



Ryan B-1 Brougham named "Kwangchow" ("Canton"), which became famous because of a long-distance flight made in 1928..

of the aircraft were to be supplied in the form of kits for local assembly and the equipment for an aircraft factory with a capacity of three to six K 53s per month was to be supplied. An order for a single example was finally placed and confirmed on 11 December 1928. It was shipped from Junkers subsidiary AB Flygindustri in Sweden on 3 July 1929.

"The Chinese Lindberg"

Charles Lindberg's flight over the Atlantic inspired the Canton leaders to order two Ryan B-1 Brougham cabin monoplanes from L E Gale & Co in 1928. The first arrived on 9 October and was assembled at Taishatau. The second machine was fitted with floats and arrived on 20 November. The Ryans were intended for airmail transport but both were first used for long-distance flights that were much publicised in China. On 11 November Director Chang Huei-ch'ang and Colonels Yang and Wang took off in Ryan landplane "Kwangchow" ("Canton") and flew from Canton to Hankow and then continued to Nanking, Peking and Mukden. They returned via Tientsin, Shanghai and Nanchang, and were back in Canton on 18 December. General Chan Hing-wan (Chen Chin-yun), Colonel Chau and a mechanic flew the floatplane, which was christened "Chukiang" (Pearl River), to Fuchow on 1 December, continued via Ningpo, Hangchow, Nanking, Nanchang, Hankow, Changsha and Wuchow, and finally returned on 30 December. The "Chukiang" later made a mail flight to Nanking on 22 February 1929.

In January 1929 there were two large brick hangars at Taishatau aerodrome and a new hangar was under construction. The Training School was under the command of Colonel Chau Yuk-hang (Chow Chia-heng), but there were only three training aircraft. The inventory of the Canton Aviation Bureau consisted of the 17 French aircraft,

two Curtiss Jennies and two Ryans. The Ryans had been fitted with machine-guns. New aerodromes were being constructed at Namhung, Wuchow, Kweih sien and Waichow. Those at Shiuchow/Shiukwan and Shiuking had already been completed. All aviation in Kwangtung was organised under the Aviation Bureau in 8th Army Group Headquarters with General Chang Huei-ch'ang as head.

On 5 January 1929 the Aviation Bureau signed a contract with Boyd & Co for the delivery of 10 Avro Avian two-seat trainers and 10 spare ADC Cirrus III engines. Four aircraft were to be shipped immediately to Hong Kong and were sent with SS "Troilus". They arrived in Canton on 1 March. After the first machine had been assembled, the Commanding Officer of the Training School, Colonel Chau Po-hang made the first flight in it on 6 March, and at the end of the day instructors of the school made an aerial display with all four aircraft. The remaining six arrived later in the same month.

War With Kwangsi

On 21 March 1929 Li Chi-shen was arrested by Chiang Kai-shek in Nanking and General Ch'en Chi-t'ang took over as ruler of Kwangtung. All Kwangsi troops were ordered out of Canton and on 2 April Ch'en took command of the Kwangtung Army. On 31 March Kwangsi troops attacked the NRA in the Wuhan area, but they were partially defeated at the end of April. Chiang Kai-shek now decided to suppress all resistance in Kwangsi and ordered an attack. On 6 May Ch'en sided with Chiang against Kwangsi and by the end of the month all Kwangsi troops had been driven out of Kwangtung.

At least four Breguet 14s, two Avians and one Ryan were used in action during this war. The Avians served in the observation role and as there were no bomb racks for the aircraft, bombs were dropped over the edge of the cockpits.



This Avro Avian carries serial number "21", crika 1930.

Two squadrons with six aircraft each were formed, the second only on 4 July under the command of Wang (1st) and Yang (2nd). Both units returned from Shiuking to Canton in July.

In June 1929 five two-seat Waco 220 Taperwings (Model ATO) arrived in Hong Kong. They had been purchased from Waco representative L E Gale & Co on 2 April and had left the USA in May. On 1 July they were shipped on SS "Foo Shing" to Canton, where Earl F Baskey, L E Gale company pilot, assembled, test flew and turned them over².

In September General Chang Huei-ch'ang took off from Canton with a squadron consisting of five Wacos and two Ryans. They were heading for Nanking, but five of the aircraft crashed or force landed on their way to Amoy, which was the first stop. Two of them, "Pan Yu" and "Nam-hoi", piloted by Chang Huei-ch'ang and Colonel Young Kuan-yu reached Shanghai and continued to Nanking.

An order had been placed with a French firm for 10 (or 20?) new 300 hp Renault engines for the Breguets and six of these were delivered in September 1929. At that time there were about 150 pilot and mechanic students and 15 instructors, most foreign-trained, at the Taishatau school, which was under the command of Colonel Chau. There were about 25 skilled pilots. Landing grounds had been established at Pakhoi, Samshui, Wuchow and Nanning and in the autumn of 1929 work started on a new aerodrome at Shoukouling (Lean Dog Hill), a few miles to the east of Canton on the Canton-Kowloon railway.

² Other reports say that 5 Waco and 10 three-seat aircraft had been ordered. According to the press these had already arrived in Hong Kong and were waiting to be shipped to Canton by the end of June 1929. SS "Foo Shing" left Hong Kong for Canton on 1 July with nine aircraft on board.

General Chang Huei-ch'ang was appointed Chief of the Aviation Department in Nanking on 12 September 1929 and left his post in Canton to former squadron commander Huang Kuang-jui (Freddy Wong/Wong Kwang-yui).

In October 1929 General Chang Fa-k'uei of Hupei, who intended to set up a new government of his own in Canton, decided to try to take the city and started to concentrate his troops at the Kwangtung border. On 22 November Ch'en Chi-t'ang responded by declaring war on Chang Fa-k'uei and Kwangsi. An attack by Chang against Canton followed on 6 December, but failed and the invaders soon withdrew back to Kwangsi.

At the beginning of this war the following aircraft were at Taishatau: four Curtiss Jennies, one R-1 (DH.9A), 18 French aircraft, ten Avians, two Ryans and five Waco trainers. A number of these were despatched to West River before the fighting started, a field headquarters had been established and the airfields at Wuchow and Shiuking were in use. At least 12 aircraft of the Canton Air Force were used for bombing and reconnaissance in the operations against Kwangsi and at the end of November seven aircraft returned to Canton from Hankow. Five that returned from Honan were immediately sent to the North River region.

In January 1930 Chang Huei-ch'ang, now Head of the Aviation Department in Nanking, visited Canton to try to persuade the pilots there to join the Nanking Air Force. The Canton Aviation Department was to be dissolved and the 6th and 7th Squadrons of the Nanking Air Force were instead to be located in Kwangtung. Chang was not successful and as a protest against this intervention the Canton pilots went on strike!

New airports at Yingtak and Yungyuen in North Kwangtung were completed in May 1930 and on 26 May ten aircraft deployed from Canton to these places for ope-