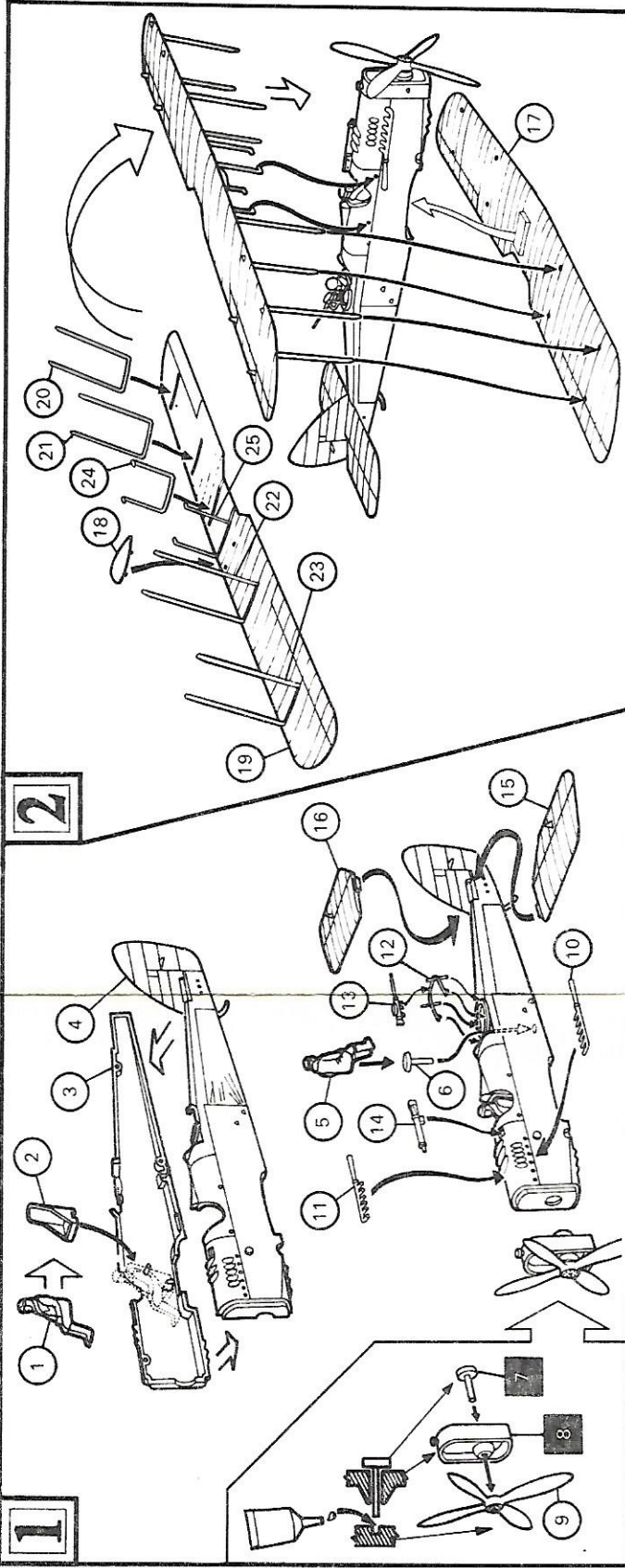


# Airco DH4 1918

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The DH4 was designed in 1916 by Geoffrey de Havilland, as a fast two-seater day bomber for the RFC. It was considered by many to be the best single-engined bomber of World War I.

The Aircraft Manufacturing Company in England (Airco), built 1449 DH4's, whilst a further 4846 were built under license in the United States. The DH4 had an armament of Vickers and Lewis machine guns, and could carry a bomb load of 2 x 104kg bombs or 4 x 50kg bombs. With a wing span of 12.92m and length of 9.35m, it could achieve 143mph (230kph) at sea level, and climb to an altitude of 23500 ft. (7163m).

The DH4 was also used for photographic reconnaissance work, anti-submarine patrols, artillery spotting and home defence. After the war, DH4's were sold to Belgium, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Chile, Spain and Greece. The American Air Force continued to use them until 1932.

## Egbert Cadbury and Robert Leckie

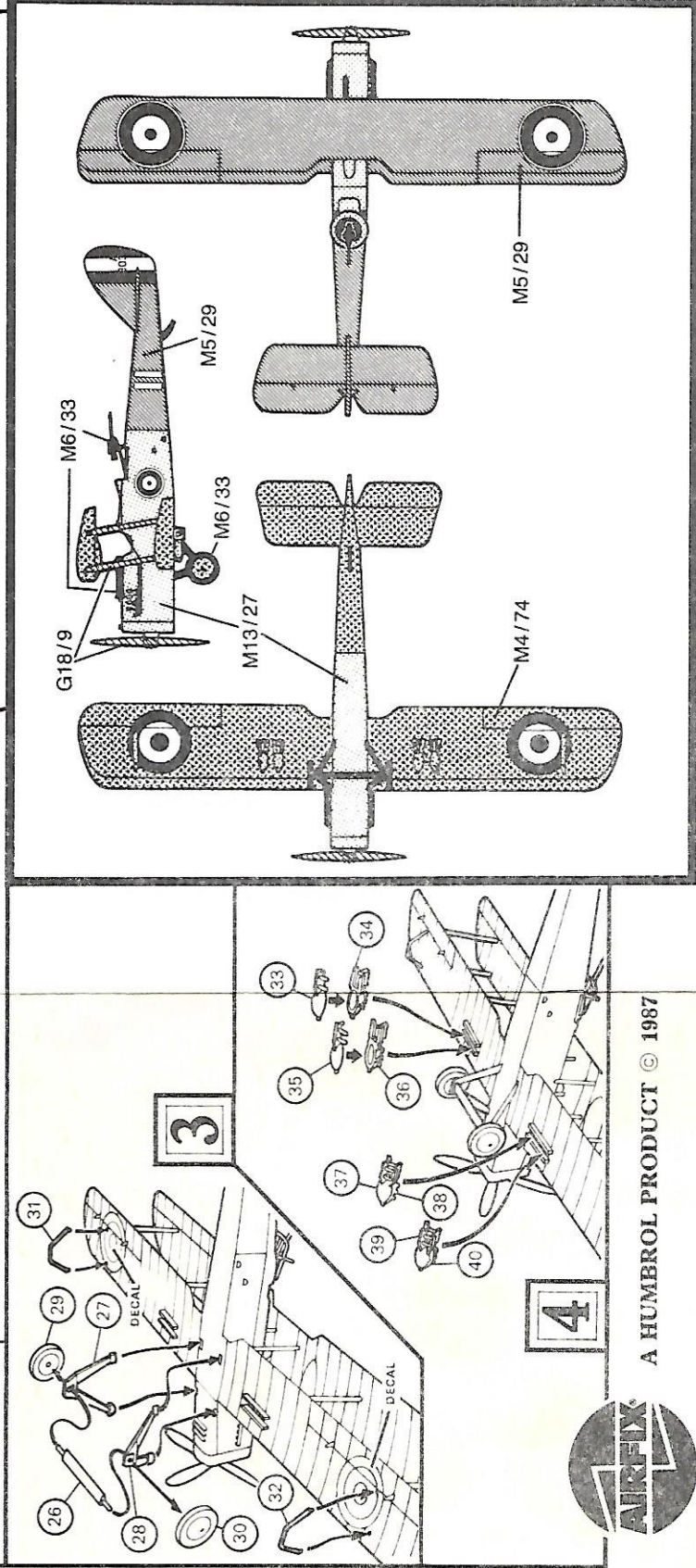
On July 8th 1918, the German Naval Airship Division commissioned a brand new flagship, the seven engined L70. On August 5th, L70 departed from Nordholz to join three other airships, to embark on a bombing raid against England, under the command of Fregatkapitan Peter Strasser.

At 20.10 the four Zeppelins were spotted by the Leman Tail Lightship, which was moored 30 miles off the Norfolk coast. The sighting was reported to Commodore Ellison at Lowestoft. Local defence units at Great Yarmouth prepared for an air-raid, whilst 15 aircraft were despatched from airfields atburgh Castle, Covehithe and Great Yarmouth, to intercept the Zeppelins. Amongst these aircraft, was a DH4, number A8032, piloted by Major Egbert Cadbury (Commander 212 sqn.) with Major 'Bob' Leckie (Commander 228 sqn.) flying as observer.

After climbing to 10000 ft. Cadbury and Leckie saw the four Zeppelins, clearly visible though the summer evening sunlight was now fading. Their DH4 continued to climb to 16400 ft. where they turned and approached L70 from head-on and slightly to port. With two bursts of gun-fire from Leckie's Lewis machine gun, L70 caught fire. After 45 seconds, the whole of L70 was ablaze and the airship plunged downwards, crashing into the North Sea off the Norfolk coast.

Cadbury and Leckie then endeavoured to engage the second airship, L65, but Leckie's gun jammed. The other airships, after seeing the destruction of L70, abandoned the raid.

After the attack, the DH4 made a dangerous journey home, through thick cloud and darkness. For their action, Cadbury and Leckie were awarded the DFC (Distinguished Flying Cross), on August 21st. Their action played a major part in convincing German military commanders that airship bombing raids on England were an unproductive waste of life and effort.



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