

Sopwith PUP

The Sopwith *Pup* quickly became a favourite with pilots of the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS). It was superior to the Fokker D.III and more than a match for any of the new Halberstadt and Albatros scouts. Armed with a single synchronous machine gun, it was lighter and less dangerous than its successor, the Sopwith *Camel*. Although underpowered, pilots liked the plane because it was maneuverable and fast. It could climb and hold its altitude better than any other fighter. In August 1917, the Sopwith *Pup* was the first aircraft to land aboard a moving ship, the Royal Navy's *H.M.S. Furious*. Canadian crews saw service with Sopwith *Pups* while attached to the Royal Naval Air Service. At least three Sopwith *Pups* were also allocated to No. 1 (Fighter) Squadron of the Canadian Air Force (CAF) at Shoreham-by-the-Sea in the UK in 1918 likely as proficiency trainers. No. 1 (CAF) Squadron had Sopwith Dolphin and Royal Aircraft Factory S.E.5a's on strength as the primary fighter aircraft.

DETAILS

Designation: N/A **Model No:** 9901
Role: single seat fighter
Service: RFC, RNAS

SPECIFICATIONS

Manufacturer: Sopwith Aircraft
Crew / Passengers: one pilot
Powerplant: one 80 hp Le Rhone 9C or 100 hp Gnome *Monosoupape* radial engines
Performance: Max Speed: 106 mph. (161 kph)
Service Ceiling: 18,500 ft (5,639 m) Endurance: 3 hours
Weights: Empty: 1,225 lb (555 kg)
Dimensions: Span: 26 ft 6 in (8.08 m) Length: 19 ft 3 ¾ in (5.86 m)
Height: 9 ft 5 in (2.87 m)
Armament: one fixed forward .303 Vickers machine gun
Cost: Unknown

The Sopwith *Pup* was a well-liked small biplane fighter, which preceded the more famous Sopwith *Camel*. The *Pup* was regarded as one of the most pleasant aircraft to fly of all the British aeroplanes in the First World War. - (Library & Archives Canada Photo # PA006396)



CAF Sopwith Pup Listing

| Serial # | Service | Manufacturer | Type | Model |
|--|---------|--------------|------|----------------|
| B4148 | CAF | Sopwith | Pup | 80 hp Le Rhône |
| <p>Rebuild at 2(N) ARD Coal Aston Issued for training W/E 10 June 1918. Used by No. 1 Squadron, Canadian Air Force (UK) in Shoreham - 1918. 42 TDS Hounslow to 41 TDS London, Colney 16 Aug 1918.</p> | | | | |
| B5333 | CAF | Sopwith | Pup | 80 hp Le Rhône |
| <p>Built by Whitehead Aircraft Ltd in Richmond, Surrey under contract. At 18th Wing ARS Hounslow. To 86 Sqn Northholt as of 18 Dec 1917 until Sqn disbanded on 4 Jul 1918. Then used by No. 1 Squadron, Canadian Air Force (UK) in Shoreham</p> | | | | |
| B5348 | CAF | Sopwith | Pup | 80 hp Le Rhône |
| <p>Built by Whitehead Aircraft Ltd in Richmond, Surrey under contract. To 86 Sqn Northholt as of 18 Dec 1917 until Sqn disbanded on 4 Jul 1918. Then probably used by No. 1 Squadron, Canadian Air Force (UK) in Shoreham. (Note - Some references list this machine as B4338 but no such serial # exists; B5338 existed but this a/c was written off and struck off charge by 30 Dec 1917 before the creation of No. 1 Sqn CAF)</p> | | | | |

Notes - No. 1 (CAF) Squadron at Shoreham-by-the-Sea in the UK had 12 S.E.5a on strength as the primary fighter aircraft. These Sopwith Pups were probably brought on strength as proficiency trainers.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Abbreviations:

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|-----|---|---------------------------|
| AAP | = | Aeroplane Acceptance Park |
| ARD | = | Aeroplane Repair Depot |
| ARS | = | Aeroplane Repair Section |
| a/c | = | aircraft |
| CAF | = | Canadian Air Force |
| SOS | = | Struck Off Strength |
| S/N | = | Serial Number |
| Sqn | = | Squadron |
| TDS | = | Training Depot Station |
| TOS | = | Taken On Strength |

REFERENCES:

Books:

- Griffin, John and Stachiw, Anthony - *Early Canadian Military Aircraft*, Aviaeology, Kitchener, ON, Canada, 2009.
- Hare, Paul R., *Mount of Aces - The Royal Aircraft Factory S.E.5a*
- Bruce, J.M., Page, Gordon and Sturtivant, Ray - *The Sopwith Pup*, Air Britain Publications, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, England, 2002.

Websites:

- http://rwrwalker.ca/cab_detail_aa_cz.html
- http://rwrwalker.ca/CAF_in_UK.htm
- <http://www.airhistory.org.uk/gy/ImperialGift-Canada.html>