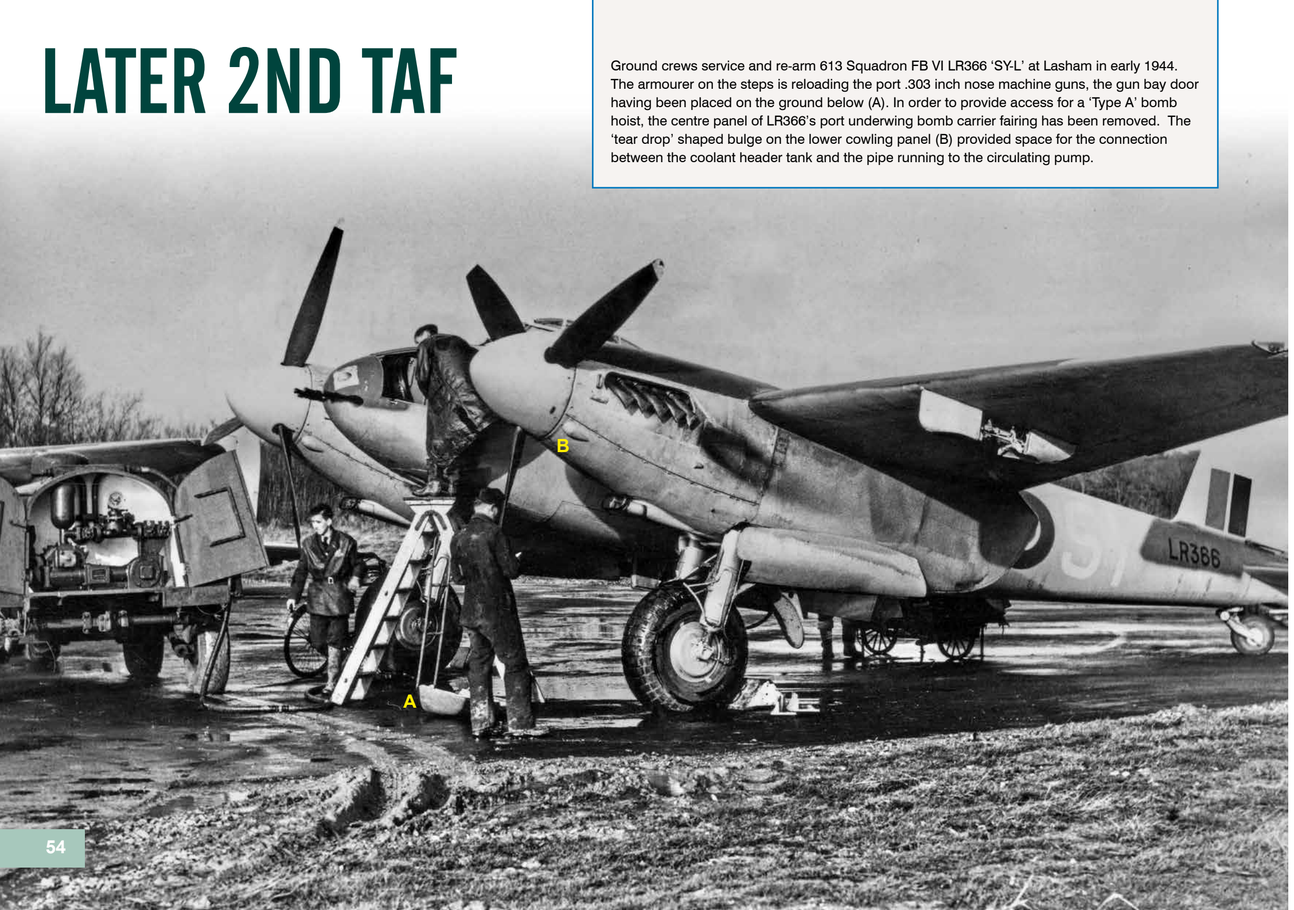
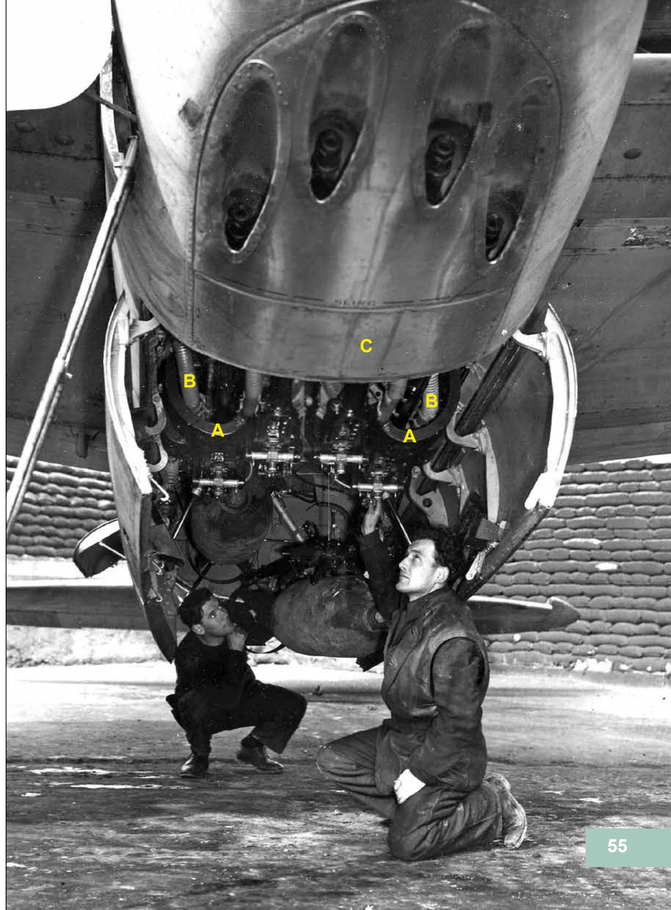
LATER 2ND TAF

Ground crews service and re-arm 613 Squadron FB VI LR366 'SY-L' at Lasham in early 1944. The armourer on the steps is reloading the port .303 inch nose machine guns, the gun bay door having been placed on the ground below (A). In order to provide access for a 'Type A' bomb hoist, the centre panel of LR366's port underwing bomb carrier fairing has been removed. The 'tear drop' shaped bulge on the lower cowling panel (B) provided space for the connection between the coolant header tank and the pipe running to the circulating pump.



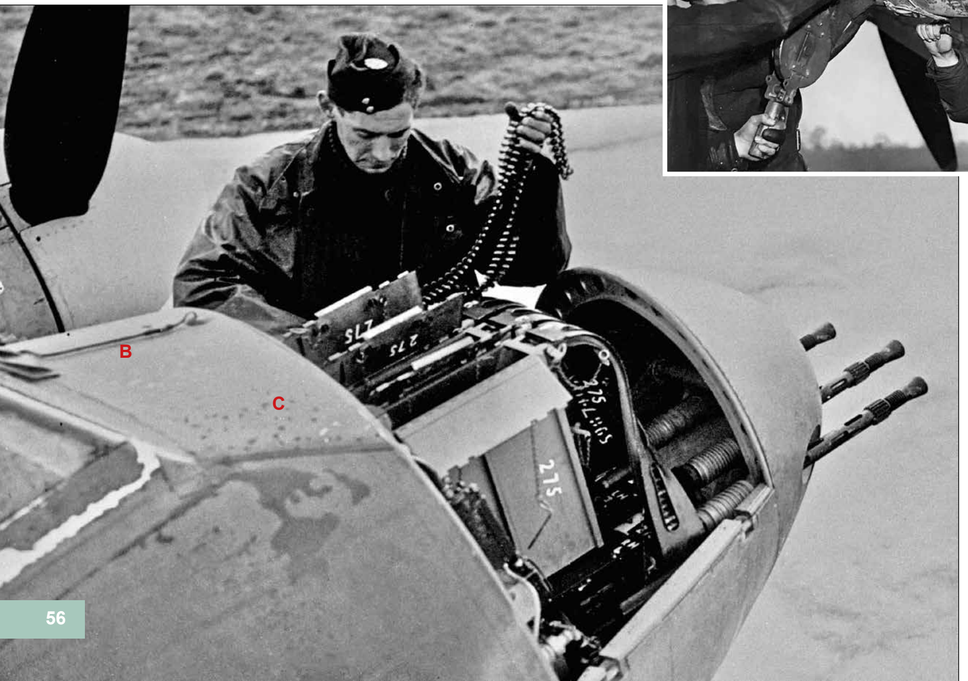
Above: Armourers clean and reload the .303 inch Browning nose machine guns of an unidentified 140 Wing FB VI. When the four ammunition boxes were removed for refilling, the inboard pair were always refitted first to enable the inboard guns to be cocked. Note the navigation headlamp on the nose cap (arrowed). This aircraft appears to be finished in the Day Fighter Scheme (see P.60).

Right: Within the confines of a sandbagged anti-shrapnel bay, 140 Wing armourers Col Davies (left) and 'Smithy' Smith prepare an FB VI for another sortie. 'Smithy' is checking the cannon stirrup centre screws (used for vertical adjustment) while Col Davies steadies the 500lb bomb being winched into the port section of the bomb compartment. The 'U" shaped fittings in the foreground (A) are the front ammunition chutes for the 20mm cannon - note the gun heating tubes running adjacent to the chutes (B). Aft of the nose under fairing is the access panel to the forward cannon mountings (C).

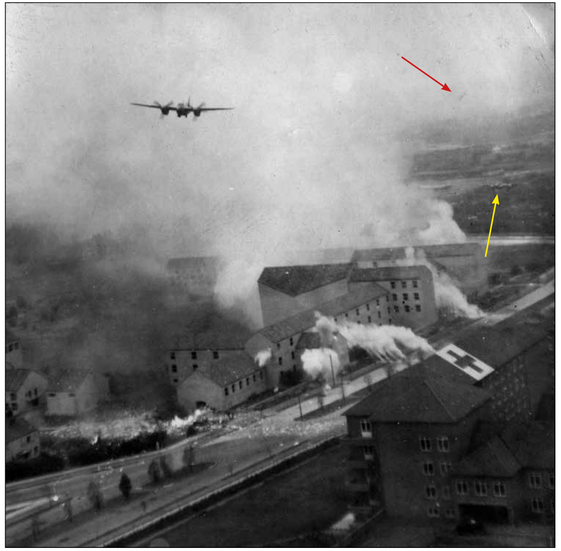


Right: Armourers employing ‘Type A’ bomb winches to load a 500lb bomb beneath an FB VI’s port wing. The carrier fairing centre panels have been detached, allowing the winch stirrups to be hooked over the bomb carrier trunnion plates (A).

Due to wiring circuit issues, early production FB VI’s were unable to fuse and release wing mounted bombs without first opening the bomb doors. Following trials with FB VI HJ679, this problem was overcome with Mod 333, the bomb switches being rewired to enable release of wing bombs with the bomb doors either open or closed.



Left: Reloading the .303 inch Browning machine guns of 613 Squadron FB VI LR275 ‘SY-B’ (see P60) at Lasham. Visible forward of the windscreen is the de-icing jet pipework (B) plus the bullet deflector plate (C), the latter manufactured from 10 SWG Dural. Note that each machine gun’s ammunition box carries the last three digits of the aircraft’s serial number.



Above: 2nd Tactical Air Force Mosquitos were renowned for their precision attacks against small targets such as individual buildings. In October 1944 twenty four FB VI’s bombed the Gestapo Headquarters in Jutland, located within two buildings at Aarhus University. Due to the attacks precise nature, the underwing hard points were not employed, bombs being dropped from the bomb-bay only. With its bomb doors open, this FB VI has just released its load and is passing over the target - another two Mosquitos are visible (arrowed).

Right: Armourers loading a 500lb bomb beneath the starboard wing of an FB VI. The bomb is being hoisted up to its Mk.III Universal Carrier using two ‘Type A’ winches, the latter nicknamed ‘hockey sticks’ for obvious reasons! Each winch was rated at 250lb lift capacity so a pair were capable of lifting a 500lb bomb. As an alternative to bombs, two 250lb Mk.IV smoke bombs S.C.I. type S/G could also be accommodated beneath the wings. Note the ‘Grimes’ underwing landing lamp (A).

Taken on the Thorney Island firing butts in November 1944, this famous picture portrays 21 Squadron FB VI HR162 'YH-H'. One of a series of images by 'Illustrated London News' photographer James Jarche, HR162 had been loaded with 100% tracer ammunition by 21 Squadron Armaments Officer, Flt Lt B.T. "Banger" Good, resulting in one of the most spectacular Mosquito photos of the war! Note the GEE whip aerial extending from the aft canopy glazing (A) plus the leaping nymph artwork (B) on the crew entrance door (directly beneath this - in black capital lettering - is the name "Kay"). The larger G-H transmitting aerial is mounted on the fuselage at (C), several 21 Squadron's FB VI's having been equipped with G-H to aid precision bombing. The significance of the spinner tip markings is currently unknown.

Below: 613 Squadron FB VI LR365 'SY-O' taking off from Lasham in January 1944. Finished in the Day Fighter Scheme (see P.60), Merlin 25 powered LR365 passed to 305 (Polish) Squadron the following month, being replaced as 'SY-O' by LR358.

Upper left: FB VI's of 305 (Polish) Squadron keeping close formation. Originally delivered to 305 Squadron in December 1944, the aircraft in the foreground is believed to be PZ335, at one stage coded 'SM-F'.

Upper right: Looking immaculate in its standard Night Fighter Scheme, 305 (Polish) Squadron FB VI LR303 'SM-A' was later sold to France, ultimately ending up as '2105' with the Israeli Defence Force/Air Force.

613 Squadron FB VI LR275 'SY-B' was one of a small number of Mosquito Fighter-Bombers finished in the Day Fighter Scheme of Ocean Grey and Dark Green camouflage upper surfaces, Medium Sea Grey undersurfaces plus Sky rear fuselage band and spinners. The reason for this remains unclear but may originate from Air Ministry Order A.664/42 of July 1942, stating that daylight role Mosquitos be finished in standard Day Fighter camouflage. Three months later, A.1096/42 added that National and tactical markings should conform to Day Bomber aircraft with Ocean Grey spinners and Sky codes. Clearly aimed at Mosquito bombers, these instructions were likely misinterpreted by some Service units who regarded all Fighter Bombers as day flying Mosquitos. The result was not popular with Allied Expeditionary Air Force Headquarters.

MOSQUITO FB VI SERIES II LR275, SY-B, 613 SQUADRON, JANUARY 1944

MODELLER'S NOTES

- Early production Mosquito FB VI Series II
- Five ejector exhaust stubs on engine inboard and outboard sides
- Inconel heat resistant panel inserts on engine side cowlings, aft of exhaust shrouds
- Longitudinal stiffening strake on starboard side of fuselage above rear access hatch
- Single Navigation light on wingtip leading edges
- 'Marstrand' double-ridged tailwheel tyre
- Ice guards on lower cowling carburettor air intakes
- Port inner and starboard outer side cowlings feature blister fairings for engine hand crank units
- Fabric covered elevators
- No fixed aerial mast.
- Fairing for 'MONICA' or 'Z-Lamp' installation beneath tail cone aft section
- Twin-drum brakes on mainwheels
- RESIN formation lights on wingtip trailing edges, in line with ailerons
- Single lamp (Navigation) mounted on upper extremity of tail cone
- Equipped with single 500lb bomb on port and starboard underwing carriers
- Finished in the Day Fighter Scheme of Ocean Grey and Dark Green camouflage upper surfaces, Medium Sea Grey undersurfaces plus Sky rear fuselage band and spinners.