


# RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

## DRS Bader



RAF College Cadet  
6 September 1928 - 25 July 1930

# DRS Bader - Flight Cadet Record

  
 "Roar" Looseleaf Books 138 Sp. 42074  
 J. W. Ruddock & Sons, Lincoln and London

COLLEGE SEQUENCE NUMBER		CHRISTIAN NAMES		SURNAME	
471.		DOUGLAS ROBERT STEWART.		BADER.	
BORN	DATE	NATIONALITY	DATE	RELIGION	DATE
JOINED COLLEGE	21/2/10.	English.		Church of England.	
LEFT COLLEGE	6/9/28.	ORDER OF MERIT ON JOINING		NO. IN CLASS ON JOINING	
	25/7/30.	6.		23.	
		ORDER OF MERIT ON LEAVING		NO. IN CLASS ON LEAVING	
		17.		21.	
PROMOTED		JOINED		DROPPED	
CADET CORPORAL		1ST CLASS	7/9/28.	AFTER	TERM
CADET SERGEANT		2ND CLASS	11/1/29.		
UNDER OFFICER	17/1/30.	3RD CLASS	6/9/29.	AFTER	TERM
		4TH CLASS			
COMMISSIONED IN R.A.F.		REASON FOR WITHDRAWAL IF COURSE NOT COMPLETED			
26/7/30.					
NAME OF PARENT OR NEXT OF KIN		ADDRESS			
Mrs. J.S. Hobbs (Mother).		Sprotborough Rectory, Doncaster, Yorks.			
PROFESSION OF PARENT OR NEXT OF KIN		CHANGE OF ADDRESS			
Father: Major R.E. and Barrister-at-Law, deceased.					
WHERE EDUCATED					
Temple Grove, Eastbourne. St. Edward's School, Oxford.					
PRIZES, ETC., ON JOINING			PRIZES, ETC., ON LEAVING		
Prize Cadetship.					
REMARKS AND FURTHER HISTORY					
Posted to No. 23 (F) Squadron, R.A.F., Kenley, Surrey, with effect from 26/7/30. A.M.P.L. No. 187/1930 dated 29/8/30.					
Promoted Flying Officer 26/1/32. Flight Lieutenant (War substantive rank) 24/9/40. Squadron Leader 18/6/41. Wing Commander 1/7/45. Placed on Retired List on account of ill-health 30/4/33, Active 1940.					
Appointed a COMPANION of the DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy - London Gazette dated 1/10/40. X					
COLLEGE SEQUENCE NUMBER		CHRISTIAN NAMES		SURNAME	
471.		DOUGLAS ROBERT STEWART.		BADER.	

P.T.O.

Mentioned in Dispatches - London Gazette dated 1/1/41.

Awarded the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy - London Gazette dated 7/1/41.

Mentioned in Dispatches - London Gazette dated 17/3/41.

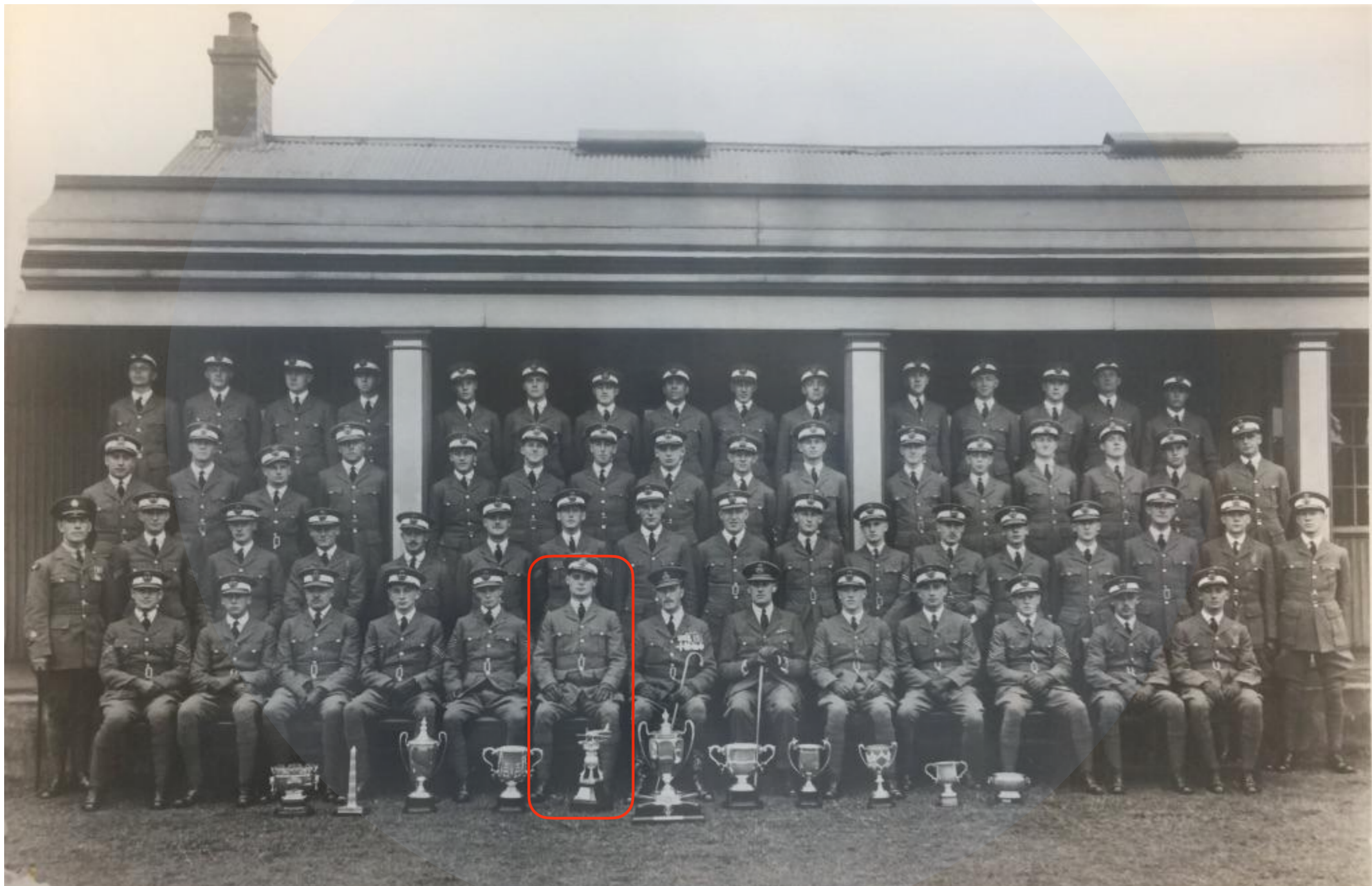
Awarded to BAR to the DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy - London Gazette dated 15/7/41.

Awarded a BAR to the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy - London Gazette No. 35270 dated 9/9/41.

Placed on Retired List w.e.f. 21.7.46 (retains rank of Group Captain)

Died 5 Sept 1982

# DRS Bader - A Sqn July 1930



# Bader and his Sports Car



# Bader at Speed



# DRS Bader - December 1928 Rugby XV



RUGBY XV, ROYAL AIR FORCE COLLEGE, CRANWELL, DECEMBER, 1928

F./C. S. S. Murray. F./C. F. C. Cole. F./C. Lord M. A. Douglas-Hamilton. F./C. N. C. Walker. F./C. R. L. Wallace. F./C. C. E. J. Baines. F./C. H. B. L. Hood. F./C. D. J. Barry.  
F./C. G. R. A. Elmslie. F./C. P. B. Coote. F./C. Sgt. F. L. P. Hazell. F./C. Cpl. R. W. Letchworth. F./C. U.O. G. P. Charles. F./C. D. R. S. Bader. F./C. W. N. McKechnie.

# DRS Bader - July 1929 Cricket XI



1st CRICKET XI, ROYAL AIR FORCE COLLEGE, CRANWELL  
JULY, 1929

F/C. W. H. Hodgkinson   F/C. W. N. McKelvie   F/C. Cpt. R. C. Keary   Capt. C. C. Brachi   F/C. W. H. Kyle   F/C. G. F. W. Heycock   F/C. D. R. S. Bader  
F/C. E. S. Des Druy   F/C. Sgt. S. S. Murray   F/C. Sgt. W. V. L. Spoolove   F/C. UO. D. J. Douthett   F/C. C. A. Watt

CRANWELL—290; WOOLWICH—216 for Six Wickets; MATCH DRAWN

# DRS Bader - July 1929 Hockey XI



HOCKEY TEAM ROYAL AIR FORCE COLLEGE CRANWELL  
JULY 1929

F/Capt R. C. Keary    F/C. Sgt. W. V. L. Spindlove    F/C. C. E. Baines    F/C. R. L. Wallace    F/C. D. R. S. Bader  
F/C. P. B. Coote    F/C. G. R. A. Dowie    F/C. H. R. L. Hood    F/C. G. F. W. Haycock    F/C. W. N. McKelvie

# DRS Bader - December 1929 Rugby XV



RUGBY XV., ROYAL AIR FORCE COLLEGE, CRANWELL  
DECEMBER, 1929

F/C. M. W. S. Robinson    F/C. J. O. W. Oliver    F/C. T. N. Colett    F/C. W. Sawyer    F/C. F. C. Daubury    F/C. W. H. Hodgkinson    F/C. E. A. E. De Pencier    F/C. N. E. Morrison  
F/C. Cpl. C. E. J. Baloes    F/C. Sgt. W. N. McKechnie    F/C. U/O. S. R. A. Elsmie    F/C. Cpl. P. B. Coote    F/C. Cpl. D. R. S. Bader    F/C. Sgt. R. L. Wallace    F/C. N. C. Walker



# DRS Bader - July 1930 Cricket XI



————— CRICKET TEAM, ROYAL AIR FORCE COLLEGE, CRANWELL —————  
JULY, 1930

FC A. M. Davis      FC A. D. Haveright      FC K. E. Morrison      FC G. H. Mason      FC D. B. D. Fife      FC W. H. G. Phipps  
FC Col. H. A. T. Hogg      FC C. W. M. King      FC DRS Bader      FC E. H. F. Jones      FC J. R. Jones

# DRS Bader - July 1930 Hockey XI



— HOCKEY TEAM, ROYAL AIR FORCE COLLEGE, CRANWELL —

JULY, 1930

F/C. R. H. A. Leigh

F/C.M. W. L' I. La V. Baker

F/C. C. W. M. Long

F/C. Cpt. H. A. V. Hogan

F/C.D. B. D. Field

Sgt. G. E. J. Baines

F/C. U/O. D. R. S. Bader

F/C. U/O. P. B. Coote

F/C. Cpt. J. W. C. More

F/C. P. E. Drew

F/C. N. C. Walker

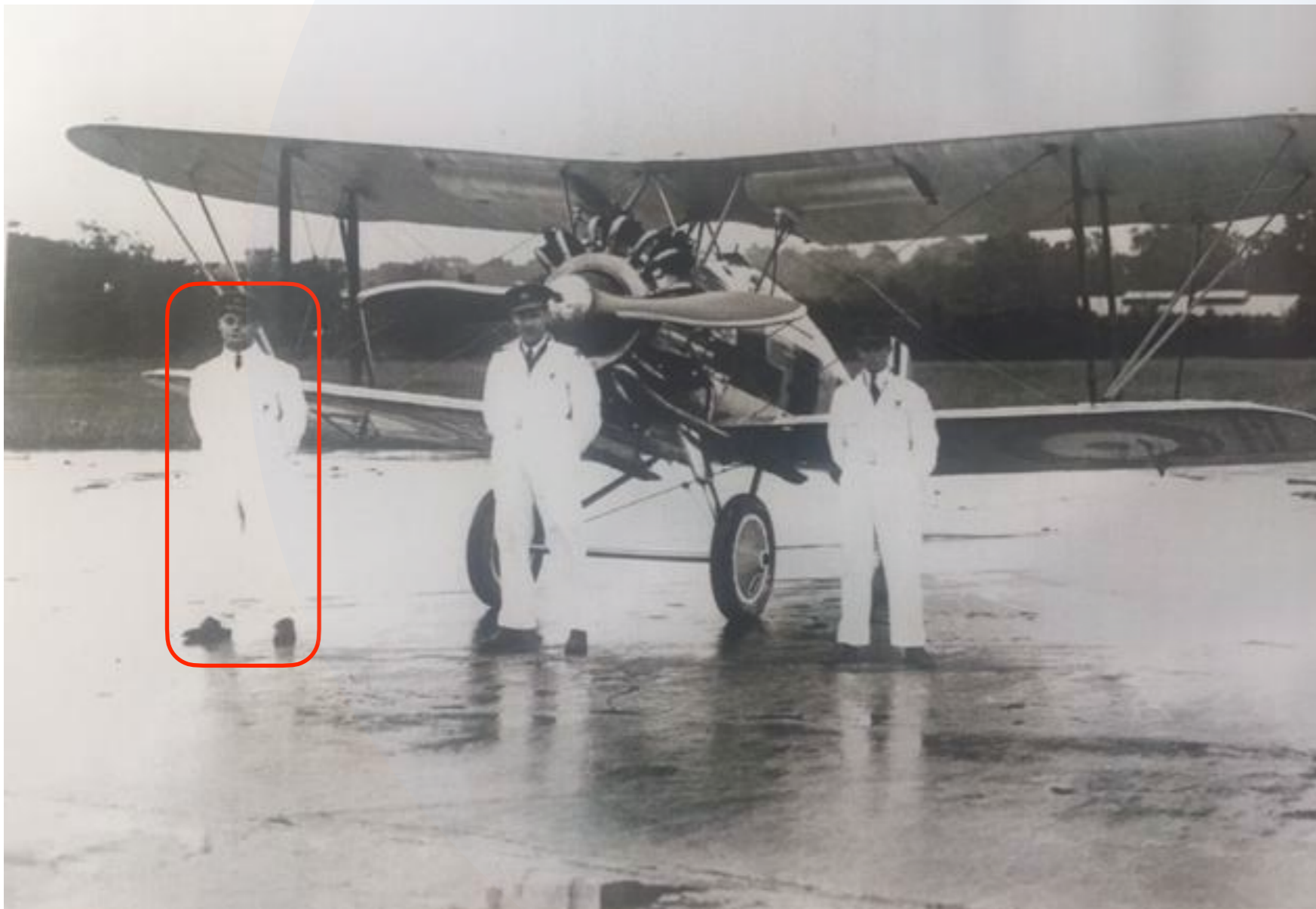
# DRS Bader - July 1930 Hockey XI



————— BOXING TEAM, ROYAL AIR FORCE COLLEGE, CRANWELL —————  
JULY, 1930

F/C. T. O. Horner      F/C. E. Xolis      F/C. J. R. Macdonald      F/C. M. W. L/T. La V. Baker  
F/C. Sgt. C. E. Luffler      F/C. Cpl. T. N. Cuddeh      F/C. T/O. P. H. Coote      F/C. Sgt. G. D. Stephenson      F/C. T/O. D. R. S. Bader

# Bader trained on an Avro 540N





# Bader's Performance Results - Exceptional

ROYAL AIR FORCE COLLEGE EXAMINATIONS - JULY, 1930.

4th Term July, 1930.	Maximum.	D.V. Angall	D.H.S. Bader	C.E.J. Barnes	J.A. Chance	A.G. Cleland	P.B. Coote	R.B. Dasgupta	H.B. Edwards	D.H.D. Field	C.J. Giles	C.H. Little	J.P. Massey	J.W.C. More	J.S. Newcombe	W.P.O. Pretty	T.U.C. Shirley	G.D. Stephenson	D.G. Youngman-Fowler	H.C. Walker	J. Whitbread	W.N. Wills-Munford	H.B. Wigley
Order of Merit:-	=	2	17	16	15	5	1	17	9	18	8	21	14	19	7	3	10	11	13	4	20	6	
General History.	E 300	270	163	132	224	284	234	204	127	127	179	38	193	203	216	225	172	126	208	272	101	218	
	T 400	310	255	277	312	365	322	302	265	235	322	20	332	305	275	357	300	295	330	325	255	318	
Aeronautical Science.	E 200	156	156	100	120	166	170	150	160	156	150	144	114	110	160	170	150	150	200	150	120	140	
	T 100	100	60	73	80	93	78	72	75	82	67	55	65	69	87	96	72	64	82	74	66	93	
Engines.	E 500	464	342	322	339	357	457	358	374	281	375	134	304	294	367	249	360	312	365	442	305	400	
	T 200	166	142	118	153	157	173	146	155	124	149	132	141	136	150	163	145	152	148	155	139	166	
Rigging.	E 300	197	183	206	196	208	249	189	215	170	243	158	195	192	212	225	203	227	203	213	179	224	
	T 150	115	105	122	107	111	116	112	107	78	123	117	105	111	122	121	110	116	113	113	104	111	
Naval Organisation.	E 150	126	115	122	117	130	141	118	116	122	123	44	111	114	116	130	104	101	110	114	94	132	
Law & Administration.	E 400	260	250	285	245	300	325	315	295	170	265	240	225	120	270	260	200	240	315	270	210	315	
Sanitation & Hygiene.	E 150	125	106	91	125	143	133	100	107	97	68	90	92	96	130	120	100	80	101	115	85	110	
	T 250	217	186	206	191	204	214	207	226	159	173	136	209	178	182	192	211	201	217	226	110	233	
Armament.	E 250	217	186	206	191	204	214	207	226	159	173	136	209	178	182	192	211	201	217	226	110	233	
	T 250	228	173	218	181	221	226	221	194	163	216	109	169	158	193	205	192	189	192	211	151	230	
Meteorology.	E 200	194	106	168	163	170	195	166	171	83	146	147	151	117	167	183	177	170	173	196	81	169	
	T 50	48	31	45	44	46	45	44	46	27	39	41	36	32	42	47	46	44	45	46	29	47	
Signals.	E 250	222	172	171	205	206	231	183	215	139	179	106	164	170	166	232	184	186	184	215	169	231	
	T 200	146	111	125	155	163	181	118	162	102	115	94	127	114	174	192	141	140	159	167	124	181	
Horse.	E 75	71	68	67	73	73	73	73	73	66	64	62	67	67	73	74	73	70	72	65	49	73	
Air Pilotage.	E 300	255	191	118	144	228	286	255	244	131	243	68	115	138	217	243	265	201	201	213	126	224	
	T 100	100	80	80	70	70	90	80	100	60	80	40	80	70	90	95	80	95	80	80	60	90	
Practical Flying.	E 300	250	240	245	185	250	225	235	340	215	195	215	245	215	260	195	265	240	230	235	240	245	
	T 900	795	840	800	760	690	835	720	730	735	700	630	610	680	770	770	850	820	540	780	725	690	
Airmanship.	E 300	241	200	226	227	250	264	230	302	224	202	189	197	195	214	263	209	218	205	241	250	213	
Drill and General Efficiency.	T 1000	831	912	883	810	848	937	815	806	763	875	485	844	823	826	872	874	840	608	868	663	823	
Exam. Total.	8675	3008	2480	2459	2559	2969	3197	2785	2765	2140	2630	1671	2382	2279	2752	2961	2755	2522	2784	2969	2119	2947	
Term Total.	8250	2839	2709	2771	2672	2762	3003	2630	2640	2391	2668	1923	2709	2498	2729	2918	2810	2755	2297	2821	2316	2749	
2nd Year Total.	7025	5847	5189	5230	5231	5732	6200	5415	5405	4531	5318	3794	5091	4777	5481	5879	5575	5277	5081	5790	4435	5696	
1st Year Total.	5575	4699	3334	3527	3657	4259	4769	3925	4056	3424	4216	3397	3806	3132	4093	4577	3884	4102	4183	4251	3088	4182	
GRAND TOTAL.	12600	10546	8523	8757	8888	9991	10969	9340	9461	7955	9534	7191	8897	7908	9574	10456	9459	9379	9264	10041	7523	9878	

Pass Mark = 55% of Total Marks = 6930.

# DRS Bader - College Development He Witnessed



1



2



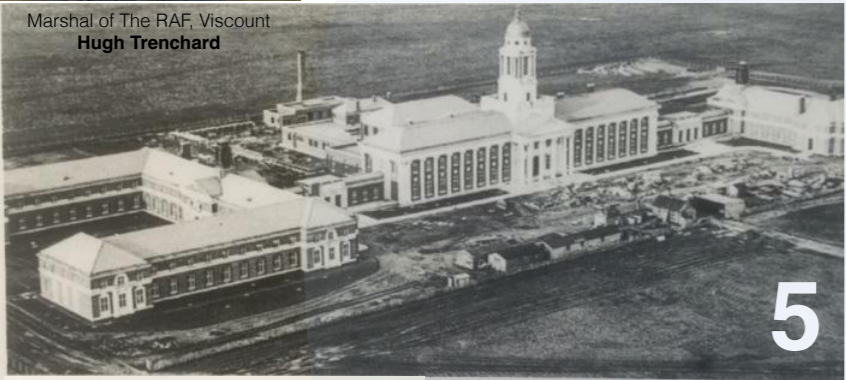
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1. Realising Trenchard's vision for an RAF College on the lines of Sandhurst and Britannia, RAF Cranwell was officially formed on 1 November 1919 and opened for business on 5 February 1920.

2. The decision to replace the existing corrugated iron huts was made in 1922.

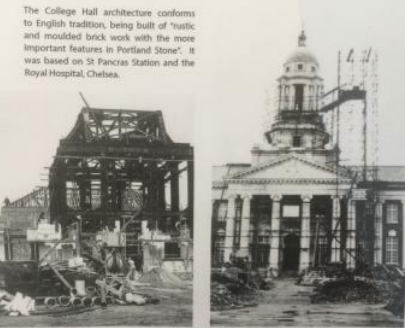
3. **By 1929, plans had been drawn up, the final version of which produced the building which we see today. The Secretary of State for Air in Stanley Baldwin's Government, Lord Hoare, was highly supportive. The problem was that a general election (which Baldwin was expected to lose) was imminent and so Hoare pulled off what he described as "an act of bluff": Lady Maud Hoare - his wife - laid the foundation stone on 29/04/29 to the left of the entrance, in front of worthies that included Viscount and Lady Trenchard, AVM Longcroft (1st Commandant) and Sir James Grey West (Architect). The event was noted in the Statute Book and so, when the new Government was formed by Ramsay Macdonald, it seems that approval was assumed and building went ahead.**

4. **A tinned steel time capsule, held within the foundation stone, holds a record of all present and a special edition of the RAF Journal Vol IX No 1 with details of every cadet who passed through the College since its inception in Feb 1920.**



5

Marshal of The RAF, Viscount Hugh Trenchard



The College Hall architecture conforms to English tradition, being built of "rustic and moulded brick work with the more important features in Portland Stone". It was based on St Pancras Station and the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.



All showing CHOM under construction c.1932

The laying of the foundation Stone, 1929

3

5. Constructed in 1932, the RAF College design was based on St Pancras Station and the dining room on the long room at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. The station canopy of the branch line terminus joining the main Cranwell station (currently the guard room) can still be seen from behind the kitchens.

6. The new College was first used by cadets in 1933, but not formally opened until 11/10/34 by HRH Edward, Prince of Wales - the honorary Air Commodore in Chief of the Auxiliary Air Force.

7. The Foundation & Commemorative Stones can be seen either side of the front entrance.



3

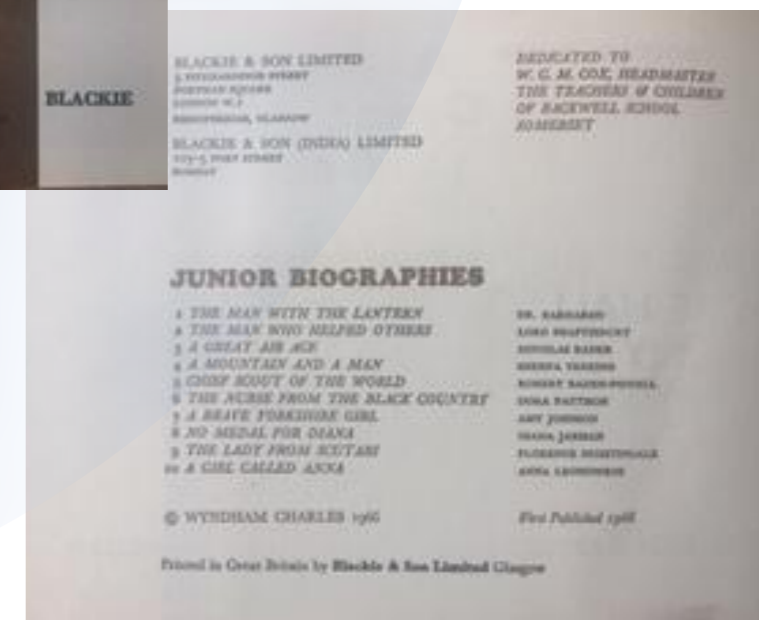
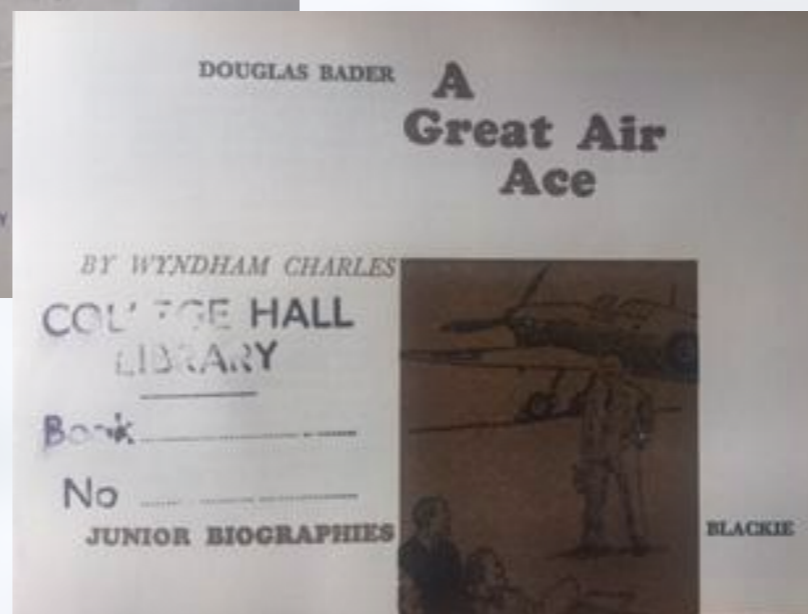
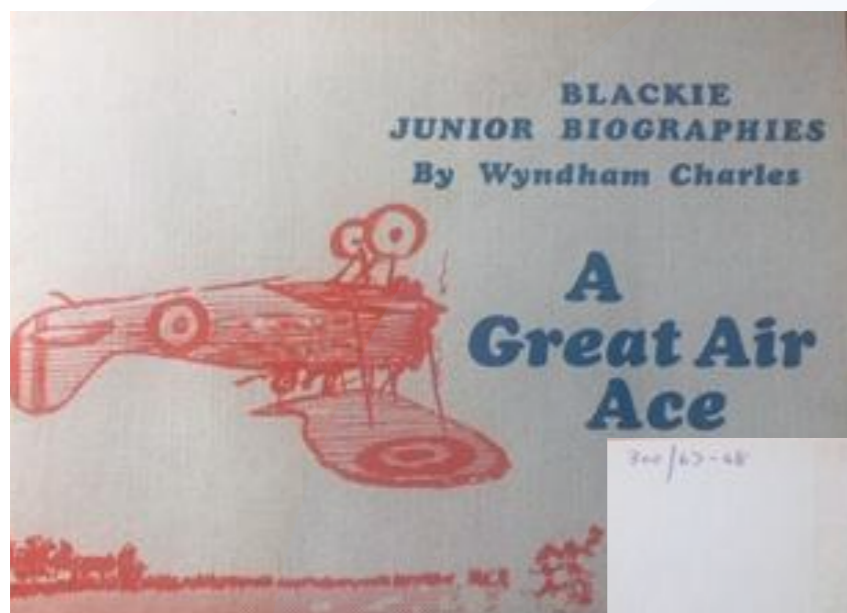
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6

7

# The Bader Story (1)



# The Bader Story (2)

The small aircraft skimmed the tops of trees and hedges as it roared towards the airfield. On the airfield men gasped with astonishment as it approached. "It's Douglas Bader!" shouted one of them. "Look at him now. He's flying upside down."

The men threw themselves flat on the ground as the plane zoomed across the airfield. It was upside down and only a few feet above the ground.

"Bader will kill himself if he tries that stunt too often," shouted a mechanic. "I could have touched a wing as he went over me."

Some of the men laughed as they watched the aircraft climb into the blue sky. "Bader is one of the best pilots in the Royal Air Force," said one of them. "I've never seen anyone fly upside down as close to the ground as that. Look out! Here he comes again!"

As the plane skimmed the hedges and turned upside down, the men saw Douglas Bader grinning at them. They threw themselves to

## Chapter One



Ashton

the ground. The starboard wing dipped in salute. The men held their breath as it almost touched the grass. They saw the pilot take one hand off the controls and wave to them. They saw the starboard wing dip once again in salute.

Then suddenly the wing touched the grass. There was a great roar of sound as the plane plunged and crashed across the field. A wing snapped off like a rotten stick. Finally the nose of the aircraft buried itself deep in the earth. The pilot's body hung limply from the straps in the cockpit. He was very still.

The men raced across the airfield towards the plane. "He may still be alive," said one of the men as he climbed into the cockpit. "Hurry up. There's no time to be lost."

They pulled the young pilot out of the plane and laid him gently on the grass. He was still breathing. Now and then he opened his eyes and looked blankly around him.

"He'll live," said one of the men, as an ambulance approached, "but I don't think he'll ever fly again. Look at his legs. They're broken and twisted under his body."

Bader was unconscious when the ambulance reached the hospital. A doctor examined him carefully. "He'll have to lose his legs," he said grimly. "Both of them are badly smashed below the knee. I must operate as soon as possible."

That night Douglas Bader lost both his legs. For many days he was very ill and at one time it was thought that he would die, but he was young and fit and after some days in hospital he began to get better.

A nurse sat by the pilot's bed and watched him. Soon he opened his eyes and stared blankly at the walls of the room. "Where am I?" he asked. "What am I doing here? Who are you?"

"You are quite safe", replied the nurse. "Your plane crashed. Don't talk too much. You're still weak and you need plenty of rest."

Bader nodded. Slowly he began to remember what had happened to him.

"I flew into the ground, didn't I?" he said. "Yes," said the nurse, "but you're going to be all right. I think the doctor would like to see you now. Don't try to move. I'll call him."



Ashton

## Chapter Two

"You're lucky to be alive, my lad," said the doctor when he arrived. "You've had a bad crash and you've been in hospital for some days."

"But I am alive," said Bader quickly. "Except for a few pains here and there I feel all right. How long will I have to stay here? When can I leave?"

The doctor shook his head, and when he spoke his voice was soft, almost gentle. "You might as well know the truth now," he said. "When you were brought here I had to operate at once to save your life. There was no other way. You've lost both your legs."

Douglas Bader stared at the doctor. There was a puzzled expression on his face. "I don't believe you," he said slowly. "I tell you that I can feel my feet. They hurt and I know that they're there." He tried to lift the blankets that covered him to prove to the doctor that he still had both his legs. The doctor placed a hand on his shoulder.

"That won't do any good," he said. "You have to get used to the idea. You can't really feel any pain in your legs. You only think you can. It often happens after an operation. Soon the pain will be gone." Douglas Bader closed his eyes. For a while he was silent. Then he said quietly: "More than anything else I wanted to fly. Will I ever fly again? Is there any hope at all?"

The doctor shook his head. "I'm very sorry," he said. "There is no hope at all. You'll never fly again. This is something you must learn to face on your own. Later on we may be able to fix you up with a pair of metal legs.

It's been done before, but I can't promise anything. We shall have to wait and see."

"Will I be able to walk with them, the metal legs?" asked Bader.

"Yes," replied the doctor. "Of course you'll have to use crutches or at least a stick. But in time you might learn to walk with them."

The young pilot smiled grimly. "As soon as I feel stronger I'll try the metal legs," he said. "How long will I have to wait?"

"Don't worry too much about that now," said the doctor. "You still need plenty of rest. As soon as I think you are well enough I'll let you know."

It was several weeks later that Douglas Bader was taken to see a man called Dessoutter. He met him in his office inside a small factory. "I understand that you have legs for me," said Bader. "I've been looking forward to this moment for a long time. I hope they fit."

Dessoutter smiled. "This is one of the few places in the country where metal legs are



Ashton

made," he said. "When they are fitted don't expect to walk at once. You'll need hours of practice before you can use them."

He nodded to two men standing near him. "These are my assistants, Walker and Tulitt," he said. "They are here to help you."

Soon the metal legs were fitted. Walker and Tulitt each took one of Bader's arms. Slowly, carefully, they pulled him to his feet, but as the pilot stood upright waves of pain swept through his body. For a moment he thought that he would faint. Grimly he tried to move his right leg forward but nothing happened.

"I can't move my legs!" he cried. "This is hopeless. I'll never be able to walk about on these. I've never felt such pain."

"Don't forget that the stumps of your legs have done no work for a long time," said Dessoutter. "You've been lying on your back in hospital. It will take time to get used to these legs. Be patient." Bader nodded. "All right," he said. "I'm beginning to feel better. I'll try to walk forward a few steps."

Dessoutter shook his head. "Take your time," he said. "You have to get used to having these metal legs strapped to your body. Now, as soon as you're ready, I'll give you a stick to help you to balance. Walker and Tulitt can hold your arms."

Bader grinned stubbornly. "Your assistants can help me," he said, "but I don't need a stick."

"You must learn to face facts," said Dessoutter quietly. "You'll never

# The Bader Story (3)

walk again without a stick. I have one here. Take it. It will help you."

Bader shook his head. "I'll walk without a stick," he said. "I'll never use one, never."

He tried to take a step forward. Nothing happened. Terrible pain swept once again through the stumps of his legs.

"Try kicking the stump of your leg forward," said Dessoutter. "Move the leg as if you're cracking a whip."

Bader flicked his right leg forward. The assistants helped him to move and he flicked his left leg forward. He moved jerkily, like a toy soldier. After half an hour he was very, very tired. "I shall never learn to walk," he said.

Dessoutter shook his head. "Don't forget that you are learning to walk all over again," he said. "It's like learning to play the piano. You must practise and practise."

Bader nodded. "Let's try again," he said. "Take very short steps," said Walker. "I think you'll find that much easier."



On the golf course

7

**Chapter Three** Again and again Bader tried to walk with the metal legs. He learned to lean the top of his body well forward to help him to balance. The stumps of his legs ached, but he kept on trying. "I think I can manage now," he said at last. "Let me try on my own."

He pushed the assistants from him and started forward on his own. Slowly he walked a few steps. "What did I tell you?" he said. "I know I'll have to practise, but I'll walk again and I'll never need to use a stick."

Dessoutter smiled. "You're right," he said. "I never would have believed it if I hadn't seen you with my own eyes, but now you really must rest. You've done enough for one day."

Douglas Bader returned to the hospital, and every day he practised walking with his new metal legs. Then one day some friends called to see him. "We're going to play golf," they said. "We thought that you might like to come with us."

"All right," said Bader. "I should very much like to see a golf course again. Although I shan't be able to play I shall enjoy watching you go round the course."

They got into the car and drove to the golf course. One of Bader's friends gave him a golf club and some balls. "Why don't you see what you can do with them?" he said. "It will help to pass the time while you wait."

When his friends had gone Bader put a ball on the grass. He picked up

the club and swung at the ball. He missed it by inches and fell flat on his back. He laughed stubbornly at himself, got up, and tried again, but the same thing happened. Twelve times he tried and twelve times he failed and fell to the ground.

Then at last he hit the ball. It soared away into the air and he felt like cheering. It was a magnificent drive and the ball landed close to the flag on the next green. "This is fine," said Bader to himself. "Now I shall soon learn how to use my metal legs to play golf."

He made up his mind to learn to play golf better than his friends. "I shan't need any help," he said to them when they returned. "I shall walk around the course on my own. I shall play all my shots myself. If you want to beat me you'll have to work very hard to improve your game."

His friends laughed and joked with him. "We shan't mind being beaten," said one of them. "If golf helps you to learn to walk better with those metal legs we shall be very pleased."



He wanted to fly again

9

So the weeks and months passed and Bader learned to play golf. Soon he was a better golfer than most of his friends. He learned to walk everywhere on his own. He learned to do everything for himself.

As the months passed he needed every ounce of his great courage. From time to time the pain in his legs above the knees was very great. The stumps that supported the metal legs bled and grew raw, but wherever he went he refused the help of a stick. Whenever he could he played golf with his friends.

There was one thing above all else that worried the young pilot. This was the thought of never being able to fly again. For many weeks he worked in an office but he soon grew tired of this. "I want to fly again," he told a friend. "If I can learn to walk again with metal legs I can learn to fly with them. What do you think?"

His friend thought at first that Douglas Bader was joking. "Flying is a dangerous game, even for a very fit man," he said. "Are you serious? Do you really think that you can fly with metal legs?"

"Of course," replied Bader. "I think I can learn to fly a plane as well as any man in the country. If Germany declares war against us, then England will need every pilot she can find. I'm sure I can be a pilot again."

"Well, I don't know what to think," said Bader's friend, "but if you've made up your mind to learn to fly again then nothing I say will stop you. If you do succeed you'll be the first legless pilot ever to fly in the R.A.F."

"That's right," said Bader. "I'll be the first."

10

One day Douglas Bader's friends found him waiting for them at the airfield. He had his flying helmet in his hand.

"I'm ready," he said grimly.

"All right," said one of his friends. "Come up with me and have some practice. When I think you're good enough I'll let you fly solo." Together they walked to a plane and took off. The other pilots watched closely as the aircraft rose into the air and circled the field. After a long practice the plane landed. Bader's friend jumped out and waved to the legless pilot. "You're on your own," he shouted. "Let's see what you can do."

Bader opened the throttle wide and took off. The plane climbed rapidly into the blue sky. It circled the airfield, landed, and then took off again. Bader's friends watched anxiously as the plane turned upside down and flew a few feet above the grass. "He's the same Bader," grinned one of the pilots. "He's still the best pilot I've ever seen."

## Chapter Four



Waiting at the airfield

11

The other pilots agreed. They knew he was right. When the legless pilot landed they all crowded round him and shook his hand.

Some months later Douglas Bader was sent to the Central Flying School to be tested in the air. Many instructors flew with him for hours in different types of aircraft. "He's wasting our time," they said. "We can't teach him anything. He's the best pilot we've ever seen."

In spite of this the Royal Air Force finally decided that a legless man could not be accepted as a pilot. Bader was not allowed to rejoin the R.A.F., but he was promised that if war broke out he would be allowed to fly again.

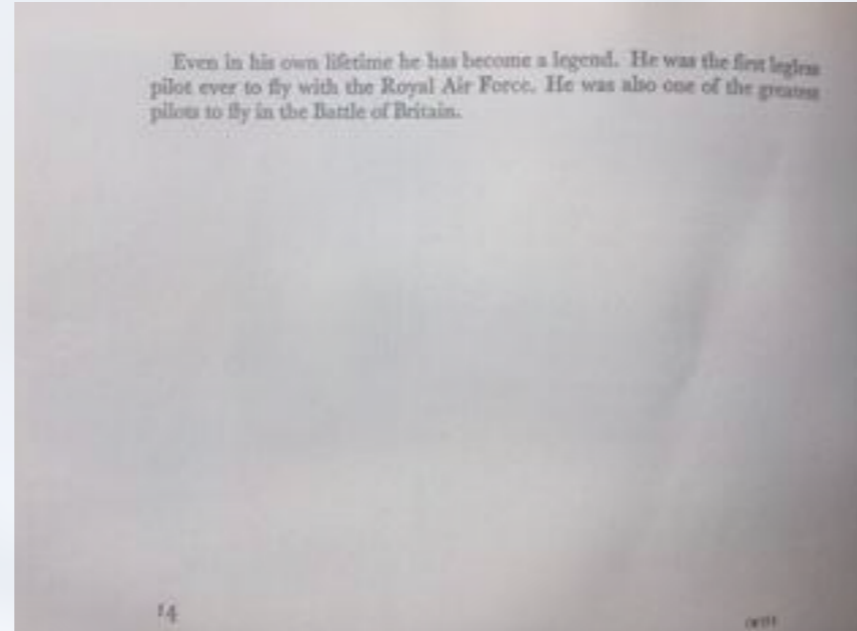
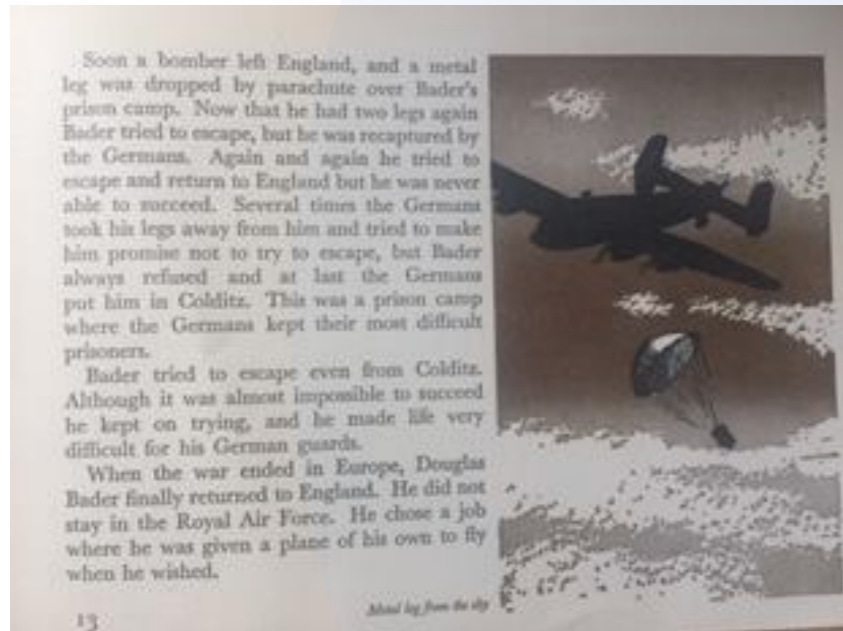
When war did break out in 1939 Douglas Bader was soon back in the Royal Air Force and drawing his flying kit. He refused a fine pair of flying boots. "I don't need those," he laughed. "I don't get cold feet."

In the months that followed Bader proved he was one of the best fighter pilots in the country. Soon he was given his own squadron, and he showed that he was a great leader. In the Battle of Britain he and his men shot down many enemy aircraft.

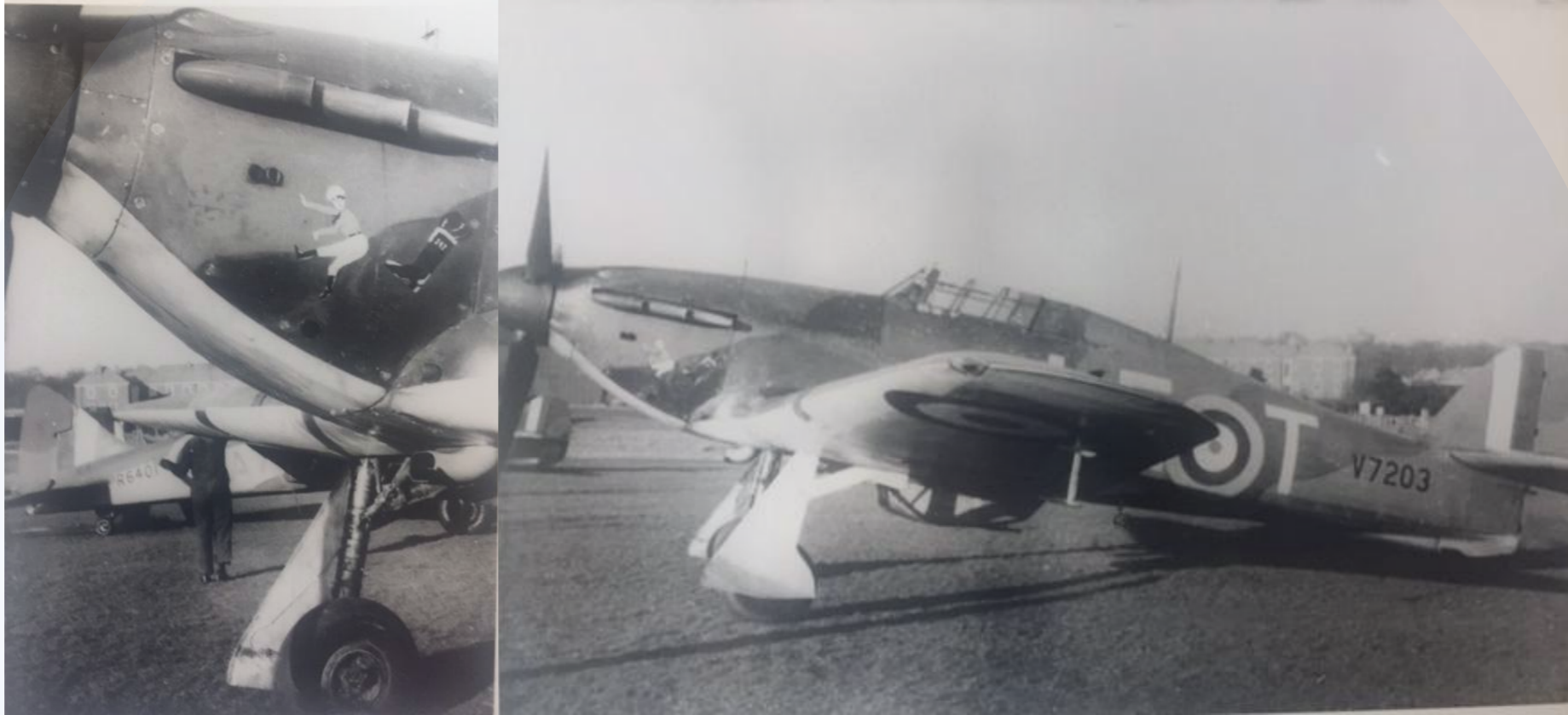
Douglas Bader had shot down twenty-two German aircraft before he was himself shot down. When he tried to bale out he found that his right leg was stuck in the cockpit, so he went without it. As he floated down to earth he thought how lucky he was to have metal legs. When the Germans took him prisoner he told them to send a message to England, to ask for another leg.

12


# The Bader Story (4)



# Bader's Hurricane with 242 Sqn



# DRS Bader - Extracts from RAFC Honours Register

BADER	St Edwards,	Under-Officer	Entered;
Douglas Robert Stuart,	Oxford.		6 September 1928
			Passed;
			25 July 1930

<sup>1</sup> D.S.O. 1 October 1940. <sup>1</sup> This officer has displayed gallantry and leadership of the highest order. During three recent engagements

Mention 1 January 1941. he has led his squadron with such skill and ability that thirty-three enemy aircraft have been destroyed.

<sup>2</sup> D.F.C. 7 January 1941. In the course of these engagements Squadron Leader BADER has added to his previous successes by

Mention 17 March 1941. destroying six enemy aircraft *London Gazette*

<sup>3</sup> Bar to D.S.O. 15 July 1941. <sup>2</sup> Squadron Leader BADER has continued to lead his squadron and wing with the utmost gallantry on

<sup>4</sup> Bar to D.F.C. 9 September 1941. all occasions. He has now destroyed a total of ten hostile aircraft and damaged several more *London Gazette*

<sup>5</sup> This fearless pilot has recently added a further four enemy aircraft to his previous successes; in addition he has probably destroyed another four and damaged five hostile aircraft. By his fine leadership and high courage Wing Comdr BADER has inspired the wing on every occasion *London Gazette*

(See Index 'B' at end of book)

high powers of leadership, unswerving skill and iron determination. His greatest virtue has been his courage *London Gazette*

<sup>4</sup> BAR to D.S.O. 15 JULY, 1941. "In recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy"

*known as Captain D.R.S. BADER, DSO, D.F.C.*

# DRS Bader - Colditz Resident

## Colditz Castle - Oflag IV-C PoW Camp - Liberation Date 16 April 1945

Group Captain Sir Douglas Bader (**centre**) was among the famous Colditz inmates. He is credited with 22 aerial victories, before he baled out over German-occupied France in August 1941. He is seen with close Cranwellian friend (same IOT cohort S38) Air Cdre Geoffrey Stephenson. Bottom right is Dominic Bruce, who was 'the most ingenious escaper' of the war. Jack Best (back left) and Bill Goldfinch (back right) built the 'Colditz Cock' glider out of floorboards and porridge in their hidden workshop in the castle's attic during the winter of 1944.

The photo below lists their names, squadrons and dates when they were "downed/captured".



Flt Lt Leslie John "Jack" Best (30 Sqn - May 1940)      Flt Lt Jaroslav-Zafouk (Czech) (31 Sqn - 17/07/41)      Flt Lt Albert "Peter" van Rood (Dutch) (31 Sqn - 17/07/41)      Flt Lt Donald Sutherland Dom (Canadian) (1 Sqn - 25/05/40)      Flt Lt Donald Frederick Middleton (Canadian) (50 Sqn - 12/04/40)      Unknown (Possibly not a PoW)  
 Flt Lt Norman "Bricky" Forbes (605 Sqn - 27/05/40)      Flt Lt Francis "Error" Flinn (42 Sqn - 4/10/40)      Flt Lt Donald "Weasel" Donaldson (Canadian) (24 Sqn - April 1940)      Flt Lt Keith T. Milne (Canadian) (51 Sqn - 24/04/40)      Flt Lt Bill James Goldfinch (228 Sqn - 25/04/41)  
 Flt Lt John Patrick "Bag" Dickinson (99 Sqn - 7/11/41)      Flt Lt "Bushy" Parker (Australian) (234 Sqn - 15/08/40)      Sqn Ldr Malcolm Llewellyn McColm (21 Sqn - 27/12/40)      Flt Lt Dominic Bruce (9 Sqn - 9/08/40)  
 Cranwellian Sqn Ldr Geoffrey Dalton Stephenson (19 Sqn - 26/05/40)      Cranwellian Sqn Ldr Douglas Bader (OC Tangmere Wg - 9/08/41)      Sqn Ldr Charles Edward Lockett (226 Sqn - 14/05/40)

# DRS Bader - 'Reunited'



# DRS Bader with Battle of Britain Film Actors



# A Very Fine Cranwellian - Douglas Bader



Group Captain **Sir Douglas Robert Steuart Bader**  
CBE, DSO & Bar, DFC & Bar, FRAeS, DL  
(21 February 1910 – 5 September 1982)

Joined the RAF in 1928, commissioned in 1930, lost both legs in an aerobatic accident in 1931. Despite being discharged on medical grounds, he rejoined in 1939 to become a renowned flying ace, credited with 22 aerial victories, four shared victories, six probables, one shared probable and 11 enemy aircraft damaged. Shot down in 1941 - blue-on-blue - he 'resided' in Colditz Camp for the next 4 years.



**C**ourage **A**bility **D**edication **E**nergy **T**eamwork **S**ingle-mindedness