Speaking through Telidon

The federal Department of Communications is working on the establishment of a Bliss/Telidon system that would provide the disabled with access to the same information that other users can obtain through Canada's two-way television technology.

When Charles Bliss invented a visual code allowing users to create messages by choosing appropriate symbols, he invented speech for those who cannot communicate verbally.

The speech-impaired comprise a variety of groups, including the cerebral-palsied, the aphasic, the mentally retarded, the deaf, the autistic and the multi-disabled. All of them need a quick and easy means by which they can communicate and be taught.

Visual symbols

Blissymbolics is just such a means. It is a visual-symbol system which has been expanded by the Blissymbolic Communication Institute (BCI) of Toronto to include some 1 500 standardized symbols.

The means for communicating the Bliss code has taken several forms to date. The first was a display board presenting an array of coloured symbols which fit on the user's wheelchair or was used at his work station. The most recent is a federal project using Telidon videotex technology.

Herb Bown and Bill Sawchuk of the Communications Research Centre, have developed a terminal generating Blissymbol displays by writing a text and graphics protocol, "Picture Description Instructions", which is the heart of the Telidon system.

Bliss/Telidon system

The department's goal is the establishment of a Bliss/Telidon system at the BCI. The system components would include Telidon videotex terminals with the capability of generating text, graphic and Blissymbol displays, a data base containing Bliss educational content and information provider terminals.

The user terminals would be able to communicate with other terminals as well as to access data on public and private data bases. They would be designed to accept a number of custom-designed switches, which make it possible for a range of users to operate the system. A joint venture between BCI and Telidon will eventually allow the speech-impaired to have access to the same information and services available to all Telidon users.

War Museum acquires medals of Canadian flying ace

The medals of Captain Arthur Roy Brown, a Canadian flying "ace" in the First World War, have been purchased by the Canadian War Museum, in Ottawa.

The generosity of 275 former Canadian service personnel or their families made the acquisition of the medals possible.

Shot down Red Baron

Captain Brown was an outstanding fighter pilot during the First World War and was one of only 12 Canadians to be awarded a bar to the Distinguished Service Cross. He was considered by many to have been the man who shot down Baron Manfred Von Richtofen, the "Red Baron" of Germany, and he received the bar in June 1918 for this act.

The accompanying citation, as was customary, omitted the enemy pilot's name. It read: "For conspicious gallantry and devotion to duty. On the 21st April 1918, while leading a patrol of six scouts he attacked a formation of 20 hostile scouts. He personally engaged two *Fokker* triplanes which he drove off; then, seeing that one of our machines was being attacked and apparently hard pressed, he dived on the hostile scout, firing the while. This scout, a *Fokker* triplane, nose dived and crashed to the ground. Since the award of the Distinguished Service Cross he has destroyed several other enemy aircraft and has shown great dash and enterprise in attacking enemy troops from low altitudes, despite heavy anti-aircraft fire."

The Distinguished Service Cross was presented to Captain Brown in September 1917. The citation referred to several aircraft that he had shot down during the month and also to one occasion just prior to the squadron's return to Dunkirk, when Brown dove on four enemy aircraft about to attack a comrade, and with both guns jammed, simulated an attack and drove them off.

In all, Captain Brown was credited with shooting down 13 enemy aircraft.

Brown was born in Carleton Place, Ontario in 1883. After obtaining his private pilot's licence in 1915 from the Wright Brother's Aviation School in Dayton, Ohio, he joined the British Royal Naval Air Service which became the Royal Air Force on April 1, 1918. He served as a flight commander with the No. 9 (Naval) Squadron and then the No. 209 Squadron which was equipped with *Sopwith Camels.*

After the war, Captain Brown was posted to the staff of a flying school in England. A near-fatal crash ended his career as a fighter pilot in July 1918 but his interest in aviation remained and he later organized General Airways which operated a small airline between Noranda, Quebec and Haileybury, Ontario.

Captain Brown died in Stouffville, Ontario in 1944.

Three medals awarded to Captain Brown: (left to right) *Victory Medal, 1914-1918 Medal and the Distinguished Service Cross and Bar.*

National Museums of Canada