

— March 2022 — Revision 1

Author: JB Nisley — Blogger/webmaster — KCFreeFlight.org

Contributor: Jeff Renz — Blogger/editor in chief — [Casey's \(KC's\) Free Flight BLOG](http://Casey's (KC's) Free Flight BLOG)

— TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION —

*Who really "Invented" Ailerons"—the Absolutely Essential Controlling Surface Devices of Modern-Day Airplane Wings?
Popular Wisdom points to Glenn Curtiss—but did He?*

And on a Lighter Note was there a possibility that Early Aeronautical Pioneer Casey Baldwin was Master to an English Cocker Spaniel named "Red Wing"? — This author wants to believe it was true . . .

Believe it or not Casey Walker Baldwin played a significant role in the development of AILERONS we now take for granted as an integral part of a Wing's "Control Surfaces." Without them flight as we know it would be impossible.

It is this author's opinion that it was inevitable that the development of ailerons came about. As early as 1900, the idea of "[Wing Warping](#)" was what the Wright brothers came up with in order to be able to control the direction of flight with their gliders and airplanes, notably first used in the [Wright Flyer](#) (1903). This worked quite well with cloth coverings and box type structures of the wings used during the early days of flight. But as the materials and the designs of wings in later years became more rigid, this system of wing warping would soon be relegated to the history books.

Among aviation historians and enthusiasts alike there has always been sort of a debate as to who should be given credit for the "Invention" of the Aileron. Popular beliefs place Glenn Curtis as the one responsible. — But was he?

It turns out that the answer to this is not as clear as you may think. Rather than attributing it to a single person, it is more likely that several persons had small but significant contributions to this eventuality during the course of the early years of flight. If we want to get closer to the bottom of this issue—a good place to start would be to read a section from the Wikipedia Website titled: [Other early aileron designers](#).

As I mention earlier, it goes without saying that many Aviation Historians and also many of my fellow Aeromodellers I personally know attribute the invention of the Aileron to [Glenn Curtiss](#).

However in a (well written I might add) review of the biography of Fredrick Walker (Casey) Baldwin titled [“Casey: The Remarkable Untold Story of Frederick Walker “Casey” Baldwin: Gentleman, Genius, and Alexander Graham Bell’s Canadian Protegé,”](#) the reviewer Dean Jobb writes in his [Post dated March 19, 2020:](#) “Baldwin also devised the aileron, a horizontal control rudder essential for flight.” (You’ll find this in the 5th paragraph of the Post.)

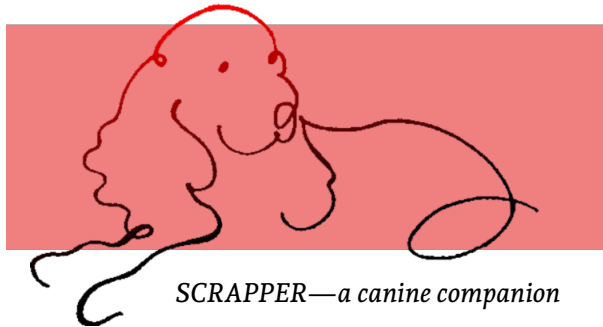
Above I mentioned a certain section contained on the Ailerons web page of Wikipedia article talking about [Other early aileron designers](#). In the 4th paragraph of this section, there is this observation: “On May 18, 1908, engineer and aircraft designer [Frederick Baldwin](#), a member of the [Aerial Experiment Association](#) headed by [Alexander Graham Bell](#), flew their first aileron-controlled aircraft, the [AEA White Wing](#), [6] which was later copied by the U.S. aeronautical pioneer [Glenn Curtiss](#)[21] the same year, with the [AEA June Bug](#).”

So in wrapping up the first half of this Op-Ed, I’ve left this dilemma up for to you to decide. However, since this author is obviously totally biased in favor of Casey Baldwin—I have no qualms about giving him the credit. ;-)

Was there an English Cocker Spaniel christened “Red Wing” by Casey’s Side?

It’s no secret to any of my close friends—especially Jeff Renz, :-) that I have developed a great respect and admiration for the man named Fredrick Walker (Casey) Baldwin. After reading his biography simply titled “[Casey](#)” written by John Langley and conducting additional research on my own (as much as I was able to do) that’s available on the Internet—my response developed into a greater thirst for further knowledge. To me there never has been an historical figure, aviation related or otherwise, that has captured my imagination quite like Casey has.

So it’s disconcerting that there seems to be much we don’t know about Casey. What was he like? We know he smoked a pipe but did he have a canine close by? As an AEROMODELLER, I’m also curious as to whether or not he built “model flying machines” or “Aerodrome” models to test his ideas. (NOTE: “Aerodromes” was the terminology Casey and others used during this time period to refer to aircraft they were constructing. The word “[Aerodrome](#)” as defined on [the Wikipedia Website](#) is now “a location from which aircraft flight operations take place what some call airports.”



SCRAPPER—a canine companion

What were the tools he employed (or devised himself) to be used to build and fly models? Although no record to my knowledge has him building or flying models—I assume he needed to make smaller versions of his real aerodromes to problem solve. The looming question I have is did he sometimes fly models just for the sheer joy of seeing them in flight like we do—over a century later?

Because we know little about his day-to-day existence, would it be unreasonable to speculate on the breed of dog Casey might have had or or the name he would have bestowed on it?

Canada—having strong English ties would lead me to believe that he settled on a **Red English Cocker Spaniel**. Its name? — My guess would be “Scrapper” because in 1912 Casey won the Coronation Cup in Sydney, Nova Scotia with his sailboat **Scrapper**. [Here is an article about this sailboat.](#)

We’ll never know if this was the case, however it’s hard not to imagine him not having a canine friend at his side conducting experiments at his flying site or when he was in his workshop arduously working out solutions to his latest project’s design challenges. **SCRAPPER** will be the featured pooch in our new segment titled: “**Presenting the Best New AeroModelling THING !!! Brought to you by SCRAPPER.**” Future subjects for my OP-Ed’s will tend to explore the possibility that Casey was in fact one of our first **AEROMODELLERS** (and possibly one of the BEST) EVER !!! :-) Stay tuned for an “**Innovations Casey might have come up with when test flying aerodrome models**” subject line for one of my next Op-Eds. — Sincerely Yours, Blogger/Webmaster — **JB Nisley**