



Auberon Thomas Herbert, 8th Baron
Lucas and 11th Baron Dingwall (1876-
1916)

Baron Lucas was member of the House of Lords and was to serve as a pilot and trainer in the newly formed Royal Flying Corps (RFC, a precursor to the RAF) during WW1.

Educated at Bedford School and going on to study at Balliol College, Oxford he was the second son of the Hon. Auberon Herbert. In 1882 his elder brother died and so he inherited the titles of Baron Lucas and Dingwall. He took his seat in the House of Lords in 1907.

Herbert was quickly appointed to senior roles in Asquith's government. He was Private Secretary to the Secretary of War from 1907-08. In April 1908 he was appointed to his first ministerial post as Under-Secretary of State for War. In 1911 he was appointed Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies and from late 1911- 1914 he was Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. In August 1914 he entered Cabinet sitting next to Churchill during meetings as Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods. Churchill described him in his memoirs:

"...his pleasing presence, his compulsive smile, made him much courted by his friends, of whom he had many and of whom I was one.

Young for the Cabinet, heir to splendid possessions, happy in all that surrounded him, he seemed to have captivated Fortune"¹

When a Coalition Government was formed by Asquith in May 1915 Herbert decided his services were best served on the front line serving with the Royal Flying Corps.

Herbert had already experienced the brutality and sacrifices of war as correspondent for the *Times* whilst reporting on the Boer War (1899-1902). As a result of a wound he sustained during the conflict he was forced to have his leg amputated. Undeterred, he went on to serve as Captain in the Hampshire Yeomanry in 1903.

Herbert was a proficient pilot, quickly gaining his pilot's licence and then training extensively in Egypt as part of the 22nd Squadron. He was soon responsible for training new recruits in the RFC. On one particular training flight in the summer of 1916 he was fortunate to survive as the plane nose-dived killing the pilot whilst he escaped unharmed.

His fortune was not to last though as he flew over German enemy lines in November 1916. Whether due to mechanical failure or enemy fire, his plane was lost and body never recovered.

His memorial stone is at H.A.C cemetery, Ecoust-St.Mein a village between Arras, Cambrai and Bapaume.

¹ Crisis, vol. I, Winston Churchill