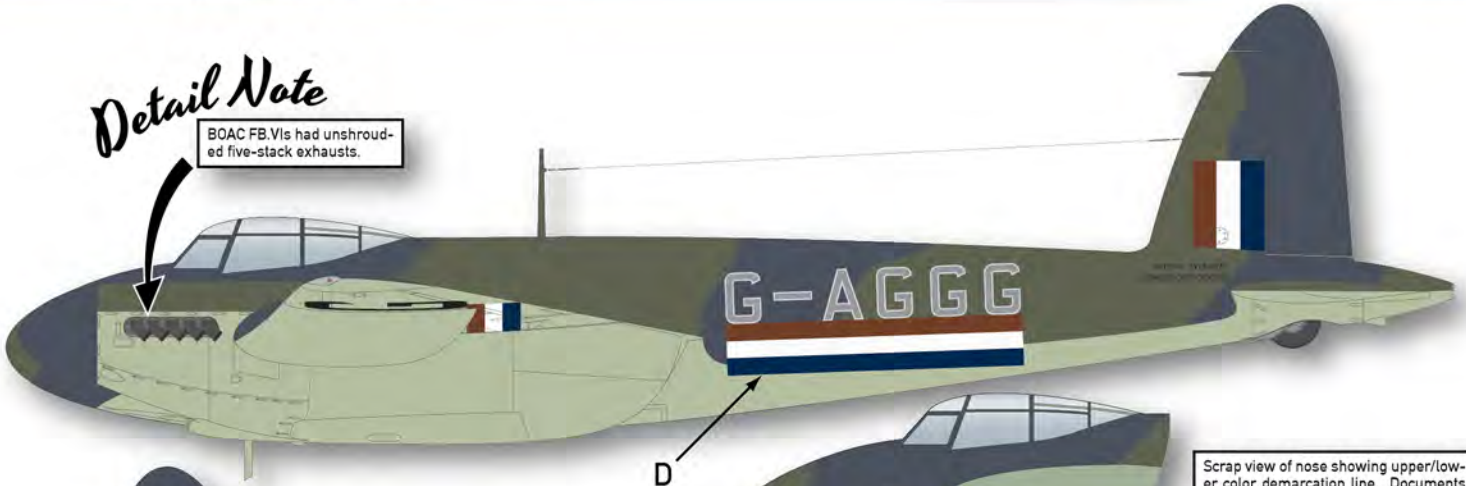


Detail Note

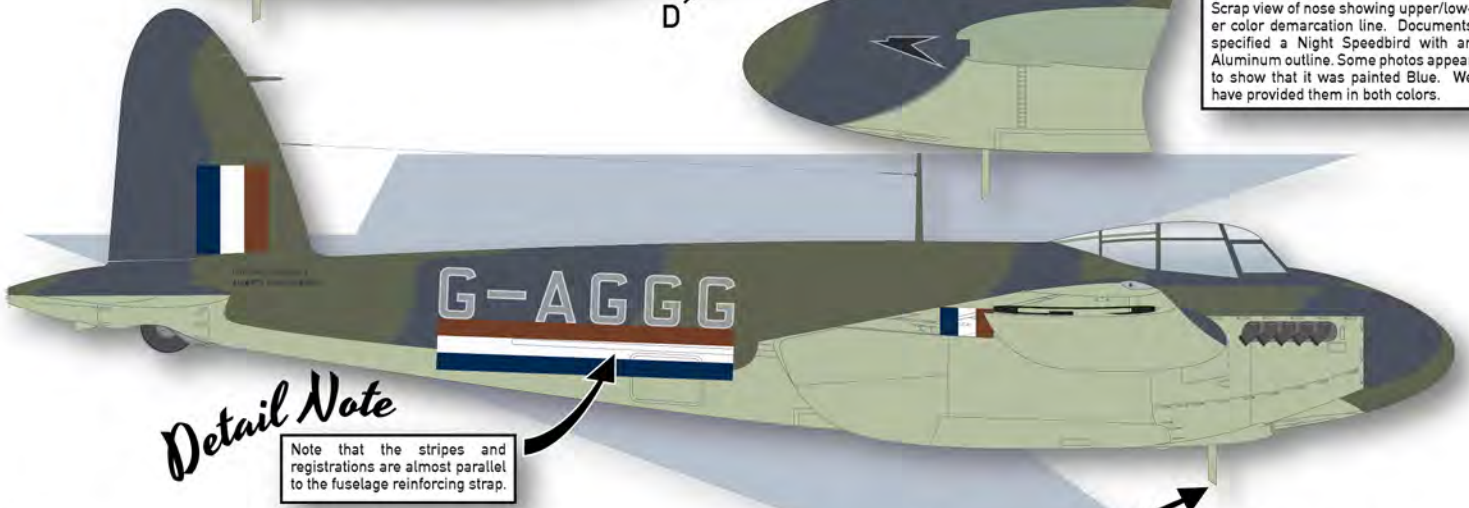
BOAC FB.VIs had unshrouded five-stack exhausts.



Scrap view of nose showing upper/lower color demarcation line. Documents specified a Night Speedbird with an Aluminum outline. Some photos appear to show that it was painted Blue. We have provided them in both colors.

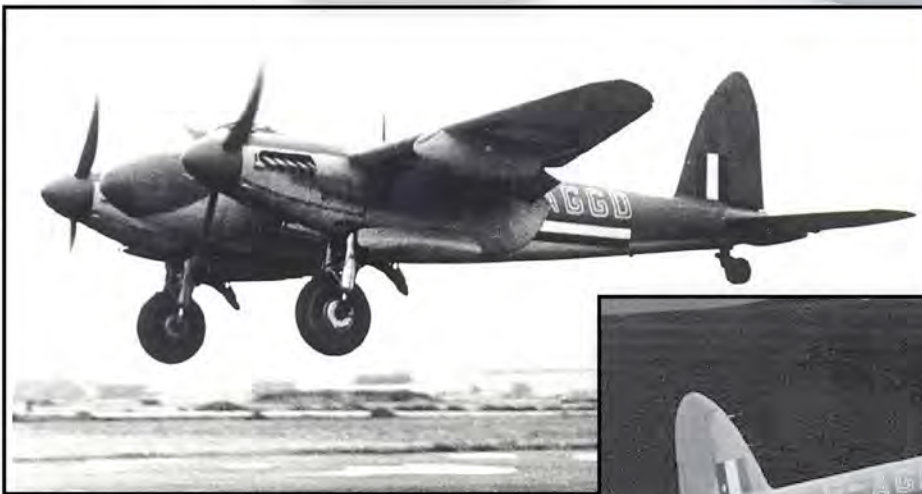
Detail Note

Note that the stripes and registrations are almost parallel to the fuselage reinforcing strap.



Detail Note

BOAC FB.VIs carried the trailing wire antenna mast fitted. Use Tamiya parts U22 and T14.

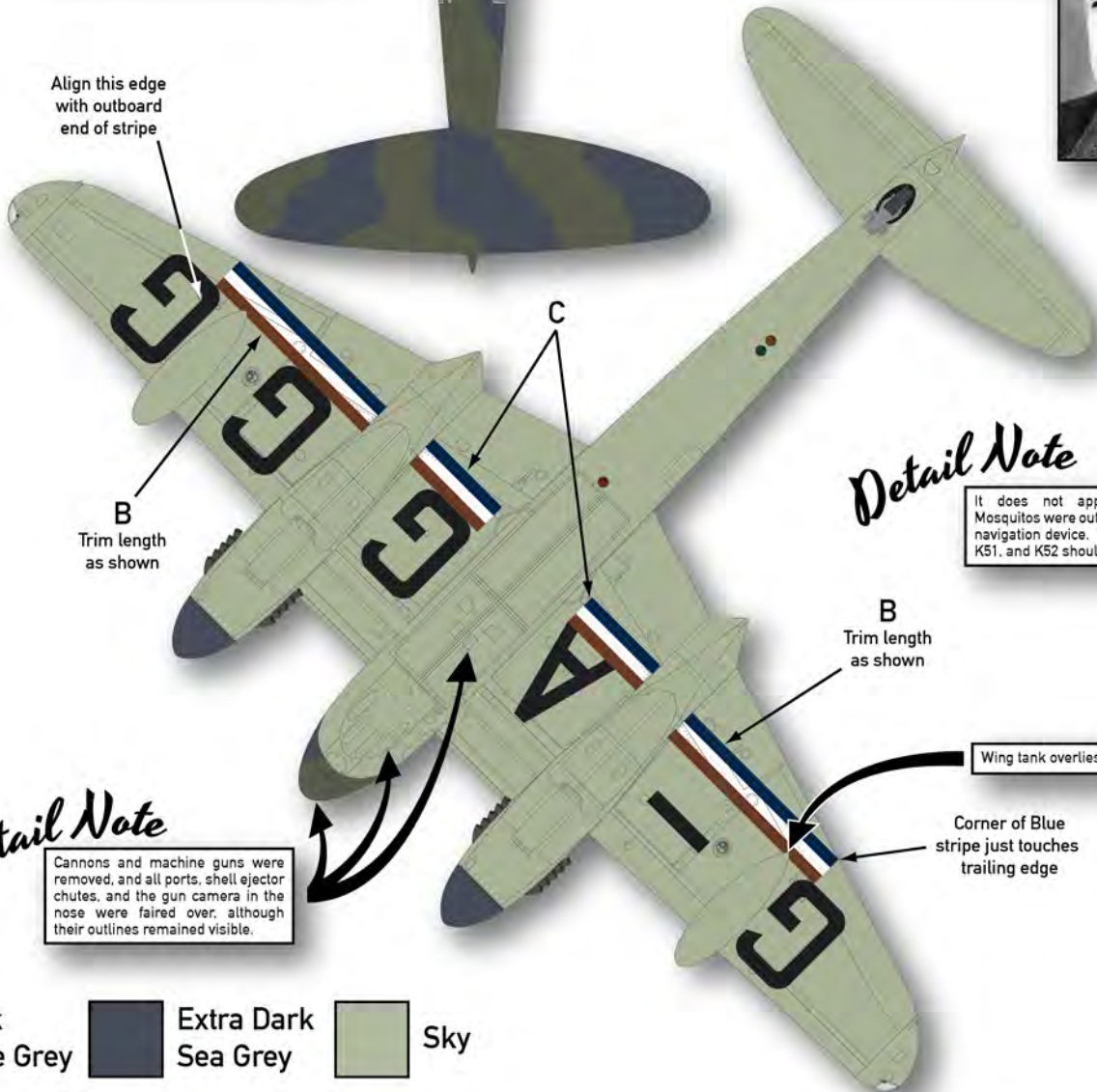
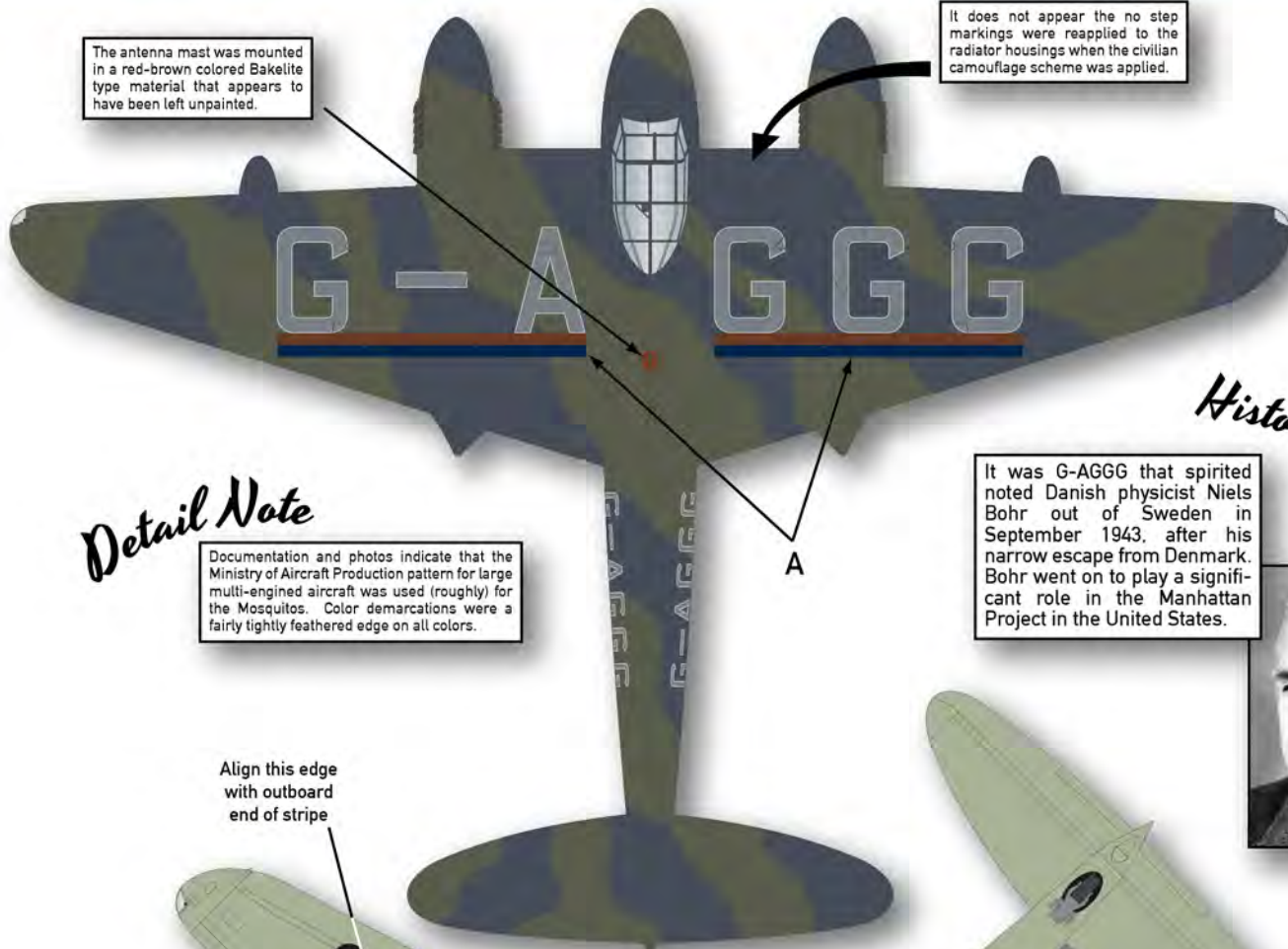


G-AGGD and -AGGE demonstrating the initial BOAC scheme with a Sky belly. Note the solid hub wheels, 50 gallon wing tanks (standard fit on all BOAC FB.VIs), and lack of any guns or gun ports. These were plated (or doped?) over. All armament and armor plate, except that behind the pilot's seat, were removed. Unshrouded exhausts were standard.



Kjærtelig takk!

Special thanks to Mr. Nils Mathisrud for his kind generosity and assistance on this project. His research made it possible!



Detail Note

All BOAC Mosquitos had narrow chord propeller blades throughout their lives.

Detail Note

See notes on page 8 regarding the BOAC titles at this location.



The tail wheel leg and wheel hub appear to have been painted Night. Compare to the color of the main gear legs in the photo below.

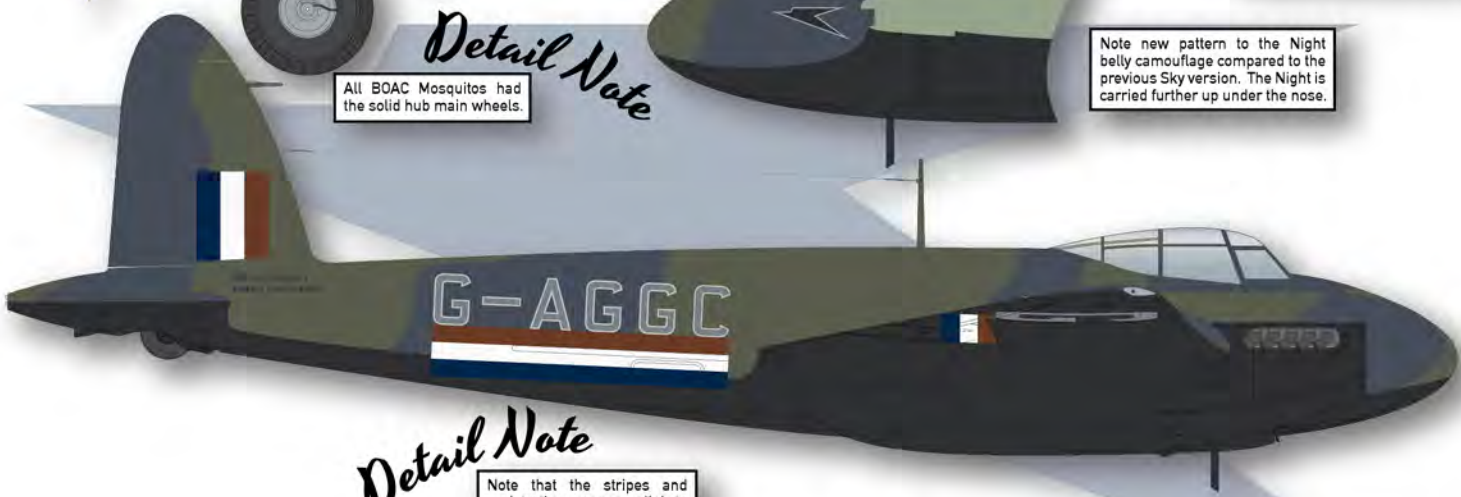
Detail Note

All BOAC Mosquitos had the solid hub main wheels.

Note new pattern to the Night belly camouflage compared to the previous Sky version. The Night is carried further up under the nose.

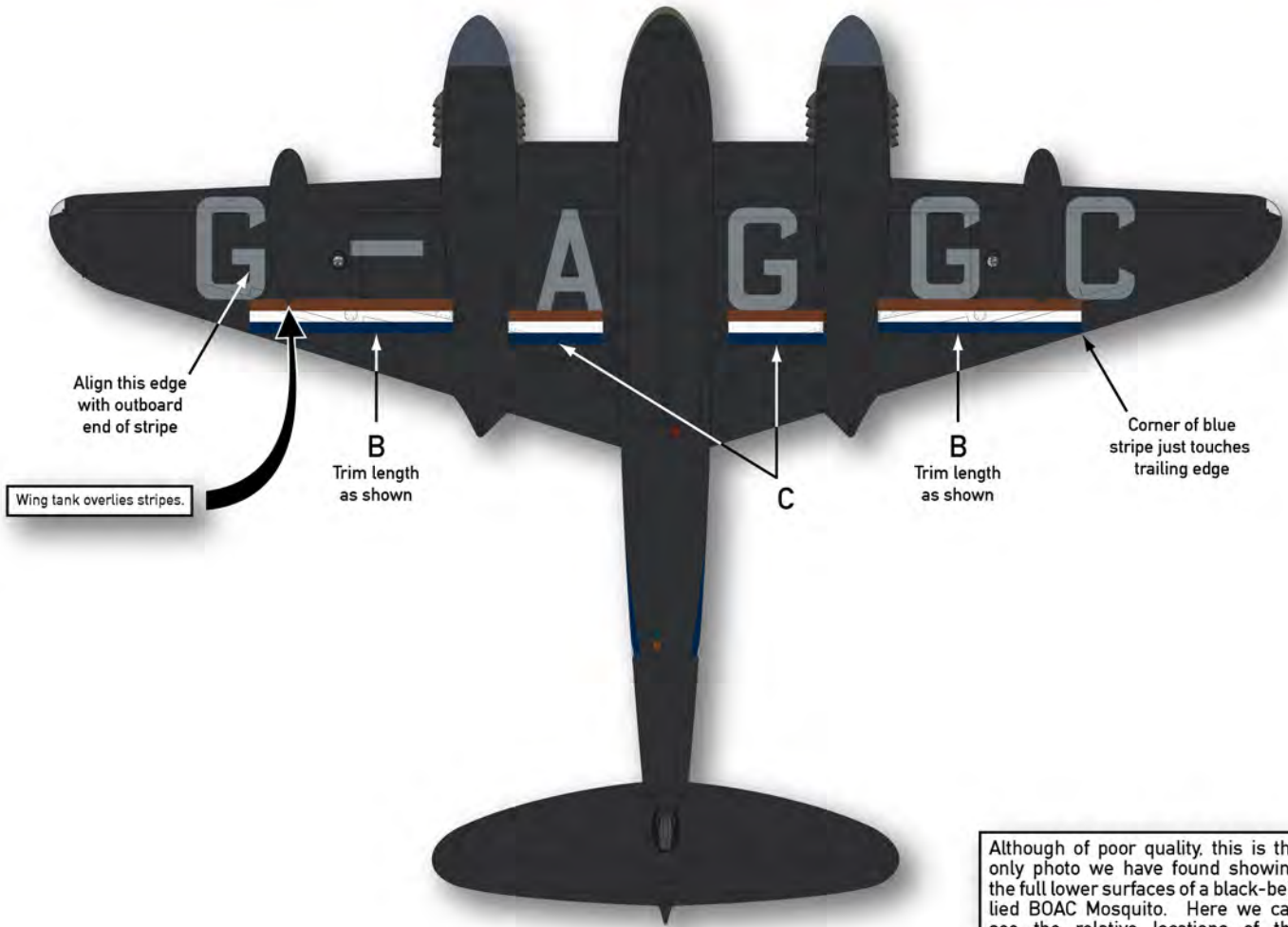
Detail Note

Note that the stripes and registrations are parallel to the fuselage reinforcing strap.



G-AGGC on the ramp during an intermediate stopover at Gothenburg Torslanda airport sometime after July 1943. Note the solid hub wheels and the 50 gallon wing tanks. Unshrouded five-stack exhausts were standard on the FB.VIs, as were the narrow chord props. The tail wheel hub and leg appear to be painted Night. Interestingly, the yellow prop tips are not visible, possibly due to the use of orthochromatic film. They are clearly visible in other FB.VI photos.

	Dark Slate Grey		Extra Dark Sea Grey		Night
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Although of poor quality, this is the only photo we have found showing the full lower surfaces of a black-bellied BOAC Mosquito. Here we can see the relative locations of the registrations and stripes. It appears to be a still from a motion picture.



BOAC first class passenger accommodation circa 1943. This chap is outfitted with a fully lined flying suit, helmet, oxygen mask, and gloves. Not the most comfortable way to get to Sweden at the time, but certainly the fastest! Not all that different from some airlines today, come to think of it.



British Overseas Airways Corporation Mosquito History

British Overseas Airways Corporation was formed in November 1939 by the merger of British Airways, Ltd. and Imperial Airways, Ltd. The two flew as separate entities until April 1940, when BOAC was formed. With the outbreak of war, almost all civilian air traffic in Europe was suspended. The British embassy in neutral Sweden remained open (as it would throughout the war), and the British government maintained a diplomatic air link using aircraft of the state-owned BOAC.

By 1942 it was clear that in order to avoid German interceptors, the Stockholm run required a faster transport than the Lodestars, Hudsons, and Whitneys then in use. Although such air service was technically allowed under the rules of war, "diplomatic" flights across hundreds of miles of hostile territory were still a dicey proposition. The aircraft were supposed to be conspicuously "civilian", and unarmed, and although BOAC complied with these rules, its aircraft were still the subject of the attentions of the Luftwaffe. BOAC's link with Sweden allowed the delivery of mail, diplomatic pouches, newspapers and magazines (a counter to German propaganda about how England was losing the war), and high priority passengers, not a few of whom were MI6 and OSS agents.

BOAC requested Mosquitos to fill this role, and on 5 August 1942 a trial run was made from the BOAC base at RAF Leuchars, Scotland to Stockholm using a borrowed RAF Mosquito B.Mk.IV (DK292) of No. 105 Squadron. All of her military markings were removed, and her crew flew without military rank insignias. After the success of that first mission, Mosquito PR.IV DZ411 was delivered to BOAC on 15 December of 1942. All of her military equipment except the pilot's armor plate was removed, and she was fitted with unshrouded six-stack exhausts to improve performance. As a result of these modifications DZ411 is believed to have been the fastest Mosquito flying at the time. She was given the registration G-AGFV, along with standard BOAC red/white/blue striping and Dark Green, Dark Earth, and Aluminum camouflage paint.

The first Stockholm flight by G-AGFV was made on 4 February 1943. The speed of the Mosquito convinced BOAC that the flights could be safely accomplished in daylight, previous flights having been made under the cover of night. After AGFV's first mission, BOAC requested a change from Aluminum to the then-current RAF Sky lower surface color, as it was felt this would be less conspicuous when seen from the ground. This was duly approved, and subsequent missions were flown with a Sky belly.

Operations continued into the spring of 1943 with G-AGFV. On the night of 22/23 April 1943, she was attacked by Fw190s and forced down in Sweden with serious damage. The aircraft was repaired on site, finally returning to the UK on 10 December 1943.

The success of operations with G-AGFV (her near-shutdown notwithstanding) led BOAC to request six new Mosquito FB.Mk.VIs from RAF stocks. These arrived during April and May of 1943, and were delivered to the BOAC maintenance base at RAF Bramcote, where de-militarization and repainting were accomplished. No passengers were carried by the PR.Mk.IV, but provisions (be they rudimentary) for them were to be fitted to the FB.Mk.VIs.

With no spare room in the already cramped Mosquito cockpit, a single passenger was accommodated in the forward end of the bomb bay. It was lined with felt, and provided with temperature controls (undoubtedly of questionable utility), a reading lamp, an oxygen connection, and an intercom lead. A flask of coffee and some sandwiches comprised the in-flight service for the passenger.

Given that the majority of the route from Leuchars to Stockholm was over water, BOAC had requested and received permission to switch from the temperate land scheme colors to a scheme more appropriate for operations over the North Sea. The standard Ministry of Aircraft Production temperate sea camouflage scheme at the time used Dark Slate Grey and Extra Dark Sea Grey, and this scheme was approved for BOAC's new FB.Mk.VIs. As with the Mk.IV, the Mk.VIs were painted using a modified MAP large multi-engine aircraft camouflage pattern, with the lower surfaces in the previously approved Sky.

As a result of the Fw190 incident, BOAC resumed night operations in mid-1943. With this operational change, in July 1943 BOAC requested a change in its Mosquito camouflage. The lower surfaces were now to be finished in Night, with Medium Sea Grey codes, and retaining the red/white/blue stripes - both of which were contrary to what the official regulations stipulated! Mosquito G-AGGF had been lost on ops on 17 August 1943, and thus never received a Night belly.

After her return to the UK following the Fw190 incident, G-AGFV was repainted into the temperate sea scheme, which had been approved for Mk.VIs during her sojourn in Sweden. The Sky belly on the FB.VIs was changed to Night while she was away, thus she never carried the temperate sea scheme with a Sky belly.

G-AGFV suffered another incident at Stockholm Bromma airport on 4 July 1944 when her undercarriage collapsed. Fortunately the aircraft was not a writeoff, and she was given temporary repairs, returning to Leuchars on 23 October 1944.

After American 8th Air Force bombing missions in August 1943 destroyed much of Germany's ball bearing manufacturing capacity at Schweinfurt, Britain negotiated with Sweden to purchase its entire production, thus robbing Germany of an alternate source for these critical items. BOAC Mosquitos were then fitted with special baskets in the bomb bays and began to carry cargos of ball bearings on the return flights from Stockholm.

With the loss of G-AGGF in August, and G-AGGG in October 1943, BOAC requested three additional FB.VIs as attrition replacements. These were delivered in April 1944, and were registered G-AGKO, KP, and KR. Only one poor quality photo of any of these aircraft has come to light, and it is of insufficient quality to determine much about their markings and camouflage (markings for them are not included). In addition to the single PR.IV and nine FB.VIs, BOAC operated three Mosquito T.Mk.III trainers. These were not used on operations, and remained in the UK throughout the war. Photos of one of these T.Mk.IIIs exist, and it appears to be finished in Dark Green and Dark Earth, with yellow lower surfaces.

In all, BOAC's Mosquitos made 520 round trip flights to Sweden between February 1943 and May 1945. Much of their heroic saga will probably remain lost to history, but it undoubtedly played a significant part in bringing the European war to a successful conclusion. All of BOAC's surviving Mosquitos were returned to the RAF in 1945 and 1946.

Nils Mathisrud is currently (late 2015) working on a new book on BOAC Mosquito operations, to be entitled "The Stockholm Run," which will feature much more information on this fascinating piece of WWII history.

BOAC Mosquito Fleet Details

Mosquito PR.Mk.IV:

G-AGFV DZ411

Mosquito T.Mk.III

HJ898
HJ985
LR524

Mosquito FB.Mk.VI:

G-AGGC HJ680
G-AGGD HJ681 (lost January 1944)
G-AGGE HJ718
G-AGGF HJ720 (lost 17 August 1943)
G-AGGG HJ721 (lost 25 October 1943)
G-AGGH HJ723
G-AGKO HJ667
G-AGKR HJ792
G-AGKP LR296 (lost 18 August 1944)

British Overseas Airways Corporation Mosquito History



This map (with current borders) illustrates BOAC's main routes from Leuchars to Stockholm. The route across the North Sea and up the Skagerrak was the only one used by British crews, while the expatriate Norwegian Mosquito crews preferred the northerly routes over their familiar home territory. German air domination over Norway and Denmark made life "interesting" for the unarmed BOAC Mosquitos and their brave crews.

G-AGGF taxis out for a night takeoff. The Sky belly indicates this photo was taken in July or early August 1943. Her first trip was on 23 July, and she was lost in a crash on 17 August. The flash has washed out the contrast between the camouflage colors, and of the Aluminum outlined Medium Sea Grey registration letters.



Either G-AGGC, GD, or GG (the curved outboard corner of the last letter is just visible beyond the wing tank) on short final. Note the orientation of the code letters and stripes, and the slightly irregular demarcation between the upper and lower camouflage colors on the nose.

British Overseas Airways Corporation Mosquito History



BOAC Capt. Louis "Bill" Watkins and his navigator, Flt. Sgt. Harold Beaumont (left) have a last minute word with an unidentified passenger (at right). He, like all Mosquito passengers, would be accommodated in the bomb bay along with the other cargo. Note the pretty WAAF with her big smile behind him. Wilkins and Beaumont were both killed in the crash of G-AGGF at Glen Lee, Scotland on 17 August 1943.

Note the orientation of the black "A" between the nacelle and the fuselage, along with the red/white/blue stripes below it. Also note the BOAC Speedbird logo position with reference to the door. The logo was supposed to be in Night with an Aluminum border, but we believe that despite the direct sunlight (filtered through overcast), this one is in blue. We have provided both colors on the decal.

Also note the gun ports which appear to be covered with doped fabric, with the outline of the actual opening being faintly visible. The five-stack unshrouded exhaust is clearly visible, with very little exhaust staining in this case. Other aircraft exhibited quite extensive exhaust stains. Standard block tread tires and narrow chord prop blades are evident.



Black-bellied G-AGGG and G-AGGE (background) seen parked at Sätenäs, prior to her loss on 25 October 1943. Of poor quality, but interesting none the less, as it shows how the Night belly curves up under the nose. Compare to the photos of aircraft with a Sky belly.

British Overseas Airways Corporation Mosquito History



The following images are screen captures from a short piece of film portraying operations at Leuchars, probably sometime in 1944. Although not the best quality, they are none the less telling of some details of these enigmatic aircraft, so we felt they would be of benefit if included here.

Two images of G-AGGC under tow. We are not certain what's happening with the camouflage just forward of the horizontal stabilizer here, but clearly the "British Overseas Airways" wording has been removed for reasons unknown. Clear photos are hard to come by, and we do not know if the wording was removed from all aircraft at some point.



Although very difficult to tell with certainty, this appears to be G-AGGE.

Two BOAC officers conferring over the paperwork. Note the way the black belly comes up under the nose, and the location of the Speedbird logo on the cabin door.



British Overseas Airways Corporation Mosquito History



These four images show a white-covered passenger being led from the BOAC offices at Leuchars, taking his place in the cramped bomb bay for a quick trip to Stockholm. We believe this to be G-AGGE. Note the engine start while still in the hangar!

