

A FINE WWI RNAS AND 80 SQUADRON RAF SOPWITH CAMEL FIGHTER PILOTS MEDALS, PHOTOGRAPHS, LOGBOOK AND DOCUMENT GROUP



BRITISH WAR AND VICTORY MEDALS '2. LIEUT. R.A.H. SHELFORD. R.A.F.'

Roy Albert Henry Shelford from Stevenage, a motor engineer, was born on 26 December 1899 and joined the Royal Navy Air Service on 25 November 1917 with the rank of Probationary Flight officer. He commenced training as a pilot at Vendome on 2 March 1918 and was selected for training as a Sopwith Camel fighter pilot. The Royal Air Force having been formed on 1 April 1918, Shelford was transferred with the rank of 2nd Lieutenant and completed his training on 13 August that year. Posted to the BEF on 17 August, he joined 80 fighter Squadron in France shortly after, making his first flight on 29 August. On 2 September he crashed his Camel at Arras after losing his way on a practice flight, however he was uninjured and was back flying the next day. On 7 September he notes in his logbook '1 E.A. shot down', however it is believed he was just noting what happened during his patrol and another pilot claimed the victory.

Over next six weeks, he lists a large number of combat flights and various ground attack raids; remarks including; 'dog fight 2 E.A. down, Camel down in flames', '50 Fokkers in formations, 2 Camels down, hit by shot', 'FL Arras lost in mist crashed', 'AA fire accurate, 1 indecisive combat', '4 bombs dropped on troops' etc etc His last recorded is on 14 October 1918 by which time he also notes in his logbook '27' for 27 operational/combat flights. It is not clear why the entries end on 14 October, there is a note in ink 'incomplete' but by checking the operational logs for 80 Squadron, any further flights will be found or the reason why this was his last. There is nothing to suggest Shelford was wounded or hospitalised, but he is shown at Home Establishment on 29 November 1918 and transferred to the unemployment list on 30 May 1919.



[illegible][illegible]

Date and Hour	Wind Direction and Velocity	Machine Type and No.	Parameter: the reference is the Machine	Time in hrs.	Notes
		30	S. S. machine		
			B.F. Vance		
Aug 29		Good	Solo	17.0	
" 30		"	"	1.15	
" 31		"	"	1.35	
" 31		"	"	2.23	
" 31		"	"	1.10	
" 31		"	"	1.10	
Sept 2		"	"	1.10	
Sept 3		"	"	2.58	
" 5		"	"	12.5	
"		"	"		
" 6		"	"	2.25	
" 7		"	"	5.5	
" "		"	"	1.15	
" 21		"	"	2.55	
Sept 8					
" 14				1.15	

Date and Hour.	Wind Direction and Velocity.	Machine Type and No.	Passenger for reference in column next to rating.	Time in Air.	Height.	Circuit.	Remarks.
Oct 11		Leavel		1			the birds were on the trees
" 11	"	"		2:20			the birds were on the trees
" 11	"	"		1:20			the birds were on the trees
Oct 12		"		1:10			the birds were on the trees



The medals are accompanied by a fine selection of documents and photographs, some of which are rarely encountered:

- 1) Royal Naval Air Service Pilots Log Book. This filled from his training on 1 April 1918 through his frontline service with 80 Squadron until 14 October 1918. Condition is very good bar a 2" section missing from the last entry page so an entry on the reserve page is partially lost.
- 2) A portrait photograph of the Shelford in RNAS uniform
- 3) A very fine 20 x 16m framed photograph of Shelford standing in front of his very colourful Sopwith Camel
- 4) Appointment as Temporary Probationary Flight officer at Vendome, dated 2 March 1918
- 5) RAF training transfer card – this fully filled
- 6) An unusual document relating to the death of a fellow trainee pilot on 12 July 1918
- 7) Protection certificate (Officer)
- 8) Pilot's Record at School of Aerial Gunnery & Fighting, Royal Air Force Freiston – fully filled
- 9) Air Ministry pass for departing overseas August 16 1918



A most complete and interesting group to an 18 year old Sopwith Camel Fighter pilot