

Douglas B-7

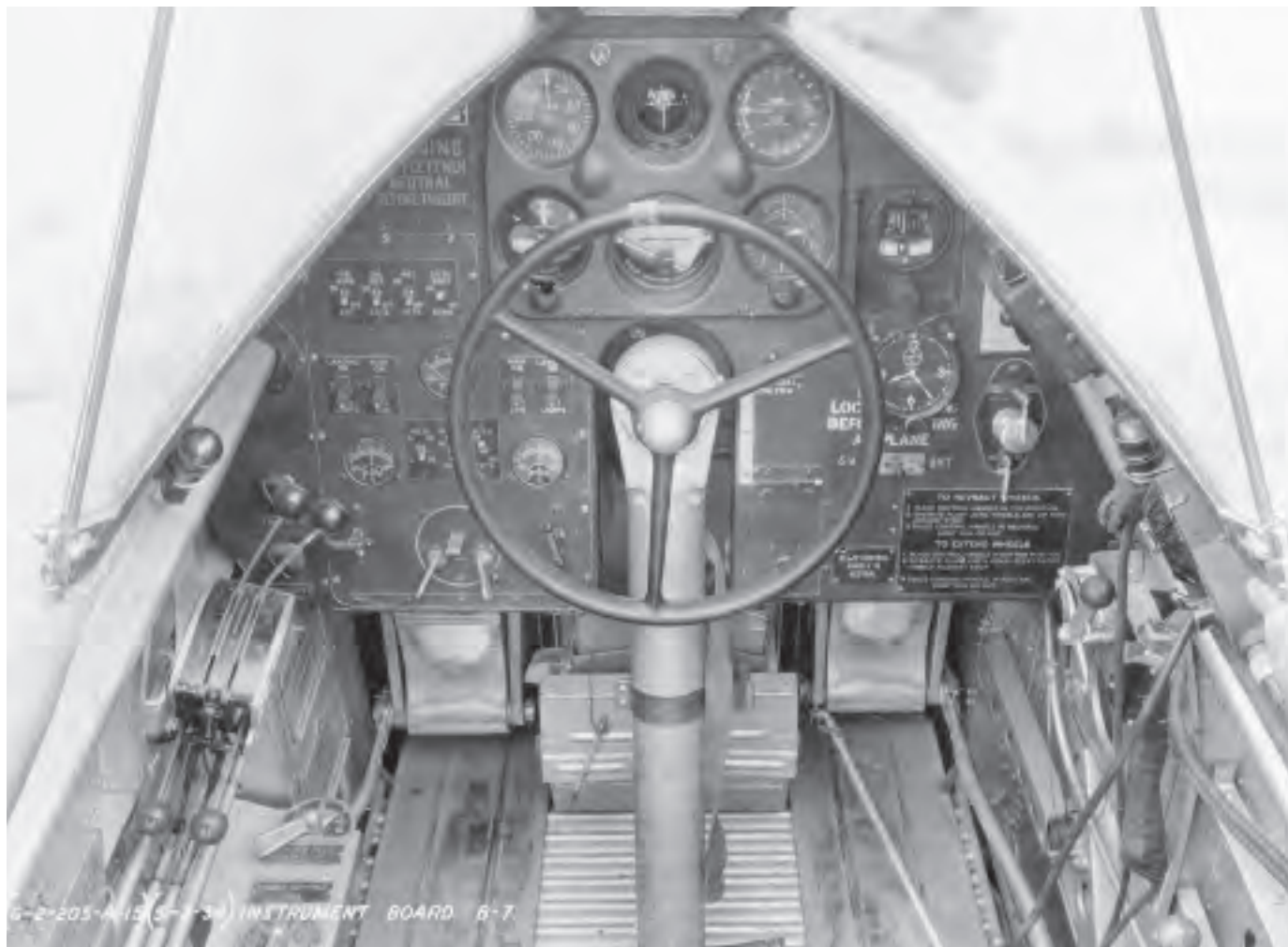


Photo: Dave Ostrowski Collection

Douglas B-7 Cockpit Analysis

This review is divided into five sections: the Top Center Instrument Panel, the Forward Left and Right Panels and the two Sidewalls.

Top Center Instrument Panel

Top Center Instrument Panel (CW from upper left): Airspeed Indicator, Liquid Compass, Rate of Climb Indicator, Altimeter, Artificial Horizon, Turn and Bank Indicator.

Forward Left Panel

Forward Left Panel (T-B): at top, a Placard, “WARNING—(SET) FLETTNER NEUTRAL BEFORE TAKE-OFF” (refers to trim tab). 1st Row: Four Lights Switches (Fuel Gauge, Engine Instruments, Instruments, Running/Signal). 2nd Row: Landing Light and Main Line (Left Engine) Switches, a Voltmeter, Main Line (Right Engine) and Landing Light Switches. 3rd Row: Ammeter, Three Electrical Switches (L and R Volts, unkn, Blinker/Running Lights) and a second Ammeter. Bottom Row: L and R Starter T-Handles with a Dual Ignition Switch located between the two. Rheostats for Engine and Flight Instruments are at far left behind the throttle levers.

Forward Right Panel

Forward Right Panel (T-B): Directional Gyro, Clock with a Dual Engine Primer to its right. The White Placard in the Holder above the primers is probably the Compass Calibration Card. The Placard behind the upper right spoke of the control wheel labeled, "Artificial Horizon," may be a Vacuum Selector. The Stencil below the clock reads, "Lock Before Leaving Airplane," presumably referring to a Control Lock. Below the stencil is a Large Toggle Switch, labeled "SW" (at left) and "INT" (at right); its purpose is unknown. The Large Placard in the lower right corner of the right front panel contains instructions for retracting and extending the Landing Gear.

To Retract Wheels

1. Place Control Handle In Top Position.
2. Operate Pump Until Wheels Are Up Firm (Sic) Against Stop.
3. Place Control Handle in Neutral. Light Will Go Out.*

To Extend Wheels

1. Place Control Handle In Bottom Position.
2. Operate Pump Until Gear Is Extended Firmly Against Stop.
3. Place Control Handle in Neutral. Light Will Go Out.*

* One would expect the Wheels Indicator Light to occupy a prominent place but that does not seem to be the case. It cannot be located.

The small Placard to the left of the wheels operating instructions reads, "Place Control Handle in Neutral." A small, hinged Access Cover is to the left of the small plate. Its purpose cannot be determined.

Left Sidewall

The Engine Control Quadrant is located in the normal position. It carries 2 Throttle Levers (forward) and 2 Mixture Controls (aft). A Hinged Door on its inboard face provides access to the Generator Control Boxes. A second (unidentified) access door is below. Two Fuel Selectors are seen on the shelf outboard of the left rudder heel track: Cross Feed Valve (Fwd) and Engine Control Cock (Aft). A First Aid Kit is visible in the lower left corner of the photo. Cockpit Lights are provided near the rear frame of the windshield at both sides.

Right Sidewall

The Quadrant forward, at right, apparently carries the Landing Gear Selector, and the Knob at lower right presumably is the top of the Hand Hydraulic Pump Lever. The Radio Receiver Tuning Head ("Coffee Grinder") is immediately aft of the light. The Box forward of the light may be a Transmitter Selector. Note the Microphone and Headset Cords. A Hand Microphone is stowed aft of the landing gear quadrant.

The web strap beside the control column post may be for locking the controls. A Stowage Box and a Map Case are visible ahead of the control column post (Note the pencil restrained by a string). A Flashlight is lying on the floor at the base of the Control Column Post.

Note that no engine instruments are visible in this photo. There was no Copilot or Engineer's station provided so it must be presumed that the engine instruments were carried on the inboard sides of the engine nacelles as was a common practice in the 1930s. ■



Originally designed as an observation plane, this first production Y1B-7 was recognized by the Army for its greater potential as a bomber. Seven production Y1B-7s were ordered. Its single gull wing and retractable gear contributed to significantly improved performance over the biplane Keystone bombers of the era.

Y1B-7 of the 31st Bomb Squadron in water-based camouflage for the Air Corps Anti-Aircraft Exercises at Ft. Knox, KY in May 1933.

Photo: Dave Ostrowski Collection



Y10-35, ship #139 of the 88th Observation Squadron with black-outlined orange squadron colors on the diagonal fuselage band, engine nacelles, and nose.

Photo: Dave Ostrowski Collection

Y10-35, ship #135 also of the 88th Observation Squadron with barely visible orange (black-outlined) squadron colors as described in the caption for the photo of ship #139. The orange markings do not stand out on this black & white photo because it's on orthochromatic film. These two photos of ship #139 and ship #135 are a good example of the differences between orthochromatic film (ship #135) and panchromatic film (ship #139) which shows yellows and oranges as a lighter shade of grey.

Photo: Dave Ostrowski Collection

