

RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

“WWII SFTS VVIPs”



A Tribute to College SFTS Pilots Who Excelled

In its electronic form, this document contains underlined, hypertext links to additional material, including alternative source data and archived video/audio clips.
[To open these links in a separate browser tab and thus not lose your place in this e-document, press control+click (Windows) or command+click (Apple Mac) on the underlined word or image]

INTRODUCTION

The RAF College has a proud and unrivalled history as the world's oldest military air academy, not least in the contribution made by its graduates during WWII.

Pre-WWII College Flight Cadets such as Bader, Tait and Townsend went onto distinguished careers and their stories widely published. However, when the College Flight Cadet training system was suspended at the outbreak of war, it is not generally known that the College - as the College SFTS, later 17 FTS - continued to deliver basic and advanced training to pilots who went on to distinguish themselves in operations with Fighter, Bomber, Coastal and the Overseas Commands. Their stories are seldom told, at least not as a chapter in the history of the RAF College.

This album attempts to redress that shortfall and focuses on a number of College SFTS graduates who distinguished themselves in combat and/or went on to excel in their RAF Careers. This is not an exclusive list, but an overdue recognition of the courage demonstrated by over 3,000 pilots who underwent training at the College and went onto serve the allied forces during WWII.

There are underlined hypertext links throughout this album, which enable access to information held elsewhere on the internet. This "linked information" can be accessed without losing your place in this album, simply by clicking on the underlined text. **For Apple Mac users, hover over the underlined text and press COMMAND+CLICK; for Windows users, press CONTROL+CLICK.** So doing, a new tab will open in your internet browser, to the right of your current tab, where you will find the supplementary information. To return to this album merely select the original tab where you will find the table still open at the page you left.

If you have any queries, send an email to ibms520@gmail.com using the Contact Us tab on this CHS website.

CLICK ON SURNAME TO REVEAL BIOGRAPHIES

<u>Bazalgette</u>	<u>Campbell</u>	<u>Curry</u>	<u>Hopgood</u>
<u>Shannon</u>	<u>Barclay & Davis</u>	<u>Fulford</u>	<u>Maskell</u>
<u>Page</u>	<u>Humphrey</u>	<u>Lawson</u>	<u>Hughes</u>

Ian Willoughby BAZALGETTE VC



VC Citation (London Gazette):

"On 4th August, 1944, Squadron Leader Bazalgette was 'Master Bomber' of a Pathfinder Squadron detailed to mark an important target at Trossy-St. Maximin for the main bomber force. When nearing the target his Lancaster came under heavy anti-aircraft fire. Both starboard engines were put out of action and serious fires broke out in the fuselage, and the starboard main-plane. The bomb aimer was badly wounded. As the deputy master bomber had already been shot down, the success of the attack depended on Squadron Leader Bazalgette, and this he knew. Despite the appalling conditions in his burning aircraft, he pressed on gallantly to the target, marking and bombing it accurately. That the attack was successful was due to his magnificent effort. After the bombs had been dropped the Lancaster dived, practically out of control. By expert airmanship and great exertion Squadron Leader Bazalgette regained control. But the port inner engine then failed and the whole of the starboard mainplane became a mass of flames. Squadron Leader Bazalgette fought bravely to bring his aircraft and crew to safety. The mid-upper gunner was overcome by fumes. Squadron Leader Bazalgette then ordered those of his crew who were able to leave by parachute to do so. He remained at the controls and attempted the almost hopeless task of landing the crippled and blazing aircraft in a last effort to save the wounded bomb aimer and helpless gunner. With superb skill, and taking great care to avoid a small French village nearby, he brought the aircraft down safely. Unfortunately, it then exploded and this gallant officer and his two comrades perished. His heroic sacrifice marked the climax of a long career of operations against the enemy. He always chose the more dangerous and exacting roles. His courage and devotion to duty were beyond praise."



Born	19 October 1918 Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Died	4 August 1944 (aged 25) Senantes, France
Buried	Église Saint-Martin, Senantes
Service/branch	British Army (1940–41) Royal Air Force (1941–44)
Years of service	1940–1944
Rank	Squadron Leader
Unit	No. 115 Squadron RAF No. 635 Squadron RAF
Battles/wars	Second World War <ul style="list-style-type: none"> European air campaign † <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Battle of the Ruhr ○ Battle of Berlin
Awards	Victoria Cross Distinguished Flying Cross



Kenneth CAMPBELL VC



Kenneth Campbell VC

b. 21/04/1917 Saltcoats, Scotland. d. 06/04/1941 Brest, France.

Kenneth "Ken" Campbell (1917-1941) was born on 21st April 1917 at Saltcoats, Ayrshire, Scotland, the youngest of a family of six children, and attended Sedbergh School before gaining entrance to Clare College, Cambridge, to study for a degree in Chemistry. Joining the Cambridge University Air Squadron, he had been commissioned as a Pilot Officer in the RAF Volunteer Reserve on 23rd August 1938, and eventually mobilised for RAF service on 25th September 1939.

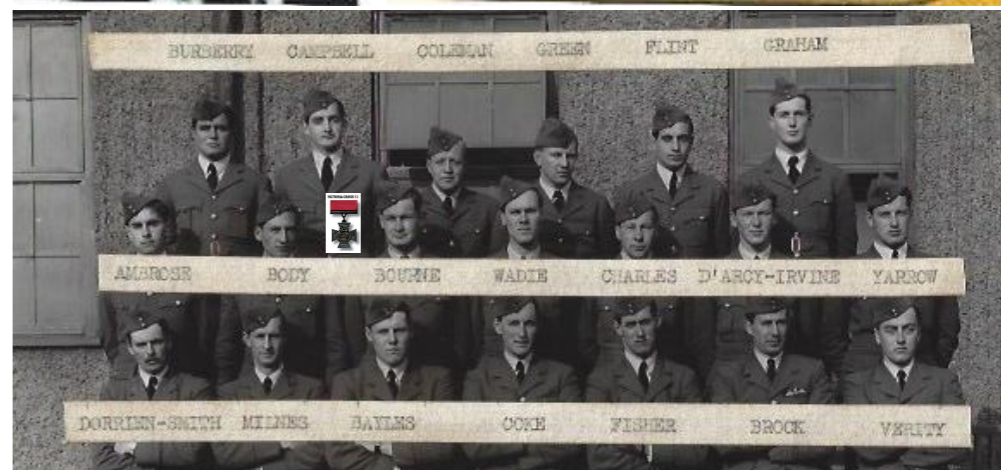
A brief course of Service training at RAF Cranwell commenced on 21st October 1939 and was followed by a move to RAF Abbotsinch on 20th April 1940; by which time Campbell had been promoted to Flying Officer. On 8th June, he completed his training with a posting to No 1 OTU; and on 28th September 1940 joined 22 Squadron to start his operational career. The non-stop Battle of the Atlantic then being waged saw him quickly introduced to the role of 22 Squadron; attacking enemy shipping at every opportunity.

On 6th April 1941, over Brest Harbour, France, Flying Officer Campbell attacked the German battleship Gneisenau. He flew his Bristol Beaufort through the gauntlet of concentrated anti-aircraft fire from about 1000 weapons of all calibers and launched a torpedo at a height of 50 feet (15 m).

The attack had to be made with absolute precision: the Gneisenau was moored only some 500 yards (460 m) away from a mole in Brest's inner harbour. For the attack to be effective Campbell would have to time the release to drop the torpedo close to the side of the mole. That Campbell managed to launch his torpedo accurately is testament to his courage and determination. The ship was severely damaged below the waterline and was obliged to return to the dock whence she had come only the day before, she was out of action for 6 months, which thus allowed allied shipping to cross the Atlantic without any threat.

Generally, once a torpedo was dropped an escape was made by low-level jinking at full throttle. Because of rising ground surrounding the harbour Flying Officer Campbell's Beaufort was forced into a steep banking turn, revealing its full silhouette to the gunners. The aircraft met a withering wall of flak and crashed into the harbour.

When the aircraft was later salvaged the Germans found the body of "Jimmy" Scott, the Canadian navigator, in the pilot's seat, normally occupied by Campbell. All four crew members were buried by the Germans in the grave of honour in Brest Cemetery. Reports of Ken Campbell's devotion to his designated task, and the courage he showed in completing his attack in the face of unnerving odds filtered through to England from local French patriots; and on 13th March 1942 Campbell was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross, which his parents received from King George VI at an investiture on 23rd June 1943. A memorial was erected in his memory at Sedbergh where he spent his schooldays.



SFTS Course 5 Sqn 2

OPERATIONS RECORD BOOK		
of this form in K.R. and A.C.I. P. Full Service Pocket Book.		No. of pages us
of (Unit or Formation).....		Station Headquarters.....CRANWELL.
Date.	Time.	Summary of Events.
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.
2.9.39.		Lighting restrictions introduced, and guards posted at entrances to the Station.
3.9.39.		Receipt of message stating that War has been declared on Germany by the Allied Powers. Group Captain Strugnell, MC., posted to Command (A/Care Post). Royal Air Force College becomes a Flying Training School, and is self-controlled.

Peter Talcott CURRY GM



Citation for George Medal:

**Pilot Officer Peter Talcott Curry (84314), RAFVR
901077 Leading Aircraftman Harry Robert Garner, RAF.**

This officer and airman displayed courageous conduct when an aircraft, with a full load of bombs, crashed and burst into flames one night in May, 1941. They succeeded in extricating two of the crew who were trapped in the aircraft, while the bombs were actually exploding.

(London Gazette – 11 July 1941)



Numb. 35217

3987



The London Gazette

Published by Authority

Registered as a newspaper

**

For Table of Contents see last page

FRIDAY 11 JULY, 1941

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD.

St. James's Palace, S.W.1.

11th July, 1941.

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the George Medal to:—
Pilot Officer Peter Talcott Curry (84314), Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve.
901077 Leading Aircraftman Harry Robert Garner, Royal Air Force.

This officer and airman displayed courageous conduct when an aircraft, with a full load of bombs, crashed and burst into flames one night in May, 1941. They succeeded in extricating two of the crew who were trapped in the aircraft, while the bombs were actually exploding.

clear of the aircraft. Sergeant Pacey took a considerable risk in re-entering the blazing aircraft and set a splendid example of courage and self-sacrifice.

968365 Sergeant Dudley Farquhar Allen, G.M., Royal Air Force.

One evening in April an enemy aircraft dropped incendiary bombs on an aerodrome. One bomb fell into the cockpit of an aircraft on the ground and lodged beneath the seat and under the front of the fuselage petrol tank in a position which prevented its removal. Sergeant Allen attempted to extinguish the incendiary but his efforts were unavailing owing to its position. He therefore climbed into the cockpit and, although fully aware that the fuel tank was likely to explode at any moment, he plied fire extinguishers against the side of the tank and put soil on the incendiary until it was finally extinguished. At the time a large number of

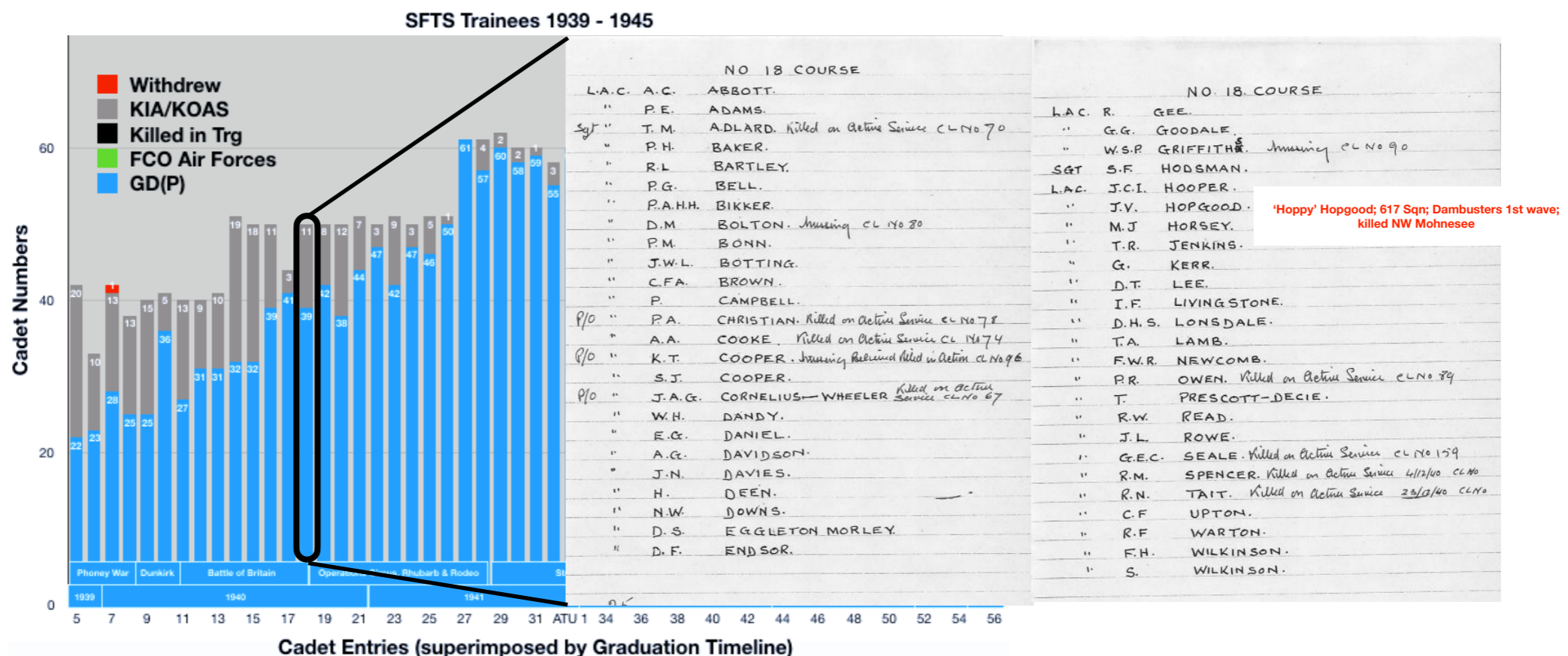
John Vere 'Hoppy' HOPGOOD DFC* (617 Sqn)



Having joined the Volunteer Reserve in 1940, John Vere Hopgood undertook flying training on No 18 Course, SFTS Cranwell in 1941 and was commissioned in 1942. As a Flight Lieutenant, 'Hoppy' was awarded a DFC in October 1942 after completing 47 missions; he was awarded a bar to the DFC in 1943. He served on 50 Sqn, 106 Sqn and the immortalised 617 (Dambusters) Sqn. Then the newly appointed OC 106 Sqn in 1942, Wg Cdr Guy Gibson recorded his first impressions:

He was a fair-haired chap about medium height, rather good looking, except for one prominent tooth. He was a serious fellow at heart..... As soon as I saw him I thought, "What an ideal squadron type. I like that chap"

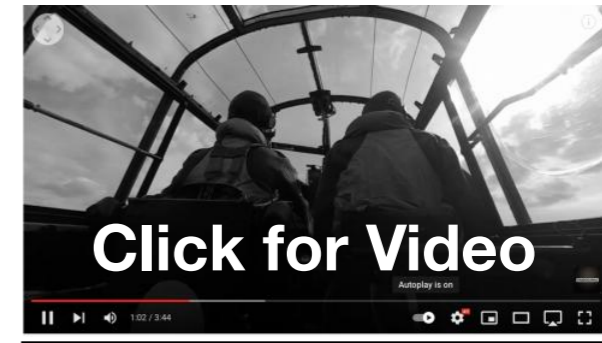
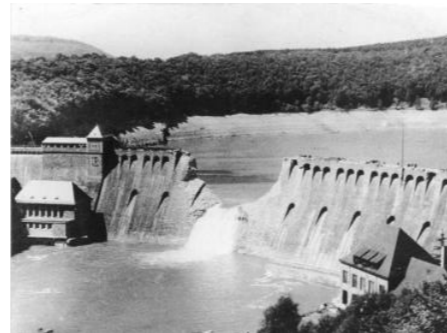
Unsurprisingly, Gibson was to select Hoppy as his Deputy on the Mohne Dam attack. Outbound to the Mohne, his aircraft AJ-M (M for Mother) was hit by flak, injuring Hoppy, his gunners Burcher and Gregory (possibly fatally). The damaged aircraft reached the dam where they attacked at 00:32, ten minutes after Gibson. However, they were struck again by anti-aircraft fire and their bomb was released too late. It bounced over the dam and exploded on a power station on the other side. The aircraft was fatally damaged at this point and Hopgood remained at the controls, gaining height to allow his crew to bail out. AJ-M crashed in a field near Ostönnen, 6 kilometres (3.72 miles) from the dam. Hopgood's body rests in the care of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission at Rheinberg War Cemetery (Coll. grave 17. E. 2-6).



David John 'Dave' Shannon DSO* DFC* (617 Sqn)



Courtesy of Australian War Memorial



An Australian member of the elite 'Dam Busters' squadron. Shannon was just 20 when he took part in the famous bombing raid on the German dams in the Ruhr Valley.

No. 617 Squadron RAF was to make a daring raid using special bombs on German dams supplying the Ruhr industrial works, and Shannon was one of four Australian pilots involved. The operation took place on 16 May 1943. Shannon saw the Möhne Dam successfully breached and so was ordered to attack the Eder Dam, a difficult task because of the surrounding hills. For his part he was awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO), while the squadron soon became famous as The Dam Busters .

Shannon had the unblemished look of a teenager [and] unruly blonde hair . He failed to conceal his youthful look with a wispy moustache. When introduced to the King, an event which coincided with his 21st birthday, he was told: You seem a well preserved twenty-one, Shannon.

The squadron continued its specialist role throughout the war and Shannon would be regarded as one of the pilots who were its backbone. He received the second of his two Distinguished Flying Crosses for an attack on the Dortmund Ems Canal, and another DSO for an attack on Munich in April 1944. Not long after he left No. 617 Squadron, having completed 69 operations, he chose to drop rank to resume operational flying in Transport Command

After the war Shannon remained in Britain, becoming a business executive and travelling widely. He died only a few weeks before a reunion planned for the 50th anniversary of the Dam Busters raid.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

UK2640

Service number	407729
Ranks Held	Flight Lieutenant, Flying Officer, Squadron Leader
Birth Date	27 May 1922
Birth Place	Australia: South Australia, Adelaide, Unley Park
Death Date	1993
Final Rank	Squadron Leader
Service	Royal Australian Air Force
Units	<ul style="list-style-type: none">No. 106 Squadron (RAF)No. 617 Squadron (RAF)

SFTS Battle Of Britain 'Air Aces' - Barclay & Davis



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



Born at Upper Norwood, 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 via 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 Barclay, died serving with the 2nd Battalion, Royal Norfolk Regiment. He is buried in Kohima War Cemetery, India.



Davis, Charles Trevor
(A39 Entry, B Squadron)



238

Charles Trevor Davis was born in Cardiff and educated at Whitby County School (although the CWGC has his parents being of Grindleford, Derbyshire, and his name is on the war memorial there).

He entered the RAF College on 27 April 1939 as a Flight Cadet. The advent of war caused the course to be shortened, but he was selected to complete his flying training with Course 6 of the newly formed SFTS at Cranwell and, on its completion in May 1940, Davis was granted a permanent commission.

He joined 238 Squadron in June 1940.

On 13 July, Davis shared in the destruction of two Me110's and a Do17, on the 20th he shared an Me109, on the 21st shared an Me110 and a Do17 and on the 27th destroyed a Ju87. He claimed an Me110 destroyed on 8 August, two Me110's on the 13th, damaged a Ju88 on 12 September, probably destroyed an He111 on the 15th and damaged a Ju88 on the 21st.

He was awarded the DFC (gazetted 25th October 1940).

Davis was killed on 26 March 1941 when he flew into a hill coming down through cloud near Winchester. He was 20 years old.

He was cremated at St John's Crematorium, Woking, Surrey.

SFTS 'Film Star' - David Fulford



Fulford, David
(A40 War Entry, not S39)



David Fulford was from Dinnington, Yorkshire, and was educated at King Edward VII School, Sheffield. He had been accepted for a flight cadetship at the RAF College, but at the outbreak of war the scheme was suspended and Fulford became an Airman u/t Pilot in the RAFVR in October 1939 (905533). (College records show him having undertaken a shortened course of officer training on A40 Entry, which graduated on 20 July 1940.)

He did carry out his elementary flying training at 9 EFTS Ansty from October 1939 to April 1940, when most historians concur he went to Cranwell for intermediate and advanced training. Archived records at the RAF College show him on SFTS Course 9 (Squadron 1). He passed out as a Sergeant-Pilot, instead of receiving a permanent commission, as he may well have done if his cadetship had fully materialised and his officer training been completed.

In August 1940, Fulford joined 64 Squadron at Leconfield and flew his first operational sortie on 6 September. He moved to 19 Squadron at Fowlmere on 25 September. He shared a Bf110 on 15 November and shared a Bf109 on the 28th.

Commissioned in March 1941, Fulford was posted to 118 Squadron at Ibsley. On 17 July, Fulford obtained a probable Bf109 and he destroyed Bf109s on 6 August and 13 October.

He was awarded the DFC (gazetted 4 November 1941). When 118 Squadron took part in the film *First of the Few*, Fulford appeared as himself, with other Battle of Britain pilots.

In early 1942, he was posted to 261 Squadron in Ceylon, as a Flight Commander. He was in action against the Japanese on 9 April, when they launched their big carrier-borne air attack on Colombo. Fulford shot down two Zeros in the ensuing action.

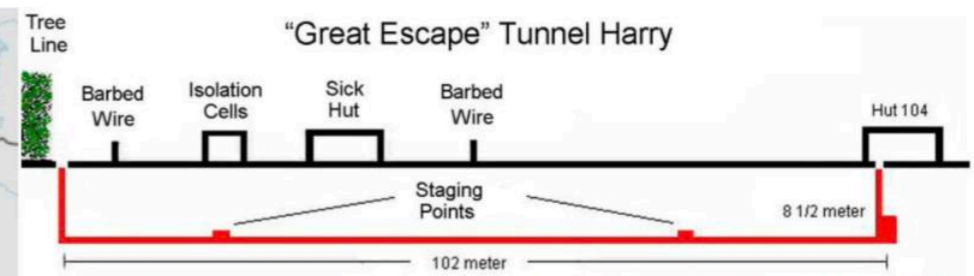
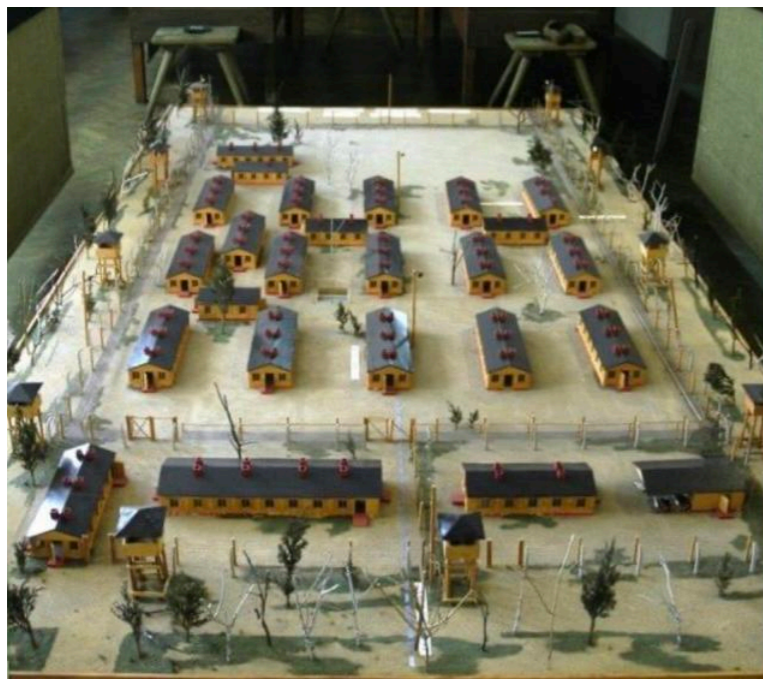
Posted back to the UK in June 1942, he joined 611 Squadron at Redhill, as a Flying Officer. He was killed on 2 November 1942, when his Spitfire was shot down by Fw 190s over le Touquet.

Fulford is remembered on the Runnymede Memorial, panel 67. A plaque in his memory was unveiled at King Edward VII School on 10 November 2000.



First SFTS PoW Germany - Eric Cyril MASKELL

Cadet Details from PDF Records	Dates (Start- Finish)	Course	No	Links to Special Features Albums Command+Click (Apple) Control+Click (Windows) On Underlined Text	External Links to Supplementary Information Command+Click (Apple) Control+Click (Windows) On Underlined Text	Author's Notes <i>(Text in Italics indicate a degree of uncertainty)</i>
Maskell EC	21 Sep 40 - 4 Dec 40	SFTS	16	Cranwellian POWs: https://www.cranwellian-ian.com/ewExternalFiles/CranPOWsV1.0.pdf	Courtesy of RAF Commands Forum: http://www.rafcommands.com/database/awards/details.php?qname=MASKELL&qnum=89353	Pit Off Eric Cyril POW CL 88; POW 50 Sqn 18/8/41; Hampden I AE185 shot down and crashed near Groningen, Holland



SFTS 'Guinea Pig' - Eric Cyril MASKELL



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



56 66 122 132

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

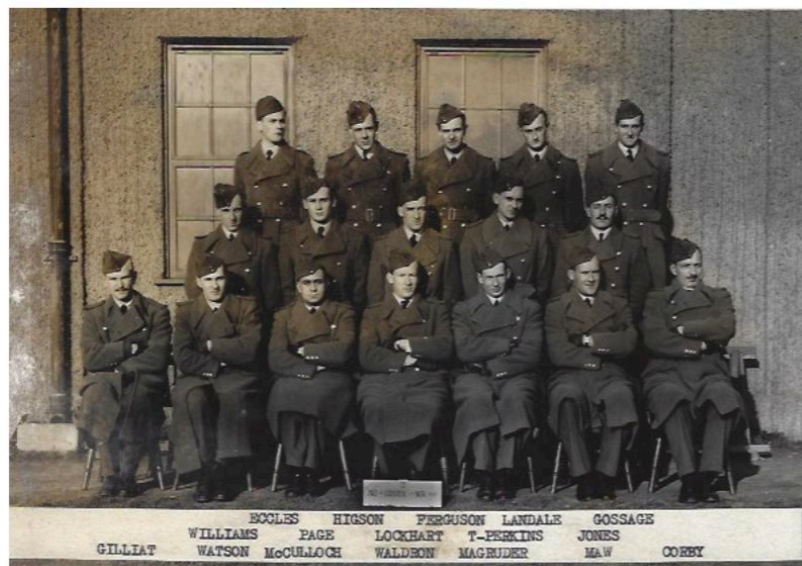
At the end of the course, Page was posted to No 1 Flying Practice Unit at Meir, for further training. On 18 May, he was posted to 66 Squadron but on 3 June he moved to 56 Squadron based at Digby.

On 13 July, Page destroyed a Bf109, on the 20th he shared a Ju88 and on the 25th destroyed a Ju87. During an attack on Do17s ten miles north of Margate on 12 August, Page was shot down and baled out, badly burned. He was rescued by tender and transferred to the Margate lifeboat. His Hurricane, P2970, crashed in flames two miles off Epple Bay.

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

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

On 29 June 1943, in company with Squadron Leader JAF MacLachlan, he flew a Mustang on a daylight sortie, during which he destroyed two Hs 126s and shared a Ju88. On a second sortie on 18 July, MacLachlan did not return. Page was awarded the DFC (gazetted 30 July 1943).



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

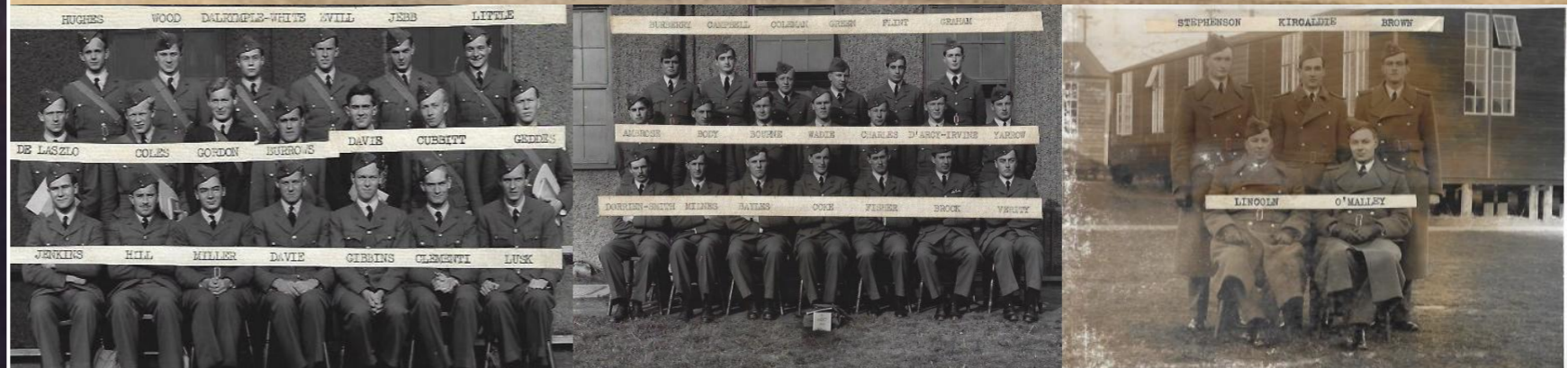
He received the Order of Orange Nassau. Page founded the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust with the intention of creating a National Memorial to "The Few". The memorial took the form of a seated airman, with no indication of rank, nationality of aircrew trade visible and was unveiled at Caple-le-Ferne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

Chief of the Air Staff - ex J39 Cadet & SFTS Course 5

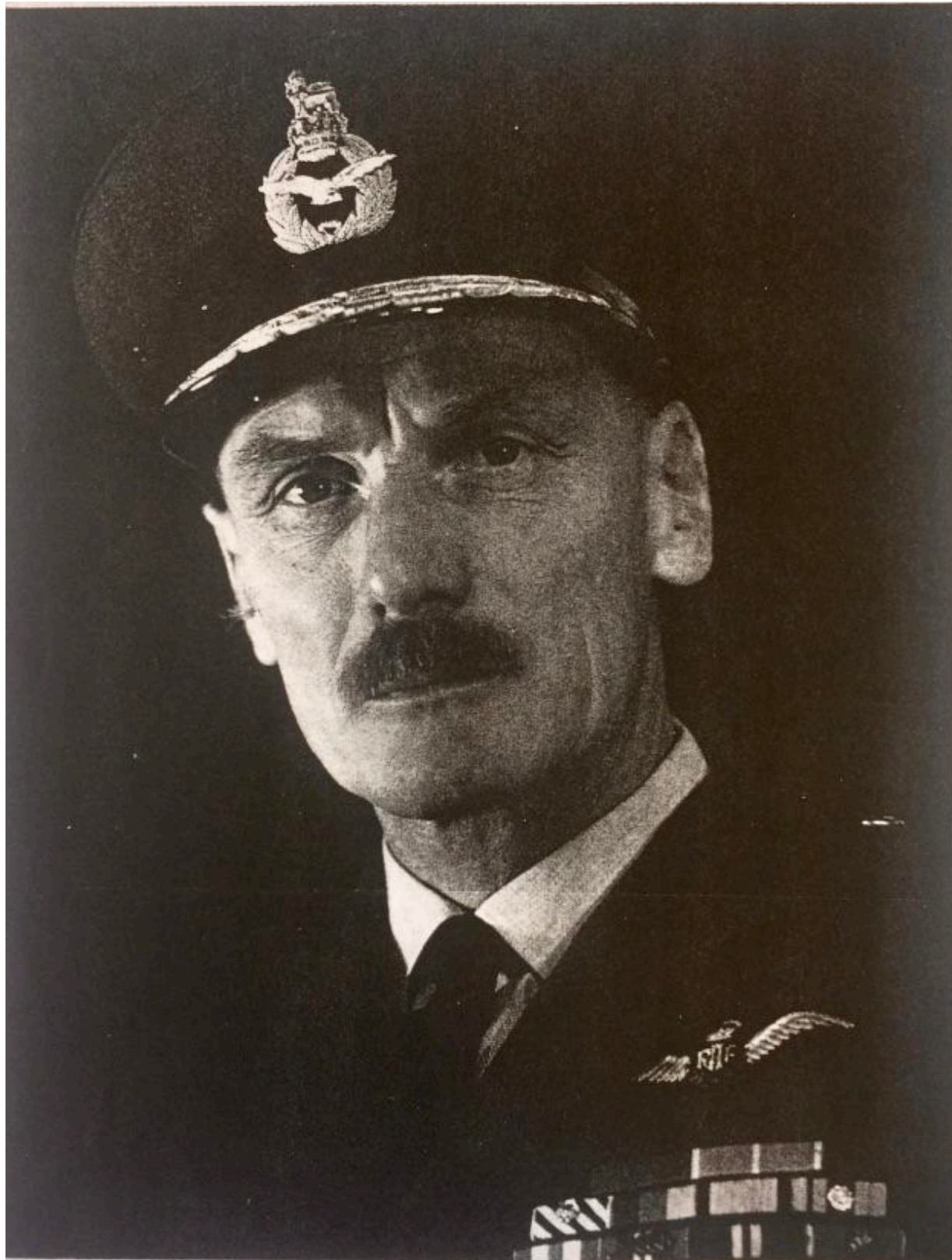


Marshal of the Royal Air Force
Sir Andrew Henry Humphrey
GCB, OBE, DFC, AFC & Two Bars
(10 Jan 1921 – 24 Jan 1977)
J39 Entry; graduated with SFTS

The day war was declared, 134 cadets from six pre-war entries had their training abruptly terminated, the College being closed immediately for officer training. Some, like AH Humphrey (later MRAF Sir Andrew Humphrey) who had not completed officer training, were enlisted as airmen u/t pilots to undergo flying training at the Service Flying Training School (SFTS) set up at RAF Cranwell. Others transferred to the RAFVR and received flying training at other FTS. From these humble beginnings, Sir Andrew went on to win not just one but three AFCs, as well as a DFC, an OBE and a GCB. He rose to the rank of Marshal of the Royal Air Force, a rarity, was only the second Cranwellian - the first was Sir Dermot Boyle - to become Chief of the Air Staff and the first to become Chief of Defence Staff.



Ian Douglas Napier Lawson - 17th Commandant



Air Commodore Ian Douglas Napier Lawson (later Air Vice Marshal) was working for De Havilland before the war, but had joined the RAF Volunteer Reserve as a Sergeant Pilot in 1938.

On declaration of war, he was still undergoing training and was sent to Cranwell to complete his pilot's course. He was commissioned on the award of his wings and was posted onto Wellington bombers.

Most of his operational flying was in the Middle East, flying against targets in North Africa, Greece, Crete, Sicily and Yugoslavia. He was awarded the DFC and bar and mentioned in despatches on three occasions. After the war he was awarded a permanent commission.

He was appointed as Commandant in December 1964.

Born 11 November 1917. He retired on 8 September 1969. Died 22 January 1998

Frederick Desmond Hughes - 19th Commandant



Air Vice-Marshal Frederick Desmond Hughes was a member of Cambridge University Air Squadron who was called up at the outbreak of war.

After completing his pilot training at Cranwell, he became a successful night fighter pilot, pioneering night flying techniques in defiant aircraft, and was awarded the DSO and DFC and two bars. By the end of the war, he was credited with destroying 18 enemy aircraft.

Awarded a permanent commission after the war he became Commandant of the College on 9th March 1970. As a graduate of Cambridge University and a former member of the University Air Squadron, his appointment was most appropriate, as he oversaw the transition from the Flight Cadet entries to the Graduate Entry scheme and the responsibility for the University Air Squadrons.

Born 6 June 1919. He retired in 1974. Died 11 January 1992.