

❖ PARDON'S PROGENY ❖

Volume 21, Issue 1

tillinghastsociety.org

Winter 2020

*A Publication of
the Tillinghast
Family In
America.*

*"Be Just and
Fear Not"*

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Subscriptions**

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Inc**

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President's Message – Winter 2020

Last year at this time we were relieved that the necessary major repair projects – repair of the deteriorated south wall next to Barker Playhouse and replacement of 81 feet of badly rusted fence on the north side of the historic Tillinghast Burial Ground--were both completed in 2018. But visitors to the site had to search to notice these much-needed repairs.



This year as we look back on our accomplishments during 2019, we can easily see the positive results of another year of successful fund raising and planning. We received two \$3,000 grants. One from the Felicia Fund covered the prep, priming and painting of the three remaining original sections of the fence that surrounds the site. The entire fence is now freshly painted. The second grant was from the Mary Dexter Chafee Fund and that is slated to be used for several iron benches on the site.

In addition, we had \$6,250 of private donations that, coupled with funds on hand, enabled us to begin landscaping work. This included much needed tree pruning that will allow more sunlight onto the site and benefit the perimeter shrub plantings done in October/November.

A major goal was accomplished when the Tillinghast Society purchased the software for "Family Tree Maker" and donated it to the RI Historical Society's Library – Mary Elizabeth Robinson Research Center. This enabled our genealogist, Todd Lawrence, to download his entire data base (28,000 entries) so there is now a back-up ensuring his work will be saved. PLEASE NOTE: This data base is available to anyone for research on Tillinghast family members at the RIHS Library. Currently it is not available online.

The Mile of History Association (MoHA) sponsored a two-part walk along Benefit Street. The north section was in the spring and the south section in October when one of the stops was the historic Tillinghast Burial Ground where I gave a short talk about the unique history of the burial ground. Very few of the attendees had any knowledge of it

(Continued on page 2)

being the last of the small family burial grounds from Roger Williams' early Town of Providence and not just a monument to Pardon Tillinghast. In early December the MoHA held a "Benefit Street Stroll" where residents and businesses were encouraged to decorate doors. Treasurer Jane Roberts and I thought it a good idea to get "in the spirit" and hung garlands on the fence and placed a basket with greens and a bow in front of the monument.



Looking to the future, landscaping will continue this spring. The plan is to use a variety of perennials that would have been available when the burial ground began in the mid-1600's. The plants' blooming times and colors of blossoms and foliage will extend over the seasons.

We are also investigating several grants that could be used for wayside signs on the site. These signs will help to explain to tourists and visitors the historic importance of the site as the last family burial ground from Roger Williams' "lively experiment" in the separation of church and state as well as who Pardon Tillinghast was and his contributions to the early Town of Providence. For example, he built the first commercial wharf in Providence that is now the hub and capitol of Rhode Island's business community.

Bruce



Bruce Tillinghast, President

**Tax exempt donations to
The Tillinghast Society
May be sent to:
Jane Tillinghast Roberts
355 Blackstone Blvd., Apt. #220
Providence, RI 02906**



POTENTIAL NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Since the By-Laws of the Tillinghast Society, Inc (TSI) limit the terms of our Board of Directors we will in the next few years be looking for Tillinghast Family members who would be interested in serving on the TSI board.

If interested, please contact our secretary, Shelly Tillinghast Walkington, at shellywalkington@yahoo.com for details and an application. We're especially looking for the *under-60* generation.



REUNION?!? WE NEED A LEADER/ORGANIZER !!!

We are hoping that the major part of our work will have been completed by the summer of 2021. Our last Tillinghast Family Reunion was held in 2011 so 10 years seems like an opportune time to hold another one. They are such fun, connecting with "cousins" from around the country and from all walks of life. We are a unique family and with rare exception anyone carrying the Tillinghast name in this country can trace their lineage back to Pardon Tillinghast who settled in Providence c. 1644. There is ONLY ONE Tillinghast Family in this country. Are you interested in helping to celebrate our heritage? Contact Greta for helpful hints on how it has been done before.

ANNUAL SPRING CLEAN-UP

Our annual spring clean-up of leaves and fallen branches will be held on Saturday, May 9th from 10am – 12 noon. "Many hands make light work." Just bring some gloves and if possible a rake (If traveling we do have extra rakes) Coffee and pastries are provided. This is a good opportunity to see our progress "first hand."



Editor's comments

We are grateful to Todd Lawrence for not only his tenacious collecting of our family lineage, but also for sharing the interesting lives of his close family. In the summer of 2002, Volume 3, Issue 2 of Pardon's Progeny, we met Todd's great grandfather, Pardon Wilber Tillinghast, Inventor. His list of inventions run from button to pneumatic tire. In this issue, we meet Todd's grandfather, Theose Tillinghast, who was recently entered into the Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame. Todd reached out to Frank Lennon, President of the RI Aviation Hall of Fame, with information about his grandfather. Lennon's research led to Theose Tillinghast's induction into the RIAHOF. He also received the Galkin award.

Following is Lennon's Introductory statement about the Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame that leads us to the organization's publication of the biography of Theose Tillinghast, found in the following pages. To learn more about RIAHOF, follow this link to their website: <https://riahof.org/>

FYI, my son Brian Gaston and I plan to make a road trip to Providence for Clean Up day on May 9. Come join us for a mini-reunion.

Greta

Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame (RIAHOF)

By *Frank Lennon*

We launched the Rhode Island Aviation Hall of Fame (RIAHOF) in conjunction with the Centennial of Aviation in 2003. RIAHOF is a tax-exempt non-profit group dedicated to identifying, honoring and perpetuating the memory of those individuals who have contributed to Rhode Island's rich aviation history.

Over seventeen years we have inducted 88 individuals and one entire family (the Allen family of balloonists/aeronauts). Previous inductees have included astronauts, war heroes, aeronautical engineers, airline executives, inventors and manufacturers. We have also given special recognition awards to 48 individuals along with the four WWII WASP (Women Air Service Pilots) from RI and the 20 or so Tuskegee Airmen hailing from this state.

Few people know just how rich and varied our aviation history is, and just how many wonderfully skilled and talented contributors to the aerial age have been born in Rhode Island, were educated here, lived here for a portion of their lives or performed some great aviation-related acts or service here.

In past years we have honored luminaries such as Apollo 8 astronaut Bill Anders, former American Airlines CEO Bob Crandall, and Jennifer Murray, the first woman to fly a helicopter around the world solo.

We are always looking for additional nominations, volunteers to help with research, and contributions to an endowment so that we might continue this work. Please email Frank Lennon at FrankL69@aol.com, or call 401-831-8696.

Theose Elwin Tillinghast (1893 – 1982)

World War I Pursuit Pilot; Escaped POW; Commercial Aviation Executive

"Tilly has been a vital part of the international growth of aviation since his days with the United States Army Air Corps in World War I. He has served with outstanding distinction in our Air Force in war and peace. In his long career as a leader in the aviation industry he has helped develop power plants that have been milestones in our aviation progress including those used in such Hall-of-Fame planes as the Air Force's P-47 Thunderbolt and the Navy Corsair."

- General Edwin W. Rawlings, 1958 Major General William E. Mitchell Award Dinner

Theose Elwin Tillinghast was born in Providence May 29, 1893, the first child of Pardon Wilbur Tillinghast and Emily Maria Barnes. Theose came from a long line of Baptist preachers and farmers; the family can trace its lineage back to Elder Pardon Tillinghast (1622-1718). According to his daughter Ann, the name "Theose Elwin" came courtesy of an eccentric aunt who came across it in a novel she was reading.

Theose's father, Pardon Wilbur Tillinghast, was the first family member to step into the worlds of mechanics and science. Pardon worked as a designer for the famed silversmiths, Gotham Manufacturing, and was also an avid cyclist.

An inventor in his spare time, he conducted experiments on a new type of bicycle tire.

He applied for a patent in 1892 for his innovation, a single rubber tube in which the outer, wearing surface combined fabric and vulcanized rubber and the inner surface provided a sealed pneumatic chamber. The importance of this invention to cycling as well as the history of the pneumatic tire was described by the B.F. Goodrich Company in 1918: "The tire invention which proved to be the most fruitful and accordingly most important in the history of the American bicycle industry was that of the "Single Tube" or, as it was termed, "hose pipe" tire, invented and patented by Pardon W. Tillinghast of Providence, Rhode Island, early in the year 1893."

He retained all the rights to his invention. Tillinghast sold the



Theose's baby photo

manufacturing rights to the Hartford Rubber Works in 1893—the same year Theose was born. Some 50,000 sets of these tires were sold in the first two years of their manufacture.

Upon sale of his patent, he moved his growing family to an elegant new home on Broad Street in Edgewood, RI. Daughter Edris was born in 1895.

In the 1900 census he listed his occupation as "inventor". He had an office at 107 Westminster Street in Providence.

As the automobile came into vogue, he turned his talents to improving motor cars and their accessories. He suffered a major stroke in April, 1906, while taking the family for a ride in a new Cadillac he had purchased.

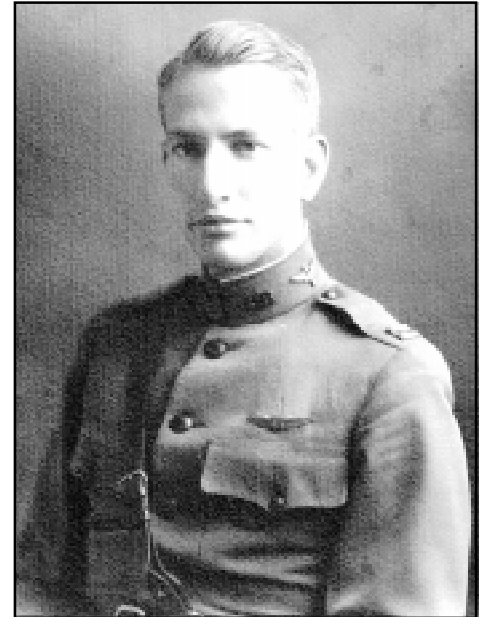
He died on April 20, 1906, before Theose's 13th birthday.

Young Tillinghast followed in his father's footsteps, exhibiting a lifelong interest in automobiles and other mechanical devices. His primary fascination, however, was with airplanes. In later years he told his daughter he was acquainted with the Wright brothers and shared their interest in putting men in the air.

Family members called him "The" (rhyming with Me). Others called him "Till" or "Tilly". Only his younger sister, Edris, called him Theose. They both graduated from Providence Technical High School. His 1913 yearbook entry reads in part:

'The' is interested in aviation. At any local meet he may be found on the field quizzing the bird-men from whom he is able to extract more information in ten minutes than most fellows could in a week. His chief pastime is trying to catch aeroplanes or racing automobiles with his camera...

Widow Emily and her daughter Edris moved to Westerly, probably in the summer of 1913, because Theose was listed as a Westerly resident when he entered Rhode Island State College (now the University of



Captain Tillinghast, c.1920

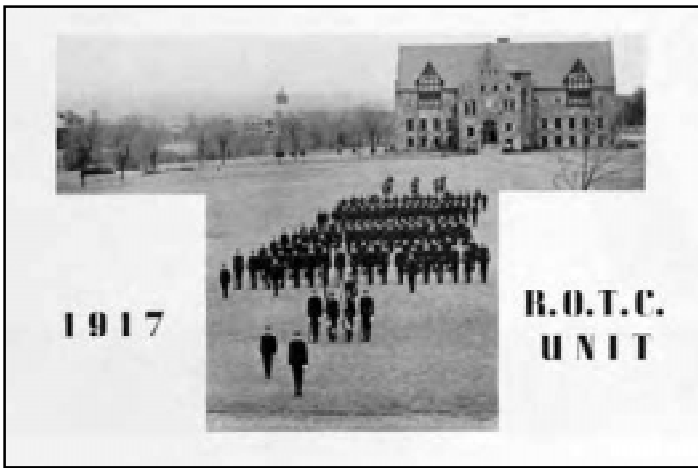
Rhode Island) in September of that year.

Westerly was comfortable and familiar; later in life, would often reminisce about the many happy hours he spent in Westerly as a boy, rowing and fishing in a nearby pond while visiting his mother's parents.

He was quite active in college, playing hockey and baseball and serving as a student manager for the basketball team. He was a member of Delta Alpha Psi fraternity, and he also participated in the Army ROTC program. He played the cornet in the military



Possible high school grad photo, c.1913



Tillinghast (seated left of the drum) played the cornet.

band, was a corporal in 1915 and a sergeant in 1916.

He was also the treasurer of the college's Society of Mechanical Engineers.

According to classmate and roommate William Gillis, he worked one summer as a repairman in a garage to help pay his tuition. He served an apprenticeship in a machine shop as well. He also pursued his interest in photography, selling many of his pictures to Providence newspapers. The college provided him with a darkroom, and he was their unofficial photographer from 1914 – 1917.

In a 1983 letter to the Tillinghast family, Gillis wrote that "...Tillinghast took many pictures of airplanes."

Tillinghast's fascination with airplanes, and the fact that he had already rubbed shoulders with some of the giants of early aviation (see sidebar), undoubtedly led to the decision he made in April, 1917.

Gillis wrote, "... his interest [in aeroplanes] led to his leaving college to join the air service" when war was declared in the spring of 1917.

When the US declared war with Germany, the US Air Service only had 65 trained flying officers. A few of those men had seen active service during the Punitive Expedition in Mexico but most had no wartime experience. Chief Signal Officer Major General George O. Squier had to work tirelessly to expand the meager Aviation Section under his command. President Wilson authorized the Aviation Section to use civilian flying schools for preliminary flight training, since the military had very few aviation schools.

Potential pilots enlisted in the Aviation Section, Signal Enlisted Reserve Corps, and were assigned to active duty so that they could complete their training and earn a commission. Those who met certain requirements (such as previous flying experience, a college degree, and perhaps previous military or ROTC experience) joined as sergeants.



Possible self portrait, showing his college room.

Tillinghast met those requirements and was enlisted as a sergeant, Signal Enlisted Reserve Corps (ASSERC). He began his military service on April 23, 1917, listing the Westerly address, and was assigned to ground school at Mineola, Long Island.

This was the first class of reserve military aviators; his commitment was for a term of "four years less a month after war was declared". Later in life, John H. Baker, one of his Mineola classmates, wrote: "We learned to fly together at Roosevelt Field, Long Island in the spring of 1917... Got our wings that summer, and spent the following fall and winter helping to staff various new training fields in this country."

On July 20, 1917 he was commissioned First Lieutenant with Aviation Section, Signal Officer's Reserve Corps possibly at Brooks Field, San Antonio, Texas. He served as a flying instructor from July 21, 1917 to August 10, 1917 at Selfridge Field, Mt. Clemens, Michigan. On August 11, 1917, he was ordered to active duty. In mid-August he returned to Kingston for a reunion of former RI State College students who had earned their commissions.

He continued as a flying instructor at Selfridge until October 25, 1917, when he was named Adjutant, 8th Aero Squadron and transferred to Garden City, Long Island, to await transportation overseas. These sailed to England on November 22, 1917, arriving on December 8. He spent the next month at a camp in Winchester, the major assembly and transfer point for American and Canadian troops arriving in Europe.

According to family records, he was assigned on January 10, 1918 to No. 61 Training Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, at South Carlton, a village in Lincolnshire in east central England.

His Royal Flying Corps file in the British National Archives shows that he joined No. 45 Training Squadron on April 28 (also at South Carlton), and was then transferred to No. 2 Fighter Squadron of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) on June 6. On June 28 he was issued orders posting him to the 17th Aero Squadron of the US Air Service at Petite Synthe near Dunkirk in France. The unit flew Sopwith Camels, and he quickly earned the nickname "Tailspin Tilly" because he was able to maneuver the Sopwith Camel with such a degree of proficiency that he was able to put the aircraft in a tailspin and pull out of it at the last possible moment.

The 17th had been the first squadron sent to Canada to be trained by the British; the first squadron to be completely trained prior to be sent overseas with its full complement of pilots; the first squadron to be attached to Royal Flying Corps units for combat duty; and it was the first US squadron to go into action.

On July 15, 1918, the 17th Aero Squadron entered combat

Tillinghast's Early Aviation Photography

As a teenager, Theose was fascinated by both photography and airplanes. RIAHOF discovered some of his early aviation work in an old scrapbook buried in the URI library archives. His photos of aviation pioneers William Thaw and Steve MacGordon are historically significant.

In a 1983 letter to the Tillinghast family, college roommate William Gillis wrote that "...Tillinghast took many pictures of airplanes."

He took some of those pictures September 25, 1913—the same month he entered college. They showed fliers William Thaw and Steve MacGordon with their Curtiss Model E seaplane at Newport's Atlantic Beach, and also in flight around the area.

Thaw, scion of a wealthy Pittsburgh family, had dropped out of Yale that summer to learn to fly. MacGordon, a Curtiss instructor from Chicago, was already a record-holding pioneer aviator.

Shortly thereafter, Thaw and McGordon took off, As it happened, Gerald Hanley (2006 RIAHOF inductee) and instructor Ray Morris were flying near the Newport Naval Station, observing submarines at work beneath the water. The two crews spotted each other. In the breathless prose of the day, the *Providence Bulletin* described "two white-winged hydro-aeroplanes...shot over Newport late yesterday afternoon after an exciting aerial trip from Conanicut Island, during which both machines...attained a speed of more than 80 miles per hour."

When they landed in the Providence River near Hanley's hangar at Fields Point, early aviation photography Raymond Estey (2018 RIAHOF inductee) was there to snap a group picture, which appeared in the Providence papers.

Within a year of that photo Thaw was in France, where he joined the Foreign Legion before transferring to the French Air Service. He became one of the founders of (and also commanded) the famed Lafayette Escadrille. He is believed to be the first American to engage in aerial combat in World War I. Thaw became an ace who was one of the most highly decorated American pilots in that conflict.

MacGordon died of injuries after the crash of a Curtiss Jenny in Newport News, VA in June, 1916. His student survived,



Tillinghast's image, inscribed in his own hand, "MacGordon & Thaw at Atlantic Beach."



Above: Providence Bulletin ran this photo on September 25, 1913, just after the flight up the bay. (L-R): Bill Batcher (Curtiss factory mechanic), Gerald Hanley, William Thaw, Stephen McGordon, and Raymond Morris. Below: Two weeks later, Thaw (right) and MacGordon became the first to fly beneath all four of New York's East River bridges. This photo appeared in a New York newspaper.





With his mother, before going overseas.



In front of the prop of his Sopwith Camel.



17th Aero pilots, L-R: Glen Wicks, George Thomas. George Vaughn and Tillinghast. Vaughn was America's second-ranking Air Service ace to survive the war. He was a recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross, Britain's Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Silver Star.



Tillinghast (L) stands with another pilot in front of a very colorfully striped aircraft.

for the first time. Flying from the Petite Synthe Airdrome, the squadron engaged in combat operations almost daily, frequently engaging German aircraft in aerial battles over the skies of northern France and Belgium.

In his 1990 *History of the 17th Aero Squadron* Frederick Clapp wrote, "Tillinghast, whose health at the time was so frail that he was constantly dodging the doctor and whose veins were blue under the thin skin of his temples, ... would never give up flying and fighting."

In *The Camel Drivers: The 17th Aero Squadron in World War I*, authors Otis Lowell Reed and George Roland provided more detail:

Doc Ross decided he would have to send Theose Tillinghast away on sick leave. "Tilly" never had fully recovered from a bout with pneumonia that had laid him in the hospital in June. He went pale and drawn and exhibited a tendency to black out at heights above 17,000 feet, hardly a desirable trait in a pilot. Ross recommended him for sick leave on July 20, a leave that could not be granted immediately because of the limited number of pilots available. So, Tillinghast went on soldiering despite his health.

He did eventually get sick leave and the time he spent in the hospital may well have saved his life, as the 17th Aero Squadron lost eighteen pilots in just six weeks the summer of 1918.

On September 22, 1918, the squadron sent two flights of five planes each on morning patrol over Cambrai. Numerous Fokkers dove on Tillinghast's "C" flight, outnumbering them five-to-one. In the ensuing free-for-all which involved as many as 50 aircraft, all but two of the beleaguered Americans managed to escape.

"Tailspin Tilly" was maneuvering effectively and was gradually getting away when a fluke shot hit his engine. He put his powerless plane into a controlled dive, but the Germans followed him down, filling his plane with bullet holes but miraculously missing him. Seeing his predicament, his squadron mate Lt. Gerald Provost Thomas broke off his own escape and plunged into the horde of German planes attacking Tillinghast's wounded aircraft. He distracted their attention long enough for Tillinghast to make a dead-stick landing atop a German bunker.

Unfortunately, an incendiary bullet struck Thomas' gas tank, and he plunged down in flames. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his selfless action; his citation read in part, "Lieutenant Thomas refused to seek safety... but attacked a superior number of the enemy in order to assist another member of his



Left: Tillinghast and two mechanics lean against the fuselage of a 94th Aero Squadron aircraft, known for its famed "Hat in the Ring" emblem. Above: Sopwith Camel, restored in the colors of the 17th Aero, shown at the Air Force Museum in Dayton, OH.

squadron to escape. In the performance of this act he was shot down and killed."

Tillinghast carried to a ruined church where he spent his first night. Four days later he and a British airman named Lt. Robert A. Anderson were transferred to a nearby farmhouse that had been converted into a small POW camp. There they met two more pilots, Oscar Mandell and John Donaldson.

Mandell and John Donaldson had managed to cut a hole in the roof of the room in which they were confined, and they planned to escape the next night, along with British Corporal George Rogers. The five did manage to get out, and they received food, shelter and civilian clothes from friendly French and Belgian farmers. They were moved along from village to village, very much like the Underground Railroad during the Civil War. They reached the outskirts of Brussels within 5 days, but Mandell and Rogers were captured. The remaining three took another route towards the Netherlands and made it to the Dutch border, 28 days after they first escaped. They had crossed about 200 miles of enemy-held territory.

The border consisted of three fences about five feet apart, with the middle fence being electrified with about 5000 volts of 3-phase current. Fortunately, one of their new Belgian friends owned a small factory that supplied the current for the fence. He had no love for the Germans, so he filled them in on the best way to cut the wires and cross through. They obtained wire cutters with rubber handles and added rubber gloves for good measure.

They walked to about 150 yards of the fence, and could hear the German sentries calling to each other. It took them three hours to crawl the next 100 yards. With a sentry about 100 yards away, they made a run



Tillinghast stands second from left with fellow pilots in this undated wartime photograph.



This picture, dated October 13, 1918, was taken by a Belgian who aided in the escape. The film was buried until after the Armistice near Baelen-sur-Nethe, nine kilometers from the Dutch border. A slightly different version of this photo, taken two days later, was published in Harper's Magazine..



On June 23, 1928, Theose married Margaret Todd, sister of a 17th Aero pilot.



Tillinghast retired as President of United Aircraft Service Corporation in 1958.

for it and cut through the fences. The first shots rang out as they were getting through the third fence, and they made a run to safety.

They were among the very few Allied flying officers to escape from enemy hands during World War I.

Donaldson, who was an ace credited with shooting down eight German aircraft, wrote a detailed account of his own capture and escape which appeared in a 1919 issue of Harper's Monthly. It was reprinted in the June and July, 1922 editions of US Air Service magazine.

Tillinghast's daughter Anne reminisced later, "Many a time we persuaded Dad to retell the story of his escape from German prison camp. This he delighted to do, always expressing his gratitude to those Belgians in particular who had risked their lives to help him and his companions make their way to Holland."

Lt. Tillinghast was issued an emergency passport at the US Embassy at The Hague, and returned to England on November 1, 1918. He was there for another month until he sailed home aboard the Mauretania on December 1.

He decided to stay in the Air Service, and was reassigned to the Air Service Depot in Garden City, NY. However, his health was still compromised, so he spent two months convalescing and regaining his strength at the Military Hospital in Cooperstown, NY.

After returning to duty in March, he became CO of the 57th Aero Squadron at Selfridge Field in Detroit, and was promoted to Captain in July, 1920. Pursuing his mechanical bent, he was then posted to the Engineering Division at McCook Field, Dayton, Ohio, with the Power Plant Section. He became Chief of the Power Plant Branch, the first large-scale engine laboratory at McCook. In 1926 the US Army Air Service became the Army Air Corps.

While in Dayton, he connected with a friend and 17th Aero Squadron ace, Robert C. Todd. Todd introduced Tilly to his sister, Mary Margaret Todd, and the two were eventually married on June 23, 1928 in Madisonville, OH.

In March, 1929 he took leave from the Air Corps to go to England to consult with Armstrong Siddeley about their engines. He and his bride sailed from New York aboard *SS Olympic*.

Armstrong Siddeley manufactured luxury cars, aircraft engines, and later, aircraft. (The company was the forerunner of Hawker Siddeley, a famous name in British aircraft production.)

His daughter Ann wrote in the family history: "He found the work challenging, and upon his return several months later, he decided to leave the military and go into commercial aviation. He resigned with the rank of Major shortly thereafter to join Pratt and Whitney Aircraft in East Hartford, CT, as executive engineer."

He went to Hawaii with the Navy's first aircraft carriers, the *USS Saratoga* and *USS Lexington*, and apparently participated as an engine consultant to the Navy during what was called "Grand Joint Exercise No. 4". Cruising from their west coast bases under radio silence, *Saratoga* and *Lexington* were able to launch an early Sunday morning airstrike against Pearl Harbor on 7 February 1932. In the surprise attack the pilots dropped sacks of flour and scored direct hits on the airfields and all the ships in the harbor.

The mock attack, intended to simulate a Japanese raid on the naval base, was designed to test Pearl's defenses and assess its vulnerability to an attack. The judges ruled that the mock attack was a complete success.

Theose sailed back from Honolulu on board *SS President McKinley* later that month, and shortly thereafter he was named assistant to the President of Engineering for Pratt & Whitney. Two years later, he became sales manager for the company, playing a very active role in military purchases of Pratt & Whitney engines.

He also worked closely with Pan American World Airways

in the development of their trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific service.

On January 12, 1937 he survived the crash of a twin engine Boeing 247D airliner. The plane pancaked into a ridge about 15 miles short of its destination, Union Air Terminal at Burbank, California. Western Air Express Flight 7, flying from Salt Lake City, crashed in severely lowered visibility due to heavy rain and fog. Of the three crew and ten passengers on board, the co-pilot and four passengers died. Theose escaped with a broken ankle.

In 1942 he was named President of United Aircraft Service Corporation. [This was a subsidiary of United Aircraft Corporation, which later became United Technologies Corporation]. He consulted personally with General James Doolittle and General Carl Spaatz in Europe during World War II, and after the war he became personal friend and advisor to virtually all the men who headed the commercial airlines of that era.

He officially retired from the military in 1953 when he reached his 60th birthday

He headed United Aircraft Service Corporation for 16 years. When he planned to retire in 1958, the company invited him to take his wife and spend his last few months visiting many of the major airlines worldwide. He readily agreed, welcoming the opportunity to visit the men with whom he had worked for so many years.

Two months before his retirement, he received the William E. Mitchell Award from the American Legion Aviators Post #743, for his career "making outstanding individual contribution to aviation progress."

As the program for the April 9, 1958 event noted:

He has 'followed the engines', instructing, advising and consulting wherever the air routes led into remote parts of the world...Mr. Tillinghast has built not only a world-wide service and field engineering organization, but a personal reputation for integrity in all problems related to the reliability, durability and economy of aircraft engines, including the revolutionary change-over to jets. His forty years with [United Aircraft] have earned him myriad friends, all of whom wish him good luck in his retirement.

During his working life he was constantly on the road, so in retirement he focused on spending time with his wife and family. He visited his daughter's family in Ohio regularly, and flew to California at least once a year to visit with his son. In August every year he rented a beach house in Groton Long Point, CT, for the entire family to use.

He spent many weekends on his sailboat, the "Maran" (after his wife and daughter's names). Old friends from the aircraft industry would frequently join him for sails to Block Island, RI. He was an occasional golfer, but preferred to spend time with his wife. They went on long walks every day.

Theose and Margaret owned land in Fort Lauderdale on the Intercoastal Waterway, and they had plans to build a home there and sail down the Intercoastal each year, but those plans never materialized.

Theose Tillinghast died on 16 March 1982, leaving a son, Todd, then of Danville, CA; a daughter, Ann Lawrence of Shaker Heights, OH, and five grandchildren.

He was buried at Saint John's Episcopal Church Cemetery, West Hartford, CT with full military honors. The University of Rhode Island Army ROTC Hall of Fame inducted him in 2015. He was also a charter member of the Order of the Daedaleans, a fraternal group of World War I pilots organized in 1934 at the suggestion of



This 1970 photo, taken at Theose's summer home at Groton Long Point, CT, is the last picture showing the entire family together. Back row, L-R: Todd Tillinghast, Chuck Lawrence, Scott Tillinghast, Ann (Tillinghast) Lawrence, Margaret Tillinghast, Theose Tillinghast. Front row L-R: Brian Tillinghast, Steve Lawrence, Todd Lawrence, David Lawrence.



Theose and Margaret are flanked by their two children, Ann Lawrence and Todd Tillinghast.



Margaret, Theose and grandson Todd Lawrence.

Billy Mitchell. Eligibility was limited to commissioned officers who were rated as pilots of heavier-than-air aircraft no later than November 11, 1918.