

THE AEROPLANE COLLECTION NEWS

PRESERVING AVIATION HERITAGE SINCE 1962

THE TAC NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2014

THE TAC WEBSITE

www.theaeroplanecollection.org



Sopwith Camel
Taken At Imperial War Museum North



McDonnell AV8
Taken At Imperial War Museum North

Work Sessions

Take place at

HOOTON PARK

On Wednesday and Thursday
And Occasional Weekends

Please Contact

Colin Schroeder (colinschroeder@hotmail.com)

or

Dave Arkle (d.arkle@ntlword.com)

Lloyd Robinson's e mail

I have waited a few days after our 52nd Anniversary Weekend to let the dust settle and to have undertaken a little preparation work for the 53rd events in 2015. Before we look ahead to the future I feel we should just spend a minute or so looking backwards. The 52nd Anniversary event took place in the Coventry area and to me seemed to go very well. The inclusion of our old friends, in all senses of the word!, from the Midlands Aircraft Preservation Society added to the event and they themselves helped make it that much more interesting by organising our visit to Bericote Farm – Thank you David.

From some of the feedback I have already had comments seem favourable. Sadly this in itself poses a problem – how do we maintain, or better the standard set by the Holiday Inn and the places we visited? Incidentally I thought that the timings and events we did this year was about right, especially the afternoon 'clan gathering / picture show' – what do YOU think? Should we use this template for future events? The event in Coventry would not have been so good if it were not for quite a few members who provided support in many different ways. We had a variety of providers of Raffle Prizes - I omitted to make note of who donated what – but thank you to you all. Joan and Malcolm arranged the production of the Avian and Rapide mugs for us – I hope you bought yours but if you didn't then they are available at Hooton Park. John Kenyon provided the Directions file for everybody, though he was not responsible for the Post Code of the Snitterfield location which placed it some distance from reality. Our various hosts ensured that the locations we visited provided a variety of interesting aircraft to look at. Incidentally, I'll be making my photographs available as I know some people were unable to take photographs over the weekend. If you'd like to let me have any pictures you took I can add them to the NAPS / TAC Digital Image Library and then make them available to those who took part in the weekend if you so allow.

This year's event was not graced by a number of people who were unable to travel the distance to Coventry and this set me thinking of how we could include them and yet at the same time continue to visit various locations outside of the Manchester area as I know that many of you would have to travel considerable distances to

wherever we meet. In discussions during the event David Arkle came up with a great suggestion of York as a location, as it has a variety of aviation and non-aviation sites close by, as well as being attractive as a place where the ladies may like to visit too. Given that the Holiday Inn at Coventry was so good in the service they provided and the prices they charged I have spoken with the Holiday Inn at York. Unfortunately York is rather a bigger tourist attraction than Coventry is and their rates reflect this – Bed and Breakfast is £99, with the Dinner costs around £25. However, they alerted me to the local Holiday Inn Express at Monks Cross, which is a York Park and Ride location and adjacent to a large shopping centre. It has a Toby Restaurant next door so is quite close to the setup we had in Cheadle last year. I'll check their prices and come back to you at a later date. However, this idea would not satisfy the need to accommodate those who live in the Manchester area and who cannot, or will not, travel further afield. So I thought we should give consideration to a 52½th gathering in the Manchester area in mid-April. Not on the scale of our Coventry or Newark events but perhaps encompassing a one-night stay so that we can have a Dinner together on the Saturday evening. Please let me know your thoughts on the idea of two events in 2015, and the locations suggested. Thinking farther ahead and of the locations from which some of our members travel from we could perhaps think about Gloucester / Bristol as one possible location. Leicester comes to mind as another with Bruntingthorpe and the Aeropark at East Midlands Airports as locations to visit, and then perhaps somewhere in the Bedfordshire area to encompass Old Warden. In each case we would try and arrange to visit places that are not generally accessible to the public. I have in my two of these in mind for the York area already! Is the idea of visiting differing localities one that is acceptable to you?

I look forward to hearing back from you with your thoughts on the above.

Best wishes

Lloyd

Mike and Jon have been out and about during October and picked up another piece of our Lancaster undercarriage and three more Hercules cylinders from East Midlands. Jon's friend David Burke also managed to source two Cirrus cylinders and inlet manifold for our Miles engine project. Photos by Jon



Meanwhile Chairman and Archivist Colin has come across this WW2 portable air raid siren complete with packing case in the archive. He and I had great fun assembling it last Thursday and of course it had to be tested naturally. We now await the complaints to arrive about the noisy neighbours in Hooton Park.

Lastly to keep you up to date on Stewarts progress with the Leonides engine, this picture also taken last Thursday shows he has completed painting the casing and has now turned his attention to the ancillaries. The lump on the left hand side is the constant speed controller so I am informed.



The above photo taken on the Sunday morning of the reunion weekend at Peter Turner's Miles Gemini & Messenger store Snitterfield in Warwickshire, about six early MAPS members joined us for this visit some of whom can be seen above.

This unfortunately was the only group photo I took all weekend so you will have to wait till the November edition when hopefully I will have scrounged some off Lloyd.



On the Friday afternoon after lunch in the DC6 Liner restaurant Jon Howard took a trip in the Proctor 5 G-AKIU as indeed did Lloyd and Linda from Coventry Airport.



One for Simon Pulford, MAM's latest acquisition Tornado GR4 ZA452/021.

Please note Simon this has a few extras added to its tail which make it look like an aircraft !

For those not in the know all will become clear next month I promise.

George William Bulmer

George Bulmer was born on 1 September, 1898, in Dixon, Illinois, USA, of British parents. His father's work caused the family to move and, by 1910, they had settled in Toronto, Canada.

George trained as an accountant, and worked in Toronto. In April, 1917, he joined the Royal Flying Corps in Ottawa. Finishing his flying training in Britain, George was gazetted as a Flying Officer on 24 December, 1917.

On 29 December, 1917, he was posted to 22 Squadron at Estree Blanche, in France to fly the Bristol F2B Fighter. 22 Squadron moved to Auchel on 22 January, 1918, and to Treizennes on 2 February.

George was in action on the morning of 6 March, piloting Bristol Fighter C4810, when *"while on patrol east of La Bassee at 16,000 feet.... The formation was attacked by 9EA. Leader dived on our tail at close range and my observer (2Lt SJ Hunter) put a burst in to at about 50 yards range and drove it down out of control. The enemy aircraft continued to dive to the east. My machine being badly shot about I retired."* This was around 11:15 am, and the enemy aircraft claimed out of control was identified as a Pfalz DIII scout, though German records do not confirm a loss.

On 16 March, George was flying C4810 again, but this time with 2Lt PS Williams as observer, when, at about 10:30 am he spotted a formation of machines which were *"silver, blue and dark green and one machine with blackish coloured body and red nose"*. George attacked the formation, later noting in his Combat Report : *"the machine I dived on went down completely out of control and as I pulled out of dive my observer fired on a second machine which also went down completely out of control."* The German aircraft were identified as Pfalz DIII scouts, and both of them were credited to George and his observer as 'out of control' (meaning probably destroyed) at 10:30 am over the Henin Leitard area. Again, German records do not confirm these losses. This was a common error, as aircraft manoeuvred to break off combat, and black exhaust smoke from an engine with its throttle fully opened was misinterpreted as a sign of damage.

22 Squadron moved to Serny on 21 March, and two days later to Vert Galand; both moves being in response to the German offensive and the British Army retreated. On 23 March George was again flying with Williams, but this time in A7251, at 10,000 feet when they encountered enemy aircraft at about 10,000 feet near Brussy at about 11:00 am. During the ensuing dogfight, one of the German Albatros scouts *"passed immediately under ours"* George reported, allowing him and Williams to fire about 5 rounds in to it *"when it spun down... and crashed."* George and his observer were credited with an Albatros DV destroyed.

On 28 March the British attacked at Arras, but on 9 April the Germans renewed attacks in the hope of splitting the British and French forces and threaten the Channel ports. The Squadron moved back to Serny on 9 April, and were engaged heavily in April and May. George Bulmer, and his observer, were to make four claims in May.

The first of these was on 6 May, *"I picked out one Pfalz scout and dived twice on it. After the second dive the enemy machine was seen by my observer to lose speed and sideslip very steeply toward the ground completely out of control. As we continued the fight with the other two machines we were not able to see the EA actually crash."* The observer, in C4888, on this occasion was Lt HE Elsworth. The crew were credited with a Pfalz DIII 'out of control' over Fresnoy at 10:25 am, there being no confirmation that it had crashed.

Two days later Williams had returned to fly as George's observer in C4888 when the 22 Squadron patrol intercepted about six Pfalz scouts at about 12,000 feet over Brebieres. George attacked,

and saw his target sideslip away, apparently out of control. This time George's claim was confirmed by the report of about Biff pilot who reported, *"the machine's tail was seen to crumple up"* and he was credited with a Pfalz DIII destroyed at 10:15 am.

The next claim was a target of opportunity, when German observation balloons were spotted when returning from patrol on 16 May. Observation balloons were priority targets because of their key role in directing artillery and reconnaissance, but attacking them was unpopular as they were heavily defended and, being inflated with hydrogen, liable to explode and bring down their attackers. Nevertheless, George attacked: *"The second balloon I dived on was seen to give way in the centre and both ends fold up and it immediately fell to the ground. Other balloons were drawn down along the line but none were seen to be actually damaged."* The collapsing balloon was recorded as coming down about a mile east of Neuf Berquin, at about 10:45 am. Of course, all that had been achieved is that German observation work had been disrupted as a replacement balloon would have been inflated as soon as the attackers left.

The next day, George was returning from a sortie escorting DH4 bomber when he *"observed an EA machine coming from the west and losing height through the clouds."* George positioned C4888 to attack and *"dived firing about 150 rounds to the enemy machine. The EA pulled nose up and did one turn of a spin then nose-dived to the ground and crashed, southeast of Douai near Villiers."* Another 22 Squadron crewed observed a two-seater C Type going down south east of Douai at about 12:00 noon, and were able to confirm the claim as destroyed.

George Bulmer's success, particularly during May, led him to be appointed as a Flight Commander in 22 Squadron on 29 May, 1918, and he was recommended for the Military Cross. It was clear that George was a particularly aggressive pilot and he was often chosen to lead the Squadron in the air.

The Military Cross citation appeared in the *London Gazette* of 16 September, 1918 : *"For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty as a fighting pilot. In recent operations he has destroyed seven enemy machines and an observation balloon. By his tenacity and zeal he set a magnificent example to his squadron."*

George made a final claim on 9 July, when he attacked an Albatros C type two-seater, encountered north of Bois de Phalempin at about 11:00 am. As George fired at the Albatros it *"did a close turn of a spiral and then burst in to flames dropping through the clouds."* Some sources note that George made a further claim in July but this, along with the suggestion that he received the Distinguished Flying Cross in addition to his Military Cross, are inaccurate.

Captain George Bulmer continued to fly as a Flight Commander with 22 Squadron until 20 August, 1918, when he was posted to Home Establishment. 22 Squadron remained in Europe until 31 August, 1919, when it moved to Ford Junction as a cadre. George, meanwhile, had left the Royal Air Force on 13 April, 1919, and returned to Toronto to resume his work as an accountant.

George Bulmer was a devout Methodist, and when his parents separated and divorced, he became estranged from them for many years and in 1925 he moved back to Dixon, Illinois. He lived there, and later in Chicago, for more than 40 years.

In the Spring of 1970 he moved to Phoenix, Arizona, and died in San Diego on 5 April, 1987. George Bulmer's son was an officer on USS Nautilus, the first US nuclear submarine.

| | Date | Claim | Serial | Area | Time | Claim type | Observer |
|---|-------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | 6.3.1918 | Pfalz DIII | C4810 | East La Bassee | 11:15 | Out of control | 2Lt SJ Hunter |
| 2 | 16.3.1918 | Pfalz DIII | C4810 | Henin Lietard | 10:30 | Out of control | 2Lt PS Williams |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-------------|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 3 | 16.3.1918 | Pfalz DIII | C4810 | Henin Lietard | 10:30 | Out of control | 2Lt PS Williams |
| 4 | 23.3.1918 | Albatros DV | A7251 | Brussy | 11:00 | Destroyed | 2Lt PS Williams |
| 5 | 6.5.1918 | Pfalz DIII | C4888 | Fresnoy | 10:25 | Out of control | Lt HE Elsworth |
| 6 | 8.5.1918 | Pfalz DIII | C4888 | Brebieres | 10:15 | Destroyed | 2Lt PS Williams |
| 7 | 16.5.1918 | Balloon | C4888 | 1 mile north east of Neuf Berquin | 10:45 | Destroyed | 2Lt PS Williams |
| 8 | 17.5.1918 | C Type | C4888 | South east Douai | 12:00 | Destroyed | 2Lt PS Williams |
| 9 | 9.7.1918 | C Type | C4888 | North of Bois de Phalempin | 11:00 | Destroyed in flames | 2Lt J McDonald |

Sources

Above the Trenches : A Complete Record of the Fighter Aces of the British Empire Air Forces 1915-1920, by Christopher Shores, Norman Franks & Russell Guest, Grub Street, 1990

In Clouds of Glory : American Airmen Who Flew With the British During the Great War, by James J Hudson, University of Arkansas Press, 1990

The Military Cross to Flying Personnel of Great Britain and the Empire 1914-1919 with service and biographical details of recipients, by Hal Giblin & Norman Franks, Savannah, 2008

Royal Air Force Communiqués 1918, edited by Christopher Cole, Tom Donovan , 1990

The Sky Their Battlefield : Air Fighting and the Complete List of Allied Air Casualties From Enemy Action in the First War : British, Commonwealth and United States Air Services 1914 to 1918, by Trevor Henshaw, Grub Street, 1995

Honours and Awards Army, Navy and Air Force 1914-1920, JB Hayward & Son, 1979

Pi in the Sky : A History of No 22 Squadron Royal Flying Corps & RAF in the Great War of 1914 – 1918, by WFJ Harvey, Colin Huston, 1971

Bristol F2B Fighter : King of Two-Seaters, by Chaz Bowyer, Ian Allan, 1985

RAF Squadrons : A comprehensive record of the movement and equipment of all RAF squadrons and their antecedents since 1912, by Wing Commander CG Jefford MBE, Airlife, 1988

On the next page the sketch Noughts & Crosses by George William Bulmer when on finding it in his loft set John off on the above research.
Just one thing John how did NAPS come by it ?

Many thanks to John Kenyon for this article and photo.

