

Fewest of the Few Supplement



SFTS Course 6 Graduated April 1940

SURNAME	INITS
BACON	CH
BEAZLEY	HJS
MAYHEW	PF
PAGE	AG

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

R.A.F. Form 540

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

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

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

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



Bacon, Charles Harvey (SFTS Course 6, Squadron 1)



A Demi (Half Fellow) of Magdalen College, Oxford, Bacon was born on 15 January 1919. He joined Oxford UAS and transferred to the RAFVR in June 1939, as an Airman u/t Pilot (754287). He was called up on 1 September.

Commissioned on 26 September 1939, Bacon was on No 6 Course SFTS, Cranwell from 6 November 1939 to 9 May 1940.

Bacon arrived at 10 B&GS, Warmwell, with the Advanced Training Squadron from SFTS on 26 April. With the course completed, he joined 98 Squadron in France in early 1940, flying Battles. It was withdrawn to England in early June.



The Squadron reassembled at Gatwick on the 15th and in July it was preparing for a move to Iceland for coastal patrol duties. When 98 Squadron departed, Bacon stayed at RAF Gatwick, as a supernumerary. He joined 4(C) Ferry Pilot Pool on 1 August.

Along with other pilots with Merlin engine experience, he went to 7 OTU, Harwarden, on 3 September. After converting to Spitfires, he joined 610 Squadron at Acklington on the 16th.

On the 30th, Bacon was killed when his Spitfire crashed on Alnmouth beach. He is buried in an extension to St Mary's churchyard, Windermere.



Beazley, Hugh John Sherard (SFTS Course 6, Squadron 1)



Beazley was born on 18 July 1916 and was educated at Cheltenham College and Pembroke College, Oxford. He was a member of the UAS and transferred to the RAFVR in December 1937 (731134).

Beazley was called up on 25 September 1939 and commissioned. He attended the SFTS Course 6 on 6 November.

Beazley made a forced-landing, en route from Cranwell to 10 B&GS, Warmwell, on 26 April 1940, where he was going for armament training, the last phase of his course. Training complete on 9 May, he joined 249 Squadron when it reformed at Church Fenton on 16 May.



On 8 July, Beazley shared a Ju 88 and on the 15th he destroyed a Bf 110. On 2 September, he probably destroyed a Bf 110 and was then himself shot down in flames over Rochester by a Bf 110 of 5/ZG 26. He baled out over Gillingham and landed in Boxleywood. His Hurricane P2988 crashed near Rainham, on Eccles Recreation Ground.

On 5 September, Beazley probably destroyed a Bf 109, on the 6th probably a Ju 88, on the 7th he shared a Do 17 and on the 15th he destroyed another. He was appointed 'A' Flight Commander on 18 September, as an Acting Flight Lieutenant. On the 19th, he shared a Do 17 and damaged another on the 26th.

Beazley shared a Bf 110 on the 27th and received a bullet wound in the foot. On 15 October, he was posted to SHQ staff at RAF North Weald, as non-effective sick and did not fly for some time.

In May 1941, 249 Squadron sailed for Malta, arriving there on the 21st, having flown off HMS Ark Royal. On 8 June, having presumably rejoined the Squadron, Beazley shared a probable Fiat BR 20, on 21 December damaged Bf 109 and on the 26th he assumed command of the squadron, when the CO was wounded.

On 29 January 1942, Beazley's Hurricane, BV 174, was hit by ground fire during a strike on Comiso airfield and he made a crash-landing back at Luqa. He was posted from the squadron on 16 February 1942.

Beazley later served with 89 Squadron, as a Flight Commander, and was awarded the DFC (gazetted 7 March 1944). He was released from the RAF in 1946, as a Wing Commander. He worked for the family shipping business, spent 10 years in Nigeria with the Colonial Office, then became a Chartered Accountant. He was Treasurer and later a Life Vice-President of the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust. Beazley's part in the National Memorial to the Few at Capel-le-Ferne is named after him.

Beazley died on 13 June 2011.



Mayhew, Paul Francis
(SFTS Course 6, Squadron 1)



Mayhew, of Felthorpe in Norfolk, was educated at Haileybury College and then Christ Church, Oxford, where he read Modern Greats. He was a member of the UAS in 1939 and in June he joined the RAFVR, as an Airman u/y Pilot (754284).

Called to full-time service in September, he was commissioned on the 26th and sent to No 1 ITW, Cambridge. In mid-November, Mayhew was posted to the SFTS at Cranwell to attend Course No 6, which ran from 6 November 1939 to 9 May 1940. He was awarded his flying badge in February 1940 and was with the Advanced Training Squadron of his course when it arrived at 10 B & G S, Warmwell, on 26 April. With the course completed, he went to No 1 School of Army Co-operation, Old Sarum on 9 May.



Mayhew was posted to 5 OTU, Aston Down on 23 June 1940. After converting to Spitfires, he was posted to 32 Squadron at Biggin Hill on 6 July, to fly Hurricanes. He moved to 79 Squadron at Sealand on 11 July. On 15 August, he damaged a Bf 110.

On 27 August, the squadron went south to Biggin Hill and next day Mayhew shared in the destruction of an He 59. His Hurricane was damaged in combat on 29th. He shot down an He 111 on the 30th and on 1 September a Do 17. The squadron moved to Pembrey on 8 September.

Mathew was one of a section which intercepted eight He 111s over the Irish Sea in the evening of 29 September. He chased them but found himself alone when he caught them up, about 15 miles off the Irish coast. In the face of intense cross-fire, Mayhew made some attacks, resulting in the Heinkels jettisoning their bombs and heading for home.

At this time, other 79 Squadron Hurricanes arrived and pressed home their attacks. One He 111 was hit and began to fall back, with one engine smoking. Mayhew made a further

attack on this aircraft, which went down and was later confirmed destroyed. The other Hurricanes turned for home but Mayhew continued to chase the surviving Heinkels.

Some time later, he found himself over the Atlantic ocean about 70 miles south-west of Wexford. He turned for home and with darkness approaching fast and very low on fuel, he made a wheels-up landing in a stubble field at Enniscorthy, Co Wexford.

Mayhew was interned by the Irish authorities and held at Curragh Camp, Dublin. His Hurricane, P5178, was impounded. In December, he obtained permission from Air Ministry to give his parole to travel to Dublin each day from the Curragh to study for an Honours Degree under tutorship from Dublin University.

Later in December, he was joined by other internees, On 20 January 1941, he and three others broke out of their compound in heavy snow. He was recaptured when nine miles from Dublin.

In the early hours of 26 June, Mayhew led a well prepared escape, with nine other internees. He and five others managed to reach Northern Ireland. Back in England, Mayhew returned to 79 Squadron, then at Fairwood Common.

In late 1941, he was made a Flight Commander and in December the squadron moved to Baginton, to prepare for a possible move overseas.

Defensive patrols were still being flown in February 1942 and on the 19th, Mayhw led his flight on an uneventful one. On his return to Baginton, he ordered his pilots to land but he stayed airborne. Soon afterwards he flew across the aerodrome, but, on turning, his engine stalled and he was too low to recover height and crashed.

Mayhew was severely injured, did not recover consciousness and died five minutes after reaching hospital.

He was 22 and was cremated at Perry Bar Crematorium, Birmingham.



**Page, Alan Geoffrey
(SFTS Course 6, Squadron 2)**



Page was born in Boxmoor, Hertfordshire on 16 May 1920 and was educated at Dean Close School, Cheltenham, and Imperial College, London. Page studied aeronautical engineering and learned to fly at Northolt with the UAS.

Called to full-time service in mid- September 1939, Page was posted to 3 ITW, Hastings, in October. He was granted a direct-entry commission in the RAFVR on 3 October. Page went to the SFTS at Cranwell and attended Course No 10 which ran from 6 November to May 1940.



At the end of the course, Page was posted to No 1 Flying Practice Unit at Meir, for further training On 18 May, he was posted to 66 Squadron but on 3 June he moved to 56 Squadron based at Digby.

On 13 July, Page destroyed a Bf 109, on the 20th he shared a Ju 88 and on the 25th destroyed a Ju 87. During an attack on Do 17s ten miles north of Margate on 12 August, Page was shot down and baled out, Bailey burned. He was rescued by tender and transferred to the Margate lifeboat. His Hurricane P2970 crashed in flames two miles off Epple Bay.

After two years in hospital receiving plastic surgery, in late 1942, Page was given a limited flying category and posted to an army co-operation squadron in Wales. After three months, Page applied for another medical board and was given an AIB category.

He was posted to 132 Squadron at Hornchurch in early 1943, as a supernumerary Flight Lieutenant. He volunteered for service in North Africa but after three months there, the heat of the sun was too much for his grafted skin. He returned to England and was posted to the AFDU at Wittering.

On 29 June 1943, in company with Squadron Leader JAF MacLachlan, he flew a Mustang on a daylight sortie, during which he destroyed two Hs 126s and shared a Ju 88. On a second sortie on 18 July, MacLachlan did not return. Page was awarded the DFC (gazetted 30 July 1943).

After a further spell in East Grinstead, he was posted to 122 Squadron as a Flight Commander. In January 1944, Page assumed command of 132 Squadron at Detling. On 26 April, he shared a Ju W34 and on the 29th shot down a Bf 110.

In June, Page took 132 Squadron to France. On the 18th, he damaged an Fw 190. On the same day, he was promoted to Acting Wing Commander and appointed Wing Leader of 125 Wing.

On 12 July 1944, he shared a Bf 109, on the 14th destroyed an FW 190 and damaged another on 20 July and on 26 September he shot down Bf 109s. Page was awarded a Bar to the DFC (gazetted on 22 August 1944).

At the end of September, Page crashed on landing, injured his face on his gunsight and fractured his back. He was flown back to England and taken to the Queen Victoria Hospital at East Grinstead. He was awarded the DSO (gazetted 29 December 1944), credited with 15 enemy aircraft destroyed.

In January 1945, Page was sent on a lecture tour to the USA. He returned to the UK in April and went into hospital to have a piece of cannon shell removed from his leg that had been there since August 1940. Fit again, Page was attached to Vickers-Armstrong at Weybridge, as a test pilot.

Granted a permanent commission in 1946, Page was selected for a course at the Empire Test Pilots' School. It was postponed and after a Senior Officers' Administration Course, he was posted as PA to the senior RAF Officer on the Military Staff Commission at the UN in New York.

Page retired from the RAF on 1 December 1948, as a Squadron Leader, and joined Vickers-Armstrong as a sales executive.

He received the Order of Orange Nassau. Page founded the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust with the intention of creating a National Memorial to "The Few". The memorial took the form of a seated airman, with no indication of rank, nationality of aircrew trade visible and was unveiled at Caple-le-Ferne on the cliffs between Folkstone and Dover on 9 July 1993 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Page received the OBE in 1995 and died on 3 August 2000.