



A Curtiss H75M Hawk of 25th Squadron.

was probably purchased, but crashed on 5 January 1938. Another Curtiss product, an H-75H Hawk single-seat fighter, was completed in June 1937 and shipped to China as a demonstrator. It was shown in Nanking by company pilot Peter Brewster on 25 August and it was finally bought by Madame Chiang and presented to Colonel Chennault as his own personal aircraft! A North American NA-16-2 (NA-20) two-seat trainer was demonstrated in Nanking during the summer of 1937, but was later returned to the USA and both the H-75 and NA-16 would later be ordered in quantity for the CAF.

American Captain Claire Chennault had accepted an invitation to come to China as an air adviser and arrived in Shanghai on the "President Garfield" in May 1937. He was instructed to make an immediate tour of all CAF aerodromes to make a survey of the CAF. While he was at

Loyang the city suffered a Japanese attack and he decided to stay to help China fight back. He was made a Colonel in the CAF and was put "in charge of CAF training and operations" on 1 September. Among other things he set up an air raid control system for the CAF fighter units. In 1938 he was retired from active service and was requested to head instruction at an advanced flying school at Kunming.

On 5 May 1937 an aviation day ceremony was staged in Canton and 18 aircraft bought from funds raised in Kwangtung as gifts to Marshal Chiang Kai-shek on his 50th birthday were named. At Tin Ho Aerodrome a bottle of wine was broken on the fuselage of each machine, formation flights were made and pamphlets were dropped over several cities. About 30 aircraft came down from Hangchow for the air show.

In July 1937 the Nanking Government took over the



Thirty Vultee V-11-Gs were ordered, originally by the Canton Government, and delivered in 1937-38.



The CAF had nine Martin M-139WC bombers.

Szechwan Air Force at Chungking. All troops, aircraft, probably mostly old Potez 25s, airfields, arsenals and repair shops were handed over. The CAF was now under the control of General Chiang and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, who early in 1936 was appointed Secretary General for Air.

The Beginning of the Sino-Japanese War

A Japanese attack on Marco Polo Bridge (Lukouchiao) in July 1937 marked the beginning of the Sino-Japanese War. China declared the War of Resistance against Japan. Fighting spread through North China and by 13 August the hostilities had reached Shanghai. From 1937 to 1939 the Japanese Army advanced and finally occupied most of the important and heavily populated areas in China.

On the night of 7 July 1937 Chinese troops clashed with a Japanese battalion near Marco Polo Bridge at Wanping, south-west of Peking. On 11 July Japan decided to mobilise and send additional troops to China and Chiang Kai-shek ordered troops to Paoting. Fighting broke out in Hopei and around Shanghai. On 7 August 1937 the National Defence Council decided to fight a general war against Japan.

On 14 August the CAF bombed the Japanese naval installations near Shanghai and attempted to attack the Japanese cruiser "Izumo". Unfortunately one of the bombs hit a hotel and another building, killing a large number of people. The Japanese forces in Shanghai had been building up their strength for some time and the Chinese Army was driven out of the city and suffered a major defeat in November. Peking had been occupied by the Japanese on 31 July and they then continued into Chahar and took Kalgan on 3 September, followed by the main cities in Suiyuan in October.

Changchow fell on 29 November and the Japanese Army was soon approaching Nanking. The Chinese Government now moved to Chungking and the military headquarters to Wuhan. On 13 December the Japanese finally entered Nan-

king. Meanwhile the Japanese advanced also in North China and took Taiyuan on 8-9 November.

The CAF Moves to War Stations

The number of squadrons had been reduced to 21, as already described, but when the war broke out two additional Douglas O-2 squadrons immediately started forming with nine aircraft each as an emergency measure. The total number of squadrons was then 23. Another three reconnaissance squadrons were being formed with Corsairs, but they were not ready, and the Heinkel He 111 bomber squadron was ordered to remain at Nanchang, as it had no bombs. The rest of the CAF was ordered to move to war stations before 15 August and the squadrons were to be based as follows:

Squadron	Aircraft Type	War Station
4th	Douglas O-2MC	Chih Chiachwang
7th	Hawk III	Sinsiang
8th	Fiat CR 32	Nanking
9th	Northrop	Tsining
10th	Savoia S 72	Sinsiang
11th	Northrop	Tsining
14th	Northrop	Tsining
15th	Douglas O-2MC	Tsinan
17th	Boeing 281	Nanking
19th	Heinkel He 111	Nanchang
20th	Douglas O-2MC	Siaokan
21st	Hawk III	Chih Chiachwang
22nd	Hawk III	Taming
23rd	Hawk III	Tsinan
24th	Hawk III	Tsinan
26th	Shrike	Taming
27th	Shrike	Taming
28th	Hawk I	Nanchang
29th	Hawk III	Canton
30th	Martin M-139	Sinsiang