

The end of the adventure

After the failure of the sealing ships to utilise the Avro 554 on the *Neptune*, and with no contracts and not much help from the Government forthcoming, Cotton had had enough. He had fallen out with Butler and agreed to split their interests. Butler took over The Hawke's Bay Trading Company and Cotton kept ASC. According to his autobiography, his decision to quit was further reinforced when he had engine trouble in a Martinsyde 200 miles (320 km) offshore and thought he

would die. He nursed it home to Botwood, packed his bags and caught the train for Canada on 25 May 1923. He liquidated ASC and sold the three Westlands to parties unknown. By August he was in New York with \$25,000 cash looking for a new challenge. According to the local newspapers, the two Martinsydes were crated up in October 1923 and shipped to South America. However, this deal may have fallen through as another source says that they were sold off cheaply to Pitcairn Aviation in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania.

Cotton the innovator

Cotton is credited as being one of the first aviators to design and use skis (he called them skids) for use on ice and snow. These skids were hand built by Nathan Hart (see Volume 58 No 1) who also looked after the hangar at Botwood. Cotton also pioneered the use of catalytic lamps under the crankcase to keep the engine oil warm, allowing for easier starting in extreme cold. He was also a pioneer in the regular use of alcohol as antifreeze in the aircraft radiators. On 10 February 1922, Cot-

Table 1: The Aerial Survey Company (Newfoundland) Fleet

Type	c/n	Registration	Fleet No	Notes
Initial Fleet				
Airco D.H.9	5622*	G-EAMX	none known	Previously Aircraft Transport & Travel Ltd (AT&T). To Canada April 1920. This registration is reported as the D.H.9 written off near Grand Falls 11 January 1922.
Type 29 Bristol Tourer	6123	unregistered	n.k.	Delivered to Canada May 1921.
Martinsyde Model A Mk.II	218	G-EATY	n.k.	To Newfoundland October 1921. Registration not carried. CofA lapsed 24 October 1922.
Westland Limousine III	WAC 8	G-EARV	n.k.	Sold to Laurentide Air Service (Canada) in 1924 for \$5,000 and scrapped due to rotten longerons.
Additional Aircraft				
Type 29 Bristol Tourer	6123	unregistered	n.k.	Delivered to Canada in May 1921.
Type 29 Bristol Tourer	6122	G-EAWB	4	Registered to Butler 29 November 1920. Flown in Europe April to July 1921, before shipment to Newfoundland.
Airco D.H.9B	P.39E	G-EAQP		Arrived circa January 1922, with former operator, AT&T, titles still on its fuselage. Sold to Laurentide Air Service in 1924 (with the Limousine III) and crashed 24 January 1925.
Westland Limousine II	WAC 2	G-EAJL	4, 5 & 6 (order unknown)	These were delivered to Newfoundland in 1922, where they carried fleet numbers. No 4 was turned over at Hawke's Bay, No 6 crashed at St John's. No 4 had a single port side cabin window, No 5 had two and No 6 had three.
Westland Limousine II	WAC 3	G-EAMV		
Westland Limousine II	WAC 6	G-EARG		
Martinsyde Model A Mk.II	215	unregistered	8	Was carrying this fleet number when it crashed (date unknown) with Cotton flying. It was probably this one that was called the "Silver Falcon."
Avro 554 "Antarctic Baby"	5040	G-EBFE	n.k.	Named "Antarctic Baby." Based aboard sealing ship <i>Neptune</i> .

* This is most probably the last four digits of the aircraft's former RAF serial number, D5622.



One of the aircraft confirmed to have had a useful service life after its time with ASC was Cotton's D.H.9B, c/n P.39E. Formerly on the UK register as G-EAQP (see Volume 58 No 1, pg 38), and operated by AT&T in Europe and later by ASC in Newfoundland, it may have become G-CAEU (pictured here) when sold to Laurentide Air Service Ltd in 1924. If AEU is indeed the same aircraft, the Canadian operator modified it with a windowed enclosure over the two passenger seats (behind the pilot's cockpit). This appears to have been part of a winterization kit which also included metal cowls around the otherwise exposed engine cylinders, and a set of Elliott Bros Skis. G-CAEU was written off after crashing in the Kékéko Hills woods, west of Rouyn-Noranda, QC, on 24 January 1925.

It should be noted that the Laurentide crash subject has also been referred to as either the former G-EBDE (ex-RAF H5738) or G-EBDF (ex RAF H5652). Both of these were built as military two-seaters which may have been converted to three-passenger D.H.9C civilian models after the war. Laurentide did refer to G-CAEU as a D.H.9C, but the external features of the 13 conversions produced in the UK were notably different from those of G-CAEU.

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