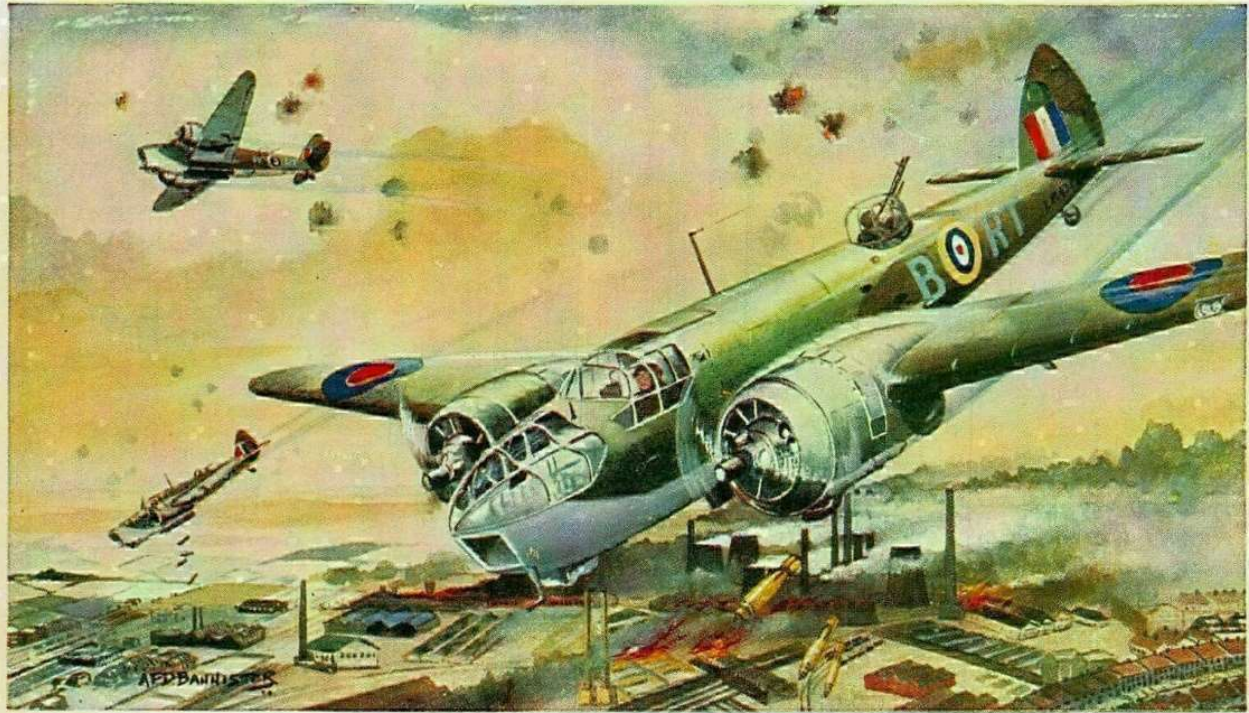


## The “Bloody” Bristol Blenheim

**Bloody** is mostly a British adjective word used to emphasize what they are saying, and it was spoken many times to describe the RAF Bristol Blenheim in the first two years of World War Two. During the British defeat in France in the months of May and June 1940, the RAF Blenheim suffered the highest loss rate, in operations of a similar size, that was ever suffered by the Royal Air Force, and that is the main and only reason for my title page name.

When the first Blenheim flew in 1935 it was capable of evading and out distancing the fixed wing undercarriage biplanes then in service with the RAF, and the bomber became a victim of British overconfidence based on the performance for the mid-1930s. Four years later the Blenheim was incapable of evading or fighting off the modern Bf109s and Bf110s of the German Luftwaffe. The 1939 sudden rise of the Luftwaffe was a remarkable German achievement, which has been detailed in hundreds of books, videos, aviation magazines and historical documents. The RAF Blenheim has best been summed up in one book “Tale of a Guinea Pig” by WWII pilot Alan Geoffrey Page. “For the RAF pilots sent to war in ‘Fairey Battles’ and “Blenheims” the best thing to say for them was a quiet ‘Amen.’



**Bristol Blenheim Mk. IV** light bomber with crew of 3. Span 56' 4", length 42' 7", height 9' 10", loaded weight 14,400 lb., engines two 920 h.p. Bristol Mercury XV, max. speed 266 m.p.h., range 1,460 miles, service ceiling 22,000', armament five 0.303 machine guns, max. bomb load 1,320 lb.

**By 1939, the Blenheim Mk. IV long nose looked very impressive to the people of Britain painted on a British Post Card, which soon proved to be a lot of war propaganda.**

# EMPIRE AIR DAY

20th MAY, 1939

## FLYING PROGRAMME

Event No.

1. **2.10** p.m. EXHIBITION OF NEW TYPE ARMY CO-OPERATION AIRCRAFT—"LYSANDER."
2. **2.20** p.m. ATTACK ON TOWED TARGET.
3. **2.32** p.m. SOLO AEROBATICS.
4. **2.40** p.m. MESSAGE PICKING UP.
5. **2.53** p.m. DUMMY PARACHUTE DROP.
6. **3.5** p.m. FORMATION OF FAIREY "BATTLE" AIRCRAFT.
7. **3.15** p.m. FORMATION DRILL.
8. **3.55** p.m. FLY PAST OF "SPITFIRE" FIGHTER.
  
- 4 - 5 p.m. TEA AND CIVIL FLYING.
  
9. **5.0** p.m. DEMONSTRATION OF SPEED BY "SPITFIRE" FIGHTER.
10. **5.5** p.m. ATTACK ON A TWIN ENGINE BOMBER.
11. **5.15** p.m. LOW FLYING ATTACK ON TANK.
12. **5.30** p.m. PUPIL AND INSTRUCTOR.
13. **5.45** p.m. FLY PAST OF GROUND EXHIBITS.
14. **5.55** p.m. BALLOON BURSTING.
15. **6.15** p.m. SET PIECE AND A.R.P. DEMONSTRATION.

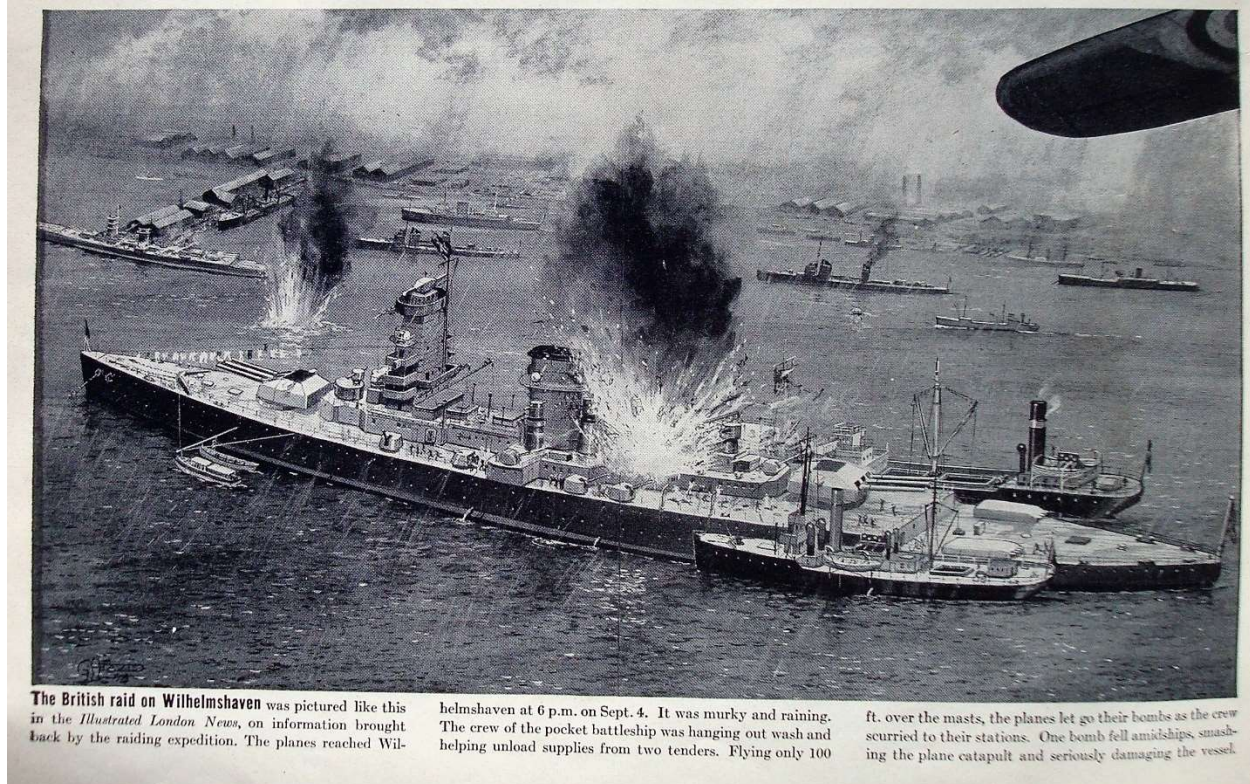
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**GOD SAVE THE KING.**

**The Blenheim Mk. IV was introduced to the public on 20 May 1939. Four months later the Fairey Battle, and Bristol Blenheim went to war. Amen.**



At 11:00 am on the 3 September 1939, the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, announced on radio that Great Britain was at war with Nazi Germany. Thirty minutes before the speech, the first RAF operation in World War Two was undertaken by F/O McPherson in a Bristol Blenheim, [serial N6215] followed the next day, 4 September 1939, with the attack by fifteen Blenheim bombers on Nazi Germany naval bases at or near Wilhelmshaven.



The British raid on Wilhelmshaven was pictured like this in the *Illustrated London News*, on information brought back by the raiding expedition. The planes reached Wil-

helmshaven at 6 p.m. on Sept. 4. It was murky and raining. The crew of the pocket battleship was hanging out wash and helping unload supplies from two tenders. Flying only 100

ft. over the masts, the planes let go their bombs as the crew scurried to their stations. One bomb fell amidships, smashing the plane catapult and seriously damaging the vessel.

The British people soon learned the first RAF Blenheim raid on Wilhelmshaven, Germany, took place at 6 p.m. while the crew of a pocket battleship were caught hanging out their wash. The British Blenheims roared in at 100 feet, letting their bombs go as the Germans scurried to their stations. One bomb fell amidships, smashing the plane catapult and seriously damaging the vessel. This drawing of the raid appeared in the *Illustrated London News*, and the British people were happy, just the performance they expected from the world's fastest medium bomber.



**This RAF propaganda drawing was in fact far from the truth. When the first five Blenheims returned they reported they could not find Wilhelmshaven, and then later a lone RAF Blenheim from No. 107 Squadron returned, the other nine had been shot down by the Germans, with the loss of twenty-four aircrew members. This was the beginning of a long pattern for future “Bloody” Blenheim operations.**





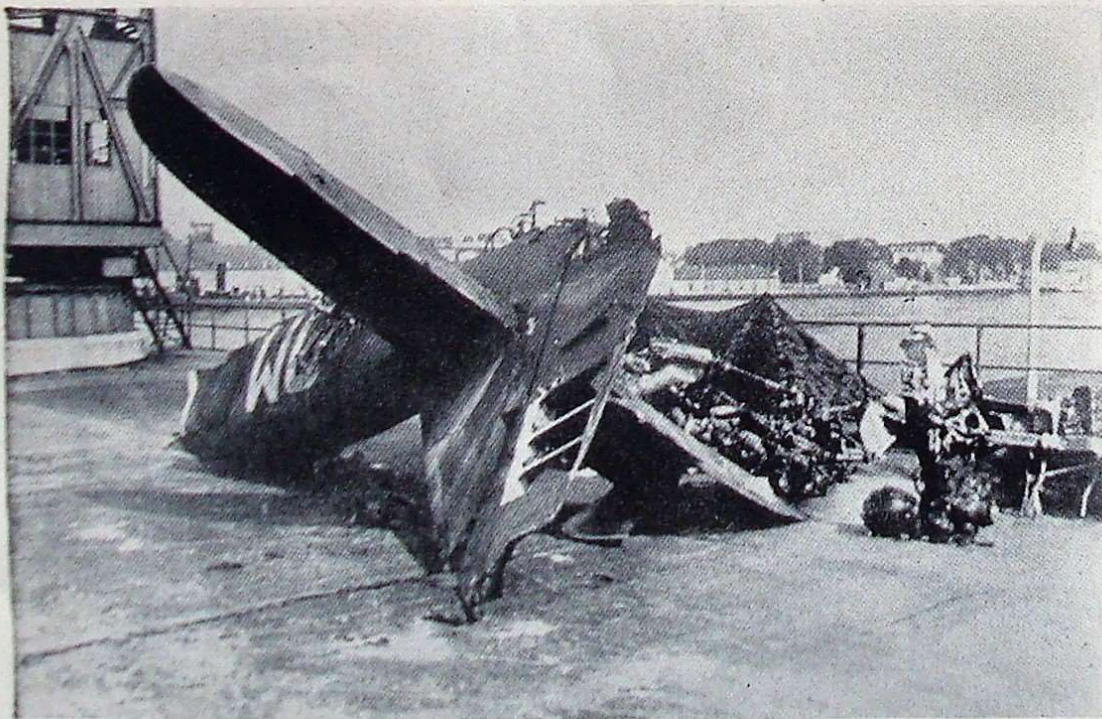
**The Bristol Aeroplane Company followed up with this impressive poster of the first raid on 4 September 1939. Pure British war propaganda, and the Blenheim fell victim in many ways, amazingly this print is still selling on the internet today. It can be ordered on tea cups, mugs, t-shirts, shopping bags, etc. and this war propaganda art is still confusing the main-stream average internet historian.**

## **GERMANY AND BRITAIN PRESENT CONFLICTING EVIDENCE ON PLANE VS. BATTLESHIP**

**On 9 October 1939, American magazine LIFE reported the truth to Canada and U.S. strongly pointing out the conflicting reports about the Blenheim attacks on Germany.**

**O**n Sept. 26, according to official German reports, German airplanes, while bombing a British fleet in the North Sea, "reduced to a wreck" the British aircraft carrier *Ark Royal* and damaged a battleship. Two days later, according to German reports, a German plane dropped a bomb on a British heavy cruiser. Both reports were flatly denied by the British Admiralty which said that all the German bombs had missed, that two German planes had been brought down.

Out of this mass of contradiction came no answer to the grave question which this war may yet solve: How effective is the airplane against surface warships? In the first days of the war, Britain itself tried out the airplane against the battleship by raiding German naval bases at and near Wilhelmshaven. The British said they damaged a pocket battleship. The Germans said the bombs missed and that five planes were brought down. As evidence, the British offered a drawing of the raid based on the reports of British pilots. The Germans offered these photographs of a wrecked British plane.



**A wrecked British bomber**, brought down during the raid on Wilhelmshaven, lies in front of Focke-Wulf airplane plant at Bremen. It is a medium-type Bristol Blenheim. Here is the tail assembly and the rear of the fuselage. The smashed nose is at right.





**A shattered wing** is inspected by members of the German air force. Notice crumpled aileron on wing edge and torn tail in rear, also seen in picture at left. Automatic fire extinguisher probably kept plane from burning when it crashed. Germans honored British fliers with military funeral.

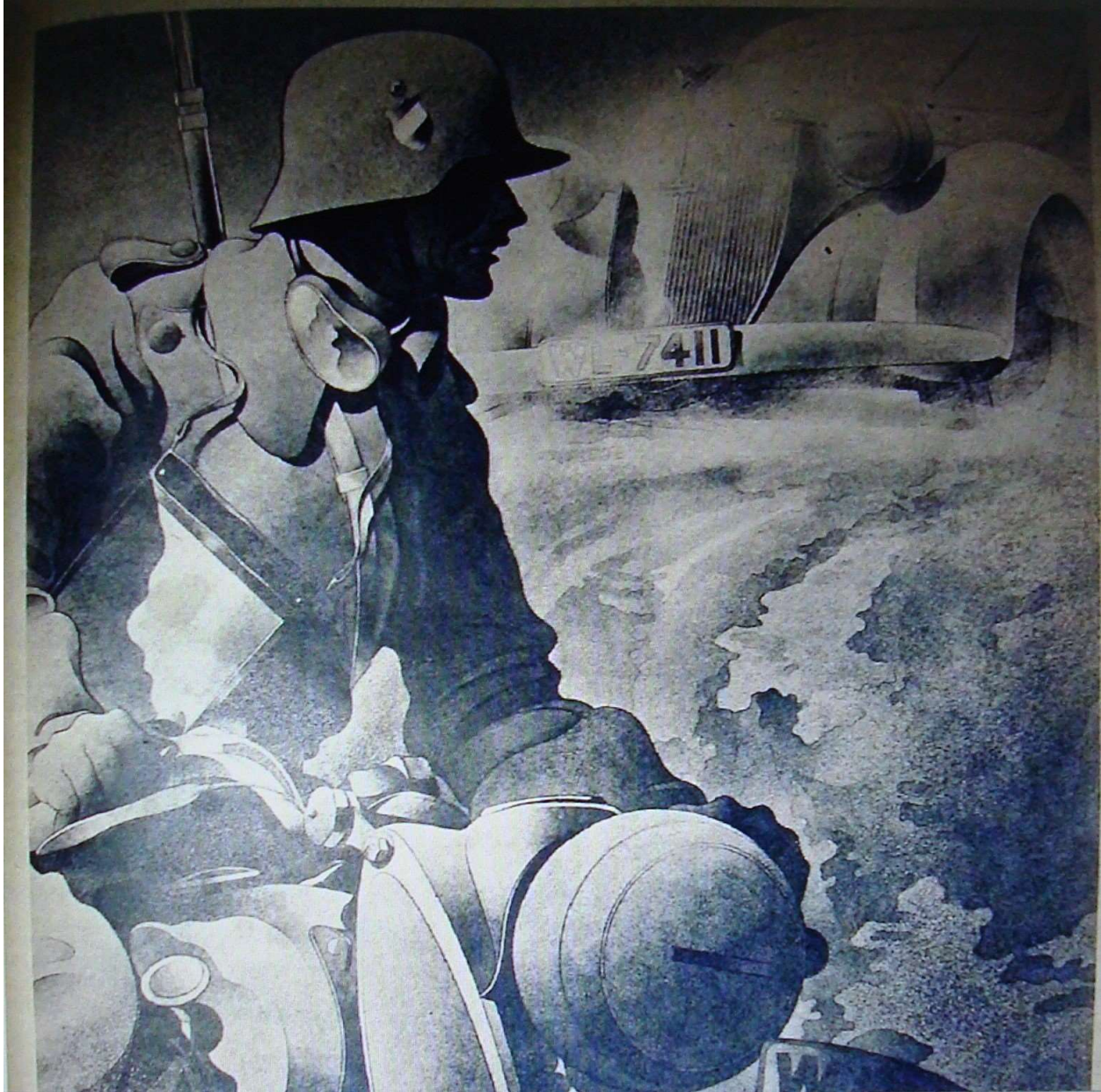
**This was Blenheim Mk. IV serial N6184, and much more can be found on many websites.**

**During the Battle of France, 10 May to 25 June 1940, the RAF Blenheim IVs and Fairey Battle Mk. Is suffered crippling losses at the hands of the Luftwaffe, and both aircraft were withdrawn from further front line combat. Seven-hundred and thirty-nine Fairey Battle aircraft were shipped to Canada, where five-hundred and forty were assigned as trainers at Bombing and Gunnery Schools. This has been fully recorded in my history of No. 9 Bombing and Gunnery School at Mont Joli, Quebec, where over one-hundred Fairey Battles flew. It became obvious to the RAF that the Blenheim Mk. IVs could not survive unless they had a fighter escort protection, and that was not always possible. When fighter escort was unavailable, daylight Blenheim operations were abandoned if the cloud cover was less than seven tenths. Another problem were the propellers which could not be feathered in flight, and the wind milling effect added drag to the wing and made the bomber difficult to control. The Blenheim IVs were best at night attacks against German occupied ports and installations in the British frantic attempts to disrupt the German planned invasion of the United Kingdom.**

**The German magazine Der Adler [The Eagle] was published before and during the Second World War, the main purpose was to publicize the growing might of the Luftwaffe to Europe. From 1939 to 1942, the magazine was also published in English, specifically designed to encourage the isolationism in the United States of America, and emphasizing the world airpower of Nazi Germany. Another German magazine appeared in 1940, titled Signal, it was supervised by Goebbels's Ministry of Propaganda and published in twenty-five languages. Today this magazine is a living record of Nazi Germany in a highly illustrated format of colour and B & W photos, line graphs, drawings, and persuasive colour war paintings. Many Nazi magazines used different German artists and I consider the work of Hans Liska to be the finest. He served at the front lines along side the German troops and captured in sketches and water colours stunning images of the German forces in live action. [Look at his art online today] His paintings are in fact an historical document which is now becoming a great source for students and aircraft enthusiasts alike. Der Adler was a mix of straight war reporting and Nazi propaganda showing Goering's Luftwaffe dominated the skies over Europe, and for the first two years Germany in fact did just that.**

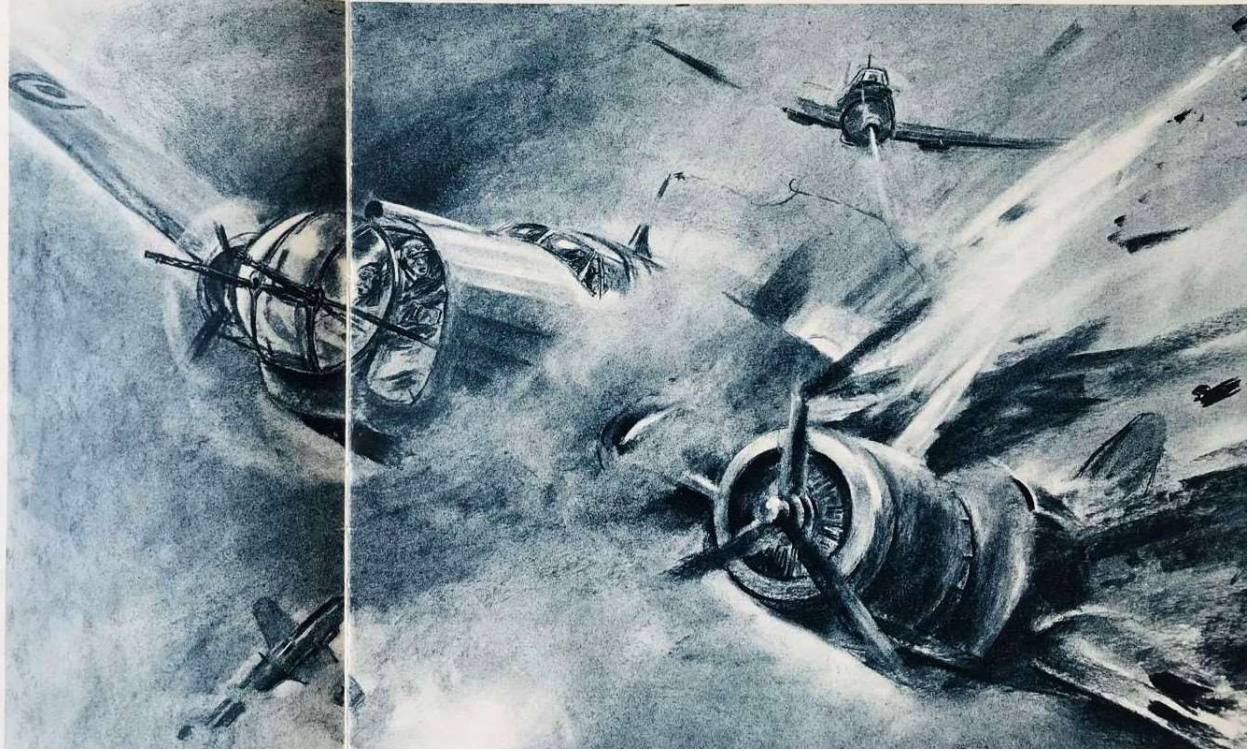


Signal was the most widely circulated magazine in WWII, with three million copies sold in 1943, most outside Germany. Twenty thousand copies in English were still selling until the English and French editions were closed with the liberation of Paris in 1944. Today it is unknown how many original German war paintings survived the war, and if they did, most are hidden away in small collections by the rich and famous. Today many issues of WWII German magazines are appearing for sale on the internet, but to conduct proper research an average historian would need bags of money to purchase. Many sketches and water colour art paintings of Austrian born Hans Liska [1907-1983] still remain hidden on pages of Der Eagle and Signal magazine collections.



**Liska was dispatched to the front lines of German combat and for that reason most of his sketches and paintings were ground forces of the Heer [Army] but all branches of the Wehrmacht [Armed Forces] were included in his overall work. I believe most of this art was lost during the final days of the war and hope someone [German] will make an attempt to save what remains in German magazine issues. His record of markings, serial numbers, badges, and even Luftwaffe aircraft insignia are important to future historical research.**





**The destruction of RAF aircraft by the Luftwaffe appeared in limited editions, by different artists, scattered among stories featured in both magazines where ever the German editor decided to place them, part fact and part propaganda.**





**Artist Liska sketch in the pouring rain as a German Luftwaffe ground crew member attempts to keep dry under a Me110 engine, Signal magazine 1940.**



**This sketch appeared during the Battle of Britain where a squadron of Luftwaffe Do17 bombers attack British shipping. The surprise is the Luftwaffe emblem badge was in fact correct, no censorship as seen in insert. IV[ERG]/KG3 carried the badge of green hairy cavewoman with a trident in his right hand and a 500 lb. German bomb under his left arm. Even the jousting shield background is correct, with a top right curl. ERG was**



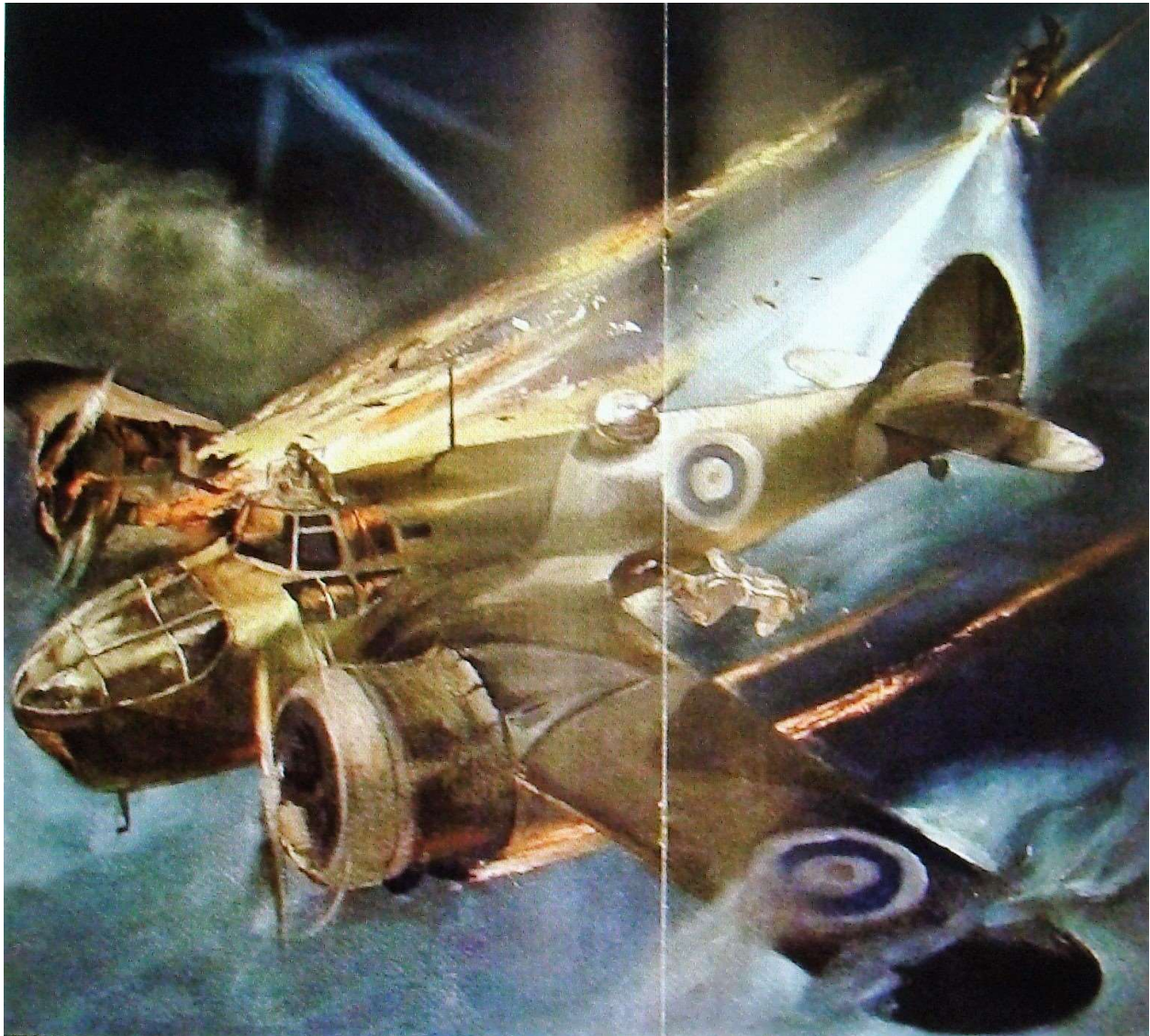
Erganzungs-Fernaufklaugs Gruppe, [Long-Range Reconnaissance] and KG was Kampfgeschwader [Bomber Group].





**Hans Liska created many war time ads for Mercedes-Benz, which he continued to paint in postwar era. Today his rare originals sell for 5-6 thousand American dollars. Rich Americans just seem to love this Nazi stuff.**

**“Jagd in der Nacht” [Hunt in the Night] appeared in the October 1940 issue of Signal magazine.**



**A British Blenheim Mk. IV has bombed a target in German occupied France and a Luftwaffe Bf 109 is attacking in the dark. With both engines ablaze the three-man crew are leaving the Bloody Blenheim and will become prisoners of war. In the background you see the German search lights and the raising smoke and dust from the target area. This painting appeared in one million issues in twenty-five languages, and the British called it pure German propaganda. German artist Liska was posted to operational Luftwaffe units in France and it is possible his painting came from actual pilot reports. Fact - too many Blenheims were lost to enemy fighters in 1940, when the wing tanks were set on fire. Only the Blenheim main fuel tank was self-sealing, while the wing tanks remained non self-sealing, a death trap for many RAF aircrews.**

**In April 1918, the Royal Air Force introduced a new system of naming British aircraft, which remained in effect until 1932, when more appropriate names were allowed. RAF Heavy bombers were now named after inland towns in the British Empire, Short Stirling, Handley Page Halifax, and Avro Lancaster. The new medium bomber was named for the Duke of Marlborough's 13 August 1704, victory at the Battle of Blenheim, during the Spanish Succession. Other RAF medium bombers had been named for places in France, Boulton Paul Bobolink, Airco Amiens, and Vickers Vimy. By 1942, the RAF Blenheim had found a new life as a radar equipped night-fighter, maritime patrol bomber, and aircrew trainer aircraft.**

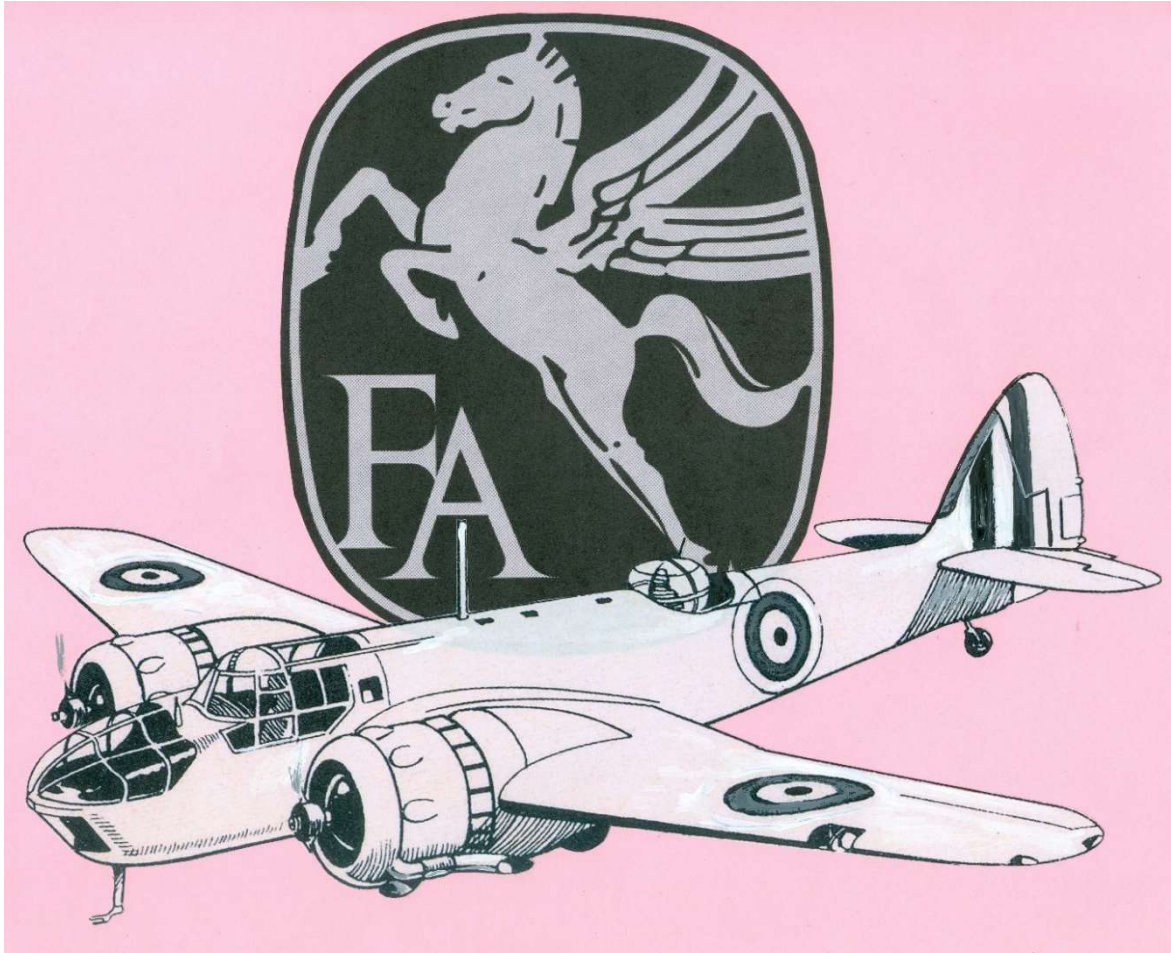




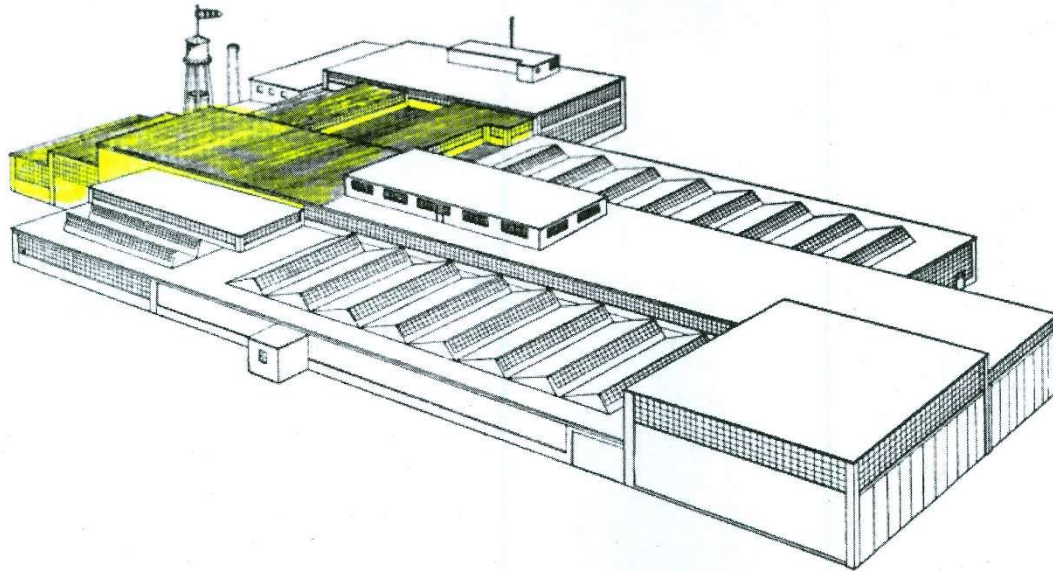
This ad appeared on inside cover of Empire Air Day 20 May 1939.



**In Canada the great Depression had ruined the beginnings of any aircraft industry, and now the Canadian government decided the RCAF would be built on British type aircraft. Nobody seemed to understand bringing aircraft, guns, bombs, and instruments by ship from U.K. in time of war posed a problem, when American aircraft and products were right next door. This is fully detailed in the best book “The Creation of a National Air Force, by W.A.B. Douglas, Part One Between the Wars. In 1935, Canada ordered six Westland Wapiti bombers and four Blackburn Sharks from the U.K., followed in 1936 with five Supermarine Stranraer, all being WWI type open cockpit aircraft with unimpressive flight performance. Contracts were next obtained and Canada was happily constructing these British obsolete military aircraft, which presented no deterrent to the most faint-hearted enemy attack. In 1937, the Liberal government provided more lavish defence spending for RCAF aircraft and that is how Canada received the Bristol Bolingbroke and the Lysander, more obsolete British aircraft. Until England went to war in 1939, the RAF had for the most part, been trained on a generation of World War One aircraft and techniques from the past. The most serious unknown Canadian problem being that RCAF officers sent to Britain received this same outdated training in obsolete aircraft, and now Canada began manufacturing these same obsolete British aircraft. Its recorded page by page in the history books, all true, so political.**



**In 1937, the Canadian Government issued a license contract to construct the British Blenheim Mk. I and IV aircraft [Type 149] at Fairchild Aircraft Ltd. in Quebec, Canada. American owned company, French-Canadian constructed, [3,900 employees] while the British name “Bristol” must be retained in the original contract.**



SHADED AREA 1937 BUILDING

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### LONGUEUIL PLANT 1941

The original 1937 Longueuil, Quebec, plant [yellow] located 128 miles East of Ottawa, Ontario, was first expanded to accommodate the new production line, and the Canadian manufactured Bristol Bolingbroke Mk. I was born. The first eighteen aircraft were more British than Canadian, constructed with British instrumentation and other equipment shipped from U.K. The Canadian Bolingbroke was not an extension of the British Mk. I Blenheim bomber but developed as a British Coastal Command Reconnaissance Bomber to replace the obsolescent Avro Anson. British land-based maritime patrol aircraft were mostly named for British naval explorers - Lockheed Hudson [Henry Hudson], Avro Anson [George Anson], and Bristol Beaufort [Francis Beaufort]. This new type 149 extended nose aircraft first flew 24 September 1937, released to the RAF as the Bolingbroke Mk. I in 1938, then during the first 1939 production run the name again reverted back to Blenheim Mk. IV bomber. The RAF record the naming for a small Lincolnshire village [Bolingbroke] where King Henry IV [Henry of Bolingbroke] was born in 1399. The RCAF retained this British name or perhaps, as has been suggested, named it for the east coastal community of Bolingbroke, Nova Scotia, which is also possible. The RCAF officially named the American built Douglas "Digby" land-based aircraft and Canadian built "Canso" Flying Boat both for coastal communities in Nova Scotia, Canada.



The construction of the first four Bolingbroke's began in 1939, and eighteen would be completed in the first production block, with the designation Bolingbroke Mk. I, II, and Mk. III, serial numbers #702 to #719. A good number of these early production airframes were used for experimental and development by Fairchild. Fifteen would be taken on strength by No. 119 Squadron [marked with yellow serial], seven were later passed on to No. 115 Squadron.

*No. 119 SQUADRON - SIMONSEN WORK SHEET.*

Type	CODE DM	Serial Number	TAKEN ON STRENGTH - No. 119 SQN.	Taken on Strength	Struck off Strength	Subsequent Registration	Remarks
Bristol Bolingbroke I	A	702	30 JULY 1940	15.11.39	19.9.44	1st RCAF	Equipped for Floats
Bristol Bolingbroke I	S	703	28 JULY 1940	12.1.40	23.6.44		147(BR) Squad 1942
Bristol Bolingbroke I		704		30.1.40	25.1.45	A 431	115(F) Squad 1941 Nov.
Bristol Bolingbroke I & II		705	No. 115 Nov. 41.	26.2.40	21.6.44		Eastern Air Command 1940
Bristol Bolingbroke I		706		19.3.40	8.5.43		Cat A 2.3.43 Tofino, B.C.
Bristol Bolingbroke I	E	707	19 JULY 1940	26.3.40	22.3.43	A 184	Cat A 21.8.42 Mossbank, Sask
Bristol Bolingbroke I		708	No. 115 Nov. 41	3.4.40	2.5.42		8(BR) Squad 1940 - 11 APRIL
Bristol Bolingbroke I		709	18 JULY 1940	20.5.40	24.3.45	A 406	115(F) Squad 1941 - 27 SEPT
Bristol Bolingbroke I	TEST FIGHTER -	710	8 JUNE 1940 - TEST	6.6.40	1.9.44	FOUR PACK GUNS	TEST
Bristol Bolingbroke I		711	30 JULY 1940	4.7.40	15.2.43		115(F) Squad 1941
Bristol Bolingbroke I		712	28 JULY 1940	4.7.40	22.2.45	No. 115 Nov. 41	Dual Control 23.7.42
Bristol Bolingbroke I	K	713	24 JULY 1940	5.7.40	10.10.44		147(BR) Squad 1942
Bristol Bolingbroke I		714	18 JULY 1940	5.7.40	27.6.44	"IDA" DONATION	8(BR) Squad 1940
Bristol Bolingbroke I		715	8 AUG 1940	24.7.40	28.4.44		115(F) Squad 1941 - OCT.
Bristol Bolingbroke I	N	716	31 JULY 1940	31.7.40	10.3.42		Cat A 30.1.42 B.C.
Bristol Bolingbroke I & III		717		8.8.40	21.6.44		Float Trials in 1940
Bristol Bolingbroke I		718	15 AUG 1940	14.8.40	12.6.46		Dual Control
	P	719		28.8.40	27.6.44	No. 115 - OCT 41	

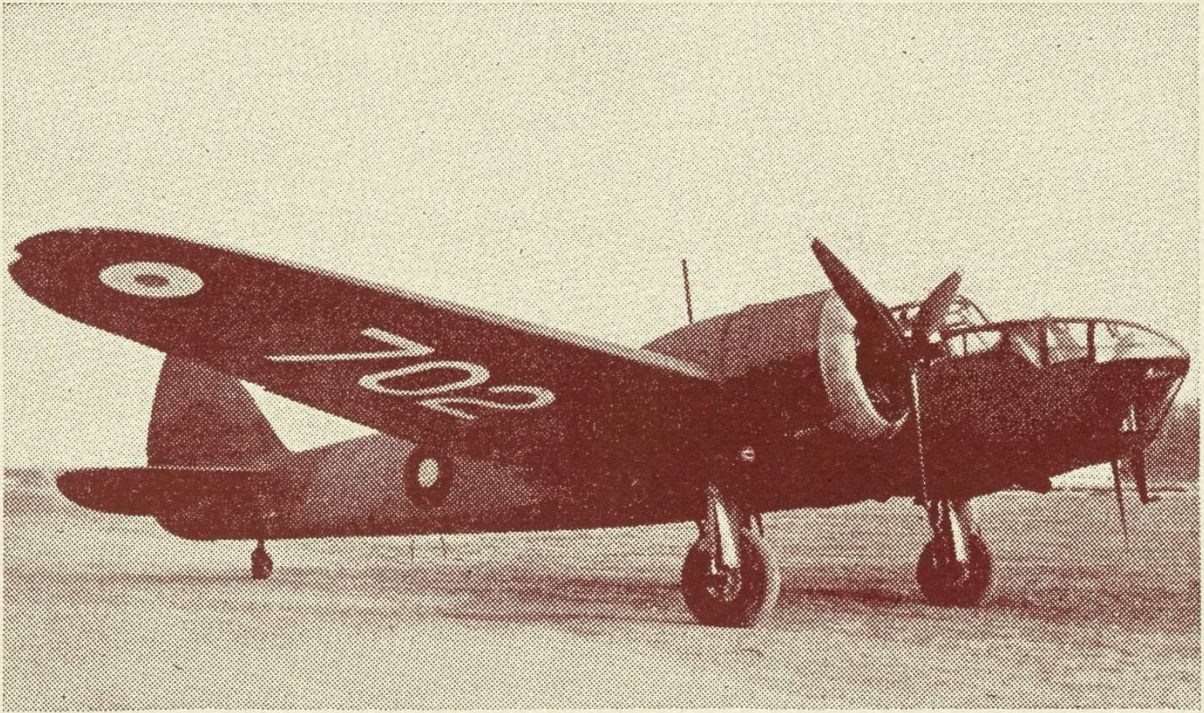
Bristol Bolingbroke Mk. I, serial 710, sent to RCAF Rockcliffe, Test and Development Est. 8 June 1940 to 17 July 1940. Back to Fairchild Plant for modifications, returned to Rockcliffe 16 May 1941, extensive test as fighter including four .303 Cal. machine gun belly pack. Returned to Fairchild and then Eastern Air Command. To Western Air Command 28 May 1942, storage 25 November 1943. To No. 3 Repair Depot for scrapping. Purchased by Metro Goldwyn-Mayer Studios and used in film "Son of Lassie" 1945.

Two of these Mk. I aircraft would be used by the Canadian Government and the RCAF for press coverage as special presentation bombers for Canada.

The original first built Bristol Bolingbroke Mk. I serial 702, had been equipped with attachment points for floats but they were never fitted. Aircraft test flights began at the Quebec plant on 3 November 1939, civil pilot Mr. Lymburner and RCAF test pilot S/L Wray, 45 minutes. Accepted by the RCAF, and taken on charge 15 November 1939, it was next ferried to RCAF Test and Development Est. at Rockcliffe on 16 November. At 17:00 hrs, 17 November 1939, S/L Wray piloted the first Canadian built Bolingbroke Mk. I, serial #702, test flown for 25 minutes in front of senior officers and officially turned over to the RCAF at Station Ottawa. RCAF Press photo [below] taken on 22 November 1939, just minutes before S/L Wray took #702 on her very first high speed test in front of Senior RCAF officers, and the Canadian Press, the speed was not recorded in the Daily Diary. [probably around 260 m.p.h.]







**BRISTOL BOLINGBROKE BOMBER** Powered with two Mercury VIII engines of 810 hp. This medium bomber is a Canadian development of the famous Bristol Blenheim. The R.C.A.F. is using the Bolingbroke on East Coast Patrol duty.

**No. 11 ZOOM** Official Photograph Royal Canadian Air Force

**This special RCAF event and aircraft images were published in many Canadian magazines, newspapers, and even aviation collector cards.**



**Test and Development Flight [RCAF Rockcliffe, Ontario] main test pilot S/L Wray signing the RCAF trial book after the fly-over ceremony at RCAF Ottawa, 17 November 1939. On this date, the bomber went to RCAF Test and Development Establishment at Rockcliffe, remained until 5 December 1939, then returned to Fairchild where it crashed on 20 August 1940. Repaired at factory cost, #702 was assigned to No. 8 [BR] Squadron on 18 November 1940 and received the code letters YO-A. Damaged in a Category “C” accident on 31 May 1941, at RCAF Sydney aerodrome. 1940-41 flew with No. 119 Squadron as DM-A and later No. 147 [BR] Squadron at Sea Island, [Vancouver, B.C.] Scrapped on 5 April 1944.**



The first Squadron to receive a single Canadian Bristol Bolingbroke [serial #708] became No. 8 Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron based at Sydney River Base, North Sydney, Nova Scotia, on 3 April 1940. Formed at Winnipeg, Manitoba, 14 February 1936, they moved to Rockcliffe, Ontario, as a photographic unit on 1 February 1937. Mobilized on 10 September 1939, they moved to war station Sydney, Nova Scotia, on 14 September 1939. Flying obsolete Northrop Delta Mk. II aircraft, Delta #673 failed to arrive at their new posting. F/Sgt. J.E. Doan and LAC D.A. Rennie became the first RCAF casualties of World War Two, and the crash site and bodies were not found until July 1958, north of Fredericton, New Brunswick. The two other WWI style obsolete RCAF aircraft being flown were the Fairchild 71 and Bellanca Pacemaker, making the arrival of the new Bristol Bolingbroke Bombers a huge step forward.

(UNIT OR FORMATION) R.C.A.F. Station, Rockcliffe, Ottawa.

DATE	TIME	SUMMARY OF EVENTS
11-7-40		<p><u>Visitors</u> - Nil.</p> <p><u>General</u> - General Routine</p> <p><u>Arrival and Departure of Aircraft</u> - Hudson N. 7380 arrived Calgary 1800 hrs. 10-7-40. Grumman 917 departed Malton for Ottawa Pilot F/O Dobson, at 1248 hrs.</p>
12-7-40.		<p><u>Visitors</u> - Nil.</p> <p><u>General</u> - General Routine</p> <p><u>Arrival and Departure of Aircraft</u> - RCAF Hudson 7386 departed Malton 1110 E.T.A. Ottawa 1500 Digby 746 Pilot Newcombe departed Malton 1107 E.T.A. Ottawa 1257. Digby 750 Pilot Skalli departed Malton 1119 E.T.A. Ottawa 1249. Goose 917 arrived Ottawa 1215 from Trenton Pilot F/O Dobson. Bolingbroke 714 ferried Ottawa 11-7-40.</p>
13-7-40		<p><u>Visitors</u>- Her Royal Highness the Princess Alice and the Earl of Athlone and party.</p> <p><u>General</u> - A presentation was made by the Princess Alice for the Daughters of the Empire of Bolingbroke 714, on Saturday afternoon at 1500 hrs. The plane was then flown by S/L Truscott for demonstration.</p>

On 11 July 1940, a second presentation Bolingbroke #714 arrived at RCAF Station Ottawa, and two days later a special presentation was made to No. 119 [B.R.] Squadron by Her Royal Highness Princess Alice. This became the very first Canadian built Bolingbroke purchased by donations from the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, and the bomber was christened "Ida." The bomber was taken on charge by Test and Development Est. at RCAF Rockcliffe, 11 July 1940, taken on charge by No. 119 [BR] at RCAF Station

**Yarmouth, 18 July 1940, delivered by F/Lt. Wigle. This was the very first Bolingbroke to be delivered to No. 119 [BR] Squadron at Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, and Bolingbroke #709 arrived later that same day.**







**Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Her Royal Highness Princess Alice on 13 July 1940, Bolingbrook #714 ceremony at RCAF Ottawa, Ontario. Special guest His Excellency, Governor-General, the Earl of Athlone.**

**The correct special aircraft nose dedication wording painted on Bolingbroke Mk. I, serial #714, 13 July 1940, RCAF Ottawa.**



**Presented by  
the Imperial Order  
Daughters of the Empire  
across Canada**



**“For King and Empire”**

A Bolingbroke replica of this aircraft has been under restoration at Hamilton Warplane Heritage for the past thirty-years, and will be a most welcome addition to their vast collection. It is also a pure joy to read they will not fly this aircraft, as first intended, due to the fact it would cost around \$500,000 to rebuilt the two engines. In 1940, it cost \$100,000 to build this complete aircraft and that was the money gift collected from nickels and dimes donated by women from across Canada.

The Canadian Bolingbroke Mk I first entered RCAF Squadron service with No. 119 Squadron in July 1940, as a fighter aircraft, [not a bomber] but never designated such. Many problems faced No. 119 Squadron at Yarmouth, N.S., lack of rations, no water, no fences for security, no sheets or pillowcases for 160 men, and then a sudden rise in Venereal disease. The C.O. read the Station Orders regarding V.D. “protective measures” on the morning parade, and then read the names of several local ladies who were suspected of spreading the sexual infection. Two airmen fainted on the parade square, from Capt. Nora Bottomley, Canadian Armed Forces historian 1985. In mid-August the squadron were assigned their code letters “DM” and instructions for painting the fighter/bombers.



**On 1 October 1941, an SOS was received from an USN aircraft which ditched 200 miles off the east coast and Bolingbroke #714 was dispatched with F/L P. H. Douglas as pilot and Sgt. L. C. Fulton as his navigator. They took off at 21:00 hrs and received a recall at 00:15 hrs. but never arrived at base on the estimated time of arrival. The navigator became lost and the crew flew around in the dark until shore lights were sighted, but fuel had become critically low. The pilot made a forced landing in the dark without engines running [no fuel] with aircraft wheels up. None of the four crew were injured but the famous presentation aircraft was seriously damaged. The crew walked for help and surprisingly learned they had landed at Greenland, New Hampshire, USA, just outside of Portsmouth. On return to base the red faced navigator received the nickname “Wrong Way Fulton.”**





**The 13 July 1940 presentation nose art was still painted on the nose.**

**The first correct markings of Bristol Bolingbroke MK I, [Fighter] aircraft #716 with No. 119 Squadron August 1940. Final Cat. "A" accident No. 115 Sqn. at Pat Bay, B.C. 30 January 1942.**

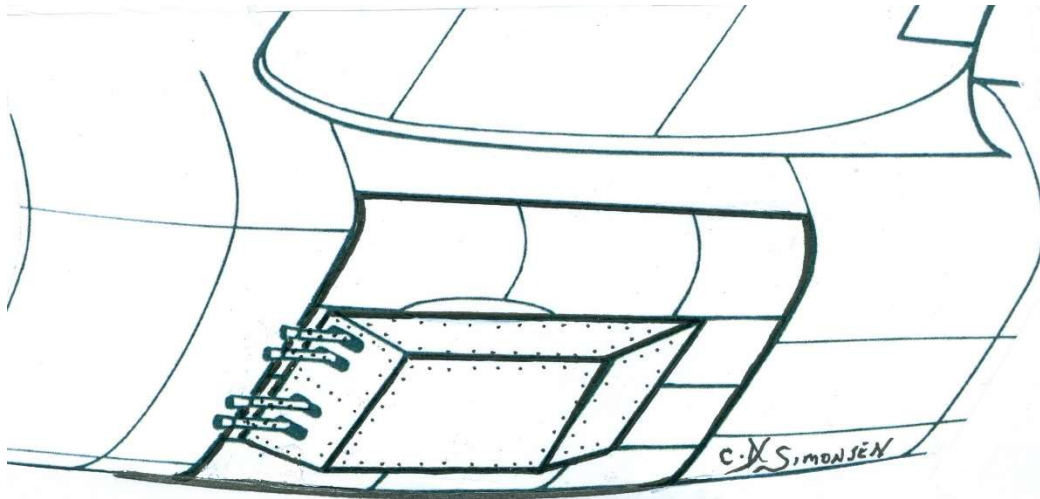






**The two-letter unit squadron codes were created by the RCAF in August 1939, and first appeared on aircraft in August 1940. The squadron two-letter code and single aircraft code letter were underlined with a solid white bar, identifying them as Home War Establishment aircraft. This marking remained in effect until 16 October 1942. The RCAF serial number was painted reverse white under main wing surface.**

**These Bolingbroke Mk. Is were all long range fighter aircraft, fitted with one Vickers K .303 cal. upper dorsal turret rear firing machine gun and one forward firing .303 cal. machine gun in belly gun packs. The first shipment of Browning machine guns, sights, and gun packs arrived on 14 September 1940, installed in Bolingbroke #709 on 23 September, and the 1<sup>st</sup> test firing took place on 26 September. These rare RCAF fighter gun pack photos must still be hidden away in the archives somewhere in Ottawa, but I never had the time or money to find them. This gun pack was fitted into the bomb bay of the RCAF Bolingbroke, author drawing below.**



**Bolingbroke Mk. I, serial 710, became the official RCAF fighter test aircraft assigned to Rockcliffe, Test and Development Est. on 8 June 1940 to 17 July 1940, returned to Fairchild for modifications. Back for extensive fighter testing including four .303 cal. machine gun belly pack testing 16 May to November 1941. A very nice photo of this test Bolingbroke Mk. I, with gun pack, can be found in the book "Canada's Air Force" Vol. One by Larry Milberry, page 134, donated by David Thompson. The location is not noted, but I believe it was taken at RCAF Rockcliffe, Test and Development Est. after 16 May 1941. I believe these RCAF under-fuselage gun packs were obtained from England, the same as those used on the RAF Blenheim Mk. I [Fighter] aircraft in 1940. The British gun package contained four .303 machine guns and 2,000 rounds of ammunition, however for training the RCAF only installed one single forward firing machine gun, as recorded in the No. 119 Squadron Daily Diary. Test flying, front and rear gunnery training continued into March 1941. Bolingbroke #710 never served with any active RCAF squadron, but possibly was used by No. 119 Squadron for machine gun pack ground school training, transferred to Halifax Nova Scotia, 18 November 1940.**



**Imperial War Museum photo IWM107160 showing the belly gun pack on a Blenheim Mk. IV.**

**On 28 May 1942, Boley #710 was transferred to Western Air Command and placed into reserve storage on 25 November 1943. In the spring of 1944, the aircraft was flown to No. 3 Repair Depot, Vancouver, B.C., for scrapping or sale, her days were numbered. That's where a second life began for #710, purchased by American film studio Metro Goldwyn-Mayer, [2 July 1944] for use in a new Hollywood movie called "Son of Lassie." Saved from the very brink of scrap-pile oblivion the RCAF Bolingbroke became a feature player beside Peter Lawford and Lassie. The opening scenes in rich Technicolor preserve forever the real life of the Bolingbroke aircraft based at Patricia Bay, B.C., which Hollywood transformed into an operational RAF fighter base somewhere in England. The real RCAF base C.O. Group Captain B.D. Hobbs appears in flying scenes, and two real RAF veterans Wing Commander Eric Jones and pilot S/L Blair A. Fraiser have small speaking parts acting as**



flying instructors to Sergeant/Pilot Lawford. Flying over Norway, [Banff, Alberta], Bolingbroke #710 is hit by German flak and Peter Lawford is forced to parachute with Lassie in his arms, filmed over Patricia Bay, [15 August 1944].



Movie production began at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, on 22 May 1944, then moved North to Banff National Park and Lake Louise, Alberta. [Which became Norway in the film] The German escape scenes were shot at Christopher Point in British Columbia and all the flying scenes were taken at RCAF Patricia Bay, B.C., 13 to 19 August 1944, using three Bolingbroke aircraft loaned from No. 122 [Composite] Squadron. Bolingbroke #9032, #9035 and #9068.

No. 122 Squadron was formed as a Composite unit at Patricia Bay, B.C., on 10 January 1942, and they were expected to perform a wide variety of menial tasks for the RCAF, flying an obsolete collection of British designed aircraft, Blackburn Shark, Westland Lysander, and ten Bristol Bolingbroke Mk. IV aircraft. For RCAF Senior Officers VIP flights pilots flew modern American Grumman Goose and a Canadian Noorduyn Norseman float aircraft. They soon earned the nickname “Flying Joe Boys” from other

RCAF units and that was not appreciated by many members, so they applied to Walt Disney Studios for a new unofficial insignia and name. The Disney Artist's at Burbank, California, were producing hundreds of Air Force insignia for units around the world and they just picked a character that seemed to fit the functions of the unit who sent in the request. When the new RCAF insignia arrived it featured a silver Knight riding a white winged horse and the name "Flying Nightmares." The new name fit, as a few of the pilots had been involved in mishaps which caused nightmares for the RCAF brass, so the squadron loved it, plus it was in fact rare official Walt Disney designed nose art.

The Hollywood Studio directed painting of the four "Flying Nightmares" Bolingbroke aircraft took place on 13 August 1944, as recorded in their No. 122 Daily Diary.





R.C.A.F. Station, Patricia Bay, B. C. 13 Aug.

Weather: The day began with a ceiling of 8,000 ft. which lowered to 3,000 ft. by 0530 hours in light rain. The rain stopped at 0545 hours but resumed at 0740 hours when the ceiling gradually lowered to 1,200 ft. by 1000 hours. The rain continued until 1222 hours when the ceiling began to rise, reaching 2,500 ft. by 1400 hours and unlimited by 1430 hours, and remaining thus for the remainder of the day. The visibility was mainly over 10 miles except for the period between 0800 to 1100 hours when it occasionally dropped to 6 miles. Surface winds were light variable throughout. Temperature range 55-66 deg. F.

135 (F) Squadron. Dawn and dusk patrols were flown.

8 (BR) Squadron. One recco. patrol was flown but not completed due to weather. Two surface vessels were sighted and identified.

122 Squadron. All available personnel were engaged in painting Bolingbroke aircraft for the production of the M.G.M. picture "Son of Lassie" which is to be filmed on the station. The squadron being non-operational it was necessary to install dummy machine guns etc., in the aircraft.

The Bolingbroke movie star #710 was given the factious code letters DA-H and received a Canadian Maple Leaf roundel nose art painting. The three borrowed No. 122 Bolingbroke received painted code letters DA-D, DA-F and DA-J.







Take offs, landings, and other ground shots were all taken on 14 August 1944. Bolingbroke Mk. I serial #710, [above] was in fact owned by MGM studios and the other three were loaned from No. 122 Squadron, original "Flying Nightmares" aircraft in wartime west coast of B.C.

14 Aug.

Weather: The ceiling was unlimited throughout the day. The visibility was over 10 miles except for the periods: 0545 to 0655 hours and 0930 to 1230 hours when it was less than a mile, and 0700 to 0800 hours when it increased to 4-8 miles, 0830 to 0930 hours when it was 2 miles and 1259 to 1430 hours when it increased from 4-10 miles. The surface winds were light and variable until 0800 hours when the wind became east southeast, gradually increasing to 20 m.p.h. by 1300 hours and gradually decreasing to become light and variable after 1430 hours. Temperature range 53-66 deg. F.

135 (F) Squadron. Dawn and dusk patrols were flown.

8 (BR) Squadron. Recco. patrols to sea were cancelled due to weather.

122 Squadron. Squadron pilots and aircraft carried out for take-offs and landings, and taxiing sequences for the filming of "Son of Lassie". Personnel of Squadron took part in scenes depicting crews scrambling to aircraft and engines being run up.

A target tow, one line flying assignment and a Radar offshoot were carried out.

**On 15 August 1944, the sequences of a Bolingbroke flying through simulated German Flak was filmed around Patricia Bay. These flying scenes were piloted by F/O H.R.K. West from Quebec City and his gunner P/O C.N. Kendall, flying Bolingbroke #9032, seen in film as DA-D.**



**These flying scenes [Boley #9032] are worth watching a number of times as you can see these RCAF pilots were truly a professional group of “Flying Nightmares.”**

**Just before the final shots were taken [19 August 1944] a special wing parade was held attended by AVM F.V. Heakes, AOC of Western Air Command. MGM Studios presented a cheque for \$1,000 to the RCAF station and GC Hobbs received a new station mascot, a female pup from Lassie, named “Miss Patricia.”**



19 Apr.

Weather: The ceiling was unlimited throughout. The visibility was over 15 miles throughout. The surface winds were light westerly until 0830 hours, veered through north to northeasterly 5-10 m.p.h. by 1530 hours, continued to veer through east to southeasterly 5-10 m.p.h., by 1930 hours, when they became light and variable for the remainder of the day. Temperature range 47-71 deg. F.

132 (F) Squadron. A dusk patrol was attempted but cancelled owing to P/O Doyle crashing on take-off. The left tyre of his Kittyhawk blew out. The aircraft groundlooped and skidded 100 yards. P/O Doyle escaped unhurt but the left oleo leg and the undercarriage of the aircraft were damaged, resulting in a "C" category crash.

8 (RR) Squadron. Two recco. patrols were attempted. One was completed and one was incomplete due to weather. Two vessels were sighted, one of which was identified by flare and the other by photographs taken from the aircraft.

122 Squadron. Aircraft and personnel performed for the N.S.L. picture "Son of Lassie", during which Bolingbroke 9035 was damaged due to an oleo leg buckling while taxiing.

The envy of her canine acquaintances "Miss Patricia", daughter of "Lassie" was today taken on strength at R.C.A.F. Station, Patricia Bay. With an R.C.A.F. Band from W.A.C. in attendance before a parade of three squadrons, and within a hollow square by No. 3 hangar, "Miss Patricia" was presented by F.C.M. Director, E. Sylvan Simon, to the A.O.C., W.A.C., A/V/E F.V. Heakes, C.B., who in the presence of the Chief Staff Officer W.A.C., A/C D.L. With, presented "Miss Patricia" to the Commanding Officer G/C B.D. Hobbs, D.S.O., D.S.C. It was thus that the daughter of "Lassie" became the mascot of R.C.A.F. Station, Patricia Bay.

Cradled in big braid, Patricia, pup of Lassie, is attested into RCAF by AVM F. V. Heakes, AOC of WAC. GC B. D. Hobbs, Pat Bay CO, is at left.



The first RCAF No. 119 Squadron [B.R.] operation took place on 16 March 1941, providing escort for HMS Ramilles. Three months later the RCAF were attempting to form more squadrons for the protection of Canada, [Home War Establishment] but they



faced a shortage of fighter aircraft, and that is how No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron was reborn flying Bristol Bolingbroke Mk. I and Mk. IV fighter aircraft with four-.303 cal. belly gun packs. Rare forgotten RCAF history.

No. 15 [Fighter] Squadron originally was an Auxiliary unit formed at Montreal, Quebec, 1 September 1934. On 15 November 1937, they were renumbered No. 115 Squadron and called to full-time duty as Canada went to war 10 September 1939. Their RCAF personnel were absorbed into No. 1 [Fighter] Squadron at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, on 27 May 1940, and No. 115 was then disbanded the following day. On 31 July 1941, the RCAF decided to re-form No. 115 Squadron [Order #20] and they became No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron located at Rockcliffe, Ontario, on 1 August 1941.

SECRET ORGANIZATION ORDER NO. 20

COPY: 15  
FILE: 8.8180-8(DAO)  
DATE: 31/7/41.

FORMATION NO. 115 (FIGHTER) SQUADRON

APPENDIX "A":- Personnel, Aircraft and M.T. Establishments.

INFORMATION

1. Nos. 14, 111, 115 and 118 (Fighter) Squadrons are authorized as single seater fighter squadrons in the Home War Establishment. No. 118 (Fighter) Squadron is the only one now formed. The formation of another fighter squadron is urgently required.
2. No single seater fighter aircraft are available but the Bolingbroke Mk. I aircraft of No. 119 (B.R.) Squadron are being converted to fighter aircraft. It is anticipated that this conversion will be completed by July 31st, 1941.
3. No. 118 (Fighter) Squadron moved from Rockcliffe on July 15th, 1941, leaving accommodation for one squadron available.

INTENTION

4. It is intended to form No. 115 (Fighter) Squadron as a twin engine fighter squadron at R.C.A.F. Station, Rockcliffe on August 1st, 1941. At some later date when single seater fighter aircraft are available it is intended to convert this squadron to a single seater fighter squadron.

Aircraft

7. A.M.S. is to arrange for the Bolingbroke aircraft, now being converted to twin engine fighters with No. 119 (B.R.) Squadron, to be transferred to No. 115 (Fighter) Squadron. A.M.S. is to arrange for the provision of single seater fighter aircraft for this squadron and is to advise A.M.A.S. when they are available so that further instructions may be issued.

On 11 August 1941, all of the Bolingbroke Mk. I [Fighter] aircraft in No. 119 Squadron had been converted with under fuselage four .303 cal. gun packages, and they were transferred to No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron in Rockcliffe, Ontario. Fighter training began including front and rear gunnery live firing exercises. The four .303 cal. machine guns' belly pack reduced the Bolingbroke airspeed by 37 M.P.H. to around 220 M.P.H. On 15 October 1941, No. 115 Squadron was transferred to Patricia Bay, British Columbia, for coastal protection and conversion to the newer Bolingbroke Mk. IV [Fighter] aircraft. Nine Bolingbroke Mk. I fighters were flown across Canada to Pat Bay B.C. arriving 18 October 1941, serial #704, 705, 708, 709, 711, 712, 715, 718, and 719. Conversion to the new Bolingbroke Mk. IV fighters began on 19 November 1941, when six Mk. Is were flown out to Lethbridge, Alberta, [four] and Jarvis, Ontario, [three 705, 712, and 718] and Bolingbroke #9051 arrived at Pat Bay. By the end of December, No. 115 squadron had eleven new Bolingbroke Mk. IV fighters on strength at Patricia Bay, B.C.



This RCAF image [PA140638] taken 28 January 1942, shows No. 115 Squadron Bolingbroke Mk. IV [Fighter version] aircraft all installed with four-gun .303 cal. Browning machine gun belly packs. They had sixteen Bolely Mk. IV on strength at Pat Bay, B.C., seven appear in this image. Bolely #9059 was taken on strength by RCAF 5 December 1941, arrived with No. 115 Squadron on 23 December 1941, assigned code BK-J. The next aircraft #9060 arrived 4 January 1942, would have a Cat. "A" accident on 6 June 1942. The third aircraft #9122 arrived on 5 January 1942 and still wears sky blue painted under surface, the others were all matt black. The majority of Bolingbroke Mk. IV [eighteen] assigned to No. 115 Squadron came from serial numbers 9118 to 9178, and fourteen of

these would serve in Alaska first as twin-engine fighter aircraft, [until 22 June 1942] a rare forgotten part of RCAF Alaska WWII history. Original fourteen to arrive Annette Island, Alaska, on 5 May 1942 - #9030, #9057, #9059, #9118, #9119, #9120, #9122, #9125, #9137, #9140, #9143, #9150, #9154, and #9157.

The first all-Canadian production block of 151 Bolingbroke aircraft were designated the Mk IV and they were constructed in serial numbers 9001 to 9151, with 905 h.p. Mercury XV engines, and American-built instruments and other internal North American equipment.

A number of aircraft in this production block were modified with different engines and propellers and pre-designated Mk. IV-W on the records. These fifteen were built with American [825 h. p.] Pratt and Whitney Junior Wasp engines. The Bolingbroke's were primarily assigned to RCAF Bomber Reconnaissance units and flew anti-submarine patrols along both Atlantic and Pacific coastlines of Canada. Simonsen work sheets with Bolingbroke Mk. IV serial numbers 9001 to 9076, record all the aircraft assigned to RCAF No. 8, No. 115, and No. 119 Squadrons.







Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9052	24.11.41	6.9.46			119 (BR), 147(BR) Squad
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9053	24.11.41	4.2.42		119 BR	Cat A 11.12.41 Yarmouth
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9054	16.12.41	6.9.46			115 Squad 382:55 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	23 DEC 42 9055	5.12.41	6.9.46	No 115	BK-R	WAC 622:45 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9056	16.12.41	13.10.43	No 115 "B"	C 15 JAN 42	Cat A 5.10.43 8(BR) Squad
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	3 JAN 42 9057	16.12.41	6.9.46	No 13 (OT)	PAT DAY.	Conv Target Tow 22.8.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9058	16.12.41	23.5.48		Cat B 17.4.45	Conv Target Tow 8.3.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	4 JAN 42 9059 "J"	5.12.41	21.8.46	No 115	3 B&G	Conv Target Tow 3.8.44 BK-J
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	23 DEC 42 9060	16.12.41	6.9.46	No 115		Cat A 2.6.42 115 Squad REPAIRED
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9061	21.10.41	6.9.46	"D"		119 (BR), 147(BR) Squad
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9062	21.10.41	18.8.42	"G"	119 BR	Cat A 1.6.42 Sydney
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9063	21.10.41	9.3.42		119 BR	Cat A 4.2.42 Sydney
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9064	3.11.41	25.5.42		119 BR	Cat A 16.3.42 Grand Lake
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9065	3.11.41	20.5.42		119 BR	Cat B 21.1.42 Sydney
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9066	3.11.41	21.7.47			119(BR), 147(BR) Squad
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9067	3.11.41	24.4.42		No 119 BR	Cat A 9.4.42 Sea Island
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	MOVIE 9068	3.11.41	23.9.46		119 & 147 BR	Cat B 4.2.42 Dartmouth
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9069	12.11.41	30.6.47			121(Comp) Squad
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9070	30.12.41	7.9.46			Conv Target Tow 12.4.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9071	30.12.41	29.10.45			Conv Dual 30.7.42
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9072	17.1.42	25.5.43			Into Fraser River 24.4.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9073	12.1.42	15.5.46			Conv Dual 27.11.42
Bristol Bolingbroke IVC	9074	29.6.42	8.6.44			To T&D est. 29.6.42
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9075	12.1.42	6.5.46			Cat C10 20.4.42 Rockcliffe
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9076	8.1.42	7.5.43			119(BR) Squad
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9077	8.1.42	6.9.46			119(BR) & 147(BR) Squad 485:75hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9078	8.1.42	15.5.46		TT 21.7.44	119(BR) Squad, 3 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9079	28.1.42	27.11.46	No 115 ALASKA -		WAC 224:10 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9080	28.1.42	30.6.47			Conv Target Tow 12.2.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9081	28.1.42	8.9.44	A 188	CI 10.11.42	Cat B 31.7.42 EAC
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9082	3.2.42	9.9.46			4 B&G, 5 OTU
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9083	8.1.42	10.12.46			EAC 264:45 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9084	3.2.42	31.3.43		7 miles Pat Bay	Into Mill Bay 16.3.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9085	29.1.42	6.1.47			10 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9086	29.1.42	30.6.47			Ski tests
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9087	29.1.42	30.6.47			EAC
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9088	5.2.42	6.9.46			Conv Target Tow 17.5.42
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9089	29.1.42	6.9.46			WAC 595:50 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9090	4.2.42	18.10.45			Cat C 31.1.42 St. Eustache
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9091	29.1.42	6.9.46			4 B&G 327:25 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9092	3.2.42	1.6.46			4 B&G 13:10 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9093	18.2.42	6.9.45		7 B&G	Conv Target Tow 12.4.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9094	27.1.42	6.9.46		Cat B 11.5.42	Conv Target Tow 15.5.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9095	27.1.42	7.9.46			Conv Target Tow 21.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9096	28.1.42	19.4.45			Cat A 2.4.45 Bay of Fundy
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9097	29.1.42	6.9.46			4 B&G 304:55 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9098	29.1.42	7.11.42			Cat A 9.9.42 Jarvis, Ont
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9099	29.1.42	6.9.46			4 B&G 522:00 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9100	20.2.42	10.12.46			10 B&G 222:00 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9101	20.2.42	16.5.46			Mt. View 104:30 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9102	23.2.42	10.12.46			Conv Target Tow 29.4.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9103	24.2.42	1.1.46			Mt. View 124:55 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9104	8.1.42	6.9.46			122 (Comp) Squad
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9105	25.2.42	8.1.47			Conv Target Tow 9.6.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9106	26.2.42	8.1.47			Conv Target Tow 9.6.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9107	26.2.42	10.12.46			Conv Target Tow 9.6.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	13 JAN 42 9108	2.3.42	8.1.47	PAT DAY.	10 B&G	Conv Target Tow 9.6.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9109	2.3.42	31.6.47			Conv Target Tow 1.11.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9110	12.1.42	28.4.43			Cat B 9.5.42 Sydney
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9111	30.12.41	7.9.46		No 119 -	119 & 147(BR) Squad
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9112	30.12.41	10.12.46			Cat C21 15.4.42 Amhurst
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9113	2.3.42	20.10.42			Cat A 23.7.42 Jarvis, Ont
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9114	30.12.41	6.10.42			Missing 6.9.42 Sea Island



Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9115	28.1.42	6.1.47			123 (ACT) Squad, 10 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9116	29.1.42	10.12.46			EAC 194:00 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9117	8.1.42	7.9.46			119(BR) Squad 467:45 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	4 JAN 42 9118	22.12.41	2.4.43	No 115 ALASKA -		Burnt 21.9.42 Annette I. BK-V
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	13 JAN 42 9119	22.12.41	6.9.46	No 115 ALASKA -		5 OTU 650:25 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	3 JAN 42 9120	22.12.41	22.7.46	No 115 ALASKA -		Conv Target Tow 8.3.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9121	30.12.41	6.9.46			Cat C 30.5.45 Port Hardy
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	5 JAN 42 9122	22.12.41	22.2.45	No 115 ALASKA -		4 TC
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	5 JAN 42 9123	22.12.41	7.9.46	No 115 ALASKA -		115(F) Squad 451:35 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9124	30.12.41	15.5.46			Conv Target Tow 20.9.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	13 JAN 42 9125	29.12.41	15.5.46	No 115 ALASKA -		3 B&G BK-W
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9126	3.2.42	29.7.44			Cat B 5.4.42 Jarvis
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9127	2.3.42	6.9.46			WAC 365:15 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9128	5.2.42	1.1.46			Cat B 30.4.42 Jarvis
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9129	6.2.42	10.10.44	A 378	CI 1.3.44	Conv Target Tow 8.5.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9130	29.1.42	10.12.46	No 115 ALASKA -		Mt View
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9131	26.1.42	6.9.46			4 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	13 JAN 42 9132	26.1.42	22.10.53	PAT BAY.		Conv Target Tow 31.7.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9133	3.2.42	10.9.42			Cat A 12.7.42 Fingal
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9134	3.2.42	25.5.46			Cat C 3.2.42 Fingal
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9135	4.2.42	10.4.44			Cat B 23.2.43 Lethbridge
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9136	16.2.42	30.6.47			10 B&G 157:15 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9137	5.2.42	10.6.43	No 115 ALASKA -		1 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9138	5.2.42	16.5.46			Cat B 26.5.42 Island Airp.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9139	5.2.42	1.4.43			Mt View
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9140	7.2.42	15.5.46	No 115 ALASKA -		1 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9141	9.2.42	10.12.46			Cat B 16.4.42 Mt. View
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9142	10.2.42	15.5.46			561:10 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9143	11.2.42	15.5.46	No 115 ALASKA -		1 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9144	3.3.42	30.6.47			EAC
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9145	3.3.42	30.6.47			10 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9146	3.3.42	6.1.47			Conv Target Tow 24.1.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	13 JAN 42 9147	4.3.42	6.5.46	PAT BAY.		6 B&G
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9148	9.3.42	6.9.46			Conv Target Tow 7.3.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9149	28.10.42	30.6.47			Cat B 6.3.42 Rockcliffe
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9150	5.3.42	6.9.46	No 115 ALASKA -		4 B&G 144:35 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IV	9151	5.3.42	1.6.46			Cat B 26.2.42 Fingal
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9152	12.7.43	10.12.46		Rio de Janeiro	Loan to Br. Air Attaché Rio
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9153	19.7.43	1.6.45			Cat A 3.5.45 W. Miscouche
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9154	31.7.43	10.12.46	No 115 ALASKA -		3 TC
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9155	31.7.43	10.12.46			3 TC
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9156	22.10.43	15.5.46			3 B&G 535:30 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	3 JAN 42 9157	22.10.43	10.12.46	No 115 ALASKA -		Conv. Target Tow 22.8.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9158	22.10.43	6.1.47			Conv. Target Tow 2.6.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9159	22.11.43	6.1.47	No 115 ALASKA -		Conv. Target Tow 2.6.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9160	22.10.43	10.12.46			Conv. Target Tow 19.8.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9161	22.10.43	19.12.46			Conv. Target Tow 22.8.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9162	22.10.43	6.1.47			Conv. Target Tow 25.7.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9163	22.10.43	15.5.46			3 B&G 546:40 hrs.
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9164	1.11.43	21.3.44			Cat B 3.2.44
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9165	22.10.43	10.12.46			Conv Wireless Trainer 25.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	3 JAN 42 9166	22.10.43	5.2.48	No 115 - 3 JAN 1942		Wireless Trainer 25.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9167	4.10.43	8.3.45			Conv Target Tow 4.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9168	4.10.43	6.1.47			10 B&G TT 4.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9169	4.10.43	6.1.47			Conv Target Tow 4.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9170	4.10.43	27.3.45			Conv Target Tow 4.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9171	4.10.43	10.10.46			Conv Target Tow 4.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9172	8.10.43	6.1.47			Conv Target Tow 8.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9173	8.10.43	6.1.47			Conv Target Tow 8.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9174	13.10.43	2.12.46			Conv Target Tow 13.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9175	13.10.43	3.12.46			Conv Target Tow 13.10.43
Bristol Bolingbroke IVT	9176	13.10.43	6.1.47		10 B&G	Conv Target Tow 13.10.43



The sudden and surprise entry of Japan into the war, with such a crippling attack on the U.S. naval and air forces at Pearl Harbor, quickly changed the plans of the RCAF Home War Establishment. In March 1942, as a result of heavy losses in the Pacific and the lack of immediate reinforcements for the American troops in Alaska, an agreement was signed where the RCAF would assist in the defence of Alaska, under U.S. Air Force Command. A decision was made by RCAF H.Q. to form "Y" Wing, consisting of one Fighter Squadron and one Bomber Squadron, based at Annette Island, Alaska. This decision was based on the fact 50% of all the American war and construction materials were being shipped through Prince Rupert, B.C. and its defence was most vital to Alaska and Canada. Annette Island was situated 75 miles N.W. of Prince Rupert and patrol aircraft could also cover the most important air transport coastal [panhandle] route to main land Alaska. On 11 April 1942, No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron received orders to prepare for movement to Annette Island, Alaska. The O.C. and Flight Officer flew to Annette the following day and the advance party arrived on 21 April. The main force arrived by ship on 27 April and began to set up tent camp.

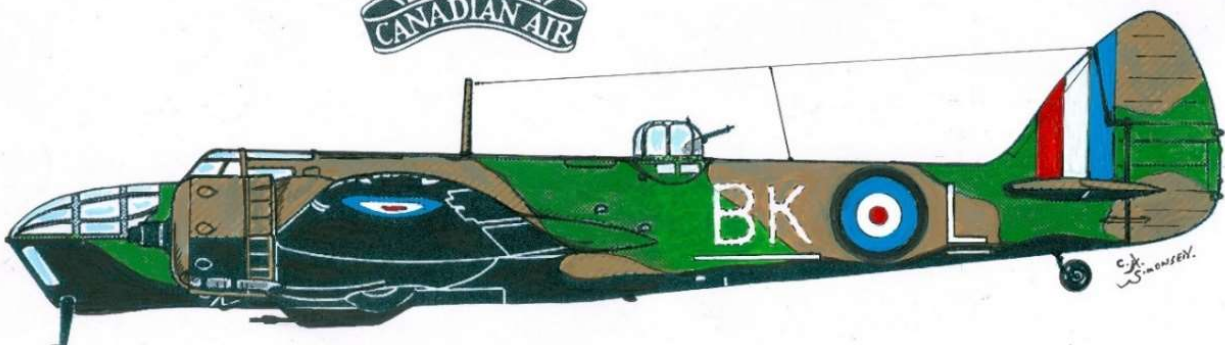


*U.S. Alaska Command*

*RCAF "Y" Wing*

*Annette Island, Alaska*

115 SQN



Following Japan's sudden entry into the war, the RCAF authorized the formation of ten fighter units and six bomber reconnaissance units. In mid-May 1942, new two-letter squadron code letters were issued, and No. 115 [Fighter] Sqdn. located at Annette Island received new code "UV". The old letters "BK" were removed from the twin-engine Bolingbroke fighters in Alaska.

The first flight of six Bolingbroke Mk. IV [Fighter] aircraft arrived at 18:00 hrs 5 May 1942, followed by seven more at 18:50 hrs. The fourteenth and last Bolingbroke landed at Annette Island at 20:00 hrs and RCAF history was made. RCAF photo below first flight at 18:00 hrs.



Under command of S/L E. Ryeno, his fourteen Bolingbroke [two-engine fighters] were all fitted with a belly-gun-pack of four forward firing machine guns. All aircraft were in factory markings, RAF Dark Green and tan Light Earth upper markings and new painted matt black under surfaces, as seen in the above photo. The far Bolingbroke #9122 was still painted in sky blue under wing markings and her belly gun pack outline can be seen below the wing. Bolely #9122 arrived with No. 115 Squadron on 5 January 1942, the aircraft of S/L Ryeno, which later flew in No. 4 Training Command until 22 February 1945. Why this single Bolingbroke [Fighter] was never under surface painted in matt black is unknown, possibly just to identify this aircraft as the Commanding Officer's.



This British Blenheim internet photo gives a very good image of what RCAF Bolingbroke #9122 four-gun belly pack looked like in under surface sky blue colors. [internet photo]





**This image shows the four-gun belly pack on the camouflage Bolingbroke #9059 of No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron. Bolely #5095 was taken on strength by RCAF 5 December 1941, arriving at Pat Bay, B.C. with No. 115 on 13 January 1942. The two squadron letters “BK” with outlined bar were ordered removed in mid-May 1942, at Annette Island, Alaska. No. 115 were assigned new squadron code letters “UV” end of May, but I don’t believe they were ever painted on the aircraft. Converted to a target tow 3 August 1944, flew last with No. 3 Bombing and Gunnery at MacDonald, Manitoba.**

**RCAF Western Command recognized the Bolingbroke fighters of No. 115 Squadron were vulnerable, slow, [220 M.P.H.] and not a very good fighter aircraft, but in fact they had nothing else. The 1935 British Stranraers, British Shark floatplanes and Canadian built Hurricane fighters were all obsolete, and No. 8 [BR] Squadron sixteen Bolingbroke’s were the only effective submarine strike force on the whole west coast of Canada. The only modern fighter aircraft were American built Curtiss P-40 Kittyhawks, which were pried from American hands thanks to Major General H. H. Arnold. The Bolingbroke [Fighter] aircraft of No. 115 Squadron became the first Canadian force ever based in United States territory to assist directly with American defence of their homeland, 5 May 1942. A special distinction which also created many unusual problems, some funny and others very serious. The U.S. Secretary of State declared all the RCAF personnel ‘distinguished foreign visitors’ which granted free entry for all Canadian goods and supplies arriving by ship. At first No. 115 Squadron flew fighter air defence of Prince Rupert and covered the many water approaches, from 5 May until 22 June 1942.**

SECRET

COPY: 11  
FILE: S. 17-115-1 (2 of 9)  
DATE: 18-8-42

SECRET ORGANIZATION ORDER NO. 82

CONVERSION OF NO. 115 SQUADRON

(Cancels Secret Organization Order No. 20 in Toto)

APPENDIX "A": Personnel, Aircraft and M.T. Establishments.

INFORMATION

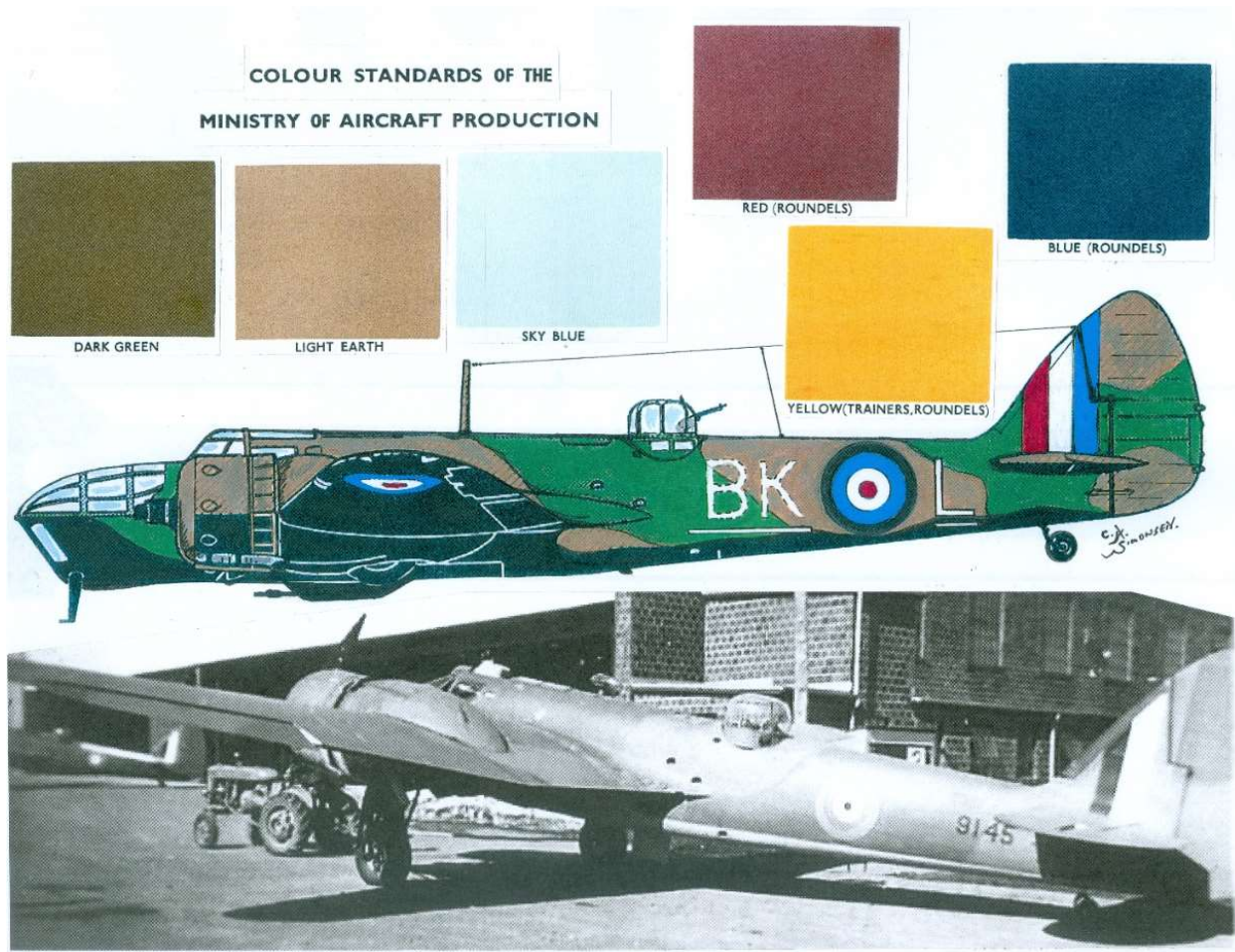
1. There is an urgent need for squadrons on the West Coast which can be used as a striking force. No. 115 Squadron is temporarily stationed at Annette Island, Alaska and is equipped with Bolingbroke fighter aircraft. These aircraft are better suited for bomber reconnaissance operations than for fighter operations, and can be converted at this base from fighter to bomber reconnaissance aircraft.

INTENT

2. It is intended to convert No. 115 Squadron to a Bomber Reconnaissance Unit. EFFECTIVE 22 JUNE 1942.

No. 115 [Fighter] official orders dated 18 June 42, they became a Bomber Reconnaissance Squadron on 22 June 1942. The fourteen Bolingbroke four machine gun packs were removed and B.R. training began the following day. The original gun packs might still be in the muskeg at Annette Island today. It cost time and money to transport fourteen gun packs 563 miles south to Patricia Bay, B.C., during time of war and they were now war junk, never to be used again.

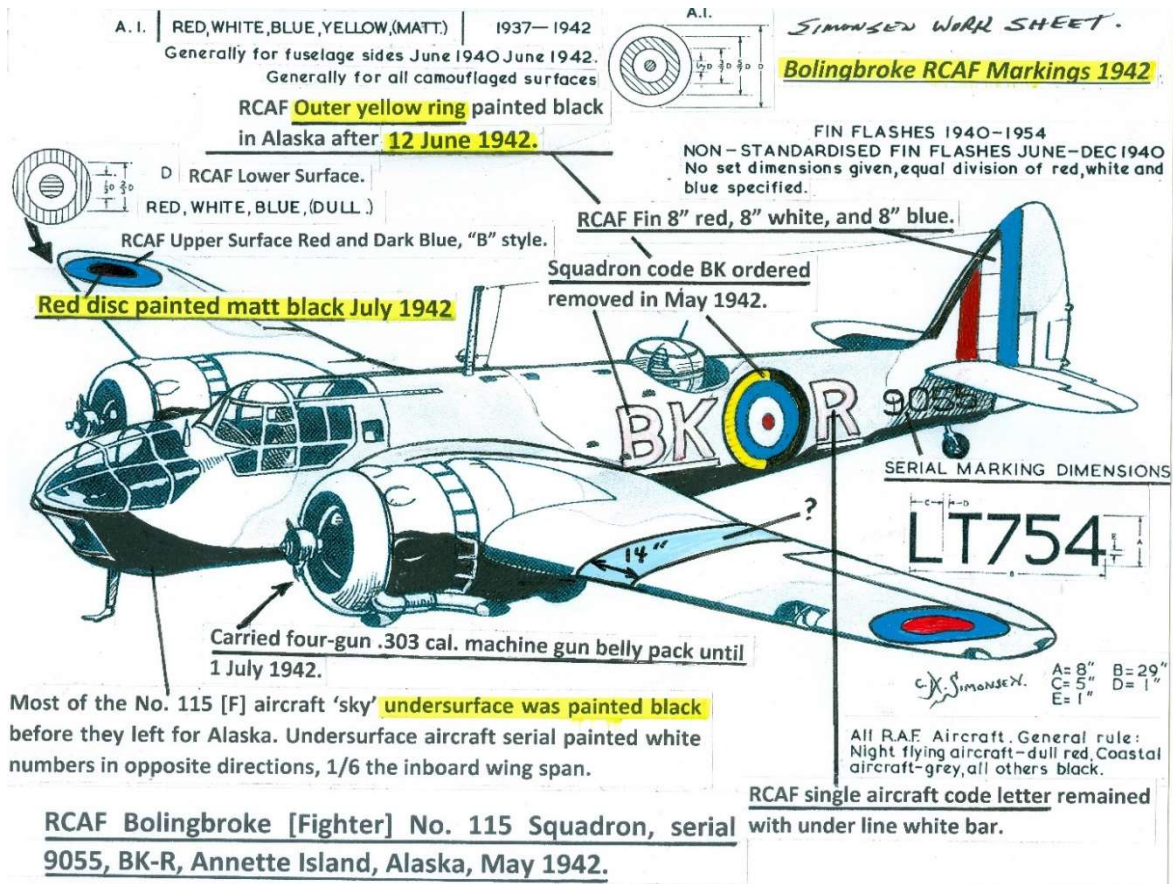
Over the passing years the RCAF Bolingbroke Mk. IV [Fighter] aircraft have been both lost in history and lack of photos showing correct aircraft markings. This Simonsen research work sheet was completed for a painting and I believe this to be close to correct fighter markings used in Alaska May-June 1942. Below are British RAF colours, the RCAF were darker in shade and brighter in colour, but I leave that up to the modeling world, the true experts who care.



Canada used the basis of the British Air Ministry and associated technical standards as a starting point for the RCAF. In 1938, the Canadian Department of Defence accepted the RAF Temperate Land Scheme two color upper surface camouflage of Dark Green and Light Earth colouring with an undersurface finish of Sky Blue for both land and sea-based aircraft. All of the Bolingbroke Mk. IV aircraft built by Fairchild Aircraft Division in Quebec, [above] were painted in the same RAF camouflage example known as Pattern No. 2, for all Twin Engine Monoplanes of less than 70' wingspan. [The Bolingbroke had a 56' 4 "wingspan] The painting of roundels followed the RAF in regard to composition and proportions but the Bolingbroke roundels were painted on the outboard wingtips both upper and lower positions. The fuselage type AI roundel was red, white, blue, and yellow, and this outer yellow ring were ordered [12 June 1942] to be painted over in black during U.S. Alaskan operations.



From the Fairchild factory RCAF ferry pilots delivered the new Bolingbroke Mk. IV aircraft to No. 115 Squadron at Patricia Bay, B.C. Boley #9051 was the first to arrive on 19 November 1941, followed by eight on 23 December, two more on 26 December 1941 and #9050, 9057, and 9120 arrived on 3 January 1942, #9060, 9118, and 9120, came the following day. Bolingbroke #9123 and 9122 landed on 5 January and the last two arrived from Montreal on 13 January 1942. By the end of the month they had sixteen Bolingbroke Mk. IV [Fighter] aircraft on strength and eleven were painted and ready for operations. Eleven [or more] of these fighter aircraft were painted RCAF Matt Black on the complete undersurface and large white serial numbers were painted, half cord wing size reverse, under each wing. This was a feature of RCAF aircraft marking which began in August 1940, and used on all operational aircraft. In 1940, [war declared] the RCAF also established three distinct colour schemes for the thousands of aircraft flying in Canada, silver and white for communications and reconnaissance, yellow for BCATP trainers, and land scheme [Green and Earth] for operational fighters and bomber aircraft. Two-letter unit codes were first issued to RCAF Squadrons on 1 August 1939, and began appearing on aircraft in August 1940. All Squadrons belonging to units in the Home War Establishment were issued code letters which were painted on the fuselage sides and underlined with a bar of matching colour. This remained on No. 115 Bolingbroke Mk. IV fighters until end of May 1942, when all two-letter squadron codes “BK” were removed, replaced with “UV” but never painted on aircraft.



When No. 115 landed on Annette Island, 5 May 1942, only the North-South [left] runway was completed the East-West was still under construction. S/L A.D. Nesbitt, DFC, reported that the RCAF aircraft [Bolingbroke's] were parked on each side of the runway, which was also used as a road way and large American trucks loaded with crushed rock thundered by all day long. This rock fill base was dumped into the muskeg and quickly sank into the water and mud. Each runway and twenty-seven aircraft hardstands were constructed twelve feet about the muskeg water line, covered with two feet of fine ½ inch crushed gravel, then packed by American civil engineers. On 24 June 42, S/L Nesbitt wrote –

The Squadron was ordered to proceed to Annette Island, Alaska, as soon as possible; and preparations for the move commenced on 11/4/42. Advance party of 1 Officer and 14 airmen left for Annette Island via Prince Rupert on 21/4. A new establishment, received 22/4/42, necessitated posting of supernumerary personnel to R.C.A.F. Station Patricia Bay. The main party left by boat on 25/4, arriving at Annette Island 27/4. Through the co-operation of U.S. forces, who loaned trucks and men, all ranks were settled in quarters the same day. Fourteen Bolingbroke aircraft, from the former station at Patricia Bay, arrived on 5/5. All personnel were welcomed by Col. Christenson, C.O. of Annette Island post, on 7/5/42.

A submarine was reported off Harris Island on 13/5/42, and an aircraft investigated without result; further information reported submarine 30 miles West of Annette and again an aircraft investigated with negative results.

Whole squadron brought to readiness at 0630 hours, 20/5/42 and from then on immediate readiness, or 15 minutes available, was maintained.

S.L. E.M. Reyno, O.C., was posted to No. 2 B.& G.S. at Mossbank, to form No. 1 135 (F) Squadron and F.L. R.A. Ashman assumed temporary Command on 5/6/42.

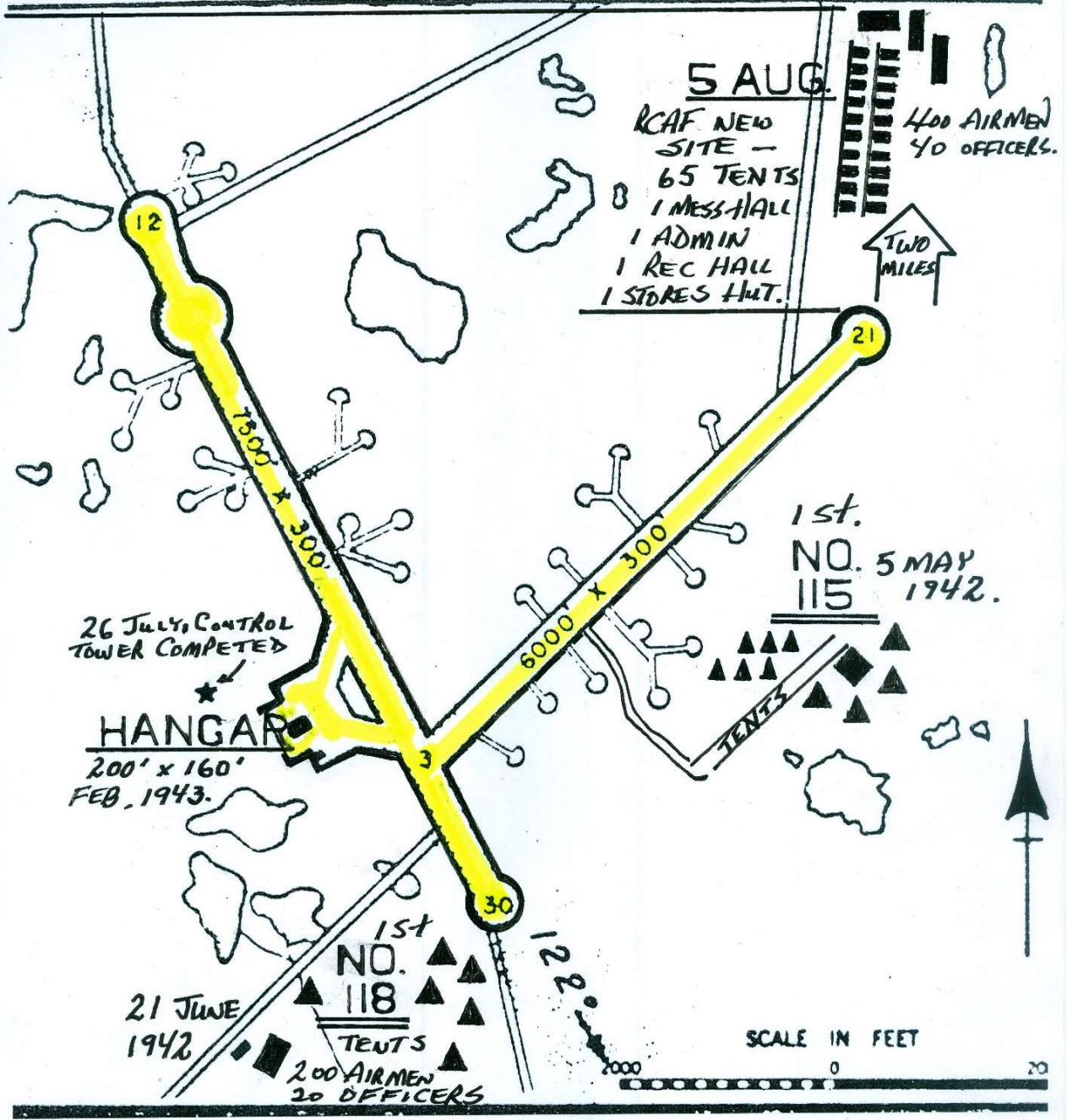
W.O.2 Burden, awarded B.E.M. in King's Birthday Honours List. The award was for good work in keeping aircraft serviceable.

By Secret Organization Order No. 82 dated 18/6/42, the Squadron was converted from Fighter to Bomber Reconnaissance, effective 22/6/42. Ground training in BR work commenced 19/6.

Twelve hardstands were also constructed for the placement of Anti-Aircraft guns, manned by Canadians of the 112<sup>th</sup> Battery, Royal Canadian Artillery. On 21 July 1942, the control tower was completed and commenced operations under control of the U.S.A.A.C., which had a different system from that of the RCAF. To add to general problems, on 4 September, the old RCAF Mess Hall caught fire and the kitchen was destroyed. At the end of September 42, the U.S. government cut overtime pay to the civil labourers, and most quite their jobs and returned to main land U.S. This caused delays in the much needed new hangar, just as wet, cold, winter had arrived in Alaska. The wind and rain caused major problems with the Bolingbroke ignition system and numerous engine failures resulted, with ten of fourteen aircraft grounded. No. 115 Squadron were issued new two-letter codes "UV" in July but unknown if any were ever painted on the aircraft in Alaska. It was not important, and war confusion ruled on Annette Island.



# ANNETTE ISLAND, ALASKA JUN.-DEC. 42



The base was constructed 6 miles South of Metlakatla, on the SW peninsula of Annette Island, at altitude of 50 to 100 ft. above sea level. Position Lat. 55 degrees 03' N., Long. 131 degrees 35' W.



**This RCAF image PA140643 was taken around 15 June 1942, showing work on the N-S runway, and the maintenance area for the Bolingbroke fighters. The Americans in the foreground are jack-hammering the rock formation where the single hangar will be constructed beginning on 20th of the month. No. 118 [Fighter] Squadron were placed in tents at the intersection of the two runways on 21 June, right in this image, and No. 115 tents were erected to the right on 5 May, in the tree lined muskeg area, all being connected by wooden walkways. No American aircraft were based on Annette Island, but numerous C-47 transports and a few fighters stopped for fuel on a daily basis. On 20 June, the first five RCAF P-40 Kittyhawks of No. 111 Squadron touched down for fuel and stayed the night. The next morning fifteen P-40 Kittyhawks of No. 118 Squadron arrived and they had to find accommodation in a storeroom until their tent area was prepared. Next came the repainting of RCAF aircraft in Alaska.**



EDMUNDORF FIELD,  
Alaska. H.Q.

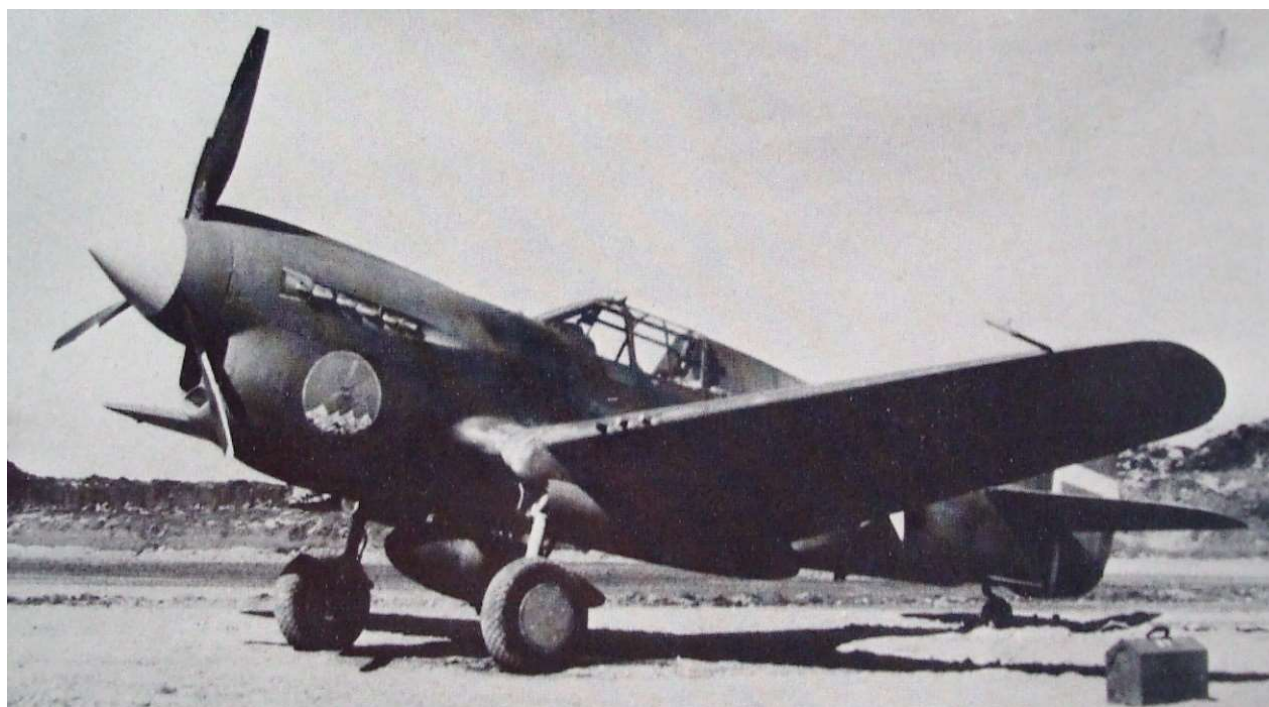
June 12, 1942

R.C.A.F.

Two way R.T. communication between the aerodrome tower and Kittyhawk aircraft established on 3105 kilocycles but 4400 kilocycle communication with sector control still not available owing to delays in placing the ground station in service. Accompanied by Colonel Sillin, visited the sector control point (approximately 3 miles North of the aerodrome) and conferred with controller, as a result of which agreements were reached on the subjects of standing patrol lines, readiness aircraft and air speeds. At the request of Colonel Sillin, Officer Commanding Fighter Command, it was agreed to further modify Canadian aircraft markings as follows:

1. Remove orange rings from outside roundels on sides of fuselage.
2. Paint a band 14" wide around the fuselage of the Kittyhawk aircraft in Duck's egg blue, immediately ahead of the empinage.

The first modification of standard RCAF aircraft markings officially came on 12 June 1942, issued by U. S. Colonel Sillin, Officer Commanding Fighter Command. Col. Sillin served as a fighter pilot, flight commander, and squadron commander, before he moved to Alaska, 29 December 1941. Major Sillin organized and commanded the 11<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron in Alaska, including the creation of unit aircraft markings. This P-40E displays early [Lt. Blue] tail fin bar used by 11<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron and unofficial nose art of a mosquito flying over the Alaskan mountains.







**On 12 May 1942, U.S. Combined Chiefs of Staff ordered the removal of all red circle and red and white rudder stripes from all American combat aircraft effective 15 May 1942.**



**This famous No. 111 Squadron image shows the correct marking change, 14" sky blue rear fuselage band, and outer yellow ring painted matt black. RCAF Squadron two-code letters ordered removed 17 October 1942, as seen below, under line white bar remained.**



**This RCAF image clearly shows the upper wing and fuselage outer ring painted in matt black and not dark green as some historian's record.**

**When No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron arrived on Annette Island, 5 May 1942, they came under the same control [Major Norman Sillin] same as No. 111 Squadron P-40 fighters, so, the Bolingbroke's fighter's should have been painted the same markings. Right?**



RCAF



12 June 1942, RCAF orders received from Alaska H.Q. --  
"Remove orange rings from outside roundels on sides of fuselage." This was painted over with matt black or dark green camouflage colours.

Fighters were ordered to paint a 14" wide bland, sky blue in colour, around the fuselage.



The upper center red roundel on RCAF aircraft were ordered painted black by American commander, Major Gen. W.O. Butler in July 1942.

On 12 June 1942, No. 115 Squadron Bolingbroke's were still fighters and it is possible they followed orders. This Bolingbroke code "D" at Annette Island, appears to have a 14" light band painted on the port wing?



Type AI roundel, Red, White, and Blue, remained on all Bolingbroke undersurfaces in Alaska.



**This original RCAF image [PMR 79-778] shows a clearer detail of markings.**

**In early 1942, as Japanese forces swept through South-East Asia, British aircraft camouflage and roundels changed in both colour shades and aircraft position. The most**



striking change became the upper Type "B" roundel, where the large red center was overpainted in light blue or RAF azure. They appeared the same as Japanese 'meatball' red national markings. The RCAF did nothing with upper wing markings until No. 115 and No. 8 Squadron Bolingbroke's arrived in Alaska, and again, it was the Americans who ordered the repainting on the Canadian aircraft under their command. In May 1963, RCAF Roundel magazine published a history titled "The Aleutian Campaign" by RCAF Air Historian F/Lt. F.J. Hatch. When Major General W.O. Butler took over command of 11<sup>th</sup> Air Force in Alaska, 8 March 1942, one of his early orders were directed at the RCAF, to paint out all the upper Type "B" red circles, which had a confusing similarity to the red disc carried on all Japanese aircraft, also recorded in No. 115 Daily Diary.

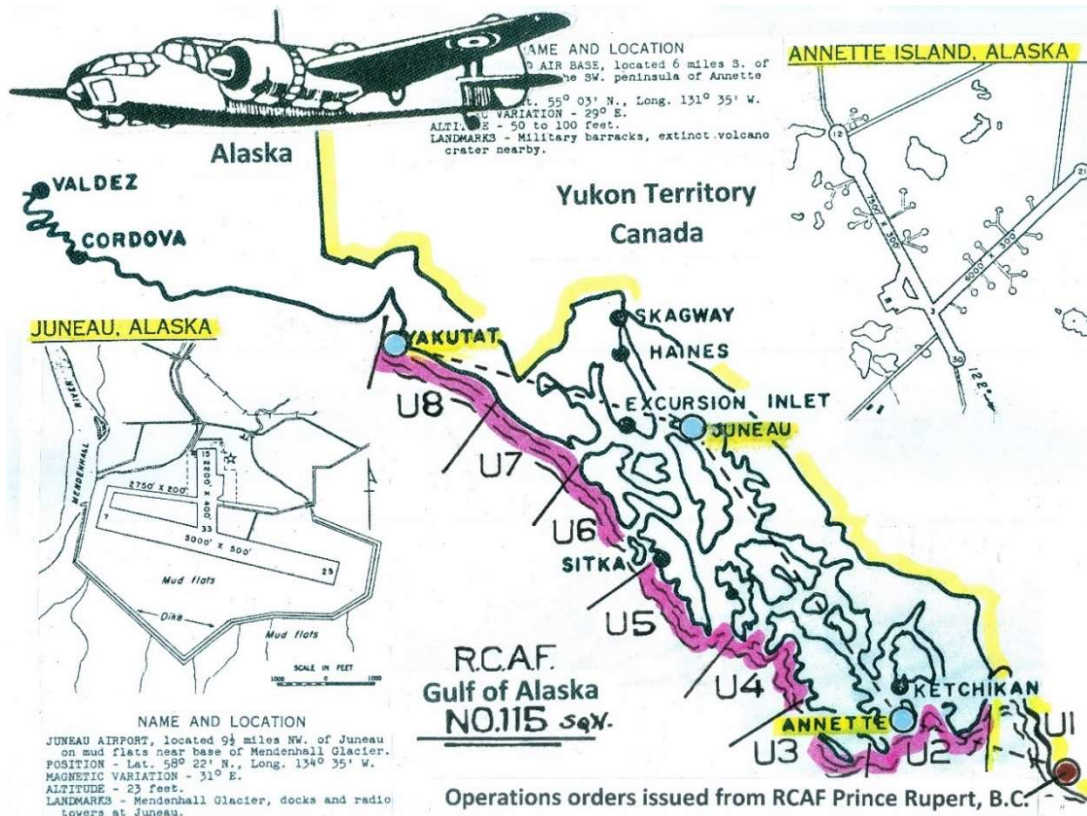
DATE	Summary of Events
	Annette Island, Alaska. No. 115 SQN. SECRET
12-7-42	Three U.S. Navy D.C.3 transport planes landed at 1530 hours. One of the pilots mentioned that the rounded markings on R.C.A.F. aircraft looked very similar to Japanese aircraft markings. He also mentioned that a whole squadron of P.B.Y.'s had been shot down by Japanese zero fighters. General de Witt landed at this base to stay overnight. Had a conference with S/L Nesbitt.
13-7-42	Aircraft of 115 (BR) and 118 (F) Squadrons cooperated in giving anti-aircraft battery sighting practice by staging mock attacks on the aerodrome area.
14-7-42	Goose 940 arrived from Prince Rupert at 1030 hours with S/L Lees, F/L Wilson, F/O Campbell, F/L McGroel (R.C. Chaplain), S/L Davies Command Chaplain (P) arrived at Annette from Ketchikan at 2030 hours. Considerable difficulty was experienced in finding quarters for so many officers.

The new formed No. 115 [Bomber Recon.] Squadron now flew eight new assigned patrol areas on the Gulf of Alaska coastline, with refueling bases at Juneau and Yakutat, Alaska.

From..... hrs. 1 / 7 / 42 to..... hrs. 31 / 7 / 42..... By 115 (BR) Squadron, Annette Island, Alaska. No.

Aircraft Type and No.	Crew	Duty	Time Up	Time Down	Remarks
Bolingbroke 9150	Ellis, Shebeski, Kukuraki	Ship Search	0805	0915	Search Negative
9122	Asman, Cowan, Murray	Patrol U.3 U.1	1125	1540	Not completed. Weather bad
9125	Ellis, Shebeski, Shea	Patrol U.4 U.2	1148	1510	No air or sea craft observed other than American fishing vessel near Noyes and Bell Island
9120	Rogers, Aylsworth, Kukuraki	Patrol U.7 U.5	1136	1602	Coast Guard vessel 88 Herbert 6-3 and 3 tugs 88 Fletcher 7-2
9143	Wallace, McCallum, Wright	Patrol U.3 U.1	1202	1527	No air or sea craft observed except American Coast Guard Cutter off Chacon
9143	Hobbs, Blatchford, Burnatt	Patrol U.3 U.1	1058	1430	2 U.S. C.G. vessels inside Cape Muzon & inside Cape Chacon & 3 fishing vessels
9059	Currie, McKibbin, Wright	Patrol U.7 U.5	1048	1425	No air or sea craft observed other than fishing vessels
9125	Smith, Reichel, Shea	Patrol U.4 U.2	1053	1440	6 fishing boats off Noyes Island
		7 JULY 1942			No patrols from 4-7 to 6-7 incl. Weather bad
9125	Murray	Sub. Search	1417	1722	A check on area Kepner 88 for sub. rptd. by USN - Negative
9140	Park, Cochran, McCallum, Radcliff	Patrol U.3 U.1	1705	1845	Spotted Corvette, Canadian, 90 Miller. Recalled for weather
9118	Thomas, Shebeski, Leland, Kennings	Patrol U.4 U.2	1656	2045	Bombed object resembling sub. 86 Kepner 53 - 1759 HRS.

Patrol flights began 13 May 42 with Bolingbroke #9060 as a fighter aircraft. Bomber Reconnaissance patrols began 1 July, no flying from 4 to 7 July due to weather conditions.



(UNIT OR FORMATION) No. 115 (BR) Squadron, Annette Island Landing Field, Alaska.	
7-7-42	F/S Thomas pilot, P/O Shebeski observer, Sgt. LeLanda's observer, dropped a bomb on what appeared to be a submarine, submerged 135 miles north west of base. A direct hit was scored. Confirmation has yet to be obtained. <b>BOLINGBROKE #9118.</b>
8-7-42	Rain and fog. No flying.
9-7-42	U.S. authorities reported a submarine attacking U.S. Coast Guard ship. Four Bolingbroke took off immediately but search proved negative. W/C McGregor arrived from Anchorage in Kittyhawk.
10-7-42	S.A.S.O. from No. 4 Group, Prince Rupert landed here at 1100 hours. W/C McGregor departed for Anchorage in Kittyhawk at 1835 hours.
11-7-42	Newly arrived pilots being given B.R. instructional course. U.S. D.C.3 arrived at 1600 hours with several senior U.S. Air Corps Officers.

*R.D. Askenan Spd. Lt.*

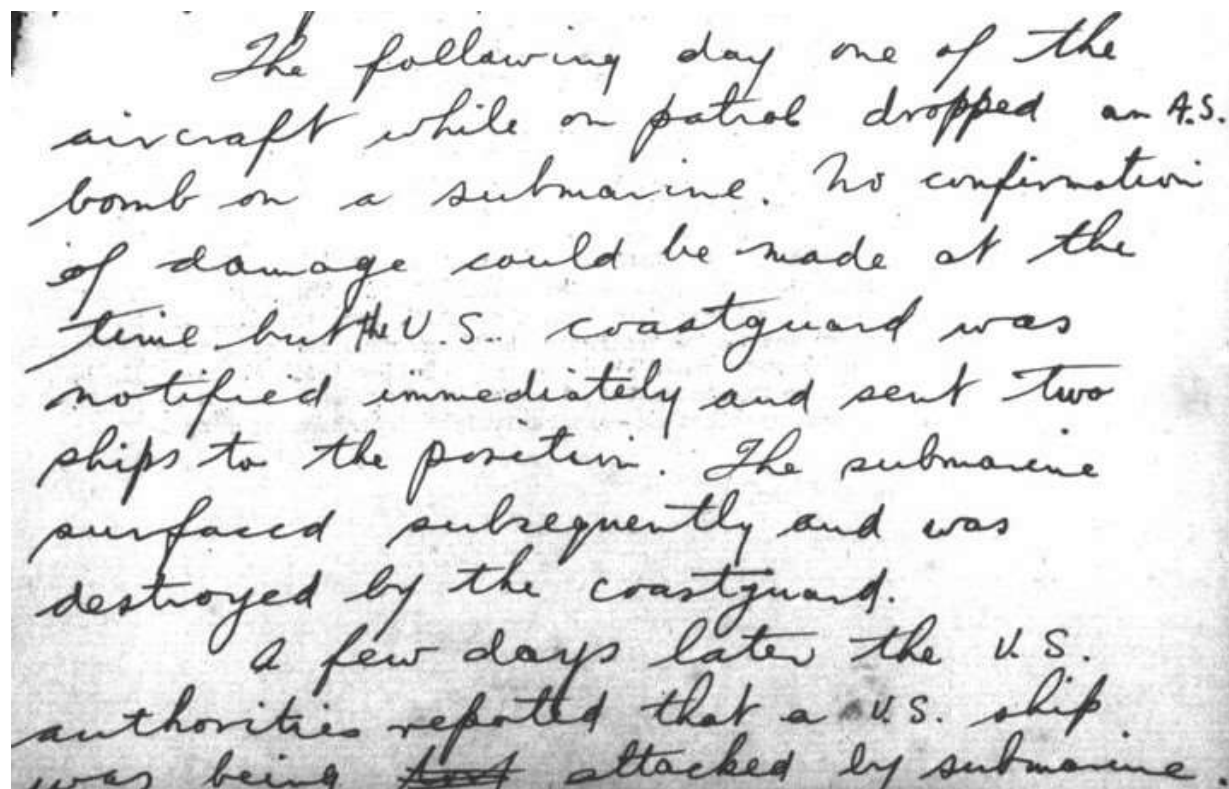
On 7 July 1942, No. 115 [B.R.] Squadron RCAF Bolingbroke #9118 made the first possible bombing of a Japanese [Soviet] submarine at 17:59 hrs., and a direct hit was scored. The U.S. Navy continued the attack and reported the sinking of one submarine R.O. 32. Postwar Japanese records did not mention any submarines lost around that date, and the training submarine R.O. 32 was still in service when the war ended. It appears the Canadians attacked a [spying] Soviet submarine, which were operating in the same area.



On 5 October 1942, Japanese submarine I-25 torpedoed and sank a Soviet Submarine L-16 North-West of the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, [Vancouver Island] in fact there were two Russian Subs L-15 and L-16 running side-by-side on the surface when attacked. The U.S. Navy denied the loss for the next fifty years, same as the sinking of the S.S. Coastal Trader by I-26 on 7 June 1942.

On 18 August 2008, Brendan Coyle wrote a story in the Vancouver Sun Newspaper – “Jim Johnson, an RCAF photo tech. stationed on Annette Island still had a photo of the attack taken by the crew of Bolingbroke #9118, showing the submarine and conning tower.”

The actions of Bolingbroke #9118 on 7 July 1942, were recorded by W/C A.D. Nesbitt, DFC, #C1327, in his own handwriting for a historical narrative of RCAF Wing Annette Island.



The following day one of the aircraft while on patrol dropped an A.S. bomb on a submarine. No confirmation of damage could be made at the time but the U.S. coastguard was notified immediately and sent two ships to the position. The submarine surfaced subsequently and was destroyed by the coastguard.  
A few days later the U.S. authorities reported that a U.S. ship was being ~~lost~~ attacked by submarine.

By 2009, [American/Canadian historians now suspect] No. 115 Squadron Bolingbroke #9118 damaged a Soviet submarine spying off the Aleutians. No.115 [B.R.] Squadron continued their patrols up and down the Alaska Panhandle under operational control of Western Air Command rather than the 11<sup>th</sup> U.S. Army Air Force. By July 1942, it was



evident to both Americans and the RCAF, the real problem in Alaska was the supply and maintenance of British-designed Bolingbroke's, when American spare aircraft parts were readily available. The shortage of Canadian felt oil filters and aircraft spark plugs grounded ten of fourteen Bolingbroke's and the squadron never became fully operational. Other problems were the wet, cold, and freezing to death in tents, which is recorded in the Daily Diaries. Some Canadians went AWOL and others reported for duty drunk, [ninety-days detention and release from the RCAF] just to get out of Alaska. It's all there in the Daily Diary records. Wing Commander McGregor wrote that Canadians were seen essentially as a convenient rear-area security force for the Americans, but they also recognized the old Bolingbroke aircraft played an important role in freeing other American units for the protection of Anchorage's defence needs.

Like the British Blenheim the Canadian Bolingbroke was "Too Little Too Late" but she did the best she could. No. 115 Squadron returned to Patricia Bay on 21 August 1943 and converted to new American Lockheed-Vega Ventura G.R. Mk. V aircraft the same month. They were disbanded at Tofino, B.C. on 23 August 1944, and basically just forgotten by historians. The old Bolingbroke aircraft which flew in Alaska were transferred to RCAF Bombing and Gunnery schools where many became target tows, then sold for scrap, ending up in hundreds of farmer dumps. Today five or six old salvaged airframes have been restored back together and a new Bolingbroke once again grace's many RCAF museums. Another group of scrap sections made their way across the pond and today form the basis of the original British Blenheim aircraft for British museum's, constructed by French/Canadians in Longueuil, Quebec, Canada. The British never seem to mention that French connection in their history sheets.

Beginning on 19 November 1941, No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron received new Bolingbroke Mk. IV aircraft at Patricia Bay, B.C., and a total of sixteen were on strength by 5 January 1942. They were equipped with four-gun .303 cal. machine gun belly packs and trained as a RCAF fighter unit. No. 115 Squadron became the only RCAF Squadron to fly both the Bolingbroke Mk. I and Mk. IV twin-engine fighter aircraft, while both were based at Patricia Bay, B.C., rare forgotten history.



This image taken from the internet shows No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron, Bolingbroke Mk. IV, serial 9030 training over Patricia Bay early 1942. Ferried to Pat Bay on 23 December 1942, assigned code BK-U, fitted with four-gun .303 cal. bomb-bay belly pack and trained aircrew as a Bolingbroke Mk. IV fighter aircraft. Arrived at Annette Island, Alaska, 5 May 1942, removed code letters "BK" in mid May and converted to a Bomber Reconnaissance aircraft on 22 June 1942. I do not believe the new Squadron code letters "UV" were ever painted on the Bolingbroke B.R. aircraft, however that has never been proved. The following sixteen Bolingbroke serial numbers were taken on strength by No. 115 Squadron. Bolingbroke serial 9030 "U", 9057, 9059 "J", 9078, 9118 "V", 9119, 9120, 9122, 9125 "W", 9137, 9140 "P", 9143, 9150, 9154, 9157, and 9159.

The proper place to preserve, educate, and display an RCAF Bolingbroke Mk. IV "fighter" flown by No. 115 Squadron should be where they operated, Patricia Bay, B.C. The British Columbia Aviation Museum, located at the old Pat Bay airport in fact own and display a beautifully restored Bolingbroke. They state their Bolingbroke is painted in the colours of No. 3 Operational Training Unit, which flew old British Lysander, Stranraer, and later twenty-eight Canadian built modern American Canso "A" flying boats. I think they mean No. 13 Operational Training Unit which in fact flew seven Bolingbroke trainers, serial 9033, 9034, 9036, 9037, 9013, 9042, and 9057. The serial number on their Bolingbroke is #9104, which in fact flew with RCAF No. 122 Composite Squadron [Flying Nightmare's] at Pat Bay, B.C. They had ten Bolingbroke trainer's serial 9032, 9035, 9040, 9068, 9084, 9088, 9090, 9092, 9094, and 9104 on strength. The Squadron code markings are shown as BK-L, which flew with No. 115 [Fighter] Squadron at Pat Bay and Annette island, Alaska. OK,

they have three different aircraft painted as one, enough said. What do model builders think of that mess?

The only place you can find a properly painted RCAF Bolingbroke Mk. IV from No. 115 Squadron is at the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, Arizona, USA. They not only display a replica of Bolingbroke #9118, BK-V, but they explain the fact it was most likely a Soviet Submarine SHCH-138 which the Canadians bombed and damaged 7 July 1942. Many thanks to all the Americans involved in preserving our long forgotten past from RCAF Annette Island, Alaska.



Replica of Bolingbroke Mk. IV, serial 9118, Pima Air and Space Museum image from website.





new patrol areas began on 1 July 1942, first patrol for #9118 was 2 July 1942, in areas U-4 and U-2 beginning at 09:30 hrs. Due to fog and rain weather conditions they were unable to complete their very first assigned patrol.

No patrols were carried out by No. 115 [B.R.] Squadron from 4 to 7 July due to bad weather. The WWII Daily Diary from the War Room, RCAF Headquarters in Ottawa, record what took place on 7 July 1942. At 11:58 Hrs a steamship reports sighting a submarine periscope at position 55.5 North 134 West, some 130 miles Northwest of the RCAF base at Annette Island, Alaska. Due to the weather conditions a submarine search was not launched until 14:17 hours when Bolingbroke #9125 took off, followed by #9118 at 16:56 hrs and #9140 at 17:05 hrs. Bolingbroke #9118 with Flight Sergeant William E. Thomas begin a sea search and Pilot Officer Leonard Shebeski spots a disturbance on the sea surface where the crew observe a submarine periscope, churning water, and puffs of white smoke. The submarine outline is over 100 feet long and submerged ten to twenty feet in the water. At a height of 40 feet the RCAF Bolingbroke drops her four American 250 lb anti-submarine depth charges and a direct hit is observed by two of the bombs. In five minutes a scum of yellow oil appears on the surface covering approximately 50 feet in diameter. The attack takes place at 17:59 hrs, or six hours after the first reported steamship sighting.

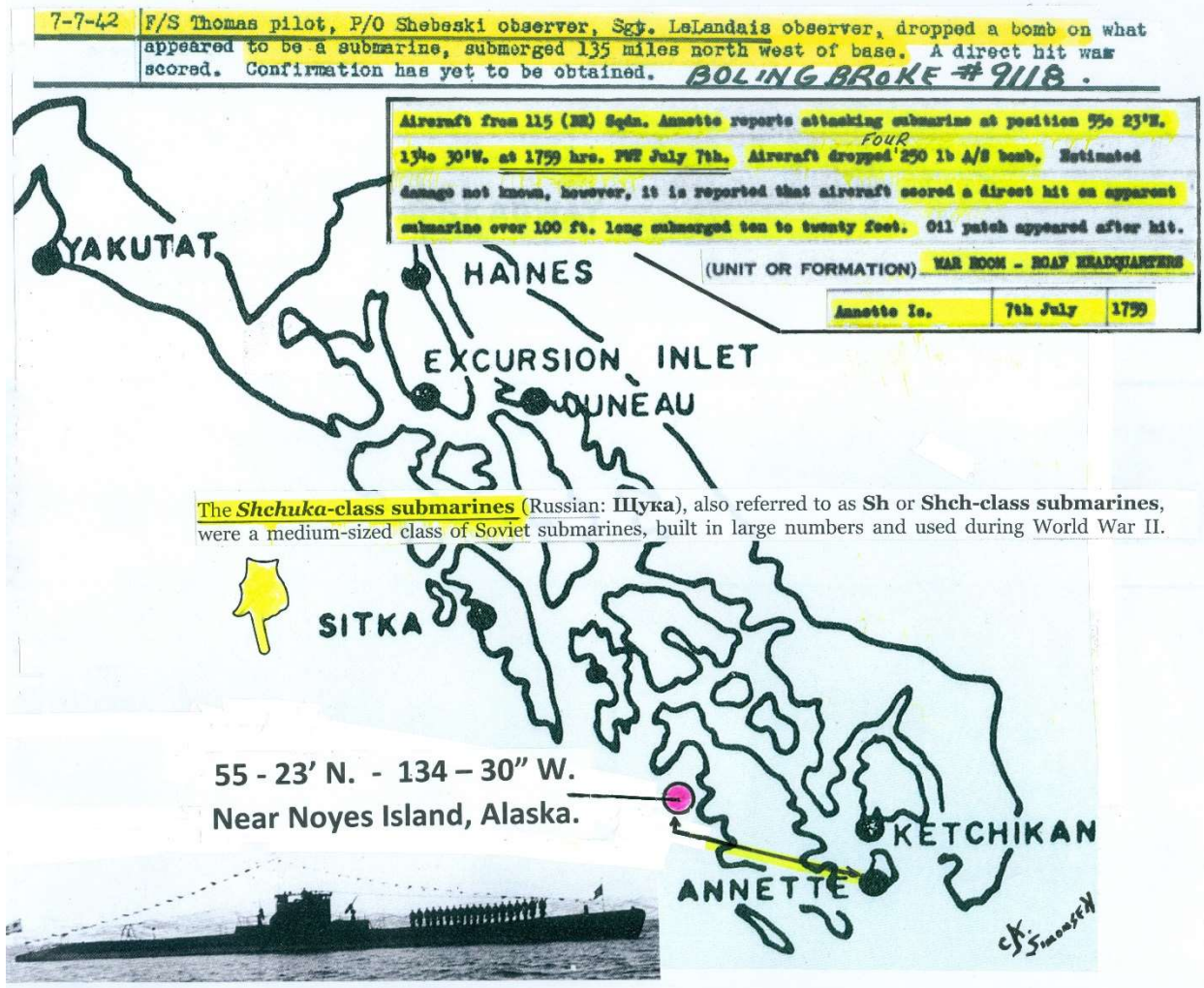
(UNIT OR FORMATION) WAR ROOM, R.C.A.F. HEADQUARTERS

PLACE	DATE	TIME	SUMMARY OF EVENTS
<u>Annette Is.</u>	<u>7th July</u>	<u>0115H</u>	<u>Sighting of periscope reported by steamship in position <u>55.5 North 134 West</u></u>
Kiska	13-14/7		U. S. Navy estimates following vessels at Kiska:- 1 Heavy Cruiser, 3 or 4 Transports, possibly a Seaplane Tender and several light Cruisers or large Destroyers. Believed this force trying to discover strength of U. S. Naval Units. Single float Jap Fighters resembling Sikorski V-8 have been observed. 2 unidentified Submarines sighted at 1220 hours on south course 52.25 N 179.58 W submerged
<u>RAC</u>	<u>18/7</u>	<u>17:59HRS</u>	<u>Further details received concerning attack on Submarine 7th July vicinity of Seven Islands. 4 depth charges released passing over submarine at height of 40 ft. while periscope still showing. Submarine bracketed by first and second depth charges. Within lethal distance. Aircraft flew over area five minutes later and observed scum of yellow oil approximately 50 feet in diameter</u>

The RCAF on Annette Island contact the U.S. Coast guard and the cutter McLean and patrol vessel YP-251 "Foremost" arrive on the last known location of the submarine. These American vessels conduct an 18-hour search and attack at which time the submarine comes to the surface once, then dives and a periscope is seen. At one point the submarine launches

**a torpedo at one of the American ships, and many depth charges are dropped. Later “flotsam resembling Rockwool comes to the surface which results in a claim of the probable destruction of an enemy submarine. The RCAF Dispatches mention the actions of the crew of Bolingbroke #9118 and they are credited with a shared probable sinking of an enemy submarine believed to be Japanese. For some reason the American’s record this as being Japan’s Ro.32, which still survived in August 1945. The incident is forgotten until 2008, then a photo taken by the crew of Bolingbroke 9118 showing the control tower of the submarine is published. The submarine appears to be a Russian type “Shchuka-class” medium size Soviet submarine built in large numbers and used in WWII. The Canadians bombed a real submarine and I do believe the U.S. Navy know much more about this sinking then they wish to release, even in 2020.**





The Canadian reports show No. 115 [B.R.] Squadron RCAF Bolingbroke #9118, sighted, attacked, and damaged the Soviet Submarine Shchuka-138 which was reported missing on 8 July 1942. Other websites carry more information in regards to this incident, which is at least worth reading. The U.S. Navy did not wish to report the sinking of a Soviet [Allied] submarine and the Russians did not want to release the fact they were spying on U.S.A. At this time in history the United States were supplying Russia with aircraft, tug boats, ships, and billions of dollars of other war material. So, both sides shut up and only sixty-five years later the facts start to come together. The Russian word Shchuka means “Pike” and it now becomes clear the Canadian crew of Bolingbroke #9118 went Pike hunting on 7 July 1942, and they got a medium sized one, with a large red star on the conning tower. Now that’s a rare claim for RCAF fame.

In 2010, the U.S. Navy began to survey deep sea wrecks along their west coast, including the S.S. Coastal Trader, which is located in Canadian waters and still has 8,088 barrels of bunker oil on board. Look out B.C. coastline. They surveyed Soviet Submarine L-16 and I'm sure they also found Soviet Shchuka-138 and know the full hidden truth.

Bolingbroke #9118 continued her bomber reconnaissance patrols and on 21 September 1942, took off from Annette Island for what should have been operation number eighteen. Just after lift-off the aircraft lost an engine and made a forced landing one and a half miles from the end of the runway.

16.  
2 a Bolingbroke had an engine failure  
and just after take off. The pilot  
jettisoned his bombs and then crash  
landed the aircraft of about 1 1/2 miles  
from the runway. The aircraft immediately  
caught fire but fortunately for the  
aircrew the crash took place close  
to the C.A.A. camp and three civilians  
of the C.A.A. establishment dragged the  
crew to safety shortly before the gasoline  
tanks exploded. The C.O. R.C.A.F. Annette  
has recommended to W.A.C. that some  
recognition be made ~~of the~~ for the  
display of courage shown by these  
civilians. Several broken bones  
resulted from the crash but ~~not~~ none  
of the crew of four were dangerously  
hurt.

This Bolingbroke accident is described [above] by W/C A.D. Nesbitt, DFC, in his own handwriting and a photo of the crash site can be found in the excellent book "Canada's Wings" Vol. One, by Larry Milberry, page 139. Three of the crew were injured with broken bones and flown to Sea Island, [Vancouver, B.C.] never returning to Alaska.

Strength - Officers --	36
" - Airmen --	271
Aircraft on charge - Bolingbrokes --	14
" - Harvard --	2
" - Norseman --	1
Total flying time for month --	265 hrs. 40 min.

*H.A. Aslamon*  
 (Rear Admiral) Squadron Leader,  
 Officer Commanding,  
 No. 115 (SR) Squadron,  
 Annette Island, Alaska.

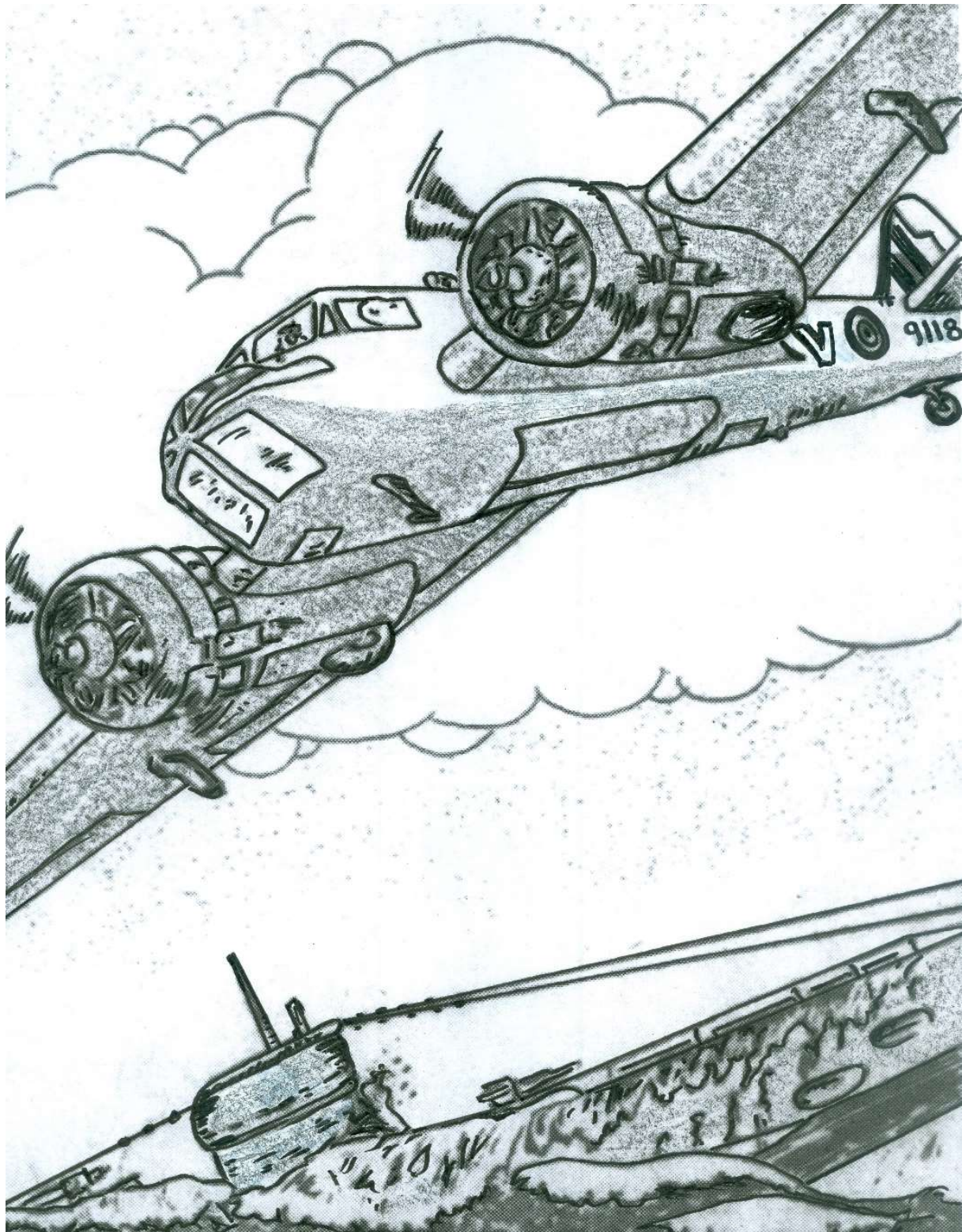
21-9-42.

Flying accident occurred at 1045 hrs. Bolingbroke 9118 crashed  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles beyond end of runway after takeoff, presumably due to engine failure. The pilot WO2 J. J. Wallace, Obs. Sgt. W.N. Gray, Air Gunner F/Sgt. Huggan were severely injured. The W.A.S., Sgt. C.O. Day was slightly injured. The pilot jettisoned his bomb load just prior to the crash. The aircraft caught on fire and was a complete loss. Civilians near scene of accident got one member of crew out of the <sup>A/C</sup> probably saving the airman's life. The pilot and observer suffered broken legs, bruises and abrasions. The air gunner sustained injury to the vertebrae of his neck but the doctor had not definitely been able to diagnose the exact injury which should

21-9-42. (cont'd).

became evident after 24 hrs. The W.A.S. suffered bruises and cuts about the head. A Court of Inquiry was immediately appointed to investigate the accident. All aircraft were grounded pending gasoline analysis.





Original art by Cpl. Vincent Barwood, front cover RCAF Shovel Magazine, Coal Harbour, B.C. 13 January 1944. Serial number and code "V" added by author.

**No. 115 [B.R.] Squadron returned to Patricia Bay, B.C., on 21 August 1943, where they converted to modern American Lockheed-Vega Ventura, then transferred to RCAF Tofino, B.C. on 17 March 1944. They received their official RCAF Lynx's head insignia in January 1945, five months after they had been disbanded on 23 August 1944. The history of RCAF No. 115 Squadron spanned four complete war years, yet few photos appear. They flew 9680 operational hours and lost two aircraft in Alaska, two more in training, one killed and six missing, non-operational accidents. They should officially be credited with damaging one WWII submarine, most likely a spying Russian.**

**This research is dedicated to all members of No. 115 [Fighter] and [B.R.] Squadron which numbered almost 300 Canadians in total. Photos would be appreciated to help preserve their historical past, there out there someplace. Thanks to denial by the U.S. Navy and the Russians, true Canadian RCAF WWII history was almost lost along with the actions of Bolingbroke #9118. Now, if we can just get any Canadian museum to save this true part of "Combat" history and paint one Bolingbroke correctly as 9118. Do Canadians have to drive to Pima Air and Space Museum to see their "Bloody" preserved past?**