

operated. During 1917 this squadron, which used an average of only eight boats a month, sighted forty-seven enemy submarines and bombed twenty-five, besides destroying enemy seaplanes and bringing down a Zeppelin in flames.

It was my good fortune to be posted to Felixstowe Air Station in March, 1917, and to be put in charge of the flying-boat operations. So this is a yarn about the beginnings and work of a single flying-boat station, but it is characteristic of the work carried out at the seaplane stations strung along the South and East Coasts of Great Britain, from the Scilly Islands, off Land's End, to the Orkneys and Shetlands, off the north of Scotland. If the names and deeds of the pilots at Felixstowe are alone recorded, it is not that equally gallant and skilful men were not harrying the Hun elsewhere, but that their adventures would fill many volumes.

## II.

In the curious quirks of fortune and chance which moved people across oceans and continents to play their part in the war, and finally fetched them up, in some cases, in the jobs which they most desired to fill, there are all the elements of romance. Just before the war broke out I was occupying a room at the "Aviator's Home," a boarding-house in the small American inland town of Hammondsport, N.Y. This town was situated on a long narrow lake, with a forked end, a lake surrounded by steeply rising vine-clad hills to which clung the white wooden houses of the vine-growers, and in which were dug the huge cellars for storing the excellent champagne of the district.

It was here that Mr. Glen Curtiss built his flying-boats before the war, having recruited his labour at first from the ranks of the local blacksmiths, carpenters, and young men with a mechanical turn of mind. And it was here that I first tasted the smoke of a Fatima cigarette, a particularly biting smoke affected by Yankee airmen, and went out in a flying-boat for the first time in July, 1914. This boat, to memory quaint and medieval, had a single engine alleged to develop sixty horse-power; it belonged to the dim dark ages when compared to the latest boat I have flown, the eighteen hundred horse-power *Felixstowe Fury*.

Finishing the course of instruction a few days after the declaration of war, and receiving no satisfaction by cabling to the Admiralty and War Office offering my services as a pilot, which rather annoyed me at the time, but which I now know was probably due to their being somewhat preoccupied with other little matters, I returned to my home in Toronto, Canada, and joined the first Canadian contingent as a private in a machine-gun battery.

Arriving in England in the steerage of a troop-ship in October, 1914, I satisfied at Lockyears, in Plymouth, a great