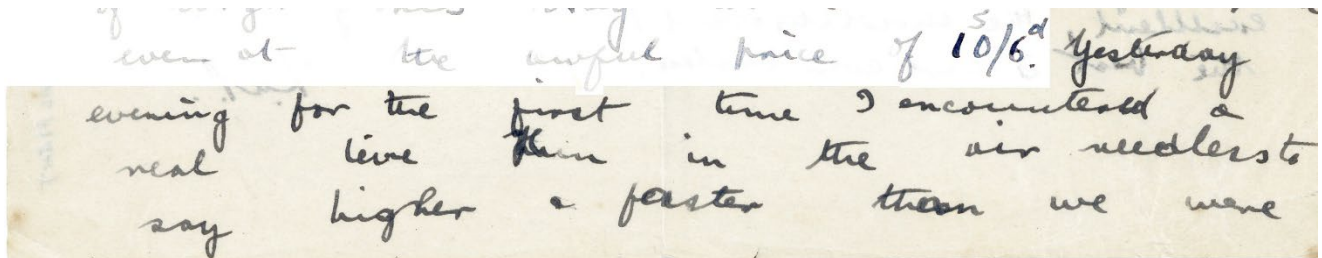


## Source 1 (LAP 1/2/4)

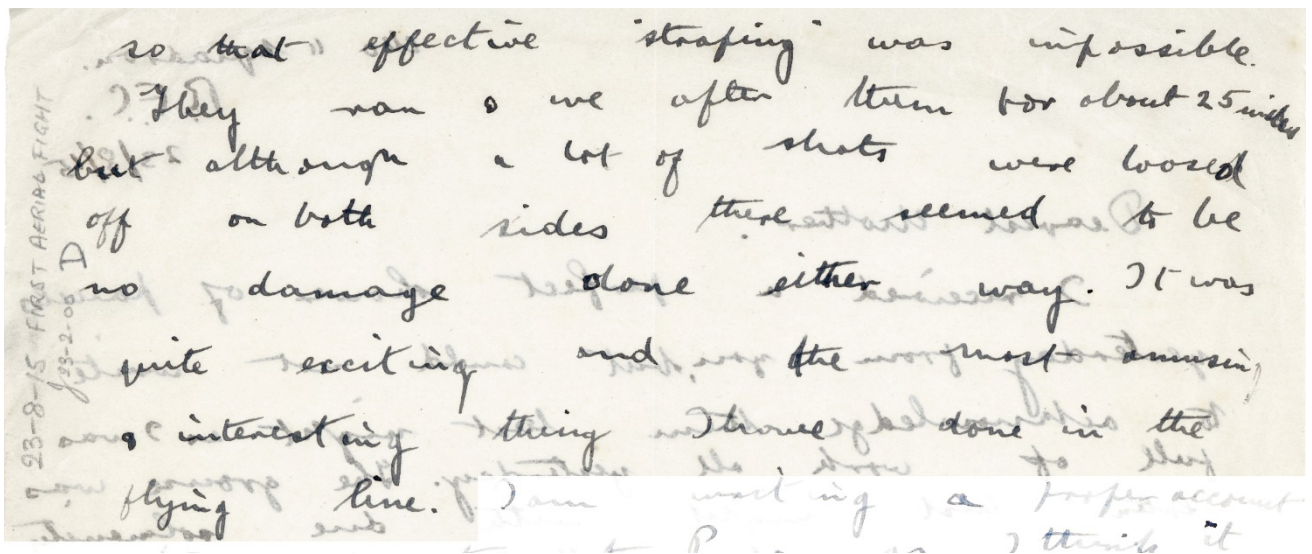
Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence Pattinson to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he comments on seeing his first "real live Hun" and chasing an enemy plane.

23 Aug 1915

Yesterday evening for the first time I encountered a real live Hun in the air needless to say higher and faster than we were so that effective 'strafing' was impossible. They ran and we after them for about 25 minutes but although a lot of shots were loosed off on both sides there seemed to be no damage done either way. It was quite exciting and the most amusing and interesting thing I have done in the flying line.



even at the awful price of 10/6. Yesterday evening for the first time I encountered a real live Hun in the air needless to say higher & faster than we were



so that effective 'strafing' was impossible. They ran & we after them for about 25 minutes but although a lot of shots were loosed off on both sides there seemed to be no damage done either way. It was quite exciting and the most amusing & interesting thing I have done in the flying line. I am writing a proper account of it.

23-8-15 FIRST AERIAL FIGHT  
1915-2-06

## Key Words

Hun - a derogatory term used by British officers in the First World War to describe the German armed forces

Strafing - the military practice of attacking ground targets from low-flying aircraft using aircraft-mounted automatic weapons

## **Source 2 (LAP 1/2/5)**

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence Pattinson to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he discusses being on patrol and having a fight with a German plane, during which he received a small wound to his leg when his plane was shelled. He also describes the damage to his plane.

10 Sep 1915

I had a most exciting patrol about which I am going to give you full information as I trust you to understand what war is and not to get worried over it. We sighted a Hun just over the lines and gave chase. He at once nosed dived away from us over his own country and we all went after him at about 90mph and what seemed a terrific angle of descent. We got off about 130 rounds at him and he had a good do at us as well. He went right down to 2000 feet and we could not follow him as we should have been hopelessly "strafed". We got as low as 4,300 then returned. On the way back we got pretty well shelled and one piece came through the fabric of the body of the machine and hit my leg. Fortunately it was not going very hard and though it went through my leather trousers the lining was almost too much for it and only jagged points actually came to my leg. A very small hole and a fair bruise. However, I can now say I have "bled for my country" though very little. I must say being hit rather interested me till I had had time to find out how little damage had been done, as I thought any bit of shell would go straight in. I also got a rifle bullet plunk through one of the struts on my indicator head, which is mounted on the strut. It was altogether quite thrilling.

I had a most exciting patrol about which I am going to give you full information as I trust you to understand what war is & not to get worried over it. We sighted a plane just over the lines & gave chase. He at once nose dived away from us over his own country & we all set after him at about 90 mph. & what seemed a terrific angle of descent. We got off about 130 rounds at him & he had a good go at us as well. He went right down to 2000 feet & we could not follow him as we should have been hopelessly "strafed". We got as low as 4,300 & then returned. On the way back we got pretty well shelled & one <sup>piece</sup> came through the fabric of the body of the machine and hit my leg. Fortunately it was not going very hard & though it went through my leather trousers the lining was almost too much for it & only jagged points actually came to my leg. A very small hole & a fair bruise. However I can now say I have "bled for my country" though very little. I must say being hit rather interested me till I had had

time to find out how little damage had been done, as I thought that any bit of shell would go right in. I also got a rifle bullet plunk through one of the struts & my speed indicator head, which is mounted on the strut. It was altogether quite thrilling.

## Key Words

Hun - a derogatory term used by British officers in the First World War to describe the German armed forces.

Strafed - attacked repeatedly with bombs or machine gun fire from low flying aircraft

Plunk - hit abruptly

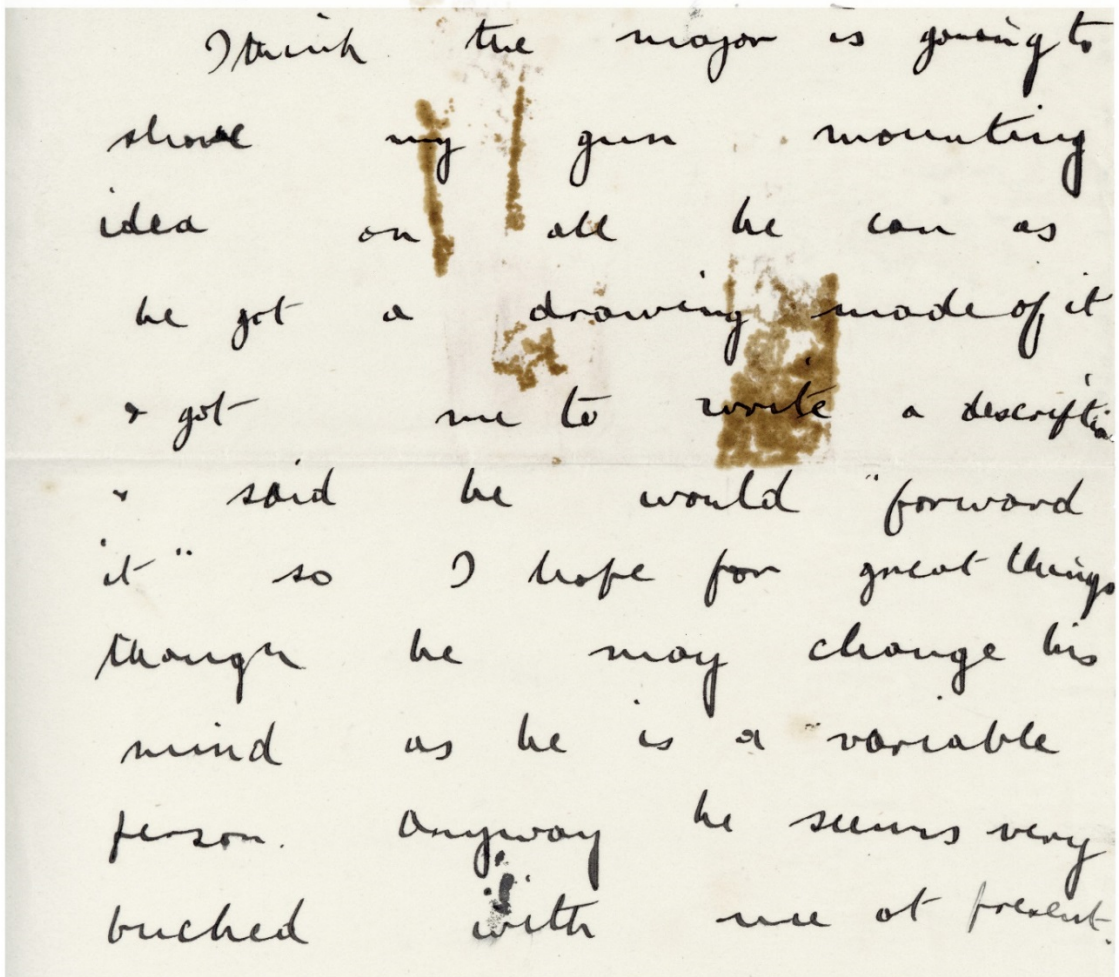


### Source 3 (LAP 1/2/6)

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he remarks that the major approves of his "gun mounting idea" and he hopes for great things to come of it.

15 Sep 1915

I think the Major is going to shove my gun mounting idea on all he can as he got a drawing made of it and got me to write a description and said he would "forward it" so I hope for great things but he may change his mind as he is a variable person. Anyway he seems very bucked with me at present.



I think the major is going to  
shove my gun mounting  
idea on all he can as  
he got a drawing made of it  
& got me to write a description  
& said he would "forward  
it" so I hope for great things  
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mind as he is a variable  
person. Anyway he seems very  
bucked with me at present.

### Key Words

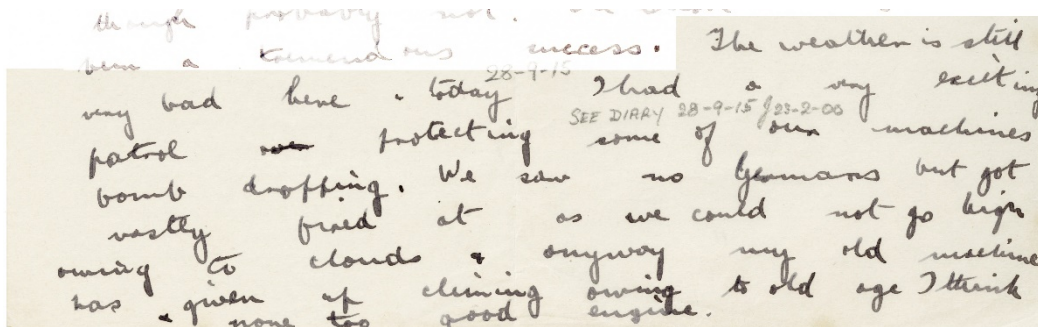
Bucked - crazy/wild about something or someone

## Source 4 (LAP 1/2/8)

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence Pattinson to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he writes about his patrol in bad weather, and the possibility of him being given a job as Flight Commander in England. He also remarks on being afraid and asks his mother to pray for him to have courage.

01 Oct 1915

The weather is still very bad here and today I had a very exciting patrol protecting some of our machines bomb dropping. We saw no Germans but got vastly fired at as we could not go high owing to cloud and anyway my old machine has given up climbing owing to old age I think and none to good engine. There is the scent of my possible job in England. Dawes has recommended me to be a Flight Commander i.e. a captain which bucks me up colossally as it really is a great compliment considering how little service I have had in the R.F.C. Of course I might get a flight out home or not at all as it might take a long time to mature but if it comes off it is a tremendous step up and I should love the job. I must say I was quite frightened today and fear is the most beastly thing in the world. I should like to think that you pray for my courage even more than my safety as it is the greatest thing and man can have or luck.



through probably not. success. The weather is still  
been a tremendous success. 28-9-15 I had a very exciting  
very bad here. today SEE DIARY 28-9-15/23-2-00  
patrol was protecting some of our machines  
bomb dropping. We saw no Germans but got  
vastly fired at as we could not go high  
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has given up climbing owing to old age I think  
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Daves has recommended me to be a Flight  
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materialise. Anyway if it comes off it is a tremendous  
step up & I should love the job. I must say I was  
really frightened today & fear is the most beastly  
thing in the world. I should like to think that you  
pray for my courage even more than my safety  
as it is the greatest thing a man can have or lack.

## Key Words

The R.F.C. - The Royal Flying Corps was the air arm of the British Army before and during the First World War, until it merged with the Royal Naval Air Service in April 1918 to form the Royal Air Force

### **Source 5 (LAP 1/2/9)**

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence Pattinson to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he discusses seeing the 'fire balls' which are now being used by the enemy.


23 Oct 1915

I had a most interesting day today I had my first reconnaissance this morning early. It is the most interesting job but a bit on the thrilling side. The Huns have a new frightfulness in the form of sort of fire balls in the form of roman candles which they shoot up in bursts of about 7 or 8 at a time. They come up straight for a bit and then open out fanwise like this [see sketch]. They are extraordinary things as you can see them coming all the way and even dodge them. One lot they put up I saw coming almost dead at me slantingly and I just swung the machine off and avoided them. It is very exciting work altogether. You mustn't think that there really any awful risk in it as it is simply the ordinary business of war and for some reason we have the most amazing luck.



No. 1 Squadron  
R.F.C.  
23/10/15.

Dear Mother,

I had a most interesting day today  
I went for my first reconnaissance this  
morning early. It is a most interesting job  
but a bit on the thrilling side. The Huns  
have a new frightfulness in the form of  
sort of fire balls like roman candles which  
they shoot up in bursts of 7 or 8 at a  
time. They come up straight for a bit & then  
open out fanwise like this  They are  
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coming all the way & even dodge them.  
One lot they put up I saw coming almost  
dead at me slantingly & I just swung  
the machine off & avoided them. It is  
very exciting work altogether. You mustn't think  
that there is really any awful risk in it as  
it is simply the ordinary business of war & for  
some reason we have the most amazing luck.  
I saw no less than 4 Huns today. B. & L. H.

## Key Words

Reconnaissance - a mission to obtain information by visual observation

Huns - a derogatory term used by British officers in the First World War to describe the German armed forces

## **Source 6 (LAP 1/2/10)**

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence Pattinson to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he describes dealing with a seemingly broken engine.

17 Nov 1915

I had a most amazing experience today, one of my machines came down near the lines but not under shell fire and they sent in a message that a new magneto was wanted. I went in myself to try and get it in by dark and when I got there neither pilot nor observer were there and they had left a message that they weren't quite certain what was wrong with it. I got in to try the engine and found it running quite alright, so simply brought it home just in time to get a difficult but not impossible light to land in. The other two are now on their way back in the car I went out in I expect. Rather a humorous episode "de guerre" wasn't it. You notice that I am now such a French scholar (sic) that I automatically break into it now and then. I am changing machines tomorrow and hope I shall pick a winner this time.

good spread just to show them that we are the  
R.F.C.

I had a most amusing experience today  
one of my machines came down near the lines  
but not under shell fire & they sent in a  
message that a new magnet was wanted.

I went out myself to try & get it in by dark  
& when I got there neither pilot nor observer were  
there & they had left a message that they  
weren't quite certain what was wrong with it.

I got in to try the engine & found it running  
quite all right, so simply brought it home, just  
in time to get a difficult but not impossible  
light to land in. The other two are now  
on their way back in the car I went out in I expect.  
Rather a humorous episode "de guerre" wasn't it. You  
notice that I am now such a French scholar (sic)

2.

that I automatically break into it now & then.

I am changing machines again tomorrow & hope I  
shall pick a winner this time.

There is really no

kind today I not a must

## Key Words

"De guerre" - French for "of war"

Sic - Latin for 'so' or 'thus'

Magento - an electrical generator



## Source 7 (LAP 1/2/12)

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence Pattinson to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he describes his morning spent doing mixed patrol and photography, during which time his propeller broke and he was confronted by German planes known as "two tails". He remarks on firing rounds at the German planes, and they fly off in a "most extraordinary case of German lack of enterprise". He includes detailed drawings and annotations of the "two tail" planes.

19 Dec 1915

I had quite an exciting mornings work today. I was up 2 ½ hours mixed patrol and photography just over the trenches. Just as I was starting off my propellor broke, which as we have to go over trees with the wind in the present direction, was quite sufficiently exciting. I got back to the aerodrome and started off at once in another machine. When we had got our height and were just going over the lines to start photography we saw 3 or 4 machines, higher than we were, circling round each other apparently fighting, just over this side of the lines. As we started going towards them one glided down steeply and made for the German side so we went to cut it off opining it was a Hun. We got fairly close and saw that it was one of the big double engine German machines known as "two tails" which the Daily Mail etc. refer to as the enemy's battle planes and which carry 3 machine guns.

The machine came towards us and just before we got within range I circled round so as not to be taken in the rear by any other Hun and saw another one of the same kind coming some distance off behind us. I must say, faced by the possibility of taking on an armament of 6 machine guns with only one, I felt, to say the least of it, pretty excited and thought surely, if ever, it was to be a proper "death or glory" show. We got to within about 300 yards and fired about 40 shots and then the Hun, who didn't answer very vigorously, shoved off and we turned to see what the other two tails was doing. It had not approached to within range apparently waiting to close when we were fully occupied with the other. The first Hun then came within range again and fired with its stern guns and we got off about 80 more rounds at it, I feel sure getting all about it, and the Hun then put his nose down slightly and drew away, joined a minute or two later by the other. P.T.O. for diagram of twotails and of Vickers showing disparity in armament.

In the meanwhile, we went on taking photos and being shelled like mad but keeping a sharp lookout on the other machines which continued to manoeuvre about together some two miles from the scene of our operations. After we had taken 2 or 3 photos we saw the enemy side by side and about 200 yards apart coming towards us and I of course thought that they meant to attack us simultaneously and had previously kept away so that they could join forces. However, they did not come close and finally went home. I think it the most extraordinary case of German lack of enterprise I have ever heard of as they had the odds so immensely their favour.



Christmas card which he sent.

I had quite an exciting morning's work today. I was up 2½ hours mixed patrol & photography just over the trenches. Just as I was starting off my propeller broke which, as we have to go over trees with the wind in the present direction, was quite sufficiently exciting. I got back into the aerodrome & started off at once on another machine. When we had got our height & were just going over the lines to start photography we saw 3 or 4 machines, higher than we were, circling round each other, apparently fighting, just over this side of the lines. As we started going towards them one glided down steeply & made for the German side so we went to cut it off opening it was a thin. ~~Just~~ We got fairly close & saw that it was one of the big double engine German machines called "two tails".

which the Daily Mail etc. refer to as the "enemy's battle-planes" & which carry 3 machine guns.

The machine came towards us & just before we got within range I circled round so as not to be taken in rear by any other plane & saw another one of the same kind coming some distance off behind us. I must say, faced by the ~~probability~~ <sup>possibility</sup> of taking on an armament of 6 machine guns with only one, I felt, to say the least of it, pretty excited & thought surely, if ever, it was to be a proper "death or glory" show.

We got to within about 300 yards and fired about 40 shots & then the plane, who didn't answer very vigorously, sheered off & we turned to see what the other two-tails was doing.

It ~~did~~ had not approached to within range apparently waiting to close when we were fully occupied with the other. The first plane then came within range again & fired with its stern guns & we got off about 80 more rounds at it, apparently I feel more getting all about it, & the plane then put his nose down slightly & drew away, joined a minute or two later by the



P.T.O. for diagram of two tails & of boxes showing  
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had previously kept kept away so that  
they could join forces; however they did not  
come close and finally went home.  
I think it is the most extraordinary case of  
German lack of enterprise I have ever heard of  
as they had the odds so immensely in their  
favour. After we had finished with the Germans

## Key Words

Lines - refers to lines of trenches nearest to the conflict

Opining - to hold as an opinion

Hun - a derogatory term used by British officers in the First World War to describe the German armed forces

### **Source 8 (LAP 1/2/13)**

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he discusses flying in bad weather.

15 Jan 1916

Another busy day in the flight with 3 out of the 4 machines unserviceable for trifling complaints which makes things very hurried. I did 80 minutes flying trying to patrol the trenches but never got there due to an enormous bank of clouds stretching up to an immense height. I got up to 8000 and there encountered a wind storm of drifting ice flakes, curious flat things which glimmer in the sun. I avoided too close acquaintance with them and tried to skirt round the cloud coming down to 5000 where I met a hail storm which drove me south away from the 'beat'. I had to get home as the clouds were blowing down further away south so came down to 2000ft and there got into various snow storms which lasted me the last 15 minutes back to the aerodrome.



Dearest.

26/11/15.

Another busy day in the flight with 3 out of 4 machines unserviceable from trifling complaints which makes things very hurried. I did 80 minutes flying trying to patrol the trenches but never got there owing to an enormous bank of clouds stretching up to an immense height. I got up to 8000 & there encountered a wind storm of drifting ice flakes, various flat things which glimmer in the sun. I avoided too close acquaintance with them & tried to skirt round the clouds coming down to 5000 where I met a hail storm which drove me away south from the "beat". I had to get down as the clouds were blowing down further away south so came down to 2,000 ft & there got into various snow storms which lasted me the last 15 minutes back to the aerodrome.

Very many thanks for sending

## Key Words

Aerodrome - a location from which aircraft flight operations take place

## **Source 9 (LAP 1/2/14)**

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he discusses an encounter he had with a sausage captive balloon.

25 Jan 1916

I had a very busy day especially as the machines played up badly. I had rather an amazing go at a sausage captive balloon. We went up at a moment's notice after some Huns but did not get to them but saw a Balloon about 6 miles over the lines. I saw that there was a bank of low clouds which crossed the trenches and came to within about 2 ½ miles of the sausage so we got as near as we could to it over the clouds, crossed the open and dived at it and fired with the gun. We had 3 dives altogether and Morris got rid of about 300 rounds at it at ranges varying from 400 to 200 yards. They were hauling it down so to get the last go we went down to 3,500 feet. We bolted for our lives after that and though we got some pretty hot shots after us on the way back we only got one piece of shell through the planes and crossed the trenches at about 4,000 feet through the screening mist. The sausage was then right down after we left it.

Dear Mother.

No letter from you today. I had a very busy day especially as the machines played up badly. I had rather an amusing go at a Sausage captive balloon. We went up at a moments' notice after some flares but did not get to them & saw a Balloon about 6 miles over the lines. ~~We~~ I saw that there was a bank of low clouds which crossed the trenches & came to within about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles of the sausage so we got as near as we could to it over the clouds, crossed the open & dived at it & fired with the gun. We had 3 dives altogether & Morris got rid of about 300 rounds at it at ranges varying from 400 - 200 yards. They were hammering it down so to get the last go we went down to 3,500 feet. We belted for our lives after that & though we got some pretty hot shots after us on the way back we only got one piece of shell through the planes & crossed the trenches at about 4,000 ft over the screening mist. The sausage was taken right down just after we left it.

## Key Words

Sausage captive balloon - A balloon used for observation in World War I, shaped like a sausage and held 'captive' by a rope



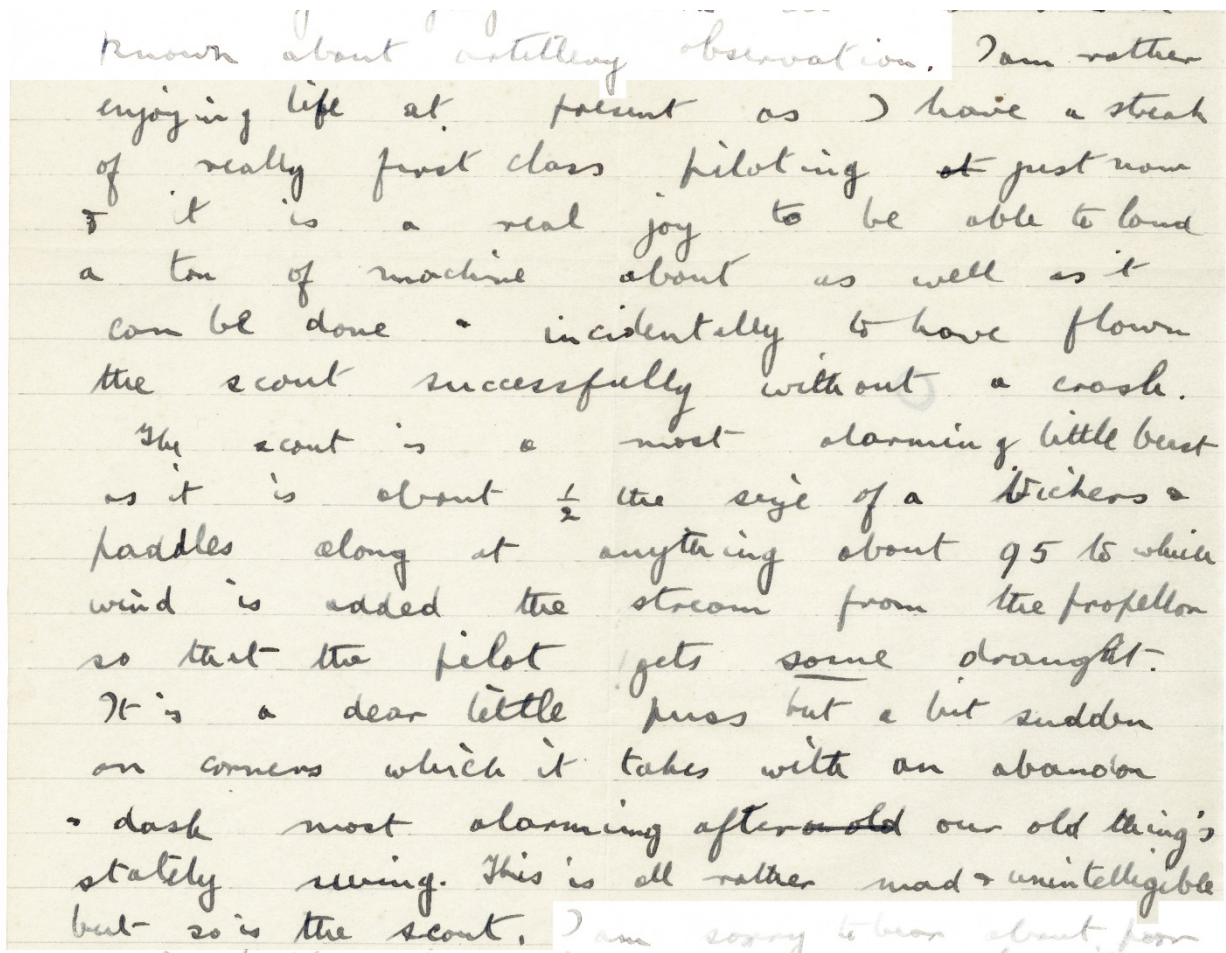
## Source 10 (LAP 1/2/15)

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he discusses enjoying piloting, and flying the 'scout'.

28 Jan 1916

I am rather enjoying life at the moment as I have a stretch of really first class piloting right now and it is a real joy to be able to land a ton of machine about as well as it can be done and incidentally to have flown the scout successfully without a crash.

The scout is a most alarming little beast as it is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the size of a Vickers and paddles along at anything about 95 to which wind is added the stream from the propellor so that the pilot gets some draught. It is a dear little puss but a bit sudden on corners which it takes with an abandon and dash most alarmingly after our old thing's stately swing. This is all rather mad and unintelligible but so is the scout.



known about 'astute' observation. I am rather enjoying life at the moment as I have a stretch of really first class piloting at just now & it is a real joy to be able to land a ton of machine about as well as it can be done & incidentally to have flown the scout successfully without a crash. The scout is a most alarming little beast as it is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the size of a Vickers & paddles along at anything about 95 to which wind is added the stream from the propellor so that the pilot gets some draught. It is a dear little puss but a bit sudden on corners which it takes with an abandon & dash most alarmingly after our old thing's stately swing. This is all rather mad & unintelligible but - so is the scout. I am sorry to hear about your



## Key Words

The Scout - A fast (for its time), light, unarmed aircraft used during the First World War for reconnaissance (gathering information)

## **Source 11 (LAP 1/2/17)**

Extract from a letter from Sir Lawrence to his mother Mary Pattinson in which he discusses a 'street corner brawl', and describes taking a young observer along the lines only to find himself involved in a fight with four German planes. He admits he didn't manage to incapacitate any of them, but feels he has 'shown the superiority of the British pilots'.

13 Feb 1917

I am sorry to say that I was involved in street corner brawl with 4 Huns yesterday. I was taking one of my young observers along the lines who had never seen a shell or Hun before to see if we could cut one off on our side and presently a scout hove in sight about 3 miles over their side. We cleared the decks for action and it dived on us closely followed by two more and a very fast two seater.

We had the most heated and hurried discussion imaginable which lasted for 20 minutes which varied in range from 150 yards to 5 and in height from 11,00 to 5,500 feet. It was fearfully quick because as soon as I charged one machine I had to swing to meet another diving for the deadly position under my tail. None of them ever got fairly there or I shouldn't have been writing this letter. Eventually an induction pipe on my engine was hit and I retired to our side turning frequently to growl at the Huns on the way.

The shots were very difficult and rather beyond any inexperienced observer and I am afraid we didn't incapacitate any of them but the fight was of enormous value as it clearly proved the absolute superiority of the British pilots that I could fight 4 faster machines for so long and hold my own and also it gives all my young gentlemen who haven't been in action a warning against thrusting in too boldly and a primary contempt for the Huns as fighting men. It was much the hottest fight I have been in and was the only one so far in which really "all out" manoeuvring was necessary.

I am sorry to say I was involved in a  
stout corner brawl with 4 Germans yesterday.

I was taking one of my young observers along  
the lines who had never seen a shell or German  
before to see if we could not cut one off  
on our side & presently a ~~the~~ scout dove in  
sight about 3 miles over their side. We cleared  
the decks for action & it dived on us closely  
followed by two more & a very fast two seater.

We had the most heated & hurried discussion  
imaginable which lasted for 20 minutes and  
varied in range from 150 yds to 5 and in height  
from 11,000 - 5,500 feet. It was fearfully quick  
because as soon as I changed one machine  
I had to swing to meet another diving for  
the deadly position under my tail. None of them  
ever got fairly there or I should not have been  
writing this letter. <sup>PROBABLY THE ONE GUR HAS 23-2-00</sup> Eventually an induction pipe on  
my engine was hit & I retired to our side  
turning frequently to growl at the Germans on the  
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my inexperienced observer & I am afraid we did not  
incapacitate any of them but the fight was of enormous  
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British pilots that I could fight 4 faster  
machines for so long & hold my own &  
also it gives all my young gentlemen who haven't  
been in action a warning against thrusting in  
too boldly and a permanent contempt for the  
Germans as fighting men. It was much the  
hottest fight I have been in & was the only  
one so far in which really "all out" manoeuvring  
was necessary. I landed out at my old

## Key Words

Brawl - fight

Hun - a derogatory term used by British officers in the First World War to describe the German armed forces