



# JN-4D to JN-4 Canuck

a good beginner's conversion

*We present an expanded version of an article which originally appeared in RT back in 1971*

The Curtiss JN-4 (Can), commonly called the JN-4 Canuck, was the first aircraft to go into mass production in Canada. Approx 1,210 were built by Canadian Aeroplanes Ltd. in Toronto. During WW I large numbers were used for military training both in Canada and the US. Many were subsequently sold as war surplus. Because of its availability and low price, the JN-4 (Can) became the preferred aircraft of many barnstormers in the decade after the war.

The JN-4 (Can) recorded more Canadian firsts than any other aircraft. For example, first mass-produced aircraft, first exported in large quantities, first use of ski undercarriage, first airmail, first aerial survey, and first flight across the Canadian Rockies.

Both the well-known Curtiss JN-4D Jenny and the JN-4 Canuck were developed from the earlier JN-3. However, they were developed independently from each other, and as a result there were several differences in the airframes.

The Canuck had ailerons on both the upper and lower wings, which were connected by a V-shaped strut, while the Jenny had ailerons on the upper wing only. On the Canuck the upper and lower wings had tips of similar shape, while on the Jenny the lower wing tips were rounded. The horizontal stabilizer on the Canuck was rounded while the Jenny's was angular. Finally, the Canuck had a round rudder while the Jenny's was taller and narrower. The drawings below will illustrate these differences. The JN-4 Canuck also used a joystick for control, whereas the Jenny had a control wheel.

To model a JN-4 Canuck in 1/48, you're limited to the only kit around – the ancient Lindberg JN-4D

Jenny, which though not common, can be found if you search. The conversion itself is relatively simple, and so if you've never attempted any kit bashing, this would make an ideal first subject.

Modifications to the wings requires the extension of the lower wing tips. The simplest method would be to cut the existing wing tip off at the first rib location, add a new correctly shaped tip made from sheet plastic, and file and sand in the new rib contours. Ailerons will have to be scribed. The upper and lower ailerons are connected by a thin V-shaped strut which can easily be made from plastic rod.

The horizontal stabilizer can be trimmed to the proper shape and smoothed out. A new rudder is also needed. This is best made from sheet plastic of suitable thickness.

In truth, the JN-4D's engine has a slight downward thrust and the wings have a slightly different stagger, but as well as being difficult to modify, these things are not that noticeable, so for a beginner's conversion, can be ignored.

The basic colour scheme for JN-4 Canucks was overall clear doped linen with a brownish green on the metal parts. Unlike on some artwork, the linen is actually quite a pale colour. The brownish green is probably the wartime PC-10, and similar to a brownish olive drab.

Colourful markings abound for the JN-4 Canuck. Fortunately a number of schemes are available on a set of decals produced by Lone Star Models. They also make a set of resin cockpit details for the JN-4. You can see them at [www.lonestarmodels.com](http://www.lonestarmodels.com)



Two photos showing the V-shaped aileron struts to advantage. On the left, in flight somewhere over Central Ontario, and on the right a museum display.



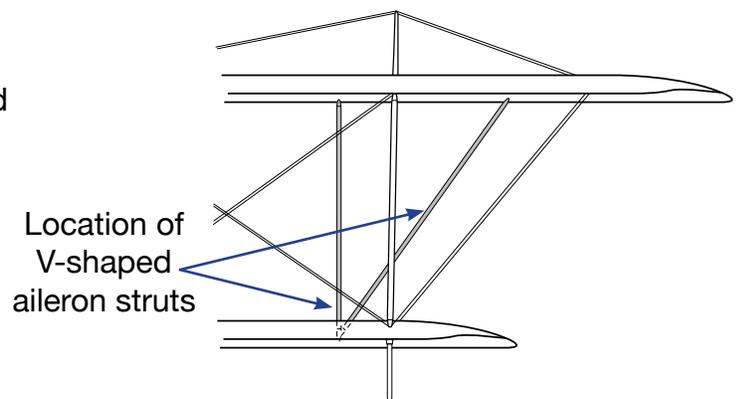
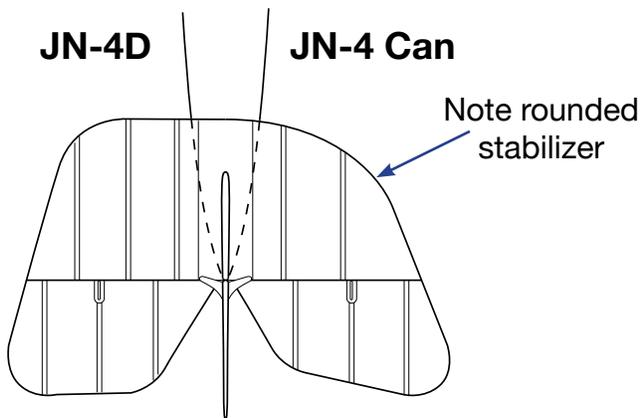
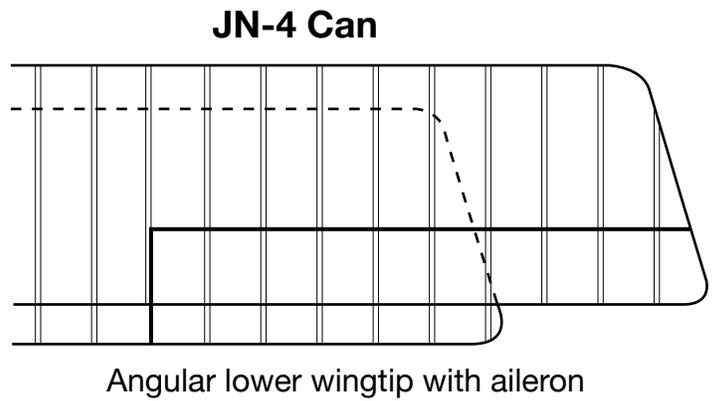
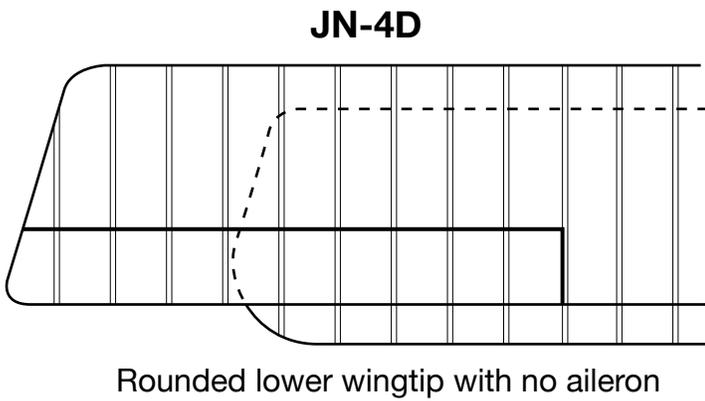
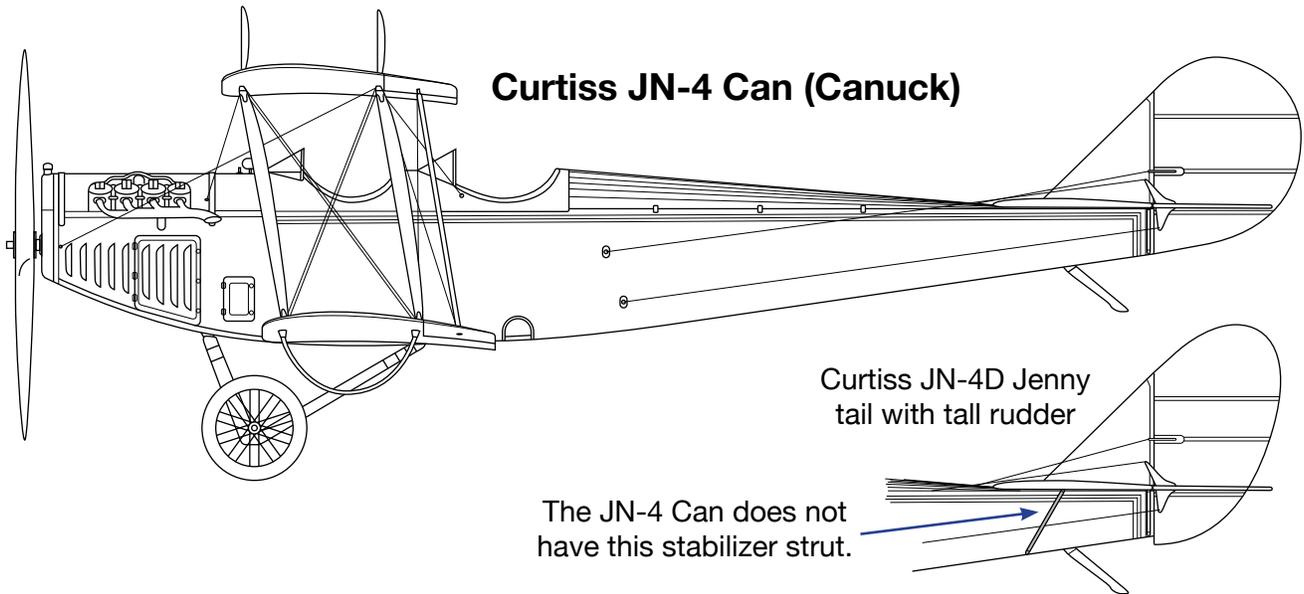
Aircraft C129 encourages viewers to “Buy a Bond”. The fuselage is emblazoned with a fleur-de-lis, and caricature of someone... John Bull, or Robert Borden perhaps?

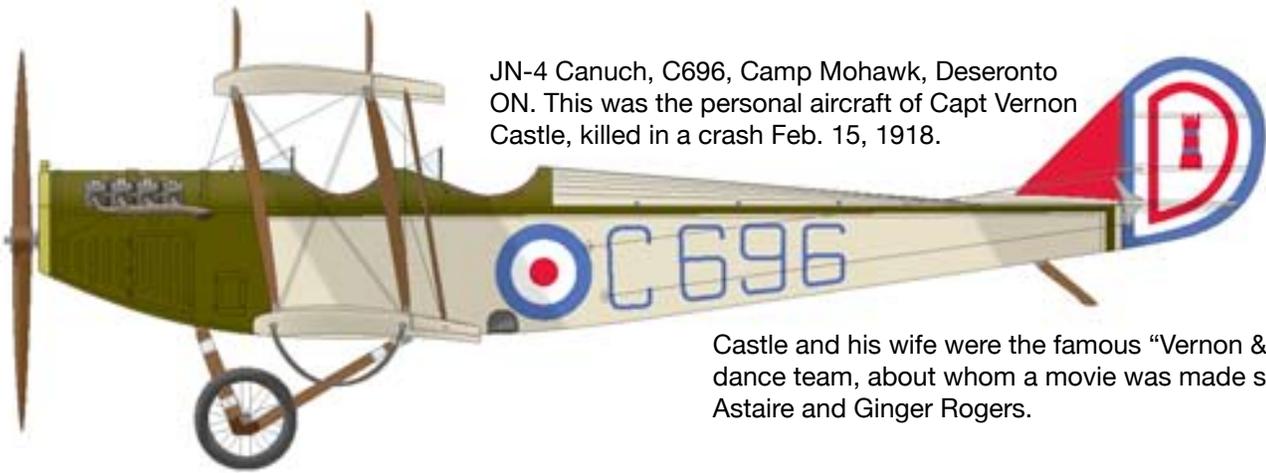


JN-4 Canuck #C318 fitted with skis for operation on snow covered airfields.



The Lindberg JN-4 Jenny in one of its more recent boxings.





JN-4 Canuck, C696, Camp Mohawk, Deseronto ON. This was the personal aircraft of Capt Vernon Castle, killed in a crash Feb. 15, 1918.

Castle and his wife were the famous “Vernon & Irene Castle” dance team, about whom a movie was made starring Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.



JN-4 Canuck, #C368, City of Toronto



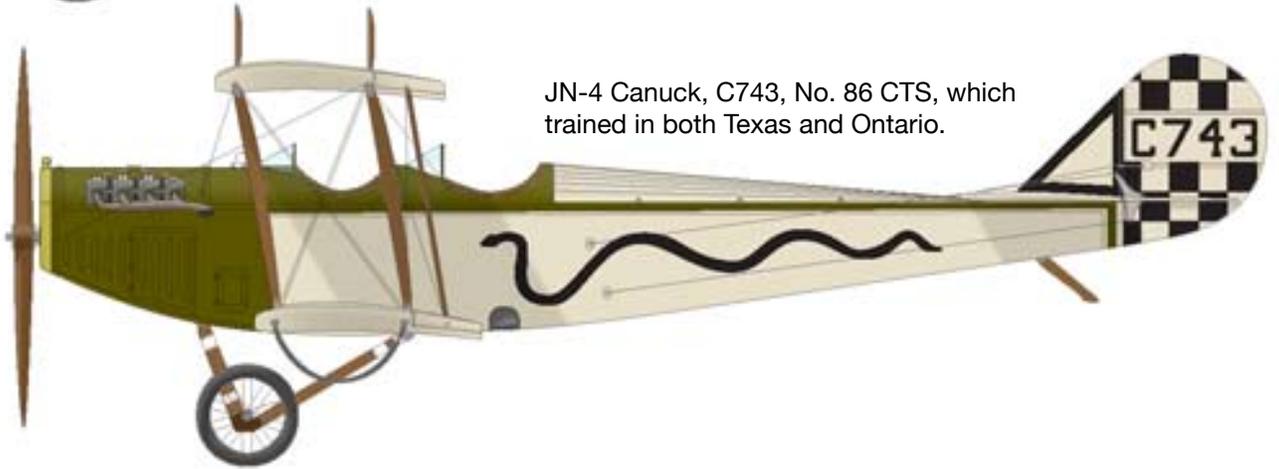
JN-4 Canuck #C300, of No. 81 Canadian Reserve Squadron, Camp Borden, Ontario, 1917.



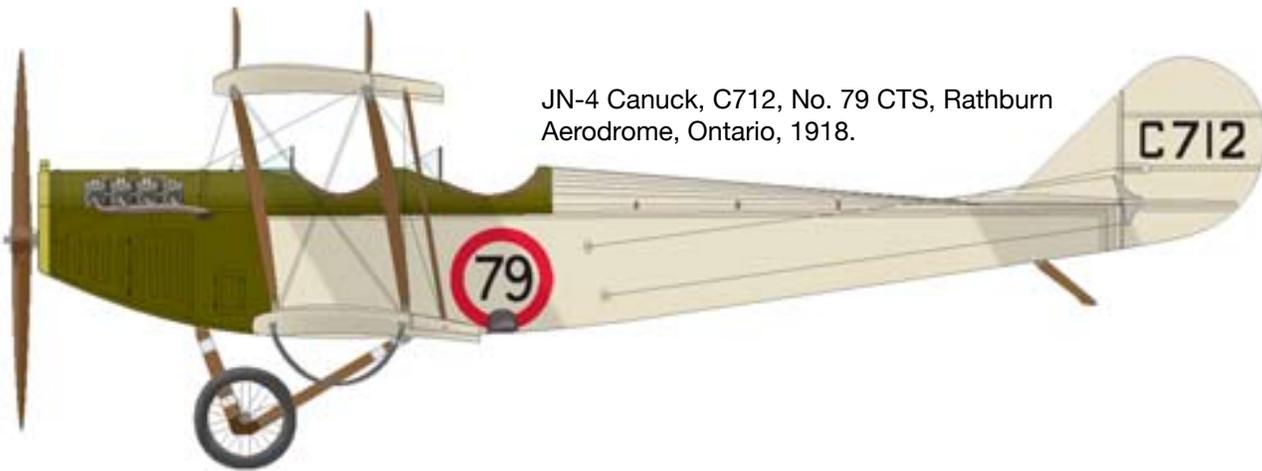
JN-4 Canuck #C130 of No. 89 Canadian Reserve Squadron, CFC Armour Heights, Ontario, winter 1917. Note the different style exhaust pipes.



JN-4 Canuck, C705, No. 85 CTS at Benbrook Airfield, Texas, early 1918.



JN-4 Canuck, C743, No. 86 CTS, which trained in both Texas and Ontario.



JN-4 Canuck, C712, No. 79 CTS, Rathburn Aerodrome, Ontario, 1918.



JN-4 Canuck #C1009 of No. 92 CTS, Armour Heights Aerodrome, Ontario, winter 1917-18