

Aviaology **Venturas in Canada 3**

8, 115 & 149 (BR) Squadrons, Western Air Command, RCAF

Ventura GR.V

2177 H

8 (BR) Sqn, Feb - March 1945

Ventura GR.V

2185 M

149 (BR) Sqn, March 1944

8 (BR) Sqn, mid - late 1944

Ventura GR.V

2189 Q

8 (BR) Sqn, Feb - March 1945

Ventura GR.V

2192 A

8 (BR) Sqn Met Flt, summer 1945?

Ventura GR.V

2194 B

149 (BR) Sqn, March 1944

8 (BR) Sqn, mid - late 1944

Ventura GR.V

2227 M

115 (BR) Sqn, May 1944

Ventura GR.V

2244 D

8 (BR) Sqn Met Flt, summer 1945?

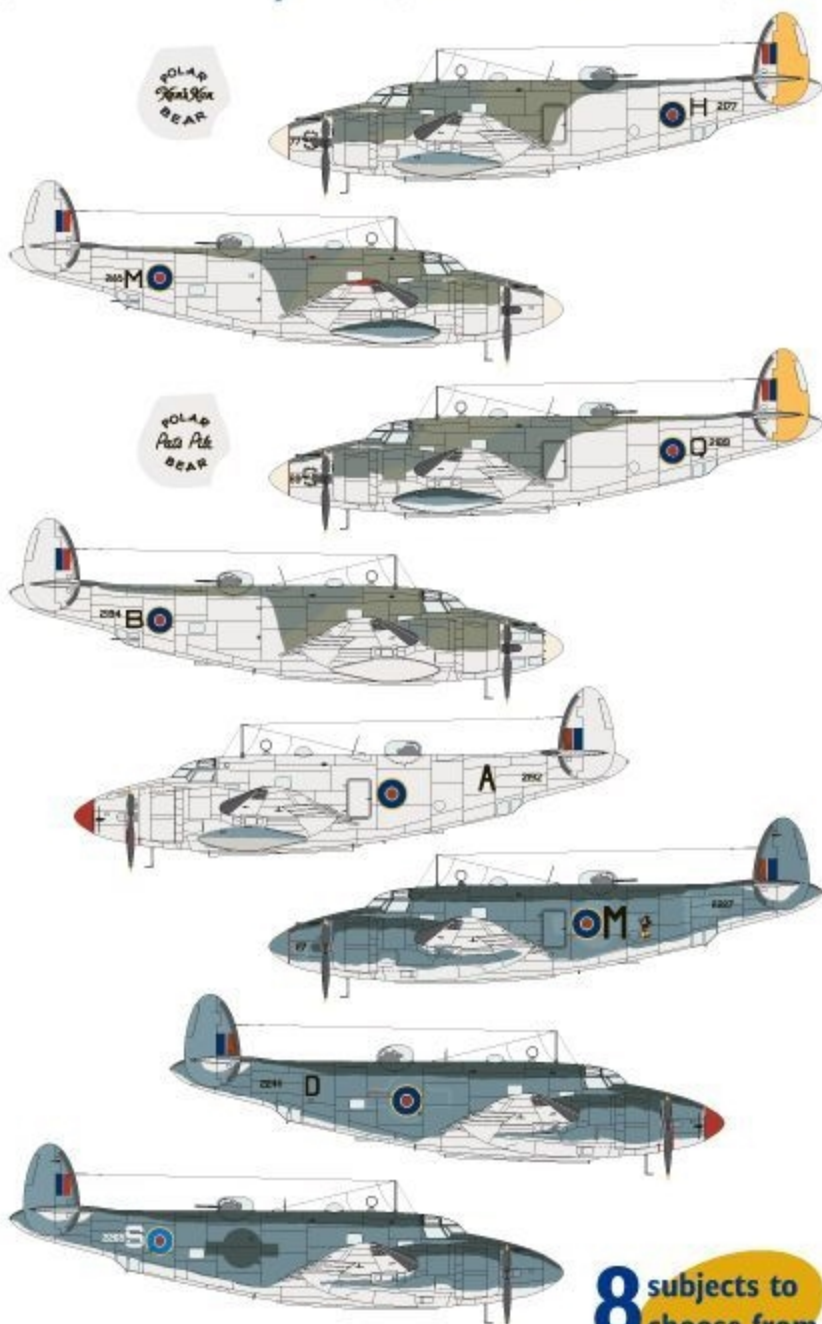
Ventura GR.V

2265 S

RCAF Station Patricia Bay, stored reserve

All known WAC

roundel & fin flash variations are provided. Scheme variations are covered in detail. Reference photos included.

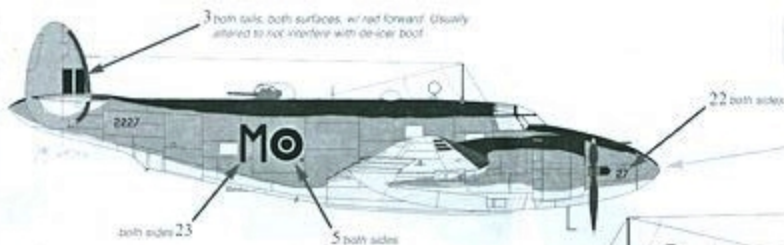


8 subjects to choose from

Ventura GR.V 2227, 115 (BR) Sqn

• PV-1 Ventura BuNo 34625 (c/n 5495) - became Ventura GR.V 2227 on entering RCAF inventory.

• The earliest confirmed Ventura GR.V to be taken on RCAF WAC strength in the USN three-colour scheme.



USN BuNos retained initially, but most probably overpainted later.

opposite side 24R
top side 24L

Clear Plexiglas nose retains the later factory finish - outer surfaces fabric-reinforced, doped, and overpainted in exterior camouflage colours.

by Carl Viscusi collection



This detail, from a larger photo of a long line of 115 (BR) Squadron Ventura GR.V's at taken Tofino on 10 May 1944, shows some of the markings features of aircraft 2227 to good advantage. The US national insignia overpainting represented in the accompanying illustrations show up better in earlier photos of the aircraft, taken before the Canadian national insignia were applied. Note the small dipole aerial of the radio altimeter system installed on the next aircraft in the line-up. It is not known if this was installed on all (progressively) or only some WAC Venturas. It is therefore shown as installed in the illustrations.



overpainting of US national insignia on rear fuselage appears to be relatively neat. Further to the rear, the temporary serial that was applied immediately after delivery has also been overpainted in the same colour - apparently a close match to intermediate blue.



With the same ingenuity and dogged persistence he applies to achieving a steady output of stellar scale models, British writer, researcher, and modelmaker Tony O'Toole went beyond the usual "screen grab" and snapped this photo of the fleeting moment at which Ventura 2265 appears nearly full length on his large-screen TV while viewing *Son of Lassie*... capturing the aircraft's few moments in the spotlight during the shooting of this 1944 film. The nonstandard markings (white lettering not to spec, the rounded blue overly light) and scheme (for summer, 1944) suggest that the aircraft was made a spurious extra in the film by pulling her out of stored reserve and doing a quick ramp job of the markings. Note the overpainted US insignia on the fuselage in what appears to be US-spec Sea Blue. If this was a standard (of the day) operational machine, the finish and markings would have been very different (see pp. 4 & 5).

Ventura GR.V 2265, Stored Res.

• PV-1 Ventura BuNo 33082 (c/n 5091) - became Ventura GR.V 2141 on entering RCAF inventory

• One of the last Venturas taken on RCAF strength, 9 December 1943. Seemed to go right to stored reserve.

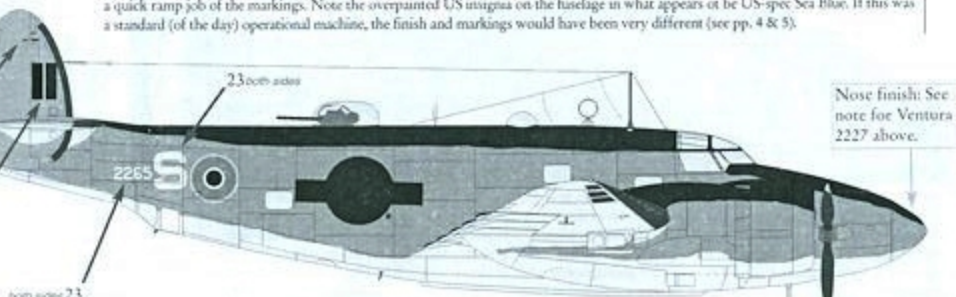
Overlay decal element 6b to replicate the lighter blue in evidence here during the filming of the movie.

USN BuNos retained?
Not confirmed.

both tails, both surfaces, w/ red forward. Usually positioned to avoid overlapping de-icer boot

opposite side 27L
this side 27R

both sides 23 or 32



Nose finish: See note for Ventura 2227 above.

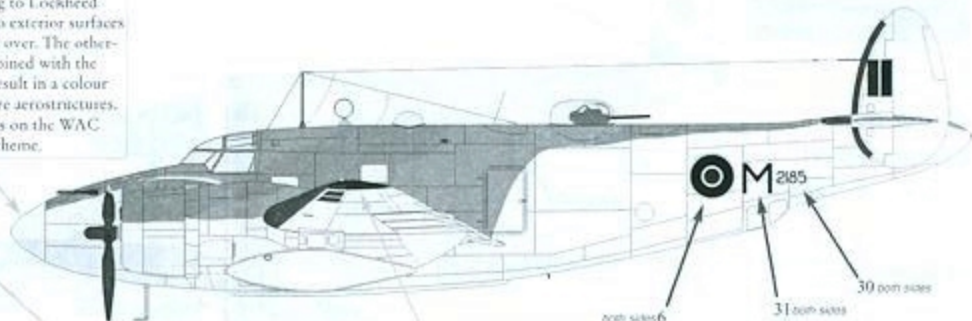
This decal element must be amended as "6" and "5" characters were transposed, in error, as printed.

**Ventura GR.V 2185,
149 (BR) & 8 (BR) Sqns**

- PV-1 Ventura BuNo 33258 (c/n 5267) - became Ventura GR.V 2185 on entering RCAF inventory.
- TOS 149 (BR) Squadron 12 June 1943.
- Transferred to 8 (BR) at some point (probably on disbandment of 149 (BR) March 1944).
- Almost certainly delivered in the earlier USN two-colour scheme (see Aviaology AODex031 for details), the RCAF saddleback finish applied late in the aircraft's service with 149 (BR).

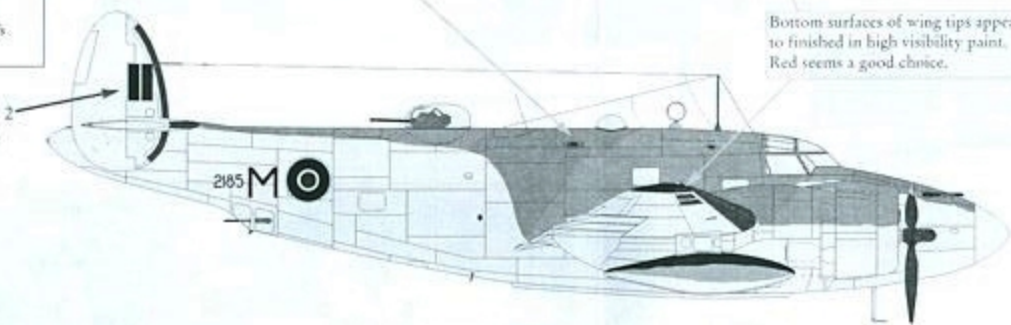
Clear Plexiglas nose was modified according to Lockheed Service Bulletin, with fabric strips applied to exterior surfaces with solvent adhesive, and then clear-doped over. The otherwise unrefinished colour of the fabric, combined with the "warm tint" of the clear dope combine to result in a colour resembling that seen on unpainted glass-fibre aerostuctures. This was pretty much the standard for noses on the WAC Ventura fleet refinished in the saddleback scheme.

Cabin venting fixture appears to have been repaired and patched with red primer (or fresh camouflage paint?).



Bottom surfaces of wing tips appear to finished in high visibility paint. Red seems a good choice.

both tails, outer surfaces only. All red forward. Usually positioned to avoid overlapping de-icer boot.



This aircraft probably wears the smaller (dcal item #1) roundels on the top wing surfaces.

the Carl Vincent collection



The 149 (BR) Squadron line-up at Terrace, British Columbia, in early 1944. The squadron disbanded in March 1944, and most, if not all, of its aircraft went to 8 (BR). All aircraft in the line-up appear to be in the saddleback ASW scheme. The disbandment date of 149, combined with the already well weathered appearance of the upper paintwork, indicates that this scheme may have been on the aircraft for some time already - most probably applied in the last months of 1943. The first three aircraft, Venturas P, H, and M were later photographed while in service with 8 (BR). The fourth aircraft is quite likely 2194 / B, the only early-nosed GR.V thus far confirmed as being in WAC service also ended up in 8 (BR) hands.

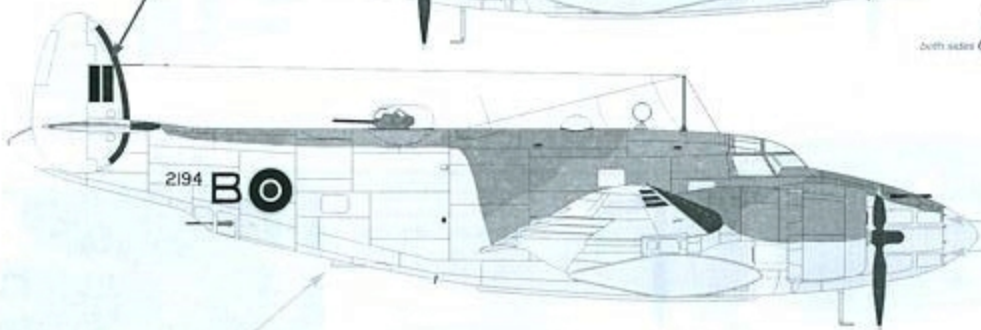
the Carl Vincent collection



Ventura 2185 / M, at RCAF Station Patricia Bay, B.C. on 1 June 1944 - by now on strength with 8 (BR) Squadron. Interestingly, the 149 (BR) markings remain unchanged on this and a number of other examples. The weathered appearance of the upper paintwork is noteworthy and the gloss finish of the wing under surface is immediately apparent in this view. The dark tone under the wingtip seems to be an accent colour - possibly red - rather than a trick of the light. It shows up in a few other photos of saddleback scheme endowed Venturas. Note also the USN three-colour scheme remaining on the underswing drop tank. This aircraft had the distinction of flying the squadron's final war patrol on 16 May 1945.

Nose cap has been refinished in the same fashion as that on 2185 (see pg. 4). However, this is the earlier nose cap that featured external fasteners (visible just ahead of the panel line where the nose joins to the fuselage) associated with the early production PV-1 nose, so the fabric covering may have "dimpled" a little over the fastener recesses.

both base, outer surfaces only, w/ red upward. Usually positioned to avoid overlapping de-icer boot 2



Flare / marker pyrotechnics chute shown in the open position. This appears to have been a different configuration on some aircraft, looking more like a fixed fairing than a hinged (along its forward edge) retractable structure as here.

This aircraft probably wears the smaller (decal item #1) roundels on the top wing surfaces.



Tony O'Toole

Another of Tony O'Toole's stills from the movie *Son of Lassie*, reveals Ventura 2194 filling a similar role to that played by the differently painted Ventura 2265 (see pg.3). Unlike 2265, this aircraft was actually operational with 8 (BR) when the film was being made. This supports the author's conjecture that any Venturas that may have gone to stored reserve prior to the new scheme coming into effect in WAC, were not refinished in the operational scheme until taken out of storage for the purpose of actual squadron assignment.

It should be noted that a similar protocol appears to have been in place in EAC, as evidenced by Ventura 2141 (see *Aviation: AODxx231*) plus one other present, in their factory finishes in a 22 June 1945 flightline photo that included other Venturas in EAC's overall White operational ASW scheme. It stands to reason that this protocol may have been RCAF wide, perhaps as a resources-saving measure (?), but supporting documentation has not yet been discovered.

Ventura GR.V 2194, 149 (BR) & 8 (BR) Sqns

- PV-1 Ventura BuNo 33282 (c/n 5089) - became Ventura GR.V 2194 on entering RCAF inventory.
- Dual flight controls fitted.
- TOS 149 (BR) Squadron 14 June 1943.
- Transferred to 8 (BR) at some point (probably on disbandment of 149 (BR) March 1944).
- The earliest-production Ventura in RCAF Service, but may have been sidelined for the fitting of dual controls, hence the relatively late delivery date.

both sides 6

33 both sides

32 both sides

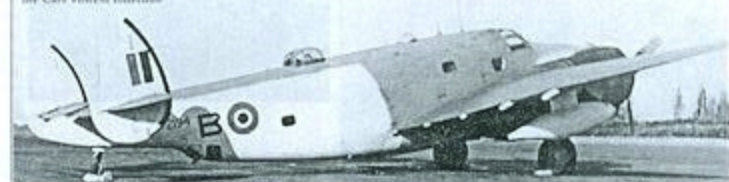
Early PV-1 nose, featuring clear four Plexiglas quarterlights on each side can be had from a donor Ventura B.11 kit or from several aftermarket manufacturers.

the Almost Baltzer collection



Although very grainy, this rare glimpse of the left side of Ventura 2194 / B, when compared to photos of the right side, illustrates the fact that the upper/lower demarcation was asymmetrical left to right. The time and place of the photo were not recorded.

the Carl Vincent collection



Another similar view of 2194, albeit this time not in colour, showing a little more of the demarcation between upper and lower colours on the nose ahead of the wing. Not unlike the colour image, the demarcation between Extra Dark Sea Grey and Dark Slate Grey are difficult to detect, with general aging / weathering of the finish, including a darkening of the cockpit area paintwork due to de-icer fluid spray, helping compound the problem.

Like a number of other early-service WAC Ventura GR.Vs, 2194 started out with 149 (BR) and ended up on strength with 8 (BR) in the spring of 1944. However, she is unique in being the only early-nosed GR.V thus far known to have been operational in WAC.

Ventura GR.V 2177, 8 (BR) Sqn

- PV-1 Ventura BuNo 33275 (c/n 5244) - became Ventura GR.V 2177 on entering RCAF inventory.
- TOS 8 (BR) Squadron 29 May 1943.
- Illustrated in Operation Polar Bear era markings, c/w Yellow search panels on rudders and outer upper wing surfaces, February - March 1945.

See Ventura 2185 (pg.4) for nose finish details.

POLAR BEAR
Ken's Kau

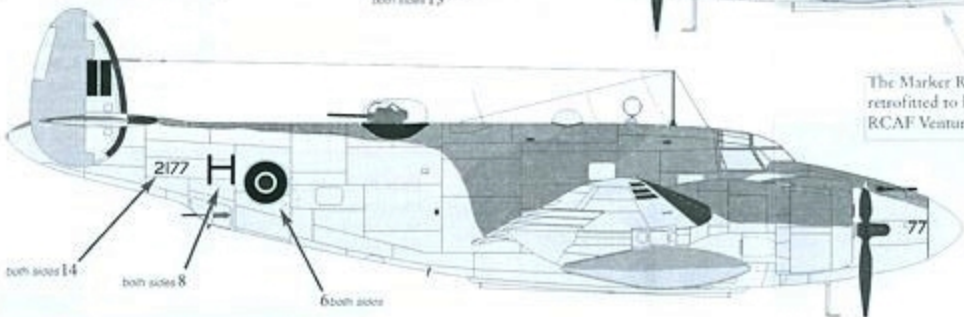
both sides 13

both take, outer surfaces only, w/ red forward
(usually positioned to avoid overlapping of deicer boot. 2)

Search Panel on the upper surfaces of each wing on both Operation Polar Bear aircraft.

The Marker Range aerial retrofitted to late-service RCAF Venturas. (see pg. 8)

This aircraft probably wears the smaller (decal item #1) roundels on the top wing surfaces.



both sides 14

both sides 8

6both sides

Ventura 2177 / H and crew. The fin flash looks like it could use renewing and the rudder does not appear to have the Yellow finish yet, this could be a result of the photo being overexposed (the upper camo colour doesn't even show up!) indicate that this may be prior to the start of Operation Polar Bear.



VMFA collection via Tony Jarvis

Gard Moss photo via Tony Jarvis / VMFA collection



Aviation by SkyGrid © 2014



VMFA collection via Tony Jarvis

Another overexposed photo from the same series as that of the rear fuselage above. Note that the "last two" of the serial number are repeated here, but the nose art is present only on the left side.

P/O Ken Reed (right) and an unidentified crewman pose with Ken's Kau at Prince George, British Columbia, presumably during a trip back to civilization during Operation Polar Bear. The .50 calibre gun FOD "socks", eponymous nose art, rough upper/lower camouflage paint demarcation, and substantial weathering of the White fuselage finish (note the distinctive web pattern made by airborne material thrown by the propeller) all show up well in this view. Striations created by the doped fabric strip reinforced nose cap can also be seen, and the joint between nose and fuselage appears to have a dark sealing material applied.

Stan Bray photo via Tony Jarvis / VMFA collection



Ventura 2177 / H and crew, with refuelling in progress, on the frozen surface of Anahim Lake during Operation Polar Bear in February of 1945. Features of the saddleback scheme show up well in this image, as does the inboard edge of the Yellow Search Panel applied to the outer upper wing surfaces. The ailerons appear to have remained in the camouflage colours. The drop tank appears to be in the USN two-colour (Blue Gray and Light Gray, see Aviationology AODxx031) scheme, which would have been applied to this particular aircraft at the factory.

Ventura GR.V 2189, 8 (BR) Sqn

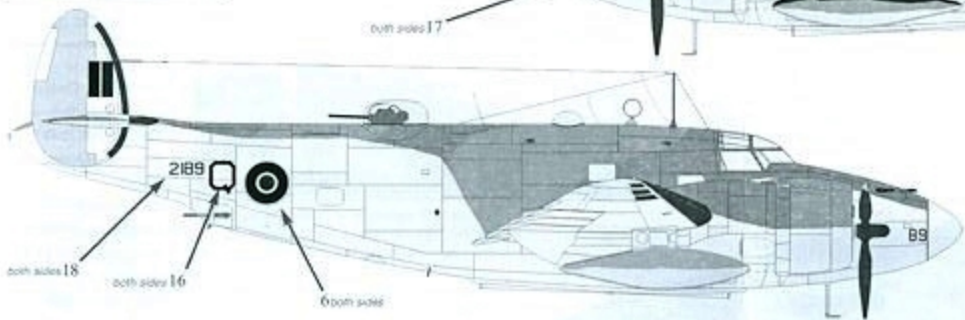
- PV-1 Ventura BuNo 33258 (c/n 5272) - became Ventura GR.V 2189 on entering RCAF inventory.
- TOS WAC 10 June 1943.
- Illustrated in Operation Polar Bear era markings, c/w Yellow search panels on rudders and outer upper wing surfaces, February - March 1945.

See Ventura 2177 (pg.6) for wing markings details

See Ventura 2185 (pg.4) for nose finish details.

POLAR
Pats Pile
BEAR

both tails, outer surfaces only, w/ red forward. Usually positioned to avoid overlapping de-icer boot 2



The Marker Range aerial retrofitted to late-service RCAF Venturas. (see pg. 8)

Grand Mass photo via Tony Jarvis / VMFA collection



Operation Polar Bear Venturas 2189 (foreground) and 2177 and one other Lockheed twin (either a Lodestar transport or a Ventura) during a busy scene on Anahim Lake - a septicide diorama in 1:1 scale! The special Search Panel finish on the rudders of each Ventura are quite evident in this view. Ventura 2189 does not appear to be carrying underwing drop tanks in any of the extant Polar Bear photographs.

From *Sea of Lasse* in the summer of 1944 to *Polar Bear* in early 1945, Ventura 2189 sported the saddleback variation of the Temperate Sea Scheme peculiar to WAC Venturas. Here, at the time the movie was being shot at RCAF Station Patricia Bay, the 6 or 7 month old paintwork was already looking tired. The drop tank remains in the aircraft's USN two-colour delivery scheme, with some quick and dirty repair work apparent on its bug-smashing end. Nose numbers have yet to be applied to the squadron's aircraft and the Marker Range aerial is not yet installed - circa June 1944.



via Tony Jarvis / VMFA collection

Ventura 2189 *Pat's Pile*, and company at Anahim Lake during operation Polar Bear. Oil stains on the lower part of the engine cowl and exhaust staining on the lower nacelle fairing above the main wheel well cover are not at all insubstantial. Note also the tire tread pattern, wheel hub details, weathered propeller hub, and the marker sense aerial installed on the lefthand bomb bay door. A ski-equipped Norseman is visible in the background.

Like 2177 (pg.6), Ventura 2189's forward fuselage flank has taken a bit of a beating from material thrown against the fuselage at high speed by the propeller. On the opposite side, the wet pattern was most likely different, with the blades on the up-swing when turning towards the fuselage. The "8" in the nose number is missing a part of a stroke, making it look like a nine. The pattern made by the overlaid fabric strips on the nose cap appear to be made more apparent by the frost-chilled surface.

the Carl Vinson collection



Stan Bray photo via Tony Jarvis / VMFA collection

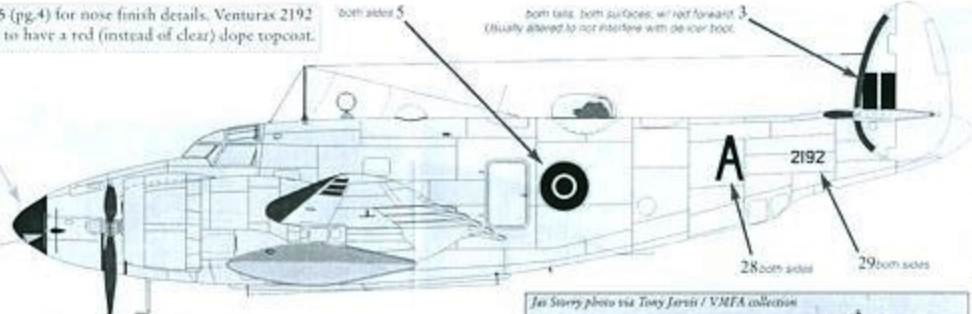


Ventura GR.V 2192, 8 (BR) Sqn

- PV-1 Ventura BuNo 33273 (c/n 5582) - became Ventura GR.V 2192 on entering RCAF inventory.
- TOS WAC 10 June 1943.
- In service with 8 (BR) Squadron, late March 1945.

SCR-729A Rebecca AN-147-A transmitting aerial. Twin AN-148-A or a single AN-148 receiving aerial would have been present also (as yet undetected in photos).

See Ventura 2185 (pg.4) for some finish details. Venturas 2192 and 2244 appear to have a red (instead of clear) dope topcoat.



3 both tails, outer surfaces only altered as above

25 both sides

All guns have been removed from both of these aircraft. Note the higher profile dome of the Martin 250-23A turret (as installed on Lancaster B.X's produced in Canada), in place of the usual 250-CE-7 Ventura installation, on 2244.

2244

both sides 26

both sides 12

11 both sides

Radio altimeter aeriels - one under each wing.

The Marker Range aerial retrofitted to late-service RCAF Venturas.

A photo of this aircraft appears in the Squadron & Signal Ventura in Action book on pg.18.

Jan Steery photo via Tony Jarvis / VMFA collection

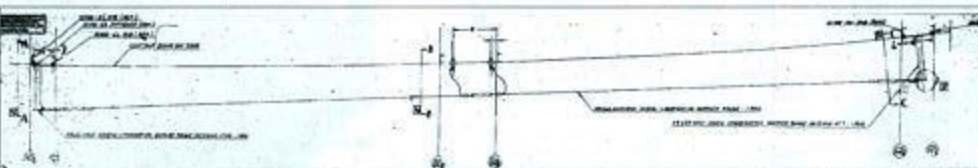


Ventura 2192, reportedly of "a Met Flight attached to 8 (BR) Sqn". The photo was most probably taken, therefore, in late March 1945 just before the squadron disbanded. Note one of the paired radio altimeter aeriels beneath the wing, the factory-finish drop tank, the SCR-729A Rebecca transmitting aeriels on the nose, and prop warning stripes on the fuselage.

This aircraft was involved in a category C accident 15 March 1944; the overall white finish and Regulation fin flashes, both unusual for a WAC Ventura, may have been applied after repairs.

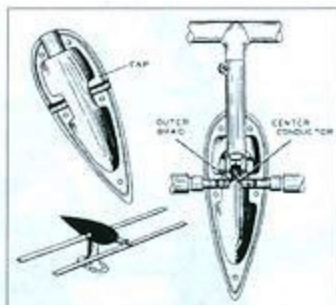
Ventura GR.V 2244, 8 (BR) Sqn

- PV-1 Ventura BuNo 34709 (c/n 5599) - became Ventura GR.V 2244 on entering RCAF inventory.
- TOS WAC 25 August 1943.
- In service with 8 (BR) Squadron, late March 1945.



Detail from an installation drawing showing the Combination Marker Range aerial fitted to surviving operational RCAF Venturas later in their service careers. The forward mast is approximately 88 inches tall and mounted 8 1/2 inches out from the aircraft's centerline, perpendicular to the curved skin of the lefthand bomb bay door slightly to the rear of fuselage station 1426. The approximately 10 inch tall rear mast is also mounted perpendicular to the bomb bay door skin (i.e. both masts thrust outward at a slight angle when viewed from the front/rear) 9 1/2 inches out from the aircraft's centerline, approximately mid-way between Fuselage Stations 304% and 310%. Station numbers represent relative distance from a zero datum point on Lockheed (and many other) drawings, so the difference between the front and rear mast locations can be used to determine the length of the aerial wire.

the VEMA collection, via Tony Jarvis, revised by Tony Higgins



An out-take from the SCR-729A handbook showing transmitting aerial installation details. The drawings represent the interior of one half of the streamlined cap - assembled in two halves, its outside contour is smoothly streamlined.

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and Ventura's in general.

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