

RT

Random Thoughts



By Modellers, For Modellers

Volume 46 • Number 4 • Winter 2024

Wayne Beattie's 1:48 RCAF DHC-1 Chipmunk



Decal subjects:

- M4A2 Sherman, Fort Garry Horse
- Spitfire IXc, 402 Sqn, 1944
- FMC badges and Canada flags
- RCAF WWII Identity Markings
- Harvard IIB, 3 Training Command
- Hurricane I, No. 1 Sqn, RCAF, 1940
- RN Gannet AS.1 at Namao, 1954

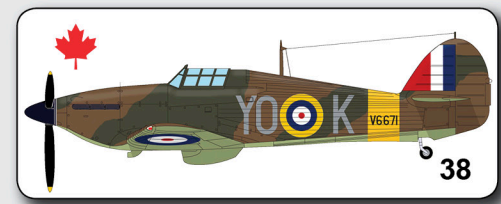
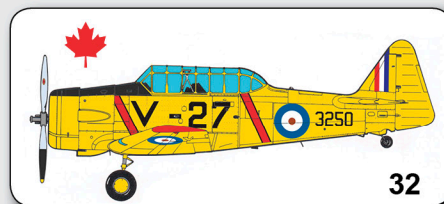
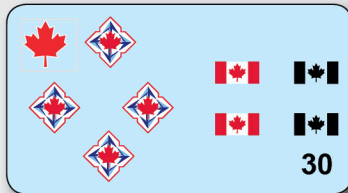
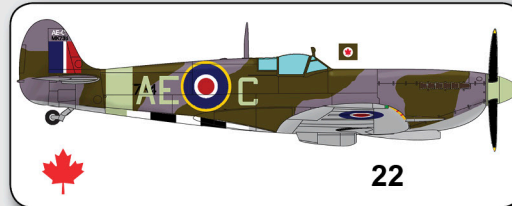
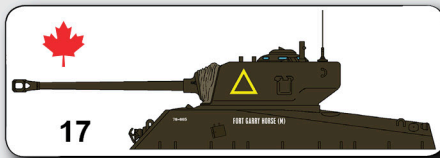
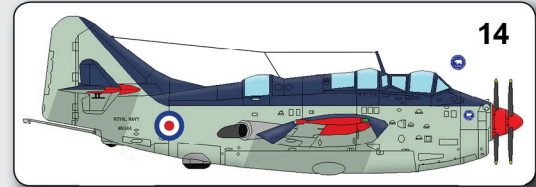
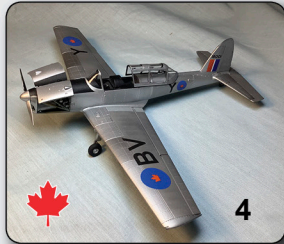
Also in this issue:

- 1/48 Gannet AS.1



ipmscanada.com

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Cover Comment: *Wayne Beattie of Moncton, NB, did a very nice job on the Airfix 1:48 Chipmunk and painted it to represent a very early RCAF aircraft. See page 4 for the build article.*

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Future RTicles...

Here are some articles that are coming down the **RT** pipeline. If you have something that might fit in with related topic to make it a theme, please contact the Editor. Heck, if you've got something on any modelling topic, get in touch!

CF-5 Aggressor Camo, 1:35 T-28 tank, 1:43 Can-Am cars, 1:35 Cdn Army Ferret, 1:144 Discovery XD-1, 1:32 post-war Lancaster, 1:72 VF-18C Valknet, 1:48 Irish Vampire F.3, 1:48 B-24 Liberator GR.V, 1:48 S-2G Tracker,

Squirrel!...
I mean -

Chipmunk

444 (AOP) Sqn, RCAF



1:48

Wayne Beattie
C#3174
Moncton, New Brunswick



Project background

I used the 1:48 Airfix De Havilland Chipmunk is to try to replicate the first Canadian Chipmunk that was taken into squadron service. This airplane was issued to 444 Air Observation Post (AOP) Squadron (Sqn) at RCAF Station Rivers, Manitoba in 1948.

The kit came only with a framed canopy which was used for the first few Canadian-built Chipmunks until the bubble canopy was introduced for the rest of the RCAF's production batch. Above & Below decals (abovebelow.ca) produce decals for the prototype as well as RCAF Chipmunk 18001.

Building

The build was going to be mostly out-of-the-box as there were no aftermarket products available.

I started with the cockpit, as usual. Too late, I realized when I started to write this article, that, somehow, I did not take any photos of the cockpit part of the build. The photos here are shots I took after the build was completed.



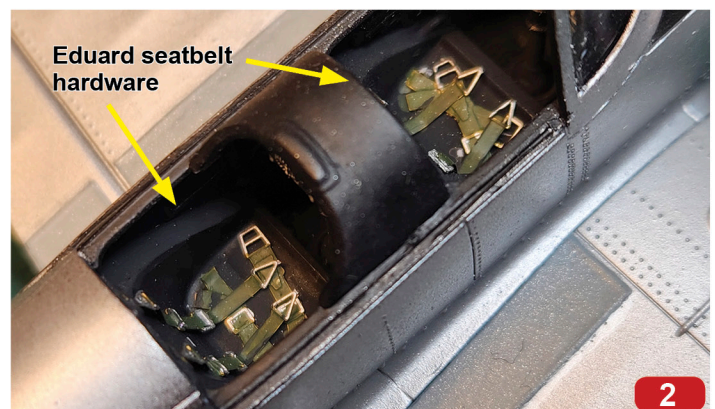
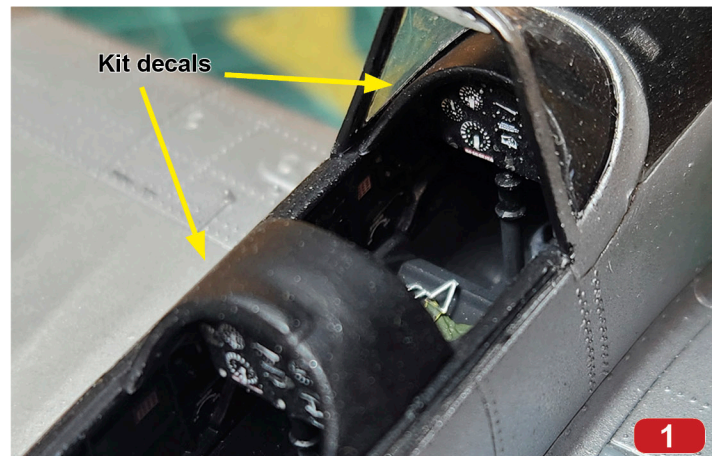
I gave it a coat of Vallejo black primer and then painted it with their NATO Black so it would not be a deep black

hole. For the instrument panel I used the kit decals. (Fig. 1)

For some added colour and interest I used some placard decals from Airscale. I also used some Eduard photo-etch seat belts. (Fig. 2)

I am pretty sure they [point at seat belts] are not of the correct era or country but they were all I had at the time. So sue me!

The only part of the build that I really had trouble with was



It's so ugly, it's beautiful...



Royal Navy Gannet AS.1



1:48

Maurizio Laudisa,
C6255
Toronto, ON



Project background

When Airfix announced that they were releasing a new-tool Fairey Gannet in early 2023, I knew I wanted one. I have always liked British naval aircraft of that post-war era, with their two-tone liveries and storied past. Although I didn't know much about the Gannet, its awkward and ungainly shape betrays a purposeful and very capable anti-submarine warfare platform that proved very effective during its short service life. I call it a "so ugly it's beautiful" kind of aircraft.

The Fairey Gannet

The Fairey Gannet was a British carrier-borne aircraft developed in the late 1940s and early 1950s for the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm. Designed as an anti-submarine warfare (ASW) aircraft, it first flew in 1949 and entered service in 1953. The Gannet had a distinctive appearance, featuring an Armstrong Siddeley Double Mamba turboprop engine driving two contra-rotating propellers.

The aircraft's primary design role was to detect and

destroy enemy submarines; as an ASW platform it could carry torpedoes, bombs and depth charges in its internal bomb bay. It was later adapted for other purposes such as airborne early warning (the AEW.3, replacing the Douglas Skyraider AEW.1 in 1960 in this role) and electronic countermeasures (as the ECM.6) and carrier onboard delivery (as the COD.4).

The Gannet's unique feature was its ability to shut down one of its engines (and a propeller) in flight to conserve fuel. When cruising, pilots would alternate between running the left and right engine every hour to reduce and distribute wear and tear on each engine, lower fuel consumption, and improve overall engine life.

The Gannet saw service through the 1950s and 1960s, with a notable deployment in the 1956 Suez Crisis. The Gannet was eventually retired from the ASW role by the Royal Navy in the mid-1960s and was replaced by the Westland Whirlwind helicopter. In addition to the British Royal Navy, the Gannet served with The Royal Australian Navy aboard their aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne. It was also used by Indonesia and by the German Navy (Bundesmarine), which operated the Gannet in the ASW role during the Cold War, helping to protect European waters from submarine threats. Its unusual design and multi-role capabilities made it a distinctive part of post-WWII naval aviation.

Royal Navy Gannet AS.1 at C.E. & P.E. Namao, Winter 1954

Members' Bonus
Decals



Info compiled by Steve Sauvé
C#0323, Ottawa ON
RT Editor



Gannet AS.1 WN344, presumably at Namao, Alberta. An interesting feature of the Gannet is illustrated here. The Armstrong Siddeley Double Mamba effectively makes the Gannet a twin-engine aircraft, with each engine controlling one of the two propellers. The straight demarcation line of the red outer wing panel can be discerned. Note the ring of Sky paint surrounding the roundel. The close fit of the underwing serial between the two wing fold joints is evident here.

DND Canada photo RE68-1768

While not a true Canadian subject, we finally decided that we just couldn't pass this one by any longer.

This Royal Navy (RN) Gannet AS.1 made its way over to the RCAF's Central Experimental & Proving Establishment's (CEPE) Winter Experimental Establishment in June 1954 for the RN to do winter trials with this unit at Namao, Alberta (which was then about 10 km north of Edmonton). Note that, despite international myths to the contrary, winter in northern Alberta doesn't arrive until much later in the year.

Little is known about these trials, but it is safe to assume that RN personnel were conducting them. It is unknown as to whether any RCAF personnel were getting trips in the Gannet, but it's nice to think that it could have happened.

Paint and Markings

WN344 carries the standard RN operational colour scheme of Extra Dark Sea Grey on top over Sky undersides.

What adds some very nice colour to this camouflage is that all aircraft attached to the WEE for testing were mandated to have red search markings applied to the outer wings and tailplanes. This safety measure was intended to facilitate an air search of a downed aircraft. (Photos also exist of a RN Firefly and Sea Hornet, along with a RAF Meteor with these red markings). It is most likely that this paint would

have been supplied by the RCAF upon arrival, and should therefore have been shade 1-GP-12b Red 9-2, which later became 1-GP-12c: 509-102 (Gloss). It is approximated by FS 11086 or 11105.

The Decals and ... Stencils...?

The general markings are standard for a RN Gannet of this period, so you can use the kit's markings or your choice of aftermarket decals for most of the finish. This decision was made at IPMS Canada's HQ in order to save decal sheet space, so we have just provided you with:

- ◆ the underwing serial numbers **WN344**,
- ◆ the **WN344** serial numbers on the rear fuselage under the **ROYAL NAVY** marking,
- ◆ the **WEE** badge on both sides of the nose, and
- ◆ possibly a first for any IPMS free product, **vinyl stencils** with which you can create the Sky outlines to the lower wing roundels. These can be used as either a 'positive' or 'negative' mask, depending on your preferred painting style.

Best Kits Available

- ◆ 1:48 - Airfix, released in 2023
- ◆ 1:72 - Revell and Trumpeter are the most recent and of the best quality.

M4A2 (76)W HVSS, FORT GARRY HORSE (M), 1960s

Members' Bonus
Decals



▲ A Fort Garry Horse M4A2 Sherman on parade in the regiment's home city of Winnipeg, Manitoba. The T84 rubber chevron tracks were worn by the regiment's city-based vehicles. It carries the full unit titles emblazoned on the hull sides along with a small Canadian Army Registration (CAR) number - possibly 78-826 or 78-866 (both were known to be FGH tanks). The Armoured Corps red-over-yellow unit sign marking on the hull front, as is the yellow Manitoba licence plate. The style of the plate puts this in the mid- to late-1960's. Unfortunately the plate number is not fully discernible in the photo. It might be 'T33551' or 'T33561' (photo courtesy of G.T. Crossley, The Fort Garry Horse Museum and Archives)

Info compiled by Steve Sauvé
C#0323, RT Editor



RT has published several great M4A2 articles in fairly recent issues, so if you have **RT 40-4** (2018) and **RT 44-3** (2022) in your library you'll find a few modelling and reference pieces on this variant of the Sherman.

I'd like extend my thanks to Mr. Gord Crossley at the Fort Garry Horse Museum and Archives (fortgarryhorse.ca/wp/museum-and-archives/) for his research cooperation and the photos he provided for this article. Here are a few extracts from his notes:

"FGH Shermans carried the Prairie Command flash until



▲ NOT from a Fort Garry Horse M4, but this style is similar to the 1960's style of licence plate that the FGH Shermans needed for moving on the streets of Winnipeg. They are seen on several photos in this article of FGH tanks moving about in the city and appear to be mounted temporarily to meet provincial driving requirements. The open space at the bottom right appears to have been used for annual renewal tags, but the Shermans don't appear to have had this feature on their plates. (photo found online)

SPITFIRE LF Mk IXc, MK734

Members' Bonus
Decals

402 'WINNIPEG BEARS' SQN, RCAF
JULY - AUGUST, 1944

Info compiled by Steve Sauvé
C#0323, Ottawa ON
RT Editor



This decal scheme is a re-pop of one we did back in 1995, so we don't feel too bad about bringing it back with some higher-quality decal printing 29 years later.

(this information was originally published in RT 24-1, circa April 1995)

MK734 joined 402 Sqn while they were based at Merston, Sussex, and first flew operationally on 17 July 1944. Flight Lieutenant (F/Lt) D.R. Drummond flew MK734 on 8 of its 16 missions with the unit. On 8 August 1944, 402 Sqn gave up their Spitfire IXs in exchange for Spitfire XIVs, so they operated this batch of aircraft for less than a month.

Colours and Markings for MK734

The colour scheme was the standard Day Fighter Scheme of Dark Green and Ocean Grey over Medium Sea Grey. It had slightly soft-edged camouflage, with about 1/2" of blending between colours. Note that the upper surface camouflage extends below the side cowling/lower cowling panel joint line. The spinner, code letters, and tail band were painted in Sky.

1:48, 1:72
scale

AE C AE C

MK734

MK734

AE-C
MK734

AE-C
MK734



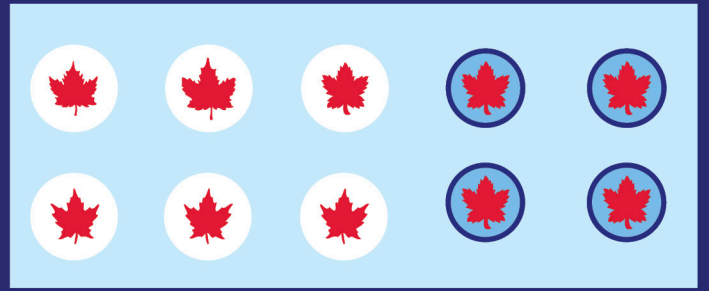
At this time, 402's Spitfires carried an interesting presentation of the serial and squadron codes on the tail fin. The aircraft serial number **MK734** was painted in black just above the fin flash, and the codes **AE-C** were painted in white just above the serial. MK734 may have carried an individual aircraft letter on the lower cowling aft of the spinner, but this cannot be verified.

One photo shows that MK734 carried invasion stripes only on the lower surface of the wings and fuselage (unfortunately we couldn't find this photo in 2024...). Since they received these aircraft in July 1944, it is unlikely that they were ever painted with full wrap-around stripes during their short time with 402 Sqn.

What is interesting is that the upper surface invasion markings were ordered removed in September 1944. 402 had, by that point, already given up the Mk IXs, so it is not clear when this early removal of the stripes had taken place.

RCAF WWII Identity Markings

Members' Bonus
Decals



Info compiled by Steve Sauvé
C#0323, Ottawa ON
RT Editor



RT 44-2 in 2022 contained an article written up by, well..., me, regarding the history of the RCAF's wartime identifier markings that were applied to overseas and our other operational aircraft. These markings took several forms and I'll summarize the stories in this article.

What prompted us to include these decals on a free sheet (again) is pretty simple. Several mainstream model decal producers provide a red maple leaf on a white disk for their Canadian Spitfire schemes. Unfortunately some of the leaves have been a bit 'off', or in some cases, even provided in green. In some cases, the leaf shape has been quite wrong, for example using Canada's current flag maple leaf (first used in 1965) on a WWII aircraft. It just didn't happen.

These markings can help improve a wide range of aircraft. The red-and-white version has been noted on Spitfires, the blue-blue-red on a wider variety of aircraft, both overseas and at home in Canada. The blue background version was almost universally applied as a waterslide decal.



This absolutely did not exist during WWII. The leaf was not seen before Canada's new flag appeared in 1965...



... and there is no convincing evidence that this ever existed on an Canadian Spitfire. Prove me wrong...

The Classic Red-and-White Marking

First, a confession... I screwed up on designing part of these markings on the decal sheet, folks. I had read that these red leaf markings were painted onto a 9" white disc, and this was quoting the airman who created the original marking, Sqn Ldr R.E. 'Bob' Morrow:

"On May 16, 1942, we moved to Kenley, Surrey, and set about serious business. On May 31, [1942], we moved to Redhill [where] I introduced the logo of a red Maple Leaf in a white nine-inch circle. ... RCAF headquarters liked the idea."

That seemed simple enough to me, and I went ahead with that plan for the decal artwork and didn't think about it much after that. That is, until I was laying out this article and the one for 402 Sqn Spitfire IX, which uses the same red-on-white marking. I realized that the marking was too big to fit properly on a Spitfire kit skin panel under the windscreen.

After fiddling with it and comparing it to good drawings, kits and period photos I came to realize that the white disc on the Spitfires is closer to eight, or maybe even seven inches in diameter.

So? What to do about it? Ignore it if you want to. Fortunately the red maple leaves are just about the right size to fit on a smaller white disc. The ideas I've had for creating a better-sized white disc are:

1. use a small punch set to punch out the current decal marking at a smaller size; or
2. trim out the red leaf from the decal and then:
 - ♦ find a white disc decal of the right size; or
 - ♦ punch out a stencil in some masking tape; or
 - ♦ drill a hole in thin plastic card and use that as a mask to spray the white disc; or
3. use the vinyl masks supplied with our decal sheet.

Hopefully the above provides you with a workable solution for your own modelling style. Again, my apologies for messing up this detail on the decal sheet.



Mobile Command Badges and Canada Flags



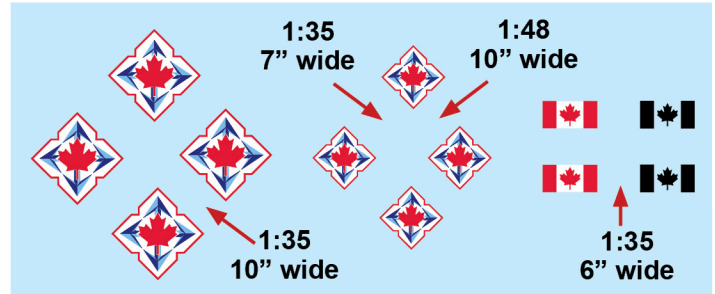
Info compiled by Steve Sauvé
C#0323, Ottawa ON
RT Editor



In 2018 we included these markings as part of a free decal sheet for members, so we're hoping that a re-release of them won't offend any modern Canadian modellers.

We always have trouble getting researched ideas for armour decal subjects so we decided to provide you with these to help with your CAF modelling. The Force Mobile Command (FMC, the bilingual name for the CAF's land forces) badge was in general use on Canada-based army field vehicles from the mid-1960's well up into the 1970's.

There were two sizes of vinyl decals produced for vehicles; 7" wide and 10" wide. When used, they were applied to the right hand side of the vehicle; placed so as to be visible directly from the front and rear. In the example photos the 10" decals are used on all the vehicles like the M37 3/4 ton and M135 2 1/2 ton trucks. The 7" decal was used on smaller vehicles like the M38 Jeep.



The decals we have provided can be used in two scales:

- ◆ the larger ones are 10" wide in 1:35 scale
- ◆ the smaller ones are 7" wide in 1:35 scale
- ◆ the smaller ones can also be used as 10" wide markings in 1:48 scale

We have included a two pairs of Canada flags; one set in full-colour and the other in black. These are typically used on the front and rear ends of vehicles, usually located towards the right side.

We have included a short selection of photos and vehicles and aircraft sporting the FMC badge decal.



▲ An M577A1 Command Post in 1967. The matt olive drab finish is typical of vehicles in this period. (DND Canada photo PCN67-1072)



▲ An M37 3/4 ton truck in Alberta in 1968. Mounting the FMC decal on sheet metal and then attaching it to the grille was a typical solution to display the marking and better protect it compared to applying it to the bumper. (DND Canada photo IE68-50a)



Harvard Mk. IIB 3250 No. 3 Training Command

of the Conversion Training Squadron,
... or the Conversion Training School,
... or No. 1 (Refresher) Squadron, ...
but for sure it was at RCAF Station
Rockcliffe, Ontario, 1942

Information compiled by
Jim Bates C#6008, Tacoma WA,
Steve Sauvé C#0323, Ottawa ON



What we know about this airplane (and what we don't know for sure)

Researching this basic colour scheme was straightforward. It's pretty much just in the 'bog-standard' British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP) colours of 'Trainer Yellow' with a black anti-glare panel. As will be seen below, there are a lot of great photos showing how it and its contemporary stablemates looked at this period.

The interesting bits on our decal scheme are the black 'V-xx' fuselage codes, the red wingtips, and of course these great-looking sashes on the fuselage and upper wings. That too has been fairly straightforward, again thanks to the range of period reference photos we were able to dig up.

Unit Name Information notes, from a discussion with Chris Charland, North Bay, Ontario:

The **Conversion Training Squadron** was formed at RCAF Station Picton, Ontario on 29 November 1940 to provide additional experience to partially-qualified pilots. The name of the unit was to have been the **Additional Training Flight**. The unit was also referred to as the **Refresher Training Flight** up to the end of February 1941 and in fact the unit's Daily Diary was titled by that name until 1 March 1941.

The **Conversion Training Squadron** was also known as the **Conversion Training School** after the move to RCAF Station Rockcliffe on 28 November 1941. The C.T.S. also was referred to as the **Refresher Flight**.

The Squadron was redesignated as **No. 1 (Refresher) Squadron** on 15 March 1943. This unit was disbanded on 29 October 1943 at Rockcliffe. They were then reformed on 1 April 1945 as **No. 1 Composite Squadron** from the former **No. 1 Composite Detachment**. The unit was finally disbanded on 7 July 1945.

source: caspir.warplane.com/asrc/acn/200000852/#3250

Harvard 3250

serial number: 3250 construction number: 07-117
[constructor] Noorduyn [Type] Mk. IIB

RCAF Aircraft Record Card

1941-12-16 Taken on Strength

1942-3-31 Accident: Conversion Training Squadron Location: [Rockcliffe] Aerodrome

1943-4-29 Accident: 1 REFRESHER Squadron Location: [Rockcliffe] Aerodrome

1943-12-05 Accident: 13 Service Flying Training School Location: Marieville Quebec

1946-12-04 Struck off Strength Struck off, [handed over] to War Assets for disposal.

The biggest problem was figuring out which unit these 'sashed' airplanes served with. After some deep digging and cross-referencing, we are now pretty confident that we've been able to narrow it down to one unit in Ontario, but this one unit went through several names and locations during its lifetime (see sidebar).

Some references show Harvard 3250 serving with "CTS", which is variously cited as being the **Conversion Training Squadron** or the **Conversion Training School** and even the **Central Training School** in some references. The latter appears to be incorrect - the Central Training School did exist as a mechanics' training unit at RCAF Station Picton during the BCATP period. While it is quite possible that they had some 'ground-runner' aircraft to help trainees learn how to deal with powered-up and taxiing aircraft, but it doesn't appear to have been a flying training unit. We hope that this has been clarified in the sidebar discussion.

Canadian Harvard Mk. II variants

As detailed in Dave Fletcher and Doug MacPhail's book, HARVARD! (see more at the end of this article), the Harvard Mk. II was essentially an American-built and modified AT-6A. It had a lengthened exhaust pipe, a fixed-position rear canopy section that was longer than the AT-6's, a revised instrument panel, a British-style (i.e., a

HURRICANE MK. I V6671

Members' Bonus
Decals



Our decal subject aircraft. This is the only known photo evidence of this short-lived marking experiment. The squadron's diary records this tailband as being "orange", but was it really just yellow? DND Canada photo RE68-6298 (via the Carl Vincent collection)

Info compiled by Jim Bates
C#6008, Tacoma WA
Social Media Coordinator



FOREST VS. TREES

It's interesting how you can look at something over and over again and not notice important details. (*It begs the question; do I really have that detailed eye to be a modeller?*) I noticed this phenomenon late last year when Wingleader Books started teasing "the rarest Battle of Britain photo ever." I was intrigued; what have they found? Turns out the photo was a shot of a Hurricane of 1 (F) Squadron (Sqdn) RCAF. However, it wasn't something new. It was a photo I first saw in Carl Vincent's article, "1 to 401", in the Nov/Dec 1982 issue of High Flight magazines published by Canada Wings Inc. Nothing special really, just two men sitting on the tail of Hurricane Mk. I V6671/YO-K after the Battle of Britain.

BUT HOLD ON A SECOND...

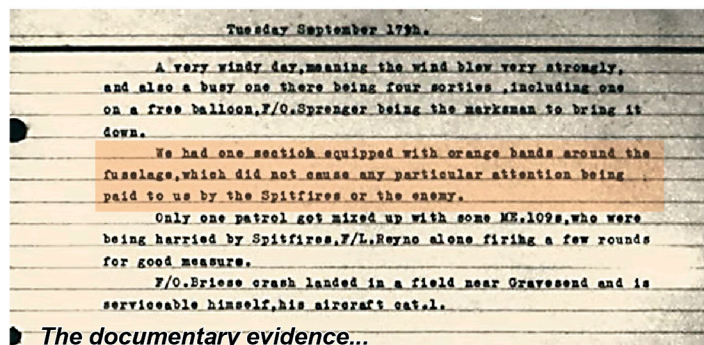
During the Battle of Britain, the RAF (and RCAF) Hurricanes carried very straightforward markings. They were painted in the Temperate Land Scheme of Dark Earth and Dark Green over Sky undersides. They carried six roundels in the usual positions, and the fin flash typically covered the whole non-moving surface of the fin. After the Battle, in November 1940, the Sky band was

added around the rear fuselage and the standardized 27" x 27" rectangular fin flash was now more-usually applied.

So why does this Battle of Britain aircraft have a Sky band and fin flash that covers the whole vertical fin? And why is the Sky band wider than the expected 18"? Why does it not blend in with the Sky undersurfaces? And why does the band look funny in the shadows of the lower fuselage?

THE REST OF THE STORY

Nothing is mentioned in the "official" squadron diary regarding the band, but 1 Sqdn kept both the 'official' diary and a second, more informal diary. This second diary was



32503250

IPMS
Canada
3250
3250

V - 27 V - 27



V6671 V6671
YOK YOK

WN344
WN344



AEC AEC
MK734



AEC
AEC

WN344



MK734 MK734
V6671 V6671

WN344

3250 3250

YOK
YOK

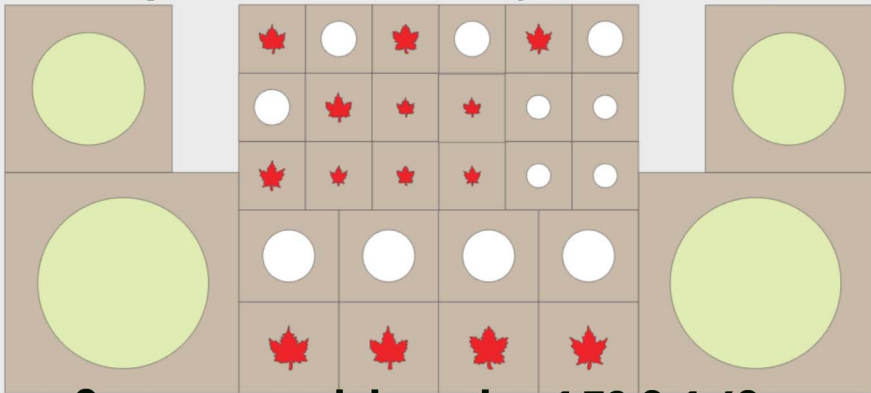
3250



3250
V - 27
V - 27



RCAF operational markings, 1:72, 1:48, 1:32



Gannet roundel masks, 1:72 & 1:48