

# **RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL**

## **“Tour Guide Presentation”**



ALL FIVE CHAPTERS - EXCLUDING AUDIO & VIDEO  
LINKS

# **RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL**

## **“Tour Guide Presentation”**



Chapter 1 - The College and its Evolution



# Graduation Parades



At the front of the College building is a unique parade square, known colloquially as the Orange. This is where the cadets learn to march in readiness for a variety of parades: the Queen's Birthday; Remembrance Day; Battle of Britain Day; the College's Founders Day; of course, the one parade they all look forward to, their own Graduation Parade.

Whilst the formats of each parade differ, there are some common themes. For example, the Squadron's march on to the 'College March'. The Colour Party marches onto the 'Lincolnshire Poacher', and you will find in the library formal permission granted by the Colonel of the Lincolnshire Regiment for the College to adopt the tune for marching on the Queen's Colour.

At Graduation Parades, the squadrons will march past the Reviewing Officer in slow and quick time, the former to the evocative strains of Aida's 'March of the Pharoes'. But the pinnacle of the Graduation Parade is when the Graduating Squadron marches off in slow time to 'Auld Lang Syne' - the first time that the cadets are permitted to pass through the front doors, signifying their rite of passage into the RAF as commissioned officers. Hoorah!





# The 'Forbidden' Carpet of College Hall



Whilst under training, cadets are forbidden to walk through the front doors or on the carpet laid in the Rotunda of the College. It is something of a rite of passage into the RAF, and is judged as the moment cadets are actually commissioned

Until they graduate, they must walk around the carpet if requiring access to the reception and/or the ante-rooms and the wings connected to the rotunda.

Slow marching to "Auld Lang Syne" at their graduation parade, up the College step and into the Rotunda, they step on this carpet for the very first time.



# Commandant-in-Chief

On entering College Hall, you are greeted by the portraits of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, painted by Norman Hepple in 1960 - the year HM The Queen consented to become the Commandant-in-Chief of the Royal Air Force College..

Through the arch, you will see a plaque recording the creation of the RAF College.

Further down the corridor of West Wing is a portrait of Prince Charles, painted by Mara McGregor.



This portrait includes Prince Charles' car parked on the Orange near his room, which caused some consternation at the time given the increasing threat from the IRA in mainland UK.



When presented with Prince Philip's portrait for her approval, HM The Queen asked why it was so much smaller than hers, a discrepancy she wished to be rectified.

If you look very closely, you will note the inserted 'background' pieces at the top and bottom of the portrait to make good the deficiency.



# Formation of RAF



Formed on 13 April 1912, the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) was the air arm of the British Army until it merged with the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) on 1 April 1918 to form the RAF.

During the early part of the war, the RFC supported the British Army by artillery co-operation and photographic reconnaissance. This work gradually led RFC pilots into aerial battles with German pilots and later in the war included the strafing of enemy infantry and emplacements, the bombing of German military airfields and later the strategic bombing of German industrial and transport facilities.



The Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS) was the air arm of the Royal Navy, under the direction of the Admiralty's Air Department, and existed formally from 1 July 1914 to 1 April 1918, when it was merged with the British Army's Royal Flying Corps to form a new service, the Royal Air Force, the first of its kind in the world.

During its first year it continued to be the Naval Wing of the joint Royal Flying Corps (which had been set up in 1912), but was administered by the Admiralty's new Air Department; on 1 August 1915 the RFC became the flying branch of the British Army while the RNAS became "an integral part of the Royal Navy".



Marshal of The RAF, Viscount  
**Hugh Trenchard**  
GCB, OM, GCVO, DSO  
'Father of the RAF'  
(b 1873, d 1956)



Field Marshal  
The Right Honourable  
**Jan Smuts**  
OM, CH, ED, PC, KC, FRS  
Author of the White paper on  
proposing an RAF  
(b 1870, d 1950)

Lord Trenchard - often referred to as 'the Father of the RAF' - saw the need for an independent Air Force during his time as Commander of the RFC in France during WW1. He possessed the drive and determination to press his belief in the formation of the RAF and became the Services first Chief of the Air Staff in 1918.



Field Marshal Smuts - the Chairman of the Cabinet on Air Organisation in July 1917 - shared Trenchard's belief and, in simple terms, wrote the White Paper that justified an independent Air Force, convincing the War Council that air power had the potential for the 'devastation of enemy lands and the destruction of industrial and populous centres on a vast scale'.

1912

1914

1917

1918



# Formation of HMS Daedalus, Cranwell



The RFC had constructed its Central Flying School in 1912, on an elevated site of training gallops, about 1.5 mi east of Upavon village, near the edge of the Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire. The RFC site was unusual, in that it was bisected by a public highway, the A342 – with the airfield and hangars on the south side of the road, and all the administrative (and some technical) buildings and accommodation on the north side. Though fit for the RFC's purpose, it could not accommodate RNAS training, when the RNAS formed in 1914



The Admiralty was thus forced to seek alternative accommodation and selected Cranwell as it was close to existing air stations on the east coast and, being in the middle of nowhere, it was far away from possible extra curricular distractions.

In keeping with RN tradition, personnel posted to a shore base had to be borne on the books of a naval vessel. In the case of Cranwell staff, they were borne on a renamed Medway hulk - HMS Daedalus - a depot ship for RN personnel serving ashore on Britain's east coast.

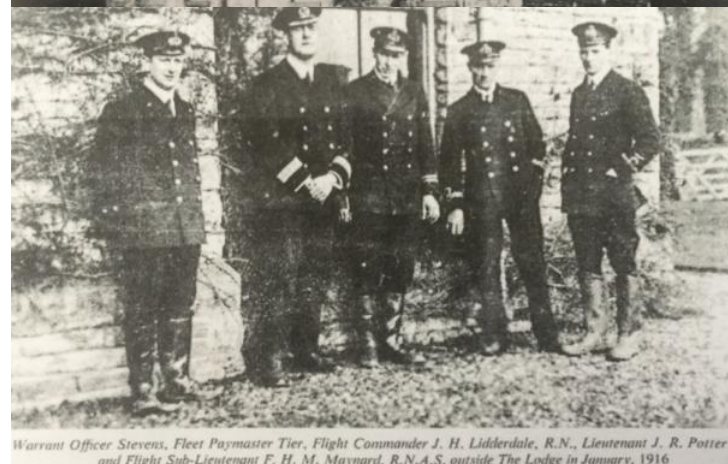
Under the command of Cdre Geoffrey Paine, the RNAS students at Cranwell effectively became part of the ship's company of HMS Daedalus



Cranwell Lodge Farm was commandeered from Mr Usher Banks for the Admiralty by CPO Whitlock on 23 November 1915. Accommodation for the men comprised three cottages and the outbuildings. Cranwell Avenue was, at that time, a cart track.

The Lodge was used as the Commandant's accommodation and also the Officer's Mess, or Wardroom in RN parlance, until early 1916 when the Mess building was completed.

With the infrastructure completed, the RNAS Central Training Establishment formed on 1 April 1916 and, in late 1916, RNAS Cranwell was fully established, equipped and operational.





# Foundation of the RAF College



1



2



5



3



6



3

7

4



6

7

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. 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.



# The Keeper of the Lighthouse



The cupola over the RAF College main hall houses the last operational aerial lighthouse in the UK, a legacy from days when RNAS aircraft operated between the east coast and Cranwell (HMS Daedalus).

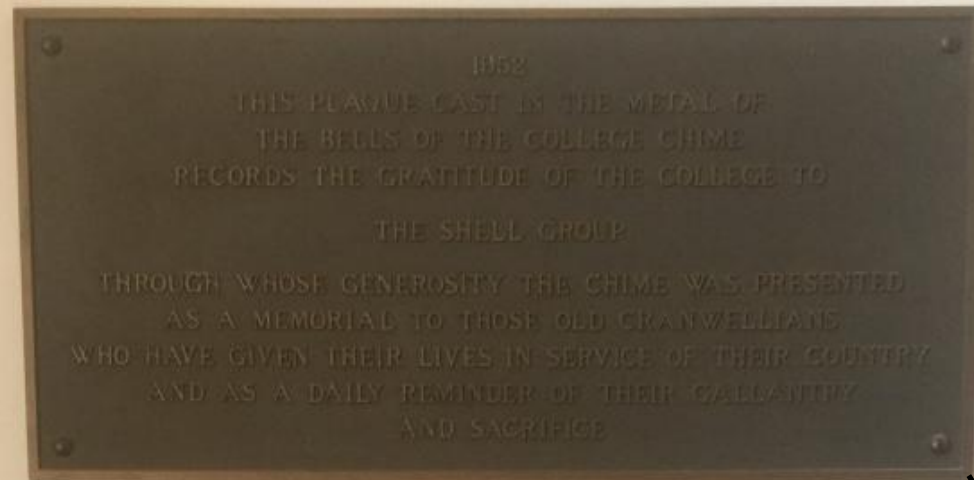
In the 1920s and 30s, ahead of radio navigation aids, a network of aerial lighthouses had been set up to guide aircraft at night. In the dome is a light, which, in the early days, could be seen as far as thirty miles away as the UK's most inland lighthouse. The modern light is not so powerful and scans at 15 rpm.

To this day, the Commandant of the College assumes the responsibilities as 'Keeper of the Lighthouse'.





# Bell Chimes donated by Shell

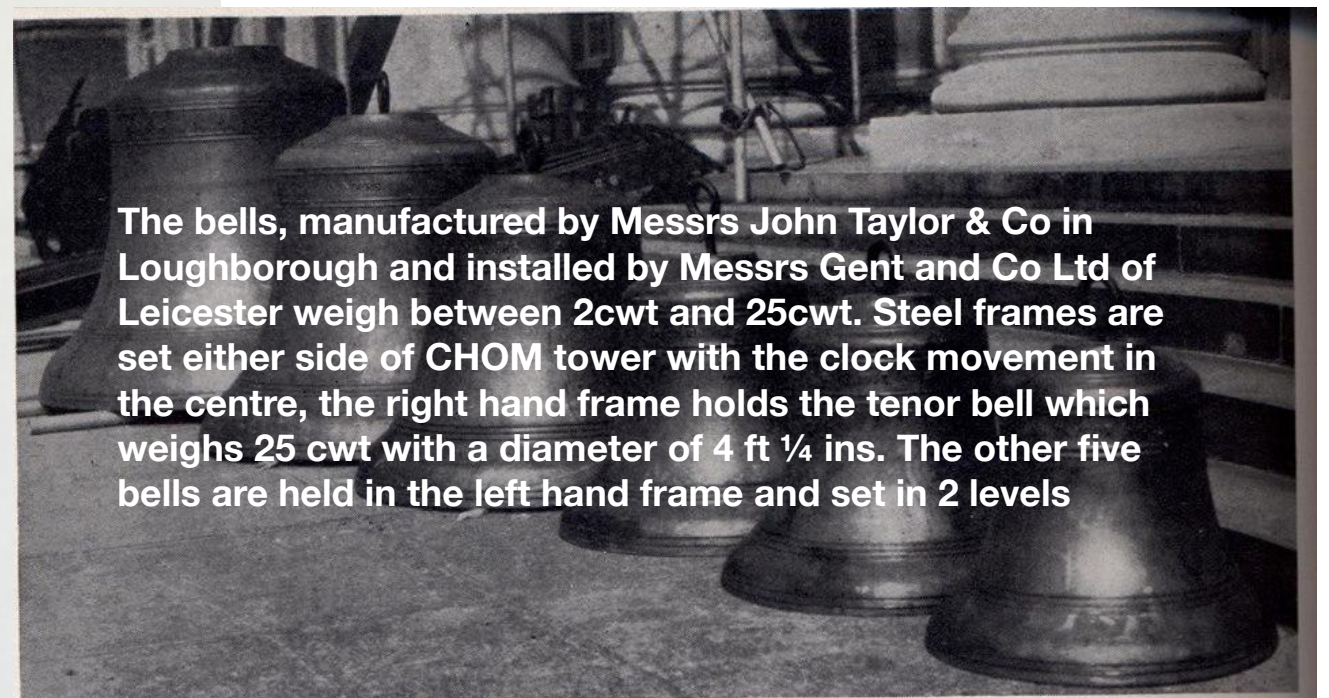


1952

**THIS PLAQUE CAST IN THE METAL OF  
THE BELLS OF THE COLLEGE CHIME  
RECORDS THE GRATITUDE OF THE COLLEGE TO**

**THE SHELL GROUP**

**THROUGH WHOSE GENEROSITY THE CHIME WAS PRESENTED  
AS A MEMORIAL TO THOSE OLD CRANWELLIANS  
WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES IN SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY  
AND AS A DAILY REMINDER OF THEIR GALLANTRY  
AND SACRIFICE**



The bells, manufactured by Messrs John Taylor & Co in Loughborough and installed by Messrs Gent and Co Ltd of Leicester weigh between 2cwt and 25cwt. Steel frames are set either side of CHOM tower with the clock movement in the centre, the right hand frame holds the tenor bell which weighs 25 cwt with a diameter of 4 ft ¼ ins. The other five bells are held in the left hand frame and set in 2 levels


Group Captain Sir Douglas Bader CBE DSO\* DFC\*

Flight Cadet 1928-30

Managing Director of Shell Aviation when the Shell Group presented the College Chime  
31 July 1952



# The Rotunda of College Hall

A photograph of the interior of the Rotunda of College Hall. The room is a large, circular space with a high, vaulted ceiling. A balcony with a white railing runs around the upper level. Several large, ornate flags (standards) are hanging from the balcony. The walls are light-colored with decorative moldings. Large windows with dark frames are visible on the upper level. The lighting is warm, coming from wall sconces and natural light from the windows.

A unique feature of the College is its Rotunda. Aloft hang the standards of temporarily disbanded squadrons and the boards announcing previous cadet prizewinners

Squadron standards, which are permitted a maximum of 8 battle honours, are consecrated items that may be touched only by the ungloved hands of the monarch or clergy. Standards of fully disbanded squadrons are held in the church or cathedral closest to the squadron's base.

Prize winners displayed include those of leadership trophies (e.g. Sword of Honour) and those for exceptional flying, engineering, supply and secretarial skills.



# The Queen's Colour for the RAF College



The heraldic portrait of the Queen's Colour is on the East Wall of the Rotunda. The actual 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 Dining Room.



HM the Queen has been gracious to award and renew the colour on five occasions. The first colour presented by HM The Queen in 1960 hangs in the Church of St Michael and All Angels, the College Chapel. The current colour was presented by HRH Prince Edward in 2016.





# The Sovereign's Colour - What It Means



Flight Cadets of the Royal Air Force College,

I am very glad to be here today to see you on parade and to present to you this new Colour, the first ever to be borne by the Royal Air Force. I want to tell you what it stands for, before it is carried back to its place in the centre of your parade.

First, it is The King's Colour, and therefore the symbol of the loyalty which you owe to your Country.

Secondly, as the Colour of your Service, it enshrines the history, embodies the traditions and represents the ideals of the Royal Air Force.

Finally, it belongs to this College and commemorates the leaders who have gone out from Cranwell and especially those who have laid down their lives.

Just as this Colour has been consecrated, so too you yourselves in saluting it are dedicating yourselves to the service of all that it represents. Look upon it then as your standard of honour and uphold it by your loyal and unstinting service.

You are now at the beginning of your careers in the Royal Air Force. Yours is a calling both arduous and daring. It will demand courage, initiative and a readiness to meet danger in a spirit of adventure. It will demand also, what for many is more difficult to achieve, the zealous and conscientious performance of your daily tasks and duties.

The way to the stars is not easy, and it is only by application, hard work and devotion to duty, that you will reach the heights. By its daring, for its efficiency and through its sacrifice, the Royal Air Force has won renown throughout the world. It has proved itself our shield and spearhead in war. It stands today as a guardian of peace.

I am glad to honour the Royal Air Force and you by giving you this Colour. I commit it to your faithful keeping, in the sure confidence that you will hand it on with added honours to your successors.

*George R.*

6th July, 1948.



Flight Cadets of the Royal Air Force College:

It is a great pleasure to me to have this opportunity of visiting the Royal Air Force College so soon after becoming its Commandant-in-Chief and of taking this Passing Out Parade. Cranwell has a great reputation throughout the Air Forces of the world and many distinguished leaders of the Royal Air Force and other Air Forces received their training here. I am very happy to have this closer link with the College.

I already have a close link with you, for Colours are symbols of the personal relationship which exists between the Sovereign and units of the Armed Forces of the Crown. That is why I am presenting the College with this new Queen's Colour today. It will be a constant reminder to all who serve at this College that they are entering my personal service for the protection and defence of the realm.

In war the Services are the guardians of the nation. In peace, they are the guardians of the nation's good name in every kind of testing circumstance. This Colour, therefore, should also be to you a reminder of duty, of your duty to uphold our Christian principles in all circumstances against every kind of evil.

Finally, this Colour embodies the traditions of the College and of the Royal Air Force, traditions of steadfastness and devotion, courage and skill, intelligence and inventiveness. At this time of change and uncertainty, these qualities are more important than ever. Conditions may alter from day to day; but it was these qualities of the spirit which made the Royal Air Force, and it is they which will sustain it in the future.

*Elizabeth R.*

21st July, 1960.



# The College Arms and Armourial Bearings



Azure on a Chevron between three Cranes volant Argent as many Torteaux each charged with a Lion's Face Or and for the Crest on a Wreath of the Colours a Figure representing Daedalus proper. On either side standing upon a Scroll Or bearing the motto "Superna Petimus" in letters Azure two Eagles wings addorsed and inverted Argent beaked and legged Gules langued and armed Azure gorged with an Astral Crown Or charged with a Fleur-de-Lys Or the dexter fimbriated Vert the sinister fimbriated Gules."



Two plaques, one either side of the College front doors, contain the rites for the College to "bear arms". Dated 1929 and 1972, they represent the evolution of the College Arms as depicted today.





# RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

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Chapter 2 - The Leaders



# Past Commandants & Assistant Commandants



The corridors leading away from the College rotunda contain portraits, photographs and paintings of Commandants, graduates and significant events such as HM The Queen's Review of the College.

To the West Wing are the photographs of former Commandants of the College (and some Cranwell graduates who received gallantry awards); to the East there are hand drawn portraits (cheaper than photographs in their day) of Assistant Commandants - the most recent Commandants and their Assistants appear furthest from the rotunda.





# Sir Sefton Brancker



Sir Sefton Brancker - Sir Sefton can be considered as one of the founding fathers of the RAF. Though overshadowed by Lord Trenchard with whom he was to disagree on several occasions, it was he - when the RFC officers from the War Office were posted to France at the start of WWI - who remained in London and provided the vital admin and support to the RFC on the front.

He reorganised the home squadrons - a necessity, but also an unpopular move - and the training of pilots to ensure that the RFC in France had the aircraft and aircrew which they required. The three Air Boards in 1917 and 1918 on which Brancker sat were the forerunners of the Air Ministry which can arguably be seen to have brought about the formation of the RAF.

On 11 May 1922 he was made Director of Civil Aviation, and worked assiduously to stimulate UK interest in the private flying - both cheap and accessible - with both local authorities and flying clubs. He encouraged Manchester and other cities to construct municipal airports and airfields. He participated in several long-distance survey flights, notably with Alan Cobham. He was an ardent supporter of the development of British civilian air services connecting London to British colonies and dominions overseas.

He pioneered guidelines and a system of governance for flight safety, which became the bedrock of the Civilian Aviation Authority (CAA). He strived to maintain flight safety standards on the UK's airships, R100 and R101. He insisted that the government should not cut costs and tinker with their flagship design, but to no avail and it was a tragic irony that he should be killed, with Air Minister Lord Thomson, in the ensuing R101 disaster.



# Founders' Gallery



For good or ill, air mastery is today the supreme expression of military power and fleets and armies, however vital and important, must accept a subordinate rank.

*Prime Minister Winston Churchill*



# RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

## “Tour Guide Presentation”



Chapter 3 - The Dining Hall



# Dining Room



The design of the College Dining Room is based on that of the Long Room of the Royal Hospital.

At its head are displayed the College Colours, behind which is hidden a pair of white gloves for the duty cadet to wear if/when removing it in the event of a fire.

A very special place, it is adorned by paintings of previous Chiefs of the Air Staff and cherished College celebrities such as Malcolm VC, Whittle and Bader.

Above all, it is where the 'spiritual home of the RAF' becomes the "domestic home to cadets" who have decided to serve their country. And on special nights, when those cadets enjoy the formalities of a dining-in night, you will hear, from the gallery at the opposite end of the Dining Room, a traditional rendition of the Post Horn Gallop from a musician of the RAF College Band.



# Former Chiefs of Air Staff



Marshal of the Royal Air Force  
**Sir Andrew Henry Humphrey**  
GCB, OBE, DFC, AFC & Two Bars  
(10 Jan 1921 – 24 Jan 1977)



Marshal of the Royal Air Force  
**Sir Keith Alec Williamson**,  
GCB, AFC  
(born 25 February 1928)



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Michael James Graydon**,  
GCB, CBE  
(b 24 October 1938)



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Richard Edward Johns**,  
GCB, KCVO, CBE  
(born 28 July 1939)



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Peter Ted Squire**  
GCB, DFC, AFC, DL, FRAeS  
(born 7 October 1945)



Marshal of the Royal Air Force  
**Baron, Graham Eric Stirrup (aka 'Jock')**  
KG, GCB, AFC, FRAeS, FCMi  
(born 4 December 1949),



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Glenn Lester Torpy**  
GCB, CBE, DSO  
(born 27 July 1953)



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Stephen Gary George Dalton**  
GCB, ADC  
(born 23 April 1954)



# Three of our very best Cadets



Wg Cdr **Hugh Gordon Malcolm VC**  
(2 May 1917 – 4 December 1942)

Malcolm was the only College cadet to be awarded a VC, heroically leading 18 Sqn in a bombing raid on an enemy fighter airfield near Chougui, Tunisia, against overwhelming odds. He was posthumously awarded a VC in April 1943, the first to be awarded in the North Africa campaign. His name is remembered through the formation of the Malcolm Clubs that provide welfare services for RAF families.



Air Commodore **Sir Frank Whittle** OM KBE CB FRS FRAeS  
(1 June 1907 – 9 August 1996)

Despite passing the RAF entrance examination with a very high mark, Whittle failed twice to enter the RAF because he was too small, at just 5 feet tall. Undeterred, he applied again under an assumed name, passing the physical and, in September 1923, 364365 Boy Whittle, F started his three-year training as an aircraft mechanic in No. 1 Squadron of No. 4 Apprentices Wing. Recognised by RAF staff as a genius, he developed the jet engine that first flew in a Gloster E28/39 at Cranwell in 1941.



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



# RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

## “Tour Guide Presentation”



Chapter 4 - Corridors of History



# Corridors Leading to Dining Room



Moving from the College Rotunda towards the Dining Room takes you on a journey through College history

Of cadets who have represented the College in a variety of sports before eventually graduating and, in many instances, taking honours for leadership and excelling in their specialist training.

If you look carefully, you will see some pictures annotated with stickers, to denote cadets who later excelled in their careers either through gallantry or becoming masters of their chosen professions.

Each one is the embodiment of the College and the standards and values that it cherishes.

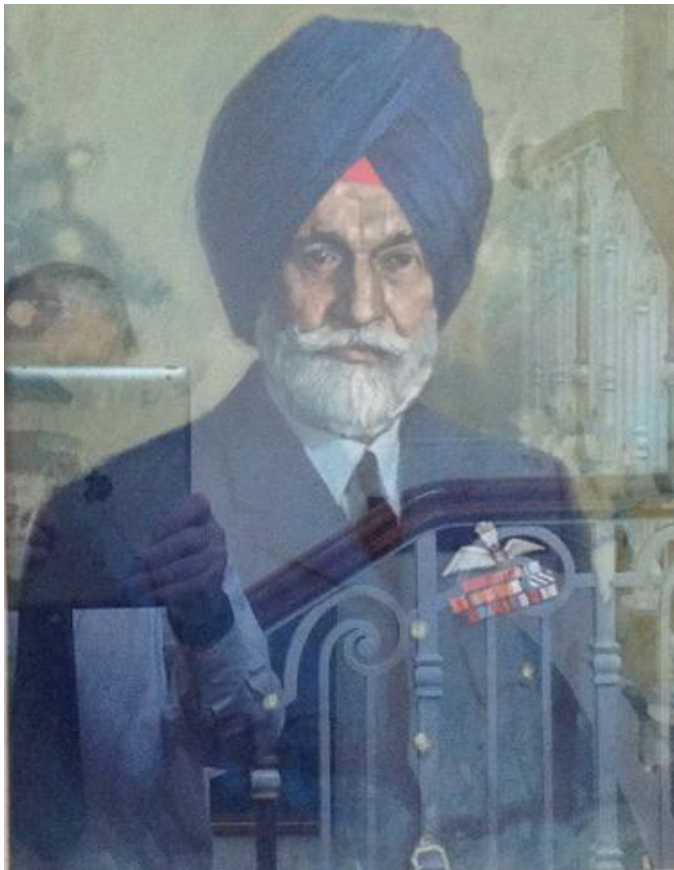


# Trophy Cabinets (either end of Founders' Gallery)





# VIP Gallery - West Mezzanine



Marshal of the Indian Air Force  
**Arjan Singh**  
 DFC  
 (14 Apr 1919 – 16 Sep 2017)

Marshal of the Indian Air Force **Arjan Singh** served as Chief of the Air Staff from 1964 to 1969. For his distinguished service in commanding the IAF during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan and in 1966 became the first IAF officer to be promoted to Air Chief Marshal. After retiring from the IAF, he served as a diplomat, politician and advisor to the Indian government. He was Lieutenant Governor of Delhi from 1989 to 1990. In 2002, he became the first and only officer of the Indian Air Force to be promoted to five-star rank. He was awarded the DFC by King George VI in June 1944.



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir William John Wratten**  
 GCB, CB, AFC  
 (15 Aug 1939)

ACM **Sir William Wratten** graduated from RAF Cranwell in 1960. He commanded 23 Squadron (1975) RAF Coningsby (1980), RAF Stanley (1982). He went on to serve as DOR (Air) 1 at MOD (1983), as SASO at HQ 1 Group in 1986 and as AOC 11 Group in 1989. As an AVM, he was Air Commander British Forces Middle East from 17 November 1990 until the end of the Gulf War (the senior air force officer in Operation Granby). He retired as AOC-in-C STC in 1997.



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Peter Edward Squire**  
 GCB, DFC, AFC, DL, FRAeS  
 (7 Oct 45)

ACM **Sir Peter Squire** graduated from the RAF College in 1966. He was a fast jet pilot in the 1970s, a squadron commander during the Falklands War and a senior air commander in the 1990s. He was CAS from 2000 to 2003 during which time both Operation Veritas (in Afghanistan) and Operation Telic (in Iraq) were initiated. In retirement he became Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Imperial War Museum and Vice-Chairman of the Board of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir John Thomson**  
 GCB, CBE, AFC  
 (7 Jun 1941 – 10 Jul 1994)

ACM **Sir John Thomson** graduated from RAF College Cranwell in 1962. He was appointed OC 41 Squadron in 1976, PSO to the CAS in 1979, and Station Commander at RAF Bruggen in 1981. He went on to be Director of Defence Concepts at the MoD in 1985, AOC 1 Gp in 1987 and ACAS in 1989. He became AOC-in-C at SC in 1991, and AOC-in-C at STC in 1992. In July 1994, he became the first Commander in Chief of the new NATO command, Allied Forces North-Western Europe. However, only days after taking up this post, he became ill and was rushed at RAF Halton where he died aged 53.



# VIP Gallery - Top Corridor West



Flight Lieutenant  
**Henry Richard Danvers Waghorn**  
AFC  
Flight Cadet 1922-1924  
Winner of Schneider Trophy 1929



Air Vice Marshal  
**Laurence Frank Sinclair**  
GC, KCB, CB, CBE, DSO\*  
Flight Cadet 1926-1928  
One of two cadets to win GC



Group Captain  
**Philip J Robinson**  
OBE, DFC\*\*  
140 IOT 1992  
Iraq and Afghanistan Ops



Air Marshal  
**Sir Kenneth William Hayr**  
KCB, KBE, AFC  
Flight Cadet 69 Entry 1954-1957  
AOC-in-C STC 1988



Group Captain  
**Adolph Gysbert 'Sailor' Malan**  
DSO\*, DFC\*  
OC 74 Sqn Battle of Britain  
Anti-apartheid Movement



Air Commodore  
**Stephen Haistwell Hardy**  
CBE  
Flight Cadet 1924-1925  
Cmndt Advanced Trg School



Flight Lieutenant  
**Bernard Clegg**  
DFC  
Flight Cadet Jan-Dec 1939  
Killed on active service 1943



Air Chief Marshal  
**Henry Neil George Wheeler**  
KCB, CB, CBE, OBE, DSO, DFC\*, AFC  
Flight Cadet 1935-1937  
Dominion Nomination, South Africa



# VIP Gallery - Top Corridor East



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Wallace Kyle**  
GCB, KCVO, CBE, DSO, DFC, KStJ  
Flight Cadet 1928-1929  
Assistant Commandant 1951-1952



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir George Holroyd Mills**  
GCB, DFC  
Flight Cadet 1920-1921  
Gentleman Usher of Black Rod



Air Marshal  
**Sir John Baldwin**  
KBE, CB, DSO  
Commandant of CFS 1929-1932  
Commandant 1936-1938



Air Chief Marshal  
**The Earl of Bandon**  
DSO  
Flight Cadet 1923-1924



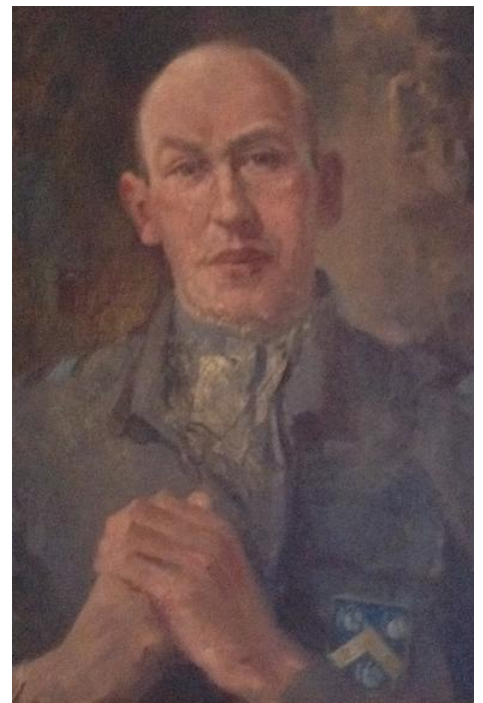
Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Edmund Hudleston**  
GCB, CBE  
Flight Cadet 1927-1928  
C-in-C AFCE 1964-1965



Wing Commander  
**Roland Prosper "Bea" Beamont**  
CBE, DSO\*, DFC\*  
BoB Fighter Pilot and Jet Aircraft Test Pilot  
First British Pilot to exceed Machs 1 and 2



Air Chief Marshal  
**Sir Godfrey Marshall Paine**  
KCB, MVO  
First Commandant CFS May 1912  
First Cmdt RNAS Cranwell Dec 1915



Air Commodore  
**Richard Atcherley**  
GCB, KCVO, CBE, DSO, DFC, KStJ  
Flight Cadet 1922-1924  
1st Cadet to become Cmdt 1951-1952



# Sinking of the Tirpitz - East Mezzanine



On 12 November 1944, the Royal Air Force carried out one of the most successful precision bombing attacks of the Second World War, resulting in the sinking of the German battleship '**Admiral von Tirpitz**'. The attack was made by 29 Lancasters of Nos 9 and 617 Squadrons.

No fewer than 10 attacks, by RAF and Royal Navy aircraft and by British and Russian submarines, had already been made on the Tirpitz since she had been completed in 1941; the German Navy bragged the ship as unsinkable - rather like her sister ship, the Bismark, sunk in 1941.

Two RAF bomber attacks preceded the successful one of 12 November:

- On 15 September, Nos 9 and 617 Squadrons, operating from Yagodnik near Archangel in Russia, attacked the Tirpitz, but were prevented from making accurate bombing runs by a smoke screen which surrounded the vessel. However, the Tirpitz was hit by one of thirteen 12,000lb Tallboy bombs and was unable to put to sea, a fact not known to the Allies at the time. The ship was towed to an anchorage 4 miles from Tromso.
- On 29 October, the two squadrons made another attack, flying direct from Lossiemouth, with Lancasters fitted with more powerful Merlin 24 engines, lightened by the removal of the mid-upper gun turret, some of the armour plating and other equipment, and fitted with overload fuel tanks. Each Lancaster carried a 'Tallboy' bomb, but again the attack was a disappointment as low cloud interfered with bombing runs. The ship did, however, sustain some damage on this occasion.

But on 12 November, Lancasters of Nos 9 and 617 Squadrons, led respectively by Squadron Leader AG Williams DFC and Wing Commander JB Tait DSO DFC, took off from Lossiemouth at about 3 a.m. They flew to a rendezvous point, a lake 100 miles south-east of Tromso, at 1,000 feet to avoid early detection by enemy radar.

Climbing to bombing height - between 12,000 and 16,000 feet - they spotted the warship about 20 miles away. This time the smoke screen was out of action and there were no defending fighters.

When the bombers were about 13 miles away, the main guns of the Tirpitz opened fire and were shortly joined by shore batteries and two flak ships. One Lancaster was shot down.

The first Tallboy bombs narrowly missed the target, but then, in rapid succession, came three direct hits. A column of steam and smoke shot up to about 300 feet and within a few minutes the ship had started to list badly. About 10 minutes after the first bomb struck, the Tirpitz had completely turned turtle with only the hull visible from the air.



# RAF COLLEGE CRANWELL

## “Tour Guide Presentation”



Chapter 5 - The Library



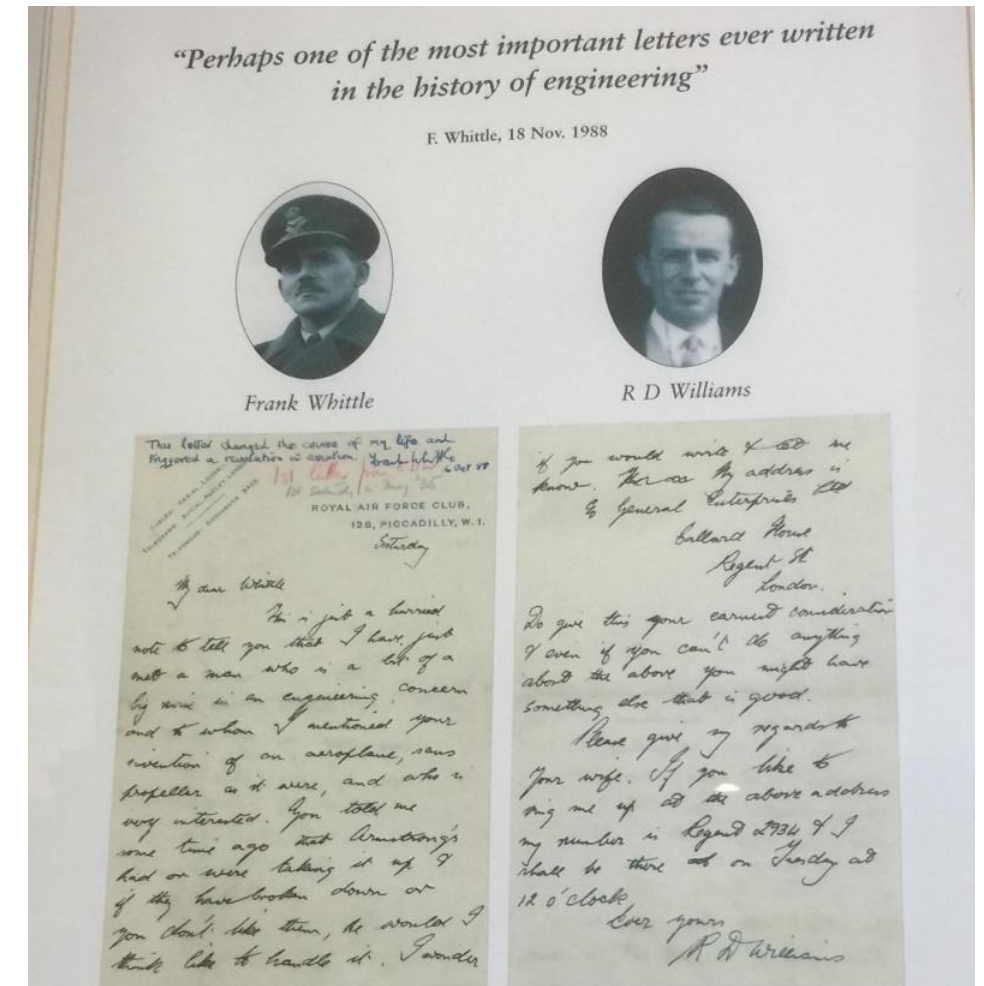
# Mahogany Bombers - Sir Frank Whittle's

Sir Frank Whittle is the RAF College's most distinguished academic cadet. His desk can be seen at the entrance to the College library where you will also find many items of interest relating to Sir Frank's achievements as the inventor of the jet engine.

Whilst a teenager at Cranwell, he published his first printed theory of jet propulsion in the Cranwell Journal of Autumn 1928. Our chief educational block to the west of the College is named Whittle Hall in his memory and a replica of the prototype jet engine stands in the entrance to this building. An extract from his paper is exhibited outside the Commandant's Meeting Room at the back of the College Hall library.

To the right of this slide is a letter exhibited in the RAF Club. It shows that Whittle, despite the knock-backs from officialdom in Whitehall, received support from RD Williams and ultimately Power Jets Ltd, to pursue his theories and to develop the turbo-jet engine for the Gloster E28/39, which flew at Cranwell for the first time on 15 May 1941. As Whittle's hand-written note acknowledges, the letter from RD Williams was to change the course of Whittle's life.

And Sir Frank Whittle very recently featured on social media, Facebook, with a light hearted explanation of why he was motivated to invent the jet engine.



Air Commodore Sir Frank Whittle verified the importance of R D Williams's letter in a hand written note dated 18 November 1938. He recorded how his ideas, put to the Air Ministry in 1929, patented in 1930 and offered to various industrial concerns, failed to raise any significant interest. As a result of this letter, Power Jets Ltd. was formed in March 1936 and jet propulsion development in Great Britain was rescued from oblivion. The refusal of officialdom to recognize the merits of Whittle's ideas and a lack of secrecy, saw the beginning of turbo-jet development in Germany that same year. Nevertheless, the lineage of all present day turbo-jet propulsion engines worldwide can be traced to the first Whittle engine that propelled the Gloster E28/39 that flew for the first time from Cranwell on 15 May 1941.





# Mahogany Bombers - MRAF Sir Arthur Harris's



Sir Arthur 'Bomber' Harris was a much loved C-in-C by his bomber crews, despite losing half of them during WW II. He was given the loosest of briefs to destroy Nazi Germany with strategic air power and, with the support of the USAF, he remained wedded to the belief that Germany could be destroyed from the air.

However, his philosophy of 'area bombing' did not meet with universal approval and, despite attritional successes throughout WW II, he lost the full support of Churchill who saw the war being won on two land fronts - the Western Front launched on 'D-day' and the Eastern Front being waged by Stalin's Soviet forces. Historian Max Hastings gives a very good account of the tensions within the RAF and between British and American forces as the strategic air power gave way to tactical air power in support of an integrated campaign on the Western Front.

Notwithstanding, the contribution made by Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris during our darkest years cannot go understated and he remains one of our greatest air commanders ever.

In the interview (video above) with the then Gp Capt Tony Mason - later AVM Professor Mason - Sir Arthur was to reiterate his determination, from the 'shower of directives', to take the war to the enemy and defeat him on his home ground.



# Enemy Trophies



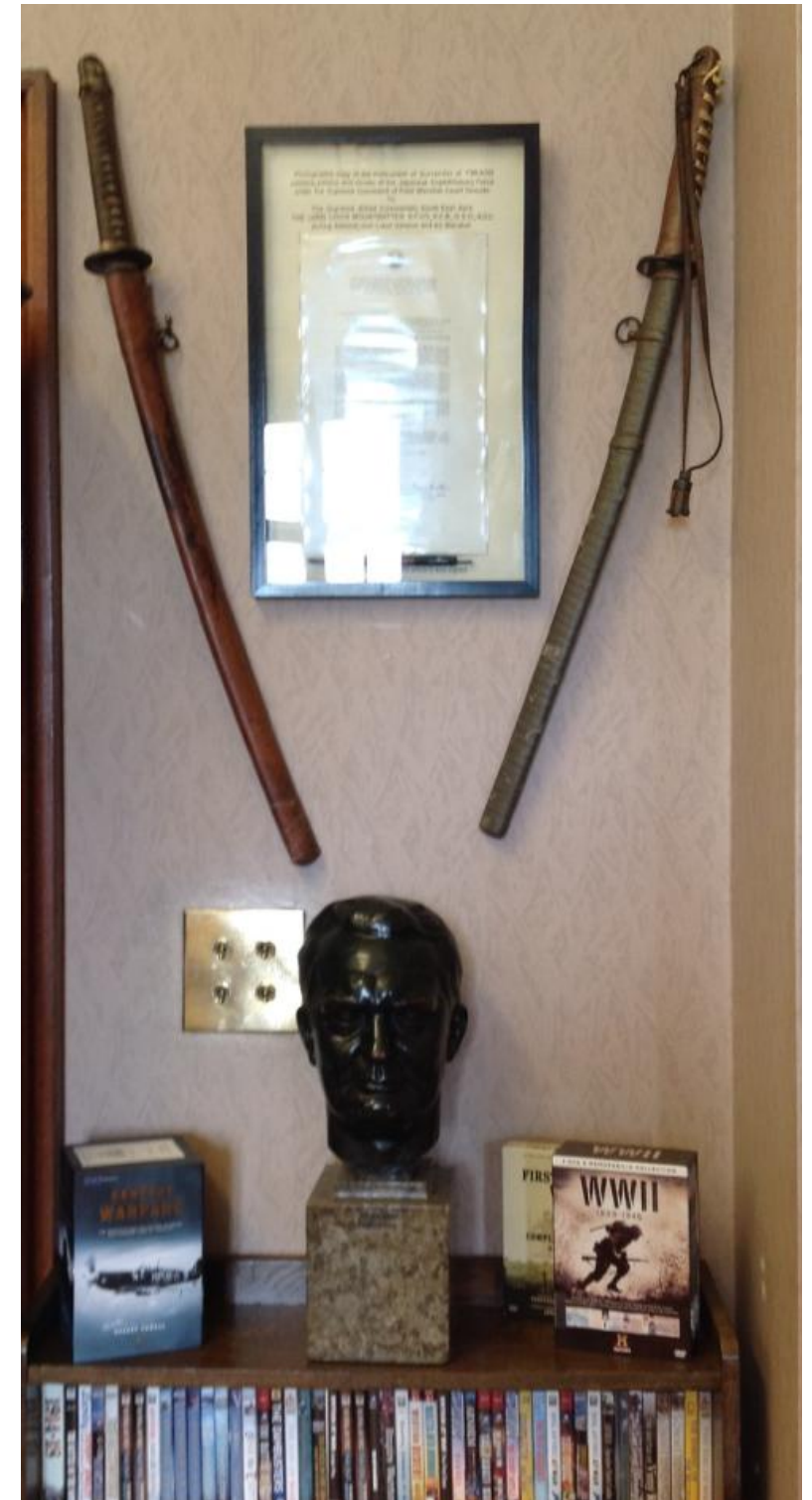
With his eye on the RAF College as a potential HQ, Goering sanctioned the presentation of two charcoal and chalk drawings of Richthofen and, his mentor, Boelcke; the College responded with two of its own WW1 fighter aces, Captain Albert Ball VC and Major Mick Mannock VC.

Offered as a gift to encourage mutual respect to “avert war”, the two drawings were presented during a visit by General Milch in 1938 and have remained here ever since. It is thought that these drawings are copies of originals retained by Germany, but lost when Soviet forces closed in on Berlin to force the German surrender.

A bust of Goering was presented at the same time and, surviving a temporary deployment to a skip, is located in the library, below the Japanese Document of Surrender.



To the right of these drawings, flanked by two Samurai swords, is a copy of the Japanese Document of Surrender accepted on the Allies' behalf by Earl Mountbatten. It is displayed with one of the fountain pens actually used to sign the Surrender Treaty

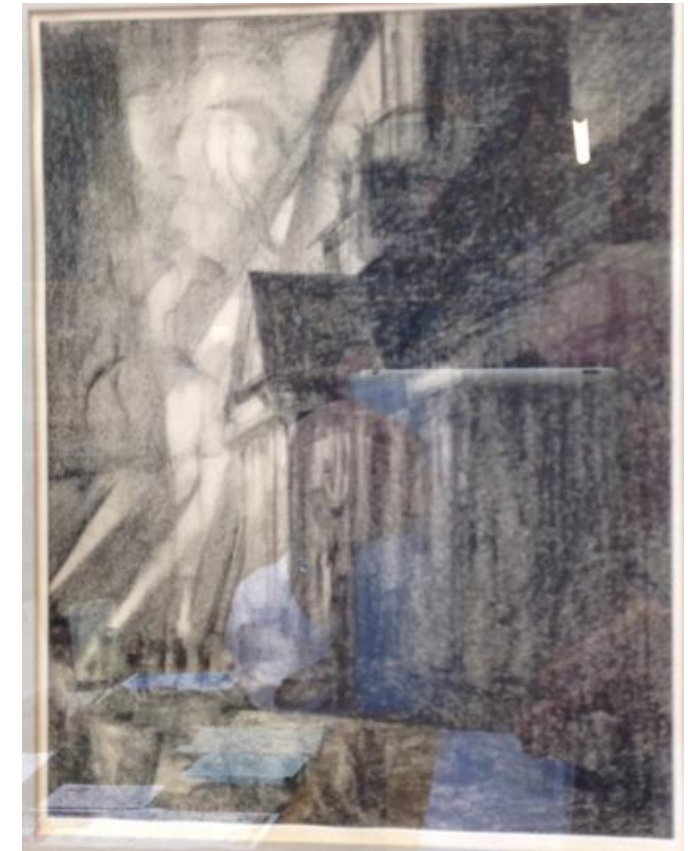




# ‘Wizard Prang’

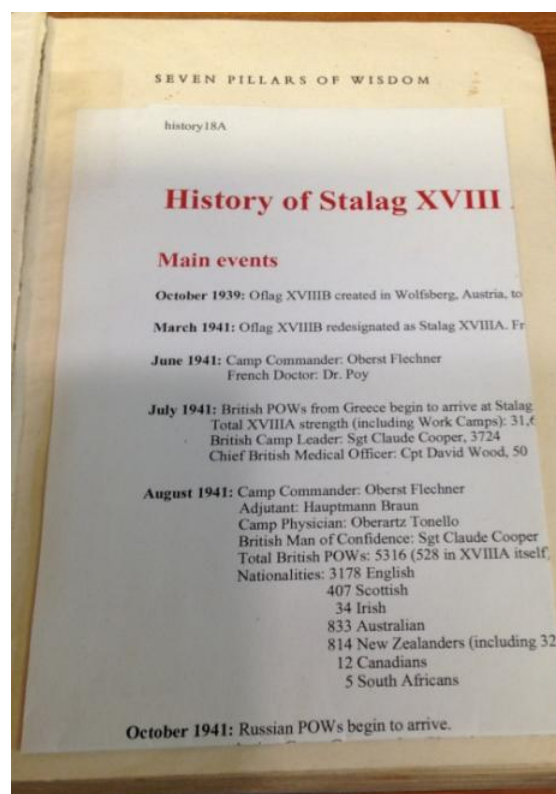
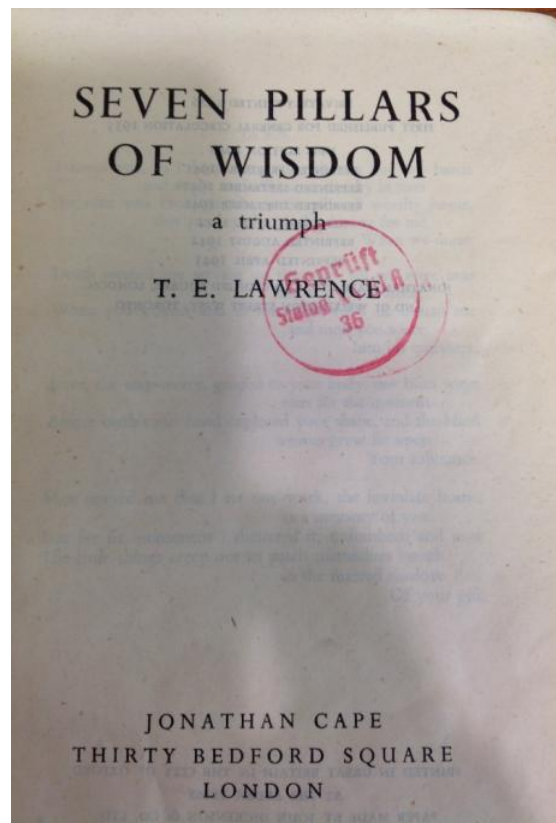


The Whitley Bomber which crashed at Cranwell on 18 March 1942 caused the only damage to College Hall throughout the war period. The three crew members of the aircraft were sadly killed in the accident, but the personnel who would have been sleeping in the building later that night were spared injury as they were at the cinema at the time of the crash. The pictures show the incident itself and the various stages of repair to the College buildings. The brass engine plate recovered from the wreckage of the aircraft is also displayed.





# TE Lawrence (aka AC Shaw)



The "Lawrence Room" is named after Col TE Lawrence (AC2 TE Shaw) or Lawrence of Arabia. TE Lawrence was stationed at RAF Cranwell as AC2 TE Shaw" 1925-1926. It was whilst he was stationed at RAF Cranwell, that Lawrence wrote "*Revolt in the Desert*". He also presented a hand annotated proof copy of *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* to the College Library which remains in the collection today. If you go up the stairs, on your right, you will see a model of part of the men's accommodation and the then SHQ. This was made in 1934.





HEADQUARTERS, FIGHTER COMMAND,  
ROYAL AIR FORCE,  
BENTLEY PRORY,  
STANMORE,  
MIDDLESEX.

1954 May, 194E.

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I have the honor to refer to the very serious calls which have recently been made upon the House of Representatives in an attempt to stop the German invasion on the Continent.

8. I hope and believe that our Allies may yet be victorious in France and Belgium, but we have to face the possibility that they may be defeated.

5. In this case I presume that there is no-one who will deny that England should fight on, even though the remainder of the Continent of Europe is dominated by the Germans.

4. For this purpose it is necessary to retain some minimum fighter strength in this country and I must request that the Air Council will inform me what they consider this minimum strength to be, in order that I may make my dispositions accordingly.

Q. I would remind the Air Council that the last estimate which they made as to the force necessary to defend this country was 38 Squadrons, and my strength has now been reduced to the equivalent of 28 Squadrons.

5. Once a decision has been reached as to the limit on which the Air Council and the Cabinet are prepared to stake the existence of the country, it should be made clear to the Allied Commanders on the Continent that not a single aeroplane from Fighter Command beyond the limit will be sent across the Channel, no matter how desperate the situation may become.

7. It will, of course, be remembered that the estimate of 80 Squadrons was based on the assumption that the attack would come from the eastwards except in so far as the defences might be outflanked in flight. We have now to face the possibility that attacks may come from Spain or even from the North coast of France. The result is that our line is very much extended at the same time as our resources are reduced.

G. I must point out that within the last few days the equivalent of 10 Squadrons have been sent to France, that the Hurricane Squadrons remaining in this country are seriously depleted, and that the more squadrons which are sent to France the higher will be the cost and the more insistent the demands for reinforcements.

The Under Secretary of State,  
Air Ministry,  
LONDON. W.C.C.

# The Dowding Letter

The College library displays a copy of the original letter sent by ACM Sir Hugh Dowding to the PUS for Air, expressing his concern about the continued use of his fighter force in a beleaguered France and seeking its retention for the Battle of Britain which he foresaw.

In the film *Battle of Britain*, the opening sequence shows the PUS interviewing Dowding on receipt of this historic and ‘game changing’ letter. You may recall the script as the PUS challenged Dowding, “You realise, Dowding, the Prime Minister will have to see this.” To which Dowding, played by Laurence Olivier, responded without flinching, “That’s why I wrote it.”

9. I must therefore request that as a matter of paramount urgency the Air Ministry will consider and decide what level of strength if to be left to the Fighter Command for the defence of this country, and will assure me that when this level has been reached, not one fighter will be sent across the Channel however urgent and insistent the appeals for help may be.

10. I believe that, if an adequate fighter force is kept in this country, if the fleet remains in being, and if Home Forces are suitably organised to resist invasion, we should be able to carry on the war single handed for some time, if not indefinitely. But, if the Home Defence Force is drained away in desperate attempts to remedy the situation in France, defeat in France will involve the final, complete and irremediable defeat of this country.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

6P. B. J. Dowding

Air Chief Marshal,  
Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief,  
Fighter Command, Royal Air Force.





