

On the Home Front - The RCAF's Hawker Hurricanes



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*(This is the second of what was to be a two-part **RT** article on Canada's home-based use of the Hurricane. The original plan was to publish all of Jim's material in one issue of **RT**, but there was simply too much great stuff to do it justice in one, or even, as it turns out, two issues. So the extra material that still didn't fit into this issue of **RT** will be published in an upcoming issue. Editor)*

Part 2 - Canadian Car and Foundry Hurricanes The Hurricane Mk. XIIA

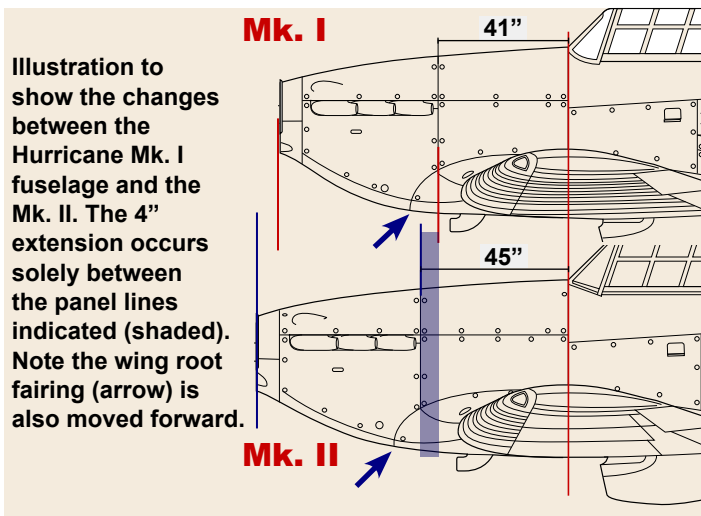
In 1943, the surviving RCAF Hurricanes and Sea Hurricanes, along with one Hawker-built Hurricane, were returned to **Canadian Car and Foundry** (CCF) at Port William, Ontario, for conversion to **Mk. XIIA** standard. This activity entailed the:

- ♦ fitting of a **Packard Merlin 29** engine to replace the original **Rolls-Royce Merlin III**,
- ♦ conversion of the fuselage to the **Mk. IIB**'s length by extending the forward fuselage by 4" *, and
- ♦ removal of all remaining naval-related gear (e.g., tail hooks, catapult launch spools) from the **Sea Hurricanes**.

(above) RCAF Hurricane Mk. XII, 133 Sqn, at Lethbridge, Alberta, 21 August 1942. Just visible in the middle of the photo is aircraft 'L', which is 5398 'March of Dimes', one of our decal subjects.
(Canada Dept. of National Defence PL-12434)

Probably the easiest way to tell which is which is to determine where the vertical panel line just aft of the exhaust stacks lay. If it's a bit ahead of the leading edge, it's a **Mk. II**. If it's almost in line with the leading edge, it's a **Mk. I**. This four-inch extension was necessary to fit the slightly longer two-stage **Merlin 29**, but also helped ameliorate some of the centre of gravity issues that had arisen as more weight was added to the **Hurricane Mk. I**.

* - This extension is located in between the front windscreen and the panel line just behind the exhausts. On the **Mk.I** fuselage this distance was 41"; on the **Mk.II** fuselage this was extended to 45". It is not a very prominent change, and it is hard to determine by casual observation of photos. This extension also changed the shape of the forward part of the wing root fillet that is closest to the engine cowling. On **Mk. I** aircraft it is closer to being a half-circle shape, but on the **Mk. XII** and **XIIA** the fillet is closer to being a half-oval shape.



The reworked aircraft were also fitted with American-manufactured **Hamilton Standard Hydromatic propellers**, and **exhaust glare shields** on the cowlings flanks (for night flying). Oddly, they retained their original eight-gun wings (i.e., they did not receive the 12-gun wings that were installed on CCF-produced **Hurricane Mk. XII**s).

Once converted, most of these aircraft were operated by **1 Operation Training Unit (OTU)** at RCAF Stn. Bagotville, Quebec or with various RCAF Station Flights. The provenance and (lack of) paperwork trails of these upgraded aircraft appears to have tripped up many Hurricane researchers in the years since the war.

As shall be illustrated here, the RCAF had a surplus of Hurricanes on strength, so the reasoning behind such an extensive upgrade program is quite a mystery. It makes sense that the RCAF would want more-capable aircraft and the **Merlin 29** was certainly an improvement over the **Merlin III**. It also makes sense that the RCAF would want to standardize on one variant of the type, for, say, maintenance and training reasons. But with over 100 brand-new Hurricane Mk. XII's sitting in storage, one wonders why the effort was made to upgrade all of the remaining earlier production machines.

The Hurricane Mk. XII

While the Hurricanes and Sea Hurricanes were diverted RAF and FAA aircraft that were adapted for RCAF use, the **Hurricane XII** was the definitive RCAF Home War Establishment (HWE) variant. In 1941, an order for 400 Hurricane XII's was placed with CCF. Clearly this is more aircraft than were needed by the RCAF, and there is much speculation that the number was determined by Minister of Munitions and Supply, **C. D. Howe**, whose riding just happened to include Fort William (known today as *Thunder Bay, Ontario*). (Could this also be the real reason the Hurricanes and Sea Hurricanes were re-manufactured?) The Hurricane XII's were assigned the RCAF serials **5376 to 5775**.

Originally designated **Hurricane Mk. IIB (Can)**, later changed in 1943 to **Hurricane Mk. XII**, these aircraft were externally similar to **UK-built Hurricane Mk. IIB**'s but were fitted with **Packard Merlin 29** engines and an American

Hamilton Standard Hydromatic propeller. (The hub mechanism was a Hamilton Standard 23E50 fitted with No. 6353 blades. This was the same combination of Hamilton Standard propeller used on Cansos, which was another aircraft type built in Canada.) As the large dome of the prop hub would not fit under a standard British Hurricane spinner, the aircraft were generally flown without a spinner. However, with time, CCF designed a conical 'Canadian' spinner (of noticeably different shape than a British-built spinner) that for the Hamilton Standard installation. It is interesting to note that most Hurricanes still in service late in the war had been fitted with the spinner. All RCAF Hurricane XII's were fitted with exhaust glare shields on the cowlings flanks and sported twelve-gun wings. Many of the **Hurricanes XII**'s retained the **early Mk. I tailwheel**, but the later **Dowty kinked tailwheel** fitted to **RAF Hurricane Mk. II**'s can also be seen in some photos.

As described in **Part 1** (see **RT Vol.36 No.2**), much of the Canadian Hurricane story is indelibly linked to the Merlin engines that powered them. The reasoning for CCF's use of the Hamilton Standard propeller was tied to supply and demand of both the props as well as the Merlins. Packard built two versions of the two-stage Merlin which are germane to this story - the **Merlin 28 and 29**. Both versions of the Merlin V-1650, they were modified for British and Canadian use. (Apparently, these modifications centred on the voltage of the electrical system.) **Merlin 28**'s were additionally modified so that their propeller shaft splines and reduction gear ratios were compatible with British propellers. The **Merlin 29**s, however, maintained propeller shafts that were only compatible with U.S.-built propellers. Therefore, as the RCAF was able to acquire **Merlin 29**'s for the Hurricanes, it was most efficient if a U.S. propeller was sourced to fit the engines. It can only be assumed that the Hamilton Standard propeller and blade combination was chosen as it was available in the numbers necessary to outfit the Hurricanes.

Note: For purposes of this article I have referred to all of the Packard-built Merlins with their Arabic numbers. RCAF record cards and accident cards record the engines both as **Merlin 29** and **Merlin XXIX**. It is very possible that the designation depended on the clerk typing up the form!

The first Hurricane XII's were taken on strength by the RCAF in mid-1942, and the type equipped:

six **Eastern Air Command (EAC)** fighter squadrons -

- ♦ **125 (F) Sqn**, RCAF Stns. Sydney and Torbay
- ♦ **126 (F) Sqn**, RCAF Stns. Dartmouth and Gander
- ♦ **127 (F) Sqn**, RCAF Stns. Dartmouth and Gander
- ♦ **128 (F) Sqn**, RCAF Stns. Sydney and Torbay
- ♦ **129 (F) Sqn**, RCAF Stns. Dartmouth, Goose Bay, Bagotville and Gander, and
- ♦ **130 (F) Sqn**, RCAF Stns. Bagotville and Goose Bay

and two **Western Air Command (WAC)** fighter squadrons -

- ♦ **133 (F) Sqn**, RCAF Stns. Lethbridge, Boundary Bay, Tofino, Sea Island and Patricia Bay, and

◆ **135 (F) Sqn**, RCAF Stns. Mossbank, Patricia Bay, Annette Island and Terrace.

In addition, it was operated by **123 (Army Co-operation Training) (AC) Sqn** in EAC at RCAF Stn Debert and Sydney, **163 (AC) Sqn** at RCAF Stn. Sea Island in WAC, **13 (Photographic) (P) Sqn** at RCAF Stn. Rockcliffe, **1 OTU** at RCAF Stn. Bagotville and its associated **1 Advanced Tactical Training Detachment (ATTD)** at RCAF Stn. Greenwood, Nova Scotia. No. **163 Sqn** is an interesting unit as it was formed as an Army Co-operation Squadron, but within months of acquiring Hurricanes it was redesignated as a Fighter Squadron.

Besides air defence and fighter tactical training, the Hurricanes were also operated by **1 ATTD** as weapon trainers with **rockets**, and a few in EAC were converted to carry **depth charges and bombs** for coastal defence with **125 (F) Sqn** at Torbay. These repurposed Hurricanes did not claim any U-Boat kills! (*More coverage of these modifications will be presented in Part 3 of this article. Ed*)

The WAC squadrons were rather nomadic during their

Hurricane operations period. From August until November 1943, **135 (F) Sqn** even operated Hurricanes out of Annette Island, Alaska, as a part of '**Y' Wing** (*one of the two RCAF formations contributed to the continental defence of North America in Alaska.*) The squadron's patrols could be quite hazardous due to Alaskan weather conditions, no enemy aircraft were encountered.

As the war continued, the Hurricane was systematically replaced by various models of the **Curtiss P-40 Kittyhawk** and relegated to "**Stored Reserve**". As stated above, the RCAF ended up with more Hurricanes than required, so it was hoped that some could be sold abroad. In the end, a large number of the HWE Hurricanes were in storage at Souris, Manitoba, and 150 Hurricanes were transferred to the RAF as '**Free Issue**'. These free issue Hurricanes were returned to CCF where "certain RCAF equipment" was removed (*possibly including the Packard Merlins*) before they ended up in either **India** or **Russia** with RAF serial numbers in the **PJ-** serial range. Fifty of these free issue aircraft were considered repayment to the British for the **BW-** series **Sea Hurricanes** discussed in **Part 1** of this article (see **RT Vol. 38, No.2**).

Rocket Projectiles



A 1 OTU Hurricane at Bagotville mounting RP rails. Rockets were only used in Canada for training and demonstration purposes. Further details will be covered in **Part 3** of this article. (Marc-André Valiquette collection)

The final operational activity of the Hurricane in HWE service involved the so-called "**Prairie Hurricanes**". In late 1944, the Japanese started launching balloon bombs that would drift along the upper atmospheric currents toward North America. There was much concern in U.S. and Canadian military and political circles not only that these bombs would drop on civilian populations and invoke terror, but that they would drop on unpopulated, but heavily wooded areas, and the small bomb load would ignite the surrounding vegetation which could result in large forest fires in western and central North America. To combat this threat, a number of Hurricanes were removed from storage, assigned to **No. 2 Air Command**, and based at BCATP stations in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The intent was to base one or two aircraft at designated stations to intercept any balloons that drifted toward the prairies. Eight of these Hurricanes were modified by **8 Repair Depot (RD)** at RCAF Stn. Winnipeg. Here they "*were stripped of machine guns and camera guns. One machine gun being reinstalled and harmonized.*" This was done to lighten the aircraft and afford them the highest possible climb rate. These modifications certainly must have created quite a 'hot-rod' Hurricane. While many sightings and interceptions were carried out, it is unclear if any

Depth Charges



Some 125 (F) Squadron's Hurricane XII's were modified for the anti-U-boat role. Note the depth charges under the wings. Further details of these modifications will be covered in **Part 3** of this article. (Carl Vincent collection)

Drop Tanks



A Hurricane XII carries the Canadian-developed wood external fuel takes. While RAF Hurricanes were fitted with external tanks, the RCAF design was all-wood and included shell ejection chutes. This allowed the RCAF Hurricanes to carry and fire the full complement of machine guns, unlike the RAF aircraft. The tanks were tested but never adopted in service. (Canada Dept. of National Defence PL-12434)

Skis



The second RCAF Hurricane tested on skis was RCAF 5624. **Part 3** of this article will have additional details of this unique ski installation. (Carl Vincent collection)

Hurricanes were successful in shooting down a balloon. (There is an unconfirmed report that a balloon landing in Strathmore, Alberta, on March 28 1945, was shot down by an RCAF fighter. Logically this could only be one of the Prairie Hurricanes.) By the summer of 1945, the balloon threat had lessened and the Hurricanes stood down from their watch.

Going Skiing and Getting Tanked

A variety of testing was done on Hurricanes by the RCAF, conducted for the most part by the **Test and Development Establishment** at RCAF Stn. Rockcliffe. This included, for example, the ground and flight testing of Canadian-designed wooden drop tanks and skis. Two RCAF Hurricanes, Mk. I **1363** and Mk. XII **5624**, were tested on Noorduyn-built fixed skis. Neither the tanks nor the skis were ever used operationally by the HWE Hurricanes. (More coverage of these modifications will be presented in **Part 3** of this article. Ed)

Colours and Markings

There appears to be no official RCAF Engineering Order (EO) specifications for the painting of HWE Hurricanes. An RCAF Headquarters Letter File 938-5-7, dated September 16, 1941, instructs, "where old camouflage existed, older undersurfaces will be altered from black or silver (aluminum) to Sky", and continues with, "this instruction applies to Canso, Stranraer, Hudson, Digby, Bolingbroke, Goblin, and Lysander aircraft." At first it would appear odd that the Hurricanes would not be included until it is remembered that on that date there were no Hurricanes on RCAF strength in Canada.

As CCF was building Hurricanes on British contracts they were most probably painted in British Air Ministry promulgated schemes using locally-produced paints matched (or accepted as equivalent to) British **Directorate of Technical Development (DTD)** chemical and colour specifications. This means that all Hurricanes should have been delivered to the RCAF in the **Temperate Land Scheme*** of **Dark Earth** and **Dark Green**, with **Sky** undersides and all Sea Hurricanes should have been delivered to the RCAF in the **Temperate Sea Scheme** of **Dark Slate Grey** and **Extra Dark Sea Grey** upper surfaces, with **Sky** under surfaces. When the Sea Hurricanes were modified to **Hurricane Mk. XIIA** standard, they were most probably repainted in the **Temperate Land Scheme**.

** - RAF colour schemes, such as the Temperate Land Scheme and Temperate Sea Scheme described only the top surface colours. The undersurface colour was specified separately from the upper surface colour(s).*

According to **Ian Huntley**, in an article in the November 1984 issue of **Scale Aircraft Modelling** entitled "**RCAF Colours 1939-1945**", sprayed out samples received by the British Air Ministry from CCF show that "**Canadian Dark Earth** was perhaps a fraction more red brown; **Dark Green** a little more of a blue green while the RCAF-titled '**Duck Egg Bluish-Green Sky**' a shade more on the blue side than its **Ministry of Aircraft Production (MAP)** counterpart." It is believed that the CCF Hurricanes were painted with **Titanine** brand paints manufactured in Canada by **International Paints (Canada) Limited**. An extant Titanine Standard Colours chart lists **Camouflage Dark Earth**, **Camouflage Dark Green** and **Camouflage Duckegg Bluish Green**; the approximate FS-595 number match to each colour is as follows:

Camouflage Dark Earth = FS 30097

Camouflage Dark Green = FS 34052

Camouflage Duckegg Bluish Green = FS 34518

When comparing these FS-595 numbers with Mr. Huntley's description of the colours, only the Dark Green does not appear to match, being substantially darker than expected.

It should be noted that, as with all colour issues, all of the above is open to interpretation. In discussions with **Terry Higgins of Aviaeology** (stores.ebay.ca/Aviaeology or stores.ebay.com/Aviaeology) he notes, "I maintain that these samples represent a single instance sample from one manufacturer, and as such, may, or may not, be representative of the entire gamut of acceptable tone/hue/intensity variations for each colour. I am of the mind that the tolerance gamut was much more wide open than modellers often care to admit."

It appears that unlike UK Hurricane manufacturers, regardless of the serial number, CCF painted all **Hurricane XII and XIA** aircraft in the standard **RAF the 'A-scheme' camouflage pattern***. Additionally, while CCF-applied aircraft serial numbers match the standard black RAF eight inch size, the letter and number style is slightly different from that seen on UK production.

** - In the UK, an important Hurricane production change occurred in January, 1941. It was decided to abandon the alternating 'A-scheme' and 'B-scheme' camouflage patterns, which had been in use since 1937. All Hurricanes produced after this date were produced in the 'A-scheme' only.*

National markings on all of the Hurricanes delivered from CCF were:

- ◇ **49" Type B roundels** on top of the wings,
- ◇ **45" Type A roundels** below the wings,
- ◇ **35" Type A1 roundels** on the fuselage,
- ◇ **27" x 24" Fin flash** on the vertical fin.

(Some WAC Hurricanes were late refinished with **Type A** roundels above the wings. Others, however, carried the standard **Type B** roundels. There really is no explanation for these anomalies, as is usual with WAC markings.) It is alleged that all RCAF aircraft used the pre-war 'bright' shades for the roundel red and blue colours, not the dull markings colours used by the wartime RAF. RCAF EO outtake "**Markings - Identification of Operational Aircraft**", dated August 1, 1939, provides that fuselage markings consisted of "Roundel Blue / Red." (Keep in mind, some early RCAF aircraft - for example, Lysander Mk. II's - featured red and blue roundels with no white.) No order has been uncovered that noted a change to dull colours, extant photos appear to use the 'brighter' roundel colours, and even Mr. Huntley states "the roundel colours were of the 'bright' form." Mr. Huntley does state, "The change to dull ident colours was only made on certain home-based operational units," without providing any support for that statement as to which units and what aircraft.

Sidebar Roundel Rant from the Editor:

This makes me crazy, ever since I found out the truth about these markings. **NOBODY** (including me) uses the official RAF designations for the markings. The **Type A, B, C, etc.**, 'names' that we all use to identify British-style national markings was created post-war, not by the RAF, but by noted British aviation writer **Bruce Robertson**. Two of his seminal Harleyford books are:

- **Aircraft Camouflage and Markings 1907-1954. London: Harleyford, 1959.**
- **Aircraft Markings of the World 1912-1967. London: Harleyford, 1967.**

For late-war RAF roundels,
what Bruce called:

Type B	National Marking I
Type C	National Marking II
Type C1	National Marking III

are actually:



And the '**Fin Flash**' was called the **Tail fin marking**.

It appears that the early war RAF roundels were not given any particular way to identify them. They were merely described verbally, indicated the location, and given dimensions for each marking. Which apparently worked well enough for that time.

Later, from a historian's or modeller's point of view, people were looking at the whole range and timeline of RAF markings and needed a system whereby we could more easily describe them to others. Bruce must be applauded for his work in finding a relatively simple way of describing these markings, but he did produce a very useful legacy that we all erroneously think of as the gospel on this subject.

Okay, rant mode is 'OFF'; please go back to Jim's article, which is still in progress. Steve.



A March 1943 Hurricane XII (captioned as being a "Mk. II.B") showing some great prop, engine, undercarriage and other detail. Note the metal/silver painted undercarriage, wheel hubs and wing flaps. Much of the Hurricane's interior was painted silver butrate dope (Carl Vincent collection)



Specifications say that the squadron codes were in **RCAF Light Grey** (equivalent to **British Medium Sea Grey**) but some, especially on WAC aircraft, look **white**. Squadron codes were applied to Hurricanes and Sea Hurricanes, but by the time the Hurricane Mk. XII was in service, the RCAF specification required only the single-letter, aircraft-in-squadron code.

For Hurricanes that were in service post-1943, an order was issued April 30, 1943, for the **Type A** and **Type A1**

roundels were to be replaced with the **Type C** and **Type C1** roundels respectively*. While most Hurricanes carried the **Temperate Land Scheme** during their whole career during the RCAF, a few appear to have been repainted in the **Day Fighter Scheme** of **Dark Green** and **Ocean Grey** over **Medium Sea Grey**. The few aircraft repainted also had **Sky** bands applied around the rear fuselage and the yellow identification markings applied to the leading edges of the wings, reflecting British practice of that time period.

* - The RAF in England started the change-over to the late-war markings in July, 1942. This is another example of where British paint and marking practices did not automatically generate an immediate mirrored response by the HWE RCAF.

NOTE: Surviving Hurricane XII 5389 (Now under restoration with the Calgary Mosquito Society at Wetaskiwin, AB) was repainted in service with a grey that matches **RCAF Light Grey** on the underside. It is unknown why this was done or how common it was fleet-wide. It is assumed the undersides were repainted by a contractor (Coates Limited) after a Category C accident on July 15, 1943.

(Editor's note: space considerations prevented inclusion of some additional info and imagery that the author had amassed during his RCAF Hurricane research. These will be presented in **Part 3** of this article.)

Acknowledgments:

This article would not be possible without the help of **Jerry Vernon, Mark Peapell, Steve Sauvé, Dr. Jon Leake, Nicholas Millman** and **Carl Vincent**. Also, I have to give thanks to **Terry Higgins** and **Tony O'Toole** for their assistance and enthusiasm, which gave me the strength to persevere with this project even when every answer appeared to open up 15 more questions.



Hurricane XII 5695, coded '1OX' carries the number codes seen on some Dartmouth Hurricanes. These codes are the only examples of Hurricane XII's with squadron codes applied. This view nicely illustrates the main features of a Canadian-built aircraft: Hamilton Standard prop, Mk. I exhausts, glare shields and 12-gun wing. Note lack of yellow tips and position of manufacturer decals on prop. (Carl Vincent collection)



Details & Markings

Hurricane 'U' of 133 Sqn being serviced. Some great diorama detail here - the paved ramp, refuelling tender, trolley accumulator (battery cart), and even the metal wheel chock with a loop for a rope. (Carl Vincent collection)



HWE Marking Anomalies

(above) Former Sea Hurricane BW862 '5', rebuilt as a Hurricane XIIA is carrying an early fin flash and an oddly-proportioned Type C1 fuselage roundel.

(above, right) Hurricane XII 5463 '42', with late-war markings, but still with Type A roundels under the wings.

Both aircraft are wearing the Dark Green/Dark Earth over Sky colour scheme. (photos from the Carl Vincent collection)



Hurricane XII 'V', of 133 Sqn in an undignified pose but showing a wealth of detail and extreme weathering. Interesting to see that only two of the 0.303" guns appear to be open and ready for use. Note the dark-painted 'Canadian' prop spinner. This also shows that the exhaust glare shields have 'swept-back' leading and trailing edges. (Carl Vincent collection)



Hurricane 5636 'Q' is one of the few RCAF Hurricanes that was definitively repainted in the RAF spec Day Fighter Scheme. Note the Sky band and Yellow leading edge markings, and the dark propellor cap. Shot on panchromatic film, the Ocean Grey is recorded as much lighter in tone compared to the Dark Earth on 5723 'N'. (Mark Peapell collection)





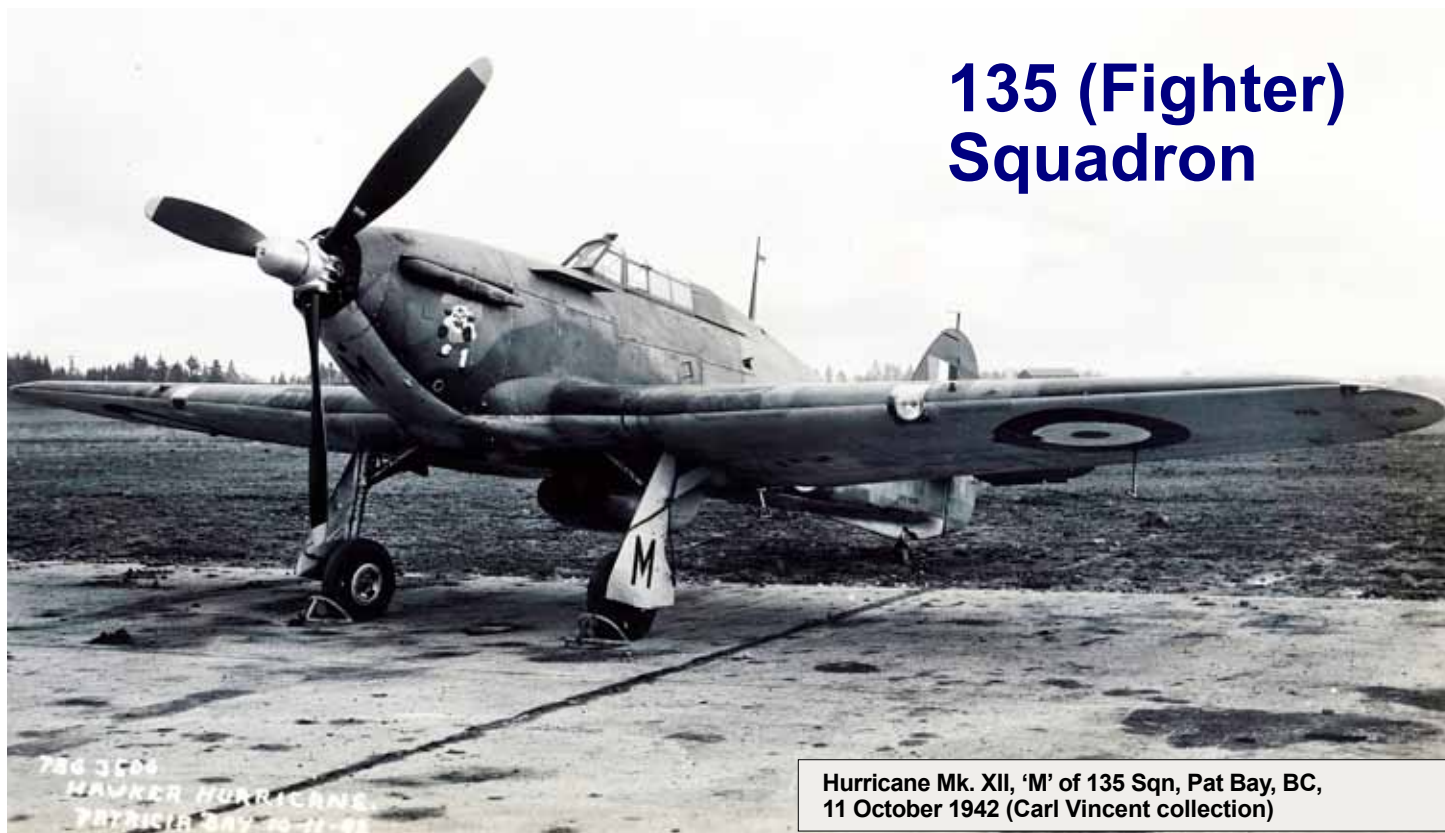
About the author:

Jim Bates' first memory of the Hurricane goes back to June of 1984 when he first saw ex-RCAF Hurricane 5377 doing gear retraction tests with the Canadian Warplane Heritage. Airfix, Matchbox, and Aoshima 1/72 Hurricanes were soon being built and a lifelong interest in the RCAF Hurricanes was born.

To finish off Part 2 and provide a nice segue into Vic Scheuerman's Hurricane XII build article here are a couple of nice shots of two 135 (F) Sqn Hurricane XII's.

Aircraft 'M' is seen in Pat Bay, BC on Oct 11th, 1942. Note the concrete parking ramp and the metal wheel chocks with ropes attached.

Aircraft 'P' is parked in a protective revetment. It appears to be an 'Alert bird', as the pilot's parachute harness can be seen carefully positioned on the port wingtip.



135 (Fighter) Squadron

Hurricane Mk. XII, 'M' of 135 Sqn, Pat Bay, BC, 11 October 1942 (Carl Vincent collection)

Squadron mascot 'Queenie', an English Bulldog, looks at her namesake insignia for 135 (F) Sqn, 23 March 1943 (DND Canada photo PL-13608)



Hurricane 'P' of 135 Sqn, in British Columbia, sometime in 1943-44. Note the pilot's parachute harness draped on the port wingtip. (Mark Peapell collection)

IPMS Canada 2016 Decal Sheet

RCAF HWE Hawker Hurricanes

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Hurricane Mk. I 1380 / RA-S, 128 (Fighter) Squadron, RCAF Station Torbay, Newfoundland

This aircraft was built by Canadian Car and Foundry (CCF) as a Hurricane Mk. I for the RAF and diverted to the RCAF. The accident depicted in the two photos (at right) occurred on July 26, 1942. **Hurricane 1380** was later returned to Canadian Car and Foundry for conversion into a Hurricane Mk. XIIA in late 1943. After conversion, it was allocated to 1 (F) OTU and operated until an Category A accident (i.e., the aircraft was a write-off) in August 1943.

It was painted in the standard RCAF HWE scheme of Dark Green/Dark Earth over Sky undersides. The national markings were the standard **Type A1** roundels on fuselage, **Type B** on top of the wings and **Type A** below the wings. The squadron codes were painted in **RCAF**



Photos: Carl Vincent collection



Light Grey (aka **RAF Medium Sea Grey**). Notice the squadron code placement variation on each fuselage side - **RA-S** on the left and **S-RA** on the right.

Hurricane Mk. XII 5398 133 (Fighter) Sqn Western Air Command

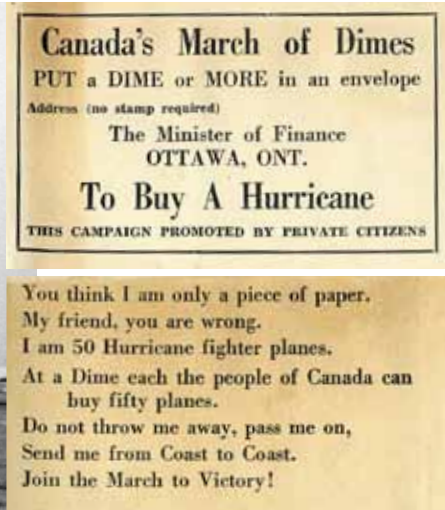
"March of Dimes" was a Canadian Car and Foundry-built **Hurricane Mk. XII** (or, if we look at the record card, a **Mk. IIB(Can)**) **RCAF serial 5398**. Those nose art

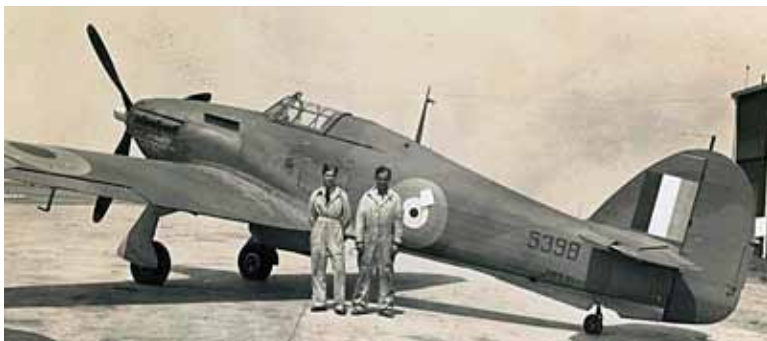
commemorates that this was a presentation aircraft paid for by "**Canada's March of Dimes**", which apparently is an odd coincidence, as the non-profit organization **March of Dimes Canada** did not exist until 1949. The nose art was applied at the factory and at least one photograph exists of this aircraft without the exhaust glare shields fitted. (The shields were in place by the time the Hurricane was

Note the engine oil streaks on the main landing gear door. 'L' code not applied. March of Dimes inscription appears 'not white'.



Photo: Mark Peapell collection





Nice study of 5398, shot on orthochromatic film, clearly showing that the M of D marking is not white. We went with yellow on the decal sheet as the most logical choice for a presentation inscription on a camouflaged aircraft. (Mark Peapell collection)



Although of poor quality, this photo does show 5398 with its 'L' code applied by 133 (F) Sqn. (Mark Peapell collection)

operating at Lethbridge.) The aircraft was taken on strength with 133 (F) Sqn in July, 1942

while they were working up at RCAF Stn. Lethbridge, Alberta. The Squadron relocated to RCAF Stn. Boundary Bay, British Columbia in October, 1942. March of Dimes was written off on February 4, 1943 in a Category A crash near Pender Island, B.C., killing the pilot, Flying Officer Grover Stewart Sargent, Jr.

Hurricane 5398 was painted in the standard RCAF HWE scheme of **Dark Green/Dark Earth** over **Sky**. Upon arrival at Lethbridge the aircraft did not carry an aircraft code, but it was assigned the code 'L' before arrival at Boundary Bay. The aircraft code is probably painted in white, though RCAF Light Grey (aka RAF Medium Sea Grey) is possible. (The E.O. Specs state codes were RCAF Light Grey.) March of Dimes wore the standard **Type A1** roundels on the fuselage, **Type B** on top of the wings and **Type A** below the wings.

RCAF specs required lettering on presentation aircraft to be in **white**, but the photos appears to show yellow lettering. Both are provided on the sheet and you have the option to use either. If the yellow is chosen, it is suggested to use the white as an underlay to the yellow lettering.

Some sources say the aircraft was assigned the code **FN*L**, but there is no photographic evidence to support that position. Additionally, there is almost no photographic evidence to illustrates any WAC Hurricane XII's with Squadron codes.

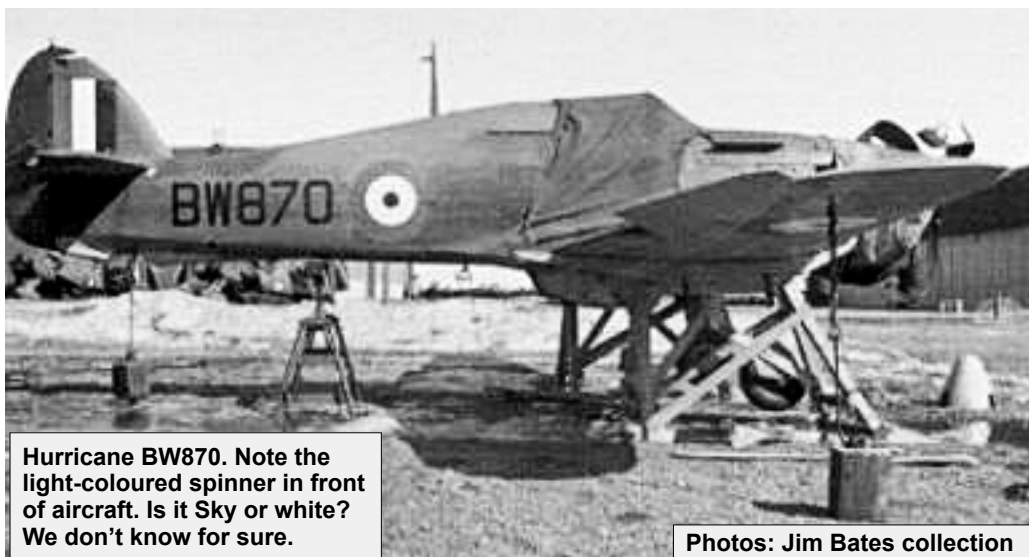
March of Dimes is a Hurricane XII fitted with a Merlin 29 engine and a Hamilton Standard propeller. While it features the longer fuselage and 12 gun wing of the Hurricane IIB, it is fitted with a Mk. I style tail wheel and the earlier round exhausts.

Hurricane Mk. XIIA BW870, No. 1 Central Flying School Trenton, RCAF Stn. Trenton, Ontario

BW870 was built as a Hurricane Mk. I for the RAF and diverted to the RCAF.

It was returned to Canadian Car and Foundry for conversion into a **Hurricane Mk. XIIA** in late 1943. After conversion, it was allocated to No. 1 Training Command and based at RCAF Stn. Trenton. It set an unofficial station altitude record at the hands of Station Commander Alan Bell-Irving. It suffered an accident on February 2, 1945, when it landed short, hit a snowbank and went over onto its nose. In the summer of 1945 it was displayed on the base nose-down in 'faux' Japanese markings. It was painted in the standard RCAF HWE scheme of **Dark Green/Dark Earth** over

Sky. Unusually, it carries **Type A** roundels on the fuselage, **Type A** on top of the wings and **Type A** below the wings. The serial is present in a very non-standard format on the rear fuselage in **black**. The spinner is **Sky**... or **white**. A **Sky** spinner would have been normal for RAF aircraft in the UK, but not necessarily for the HWE RCAF. You'll have to flip a coin and decide.



Hurricane BW870. Note the light-coloured spinner in front of aircraft. Is it Sky or white? We don't know for sure.

Photos: Jim Bates collection

Hurricane Mk. XII 5656 in similar markings to BW870. Note the white gun patches and the atypical Type A roundels on the fuselage top of the wings. Also worth noting is the white-ish coloured gun port covers, and the apparent use of 'bright' shades for the roundel Red and Blue. (Carl Vincent collection)



Hurricane Mk. XIIA 1365 / 16, 1 (Fighter) Operational Training Unit, RCAF Stn. Bagotville, Quebec

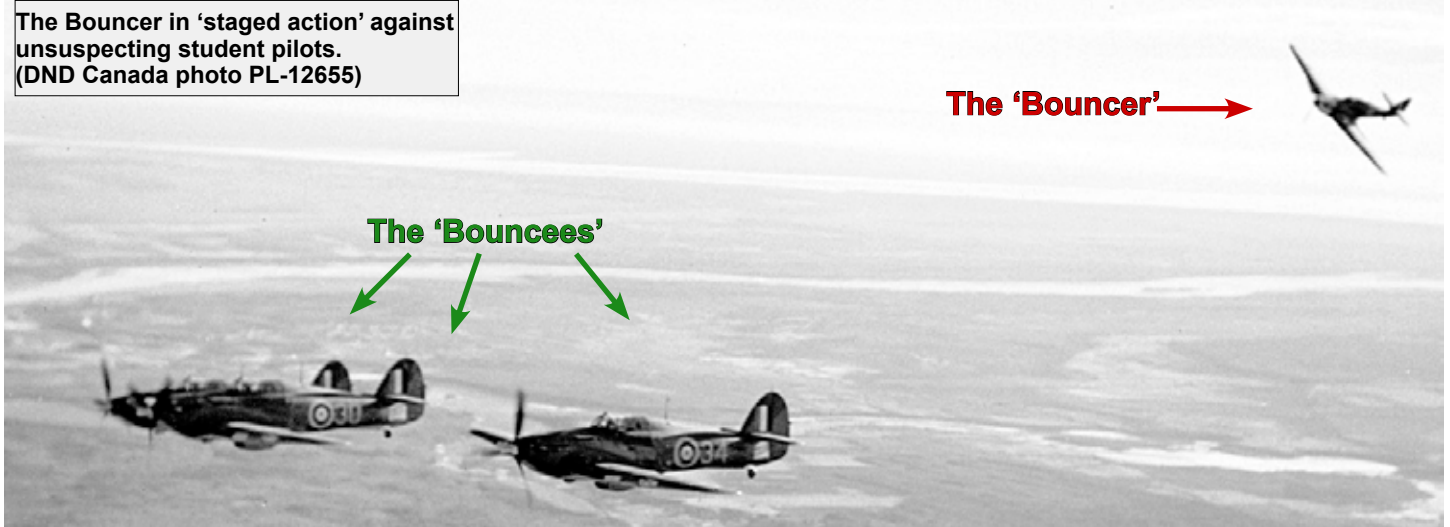
Built as a Hurricane Mk. I for the RAF and then diverted to the RCAF. Returned to CCF for conversion into a Hurricane Mk. XIIA in late 1943. After conversion, it was allocated to 1 (F) OTU and operated as the 'Bouncer'. As the name suggests, the aircraft was flown by an instructor and used

to 'bounce' unsuspecting students during training.

Hurricane 1365 was painted in the standard RCAF HWE scheme of **Dark Green/Dark Earth** over **Sky**. Standard **Type A1** roundels on fuselage, **Type B** on top of the wings and **Type A** below the wings. The nose section and fuselage code 'buzz' number on the fuselage are in **yellow**. The spinner is **red**.



The Bouncer in 'staged action' against unsuspecting student pilots. (DND Canada photo PL-12655)



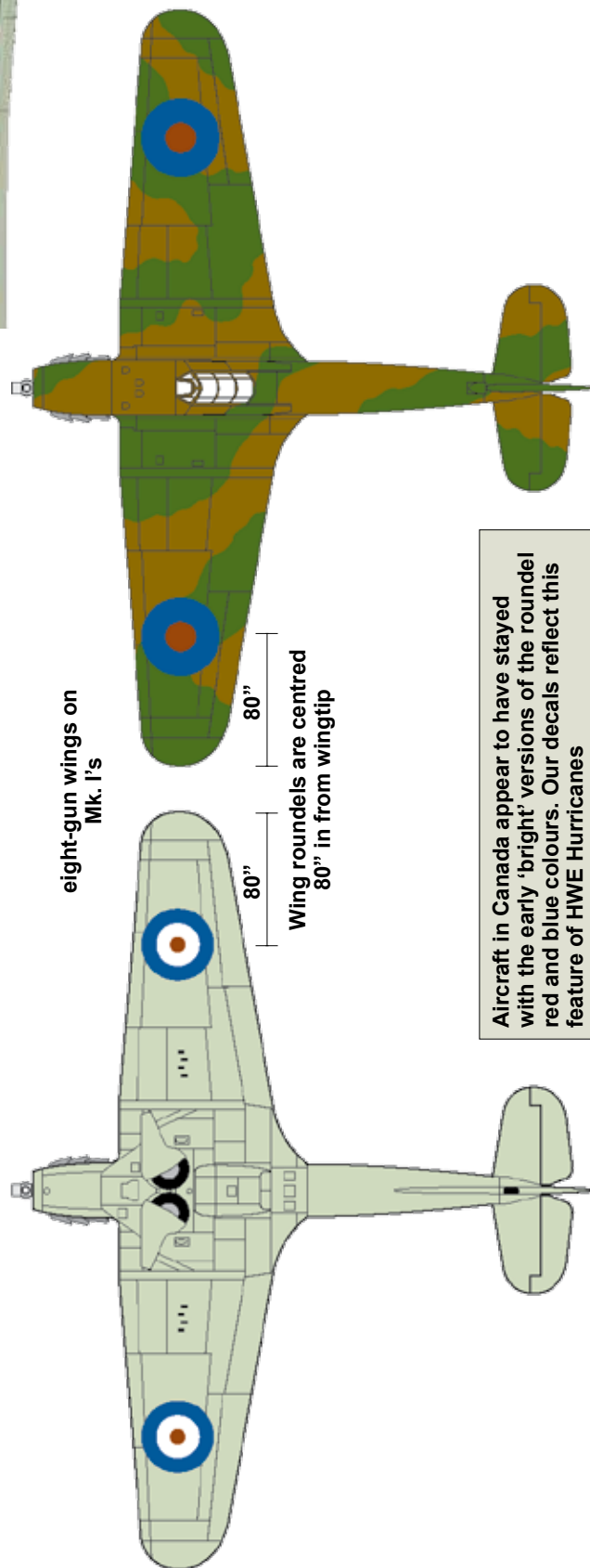
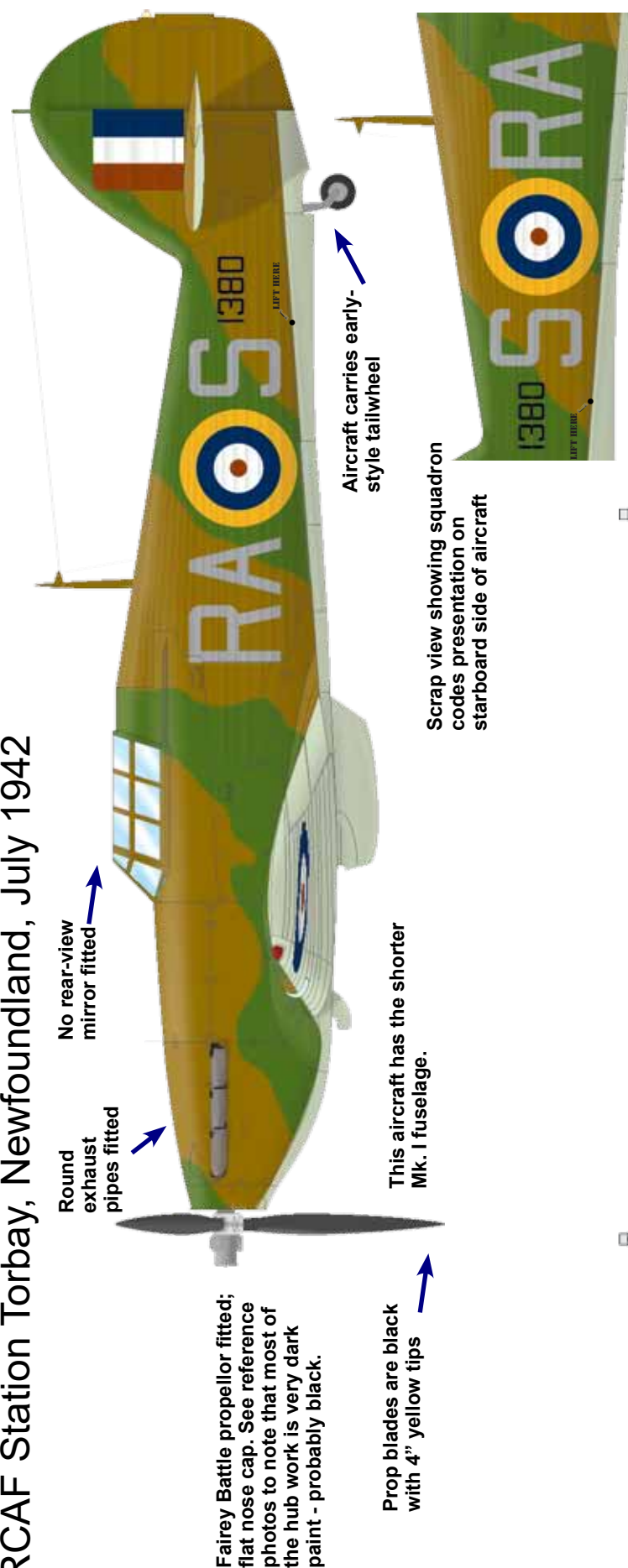
Note the distinctly-shaped Canadian spinner. (DND Canada photo PMR 76-267)



Photo: Carl Vincent collection

Hurricane Mk. I 1380 / RA-S, 128 (F) Sqn, RCAF Station Torbay, Newfoundland, July 1942

26



Aircraft in Canada appear to have stayed with the early 'bright' versions of the roundel with red and blue colours. Our decals reflect this feature of HWE Hurricanes



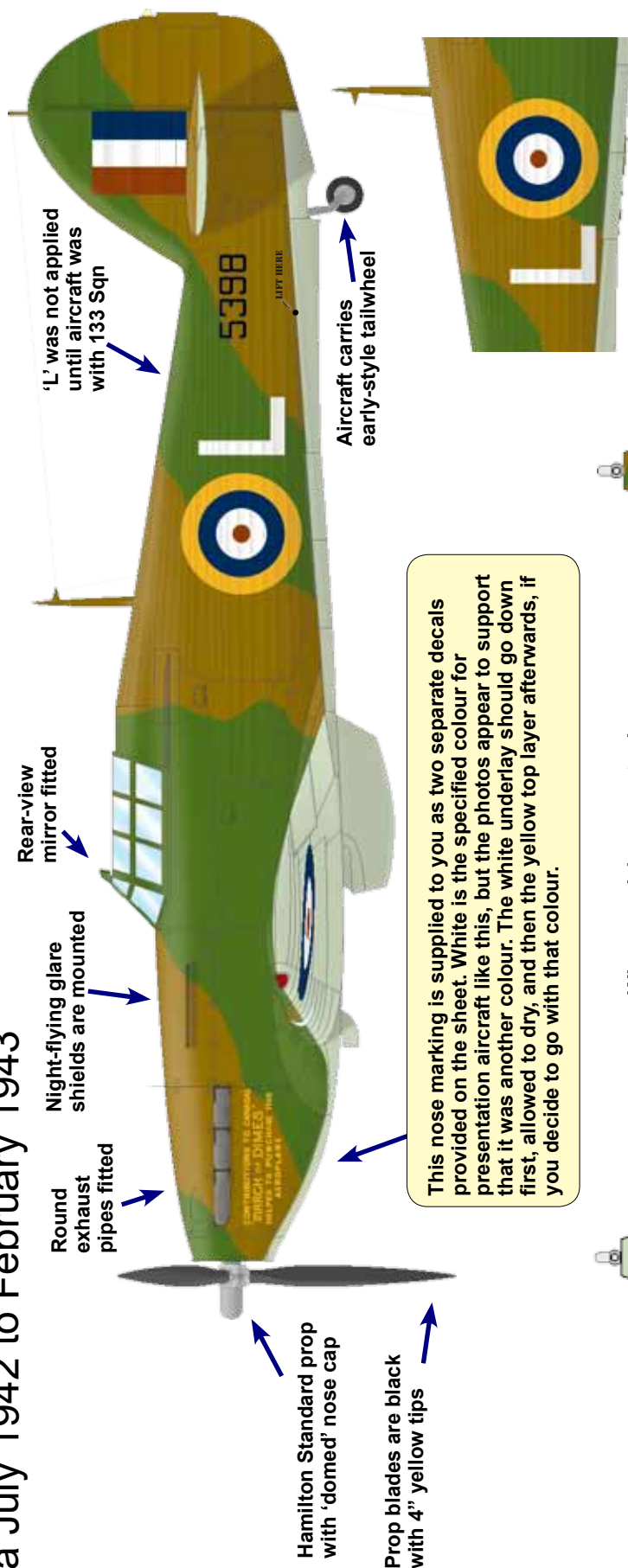
facebook.com/CanadaIPMS

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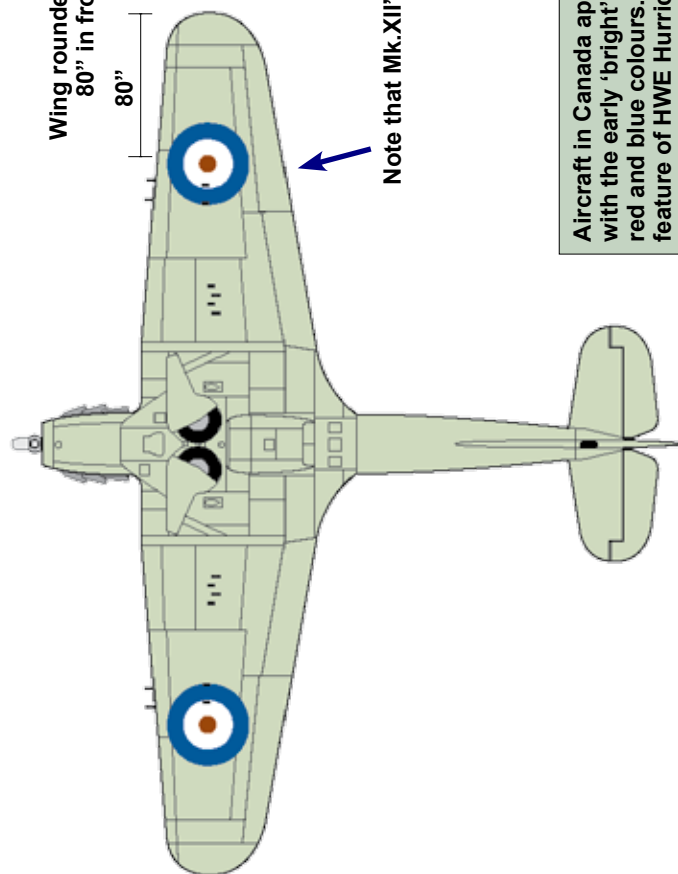


Hurricane Mk. XII 5398, 133 (F) Sqn, WAC, circa July 1942 to February 1943

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This nose marking is supplied to you as two separate decals provided on the sheet. White is the specified colour for presentation aircraft like this, but the photos appear to support that it was another colour. The white underlay should go down first, allowed to dry, and then the yellow top layer afterwards, if you decide to go with that colour.



Note that Mk. XII's carry 12-gun wings

Aircraft in Canada appear to have stayed with the early 'bright' versions of the roundel red and blue colours. Our decals reflect this feature of HWE Hurricanes



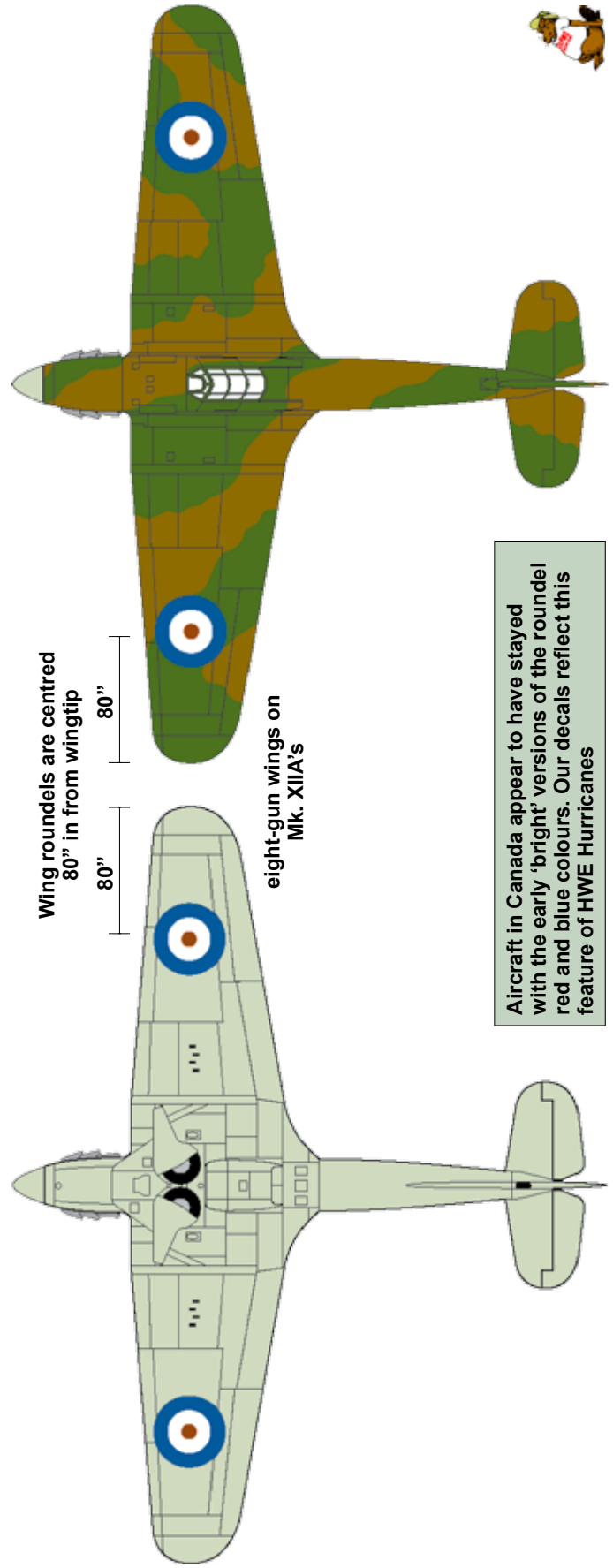
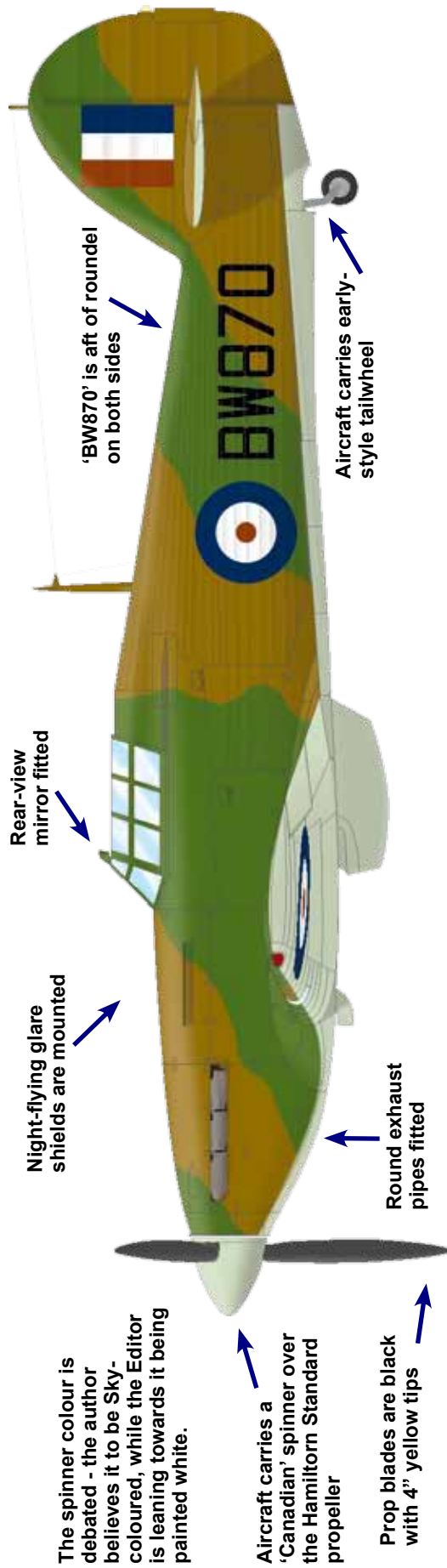
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Hurricane Mk. XIIA, BW870, No. 1 Central Flying School

RCAF Stn. Trenton, Ontario, late 1943



Aircraft in Canada appear to have stayed with the early 'bright' versions of the roundel red and blue colours. Our decals reflect this feature of HWE Hurricanes



Hurricane Mk. XIIA, 1365/16, 1 (F) OTU, 'The Bouncer'

RCAF Stn. Bagotville, Quebec, late 1943

