

## A FLYING OFFICER

incredible that in a British Military Unit such a thing could happen.

At the Central Flying School, 23rd Sept., 1917. I have just begun solo on Avros, having done about 15 hours very successful flying on Hunguffins without smashing a single thing. Rather a record I think. I am very pleased in consequence. Avros are quite different to fly. They are stable in the air, practically fly themselves, and if they get into a nasty position, come out of it themselves. The other busses I have been on will not do this, and are not so safe; I am glad I am through with them.

I got lost this morning for the first time. Five machines went up together to fly in formation. I was the second on the right. After we had been up for a while we all got into a cloud, and as a precaution against getting too close to the rest, I put my nose down and came out of it. I could not find the others anywhere, and we were miles away from the aerodrome. I did not recognize any of the surrounding country. If I had not had my compass, I should have had to land, and ask where I was, as I had no map with me. By steering south I came to a town I recognized as being L——. This relieved me very much. I knew the way from there and in twenty minutes regained the "drome." I was glad I did not have to land, as it makes one feel so foolish to ask where you are, and have some yokel volunteer the information that you are in Master Brown's field. When I got back to the aerodrome it was just in time to catch up with the rest of the flight and we all landed together in perfect formation. I enjoyed this morning's flip, as in formation all one does is to keep one's eyes on the leader, and do just as he does. If one gets engine trouble, one has to drop out, but that does not happen often.

During the week fifteen American soldiers arrived here to be trained as Ack Emmas (air mechanics). To-night we had two American officers in the mess.

This afternoon I went to the village to call at the Alexander's. At one time they were *the* family of this part of Wiltshire, and owned most of the land about here. Mrs. A. asked me to walk to Rushall with her to visit her husband's