



Remembered in an English Churchyard

Harry Walter Jassby, from Montreal, Canada, was one of ten children part of a large Jewish family.

Mr and Mrs M Jassby resided at 4143 Oxford Avenue, Montreal and with some older siblings had originally come from what is now Moldavia, then part of the Russian Empire.



Family tradition was for boys to become pharmacists. Harry, then age 19, had begun his studies at McGill University to follow this profession. Then he chose to join the Royal Flying Corps, as Canada did not have an Air Force at this time.

Harry Jassby
(Caroline Steinman)

He lied about his age. As will be seen, his grave indicates that he was 22, when in fact he was just 20.

It is not clear from his flying log, what he intend to be when he completed his training.

In the early part of January 1918 he was part of 84 Training Squadron RFC, flying around the aerodrome on what is described as a Joy Ride, then he flew solo for the first time on the 15 January, a total time of 6 Hours 20 minutes.

Date and Hour	Wind Direction and Velocity	Machine Type and No.	Passenger	Time	Height	Course	DUAL LANDINGS	Remarks
1/18 9:30		709	1st Parsons	10	500	Around Aerodrome	1	Joy Ride.
1/18 12:20		749	2nd McDonald	25		" "	1	
1/18 1:45		709	1st Parsons	15		" "	2	
1/18 2:55		447	2nd McDonald	45		" "	1	
1/18 5:10		754	1st McDonald	15		" "	1	
1/18 4:25		754	2nd McDonald	35		" "	1	

On the 21 January he flew at 3,200 feet on a course 15 miles northwest of aerodrome and made a forced landing. In February he flew at varying heights up to 7,500 feet and flew occasionally in formation. He flew to Panneau but could not find station.

Date and Hour	Wind Direction and Velocity	Machine Type and No.	Passenger	Time	Height	Course	SOLO LANDINGS	Remarks
20/1/18 3:50-4:30		710	Solo	40	1500	Aerodrome	1	
20/1/18 5:10-5:45		750	"	35	1000	"	2	
21/1/18 12:00-3:00		490	"	180	3200	15 miles northwest of Aerodrome.	2	FORCED. LANDING.
23/1/18 5:30-6:25		458	"	55	500	Aerodrome	6	
24/1/18 10:00-11:00		447	"	65	500	"	13	

His log for March 1918 is most interesting, as he flew **Strips**, **Puffs** and **Photo** with one entry showing **engine missing** (misfiring?)

Date and Hour	Wind Direction and Velocity	Machine Type and No.	Passenger	Time	Height	Course	LANDINGS	Remarks
15/3/18 9:10-10:00		758	Solo	50	2000	Strips P	1	Successful
15/3/18 11:10-12:00		813	"	60	2000	Puffs L	1	"
15/3/18 4:00-5:05		815	"	65	2500	Bombs J	1	"
16/3/18 9:50-11:05		722	"	75	3500	Photo	1	"
16/3/18 1:25-2:10		782	"	45	500	Panneau q	1	"
16/3/18 2:40-3:10		758	"	30	1200	Photo	1	Engine missing
16/3/18 4:15-5:30		781	"	75	2500	Puffs 7	1	Successful
17/3/18 11:05-11:20		442	"	45	2000	Puffs Q	1	"
17/3/18 1:30-2:45		715	"	65	3000	Photo	1	"
19/3/18 11:10-12:00		455	"	50	3000	Bombs X	1	"

After flying a total of 37 Hours 20 minutes, Harry trained at the School of Aerial Gunnery, Royal Flying School situated at Beamsville, Ontario near to Niagara Falls.

Here he trained on aspects of Aerial Gunnery: silhouettes; ranges; camera A & B aerodrome; Camera C aerodrome: CC gear and Danger Zone. He flew 1 hour 70 minutes as a passenger, 3 hours 50 minutes dual, Solo Nil and landings Nil.

London Gazette entry.

24 April 1918. (P7070) Under mentioned cadets are granted temporary commission 2nd Lt. (A & S) Harry Walter Jassby.

What Harry Jassby did at Fairlop is not certain because all the records of 54 Training Depot Station (TDS) were later destroyed.



**Three Sopwith F1 Camels flying over two Curtiss JN4s (left) and Avro 504Bs (right) at Fairlop
(The tower of Chigwell Church can be seen above the 3 of the nearer Curtiss.)**

(Imperial War Museum Q 33808)

Even his death is shrouded in mystery because the inquest was not recorded in the local press.



The Grave of Harry Jassby in St Peters Aldborough Hatch
(David Martin)

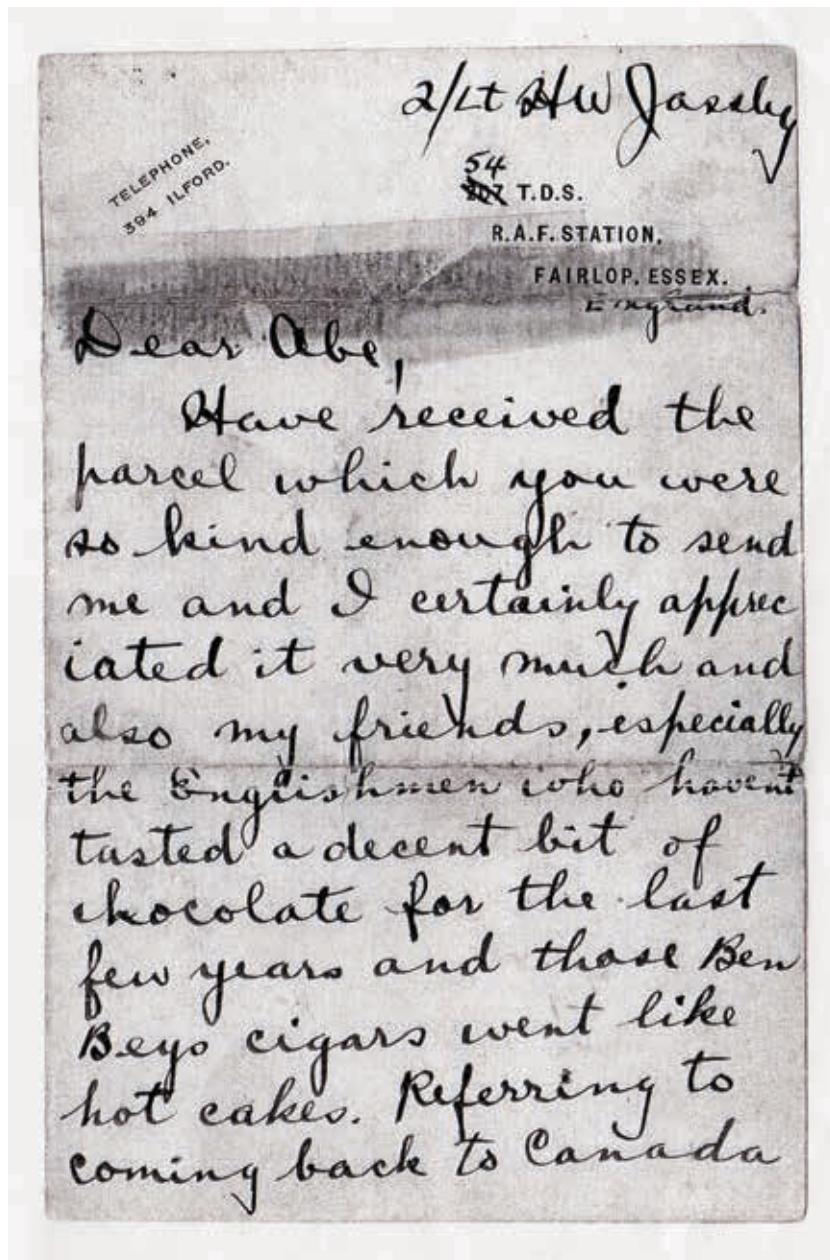
The Coroner at Walthamstow has made extensive enquiries with the Metropolitan Archives, where Coroners Inquest records are kept and they are of the opinion these documents are no longer in existence. (destroyed).

Died: 6 November 1918, Fairlop Aerodrome, Essex
(Death Certificate)
Broken neck and other injuries -falling to the ground in an aeroplane (i) (ii) (iii)

- (i) Inquest accidental death - no mention of other parties.
- (ii) John Barfoot states, mid air collision with other aeroplane
(* there is no evidence of this)
- (iii) Family say he was practicing formation flying for victory flypast
(* there is no evidence of this)

* The coroners report would state the circumstances, which led to the accident and his death.

In an undated letter to his bother Abe (written in 1918) when stationed at Fairlop, Harry says ' . . .at the end of this month will be a year since I joined up as an instructor .



First page

Note the telephone number 394 Ilford
(Caroline Steinman)

3.
 providing off course if there is anything left of me, (a very cheerful outlook). The weather here is getting very miserable of late and I have at the present a very bad cold and sore throat which I hope will get better soon. I hear they have started a Canadian flying corps I get so very little news from home that I don't know whether its true or not. I believe the end of this month will be a year since I joined up

2.
as an instructor, before going to France is an impossibility, besides I am really keen to get into a scrap with a hun but I have an idea which if it will work out I might manage to go to Egypt which is a much nicer place. We only need to put in about six months service in France or Egypt and then we get six months home service which would mean Canada for me,

I am sending a list of things and money to mother which I want, so I guess ~~I don't need anything~~ just now. I will close for the present, with my best regards to Besse and Viola.
 Your brother
 Harry.

This is a clue as to what Harry did at Fairlop. Also as he was a 2nd Lieutenant it is unlikely he was a pupil, one who regretted he would not see action in France.

I am grateful to Caroline Steinman for her agreement to publish this letter.



Harry is remembered by those of all beliefs and his grave in an English Churchyard makes this unique, especially as his death was so close to the end of the 1914 -1918 conflict.

The last of the first and the first of the second
(David Martin)

The photograph taken in 2004 records the visit of Harold Bennett, the first to fly from RAF Station Fairlop when it came operational in 1941.



ת' נ' צ' ב' ה'

The traditional Hebrew text appears within the Star of David, means

May his Soul be bound up in the bundle of life

Below is inscribed

**In life he flew the azure sky,
in death he flew to Heaven high**



**Written in Memory of
Harry Walter Jassby whose sacrifice is not forgotten**

David Martin September 2014