

March 14<sup>th</sup>

### Memory verse

**There is no God like thee**, in heaven above or on earth beneath. I Kings 8:23

These are the words of Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived,<sup>1</sup> and they are worth learning. Very small children can learn the words in bold and understand that “thee” is like the word “you” but only means one person, never more than one.

Do you know what a “patent” is? When an inventor makes something new, in order that other people do not just take his idea and use it without paying him anything, he can be granted a patent. This means that anyone wishing to make or copy his idea has to have his permission. Inventors submit their inventions to a government Patent Office (in Britain this is now called the Intellectual Property Office) and checks are made to ensure that it really *is* a new invention. If this is the case the patent is granted. In Britain, a patent lasts for 20 years. After that time anyone can make the item that was originally patented without the inventor's permission.

On **March 14<sup>th</sup>** 1899 a German inventor was issued with an American patent for his invention. His name was Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin. Can you guess what it was that he had invented?



The count called his invention a “Navigable Balloon,” but it soon became known simply as the Zeppelin.

This first Zeppelin had the same overall cylindrical shape as you see in the later Zeppelin pictured above with rounded ends and covered with a cotton shell. It was framed with aluminium struts and braced with wire. Inside were a number of independent balloons used for lift. To propel the Zeppelin there were engines hanging below the balloon. The balloons were filled with hydrogen gas. Hydrogen gas is lighter than air. This is what made the Zeppelin able to rise in the air. It was also the great problem that made Zeppelins so dangerous. Hydrogen gas is highly inflammable – that is, it easily bursts into flame.

It was not long before Zeppelins were being put to a terrible use. In 1899 the First World War was only fifteen years away...

It was the early months of 1915 that brought the first Zeppelin raid at **Yarmouth**, **Cromer** and **King's Lynn** on January 20, on **Tyneside** and **Lowestoft** in April, and at **Southend** in May.

Although it cannot be said that the Zeppelins that bombed England achieved anything of great military value, they did undoubtedly have a great moral effect upon the people of this country.

When their visits became a regular feature many householders abandoned their homes on the East Coast and came inland. For the most part, however, the people of this country took the bombing by Zeppelins with the phlegm of true Englishmen and were apt to stand out of doors on roofs or other vantage points and regard the whole affair as a spectacular show well worth watching...

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<sup>1</sup> Apart from the Lord Jesus Christ himself, of course.

...from 1914 until 1918 the Friedrichshafen works built sixty Zeppelins for the [German] navy... fourteen of these were shot down in land attacks, and four over the sea were so hit by shrapnel that they could not return. Two were destroyed in their sheds by English flyers, thirty were wrecked because of unfavourable circumstances or burnt in their sheds. Some were discarded as being out of date, and so only a few airships existed towards the end of the war....

Kaptänlieutenant D. Jochim Breithaupt [pictured right]... Captain of the Zeppelin L15... made his attack on London in October 1915...



“London did not know,” wrote James Wickham, [call-boy at a London theatre] “that three hours ago on this fatal evening an urgent message had been flashed from France to the War Office that five Zeppelins had been noticed making for the East Coast. I heard it from Jupp, the stage door-keeper. We often heard things of that kind at the Gaiety [Theatre]. Marconi House is next-door. A clock struck nine... the stage manager... wanted me. 'Just run across to the post with these letters, Jimmy,' he said... The nearest pillar-box was at the top of Catherine Street... 'They say the Zepps are on their way...' I remarked [to Billy who had come with me]. As though my words had released ten thousand furies, there was the sudden crackle of anti-aircraft gunfire; simultaneously a dreadful sound... it was the mournful wail created by the velocity of a descending bomb.

“In the one brief terrible moment before the impact I instinctively knew it was coming directly where we stood. I was not wrong. It exploded three yards from where we were standing. It flung me against the wall next to the pit entrance to the Strand theatre. It sucked me back again. It dashed me to the ground. Masonry fell. Glass rained. I felt unhurt. Only dazed. Yet I had twenty-two lumps of shrapnel embedded in me. They carried me downstairs into... the Strand Theatre. The streets were pandemonium... The dull vibrant thud of more bombs... Others were brought in and laid beside me... there was the ring of ambulance bells, the imperious clang of fire alarms. And above it all a terrible insistent thudding.

“The Zeppelin – it was the L15 on her maiden voyage to England – had manoeuvred herself into line with the Strand and travelled directly eastwards, dropping bombs at short intervals... No single bomb dropped from a Zeppelin during the war claimed a greater death-roll.”

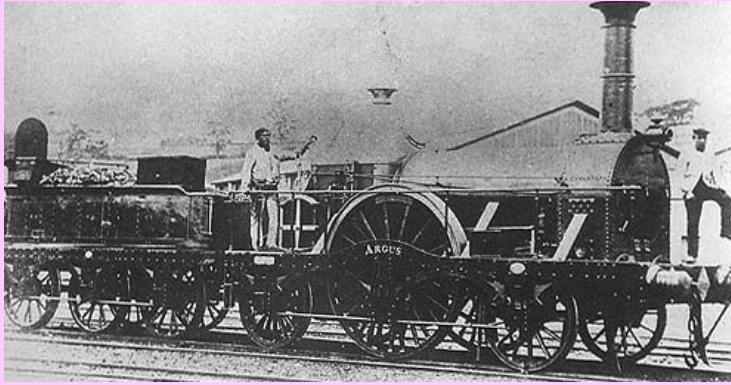
At the end of some eighteen months effective means were invented for the destruction of Zeppelins in the air, and several raiders were brought down in flames.

The *News Chronicle* newspaper's Silver Jubilee Book: *The Story of Twenty-five Years* from which this extract comes was put together from a variety of sources, such as eye witness accounts and the newspaper articles themselves. Jimmy's account sounds as if it might have been polished up a bit by a journalist or perhaps put together from an interview but it makes very interesting reading. Look at the towns highlighted in green in the first paragraph. Why were they so vulnerable? What was Marconi House? Find Catherine Street and the Strand on a London Street map. Can you trace the path of the Zeppelin? What was it about Zeppelins that made them very dangerous to use in war conditions? There is more about airships in the Lesson for 6<sup>th</sup> May.

Count Zeppelin had originally called his airship a “steerable-air-cruising train”. He called it this because he had designed it so that additional cylindrical mid-segments could be connected together for a longer airship with greater carrying capacity. This type of airship was never actually made but

today is also an anniversary connected with more conventional land-going trains. In March 1840, the Great Western Railway opened a new line from London to Reading. This was a great event at that time, for the railway engine was still a new and wonderful invention.

In the *Reading Mercury and Oxford Gazette*, on **March 14<sup>th</sup>** it was reported:<sup>2</sup>



The first train drawn by the 'Fire Fly', started from Paddington at six o' clock. The novelty of this delightful and **expeditious** mode of travelling, coupled with the extreme beauty of the morning, attracted a vast number of our country friends to the town. Indeed, we have seldom witnessed a great **influx** of visitors. At the station house every accommodation was **afforded** the spectators which could reasonably be expected or desired by them, the

extensive platform immediately adjoining the offices having been thrown open to the public, and seats provided, in a most handsome manner for their convenience. Trains were progressing to and fro at all hours of the day, and the passengers were quite as numerous as could have been expected at the **commencement**.

In the course of the afternoon, several thousands of lookers-on were congregated on Forbury Hill [Reading], and in the immediate **vicinity** of the railroad. The distance between this and Paddington Station is  $35\frac{3}{4}$  miles, and the time occupied in completing the same, including four or five stoppages, may be averaged at one hour and a quarter. A new and powerful engine named the 'Wild Fire', made its **debut** yesterday, occupying one hour ten minutes in its journey, and on Thursday one of the engines completed the whole distance in one hour five minutes.

Do you know the meaning of the words I have **highlighted**? Can you use them in sentences of your own? Use your dictionary to help you.

#### **A letter to read**

We learned about Samuel Rutherford on 7<sup>th</sup> March and there is more on 30<sup>th</sup>. Here is part of a letter he wrote from prison on **14<sup>th</sup> March** 1637 to a young lady, Grizzel Fullerton.

DEAR SISTER, —

*I exhort you in the Lord, to seek your one thing, Mary's good part<sup>3</sup>, that shall not be taken from you. ... Learn the way (as your dear mother hath done before you) to knock at Christ's door. Many an alms of mercy hath Christ given to her, and hath abundance [remaining] behind to give to you.... I would not exchange Christ Jesus for ten worlds of glory. ... I am swelled up and*

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Owen, Evan, *What Happened Today?* Book 2 available on the *Mothers' Companion* flashdrive <https://motherscompanion.weebly.com/>

<sup>3</sup> Luke 10:42

*satisfied with the love of Christ, that is better than wine. It is a fire in my soul; let hell and the world cast water on it, they will not mend themselves. I have now gotten the right gate of Christ. I recommend Him to you above all things.... ye know not how fain Christ would have all your love. Think not this is imagination and bairns'<sup>4</sup> play, which we make din<sup>5</sup> for. I would not suffer for it, if it were so...<sup>6</sup> it is the way to glory. Think much of truth,...*  
*The grace of Christ be with you.*

*Yours, in his sweet Lord Jesus,*

*S.R.*

*Aberdeen, March 14, 1637.*

### **Something to think about**

Samuel Rutherford's language is not easy for us to read nowadays but it is worth making the effort. "Learn the way (as your dear mother hath done before you) to knock at Christ's door." What does this mean? It is wise advice! There is more about learning "the way" from our parents in the lesson for 4<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Something to write**

Don't forget to keep up your diary writing. If you have let it lapse don't worry about the gap. Make an entry today and write about what you have been doing recently.

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4 Children's

5 Cry for

6 i.e. if Christ's love was not a reality he would not allow himself to be imprisoned for Christ's sake.