OVER THE BALKANS AND SOUTH RUSSIA*

By H. A. JONES, M.C.

THIS volume by H. A. Jones, recently published, is frankly a brief history of the work in the War of No. 47 Squadron, one of the permanent squadrons, and of the 16th Wing. As a record of magnificent services to the Empire by a section of the R.A.F., this book is of great value. From its pages can be visualised in a small degree the wonderful enthusiasm and heroism which largely account for the selection of the 47th Squadron as a permanent unit of our Air Force. History in this form is a necessity for the building up of an *esprit de corps* in so entirely new an arm as the R.A.F. The author of "Over the Balkans" has approached his task in a spirit of admiration of his comrades and their deeds in the past, whilst, where sympathetic treatment is essential, incidents are treated with that reverence which suggests a touch begotten of personal experience. Moreover, the author has succeeded in not only compiling facts of historical importance, but has also dealt with them in such form as to give the work the character of a consistent story.

From the Preface by the author and a "Foreword" by Air Vice-Marshal Sir W. G. H. Salmond, to the end of Appendix III, every page carries its facts, put forward in plain, simple, but convincing words. The compilation is more than justified by Sir W. G. H. Salmond, who states "it is good that it is published," and that the R.A.F., Middle East, embraced an operational area which no command in any service has hitherto approached—No. 47 Squadron being quoted as a typical example of a Middle East squadron, one in which all ranks carried out their duties with splendid efficiency, and displayed a bravery, tenacity, and adaptability to all circumstances in keeping with the highest traditions of our fighting forces. And be it remembered Sir W. G. H. Salmond speaks from personal knowledge of the squadron.

The "contents" by itself is such a full epitome of the book that one can almost say it constitutes the history and work of No. 47 Squadron in "tabloid" form. We give below, therefore, a *résumé* of its "headings" which will almost convey to our readers details of this book. It should be mentioned, before we turn to the contents, that this work is illustrated with a number of excellent photo. reproductions, mostly aerial views of the various "places of interest," and outline maps of the scenes of operations.

Here are the chapter heads, in the order in which they are given, with the principal incidents, etc., therein :—*Part I.*—Macedonia; Outward Bound—The Squadron embark at Devonport; Early Adventures—The *Menominee* arrives at Salonika—No. 47 march to Karaissi—The move to Mikra Bay—The Story of the Balkan Campaign—Accidents to Machines—H.Q. and "A" and "B" Flights move to Janus and "C" Flight to Kukus; The Routine of a Corps Squadron (quite an interesting chapter this, which helps one to follow subsequent portions of the book); The First Winter—The Aerodrome at Janus—First Bomb Raid on the Aerodrome—Aeroplanes co-operate with Infantry at Krastali—"C" Flight move from Kukus to Snevce—47 receives visit from General W. G. H. Salmond—A Machine of 47 collides in the Air with a Hostile Aeroplane (and there are many other exciting and amusing incidents given); Gothas! (another good chapter)—Enemy No. 1 Bombing Squad. arrive at Hudova—They bomb French Aerodrome at Gorgop, Janus, Salonika, etc.—Counter-bombing with the help of the R.N.A.S.—Twenty Machines bomb Hudova—Composite Flight formed at Hadzi-Janus—Lieut.-Col. Dawes temporarily disappears—Bamford and Wilkinson collide in the Air—An Adventure with Nurses from No. 20 Stationary Hospital—"F" Squad. R.N.A.S. arrives at Amberkoi—"F" Squad. blown up at Marian—Enemy Bombing Squadron leaves the Front; The Battle of Dorian, 1917—Description of the Country between Lake Dorian and the Vardar, etc., etc.; Summer Nights—and Gnats (another chapter full of "incidents"); The Second Winter—Flights reorganised for Artillery Co-operation—Night Bombing—New Scout Machines in use—Sortie of the *Goeben* and *Breslau*—47 co-operate in Bombing Attacks—No. 150 Squad. formed; The Final Push—Lieut.-Col. Todd takes command of the 16th Wing—Mutiny among the Bulgars—Major F. A. Bates takes over 47 Squad.—Franco-Serbian success opens way for British Attack—The Attack—Brandt and Gerhardi down in Flames—Landing Spies—Reconnaissances show Enemy Retreat—The great Bombing Attacks from the Air—Bulgars sue for Peace—Convention Signed—47 land at Hudova.

Part II.—South Russia: Denikin's Campaign (a most interesting chapter)—The Epic Story of the Volunteer Army—Gen. Alexieff builds up an Army on the Shores of the Black Sea—Gen. Alexieff dies and Gen. Denikin takes Command—The Opposing Armies at the end of 1918—The Attack—Ukrainians and Cossacks give way—Further Progress—The Lack of Clothes and Medical Comforts—The Red Army Counter Attack—Denikin's Army pushed Back—Loss of Kiev—Wrangle evacuates Tsaritsin—Rapidity of Bolshevik Advance—Denikin evacuates Remnants of Army *via* Novorossisk and leaves for England; In South Russia—47 clear up in Macedonia—Reconnaissances against Turkey and flights to Sofia—Concentrate at Amberkoi—Leave for South Russia (April, 1919)—Arrival at Novorossisk—Major Collishaw takes command of 47—"C" Flight sent to operate against Tsaritsin—The Adventures of "C" Flight on way to Volga—Arrive at Gniloaksaiskaya—They raid Tsaritsin—Further Raids—Move to Beketovka—Capt. Anderson lands among Bolshevik Cavalry and makes a Rescue—How "C" Flight celebrated Peace Day—Bombing Barges on the Volga—Concentrates at Beketovka—"B" Flight on "Camels" do effective Ground Strafing—47 protest that they "want to fight" and become a Volunteer Unit of South Russian Army. Appendix I.—Summary of the History of 47 Squad. in Macedonia; Appendix II.—Casualties: A. Macedonia, B. South Russia; Appendix III.—Honours and Awards: A. Macedonia, B. South Russia.

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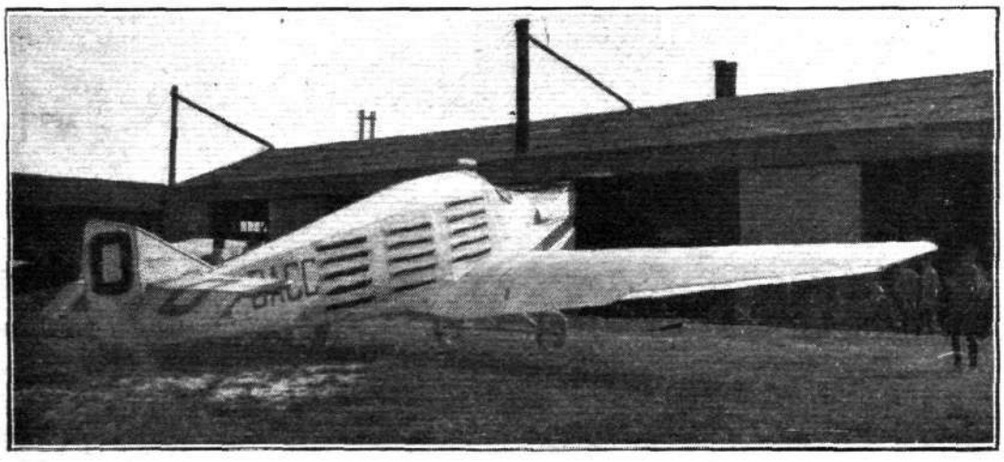

A Flying "Pigeon Loft": This Junkers monoplane has been converted by a Belgian company for carrying pigeons, the Belgians being fond of pigeon races.