

COLORS OF WAR

RARE IMAGES FROM
THE CHALLENGE ARCHIVES
BY MICHAEL O'LEARY



Dramatic photograph by Rudy Arnold of a Douglas Boston Mk. II being prepared for delivery to the Royal Air Force. Photographed at Floyd Bennett Field in New York, which was a hotbed of warplane delivery activity prior to America's entry into the Second World War. The image offers a wealth of details on the bomber, which had just arrived from the Douglas factory in Santa Monica. The aircraft was finished in standard RAF day fighter camouflage with black undersurfaces. France had placed large orders for the DB-7, as the type was designated, but that country's surrender left many undelivered. One hundred upgraded variants fitted with Wright R-2600s had been ordered as DB-7As but were not delivered and they were taken over by the British Purchasing Commission. The aircraft was flown by a single pilot so that a narrow fuselage could be designed for more streamlining. As can be seen, the crew would enter through the large top hatch, which incidentally has the interior framework finished in zinc chromate. The photo also shows the stamped holes in the structure to reduce weight.