



The Library

H.G. Brackley ('Brackles') Photograph Collection

The Library's photographic archives have been recently supplemented through the kind donation via Michael Pidcock of some 100s of photographs dating from WW1 through to the early 1940s, most of which originated from the collection of Air Commodore Herbert George Brackley, CBE, DSO, DSC, AFRAeS (1894-1948).

H.G. Brackley ('Brackles') after serving in France with the Royal Naval Air Service and Royal Air Force during WW1, in 1919 was one of the entrants for the *Daily Mail* transatlantic

flight contest, the flight attempt in a Handley Page V/1500 being abandoned following the successful first non-stop flight across the North Atlantic of 16 hours and 27 minutes by Sir John Alcock (1892-1919) and Sir Arthur Whitten Brown (1886-1948) in a Vickers Vimy powered by two modified Rolls-Royce Eagle engines.

During 1920-1921 Brackley served as chief pilot to the fledgling Handley Page Transport Ltd and then, in 1921, he went to Japan to train pilots as part of the British Aviation Mission to the

Imperial Japanese Navy. In 1924 Brackley became air superintendent of the newly-formed Imperial Airways overseeing the development of its operations in Europe and the Empire, personally undertaking to fly all the aircraft types it operated over the years and pioneering many of its distant air routes. His WW2 duties included serving as Senior Air Staff Officer of No 19 Group, Coastal Command, and post-war, in 1947, he organised the BOAC evacuation of nearly 42,000 people following the partition

of India and Pakistan. His last role was as chief executive of British South American Airways, succeeding Air Vice-Marshal D.E. Bennett but he died tragically soon after his appointment in a swimming accident at Copacabana Beach.

A much-respected man, a privately-published posthumous memoir included contributions from J.W. Booth, C.G. Grey, Major Woods Humphrey, Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill, Lord Knollys and Sir Frederick Handley Page among others, his career being described in detail in *Brackles*:

Imperial Airways Armstrong Whitworth AW15 Atalanta, G-ABTI, Atalanta.
RAeS Library photo.



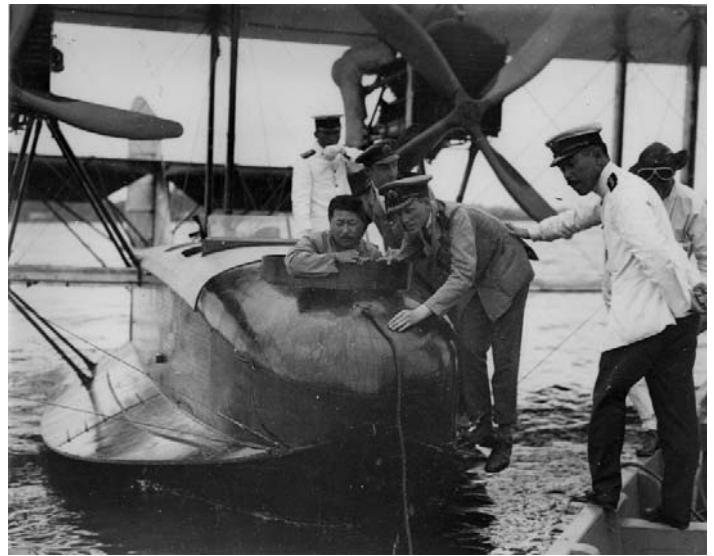
Imperial Airways Short S8 Calcutta.
RAeS Library photo.





Handley Page VI1500, F7140, Atlantic, entered for the attempted 1919 transatlantic crossing.

Left: Imperial Airways Supermarine Sea Eagle, G-EBGR. RAeS Library photos.



Major Herbert G. Brackley supervising training of Imperial Japanese Naval Air Service personnel, 1921. The Short-built Porte/Felixstowe F5 had been sent to Japan as part of the British Aviation Mission led by the Colonel The Master of Sempill. The Society's Library holds Lord Sempill's photographic record of the Mission preserved on glass lanterns slides. RAeS Library photo.

Memoirs of a Pioneer of Civil Aviation (Chatham: W. & J. Mackay & Co Ltd. 1952) compiled by his widow, Frida.

The collection reflects all stages of Brackley's distinguished career and particularly his long association with Imperial Airways, and complements the Library's wealth of material relating to the aircraft and

operations of the airline. The material includes bound sets of the company journals *Imperial Airways Weekly News Bulletin* 1936 No 27–1939 No 166 and *Imperial Airways Gazette* 1929 Vol 1 No 10–1939 Vol 11, annual reports, timetables, route maps, posters, photographs, books and other papers.

All enquiries regarding the collection should be addressed to: Brian Riddle, Librarian, Royal Aeronautical Society, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1J 7BQ, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7670 4362. e-mail: brian.riddle@raes.org.uk.