

This Believer in Aviation Backs his Belief with Dollars

Thomas Hall, a veteran in years, is a frequent flyer and has unbounded confidence in future of aerial transport.

By GEORGE A. MACKIE

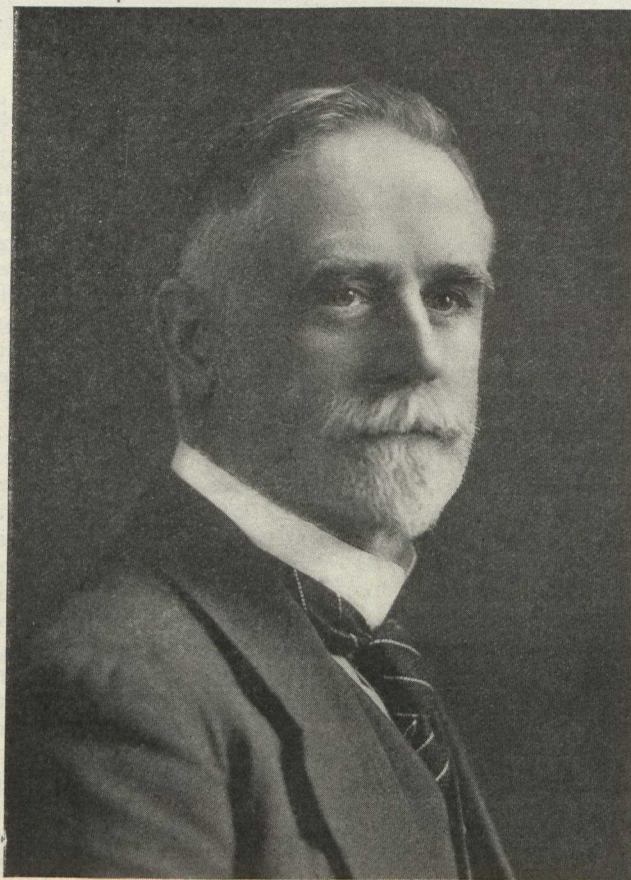
THE progress of civil and commercial aviation in Canada—and, indeed, in most other countries—depends very materially on the moral and financial support of individuals and groups, who are prepared to invest their energies and dollars in the organization of companies, equipped to undertake aeronautical work which will demonstrate the possibilities of this most modern and efficient method of observation and transportation. The returns on such investments are neither immediate nor highly remunerative, but the pioneers and patrons of the industry—for such it must now be termed—will eventually be rewarded for their far-sightedness and faith in the business and science of aviation.

In Canada, there is probably no other individual who has furnished as much practical assistance in this regard as has Mr. Thomas Hall, the subject of this article. Mr. Hall, who calls himself a veteran in years, is still several decades younger than his age in his general appearance and more particularly in his outlook upon life. While his support of aviation is largely due to his natural liking for "the game" and his firm faith in its ultimate importance to the nation, there is also a marked degree of sentiment in his attitude toward it. In this connection it will be recalled that Mr. Hall's eldest son, Lieut. Ralph Gordon Hall, one of the fine examples of young Canadian manhood who staked their all with the Royal Flying Corps, made the supreme sacrifice in January, 1918.

In June of 1919, Mr. Thomas Hall became interested in Canadian Aerial Services, Limited, Montreal, following a very quick flight from Montreal to his country home at Summerstown on the St. Lawrence. After investigating the Company, he made a considerable investment in order to allow the firm to expand its business and retain skilled personnel who had been trained in the previous two years of operations. Mr. Hall made a considerable number of flights, and in fact flew right up till last November, his last flight being made in a snow storm. During the past winter, when the organization of the Laurentide Air Service was discussed, Mr. Hall was approached with a view to gaining his interest, and he at once assumed

responsibility for the financing necessary to develop the work. During the organization period, it was decided to expand by the establishment of a very much larger station in Ontario and Mr. Hall backed up this expansion programme by furnishing the necessary additional capital. The Company is now being incorporated and Mr. Hall is to be president. Mr. Hall's faith in the future of aviation is unbounded as is shown by his large investments in these two operating companies, and he is, in addition to furnishing the capital for a great part of Canadian Civil Aviation, lending his very valuable advice and business experience in the operations of Laurentide Air Service.

Interviewed recently in Vancouver, B. C., following a flight with Mr. Norman Yarrow in the latter's hydroplane, Mr. Hall placed his views concerning aviation on record in the following breezy manner:—"People express surprise that a veteran like myself should go flying, but what will the young fellows who have the thing so much at heart do if we older men don't come to their assistance? If aviation is to succeed, those of us who have seen the automobile industry rise from its small beginning a score of years ago in the face of scoffing and skepticism must give the thing our support. I see a time not far distant when there will be more and better aeroplanes than automobiles, when the aeroplane will be cheaper and more sought after than the automobile and when the roofs of buildings in congested cities will be joined together as landing and parking places for private aeroplanes used by the class of



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people who are now commuters. Before this comes about, engineering talent will have to design aeroplanes, suitable for such purposes. Just now, machines designed for war purposes are being adapted to peace service, but commerce requires a type of plane suitable to its own ends. It must be a more substantial structure and high speed will not be so great a requisite. One hundred miles an hour is fast enough for ordinary purposes."

Apart from his aviation connections entirely, Mr. Hall's career furnishes an interesting chapter in the history of Canadian industrial achievement. Formerly proprietor of the Hall Engineering Works, Limited,