

ArtiFactsheet: Sopwith Triplane

The U.K. designed Sopwith Triplane was a successful attempt to produce a fighter with outstanding manoeuvrability and excellent visibility for the pilot. Records of procurement are very confused, but it seems that the Royal Naval Air Service (U.K.) received all of the small number of Triplanes available. Even though the Triplane remained in front-line service for less than a year, it was so successful that it inspired several German triplane designs. Only 150 Sopwith Triplanes were built.

The all-Canadian B Flight of No. 10 (Naval) Squadron were equipped with Triplanes. Called the Black Flight, partly because of their black cowlings, their aircraft were named: Black Maria, Black Sheep, Black Prince, Black Roger, and Black Death.

For more information about the Sopwith Triplane visit ingeniumcanada.org/aviation/collection-research/artifact-sopwith-triplane.php.

Many artifacts related to aviation and First World War planes can be found in the collection of Ingenium – Canada’s Museums of Science and Innovation: ingeniumcanada.org/ingenium/collection-research/collection.php.

Fun Fact

Wing Commander Paul A. Hartman piloted the Museum’s Triplane during its first flight, on May 5, 1967 at Rockcliffe airport.

Artifact Details

Sopwith Triplane, 1966
Manufacturer: Carl R. Swanson
Artifact no. 1967.0693

The Sopwith Triplane found at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum is a reproduction built by American amateur airplane-maker Carl R. Swanson between 1963 and 1966. The Museum purchased it in 1966.

Canada Aviation and Space Museum, Image Bank, CAVM 12001

