RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL
College History - Book 3

“The New Normal”

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In its electronic form, this document contains underlined, hypertext links to additional material, including alternative source data and archived video/audio clips.
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Introduction

This booklet is the third of four summarising 100 years of College History. It chronicles some of the events involving the College and its alumni during the 25 years that saw the end of the Flight Cadet era and the introduction of the Graduate entry scheme which itself was to morph through the ‘Single Gate’ IOT system of the 80s and 90s to IOTC of today.

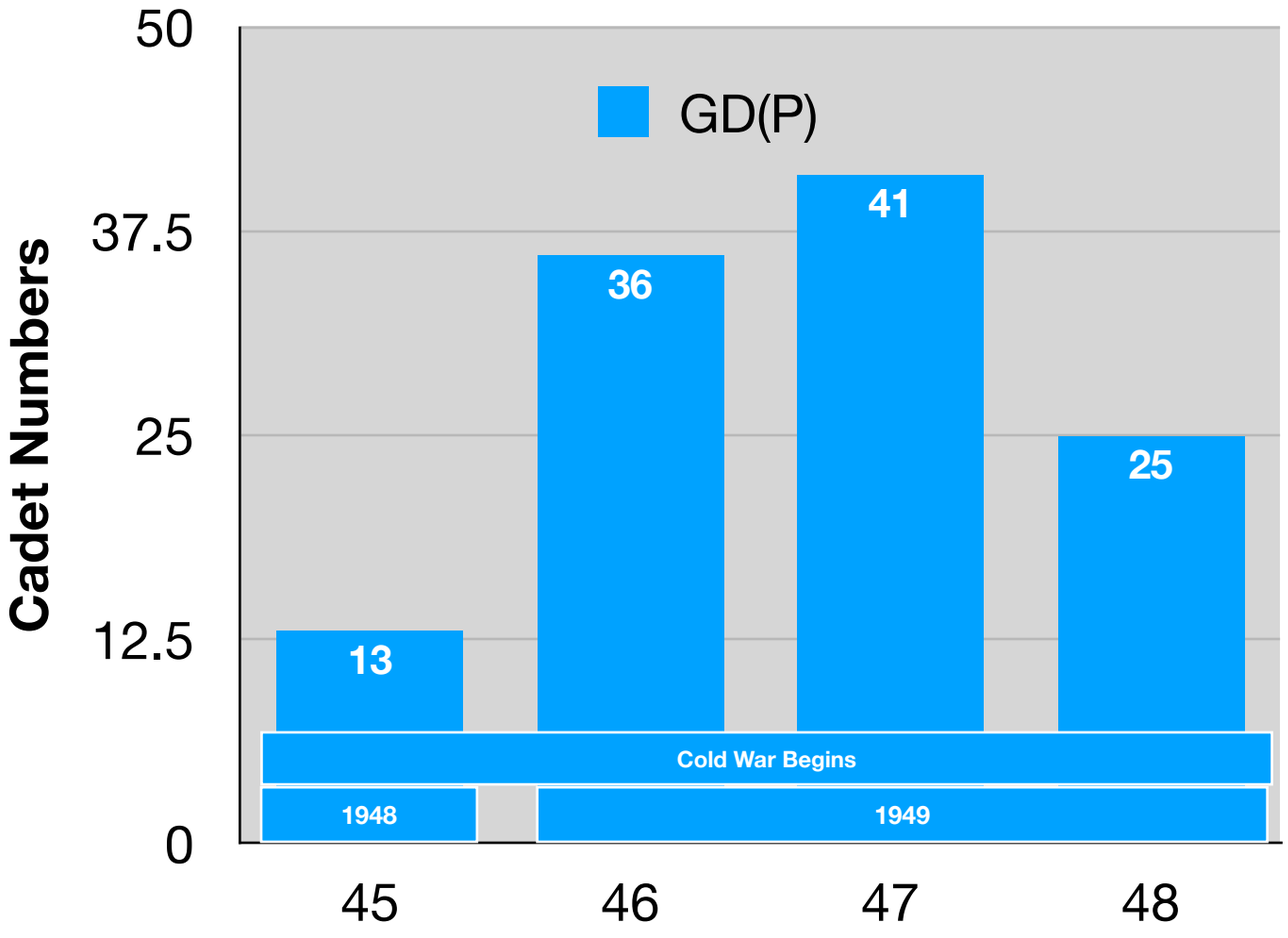
The other three booklets cover Cranwellian milestones either side of this period, viz:

- Book 1 - **The Pre-War Formative Years**, covering the trials and tribulations of setting up and sustaining an independent military air academy for the RAF and establishing it as the RAF’s spiritual home.
- Book 2 - **Cranwellians At War**, covering the war years and examining the contributions Cranwellians made to defending our nation in its hour of need.
- Book 4 - **Onwards an Upwards**, covering the introduction of the Single Gate Initial Officer Training (SGIOT) systems and transition from IOT of the 80s to IOTC training of the new millennium.

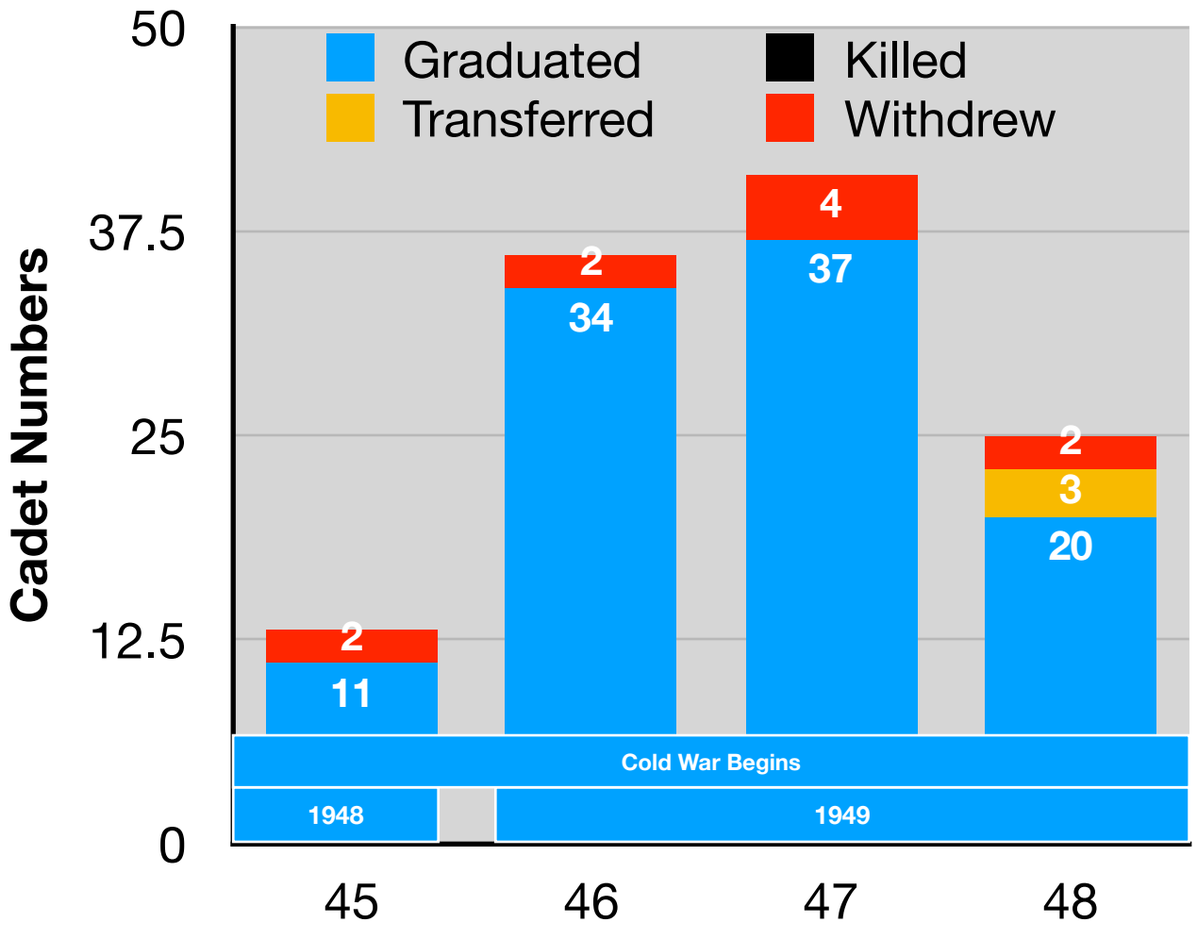
Each book gives a summary of milestone events and achievements with embedded ‘hot links’ to supporting videos, audio and more detailed, researched material. Every attempt has been made to record facts as they occurred, with references to source material added where relevant. Many of the entries are extracts taken from the RAF College Journals issued at the time, themselves a reflection of College life.

The College Re-opened - 1940s Statistics

Flight Cadet Intakes by Branch

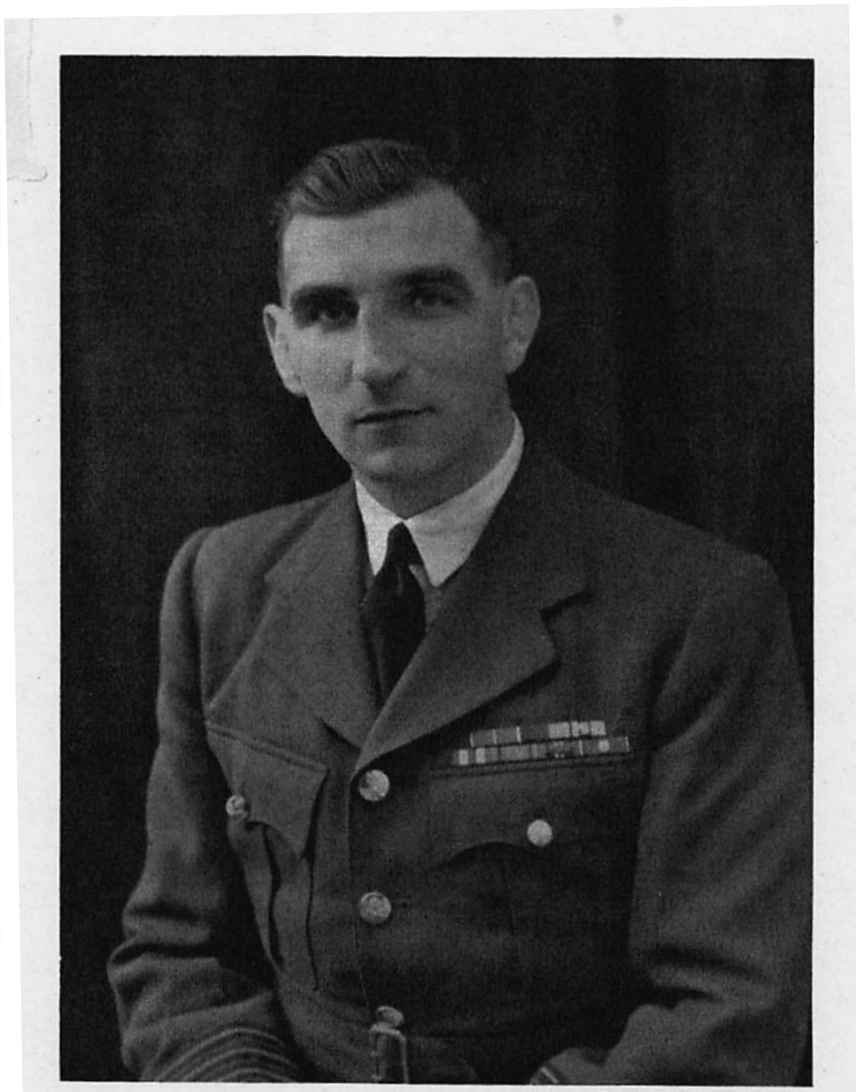


Flight Cadet Outputs



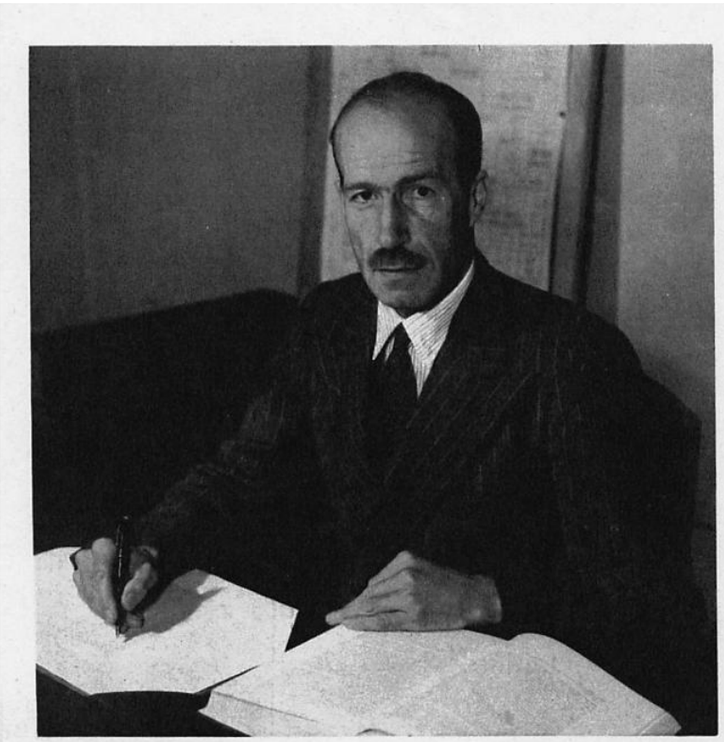
New Leaders on Resumption - All “Firsts”

Air Commodore RLR Atcherley CBE AFC
First Cranwell Cadet to become College Commandant



[*Photo: Ernest Whitney, Huntingdon*

GROUP CAPTAIN R. G. SEYMOUR, C.B.E.
First Assistant Commandant, Equipment and Secretarial Wing, Royal Air Force College, 1947-1949



MR. PATRICK JOHNSON, O.B.E., M.A.
First Director of Studies, Royal Air Force College

College Journal Extracts 1947

(With apologies for poor quality reproductions)

FOREWORD

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO I wrote the foreword for the first number of this Magazine, in which I said: "This College, in conjunction with Halton, will have the making or marring of the future of this great Service. . . . We all realize that it has to live up to its war reputation . . . "—referring, of course, to the 1914-18 war.

Who can deny that the boys of that day, who are the men of today, both at Cranwell and Halton, have made the Air Service for all time? Who can deny that those who were at its Colleges in those days have more than fulfilled their part in the history of the Air Force, and not only that, but in the life of the British Commonwealth? They saved it.

Now this Journal is being reissued. In August, 1939, the last issue before the war, the war was not mentioned. The Journal was, I suppose, in the "jargon" of today, in "suspended animation." With the 1939-45 war behind us, it is appearing again.

It is plain for all to see in the actions of the leaders and all ranks of the Royal Air Force what work they did in the last war. That work will be, or ought to be, the inspiration of all those coming into Cranwell now. I feel that they will respond with all their vigour to the inspiration of keeping this Service in the forefront, keeping this Service as the guardian of the British Nation, the British Isles and the British Commonwealth.

If you carry forward, by your efforts, the work of your predecessors, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you have done well.

Trenchard

MARSHAL OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE.
4th NOVEMBER, 1947.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF THE AIR STAFF

THE reappearance of the Royal Air Force College Journal comes at a time when the country as a whole is being compelled by the force of both logic and circumstance to readjust its ideas upon defence requirements. Now, more than ever before, people are becoming firmly conscious of the vital importance of our Service in the national defence. As an example, I should like to quote the following statement made by the Minister of Defence during the recent Commons debate on the Address :—

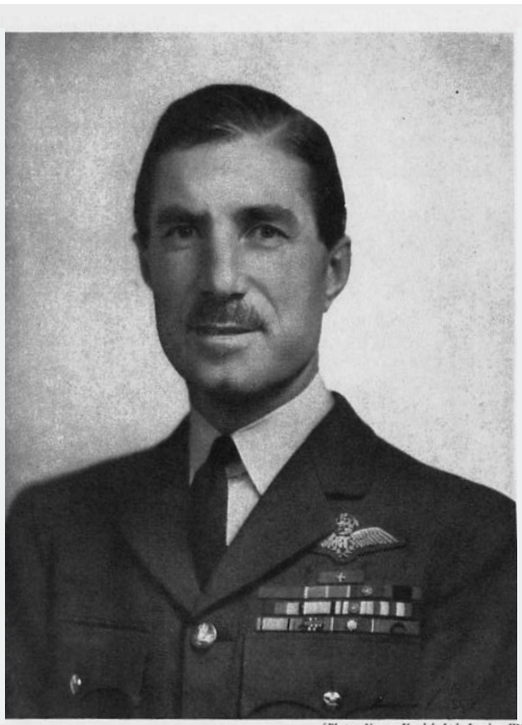
> "In the light of circumstances with which we are faced, my own view is that the first priority, which must not be interfered with, is defence research. The second, in the light of the present developing situation, must be to maintain the structure of the Royal Air Force, and its initial striking power. The third priority is for the maintenance of our sea communications, and, therefore, for the most efficient Navy we can get in the circumstances, and then we will do the best we can for the Army."

That places an immense responsibility on our Service. In this world of rapid change we must be continually alert. We must be up to date and keep up to date in mind and spirit. We must never let ourselves be complacent or self satisfied. Nothing but the best—and then something better—that must be our standard. Working to that standard the Royal Air Force will be a source not only of military, but also of spiritual strength to the national team of which it is a vital element; it will, moreover, be the best insurance against war.

It is to Cranwell that the Service looks for fresh ideas and fresh inspiration, fresh vitality and fresh energy. The Journal is an invaluable means of giving expression, for the Service as a whole, to the ideas and spirit of Cranwell.

Tedder

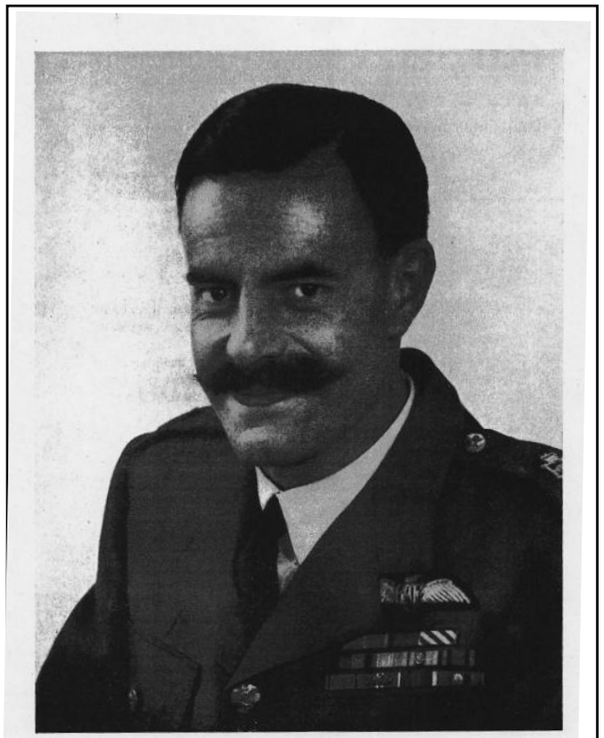
Heroes Return - Post-War Commandants



[Photo: Navana Vandyk, Ltd., London, W.1

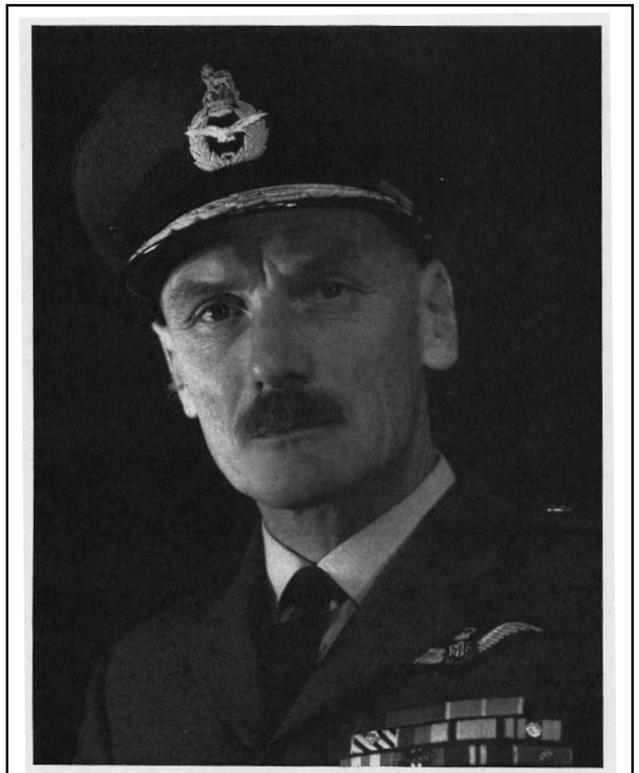
AIR COMMODORE L. F. SINCLAIR, G.C., C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O.,
Commandant of the Royal Air Force College

AIR COMMODORE H. EELES, C.B.E.
Commandant Royal Air Force College



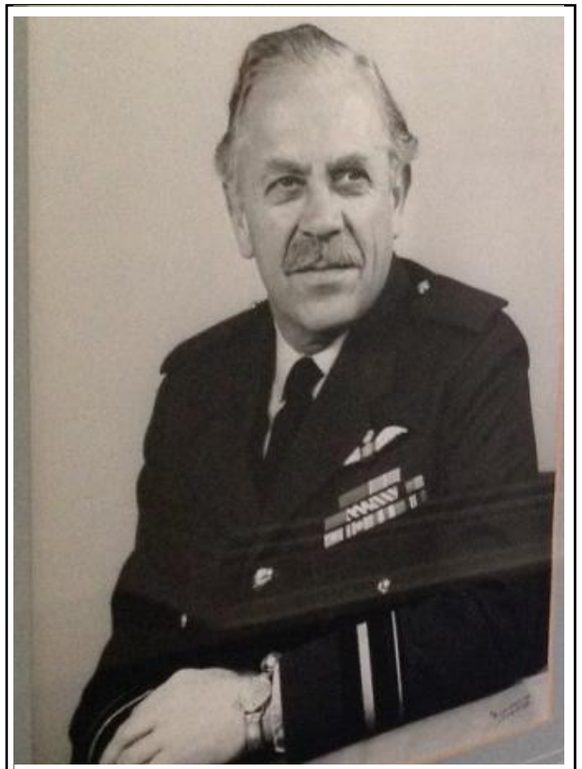
Air Commodore D. F. Spotswood, C.B.E., D.S.O., D.F.C., A.D.C.
Commandant Royal Air Force College

Air Commodore Michael Dillon Lyne, A.F.C.



Air Vice-Marshal I. D. N. Lawson, C.B., C.B.E., D.F.C.

Air Vice Marshal T. N. Stack, C.V.O., C.B.E., A.F.C.



Air Vice-Marshal FD Hughes CBE, DSO, DFC, AFC, MA

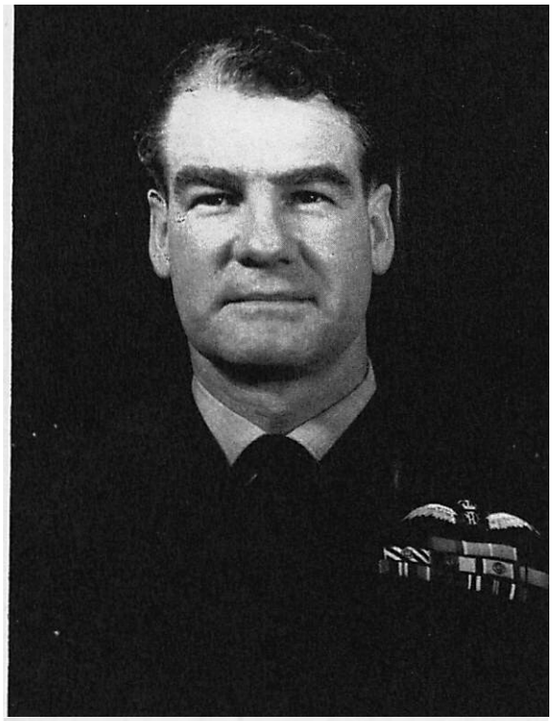
Heroes Return - Post-War Assistant Commandants

[Montage by W. E. Kelly

GROUP CAPTAIN J. O. W. OLIVER, C.B., D.S.O., D.F.C.
Assistant Commandant

Frontispiece

GROUP CAPTAIN W. H. KYLE, C.B.E., D.S.O., D.F.C., A.D.C.
Assistant Commandant



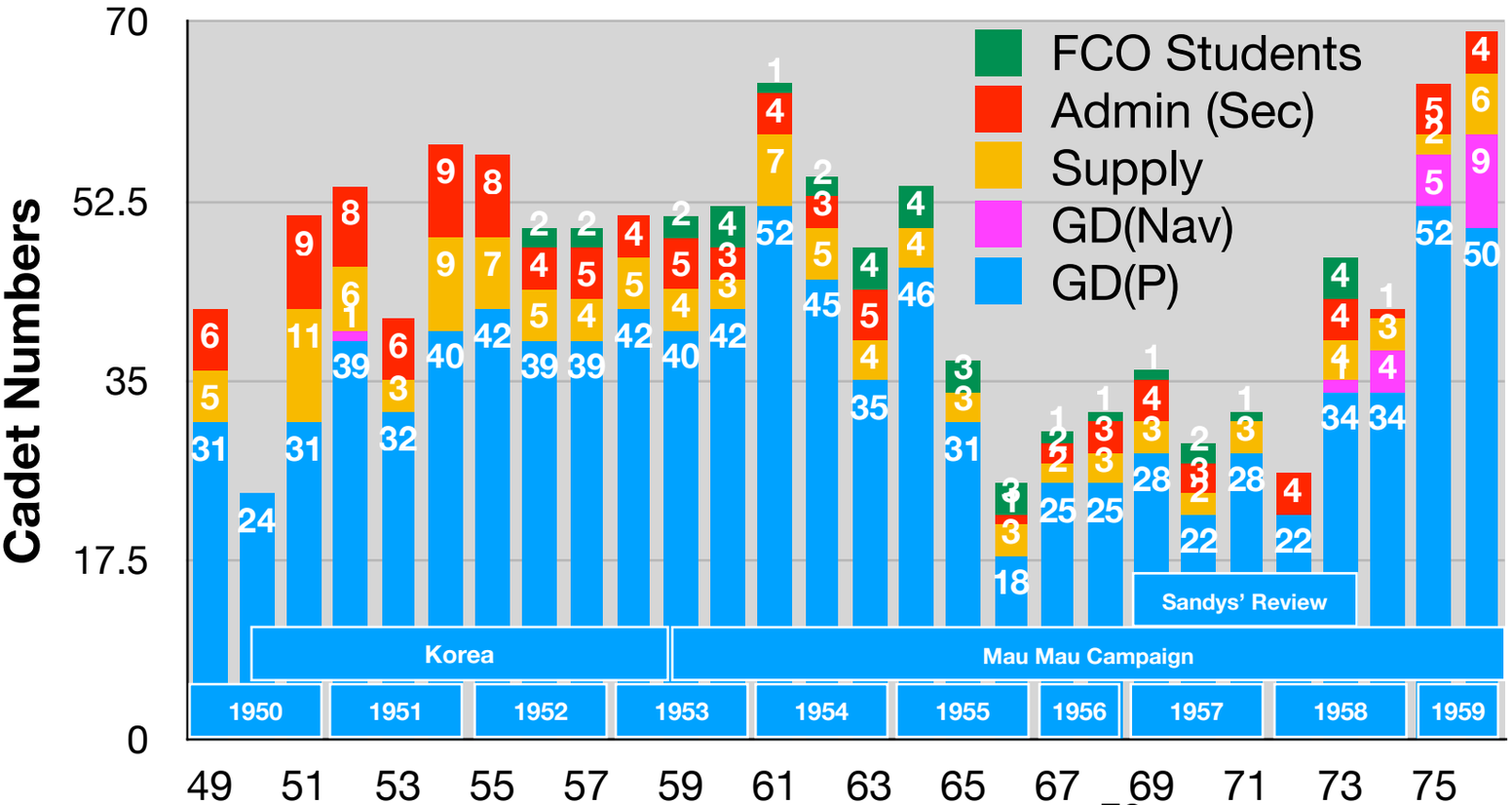
Group Captain Deere

GROUP CAPTAIN J. R. A. PEEL, D.S.O., D.F.C.
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT, 1946-7

GROUP CAPTAIN H. N. G. WHEELER,
C.B.E., D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C., A.D.C.
Assistant Commandant, Royal Air Force College

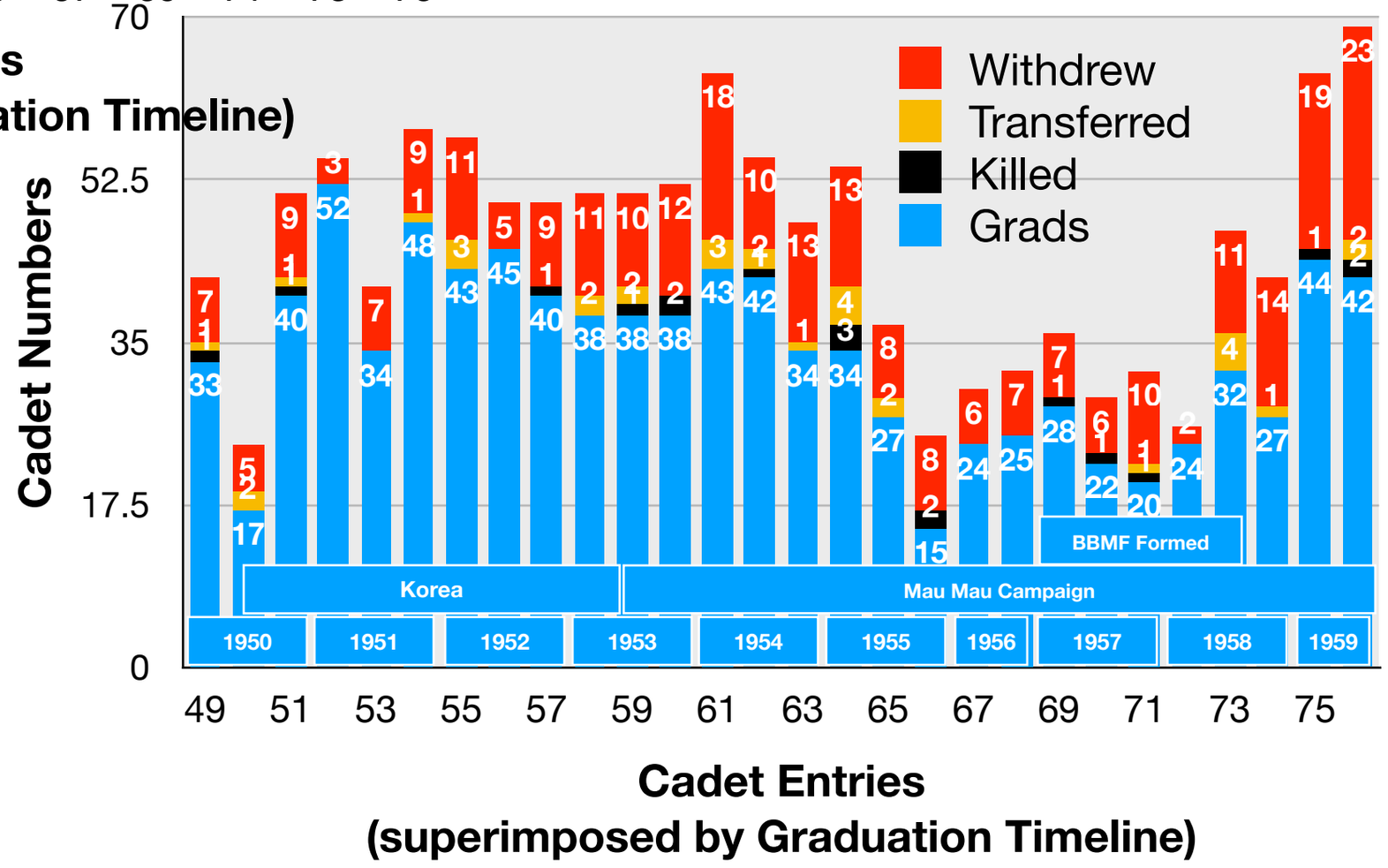
1950s Statistics

Flight Cadet Intakes by Branch

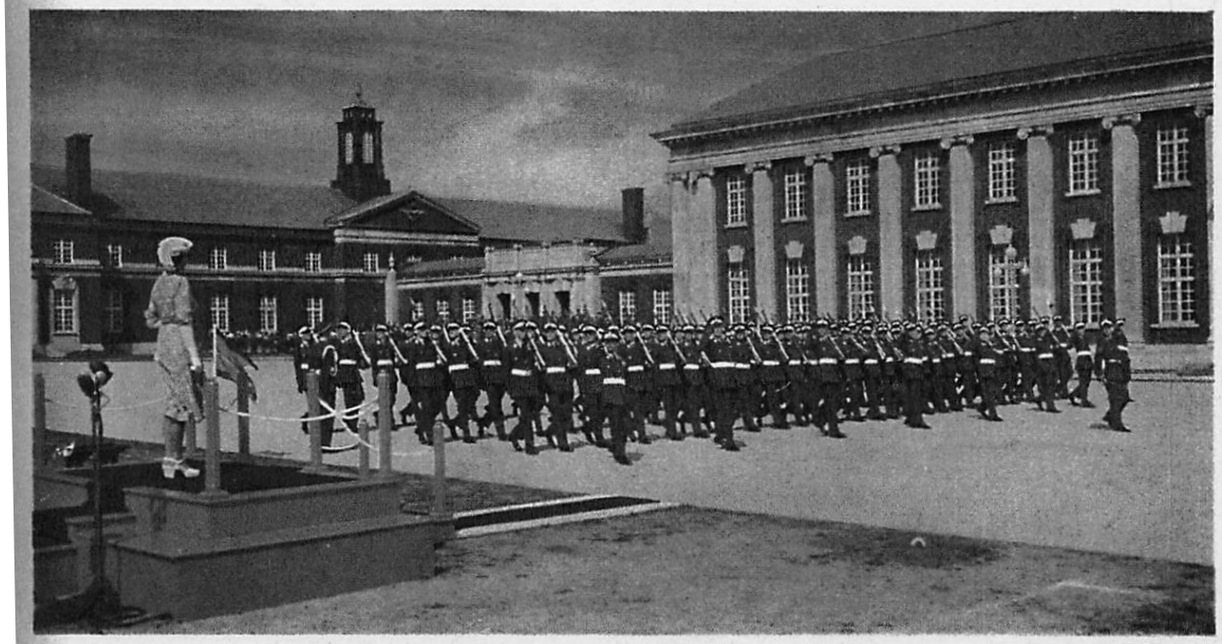


Flight Cadet Outputs

Cadet Entries
(superimposed by Graduation Timeline)



November 1951 - Royal Visit



The March Past and The Presentation of Prizes

★

Above: H.R.H. The Princess Elizabeth takes the salute as the Cadet Wing of the Royal Air Force College marches past.

Left: H.R.H. The Princess Elizabeth presents the Sword of Honour to Flight Cadet Under Officer H. A. Merriman, who also received the King's Medal shortly afterwards from Her Royal Highness's hands.

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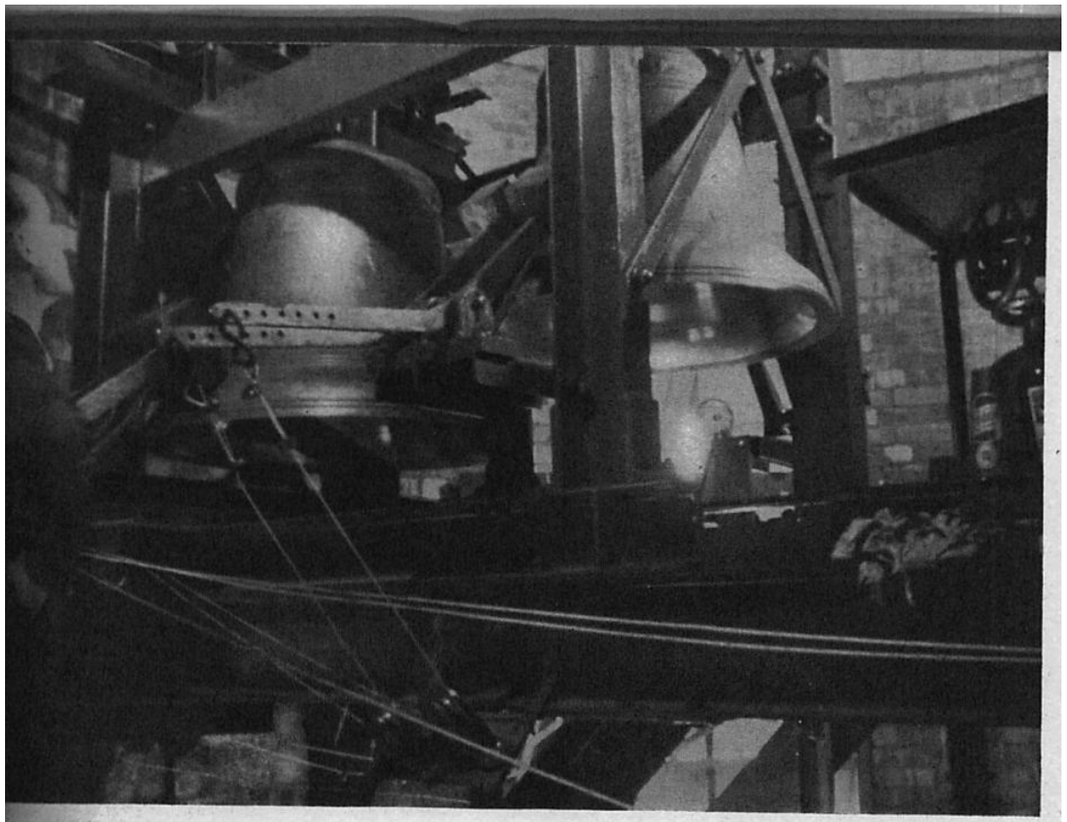
Photographs by Air Ministry Photographic Reproductions Branch

Journal November 1952 - The Bell ‘Chimes’



The Bells—a view inside the College Tower

THE DEDICATION OF THE BELLS

THE plan of installing a chime of bells in the College tower was discussed as a project for the Old Cranwellian Association's war memorial. When the Association decided to apply its fund to the development of the Chapel scheme, it appeared that the tower must remain silent. But the directors of the Shell Group generously wished to commemorate the close association of the Group with the achievements of the Royal Air Force. To their order bells were cast by the Loughborough firm of Messrs John Taylor & Co., and installed in the tower with the elaborate mechanism necessary to strike the hours, ring the quarter-hours in the Westminster chime, and sound 'Retreat' at the daily lowering of the ensign.

The work of installation could not start until after the day of the dedication of the Chapel, but it was completed before the end of the term.

In the afternoon of 30th July after the Graduation Parade the bells were dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Croydon, the Right Reverend C. K. N. Bardsley, C.B.E., and the day ended with the first ceremonial sounding of 'Retreat.'

The College was delighted to welcome at the Graduation Parade a number of those to whom this generous gift was due. Representatives of the Shell Group present included Sir Frank and Lady Godber, Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Salmond, Mr and Mrs R. A. Denne, Mr Guepin, Mr Hill and Group Captain D. R. S. Bader, D.S.O., D.F.C., who had been so active and helpful an intermediary in the whole scheme.

When the Reviewing Officer had driven away, visitors did not disperse, but gathered in the Entrance Hall and corridors of the College for the Act of Dedication. On the west wall of the

The Bells before installation in the Tower. Here all six bells lie at the foot of the steps leading up to the main entrance of the College. The notes and sizes of the bells are: G (2 cwt.), F (2⅛ cwt.), E flat (3¼ cwt.), B flat (7 cwt.), G (13 cwt.), E flat (25 cwt.). The four smaller bells are used for the Westminster Chime, the four larger ones for sounding 'Retreat.'

hall a plaque, cast in the metal of the bells and commemorating the gift, had been placed. A small enclosure around this was reserved for the representatives of the donors and for senior visitors, and behind them the hall was thronged and spectators took up their position in the round gallery above. At half past three the Bishop and his attendant clergy emerged from the flight cadets' ante-room and the short service began. After prayers and responses, the Bishop gave an address, recalling the sacrifices of which the gift of the bells was a memorial and the obligation that those sacrifices laid upon all. Then he unveiled the plaque and dedicated it.

The Bishop and clergy withdrew, and visitors moved out to the Parade Ground and the Orange. A squadron of flight cadets had marched into position on the Parade Ground, with the Band, in readiness for the striking of the hour and lowering of the ensign. As the bells chimed for the hour the squadron came to attention and the advance. When the hour had struck they presented arms. Then, while the ensign was lowered, the bells sounded 'Retreat' in a moving inauguration.

The College has been enriched by a most notable and imaginative gift. The striking of the hours may become, as indeed it is, a convenience, and the chiming of the quarters a welcome but almost unnoticed part of a familiar background. But the daily ceremony of the chime will not lose its significance.

'. . . You hear the solemn bell
At vespers, when the oriflammes are furled.
And then you know that somewhere in the world
They think of you.'

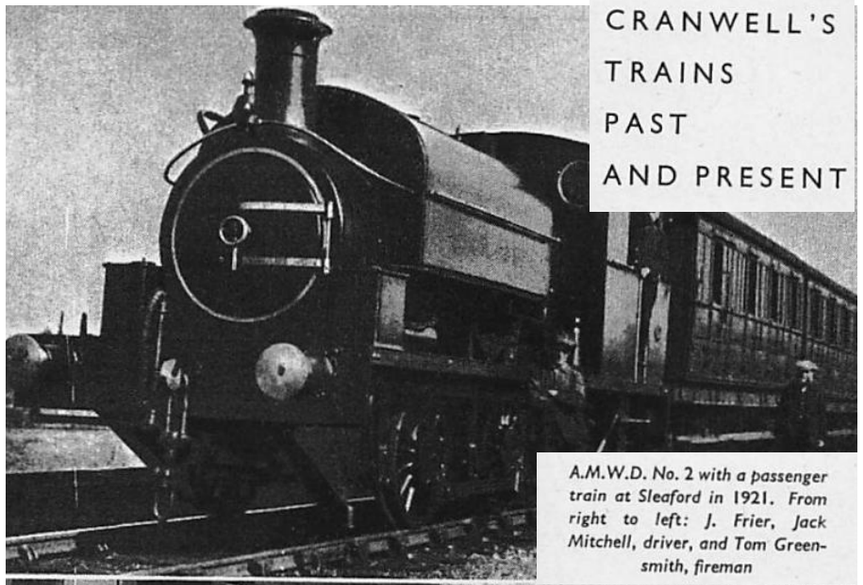
THE PLAQUE

The plaque reads:

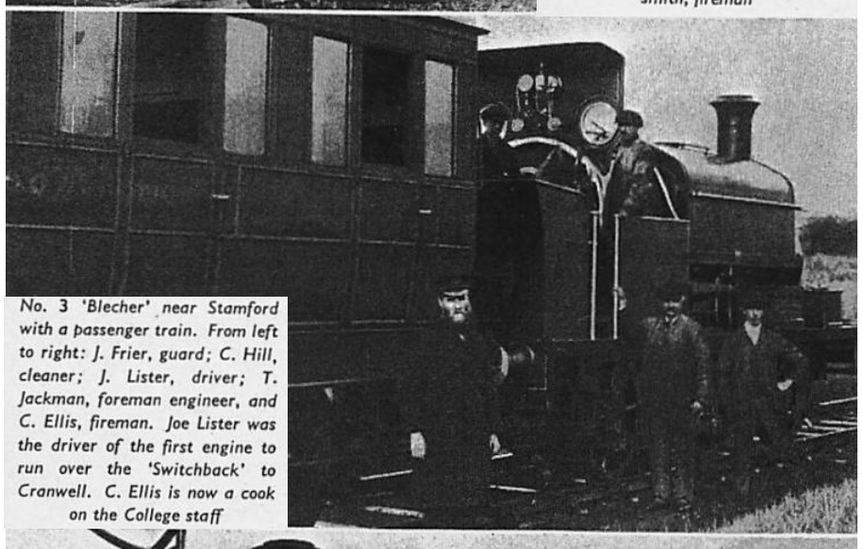
1952
THIS PLAQUE CAST IN THE METAL OF
THE BELLS OF THE COLLEGE CHIME
RECORDS THE GRATITUDE OF THE COLLEGE TO
THE SHELL GROUP
THROUGH WHOSE GENEROSITY THE CHIME WAS PRESENTED
AS A MEMORIAL TO THOSE OLD CRANWELLIANS
WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY
AND AS A DAILY REMINDER OF THEIR GALLANTRY
AND SACRIFICE

November 1953 Journal - Cranwell Railway

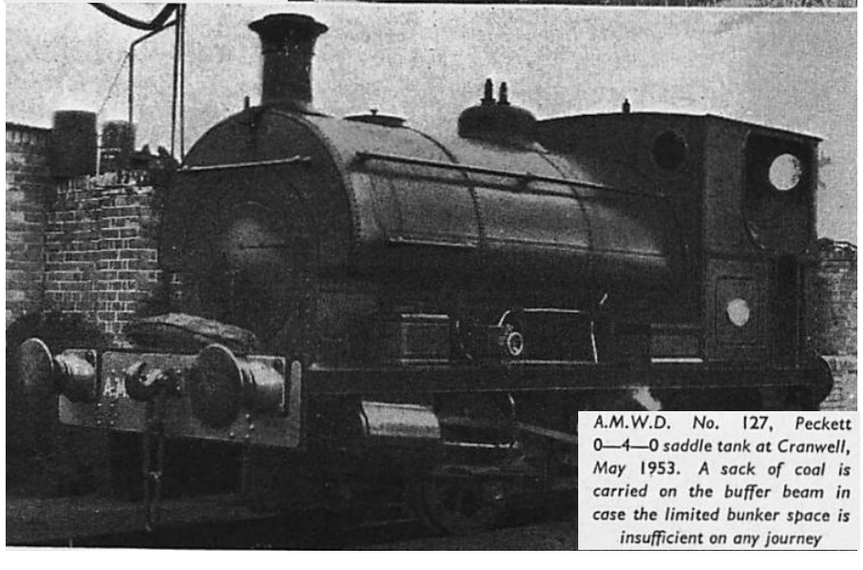
CRANWELL'S TRAINS PAST AND PRESENT



A.M.W.D. No. 2 with a passenger train at Sleaford in 1921. From right to left: J. Frier, Jack Mitchell, driver, and Tom Greensmith, fireman



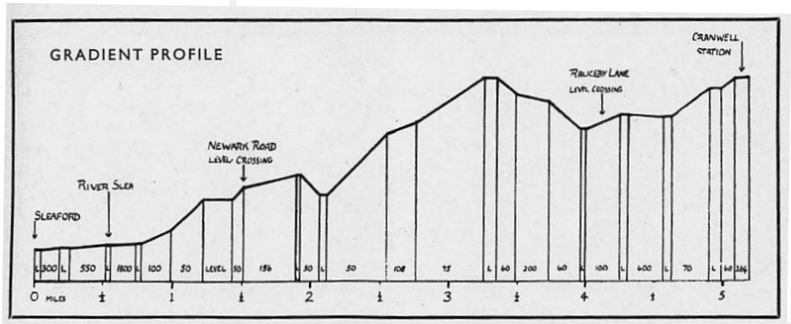
No. 3 'Blecher' near Stamford with a passenger train. From left to right: J. Frier, guard; C. Hill, cleaner; J. Lister, driver; T. Jackman, foreman engineer, and C. Ellis, fireman. Joe Lister was the driver of the first engine to run over the 'Switchback' to Cranwell. C. Ellis is now a cook on the College staff

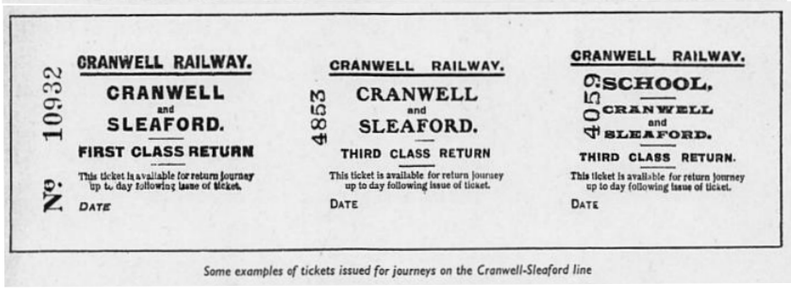


A.M.W.D. No. 127, Peckett 0—4—0 saddle tank at Cranwell, May 1953. A sack of coal is carried on the buffer beam in case the limited bunker space is insufficient on any journey

The 'Little-Used Branch Line'

The Cranwell-Sleaford Railway of Yesterday and Today



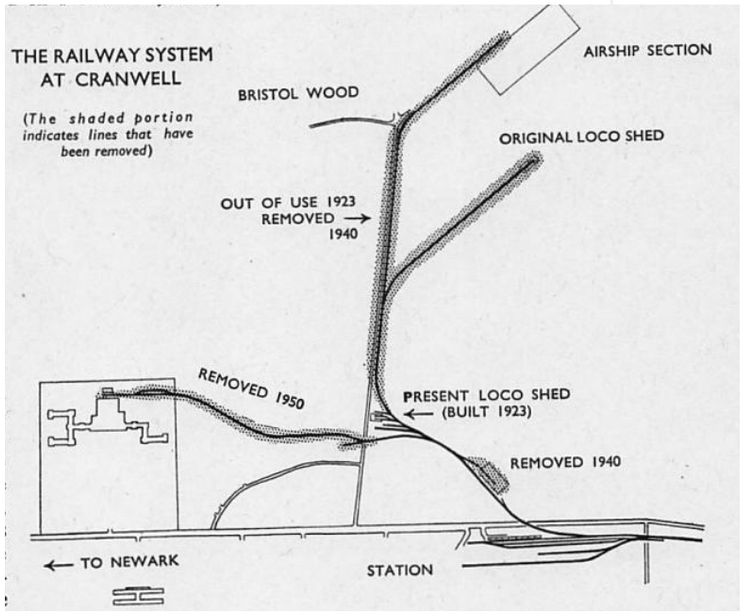


CRANWELL RAILWAY.
No. 10932
CRANWELL and SLEAFORD.
FIRST CLASS RETURN
This ticket is available for return journey up to, day following issue of ticket.
No. DATE

CRANWELL RAILWAY.
4853
CRANWELL and SLEAFORD.
THIRD CLASS RETURN
This ticket is available for return journey up to day following issue of ticket.
DATE

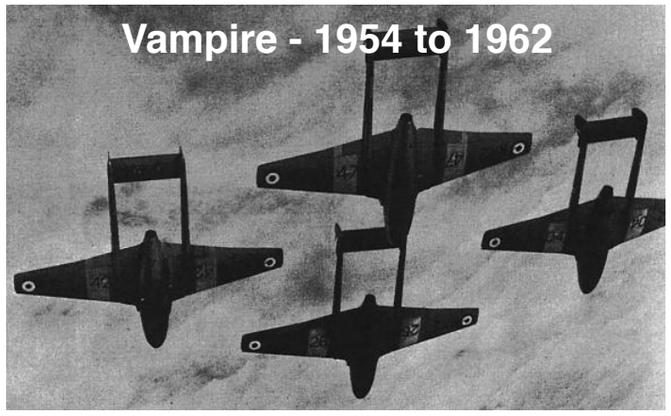
CRANWELL RAILWAY.
4059
SCHOOL.
CRANWELL and SLEAFORD.
THIRD CLASS RETURN.
This ticket is available for return journey up to day following issue of ticket.
DATE

Some examples of tickets issued for journeys on the Cranwell-Sleaford line



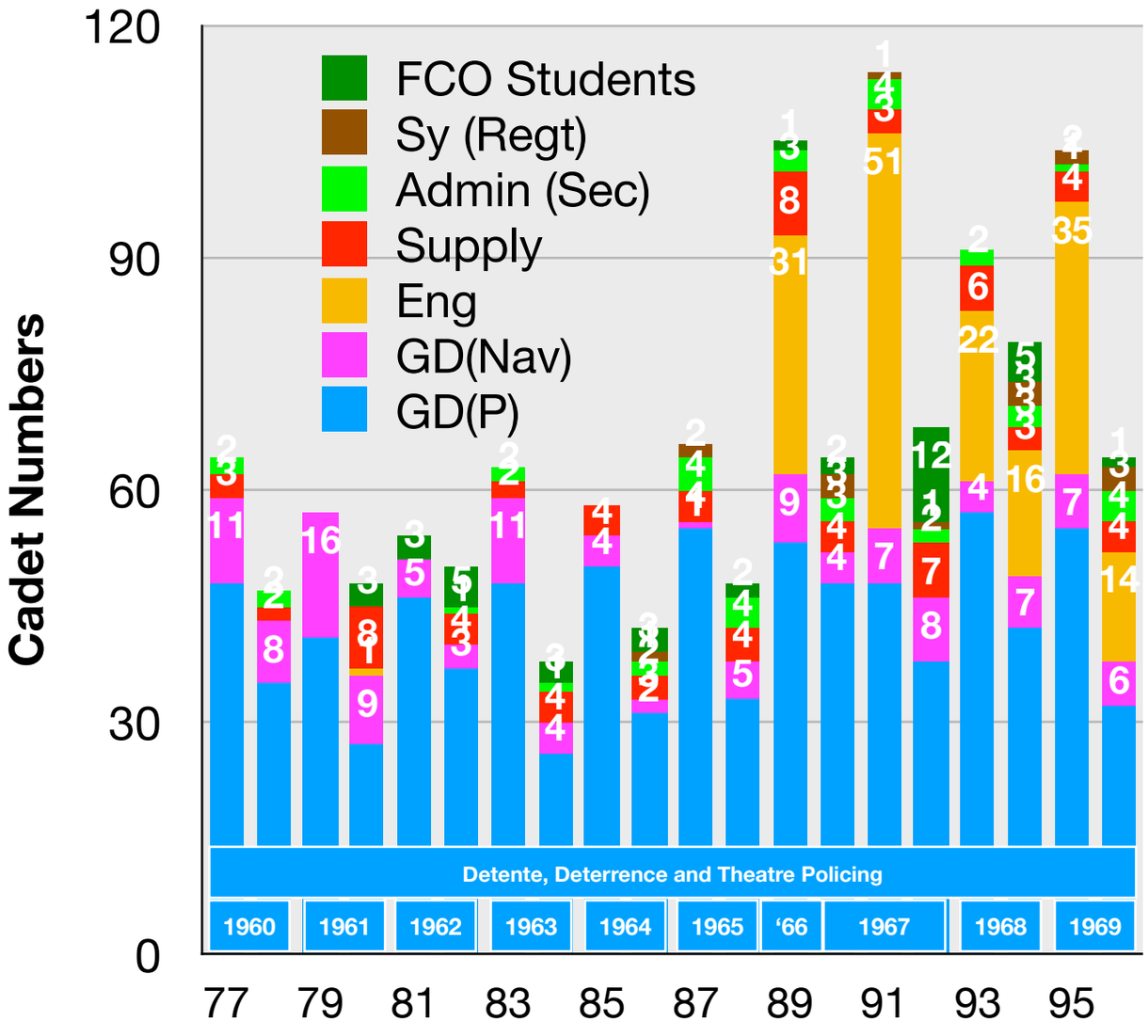
One of the Coronation specials standing at Cranwell station, in June 1953, watched by the present Commandant, Air Commodore Eeles. On the outward journey, after changing engines at Sleaford, the specials ran to Kensington (Olympia) via Spalding, Peterborough and the North London line

Training Aircraft Post-War to 1980s

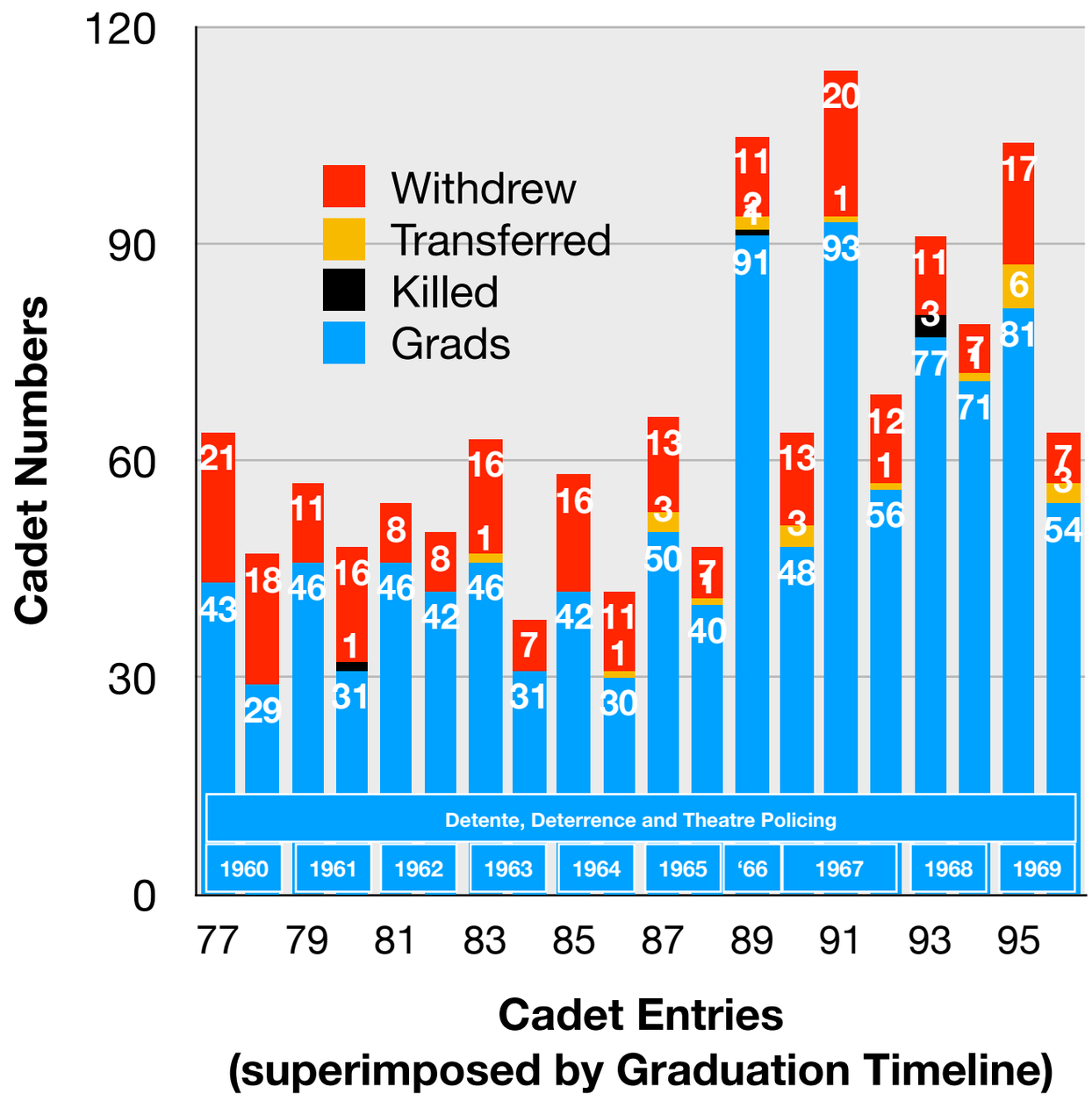


1960s Statistics

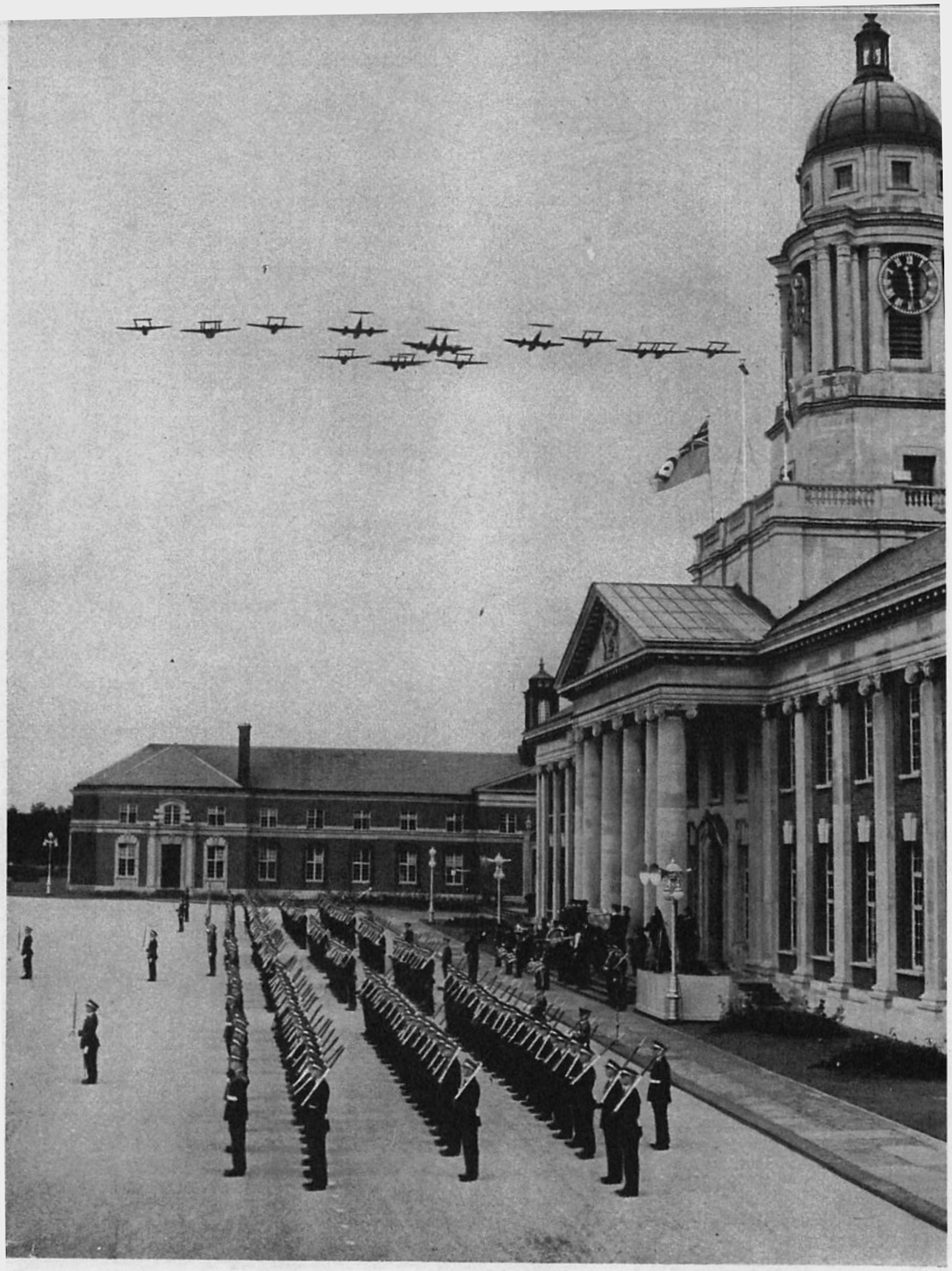
Flight Cadet Intakes by Branch



Flight Cadet Outputs



Autumn 1960 - Royal Visit



As Her Majesty approached the dais, 16 *aircraft of the Advanced Flying Wing flew past*

Her Majesty inspects 'B' Squadron

Autumn 1962 - Whittle Hall Opens (No audio)

Air Commodore Sir Frank Whittle, K.B.E., C.B., F.R.S., Ll.D. in the Entrance Hall to the new Instructional Building (*see p.* 205)

Air Commodore Sir Frank Whittle, K.B.E., C.B., F.R.S., LL.D., officially opened the new Instructional Building on 4th October. Classes in Science and Humanities subjects were held in the new building from the beginning of the Autumn Term before work in the building was complete, but all was ready for the opening ceremony.

AIR COMMODORE SIR FRANK WHITTLE

December 1970 Journal - Royal Visit

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

13th June, 1970.

My dear Commandant,

The Queen, as your Commandant-in-Chief, has asked me to convey to you and to all at The Royal Air Force College, Cranwell, her warm appreciation for a splendid day on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the College. Her Majesty was most impressed by the outstanding smartness of the parade and wishes to congratulate all those concerned.

The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh were delighted to have this opportunity of seeing so much of the College and of meeting so many former members, staff, student officers and cadets. They greatly enjoyed the static and flying displays and an excellent lunch, and were very pleased to see St. Michael's Church. I have written separately to Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Dermot Boyle to convey Her Majesty's thanks for the lovely silver chalice from The Old Cranwellian Association.

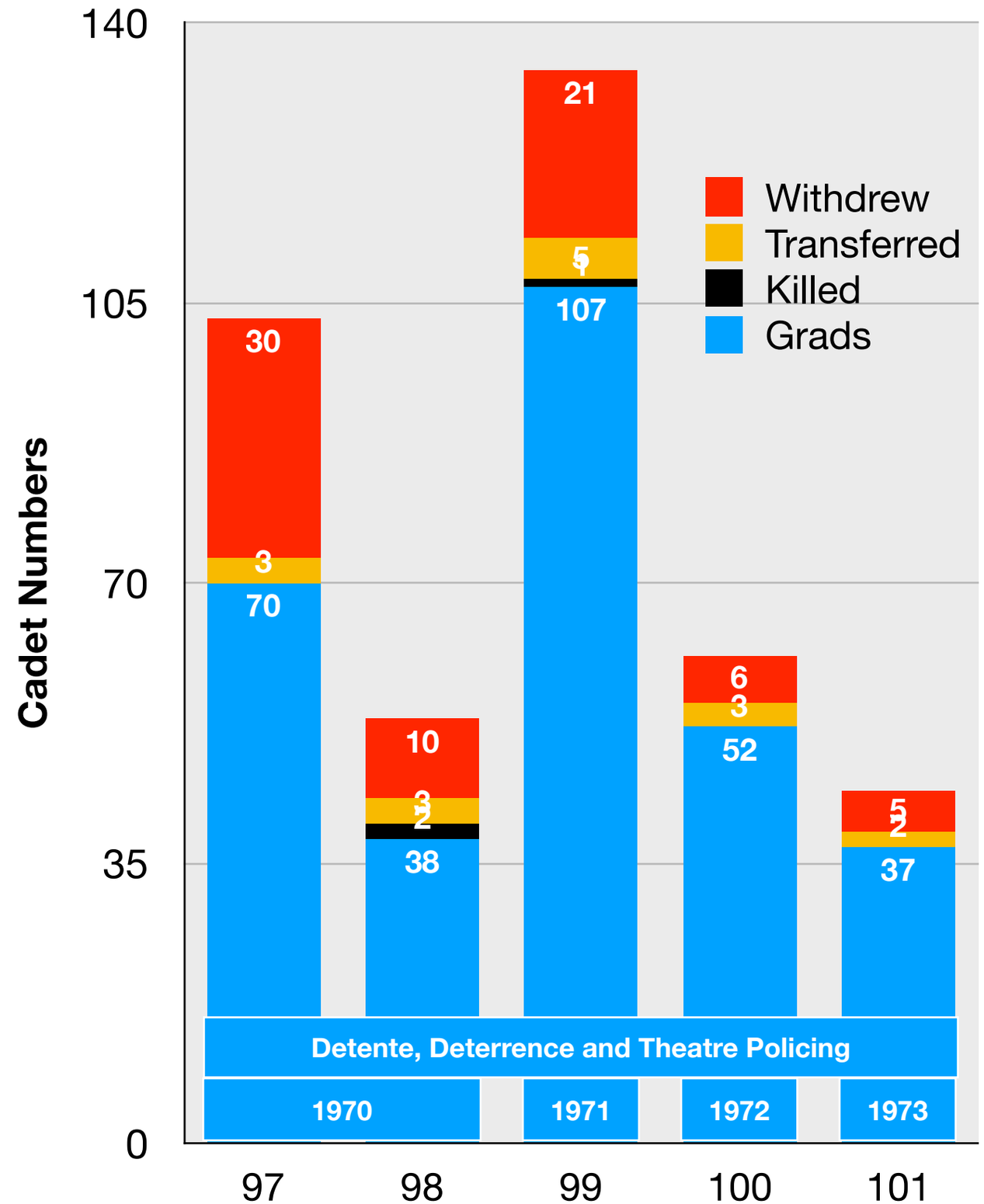
The Queen has also asked me to say how pleased she is that The Prince of Wales will be joining the College next year.

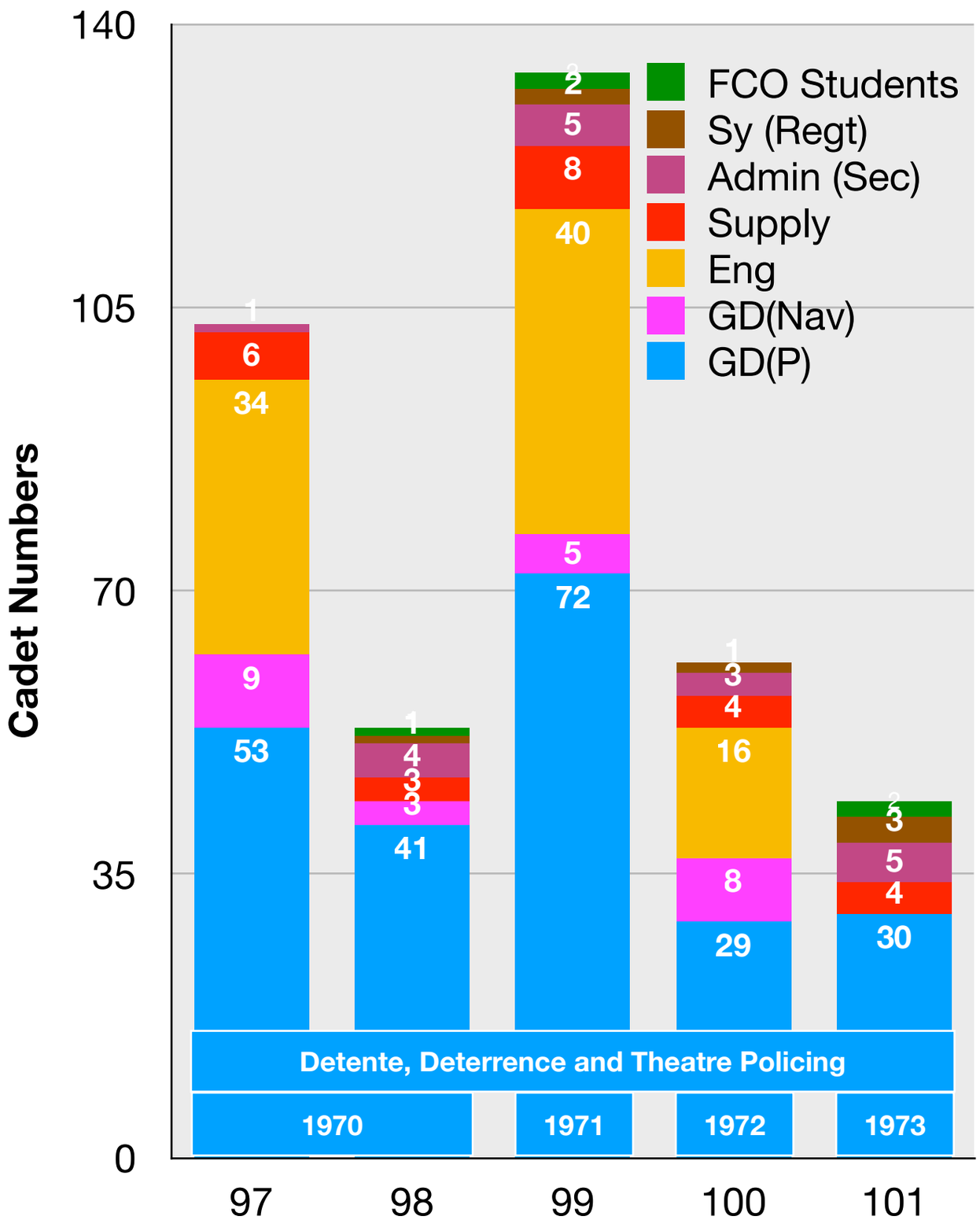
Signed - Yours sincerely

Philip Moore

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Commandant in Chief of the Royal Air Force College inspecting the Ceremonial Parade held in her honour 12th June, 1970

End of Flight Cadet Era - 1970s Statistics





1971 Royal Graduation

LIST OF PASSING-OUT OFFICERS No 1/70 ENTRY

Flight Lieutenant	The Prince of Wales
Flight Lieutenant	M. J. Bell
The Hicks Memorial Prize	
Flight Lieutenant	G. K. Charlton
Flight Lieutenant	H. G. Mackay
The Sword of Honour	
The Kinkead Trophy	
The Dickson Trophy	
Flight Lieutenant	M. D. Pledger
Flight Lieutenant	C. Mac M. Plows
Flight Lieutenant	G. O. Riddett
The Battle of Britain Trophy	
Flying Officer	R. C. Back
Flying Officer	D. J. Baldwin
Flying Officer	P. R. Boyle
Flying Officer	J. A. D'Aubyn
Flying Officer	P. R. Dixon
Flying Officer	J. A. Giles
The Phillip Sassoon Memorial Prize	
Flying Officer	M. A. Hill
Flying Officer	R. D. Lapraik
Flying Officer	S. M. J. MaCartney
Flying Officer	J. E. M. Mustard
Flying Officer	J. H. Plumley
Flying Officer	R. A. Walster
Flying Officer	J. A. West

A CWO Retires - 1972

WARRANT OFFICER J. GARBET

Senior Under Officer A. D. Maddox on behalf of all Flight Cadets, presenting Warrant Officer J. Garbet with a tankard to mark his retirement from the Royal Air Force.

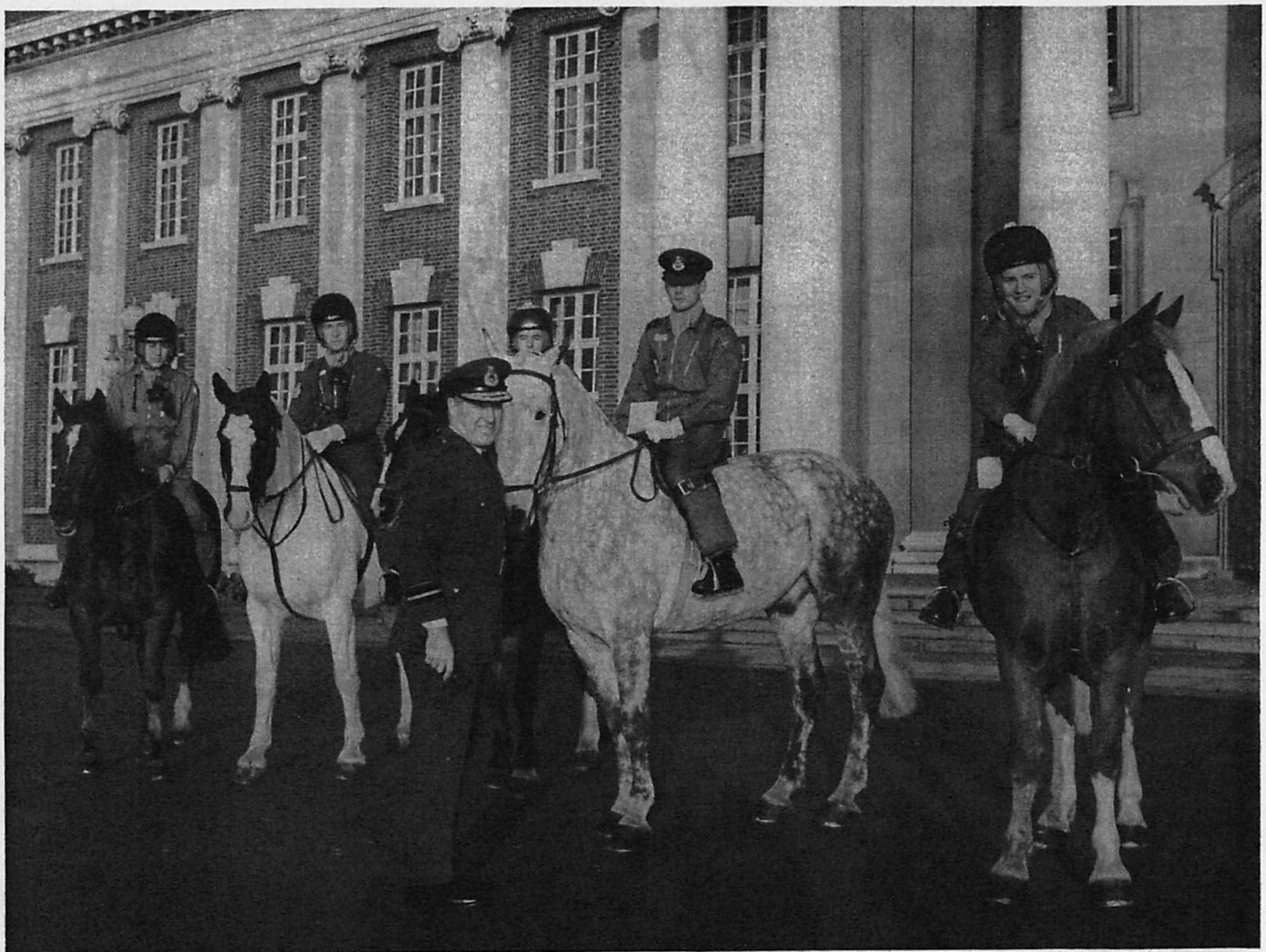
'Permission to dismiss the parade, Sir' asked College Warrant Officer John Garbet and was shattered to be told 'Certainly not.' Thereafter he became the centre of attention when the whole parade gave three cheers to start the various events marking his retirement. He was then presented with a tankard by the flight cadets still at the College and subsequently marched up the front steps to the strains of 'Auld Lang Syne.'

Later he was presented with a gift from many officers and others with whom he worked, and a salver from the Sergeants' Mess. Parties in pub and mess were the order of the day — in fact several days.

The final event was a trip round the parade ground on a mobile saluting dais escorted by flight cadets and graduate officers and with a kilted piper Flight Lieutenant Don Dale to supply 'Scotland the Brave' and 'Amazing Grace.'

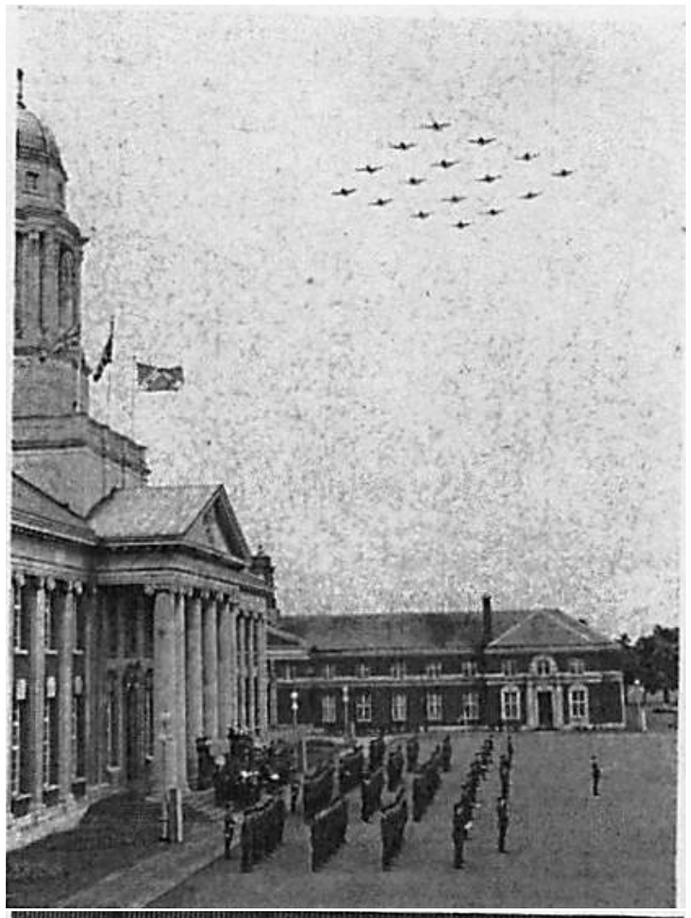
Warrant Officer Garbet retires after 25 years and now intends to train as a teacher. He will continue to live at Leasingham.

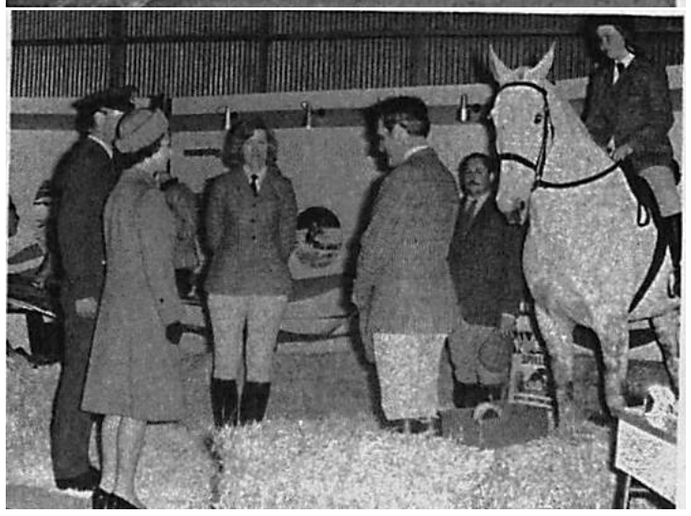
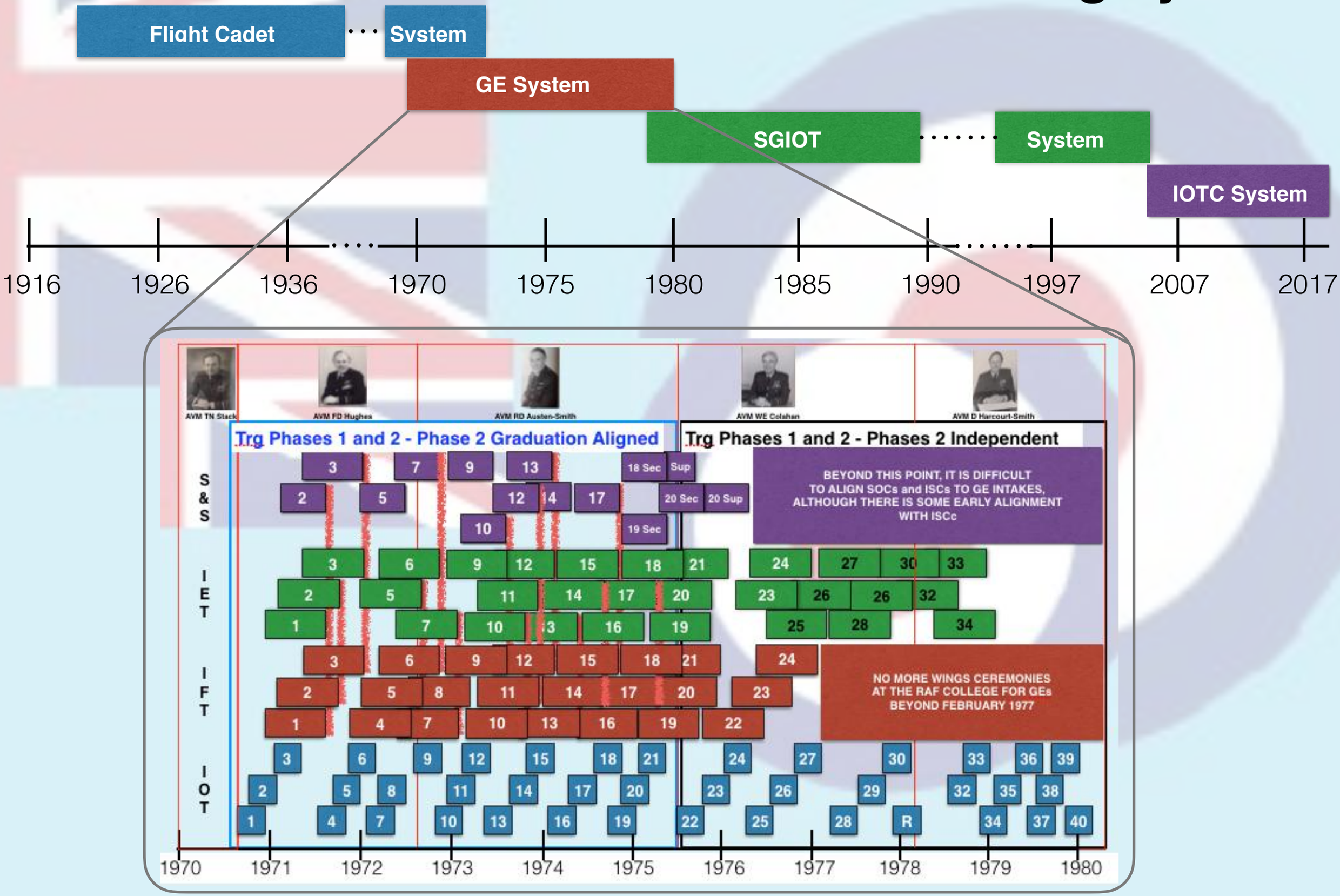
1973 - “Great Pebble Mill Dash 1972”



The Commandant with Officers of No 9 Graduate Entry ready to depart for the “Great Pebble Mill Dash”— part of the BBC Celebrations, November 1972. Other modes of transport included the Jet Provost (without the horses), an Army Scout Helicopter, a Minibus, a 5 Seater Dinghy and a 1930 Rolls Royce.

May 1975 - Royal Visit





GEs in Context of other RAF cadet training systems