

Battle of Britain Commemorated by Bhutan

Alyn Lunt

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Bhutan commemorated both Winston Churchill and the Battle of Britain with a three stamp set. The set depicts three separate Royal Air Force (RAF) aircraft that were in use during the Second World War. Also featured on the stamps is the victory sign used by Winston Churchill.

The combination of Winston Churchill and RAF aircraft is poignant when one considers that Churchill in a speech delivered on August 20, 1940 stated: "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few" referring to the RAF's stand against the German Luftwaffe during the Battle of Britain and Bomber Commands campaign over Germany.



The first stamp in the set features the Avro Lancaster. The Lancaster was a heavy bomber that was used by many of the Commonwealth and European countries serving RAF Bomber Command. Lancasters were responsible for delivering 608,162 tons of bombs during night-time operations. The Lancaster was used for the precision day light raids on dams in the Ruhr Valley; this led to the Lancaster being recognized worldwide as the "Dam Buster."



The next stamp in the set shows the Supermarine Spitfire. The Spitfire was a British fighter aircraft that was used by many allied countries during the Second World War. Designed as a high speed interceptor aircraft it first went into service in 1938. During the Battle of Britain, the Spitfire had a lower attrition and greater victory to loss ratio than the Hawker Hurricanes. After the Battle of Britain, the Spitfire became the Backbone of the RAF Fighter Command.



The last value of the set pictures a Hawker Hurricane. The Hurricane was developed in the 1930s and put into service in 1937. Used primarily by the RAF and RCAF, the Hurricane was responsible for 60% of the allied air victories during the Battle of Britain. The Hurricane served in every major theatre of war. The Hurricane had interceptor-fighter, fighter-bomber and ground support variants. By the end of 1944 there were more than 14,000 Hurricanes built.

The stamps were printed by lithography and were perforated 13½ and were issued on June 26, 1967.

Sources:

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