



Hubert Stanford Broad MBE (1897-1975)

Captain Broad was a pilot who developed his flying skills during the Great War. He was a well-known figure in the post-war aviation world, taking part in competitions and displays, and taking joy-riders up on their first flights. Conveniently for Aerofilms Ltd, he was based at Stag Lane Aerodrome from 1921, and the company hired him as a skilful and reliable pilot.

Hubert Stanford Broad was born in Watford on the 20th May 1897, the third child of Amelia and Thomas Broad. His father Thomas was a solicitor, and the family lived at Aston Lodge on St John's Road (1901 England Census). Hubert was educated at St Lawrence College in Ramsgate (1911 England Census).

On the 15th November 1915 at the age of 18, Hubert was awarded his Royal Aero Club Aviator's Certificate (no. 2044). He passed his test at the Hall School at Hendon, flying a Hall biplane (Great Britain, Royal Aero Club Aviators' Certificates, 1910-1950). He then joined the Royal Naval Air Service at Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey and was accepted on the very first training course at Cranwell, which at the time was an RNAS establishment known as HMS Daedalus. His first tour of duty was with No. 3 Squadron at Dunkirk flying Sopwith Pups (*Flight*, 1946:314). On the 11th May 1917 Hubert was involved in a dogfight with Lieutenant Adolf Ritter von Tutschek of Jasta 12 when "...one bullet entered Broad's open mouth as he was looking back and exited through his chin, he managed to spin down, recover and force land near Bapaumo in Allied Lines" (Guttmann, 2011:91). He returned to England to recover from his injury and spent time as an instructor at Chingford. He then went back to France for a second tour of duty, this time with No. 46 Squadron flying Sopwith Camels

(*Flight*, 1946:314). At the end of the war he was working as an instructor at the Fighter Pilots Flying School at Fairlop (*Flight*, 1975:172).

As a skilled pilot, Hubert's post-war employment options were limited. However, joy-riding was still a novelty and many pilots who had flown in the Great War made a living that way. He joined the Avro Company piloting joy-riding trips, and in 1920 went to the Adiron Lakes in America with two Avro 504 seaplanes (*Flight*, 1946:314). He returned to Britain and in 1921 competed in the Aerial Derby air race around London, flying a Sopwith Camel and finishing in sixth place. Such feats brought him to the attention of the De Havilland Aircraft Co Ltd who took him on as chief test pilot at Stag Lane in October 1921 (*Flight*, 1975:172). He flew extensively for De Havilland and for many other aircraft manufacturers. He did most of the development work on the Gloster II and Gloster III racing seaplanes, and in 1925 raced the III in the Schneider Trophy contest over Chesapeake Bay in America, coming second to the American Jimmy Doolittle. He was heavily involved in the testing and racing of Moths, and in 1926 won the King's Cup in one (*Flight*, 1946:315). In 1928 he set a 24 hour endurance record testing the new 100 hp Gipsy engine fitted in a Moth. During the flight he covered about 1,500 miles and reputedly read three novels (Cunningham, 1975).

In January 1920 Hubert married Ruby Isabel Houghton (England & Wales Marriage Index: 1916-2005) and the couple had two sons: John Stanford and Charles Eric (J 77/2868/8790). The marriage did not last on account of Hubert's infidelity with Margot Baroen, and in 1931 Ruby filed for divorce (J 77/2868/8790). In 1932 he married Marguerite Marie Baroen (England & Wales Marriage Index: 1916-2005). Records show that on the 27th May 1932 Hubert and Marguerite arrived back in England having sailed from Buenos Aires aboard the *Andalucia Star* (UK Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960). Perhaps they

were returning from their honeymoon? This second marriage also had its problems: in 1939, Hubert was named as co-respondent in the divorce proceedings of Mansfield Markham and the famous aviatrix Beryl Markham (J 77/3856/7428).

In 1935, after 14 years service, Hubert left De Havilland. He flew for the Air Registration Board, then went to the Royal Aircraft Establishment before joining Hawker Aircraft as their chief production test pilot at Langley (*Flight*, 1947:315). In 1944 he was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire for his work as a Hawker test pilot (*Supplement to the London Gazette*, 1944:2670).

Hubert Stanford Broad died on the 30th July 1975 at the age of 78. He had spent more than 7,500 hours in the air flying 200 types of aircraft (*Flight*, 1975:172).

Sources

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