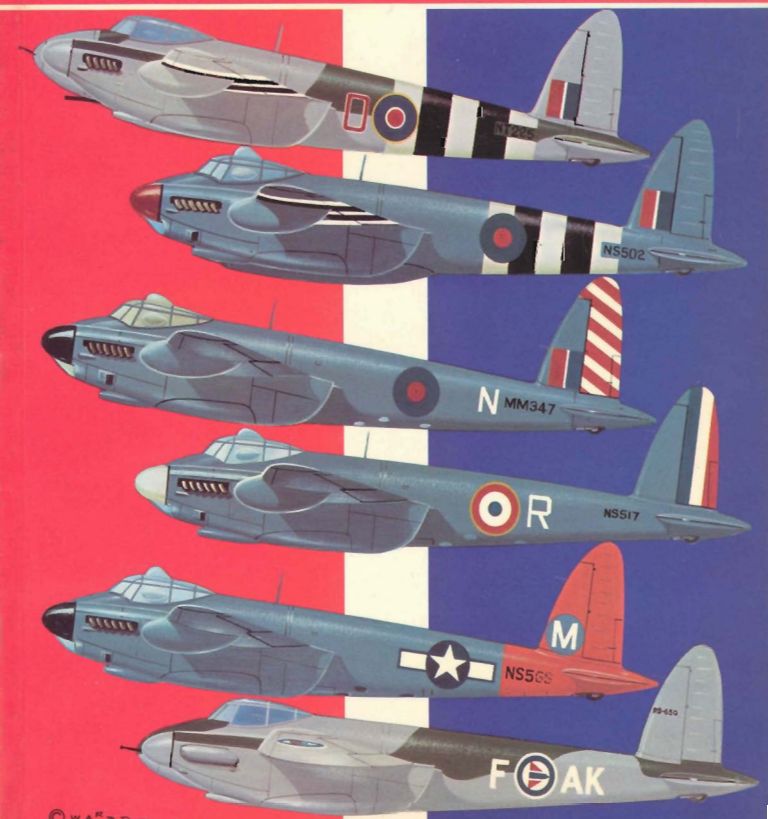
AIRCAM AVIATION SERIES

№ 28

De HAVILLAND MOSQUITO

IN RAF·FAA·RAAF·SAAF·RNZAF·RCAF·USAAF FRENCH & FOREIGN SERVICE



Coastal Command Mosquitoes attacking a German U-Boat with cannon and rockets, during this attack one U-Boat was sunk and one damaged. (IWM)

AIRCAM AVIATION SERIES

No. 28
(VOL. 1)

Mosquito PR.XVI, No. 684 Squadron, RAF, SEAC in overall silver dope scheme with black wing and tail-plane stripes, spinners and M. Serial NS787 in square stencil style also in black. Pale blue, dark blue SEAC roundels and fin flash.

De HAVILLAND MOSQUITO
IN RAF-FAA-RAAF-SAAF-RNZAF-RCAF-USAAF FRENCH & FOREIGN SERVICE

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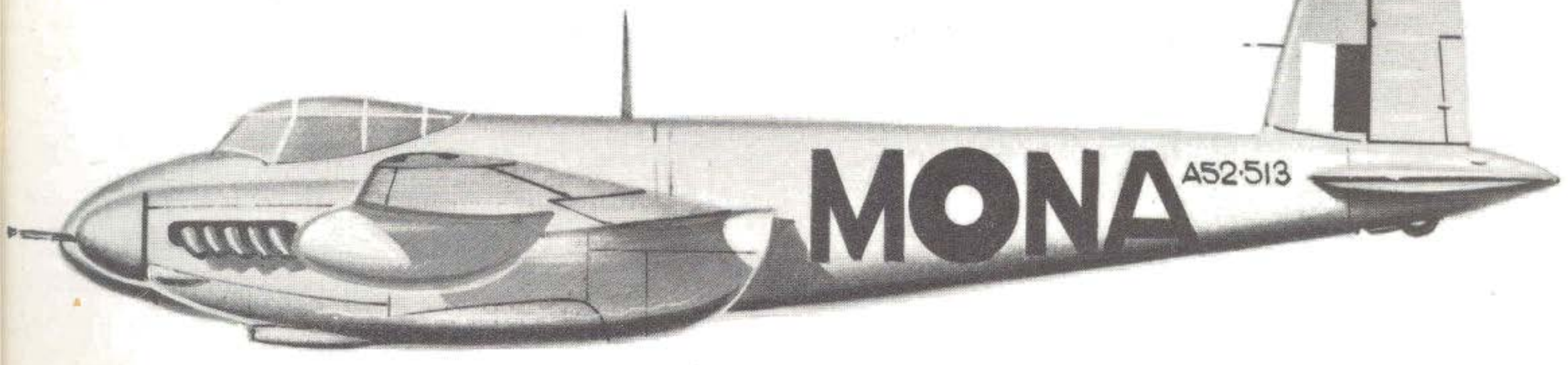
Gothscans ltd

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This, the first volume on the Mosquito does not attempt to illustrate in colour or black and white the complete service coverage of the type. The Mosquito was certainly one of the most potent and aesthetically pleasing twin-engined fighter, bomber, intruder, torpedo bomber or what have you of World War II. In fact its range and load carrying capability made some four-engined "heavies" look rather sick by comparison. Mention must be made to frequent references to the following books: *Mosquito* by C. Martin Sharp & M. J. F. Bower; *Fighter Squadrons of the RAF* by John Rawlings and *Bomber Squadrons of the RAF* by Philip J. Moyes.
Thanks are due to all who assisted with photographs and information whose names are listed below in alphabetical order:
J. Cuny, G. Cynk, d'E. C. Darby, Col. O. G. Davies, ECA, Imperial War Museum, Royal Norwegian Air Force, Frank F. Smith, K. Smy, South African Air Force, USAF.

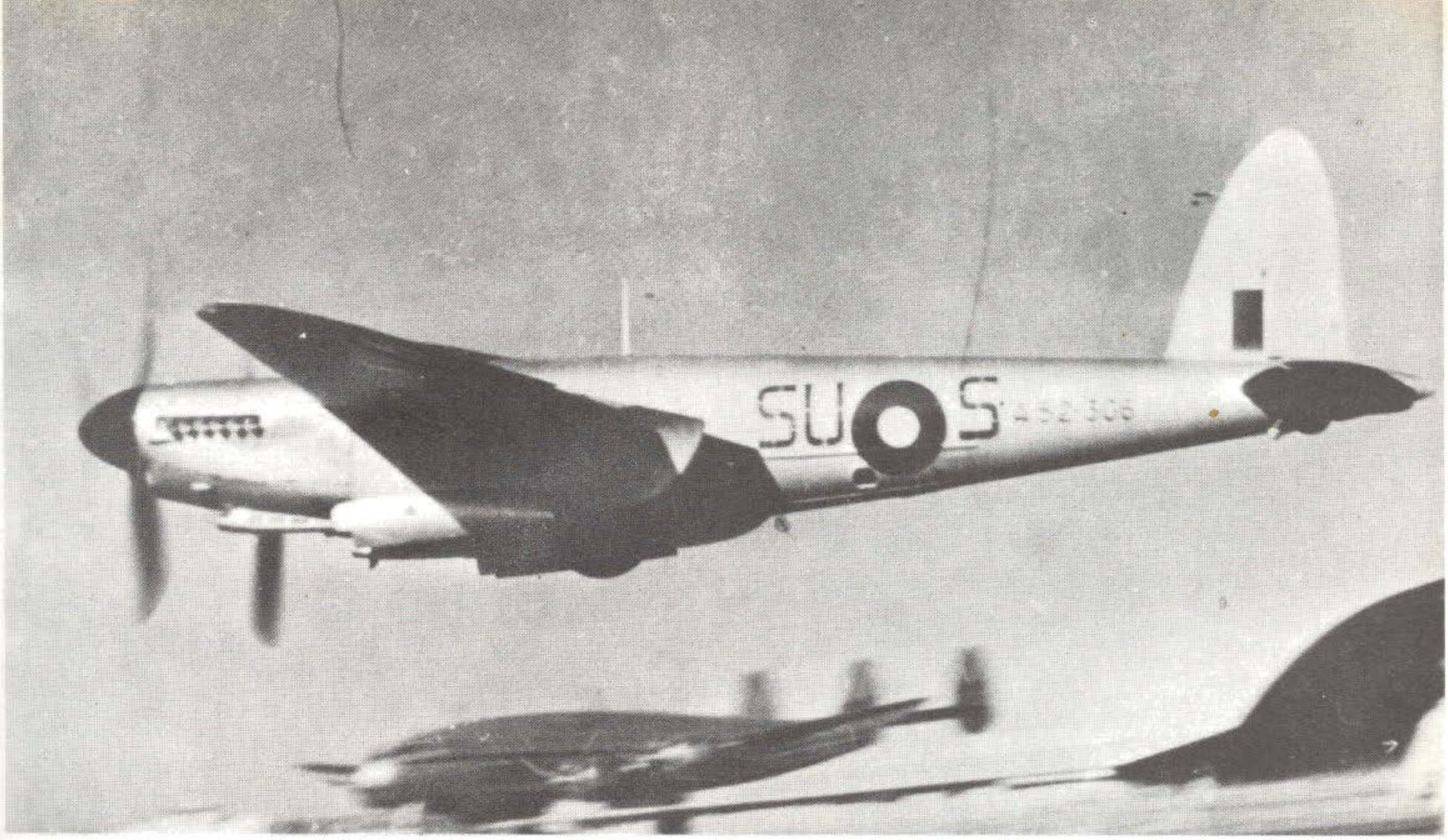
Mosquito FB.VI, No. 1 Squadron, RAAF, in standard overall silver dope scheme. Black code and serial, blue and white roundels and fin flash.



Published by : Osprey Publishing Limited, England
Editorial Office: P.O. Box 5, Canterbury, Kent, England
Subscription & Business Office: P.O. Box 25, 707 Oxford Road, Reading, Berkshire, England

The Berkshire Printing Co. Ltd. SBN 85045 043 8

A French Air Force PR.XVI of GC "Lorraine" over rugged Moroccan mountains. See front cover for colour illustration. (ECA via J. Cuny)



Mosquito PR.41 converted from FB.40 of the Royal Australian Air Force doing a very low-level beat-up. Note stencil style code, serial A52–306. (d'E. C. Darby)

De HAVILLAND MOSQUITO

In one respect at least the superb Mosquito may have seemed an anachronism in that throughout the twenty years between the World Wars leading aircraft designers had been developing metal stressed skin construction as a natural sequel to the woodworking techniques that had survived the First World War. Almost every first rate air force had accepted the superiority of metal construction by 1939, and only isolated projects—undertaken usually in the interests of eliminating lengthy manufacturing techniques or to avoid use of "strategic" materials—were pursued.

The concept of the Mosquito was not entirely owed to the necessity to eliminate strategic materials as such, for it was de Havilland's own unique, broad and recent experience in wooden aircraft construction that led to the company's proposals as early as 1938 for a high-speed, unarmed wooden bomber capable of carrying 1,000 pounds of bombs to Berlin at a speed that would render it immune from interception by any German fighter. The design of this aeroplane owed much to that of the unique two-seat D.H.88 Comet racer of 1934, while the construction of cedar ply laminations sandwiching a layer of balsa was a natural outcome of experience with that of the D.H.91 Albatross airliner.

Largely ignored by the Air Ministry until the outbreak of war, the D.H.98 was, however, enthusiastically sanctioned on 29 December 1939 and authority given to proceed with Rolls-Royce Merlin-powered fighter, bomber and reconnaissance versions simultaneously, the performance being based upon a capability of carrying a 1,000 lb. bomb load over a range of 1,500 miles with a crew of two.

Prototypes and Early Development

Design was undertaken at Salisbury Hall, Hertfordshire, and a contract for fifty aircraft (W4050-W4099) to Specification B.1/40 was placed on 1 March 1940. The first prototype bomber (E-0234, later W4050) was flown by Geoffrey de Havilland jr. at Hatfield on 25 November 1940, and was followed by W4052, the night-fighter prototype (to Specification F.21/40) on 15 May 1941. Power for these aircraft was provided by two 1,250 h.p. Merlin 21s with low-drag radiators in the wing-root leading edges. The bomber was unarmed, carrying four 250 lb. bombs in its fuselage bomb-bay, but the night-fighter was armed with four 20 mm. Hispano cannon under the cockpit floor and four 0.303 in. machine guns in the extreme nose, together with A.I. Mk. IV radar.

The third prototype, W4051, was the unarmed photo-reconnaissance aircraft and made its first flight on 10 June 1941. It was also the first version to enter operational service when the prototype and four P.R. Mk. Is joined No. 1 Photographic Reconnaissance Unit at Benson on 13 July, W4055 flying the first operational sortie over Brest and Bordeaux on 18 August.

In the meantime W4052 was undergoing night-fighter development trials and was at one time fitted with a dummy Bristol B.IX four-gun dorsal turret and later, to achieve rapid deceleration in the night interception role, a segmented air brake around the mid fuselage. This aircraft was also evaluated under combat conditions by No. 25 (Fighter) Squadron.

Of the first fifty aircraft ordered, W4054-W4063 were the P.R. Mk. Is of the PRU, the next ten were modified to various standards for experimental purposes, W4075 and W4077 were the first trainer T.Mk. IIIs and the remainder were completed as N.F. Mk. IIs.

The Bombers

Among all its roles, that of the high-speed unarmed bomber is that for which the Mosquito will be best remembered, for here was an aircraft whose speed was, and remained for more than two years, greater than any other combat type. Even before it entered service with RAF Bomber Command it was found that by shortening the tail fins of 500 lb. bombs, four such weapons

The prototype Mosquito landing at Hatfield after a test flight. (IWM)

could be accommodated, thereby doubling the Mosquito's destructive power.

The first production bomber version was the B. Mk. IV Series 1, developed from the sub-variant prototype W4072 which first flew on 8 September 1941. Ten such aircraft were followed by 263 Mark IV Series 2, identifiable by engine nacelles which extended aft of the wing trailing edges.

The first Bomber Command squadron to receive the Mark IV was No. 105 at Swanton Morley in No. 2 Group, W4064 being delivered by Geoffrey de Havilland on 15 November 1941. For almost a year this squadron was the only Mosquito bomber squadron and it was not until 31 May 1942 that it carried out its first offensive sortie when four aircraft were sent to Cologne in daylight —following the so-called 1,000-bomber raid of the previous night. One Mosquito failed to return. On 26 September six Mosquitoes were sent against Berlin in daylight but only one crew claimed to have hit the city, bad weather having foiled the others. First mention of the Mosquito in public communiqués was made after four 105 Squadron aircraft had carried out a pinpoint attack on the Gestapo H.Q. building in Oslo on 26 September 1941. Second squadron to receive Mosquito IVs was No. 139 (Jamaica) Squadron, also in No. 2 Group, which took delivery in the late autumn of 1942.

Only three other RAF squadrons received the Mark IV—Nos. 109, 627 and 629—the last-named being the first to carry 4,000 lb. bombs in specially-modified Mark IVs, delivered in January 1944. This version (of which 54 were converted) was considerably underpowered for such a load, and within two months RAF bomber squadrons were receiving a more powerful version, the B. Mk. XVI—of which more anon.

After the Mark IV the next unarmed bomber Mosquito was the high-flying B. Mk. IX, of which 52 were built or converted, powered by 1,680 h.p. Merlin 72s. This version entered service with No. 105 Squadron at Gravely early in 1943. Some of these aircraft were used for path-finding duties carrying Oboe radar. Nos. 109 and 139 were also equipped with B.IXs and one such aircraft flew with No. 627 Squadron during 1944. The Mark IX was also capable of carrying the 4,000 lb. "blockbuster" during 1944.

It was the 4,000 lb. high capacity blast bomb around which much of the Mosquito's wartime night bombing operations centred. After trials with a Mark IV, DZ594, which featured bulged bomb doors to accommodate the large bomb, deliveries of similarly-modified Mark IVs and IXs were made during the winter of 1943-44; but it was the B. Mk. XVI which represented the main bomber version. Equipped with pressure cabin and Marshall blower, and powered by Merlin 72 engines, this bomber had a ceiling of more than 37,000 feet, could carry a 4,000 lb. bomb and under-wing fuel tanks, and possessed a maximum speed of 408 m.p.h.

First deliveries were made to three squadrons simultaneously in March 1944 (Nos. 105, 109 and 692), and before the war's end a further five followed (Nos. 128, 139, 571, 608 and 627). Nos. 14, 69 and 180 received this version after VE-Day. In all, about 1,200 B. Mk. XVIs were produced.

Introduced into RAF service shortly after the XVI was the Packard-Merlin 31- and 33-powered Canadian-built B. Mk. XX, which joined No. 608 (North Riding) Squadron at Downham Market in August 1944. Eighty-five Merlin 31-powered examples (KB100-KB179 and KB325-KB329) and 160 with Merlin 33s (KB180-KB299 and KB330-KB369) were built by de Havilland at Toronto and most of these were shipped to the United Kingdom where they equipped Nos. 128, 139, 162 and 627 Squadrons before the end of the war. (The first Canadian-built version had been the Mosquito B. Mk. VIII of which 25 were built (KB300-KB324), but this did not reach operational status.)

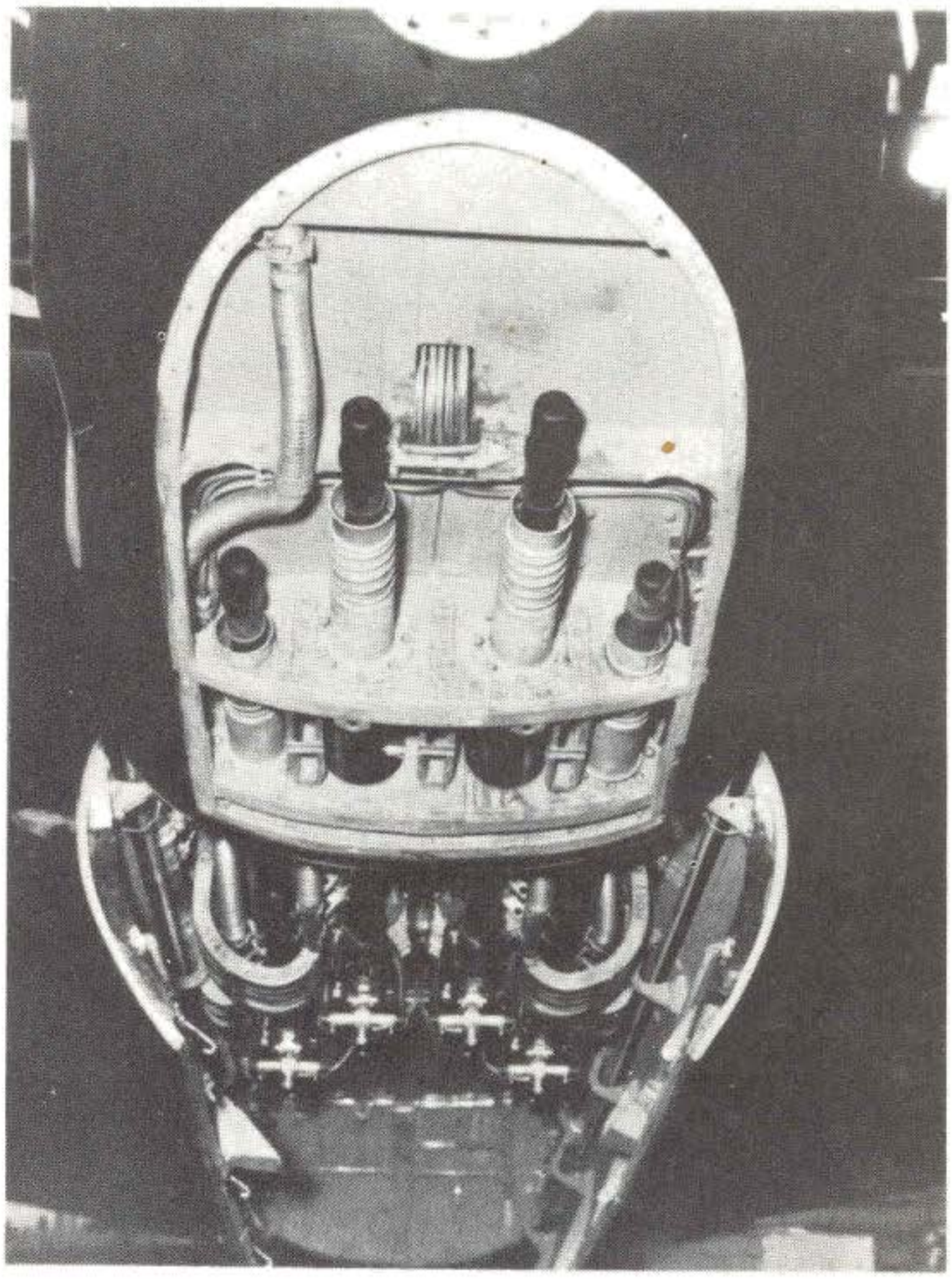
One further main bomber version appeared during the war, the Mk. XXV, also built by de Havilland in Canada, powered by two 1,620 h.p. Packard-Merlin 225s. No fewer than 400 of these were completed and these reached Nos. 128, 139, 162, 608 and 627 Squadrons in the UK, and No. 142 in Italy during 1944 and 1945. Some of the war's survivors were issued to No. 502 (Ulster) Squadron at Aldergrove in 1946.

Undoubtedly the Mosquito bomber was one of the outstanding aircraft of the Second World War and its astonishing performance was undoubtedly the principal reason for its relatively light casualty rate. Many was the night when the devastating 4,000 lb. blast bombs tumbled from stormy clouds which had prevented Bomber Command's Lancaster force from reaching Germany.

The Fighters and Intruders

Experience with the Beaufighter in the night-fighter role since the autumn of 1940 had been slow to render significant results and it is now known that British night-fighters inflicted less than 2% casualties during the German night blitz between September 1940 and May 1941. The appearance of the Mosquito night-fighter, with a performance greatly superior to that of the Beaufighter, Defiant and Boston/Havoc, promised much improved results. The prototype, W4052, was first flown by Geoffrey de Havilland on 15 May 1941 and differed from the bomber in having an optically flat bullet-proof windscreen for better vision, and A.I. Mk. IV radar.

Production of the Mosquito N.F. II amounted to 488 aircraft (of which 96 were converted to later variants before delivery), and first deliveries were made in January 1942 to Nos. 23 Squadron at Ford and No. 157 at Castle Camps simultaneously (the latter squadron receiving some of the initial production aircraft, e.g. W4073, W4079, W4082, W4098 and W4099). It is perhaps interesting to record that the first pilot to score a night



Above: 303 Browning and 20mm cannon detail of a Mk. II. (IWM)
Right: 20mm cannon bay of a Mk. II. (IWM)

intercept success in a Mosquito was a flight commander of No. 157 Squadron, Sqn./Ldr. G. Ashfield, in W4099 on 29 May 1942. The same pilot had scored the world's first A.I. radar night "kill" flying a Blenheim of the Fighter Interception Unit on 22/23 July 1940. He also performed the first operational sortie in a Beaufighter of the same unit on 4/5 September 1940.

These two squadrons were followed with Mosquito IIs by No. 151 at Wittering, and by Nos. 25, 27, 85, 141, 169, 239, 264, 307 (Polish), 410 (Canadian), 456 (Australian), 515 and 605, all based in the United Kingdom.

The classification of the next principal Mosquito variant, the Mark VI, was blurred by the introduction of the intruder role, for this version was strictly a day/night fighter-bomber. With the full fighter armament retained, the Mark VI carried two 250 lb. (later 500 lb.) bombs in the aft part of the bomb-bay and two further bombs under the wings. The prototype, HJ662 (a converted Mark II), was flown during February 1943 and was followed by 300 Mark VI Series 1 production aircraft powered by Merlin 21 or 23 engines. Subsequent production was of the Series 2 version with Merlin 25s (and strengthened to carry the 500 lb. bombs).

The Mosquito VI was by far the most widly-used version of the design, production in Britain amounting to 1,218 by de Havillands, 1,200 by the Standard Motor Company and 300 by Airspeeds. First two fighter squadrons to be equipped with Mark VI intruders in May 1943 were No. 23, commanded by Wg./Cdr. J. B. Selby, DSO, DFC, in the Italian theatre, and No. 418 (City of Edmonton) commanded by Wg./Cdr. J. H. Little, DFC, at Ford. By the end of the year Nos. 25, 27, 29, 239, 264, 307 (Polish), 410 (RCAF), 456 (RAAF) and 605 had received these aircraft (often in addition to other Marks).

Bomber squadron re-equipment commenced with No. 464 (RAAF) and 487 (RNZAF) at Sculthorpe, Norfolk, in August the same year; in the next four months Nos. 21, 305 (Polish), 613 and 627 were also flying Mark VIs. Subsequently Fighter Squadron Nos. 89, 141, 169, 256 and 515 were similarly equipped, together with Nos. 4, 11, 39, 45, 47, 69, 82, 84, 107, 110, 114, 268, 418, 605, 617 and 692 Bomber Squadrons—many of them after the war. Towards the end of the variant's life, aircraft were used for a wide variety of duties, and there can be few RAF light bomber pilots of the 1948-53 period who did not spend several months learning their trade on Mosquito VI trainers.

A direct development of the Mosquito VI was the F.B. Mk. XVIII, armed with a 57 mm. Molins quick-firing gun mounted offset in the nose. A Mark VI, HJ732, was so modified and first flown on 25 August 1943. Fifteen new-built aircraft and 12 conversions were produced and, of these, eighteen were supplied to No. 248 Squadron. Although a U-Boat was claimed to have been destroyed with this weapon off the French coast on 25 March 1944, the installation was not popular among pilots owing principally to recoil problems (the gun weighed nearly a ton), and the project was relatively short-lived.

Much more promising were rocket projectiles which started to appear on RAF ground attack fighters (and other aircraft) in 1942-43. HJ719, an early Mark VI, was the first Mosquito so equipped in February 1943, and underwing rocket rails reached squadrons before the end of that year, the three-inch weapons being used to considerable effect against enemy shipping by Mosquito squadrons of Fighter and Coastal Commands.

Passing mention should be made of the projected F.B. Mks. X (Merlin 72) and XI (Merlin 61), but these were not proceeded with owing to the unsuitability of these engines to the low level role. The next version to achieve operational status was the Mark XII night-fighter and, equipped with low-looking A.I. Mk. VIII radar, largely replaced the initial Mark IIs with the night squadrons. The 97 aircraft were in fact converted Mark IIs with Merlin 21s or 23s.

First squadron to get the new version was No. 85 in March 1943, based at Hunsdon and commanded by Wg./Cdr. John Cunningham, DSO, DFC†. Shortly afterwards the Mosquito N.F. XIII was introduced into service, and this permitted a wide distribution of the Mark XII which served with Nos. 29, 46, 96, 108, 151, 256, 307, 406, 488 and 604 Squadrons.

The N.F. XIII, of which 270 were newly-built, was

† In his book, *Night Fighter*, C. F. Rawnsley, who was Cunningham's radar operator, gives a graphic account of the introduction of this version of the Mosquito.

similar in most respects to the previous Mark, but carried its A.I. VIII radar in a universal nose mounting of a design which retained the four 20 mm. guns and was to remain virtually unchanged throughout the adaptation of all subsequent night-fighter variants. No. 29 Squadron at Ford (under Wg./Cdr. R. E. Mack, DFC) and No. 488 at Bradwell Bay (under Wg./Cdr. P. H. Hamley) were the first to equip with Mark XIIIs, and were followed by Nos. 96, 108 (in Malta), 151, 256, 264, 409, 410 and 604.

Though scarcely a true night-fighter, the N.F. XV was an interesting exercise in hurried yet efficient adaptation. Some consternation had been evinced by the supposed threat of the high-flying Junkers Ju 86P, and in much the same context as the development of the Spitfire VI and VII had taken place, a Mosquito IV, MP469, was prepared for high altitude interception duties by extending the wings, fitting small landing wheels and removal of 2,300 pounds of armour. Armament was confined to four .303 in. machine guns—considered to be perfectly adequate to puncture the pressure cabin of the enemy aircraft. John Cunningham took this Mosquito to a height of 43,500 feet. Five other Mark IVs were converted (with the four machine guns carried in a ventral tray) and some of these were issued to No. 85 Squadron in March 1943.

Hitherto all night interceptions using A.I. radar had been performed with the early Mark IV, the pilot-interpreted Mark V and the low-looking Mark VIII radars, but it was in mid-1943 that the first American A.I. Mark X was introduced into Britain, and the first operational Mosquito night-fighter to be so equipped was the Merlin 23-powered Mark XVII, one hundred of which (HK237-HK265, HK278-HK327 and HK344-HK362) were converted from Mark IIs already delivered to maintenance units early in 1943. These commenced delivery to operational squadrons starting with No. 85 Squadron in November that year, followed by Nos. 25, 68, 125, 219 and 456.

By the time No. 68 Squadron was receiving its Mark XVIIs (in July 1944) the new higher-powered Merlin 25 Mosquito N.F. XIX was arriving in squadron service. Equipped with either A.I. Mark VIII or X (depending on the role of the squadron), 220 Mosquito XIX were built (commencing MM624) and first entered service with No. 157 Squadron in May 1944, based at Swannington under the command of Sqn./Ldr. H. D. U. Denison.

With the massive build-up of Allied air power for the invasion of Northern Europe and the growth of pressure in the Mediterranean and Far Eastern theatres, deliveries of Mosquito night-fighters increased considerably during 1944, No. 68 and 600 Squadrons receiving the Mark XIX (followed by Nos. 89, 169, 176, 255 and 256 in 1945).

The principal wartime night-fighter/intruder variant was the Mark 30, first delivered in July 1944 to the Canadian squadron, No. 406 (Lynx), commanded by Wg./Cdr. D. J. Williams, RFC, at Winkleigh. Powered by two 1,680 h.p. Merlin 72s or 1,710 h.p. Merlin 76s, this A.I. Mk. X-equipped night-fighter possessed a maximum speed of 407 m.p.h. and could operate up to an altitude of 38,500 feet. Before the end of the war this version equipped Nos. 23, 25, 29, 68, 85, 125, 141, 151, 157, 219, 239, 255, 307, 406, 410, 456 and 488 Squadrons, and even before the end of 1944 twelve squadrons were wholly-equipped with either Mark XIXs or 30s. A total of 506 Mark 30s was taken on charge by the RAF, of which about half were built at de Havilland's Leavesden factory.

After the end of the war, Mosquito 30s were handed down to the Royal Auxiliary Air Force (Nos. 500, 502, 504, 605, 608, 609 and 616 Squadrons) at about the same time as Regular units were receiving the Mark 36, powered by Merlin 113s. Apart from a small number of N.F. 38s (fitted with British A.I. Mk. IX radar), the N.F. 36 remained in service as the RAF's only night-fighter until the early nineteen-fifties when it was replaced by jet-powered Vampire N.F. 10s and Meteor N.F. IIs. They flew with Nos. 23, 25, 29, 39, 85, 141 and 264 Squadrons.

Other Wartime and Post-War Variations

Briefly mentioned above was the Mosquito T. Mk. III, perhaps the longest-lived of all variants. Equipped with side-by-side dual controls, this version persisted in service with the RAF from 1942 until the mid-fifties

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Brief Specification

Powerplants

1,460 h.p. Merlin 21 (Mks. I, II, III, IV, VI, XII, XIII and XVII).
1,460 h.p. Merlin 23 (Mks. I, II, III, IV, V, VI, XII, XIII and XVII).
1,635 h.p. Merlin 25 (Mks. VI, XVIII, XIX, 33 and 37).
1,460 h.p. Packard-Merlin 31 (Mks. VII, XX, F-8, 21 and 40).
1,460 h.p. Packard-Merlin 33 (Mks. XX, 21, 22, 40 and 43).
1,705 h.p. Merlin 66 (Mk. 33)
1,705 h.p. Packard-Merlin 67 (Mk. XIV).
1,705 h.p. Packard-Merlin 69 (Mks. 23, 41 and 42).
1,680 h.p. Merlin 72/73 (Mks. VIII, IX, XIV, XV, XVI, 30 and 39).
1,710 h.p. Merlin 76/77 (Mks. XV, XVI, 30 and 39).
1,690 h.p. Merlin 113/114 (Mks. 30, 32, 34, 35, 36 and 38).
1,710 h.p. Merlin 114A (Mk. 34A).
1,620 h.p. Packard-Merlin 225 (Mks. 25, 26 and 27).
1,620 h.p. Packard-Merlin 301 (Mk. 24).

Wing span

54 ft. 2 in. (all versions, except NF.XV, 62 ft. 6 in.).

Length

40 ft. 6 in. (Mks. I, II, III, IV, VI, VIII, XII, etc.).
44 ft. 6 in. (Mks. IX, NF.XV, B.XVI, PR.XVI, NF.30).

Height

12 ft. 6 in. (all versions).

Wing area

454 sq. ft. (all versions, except NF.XV, 479 sq. ft.).

Tare weight

e.g. 12,824 lb. (Mk. I); 13,400 lb. (Mk. IV); 14,344 lb. (Mk. VI); 14,569 lb. (PR. Mk. IX); 14,635 lb. (B. Mk. XVI); 16,000 lb. (NF. Mk. 38).

Loaded weight

e.g. 19,670 lb. (Mk. I); 21,462 lb. (Mk. IV); 22,258 lb. (Mk. VI); 22,000 lb. (PR. Mk. IX); 23,000 lb. (B. Mk. XVI); 21,400 lb. (NF. Mk. 38).

Maximum speed

e.g. 382 m.p.h. (PR. Mk. I); 380 m.p.h. (B. Mk. IV); 436 m.p.h. (PR. Mk. VIII); 408 m.p.h. (B. Mk. XVI); 415 m.p.h. (B. Mk. 35); 404 m.p.h. (NF. Mk. 38).

Service ceiling

e.g. 35,000 ft. (PR. Mk. I); 34,000 ft. (B. Mk. IV); 38,000 ft. (PR. Mk. VIII); 43,000 ft. (NF. Mk. XV); 37,000 ft. (B. Mk. XVI); 42,000 ft. (B. Mk. 35).

Maximum range

e.g. 2,180 miles (PR. Mk. I); 1,485 miles (B. Mk. XVI); 3,340 miles (PR. Mk. 34)

Mosquito Mk. II of No. 23 Squadron, RAF over Malta in December 1942. Green/grey uppers with matt black under surfaces, red code and serial DZ230 in black. (IWM)

almost exclusively with OTUs and OCUs. Many were used as target tugs.

Perhaps the third most widely-used category of Mosquito were those employed for photographic reconnaissance, the first two and main) versions, the P.R. IX and XVI, being adaptations of the bombers of the same power configurations. These aircraft, as well as F-8s (converted from Canadian-built B. Mk. XXs), based at Benson and nearby Mount Farm, performed the lion's share of all photographic reconnaissance over occupied Europe during 1943 and 1944. No fewer than 432 P.R. Mk. XVIs were built and many were shipped to the Far East before the end of the war.

The need for high-altitude flight by P.R. aircraft had been recognised early in the war and five early Mosquitoes were fitted with two-stage supercharged Merlin 72s as the P.R. Mk. VIII. Much later another five aircraft were fitted with extended wing tips and powered by Merlin 113s under the designation P.R. Mk. 32. The very-long-range Mosquito P.R. 34 flew on 4 December 1944, but did not reach squadron service until late in 1945. Developed primarily for use over South-East Asia, this version had a still-air range of over 3,500 miles using a large bomb-bay fuel tank and increased-capacity underwing tanks.

Mosquitoes were manufactured in substantial numbers breaking flights, including a west-east Atlantic crossing (RG241 flown by Wg./Cdr. J. R. H. Merriman, DSO, DFC) on 23 October 1945 in 5 hours 10 minutes.

Overseas Manufacture

Mosquitos were manufactured in substantial numbers in Canada and Australia. Twenty-five Packard-Merlin 31-powered B. Mk. VIIs were produced by de Havilland Aircraft of Canada Ltd., at Downsview Airport, Toronto, as well as the 40 similarly-powered photo-recce F-8s mentioned above. Merlin 31s were also used in the first 85 Canadian-built Mosquito B& XXs, but Merlin 33s appeared in the remaining 190 aircraft. This version served with the RAF on Nos 128, 139, 162, 608 and 627 Squadrons, entering service in 1944.

The Canadian factory also produced two training variants, the T.22 (four Merlin 33-powered aircraft) and the T.27 (50 Packard-Merlin 225-powered aircraft). The single F.B.24 (with Packard-Merlin 301 engines) was not proceeded with, but the F.B.26 was built in large numbers, at least one squadron of the RAF—No. 249—using this version in Africa and Iraq after the war.

The principal Canadian bomber variant, the B.25 (with Packard-Merlin 225s), of which 400 were built, served with Nos. 128, 139, 142, 162, 163, 502, 608 and 627 Squadrons of the RAF, first participating in operations in November 1944, and with the RCAF after the war.

Australian production was confined to the Marks 40, 41 and 43, a total of 228 being produced by de Havilland Aircraft Pty., Ltd., Bankstown, Sydney, N.S.W. One hundred and seventy-eight F.B.40s were built (A51-1 to A51-178) and of these six were converted to the P.R. role. Packard-Merlin 69s powered the 28 P.R. Mark 41s, and Packard Merlin 33s the 22 Mark 43 trainers. None of these served with the RAF.

Sea Mosquitoes and Target Tugs

Among the projects which were pursued towards the end of the war was a navalised version of the Mosquito, which originated in Specification N.15/44 and, as a

Another Mk. II of No. 23 Squadron in similar scheme with the exception of the serial, DZ229 in red on the black under surface. (IWM)

A Mosquito FB.VI of No. 305 "Ziemi Wielkopolskiez" Squadron, RAF, 2nd Tactical Air Force. In standard green/grey scheme with sky spinners and D-Day stripes. (via G. Cynk)

feasibility study a Mark VI, LR359, was modified to incorporate deck landing equipment. This became the first British twin-engine aircraft to land on an aircraft carrier when, on 25 March 1944, Lt./Cdr. E. M. Brown, MBE, DSC, landed the aircraft on H.M.S. *Indefatigable*.

Two semi-navalised prototypes, TS446 and TS449, followed, and the first fully-modified aircraft, LR387 (previously an F.B. VI) represented the definitive version with nose radar, folding wings and four-blade propellers. Production was undertaken at Leavesden and 50 aircraft were built as the T.R. Mark 33, most of these aircraft being adapted to carry an 18 in. torpedo and limited underwing stores. Some of these machines served with No. 811 Squadron of the Fleet Air Arm during 1946-47. Six other Sea Mosquitoes, designated T.R. Mk. 37s (equipped with British ASV radar), were also delivered to the Fleet Air Arm.

The role of target-towing is interesting in that occasionally aircraft are specifically designed to perform this function, while others, having failed in their intended operational role, are relegated to the job of target tug. Yet other designs are so adaptable as to recommend them to the work without substantial redesign. Almost all Mosquito IIIs and many Mark VIs with training units were so adapted, but it was not until after the war that a specific target-towing version, the (Sea) Mosquito T.T. Mk. 39 was developed. Using surplus B. Mk. XVIs, General Aircraft Limited of Hanworth converted a number of Mosquitoes to feature a lengthened nose to accommodate a recording cameraman, an electrically-driven winch in the bomb-bay, and a dorsal sighting position for the winch operator.

Among the many interesting jobs performed by the Mosquito during wartime was that of courier aircraft, flying between Leuchars and Stockholm during 1943-44. Using a number of converted Mark VIs, BOAC maintained a "service" across enemy airspace under the most hazardous conditions, carrying diplomatic mail (and occasionally important passengers) in the bomb-bay.

The Wooden Wonder

Looking back 25 years, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the Mosquito was one of the truly great aeroplanes of all time—certainly ranking in anyone's list of the dozen greatest classics of any age, of any nationality. Its very concept—safety in speed—demanded no design compromise, simply superb aerodynamics. In service it proved supremely adaptable, and capable of progressive development—at no considerable complication —to maintain continuing superiority.

Many of the war's classic operations, demanding unheard-of skill by the crews, were performed by Mosquitoes. After all, the concept of a light bomber carrying a 4,000 pound bomb to Berlin was radical to say the least, yet these operations were not performed once, but repeatedly over many months. Pinpoint operations by small formations of Mosquito bombers and fighter-bombers were carried out against single buildings throughout Northern Europe with astonishing success. Whether it was with bombs, large or small, rockets, torpedoes or guns, the Mosquito proved itself maid of all work—and master as well. Bereft of the stimulus of world war, there will probably never be another aeroplane quite like the universal "Mossie".

An FB.VI of No. 613 Squadron with a pair of 500 lb. bombs on wing racks tucking its wheels up. Note sky fuselage band and spinners.

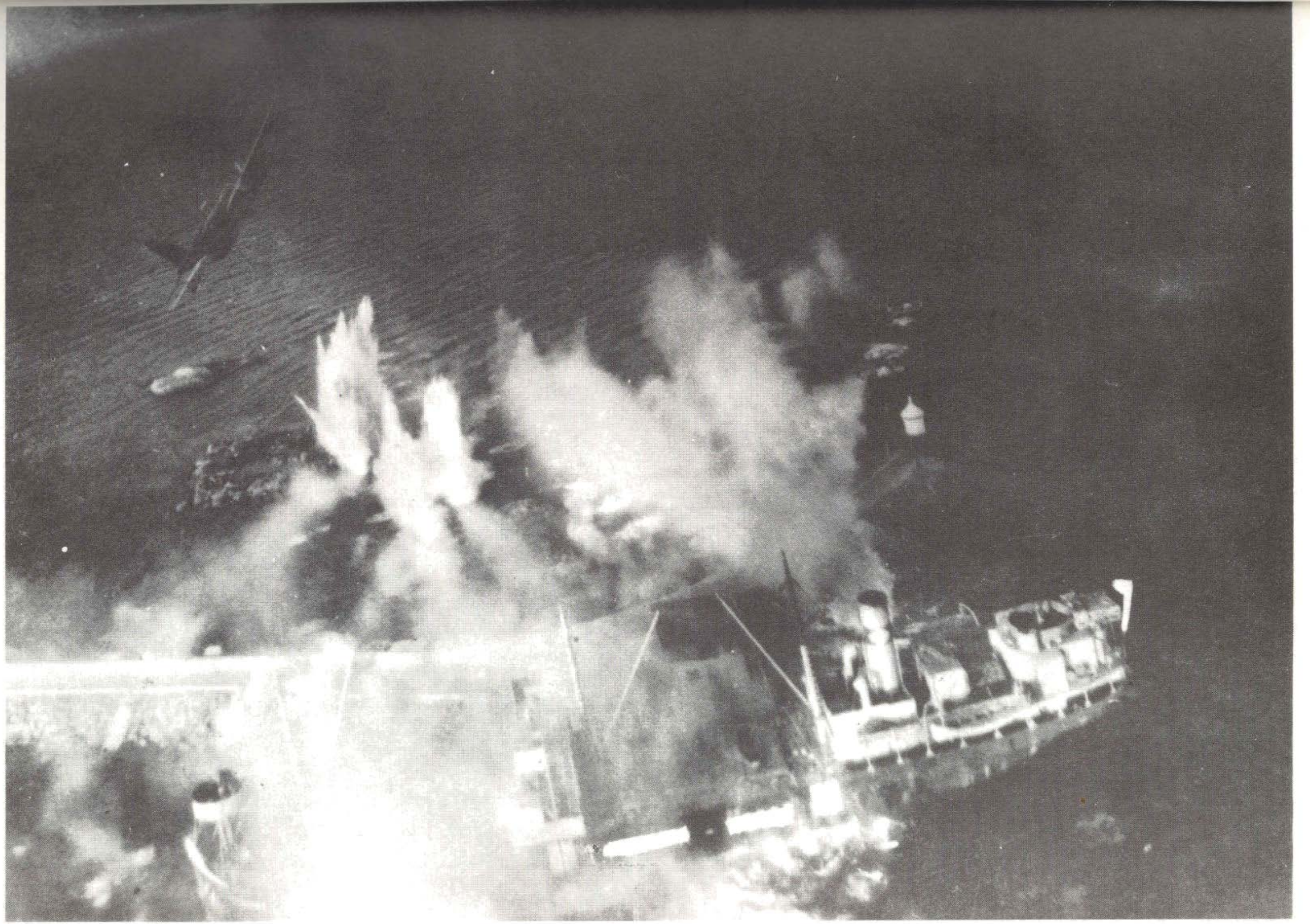
Above & below: Mosquito FB.VI of No. 456 Squadron, RAAF. Note in the lower photograph the censor has been at work on the wing aerials. (IWM)

Below: A Mosquito B.VI showing off its single engine performance. (IWM)

Below: Mosquito FB.VI of No. 107 Squadron, RAF, with D-Day stripes under the fuselage only, sky codes. (IWM)

Above & below: Mosquito FB.VI's of No. 487 Squadron, Royal New Zealand Air Force. Note 500 lb. bombs on wing racks, serial of EG–T is MM417. (IWM)

Below: The typical Mosquito silhouette, virtually unchanged throughout its life span. (IWM)



Coastal Command Mosquitoes attacking ships in Sandshavn harbour on 23 March 1945. (IWM)

Above: A B.IV, DK290/G equipped with two mines for "Highball" trials. (IWM)

Above: A B.XVI with H2S scanner under the bomb-bay. (IWM)

Below: Front view of a Mosquito B.XVIII showing the position of the 6 lb. anti-tank gun slightly off-set to starboard of the centre- line. (IWM)

Above & below: Mosquito B.XVIII of No. 249 Squadron, RAF, see colour illustration on front cover. Note the black and white stripes are not too evenly applied. (photos. IWM)

Above & below: Mosquito FB.VI's in the Arakan during 1945. Note the white stripes on the green/grey camouflaged aircraft and the black stripes on the silver doped aircraft. Squadron unknown. (IWM)

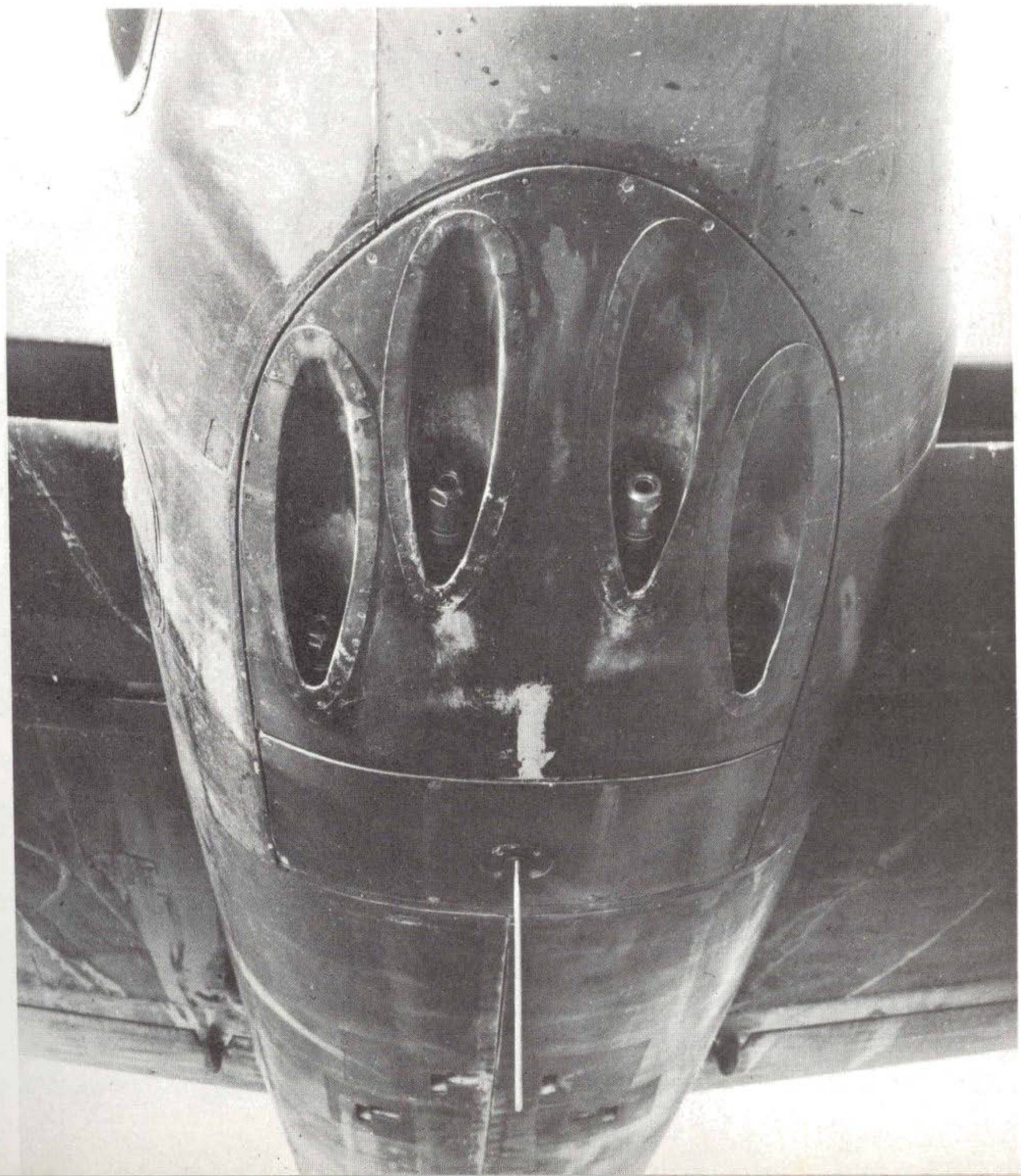
Rocket rail details on a pair of FB.VI's in the Arakan. Note the yellow surround to the pale blue/ dark blue SEAC roundel on RF942. (IWM)

Above: A Canadian built B.20, name on the nose is "MOOSE JAW" Saskatchewan, Canada. (IWM)

Above & below: Two good detail shots of a Canadian built B.25. (IWM)

Above: Mosquito NF.XIII of No. 29 Squadron, RAF, on its dispersal area at Hunsdon in January 1945. Note the irregular join between grey and matt black on fuselage.

Below: Cannon ports, aerial and ejector port detail of a NF.XIII. (IWM)



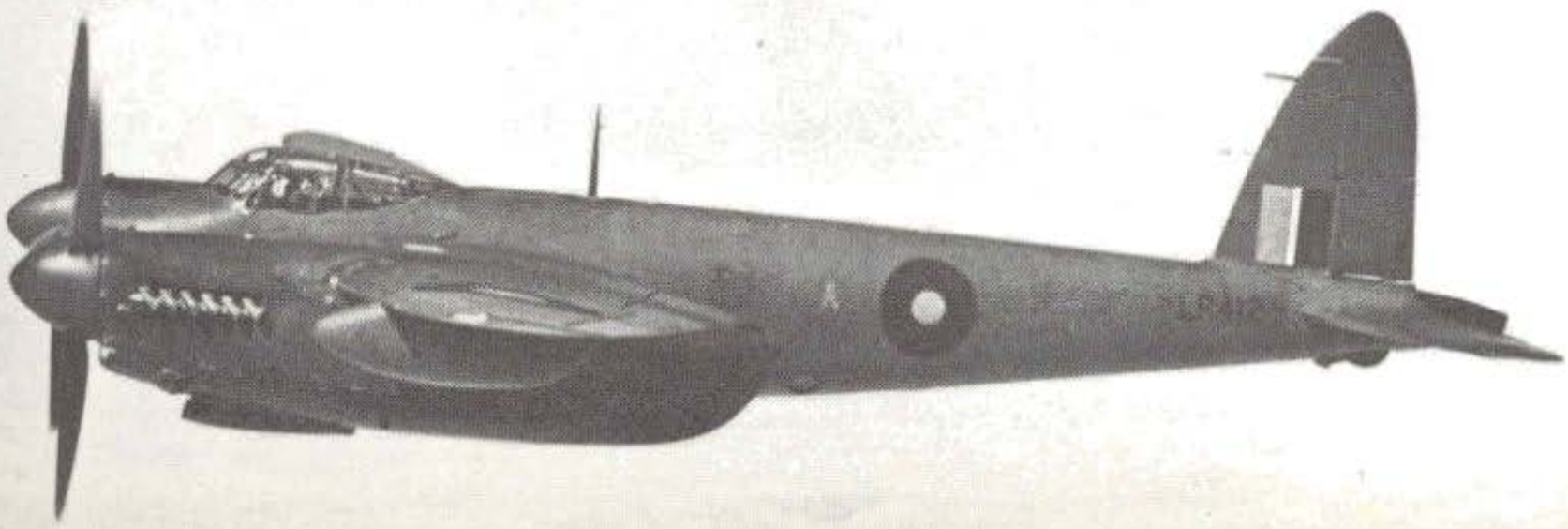
Above: A three-quarter front view of RO–T illustrated on previous page, note white T on nose. Serial is HK382. (IWM)

Above & below: A pair of bomber support Mosquito NF.30's on an English airfield during the 1944–45 winter. (IWM)

Above: A Mosquito NF.36 of No. 264 Squadron, standard green/grey scheme, code PS–E in black, serial RL154.
Below: Mosquito PR.I of No. 1 Photographic Development Unit, code LY–J, serial W4051 in standard PR blue scheme. (IWM)

Above: Plan view detail shot of W4051. (IWM)

Below: A Mosquito PR.9, serial LR412 of an unknown unit. (IWM)



Three fine flying shots of a Mosquito PR.XVI of No. 544 Squadron, note black long-range tanks. Serial NS502 with M below. (IWM)

Right: The PR.XVI which flew to Karachi from the UK in an overall time of 16 hrs. 46 mins. taking off at the start of the trip. (IWM)

Above: Under surface detail shot of a PR.XVI. (IWM)

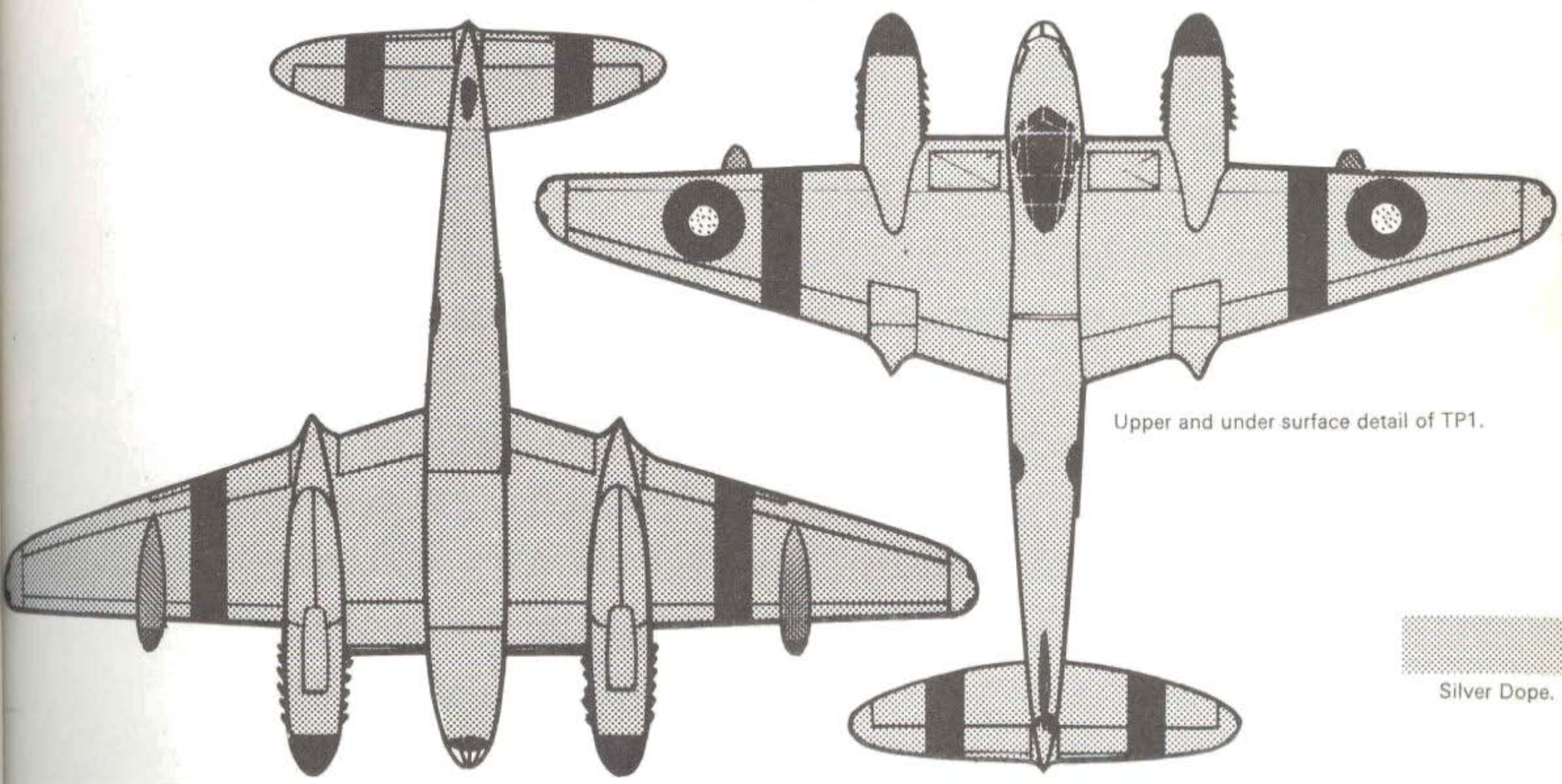
Below: The record breaking PR.XVI on the airfield at Karachi. Serial in red was NS688 with the SNAKE prefix also in red. (IWM)

Above: MM307, a Mosquito PR.XVI of No. 400 Squadron, 2nd Tactical Air Force at Odiham early in 1944. Standard PR scheme with no markings but with red/white/blue fin flash. (Robinson)

Above: Mosquito PR.XVI of No. 140 Squadron, 2nd Tactical Air Force in company with a Spitfire PR.XI and Wellington Mk. XIII on Melsbroek airfield early in 1945. 34 (PR) Wing, RAF. (IWM)

Below: Close-up of the nose of the PR.XVI with a Spitfire PR.XI in the background. (IWM)

Above & bottom: A silver doped Mosquito PR.XVI of No. 684 Squadron, RAF, SEAC. Note the pale blue/dark blue SEAC roundels and fin flash, PR blue long-range tanks, black stripes and spinners. Serial NS787 in stencil style square letters. (IWM)



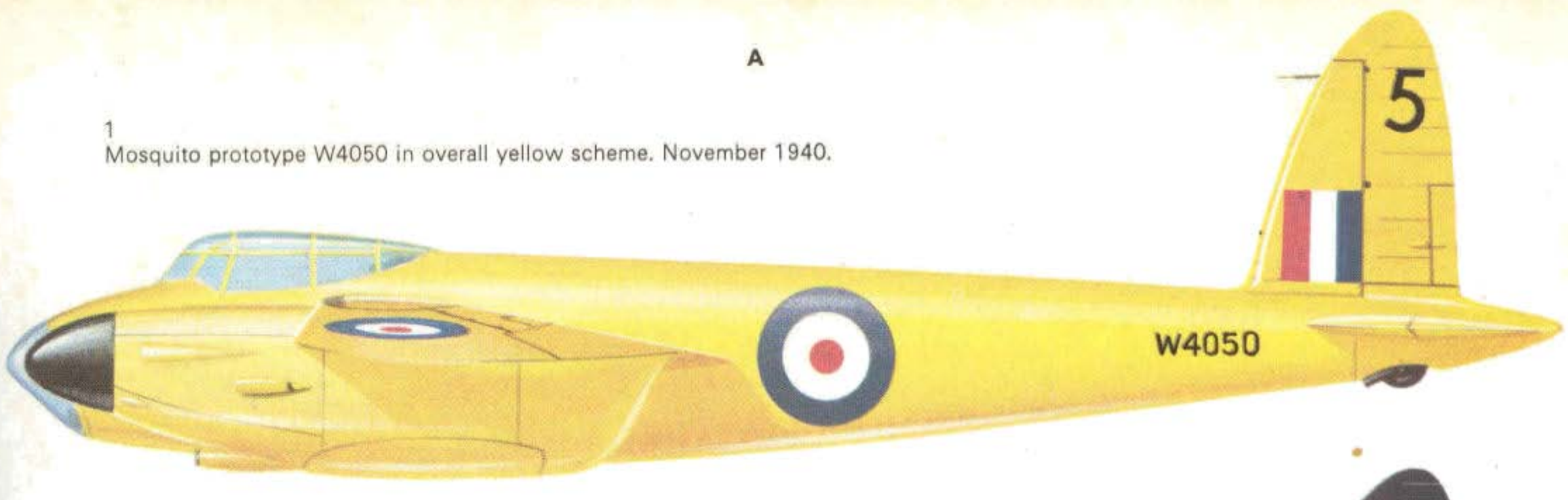
Upper and under surface detail of TP1.

Silver Dope.

Above: Mosquito PR.32, one of the initial batch photographed during 1943. (IWM)
Below: A PR.34 with 210 gallon long-range tanks. Serial RG176. (IWM)

Below: Three-quarter rear view of a pre-production Mosquito T. Mk. 35, in overall silver dope with yellow fuselage and wing bands. (IWM)

1
Mosquito prototype W4050 in overall yellow scheme. November 1940.



2
Mosquito prototype NF.II in overall matt black night-fighter finish with A.I. Mk. IV radar in nose.

3
Mosquito B. Mk. IV, No. 105 Squadron, RAF. In early bomber scheme.

4
Mosquito B. Mk. IV, No. 139 Squadron, RAF. In later bomber scheme.

5
Mosquito B.35, No. 139 Squadron, RAF.

1
Mosquito FB.VI, No. 305 "Ziemi Wielkopolskiej" (Polish) Squadron, RAF.
2nd Tactical Air Force, 1944.

2
Mosquito FB.VI, No. 415 "Swordfish" Squadron, RCAF.

3
Mosquito FB.VI, No. 487 Squadron, RNZAF.

4
Mosquito B.XVI, No. 571 Squadron, RAF.

5
Mosquito B.IV, No. 692 Squadron, RAF. Converted to carry 4,000 lb. bomb.

1
Mosquito NF.II, No. 23 Squadron, RAF. Malta early 1943.

2
Mosquito FB.VI, No. 23 Squadron, RAF. Fitted with ASH.

3
Mosquito NF.36, No. 23 Squadron, RAF. 1951.

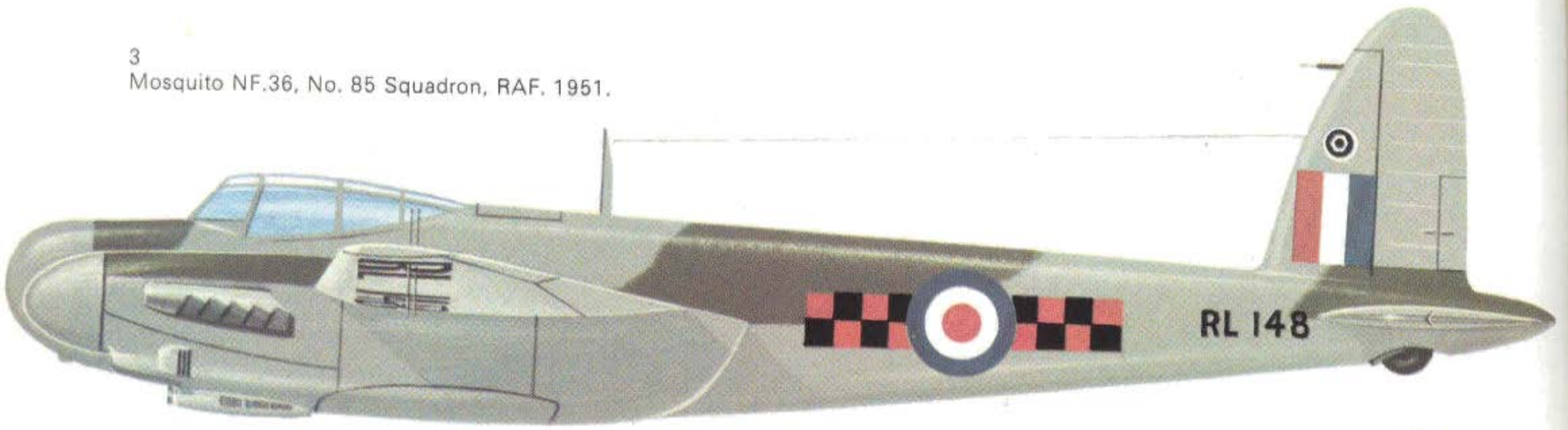
4
Mosquito NF.36, No. 25 Squadron, RAF. 1949.

5
Mosquito NF.XIII, No. 29 Squadron, RAF. 1945.

1
Mosquito Mk. XII, No. 85 Squadron, RAF. 1943.

2
Mosquito NF.XVII, No. 85 Squadron, RAF.
Flown by Wg./Cdr. J. Cunningham, DSO, DFC & bar. 1944.

3
Mosquito NF.36, No. 85 Squadron, RAF. 1951.



4
Mosquito NF.36, No. 141 Squadron, RAF. 1951.

5
Mosquito FB.VI, No. 157 Squadron, RAF.
Flown by Sqn./Ldr. J. G. Benson, 1944.

1
Mosquito NF.30, No. 219 Squadron, RAF. 1945.

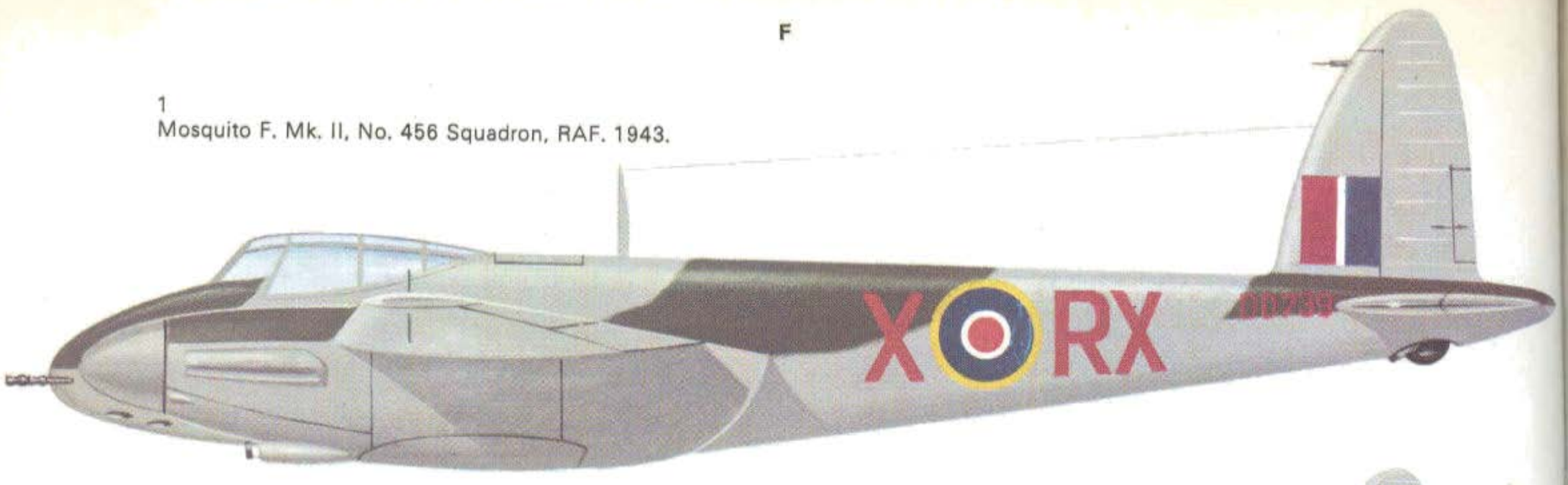
2
Mosquito NF.30, No. 239 Squadron, RAF. 1945.

3
Mosquito II, No. 264 Squadron, RAF. 1943.

4
Mosquito NF.36, No. 264 Squadron, RAF. 1947.

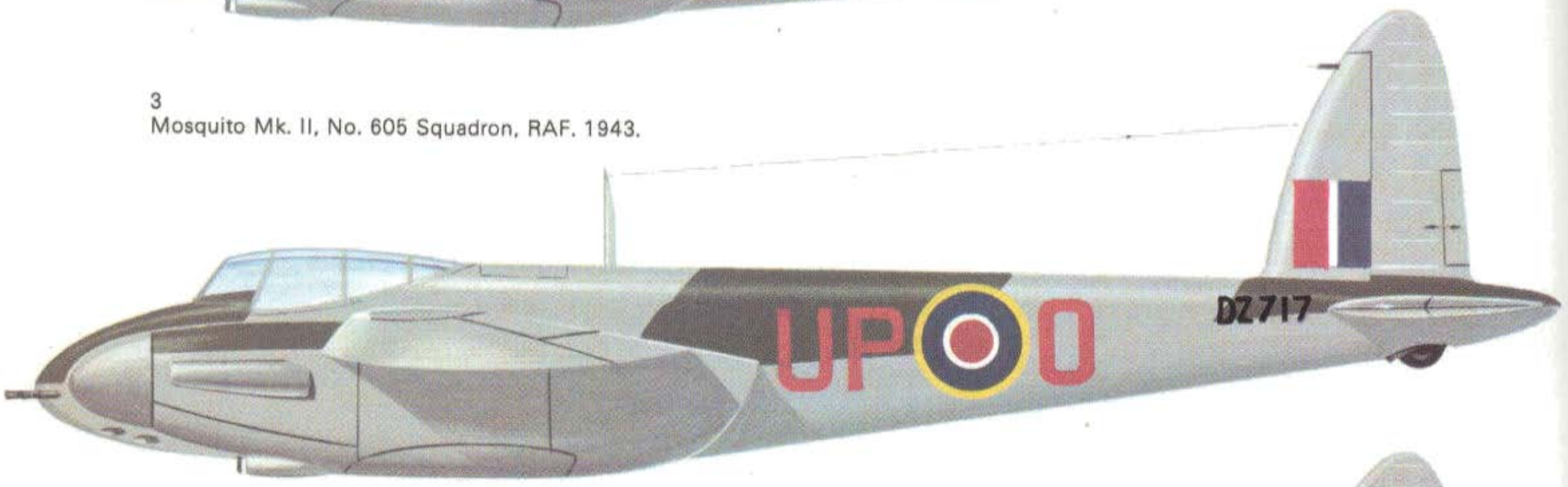
5
Mosquito NF.30, No. 410 Squadron, RAF. 1944.

1
Mosquito F. Mk. II, No. 456 Squadron, RAF. 1943.



2
Mosquito Mk. XII, No. 488 Squadron, RAF. 1943.

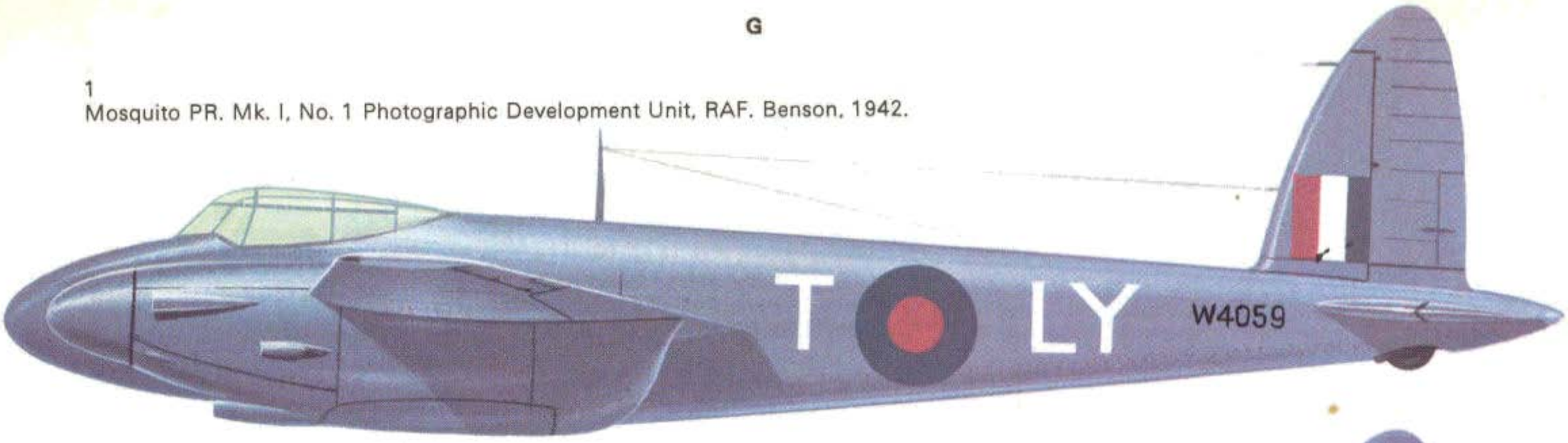
3
Mosquito Mk. II, No. 605 Squadron, RAF. 1943.



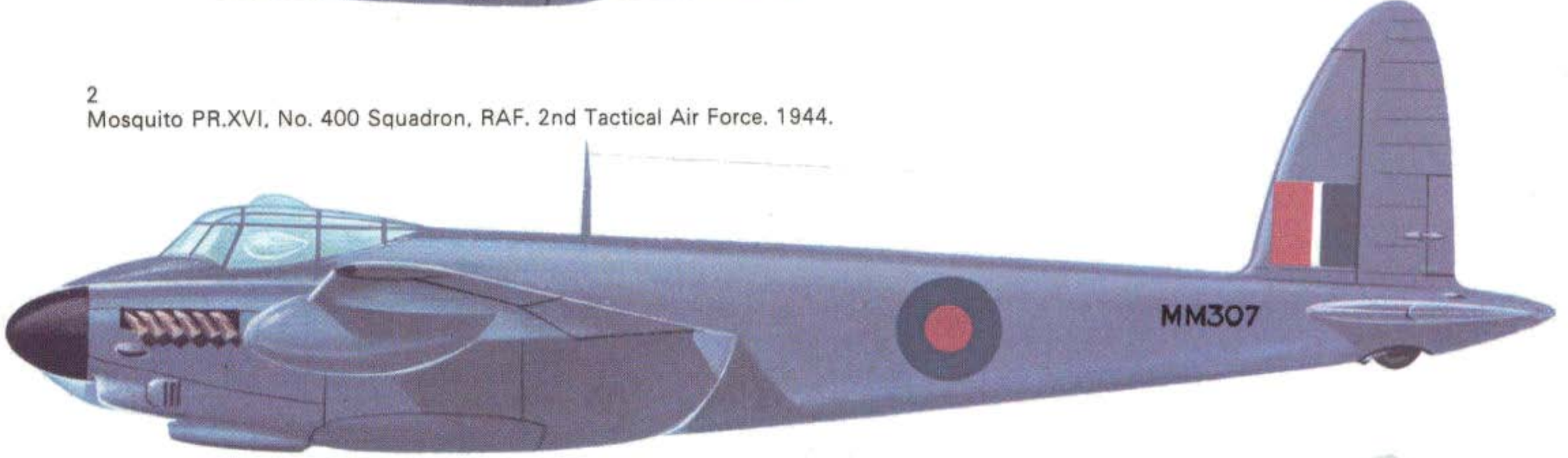
4
Mosquito FB.VI, No. 605 Squadron, RAF. 1944.

5
Mosquito NF.30, No. 616 Squadron, RAuxAF. 1948.

1
Mosquito PR. Mk. I, No. 1 Photographic Development Unit, RAF. Benson, 1942.

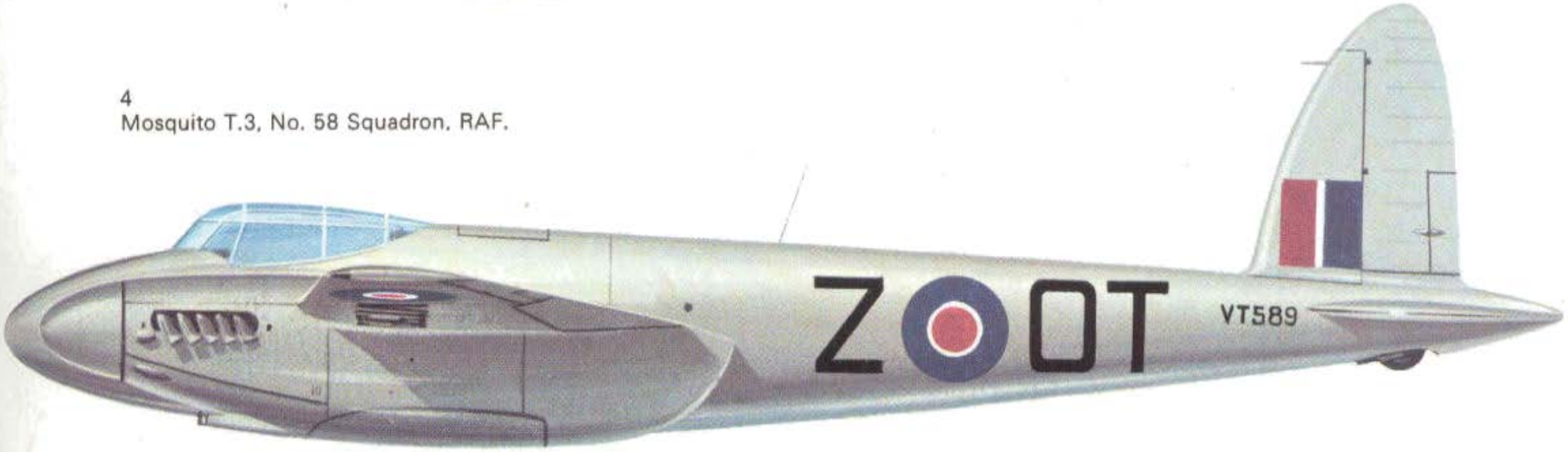


2
Mosquito PR.XVI, No. 400 Squadron, RAF. 2nd Tactical Air Force. 1944.

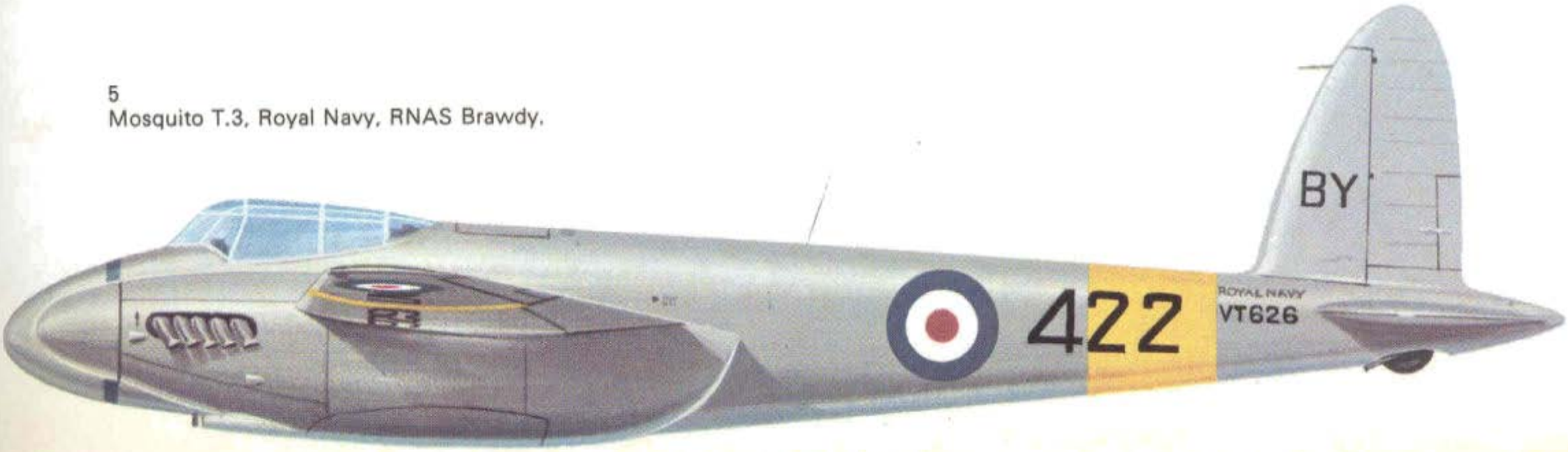


3
Mosquito FB.VI, Central Gunnery School, RAF.

4
Mosquito T.3, No. 58 Squadron, RAF.



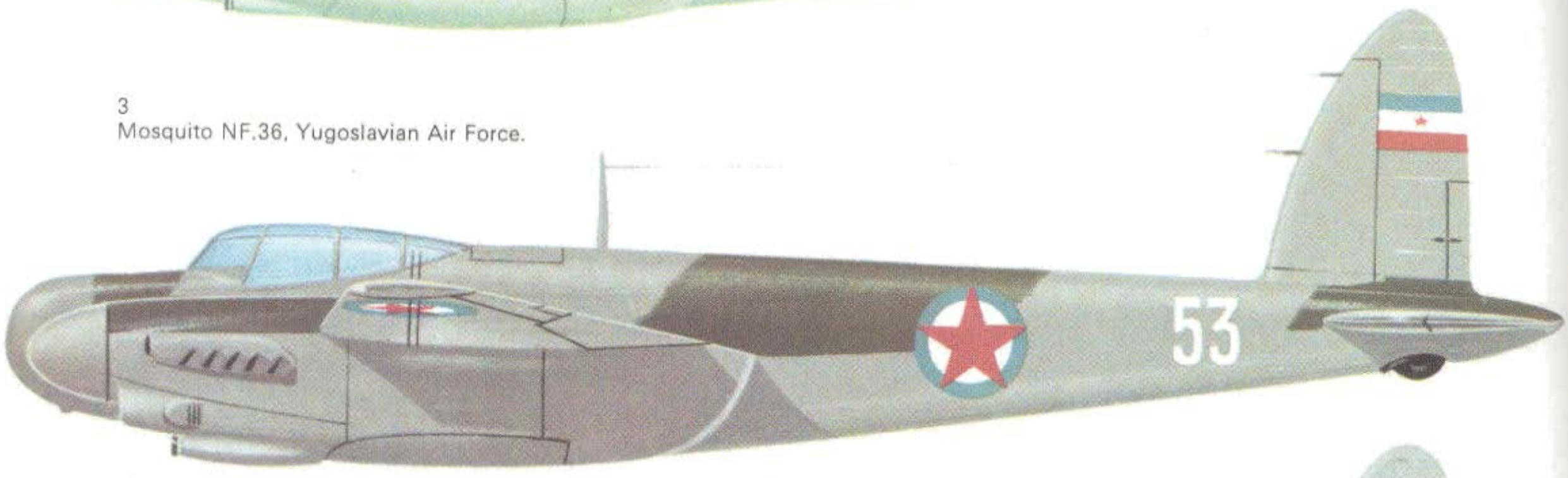
5
Mosquito T.3, Royal Navy, RNAS Brawdy.



1
Mosquito FB.40, No. 87 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force.

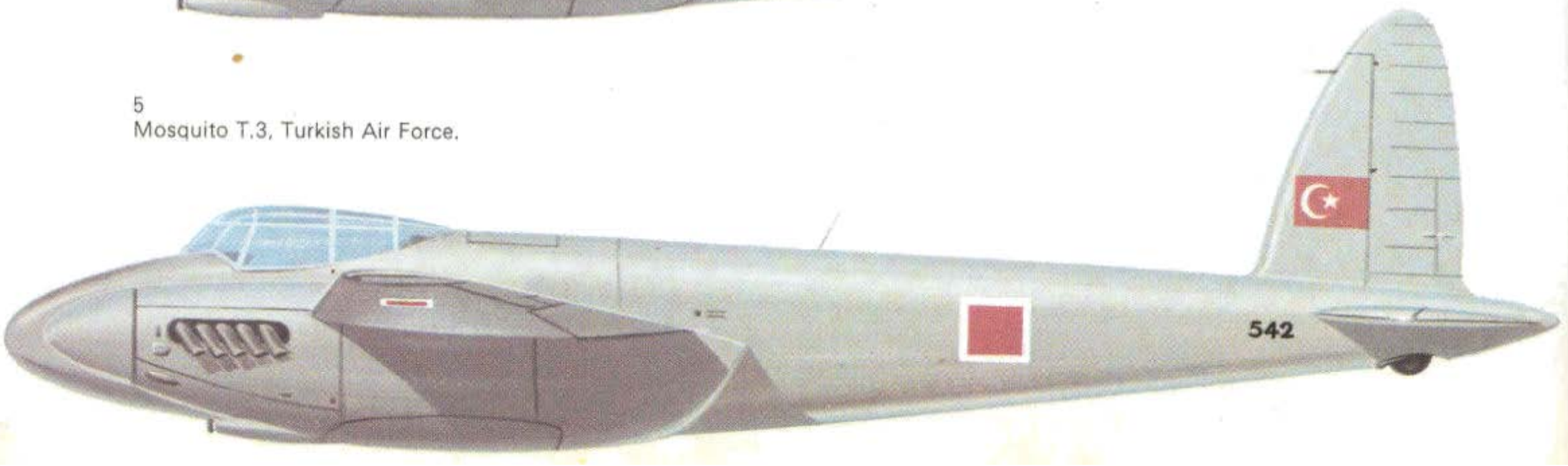
2
Mosquito Airliner, British Overseas Airways Corporation.
Converted Mk. IV, DZ411.

3
Mosquito NF.36, Yugoslavian Air Force.

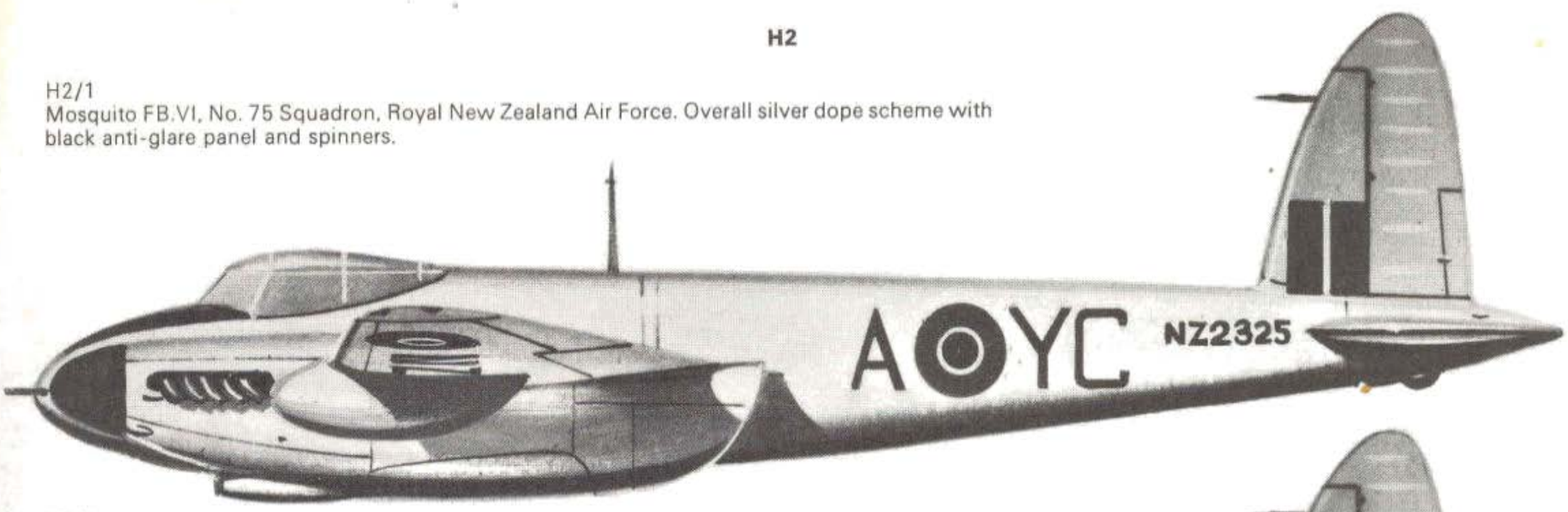


4
Mosquito PR.XVI, Israeli Air Force.

5
Mosquito T.3, Turkish Air Force.



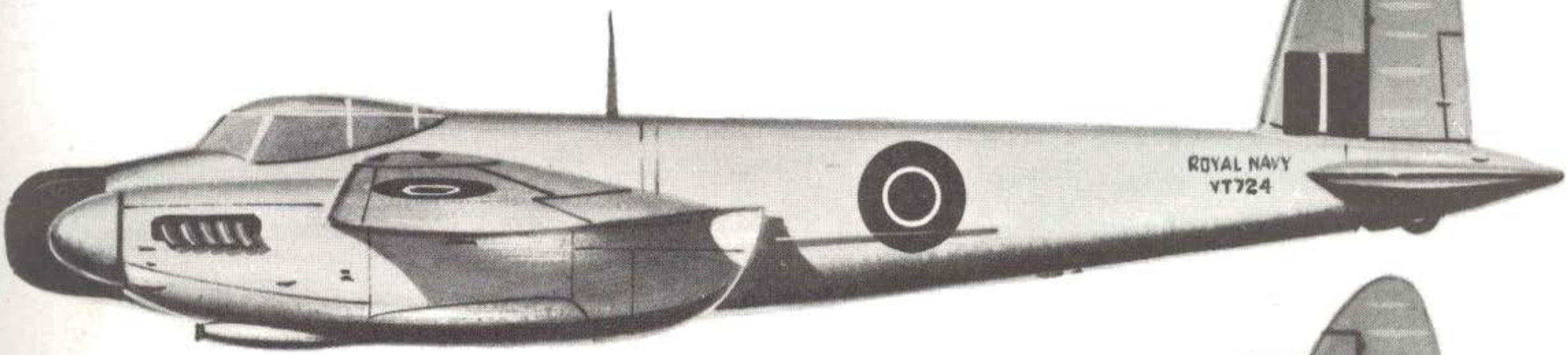
H2/1
Mosquito FB.VI, No. 75 Squadron, Royal New Zealand Air Force. Overall silver dope scheme with black anti-glare panel and spinners.



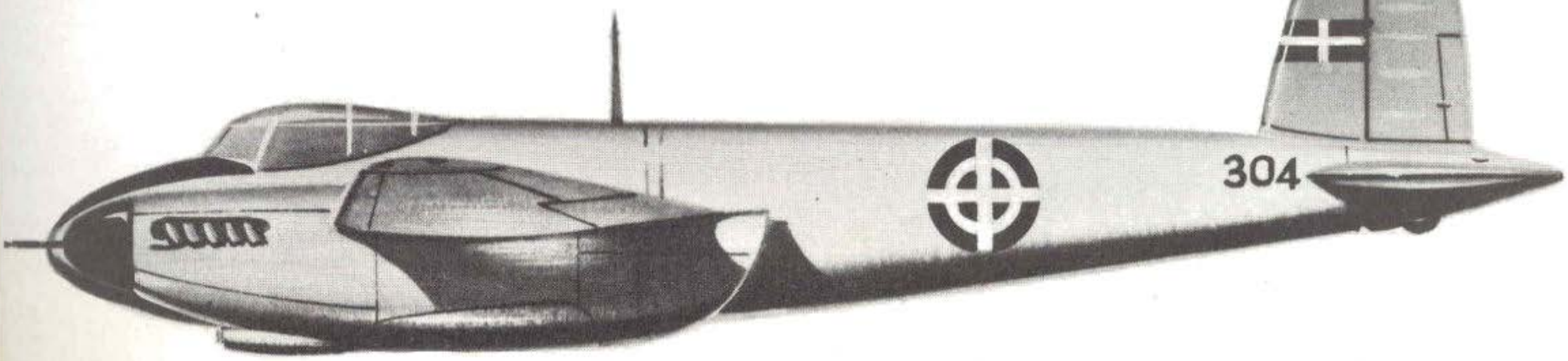
H2/2
Mosquito T.43, No. 75 Squadron, Royal New Zealand Air Force. Overall silver dope scheme with black anti-glare panel and spinners.

H2/3
Mosquito PR.XVI, No. 60 Squadron, South African Air Force, 1946. Overall silver dope scheme with olive drab anti-glare panel in front of cockpit and on engine cowlings, red code, black serial.

H2/4
Mosquito TR.37, Fleet Air Arm, in standard overall silver dope finish, black radome.



H2/5
Mosquito FB.VI, Dominican Air Force, in overall silver dope finish, wing insignia USAF style.

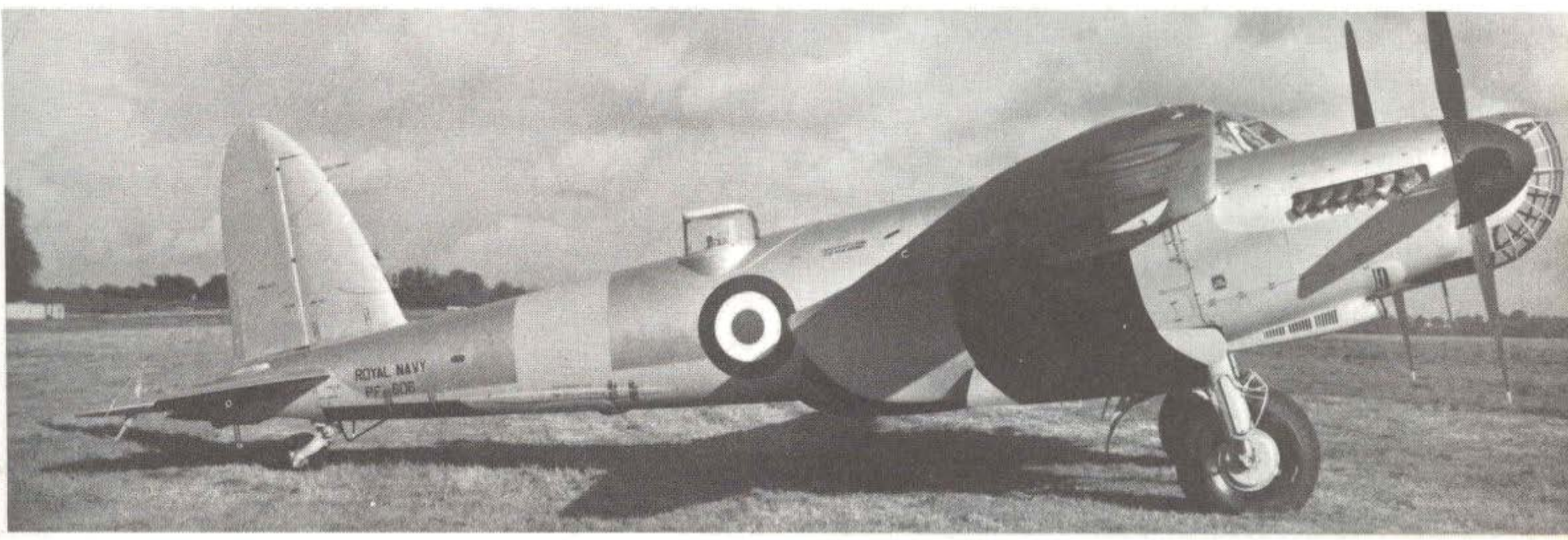


Above: Mosquito B.VI, LR359, with strengthened fuselage and A-frame deck-landing hook carried out the first deck-landings on an aircraft carrier, HMS *Indefatigable* on the 25 March 1944. (IWM)

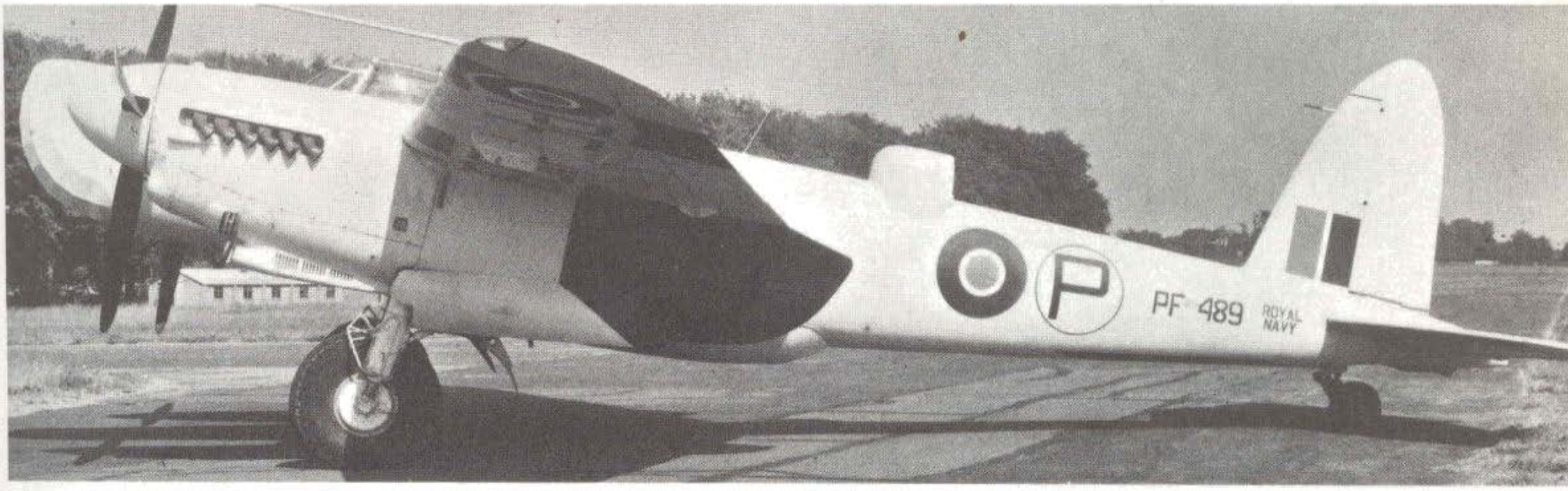
Below: Mosquito TR.33 of the Royal Navy in what appears to be dark sea grey uppers and extra dark sea grey unders. (IWM)

Below: TW281 a TR.33 Mosquito with cleaned up nose in extra dark sea grey uppers and sky unders. Note outboard position of the roundel. (IWM)

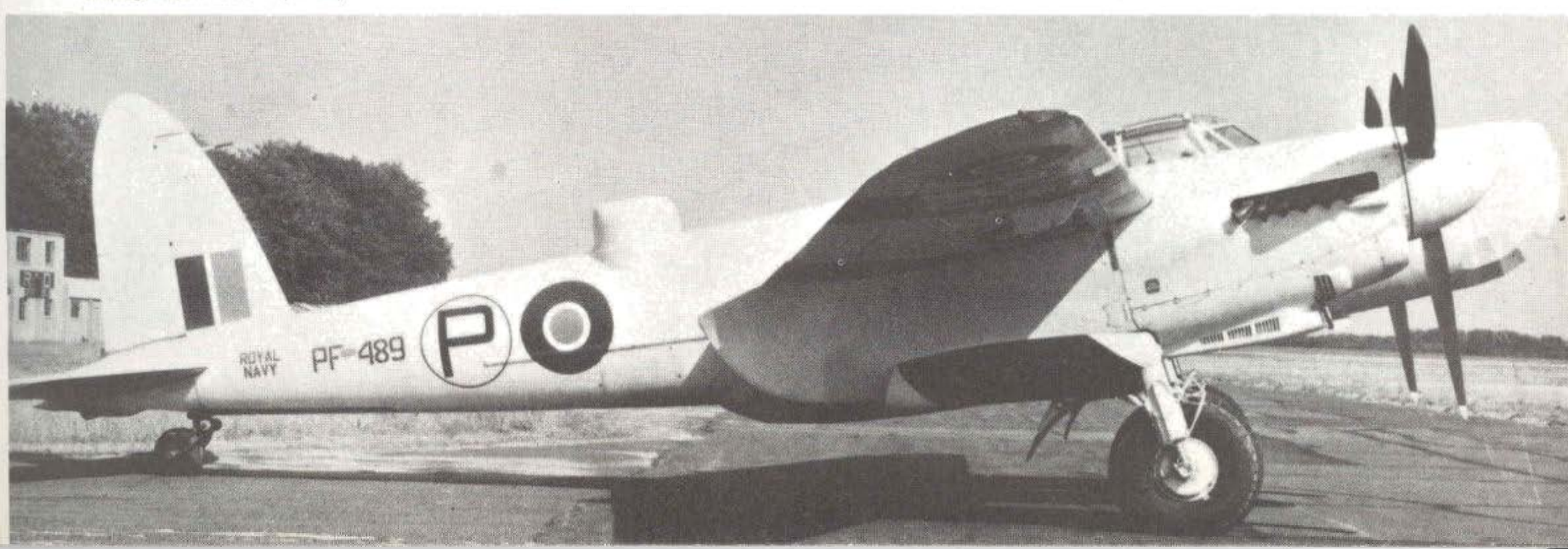
Above: LR387 a Mk. VI modified to Mk. 33 standard with hook and folding wings, shown here with a tin-fish in position. (IWM)



Above: Mosquito TT.39 in silver upper surfaces and yellow with black stripes under surfaces. Serial PF606. (IWM)



Above & below: Port and starboard views of an overall yellow with black stripes on the under surfaces TT.39 of the Royal Navy, the P in circle. Prototype marking was in black. (IWM)

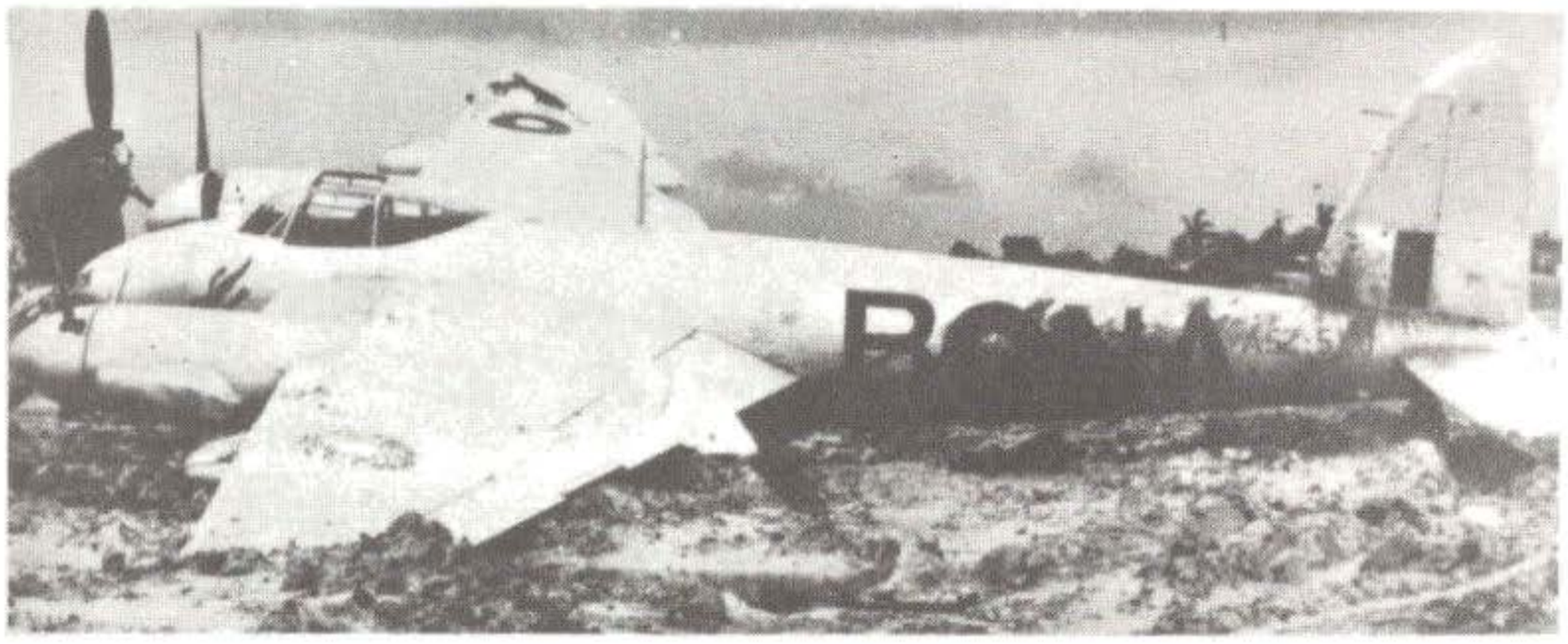


Left, both pictures: Mosquito FB.VI of No. 464 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force, forced landed at Sculthorpe in 1943. Serial HX948. (via F. F. Smith)

Below: Line-up of overall dark green Australian built Mosquito FB.40's. (IWM)

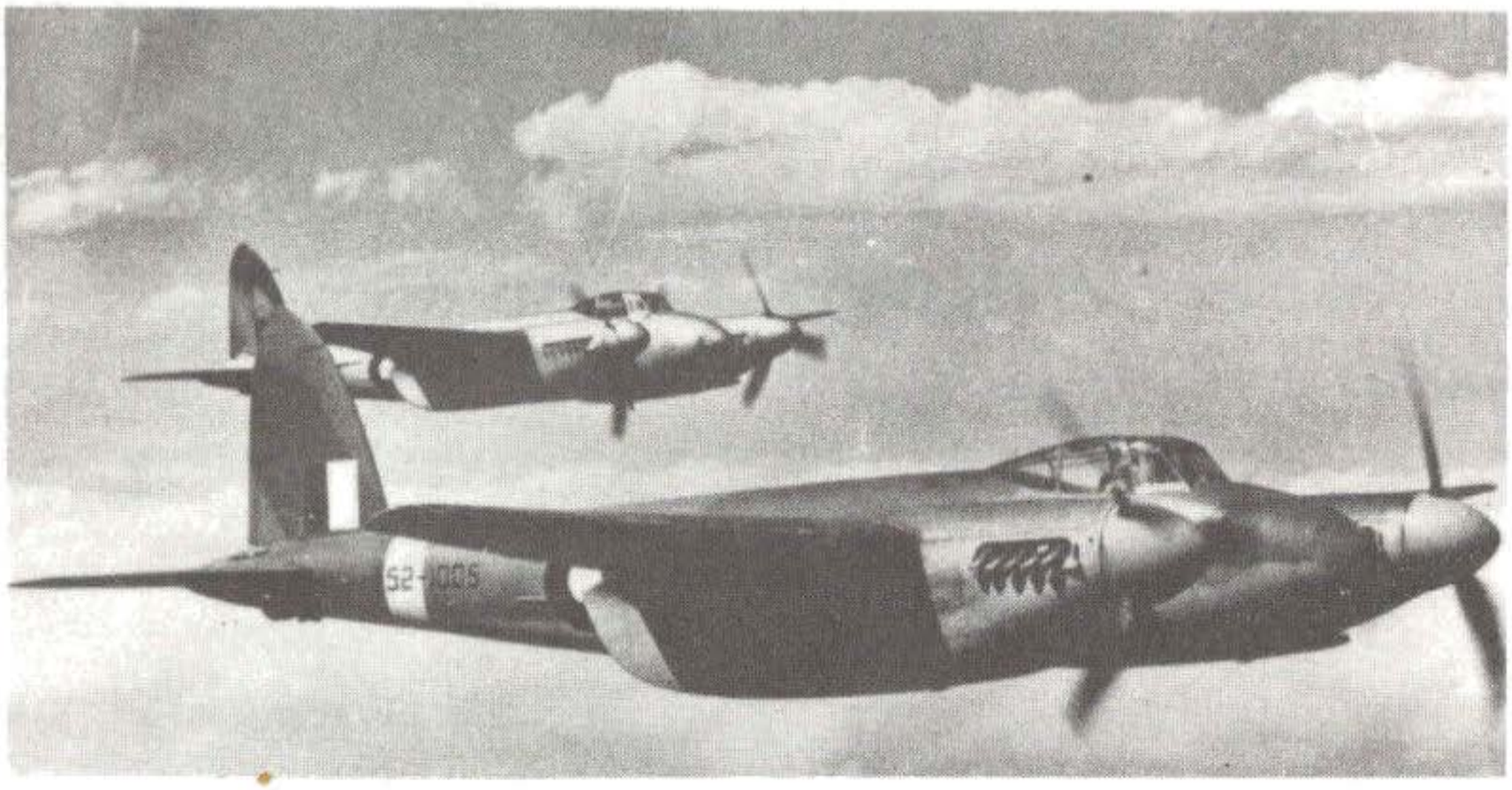
Above & below: Mosquito FB.VI's of No. 1 Squadron, RAAF in overall silver dope with black codes and serials. J is A52–525 in stencil style. Morotai 1945.

NA–L another Mosquito FB.VI of No. 1 Squadron flying over Ku-Ching, Borneo in 1945. Serial A52–508.



A52–520 an FB.VI of No. 1 Squadron somewhat in the rough off the runway. Labuan Island, 8 August 1945. Code NA–B in black. (F. F. Smith)

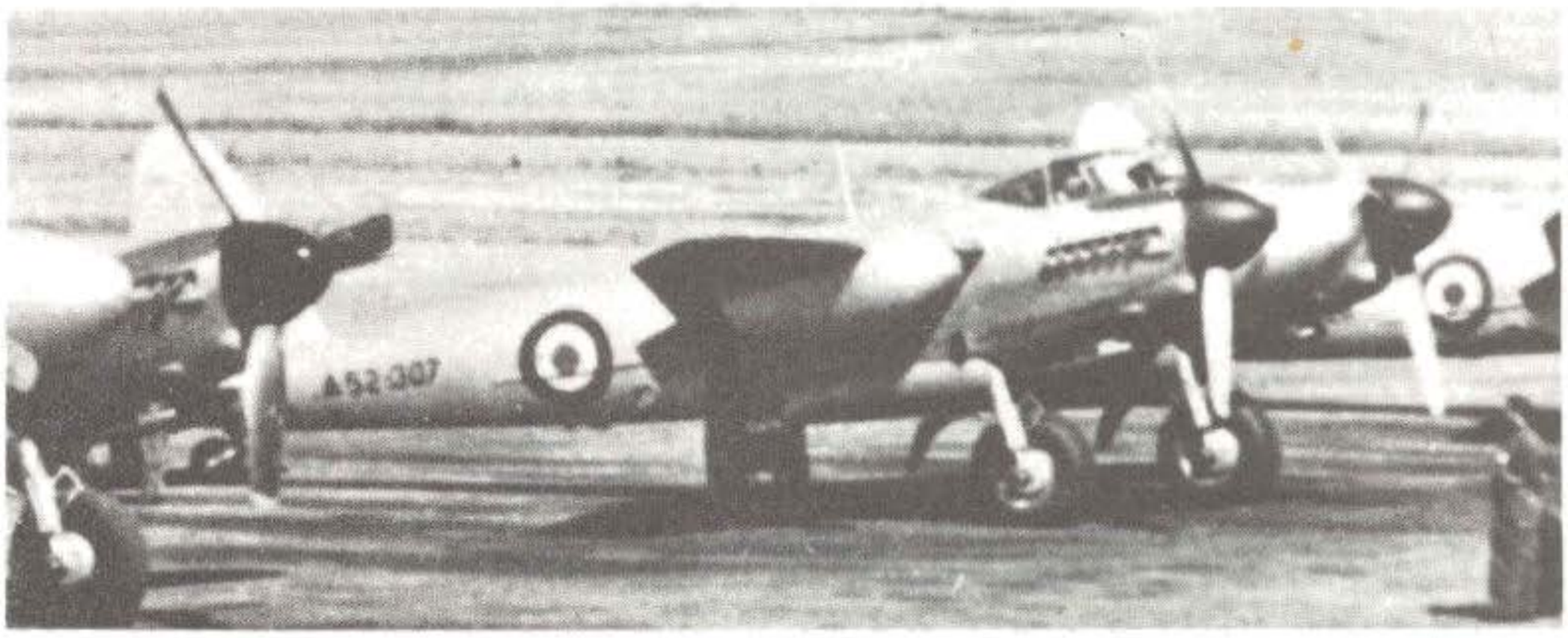
A52–513, a good clear port side detail shot of a FB.VI of No. 1 Squadron, Labuan, 1945. (via F. F. Smith)



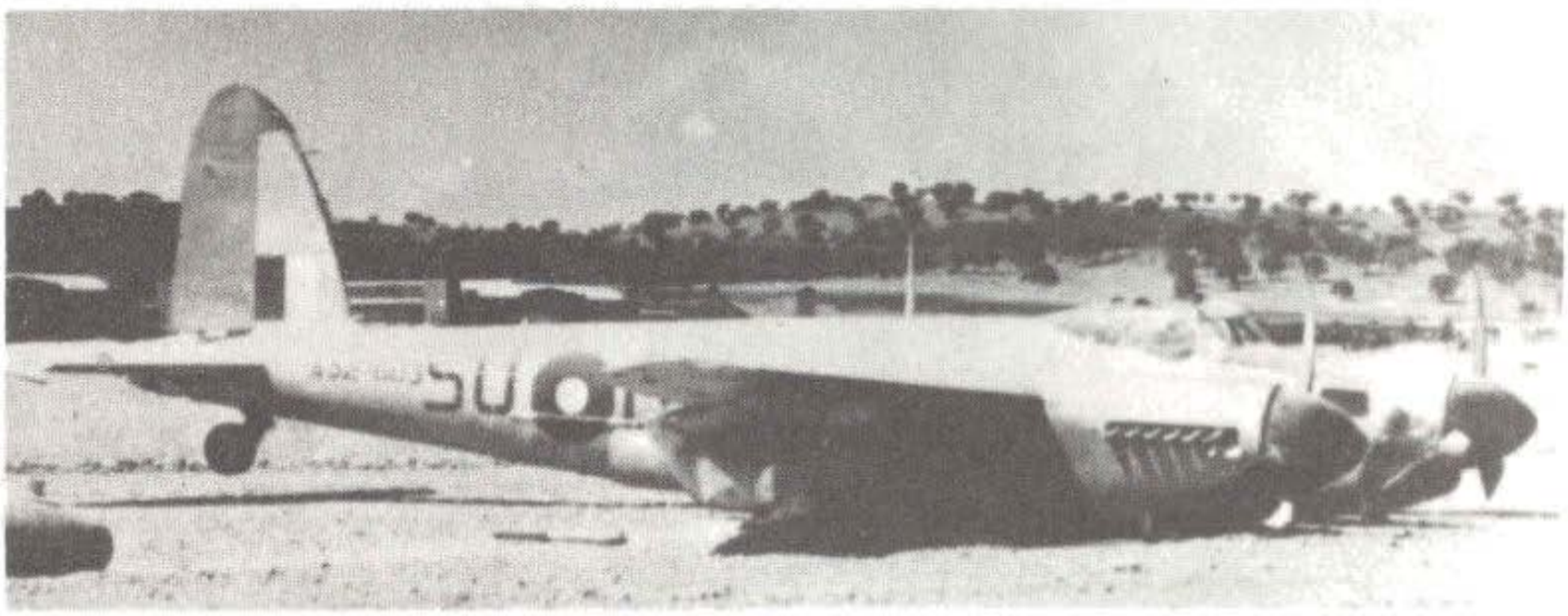
A British built T. Mk. 3 of No. 5 OTU formating with an FB.40. (F. F. Smith)

Mosquito T. Mk. 3, A52–1005 of No. 5 OTU, RAAF, Williamtown, NSW in 1944. Colour scheme was foliage green and dark sea grey on upper surfaces with medium grey under surfaces. (F. F. Smith)

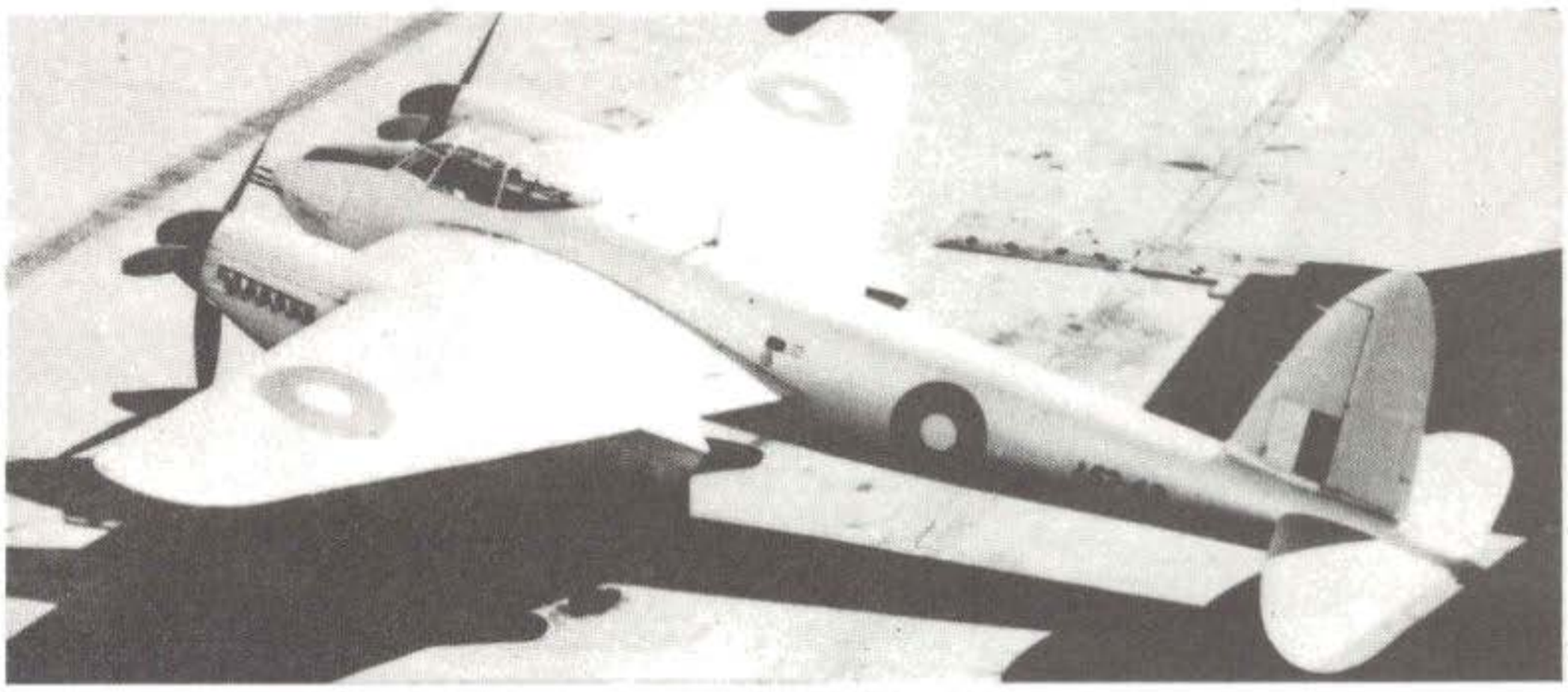
Mosquito FB.40's of No. 94 Squadron, RAAF at Clark Field in 1945. (F. F. Smith)



Mosquito PR.41 converted from FB.40 A52–198. Operated with the RAAF from 19 August 1948 to 27 July 1956. (d'E. C. Darby)



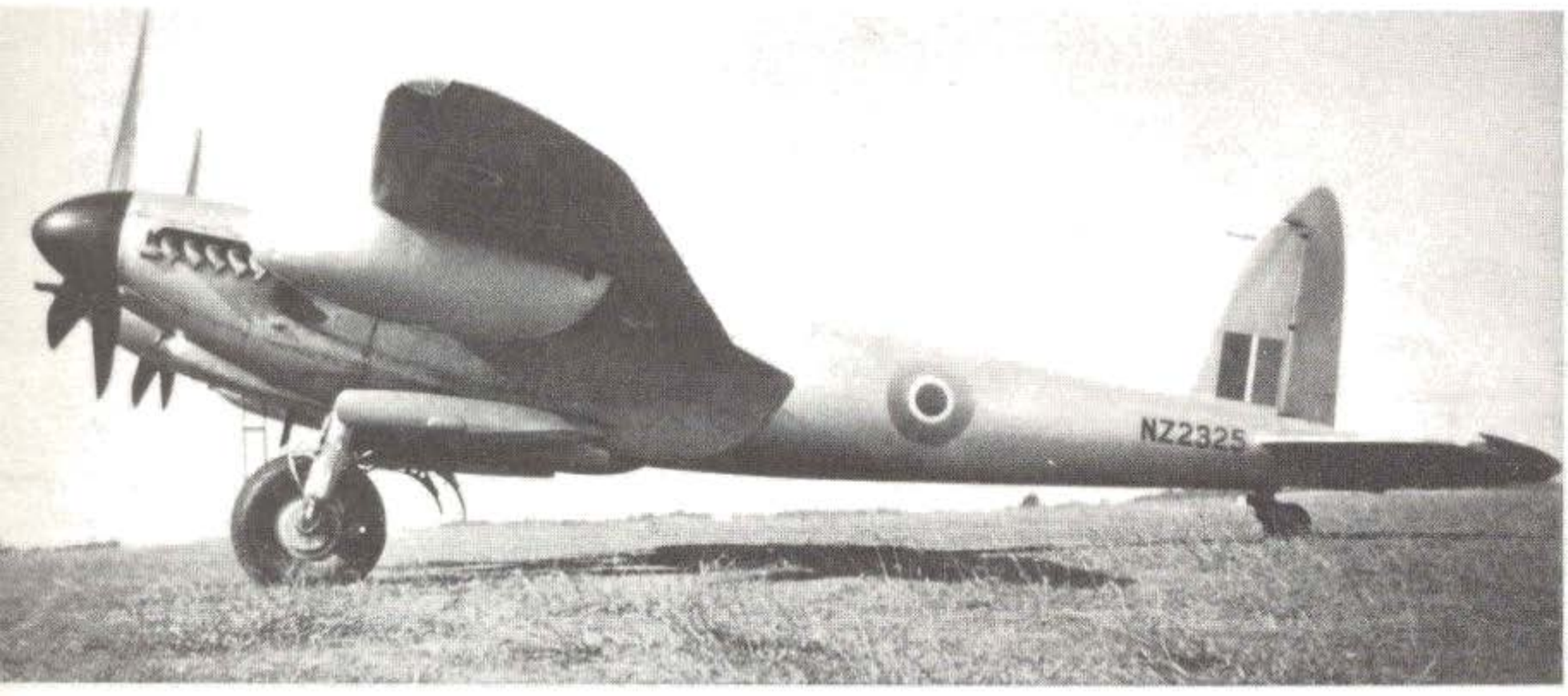
Mosquito PR.XVI, A52–603 (ex NS679) of the Survey Squadron, Canberra. (d'E. C. Darby)



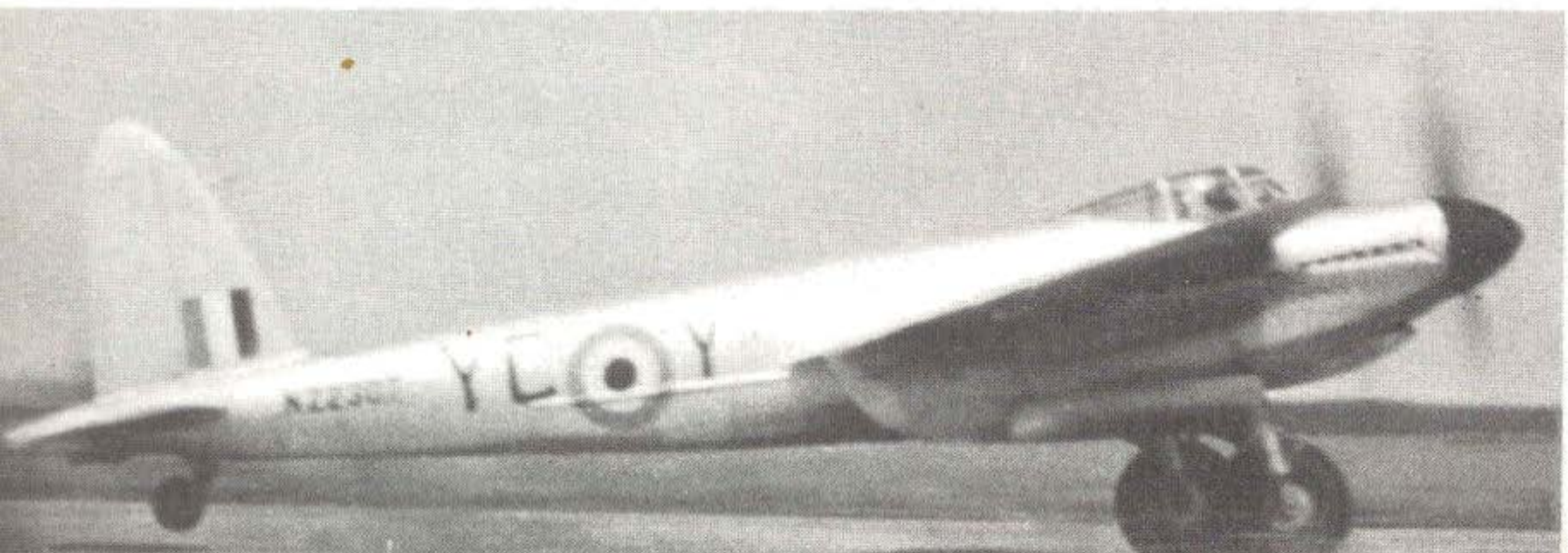
Mosquito FB.40 of No. 1 APU, Laverton, 1945. Serial A52–43. (F. F. Smith)

Mosquito FB.VI, RS504 in standard RAF scheme, the serial NZ2363 was allocated to this aircraft but never used. RNZAF. (d'E. C. Darby)

Mosquito FB.VI of No. 75 Squadron, Royal New Zealand Air Force. Note serial NZ2326 on under surface of the wings. Overall silver dope scheme with black anti-glare panel and spinners. (d'E. C. Darby)

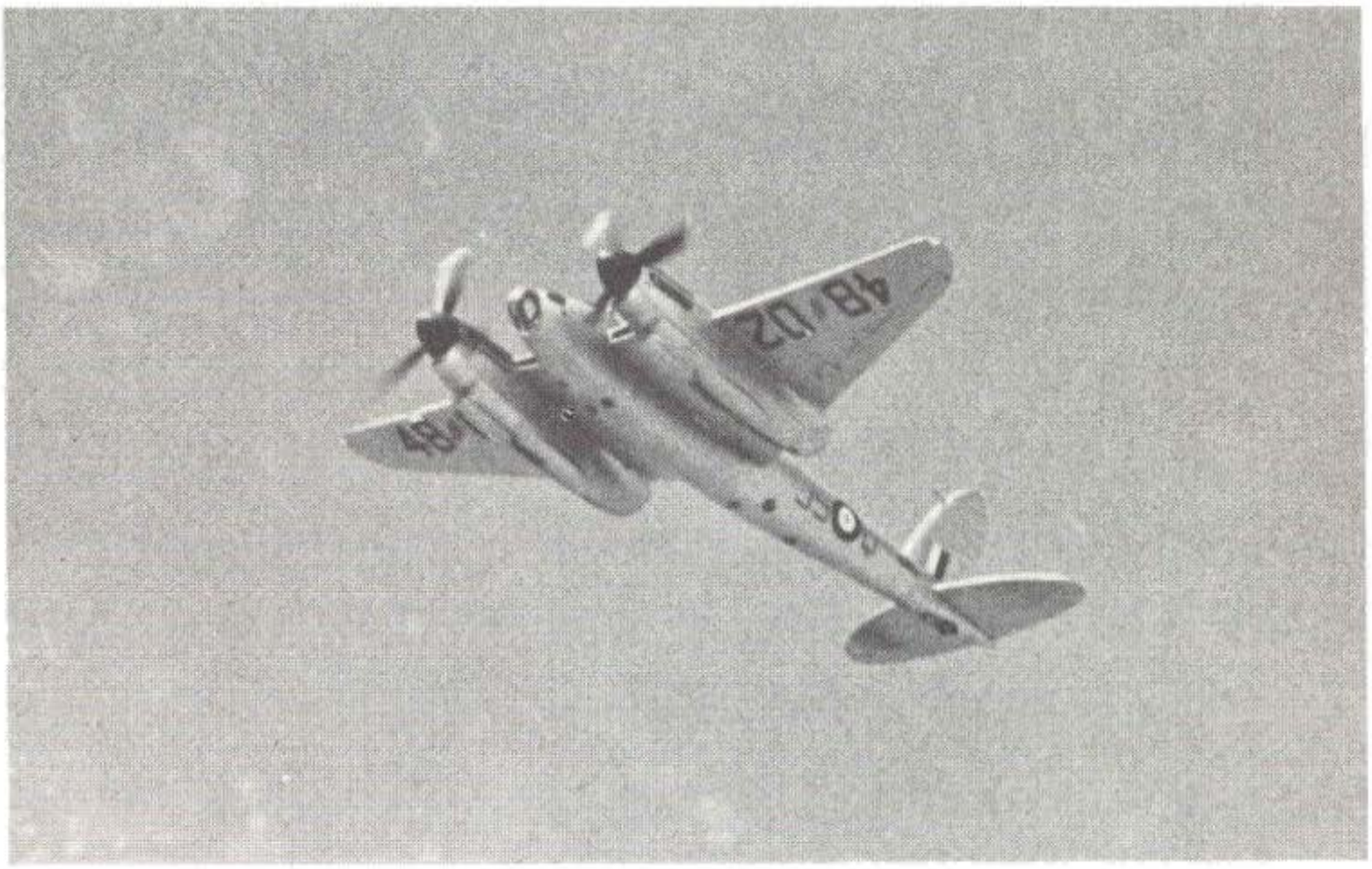


Mosquito FB.VI, NZ2325 of No. 75 Squadron at Ohakea, at a later date the code YC–A was applied, overall silver doped as 2326 below but with early roundels and fin flashes. (d'E. C. Darby)



Mosquito T.43 of No. 75 Squadron, RNZAF. Code YC–Y, serial NZ2307. See black and white side-view illustration. (d'E. C. Darby)

Above: Rare shot of one of the two Mosquito F. Mk. II's modified and used by No. 60 SAAF Squadron to photograph the German defences of the Mareth Line in Tunisia. These two Mosquitoes came to 60 SAAF following a direct request from Gen. Montgomery to Churchill for aircraft of this type to undertake the PR work necessary prior to the attack by the 8th Army on the heavily fortified gateway to Tunisia proper. Standard RAF scheme and markings, serial DD744. (Colonel O. G. Davies)



Right & below: Mosquito PR.XVI, No. 60 Squadron, SAAF. Overall silver dope scheme with red code JS–Q and black serial 4802, olive drab anti-glare panel in front of cockpit and on engine cowlings. Note position of serial on under surfaces of wings. (SAAF via K. Smy)

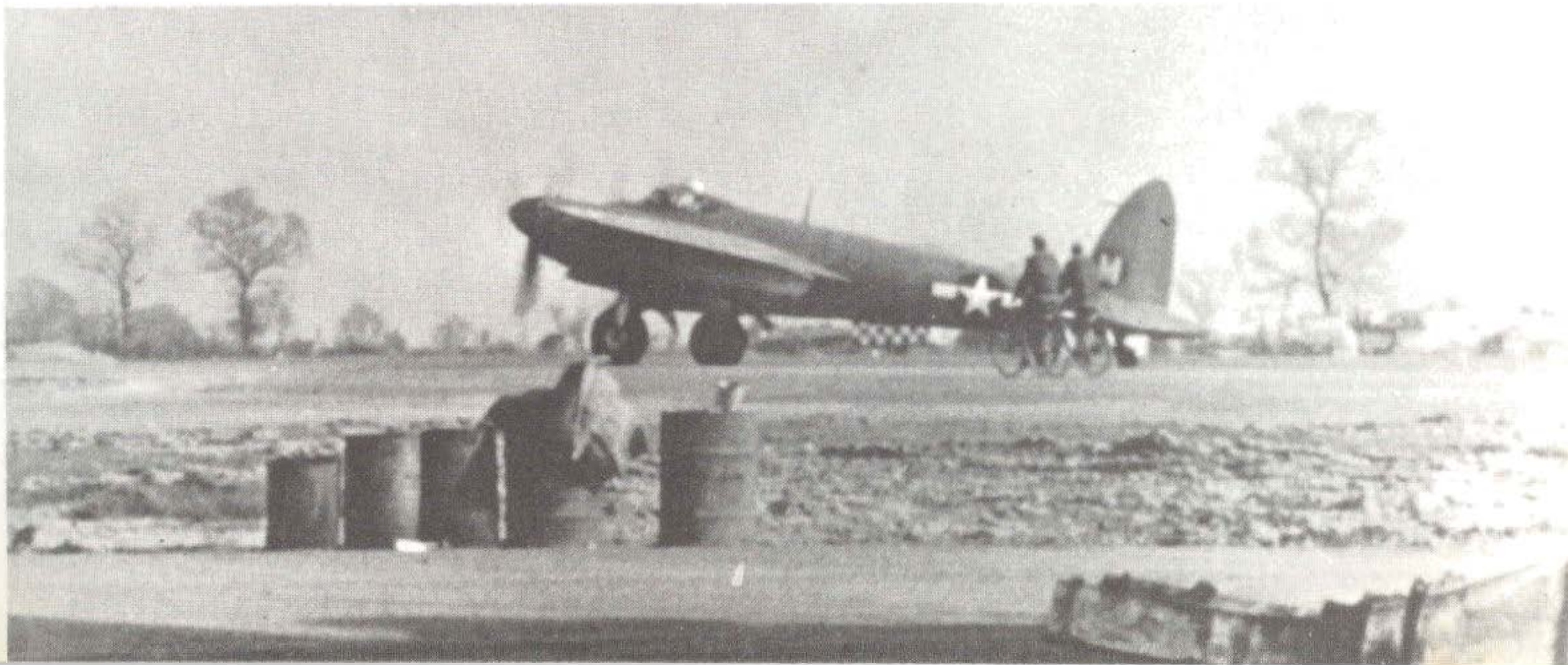
Above: A sharkmouthed FB.VI, probably of GC "Corse" on a North African airfield. The Mosquito in the background is coded 15, serial RF885. Standard RAF scheme with RAF style fin flash. (J. Cuny)

Above: Mosquito FB.VI also probably of GC "Corse", French Air Force in North Africa. Serial RF842. (J. Cuny)
Below: Mosquito FB.VI believed to be of GC "Normandie-Nieman", note blue, white and red spinners. The serials of all the above aircraft are repeated under the wings, see plan views, the serial of this aircraft is RF694. (J. Cuny)

Above: Another view of Mosquito PR.XVI, NS517 of GC "Lorraine". (ECA via J. Cuny)

Above: RF995 a PR.XVI in standard RAF PR blue scheme of GC "Lorraine" on a North African airfield, note the early RAF style fin flash. (J. Cuny)

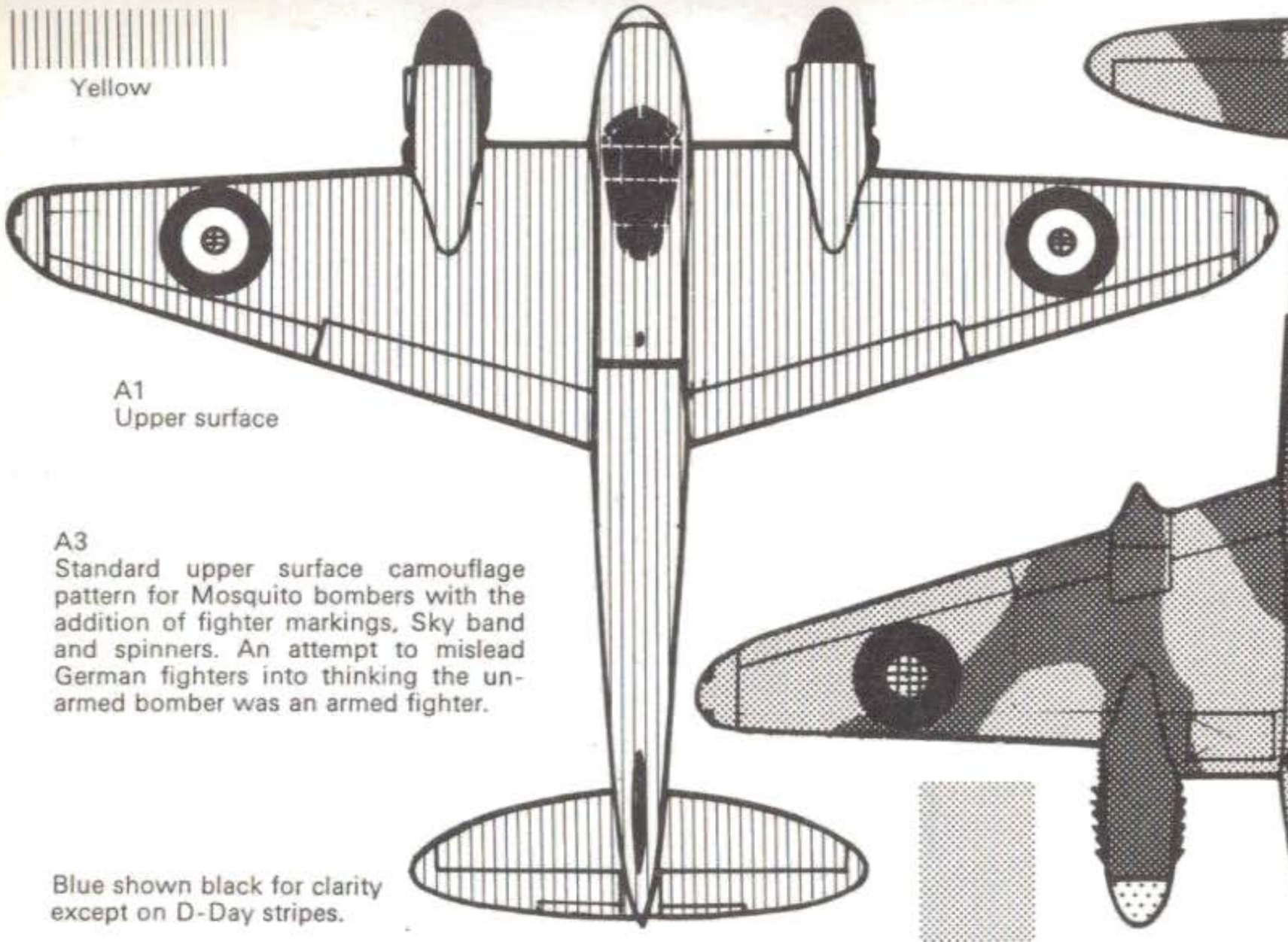
Below: Mosquito PR.XVI of the 25th (PR) BG, 8th Air Force, USAAF, ETO. See colour illustration on front cover. (USAF)



Above: A Royal Norwegian Air Force Mosquito FB.VI, see colour illustration on front cover. (RNorAF)

Below: An overall silver doped Mosquito T.3 of the Turkish Air Force on a pre-delivery flight. (IWM)

Yellow

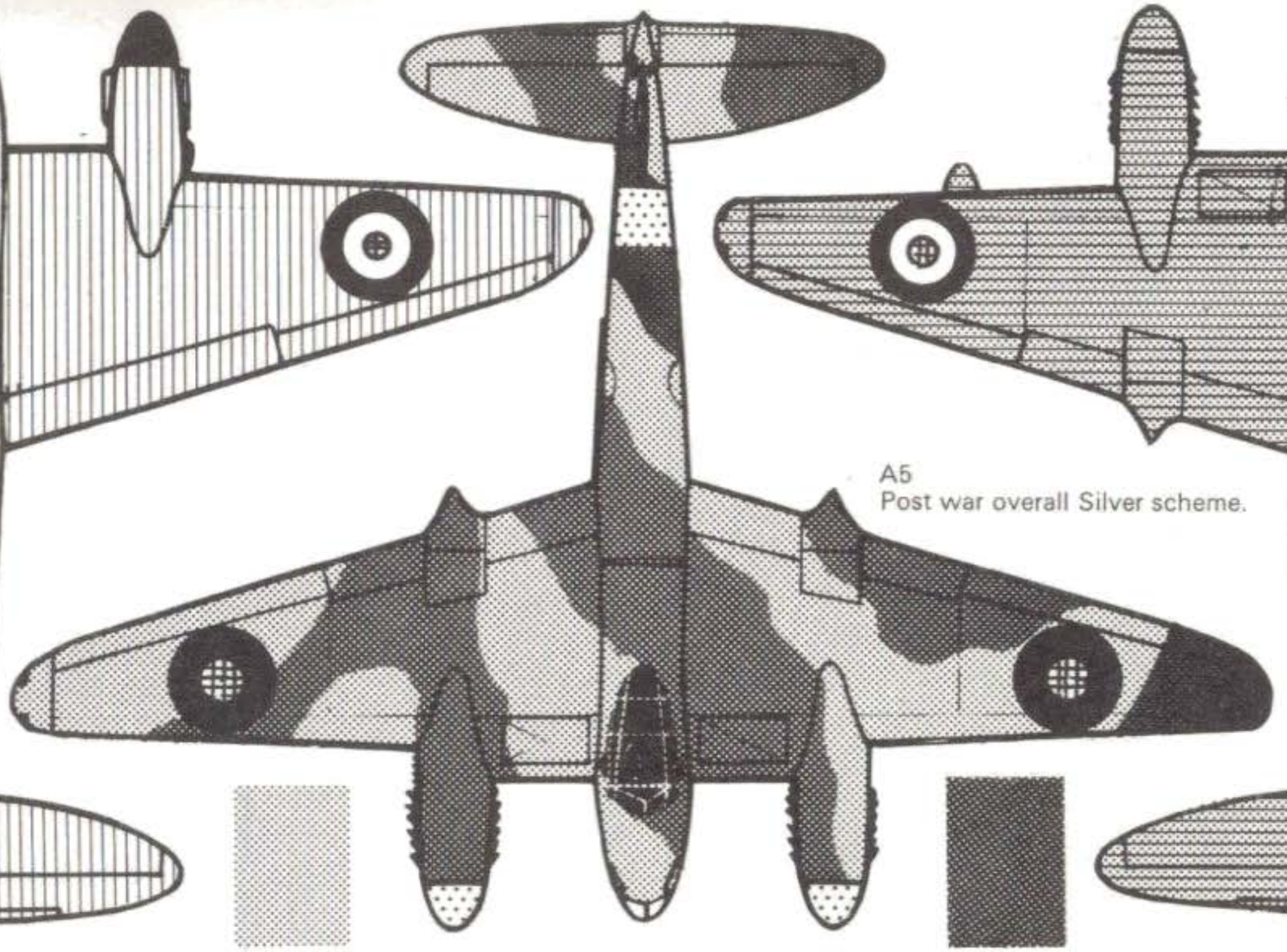


A1
Upper surface

A3
Standard upper surface camouflage pattern for Mosquito bombers with the addition of fighter markings, Sky band and spinners. An attempt to mislead German fighters into thinking the unarmed bomber was an armed fighter.

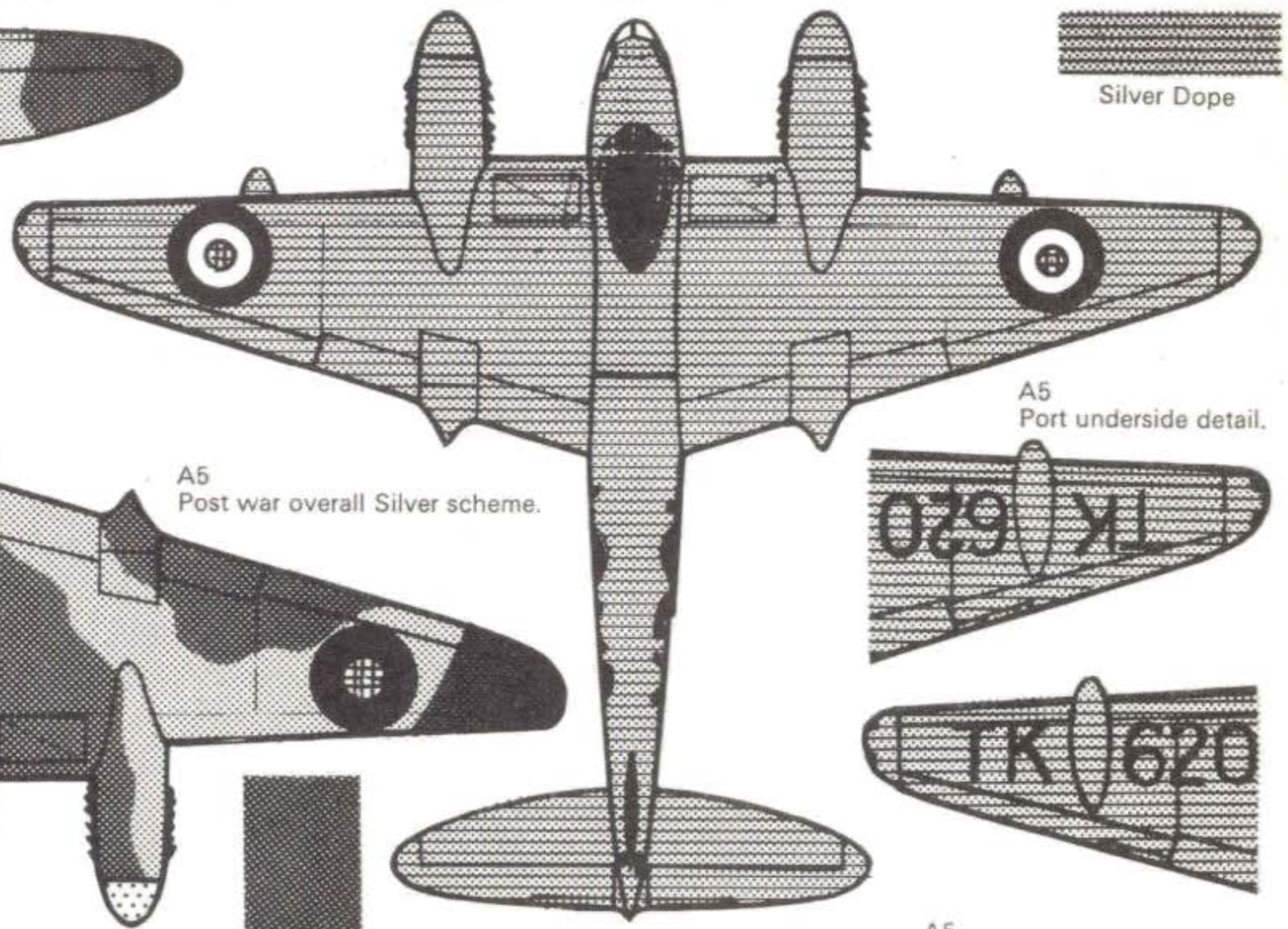
Blue shown black for clarity except on D-Day stripes.

Medium Sea Grey



Dark Green

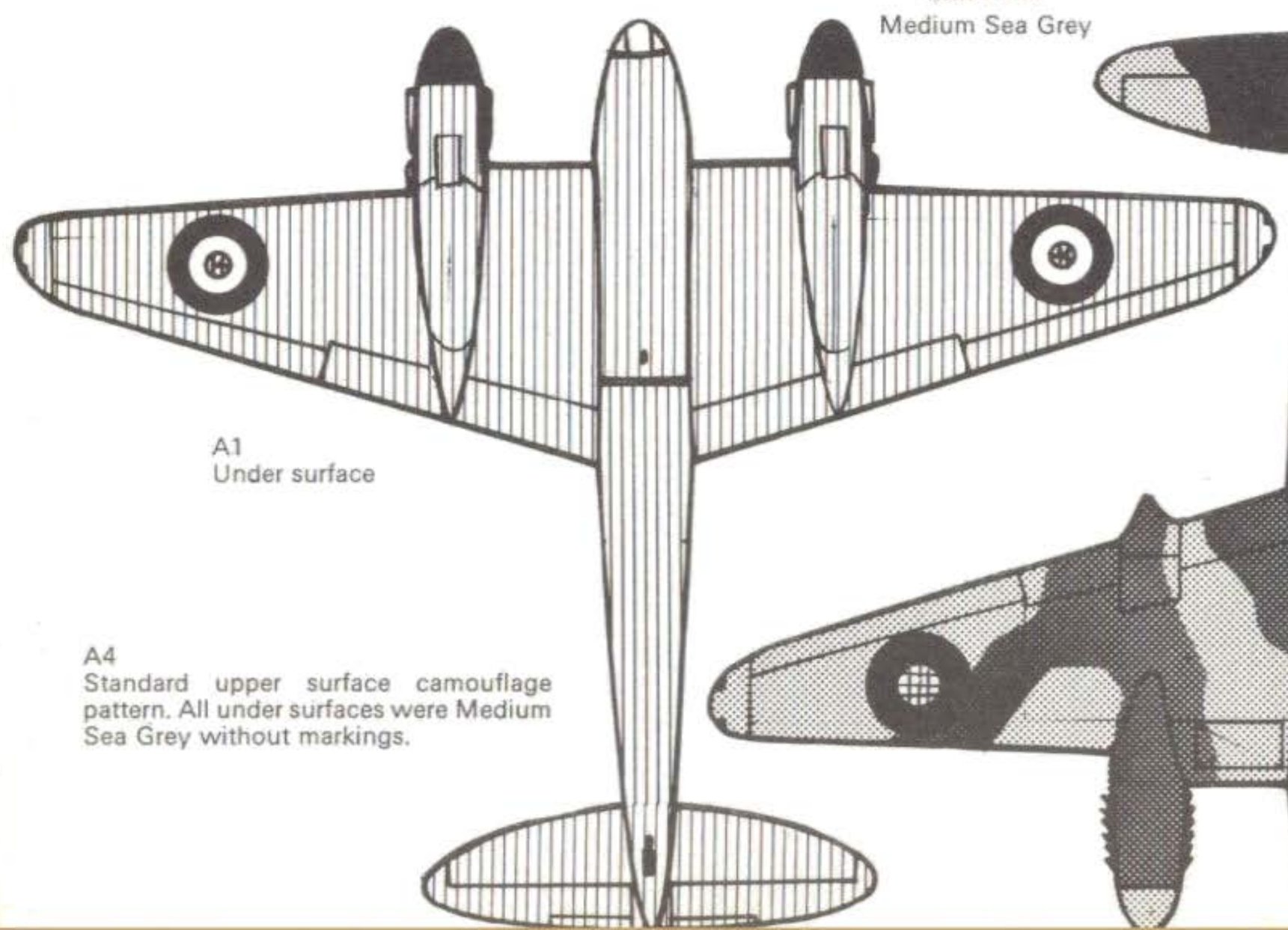
Silver Dope



A5
Post war overall Silver scheme.

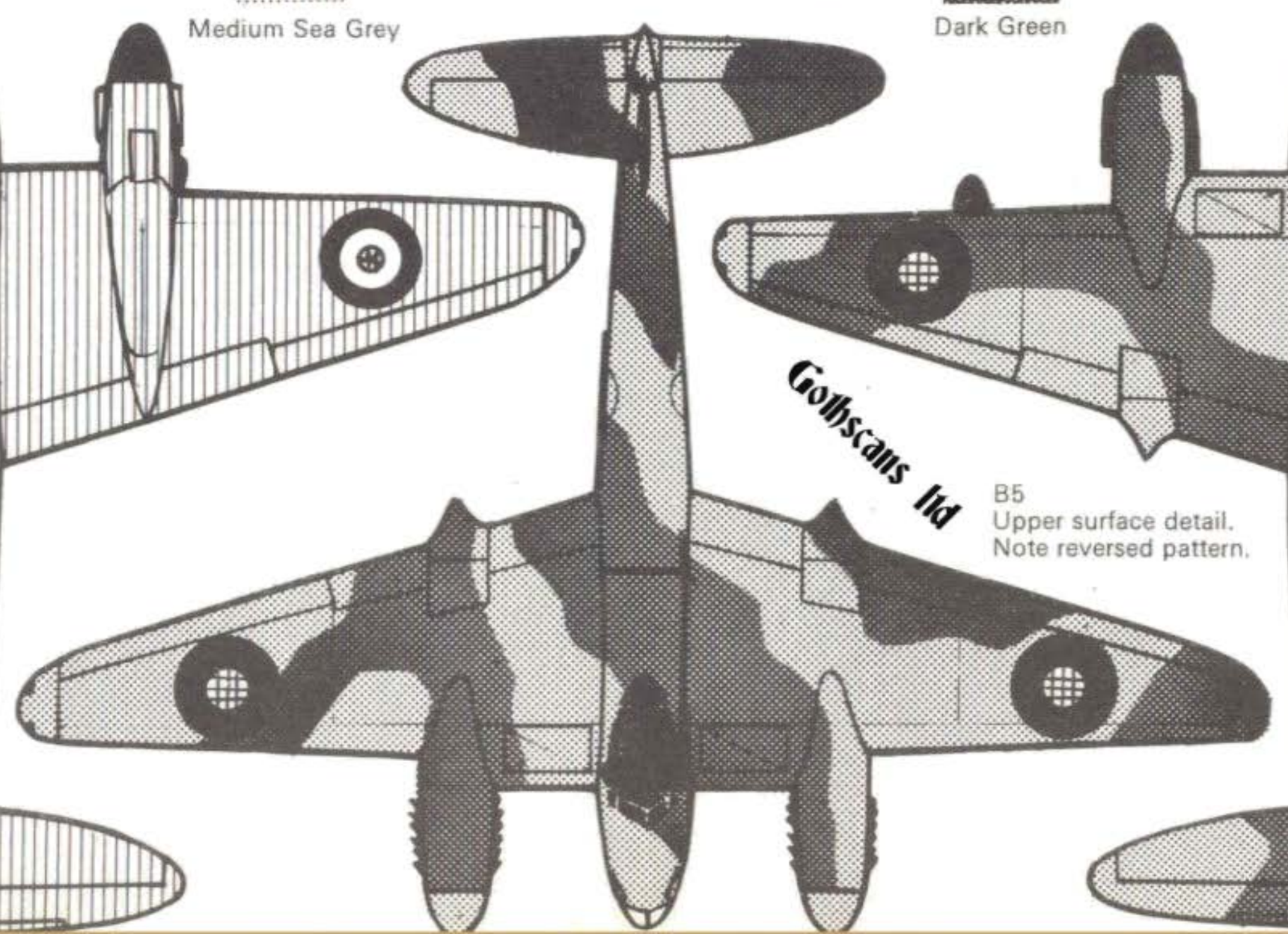
A5
Port underside detail.

A5
Starboard underside detail.

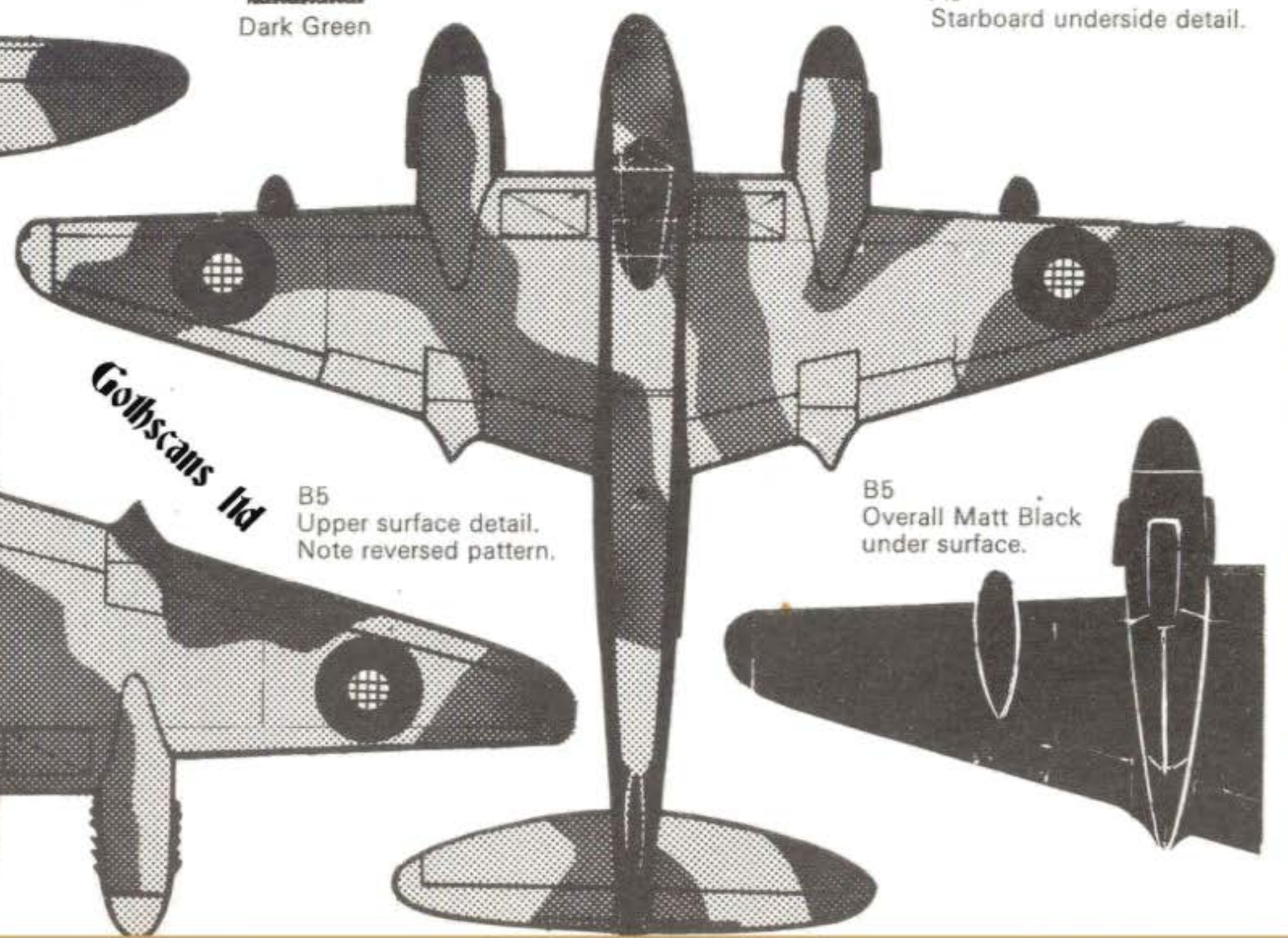


A1
Under surface

A4
Standard upper surface camouflage pattern. All under surfaces were Medium Sea Grey without markings.



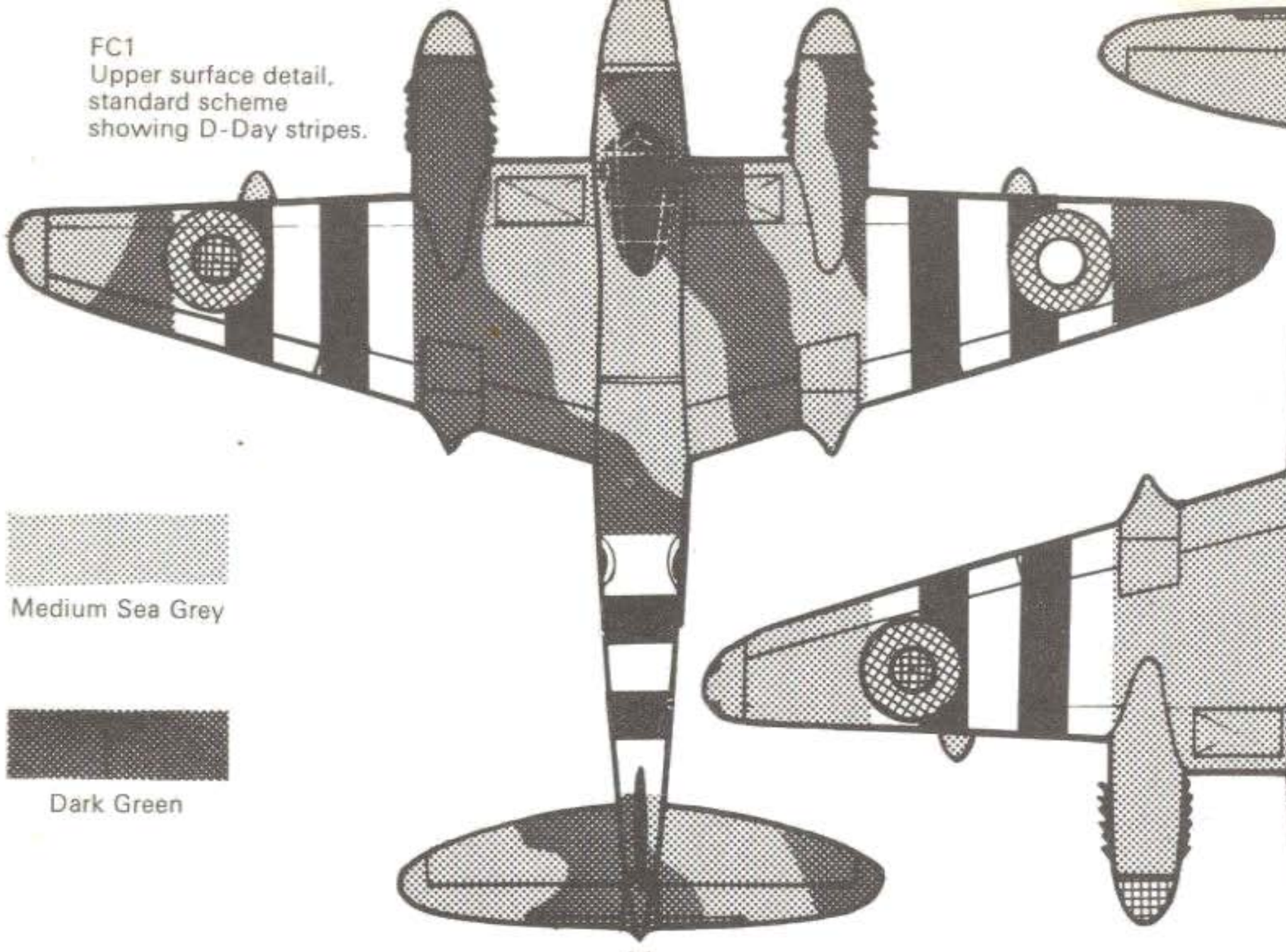
Gothscans ltd



B5
Upper surface detail.
Note reversed pattern.

B5
Overall Matt Black
under surface.

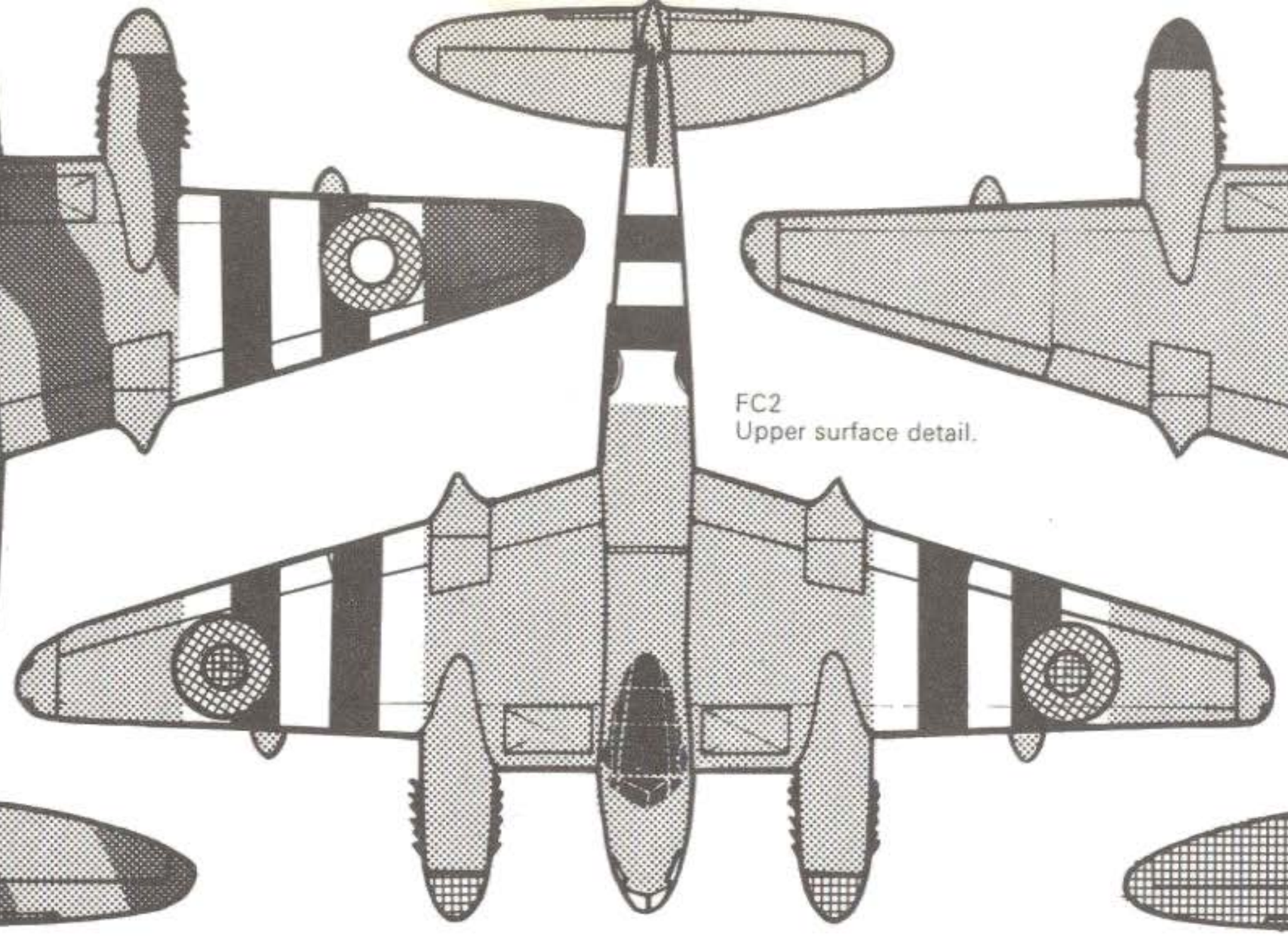
FC1
Upper surface detail,
standard scheme
showing D-Day stripes.



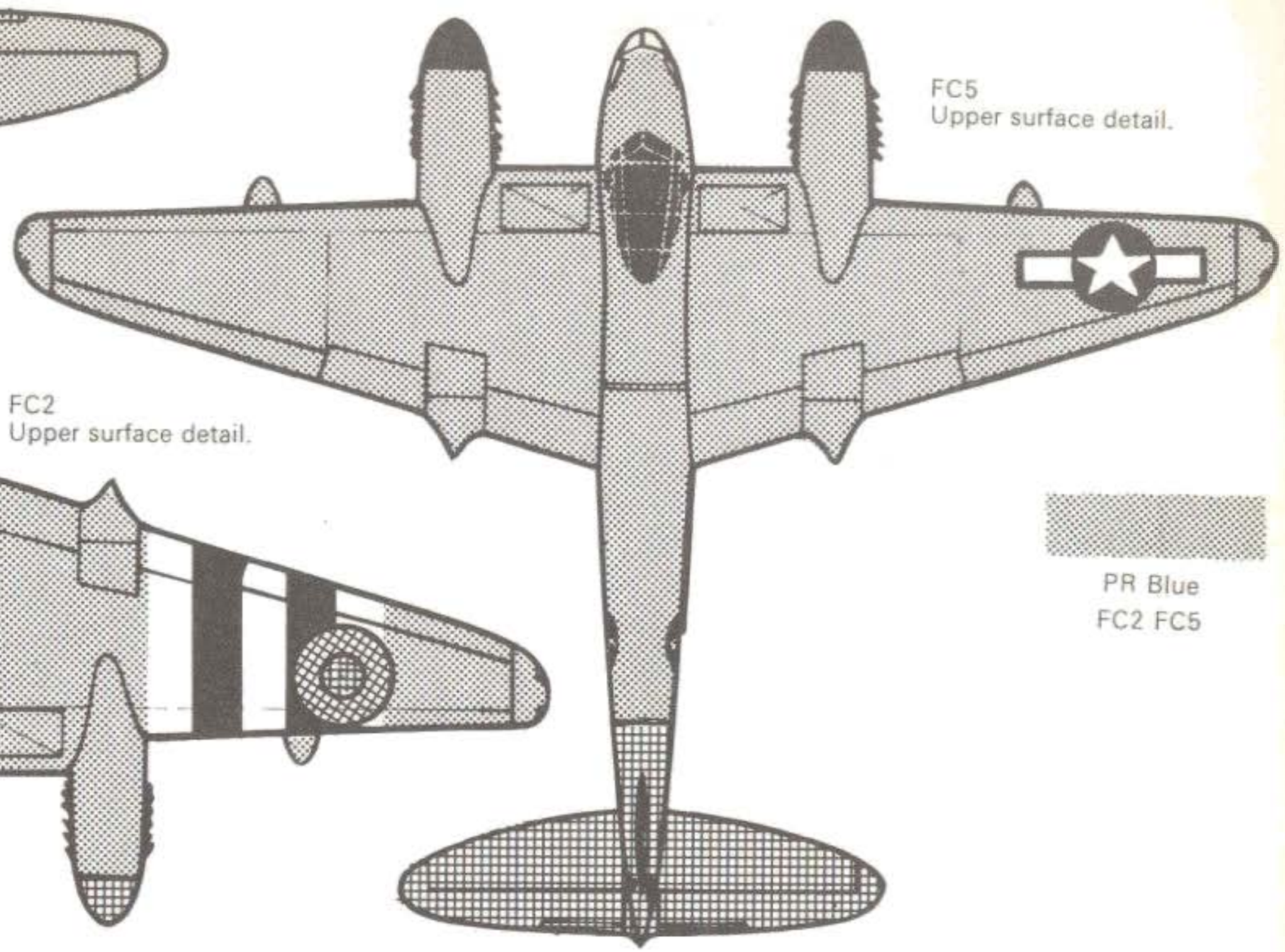
Medium Sea Grey

Dark Green

FC2
Upper surface detail.

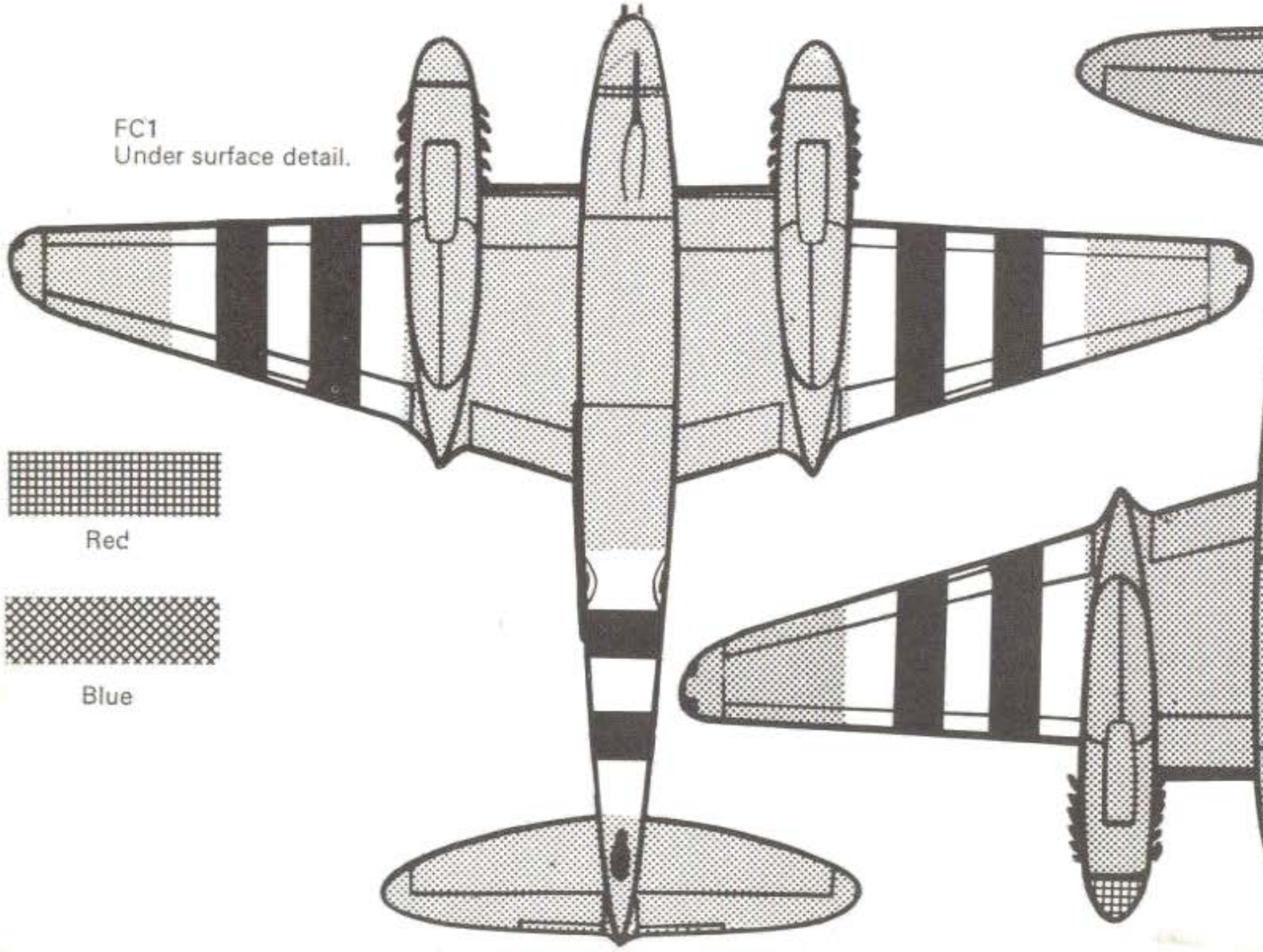


FC5
Upper surface detail.



PR Blue
FC2 FC5

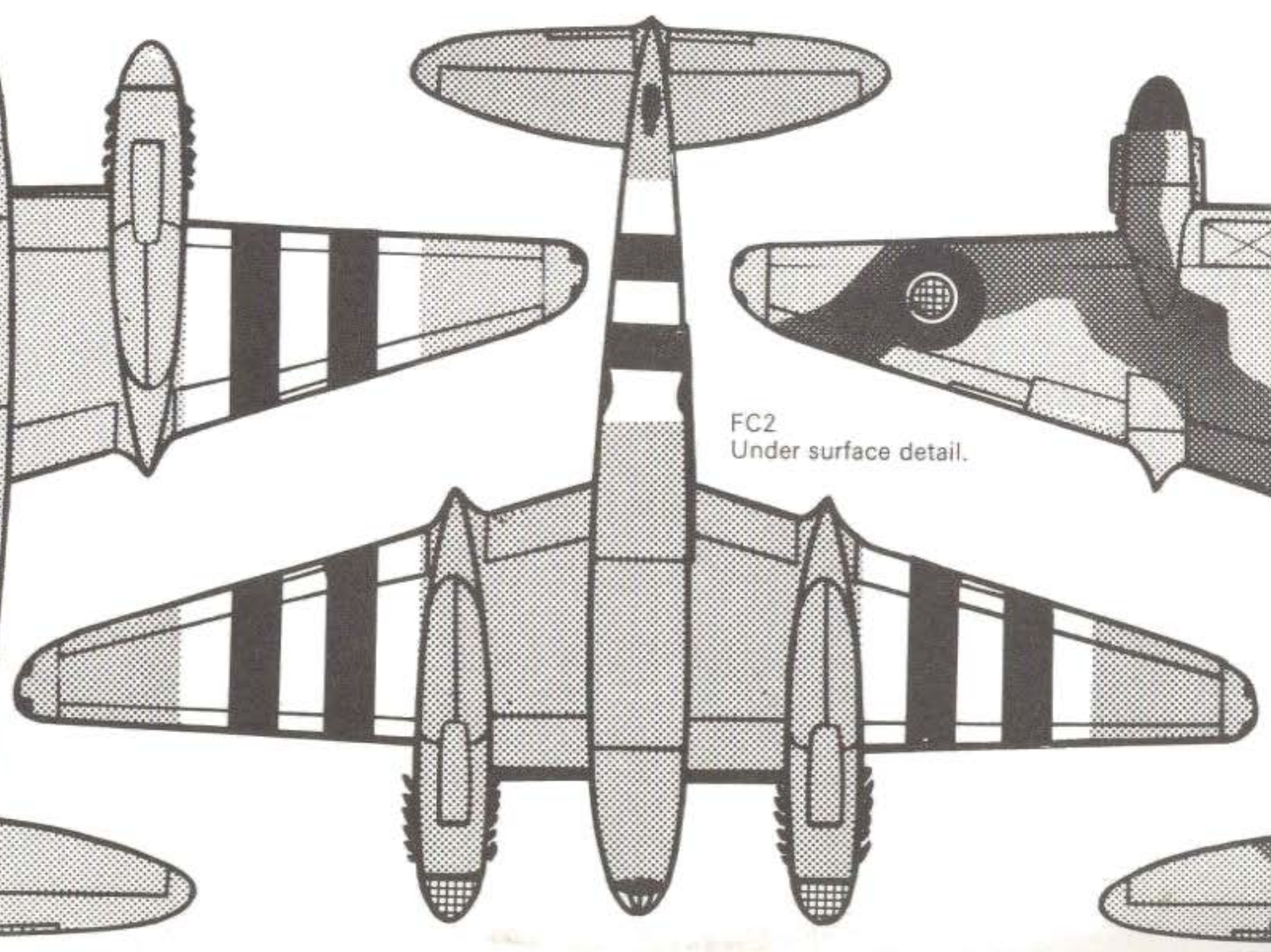
FC1
Under surface detail.

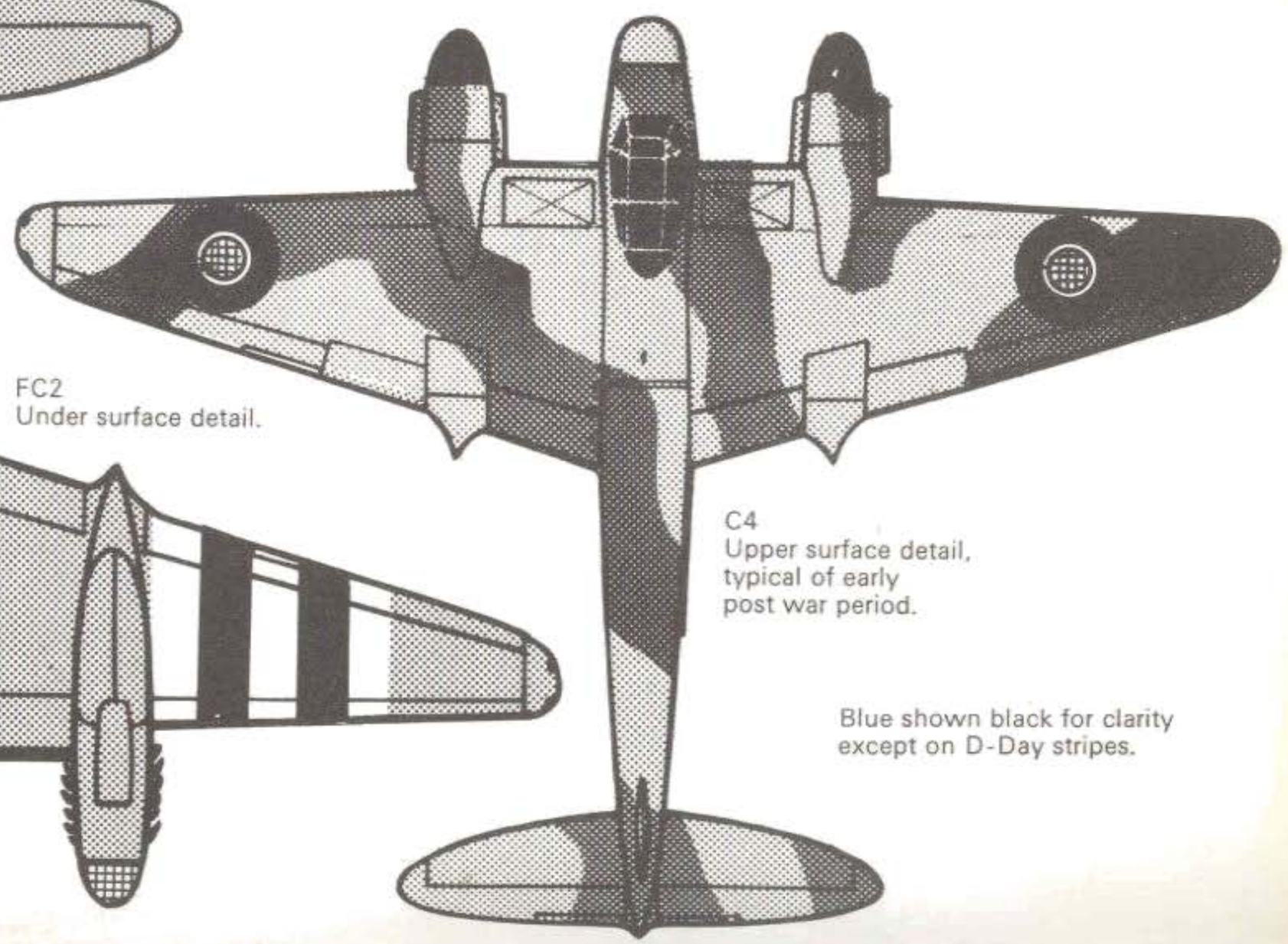


Red

Blue

FC2
Under surface detail.





C4
Upper surface detail,
typical of early
post war period.

Blue shown black for clarity
except on D-Day stripes.

TP2
Overall Silver Dope scheme,
no roundels on under surfaces.

Silver Dope

Red

H2/3
Overall Silver Dope scheme with Olive Drab
anti-glare panels in front of
cockpit and on engine cowls.

H2/3
Under surface detail,
port side,
starboard side as A5.

H2/1
Overall Silver Dope scheme.
Later roundels in same position
to same diameter.

FC4
Overall PR Blue scheme,
Blue, white, red, yellow roundels.
No roundels on under surfaces.

PR Blue

H2/5
Overall Silver Dope scheme,
roundels USAAF positions.
Black spinners and
anti-glare panel.

H2/1
Under surface scheme.
Later roundels in same
position to same diameter.
Olive Green anti-glare
panel, black spinners.

Blue shown black for clarity
except on D-Day stripes.

Above: A Mosquito Airliner in the markings of BOAC, this aircraft G–AGGD was a converted Mk. IV HJ681. (IWM)

Above & below: Two views of G–AGGF also a converted Mk. IV HJ720. Note there are only red and blue stripes below the wing registration letters and that in the above photograph the letters are outlined in white whilst in the photo below the outline is dark blue. Legend below fin reads British Overseas Airways Corporation. (IWM)

Landing shot showing the BOAC Speedbird insignia on nose and red, white and blue stripes on under surfaces, aircraft is believed to be G–AGGD. (IWM)

H3
Standard RAF upper surface scheme, under surface Medium Sea Grey, roundels in six positions.

FC6
Standard RAF scheme, roundels in six positions.

H5
Overall Silver Dope scheme, Insignia in six positions.

H4
Overall Silver Dope scheme, roundels in six positions.

Silver Dope

Dark Green

Medium Sea Grey

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West German Luftwaffe

Front cover, top to bottom:
Mosquito FB.XVIII, No. 248 Squadron, RAF. Known popularly as the Tse-Tse when fitted with the 6 lb. anti-tank gun. The full code D–DM has been partially overpainted by the D-Day stripes. Serial NT225.
Mosquito PR.XVI, No. 544 Squadron, RAF. Serial NS502.
Mosquito PR.XVI, No. 680 Squadron, RAF. Serial MM347. Based at Foggia, Italy, the red and white rudder stripes were applied to avoid confusion with Me.210's and 410's.
Mosquito PR.XVI, GC "Lorraine", French Air Force, North Africa. Serial NS517.
Mosquito PR.XVI, 25th (R) BG., 8th Air Force, USAAF, ETO. Full serial not known. The red tail unit was applied to avoid confusion with Me.210's and 410's. Another similarly marked aircraft of the same unit was N NS569, the N was applied directly on the red fin.
Mosquito FB.VI, Royal Norwegian Air Force.

SBN 85045 043 8