

Fewest of the Few Supplement



SFTS Course 12 Graduated 20 September 1940

SURNAME	INITS
BACHELOR	GH
HUMPHREYS	P
THACKER	DJ
TIDMAN	AR

7000-1000 WE 2007-724 5122 201 T.A. 118

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

R.A.F. Form 540

See instructions for use of this form in K.E. and A.C.I. and notes in R.A.F. Field Service Pocket Book.

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. 166.
	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/Care Post). <u>Royal Air Force College becomes a Flying Training School, and is self-controlled.</u>	A.M.P.L. 319.



Batchelor, Gordon Herbert
(SFTS Course Unknown, Possibly Course 12)



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Gordon Herbert Batchelor, of Higham, Kent, joined the RAFVR in June 1939, as an Airman u/t Pilot (748532). He was called up on 1 September and with his training completed at the SFTS , Cranwell, on 20 September 1940, he went on to 7 OTU, Harwarden, on the 23rd. (These dates are taken from Kenneth Wynn's manual *Men of the Battle of Britain*, and would suggest that Batchelor could have attended SFTS Course 12, but there is no record of him either on the College's archived listing of Course 12 or on the course photograph.)

After converting to Spitfires, he joined 54 Squadron at Catterick on 14 October.

On 27 October, he damaged a Ju88. He was still with the Squadron when he was shutdown near Lens on a Circus operation - mass fighter escort to bomber operation - on 9 July 1941.

Batchelor died, as a PoW, on 15 April 1942. He is buried in Hamburg Cemetery, Ohlsdorf, Germany. He was 23.



**Humphreys, Peter Cecil
(SFTS Course 12, Squadron 2)**



Peter Cecil Humphreys joined the RAFVR about April 1939, as an Airman u/t Pilot (745610). Called up on September 1, he completed his elementary flying training at 18 EFTS, Fair Oaks and his intermediate and advanced training at 5 FTS, Sealand. Although these dates quoted by Wynn in his acknowledged reference manual *Men of the Battle of Britain*, RAF College records show that Humophreys completed his intermediate and advanced flying training on Course 12 at SFTS Cranwell.

He was commissioned at the end of the course and arrived at 5 OTU, Aston Down on 26 September 1940.

After converting to Hurricanes, he joined 32 Squadron at Acklington on 18 October.



Humphreys was posted to 73 Squadron at Castle Camps on 5 November 1940 and went with it to the Middle East.

He was released from the RAF in 1945 as a Flight Lieutenant. He later went to live in Spain.



Thacker, David John
(SFTS Course 12, Squadron 1)



David John Thacker joined the RAFVR about July 1939, as an Airman u/t Pilot (754813). Called up on 1 September, he completed his training at 5 FTS, Sealand on No 48 Course, which began on May 27 1940. However, he fell sick and was moved to a later course, which ended on 24 September 1940.

[We believe this was the time he attended Course 12 at the SFTS, Cranwell.]

He arrived at 5 OTU, Aston Down on the 26th and after converting to Hurricanes, he joined 32 Squadron at Acklington on 18 October 1940. He was posted and joined 145 Squadron at Tangmere on 3 December.



Thacker left 145 for overseas in mid-December 1940 and he embarked on the carrier HMS Furious on the 17th, for an unknown destination. With other pilots he flew a Hurricane off to Takoradi on 9 January 1941. They flew up to Cairo via Lagos, Kano, El Geneina, Khartoum, Wadi Halfa and Abu Sueir.

Thacker flew to Malta on 29 January 29 and joined 261 Squadron at Ha! Far. On 12 February, he was shot down by Bf 109s of 7/3G 26 and baled out, wounded, into the sea at St Paul's Bay. He was out of action for a month and when 261 Squadron was disbanded in May 1941, he returned to the Middle East and later went to ADU, Takoradi on ferrying duties.

He was awarded the AFC (gazetted 8.6.44) and he was with 151 Squadron at Hunsdon in 1944/45, as a Flight Commander.

Thacker was released from the RAF in late 1946, as a Squadron Leader.



Tidman, Alfred Roberts
(SFTS Course Unknown, Possibly Course 12)



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123



602

Alfred Roberts Tidman, of Lincolnshire, joined the RAFVR around March 1939, as an Airman u/t Pilot (754484). Called up on 1 September, he completed his training at the SFTS at Cranwell on 20 September. (These dates are taken from Kenneth Wynn's manual *Men of the Battle of Britain*, and would suggest that Batchelor attended SFTS Course 12, but there is no record of him either on the College's archived listing of Course 12 or on the course photograph.)

He was commissioned the next day and arrived at 7 OTU, Harwarden, and, after converting to Spitfires, he joined 64 Squadron at Leconfield on 6 October. Tidman flew his first sortie on the 11th.

He was posted to 123 Squadron, on its reformation at Turnhouse, on 10 May 1941. Later Tidman was posted to 602 Squadron at Kenley, to gain operational experience. He was shot down and killed on 17 September 1941, on his fourth flight with the squadron.

Tidman was 23. He is buried in Bergen-op-Zoom War Cemetery, Netherlands.