

The Haltonian Magazine

Volume 4 No. 2a

Autumn Daedalus 1927

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THE DAEDALUS

The Magazine of the
Old Boys' Association,
Royal Air Force, Halton.

AUTUMN, 1927

Vol. I.

No. 2.

The Schneider Trophy, 1927

AN AIR MECHANIC'S ACCOUNT.

SQUADRON LEADER L. H. SLATTER, O.B.E., D.S.C., D.F.C. and Flight-Lieut. O. E. Worsley, with the main party of the Flight, left Victoria Station, London, on the 28th of August, and arrived at Venice at 2100 hours the following day. The Squadra Inglese (Coppa Schneider) was accommodated at the Italian seaplane station, Aeroporto, San Andrea, and was given a brand new hangar for its machines. The Italian racing machines were housed in a hangar on the opposite bank of the canal.

The personnel and machines arrived simultaneously, so that no time could be spent in exploration outside the station, for work had to begin right away. The machines were erected and tested, and the results were satisfactory. The machines were the Supermarine S 5's (numbers N 219, N 220, N 221), Gloster IVA, (N 222), Gloster IVB (N 223) and the Crusader, which crashed. A week before the race, the engines had to be changed on N 222 and N 219, and the rigging on N 220 had to be altered. This entailed a great deal of work, for on racing machines the ends of the wires are enclosed in the floats, wings and fuselage.

The machines chosen for the race were N 223, N 219 and N 220, and their racing numbers were No. 1, No. 6 and No. 4 respectively. Flight-Lieut. S. M. Kinkead, D.S.O., D.S.C., D.F.C. was pilot on No. 1, Flight-Lieut. O. E. Worsley on No. 6 and Flight-Lieut. S. N. Webster, A.F.C., on No. 4.

On Friday, September the 23rd, the navigability, taxiing and mooring tests took place, but on Saturday, Flight-Lieut. Webster had to repeat his taxiing, as the Committee decided that he had not taxied a long enough distance on the previous day. Saturday was spent in the inspection of every possible detail. Sunday morning brought a stiff breeze, which made the sea inside the lagoon quite rough, and although it became calmer later in the afternoon, it was found impossible to hold the race.

Monday morning was fine and calm, but not too

promising. When orders came through that the race would be held, the machines were taken out of the hangar, lashed down and the engines run up, after which, plugs were changed, plug cowling put on and the engines run up again. Results being satisfactory, the petrol, oil and water used in the ground runs were replaced and a final superficial inspection carried out.

On the other side of the canal the Macchi mechanics were doing the same kind of thing. The Fiat A.S.8 engines, with which all three Macchi machines were equipped, had a queer note when running. When ticking over, only two or three cylinders fired on each bank, and this produced intermittent loud reports. On opening up, however, the sound diminished to a low murmur, a sort of whirring sound, which increased in volume as more throttle was given, but the note was not convincing even at full throttle.

Of the race, there is no need to write as it is now a matter of history, but one point worthy of mention is the remarkable contrast in cornering between the Italian and British machines. The Italian climbing turns which developed into a half roll looked artistic, but the British straight turns gained miles, particularly in the case of Flight-Lieut. Kinkead. It was bad luck that this pilot had to retire in the fifth lap owing to part of his spinner breaking away, as he was putting up a very fine show. Flight-Lieuts. Webster and Worsley flew splendidly, and finished the course, making faultless landings.

The Macchi mechanics afterwards told us that their sparking plugs and magnetos had let them down. They congratulated us on our victory, but assured us that they would win next year. Mr. Levine who was at Venice for the race, informed us that America would win next time. This was rather puzzling. Apparently they are under the delusion that Great Britain will not be competing next year!

Ex-Apprentices' Passing-Out Examination Marks

MANY ex-apprentices have written to us about their "Passing-out" examination. To make the situation quite clear, we quote from the Air Ministry Weekly Order which deals with the question. If any additional information is required, the Station Education Officer should be approached.

1. When an aircraft apprentice or apprentice clerk passes out of a school of instruction, the result of the passing-out examination in educational subjects will be entered on Form 865 in the first instance, as either "Class A," "Class B," or "Class C." The C.O. of the training establishment will ensure that the result is also recorded on page 4 of the Certificate of Service (Form 280). The method of classification will be similar to that for the educational test for reclassification as L.A.C., namely :—

Class A (Pass with credit)	= 75 per cent. of maximum marks or over.
Class B (Pass)	= 50 per cent. of maximum marks, but less than 75 per cent.
Class C (Failure)	= Less than 50 per cent. of maximum marks.

The authority for the entry on Form 280 will be the passing-out list as finally approved by the Air Ministry.

2. No entry will be made in casualty forms. The information required by the Officer i/c Records will be obtained from the duplicate Form 865 and the passing-out list which will be forwarded to him by the Air Ministry for custody.

3. In order that the service documents of airmen, serving in units, who enlisted as aircraft apprentices may be completed in this respect, the Officer i/c Records will arrange for their present C.O.'s to be informed of the results obtained on passing out, and of the exact notation to be made on Form 280. The information will be forwarded without application from units concerned.

4. Should the actual percentage of marks obtained by an aircraft apprentice on passing out be required at any time, application should be made to the Officer i/c Records.

Easy Saving

A WORD TO THE WISE.

YOU who are now members of the Royal Air Force may not perhaps realise how great an improvement has been made in Service rates of pay. Men who did their soldiering some years ago speak with good-humoured envy of the rates of pay which airmen of to-day enjoy. In fact, you are now in so substantial a position that you may fairly and reasonably be asked to consider the advisability of saving a part of your income. Please do not be alarmed at this suggestion! Nobody who knows Service life would wish to be a kill-joy. You have a right to enjoy yourselves and to indulge in pleasant relaxations. But so much is done now to brighten life, that you cannot honestly argue that you have to spend all your pay in the search of relief from boredom and monotony. As a member of the Royal Air Force, if you are not in a quite exceptional position, you can easily put aside a small part of your weekly pay without lessening your comfort and your happiness from day to day.

You will be wise if you save a little while you have so good an opportunity. Circumstances may some day arise in which a lump sum of money ready to hand may be a great godsend to you. You cannot foretell the future. You can, however, prepare for it, whatever it may be.

WHY YOU SHOULD SAVE.

By joining the Royal Air Force you have assured your own livelihood for a number of years. You have probably not tried to cut yourself off entirely from the relations and friends amongst whom you were brought up. Their welfare is still a matter of importance to you. In these post-war years many people who have been quite comfortably well off fall into vicissitude, owing to unexpected changes in business or to alterations in the value of investments. If you have kinsfolk to whom you feel strong attachment, will it not be a great pleasure to assist them out of your own savings, should they ever find themselves in need of help?

There is, too, another good reason for saving. It has to do with your own future welfare. Your return to civil life will be a very important step in your career. You will probably then wish to turn to a profitable account the technical skill with which the Air Force has equipped you. If you have a fairly good lump sum at your command, you may be able to buy a little business or pay for a partnership in some cosy and flourishing concern. At least, you will be able to fit yourself out with a complete set of such tools and appliances as you may require. The whole nature of your subsequent story as a civilian may very well depend upon the amount of money you possess on leaving the Royal Air Force.

It must be pointed out, moreover, that by saving and wise investment, you render a patriotic service to the nation. You help to increase the total amount of money available for carrying on the nation's industry and commerce, and by so doing, you make your own small personal contribution towards increasing the general welfare of your fellow countrymen.

EASY SAVING.

It is well that you should realise that saving is nowadays quite easy. Regular investment of small sums will result in striking results as time rolls on. The amounts put by need not be very large. They earn interest, however, and your money increases steadily.

A profitable way of saving is the purchase of National Savings Certificates. A Certificate costs 16/- and, in ten years' time, becomes worth 24/-. At this rate of growth, in ten years,

1/-	a week	becomes	..	..	..	£31
2/6	"	"	..	..	..	£77
4/-	"	"	..	..	..	£124
5/-	"	"	..	..	..	£156

Certificates may be obtained at any Money Order Post Office. They can be bought by instalments, and—what is very important—you can at any time withdraw your money with interest due.

The best way of buying Savings Certificates is through a Savings Association. A Savings Association relieves you of all trouble in regard to your investments. You pay your money and the Association does the rest. Associations are at work in a large number of Army Units, and considerable totals of money are quickly invested through them. For example, in some recent half-yearly returns it is shown that, in a period of six months, several battalions accumulated over £4,000 through their Savings Association, and one Unit reported investment to the notable figure of £7,687.

It is hoped that you who read this article will, if you have not yet begun saving, now give your serious consideration to the wisdom of that course.

If there is an Association in your Unit, you will have no difficulty at all. Even if there is not yet an Association in your Unit, you can buy Certificates at a Post Office by means of a Savings Stamp Card. Whatever happens, you will never regret having started saving. The day may come when you will thank heaven that you had the good sense to begin.