

BILL FROST - INVENTOR

William Frost (1848-1935) was born in Saundersfoot and worked as a carpenter. In 1895 he patented a flying machine - a whole 15 years before the first flight of the Wright brothers. The machine was a cross between an airship and a glider and was fitted with a hydrogen cylinder on top and a crank on the propeller.

It is reported by Roscoe Howells from recollections of his father that Bill Frost did make an attempt to fly the plane. It took off but caught in a tree top as he tried to clear a hedge. Before he could make repairs a violent storm took the plane and smashed it to pieces. Bill Frost was broken hearted but offered the patent to the Secretary of State for War. The reply from the Under Secretary, Mr St John Broderick, thanked him for his offer but said that "The nation does not intend to adopt aerial navigation as a means of warfare".