



Edgar James (Kingston) McCloughry

'There is silver lining, through the dark cloud shining, turn the dark cloud inside out, till the boys come home...' (Genius Media group , n.d.)

Keep the Home Fires Burning is a song that perfectly encapsulates the ANZAC Spirit, the spirit of courage, perseverance, and mateship, and there are few people more deserving of such a song than Edgar James McCloughry.

Image 1: Edgar James McCloughry (see Image 1) was born at Hindmarsh, an inner suburb in Adelaide, South Australia, on 10th of September 1896. He had an older brother, Wilfred Ashton McCloughry, who was two years old when Edgar was born. Their father, James Kingston McCloughry, was a draper who migrated from Larne, Northern Ireland, and married an Australian-born wife – Charlotte Rebecca. They settled together in Adelaide. McCloughry was later educated in the South Australian School of Mines and Adelaide University, where they learned the technical and practical skills required to do engineering, mining, and agriculture. (Fraser, published first in hardcopy 1986)

In May 1915, before Edgar had the opportunity to continue his career, he enlisted into the Australian Military Force (AMF), just one year after the First World War started. That December, he was transferred to the First Australian Imperial Force (AIF), embarking on the His Majesty's Australian Transports Ships (HMAT) Runic for transporting information to the AIF. On the 27th of January 1916, he left Australia to serve the HMAT Runic in both Egypt and France for almost one year. In that December, he was seconded to the Request for Comments for pilot training. McCloughry soon graduated in August the next year and was posted to No.23 Squadron of Royal Flying Corps (RFC) to France. (World Heritage Encyclopedia Edition , n.d.)

Image 2: Group portrait of Officers of C Flight, NO.4 Squadron (Rebbeck, 2007)



During his enlistment in France, McCloughry demonstrated his distinguished ability and courage as a 2Lt¹ pilot. He was then posted as flying instructor in the sixth Squadron, patiently training *"many pilots who afterwards became part of the famous 4 Squad"* (McCloughry, Memoir of Captain Edgar James McCloughry, 1919). He soon became a flying commander and temporary captain and was transferred to Wilfred's Fourth Squadron, assigned as leader of 'C' flight, on the 3rd of June 1918. McCloughry wrote to The Officer i/c Australian Record Section on the 21st of February 1919, saying in a letter:

"To go back to my first impression [of the Fourth Squadron], I could not help noticing the wonderful spirit of all from the senior down to the mechanic...the pilots were so keen, in the mess they were always sky-larking and enjoying themselves." (McCloughry, Memoir of Captain Edgar James McCloughry, 1919)

¹ 2 Lieutenant

The engagement of every single pilot was inspiring and admirable, in that they had made so few mistakes – “in [McCloughry’s] flight never once was there a shortage of serviceable machines which is indeed a record”, which not only highlights their professionalism, but also their care and concern for every members’ safety (McCloughry, Memoir of Captain Edgar James McCloughry, 1919). Their squadron as a whole, had caught any great opportunity to “put [their] idea of small formation into practice”, such as “[flying] to the lines together” which they later found it “very successful in finding Hun two seaters” and was a breakthrough in their tactics (McCloughry, Memoir of Captain Edgar James McCloughry, 1919). In their leisure time, they also “had quite a good squadron concert party, together with No 2 Squadron” with “an occasional cinema and the RAF band”. Even “the RAF band gave a concert at every aerodrome in France” as well (McCloughry, Memoir of Captain Edgar James McCloughry, 1919) Page 11. These all demonstrate the precious and firm mateship between all the pilots and the troops as a whole. Through this way, every pilot and mechanic were able to show their outstanding teamwork, with incredible courage and wise strategy they then later demonstrated when fighting the war against German opposition.

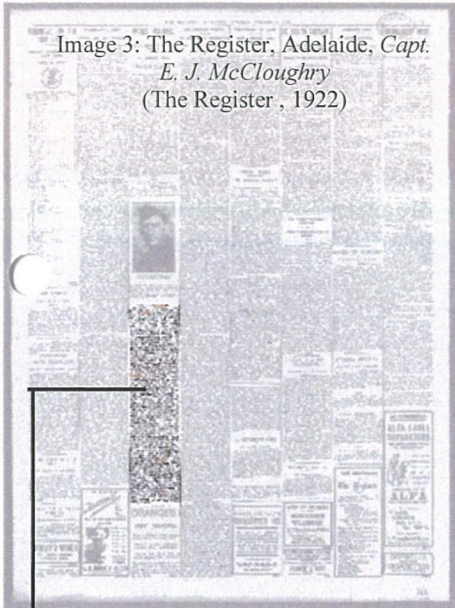


Image 3: The Register, Adelaide, Capt. E. J. McCloughry (The Register, 1922)

McCloughry himself was undoubtedly one of the representative figures in his quadrant, as he contributed the most in their attack strategy. He always ‘[took] off about half an hour before dawn and fly over Hun land’ just to ‘try [his] dawn stunt’ method which was later been proved to be useful. Although ‘the Bosche [also] made great improvements in his balloon defences, which made it very difficult for [him] to get near them at all’, he ‘would not be taken’ and kept ‘[planning] for [another] attack’ until he and his team was able to suppress the German enemy’s attack (McCloughry, Memoir of Captain Edgar James McCloughry, 1919) Page 9. This emphasises McCloughry’s noble spirit which he was able to maintain on and on, demonstrating by his distinguished operation capability, and his wisdom in the face of adversity.

His perseverance was also clearly shown through his various service during his conscription in France. His first severe injury happened eleven days after he was posted to France which sent him back to a hospital in England, nearly fatally (Fraser, published first in hardcopy 1986). It was on 18th August 1917:

“He was severely wounded by fire from a scout that attacked him from behind; turning, he drove the machine off, badly damaged.” (The Register, 1922) Image 3. Yet, a severe injury did not change his determination at all to continue to fight for his country. One of his notable attacks later was on the 24th of September 1918 – he strafed a train from a height of 250 feet altitude, “[obtaining] a direct hit, cutting it in two”. He was thus described as “a bold and fearless officer who has performed many gallant deeds of daring”, “repeatedly [displaying] an utter disregard for danger”, according to the Supplement to the London Gazette, publishing on the 3rd of December 1918 (The London Gazette, 1918). This demonstrates McCloughry’s courage and selfless, in that he always put

Image 4: Honours and Awards for Edgar James McCloughry, ((sd) E.R. Ludlow-hewitt, Brigadier General, Commanding 10th Brigade RAF, 1918)

10th Brigade ROYAL AIR FORCE		Date Recommendation passed forward	Army Form W. 312L					
		Referred to	Passed					
		By	On					
		Division	25.9.18					
		Corps						
		Army						
Article No. referred to	Title	Regt. No.	Rank and Name (Please leave blank if desired)	Acted in what capacity (Do not put in if same as in award)	Recommended by	Senior Officer (To be left blank)		
	No. 4 Sqdn., Australian Flying Corps.		Captain Edgar James McCLOUGHRY.	Leaving the ground before daylight on the 24th instans, Captain McCLOUGHRY, accompanied by another Pilot, who, however, soon lost him in the darkness, flew to Lille and dropped 2 50-lb bombs from a height of 250 ft. upon a train which was proceeding S.W. from Lille to ROUBAIX. One of his bombs hit the train about half way down its length, and, exploding, cut the train in half; the rear portion, being derailed, burned over. He then fired 300 rounds from approximately the same height into the fore portion of the train, which pulled up. On sighting a hostile two-seater in an easterly direction, he left the target upon which he was engaged, and flew to attack after firing 100 rounds at very close range, the D.F.W. dived into the ground and crashed. Captain McCLOUGHRY was then some distance East of Lille, and commenced to climb towards home. On reaching a height of 4000 ft., he observed 7 Fokker biplanes between himself and the line. Although he had used up over half of his supply of ammunition, Captain McCLOUGHRY did not hesitate to attack, and flew straight at the leader of the hostile formation. While engaged in close combat with this machine he was attacked from behind by another hostile scout, a burst of fire from the latter severely wounding him in the hip and thigh. Turning, he attacked the hostile machine on his tail at point blank range, and saw the right hand plane of his opponent's machine fold back against the fuselage. He then faced another hostile scout, firing at him until all his ammunition was expended. While both guns were, successively, out of action, he was again attacked from behind by 2 hostile scouts	FORWARDED	25th September, 1918.		

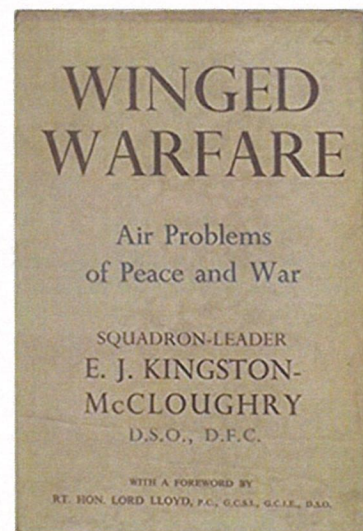
the war and his nation before his individual needs. Within four months, he had already destroyed nineteen enemy aeroplanes and four balloons. For his hard work and achievements, he received several awards including the Distinguished Service Order, Distinguished Flying Cross and Bar (Fraser, published first in hardcopy 1986), and was mentioned in dispatches. Both him and his elder brother '[were] ranked with the Allies' most experienced and brilliant birdmen'. (The Bulletin, 1918-11-07)

The December of 1918 was an unforgettable summer, not only for McCloughry, but also for the rest of Australia. The world war finally came to an end.

In 1919, McCloughry started his on furlough from the Advanced Flight Control (AFC) due to his previous injury and started studying mechanical science at Trinity College Cambridge University and graduated the Bachelor of Arts in 1920 from Trinity College (Jonathan Smith, 2021). To continue his passion about mechanics, he devoted himself to the engineering industry for the next three years. Despite the impacts of the war, he still chose to pursue his passion for engineering. In December 1922, he joined the Royal Air Force (RAF) Number 44 group again, becoming a permanent member of the team on the 1st of January 1926, and running staff courses in Andover in 1929 (Schaedel, 2018). On the 16th of January 1924, in London, he married Freda Elizabeth Lewis and the couple had two daughters. (The Advertiser, 1924).

As a reminder of his father, Kingston McCloughry, who had passed away in 1934, Edgar James McCloughry added Kingston to his name (Fraser, published first in hardcopy 1986). In 1934, Kingston McCloughry became a flight lieutenant and taught staff courses at Camberley. Just four years after he was qualified, in the September of 1939, the Second World War started. He was given the honour of being assigned as Commander of the Most Excellent Order of British Empire (C.B.E), which recognised his dedication to the RAF as it is the highest-ranking British award (The Gazette , 2021). He was also assigned Chief Operations Planner at Allied Expeditionary Air Force Headquarters, in order to support the invasion of Normandy in June, 1944. However, in the same year, his elder brother Wilfred Ashton McCloughry was dramatically killed in an air crash in Egypt (News, 1943). Due to their close relationship, this motivated McCloughry to fight even harder for Australia in World War II. At the conclusion of the invasion of Normandy, McCloughry was appointed as a chairman in His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief's Committee from 1945 to 1946, responsible for the reorganisation of the army and air forces on defence of the North-West Frontier in India (The Courier-Mail, 1944). In 1947, he was transferred to the Air Officer Commanding (AOC) and was selected as senior air staff officer of Fighter Command in 1948 (Schaedel, 2018).

Although McCloughry himself was not a pilot anymore, he did not forget his skills and strategy of flight, demonstrating his strong patriotism. Later, he devoted to writing all his rich experience on air fighting and his enormous attainment on mechanics, dedicating his talent and loyalty to his nation. In the following 27 years, he finished writing 5 books associated with air strategy and war. His first book was published in 1937, named *Winged Warfare: Air Problems with Peace and War*, and his second book, *War in Three Dimensions*, was published in 1949 (Australian War Memorial , n.d.).



((Author), Published: 1937)

As a Chief Air Defence Officer, McCloughry retired from the RAF in 1953, at age 57. He wrote three more books after he retired: *The Direction of War* published in 1955, *Global Strategy* published in 1957, and *The Spectrum of Strategy* published in 1964 (Australian War Memorial, n.d.). Within his books, he not only discussed academic and scientific concepts or knowledge, but more importantly, he demonstrated “*the impact of air-power upon the classic principle of war*” (War in Three Dimensions, Hardcopy in 1949) and “*the nature of warfare in a third dimensions*” in relation to how damaging a war could possibly be (The West Australian, 1950).

McCloughry passed away on 15th November 1971, in Edinburgh, Scotland, at the age of 76. In his will, he specified that he wanted his body to be donated to medical research, and his documents to the Imperial War Museum in London (Virtual War Memorial Australia, n.d.). Even in his death, McCloughry was still giving.

Edgar James Kingston McCloughry’s death is not the loss of life. His medical and mechanical achievements, his service, his remarkable commitments and dedication to the war and to Australia, and most of all, his noble spirit, the Anzac Spirit, is forever with us. Lest We Forget.

Part B

In Part A, I used a variety of sources – 26 primary sources and 11 secondary sources, to ensure the reliability of every source and form accurate conclusions.

Considering the recommendation of the task, that lesser-known individual would be expected, I found it relatively hard to collect detailed information online. I started my research from several war museum websites, mainly the *Virtual War memorial Australia*, *Australian War Memorial*, and the *Imperial War Museum* in London, where general information on individuals was provided. From a range of options, I chose Edgar James Kingston McCloughry as my focus, based on his remarkable commitment to the war and his honourable spirit, which was not recognised or known by the majority of South Australians.

At the early stage of my research, there was very limited information related to his family background, especially his primary and high schools. Yet, believing that one's schooling is likely to influence or motivate his later decision, I tried hard to trace further information – I read through almost all of the newspaper and gazette that mentioned his or his brother's names, via a platform named *Trove*. In a gazette published on 2 January 1945, I was able to find a line stating that McCloughry used to be 'educated at St. Peters College' (The West Australian, 1945) and soon found a few other gazettes providing the same information (The Canberra Times, 1944) (The Daily News, 1944). However, after sending an email to the archivist of St Peter's College, it surprisingly turned out that he was not listed on their archive. However, since I found that McCloughry's elder brother was educated in Queen's School, Adelaide, which further became Pulteney Grammar School. I sent them another e-mail to see if Edgar was also educated there. To my disappointment, I was later notified that their archivist was on leave and thus unable to provide any further information.

Simultaneously, I also contacted the University of South Australia, the Adelaide University, and Trinity College, Cambridge. Due to the Covid restriction in the UK, the archivist of Trinity, Mr Smith, was only able to offer me basic information about his admission and degree, which provided some contradictory details to some websites. It was mentioned on all of his biography sites that he graduated Master of Arts from Trinity; yet, according to the admission book of Trinity, he only graduated Bachelor of Arts. Although contradictory ideas can be frustrating, they still provide me, as a young historian, with fuller and more comprehensive insights into the subject's life.

Despite all I mentioned above, the rest of the sources were all supported by various other trustworthy sources. One of the most important sources I used was McCloughry's typewritten memoir describing his experience in the fourth squadron, which demonstrated not only his personal commitment in improving their attacking strategy, but also the deep mateship every member in their squadron established.

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