The full size S.V.A. 4

DESIGNED by Ing. Verduzio and built by the Savoia Verduzio Ansaldo Company, the S.V.A. was probably the most famous of the Italian W.W.1 aircraft. Very versatile, it was used as a fighter, a light bomber and, due to its long range, was also employed for reconnaissance missions. Although of unusual shape, the Ansaldo was beautifully proportioned and consequently one of the most handsome aircraft of this period.

Of the six squadrons equipped with S.V.A.s, the most famous was the 87th "Serenissima" Squadron, which had the Venetian Standard with the Lion of St. Mark, painted on the sides of its aircraft.

In June, 1918 Lt. Locatelli completed a photo reconnaissance flight to Zagreb—a total distance of 560 miles. However, it was the 650 mile return flight to Vienna, when the squadron was under the command of the famous poet Gabriel d'Annunzio, that is most noteworthy.

This flight took place on August 9th, 1918 by ten S.V.A 4s, with d' Annunzio in an S.V.A. 9 (a two seater variant of the 4). Taking off from San Pelagio at 5.50 a.m., three aircraft were shortly forced to land due to lack of pressure in the main tanks, but the remaining eight arrived over Vienna at 9.20 a.m., dropped leaflets from a height of 250 ft., and landed safely at San Pelagio at 12.40 p.m. A flight of 6 hr. 50 min.

Data S.V.A. 4

Photos from top to bottom show an S.V.A.4 "in the field" and two framework shots of a scale model S.V.A.4 built by the manufacturers.