

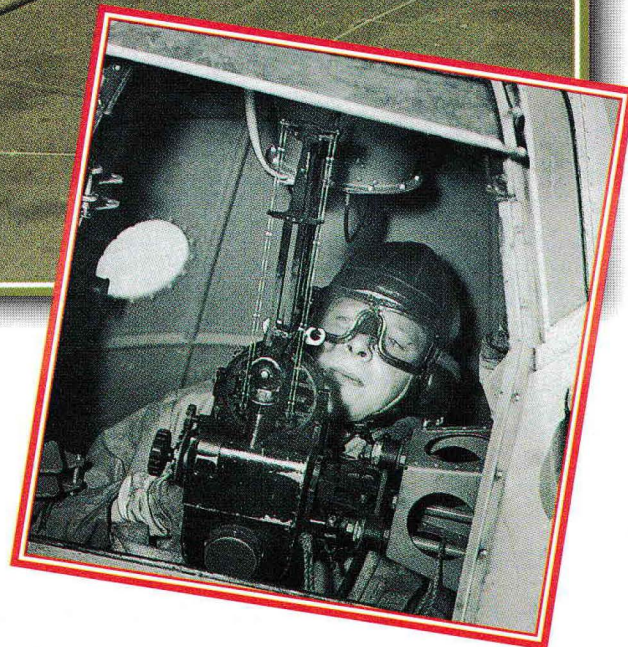
AVRO

ANSON



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veloped to meet an RAF Coastal Command requirement for a land-based reconnaissance aircraft, the Anson was derived from the Avro 652 six-seat airliner. Flown for the first time in March 1935, it entered service one year later. Although the Hudson started to replace it by the start of the World War II, the Anson continued to carry out reconnaissance missions until 1942. From then on it was one of Britain's most widely used trainers.



▲ The prone bombardier's position in the nose of the Anson Mk I had a sliding panel in the floor for the operation of a Wimperis Mk VIIB bomb sight.

From maritime patroller to trainer

When it first entered service in 1936, the Anson was the RAF's fastest twin-engine aircraft, and the force's first monoplane with a retractable undercarriage. For military service it had an added forward-firing machine gun and another in a dorsal turret, plus a bomb bay for two 100-pound and eight 20-pound bombs.

Although its performance was rather tame by the standards of 1940, the type could turn inside the Bf 109, and keep on turning for much longer. This ability

enabled Anson crews to claim six of the German fighters in combat. From 1941, it was also used by a number of air-sea rescue squadrons.

The Anson was also used as a trainer from an early stage in its career, and in 1940 it was chosen as the standard twin-engine aircraft for training pilots in Canada.

The Anson was used by at least 20 air forces and after the war many were converted to civil transports. More than 11,000 were built, nearly 3,000 of them

Above: Tasked with land-based maritime reconnaissance of the English Channel, North Sea and the Western Approaches, the Mk I was a vital tool in protecting British shipping.

in Canada with Wright, Jacobs or Pratt & Whitney engines. Production continued until 1952, and the type remained in RAF service until 1967.

Below: Demand for the Anson was so great that license production, supervised by Federal Aircraft Ltd., was set up in Canada. The 50 purchased by the U.S. Army Air Force were designated AT-20. They differed from British Mk Is in having Jacobs L-6BM engines and Canadian equipment.

SPECIFICATIONS Anson Mk I

Type: Advanced trainer.

Powerplant: Two 350-hp. Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX seven-cylinder air-cooled radial engines.

Maximum speed: 188 m.p.h. at 7,000 ft.

Climb rate: 750 f.p.m. at sea level.

Range: 787 mi.

Service ceiling: 19,000 ft.

Weights: Empty 5,361 lb.; max takeoff 7,984 lb.

Weapons: Two 7.7-mm machine guns and up to 360 lb. of bombs.




Dimensions:

Span	56 ft. 6 in.
Length	42 ft. 3 in.
Height	13 ft. 1 in.
Wing area	463 sq. ft.

ACTION DATA


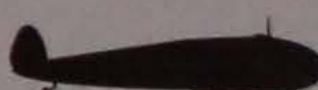

SPEED

The Anson had a respectable though not particularly fast top speed, since it was derived from a small airliner of the mid 1930s. The Si 204 was equipped with more powerful engines than both the Anson and Ki-54.

ANSON Mk I	188 m.p.h.	
Si 204D	210 m.p.h.	
Ki-54a "HICKORY"	148 m.p.h.	

WEAPONS

While the reconnaissance variants of the Siebel Si 204 were often fitted with radar, they were generally unarmed. The Anson and Tachikawa Ki-54 were armed, the latter with over twice the load and defensive armament of the British aircraft.

ANSON Mk I	2 x 7.7-mm machine guns 360-lb. bomb load	
Si 204D	none	
Ki-54a "HICKORY"	4 x 7.7-mm machine guns 900-lb. bomb load	

RANGE

The Anson's 744-mile range made it suitable for maritime reconnaissance until the arrival of the Lockheed Hudson, another type derived from an airliner. The "Hickory" had the shortest range, though it carried a larger weapons load. This aircraft was developed initially as a trainer; a maritime version entered service later, unlike the Si 204 and Anson.



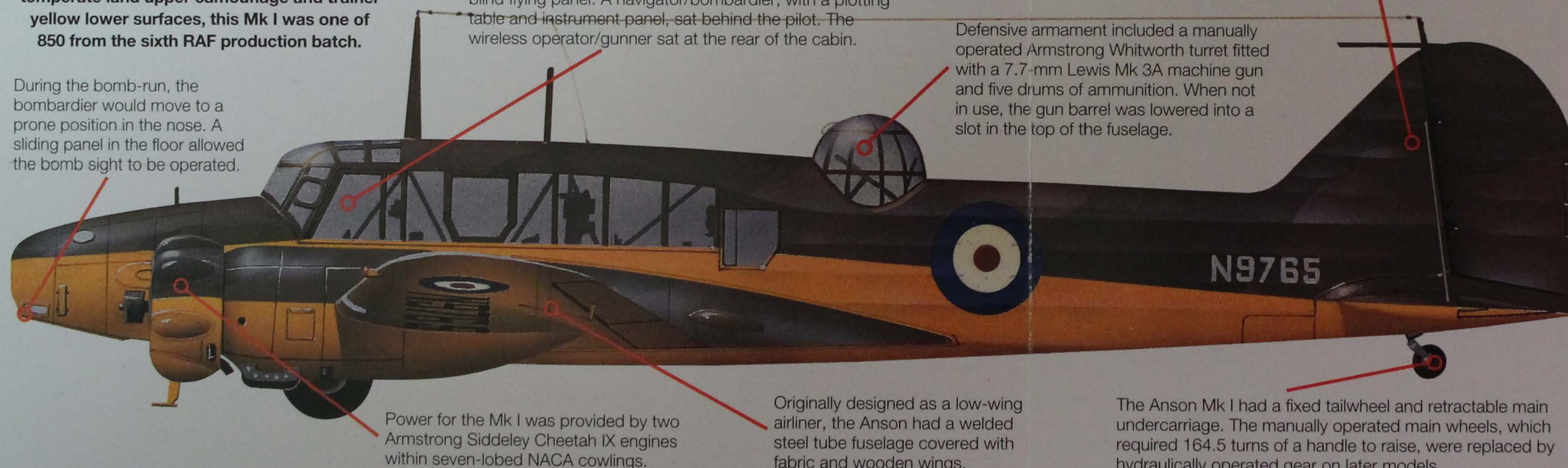
ANSON Mk I

Carrying the training color scheme of temperate land upper camouflage and trainer yellow lower surfaces, this Mk I was one of 850 from the sixth RAF production batch.

During the bomb-run, the bombardier would move to a prone position in the nose. A sliding panel in the floor allowed the bomb sight to be operated.

With a normal crew of three, the cockpit was fairly roomy. The pilot had solo controls and a Reid and Sigrist Mk I blind flying panel. A navigator/bombardier, with a plotting table and instrument panel, sat behind the pilot. The wireless operator/gunner sat at the rear of the cabin.

Defensive armament included a manually operated Armstrong Whitworth turret fitted with a 7.7-mm Lewis Mk 3A machine gun and five drums of ammunition. When not in use, the gun barrel was lowered into a slot in the top of the fuselage.



Power for the Mk I was provided by two Armstrong Siddeley Cheetah IX engines within seven-lobed NACA cowlings.

Originally designed as a low-wing airliner, the Anson had a welded steel tube fuselage covered with fabric and wooden wings.

The Anson Mk I had a fixed tailwheel and retractable main undercarriage. The manually operated main wheels, which required 164.5 turns of a handle to raise, were replaced by hydraulically operated gear on later models.

RAF World War II trainers

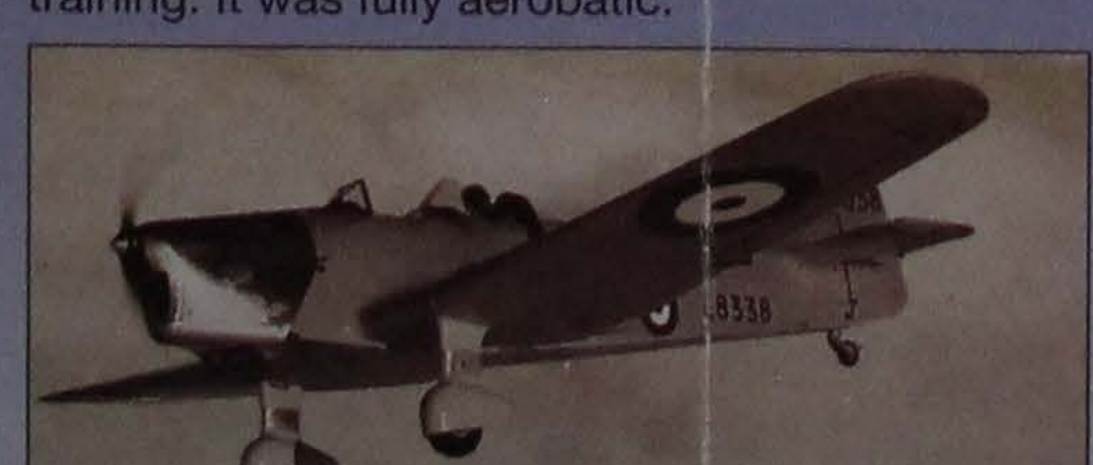
■ AIRSPEED OXFORD: As the first twin-engine monoplane advanced trainer used by the RAF, the Oxford was used for all aspects of aircrew training, including gunnery.



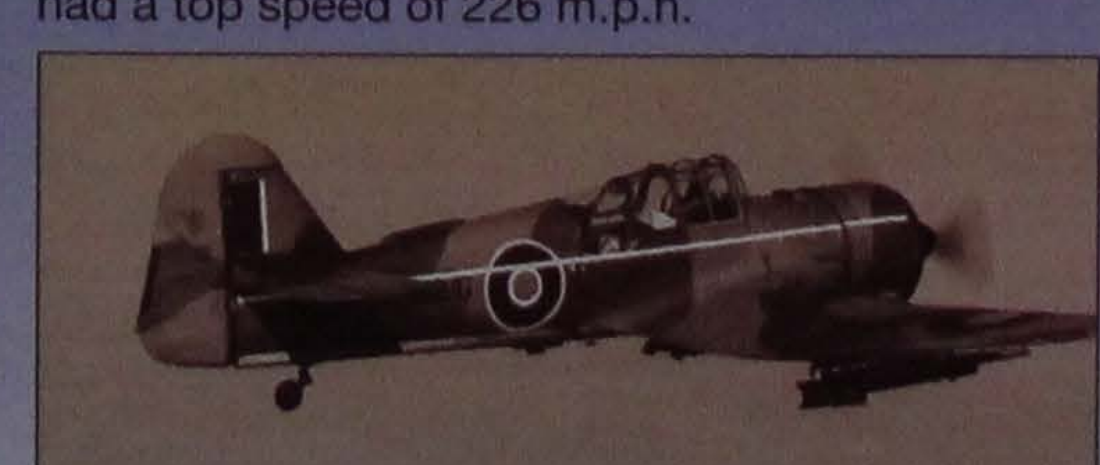
■ DE HAVILLAND TIGER MOTH: As the most numerous famous British elementary trainer during World War II, the Tiger Moth equipped 44 flying training schools in 1939.



■ MILES MAGISTER: Known as the "Maggie," this classic Miles design was the first monoplane trainer to be used by the RAF for elementary training. It was fully aerobatic.



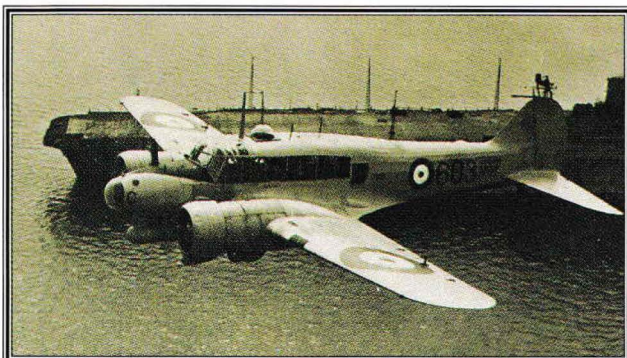
■ MILES MASTER: In 1938, the Master attracted the largest ever contract for a trainer at the time. Used for advanced training, the Master had a top speed of 226 m.p.h.



AVRO ANSON

▼ Learning to use radar

In 1944, the Royal Navy acquired Ansons fitted with radar scanners, for training radar operators.

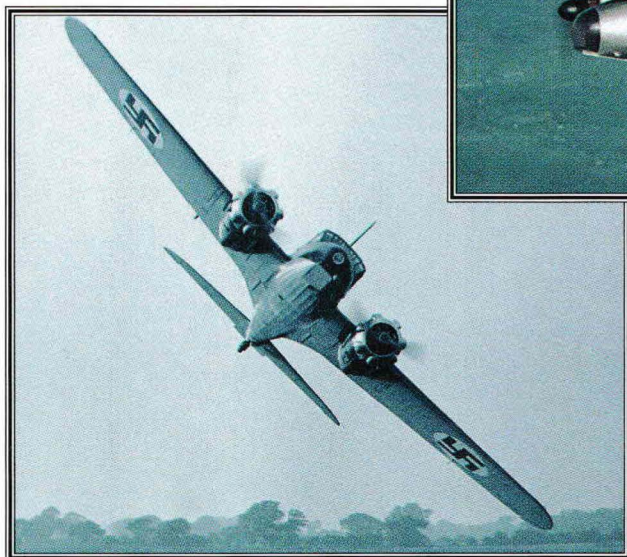


▲ Cadet gunners

By 1943, the Anson's primary task was training. Prospective air gunners were taught day- and night-gunners skills using the Boulton Paul turret.

► Trainer for Rhodesia

The postwar Anson Mk 20 was built as a trainer for Rhodesia. The RAF also used a small number.

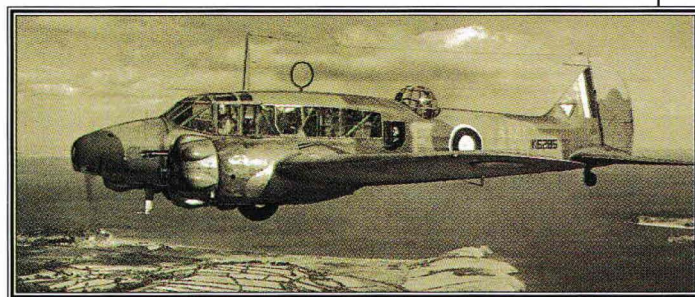


◀ Pre-war exports

The RAF was not the only armed force to realize the potential of the Anson. This example was one of three acquired by Finland in 1938. Other export users of the Mk I included Australia, Estonia, Ireland and Greece.

► Dutch survivors

No. 321 was one of two RAF squadrons manned by Dutch aircrew who escaped during the German invasion. The aircraft had a Dutch insignia on the fin.



FACTS AND FIGURES

- Avro's Anson was based on the Avro 652 six-seat airliner for Imperial Airways, which first flew on January 7, 1935.
- The Anson beat the competing DH.89M Rapide for the RAF order.
- On September 5, 1939, the Anson first saw combat, attacking a German U-boat.
- During the Dunkirk evacuation, a single No. 500 Squadron Anson shot down two of three attacking Bf 109 fighters.
- Retired in 1968 after 32 years service, the Anson was the longest-serving RAF type.
- Anson production totalled 11,020 airframes, including license-production.