

The Historic 1927 Attempted Transatlantic Flights

By: The Sir John Carling & the Royal Windsor Aircrafts

Purpose and Scope: Exhibit shows the original proof & tells the philatelic/aerophilately story associated with the two flights involved in the Transatlantic race to be the first. **Overview:** This fascinating Airmail story is being shown for the *first time* philatelically in this exhibit.

Background: Known as the London (Ontario) to London (U.K.) flight & the Windsor (Ont.) to Windsor (U.K.) flight, both took place in August/September 1927. Both flights were unsuccessful with the London/London flight ending in tragedy.

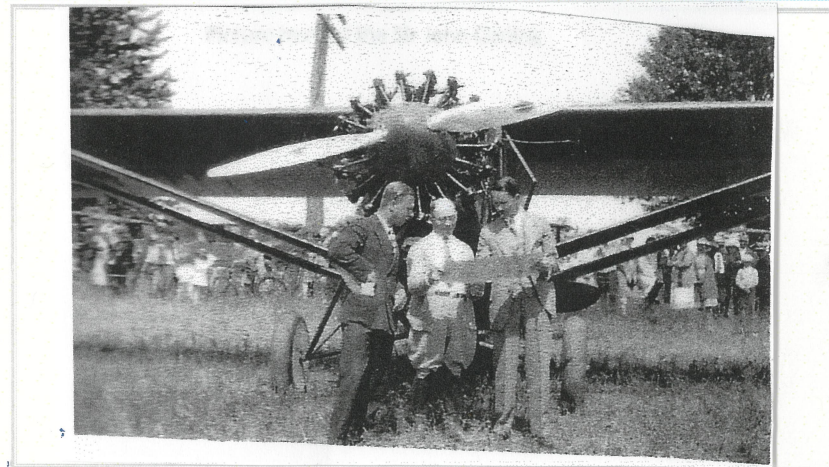
Exhibit Plan and Layout: This one frame exhibit contains two chapters. The first being the London to London saga with the issuance of stamps/covers & the second chapter telling the Windsor to Windsor account. While parallel stories, there endings were quite different. The resultant "mystery plot" of the proof/stamps issuance will be told here.

Condition & Difficulty of Acquisition: All real items displayed are one-of-a-kind & therefore are only-known copies available. A few items are scans or reproduced photos & are labeled as such. They are included to aid in the understanding of the historical presentation. No items are *red bordered* in this exhibit.

Reason for this Exhibit: Many years were devoted/required to assemble the material shown & only now (post 2020) for the first time this exhibit can be shown in a comprehensive meaningful manner.

Knowledge and Research: Most research included is secondary in nature as numerous accounts of the flights and issuance of stamps is well-notated but the few new gems of information are highlighted with a small magnifying glass icon.

Chapter I The London to London Flight of the Sir John Carling



< Scan of photograph with Pilot & Navigator in front of plane

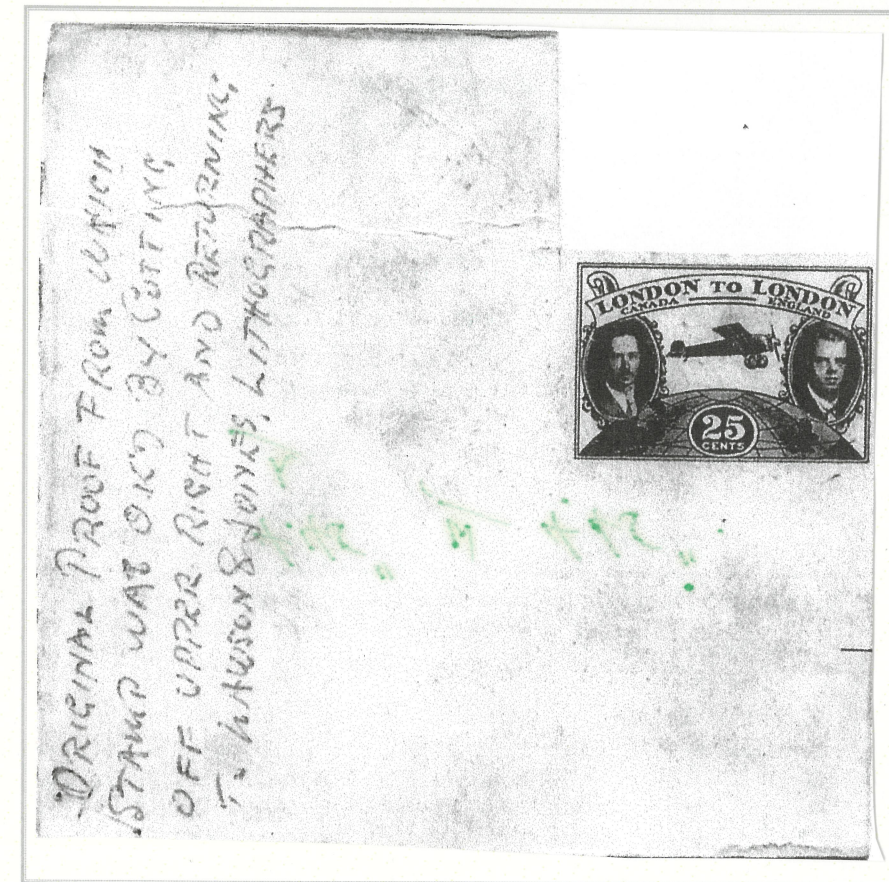
The events in Canada, specifically Ontario, spurred on by the awareness of the planning by Charles Lindbergh in the U. S., Carling Brewery of London, Ont. offered a \$25,000 prize for a Canadian or British pilot to fly their Stinson-Detroiter monoplane "The Sir John Carling" from London Canada across the Atlantic to London U. K.

Carling selected Captain **Terry Tully** & Lieutenant **James V. Medcalf**, from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Tully & Medcalf, both worked for the Provincial Air Service (PAS) in Sault Ste. Marie, had their request for a leave of absence denied by the Ontario Government. It was reported that their requests were turned down on the grounds that, "the protection of Northern Ontario's forest from fire was more important at this season of the year than a Canadian trans-ocean flight." Both resigned from the PAS in order to participate in the Trans-Atlantic race, which Charles Lindbergh ultimately won. \$25,000 was up for grabs if they were able to accomplish their non-stop flight from London, Ont. to London, Captain Tully & Lieutenant Medcalf would fly the Stinson-Detroiter equipped with a Wright Whirlwind motor. Tully and Medcalf's first attempt from London was thwarted due to bad weather near Kingston Ont. Their second attempt had them flying past PEI, only to have to turn back & land in Washburn, a town in Maine. On Monday, Sept. 5, 1927, the duo flew to **Harbor Grace, Newfoundland**, where they picked up new supplies & gasoline. On the morning of **Sept. 7, 1927**, Captain Tully & Lieutenant Medcalf had a hearty breakfast. At 7:25 a.m., EST it was reported in the Sault Star that, "the plane took the air easily & soared over the harbor at an altitude of about 500 feet. Then it sheared off to the eastward, gradually rising to two thousand feet & keeping at that height until it passed out of sight over Cape St. Francis, 30 miles away." **That was the last sighting** of Captain Tully, Lieutenant Medcalf and the Sir John Carling. By the time the Sir John Carling was declared missing, the death toll of the trans-oceanic flights since the fall of 1926 was more than 47 people. Twenty were lost at sea.

Originally Located Progressive Plate Proof

Canadian postal authorities approved the printing of special semi-official stamps to be applied to the envelopes to be carried on the Sir John Carling flight. Only 100 were printed and 87 were affixed to envelopes. Those 87 are presumed lost at sea. One cover was removed prior to take-off in Newfoundland.

Stamps were printed & scheduled for release on **August 18, 1927** but were delayed until the date of the flight. The face value was 25 cents; printing method was panes of four stamps with a reported 100 stamps printed; approx. 13 known; perforated 12; color green & yellow on a white background; **the proof (shown here)** black on white thick card stock. **This is the originally found proof.** Note: the second proof reported in 2014. Printer was Lawson & Jones Lithographers of London



London to London Plate Proof in black on card.
Lower left copy from the sheet of four.

The manuscript notation in the left selvage states: "original proof from which was Ok'd by cutting off upper right and returning to Lawson & Jones Lithographers for production".

