

Two Lesser Known Hawker Aircraft of the Second World War

By Philip L Scowcroft

When we think of Hawker aircraft of World War II our thoughts turn to the Hurricane, victor of the Battle of Britain, and its successors the Typhoon and Tempest. But what of the Hawker Hector and Hawker Henley ?



<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b1/Hhector.jpg/300px-Hhector.jpg>

The Hector dated from 1937 and was the replacement for the Hawker Hardy and Audax army-cooperation machines who were among the derivatives of the Hawker Hart series of the mid-1930s. The Hardy and Audax saw service in the 2nd War (in East Africa), as did the Hector, but nearer home, briefly as an army-cooperation aircraft in France in May 1940. 178 of them serving with 12 RAF squadrons, were produced, with a maximum speed of 187 mph, faster than other Hawker army cooperation machines like the Audax, etc. They were soon relegated to second-line roles like towing gliders in England. It also served with Irish Air Force.



https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/78/Hawker_Henley_TT_III_target_tug_in_flight_c1938.jpg/300px-Hawker_Henley_TT_III_target_tug_in_flight_c1938.jpg

The Henley was a more up to date aircraft being a monoplane powered by a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine (maximum speed 272 mph). It was first envisaged as a light bomber before being assigned to target towing before being retired after 1942. Altogether 200 examples were built which served with 9 RAF squadrons.

June 2016