

Place                      Date &  
                                    Time

Summary of Events.

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JULY.

July was a memorable month in the history of the squadron in that the long awaited re-equipment with new aircraft was begun. On 9th. July a D.C.2. was collected from No. 117 Squadron, Bilbeis, to be used as a training machine to accustom the Squadron pilots to flying modern American aircraft. A second machine was collected a few days later. Both machines had seen considerable service with American civil airlines and the R.A.F. and some difficulty was found in keeping them serviceable owing to their age. Even so a number of dual flights were made and several of the more experienced pilots went solo. Dual was given by the C.O. and F/O. King who had just been posted to this Squadron from No. 2. P.R.U. and whose experience of American aircraft has proved invaluable in the course of the re-equipment.

On 18th. July a Lodestar and three Hudsons were collected from Heliopolis and Bilbeis and information was received that the Squadron was to be re-equipped with Hudson aircraft. The Lodestar being equipped with dual controls was to be used for dual instruction. Four more Hudsons were received next day and orders were received to get a Hudson flight into operation as soon as possible. With this object the flights were re-organised on the basis of two Bombay and one Hudson flights, the flying personnel for the latter being drawn from the most experienced aircrews on the Unit. Three trained Hudson pilots were also posted to the Squadron. Dual instruction was given in the Lodestar by F/O. King and although conversion was held up by one engine of the Lodestar going unserviceable and having to be changed, the Hudson flight was able to carry out its first duty flight on 1.8.42 with Mr. Casey the Minister of State as its first passenger. By the first week of August it was ready to operate at normal pressure.

The Hudsons arrived fully equipped for operations except for the guns and rear turret, but provision had been made by the makers for converting them to troop carriers if required. No difficulty was experienced in putting the conversion into effect. In spite of the very great difference between a Bombay and a Hudson, pilots have not had any difficulty so far in converting to the new types. Khanka aerodrome is rather small for aircraft with such a long run and some of the training circuits have therefore been carried out at Helwan. There has been considerable discussion on the proposal to move the Squadron to an aerodrome more suited to modern aircraft but no definite conclusion has as yet been reached.