



Editorial

Mick Davis

Our society has an aging membership and the onset of this pandemic has had its consequences. An obvious one is that a large proportion of our members are over 70 years old and will, therefore, be shielding

themselves. This applies to certain members of the committee. We had to cancel our AGM, scheduled for 18 April, and planned committee meetings have been altered with a test run showing a that a Zoom meeting is possible – scheduled for 4 June, by which time this issue will have been posted. The current restrictions also mean that postage of items from the society shop has been put on hold. Hopefully, some of the current restrictions may be eased in the near future but, until then, we'll all just have to keep our heads down.

Although unrelated to the pandemic, the passing of Paul Leaman has come as a great shock to all who knew him. Newer members of CCI may not appreciate Paul's importance but he was, for many years, the public face of the society and did so much to ensure that it still thrives today. A fitting obituary will be found on pp 141-143.

This Issue

I still have a considerable stock of Stewart Taylor articles which are based on his interviews with former pilots and observers and, largely, illustrated with images which they provided. The only drawback is that a large proportion, being Canadian, had enlisted in the RNAS and so ended up flying Sopwith types. Rather than picking another Camel pilot, I've selected the story of a couple of 8N Triplane pilots for this issue. It's another of those SKT articles that gives insight to the character of the people mentioned, rather than just giving statistical information about missions flown and combat successes achieved.

Graham Pitchfork recently passed on to me a selection of raw material that he considered to be of possible use. It most certainly is and the first feature to be drawn from it is the story L.A. Colbert, a 100 Sqn observer, whose parents were able to inform the War Office and their son's unit of his fate – a reversal of the usual situation and one resulting from an arrangement between the airman and his father.

Mike Kelsey is acknowledged as the leading authority on the air war over Macedonia and his latest take is presented in this issue; a listing of the enemy machines captured by the British that complements Paul Leaman's opus on those captured on the Western Front.

David Leamount then presents the story of his grandfather, Major L.W. Leamount DSO MC, who flew operationally from 1915 until 1918 on types that ranged from the unwieldy Voisin LAS to the sublime Bristol Fighter.

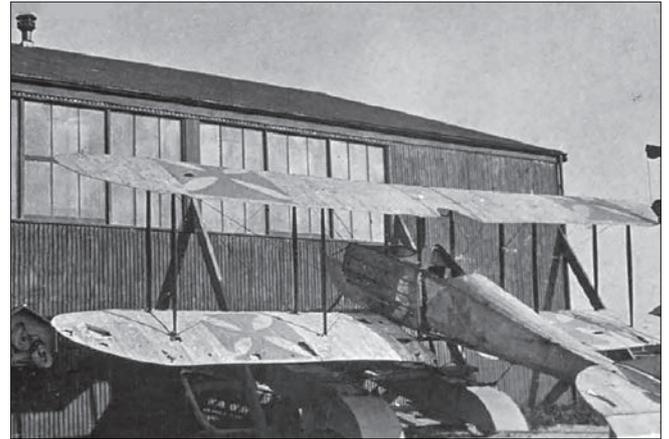
Andy Thomas suggested, a couple of years ago, that we publish something on the Hellenic Naval Air Service and provided some material and a selection of photographs. I suggested that we involve Paschalis Palavouzis, whose local knowledge might help add extra information. The fruits of that collaboration begin in this issue and make for fascinating reading, particularly detail of the political situation that led to Greek airmen working with British forces in the Aegean. This initial part includes almost 100 photographs of men and machines, the vast majority of which will be new to our

readers. The Gazetteer continues with information about the support units that enabled the squadrons of the BEF to function. This section will conclude in the next issue which will see the start of the tabulations that detail each aerodrome.

Next Issue

Obviously, I'm looking forward to Part 2 of the Hellenic Air Service feature, which will cover the later war years and operations with the RNAS and RAF. Paschalis is covering new ground for English-speaking aviation enthusiasts and his work must become a standard reference in the future.

Paul Hare has taken time away from the histories of individual BE2s and produced the definitive history of the



BE8/8a. A mystery picture, not included in the article, has emerged of the type and shows a BE8 in floatplane guise and in German markings. Can anyone throw light on this unusual subject?

Kenneth B. Watson achieved nine combat successes with 70 Sqn during 1918 and his story has been provided by Stewart Taylor. It is illustrated by more than 60 photographs and Alan Simpson is to be thanked for scanning the negatives and enhancing the resultant images.

As a contrast to Watson's fighter exploits, there will also be a short biography of Frank Thomas Digby, an early RNAS pilot best known for his time on Handley Pages.

Editor's Choice

The Maurice Farman Se.7 'Longhorn' was a fairly large machine, making it quite difficult to manoeuvre by ground crews on an aerodrome. The photo, below, shows how it could be done, with two air mechanics taking weight off the tail by hanging on the skids.



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