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## Tail gun charlie

The flight crew responsible for operating defensive armament located on the tail of the aircraft Tailgunner redirects here. For the song with this name, see No prayer for the dying. For other reviews of the 1979 arcade game, see Tail Gunner. Tail shooter in a USAAF B-17 Flying Fortress, 1943 A tail shooter or rear gunner is a crew of a military aircraft that acts as a shooter defending against enemy fighter attacks from the back, or tail, of the aircraft. The tail shooter operates a flexible machine gun position at the tail end of the aircraft with unobstructed views towards the back of the aircraft. While the term tail gunner is usually associated with a crew inside a gun tower, the first tail guns were operated from open openings in the aircraft's fuselage, such as the Scarff ring mechanism used in the British Handley Page V/1500, which was introduced during the final months of the First World War. In particularly advanced tail-shooting schemes, the tail armament can be operated by remote control from another part of the aircraft, such as the American Boeing B-52 Stratofortress, a strategic bomber first introduced during 1955. History The Russian Sikorsky Ilya Muromets (model S-25 variant Geh-2, from March 1916) was the first aircraft equipped with a tail gun position The first aircraft ever incorporated a tail gunner position was the Sikorsky Ilya Muromets bomber, which became active during World War I and the last years of the Russian Empire. Ilya Muromet's prototype first flew in 1913, with no weapons on board and no rear position for the crew. When the war broke out, in 1914, only a few Ilya Muromets aircraft were built, but there was a need for increasing numbers because of the war effort. After entering the mass production phase and after watching combat throughout the first year of war against the fighters of the German Empire, a rear-defending position seemed to the Imperial Russian Air Service to be increasingly important in protecting both the aircraft and its crew. Such a scheme, during March 1916, saw the light of day on the model S-25 (variant Geh-2) of the Sikorsky Ilya Muromet bomber. This aircraft was the first in history that included at the end tail area a gunner position. [1] Mass production of Ilya Muromet's bombers began, with the final example completed in 1918, when more than 80 aircraft had been reportedly completed. De Ilya Muromets who served after the Russian Revolution was incorporated into the Soviet air forces. [1] Another example of a World War I aircraft equipped with a tail-shooting position was the British Handley Page V/1500. It was specifically developed as a heavy bomber by Handley Page, which designed a relatively large four-engine for the era; It was reportedly able to bomb Berlin from bases in East Anglia. [2] However, the type did not enter service until the end of the war, in the months of October and November 1918, and thus never saw any kind of combat action. The type saw use in subsequent conflicts, including a crucial role in ending the third Anglo-Afghan war, which flew from Risalpur to Kabul to drop its payload of four 112 lb (51 kg) bombs and 16 20 lb (10 kg) bombs on the city and the royal palace, reportedly contributing to the Rapid Surrender of Afghans. [4] Vickers Virginia in flight Throughout the interwar period, various new military aircraft containing a shooting position on the tail were introduced; Examples included british Vickers Virginia, introduced to service in 1924,[5] and the Japanese flying boat Kawanishi H3K (developed from Short Rangoon), adopted during 1930. Whitley completed his first flight during 1936, and entered service with the RAF, and remained in service until the final months of World War II. [8] Whitley's tail shooter position would be revised on later built models, adopting a more powerful Nash & Thompson power-powered tower that mounted four Browning machine guns. [9] During the overall history of its use in combat, the tail shooter was most active during World War II. For almost all aircraft models where it was mounted, the tail gun position was made up of an enclosed space inhabited by the shooter. During World War II, this extreme tail room usually adapted to the inside fixed gunner configuration, where the shooter operated the articulated mount of autocannon or machine gun fire (usually one or two weapons); examples of such aircraft are the Japanese Mitsubishi G4M bomber (which had an Oerlikon 20 mm autocannon), [10] and the American B-17 and B-29 bombers (which were equipped with a mount of two 0.50 Browning M2 machine guns). [11] [12] A number of Halifax bombers during assembly, 1942. Note the rounded turret position towards the end of the tail An alternative arrangement in the form of the hydraulic or electrically driven and completely closed gun tower. This configuration is usually rotated horizontally and mounts one, two or more automatic firearms; aircraft that contained such tail cannons include the later built variants of the American B-24 bombers (different different tower models were used, all equipped with two 0.50 Browning M2), and several British bombers, including the Avro Lancaster (equipped with a Nash & Thompson FN-20 turret with four Browning .303 II machine guns),[14][15] and Handley Page Halifax (with a Boulton & Paul Type E Mk III turret that also mounted four 0.50 Browning M2s). [16] During the last years of the conflict, the Us B-29 bombers were equipped with a gun position where the shooter still had a direct view on his target while operating his synchronized weapons, but some other gun positions of this model of Boeing bombers were, for the first time in an aircraft, operated from other parts of the aircraft, each a spotting target using a periscopic display system. [17] [18] After the end of the conflict, the post-war period saw more and more successive tail gun positions in aircraft inherited this display and vision method, and subsequently ended with additional radar sights and radar targeting systems, where early testing had occurred during World War II; One such example was the radar-directed FN121 turret that was mounted on some Lancaster and Halifax bombers was introduced during 1944. While many aerospace firms went into heavy design with new powerful engines and several defensive towers, such as the Avro Manchester and Halifax bombers, de Havilland promoted the concept of a compact bomber that lacked defensive towers and instead relied on speed. [19] Despite pressure from the Air Ministry to arm his proposal, de Havilland made no design changes and built the Mosquito as intended. [21] When the type began its introduction in 1941, the aircraft was one of the fastest operational aircraft in the world. [23] In practice, the mosquito showed its effectiveness; Despite an initial high loss rate, the bomber variants ended the war with the lowest recorded casualties of any aircraft in the RAF Bomber Command service. [24] Due to its success, aspects such as speed and altitude performance were often prioritised over defensive armaments on future bombers, such as the much-acquired jet-powered English Electric Canberra. [25] The tail shooter was last heavily used in combat during the Vietnam War against the United States Air Force (USAF) large bombers. At this point, the position has largely become obsolete due to advances in long-range air combat weapons such as air-to-air missiles, as well as modern detection and

