

Fewest of the Few Supplement



SFTS Course 7 Graduated 1 June 1940

SURNAME	INITIALS
BARCLAY	RGA
BURTON	PR-F
KNOCKER	WRA

FORM 540 (1939) 101 0247-724 5,187 2/31 T.O. 118

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

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK

R.A.F. Form 540

No. of pages used for day

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.



**Barclay, Richard George Arthur Barclay
(SFTS Course 7, Squadron 2)**



Born at Upper Norwodd, Surrey, on 7 December 1919, Barclay was a member the banking family. He was educated in Stowe School and then went to Trinity College, Cambridge, to read Economics and Law.

In October 1938, he joined the UAS and enlisted in the RAFVR in June 1939 (754329, as an Airman u/t Pilot.

Called up in October, he went to 3 ITW on 8 November and began his flying training on Course 7 at the SFTS Cranwell, on 1 January 1940. The course completed, he was then posted No 1 School of Army Co-operation, Old Sarum, on 2 June 1940. Eight days later he went to 5 OTU, to convert to Hurricanes, and on 23 June he joined 249 Squadron at Leconfield.



On 2 September, he damaged a Bf 110, on the 7th he shot down a Bf 109 and damaged a Do 17 and an He 111, on the 15th he shot down a Do 17, probably destroyed two others and damaged another, on the 18th probably destroyed an He 111, on the 19th shared a Ju 88 and on the 27th

claimed a Bf 109 and a Ju 88 destroyed. During an attack on Ju 88s on that day, Barclay, in Hurricane V6622, was shot down south of London and made a forced-landing at West Malling.

He probably destroyed Bf 109s on 14 and 15 October, two probable Bf109s on 7 November, shared an He 59 destroyed on the 11th and shared another Bf 109 on the 14th. He was awarded the DFC (gazetted 26 November 1940).

On 29 November, Barclay was shot down by a Bf 109 and wounded in the ankle, legs and elbow. He spent two months in hospital and did not return to 249 until March 1941. He was posted to 52 OTU, Debden, on 7 May, as an instructor.

Three months later, he joined 611 Squadron at Hornchurch, as a Flight Commander. During a sweep over St Omer on 20 September, Barclay was attacked Bf 109s and his engine was damaged. He made a forced-landing at Buyschoeure, after breaking high tension cables. With the help of the French Resistance, he crossed the Spanish frontier, arriving in Barcelona on 7 November. He reached the British Embassy, left for Gibraltar on 7 December and arrived back in the UK two days later.

After a short attachment at HQ Fighter Command, Barclay was posted to HQ 9 Group, as Tactics Officer. On 4 April 1942, he took command of 601 Squadron, then about to depart for the Middle East. The squadron embarked at Liverpool on 10 April in HMT K6 (SS Rangitata) and reach Port Tewfik on 4 June, having gone vat South Africa.

Barclay did not get the chance to lead 601 Squadron. He went to command 238 Squadron at Amriya on 2 July 1942. On the 6th, he shot down a Bf 109.

In the afternoon of the 17th, he destroyed a Ju 87. In the evening, 238 Squadron was on patrol of the Alamein area, acting as top cover for 274 Squadron. As 238 Squadron went for some Ju 87s, it was jumped by Bf 109s and Barclay was shot down and killed, possibly by Leutnant Werner Schoer of III/JG27.

Barclay is buried in the El Alamein Cemetery and he is remembered on a plaque in Cromer Parish Church, where his father was vicar from 1939 to 1946.

Barclay's elder brother, Lieutenant GC Barcly, died serving with the 2nd Battalion, Royal Norfolk Regiment. He is buried in Kohima War Cemetery, India.



Burton, Percival Ross-Frames (SFTS Course 7)



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Burton was born in 1917 in Cape Province and joined the South African Coast Garrison and Citizens Forces in 1935. He later went to Britain, to Christ Church, Oxford, where he read Jurisprudence. In 1938, he was reserve cox for the Oxford crew in the University Boat Race on the River Thames.

Burton learned to fly with the UAS and was commissioned in the RAFVR on 26 September 1939. Called up in October, he completed his training at SFTS Cranwell on Course 7.

He arrived at 6 OTU, Sutton Bridge, on 22 June 1940, to convert to Hurricanes, and he joined 249 Squadron at Church Fenton on 21 July. On 2 September, Burton probably destroyed a Do 17 and on the 26th he damaged another.

On the morning of 27 September, the squadron engaged a formation of Bf 110s of V/LG1. The Hurricanes broke the Germans' defensive circles and the enemy aircraft went south at low level, heading for the Channel. Burton pursued one of the Bf 110s for about forty miles often a little more than treetop height, but the German pilot, Gruppe Kommandeur of V/LG1, Hauptmann Horst Liensberger, was unable to shake him off.

Just north of Hailsham, Burton's guns stopped firing and the two aircraft skimmed over the rooftops. The Hurricane, V6883, was above and behind the Bf 110. Burton suddenly banked and made what appeared to be an attack. Both machines lurched and an object spun away. The tail unit of the Bf 110 dropped into the field, followed by the rest of the aircraft. The falling object was the wing tip of Burton's Hurricane. His aircraft crashed into a huge Oak tree on New Barn Farm, throwing its dead pilot clear and burning itself out in a field.

Burton is buried in St Andrew's churchyard, Tangmere, Eye-witness reports indicate strongly that Burton deliberately rammed the Bf 110.

A letter from Fighter Command to the Hailsham ARP Chief said that Burton was to be recommended for a posthumous gallantry award. This could only have been the VC but in fact he only received a Mention in Despatches.



**Knocker, William Rodney Alexander
(SFTS Course 7, Squadron 1)**



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Knocker was at Wellington College from 1933 to 1938 and then St John's College, Oxford, where he read law. He was a member of the UAS and was enlisted in the RAFVR, with other members of the squadron, on 15 June 1939, Airman number 754282.

He was called up to full-time service on 1 September 1939, went to No 1 ITW, Cambridge in November 1939 and was posted to the SFTS at Cranwell on 1 January 1940 on Course No 7. He was detached to 5 FTS, Sealand for a few days in May, for conversion to Masters, after which he returned to Cranwell, where the course ended on 1 June.



Knocker went to No 1 School of Army Co-operation at Old Sarum, on No 8 Course, which began on 3 June but ended abruptly on the 10th, when the 20 officers on the course were posted to 5 OTU Aston Down.

After converting to Defiants, Knocker joined 264 Squadron on 19 June. In its last spell of day-fighting, he claimed a Ju 88 destroyed and a Bf 109 damaged on 24 August 1940.

Knocker was flying Defiant N1547 on 15 November, when it caught on fire. On an emergency approach, he hit a tree, crashed and burned out on Rochford Golf Course. He was unhurt but his gunner, Pilot Officer FA Toombs, was badly burned and died of his injuries.

In May 1941, Knocker was shot down over London by anti-aircraft fire and he baled out.

He was released from the RAF in 1946 as a Wing Commander. He later went to live in Kenya and established a business there. Knocker died on 27 December 1990, aged 70.