



DE HAVILLAND MOSQUITO



The Mosquito was a British twin-engine, two-seater fighter and bomber aircraft that served during the Second World War. The plane was unusual because its frame was constructed mostly of wood. It was nicknamed the 'Wooden Wonder', or 'Mossie'. It saw service with the Royal Air Force as well as other air forces around the world.

The Mosquito was 12.5 metres long and had a wingspan of 16.5 metres. It weighed 7,200 kilograms and was armed with four Browning machine guns and four Hispano cannons, all firing from the nose. It had a range of 1,400 miles and a ceiling of 8,500 metres. When the Mosquito entered service in 1941, it was faster than the Spitfire used at the time with a top speed of 400 miles per hour.

The Mosquito's famous raids were code-named Operation Jericho. This involved the bombing of a prison in Amiens, France, which held captured British and French soldiers. The destruction of the walls allowed 225 prisoners to escape.

About 8,000 of this beautiful aircraft, designed by Sir Geoffrey de Havilland, were built.



HAWKER HURRICANE



The Hawker Hurricane was a British single-seat fighter aircraft that was designed and built by Hawker Aircraft Ltd for the Royal Air Force, entering service in 1937. Along with the Supermarine Spitfire, the aircraft became renowned during the Battle of Britain. At the end of June 1940, the majority of the RAF's 36 fighter squadrons were equipped with Hurricanes. There were 14,500 built in total.

During the Battle of Britain, from July to October 1940, the Hurricane wasn't as famous as the Spitfire but it shot down many more planes. Its main job was to intercept and shoot down German bombers. It was slower than both the Spitfire and the Messerschmitt Bf 109, but it could out-turn both of them. In spite of its slower speed, the Hurricane was still capable of destroying the German fighter, especially at lower altitudes.

The Hurricane was 10 metres long with a wingspan of 12 metres. It weighed 2,600 kilograms and was powered by a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine which enabled it to fly at speeds up to 340 miles per hour. It had a ceiling of 10,000 metres and a range of 600 miles. The Hurricane was armed with four machine guns in its wings.



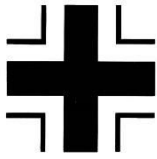
AVRO LANCASTER



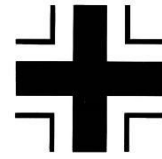
The Lancaster was a British four-engine bomber that entered service during World War Two in 1942. It was designed by Roy Chadwick.

The Lancaster was 21 metres long and had a wingspan of 31 metres. It weighed 16,500 kilograms and was also armed with three Browning machine guns which were fired by gunners from the nose the mid-section and the tail of the plane. It had a crew of seven; the pilot, flight engineer, navigator, bomb aimer/nose gunner, wireless operator, mid-section and rear gunners. It had a range of 1,600 miles, a ceiling of 7,500 metres and a top speed of 280 miles per hour.

The Lancaster was best known for its incredibly dangerous missions flying at night to bomb targets in Germany. On these raids it would carry up to 5,500 kilograms of bombs. It was also used as a 'Dambuster' which bombed dams so that an area of land was flooded. For this, it used the famous 'bouncing bomb' which bounced on the surface of a lake before hitting the dam.



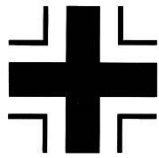
HEINKEL HE 111



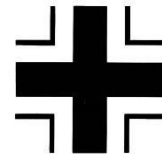
The Heinkel He 111 was a German aircraft designed by Siegfried and Walter Günter, entering service in 1936. It is perhaps the best-recognised German bomber of WWII due to the distinctive, bullet-shaped 'greenhouse' nose. It was the most numerous bomber in the Luftwaffe with 6,500 being made.

It was considered by the Luftwaffe as a very reliable plane until the Battle of Britain, when its weak defensive weapons, low speed, and poor manoeuvrability were exposed. Nevertheless, it proved capable of sustaining heavy damage yet still able to make it back home to base. It had a crew of five; a pilot, navigator/bomb aimer, a nose gunner, front gunner, top gunner/radio operator and side gunner.

It was 16 metres long, with a wingspan of 22 metres. It weighed 8,600 kilograms and could carry 2,000 kilograms of bombs. It was powered by two Daimler-Benz engines which enabled it to fly up to 270 miles per hour, with a range of 1,400 miles and a ceiling of 6,500 metres. As well as bombs it was armed with seven machine guns.



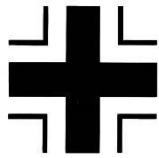
MESSERSCHMITT BF 109



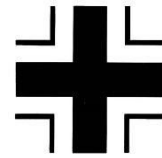
The Messerschmitt Bf 109, often called Me 109 by Allied pilots, was a German World War II fighter aircraft designed by Willy Messerschmitt and Robert Lusser which entered service in 1937. It was one of the first truly modern fighters of the era, being made completely of metal and having a retractable landing gear. Nearly 34,000 were built in total.

During the Battle of Britain it served as a bomber escort, protecting the Heinkel He 111 on bombing raids over Britain. The Bf 109 was the most numerous fighter aircraft in history, with a total of 33,900 built. More planes were shot down by the Bf 109 than any other aircraft during World War II.

It was 9 metres long with a wingspan of 10 metres. It weighed 2,200 kilogrammes and was powered by a Daimler-Benz engine, which enabled it to fly at up to 398 mph. It had a range of 528 miles and a ceiling of 12,000 metres. It was armed with 4 machine guns on its wings and one in its nose.



JUNKERS JU 87 'STUKA'



The Junkers Ju 87, or Stuka from the German word meaning dive bomber, was a two-man German dive bomber and ground-attack aircraft. Designed by Hermann Pohlmann, the Stuka entered service in 1936 as part of the Luftwaffe's Condor Legion during the Spanish Civil War. An estimated 6,500 Stukas were built between 1936 and August 1944.

The aircraft was easily recognisable by its wailing siren that sounded as it dived, terrifying people on the ground. It was used during the Battle of Britain to attack ships and radar stations. Although it was sturdy and very effective against ground targets, the Stuka was vulnerable to attack from RAF fighters. Its weaknesses became apparent during the Battle of Britain because it was slow and had few of its own guns for defence and eventually it required fighter escorts whilst on bombing missions.

It was 11 metres long and with a wingspan of 13 metres. It weighed 3,200 kg and was powered by a Junkers Jumo engine. It had a maximum speed of only 242 miles per hour. It had a range of 300 miles and a ceiling of 8,200 metres. It was armed with three machine guns and three bombs.