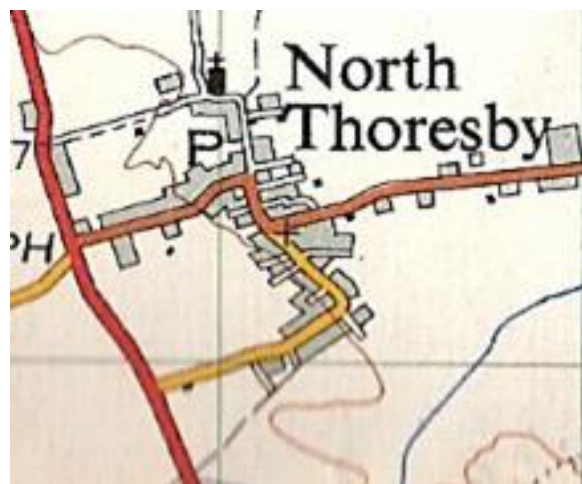


A Lancaster and a Village

David Barnett and Tim Stone



Address: Remembrance Sunday - 10th November 2013

The Rector, Rev. Bob Emm

Because their sacrifice was made in our village,
In the presence of our parents or grandparents,
In the presence of those who lived before us in this place
we remember with especial reverence the crew of Lancaster ED583.

For the most part they were strangers in this area
and thought that this would be a very temporary billet.

But it became their last lodging.

Very few of us here can imagine their longing for their own home – for their place,
for their accustomed landscape and habits, and for parents, girlfriends, wives and children.

None of us can imagine their horror, their panic or their fear as their aircraft broke up and
fell.

So these are dear to us because they gave all that they were for our peace.

Warrant Officer John Goozee
Flight Officer Thomas Morgan
Sergeant Walter Giles
Sergeant Charles Green
Sergeant Ralph Worsey
Sergeant John Baker
Sergeant William Bristow
Sergeant John Rogers

As long as we have strength, we will remember them. We will remember them.

Introduction: A Gem Discovered

In early 2023, during the process of organising the location, siting and dedication of a memorial bench in honour of Dave Barnett, I was given a draft copy (Draft Number 3 stated boldly on the cover) by Dave's wife Maureen. I had often heard that Dave and Tim had been working on a research project of the fateful Lancaster crash in the village on October 4th 1943, and Dave had given a well-received presentation on 'Bomber County' to the village History Group. For his part, Tim always brought his collection of documents and photographs to display as part of our 1940s event, so I knew that both were deeply interested in this period of history and possessed significant expertise. Dave had been responsible for the creation of the Memorial Garden, dedicated in September 2005 and highlighted later in the book. I believe that Tim was also an able ally in this achievement too.

As I examined the manuscript, it became clear that some editing, re-design work adjusting borders, spacings and paragraphs etc., and careful proof reading, would soon get it ready for publication. Maureen, having been an expert professional proof-reader and translator, has done a meticulous job on this booklet. Maureen worked for the World Intellectual Property Organisation in Geneva checking documents for accuracy, often at international conferences where documents had to be amended, checked and presented under great time pressure. The painstaking task of proof reading benefits from teamwork, and many thanks also go to Joyce Erswell for casting her very observant eye over this booklet. It is much the better for their work. Any remaining errors are mine. The village History Group has had recent experience of producing books, utilising the excellent Print Shop at the Grimsby Institute so, we have been able to make good progress through to the publication stage.

In the first section, pages 3-7, Dave and Tim begin by giving us a background to the characteristics of the Lancaster bomber, the history of the plane (ED583) that crashed, followed by illustrations of the workload of raids made by 100 Sqn based at RAF Grimsby, near the villages of Holton-le-Clay and Waltham.

In the second section, pages 7-9, the authors introduce us to the crew of the plane on October 4th and, as they were not the regular crew, how that came about. The following section, pages 9-13, takes us through the tragic events of October 4th 1943, an aerial photograph shows the location of the crash and an explanation of the probable causes of the crash are given. The creation of the Memorial Garden is explained and illustrated.

The longest section of the book, pages 14-39, is given over to meticulously researched biographies of the 8 members of the crew, utilising their service records, letters and photographs, together with photographs of their final resting places.

On pages 40-48, the perspective of the village, and villagers, is discussed with a wonderful collection of recollections made in 2013, from villagers who were children at the time. This is followed by a short outline of the village centre today and images of the memorial to the crew.

In the final part of the book, pages 49-56, I've added copies of two old postcards which show the chapel and cottages that were destroyed; some recent correspondence I've had with the artist who created the memorial, Alan Potter; a copy of the Memorial Dedication service booklet of September 2005; a table of sorties flown by ED583 (indicating the massive bombing campaign against German cities and occupied territory in 1943) and a clipping from the Grimsby Telegraph. These last two were appendices in the draft copy. The image on page 35 has been added. Finally, (pages 57-60) I've added brief historical details of 'Bomber County' and information about the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Trail, together with the poem 'High Flight'. Apart from these additions, in preparing the text and layout for publication, I've been strictly true to the content of the original text and its sequencing, but I've added some section headings to more obviously signpost where the subject matter changes.

The book demonstrates great dedication and many, many hours of painstaking research. It records young men of great talent and bravery, removed from home and loved ones who undertook demanding training and endured enormous physical and mental pressures. The book is driven by the sensitive empathy of its authors. Many of us in the village will know the bare-bones facts about the Lancaster crash but here Dave and Tim give us the much bigger, and deeper, picture.

With both Dave and Tim sadly no longer with us, it's difficult to know exactly when the project began and ended, nor to know the precise nature of their collaboration. I think it's likely that the seeds of the project began with the campaign to create the Memorial Garden, either following on from it, or as an adjunct to the initial aspiration to create an enduring and significant memorial for these young men.

Publishing their work, and bringing it to a wider audience, simply had to be done - a fitting tribute to Dave and Tim. Those readers with an interest in the technical details of the aircraft, the nature of the training and so on, will find much of interest here, but at the core of the book is a human story. Dave and Tim were clearly moved by the fate of these eight young men, and that empathy extended to the whole generation who fought, and were victorious, against the monstrous evil of Fascism and authoritarianism. Of those who served with Bomber Command, 72% were either killed, seriously wounded or taken prisoner.

Dave now has his own memorial bench, and Tim has his in Grainsby – both so richly deserved. The belated publication of their labour of love, is also a fitting tribute to them.

Ian Wright, North Thoresby History Group, February 2023.

RAF Grimsby and Lancaster ED583, 1943

On the east coast of Lincolnshire near to the villages of Waltham and Holton-le-Clay and some two miles south of Grimsby lies what is left of RAF Grimsby. Some of the buildings still survive to this day, the Control Tower, Crew Locker and Drying Rooms and a couple of hangars, albeit in a dilapidated state, whilst much of the original runway still remains under a covering of tarmac. In 1943 the station was a satellite base to RAF Binbrook, one of the twelve stations comprising No.1 Group Bomber Command which had its headquarters at Hucknall, Nottinghamshire. However, with its airfields mostly in South Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire the decision was taken to relocate the headquarters more centrally at Bawtry Hall near Doncaster where it remained until the Group was disbanded in the Cold War years.

February 3rd 1943 saw a Lancaster bomber make its final approach, most probably from a northerly direction and, after clearance from the Control Tower, land on the main runway 02 which ran north – south to maximise use of the prevailing south-south westerly wind. RAF Grimsby was to be the Lancaster's permanent base for the duration of its life. The Lancaster looked, and smelled, new which indeed it was, having recently come off the production line at A.V.Roe, Chadderton, Manchester.

ED583 stood majestically, purposeful and menacing, resplendent in the classic night bomber paint scheme of matt black on the underside of the belly and wings and matt reddish brown/dark green on all upper surfaces. The matt colours were essential in reducing the visibility of the aircraft and preventing reflection from ground light sources such as the obvious one of searchlights. Adding to that air of menace were the eight .303 machine guns she was armed with, two in the front turret, two in the mid-upper and four in the rear turret.

The aircraft was part of the fourth production run of 620 aircraft to come from A.V.Roe and was built in the final phase of Contract No. B 69247/40, Works Order 7671. Deliveries had commenced in November 1942 and were completed in the June of 1943.

ED583 was a Lancaster B III and as such was fitted with the American-built Packard Merlin 28 engines, not the 'home grown' Rolls Royce Merlin. The Merlin was considered so important to the war effort, a contract was awarded to the Packard Motor Co. in America, thus ensuring production was unaffected by bombing raids. The B III had a maximum speed of 287 mph (482 kmph) at 11,500 feet (3505 mtrs), a ceiling height of 24,500ft (7470 mtrs) and a range of 2,530 miles (4050 km). In order to give these figures some meaning, the ceiling height equates to just over 4½ miles. A family car travelling at 30mph would take nine minutes to cover this distance. A range of 2,530 miles is quite impressive, about only 100 miles short of a car journey from Waltham to Rome and back.

The aircraft joined 100 Sqn on February 3rd, 1943, and became a member of an historic force. 100 Sqn was formed at Hingham, Norfolk, on February 23rd 1917, as the Royal Flying Corps first night bomber unit. Following the end of the First World War the Squadron returned from France to England in 1919 and was then posted to County Dublin where it remained until 1922. On returning to England again the Sqn was moved around various bases including three stays at Donibristle, Scotland, and twice to Gosport. In early 1934 it was posted overseas to Seletar, Singapore. Then, in early 1942, the Squadron, equipped with Vickers Wildebeest, was destroyed by Japanese Zero fighter planes whilst attempting to halt the Japanese advance.

In December 1942, 100 Sqn reformed at RAF Grimsby, once more as a night bomber squadron, officially coming back into existence on the 23rd of that month when it was allocated 16 Mk III Lancasters, plus two reserves. By March it was operational.

During the Second World War the Squadron dropped over 17,500 tons of bombs and, during 'Gardening' missions a considerable number of mines. In one three-month period it flew more than 700 aircraft missions without the loss of a single plane whilst four of its Lancasters flew over a hundred missions.

So it was a rich squadron history that ED583 joined on that February day 1943, with the code letters JA-U. The Squadron did not become operational until March 4TH and in the weeks following its arrival the aircraft and its crew worked up to operational readiness. They undertook Standard Beam Approach training to enable landing approaches in low cloud and poor visibility. There were high level bombing practices, cross country exercises, two and three engine flying drills, stalls, air firing of the machine guns, and local night flying. Busy days and some busy nights but not as busy or exhausting as they were going to be over the coming months.



F/Lt. McGrath and his flight engineer, Sgt. Wilkie flying during an air test and soon deciding, as a crew, to volunteer for Pathfinder duties. F/Lt. McGrath was in the habit of flying with his peak cap on top of his leather flying helmet, a practise that was not uncommon amongst many pilots.

The initial pilot of ED583 was Fl/Lt A L McGrath from Christchurch, New Zealand, who, in December 1943 was to be awarded the D.F.C., and whose first operational trip with ED583 was on March 4th on a mine-laying run to St. Nazaire, a round trip of approximately 900 miles. On the return, McGrath had to land at Scampton, where, on touchdown, a tyre burst. There is no record of any damage done to the plane and she was soon back home at RAF Grimsby.

The point needs to be made that distances quoted are straight line, i.e., from A-B-A with no deviation. However, when missions were being planned, the route to target would often include doglegs and deviations in an attempt to avoid flak concentrations, searchlights, enemy fighter stations and, not least, to try and confuse the enemy as to the ultimate destination. This meant the mileage covered would be greater than the straight-line distances given and, as a consequence, would increase the hours airborne.

On March 8th that year the aircraft was tasked, on a bombing run, to attack industrial targets in and around Nuremberg. However, because the target marker aircraft experienced difficulty with their specialised equipment the attack was widely dispersed, particularly in its early stages. Search lights and heavy flak were active throughout the raid but particularly at Abbeville, Strasbourg, Saarbrücken, Stuttgart and Mannheim/Karlsruhe. The round trip for this raid was approximately 1120 miles.

On April 13th 1943, ED583 and Fl/Lt McGrath and crew were on a mission to La Spezia, northern Italy, as part of a force of 208 Lancasters and three Halifaxes to bomb the dockyard area. The round trip was a distance of some 1600 miles and using the design cruising speed of 200 mph aircrew and aircraft would be in the air about eight hours. On May 12th ED583 was recoded from JA-U to HW-U. The reason for this recoding is not clear but one theory is that JA was rather too close to “ja”, German for yes. Who knows? At the end of June, or beginning of July, she was again recoded, this time to HW-K giving her the call sign “K-King”. All the while ED583 kept flying her tasked missions, albeit with pilots who seemed to change with some regularity.

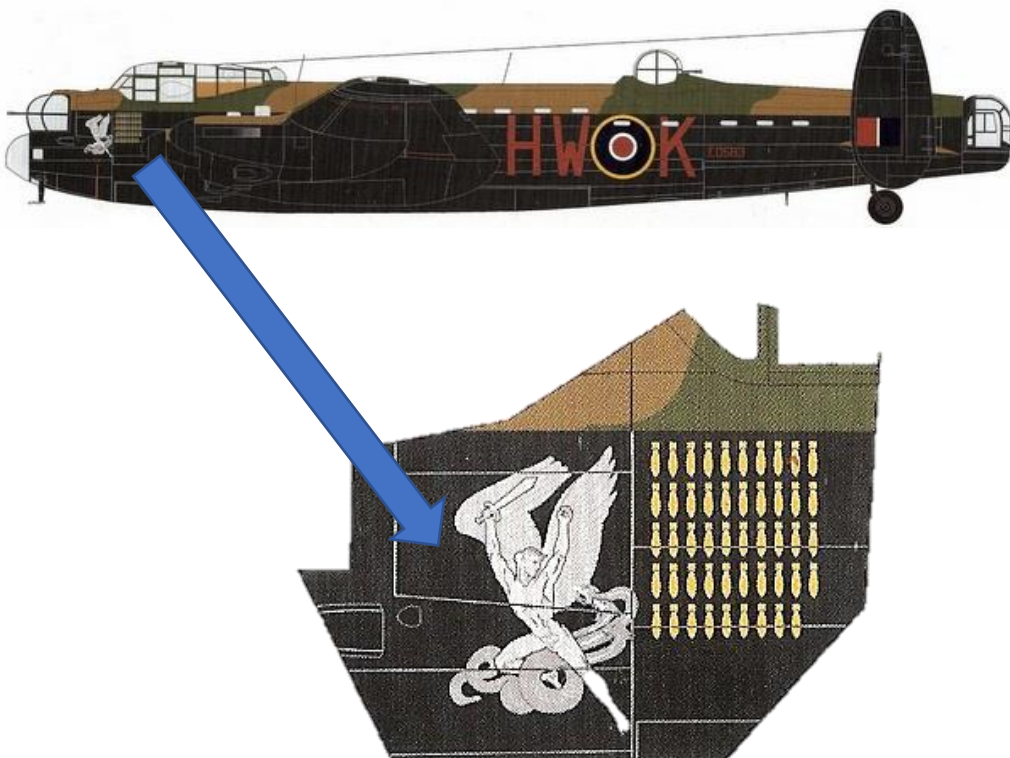
The photograph on the next page is undated and not attributed to any aircraft but it is believed it could be ED583 on the basis that the nose art is Wings for Victory and the bomb tally shows a count of 41. If this supposition is correct, then the picture was taken at the end of August 1943. The crew man in the bomb aimers position is named as Harry Ferdinand in which case, provided he was not ground crew at play, he was a member of Sergeant Johnny Stow’s crew.

During the night of the 1st/2nd October 1943, ED583, with Tommy Morgan as Captain, was part of a bomber force of 243 Lancasters and eight Mosquitoes tasked with an attack on Hagen in Westphalia. According to the Bomber Command Campaign Diary “This raid was a complete success achieved on a completely cloud-covered target of small size, with only a moderate

bomber effort and at trifling cost". The trifling cost was two Lancasters lost, 0.08% of the force. In comparison to many raids this was in truth a trifling loss.



But why attack Hagen if the target was of small size? The answer is simple. It was to destroy battery manufacturing. Between 1905 and 1945 Hagen was home to the Akkumulatoren Fabrik Aktiengesellschaft Berlin-Hagen (now better known as VARTA Batterie AG), who supplied all U-boat batteries and most torpedo batteries to the German navy. However, as the Second World War progressed production was unable to keep pace with demand and AFA built new plants at Hanover, Posen and Vienna.



Returning to RAF Grimsby early on the morning of the 2nd there was only a comparatively brief respite for the aircraft before she was airborne again that evening, this time on a raid over Munich with Pilot Officer Dripp as her Captain. Munich was not only a major industrial centre and transport hub but also an historical and cultural centre, the birthplace of the Nazi Party and consequently referred to as the 'Hauptstadt der Bewegung'- the Capital of the Movement. Throughout this period the city was the headquarters of the Nazi party and contained museums and other buildings housing those forms of artwork approved by Hitler. Such sites were used for lavish annual memorial ceremonies and swearing in ceremonies for new members of the SS.

The Bomber Command Campaign Diary for October 1943 states this about the Munich raid:

"249 Lancasters of 1, 5 and 8 Groups and two B17s to Munich. Eight Lancasters lost – 2.7% of force. Visibility over target clear but initial marking scattered. Heavy bombing developed over southern and south eastern districts of Munich but later stages of the raid fell up to 15 miles back along the approach route. Most of this inaccurate bombing was carried out by 5 Group attempting their 'time and distance' bombing method independently of the Pathfinder marking".

The Crew of Lancaster ED583, October 4th 1943

When ED583 landed back in Waltham on October 3rd there is some speculation and uncertainty as to whether the aircraft had suffered damage or not. What is known is that over the next twenty-four hours ground crew worked on the plane and the next day, October 4th, a flight test was authorised for the purpose of testing the starboard outer engine and an altitude test with the proviso to climb as high as possible, dependent on the weather conditions encountered.

There is some suggestion that K-King had undergone a maintenance inspection during the previous days but examination of the Operations Log for 100 Squadron shows that the aircraft had been on operations on the 27th and 29th September, and October 1st and 2nd. It would therefore seem more likely that maintenance work was carried out on October 3rd. Because Dripp and his crew had just come back from the Munich mission, Tommy Morgan, who by then had had two non-flying days following the raid on Hagen and also had completed his tour, was asked whether he would undertake the flight test, thus allowing Dripp a 'lie-in'.

Morgan agreed, as did his regular Flight Engineer Walter 'Jim' Giles. With them on this flight would be six other men. Weather conditions were reasonable, with visibility at six miles, 9/10 cloud at 1000ft and 10/10 cloud cover. Winds were south westerly at 25-30mph and the icing index high in cloud above freezing level of 9000ft. So, at 12.05 on October 4th 1943, K-King took off from RAF Grimsby with Flight Officer Tommy Morgan DFC at the controls and Flight

Engineer Sgt Walter “Jim” Giles DFM. By this date Morgan had a total of 745 hours flying time logged which included 48 hours daylight, 175 hours night flying on Lancasters and total instrument flying of 78 hours. Plus, he had just completed an operational tour in Lancasters. Morgan had been born in America but at the age of two, following the death of his father, his mother moved back to her home town of Lillooet in British Columbia, Canada. At 19 he joined the RCAF and came across to England, eventually arriving at RAF Grimsby as Sergeant Pilot.

Giles, known in his service life as Jim, but by his family as Walter, was born in 1921 in Oxfordshire and following the death of his father at the early age of 38 he was brought up, together with his brother Frank, by his mother in the village of New Marston, now a suburb of Oxford. According to Frank Giles, Jim’s brother, Giles and Morgan had been awarded their decorations for a particularly dangerous raid over Berlin. By deduction, and after examination of the flight logs, this was most likely the raid over Berlin on September 3rd/4th when 22 out of the 316 Lancasters that took part were lost, virtually 7% of the force. A considerable time has been spent examining the London Gazette and Supplements for the award citations but without success.

The other six crew members on 4th October comprised two men from each of three crews newly arrived at RAF Grimsby and they were being taken up to familiarise themselves with the airfield layout, the local area, and its topography. They were:

Sergeant (Navigator) John Alexander Baker, RAF, the son of John and Minnie Elizabeth Baker of Vauxhall, London. He was, at thirty four, the oldest of the eight men having been born in 1909.

Sergeant (W.Op./Air Gunner) William Frederick Bristow, RAFVR, aged 22, the son of Frederick William and May Bristow of East Dulwich, London. He had married Annie Donoghue, a clerk for a shipping company, in the spring of 1942.

Warrant Officer (Pilot) John Thomas Goozee, RAFVR, aged 22, the son of John Donovan and Mary Ann Goozee who lived in Kingsbury. John had married his wife, Doris May, who had lived in Kenton, Harrow, in the summer of 1942.

Sergeant (Flight Engineer) Charles Alexander Green, RAFVR, aged 20, who had lived in the Castlehill area of Hull and was the second of twelve children born to Charles Alexander and Lillian.

Sergeant (Air Bomber) John Hill Rogers, RAFVR, aged 21, from near Chester. His service training started in London when he was billeted in Viceroy Court on Prince Albert Road, NW8, which had been requisitioned by the Royal Air Force for prospective aircrew who were undertaking their training at Lords cricket ground.

Sergeant (Pilot) Ralph Frederick Worsey, RAFVR, aged 22 and son of Frederick and Kate Louisa of Plumstead.

A letter, part of a collection written by Rogers to a very close friend of his shows, that he and Goozee were part of the same crew having been together at No 28 OTU, Wymeswold, near Leicester. It was at this stage in the training process that the crews were formed, largely through self-selection. He writes:

Well, I've got three members of my crew so far – the Pilot, W.O.P./A.G., & navigator – just let me tell you about them:

The Pilot Aged 21, is a Flight Sergeant by the name of Goozy (sic) and he's reputed to be one of the best pilots on this course (our course is comprised of 18 crews) as he has some 950 flying hours in Ansons, Oxfords, Whitleys, Hampdens and Lancasters – so he ought to be o.k. Another thing is that he has been a staff pilot (flying bomb aimers & navigators about) for a year and should know how to fly on a bombing run! – At least I'm hoping so!

Goozee and Rogers were part of one crew but what of the remaining four men? It is possible that Bristow and Green were from the one crew as they both arrived at 1662 HCU, RAF Blyton within days of each other, Bristow arriving there on August 1st whilst Green arrived a little later on August 6th. Both moved to Hemswell on September 22nd and then joined 100 Sqn on October 1st 1943.

If this supposition is correct, the remaining two, Baker and Worsey, must have been members of the third crew although their movements and dates do not fit together as neatly as the others. Whilst both were at 1656 HCU, Worsey arrived there on August 3rd and remained until he was posted to 100 Sqn on October 1st. Baker, however, commenced his phase of training at 1656 HCU on July 12th but a month later was admitted to RAF Hospital Cranwell on August 13th and not discharged until September 1st. However, his record shows that he was based at RAF Lindholme from August 16th until the 26th, when he went back to 1656 HCU, presumably to finish his training. From there he went to 103 Sqn RAF Elsham Wold for ten days before arriving at 1662 HCU on September 14th, until he too was posted to 100 Sqn on October 1st.

The Day of the Crash, October 4th 1944

At approximately 12.50, RAF Waltham were notified that the aircraft had crashed in the village of North Thoresby and around this time various people in the vicinity said they heard a cracking noise, whilst others described it as an explosion, in the sky above the cloud base. What is not in doubt is that people saw objects which they could not readily identify falling to earth. Some little while later the aircraft appeared, diving at a very steep angle and at very high speed. It had lost its tail and both port and starboard outer engines together with the

portions of the wings they were affixed to. The aircraft continued in its dive and crashed into the centre of North Thoresby where, on impact, it burst into flames, demolishing the front half of the Primitive Methodist Chapel. Fortunately, not only was there nobody in the Chapel at the time but, even more miraculously, no one in the village was killed or seriously injured. Flying debris struck cottages on both sides of the road. Sadly, however all the crew members were killed.



The photograph above, taken in the early 1950s, clearly shows the crash site in the context of the whole village at that time with the remains of the Chapel still standing. Three bodies were recovered from the wreckage including one of the new pilots; the other five crew members, amongst them Tommy Morgan, were thrown from the aircraft during those last moments of its flight.

The break-up of ED583 included the mid-upper turret becoming detached as well as the rear turret, an undercarriage door, rudder bars and dinghy and the complete tail unit and rear end fuselage. The trail of wreckage was scattered over a corridor seven miles long and one mile wide with small pieces of wing skin being found furthest from the point of impact and the resultant main wreckage.

Due to its complete destruction by the impact and the resultant fire, the main wreckage was of little use to the crash investigation team apart from indicating the angle at which the aircraft had struck the ground. It seems that at the time the aircraft was flying from a westerly direction.

The Accident Investigation Branch (Precis of Investigation No. W1674) gives a most complete report of the accident. Detailed examination of those parts which had broken away in the air revealed that both wing tips had failed in download. As previously mentioned, the rear end of the fuselage had failed and literally broken off. The tailplanes had failed in upload close to the fuselage. The port elevator had been torn off at the hinges but the starboard elevator was never found. The port fin was broken in three places whilst the starboard fin was still attached to the remains of the tailplane. With regard to the rudders the port side was broken in two about the centre hinge whilst the starboard side was still in position on the fin. Whatever had happened to K-King, tremendous pressures had been exerted on her.

The summary report concludes that structural failure occurred, almost certainly due to a high speed dive following loss of control. The reason for this loss of control was never established. Additionally, the accident was to be further considered in conjunction with structural failures which had occurred to other Lancaster aircraft.

During flight, varying amounts of pressure are exerted on the top of the wing and its underside. Over time this can alter the molecular structure of the metal such that cracks develop which, if left unchecked, will cause the wing to fail and the aircraft to crash. Have you ever bent and twisted a paper clip until it breaks in half? If so, then you have caused and experienced metal fatigue.

Forces of pressure were applied to the aircraft as soon as they were taxiing with a payload on board. There is newsreel film shot during World War II of Lancasters taking off where the wings can be clearly seen to flex as they take the full weight of aircraft and payload on lift off. Compound this with the twists and turns of evasive action taken to avoid flak, night fighters and searchlights and there is little wonder that aircraft suffered structural failure due to metal fatigue.

One theory behind the mid-air break up is that Morgan was demonstrating the corkscrew, a manoeuvre used to escape from a searchlight cone or attack by a night fighter which involved putting the aircraft into a steep dive and at the same time dropping alternately the port and starboard wings as the dive continued. This was not the crews favourite experience as they, and all their on-board equipment, were likely to be thrown all over the aircraft. By the time the bottom of the dive was reached the Lancaster could have attained speeds of up to 450 mph and it would take the strenuous, almost superhuman, combined efforts of both pilot and flight engineer to pull the aircraft out of the dive and level out. Bearing in mind the maximum

design speed of the plane was 287 mph and the cruising speed 200 mph one may imagine the strains and pressures put on the aircraft. With regard to the damage to the aircraft, described earlier, this theory does not seem out of the question.

On October 5th 1943, the Grimsby Evening Telegraph published the following account of the crash that had taken place the day before.

“A plane which crashed wrecked a Primitive Methodist Chapel in the main street of the village of North Thoresby, near Grimsby, yesterday, and also demolished the adjoining bungalow of a Mrs. Markham, who was away from home at the time.

The machine burst into flames. Burning pieces fell on cottages in the neighbourhood as well as two haystacks, and at one time six buildings were burning. An N.F.S. party from Grimsby saved all the houses from serious damage with the exception of two opposite the chapel.

One of them, occupied by a Mr Smith, who lives alone, was completely gutted. The other cottage, the home of a Mr and Mrs Scott, was so badly damaged that it was left uninhabitable. Mrs Scott, who was at the rear of the premises, was got out uninjured. No civilians were injured”.

Reading this account, it is interesting to note two points. Firstly, that due to wartime reporting restrictions no mention is made of what type of aircraft crashed, and secondly just how miraculous it was that no civilians were killed or seriously injured. It is reputed that one of the engines is buried under the lounge floor of the house built on the chapel site but was deemed too deep to be removed, although a second engine was removed from the garden.

Crashes due to structural failure could not have been that uncommon. Rod Collins website ‘Lancaster Crashes in Lincolnshire’ specifically lists three, and a possible fourth, between May 1942 and February 1943, two where wings failed on take-off, one in-flight break up and a fourth which crashed after a flight test. The Accident Investigation Branch were obviously concerned at the time at the number of such accidents because, as mentioned earlier and stated in their report “.....the accident is to be further investigated in conjunction with other structural failures which have occurred to Lancaster aircraft.”

In 2006 a rather unique memorial was built on the village green literally feet away from where ED583 plunged to earth. This memorial, designed and built by the Glasgow artist Alan Potter, comprises an eight-pointed star, each point representing a member of the crew, with an individual disk engraved showing name, rank and age. The design also includes eight white doves each with a red poppy in its beak.

On Sunday 4th September 2005, a poignant dedication service was held attended by some three hundred members of the public, representatives of 100 Sqn Association, including some members who had served with the Squadron in 1943. Footpaths on the village green were lined by members of the Ceremonial Detachment, RAF Coningsby. The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Lancaster, PA474 City of Lincoln, flew over, paying its very own intimate tribute to those brave young men killed all those years ago so that we may enjoy our freedom today.

Ed: The service booklet for the dedication of the memorial is reproduced at the end of this publication.



Biographies of the Crew

The crew who climbed aboard ED583 on that fateful Monday were barely more than boys, their ages ranging from 19 to 22, the exception being John Baker at 34. Regardless of age they must have experienced more intense, basic, raw emotion in their short lives than the majority of us experience over the notional three score years and ten.

They will have experienced fear which on occasions was possibly more akin to terror, exhilaration, exhaustion and despondency particularly when the adrenalin rush started to wear off and when they realised that some of their friends and comrades would never be coming back. These would have all been experienced on an almost daily basis once they had finished training and become operational.

Some were only recently married, Charles Green was engaged, Morgan was intending to get engaged now that he had finished operational flying. They had not had a real opportunity to share the love of husband and wife, to see children growing up and to share aspirations and dreams.

Through research over several years we have pieced together their individual lives in so far as we have been able. With some, like Morgan, we were lucky in locating family members in British Columbia gaining, through them, quite substantial detail. At the other end of the scale there are other members of the crew, like Ralph Worsey, where we have no information whatsoever apart from his service record. It is a particular disappointment in his case as we know for a fact there are living relatives but we have been unable to make contact with them.

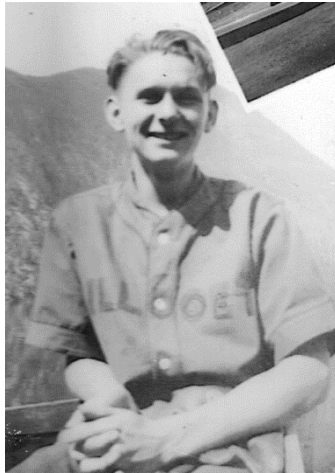
What has been remarkable is to have photographs of some of them, as well as letters, and these bring the young men to life and deliver into sharp focus the line in the poem 'For the Fallen' (by Robert Laurence Binyon): **'They shall not grow old as we that are left grow old'**

Flight Officer Thomas (Tommy) Hurley Morgan DFC

Tommy Morgan was born on 28th February 1920 in St. Helens, Oregon, USA. His father died when Tommy was two and his mother Susan "Tudie" Hurley Morgan returned to her hometown of Lillooet, British Columbia, Canada, with her children Glen, Marion, Lil and Tommy whose grandfather was Dan Hurley, a Canadian pioneer, after whom the Hurley River was named. Tommy was educated in Lillooet and was a star athlete for the High School basketball team and the town's championship winning baseball team.

Tommy left Lillooet High School in the summer of 1940 and went to work in July of that year for B.R. Saw Mills as a trainee saw man. In December, the mill closed down and on January 6th 1941, he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Tommy's initial posting was to the RCAF

Training School in Brandon, Manitoba, which was one of two hundred and thirty RCAF training bases established by the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan which ran from 1939 until 1945 to train air and ground crew for the war in Europe. After only sixty hours training, he, and other young men, enthusiastic recruits, were flying aircraft powered by 600 horsepower Pratt and Whitney engines. These aircraft were most probably North American T-6 Texans known in the UK as Harvards.



Above: Tommy the baseball player.

A contemporary recruit of Tommy Morgan, Len Morgan (no relation) said:

“Nineteen is an impressionable age. Put a boy who has never wanted to do anything other than fly into a big, hefty, fully aerobatic 600 horsepower fighter-type plane and he soaks up his new world like a sponge. The heady aroma of gasoline, the spine-tingling sound of aircraft engines coming to life at sunrise, the utterly indescribable sensation at the top of a loop, the talk of those who speak your language, the snug feel of the parachute straps, the entire overwhelming atmosphere: I remember it all. That was living.”

Tommy finally graduated from No. 10 Flight Training School in Dauphin, also in Manitoba, and his home town paper ‘The Bridge River – Lillooet News’, reported that he received his blue wings “two weeks ahead of ordinary schedule time”. Tommy joined 100 Sqn as a Sergeant in the Royal Canadian Air Force in early April 1943 and his first operation is shown as being on April 10th 1943, with an aborted raid on Nuremberg flying JA-V, ED750, when he dropped a 4000lb bomb near Amiens due to an insufficient rate of climb and returned to base. He regularly flew ED750, which had become HW-V, and on May 29th 1943, took part in a raid on Wuppertal.

'The News' followed his progress with regular reports for hometown readers, including this account:

"Tommy Morgan has been flying over Germany for several months and was made Flight Officer four months ago. He joined up three years ago and has been overseas two years. He is one of four Canadians flying the famous Lancasters and is now with the American Air Force. He was a member of the oldest British Night Bombing Squadron, whose first operation in World War One was an April, 1917 attack on the Douai Airdrome, base of the famous Richtofen Circus".

On June 1st 1943, Tommy Morgan having completed thirty operational tours, was discharged from the R.C.A.F. and admitted into the United States Forces. When ED583 crashed on October 4th 1943, Tommy Morgan was thrown from K-King as it came down and his body was found just north of North Thoresby* in a field adjacent to the A16 Grimsby to Louth road. Initial identification was comparatively easy as he was in American uniform. Originally, he was laid to rest in Brookwood Cemetery but because he was an American citizen serving with the RAF, and also because he was born in the United States, his body was eligible for repatriation under the World War II Dead Act. However, his mother Susan Cahill wished his remains to be permanently interred in the United States Military Cemetery, Madingley, Cambridge, and that is where he now rests. At the time of his death Tommy had a Scottish girlfriend, Irene Green, and some sources state that they intended to marry when the war ended.



*Ed: I recently learnt that Robert Simons, who has sadly passed away recently, soon after he celebrated his 100th birthday, was first on the scene.



Above: F.O. Thomas Hurley Morgan 28th February, 1920 – 4th October, 1943 Madingley, Cambridge. Below: Remembrance Day, War Memorial, Lillooet, British Columbia, 2006

Sgt. (Flt. Engr.) Walter Edward James (Jim) Giles, DFM, RAFVR



Known in his service life as Jim but by his family as Walter he was born in 1921 in Oxfordshire but, regrettably, little is known of his early life. What is known is that after leaving school he started work as a motor bike engineer having become the family's breadwinner following the death of his father in the early 1930s from injuries sustained in the First World War. Jim then became a despatch rider for the Fire Brigade in Oxford but as soon as he was nineteen he signed up and went off to do his basic training.



Giles became the regular flight engineer for Tommy Morgan and they also became close friends such that on occasions Morgan would spend some of his leave with Giles at the latter's mother's Oxfordshire home.

He won the DFM on the same trip that Morgan gained the DFC and the medal was awarded posthumously in 1944 and received by his mother from George VI at Buckingham Palace. At the time that Giles went back to RAF Waltham with Morgan in October 1943 he was engaged to be married to a young lady called Florence (known to the family as Florrie) from Stanton Harcourt, a village some six miles west of Oxford. They were due to be married when the war was over and Giles had just written to her saying that he had completed his operational flying.

On receiving the news of his death Florrie was devastated and subsequently never married. His body was brought back to Oxfordshire and he was buried at Rose Hill Cemetery on the 9th October, 1943. When his mother died in 1981 she was laid to rest in the same plot.

Sgt. (Navigator) John Alexander Baker

Baker was born in 1909. His father, John Sr., employed by the Railways and Metropolitan Omnibus Co. as a bus conductor, married Minnie Elizabeth Bowden in 1907 and the 1911 Census shows the family comprised John Sr., Minnie Elizabeth (nee Bowden), Eleanor age 3 and John Alexander age 2 living in two rooms at 66, Guinness Buildings, Vauxhall, London, which were demolished in the mid 1970s. Regrettably nothing is known of John Baker's formative years.

His life is now picked up via his service record. On September 9th 1942 he went to the Central Recruitment Centre, Euston, London, and the next day he was Aircraftsman 2nd Class (AC2) Baker, number 1395957 on Reserve. This meant that at this time there was no posting for him and he was being held until there was a vacancy in the training system. He was free to go home and continue his civilian life until such time as the RAF notified him.

This notification must have arrived towards the end of February 1941 because his Movements Record shows he reported to No.1 Aircrew Reception Centre (No1 ACRC) St Johns Wood, London on March 2nd 1942. No.1 ACRC was based at Lords Cricket Ground (for cricket lovers principally the Pavilion end) and also included Regents Park. The restaurant at London Zoo had been requisitioned for use as a canteen, all the animals having earlier been removed and transported to Whipsnade, whilst nearby blocks of flats, some of which were barely completed, had been requisitioned as accommodation blocks.

Baker spent just under three weeks here undergoing basic training, rigorous medical checks, the ubiquitous services haircut, compulsory church parades and a series of tests to ascertain what role best suited him. At the end of this period he was posted to Aircrew Disposal Wing (ACDW) from March 21st 1942. ACDW was at RAF Brighton and located in requisitioned hotels such as the Grand and Metropole and it was here in Brighton that he learned to play the well-known service game of waiting. By the end of six weeks he was probably very accomplished

at playing the game because ACDW was essentially a holding operation between postings waiting for suitable slots to arise in the training programme.

On May 22nd Baker arrived at No.11 Initial Training Wing (I.T.W.), RAF Scarborough. Yet again, as in Brighton, the Wing was based in several requisitioned hotels including the Grand used by No.10 I.T.W., No.17 I.T.W at Belvedere House whilst No 11 was located in the Prince of Wales hotel sited on the corner of the Esplanade and Prince of Wales Terrace, which nowadays is a block of luxury flats.

The course, in common with the other I.T.W.s, comprised maths lessons, navigation, armaments (centred around the Browning machine gun), aircraft recognition, RAF law, health, hygiene, morse code and Aldis lamp signalling all taken in the Spa buildings at the bottom of the cliff. During his posting to No.11 ITW Baker was promoted to Leading Aircraftman effective from July 23rd 1942.

On September 11th 1942 Baker was at No.1 Elementary Air Navigation School, RAF Eastbourne, the Headquarters of which were based in the Sandhurst Hotel on Grand Parade. The school also used five other hotels in Eastbourne as well as classrooms at Eastbourne College. It is interesting to note that during 1942-43 the town was the target for 'tip and run' raids by the Germans and was the most bombed town on the south coast.

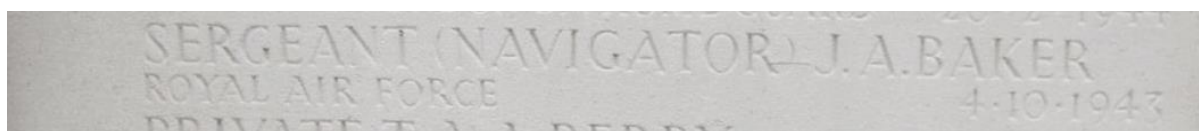
Baker underwent training on the triangle of velocities used to determine wind speed in flight, methods of determining wind; bubble sextant and astral navigation skills; use of aerials to determine position from wireless stations as well as airfield visual signals. Having successfully completed his Navigation School training, his next posting on December 28th 1942 was to No.3 (Observer) Advanced Flying Unit (3 (O) A.F.U.), RAF Bobbington in Staffordshire which, at around this time, changed its name to RAF Halfpenny Green to avoid confusion with Bovingdon, a new airfield being constructed near London. The syllabus at Bobbington included long distance training flights out over the Irish Sea to hone and perfect navigational skills.

On April 13th 1943 Baker had completed his (O) A.F.U. course and was now posted to No.81 Operational Training Unit, RAF Tilstock, Cheshire. The purpose of the O.T.U.s was to prepare aircrew for operations on a particular type or types of aircraft or roles. Tilstock and its satellite station of Sleep operated with Whitley, Stirling and Halifax aircraft. It is also reputed that some leaflet dropping operations were flown. Three months later, July 13th 1943, Baker was at No. 1656 Conversion Unit (1656 C.U.), RAF Lindholme in South Yorkshire where his training continued on Lancaster and Halifax aircraft. The purpose of the Operational Conversion Unit was to support preparation for the operational missions of a specific aircraft type by providing trained personnel. Then, on September 1st, his record shows that he was admitted to the RAF hospital at Cranwell where he spent just over two weeks, being discharged on August 16th

1943, back to base at Lindholme. The reason for his hospitalisation is not known - perhaps it was something as relatively mundane as appendicitis, but his training resumed on August 20th.

On September 4th 1943, he was posted to No.103 Sqn. RAF Elsham Wold in Lincolnshire which by this time was equipped with Avro Lancasters which, in October 1942, had replaced their Handley Page Halifaxes. This may have been just a holding posting because he was only there for ten days being posted on the 14th to No.1662 Heavy Conversion Unit at RAF Blyton near Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. It was here that he finished his training and from where on Friday, October 1st found himself at RAF Waltham, Grimsby.

At the time of the crash Baker, aged 34, was the oldest member of the crew and is buried in Lambeth (Tooting) Cemetery and his memorial is on Panel 1 of the Screen Wall.



Sgt. (W. Op./Air Gnr) William Frederick Bristow, RAFVR

It was exactly three years prior to his untimely death that William Bristow found himself at No.1 Reporting Centre, Uxbridge on October 4th 1940, signing up for the RAFVR like so many other young men of his age. On October 5th he was posted as a Reserve with the rank of Aircraftsman 2nd Class (AC2) and returned to civilian life to await his first posting and thus commence his training. In December 1940 he received that notification and on December 3rd

duly arrived at No.10 (Signals) Recruit Centre, RAF Blackpool, which was reputedly the largest RAF camp in Britain during World War II.

By October 3rd 1941, Bristow was at No 2 Signals School, RAF Yatesbury, Wiltshire where he was taught wireless theory and Morse code whilst his in-flight training was undertaken in Proctor and Dominie aircraft. The training, based on other accounts of time spent at Yatesbury, comprised ten hour days from 08.00 to 18.00 six days a week in ground school classrooms being taught how to receive and transmit messages in Morse code. A competitive system was set up whereby a student would sit at a table with the aim of achieving six words per minute receiving and transmitting. Once this goal had been achieved, he would move to the next table to strive for eight words a minute. This process continued until the ultimate target of twelve words a minute was attained. The Wireless Operator was also taught how to use the Aldis signal lamp for visual Morse code communication in the event of a wireless failure.

On January 31st 1942, William Bristow reported to No.9 Air Observer School at RAF Penrhos, Caernarfon where he stayed for some four months. The curriculum was quite diverse and included bombing, air navigation, aerial photography and reconnaissance. His movement record then has a blank period of some 16 months until an entry dated 25th May 1943 places him at No.28 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF Wymeswold in north Leicestershire. Where was he during that period of sixteen months? Currently there is no record, and it remains a mystery as to what he was doing and where he was, although wherever he was he was promoted to Sergeant on April 24th, 1942.

However, and this is no more than educated supposition or perhaps that should be uneducated supposition, he may have remained at Penrhos as an Instructor. The reasoning for this comes from a letter sent by John Rogers to his friend Gerry Fair in Chester. Rogers had also arrived at No.28 OTU on the same date as Bristow, May 25th, and it was in OTUs that many crews started to form. John Rogers wrote:

"The Wireless Op is also supposed to be bloody good. He's 22 years old (same age as Rogers) and has been a "screen" W.O.P. for 10 months i.e. he has been flying with other W.O.P.s instructing them."

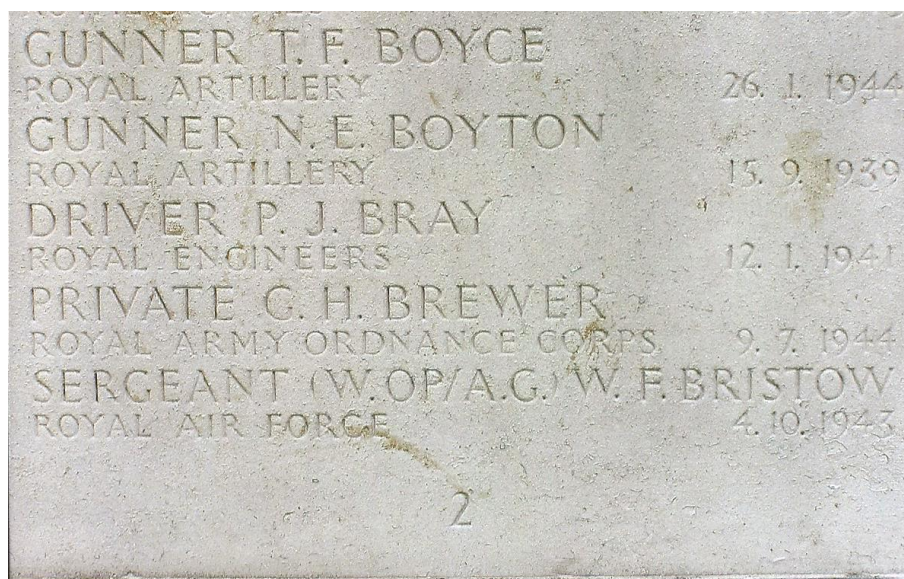
So perhaps he was referring to Bristow because the coincidences are there: John Bristow's age; the apparent gap in Bristow's record could be accounted for by an Observers course running for approximately 4½ months and his instructing lasting approximately 10 months; the same day arrival at the OTU.

Following his training at Wymeswold Bristow's next posting w.e.f. August 1st 1943, was to NO.1662 Conversion Unit, RAF Blyton. He was there to convert from the medium bombers he had so far been trained on, to heavy bombers prior to final assessment and posting to an

operational squadron. The aircraft used for this phase of training were Halifax Mk I, II, III and V. After three weeks his record shows simply RAF Hemswell, September 22nd 1943. where he stayed for just over a week. At this time Hemswell was home to No.1 Lancaster Finishing School which was tasked with giving Lancaster experience to aircrew who had just finished their training at a Heavy Conversion Unit.

On October 1st, John Bristow became operational when he was posted to 100Sqn., RAF Waltham, Grimsby where he was based until the fateful date of October 4th 1943, when he took his final flight exactly three years after signing up.

He is remembered in Camberwell New Cemetery on Panel 2 of the War Memorial.



W.O. (Pilot) John Thomas Goozee, RAFVR

John Thomas Goozee was born in Finchley, London, in August 1921 to Mary and John D. Goozee but, unfortunately and despite extensive enquiries, nothing is known of his early years other than he had an elder sister Kathleen who died one month short of her second birthday in March 1918, so John never knew her. The first documented entry is on his service record which shows that on January 1st 1938, at the age of only 16 years and 3 months, he joined the 36th Middlesex Regiment Royal Artillery Territorial Army as a Sapper. If the interpretation of the records is correct this was a searchlight regiment forming part of Eastern Command, East Anglian Area with headquarters in Edgeware.

Goozee served as a sapper until September 29th 1938 when, now aged 17, he signed on with the Royal Air Force as a boy entrant at No1 Recruit Training Wing, RAF Uxbridge, Essex. Two days later saw him reporting to the Electrical and Wireless Training School, RAF Cranwell, Lincolnshire as part of Entry Group 9BE9A with the rank of Boy. Here they were trained in the first instance as Wireless Operators whilst later some were trained as Electricians and Wireless Repairers. On November 15th, 1938, the School was renamed No.3 Wing, No.1 Electrical and Wireless School.

Boy Goozee remained at Cranwell until August 24th 1939, when he was posted to No.24 Sqn, RAF Hendon as Aircraftman 2nd Class (AC2) and here he remained for the next three months. No. 24 Sqn. operated numerous aircraft types including de Havilland Dragon Rapide and Dominie, Miles Magister, Lockheed 10 Electra and Percival O6 to name but a few. The Squadron had responsibility for providing air transport for VIPs, government officials and senior members of the three armed forces as well as looking after Sir Winston Churchill's personal aircraft.

In the absence of any further information, and acknowledging the fact the Squadron did not have a training role, it must be presumed that AC2 Goozee was probably helping to maintain the Squadron's communications equipment. Whilst at Hendon, promotion came quite quickly. Firstly, on September 26th 1939, to Aircraftman 1st Class (AC1) then to Leading Aircraftman (LAC) on November 1st just three weeks before he was posted to RAF Bircham Newton, located on the Sandringham Estate, Norfolk.

He arrived on the 22nd of that month. Bircham Newton was a Coastal Command station and home to both No.42 Sqn, equipped with Vildebeest torpedo bombers and No.206 Sqn. Like Hendon, it did not have a training school and it is not known what he was doing there. Whatever it was did not last long, because after just over two weeks he was posted again. This time to No 1 Air Armament School (AAS), RAF Manby, Lincolnshire where he duly arrived on December 6th 1939. The role of the AAS was to train Armament Officers, Air Gunners and

Air Bombers and, using the Fairey Battle, Supermarine Walrus and Vickers Walrus, it made good use of the nearby east coast bombing ranges.

Goozee's time at Manby is not well documented but at some point he was posted to RAF Sullom Voe in the Shetlands with the posting annotated AMES Skaw. AMES was the acronym for Air Ministry Experimental Station and Skaw is the location in the Shetlands close to Sullom Voe. It is known that Sullom Voe was a flying boat base with various squadrons flying Sunderlands and Catalinas on anti-submarine and North Sea patrols as well as undertaking Air Sea Rescue missions.

The decision was taken to cover the Sullom Voe base with the Chain Home Low radar system in order to assist in the protection of the flying boat base. At the same time a rethink on the design and technology of the Chain Home stations showed that by reducing the number of operating frequencies from four to two not only would the efficiency of the system be improved but the number of towers required could be reduced from four to three. Consequently, and as a result of this rethink, the fourth mast at Ventnor on the Isle of Wight was dismantled and shipped up to Skaw.

It would seem likely that because of his ten months training at Cranwell, Goozee was sent up to Kaw to assist in the setting up of the CHL there known as AMES 2. During this period, he was promoted to temporary Corporal on August 1st 1940. Ignoring his time at Cranwell as a Boy, within twelve months he had risen to Corporal.

On December 14th 1940, Cpl Goozee reported to No 6 Initial Training Wing, RAF Aberystwyth, Wales. This posting appears to indicate that he had volunteered for aircrew because he was back into basic training involving mathematics, navigation, armaments, signals, aircraft recognition, gas, Air Force law and the ubiquitous, extensive periods of drill. It was to be hoped he enjoyed sport because one day of the week was set aside as a sports day where everyone had to do some sporting activity.

After completing his basic training he went to No.51 Group Pool, RAF Yeadon, West Yorkshire which, these days, is better known as Leeds/Bradford airport. Here he underwent basic flying training most probably in De Havilland DH82a Tiger Moths. He must have shown aptitude and potential because two months later, June 25th 1941, he was at No.14 Service Flying Training School, RAF Cranfield, Bedfordshire, between Milton Keynes and Bedford. This was a group II school specialising in advance training for those who were to become multi-engine pilots.

Here flying training was carried out using twin engine Airspeed Oxfords and the single engine Miles Master one of the fastest and most manoeuvrable trainers of its day. The classroom-based lessons in various subjects continued together with simulated flying in link trainers, the fore-runner of today's flight simulators. Final tests and examinations completed his advance

training and on successfully passing these he was awarded his pilots wings. On September 6th he was promoted to Sergeant and was now Sergeant (Pilot) John Thomas Goozee.

Having finished his course at Cranfield, Sgt Pilot John Goozee was, once more, posted to No.1 AAS, RAF Manby w.e.f. September 16th and, according to his movements record, remained there until May 1943. The school trained air gunners and air bombers and Goozee was employed piloting them on their training missions. This was confirmed by Rogers in one of his letters (see below) where he stated that Goozee had some 950 hours in Ansons, Oxfords, Whitleys and Lancasters and had been a staff pilot flying bomb aimers and navigators for a year. However, according to historical sources aircraft flown by AAS at this time were Hawker Harts, Furies, Demons and Henleys, Westland Wallaces, Gloucester Gauntlets and Fairey Battles. All these aircraft were either single or two seaters so where Goozee obtained his 950 hours flying multi-engine is something of a mystery.

During July 1942, the twenty year old Goozee had a period of leave for his wedding in Kingsbury Parish Church, Middlesex, to Doris May Green a 19 year old clerk from Repton Road, Kenton, who was given away by her father John Charles Green a shipping clerk.

On August 1st, he was promoted to Temporary Flight Sergeant, still at Manby, where he was to remain until May 7th 1943, when he was posted to No.97 Sqn., RAF Bourn, Cambridgeshire. The Squadron had moved to Bourn a month earlier in April 1943 becoming a "Marker" squadron in the Path Finder Force under No.8 (PFF) Group. His stay with 97 didn't last long and it is likely his time there was a holding posting until a place became available on the next OTU course because on May 23rd he reported to No.28 Operational Training Unit (OTU), RAF Wymeswold, north east of Loughborough, Leicestershire.

The OTUs took trained aircrew personnel and formed them into crews which would ultimately join a front-line squadron. Crews were formed by placing all newly arrived course entrants in a hangar, or other similarly large area, where they were told to sort themselves out into crews. One contemporary of the period likened it to a marriage market. Having sorted themselves into a crew their time at the OTU was spent welding and blending themselves into a team by constant flying exercises, predominantly in Vickers Wellingtons.

It was here at 28 OTU that Goozee and Rogers came together. In June 1943, operations moved from Wymeswold to Ossington, seven miles north of Newark, whilst concrete runways were laid at the former. Everything must have gone well for John Goozee because, on August 1st 1943 he was promoted to Temporary Warrant Officer and on that day he and his crew reported to No.1662 Heavy Conversion Unit, RAF Blyton, some 5 miles north east of Gainsborough.

John Goozee and his crew started to work up towards operational readiness. It was dependent on which Flight they were in as to which aircraft type they trained on. 'A' Flight comprised Lancasters whilst 'B' and 'C' Flights were equipped with Handley Page Halifax and Avro Manchesters respectively. Typically, initial training would have comprised flights of one – two hours, with the pilot in charge being an instructor, and were simply aircraft familiarisation. This stage of training would have lasted approximately a week.

CENTRAL EXAMINATION BOARD, ROYAL AIR FORCE.
INTERMEDIATE EXAMINATION. 4th. April, 1940.
Nos. 8,9,12,14 & Cranwell Service Flying Training Schools.
ALSO RE-EXAMINATIONS.
AIRMANSHIP & AEROPLANE MAINTENANCE.

READ all QUESTIONS and INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY before commencing to answer, and give concise answers, tabulated where possible.

Total Marks- 200. Time allowed - 2 hours.
QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED.

AIRMANSHIP - Questions Nos. 1 to 8 - SIX questions ONLY to be answered.
AEROPLANE MAINTENANCE. - Questions Nos. 9 to 12- TWO questions ONLY to be answered.
ALL questions carry equal marks.
Answers to Questions Nos. 9 to 12 should be done last and under the heading of AEROPLANE MAINTENANCE.

AIRMANSHIP.

1. (i) What precautions should be taken by a pilot when taking off or landing at aerodromes situated at high altitudes ?
(ii) Can the indicated air speed be relied upon as a safe speed at which to approach when making a landing at such an aerodrome ?
Give reasons for your answer.

✓ 2. (i) What do you understand by "Wind Gradient"?
(ii) What causes it and where and when is it most likely to be encountered ?
(iii) What precautions should be taken by a pilot to overcome the effect of "Wind Gradient"?

✓ 3. State the FIVE main points to which you should pay particular attention when carrying out a daily inspection of your parachute.

✓ 4. State what procedure you would follow when approaching an unfamiliar aerodrome to land, together with particulars of the precautions you would take in the approach.

✓ 5. Name FIVE factors in modern service flying conditions which dissipate the pilot's energy and state how these factors can be eliminated or minimised in effect.

✓ 6. (i) State briefly the procedure to be followed at night from the time you commence taxiing out from the hangars until you are airborne.
(ii) In the event of engine failure at night, what signals would you use to indicate that you were forced to land ?
(iii) What signal is used by the aerodrome control pilot at night to recall ALL aircraft belonging to the unit ?

FOR QUESTIONS 7,8,9,10,11 & 12 SEE OVER.....

Above is an example of the front page from 1940 of the type of intermediate exam paper Goozee would have had to sit.

When Goozee and his crew were deemed ready to go solo, daylight circuits would be carried out with this phase lasting about two weeks. Then they would commence night flying, again with an instructor, and after three or four hours of circuits and landings would continue for another hour and a half or so. Once this part of the training was successfully completed the crew moved onto cross country day flying which would involve sorties of some six hours' duration. Finally came the night flying exercises which were approximately the same length of time.

On September 22nd 1943, W.O. (Pilot) Goozee and his crew were posted to RAF Hemswell, No.1 Lancaster Finishing School which was tasked with giving Lancaster experience to crews who had just finished training at a Heavy Conversion Unit prior to posting to an operational squadron. Now, having finished this final phase of training Goozee was posted to No.100 Squadron, RAF Grimsby, with effect from October 1st 1943, little knowing when he arrived there what fate cruelly held in store for him.

W.O. John Goozee is buried in Islington Cemetery in a family grave with his sister Kathleen and his father John Donovan Goozee who died in December 1977 at the age of eighty five.



Sgt. (Flight Engr) Charles Alexander Green, RAFVR

Charles was the second child born to Charles Alexander and Lillian Green in 1923 and one of eleven children in the family which lived in Grantley Grove, Bilton Grange, Hull. The family

referred to him as Alec who, when he came of school age, attended Crowle Street Primary School and later probably Maybury Road Senior School. This has not been confirmed but is deemed highly likely by one of his surviving brothers. Alec was, according to his family, quite clever at school and very good at drawing, so much so that at the age of thirteen he won a prize for a drawing of his grandfather entitled "Grandfather Asleep with Whiskers".

Because there were so many mouths to feed mother and father used to sit down for their meal before the children arrived home from school and it was not unknown for the children to stand round the table waiting for their parents to finish eating so that they could then sit down and be fed. By all accounts they were a happy family and popular in their street. Prior to enlisting Alec was a butcher with Cousins in Hull, a business which no longer exists.

Christmas and New Year were barely over when, at the age of nineteen, he reported to No.2 Recruit Centre, RAF Cardington, Bedfordshire, on January 5th 1942. The next day AC2 Green, as he then was, was listed as Reserve and sent home until called for. Nothing happened for six months, until on Monday, July 6th, he reported to No 3 Reception Centre, RAF Padgate, Warrington, Lancs. Here he was issued with his uniform, attested and undertook aptitude tests.



Photograph taken after selection for Aircrew training as denoted by the white stripe on Forage Cap.

Four days later on July 10th, he arrived at No.10 (Signals) Recruitment Centre, RAF Blackpool where he was billeted in one of the many requisitioned hotels. For the next few months his life revolved around the ubiquitous "square-bashing", signals training in morse, Aldis lamp and flags and additionally to the limitations of wireless transmission when communicating by morse code and voice.

On November 26th 1942, he was on the move again, this time to No.3 School of Technical Training, RAF Weeton where he stayed for five months before going to No.4 School of Technical Training, RAF St. Athan, Wales, where all flight engineers were trained. Instruction included aircraft construction and systems, emergencies and emergency repairs, aircraft control systems, pre-flight checks, take-off and landing drills, engine handling and economy flying. Part of the course included a week at A.V. Roes' Lancaster production unit at Woodford, Stockport, Greater Manchester. Also, whilst at St. Athan, he would have been subject to another aircrew medical. At the end of his training, which he obviously successfully completed, he was promoted to Temporary Sergeant and received his Engineers brevet. It would most likely be around this time that he became engaged to local Hull girl, Elsie Thompson.



L to R: Mr and Mrs Green, Alec's parents, Alec, Elsie Thompson, Unknown, Mr and Mrs Thompson, Elsie's parents.



On 31 July, 1943, he was posted to RAF Lindholme, near Thorne in South Yorkshire. However, he was only here for a week on what we suspect was a holding posting until a place on the next part of his training programme became available. He did not have long to wait because on August 6th Sgt. Green found himself at 1662 HCU, RAF Blyton. Interestingly enough, John Rogers had arrived at Blyton only five days earlier on Sunday, August 1st, as had John Goozee.

Green's conversion lasted until September 22nd when he arrived at RAF Hemswell, as did Goozee, then they joined the Lancaster finishing School before being posted to 100 Sqn on October 1st, 1943. Some members of the family state that Alec was in fact a Rear Gunner but it has not been possible to corroborate this fact and it would not appear so from his Training and Movements Record. Sgt Charles Alec Green was laid to rest in Hull Eastern Cemetery.

Sgt. (Air Bomber) John Hill Rogers, RAFVR

Sgt. Rogers parents, Harry and Gladys, married in mid-1921, and their son John was born in the quarter ending September 1924. Unfortunately nothing is known of his younger years other than he was brought up in the family home, a cottage in the village of Upton, south west of Chester, in the Welsh borders.

When he finished primary school he went on to the King's School, Chester which was located in the precincts of Chester Cathedral prior to its move to a new site in the 1960s. His name is commemorated on the school's memorial on the stairway to the Old Library. It was at King's School that Rogers struck up what was to be a firm, lasting friendship with Gerry Fair, the son of a farmer at Pulford where he spent many happy hours. After leaving the King's School in 1940, at the age of sixteen, and having become a very useful rugby player, he joined the staff of the Chester Observer (now the Chester Chronicle) prior to joining the Royal Air Force a year under age!

On September 15th 1941, John went to No.3 Reception Centre, RAF Padgate, Warrington, Lancashire, where the next day he was officially ranked Aircraftman 2nd Class (A.C.2), put on Reserve and sent home until called for. He got that call in early March 1942 and on Monday, March 9th 1942, reported to No.1 Aircrew Reception Centre, RAF Regents Park for aircrew selection. The Selection Centre was at Lords Cricket Ground where medical, aptitude tests and kitting out were undertaken. It was possibly here that his ambition to become a pilot was frustrated due to colour blindness and he had to content himself with being aircrew. Messing was provided in the cafeteria at Regents Park Zoo whilst the billet he was allocated was in Viceroy Court, Prince Albert Road, London, N.W.8, an apartment block still very much in existence. One of his first free time tasks was to write to his long-time friend, Gerry Fair, stating ".....living in huge block of ultra-modern flats with hot and cold water and wonderfully enamelled baths." He goes on to state that he was told that the block of flats cost the Air

Ministry £80,000 per year. At the time of writing, a two bedroom flat is on the market for £1.4m. Not bad for the billet of an AC2.

This was in quite stark contrast to his home near Chester where he lived with his mother, his father having died in 1931. The cottage was very modest with only cold water, probably from an outdoor pump or well, no electricity and, in places, an earth floor.

Whilst at the Aircrew Reception Centre, John should have sat both a maths and a morse exam but on the morning of the former and feeling unwell he reported sick, a process which took all morning. The result of not taking the maths exam was that he and 200 other cadets were sent to Aircrew Disposal Wing (ACDW), RAF Brighton. A minority of definitions show ACDW as Aircrew Dispersal Wing which, in hindsight, may be a more sympathetic and just definition when Bomber Command's losses are borne in mind. Here they would have approximately thirty hours maths and morse tuition then sit a far harder exam than they would have done earlier at the Reception Centre. Fail these exams and it was a case of remuster, pass and it was on to the Initial Training wing.

During his time at Brighton John does not appear to have suffered from a shortage of girlfriends - quite the reverse. He states that the girls in Brighton are the most gorgeous he has ever seen, better than any in Chester, Cheshire or London. His main complaint though was that he had to be back in at night by 22.20 although on a Saturday he could buy a ticket for the Wing Dance at a cost of 1/6d (7½p) which then allowed him a late pass until midnight.

Writing to Gerry John says of one Saturday night, " Last Saturday was one of the most eventful in the present spell of my life which I have completed. You see I went out with my married friend and then she took me home for COFFEE !!... He explains in his letter that his 'married friend' is aged about twenty with a husband serving somewhere with the Army.

On 18th April 1942, John Rogers found himself in No.3 Flight, No.3 Squad, No.10 Initial Training Wing (I.T.W.), Scarborough, Yorkshire, billeted in the Crown Hotel. He describes his time at ITW as generally running as smoothly as can be expected and, apart from a few fatigues for lateness on parade, as being quite pleasant. It is not very far into this latest letter that he makes reference to his current girlfriend, Amy, whom he describes as being very, very sweet and he goes on to say, "The times we have had would provide plenty of material for a full length novel. And I don't think it would be a very nice novel either".

However it was not all play and an easy life because he was taking more maths exams, gas exams and navigation exams. He writes saying how they spend some nights deeply engrossed copying out vast amounts of navigation notes and that, within the syllabus, they have reached "Finding Change of Wind". At this time it would appear the Air Crew structure changed because he tells Gerry there is now a new crew member, a Bomb Aimer, who does all the

bomb aiming and finding the exact target. Also, that bombers are to have only one pilot instead of two and consequently exams are stiffening up and even if all exams are passed only a certain percentage will go to flying school.



On November 27th 1942, Rogers wrote to Gerry Fair from Saskatchewan, Canada, No.5 Bombing and Gunnery School, R.C.A.F. Dafoe, referring to the extreme cold and the vastness of the prairies as well as the bombing exercises he had undertaken. He says on one occasion he scored a twenty five and explained this meant he got six bombs in a twenty five yard group from 6,000 feet!

There is a letter written (partly quoted earlier), by now Sgt John Rogers from the Sergeants' Mess of No. 28 OTU, Wymeswold, Nr. Leicester detailing how they are training on Wimpeys (Wellingtons Mk1 and II). He also says he has got three members of his new crew – the pilot, W.O.P./A.G. and Navigator:

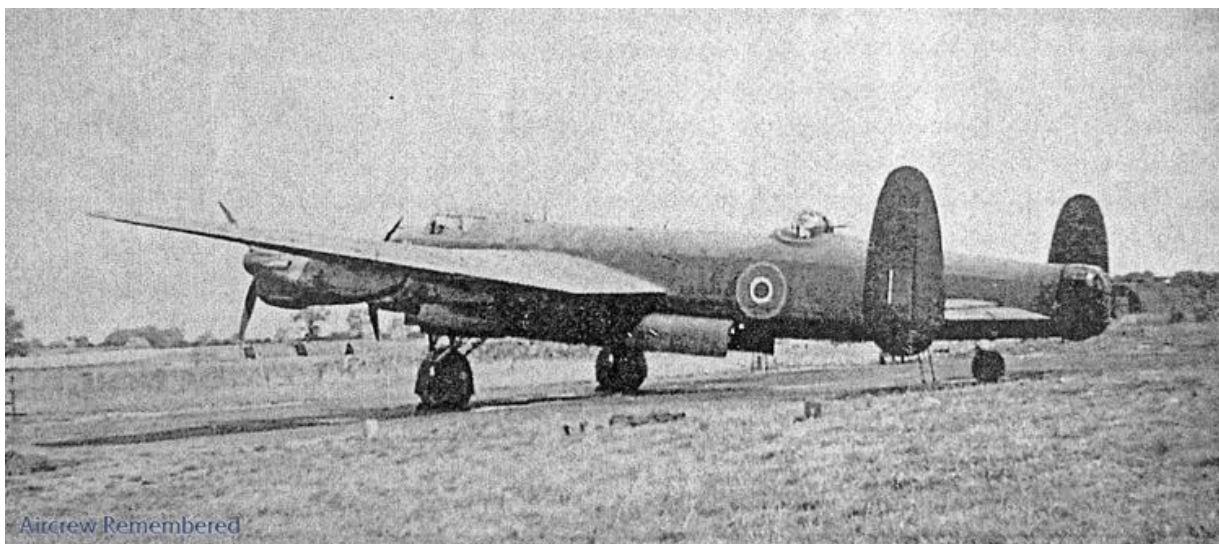
"..... Just let me tell you about them: The Pilot: Aged 21, he's a Flight Sergeant by the name of Goozy; and he's reputed to be one of the best pilots on this course (our course is comprised of 19 crews) and he has 950 flying hours in Ansons, Whitleys, Hampdens and Lancasters – so he ought to be o.k. The Wireless Operator: Also supposed to be bloody good, 22years old and has been a "screen" w.o.p. for 10 months. i.e. He has been flying with other W.O.P.s instructing them. And the Navigator – 20 yrs old Pilot Officer took the top maths in his course. We are just

waiting for a Tail Gunner- that is the crew for an O.T.U. We finish Ground School next week."

The next letter is from RAF Blyton situated approximately five miles north east of Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, where Rogers is doing flying training on Lancasters. In the letter he explains they have been doing a cross country and were on a leg from Northampton to Whitby when the outer port engine caught fire. He says that Johnny used the automatic fire extinguisher to put the fire out which meant they could not restart the engine. For the next few minutes everything was fine then the engine temperature on the inner port engine started to rise until it got up to 120deg. (The official maximum for safety was 100.) when they feathered it - so now they were flying on two engines! They got back to Blyton and just prior to landing restarted the inner port whereupon the outer starboard engine caught fire. The aircraft came to rest in flames at the end of the runway. Fortunately, all crew evacuated the plane without injury although the aircraft was destroyed. So even flying training had its hazards.

Nothing more is heard of Rogers until October 4th 1943, when he was killed together with John Goozee. John Hill Rogers was laid to rest in the Upton (Holy Ascension) Churchyard.





An image of Lancaster ED583 Source: <https://aircrewremembered.com/morgan-thomas.html>

Sgt. (Pilot) Ralph Frederick Worsey, RAFVR

Ralph Worsey signed up at the Euston Recruitment Centre on June 19th 1941, as Aircraftsman 2nd Class (A.C.2), number 1392269, and, like many others, was promptly placed on Reserve until he could be accommodated within the RAF's training programme. In early October of that year, he received notification that he was to report to No.1 Aircrew Reception Centre, St. John's Wood.

Having finished at the Reception Centre he was posted to No. 6 Initial Training Wing, Aberystwyth, where he spent four months, following the routine of courses in Mathematics, Navigation, Armaments, Signals, Aircraft Recognition, Gas and Air Force Law as well as one day a week being dedicated to sports. At the end of the course were the final exams with many personnel claiming the Navigation exam to be the longest and hardest of them all. Worsey was successful in passing his finals at which time it was not unusual for ten days' leave to be granted.

On January 3rd 1942, he was promoted to Leading Aircraftman (L.A.C.) which gave him a pay increase from 2/6 to 7/6 a day. In today's currency this would be a rise from 12.5p to 37.5p which represents an increase from £5.33 to £16.00 per day in today's values (Ed: this was probably written in 2013).

The next posting was to No.51 Group (Pool), Yeadon, West Yorkshire on February 24th 1942. Whilst Yeadon was used for aptitude assessment for flying training it was also a holding centre for personnel awaiting posting to Canada for flight training under the Arnold Scheme and on

the next day, 25th February, his records show he was posted to No. 17 Elementary Flying Training School. On March 25th 1942, Worsey was in a whole new world at No. 31 RAF Personnel Depot, Moncton in Canada where he arrived after a voyage from a port on the west coast of England, typically Liverpool or Gourock, to Halifax, Nova Scotia, followed by a rail journey of some five hours. In all likelihood, the Atlantic crossing would have been undertaken in a liner converted to an armed merchant cruiser which would have undertaken the voyage on its own relying on its speed to out run and out-manoeuve U-boats.

Ralph Worsey spent four weeks at Moncton where acclimatization included academic, physical and military training elements as well as the course being designed to help personnel adjust to a different environment and climate. Interestingly, greater detail of Moncton was provided by LAC George Stone from Crewkerne, Somerset who, in terse details of procedures at No. 31 Personnel Depot said, "Reported to Drill Hall after breakfast each morning, if name not called out for posting then got lost till next morning"!

On April 29th, Worsey was on his way to Turner Field in Albany, Georgia, USA, a journey of forty-eight hours by rail. Each contingent was accompanied by RCAF officers. They brought with them route schedules and travel requisitions for use in handling administrative details which included changing trains, meal and luggage vouchers and physical checks by American immigration officers. As the train travelled down Canada's east coast it crossed into the United States at Vanceboro, Maine. At Portland, he and all the other cadets had to change trains before continuing there via New York, Philadelphia and Washington until arriving, 48 hours after boarding, in Albany, Georgia. Here he would have boarded U.S. Army transport for the short journey to Turner Field some three miles east of the town. Turner Field was an Advanced Flying Training School. However, for the period January 24th 1942, until August 6th that year it was also an Acclimatization Centre for Classes 42H to 43B.

It is worthy of note that when RAF personnel first arrived in America in 1941 they went directly to primary flight training. However, it was not long before it was realised that there was such a culture shock for these young men arriving from a Britain that was deeply war torn, enduring shortages and blacked-out, into a country that was still enjoying peacetime. Cities were ablaze with light at night time, there were strange local foods and customs and an ambience that seemed to deny the existence of the life or death struggle raging in Europe. Consequently, it was decided that a period of orientation lasting a few weeks be added to the Arnold scheme prior to commencing primary training.

When the cadets arrived at Turner Field, the RCAF escort officers would call the roll and provide an accurate nominal roll to the American officer and the RAF's Administrative Officer (RAFAO). Ralph Worsey would, if he was lucky, have been assigned a billet in the new barracks or, if unlucky, allocated to tented accommodation most probably in an eight-man bell tent.

Later on that first day Ralph would have had to undergo physical examinations as individual medical records were not available.

The acclimatisation course at Turner comprised four major elements – reception, processing, military and academic. Reception and processing included the medical examination, pay parades and the issue of clothing and equipment. Military included ‘Basic Military Indoctrination’, physical training, infantry drill and ceremonies, inspection and interior guard duty. It also included training in local customs, an element of which covered the explanation of racial segregation which was the norm at the time.

During the preceding month the cadets had had little, if any, opportunity for exercise and USAAF Physical Training Instructors assessed their physical condition as little better than fair, but this was soon to change however with the introduction of calisthenics into their lives.

On completion of the period at Turner Field, Ralph Worsey again came under No. 31 Personnel Depot who then sent him off to Darr Aero Tech for the next phase of his training. He did not have to travel too far though as Darr, a Primary Flying Training School, was located only four miles west of Albany and he commenced the next part of his training here on June 2nd 1942.

For British personnel the ground syllabus omitted mathematics and navigation instruction and the number of hours of meteorology instruction was reduced on the basis that RAF personnel had already covered a high level of academic work. The thirty-four ground hours thus removed from the syllabus were replaced by ten hours of aircraft recognition, ten hours of current events, five hours of RAF organisation, four hours’ aldis signal lamp, and five hours of RAF procedures.

LAC Worsey’s first phase of hands-on flying took place in Stearman PT17 biplanes and covered rigid flight manoeuvres as well as extensive aerobatic manoeuvres. Those cadets who did not succeed were sent to other phases of flight training such as gunnery. Worsey was not one of these and on completion of the course once again came under N0.31 P.D. before being posted on August 6th to Cochran Field, Macon, still in Georgia, and some ninety-five miles north of Turner Field.

Cochran Field was used exclusively for training British personnel. The days were long and, typically, consisted of reveille at 5.20am, breakfast 5.50am, and at 6.25am drill or calisthenics for forty minutes because at 7.05am half reported to the flight line and half to ground school and physical training classes. Between 12.15 and 1.00pm the cadets ate lunch in the dining hall and then reversed the training. The evening meal was served at 5.40pm after which the time was their own until 7.30pm when the “call to quarters” was sounded and study time commenced until lights out at 9.15pm.

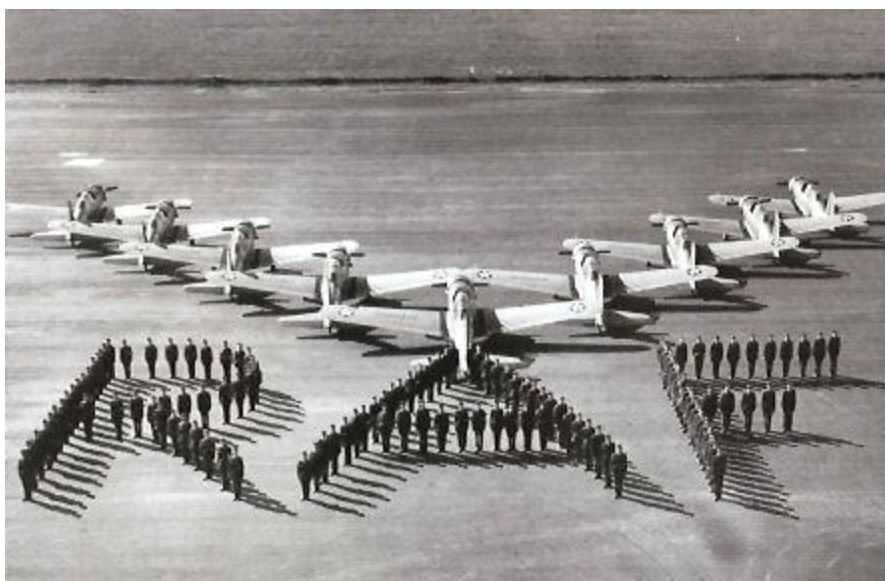
Flying training continued using the Stearman until they had reached the necessary standard when progression was made to the Vultee BT-13A, pictured below. This had a twin cockpit, fixed wing and non-retractable under carriage. The rear cockpit was fitted with a curtain which could be closed to cover the student pilot's vision thus obliging him to fly using the five basic instruments: altimeter, air speed indicator, compass, bank and turn indicator and an optional tachometer.



Vultee BT-13A

On October 10th 1942, and having successfully completed the basic flying course, No. 31 PD despatched Worsey on to the next stage of his training, Advanced Flying, at Moody Field near Valdosta in the south of Georgia and quite close to the state boundary with Florida. It was only in early 1942 that Moody Field became an advanced flying training school equipped with Beechcraft AT-7, AT-10 and Cessna AT-17 trainers. Aircraft of the same era and of comparable type and configuration were the Airspeed Oxford, Avro Anson and Curtis AT- 9.

Two months later and having successfully completed the course he was awarded the rank of Technical Sergeant (T/Sgt) on 13th December 13th 1942, and departed Moody Field the following day. On February 4th 1943 he disembarked in the UK and on February 5th reported to No. 7 Personnel Reception Centre at the Majestic Hotel in Harrogate. He remained there until March 3rd when he reported to Whitley Bay, North Tyneside, Tyne and Wear, where various training courses were run. There is no indication of what course he undertook but some have been ruled out as being totally inappropriate, leaving a Senior NCOs' course and the Air Crew NCOs' School. A reasonable assumption seems to be that he would have attended the latter which covered rules and regulations as well as what was expected of them as a senior NCO, mostly as pilots or senior gunners.



Cochran Field RAF Cadets, 1942. Other than 1942 the above picture is undated but perhaps, just perhaps, Ralph Worsey is one of these airmen,

Following his sojourn in the northeast, he was back to No.7 PRC Harrogate for an unknown period until his next posting to No.3 (Pilots) Advanced Flying Unit, RAF South Cerney, Gloucestershire, specialising in refresher and acclimatisation training, for pilots trained overseas, and using Airspeed Oxfords. His next posting onto Beam Approach Training may not have involved a lot of travelling. Although his record does not indicate so, this was possibly undertaken also at South Cerney as No.1539 BAT Flight was located there having been formed on 25th April 1943 and attached to No.3 (P) AFU. Perhaps he did not even have to move billet.

His next unit on May 25th was No.18 Operational Training Unit, RAF Finningley, South Yorkshire. This unit had been formed in June 1940 at RAF Hucknall, Nottinghamshire, from the Polish Training Unit within 6 Group and by September 1942 was training crews other than Polish. He spent almost eight weeks here training on Vickers Wellingtons undertaking the tasks that other personnel undertook at other OTUs, namely cross-country flights, night flying etc., and generally becoming familiar with a heavy bomber.

The penultimate posting for Ralph Worsey was to No.1656 Heavy Conversion Unit (HCU), R.A.F. Lindholme, five miles east of Doncaster where he would spend two months converting to Lancasters prior to his posting to 100Sqn, RAF Grimsby on October 1st 1943, just three days before his death. His final resting place is Woolwich Cemetery.

All the regular crew survived the war.

The Day that Changed the Village

Monday, October 4th 1943, and in terms of the village and its inhabitants the day started out as many other Mondays had. Get up, have breakfast, or not. Children go off to school, fathers and husbands go off to work, mothers and wives get to grips with the weekly wash because Monday was ritually and habitually, wash day. Later in the morning some people caught the bus into Grimsby to go shopping or do various tasks in town which life dictated needed to be done.

Around midday the children came home from school, the men came in from work and mother put lunch on the table. Then all sat down to eat what was probably a very similar meal in a lot of households, 'hot up', comprising cold meat left over from the Sunday roast together with left over heated up potatoes and vegetables.

As lunch was being finished and some of the children were already starting to make their way back to school a large explosion rocked the village. People stopped what they were doing and rushed outside to try and discover what had happened. Many of those children still at home were not allowed outdoors which meant, of course, no afternoon school.

When people reached The Square, they very quickly discovered what had happened when they were confronted by the burning remains of ED583 K-King, where the front half of the Primitive Methodist Chapel had been only minutes earlier. As time went on, and amongst all the emotion and activity, there was an element of relief throughout the village as it became apparent that no residents had been killed or seriously injured which was quite remarkable. Even more so when one takes into account the fact that there was live ammunition on board which was being detonated by the heat and flames of the burning aircraft.

Looking at the Village Green today it is hard to envisage the hellish scene that was unfolding in the centre of this rural village in the early afternoon of October 4th 1943. The NFS (National Fire Service) arrived from Grimsby having been called possibly by someone from the village or, more likely, from RAF Grimsby. There was no water main in the village and houses obtained their water from an individual well serving the one property or five or six houses built near each other, sharing a well. It was from these wells, and their tenders, that the fire crews pumped water, to control, and ultimately extinguish, the fire that blazed on the wrecked aircraft which only a short time earlier had been an operational Lancaster containing eight young men on what should have been a routine test flight.

Recollections of the Break-up and Crash

Ed: These recollections were gathered circa 2013. Dates are recorded in many cases.

Fred Robinson of Market Rasen recorded, at the time, what his late brother saw on October 4th 1943.

“He was operating a threshing machine on a farm at Brigsley and was just checking the time on his pocket watch to see if it was break time. The time was exactly 12.50pm and, at that moment, he heard a terrific explosion at a great height – and debris began falling which resembled a flock of crows falling from the sky, with some large pieces and tiny fragments. The largest pieces he saw appeared to be red in colour and he presumed they were fuel tanks.

An aircraft had exploded over Brigsley and Ashby-cum-Fenby. The wreckage was falling in a south-easterly direction towards Grainsby, where two engines fell at the entrance to the park and, at almost three miles away from the explosion, over the village of North Thoresby. A large piece of wreckage fell in the centre of the village demolishing part of the chapel.”

The following are recently gathered recollections from people living today who were children living in the village when the crash occurred. Their words have not been altered.

David Bell – Age 9

I was nine years of age and attending the local Primary School in North Thoresby. On this particular day, I had been home for my lunch and was on my way back to school when I suddenly heard a strange sound coming from above me. I looked around and to my surprise and horror I saw an aircraft falling from the sky and heading towards the village. I very quickly realised that it was only half a Lancaster Bomber. Fear overtook my body, and I ran as fast as I could back in the direction of school. Just as I reached Ostlers Cobblers shop I heard what can only be described as a huge explosion as the Lancaster hit the ground; I then could see smoke and flames billowing into the sky as I ran back into school.

Later, the residents of the village found out that the Lancaster had blown up in mid-air flight over Grainsby Park and the front half had uncontrollably drifted towards North Thoresby and landed on the small chapel on the High Street. In addition to the chapel being destroyed, the small cottage directly next to it was also flattened. Unfortunately the crew of the plane were tragically killed but thankfully and amazingly nobody on the ground was injured. Miraculously, Mrs Markham, the lady who lived there had gone shopping and returned to the shocking news that her home had been destroyed. This event happened over seventy years ago and now, as I approach my 80th year, it is still very fresh in my mind and has been something I have and will never forget. [recorded circa 2013]

Wendy Cooling – Age 7

It was just another day. We lit the fire, filled up the boiler with water from the old pump and after an hour or so we had warm water and a boiling kettle with which we could make tea and have a wash. As a seven-year-old I made my way to school. After a morning of learning I returned home for lunch which, being a Monday, would have been cold meat and bubble and squeak (yesterday's veg mashed up and fried) YUK!

During the lunchtime, the life of my Village changed for ever when the body of a fighter (sic) crash landed on the Primitive Methodist Chapel killing eight young airmen. I was intrigued by what had happened and though I was forbidden by my Mother to even put my nose out of the door I managed to escape and discovered what shrapnel was!

Despite wandering around the fields, I was unable to catch sight of the tragedy. My family – five girls and one boy plus mum and dad – were staunch Methodists and the impact of losing our place of worship was soul destroying. We then had to join up with the Wesleyan Methodists – what a catastrophe this was as we had two sets of organists, two sets of wardens and Sunday School teachers. This caused turmoil in this group of Christians as no one wanted to relinquish their posts nor did they wish to be seen to oust their competitors. Several years on and eventually both sides came to a happy compromise and a very strong worshipping community was formed. These are my lasting memories of seventy years ago. [recorded circa 2013]

Andrew Dickinson – Age 6

I was six years old and, as I remember it, Monday the fourth of October, 1943, was a 'nothing' sort of day. The sky was grey, the air still. My father, Fred Dickinson, one of the two butchers in the village, had gone on the bus to the abattoir in Grimsby. Meat was, of course, rationed, at ten pence (old money) (equivalent to approx. 4p in today's coinage) per head, per week. On Mondays, butchers went to choose their meat for the coming week. How much they could have depended on how many customers were on their books, and thus how many coupons they had collected.

Before catching the bus to Grimsby, my dad would have filled the copper in the washhouse and lit the fire underneath. The 'soft' water would have come from one of the two large metal tanks which stored the water collected from the house roof. Monday was washing day – everybody washed on a Monday come rain or shine! You had to wash on a Monday, else the rest of the week wouldn't have worked!

Monday morning was one of the few times when my father wasn't working. My mother, on the other hand, was extremely busy. Washing had to be very well organised. First the whites,

then the light-coloured garments, then darker and so on. That day she must have had an early start, because at five minutes to one she was bringing in a basket of washing from the clothesline. Coming down the drive, she had just passed the Wesleyan Chapel on her left, when suddenly she was flung forward onto her knees. The basket of washing flew out of her hands, strewing the clean clothes on the ground. Later, she described how, looking up, she saw a great shape falling out of the sky towards her. She was sure she was going to die. Fortunately for her, part of a Lancaster bomber, which was the shape she described, fell about thirty yards short of where she was lying. She lived to be ninety-nine years and six months!

I was recovering from bronchitis and hadn't been to school that morning. The late Terry (Todd) Sylvester, who lived with his grandparents at one end of Jack Hinch's thatched cottage, across The Square from me, had called to see me on his way back to school. We were in a little shed behind the butcher's shop making catapults. You couldn't get elastic during the war, so boys improvised by using strips of bicycle inner tubes when they were past repairing. The Y shaped handles would have been cut from a tree or shrub – all boys had pocket knives!

Neither of us saw what happened at five minutes to one that day, but we certainly heard it! There was an almighty crash and the ground shook. Instinctively we both made a dash for the house. Toddy tripped over a log and went all his length. How long we were in the house I can't remember. At some point my mother arrived, her knees bleeding from the fall. Just after half past one my father would have returned from Grimsby, the bus having been diverted down Ludborough Road, turning round at the Station corner (sic). I remember Todd stayed for lunch, which would have been his second, and that we had Sunday left-overs – cold mutton and mint sauce with fried potatoes.

At some point we ventured out, and I remember lots of smoke and firemen with hosepipes, and the noise of what sounded like fireworks. Across The Square we could see flames in the direction of Todd's grandparents' house – that is the only time I ever saw him cry. It was impossible to go and investigate because something was burning in The Square, just where the bus to Grimsby stopped. Happily, the flames we could see were not from his grandparents' house – it was a stack in Jack Hinch's farmyard!

I shall never forget seeing stretchers being carried across The Square to the emergency first aid post down Haith's Lane. I remember thinking that what was on the stretchers covered by white cloths were too small to be people. Things gradually quietened down although smoke still rose from the crash site and there were occasional explosions. We also found what had knocked my mother to the ground. Lying on the ground was a long metal cylinder. It had obviously been red hot when it left the plane, because it had burnt its imprint in the grass, which could be seen for some time afterwards. I believe by next day things were pretty much back to normal. The buses ran on time, children went to school and people got on with their work. After all there was a war on!

Josie Dows – Age 8

My brother and myself were walking down the lane going back to school for afternoon lessons when we saw a plane come down , then a huge CRASH and clouds of smoke. We weren't sure of what was happening as we saw it across the fields. My mum rushed out to take us back home. Only later did we learn what had happened.

But across the road from where we lived there was a lady called Mrs. Robinson and in her orchard was a member of the crew hung by his parachute in a tree. Another crewman was found in another part of the orchard. The orchard is no longer there. I was eight years old at the time and remember the village looking not like our village at all. Everyone was very sad. It is a day I will never forget.

Margaret Gaukroger – Age 6

I had been home for my dinner and my father, Roger Gaukroger who was a farmer at Eastfield House, was taking me back to the village school on the carrier on the back of his bicycle along Station Road. As we approached the bend just before the school, we heard the noise and a loud crash as the plane came down somewhere in the village – at the time we didn't know where. My dad dropped me off at the school gate then went off on his bike to investigate along with everyone else.

Mary Channon nee Pawson – Age 16

I was sitting with my mum, at home in Borman's Lane, eating lunch. We heard the bomber coming over very low and it looked as if it was going to crash in the farmyard at Highfield Farm. Then we heard the noise of the crash. We walked to The Square in the centre of the village to see whether we could help. We saw bodies wrapped in sheets being taken to the Church Hall which was just down Haith's Lane at the back of the existing Village Hall and roughly where 16, Haith's Lane now stands. [Taken down during interview on Saturday, 15th June 2013]

Edna Procter – Age 6

I can't really remember anything about the day of the crash, (I was six years old), but I do remember the rubbish at the chapel and the garden opposite. Next door to the bungalow opposite there were two cottages (where the property named Magnolia is now). The doors opened directly onto the road, and they stood empty for ages afterwards – probably never rebuilt, but the windows were out and I do remember as a little girl being lifted up to put newspapers through the 'window' because that was where the old papers were collected for the War Effort.

Valerie Smith – Age 6

I went home from school for my lunch and remember sitting at the table eating bramble and apple pie when there was a loud bang. My grandmother pushed me under the table not knowing what else was going to happen. I was not allowed to go back to school that afternoon nor was I allowed to play out because of all the smells. Mother went to see whether she could help. When she came back she told how she helped, with quite a number of other people, to move all the furniture out of Mrs Markham's cottage in case the cottage caught fire.

Mrs Markham had gone on a rare trip into Grimsby, but the cottage was left unlocked which was the norm in those days. Later in the afternoon it started to rain so mother went back to the cottage and helped to put the furniture back inside, the threat of fire having subsided, although this time there were a lot fewer people to help. [This recollection taken over the 'phone, Wednesday, 15th May, 2013]

L. Spink – Age 3

I, obviously, do not remember much about the crash but seem to think my mother took us up to The Square (we lived in Church Lane) to see the plane that had crashed. I can recall seeing it nose-dived into the old Chapel as though it had come from the Louth direction. But, as I had only turned three years old at the end of September, I am not sure how much I remembered or how much I had been told.

David Spyvee – Age 5

I had just started at North Thoresby primary school located, then, at the junction of Station Road and Ludborough Road and lived in a house on Station Road called Hillcrest which had large stone balls atop the gate posts

We were sat round the table at lunchtime when there was a loud bang and, on looking outside, a plume of black smoke rising over the centre of the village. My father, a Captain in the North Thoresby Homeguard, immediately went to see what help and assistance he could offer.

Later in the afternoon I recollect seeing firemen in the centre of the village and hosepipes snaking down from The Square, past the Post Office, towards Station Road. I vividly recollect that the hosepipes must have been in a poor state because water was escaping from them in spurts and fountains. [This recollection taken over the 'phone Monday, 29th April 2013]

Tim Stone

I have been told that I was about six weeks old and in my pram in the garden when the Lancaster, already breaking up, came over Grainsby shedding pieces all around. Monty Raymond Lovesey ran, took hold of my pram and quickly pushed me into the house. As this was happening my mother together with Mrs B. Dickerson and the lady whose house was destroyed were on the local service bus returning from Grimsby.

Bob Templeman OBE

I grew up in High Street and then joined the R.A.F. for training and was back in the village on leave for the first week of October 1943. On October 4th at 12.40pm (sic) we were just finishing lunch when we heard a bang in the sky. I remember clearly remarking to Mother that it sounded very much like an aircraft exploding. Shortly after, there was a mighty bang and we saw flames and smoke and heard the crack of ammunition as it exploded in the heat.

I was at the scene within a minute or so and saw that most of the Chapel had been reduced to rubble. The bungalow next door – then Mrs Markham's - (later to become Bill Kane's) was partly flattened and "Bricky Bill's" cottage opposite was on fire. Together with a chap called Bill Plumtree we saved as much of Bricky's furniture as we could, but it must have been a shock to him when he returned home from work. Both cottages were later demolished, and the present bungalow (Magnolias) was lived in by Mrs Smith and daughter Madge, who were landladies of the Granby Inn (Now the Halfway House).

Fortunately, no one was hurt. Bricky Bill was at work as was Mr. Neale (who lived in the next-door cottage to him). Mrs Neale and Mrs Markham were in Grimsby shopping. If Mrs Markham had decided on a lie-in on that day she would have had the company of a large piece of Lancaster, which went through the roof and straight through her bed.

I stayed for an hour or two around the large hole in the ground towards the front of the chapel and left after a charred body was lifted out. We know now that the aeroplane was a Lancaster 111 of No.100 Squadron Waltham and was on a high-altitude test. Its Captain was an American who had over 300 hours on Lancasters. The engines landed between Thoresby and Grainsby and I recall one of the crew was found dead in the orchard of a house on the west side of the A16 owned by the Rawson family. We never learned the cause of the accident.

The Village Today

What of the village now in the present day? The orchard where two of the aircrew came to rest is, as Josie Dows recalled, long since gone. The trees grubbed out and replaced by houses. The field close to the A16 where Thomas Morgan's body was found has changed little over the intervening years. It is populated quite regularly by sheep or cattle creating a pastoral scene belieing the tragedy that happened there.

[Ed: I have made little amendments here to bring the picture up to date]. Much of the centre of the village as it was in 1943, remains. The village shop is at least 120 years old, the row of buildings to the east (if facing the shop) was built around 1850 and the thatched cottage dates from 1683. The village hall still stands on the opposite side of the road to the village green and has changed little since it served as a temporary morgue all those years ago. The remaining part of the Primitive chapel was demolished some years ago and a house built on the same site.

Ed: As mentioned earlier in the booklet, since 2005, a wonderful and beautifully designed memorial has been situated just east of the crash site, in a lovely tranquil space. With typical modesty, Dave and Tim did not mention in their original text that its creation was due to their vision, commitment and determination to produce a fitting tribute to the 8 young men who died here. As such, it stands as a universal symbol of the debt we owe to the generation who fought, and too frequently died, for the freedom we enjoy today. I have added several additional images of the memorial and copies of old postcards which show both the chapel that was destroyed and the two cottages opposite which were also destroyed. I have also included a copy of the Dedication Service of September 2005.

In January 2023, I contacted the artist who created the memorial, Alan Potter, and he kindly replied with his recollections, the ideas behind the memorial and a couple of his original sketches.





Old Postcards of the Village



Above: Directly behind the figure, the two thatched cottages destroyed by the Lancaster can be seen. Below: The Chapel that was destroyed

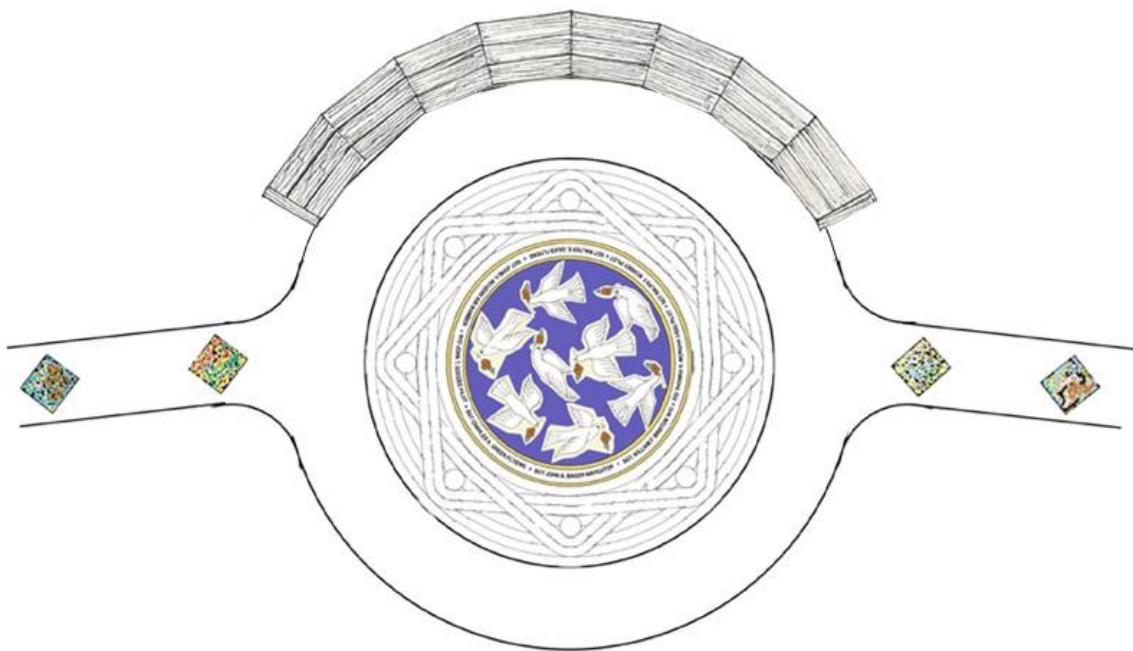


The Recollections of Alan Potter

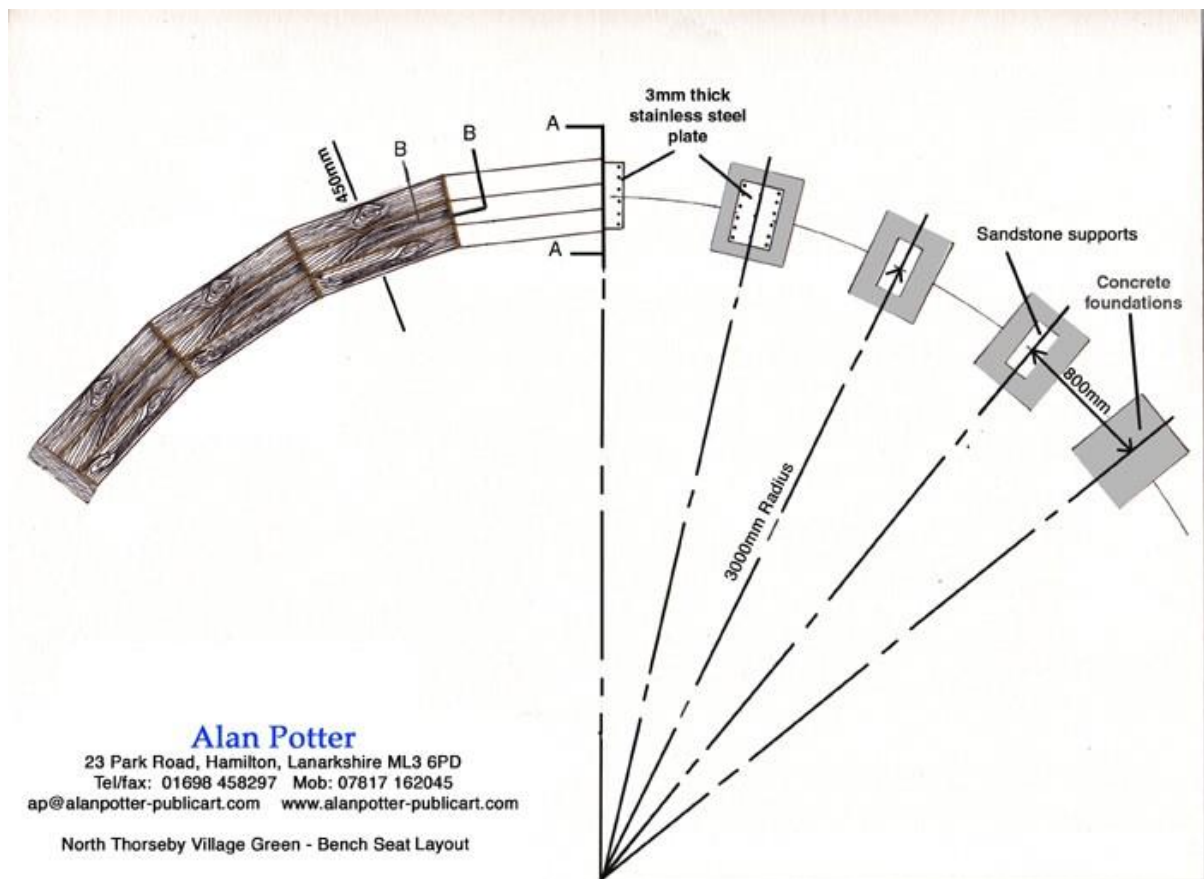
'When I was commissioned to refurbish the village green I was searching around for clues as to the character of North Thoresby and its residents. I ran drawing workshops with senior residents to design the left-hand entrance railings with the theme of farming. The right-hand entrance railings are based on drawings by teenagers reflecting their leisure and sporting interests. The pathway mosaics were developed through design workshops with the primary school, depicting local trades.

I was still looking for a centrepiece and was chatting to a resident whose house bordered the green [the resident was Dave Cooper, who still lives in the bungalow with his wife Barbara, and the couple do marvellous work in maintaining the garden]. He told me how he had on occasion found bits of old aircraft instruments when digging in his garden.

The design takes the form of eight mosaic flying doves with poppies in their beaks surrounded by text explaining their fate. The centre is enclosed within an interlacing knot-work pattern in silver grey and pink granite symbolising the teamwork required by the crew to fly a Lancaster. The name, rank and age (where available) is etched in stainless steel plaques positioned within the knot-work pattern. The work was completed by an eight-person bench seat. One seat for each crew member. The bench is made of Ancaster stone, Iron hardwood and brass.'



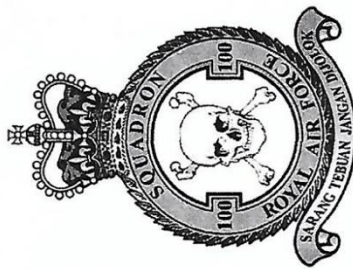
One of Alan Potter's original sketches.



Alan Potter has become an eminent figure. Below, he describes his approach, which is clearly seen in his North Thoresby creation :

'My preferred approach is an examination, through a contemporary prism, of the traditions, culture, history and future use of the location. I regard history as important. I believe it moulds our identity, giving reality and substance to our communities through a shared past. It is the glue that binds us together, and gives us our benchmarks in our relationships. Every city, town and village has its own unique history, which in turn gives it its particular character. Through my artwork I seek to discover that uniqueness and bring it to life in a modern way'

Memorial Dedication Service



North Thoresby
4th September 2005

On the 4th October 1943 Lancaster ED583 from RAF Grimsby was conducting a training sortie with a newly formed crew. As the aircraft practiced a corkscrew manoeuvre it suffered a catastrophic failure of the wing-tips.

The aircraft crashed onto the village of North Thoresby at a site close to the present village green, demolishing the front half of the Methodist Chapel. No villagers were killed or injured in the crash but sadly the whole crew lost their lives.

The new memorial commemorates this event and is dedicated to the aircrew who were killed.

Flying Officer T Morgan RAF
Warrant Officer J T Goosie RAF
Sergeant R F Worsey RAF
Sergeant C A Green RAF
Sergeant WEJ Giles RAF
Sergeant J A Baker RAF
Sergeant WF Bristow RAF
Sergeant J H Rogers RAF



Bidding

We have come together in the presence of Almighty God to offer him our praise and thanksgiving.

We come dedicate a memorial to the crew of Lancaster ED583 of 100 Sqn; to remember their sacrifice and the sacrifice of all those of Bomber Command who died on operations or in training.

We pray for those who are scarred by conflict and all who grieve the loss of comrades and loved ones. We pray for peace and reconciliation in those places where there is violence and bloodshed; and we pledge ourselves to work and pray for justice that it may prevail throughout the world.

Let us pray:

O God, our refuge and strength, and our most mighty deliverer, by whose mercy we are spared, by whose providence we are governed, and by whose love we are redeemed, grant us the help of your Holy Spirit, that we may praise you for your goodness and do all things to your glory, and that our worship may be acceptable to you; through our Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

First Lesson: Ecclesiasticus 44:1-14

Second Lesson: John 15:12-17

The Dedication of the Memorial

Almighty God, in your holy gospel you taught us that there is no greater love than that a man lay down his life for his friends. Let this monument stand as a testament to the sacrifice of those we remember today:

Lord, may their sacrifice remind us of your own self-giving love, shown to the world in your Son, our saviour, Jesus Christ. And so we hallow and dedicate this memorial, in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

The Act of Remembrance

Let us remember before God those who stood firm and fought the fight; and those today who strive against evil and seek to establish the ideals of peace amongst all peoples:

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, or the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.
We will remember them.

Last Post

Silence

Reveille

Laying of Wreaths

Almighty and eternal God,
from whose lover in Christ we cannot be parted,
either by death or life;
hear our prayers and thanksgivings
for all whom we remember this day;
fulfil in them the purposes of your love;
and bring us all, with them, to your eternal joy;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Prayers

Concluding with:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen

Blessing

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold
fast that which is good; render to no man evil for evil;
strengthen the faint hearted, support the weak, help the af-
flicted; honour and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of
the Holy Spirit. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father,
Son, and holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you for
ever. **Amen**

The Lost

*Think of them. You did not die as these
caged in an aircraft that did not return.
Whenever hearts have song and minds have peace
or in your eyes the prides of banners burn,
think of these who dreamed and loved as you,
and gave their laughter, gave their sun and snow,
their English grave blessed by their native dew
that you would live. To them this debt you owe.
Their glory shines about the sky for ever,
though in these things they left to you,
the ghost should haunt your field of ease and resting river.
Their lives are ended, but dreams are not yet lost
if you remember in your laugh and song
these boys who do not sing and laughed not long.*

Herbert Corby



Operational Sorties ED583

3rd February, 1943 – ED583 Lancaster III Delivered brand new to 100 Squadron, RAF Grimsby

Ops Date	Task	Code	Comment	Pilot
04/03/43	Mine Laying – St Nazaire	JA-U	Landed Scampton, Burst Tyre	F/L McGrath
08/03/43	Nuremberg	JA-U		F/L McGrath
11/03/43	Stuttgart	JA-U		F/L McGrath
26/03/43	Duisberg	JA-U		F/L McGrath
03/04/43	Essen	JA-U		F/L McGrath
04/04/43	Kiel	JA-U		F/L McGrath
09/04/43	Duisberg	JA-U		F/L McGrath
13/04/43	Spezia	JA-U	Group diverted Squadron to Wing	F/L McGrath
18/04/43	Spezia	JA-U		F/L McGrath
20/04/43	Stettin	JA-U		F/L McGrath
26/04/43	Duisberg	JA-U		F/L McGrath
30/04/43	Essen	JA-U	A.S.I – u/s	F/L McGrath
12/05/43	Duisberg	JA-U	Aborted – Port inner engine u/s	F/L McGrath
23/05/43	Dortmund	HW-U	Code change	F/L McGrath
25/05/43	Dusseldorf	HW-U		F/L McGrath
27/05/43	Essen	HW-U		F/L McGrath
29/05/43	Wuppertal	HW-U		F/O Gersekowski
11/06/43	Dusseldorf	HW-U		F/L McGrath
16/06/43	Cologne	HW-U	Only three engines	Sgt Thomas
21/06/43	Krefeld	HW-U		F/L Anderton
22/06/43	Mulheim	HW-U		F/L Anderton
24/06/43	Wuppertal	HW-U		Sgt Berry
28/06/43	Cologne	HW-U		F/S Rolland
03/07/43	Cologne	HW-K	Code change	F/S Rolland
08/07/43	Cologne	HW-K		F/L Anderton
09/07/43	Gelsenkirchen	HW-K		F/L Anderton

Ops Date	Task	Code	Comment	Pilot
12/07/43	Turin	HW-K		F/L Anderton
24/07/43	Hamburg	HW-K	Diverted - fog	S/L Bell
27/07/43	Hamburg	HW-K	Aborted – Instruments u/s	S/L Bell
30/07/43	Remscheid	HW-K	Aborted – Engine failure	P/O Gardiner
02/08/43	Hamburg	HW-K	Aborted – Starboard outer engine u/s	F/S Andrews
07/08/43	Genoa	HW-K		F/L Anderton
09/08/43	Mannheim	HW-K		F/L Anderton
10/08/43	Nuremberg	HW-K	Three engines	F/L Anderton
12/08/43	Milan	HW-K		Sgt Stow
15/08/43	Milan	HW-K		Sgt Stow
17/08/43	Peenemunde	HW-K		Sgt Stow
22/08/43	Leverkusen	HW-K		F/S Close
23/08/43	Berlin	HW-K	Overshoot	Sgt Stow
27/08/43	Nuremberg	HW-K		Sgt Stow
30/08/43	Munchen Gladbach	HW-K		Sgt Stow

Reproduced from the draft as found.

31/08/43	Berlin	HW-K		Sgt Stow
02/09/43	Minelaying	HW-K		F/S Sime
03/09/43	Berlin	HW-K		Sgt Stow
05/09/43	Mannheim	HW-K		Sgt Stow
06/09/43	Munich	HW-K		Sgt Brook
22/09/43	Hanover	HW-K		Sgt Stow
23/09/43	Mannheim	HW-K		P/O Stow
27/09/43	Hanover	HW-K		P/O Stow
29/09/43	Bochum	HW-K		P/O Stow
01/10/43	Hagen	HW-K		F/O Morgan
02/10/43	Munich	HW-K		P/O Dripps
04/10/43	Air Test	HW-K	Crashed Nth. Thoresby (Air Test) (8 killed)	F/O Morgan

LATE NEWS

PLANE CRASH AT NORTH THORESBY

A plane which crashed wrecked a Primitive Methodist chapel in the main street of the village of North Thoresby, near Grimsby, yesterday, and also demolished the adjoining bungalow of a Mrs. Markham, who was away from home at the time.

The machine burst into flames. Burning pieces fell on cottages in the neighbourhood as well as two haystacks, and at one time six buildings were burning. An N.F.S. party from Grimsby saved all the houses from serious damage with the exception of two opposite the chapel.

One of them, occupied by a Mr. Smith, who lives alone, was completely gutted. He was at work at the time. The other

cottage, the home of a Mr. and Mrs. Scott, was so badly damaged that it was left uninhabitable. Mrs. Scott, who was at the rear of the premises, was got out uninjured. No civilians were injured.

The History of Bomber Command

[Source: International Bomber Command Centre website. The IBCC is located 2.6 miles to the south of the centre of Lincoln and is close to the villages of Canwick and Bracebridge Heath]

During WWII, more than a million men and women served, or supported, Bomber Command. Originating in 60 nations across the world, they were united in their efforts to protect the freedom we enjoy today. The service included Aircrew, Ground Crew, Women's Auxiliary Air Force, Auxiliary Air Transport, Auxiliary Transport Services, NAAFI and others. The majority came from the UK and the Commonwealth, with the remainder from countries as diverse as Peru and Germany (many escaping from the Nazi regime), as well as other European refugees. Their service and sacrifices are remembered in the exhibition.

Of the 125,000 Aircrew who served, 72% were killed, seriously injured or taken Prisoner of War. More than 44% were killed whilst serving, giving the highest rate of attrition of any Allied unit. Each man was a volunteer, and their average age of death was only 23. The efforts of the RAF Bomber Command significantly changed the outcome of WWII. Their bombing sorties did great damage to the Axis powers industrial capacity. So concerned were the Axis powers about Bomber Command's capabilities that they permanently stationed more than 1,000 Luftwaffe aircraft for the purpose of fighting the bombers as well as more than 30,000 artillery pieces.

A million men and women supported Bomber Command on the ground. Their tasks included engineering, scientific developments, the loading of bombs, air traffic control, plotting, map creation and a myriad of other essential roles. They too suffered losses and are memorialised on the IBCC Walls of Names.

Bomber Command developed and pioneered new technologies that together with Allied contributions of both men and material allowed a huge expansion of bombing operations after 1942, contributing to the eventual victory in Europe. It was Bomber Command that delivered the world's first airborne humanitarian mission, Operation Manna, delivering over 7,000 tons of food parcels in 10 days over the west of Holland, where one million people were registered as starving. They also acted as a vital element to Operation Exodus that saw the repatriation of over 70,000 POW's from internment camps across Europe. In addition, they proved vital to the boosting of the morale of the Allies.

It is impossible to say enough about what these brave men and women achieved during the war or the price they paid for it. We owe it to them, and to ourselves, to remember them and their stories. Recognition must also be given to the civilians who suffered as a result of the Command's campaigns.

The Walls of Names at International Bomber Command Centre carries the names of almost 58,000 men and women who lost their lives whilst serving Bomber Command, the

only place in the world where you can bear witness to the sacrifices of this unit. This figure is higher than the number of people serving in today's RAF.

Since its inception, the International Bomber Command Centre has been working with veterans. Thanks to their astounding level of support, their stories have been recorded, and their documents and photos preserved.

Bomber County and the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Trail

[Source: lincolnshire.org].

Lincolnshire was home to 49 airfields during World War II – more than any other county.

The average distance between these airfields was 7.5 miles, with bomber stations typically taking up approximately 700 acres. The county was at the forefront of the allied air offensive and was home to 1 Group and 5 Group of the Bomber Command of the Royal Air Force.

The Lincolnshire-based bombers contributed heavily to many crucial attacks in the war against Germany, including:

- The Battle of the Barges (August 1940)
- The Augsburg Raid (April 17, 1942)
- Operation Robinson (October 17, 1942)
- Operation Millennium (May 30, 1942)
- The Dams Raid 'Dambusters' (May 16, 1943)
- The Battle of the Ruhr (1943-1944)
- The Numerburg Raid (March 30, 1944)
- The Battle of Berlin (1944-1945)
- The Bochum Raid (November 4, 1944)

As well as being home to Bomber Command, Lincolnshire also had several fighter airfields, the most important of which were RAF Digby and RAF Kirton in Lindsey.

The Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Trail is a fascinating journey that highlights Lincolnshire's long and illustrious relationship with the Royal Air Force.

RAF Scampton Heritage Centre – celebrates the history of the RAF Scampton, home to the iconic 617 (Dambusters) Squadron, which, led by Squadron Leader Guy Gibson, flew a daring raid from Scampton to bomb the dams of the German Rhur Valley in 1943; a reformed 617 Squadron which flew Vulcan bombers during the Cold War; and The Red Arrows. Entry to the museum is free, but you must pre-book before you visit as RAF Scampton is a working airbase.

St John the Baptist Church, Scampton – the graveyard of Scampton Parish Church has a military section for aircrew from RAF Scampton. Unusually, there are also the graves of 8 Luftwaffe crew who died when their aircraft crashed nearby.

RAF Wickenby Memorial Museum – this tiny museum tells the story of RAF Wickenby, from its inception in 1941 to its closure in 1956. During the Second World War, it was home to 12 and 626 Squadrons. Post war it was home to 92 and 93 (Mustang) Squadrons. More poignantly, it remembers the 1,491 aircrew who failed to return to RAF Wickenby and nearby airfields during active service. RAF Wickenby Memorial Museum is located less than 10 miles north of Lincoln, off the A158 Lincoln – Skegness Road.

RAF Waddington Heritage Centre – learn about the history of RAF Waddington from its beginnings in 1916, to its current role as the nation's hub of airborne intelligence systems. Entry to the museum is free, but by appointment only. As with RAF Scampton, RAF Waddington is an operational airbase.

Waddington Aircraft Viewing Enclosure (WAVE) – RAF Waddington has a viewing enclosure located off the A15 opposite the airbase.

Waddington Air Show – is the RAF's largest air show and features some of the most spectacular flying displays you are ever likely to see! Aircraft from around the world take part in this two day spectacular held annually in July, as do Lincolnshire's very own Red Arrows and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

RAF Digby Sector Operations Room – located in a World War 2 bunker, the Sector Ops Room replicates a typical day during the Battle of Britain. Free Admission. Open: Sunday May – October. Guided Tour at 11am. No need to book

Scopwick Cemetery – RAF Digby's war dead are buried in the nearby village of Scopwick, including Pilot Officer John Gillespie Magee Jr, an American who had joined the Royal Canadian Air Force. Pilot Officer Magee wrote the world famous poem 'High Flight' which has since become the unofficial poem of aviators. The words of 'High Flight' appear on the headstones of many aviators and astronauts buried at Arlington National Cemetery in the USA. Pilot Officer Magee was killed 3 months after he wrote the poem, at the age of 19.

Cranwell Aviation Heritage Centre – located near the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell. This small aviation centre tells the story of RAF Cranwell, from its early days as a Royal Navy air service base to the present day. There are some great interactive exhibits including a flight simulator, navigation, aircraft recognition, supply drop, and propeller development. Free admission.

Woodhall Spa has long links with the RAF and several excellent aviation museums and memorials are to be found nearby.

There are two spectacular memorials located in Woodhall Spa's Royal Square on Station Road. **The Dambuster's Memorial** is dedicated to the brave airmen of 617 Squadron who lost their lives on the famous Dambusters Raid in 1943 and depicts the breaching of those dams in the German Ruhr Valley. The **617 Squadron Memorial** is dedicated to the air and ground crew of 617 Squadron who have given their lives for their country since 1945. The memorial is a black granite sculpture that reflects the shape of both the Vulcan and Tornado bombers flown by the squadron.

Thorpe Camp Visitor Centre was formerly the Officers' and Sergeants' Mess at RAF Woodhall Spa. It is now a museum depicting the history of RAF Woodhall Spa and the squadrons based there during WW2. Look out for the superb re-enactment weekends it occasionally holds. Located at Tattershall Thorpe, en route to RAF Conningsby.

Battle of Britain Memorial Flight at RAF Conningsby - guided tours of the hangar featuring the iconic Spitfire, Lancaster, Hurricane, Chipmunk and Dakota aeroplanes.

The Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre at East Kirkby, is the largest WW2 Bomber Command airfield in the UK. Here you can experience the atmosphere of a Second World War airfield (including the sights, sounds and smells). Award-winning displays, friendly & knowledgeable staff, and lots of great events happening throughout the year.

'High Flight' by John Gillespie Magee

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds, – and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of – wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.

Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or ever eagle flew –
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of God.

On of the most well-known poems of WWII The writer of 'High Flight' was John Gillespie Magee Jr., a Royal Canadian Air Force fighter pilot. He wrote the sonnet 'High Fight' only a few months before his death. He was killed in December of 1941, shot down while flying his Spitfire. This poem was included in a letter that Magee wrote to his parents in September of that same year.



Dave Barnett



Tim Stone

