

American Secret Projects: Fighters, Bombers, and Attack Aircraft, 1937-1945

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Much has been written about the combat aircraft that the United States built in their many variants and fielded in their tens of thousands during WWII, but it may be useful to briefly review that list again: B-17, B-24, B-25, B-26, B-32, B-29, P-38, P-39, P-40, P-47, P-51, A-20, A-26, A-31/35, SBD/A-24, SB2C/A-25, F4F/FM Wildcat, F6F, F4U, TBF, PBY, PBM and a number of others produced in numbers under 1000, such as the Mars and Coronado. And this list does not even consider the number of transports, liaison and training aircraft that were built.

In looking at this list it is important to note that only two of these aircraft were actually designed and flown prior to 1937 - the PBY and the Boeing Model 299, the B-17's predecessor. NONE of the others were designed prior to 1937, but all the others had at least been committed to paper and many had flown prior to the U.S.'s entry into WII in December, 1941.

So while the incredible industrial might of the U.S. has been often and deservedly talked about, the amazing design and intellectual might behind it has been given very short shrift. The authors have dug deeply into original military and manufacturer's files to provide a look at dozens of aircraft that were designed and submitted but either lost in subsequent competitions to those built or were examined and rejected as independent submissions.

Some examples: * Bell's Model 3, 4, 11, 13, 16 and 22 fighter proposals, * Fairchild Model 85 twin-Rangerengine-powered fighter, * XP-72 production version * Hughes D-2/XP-73/XA-37 and D-5 twin-engine Duramold wooden attack aircraft * Curtiss XP-71, a massive twin-engine bomber destroyer * Martin 207 "convoy fighter" shown in two of its versions * Burnelli XBA-1 and BX-AB-3 twin-engine light bomber/attack aircraft * Douglas El Segundo Model 9 flying wing bomber * Boeing Model 316/Y1B-20/B-20, Model 322, Model 333 and 333A, Model 384 and Model 385 multi-engine heavy bomber projects * Boeing Model 352, 374, 376, 386, 387, 394, 398 and 400 Naval fighter projects * Curtiss "Cab over Engine" Wasp Major Naval fighter * Curtiss SB3C/A-40 dive bomber in the most accurate 3-view drawn to date * Kaiser-Fleetwings Model 47 twin-engine Naval fighter * Martin 180, 181 and 183 long-range twin-engine flying boat patrol bombers And dozens more are covered in 275 pages with nearly 450 photos, 3-views and artist concepts, many never before in print.



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