

RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

“The Cranwellian Forgotten”



A Tribute to the Cranwellians of Coastal & Overseas Commands
(1st Revise)

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Coastal Command - the Cranwellian Contribution

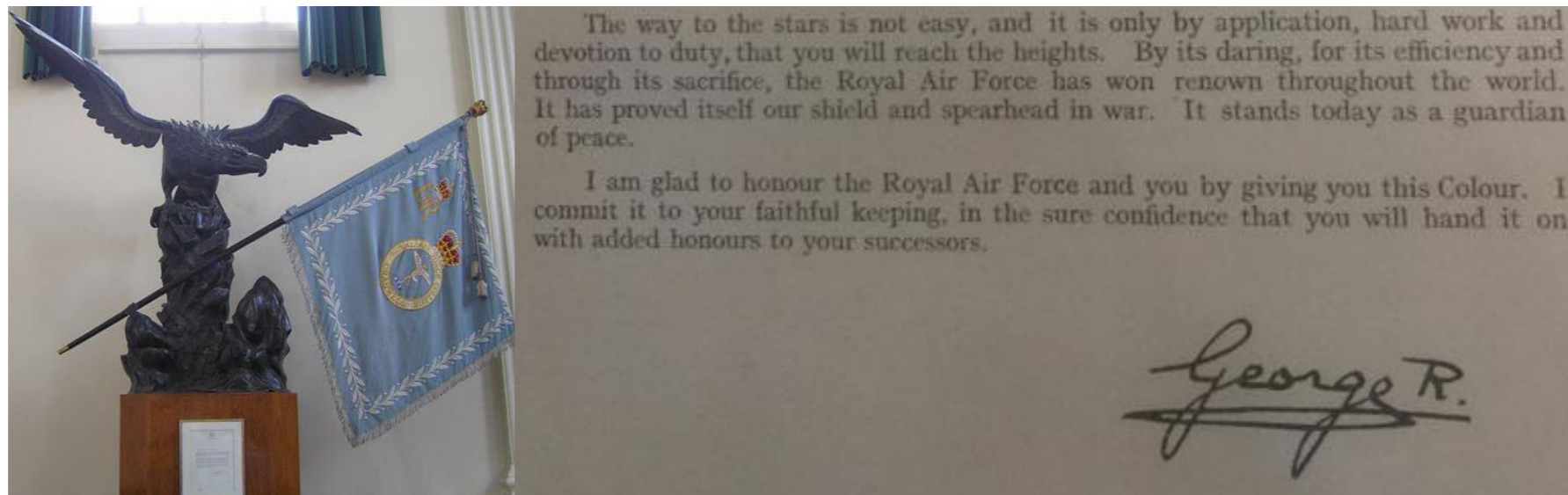


[With thanks from Andrew Roberts for editorial comments]

RAF Coastal Command was formed in 1936 when the RAF was restructured into four Commands, the other three being the better known Fighter and Bomber Commands, and Training Command. At a time of UK Defence austerity, Coastal Command tended to be neglected and as a consequence it did not receive the resources it needed to develop properly or efficiently. It came to prominence at the outbreak of WWII, but owing to the Air Ministry's concentration on Fighter Command and Bomber Command, Coastal Command was often referred to as the "Cinderella Service". Other Commands would sometimes refer to their Coastal brethren as the "Kipper Fleet".

Of the 8,218 Coastal Command aircrew who lost their lives during World War II, our research suggests that as many as 112 Cranwellians (32 flight cadets and an estimated 80 SFTS trained pilots) were killed in action on Coastal Command operations; these are summarised in our 'Roll of Honour' presented on the last page of this tribute. These totals are based on an analysis of the 2006 College Journal Roll of Honour, archived flight cadet and SFTS trainee records and the Coastal Command losses recorded in the Air81 database whose records beyond May 1942 have yet to be released. Any errors and omissions are regretted and will be rectified as verified data emerges.

The Queen's colour is held by a large bronze eagle, donated by Sir Philip Sassoon - Secretary of State for Air 1933 - at the west end of the RAF College Dining Room.



As His Majesty King George VI declared in 1948, "...by its daring... efficiency... and sacrifice... the RAF... has proved itself our shield and spearhead in war... a guardian of peace."

The Colour is a symbol of our devotion and our personal relationship with the monarch.

A review of Cranwellian Coastal Command pilots of World War II follows, and was prompted by, an earlier analysis of the unstinting dedication from Cranwellian Battle of Britain and Bomber Command crews - "the Cranwellian Few" and "the Cranwellian Many". Whilst much authenticated material exists on the Battle of Britain and the Strategic Bomber Offensive, material on Coastal Command operations is limited; the objective remains the same, however, to record the outstanding contribution of Cranwellian crews, lest we forget the price they paid through "their prowess and their devotion" {WSC}.



Coastal Command Campaigns



Netherlands, Belgium & France - ASW & Dunkirk (April - June 1940)

Coastal Command began scouting German shipping near the Dutch Coast in Spring 1940, but the tempo of operations increased dramatically following the German assault on Europe in May. Initially covering the landing of British troops near the Hague, Coastal Command operations were soon diverted to covering the evacuation from Dunkirk on 4 June.



Battle of Britain - Disrupting Operation Sea Lion (July - October 1940)

Whilst ASW operations were conducted against U-boats and keeping the Atlantic Approaches clear, Coastal Command's priority soon became anti-invasion operations (aka the "Battle of the Barges"). Throughout this period, Coastal Command carried out sustained raids against Cherbourg, Dieppe, Le Havre and Ostend.

The Norwegian Campaign - Anti Shipping Missions (April - June 1941)

The earliest Coastal Command missions involved hunting down German ships in the North Sea and off the Norwegian Coast, notably Kriegsmarine cruisers *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst*, and Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) in combined operations with the RN.



Battle of the Atlantic - Raiders, Condors, U-boats (1939 - 1945)

By far the longest sustained campaign for Coastal Command was the *Battle of the Atlantic*, working with the RN to protect the Atlantic convoys primarily against the Kriegsmarine U-boat threat. Holding the technological edge (e.g. the Magnetic Anomalies Detector (MAD), the Mk 24 mine (FIDO)) from 1943 onwards, Coastal Command diluted the menacing threat of the U-boat.

Offensive Ops - Anti-Shipping Ops (1940 - 1945)

Its primary task to defend allied convoys from the U-boat threat, Coastal Command also protected allied shipping from the aerial threat from the Luftwaffe. After a slow start and distractions transferring squadrons to the Desert Air Force (DAF) in 1941, Coastal Command's offensive operations increased significantly, with much improved results, from July 1941. With the advent of the Beaufighter, longer range operations were effective from November 1942 and by 1944, the Germans were unable to make good ongoing losses.



Gneisenau & Scharnhorst



Other Theatres - The Mediterranean Offensive (Gibraltar)

Coastal Command played a limited part in Mediterranean operations, operating from Gibraltar and intercepting Axis submarines in transit from Europe to the Indian Ocean.

Non-Combat Ops - Met, Rescue, Recce Ops (June 1940 - October 1944)

To address Bomber Command concerns regarding Met reports from ships, Coastal Command provided a more reliable Met service from June 1940. The first Air Sea Rescue (ASR) service was set up in January 1941 and operated throughout the war. One of the first PR squadrons was 212 Sqn operating under Fighter Command control in May/June 1940; such operations were handed over to Coastal Command on 18 June.



Spitfire PR Mk XI located Wurzburg Radar





Coastal Command - Aircraft

The Avenger was not actually a Coastal Cmd Aircraft, but was flown by a Cranwellian on a Coastal Cmd Operation



Anson



Avenger
(Not actually Coastal Cmd)



Battle



Beaufighter



Beaufort



Blenheim



Botha



Catalina



Fortress



Gladiator



Halifax



Hampden



Hudson



Lerwick



Liberator



London



Mosquito



Nomad



Spitfire



Stranraer



Sunderland



Swordfish



Ventura



Vildebeest



Walrus



Warwick



Wellington



Whitley

Coastal Command - Some Cranwellian Squadrons





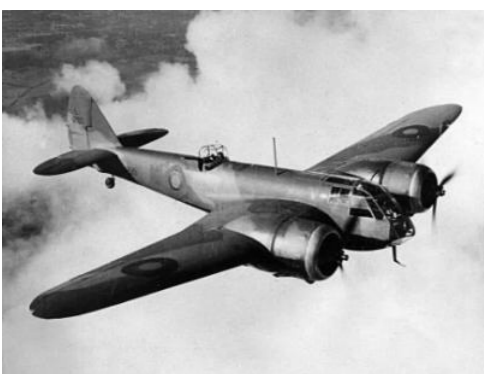
Coastal Command - Ne/Be/Fr Campaign



Netherlands, Belgium & France - ASW & Dunkirk (April - June 1940)

When the war began, RAF Coastal Command was far from ready for it. It had nothing to attack let alone sink the German U-boats. The U-boat weapon available at the time was the anti-submarine bomb that was far from effective and required a direct hit to do any damage. To make matters worse, the Command was always secondary to Bomber Command for equipment and aircraft. During the spring of 1940, experiments were carried out to see if an aircraft could successfully drop a depth charge (a Royal Navy model little changed from WWI). This proved feasible if the aircraft was not too high or travelling too fast. Thus, the MK. VII depth charge became the new weapon for Coastal Command's aircraft. These were later replaced by Torpex-filled depth charges with more explosive power. At the outbreak of war, the Command only had 3 Operational Groups, 15, 16 and 18 with Group 17 taking care of training. One week after war began, Coastal Command set up a base in Gibraltar to cover the southern part of the Bay of Biscay and the waters closest to this entry into the Mediterranean. This base was to prove very important.

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Bird FD		J36	KIA 59 Sqn; Blenheim IV L9266; based in Andover; crashed near Fricourt, France.	22/5/40
Bouwens A		S37	KIA 206 Sqn; Hudson I N7400; failed to return from operational flight over Hamburg.	18/5/40
Guest EMC	DFC; MiD*	A38	KIA 53 Sqn; B-24 Liberator; Thorney Island-Bay of Biscay ASW patrol; attacked by JU88s.	5/4/40
Jolliffe PS		S34	KIA 254 Sqn; Blenheim IV L9409; failed to return from an operational flight over Trondheim.	24/6/40
Mellor HM	MVO	S21	KIA 22 Sqn; Beaufort I L4450; failed to return from ops over France.	26/5/40
Middleton JD	MiD	J36	KIA 201 Sqn; Sunderland I N6133; missing presumed lost in operations over North Sea.	9/7/40
Seeds J		S37	KIA 201 Sqn; Sunderland I N6133; lost on operations over North Sea.	9/7/40



Blenheim



Hudson



Liberator



Beaufort



Sunderland



Coastal Command - Battle of Britain



Battle of Britain - **Disrupting Operation Sea Lion (July - October 1940)**

With the Battle of Britain underway, the Command was ordered to disrupt German preparations for *Operation Sea Lion*. In this respect, former RAF-Army co-operation squadrons, 53 and 59, were transferred to Coastal Command in July 1940 for these tasks. 254 Squadron, supplemented by 21 and 57 Squadrons of Bomber Command, attacked shipping off the Norwegian coast, as a result of alerts that suggested a German amphibious assault from there. Avro Ansons of 16 Group's 500 Squadron were fitted out with extra armour plating and side mountings for defensive guns. A free mounted 20mm was installed in the lower fuselage to offer protection. The Beaufort, on the other hand, was just too fast to use the torpedoes available, so new tactics had to be developed and, meantime, the aircraft was restricted to mine-laying or bombing missions; after further modifications, however, 22 Squadron carried out more trials and began anti-shipping operations on 31 August 1940. Other notable actions included strikes on convoys by 42 Squadron. 217 Squadron took part in attacks on Luftwaffe airfields in France, and 224, 269 and 42 Squadrons made attacks on Norwegian rail targets late in the year. On 13 September, they carried out another large raid on the Channel ports, sinking 80 large barges in the port of Ostend. Some 84 barges were sunk in Dunkirk after another raid on 17 September and by 19 September, almost 200 barges had been sunk.

Casualty	Entry	Description	Date
Dalzell-McKean MH	J39	KIA 210 Sqn; Coastal Cmd Sunderland Mk 1.	2/9/40
MacFarlane RA	J39	KIA 22 Sqn; Beaufort I L4508; crashed near Cherbourg.	17/9/40
McIntosh J	SFTS9	KIA 233 Sqn; Hudson I P5117 crashed at sea near Berwick.	5/10/40
Phillips IW	J38	KIA 210 Sqn; Sunderland I T9043; failed to return from convoy duties.	2/9/40



Hudson



Beaufort



Sunderland



Coastal Command - Norwegian Campaign



The Norwegian Campaign - Anti Shipping Missions (February - June 1941)

The Norwegian campaign was an attempted Allied occupation of northern Norway, during the early stages of World War II. Some early stages of the Allied operation, notably Coastal Command anti shipping missions, preceded the German invasion and occupation of the Norwegian mainland on 8 April 1940. British and German naval forces met at the first Battle of Narvik on 9 and 10 April, and the first British forces landed at Åndalsnes on 13 April. Thus, the Allied movements could be presented as an attempt to prevent the Germans from capturing northern Norway. The main strategic reason for Germany to invade Norway was to seize the Norwegian port of Narvik and guarantee the raw materials needed for the critical production of steel. The Allied campaign continued until 10 June 1940 and did not succeed, but it resulted in the successful escape of King Haakon VII and his heir apparent Crown Prince Olav to Great Britain. After the Allied failure in Central Norway, more preparation was given to the northern forces. Air cover was provided by two squadrons of carrier-transported fighters operating from Bardufoss Air Station, the re-equipped 263 Squadron with Gloster Gladiators and 46 Squadron with Hawker Hurricanes.

Casualty	Entry	Description	Date
Anderton W	SFTS23	KIA 48 Sqn; Hudson Mk V AE652; Sola, Norway.	7/1/42*
Bolton FA	SFTS25	KIA 235 Sqn; Beaufighter Ic T4775; crashed near Shetland Islands on recce flight to Norway.	7/5/42*
Clench PK	SFTS15	KIA 220 Sqn; Hudson Mk 5 AM 583; failed to return from operational flight off the coast of Norway.	6/8/41*
Culverwell E	S34	KIA 22 Sqn; Beaufort I W6521; failed to return from an operational flight off the coast of Norway,	13/6/41
Dale SH	SFTS14	KIA aircraft failed to return from operational flight, Hudson AE612, 206 Squadron.	13/6/1941
Erskine BP	A40	KIA 233 Sqn; Hudson Mk II T9377 lost over Norway.	31/10/40
Gilbert HG	A40/SFTS9	KIA 233 Sqn; Hudson I N7374; missing believed killed; failed to return air operations over Lister, Norway.	3/11/40
Hunter DC	SFTS23	K KIA Hudson V AE652 48 Sqn North Sea/Norway	7/1/42*
Newcomb FWR	SFTS18	KIA 48 Sqn; Hudson V AM814; failed to return from ops off the coast of Norway.	23/2/42*

* Denotes lost over Norway, but not necessarily in the Norwegian Campaign of February to June 1941



Hurricane Mk I of 46 Squadron during the Norwegian campaign, May 1940. This aircraft was abandoned in Norway.



Gladiator



Hudson



Beaufighter



Beaufort



Coastal Command - Battle of the Atlantic (1)

Battle of the Atlantic - Raiders, Condors, U-boats (1939 - 1945)

RAF Coastal Command played a pivotal role in the Allied war effort, most notably against Hitler's U-boats during the **Battle of the Atlantic** – a role which has been largely obscured by the more famous achievements of Fighter Command, and Bomber Command's costly and controversial offensive against German industry. Yet the war to protect Britain's Atlantic life-line and secure safe shipping routes for men and materiel from North America was perhaps the most important struggle of all. From weak and feeble beginnings, and in the face of massive competition for resources, Coastal Command built a formidable force of anti-submarine aircraft. Armed with effective new weapons and the latest radar technology, these could hunt and attack U-boats by day or night, off Britain's shores or out in the vast expanses of the Atlantic Ocean. Coastal Command patrolled a vast area of the Atlantic from the Arctic Circle to North Africa – some ten million square miles of ocean. To extend its reach, squadrons were based at Gibraltar, Iceland, West Africa and in the Azores. A small number of long-range aircraft made a huge difference in the convoy battles, which was fortunate as Coastal Command was denied its fair share of home-grown aircraft. Instead, it relied mostly on American-built Liberators, Catalinas and Flying Fortresses, and the obsolescent cast-offs from RAF Bomber Command. Ironically, aircraft numbers only reached satisfactory levels after the Battle of the Atlantic had been won, but U-boats were pursued until the very end of the war. A lesser-known facet of Coastal Command's war was its campaign against German shipping operating along the coast of occupied Europe. After a costly and ineffective start, Coastal Command's offensive arm grew strong, so that in the last year of the war the powerful Beaufighter and Mosquito Strike Wings halted much of Germany's traffic of raw materials.

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Bartlett JP		SFTS20	KIA 201 Sqn; Sunderland II W3977; aircraft failed to return from convoy escort.	6/2/42
Belchem LG		S28	ex-BoB Fighter Cmd; KIA 119 Sqn; Catalina crash operating from Lough Erne.	14/7/42
Berry JD		SFTS16	KIA 608 Sqn; Hudson V AM657; aircraft failed to return from Terschelling-Heligoland Bight.	5/11/41
Bolton DM		SFTS18	KIA 53 Sqn; Blenheim Mk IV V5647; failed to return from Ops.	23/6/41
Breese HFD		J37	KIA 210 Sqn; Catalina I AH532; failed to return from operational flight off coast of Ireland.	21/4/41
Bures O		SFTS41	KIA Liberator GR.V FL949 311 Sqn Orkneys.	1/1/45
Buck AF		SFTS14	KIA 53 Sqn; Hudson V AM672; shot down at sea off the coast of Holland.	10/8/41
Carmichael JW	DFC; MiD	S37	KIA 53 Sqn; ASW Ops; Liberator GR.V BZ818; attacked three U boats under heavy fire.	14/6/44
Carson TH	DFC	SFTS17	KIA Beaufighter VIc JL638 254 Sqn UK.	25/1/43
Coles DGG		SFTS5	KIA 22 Sqn; Beaufort Mk 1 N1151; failed to return from operational flight.	22/1/41
Cooper CS	DFC	A33	KIA 254 Sqn; <i>Beaufighter VI; based at North Coates.</i>	25/9/43
Cooper LF		J35	KIA 86 Sqn; Liberator GR.V FL954; <i>Ballykelly maritime ops.</i>	24/10/43
Dewhurst L		SFTS21	KIA Beaufort AW290 , 39 Squadron, aircraft failed to return from an operational flight.	24/8/42
Dunn F		SFTS15	KIA 206 Sqn; Hudson V AM644; crashed County Antrim on return from ops.	24/9/41
Edmondson WA		SFTS54	KIA Hudson IIIa FK743 251 Sqn Iceland.	27/3/45
Endicott LJ		SFTS13	KIA 502 Sqn; Whitley VII Z9192; brined St Mawgan.	30/7/42
Evill AG		SFTS5	KIA 201 Sqn; Sunderland Mk II W3982; failed to return from ASW patrol NW of Shetlands Islands.	21/8/41
Finch J		SFTS20	KIA 57 Sqn; Lancaster III JB725 DX-M; East Kirkby-Mine laying in Baltic waters; shot down by night fighter, Tellingstedt.	10/4/44
Fishwick JR		S34	KIA 22 Sqn; Beaufort I W6489; failed to return from an operational flight.	15/1/41
<i>Francis LJ</i>		<i>SFTS14</i>	<i>KIA 53 Sqn; Blenheim IV V6309; shot down and crashed at sea near St Lunaire.</i>	<i>26/6/41</i>
Franklin MH		S37	KIA 86 Sqn; Blenheim IV V6148; failed to return from operational flight.	9/4/41
Fricker DJ		SFTS19	KIA Beaufighter TF.X NT956 489 Sqn North Sea.	10/8/44
George AF		SFTS14	KIA 206 Sqn; Hudson IV AE612; aircraft failed to return from operational flight.	13/6/41
Gordon AL		SFTS16	KIA 206 Sqn; Hudson IV AE614; failed to return from an operational flight.	12/6/41



Coastal Command - Battle of the Atlantic (2)



Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Greville-Haygate CE		SFTS14	KIA 53 Sqn; Blenheim IV V6122 failed to return from Brest.	26/6/41
Griffiths WSP		SFTS18	KIA 217 Sqn; Beaufort Mk 1 W6501 failed to return from Donges, France	28/9/41
Grout A		SFTS17	KIA 29 Sqn; Beaufighter 1f R2141 crashed at Staplehurst	21/7/41
Halliday NAR	MiD	S29	KIA OC 461 Sqn; Sunderland II T9090 UT-B; Mount Batten-Brest; engine fire, ditched. Drowned.	12/8/42
Hicks RL		J39	KIA 22 Sqn; Beaufort I N1147; failed to return from operational flight over English Channel.	6/4/41
Harrison JR		SFTS17	KIA 217 Sqn; Beaufort AW6483, crashed at Breage near Helston, Cornwall on return from ops.	26/9/41
Hayston TL		SFTS14	KIA 206 Sqn; Hudson V AM588; aircraft failed to return from operational flight over Northern Ireland.	16/8/41
Lindsay EW		SFTS7	KIA Liberator GR.VI EV878 224 Sqn Channel.	12/8/44
Lothian L		SFTS14	KIA Beaufighter Ic T5220 235 Sqn	8/9/42
Lown JF		SFTS12	KIA Mosquito FB.VI HP922 248 Sqn.	31/12/44
Naylor R		SFTS14	KIA 502 Sqn; Whitley V Z6500 crashed at RAF Limavady on return from operational flight.	23/8/41
<i>Khan MM</i>		<i>SFTS22</i>	<i>KA 86 Sqn; Beaufort shot down over English Channel.</i>	<i>2/2/42</i>
<i>Lee M</i>		<i>SFTS17</i>	<i>KIA 217 Sqn; Beaufort I AW190; AAA over convoy off the coast of Holland.</i>	<i>9/12/41</i>
Mackey FA		SFTS19	KIA Hudson V AM718 500 Sqn Chosely Farm UK.	21/12/41
Maclean I		SFST21	Likely KIA 22 Squadron; Beaufort I W6486; missing believed killed; failed to return from ops.	25/3/41
Masters RD		SFTS7	KA 220 Sqn; Hudson I P5135 failed to return, presumed lost over sea.	4/12/40
Mayhew JC		J34	KIA 22 Sqn; Beaufort I AW221; shot down and crashed near Nantes.	2/12/41
<i>McClintock AN</i>		<i>SFTS17</i>	<i>KIA 53 Sqn; Hudson V AM560; missing believed killed; failed to return from ops Dutch coast.</i>	<i>11/4/42</i>
<i>Ogilvie JFT</i>		<i>SFTS13</i>	<i>KIA 21 Sqn; Blenheim IV V6372 YH-H; Watton-ASW; shot down by Me109s off Heligoland.</i>	<i>15/5/41</i>
Prescott TR		SFTS20	KIA Hudson III 269 Sqn LWT.	1/9/42
Pruden DH	DFC	SFTS24	KIA Halifax III PN402 502 Sqn Sea.	10/4/45
Robertson J		SFTS10	KIA Catalina IVa JX210 210 Sqn Shetlands.	25/3/44
Rogerson CF		SFTS17	KIA 59 Sqn; Hudson V AM704 TR-D failed to return from ops near Le Havre; Blenheim says "hit by flak".	3/10/41
Ruth WDB	DFC*; MiD	J37	KIA 201 Sqn; Sunderland III ML760; possibly shot down by flak from U-333 in North Atlantic.	12/6/44
Sharp AS		SFTS15	Possibly KIA Hudson IV AE614 206 Sqn North Sea.	12/6/41
Sherley-Price MH		SFTS19	KIA 59 Sqn; Hudson V AM740; failed to return from operational flight over the North Sea.	16/10/41
Tanner RL		SFTS7	KIA 206 Sqn; Hudson I T9304 crashed on return from operational flight.	21/4/41
Thomas PC		J39	KIA 240 Sqn; Catalina I AH536; aircraft crashed at Lough Erne on return from mission.	7/5/41
Turner RP		SFTS10	KIA 209 Sqn; Lerwick I L7263 aircraft failed to return from operational flight over Atlantic convoy.	24/2/41
Warburton GD		SFTS50	KIA Beaufighter TF.X NV187 254 Sqn Noord-Holland.	17/1/45
Zillessen WH		SFTS16	KIA 86 Sqn; Beaufort I AW205 shot down, crashed at sea at Hubergatt near Rottumeroog, Holland.	17/7/41



Coastal Command - Offensive Ops



Offensive Ops - Anti-Shipping Ops (1940 - 1945)

Up to the end of 1940, Coastal Command's Anti-shipping Operations (ASO) campaign against German seaborne trade in north-west European waters had claimed a direct attack on only six vessels, totalling 5,561 tons, and 14 others badly damaged. In exchange, 158 aircraft were shot down or lost to other causes; 26 for every enemy vessel. The failure of Coastal Command to acquire any tangible results prompted the Admiralty to complain to the Air Ministry on 5 November 1940. In December, it was agreed that 15 of the planned 100 new squadrons be given to Coastal Command. These were to be operational by 1941. By 1942, increased numbers of better aircraft and armament enabled the offensive capabilities of the Command to increase dramatically. The Bristol Beaufort solved medium-range operational problems but long-range strikes were beyond the type. Bomber Command's 2 Group took on ASO from March to October, but their Blenheims were not suitable. The answer lay with the Bristol Beaufighter. It offered a combination of speed, rugged endurance, and multi-role capability with a variety of different armament. It became operational in early 1942. It made an immediate impact. In May 1943, the de Havilland Mosquito joined the Command's strike wings and on 22 June they began operations with rockets. The ASO kill account achieved by Coastal Command aircraft is given in the tables below, but they came at an appalling cost to Coastal Command. The loss rate of aircrew engaged in these operations was in excess of 80%, considerably greater than the much publicised loss rate of Bomber Command, and was the highest loss rate (apart from the U-boat crews).

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Campbell K	VC	SFTS5	KIA 22 Sqn; Coastal Command Beaufort; hunting down Gneisenau off Brest.	6/4/41
Harding AGE		SFTS25	KIA Beaufighter T4827, 236 Squadron, engaged by enemy aircraft during operational flight over the North sea.	9/7/1942
Harries JA		J38	KIA 55 Sqn; Blenheim IV V6306; Anti-shipping ops.	1/10/41
Humphris JH		S34	KIA 276 Sqn; Anson I MG552; shot down by German flak over Dunkirk.	8/1/45
Mathewson TI		J36	KIA 86 Sqn; Beaufort BXG; Prinz Eugen, Scharnhorst and Gneisnau (Operation Fuller) Channel.	12/2/42
Pierpoint KJ		SFTS33	KIA Boston AL463 602 Squadron, aircraft accident, Middleton-on sea, Sussex.	28/8/42
Ridings AL		SFTS27	KIA 19 Sqn; Spitfire Vb W3644; Ramrod ops, Bostons to Morlaix; victim of JG2 south of Start Point.	23/6/42



Anson



No. 16 Group RAF success



Beaufort



No. 18 Group RAF success



Blenheim



No. 19 Group RAF success



Spitfire

Year	Ships sunk	Ships damaged	Tonnage sunk	Tonnage damaged
1940	2	8	2,860	32,176
1941	9	3	23,274	15,042
1942	13	5	27,139	17,559
1943	18	2	41,944	19,093
1944	99	6	80,105	15,449
1945	37	4	14,686	24,444

Year	Ships sunk	Ships damaged	Tonnage sunk	Tonnage damaged
1940	4	6	2,701	15,486
1941	16	15	19,659	29,685
1942	8	6	27,349	16,075
1943	10	2	33,083	1,785
1944	42	29	68,308	98,110
1945	67	32	116,743	120,493

Year	Ships sunk	Ships damaged	Tonnage sunk	Tonnage damaged
1940	0	0	0	0
1941	3	2	8,932	39,640
1942	5	9	942	48,478
1943	4	1	9,732	6,240
1944	29	4	34,779	13,699
1945	0	0	0	0



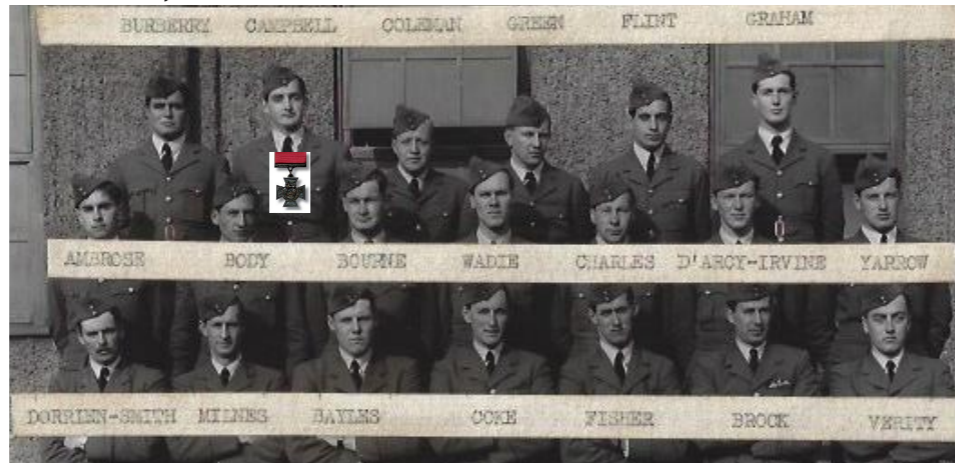
Flying Officer Kenneth Campbell VC

(21 April 1917 – 6 April 1941)

Fg Off Kenneth Campbell is one of four Cranwellians to have been awarded the Victoria Cross, the others being Wing Commanders IWB Rees (Assistant Commandant 1923-24) and HG Malcolm (a flight cadet of J36 Entry.), and Squadron Leader IW Bazalgette (of SFTS Course 30).

Cambell completed his flying training on No 5 Course at the Service Flying Training School at Cranwell in 1939. He completed flying training on 1 OTU before joining 22 Squadron in September 1940 where he quickly developed a reputation attacking enemy shipping and destroying enemy aircraft during the Battle of the Atlantic. On 6 April 1941, he was to encounter the Gneisenau moored in Brest Harbour.

The London Gazette citation recounts his outstanding bravery against all odds for which he was awarded the VC posthumously:



“The battle cruiser was secured alongside the wall on the north shore of the harbour, protected by a stone mole bending around it from the west. On rising ground behind the ship stood protective batteries of guns. Other batteries were clustered thickly round the two arms of land which encircle the outer harbour. In this outer harbour near the mole were moored three heavily armed anti-aircraft ships, guarding the battle cruiser. Even if an aircraft succeeded in penetrating these formidable defences, it would be almost impossible, after delivering a low-level attack, to avoid crashing into the rising ground beyond.

This was well known to Flying Officer Campbell who, despising the heavy odds, went cheerfully and resolutely to the task. He ran the gauntlet of the defences. Coming in at almost sea level, he passed the anti-aircraft ships at less than mast-height in the very mouths of their guns and skimming over the mole launched a torpedo at point-blank range. The battle cruiser was severely damaged below the water-line and was obliged to return to the dock whence she had come only the day before.

By pressing home his attack at close quarters in the face of withering fire on a course fraught with extreme peril, Flying Officer Campbell displayed valour of the highest order.”



At a small ceremony in his home town of Saltcoats in Ayrshire on 6 April 2000, a memorial plaque and bench were unveiled by his sister-in-law, and his 90-year-old brother handed over his VC to the safekeeping of the commanding officer of the present-day No. 22 Squadron. It is believed the VC was later transferred to the RAF College.





Coastal Command - Other Theatres



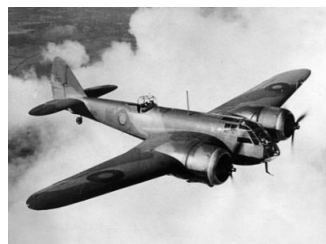
Other Theatres - The Mediterranean Offensive (Gibraltar)

Coastal Command played a limited part in the Mediterranean Theatre of Operations. 202 Squadron and 233 Squadron operated from Gibraltar, covering the Strait of Gibraltar and intercepting Axis submarines in transit from Europe to the Indian Ocean. The first credited sinking went to 202 Squadron's commanding officer Squadron Leader N.F Eagleton. His crew crippled the Italian submarine *Galileo Ferraris* on 25 October 1941, allowing an escorting destroyer from Convoy HG.75 to capture the crew. They were involved in the sinking of *U-74* and *U-447* on 2 May and 7 May 1943, respectively as part of AHQ Gibraltar, under command of Air Commodore S.P. Simpson



The **Mediterranean and Middle East Theatre** was a major theatre of operations during the Second World War. The vast size of the Mediterranean and Middle East theatre saw interconnected naval, land, and air campaigns fought for control of the Mediterranean, North Africa, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and Southern Europe. The fighting in this theatre lasted from 10 June 1940, when Italy entered the war on the side of Germany, until 2 May 1945 when all Axis forces in Italy surrendered. However, fighting would continue in Greece – where British troops had been dispatched to aid the Greek government – during the early stages of the Greek Civil War. To the left is a map showing the territories held by Allied (green), Axis (orange) and neutral (grey) powers at the outbreak of hostilities in the Mediterranean.

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date	Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Bettles KJ	DFC	SFTS31	KIA Halifax II JP294 148 Sqn Italy.	3/8/44	Lilian JCJ		J38	KIA 228 Sqn: Sunderland I T9048; crashed at Kalamata Bay, Greece.	25/4/41
Boardman HS		SFTS36	KIA Beaufighter VI ND314 153 Sqn Mediterranean.	7/8/44	MacGlashan PDK		SFTS39	KIA Baltimore V FW535 13 Sqn Italy.	23/8/44
Carter GW		SFTS39	KIA Boston III BZ375 18 Sqn Italy.	16/3/44	McLeod NJ		SFTS43	KIA Sunderland III W4004 10 RAAF Sqn Bay of Biscay.	17/5/43
Coggins WR		SFTS43	KIA Beaufighter Vif V8877 255 Sqn Italy	16/12/44	Magill HMD		SFTS10	KIA Liberator II AL565 178 Sqn Italy.	27/4/43
Day BJ		SFTS33	KIA Mosquito FB.VI HJ678 23 Sqn Mediterranean.	8/7/43	Mandeville GP		SFTS20	KIA 86 Sqn; Beaufort I X8928 force landed at sea between islands of Meis and Castelorinzo.	6/8/41
Dill-Russell BF		SFTS41	KIA Blenheim IV L8837 1 OADU Portugal.	15/9/43	Mercer RG		SFTS24	KIA Beaufort AW240, 217 Squadron, failed to return from an operational flight over the South Ionian Sea.	03/7/42
Gillham RW		SFTS33	KIA Boston BZ508 armed recce of Po Valley, presumed to be a/c seen to ditch on fire E Venice, FTR.	31/12/44	Newey AS		SFTS35	KIA Wellington VIII HX638 179 Sqn Mediterranean.	27/12/42
Hamer RT		SFTS27	KIA Albemarle GT.I P1444 296 Sqn Italy/Sicily.	13/7/43	Newton GRH		SFTS11	KIA 53 Sqn; Blenheim V5399 failed to return from PR sortie over Brest; victim to Bf109, St Renan.	14/3/41
Hillman DE		1 ATU	KIA Halifax II JP237 148 Sqn SOE Italy.	24/6/44	Reid J		SFTS13	Possibly KIA Catalina In FP232 210 Sqn Bay of Biscay.	13/6/43
Jones JBL		SFTS28	KIA Spitfire VIII JF451 241 Sqn exploded as he attempted to make a forced landing near Rieti, Italy	1943?	Smith R		SFTS11	Possibly KIA 53 Sqn; Hudson AE656; failed to return from Ops over the Bay of Biscay.	12/12/41
Lancaster HG		SFTS41	KIA Halifax II HR660 148 Sqn Italy.	3/3/44	Smith WB		SFTS32	KIA 1 OADU; Blenheim IV BA445; Portreath-Gibraltar; never arrived.	18/6/42
Lowe JC		A38	KIA 205 Sqn; Catalina IB FB255; : 'U' Ditched in Indian Ocean NFD. Crew (13).	11/6/43	Thomas C		SFTS20	Likely KIA 53 Sqn; Hudson V AE656; failed to return from ops over the Bay of Biscay.	12/12/41
					Tym WE		SFTS12	KIA 23 Sqn Malta	5/6/43



Blenheim



Beaufort



Catalina



Hudson



Sunderland



Coastal Command - Essential Support Ops



Essential Support Ops - Met, Rescue, Recce Ops (June 1940 - October 1944)

On 1 March 1941, Coastal Command assumed operational control of Bomber Command's 403, 404 and 405 Squadrons, re-designating them 1401 to 1406 flights; two more flights, 1407 and 1408 were sent to Iceland to assist with Meteorological operations. They operated Blenheims, Gladiators, Hurricanes and Spitfires. In 1943, long-range Halifax and Mosquito aircraft became available in increasing numbers. Coastal Command went on to cover 91 percent of the Allied MET flights between November 1943 and June 1944.

In January 1941, the Command set up operational control of all Air Sea Rescue missions employing Lysander, Walrus and later Hudsons (later to be replaced by Anson and Defiant aircraft). By June 1941, rescue from the seas had increased to 35 percent. Throughout 1941, the Command grew its ASR Fleet, inheriting 275 and 278 Squadrons and later creating 279 and 280 Squadrons. By the end of 1943, Coastal Command had rescued 1,684 aircrew out of 5,466 presumed to have ditched in the sea. On D-Day, 6 June 1944, 163 aircrew and 60 other personnel were rescued. During the month June 1944, 355 were saved by ASR units of Coastal Command. In all, 10,663 people were rescued by Coastal Command in ASR operations. Of this total, 5,721 were Allied aircrew, 277 enemy aircrew, and 4,665 non-aircrew.

Following the evacuation from Dunkirk, the Admiralty pressed its case for the need for coastal and sea reconnaissance. These reconnaissance operations were given to Coastal Command on 18 June 1940 and included the Interpretation Unit, which analysed photographic evidence. The organisation became the PRU (Photographic Reconnaissance Unit) and was administered by 16 Group, remaining under the operational control of Coastal Command. Notable recce ops conducted by Coastal Command included readiness for Operation *Sea Lion*, the search for the Kriegsmarine ships *Tirpitz*, *Gniesenau*, *Scharnhorst* and *Prince Eugen*, the location of the Luftwaffe *Wursburg* ground radar and of the V1/V2 sites at Peenemunde. Coastal Command flew Spitfires and Mosquitos for these recce ops.

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Bilderbeck A		SFTS5	KIA 224 Sqn; Hudson I N7263; failed to return from reconnaissance mission over Norwegian Coast;	9/12/40
Bulloch AAT	MiD	S34	KIA 220 Sqn; Hudson I N7283; recce flight over Norwegian coast; crashed North Sea.	24/4/40
Davis ESC	OBE; AFC; MiD	F22	KIA 204 Sqn; Sunderland I N9028; failed to return from recce flight over Trondheim Fjord, Norway.	21/7/40
Elgar CM		SFTS11	KIA 500 Sqn; Blemheim IV Z6036; SAR North Sea.	15/8/41
Halstead JL		SFTS6	KIA 220 Sqn; Hudson II T9366 failed to return from recce over Norwegian coast.	1/6/41
Lumsden MS		SFTS41	KIA Mosquito PR.XVI MM351 540 Sqn Germany.	11/11/44



Hudson



An airborne lifeboat rigged for sailing, in front of a Coastal Command Warwick with D-Day identification stripes.



Sunderland



Middle East & Mediterranean Commands



On 3 September 1939, RAF Middle East - under ACM Sir William Mitchell, AOC-in-C Middle East - comprised four separate commands: Egypt (designated Middle East), RAF Iraq, Mediterranean at Malta, and RAF Aden (8, 203, and 94 Squadrons). Mitchell handed over to AVM Sir Arthur Longmore in early May 1940; Longmore was College Commandant from 1929-1933. When Italy declared war in June 1940, Longmore had just 29 squadrons numbering less than 300 aircraft in the four commands detailed.

RAF Middle East Command was formed on 29 December 1941 following the re-designation of RAF Middle East. It was one of three British commands in the Middle East, the others being the British Army's Middle East Command and the Royal Navy's Mediterranean Fleet. On 15 February 1943, RAF Middle East Command became a major sub-command of the Mediterranean Air Command (MAC), the Allied formation that also included non-RAF units. MAC was disbanded in December 1943 and Middle East Command was absorbed into RAF Mediterranean and Middle East on 1 August 1945.

ACM Sir Arthur Tedder had been Churchill's default choice as AOC-in-C of RAF Middle East when his first choice, AVM Owen Boyd, was captured. But soon after Tedder assumed command in June 1941, he made the following statement that not only characterised his mission in the Middle East, but the organisation of the Mediterranean Air Command in early 1943 and nearly all future air forces:

"In my opinion, sea, land and air operations in the Middle East Theatre are now so closely inter-related that effective coordination will only be possible if the campaign is considered and controlled as a combined operation in the full sense of that term."



ACM Sir Arthur Longmore was the fourth Commandant of the RAF College (1929-1933) before becoming AOC-in-C Training Command and AOC-in-C RAF Middle East.



ACM Tedder was not a Cranwellianbut he knew a man who was. The Lord Trenchard speaking informally with Sir Arthur during World War II.

Our research suggests that 64 Cranwellians (16 flight cadets and an estimated 48 SFTS trained pilots) sacrificed their lives in combat as summarised in our 'Roll of Honour' presented on the last page of this tribute. These totals are based on an analysis of the 2006 RAF College Journal Roll of Honour, archived flight cadet and SFTS trainee records and the Middle East Command losses recorded in the Air81 database whose records beyond May 1942 have yet to be released. Any errors and omissions are regretted and will be rectified as verified data emerges.



Middle East Ops - Cranwellian Contribution (1)



Libya - North African Campaign (1940 - 1941)

When fighting commenced in North Africa in June 1940, the RAF's Air Headquarters Egypt immediately mounted bombing missions against Italian targets in Libya and helped repel the Italian offensive into Egypt. The RAF was initially under-strength and equipped with the obsolete Gladiator and Blenheim aircrafts until modern aircraft began to arrive in Egypt. In 1941, as Greece came under attack from Germany, units were diverted to Greece and, in Libya, German air and ground forces pushed the weakened British back.



Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Adams HWS		SFTS7	KIA 38 Sqn; Wellington CR 1033; over Libya.	14/4/41
Aldis JR	MiD	S36	KIA 208 Sqn; Hurricane 1 Z4364; shot down, enemy action near Damascus, Syria.	8/6/41
Barclay DP		J32	KIA 45 Sqn; Blenheim IV Z5898; shot down off coast of Libya.	28/4/41
Berry GH		SFTS32	KIA 18 Sqn; Blenheim V BA815 O; Blida-Op Bizerta; collided with BA725 over target, Cap Serrat.	17/11/42
Coke DA The Hon		SFTS5	ex-BoB; DFC; KIA 257 Sqn; Hurricane Z4833 enemy action near Acroma, Libya.	9/12/41
Cooper RJ	DFC	SFTS9	KIA 38 Sqn; Wellington Ic Z8736; crashed at sea near Derna, Libya.	26/11/41
De Freitas WAA	DFC	A33	KIA 70 Sqn; Wellington Ic Z8728; aircraft force landed near Bir El Garanis, Cyrenaica, enemy action.	20/12/41
Gethin JPD	DFC	S35	KIA 203 Sqn; Blenheim IV L9174; Israel and Palestine (including Gaza).	10/5/41
Gordon RH		SFTS5	KIA 148 Sqn; Wellington II Z8355; failed to return from ops over Gazala, Libya.	17/11/41
Johnson DV		J30	KIA 45 Sqn; Blenheim IV Z5898; shot down, aerial combat off coast of Libya.	28/4/41
Parkinson H		J37	KIA 70 Sqn; Wellington Ic T2987; shot down and crashed over Benina Aerodrome, Libya.	20/12/41
Standfast PH		SFTS16	KIA 105 Sqn; Blenheim DZ9604; aircraft blew up mid air, over north African coast.	15/8/41
Wheeler RH		SFTS11	KIA 37 Sqn; Wellington Ic T2512; crashed into the sea off Tobruk.	5/9/41
Winser FCD		SFTS12	KIA 148 Sqn; Wellington Ic T2746 crashed near Ismailia, Egypt, on return from ops over Sinai Desert.	7/7/41
Wren AD		SFTS22	KA 38 Sqn; Wellington Ic Z8736; crashed at sea near Derna, Libya.	26/11/41



Blenheim IV 45 Sqn



Hurricane Mk I of Middle East



Wellingtons of 38 Sqn



Middle East Ops - Cranwellian Contribution (2)



Tedder-Coningham Successes - Egypt, Libya & Western Desert (1942)

It was during the critical campaigns in Egypt and Libya during 1942 that ACM Sir Arthur Tedder, as AOC-in-C of RAF Middle East, successfully coordinated his *strategic, coastal, and tactical* air forces consisting primarily of 205 (Heavy Bomber) Group, 201 (Naval Co-operation) Group, and especially AVM Arthur Coningham's Air Headquarters (AHQ) Western Desert, respectively. The success of the Tedder-Coningham air interdiction during the desert war was the model upon which the Northwest African Air Forces were created at the Casablanca Conference in January 1943.



Tedder



Coningham



Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Barclay RGA		SFTS7	ex-BoB; KIA OC 238 Sqn; Spitfire; top cover patrol for 274 Sqn, Alamein; jumped by III/JG27 Bf109s.	17/7/42
Beckwith EA		SFTA36	KIA Hurricane IIb HV367 241 Sqn Tunisia.	6/1/43
Beet CH		SFTS23	KIA 252 Sqn; Beaufighter Ic T4833; failed to return from an operational flight north of Benghazi, Libya.	18/1/42
Brown JG		A40	KIA 148 Sqn; Wellington IC HX400; Kabrit-Op Tobruk; failed to return.	16/7/42
Charles GP	OBE	J27	KIA 208 Sqn; Hurricane I Z4864; enemy action, Antelat, Aerodrome, North Africa.	13/1/42
Churchman GF		SFTS37	KIA Mosquito TA139 144 MU Algeria	3/3/45
Crompton JA		SFTS6	KIA Beaufighter JL 625 shot down by anti-aircraft fire and had crashed into the sea near Ionian island of Zante	23/8/43
Davis HHG		SFTS44	KIA Wellington XIII HZ703 8 Sqn Middle East/Sea.	28/6/44
Edwards DH		SFTA 44	KIA Wellington ME887 621 Sqn Egypt.	21/12/44
Griffiths WSP		SFTS25	KIA Kittyhawk III FR263 112 Sqn Egypt.	26/10/42
Grisenthwaite E		SFTS33	KIA Wellington III HF678 70 Sqn Libya.	1/5/43
Holloway JW		SFTS24	KIA Wellington X HE537 70 Sqn N.Africa/Middle East (desert)	13/4/43
Hopkinson GFL		SFTS32	KIA Albemarle GT.I P1522 296 Sqn Tunisia.	8/7/43
Malcolm HG	VC	J36	KIA 18 Sqn; Blenheim V BA875; shot down Chouigui airfield, Tunisia; overwhelming odds.	4/12/42
March JR		SFTS32	KIA Wellington X HE537 70 Sqn N.Africa/Middle East (desert).	13/4/43

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Marshall A		SFTS32	KIA 40 Sqn; Wellington IC HF834 C; Luqa-Op Bizerta; failed to return from ops.	7/12/42
May FMV		S23	KIA 108 Sqn, 242 Wg; Liberator II AL511; missing believed killed Libya, but died as POW.	22/5/42
Milnes GE		SFTS5	KIA Hudson VI EW969 Comms Fit Iraq.	18/1/43
Rimmer SG		SFTS29	KIA 148 Sqn; Wellington IC T2985; Op Tobruk; crashed Shallufa.	7/7/42
Ross JS		SFTS34	KIA 272 Sqn; Beaufighter Ic T4838; failed to return from ops over Appolonia to Martuba Road, Libya.	7/2/42
Roe JRW		SFTS27	KIA Beaufighter 46 Sqn Egypt.	19/12/42
Scott FA		SFTS27	Possibly KIA 30 Sqn; Hurricane I Z4418; crashed at sea during convoy protection duty off the coast of Tobruk, Libya,	4/1/42
Shackleton FH		SFTS27	KIA Wellington II Z8592 104 Sqn shot down and crashed off the coast of Benghazi, Libya by enemy anti aircraft fire.	13/6/42
Sprague RA	DFC; MID	S26	KIA 47 Sqn; Beaufort I DE118; Egypt.	18/11/42
Temlett CB	DFC	S38	BoB; KIA 213 Sqn; Hurricane shot down over El Alamein by Me109's of I/JG27.	3/7/42
Thorne SJ		SFTS27	KIA 37 Sqn; Wellington IC Z8990; Op Naqb Abu Dweis, over Wadi Natrun, Egypt; engine fire over target; parachute failed.	3/7/42
Watson RJ		SFTS45	KIA Mosquito MM333 680 Sqn Palestine.	30/4/45
Watson RS		SFTS31	KIA Beaufighter VIc EL296 272 Sqn Palestine.	11/12/42
Young TA		SFTS30	KIA Blenheim V BA872 614 Sqn Algeria.	2/12/42



Beaufighter



Blenheim



Beaufighter



Beaufort



Hurricane



Liberator



Spitfire



Wellington



Hugh Gordon MALCOLM VC

TUESDAY, 27 APRIL, 1943

Air Ministry, 27th April, 1943.

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

The KING has been graciously pleased to confer the VICTORIA CROSS on the under-mentioned officer in recognition of most conspicuous bravery:—

Acting Wing Commander Hugh Gordon MALCOLM (33322) (deceased), No. 18 Squadron.

This officer commanded a squadron of light bombers in North Africa. Throughout his service in that theatre his leadership, skill and daring were of the highest order.

On 17th November, 1942, he was detailed to carry out a low-level formation attack on Bizerta airfield, taking advantage of cloud cover. Twenty miles from the target the sky became clear, but Wing Commander Malcolm carried on, knowing well the danger of proceeding without a fighter escort. Despite fierce opposition, all bombs were dropped within the airfield perimeter. A Junkers 52 and a Messerschmitt 109 were shot down; many dispersed enemy aircraft were raked by machine gun fire. Weather conditions became extremely unfavourable and as a result, two of his aircraft were lost by collision; another was forced down by enemy fighters. It was due to this officer's skilful and resolute leadership that the remaining aircraft returned safely to base.

On 28th November, 1942, he again led his squadron against Bizerta airfield which was bombed from a low altitude. The airfield on this occasion was heavily defended and intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire was met. Nevertheless, after his squadron had released their bombs, Wing Commander Malcolm led them back again and again to attack the airfield with machine gun fire.

These were typical of every sortie undertaken by this gallant officer; each attack was pressed to an effective conclusion how-

ever difficult the task and however formidable the opposition.

Finally, on 4th December, 1942, Wing Commander Malcolm, having been detailed to give close support to the First Army, received an urgent request to attack an enemy fighter airfield near Chouigui. Wing Commander Malcolm knew that to attack such an objective without a fighter escort—which could not be arranged in the time available—would be to court almost certain disaster; but believing the attack to be necessary for the success of the Army's operations, his duty was clear. He decided to attack. He took off with his squadron and reached the target unmolested, but when he had successfully attacked it, his squadron was intercepted by an overwhelming force of enemy fighters. Wing Commander Malcolm fought back, controlling his hard-pressed squadron and attempting to maintain formation. One by one his aircraft were shot down until only his own aircraft remained. In the end he, too, was shot down in flames.

Wing Commander Malcolm's last exploit was the finest example of the valour and unswerving devotion to duty which he constantly displayed.

Air Ministry, 27th April, 1943.

ROYAL AIR FORCE.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the following awards in recognition of gallantry displayed in flying operations against the enemy:—

Second Bar to Distinguished Flying Cross.

Acting Squadron Leader Lance WADDE, D.F.C. (68717), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, No. 145 Squadron.

This officer is the leader of a squadron which has achieved much success in recent operations. During March, 1943, the squadron destroyed 21 enemy aircraft, 4 of which were shot down by Squadron Leader Wade. By his great skill and daring, this officer has contributed materially to the high standard of operational efficiency of the squadron he commands. Squadron Leader Wade has destroyed 19 enemy aircraft.



Westland Lysander



Blenheim Vs of 18 Sqn

Born at Broughty Ferry, Dundee, Malcolm entered the Royal Air Force College Cranwell on 9 January 1936.

In January 1938, he joined 26 (Army Co-operation) squadron at Catterick. In May 1939, he suffered a serious head injury in a Westland Lysander crash. When the war started, Malcolm was serving with No 17 Training Group.

On 4 March 1941, he was promoted to Flight Lieutenant and was Air Liaison officer on General Bernard Montgomery's general staff.

By the end of 1941, he had risen to the rank of Squadron Leader and joined No 18 Squadron as a flight commander, flying the Bristol Blenheim based in Suffolk, UK.



Middle East Ops - Cranwellian Contribution (3)



Malta - Siege Of Malta (June 1940 - November 1942)

The opening of a new front in North Africa in June 1940 increased Malta's already considerable value. British air and sea forces based on the island could attack Axis ships transporting vital supplies and reinforcements from Europe; Churchill called the island an "unsinkable aircraft carrier". General Erwin Rommel, de facto field commander of Axis forces in North Africa, recognised its importance quickly. In May 1941, he warned that "Without Malta, the Axis will end by losing control of North Africa".

The Axis resolved to bomb or starve Malta into submission, by attacking its ports, towns, cities, and Allied shipping supplying the island. Malta was one of the most intensively bombed areas during the war. The *Luftwaffe* and the *Regia Aeronautica* (Italian Air Force) flew a total of 3,000 bombing raids, dropping 6,700 tons of bombs on the Grand Harbour area alone, over a period of two years in an effort to destroy RAF defences and the ports. Success would have made possible a combined German-Italian amphibious landing (Operation Herkules) supported by German airborne forces (*Fallschirmjäger*), but this did not happen. In the event, Allied convoys were able to supply and reinforce Malta, while the RAF defended its airspace, though at great cost in materiel and lives. In November 1942, the Axis lost the Second Battle of El Alamein, and the Allies landed forces in Vichy French Morocco and Algeria under Operation Torch. The Axis diverted their forces to the Battle of Tunis.

In December 1942, air and sea forces operating from Malta went over to the offensive. By May 1943, they had sunk 230 Axis ships in 164 days, the highest Allied sinking rate of the war. The Allied victory in Malta played a major role in the eventual Allied success in North Africa.



Service personnel and civilians clear bombing debris from Kingsway in Valletta in 1942

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Baker SR		SFTS24	KIA 18 Sqn; Blenheim MZ7652; failed to return to RAF Luqa, Malta from reconnaissance patrol.	7/1/42
Brighurst AW		SFTS35	KIA Wellington Ic AD593 221 Sqn Luqa	28/4/43
Craigie AP	DFC	SFTS8	KIA Wellington HX474 142 Sqn Malta	4/7/43
Jickling A		SFTS30	KIA Blenheim V BA785 13 Sqn LWT	18/12/42
Langley R		SFTS22	KIA Wellington DV419, 38 Squadron; failed to RTB rom operationPeiraesus, Greece.	4/5/42
Leaver CM		SFTS24	KIA Blenheim IV Z6044 14 Sqn Middle East.	13/6/42
Lundy MA		SFTS24	KIA Spitfire Vb EN954 229 Sqn Malta.	21/11/42
Olley PD		SFTS33	KIA Mosquito NF.II DZ237 23 Sqn Malta.	9/1/43
Riddell GHM		S38	KIA 179 Sqn; Wellington XIV MP722; Malta.	25/9/43
Ramson JL		SFTS22	KIA Boston IIIa 114 Sqn LWT Malta.	18/3/44
Rowbotham WD		SFTS22	KIA 39 Sqn; Beaufort; missing believed killed; aircraft failed to return from ops over Crete.	1/12/41

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Sanderson J		SFTS19	KIA Catalina In FP153 202 Sqn Mediterranean	20/11/42
Stephenson IR		SFTS5	ex-BoB; KIA 153 Sqn; Beaufighter VI ND 209 failed to return; interception mission off Algerian coast.	26/11/43
Styles HM	DSO; MiD	J33	KIA Gibraltar; Casualty List 195. CWGC cites 233 Sqn and buried in Malta. Probably flying a Hudson VI.	1/11/42
Strutt IC	DFC	SFTS17	KIA Wellington II W5401 104 Sqn LWT	6/1/43
Sunley FJ		SFTS22	KIA, killed whilst waiting to board Wellington Ic X9907 of 40 Sqn, which was destroyed in an air raid on Luqa.	18/12/41
Underwood PL	DFC	SFTS16	KIA Beaufighter VIc X8030 227 Sqn Mediterranean	14/10/42
Wayland JS		SFTS39	KA Spitfire VIII JF326 241 Sqn Malta.	17/3/44
White RD		SFTS31	KIA Wellington Ic DV484 70 Sqn Italy.	30/1/43
Willis JD		S37	KIA 42 Sqn; Wellington IC T2545; Malta (but not based at Malta, possibly en route to Ceylon via Malta).	28/8/42
Yaxley RG	DSO; MC; DFC	S32	KIA 1 OADU/272 Sqn: Hudson VI FK386; based at Luqa.	3/6/43



Hudson VI over Egypt



En-route to Ceylon



Wellington Ic

179 Sqn Wellington XIV



Beaufighter VI



Far East Command - the Cranwellian Contribution



The former Royal Air Force Far East Air Force, more simply known as RAF Far East Air Force, was the Command organisation that controlled all Royal Air Force assets in the east of Asia (Far East). It was originally formed as Air Command, South East Asia in 1943 during the Second World War.

The first organisation dedicated to this task was formed in Singapore in 1930 as Royal Air Force Singapore. This was upgraded to Headquarters Air Force Far East Command in 1933. During the Second World War, when Malaya (31 January 1942), Singapore (15 February 1942), Burma (May 1942) and Hong Kong (25 December 1941) were overrun by the Japanese, the command retreated to India and was renamed Air Headquarters Bengal.

When Supreme Allied Commander Lord Louis Mountbatten assumed control of South East Asia Command (SEAC), the air element was initially called South East Asia Air Command, but became Air Command, South East Asia (ACSEA) on 30 December 1943. On 1 July 1944, ACSEA comprised RAF Groups 222, 225 and 229, and Eastern Air Command, itself being made up of the Strategic Air Force (comprising 7th Bombardment Group USAAF and 231 Group RAF).

The war in the Far East, which started with the surprise attack on Pearl Harbour on 7 in December 1941, would see the seemingly invincible Japanese navy, army and air force overrun much of South-East Asia in the space of just six months. The British-Indian forces in Burma were to be pushed back to the very borders of India. From this perilous position, however, the Allied forces would defeat the attempt in 1944 by the Japanese army to invade Eastern India itself and by mid-1945 would recapture Burma and take the surrender of their erstwhile enemy across South-East Asia.

Our research suggests that seven Cranwellian flight cadets lost their lives in combat, as summarised in our 'Roll of Honour' presented on the last page of this tribute; to date, we have only been able to establish 14 aircrew trained on SFTS courses at Cranwell were lost on operations in the Far East. These totals are based on an analysis of the 2006 RAF College Journal Roll of Honour, archived flight cadet and SFTS trainee records and the Middle East Command losses recorded in the Air81 database whose records beyond May 1942 have yet to be released. Any errors and omissions are regretted and will be rectified as verified data emerges.



Far East Ops - Cranwellian Contribution (1)



Retreat - Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong & Burma (1942)

Prior to the commencement of hostilities, the Allies in Malaya and Singapore had four fighter squadrons: 21 and 453 RAAF, 243 RAF, and 488 RNZAF; they were equipped with the underpowered Brewster Buffalo B-399E. The remaining offensive aircraft consisted of four RAF squadrons of Bristol Blenheim I and IV light bombers (27, 34, 60, 62 Squadrons), two RAAF squadrons (1 and 8) of Lockheed Hudsons, and two RAF squadrons of the obsolete Vickers Vildebeest torpedo bombers (36 and 100). There were also two PBY Catalina flying boats of 205 Squadron RAF and three Catalinas from the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army Air Force at Singapore. Beset with technical problems, inexperienced aircrew and an insurgent Japanese intelligence network, this force was unable to defend Malaya from the Japanese forces.

The speed of the Japanese advance meant that on 9 December 1941, two days after the attack was launched, all but two allied squadrons were withdrawn to Singapore. This was the last line of defence, to defend the naval base, to enable reinforcements to come in by sea. By mid-January, the RAF had only 56 operational fighters left spread across five squadrons. Warning radar stations being overrun, the remaining force that now included some imported and hastily assembled Hurricanes was unable to halt the Japanese advance.

On the same morning as the attack on Pearl Harbor, forces of the Empire of Japan attacked the British Crown colony of Hong Kong. The Hong Kong garrison consisted of British, Indian and Canadian units, also the Auxiliary Defence Units and Hong Kong Voluntary Defence Corps; the RAF possessed only two Supermarine Walrus amphibious aircraft and three out-dated Vickers Vildebeest torpedo-reconnaissance bombers, flown and serviced by seven officers and 108 airmen. Against overwhelming odds, within a week the defenders abandoned the mainland and less than two weeks later, with their position on the island untenable, the colony surrendered.

The Burma Campaign lasted from 14 December 1941 till 13 September 1945 (11 days after VJ Day). Allied forces suffered a series of setbacks throughout 1942/3 before the tide turned in 1944.



Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Ault K		J35	KIA 11 Sqn; Blenheim IV V5992; Ratmalana-air combat; crashed Trincomalee, Ceylon.	9/4/42
Bonn PM		SFTS18	KIA 62 Sqn; Hudson III AE493; shot down and crashed near Buitenzorg, Java; died of injuries.	21/2/42
Chambers RA		SFTS44	KIA Beaufighter XLZ383 211 Sqn Bhatpara, India	17/4/44
Charman PJ		SFTS40	KIA Vengeance I AN991 110 Sqn Kumbhirgram.	2/1/44
Davis EGM		SFTS30	KIA Dakota I FD802 31 Sqn Burma.	6/1/44
Flamer-Caldera IS		SFTS41	KIA Hurricane II BN782 135 Sqn Minneriya, Ceylon.	23/3/44
Garrard P	DFC; MID	A40	KIA 59 Sqn; believed captured by the Japanese; Sumatra. Probably flying a Hudson III.	25/3/42
Ireland RH		SFTS37	KIA Hurricane IIC LB862 11 Sqn Sinthe, Burma.	20/4/45
Jewell HC		SFTS24	KIA Vengeance IA EZ879 45 Sqn Kumbhirgram	27/1/44

Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
Lockhart J		SFTS6	KA 258 Sqn; Hurricane Mk 1 Z4227 shot down by enemy action over Colombo harbour, Ceylon	5/4/42
Robinson JS		SFTS17	KIA 62 Sqn; Hudson AE592; failed to return from ops over Bangka Strait, Indonesia.	14/2/42
Rowland ITBT	MID	J35	KIA 100 Sqn Vildebeest III; Far East.	26/1/42
Steedman EB	MID*	J24	Died Java PoW camp; reports of being shot for inciting disobedience to Japanese orders.	17/5/42
Waters WT DeR	DFC	SFTS19	KIA Hudson AE602, 62 Squadron; aircraft crashed near RAF Sembawang, Singapore on return from an operational flight,	26/1/42.
Webb RA		SFTS14	KIA shot down, aerial combat near Khota Bharu, Malaya, Blenheim L4829, 60 Squadron,	8/12/41
Whistondale GF		J25	KIA CO Kalidjati; missing believed killed, enemy action at Kalidjati Aerodrome, Java;	1/3/42
Wilcock CP		SFTS26	KIA Hudson IIIa FH293 353 Sqn India.	2/1/43
Wilkins JT	MID	S35	KIA 100 Sqn; Vildebeest K6377; Indonesia	1/3/42
Wilkins SP		SFTS17	KIA 2015 Sqn; Catalina I W8409; aircraft FTR from ops over Singora Railway Station, Thailand.	12/1/42
Wilson S		SFTS27	KIA Dakota III FZ597 353 Sqn India.	4/8/44





Far East Ops - Cranwellian Contribution (2)



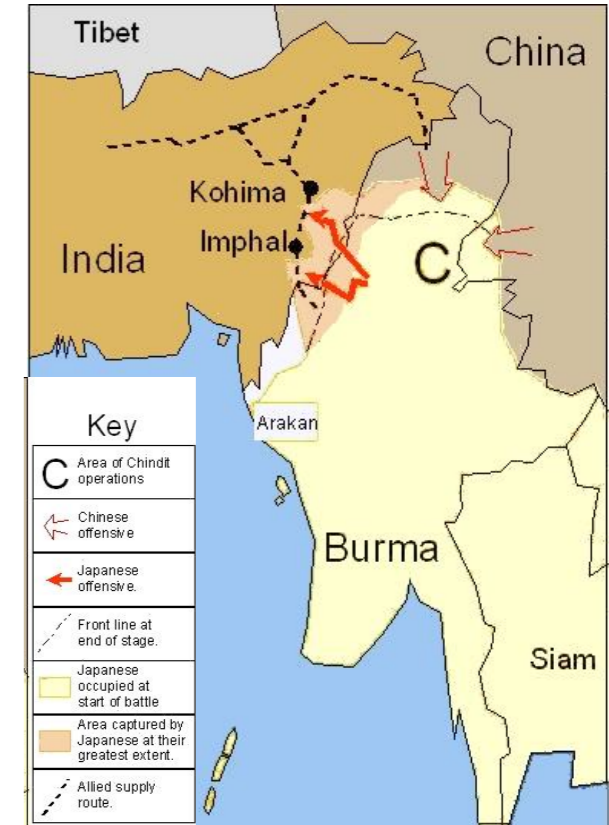
Fight Back - The Burma Campaign (14 December 1940 - 13 September 1945)

From December 1943 to November 1944, the strategic balance of the Burma campaign shifted decisively. Improvements in Allied leadership, training and logistics, together with greater firepower and growing Allied air superiority, gave Allied forces a confidence they had previously lacked. In the Arakan, XV Indian Corps withstood, and then broke, a Japanese counterstrike, while the Japanese invasion of India resulted in unbearably heavy losses and the ejection of the Japanese back beyond the Chindwin River.

The Allies launched a series of offensive operations into Burma during late 1944 and the first half of 1945. The major effort was intended to be by American-trained Chinese troops of Northern Combat Area Command (NCAC) - "the Northern Front" - under General Joseph Stilwell, to cover the construction of the Ledo Road. Under the British Fourteenth Army, the Indian XV Corps prepared to renew the advance in Arakan province - "the Southern Front" - while IV Corps launched a tentative advance from Imphal in the centre of the long front - "the Central Front" - to distract Japanese attention from the other offensives.

A Cranwell cadet from 1923-24, Air Commodore the Earl of Bandon commanded 224 Group between 1944-45, fighting against the Japanese in the Arakan sector to drive them out of Burma. As AOC, he very unofficially continued to fly on operational sorties, removing his air commodore rank badges and flying instead in a flying officer's uniform.

Following the "Race for Rangoon" and Operation Dracula - the amphibious assault on and capture of Rangoon - the Japanese attempted a disastrous breakout to rejoin the Burma Area Army and were driven back, leaving the way open for the Allied Forces to move on and retake Malaya, under Operation Zipper. The dropping of the atomic bombs forestalled this operation, but it was undertaken post-war as the quickest way of getting occupation troops into Malaya.



Casualty	Decorations	Entry	Description	Date
More JWC	OBE; DFC	S28	Ex BoB; KIA; SASO Far East; aircraft shot down, reported to be a 615 Sqn Hurricane (RAF Commands database) or more likely a 615 Sqn Spitfire VIII (James J Halley) hit by ground fire whilst en route Maungdaw to brief crews for an attack on Prome; taken POW; POW boat from Singapore to Japan sunk by allied forces. Gp Capt More was last seen on a raft.	12/9/44



Gp Capt JWC More






Churchill addresses 615 Sqn



Cranwellian Air Commodore the Earl of Bandon, Air Officer Commanding 224 Group, sits to the right of Keith Park at Kyaukpyu landing ground, Burma

Coastal & Overseas Commands - Cranwellians KIA

These totals will be updated as more verified data becomes available

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	Totals
 Coastal Command	0	17	43	20	12	16	4	112
 Middle East Command	0	0	16	27	15	4	2	64
 Far East Command	0	0	1	11	1	7	1	21