



DICK'S WAR

Memories from my father, *Grand Beach*,
Richard Frederick Marshall-Hardy,
better known as Dick.



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Memories from my father, Richard Frederick Marshall-Hardy, better known as Dick. This is his story as told to me, Richard Marshall-Hardy, at intervals over many years, supported by his flying log books, my mother's three diaries recording trips to North Africa and information discovered on the internet.

November 2020


CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY OF BIRTH
Pursuant to the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1953

B. Cert.
S.R.

Registration District <u>North Bierley</u>										
1919 . Birth in the Sub-district of <u>Shipley</u> in the <u>County of York W.R.</u>										
Columns:— 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10*										
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name, and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description, and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration
52	Twentieth May 1919 Hirst Royd Nab Lane U.D.	Richard Frederick Marshall	Boy	Eric Marshall Hardy	Annie Elizabeth Sophia Hardy formerly Weeks	Lithographic Designer	E. Marshall Hardy Father Hirst Royd Nab Lane	Twenty ninth May 1919	Sydney Booth	
									<i>Registrar.</i>	

*See note overleaf.

Certified to be a true copy of an entry in a register in my custody.

R. S. Sangreaves

..... Superintendent Registrar

27th October 1978

..... Date

CAUTION:—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this certificate, or (2) uses a falsified certificate as true, knowing it to be false, is liable to prosecution.

Dick was christened with three forenames: Richard Frederick Marshall. The 'Marshall' was the maiden name of Dick's grandmother and given to all her children including Eric, Dick's father, after she married Alfred Hardy and subsequently to Eric's sons Dick and Pat. It was Eric who, in later years, hyphenated the surname to Marshall-Hardy.

THE EARLY YEARS

Born at Hirst Royd, Nab Lane, in Shipley, Yorkshire, Dick lived with his parents Eric and Daisy, and his younger brother, Pat.

Eric was a successful business man who ran his own advertising agency in Bradford. In 1924, when Dick was 5, Eric moved the family to Camden, north west London, to work for Sandeman Brothers, the sherry and port company.

Eric was also a keen fisherman and wrote 'Angling Ways' produced in many editions and one of several books he wrote on fishing, editions of which I (Richard) have.

Dick and Pat went to the William Ellis School for boys, originally located in Gospel Oak then relocated to Highgate, London which backed onto Hampstead Heath. He and his brother Pat were then withdrawn following his parent's separation and divorce in 1935. Dick was 16. He got a job working on Fleet Street in the small ads department of County Newspapers. He was bored with the job but saw an ad from the RAF who were recruiting Wireless Operators!



Dick, Pat and Auntie Alice,
Daisy's twin sister.



Dick with his mother Daisy
and brother Pat (in arms).



Pat and Dick.

THE EARLY YEARS

He applied and went for an interview on the Kings Road where the RAF tried to persuade him to become a cook! He declined and from May to August 1937 he was based at No 1 RTW Uxbridge for induction training. Then, from August 1937 to August 1938 at No 1 Electrical and Wireless School Cranwell for wireless operator training mostly learning morse code. From August 1938 to January 1939 at the age of 18 he attended the School of Air Navigation, RAF Manston, Kent. Meanwhile, his mother moved back to Morecambe with brother Pat. Dick did not see his father for a long time.

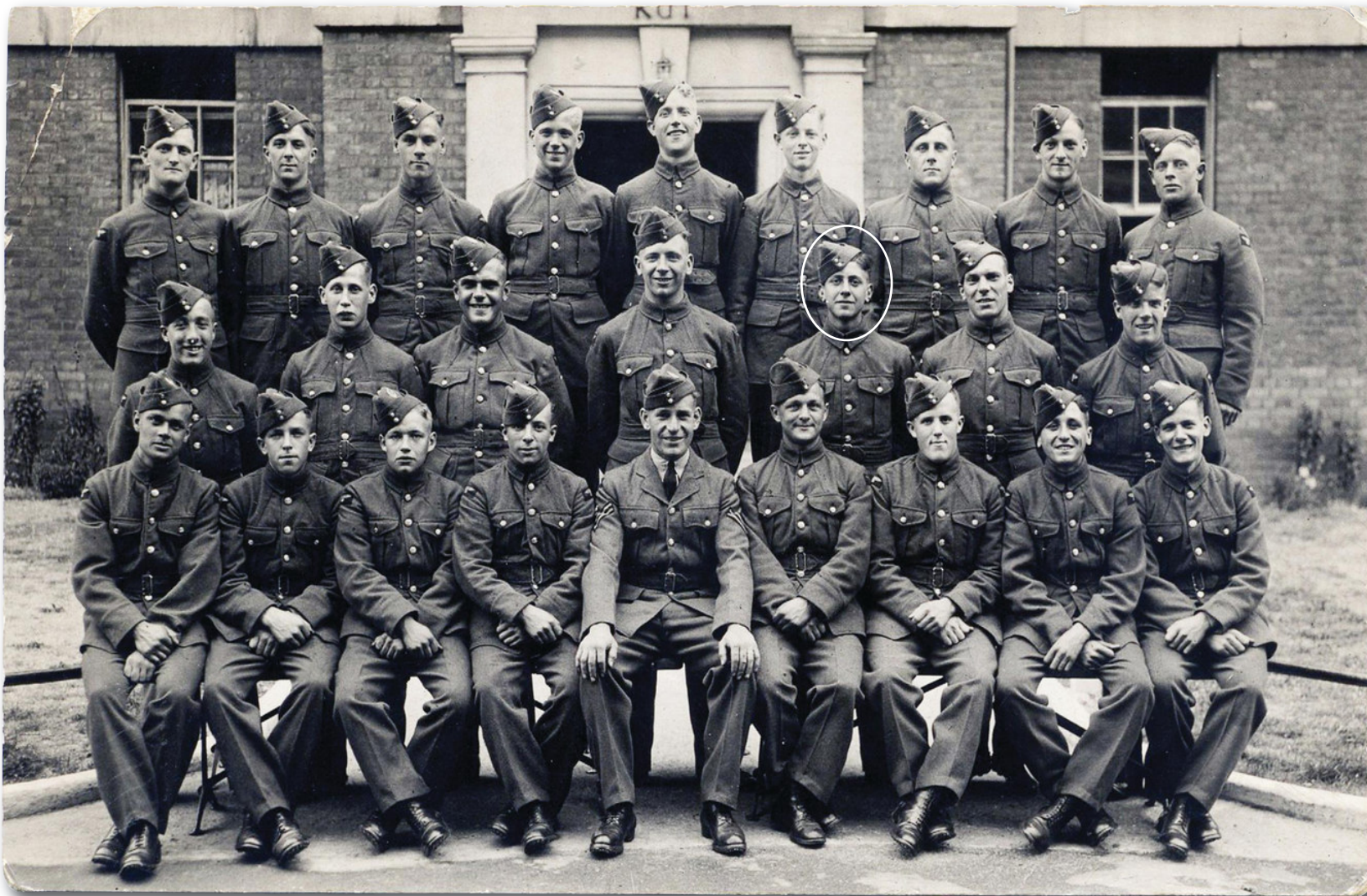


Dick with his mother Daisy, Morecambe.



Dick, Morecambe beach.

JOINING THE RAF



Above From May to August 1937 Dick was based at No 1 RTW Uxbridge for induction training.

The extract to the right is from a Corporal EF Marsh's recorded memories. He was at RTW No 1 Uxbridge at the same time as Dick. Courtesy of the BBC.

The first thing was to collect our uniforms and equipment. We had to mark all our kit with our number, this had to be in the right place so that when the item was folded the number could be seen. We also had to stamp our knife, fork and spoon and our identity disc which was worn around the neck.

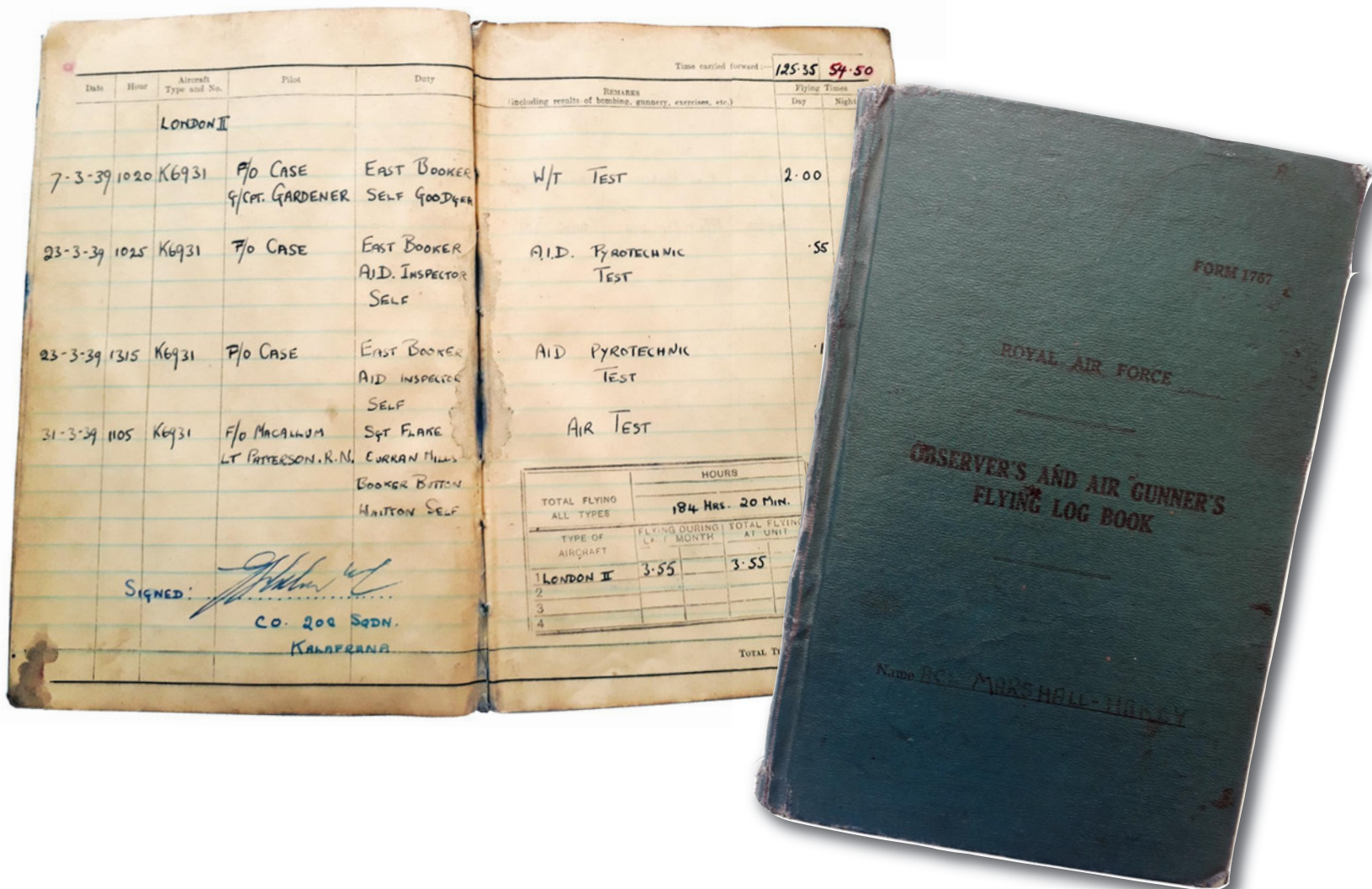
Then came the job of Blanchoing all our webbing belt, bullet pouches, straps and back packs. That was not the end of it – there was your boots and bayonet scabbard to spit and polish. However hard you tried you could never please the NCOS!

MALTA 1939-1940

According to the audio diary he recorded in the hospice just before he died, Dick said he was posted to Malta in January 1938. He travelled by troopship. The first entry in his Observer's and Air Gunner's

Flying Log Book is dated 7 March 1939 when, with 202 Squadron (Flying Boats), he flew in a Saro London Mk II from Kalafrana, Malta, for 2 hours on a W/T (wireless transmission) test. Over the next

6 months and a series of pyrotechnic, air, engine, circuits and bumps, air to ground, air to sea, air to air Lewis Gun Practice, and camera gun, he qualified on 23 November 1939 as a Wireless Operator (Aircrew).





MINELO DRES

ASK FOR PORTSMOUTH UNITED

H. BERNARD & SONS

112 -MALTA- SLIEMA LANDING STAGE.

MALTA 1939-1940

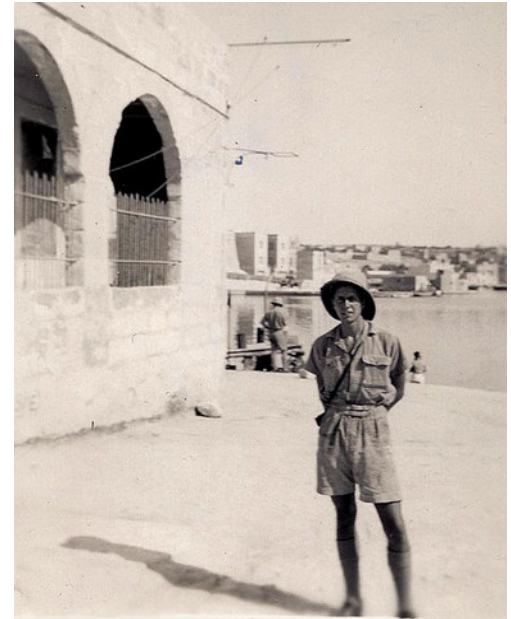
202 Squadron was classed as Flying Boat Squadron, but initially was only equipped with Fairey IIID seaplanes. Flying boats eventually arrived in May 1935, when Supermarine Scapas replaced the Fairey seaplanes and in their turn, these were replaced by Saro Londons. Just prior to December 1937, the squadron had actually begun anti-submarine operations in the Mediterranean to protect neutral shipping from Italian submarines as a result of the Spanish Civil War.

During the Munich Crisis in September 1938 (cession to Germany of the Sudeten German territory of Czechoslovakia) the squadron moved to Alexandria and then, shortly after the outbreak of war in 1939, it moved to Gibraltar.

Responsible for patrolling the Straits of Gibraltar and the approaches to it from both the Atlantic and Mediterranean, the squadron was re-equipped with Catalinas in April 1941. It also used Swordfish seaplanes from September 1940 to June 1941 and Sunderlands from December 1941 to September 1942.



'On the slip-way, where the boats go. Windy.'



Strada Reale/Republic Street, Valletta.

MALTA 1939-1940



The Gut, Valletta.



Grand Harbour, Valletta.

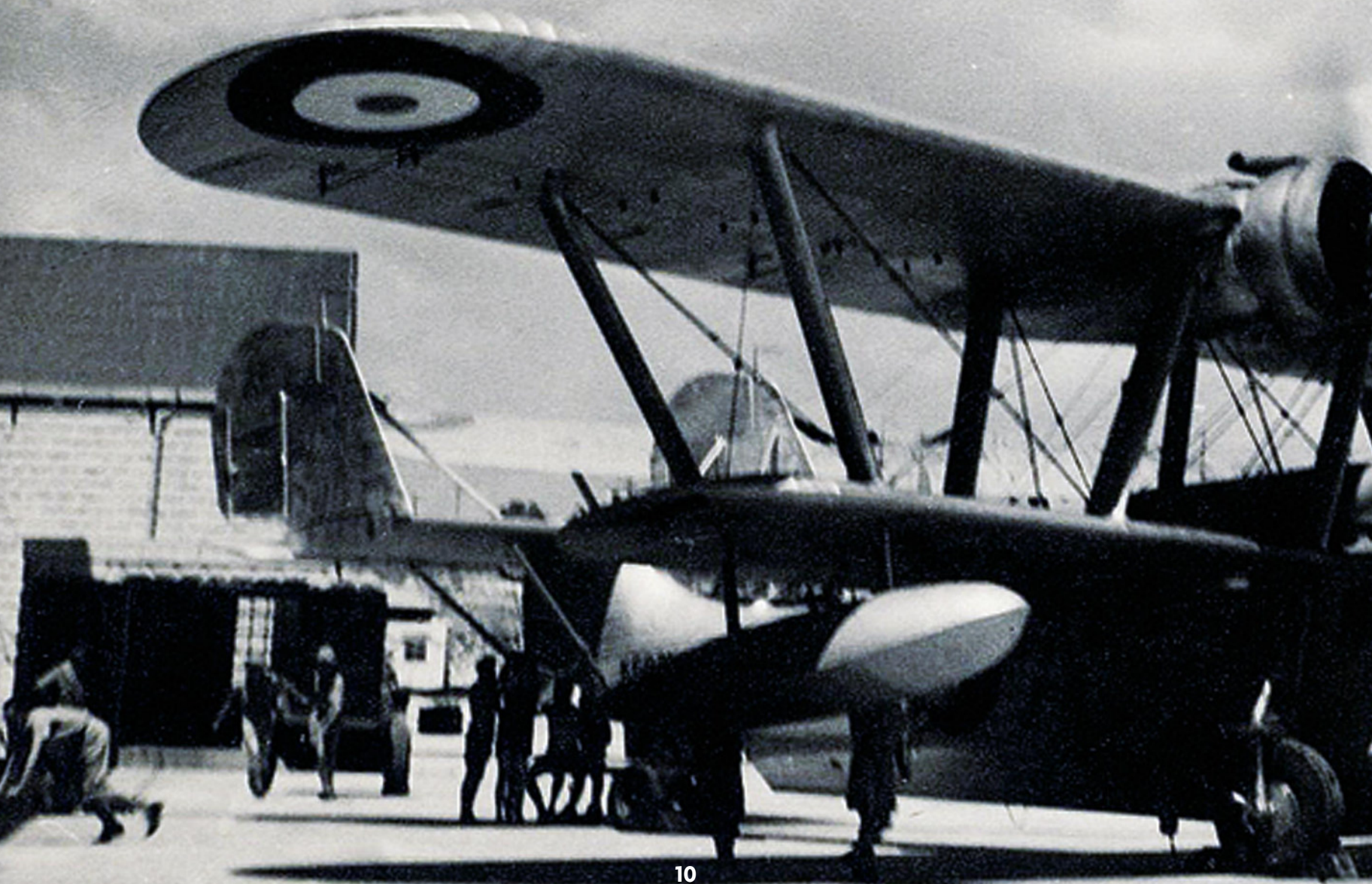


Dockyard Creek, Valletta.

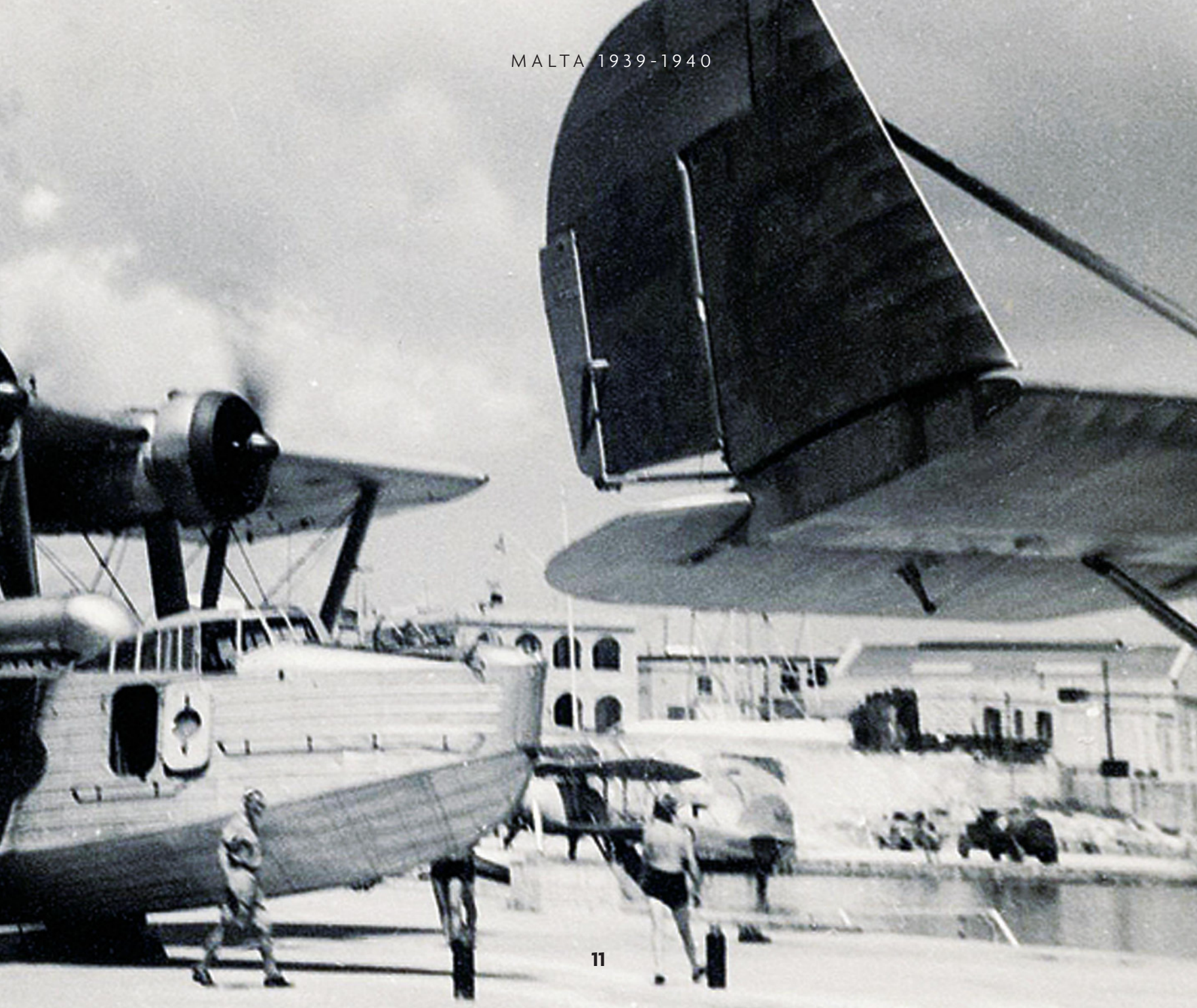


Floriana, Porte Reale.

MALTA 1939-1940



MALTA 1939-1940



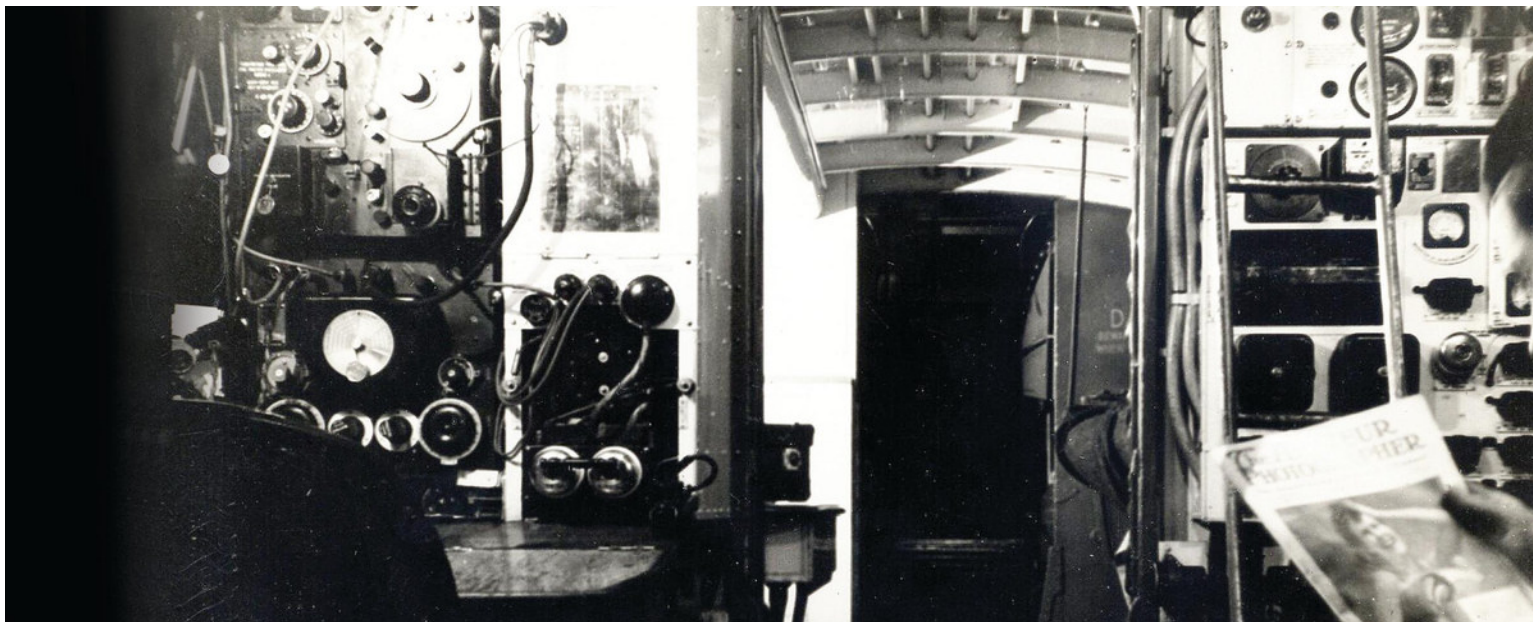
MALTA 1939-1940



Lewis gun practice.



Saro London Mk II at Kalafrana.



Dick's office – the wireless operator's station.

MALTA 1939-1940



Dick loading something!



Destroyer D88 HMS Wren, entering Grand Harbour.



HMS Ark Royal, entering Grand Harbour.



Saro London Mk IIs at Kalafrana.



Destroyer D98, Grand Harbour.

All previous flights had been short (15 minutes to an hour) but on 9 September 1939 Dick flew for over 6 hours from Malta to Bougie (now Béjaïa) in Algeria, then on 10 September for 5 hours from Bougie to Gibraltar. As far as I can see there was a Naval base in Bougie used by the RAF during the war. On September the 11th they provided anti-submarine convoy cover for 5 hours.

Between September 1939 and January 1940, Dick was based mostly in Gibraltar. Initially they were billeted in the Bristol Hotel, but because there weren't enough hotel beds, they had to take turns sleeping in shared beds until they were moved to the Garrison Library, which was converted into an 'other ranks mess'.

Dick flew a total of 445 hours, mostly on anti-submarine patrols. On 16 and 17 October, along with Flight Lieutenant Farrar, Pilot Officer Fitzpatrick, Dick and Corporal Robinson as crew, flew along the North African coast from Gibraltar to Arzeu to Bougie to Bizerta to Malta. On the return flight, due to bad weather, they force landed at Wadi el Kebir, Algeria, arriving back in Gibraltar on the 26th.



GIBRALTAR 1939-1940



GIBRALTAR 1939-1940

More anti-submarine patrols and convoy escorts followed. Although Christmas 1939 was spent in Gibraltar, Dick flew back to Malta arriving on New Year's Eve. I wonder what the party was like!

January, February, March 1940 were much the same – anti-submarine patrols and convoy escorts. On 5 April the same crew flew Gibraltar to Bougie to Marseille to Biscarosse (in occupied France) and on to Calshot, England on 7 April. I wonder what they were doing in England? 14 days leave? Dick said they got 6 weeks leave every year.

On 21 April 1940 they made the return flight, but due to engine failure force landed on a lake near Bages, Pyrénées-Orientales, France. There I believe they were met by a French Gendarme, but following repairs, were allowed to take off back to Gibraltar arriving on 24 April.

On 11 July 1940 following yet more anti-submarine patrols and convoy escorts the same crew flew from Gibraltar to Mt Batten near Plymouth then to Calshot, a 14 hour flight over hostile territory. They returned to Gibraltar on 19 July.



Béjaïa formerly Bougie, Algeria. Sea Otter on left.



Checking up on stragglers!



Force landed near Bages, Pyrénées-Orientales

GIBRALTAR 1939-1940



GIBRALTAR 1939-1940

Between the 19 July and mid-September the patrols continued. Then, on 14 September 1940 their Saro England set off at first light to search for enemy war ships that were reported passing through the Gibraltar straights during the night. At 12.30hrs whilst off Casablanca at about 12000 feet the tail gunner shouted "fighters beneath us". Their aircraft was attacked by six Curtiss (Vichy French) fighters. Both Canadian pilots, Flight Lieutenant Bruce MacCullum and Pilot Officer Edwin Charles Minchington, were killed. Dick, and the other crew members (the rear gunner and flight engineer), survived.

According to the recording Dick made this is what I have pieced together: Although the flying boat aircraft they were in was armed with Lewis machine guns, the defensive tactics then, when flying over sea and when attacked by fast fighter aircraft, was to fly low just above the waves and out to sea hoping the fighters wouldn't follow. This didn't work, and their aircraft was machine-gunned. The port engine caught on fire, the left rudder was shot away. The seaplane hit the water and flipped over onto its back.



Curtiss H75 with French Armee de l'Air markings, similar to the aircraft which shot Dick down..

Dick was seated at the radio console and smashed his head against this on impact. It knocked him out. When he came to he was upside down, with water coming in through the bullet holes as the plane sank. Dick had the good sense to swim down to the middle turret and escape to the surface. The other crew members had also managed to get out and were hanging on to the only part of the aircraft still floating – one of the wing tip floats – with a lot of burning petrol floating on the water. The rest of the seaplane sank. They were 40 miles off the North African coast in the Atlantic. He told me that a pod of dolphins came to inspect them. The men thought they were sharks because a crew member had an injured bleeding foot.

They had been in the water for 4 or 5 hours when a Vichy French submarine surfaced. In the submarine conning tower

stood a French officer dressed in an immaculate white uniform. They were taken on board and given dry clothes.

The Curtiss fighters must have radioed the position of the crash and they were rescued. I have often speculated what went through my father's mind whilst they were floating in the sea with very little chance of rescue and survival. Years later, not long before he died, he said to me that the rescue was a miracle, and that every day after he was saved was a blessing.

The following is an extract I found from 12oclockhigh.net, an online forum:

Brian: A London flying boat K9682 of 202 Squadron Gibraltar was shot down by a Vichy fighter off Casablanca on 14 September 1940. The crew survived and all but two were later rescued by another London from Gibraltar, including the skipper Flt Lt McCullum and Cpl Simpson, who suffered a fractured fibula, but two airmen (Graham and Marshall) were picked up by a French submarine (Vichy?).

Can anyone add details? If it was a Vichy sub I assume the two airmen were interned?

Icare9: Geoff's Search Engine indicates that two crew did not survive: Bruce MacCullum and Edwin Charles Minchinton.

Brian: I note that two of the aircrew were picked up by the French submarine *Amazoné* – was this a Vichy craft?

JCE: It surely was as it was based in Casablanca harbour which was under Vichy control.

Brian: So the two airmen Graham and Marshall were interned?

Chesterflyer: Yes, Graham and Marshall were taken onboard the *SS Massilia* and interrogated by the French. They were then interned at Mediouna.

Date	Hour	Aircraft Type and No.	Pilot	Duty	REMARKS (including results of bombing, gunnery, exercises, etc.)	Time carried forward: <input type="text"/>	
						Flying Times Day	Night
7-9-40	1900		F/LT MACCULLAM P/O MINCHINTON	CREW SELF	MALTA TO GIBRALTAR	10:00	4:00
14-9-40	1230		F/LT MACCULLAM P/O MINCHINTON	CREW SELF	A/S PATROL - PHOTO RECON OF CASABLANCA A/C ATTACKED AND SHOT DOWN OFF CASA BLANCA BY TWO CURTIS (FRENCH) FIGHTERS. BOTH PILOTS KILLED, CREW P.O.W. IN MOROCCO		3:50
						TOTAL TIME	

"SEAPLANE SHOT DOWN"
 Vichy, Monday.
 According to an official statement, a British seaplane fired on a French fighter patrol near Casablanca (Morocco), and was shot down in flames by French airmen on Saturday. Three occupants of the plane were rescued, adds the official statement.
 —British United Press.

Observer

BRITISH MACHINE SHOT DOWN BY FRENCH
 It is officially announced at Gibraltar (says Reuter) that an aircraft from a squadron stationed at Gibraltar failed to return from a patrol on September 14. Three members of the crew are safe and have been interned in neutral territory. The captain and the second pilot are missing.
 From Tangier it is reported that a British seaplane was shot down by a French machine off the Moroccan coast. Two pilots were killed, but three gunners were picked up by a French submarine.
 Casablanca

Daily Herald

French Down R.A.F. 'Plane
 A British flying boat has been shot down by a French 'plane off the Moroccan coast. Two pilots were killed, but three gunners were picked up by a French submarine, and are prisoners at Casablanca.

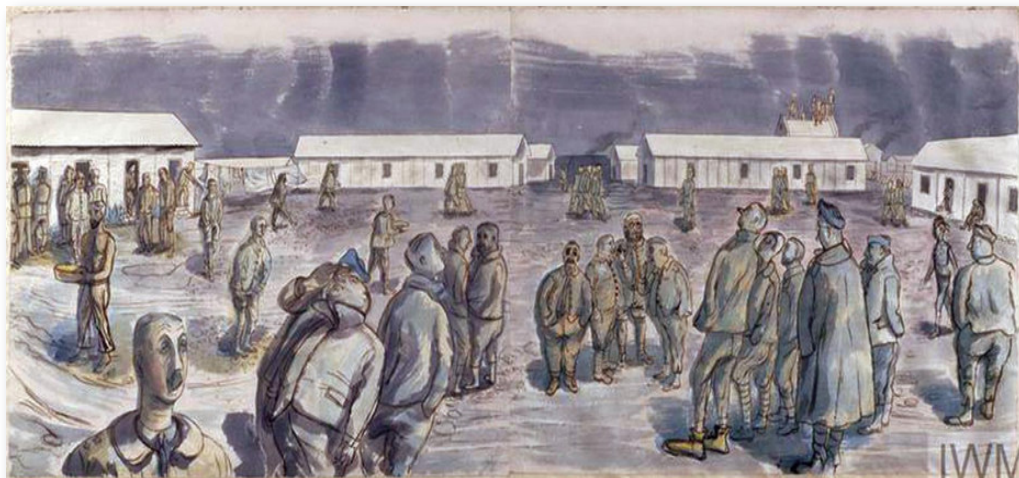
Daily Mail

PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942

The submarine took them to Casablanca. They were held briefly and interrogated before being transferred some 16 kilometres in-land to Mediouna internment camp on the outskirts of Casablanca. According to Mum's 1966 diary: *'Dick was there for 4 months. Building in ruins in 1966.'*

Now, this is where the story gets a bit woolly. Dad loaned me a book called 'War in a String Bag' written by Commander Charles Lamb. 'String Bags' were the Fleet Air Arm's Swordfish, by 1940 an almost obsolete bi-plane which carried torpedoes. Lamb was shot down and also became a POW in North Africa and followed more or less the same route from capture to internment as Dick. So, some of this is based on Lamb's book, as well as a diary written by an unknown Fleet Air Arm officer*, who ended up in Laghouat POW camp and knew Dick. At some point Dick was transferred from Mediouna to a temporary POW camp in a disused French Foreign Legion fort in Agdz down the Draa valley. In Mum's diary of their trip to Morocco in 1966 she writes *'This [Agdz] was where Dick lived for four months. Saw his house in the fort.'*

* see Appendix page 49



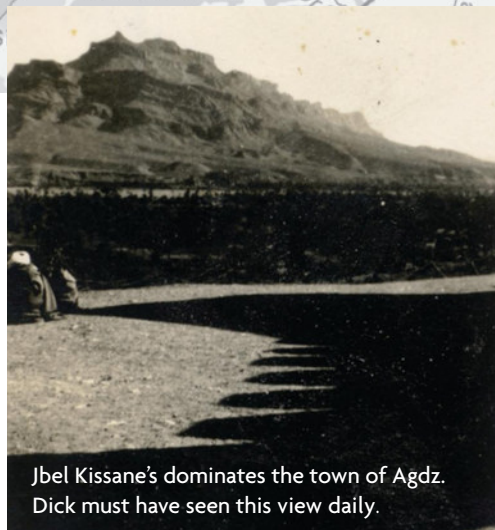
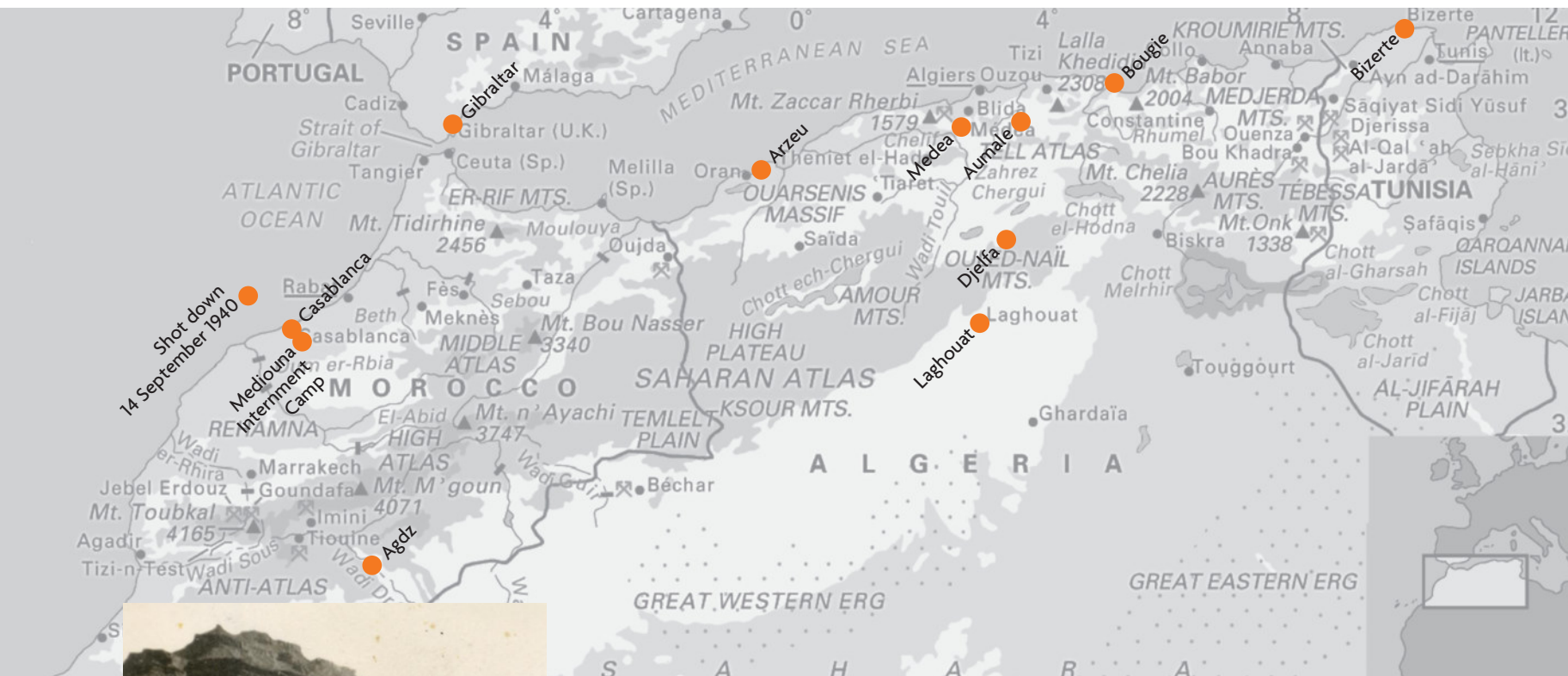
Mediouna Internment Camp with figures standing around the central yard.



Hand written on reverse: Agdz 9 Feb 42.
To Dick Marshall, Laghouat, Algeria. Paul.

The story told to me was that Dick and the other surviving crew members were escorted by two armed Arab guards by public transport (bus) from where they were held in Mediouna near Casablanca, via Marrakesh towards Ouarzazate in the High Atlas mountains. When they reached the foothills the Tizi n'Tichka pass over the High Atlas mountains was snow bound and they had to wait for the road to be cleared. They had no money and only the clothes they stood up in. A Russian surveyor who was working in the area put them up in a local hotel and fed them for two weeks until the pass had been cleared of snow and the bus could get through down the Draa Valley to Agdz.

PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942



Jbel Kissane's dominates the town of Agdz.
Dick must have seen this view daily.

Hand written on reverse: Best souvenir from Agdz
9 Feb 42. Paul. To Dick Marshall, Laghouat, Algeria.

Somewhere in all this Dick also spent time in detention camps in Medea and Aumale, before going on to Laghouat.

From Mum's 1973 diary of their third visit to Morocco and Algeria:
Sunday 1 April 1973 *'...Medea has grown into a very big place, but we eventually found a little square that Dick recognised, and [where] he had lived'.
'...we went to Aumale where Dick was for a little while. They wouldn't let us in there, but we went round a back way and managed to get a photo of the building where he had lived.'*

Extract from Commander Charles Lamb's book 'War in a String Bag':

Aumale: Prior to the completion of Laghouat, prisoners were moved from a small boarding house in Algiers to Aumale. In Aumale some 60 men from all services existed in the top storey of a huge barn like building above a lunatic asylum for Arab females. The entire ground floor was occupied by these unfortunate ladies, who were incurably mad. At the back of the building was 'la douche' – four cold water taps above stone troughs. Sanitary arrangements were three holes in the floor of an outhouse above three metal drums which were meant to be emptied weekly. Because the majority of men were suffering from dysentery, sandfly fever and bouts of jaundice they needed emptying daily. The building was surrounded by a high wall with Arab guards about 20 yards apart. Escapees would be shot at once. Food was ersatz 'coffee' made from date stones. Dark blue in colour, it was warm and sweet and after a few weeks was palatable!

The same did not apply to the food. Twice daily, large urns of some unspeakable mess were dumped on the floor at the top of the stairs. When this pigswill was brought, the Arab porters were always accompanied by the Vichy-French duty officer. The commandant at Aumale was an out and out sadist who liked to watch starving men scramble for the obnoxious food commenting – "Les Anglais, comme les cochons". Most internees had a private supply of food via a black market and a legitimate market once a week organised by the Vichy-French where cigarettes and alcohol were sold at a handsome profit for the French. Internees had a monthly credit of 1000 francs per person paid directly to the French by the American Vice-Consul. Purchases were deducted from this credit. Clothes and footwear were commodities we could not buy at all. As a result the internees were a scruffy lot, many of whom went about bare-footed. The beds were covered with grey calico sheets changed once a month. These were infested with bed-bugs which in turn infested clothing. The solution was to burn out the bugs with a lit cigarette.

Laghouat: When the 'Le Camp des Internées Britanniques Laghouat' was completed by adding barbed-wire fencing and machine gun posts, the Aumale prisoners were transported by train to Djelfa, the most southerly point in Algeria which could be reached by rail. Deep in the Sahara, for the last hour in transit the train rattled across open desert with no sign of life. The men were then packed in lorries and driven a further 75 miles south through unending vistas of sand. Escape was impossible. Djelfa was the nearest water supply, 100 kilometers across the desert. Should anybody be successful in getting to Djelfa and to the railway station they would immediately stand out and be reported. The camp was guarded by a battalion of Tirailleurs, Algerian Infantry, and the 1er Régiment de Spahis, the best cavalry men in the French Army. All who attempted escape were returned by the Spahis, generally in grim circumstances and given 15 days solitary in Arab cells although it was generally necessary for them to recuperate in hospital.

PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942



Le Camp des Internées Britanniques, Laghouat.

The quarters were designed for Arabs and had been used by them for decades. Men were housed in single-storey dormitories with a plaque saying 'Vingt-cinq hommes' [25 men] but on arrival there were at least 40 men per dorm. During the year the number swelled to at least double that when conditions became unspeakable and survival problematical.

Every British prisoner was issued with a litre of Algerian very coarse rough wine each day (the umpteenth press, and the left overs after the French had received their ration). Water was strictly rationed and was unfit for drinking until it was boiled. The daily food ration consisted of one loaf of bread, no bigger than a saucer, shared between four, blue ersatz coffee in the morning and one meal – some sort of ghastly soup – per day. Water for washing only came on at 5.30am for half an hour. There were three drums which are 'the heads' for over 1000 men.

Three barbed-wire fences surrounded the three internal sides of the compound, from a long outer wall at the back, parallel with each other, and eleven feet high.

Between them were rolls of hooped wire, piled on top of each other. Machine-gun and searchlight platforms were mounted at strategic points all around the barricade and along the wall and at least one on the roof of each building.

Escapes were attempted. A Sergeant Belcher had found a spot beneath the wire out of sight of the searchlights. He crawled through on his face whilst a noisy sing-song diversion took place on the other side of the compound. Belcher stayed out longer than anybody else. He stowed under a van and made it all the way to Djelfa. But after walking for days he took off his boots to relieve his swollen feet before going to sleep under a railway bridge and when he woke they had been stolen. Without boots he was unable to continue and gave himself up.

When a cellar, unknown to the guards, was discovered under one of the buildings, a tunnel was started. Over a period of 7 months the tunnel was dug 15 feet below ground, 39 inches high and 39 inches wide and 68 yards long.



Barbed wire fence around the camp.



Machine gun post on roof.

PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942

Friday 30 March 1973 *'Dick tried to phone the Captain at the Caserne [the ex-military fort used as Laghouat Internee Camp] where he [Dick] had lived as a prisoner to see if we could go inside. After several attempts he gave up, but a little later a call came from the Captain and he said yes at 12 o'clock. We got all changed and at 12 o'clock two Lieutenants turned up and said would we go at three pm, but at 3pm we couldn't get in either so we gave up and decided he meant no after all!*

From Mum's 1973 diary of their third visit to Morocco and Algeria.



PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942

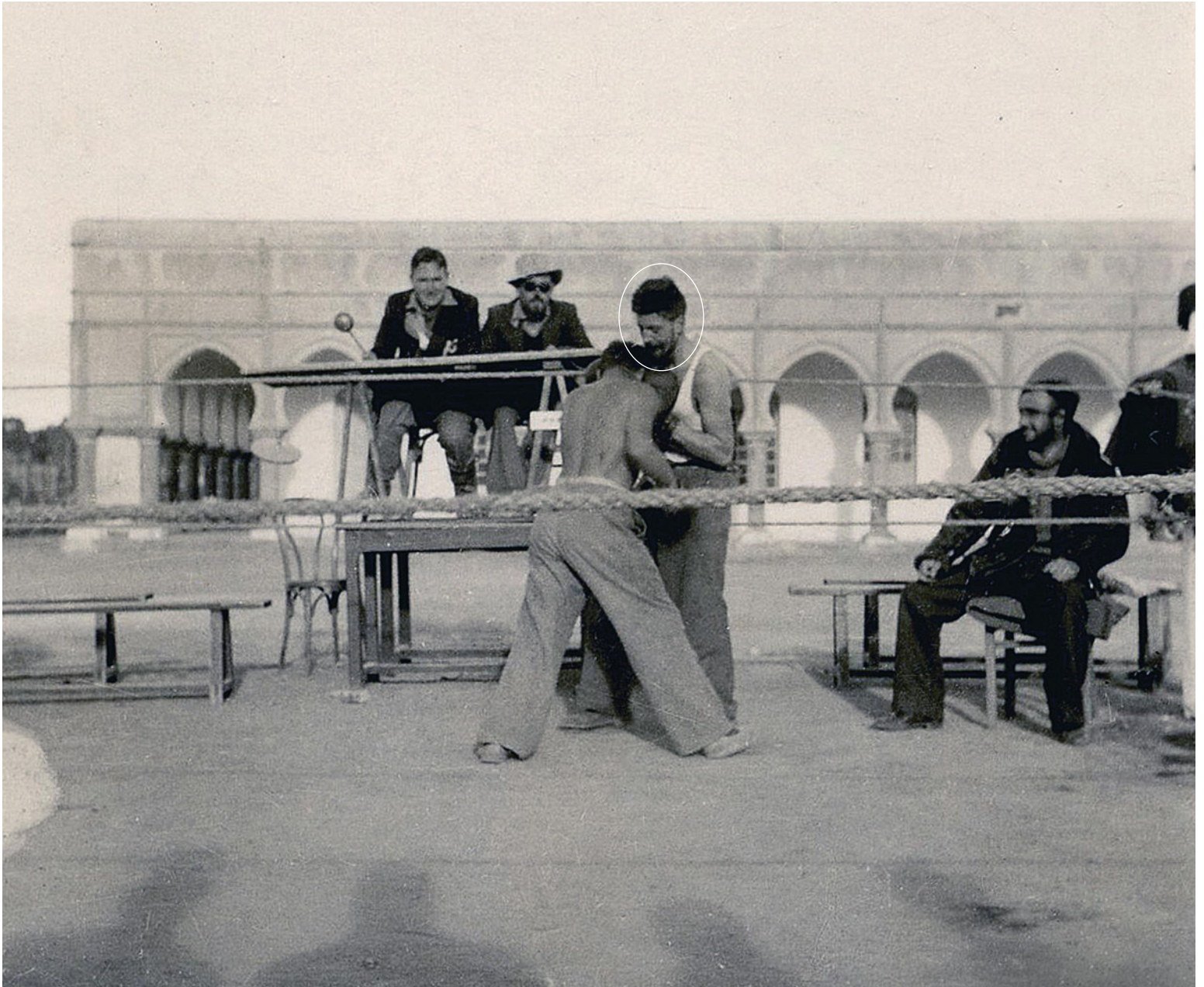
A team of experts were kept busy full time making candles and ventilators and sharpening digging tools. Others were busy forging passes, identity cards, travel permits and making compasses. Because communication home by telegram was still possible Charles Lamb had devised a code for sending messages. An idea was formed to land an aircraft near the camp. There was plenty of room outside the oasis for quite big aircraft, like Beaufighters, to land if properly organised. Initially one aircraft, but then a Squadron of Beaufighters, would fly from Malta to Laghouat and rescue the escapees coming out of the tunnel. Unfortunately the officer, a close friend of Lamb, based in Malta and responsible for organising the flight, was shot down and killed. A combination of this, and rising mental disorder amongst the prisoners forced Lamb to cancel the aircraft. Never-the-less, having drawn lots, 29 men made their escape through the tunnel. The following morning at Appel the escape was discovered. 29 men had taken less than a quarter of an hour to file through into the night, but all were back in Laghouat within 24 hours.



PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942



PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942



Dick (on the right facing) in the boxing ring.

PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942



LAGHOVAT DECEMBER 1941

BOXING IN PROGRESS

MYSELF WAITING FOR NEXT
FIGHT AT FAR SIDE OF
RING SITTING THIRD FROM
TREE WITH BLANKET ROUND
SHOULDERS

TO MRS. E. MARSHALL-HARDY
20 SOLBY GROVE
BARE



LAGHOVAT DECEMBER '41

GROUP OF FELLOWS WHO
TOOK PART IN THE BOXING
COMPETITION.

MYSELF ONE FROM LEFT
IN LAST ROW BUT ONE

TO MRS. E. MARSHALL-
HARDY
20 SOLBY GROVE
BARE

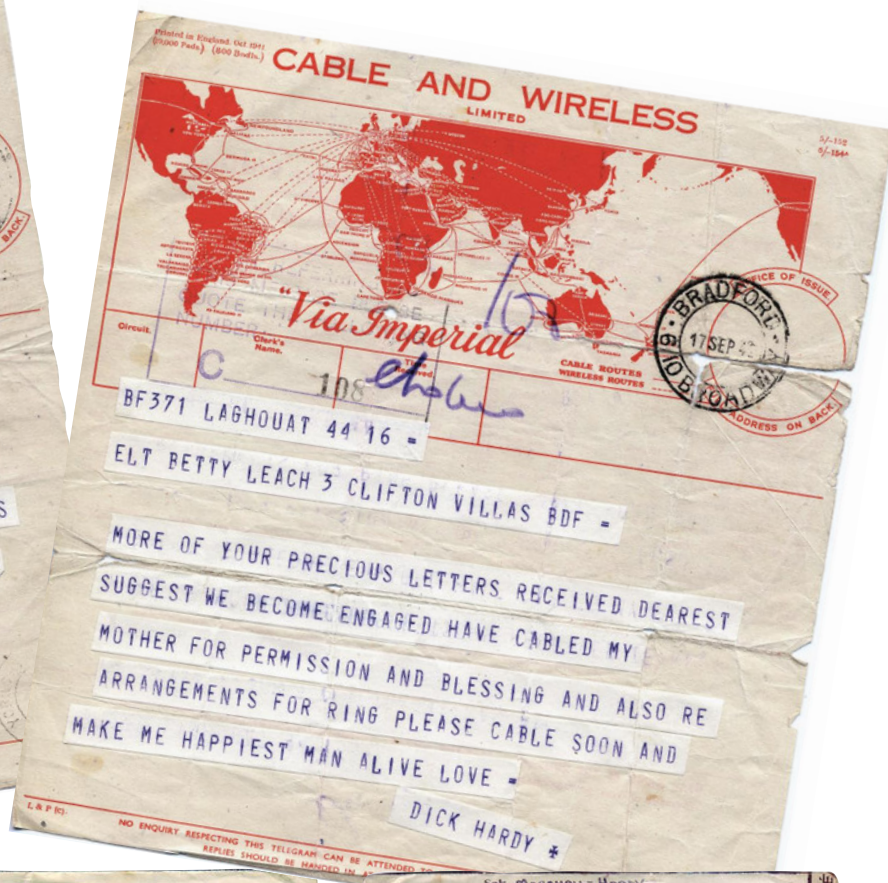
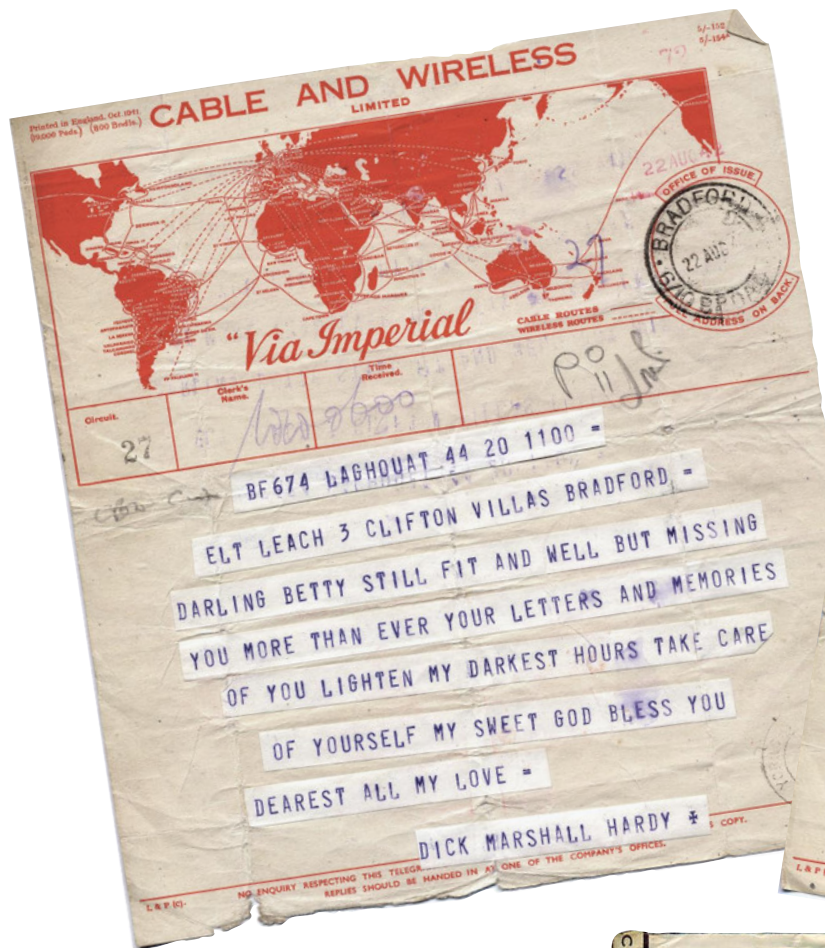
Boxing was a popular diversion but due to the malnourished state of the men, rounds were limited to 1 minute per round. It would appear Dick was quite competent, enough to send photographs home to his Mother!

PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942

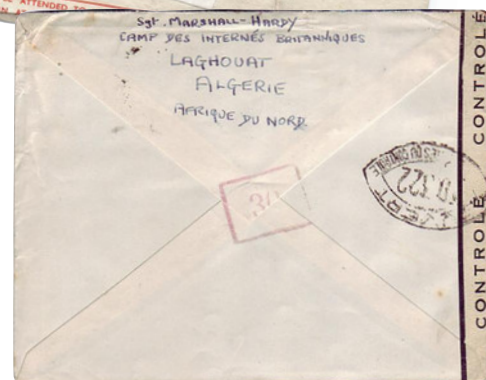
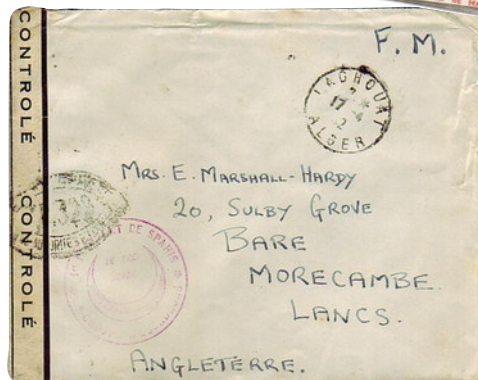


Betty, my mother, joined the WAAF as a driver. This quote is from a Liz Cook who joined up at about the same time: *'...then we moved onto training in driving lorries, anything up to 3 tons. We also had to know how to change a wheel, not an easy job in those days. The training lasted for about three months and it was a great day when I received my first driving licence.'*

PRISONER OF WAR 1940-1942

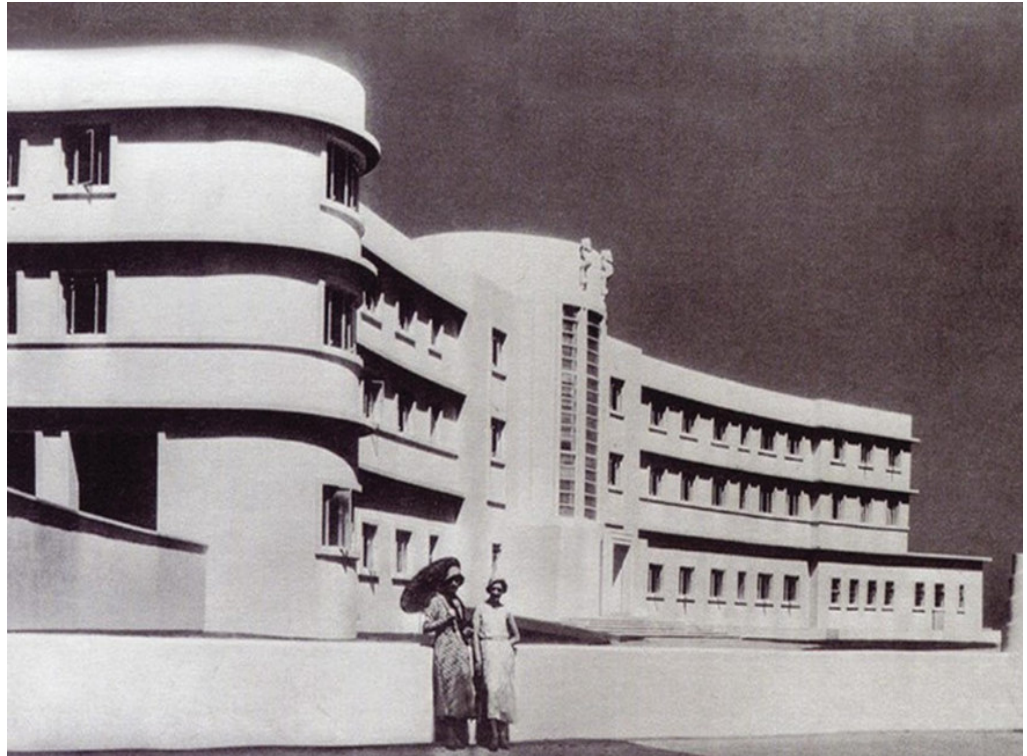


Whilst in Laghouat Dick and Betty wrote regularly to each other. Whilst researching photographs of Laghouat on the internet I found an envelope addressed to Dick's mother and got very excited. Regretfully there was no letter in the envelope. He proposed marriage to Betty by telegram. So, communications were possible.



The first indication that Dick's internment might be coming to an end was on 19 August 1942 when one of the prisoners who kept a listening watch on the radio rushed around the camp with news of Operation Jubilee, an Allied attack on the German-occupied port of Dieppe. Over 6,050 infantry, predominantly Canadian, supported by tanks, were put ashore. The operation was unsuccessful.

On 7 November, early one morning, a Sub-Lieutenant ran from building to building shouting that they were free. Eisenhower had captured Algiers. Everybody turned out to cheer, dance and shout! Operation Torch (8–16 November 1942) was an Allied invasion of French North Africa. The interned servicemen were quickly freed by United States troops who arrived at the Laghouat camp with a convoy of trucks. They were taken to Djelfa and put on the train to Algiers. Then transferred to the troopship HMS Keren which returned to Greenock on the Clyde. From there, according to Dick's log books, he was sent to the RAF Hospital, Morecambe (then based in the Midland Hotel) until February 1943.



Midland Hotel, Morecambe circa 1930.

Mum told me Dad lost a huge amount of weight in Laghouat and quite often, when visiting Bradford during the summer months of 1943, would wear his military great coat because he felt so cold! The poor diet in Laghouat meant many, including Dick, lost teeth. He also suffered from bladder issues and I'm sure he would have been traumatised by his experiences.

Between February and December 1943 Dick was variously posted to No 1 NE Unit Uxbridge; Air Crew Reception Centre Regents Park, London; No 10 Initial Training Wings Scarborough based in the Grand Hotel, Scarborough (where I was conceived in September 1943!); Air Crew Despatch Centre Heaton Park, Manchester and finally No 4 Elementary Flying Training School, Brough, East Yorkshire.

MARRIED - FEBRUARY 1943

Dick and Betty married on 22 February 1943 in the Parish Church of St Peters, Shipley and had their reception in Betty's Cafe, I believe the one in Bradford. The marriage registration document read:

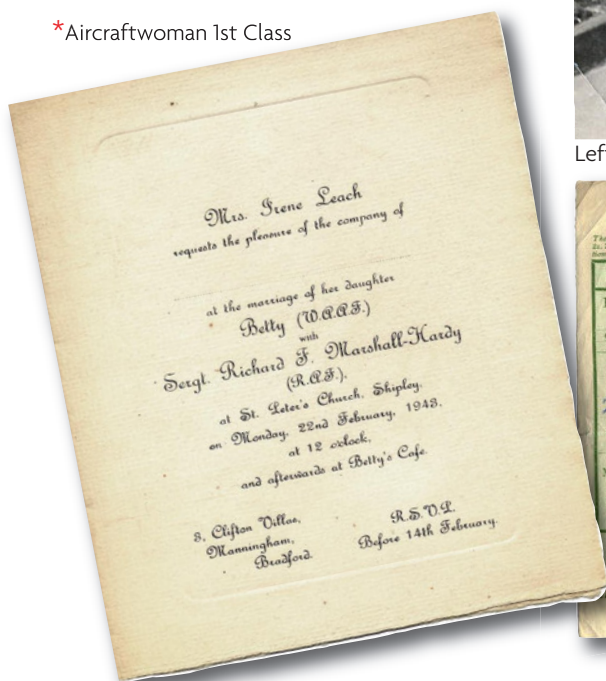
Betty Leach WAAF A/CI* (age 20) of 14 Albert Terrace, Shipley, daughter of George Edgar Leach (deceased) Fish and Game Merchant, 226 Manningham Lane, Bradford and

Richard Frederick Marshall-Hardy Sgt RAF (age 23) of 65 Glenview Road, Shipley son of Eric Marshall-Hardy Advertising Manager

*Aircraftwoman 1st Class



Left to right: Colin Hepworth, Dick, Betty and I don't know who the two women are.



114195

CERTIFIED COPY of an ENTRY OF MARRIAGE Pursuant to the Marriage Acts, 1811 to 1939.

Registration District of Shipley, Yorks.

1943. Marriage Solemnized at the Parish Church of St. Peter, Shipley, in the County of York.

Column No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
1	February 22nd 1943.	Richard Frederick Marshall-Hardy	23.	Bachelor.	Sgt. R.A.F.	65, Glenview Road, Shipley.	Eric Marshall-Hardy	Advertising Manager
2	February 22nd 1943.	Betty Leach	20	Spinster.	W.A.A.F.	14, Albert Terrace, Shipley.	George Edgar Leach (deceased)	Fish and Game Merchant

Married in the Parish Church according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England by P. B. Carrivick

This Marriage was solemnized between us, Richard Frederick Marshall-Hardy and Betty Leach, in the presence of us, P. B. Carrivick and W. Weeks.

I, P. B. Carrivick, of Shipley, in the County of York, do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Entry No. 239, in the Register Book of Marriages of the said Church.

WITNESSES MY HAND this 22nd day of February 1943.

State: "Yorkshire," in Witness Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and Seal at Shipley, the 22nd day of February 1943.

P. B. Carrivick



De Havilland Tiger Moth.

Throughout October and November 1943, based in Brough, Dick learnt to fly in a De Havilland Tiger Moth. In total he did 13 hours of tuition taking his first solo flight after five and a half hours.

In January 1944, on board His Majesty's Troopship Queen Elizabeth, Dick left Gourock, Scotland for New York and subsequently for Canada, to continue his training.

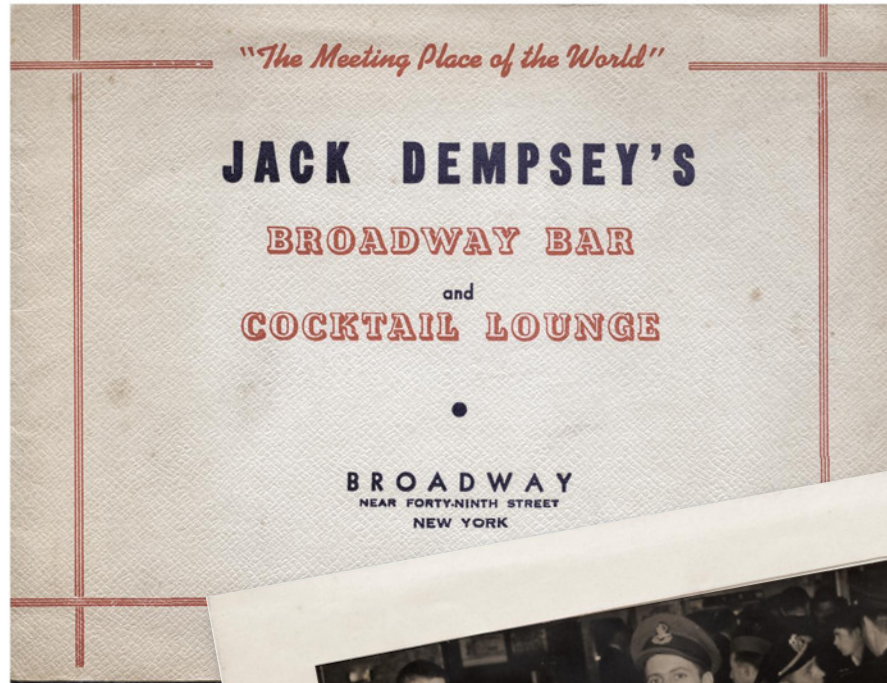


On the journey north from New York to his first posting at 31 Personnel Depot, Moncton, New Brunswick, Dad told me that the train stopped in upper state New York and they were allowed off the train to stretch their legs. It was so cold that, as Dick exhaled, the air cracked as his breath froze. Always remembered that!



Ed Minchinton.

Before he arrived in Moncton he visited the families of both Flying Officer Edwin Charles Minchinton (40555) from Toronto and Flight Lieutenant Bruce MacCallum (37723) from Ottawa to give them news about the death of their sons. Both men have their names inscribed on the Malta War Memorial in Valetta.



Whilst in New York Dick ended up in Jack Dempsey's bar, had his photo taken and sent it home to Betty, by then 4 months pregnant with me. No doubt he would have been at home talking to the Belgian airman also in the photo. Dick learnt his French from other Belgian internees.



LEARNING TO FLY – CANADA 1944-1945



According to his Record of Service entry at the back of his second log book, from January to February 1944, Dick was based at No. 31 Personnel Depot, Moncton, New Brunswick, which was a reception centre for members of the RAF moving to and from Canada.

Dick commenced flight training at 32 Elementary Flying Training School, Bowden, Alberta on 13 March 1944. In a Fairchild Cornell, under the instruction of Sgt Philp, he practiced take off, climbing, descending, stalling, turns, approach and landing. By the end of March he had 26 hours and 35 minutes of training.

In April he commenced instrument flying as well as developing his flying skills and techniques right through to aerobatics and night flying. By the end of the month he'd ratcheted up 79 hours and 45 minutes in the air. On the 19 May he was assessed as being an 'average' pilot!

In the back of Dick's second log book, the Record of Service shows that he was at SHQ Medicine Hat, Alberta from May to August 1944 but there is no record in his daily log books. However, there are photos of him staying in Procter, British Columbia with Canadian relatives. I don't know whom but the photos are captioned on the reverse (see pages 38 and 39). I believe the Canadian Pacific Railroad ran from Bowden to Procter in 1944, so he may well have taken the train there. But 19 May until 14 August seems to be a long holiday unless he was suffering from issues following his Algerian experiences, or he had returned to the UK for my birth on 13 July 1944? I don't know! He also visited Banff and took photos of Sulphur Mountain and Banff Springs Hotel.



Cornell IIs over Bowden, late 1944



Andrew and Clare visited Banff in May 2017 and took a photo from the same spot as the postcard picture right, but no teepees!



Banff Avenue, Winter (postcard)

LEARNING TO FLY – CANADA 1944-1945



Caption on reverse: Me, little Marg and Colin at Procter.



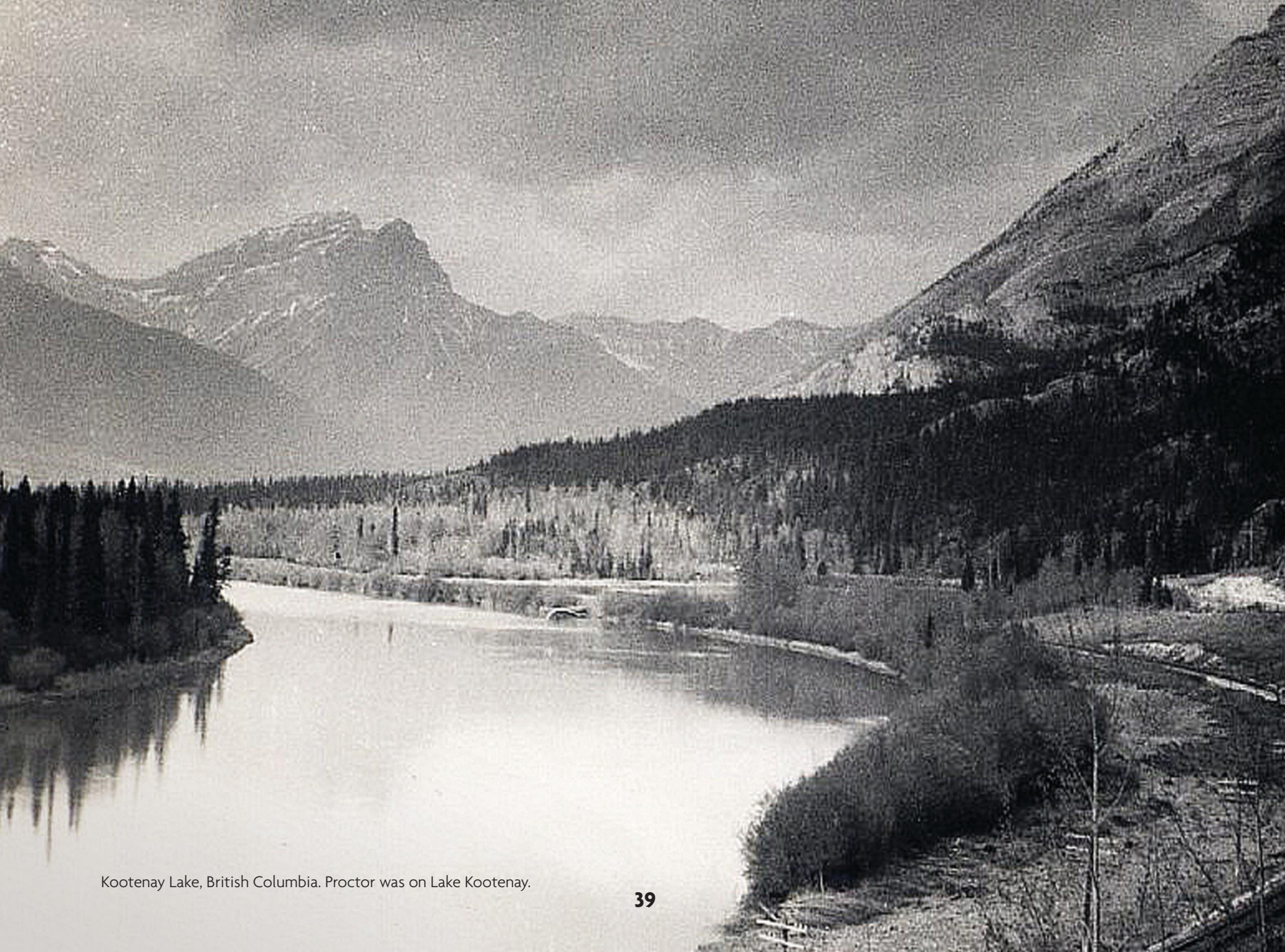
Caption on reverse: Yours truly at Procter.



Caption on reverse: Aunt Kate and I at the farm Procter BC



Dick, possibly in Royal Canadian Air Force uniform. The RCAF's was a much lighter blue than the RAF's.



Kootenay Lake, British Columbia. Proctor was on Lake Kootenay.

CANADA 1944-1945

The next log book entry, 14 August 1944, shows him based at 18 Service Flying Training School, Gimli, Manitoba. He trained on the Avro Anson II, a twin engined aircraft. A combination of in the air and Link training continued until 21 January 1945 and on 26 January Dick was issued with his 'Summary of Flying'.

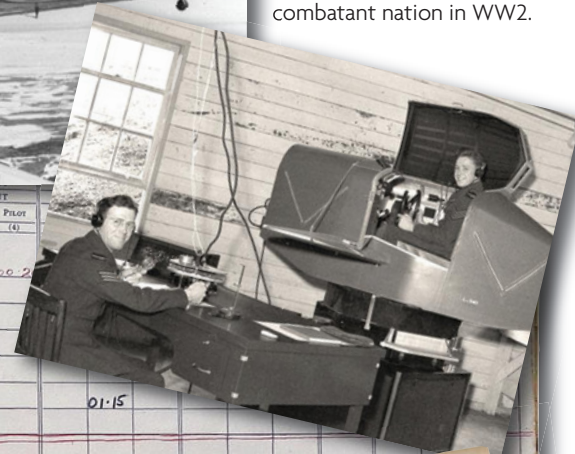


Left photo taken on 25 August of Dick soloing in Anson number 7112 – see log book entry below.

Below Link flight simulators were used as a key pilot training aid by almost every combatant nation in WW2.

MOF	YEAR		AIRCRAFT		PILOT, OR 1ST PILOT	2ND PILOT, P/O OR PASSENGER	(INCLUDING RESULTS AND REMARKS)
	MONTH	DATE	Type	No.			
	TOTALS BROUGHT FORWARD						
K	Aug	23	ANSON II	151	P/O GARDNER	SELF	10, 11, 12, 13, 20
A	Aug	23	ANSON II	151	SELF		10, 11, 12, 13, 20
A	Aug	24	ANSON II	JS123	SELF		10, 11, 12, 13, 20
TOTALS FOR W/E AUGUST 24 th 1944							
WEEKLY TOTAL							
COURSE TOTAL							
O.C. No. 1 SQUADRON No. 18 S.F.T.S. GIMLI, MAN.							
	Aug	25	ANSON II	8480	P/O GARDNER	SELF	PASSENGER
	Aug	25	ANSON II	8480	P/O GARDNER	SELF	10, 11, 12, 17, 9.
	Aug	25	ANSON II	7112	SELF		9, 10, 11, 12, 17.
	Aug	27	ANSON II	11493	P/O GARDNER	SELF	10, 11, 12, 13, 19, 22, 33
	Aug	27	ANSON II	11493	SELF		10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 33
GRAND TOTAL (Cols. (1) to (10))							
106 Hrs. 05 Mins.							TOTALS CARRIED FORWARD

DAY		NIGHT	
DUAL (1)	PILOT (2)	DUAL (3)	PILOT (4)
48:55	40:25	02	40:00



P/O MARSHALL-HARDY, R.F. *19

RCAF 895A
13E-143 (Rev.)
HQ 800-3-614

SUMMARY OF FLYING and ASSESSMENTS FOR YEAR COMMENCING 1st

(*For Officer, insert "JUNE"; For Airman Pilot, insert "AUGUST")

	S.E. AIRCRAFT		M.E. AIRCRAFT		TOTAL for year	GRAND TOTAL All Service Flying
	Day	Night	Day	Night		
DUAL	48:55	2:40	59:50	8:30	129:55	
PILOT	40:25	1:20	46:50	8:05	95:40	
PASSENGER					823:20	1048:55

ASSESSMENT OF ABILITY
To be assessed as:—Exceptional, Above the Average, Average, or Below the Average

(i) AS A T.E. PILOT AVERAGE

(ii) AS PILOT-NAVIGATOR/NAVIGATOR AVERAGE

(iii) IN BOMBING N.A.

(iv) IN AIR GUNNERY

(Insert: "P," "L.B.," "O.R.," "F.B.," etc.)

ANY POINTS IN FLYING OR AIRMANSHIP WHICH SHOULD BE WATCHED

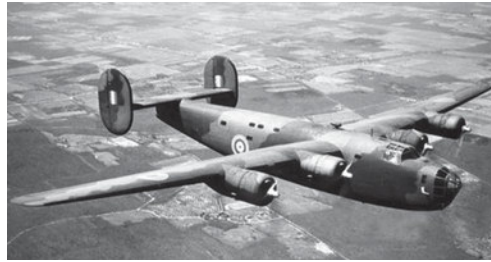
NO. OUTSTANDING FAULTS

Signature John J. Anson

Date January 26th, 1945. Officer Commanding No. 1 Squadron

ENGLAND 1945-1948

During January and February 1945 the Record of Service shows that Dick was back at 31 Personnel Depot Moncton, New Brunswick. But there is no day by day record of activity until the following entry on 7 March 1945 when he flew back to the UK in a B24 Liberator.



B24 Liberator

April to May 1945

20 Pilot Advanced Flying Unit, Kidlington, Oxfordshire. The war in Europe ended on 8 May 1945 – VE Day.

May to August 1945

6 Pilot Advanced Flying Unit, Little Rissington, Gloucestershire. This unit provided final training for pilots who had completed basic training in the commonwealth training schools. After polishing their skills pilots would move on to an operational station.

August to December 1945

No 1380 Transport Conversion Unit Sleaf, Shropshire. Dick trained on Wellingtons.

January to February 1946

No 1665 Heavy Transport Conversion Unit, Linton-on-Ouse, North Yorkshire. Dick trained on Halifax.

February 1946

17 Air Crew Holding Unit Snaith, Yorkshire. Dick trained on Airspeed Oxfords.

YEAR		AIRCRAFT		PILOT, OR 1ST PILOT	2ND PILOT, PUPIL OR PASSENGER	DUTY (INCLUDING RESULTS AND REMARKS)
MONTH	DATE	Type	No.			
1945						
						TOTALS BROUGHT FORWARD
MAR	7	LIBERATOR	AH 549	CPT. KE. BUXTON	SELF	MONTREAL TO GOOSE BAY
MAR	7	LIBERATOR	AH 549	CPT. KE. BUXTON	SELF	GOOSE BAY TO PRESTWICK
KIDLINGTON OXON 28 th MARCH 1945						
# 20 (P) A.F.U.						

Captain K E Buxton and Dick flew from Montreal to Goose Bay to Prestwick in Scotland. They followed one of a series of air routes used to delivered aircraft from the United States and Canada to Great Britain across the Atlantic during WW2.

Dad never told me much about his RAF career after this. Of course I lived a large proportion of it, remembering quite a few of the places that we were based until I was sent to boarding school in Yorkshire in 1953 at the age of 9.

The following pages are extracts taken from his Record of Service entries and information recorded in his log books with notes describing what he was doing at each posting and my recollections of what was happening at home and to the family:

March to April 1945

No 7 Personnel Reception Centre, Harrogate, processed aircrew returning from overseas during WW2 (especially after training courses). Men were billeted in the hotels in the centre of Harrogate.

ENGLAND 1945-1948

February to March 1946

1381 Transport Conversion Unit,
Desborough, Northamptonshire.

March 1946

1513 Radio Aids Training Flight, Bramcote,
Warwickshire. Dick trained on Airspeed
Oxfords.

March to April 1946

Squadron and Flight Commanders
School, Bramcote, Warwickshire.

April to May 1946

17 Air Crew Holding Unit Snaith, Yorkshire.
Dick trained on Airspeed Oxfords.

May to June 1946

Central Flying School, Little Rissington,
Gloucestershire. Flight Lieutenant
R F Marshall-Hardy becomes a BABS
instructor on Oxfords and on Anson Is.
BABS (Blind Air Beam System) allowed
aircraft to approach an airport at night
or in bad weather and land more safely.

June to November 1946

1510 BABS Flight RAF Melbourne, East
Yorkshire. Continues BABS instruction
on Oxfords and on Anson Is.



Vickers Wellington



Handley Page Halifax



Airspeed Oxford

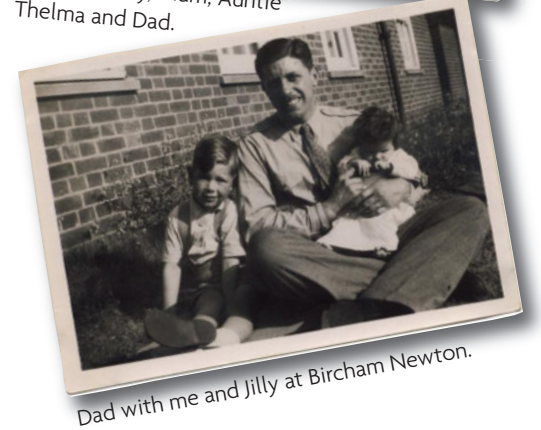
November 1946 to September 1948

1510 BABS Flight Bircham Newton,
Norfolk. In October 1946, Bircham
Newton came under the control of
Transport Command. Training on BABS
continued for about two years using
Anson and Oxford aircraft.

Betty and Dick befriended the Lemms
(Uncle Tommy and Auntie Thelma) also
based there. As children of 3/4, myself
and the Lemm's eldest son John rode
our tricycles across the parade ground
during the middle of the Commanding
Officer's parade!



Uncle Tommy, Mum, Auntie
Thelma and Dad.



Dad with me and Jilly at Bircham Newton.

During this period Dick made flights to
Buckeburg (near Hanover) in Germany and
to Kastrup (Copenhagen) Denmark.

ENGLAND 1945-1948



Courtesy of Peter B. Gunn's book 'Bircham Newton - A Norfolk Airfield In War and Peace.'

1510 BABS Flight, Bircham Newton 1948. Dick circled. Anson in background.

(*15479-11212) Wt. 34331-2854 20M 10/44 T.S. 700
 (*15899-11212) Wt. 48781-3828 40M 1/45 T.S. 700

PERIOD **SEPT** *1948

SUMMARY of FLYING and ASSESSMENTS FOR YEAR COMMENCING 1st **SEPT** *1948

[* For Officer, insert "JUNE"; For Airman Pilot, insert "AUGUST."] 1st Nov. 1948

	S.E. AIRCRAFT		M.E. AIRCRAFT		TOTAL for YEAR PERIOD	GRAND TOTAL All Service Flying
	Day	Night	Day	Night		
DUAL	-	-	-	-		
PILOT	-	-	29.25	-	29.25	1297.55
PASSENGER	-	-	-	-		843.25

ASSESSMENT of ABILITY (To be assessed as :- Exceptional, Above the Average, Average)

(i) AS A **BABS** † PILOT **INSTRUCTOR** *Above the Average*

(ii) AS PILOT-NAVIGATOR/NAVIGATOR **N/A**

(iii) IN BOMBING **N/A**

(iv) IN AIR GUNNERY **N/A**

(v) IN **S.B.A. INSTRUMENT FLYING** *Above the average*

† Insert :- "F.", "L.B.", "G.R.", "F.B.", "Instructor", etc.

ANY POINTS IN FLYING OR AIRMANSHIP WHICH SHOULD BE WATCHED

Nil

Date **1-11-48** Signature *[Signature]* **CHIEF INSTRUCTOR** -W/CDR
240 TRAINING WING - LUFFENHAM

Assessment of Ability – BABS Pilot Instructor.

September to December 1948

240 Operational Conversion Unit (BABS) North Luffenham, Rutland. Although Dick was working out of Luffenham I think we, as a family, were still based in Bircham Newton. He continued to make flights all over the UK and on 1 November 1948 he received his Assessment of Ability for BABS instruction and instrument flying – above average in both cases!

December 1948 to February 1949

241 Operational Conversion Unit (BABS) Dishforth, North Yorkshire. During this period Dick trained on Avro York transport aircraft, derived from the Avro Lancaster bomber, and flew all over the UK and made a trip to Malta and back a 7 hour flight in those days.



Avro York transport aircraft.

BERLIN AIRLIFT 1949

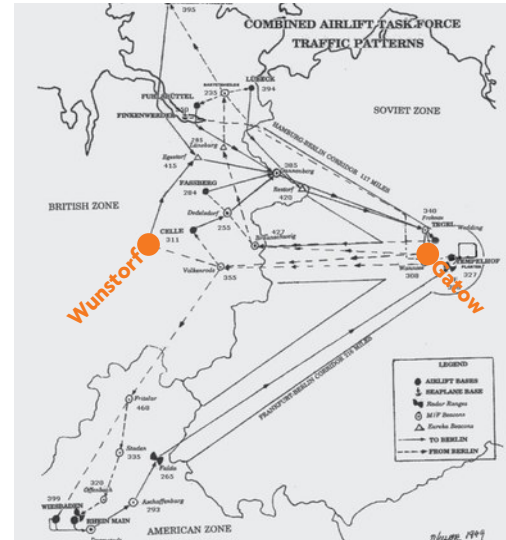
February 1949

99 Transport Squadron,
Lyneham, Wiltshire.

Between February and September 99 Transport Squadron, along with Dick, were transferred to Wunstorf, just west of Hanover. The Berlin Blockade (24 June 1948 – 12 May 1949) was one of the first major international crises of the Cold War. During the multi-national occupation of Germany post WW2, the Soviet Union blocked the Western Allies' railway, road, and canal access to the Western controlled sectors of Berlin. They feared a capitalist city located right in the middle of their occupation zone would be powerfully and aggressively anti-Soviet.

Dick flew between Wunstorf and Berlin (Gatow) and back, sometimes twice a day delivering mostly food, medicine, fuel, and other basic goods to some 2.5 million civilians. The flight time there and back was just over 2 hours, Though the Red Army harassed the transport aircraft, the United States and Britain retained control of the 3 air corridors into West Berlin. Initially properly maintaining the aircraft and adequately supporting aircrews was

a challenge. Efficiencies were found to improved the process including bringing refreshments out to the aircrews on the flight line to save turn-around time and using German workers to unload cargoes. Because the operation ran continuously, a supply plane took off or landed every 30 seconds, pilots operated under great strain often without adequate sleep. During the airlift nearly 300,000 flights were made. In the final analysis it was recorded that the Western Allies provided 714,090 US tons of supplies in 1948 and 1,198,305 in 1949.



Three air corridors permitted by the Soviets enabled provisions to be flown into Berlin.



Avro York CIs of Transport Command being unloaded at Gatow during the Berlin Airlift.

October to December 1949

School of Air Traffic Control, Watchfield,
Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire.

January to June 1950

APS RAF Acklington. It is unclear what
Dick was doing at this time but according
to his log book he was flying Harvards,
Martinets and Oxfords, with 'General
flying practice' under 'Duty'.



Harvard trainer.

On 17 April he took a 30 minute solo flight
in a Spitfire MkXVI. He did the same on
three further occasions in May for around
an hour each time and recorded 'General
flying' under 'Duty'. I wonder if 'General
flying' is the same as 'Joy riding'!



Spitfire MkXVI.



Gloucester Meteor.

On the 19 May he had his first 30 minute
experience of a Meteor VII jet recording
under 'Duty' – 'Familiarisation on type'.

July to September 1950

Signals Development Squadron RAF
Watton, Norfolk. I was now 6 years of
age and recall we were billeted in a farm
house just outside Thetford for a while
before moving to married quarters at
RAF Watton.

During this period, according to his log
book, Dick flew Lancasters, Lincolns,
Hastings, Oxfords and Ansons all over
the UK. He also made trips to Gibraltar
and Tangier in connection with the Eu-
reka transponder system. He took part in
Exercise Emperor, an RAF test of the
UK's air defences.



Avro Lancaster.



Avro Lincoln.

In January 1951 Dick was back in Wunstorf,
West Germany and made several BABS
flights in a Lincoln to and from Wunstorf,
Gatow and Fassberg, Germany.

On 16 March he had a 30 minute flight in
a Mosquito for the first time.



De Havilland Mosquito.

From the Autumn of 1951 to the Autumn of 1952, still based at Watton, Dick flew Lincolns, Mosquitos and Ansons on a variety of missions throughout the UK and Europe. This included one trip in October to Malta, Fayid, Egypt and Habbania, Iraq and back via Nicosia, Cyprus. Fayid is on the Suez Canal and in January 1952 the Suez Crisis had started. Perhaps he was involved? There is nothing in his log books to indicate precisely what he was doing other than operations within 'Calibration R Squadron'. I suspect from my research that his work was mostly to do with early warning radar stations built by the RAF to detect and track enemy aircraft.

In June 1951 Flight Lieutenant Marshall-Hardy's Summary of Flying Assessment stated that as a calibration pilot, he was 'Above Average'. By February 1952 Squadron Leader Marshall-Hardy's Summary of Flying Assessment stated that as a calibration pilot, he was 'Exceptional'. On instrument flying he was rated Master Green, the highest rating possible.

By November 1952 he had transferred to 527 Squadron, still at RAF Watton, still flying the same aircraft, still on calibration.

At <https://www.rafwatton.info> I found an extract '*Flying on 527 Squadron, Watton – Early 1950s by Ralph Swift*':

My introduction to Calibration duties was to calibrate the ACR7 with a Mr Page, one of our 'boffins' in the back seat. The ACR7 was known to us as the 'poor man's GCA' (ground controlled approach) and I actually enjoyed calibrating it. It was perhaps one of the few calibration duties where the pilot was doing a lot of the work and actually flying the aircraft on a series of short duration runs repeated over and over again until ground control were satisfied with the result. Unlike the usual ground controlled approach where the controller was giving the pilot corrections, the situation was reversed somewhat and my navigator's job, using his 'black boxes' was to keep me strictly on track whilst I had to maintain a very accurate rate of descent and speed to arrive at the fixed distances at precisely the right time and altitude.

Dick's time with 527 Squadron seems to have ended around 5 May 1955 as he records in his log-book 'summary [of flying hours] on posting'.

By this time I had been sent away to Bronte House Prep Boarding School in Yorkshire so I have little recollection of moving. I believe the posting referred to in Dick's log-book was to RAF Brampton near Huntingdon. Throughout October 1955 Dick was sent on an intensive jet conversion course on Vampire T11s and FB5s at RAF Oakington, just half an hour's drive from Brampton.



Vampire FB5.



Vickers Varsity.

RAF WATTON – 1950 ONWARDS

December 1955 to November 1956

Instrument Rating Course, at RAF Debden, Essex, variously flying Prentice, Varsity, Anson, Chipmunk and Jet Provost.

Between 5 and 28 March 1956 Dick was attached to RAF Lyneham. The log book entry shows him, a Flt Lt Hayley and crew flying a Handley Page HP 67 Hastings from Lyneham to Idris in Libya, Habbaniya in Iraq, Mauripur near Karachi in Pakistan, Negombo in Ceylon, Butterworth, Panang in Malaysia, Changi in Singapore, Jakarta in Indonesia then on to Darwin, Australia and eventually Adelaide.

I recall him talking about being involved in rockets in Australia and the only thing happening then were the British nuclear tests at Maralinga, part of the Woomera Prohibited Area in South Australia. There is no mention of civilian passengers on the plane but research shows a regular British military courier service was operated between Britain and Woomera and the Long Range Weapons Establishment Adelaide using RAF Handley Page Hastings transports.



Handley Page HP 67 Hastings.



Jet Provost.



In June 1959 Dick spent 5 days taking Combined Cadet Force cadets up for joy rides. By this time we must have been based at RAF Cranwell as I recall going up several times in gliders and sailplanes. By this time I was 15 and old enough to look like a CCF cadet so Dad and I took a jet Provost up the M1 (then being built) as far as Yorkshire, then turning East towards Skegness then down the coast and back to Cranwell.

June 1959 to April 1962

Fighter Command Communications Squadron, Bentley Priory, Stanmore, Middlesex

The last entry in the flying log books that I have was for 28 October 1959: 'Base – Church Fenton'. The last married quarters we lived in was Bushey Heath just up the road from Bentley Priory, Fighter Command HQ near Stanmore, Middlesex. As far as I know Dad was based there until April 1962 when he received his discharge letter from The Right Honourable Julian Amery, Secretary of State for Air.

Dick had served 25 years in the Royal Air Force from August 1937 when he was based at No 1 RTW Uxbridge for induction training until April 1962 when he retired as a Squadron Leader.

RAF WATTON – 1950 ONWARDS



On the way home we stopped off at RAF Watton. Although the base was decommissioned, the Officer's Mess was still intact and housed a small museum. We took the photograph (left) of Dad pointing at his 'Queen's Commendation'. He was very proud, as I was of him.

In the late 1990s Dad, my son Andrew and myself visited RAF Duxford, the Imperial War Museum's Cambridgeshire museum. As we arrived a Flying Fortress landed and was standing on the apron dripping oil and smoking! We instantly lost Dad to a group of veteran WW2 USA pilots visiting the UK for the event!



The 1939-1945 Star The Atlantic Star The Africa Star The Defence Medal War Medal 1939-1945 with oakleaf Queen Elizabeth Coronation Medal



Letter from The Right Honourable Julian Amery, Secretary of State for Air.

APPENDIX

APRIL 1941.

This Appendix is taken from the handwritten diary of an unknown Naval Officer imprisoned at same time as Dick in Medea, Aumale and Laghouat.

It was given to me by Audrey, my stepmother, who believed it might be Dick's diary. Although there are parallels, the Naval officer's wife was also named Betty, this is not Dick's diary.

Some of the writing is illegible or is missing, hence the

APPENDIX

Tunis (Tunisia) and Medea (Algeria)

APRIL 1941

At 00.00(?) 12th April 1941 I took off from Hal Far aerodrome [Malta] with torpedo in company with 11 other Swordfish. Sub. Lt Holmes since killed and Petty Officer (?) Parr made up my flight. At 23.05 we saw flares dropped by another Swordfish and at 23.17 made my attack on the first ship in line. In the bright moonlight the convoy appeared to consist of 5 merchant ships the second inline being a tanker. Six escort vessels protected the convoy and due to my failure to observe the leading port hand destroyer I was heavily fired upon with all kinds of guns and also by my target itself – which was hit by my torpedo below the bridge. Finding all tanks and gas decided due west to the Tunisian coast which I reached at 2350, crashing on the beach. At 24.05 I fainted, loss of blood from small splinter in right thigh.

Taken to Hammamet caserne and locked up with Edwards and others. The following day Capt de Cervens took us to Mrs Hensons for lunch and then on to Tunis where I stayed until 24th. During this period in hospital at Tunis I received many contre tetanus etc.

Left Tunis with Raf people on 23rd April for Algeria and arrived at Medea on 24th at mid-day. Lived at Hotel Orient and then lodgings owned by M. Ousset of the Paris Cafe.

Period when Brit night fighters were taking heavy toll of German raiders. Still had not heard from Betty by mail. Visits to family of the local

In hospital at Tunis 13th – 21st and at Al a from then until 23rd.

Medea (Algeria)

MAY '41

All this month spent at Medea (Algeria) plenty of freedom. 500frs per month and football against the local teams, Turkish baths b...ies and cafe au lait in quantity. One or two English people here. Quite a bit of trouble caused with the local inhabitants. Several of the fellows visiting the two local brothels. We found that the hotel was little better than one and the proprietress had run this kind of place at Algiers and had been slung out.

Received cables from Betty but no letters. My French began to improve after a few visits to the merliens(?). Thompson and I very pally. Pickles sleeping with too many different women. Grub at Pasteurs pretty bloody. Little girl at the Paris same age as C.A. Visited Algiers during first fortnight stayed at the Brit Hospital had a very enjoyable time despite fuggery(?). Met Burns and Cook also Eve(?) Butcher.

APPENDIX

Aumale Algeria **JUNE 1941**

Left Medea for AUMALE on 31st MAY. Found great change, being in a granary not much fun. Allowed out in town 2 hrs each week. 25th June received first letter from loveliest girl in the world. Grub here bloody awful worst of all my internment rice: in salt water, horse, fish soup and marrow stew. Were able to use our 500frs per month to buy eggs, fat, tomatoes, mushrooms, spuds, grapes, cakes etc etc so that life was bearable. Senior NCO during this period and found the RAF blokes both dirty, lazy and undisciplined. Sqn/Ldr Brickell was CO during this period and things went off ok. Receiving parcels and money regularly from Mrs Henson.

June 23rd in hospital stomach trouble probably due to rotten fat.

M & Mme Wargner. Had fight with Arab in Paris Bar.

Aumale Algeria **JULY 1941**

Can't think of anything during this period except trying to teach Conolly boat sailing in his room and helping him with the construction of a boat. Believe it was here that we were in touch with Admiralty and plans were made to go in three parties and reach the coast to get a destroyer or sub. Admiralty kept telling us to wait but of course we didn't and in Aug and Sept altho several breaks were made nobody got out of the country.

Believe we had a wireless in this month.

Went in hospital on 12th with dysentery for 17 days.

Aumale Algeria **AUGUST 1941**

This was the escape month. Johnny Mat....., Beresford-Smith, Bickell, Dawson, Campbell, Pickles, Thornton, all went. All in cells for 2 months sentence.

Went down again with dysentery due to filthy cell conditions from 17th – 24th Aug.

Quite a few letters received during this period and a few photos.

Of 14 eggs on our table 2 were good. Another search. Padre came to see us. Everybody shaving heads. Fighting in Iran finished. Jawal and De.... shot.

APPENDIX

Aumale Algeria SEPTEMBER 1941

1st – Betty Birthday this was celebrated by a riot bottle party etc etc. I was still in cells with the rest of the escapees.

MacLaren started whist drives and we received fags from the Red Cross. Very cold during this period clothes very scarce. Playing indoor cricket against the Officers.

Compulsory PT at 7.30 each morning was very popular ha ha.

Belcher escaped thro' wire bloody good shout.

Wireless was taken away and achats*, walks etc all stopped.

**Achats – French for buying, ie, the prisoners opportunity to add to their diet by buying extra food on the black-market.*

Aumale and LAGHOUAT (Algerie) OCTOBER 1941

We all went to cells for 10 days for our part in the riot. Tons of boxing when we came back. Red Cross parcels for a few lucky ones.

Officers left Aumale for LAGHOUAT on 20th, first bunch of NCOs left 21st and rest including CHW on 22nd. Eight hours on the train. Spahis met us at Djelfa.

Very hot at LAGHOUAT we thought compared with AUMALE. Lights out at 9.30. Commandant very popular grub OK but was soon to deteriorate.

Hostages being shot in France. Cold and frosty in the evenings. Germans 40 miles from Moscow.

In room with Marshall-Hardy he's a dirty lazy sod guess I'll be like him after a few weeks – I am?!

LAGHOUAT NOVEMBER 1941

Got 10 days cells for having money found on me during search. Brickell there also for maps, Bloody cold here all clothes being worn, two pairs of trousers very useful. Tunnel commenced working about 2 hrs per day on it.

LAGHOUAT (Algerie) DECEMBER 1941

Yanks in the war at last. Still very cold icy winds coming from the NW. University still going on. Randall running a camp newspaper The Echo. Concert on New Years Eve. [8th Army enter] Benghazi on Xmas Day. Hong Kong fights and surrenders. Repulse and Prince of Wales sunk*. Pearl Harbour 7th. Gonda [India] falls. Still icy weather. Red X parcels arrive but heavily rifled. Germans retreating in Libya. Boxing Tournament on 5th Dec. I gave a lecture on Small Boat Sailing.

**Battle cruiser HMS Repulse and battleship HMS Prince of Wales sunk by Japanese land based bombers north of Singapore 10 September 1941.*

APPENDIX

LAGHOUAT JANUARY 1942

Still cold snow fell but it did not lay.
Bardia fell 1st. New term of the
University opens.

Galatea sunk. Sollium taken 13th. Barham
reported sunk. Halfaya slammed and
taken 17th.

LAGHOUAT FEBRUARY 1942

Fighting in Singapore. Escape by
Conolly, Dick Jones, Brikwell.
Test wireless typewriter etc and search.
Gneisenau, Scharnhorst, Eugen leave Brest
and get away with it, we lose 42 machines.
Singapore surrenders 15th. Webb
..... arrive chef de chambre of room 14.
Arg Red Cross arriving OK
Plenty of sand storms. Pickles receives
message on the Malta programme. Rand
in France on a Radio Location post by
para troops and navy.

LAGHOUAT MARCH 1942 – 1 YEAR

Regulating staff in power. Steve Gamble,
Turner, Ball, Wines.

Motor launch (23) people arrive.

About half way thro to the wall air very
bad candles won't stay alight, will have to
make shaft.

LAGHOUAT APRIL 1942

[HMS] Havock ran aground 6th. Her crew
and passengers arrived Laghouat on 11th.
Whole routine life changed from this date.
Went in room 4 with Gamble, Turner,
Ball. One or two Boxing Tournaments.
Still unbeaten at Laghouat. Inoculated
against typhus, typhoid, etc 3 jabs in all.

LAGHOUAT MAY 1942

Havock chaps mutiny won't go to PT.
Cooking our own food. Mandalay falls
2nd. Boxing Tournament. I beat A B
Mulholland. General Kolby(?) inspected
the camp. We attacked Madagascar. Still
digging tunnel. Coral Sea battle. Japs get
wiped up. Raid on Rostock by RAF (19
machines). 15 Junker 52s shot down by
Bea of Libya. Prince Eugene
attacked and hit by fish off Norway.
Sports Day I won 100yds and the wet
races obstacle etc. Shift rumours start.
German offences in Russia and Libya
begin. Tank battles
at Kharkov and Libya.

31st – 1st 1000 BOMBER RAID on
COLOGNE. We dropped 3000 tons of
bombs in 90 minutes.

APPENDIX

LAGHOUAT JUNE 1942

Tunnel finished. 29 blokes get away. All back in cells within 3 days. Still plenty of inter-Div sport. Received parcel from Betty. How I love her! 12th June. Took over chef de chambre No 5 room. Ayling, Turig, Jolsen, Miles. Plenty of volley ball and relays. Awa wireless. Jamb(?) gets charged and loses Adjts job hurrah. Very little water so no soap and no shoes. Thousand bomber raid.

LAGHOUAT JULY 1942

University and Sports come to an end as weather hot as Hades. Mail getting through ok. Too much Red X gear not necessary due to the heat. Great scumble to get wood to make tea. News pretty bloody everybody expecting invasion next month. Burfield escaped for one night. Soap, khaki, tooth paste arrived from the Admiralty.

Swimming bath inaugurated. On 28th Lloyd-Smith took our photos hope to send them to Betty in 3 weeks time. I fg hot both day and night. We never go to sleep until about 1 or 2am. Had a parcel from Mrs H with books and sandals.

LAGHOUAT AUGUST 1942

11th Big convoy tries to reach Malta. [HMSs] Cairo, Eagle, Manchester, Foresight sunk. 20th Manchester's crew arrive in the camp now makes us 900 odd. Teaching German and French to Petty Officers. 22nd Aug big mail day received 10 letters. Massey and Walcott escaped but caught next day at Djelfa. Yanks taken bases in Solomons. Received sandals. Germans not yet across the [River] Don to Stalingrad. No activity in Egypt. Big Commando raid on Dieppe, we thought the balloon had gone up. Inoculated for swimming bath inaugurated. Captain Drews takes over. Weather getting cooler altho' still stifling days and nights. Lamb recommends Perks for FO!!!

APPENDIX

LAGHOUAT SEPTEMBER 1942

Many photos from Betty of herself and Caroline. Had a fight with Manchester Chief Stoker and beat PO Andrews in the Laghouat mile. Camp now somewhat settled down. Mail restrictions can now only send two letters per week. Many buzzes that some of us are leaving. Russians gallantly holding Stalingrad. Request to see Capt for for Many chaps suffering with cuts etc which turn rotten due I believe to lack of green veg and of our blood. Chaps from Tobruk-Tripoli-Tunis here. Weather now cooler and cold in the mornings and evenings. Yanks building up 3 ships per day and doing good work in Pacific. Captain Drew recommended me strangely for WO [Warrant Officer]. Concerns by 3 artists held in camp Two men died this month Bristow and Royds.

LAGHOUAT OCTOBER 1942

Five jaundice cases. University going full swing. Bricknell made good job of class rooms. Is he engaged to Eve? No writing paper until she sends me a large full. Stalingrad still holds out after three weeks of incessant attacks. Eating tons of pomegranates. No fags. Supposed to be tons of stuff at Djelfa. Capt Drew tells they are leaving 15th Oct for Gerville. 6 chaps escape on 4th Tobruk boys. 5 caught first day. Red Cross convoy expected on 8th. Buzz that Dakar was attacked. P..... now a F/O. 23rd still no mail. Sent off Xmas cards. Appel meeting. Grub terrible. 3rd chap dies. Shot by sentry. local funeral. Personal parcels. Red Cross. Stamps from Algiers. Raf over Italy first time since April. Raf people now at Sfax. Bristow Royds Grieves a/c crew picked up by Maroc fishing boat but by French? 22nd Montgomery offensive in Libya. Egypt crashes forward. Gerville advance party leaves.

LAGHOUAT NOVEMBER 1942

At 10pm 4th Nov. The enemy is in full retreat, keep up pressure and all the Panzer army will be in the bag. Buffers celebration. Stalingrad still stands. Aussies take Kokoda. Received portraits from Betty of C. A. and herself. YMCA representative here. New interpreter educated at Dublin Foreign Legionnaire. Teeth in bad state. Army boots overcoat and battle dress promised. By 7th 20,000 prisoners [Axis] 350 tanks 600 A/C over 1000 vehicles Itie and Germans in full retreat but not yet a rout

APPENDIX

Operation Torch (8–16 November 1942) was the Allied invasion of French North Africa.

The interned servicemen were quickly freed by United States troops who arrived at the Laghouat camp with a convoy of trucks on 10 November 1942.



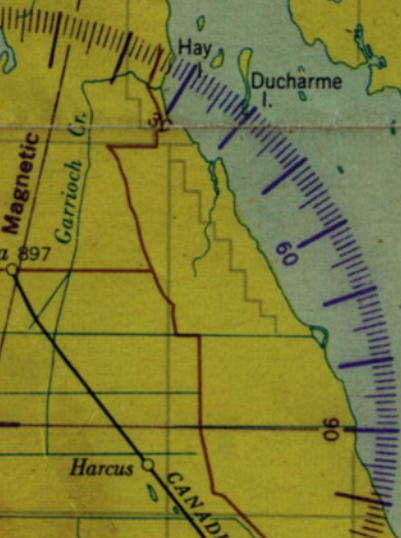
L A K E

M A N I T O B A

Bombing and Gunnery Ranges

N. 11° E.

50° 30'



Magnetic

897

Harcus

Amaranth

Embury

Langruth

881

McRae L.
Deception Bay

Hay
Ducharme I.

Duck I.

Long Pt.

Sandy Pt.

Sugar Pt.

Rabbit Pt.

Mulvihill
882

Pine L.

Buffalo L.

Kalevala L.

Big Rock L.

Eriksdale
872

Deer Horn
863

Luddar
863

Clarkleigh
819

Marshy Pt.

Oak Point

St. Laurent
821

Broad Valley
882

Poplarfield

Oak Island Marsh

Chat

North Shoal Lake
851

850 West Shoal Lake

850 East Shoal Lake

850 West Shoal Lake