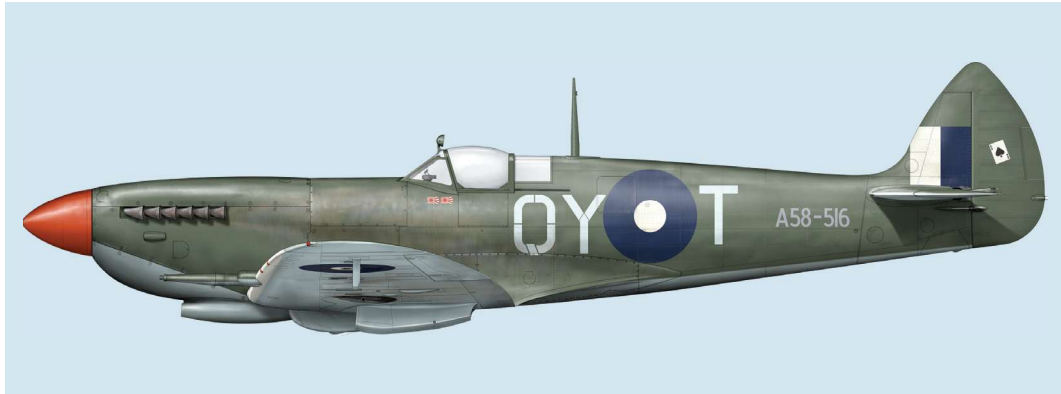
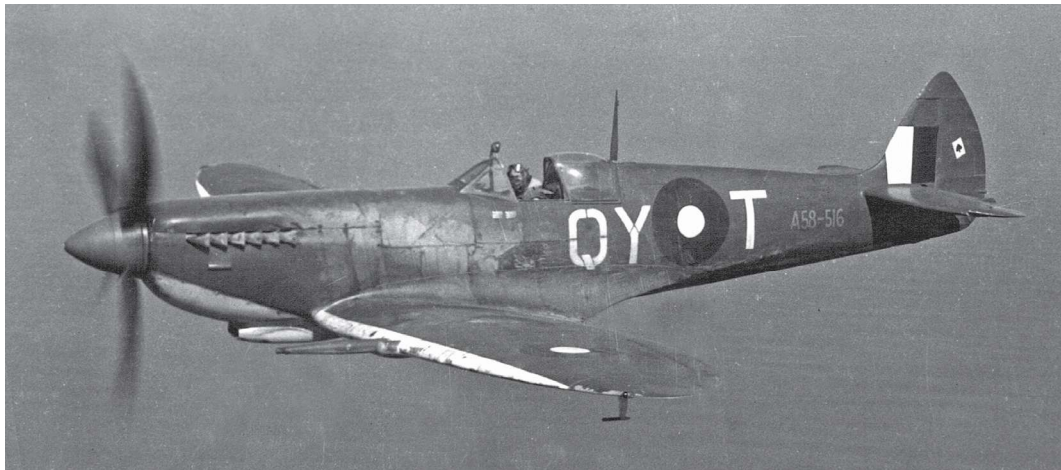




*Spitfire Mk VIII A58-516 (QY-T). This fighter was received by No. 452 Squadron in December 1944 and was regularly flown by Flight Lieutenant Lyn Crompton. It was destroyed in a landing accident at Balikpapan on 17 July 1945.*



*A fine photograph of Spitfire Mk VIII A58-516 (QY-T) which is illustrated in the profile above.*

1945 when Flying Officer Jeff “Argus” King made an early morning contact with a flight of ten enemy aircraft. He made two attacks and shot down a Nakajima Ki-49 Helen bomber into the sea in flames. No. 452 Squadron’s last operational sortie of the war was flown along the Milford Highway on 10 August. Fittingly led by Squadron Leader Barclay, one truck was destroyed and four were left badly damaged.

On 15 August, news arrived of the Japanese surrender which was met “without excitement or demonstration”. So ended No. 452 Squadron’s war. All offensive operations were suspended although night readiness was still maintained. As if to put another damper on squadron morale, Flying Officer Ed Lee died eleven days after his Spitfire A58-650 collided with a truck parked at the edge of the runway just after he became airborne.

With the war at a close, several changes were made to both No. 452 Squadron’s command and the flying routine. Replacing Squadron Leader Barclay, on 12 September Flight Lieutenant William Friend assumed command as temporary commanding officer and was given the task by wing headquarters of preparing the Spitfires to return to Australia. Friend had flown