**Flight Badges of the Allied Nations, 1914-1918: Volume I - The French, Russian, and Romanian Air Services**

By CDR. Robert S. Pandis USNR (Ret.) Publisher: Imperial House Antiques LLC. Hardcover 12” x 9”: Photographs, Bibliography Pp.320 pages $95.00 ISBN-10: 1495109992

Robert Pandis’s new book, Flight Badges of the Allied Nations, 1914-1918 is far more than a collection of unique images, it is a historical romp and a testament to the men who fought and flew a hundred years ago over the skies of Europe. While the photographs of the objects in it are exceptional it is also a well-researched book and the historic context presented makes it far more interesting than a work that was merely focused on flight badges would be.

Pandis is no stranger to the subject matter or how best to present it; he has published similar works on German flight badges and American aviator wings. It is obvious he knows the particulars and idiosyncrasies associated with these objects as well as how to distinguish the real item from the forgeries which have become all too common. This book, like his other works, provides good guidelines to distinguish the authentic from the counterfeits. From the large variety of objects covered in this book it is obvious that Pandis had special access to some very unique collections. It is to his efforts we owe this almost encyclopedic review of the Flight Badges of the French, Russian, and Romanian Air Services

The section on French aviation begins with the pre-war period, which remarkably extends back to the late 1800’s. This section provides some important insights into early military aeronautics in France up to 1914. His coverage of the wartime period 1914-1918 also includes the vaunted Lafayette Flying Corps, the French Airship section, naval aviation, and other units making it a complete sweep of all the French military services involved in the war in the air.

The section dealing with the Imperial Russian Air Fleet is nothing less than remarkable. It is the first comprehensive English language work that deals with the design, variations, manufacture and history of flight badges for the Russian military and civilian organizations. His attention to detail and historical relationships makes it an invaluable examination of aviation in Imperial Russia.

Looking through the existent literature I could not find its equal in breadth of topic or quality of research. The sections on either the French or Russian air services could stand on their own as separate works, and adding to all this his review of Romanian air service badges with the other two subjects in one volume makes this a very important research tool for anyone interested in aviation during WWI.

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