

INDIVIDUAL HISTORY

GLOSTER F.9/40 METEOR PROTOTYPE DG202/G/5758M
MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER 85/A/64

- 7 Feb 41 Order from Ministry of Aircraft Production for 12 prototype F.9/40 'Gloster-Whittle' twin-jet interceptors (unofficially known as the Rampage at this time)- serialled DG202-DG213 of which 8 eventually flew (DG202-209), each with different engines. Contract No. SB21179/C.23 (a).
- Under construction by Glosters at Brockworth by autumn 1941 using components from a variety of sub contractors including Boulton Paul and Parnell Aircraft Ltd. Given the 'G' suffix to its serial number to denote a high security aircraft, to be guarded at all times when on the ground. In Feb 1942 the name 'Meteor' had been allocated for the aircraft by the Ministry of Aircraft Production.
- 26 Jun 42 Wing stiffness tests completed.
- 27 Jun 42 Fuel flow tests completed. Painting and weighing also completed at this time.
- 29 Jun 42 First ground run at Gloster's Bentham factory with two 'ground only' Rover built W.2B/23 engines. These were derated to give 1,000lb of thrust each and were not passed for flight because of unreliable turbine blades.
- 2 Jul 42 By road to RAF Newmarket Heath, near Cambridge with outer wings removed, for ground running and taxiing trials.
- 10 Jul 42 Taxiing trials commenced on the 9,000 foot strip at Newmarket Heath with Flt Lt P.E.G. 'Gerry' Sayer at the controls. These included two attempted take-offs; at the second attempt the aircraft left the ground for a short hop about six feet off the ground after a 1100 yard run. Photo probably taken at this time - Air Pictorial Jul 94 p.299. Taxiing suspended due to undercarriage problems.
- 18 Jul 42 Taxiing trials resumed after Hawker Typhoon wheels and tyres fitted.
- Aug 42 Taxiing trials completed by the middle of the month and the 'ground only' engines removed to await the delayed delivery of new W.2/500 engines from Rovers, one of which blew up on the test bench. Aircraft stored in Ministry of Aircraft Production blister hangar at Newmarket. Sister aircraft DG206 was actually the first to fly, on 5th March 1943.
- 22 May 43 By road to RAF Barford St. John aerodrome near Banbury, Oxon. The aircraft then stood idle for two months undergoing various modifications and was also robbed of many items for use on other Meteor prototypes.

- 24 Jul 43 First flight (delayed by borrowing of parts) from Barford St. John .Duration six minutes. Pilot was Glosters' chief test pilot, Michael Daunt. The engines were Rolls-Royce built W.2B/23s, later developed as the Rolls-Royce Welland. These had been installed the previous month. Photos at this time with fluted canopy fairing and minus acorn fairing at the fin/tailplane junction - Gloster Aircraft (Putnam) p.246; The Gloster Meteor (002062) p.15-16; Camouflage and Markings No.11 p.242 and 246.Carried matt dark green and ocean grey camouflage on the upper surfaces with yellow undersides and yellow 'prototype' marking aft of the fuselage roundel plus sky painted rear fuselage fighter band. Profile - Meteor (016776) p.138. Colour profiles - Meteor (016946) p.93; Warpaint Series 22 – Gloster Meteor (Butler) p.3. Line drawing - Air Pictorial Jul 94 p.299.
- 26 July 43 27 minute flight by John Crosby-Warren. The same pilot flew the aircraft on three successive days at the end of the month to check engine handling, gearbox oil temperatures and aileron characteristics, accumulating 117 minutes flight time and a maximum altitude of 29,000 feet.
- Most flights at this time were of about 20 minutes duration, and where possible were carried out in cloud cover to preserve secrecy.
- 18 Aug 43 Tailplane/fin acorn fairing added.
- Around this time the aircraft was grounded at Barford St. John awaiting new B.23 engines which arrived on 30 September.
- 12 Oct 43 Ready for flight following fitting of new engines.
- 17 Oct 43 Moved to Moreton Valence near Gloucester for continuation of flight trials following completion of the new hardened runway there and impending closure of Barford site.
- 6 Nov 43 Flown by Michael Daunt to Rolls Royce at Hucknall, Notts for development trials with the Welland engine using the W2B/23c. Completed 25 hours testing at Hucknall and the Rolls Royce aerodrome at Church Broughton on engine surge, re-starts in the air and fuel consumption tests.
- Jan 44 Returned to Glosters for a complete overhaul
- 24 Feb 44 To Rolls-Royces' aerodrome at Balderton following completion of overhaul.25 minute flight. To quote from the flight report held by DoRIS; 'due to the landing of an entire American Transport Squadron, the aircraft was flown around Balderton for a few minutes while waiting for the aerodrome to clear'
- 28 Apr 44 Following tests, transferred to Church Broughton for further development flying.

- 13 Dec 44 Port engine exploded during take-off causing considerable damage to the nacelle, centre section and outer wing panel. The aircraft had flown some 367 flying hours by this date.
- 5 Jan 45 Aircraft rebuilt and modified at Moreton Valence, to where it was delivered by road.
- 14 May 45 Repairs complete and pronounced serviceable.
- 11 Aug 45 Flown to Abbotsinch by Squadron Leader Eric Greenwood, Glosters new chief test pilot for sea trials.
- Dismantled and taken by road to the Clyde and transferred to a lighter following reassembly.
- Loaded onto HMS Pretoria Castle, lying in the Firth of Clyde, for engine running, taxiing and deck handling trials to test the suitability of jet aircraft for carrier work. Photos - Gloster Aircraft (Putnam) p.246; The Gloster Meteor (002062) p.27; Flight Oct 11th 1945 p.407; The Aeroplane Oct 12th 1945 p.406. By now fitted with sideways opening canopy, torpedo fairing and housing for anti - spin parachute aft of the tailplane. The trials proved there were no problems in handling jet aircraft aboard an aircraft carrier.
- 18 Aug 45 Recorded in station control tower logbook as visiting HMS Ringtail (RNAS Burscough), flown by Lt. Morrell, departing from RAF Silloth, Cumbria at 14.27pm, arriving at Burscough, Lancashire at 14.55, and staying overnight – presumably en route south to Glosters.
- 26 Aug 45 Trials completed by this date –and presumably by 18 August when recorded as flying into Burscough as above.
- 11 Sep 45 Aircraft allocated for storage with Glosters at Moreton Valence, Glos.
- 17 Dec 45 Allotted instructional serial 5758M with School of Aeronautical Engineering (Officers), RAF Henlow, Beds. Possibly not delivered.
- 7 Feb 46 Allotted to No.5 School of Technical Training at RAF Locking, Somerset, becoming 5758M.
- 25 Apr 46 Taken on charge at No.5 School of Technical Training.
- Jan 51 At No.2 Radio School at RAF Yatesbury, Wilts by this date for continued ground training use.
- Mar 58 Refurbished for display at the main gate under the direction of G/C Maurice L.'Larry' Gain, C.O. of RAF Yatesbury prior to an AOC's inspection. Repainted by P.A.Brown Photos - Flight 14 Mar 58 p.349; The Gloster Meteor (002062) p.28; Meteor (016776) p.10. Painted silver overall with the maintenance serial 5758M on rear fuselage but lacked engines.

- Jun 58 By this date the prototype marking and original serial DG202 were carried when Mr Brown noticed the earlier markings when prepping the aircraft for repainting and decided to restore the original markings.
Photos - RAF Gate Guards (Simpson) p.190; Meteor (016776) p.11; Aeroplane Monthly May 98 p.61; Aeromilitaria Summer 2009 p.69; Warpaint Series No 22– Gloster Meteor (Butler) p.1.
- The aircraft was noticed by a former Dowty employee who realised the aircraft's historical significance. The authorities were alerted and two Welland engines (one of them s/n 271) were found at Cosford and the aircraft was fully refurbished by RAF Yatesbury.
- Nov 61 Replaced on Yatesbury gate by Venom NF Mk 3 WX905 by this date until the camp closed in 1962. Remained stored in the open at Yatesbury for some time. Photo - Air Britain Digest Mar 63 p.29.
- 1965 Transferred to RAF Cosford as part of the Air Historical Branch Collection. Photos at Cosford - Airfix Magazine Dec 66 p.143 (Repainted in camouflage colours); Aircraft Illustrated May 74 p.208.
Occasionally displayed at 'Battle of Britain' open days at RAF Gaydon, Warwicks in the late 1960s.. Photo - Meteor (016776) p.11; Warpaint Series No 22 – Gloster Meteor (Butler) p.2.
The aircraft remains on display at The Royal Air Force Museum, Cosford
- Oct 98 Survey, partial stripping and restoration work of engines and airframe underway at Cosford. Photo - Aeroplane Monthly Jan 1999 p.9.
- 30 Jun 03 By road to RAF Fairford, Glos for the Royal International Air Tattoo for display in the '100 Years of Flight' Exhibition. Photo during dismantling for transport; The Flying M Yearbook 2003 p.15. Photos on display; Aircraft Illustrated September 2003 p.56, June 2011 pp.84-85; Aeroplane October 2003 p.10; Flypast Airshow 2005 Supplement p.24.
- 20 Aug 03 Returned to RAFM Cosford by road.
- Aug 11 Dismantled and temporarily stored in MBCC, RAFM Cosford.
- 26 Sep 11 By road to RAFM Hendon for further display in 'Milestones' gallery. Photos on display – Aeroplane December 2011 p.6; Aircraft Magazine December 2011 p.11; The Flying M Yearbook 2011 p.11.

TEXT: ANDREW SIMPSON

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