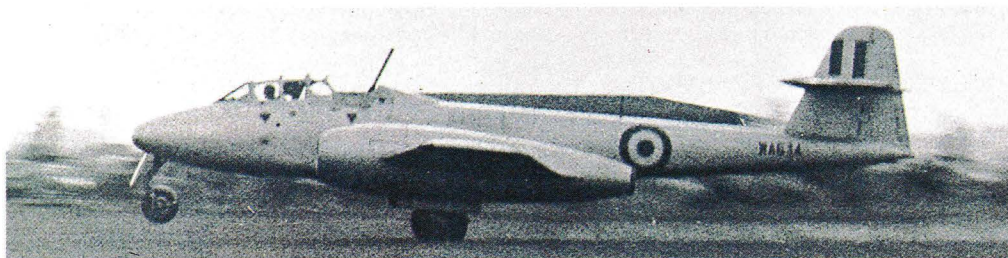
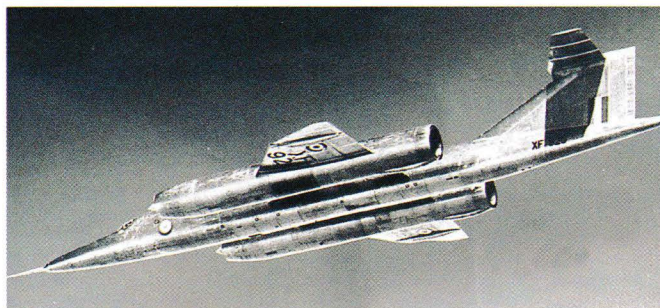


COSFORD'S PROTOTYPE

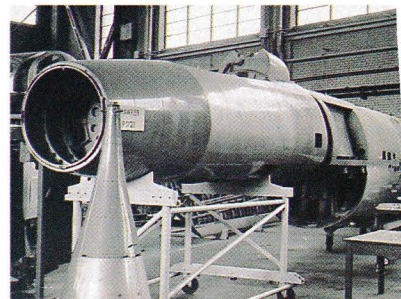


Sqn Ldr John Fifield was a passenger in Gloster Meteor T.7 on September 3, 1955 — but only for a short period of time. Using a Martin-Baker low-level ejector seat, he left the aircraft during its take-off run, coming to earth safely, thanks to the amazing invention. WA634 joined Martin-Baker's test fleet at Chalgrove, Oxon, in January 1952. It was much-modified, including the fitting of an F.8-like rear fuselage, for its role as ejector seat test-bed. When it retired in April 1962, it had completed 670 trial ejections. It passed on to the RAF Museum, initially at St Athan, Wales.

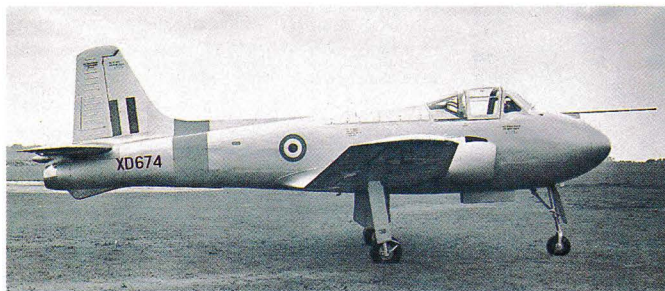
The second of two high-speed (Mach 2 plus) research aircraft, Bristol Type 188 XF926 made its first flight at Boscombe Down on April 29, 1963. Construction employed much stainless steel. Both aircraft had brief careers, XF926 being flown just 51 times, the last one being in January 1964. It moved to Foulness, Essex, as a gunnery target, but was saved from this fate and joined the RAF Museum's collection. MAP



Currently stored at Cosford is the uncompleted Hawker P.1121. This was a private venture single-seat air superiority fighter. Construction of the prototype and a full-sized mock-up started at Kingston-upon-



Thames but was abandoned in 1958. This large — length 66ft 6in/20.3m — fighter featured an intake for the engine mounted under the fuselage; beating the General Dynamics F-16 Fighting Falcon to this concept by a full 16 years. The fuselage moved to the College of Aeronautics at Cranfield, Beds, and later went into the care of the RAF Museum.



The Hunting P.84 Jet Provost T.1 was a two-seat jet trainer based as much as possible on the airframe of its piston-powered predecessor, the P.56 Provost T.1. The prototype was XD674, which first flew at Luton, Beds, on June 26, 1954. A developmental batch was used by the RAF to evaluate the idea of 'all-through' jet training and the very successful Jet Provost line was the result. XD674 was used for engine and manufacturer's trials until it was retired, becoming an instructional airframe, in April 1958. It joined the RAF Museum's collection in the mid-1960s. FlyPast collection



The first of two English Electric P.1As — the prototype of what would become the Lightning — WG760 made its first flight at Boscombe Down, Wilts, flown by Roland Beamont on August 4, 1954. It served all of its flying life on development trials, amassing just over 700 flights, before being retired in the early 1960s. After use as an instructional airframe it was put on display at RAF Henlow (alongside the second example, WG763 — now at Manchester) in 1967. FlyPast collection



The Short SB.5 was built as part of the English Electric P.1 programme to investigate the format of the planned interceptor. It was tasked with examining the wing sweep and the merits of a 'conventional' or 'T' tail. (The latter is illustrated — interchangeable rear fuselages could be fitted.) The one-off WG768 first flew at Boscombe Down, Wilts, on December 2, 1952. The wingsweep could be changed (not in flight) to 50, 60 or 69 degrees. It was not to be until October 1960 that it flew with the greatest angle of sweep. In later years, the SB.5 was used by the Empire Test Pilots School. Retired in 1968, it joined the RAF Museum 'fleet'. FlyPast collection



As related in the September 1999 *FlyPast*, a family of 'mini-deltas', the Type 707s, was launched to gain aerodynamic experience for the Avro 698 Vulcan programme. WZ744 was the only two-seat 707C to be completed. Built at Avro's facility at Bracebridge Heath, Lincs, it made its first flight from nearby Waddington on July 1, 1953. It was used for a variety of trials, retiring in 1966 to the RAF Museum's Reserve Collection. FlyPast collection