

The John Stroud Archive

# CHANNEL-HOPPING

In April 1947 aviation journalist John Stroud boarded a BEA Dakota at Northolt with the objective of sampling the newly-minted organisation's extremely profitable Channel Islands service; **NICK STROUD**

(no relation!) takes a look at the history of civil aviation in the islands alongside some of John's previously unpublished photos

**T**HE LATE WINTER and early spring of 1947 proved to be a characteristically busy time for John Stroud, the intrepid aviation journalist having flown on the inaugural non-stop Junkers Ju 52/3m Croydon—Belfast service operated by the newly-established British European Airways (BEA) on March 20 that year (as described in *To Belfast, By Jupiter!* in *TAH17*). Little more than a month later John was off again with BEA to sample another of the carrier's regional routes, this time to witness at first hand what was described at the time as the nationalised airline's most profitable operation: the Channel Islands service.

## CHANNEL ISLAND AIRWAYS

When BEA came into being in August 1946, the Channel Islanders' air needs had long been met by Channel Islands Airways (CIA), an amalgamation of Jersey Airways and Guernsey Airways, both of which had been serving the States since the early

Born on April 3, 1919, John Stroud joined Imperial Airways aged 14, and six years later became a freelance aviation writer. In 1963 he was appointed General Editor of the Putnam series of aeronautical books, and continued to publish material until his death in March 2007. In 2014 a substantial part of John's archive, including rolls of previously unseen 35mm film, was acquired by A Flying History Ltd, and forms the basis of this regular *TAH* series



WITH

BEA



Three of BEA's Rapides beside the terminal at Guernsey on April 30, 1947. The nearest, G-AGSH (c/n 6884) and the furthest, G-AGPH (c/n 6889), were both operated by Channel Islands Airways before the latter became part of BEA in the nationalisation process in 1946; G-AHXZ (c/n 6825) had joined BEA from the Ministry of Supply in September 1946.



**BELOW** With a stiff breeze blowing over the landing field at La Grand Blaye on Alderney, Rapide G-AGSH is prepared for its return hop back to Guernsey, and then on to Jersey, during John Stroud's visit to the Channel Islands at the end of April 1947. Although the smallest of the three islands by some margin, Alderney can boast the first licensed airport in the Channel Islands, having opened in October 1935.