

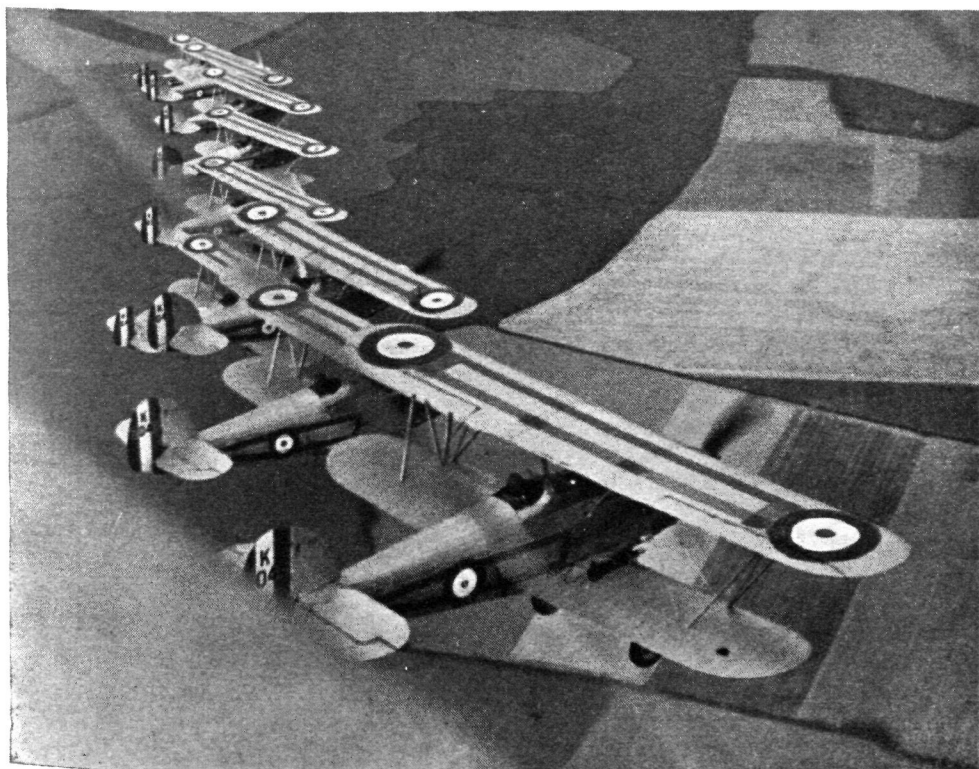
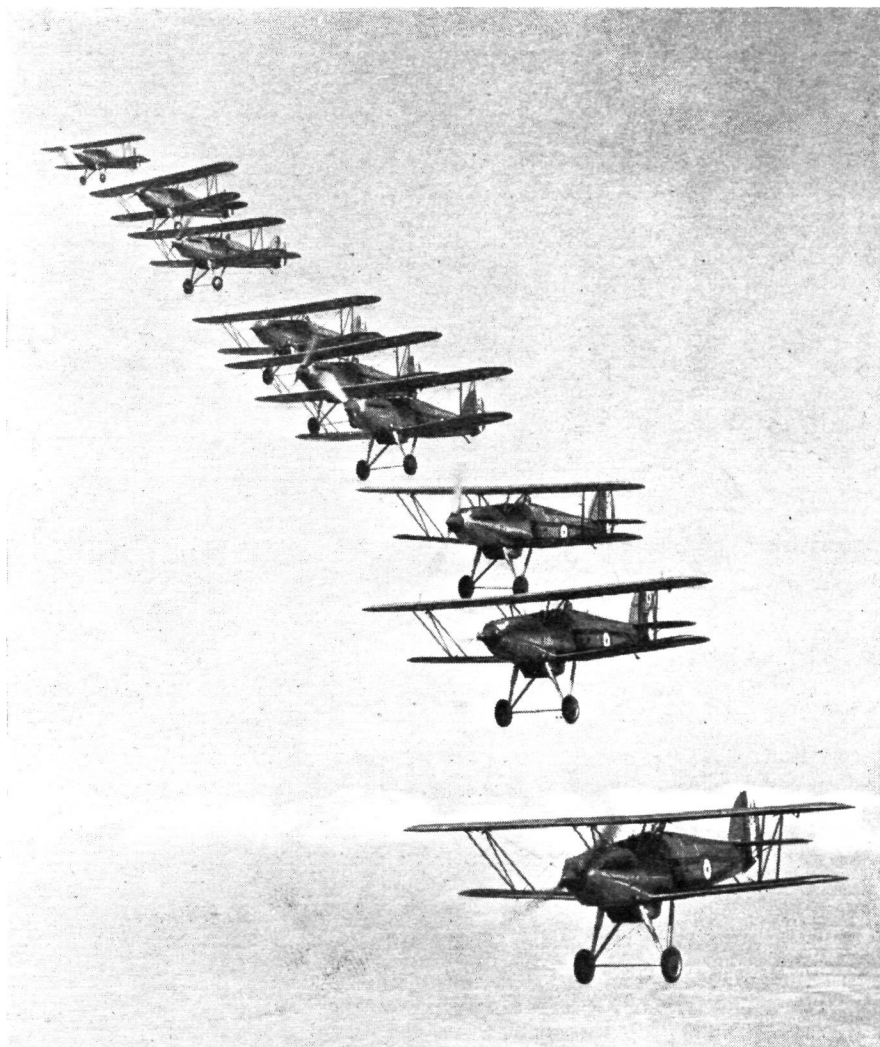
flying one of these when he fought Maj. Hawker, V.C., in a D.H.2, which had a movable gun. Richthofen killed Hawker. On September 7, 1915, a Morane of No. 1 Squadron, with 2nd Lt. R. Balcombe-Brown as pilot and Lt. M. C. K. Hughes as observer, was up on a close reconnaissance near Ypres when it was attacked by four "Albatros" fighters. The Lewis gun was on a fixed mounting, pointing forward, which meant that the observer was unarmed against an attack from the rear. These difficulties of our men in early fights show how slow the people at home were to realise the needs of an air fighter and to overcome the difficulties in the way of providing for those needs. Still, do we even yet know for certain whether the single-seater fighter or the two-seater fighter is going to be the more effective in the next war? The Morane was naturally trying to get away from the four fighters, and finally succeeded through a ruse. When the enemy had got within a range of about 250 yards, the pilot fired the Lewis into the air, while the observer pointed a telescope at the Germans, who mistook it for a rear gun. Evidently they were not as stout-hearted as many German fighters proved to be, and they seem to have made no attempt to get under the tail. Instead, they immediately sheered off out of range and followed the Morane almost to the lines at a discreet distance.

In August, 1915, Maj. Salmond gave over the command of the squadron which he had led so well to another very distinguished officer, Maj. (now Air Vice-Marshal) P. B. Joubert de la Ferté. He only kept the command for three months, and was then succeeded by Maj. (now Wing Com.) G. F. Pretyman. In December, 1916, Maj. G. C. St. P. de Dombasle took over the command. During the command of Maj. Pretyman, an important change took place. The squadron was selected by General Trenchard for conversion to a fighter squadron, and was completely equipped with Nieuport "Scouts."

It has remained a fighter squadron ever since. The change, however, was not completed until the end of January, 1917, and in the meantime Army co-operation work was still carried out.

Towards the end of the year No. 1 Squadron provided an escort of two machines for the first large bombing raid made by the British. Sixteen machines of the 2nd Wing concentrated on the British side of the lines and then flew in formation to attack Comines railway station. No enemy aircraft ventured to attack this formation. The experiment proved a success, and this plan was extensively followed thereafter.

In June, 1916, the squadron was partially re-equipped, and its establishment was raised to 18 machines, but these were partially Moranes and partially Nieuports. In a short article it is impossible to follow all the fortunes of the squadron throughout the war. Only a few outstanding points can be noted. In 1917 a number of fine victories were scored by a flight commander of the squadron, Capt. C. J. Q. Brand. He afterwards became famous for his flight with Van Rynefeld to South Africa, for which both were knighted, and Wing. Com. Sir Christopher Brand, K.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C., is now seconded as chief of the flying corps of the Egyptian Army.



ECHOLON ON THE RIGHT, STEPPED UP: Two views of No. 1 (Fighter) Squadron in one of the most difficult of all formations. (FLIGHT Photos.)