

Philip Billard

An informal portrait of pilot Philip Billard, 1891-1918, and a biplane. A native of Topeka, Kansas, Billard (born Louis Philip Billard) was well known in the Topeka area for his flying skills in the early days of aviation. When the U. S. entered World War I, Billard volunteered for service in the United States Army as a pilot. He was stationed in France, and assigned the dangerous duty of test pilot. On July 24, 1918, Philip Billard was killed when the DeHaviland 4 aircraft he was testing crashed. In 1938, his older brother, Robert T. Billard, donated Philip's own Longren No. 5 biplane to the Kansas State Historical Society. The biplane had been built by Topeka-based aircraft manufacturer, Albin K. Longren, and stored in the Billard family's garage for two decades following Philip's death. In 1940, the Philip Billard Airport in Topeka, Kansas, was dedicated to his memory.

Date: Between 1914 and 1918

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