

INDIVIDUAL HISTORY

HAWKER HURRICANE Mk.I P3175
MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER 79/A/1722-23

- 40 Built by Gloster Aircraft Company Ltd with constructor's number GO/89296 as part of their first production batch of Hurricanes to contract No.962371/38/C.23a for 500 aircraft, delivered from Nov 1939, serialled from P2535 to P3264 and including serial batch P3140-P3179.
- 29 Jun 40 Taken on charge by No. 10 Maintenance Unit at RAF Hullavington (Aircraft Storage Unit).
- 9 Aug 40 To No. 257 Squadron at RAF Northolt, coded DT-S. Colour Profile – Aircraft December 2010 pp.44-45.

FLIGHT DETAILS

- | | | | | | |
|----|--------|----------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 12 | Aug 40 | Northolt | 1020-1050 | Sgt Hulbert | Recce of Northolt Sector |
| | | | 1350-1420 | F/O Mitchell | To Tangmere |
| | | | 1600-1640 | “ | Convoy patrol and combat over Portsmouth area. |
| | | | 2000-2025 | “ | Return to Northolt |
| 13 | Aug 40 | Northolt | 0620-0735 | F/O Mitchell | Scramble-engaged enemy aircraft south of Tangmere. F/O Mitchell claimed a Ju88 probably destroyed. |
| | | | 1625-1755 | “ | Convoy patrol from Tangmere and interception |
| | | | 1905-1935 | “ | Return to Northolt. |
| 14 | Aug 40 | Northolt | 1155-1340 | F/O Mitchell | To RAF North Weald, Essex |
| | | | 1725-1750 | “ | Return to Northolt |
| 15 | Aug 40 | Northolt | 0630-0700 | F/O Mitchell | To North Weald |
| | | | 1000-1140 | “ | Convoy patrol and return to Northolt |
| | | | 1700-1720 | “ | Movement of Squadron to Debden |
| 16 | Aug 40 | Debden | (Squadron move) | | No flights. |
| 17 | Aug 40 | Debden | 1030-1130 | P/O Gerard Hamilton Maffett (Aged 24) | Sector recce |
| | | | 1430-1530 | “ | Sector Recce |

18	Aug 40	Debden	1210-1335 1700-1800	P/O Maffett “	Convoy patrol Scramble and combat-Maffett claimed one Do 215 damaged.
----	--------	--------	------------------------	------------------	---

At 1750 No 257 squadron had intercepted a mixed formation of 50 Heinkel and Dornier bombers over the Thames Estuary.

19	Aug 40	Debden	1000-1030 1050-1110 1245-1310	P/O Maffett “ “	To Martlesham Heath From Martlesham Heath To Martlesham Heath- Squadron move.
		Martlesham	1500-1605 1915-1955	“ “	Convoy Patrol Patrol, scramble

20	Aug 40	M-sham	0920-1030 1500-1550 1825-1915	P/O Maffett “ “	Scramble Scramble Scramble
----	--------	--------	-------------------------------------	-----------------------	----------------------------------

21	Aug 40	M-sham	0920-1040 1430-1530	“ “	Scramble Scramble
----	--------	--------	------------------------	--------	----------------------

22	Aug 40	M-sham	1010-1040	Sgt Robinson	To Debden. Exchange of machines, Sgt Robinson returning with P3620
----	--------	--------	-----------	--------------	---

23-24	Aug 40	Debden			No flights-possibly under maintenance.
-------	--------	--------	--	--	--

25	Aug 40	Debden	1400-1420	P/O Gundry	Exchange of machines. P3175 returned to Martlesham
----	--------	--------	-----------	------------	---

26	Aug 40	M-sham	0900-1030 1300-1445 1955-2015	P/O Maffett “ “	Convoy patrol Convoy patrol Scramble
----	--------	--------	-------------------------------------	-----------------------	--

27	Aug 40	M-sham	0810-0940 1115-1205	P/O Maffett “	Convoy patrol Convoy patrol
----	--------	--------	------------------------	------------------	--------------------------------

28	Aug 40	M-sham	0910-0955 1330-1410 1540-1550 1600-1610	P/O Maffett “ “ “	Scramble Scramble R/T test R/T test
----	--------	--------	--	----------------------------	--

29	Aug 40	M-sham	0630-0730 1017-1136 1450-1540 1810-1905	P/O Maffett “ “ “	Convoy Patrol Convoy Patrol Convoy Patrol Scramble
----	--------	--------	--	----------------------------	---

30	Aug 40	M-sham	0930-1040 1110-1235 1615-1735	P/O Maffett “ “	Convoy patrol Convoy patrol Scramble
----	--------	--------	-------------------------------------	-----------------------	--

Plus two possible evening flights to Debden although the records are unclear

31 Aug 40 A fair but hazy Saturday. Took off on 9 aircraft scramble from Martlesham Heath at 08.25 to patrol own airfield at 10,000 feet; Pilot P/O Maffett. Following new instructions to patrol Debden at 15000 feet the Squadron then attacked a formation of about 50 Me110's at 16000 feet over the Clacton area; these were escorting Do17 bombers heading to attack Debden and Duxford airfields. P3175 was shot down (witnesses on the ground saw its spiralling descent) and crashed at 0850. P/O Maffett baled out at low level (around 400ft) when the aircraft turned over but was killed when his parachute failed to deploy.

Pilot Officer Maffett was buried on Wednesday 4 September at Bray in Berkshire. Uniquely among those of the Battle of Britain dead, at his mother's request, his grave was marked post-war by the original Imperial War Graves Commission wooden cross, which was meant to be temporary. It remains in situ today. Photo – Aircraft December 2010 p.46.

Following the crash most of the guns and ammunition was recovered from the wreck, (including 3 boxes of ammunition by a member of the local Home Guard) though over 100 rounds of linked .303 ammunition were recovered in the 1973 recovery operation. Other parts were removed during the war by soldiers from a local camp.

21 Sep 40 Struck off charge.

1960s Four foot length of remaining stub of starboard wing main front spar visible at crash site on the marshy coastal inlet of Hamford Water just off Tamarisk Wall, Walton-on-the-Naze, near to Harwich; by 1971 coastal erosion had revealed the port rear spar also.

Dec 72 Trial excavations by local enthusiast Lieutenant Geoff Rayner RN showed that the aircraft was lying nose down and upside down.

1/8 Apr 73 Major wing and fuselage components recovered with the assistance of the Colchester Air Training Corps and stored in Walton. The history and recovery of the aircraft is fully documented in Lieutenant Geoff Rayners' book, 'One Hurricane One Raid' (023750). See also Battle of Britain Then and Now Mk.III pp399-401 (019136).

May 73 Engine (Rolls Royce Merlin III No.22637) recovered and taken to Colchester for cleaning and stripping, being displayed at the Battle of Britain open day at RAF Coltishall that August and at a Clacton cinema in Dec 1973.

31 Jul 77 Airframe remains taken by RAF truck from Walton to RAF Museum, Hendon and stored and Vacu-Blasted on site.

Jun 78 Engine collected from No.308 Squadron ATC at Colchester. Engine and most other parts transferred to the new Battle of Britain Museum at Hendon.

28 Nov 78 Battle of Britain Museum officially opened by HM The Queen; The surviving parts of P3175 remain on display there. Photos - Battle of Britain Then and Now p.401; Air Pictorial Aug 2000 p.536.

TEXT; ANDREW SIMPSON

© ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM 2013