



TASMANIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY Incorporated


TASMANIAN BORN AIR ACES OF WORLD WAR 1 WILMOT HUDSON FYSH

Wilmot Hudson Fysh

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Historical Archives of Early Tasmanian Aviators

Tasmanian Born Air Aces of World War 1

 <p>AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL P00342.001</p>	Wilmot Hudson Fysh	
	Born:	07 January 1895, Launceston
	Joined:	3rd Light Horse, August 1914
	Died:	06 April 1974 (Aged 79 years) Paddington, Sydney, NSW
	Serial Number:	415

Hudson Fysh has is no stranger to our newsletters. As the co-founder of QANTAS, he is one of the Giants of Tasmanian Aviation. Our earlier articles can be found [here](#).

He was an ANZAC veteran, having served on Gallipoli with the 3rd Light Horse Regiment. He transferred to the Flying Corps, qualifying as an observer and then a pilot.

It is almost forgotten that Fysh, who for so long associated with the co-founding and management of Qantas Airways, gained his early flying experience in the Australian Flying



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Corps and was a distinguished First World War airman. Of the Tasmanian World War 1 aces, he is unique in that he achieved his 5 “kills” as an observer/gunner, who sat behind the pilot and attacked the enemy planes with his machine gun.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Lieutenant Fysh at his guns, with Major Addison (pilot), in a Bristol Fighter during the Palestine campaign, 1917

Flying as an observer with No. 1 Squadron AFC in the Palestine campaign, Fysh proved an accurate and cool gunner. In 1918 he was heavily involved in actions against German and Turkish aircraft, airfields and ground troops. He shot or forced down a number of enemy aircraft, including two destroyed on one day.



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Victories				
Date	Time	Aircraft	Opponent	Location
23 Jan 1918	0800	Bristol Fighter (A7237) ¹	Albatros D.V (OOC)	SE of Bireh
03 Aug 1918	1210	Bristol Fighter (B1223) ²	Albatros C (DES) ³	NR of Ez Duba
31 Aug 1918	1430	Bristol Fighter (C4623) ²	LVG C (CAP)	Rantieh
31 Aug 1918	1440	Bristol Fighter (C4623) ²	LVG C (DES)	E of Kalkilieh
14 Sep 1918	1130	Bristol Fighter (C4623) ²	Rumpler C (FTL/DES) ⁴	E of Jenin
¹ Pilot Captain S W Addison ² Pilot Paul McGinness ³ Shared with Lt Edward Kenny & Leslie Sutherland ⁴ Shared with Lt D R Dowling & Lt E A Mulford				

Notable in his victories were the four he achieved with Paul McGinness, with whom he would co-found QANTAS after the war.

As the war was ending, before he returned to Australia, Hudson Fysh qualified as a pilot.

He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross; its citation reads:

Lieut. Hudson Fysh (Australian F.C.). (EGYPT)

A skilful observer, conspicuous for courage and determination, whether engaging the enemy in the air or attacking ground targets. He has taken part in numerous combats resulting in loss to the enemy, and has inflicted serious damage on hostile camps and aerodromes. Supplement to the London Gazette, 8 February 1919 (31170/2039)