Sopwith F.1 Camel (Clerget)

eduard

1/48 Scale Plastic Model Kit

item No. 8486

WEEKEND edition

Highly maneuverable, but tricky to fly. This is short description of Sopwith Camel, one of the most popular WWI fighters. It was effective in hands of skilled pilots, but dangerous to unexperienced ones.

The Sopwith Camel was a solution to the requirements for a faster and more maneuverable fighter than what was available to Royal Flying Corps and Royal Navy Air Services during 1916. The Sopwith company had already several successful designs added to its reputation and the new "Fighter 1", abbreviated as F.1 was designed under the leadership of Sopwith´s chief designer Herbert Smith who was working with the concept conceived by T. Sopwith, F. Sigrist and H. Hawker. Their main idea was to concentrate most of the mass of the aircraft within a relatively small area to create extremely maneuverable aircraft. The design job was fast thanks to the fact the Sopwith´s design office was very simple. The basic design drawings were made by chalk directly on the workshop floor in 1:1 scale.

Conventional but different

The first of three prototypes undertook ground acceptance tests towards the end of the year and was deemed airworthy on December 22, 1916. It is believed the prototype flew for the first time the same day with Harry Hawker behind the controls (some sources state December 26), powered by the Clerget 9Z 110hp engine. Hawker was very positive about flying characteristics, although it was obvious the new design had very sensitive controls and was rather unstable. More to it, a strong gyroscopic effect of rotary engine and propeller was making the control of the aircraft even trickier. Many less experienced and novice pilots fell victim to its flying characteristics later. On the other hand, when mastered, the Camel was very effective in combat.

The new fighter assembly was more conventional than the design approach. The fuselage was made of wooden box-girder, wire-braced assembly. The sides of the cockpit were covered in plywood, while the forward engine bay was covered in sheet aluminium panels. The rest of the fuselage was fabric-covered, as were the wings and tailplanes. To make the mass production easier, the upper wing lacked dihedral and lower wing was given increased 5° dihedral.

Armament consisted of two synchronized Vickers 0.303 inch machine guns mounted in the "hump" in front of the cockpit. The original gun cover did not allow access to the cocking handle of feed-block pawls, as both weapons had right-hand feed. This made in-flight fix of the jammed starboard gun impossible. To overcome the problem, the opening was cut in forward decking above the breech mechanism of the starboard gun. This modification was standardized on July 28, 1917, by No. 2 Aircraft Depot. The change necessitated addition of a windshield (these were of various design).

Engine and production troubles

The Admiralty placed its first order for 50 aircraft even before the prototypes had flown, while the War Office was waiting until late May. Thanks to that Naval Camels began to reach the units by mid-May, while the No. 70 squadron of RFC obtained their Camels in late June as first to put them in combat with RFC. And while the Naval Camels were powered by the 150-hp Admiralty Rotary No.1 engine (later renamed as Bentley Rotary No. 1), RFC used their Camels with license-built Clerget 9B engines, which not only lacked some performance to their French original, but also lost power after just about 10 hours of running time. The solution was to install less powerful but more reliable Le Rhône 9J 110 hp. Later, the Clerget 9Bf 140 hp were also used and the Camels supplied to United States Air Service units were fitted with the Gnome Monosoupape 150 hp engine.

Despite of some shortcomings of the design and troubles with engines and guns, the aircraft, which got the name Camel due to the hump on the front section of the fuselage was ordered in huge amounts by both RFC and RNAS. Sopwith company was unable to fulfill the orders, so other companies were tasked with production. These were Ruston, Proctor & Co., Clayton & Shuttleworth, William Beardmore, Boulton & Paul, British Caudron, Hooper & Co., March, Jones & Cribb, Nieuport & General Aircraft and Portholme Aerodrome. There were minor technical differences between aircraft from these factories and bigger in terms of built-in quality. Namely Ruston, Proctor-built aircraft were markedly inferior in performance in comparison to other manufacturers.

Wide use

Altogether 5597 Camels in 48 series were built until the end of the war. Twelve RFC day fighter squadrons (Nos. 3, 28, 43, 45, 46, 54, 65, 66, 70, 71, 73 and 80) operated Camels on Western front with three of them having also spell in Italy (28, 45 and 66). There were also two night squadrons operating in France (Nos. 151 and 152) with Camels. The RNAS had eight Camel squadrons (Nos. 1, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13). Home Defence used Camels with seven squadrons equipped with them (Nos. 37, 44, 50, 61, 87, 112 and 143). These were used to fight night flying German heavy bombers and airships attacking British islands in 1917 and 1918. Some of these night fighters were converted to the "Comic" version. Another special version of the Camel was 2F.1, used as shipborne fighter. These Camels had folding fuselage for easier storage on the decks. Two USAS squadrons were equipped with Camels, Nos. 17 and 148, also Belgians received them during the war and some other Air Forces were flying them after the armistice. Although the Camel was a fighter, squadrons used their aircraft also as fighter-bombers using bomb rack for four 20lb (11kg) Mk.I Cooper bombs. These low-level strafing and bombing sorties, although quite effective, were very dangerous for pilots. All in all, Camel pilots shot down some 1543 enemy aircraft and 120 balloons during the WWI. Another 1086 enemy aircraft were reported as OOC (Out-of-Control).

This kit: Sopwith F.1 Camel (Clerget)

Camels powered by the Clerget 9B engine were the most numerous, thanks to good availability for both RFC and RNAS units. Pierre Clerget's engine design was manufactured under licence by Ruston Proctor & Co LTD, where a total of 1,300 were built. Later, the 9Bf version with increased stroke was introduced, offering maximum output of 104 kW (140 hp). Gwynnes Limited produced 1,750 of them, while Ruston Proctor & Co LTD added 600 units. Like the BR.1 engine, the Clerget 9Bf had a larger diameter, but it still fit into the original engine cowling for the 9B. The Camels with Clergets or BR.1s used the Sopwith-Kauper No. 3 system for machine gun synchronization, which was less efficient than the Constantinesco system used on the Le Rhone engines.

ATTENTION ✶ UPOZORNĚNÍ ✶ ACHTUNG ✶ ATTENTION ✶ 注意

Carefully read instruction sheet before assembling. When you use glue or paint, do not use near open flame and use in well ventilated room. Keep out of reach of small children. Children must not be allowed to suck any part, or pull vinyl bag over the head.

Před započetím stavby si pečlivě prostudujte stavební návod. Při používání barev a lepidel pracujte v dobre větrané místnosti. Lepidla ani barvy nepoužívejte v blízkosti otevřeného ohně. Model není určen malým dětem, mohlo by dojít k požití drobných dílů.

INSTRUCTION SIGNS ✶ INSTR. SYMBOLY ✶ INSTRUKTION SINNBILDEN ✶ SYMBOLES ✶ 記号の説明

OPTIONAL VOLBA

BEND OHNOUT

SAND BROUSIT

OPEN HOLE VYVRTAT OTVOR

SYMETRICAL ASSEMBLY SYMETRICKÁ MONTÁŽ

REMOVE ODŘÍZNOUT

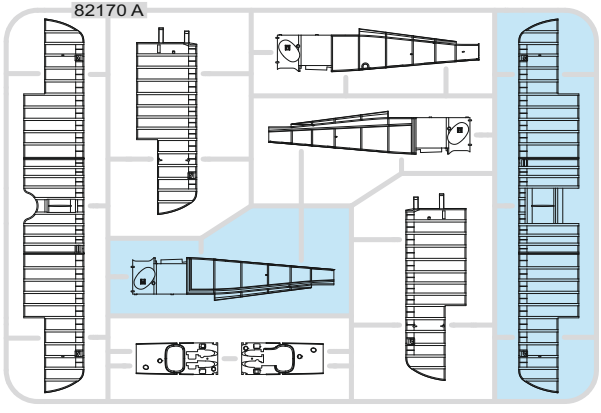
REVERSE SIDE OTOČIT

APPLY EDUARD MASK AND PAINT POUŽÍT EDUARD MASK NABARVIT

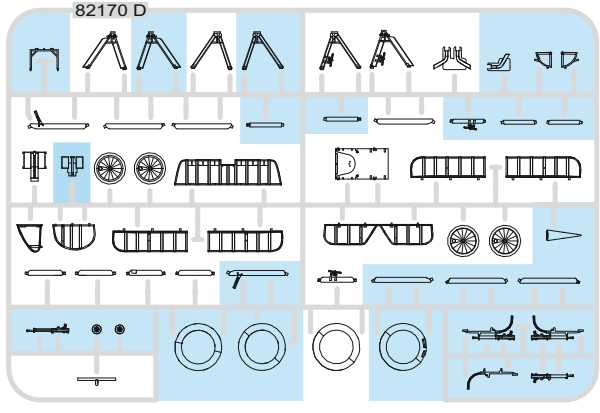
PARTS ✶ DÍLY ✶ TEILE ✶ PIÈCES ✶ 部品

PLASTIC PARTS

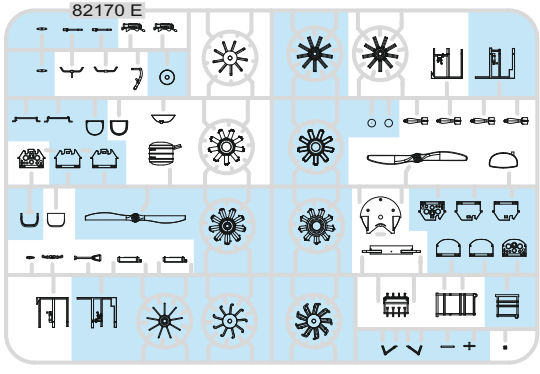
A>



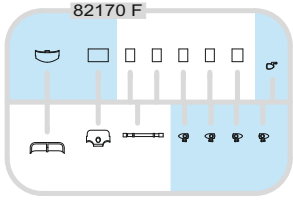
D>



E>



F>

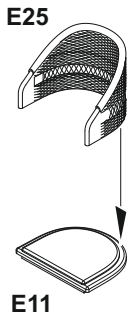


-Parts not for use. -Teile werden nicht verwendet. -Pièces à ne pas utiliser. -Tyto díly nepoužívejte při stavbě. - 使用しない部品

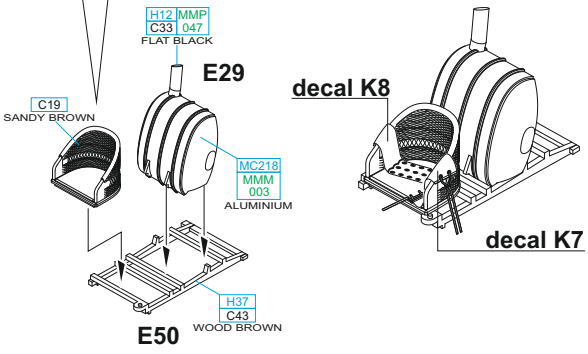
COLOURS ✶ BARVY ✶ FARBEN ✶ PEINTURE ✶ 色

GSi Creos (GUNZE)		MISSION MODELS	
AQUEOUS	Mr.COLOR	PAINTS	
H4	C4	MMP-007	YELLOW
H5	C5	MMP-048	BLUE
H8	C8		SILVER
H11	C62	MMP-001	FLAT WHITE
H12	C33	MMP-047	FLAT BLACK
H37	C43		WOOD BROWN
H47	C41	MMP-012	RED BROWN
H51	C11	MMP-063	LIGHT GULL GRAY
H78	C38		OLIVE GREEN
H85	C45		SAIL COLOR

GSi Creos (GUNZE)		MISSION MODELS	
AQUEOUS	Mr.COLOR	PAINTS	
H327	C327	MMP-101	RED
H338	C338	MMP-116	LIGHT GRAY
H417	C117	MMP-051	LIGHT BLUE
	C19		SANDY BROWN
Mr.METAL COLOR		METALLICS	
MC214		MMM-001	DARK IRON
MC215		MMM-004	COPPER
MC218		MMM-003	ALUMINIUM

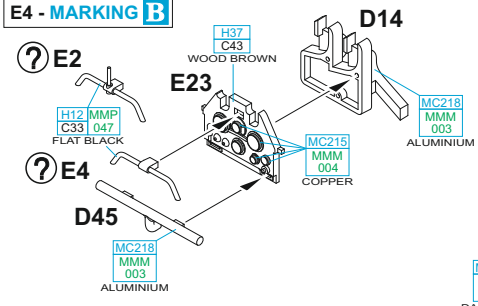


A

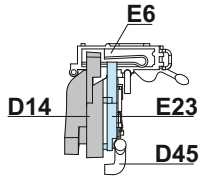


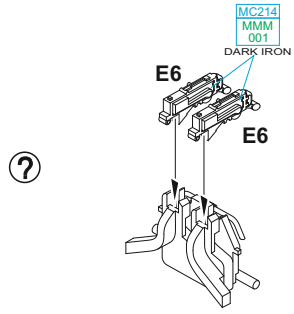
B

E2 - MARKINGS A, C, D
E4 - MARKING B

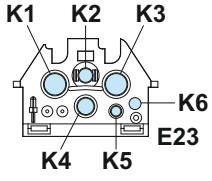


ALLOW A SPACE BETWEEN PARTS D14 AND E23

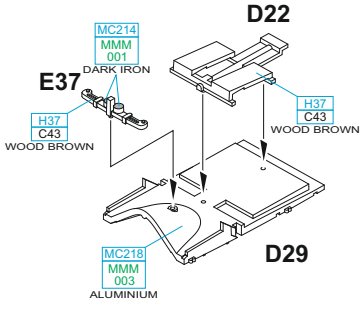


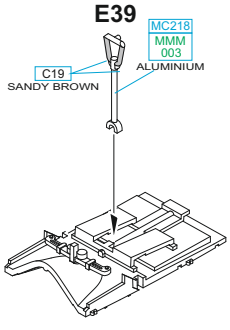


OPTIONAL: decals

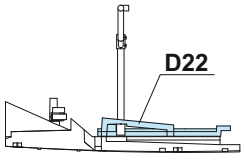


C

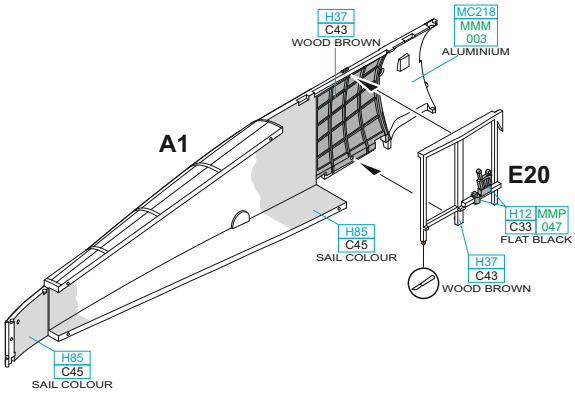




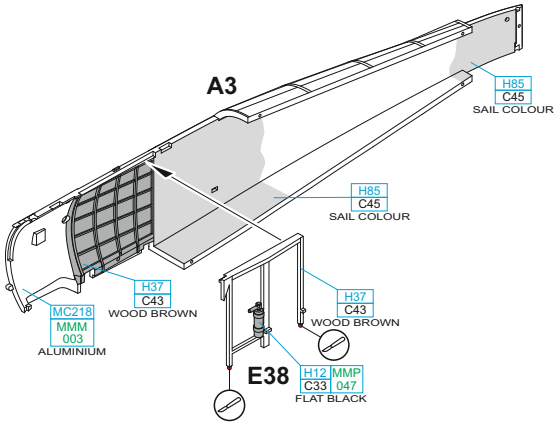
SIDE VIEW

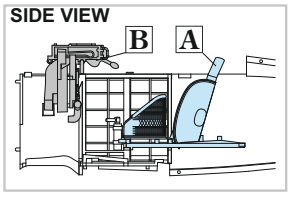


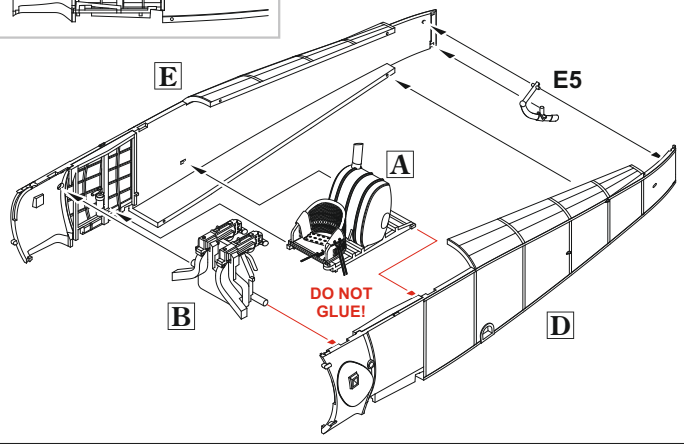
D

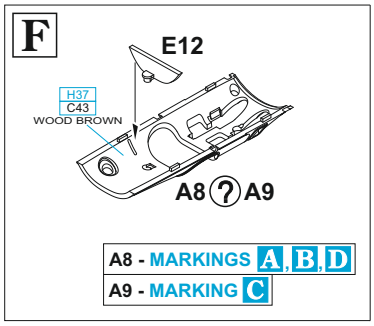


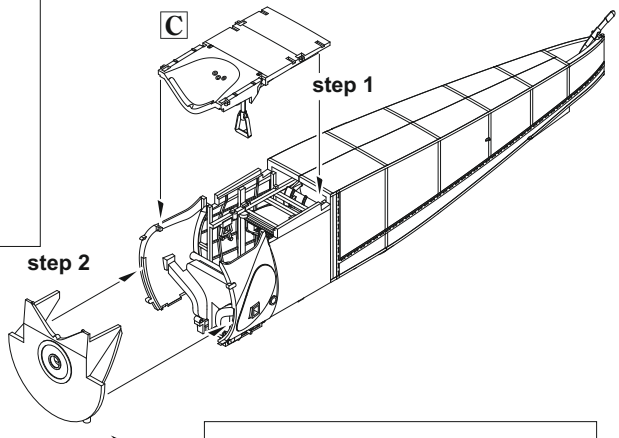
E

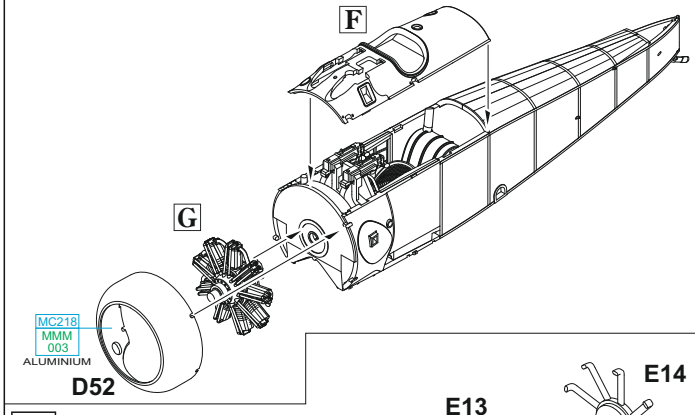


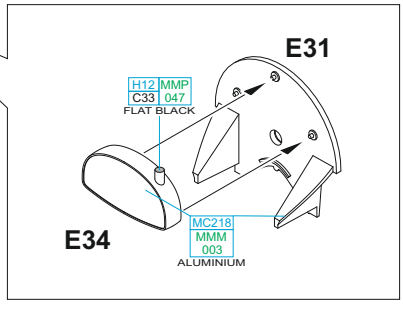

SIDE VIEW
B
A

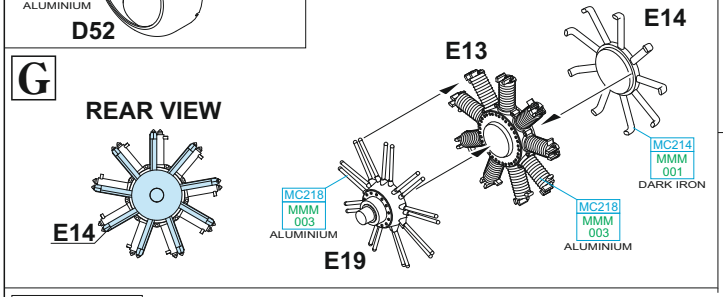

E
E5
A
DO NOT GLUE!
B
D

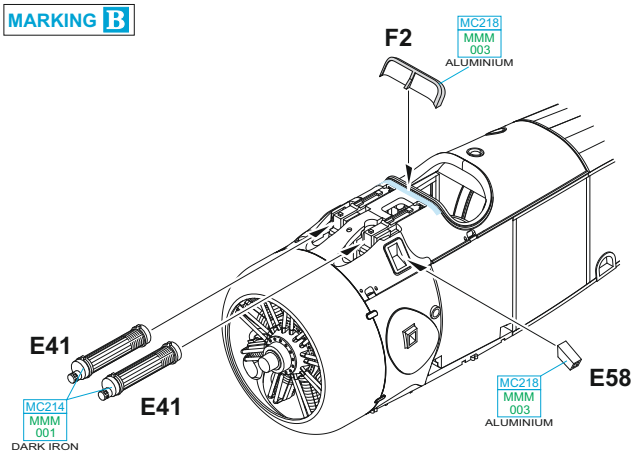

F
E12
H37
C43
WOOD BROWN
A8 ? A9
A8 - MARKINGS A, B, D
A9 - MARKING C

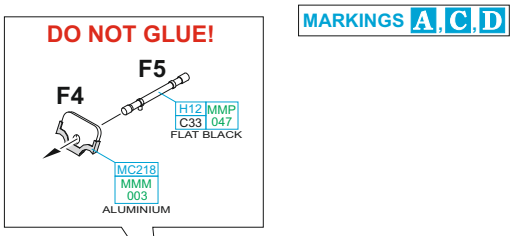

C
step 1
step 2

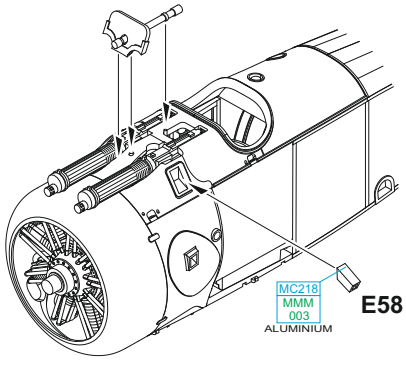

F
G
MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
D52

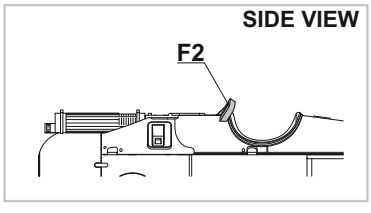

E31
H12 MMP
C33 047
FLAT BLACK
E34
MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM

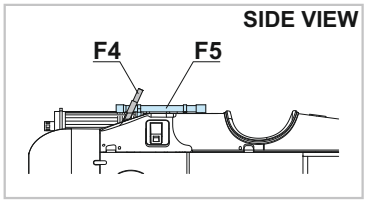

G
REAR VIEW
E14
E13
E14
MC214
MMM
001
DARK IRON
MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
E19
MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM

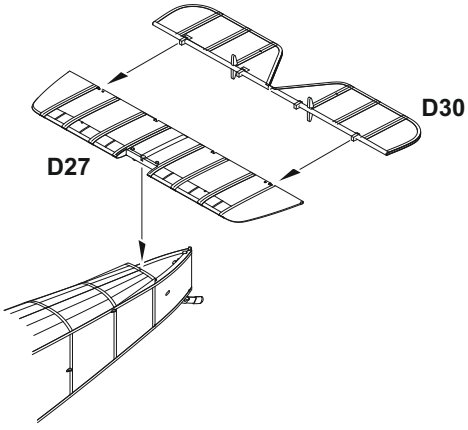

MARKING B
F2
MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
E41
E41
MC214
MMM
001
DARK IRON
MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
E58

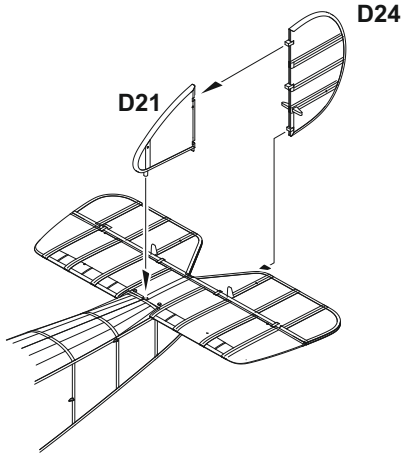

MARKINGS A, C, D
DO NOT GLUE!
F5
F4
H12 MMP
C33 047
FLAT BLACK
MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM


MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
E58

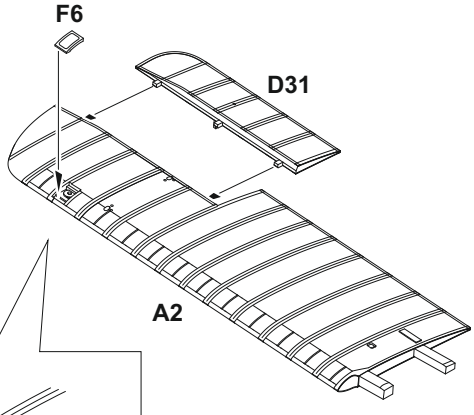

SIDE VIEW
F2

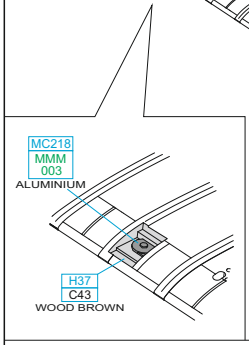

SIDE VIEW
F4
F5


D30
D27

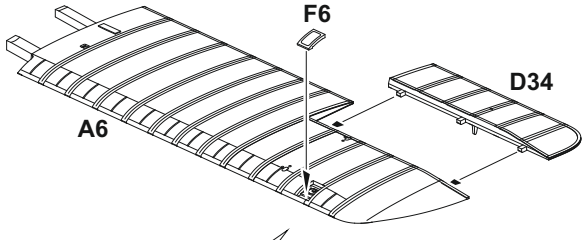

D24
D21

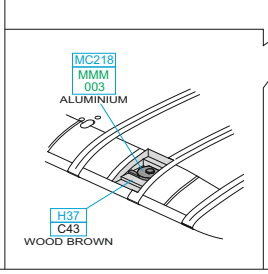
H

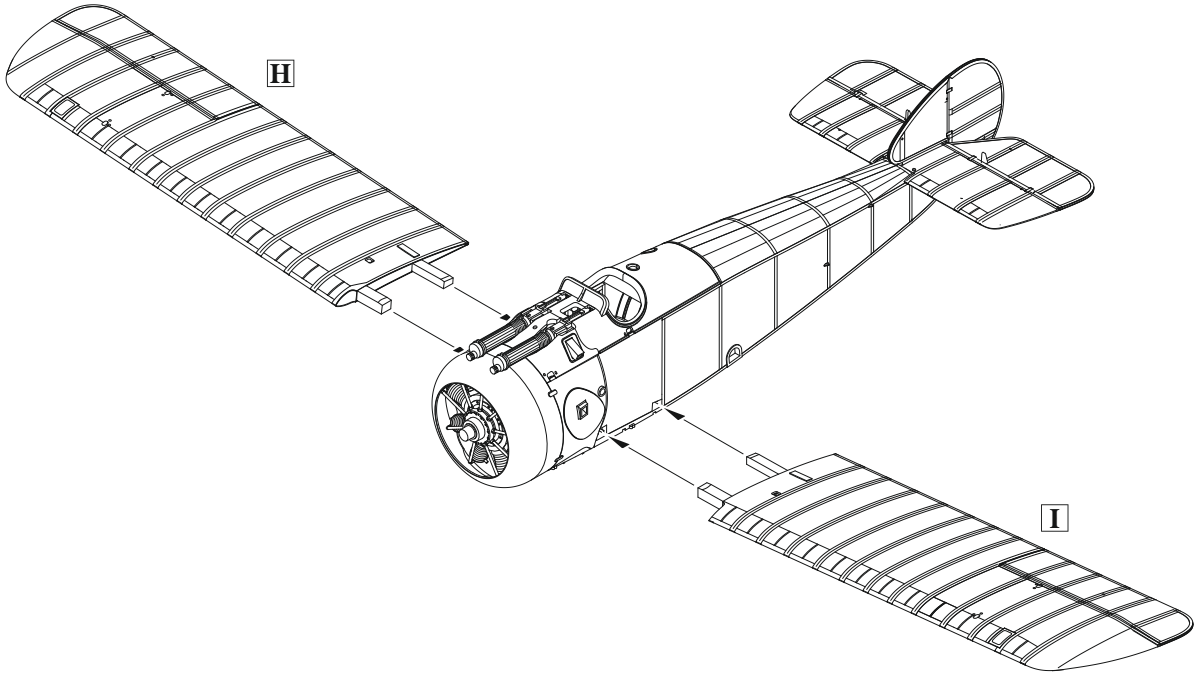

F6
D31
A2

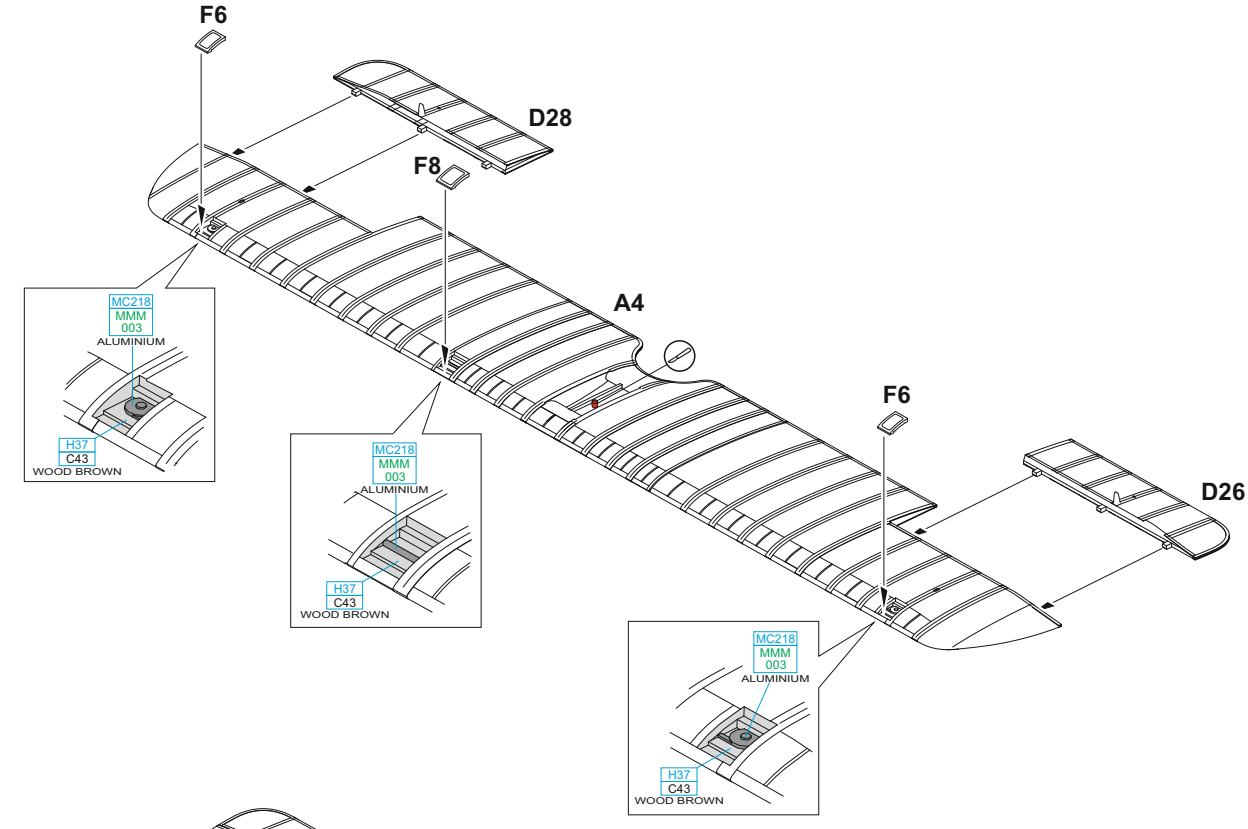

MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
H37
C43
WOOD BROWN

I


F6
D34
A6


MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
H37
C43
WOOD BROWN


H
I


F6
D28
F8
A4
F6
D26
MC218
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
H37
C43
WOOD BROWN
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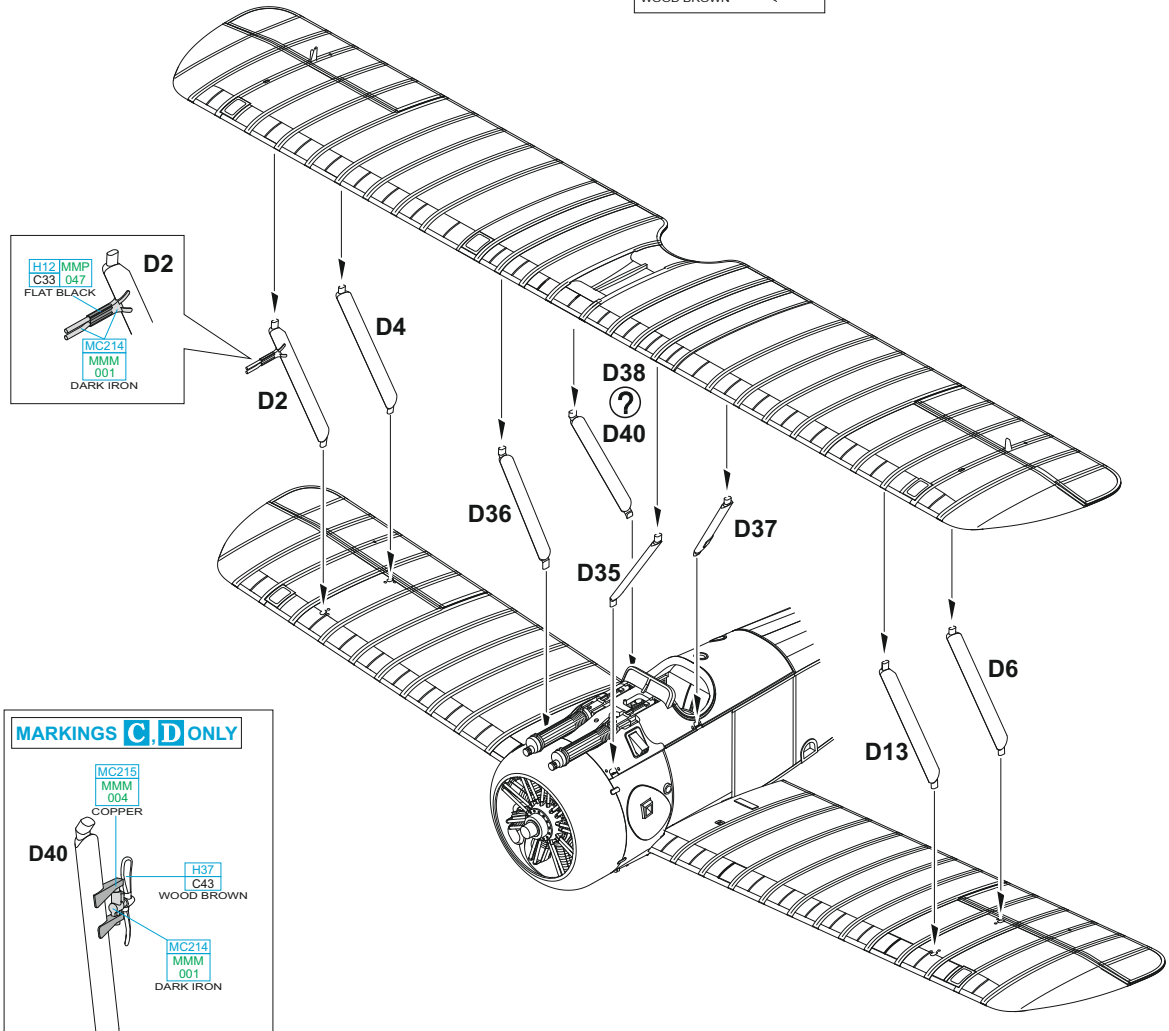
MMM
003
ALUMINIUM
H37
C43
WOOD BROWN


H12
MMP
C33
047
FLAT BLACK
MC214
MMM
001
DARK IRON
D2
D2
D4
D38
?
D40
D36
D37
D35
D6
D13

MARKINGS C, D ONLY
MC215
MMM
004
COPPER
D40
H37
C43
WOOD BROWN
MC214
MMM
001
DARK IRON

D25 - MARKING C
D32 - MARKINGS A, B, D

D25 ? D32

D7

D3 - MARKINGS B, C
D7 - MARKINGS A, D

?

D3

D5 ? D9

E47

?

D5 - MARKING C
D9 - MARKING D

MC215 MMM 004 COPPER
H37 C43 WOOD BROWN
MC214 MMM 001 DARK IRON
MC215 MMM 004 COPPER
D11 ? D12

D11 ? D12

D25 ? D32
D25 - MARKING C
D32 - MARKINGS A, B, D

D11 - MARKING A
D12 - MARKING B

H12 MMP C33 047 FLAT BLACK
H4 MMP C4 007 YELLOW
decal 56

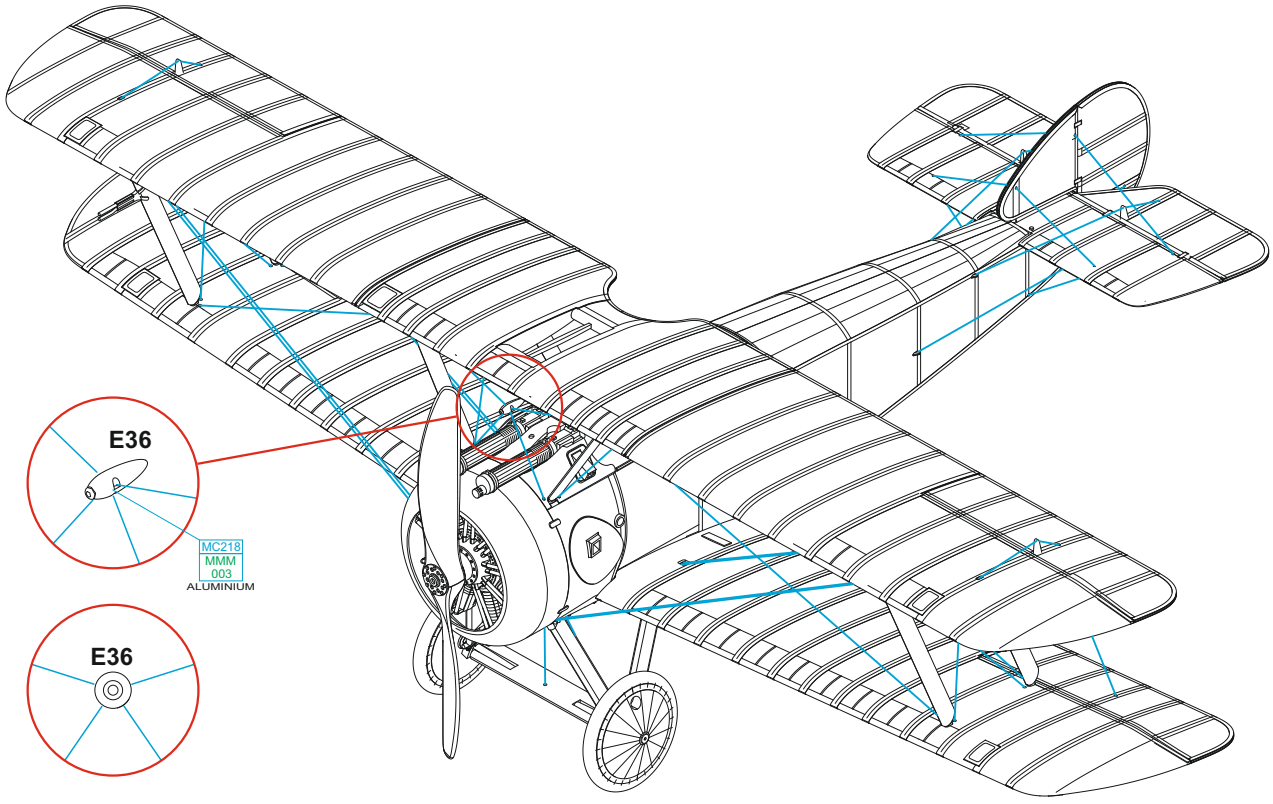
E21 4 pcs.

E48

MC218 MMM 003 ALUMINIUM

?

E30


E36
MC218
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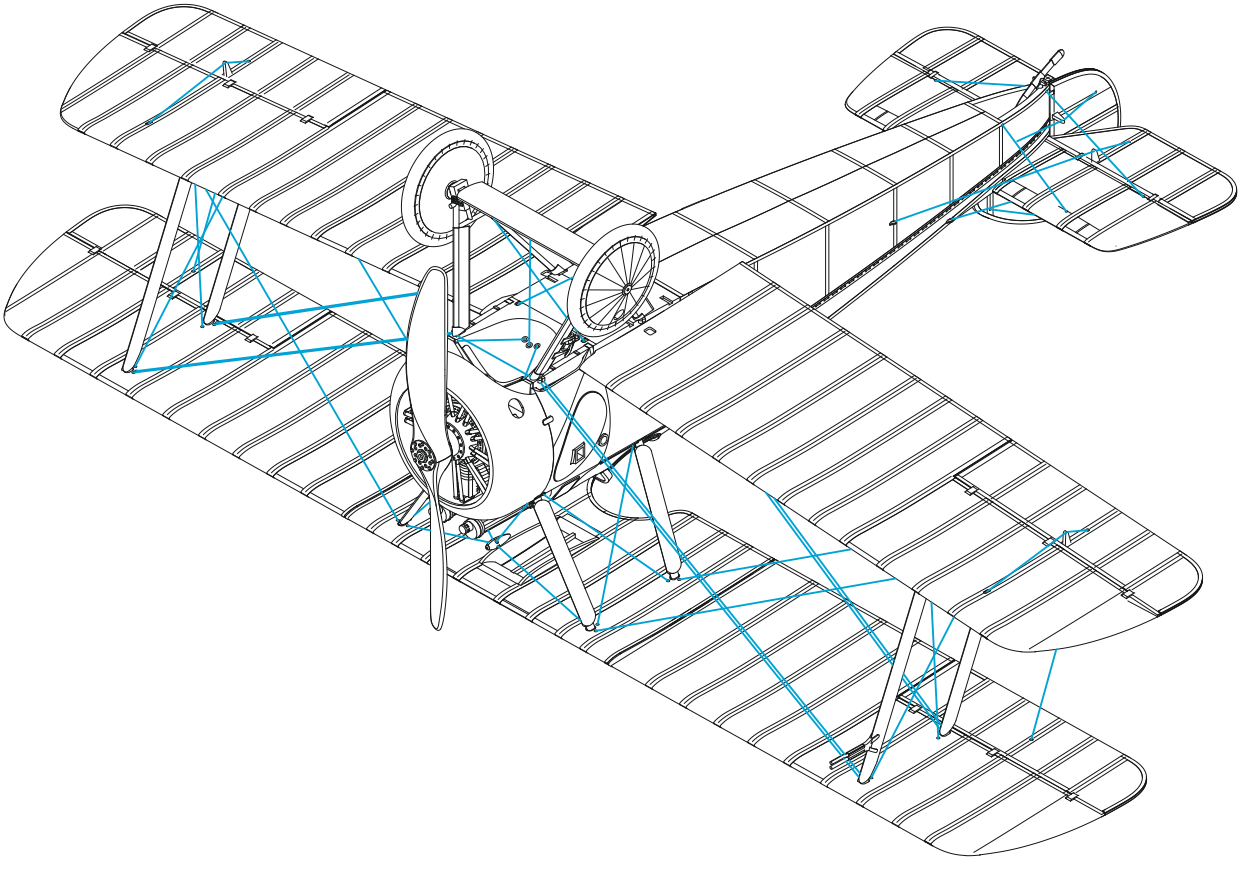
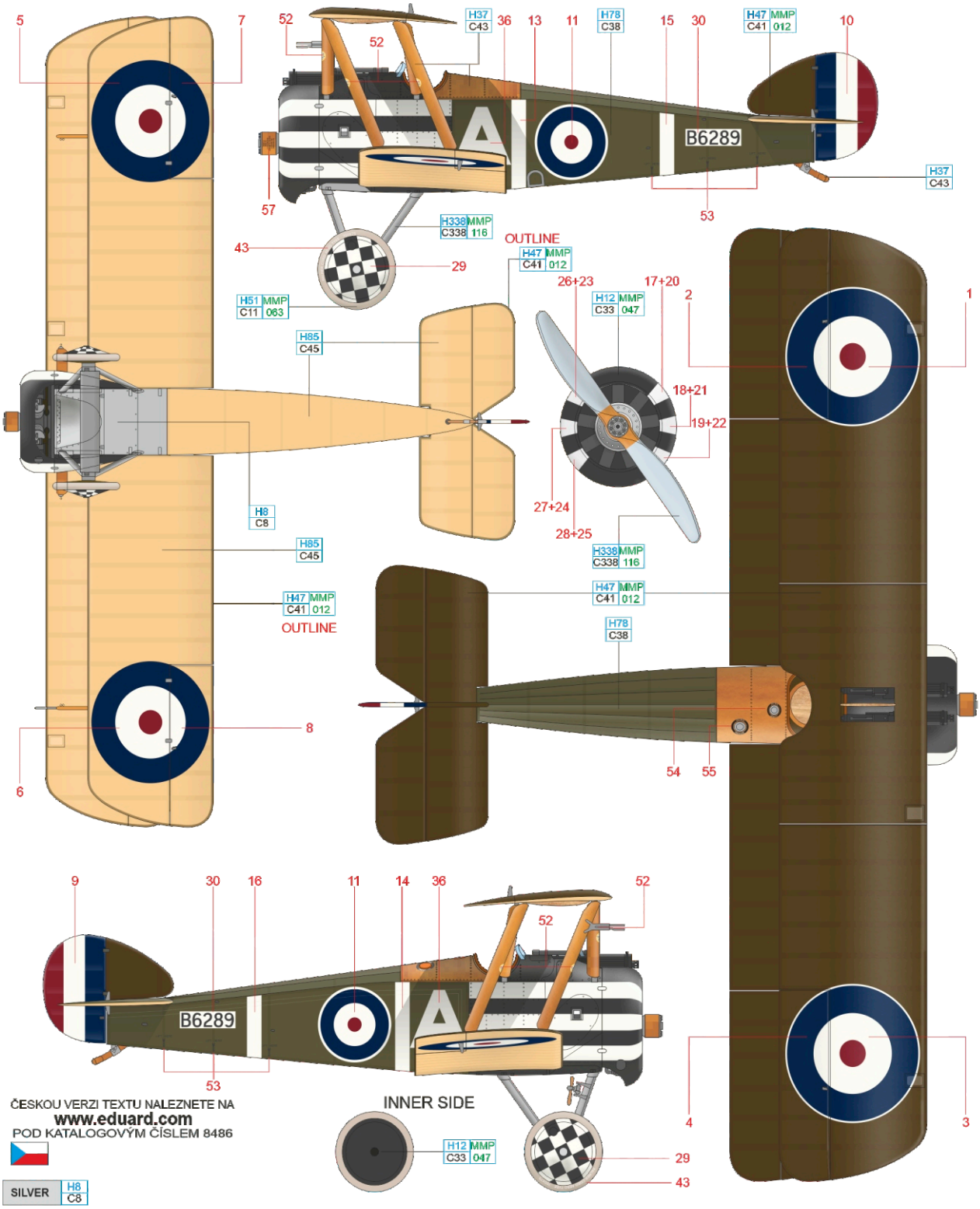
E36



A B6289, William M. Alexander, No. 10(N) Squadron RNAS, Téteghem, France, January 1918

Canadian William Melville Alexander was native from Toronto, and he was keen to learn to fly as soon as he turned out 18. As the Curtiss and Wright Brothers flying schools were at full capacity, he took a journey to Stinson school in San Antonio, Texas. There he got just 3.5 hours of training prior to his flying test. He succeeded and received Aero Club of America Certificate No. 447. In 1916, back in Canada, he was appointed a flight sub-lieutenant in the RNAS and after future training he was sent overseas to become member of No. 3 (Naval) Wing in France. There he was flying Sopwith 1½ Strutters. Four months later, his unit was disbanded, and Alexander was posted to the new No. 10 (N) Squadron to fly Sopwith Triplanes as a part of Raymond Collishaw's "Black Flight". He achieved his first victory on June 2, 1917, (shared) and he added seven more by the end of July. After the unit started to receive new Camels, Alexander achieved his first victory on this type on August 16. He was also still using Triplane for some time alongside Camel. On August 27 he was appointed an acting Flight Commander. Altogether he achieved 23 victories, most of them classified as Out of Control (OOC) which was also the case of the only victory achieved with Camel B6289. He did not continue military service after the war and died on October 4, 1988, in Canada.



ČESKOU VERZI TEXTU NALEZNETE NA
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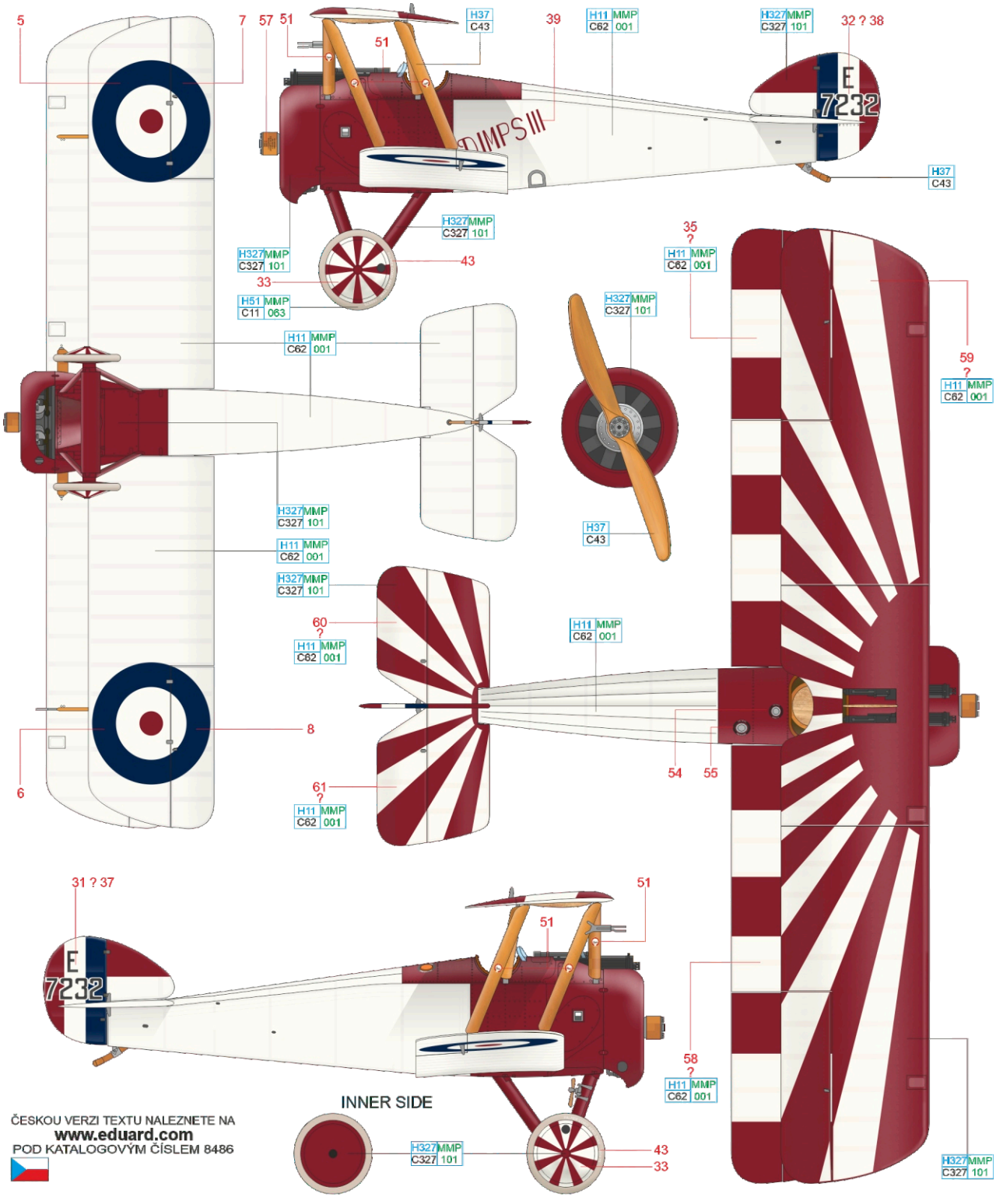
SILVER	LIGHT GULL GRAY	LIGHT GRAY	WOOD	SAIL COLOR	OLIVE DRAB	RED BROWN	BLACK
H8 C8	H51 MMP C11 063	H338 MMP C338 116	H37 C43	H85 C45	H78 C38	H47 MMP C41 012	H12 MMP C33 047

B E7232, No. 4 Flying School, Freiston, United Kingdom, 1918

This Camel was manufactured by Ruston Proctor & Co Ltd. In September 1918 and was posted to No. 4 Flying School in Freiston, where it got colorful painting of white and red colors. The upper side of the top wing obtained the motif of the rays of rising sun, while upper side of bottom wing got simple stripes of white and red color. The name Dimps was painted on the left side only probably. The site of the RNAS Freiston Shores was established in 1917 and served as a satellite base for air-weapon training for nearby RNAS Cranwell. Originally it was nothing more than a field on area of about 80 acres and was originally used for final two weeks of training of officers on the advanced flying course at RNAS Cranwell. However, its role was soon extended, and the airfield was expanded and hangars, accommodation blocks and a control tower were built. The airfield was originally known as the RNAS Gunnery School or Armament Training School and then became the School of Aerial Fighting and Bomb Dropping when the RNAS became amalgamated into the newly formed RAF in 1918. The name of the school than changed again to the No. 4 School of Aerial Fighting and Gunnery and was redesignated again as No. 4 Fighting School. The base was disbanded in March 1920.



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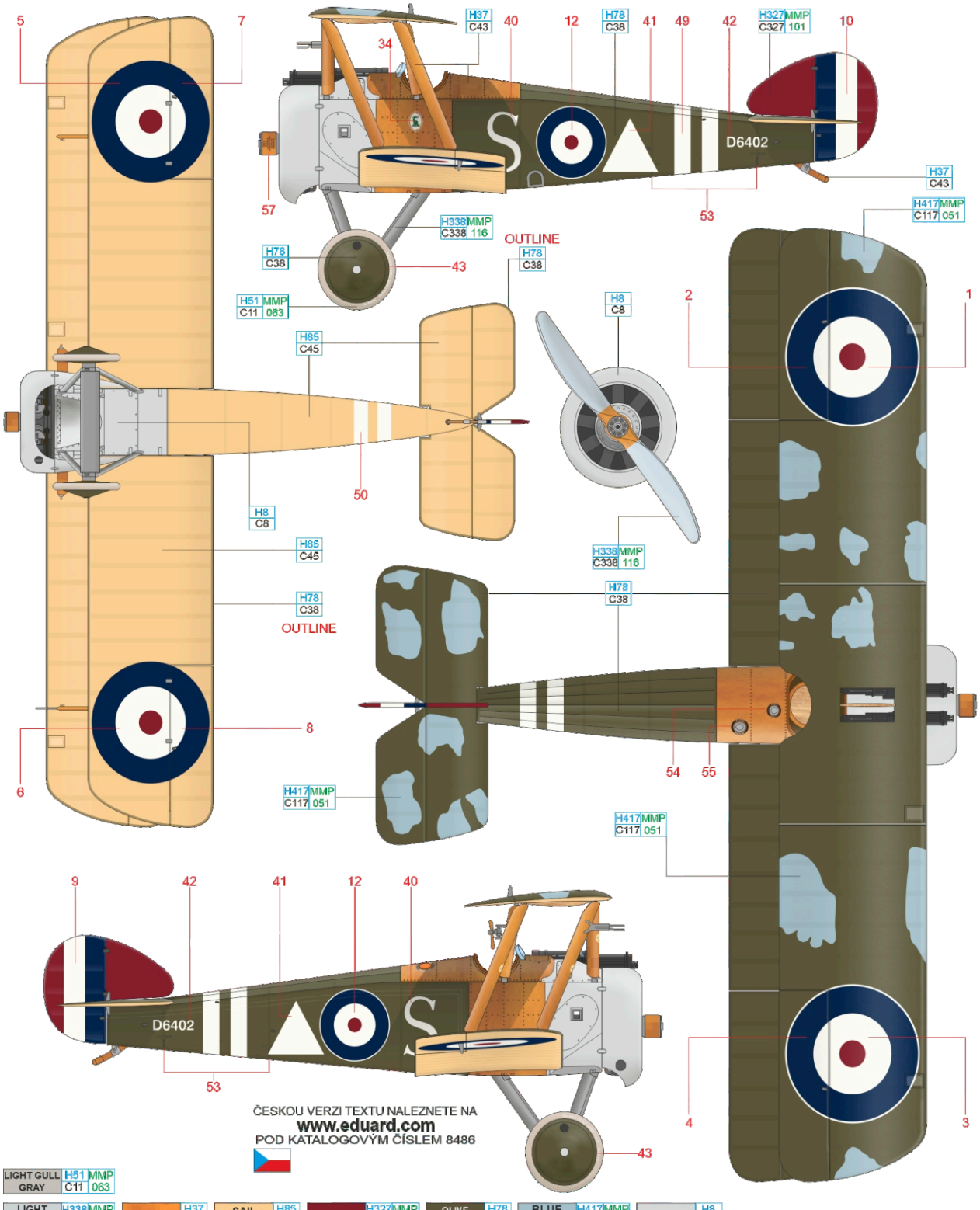
WHITE	H11 MMP C62 001
LIGHT GULL GRAY	H51 MMP C11 063
WOOD	H37 C43
RED	H327 MMP C327 101

C D6402, Henry W. Woollett, No. 43 Sqn, Avesnes-le-Comte, France, April 1918

Henry Winslow Woollett was set to follow in the footsteps of his father, who was a doctor. Henry, medical student at the outbreak of WWI, was commissioned in the Linconshire Regiment in August 1914 and took part in the Suvla Bay landings in the Dardanelles. He was transferred to the RFC in 1916 and after training he joined No. 24 Squadron RFC in November. They were flying DH.2s in France, which were getting obsolete at the time. Woollett managed to shoot down one enemy flying this "bunch of wires". After converting to DH.5s, he added for more. In August 1917 Woollett returned to England, became Flight Commander. Back to France in March 1918, he joined No. 43 Squadron with Camels. As a leader of the C Flight, he brought his score to 35 by early August. Of these victims 11 were balloons. His specialty in fighting these heavily defended targets, was the reason behind the adoption of irregular fields of very light color over the upper wing and rudder. This was to mimic the appearance of more colorful German aircraft. This additional camouflage lasted only for a couple of days before being ordered to be painted out. Some sources state white color of these fields, but on the existing photo they look somewhat darker and might be of very light blue as well. This is up to every modeler to choose.



D B5406, Lt. Sadhar H. Malik, No. 28 Squadron RFC, Droglant, France, October 1917

Sadhar Hardit Malik became the first Indian to fly as a pilot with the RFC in the WWI. He travelled to England from Punjab at the age of 14 to attend preparation school and college studies at Balliol College. After his graduation in 1915 he applied to join the RFC but was denied. He then served with the French Red Cross in 1916 as an ambulance driver and still determined to fly he applied to join the Aéronautique Militaire in 1916. When his Oxford tutor Francis Urquhart learned about it, he considered it scandalous and wrote to head of the RFC General Henderson. The intercession paid off and Malik was accepted as an air cadet. On April 6, 1917, he received a temporary commission as a second Lieutenant in the RFC and was trained as a pilot. His first assignment was with No. 26 Sqn from July 13, 1917. As an observant Sikh, he wore a turban instead of a helmet, later covered by specially designed flying helmet. Malik was transferred to No. 28 Sqn in 1917 and managed to score his first victory on October 18. Just eight days later he scored another kill but was wounded in his right leg. He was set to get back to the action after convalescence, but he was diagnosed as having an allergy to the Sopwith Camel's castor oil lubricant. Due to that he spent rest of the war flying Bristol F.2b Fighters and returned to India after the end of the hostilities to serve in the Indian Civil Service. He was very successful and held several trade and diplomatic posts, namely as Indian Ambassador to France. He died on October 31, 1985.