



602 Sqn Spitfire F.22 PK321 'LO-L' at Chivenor July 1950
(grey codes?) (via Dugald Cameron)

forward of the fuselage roundel (wartime style gradually changed to postwar type) with individual aircraft letter aft. At the end of 1949 unit code letters were changed to LO reflecting the switch from Reserve to Fighter Command, eg: F.21 LA319 RAI-G, later LO-G, LA269 LO-D, F.22 PK395 RAI-F, later LO-F with 2-tone blue spinner. At least three of 602's Spitfires featured an overall Aluminium (silver) finish with dark code letters: F.21 LA227 LO-O, and F.22s PK321 LO-L, and PK651 LO-N, each with dark blue spinner.



602 Sqn at Abbotsinch in early 1949 with Spitfire F.21s LA198 'RAI-G', LA265 'RAI-J', and silver LA267 'RAI-M'.
(LA198 is preserved and displayed in Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum.)



Spitfire F.21 LA269 was issued to 602 Sqn on 21 July 1949 to become LO-H. It was oddly painted in an overall dark green(?) finish with post war national markings and non-standard serial in white. The blanked off gun barrels and location outside Airwork Gatwick Trading premises confirm that its service with 602 had concluded. (via Peter Green)

603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron Turnhouse

603's first postwar fighters were Spitfire LF.16s, received in October 1946, replaced in June 1948 with F.22s which were retained until replacement by Vampire FB.5s, the first of which were delivered, at intervals, from 12 May 1951. It wasn't until the full establishment of Vampires had been taken on strength in mid-July that the remaining Spitfires were discarded, by which time 603 was at Leuchars, having moved there on 16th of the month for operational training resulting from the mobilisation of the Auxiliaries consequent to the Korean War.



Resplendant in 603's black-bordered red and pale blue chequerboard markings are three of the unit's silver Spitfire F.22s at Turnhouse in 1951, PK433/Q, PK428/H, and PK570/F. (603 archives via Bruce Blanche)

Markings

In common with the majority of RAuxAF Spitfires circa 1950 most of 603's were camouflaged in the standard postwar scheme, initially with RAJ unit code letters in Sky ahead of the fuselage roundel, and aircraft letter aft, eg: PK411 RAJ-O with a red spinner. Unit code letters were changed to XT under Fighter Command, eg: PK504 XT-P, PK354 XT-L, both of which had the unit letters ahead of the roundel on the port side, and aft on the starboard. Several of 603's F.22s were repainted in Aluminium (silver) finish, with black code letters, with unit code letters mainly positioned as before eg: PK504 XT-P. Towards the latter part of their service some aircraft dispensed with code letters and carried colourful new squadron markings comprising a double row of red / pale blue chequers, with black bars positioned above and below. ; the aircraft letter, in black, was moved to above the fin flash, eg: PK570/F which had a red spinner.



Quartet of silver Spitfire F.22s from 603 Sqn displaying the unit code letter XT- introduced in late 1949, including PK504 XT-P (603 Sqn archives via Bruce Blanche)