



# ADF Serials Telegraph News

News for those interested in Australian Military Aircraft History and Serials

Volume 8: Issue 6: **Summer 2018/2019 Supplement**: *Editors and Authors: Gordon R Birkett and John Bennett*

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**Message Traffic:** Please address any questions to:

[question@adf-serials.com.au](mailto:question@adf-serials.com.au) or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/233552413412953/>

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## News Briefs

**22 September 2018 – end of BAE training contract.** BAE Systems at Tamworth marked the end of their ADF pilot training contract with a flypast of 15 CT4s. Training will continue at a lower rate until mid-2020, by which time all basic Service training will be at RAAF Base East Sale. BAE has been training at Tamworth for 27 years.

**23 October 2018:** To commemorate the 75th Anniversary, ARDU conducted a formation flight over the NSW south coast with the former ARDU (and the RAAF's first) McDonnell Douglas F/A-18B Hornet **A21-101**; a former ARDU Douglas C-47 Dakota **A65-94** now belonging to the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) at Albion Park; and an ARDU Pilatus PC-9/A **A23-045** with commemorative tail markings.



**16 November 2018:** The *Adelaide Advertiser* claimed that at least 12 General Atomics MQ-9 Reaper armed medium-altitude, long-endurance (MALE) unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) will be based at RAAF Edinburgh. Several days later the Minister confirmed acquisition of 12 to 16 General Atomics MQ-9 Reaper. Although a completely different requirement and procurement from the MQ-4, it is unsure how an MQ-9 acquisition would impact the number of surveillance platforms (i.e. the P-8As and MQ-4s) Australia will acquire. Furthermore, it is unclear which variant of the Reaper family the RAAF will operate - perhaps the existing US Air Force MQ-9A Reaper, or probably the Type-Certifiable Predator B (TCPB, marketed as the Sky Guardian), which the USAF has designated as the MQ-9B. The 'Certifiable' indicates the aircraft will be cleared to operate in controlled airspace.



MQ-9 Reaper marked as RAAF "A99-007"

#### FAREWELL ORIONS

**30 November 1918:** 50th Anniversary of RAAF P-3 Orion operations from Edinburgh was celebrated by a planned flypast of a 4-ship over Adelaide and surrounding areas. Unfortunately the formation was reduced to a three, due an engine ground abort on one.





**2 December 2018:** RAAF Heritage handed over AP-3C A9-756 to the South Australian Air Museum (SAAM) at an official ceremony. A9-756 had arrived at the museum on 10 December 2017, in pieces on six semi-trailers from RAAF Edinburgh. Now SAAM has assembled and refurbished the aircraft for display in its new display hangar.



**A9-756 being prepared for display at SAAM**

**12 December 2018:** The latest AP-3C **A9-662** (Bu 162662, msn 5789) to depart for the US left Edinburgh on 14 DEC as **N662JD**, to arrive with the aircraft logistics support company MHD Rockland Services Inc of Florida on 15 December. Meanwhile AP-3C **A9-665** (Bu 162665, msn 5795) had departed Edinburgh for the US on 12 DEC as **N665BD**, to arrive in Florida on 15 DEC. Former **A9-664** (Bu 162664, msn 5793), registered as **N664SD**, left Avalon for Florida on 16 NOV. Previously, having sat at Avalon for several weeks, **A9-656** (Bu 162656, msn 5778) / **N656T** had left for Pago Pago on 23 October. MHD-Rockland advertises as “a leader in aerospace distribution, services and a premier worldwide stocking distributor of aircraft OEM parts”, and as “the largest P-3 Orion stockist in the world”. What will happen to the Israeli avionics inside? The next to depart – possibly by the time you read this – will be



presumably the last, **A9-661** as **N661MK** (Bu 162661, msn 5787) registered with the US FAA on 11 DEC. No details yet on the fate of A9-663.

**16 December 2018:** Meanwhile local disposals (for display) of ex-RAAF Orions has continued. **A9-752** was flown into Lismore airport on 6 DEC in preparation for an official handover at Lismore on Sunday 16th DEC. A9-752 then some final equipment removed for retention by the RAAF and then dismantled for trucking to Evans Head, for its permanent display beside Caribou A4-299 and F-111C A8-147 at the Evans Head Aviation Museum.

### F-35A LIGHTNING II DELIVERY

**5 December 2018:** The RAAF's first two home-based F-35s – A35-009 and A35-010 from Lot 6 – arrived at RAAF Base Amberley, before proceeding to RAAF Williamtown for welcoming celebrations on **Monday 10 DEC 2018**, with Hornet joint formations around the Williamtown-Newcastle area. Ferry legs had been from CONUS via Hickam AFB Hawaii (overnight) and then 9-hour flight to Amberley, supported by a 33SQN KC-30A.



F-35As A35-010 and A35-009 Defence PR shots prior to delivery

RAAF Serial	USAF Serial	msn	First Flight	Details
<b>LRIP Lot 6</b>				
A35-001	12-5060	AU-01	29 SEP 2014	61FS Luke AFB, del DEC 2014, 2OCU mks
A35-002	12-5061	AU-02	1 OCT 2014	61FS Luke AFB, del DEC 2014, 2OCU mks
<b>LRIP Lot 10</b>				
A35-003	15-5211	AU-03	DEC 2017	61FS Luke AFB, del DEC 2017, 3SQN mks
A35-004	15-5212	AU-04	12 DEC 2017	61FS Luke AFB, del DEC 2017, 2OCU mks
A35-005	15-5213	AU-05	JAN 2018	61FS Luke AFB, del 2018, 2OCU mks
A35-006	15-5214	AU-06	MAR 2018	61FS Luke AFB, del 2018, 2OCU mgs
A35-007	15-5215	AU-07	2 JUL 2018	61FS Luke AFB, del 2014, 3SQN mks
A35-008	15-5216	AU-08	16 JUL 2018	61FS Luke AFB, del 2018, 3SQN mks
<b>A35-009</b>	<b>15-5217</b>	<b>AU-09</b>	<b>15 AUG 2018</b>	<b>del SEP 2018, 3 SQN Williamtown 10 DEC 2018</b>
<b>A35-010</b>	<b>15-5218</b>	<b>AU-10</b>	<b>16 AUG 2018</b>	<b>del SEP 2018, 3 SQN Williamtown 10 DEC 2018</b>

**Note:** The following four aircraft, 15-5219 through 15-5222, are allocated to Turkey and South Korea. The USAF FY serials are marked on both nose wheel doors of our aircraft.

Lockheed Martin low-rate initial production (LRIP) are divided into FY "Lots". For the RAAF's final batches of 62 aircraft, ordered under Project AIR 6000 Phase 2A/B, will be Lot 11 to Lot 15:

- Next year, to finalise 3SQN requirements, will be eight **Lot 11** (A35-011/A35-018), probably with FY17 USAF serials;
- Then deliveries will gain further momentum with 15 **Lot 12** scheduled for delivery in 2020 (A35-019/A35-033), with FY18 serials (some sources state 20); and
- **Lot 13** FY19 and **Lot 14** FY20 to be delivered in 2021 and 2022 respectively, then presumably **Lot 15** FY21 in 2023.



3SQN will conduct a two-year verification and validation (V&V) period with the F-35 from early 2019. The V&V will be the major effort in order to achieve an initial operational capability (IOC), and will validate the F-35's capabilities in an Australian operational and maintenance environment, i.e. *operational effectiveness* and *operational supportability*. In the meantime in the US, Australia will continue to [build its cadre of F-35 pilots](#) with the USAF 61st Fighter Squadron's (61FS) multi-national Integrated Training Center (ITC, sic) at Luke AFB. Further known RAAF milestones are:

- **late 2019**, 3SQN should have its full complement of aircraft at Williamtown, IOC in DEC 2020;
- **early 2020**, the next RAAF unit, **2OCU**, is scheduled to start bringing its F-35s home;
- **2021** next to re-equip will be **77SQN**, then **75SQN** will commence in 2022; and
- **2023**, all the RAAF's 72 F-35As are due in Australia.



**10 DEC 2018: F-35 A35-009 and A35-010 arrival at RAAF Williamtown with Hornets**



Defence PR image of arrival over Newcastle – **with A21-39 77SQN, A21-38 75SQN, A21-109 2(F)OCU**



Warren's view of the JSF arrival, *Daily Telegraph* 11 DEC 2018

...meanwhile on 7 November 2018: The F-35A dropped a GBU-49 precision bomb for the first time at Eglin AFB, Florida. The test on 7 NOV was conducted by the USAF 388th Fighter Wing's 34th Fighter Squadron which is based at Hill AFB, Utah. The Raytheon GBU-49 is a converted 'dumb' bomb that uses a laser and GPS kit for guidance to the target. The precision weapon can be used in a variety of weather conditions, against moving or stationary targets.



The F-35A 15-5134, of 34FS Hill AFB, testing GBU-49 release on 7 NOV 2018

...and on 18 December 2018: A key ally, Japan, approved an increase of its existing order for 42 F-35As to a total of 147 JSFs. With the extra 63 F-35As, the new order will likely include around 42 F-35Bs - the USMC STOVL variant -



aboard the **Izumo**-class helicopter carriers, expected to be converted to F-35B capability in the next decade. In January 2018, the Japanese Air Self Defence Force (JASDF) [deployed](#) its first F-35A to Misawa, in northern Honshu, with a total of ten F-35As currently operational and the first JASDF squadron to be stood up in the coming months.

**23 November 2018:** The RAAF celebrated its 60 years of C-130 operations, over Sydney Harbour below. Here's to the many RAAF personnel who have operated and maintained Australia's Hercules airlifters over these six decades.



Left, 1958 C-130A 36SQN



Right, 2018 C-130J-30 37SQN

**END for 38SQN**

**29 November 2018:** The 38 Squadron Colours were laid up in Townsville, to bring to an end this stage of 38SQN's life. How will it emerge in its next iteration – more C-27Js would be nice!! The following day, at least three of its King Air 350s were ferried to RAAF East Sale for delivery to 32SQN – A32-426 (callsign Dingo 65), A32-437 (Dingo 66) and A32-439 (Dingo 67).





## MRTT / KC-30 UPDATE

**13 December 2018:** Airbus Defence and Space has received a firm order from the French Defence Procurement Agency (DGA) for a further three A330 MRTT Multi-Role Tanker Transport boom-and-drogue aircraft for the French AF (Armee de L'Air). This is the third and final tranche of the multi-year contract for **12 A330 MRTTs** signed by the French Ministry of Defence in 2014. The first of the fleet was formally handed over in OCT 2018, and the remainder will be delivered by the end of 2023 under an accelerated timescale requested by France.



French Air Force (Armee de L'Air) MRTT

**11 January 2019:** Meanwhile, our seventh KC-30A A39-007, departed Manchester Airport as MRTT040 after repainting, so we should see this here in several months.



A39-007 / MRTT040 departing Manchester 11 January

*[Manchester Planespotter]*

## CLASSIC HORNET – Celebration Colours

**10 January 2019:** 2(F) OCU Classic dual **A21-116** has been painted by Boeing at Amberley and delivered to Williamtown. The aircraft is painted to celebrate training of Hornet pilots from 1985 to the 2019 changeover to begin training on the F-35A.

From this in 2017



To this in 2019:



Jetspotters





## PC-21 NEWS

**21 January 2019.** After departing Stans on 30 NOV, two PC-21s **A54-025** (HB-HWY) and **A54-026** (HB-HWZ) arrived at East Sale on 10 DEC. After the Christmas-NY break, we saw departure of our latest pair from Stans on 11 JAN, **A54-027** (re-using delivery registration HB-HWA) and **A54-028** (HB-HWB), arriving at East Sale on 21 JAN 2019.

RAAF Serial	Ferry Reg	msn	Delivery Details
A54-023	HB-HWW	256	Seen at Stans 24th May 2018 ( <b>Roulettes</b> ) with A54-021, ready for final assembly. Outside hangar first time on 21 JUN for engine runs, departed Stans 12 OCT, arrived ESL 22 OCT 18.
A54-024	HB-HWX	257	Seen at Stans JUN 2018 ( <b>Roulettes</b> ). Departed Stans 12 OCT, arrived ESL 22 OCT 18.
A54-025	HB-HWY	258	Flight test ( <b>Roulettes</b> ), departed 30 NOV, arrived ESL 10 DEC 18.
A54-026	HB-HWZ	259	Flight test ( <b>Roulettes</b> ), departed 30 NOV, arrived ESL 10 DEC 18.
A54-027	HB-HWA	260	Seen 10 SEP 18 ( <b>Roulettes</b> ) Stans for pre-flight checks, departed Stans 11 JAN, arrived ESL on 21 JAN 19.
A54-028	HB-HWB	261	( <b>Roulettes</b> ) first flight 26 SEP 18, in flight test at Stans, departed Stans 11 JAN, arrived ESL on 21 JAN 19.
A54-029	HB-HWC	262	Seen 5 OCT 18 ( <b>Roulettes</b> ) Stans for first engine runs. Probably arrive late FEB 2019.
A54-030	HB-HWD	263	Not yet noted, <b>probably Roulettes</b> markings and for probable delivery late FEB 2019.
A54-031	HB-HWE	264	Seen engine runs at Stans 28 NOV 18, ( <b>Roulettes</b> ), del MAR 19.



**10 DEC 2018: A54-025 (HB-HWY) and A54-026 (HB-HWZ) transit Adelaide – Nathan Rundle pic**

Thanks to “correspondents” at Stans and Adelaide for keeping track of all these RAAF aircraft as they go through the production/testing/delivery phases, as this provides us with unprecedented pre-RAAF details of each of our aircraft.



**5 OCT 2018: A54-029 (HB-HWC) msn 262 pre-flight checks at Stans, for delivery probably late FEB 2019**



**28 NOV 2018: A54-031 (HB-HWE) msn 264 for engine runs at Stans**

These images show how the Swiss ferry registrations are now being re-used, as from A54-027/HB-HWA. Also with the number of aircraft delivered with **Roulettes** markings (as with the PC-9s), all East Sale-based aircraft will be marked in Roulette colours for ease of maintenance.



**AND TO FINISH WITH SOME OF OUR NEWEST TYPES...**

**P-8A Poseidon Details:** Details of or ninth P-8A are **A47-009** (msn 64165), line number 7324 and registered for air testing as N391DS.

**No Date Yet for the MC-55:** In JUN 2018, the US DoD awarded L3 Technologies (Greenville, TX) a US\$83m (A\$112m) contract for the upgrade of two Gulfstream G550 business jets to the MC-55 Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Electronic Warfare (AISREW) mission systems for the RAAF. The contract is set to run through to AUG 2021, and the two G550s are the first of five for the RAAF: the 2016 Defence Integrated Investment Program (IIP) stated that Defence would acquire long-range EW support aircraft based on the G550 airframe with additional and modified systems from the early 2020s. The aircraft will be acquired in two tranches (2+3) and incrementally upgraded to maintain commonality with US-developed systems, and the first two 'green' Gulfstream G550 airframes were ordered in JAN 2016 and have been registered **N540GA** and **N542GD**. The following unclassified details of the two aircraft delivered to L-3 for the RAAF modifications have been advised on the internet.

Probable RAAF Serial	Ferry Reg	msn	Delivery Details
A51 ? -540	N540GA	5540	FAA registration 9 MAY 2016, expiration date 30 NOV 2019. Ferried from Gulfstream to L3 Greenville 28 MAR 2016, at L3.
A51 ? -542	N542GD	5542	FAA registration 20 JUN 2016, expiration date 31 MAR 2020. Ferried from Gulfstream to L3 Greenville 29 APR 2016, at L3.

## RAAF Reconnaissance Development: Part 1 @Gordon R Birkett 2017

### Back Ground

Stemming from a mid-1942 requirement to furnish the RAAF with an aircraft for conducting forward photographic reconnaissance north of Australia, consideration was given firstly to a suitably modified Brewster Buffalo.

Previously in Malaya a RAF Unit, 4 PRU, was formed around the establishment of 4 such modified aircraft for the same purposes as required by the RAAF.

Other types considered - PR Spitfires and Mosquitoes as used in Europe - were just unavailable, therefore with limited options, the Australian Advisory War Council (per Minutes of the 6th July 1942) authorized the use of nine previously consigned NEIAF Buffaloes for this purpose until a suitable replacement, preferably purpose built, became available.<sup>1</sup>



PRU's A51-1 pictured at Laverton 1942. Photo RAAF

Elsewhere in Australia, the USAAF had received four Lockheed Lightning F4 Photo Reconnaissance aircraft in April 1942, for use by their 8th Photo Squadron based at Garbutt. Further F4 shipments were due in August 1942.

Thus No 1 photographic Reconnaissance Unit (1PRU) was formed on the 8th June 1942 with six NEI Refugee Cargo Brewster Buffalo Aircraft, which was to become its primary in use equipment, along a single Wirraway aircraft. In place of the removed items, auxiliary fuel tanks and three F24 Cameras were to be installed, though seldom fitted after modification. In its place a single K-17 Camera was fitted for use.

The Unit's role was to carry out long range strategically reconnaissance and tactical reconnaissance through photography from a high altitude, using cameras fitted for a long focal length lens.

In the following month, the unit suffered its first casualty when Flt Lt R R H Winter was killed in the crash of A51-2 on the 8th July 1942 at Tallabrook, Victoria.

By the end of the month, no Buffaloes had been modified. The unit was now down to four Buffaloes (the fifth was away at 1AD being modified to PRU standard) and one Wirraway (A20-599).

On the following day, the 9th July 1942, the Chief of the Air Staff advised the AAWC that eight Republic P-43A/B Lancer aircraft were being made available by the United States Army Air Force for photographic reconnaissance in operational areas. He stated thereafter, that the Brewster Buffaloes would be used only to supplement the Lancers<sup>2</sup>.



*A RAAF P-43D Lancer A55-6 at Laverton late 1942. Photo RAAF*

In August 1942, the unit moved to the Northern Territory to Hughes Strip on the 19th August 1942 from Laverton Victoria.

Within a few days of arriving, on the 23rd August 1942, the Japanese bombed Hughes Strip which resulted in a further Buffalo loss (A51-6) and the Unit's sole Wirraway (A20-599). This just left A51-1, A51-3, and A51-5 left.

The unit commenced their training in the North Western Area and had their camera fit reduced from three to just one. The unit at the end of August had on strength only three Buffaloes, but training continued while the unit waited for its Lancers to be modified.

On the 25th September 1942, another Buffalo (A51-5) and pilot were lost in an accident. Sgt J Austin Ser#404699 was killed at Derby, Western Australia, when the aircraft crashed and burned.

This left the Unit with only one serviceable Buffalo (A51-1) and another waiting for spares (A51-3). This serviceability level was to continue till to the end of October 1942, tasked doing the work of photographing all defence installations and photographic assignments within the North Western theatre.

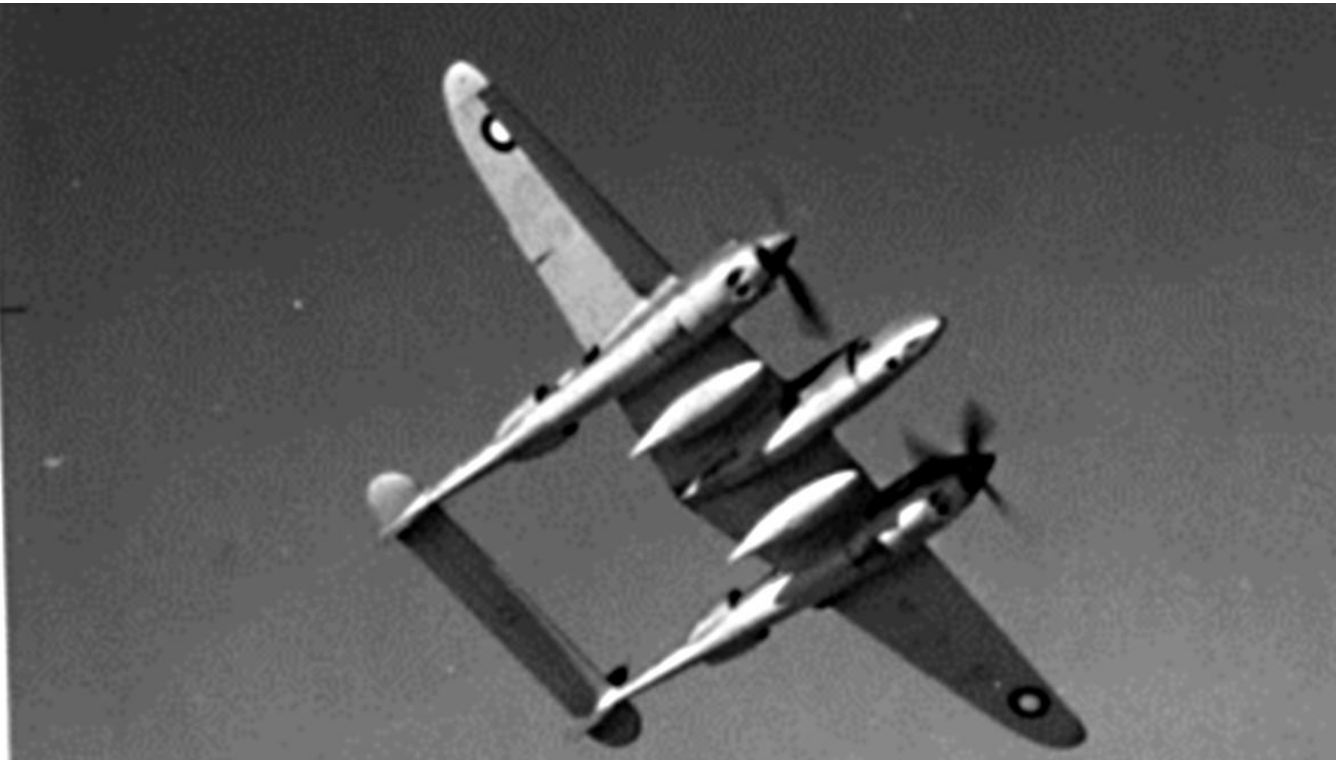
This was to change however, when on the 30th October 1942, two Lockheed F4 Lightning aircraft arrived at Hughes Strip. This would be the start of a true strategic reconnaissance capability for the RAAF.

On the 20th November 1942, one of the two Lockheed F4 Lightning; A55-2 crashed, thereby reducing the Unit to just two serviceable aircraft, Buffalo A51-1 and Lightning A55-1.

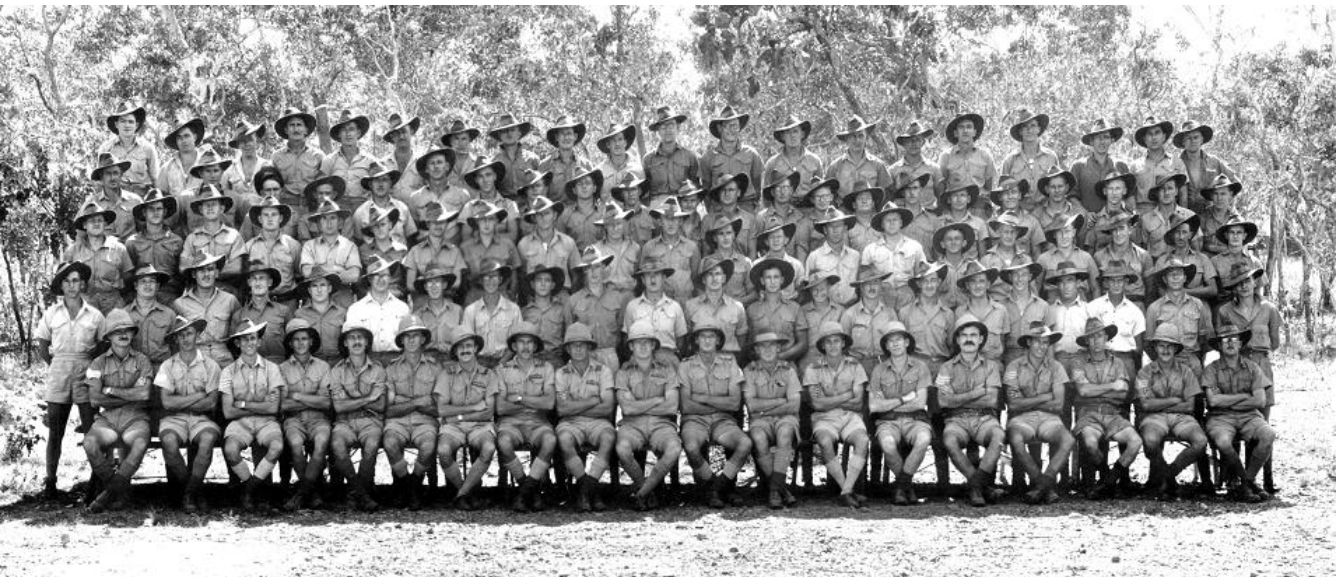
Reinforcements arrived on the 26th November 1942, in the form of the first three 1PRU P-43Bs Lancers (A56-3, 4 and 5) which were sent on to the forward echelon of 1 PRU at Hughes Strip.

This was to be the first deployment of the type. F/O Bond was delayed at Oodnadatta, South Australia, with brake problems. This would be the bane of the type throughout the service of these aircraft.





*Lightning A55-1*



*Forward echelon Members of 1 PRU at Hughes Strip Dec 1942. Photo RAAF*

Wirraway A20-178 arrived at Hughes as well, fitted out for oblique photography.<sup>3</sup>

Another, A56-6, being used for bomb carriage trials, was damaged severely on landing at Laverton on the 9th December 1942, injuring the pilot, P/O J D McLeod of 1 PRU. The pilot had unlocked his tail wheel and on application of brakes, the aircraft ground-looped to starboard.

Another P-43B, A56-5, was damaged at Coomalie Creek, Northern Territory on the 14th December 1942, when the brakes went spongy resulting in the aircraft making a right turn off the strip and mounting the drainage ditch parallel to the strip. The pilot was Flt Lt H M Angwin.

Due to the reduced availability of Buffaloes at 1 PRU, all three remaining P-43Ds were modified by the 18th December 1942 in an emergency action for the carriage of 250lb bombs or long-range tanks.<sup>4</sup>

A third RAAF Lockheed F4 Lightning, A55-3 had arrived in March 1943 from Eagle Farm.



*P-43B, A56-5, pictured after her accident. Note plated over rear camera ports. Photo RAAF.*

With the limited number of aircraft available, it was decided to piggyback operations with the resident USAAF 319th Bomb Squadron /90th Bomb Group B-24D Operations during March 1943 onwards.

*Sadly the first operational casualty resulted from this arrangement when Cpl Darcy Arthur Sharland Serv#36648 was killed over Babo, Timor on one such mission in B-24D "Dirtie Gertie" 41-23731 (CO's aircraft 319<sup>th</sup> BS, 90<sup>th</sup> BG), 0218Hrs Zulu on the 16th March 1943, when the aircraft disintegrated in mid-air for some unknown reason at position 04.07degrees South and 134.16degrees East. There were no AAA or enemy aircraft present as witness by the accompanied B-24D aircraft; 41-23073.*

By the end of June 1943, the Unit just flew two Lightning's, two Buffalos (till the end of the month) and their solo Wirraway. By the following month an additional two Wirraways (A20-178 and A20-605) were assigned to replace the remaining Buffalos (A51-1 and A51-3).

*Wirraway (A20-605) overturned on landing in September 1943.<sup>5</sup> The unit settled on two of each type, with serviceability showing only a single example of each type operational at any one time for several months in 1943 and well into 1944.*

### **The new era; the wooden wonder**



During May 1944, the first PR Mosquito for 1PRU, the prototype Australian built solid-nose PR40 (*of which six were built (A52-2,4,6,7,9 and 26)*) was ferried up to the North West Area on the 29th May 1944 by F/O Ross-Walker and P/O Love from Bankstown via Laverton/Port Pirie/Alice Springs to Coomalie.

These aircraft were equipped with F52-20" and K17-6" Cameras in the vertical position.



*A52-4 during fitment, before delivery*

During June 1944, this aircraft flew nine missions to places including Ambon, Flores and Soemba islands, Celebes, Tiworo Straights, Ceram and Surabaya.

On this last mission, 25th June 1944, Pilot F/OFF Ken Boss-Walker suffered an engine failure over Surabaya (Java in the Netherlands East Indies) and flew the 10.5 hour return trip to Australia of 1450km on one engine, back to Broome.

The following month in July 1944, A52-2 was busy. Missions included Ambon, and returning on one engine on the 11th July 1944, Deployment to Mokmer DNG to carryout recce to Owi Island on the 17th July 1944, and a separate recce mission to Davao in the Philippines 18th July 1944, , then return to Coomalie. Another mission was over Java (Penaoei, Waingapoe and Memboro).

Then this Mosquito flew its longest mission to date, when Sqn Ldr A.S Hermes and P/O Bowden flew from Truscott Strip to Balikpapan and return, on the 31st July 1944; *some 2235 statute miles*. A quick turnaround, she was off to Ambon on the same day. *A52-2 would be given the name "Old Faithful"*. Mosquito Operations were taking off, and they would include 5th AAF Missions when A52-4 deployed to Kamiri Strip, Noemfoor in August 1944.

A52-4 was fitted with a Trimetrogon 6" K17 Camera, two Reconnaissance 12" Vertical cameras, 20" F52 Vertical camera, and a 8" F24 Oblique Camera. However it was damaged by large hailstones during its flight, and was returned to Darwin. It was replaced by A52-2 "Old Faithful".



All missions started from Middleburg Strip (Pictured below) after originating from its detachment base of Noemfoor<sup>6</sup>.



A previous two missions to the Philippines on the 28th and 30th August 1944 were aborted due to electrical failures before reaching the target area.

The first mission was abandoned after only twenty minutes into the Philippine leg, and so had the second mission in its fortieth minute.



On the 6th September 1944, A52-4 following its repair was forced landed on beach West of Manokwari in Dutch New Guinea due to fuel exhaustion mainly contributed to bad weather.

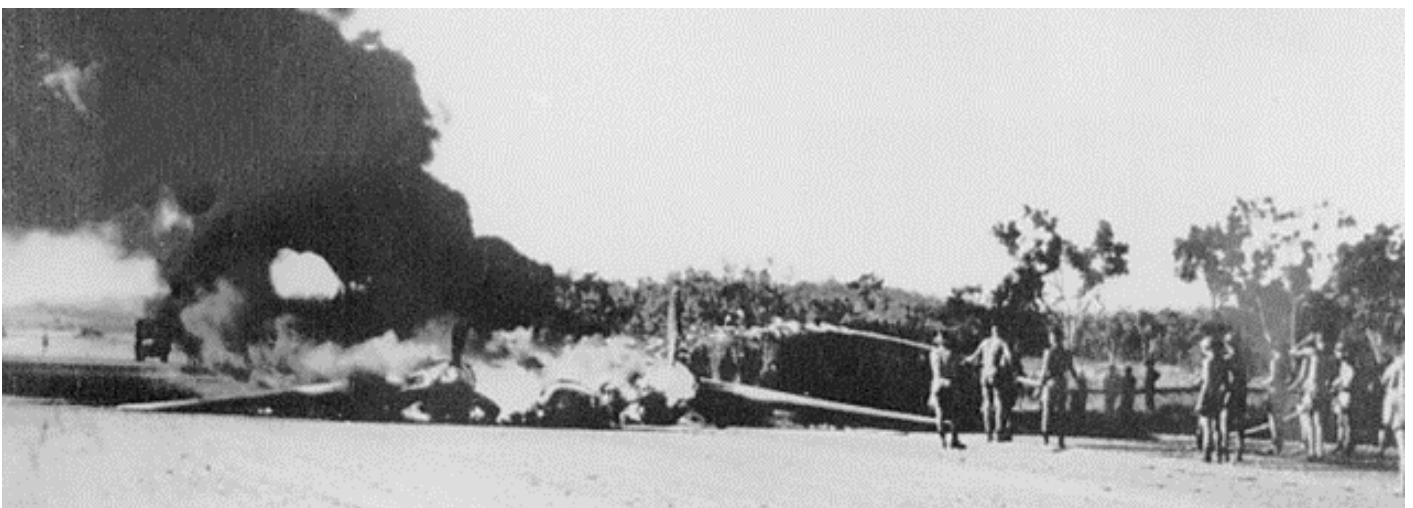
The aircraft had been on its last leg of a nine hour photo recce trip to the central Philippines on behalf and request of the 5th Air Force (USAAF). This was by far the longest RAAF Reconnaissance Mission of WW2.



The crew, Sqn Ldr Hermes and W/O Kirley, destroyed A52-4 by burning it.

*During this time, 1PRU continued to operate the F4 Lightning and Wirraway. It was soon augmented by two Lockheed Hudsons (A16-130 and A16-47<sup>7</sup>) from the Survey Flight, based at Kingaroy Queensland, for a short time.*

Surprisingly, Lightning A55-1 arrived from the south after a service at Eagle Farm by the USAAF and was used for one last trip to recce the Timor Area on the 1st September 1944. This was its last operational flight in the RAAF when on the following day it was destroyed, on a test flight which sadly claimed the life of F/Lt Rush, after he was admitted to hospital with severe burns.



On the 10th September 1944, 1PRU was absorbed and re-established as Number 87 (Photographic Reconnaissance) Squadron. By month's end, A52-6 joined the squadron after being ferried up from Richmond RAAF Base by Sqn Ldr Hermes and P/O Kirley. Crewed by Sqn Ldr Hermes and F/O Bowden, she performed its first operational mission on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1944 on a recce mission to the Ceram/Boeroe Areas, NEI.



During October 1944, the Squadron the bulk of flying was carried out on A52-6 as A52-2 was unserviceable for some 26 days. A52-6 was also fitted with a 36 inch lens in addition to its normal 20 inch lens.

Results were satisfactory but not as good as expected, the so the use of the 20 inch lens continued as the main focal length. Serviceability was also an issue with the aircraft, returning twice with plug trouble after just taking off. Wireless electrical issues also plagued the aircraft, until a copy of the wiring diagram was provided. Wirraway serviceability was excellent for the two aircraft on strength; however attached Hudson A16-47 developed a generator issue in one engine.

At the start of November 1944 over three days, the eastern reaches of Java and Bali were covered for the first time, by using Broome Strip as the staging start point for a two aircraft mission covering Makassar and Boetoeng with A52-2 and A52-6. Results were disappointing on two of the tree sorties flown due to weather related issues.

Two new additional aircraft arrived on strength that month, A52-7 and A52-9; bringing up the No 87 Squadron RAAF Mosquito establishment Unit strength to four aircraft.

Serviceability issues continued to plague the Australian built Mosquitoes the following month, despite having A52-26 arriving on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 1944.



A52-9 became unserviceable on the 5<sup>th</sup> December and remained so until the 30<sup>th</sup> December 1944. A52-6 also went unserviceable on the following day and was not operational until also at the end of the month.

However minor faults developed on A52-26 as well, but with these minor issues resolved daily, remained serviceable until the last few days of the month. The bulk of December 1944 flying therefore remained with A52-2 and A52-7.

During January 1945 serviceability improved through a visit and the maintenance direction of a De Havilland Representative, arriving from Bankstown. However A52-6 continued to go unserviceable, while A52-2 was sent to 2AD for complete overhaul and stripping. A total of twelve Photographic Flights were performed by the Squadron during the month; some 2296 negatives were exposed from which some 2865 prints developed. Wirraway A20-178 was issued off to 4RSU for repairs following an accident, whereas A20-605 was issued off to Clyde Engineering for a total rebuild. In place, A20-572 was assigned to the Squadron.

February 1945 saw the second operational loss of a Australian built Mosquito.

A52-7 with Sqn Ldr Ken J Gray Serv#402119 and F/O W E Sudlow Serv#427958 had arrived at Broome on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 1945 following a ferry flight from Coomalie.

The next morning they took off from Broome at 0700hrs Zulu (Local 0530hrs) on a single aircraft Photographic Reconnaissance Operational sortie to East Java and Bali. Five hours later a signal was received (1220hrs) that they were experiencing "engine trouble" and gave a position of some 150 miles east of the Java coast (Position O.P.7050). Despite one Catalina, one B-25 and two B-24s involve in the search, with an ASR Catalina standing by, no sighting was made of survivors in the area. Things look glum.

*However five days later, word from in Western Australia was signalled that both crew members had survived. Following the starboard engine overheating east of Java, the pilot managed to nurse the aircraft all the way to King Sound in Western Australia and ditched successfully. After two nights in their life raft, they made landfall and walked a further three days before being picked up by local Mission people and taken to Lombardina Mission. They returned to the Squadron a few days later.*

Two new aircraft arrived that month; Wirraway A20-165 arrived on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 1945, with a Dual control Mosquito T3 A52-1010 on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 1945.

The next loss occurred on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1945 when A52-26 swung off the gravel strip at Coomalie on landing after a 68 yard roll, despite corrections. After a 453 yard roll and slide, it came to rest in a ditch with F/O G C Henry and passenger, LAC N M Simmons being not injured.

In March 1945, the Squadron also saw the arrival of the first British built Mosquito Mk XVI's; A52-600 arriving on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 1945, A52-602 and A52-605 on the 11<sup>th</sup> March 1945 and finally A52-601 on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 1945.



These could cruise higher and faster than the Australian Mk40's, but were restricted to shorter radius sorties in use initially (Timor) due to their lack of a second generator being fitted.

*These were part of some 23 British built Mosquito PR Mk XVI's (A52-600/622) ordered that were equipped with two stage blowers and equipped with F24-14" Lens Cameras and F52-20" Cameras.*



On the 5<sup>th</sup> April 1945 of historical interest, two Mosquitoes (A52-602 and A52-605) were tasked to locate and report on a position of a enemy surface convoy (One Light Cruiser later Identified as the IJN Isuzu and three destroyers) that was reported by a Catalina in the Sawoe Sea, returning from its journey to Koepang Timor on the 4<sup>th</sup> April 1945.

The next morning, on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1945, two squadrons of B-25s (from the NEI's 18 Sqn, and the RAAF's No 2 Squadron) and a squadron of B-24s were airborne to attack the convoy.

An 87 Squadron Mosquito, A52-9, was tasked to relocate the convoy first. A task it did not do until the B-25s arrived on site.

In effectual flak from one the destroyer escorts was experienced flying at 21000 feet over the target, and then things went from bad to worse, when two climbing Oscar single seat fighters appeared at 19000 feet.

After increasing the aircraft's speed to 400 MPH Indicated, the fighters were left behind. A few minutes later, the Mosquito returned to witness the Liberators attack despite very heavy flak. Sadly one of these aircraft exploded after being hit.

*Two RAAF Liberators were shot down that day: A72-77 and A72-81(Pictured below).*



*RAAF Catalina A24-54, that collected the survivors, was also strafed by Oscars and set alight. Later all were picked up by another RAAF Catalina.*

Photos were taken of the Cruiser by A52-9 later showed that three direct hits were made by the attacking aircraft. It was assumed that the convoy was sunk.

*Another Mosquito Mk 16 arrived in April 1945, A52-606.*

*However A52-1010 suffered a ground accident on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1945, when taxiing damaging an airscrew and tailplane (Not mentioned on E/E-88Card).*



For the month Photographic Flights performed by the Squadron resulted in some 7130 prints developed. During May 1945, three new Mosquito MkXVIs arrived; A52-608 on the 14<sup>th</sup> May 1945, A52-609 on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 1945 and A52-604 on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1945.

Significant maintenance issues for the Squadron that month included A52-602 developing warping in the tail plane skin, which required its transfer to 14 Aircraft Repair Depot for a replacement tail plane. A52-605 also remained unserviceable for most of the month waiting for parts.

When A52-608 when first received was found to be very slow and on inspection it was found to have a twisted main plane and sent back south.

During the same month, A52-1010 forced landed at Tyndall due to an Engine Bearer cracking, while A52-601 forced landed at Darwin due to a Glycol leak. A52-9 suffered an airscrew governor unit seizure at Broome.

*The later went to 2AD on return for overhaul on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1945.*

*F52 "20 inch" Split Vertical and a K17 "6 inch" Vertical Cameras were used, resulting in a record number of negatives, 3,459, of which 9,850 photographic prints were actioned and issued.*

During June, some twenty-eight sorties were flown which also included special duties to the Coco Islands (Point "X") between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1945 with three aircraft: A52-604 (SqN Ldr Grey), A52-606 (F/Lt Langsford) and A52-6 (F/Lt Spurgin).

Unfortunately A52-606 forced landed on a beach there when it exhausted its fuel on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 1945 some 21 miles from strip. F/Lt T Langsford and F/O Tozer were not injured.

Replaced by A52-611 on 9th June 1945, this aircraft had a very short life (22.55hrsTT) with the squadron when on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 1945; it crashed on take-off after swinging off strip at Coomalie. SqN Ldr H A Gamble and P/O Williams were not injured.



*Above; the aircraft was finally destroyed by fire in July 1945*

During July 1945 a further three Mosquito MkXVIs arrived; A52-610 on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 1945, A52-613 on the 7<sup>th</sup> July 1945 and A52-616 on the 26<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

One of the original Mosquito MkXVIs, A52-601, was fitted with a F.24 5 inch Oblique camera, which was first used on photographing a Radar Site near Timor on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 1945.

*15<sup>th</sup> August 1945 saw the end of the Pacific War, but sadly not before the last war casualty.*



Sqn Ldr L Jim Gillespie Serv#407576 and F/O Frank A Haymes Serv#438623 were taking off on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1945 in A52-605 from Coomalie on detachment to Labuan Island via Morotai, when the aircraft crashed on take-off.

The aircraft swung off strip in the first 400 yards of take-off, and burst into flames after travelling a further 398 yards hitting a ditch and finished facing the way it came. Gillespie was severely burnt and died later in hospital, and Haymes, he too suffered burns and was treated in No 1 Medical Receiving Station.



On the following day, two further No 87 Squadron RAAF Mosquito MkXVIs (A52-600 and A52-604) completed the trip to Labuan Island and for maintenance needs, were attached to No 1 Squadron, also flying Mosquitoes, albeit MkVIs.

During August 1945 a further three Mosquito MkXVIs arrived; A52-614 on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 1945, A52-618 on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 1945 and A52-619 on the 27<sup>th</sup> August 1945.

The following month, with the war finished, a record number of operations (43) were undertaken; albeit photographic inspections to ensure the Japanese complied with war material stacking and placement were actioned.

Two incidents took place, with the first happening on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 1945 when A52-601's pilot, F/Lt Henry, had to jettison its wing tanks after experiencing a drop of engine revs.



No 87 Squadron's Group Photograph late August 1945.

The other was when Sqn Ldr Law took off on an operation in A52-604 when the port engine failed following take-off on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 1945. He landed successfully without injury.

During October 1945, two Mosquito were received; Mosquito MkXVI A52-608 and the return of A52-9 from 2AD after overhaul. A52-616, with F/Lt Johnston and F/O Williamson, was forced landed at Wyndham due to a faulty glycol bleed pipe on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 1945.

A52-613 was damaged after it swung on take-off and suffered a collapsed undercarriage at Charleville Queensland on its way to Parkes NSW on the 14<sup>th</sup> October 1945. It would be a write-off.

By then the Squadron was in transit in late October 1945 from Coomalie to Parkes NSW with one aircraft left behind due to a parts issue; A52-604.

Parts from the Parkes arrived A52-601 were sourced and sent onto Coomalie to make A52-604 airworthy for the ferry by the 15<sup>th</sup> October 1945.

However, A52-604 forced landed at Gorrie NT with glycol leaks on its way down and only reached Parkes NSW on the 29<sup>th</sup> November 1945. Not only did the Mosquitoes make the trip down, even Wirraway A20-572 made the journey to Parkes NSW.

*A famous experienced pilot arrived in December 1945, having flown with No 680 Sqn RAF in Reconnaissance Aircraft in the Mediterranean: Pre War Radio Announcer, F/Lt Charles "Bud" Tingwell who later became a renowned Australian TV Star and actor.<sup>8</sup>*



*Old timers continued on with No 87 Squadron in the forties: A52-6 now in post war scheme and named "Busco's Bus".*



Peace time tasks now were on the horizon, and the Photographic role in the RAAF assured, at least till 1953.....Gone went the Photo Blue, in came the Post war Silver Dope..... and in came Codes



1946, the first of many a RAAF Mosquito MK41's entered service with 87 Sqn RAAF: A52-306 SU-S

The last flight of a RAAF Mosquito MK41 of No 87 Squadron RAAF, based in Canberra, was on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 1953 when Mosquito Mk41's A52-305/308/310 and 325 touched down at Canberra after flying from Port Hedland in WA.



Following the disbandment of the squadron in October 1953, it ended the only dedicated the RAAF's Post War "Survey" Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron. In war time, it would have re-role as the service's only Strategic Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron, continuing its lineage of WW2 operations previously outlined.<sup>9</sup>

#### **Tactical Photographic Reconnaissance; Immediate Post War: 1945-1953.**

Tactical Photographic Reconnaissance continued on post war with the role assigned to No 4 Squadron RAAF (later renumbered No 3 Squadron RAAF) which was based at Canberra. Initially it was to be assigned the first converted TAC/R P-40N-35/40-CUs in late 1945.

*RAAF discussion on the eventual supply of the CAC Mustang TAC/R during the 1946-47 Period had seen this P-40N program cancelled at the end of the war. Some 28 P-40N airframes had been modified from out of a total of 45 airframes selected, excluding the prototype.<sup>10</sup>*

In any event, they did get two such aircraft, if only for storage purposes.

Reduced to a Cadre Unit initially post war by late 1945, No 4 Squadron's Unit Establishment would be centred on nine Mustang TAC/R type aircraft.

In the mean time of June 1946, two ex School of Army Co-operation TAC/R P-40N-40s, A29-1154 and A29-1155, were actually for a short time, in their care, as all of the CAC Boomerang TAC/Rs had been consigned to 6AD by late 1945 on its return from SWPAC.



*School of Warfare's CAC Mustang A68-38, laying smoke.*

Eventually by late 1946 its Unit establishment was based on a composite unit that included some nine CAC Mustang PR Mk22s, eight Auster AOPMKIII and two CAC CA-16 Wirraways.

When No 3 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron stood up on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1948, replacing only in name, its unit establishment remained nine Mustang PR MK22, eight Auster AOPMKIII and two Wirraways, which remained unchanged until in March 1952.

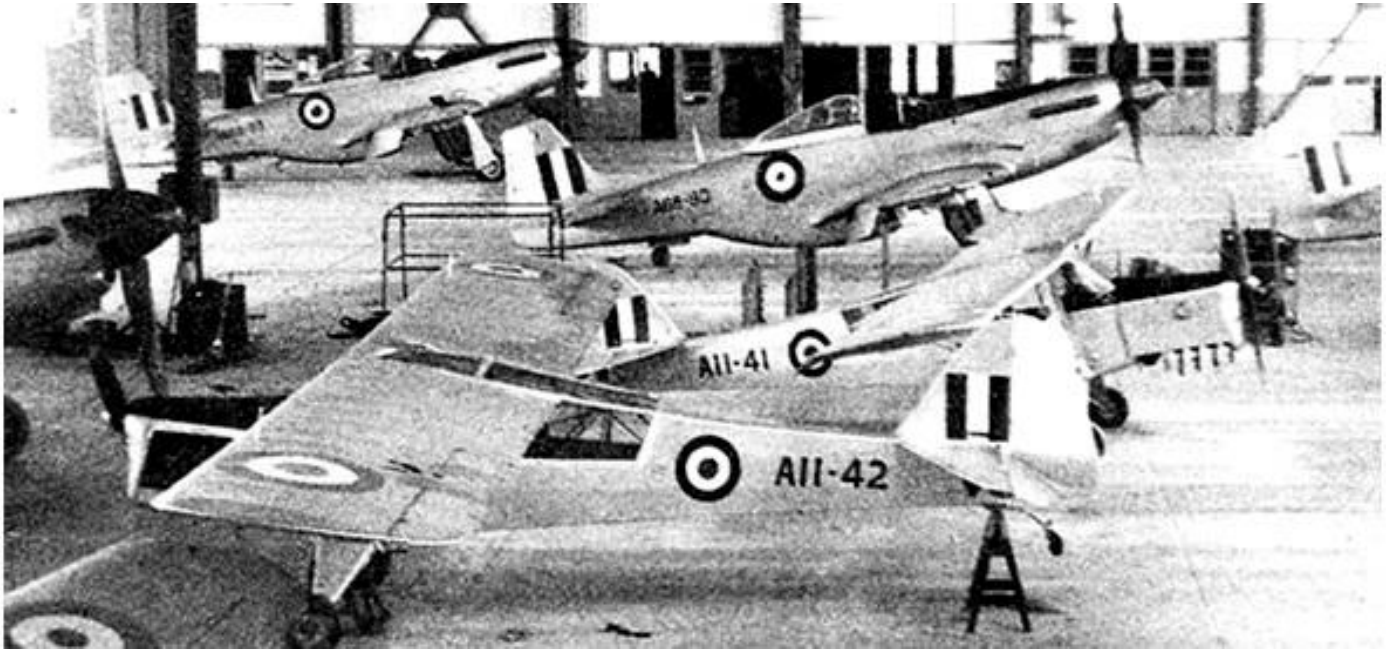


*Notice camera aiming Crosses per A68-187 'S port wing. These are lined up with similar ones on canopy for alignment*

That time, all Mustang PR Mk22's were placed in Category C Storage, whereupon the Unit flew only Austers and Wirraways thereafter, except, after some air tests, a four ship flypast over the Australian War Memorial on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 1952.

It's remaining Mustang PR Mk22 and Mk23s, A68-82/86/89/90/91/187/189, were delivered to 1AD at Tocumwal between the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> September 1952 for storage.

Thereafter A68-92/93 would follow a month later. The Unit Establishment would be further reduced to just six for a few months, then later to just five Auster AOP MkIIIs.



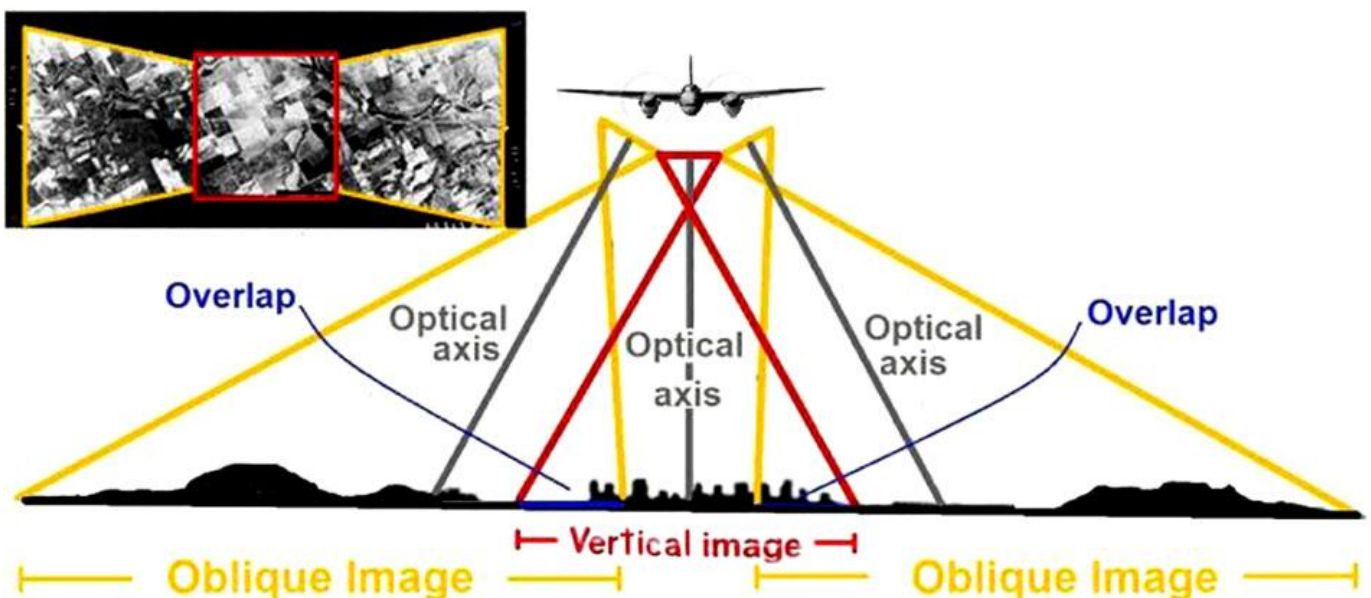
On the 15<sup>th</sup> June 1953, the Auster AOP MkIIIs were transferred to the Base Squadron Canberra, and No 3 Squadron RAAF ceased to be a flying unit. There ended the only dedicated Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron role in the RAAF Post War use.

*No 3 Squadron RAAF would later be reform as a RAAF Fighter Squadron from the absorption of both aircraft and men from CAC Sabre Trials Flight on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1956. The CAC Sabre throughout its service life with the RAAF never was used or carried reconnaissance equipment aside from "visual" Mark 1 eyeballs.*

#### PR MkXVI and PR Mk41 Aerial Cameras (As explained by John Bennett)<sup>11</sup>

British aerial cameras had traditionally been used by the RAAF before the arrival of US equipment – the F24 5" x 5" square format (with a magazine for up to 250 images), and the larger F52 10" x 7" format (with a 300 magazine), both with a variety of lenses from 5" focal length, up to the long 36" for the F52. These in fact remained after the Mosquito, for use with the Canberra.

The British **PR.XVI** was fitted with US K-17 9" x 9" format (200 magazine) with 6" and 12" lenses;<sup>12</sup> the **PR.40** with the K-18 18" x 9" format with 24" lens; and the **PR.41** with both those K-17 cameras, and the F52 20" or 36" mounted in the rear fuselage which could be used a split verticals.







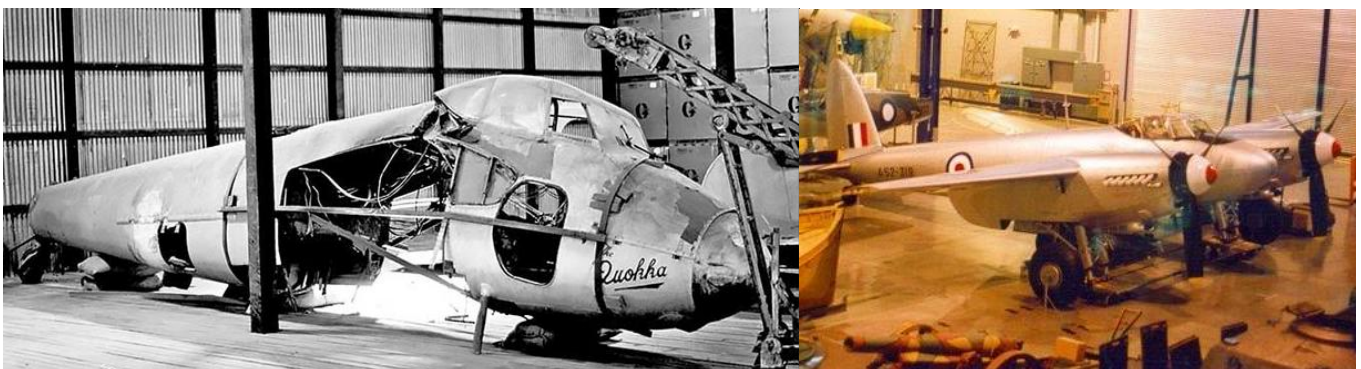
British aerial cameras – F24 left 5" x 5" format, F52 10" x 7" format The US K-17 camera 9" x 9" format 12" lens

A simple vertical photographic calculation for working out a height to fly to obtain certain ground coverage, with a specific focal length lens and camera format is given by:

- **W x H = L x F**
- **W** is the width of camera plate format, either in direction of flight or across track (in inches);
- **H** is the height (above ground level, AGL, in feet);
- **L** is the length of the ground coverage (in feet); and
- **F** is the lens focal length (in inches).
- In the simplest case of an F24 aerial camera (which has a 5" x 5" format), fitted with a 5" lens, then the height in feet AGL equals the ground coverage distance. That is for vertical photography, if the aircraft is 5000ft AGL, then the camera coverage of one exposure would be 5000ft on the ground – and as the F24 has a square 5" camera format, that translates as a square image 5000ft along track, and 5000ft across track.

**Mosquito PR.41 Aerial Camera Fits** <sup>13</sup>

Camera Station	Mount	Camera	Remarks
Nose	vertical tri-metrogon	K-17 6"/12" lens	10.4" diameter window
2 x Rear Obliques	port and stbd obliques	K-17 6"/12" lens	10.4" diameter windows
Rear Fuselage - Forward	vertical	F52 20" or 36" lens	10.4" diameter window
Rear Fuselage - Aft	vertical	F52 36" lens	13.4" diameter window



Survivor A52-319, AWM

Part 2, to follow: bridging the Reconnaissance Capability Gap 1950s to 1980's

## No 3 SQUADRON A.F.C

### PART III – THE SUMMER OFFENSIVES

*The Australians had outfought the Germans at every point.*

- Major General Montgomery, Chief of Staff British Fourth Army <sup>14</sup>

On the Somme, as in other parts of the British line, the months from May to July were a waiting period – waiting for a ground counter-attack by Allied Supreme Commander, General Foch, whose forces were now being reinforced by the arriving American divisions. However, although the Front had now returned to trench warfare, the Australian Corps was far from inactive over this waiting period, staging continual minor raids on various sections along the German front. These attacks made a series of inroads into the enemy lines, and would have a very important effect on subsequent operations. The minor operations, some 14 over May and June, met with encouraging success, not only by gradually improving the position of the Allied line and gaining many prisoners, but also by establishing a moral superiority over the Germans that would be of great value in the future.

The renewal of trench warfare on the Somme demanded a heavy workload from 3 Squadron, which resumed the normal trench support duties that the R.E.8s had flown over Messines in the winter. These tasks were the locating of enemy batteries for regular counter-battery bombardment, constant photography of the Corps front, and close reconnaissance of the trenches and resupply routes. Interspersed amongst these Corps reconnaissance tasks were contact patrols in support of the minor infantry operations as the Australian brigades constantly raided and eroded the German front. The aim of the contact patrol was to keep the advancing infantry in sight and report back to the Corps headquarters, normally within ten minutes, the changing position of the front line. Lieutenant General Monash, commander of the Australian Corps, later wrote:

The vital information, which it is imperative for the Corps Commander to have accurately and rapidly delivered throughout the course of a battle, is that relating to the actual position, at any given moment of time, of our front line troops...<sup>15</sup>

Another capability being developed more was the bombing of enemy defences. For these ground attacks, the standard weapon was the 25-pound (11kg) Cooper bomb, introduced in May 1917.<sup>16</sup> 3 Squadron pilot Lieutenant Jack Treacy recalled: “We used Cooper bombs – ‘Daisy cutters’, we called them – we dropped them on infantry, motor transport and trenches where they were open. You would fly along the trench and let them all go in a line.”<sup>17</sup>

3 Squadron moved north on 3 May from Poulainville to Flesselles (near Villers-Bocage), as part of the 15th Corps Wing, V Brigade RAF. The month was to prove a torrid period for the Squadron, with the losses that were suffered on its exacting duties. The new RAF, in the first two months of its existence over April and May, lost 1,032 aircraft.<sup>18</sup> For 3 Squadron, these losses were most significant as all three flight commanders became casualties within one fortnight.

On 6 May, the ‘C’ Flight Commander, Captain Douglas Ralfe, with Lieutenant W Buckland (A4404) were killed on a dawn patrol when their R.E.8 was attacked over the Morlancourt Ridge by five German triplanes which dived down through the clouds.<sup>19</sup> The R.E.8 was shot down in flames. Ralfe’s loss was particularly hard felt by the Squadron, as he had been a respected aviator and popular officer. He had trained on the 2nd Course at Point Cook in early 1915, and had then seen active service with the Artillery at the Somme in 1916 before undertaking advanced flying training in England. Posted as an original flight commander to 69 Squadron at South Carlton, Ralfe then had to remain in England with Home Establishment as a flying instructor, before being able to rejoin the Squadron in early 1918. Ralfe was replaced as ‘C’ Flight Commander by Captain Stan Brearley.

Three days later, on 9 May, as an example of the pressure of the air war, Lieutenants Baillieu and Rowntree (A3665) fought three combats during one patrol.<sup>20</sup> The ‘B’ Flight Commander, Captain John Duigan, and Lieutenant Patterson (B2271) were attacked by four Fokker triplanes while on a morning photographic sortie over Villers Bretonneux. Both being wounded, they forced landed in the French lines near Cachy village.<sup>21</sup> Captain Leigh Simpson took over ‘B’ Flight.

A week later on 16 May, the 'A' Flight Commander, Captain E J Jones, flying with Lieutenant Hainsworth (A3817), were photographing over Morlancourt when they were attacked by six triplanes. They sent one spinning down in flames, and the others were then driven off by British scouts.<sup>22</sup> Just four days later, on 20 May, Jones was flying with his usual observer Lieutenant A Taylor (B8876), when he was again attacked by six triplanes. Taylor was shot dead, and although wounded, Jones was able to return to his aerodrome and land his machine. Jones was repatriated to hospital in England, and replaced as 'A' Flight Commander by Captain Reg Francis.

On 19 May, the Australian 6th Brigade successfully attacked Ville-sur-Ancre. Despite the thick ground fog which hindered observation, 3 Squadron conducted four successful preplanned shoots and many zone calls were sent onto active enemy batteries. The constant Australian Corps raids, continually changing the shape of the line, resulted in a high activity in reconnaissance for 3 Squadron. During May, the Squadron completely photographed the Australian Corps front on five separate occasions.<sup>23</sup> During the last week of May to the south-east of the Australians, the Battle of Aisne began, when on 27 May, 42 German divisions attacked the French along a 50km front between Soissons and Rheims. It was the last great enemy offensive of the war, and although the Germans reached within 100km of Paris, by the beginning of June they had been held at the Marne. Meanwhile, on the British front to the north, the month was a static period, and the opposing air forces struggled for air supremacy. This allowed the RAF to operate artillery observation aircraft virtually unhindered, with the bulk of the German Air Service engaged on the Aisne offensive against the French and Americans.

On 2 June, during a dawn artillery patrol, Captain Leigh Simpson and Lieutenant Gamble (B6576) were shot down by enemy anti-aircraft fire over Hamel. Simpson was wounded, but managed to force land his R.E.8 and observer safely back within the friendly lines. Captain Lawrence Wackett, a veteran of 67 (Australian) Squadron in the Middle East, was posted in as 'B' Flight Commander to replace Leigh Simpson, who, with other pilots E J Jones and William Anderson, were recognised during the month with the first awards of the new Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC). Jones had just previously been awarded the Military Cross.

The beginning of June also saw some aerial victories for the R.E.8s. On the morning of Monday 3rd, an Albatros scout was destroyed over Vaire Wood, near Hamel, shared by Lieutenants Baillieu and Sewell (C2270) and Armstrong and Jeffery (B2275).<sup>24</sup> Armstrong's success continued days later. On 9 June, flying on an artillery patrol with observer Lieutenant Mart (D4689), Armstrong was at 2000 feet flying near Querrieu when he was directed towards an enemy machine by the anti-aircraft bursts. He intercepted the Halberstadt CL.II two-seater, cutting off its escape to the east.<sup>25</sup> With Mart covering the enemy reconnaissance machine, the Germans were escorted west by the Australian R.E.8, and shepherded to land at Flesselles airfield. The CO, Major David Blake, later related:

The Germans landed with their engine still ticking over, and appeared to be on the point of taking off again, when the situation was saved by the corporal of the guard, the only armed man in the vicinity, who ran up with his revolver and presented it at the head of the pilot with the order, 'Hands up!' They did.<sup>26</sup>

Lieutenant Jack Treacy recalled the pilots took the captured Germans to the Officers' Mess for a few drinks: "The German pilot had exceeded the height for his reconnaissance as our 'Archie' was too hot for him, and it was recorded on the barometers on the wings, so they thought it was a good idea to surrender."<sup>27</sup> The captured Halberstadt was claimed as a war trophy and presented to the Australian Government.<sup>28</sup> The aeroplane was not the only item of value captured, as maps and papers giving details of the German forces employed against the French on the Noyon front were found on the captured airmen.<sup>29</sup>

The Australian Corps still formed the southern boundary of the British Armies, with three Australian divisions astride the Somme. The evening of 10 June saw the Australian Corps attack on Morlancourt Ridge, and by the following evening the airmen of 3 Squadron had enabled the guns to silence two batteries behind Morlancourt and four behind Hamel. Captain Lawrence Wackett, whose 'B' Flight's primary aim was this counter-battery work, later related the procedures for locating the target. With the airfield only 30km from the line, the R.E.8s could be in the target area and find the guns in 15 minutes. Wackett recorded:

The targets were concealed by camouflage and were very difficult to locate, so that we had to fly at altitudes less than 5000 feet to get clear identification. At this height we encountered intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire which was most unpleasant, and we also ran the gauntlet of enemy fighters who watched for the opportunity to shoot us down. Usually the only positive identification mark we could observe to locate each gun was the blast erosion on the ground before the muzzle.<sup>30</sup>



Occasional aerial combats still hindered the reconnaissance work, and during June, 468 Allied aircraft and 15 balloons fell to German flyers.<sup>31</sup> On the morning of 27 June, Lieutenants McKenna and Heslop (C2535) were engaging a battery near Hamel when they were attacked by a dozen Albatros scouts. By skilful manoeuvring the crew was able to evade the fighters, forcing one down out of control, and succeeded in bringing their damaged machine back to forced land near Corbie.<sup>32</sup> During the day, the whole Hamel position was photographed, and a further nine batteries were engaged during the evening and these were either damaged or put out of action.<sup>33</sup> While returning from one of these shoots, Lieutenants Kerr and Brook (A3661) were engaged by Pfalz scout near Hamel. The enemy scout killed the observer and seriously wounded the pilot, but Kerr was able to crash land at Pont Noyelles. The following afternoon, Lieutenants Lee Smith and Oscar Witcomb (C2275) were over the line and saw two Albatros scouts attack an observation balloon near Baizeux. Smith attacked, with Witcomb firing 100 rounds at one enemy fighter, and drove the scout down, with its engine off, into a forced landing in the enemy lines.<sup>34</sup>

At the prompting of Lieutenant General Monash, towards the end of June Sir Henry Rawlinson (Commander of the Fourth Army) had agreed that the Australian Corps would undertake an operation on a somewhat larger scale than the raids that had been so successful.<sup>35</sup> The operation had the objective of capturing the village of Hamel and Vaire Wood, and the important ridge immediately to the east. Capture of this ridge would deepen the Allied line, test the German defences and deny the enemy observation of much of the Somme valley.<sup>36</sup> In preparation for the Australian assault on Hamel, 3 Squadron devised a method for supplying ammunition boxes from the air to the advancing troops. The device for dropping ammunition was originally obtained from a captured German document and the Fourth Army commander, General Rawlinson, asked whether it could be copied. The CO, Major Blake, recorded:

The job was handed over to No 3 Squadron and the preliminary details were worked out. Captain Wackett was the pilot chosen to make the early trials; he had a gift for mechanical invention. The apparatus was the ordinary bomb-rack and release-gear adapted to hold two boxes of ammunition attached to parachutes. Much credit is due to the squadron's workshop mechanics under Sergeant Nicholson, whose skill made the success of the gear eventually produced. It was adopted throughout the RAF for this purpose.<sup>37</sup>

With Captain Wackett in charge of the operation, 3 Squadron was augmented by a second unit, 9 Squadron RAF, so that there were some 20 aircraft fitted for ammunition dropping. The R.E.8s had their 25-pound (11kg) Cooper bomb carriers modified to carry two ammunition boxes. Each ammunition box contained four 300-round belts of 0.303 ammunition for Vickers machine-guns.<sup>38</sup> By experiment, the correct size of parachute and method of attachment was determined so that the box would descend and reach the ground without severe impact. Wackett set up a small factory in a hangar to produce the parachutes:

The parachutes were twelve feet [four metres] in diameter and the wooden ammunition boxes weighed forty pounds [18kg] each. They had steel straps fastened to them to provide attachments for the bomb releases on the aeroplanes. The bomb racks were modified to accommodate the rectangular cases and were fitted with canisters made from cut-down oil drums to hold the folded parachutes. All the gear was assembled adjacent to the aeroplanes and covered by tarpaulins. I reported that all was ready to deposit 200,000 rounds within twenty-four hours of notice being given to mount the operation.<sup>39</sup>

July opened with warm weather, causing thick heat haze over the front when 3 Squadron was visited by the Australian Prime Minister Billy Hughes on 2 July. The haze was especially bad over the valley of the Somme, preventing any observation for destructive shoots. For the Hamel battle, planned to commence at dawn on 4 July, the Australian Corps, with four attached companies from the American 33rd Division, was to attack on a three-kilometre front. This was the first occasion that US troops went into action with British or Commonwealth infantry.<sup>40</sup> Air support for the offensive was allocated between 3 Squadron (for cooperation with the assault battalions), 8 Squadron RAF (similar duties with the tanks), and 9 Squadron RAF (dropping small arms ammunition to the forward troops).

3 Squadron was to be fully occupied with direct support of the Australian Corps for the first day of the offensive – 'A' and 'B' Flights were tasked with 19 artillery patrols and 'C' Flight with 13 counter-attack and contact patrols.<sup>41</sup> The aim was to maintain artillery and counter-attack patrol aircraft over the line continuously, with the contact patrols following the infantry and dropping message bag reports to the Australian Corps HQ. Because of 3 Squadron's heavy direct support commitment, having been trained by Wackett 9 Squadron RAF's R.E.8s deployed to the Australian aerodrome before first light on 4 July for the ammunition resupply missions. The day dawned with all available aircraft airborne dropping bombs around Hamel to hide the sound of the approaching tanks, and the ground assault – a complete surprise to the enemy – was entirely successful. All objectives were gained with astonishingly small loss and with all counter-attacks being easily driven off.<sup>42</sup>



**A4397 cAPR 1918, before the addition of 'Kewpie doll' artwork** AWM P00394.015

A4397 flew a British record on the Western Front with 440 hours over the lines, before being retired in JUL 1918. It was provided free of charge to Australia in NOV 1918, and was displayed at the Aeroplane Exhibition in Melbourne in JUN 1920.<sup>43</sup> A4397, with other aircraft, was destroyed in 1925 in Melbourne by a fire started in the picnic grounds of the (then) Australian War Museum, while crated for shipping for the Museum's move to Sydney.<sup>44</sup>



**A4397/D with Captain Reg Francis and his added 'Kewpie doll'**

*[colourised photograph by Benjamin Thomas]*



**The RAAF Museum at Point Cook has a flying replica of R.E.8 A4397, registered VH-OTF**



# CAPTAIN REG FRANCIS



## No 3 SQUADRON AUSTRALIAN FLYING CORPS

### WARRIOR OF THE SOMME, AUGUST 1918



Captain Reg Francis of No. 3 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps with his RE3, a two-seat reconnaissance and artillery spotting aircraft. The pilot occupied the front cockpit while the observer/gunner was in the rear. Armament consisted of a forward-firing Vickers machine gun mounted on the left and synchronized to fire through the propeller arc, while the rear cockpit was equipped with a Scarff gun ring to which was attached a Lewis gun.

In RE3 No. A4397, Francis flew a record 440 hours 35 minutes and made 140 trips across the line.

He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The citation read:

During the 4th and 5th of July, 1918, he carried out most valuable work in casing our Batteries on active hostile Batteries in the vicinity of Hamel.

On the first day he flew for over eight hours and a half, and on the morning of the second day for four hours, during which flights he successfully ranged our Artillery on seven hostile Batteries, besides sending down thirty-two mine calls. His work was of material assistance to our Artillery in the silencing of the enemy Batteries.

By his devotion to duty, and perseverance, he has set a splendid example to the Flight under his command.

Signed: L CHARLTON  
Brigadier-General  
Commanding 5th Brigade, AIF

*Norman Clifford*



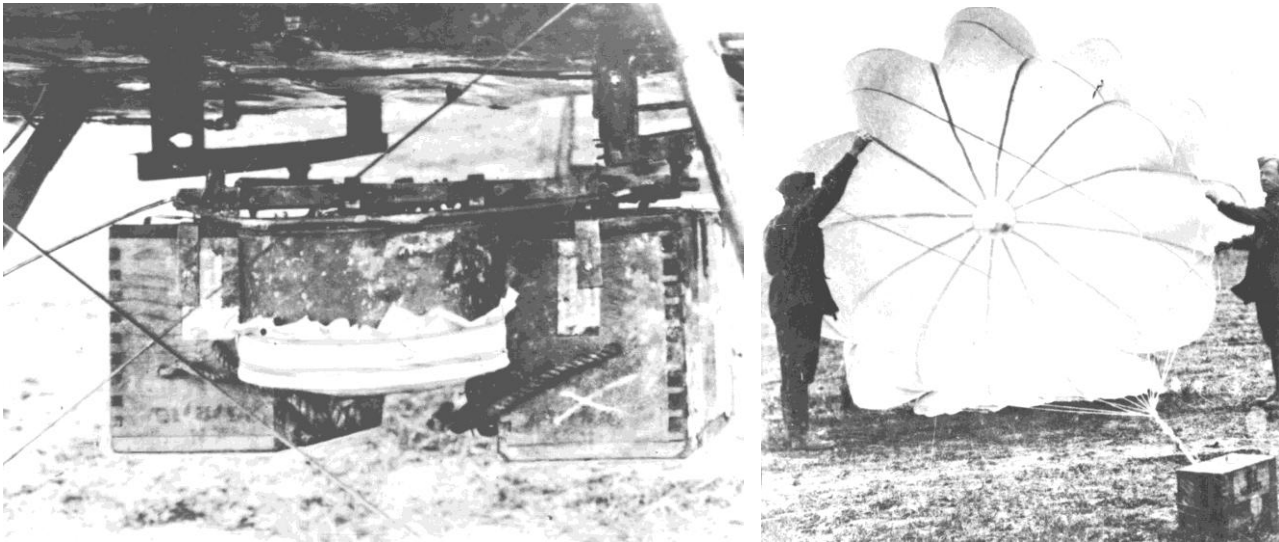
Original oil painting and poster design by aviation artist Norman Clifford

Pilot of A4397, Captain Reg Francis, 3SQN 'A' FLT CDR

Artwork by Norman Clifford



On the airdrop missions, several of the 9 Squadron crews flew eight sorties during the day. The procedure was for each machine-gun crew, upon reaching its appointed locality, to spread out a large V-shaped canvas (V representing the word "Vickers") to show that ammunition was required. The pilots released from a height of 1000 feet, dropping their stores well within 100 metres of their target.<sup>45</sup> In this way, the R.E.8s were able to supply 93 boxes of ammunition during the day, making a total of some 112,000 rounds.<sup>46</sup> However, during the morning sorties, two aeroplanes were shot down by the intense groundfire with the loss of three of the crewmembers. Despite these losses, the airdrop operation was, as the official history of the RAF in the First War described, "an unqualified success".<sup>47</sup> Hamel was the first British success since the disastrous defeat of the Fifth Army and the advance of the Germans to Villers Bretonneux. Lieutenant General Monash acknowledged that the success at Hamel had been the result of excellent cooperation between infantry, machine-gunners, artillery, tanks and aircraft.<sup>48</sup>



**Ammunition boxes on the R.E.8 bomb carrier with the drum housing a parachute – one drum for each box**

During the day, Lieutenants Grigson and James (A3662) while on a morning artillery patrol south-east of Hamel near Accroche Wood, were attacked by two enemy scouts which dived on their machine. The observer's fire brought down one, which the army later confirmed. Thirty minutes later, they were attacked by a further three scouts. Again one was brought down out of control, and the remaining enemy fighters withdrew.<sup>49</sup> Grigson and James were able to continue their patrol. Meanwhile, Lieutenants Dimsey and Mart (E123), on a counter-attack patrol nearby, drove down a Pfalz scout from a formation of three which was attacking another R.E.8, probably Grigson's aircraft.<sup>50</sup>

The Battle of Hamel set records for 3 Squadron, flying more sorties than had originally been planned. Over 4 July, the Australians flew 20 artillery patrols, neutralising 17 batteries and engaging a further three on zone calls, transmitting 80 zone call reports, and exposed 108 photographic plates. Also flown were 14 contact and counter-attack patrols. In all, during 80 hours of flying, 138 bombs were dropped and nearly 10,000 machine-gun rounds had been fired. Furthermore, 4 July 1918 had been the first occasion when aeroplanes were used to carry and deliver small-arms ammunition. It required two men to carry one ammunition box, holding over 1000 rounds, which a machine-gun in action could easily expend in less than five minutes. Those carrying parties had to travel probably not less than five kilometres in the double journey across the open, exposed to both view and fire. Casualties among ammunition carriers were always substantial, however this new development proved economic in lives and wounds.<sup>51</sup>

The Australian Corps command gave much of the credit for the success at Hamel to the airmen.<sup>52</sup> The success of the operation on 4 July meant that the airdropping of ammunition was increasingly employed during the rapid Allied advance from August onwards.<sup>53</sup> Indeed during the Battle of Amiens, the British Official History records that the RAF dropped between 30,000 and 60,000 rounds each day to British troops in forward positions.<sup>54</sup>

The final victory which would result from the British offensive of August 1918 would not have been won without the steady and continuous offensive of the Australian Corps throughout the months of April to July.<sup>55</sup> The procedures that Australians had developed were adopted for air-army cooperation for the remainder of the war. The Battle of Hamel marked the termination of the purely defensive attitude on the British front and was the starting point for the resumption of the offensive by the Allies that ended in the defeat of Germany in November.



Colourised by Benjamin Thomas

### **Pre-flight briefing for an R.E.8 contact patrol aeroplane**

A Corps squadron commander commented on when the troops on the ground were in real need a contact aeroplane, typically when they were out of touch or cut off from their main forces:

...they were generally afraid of showing flares because they feared retaliation from the enemy artillery. The result of this was that, where a contact aeroplane had to be sent out for a specific and important duty, and was generally, as was the case on our side, flying against a head wind, it had to fly so low to obtain the necessary information that it was often shot down. This was lamentable, since the supply of trained contact pilots or observers was very limited, and it was one of the very serious responsibilities and difficulties of a Corps squadron commander to decide when to send out a contact aeroplane and what amount of risk was justified.<sup>56</sup>

The Australian Corps remained virtually stationary on the Somme front for five weeks after the Battle of Hamel, raiding and harrying the German front-line garrison in small operations. For the next large scale attack – the Battle of Amiens – the role of 3 Squadron in support of the Australian Corps would be similar to its role in previous operations. In preparation of the major offensive, planned for 8 August, 3 Squadron's reconnaissance had shown the poor condition of the enemy's defensive works.<sup>57</sup> Also a reorganisation of the Fourth Army front was necessary as the British took over seven kilometres of the line from the French First Army to the south. This necessitated readjusting the Australian Corps boundaries, with the portion of the Front north of the Somme being handed to the British III Corps, and extending it southwards to the Amiens-Roye road.<sup>58</sup> This Front was further adjusted immediately before the battle, with the Australians holding the line between the Rivers Somme to the north, and the Luce to the south.

While these boundary changes were occurring, on 1 August, Lieutenants Gould-Taylor and Thomson (C4586) were conducting an artillery observation north of Villers Bretonneux, when they spotted an enemy Albatros scout attacking balloons over Blangy. The Australian crew attacked the fighter, which dived out of control to the east streaming smoke. The Albatros was then attacked by another R.E.8, flown by Lieutenants Grigson and James (D4853), which dived onto the scout over Corbie and sent it down to crash near Hamel.<sup>59</sup>

On the afternoon of 7 August, Major Blake briefed his 3 Squadron crews on the operations for the next day. This was to be the Allies final great offensive, a major assault east of Amiens, south of the Somme, with tanks and aircraft playing an important part. The Australian Corps would attack on its Somme-Luce front, with the Canadian Corps, assisted by the French, to its right; to the left was the British III Corps. This was the first time in France that all five divisions of the Australian Corps would be fighting together.<sup>60</sup> The extent of the proposed advance was planned for about ten kilometres, with staged objectives for the different Australian divisions.

In support, 3 Squadron's three flights, too, had separate objectives. 'A' Flight was to carry out artillery patrols, calling down fire on every unengaged enemy battery that was seen to be in action. 'B' Flight was to conduct counter-attack patrols, signalling enemy infantry concentrations, and then firing red flares over the centre of any threatening counter-attack. 'C' Flight would fly contact patrols, advancing with the assaulting infantry and continually reporting the new line back to the nearest brigade headquarters. All aircraft would drop phosphorous bombs for smoke screens as required.<sup>61</sup> Zero hour for the Amiens offensive was fixed at 0420 on 8 August.

One of the preparatory tasks of the Squadron was the provision of target folders to the various ground commanders. This had involved the supplying of oblique and vertical photography, with sections of map, issued in sufficient numbers down to the platoon commanders and sergeants. These folders covered the respective areas of the front over which each unit would advance. For the forthcoming battle, some 90,000 prints were produced by the Squadron with the assistance of the Wing photographic section.<sup>62</sup> General Monash considered that this large amount of photography excellently served his needs as a substitute for visual reconnaissance from the ground.<sup>63</sup>

At 0400 hours on 8 August, the first R.E.8 left the ground to support the Australian Corps in the greatest battle yet undertaken by the Australians in France. Twenty minutes later the bombardment opened, and within a few minutes the tanks and infantry moved forward. As the Australian Corps commander, Lieutenant General Monash, later wrote: "Viewed from a high vantage point and in the glimmer of the breaking day, a great Artillery barrage surely surpasses in dynamic splendour any other manifestation of collective human effort".<sup>64</sup> There was a thick ground mist, as there had been when the Germans had counter-attacked so successfully at Cambrai in November 1917, and again when they had begun their offensive against the British on 21 March 1918. A thick blanket of fog swept up from the south-west, and the six 3 Squadron R.E.8s that were airborne were feared lost, but later were able to safely return from forced landings at various villages near the aerodrome.

The early mist, which screened the movements of the Allied infantry and of the tanks, made useful air cooperation practically impossible, and the aeroplanes could not enter fully into the battle until mid-morning as the fog lifted. Shortly after 0900 hours, Lieutenants Smith and Witcomb (C2275) carried out the first contact patrol of the day, and reported the 4th Australian Division now in "open warfare" and well on the way to its objective, having advanced some five kilometres in open warfare conditions.<sup>65</sup> Subsequent contact patrols also reported that the Australians were progressing to schedule and provided details of enemy movements, revealing great confusion within the German lines.

A feature of the air cooperation on the first day had been the laying of smoke screens – the dropping of phosphorous bombs by the R.E.8s to obscure by smoke any German observation. The 4th Australian Division reported: "The success of the smoke screens during the 8th of August showed that such screens could be adequately produced on limited objectives for a short period from the air."<sup>66</sup> A hole, 20-km wide, had been driven right through the German defence.<sup>67</sup> The assault had taken the enemy completely by surprise, and owing to the speed of the attack, the enemy was unable to retaliate with much artillery fire. By day's end, the Australian troops had advanced their ten kilometres, and, except at Le Quesnel, had regained the Amiens outer defences on the front of attack. General Ludendorff was to make his famous observation: "*August 8th was the black day of the German Army in the history of this War.*"<sup>68</sup>

The ground assault had gone to schedule – no surprise had ever been so complete than was that of the Germans on 8 August.<sup>69</sup> The whole German Army was shaken by its speed and success, as was clear from Ludendorff's description of 8 August which the Germans generally called a "catastrophe".<sup>70</sup> The Canadian and Australian Corps had cut the German front line, starting a series of battles which broke the enemy's forces apart. As things looked bleak for Germany, there were congratulations from Acting Prime Minister Watt in Australia for a brighter future for the Allies:

On the commencement of the fifth year of the war, the people of Australia wish to assure their troops of their unbounded confidence in their valour and endurance, which has been tried and proved so well at Gallipoli, in Egypt, Mesopotamia and on the historic battlefields of Europe. Australia is proud of her soldier sons and feels sure that their gallant record will be maintained until peace with victory rest with the allied arms.<sup>71</sup>



**3SQN R.E.8 B3420/K**

**LIEUTENANT NIGEL LOVE**

**APR – JUN 1918**

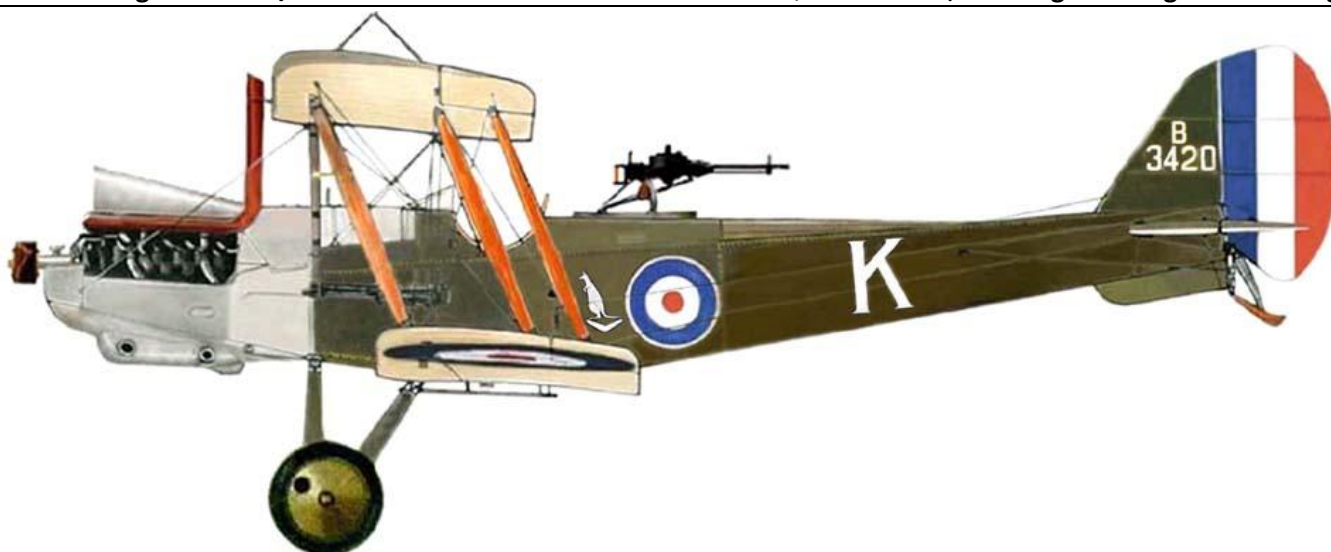
B3420, an original allotment with 69SQN from AUG 1917, served until retirement to 2 ASD on 1 JUL 1918. It probably carried the identity "10" before changing to the letter identifier 'K' in NOV 1917. B3420 wore the white disc Squadron marking from 19 SEP 1917<sup>72</sup> until 22 MAR 1918, when these markings were deleted.<sup>73</sup> 3SQN pilot Lieut Nigel Love flew B3420 as a member of 'B' Flight from APR until JUN 1918, when he returned to UK to instruct on 7SQN AFC at Leighterton.



**B3420/K with the initial Squadron marking of a white disc<sup>74</sup> – carried from SEP 1917 until MAR 1918**



**A later image of B3420/K after the MAR 1918 removal of the 3SQN white disc, showing the kangaroo marking**



**The kangaroo marking was probably carried by Love's aircraft over the period APR-JUN 1918**

Love had trained initially with the 1st Course at the Richmond Aviation School in 1916, before higher training with the RFC in UK in 1917. Postwar, he joined with H. E. Broadsmith (chief designer for A. V. Roe & Co Ltd), who had secured the Australian agency of the Avro company. On returning to Sydney in JUN 1919, Love searched for a suitable airfield and, after inspecting numerous sites, leased a grazing paddock near Cooks River at Mascot. The partners, registered as the Australian Aircraft & Engineering Co. Ltd (AA&EC) with Love as Managing Director, began assembly of Avro 504Ks at Mascot in FEB 1920.

The Allies soon secured as complete control of the air over the battle as the infantry secured upon the ground.<sup>75</sup> The confusion within the German lines resulted in exceptional targets being offered to the low-flying aircraft. By midday on 8 August, pilots and observers reported that the roads leading east to the Somme crossings were becoming crowded with retreating German troops and transport. The Somme bridges were targeted through the afternoon, and the RAF flew 205 sorties against the bridges that day, with 12 tons of bombs being dropped.<sup>76</sup> One 3 Squadron crew, Lieutenants Foale and Sewell (C2610), flying a contact patrol with the 5th Australian Division near La Flaque, attacked three enemy scouts which were strafing the trenches near Proyart. They saw one of the fighters dive steeply away to crash in flames.<sup>77</sup>

However, to mar the successes of the day, 3 Squadron did suffer casualties. About midday, Lieutenants Bice and Chapman (C2309) were shot down and killed while on a contact patrol, believed to have been surprised by a flight of nine Fokker biplanes near Mericourt.<sup>78</sup> This was the first engagement in which 3 Squadron encountered the new Fokker D.VII biplane. The Fokker D.VII scout proved to be the outstanding German fighter of the war: it was strong and manoeuvrable, and had commenced equipping some German squadrons at the front from May. The new fighter was generally acknowledged as a magnificent weapon, and was able to offer tenacious and successful resistance in the final months of the war.



**Presentation machine C2309/O "The Ranby", lost to Fokker D.VII scouts with Lieuts Bice and Chapman on 8 August**



**C2309/O, a Daimler-built R.E.8 with the simpler cowling for the RAF 4a engine, and a 25-lb Cooper bomb**

Another interesting insight of this first day was the discovery of the long-range Amiens gun. Earlier that day, low-flying aircraft found the large German 11-inch railway gun that had been used in the bombardment of Amiens. The

5th Australian Division captured the gun, finding its crew either killed or wounded, and at the wish of General Foch, the gun was placed on show to the people of Paris.<sup>79</sup> Lieutenant General Monash described the gun as an imposing affair: "The gun itself rested on two great bogie carriages, each on eight axles; it was provided with a whole train of railway trucks fitted some to carry its giant ammunition, others as workshops, and others as living quarters for the gun detachment".<sup>80</sup>

By 2100 hours that evening – 8th August 1918 – when the Australian Corps had reached its objectives, 3 Squadron had flown 24 sorties, dropping 92 bombs, firing 3500 rounds of ammunition, exposing 54 plates and sending 15 zone calls.<sup>81</sup> RAF casualties for 8 August were heavy, with 45 aircraft lost and 52 wrecked or damaged beyond repair; of these, 70 belonged to the squadrons engaged on the Somme bridge attacks or other ground targets.<sup>82</sup> As the number of aircraft so employed was about 300, this represented a wastage rate for low-flying aircraft of 23 percent.

The following day, the Fourth Army commander, General Rawlinson, had decided that his advance would reach a line Roye-Chaulnes-Bray-Dernancourt. The Canadian Corps on the Australians' right was to make a big push forward, with the Australian Corps swinging around to conform with the Canadian left flank. Recovering from the shock of the first day, enemy resistance was now stiffening, and German aircraft became more numerous. While on an artillery patrol, Lieutenants McKenna and Kirkwood (C2535) shot down an enemy two-seater at Chipilly ridge and saw it crash at Chuignolles.<sup>83</sup> Several contact patrols were sent up, but owing to the infantry not having flares, the front line was rather obscure. Later, however, two machines managed to pinpoint the Corps' advanced line, which showed that the final objective had been gained. A problem now encountered was that the Australian left flank came under the fire of enemy batteries opposite the III Corps front. A 3 Squadron R.E.8 was despatched, flown by Lieutenants Gould-Taylor and Thomson (C4586), and succeeded in silencing no fewer than nine enemy batteries.<sup>84</sup> It had been another successful day for the Squadron, with the only casualty being one machine which crashed in a forced landing at Villers Bretonneux.

The third day of the offensive, 10 August, saw the Australian 4th Division extend its front to the left, north of the Somme, which would enable the 3 Squadron artillery patrols to engage active enemy batteries with zone calls. The morning started badly for the Squadron. The first aircraft airborne, flown by Lieutenants Smith and Witcomb (C2275), was shot down while on one of the hazardous contact patrols. Although Smith was wounded in the foot by machine-gun fire, he managed a perfect landing in the front line near Vauvillers. The aircraft was able to be returned to the Squadron later in the day, but 'C' Flight was now hard pressed flying its contact patrols. Having lost two aircraft over the first days of the offensive and weakened by casualties, the crews were now very hard-pressed by their continually hazardous low flying missions.

11 August saw another hazy morning in heavy ground mist, with contact patrols taking off at daybreak and being unable to conduct any meaningful work. Early in the afternoon, the enemy was reported massing for a counter attack south-east of Proyart. Three R.E.8s were immediately bombed up, but on arriving over the lines were unable to see any signs of an attack. Consequently, enemy concentrations around Chuignolles were attacked. Main ground attacks were directed against bombing the Somme bridges, which had continued for several days. Unfortunately these attacks failed to achieve the objective, and although some bridges suffered minor damage, it was not enough to make them impassable to traffic.<sup>85</sup> Another 'C' Flight casualty later in the day was the R.E.8 flown on a contact patrol by Lieutenants Lock and Barrett (C2610), which was shot through the fuel tank by groundfire, with the crew forced landing near Morcourt.

At this stage, the British Fourth Army offensive was stopped until artillery could be brought forward. The advance had penetrated to a total depth of more than 20 kilometres and the old line of the Roye-Chaulnes defences had been reached. This meant that the important centre of Amiens, with its railways, had been made safe from artillery fire. With the Battle of Amiens over, and after the continuous demands on the Squadron during the first four days of the offensive, the quiet period over 12 to 15 August was welcomed, as the hazy conditions prevented much air activity. With the advance, the Australian Corps front had increased to 16 kilometres, and some reorganisation was now required.<sup>86</sup>

This time was also used by 3 Squadron to establish an advanced landing ground (ALG) so that the reconnaissance crews could land and make their reports closer to the various headquarters. The ALG was therefore developed at Glisy, 6km east of Amiens, and this was ready for operations by 15 August. By the following day, visibility had improved, enabling the whole of the Australian Corps' front to again be photographed to a depth of 5km.



One innovation introduced over this week to further improve cooperation between all forces was the establishment of the Central Information Bureau (CIB). This was an attempt to make aircraft more responsive in engaging targets of opportunity that had been identified on the ground. The CIB, set up near Villers Bretonneux, was to report targets that were suitable for air attack. The aircraft that observed a worthwhile target sent an "LL" ("all batteries open fire") call with the position and brief description of the target. The CIB then sent a wireless message to units allotted to attacks on ground targets.<sup>87</sup> This new system was a further step towards closer cooperation in providing timely close air support.

On 21 August, as the short period of relative inactivity was coming to an end, 3 Squadron was able to celebrate a milestone in its history, with the first anniversary of the initial departure of the Squadron from England. A message received from Major General J M Salmond, GOC RAF congratulated the Squadron on the excellent work achieved since its arrival in France.<sup>88</sup> This coincided with the eve of the next offensive, planned so that the Fourth Army would advance abeam Albert, with the Third Army widening the front of attack to the north, in the early stages of the Allied offensive against the Hindenburg Line, and the French attacking in the south. From then onwards, the continuous pressure would be maintained along almost the whole of the Allied front.<sup>89</sup>

At daybreak on 22 August, III Corps and the 3rd Australian Division, assisted by tanks, attacked on the Bray front to open the Battle of Bapaume. From this stage, Australian interest focussed on that part of the Somme that flowed directly north from the town of Péronne. 3 Squadron's role was for the contact and artillery patrols to support the Australian advance in conforming with the III Corps line, and counter-attack patrols which reported no signs of enemy concentration. Two decisive aerial combats occurred. During an artillery patrol, Lieutenants Matheson and Brown (C2413) engaged a Halberstadt two-seater east of Suzanne, and crashed it three kilometres east of Bray, although further confirmation was not possible in the haze.<sup>90</sup> That evening, Lieutenants Grigson and James (E120), while on a counter-attack patrol over Bray, encountered a Halberstadt two-seater, bringing it down to crash near Ceylon Wood,<sup>91</sup> giving this crew their fourth aerial victory.

The Australian Corps involvement on 23 August was the major push south of the Somme, on a line from Chuignes south along the valley to Herleville, and as the R.E.8 workload would be high, operations were planned from the ALG at Glisy. As the fog cleared that morning, two contact patrols pinpointed the infantry advance, but Lieutenants Lock and Mart (C2599) were shot down by groundfire over Herleville by a bullet through the petrol tank, and landed near Vauvillers. Several calls for small arms ammunition by the infantry were answered by Lieutenants Kilburn and Wilson (E2271) and Lieutenants Hope and Gamble (B6576) dropping ammunition in the Proyart and Poucaucourt areas. A formation of five R.E.8s, each aircraft dropping six bombs, provided close support to Australian infantry climbing Chuignes ridge. Enemy aircraft were now showing a tendency to be wary of the R.E.8, often withdrawing to their own lines, evidently the result of previous experience.<sup>92</sup> However, Lieutenants Lavers and Bell (E225) were able to drive down a German two-seater which forced landed near Soyécourt.<sup>93</sup> Progress on the ground, with the whole Chuignes Valley in Australian hands, was considered by Monash as an "unqualified success".<sup>94</sup>

The results of the steady Allied advance were apparent on 25 August as longer range reconnaissance sorties were flown by three aircraft, led by Captain Brearley and Lieutenant Devlin-Hamilton (E123) penetrating the lines to a depth of 10km. Although heavily shelled by anti-aircraft fire, the crews were able to report the surrounding country as being practically deserted. The success of the Battles of Amiens and Bapaume gave the opportunity for the British First Army to join in the onslaught. Accordingly, on 26 August, the battle was extended north to the Sensée and Scarpe Rivers, east of Arras, in the Battle of the Scarpe.

Meanwhile to the south, poor weather hampered flying, but efforts were made by the Corps squadrons by contact and artillery patrols to track the advance and to locate enemy positions, which appeared largely vacated. As the Australian 2nd and 5th Divisions now came into the line, reconnaissance sorties watched for the enemy's complete withdrawal, and much information was gathered on the enemy's movements eastwards. On 27 August, with the Australian Corps initiating some vigorous patrolling, it was found many enemy posts were unoccupied. As an immediate advance along the Australian front was ordered, Captain Wackett and Lieutenant Shelley (C4581) located about 40 vehicles about five kilometres east of the line and called in an immediate "LL" call which was answered by the batteries. Five R.E.8s were then sent out to this position on a bombing raid and "the area was deluged with bombs and machine-gun fire".<sup>95</sup> Later that afternoon, Lieutenants Gould-Taylor and Thomson (C4586), while on artillery patrol, were attacked by five Fokker D.VII scouts and were able to send one spinning down to crash near Assevillers.<sup>96</sup> They were able to elude the remaining fighters, and continued on the patrol. This was the Squadron's first victory over the very capable Fokker D.VII biplane.

The Australian Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Sir John Monash, wrote of 3 Squadron's patrols during the subsequent days:

Contact patrols were maintained throughout every hour of daylight. Difficult as it was to identify the positions reached by our leading troops during an organised battle, where, their approximate positions and ultimate objective lines were known beforehand, it was doubly so when no guide whatever existed as to the probable extent of each day's advance, or as to the amount of resistance likely to be encountered at different parts of the front. Yet it was under just these circumstances that rapid and reliable information as to the progress of the various elements of our front line troops was more important than ever, and no means for obtaining such information was so expeditious as the Contact Aeroplane.<sup>97</sup>

By 29 August, the Australian troops had reached the Somme, which threatened to be a formidable obstacle to further advance. Patrols found it difficult to locate the enemy positions, and 3 Squadron's CO, Major David Blake told of the risks that were involved for the contact machines: "In the later stages of the great advance, machines generally found it necessary to descend low enough to distinguish the cloth of the Australian uniform from the field-grey of the German."<sup>98</sup> During one such mission, Lieutenants Gould-Taylor and Thomson (C4586) were shot through the propeller by enemy groundfire, but managed to make a good landing and narrowly missed landing in the enemy lines. Reconnaissance verified that the retreating enemy had methodically and systematically destroyed all of the bridge crossings.<sup>99</sup> A typical attempt to determine the situation was on the afternoon of the 30th. Lieutenants Pengilley and Witcomb (F5899), in an attempt to locate the enemy's defences, flew as low as 300 feet east of the Somme between Brie and Halle with the object of drawing machine-gun fire and to record if there were any passable bridges remaining.<sup>100</sup>

The infantry had made a successful advance, and the line now ran from Péronne, along the west bank of the Somme as far as Brie, and on the north bank from Maricourt to Ham.<sup>101</sup> During the night of 30 August, the 2nd Australian Division stormed the strongly-defended Mont St Quentin, which commanded Péronne and the Somme crossings. The opposition was determined but the position was secured and held against counter-attacks. This battle differed from all other Australian attacks in the August offensive. While perhaps largely a gamble, it was certainly a test of sheer morale of the Australian troops over the Germans.<sup>102</sup>

The month of August ended with a wet morning, but two contact patrols were able to locate the Australian line now pushed forward east of Mont St Quentin. As the weather cleared during the afternoon, Lieutenants Kilburn and Moore (E119) departed on artillery patrol, but were shot down by a flight of six Fokker scouts. Fortunately they were able to land in Australian lines near La Chapelle.

Monash now planned for the 2nd and 5th Divisions to cross the Somme in the direction of Cléry.<sup>103</sup> August had been a disastrous month for the German Army and was the most strenuous that 3 Squadron had gone through since arriving in France. The Squadron had flown 967 hours in the month, undertaken over 200 artillery patrols, taken 650 photographs, dropped over 1400 bombs and had been successful in six decisive combats.<sup>104</sup> Overall, air power had played a dominant part, and RAF casualties had amounted to 215 aeroplanes missing.<sup>105</sup> After the great advance, the Fourth Army commander, General Rawlinson, paid tribute to the air support provided throughout August with "the constant and hazardous work of the artillery machines had a very marked influence in bringing about the unqualified success of operations".<sup>106</sup>

On Sunday 1 September 1918, Australian troops entered Péronne, and this marked the end of the second stage of the offensive, during which the enemy had been driven back across the old Somme battlefields. Monash was to describe this as an "heroic combat which will ever be memorable in Australian history".<sup>107</sup> Across the British front, over the Battles of Amiens and Bapaume, in addition to heavy losses in killed and wounded, the enemy had left 34,000 prisoners and 270 guns in Allied hands.<sup>108</sup>

The victory in front of Amiens had restored permanently to the Allies the initiative, and as General Rawlinson stated, "aroused in the hearts of all Allied Armies the confident hope that victory might be won in 1918".<sup>109</sup> The great August offensive had driven the Germans back 50km over the Somme battlefields, and this success had been largely due to the information obtained from the air. The Australian capture of Péronne and the surrounding high ground was described by General Rawlinson as "the finest single feat of the war".<sup>110</sup>

But now confronting the Allies was the Hindenburg Line.

## AUSTRALIAN R.E.8 PRESENTATION LIST

During the war, private individuals and organisations around the British Commonwealth were invited to contribute a nominal sum towards the war effort in return for which an aircraft would be inscribed with a name of their choice. In the event of the aircraft being destroyed, the name was transferred to another machine. The funds that were provided enabled the British War Office to purchase aircraft for the Royal Flying Corps (later to become the RAF), which eventually extended to some 1800 aircraft of many types. The RNAS did not implement the Presentation scheme with any enthusiasm, and it is doubtful whether any of the handful of aircraft that were received were embellished with the appropriate names.<sup>111</sup>

In this consideration of 'Presentation' aircraft, some terminology needs explaining:

- A formal 'Australian Air Squadrons Fund' was established in 1916 in Sydney by the Honorary Organiser, Mr Charles Alma Baker. His fund organised the purchase of 41 battleplanes from Australian subscriptions, and a further 53 from the Federated Malay States. In 1920, Alma Baker catalogued these aircraft in his publication "*Souvenir of Ninety-four Gift Battleplanes Which Helped Us to Victory*".<sup>112</sup> While he attempted to obtain a photograph of each battleplane with its inscription, these were often 'doctored' by mocking up the marking. Furthermore, the images were of one aircraft that carried the inscription, when in reality the names were used many times – the presentation of a certain 'nameplate' was given to several aircraft in succession, due to attrition of 'original' titled machines as the war progressed.<sup>113</sup> This complex 're-use' of nameplates will soon become particularly obvious as we cover Australian Presentation aircraft in detail.



- In addition to this formal Alma Baker fund, many individuals also donated, and these aircraft boosted the Australian contribution beyond the "41 aeroplanes" that is normally cited. Together with the Malay aircraft listed by Alma Baker, African colonies made a sizable percentage of presentations, while India was the largest contributor of battleplanes, with generous Maharajahs coughing up funds for hundreds of aircraft.



- Details of Australian 'Presentation' R.E.8 aircraft appear below – (1) firstly the official Alma Baker donations; (2) then private presentations (noting that some Australian presentation R.E.8s did not serve with 3 SQN, but with other RFC/RAF units); and (3) the 3 SQN R.E.8s that were presentation machines provided by other Commonwealth dominions, colonies, social organisations and individuals. All of these have been included below in our 'R.E.8 Presentation List'.
- Some names were incorrectly painted on aircraft, an example being R.E.8 A3754 'Narandera-Jerilderie' (instead of Narrandera), and 'Kookooburra' (misspelt for Kookaburra).
- At the commencement of the scheme, the most prevalent Presentation machines from worldwide donations were F.E.2s and B.E.2s. Below are two early examples of the B.E.2 in 1916.



**Presentation B.E.2c 2503 'John L Macaulay, Native of Edinburgh', in June 1916 – name later carried by R.E.8 F3577**



AWM H08358

**An individually donated machine from Australia – B.E.2c 2650 'TASMANIA' c mid-1916**

With the widespread patriotic fervour engendered throughout the British Empire during the years 1914-18, the large contributions towards the costs of manufacturing aircraft normally meant applying an inscription would be allotted to the next completed machine to emerge from the production line. When such an aircraft was eventually written off Service charge for any reason, the inscription was often carried 'forward' to a new aircraft, thereby perpetuating the 'Presentation' inscription.<sup>114</sup> Of the 1800 aircraft presented to the British War Office, over 400 were R.E.8s (13 of which flew with 69 Sqn/3 AFC), over 400 were F.E.2s (which formed the initial Australian presentations), and nearly 400 were B.E.2s (the other prolific early presentation type). Other AFC squadrons also were allotted some of the 150 Camels and over 100 Bristol Fighters, 75 D.H.4s, 80 D.H.9/9As, 55 S.E.5as, 40 D.H.5s and 25 Martinsyde Elephants.<sup>115</sup> Large numbers of Australian presentation aircraft had their names re-used, and then over 1917-1918 were carried by many 1AFC Bristol Fighters.

## 'Australian Air Squadrons Fund' Presentation Aircraft

The Honorary Organiser of this Fund, Charles Alma Baker, chronicled the list of 41 Australian 'batteplanes' presented to the British War Office for RFC war operation.<sup>116</sup> A strong believer in King and Empire, Alma Baker was a prominent fundraiser for the RFC during the War, raising funds in both Australia and Malaya for the purchase of a total of 94 aircraft. For this work he received the CBE in 1919. His first donor in Australia paid for F.E.2b 7023, "Australia 1, South Australia 1, The Sydney Kidman", donated by "Australia's cattle king".<sup>117</sup>

The details in the table below are from the Alma Baker data interpreted by Isaacs.<sup>118</sup> They both only considered one aeroplane for each national Presentation number – Isaacs does mention only a handful of replacement aeroplanes – when up to seven aircraft might eventually carry that single inscription by its *re-use*. To the Isaacs table below, I have added a [blue remarks column](#) to ease the reader into the complexity that will be covered in more detail ahead. In addition to *re-use* of inscriptions, confusingly there was also *duplication* by the NSW Govt of inscriptions.

### Re-use / Duplication / Concurrent Allocation of Inscription Names

An example of re-use of Presentation inscriptions is **AUS 8 NSW 7 "Duplicating The Mrs P Kirby and Son"** – AUS 8 indicates it was the 8th Australian presentation in Alma Baker's *Australian Air Squadrons Fund*, and the 7th aeroplane donated from New South Wales. Alma Baker lists this aircraft as D.H.5 A9415 presented on 2 SEP 1916 by the NSW Government, and "duplicating" the earlier inscription of Mrs P Kirby and Son, previously allotted to F.E.2b 7689 AUS 4 NSW 3. The reason for this duplication is unclear, but applied to some eight aircraft as shown in the list below, and each aeroplane concerned was funded by the NSW Government to adopt and match an individual's earlier 'personal' name. This duplication added to the complexity of the re-use of names. Now a close look at our example AUS 8 NSW 7: both sources relate this allotment to **D.H.5 A9415**, presented by the NSW Govt at a cost of £2700 on 2 SEP 1916 and duplicating the earlier name *Mrs P Kirby and Son*.

However, **F.E.2b A5449** had been received by the RFC on 1 NOV 1916 marked as *NEW SOUTH WALES No.7* and it is unknown if it carried the full inscription *AUS 8 NSW 7 "Duplicating The Mrs P Kirby and Son"* over NOV 1916 to MAY 1917, when serving with 23 and 100 SQNs RFC. On 27 MAY 1917 its engine caught fire at 300ft when preparing to forced land near Hazebrouck, crashed with its bombs exploding on impact, and was struck off charge (SOC).

Its inscription name was also SOC on this date, thereby being available for re-use from JUN 1917, and **R.E.8 A3741** was next, sent to France on 19 JUL 1917, joined 6QN RFC on 5 AUG 1917, and crashed landing on 5 SEP 1917, to be SOC at 1AD 8 SEP 1917.

Next was **D.H.5 A9415**, and little is known of its service history of A9415, other than it was received by the RFC cJUL 1917, and allotted to 30 (Australian) Training Squadron at Tern Hill on 3 DEC 1917, by this stage with the inscription AUS 8 NSW 7. Now the D.H.5 was generally being retired as obsolete, and was so withdrawn from service.<sup>119</sup>



FE2b A5449 "New South Wales 7" (i.e. AUS 8) went to France in NOV 1916 with 23SQN RFC

The inscription was then used again (as the D.H.5 was SOC at the end of 1917) by a **Bristol F2B C4623** with 1AFC in the Middle East. C4623 was flown by 1AFC from 19 MAR 1918 to 9 JUL 1918, and later by 111 SQN RAF.<sup>120</sup> Now although the inscription was adopted by this F2B in a normal sequence, there were some dozen cases of *concurrent* use of Presentation inscriptions by 1AFC Bristol Fighters, while similar names were also in use on the Western Front.

THE AUSTRALIAN AIR SQUADRONS FUND				
AUS/State Number	Aeroplane	Remarks	Date Present	Inscription
AUS 1 SA 1	F.E.2b 7027	was7023, BE2 A1882, FE2, 2xF2Bs,Camels	8 AUG 16	The Sidney Kidman
AUS 2 NSW 1	F.E.2b 7686	RE8 A4624, DH5 B4905, F2B B1146	17 AUG 16	The White Belltrees
AUS 3 NSW 2	Bristol F2B B1148	FE2b 7687 1st; G102 A1595; F2B,Camel	17 AUG 16	The White Edenglassie
AUS 4 NSW 3	F.E.2b 7689	then DH5 A9205, F2B C4840	18 AUG 16	Mrs P Kirby & Son
AUS 5 NSW 4	D.H.4 A7483	FE2b 7691 1st; then DH4, Camel C8387	21 AUG 16	F J White Saumarez
AUS 6 NSW 5	F.E.2b A5477	FE2b4449,RE8 A3666,Camel,FE2 D9993	2 SEP 16	duplicating White Belltrees
AUS 7 NSW 6	Bristol F2B B1285	FE2b A5448 1st; A801, Camel B2489; F2B	2 SEP 16	dupl White Edenglassie
AUS 8 NSW 7	D.H.5 A9415	FE2b A5449,RE8 A3741; then DH5, F2B	2 SEP 16	dupl Mrs P Kirby & Son
AUS 9 NSW 8	F.E.2b A5450	A804/A6457,RE8 A4634/B5023, F2B, RE8	2 SEP 16	dupl FJ White Saumarez
AUS 10 NSW 9	F.E.2d A6360	DH5 A9287, two Camels, F2B B1199	19 OCT 16	The Tweed
AUS 11 NSW 10	F.E.2d A6361	then Camel B2515, F2B B1149	20 OCT 16	duplicating The Tweed
AUS 12 NSW 11	Bristol F2B B1229	FE2d A6528 1st; RE8 B5017/C2802;F2B	31 JAN 17	Macintyre Kayuga
AUS 13 NSW 12	F.E.2d A6547	later RE8 A3663,Camel,F2B C4624/A7200	2 FEB 17	dup Macintyre Kayuga
AUS 14 NSW 13	F.E.2d B1897	later Camel B6433; RAAF DH9 A6-21	5 APR 17	Tweed-Armidale
AUS 15 NSW 14	D.H.5 A9242	later D.H.5 A9395, F.2B A7190	12 APR 17	Women's Battleplane
AUS 16 NSW 15	D.H.5 A9432	later F2B C4626, Camel B6442	14 APR 17	dupl Women's Bat' plane
AUS 17 NSW 16	D.H.5 A9245	DH5 A9197 1st; CamelB2478,F2B B1223	15 MAY 17	Upper Hunter Bat' plane
AUS 18 NSW 17	D.H.4 A7488	DH4 A7600, F2B B1276, Camel F1889	15 MAY 17	dupl Upper Hunter Bplane
AUS 19 VIC 1	R.E.8 A3652	later Camel B2469	15 JUN 17	Sargood Bros
AUS 20 NSW 18	R.E.8 A3747	RE8 F1588	26 JUN 17	The McCaughey
AUS 21 NSW 19	R.E.8 A3754	later Camels B9150/B9215, FE2b E7105	24 JUL 17	Narrandera Jerilderie
AUS 22 QLD 1	R.E.8 C2298		16 FEB 18	The North Queensland
AUS 23 NSW 20	R.E.8 C2295		19 FEB 18	Tamworth & District
AUS 24 SA 2	Bristol F2B D8065	F2B B1147 was 1st; later F2B H7198	7 MAY 18	The Mrs Sidney Kidman
AUS 25 NSW 21	S.E.5a E6006	later SE5a E6014	10 MAY 18	The Capel
AUS 26 QLD 2	D.H.9 F1222		25 MAY 18	The Banchory
AUS 27 VIC 2	D.H.9 F1227		25 MAY 18	The Murroa
AUS 28 QLD 3	D.H.9 B9395		31 MAY 18	Mackenzie Tooloombah
AUS 29 NSW 22	S.E.5a E6003	later SE5a F926	1 JUN 18	The White Belltrees 2
AUS 30 NSW 23	S.E.5a F8949		5 JUN 18	The Joan
AUS 31 NSW 24	S.E.5a E6005		10 JUN 18	The Yarralumla
AUS 32 NSW 25	S.E.5a E6001		17 JUN 18	The Anchor
AUS 33 NSW 26	S.E.5a D6974	later SE5a F931	25 JUN 18	Manning & Wallambi
AUS 34 NSW 27	S.E.5a D6978	later SE5a F949	29 JUN 18	Kookaburra
AUS 35 QLD 4	S.E.5a --	was F5552	1 JUL 18	The Saltbush
AUS 36 VIC 3	S.E.5a D6971	later SE5as E3971 and F7756	22 JUL 18	The Wannon
AUS 37 NSW 28	S.E.5a F5553		9 AUG 18	Sydney & Nth Sydney
AUS 38 NSW 29	S.E.5a F5554		10 AUG 18	The Kookaburra No.2
AUS 39 WA 1	S.E.5a F856	later SE5a F7759	28 AUG 18	The Boolathana
AUS 40 NSW 30	S.E.5a F5544		11 SEP 18	The Victory
AUS 41 VIC3/ NT1	S.E.5a C6424	2AFC over JAN-FEB 1919	9 NOV 18 <sup>121</sup>	Victory Scout

### Anomalies

As stated, this list in the Isaacs book was based on the rare publication on British 'Presentation battleplanes' by Charles Alma Baker, produced in 1920 as a souvenir for his supporters.

- He probably was unaware of the full extent of the *re-use* of named inscriptions, that in some cases were used up to seven times. Therefore it is understandable that all the aeroplanes that carried inscriptions were not known at that time, and to some extent that applies too to the Isaacs publication of 1971. So this is not in any way a criticism – we now have the benefit of the internet for so many on-line research tools and resources. Furthermore, the issue of eight 'duplicate' inscriptions by the NSW Govt muddied the waters.
- Something also obvious from this list was the seemingly wrong order of the presentation inscriptions to newer aeroplane types – in fact, the first 14 Australian allocations were the F.E.2b/d types.



- Furthermore, in Alma Baker's book is a reference to 1AFC virtually being fully equipped with 'Presentation' Bristol F.2Bs – that was true, but is not apparent from that original list. With re-allocations over 1917-18, up to a dozen F2Bs carried Australian inscriptions *concurrently* in the Middle East while still being carried by other aircraft on the Western Front.
- A 1920 'Imperial Gift' D.H.9 to Australia carried 'NSW 13 *The Tweed-Armidale*' inscription. This flew initially at Point Cook as D3320, then from 1921 as A6-21. The retention of its Presentation name was unusual.

**Analysis.** An examination of the '41 Battleplanes' presented by Australia of the first allocations in each case does show a trend, which naturally was determined by the war strategy and available modern warplanes at that stage.

- For instance as stated, over 1916 and early 1917 principal 'battleplanes' were the Royal Aircraft Factory (Farnborough) B.E.2 and F.E.2 designs, and **the first 14 Australian allocations were all F.E.2b/d types (Australia 1 to Australia 14).**
- Then approaching mid-1917 – indeed the period of "Bloody April" – the latest Aircraft Manufacturing Co (Hendon) single-seat scout, the D.H.5 a tractor with forward-firing gun, was funded. Several went to 68 (Australian) SQN, however with some confusion in allocating the inscriptions **(Australia 15 to Australia 17).**
- The next presentation in mid-1917 was a D.H.4 bomber **(Australia 18).**
- By mid-1917 to early-1918, the value of army cooperation and artillery observation had really been recognised as the prime role of air power, as 69 (Australian) SQN equipped and proceeded to the Front. The R.E.8 was the most prolific Corps aeroplane, entering service in 1916 and serving through to the Armistice. By NOV 1918, there were fifteen R.E.8 squadrons at the front.<sup>122</sup> Five R.E.8s were presented through the Alma Baker Australian fund **(Australia 19 to Australia 23).** It should be noted that at this stage (JUN-OCT 1917) six further presentation R.E.8s were also replacing the earlier F.E.2s – AUS 2, AUS 6, AUS 8, AUS 9, AUS 12, and AUS 13 – increasing the Australian Presentation R.E.8 count to 13 inscriptions.
- MAY 1918 saw a mixed bag of presentations, but of modern design – Bristol F2B, S.E.5a and D.H.9 **(Australia 24 to Australia 28).**
- Then over the second half of 1918 the presentations were all S.E.5as **(Australia 29 to Australia 41).**

**Concurrency.** Apart from the re-use and duplication of these Presentation inscriptions, of further interest is the concurrent use of these names in the Middle East, in particular by 1AFC Bristol Fighters. In Alma Baker, RAF BRIG A E Borton DSO stated in 1919 that the whole of 1AFC comprised Presentation F2Bs. He wrote:

At the time of the final successful operations in that theatre No.1 Squadron of the Australian Flying Corps under my command was entirely equipped with aeroplanes provided by the fund, and it was largely the possession of this type of machine that enabled our pilots to obtain that complete mastery over enemy aircraft which General Allenby in his despatches referred to as having such a marked influence on the success of his operations.<sup>123</sup>

**1AFC Bristol Fighters.** Now this statement is not immediately apparent by studying the lists in Alma Baker or Isaacs, it is only by delving into the *re-use* and *concurrent* use of the inscriptions. Indeed, Borton was correct – by mid-1918 1AFC had 16 F2Bs with these Australian Presentation inscriptions (in addition to C4627 "*City of Adelaide*"):

AUS 1 SA 1 A7178 "*The Sidney Kidman*", then F2B A7236;  
 AUS 2 NSW 1 B1146 "*The White Belltrees*";  
 AUS 3 NSW 2 B1148 "*The White Edenglassie*";  
 AUS 4 NSW 3 C4840 "*The Mrs P Kirby & Son*";  
 AUS 7 NSW 6 B1285 "*Duplicating The White Edenglassie*";  
 AUS 8 NSW 7 C4623 "*Duplicating The Mrs P Kirby & Son*";  
 AUS 9 NSW 8 A7237 "*The F J White*";  
 AUS 10 NSW 9 B1199 "*The Tweed*";  
 AUS 11 NSW 10 B1149 "*Duplicating The Tweed*";  
 AUS 12 NSW 11 B1229 "*The Macintyre Kayuga Estate*";  
 AUS 13 NSW 12 C4624 "*Duplicating The Macintyre Kayuga Estate*", then A7200;  
 AUS 15 NSW 14 A7190 "*The Women's Battleplane*";  
 AUS 16 NSW 15 C4626 "*Duplicating The Women's Battleplane*";  
 AUS 17 NSW 16 B1223 "*The Upper Hunter Battleplane*";  
 AUS 18 NSW 17 B1276 "*Duplicating The Upper Hunter Battleplane*";  
 AUS 24 SA 2 B1147 "*The Mrs Sidney Kidman*", was replaced by D8065, then H7198.

## AUSTRALIAN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.2 NSW No.1

### The White Belltrees

**A4624** was not a 69SQN machine, but an R.E.8 which served with 7SQN RFC. Allotted the inscription "*The White Belltrees*" a second time on 5 JUN 1917, it went to 7 SQN RFC on 29 JUN 1917, until damaged by EA on 2 SEP 1917, and struck off charge (SOC) at 1AD on 8 SEP 1917. The first aeroplane with this inscription was F.E.2b 7686; next was this R.E.8; then followed D.H.5 B4905, and F2B B1146. Therefore, the inscription *AUS 2 NSW 1* was used four times:

- **7686** F.E.2b presented 17 AUG 1916, allotted "*The White Belltrees*" on 16 SEP 1916, to France and to 25SQN 1 OCT 1916. Crashed forced-landing at Bruay 7 APR 1917, SOC 19 APR 1917; this R.E.8 followed in JUN 1917.
- **B4905** D.H.5 was the third to carry "*Australia No 2 NSW No 1* inscription from SEP until DEC 1917 with the Australian No. 30 (Training) Squadron. D.H.5s were being withdrawn from service at this stage.
- **B1146** Bristol F2B was next to carry "*Australia No 2 NSW No 1 The White Belltrees*" during 1918 (after the D.H.5) with 1AFC in Palestine from 31 JAN 1918 until SOC on 7 MAY 1918.



Alma Baker '94 Gift Battleplanes'

F.E.2b mocked up in the Alma Baker book to represent 7686 "*AUS 2 NSW 1 The White Belltrees*"

## AUSTRALIAN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.6 NSW No.5

### The White Belltrees (Duplicate)

**A3666** was not a 69SQN machine either, but an R.E.8 which served with 21SQN RFC from 16 OCT 1917 until being SOC on 21 FEB 1918. The original "*The White Belltrees*" had been allotted to AUS 2 NSW 1 in AUG 1916 to an F.E.2b 7686 (above), and this R.E.8 was a NSW Govt duplication in SEP 1916 as "*Australia No 6 NSW No 5 Government Duplicating The White Belltrees*". This duplication inscription as *AUS 6 NSW 5* was used several times:

- **A5447** F.E.2b presented 2 SEP 1916 (below, and duplicating F.E.2b 7686, the first machine to be inscribed "*The White Belltrees*"). Allotted to 23SQN RFC 1 NOV 1916, and carried when shot down 4 DEC 1916.
- **4999** F.E.2b next carried "*Australia No 6 NSW No 5 Duplicating The White Belltrees*" inscription from 24 FEB 1917 until 19 APR 1917, then followed by this R.E.8 A3666.
- **D9993** F.E.2b later carried "*Australia No 6 NSW No 5 Duplicating The White Belltrees*" after R.E.8 A3666, from 27 SEP 1918 until 19 JAN 1919.



Alma Baker '94 Gift Battleplanes'

F.E.2b mocked up in the Alma Baker book as A5447 *AUS 6 NSW 5*

## AUSTRALIAN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.8 NSW No.7

### The Mrs P Kirby & Son (Duplicate)

**A3741** was not a 69SQN R.E.8, but was sent to France on 19 JUL 1917, joined 6QN RFC 5 AUG 1917, and crashed landing on 5 SEP 1917, to be SOC at 1AD on 8 SEP 1917. This duplication inscription as *AUS 8 NSW 7* was used several times:

- **A5449** F.E.2b presented 2 SEP 1916 (duplicating F.E.2b 7689, i.e. the first machine to be inscribed "*The Mrs P Kirby & Son*") and the first allotted *Australia 8 NSW 7* on 1 NOV 1916, joining 23SQN RFC on 17 NOV. Then with 100 SQN RFC it crashed near Hazebrouck on 27 MAY 1917, the inscription then passing to the R.E.8.
- **A9415** D.H.5 was the third to carry "*Australia No 8 NSW No 7 Duplicating The Mrs P Kirby & Son*" inscription after the R.E.8 – but for a very short period, again with the AFC's 30 (Trg) SQN from 3 DEC 1917, when it was immediately declared obsolete and WFS.
- **C4623** Bristol F2B was the fourth to carry "*Australia No 8 NSW No 7 Duplicating The Mrs P Kirby & Son*" after D.H.5 A9415, with 1AFC in Palestine from 19 MAR 1918 until being passed to 111 SQN RAF on 4 FEB 1919 with Australia's withdrawal from the theatre.



Artist Keith Woodcock, cover of Putnam's *The Royal Aircraft Factory*<sup>124</sup>

F.E.2b A5449 with 23SQN RFC marked as *New South Wales No.7* in early 1917

## AUSTRALIAN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.9 NSW No.8

### The F J White, Saumarez and Baldblair (Duplicate)

**A4634** was not a 69SQN R.E.8, but one that served for short period with 9SQN RFC from 19 JUN 1917 until crashing on landing on 25 JUL, to be SOC by 1AD on 1 AUG 1917. Note the original "*The F J White, Saumarez and Baldblair*" had been allotted to *AUS 5 NSW 4* in AUG 1916 to an F.E.2b 7691, and this R.E.8 was the fourth use as NSW Govt duplication in JUN 1917 as "*Australia No 9 NSW No 8 Government Duplicating The F J White, Saumarez and Baldblair*". This duplication inscription as *AUS 9 NSW 8* was used seven times:

- **A5450** F.E.2b presented 2 SEP 1916 (duplicating F.E.2b 7691, the first machine to be inscribed "*The White Belltrees*"). Allotted to 23SQN RFC 1 NOV 1916, and carried when shot down 4 DEC 1916.
- **A804** F.E.2b next carried "*Australia No 9 NSW No 8 Duplicating The F J White*" inscription from 24 FEB 1917 until 19 APR 1917.
- **A6457** F.E.2d was next, allotted to France on 10 MAY 1917, and with 20SQN RFC was missing from an offensive patrol on 20 MAY 1917. It was SOC and followed the next month by two R.E.8s, A4634 and B5023.
- **B5023** was the fifth machine, and the second non-69SQN R.E.8, which served with 12SQN RFC from 17 SEP 1917 until shot down by groundfire and SOC on 12 JAN 1918.
- **A7237** a Bristol F2B with 67SQN in Palestine also carried "*Australia No 9 NSW No 8 Duplicating The F J White*" (concurrently with R.E.8 B5023), from 26 OCT 1917 until 30 OCT 1918.
- **C2883** another R.E.8, made by the Daimler Company of Coventry in SEP 1918, with the inscription allocated in OCT 1918, but no other details are known.



## AUSTRALIAN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.12 NSW No.11

### The Macintyre Kayuga Estate

**B5017** was not a 69SQN machine, but an R.E.8 which served with 16SQN RFC from 29 AUG 1917, then 53SQN RAF until being SOC on 21 JUL 1918; then rebuilt and re-serialised F6018. Other machines with this inscription were:

- **A6528** F.E.2d was named "*Australia No 12 NSW No 11 The Macintyre Kayuga Estate*" from 4 JUN 1917 with 20SQN RFC until wrecked on 13 AUG 1917.
- **B1229** Bristol F2B carried the inscription in the Middle East from 17 MAR 1918 with 1AFC until passing to 111 SQN on 4 FEB 1919. Of great interest, this aircraft subsequently came to Australia in 1919.
- **C2802**, this 4SQN RFC R.E.8 concurrently carried the inscription with the 1AFC F2B over SEP and OCT 1918.

## 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.13 NSW No.12

### The Macintyre Kayuga Estate (Duplicate)

**A3663** served with 69SQN from AUG 1917 until 12 SEP 1917, and was a duplicated name being inscribed as "*Australia No 13 NSW No 12 Government Duplicating The Macintyre Kayuga Estate*". It was then passed to 9SQN RFC, and was soon struck off charge (SOC) on 9 OCT 1917. This inscription was used as follows:

- **A6547** F.E.2d was the original *AUS 13 NSW 12* presented 2 FEB 1917, and duplicated the names "*NSW Government The Macintyre Kayuga Estate*". Serving over JUN-JUL 1917, it was followed by R.E.8 A3663.
- **B2464** Sopwith Camel next received the name on 16 NOV 1917 with 65SQN RFC, until SOC on 6 DEC 1917.
- **C4624** Bristol F2B carried the inscription with 1AFC over MAR-JUN 1918.
- **A7200** another F2B 1AFC then assumed the inscription in 1918 until being SOC 19 DEC 1918.

## AUSTRALIAN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.19 VIC No.1

### The Sargood Brothers

**A3652** did not serve with 69SQN. It was presented by F G and A H Sargood, of Sydney and Melbourne on 15 JUN 1917. On 11 SEP 1917 it was allocated to 6SQN RFC, and was SOC on 14 OCT 1917. The inscription then passed to:

- **B2469** Camel 16 NOV 1917 and allotted to 71SQN AFC on 24 NOV 1917, then to 73 SQN RFC 21 JAN 1918 and SOC 15 SEP 1918.

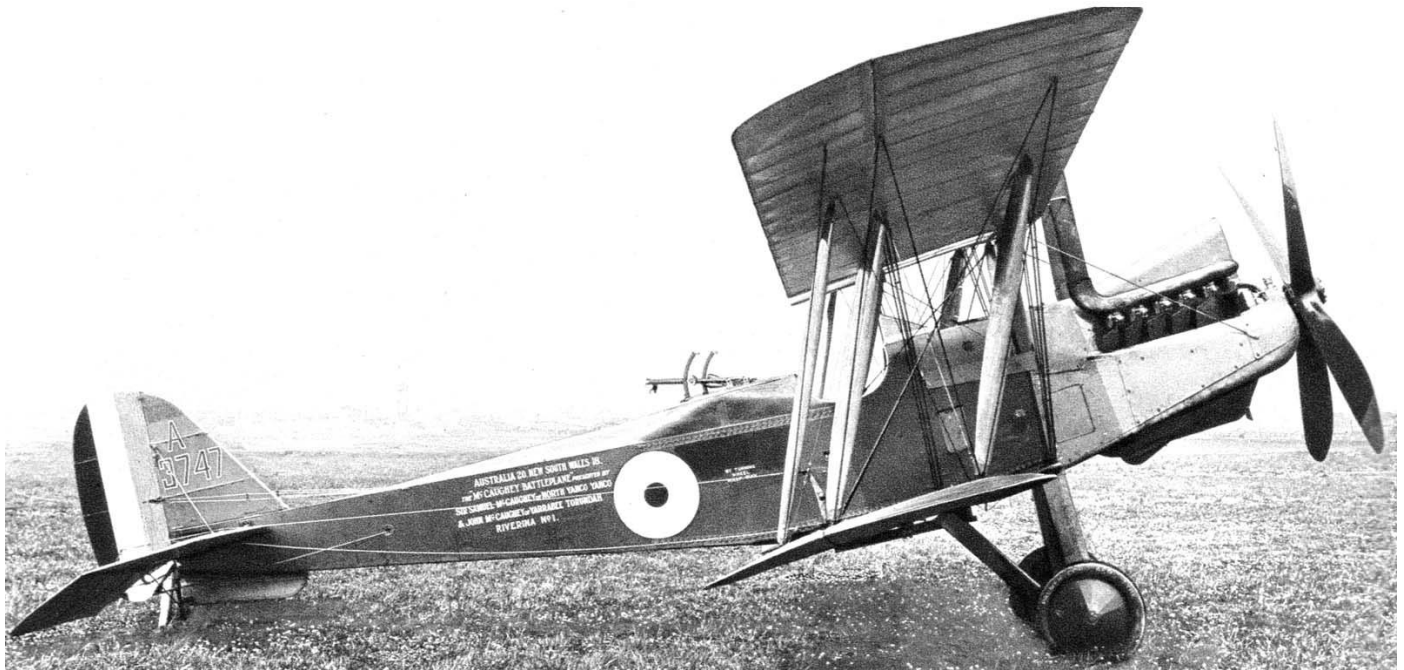


A3652 'Aus 19 Vic 1 Sargood Bothers', not with Australian 69 SQN, but briefly with 6SQN RFC in 1917

### The McCaughey Battleplane

**A3747** "The McCaughey Battleplane" was presented on 26 JUN 1917 and became a 69SQN original in JUL 1917, but was not taken by the unit to France. It had been presented jointly by Sir Samuel McCaughey of North Yanco Yanco, (near Narrandera NSW) and John McCaughey of Yarrabee Torundah (*apparently a misprint, as Yarrabee is in the NSW township Morundah, 40km south of Yanco*). Not proceeding to the Front with 69SQN, A3747 passed in OCT 1917 to 21SQN RFC, and was missing, believed shot down, on 12 APR 1918. The name continued with another R.E.8:

- **F1588** was a late-production R.E.8. which received the name at the end of the war and allocated to No.1 Aeroplane Acceptance Park (AAP) at Coventry at the beginning of JAN 1919, but apparently never allotted to an operating RAF squadron.



Alma Baker '94 Gift Battleplanes'

**A3747 Aus 20 NSW 18 not taken by 69SQN to the Front, but went in AUG 1917 to 21SQN RFC**

The inscription read: **AUSTRALIA 20 NEW SOUTH WALES 18**  
**"The McCAUGHEY BATTLEPLANE" Presented By**  
**Sir Samuel McCaughey of North Yanco Yanco**  
**& John McCaughey of Yarrabee Torundah**  
**RIVERINA No.1**



With the postscript **RIVERINA 1** – the next R.E.8 A3754 *Australia No 21 NSW No 19* was subtitled **RIVERINA 2**.



### Narrandera-Jerilderie Battleplane



Saunders, 23rd Training Wing South Carlton

**A3754 at South Carlton in AUG 1917, and below its Presentation inscription**



**A3754 R.E.8 presentation**<sup>125</sup> – “AUSTRALIA No.21, NEW SOUTH WALES No.19, NARRANDERA JERILDERIE BATTLEPLANE, RIVERINA 2” – had been donated on 24 JUL 1917 by the citizens of the Narrandera (applied incorrectly to the aeroplane as ‘Narandera’) and Jerilderie Districts of NSW. Allocated to 69SQN’s ‘A’ Flight in AUG 1917, it is believed to have had the initial numerical 69SQN code “5” after reaching France, but soon crashed when landing at the aerodrome at Savy on 22 SEP 1917.<sup>126</sup> It was then SOC at 2AD on 26 SEP 1917.

- **B9150** Camel on 27 JAN 1918 at 6(Trg)SQN AFC at Tern Hill, and was transferred in the Wing to 5(Trg)SQN at Minchinhampton by JUL 1918. It crashed when forced landing outside the aerodrome on 10 AUG 1918.
- **B9215** Camel, also on No.1 Australian Training Wing, supposedly received the inscription in 1918 – was with 6(Trg)SQN by JAN 1918, but no further details are known.
- **E7106** F.E.2b carried the name in OCT 1918 at 3AAP, and was issued to the US Air Service on 16 NOV 1918.





## AUSTRALIAN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.22 QLD No.1

### The North Queensland

**C2298** "AUSTRALIA No.22, QUEENSLAND No.1, THE NORTH QUEENSLAND" was an R.E.8 presented on 16 FEB 1918 by the residents of North Queensland, but not allocated to 3SQN AFC, serving with 15SQN RAF, then 13SQN RAF into 1919, and the inscription was not re-used. D.H.4s B2105/A8010 were both "North Queensland Grazier" in 1918.



C2298 Alma Baker '94 Gift Battleplanes' mocked up inscription above, with the actual inscription below



## AUSTRALIAN PRESENTATION R.E.8 AUS No.23 NSW No.20

### The Tamworth and District

**C2295** was a Daimler-built R.E.8 purchased on 19 FEB 1918, but not allocated to 3SQN AFC, serving with 5SQN RAF, where it was wrecked on 21 JUL 1918. No record of this name being re-used.

## 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'MR H TEESDALE-SMITH ADELAIDE'

**A3662** was an original 69SQN R.E.8 from 21 AUG 1917 with 'B' Flight, coded "9" and then "J", marked "Presented by Mr H Teesdale Smith of Adelaide". This machine inherited the inscription from F.E.2bs and B.E.2e. A3662 was damaged landing with 3AFC on 20 JUN 1918, then sent to 2ASD where it was SOC on 19 JUL 1918.



This *Teesdale Smith* inscription was carried by several donated battleplanes: F.E.2b 7000 (from JUL 1916), F.E.2b 7707 (OCT 1916), B.E.2e A1881 (JUN 1917), then 69SQN R.E.8 A3662 (AUG 1917), and a further R.E.8 C2993 (DEC 1918).



A letter from Mr H Teesdale Smith in Melbourne, dated 10 JAN 1916, to the Department of Defence covering his presentation of £2300 for the purchase of an "armoured fighter" (which would have at that stage been the F.E.2b), but it is unknown whether there was pilot training for his nephew.

ADELAIDE OFFICE.  
MARLBOROUGH CHAMBERS,  
MOUTH STREET.  
TEL 5320.

ADELAIDE TRAMWAYS CONTRACT  
No 8.

NORTH COAST RAILWAY No 3.  
N. S. W.

DECRES BAY RAILWAY  
PRAHRAN & MALVERN  
TRAMWAYS CONTRACT No 54.  
TEL MALVERN 212.

*H. Teesdale Smith*  
Contractor  
110 Burwood Road  
HAWTHORN  
10th January, 1916  
VICTORIA.

DEFENCE  
384 284

T. Trumble Esqre.,  
Under Secretary,  
Defence Department,  
Melbourne.

Dear Sir,

Further to my interview of this morning, relative to my donating an Armoured Fighter, circumstances shortly are these:-

My Nephew, Lieutenant Johnson now in England, cabled and asked me to give an Aeroplane provided he was allowed to pilot same. After learning from him the cost would be £2,250 I agreed to do this, and told him I would add an additional £50-0-0 for special training of himself. At about the same time I cabled to Sir Newton Moore, Agent General for Western Australia, asking if he would interest himself to the extent of getting my son Paul, No.528, 9th Light Horse, also transferred from Gallipoli, where he then was, (Where he is now I do not know) to the Flying Corps in England, so that he might join his Cousin, Lieutenant Johnson.

It is of course understood that neither Lieutenant Johnson or my son will be allowed to enter the Machine if it is found that either or both of them are unsuited, and in any case they must of course be subject in every way to the instructions of the Authorities.

I have pleasure in enclosing cheque for £2,300, and trust the Machine will do good work.

Yours faithfully,

H. TEESDALE SMITH.

*A.N. Burcott*

Agree £2300 received & official receipt raised  
 J. B. ...  
 DEFENCE (MILITARY) GENERAL ADMINISTRATION



### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'CITY OF ADELAIDE'

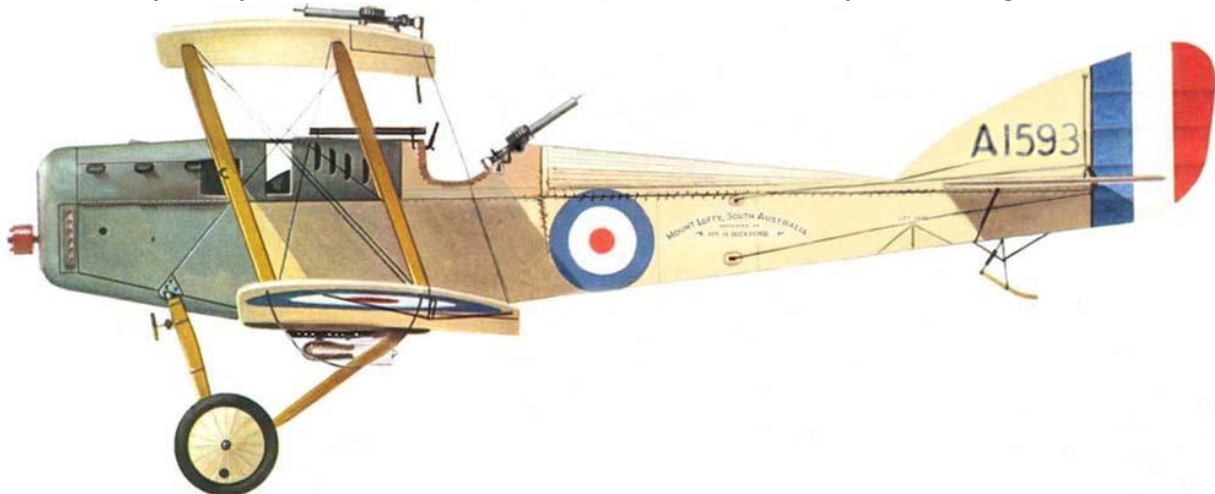
**A3667** was another original 69SQN R.E.8 from 16 JUL 1917, possibly coded "14" and then "Q", marked "CITY OF ADELAIDE, MRS H BICKFORD". While with 69SQN, A3667 was collided with A3756 when landing on 21 OCT 1917, and was wrecked. Other battleplanes with this prolific inscription were:

- **F.E.2b 6952** was the first machine with this inscription with 11SQN RFC from 3 JUL 1916 until 9 JUL 1916.
- **F.E.2b A5486** was the next to carry this inscription from 22 JAN 1917, and crashed while with 22SQN RFC on 3 APR 1917.
- The first **R.E.8 A3610** to receive this inscription on 13 JUN 1917 with 5SQN RFC, until crashing on 25 JUL 1917, and SOC. Aeroplanes did not last long! 69SQN's R.E.8 A3667 was next.
- After the loss of these two R.E.8s, **Camel B2490** on the Western Front carried "CITY OF ADELAIDE, PRESENTED BY MRS HARRY BICKFORD" with 4AFC over JAN-MAR 1918.
- A third **R.E.8 C2993** received this inscription in DEC 1918.
- Martinsyde **G.102 A1593** of 67SQN in the Middle East, was inscribed with a slight variation as "Mount Lofty South Australia, Presented by Mrs H Bickford". It joined 14SQN RFC on 16 APR 1917, and then was on 67SQN strength from 24 MAY 1917 until 12 AUG 1917, when allotted to X Aeroplane Park (XAP). Then with 5 Flying School RAF in Egypt it crashed on take-off 4 NOV 1918, and SOC 21 MAR 1919.



AWM A03925

Martinsyde Elephant A1593 of 67 (Australian) SQN with its inscription marking in mid-1917



After this Martinsyde Elephant's service with 67SQN in 1917, a further Middle East machine with 1AFC, **Bristol F2B C4627**, was subsequently marked "CITY OF ADELAIDE, PRESENTED BY MRS HARRY BICKFORD" from 22 MAR 1918 until passing to 111 SQN RAF at the end of Australian operation on 4 FEB 1919.

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'SOUTH AUSTRALIA'

**A3746** was another original 69SQN R.E.8 from 21 AUG 1917, marked as "SOUTH AUSTRALIA Presented by The People of South Australia", but apparently did not proceed to France with 69SQN – on 14 OCT 1917 A3746 was transferred to 4SQN RFC. On 7 NOV 1917 while undertaking a Contact Patrol in support of the 1st Anzac Corps, it was shot down with the loss of its crew. Over 1916-17, this inscription had been carried by F.E.2bs 6347, 5234 then 4965 until MAR 1917, then this R.E.8, and finally Camel B2325 from NOV 1917.



### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'THE RANBY'

**C2309**, marked "THE RANBY", was a UK donation in APR 1918 from *LTCOL A E Bingham, Bart, VD, West Riding Divisional RE (T) Sheffield*. C2309 arrived on 3SQN on 8 MAY 1918, coded "O", and while undertaking a contact patrol on 8 AUG 1918 was shot down by a Fokker D.VII near Mericourt. In OCT 1918, this inscription passed onto another R.E.8, **C2978**, which served with the RAF until MAY 1919.



AWM P00355.028

**C2309 'The Ranby' while in service with 3AFC's 'C' Flight in 1918**

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'KHAN OF KALAT No.2'

**B2253**, an ex-21SQN RFC machine from OCT 1917, was on 3AFC 19 JAN 1918 to 3 APR 1918. It crashed on 1 APR near Lake Dickebusch, and was handed to 1ASD to be SOC on 8 APR 1918. The Indian Khan of Kalat, of the Khanate of Kalat state (now in Pakistan), presented several battleplanes, and others marked as "KHAN OF KALAT 2" were:

- A first R.E.8 **A3606**, from 9 JUN 1917 with 7SQN RFC until crashing 19 SEP 1917 and SOC.
- A third R.E.8 **C2559**, from 30 MAY 1918 with 12SQN RAF until 29 SEP 1918.

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'GOLD COAST No.3'

**B2259** was an early 69SQN machine from 22 DEC 1917. It was shot down on 26 JAN 1918 by anti-aircraft fire near Danoutre, and the wreckage was collected by 1ASD to be SOC on 31 JAN 1918. 69SQN's B2259 was the 4th aircraft marked as "GOLD COAST 3", and others were:

- F.E.2b **6962** from 11 JUN 1916 with 35 and 64SQNs RFC, until at least 18 AUG 1916.
- R.E.8 **A3738** from 29 JUN 1917 until 12 JUL 1917 when it was SOC at 1AD.
- R.E.8 **A4421** from 2 AUG 1917 with 9SQN RFC until wrecked on landing 13 SEP 1917, and SOC 19 SEP 1917.
- R.E.8 **B6659** became the fifth *GOLD COAST 3* (and fourth R.E.8), from 22 FEB 1918 with 7SQN RAF until crashing on landing 4 SEP 1918 and SOC.

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'COLONY OF MAURITIUS No.11'

**B5018** was handed to 69SQN in France on 17 SEP 1917. It forced-landed on 4 DEC 1917 as 'A' Flight's "D" flown by Lieutenant Reg Francis, and passed to 1AD for repair to be reconstructed by 1ASD. It then went to 52SQN RFC, and crashed 22 MAR 1918 to be SOC. Other "COLONY OF MAURITIUS No.11" presentation aeroplanes were:

- The first "MAURITIUS 11" was F.E.2d **A6512** on 5 JUN 1917, crashed 13 AUG 1917.
- After our B5018, another R.E.8 **C2515** assumed this inscription on 16 MAY 1918, with 42 and 13SQNs RAF, until at least 6 FEB 1919.

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'ZANZIBAR No.7'

**B6576** joined 3AFC in France on 28 JAN 1918, and coded "L" with 'B' Flight. It was damaged when shot down by anti-aircraft fire on 2 JUN at Hamel, and after repair was eventually retired on 27 OCT 1918 to 2ASD as "war worn". Zanzibar was also a prolific donor of battleplanes, and the "ZANZIBAR 7" inscription was also borne by R.E.8 A4619 from 7 MAY 1917 to 30 NOV 1917. Another *Zanzibar* presentation machine with an Australian connection was S.E.5a F930 "ZANZIBAR 24" with 2AFC.

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'BURMA No.2'

**C2333** joined 3AFC's 'A' Flight as "F" on 16 APR 1918 and was badly damaged in a forced-landing at Vignacourt on 21 AUG, and was SOC by 2ASD on 22 AUG 1918.

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'PUNJAB No.48 BEAS'

**C2696** joined 3AFC 'C' Flight as "Q" on 17 SEP 1918, the fourth to carry the "PUNJAB 48 Beas" inscription, Beas being a Punjab town on the Beas River. This name had been allocated at the factory on 26 JUNE 1918 after being previously used by three earlier machines, below. C2696 was badly damaged when landing at 3SQN's aerodrome at Premont on 14 OCT, to be SOC by 2ASD on 7 NOV 1918. The earlier "PUNJAB 48 Beas" machines were:

- F.E.2b **A6391** from 21 MAR 1917 with 20SQN RFC until shot down by enemy aircraft during the RFC's "Bloody April" on 29 APR 1917.
- R.E.8 **A3603** allocated on 5 JUN 1917, and with 21SQN RFC from 29 JUN until shot down on 20 AUG 1917 when conducting an artillery observation patrol.
- R.E.8 **B6467** on 20 SEP 1917 to 7SQN RFC until crashed landing on 22 APR 1918 and SOC.

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'MALAYA No.22 THE SIME DARBY'

**D6817** joined 3AFC on 18 SEP 1918 as 'B' Flight's "H", and was damaged in a forced-landing at Malincourt on 4 NOV. It was transferred to 2ASD on 9 NOV, to be SOC on 1 DEC 1918. The "MALAYA No.22 *The Sime Darby*" inscription (named for the donation from the rubber plantation Sime, Darby & Company) was also carried beforehand by:

- F.E.2b **6973** allotted 15 JUN 1916, to 11SQN RFC 9 JUL 1916, shot down near Bapaume 30 SEP 1916.
- F.E.2b **A5463** allotted 27 NOV 1916, to 22SQN RFC on 19 DEC 1916 and forced landed 17 MAR 1917. To 2AD 30 MAR 1917 and SOC.
- R.E.8 **A3574** allotted on 22 MAY 1917, but no further details. SOC at 1AAP Coventry on 21 JUN 1918.



Alma Baker '94 Gift Battleplanes'

Before 3AFC's R.E.8 D6817, the first MALAYA 22 was F.E.2b 6973, here mocked up as "The Sime Darby" in 1916

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 'BARODA No.12'

**C2795** joined 3AFC on 29 SEP 1918 and crashed when attempting to land at Premont on 17 OCT.<sup>127</sup> It passed to 2ASD on 21 OCT, to be SOC on 7 NOV 1918. Typical of the large numbers of Indian Presentation aeroplanes, C2795 had inherited the "BARODA 12" (now the city Vadodara) inscription from a previous five B.E.2 and R.E.8 machines:

- B.E.2c **2591** 27 JAN 1916 for service in UK for Home Defence.
- B.E.2c **2663** 12 APR 1916 served at the Front with 53SQN RFC, then returned to UK on 4 NOV 1916 for a training role on 63(R)SQN at Cramlington, Newcastle. SOC at Turnhouse, Edinburgh, on 24 JAN 1917.
- R.E.8 **A3603** allocation of "BARODA 12" on 5 JUN 1917, to 21SQN RFC on 29 JUN, and shot down during artillery observation patrol on 20 AUG 1917.
- R.E.8 **B6467** allocated 17 SEP 1917 and to 7SQN RFC on 24 SEP. Crashed on landing 22 APR 1918 and SOC.
- B.E.2e **B4517** was a concurrent use of the inscription on 23 SEP 1917 with 77SQN RFC at Turnhouse, to then be SOC at 1AAP Coventry on 22 JUN 1918.

### 3 SQN PRESENTATION R.E.8 ORISSA STATES No.2

**E225** joined 3AFC 'A' Flight as "F" on 22 AUG 1918. It was damaged in air combat by a Fokker scout on 6 SEP, but was repaired to remain on 3SQN strength until handed back to the RAF in FEB 1919. The "ORISSA STATES No.2" (now the Odisha state in India) inscription had previously been carried by:

- B.E.2e **A3113** struck off charge on 28 SEP 1917 but no further information.
- B.E.2e **A3144** allotted at 1AAP on 1 NOV 1917, to 42(R)SQN RFC at Hounslow on 8 NOV 1917, then to 5(Trg)SQN RAF at Castle Bromwich where it crashed from a spin on 22 APR 1918, SOC 25 APR 1918.



Wolseley Motors production line with B.E.2e A3113 - already with Presentation inscription *ORISSA STATES No2*<sup>128</sup>

*Is there a Presentation aircraft that you are interested in, but not covered by this 'R.E.8 Presentation List'?* Well standby, as in several editions time we will list all of the 41 Alma Baker Australian Presentation battleplanes – and their complex re-use and duplication of names and numbers – together with the private Presentation aircraft gifted by Australian individuals, from as early as 1915.



**Part IV of 3AFC covers the final Allied offensives from SEPTEMBER 1918 to the Armistice, and a list of 3SQN Bristol F2B Fighters**





## Curtiss Corner:

### P-40E USAAF/RAAF Operations in Australia Supplementary #9:



**Past the P-40E beginning: ex Amberley RAAF Station late 26<sup>th</sup> January 1942, and then into the unknown history of the 17<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Provisional) in Java from late January to the 1st March 1942, we go.....**



**In late February 1942, a report from the Royal Netherlands Ship “Piet Hein” was sent to the Department of Justice by the Department of Marine concerning the recovery of a crashed plane and a parachute of an Australian Pilot, sighted by a MLD Sergeant Christiann Bram, Royal Netherlands Navy #9212.**

*“Whilst I was swimming, during the sea battle in the straight Lombok, I saw in my opinion, three Jap fighters attack one Allied fighter. After a brave flight, the Allied fighter was shot down.*

*This was on either the 21<sup>st</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1942.*

*Later after I landed on the island of Noesa-Penida, this is an Island between Bali and Lombok, the Natives of Bali brought to me the pilot after midnight.*

*He was wholly unrecognisable, and his parachute was covered in blood.*

*He wore a pair of green “peau de suede” shoes with thick rubber soles, and had in his pocket a white bone knife with the inscription “C.A. Sprague”.*

*His oxygen apparatus and lifebelt had the inscription: **R.A.A.F.***

*He was buried by myself, and is lying in the cemetery on the beach, near the village of Sampelan. I put markings on it, but these will probably be destroyed by the years”*

**This knowledge or description of the RAAF Pilot did not see light until October 1945 when details were sent to the RAAF for identification of the remains.**

**At the end of this article, we will find the truth.**

## **The beginning....17<sup>th</sup> December 1941.....the United States Navy Pensacola Convoy is coming to Brisbane**

It all started when a reinforcement convoy to the Philippines left San Francisco between the 21st and 24th November 1941.



*The Name sake Escort for the first Convoy to Australia: the USS Pensacola pictured six months later at Pearl Harbour.*

This convoy, named after its escort, the USS Pensacola, consisted of the following ships:

- USS Pensacola 8" Gun Cruiser as escort
- USS Yacht Niagara
- USAT Holbrook
- SS Coast Farmer
- Admiral Halstead both carrying some 18 crated 24thGP P-40E's (one P-40E lacked a Rudder)
- SS Chaumont,
- SS Republic (7th BG personnel)
- SS Meigs (latter sunk at Darwin 19/2/42) 52 A-24's 27th BG (Lt)
- Dutch Ship Bloemfontein (75 strong AVG P-40 Outfit on board)

### **Aircraft Ownership**

The parent Unit of this shipment, the 35th Pursuit Group, made up of the 21st (equipped with P-40E's) and the 34th (equipped with P-35A's) Pursuit Squadrons, was to be the second P40E Group to be based in the Philippines after the 24th Pursuit Group (3rd, 17th and 20th Pursuit Squadrons).

These 18 P-40E's were to be used to initially equip the 34th Pursuit Squadron, based at Del Carmen Field, with its replaced P-35A's being the initial equipment of the 70th Pursuit Squadron, which would arrive from the states after December 1941.

During this work-up, the 35th Pursuit Group Squadron's command was assigned under the 24th Pursuit Group. This arrangement continued at the start of the hostilities on the 8th of December 1941, Philippine time, till attrition resulted in only one squadron size force surviving.

### **The Convoy's new Destination**

Due to the supremacy of the Japanese Navy at this time, and its resultant blockade of the Philippines, it was considered at that time to change the destination of the Pensacola Convoy to Brisbane, Australia.

The reason behind this was twofold.

Firstly, there was thought at that time that there were ample facilities for the assembly and training of these reinforcements, without the chance of attack.

And secondly, they could be air ferried across Australia, via Darwin, Timor, and Borneo to the Philippines, thus bypassing the Japanese naval blockade. This Route had been laid out as a backup, some months before by General Brereton, as a way of reinforcing the Philippines, should the enemy enforced a blockade.

However, the primary idea was that this route was for bombers, with sufficient ferry range. Soon it was realised that also the P-40E, with a drop tank, could negotiate the route.

The result would then be landing combat ready P-40 Pursuit Squadrons to reinforce beleaguer fighter forces, then holding back the tide of the Japanese thrust.

### **The Arrival and its Destination**

The Convoy arrived in Brisbane's Newstead Wharves on the 22nd December 1941 with its eighteen P-40E-cu's and fifty-two A-24 Banshee's (Army version SBD3 Dauntless Dive-Bomber) for unloading and then for assembly.

These aircraft were trailed to the new Amberley RAAF Station base outside of Ipswich, some 60 kilometres away.

For erection and assembly, disembarked USAAF personnel from this convoy, along with the volunteers from the AVG contingent on route to China via India, commenced the job of unpacking these aircraft from their crates.

RAAF personnel from No 3 S.F.T.S (Service Flying Training School) assisted in the assembly of these P40E aircraft, along with USAAF Personnel of the 8th Material Squadron (7thBG) and 75 AVG volunteers from the SS Bloemfontein.

Their assembly of these eighteen P-40E's was commenced immediately with the first P-40E, 41-5332 assembled and flown on the 02/01/42, this being the first flight of a P-40E Warhawk in Australia, pictured below.







P-40E #3, 41-5334, was the third P-40E aircraft to be flown in Australia. GRB Collection

By the 12th January 1942, 15 were ready for combat with two more nearing completion or being rectified of faults and damage, (40-666 with wing tip damage, and 41-5314).<sup>129</sup>

Despite several problems, including the supply of Prestone coolant for their radiators and the lack of a rudder for one of the aircraft, training commenced. Because of the nature of its destination, to reinforce the existing fighting units in theatre, the Unit was designated as the 17th Pursuit Squadron (Provisional). Additional pilots evacuated from the Philippines joined the unit.

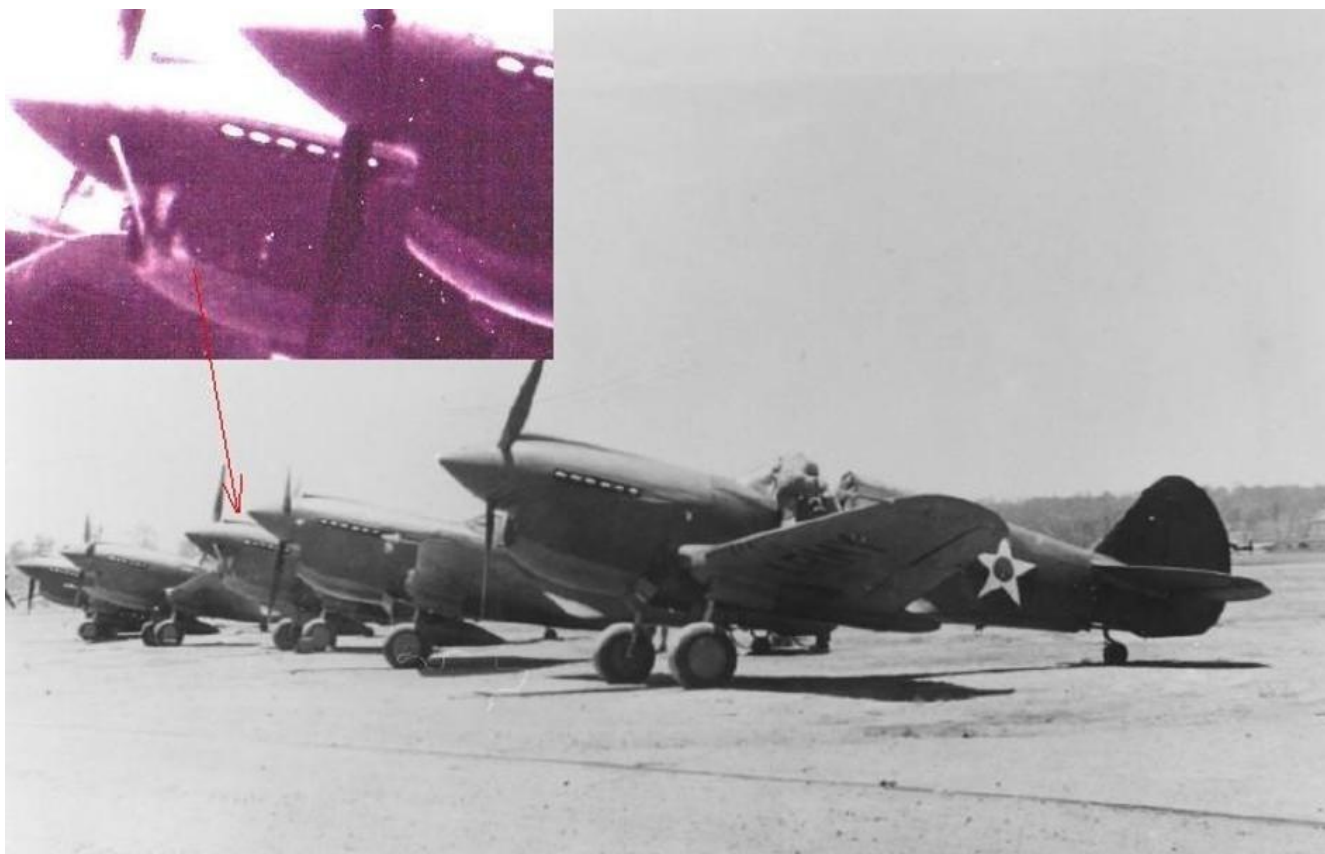
### **The journey north**

The squadron was ready to deploy by the 16th January 1942. However by then, the Philippine air route had been severed by this time at Borneo by advancing Japanese Forces.

It was therefore decided to reinforce USAAF forces in Java with the intent to re-open the route when sufficient forces, then on their way from the USA, would allow it.

They left Amberley in two flights, one of nine P-40Es led by a C-40 flown by Capt "Pappy" Gunn and one with eight P-40Es lead by two RAAF Fairey Battles to Rockhampton as part of their first leg.





The third P-40E in line, #14, 41-663 was Sprague's Shark mouthed P-40E named "J.C.Penny-Lou" used in Java, and maintained by his Crew Chief, Master Sgt Lynman Goltry.

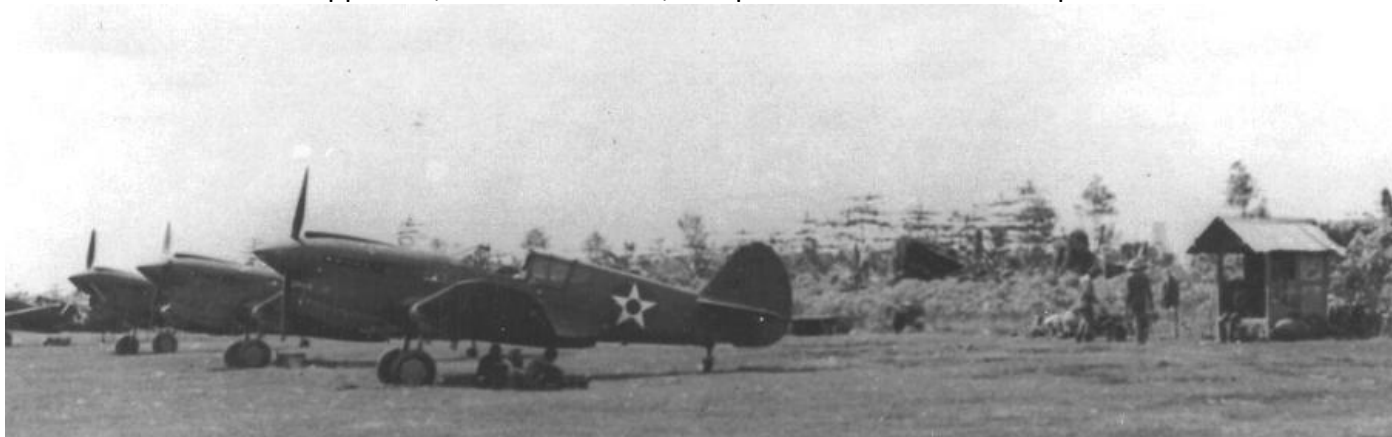
All arrived, however one crash-landed by 2nd Lt. Carl Geiss, (40-667 #6) which resulted in the force being reduced to sixteen P-40Es. Following refuelling, the Squadron flew onto Townsville for an overnight stop. Here another aircraft (40-663 #14) was damaged on landing by 2nd Lt Bryan Brown.

The following day, the squadron flew onto Cloncurry and then onto Daly Waters for another overnight stop. Here another P-40E was damaged. The following day, the 19th January 1942, they landed at Darwin. Here they waited for several days pending maintenance staff, who were flown up by RAAF DC2s to service the aircraft and for one of the Veteran Philippine pilots (1stLt.Gerald McCallum in 41-5333 #10) to recover from illness.

They departed for Java on the 26th January 1942 from Darwin, where they came under ADBA Command for the defence of Java. With minimal loss, the route had been proven that P40Es could be air ferried to reinforce USAAF Forces in the Far East.

### **"Over there"**

I considered writing the diary as a story, but my feeling was to leave it in its original form, so it would reflect the businesslike approach, sans all emotion, and professionalism of the Squadron.



17<sup>th</sup> PS (Prov) Squadron Photographed on arrival at Bilbing Java.



USAAF Ground crews practice for Java, ground camouflage at Amberley RAAF Station with one of the new arrivals

**Thus hereon, is that lost 17<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Provisional) diary.....**

(Reel#A0723 typed verbatim Gordon Birkett @2005)

Doc#1922

Jan 14—Maj Sprague instructed to organise the 17<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Provision) with 17 P-40E type airplanes, 17 Pilots, 17 Crew chiefs, 17 Armourers, 1 Line Chief and First Sergeant, and three Radiomen.

Jan16-24

Combat Echelon departed Brisbane in two flights. Captain Gunn in a Beechcraft escorted the 1<sup>st</sup> Flight (Sprague) and a Fairey Battle escorted the second Flight (Coss). Route-Rockhampton (Geis landed without flaps and brakes, ground looped at end of the runway).

Townsville (Brown's landing gear collapsed cracking up airplane). Squadron then proceeded to Cloncurry where the second flight remained overnight. The first flight proceeded to Daly Waters and Darwin.





## A RAAF Fairey Battle

The Second Flight arrived Darwin the next day. The landing gear on Kruzel's airplane collapsed on a practice flight (41-5334 #03 GRB). The number of airplanes available for flying at Darwin- 14

Remained at Darwin awaiting instructions from Headquarters as to ultimate destination of Squadron and availability of escort airplanes. The Squadron finally departed for Koepang (Irwin sick, remained with plane- Trout remained at Darwin because of sickness).

First Flight departed Koepang same day without escort airplane, remaining overnight at Waingapoe. First Flight arrived Soerabaja, Jan 25.



Jan 26—several alert missions to investigate friendly unidentified airplanes. Sprague leading flight of four airplanes (correction six) flew out to sea to escort crippled submarine. Weather bad. Neri spun in, lost right ear and suffered deep cuts on face, otherwise OK. Decided to use Madioen as Depot.

Feb1—Moved to Djombang—Twelve airplanes now available—13 pilots

Feb3—Major Sprague flew to Bandeong to arrange for transportation pay, reports and operational matters. Squadron encountered first Nip planes. Coss brought down one fighter and Hennon downed a bomber. Rowland was killed in action.

Feb4—Maj Sprague returned from Bandeong. Sprague led a four-ship formation to protect Marblehead out to sea. One hundred and fifty miles out flight was recalled. Bad weather coming into field. Sneaked in from south.

Flight performed excellently in landing on mussy field. Capt Reed directed operations from ground. Lt. Guertz Dutch as liaison Officer. Capt Hall Medical Officer.

Feb5—Maj Sprague leading, was ordered into the air about 09:30. We climbed to 22,000 feet over Soerabaja. The ground station mentioned bombers low over Ngoro and low over Malang. Both reports concerned our own bombers. No contacts.

Landed all nine--- at 11.30. Three P-40s landed at Soerabaja. One was damaged. Maj Sprague led two of them to the field.

New Arrivals: Capt Lane, Lts Gallienne, Muckley, Hague and Parker.

Seven planes were destroyed at Bali. Only one pilot (Lt Landry) is missing. Major Sprague then flew to Malang to obtain an objective folder

Feb6—No combat missions performed. Capt Reed (Marine Corps) was killed when his engine quit upon landing. Capt Reed was buried at Djombang same day.



Feb7—In the early morning, Capt Coss flew to Soerabaja and led in a flight of four planes from Soerabaja. Later in the day Lt Jackson returned to Soerabaja by truck and returned with another P-40. This brought the squadron strength to 22 planes. The new officers arriving were 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts Oliver, Reynolds, Jackson, Johnson, Ryan, Hoskyn, McWherter, Egenes and Williams.

At 11.10, the ADC reported one bomber over Soerabaja and Major Sprague and Lts Gilmore, Kiser and Muckley took off to intercept it. At 11:25, the ADC ordered off the last two flights to intercept six pursuit planes approaching Soerabaja from the north. Capt Lane, Lts Gallienne, Kruzel and Thompson, the third flight, and Lts McCallum, Blanton, Dale and Hague, the fourth flight, took off. All flights circled Soerabaja at about 20 to 24 thousand feet for an hour and a half, but no one saw an enemy plane. Lt Gallienne made a forced landing on the outskirts of Soerabaja, due to engine failure and wrecked the plane. Lt Gallienne was unhurt.

Lt Muckley was forced to land at Soerabaja due to failure of the propeller pitch control, but the plane was undamaged.

At 13.30 Lts McCallum, Blanton, Dale and Hague took off and patrolled at 18,000 feet between Soerabaja and Ngoro for two hours. Nothing was sighted.

At 14.15, Major Sprague and Lts Hennon, Kiser, Stauter, Capt Coss and Lt Kruzel took off and patrolled north of Malang at about 18,000 feet for two hours and saw no enemy planes. At end of the flying day there were a total of 21 P-40s. Twenty of them at Ngoro and one at Soerabaja. Of the twenty-one planes there were sixteen ready for combat flights.

Feb8—At 07.30 Maj Sprague took off to intercept a reported enemy reconnaissance plane south of Madoera. Maj Sprague saw no enemy plane.

“A” and “B” flights took off at 10:00 to intercept reported enemy formation of bombers. At 10.35 “C” flight took off to intercept a reported formation of enemy planes that were heard flying very very high.

At 11:20 “D” flight took off to give protection to the other three flights while landing.

None of the flights were able to make contact with the enemy. All planes returned safely from the missions.

At 13.45, Hennon, McWherter, Egenes and Thompson took off to patrol over the field at 10,000 feet. They were shut out from the field by rain and circled by way of Malang to come in from the south. The second element was separated from the first, south of Malang. Hennon and McWherter circled back to the north and landed at Ngoro at 15:20. Thompson and Egenes were reported by the ADC as having landed near Djomber in a cornfield, undamaged and very low on gasoline. Two more pilots arrived at Soerabaja in P-40s. The pilots were Reagon and Hayes.

(Doc#1923)

Feb9—At Six o'clock Lt Gilmore took off to find a Enemy Reconnaissance Plane that we expected to return over the same route on which one had been observed on the preceding two mornings. He returned at 08:00 and reported that he had seen no enemy planes.



At 0600 Lt Blanton took-off to go to Soerabaja and lead back Lts Turner and Hynes to Ngoro, making the radio check with the ground station enroute. The three returned about 0700hrs.

At 1050 "A", "B", "C" and "D" flights took off to intercept a reported formation of enemy bombers at 0-35. "A" flight consisted of McCallum, Oliver, Blanton and Parker. "B" flight: Coss, McWherter, Gilmore and Hague. "C" flight: Dale, Jackson, Kruzel and Williams. "D" flight: Kiser, Hoskyn, Stauter and Ryan.

The Squadron got pretty well stretched out by the time it had climbed to 23000 feet and when the enemy formation of 18 bombers was sighted by Lt Williams, his warning was not understood by all the pilots and contact was made with the bombers by only 5 pilots.

Capt Coss, Lts Williams, Lt Jackson, Lt McWherter and Lt Hague each made a individual attacks on the formations which had split into two flights of eight each. Lt McWherter had the left engine of one bomber smoking momentarily.

One enemy bomber was reported by ADC as going down north east of Soerabaja.

Capt Coss, Lt Williams, Lt Hague and Lt Jackson all made at least one attack on the bombers, Lt McWherter made four attacks-All pilots returned safely.

Lt Hennon left by car at 06:30 to go to Djemer and supervise the taking off of the two planes forced landed down there, and to fly one of them back. We received word from Hennon late in the afternoon that he was returning next Morning.

Feb10—at 0630 Major Sprague took off to make the radio check with the ground station. He returned thirty minutes with the radio receiver out. Lt Blanton took off at 0730, made the radio check and returned thirty minutes later. At 0830 Lts Hennon and Egenes returned with two P-40s that had been down at the cornfield.

At 10.55 the squadron took off to patrol north and east of Soerabaja. Major Sprague led the squadron. "A" flight was composed of Major Sprague, Gilmore, Hennon, and Johnson. "B" flight was composed of Capt Coss, Lt McWherter, Lt Kruzel, and Lt Reagon. Reagon failed to take off due to trouble in starting his engine. "C" flight consisted of Lt McCallum, Lt Hayes, Lt Blanton and Lt Reynolds. "D" flight consisted of Kiser, Stauter, Muckley and Jackson.

At 11.30 Major Sprague ordered "C" flight to return to base and at intervals the other flights returned. No more missions were flown this day.

16 planes were in commission of a total of 23. (End of Doc#1924)

Feb11—At 0600 Lt Muckley took off to make a radio check and returned 30 minutes later with his transmitter out. Lt McCallum made the radio check.



At 10.30 the squadron took off to patrol north east of Soerabaja. The first flight was made up of Major Sprague, Lts Fuch, Hennon and Morehead. 2<sup>nd</sup> Flight McCallum, Gambonini, Muckley and Williams. 3<sup>rd</sup> Dale, Parker, Gilmore and Oliver.

No enemy were sighted.

At 2:00pm word was received that there was a flight of P-40s at Pasirian and Maj Sprague, Lts McCallum, and Dale flew down and led them back. There were 9 P-40s there, but one of them had landed on its belly (piloted by Lt Fields) and Lt Adkins had nosed up on landing and bent its prop. The seven other planes were led back to Ngoro. Their pilots were: Capt Mahony, and Lts Johnson, Dockstader, Wahl, Lund, Caldwell, and Irwin. This brought our total to 30 P-40s, of which 25 P-40s were in commission.

The two at Pasirian have not been counted in this total.

Feb12—At 0600 Lt Kruzel took off and made the radio check. At 0630 Lt Dale and Lt McWherter took off to look for the enemy recon plane, but none was reported or sighted.

At 11:15 the squadron took off and patrolled east of Soerabaja. The first flight was composed of Major Sprague, Hoskyn, Hennon, and Ryan. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts McCallum, Hayes, Gilmore, and Reynolds: 3<sup>rd</sup>: Lts Kiser, Jackson, Kruzel and Reardon. 4<sup>th</sup> Flight: Capt Coss, Lts Stauter, Egenes, and Hynes. 5<sup>th</sup> Flight: Capt Mahony, Lts Hague, Irwin, and Johnson. 6<sup>th</sup> Flight: Lts Dale, McWherter, Muckley and Turner.

No enemy planes were seen on the flight.

At 14:00 Lts McCallum and Gilmore flew to Pasirian to lead back + reported flight of 7 P-40s but found that they were A-24s (dive bombers).

At 1430 Lt Blanton flew to Soerabaja to lead back Lt Gallienne who was bringing back No 18 which had been repaired. At 1500 Lt Thompson flew a plane to Madioen to have the hydraulic system repaired, and to remain there overnight. *(GRB... On landing he actually collided with truck and killed a native, washing out ship. Noted on Fisher Diary pages on)*

Feb13—At 0630 Lt Kruzel and Oliver took off to make radio check, to check on weather, and to try to intercept the expected enemy recon plane. They saw no enemy plane and radio check was unsatisfactory. Capt Lane took off at 0750 and made the radio check.

Malang expected an attack and so "A" and "B" flights patrolled there from 1200 to 1345. "C" and "D" flights patrolled from 1315 to 1515.

"A" flight consisted of: Maj Sprague and Lts Johnsen, Gilmore, and Lund. "B" flight was composed of Capt Coss and Lts Hoskyn, Egenes, and Hynes. Capt Mahony, Lt Hague, Lt Irwin, and Lt Hennon made up "C" flight. "D" flight consisted of Capt Lane, Lt Reynolds, Gambonini, and Fuchs. "E" Flight: Lts McCallum, Johnson, Blanton, and Caldwell. "F" Flight: Lts Dale, Wahl, Kruzel, and Oliver.

No enemy planes were sighted by the flights patrolling. "E" and "F" flights remained on alert. Lt Thompson returned from Depot.

We had a total of 23 planes, of which 16 were in commission.

Summary of Victories to date: 3 Zero fighters. 1 Seversky, 1 ME110, 2 Heavy Bombers.

***Doc#1926 ends***

***End of first diary,.....***

**Next Diary starts Doc#1927**

Feb10—The two P-40s, which were forced down in Djember were taken off from a road successfully and landed at home base.

The Commanding Officer of the ADC at Soerabaja, Lt Col Ente Von Gils, by telephone, discussed with Major Sprague possible base of enemy from which attacks have been coming.

At about 11:00am Maj Sprague took off with the 4 available flights in order to intercept possible enemy planes. Although enemy planes came over, no contact was made. All planes landed safely.

Phoned Bandeong concerning Lockheed's that were using this base as hideout. Request steps be taken because this practice may give position of field away.

Feb11—At about 07:00am enemy reconnaissance plane reported north of Madoera. At 08:40am ADC reported enemy coming from north heading west. Four flights went up to meet them, but results not recorded.----- Capt Mahony with 6 other pilots landed at Pasirian. Mahony, Lt Lund, Lt Dockstader, Lt Wahl, Lt Irwin, and Lt Caldwell came onto base. Lts Field and Adkins's ships were not in condition to come in with rest of flight and remained at Pasirian.

Feb12—A protective mission of 6 P-40s sent over Malang during morning at request of Maj Broadhurst. After their return, 24 planes up at 11:15 to intercept possible enemy planes. No planes sighted. Status of Personnel: Total of 47 Officers, including two Dutch and two Transport pilots. 2 Officers in Hospital (Bound and Neri). 2 in Bali (Dutton and Coleman) Total of 81 Enlisted man, plus Dutch Radio Detail of 3. Of these, 3 on duty in Soerabaja, 3 ill in Quarters, 4 in Hospital.

Feb13—Two ships sent up to attempt again to catch enemy's early reconnaissance. No success. Protection Mission of eight ships over Malang from 12:00 to 3:00.

At 04.00pm 24 planes total in commission. 7 not in com. 31 planes in all. Of the 7 not in commission, 1 was undergoing 100hr inspection, one with booster coil burned out, one with faulty landing gear, one grounded at Pasirian.

Feb14—Status of planes: Total 31, 26 in commission, 5 out.

Feb15—Maj Sprague departed for Bandoeng to receive instructions for special mission. Lts McCallum, Coss, Mahony, Kiser, Kruzel. Egenes, Hennon and Muckley departed for Madioen to load twenty-Kilo bombs (Four per plane) and departed Madioen for Batavia. Muckley cracked up his airplane on landing

Feb16—Remained on ground awaiting instructions. (*GRB- Major Fisher arrived to command interceptor Command on this day--GRB*)

Feb17—With Sprague leading, the flight took off (Eight Planes) and flew a course of 325 degrees over the Java Sea at 500 feet with light rain. Arrived over checkpoint on coast. Ceiling raised. Very thick jungle below. Arrived over objective, Palembang Number 1 at 10.20. Attacked six Nip Army 97 fighters. Sprague, Kiser, McCallum, and Kruzel each downed a fighter.

Mahony and Kiser dive-bombed the airport. The remainder of the flight dropped their bombs at about ten thousand feet. Hennon then strafed the small boats on the river. The flight returned individually to Batavia, gassed and went on to Bandoeng.

All airplanes returned safely.

Feb18—Blanton led the squadron of 16 airplanes to intercept nine Nip bombers. At approximately 11:50 intercept was made.

Blanton, Mahony, Gilmore, and Irwin destroyed one bomber apiece. Zero fighters were encountered. Lt Adkins shot one Zero down. Lt Caldwell baled out safely.

Net results: Four bombers, one fighter. Loss one P-40

Feb19—Performed regular radio check and reconnaissance flights. Squadron was ordered off around nine o'clock but proved to be false alarm. Squadron again ordered off at 12:00.

Mahony and Coss's flight intercepted about eight Zero fighters and Kruzel, Hague, Lane and Mahony each bagged a Zero.

The bombers failed to reach their objective. Gilmore and Blanton bailed out, Fields still missing.  
Net results: Four Zeros. Loss three P-40s

Status of Airplanes:

24 here; 18 in

1 Batavia (left landing gear out)

1 Bandoeng (needs prestone)

1 Rice field (Wheels up landing)

4 crashed

31 total

Status of supplies

60 gal Prestone

64 gal Hydraulic Fluid

52580 gal Gas

143100 rds Ammunition end of Doc#1931

Docs#1932-1933 (per A24 written information can't read)

Status of Personnel:

Total Officers:

Pilots 48, staff 5

Present 45

Leave 1

Hosp 2

(Two officers, reported in) Bailed out 3.

Enlisted Men total on rolls 118

Present 98

Abs on duty 8

In quarters 7

Hospital 4

Feb20—At 06:15 to 06:30 AM Major Sprague and a flight composed of 15 other P-40s took off from this base to escort B-24s and A-24s (Dive Bombers) on a mission to bomb enemy plane, ship, troop, and material concentrations in Bali. Rendezvous with bombing ships was made at Malang, and the entire group proceeded to objective.

Bombing was carried out by the A-24s and B-24s directed against ships and barges in the straight at Bali. The P-40s patrolled above.

During and following the bombings, P-40s were attacked by zero fighters, and in the ensuing fights, 3 zeros were definitely shot down. One zero was strafed on the field at Denpasar.

At least six ships were spotted in the straight, and barges were seen along the shore. The bombers scored hits with result that 4 ships were left smoking, plus one enemy cruiser or destroyer which seemed to be burning, and 2 other ships disabled, unable to move under their own power.

Our flights were broken up and planes returned to base in small groups and individually. Four of our P-40s failed to return, and another (P-40E #6 "Colleen"), piloted by Lt Hayes, cracked up at field on attempting to land. It had been shot up during the fight.





Of the four missing Pilots, two, Lt Stauter, and Lt Johnson, reported in by telephone as having cracked up, but as safe.

**Major Sprague** and Lt Gallienne have not yet reported in (4:00pm).

Planes left at base went out on several sorties after reported zeros and Jap bombers, but no contact was made here with the enemy.

Alarm at 4:00pm concerning 9 unidentified planes high over Malang. Proved to be Japanese planes attacking Malang. Four flights sent up—results yet to be reported.

Status of Personnel: - As of 4:00pm

On roll Pilots:	43
Transport Pilots:	2
Staff:	3
Total:	<u>48</u>

Feb22—At 7:24 one flight took off to cover field. 07:30 2 flights were sent up but no contact and at 09:20 2 more flights took off.

One of our planes was shot up by strafers at Pasirian. We made no contact with the enemy this day.

Feb23—Captain Mahony took charge today and appointed Sgt Nicols as 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt.  
26 Officers and 20 enlisted men were ordered to another destination.

McCallum's flight registered hits on bombers and fighter planes. Saw 8 bombers and 5 pursuit planes. Blanton got 1 bomber; he saw 15 "O" and 9 bombers.

Feb24—Lt Gallienne left for unknown destination with 20 enlisted me.

Four fighters sent up. Kiser at 10:00 saw 10 bombers of the 97 Type. He shot one down.

10:41 aircraft was very active.

Dockstader crippled one bomber.

Capt Mahony was called to the location of General Brereton.

Lt McCallum now in command.

Feb25—Lts Reynolds and Hennon got a zero apiece. 13 planes took off.

Four zero fighters attacked one flight but they were able to dive away. All enemy airplanes are coming in at 20000 ft and we are unable to get to them.

McCallum is unreported as at 14:00 someone saw him apparently on his way down.

Another mission was sent up to sweep but sighted nothing.

17 planes 14 in commission

20 pilots left

3 attached airplanes

5 casual officers attached. C-53 planes

61 enlisted men

Feb26—twelve planes took off at 9:30 and sighted enemy bombers and fighters. Lt Hennon shot down one "O" fighter. Six Brewster fighters arrived at our field to work with us.

*Dutch? Intel?* phone for protection but Maj Fisher said No No.

Information came in that we are receiving more Dutch reinforcements. Dutch Hurricanes are supposed to be arriving tomorrow.

Status of Planes 17

12 in commission

6 Hurricanes arrived later this evening piloted by the Dutch.

### ***Doc#1947(Diary leaps to there)***

Feb27—The squadron was not in action on the morning of February 27<sup>th</sup>, but remained on alert. A and B flights took off at 16:15 to escort 3 A-24s to bomb a Japanese convoy which was headed towards Java about 40 miles at sea.

No enemy aircraft were encounter, and both flights returned to base at 19:45. A flight was composed of Lt Kiser, Morehead, Fuchs and Lund. B flight was composed of Lts Dale, R S Johnson, Adkins, Dockstader, Kruzel and Caldwell. The Japanese fleet was engaged by the Allied Fleet south west of Baween Island and heavy fighting was in progress. The A-24s scored direct hits on a 14000-ton transport, which sank soon after. Six additional Officers were ordered by Major Fisher to report to a secret destination.

Feb28—At 09:00 3 flights of P-40s and 4 Brewster were ordered in the air to intercept enemy pursuit.

Contact was not made, and all returned to base at 11:00. At 14:10 10 P-40s and 4 Brewsters were ordered into the air to intercept enemy bombardment. 18 enemy bombers and 9 zero fighters were contacted. 9 zeros attacked the Brewsters, but all Brewsters got away safely. One Brewster encountered motor failure and was forced to jump.

The P-40s tried to intercept the formation, but again they were still too high. The squadron had 13 ships, of which 12 were in commission at the end of this day's operation.

Many P-40s were being forced to return to the field because of motor trouble. The planes had had about 150 hours of combat put on them with little or no maintenance.

All ships were forced to remain on alert all day; and this work could not be done. On the evening of February 28<sup>th</sup>, Major Fisher gave us orders to plan a raid at dawn to strafe the Japanese invasion fleet and beachhead at Rembang, Java.

The mission was to be performed by all available P-40s, 4 Brewsters and 6 Hurricanes. Plans were formulated to attack first with P-40s, then Hurricanes and then the Brewsters flying in a string.

“A” Flight, Lts Kiser, Adkins and R S Johnson.

“B” Flight, Lts Dale, Caldwell and McWherter

“C” Flight, Lts Kruzel, Reagan and Fuchs

### ***End of Doc#1947***

### ***Doc#1936***

Mar1—Kiser, Adkins, R S Johnson, Dale, Caldwell, Fuchs, Kruzel, McWherter and Reagan took off 05:30am on strafing mission together with 4 Brewsters and 6 Hurricanes. Objective was Japanese landing on north end of Java about 70 miles west of Sourabaja. Nips had about 30 transports and a large number of troop barges, many of their troops had landed during the preceded night. AA fire from the ground on the coast was intense. There was the intense AA Fire from the transports.



All of our planes participated in the strafing-one damaged resulted in the loss of three P-40s (Caldwell, Reagan, Adkins)

Adkins plane caught fire and he bailed out successfully about a mile inland. To date no further reports on Caldwell or Reagan. - It is believed that Reagan may have bailed out over friendly territory and that Caldwell crashed into the Java Sea.All remaining planes had landed by about 07:40

Mar1—At about 09:00 ten Nip “Zeros” caught our planes on ground and each made about 30 strafing run attacks. Almost all planes either burnt or destroyed beyond repair.

Mar1—About 10:10 remainder of Squadron was sent to Jichakarta and at 17:30 were sent out by B-17E's to Broome Australia. Landed Australia 6 hours after take off.

*End of Doc#1936*

### ***Doc#1937 Extract***

The 17<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Provisional) was formed by order of General Brereton on January 14<sup>th</sup>, 1942. Major Charles A Sprague was designated as Squadron Commander, and given full authority to organise a combat squadron with personnel and equipment then available at Amberley Field, Brisbane Australia.

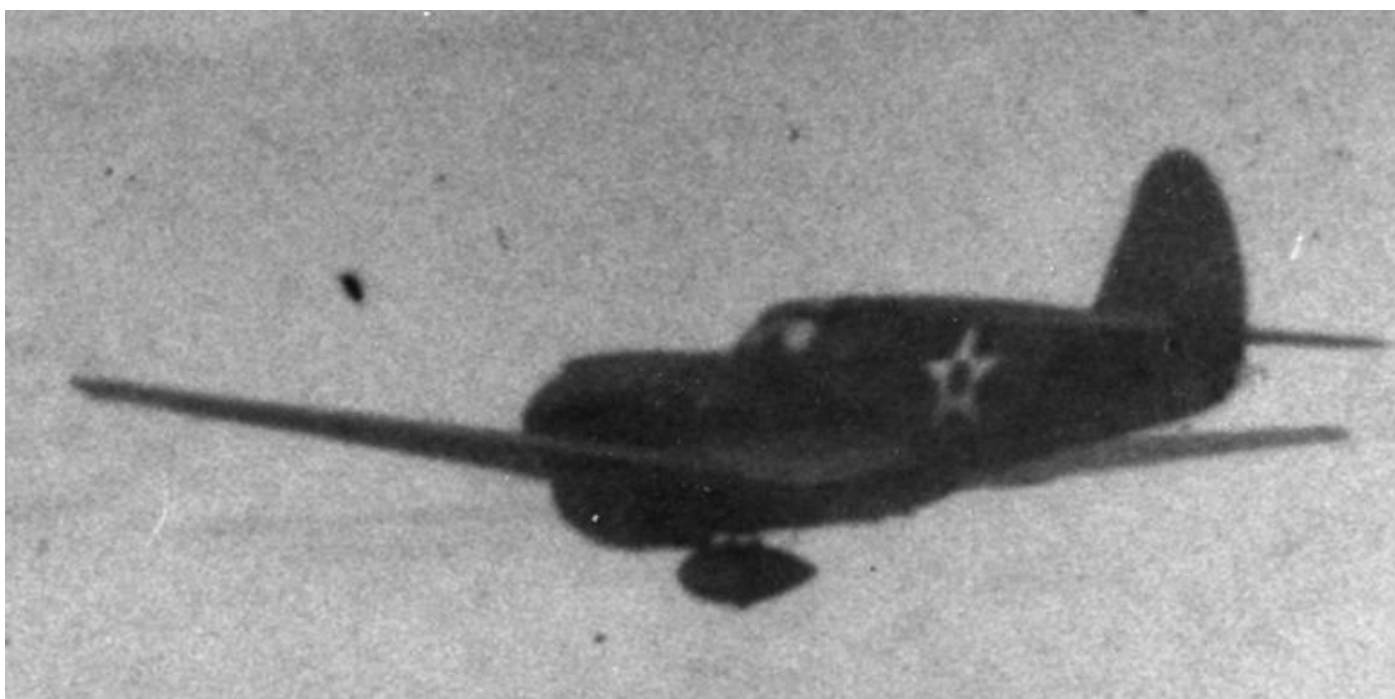


There were 17 P-40Es ready for combat, and so the force was to consist of 17 pilots to man these ships, 17 crew chiefs, 17 armourers, 1 line chief, 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant and three radio men. 13 of the 17 pilots were officers of pursuit squadrons in the Philippine Islands flown to Australia from the Bataan Peninsula December 31<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup> 1942.

1<sup>st</sup> Lt Coss, McCallum, Blanton, Dale, Kiser, Kruzel, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts Hennon and Rowland were members of the 17<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Gilmore, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lts Geis, of the 20<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron. 1<sup>st</sup> Lt Neri of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pursuit Squadron, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Irwin of the 21<sup>st</sup> Pursuit Squadron; were officers from the combat zone.

With these officers as members of the squadron, 4 pilots having just arrived from Hamilton Field, California (2<sup>nd</sup> Lts Trout, Thompson, Brown, and Stauter, were added to make up the 17 Combat Officers).

***End of Extract GRB***



**Author: Post note as of "who wrote it":**

Following further research per "originator" of this document series of the 17<sup>th</sup> PS (Prov) Diary, comments per then Major Nathaniel Blanton 0-401361, per correspondence July 1942 to 5<sup>th</sup> AAF Historian, confirms that, I quote" *The squadron record as recorded in the diary (The only record known to me as recorded as official) was kept by Lt Jack D Dale.*

There appears to be two styles, therefore I surmise that both Sprague (not absolutely sure) and Dale contributed the above 17<sup>th</sup> PS (Prov) diary entries.

From here-on I was in contact with William H Bartsch, who gratefully incorporated a fair amount of research I derived from Australian Sources and supplied sources ex USAF AHRA.

The Book resulting from this: **"Everyday a nightmare"** American Pursuit Pilots in the Defence of Java 1941-1942: ISBN-13:978-1-60344-176-6

A new book is in progress concerning the 5<sup>th</sup> Bomber Command in Java and Australia.

## Post note: RAAF Pilot identity on Lombok Island uncovered

As to the body of the RAAF pilot found buried on Lombok Island, it was in fact no other than **Lt Colonel Charles "Bud" Sprague, DSC, Serial Number O-020769 USAAF**, the first commander of the 17<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Provisional). His remains were identified and confirmed in Singapore in 1946 from denture records, and as such, exhumed and interned in India in 1948, before being re-exhumed and re-buried on American Soil.

From Captain to Major and promotion to Lieutenant Colonel on the day of his death, all condensed in a period of just over a month, confirmed the ferocity of the early Pacific war.

**The confusion:** the RAAF Stores at 3SFTS had provided flying and safety gear (Parachutes/Life Vests) from their stocks for the 17<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron (Provisional) Pilots returned from the Philippines in January 1942.



CHRON NO. 42-1-14 A-1294 HIST. NO. HEADQUARTERS 15TH AIR FORCE  
 HISTORICAL CORPS  
 SUBJECT CLASS \_\_\_\_\_ ORGANIZATION - UNITED STATES ARMY  
 TITLE OF DOCUMENT \_\_\_\_\_ 17th Pursuit Squadron (Provisional)  
 DATE OF DOCUMENT \_\_\_\_\_ FILE NO. 5AF AGO 322.09  
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 FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TYPED BY L. E. Henderson TO \_\_\_\_\_ CHECKED BY \_\_\_\_\_  
 REPRODUCED TRUE COPY: \_\_\_\_\_

HEADQUARTERS  
 AIR CORPS TROOPS  
 January 14, 1942

17th PURSUIT SQUADRON (PROVISIONAL)  
 OFFICERS

NAME	RANK	SER. NO.
X Sprague, K. A.	Captain	O-20769
Hannon, William J.	2nd Lieut	O-405549 - Bankstown P-4 SO 54
Robert, Robert A.	2nd Lieut	O-424955 - Changed to 1st Sq.
Schaefer, William C.	2nd Lieut	O-421136
W.D. Gies, C. P.	2nd Lieut	O-407081 - Brisbane permanent
Rowland, James	2nd Lieut	O-418435
X McCallum, Gerald	1st Lieut	O-388622
Thompson, Ray L.	2nd Lieut	O-421139 - 1st P. Sq. P-4 SO 51
X Gilmore, E. B.	2nd Lieut	O-401165
X Brown, Eric	2nd Lieut	O-421033 - Changed to 1st Sq.
Coss, Walter L.	1st Lieut	O-388651 - Bankstown, P-4 SO 54
X Irvine, B.S.	2nd Lieut	O-399732 - Bankstown, P-4 SO 54
X Dale, J. D.	2nd Lieut	O-401140 - Bankstown, P-4 SO 54
X Blanton, H. H.	2nd Lieut	O-401131 - Bankstown, P-4 SO 54
X Heri, Frank V.	2nd Lieut	O-395658
Trout, Chester E.	2nd Lieut	O-421145
X Kruszal, J. J.	2nd Lieut	O-401183 - Bankstown, P-4 SO 54

RADIO OPERATORS

Private Omar L. Ferguson, 19045593 - Hq & Hq Sq., 7th Bomb Gp.  
 S/Sgt. Louis A. Noise, 6556043  
~~Private Robert A. Schaefer, 421136 - 9th Bombardment Squadron.~~  
 Private Clinton J. Washburn, 20924635 - 22nd Bombardment Squadron.

-----006-----

17 Aviators from 55 on "POLK"  
17 Crew Chiefs from 55 on "POLK"  
1 Line Chief from 55 on "POLK"  
3 Radio Operators above  
18 SW & 17 Pilots, 17th Pur. Sq. (Prov).

NOTE: All passages underlined are pencil notations.

A TRUE COPY:  
 M. J. DAVEN  
 MAJ/1. J. DAVEN,  
 Captain, Air Corps.

GOC No. 302

## Incidentals "where did some of those Pilots go" 1942 (Per source data Reel #A7501 Doc#733)

- Jesse Hague went onto the 41<sup>st</sup> PS/35<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-400s (He did several 8mm colour movie films at the time)
- McWherter went onto the HQ Flight 35<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-400s
- Egenes went onto the 40<sup>th</sup> PS/35<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-400s
- Adkins went onto the 39<sup>th</sup> PS/35<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-400s
- Fuchs went onto the 40<sup>th</sup> PS/35<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-400s
- Roger Williams onto the 40<sup>th</sup> PS/35<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-400s
- Ed Gilmore went on to 4<sup>th</sup> Air Depot
- Turner went onto the 41<sup>st</sup> PS / 35<sup>th</sup> FG flying P-400s
- Richard Dennis onto the 8<sup>th</sup> PS/49<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-40Es
- Bernard Oliver onto 40<sup>th</sup> PS/35<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-400s
- Chester Trout onto 40<sup>th</sup> PS/35<sup>th</sup> PG flying P-400s

Gordon R Birkett @2018

## **Odd Stories: A near fatal error: the attack on an Enemy submarine; 17<sup>th</sup> April, 1945.** By Gordon R Birkett @2018

*Six German surface raiders had operated in Australian waters at different times between 1940 and 1943 sowing mines. These ships sank a small number of merchant ships and the Australian light cruiser HMAS Sydney.*

*Major Japanese submarine offensives were carried out against shipping off the Australian east coast from May to July 1942 and finally from January to July 1943. The Japanese had submarines operated in Australian waters from January 1942 until July 1944 (mindful of the mini sub attack on Sydney Harbour).*

*A single German submarine, U-862, one of several operating out of Singapore, also carried out attacks in Australian waters in late 1944 and early 1945<sup>130</sup>.*

One of several Operation Reserve Squadron in the RAAF's Home Command, formed in the dark days of 1942 in response of this threat (Nos 66, 67, 71 and 73 Squadrons flying Ansons in the Maritime reconnaissance role)), No 67 Squadron RAAF was still flying Avro Ansons out of Laverton Air Station in Victoria in mid 1945.

The Unit establishment of No 67 Squadron RAAF was nineteen Ansons, with some fitted with Radar. Some twenty-one Ansons were actually on hand with four to five unserviceable during April 1945.



### **Attack on HMAS Korowa by a No 67 Squadron Anson**

Having earlier on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 1945 been involved in a Naval Co-operation Exercise with HM Submarine "Virtue" honing their skills, they were all at a high level of ability and keenness.

Two of these No 67 Squadron aircraft, MK-T (EG487) and MK-R (W2542) were on a operational patrol three days later from Laverton Air Force Station per Duty Lav.8/17/2 and Lav.8/17/3 to conduct an anti-submarine Patrol and position and identify shipping from Wilson's Promontory to Mallacoota.

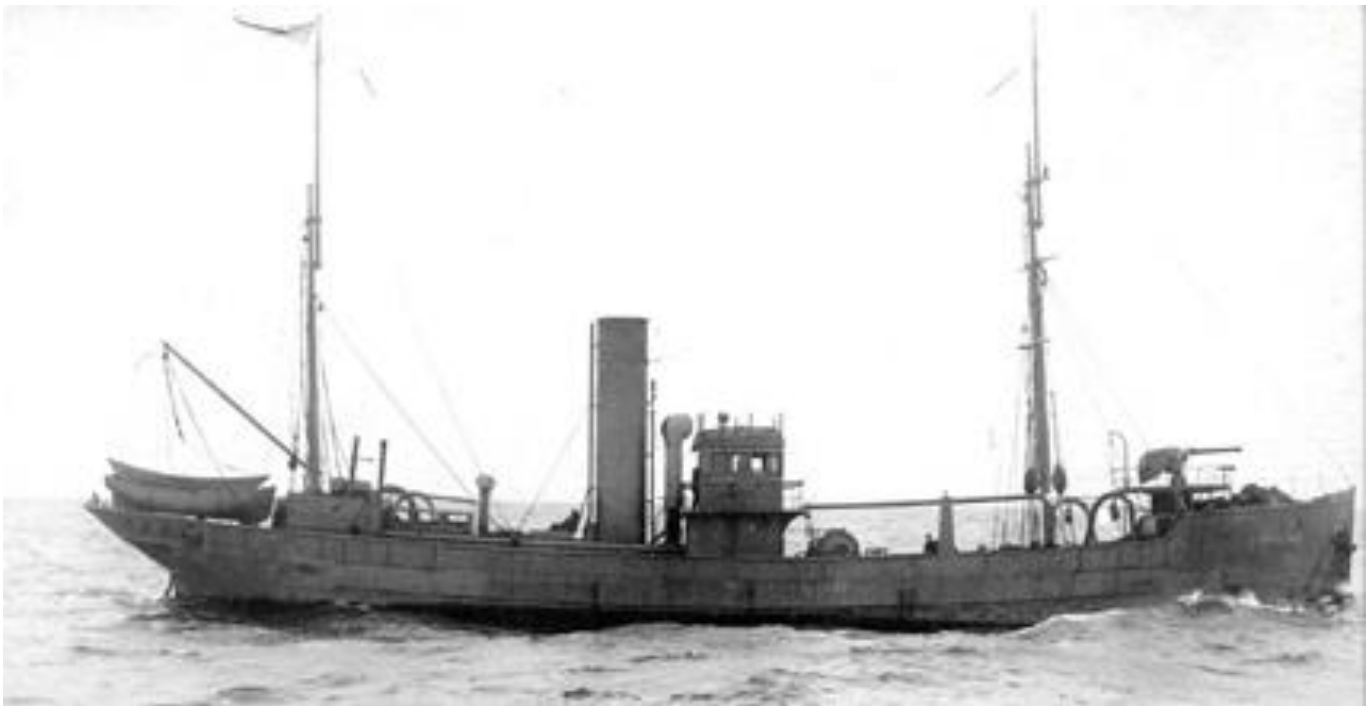
Lead aircraft was MK-T flown by Warrant Officer Malcolm Donald Smith, with the other aircraft, MK-R, flown by Flying Officer F W Dietrich. Take-off time was 2120hrs Zulu, 17<sup>th</sup> April 1945.

At position 39Degrees 05 minutes South and 146 Degrees 33 minutes East, HMAS Korowa was sighted at 0740K Hrs on a 050degree true north course.

*HMAS Korowa, Pendant Number FY79, was an auxiliary minesweeper operated by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) during World War II.*

*She was launched in 1919 by Cochrane and Sons Ltd at Selby as Edward McGuire. The ship operated in Australian waters from 1937, and was requisitioned by the RAN in September 1939.*





Similar in design and fit as HMAS Korowa, is the above Canadian Navy TR9

On approaching the ship, the lead aircraft sighted an object following the ship.

Assuming it was a periscope of an enemy submarine; he immediately commenced dive for a depth charge attack and dropped one 250 lb Depth Charge on the target.

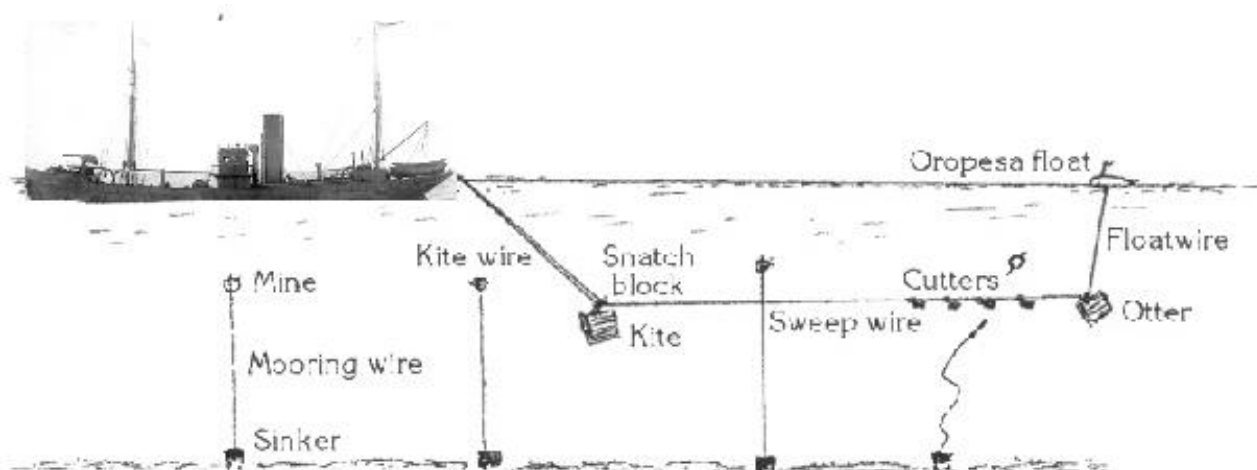
An attack report was sent immediately by radio, but then, the pilot noticed that the object trailing continued on the same course. After carrying out a closer investigation, he realised that he had attacked HMAS Korowa's towed anti mine paravane. He immediately cancelled his earlier report.

From the Navy prospective, without challenging or warning to the Ship, the aircraft came in a shallow dive, dropped its depth charge (set on shallow setting to explode).

The Depth Charge landed in the water and exploded about 50 yards from the starboard float in towards the ship.

The aircraft followed up with a further three dummy runs on its target. Despite the Naval crew trying to contact the aircraft with a 10 inch Signal Lamp and four inch Aldis Lamp, no acknowledgement or messages were exchanged with the aircraft.

HMAS Korowa was at the time carrying out a single MK1 Oropesa sweep for cutting moored contact mines from their tethers.



The Sweep consists of a single wire with a torpedo shaped-shaped float (the Oropesa) attached at the outer end. Attached to the end of the wire and to the underside of the Oropesa float is a multiplane steel 'Otter' (angled blades) which forces the float out to the quarter of the ship and keeps the wire at the requisite depth.

From the stern of the ship and attached to the wire is a 'Kite' (a similar steel contraption to the 'Otter' - the difference being the type of chain arrangement which alters the direction of the blades through the water), its purpose being to set the depth at which the sweep wire is to sweep.

The wire is serrated (specially made with barbs of wire protruding so that it has a cutting edge - and requiring leather gloves to handle it), and this acts as a saw against the mine's mooring wire.

The Pilot submitted his report on landing to the operations officer at Mallacoota, who cited in-experience of the pilot, however his good was his intention, had made a very serious mistake.

Hush Hush, per 67 Squadron A51 History sheet entry of the day: Nil sighting for that day.

Anson EG487 (T) W/O SMITH.	Nov. 8/17/2	162120Z	170005Z	
" W2542 (R) F/O DIETRICH.	Nov. 8/17/3	162120Z	170025Z	A/S Patrol "B". Nil Enemy Sightings.
		YAH.	MAL.	
		YAH.	MAL.	

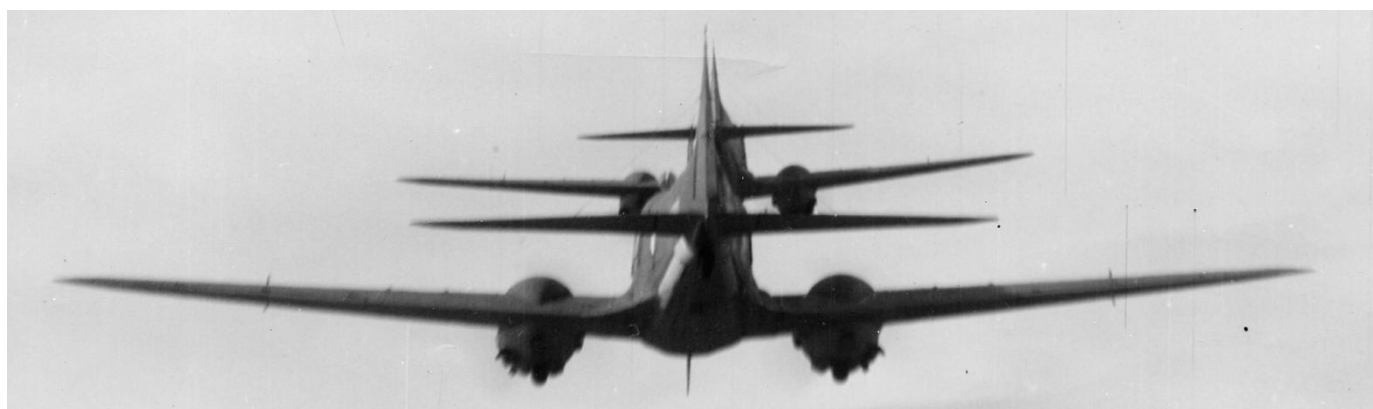
Later the report from the Operations Officer was passed onto the Commanding Officer, who later took the necessary disciplinary action against the Warrant Officer pilot. He was appointed with a commission effective 1<sup>st</sup> February 1945, as Pilot Officer, on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 1945.<sup>131</sup>

As for Anson EG487 MK-T, she ended her career later when she was landed with her undercarriage partially retracted at Laverton, Vic, on the 22nd July 1945. By a twist of fate, the pilot was Flying Officer F W Dietrich.

As for HMAS Korowa, the ship experienced severe concussion from the explosion; however neither the ship or sweep gear had suffered any damage. Later after war's end, she was returned to her owners in 1945 before being scrapped in 1954.

*Did you know, despite several false reports of landings all around Australia (From Sydney to Gulf of Carpentaria to the Far North of Australia) in WW2, the only documented Japanese force to land in Australia during World War II was a reconnaissance party that landed in the Kimberley region of Western Australia on 19th January 1944 to investigate reports that the Allies were building large bases in the region.*

*The party consisted of four Japanese officers on board a small fishing boat. It investigated the York Sound region for a day and a night before returning to Koepang in Timor on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1944.*



#### References:

NAA A50 History Sheets Number 67 Squadron, Jun 43 - Nov 45

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<https://www.ozatwar.com/japsubs/japsubs.htm>

<https://www.ozatwar.com/subsoz.htm>

<https://uboat.net/boats/u862.htm>

[https://ipfs.io/ipfs/QmXoyvizjW3WknFiJnKlWHCnL72vedxjQkDDP1mXWo6uco/wiki/Monsun\\_Gruppe.html](https://ipfs.io/ipfs/QmXoyvizjW3WknFiJnKlWHCnL72vedxjQkDDP1mXWo6uco/wiki/Monsun_Gruppe.html)

## **Odd Stories: RAAF Faithful Annie at War: No 67 Squadron RAAF**

By G R Birkett @2019

The Anson, known affectionately as "Faithful Annie", has a special place in RAAF history as more of them – 1,028 – were operated by the Service than any other type. It was also the RAAF's first low-wing monoplane, the first with a retractable undercarriage and with an enclosed gun turret. Royal Australian Air Force – 1,028 Ansons were operated by the Royal Australian Air Force, retired in 1955.

During the first half of 1943 Japanese submarines operated off the Australian east coast, sinking 16 ships and damaging several more. In response to these losses the Australian Government expanded the military's anti-submarine warfare (ASW) forces.

Three new RAAF maritime patrol units equipped with Avro Anson training aircraft, No. 66, No. 67 and No. 71 squadrons, were raised during this expansion.

While it was recognised that the Ansons lacked sufficient range and payload to be effective in the ASW role, superior aircraft were not available.

No. 67 Squadron was formed at RAAF Base Laverton on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1943 with a strength of 180 personnel and 14 Ansons. The squadron operated from Laverton and several other bases in Victoria to escort convoys and conduct anti-submarine patrols. It was later organised into two flights which operated alternately from Laverton and Mallacoota.



The squadron made a number of possible submarine sightings during the first months of 1943. Aircrew reported sighting submarines on 1st, 11th, 16th and 21st February but none of these boats were attacked.

On 11th April 1943 a No. 67 Squadron aircraft was escorting Convoy OC86 when it was attacked by Japanese submarine I-26, but did not find the attacker.

The next day two No. 67 Squadron Ansons protected the minesweeper HMAS Orara by attacking a submarine which they believed they had sighted near the ship.

No 67 Squadron continued to provide escort and anti-submarine patrols till the end of the war.

### **Loss of W2261**

No 67 Squadron RAAF 's Anson W2261, Coded MK-M, was detailed to take-off from No 1 Operating Base at Mallacoota at 2030hrs Zulu on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 1943. The take-off was delayed due to adverse weather resulting in its departure at 20145hrs Zulu.

The aircraft was tasked (Detail LAV24/245) to carry out an inner Anti-Submarine patrol on Force "U".

Crew for the detail was: Pilot: P/O Alan. Edgar Packer 410371, Navigator: F/Sgt Garnet Charles Cooper 408202 and WAG: Sgt Bruce. F. Duffy 409097



When preparing to hand over to the next detail, the starboard engine failed when it was at a height of only 500 feet. Weather conditions at the time included a cloud ceiling of 400-600 feet, with heavy rain squalls prevalent.

The port engine decided to fail as well soon after, forcing the pilot to prevent a stall by placing the aircraft into a glide to work out what was causing their engine failures. The pilot checked that his switches and fuel cocks were in the correct positions.

At 60 feet the port engine burst into life for a short moment, before dying again. It was no use, so the pilot then prepared for a ditching on the sea, 1035hrs EST.

The bomb load of four 100 pound A/S Bombs was not jettisoned in time when the aircraft, tail down, and at 60 knots, alighted successfully parallel between swells and slightly into the wind.

The force of the impact stunned both the pilot and WAG, but quickly the WAG regained conscience and opened up the aircraft's door.

He then returned to the front of the cockpit to see the Pilot slumped over the controls. He unharnessed him and managed to move him out onto the main plane of the aircraft.

The pilot came too almost immediately, and he and the WAG realised that the third member of the crew, the Navigator was missing. There was now a large hole in the starboard fuselage, where the Navigator, F/Sgt Cooper was sitting before the incident.

Both surviving crew members then remained on the wing without inflating their Aircraft stored Life raft as one of Force "U"'s escorts, HMAS Mildura, being only 3 miles distant to where the Anson had ditched, steamed over immediately to assist.



The Aircraft floundered and sank at 0110 hrs 21<sup>st</sup> June 1943, without finding F/Sgt Garnet Charles Cooper. The Ship's Engineer Officer on arrival and going inside the aircraft to search for the missing crew member, reported that the interior of the aircraft was considerably damaged due to the impact, with the wireless gear carrying forward and collapsing, all seats were collapsed, however the floor remained intact.

The rescue party from the ship hurriedly assisted the surviving crew off the main plane and into the boat, while the Ship's Engineer Officer, remaining in the aircraft now filling up to his chest height, retrieved various gear (Including the uninflated Life Raft, one flying suit and effects of the crew) whilst still searching for F/Sgt Cooper.



Ack Pic : Andy Murray



Ack Pic : Andy Murray

**Post note:** Sgt Bruce. F. Duffy 409097, despite surviving this accident and ditching, was later killed a few months later on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 1943 with three others, when Anson W2039 crashed into the sea during a right hand speed turn, at the junction of Mallacoota and Coleman's Inlet near Gypsy Point, Victoria.



# Curtiss HOBBY HABITEERS

## RAAF P-40E/E-1 Scalloping

Answering an ADF-Serials Face Book post: 23/11/2018  
<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10217378579278685&set=gm.1558647207570127&type=3&theater&ifg=1> :  
*Servicing of P-40E Kittyhawk A29-159 of 75 Sqn, at 7 Mile Drome, Port Moresby.*

In 1929, Curtiss-Wright was formed by the merger of companies founded by Glenn Curtiss, the father of US Naval aviation, and the Wright brothers, renowned for history's first flight. These technological pioneers ushered in the era of aviation and their trailblazing spirit made history.

Curtiss-Wright has changed dramatically over the past eight decades. Post War, Its new president, Roy Hurley, reduced the engineering group, effectively ending the company's airframe business, in 1950. Products of this company can still be found in the ADF. Notably, it was involved in equipping the remaining RAN FFG-7 Class Frigates, a range of valve and actuator configurations.

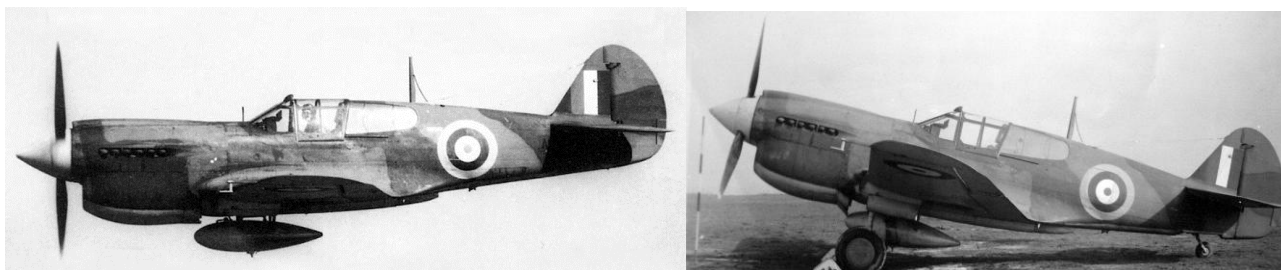


CW President, Thomas Morgan, is seen sitting on P-40D #1, in July 1941. Some 22 4 gunned P-40Ds were built. All P-40D/Es built from July 1941-January 1942 were finished in the 1941 Olive Drab/Neutral Grey Scheme.

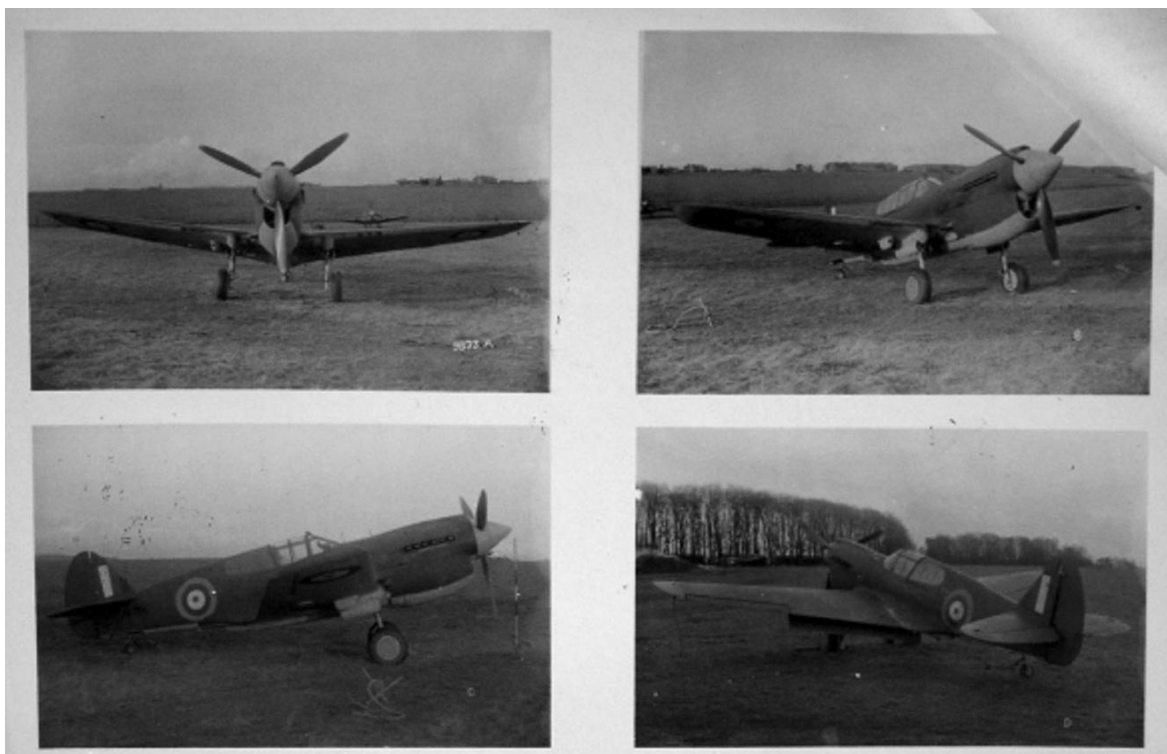


Original RAF Painting Specs for a Kittyhawk Mk1 ex Buffalo USA, August 1941. Kittyhawk Mk1 AK571 with original Paint Lines a little higher than the RAF's MAP Air Diagram 1160; sky spinner flowing to nearly the wing root with slight scalloping of rear fuselage and tail plane... one of 20 built with just four 0.50cal wing Machine Guns





RAF CW Kittyhawk Mk1 AK572, the second four gun version above, in revised lower radiator cowl paint lines, as the original sky painted predominant cowl highlighted the aircraft at medium and low attitudes at a greater distance, when seen oblique from above. The demarcation line for sky has been lowered all the way to the rudder and raised up under the tail plane in a lineal way. This simplified pre-assembled painting of fuselage, tail plane and main wing.



Kittyhawk Mk 1 AK764 in the UK per original delivery scheme (one of four in UK 1941: AK572/579/AK764/AL229)



Out of the box, one of the first RAAF, albeit ex NEIAF Kittyhawks P-40E-1, assembled in April 1942. G45 Camera fitted under the Starboard wing.

*What a USAAF P-40E-1 looked like in colour at the Factory in March 1942.*



*Paint Chart ex Curtiss Wright*

MAP Dark Green	DuPont 71-013
MAP Dark Earth	DuPont 71-035
MAP Sky	DuPont 71-021

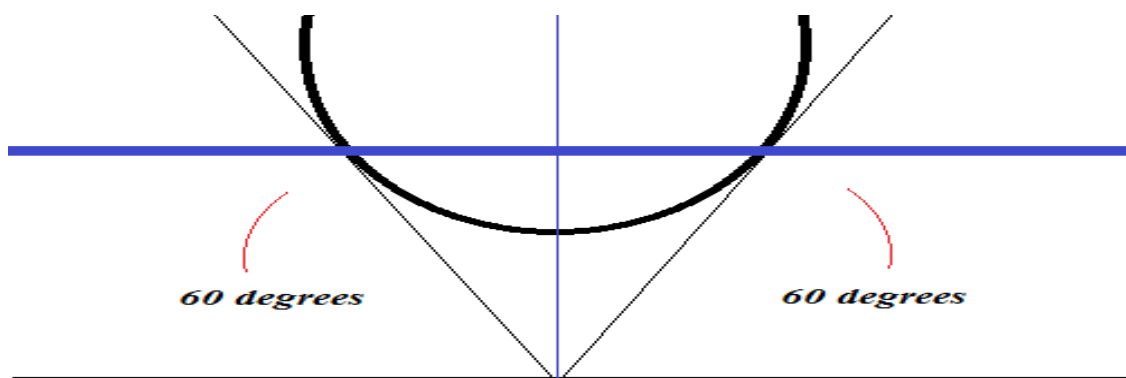


**The RAAF mix of P-40E Warhawks and P-40E-1 Kittyhawks: Names denoting original customers only.**  
**RAAF Aircraft General Instruction:**

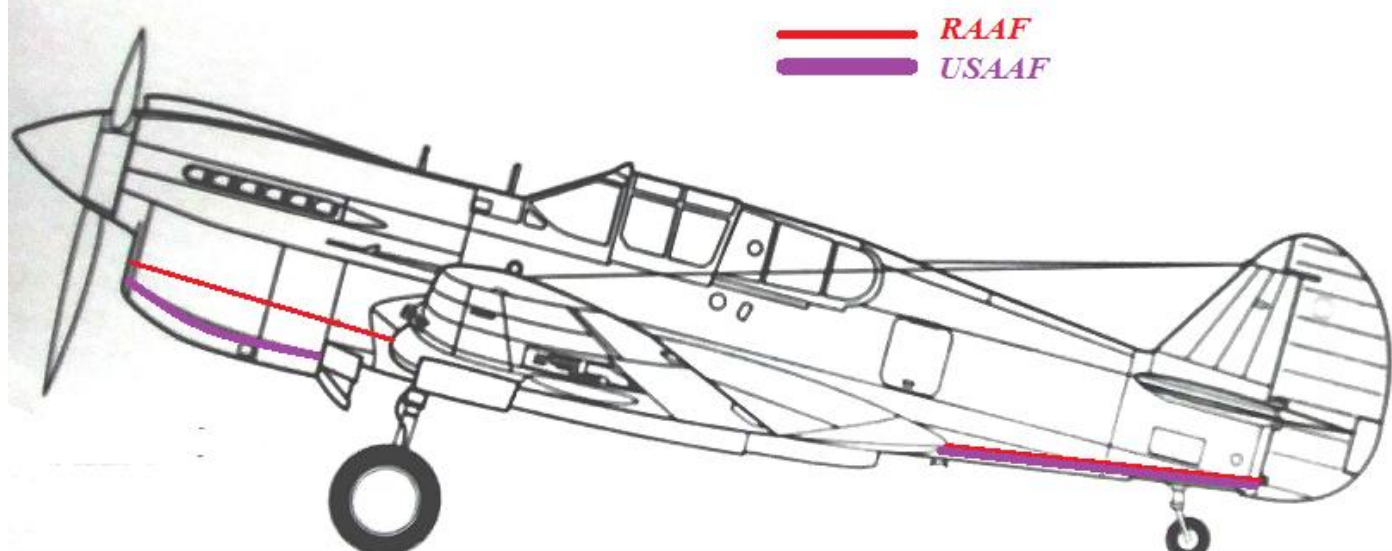
***The basis of feathering/Scalloping of camouflaging P-40E/E-1s in the RAAF.***

Boundary between Upper and Lower Surfaces: The boundary is the faired line of contact traced on the fuselage by the template shown in sketch.

If the wing is above the mid line of the fuselage, the boundary is continued under the wing, conforming to the template, but is curved upwards or down to meet the cord of the tail plane. If the wing (or the lower wing of a bi plane) is on or below the mid line of the fuselage, the boundary is moves upwards or downwards to meet the chords of the main plane and tail plane.



The Fin and Rudder are regarded as part of the upper surfaces. That line is reflected in red on the below P-40E/E-1 sketch, with the standard USAAF line shown in purple. On USAAF Contract P-40E Aircraft, below the Purple line was Neutral Grey and above, Olive Drab.



P-40E-1s were painted in an adaption of MAP Air Diagram 1160, "Camouflage Scheme for single -engine monoplanes-Army Co-operation aeroplanes-fighters.... etc)", but with one type "A" scheme and no reverse scheme. Masking Mats were used at the factory until worn, then replaced by new ones, creating a high degree of consistency on all P-40E-1s manufactured. Above is the boundary line difference of some of the Milne Bay aircraft after having underwing roundels deleted by respray of Sky.

In service with the RAAF from the 10<sup>th</sup> March 1942, with both sub-types sourced from USAFIA Reserve Stocks, they were received and prepared by various RAAF Stations and Units for re-serial and the application national markings.

Given the haste to form three Fighter Interceptor Squadrons (Two East coast and one West coast) this process led to variances in finishes in what was then standardised for the RAAF from the period 1939 to 1941 for Operational and Non-Operational finishes. P-40Es were disrupted in surface finish with Dark earth patterns, and P-40E-1s remained basically unaltered.



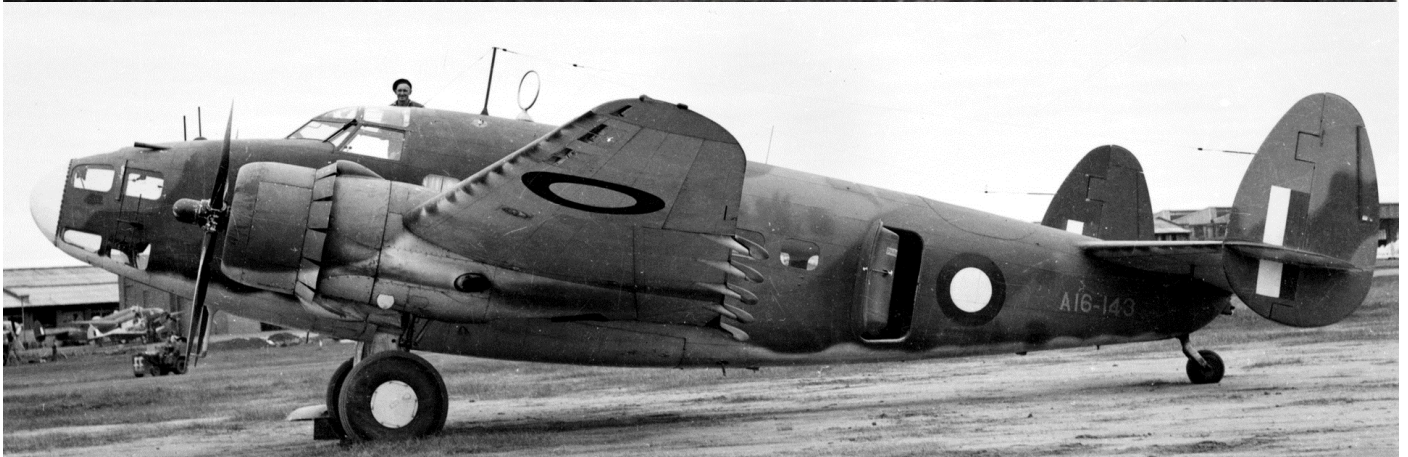
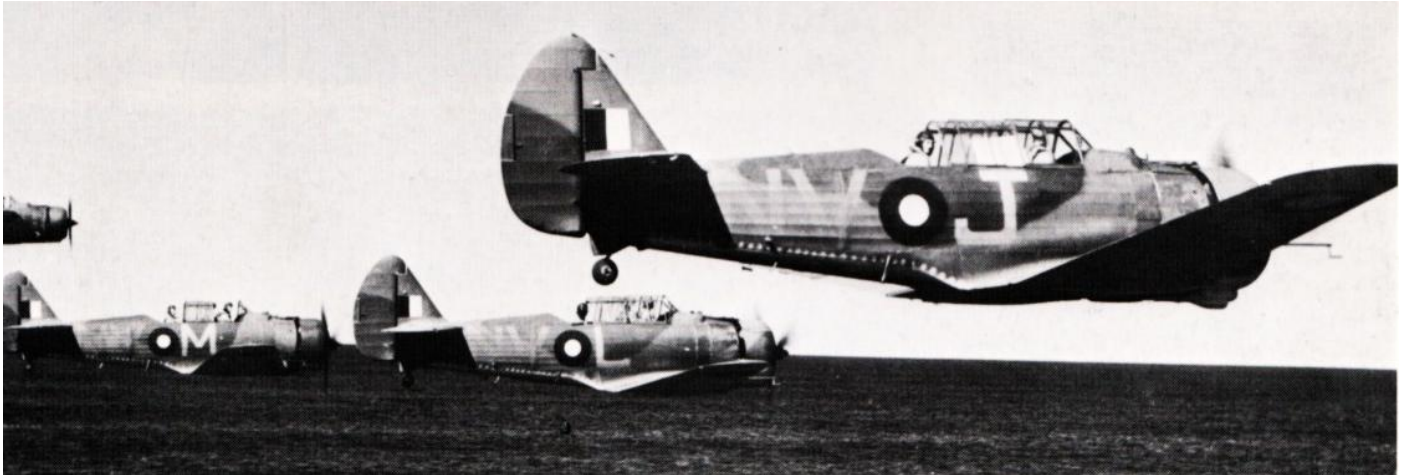
P-40E 41-5614 #55 didn't serve in the RAAF, rather the 8<sup>th</sup> FS/49thFG USAAF at Strauss. But it's O/D and in colour!!

As service use continued and aircraft weathered and overhauled or were damaged and repaired, uniformity of finish within the inventory of RAAF P-40E/E-1s was immensely diverse. Added to this, more paint schemes were created after the discontinuation of under wing roundels and revision of national markings, between the months of July and late September 1942.



To paint a P-40E/E-1 at a RSU or Air Depot, it took one and a half days to prepare and spray and some 12 gallons of paint. In lieu of masking the stated boundary line of each P-40E/E-1, a simple and yet effective way of scalloping resulting of no masking, was initiated by spray gun, was introduced to conform the original RAAF version and acceptance of the MAP Air Diagram 1160, "Camouflage Scheme for single -engine monoplanes-Army Co-operation aeroplanes-fighters.... etc)" and remove either the applied USAAF or RAAF Red/White /Blue underneath markings in accordance with newer requirements to remove this at Milne Bay.

This practice was also used on other types, such as Wirraways, Hudsons, Beauforts and other operational types.



### Variances in finishes of P-40E/P-40 E-1s RAAF in service: 1942-1943



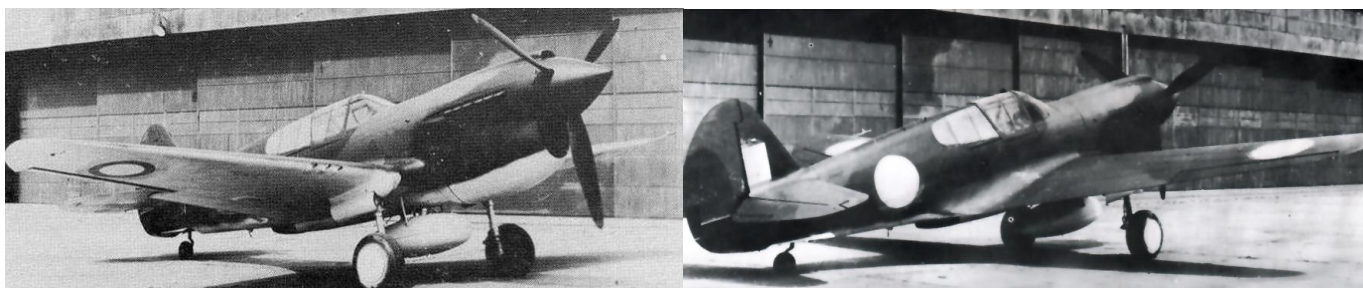
A29-27 ex P-40E Warhawk 41-5586 rear and A29-28 ex P-40E Warhawk 41-5336, front, both pictured after being repaired and inducted into the RAAF at Archerfield. A29-27 is still in Olive Drab and Neutral Grey, though there appears to be some darker Earth/Forest Green where her serial is. However A29-27 in rear, is still carrying her "186" Box number on fin. A29-28 has sky sprayed under tail plane (perhaps from repairing damage, but other than that, still in Olive Drab and Neutral Grey scheme from nose to tail, with shadows from props on forward cowl. Such was the rush to get replacements to Port Moresby.



A29-39 "E", "Adul the Bull" of 76 Sqn RAAF, Sqn Ldr Peter Turnbull's personal aircraft, late July 1942. Ex USAAF P-40E Warhawk 41-5533, with a mixed Olive drab; with Neutral Grey over sprayed with Sky and a disruptive dark earth camouflage added to main plane boundary line. Once 76 Squadron was co-located with 75 Squadron at Milne Bay, a Squadron Alpha identifier, "I" was added to all Squadron assigned aircraft. This made A29-39, "IE".



A29-44, Ex USAAF P-40E Warhawk 41-5597, now "IH" of 76 Sqn RAAF, with Neutral Grey over sprayed with Sky and a disruptive earth camouflage added. Scalloping can be seen on radiator cowl to main plane boundary line. Aircraft is also polished.



A29-51 ex P-40E Warhawk 41-5738, assuming after overhaul at Pearce WA late October 1942 due to size of Hanger (therefore not 3AD per early 1943), after earlier accident in July 1942 and long rebuild. Dark Earth and Forrest Green over Sky in a similar Wirraway applied Disruptive Scheme done just below to main plane boundary line forward of main plane. Note Spinner is Green not sky. Blue Roundel not applied as yet over white disc or is the original national markings masked off for painting of fuselage?





P-40E A29-53, seen after Depot overhaul and refurbishment, now repainted in a Forest Green and Dark Earth over Sky by mid 1943. Sky spraying was done just below to main plane boundary line forward of main plane.



A29-69, ex P-40E 41-5550 delivered SS Mormac Star Geelong on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1942, after being accepted into the RAAF in March 1942. Original Olive Drab with 1AD applied Dark Earth disruptive added, with sky under and added to spinner. Sky spraying was done just below to main plane boundary line forward of main plane.





A29-97, a P-40E-1 41-35970 ex Kittyhawk ET616, was supplied with standard RAF Temperate Camouflage with Sky reapplied underneath, with scalloping to main plane boundary line and under wing roundels over sprayed. Now coded as X4 of 75 Sqn RAAF, in a spot of bother at Horn Island (Fourth 75 Sqn Aircraft to carry that letter code in 1942)



A29-120, ex P-40E-1 41-35936 ex Kittyhawk ET 582 and named "Spitkitten/Still Squirting" was supplied with standard RAF Temperate Camouflage with Sky reapplied underneath, with Sky scalloping applied underneath to main plane boundary line, with under wing roundels over sprayed.



A29-143, ex P-40E-1 41-36238 ex Kittyhawk ET884, coded "G" m and named "Puddin". The "M" has me mystified per its application. Again, it was supplied with standard RAF Temperate Camouflage with Sky reapplied underneath, with scalloping and under wing roundels over sprayed to main plane boundary line. You can still see the Red in fuselage Roundel which would date this pre September 1942.



A29-146, ex P-40E-1 41-36241 ex Kittyhawk ET 887 and named "Bloody Mary II" was supplied with standard RAF MAP Air Diagram 1160 Camouflage, then used by the 49<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group, then transferred in August 1942 via the Joint USAAF and RAAF Replacement Pool, with rough over-sprayed Sky scalloping applied underneath to main plane boundary line, with under wing USAAF Cockade over sprayed.

Observation of upper picture of A29-146, it does appear through wear and tear, the Sky application was not working, with USAAF Cockade coming through the thin overspray.

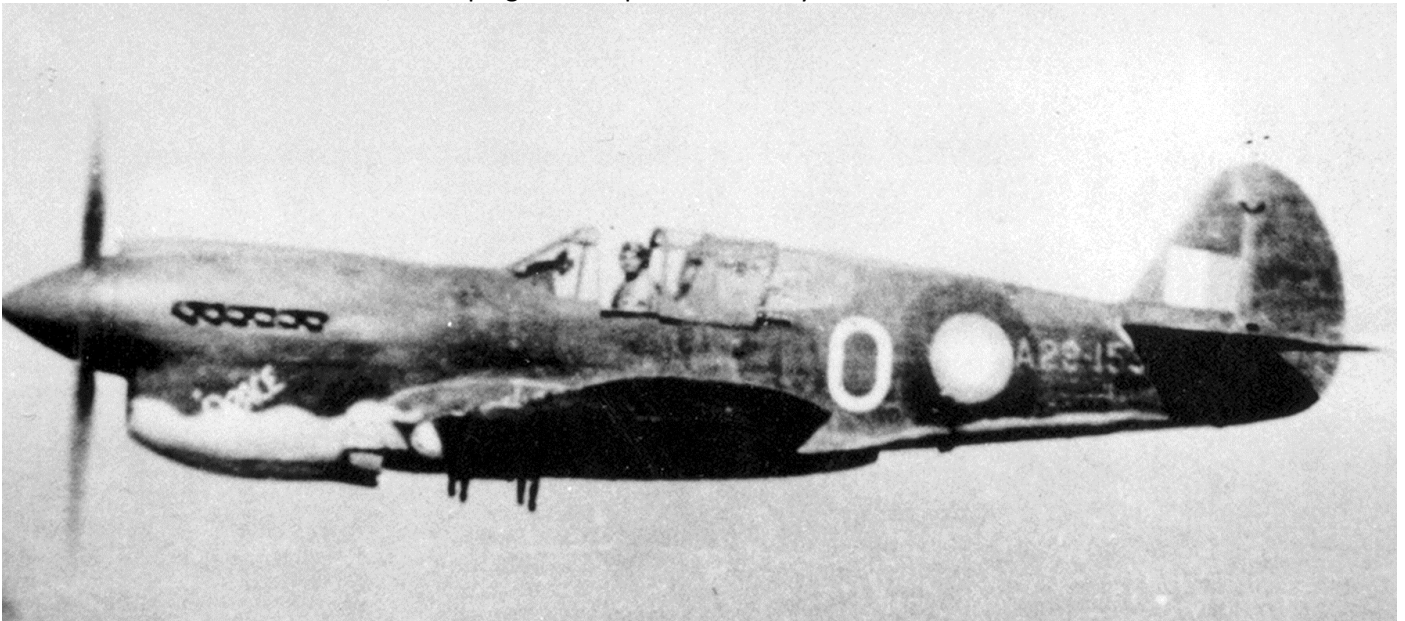




A29-148 "IK" before in service with 9<sup>th</sup> FS/49thFG USAAF,..and after, in RAAF, sprayed to main plane boundary line.



A29-150 "IP" in November 1942, scalloping to main plane boundary line.



A29-153 "O" was it "Oracle" or "Grace" ? Scalloping done to main plane boundary line.

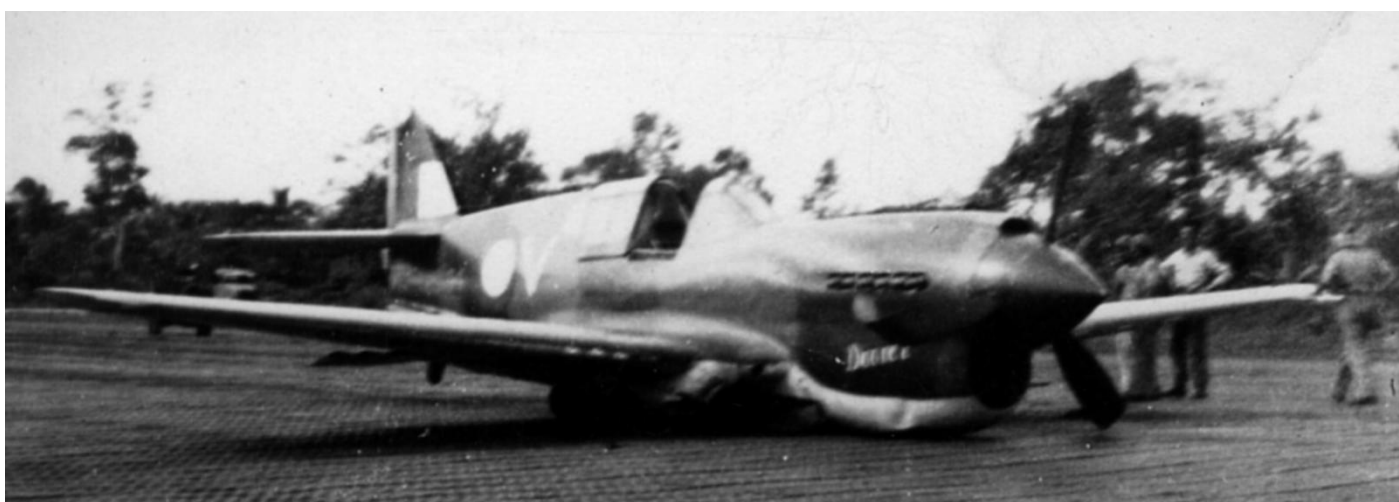




A29-159,....where did the Mossie go? Scalloping done to main plane boundary line.



A29-94'S replacement, A29-161 "V" Dulcie , a revamp ex USAAF P-40E-1 41-36162/ET808 49<sup>th</sup> FG Pool Aircraft that was refurbished and issued to the RAAF and pictured in early 1943 after a further RAAF Depot overhaul and repaint.



She herself also suffered a belly landing the following month at Milne Bay. Note polished finish after Squadron receipt and more subtle lines.



P-40M-1 A29-304 displays feathering/scalloping of sky on her undersides with original Olive Drab finish on top.





Some 75 Sqn P-40N-10s had a few with scalloping, perhaps paint repairs following nose over?

In summary, the scalloping /feathering application died out by late 1943 or early 1944 in general practice principally because of accepting Lend Lease Aircraft in the standard finish that they arrived in by the RAAF; Olive Drab and Neutral grey. Then the Americans decided that no paint (Natural Aluminium finish) was acceptable, whereas the RAAF thought, yes then no ...but that's another story.....



Yes, there are coloured Milne Bay Kittyhawk movie tone pictures!! Even RAAF P-40E-1's, A29-127 "Z" (75Sqn ) and A29-147 "II" (76Sqn)



All photos: GRB and Buz Collection. Special Credit to Buz for putting up with me over all these decades





**Odd Shots: Hudson Shots 1940 - 1941:** GRB Collection



A16-6 taxiing



A16-19 on left...



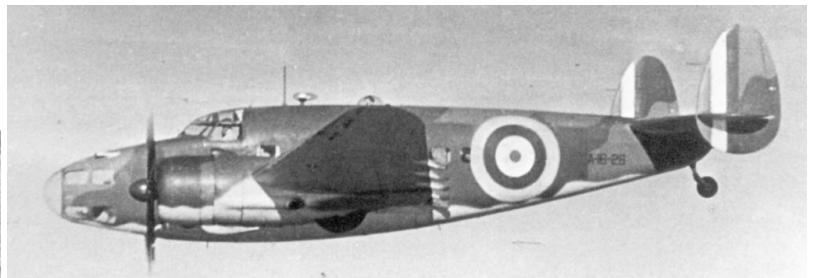
Hudson A16-16 being trucked in to Laverton RAAF Station from the wharf, in 1940.



On the factory floor: #276/277/278 left, later becoming A16-25 to A16-27. #271/272/273 right becoming A16-20 to A16-22.



Only the latter A16-22 survives to this day; Point Cook.



A16-25 US-J and A16-26 don't; with latter before having its BP Turret installed in Malaya by 151 MU in mid 1940.





A16-7 as delivered top, and later below with No 14 Squadron after a u/c a/c. Issued to 14 Sqn 04/04/40. Dual Control. Accident on 27/08/40, when aircraft made heavy landing after circuit of aerodrome at Pearce WA. Undercarriage collapsed on taxiing when turning 120degrees. Damage to Port wing and Rudder. Crew F/Lt A A Barlow and F/O R A Fletcher. Repaired. Rec 2AD 27/05/41. Rec 14Sqn 06/07/41. Allocated 151MU RAF at Malaya 18/12/41. Canc. Allocated 13Sqn ex 14Sqn 20/12/41. Accident 20/12/41 when during taxiing, main wheel dropped into ditch damaging oleo. Rec 13Sqn 28/12/41.

While part of a 5 ship strike on Enemy forces at Mendo on 12/01/42. They were attacked by 3 Japanese Flying Boats and 5 Zero's. Four of the five Hudsons were shot down, this being one of them. A16-7 crashed near Ranowangoko, North Celebes.



A trio of new Hudsons: A16-14, A16-9 and A16-11 at the Factory being readied for test flights.





A16-11 pictured still in its wrapping after being delivered. Dual controls removed and into store 29/05/40. Served with 8 Sqn RAAF in Malaya. Damaged heavily when a bomb prematurely exploded on 15/11/40.

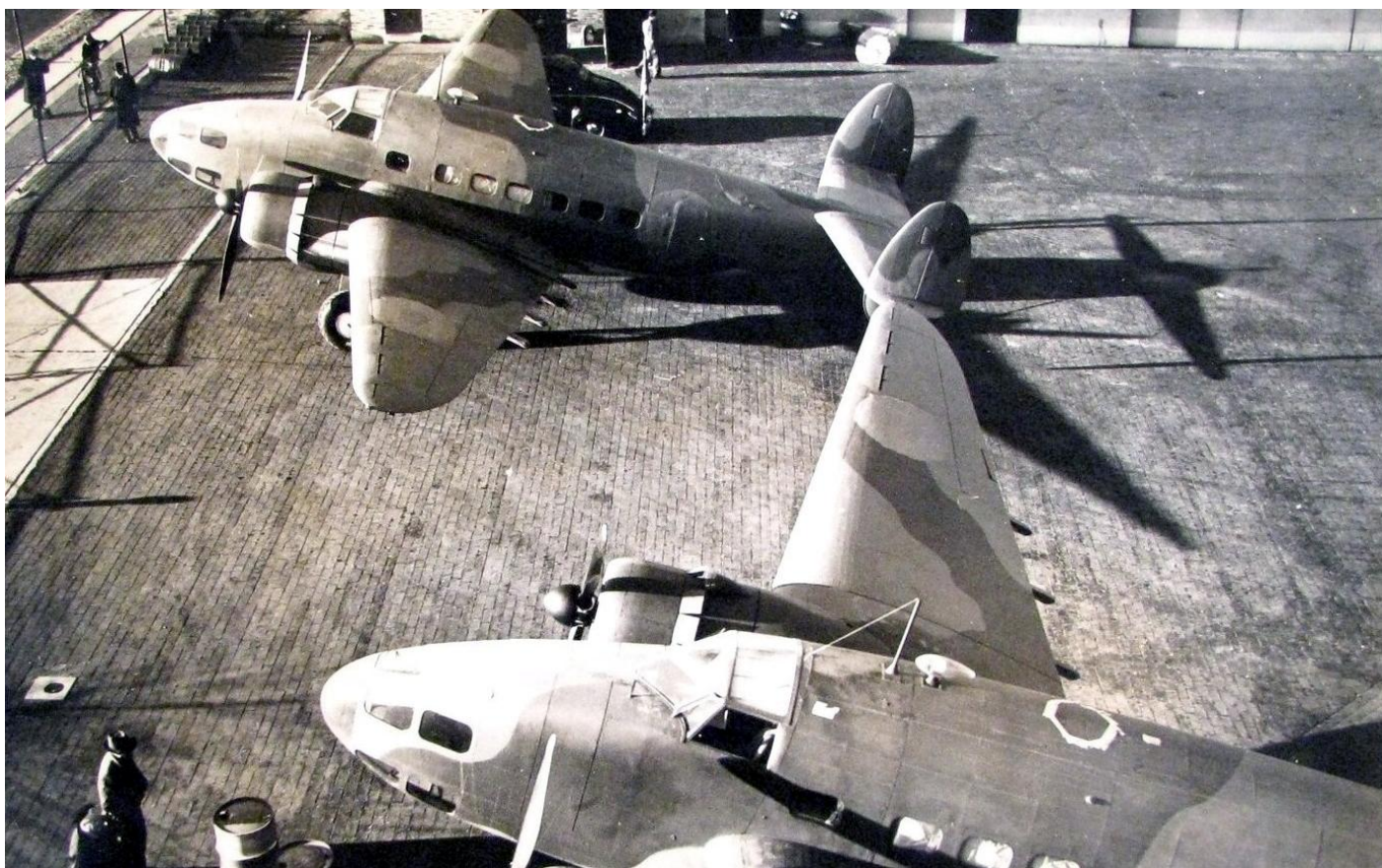
Repaired by 151MU RAF. Re-coded NN-B and named "Ichabod" and issued to No 8 Squadron. Took off 0630hrs from Sembawang with A16-87 (F/Lt Plenty) and shot down 20 miles east of near Kauntan, Malaya 24/01/42 by 4 enemy fighters.



A16-14 with No8 Squadron as NN-R in Malaya 1940



A16-14 after its accident 1028GMT hrs 23/07/41 when crash landed gear down on beach and flipped, 75 kms on the beach, north of Kuantan, Malaya.



A16-19 and one other, ex Factory and now ready for shipment ex USA.





A16-19, as US-B, now with No 1 Squadron in 1940. This aircraft was reputed to be the first RAAF aircraft shot down in the Pacific. One engine is on display in the Pacific Air Power exhibit, the other is on display in the Second World War Hall, Australian War Memorial. Engine#s 2266 and Eng#2273 are listed as lost on A16-19 per report 04/02/42 RAAF. SOC 09/12/41.



A16-20 at Richmond late 1940



Hudson A16-41 on the wayside at Geelong, being readied for transport to 1AD Laverton for re-assembling in late February 1940. Note Lockheed serial blocking error with additional Dash after Stores type "A".





Rare shot, A16-50 as NN-M, landed wheels up 27/07/41 on the beach at Kuala Kemaman , Malaya.



A16-52 US-M, being towed back in Malaya 1940. Aircraft was badly damaged whilst attacking a enemy convoy off Kota Bharu in December 1941, then on landing collided with a Brewster Buffalo W8196 at RAF Kallang. As not airworthy at the time, it was destroyed prior to the final evacuation of the airfield as part of the denial scheme.



Even rarer,...A16-54 US-U taking off. Used as one of two Navigation Ships to escort 11 Hurricane Fighters from P1 to Singapore on the 05/02/42; captained by F/Lt Emerton. This aircraft also carried 6 spare Hurricane Pilots. Destroyed by bombing at Semplak, Java 22/2/42.



A16-86 NN-A of No 8 Squadron, with 21 Sqn RAAF Wirraway in rear. Accident 04/11/40 when A16-86 forced landed at Seletar, Malaya. It was eventually SOC in July 1941 after being deemed un-repairable. Note the Rudder hinge is not continuing the painted Blue National bar in top picture.



Hudson A16-96 pictured in the No 2/13 Squadron Hanger at Darwin. It was delivered fitted with Drogue winch for target towing originally and issued to ATS Cressy 21/08/40. Received by SHQ Flight Darwin 24/11/40 for target

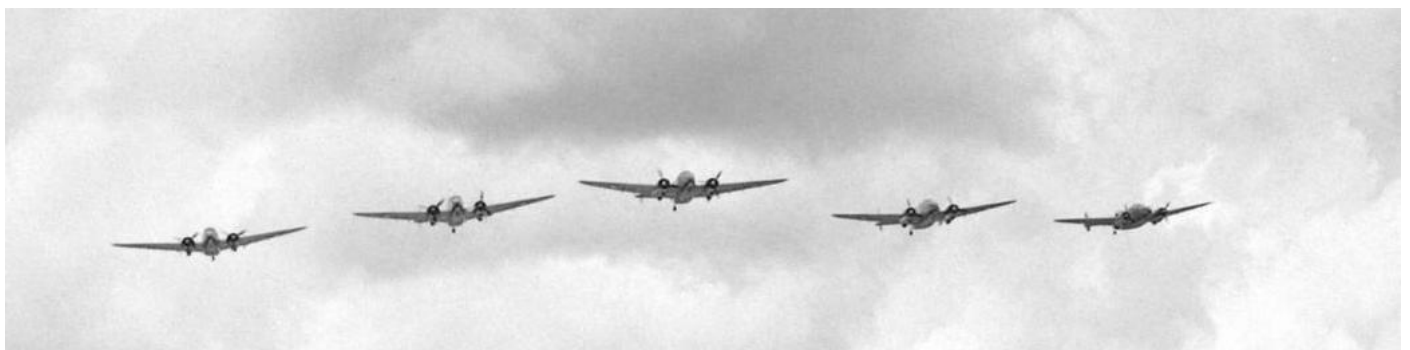
towing. Attached to SHQ Flight Pearce 07/04/41, then attached to 2Sqn 02/06/41. Received back at 1AD on the 15/06/41. Issued to 13Sqn RAAF Darwin 13/07/41 and coded with Unit "N". Down as "Lost at sea near Koepang 30/01/42 " on card, but no record per A50 or per RAAF Losses or crews lost in association of serial.

<u>No. 8 Squadron</u>	A16-4 ✓	Headquarters Far East	Q.875	27/12
	A16-11 ✓	" " "	Q.394	25/1
	A16-15 ✓	" " "	Q.875	27/12
	A16-40 ✓	Advised by minute from D. Ops.		
	A16-41 ✓	Headquarters Far East	Q.875	27/12
	A16-43 ✓	" " "	"	"
	A16-87 ✓	" " "	Q.395	25/1
<u>No. 13 Squadron</u>	A16-7 ✓	Darwin	Q.978	25/1
	A16-29 ✓	"	Q.162	6/2
	A16-33 ✓	"	Q.978	25/1
	A16-59 ✓	"	852/2/1 (5A)	30/1
	A16-61 ✓	"	Q246	14/2
	A16-63 ✓	"	Q.978	25/1
	A16-64 ✓	"	"	"
	A16-66 ✓	"	852/2/1 (5A)	30/1
	A16-67 ✓	"	"	"
	A16-69 ✓	"	Q.162	6/2
	A16-71 ✓	"	852/2/1 (5A)	30/1
	A16/96 ✓	"	Q.162	6/2
	A16/123 ✓	"	852/2/1 (5A)	30/1
	A16-125 ✓	"	"	"

Official Loss Report for Far East has on 06/02/42 lost per radio message Q162 being reported as a loss by enemy action. That would signify the Timor Area of operations, in the NEI. E/E-88 Card has SOC 19/02/42.

***As you can see, besides No 1 and 8 Squadrons huge losses to that date(36 plus 10-12 RAF and 6 or 8 RAAF reinforcements), even No 13 Squadron was practically wiped out with fourteen losses out of a UE of twelve. Sad stuff, considering we're not evening mentioning No 2 Squadron "up there" at Laha.***

***Other Squadrons like No 14 Squadron at Pearce and other Eastern based Squadrons transferred aircraft and crews during this time to all four Squadrons continually.***



***Out of the original 100 Hudsons, only some 38 or less, survived the first three months of the Pacific War.***

***No wonder that some 32 Sqn Crews called it "A butcher's shop" !***



## End Notes

### End Notes RAAF Reconnaissance Development: Part 1 @Gordon R Birkett 2017

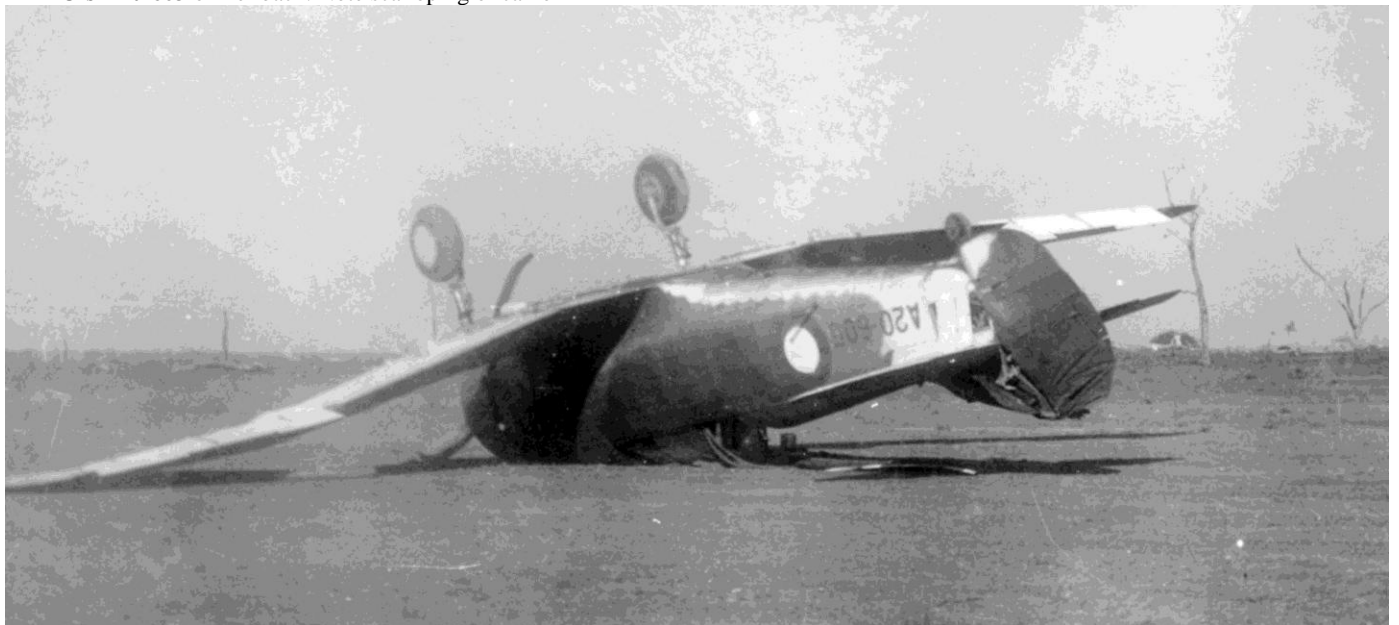
<sup>1</sup> The first Strategic reconnaissance aircraft use was in fact No 6 Squadron's Hudson A16-102 "Titwillow" and its squadron sister, A16-106 "Yum Yum" that were part of the secret Mikado Flight over the Japanese Imperial Pacific Fleet bastion at Truk Island, in early January 1942 from Rabaul

<sup>2</sup> In May-June 1942, most of the surviving USAAF P-43 and P-43A Lancers in USAAF were converted to specialised photographic reconnaissance aircraft and re-designated **P-43B**. These were fitted with two K-17 cameras in the rear fuselage. **USAAF Technical order #01-6SB-38**, dated 28<sup>th</sup> August 1942 **ordered the removal** of the blisters and cameras from the P-43B/D, with the resultant housings being sheeted over, flush with the surrounding fuselage. *In RAAF Service, following examinations of several photographs, this modification seemed to have been performed.*

<sup>3</sup> *This particular aircraft, A20-178, was an ex 24 Sqn RAAF Rabaul Survivor, flown out days before the invasion in January 1942 to Port Moresby.*

<sup>4</sup> All four P-43Ds had fuel pump/fuel line modifications and additional oil reservoir and auxiliary pump required by the longer airborne engine running time. It was not until the 21st January 1943 that the first successful flight of the first prototype sets of long range fuel tanks (24 LR tanks were ordered from Peerless Metal Company of Melbourne) was made by A56-7, following the successful modification of the wing pylon fairing. However on the 31st January the prototype tanks were written off and the aircraft (A56-7 piloted by Flt D R Cummings) was damaged on landing at Laverton when the left-hand gear collapsed, resulting in a serious ground loop. The first allocation of the longer-ranging P-43D to 1 PRU was A56-1 on the 4th February 1943, but by the 9th February 1943, the project was faltering as the production fuel tanks were not sealing properly. Additional wing fittings, fuel lines and auxiliary pumps were ordered as field kits for the installation to the other three surviving P-43Bs (A56-3, 4 and 5) situated at Hughes Strip. On the 23rd March 1943, A56-3' piloted by Flt Lt S Jones, landed and skidded resulting in the aircraft resting on its nose at Coomalie Creek. *As with the number of aircraft available for operations now dwindling, all remaining project work ceased, P-43B/Ds Lancers were withdrawn from 1 PRU operations early May 1943. They would be eventually returned to the USAAF.* Charles, or Bud as his mates called him, was born in Coogee in New South Wales on the 3rd January 1923. At the age of 18, he enlisted in the RAAF in Sydney on the 13th September 1941, and under the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, he did his initial training in Australia and then embarked for Canada during 1942. After further training, he continued onto England where he was posted to the Mediterranean Theatre. There, he completed his training at 74 OTU (Operational Training Unit) RAF in British Palestine where he learnt to fly the Hawker Hurricane and the Supermarine Spitfire. Bud was obviously an exceptional pilot because he was then posted to a photo reconnaissance unit, 680 Squadron RAF, and went on to fly 75 sorties in Mosquitoes and Spitfires during the North African Campaign and the Allied invasion of Sicily. Other aircraft that Bud was qualified to fly included the Bristol Blenheim, the Martin Baltimore, the Bristol Beaufighter and the Airspeed Oxford. Towards the end of the war, Bud was transferred back to Australia. He was posted to No.5 OTU, which was then at Williamtown, as a flying instructor, and finally to 87 Squadron RAAF flying photo reconnaissance Mosquitoes over the Dutch East Indies.

<sup>5</sup> 1PRU's A20-605 on her back. Note scalloping of camo



<sup>6</sup> Middleburg Airfield is located on Middleburg Island spans the length of the island and is located to the north of Sansapor on the north coast of New Guinea.

<sup>7</sup>

**A16-47** Rec Survey Flight ex 1AD 26/05/44. Rec 2AD ex Survey Flight 10/06/45. Rec Survey Flight ex 2AD 28/06/45. **Coded SU-R**. While attached to Survey Flight, missing between Lowood and Bowen 24/07/45. Departed Lowood at 0841hrs for an inspection flight with commanding Officer on board and 6 other including crew. Crew, F/lt L E H Clarke Serv#416567, F/O T J Steel Serv#428807 and Cpl W McP Gaze Serv#38868; with passengers Sqn Ldr N M Pilcher Serv#260750 (C.O. Survey Flight), Sqn Ldr C Griffen Serv#262191 (C.O. 14OBU), LAC F G Chiverton Serv#22955 and LAC W H Nielsen Serv#151744 missing. SOC as missing

**A16-130** Issued to Survey Flight 03/02/44. Coded Black **SU-H** in natural metal. Rec 14ARD ex Survey Flight 10/04/46. Rec SHQ Flight Store Pearce WA 04/06/46. Attached to SHQ Flight 16/07/46 for Fisheries duties replacing A16-116 on the 06/08/46. Rec 1CU ex SHQ Pearce 19/08/46. Rec 1AD 16/11/46 ex 1CU. Sold to Macquarie Grove Flying School 24/09/47. Issued to Purchaser 05/01/48.

<sup>8</sup> Charles, or Bud as his mates called him, was born in Coogee in New South Wales on the 3rd January 1923. At the age of 18, he enlisted in the RAAF in Sydney on the 13th September 1941, and under the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, he did his initial training in Australia

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<sup>9</sup> A52-329 still exists, at the AWM.

<sup>10</sup> The actual designated Tac/R P-40N-35/40s as per the E/E88 cards that did get modified or allocated for modification were as follows, in serial sequence:

- **A29-1027** (Service 75F/77F Sqn, allocated 29/09/45 to modify, modification cancelled? into Storage 20/11/45)
- **A29-1028** (Service 75F/77F Sqn, allocated 29/09/45 to modify, modification cancelled, into Storage 25/11/45)
- **A29-1030** (Service 77F Sqn, allocated 29/09/45 to modify, modification cancelled, into Storage 30/05/46)
- **A29-1036** (Service 77F Sqn, allocated 25/09/45 to modify, into Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1043** (allocated 11/06/45, modified, into Storage 23/01/46)
- **A29-1044** (Service 77F Sqn, allocated 25/09/45 to modify, modification cancelled, crashed 29/09/45 on take-off Cooktown Civil)
- **A29-1046** (Service 77F Sqn, allocated 25/09/45 to modify, modification cancelled, Storage 23/01/46)
- **A29-1053** (allocated 11/06/45, modified, into Storage 23/01/46)
- **A29-1055** (Service 80Sqn/77Sqn, allocated 25/09/45, modified? Off 19/11/48)
- **A29-1058** (Service 77FSqn, allocated 25/09/45, modified? burned post 18/02/46)
- **A29-1068** (allocated 11/06/45, modified, into Storage 23/01/46)
- **A29-1069** (allocated 11/06/45, modified, into Storage 23/01/46)
- **A29-1073** (allocated 11/06/45, modified, into Storage 23/01/46)
- **A29-1078** (allocated 11/06/45, modified, into Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1120** (allocated 21/07/45, modified, into Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1121** (allocated 21/07/45, modified, into Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1122** (Service 76F Sqn, allocated 27/09/45 to modify, but cancelled, Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1127** (allocated 21/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1133** (allocated 03/07/45, modified, into Storage 19/11/45)
- **A29-1136** (allocated 20/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1151** (allocated 07/07/45, modified, into Storage: 26/11/45)
- **A29-1154** (allocated 12/06/45, modified to S.A.C. 29/07/45) School of Army Co-operation.
- **A29-1155** (allocated 12/06/45, modified to S.A.C. 29/07/45) School of Army Co-operation.
- **A29-1156** (allocated 12/06/45, modified? 29/07/45)
- **A29-1159** (allocated 07/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1160** (allocated 07/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1162** (allocated 07/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1164** (allocated 07/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1166** (allocated 21/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1168** (allocated 21/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1169** (allocated 21/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1170** (Service 84F Sqn, damaged, allocated 07/08/45 to 15 ARD for Tac/R to modify, Storage 22/03/46)
- **A29-1174** (allocated 21/07/45, modified, into Storage 15/11/45)
- **A29-1175** (allocated 20/07/45, cancelled, re-allocated 22/08/45 modified, Storage 26/01/46)
- **A29-1176** (Service 84F Sqn/76F Sqn, allocated 27/09/45 to modify, Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1191** (Service 84F Sqn, allocated 22/08/45 to modify, into Storage 14/01/46)
- **A29-1197** (Service 84F Sqn/76F Sqn, allocated 27/09/45 to modify, Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1198** (Service 84F Sqn, allocated 29/09/45 to modify, Storage 13/11/45)
- **A29-1206** (allocated 23/08/45, modified, into Storage 14/01/46)
- **A29-1208** (allocated 23/08/45, modified, into Storage 17/01/46) (Natural Metal)
- **A29-1209** (allocated 23/08/45, modified, into Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1212** (allocated 23/08/45, modified, into Storage 14/01/46)
- **A29-1215** (allocated 22/08/45, modified, into Storage 14/01/46)
- **A29-1217** (allocated 23/08/45, modified, into Storage 17/01/46)
- **A29-1219** (allocated 20/07/45, modified, into Storage 14/01/46)

In the end it seems that a round 28 airframes are identified as being modified, out of a total of 45 airframes selected, excluding the prototype.

<sup>11</sup> Part 6b RAAF Aircraft Markings from 1950 Sqns pt6 WWII Aircraft into 1950s Silver 2nd part

<sup>12</sup> US K.17 cameras had been acquired for the P-43 Lancers serving with IPRU. NAA CRS A11093 452/A56, RAAF Command file 1101/1/E dated 23 MAR 1943.

<sup>13</sup> David Vincent, *Mosquito Monograph*, self published, Adelaide, 1982 p.245.

**End Notes: No 3 SQUADRON A.F.C. PART III – THE SUMMER OFFENSIVES by John Bennett @2018**

<sup>14</sup> Montgomery, *Fourth Army*, p.6.

<sup>15</sup> Monash, p.124.

<sup>16</sup> Lamberton, p.189. The Cooper bomb is sometimes referred to as a 20-pounder. The 25-lb Cooper bomb replaced the 20-lb Hales bomb in 1917:

- <sup>17</sup> Jack Treacy, interview, p.6.
- <sup>18</sup> W A Musciano, *Eagles of the Black Cross*, Obolensky, New York, 1965, p.214.
- <sup>19</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary, 6 May 1918; "British Roll of Honour – Captain H D E Ralfe", source and date unknown, courtesy of Neil Smith.
- <sup>20</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary, 9 May 1918.
- <sup>21</sup> Duigan was shot down by Leutnant Franz Hemer of *Jasta 6*, Ralfe was shot down by Leutnant Viktor von Presentin von Rautter of *Jasta 4*. N L R Franks, F W Bailey & R Guest, *Above The Lines*, Grub Street, London, 1993, pp. 127, 182.
- <sup>22</sup> 3 Sqn Record Book, 16 May 1918; 3 Sqn Combat Report No 33, 16 May 1918.
- <sup>23</sup> Wrigley, p.69.
- <sup>24</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report No 49, 3 Jun 1918.
- <sup>25</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report No 51, 9 Jun 1918.
- <sup>26</sup> Cutlack, p.274.
- <sup>27</sup> Jack Treacy, interview, p.4.
- <sup>28</sup> 'C' Flt Cdr Brearley ferried the Halberstadt CL.II (numbered C15342/17) from Bertangles to 1ASD at Marquise on 16 JUN 1918. It was taken on RAF strength as G/5Bde/16, and brought to Australia at the end of the war. The machine is currently on display at the AWM Canberra. Another Halberstadt also found its way to Australia; this second aircraft had been shot down near Arras on 17 October 1918, and in 1921 was allotted to the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery. Its ultimate fate is unknown. AWM 93 27/1/75.
- <sup>29</sup> Cutlack, p.269.
- <sup>30</sup> L J Wackett, *Aircraft Pioneer*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1972, p.71.
- <sup>31</sup> Musciano, p.214.
- <sup>32</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report No 56, 27 Jun 1918.
- <sup>33</sup> Cutlack, p.272.
- <sup>34</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report No 58, 28 Jun 1918.
- <sup>35</sup> R Perry, *Monash & Chauvel*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2017: this new book provides an excellent biography of Monash and his influence in the 1918 battles on the Western Front.
- <sup>36</sup> Montgomery, *Fourth Army*, p.6.
- <sup>37</sup> Cutlack, p.272.
- <sup>38</sup> A Rowe, "Praise the Captain and Drop the Ammunition!", in *Cross & Cockade*, London, Vol 27 No 1, 1996, p.15.
- <sup>39</sup> Wackett, p.73.
- <sup>40</sup> H A Jones, *The War in the Air, Vol VI*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1937, p.416.
- <sup>41</sup> 3 Squadron War Diary, 3 Jul 1918, tasking for Hamel battle.
- <sup>42</sup> Montgomery, *Fourth Army*, p.6.
- <sup>43</sup> K Isaacs, *Military Aircraft of Australia 1909-1918*, AWM, Canberra, 1971, p.65. The Australian War Museum was located at the Exhibition Building between 1921 and 1925 before it moved to Sydney where it was housed in the Exhibition Building in Prince Alfred Park. It remained there until closing in 1935, by which time construction had commenced on a purpose-built Australian War Memorial in the new national capital, Canberra. The new building was opened by the Governor-General, Lord Gowrie, on Remembrance Day, 11 November 1941.
- <sup>44</sup> [AWM P00394.015 description text]
- <sup>45</sup> Monash, p.60.
- <sup>46</sup> C E W Bean, *The Official History of Australia in the War 1914-1918, Vol VI*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1942, p.308; 3 Sqn War Diary, of 4 Jul 1918; Jones, Vol VI, p.417.
- <sup>47</sup> Jones, Vol VI, pp.416-7.
- <sup>48</sup> *Staff Sheet No 218*, "Operations of the Australian Corps Against Hamel", July 1918, cited in Monash, p.57.
- <sup>49</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report No 63, 4 Jul 1918.
- <sup>50</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report No 62, 4 Jul 1918; Wrigley, p.82.
- <sup>51</sup> Monash, p.60.
- <sup>52</sup> Cutlack, p.274.
- <sup>53</sup> P Dye, "Fabric", letter, in *Cross and Cockade*, London, Vol 27 No 3, 1996, pp.172.
- <sup>54</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.484.
- <sup>55</sup> Montgomery, *Fourth Army*, p.1.
- <sup>56</sup> H A Jones, Vol IV, p.126.
- <sup>57</sup> Monash, p.85.
- <sup>58</sup> Wrigley, p.85.
- <sup>59</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Reports 73 & 74, 1 Aug 1918.
- <sup>60</sup> Monash, p.119.
- <sup>61</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary, 7 Aug 1918.
- <sup>62</sup> Wrigley, p.87.
- <sup>63</sup> Monash, p.101.
- <sup>64</sup> Monash, p.121.
- <sup>65</sup> Wrigley, p.88.
- <sup>66</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.440.
- <sup>67</sup> Monash, p.131.
- <sup>68</sup> General Ludendorff, *My War Memories 1914-1918*, Vol II, Hutchinson, London, undated, p.679.
- <sup>69</sup> Maj Gen Sir Archibald Montgomery, *The Story of the Fourth Army*, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1919, p.7.
- <sup>70</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.437.
- <sup>71</sup> Acting Prime Minister Watt in Melbourne, message to Australian troops aboard, 3 Sqn Routine Orders No 327, dated 5 Aug 1918, AWM.
- <sup>72</sup> L Rogers, *British Aviation Squadron Markings of WWI*, Schiffer, Atglen PA USA, 2001, p.132.
- <sup>73</sup> Rogers, p.7.
- <sup>74</sup> PRO AIR1/867/204/5/523, CRFC 1693G, dated 19 Sep 1917.
- <sup>75</sup> Cutlack, p.309.
- <sup>76</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.442.
- <sup>77</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report 76, 8 Aug 1918.



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- <sup>78</sup> Believed to be a Fokker D.VII of JGr9 flown by high scoring German ace, Oblt R von Greim. Franks, Bailey & Guest, p.120.
- <sup>79</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.438.
- <sup>80</sup> Monash, p.129.
- <sup>81</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary, 8 Aug 1918.
- <sup>82</sup> Jones, Vol VI, pp.445-6.
- <sup>83</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report 82, 9 Aug 1918.
- <sup>84</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary and Record Book, 9 Aug 1918.
- <sup>85</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.452.
- <sup>86</sup> Monash, p.142.
- <sup>87</sup> Jones, Vol VI, pp.474-5.
- <sup>88</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary, 21 Aug 1918.
- <sup>89</sup> Montgomery, *Fourth Army*, p.8.
- <sup>90</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report 89, 22 Aug 1918.
- <sup>91</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report 93, 22 Aug 1918.
- <sup>92</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary, 23 Aug 1918.
- <sup>93</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report 94, 23 Aug 1918.
- <sup>94</sup> Monash, p.156.
- <sup>95</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary and Record Book, 27 Aug 1918.
- <sup>96</sup> 3 Sqn Combat Report 97, 27 Aug 1918.
- <sup>97</sup> Monash, p.171.
- <sup>98</sup> Cutlack, p.318.
- <sup>99</sup> Monash, p.175.
- <sup>100</sup> 3 Sqn Record Book, 30 Aug 1918; Cutlack, p.320.
- <sup>101</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary, 29 Aug 1918.
- <sup>102</sup> Cutlack, p.319.
- <sup>103</sup> Monash, p.180.
- <sup>104</sup> 3 Sqn War Diary, 31 Aug 1918.
- <sup>105</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.401. This total was “tactical” aircraft only, and did not include the “strategic” bombers of the Independent Air Force.
- <sup>106</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.463.
- <sup>107</sup> Monash, p.182.
- <sup>108</sup> Jones, Vol VI, p.482.
- <sup>109</sup> Montgomery, *Fourth Army*, p.viii.
- <sup>110</sup> Monash, p.192.
- <sup>111</sup> Some blocks of inscription names of presentation aeroplanes were allocated to the RNAS, but there is no evidence that these were taken up.
- C Bowyer, *Sopwith Camel, King of Combat*, Airlife Publications, Crawley, 1989, p.185.
- <sup>112</sup> C Alma Baker, *Souvenir of the Australian and Malayan Battleplanes 1914-1918*, Field Press, London, c1920.
- <sup>113</sup> C Bowyer, *Bristol F2B Fighter, King of Two-Seaters*, Ian Allan Ltd, London, 1985, p.117.
- <sup>114</sup> C Bowyer, *Sopwith Camel*, p.181.
- <sup>115</sup> Airhistory.org.uk; Bowyer, *Sopwith Camel*, pp.181-5; Bowyer, *F2B Fighter*, pp.117-9.
- <sup>116</sup> C Alma Baker, *Souvenir of the Australian and Malayan Battleplanes 1914-1918*, Field Press, London, c1920.
- <sup>117</sup> Alma Baker, p.53.
- <sup>118</sup> K Isaacs, *Military Aircraft of Australia 1909-1918*, AWM Canberra, 1971, pp.174-7.
- <sup>119</sup> AWM series 8/9/6 and 8/9/7 War Diaries of 30 (Trg) SQN detail some D.H.5 training over NOV 1917, but none in DEC 1917, as by this stage Sopwith Camels were being received. It is apparent D.H.5s were therefore obsolete and being WFS, and probably the allocation of A9415 on 3 DEC 1917 may well have been cancelled.
- <sup>120</sup> Lax, p.177; Bowyer, *F2B Fighter*, p.118.
- <sup>121</sup> Conflicting Presentation dates are given by Alma Baker (and Isaacs) as 9 NOV 1918 (i.e. 9/11/18) whereas *The S.E.5 File* gives it as 11/9/18 (11 SEP 1918). R Sturtivant & G Page, *The S.E.5 File*, Air Britain, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, 1996, p.68. The NOV 1918 date could well be correct - only £1500 was raised against the required £2700 possibly indicating a late scramble to give the presentation before the end of the War.
- <sup>122</sup> Jones, Vol III, p.352.
- <sup>123</sup> Letter by BRIG GEN A E Borton DSO of 21 MAY 1919, Alma Baker, p.38.
- <sup>124</sup> P Hare, *The Royal Aircraft Factory*, Putnam, London, 1990, cover.
- <sup>125</sup> A3754 photograph from album of Frank Saunders, 23rd Training Wing RFC, South Carlton (however the same image is used by Alma Baker):  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/13150208@N05/albums/72157627846452902/with/6223752892/>
- <sup>126</sup> In Part II of this 3AFC series, I incorrectly listed the crash date of A3754 as 13 SEP 1917, instead of 22 SEP 1917.
- <sup>127</sup> Last recorded flight of C2795 on 3SQN was 17 OCT 1918 from Montigny to Premont (Pickering/Hanson), but no mention of a crash. AWM photo P00355.024 shows crash of C2795, without a Sqn code letter.
- <sup>128</sup> From Hare, *Royal Aircraft Factory*, p.161; this is credited as *Orissa States 3*, but more recent research lists it as *Orissa States 2*. Of the 120 B.E.2s in this production batch A3049-A3168, 80 aircraft had Presentation inscriptions.

<sup>129</sup> End Notes: P-40E USAAF/RAAF Operations in Australia: Supplementary #9:

TOE for the 17<sup>th</sup> PS(Prov) and aircraft status on first day of being formed.

Date	Crated Total	Under Erection	In Flight Test	Out of Commission	In Commission for Combat	Dispatched PS(prov)	Date of Dispatched	Remarks
20/12/1941	18	0	0		0	0	0	<b>18 P40E-CU's delivered per Pensacola Convoy</b>
2/01/1942	12	6	1					<b>41-5332 first P40E Flown in Australia</b>
4/01/1942	8	6	4					40-679,41-5332,5334,5338,
5/01/1942	8	6	4					40-679,41-5332,5334,5338,
6/01/1942	6	6	6					40-679,667,41-5332,5334,5338,5305
7/01/1942	6	5	7					40-679,667,670,41-5332,5334,5338,5305
8/01/1942	6	5	7					40-679,667,670,41-5332,5334,5338,5305
9/01/1942	2	5	9	1				40-679,666, 667,670,674,678,41-5332,5334,5338,5305
10/01/1942	1	5	11	2				40-679,666, 667,670,674,678,662,41-5332,5333, 5334, 5338, 5305,5314
11/01/1942	1	2	15					40-679,666, 667,670,674,678,662,663,671,5314, 5332, 5334,5338,5305,5333,5337,5314
12/01/1942	1	2	15					40-679,667,670,674,678,662,663,671,41-5314, 5332, 5334,5338,5305,5333,5337,
13/01/1942	0	1	17					40-679,667,670,674,678,662,663,671,666,675, 5332,5334,5338,5305,5333,5337,5314
14/01/1942	0	1	0		17			40-679,667,670,674,678,662,663,671,675,666,41-5332,5334,5338,5305,5333,5337,5314
15/01/1942	0	0		1	17	17	19/01/1942	<b>41-5336 Hanger Queen, without rudder and Left wing tip.</b>

Of interest and the second RAAF tie, the 17<sup>th</sup> PS (Prov)'s 18<sup>th</sup> P-40E ended up in the RAAF as A29-28...41-5336.



**End Notes :Odd Stories: A near fatal error: the attack on an Enemy submarine; 17th April, 1945.** By Gordon R Birkett 2018-12-04

German U Boat, U-862, was a type IXD2 boat of 1800 tons. This boat was fitted with a Schnorchel underwater-breathing apparatus in March 1944. On 20<sup>th</sup> August 1944, A British Catalina FP104, coded H (265 Sqn RAF based in Madagascar) attacked the boat. The boat shot down the aircraft and escaped, despite a massive search that followed.

Captained by Korvetten Kapitan Heinrich Timm, left Batavia , Java on 18th November 1944 headed for Germany. U-862 sailed down the West Australian coast turned east and sailed across the Great Australian Bight. At 12.00 noon on 9th December 1944, Kapitan Timm shelled the Greek tanker "S.S. Illios" (4724 tons) at a location of 130 miles south east of Adelaide."S.S. Illios" returned fire with her 4 inch gun. U-862 then submerged and left the area. Southern Area ordered Beauforts from 1 Operational Training Unit (1 OTU) at East Sale, in Victoria to locate and destroy U-862. U-862 then sailed south under Tasmania.

Then she turned north and sailed up the New South Wales coast. Off Montague Island , south of Batresman Bay NSW, she sank the SS Robert J. Walker using six torpedoes in December 1944. U-862 then sailed for New Zealand. She entered New Zealand waters at North Cape and exited past South Cape. Then she sailed back across the Tasman and reversed her previous course back to Jakarta. U-862 arrived back in Singapore on 27 February 1945.

Her crew were taken prisoners of war by the Japanese and its crew were interned following the German surrender. U-862 's German crew were held by the British in Changi prison. The crew were then taken to England in July 1946 and then finally repatriated in 1947.

By then U-862 had been renumbered as I-502 by the Japanese. The Japanese submarine I 502 (ex. U-862) surrendered at Singapore in August 1945. On 15th February 1946 towed into the Straits of Malacca, off Singapore, by HM Tug Growler and scuttled there (alongside I 501 / U-181) by the frigate HMS Loch Lomand.

<sup>151</sup> Sadly, as a Flight Lieutenant, he was killed in the crash of Catalina A24-381 on Lord Howe Island on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 1948

