

A brief history of the



RAF
Royal **air force**



Legends of the skies

NicheEnglish

NicheEnglish

Vocabulary

Meaning

Legend

'Legend' here means someone who did something amazing and will be talked about and remembered in history.

Remembered in the annals of history

This basically means it will be recorded and remembered in history.

A flying ace

This refers to a pilot that is one of the best pilots.

Gallantry

This means courageous in battle / being brave in battle.

A central figure

If you are a 'central figure' you are 'very important' / 'a key figure' in something.

A dogfight

This means a group of planes attack each other and fight in the sky.

Ace-of-aces

The best of the best.

Exceptional

Extraordinary / amazing / unbelievable.

Patrolling the skies

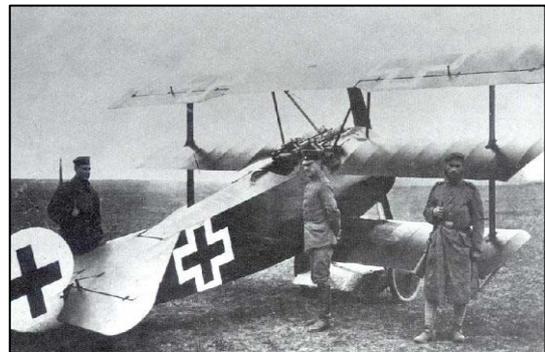
If you 'patrol the skies', you fly around and guard the skies to make sure the area is safe.

Never one to shy away from a fight

This expression means that someone will never be afraid to fight, no matter what. It's often used to describe a very brave person.



A British WW1 Plane



A German WW1 Plane [The Red Barons]



Legends of the skies

During the first world war two fighter pilots fought for their country and because of their skill and bravery, will forever be remembered in the **annals of history**. On the British side was Lanoe George Hawker, and on the German side was Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen, also known as the "Red Baron".

NicheEnglish

NicheEnglish



Lanoe George Hawker

Hawker was born on the 30 December 1890 and was killed on the 23 November 1916. He was a British **flying ace** of the First World War. Having achieved seven victories, and famous for attacking three German planes on his own and winning. He was the third pilot to receive the Victoria Cross, the highest award for **gallantry** to a British servicemen.

He was also **a central figure** in helping Britain control the skies above the Battle of the Somme. However, he was killed in a **dogfight** with the famous German flying ace The Red Baron.



Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen

[The **red baron**]

The baron was born on the 2 May 1892 and was killed on the 21 April 1918. He was a fighter pilot with the German Air Force during World War I, and is considered the **ace-of-aces** of the war due to achieving 80 air combat victories. At that time, when achieving 15-20 victories was considered **exceptional**, gaining 80 victories has assured his name will forever be remembered.

The name, the red baron, came from painting his plane red which was easily recognisable to all who feared it.



The legendary dogfight that will forever be remembered



NicheEnglish

NicheEnglish



Hawker Patrolling the skies



The legendary dogfight

The dogfight that will never be forgotten

On 23 November, Hawker was **patrolling the skies** with two other pilots when he saw a group of 8 German planes. Outnumbered, and **never one to shy away from a fight**, he flew straight at the planes and fought bravely. His engine was hit so he had to try and get away however, it was at this time the Red baron began to attack Hawker.

The **dogfight** lasted for more than 30 minutes, when, with Hawker running out of fuel, was finally killed, making him the eleventh victim of the Red baron. Hawker was aged just 25 when he died.

The Red baron later wrote:

'I discovered that I was not meeting a beginner. He had not the slightest intention of breaking off the fight...'

Hawker will forever be remembered as one of the bravest pilots to take to the skies.



Lanoe George Hawker

Born on the 30 December 1890 and was killed on the 23 November 1916.

A true legend



NicheEnglish

NicheEnglish



The death of the red Baron

On 21 April 1918, the baron took part in a **dogfight** over the Somme. He began to follow and attack Wilfrid "Wop" May, a Canadian pilot fighting for the RAF. Wilfred's school friend and flight commander, Canadian Captain Arthur "Roy" Brown, saw the Baron follow his friend and attacked the Baron from behind to try and save his friend.

It is at this point the Baron was shot and killed. However, the debate over who shot and killed the Baron has never been decided. Arthur "Roy" Brown claimed it was him, but at the same time Australian machine gunners on the ground were also firing at the Baron. Both claimed it was them who killed the **legend** of the skies.

He managed to land his plane but died soon after. He will forever be remembered as the **ace of all aces**.



Manfred Albrecht Freiherr von Richthofen

[The **red baron**]

Born on the 2 May 1892 and was killed on the 21 April 1918.

The ace of all aces