

Fewest of the Few Supplement



A40 Entry Graduated July 1940

SURNAME	INITS
DAVEY	JAJ
ELKINGTON	JFD
FULFORD	D
TOMLINSON	PA
WATLING	WC
WATSON	AR

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

R.A.F. Form 540

of (Unit or Formation).....Station Headquarters.....CRANWELL.....

No. of pages used for day.....

Place.	Date.	Time.	Summary of Events.	References to Appendices.
CRANWELL.	1.9.39.		Lieutenant T.A. Tindle assumes the duties of Station Defence Officer. Education Officers - members of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve - recalled for duty. Aerodrome Council School closed owing to evacuation.	D.R.O. 170. D.R.O. 168.
	2.9.39.		Lighting restrictions introduced, and guards posted at entrances to the Station.	
	3.9.39.		Receipt of message stating that War has been declared on Germany by the Allied Powers. Group Captain Strugnell, MC., posted to Command (A/Cadre Post). <u>Royal Air Force College becomes a Flying Training School, and is self-controlled.</u>	A.M.P.L. 319.



Davey, John Arthur Joseph (A40 War Entry, not S39)



Davey was born in Leamington and joined the RAF as an apprentice in August 1936 (569676) passing out in July 1939. Awarded a scholarship to RAF College Cranwell, he began the course which was abruptly suspended when war broke out and he remustered as a u/t Airman.

Some record that he actually entered the RAF College Cranwell in September 1939 as a Flight Cadet, but College records show him having undertaken a shortened course of Officer training on A40 Entry, which graduated on 20 July 1940. There are no records of an S39 Entry and it is speculated that the scheduled S39 course was terminated before it managed to start at the outbreak of war.



He did carry out his elementary flying training at 9 EFTS Ansty from October 1939 to April 1940, when most historians concur he went to Cranwell for intermediate and advanced training. On 14 July, Davey was granted a permanent commission and he joined 1 Squadron at Tangmere on the 15th.

Davey was attached to the Northolt Sector Training Flight, made his first flight in a Hurricane on 19 July and did not make his first operational sortie with 1 Squadron until the 26th. On the 31st, he shared a Do 17.

Shot down by Bf 110s on 11 August, Davey was killed when he crashed in Hurricane P3172, attempting a forced-landing on Sandown Golf Course.

Davey was 20. He is buried in Sundown Cemetery, Isle of White.



Elkington John Francis Durham
(A40 War Entry, not S39)



Elkington was born on 23rd December 1920 in Warwickshire. He was educated at Old Ride Prep School, Bournemouth, Packwood Haugh Prep School, Hockley Heath and Bedford School. Some record that he entered the RAF College Cranwell in September 1939 as a Flight Cadet, but College records show him having undertaken a shortened course of Officer training on A40 Entry, which graduated on 20 July 1940. There are no records of an S39 Entry and it is speculated that the scheduled S39 course was terminated before it managed to start at the outbreak of war.

He did carry out his elementary flying training at 9 EFTS Ansty from October 1939 to April 1940, when most historians concur he went to Cranwell for intermediate and advanced training. Archived records at the RAF College show him on SFTS Course 9 (Squadron 1). On 14 July, Elkington was granted a permanent commission and the next day he joined 1 Squadron at Northolt.



On 15 August he shot down an Me 109. On the 16th, Elkington was in Flight Sergeant Berry's section when the squadron was ordered to patrol off Portsmouth. A large force of German aircraft was met and, in the ensuing engagement, Elkington's Hurricane P3137 was hit by a cannon shell in the starboard fuel tank and burst into flames.

He baled out near the Nab light. Berry followed him and with his slipstream blew Elkington on to land at West Wittering. Elkington was taken to the Royal West Sussex Hospital at Chichester. His aircraft crashed and burned out at Manor Farm, Chidham.

After sick leave Elkington rejoined 1 Squadron, then at Wittering, on 1 October 1940. He probably destroyed a Ju 88 on the 9th and shared in the destruction of a Do 215 on the 27th.

In mid-April 1941, Elkington was posted to 55 OTU at Usworth as an instructor. He joined 601 Squadron in late May at Manston.

In late July he joined 134 Squadron, then forming at Leconfield for service in Russia. The squadron embarked on HMS Argus on 12th August and, on 7 September, it flew off the carrier to the airfield at Vaenga, near Murmansk. During September and early October, 134 Squadron took part in bomber escorts and airfield defence. In mid-October, it began training Russian pilots on Hurricanes, which were handed over at the end of the month. Whilst in Russia, Elkington shared in the destruction of a Ju 88.

In mid-November 1941, the squadron pilots began the journey home, making their way in three minesweepers to Archangel, sailing from there in HMS Berwick on 1 December.

134 Squadron reformed at Eglinton in January 1942. Elkington joined the MSFU at Speke in April, remaining with it until August, when he rejoined 1 Squadron at Acklington. He was posted to 539 Squadron there in September, a Turbinlite Havoc unit. When 539 Squadron was disbanded on 25th January 1943, Elkington was posted to the newly-formed 197 Squadron at Drem, equipped with Typhoons.

He received warning instructions for overseas in September 1943 and in December joined 67 Squadron at Alipore, India. With his tour completed, Elkington went to the ADFU at Amarda Road in February 1944. He returned to the UK for a course at CFE Tangmere in May 1945 and went back to India in July. Elkington returned to the UK on 27 October 1946.

He had a long post-war career in the RAF and retired on 23 December 1975 as a Wing Commander.



Fulford, David (A40 War Entry, not S39)



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Fulford was from Dinnington, Yorkshire, and was educated at King Edward VII School, Sheffield. He had been accepted for a flight cadetship at the RAF College, but at the outbreak of war the scheme was suspended and Fulford became an Airman u/t Pilot in the RAFVR in October 1939 (905533). (College records show him having undertaken a shortened course of Officer training on A40 Entry, which graduated on 20 July 1940.)



He did carry out his elementary flying training at 9 EFTS Ansty from October 1939 to April 1940, when most historians concur he went to Cranwell for intermediate and advanced training. Archived records at the RAF College show him on SFTS Course 9 (Squadron 1). He passed out as a Sergeant-Pilot, instead of receiving a permanent commission, as he may well have done if his cadetship had fully materialised and his officer training been completed.

In August 1940, Fulford joined 64 Squadron at Leconfield and flew his first operational sortie on 6 September. He moved to 19 Squadron at Fowlmere on 25 September. He shared a Bf 110 on 15 November and shared a Bf 109 on the 28th.

Commissioned in March 1941, Fulford was posted to 118 Squadron at Ibsley. On 17 July, Fulford obtained a probable Bf 109 and he destroyed Bf 109s on 6 August and 13 October.

He was awarded the DFC (gazetted 4 November 1941). When 118 Squadron took part in the film *First of the Few*, Fulford appeared as himself, with other Battle of Britain pilots.

In early 1942, he was posted to 261 Squadron in Ceylon, as a Flight Commander. He was in action against the Japanese on 9 April, when they launched their big carrier-borne air attack on Colombo. Fulford shot down two Zeros in the ensuing action.

Posted back to the UK in June 1942, he joined 611 Squadron at Redhill, as a Flying Officer. He was killed on 2 November 1942, when his Spitfire was shot down by Fw 190s over le Touquet.

Fulford is remembered on the Runnymede Memorial, panel 67. A plaque in his memory was unveiled at King Edward VII School on 10 November 2000.



Tomlinson, Paul Anthony (A40 War Entry, not S39)



Tomlinson was born on 3rd November 1921 and was educated at Tonbridge School.

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On completion he was granted a permanent commission on 21 July.

Tomlinson appears to have gone to No 2 School of Army Co-operation, Andover on 21 July but then arrived at Aston Down on 28 July. He joined 29 Squadron at Digby from 5 OTU on 20 August. Two days later, during an RDF trial flight, his Blenheim was struck by lightning. Tomlinson and his gunner were unhurt and returned safely.

He retired from the RAF on 31 March 1945 as a Flight Lieutenant, retaining the rank of Squadron Leader.

He is honoured on a plaque at Tonbridge School, unveiled on 26 November 2003.



**Watling, William Charles
(A40 War Entry, not S39)**



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Watling was born in Middlesborough on 22nd February 1920, but his family later settled in Guernsey and he attended Elizabeth College there from 1936 to 1939. He excelled at Athletics.

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He joined 92 Squadron at Pembrey on the 20 August 1940. He was then posted straight to 5 OTU Aston Down to convert to Spitfires and did not return to 92 till 2 August.

He claimed a share in the destruction of a Ju88 on 13/14 August. He was shot down in combat with enemy aircraft over East Guldeford near Rye on 9 September in Spitfire P9372 and baled out, badly burned on face and hands.

Returning to flying after recovering from his burns, Watling probably destroyed a Me109 on 2 November and damaged another on 1 December.

He was killed on 7th February 1941, still with 92. Two Spitfires, including Watling in R6924, took off from Manston in the morning for a weather test. Visibility was extremely bad and his aircraft flew into high ground near Deal. Watling was 20 years old and is buried in St. Mary Cray Cemetery, Orpington, Kent.



Watson, Arthur Roy (A40 War Entry, not S39)



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Watson, from Nottingham, was educated at the High School there. He entered RAF College Cranwell in September 1939 as a Flight Cadet. The scheme was suspended after the outbreak of war and Watson enlisted in the RAFVR in October 1939 as an Airman u/t Pilot at SFTS Cranwell on Course 9.

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On 15 September, Watson claimed an He 111 destroyed and, on the 27th, a Ju 88 and an Me 110. He may have been shot down in this engagement and wounded. He went on sick leave and did not fly operationally again till October 1940.

He was shot down in combat with Me 109's on 28 November 1940 and baled out, but fell dead after his parachute failed to open. His Spitfire, R6597, crashed near Wareham.

The diary of Pilot Officer Dennis Fox-Male contains a disturbing account of Watson's loss:

".....his number 2, Doc, was gliding out of formation with some glycol streaming from his tank. Boy turned on his back and followed the 109 down. Soon we heard him say that he had shot the enemy plane down into the sea. The squadron re-grouped and soon we were ordered to return to Warmwell and land.

It was a shock to learn from one of the pilots that Doc had bailed out but his parachute had failed to open properly and he was killed when he hit the ground.

It was a custom in the squadron if you landed safely by parachute to give the Corporal in charge of the parachute packing section the princely sum (in those days) of ten shillings. Our corporal, although he looked rather gormless, had a good reputation and was extremely conscientious. We all admired and thanked him.

He was terribly upset at Doc Watson's failure to open his parachute and of course there was an enquiry. I have read in a book and in Boy's mess diary that he bungled the opening ,but from discussions in the squadron, after the investigation, I do not think that this was accurate.

We were always instructed to check our parachutes first thing every day. The vital thing was to undo the 'poppers' over the flap which covered and protected the pin in the back of the parachute. When the rip cord was pulled it jerked the pin out of its metal holder and the parachute unfolded. It was essential to make sure that the pin was straight and not bent.

I was told that Doc's pin was found to be bent right back - as far as you can bend your index finger - and in trying to pull the bent pin out he had in the end ripped the whole patch out - too late for the parachute to open."