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Visit Website The request was granted, and by June the headstrong young officer was serving as a backseat observer in a reconnaissance plane. After honing his skills flying combat missions over France and Russia, he met the famed German flying ace Oswald Boelcke, who enlisted him in a new fighter squadron called Jasta 2. In January , Richthofen was placed in command of his own fighter squadron known as Jasta 11, which featured several talented pilots including his younger brother, Lothar von Richthofen. Around that same time, he had his Albatros D. III fighter plane painted blood red. He shot down nearly two dozen Allied planes during the month of April alone, increasing his tally to 52 overall and cementing his reputation as the most fearsome flier in the skies over Europe. He also became a beloved propaganda symbol in Germany, where he was lavished with military decorations and featured in numerous news articles and postcards. Preferring to avoid unnecessary risks, he typically fought in formation and relied on the aid of his wingmen to ambush his enemies by diving at them from above. To mark his growing kill count, he commissioned a German jeweler to make a collection of small silver cups bearing the date of each of his aerial victories. In June , Richthofen was promoted to leader of his own four-squadron fighter wing. Later that summer, it was outfitted with the Fokker Dr. Despite returning to duty with his Flying Circus just a few weeks later, he never fully recovered from the injury and complained of frequent headaches. Some historians have since speculated that he may have also been suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD. As Richthofen swooped low in pursuit of an enemy fighter, he came under attack from Australian machine gunners on the ground and a plane piloted by Canadian ace Arthur Roy Brown. During the exchange of fire, Richthofen was struck in the torso by a bullet and died after crash-landing in a field. Brown got official credit for the victory, but debate continues over whether he or the Australian infantrymen fired the fatal shot. The year-old had only prowled the skies for a little over two years, but his 80 confirmed aerial victories proved to be the most of any pilot on either side of World War I. His mysterious death and his legend as the fearsome Red Baron ensured that he lingered in the popular consciousness after the conflict ended, and he has since been depicted in countless books, films, songs, comic strips and television programs. Beyond the Legend of the Red Baron. Ace for the Ages: The Definitive Encyclopedia and Document Collection. Edited by Spencer C. How Did the Red Baron Die?

## Chapter 2 : The Death of Manfred von Richthofen

*Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen (2 May - 21 April ), also known as the "Red Baron", was a fighter pilot with the German Air Force during World War I. He is considered the ace-of-aces of the war, being officially credited with 80 air combat victories.*

Rittmeister Manfred von Richthofen makes a fateful decision to pursue Lt. The Ace of Aces is dead. Manfred von Richthofen leads the funeral procession of Captain Oswald Boelcke. An informal outtake from the same setting as his more stern-looking most famous photo in air combat death comes quickly, often from a direction least expected. The ill luck of all the others has not yet affected my nerves. His family title, Freiherr, Free Lord, corresponds to baron. Excelling at sports, especially riding and hunting, in he joined the cavalry, but soon transferred to the air corps. In Victorian times little boys and girls were treated and dressed alike, a centuries-old custom which only began to decline around and was out of vogue by . At the outbreak of war von Richthofen was a lieutenant of horse on the German-Polish border, then held by Russia. The master Captain Oswald Boelcke, one of the most influential leaders and tacticians in the history of air combat, looking somewhat ill at ease in a studio setting. The French flying men were coming to the fore. We were to be combined in a battle squadron and took train on the first of October, There was no reason to take any note of him except for the fact that he was the only man who had succeeded in shooting down a hostile flying man not once but four times. His name had been mentioned in the dispatches. I thought a great deal of him because of his experience. Although I had taken the greatest trouble, I had not brought an enemy down up to that time. At least I had not been credited with a success. So I asked him: I fly close to my man, aim well and then of course he falls down. The difference between him and I was that he flew a Fokker and I a large battle-plane. Try to secure the upper hand before attacking. If possible, keep the sun behind you 2. Always continue with an attack you have begun 3. Open fire only at close range, and then only when the opponent is squarely in your sights 4. You should always try to keep your eye on your opponent, and never let yourself be deceived by ruses 5. In any type of attack, it is essential to assail your opponent from behind 6. If your opponent dives on you, do not try to get around his attack, but fly to meet it 7. For squadrons, in principle, it is better to attack in groups of four or six. Avoid two aircraft attacking the same opponent By thenâ€”still early in World War Iâ€”Boelcke already had four kills. He confided to the young baron the secret of downing an enemy: We knew that in the last few days he had shot down at least an Englishman a day, and many times two every morning. Von Richthofen chose a victim. I gave him a short burst from my machine gun. I was so close I was afraid I would ram him. Then, suddenly, his propeller turned no more. The engine was shot to pieces, and both crewmen were severely wounded. The great ace raised his score to forty, and von Richthofen to six. As a hunter mounts the heads of his prey, he acquired a souvenir of each victim—a propeller, a machine gun, an insignia or serial number cut from the fabric—and ordered silver cups in memory. Like his mentor, he viewed air combat not as an art but a science, preferring to avoid dogfights and, like a wolf stalking prey, pick off unwary victims. Yet he proved his skill that November in single combat with an enemy ace. It carried the two circling fighters far behind German trenches. At about a hundred meters altitude he tried to escape toward the Front I followed him from fifty down to thirty meters, firing steadily About fifty meters behind our lines he plunged down with a shot through the head. No photos exist of Albatros D. II that same month and replaced by single wing-top radiators. I noticed that they were ogling me and as I felt much inclination to have a fight I did not want to disappoint them. Consequently I had to wait until one of my English friends tried to drop on me. After a short while one of the three came sailing along and attempted to tackle me in the rear. After firing five shots he had to stop for I had swerved in a sharp curve. So we circled round and round like madmen after one another at an altitude of about 10, feet. Each tried to get behind and above the other. Soon I discovered that I was not meeting a beginner. He had not the slightest intention of breaking off the fight. He was traveling in a machine which turned beautifully. However, my own was better at rising than his, and I succeeded at last in getting above and beyond my English waltzing partner. The wind was favorable to me for it drove us more and more towards the German position. At last we were above Bapaume, about half a mile behind the German front. I

had time to take a good look at my opponent. I looked down into his carriage and could see every movement of his head. If he had not had his cap on I would have noticed what kind of a face he was making. He had to decide whether he would land on German ground or whether he would fly back to the English lines. Of course he tried the latter, after having endeavored in vain to escape me by loopings and such like tricks. At that time his first bullets were flying around me, for hitherto neither of us had been able to do any shooting. That was my most favorable moment. I followed him at an altitude of from two hundred and fifty feet to one hundred and fifty feet, firing all the time. The Englishman could not help falling. But the jamming of my gun nearly robbed me of my success. His machine gun was dug out of the ground and it ornaments the entrance of my dwelling. III is second from the front, its black crosses barely visible against the red overspray. Its upper wing bears standard German green and mauve camouflage. At least one of the other planes is also red; both Lt. Otto Brauneck and Lt. Karl Allmenroder of Jasta 11 also flew red aircraft. Fourth plane back may be D. Georg Simon, which was all red with a green band behind the cockpit. Simon was shot down on June 4th, , by a Nieuport flown by Capt. The military censor blotted out the tail serial on the nearest plane, which is often attributed to Lt. Constantin Krefft but may be D. Hans Hintsch, who was killed in it on May 24th. The dark, jagged lines emanating from the lower left are branches of a tree from which the photographer took the shot. It was a beastly nuisance. Of course my joy was tremendous. The result was that everyone got to know my red bird. My opponents also seemed to have heard of the color transformation. My friend, the photographer, had not the time to defend himself. He had to make haste to get down upon firm ground for his machine began to give suspicious indications of fire. When we airmen notice that phenomenon in an enemy plane, we say: When the machine was coming to earth it burst into flames. I did so particularly because I had the impression that my opponent was wounded for he did not fire a single shot. The result was very comical. My enemy with his burning machine landed smoothly while I, his victor, came down next to him in the barbed wire of our trenches and my machine overturned. As mentioned before, they had not fired a shot and they could not understand why I had landed so clumsily. They were the first two Englishmen whom I had brought down alive. Consequently, it gave me particular pleasure to talk to them. I know your machine very well. The Baron would find it a new kind of challenge: Not only friends but foes soon recognized it. Fan mail poured in, much of it from adoring young frauen, for whom he had little time.

**Chapter 3 : The Crimson Killer - 11 Remarkable Facts About Germany's Red Baron - calendrierdelascience**

*Here's an airshow 'reenactment' of the final flight of Manfred von Richthofen, The Red Baron', on 21st April This sequence was part of the display at the Classic Fighters airshow held.*

The Death of Manfred von Richthofen: Who fired the fatal shot? Captain Brown, a Canadian pilot in the Royal Flying Corps, flying a Sopwith Camel single seat fighter, was known to have attacked von Richthofen and he was officially credited with shooting him down, eventually receiving a bar to his DSC for the feat. The controversy as to who was responsible for shooting down von Richthofen has continued over the years. C E W Bean, the author of the Official History of Australia in the War of to , carried out considerable research into the death and devoted an Appendix, in Volume V of the Official History, published in , to describe the circumstances in detail 1. Bean was of the opinion that Sergeant Popkin, an Australian Vickers machine gunner, was responsible for shooting down von Richthofen and that Captain Brown had not fired the fatal shot. There have been many books and articles published since then on the subject of who was responsible for shooting down von Richthofen. Most authors agree that it was an Australian, but disagree as to his identity, however Markham, 2 as late as , did not consider that any Australian was responsible and wrote an article re-attributing the death of von Richthofen to Captain Brown. This present paper will refer in particular to two books. Dale Titler 3 published a book agreeing that Australian machine gunners were responsible but considered that Gunner Robert Buie, firing a Lewis gun, shot down the German triplane. It must be emphasised that Bean did not quote the reports in their entirety but left out some of the original text of the reports. The original complete reports are in the Richthofen section of the Bean Papers the Bean Papers held in the research section of the Australian War Memorial AWM in Canberra 5 and a consideration of these throws important new light on the controversy. There is also an unpublished letter from Popkin to Bean in the papers, clarifying an original newspaper report about Popkin that has been used by Titler and Carisella and Ryan in their books and by Markham in his article. Using these primary sources in the Australian War Memorial, wherever possible, a critical analysis of the postmortem examination and a reconstruction of the probable events of 21 April has been made. Referring to the contradictory medical examinations made on the body of von Richthofen, Newton 6 , in , wrote: The different conclusions reached in the two medical reports were to start a controversy which, to date, has never been unquestionably resolved. Did it come from the air or the ground? However a careful assessment of the documents in the Bean Papers seems to clarify the confusion. It is accepted that Manfred von Richthofen was flying an all red Fokker triplane when he crashed in the Somme Valley near Corbie on the 21 April His body was taken to a hangar belonging to the No. The body was washed by an orderly and the first superficial postmortem examination was made by a panel of doctors. Copy extract from A. The entrance wound is on the right side about the level of the ninth-rib, which is fractured, just in front of the posterior axillary line. The bullet appears to have passed obliquely backwards through the chest striking the spinal column , from which it glanced in a forward direction and issued on the left side of the chest, at a level about two inches higher than its entrance on the right and about in the anterior axillary line. There was also a compound fracture of the lower jaw on the left side, apparently not caused by a missile - and also some minor bruises of the head and face. The body was not opened - these facts were ascertained by probing from the surface wounds. Sgd Thomas Sinclair Consulting surgeon IV Army BEF According to Sinclair, therefore, assuming that von Richthofen was sitting straight in his cockpit and the aeroplane was in level flight, the bullet must have struck him from the right side, was fired from an angle that was slightly in front of the body and was fired from below. We found that he had one entrance and one exit wound caused by the same bullet. The entrance wound was situated on the right side of the chest in the posterior folf sic of the armpit; the exit wound was situated at a slightly higher level near the front of the chest , the point of exit being about half inch below the right sic nipple and about three-quarter of an inch external to it. From the nature of the exit wound we think that the bullet passed straight through the chest from right to left, and also slightly forward. Had the bullet been deflected from the spine the exit wound would have been much larger. The gun firing this bullet must have been situated in the same plane as the long axis of the German machine and fired

from the right and slightly behind the right of Captain von Richthofen. We are agreed that the situation of the entrance and exit wounds are such that they could have not have been caused by fire from the ground. If the exit wound was on the right side, it is unlikely that such a wound would have been mortal and it is generally accepted that Graham and Downs had made a mistake. However there still remains the last paragraph of their report attributing the fatal bullet to a shot from the air, not the ground. If, as they considered, the bullet had not been deflected by the vertebral column, then the track of the bullet must have been laterally from below and behind the midline. However the only way that their statement that: There is no record of any report made by this Medical Board in the Bean Papers. However, in , Colonel Barber wrote to Bean and this letter is now quoted in its entirety, apparently for the first time. The underlining is original: Oct 23 My dear Bean, With reference to your letter of October 14th. There were only two bullet wounds, one of entry, one of exit of a bullet that had evidently passed through the chest and the heart. There was no wound of the head but there was considerable bruising over the right jaw which may have been fractured. The orderly told me that the consulting surgeon of the Army had made a post-mortem in the morning and I asked how he did it as there was no evidence. The orderly told me that the cons. I used the same bit of wire for the same purpose so you see the medical examination was not a thorough one and not a post mortem exam in the ordinary sense of the term. The bullet hole in the side of the plane coincided with the wound through the chest and I am sure he was shot from below while banking. I sent a full report to General Birdwood at Australian Corps and I have often wondered what became of it. With kind regards, Yrs sincerely George W. Barber Colonel Barber enclosed a diagram of the bullet wounds on the body with his letter. In this he clearly showed the entrance wound in the left posterior axillary line at about the level of the ninth rib, and drew a cross over the right chest, internal to the nipple on the AP view. Under the diagram he wrote: I forget now which was which but think the site of entry was the one in the back. It would have been possible to have used such a probe to examine the exit wound and determine that the bullet track involved the heart, but it would have been quite impossible to determine the track of the bullet to the vertebral column by using such a probe from the entrance wound. Dwyer sought medical opinions on the extreme difficulty in probing lung tissue. The elastic lungs would collapse as soon as air enters the pleural cavity the space between the lungs and the chest wall , and it would be impossible for a probe to detect any perforation of the lungs made by a bullet. From a consideration of the above, one is drawn to the conclusion that the fatal bullet must have passed directly through the chest from its entry wound at the posterior axillary line the back of the armpit at the level of the 9th rib that is at about five inches below the lower level of the outstretched arm. As there is no real evidence that the bullet hit the vertebrae the most probable trajectory of the bullet would have to be along a line joining the entrance and exit wounds. As the exit wound was about three-quarters of an inch external to the left nipple this means that the bullet would have passed through the heart and would have been rapidly fatal. Von Richthofen would have lost consciousness within 20 to 30 seconds, and certainly could have not continued to fly his aeroplane and fire on Lt. May for over a minute 9. It is possible to correlate the medical evidence with that of the eyewitnesses of the last flight. Fortunately, as the events took place at low altitude, directly over the Australian lines, the chase and crash were witnessed by many eye witnesses. There are several unpublished, or only partly published documents, in the Bean Papers, these have either been omitted or only partly quoted in Volume V of the Official History, and the originals of these documents cast new light of the events of that day. From the Bean Papers, and the Carisella accounts, it is now possible to advance the following description of what actually happened. There is no doubt that von Richthofen followed a Sopwith Camel, flown by a relatively novice Canadian pilot, Lt Wilfred May, down from a dogfight that occurred when two British photographic reconnaissance R. Carisella and Ryan describe the attack in detail quoting from a letter to the authors from Lieutenant Banks, 10 the observer and gunner aboard the second R. Lieutenant May, who had been told by Brown that he should observe any action, but should run for home if attacked, was seen by von Richthofen and pursued. According to his instructions May dived away and flew low over the Australian lines, flying down the valley of the Somme, closely pursued by Richthofen. According to them, Brown wrote: I observed two Albatross burst into flames and crash. Dived on large formation of fifteen to twenty Albatross scouts D. Went back again and dived on pure red triplane which was firing on Lt. I got a long burst into him

and he went down vertical and was observed to crash by Lieutenant Mellersh and Lieutenant May. I fired on two more but did not get them. Brown was quoted as having said: I was in a perfect position above and behind. I had dived until the red snout of my Camel pointed fair at his tail. My thumbs pressed the triggers. Bullets ripped into his elevator and tail planes. The flaming tracers showed me where they hit. Gently I pulled back on the stick. The nose of the Camel rose ever so slightly. The stream of bullets tore along the body of the all-red tripe. Its occupant turned and looked back. I had a flash of his eyes behind the goggles. Then he crumpled - sagged In the cockpit The triplane staggered, wobbled, stalled, flung over on its nose and went down. The reserve trenches of the Australian infantry was sic not more than feet below. It was a quick descent. I saw it as I swung over. And Mellersh saw it. In fact they stated that it was: Brown was not a professional writer; the above report is written in the colourful slick manner of the hackwriter of the period. Brown replied in a letter of 7 November that he had never read the account and wrote: Indeed there is only one witness who suggests that Captain Brown shot down the red Fokker triplane, and even this is an indirect statement. I could see his tracer hitting the cockpit of the Fokker. The German machine zoomed, banked steeply and obviously crippled glided down to land between the Allied and German lines. He landed under control so the machine was not damaged

*Manfred von Richthofen was laid to rest late in the afternoon of April 22 in a small, unkempt cemetery in Bertangles. He was buried with full military honors after a short service by an Anglican chaplain.*

He was enrolled in the military school at Wahlstatt at age 11, following the wishes of his father, a Prussian nobleman whose own active military career had been cut short by deafness. There, he excelled in sports but fell behind academically, working just enough to get by in an environment he disliked. Six years later, Richthofen attended the Royal Military Academy at Lichterfelde, which he enjoyed more. There he warmed up to the idea of life in the military and was determined to apply his riding skills to become a cavalry officer. The following year he was promoted to Leutnant, and was still participating in regiment horse jumping and racing competitions when World War I broke out in August. Richthofen went into battle with the Uhlans in the early months of the war, and saw action at Verdun. But as static trench warfare set in, the cavalry became obsolete. He served as a messenger during the winter of and saw some combat, but he felt there was no glory to be had crawling through muddy trenches and shell holes. Having had his fill of unromantic ground warfare, Richthofen wrote to his commanding general to request a transfer to the air service. Richthofen knew nothing of flying or air combat and, like many infantrymen, had held aviators in contempt. But now the air offered him a new war, one not restricted by an immobile front line. Worried that the war would end before he had a chance to see action in the air, he decided to train as an observer. Pilots were required to undergo three months of training, whereas Richthofen, as an observer, was ready for the field in four weeks. Sent to Grossenhain on June 10, , Richthofen was the first of his training class to be assigned. He began his flying career at Feldfliegerabteilung 69 as an observer on the Eastern Front, taking photographs of Russian troop positions. A couple of months later, he transferred to a Western Front unit in Belgium later to become Kampfgeschwader I as a bombardier. Richthofen had enjoyed flying from the first moment he took to the air during training. His love of flight was further enhanced by watching the bombs he dropped explode on enemy targets. His fascination with seeing the damage he was inflicting earned him his first war wound. In September , Richthofen had his initial tries at air-to-air combat, both times firing on Allied Farman biplanes. The first was an exchange of shots between observers without result. The second encounter ended with the French plane dropping away and crashing after being hit by a couple of bursts of machine-gun fire. Richthofen did not receive credit for the victory because the plane had fallen behind enemy lines, robbing him of any physical evidence. After June , the Fokker Eindekker monoplane series became the most feared aircraft in the air. Equipped with synchronized machine guns that could fire through the propeller arc without damaging the plane, they gave German scout pilots a firm advantage in air combat. With his new assignment at Kampfgeschwader 11, Richthofen hoped to get a crack at piloting his own plane. Still flying as an observer, he prevailed upon his friend Oberleutnant Georg Zeumer for help. Zeumer was an experienced pilot, and Richthofen had often flown as his observer ever since the two were first teamed on the Eastern Front. Unwounded and undeterred, Richthofen kept at it, practicing for two weeks before heading off to the flying school at Doberitz. Five months later, he returned to his squadron as a pilot, flying Albatros two-seaters near Verdun. They were not the monoplane scouts he had been hoping for, but once he had fixed a gun to the upper wing of his plane, he was able to both fly and take offensive action. April 26, , saw his second kill, a French Nieuport, go down near Fort de Douaumont again behind enemy lines, and again not officially counted. Fokker monoplanes, although successful, were rare at the time. When Richthofen finally got a chance to fly a single-seat scout it was on shared time, with him using it mornings and another pilot flying it afternoons. The Fokker did not give him the success he had expected, and neither pilot did well with their mount. Richthofen had met him initially aboard a train while traveling to flying school. Boelcke was touring the area in August, assembling pilots for his new Jagdstaffeln. He left three days later, and reported for duty back on the Western Front on September 1, . By then, the monoplanes had lost any advantage they once held. They were now being met in the air by improved Allied scouts also capable of forward firing through the propeller arc. German factories were busy turning out better combat fighters – biplane scouts that feature two front-firing guns.

While Jagdstaffel 2 awaited delivery of these aircraft for its new fighter pilots, Boelcke trained the men under him in the ways of aerial combat. By the time some Albatros D. II biplanes arrived on the 16th, the pilots were ready for action. The very next day, Richthofen scored his first confirmed kill. His inexperience allowed the Allied observer to get off some dangerous bursts at him, but he finally managed to close in and riddle the belly of the Allied plane. He followed the crippled plane down to the ground and landed near it. He watched German soldiers lift the two mortally wounded British aviators from their cockpits. The observer, seeing Richthofen and recognizing him as the victor, acknowledged him with a smile before dying. The pilot never regained consciousness and died on the way to the hospital. An avid collector of trophies from the hunt, Richthofen started a personal tradition by ordering a small, engraved silver cup to commemorate his victory. He would do the same for the ones that followed soon after. By October 10, he had claimed his place among the German aces with his fifth kill. His victory tally rose at a slow but steady rate, although everything did not always go smoothly. On October 25, he was certain he had recorded his seventh confirmed kill. Much to his displeasure, this victory was contested by two other pilots who claimed the downed B. Richthofen insisted there had been no other German planes in the vicinity until after the enemy machine had crashed south of Bapaume. Nevertheless, his claim was disallowed, despite evidence in his favor. Jasta 2, while distinguishing itself as a top fighter squadron, suffered heavy casualties. Half of its pilots and planes were lost to enemy fire, and other fliers suffered nervous collapse from the strain of battle. Its greatest setback, however, came on October 27. Two days after his 40th victory, Boelcke took to the air with five other planes in his flight. Details vary as to what happened once they engaged two de Havilland Scouts. The damaged wing tore away as Boelcke descended, and his plane crashed, crushing his head on impact. Overwhelmed with guilt, Boelcke was inconsolable. But as Richthofen continued to increase his number of victories, it became apparent that he might fill their shoes. Hawker was in a four-plane flight, led by Captain J. Andrews, that attacked five Albatroses south of Bapaume. When the four DH-2s crossed the front lines into German territory, Hawker suddenly found himself alone. Two British planes had had to turn back with engine trouble, and Andrews had quickly joined them after being hit and suffering an engine misfire. Hawker chose his target. He dove at the Albatros from behind, getting off a five-round burst that missed when Richthofen cut sharply left. Hawker followed him into the turn. The equally matched pilots began a frantic, spinning chase as each tried to outturn the other and maneuver into position for a clear shot. Their tight circle, less than feet in diameter, slowly descended from an altitude of almost 10,000 feet to nearly treetop level. Hawker was now at a disadvantage. Dangerously low on the German side of the lines, he knew he would be hit from the ground or forced to land if he did not end the battle quickly. Losing his chance, Hawker turned and bolted for his side of the lines with Richthofen in pursuit. With both the Baron and the ground closing in on him, Hawker zigzagged at high speed to stay out of the line of fire. The jam quickly cleared, however, and with his second burst Richthofen shot Hawker through the back of the head. His DH-2 pitched up and then nosed into the ground, just 50 yards short of the German front-line trenches. The new year marked a series of successes for Richthofen. With his 16th victory on January 4, 1917, he became the leading living German ace. Along with this latest victory came his reassignment as leader of Jagdstaffel 11 at Douai. To further distinguish himself from his fellow fighter pilots, Richthofen started painting sections of his aircraft red, possibly after the colors of his old Uhlan regiment. Since its formation in September 1916, his new unit had not scored a single victory, and it fell upon Richthofen to whip the 12 officers under him into shape. III, was already making a name for itself among the Allies. The two-man crew of a British F. Picture postcards and newspaper articles about him circulated widely, and correspondence arrived at his airfield from all over Germany—mostly fan letters from adoring women. Under his tutelage, the pilots of Jasta 11 were fast improving, and competition between them and the fliers of Jasta Boelcke was friendly but fierce. During this period, Richthofen had two close calls. The first occurred shortly after his 25th victory, when enemy fire ruptured his fuel tanks and forced him to shut off his engine, lest it explode, and land near Henin Lietard. April 2 saw another near miss when according to Richthofen he was fired upon and hit from the ground by the observer of a Sopwith 1Y2 Strutter two-seater he had just brought down near Givenchy. The surviving British pilot, however, insisted that his observer was in no condition to fire after their plane hit the ground. By the time Richthofen went on well-deserved leave in May, he had led

Jasta I I to more than victories. Richthofen returned to the front on June 14 with new orders to organize four Jagdstaffeln into a single wing. Jastas 4, 6, 10 and 11 became Jagdgeschwader I JG. As Richthofen assumed command as Rittmeister of JG. While leading Jasta 11 as its JG.

**Chapter 5 : Manfred "Dutch" von Ehrenfried "Flight Controller" Spacefest**

*GIANT SCALE RC VULCAN XH [20FT WINGSPAN] (DAVID JOHNSON): COSFORD LMA MODEL SHOW - Duration: Essential RC , views.*

The Savvy Aviator Thwarting Corrosion About the Author Rick Durden started flying when he was 15 and became a flight instructor during his freshman year of college. He did a little of everything in aviation to help pay for college and law school including flight instruction, aerial application, and hauling freight. Following law school he was in-house counsel for The Cessna Aircraft Company for seven years, then went into private practice in aviation law, first in Chicago, then in Grand Rapids, Mich. In late Rick became the executive director of LightHawk , a nonprofit organization often known as the "wings of conservation," providing free flights to individuals, organizations and media working on matters involving the environment. He continues to consult for pilots, FBOs, overhaulers and manufacturers in the aviation law field, and is in-house counsel for a cargo airline. He is also an instrument and multi-engine flight instructor. In the process of trying to fly every old and interesting airplane he could, Rick has accumulated over 6, hours of flying time. In the few moments it took to get to the door of the Lounge, individual voices became clear, split into two very vocal camps: The vehement "Yes it will! I stood off to the side and tried to get a handle on the conflict. Old Hack saw me and sidled over with a silly grin on his face. People observed that pilots who were flying relatively low on a heading that took them into the wind had a surprisingly high rate of impact with the ground or obstructions if they rolled into a turn and proceeded to a heading that was with the wind direction, or downwind. There were those who insisted that the airplane could not accelerate fast enough in the turn to make the necessary groundspeed change so as to stay above stall speed and thus they crashed. Its cruise speed is pretty close to the Fokker Dr-I that Manfred last flew -- call it 80 mph. The Fokker Triplane was so maneuverable few enemy pilots ever figured out it was astonishingly slow. His groundspeed is, therefore, 40 mph. In fact, if he does not accelerate through that needed 80 mph change in groundspeed, the airplane could stall because the airspeed would have dropped off radically. There were those who were convinced that it was impossible for a 65 hp J-3 to increase its groundspeed by 80 mph in 30 seconds, and therefore the airplane would stall, which was what made downwind turns so dangerous. Fortunately, back when this was being debated, rationality prevailed. It was pointed out that the airplane was flying through the air, its propeller was acting upon the air and its wings were moving in an airmass. The airplane continued to move through the air at 80 mph. Its groundspeed changed solely because of the fact that the mass of air in which it was operating, the medium upon which it was acting, was moving. Had the air been calm, Manfred and his J-3 would have had a groundspeed that matched his airspeed. Interestingly enough, when the famous aviator, Jimmy Doolittle was sent by the Army to M. Yeah, that air-racing, aerobatic, military pilot also had one of the first Ph. Doolittle also hypothesized that the frequency of crashes during such turns was the visual effect of the rapidly increasing groundspeed causing pilots to believe that the airplane was suddenly going very fast and pulling back on the stick or throttle, leading to a stall or descent into the ground. Making a few circles made it clear that the airplane and its pilot could not tell anything about the direction of the wind while turning. Conveyor-Belt Runway What I learned from Old Hack was that an updated version of a question aimed at confusing folks over relative measurements of airplane motion and the medium in which it operates had shown up on the Internet, and it was causing the fracas in the Lounge. The plane moves in one direction, while the conveyor moves in the opposite direction. The conveyor has a control system that tracks the plane speed and tunes the speed of the conveyor to be exactly the same but in the opposite direction. Can the airplane ever take off? Initially, about a third of the folks here said that the airplane could not ever takeoff, because the conveyor would overcome the speed of the airplane and it could never get any airspeed. The rest said the airplane would fly. They asked us to imagine a person running on a treadmill. As he or she sped up, the treadmill would be programmed to speed up, just as the conveyor in the problem, and the person would remain over the same locus on the earth, while running as fast as possible. The argument was that if the airplane started to move forward, the conveyor program was set up to move the conveyor at exactly that speed, in the opposite direction, thus, the airplane

would never move relative to the ground, and, because the air was calm, it could never get any wind over its wings. One of the analogies presented was the person rowing at three mph upstream in a river on a calm day. However, the current was flowing downstream at three mph, so the resultant speed with reference to the stream bank and air was zero, and thus there was no wind on the rowboat. I watched and listened to the disagreement for a while and was fascinated to see that the argument seemed to split between those who had some engineering or math background, all of whom said the airplane would takeoff and fly without any problem; and those with some other background, who visualized the airplane as having to push against the conveyor in order to gain speed. It was an interesting argument, but as things progressed, more rational heads prevailed, pointing out that the airplanes do not apply their thrust via their wheels, so the conveyor belt is irrelevant to whether the airplane will takeoff. One guy even got one of those rubber band powered wood and plastic airplane that sell for about a buck, put it on the treadmill someone foolishly donated to the Lounge years ago, thinking that pilots might actually exercise. He wound up the rubber band, set the treadmill to be level, and at its highest speed. Then he simultaneously set the airplane on the treadmill and let the prop start to turn. It took off without moving the slightest bit backwards. It is a calm day. Because the wind is calm, if Manfred can generate any indicated airspeed, he will also be generating precisely the same groundspeed. Groundspeed, of course being relative to the ground of the airport surrounding the conveyor belt runway. Manfred does his prestart checklist, holds the heel brakes, hits the starter and the little Continental up front clatters to life. Oil pressure comes up and stabilizes and Manfred tries to look busy because the eyes of the world are upon him, but all he can do is make sure the fuel is on and the altimeter and trim are set, then do a quick runup to check the mags and the carb heat. He moves the controls through their full travel and glares at the ailerons, doing his best to look heroic, then holds the stick aft in the slipstream to pin the tail and lets go of the brakes. Baron of the Belt So far the J-3 has not moved, nor has the conveyor. The propeller rpm increases and the prop shoves air aft, as it does on every takeoff, causing the airplane to move forward through the air, and as a consequence, forward with regard to the ground. Simultaneously the conveyor creaks to life, moving east, under the tires of the J As the J-3 thrusts its way through the air, driven by its propeller, the airspeed indicator comes off the peg at about 10 mph. At that moment the conveyor is moving at 10 mph to the east and the tires are whirling around at 20 mph because the prop has pulled it to an airspeed, and groundspeed, of 10 mph, westbound. The airplane is moving relative to the still air and the ground at 10 mph, but with regard to the conveyor, which is going the other way at 10 mph, the relative speed is 20 mph. Manfred relaxes a bit because the conveyor cannot stop him from moving forward. There is nothing on the airplane that pushes against the ground or the conveyor in order for it to accelerate; as Karen -- one of our techies here at the Lounge -- put it, the airplane freewheels. Unless Manfred applies the brakes, the conveyor cannot affect the rate at which the airplane accelerates. A few moments later, the roaring Continental, spinning that wooden Sensenich prop, has accelerated the J-3 and Manfred to 25 mph indicated airspeed. The wheels are spinning at 50 mph, so the noise level is a little high, but otherwise, the J-3 is making a normal, calm-wind takeoff. As the indicated airspeed passes 45 mph, groundspeed -- you know, relative to where all those spectators are standing beside the conveyor belt -- is also 45 mph. Being brought back to life seemed to create an insatiable desire for electronic stuff. The conveyor is also at 45 mph, and the wheels are whizzing around at 90 -- the groundspeed plus the speed of the conveyor in the opposite direction. Manfred breaks ground, climbs a few hundred feet, then makes a low pass to see if he can terrify the spectators because they are Americans, descendants of those who defeated his countrymen back in While the speed of the conveyor belt in the opposite direction is superficially attractive in saying the airplane cannot accelerate, it truly is irrelevant to what is happening with the airplane, because the medium on which it is acting is the air. The only time it could be a problem is if the wheel speed got so high that the tires blew out. Put another way, consider the problem with the J-3 mounted on a hovercraft body yes, similar things were tried about 30 years ago. The hovercraft lifts the airplane a fraction of an inch above the conveyor belt, and so no matter how fast the conveyor spins, it cannot prevent the propeller -- acting on the air -- from accelerating the airplane to takeoff speed. Those wheels are not powered and thus do not push against the belt to accelerate the airplane. Were that the case, the vehicle could not reach an airspeed needed to fly, because then the conveyor, the medium acted upon by the propulsive

force, would be able to negate the acceleration relative to the air and ground. Here the propeller is pushing against the air, as it does every time an airplane takes off. How fast the airplane is moving over the surface on which its wheels rest is irrelevant; the medium is the magic. On a normal takeoff -- no conveyor involved -- if there is a 20 mph headwind, Manfred and the J-3 will lift off at 45 mph indicated airspeed; but relative to the ground, it is only 25 mph. Should the wind increase to 45 mph and if Manfred can get to the runway, he can take off without rolling an inch. His airspeed is 45 and groundspeed is zero. It is not necessary to have any groundspeed to fly, just airspeed. Conversely, if Manfred has a lot of runway and nothing to hit, and takes off downwind in a 25 mph tailwind, the propeller will have to accelerate the airplane to a zero airspeed, which will be a 25 mph groundspeed, and then on to a 45 mph airspeed, which will have him humming across the ground at 70 mph. The speed over the ground, or a conveyor belt, when an airplane takes off is irrelevant; all that matters is its speed through the air, and unless the pilot sets the brakes, a moving conveyor belt -- under the freely turning wheels -- cannot stop the process of acceleration. Old Hack looked at me and suggested we depart as the few holdouts showed no sign of changing their position. So, we headed out into the night to watch the guys take the conveyor out and reinstall the runway. See you next month. Want to read more from Rick Durden? Check out the rest of his columns. As a result, they are depressingly susceptible to fraud.

**Chapter 6 : The Red Baron: Manfred von Richthofen | by Don Hollway**

*This is a heavily-illustrated, comprehensive summary of all 80 victories of the famous Red Baron, the leading ace of WWI. Full details of each victory are given, including color profiles of the aircraft flown by Richthofen, the type and serial of the downed aircraft, the names of the aircrew and their fate, etc.*

My home and office are full of Authentic Models curiosities, but today my attention kept being focused on a bright red desktop airplane I cannot take my eyes off. Most widely known as the fighter pilot of all time, he has been the subject of many books, films and other media. He earned widespread fame as the ace-of-aces of the military aviation as he is officially credited with 80 air combat victories during Great War. Hero of the Germans and respected by his enemies, von Richthofen was a major figure of the war, remembered by the nickname Der Rote Baron the Red Baron. He was so stubborn and bold that he wrote something to the Army Air Service that convinced them to accept him in the flying service at the end of May. Soon after the training he became an observer on a fighter plane and during his first battle he scored his first victory in September during the Battle of Champagne knocking down a two-seater Farman. Unfortunately, he was not credited with the "kill", since the aircraft fell behind Allied lines and therefore could not be confirmed. During this time, the Red Baron was lucky enough to meet Oswald Boelcke, Germany first fighter ace and father of air combat. This meeting encouraged him to improve his average combat skills and achieve honors. And he actually began to distinguish himself in battle in , after having successfully passed the pilot tests in Berlin. In March he was assigned to the 2nd Battle Squadron in Verdun. He had his first win as a fighter pilot from cutting down a Nieuport in Douamont April 26, but, again, the plane fell within the French lines, and he was not credited. The German aircraft Albatros D. They met again in August and Boelcke selected the young pilot to join one of the first German fighter squadrons, the battle squadron Jagdstaffel 2 often abbreviated to Jasta 2. He gained his first officially credited victory as a fighter pilot in September in the skies over Cambrai in France. From this first victory onward he used to commission to a Berliner jeweller a silver cup engraved with the date and the type of enemy aircraft shot down. Like many pilots, he also had the morbid habit of scrounging souvenirs from the planes he downed. Along with the heads of the animals he killed on hunting trips, his room was decorated with fabric serial numbers, instruments and machine guns looted from Allied wreckage. The table was crafted from propellers pieces. He even had a chandelier made from the engine of a French plane. Here are some of the silver cups The Red Baron won during his service. These cups are today owned by the Richthofen family. The Red Baron was so grateful and proud to be part of such squad, formed by an ace fighter pilot pioneer like Boelcke, however, their collaboration into the squadron did last only a couple of months as Oswald Boelcke was killed during a mid-air collision with a friendly aircraft on 28 October. Boelcke death struck the German Empire public opinion who was now in the need of a new national hero. Instead of being aggressive and act on instinct during the fights Richthofen used to follow some rules drafted by his trainer Oswald Boelcke, known as the "Dicta Boelcke" to assure success for both the squadron and its pilots. He was not an acrobatic pilot nor did crazy things in the air like his brother Lothar von Richthofen, as a real squadron leader he used well planned tactics. He would dive from above to attack with the advantage of the sun behind him, with other pilots of his Jasta covering his rear and flanks. The ace-of-aces Baron Manfred von Richthofen He was called the Red Baron for the fact that he used to paint his aircraft in bright red. Manfred von Richthofen centre , his dog and some members of the squadron Jasta 2. The Red Baron first on the right talking to fellow officers. His tactics got him downing probably his most famous adversary on November , British ace Major Lanoe Hawker, who Richthofen described as "the British Boelcke". The red Baron won this battle on the airplane Albatros II. During the same month, he assumed command of the Jasta 11, a battle squadron composed by some of the elite German pilots, many of whom he trained himself. Among those colourful airplanes, the Albatros D. III of Manfred von Richthofen bright red aircraft stood out. Same choice he made for the Fokker Triplane frame, the distinctive three-winged aircraft with which he developed a formidable reputation and is most commonly associated. As for the Jasta 11 also other units started painting their aircraft and customized their airplanes with their squadron colours. It was an order of merit awarded as

both a military and civil honour and ranked among the highest orders of merit in Germany at the time. He was credited with 80 air combat victories and soon became a legend in Germany and then all over the world. Indeed, when Richthofen shot down a plane he used to land to make sure that the pilot was still alive and was all right. This aspect of his personality did not emerge in his autobiography that he will write in , The Red Baron criticised a lot his editor for having described him just as a cold deadly war machine. The Red Baron appears in the cockpit. The Red Baron trying to improve his running performance Red Baron squadron Jasta 11 airplanes. III fighter plane of Manfred von Richthofen. It was the preeminent fighter during the period of German aerial dominance known as "Bloody April" Even though most of the Red Baron victories in battles were scored with Albatros D. During the "Bloody April" Richthofen downed alone 22 British aircraft, including four in a single day. At the peak of his success, Manfred took leave to celebrate his 25th birthday. He dined with generals, field marshals of the High Command and had breakfasted with the Kaiser. He became a legend and welcomed everywhere as a national hero. Even though the wins in battle were numerous, a serious injury head wound was encountered in July after a fight against Captain Donald Cunnell. The Red Baron appearing with his bandaged head after surgery. She used to take care of him at the aviation facility during his convalescence. Even if he came back to service more determined than ever, his head injury caused him some lasting damage he later often suffered from post-flight nausea and headaches and it was thought that he was not the invincible fighter he used to be. He was a different person. Here is what he says about his published book: I no longer possess such an insolent spirit. It is not because I am afraid, though one day death may be hard on my heels I am in wretched spirits after every aerial battle. But that no doubt is an aftereffect of my head wound. I think of this war as it really is, not as the people at home imagine, with a Hoorah! Perhaps, during his convalescence, Richthofen confronted with the realization of his own mortality. He came back as a traumatised figure, tormented by the loss of his comrades in battles and an overwhelming sense of guilt. And maybe, like it happened to his fellows, he felt in the deepest of his heart that his end was quite near. But the call of duty was stronger and he wanted to serve his nation totally to fight the Allied. That morning, he engaged a group of British fighter planes over Vaux-sur-Somme in northern France. Brown fired a burst from his guns and at the same time Allied Australian ground troops, spotting the bright red airplane of Richthofen, also unleashed a storm of machine gun fire. He died moments later, still strapped into his cockpit. He managed to make a good landing indeed, as his Fokker Triplane Dr. I, was not badly damaged but it was soon taken apart by souvenir hunters. Who was really responsible for Richthofen death still remains an interesting debate in the history of World War I which, 99 years later, is still shrouded in controversy and confusion. He was loved by his squadron and respected by his enemies. Richthofen funeral on April the 22nd Australian Imperial Force No. Australian Flying Corps fire three volleys over the grave in tribute to the airman who had chalked up 80 kills. Late State funeral for the Red Baron remains. Berlin, The legend of the fearsome Red Baron endured well after his death. The copies published after were modified versions of the original. The fame and the legend of the Red Baron were not just used by the Nazi Regime for their own propaganda, adapting this WWI hero to their own image of German supremacy and making him appear just a cold bloody war machine. His figure was massively exploited by companies for various purposes along the years. Even though Manfred von Richthofen is considered as another victim of the war, he was a man whose bravery and patriotism will never be forgotten. The stories about its feats will be echoing among aviation enthusiasts as well as among all those that have been captured by his amazing journeys upon the skies and wish to pass it on to future generations.

**Chapter 7 : The Ace of Aces: the Red Baron - Bliss from Bygone Days**

*The World War I German flying ace Manfred von Richthofen later came to be known as the "Red Baron," first in English, later also in German (der Rote Baron). In his own diaries, the aviator referred to himself as "der rote Kampfflieger" ("the red fighter pilot"), a term that referred to his bright red aircraft.*

Edit Richthofen was a Freiherr literally "Free Lord" , a title of nobility often translated as Baron. Early life Edit Von Richthofen coat of arms. He had an elder sister Ilse and two younger brothers. He enjoyed riding horses and hunting as well as gymnastics at school. He excelled at parallel bars and won a number of awards at school. Eskadron "Number 3 Squadron ". He is supposed to have written in his application for transfer "I have not gone to war in order to collect cheese and eggs, but for another purpose". At first we flew straight ahead, then the pilot turned to the right, then left. I had lost all sense of direction over our own aerodrome! Already I was counting down the hours to the time we could start again After a chance meeting of the German ace fighter pilot Oswald Boelcke , [14] Richthofen entered training as a pilot in October Initially he appeared to be a below average pilot, struggling to control his aircraft, and crashing during his first flight at the controls. Boelcke, visiting the east in search of candidates for his newly formed fighter unit, selected Richthofen to join Jagdstaffel 2 "fighter squadron". Boelcke was killed during a midair collision with a friendly aircraft on 28 October , Richthofen witnessing the event himself. Major Lanoe Hawker VC After his first confirmed victory, Richthofen ordered a silver cup engraved with the date and the type of enemy machine from a jeweller in Berlin. He continued this until he had 60 cups, by which time the dwindling supply of silver in blockaded Germany meant that silver cups like this could no longer be supplied. Richthofen discontinued his orders at this stage, rather than accept cups made in pewter or other base metal. However, he was a notable tactician and squadron leader and a fine marksman. Typically, he would dive from above to attack with the advantage of the sun behind him, and with other Jasta pilots covering his rear and flanks. II and Hawker was flying a DH. After a long dogfight, Hawker was killed by a bullet in the head as he attempted to escape back to his own lines. He switched to the Albatros D. Richthofen reverted to the Albatros D. II or Halberstadt D. II for the next five weeks. He was flying his Halberstadt when, on 6 March, in combat with F. Richthofen was able on this occasion to force land without his aircraft catching fire. II on 9 March, but since his Albatros D. V in late June. I triplane, the distinctive three-winged aircraft with which he is most commonly associated, although he did not use the type exclusively until after it was reissued with strengthened wings in November. I, only 19 of his 80 kills were made in this type. VII with suggestions to overcome the deficiencies of the then current German fighter aircraft. Several later became leaders of their own squadrons. At the time he became a squadron commander, Richthofen took the flamboyant step of having his Albatros painted red. Thereafter he usually flew in red-painted aircraft, although not all of them were entirely red, nor was the "red" necessarily the brilliant scarlet beloved of model- and replica-builders. Other members of Jasta 11 soon took to painting parts of their aircraft red—their "official" reason seems to have been to make their leader less conspicuous, and to avoid him being singled out in a fight. In practice, red colouration became a unit identification. In spite of obvious drawbacks from the point of view of intelligence, the German high command permitted this practice, and German propaganda made much of it—Richthofen being identified as Der Rote Kampfflieger—the "Red Battle-Flyer". Thomsen, von Richthofen and von Hoepfner. In that month alone he downed 22 British aircraft, including four in a single day, [27] raising his official tally to By June he had become the commander of the first of the new larger Jagdgeschwader wing formations, leading Jagdgeschwader 1 , composed of Jastas 4, 6, 10 and These were highly mobile, combined tactical units that could move at short notice to different parts of the front as required. Unlike Boelcke, he led by example and force of will rather than by inspiration. He was often described[ by whom? The system in the British army would have been for him to have held the rank appropriate to his level of command if only on a temporary basis even if he had not been formally promoted. In the German army, it was not unusual for a wartime officer to hold a lower rank than his duties implied, German officers being promoted according to a schedule and not by battlefield promotion. For instance, Erwin Rommel commanded an infantry battalion as a captain in and V after forced landing near

Wervicq On 6 July , during combat with a formation of F. There is even a theory linking this injury with his eventual death. Portrait from contemporary German postcard Author Edit During his convalescent leave, Richthofen completed an autobiographic sketch, *Der rote Kampfflieger* Written on the instructions of the "Press and Intelligence" i. British flying ace Thomas J. Martyn stated about how he and fellow pilots respected and admired the famous German flying ace: Von Richthofen was very well thought of by the British aviators as a clean fighter and a man who did not know what fear was Martyn also told a story told to him by one of his fellow British Airmen, as Martyn describes: Richthofen, being in a faster machine, had Patrick at his mercy, but when he knew that Patrick was unable to fire he flew close to him, waved his hand and turned back to his own lines. German propaganda circulated various false rumours, including that the British had raised squadrons specially to hunt down Richthofen, and had offered large rewards and an automatic Victoria Cross to any Allied pilot who shot him down. Richthofen was fatally wounded just after The RAF credited Brown with shooting down the Red Baron, but it is now generally agreed that the bullet that hit Richthofen was fired from the ground. Sergeant Cedric Popkin is second from the right in the middle row. Many sources, including a article by Geoffrey Miller, a physician and historian of military medicine, and a U. Public Broadcasting Service documentary, have suggested that Sergeant Cedric Popkin was the person most likely to have killed Richthofen. However, in the latter respect, Popkin was incorrect: A Discovery Channel documentary suggests that Gunner W. There is little support for this theory. The commanding officer of No. This claim was quickly discounted if only because of the time factor and withdrawn. Following an autopsy that he witnessed, Blake became a strong proponent of the view that an AA machine gunner had killed Richthofen. Theories about last combat Edit Richthofen was a highly experienced and skilled fighter pilotâ€”fully aware of the risk from ground fire. This was supported by a paper by researchers at the University of Texas.

## Chapter 8 : Manfred Von Richthofen – Rise of Flight

*Manfred von Richthofen was born in Kleinburg, near Breslau, Lower Silesia (now part of the city of Wrocław, Poland), into a prominent Prussian aristocratic family. His father was Major Albrecht Phillip Karl Julius Freiherr von Richthofen and his mother was Kunigunde von Schickfuss und Neudorff.*

Discipline, pride, hunting skills, and Teutonic patriotism all combined in this man, bringing him to the pinnacle of fame which long outlasted the man himself. But Richthofen was no caricature, methodically claiming 80 aerial victories, before falling himself, in a Wagnerian finale. Youth Born on May 2, to a Prussian noble family, junker landholders, Manfred von Richthofen, learned to hunt at an early age. Growing up in Silesia now part of Poland young Manfred learned from his father, a Uhlan career officer, and his maternal Schickfuss relatives. In the protected game forests, he and his brothers, Lothar and Bolko, hunted wild boar, elk, birds, and deer, collected and displayed their trophies in their castle. Later, the great ace would bring the same love of the hunt and love of victory to his aerial battles. He entered the Prussian cadet corps military school at age eleven, where he was an indifferent student. In , he entered Uhlan Regiment Number 1, which he enjoyed, at least insofar as the opportunities it gave him to ride horses. He first fought on the Russian front, where the highlight of his cavalry exploits seemed to be capturing and locking up a Russian priest in his own bell tower. Transferred to the West, his Uhlan regiment spent several enjoyable, peaceful months in the rear areas. In May, , his request was granted. Flier Soon, he was back in the East, as a reconnaissance flier and then a bomber. He had joined it as quite a junior observer and he had no special expertise. As a cavalryman his business had consisted in reconnoitering. So the Aviation Service as an observer was in his line and he enjoyed the long reconnoitering flights which they undertook nearly every day. Still dissatisfied, he complained again and was removed to Ostend on the Western front, as a back-seat observer in a reconnaissance plane. Zeumer, they patrolled over the North Sea, and once spotted a submarine beneath the water, but did not bomb it as they could not determine its nationality. His first encounter with an English airplane, on September 15, , ended without real damage to either plane; but gunner Richthofen and pilot Zeumer both thought that the other could have handled the combat better. Transferred to the Champagne front, he flew with pilot Osteroth. With his ring-mounted machine gun, he managed to shoot down a Farman aircraft, but could not get credit for the kill, as it fell behind Allied lines. Still determined to join the great hunt in the skies, he started pilot training in October, , making his first solo on the 10th. He damaged the plane on landing and had to take more training at Doberitz. On Christmas Day, , he passed his examination. In connection with it, he flew to Schwerin, where the Fokker works are situated. During his tour, he landed in many places in between, visiting relatives and friends. Being a trained observer, he did not find it difficult to find his way. In March, , he joined KampfGeswchader 2 before Verdun and learned learned how to handle a fighting two-seater airplane. Piloting this Albatros over Verdun on April 26, , he sighted a French Nieuport and opened up at 60 yards. The stricken French fighter dived into Fort Douamont; Von Richthofen had his first kill, although he would gain no official credit. While in France, he had a few opportunities to fly a Fokker single-seat fighter, further whetting his appetite to fly fighters. As the Russians had few planes, flying and bombing there was agreeable duty, relatively safe and with readily accomplished missions, like bombing the Manjewicze railway station, strafing Cossack cavalry, knocking out the Stokhod River bridge, etc.. In August, he met the great ace Oswald Boelcke 40 kills , who was in the East recruiting fliers for a new Jagdstaffel Jasta 2. After a brief interview, Boelcke took Richthofen back with him, to the Somme. The FE-2 biplane featured a pusher propeller, mounted aft of the short pod containing the observer, the pilot, and the HP Beardmore engine. Used both as a fighter and a reconnaissance plane, both of its crew had a machine gun, giving it a certain strength in redundancy. On the morning of the 17th, Boelcke led his squadron up and spotted the English planes first. They were heading toward Cambrai, with Jasta 2 between them and their own lines. Richthofen approached one, maneuvering to get behind it, where he would have the advantage. The English pilot twisted and turned expertly, but briefly let Richthofen behind him. Richtofen described the action:. In a fraction of a second I was at his back with my excellent machine. I gave a few bursts with my machine gun. I

had gone so close that I was afraid I might dash into the Englishman. Suddenly, I nearly yelled with joy for his propeller had stopped turning. I had shot his engine to pieces; the enemy was compelled to land, for it was impossible for him to reach his own lines. The English machine was curiously swinging to and fro. Probably something had happened to the pilot. The observer was no longer visible. His machine gun was apparently deserted. Obviously I had hit the observer and he had fallen from his seat. The Englishman landed close to one of our squadrons. I was so excited that I landed also and in my eagerness, I nearly smashed up my machine. The English airplane and my own stood close together. I had shot the engine to pieces and both the pilot and observer were severely wounded. The observer died at once and the pilot while being transported to the nearest dressing station. I honored the fallen enemy by placing a stone on his beautiful grave. Death of Major Hawker, V. Like any great hunter, Manfred von Richthofen reveled in bagging the largest game. Hawker was one of the first fliers to take a pistol with him in the air and was also the first to arm an early Bristol scout with a Lewis gun. He downed a German two-seater over Ypres in July. Flying constantly, he downed one German plane after another. In those early days, British records of aerial victories were not kept as carefully as later. Hawker was decorated with the Victoria Cross and given command of Number 24 squadron. On the morning of the 23rd, Hawker led three planes in an attack on some German two-seaters. But it was an ambush. Lieutenants Andrews and Saunders were hit, but managed to escape. Hawker stayed to fight; against him were Richthofen and the best pilots of Jasta 2. Starting at 6, feet, the airplanes tore at each other, twisting and turning in descending circles, down to 2, feet. Desperate to gain an advantage, Hawker looped and got off a burst. He missed and fled for home, now at tree-top level. But the German aircraft was faster and Richthofen was determined. Our speed is terrific. He knows my gun barrel is trained on him. He starts to zigzag, making sudden darts right and left, confusing my aim and making it difficult to train my gun on him. But the moment is coming. I am fifty yards behind him. My machine gun is firing incessantly. We are hardly fifty yards above the ground – just skimming it. Now I am within thirty yards of him. The gun pours out its stream of lead. Then it reopens fire. That jam almost saved his life. One bullet goes home. He is struck through the back of the head. His plane jumps and crashes down. It strikes the ground just as I swoop over. His machine gun rammed itself into the earth, and now it decorates the entrance over my door [to the family castle at Schweidnitz]. He was a brave man, a sportsman, and a fighter. Another order went to his Berlin silversmith, for a plain, silver cup, just two inches high, engraved briefly with the aircraft and date of his victory. He was methodical; he figured the odds; with mathematical precision, he calculated position, angles, and fire control to kill his prey. He led his group with order and discipline, requiring his fliers to study and follow his tactics. Richthofen fired into an airplane piloted by Capt. Oil splattered all over the wounded craft. MacLenan tossed the camera over and began firing his Lewis gun. He and the nearly blinded Grieg kept shooting back at the relentless Red Baron, and eventually their bullets crippled the Albatros, cracking its wing. Both aircraft crash-landed near Vimy. As German infantry approached, Grieg fired a flare pistol into his downed plane, setting it afire, thus denying it to the Germans. In mid-March, he got it again, this time when his group of five planes attacked fifteen British machines over Lens. As the enemies had seen each other at a great distance, both groups flew right at each other for several nerve-tingling minutes.

**Chapter 9 : Manfred von Richthofen Archives - This Day in Aviation**

*Manfred von Richthofen was a fighter pilot of the German Army Air Service (Luftstreitkräfte) during World War one. He became a prominent commander of fighter units leading several future successful aces.*

Attacking one, he closed to within 10 meters and fired several bursts of machine gun fire. Both officers were assigned from their original regiments to No. Lieutenant Morris was wounded but was able to land the crippled airplane near a German airfield. Von Richthofen landed his Albatross alongside. Lieutenant Morris died while being taken to a field hospital by ambulance. Captain Rees was buried at Villers-Plouich. Originally a cavalry officer, he had become an aerial observer before training as a pilot. This action was his first confirmed aerial victory. I was designed by Geoffrey de Havilland. He had made the first flight in the prototype at Farnborough, Hampshire, 18 August It was 32 feet, 3 inches 9. It had an empty weight of 2, pounds kilograms and gross weight of 2, pounds 1, kilograms. It could produce a maximum horsepower at 1, r. This engine was a license-built Austro-Daimler 6, which had been designed by Dr. The airplane had a maximum speed of 73 miles per hour kilometers per hour at 6, feet, and 72 miles per hour kilometers per hour at 10, feet 3, meters. The airplane could reach 6, feet 1, meters in Its service ceiling was 9, feet 2, meters. The second gun was mounted on a telescoping post between the cockpits, and in the raised position could fire over the upper wing to defend the airplane from attacks in the rear. This required the gunner to stand in his seat. A total of 1, F. II, similar to that flown by Manfred von Richthofen, 17 September It had an empty weight of kilograms 1, pounds and gross weight of kilograms 1, pounds. II was powered by a water- and air-cooled, normally-aspirated, III single-overhead cam inline six-cylinder direct-drive engine with a compression ration of 4. The engine weighed pounds kilograms. II had a maximum speed of kilometers per hour miles per hour and a service ceiling of 5, meters 16, feet. The fighter was armed with two fixed air-cooled 7. A total of Albatros D. II fighters were built before production shifted to the D. Manfred von Richtofen with an Albatross D.