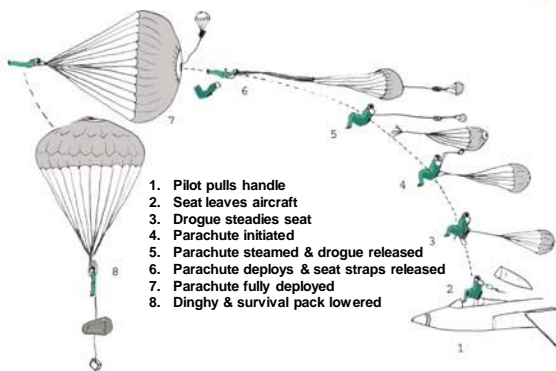




Ejection Seat

The first live flight test of the Martin-Baker system was on 24 July 1946, when fitter Bernard Lynch ejected from a Gloster *Meteor*. Similar seats were fitted to prototype and production aircraft soon afterwards. The first emergency use of a seat was in 1949 during the testing of Armstrong Whitworth's experimental jet-powered flying wing. These early seats used a solid propellant charge inside a telescoping tube attached to the seat to eject the pilot in the seat. As aircraft speeds increased this method proved unable to get the pilot sufficiently clear of the airframe. Increasing the amount of propellant risked damaging the occupant's spine, so Martin-Baker developed a new seat using multiple rocket units feeding a single nozzle. The greater thrust from this was able to eject the pilot to a safe height even if the aircraft was on or very near the ground.



The Ejection Sequence



A late ejection from a Lightning