

L.T. E. POTTER STILL BOMBING FACTORIES

Port Arthur Aviator Tells How Big Munitions Plant Near Metz Destroyed

Bombs Demolish Factories Where Six Thousand Men Employed

How Flight Sub-Lieutenant Ernest Potter, son of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Potter, of Port Arthur, led an aerial squadron in destruction of a big munitions factory near Metz is described in a letter home under date of October 28, as follows:

"Just a few lines to let you know that all is well with me. Lately I have been moving all up and down the country. We are attached to the French army and when they want anything battered down we do it for them. Two days ago we blew up some steel works at Habanningen, north of Metz. It was very clear and we could see the effect of our bombs. I was the leader and my first bomb landed square on a factory about 400 feet long by 200 feet wide. It was a delay fused bomb which does not explode until a quarter second after it had hit. It went through the iron roof and exploded inside. The whole building just flattened out like a house of cards and burst into flames. My other bombs all got home, but without such spectacular effect. One of the bombs from one of the other machines fell in between two immense smoke stacks and blew their bases clear away. They fell in opposite directions smashing everything in their path. When we were finished not a thing was left. It was our lucky day. Not a bomb was wasted and not a machine was lost."

"These factories employed about six thousand hands and supplied all the front near here with guns. They were also supplying the Bulgars."

"When we went through Nancy the people were wildly enthusiastic about it, and of course we had a good time."

Photograph: Example of Avro aeroplane ready for flight. Canadian Aeroplanes Ltd., Canada. Dept. of National Defence/Library and Archives Canada/

Articles: Fort William Daily Times Journal November 13, 1916; Port Arthur News Chronicle November 21, 1916 & November 30, 1916

ERNEST POTTER, PORT ARTHUR BIRD MAN LEADS FAMOUS AIR RAID ON OBENDORF

POR T ARTHUR AIR MAN IS DECORATED BY GENERAL JOFFRE

Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Potter, 210 Tupper street, have received word that their son, Flight Lieutenant Ernest Potter, has been decorated by General Joffre with the white whistle cord in recognition of his services as an air man on the west front. Others of his squad who have been doing great work in bombing German positions, have also received this decoration, which is given only to air men. The cord is worn around the left shoulder and the mark of distinction is its whiteness in contrast with the color usually corresponding with the uniform.

24 year old Port Arthur resident Ernest Potter made headlines during the month of November 1916 for his involvement in the bombing of munitions factories in Germany. Flight Sub Lieut. Potter of the Royal Naval Air Service sent letters home to his parents in Port Arthur describing the aerial warfare. The first letter to be published in both the Port Arthur News Chronicle and the Fort William Daily Times Journal detailed the aerial assault on Mauser rifle factories in Obendorf, Germany in which Potter lead the attack. The second letter published in the News Chronicle told of Potter's unit being attached to the French Army and bombing munitions factories near Metz, Germany. In recognition of his service, Potter was decorated with the White Whistle Cord by General Joffre. To view the letters in their entirety please visit the Thunder Bay Public Library website: <http://www.tbpl.ca/worldwarone>