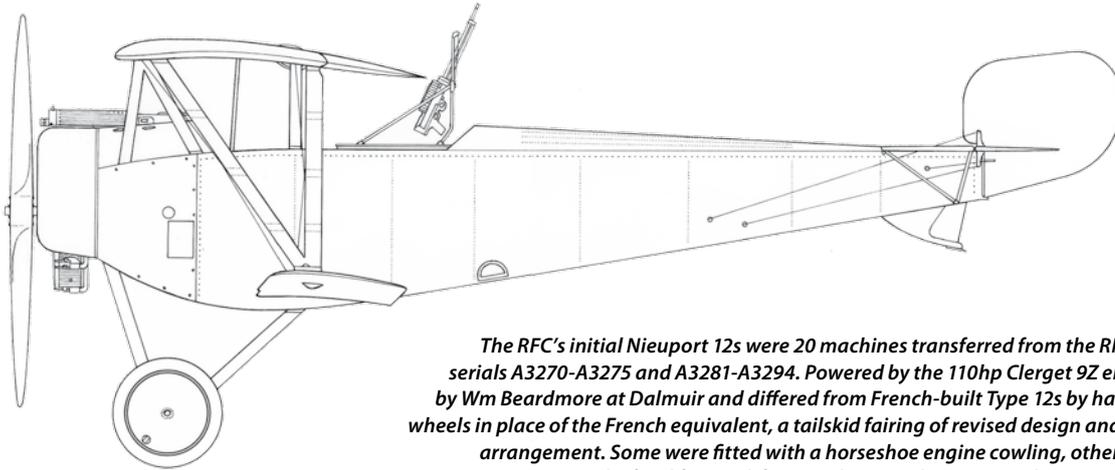


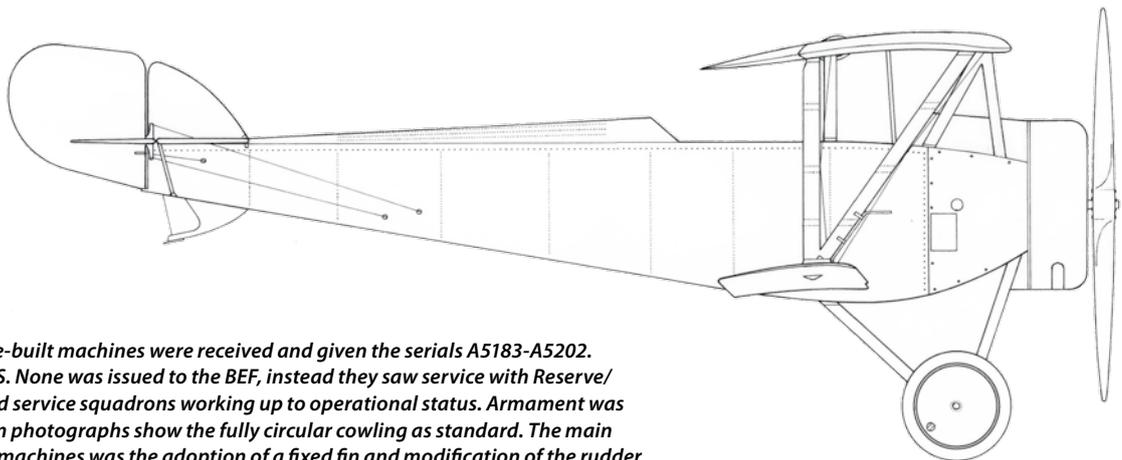
RFC NIEUPOORT 12s

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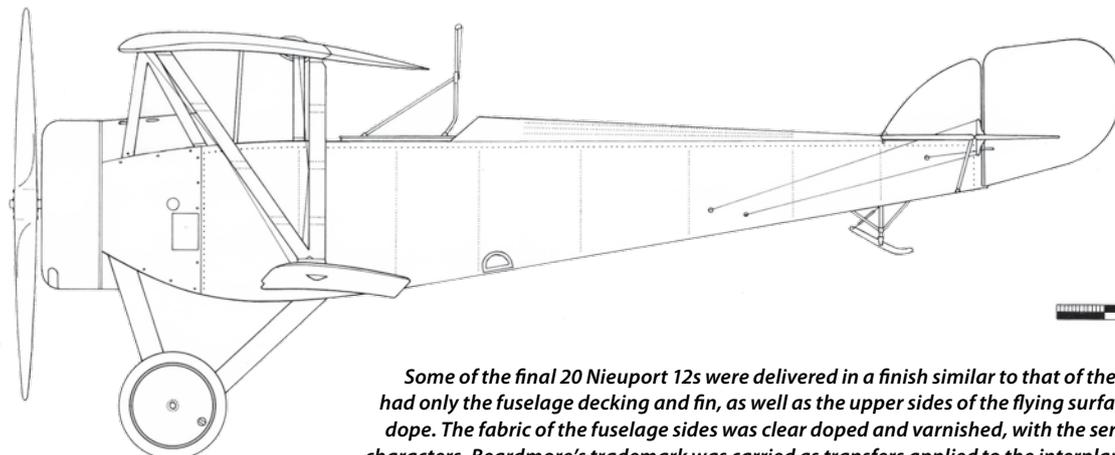
The RFC's initial Nieuport 12s were 20 machines transferred from the RNAS, which were given the serials A3270-A3275 and A3281-A3294. Powered by the 110hp Clerget 9Z engine, they had been built by Wm Beardmore at Dalmuir and differed from French-built Type 12s by having Palmer 700 x 100mm wheels in place of the French equivalent, a tailskid fairing of revised design and the tailplane struts in a V arrangement. Some were fitted with a horseshoe engine cowling, others with a fully circular one.

Armament comprised a fixed forward-firing Vickers machine gun and a Lewis gun carried on the French-designed Etévé mounting. All except six of those initial machines saw operational service with 46 Squadron and some survived until April 1917, when the unit re-equipped with Sopwith Pups. Those training machines which didn't reach France were un-armed. The standard finish for the first 20 machines comprised clear doped and varnished wheel covers and undersides of the flying surfaces and fuselage. The wing and tailplane upper surfaces and the remainder of the fuselage fabric was covered in PC10 (or a proprietary khaki dope). The cowlings and metal panels appear to have been left in their natural finish. Serials were marked in white on the rear fuselage and featured an apostrophe between the prefix letter and the number. National markings were marked in the usual positions.



A further 20 Beardmore-built machines were received and given the serials A5183-A5202. They, too, were ex RNAS. None was issued to the BEF, instead they saw service with Reserve/ Training Squadrons and service squadrons working up to operational status. Armament was not fitted and all known photographs show the fully circular cowling as standard. The main difference from earlier machines was the adoption of a fixed fin and modification of the rudder profile to eliminate the balance area. Several machines had only a single strut bracing the tailplane.

Several machines in the A5183-A5202 batch were delivered with the Etévé mounting and some had broad-chord fairings added to the undercarriage legs. A modification on at least three machines, which may have been made at unit level, was the replacement of the factory tailskid by one supported on a pyramidal strut arrangement. It was repositioned on A5185 and A5193 to centre on the rearmost fuselage spacing strut but on A5200 it was placed immediately ahead of the sternpost.



Scale of feet



Some of the final 20 Nieuport 12s were delivered in a finish similar to that of the initial machines but most had only the fuselage decking and fin, as well as the upper sides of the flying surfaces, covered in pigmented dope. The fabric of the fuselage sides was clear doped and varnished, with the serials applied in small black characters. Beardmore's trademark was carried as transfers applied to the interplane struts and the elevators were striped in the national colours – a standard practice for that manufacturer.