

Bovingdon Airfield

A Young Man's Adventure Playground



*The personal diary
Of John Young*



Compiled by Keith Fletcher, 2012



Keith Fletcher was born in Chesham in 1940. He has lived in the town all his life apart from two years in the United States. A qualified physicist by training, he spent most of his working life with Amersham International, formerly the Radiochemical Centre. Since taking early retirement, Keith has developed his interest in local history and now writes and lectures on the topic and is also a voluntary heritage contributor to *Town Talk*, Chesham's free community magazine. He is delighted to have been able to work with John Young to compile this historic document.

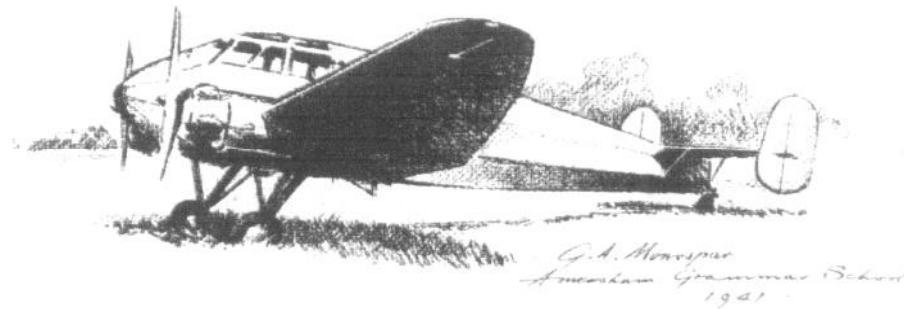
Front Cover: "Home James"

Rear Cover : "VIP" (Very Important Painting)

Both painted by John Young

John Young

John Young was born in Bristol in 1930 but moved with the family a year later when his father's job with a major bank moved to Chesham. He started his schooling at Chesham Prep School, then in Station Road, and was only 5 years old when his interest in aeroplanes first became apparent. A small biplane landed in a field near his home and not only caught his attention but captured his imagination. It was part of Cobham's Flying Circus which gave flying displays all over Britain during the nineteen thirties. This early contact with aviation was to influence the rest of John's life. By the time he first saw the RAF display at Halton in 1939 he was already busy with his pencil making sketches of the flying machines that had made such an impression on him. After a period at Whitehill Boys School he moved to Dr Challoner's Grammar School where he was to have more direct contact with aeroplanes. One day a Magister crashed into the trees at the end of the sports field and provided priceless souvenirs for the interested schoolboys. Shortly afterwards the school obtained an instructional airframe, a twin-engine Monospar, for its Air Training Corps.



In 1943 John changed schools when he was sent by his father to the Royal Grammar in High Wycombe where his contact with planes continued for their Air Squadron had a Hawker Hind, a magnificent biplane.

Further interest, joy and happiness was obtained by regular visits to Bovingdon Airfield which had been taken over in 1942 by the American Eighth Army Air Force with their B17's and B24's. Planes were frequently parked on the concrete panhandles behind the White Horse at Whelpley Hill and these close-up views plus a few trips occasionally inside the planes further fuelled John's interest in aviation. More importantly John maintained a diary of his frequent visits to the airfield and other related venues and this monograph is a unique record of his personal recollections with some additional historical notes.



AERONAUTICAL

DIARY



&

Photograph
Album



Bovingdon Airfield - Formal History 1

Bovingdon Airfield lies 535ft above sea level in the Hertfordshire countryside, two miles south of Berkhamsted and close to the village of Bovingdon. It was built in 1941/42 by John Laing & Sons Ltd as a standard Class A RAF bomber airfield with three runways but never was developed to that standard. The main NE/SW runway was 1,634 yards (1,494 m) long and the two secondary runways were 1,433 yd (1,310 m) long each. Over 30 dispersal hard standings were built extending into the woods, locally known as Strawberry Woods at the North of the airfield. The technical site and four T2 hangars were located in the south-east corner of the site.

On 15 June 1942, No. 7 Group, RAF Bomber Command took up residence at Bovingdon. Operational missions were flown in June and July by the RAF until the field was turned over to the USAAF in August. The 92nd Bomb Group came to this country at the completion of its training in the United States expecting one thing: OPERATIONS-the chance to take on the enemy in the skies over Europe and to fight it out with him. It was with this single purpose in mind that the Group carried on its day to day existence; but upon arrival at this station, the unit was immediately ordered to exchange its new ships for the battle damaged ones of the gallant 97th Group. The personnel were then told by Lt. General Ira C. Eaker (then Major General), who was at that time Commanding general of the 8th Air Force, that they were to staff a training centre for heavy bombardment crews. The loss of their planes was taken more or less in stride by the group, and repair and modification work began at once on the "beat up Es" inherited from the 97th. The men could see the logic behind the exchange of planes, though of course they were not exactly happy about the idea; but to be taken out of the big fight without even hearing the sound of the bell was nearly a mortal blow to the morale of the organization.

"Why the 92nd Group?" Was The question in everyone's mind. The comments ran something like this: "We are not trained for this job!" "We don't know anything about combat yet!" "Why had we not been told before?" And even "What did we do wrong to draw this detail?" Some of the reasons "Why the 92nd?" later revealed themselves, but not all of them.

Bovingdon Airfield to which the Group was assigned was designated as AAF Station 112. The field, which had been designed by RAF engineers as an operational base, was partially completed. With discontent everywhere, the men of the group went about this work of completing the field, setting up equipment for maintenance and organizing the system of supply. In their leisure time the discontented men fortunately had something very big to occupy their minds: a new country and a new people. For the 2,500 Americans there were things to find out: "How far was it to London?" "What was a 'pub'?" "Where was the nearest cinema?" "Just what were the English people like?" "Did the sun ever shine?" "How much did a bike cost?" "How much was that in real money?" "Can I get up to and back on a forty-eight hour pass?" "I've got relatives up there that I have never seen". And so the queries ran. But despite the fascination of the new country, and the amount of hard work that was necessary to get the field going, the big thoughts in mind were still "Why the 92nd?" and "What can we do to make them change their minds?" Colonel Sutton was furious and pledged himself to work unceasingly to have the organization reinstated for combat.

Permission was granted in September for the 92nd to take part in several combat missions in the interest of gathering necessary battle information to be taught in the school. Targets attacked by the Group were:

DATE /TARGET LOSSES

4 September 1942 Meault, France 1

26 September 1942 Cherbourg, France 0 (diversion-airdrome)

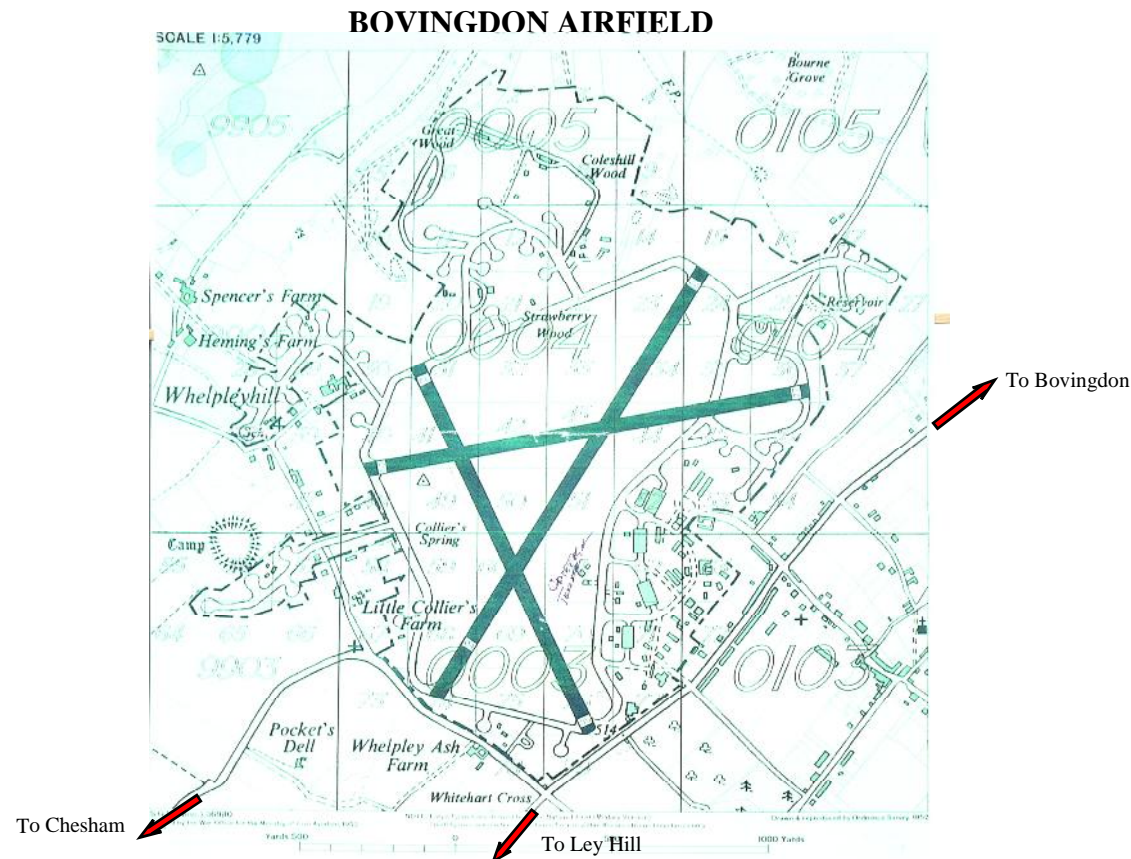
2 October 1942 Meault, France 0

9 October 1942 Lille, France 1

21 October 1942 Cherbourg, France 0 (diversion-airdrome)

Other groups flying on these raids included the 97th, 91st, and 301st bombardment Groups.

These five missions flown by the 92nd plus others being made at that time in which the 92nd did not participate were, however, bringing home to the group with great force, the seriousness of daylight high-altitude bombing. The missions also revealed dangerous weaknesses in the Group's combat technique. For example: they found their formations looked good to the eye of a camera, but did not permit maximum firepower for self defence. The aiming technique of the gunners was alright according to existing classroom ideas, but the enemy planes were not being hit. Navigation, because of radio aids and different weather conditions was full of new problems. The bombing technique proved itself to have an outstanding weakness, the pilots, through no fault of their own, found it nearly impossible to hold the plane level and true in the midst of fighter attacks and bursting flak. The bombardiers, bombing from an unstable platform, were not able to hit targets with true accuracy. These combat weaknesses and many others showed themselves on those first missions, proving to the group the necessity for further training, training to cover the gap between the generalization of the OUT schooling in the U.S and combat in the European Theatre of Operations. It was this advanced, fine-grain training that had been anticipated by General Eaker, and the assignment to set up the school for carrying out this training had been given to the 92nd Group. The assignment did not just concern itself with the training of the 92nd personnel, but rather with all combat crew replacements for the entire 8th Air Force. It was a big assignment, worthy of the best efforts of a fine organization. The need for the school was then apparent to all, still the Group balked at the idea. The Combat anticipating hearts and minds of these men could not be reconciled to the monotonous duties of school teaching no matter what accompanying circumstances existed. It was decided, therefore, after much discussion within the organization and between representatives of the Group and General Eaker, that the Unit would be divided in two. Those interested in the school and necessary to the school would be assigned to it; those interested in combat and indispensable to the Group's operation as such a unit would be assigned to the Group.



ONE MORNING IN 1935 A MULTI-COLOURED D.H. MOTH SKIMMED LOW ACROSS LYE GREEN ROAD TO LAND IN A NEARBY FIELD WHERE SIR ALAN COBHAM WAS DUE TO HOLD HIS FLYING CIRCUS. I HAD SEEN AN AEROPLANE LAND FOR THE FIRST TIME, I WAS FILLED WITH AN ENTHUSIASM OF WHICH I LOST NONE DURING THE NEXT TEN YEARS WHILE WATCHING THOUSANDS OF LANDINGS AND TAKE OFFS. THE THRILL THAT MOTH GAVE ME HAS NEVER FADED, SO THE PURPOSE OF THIS LITTLE BOOK IS TO RECORD THE FACTS WHICH HAVE KEPT THAT FEELING ALIVE DURING MY BOYHOOD.



I DESCRIBE THE NOTABLE AIRCRAFT I HAVE SEEN. THOSE I HAVE BEEN INSIDE (UNDERLINED IN RED) AND END WITH AN ACCOUNT OF MY FIRST FLIGHT 1935 COBHAMS AIR CIRCUS. STUNT AND NOVELTY FLYING, PARACHUTING, GLIDING AND JOY RIDING. THE AIRCRAFT TAKING PART INCLUDED D.H. MOTHS, AIRSPEED FERRY, D.H. DRAGONS, PERCIVAL GULLS AND MILES HAWKS. JOAN MEAKIN GAVE EXHIBITIONS OF SAILPLANING. IN 1936 C.W.A SCOTT PUT ON A SIMILAR SHOW.



Lye Green Road, CHESHAM

Friday, June 21st, 1935



SIR ALAN COBHAM'S
NATIONAL AVIATION DAY CAMPAIGN
AIR DISPLAY

Britain's Finest Pilots

— in —
Sir Alan Cobham's Great Air Display !

An Entirely New Programme.

Advanced Aerobatics tied together—an amazing display of close formation flying. Dual, "Pull-off" and Delayed-drop Parachute Descents.

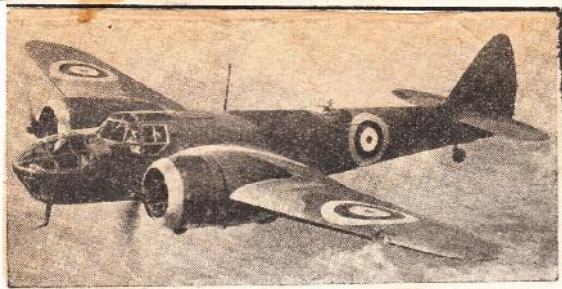
Gliding and Soaring and Glider Aerobatics by Joan Meakin.

The New Wingless Autogiro.

20 Thrilling Items in Britain's most up-to-date Aircraft.

CONTINUOUS 2.30 p.m. till DUSK. 2 Complete Displays, 2.30. and 6.30. p.m.

Admission 1/3d. ; Children 6d. Cars, 1/-



20 MAY 1939
EMPIRE AIR DAY
R.A.F. STATION HALTON.
ONE SATURDAY AFTERNOON
IN MAY 1939 WAS THE

OCCASION OF MY FIRST TIME INSIDE AN AEROPLANE.

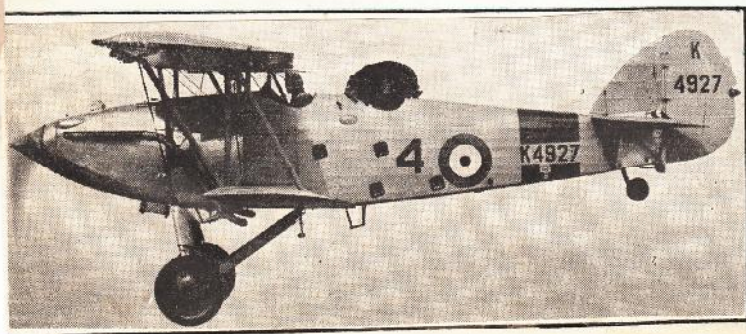
"Bristol" BLENHEIM (TYPE 149) B.mark IV

I CLIMBED A LADDER ON
TO THE WING WHERE
AN AIRMAN HELPED ME
ON TO THE FUSELAGE
AN DOWN THROUGH THE
SLIDING ROOF INTO THE
PILOTS SEAT (see photo above)

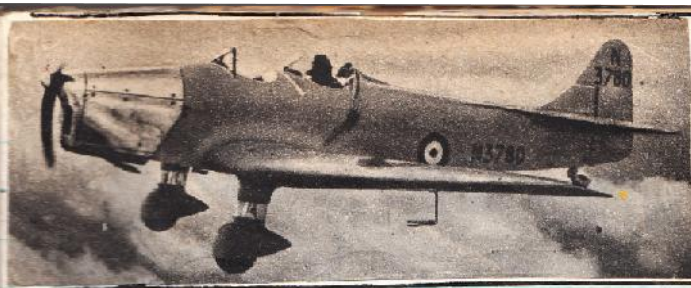


WESTLAND LYSANDER I

THIS AEROPLANE HAD STEPS LEADING UP TO THE
COCKPIT SO THAT ONE COULD SEE ALL THE INTERIOR



HAWKER HIND
I CLIMBED UP
TO BOTH
COCKPITS



PHILLIPS & POWIS
MILES M.14 MAGISTER
I SAT IN THE
FRONT COCKPIT,

THE FLYING SHOW CONSISTED OF INDIVIDUAL
DEMONSTRATIONS BY GLADIATOR, FURY, HIND
BLENHEIM AND HURRICANE.
FORMATION BEAT-UPS BY
HURRICANES AND BATTLES,
AND PARATROOP DROPPING
BY A VICKERS VALENTIA.



SEPTEMBER 3 1939

1100 HOURS. I HEARD MR. CHAMBERLAIN MAKE HIS
DECLARATION OF WAR. WE HAD OUR FIRST AIR
RAID WARNING. FULL BLACK-OUT CAME INTO FORCE.
IT BECAME COMPULSORY TO CARRY A GAS MASK.

THROUGHOUT THE
DAY ARMSTRONG —
WHITWORTH ENSIGNS
OF IMPERIAL AIRWAYS

RAN A CONTINUOUS SHUTTLE SERVICE TO THE NORTH
CARRYING EVACUEES FROM LONDON.



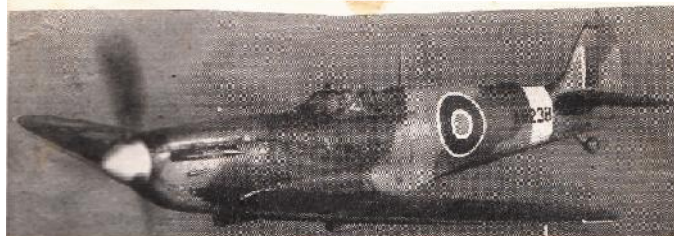
OCTOBER 1939. BRISTOL 149 BLENHEIM IV

A SCHOOL PARTY WENT TO SEE THIS AEROPLANE WHICH
CRASH LANDED AT PEDNOR.

WE SAT IN THE GARDEN ON A PEACEFUL SUNDAY MORNING EARLY IN JUNE 1940, IN THE FAR DISTANCE COULD BE HEARD A HEAVY RUMBLE. WE SPOKE LITTLE, THERE WAS NO NEED FOR DAD TO TELL ME WHAT WAS GOING ON, THE FRENCH ARMY AND THE B.E.F. HAD FALLEN BACK ON DUNKIRK - 130 MILES FROM CHESHAM.

DURING THE 'PHONEY WAR' I HAD BECOME A KEEN STUDENT OF AIRCRAFT RECOGNITION, THE PLAN VIEW OF THE HEINKEL 111 IN MY SILHOUETTE BORE A DISTINCT RESEMBLANCE TO AN AIRCRAFT I SAW TURNING HIGH ABOVE CODMORE CROSS ONE JULY MORNING. A COUPLE OF MINUTES LATER THE SIRENS WAILED I HAD SEEN MY FIRST ENEMY.

AUGUST 30. JUDY'S BIRTHDAY PARTY WAS BEING HELD IN THE GARDEN, SUCH A PEACEFUL SCENE. THEN HELL BROKE LOOSE, WE WERE STUFFED UNDER THE STAIRS FOR SHELTER, BUT I CREPT OUT TO WATCH A FORMATION OF UP TO FIFTY HUN BOMBERS HEADING SOUTH AFTER RAIDING LUTON. TWO LONELY HURRICANES WERE DOGGEDLY GOING FOR THEM ALL THE WAY ACROSS THE BACK GARDEN. SEPTEMBER 9. WE DIVED UNDER THE DINING ROOM TABLE AS A STICK OF 5 HE SCREAMERS FELL ACROSS MANOR WAY AND LEY HILL ROAD.



THE NEXT MORNING I PICKED UP SHRAPNEL AT THE BUS STOP,

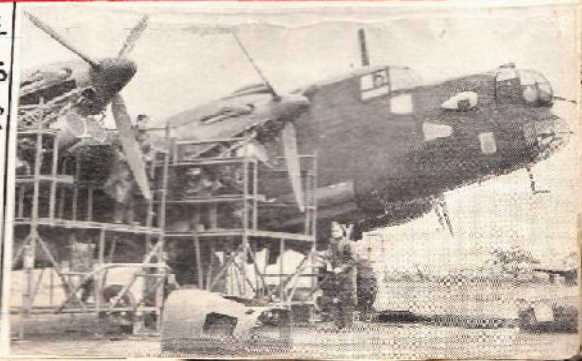
MY FIRST MORNING AT AMERSHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL. THE SECOND MORNING I SPENT IN THE SCHOOL SHELTER.

DURING OUR WAR WEAPONS WEEK THERE WAS A SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE II PARKED IN THE EMBASSY CAR PARK. I WENT INSIDE TWICE, THE ONLY TIMES I REGRETTED GOING INSIDE AN AEROPLANE, WHEN THE COCKPIT COVER CLOSED OVER ME I FELT HELPLESS.

MEANWHILE BOVINGDON WAS BEING BUILT. WE SPENT SEVERAL NIGHTS UNDER THE STAIRS WHILE JERRY DRONED ABOUT OUTSIDE.

THE FIRST AIRCRAFT I SAW LAND AT BOVINGDON WAS A LOCKHEED HUDSON III. THE SECOND WAS A HANDLEY PAGE HALIFAX I.

THIS LANDED WHILE THE METAL BARRIERS WERE STILL IN PLACE OVER THE WET CONCRETE. I WENT INSIDE WHILE THE DAMAGE WAS BEING REPAIRED.





3 AUGUST 2, 1942.

WE WERE SITTING AT TEA, I HEARD A STRANGE AIRCRAFT A NOISE I HAD NOT HEARD BEFORE. RUNNING INTO THE GARDEN I SAW TWO BOEING B-17E FORTRESSES CIRCLING BOVINGDON, TEN MORE FOLLOWED, LITTLE DID I REALISE THAT HISTORY WAS BEING MADE BEFORE MY EYES. THE VANGUARD OF THE U.S. 8TH AIR FORCE BOMBER COMMAND HAD REACHED ITS OPERATIONAL BASE IN E.T.O.

FOR THE NEXT FORTNIGHT THE 12 FORTRESSES PUT IN MUCH INTENSIVE TRAINING. THEY FLEW EVERY DAY. I CONSIDERED IT AN HONOUR TO SEE

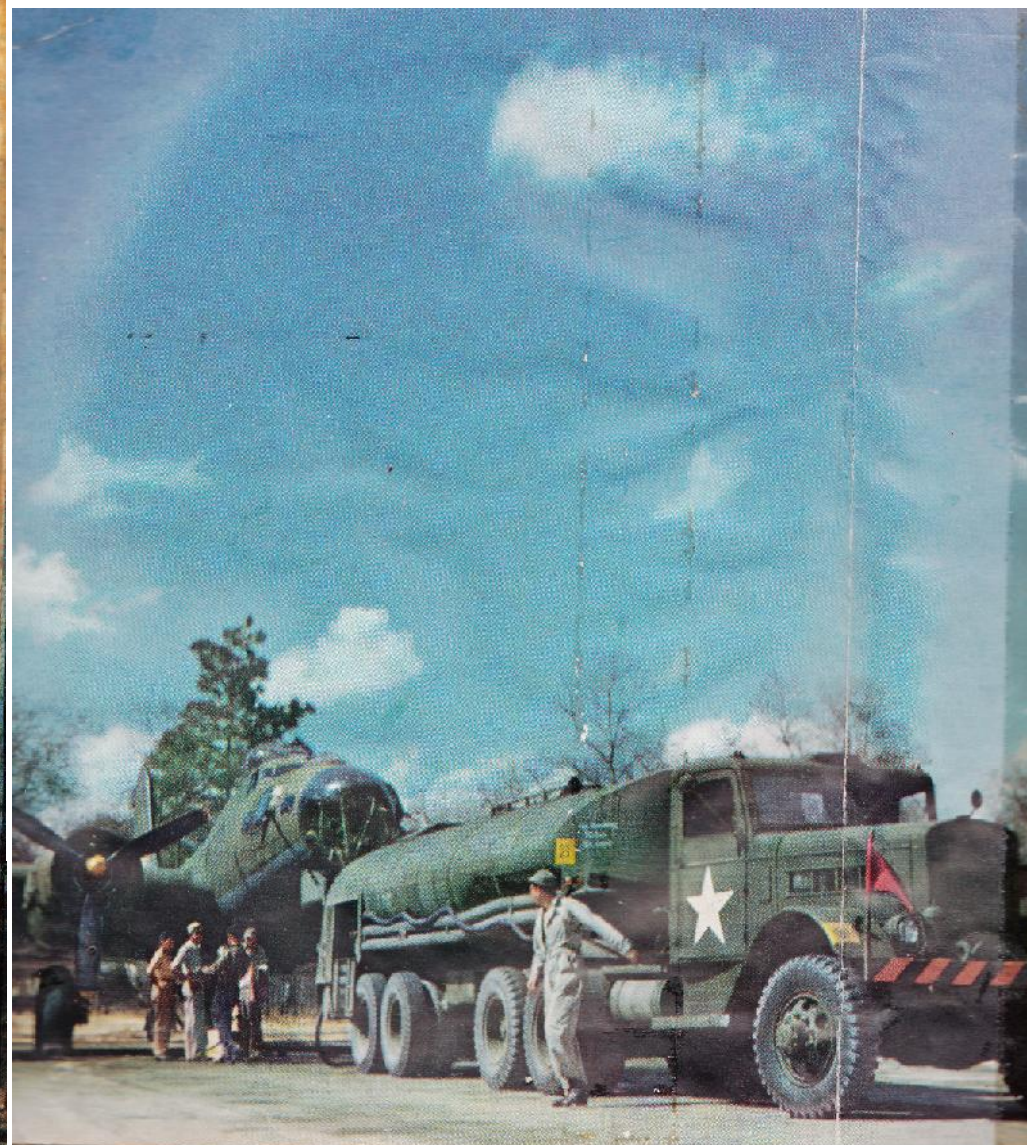
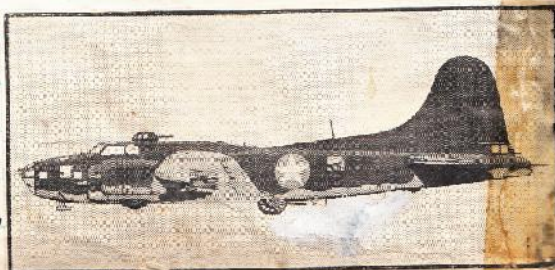


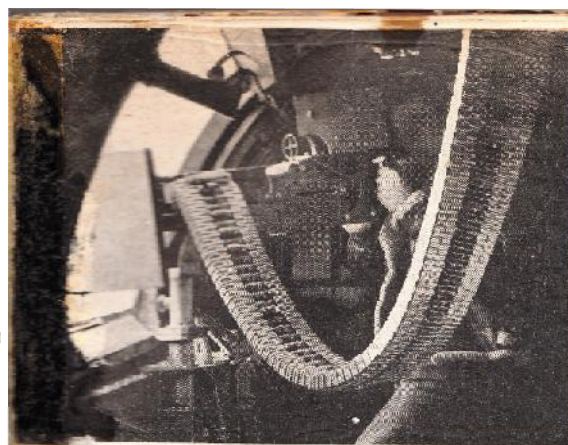
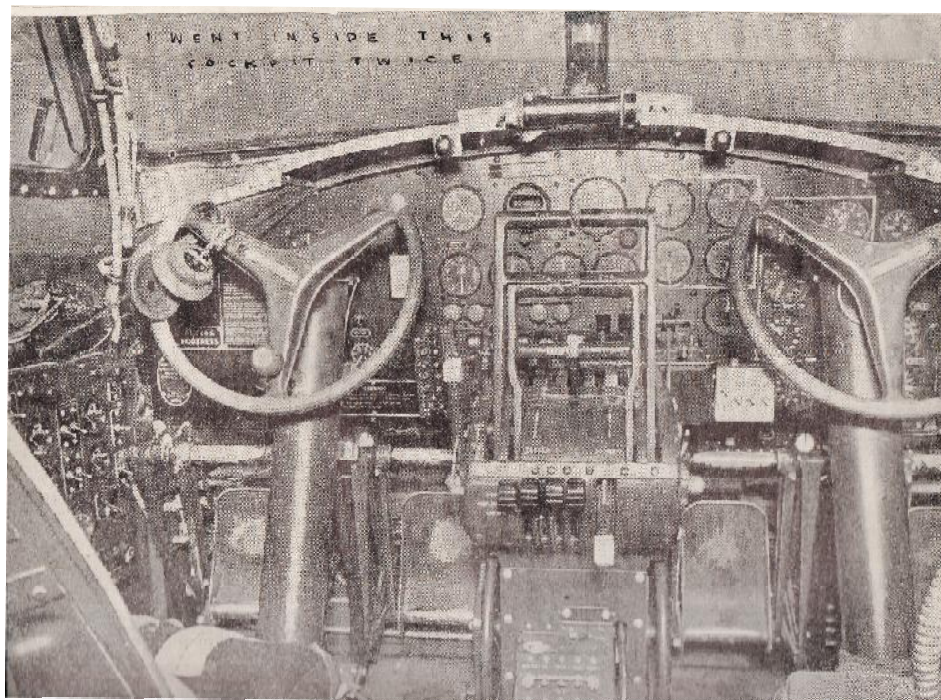
'YANKEE DOODLE'

THESE HISTORIC AIRCRAFT AND
THEIR CREWS AT WORK AT SUCH
CLOSE QUARTERS. AIR CREWS AND
GROUND CREWS ALIKE WERE MOST
FRIENDLY. THEY WENT OUT OF
THEIR WAY TO BE KIND TO US.
ALL THE BOYS OF THE DISTRICT
WERE ALWAYS WELCOME ON THE
DISPERSAL POINTS.

HERE FOLLOWS A LIST OF THE
AIRCRAFT I WAS ALLOWED INSIDE
ON DISPERSAL POINT NO 25. -
BOEING B-17E FORTRESS.
41-9045 "STINKY"

I SPENT PART OF EVERY DAY OF THAT WONDERFUL FORTNIGHT
WITH "STINKY" AND ITS CREW. THEY LET ME INSIDE THE
'FORT' NEARLY TWENTY TIMES, SHARED THEIR SWEETS
WITH US, TOLD US ABOUT THEIR HOMES, AND THE THING
WE ALL LIKED MOST, - ODD JOBS, SUCH AS DUSTING
AND LOADING AMMUNITION, (THEY GAVE US EACH A ROUND
OF .50 CALIBRE AS A
MOMENTO OF THEIR STAY)
CLEANING THE PERSPEX
OR HELPING THE CREW
WITH THEIR HEAVY CLOTHES
BEFORE A FLIGHT.





I HANDLED THE WAIST GUNS
LIKE THIS MANY TIMES.

WHILE DOING THESE SMALL
JOBS INSIDE THE AIRCRAFT
WE CONSIDERED OURSELVES
FULLY FLEDGED GROUNDCREW
MEMBERS AND DID OUR SHARE
OF 'SWEATING OUT' WITH THE
REST WHEN 'STINKY' WAS ON

A MISSION. BESIDE 'STINKY' ON DISPERSAL POINT 26 WAS -
BOEING B-17E FORTRESS 41-9043 'JOHNNY REB'
I WENT INSIDE ABOUT A DOZEN TIMES.

BOEING B-17E FORTRESS 41-9023 'YANKEE DOODLE'
LEADSHIP OF THE GROUP. WENT INSIDE TWICE.

BOEING B-17E FORTRESS 41-9013. 'BERLIN SLEEPER.'
WAS SHOWN OVER BY A NEGRO GUARD.

BOEING B-17E FORTRESS 41-9027 'BIRMINGHAM BLITZKRIEG'

I TOUCHED THE FOLLOWING
BOEING B-17E FORTRESSES.

41-9025, 'BUTCHER SHOP.'

41-9015, 'PEGGY D.'

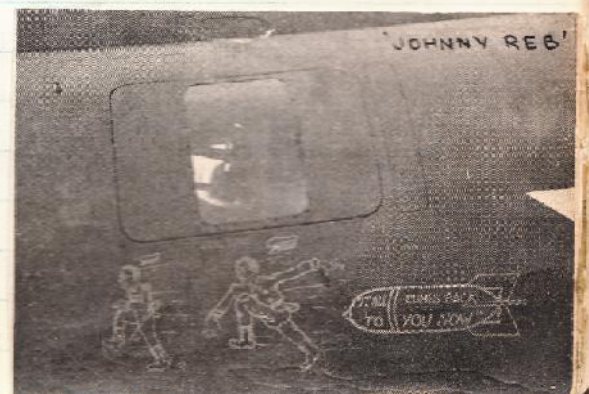
41-9042, 'BIG STUFF.'

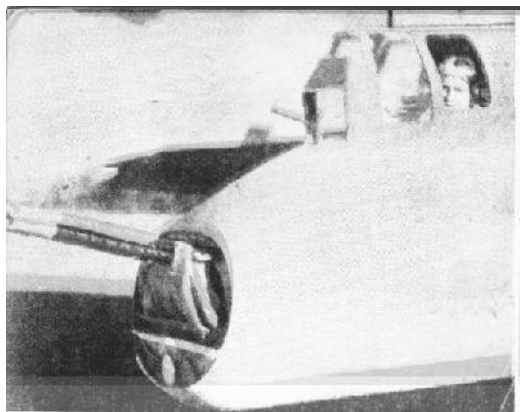
41-9036, 'BABY DOLL.'

41-9054, 'BAT OUTA HELL.'

41-2526

ONE MORNING I WATCHED A
TANK PAINT THIS ON THE SIDE
OF 'JOHNNY REB'





AUGUST 17, 1942.

A DAY THAT WILL GO DOWN IN HISTORY. IT WAS A CRITICAL DAY FOR VIII Bomber Command.

I QUOTE FROM THE OFFICIAL REPORT:

"TARGET GERMANY" - 1944

"AT 1526 THE FIRST FORTRESS TOOK OFF

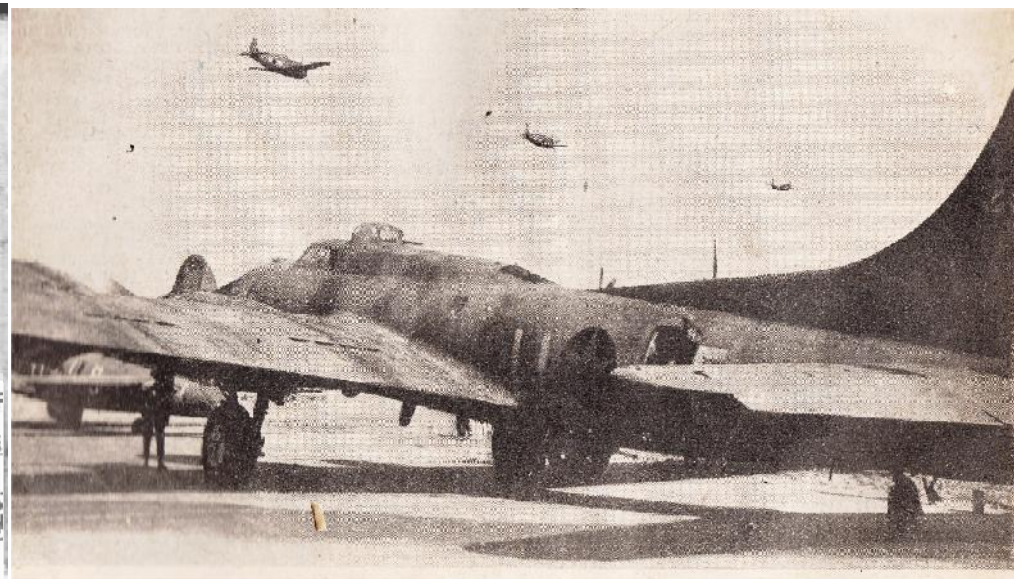
ELEVEN OTHERS FOLLOWED, THE C.G. OF THE VIII Bomber Command RIDING IN 'YANKEE DOODLE', LEAD SHIP OF THE SECOND FLIGHT OF SIX. THE TWELVE FORTRESSES WERE CARRYING ABOUT EIGHTEEN TONS OF BOMBS DESTINED FOR THE RAILWAY YARDS AT ROUEN. THERE WAS PLENTY OF ACTIVITY AT BOYINGDON AT THE END OF THIS SUMMER HOLIDAY.

THE BOMBS I SAW LOADED WERE PROBABLY DROPPED ON RAF RANGES FOR TRAINING PURPOSES.

SOME OF THE B-17'S WENT ALONG WITH THE BOMBING MISSIONS, FLYING APART FROM THE MAIN FORCE TO ACT AS DECOYS AND DRAW ENEMY FIGHTERS AWAY FROM THE REAL ACTION.



I OFTEN SAW PRESS PHOTOGRAPHERS TAKING PICTURES AT THE END OF THE RUNWAY.



THE RUNWAYS AT BOYINGDON WERE SHORTER THAN THOSE OF THE EAST ANGLIAN OPERATIONAL BASES, AND SOME MISJUDGEMENTS CAUSED ACCIDENTS IN THE FIELDS ON THE APPROACH. FROM A SPOTTER'S POINT OF VIEW, MY MAIN PROBLEM WAS A LARGE MATURE HEDGE BETWEEN THE ROAD AND THE AIRFIELD WITH NO REAL VANTAGE POINT TO WATCH THE TAKE-OFFS AND LANDINGS. THE SOLUTION WAS PROVIDED BY A B-17 FLYING FORTRESS DRIVER WHO, COMING DOWN THE RUNWAY, RAN OUT OF BRAKES, CONCRETE AND IDEAS, IN THAT ORDER. HE MADE A MAGNIFICENT HOLE IN THE HEDGE WHICH SERVED ALL THE YOUNG ENTHUSIASTS WELL FOR THE REST OF THE WAR.



AFTER A RAID ON DUTCH AIRFIELDS 'JOHNNY REB' LAGGED BEHIND AND WAS POUNCED UPON BY TWO FW 190'S. A 20. mm SHELL EXPLODED IN THE PILOTS COCKPIT, TWO ENGINES WERE DAMAGED BUT 'JOHNNY' STAGGERED IN, A SORRY MESS. AS SOON AS THE NOSE HATCH WAS OPENED BLOOD DRIPPED OUT, I DIDN'T WAIT TO SEE ANY MORE. CLEANING OUT 'STINKY'S' BALL TURRET WAS MORE IN MY LINE.

SEPTEMBER 6.

OUR USUAL GROUP OF SCHOOLBOYS WAS ASSEMBLED AT D.P. NO 25 TO SEE OUR FRIENDS OFF, BEFORE STARTING THE MOTORS 'STINKY'S' SKIPPER LEANED OUT OF HIS WINDOW AND CALLED - "CHEERIO BOYS, SEE YOU LATER", "GIVE 'EM HELL, CAPTAIN!" WE SHOUTED. 'STINKY' TAXIED OUT TO TAKE OFF. WE NEVER SAW HIM AGAIN. THIRTY FORTS TOOK OFF FROM BOYINGDON THAT AFTERNOON. IN THE EVENING I WAS PLAYING WITH DAN GRIFFIN ON NASHLIEGH HILL. WE SAW THE FORMATION RETURN..... THERE WERE TWENTY EIGHT.

FROM THEN ON THE DISPERSAL POINTS WERE OUT OF BOUNDS.



Bovingdon Airfield - Formal History 2

The 92nd group personnel settled down under Colonel Sutton but they were very unhappy with conditions at Bovingdon. The barracks were dirty and sanitary facilities were in poor conditions. Also the British food was not to their liking. However the Americans settled in and the locals generally made them very welcome although scuffles were frequent. The English pubs were a welcome retreat and they were offered free use of Chesham & Ley Hill Golf Course. The Americans also enjoyed our fish and chips and the company of local girls. Of course, these girls appreciated gifts of candy, nylons, cigarettes and items that were rationed in the UK. Early in January 1943 the 92nd transferred to Alconbury where it eventually reformed as a combat group. A few of the personnel and B-17E's remained at Bovingdon and most combat crews of other bomber units arriving in Britain during the next two years received their training at this station, which was assigned the label Station 112. As it was the nearest USAAF airfield to the Eighth Air Force and other command headquarters, Bovingdon housed several other units including the Eighth Air Force Headquarters Squadron and the Air Technical Section both with a variety of aircraft types.

General Eisenhower's personal B-17 was housed in Hangar No1.

Bovingdon was used by all manner of American aircraft being as it was the nearest Eighth Air Force base to London and various Command headquarters and was also a staging post for aircraft returning to the USA. All this activity was a great source of excitement to John and his young friends.

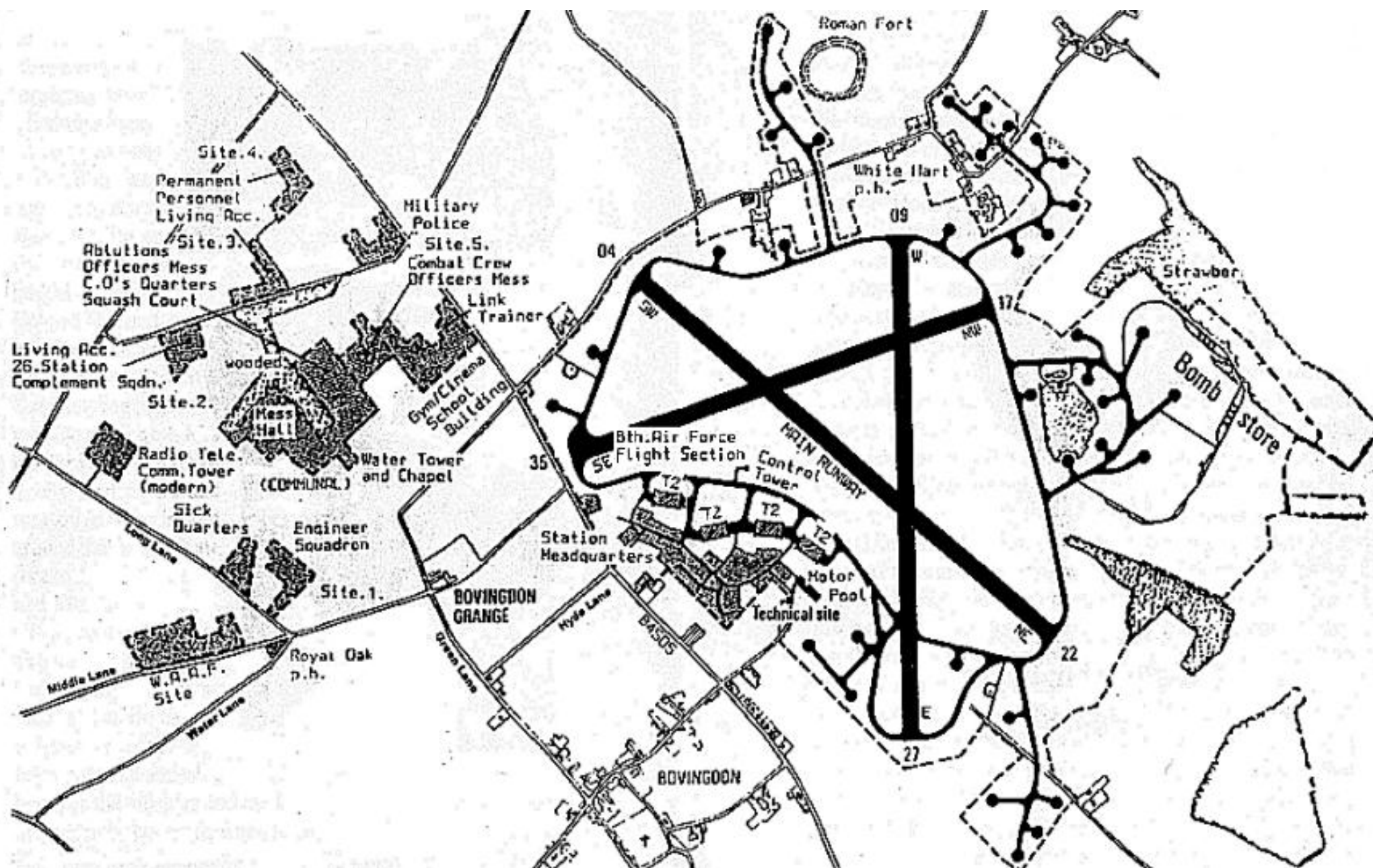
In the autumn of 1942 the crews of the 15th Photo Mapping Squadron of 3rd Photographic Group had been frequent visitors to the airfield before they moved to join the Twelfth Air Force in North Africa. The squadron's most famous airman was its Commanding Officer, Lt Colonel Elliot Roosevelt, one of the four sons of the US President. His mother Eleanor later officially visited the field. Most of the American film stars that came over to entertain the troops passed through Bovingdon, among them Bob Hope, Bing Crosby, Clark Gable, James Stewart, William Holden, Frances Langford and Glenn Miller.

Relationships with the locals improved greatly when Col. Howard Agne became Commanding Officer of Station 112. He visited many local organisations and young ladies were invited to the base for dances and children were invited for parties.

All the administration buildings and aircraft hangars were located on the airfield but the accommodation for servicemen was in a series of buildings located between Ley Hill Road, Long Lane and Shantock Hall Lane. In addition to the billets, there was a mess hall, cinema, chapel, clubs, education office and brick built bomb shelters were dotted around the area.

The Sites (see map on next page)





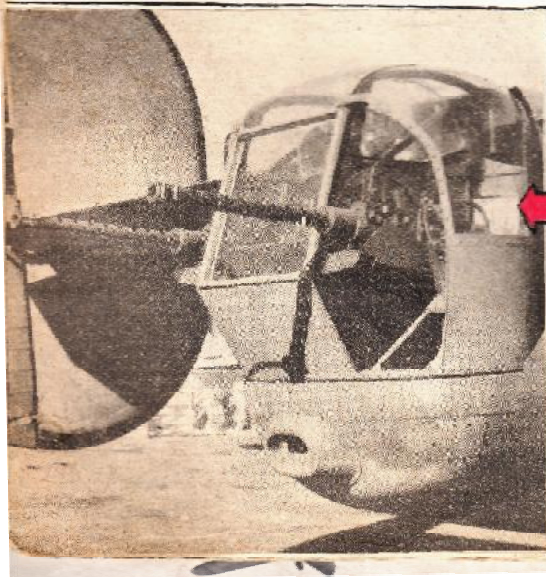


1943

I MANAGED TO ENTER THE RESTRICTED AREA AT BOVINGDON ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS BY CASUALLY PASSING A NOTICE WHICH THREATENED DEATH ON SIGHT. NEVERTHELESS, I FOUND MANY YANKS BEHIND THE WIRE WHO WERE PLEASED TO SHOW BOYS OVER THE AIRCRAFT.

I WENT INSIDE TWO AMERICAN AEROPLANES, FIRST OF WHICH WAS DOUGLAS A-20C-DO BOSTON AL672,5-

AN EX-R.A.F BOMBER. I WENT IN THE NOSE COMPARTMENT. (see photo) THE SECOND WAS A - CONSOLIDATED - FORD B-24D-CF LIBERATOR. 41-32744



I WAS SHOWN OVER BY A YOUNG MECHANIC, WHO CAME FROM ST LOUIS.

I SPENT A CONSIDERABLE TIME IN THE TAIL TURRET

IN MAY CHESHAM AND AMERSHAM HAD THEIR 'WINGS FOR VICTORY' WEEK

I WENT INSIDE THE - HAWKER HURRICANE F.I. P2434

WHICH WAS ON SHOW.



CHESHAM AND DISTRICT WINGS FOR VICTORY WEEK

JUNE 5th-12th

ASHLEY GREEN BELLINGDON CHARTRIDGE CHOLESBURY & HAWRIDGE LEY HILL ST. LEONARDS & BUCKLAND COMMON

TARGET
£150,000



**ONE SQUADRON OF
SPITFIRES**

**ONE SQUADRON OF
ALBACORES**

**POLICE & HOME GUARD
CRICKET MATCH**
On Saturday, June 5th, at Cricket Ground,
Commencing 2.30 p.m. **ADMISSION 1s.**

THE INDICATOR SHOWS THE WAY

Watch our Windows for...

**DISPLAY OF FURNITURE
SOFT FURNISHINGS, Etc.**

BUT—

**WATCH THE INDICATOR ABOVE
TO SEE YOUR SAVINGS MOUNT
JUNE 5th-12th**

**We Unite to Furnish the R.A.F. with
Two New Squadrons**

Inserted by courtesy of Messrs. BRANDON

GRAND FUN FAIR AND FETE

On **THURSDAY, JUNE 10th**
SIDE SHOWS RABBIT SHOW
TEAS
PUNCH AND TUDY

**BRING YOUR NATIONAL SAVINGS CERTIFICATE BOOK
WITH YOU**

DANCING IN THE EVENING
Admission by Ticket
Before the day, price 6d. On the day, price 8d.

**WISE SHOPPING MEANS
INCREASED SAVING**

**WISE SAVING WILL HELP US WIN
OUR WINGS!**

It is the duty of every citizen
to save during

WINGS FOR VICTORY WEEK
JUNE 5th-12th

Inserted by courtesy of Messrs. PATTERSON

AIR COMMODORE C. H. NICHOLAS, D.F.C., A.F.C.
will be the speaker at the inaugural meeting on:
Saturday, June 5th, at 8 p.m.
He will take the Stage in **The Avenue**,
in the Park, at a March-past
of the R.A.F. R.A.F. Regiment, V.A.A.F., A.C.U. and A.T.C.

ADMIRAL SIR E. EVANS, K.C.B., D.S.O.
will inspect the Parade of Army, R.A.F., R.A.F. Regiment
V.A.A.F., U.S.A.A.C., Chesham Company Home Guards,
Pre service Corps, and Civil Defence Services in
The Football Meadow, on
Sunday, June 6th, at 3.30 p.m.
The parade will then march to the Round, where the Admiral
will take the Salute.

MISS VALERIE HOBSON
will formally open the
FUN FAIR AND FETE
on **Thursday, June 10th,**
The gates will open at 2.30 p.m.

BOMBER COMMAND BAND Are all
ERIC MOSS'S (S) WING COMMANDERS performing
PIPE BAND OF THE during the
3RD BATTALION IRISH GUARDS week.

MYSTERY MAN
Look for announcement in next week's Bucks Examiner.
Remember: 1s order to qualify for a prize you must purchase
a coin before the end of the week.

EVERY BIRTH BORN
between 3 p.m. on Saturday, June 5th, and 7 p.m. on
Saturday, June 12th,
will be presented with a
SAVINGS CERTIFICATE
on application with proof of birth to the Savings Centre.

SEND A SAVINGS STAMP TO HITLER.
A bonus card will be available during the week in charge of a
steward who will be pleased to sell you all the Stamps
you require.

NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE
Exhibition of Model Aeroplanes by N.F.S. personnel will be
open all the week at the N.F.S. Premises, High Street,
Look out for the Effigy of Hitler.

THE SCOUT HUT, near Station
will be open all the week from 2-8 p.m., with photographs
of local men and women in the Service, Model Aeroplanes,
and Ministry of Information Photographs and Drawings.
No Entrance Fee.

SEE PROGRAMME for FULL PARTICULARS OF EVENTS DURING THE WEEK

THE INDICATOR CEREMONY

will take place each day (except Thursday) in
the **BROADWAY**, at 5.30 p.m. When well-
known speakers will announce the **SAVINGS**
TO DATE

MISS VALERIE HOBSON
will make the announcement on Thursday,
June 10th, at the
FUN FAIR and FETE
to be held in the Football Meadow

THE LEY HILL PLAYERS IN MUSIC HALL

On Wednesday, June 9th, in the Drill Hall at
8 p.m., and
Friday, June 11th, in the Drill Hall, at 8 p.m.
TICKETS for both nights 1s/6d.
From ... Mr. W. EAST, High Street.

ARE YOU SUFFERING FROM WAR SICKNESS?

there are very few cases in
this District, but the under-
mentioned Chesham chemists
wish to issue a

WARNING

The **DISEASE** is quite easily
recognised owing to the
victims lack of control over
the pocket or purse

THE CURE IS SIMPLE

Invest your money every
week in **WAR SAVINGS**—
All reserves must now be
mobilised to finish the war

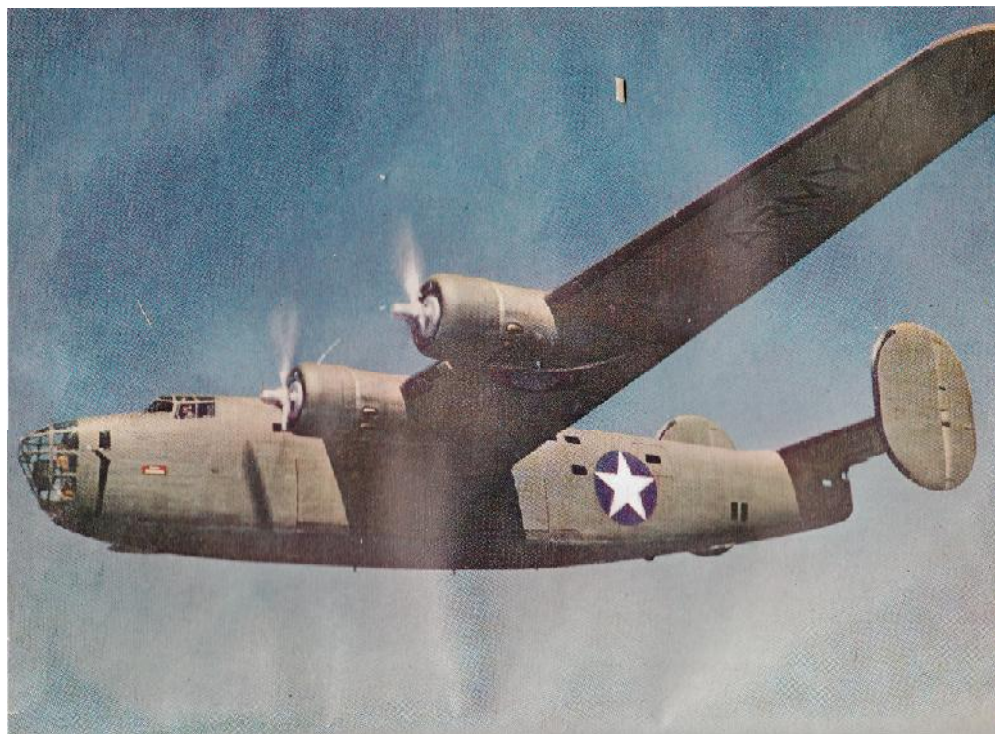
MAKE

"Wings for Victory" Week
(JUNE 5th-12th)

**HIT THE TARGET
AND THE
SQUANDER BUG**

Inserted by—
Messrs. BOOTS (Cash) Chemists
DAVIS
GARLICK
WEATHERILL





I OFTEN WENT INSIDE
THE AEROPLANE PRESENTED
TO AMERSHAM GRAMMAR
SCHOOL A.T.C. IT WAS A GENERAL AIRCRAFT MONOSPAR UNIVERSAL
EVEN MORE OFTEN I WENT IN THE TWO AIRCRAFT AT



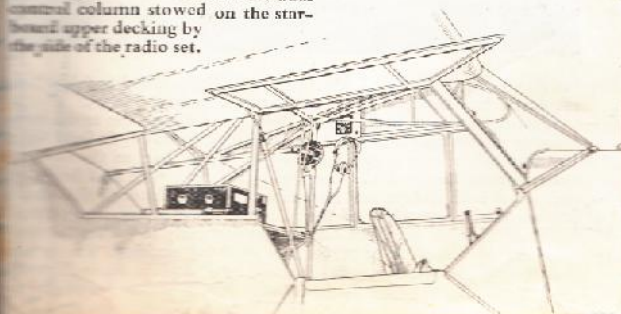
RGS HIGH WYCOMBE. THEY WERE
DE HAVILLAND D.H.60 GIPSY MOTH
WHICH I LATER HELPED TO BREAK UP.
HAWKER HIND WHICH I ALSO
HELPED TO BREAK UP, BUT IN A
MORE UNOFFICIAL CAPACITY.

DURING 1943, U.S. ARMY
OFFICERS FROM BOVINGDON
USED TO COME TO CHESHAM
TO DO THEIR SHOPPING
BY AIR. THEY LEFT THEIR CUBS IN THE TOP PARK. ONE
DAY I LOOKED INSIDE ONE OF THESE AEROPLANES —



PIPER L-4B CUB 41-1644.

Radio equipment installed in the L-4
liaison aeroplane. Note the extension
of transparent panels to well aft of
the wing, the reel aerial and the dual
control column stowed on the star-
board upper decking by
the side of the radio set.



I SAW SEVERAL OF
THESE CUBS LAND
AND TAKE ^{OFF} ON THE MAIN
ROAD BETWEEN BEAMOND
END AND HAZLEMERE
DURING U.S. ARMY EXERCISES



1944

D-DAY JUNE 6th

ARNHEM, Sept 17th

FEBRUARY 1944. My FIRST B-17G. I WAS ABLE TO LOOK OVER ONE OF THE FIRST FORTRESSES EQUIPPED WITH A CHIN' TURRET TO VISIT BOVINGDON.

30 MARCH. AVRO 683 LANCASTER B mk III. THIS BOMBER FORCE LANDED AS IT WAS RETURNING FROM A RAID THE PREVIOUS NIGHT ON LYONS, FRANCE. IT ENDED UP IN A FIELD OF KALE AFTER TOUCHING DOWN IN A PASTURE, RUNNING ACROSS A ROAD, LEAVING A WING TIP ENTANGLED IN A TREE. I PICKED UP MANY LEAFLETS PRINTED IN FRENCH AND GERMAN FROM THE FLOOR OF THE AIRCRAFT.



AT THIS TIME BOMBER COMMAND AND THE AMERICAN AIR FORCE WERE BUILDING UP THEIR OFFENSIVE IN PREPARATION FOR THE ATTACK ON N.W. EUROPE. NIGHT AFTER NIGHT THE LANCASTERS, STIRLINGS AND HALIFAXES KEPT ME AWAKE AS THEY WENT OUT AND OFTEN AS THEY RETURNED IN THE MORNING. BY DAY THE FORTRESSES AND LIBERATORS ESCORTED

BY MUSTANGS AND THUNDERBOLTS OFTEN FORMATED OVER OUR PART OF THE COUNTRY PRIOR TO GOING OUT TO EUROPE. HOW EASY IT IS FOR ONE TO FORGET THOSE GIGANTIC FORMATIONS OF HUNDREDS OF AIRCRAFT AT A TIME GLINTING IN THE SUN AS THEY WHEELED AND CLIMBED INTO THE STRATOSPHERE



JUNE 2nd I SAW THE LARGEST FORMATION OF AMERICAN BOMBERS THAT I WAS TO SEE DURING THE WHOLE WAR.

THEY WERE B-17 FORTRESSES OF THE FIRST AIR DIVISION, U.S. 8th AIR FORCE. I HAD A GRANDSTAND VIEW FROM R.C.S PLAYING FIELD AND WAS ABLE TO SPOT AIRCRAFT OF THE FOLLOWING COMBAT GROUPS AND WINGS. -

91st B.G - BASSINGBOURN, CAMBRIDGE.

398th B.G - NUTHAMSTEAD, HERTS.

381st B.G - RIDGE WELL, ESSEX.

384th B.G - GRAFTON UNDERWOOD, NORTHANTS.

92nd B.G. PODOINGTON, BEDS.

THE LOWEST AIRCRAFT WERE FLYING AT ROOF-TOP HEIGHT WHILE THOSE AT THE TOP OF THE FORMATION WERE MAKING VAPOUR TRAILS. IT WAS ONE OF THE MOST AWE INSPIRING SIGHTS OF MY LIFE.

JUNE 6, D-DAY. AFTER THE USUAL NIGHT ACTIVITY OF THE BOMBERS I GOT UP EARLY FOR SCHOOL AND WAS ABOUT TO SIT DOWN TO BREAKFAST WHEN THERE WAS A ROAR OF ENGINES AND A FORMATION OF B-25 MITCHELLS SWEEP

OVER. THE MYSTERIOUS THING WAS THAT THEY HAD LARGE BLACK AND WHITE STRIPES ON WINGS AND FUSELAGE. ON THE BUS GOING TO SCHOOL WE COUNTED OVER A THOUSAND FORTRESSES, LIBERATORS, LANCASTERS, LIGHTNINGS AND SPITFIRE COMING BACK FROM THE BEACHES. THEN RUMOURS BEGAN TO FLY IN EARNEST, THE U.S. ARMY FIELD AMBULANCE UNIT WAS MOVING OUT OF PENN STREET IN WATERPROOFED VEHICLES. EXCITEMENT AMONG THE BOYS ROSE TO FEVER PITCH, WE HAD FALSE ALARMS BEFORE BUT THIS WAS THE REAL THING. WE HAD NOT HEARD ANYTHING OFFICIAL BUT JUST A GLANCE OUT OF THE WINDOW CONFIRMED THAT SOMETHING BIG WAS HAPPENING. AT 11:00 THE SCHOOL ASSEMBLED FOR THE OFFICIAL RADIO ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE INVASION WAS ON. WE HAD PRAYERS FOR THE MEN WHO, AT THAT MOMENT WERE LANDING ON THE BEACHES.



JULY 8-9 BOEING B-17G-10-BO FORTRESS. 42-97258

THIS BOMBER LIMPED HOME WITH ITS FORMATION BUT HAD TO LAND AT BOVINGDON. AS IT ROLLED DOWN RUNWAY 22 A BRAKE FAILED, IT CAME OFF THE RUNWAY, THROUGH THE HEDGE OUT INTO





THE ROAD WHERE IT HELD UP TRAFFIC FOR SOME TIME, TO THE DELIGHT OF BOYS LIKE MYSELF WHO WERE ABLE TO CLAMBER OVER IT.

MEANWHILE THE GERMAN FLYING BOMBS HAD BEGUN TO FALL. A LAUNCHING^{SITE} SOMEWHERE IN N.W. EUROPE WAS LINED UP ON OUR AREA. I SAW THE PALL OF SMOKE FROM EACH OF THE MISSILES THAT FELL AT CHESHAM BOIS, BELLINGDON, AND LEY HILL. I COLLECTED MANY PIECES OF THE "DOODLEBUGS" WHICH DROPPED AT TERRIERS, THIS BLEW OUT A NUMBER OF WINDOWS AT R.G.S. AND THE ONE WHICH DROPPED AT BEAMOND END. ONE EVENING I SAW A D.H. MOSQUITO SHOOT DOWN A V.I INTO A FIELD AT BELLINGDON. WE GREW QUITE ACCUSTOMED TO THE EXPLOSIONS WHICH MADE THE HOUSE ROCK AND FLUNG OPEN DOORS AND WINDOWS, THE COLUMN OF BLACK SMOKE RISING TO MARK THE SPOT WHERE THE "PILOTLESS PLANE" HAD LANDED, AND THE SIGHT OF PILES OF RUBBLE, FALLEN CEILINGS AND BROKEN WINDOWS.



I SAW SEVERAL V.I FLYING BOMBS FROM HIGH WYCOMBE. MY NEAREST ESCAPE WAS IN JULY. I WAS WALKING ACROSS THE SCHOOL FIELD WITH SOME PALS WHEN A FLYING BOMB CAME INTO VIEW, THE MOTOR CUT AND IT BEGAN TO



DIVE TOWARDS US. BUT IT FLATTENED OUT AND SKIMMED ACROSS THE VALLEY TO CRASH NEAR BOOKER AIRFIELD.

(left) LEY HILL, THE CRATER

SEPTEMBER 17. WAS A BEAUTIFUL SUNDAY MORNING, I WAS IN THE GARDEN, EVERYTHING WAS AT PEACE, NOT A SOUND THEN FROM THE NORTH-WEST CAME A ROAR, STIRLING G.T. mk IV's TOWING HORSAS, HALIFAXES, ALBEMARLES AND DAKOTAS, ALL TOWING HORSAS. THEY PASSED OVER TO THE SOUTH-EAST, AT FIRST WE JUST SAID -

"PRACTICE". BUT ON LOOKING OUT OF THE UPSTAIRS WINDOWS IT WAS CLEAR THAT SOMETHING BIG WAS

ON. FROM WE COUNTED GLIDERS FROM THE I CYCLED



DESIGNED BY EDWARD SEAGO

THE HOUSE OVER 1500 AND TUGS ROAD AS TO CONFER

WITH THE BOYS I SAW A HORSA BREAK LOOSE FROM A STIRLING AND LAND AT HAWRIDGE

An other observer, who flew in a Stirling towing a glider, said: "We saw hundreds of points the size of pin-heads in a clearing between large areas of wooded country. As we drew nearer these points became discarded parachutes."

You are about to take part in an airborne operation transcending in importance even the one launched on D-Day itself.

You are taking part in one of the greatest airborne operations in military history. On the success of your mission to-day—on the navigation and flying skill and courage of the aircrews and the skill and courage and speed of the landing force—rests the difference between a quick decision in the west and a long-drawn-out battle. I know I can depend on all of you. God speed to you."

AIRBORNE FORCE 8th ARMY VETERANS

(Continued from P. 1, Column 4)

They stretch as far as I can see in every direction. Holland, with its criss-cross of canals and waterways, is below. "Action station" has just been signalled by the pilot. The paratroops are lined up. We are over the dropping zone. The first man has just gone over. As he disappeared, he shouted: "Adolf, here I come." The greatest airborne operation in history has begun. I must close this despatch. I am number 19. My turn to jump is near. If I delay too long I shall land on the wrong side.

—Scores of gliders on the ground, some of which figures were emerging. In a lane on the border of the dropping zone I saw a jeep with its trailer.

TANKS AND GUNS LANDED BY AIR

By Air Correspondent HOWARD WILLIAMS

AIRBORNE

LANDINGS WENT LIKE CLOCKWORK

STRONG ESCORT

The take-off from the British airfields for the airborne invasion of Holland was in brilliant sunshine. After breakfast the troops were taken out in trucks towards the array of parked aircraft and gliders.

They were heavily armed and carried on their backs almost all they needed for the fighting to come.

They clambered quickly into the gliders while the Dakota transport planes' engines warmed up.

In an incredibly short space of time the gliders and aircraft had swallowed up the troops and aircrews and were taking to the air in neat, swift order.

In a few minutes all the squadrons from the several neighbouring airfields taking part were airborne and swept on to start their long journey—one of the longest ever undertaken by the R.A.F. on an airborne troop mission.

"THRILLING SIGHT"

The cover provided for the landings was on a scale never before attempted. Airfields within fighter reach of the path to be taken by the stream of tow-planes and gliders were put out of commission.

With the tugs and gliders went the greatest mass of fighters and fighter-bombers in history.

The pilot of an R.A.F. reconnaissance Spitfire flew low over the British and American sectors within a few moments of the last glider having landed. "It was the most thrilling sight I have ever seen," he said.

"The gliders were laid out on the landing zones as if they had been placed there by hand. They were all bang in the right spot and unloading was going on. In one place I got right down and saw the local people out in their Sunday best lending a hand with the unloading.

"In another landing zone the troops were already leaning over an orchard wall talking to a crowd of girls."

It was the first employment of Lt.-Gen. Breerton's recently formed First Allied Airborne Army. His two air commanders, Maj.-Gen. Williams and Air Vice-Marshal Hollingshurst, led in their troops and directed operations over Holland.

The clouds lifted to provide perfect target visibility. The pilots of both American and R.A.F. troop-carrier planes reported good results both in paratroop and in glider drops.

American C.G.4A, Waco, and British Horsa gliders were used. They were filled with troops and supplies, including light guns, jeeps, ammunition and radio equipment.

The first troop-carrier plane was flown by Lt.-Col. Joel E. Crouch, of California, who also led the airborne invasions of Normandy and Southern France.

Wing-Comdr. H. J. W. Meakin, the pilot of a Mosquito, who took films of the landing, said: "It looked as if the whole thing went like clockwork. The gliders landed exactly on their targets."

DUTCH FIGHTERS

An all-Dutch Spitfire squadron formed part of the escorting forces, which included squadrons of Typhoons and Mustangs. A Dutch fighter pilot told afterwards of how Spitfires accompanied the gliders and towing craft for many miles over Dutch territory and saw them safely to the dropping areas.

They weaved around the troop-carrying planes, but met no enemy fighters.

While the Spitfires carried on this escort work several American squadrons of Typhoons and Mustangs, flying at low altitude, went for any German anti-aircraft gun sites that showed any signs of retaliation.

This pilot said that the vast number of troop-carrying planes taking part in the operation looked like a huge cloud in the sky. "They came in in tight formation and were neatly bunched together."

He also described large inundations on the islands in the mouth of the Scheldt, where there was no sign of life. The flooding was evidently caused by letting in the sea.

Up to 1,000 strong Fortresses yesterday morning swung over the Holland. They were escorted by Mosquitoes. Two bombers were lost.

Just before the glider landings tactical air force attacked German barracks. Air Force landed several strong bombing and strafing forces of the Second R.A.F. Holland airfields in the German battery on Sturday night. The Mosquitoes were also attacking the R.A.F. over Brunswick. A force of aircraft are missing.

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FROM ARNHEM the enemy is receiving the first news from the Allies from Dutch paratroops.

A few seconds after the observer saw the towing plane had been shot down. Our pilot had been shaken by the ground fire and had been determined on to carry out his mission. He went to leave a message to the German territory by dropping our tow-rope over the border.

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LATER WE HEARD THAT THEY HAD LANDED

AT ARNHEM, HOLLAND. THE NEXT DAY-

SEPTEMBER 18. THE SECOND AIR LIFT OF

OVER 500 SKYTRAINS AND HAIGS PASSED

IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON EN ROUTE FOR

EINDHOVEN. AS I WATCHED FROM AN

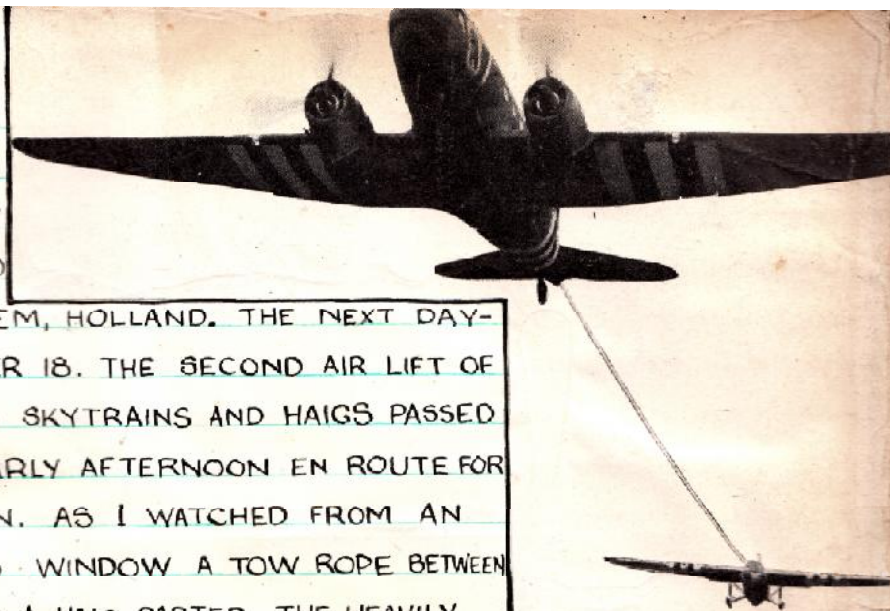
UPSTAIRS WINDOW A TOW ROPE BETWEEN

A C-47 AND A HAIG PARTED. THE HEAVILY

LADEN GLIDER SLIPPED AWAY FROM THE FORMATION AND SWOOPED

DOWN TO LAND NEAR COWCROFT WOOD. THE SKYTRAIN CIRCLED

THE SPOT DANGLING THE EMPTY NYLON ROPE. I RUSHED OVER

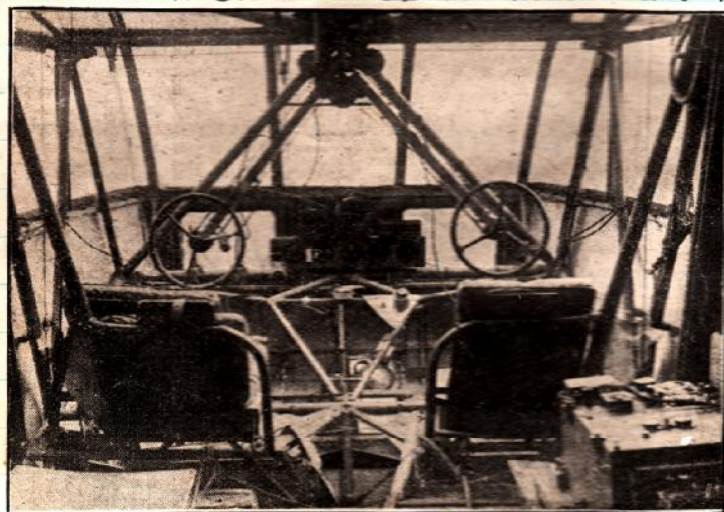




THE FIELDS TO THE FIELD WHERE
THE GLIDER LAY TO FIND FIFTEEN
HUSKY AMERICANS, ARMED TO THE

TEETH, LIFBELTS INFLATED, ANGRILY SHAKING THEIR FISTS AT THE
ARMADA ABOVE, BITTERLY DISSAPOINTED AT LANDING IN PEACEFUL
CHESHAM INSTEAD OF BATTLE TORN HOLLAND.

AFTER THEY HAD MANAGED TO CALM DOWN, AND BOXES OF
EXPLOSIVES REMOVED FROM THE AIRCRAFT I MANAGED TO
HAVE MYSELF SHOWN OVER THE GLIDER WHICH WAS A —



WACO CG-4A-BB BUILT BY BABCOCK AIRCRAFT, DELAND, FLORIDA.

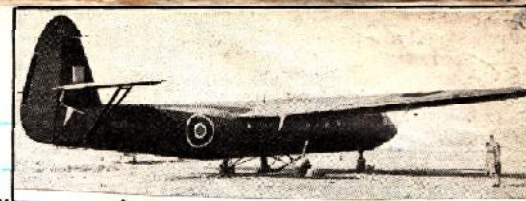
NAMED "THE HAWK" THIS GLIDER WAS ADORNED WITH UNPRINTABLE
REMARKS CHALKED ON AT THE LAST TENSE MOMENTS BEFORE TAKE-
OFF. THE CREW HAD OBVIOUSLY NOT INTENDED TO LAND IN A
COUNTRY WHERE THEY COULD BE UNDERSTOOD.

SEPTEMBER 18.

AIRSPPEED HORSA A.mk II.

THIS GLIDER LANDED AT AMERSHAM

AFTER BREAKING LOOSE FROM A TUG STIRLING ON THE WAY
TO ARNHEM ON SEPTEMBER 17. THE R.A.F GUARDS ALLOWED ALL
THEIR SCHOOLBOY VISITORS INSIDE THE HORSA WHICH CARRIED
TWO JEEPS LOADED WITH 6pdr ANTI-TANK AMMUNITION.



OCTOBER 4. SEVERAL
C-47's LANDED CARRYING
JEEPS AND TAXIED ROUND TO
THE WHEPLEY HILL DISPERSAL
AREA TO UNLOAD. I HELPED?
AN AMERICAN CREW TO
UNLOAD THE JEEP FROM THEIR
DOUGLAS C-47A-10-DK.42-10042

SKYTRAIN

OCTOBER 12. NOORDUYN UC-64A-10-ND. NORSEMAN 43-5395.

THIS MACHINE WAS THE PERSONAL AIRCRAFT OF Maj B.C. REED.

Maj REED OFTEN

USED TO VISIT 708 Sq
A.T.C. AND TOOK MANY
OF THEM UP FOR FLIGHTS
THE PICTURE ON THE NEXT
PAGE SHOWS THE PILOTS
SEATS IN THE C-64.



Bovingdon Airfield - Formal History 3

The most famous B17 to fly out of Bovingdon during the period 1942 to 44 was the “Memphis Belle” which returned to the USA in June 1943 after 25 missions. It later was featured in a popular movie. Later the site was the location for a number of large scale movies.

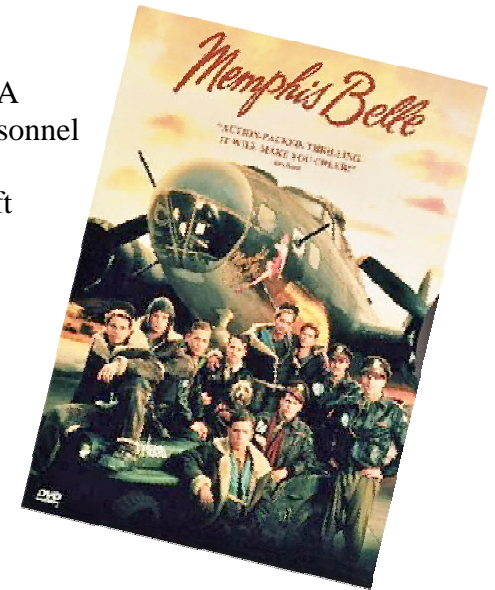
In late 1944 the Centre’s work was phased out. The advanced training of crews had improved greatly back home in the USA and it was decided that Bomber Groups would be responsible for their own operational training. Most of the remaining personnel at Bovingdon were assigned to the Air Disarmament Command but their stay was brief. The airfield was taken over by the US Air Transport Command. They mainly operated C47 Dakotas which were a feature in the local skies until the USAF left Bovingdon in 1962.

The RAF were also back at Bovingdon by Spring 1946 for a brief stay before it was handed over to the Ministry of Civil Aviation. A number of commercial airlines such as BOAC, Hunting Clan, Shorts and Harland Bros were based there.

By 1949 the American 7531st Air Base Squadron came to the airfield along with communication and support units. They also operated Dakotas. The 7531st squadron is commemorated with a plaque on the front of the village memorial hall.

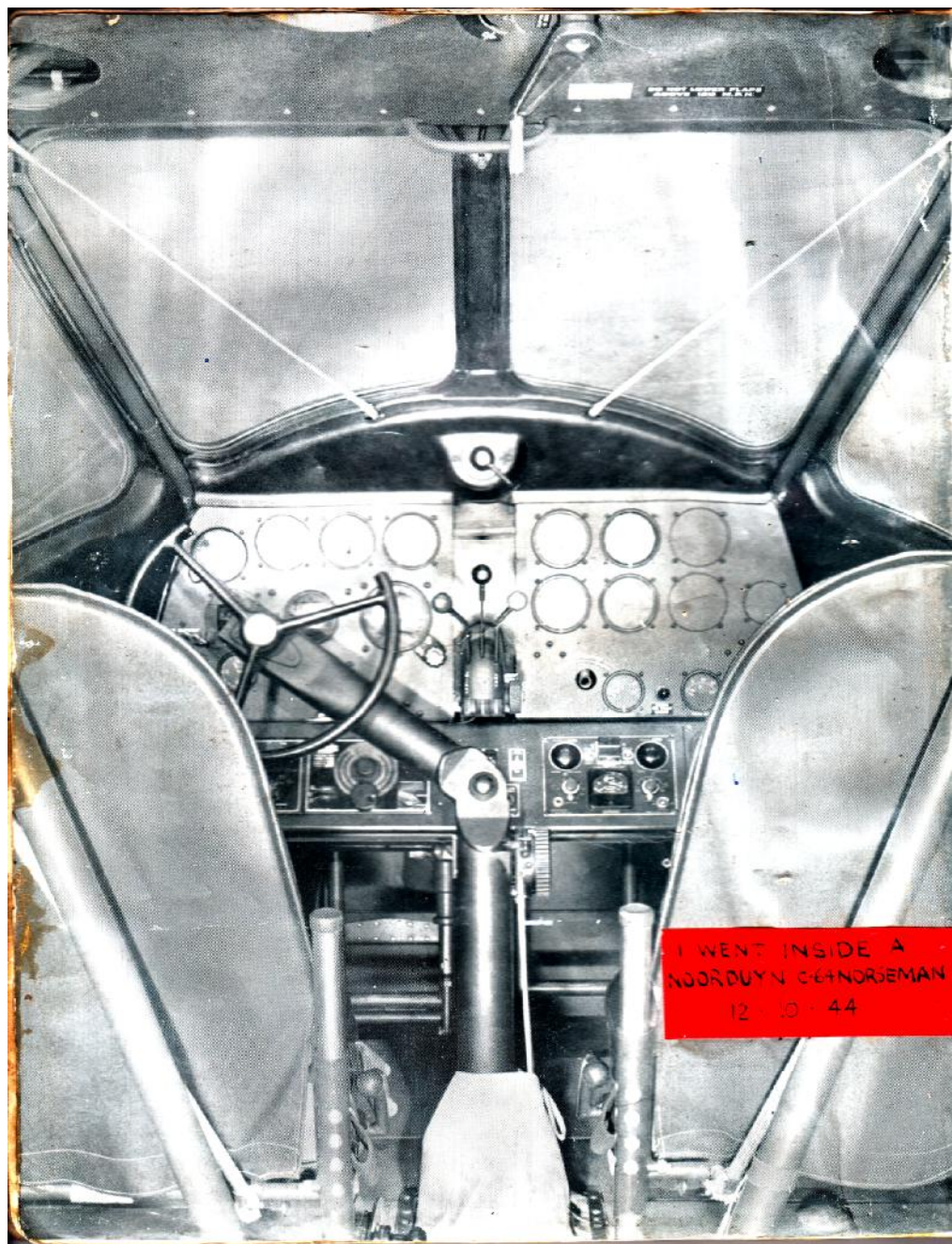
From 1962 the RAF Southern Command Squadron operated from Bovingdon and their Anson C19 planes also became a familiar site in the local skies.

Flying at Bovingdon eventually ceased in January 1969 and in 1978 the site was sold, the technical site being developed into The Mount prison.





The local pubs became very popular with the American troops. Here a group are relaxing with P.C. Lord, the local bobby, and Horace Gurney, the landlord of The Three Horseshoes at Pudds Cross.



I WENT INSIDE A
DOORDUYN GEMORSEMAN
12-10-44

1945

THE YEAR OF VICTORY.



JANUARY 4.

DOUGLAS A-20J-20-DO HAVOC .43-86758.

BUILT BY DOUGLAS AT SANTA MONICA, CALIFORNIA.

PARKED ON DISPERSAL POINT №27. I HELPED A GROUND CREW
MAN SHAPE FROST FROM THE PERSPEX. THIS MAN, WHOSE
HOME WAS IN GREAT FALLS, MONTANA, U.S.A. SHOWED ME ROUND
THE INTERIOR OF THE AIRCRAFT.

JANUARY 10

CONSOLIDATED B-24J-10-FO LIBERATOR 42-15162

BUILT BY FORD MOTOR CO. WILLOW RUN, MICHIGAN.

THIS WAS ON THE SAME DISPERSAL POINT AS THE HAVOC.
MEMBERS OF THE CREW ALLOWED ME TO GO INSIDE
THIS LIBERATOR WHICH WAS CALLED "MUFFIN RED".
IT HAD SEEN ACTION WITH THE 389th BOMBARDMENT
GROUP OF THE 2nd COMBAT WING, 2nd AIR DIVISION, U.S. ARMY
THE 389th B.G WAS BASED AT HETHEL, NORFOLK.





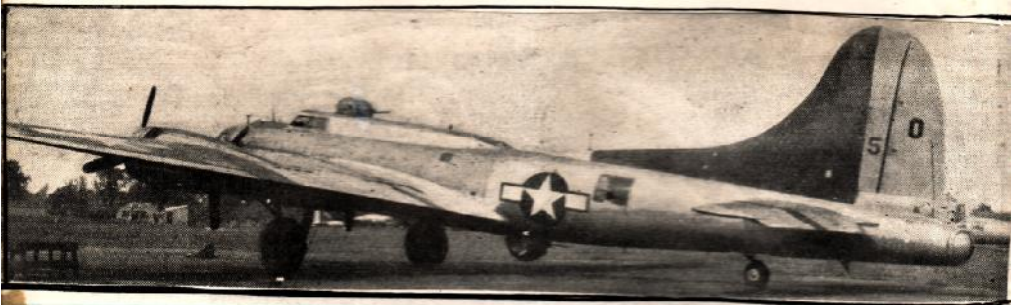
JANUARY 12.

BOEING B-17G-10-VE FORTRESS 43-38792

THIS FORTRESS WAS THE STATION 'HACK' FOR SOME TIME. IT WAS PILOTED BY Maj. B.C. REED WHO FLEW 'NIFTY' NIGHTINGALE AND 'MAC' McQUEEN OF 708sq DOWN TO BRISTOL IN THIS FORT WHICH WAS CALLED 'PETROL PACKING MAMMA'. IT WORE DESERT CAMOUFLAGE. I WENT INSIDE THE REAR FUSELAGE. ON THE SAME DAY I TOUCHED N-BV BROTHER OF 'PETROL PACKING MOTHER' WHICH WAS A-BV. N-BV WAS A -

BOEING B-17G-90-VE FORTRESS 43-43631

WHICH WAS NATURAL SILVER ALL OVER. BOTH OF THESE FORTRESSES LIVED ON DISPERSAL POINTS OPPOSITE THE 'WHITE HART'



IN APRIL I WAS LUCKY TO PUT MY HEAD THROUGH THE CREW HATCH OF A - NORTHROP P-61B-10-NO. 42-25538 BLACK WIDOW BUILT AT HAWTHORNE, CALIFORNIA. PAINTED HIGH GLOSS BLACK



ALL OVER WITH RED NUMBERS THIS BLACK WIDOW PARKED ON DISPERSAL POINT NO 27.

IN THE SAME HOLIDAY I LOOKED THROUGH THE REAR DOOR OF AN OLD VETERAN, 'JERSEY BOUNCE' ON DISPERSAL POINT 25

BOEING B-17F-40-DL FORTRESS 42-5263 WW.

APRIL 20.

41-24539 arrived BOV 27.7.43

DOUGLAS C-47A-DL SKYTRAIN 42-10053 H. J5

I TOUCHED THIS SKYTRAIN WHICH CARRIED TROOPS OF THE US 101st AIRBORNE DIVISION TO BASTOGNE



VE

ON MAY 8th WE CELEBRATED THE UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER IN EUROPE! - NO MORE BUZZ-BOMBS OR V-2's! THERE WILD REJOICING, THE YANKS WENT MAD. THEIR FIREWORK DISPLAY WAS WORTH SEEING, AND WORTH STAYING AT BOVINGDON UNTIL THE EARLY HOURS

THUS WITH 'OUR' WAR OVER THE JOB OF U.S. ARMY IN E.T.O WAS OVER. THE AIRCRAFT HAD TO BE FERRIED BACK TO AMERICA IN PREPARATION FOR THE PACIFIC WAR. SO BOVINGDON AS H.Q OF U.S. ARMY AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND WAS VERY IMPORTANT. WITH THE WAR OVER, SECURITY RESTRICTIONS WERE RELAXED ON THE DISPERSAL





POINTS AND IT WAS EASY TO INSPECT THE MANY TYPES OF AIRCRAFT WHICH OVERFLOWED ON TO THE D.P.'S FROM THE CROWDED AIRFIELD. WITH SCHOOL CERTIFICATE COMING ON I HAD TO HAVE PLENTY OF FRESH AIR ROUND THE BRAINBOX, SO COUPLED WITH LENGTHENING EVENINGS CONDITIONS WERE PERFECT. I WENT TO THE AIRFIELD PRACTICALLY EVERY EVENING, MANAGING TO TOUCH SOME AIRCRAFT, TRY TO OPEN DOORS AND COCKPIT CANOPIES NEARLY EVERY TIME I WENT. I WENT OVER MOST OF THE FOLLOWING MANY TIMES.

LOCKHEED P-38-J-15-LO LIGHTNING

44-14651 Q3-Q

HALF-BLACK, HALF-SILVER RADAR NIGHT FIGHTER. I CLIMBED ON THE CENTRE-SECTION AND LOOKED

INTO BOTH COCKPITS. I SHOWED JUDY ROUND Q3-Q. IT WAS THE



FIRST AEROPLANE SHE HAD TOUCHED. AT THE TIME THE RADAR P-38 WAS TOP SECRET.



NORTH-AMERICAN P-51D-25-NA. MUSTANG. 44-14310. Q3-N.

BY KIND PERMISSION OF THE GROUNDCREW I SPENT A MOST GLORIOUS HALF-HOUR SITTING IN THE COCKPIT READING THE PILOT'S LOG BOOK WHICH WAS PROPPED AGAINST THE GYRO-SIGHT.



IT WAS A GREAT FEELING SITTING THERE WITH THE PERSPEX CANOPY CLOSED OVER MY HEAD. THAT GROUNDCREW MAN HAD A

VERY SOFT

SPOT FOR BOYS,

ESPECIALLY ON

SATURDAY AFTERNOONS!



LOCKHEED P-38J-20-LO LIGHTNING.

Q3-P. 44-23162. "IWO JIMA" THIS LIGHTNING LIVED ON DP. 25. FOR A LONG TIME. IT HAD A BOMBARDIER NOSE FOR USE AS A LEADSHIP FOR FIGHTER-BOMBER FORMATIONS. THE HATCH



FOR THE BOMB-AIMER WAS OFTEN LEFT OPEN SO IT WAS SIMPLE TO STAND ON THE NOSEWHEEL AND PEER AT THE MAZE OF EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR HIGH FLYING AND PRECISION HIGH LEVEL BOMBING.

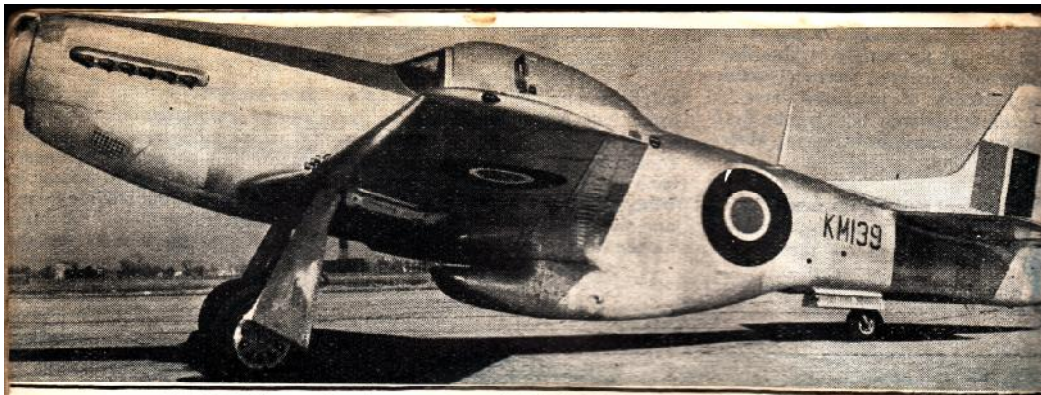
A YELLOW MAP OF THE ISLAND OF IWO JIMA WAS PAINTED ON THE NOSE

REPUBLIC P-47D-25-RE THUNDERBOLT. 42-26626. Q3-D.

I CLIMBED ON TO THE WING OF THIS FIGHTER MANY TIMES TO PEER THROUGH THE PERSPEX TEAR-DROP AT THE COMPLICATED COCKPIT.

I AUTOGRAPHED THE WHITE STAR OF THE NATIONAL MARKING ON THE SIDE OF THE FUSELAGE.





NORTH AMERICAN P-51 K-10-NT MUSTANG 44-13426 Q3-R

I STOOD ON THE WING TO INSPECT THE COCKPIT WHEN A PARTY OF NORTH-AMERICAN ENGINEERS CAME TO SEE HOW THEIR PRODUCTS WERE STANDING UP TO BATTLE CONDITIONS

REPUBLIC P-47D -30- RA THUNDERBOLT 44-20439 Y2-C.

THIS AIRCRAFT CARRIED THREE PRACTICE BOMBS WHICH WERE USED FOR GROUND-STRAFING TRAINING IN THE LEY-HILL CLAY-PITS.



REPUBLIC P-47N-5-RE THUNDERBOLT 44-88679 Q3-G

I SHELTERED FROM A STORM BENEATH THE WING OF THIS AEROPLANE WHICH CARRIED ROCKETS AS SHOWN ABOVE
JULY 10.

FAIRCHILD UC-61A-FB 42-38204. TOUCHED.

JULY 13

BRITAIN'S AIRCRAFT EXHIBITION
LONDON



I TOUCHED THE FOLLOWING AIRCRAFT -

HANDLEY-PAGE HALIFAX Bmk III. FAIREY FIREFLY F.I

BRISTOL BEAUFIGHTER T.F.X AIRSPED Horsa A.II

DE HAVILLAND DH98 MOSQUITO B.XVI GLDSTER E/28/39

AVRO LANCASTER B.III VICKERS SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE F.IXe.

VICKERS SUPERMARINE WALRUS A.S.R.II.

I WENT INSIDE THE MOSQUITO
MM 137.

TAYLORCRAFT AUSTER A.O.P IV.

HAWKER TEMPEST F.V.

also various
MODELS, GUNS, BOMBS
AND
TURRETS etc.



I SAW THIS EXHIBITION
AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER



AUGUST 2

DOUGLAS C-47A-20-DL SKYTRAIN 42-10021

I WENT INSIDE THIS
EX-PARATROOP CARRIER.

AUG 4



CURTISS C-46A-5-CU COMMANDO 44-24706.

I LOOKED ROUND THIS COMMANDO WHICH HAD TOWED A CLIDER
IN THE RHINE CROSSING. IT WAS PARKED ON DISPERSAL POINT 26.
AUGUST 6.

AT 6:00 P.M I HEARD THE MOMENTOUS ANNOUCEMENT
THAT THE ATOMIC BOMB HAD FLATTENED THE JAPANESE
CITY OF HIROSHIMA. IT WAS DROPPED BY THE B-29 SUPERFORTRESS



"ENOLA GAY"

SEPTEMBER 2. 1945 10:30am (TOKYO TIME)

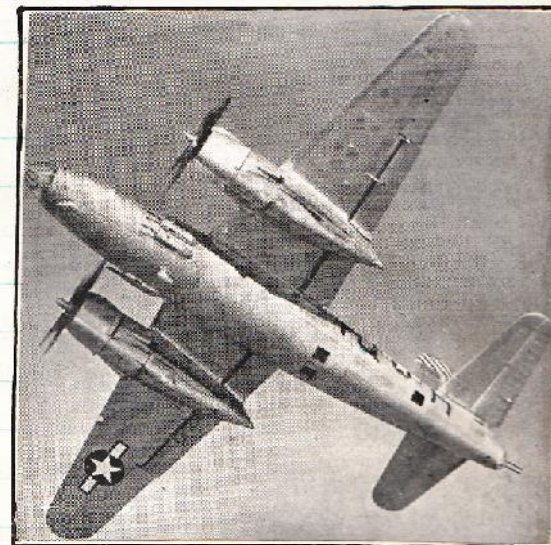
THE WAR ENDS.

SEPTEMBER 9.

MARTIN TB-26G-MO MARAUDER 44-52731

THIS TRAINING MARAUDER
STOOD ON DISPERSAL POINT
25.

I WALKED UNDERNEATH
THE AIRCRAFT AND
LOOKED IN AT THE
CREW ENTRY HATCHES



SEPTEMBER 12

MARTIN B-26G-40-MO.
MARAUDER 44-31008

THIS MARAUDER WAS A BOMBER OF THE 9th U.S. ARMY AIR FORCE
WITH 86 MISSIONS TO ITS CREDIT.

OCTOBER 3.

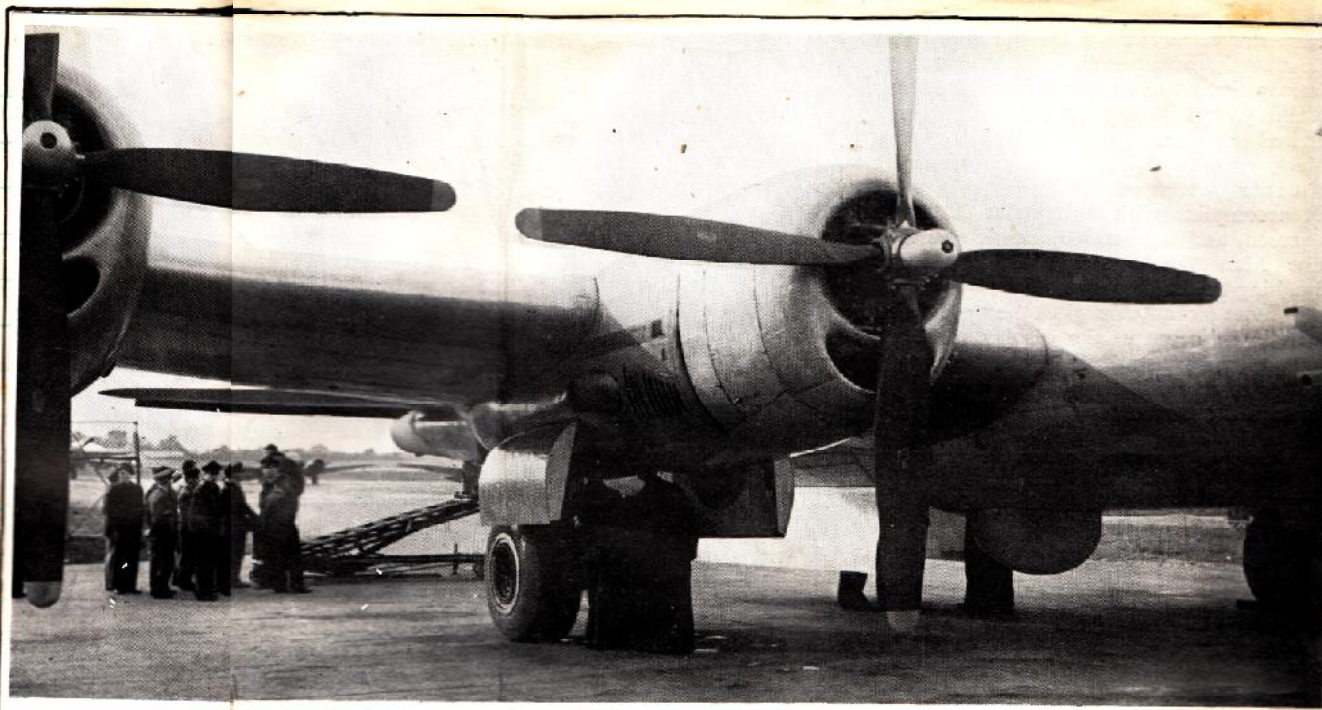
BOEING B-17G-90-VE FORTRESS 43-38572



I WENT INSIDE THE
REAR FUSELAGE AND
BALL TURRET.

OCTOBER 11.

ON MONDAY OCTOBER 8 THE SUPERFORTRESS BEGAN ITS VISIT TO BOVINGDON. DURING ITS STAY THE AIRCRAFT WAS INSPECTED BY SPECIALLY PICKED PARTIES OF A.T.C. CADETS. THUS IT WAS ON THURSDAY 11th, WARREN, WESTNEY, AND SQUIRES SET OUT FOR BOVINGDON FROM SCHOOL BY CYCLE. THEY HAD NO IDEA OF THE ROUTE BEYOND CHESHAM SO I OFFERED TO SHOW THEM. I RACED TO CHESHAM BY BUS AND WAS READY FOR THEM AT THE TOP OF THE HILL. AS WE RODE ALONG A PLAN FORMED IN MY MIND. BEING THURSDAY I WAS IN J.T.C. UNIFORM, WHY SHOULDN'T I BE ONE OF THE PARTY? THE CHANCES WERE PRETTY SLIM - BUT IT CAME OFF. THERE WERE A FEW TENSE



MOMENTS AS THE MILITARY POLICEMAN AT THE GATE QUESTIONED US, BUT WE GOT PAST THE BARRIER WITHOUT ANY FUSS. I AM AFRAID THAT DOES NOT SAY MUCH FOR THE EFFICIENCY OF AMERICAN M.P.'S.

I WAS INSIDE THE MAIN AIRFIELD FOR THE FIRST TIME. PREVIOUSLY I HAD ONLY BEEN ON THE DISPERSAL POINTS AND FLYING FIELD, NEVER AMONG THE BUILDINGS. IT WAS LIKE AMERICA IN ENGLAND. A REAL AMERICAN TOWN - DRUG STORE, CANDY STORE, MOVIES, EVEN STREETCARS FROM ONE PART OF THE FIELD TO ANOTHER.



BOEING B-29A-40-BN SUPERFORTRESS. 44-61679

WE WALKED UP AND DOWN, PULLING, PUSHING AND ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT EVERYTHING IN SIGHT. WE WERE UNABLE TO GO INSIDE.

DOUGLAS C-54B-20-DC SKYMASTER. 43-72461

I WENT INSIDE THIS CARGO SKYMASTER WHICH HAD JUST LANDED FROM GANDER, NEWFOUNDLAND. WE CLIMBED UP A VERY TALL LADDER INTO THE CARGO HOLD WHERE GREAT PACKING CASES WERE STACKED. WE WALKED UP TO THE END OF THE MAIN CABIN AND THROUGH THE FUEL COMPARTMENT INTO THE CREW'S QUARTERS. THERE WERE NEATLY MADE BUNKS, A PORCELAIN WASH BASIN, SEPARATE LAVATORY, AND EASY CHAIRS WITH A SMALL LIBRARY ON A SHELF ON THE WALL. THEN INTO THE CONTROL CABIN. I SAT AT THE RADIO OPERATOR'S DESK AND THEN AT THE NAVIGATING TABLEE WHILE I WAITED FOR MY TURN AT THE PILOT'S CONTROLS.

I STOOD UP IN THE ASTRODOME THEN I SAT IN THE CO-PILOT'S SEAT AND WORKED THE CONTROLS. THROUGH THE SIDE WINDOW I WATCHED THE AILERONS MOVE ON THE WING



WAY BACK BEHIND ME. I SLID BACK THIS WINDOW AND LEANED OUT TO SEE PEOPLE WALKING ABOUT UNDER THE AIRCRAFT LOOKING ABOUT THE SIZE OF DWARFS. THEN THE LONG WALK BACK TO THE DOOR.

THEN WE WENT TO NO 3 HANGAR WHERE FRIENDLY MECHANICS SHOWED US INSIDE TWO MORE AEROPLANES

DOUGLAS C-47A-10-DK SKYTRAIN. 43-14348

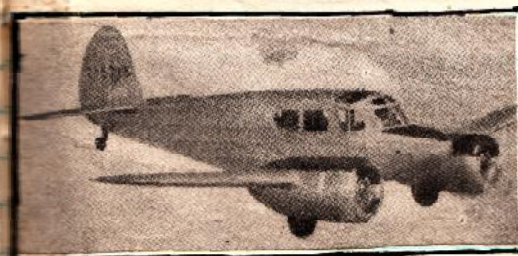


CESSNA UC-78B-10-CE

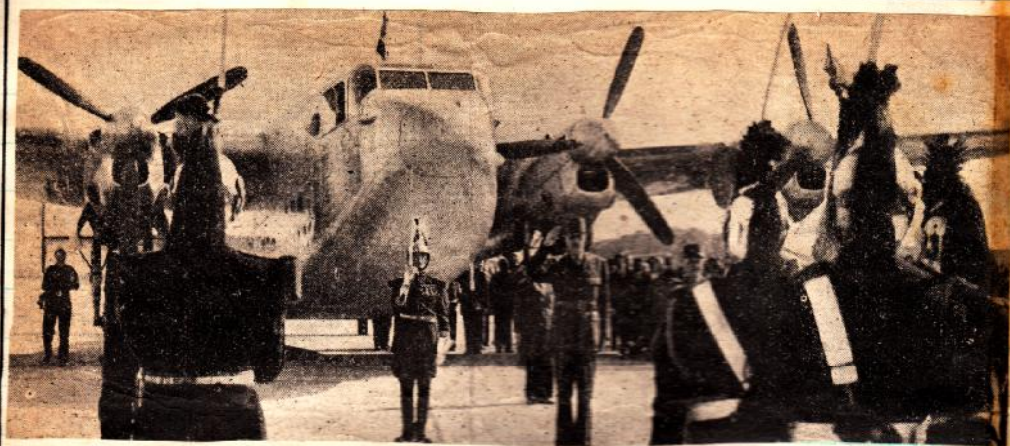
BRASSHAT

43-31827.

I SAT IN THE PILOT'S SEAT.



The three pictures show the Superfortress which visited Boeingdon airfield, Headquarters of U.S. Air Transport Command.



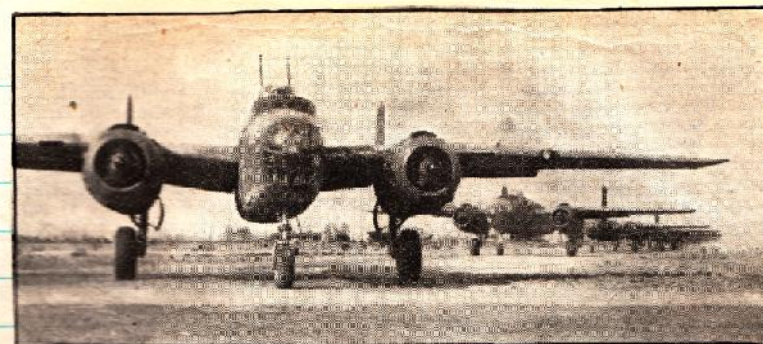
AVRO 685 YORK C.I.

THIS YORK WAS THE PERSONAL AIRCRAFT OF GEN. DE GAULLE. THE ABOVE PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS HIM STANDING IN FRONT OF THE AEROPLANE AT ORLY ON HIS RETURN FROM WASHINGTON. THE YORK CARRIED FRENCH MARKINGS. I WAS ABLE TO LOOK THROUGH THE PORT HOLES INTO THE LUXURY CABINS.



LOCKHEED R5O-5 LODESTAR

THIS NAVAL TRANSPORT LANDED WHILE I WAS IN THE SKYMASTER COCKPIT. IT TAXIED ROUND TO THE APRON WHERE AN ADMIRAL ALIGHTED AND WE DIVED INSIDE TO EMERGE JUST AS SWIFTLY PURSUED BY A BRAWNY AMERICAN SAILOR.



NORTH AMERICAN B-25J-20-NC MITCHELL.44-17250

I WENT IN THE NOSE COMPARTMENT AND THE PILOTS CABIN AND THE POWER-TURRET ON TOP OF THE FUSELAGE.



BOEING B-17G-50-LO FLYING FORTRESS.44-32148

THIS FORTRESS BELONGED DURING THE WAR TO THE 34th BOMBARDMENT GROUP, MENDLESHAM, SUFFOLK.

I CLAMBERED THROUGH THE NOSE HATCH TO SIT UP BESIDE THE PILOT WHILE HE RAN UP THE ENGINES.

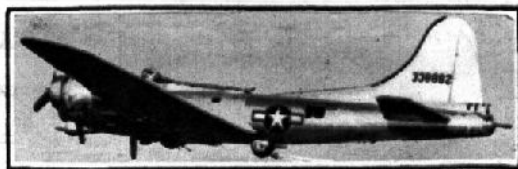
I HAD A VERY NEAR ESCAPE AS I BALED OUT OF THE FRONT HATCH, I OPENED THE DOOR AND DROPPED TO THE GROUND AND WALKED TO MY BICYCLE WHICH WAS PROPPED AGAINST THE PORT UNDERCARRIAGE. THEN AS I WAS NEARLY BLOWN OVER BY SLIPSTREAM, I REALISED I HAD MISSED THE PORT

AIRSCREW BY ABOUT A FOOT. A MISS IS AS GOOD AS A MILE.



WITH THE WAR OVER THE AMERICANS HAD THE JOB OF MOVING THEIR THOUSANDS OF HEAVY BOMBERS OUT OF THE COUNTRY. ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY ABOUT A DOZEN BOEING B-17G FORTRESSES OF THE 94TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP, 4TH COMBAT WING OF THE 3RD AIR DIVISION, U.S 8TH ARMY AIR FORCE WERE PASSING THROUGH BOVINGDON TO THE U.S.A. FROM THEIR WAR-TIME BASE AT HORHAM, SUFFOLK.

WE CYCLED UP AND DOWN THE LINE TALKING TO CREW AND INSPECTING THE AIRCRAFT AS THE TWILIGHT FADED AND FOUR VERY CONTENTED BOYS RODE ROUND THE PERIMETER TRACK, PAST THE LIGHTED FLARE PATH, WHERE I WATCHED SO OFTEN FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WIRE, AND OUT THROUGH THE DISPERSAL POINTS - TO ENGLAND AGAIN.



OCTOBER 12

INFECTED WITH MY ENTHUSIASM AS I TOLD MY STORY OF YESTERDAY EVENING, JOHN KING SAID THAT IF I COULD BLUFF MY WAY ON TO THE AIRFIELD SO COULD HE. SO -

BOEING B-29A-40-BN SUPERFORTRESS 44-61679

WE CLIMBED THE LADDER UP THROUGH THE NOSE-WHEEL WELL AND EMERGED IN THE PILOTS AND BOMBARDIER'S COMPARTMENT. THIS WAS ABOUT THE MOST COMPLICATED COCKPIT I HAD EVER BEEN INSIDE.



DOUGLAS C-54D-1-DC SKYMASTER 42-10745

'THE AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND'

I CLIMBED THE STEPS AND LOOKED IN AT THE DOORWAY OF THIS 50-SEAT PASSENGER TRANSPORT.

CLAS C-54 B-1-DO SKYMASTER 44-9095.

'THE AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND'

WAS MY TURN TO ASK THE CAPTAIN OF THIS C-54

WE MIGHT INSPECT HIS AIRCRAFT. "SURE,

JUST LET ME CHECK MY PASSENGER MANIFEST

(example on right)



D IT WILL BE A PLEASURE" HE TOOK US UP THE

EPS AND PROCEED TO SHOW US EVERYTHING FROM

USE TO TAIL. WE WALKED THROUGH THE MAIN

3IN WHICH WAS BARE EXCEPT FOR HAMMOCK-TYPE

ATS. THE PASSENGERS WERE BEGINNING TO

SEMBLE FOR THEIR FLIGHT TO AMERICA.

E PILOT LED THE WAY TO THE COCKPIT WHERE

EXPLAINED THE FIRST LEG OF HIS FLIGHT WHICH WOULD

SE HIM TO ICELAND. HIS NAVIGATOR SHOWED US THE FLIGHT

IN ON THE MAP AND LET US LOOK INTO THE RADAR

LOPES. THE PILOT CALLED UP THE CONTROL TOWER ON

E R/T, AND SETTLED INTO HIS SEAT AND PREPARED TO

EUROPEAN AIR TRANSPORT SERVICE

THIS MANIFEST TO

PASSENGER MANIFEST

[illegible]

* WITHIN AN HOUR THE 'CHARLIE 54' WAS BACK AT BOVINGDON
AFTER RUNNING INTO ROUGH WEATHER - (ont' climax)



FROM THE NEW WORLD.—The Boeing B-29A Superfortress here seen at Bovington, Herts, after flying from Paris to this country on October 8. Bovington is at present one of U.S. Air Transport Command's main Southern England bases.

["Aeroplane" photo]

HE EXPLAINED THE FIRST LEG OF HIS FLIGHT WHICH WOULD TAKE HIM TO ICELAND. HIS NAVIGATOR SHOWED US THE FLIGHT PLAN ON THE MAP AND LET US LOOK INTO THE RADAR SCOPES. THE PILOT CALLED UP THE CONTROL TOWER ON THE R/T, AND SETTLED INTO HIS SEAT AND PREPARED TO

START THE ENGINES. I HAD BEEN SITTING IN THE CO-PILOT SEAT BUT THE CO-PILOT ARRIVED SO I WATCHED THE CAPTAIN START THE STARBOARD OUTER MOTOR FROM THE ASTRO-DOME. WE HAD TO LEAVE AS THE PORT MOTORS COULD NOT BE STARTED UNTIL THE DOORS WERE CLOSED AND THE STEPS MOVED AWAY. WE STOOD ON THE TARMAC TO WATCH THE SILVER MONSTER CRAWL UP TO THE RUNWAY, TAKE OFF AND CLIMB AWAY INTO THE SUNSET.*

CONVAIR FORD B-24J-10-FO LIBERATOR 42-51657

WE TRIED TO GO INSIDE THIS B-24 BUT THERE WERE NO DOORS OR HATCHES LEFT UNLOCKED.



* WITHIN AN HOUR THE 'CHARLIE 54' WAS BACK AT BOVINGTON, AF, RUNNING INTO ROUGH WEATHER - (ont' climax.)



DOUGLAS C-54D-1-DO SKYMASTER 42-72416

'The AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND'

TOUCHED.



The Boeing B-29 landing at Bovington airfield on Monday, October 8.

SUPERFORTRESS VISIT

HERALDED BOTH by the daily papers and the B.B.C. as the first Superfortress to visit Europe, a Boeing B-29 flew to this country from Paris on Monday, October 8. Unfortunately, its flight over London, 90 minutes behind schedule, was marred by poor visibility; unfortunately, too, after a preliminary announcement that the B-29 would be shown to the public for four days at Bovington airfield, the Superfortress was not displayed in this manner. Contrary to the reports, also, this particular B-29A-40, No. 44-61679, powered by Dodge-built Wright Cyclone R-3350-23A motors, was not the first in this country, let alone in Europe. Bovington itself has already been visited by one other Superfortress and, as our readers will know, reports have been received of B-29s seen in other parts of the country.

A
TYPICAL
PRESS-CUTTING
DESCRIBING
THE
B-29 VISIT.

OCTOBER 13

THE WHOLE FAMILY WENT ON TO THE AIRFIELD
TO INSPECT THE -

BOEING B-29A-40-BN SUPERFORTRESS.

44-61679.

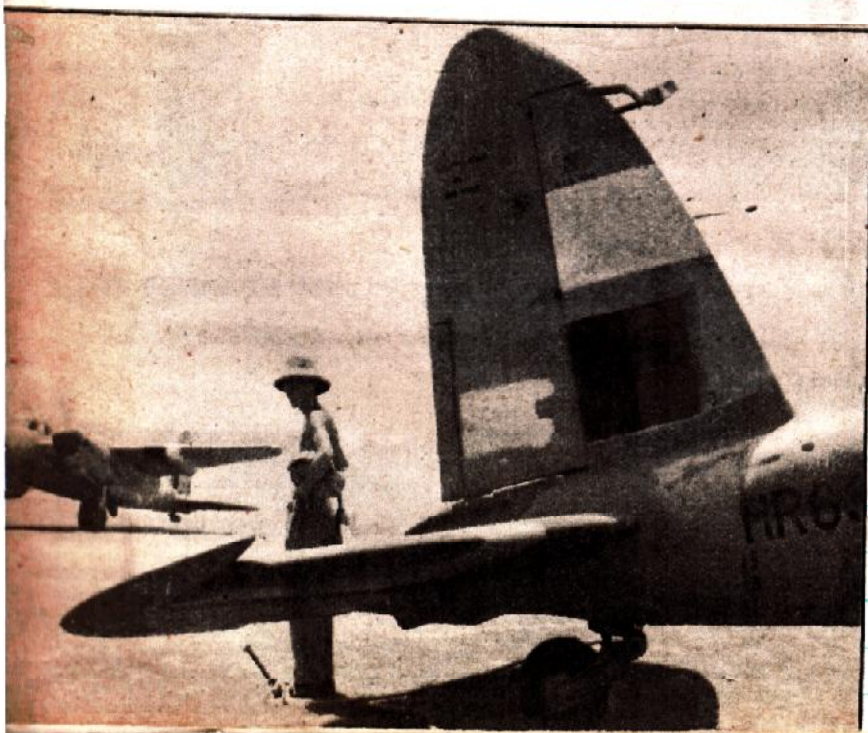
JUDY POSED FOR A U.S. ARMY PHOTOGRAPHER AS SHE
STOOD LOOKING UP AT THE HUGE TAIL.

NOVEMBER 3.

FLIGHT LIEUTENANT R. P. WILSON, C.O., R.A.F., BOVINGTON,
INVITED DAD, JIM AND I TO VISIT THE AIRFIELD. HE SHOWED US
HIS OFFICE AND DROVE US ROUND THE PERIMETER IN HIS
CAR. WE STARTED OFF ALONG THE TAXI-TRACK PAST THE
HANGARS, ACROSS THE SW-NE. RUNWAY AND CLOSE
BEHIND TWO SKYTRAINS MOVING UP TO THE MAIN (22) RUNWAY
WE HELD ON TIGHT AS THEY RAN UP THEIR MOTORS
PREPARATORY TO TAKE-OFF. AFTER THEY HAD GONE
TWO MORE C-47 'S LANDED, WE DROVE ON ROUND
THE TRACK TO THE WOOD. HERE WE TURNED IN BEHIND
THIS WOOD TO LOOK AT THE FIRING RANGE WHERE
THE AMERICAN GUNNERS ^{TO TEST} USED THEIR .50 CALIBER
GUNS, ON TO THE BOMB STORE, WHERE ONCE THE
TRAILERS QUEUED UP FOR THEIR LOADS OF T.N.T WHICH THEY
TOOK TO THE GIANT BOMBERS AS THEY CROUCHED AMONG
THE TREES. ALL THAT REMAINED TO MARK WHAT WENT

ON THERE YEARS BEFORE WERE A NUMBER OF BOMBS
LYING HERE AND THERE, WARNING NOTICES, AND SOME
RUSTING BOMB TRAILERS. WE WENT BACK TO THE
PERIMETER ALONG A CONCRETE TRACK WHICH RAN
THROUGH FARMLAND, ON THIS TRACK WERE PARKED
LONG ROWS OF DOUGLAS C-47 SKYTRAINS, PACKED
NOSE TO TAIL FOR SOME CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE.

WE LEFT THE CAR TO EXAMINE -
DOUGLAS A-26B-45-DL INVADER
42-34316 C9-R.



DE HAVILLAND D.H. 98

MOSQUITO F.11 HR721

THIS MOSQUITO WAS LEFT WITH
THE DOOR OPEN AND THE
ENTRANCE LADDER IN
POSITION. JIM AND I CLIMBED UP AND LOOKED AT THE
INTERIOR OF THE COCKPIT. THIS AIRCRAFT WAS
FINISHED IN EXPERIMENTAL WAX SILVER AND CARRIED
R.A.F. FAR EASTERN THEATRE MARKINGS.



VICKERS ARMSTRONGS SUPERMARINE SEA OTTER A.S.R.11.
NS 128.

WE LOOKED INTO THE COCKPIT BY CLIMBING ON THE
WHEEL AND WALKING ALONG THE HANDRAIL (see photo).

BEECHCRAFT UC-45F-BH EXPEDITOR 44-86905

DAD, JIM AND I WENT INSIDE. I
SAT IN THE CO-PILOT'S SEAT
WITH JIM AS FIRST PILOT.



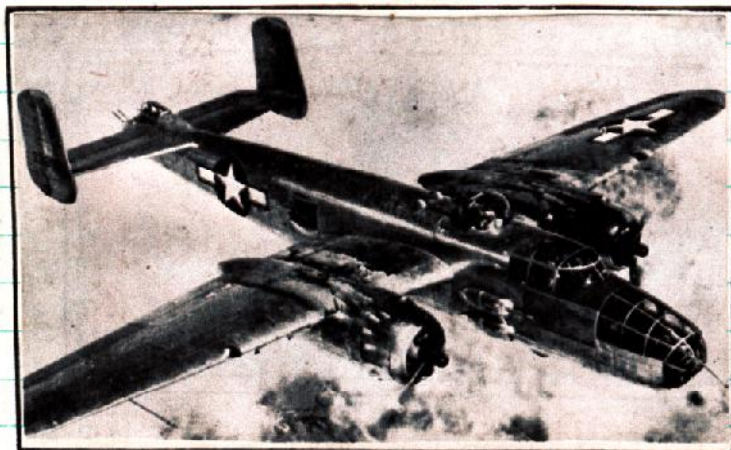


NORTH AMERICAN AT-6D-NT TEXAN
42-24501

I STOOD ON THE WING WALKWAY TO
LOOK INTO BOTH COCKPITS.

NORTH AMERICAN B-25J-10-NC MITCHELL 43-4556

JIM AND I TRIED TO OPEN THE DOORS WHICH
WERE BOTH LOCKED.



WE MOTORED ON ROUND THE PERIMETER AND A GREAT
MOMENT CAME AS WE PASSED THE END OF THE 04
RUNWAY. A NUMBER OF SMALL BOYS WERE LEANING
OVER THE WIRE BY THE ROAD - I FELT LIKE A KING!.

WE PASSED AMONG SEVERAL SKYMASTERS AND
SKYTRAINS ON OUR WAY BACK TO THE R.A.F OFFICE.

DECEMBER 12

I WENT INSIDE THE NOSE OF A
NORTH AMERICAN CB-25D-70-NT MITCHELL

Air Force Ser No 43-3100.



DOUGLAS C-47A-25-DK SKYTRAIN 43-15095.

I LOOKED INSIDE THE DOORWAY OF THIS SKYTRAIN AFTER ITS ARRIVAL FROM
DECEMBER 20. FRANCE

BOEING B-17F FORTRESS (ex U.S. Army Ser. No. 42-30177)

I TOUCHED THIS FORTRESS WHICH BELONGED TO THE
FRENCH L'ARMÉE DE L'AIR. IT WAS NAMED "BIR HAKEIM".



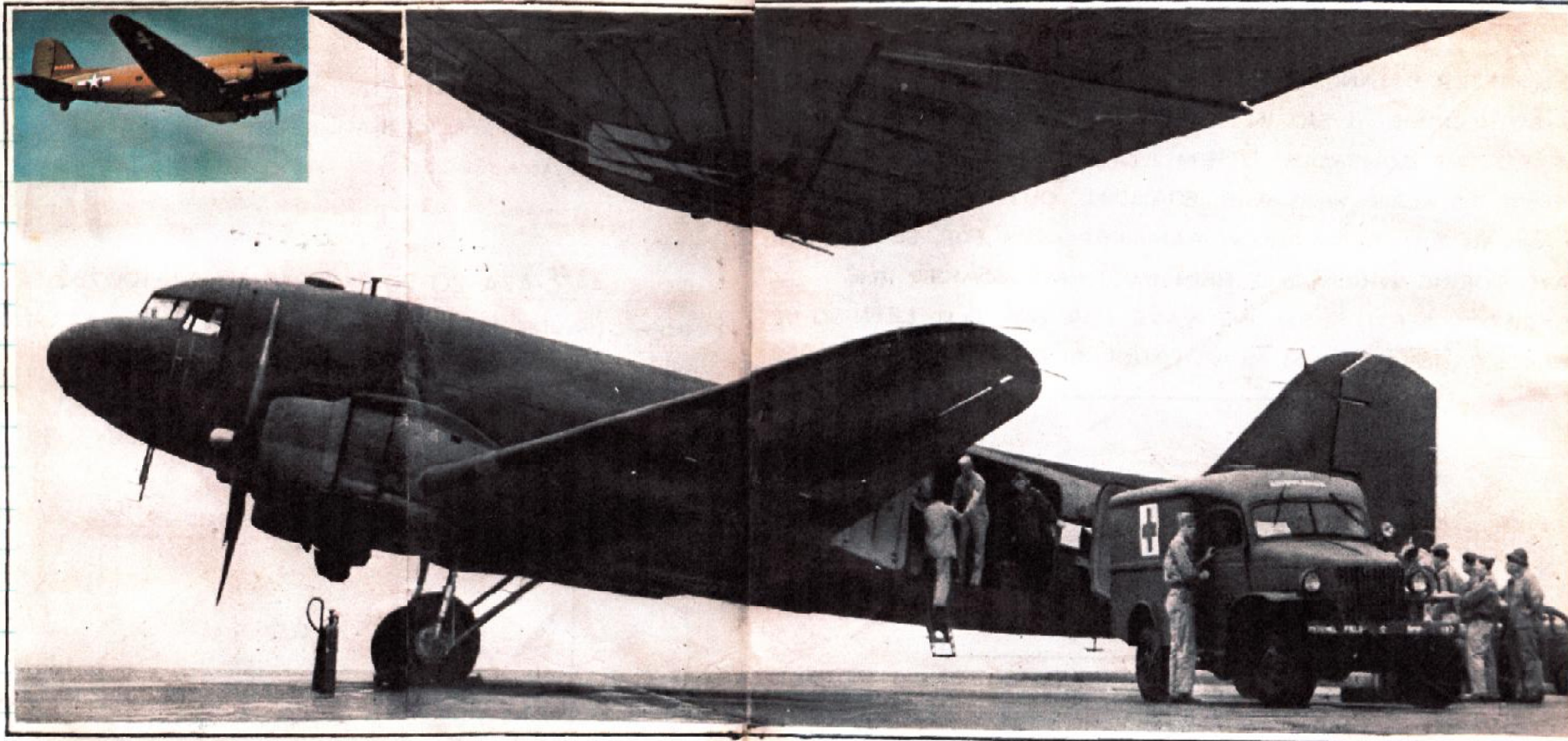
DECEMBER 23.

ONE OF THE LOCAL WHELPLEY HILL BOYS SHOWED ME INSIDE THESE
TWO AIRCRAFT. HE HAD APPEARED IN COURT FOR TAXYING ABOUT IN AN AT-6
SOMETIME PREVIOUSLY.

DOUGLAS C-47B-35-DK
SKYTRAIN 43-15263 4J

THIS SKYTRAIN WAS USED
AS AN AMBULANCE DURING
THE INVASION. I WENT
INSIDE THE MAIN CABIN.





DOUGLAS C-53C-20-DL SKYTROOPER 42-2033

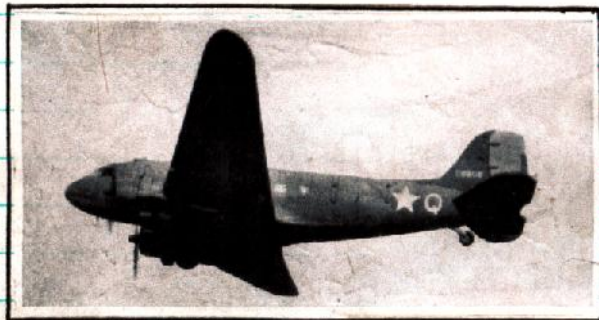
I WENT INSIDE THE PASSENGER CABIN OF THIS LUXURY TRANSPORT.
DECEMBER 24.

DOUGLAS C-47A-25-DL SKYTRAIN 42-24046 (30)

TO RELIEVE THAT USUAL CHRISTMAS EVE FEELING, PETER, ALAN
AND I RODE TO WHELPLEY HILL. WE CONTEMPLATED THIS C-47
FOR A VERY LONG TIME, UNTIL, AFTER TAKING THE CUSTOMARY

SECURITY PRECAUTIONS PETER AND I WENT OVER THE WIRE AND
DASHED TO THE SKYTRAIN. I UNLOCKED AND OPENED THE FORWARD
OF THE TWO CARGO DOORS, (see above) TIED IT BACK, THEN PUT THE
STEPS IN PLACE. WE CLIMBED ABOARD, WALKED UP THROUGH
THE CARGO HOLD TO THE NAVIGATOR'S CABIN, WHERE MAPS
LAY ALL OVER THE PLACE. PETER, BEING A RADIO ENTHUSIAST
SOON HAD A PAIR OF EARPHONES CLAMPED ON HIS HEAD AT THE
RADIO OPERATOR'S SET. WE MOVED FORWARD TO THE PILOT

CABIN, AFTER BALANCING ON A SMALL STOOL TO LOOK OUT OF THE ASTRODOME, I SAT IN THE CO-PILOT'S SEAT AND WORKED THE CONTROLS. THEN I OPENED THE SIDE WINDOW TO WAVE TO ALAN WHO WAS STANDING OUT BY THE ROAD. (UNFORTUNATELY THIS WINDOW REMAINED OPEN FOR SEVERAL DAYS DURING WHICH THE RAIN MUST HAVE SOAKED THE CO-PILOT'S SEAT.) THEN WE MADE OUR WAY OUT LEAVING THINGS (MORE OR LESS) AS WE FOUND THEM.



WE FOUND TWO MORE C-47'S BUT BOTH WERE LOCKED. NEVERTHELESS WE HAD A GOOD LOOK ROUND THE EXTERIOR OF EACH AIRCRAFT.

DOUGLAS C-47B-5-DK SKYTRAIN 43-16264

U.S. ARMY AIR TRANSPORT COMMAND

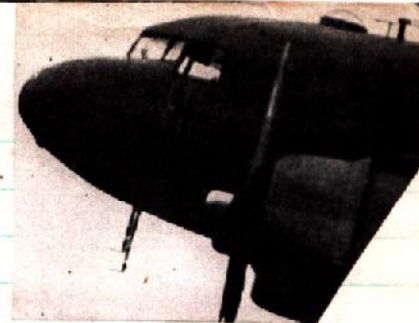
DOUGLAS C-47B-10-DL SKYTRAIN 42-93060 74H

EUROPEAN AIR TRANSPORT SERVICE.



1946

THE HORRORS OF PEACE.
BREAD RATIONED. POWER CUTS.



JANUARY 7.

DOUGLAS C-47A-20-DK SKYTRAIN 42-100732

I LOOKED INSIDE THIS SILVER C-47 SOON AFTER IT LANDED FROM ORLY, PARIS

DOUGLAS C-47A-15-DK SKYTRAIN 42-93794

I TRIED TO OPEN THE DOOR OF THIS EX-GLIDER-TUG.

DOUGLAS C-47A-20-DK SKYTRAIN 42-93723

EUROPEAN AIR TRANSPORT SERVICE BASED AT ORLY.



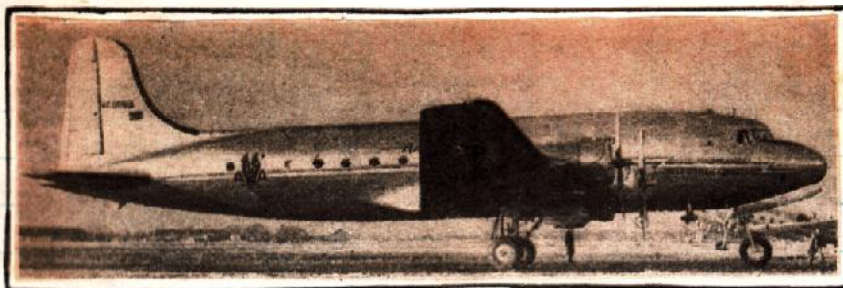
JANUARY 12.

DOUGLAS C-47A-25-DK SKYTRAIN 42-93808 R.O.S. 1307 Q.

"Fatigue"

I WAS ALLOWED INSIDE THIS AEROPLANE BY MECHANICS. IT HAD STRETCHERS STRAPPED UP TO THE ROOF.





26 JANUARY, I SAW MY FIRST AMERICAN CIVIL AIRCRAFT. IT WAS A DOUGLAS DC-4 SKYMASTER. NC90001 OF AMERICAN OVERSEAS AIRLINES, WHICH LANDED AT BOYINGDON.



FEBRUARY 2. DOUGLAS C-47A-30-DL SKYTRAIN 42-93517
I CYCLED UNDERNEATH AS IT STOOD ON D.P. 27.

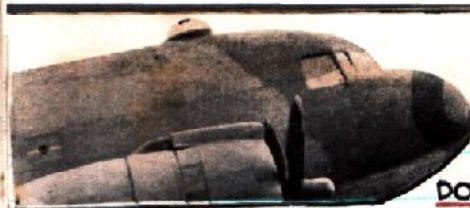
DOUGLAS C-47B-1-DK SKYTRAIN 43-48403

ARMY AIR COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE

I OPENED THE DOOR, BUT HAD TO BEAT A HASTY RETREAT ON THE APPROACH OF AN M.P. PATROL.

FEBRUARY 10. DOUGLAS C-47B-1-DK SKYTRAIN 43-48379

I OPENED THE DOOR AND SHOWED MOTHER, JIM, AND JUDY THE INSIDE OF THIS SKYTRAIN.



FEBRUARY 12
DOUGLAS C-47A-30-DK SKYTRAIN
43-47988.

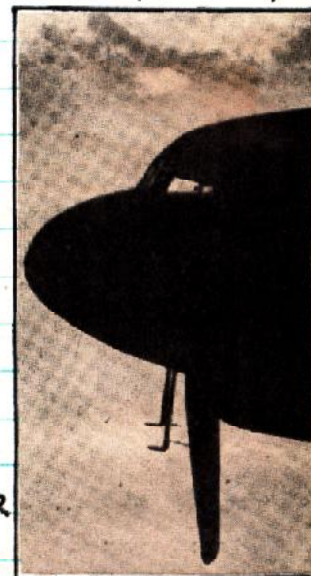
THIS WAS A SKYTRAIN WITH A TRULY GREAT WAR SERVICE. AS I SAT ON A BENCH INSIDE THE MAIN CABIN A G.I TOLD ME HOW AMERICAN PARATROOPERS HAD SAT ON THE SAME BENCH AS THEY WAITED TO DROP ON ALGERIA, SICILY, NORMANDY, HOLLAND AND GERMANY.

DOUGLAS C-47B-10-DK SKYTRAIN
43-48934.

I TOUCHED THIS C-47 WHICH WAS SILVER ALL OVER WITH NO NATIONAL MARKINGS IT STOOD ON DISPERSAL POINT 27.

DOUGLAS C-47A-9-DK SKYTRAIN.
43-93087.

I WAS UNABLE TO GET INSIDE THIS GLIDER TUG AS THERE WERE NO STEPS HANDY.

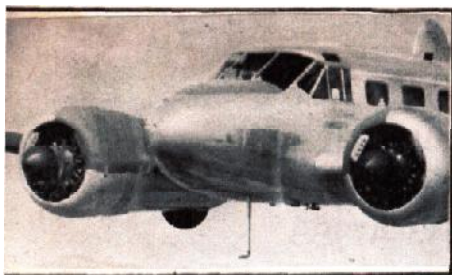


BEECH UC-45F-BH EXPEDITOR 44-47328.



I LOOKED THROUGH THE WINDOWS AND MADE A THOROUGH INSPECTION OF THIS AEROPLANE.





BEECH UC-45F-BH EXPEDITOR
44-417128

I TOUCHED THIS C-45 AS IT STOOD
ON DISPERSAL POINT NUMBER 22.

FEBRUARY 17

DOUGLAS C-47A-45-DK SKYTRAIN 43-15622.

I MET "WALLY" WARBURG FROM R.G.S. HE TOLD ME THAT
HE HAD NEVER BEEN CLOSE TO AN AEROPLANE, SO I TOOK
HIM TO THIS SKYTRAIN WHICH HAD FOUR PARACHUTE
MISSIONS AND TWO AMBULANCE MISSIONS TO ITS CREDIT.



THE 1ST PILOT'S NAME WAS LT. CH. ENNIS,
BEECHCRAFT UC-45A-10-BH EXPEDITOR.
43-317214

I OPENED THE DOOR AND LOOKED INTO
THE TOILET WHERE EVEN THE PAPER
WAS MARKED "U.S. ARMY PROPERTY"



FEBRUARY 22.

I TOUCHED MY FIRST TWO
CIVIL AIRCRAFT SINCE THE CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES
THEY WERE BRAND NEW -

DOUGLAS DC-3 DAKOTAS.

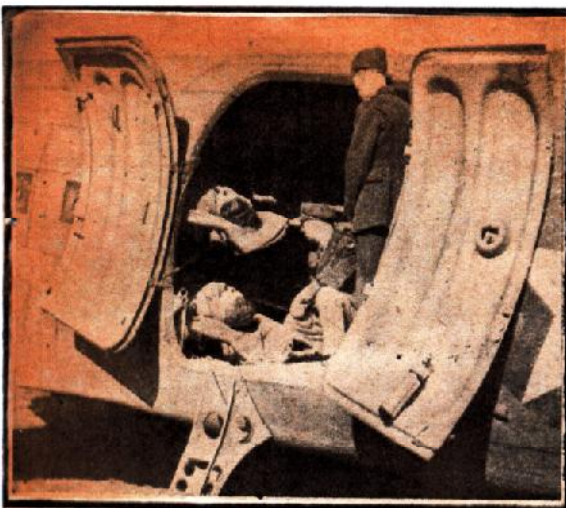
THE REGISTRATIONS WERE - EI-ACE AND EI-ACF
EACH AIRCRAFT CARRIED THE DOUGLAS INSIGNIA ON ITS FIN
(see opposite). THEY WERE READY FOR DELIVERY TO
AER LINGUS TEORANTA, DUBLIN. ONE WAS ON DP. 25,
THE OTHER ON D.P. 26, BOVINGDON. [A COMMERCIAL DC-3 →]



FEBRUARY 23.

CESSNA UC-78B-CE BRASSHAT 42-21526

THIS AIRCRAFT OMITTED TO FLY OVER THE FENCE WHILE
LANDING AT BOVINGDON. I LOOKED OVER IT AS IT LAY
IN THE APPROACH TO RUNWAY 04.



FEBRUARY 24

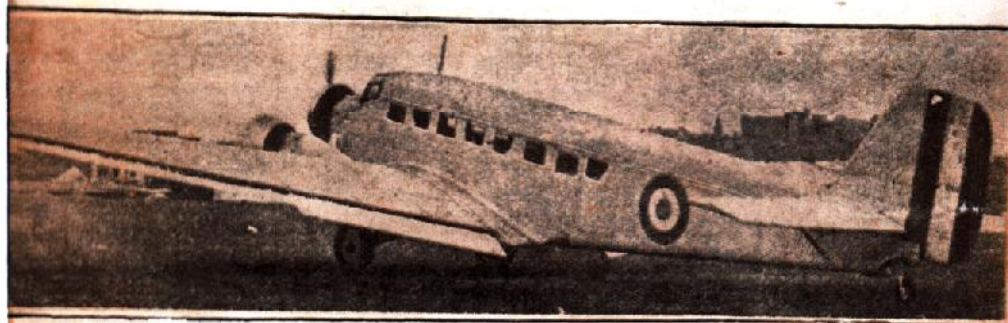
DOUGLAS C-47A-10-DL
SKYTRAIN

L 42-100808 5K

I MADE A MOST THOROUGH
INSPECTION, MAKING DETAIL
SKETCHES FOR A MODEL
I HAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION

DOUGLAS C-47A-9-DK SKYTRAIN.
43-435016.

CHASED OFF BY MILITARY POLICE.
W.J.V. DID NOT APPEAR AGAIN ON BOVINGDON
DISPERSAL AREAS UNTIL APRIL 11.



MARCH 26

I SAW A FRENCH-BUILT JUNKERS JU 52/3m OF THE
FRENCH AIR FORCE FLYING OVER HIGH WYCOMBE.

EXHIBITION OF GERMAN AERONAUTICAL DEVELOPMENTS

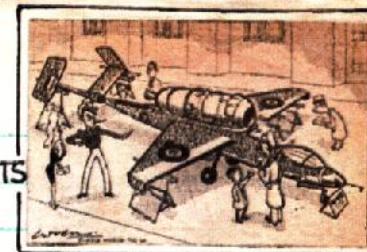
SCIENCE MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON.

APRIL 10.

PILOTED FZG 76. V.I. FLYING BOMB.



AS IT WAS MOUNTED ON A LOW TROLLEY, I WAS ABLE TO
LOOK INTO THE COCKIT. THIS BOMB WAS INTENDED FOR
USE AGAINST OUR INVASION FORCES WHICH THE
GERMANS EXPECTED AT JUTLAND.



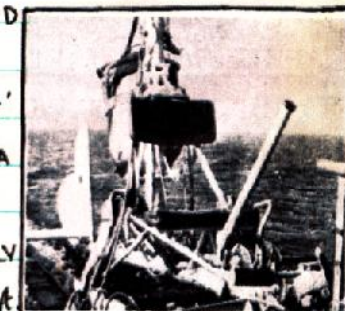
FOCKE ACHGELIS Fg 330

SUBMARINE TOWED
GYRO KITE.

THIS 'LOOK-OUT'
KITE WAS ON A
CABLE WHICH
COULD LET IT FLY
AT ABOUT 400ft



As the U-boat moves through the water
the resultant of the relative wind and the
natural wind turns the rotor and the
observer becomes airborne.

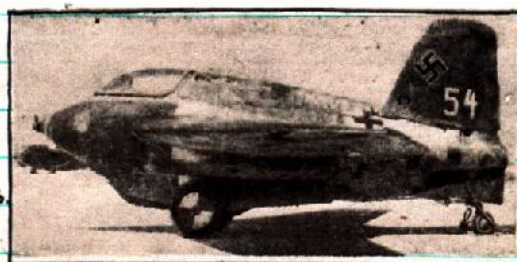


The U-boat eye assembled on a U-boat's
deck. The control column, in the fore-
ground, is of the ordinary aeroplane type
and there is a fin and rudder.



I TOUCHED THE FOLLOWING -
MESSERSCHMITT Me 163 B-1
 191912

IT WAS POSSIBLE TO LOOK ALL OVER
 THIS INTERESTING AIRCRAFT.



HIENKEL HE 162A-1
VOLKSJAEGER. AIR MIN 66.

THIS AEROPLANE WAS
 ARRANGED SO THAT EVERYBODY COULD SEE INSIDE THE
 COCKPIT. THE LUFTWAFFE SERIAL WAS 120091.



FOCKE WULF 190 A-3.
 171747

THIS WAS SECTIONED, WITH
 MANY WORKING PARTS
 MOVING.

FZG 76. V.1. FLYING BOMB.

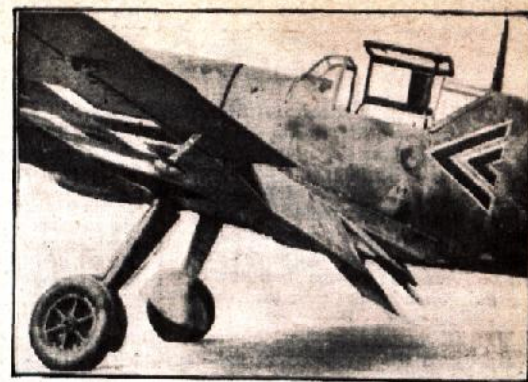
THIS FLYING BOMB WAS MOUNTED ON A SECTION
 OF A CAPTURED GERMAN LAUNCHING RAMP.

F.Z.G 76 FLYING BOMB. (V.1) 442795

THIS 'DOODLEBUG' WAS SECTIONED TO SHOW ALL THE
 'INTESTINES'.

MESSERSCHMITT
Me 109 G.

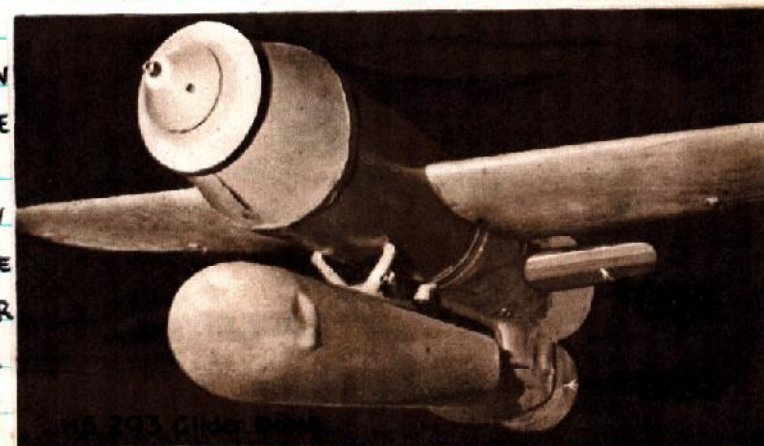
I STOOD ON THE WING
 WALKWAY TO PEER INTO
 THE COCKPIT.
 THE GERMAN SQUADRON
 MARKINGS WERE 7-C3.



A.4 VERGELTUNGSWAFFE ZWEI (V.2.) ROCKET.

AS I WENT UP TO LONDON I SAW AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT
 ONE OF THESE 3000mph ROCKETS COULD DO. -
 ROWS UPON ROWS OF HOUSES SHATTERED. EVERY
 ROCKET THAT FELL IN NORTH LONDON WAS PLAINLY
 HEARD IN CHESHAM. AT HOME THE WINDOWS RATTLED
 AT MANY OF THE EXPLOSIONS THOUGH THEY MUST
 HAVE BEEN AT LEAST TWENTY MILES AWAY. ONE
 AFTERNOON.

IN 1944 I SAW
 A V.2. EXPLODE
 AS IT CAME
 WITHIN A FEW
 MILES OF THE
 EARTH, AFTER
 DIVING FROM
 ITS CEILING
 60 MILES UP.



"RHEINTOCHTER" R.1

RADIO CONTROLLED GROUND TO AIR ROCKET WEAPON.

"X.4"

WIRE CONTROLLED ROCKET FOR AIR TO AIR COMBAT.

V.3. "SCHMETTERLING." (Butterfly)

RADIO CONTROLLED GROUND TO AIR ANTI-AIRCRAFT WEAPON

"WASSERFALL" (Waterfall)

RADIO CONTROLLED GROUND TO AIR ROCKET BASED ON V.2.

Henschel Hs 298

RADIO CONTROLLED AIR TO AIR ROCKET WEAPON.

HENSCHEL HS 293.

RADIO CONTROLLED ANTI-SHIPING GLIDER BOMB. USED DURING WAR.

"FEUERLILI 25" (FIRELILY)

AERODYNAMIC RESEARCH MISSILE FOR BALLISTIC EXPERIMENTS.

PC.1400 F.X.

RADIO CONTROLLED HIGH LEVEL ARMOUR PIERCING ANTI-SHIP BOMB

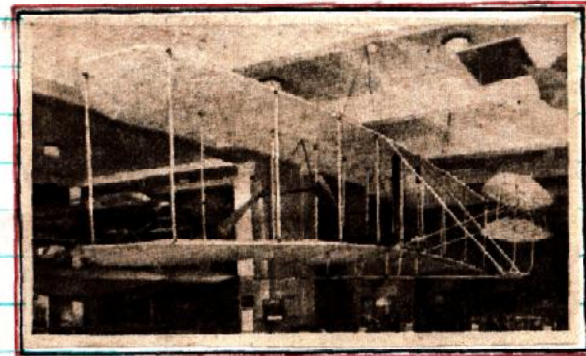
BLOHM and VOSS BV 226.

ANTI-SHIPING GLIDER BOMB. CONCRETE WINGS.

OTHER EXHIBITS THAT I HANDLED INCLUDED -
ENGINES, INCLUDING - R.R. DERWENT V. and GOBLIN.
TURRETS, SIGHTS, MODELS, GUNS, BOMBS and MINES.

I TOUCHED SEVERAL AEROPLANES BELONGING
TO THE PERMANANT AERONAUTICAL MUSEUM. -

THE WRIGHT BIPLANE. (1903)



51595. SUPERMARINE S.6B SCHNEIDER TROPHY 1931.

(above) THIS AIRCRAFT CAN BE SEEN BEHIND THE WRIGHT BIPLANE

VICKERS VIMY. ALCOCK AND BROWN

1919 FIRST ATLANTIC CROSSING.

DE HAVILLAND D.H.60G GIPSY MOTH

"Jason"

C-AAA H.

USED BY AMY JOHNSON, ENGLAND-AUSTRALIA. SOLO

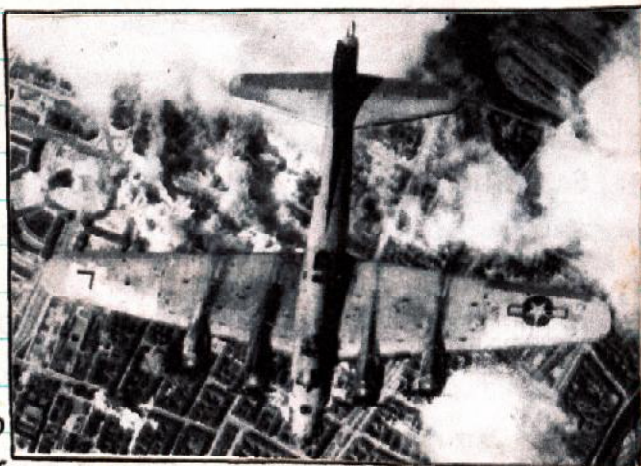


APRIL 11

I SAW THE FIRST PROTOTYPE
MILES GEMINI FOR THE
FIRST TIME AS IT FLEW
OVER CHESHAM.
ITS REGISTRATION WAS-
G-AGUS
AS I STOOD BY DISPERSAL
POINT NUMBER 25 -

BOEING B-17G-80-VE FORTRESS . 44-8779

TAXIED IN FROM
FROM THE AIRFIELD,
SWUNG ROUND ON
TO THE DISPERSAL
POINT WHERE I
STOOD. AS THERE
WERE NO GROUND
CREW ABOUT, I
RAN FORWARD AND
THRUST THE CHOCKS



UNDER THE WHEELS, THEN WENT BACK AND OPENED
THE DOOR FOR THE CREW WHO HAD COME FROM
PRESTWICK. AFTER THEY HAD GONE I WENT ON TO-

DOUGLAS C-47A-25-DK SKYTRAIN
43-15622.

I LOOKED
THROUGH
THE OPEN
DOOR OF
THIS C-47
WHICH WAS
USED AS AN
AMBULANCE



DURING THE INVASION OF EUROPE. IT CARRIED 20 STRETCHES

APRIL 13 CASES.

A MECHANIC SHOWED ME THE
INSIDE OF THE SKYTRAIN
WHICH WAS A SUPPLY AND
PARATROOP TRANSPORT
OF THE U.S. ARMY AIR FORCE.
CALLED "SUE II", 42-100804 WAS



A DOUGLAS C-47A-70-DL SKYTRAIN . Z4. T

APRIL 14.

I SAW MY FIRST TURKISH AIR LINER,
TC-ADA, A DAKOTA BELONGING TO
TURKISH STATE AIR LINES.

IT WAS STANDING ON BOVINGDON APRON.





THIS BOAC
YORK MADE
A LOW-LEVEL
BEAT UP OF
THE ROYAL

GRAMMAR SCHOOL, HIGH WYCOMBE ON MAY 10. (G-AGNL)

MAY 25

I SAW G-AGPV, THE PROTOTYPE BRISTOL 170 FREIGHTER
IN FLIGHT OVER AMERSHAM.



ON THE SAME AFTERNOON I SAW THE FIRST
PROTOTYPE D.H. 104 DOVE, G-AGPJ, AND THE
FIRST MILES M.57 AEROVAN, G-AGOZ. BOTH
WERE FLYING OVER BERKHAMPTED.



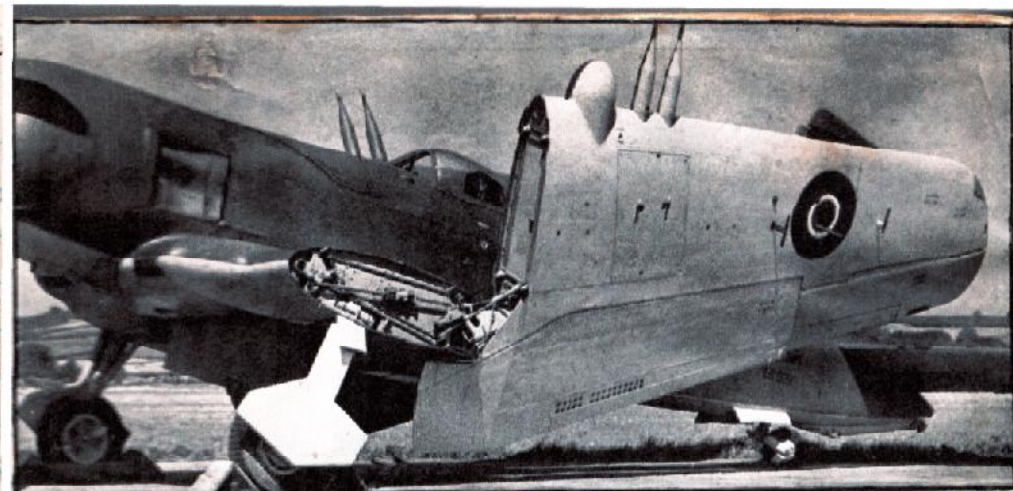
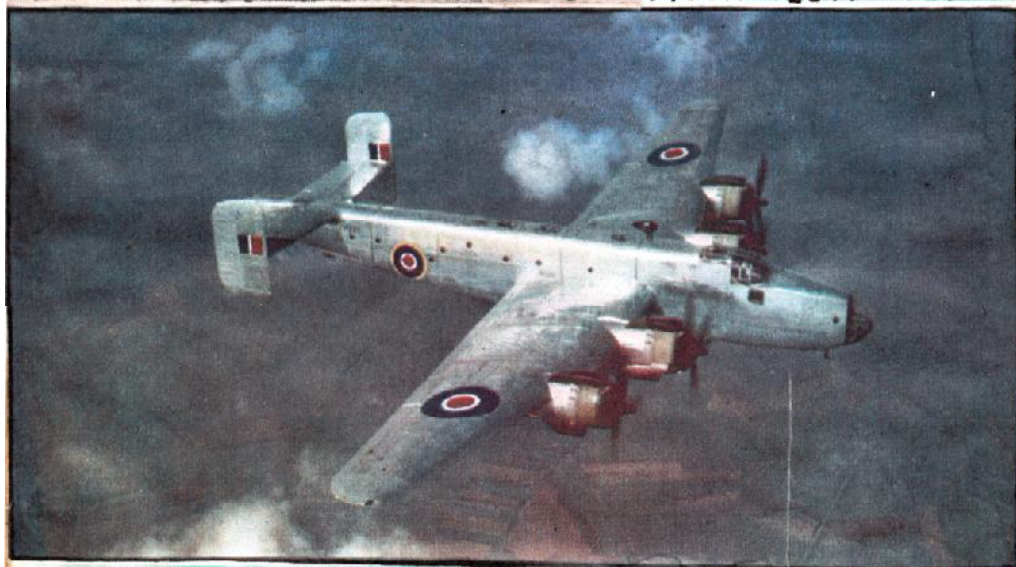
MAY 30. I SAW A VICKERS V.C.1 VIKING FOR THE FIRST TIME.

JUNE 1. ON HEARING A STRANGE ENGINE NOTE I RUSHED
OUT TO SEE A LOCKHEED CONSTELLATION, NC898830
"CLIPPER LONDON" WAS ~~FLYING~~ AT 2,000 FT. TOP LEVEL
WITH BOTH FLAPS AND UNDERCARRIAGE DOWN. IT
WAS ON ITS WAY TO LONDON AIRPORT FROM NEW
YORK. MY FIRST CONSTELLATION WAS A VERY
IMPRESSIVE SIGHT.

PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS



JUNE 11
BRITISH AIRCRAFT
EXHIBITION,
GREEN
PARK,
PICCADILLY. LONDON.

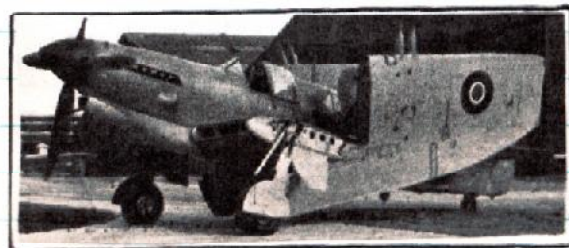


BLACKBURN FIREBRAND T.F. IV. EK 746 ROYAL NAVY

MY GUIDE EXPLAINED THE DETAILS OF THE WING FOLDING MECHANISM.



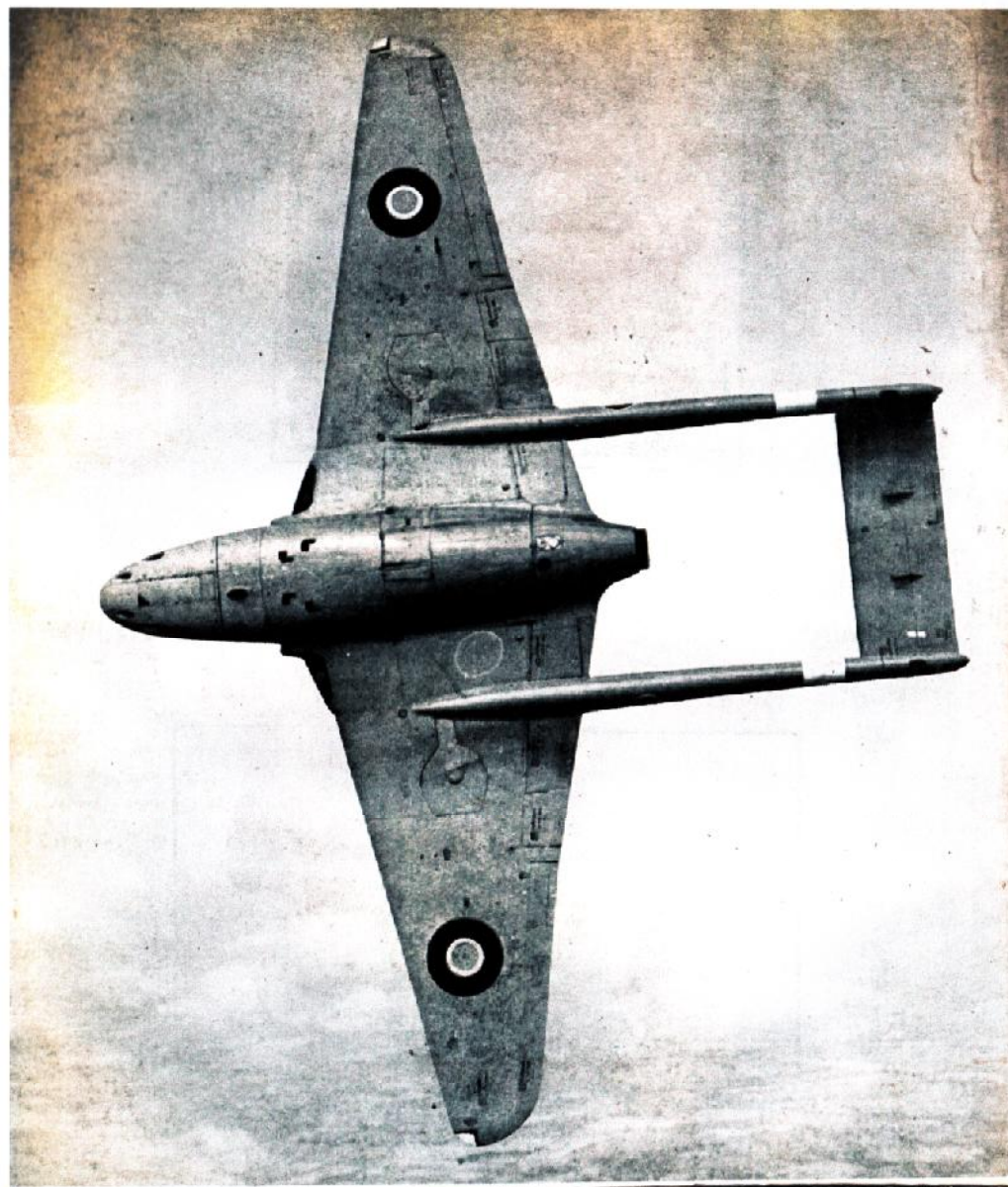
DE HAVILLAND D.H. 98 MOSQUITO F.B. 26. KA 189.



FAIREY FIREFLY F. IV. ROYAL NAVY TW 688.

I STOOD ON THE WING WHILE MY GUIDE SAT IN THE COCKPIT TO EXPLAIN THE CONTROLS.

I ARRIVED AT A VERY EARLY HOUR, IN FACT BEFORE ANY OTHER VISITORS. I HAD THE PICK OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE AND NAVAL AIR ARM^{TO MYSELF}. THE EXHIBITION WAS ARRANGED AS PART OF THE VICTORY CELEBRATION BY COURTESY OF A SAILOR OF THE EXHIBITION STAFF I WAS ABLE TO INSPECT THE FOLLOWING AEROPLANES AT VERY CLOSE QUARTERS. HE SHOWED ME EVERYTHING, I WAS TO SPEND A GLORIOUS HOUR AMONG SOME OF THE FINEST AIRCRAFT IN THE WORLD.

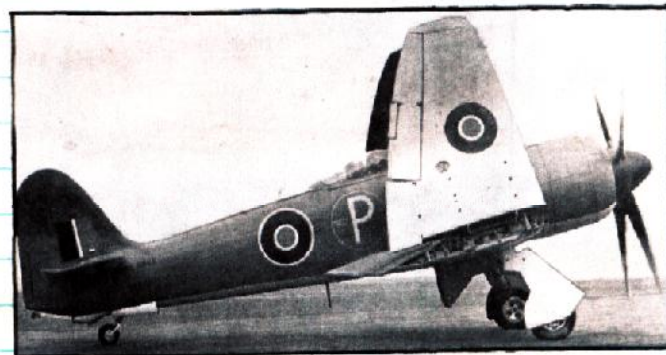


DE HAVILLAND D.H.100 VAMPIRE TG/277.

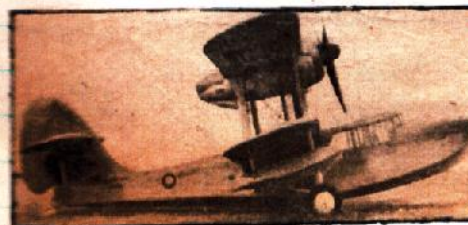


TAYLORCRAFT AUSTER A.O.P. IV. MT 363.

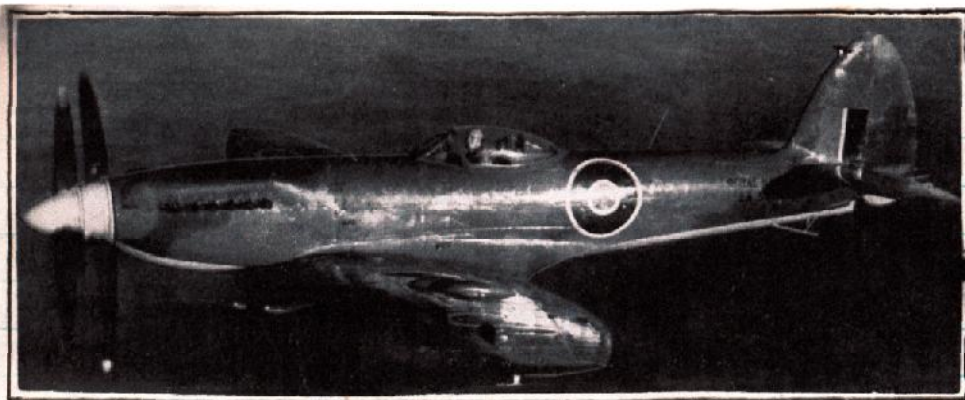
DURING THE WAR FL/LT BRIAN THIRLIE LEFT HIS AUSTER AT BOVINGDON FOR ONE OF HIS LEAVES. I WENT WITH HIS FATHER TO WATCH HIM TAKE OFF.



HAWKER SEA FURY X. ROYAL NAVY SR 666



SUPERMARINE
SEA OTTER A.S.R. II.
RD 919.



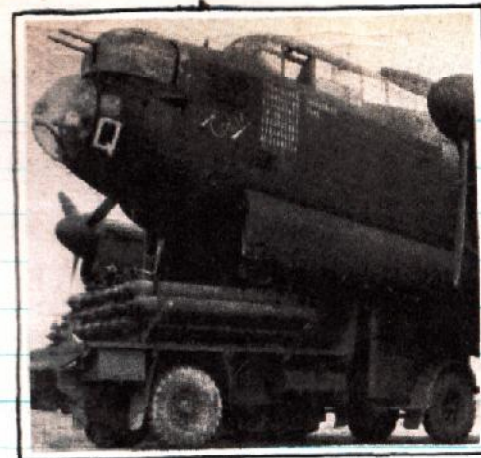
SUPERMARINE SEAFIRE 47. ROYAL NAVY LA547.
I LOOKED INTO THE COCKPIT OF THIS AEROPLANE
WHICH WAS FINISHED IN A VERY HIGH GLOSS BLUE.



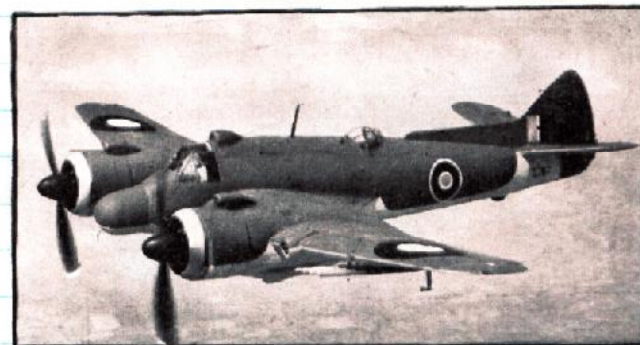
WESTLAND LYSANDER III. T1671.
THIS LYSANDER WAS USED FOR DROPPING SPIES.
THE PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN AT THE EXHIBITION.



VICKERS - ARMSTRONGS WELLINGTON B.X.
LP.673



AVRO 683 LANCASTER B.III ND 677/G KO-X
THE REAR DOOR ~~AVRO~~ WAS LEFT OPEN SO THAT
I WAS ABLE TO SEE DETAILS OF THE H2S EQUIPMENT
AND THE MID-UPPER TURRET.



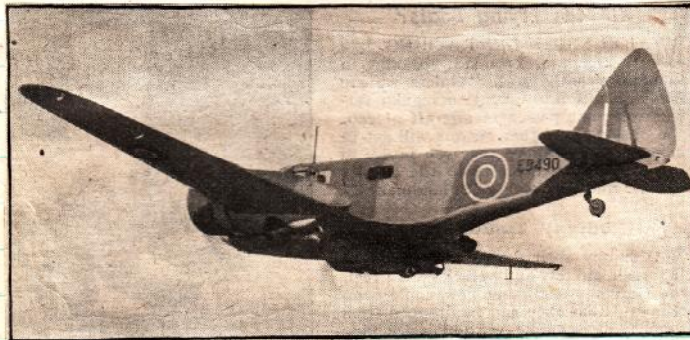
BRISTOL BEAUFIGHTER T.F.X. RD 773.
THIS "BEAU" HAD A LONG RANGE TANK
SLUNG IN THE TORPEDO CRADLE.



FAIREY-BLACKBURN
SWORDFISH II

LS 326

HANDLEY PAGE HALIFAX C. MK VIII. PP 227

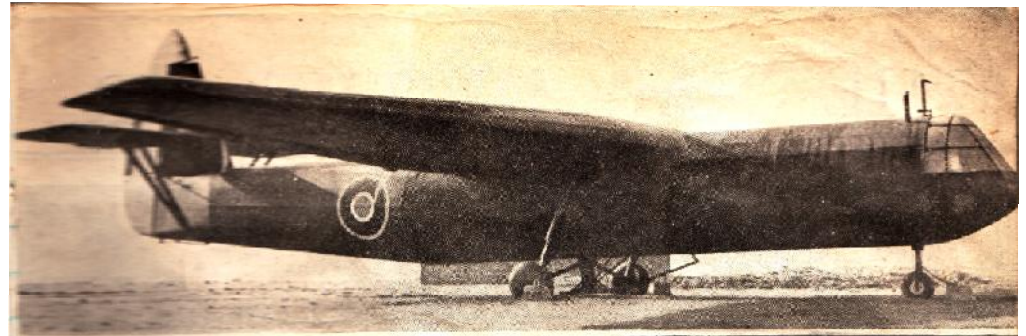


AIRSPEED OXFORD T. MK V. N6424



HAWKER HURRICANE F.11c UH-F LF 743

I HOPE I SHALL NEVER FORGET THE SIGHT OF HURRICANES
DOGGEDLY GOING FOR THE HUGE FORMATIONS OF NAZI
BOMBERS WHICH IT WAS MY PRIVILEGE TO SEE DURING
THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN.



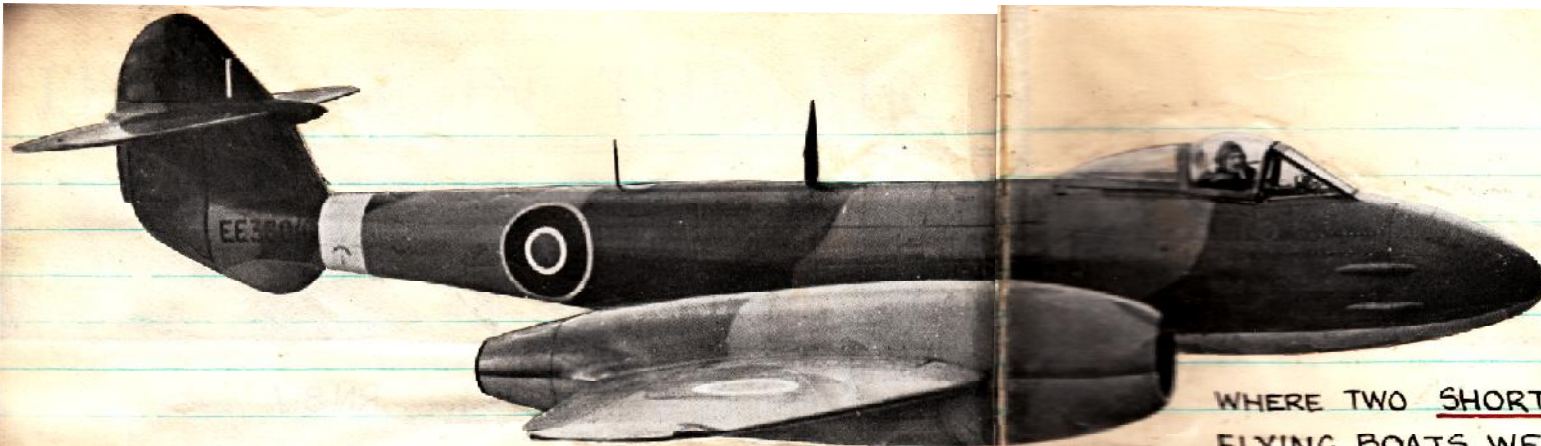
AIRSPEED HORSA A.1. RN 817 18

GLOSTER GLADIATOR II. L8032

CLIMBING ABOUT ON THIS OLD FIGHTER REMINDED ME
OF THE HOUR TO HOUR EYE-WITNESS STORIES WHICH
CAME OVER THE RADIO AT THE TIME WHEN THIS FIGHTER
PUT UP SUCH A GALLANT DEFENCE OF MALTA.

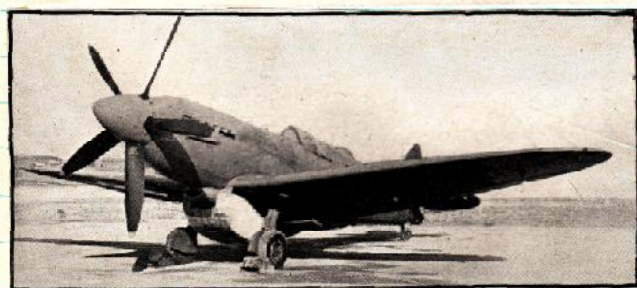
DE HAVILLAND D.H.82A TIGER MOTH T7307 FDRK. D.E.F.T.S.





GLOSTER METEOR MK IV EE 235

I SPENT A LONG TIME LOOKING OVER THIS JET AS I WAS MAKING A METEOR AT THE TIME, RATHER TO THE ANNOYANCE OF MY GUIDE WHO DID NOT WANT TO COPY DOWN THE STENCILLING WHICH ABOUNDS ON A MODERN FIGHTER.



SUPERMARINE SPITFIRE P.R. XIX

PS 909

I CLIMBED ON TO THE WING TO SEE THE COCKPIT.

IN THE AFTERNOON I TOUCHED MY FIRST FLYING BOATS. I WENT BY LAUNCH FROM WESTMINSTER PIER TO GREENWICH WHERE TWO SHORT SUNDERLAND III FLYING BOATS WERE MOORED FOR EXHIB-

-ITION TO THE PUBLIC AS PART OF THE VICTORY CELEBRATIONS.

THE FIRST WAS RN 299 P, THE SECOND, VB 882 X.



ON THE WAY BACK TO WESTMINSTER I SAW MY FIRST NORWEGIAN CIVIL AIRCRAFT, LN-IAK, A DAKOTA OF D.N.L.


JUNE 21

I SAW AVRO TUDOR 1's FOR THE FIRST TIME. G-AGRD AND G-AGRF WERE FLY TOGETHER OVER AMERSHAM. IN JANUARY 1947, G-AGRF WAS NAMED 'ELIZABETH OF ENGLAND', FLAGSHIP OF B.O.A.C.'S TUDOR FLEET BY H.R.H. PRINCESS ELIZABETH. *See photo on next page.*

JUNE 24

I LOOKED THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR OF - DE HAVILLAND D.H. 98 MOSQUITO T.III WHICH CRASH LANDED AT BOVINGDON.





MILES AIRCRAFT LIMITED

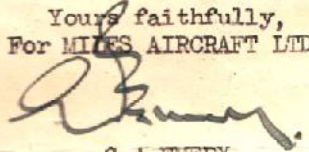
TELEGRAMS: MANK READING THE AERODROME TELEPHONES: READING 6011
 CABLE: MANKREY'S SECOND ED & A.R.C. READING - BERKSHIRE READING 4361 DUNNING 2211
 Your Ref. Date

GAE/TP/VT. 2nd July 1946.

Mr. W. J. Young,
 With Form,
 Royal Grammar School,
 HIGH WYCOMBE.
 Bucks.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of the
 28th June, I confirm that Wednesday, July
 17th, is quite convenient for you to visit
 these works.

Yours faithfully,
 For MILES AIRCRAFT LTD.

 G. A. EMERY.
 Chief Technical Officer.

Directors: F. E. Miles, F.R.A.S. Mrs. M. F. M. Miles G. H. Miles Sir William M. Mount, Bt.

MILES *Aircraft*

I ARRIVED AT WOODLEY AFTER A RATHER HECTIC JOURNEY WITH D.W.H. "NIPPER" BROWN, ON HIS R.E. (WE WERE CHASED AND STOPPED BY A POLICE PATROL  CAR, FOR PASSING A HALT SIGN IN THE FIRST ½ MILE.)

AS SOON AS WE STOPPED AT THE AIRFIELD OO-HOM, A BELGIAN AEROVAN TOOK OFF AND LANDED. THE REST OF THE PARTY



ARRIVED, AND WE BEGAN OUR TOUR. FIRST OF ALL WE SAW THE ENTIRE



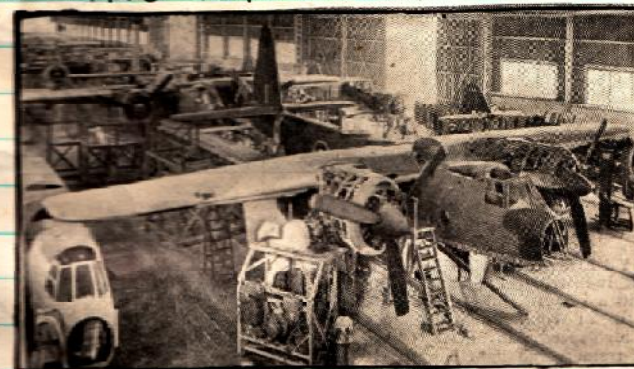
OPERATION OF THE PRODUCTION OF A MILES MARTIN 'BIRO' PEN. THEN ON TO THE 'COPYCAT' DUPLICATOR, ANOTHER OF MILES' SIDELINES.

THE FIRST AEROPLANES WE WERE SHOWN WERE THREE

MILES QUEEN MARTINET
RH 177, RH 178 AND RH 180.

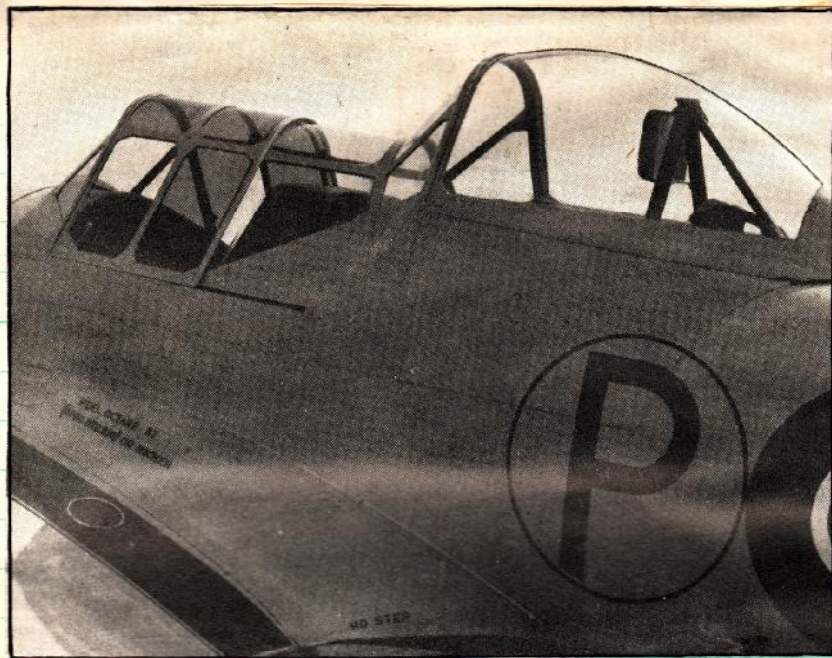


THESE AIRCRAFT WERE JACKED UP WITH LADDERS LEADING UP TO THE WING WALKWAYS SO THAT WE WERE ABLE TO GO UP TO SEE INTO THE COCKPITS. IN THE SAME SHOP AEROVAN NOSECAPS AND WING TIPS WERE BEING TURNED OUT. WE PASSED DOWN BETWEEN MASTER AND MARTINET FUSELAGES TO THE SHOP SHOWN IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH.



Miles M.57 AEROVAN IV G-AHTX. AIR CONTRACTORS LTD.

I WENT IN THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR, LOOKED AT THE CONTROLS, AND OUT AT THE REAR LOADING DOOR.



Miles MARTINET TRAINER JN 688
LOOKED INTO BOTH COCKPITS.



Miles M.33 MONITOR T.T.II. NP424
I WENT UP A LADDER TO THE FRONT
HATCH, INTO THE FUSELAGE BELLY TO WATCH
MEN AT WORK ON THE INTERIOR FITTINGS.



SEEING YELLOW.—Specifically designed as a fast target-tower, the Miles M.33 Monitor T.T.Mk.II, is now painted all-yellow with black diagonal stripes on undersurfaces. This applies to the last of the production batch, from NP423 onwards.

Miles M.33 MONITOR T.T.II NP 425.
THIS MONITOR WAS NOT IN SUCH AN ADVANCED
STAGE OF CONSTRUCTION AS NP424. IT WAS
WITHOUT AIRSCREWS OR PAINT.



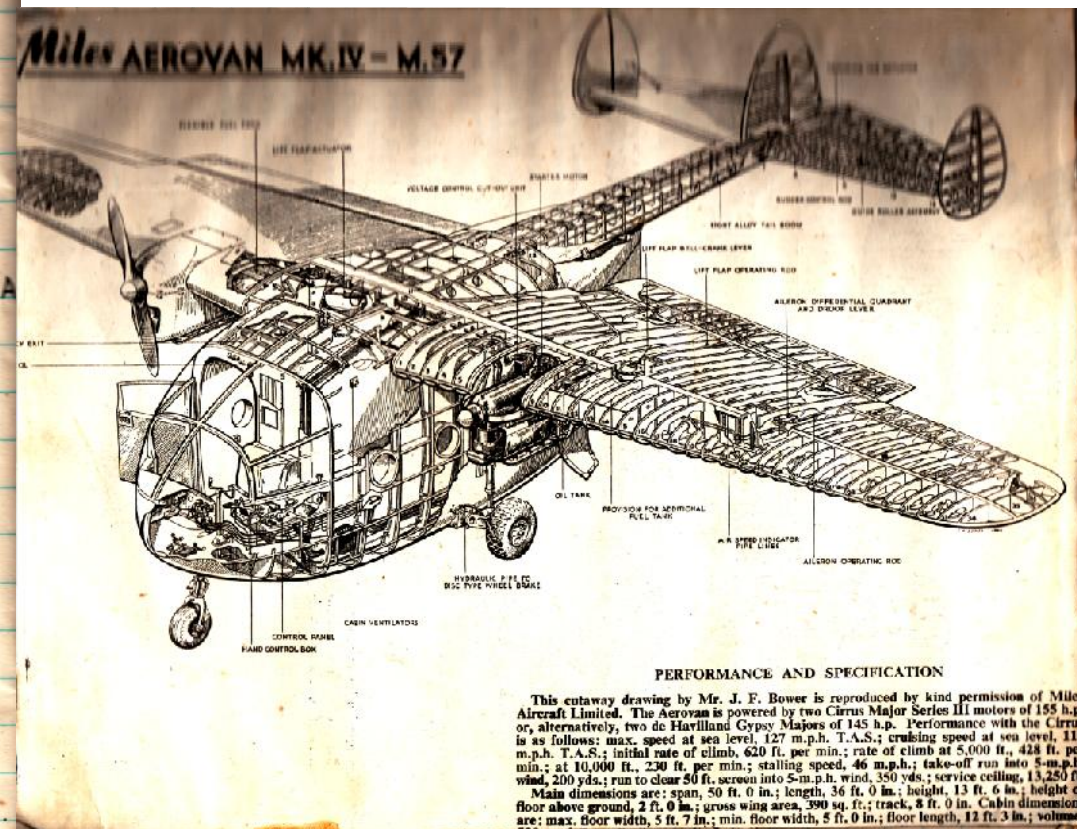
Miles M.60 MARATHON.
WE WENT OFF INTO A SHOP WHERE THE FIRST
PRODUCTION MODEL WAS IN THE FRAMEWORK
STAGE. IT WAS VERY INTERESTING TO WATCH
THE CONSTRUCTION AT SUCH AN EARLY
PERIOD IN ITS PRODUCTION.



WE MOVED TO THE MAIN ASSEMBLY SHOP WHERE A
Miles M.65 GEMINI G-AIDO
WAS NEXT ON THE LINE AFTER THE MONITORS.

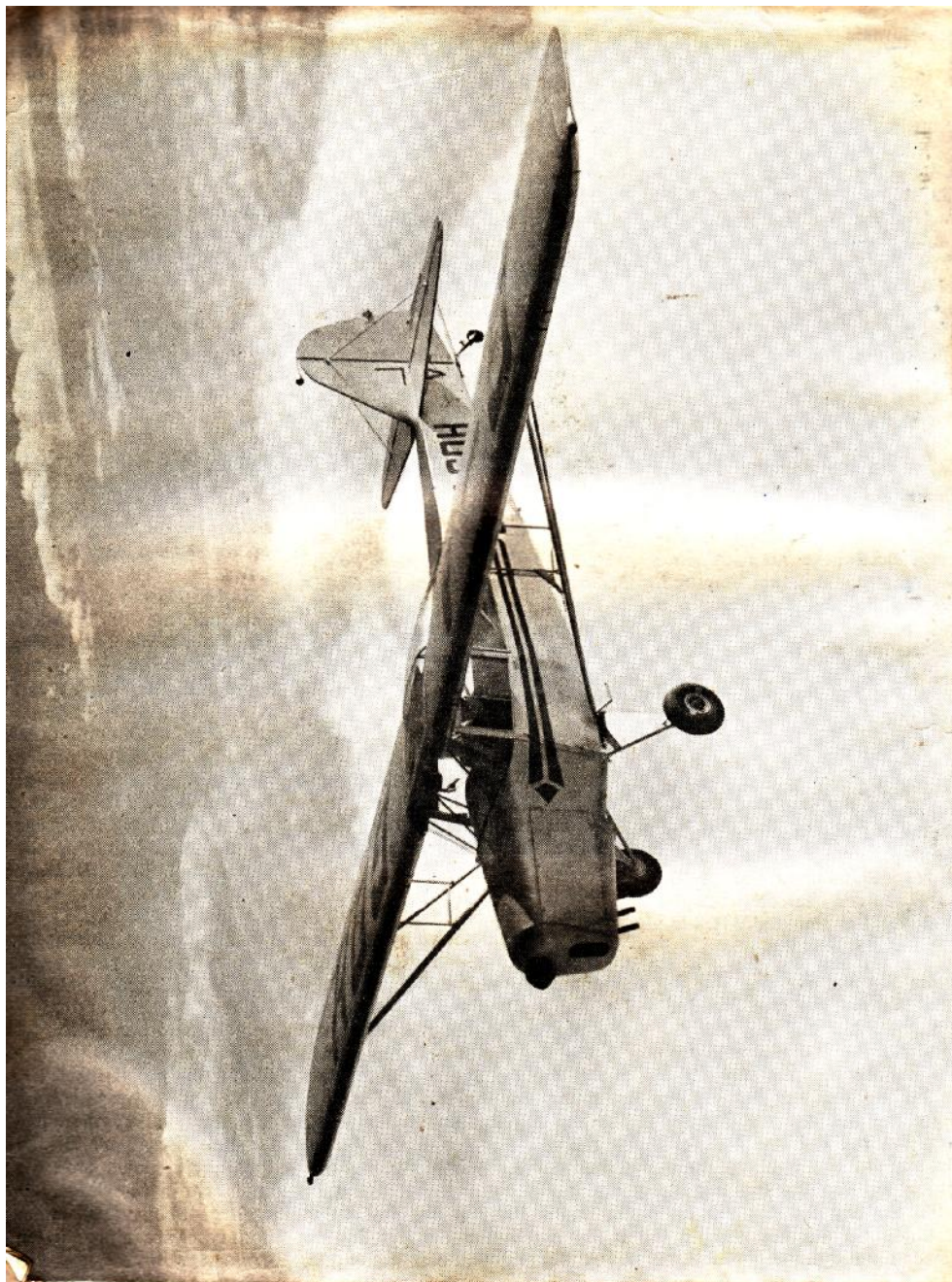


BEYOND THE GEMINI WAS A NEARLY COMPLETED
Miles M.38 MESSENGER.
WHICH WAS JUST HAVING ITS WHEELS FITTED



PERFORMANCE AND SPECIFICATION

This cutaway drawing, by Mr. J. F. Bower is reproduced by kind permission of Miles Aircraft Limited. The Aerovan is powered by two Cirrus Major Series III motors of 155 h.p. or, alternatively, two de Havilland Gipsy Majors of 145 h.p. Performance with the Cirrus is as follows: max. speed at sea level, 127 m.p.h.; T.A.S.; cruising speed, 100 m.p.h.; max. rate of climb, 1,000 ft. per min.; max. climb to 10,000 ft. 42.4 ft. per min.; at 10,000 ft., 230 ft. per min.; stalling speed, 46 m.p.h.; take-off run into 5-m.p.h. wind, 200 yds.; to clear 50 ft. screen into 5-m.p.h. wind, 350 yds.; service ceiling, 13,250 ft. Main dimensions are: span, 50 ft. 0 in.; length, 36 ft. 0 in.; height, 10 ft. 0 in.; wheel track, 5 ft. 0 in. Cabin dimensions are: max. floor width, 5 ft. 7 in.; min. floor width, 5 ft. 1 in.; floor length, 12 ft. 3 in.; volume



THE AEROVAN PRODUCTION LINE WAS WELL UNDER WAY IN THE NEXT SHOP. WE SPENT SOME TIME CLIMBING ABOUT INSIDE FOUR OR FIVE -

Miles M.57 AEROVANS.



NEXT WE WENT ON TO A HANGAR WHERE WE WERE ALLOWED TO GO INSIDE -

Miles M.57 AEROVAN mk IV . 00-HOM .

AND

Miles M.57 AEROVAN mk II G-AGWO.



ON THE WAY TO THE PAINT SHOP I PAUSED TO LOOK THROUGH THE WINDOWS OF -
AUSTER MODEL J/I AUTOCRAT G-AHCM
WHICH STOOD ON THE APRON.



Miles M.57 AEROVAN IV. G-AHXH.
I SAT IN THE PILOT'S SEAT OF THIS M.57 WHICH
WAS BEING FITTED OUT WITH RADIO FOR A
PRIVATE OWNER.

IN THE DOPE SHOP I CLIMBED INTO THE COCKPIT
OF A -

Miles M.25 MARTINET T.T.1 WHICH WORE THE
ROUNDELS OF THE EIRE AIR FORCE. I HAD TO
USE THE HANDHOLDS AND RETRACTABLE STEPS
IN A VERY PROFESSIONAL MANNER SO THAT NONE
OF THE GLEAMING SILVER DOPE WAS SCRATCHED.



STANDING NEARBY, COVERED ENTIRELY WITH YELLOW
DOPE WAS ANOTHER AIRCRAFT FOR EXPORT, A -
Miles M.14 MAGISTER.

WE WERE TAKEN TO THE PLASTICS SHOP
WHERE ANYTHING FROM A PERSPEX
WINDSHIELD FOR A MARATHON TO A BATH
MAT MADE FROM SAWDUST WERE BEING MADE.



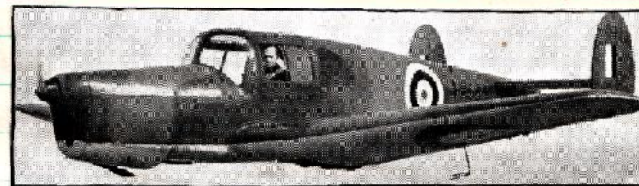
THESE AIRCRAFT, WHICH WERE BY FAR THE MOST
INTERESTING OF THE WHOLE VISIT. I WENT INSIDE ALL
OF THE FOLLOWING. -

Miles M.48. G-AGQY.

AT THE TIME THIS WAS THE ONLY M.48 IN EXISTANCE.

Miles M.60 MARATHON, G-AGPD, FORMERLY U10.

I WENT INSIDE THE MAIN CABIN OF THIS 1ST PROTOTYPE.



Miles M.28 MERCURY Mk IV G-AGVX. ex UO243

Miles M.60 MARATHON. G-AHXU. G-AILH

THE SECOND PROTOTYPE WAS FAIRLY WELL
ADVANCED IN THE PRIMARY CONSTRUCTION.



Miles M.18 mk III. U-3.

I SLID BACK THE COCKPIT COVER AND SAT IN THE FRONT SEAT.

OUTSIDE ON THE GRASS STOOD -

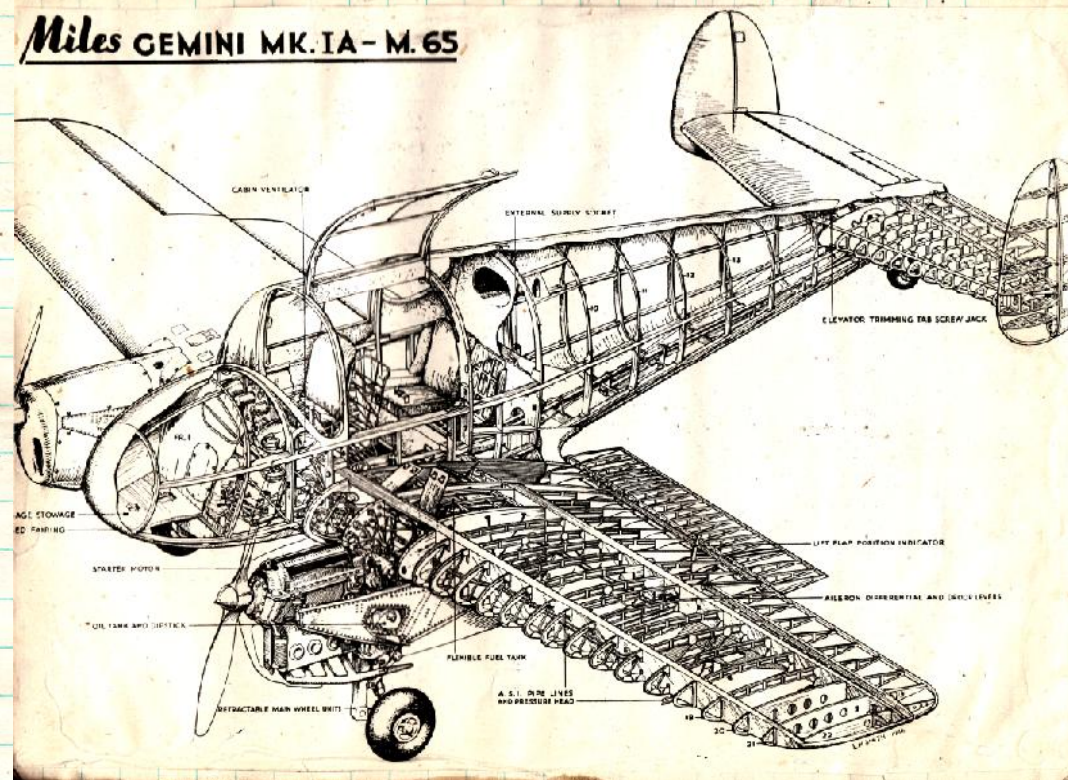


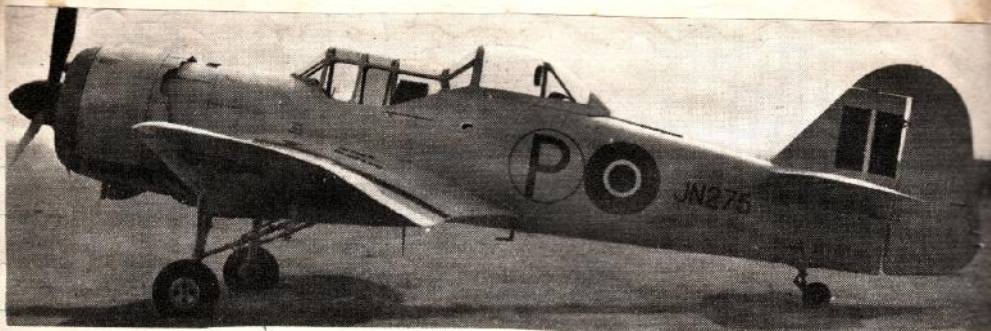
Miles M.65 GEMINI. G-AGUS

WE WERE ONLY ALLOWED TO STROKE 'GUS' AS HE WAS JUST NEWLY POLISHED

WE WALKED ALONG A ROW OF MASTERS AND MARTINETTS, ONE OF WHICH CAN BE SEEN IN THE BACKGROUND OF THE MARATHON PHOTOGRAPH.

Miles GEMINI MK. IA - M.65





Miles MARTINET TRAINER JN 275.

WE WERE NOT ENCOURAGED TO CLIMB ABOUT
ON JN 275 IN VIEW OF THE BEAUTIFULLY SMOOTH
YELLOW FINISH.

IN THE EXPERIMENTAL SHED WE WERE SHOWN.-

Miles M.39B LIBELLULA U4.



I MADE A LONG AND DETAILED EXAMINATION
OF THIS LITTLE AEROPLANE.

THEN WE WERE SHOWN
THE MOCK-UP OF THE

Miles M.52
SUPERSONIC AIRCRAFT.



I TOUCHED THE FOLLOWING THREE AIRCRAFT.-

Miles M.3B "GILLETTE" FALCON L9705.

Miles M.19 MASTER G.T. II. DL429

Miles M.65 GEMINI IA G-AILK



Miles M.33 MONITOR T.T. II. NP419

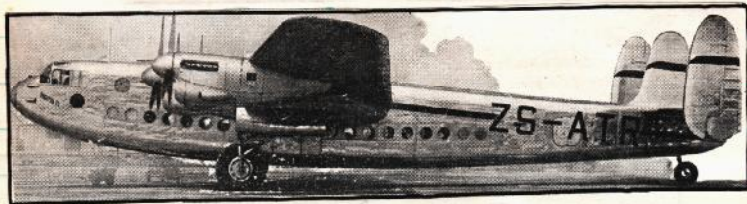
I WENT IN THE FRONT HATCH, ALONG THE FUSELAGE
AND OUT AT THE BACK.





AUG 25

I SAW AN AVRO TUDOR II, G-AGSU, FOR THE FIRST TIME AS IT TOOK OFF FROM HURN.



AUG 30

I SAW MY FIRST SOUTH AFRICAN REGISTRATION, ZS-ATR, AVRO YORK "IMPALA" OF SOUTH AFRICAN AIRWAYS AS IT FLEW OVER SWANAGE.

AUGUST 27.

I WENT TO PORTLAND NAVAL DOCKYARD WHERE I WENT ON A TOUR OF INSPECTION OF THE HOME FLEET ON BOARD AN ADMIRALTY DRIFTER. WE WENT TO SEE H.M.S. "DIADEM", "NELSON", "HOWE", "OFFA", "TINTAGEL CASTLE", AND THE

U.S. NAVAL SQUADRON LED BY U.S.S. "HOUSTON", AND MANY OTHER BRITISH NAVAL UNITS SUCH AS FLOATING DOCKS, FLEET TANKERS, SUPPLY SHIPS AND LANDING CRAFT.



MY SHIP HOVE TO AS A SIKORSKY GAFELY, ROYAL NAVY KK999, TOOK OFF FROM THE WATER RIGHT BESIDE US. IT FLEW OUT TO SEE THE U.S. FLEET WHICH WAS THEN A FEW MILES OUTSIDE THE HARBOUR. SO WE RANG FULL SPEED AHEAD AND WENT OUT TO MEET U.S.S. "HOUSTON" WE GAVE THE YANKEE BLUEJACKETS A CHEER AS WE PASSED. PERCHED



ON THE STERN WAS A CURTISS SC-1 SEAHAWK.

AUGUST 31.



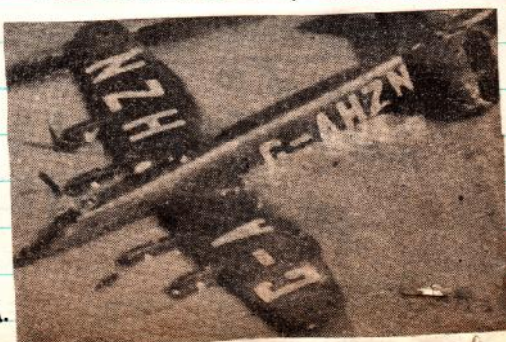
I SAW D.H. 89 DRAGON RAPIDE, G-AHEB, TAKE OFF FROM EASTLIEGH.



MEANWHILE THE HANDLEY PAGE H.P.70 HALTONS OF B.O.A.C.'S NO 1 LINE HAD MOVED INTO BOVINGDON. G-AHDU, 'FALKIRK', G-AHDW, 'FALAISE', G-AHDS, 'FREEMANTLE'. SEPTEMBER 13



THE HALTON G-AHZN, WHICH BELONGED TO LONDON AERO AND MOTOR SERVICES LTD, WHO USED IT FOR CARRYING FRUIT FROM THE CONTINENT, VISITED BOVINGDON. IT LOOKED VERY SPRUCE IN ITS BLUE PAINT. THIS IS HOW IT LOOKED ON THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 25 AT LE ZOUTE, OSTEND, BELGIUM.



SEPTEMBER 21.



I WENT TO NORTHOLT FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE IT BECAME A CIVIL AIRFIELD. THERE WERE MANY VIKINGS AND DAKOTAS OF BRITISH EUROPEAN AIRWAYS. I SAW MY FIRST DANISH AIRCRAFT, DAKOTA-OY-DCI, AND FOCKE-WULF CONDOR "JUTLANDIA"-OY-DEM. THEN I TRUSTED MY NECK TO BROTHER BROWN'S KEEPING FOR A FEW MORE MILES, TO LONDON AIRPORT, HEATHROW. HERE I SAW CONSTELLATIONS, SKYMASTERS, YORKS, HALTONS, AND LANCASTRIANS.



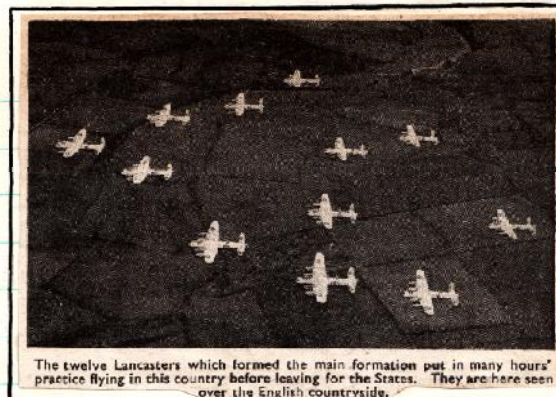


I HAD A SPECIALLY CLOSE VIEW OF B.O.A.C.'S CONSTELLATION "BALTIMORE" AS IT STOOD CLOSE TO THE ROAD.



TO LANGLEY, HEADQUARTERS OF BRITISH SOUTH AMERICAN AIRWAYS WHERE I SAW SOME OF THEIR YORKS AND LANCASTRIANS. ALSO MY FIRST VISIT.

AT THIS TIME WE WERE REMEMBERING THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN INCLUDED IN THE CELEBRATIONS WERE FLY PASTS OVER LONDON. I SAW THE FAMOUS N°35B 'MADRAS' SQUADRON, EQUIPPED WITH AVRO LANCASTERS CODED 'TL'. THEY MADE THEIR FIRST CEREMONIAL APPEARANCE IN FORMATION OVER LONDON ON VICTORY DAY, JUNE 8th 1946. ONE MONTH LATER THEY LEFT FOR A GOODWILL TOUR OF THE U.S.A WHERE THEY RECEIVED A VERY WARM WELCOME EVERYWHERE THEY WENT. THEY FLEW OVER LONDON ONCE MORE ON THEIR RETURN, AND AGAIN ON BATTLE OF BRITAIN DAY WHEN I



The twelve Lancasters which formed the main formation put in many hours' practice flying in this country before leaving for the States. They are here seen over the English countryside.

SAW THEM MAKING THEIR WAY NORTHWARDS TO THEIR BASE AT GRAVELY, HUNTINGDONSHIRE.



OCTOBER 5.

I SAW A CANADIAN AIRCRAFT FOR THE FIRST TIME, AN AVRO 691 LANCASTRIAN CF-BMW, OF TRANS-CANADA AIRLINES.

DORVAL - GANDER - PRESTWICK - LONDON.



G-AHDD, A BOYINGDON REGULAR

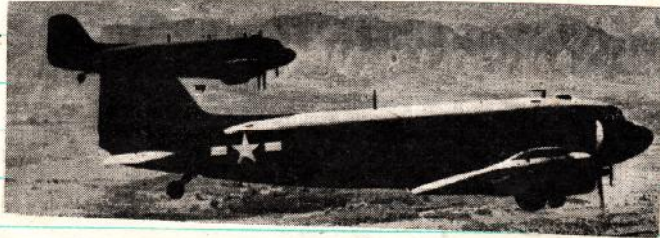


VISIT TO BOVINGDON TOWER

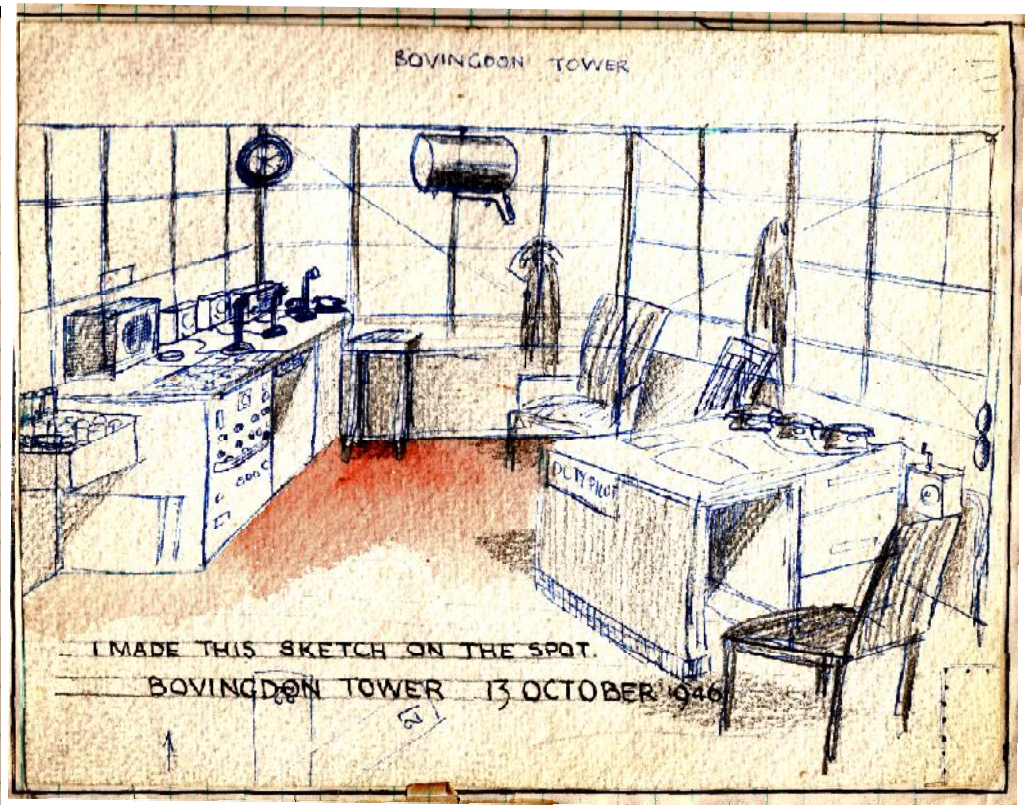
OCTOBER 13.

BY COURTESY OF MR. J. CRITCHLEY GRAHAM, OFFICER IN CHARGE, AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL, MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION, BOVINGDON, I SPENT THIS SUNDAY MORNING INSIDE THE CONTROL ROOM. ALL ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES WERE IN R/T COMMUNICATION UP TO A RANGE OF 50 MILES. OVER THE LOUDSPEAKER I HEARD THE PILOT OF A C-45 EXPEDITOR WHICH WAS STANDING ON THE APRON, ASK FOR PERMISSION TO PROCEED TO RUNWAY 04. THE CONTROLLER BESIDE ME GAVE HIM THE O.K. TO TAKE OFF FOR WATTISHAM. IMMEDIATELY HE ENTERED THE RUNWAY, SPED PAST US AND CLIMBED AWAY INTO THE OVERCAST. A SKYTRAIN WAS SIMILARLY DISPATCHED TO ORLY, PARIS.

THEN THE R/O OF ANOTHER SKYTRAIN FROM ORLY



CALLED UP AS THE AIRCRAFT PASSED OVER GUILFORD AT SIX THOUSAND FEET. THIS C-47'S AIR FORCE



Glasshouse Interior 1945

SERIAL NUMBER WAS 43-158077, SO THAT THE R/T CONVERSATION /SOUNDED LIKE THIS -

"8077 TO BOVINGDON TOWER - CAN YOU GIVE ME THE WEATHER? OVER." (*New York East Side Accent*)

"BOVINGDON TOWER TO 8077. HULLO JOE, HERE IS OUR LATEST WEATHER, CLOUD BASE TWO THOUSAND FEET, OVERCAST, WIND, NORTH-EAST, TEN M.P.H. ALTIMETER SETTING 30.16, OVER."

"8077 TO BOVINGDON TOWER, ROGER, OUT"

LATER THESE WORDS CAME LOUD AND CLEAR IN A BROAD EAST SIDE MANNER -

"LOOK HERE, YOU - SUNNUFABITCH" — SIGNS THAT THERE WAS A LITTLE DOMESTIC STRIFE IN THE NOSE OF THE SKYTRAIN. THEN SILENCE

JUST THEN A LARGE CAR WITH POLICE ESCORT



DREW UP ON THE APRON, I WENT OUT ON THE BALCONY TO WATCH THE PROCEEDINGS. FROM THE CAR STEPPED GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER FOLLOWED BY MR^S EISENHOWER.

THEY WENT ACROSS TO THE GENERAL'S SKYMASTER, "SUNFLOWER II". I WENT BACK TO THE CONTROL ROOM TO HEAR HOW THE SKYTRAIN WAS PROGRESSING. IT WAS LETTING DOWN ON THE NORTH-EAST LEG OF THE APPROACH AND EXPECTED

TO ARRIVE OVER THE AIRFIELD AT FIFTEEN-HUNDRED FEET.

"7929 (EISENHOWER'S C-54.) TO BOVINGDON TOWER, MAY I PROCEED TO RUNWAY 04. OVER"

"BOVINGDON TOWER TO 7929. YOU ARE CLEAR TO TAXI, YOU MAY RUN UP, BUT DO NOT LINE UP"

"BOVINGDON TOWER TO 8077, WHAT IS YOUR POSITION? OVER."

THE SKYTRAIN REPLIED, AND THE CONTROLLER HAD TO MAKE THE DECISION WHETHER TO KEEP EISENHOWER WAITING WHILE THE SKYTRAIN LANDED OR SEND THE SKYMASTER UP INTO THE OVERCAST AND RISK A CRASH. AFTER A QUICK CONFERENCE THE CONTROLLER SAID "BOVINGDON TOWER TO 8077, STAY AT 2000 FEET, OVER" "8077 TO BOVINGDON TOWER, ROGER, OVER"

"BOVINGDON TOWER TO 7929, YOU ARE CLEAR TO TAKE OFF." AT THESE WORDS I BOUNDED DOWN THE STEPS AGAIN TO WATCH THE SKYMASTER ROLL DOWN THE RUNWAY, I SAW THE GENERAL AND HIS WIFE, (SITTING AT A SPECIAL WINDOW WHICH WAS MUCH BIGGER THAN A PORTHOLE ON A NORMAL C-54.) IT WAS ONLY A FLEETING GLIMPSE AS THE AIRCRAFT PASSED THE TOWER ON ITS MILE-LONG RUN. AS SOON AS IT WAS AIRBORNE THE C-47 BROKE CLOUD OVER THE CENTRE OF THE AIRFIELD.



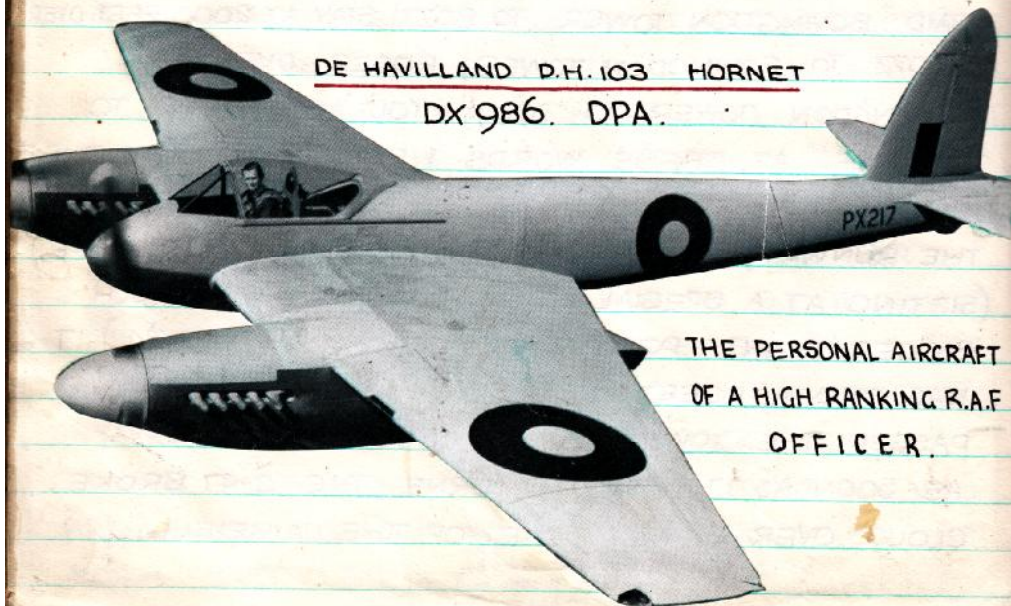


THE DOUGLAS C-47 SKYTRAIN 43158077 LANDED AND TAXIED PAST THE TOWER.

ANOTHER C-47, 42-93716 ALSO FROM ORLY, LANDED.

THEN GENERAL EISENHOWER'S PILOT CALLED UP -

"HAVE SET COURSE FOR FRANKFURT, THANK YOU VERY MUCH, GOOD MORNING." AFTER A B-17 FORTRESS WHICH STOOD OUTSIDE ON THE APRON HAD DONE A RADIO TEST I LEFT THE CONTROL TOWER AND WAS ALLOWED TO TOUCH THE FOLLOWING AIRCRAFT WHICH STOOD ON THE APRON.



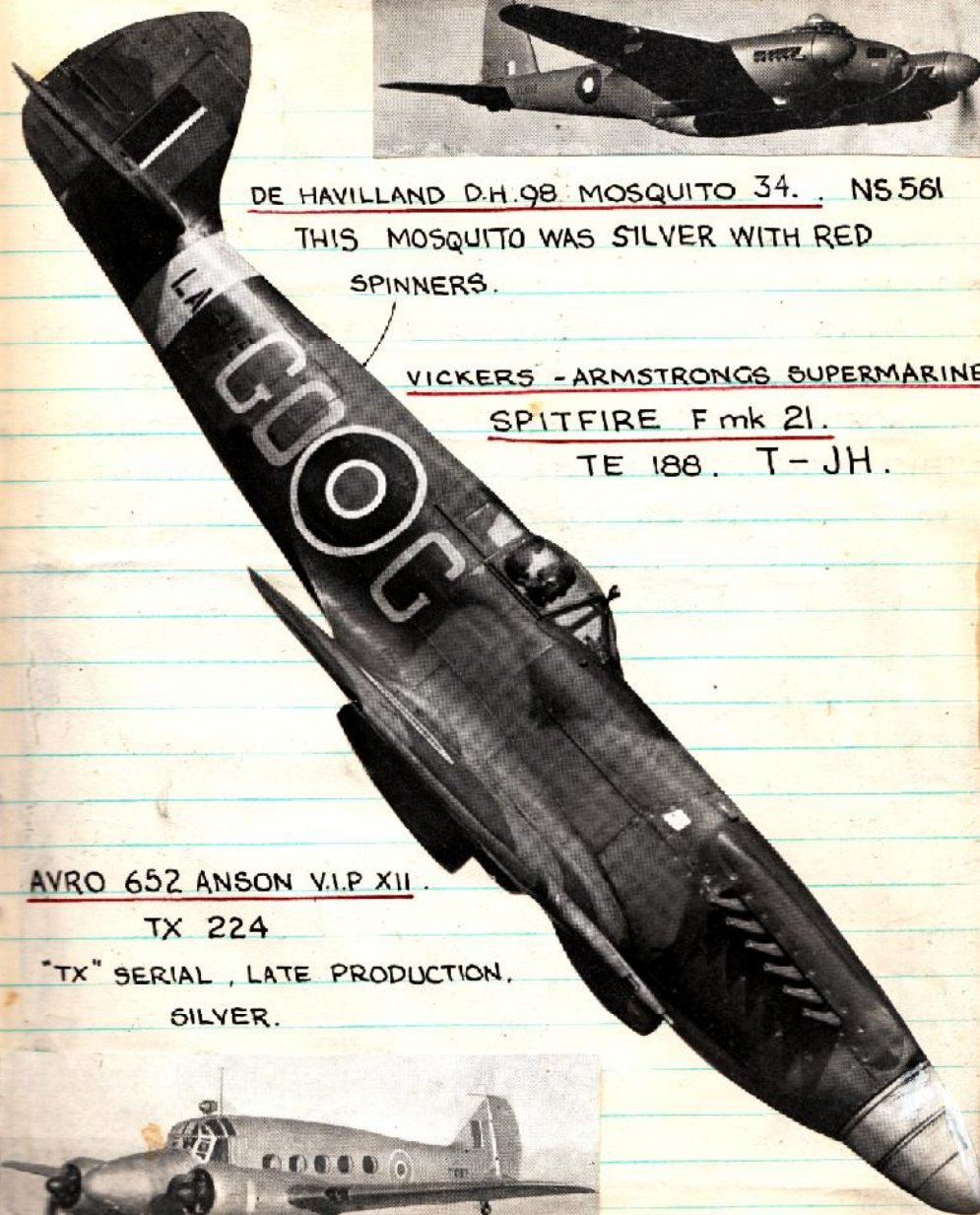
DE HAVILLAND D.H.103 HORNET
DX 986. DPA.

THE PERSONAL AIRCRAFT
OF A HIGH RANKING R.A.F.
OFFICER.



DE HAVILLAND D.H.98 MOSQUITO 34. NS 561
THIS MOSQUITO WAS SILVER WITH RED
SPINNERS.

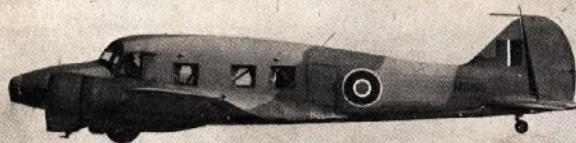
VICKERS - ARMSTRONGS SUPERMARINE
SPITFIRE Fmk 21.
TE 188. T-JH.



AVRO 652 ANSON V.I.P XII.
TX 224

"TX" SERIAL, LATE PRODUCTION,
SILVER.





ANSON XII

AVRO 652 ANSON V.I.P. XII PH 588.

"PH" SERIAL, EARLY PRODUCTION, CAMOUFLAGED.

NORTH AMERICAN B-25J MITCHELL. KJ 590.

THIS R.A.F. COMMUNICATIONS AIRCRAFT HAD GIANT WHIP AERIALS ON TOP OF THE FUSELAGE.

PERCIVAL PROCTOR I G-AHMR



THIS PROCTOR LANDED THE DAY BEFORE BECAUSE OF BAD WEATHER. THIS WAS THE FIRST PRIVATE CIVIL TO LAND AT BOVINGDON.

BOEING B-17G - 90-VE FORTRESS. 44-8929.

THIS EX-OPERATIONAL FORTRESS HAD A RADAR SCANNER IN PLACE OF A BALL TURRET.

I HAD A VERY GOOD LOOK ROUND THE EXTERIOR OF THIS AEROPLANE.

DE HAVILLAND D.H. 98 MOSQUITO XVI TA 603.

BEECH UC-45-F-BH EXPEDITOR. 44-52631.





OCTOBER 16.

I SAW THE FOLLOWING AIRCRAFT AT LONDON AIRPORT.
AVRO LANCASTER, G-AGUL. BSAA. FRUIT FREIGHTER.
H.P.70 HALTON G-AHDL. I SAW THIS HALTON LEAVE
BOVINGDON AT 07.15. ON THE SAME MORNING.
G-AHZJ AND G-AHZO, - LAMS FREIGHTERS (HALIFAX VIII)



AVRO LANCASTRIAN,
G-AGWI, B.S.A.A.
DOUGLAS DC-3,
AMERICAN AIRLINES.
I SAW A LOCKHEED L-49
CONSTELLATION TAKE

OFF FOR THE FIRST TIME WHEN NC 88857,
"CLIPPER FLYING MIST" OF PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS
SET OFF FOR SHANNON AIRPORT.

LATER IN THE DAY, AT BRIGHTON, I SAW G-AGWI
CROSS THE COAST ON ITS WAY TO SOUTH AMERICA.



AT LITTLE HAMPTON, AS I LOOKED AT THE COURSE WHERE GROUP-CAPTAIN E.M. DONALDSON BROKE THE WORLD'S AIR SPEED RECORD, I SAW G-AERO, THE J/1 AUTOCRAT WHICH BELONGED TO **THE AEROPLANE** RETURNING TO FORD FROM THE ROYAL NAVY TRIALS CARRIER, "H.M.S. ILLUSTRIOUS" WHICH LAY OFF THE NAB TOWER. R.M.S "QUEEN ELIZABETH" HAD PASSED THE NAB SEVERAL MINUTES EARLIER AS SHE BEGAN HER MAIDEN VOYAGE TO NEW YORK.



ON THE WAY HOME I SAW A DE HAVILLAND D.H.98 SEA MOSQUITO 33 WITH A 'THIMBLE' NOSE RADAR SCANNER LAND AT FORD.

EARLIER I SAW A D.H.82A TIGER MOTH TAKE OFF FROM SHOREHAM.

NOVEMBER 2. I SAW CX-AGO, A DAKOTA BELONGING TO URUGUAY, ON BOVINGDON APRON. CAMOUFLAGED, WHITE LETTERS



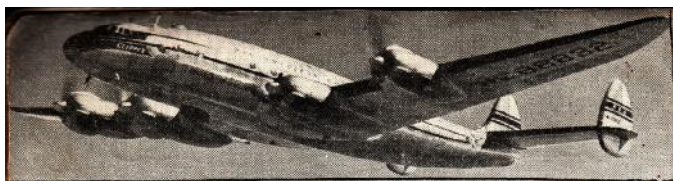
NOVEMBER 9. I SAW MY FIRST JET PROPELLED AEROPLANE LAND. GLOSTER METEOR III, EE 426, TOUCHED DOWN ON RUNWAY 04 AT BOVINGDON AFTER CROSSING THE ROAD, WHERE I STOOD, AT AN ALTITUDE OF ABOUT TEN FEET.



DECEMBER 12. I SAW G-AHOG, ONE OF BRITISH EUROPEAN AIRWAYS "JUPITER" FLEET FOR THE FIRST TIME. (JUNKERS JU 52/3m)

DECEMBER 14. DOUGLAS DAKOTA, G-AGZB, OF RAILWAY AIR SERVICES LANDED AND TAXIED PAST CLOSE TO THE ROAD.





STANDING ON THE
APRON WAS F-BAXL,
AN AIR FRANCE DC-3.

THE FIRST LOCKHEED L-49 CONSTELLATION I SAW AT
BOVINGDON WAS NC 88868 'CLIPPER POLYNESIA'
OF PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS.

STANDING CLOSE BY WAS THE FIRST "JY" REGISTRATION
I HAD SEEN, - G-AGJY, A B.O.A.C DAKOTA.



DECEMBER 20.

I SAW THE SPITFIRE TRAINER FLYING OVER
CHESHAM FOR THE FIRST TIME.

DECEMBER 30.

I VISITED THE "JETS" EXHIBITION AT CHARING
CROSS UNDERGROUND STATION, I WAS ABLE TO
INSPECT SEVERAL JET TURBINES AND MODELS OF
JET PROPELLED AEROPLANES.

SO ENDS THE FIRST VOLUME OF MY
AERONAUTICAL DIARY.

1936 - 1946.

HERE IS A LIST OF AIRCRAFT
I HAVE SEEN AT BOVINGDON
AIRFIELD, HERTFORDSHIRE.
1942 - 1946.

LOCKHEED HUDSON
HANDLEY - PAGE HALIFAX
DOUGLAS C-47 SKYTRAIN, DAKOTA
BOEING B-17 FORTRESS B-17 D, E, F, G, H
PERCIVAL PROCTOR
PIPER L-4 CUB
NORTHROP BLACK WIDOW
BEECH EXPEDITOR
AIRSPEED OXFORD
HAWKER HURRICANE
CONVAIR B-24 LIBERATOR
N.A. MUSTANG P-51 A, B, C, D, E, K
V.A. SPITFIRE, SEAFIRE.
LOCKHEED P-80 SHOOTING STAR
DOUGLAS A-20 HAVOC, R.A.F BOSTON
LOCKHEED P-38 LIGHTNING
D.H. TIGER MOTH
BRISTOL WAYFARER
MILES MAGISTER
CURTISS P-40 WARHAWK, TOMAHAWK

BRISTOL BLenheim IV
REPUBLIC P-47 THUNDERBOLT
CONVAIR L-5 SENTINEL
CESSNA C-78 BOBCAT
NOORDUYN C-64 NORSEMAN
N.A. TEXAN / HARVARD
FAIRCHILD ARGUS. FOREWARDER
SEA OTTER
AVRO ANSON, I-V.V. IPXII, TYPE XIX
MESSERSCHMITT ME 109 E, F
BOEING B-29 SUPERFORTRESS
AUSTER I, III, IV, AUTOCRAT
CURTISS COMMANDO C-46
DOUGLAS C-54 SKYMASTER
LOCKHEED CONSTELLATION
SIKORSKY R-4 HOVERFLY
JUNKERS JU 88
MARTIN B-26. MARAUDER
N.A. B-25 MITCHELL
SHORT STIRLING I, III, G.I. IV.
HIENKEL HE III
LOCKHEED LODESTAR, R50. C-69
D.H. MOSQUITO. II, III, IV, VI, 33, 34
GLOSTER METEOR III, IV.
Focke - Wulf 190

D.H. HORNET
AVRO LANCASTER I, II, III, VII
HIENKEL HE 177
D.H. DOMINIE / RAPIDE
AVRO YORK
DOUGLAS A-26 INVADER
BRISTOL BEAUFIGHTER
FAIREY FIREFLY
MILES MASTER.
WALRUS
GRUMMAN GOOSE
CATALINA
VICKERS WELLINGTON
MILES MARTINET
VICKERS WARWICK
BELL P-39 AIRACOBRA
BOULTON PAUL DEFIANT
HARVARD, TEXAN, SNJ
WESTLAND LYSANDER
A.W. WHITLEY
H.P. HALTON
WESTLAND WHIRLWIND
.. PRIVATEER
BOEING 247
PERCIVAL Q.6. PETREL

Bovingdon Airfield - Formal History 3

The most famous B17 to fly out of Bovingdon during the period 1942 to 44 was the “Memphis Belle” which returned to the USA in June 1943 after 25 missions. It later was featured in a popular movie. Later the site was the location for a number of large scale movies.

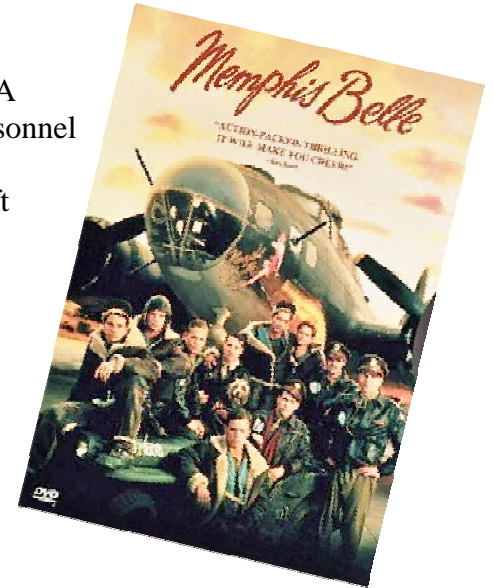
In late 1944 the Centre’s work was phased out. The advanced training of crews had improved greatly back home in the USA and it was decided that Bomber Groups would be responsible for their own operational training. Most of the remaining personnel at Bovingdon were assigned to the Air Disarmament Command but their stay was brief. The airfield was taken over by the US Air Transport Command. They mainly operated C47 Dakotas which were a feature in the local skies until the USAF left Bovingdon in 1962.

The RAF were also back at Bovingdon by Spring 1946 for a brief stay before it was handed over to the Ministry of Civil Aviation. A number of commercial airlines such as BOAC, Hunting Clan, Shorts and Harland Bros were based there.

By 1949 the American 7531st Air Base Squadron came to the airfield along with communication and support units. They also operated Dakotas. The 7531st squadron is commemorated with a plaque on the front of the village memorial hall.

From 1962 the RAF Southern Command Squadron operated from Bovingdon and their Anson C19 planes also became a familiar site in the local skies.

Flying at Bovingdon eventually ceased in January 1969 and in 1978 the site was sold, the technical site being developed into The Mount prison.





BRUSH PILOTS' CORNER™

"A Sense of Place"
by John Young

I'm sitting in my car at Bovingdon, 30 miles north of London, having just driven the length of the runway, one of the few left intact on the WWII bases used by the bombers of the Eighth Air Force in England. The ruins of the control tower are now masked by earthworks thrown up from the construction of a prison in the area where four hangars once stood. On my way home I shall pass through the village where B-17'S crossed the public road to reach their dispersal areas on farmland adjacent to the airfield. A cluster of these panhandles still provide a solid foundation for a community of mobile homes.

I have been approached to share my thoughts because collectors of aviation art have a keen interest in what motivates an individual artist. The reason I paint subjects featuring the aeroplanes that were based here is undoubtedly that my most formative years were spent in this place, witnessing the scenes that became part of history. Just to sit here brings back powerful memories - not all visual. While the light and the shade, clouds and trees trigger recollections of countless landings and take-offs, I am also reminded of the sounds - of engines running-up on a frosty morning, of the crackle of deep tyre-treads on the military trucks, of the squeal of brakes on a Fortress, of American talk, singing and cursing ! I could go on, but nostalgia can soon become a pejorative word.

John, I hear you cry, what has all this to do with painting a Mustang in a dog-fight over Berlin ? I don't know. I can only say that this sort of recall does help. Maybe it's because I believe that the magic play of light on an aeroplane can produce a more powerful image than worrying if it has the correct number of windows, guns or goofle-switches.

I guess other subjects are adequately looked after by other evocations in different places; I just happen to live here, able to summon up a picture of activity around the aircraft nearly fifty years ago. Nobody can come here today armed with all the audio-visual equipment they can muster and take away the image of what went on in those days. But it is forever in my memory. So perhaps the artist has a duty to try to convey such things.

I set out to do this in "Very Important Painting" where I showed a crewman painting a vital symbol of a bomb on the nose of the B-17 to record the mission tally. An Eighth Air Force vet wrote to me saying "I was the guy on that ladder in your painting" - a confirmation that a memory had been stirred and preserved in print. That is my job.

I will drive away now. Will the ghosts of ground crews on bicycles coming through the village street be on the wrong side of the road ? Will twenty Fortresses play their usual trick and land just as I get home ?

So I say to my friends in the Gallery on Perimeter Road at Boeing Field that I can only compliment them on the choice of Heritage for a name. Every time I examine old photographs of roll-outs at Seattle of 247, 299, Stratoliner, P-26 and other historic Boeing prototypes, I look at those buildings in the background -the big brick hangar, the old terminal building-and I feel once again this vital sense of place. You are in that place, which abounds with the most exciting visual memories of your country's aeronautical heritage.

Reprinted from "Heritage Aviation Art News. The newsletter of gallery on Boeing Field". 1992



POSTSCRIPT

After Art School and National Service in the RAF, where perversely he had little contact with aviation, John landed a dream job as an artist with Samson Clark advertising agency, painting pictures of planes and sections of planes. Not only did he gain invaluable experience with this company but he also met his wife Barbara there and they married in 1959. His ten years with the firm set his trademark of vivid lighting and beautiful landscape. In 1960 John went freelance to further expand his talents and to explore the world of fine art. In a constant search for authenticity he has taken every opportunity to fly around the world and traveled in 60 different types of Aircraft. He exhibited regularly in the exhibitions of the Society of Aviation Artists, later to become the Guild of Aviation Artists. John is a founder member of the Guild, has served as it's Chairman and was awarded the Guild's medal in 1983. In addition to countless other awards, numerous private and corporate collections in the UK and US contain John's work and the RAF Museum at Hendon displays 45 of his original works. John Young has long been regarded as one of the world's leading aviation artists. His paintings combine a truthful representation of technical subjects with sensitivity to many moods of sky, land and sea. And of course with his range of talents John is not limited to just aviation pictures. He's an accomplished landscape artist too. Although nominally retired John still paints regularly at his home in Chesham, which he loves so much.

Sources of Information

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