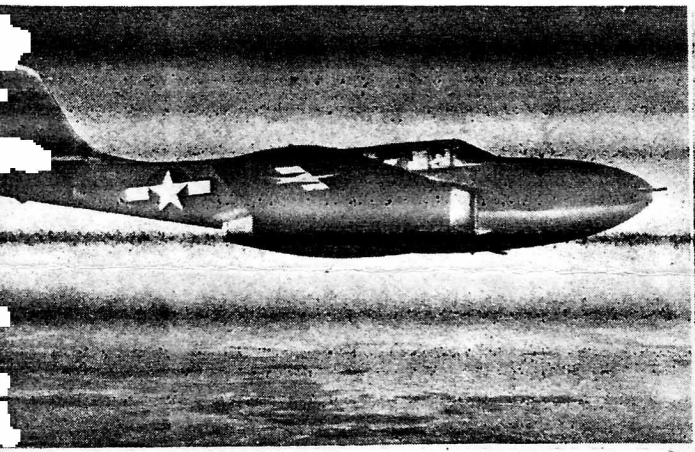
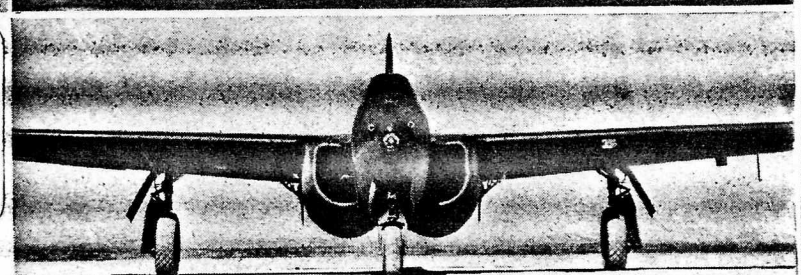
THE FIRST JET PLANE AT MATERIEL CENTER FLIGHT TEST BASE (EDWARDS)
MARCH 1943





P-59A Airacomet Details of this American-type jet plane built by Bell Aircraft Corp., have not been released. We do know that the plane is rated at a speed over 400 mph, it weighs better than five tons and has a wing span of 49 feet, and carries heavy armament. The jet units that power the P-59 are made by General Electric and are basically thermal-jet engines. Air flows into air-intake duct at front of units. Rotary compressors force it under pressure into combustion chamber where it is mixed with fuel. The mixture burns, causing high pressure, and is directed through turbine. Then jet itself is nozzled down for greater force and emerges as stream of gas driving the plane. The jet engine is started by electrical power from outside source. In operation, P-59 runs so smoothly that vibrator is installed on instrument panel to keep delicate needles functioning by the elimination of "stickiness."

JET FIGHTER, P-59A, resembles any mid-wing fighter. Power comes from two thermal-jet engines located underneath wings and next to fuselage