



# THE KAPA KOLLECTOR

Issue No. 48

Louis N. Buffardi, Editor

December 2004

## AN ILLUSTRATIVE LIFE BY WILLIAM W. WYLAM

I was born in Chicago, Illinois, 1915, and my childhood was spent in the Chicago area. At that time, my father was a civilian flight instructor of aviation cadets for the U. S. Signal Corps at Rantoul Field, Rantoul, Illinois. After the Armistice, we lived

and its promotion of skilled craftsmanship were accepted by all of its members. A large number of its "graduates" became leaders in their major occupations. As a club, we shared our views, tips, tool use, photographs, drawings, etc., which

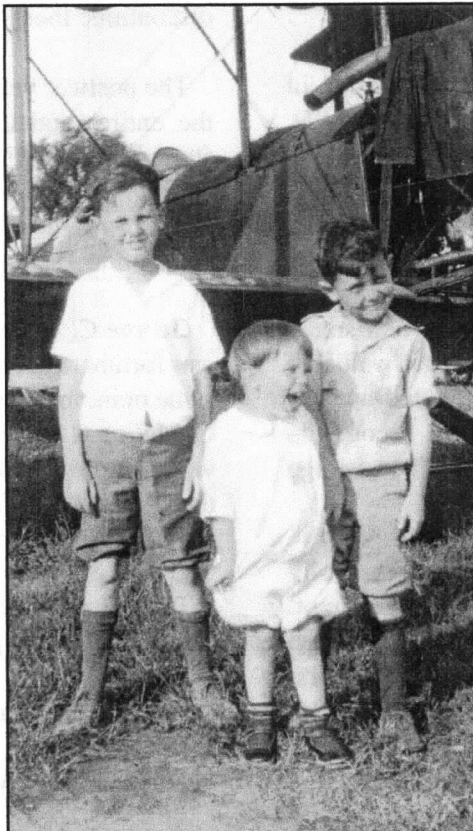
### RENEWAL TIME! ✓

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near the Checkerboard Airport, which was at First Avenue and Roosevelt Road, Maywood, Illinois. It is now the site of the massive VA hospital.

developed in the formation of the AMLA newsletter. The original newsletters were ditto copies, and later J. L. Hudson Company printed the newsletter.

I started modeling about 1924 and I built a number of twin pushers and single tractors. After several visits to scale model exhibits, I became deeply interested in this fascinating hobby. My source of information was the aviation column of the Chicago Tribune. The building of these solid models, of different scales, provided a wealth of experience and education. Looking back, my early models were crude and rough. The only tools that I had were razor blades, knife, hand drill, and sandpaper block. The wood was scraps from home construction sites.



**This 1923 photo shows Bill on the left with his brothers Jack and Bud. From the background, it is easy to discern why aviation had such a great influence!**

My own experience in craftsmanship came from my desire to be a winner at the AMLA national contest. Almost every AMLA member, thanks to Merrill Hamburg, had this goal. In 1929, I came close to the winning circle; I lost by several points to Lawrence McClellan's Stinson SM-2A model. He had an upholstered cabin in his model; my model of the Lockheed Vega had the best paint job with a painted interior. This Lockheed Vega, and several other models were donated to the Smithsonian.

Later, my models became more realistic. I used photographs to make corrections and to add the details. Finding these photographs was a great chore; the aviation editor of the Chicago Tribune was of some help. More than once, I had a set of good drawings but no photographs or a set of photographs with poor drawings. The drawings in the Chicago Tribune were crude and the drawings in another early publication were of better quality. Believe it or not, this early publication (title is long forgotten) was sponsored by the Methodist Church of Illinois.

At the nationals, I was fortunate to meet Arthur J. Cravens of La Porte, Indiana and a number of other top craftsmen. Art Cravens was one of the early judges at the nationals and he was one of the first scale airplane modelers. He helped Merrill Hamburg start the AMLA. In order to make a living by building models, Art became involved in naval ship models and he would bid on U. S. Navy ship model contracts. He never was out of work, even during the depression years. He would start the project by constructing the hull, superstructures and cabins. All the rest of

the required accessories were built by eager volunteers. Arthur was past 80 when he passed away in 1946; there were over 50 or more modelers at his funeral.

About 1925, I joined the AMLA (Airplane Model League of America) as one of its charter members. This club was sponsored by the J. L. Hudson Company, an upper class department store in Detroit. The managing director of the AMLA was Merrill Hamburg, an avid modeler and a great promoter. AMLA became very popular among those who were already in the hobby. The rules during the early days of AMLA

The steady growth in the AMLA membership list resulted in the creation of a newsletter. After Lindbergh's flight, the growth in membership was enormous and the AMLA news letter was expanded into a magazine format. In 1928, the J.L. Hudson Company decided to discontinue

connection with the AMLA because of internal business problems. Shortly afterward, Bernarr McFadden of McFadden Enterprises, a New York publishing house, rescued the faltering AMLA. The AMLA original magazine was *The American Boy*, which was renamed *Open Road For Boys* by the McFadden publishing group. In 1932 both McFadden Enterprises and the AMLA Club fell upon hard times. The AMLA was discontinued and the publishing rights to *Open Road For Boys* magazine were sold to George C. Johnson. The *Open Road For Boys* title was then changed to *Universal Model Airplane News*.

Heavy inked lines were required for printing early drawings in the AMLA newsletter. Not all of the early drawings were printed by ALMA or *The American Boy*. When George C. Johnson acquired the publishing rights, he received the contents of the AMLA files. Several of the unpublished drawings for ALMA were published by *Universal Model Airplane News*. The Polish Fighter drawing, published by *Universal Model Airplane News* in 1932, was actually drawn about 1930.

In 1930, I was very fortunate to learn the basics of mechanical drawing from an excellent instructor, Fred H. Zimmerman. The model building hobby came to an end when I became deeply involved in airplane drawings. At the 1930 AMLA nationals, an organized meeting of model craftsmen was held to discuss the possible sources of detailed drawings and photographs. This was a serious and mysterious problem for a large number of model craftsmen. Art Cravens was the chairman of this lively and valuable event. Without the detailed drawings and photographs, it was necessary to locate the actual airplane, record the measurements, and photograph all details. The average modeler could not afford these special trips.

From the early days of the AMLA events, I personally knew Nicholas Loftus-Price and Charles Hampton Grant. Nicholas was aviation editor for the McFadden Publications and *Open Road For Boys*, and was the first editor for *Universal Model Airplanes News*. About 1931, Nicholas returned to McFadden Publications and Charles Hampton Grant became the editor of *Universal Model Airplane News*. After the Art Cravens meeting, I approached Nicholas with a plan of publishing detailed drawings with cross sections and photographs. The editor liked the whole plan but he painted a grim picture of the future. In 1932, I reopened the publishing plan with Charles Hampton Grant. Both he and George C. Johnson, the publisher, became interested but *Model Airplane News* could not support this type of journalism. At that time, the deep business depression was worldwide. George did say that when the advertising income was sufficient, he would approve publishing only three-view drawings. Later, if *Model Airplane News* could support the complete original

publishing plan, I would be notified. From 1932 to 1940, the drawing work was irregular, sometimes with no pay or being placed on hold for six months or longer.

During the summer months of 1933 and 1935, I was a volunteer assistant to Paul Garber of the Smithsonian Aviation Collection. This experience cemented a lifelong friendship. While I was in college, I was a part-time designer for Cleveland, Comet, and General Models; all were model kit manufacturers.

Between 1941 and 1948, advertising revenues soared, leading to the acceptance in 1946 of my original 1930 publishing scheme. Within a year after the start-up, George C. Johnson, the publisher of *Model Airplane News*, passed away. His death changed the entire picture

About 1948 there was a serious business recession that affected the entire hobby industry. Many retailers, manufacturers, and aviation publishers were forced to discontinue their operations.

The postwar years after 1950 had the greatest growth in the entire model airplane history. This business boom started about 1950 and peaked about 1970. I left *Model Airplane News* in 1970 because of my heavy workload at NASA; I retired as senior electrical engineer from the space program in 1984.

George C. Johnson was a man of vision and integrity. I was fortunate to know this extraordinary person. I have the same opinions about Charles Hampton Grant and Howard G. McEntee. Personally, I enjoyed the lifelong relationship with Charlie and Howard. Also during the thirty odd years that I was with *Model Airplane News*, I was fortunate to meet many outstanding aviation figures and modelers.

This is entirely from my personal memory, as I kept no diary and have forgotten many events, dates, and names.

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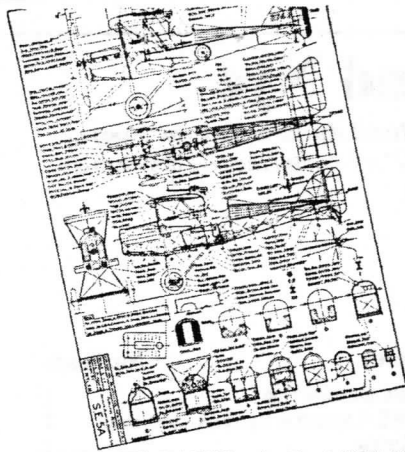
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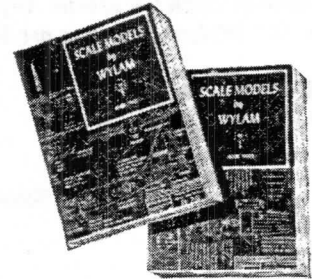
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The scale drawings in this book (as well as many other fine scale drawings from the Model Airplane News archives) are available through the Model Airplane News Plans Service. The Wylam drawings are 17" x 21", and the Nye drawings are 22" x 34". Wylam drawings are \$2.50 per sheet and Nye drawings are \$3.50 per sheet.

## William Wylam

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Northrop P-61 Black Widow	1
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Hawker Mark IIC Hurricane	4
Hawker Sea Fury XI FB-11 Navy Carrier	4
Helldiver USN Carrier SB2C-3	4
Loening US Amphibians Pts. I & II	8
Martin Mariner PBM-3C	4
Messerschmitt ME-262A	4
North American B-45	4
North American F-82E	4
Northrop P-61 Black Widow	4
Republic P-43	4
Supermarine Spitfire	4
Standard Model J	2
Thomas Morse S4E	4
U.S.S. Los Angeles	4
USAF B-26D (3-view)	1
U.S. Navy Patrol Bomber PV-1 Ventura	4
U.S. Navy Torpedo Bomber TBM-3	4

Model Airplane News' current Plans Directory of full-size model airplane plans is available for \$2. This is a comprehensive list of plans with photographs from construction articles featured monthly in Model Airplane News. Each construction plan (and each scale drawing featured above) is an individually reproduced high-quality blue-line print from the master mylar, which was made from the original drawing. Plans consist of one or more sheets and are reproduced professionally by the Model Airplane News Plans Service.

This 1986 MAN ad for William Wylam and Willis Nye drawings is typical of the time. Note that some Wylam designs involved as many as 10 sheets! (Courtesy Dave Kingman.)



## FOREWORD

What can one possibly say about the Wylam drawings—or their creator—that does them justice? It was in the mid-thirties that Bill Wylam inauspiciously launched in *Model Airplane News* what was to become a unique 30-year (so far) author-magazine relationship which by far outdates perhaps all aeronautical series-published material. In fact, his work pre-dates most aviation magazines! Other people have prepared excellent scale drawings, but for sustained quality, details and sheer numbers, the aptly named Master-plans are in a class by themselves. Considering the many hundreds—individual plates run into four figures—of subjects, Wylam's work, covering well over a quarter century of research and drawing, runs into many years of time. And over the full range of this entire output, probably only his first subject—an air-cooled-engined Polish fighter, we believe done at what must have been a tender age—might be termed crude by Wylam's quickly established and assiduously maintained standards. In this fantastic output, a nitpicking critic might find a very occasional mathematical (not drafting) error in an accumulation of many measurements, but this is mentioned, and should be mentioned, only to reassure ourselves that the man is human. As the exception proves the rule, so does such a hard-to-find instance verify the awe-inspiring values of what is a comprehensive history of the airplane, "written" with a drawing pen.

No book can be called "the Wylam book." It can be called a Wylam book. Many books such as this would be required to present the complete Wylam—and a volume that could be accurately designated "the complete Wylam" would be a treasure we probably never will find. In compiling a Wylam book, therefore, one is faced with a

monumental selection problem. Wylam's SE-5's—if you include the sheets on markings—would permit only four such-sized subjects (not sections!) in a book of this size, hardly typical of Wylam's far-ranging coverage. The tour de force that is his Stinson family, would fill more than half a book.

So what we have done is to pick out some of "the best of Wylam." That word "some" means only representative. You will find convenient sections, each section, again, including only some of the numerous, typical subjects in the few categories compacted between these covers. Covering the sweep of aircraft types and vintages, you will find a rewarding collection of World War I types, of World War II, and interesting types from between the wars. Hardly anyone realizes, we suppose, that Wylam turned out many valuable drawings of aeronautical history's famous engines—their being collected here no doubt will delight the collector and the historian, as well as any modeler who takes seriously his scale jobs. And there are other surprises!

Wylam Number 1—for we hope that a Number 2, and a Number 3, and . . . will be demanded—is, even only hot off the press, a rare volume in that there is nothing quite like it in the world. It is with a sense of humility that we presume to collect this small bit of Wylam and to call it "The Best of Wylam."

In reality, there is no best of Wylam. The priceless file of Wylam originals is proof that, what we could not include in this volume, is every bit as good as the fine items we did select. We take comfort from the fact, however, that there is nothing better than the collection of plates in this book, by Wylam—or anyone else! —BILL WINTER

## FOREWORD

What is it that leads some of us to the "pack rat" habit of gathering up and saving every bit of aeronautica that we can lay our hands on?

It is said by some that anyone who constantly desires to look back to the "good old days" is neurotic and is being driven by an unnatural longing to return to the womb. Obviously whoever came up with this conjecture is a person who lives only in the present and will never understand or appreciate the feeling of having lived at another time in addition to his own existence. Through the media of gathering, compiling, and contemplating data out of the Golden Era, the age of classic machinery, we can at least in a small way, taste and feel some of what has gone on before us.

Having been an aeromodeler for the past 36 years, this back-to-the-wombist falls into a group known as the "Plan Savers." We salt away 3-views of rare designs so we can say, "You mean you've never heard of International Aviation's twin-tailed mid-wing pusher built in May of 1938? Here, let me show you . . ." "We carefully preserve and never cut apart construction plans as we build models from kits or plan services, some now long out of print. We beg, borrow, steal, and if forced, even buy plans for airplanes that "we're going to build someday for sure . . . just as soon as we get the time . . ."

Anyone who is a member of this collector group is almost sure to be a Wylam fan. Our earliest Wylam is a Model 220 Waco Taperwing, published in the December 1933 issue of *Model Airplane News*. As far as we know, Bill's drawings have been published exclusively in *Model Airplane News* ever since. In 22 out of the past 27 years, Bill has produced over 130 different airplane drawings, all published in *M.A.N.*

Wylam's drawings, along with those of only a few other specialists, such as Nye, Nieto, Matt and Karlstrom, are characterized by a profusion of details, dimensions, color schemes, model variations and performance figures. In recent years, as the hobby of radio control and control-line scale modeling has developed to a perfection that narrows the competitive field down to a few individuals, the search for presentation material for static judging has reached the point where criticisms have been directed towards some of these men concerning the accuracy of their drawings. However, no

matter what else is said, we can be thankful that these draftsmen, artists if you will, had the desire to compile data and create these drawings, and that magazines such as *Model Airplane News* were willing to publish them.

Incidentally, it is interesting to note in looking back through all kinds of aviation magazines over the past years, that the model publications have been almost the only ones to record and thus preserve this aspect of aviation history.

This third book (one by Nye really makes it the fourth) in the current series of the BEST OF WYLAM concentrates on two famous airplane designers and manufacturers, Stinson and Curtiss.

Starting with the Stinson Junior SM-2, Wylam created a total of 31 Stinson drawings, depicting in detail the design of 13 models, finishing with the tri-motored Model U airliner. These were published off and on over a three year period, from 1958 to 1961.

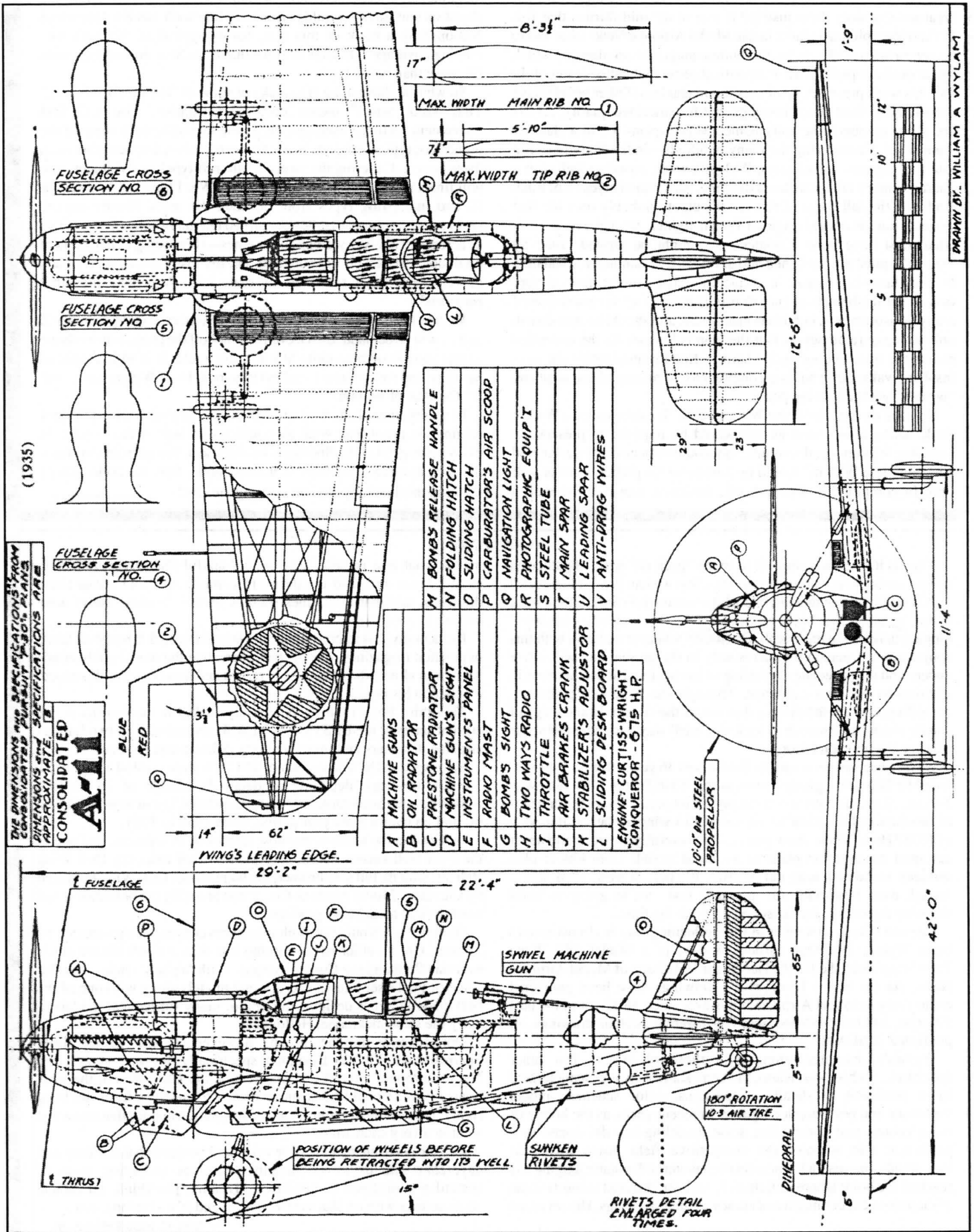
Included in the series is the most famous of all Stinsons, and one of the most well-known nonmilitary planes of all time, the Gull Wing Reliant; with its full size brother, the huge model Gull Wing produced by Cleveland Model Airplane Co., it was probably the best known and most desired model ever produced.

Obviously, it would take volumes to cover every design created by Stinson. On the other hand, nothing less than a small library could ever handle the many Curtiss designs. With Wylam's help, we offer some of the lesser known and unusual models along with one of the best known Curtiss designs, the first of many subsequent models to carry the same nickname, Helldiver.

Our favorite in the group, however, is the stubby little Sparrowhawk F9C-2. Designed specifically for use aboard the Navy's airborne aircraft carriers such as the USS Macon, the little Sparrowhawks could hook on or detach themselves from the huge rigid LTA's while in flight . . . an era in aviation history that came and went in a very short time.

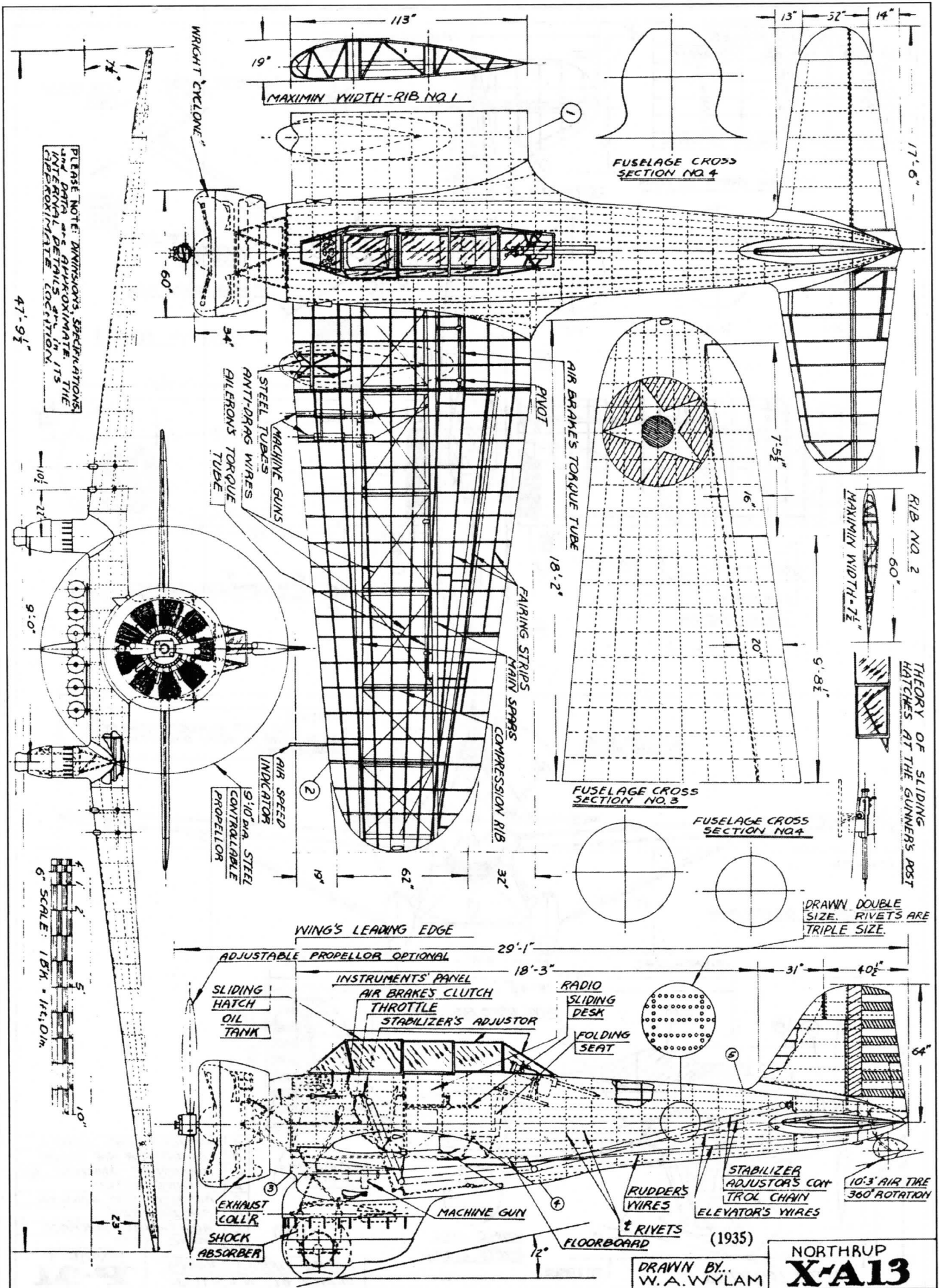
So, get out your mental slide rules and proportional dividers and daydream with us as we imagine ourselves recreating some of yesterday's airplanes in miniature. Hmmm, just think, no cabane struts to fuss with on that cute F9C-2 . . . and it's a biplane, too . . . —WM. C. NORTHROP, JR.

These forewords from the Wylam design books, penned by notables themselves, are courtesy of J.T. Durkin and Dave Kingman.



DRAWN BY: WILLIAM A WYLAN

This and the next two designs were published in 1935.



PLEASE NOTE: DIMENSIONS, SPECIFICATIONS, AND DATA ARE APPROXIMATE. THE INTERNAL DETAILS ARE IN APPROXIMATE LOCATION.

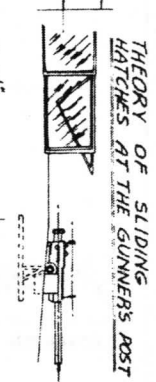
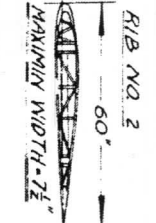
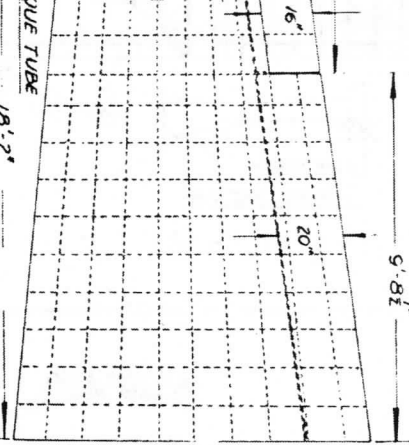
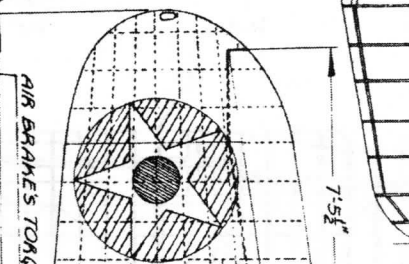
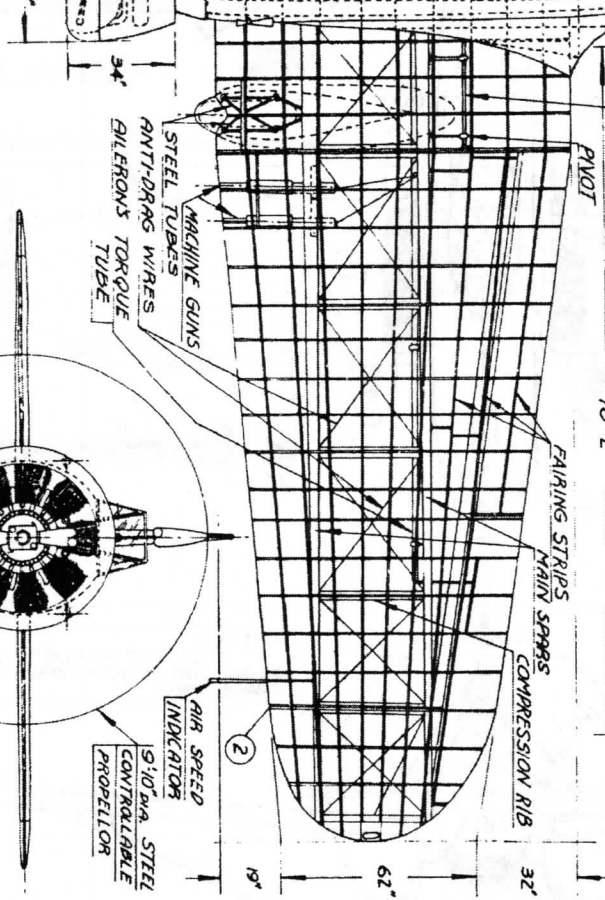
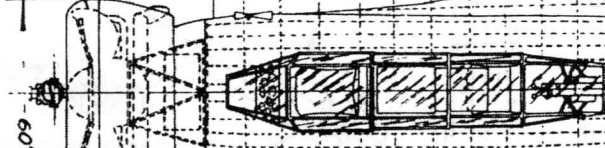
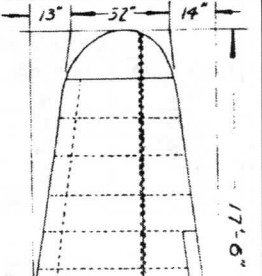
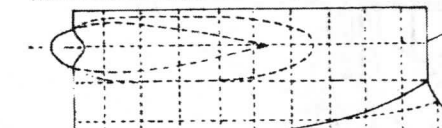
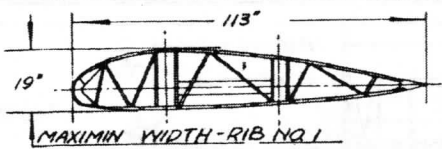
47'-9 1/2"

102"

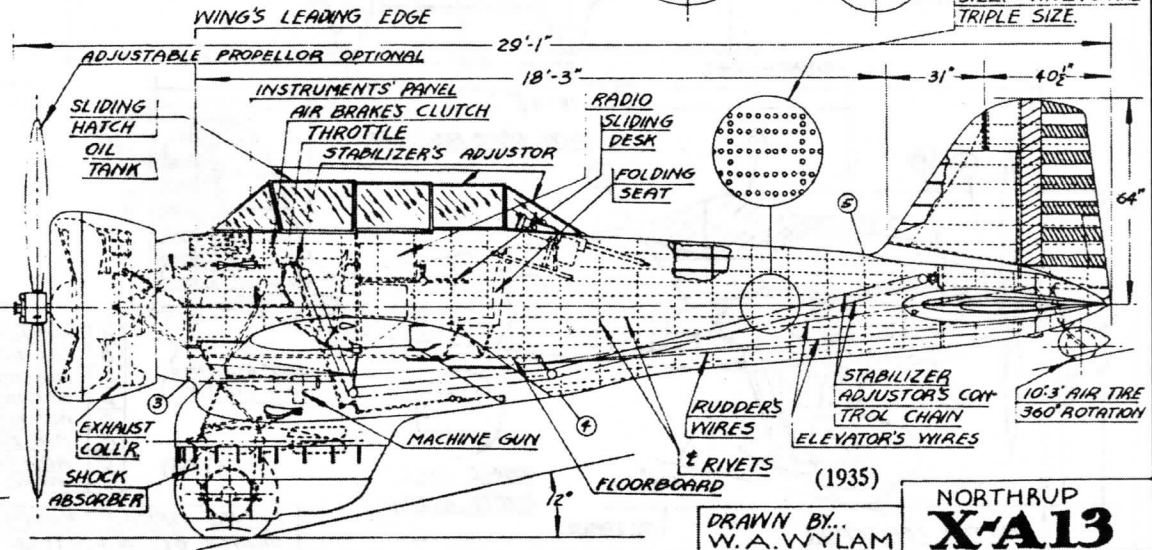
9'-0"

6" SCALE: 1/8" = 1 FT. 0 IN.

32"



DRAWN DOUBLE SIZE. RIVETS ARE TRIPLE SIZE.

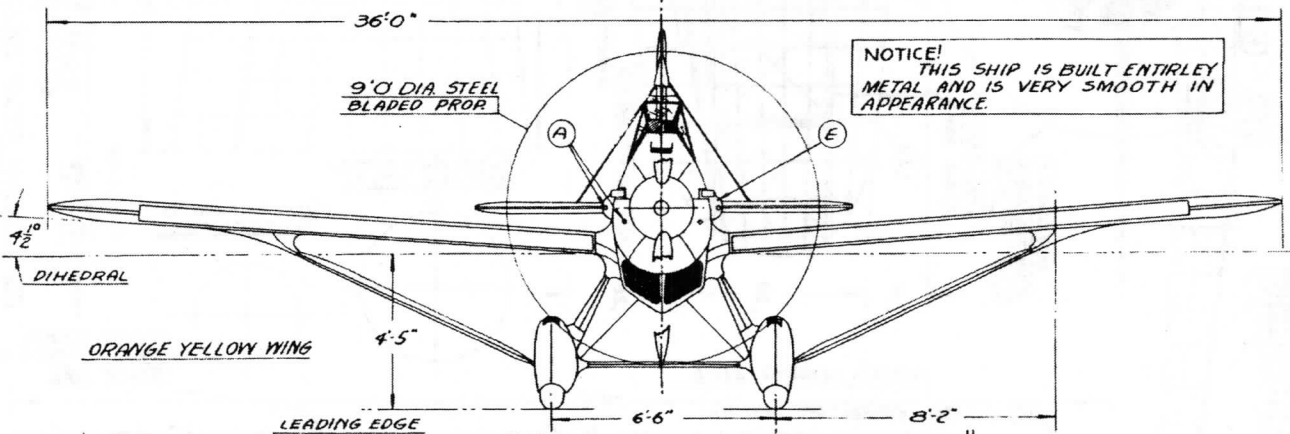
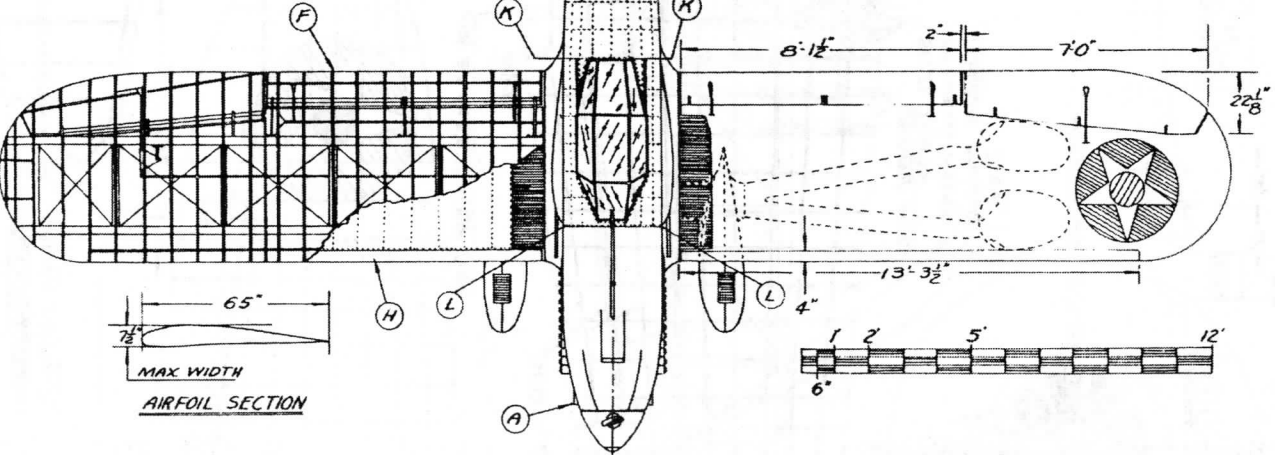
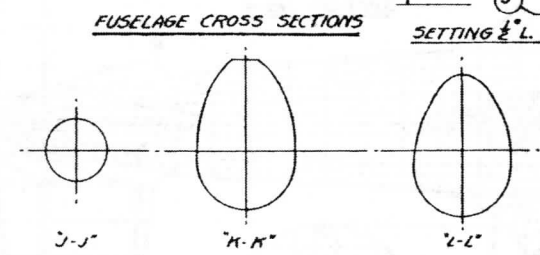
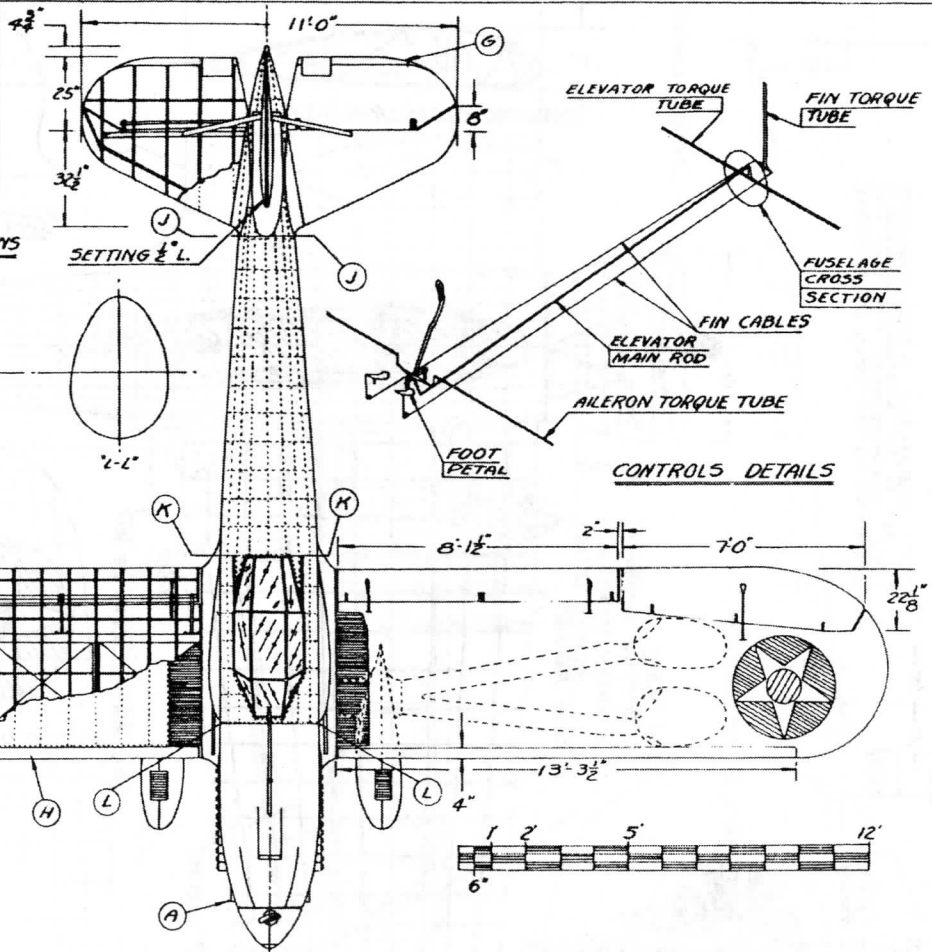


(1935)  
DRAWN BY W.A. WYLAM  
**NORTHROP X-13**

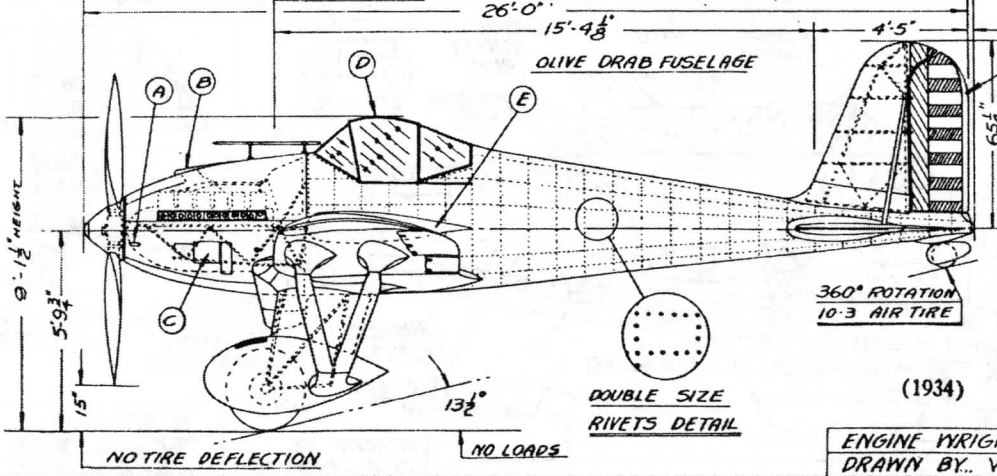


VARIOUS SCALES		
WING SPAN	SCALES	ENLARGED
6 3/4"	3/16"	0
13 1/2"	3/8"	1
20 1/4"	9/16"	2
27"	3/4"	3

USE U.S. ARMY COLOR SCHEME

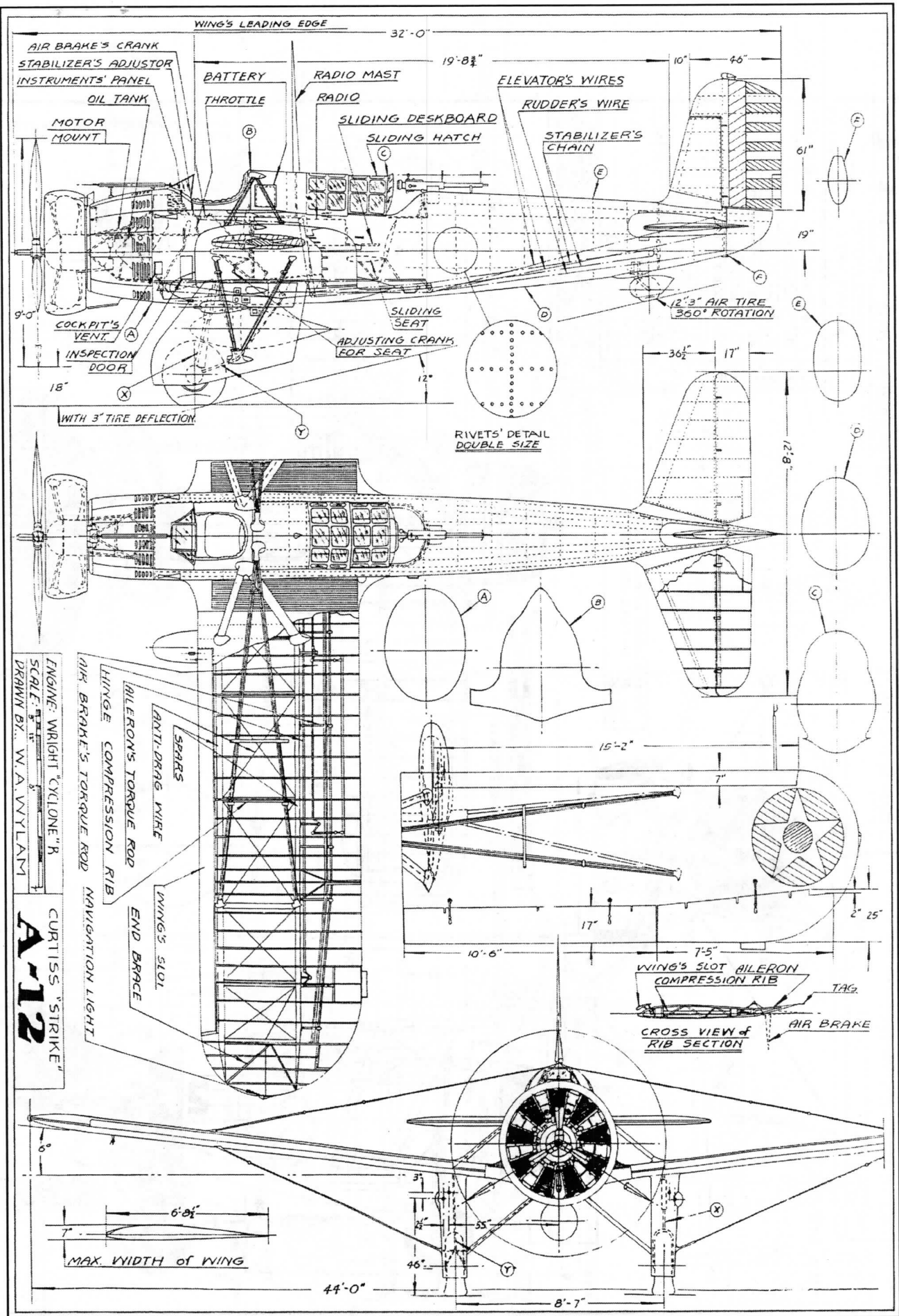


**NOTICE!**  
THIS SHIP IS BUILT ENTIRELY METAL AND IS VERY SMOOTH IN APPEARANCE.



- A MACHINE GUNS' SNOOTS
- B CARBURATOR AIR SCOOP
- C AIRCOOLER - MACHINE GUN
- D SLIDING HATCH
- E MACHINE GUN HOUSING
- F AIR BRAKES
- G ADDITIONAL SURFACE
- H WING SLOTS

(1934)  
ENGINE WRIGHT "CONQUER"  
DRAWN BY... W.A. WYLAM  
**SWIFT P-31**



ENGINE: WRIGHT "CYCLONE" R  
 SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"  
 DRAWN BY: W. A. WYLANI

**A-12**

CURTISS "STRIKE"

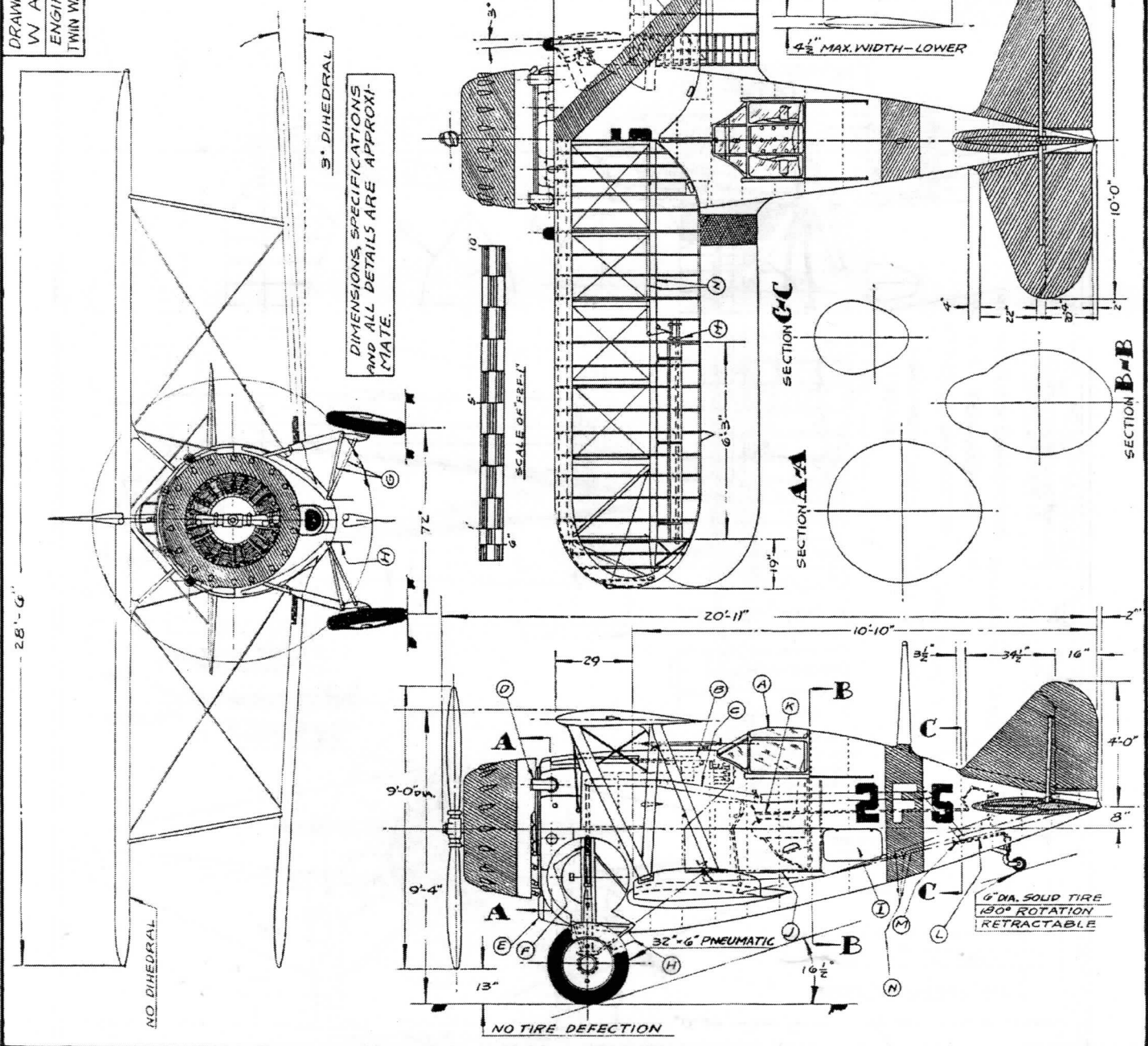
This plan appeared in the July 1936 Model Airplane News.

# GRUMMAN F2F-1

DRAWN BY:  
W. A. WYLAM  
ENGINE:  
TWIN WASP Jr. 700HP.

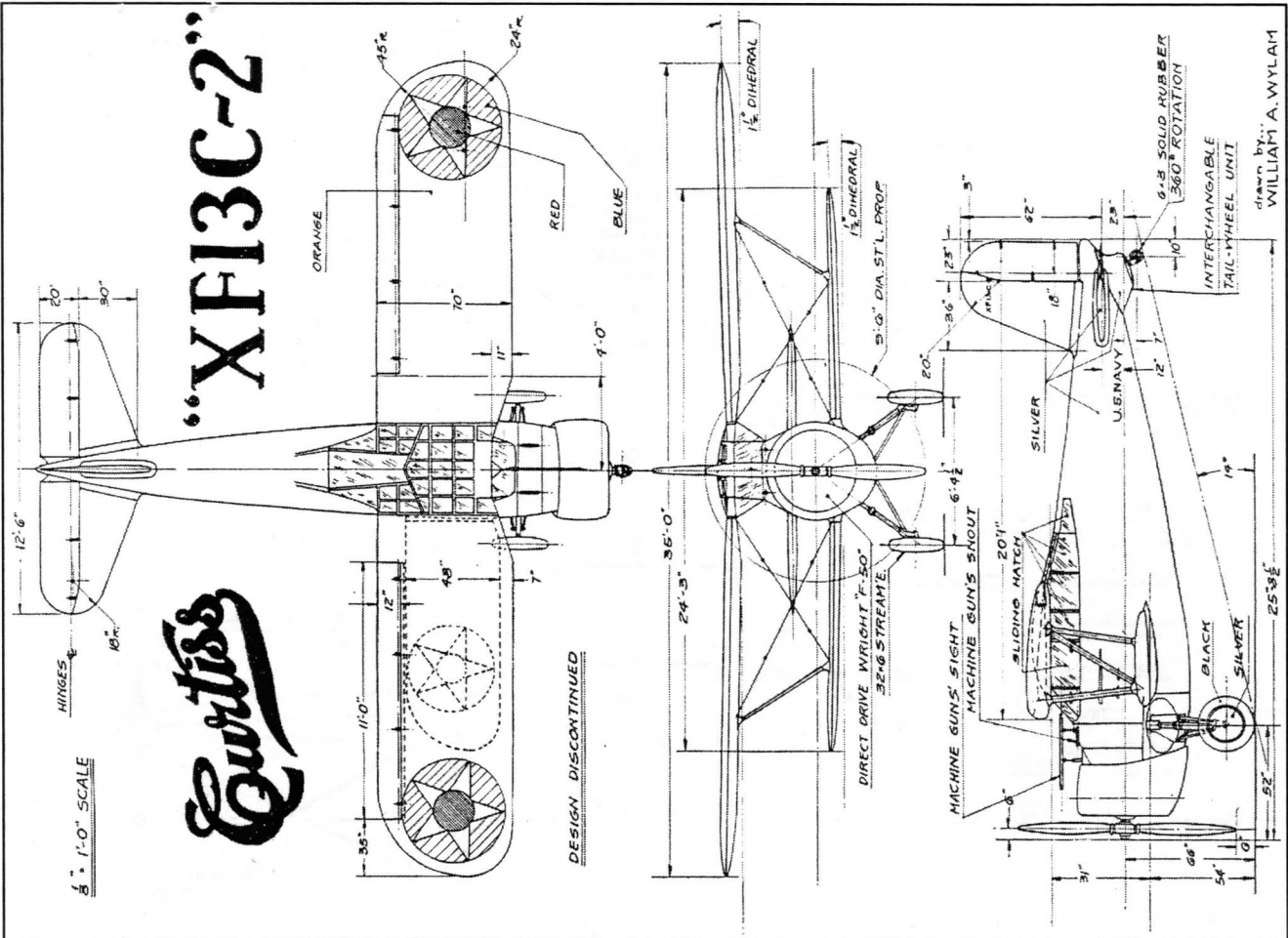
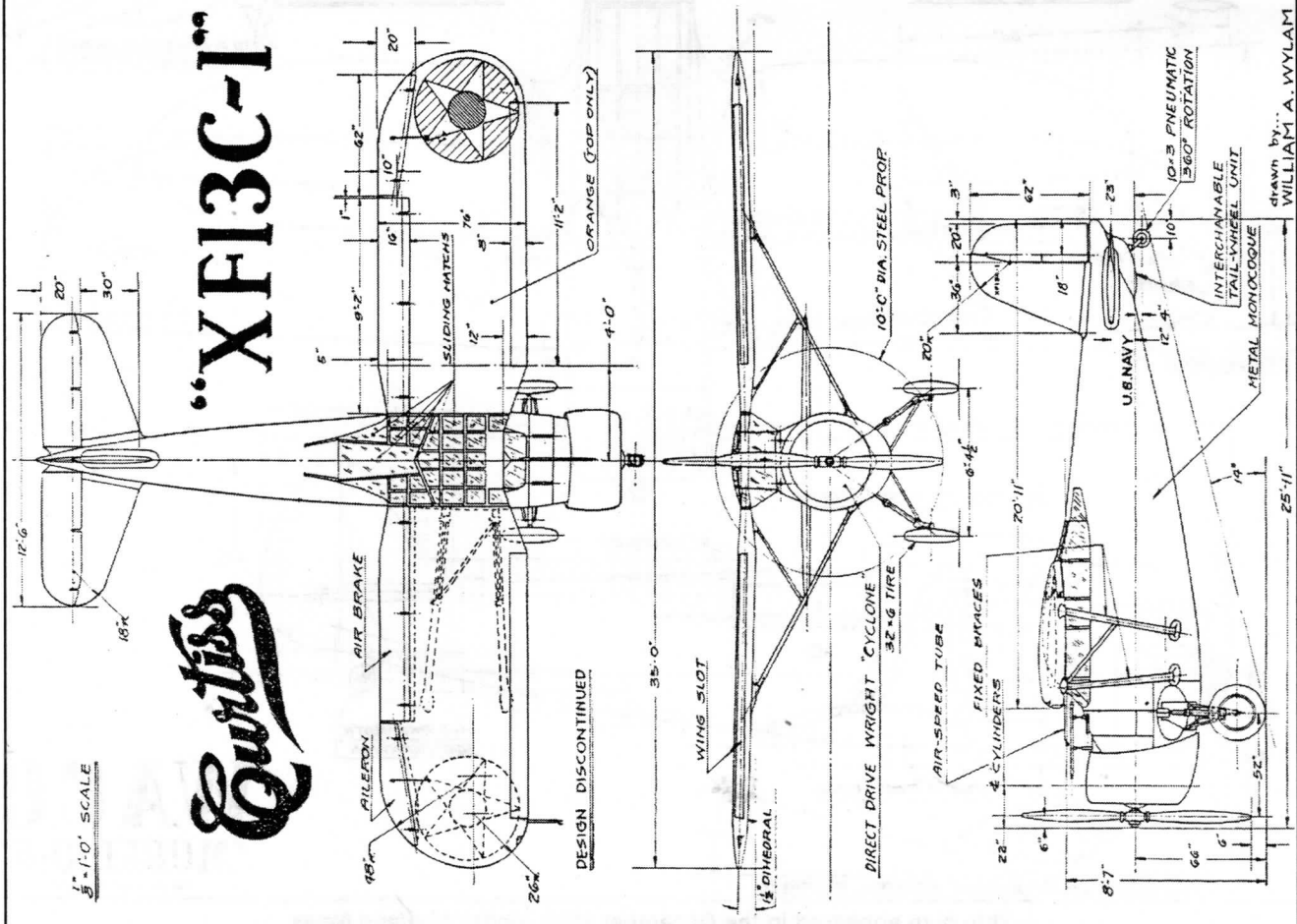
- A. SLIDING HATCH
- B. MACHINE GUN
- C. RETRACTING CHAIN
- D. CARBURATOR INTAKE
- E. OIL RADIATOR
- F. RETRACTING SCREW
- G. RETRACTING DRAG TRUSS
- H. RETRACTING COWL
- I. LIFERAFTS COMPARTMENT
- J. FLOORBOARD
- K. STABILIZER ADJUSTOR
- L. SLIDING STRAIGHT GEAR
- M. REVOLVING GEAR
- N. CONTROL WIRES
- O. PRESSED HATS

U. S. NAVY'S COLOR SCHEME  
SILVER: ENTIRE AIRPLANE EX-  
TOP of UPPER WING—ORANGE

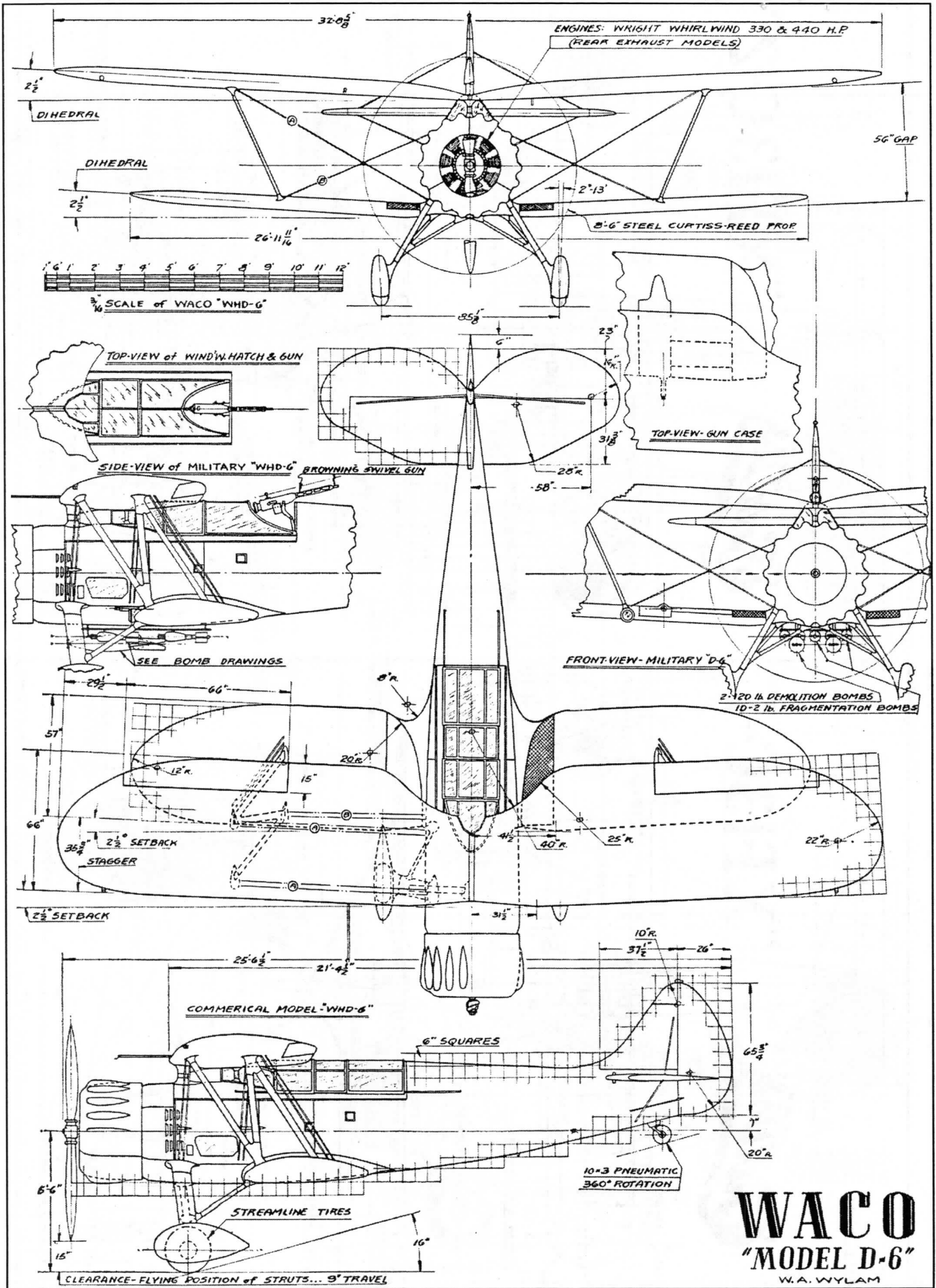


This plan appeared in the September 1937 Model Airplane News.



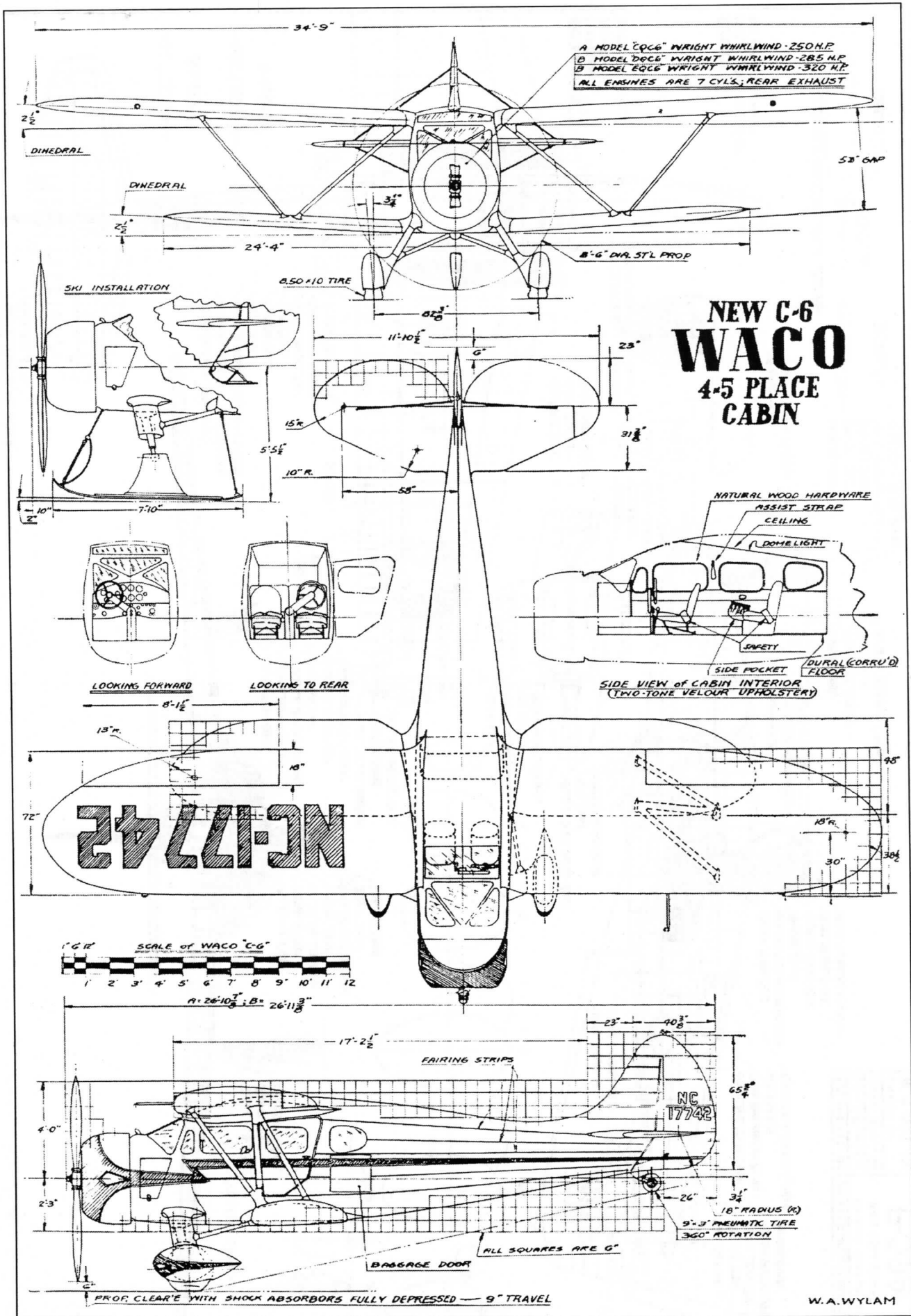


This nice double plan was featured in the October 1937 Model Airplane News.



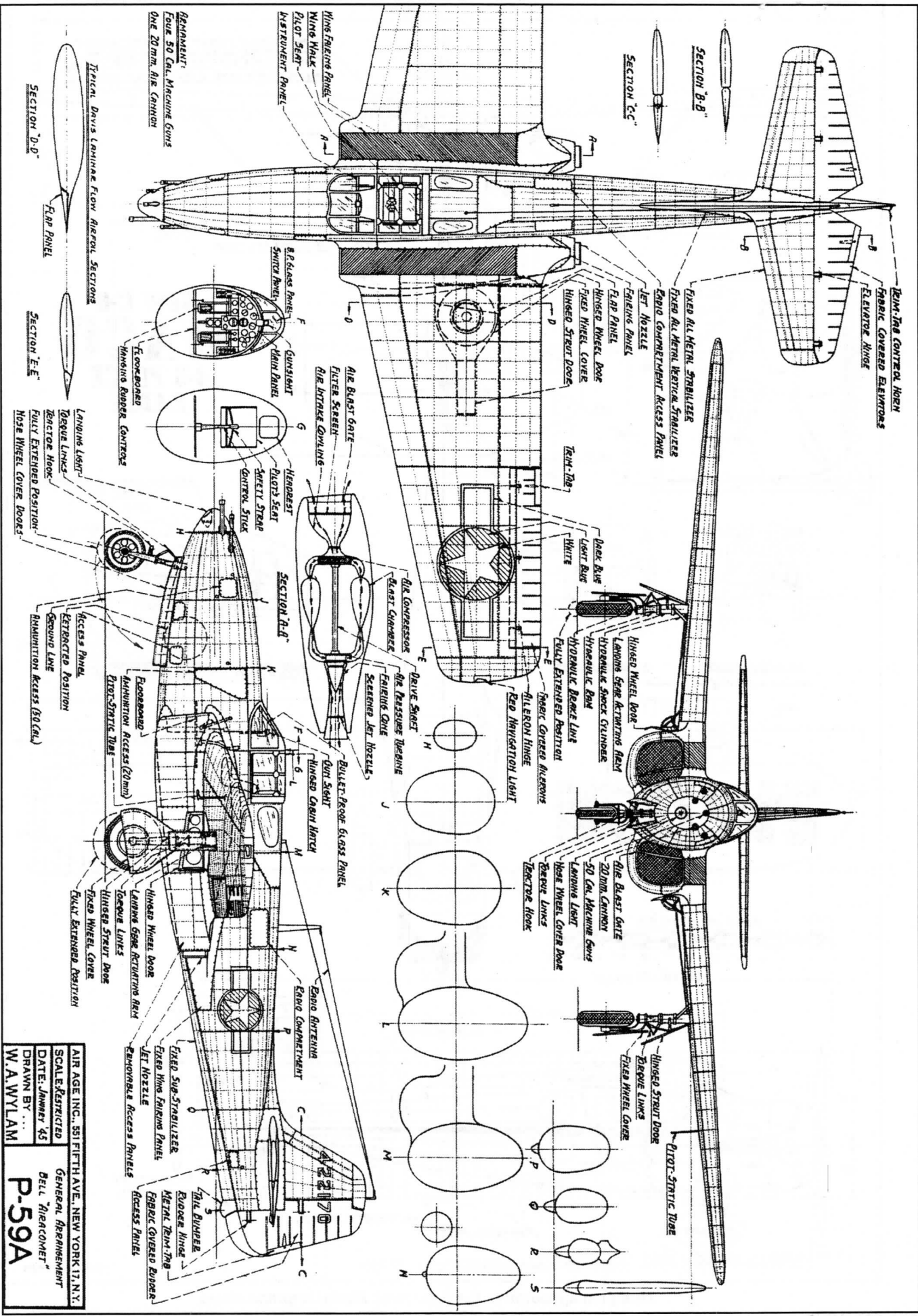
**WACO**  
**"MODEL D-6"**  
 W.A. WYLAM

This plan appeared in the December 1938 Model Airplane News.



This plan appeared in the April 1941 Model Airplane News.





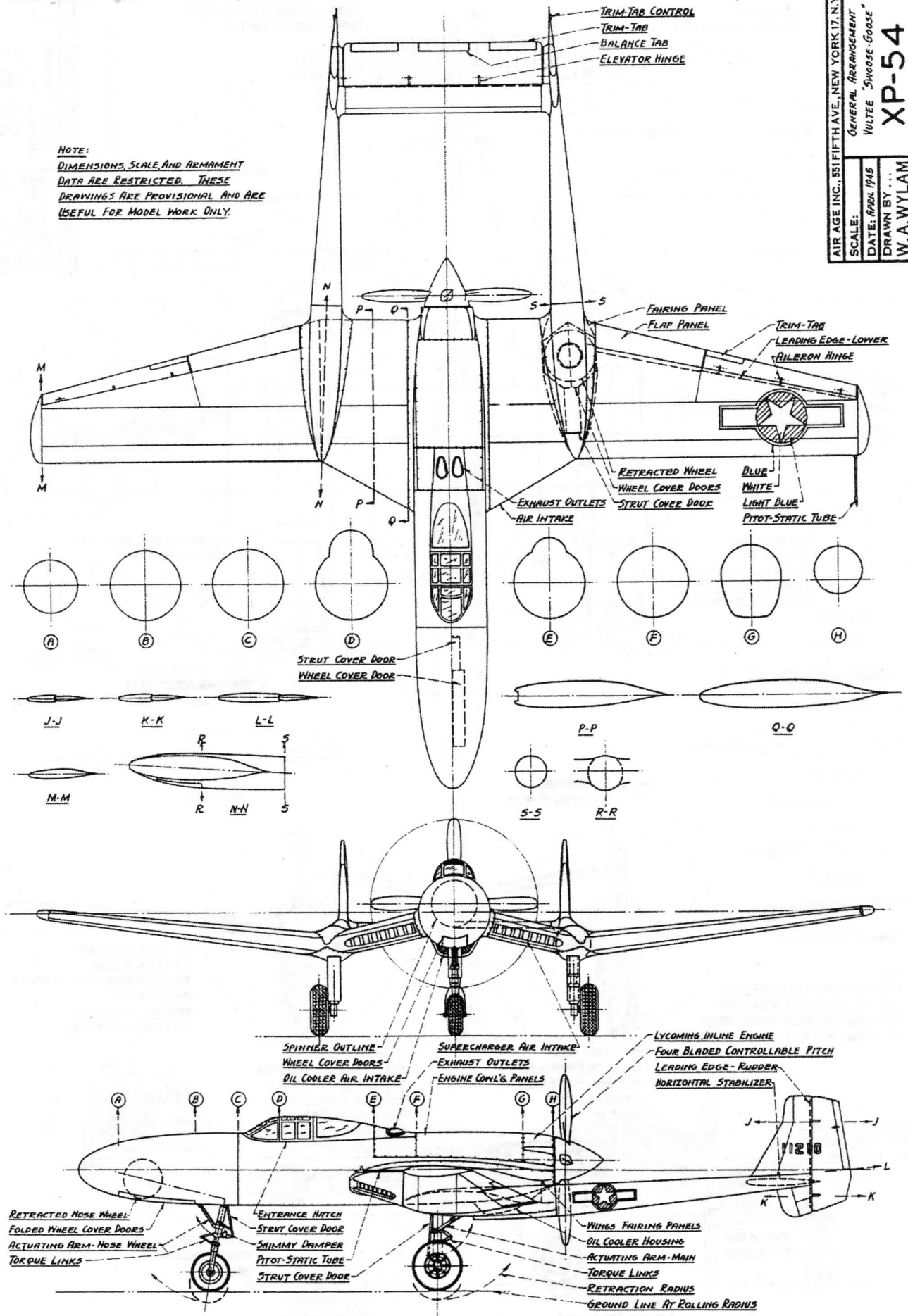
This plan appeared in the January 1945 Model Airplane News.

AIR AGE INC., 531 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK 17, N.Y.
SCALE: ENLARGED
DATE: JANUARY '45
DRAWN BY: W.A. WYLAAM
BELL "HARCONET"
P-59A

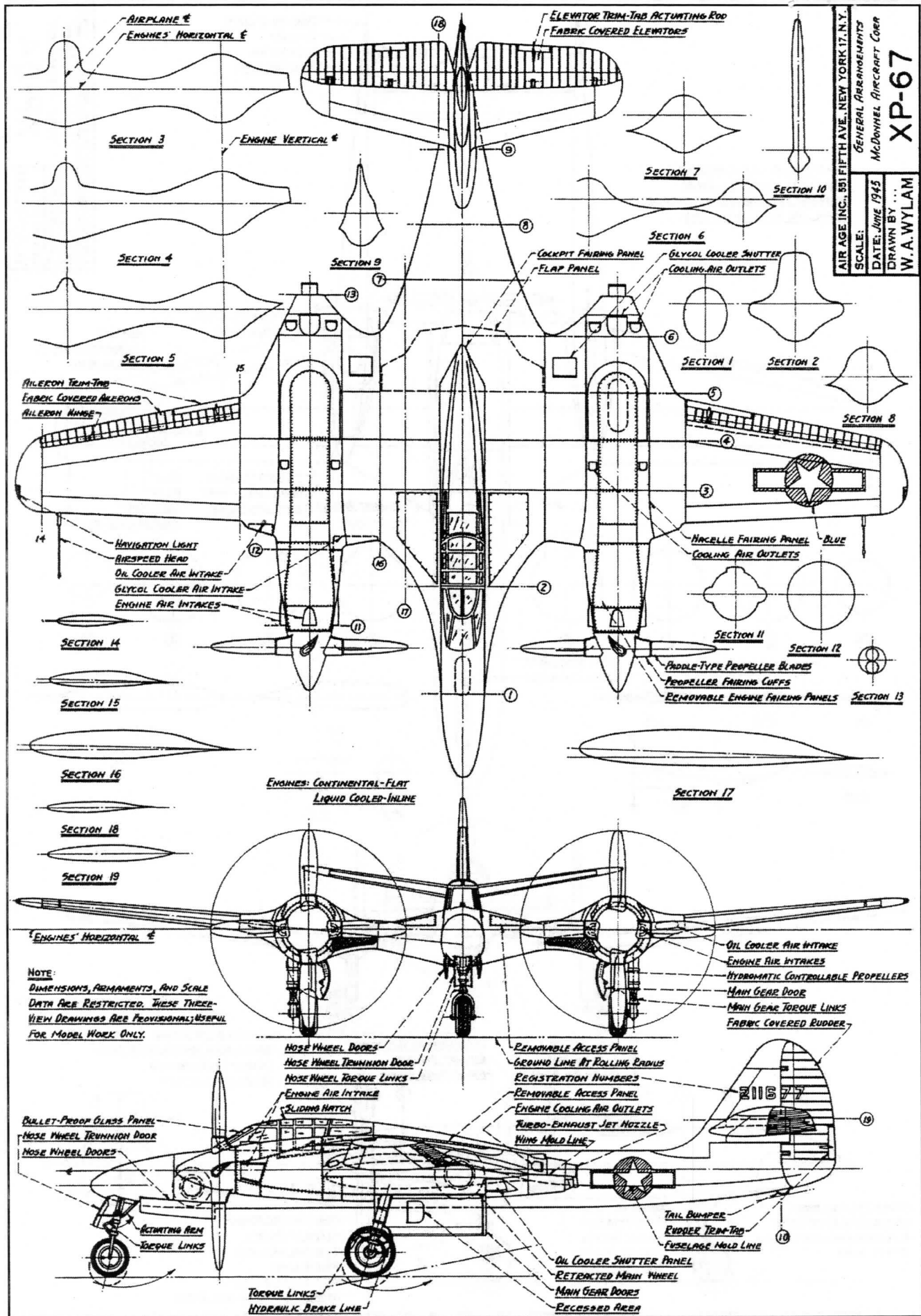
NOTE:  
 DIMENSIONS, SCALE AND ARMAMENT  
 DATA ARE RESTRICTED. THESE  
 DRAWINGS ARE PROVISIONAL AND ARE  
 USEFUL FOR MODEL WORK ONLY.

AIR AGE INC., 851 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK 17, N.Y.  
 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT  
 VULTEE "SHOOSE-GOOSE"  
 SCALE: APRIL 1945  
 DRAWN BY ...  
 W. A. WYLAM

XP-54



This plan appeared in the May 1945 Model Airplane News.



AIR AGE INC., 591 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK 17, N.Y.  
GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS  
DATE: JUNE 1945  
DRAWN BY  
W.A. WYLAM

**XP-67**

This plan appeared in the June 1945 Model Airplane News.