

Gemini Flight



Douglas Warren

Born in Nanton, Alberta, identical twins Bruce and Douglas Warren trained together at High River and Medicine Hat, Alberta. They went on to fly Spitfires together from Dieppe to Normandy, completing their wartime service as the two flight commanders on 66 Squadron.

Following the war, the twins' careers diverged, but both made significant contributions to the Royal Canadian Air Force during the Cold War. Bruce became a test pilot with Avro Canada, flying the Jetliner and CF-100 prototypes. Douglas flew the Canadair F-86 Sabre in Korea and Europe as the commanding officer of 410 'Cougar' Squadron.



Gemini Flight

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**BOMBER COMMAND MUSEUM OF CANADA
NANTON, ALBERTA**



The Warren Twins over Dieppe
[Don Connolly]

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Douglas Warren

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Back cover: 'Gemini Flight' by John Rutherford

CONTENTS

Foreword	7
Introduction	9
Halifax, 1942	11
Early Years in Nanton and Wetaskiwin	13
Manning Depot (Brandon)	21
Initial Training School (Regina)	29
Elementary Flying Training School (High River)	33
Service Flying Training School (Medicine Hat)	41
Preparing for Overseas	49
Crossing the Atlantic	53
3 Personnel Reception Centre (Bournemouth)	59
Advanced Flying Unit (Watton)	63
Operational Training Unit (Hawarden)	69
165 Squadron (Heathfield)	75
165 Squadron (Eastchurch)	83
165 Squadron (Tangmere)	93
165 Squadron (Peterhead, Ibsley, and others)	101
Rest Tour (Grangemouth, Lindholme, and Ingham)	111
66 Squadron (Thorney Island, Funtington, Tangmere and Normandy)	121

66 Squadron (Grimbergen, Woenscrecht)	135
Fairwood Common, Buckingham Palace, Warrington, USS Mount Vernon, and Home	151
With the RCAF in Canada (1945-1948)	157
Bruce Warren's Postwar Career	167
Doug Warren's Postwar Career	183

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FOREWORD

by LCol. James Kettles

The Warren twins espoused the very essence of Canada in their love for their country, the love and respect of their squadron mates and of course their love of family. The fact that these two warriors spent the entire tour together, supporting one another and risked everything for King and Country speaks volumes for the type of people they were. Two humble farm boys from Nanton, Alberta with a fundamental love of everything aviation and a belief that it was their duty to join the cause, defend those who could not defend themselves and liberate those who were overrun by the Nazi blitz.



LCol James Kettles

This is a story shared by thousands of Canadian men and women who risked everything to uphold the values held so dear by Canada and many paid the ultimate price. It still rings true today. Albeit the reasons behind joining the RCAF may differ slightly, the dedication and patriotism shared by each Canadian has not. I see it in every new group of young men and women who start the CF18 Hornet Fighter Pilot Course at 4 Wing Cold Lake, Alberta each year. I see cautious apprehension when they step to the fighter jet every flight and see them return with joy and a great sense of accomplishment that only an elite group ever experiences. Men and women that understand they could be called upon at any time to defend those that cannot defend themselves, uphold the values held dear to Canada and perhaps sacrifice everything in the service to their country. Wrapped in that sense of duty is a deep seated love of aviation. Pilot Officer John Gillespie Magee Jr captured in his poem High Flight the pure joy that pilots experience every time they fly.

“I’ve topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace.
Where never lark, or even 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.”

As Douglas Warren did during the 1950’s, I am proud to lead the young men and women of 410 Squadron in times of war and times of peace. The legacy started by men such as the Warren twins lives on in this generation and I know for a fact it will continue to do so for many to come. As long as there are airplanes, there will be pilots who love to fly them.

NOCTIVAGA

Lieutenant Colonel James Kettles
Commanding Officer
410 Tactical Fighter (Operational Training) Squadron
Cold Lake, Alberta, Canada



INTRODUCTION

Douglas “Duke” Warren sent a letter to the Nanton Lancaster Society in November 1989. At that time the Lancaster Bomber was still outside and the Society operated the local tourist information booth in which it had placed some displays related to the aircraft. The first thing we saw when we opened the envelope was a photograph of two little boys, perhaps three or four years of age, and they had a dog hooked up to pull a wagon. They were obviously identical twins.

Duke had written, “I was recently sent a clipping by a friend and the clipping told about the Lancaster aircraft and your museum in general. I have a print from a painting which was done by John Rutherford, a well-known aviation artist, and have enclosed a short article about a time in the Warren Twins’ careers. This may be of interest to you, for the Warren Twins were born in Nanton in 1922.”

Until the arrival of Duke’s letter, the members of the Nanton Lancaster Society knew nothing of the Warren Twins and they had been virtually forgotten in Nanton. However, we were soon to find out that they were revered by those who knew the history of Canada’s wartime fighter pilots.

A few weeks later, Duke and his wife Melba delivered the print to the museum. This was the beginning of a wonderful relationship between this highly respected gentleman, his hometown, and the aviation museum that became the Bomber Command Museum of Canada.

Duke returned to Nanton numerous times, becoming an ardent supporter of the museum and always willing to attend and play a role in the museum’s special events. He was Master of Ceremonies at the dedication of the museum’s Lancaster to S/L Ian Bazalgette VC DFC and at our ‘Salute to Those who Served’ event in 1996. In 2001 Duke and his family were present at the dedication of the museum’s Memorial Garden that honours the Warren Twins, and in 2003, Duke inspected the local air cadet squadron.

Arguably the most renowned of the hundreds of Nantonites to have served in Canada’s armed forces, the Warren Twins have been reintroduced to their hometown through Duke’s association with the Bomber Command Museum of Canada.

The great majority of 'Gemini Flight' was written by Doug Warren and self-published in May 1997. It is his record of the Warren Twins' early years, training, and wartime flying, although I have inserted a number of brief vignettes and some additional information.

I have written the description of Bruce Warren's post-war career. Most of the description of Doug's post-war career was written by Doug. These extensive sections are taken from various chapters of Larry Milberry's books, 'The Canadian Sabre' and 'Sixty Years'. A member of the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame, Larry has authored, co-authored or edited twenty-one books on Canada's aviation history, including many of the best-known reference books on the subject. Thank you Larry for permitting your work to be part of this.

'Gemini Flight' remains Duke's book. It is a pleasure and an honour for the museum to publish this record of these two outstanding Canadian military pilots.

-Dave Birrell

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GEMINI FLIGHT

by Douglas Warren

HALIFAX, 1942

Halifax Nova Scotia in the war years was one of the most important cities in Canada, and of vital importance to the war effort in general. It was here the convoys were assembled prior to departing for Europe. The streets were crowded with civilian workers, and military personnel wearing uniforms of every kind, indeed, it was said that there was such a variety of uniforms, of all Allied forces, and being a seaport many were naval uniforms, that two intelligence officers walked around in German Navy uniforms for two days before they were checked

Very early in January 1942, on a cold damp morning, a mountain of kit bags grew on the parade square at Goresbrook. The kit bags were all blue, for this was the barrack area of the 'Y' Depot of the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Brown mountains of kit bags grew in another area, as Army units prepared to march. A variety of shipping lay in the harbour and Bedford Basin, and small boats scurried back and forth on their business leaving plumes of vapour in the cold air.

Soon, from the barracks and mess halls, the men on draft began to assemble, flights were formed, roll-call carried out by depot staff, squadrons were turned in line and the wing draft moved off towards the harbour. The citizens of Halifax were used to these sights, besides it was a bitterly cold morning, so few were in the streets, and those who were hardly noticed the marching men, so accustomed they were to the sight. Most of the men carried some items of personal gear as well as the standard over the shoulder bag with toilet articles. It was with relief that the column reached the quay behind the Nova Scotia hotel where a large passenger liner, the P & O Stratheden, was moored ready for them to embark.

The column, reduced to two abreast, slowly mounted the gangplank and airmen were dispersed to their quarters. Watching over the side, and making not so subtle remarks they considered appropriate to the occasion, were a number of men in Army uniform who had been boarded some hours before. Finally, the embarkation was finished, and with a sudden commotion of dock workers lines were cast off, tugs took over control of the ship. The Stratheden was moved to the centre of the

harbour where anchor was dropped to wait while the convoy and naval escort were assembled.

Shortly after the anchorage was reached, the airmen who had been sent below to their quarters had stowed their kit and began to gather on deck to survey their new surroundings. The ship was to be their home for an unknown time to come, and one in which common sense told them that in January 1942 might be a particularly dangerous home. The majority had never been on an ocean-going vessel before, indeed many had never been on a vessel of any size before nor had they seen an assembly of liners and naval escort vessels before. So to most it was all new and interesting and with the spirit of youth they explored the new surroundings.

Detached from the larger group and leaning over the rail together in closed conversation were two young men in the uniform of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Each wore a pilot badge, so new it was easy to tell they were recent graduates of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. One wore the uniform of a Pilot Officer. The other an air NCO's uniform with the rank of sergeant on his sleeve.

A closer look by an observer would show a startling similarity between the two young men, in their features, their size, their mannerisms and voice. It was obvious they were identical twins.

How these two young men had arrived at the railing of the Stratheden, how they fared after they reached the war zone in Europe, and their lives after that war was over is what this story is all about.

EARLY YEARS IN NANTON AND WETASKIWIN

Bournemouth, with No. 3 PRC (Personnel Reception Centre), was a holding unit for the RCAF. This meant that air crew arriving there from training overseas, were held until they went on to their next period of training, either an Advanced Flying Unit (AFU) or an Operational Training Unit (OTU). There was lots of free time granted when we could be together, and although there were regulations about officer and NCO fraternizing, no one seemed to notice nor did any senior officer ever call us in to reprimand Duke since he was the officer. This time gave us a chance to reflect back -a sort of pause in time. We would recall our past and ponder what might lay ahead.

We were born on the 28th of May 1922 at Nanton, Alberta. Our parents were Earl and Marie Warren who had emigrated to Canada in 1917 from Oregon. Previously a sister had been born, then two children who died very young, then ourselves as a pair of identical twins, and then another sister.

Our father said at one time he was not sure if his ancestors had been in Ireland and went to Scotland, or had gone the other way and then back to England. He told us that an ancestor had come over on the Mayflower, but we were never sure if this was true or if he was 'spoofing' us. In any case, on the Mayflower passenger list there is a Richard Warren, named alphabetically below Miles Standish. R. Warren is shown as a merchant from London and he lived from 1581 to 1628.

At the time of his arrival in America Richard Warren was 40 years



The Warren Twins at Nanton, aged 4. Our father had made a wagon for Topsy to pull us in. We liked animals ever after.

old and a notation made against the manifest later states, "his wife and children were left behind, but that they arrived later." Our father was born in Indiana at Thorntown, and one of his favourite songs was, 'On the banks of the Wabash far away'. Leaving Indiana at an early age, but not before completing school, he worked in construction in Texas, as a conductor on the Great Northern Railroad, and as a cattle rancher in Oregon before coming to Alberta to farm.

Our mother, whose maiden name was Marie Gottig, was born in St. Louis Missouri, of first generation Americans of German origin. Her father was a jeweller and a gifted engraver often used by Tiffany's of New York for special projects. One of the family ancestors was Theodore Mommsen, the famous historian who wrote on Roman laws. Although a consistent admirer of England and fluent in English, he assailed the British policy for their treatment of the Boers at the time of the Boer War. When her schooling in St. Louis was completed, our mother came west to visit relatives in Oregon and met and married our father there.

Our mother often told us that as twins we came as a surprise! Naturally they were only expecting one child and there had been no previous history of twins on either side of the family. We were active, healthy babies but we were late starting to talk. We had babbled to each other long before (seemingly ignoring conversation with our parents and older sister). This often is noted as a characteristic of twins, especially identical twins it seems.

We were dressed alike, and we desired to be dressed alike. Even until the time we enlisted we did this, and of course it was no hardship for us to be in the S3116 uniform after joining up. Our marks in school were always within a few points of each other with my twin being generally ahead of me. We were consistently in the top-half of the class and enjoyed school. Our teachers could tell us apart after a certain period, largely because there was considerable difference in our hand writing. Why this was so is unknown, but the suggestions were that possibly one of us should have been left handed.

For the first six years of our life we lived in the town of Nanton. Our father had a farm some miles east of the village, and would come home on weekends and occasionally during the week. His farming was all done by horses, and he had no car. We were always happy to see him and impressed by his six and eight horse teams.

Nanton, a small town south of Calgary, was first called Mosquito Creek Crossing on the 1880 trail between Fort Macleod and Calgary. About 1900 the town was moved a few miles south east to it's present location. Our parents had property on the edge of town, close by the line of elevators. The buildings were a long line of sheds that had been modified at some time to provide modest living quarters and storage area for machinery. The yard was large, and had a long narrow section going away from the road. Rarely at that time would an aircraft fly over. But

when we were six, I recall running to the end of the yard 'racing' an aircraft en-route to Calgary. To us it seemed to be going so slow in the air, yet it passed over the far fence long before we reached there.

In 1928 we started school at Nanton but before the first year was finished our family moved to Wetaskiwin, midway between Red Deer and Edmonton. Our father wanted to get into mixed farming as opposed to only grain farming in the Nanton area. The new farm was located on a section of land that had one corner touching the town. The house was located at the centre of the property, and had been built by an English immigrant some years before. Unfortunately he had underestimated how cold it got in Canada and all the water pipes had frozen the first year and had never been replaced. Water had to be carried from the well and there was no indoor plumbing.

In the fall of 1929 we were in Grade 2 at Wetaskiwin's King Edward School, close by where our property touched the edge of town. In these early years our father would take us to school and bring us home in a horse-drawn buggy. These 'Bennett Buggies', as they were called, were made from the running gear of a light car with a small box-like structure on top and modified to be pulled by a team of horses. If it was not our father who drove it, it was our father's uncle whose name was George Hodge and who lived with us. Everyone called him 'Uncle George'.

As we grew older we walked back and forth to school and after Grade 8 we went to Queen Alexandra School. This was where the high school grades of 9 to 12 were located and the school was more into the city. Wetaskiwin was called a city, although its population was only just over 2000 people. However in the early days of Alberta, that was the criteria for a city. You only needed 2000 people. It changed shortly after



**Nine years old, Grade 5, King Edward Public School,
Wetaskiwin, Alberta, 1931**

Wetaskiwin reached that number so for many years the town had the reputation of being the province's smallest city. A dubious honour the citizens felt, although the mayor was proud of his 'city'.

In winter we often rode back and forth in a sleigh, for milk had to be delivered to the creamery each day. The team used for this duty was a pair of mares, one black and the other salt and pepper. They were called Sadie and Betty. They were familiar with the routine, stopping to pick up a neighbour child automatically, stopping at the school for our young sister, then proceeding to the creamery without any direction from the driver who often had his face turned away from the wind in any event. On one occasion they started for town without a driver or passengers and when they stopped for the neighbour's youngster, it was discovered and the team were turned around and sent back. Horses are like that are very intelligent. They can learn what is required of them quite quickly and also what is not required, for they can seem to be quite mischievous.

Before our father acquired a tractor about 1936, we had some thirty horses on the farm. When working the land eight horse teams were common and frequently twelve, although the usual was six or four. There was plowing, seeding, harrowing, haying, and the multitude of tasks to keep the farm running. Repairing harness was an ongoing chore and harnessing the horses and cleaning the stables was time consuming. These were daily activities, just as milking the cows morning and night never stopped. The tasks were perhaps boring, but they had to be done. There is a certain routine in farm life which cannot be ignored. It teaches discipline and we benefited by it, although we were not aware of this at the time.

When we were young we had minor chores to do: fill the wood box, collect the eggs, water some of the gentler horses, and pumping some water for use in the house. As we became older it was milk the cows, clean the barn, and harness the horses. When summer came and we were in our teens we were for all practical purposes doing the work a man was expected to do. There is with farming, as with all jobs really, a sense of accomplishment with a job well done, and my twin and I often worked together in many tasks whose completion gave us great satisfaction.

We were fortunate as a family to have an uncle, our mother's brother, living and working in Seattle as a chef who sent us a great store of reading material. All the comics of each month would come as a large bundle as he saved them from the Seattle Post Intelligencer. The Saturday Evening Post with those wonderful Rockwell covers and The National Geographic were so fascinating for all the family. As well, there was The American Boy, great stories of adventure and educational in many articles. Our father especially liked to read when he had time. Everyone enjoyed reading and we were all grateful to Uncle Elmer.

The one type of magazine our uncle did not provide but which we

were very keen to read were aviation magazines. At this time the English aviation magazines, *Aeroplane* and *Flight*, were predominant in Canada and we used to read them at the Wetaskiwin City Library. We also wanted to buy them, but they cost a quarter, twenty-five cents. I recall over-hearing our parents discussing family finances at one time during those terrible depression years. Our mother speaking said, "Can we afford that twenty-five cents a week we spend for the boys' magazine?" Our father replied, "No, we really can't but if it keeps them out of trouble it is worth it."

We must have been teenagers at the time of this conversation and occasionally going to town to skate or attend school functions because before that time we could not get into much trouble on the farm. We did start playing on our grade 11 rugby team, now called football. This was quite a concession on our father's part for it meant we were late for milking the cows whenever there was a practice after school.

While in high school our academic marks were in the top half of the class. My twin was, on average, a slightly better student than I. We enjoyed school, found it far more interesting than farm chores, and we made many friends. We started attending dances, went skating on Sundays if we could get away, and occasionally in winter would bring a team of horses and sleigh into town to give a sleigh ride to the town youngsters. We never played hockey. We couldn't skate well enough for that. We only started skating in our teens.

Another function we had attended since we were small boys was the annual November 11th ceremony. This always impressed us and we had great admiration for the veterans, especially the Legion President, a Mr. Wesley Burroughs who we got to know well as a friend in later years. As a matter of fact, our families became very close and continue to be so.

In 1938 we were sixteen years old and our family moved from Wetaskiwin, where my father farmed 640 acres, to a farm of 1240 acres some eighteen miles west of Ponoka on the Battle River. This new farm was bisected by the river and was partly treed. A large portion was hay land and it was quite hilly in spots. It was a far more scenic farm, but much farther from town. We attended a portion of our last year of school at Ponoka and had to drive into town each day of the week. This sending of two strong young men into town to school was a subject of some comment by the nearby farmers who felt that such manpower could be put to better use in the fields.

The two vehicles we had at that time were both rather interesting. The modified car which was a small truck was a 1925 Dodge that had an unusual starter/generator system. There was no engagement of starter gears, for the starter generator was chain driven and there was no noise on starting. The other vehicle was a 1934 12 cylinder Pierce Arrow - beautiful vehicle, sometimes called the Rolls Royce of America. My father had obtained this vehicle by trading in a 1929 Buick car and 400 turkeys to an Edmonton auto dealer. The turkeys were for Christmas give-aways.

In June of 1939 we graduated from Grade 12 and our work on the farm began in earnest. In addition to our father and ourselves, quite often an additional man was hired to assist in the work. We operated a tractor at this time, and had for several years so large teams were no longer in use but often six horses were used for heavy work and four to each binder in the fall. Again, it was mixed farming, with hogs, sheep, cattle and horses. Wheat, oats, barley were planted and hay mowed early in the summer for winter feed. In the spring the river generally over-flowed its banks so instead of fording at a shallow spot we had to drive some distance to cross by a road-bridge.

Although my twin and I could not swim, we often went in the river chest-deep where we were confident of the bottom. Our dog, a collie named Pal, would also jump into the water with us. Quite remarkably, should one of us put our head underwater Pal would immediately 'panic' and try to pull the person out. It seemed that he realized that humans should not put their heads under water or perhaps he was even more intelligent than that and realized we could not swim. Our father could swim but up till this time we had never had the opportunity to take advantage of a body of water large enough for us to learn to swim.

During September 1939 World War Two started on the 3rd of the month. This had been expected as the news on the radio and in the paper predicted trouble in Europe and had told of tensions between Germany and the other countries for some months. Canada declared war on the 10th of September. Our father was very much an American Isolationist and felt strongly that Canada and the USA should have nothing to do with war in Europe. A statement he frequently made was, "Let them fight amongst themselves. Don't send our men to be killed over there". We talked this over, my twin and I, and we were determined to join the air force. We regretted going against our father's wishes but our minds were made up. Since we were only seventeen years old we knew we would have to wait.

Winter came and went. The time seemed to drag till we were eighteen years old on May the 28th. We had told our parents we wanted to join up and enlist in the air force. This upset both our father and mother a great deal. This was not unexpected, and we often discussed it with them but only if they brought the subject up. We would not start the conversation for we knew it was very emotional for them and we had no wish to hurt their feelings, although we did insist that it was our firm intention. Notices had appeared in the papers about enlisting and although the army and navy were taking recruits men wishing to enlist as aircrew were told there was a delay in training. In July an incident occurred which delayed our plans for some months in any event.

One hot summer day I went up in the loft of our garage to get some tires stored there. Rather a dim place to work with little light, I backed into and knocked a hornet's nest off a rafter. Since it was summer



The Warren Twins at Sixteen

I was not wearing a shirt at the time and I was immediately stung by a great number of very angry insects. Fleeing down the ladder, I rushed out and jumped into the horse trough, diving under the water to get the hornets off me. This was quite effective, and after going to the house and having my mother put some medication on the stings I was shaken but alright.

However, that evening I became quite ill to my stomach and spent a miserable night. My father told me this sort of thing often happened as a reaction to bee stings. He predicted I would feel better in the morning and I fully expected that to be true, for I was very strong and healthy. But the situation was worse in the morning and became progressively worse during the day, so much so that in the evening my father was terribly concerned and took me to the hospital at Wetaskiwin. It was determined that I was suffering from what is called an intussusception and an operation was performed at once. This is an unusual occurrence in a strong, healthy person. This occurrence was usually confined to infants as a problem or to an adult suffering from a period of severe malnutrition.

Life in the hospital was pretty miserable for me for some days but I was alive and was told I would not have been had my father delayed much longer before bringing me in. The problem was that he thought that the hornet stings were the cause, but the doctor said this was not so. It was a coincidence that I became ill at that time. Never-the-less, for many years afterwards I was very nervous around hornet or bee nests. However I began to recover and gain back the weight I had lost, some fifteen pounds or more. About three weeks later I returned home, still weak but getting better each day.

Because we were identical twins, we were very much alike in looks, size, and mannerisms. Many people had great difficulty in telling us apart. This was most obvious with brief acquaintance and some people never seemed to get us straight. We were used to this confusion and never gave it a second thought. But our parents never had this difficulty and always addressed us correctly by our names (Bruce or Douglas). But much to our surprise, and our parents', when I returned from the hospital weighing less than my twin, they often mistook me for Bruce and my brother for Douglas. It would seem all the previous years my face was very slightly fatter than Bruce's and this was how they had unconsciously told us apart.

My recovery took some time and we wanted to join the service together so it was October before we proceeded to Edmonton for our aircrew medical. These we passed easily. We produced our birth certificates and High School Diplomas and were told we could enlist and train as air gunners at once, but if we wished to be pilots we would have to wait until called. We decided to wait. Although we realized wishing to be a pilot was just a wish, and it might change if we didn't pass the course. At least we wanted to start in that direction.

Christmas 1940 was both a sad and happy time for our parents. They were reconciled to the fact we were going to enlist in the air force and wanted to enjoy this last Christmas together and we did too.

Following Christmas 1940, we knew from the news that we would soon get our call to report. The Battle of France had woken us to the reality that we were not going to hang out our washing on the Siegfried Line. The Battle of Britain, which we followed intently with great interest, indicated that a pilot's life in the air force was not all that easy and was likely very dangerous. Common sense had told us that before of course, but again the reality of the situation was driven home by the hard facts.

Knowing we would soon be on our way, we worked hard to get many of the major projects on the farm completed as much as possible to make it easier for our father when we would be away. This was a time, perhaps, when we got to know him better than any other time in our lives. He treated us more as adults and we had quite long conversations with him about the war. However this did not change his opinion about the situation.

In March of 1940 we received notice to report to Edmonton for a quick medical and, if we passed, we would be enlisted and on our way. When we showed our father the message his comment was, "We shouldn't be sending our young men overseas. Let the Europeans fight their own wars." He never changed that opinion all through the years.

MANNING DEPOT (BRANDON)

The recruiting office in Edmonton at this time was in the Tegler building. A group of potential recruits assembled there early in the morning of the 14th of March 1941. We were 'bright-eyed and bushy-tailed' as the saying goes to be given our last medical before signing the papers which would make us AC2's (Airmen, 2nd Class). The medicals were reasonably thorough for the aircrew entrants, but not as complete as those we had undergone in October. Following the medical, we were lined up and sworn in to His Majesty's Royal Canadian Air Force for the duration or as long as His Majesty felt he needed us.

My service number was R93529, and my twin's was R93530. These numbers we kept until we were commissioned, and in a very short time we had them firmly fixed in our minds. The 'R' stood for Reserve, as opposed to Regular force members, who had different prefixes to their numbers.

We were given train tickets, meal tickets, and instructions to be on the eastbound passenger train departing Edmonton that night. And so we were, to begin that journey which we hoped would eventually see us overseas as pilots on operations against Germany. Basically all in our late teens or early twenties, we were a mix of town and country young men embarking on a great adventure. Some seemed more worldly than others.



An RCAF Recruiting Centre



The Warren Twins on the day they enlisted in the RCAF

In some instances, they enthralled the rest of us with tales of the girls they had left behind. There were those who had smoked for some time and others who decided to start smoking on the journey to Brandon (that was our destination). We had never smoked and had no desire to start. To us it seemed rather a waste of money which was hard to come by. A packet of cigarettes cost as much as a good aviation magazine and we much preferred the latter. It wasn't a question of morals, for our father smoked a pipe and sometimes a cigar on very special occasions such as Christmas. He had always said if we wanted to smoke to do so at home, but we had no inclination for that.

This train journey was the first time we had been on a train since the age of five when the family had made a visit to Walla Walla, Washington. It was interesting and we enjoyed it. The first part was at night of course and we saw little of the countryside, but we did get off at the Saskatoon station for a few minutes where relatives met us. Our father's cousin, Virgil Warren, was in charge of the mechanical maintenance department for the fire department there. We had met him several times before and enjoyed his tales of life in the American Army Aviation Corp during WW I. Virgil had been a mechanic then and told us about the 'Jenny' trainer aircraft and the OX-5 engine. His wife Hilda, who was a very motherly woman, brought down a cardboard box of 'goodies' which we were pleased to see.

One thing about this first entrance into service life which attracted our attention was the manner of eating, or lack of manners, which some of our fellow recruits displayed. We were not sure why, or to tell the truth,

where they gained the knowledge, but both our parents insisted on good manners at the table. It was obvious that some parents had not. It wasn't a case of feeling superior, it was more a feeling we had of wonderment as to why these young men did not know better.

We were still in civilian clothes although with meal tickets, the waiters and porters knew at once that we were new recruits en-route to Manning Depot at Brandon for many had made the journey before us. Most of the train staff treated us as ordinary passengers but the odd waiter seemed to look down his nose at us a bit in that way waiters do all over the world when a sizable tip seems unlikely. However the food was good, and who ever travelled by train in those days will not forget the 'Winnipeg Gold Eye' on the menu.



A recruit at an RCAF Manning Depot

It was mid-March and snow covered most of the prairies. We arrived in Brandon and were met by staff of Number 2 Manning Pool and a chilly reception it was, both weather-wise and otherwise.

A sergeant and several corporals had been waiting for our arrival for some time. We were not sure if the waiting had made them so 'snarly' or whether sergeants and corporals were like that all the time. Perhaps it was to demonstrate to new recruits, that they were really in the RCAF now and not at home with their mothers. In any event, after a great deal of shouting and swearing (rather unnecessary we thought), we were lined up and walked off to the barracks. I can not say that we marched off for at this stage we were just a shambling group trying to go the same way. Upon reaching the barracks, we were issued bedding and shown to our double-decker bunks in the old cow barn on the Brandon Exhibition grounds.

We took a bed and my twin had the upper bunk. Next morning everyone in the huge room was awakened by the shouts and rude comments of the staff and the mad rush for the ablutions to wash and shave. The day began with issuing of uniforms and the packing up of civilian clothing that we wished to be sent home. The saying 'one size fits all' took on a special meaning.

Our problem was with the headgear. Stores did not have, nor did not seem to be able to get, any size larger than 6 1/2 and we needed 7 1/4. We had to take the smaller size and the caps kept falling off our heads to the disgust of the almighty drill sergeant who soon appeared on the scene. It was some months before the supply situation in hats got sorted out.

Our days at Manning Pool were filled with parades for many and varied reasons - drill, hygiene, security lectures, rifle drill -and waiting and waiting. We soon learned that having a name beginning with 'W' was not an advantage. This was particularly true on pay parades when those men whose last name began with 'A' would be in the canteen a full hour before we would arrive.

The canteen for recruits was 'dry'. This meant no beer or liquor was available there. However, there were soft drinks, hot dogs, hamburgers, ice cream, cigarettes, etc. This provided for all our wants at this time.

When one thousand young men are gathered together such as we were at Manning Pool, there is bound to be a lot of good-natured chaffing and joking (and of course some not so good-natured). There were a lot of shouts of, "Anyone here from the West?" (or East as the case may be) and when there was a reply in the affirmative, the shout went up, "Well to Hell with the West" (or East, whichever had been replied).

Why this was repeated so frequently during the day, and often into the night, was never clear, for after the first hour or so spent in the large barrack room it was no longer original. There were about five hundred double decker bunks on our floor. There was also considerable swearing and obscene language at times, particularly when the order came to 'rise and shine'.

Soon we settled into the routine, and got to know others in our flight. Sutherland, Sutton, Vincent, Waddell, Warren, Watkins, Watson, Wilson, Yeomans are names which have a certain rhythm to them as they are bellowed out by a leather-lunged drill corporal on the parade square. Here I must mention the problem of our caps falling off all the time. This created more consternation in our drill instructor and was also very embarrassing to us. Sometimes if they fell off while marching, the flight just kept on marching and they had to be retrieved later in a sorry state after being repeatedly tramped

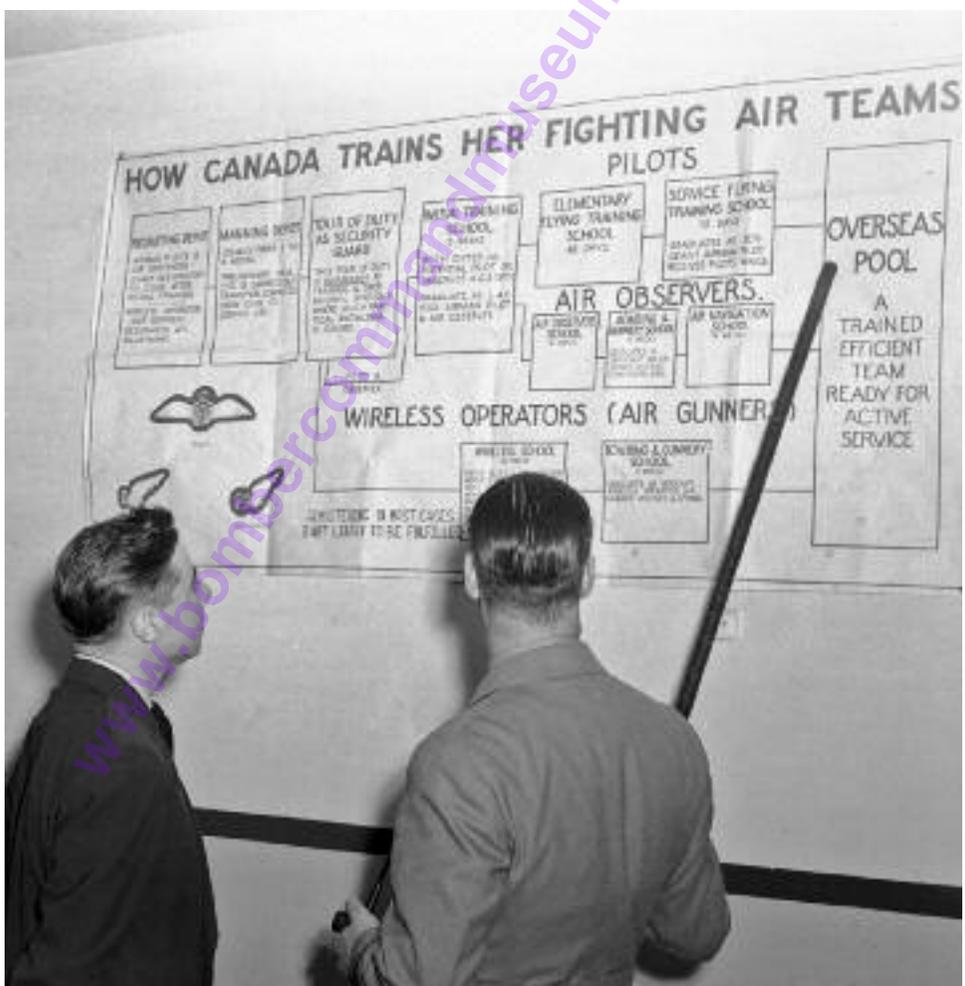
Occasionally fights would break out and sometimes quite serious blows would be struck. But if a staff member saw it, the fight was broken up at once with the admonition, "You are here to fight the Germans, not each other."

Oddly, frequently my twin and I would be urged to put on the gloves for 'a friendly fight' by various people and the reason given was that the fact we would be so evenly matched it would be especially interesting. We always declined these invitations. However some smart

alecks would often say, "What's the matter, you yellow?" We dealt with these comments either by ignoring them or agreeing we were both yellow and had no guts for fighting. Since they couldn't get us to fight or argue the game had no purpose and we were left alone.

We found this mixing into a large group a new experience for us. Before leaving home, we knew our classmates and we were friends with many. However, because we had commitments for chores at home we really had not had the opportunity to be thrown in with a lot of young men our own age in an unsupervised environment.

We did have the very great advantage over all others in that we had our best friend and closest confidant with us at all times -each other. Identical twins have a special rapport unknown to others, and it has frequently been said that talking to your twin is like talking to yourself. Indeed, such was our closeness that throughout our lives one of us would start a sentence and the other would take over halfway through and finish it.



The structure of the BCATP is explained to a recruit

Rumors thrive in such a place as a manning pool: more pilots were needed, there was a glut of pilots and we would all be air-gunners, a big draft would be called tomorrow, we never would be drafted, and we would spend the entire war in Brandon! And others equally far-fetched. We were given the opportunity to leave the barracks after a short time and we visited a local family that was friendly with the Burroughs family in Wetaskiwin. We were invited to dinner several times and enjoyed their company. In general terms Brandon was a hospitable city and most citizens went out of their way to assist the service man.

The latter stage of our training here included rifle drill although we never fired the old Lee Enfields which we paraded with in the drill hall. However, it seems our flight was considered ready to help the war effort, and on the 5th of May after six weeks at Brandon, we were sent to Mossbank, Saskatchewan to do guard duty.

Guard duty was designed for two purposes. The first was to give some additional military training in discipline and the second was to provide a security force for the new airfields opening up for the BCATP - the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan to give the scheme its full name. It also was a useful way to occupy potential aircrew as they waited for an opening at the Initial Training Schools, which were called ITS's. The period of guard duty was irritating to the aircrew recruits, but it did serve a good purpose for the RCAF.

After a ten hour train ride we arrived at Mossbank, Saskatchewan. Here was located No. 2 Bombing and Gunnery School, known as #2 BGS. At Mossbank potential observers and air gunners learned their trade. The observer might go on to additional training in Canada but the air-gunners most likely would leave Mossbank and go directly overseas after a short period of pre-embarkation leave.

Located near Mossbank was a large lake, rather alkaline as so many in Saskatchewan are, but ideal for the purpose of training air firing. The students were flown in Fairey Battle aircraft, all of which had seen better days. Frequently there were forced landings, most likely caused by a glycol leak from the Rolls Royce engines. But the open prairie and the sturdy construction of the aircraft made force landings relatively safe. For pilots who had been there any length of time, it was almost routine to return with an engine over-heating.

Guard duty was boring because nothing happened. The drill was four hours on and four hours off for a certain period then a day off and occasionally a forty-eight hour pass. We were issued with live ammunition but instructed to make sure we didn't shoot anybody. We had to account for the ammo when we came off duty and there was a great rumpus if any one had lost or fired a round at a suspicious movement that did not respond to, "Halt Who goes there?" several times. Coyotes do not respond.



A Fairey Battle with a student air-gunner

When we arrived at Mossbank, the station had only been open a short time. In residence were three courses, one mostly Australian, the other two chiefly RCAF with a good number of Americans who had enlisted in the Canadian service. The Aussies, as everyone called them, were a great group and always playing tricks on each other and on unsuspecting Canadians. I recall on one occasion one of their number who was a heavy sleeper was carried in his bunk outside and placed in the centre of a very large deep mud puddle. He was left there overnight and the next morning when the sun came up and he awoke, the entire camp learned a great number of new Aussie words and expressions!

Many of the street and sidewalks were unfinished. Even military trucks often got stuck around the station. We wondered how they were expected to perform on a battlefield. Our boots were covered in mud most of the time and we were expected to clean them, and we did. The threat of taking us out of aircrew training was enough to bring out the shoe polish. Some of the NCO's were more unreasonable than others, but it was all good experience for most of the new recruits.

Somewhere in the background there must have been an officer in charge, but we never saw him. The NCO's had the power to order, discipline, arrange '48s' and, in general, rule our lives. We did see officers and, if carrying a rifle, we did our salute smartly by hitting the butt but our paths seldom crossed.

The closest large town was Moose Jaw. On a '48' we could go in and stay overnight, but this took money unless one had friends. We did not know anyone in Moose Jaw so never stopped over. Our trips into the

city were day trips only and it was easy to hitchhike in and out as people were very good at picking one up. Often they were farmers. My twin and I enjoyed talking with them and they with us as we told them we also had come from a farming family in Alberta.

Our group had arrived at Mossbank on the 6th of May and we knew that the stay there was expected to be about a month so at the end of three weeks everyone became restless and wondering when we would be posted to Initial Training School. The closest one, and the only one in the West at that time, was at Regina and we expected to go there.

One of the attractions, if it can be called that, at Mossbank was the opportunity to arrange a ride in a Fairey Battle aircraft during a test flight or gunnery exercise. These obsolete aircraft had been sent to Canada to fill a need for training aircraft. Flying operationally in France at the start of the war. they were found to be 'dead ducks' and were rapidly withdrawn to non-operational training duties. Rather a large single engine aircraft, with a wing span of fifty-four feet, and weighing over 10,000 pounds, they could carry passengers as well as the pilot and personnel under training.

It was here that we first flew, after wanting to do so ever since we had been small boys. When flying as a passenger, one had to occupy the centre cockpit area where the navigator-bomb aimer would be situated when one was carried. The fumes from the exhaust would often be carried into this area and if the air was turbulent one had to fight nausea. An over-exuberant pilot was sure to land with sickly looking passengers and sometimes the aircrew trainee would be having second thoughts about his chosen career.

Shortly after the first week of June 1941, the notice of the posting to the Initial Training School (ITS) in Regina arrived for our group. Rifles were turned in, our kit was packed, we cleaned the mud of Mossbank from our boots and departed, anxious to start our aircrew training.

INITIAL TRAINING SCHOOL (REGINA)

The Initial Training School (known as ITS) for Western Canada was located at Regina in the former Regina College. The barracks were in the old Normal School. Both were situated not far from the Provincial Capitol building near Wascana Park. It was June, the weather was mild, and reveille was at 6:00 am each morning, ten minutes of PT, breakfast and then a Wing Parade and Inspection. Classes and an hour of drill followed.

Here at ITS a 'sorting out' took place. Instruction was at an elementary level in theory of flight, navigation, radio, engines, and there was a brief session in a Link Trainer, a primitive flight simulator that we would come to know well later. In addition, exams in math and some science were part of the curriculum. Included in the training was Morse code and all students had to reach a certain level of proficiency in this subject. I must confess that I had some difficulty adapting to Morse code, but with the help of my twin, I reached the required standard.

In a letter home to our mother we commented on the good food, which I remember was catered by an outside firm and not RCAF cooks. We regarded ITS as going to school again and enjoyed the time spent at Regina. We also reported in a letter home that a brick of ice cream cost 17 cents (the letter is dated June 1941). It should be mentioned that we wrote letters home frequently and our parents kept them all. In the interval between our arrival in Brandon on the 14th of March and reaching ITS on 6th of June we wrote twenty-four letters in about twelve weeks,

Most of our letters we addressed to our mother, for no special reason but our mother wrote the majority of letters in our family and it seemed the natural thing to do. Our father was always sent a special



Aircrew trainees practicing Morse Code

letter on his birthday, and we knew mother shared the letters with father and our sister Joyce. Both our parents were terribly upset by our joining the RCAF and training to be pilots for they were well-aware of the dangers. We felt by writing frequently and assuring them we were in good health and happy it would lessen their anxiety.

Towards the end of the course, an order was issued that suitcases were not allowed and only a very limited amount of civilian clothes. It was not clear why this came about, but on the 22nd of June 1941, Hitler launched 'Barbarossa', the invasion of Russia. For some reason (I did not think there was any connection), a good deal of mention was made of gas attacks and the use of gas masks. We would receive those later overseas. So, we packed up our suitcase with our civilian clothes, and rather than sending it home at once, took it to a family in Regina we knew for safe-keeping.

Our pay was very low and there were always men who were short for one reason or another. Others had little schemes going to augment their income. At one time my twin was pressing clothes. He received ten cents for trousers and twenty-five cents for tunics. Not everyone had money to pay of course so they had to press their own. The fortunate few were often men whose family was sending funds to them, or whose previous employer was making up the difference between their service pay and what they previously earned. Quite a few companies did this. Together we had loaned money to one of our classmates, taking his watch for security. When he paid us back we were able to purchase one Rolex 'Victory' wristwatch for \$32.50. We also put a \$10 deposit on another of the same. A month later we had saved enough and sent the Regina jeweller the remaining sum, he then mailed the watch to us at the Elementary Flying Training School.

The decision as to what aircrew position one would be trained for, at least at first, was made at ITS. There were very few who wanted to be anything other than a pilot which was a natural wish for most of us there. But other aircrew were needed, observers, wireless operators and air-gunners. Later on in the training, the positions of navigators, bomb-aimers, and flight engineers were introduced.

How people were selected depended partly on the subjective opinion of the training staff, the results of certain exams, and the particular need of the training schools at the particular time. In addition, and in fairness to the staff, they also tried to accommodate the individuals wishes as much as possible. It was realized that a happy trainee is going to do a better job than an unhappy one.

So the posting lists were placed on the bulletin board and to our delight we saw we were slated for pilot training at No. 5 EFTS, High River, Alberta. As pleased as we were for our good fortune, we were sad for several of our friends who were not selected for EFTS, but were off to Air Observer School (AOS) at Rivers, Manitoba to become navigators.

Our intake gathered at our usual tables in the mess hall that night and sang some rowdy songs in the canteen. Others dispersed into Regina, but in the morning we all went to the station and entrained for our respective destinations and futures as RCAF aircrew.



The Warren Twins at Regina wearing the 'white flash' to denote aircrew under training



Tiger Moths at No. 5 EFTS High River

ELEMENTARY FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL (HIGH RIVER)

On the 14th of July 1941, we left Regina at 6:35 pm by train to travel to High River, Alberta. The aerodrome there had been in use since WW I and first the Canadian Air Force and then the Royal Canadian Air Force had operated a station there. In peacetime, forest fire patrols in the nearby mountains were the main activities. But shortly after the start of WW II, High River became No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School. On the way to High River we travelled through Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, MacLeod, Claresholm, and Nanton arriving at High River about 11 am. It was interesting to us to go through Nanton, for that is where we were born in 1922. It was easy to see our former home which was located not far from the railway station.

At this time a major change took place in our lives. We were granted permission to wear the coveted 'white flash' in our service caps, sometimes called 'wedgies'. The white flash indicated we were under training for aircrew duties in the RCAF. In addition, we took a step up the promotion ladder, not a giant step to be sure, only a small step up, but a step up never the less. We were promoted to the rank of Leading Aircraftman, normally called LAC. In addition, our daily rate of pay was \$1.50 and, on top of that, was the sum of 75 cents called flying pay. \$2.25 a day -we were rich!!!!

It was programmed by the training staff that students at EFTS would get fifty hours flying time in forty-nine days. I first flew at High River on the 18th of July with the instructor we had been assigned to. His name was Dusenbury, a small, dark-complexioned American from Los Angeles. Like many Americans, he came to Canada with previous flying experience, was enlisted as a Sergeant, put on leave without pay, and directed to become an instructor. Since we were both allocated to Dusenbury, he was surprised to find us as twins rather than two unrelated men whose last names happened to be the same.



De Havilland Tiger Moths at No. 5 EFTS High River

The air force had roll calls when the flights would be shifted from one duty to another. For example, since it was done alphabetically you would have Adams, Anderson, Andrews, Brown A, Brown H, etc. till the last names such as Wade, Wagner, Warren B, Warren D, Watson, etc. The system was such that generally three or four students with somewhat similar names would be given to each instructor. So it was a new experience for Dusenbury to suddenly find himself with two students that he could not tell apart.

Coupled with the white flash in our caps, and the princely sum of \$2.25 a day, there was also a decided change in our attitude to life in the RCAF. We had found life interesting and enjoyed the time we had spent at Manning Pool, Mossbank, and Regina. Although many of our peers had complained about the time spent before reaching High River, we had accepted the way things were and were relatively happy. At the time we noticed it was mostly young men from cities or towns who had complained. Looking back, I wonder if this was because farm boys at an early age learn some things happen in nature and cannot be changed. Cattle and horses must be fed in a routine, seeds have to be planted and take time to grow. Rain comes, sometimes hail, early frost, late frost and drought. These are all forces in life that cannot be changed and must be borne and adapted to.

But the change that I refer to was the thrill of flying. Actually learning to handle the controls, and becoming confident that we would qualify as pilots. This had been our ambition from the time we were six or eight years old. (Why this was so we did not know). Could it be because Lindbergh flew the Atlantic in 1927 when we were five years old? Was it because a local car dealer, Ted Reynolds at Wetaskiwin, would frequently fly locally? Who knows what drives these strong ambitions and desires in a young person's mind. But whatever it was, for most of our young lives we had had this over-whelming wish to fly. Now we were on the way and we were terribly enthusiastic about our life from the moment we arrived at High River.

The routine at High River was half the day at ground school, and the other half flying. Sometimes we flew in the morning, and sometimes in the afternoon. The Tiger Moth aircraft was one of the basic training aircraft of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP). The other being the Fleet 16 Finch which, although slightly smaller than the Tiger Moth, weighed slightly more. The technical description of the Tiger Moth was D.H. 82C, standing for de Havilland aircraft company model number 82C. The Moth had a wing span of twenty-nine feet, length of twenty-four feet, a top speed of 110 mph and weighed 1825 lbs. gross. The RCAF had an inventory of over 1500 of these aircraft, mostly built in Toronto.

High River is located in an area of strong winds and often these winds, at ground level or a few hundred feet up, would exceed the stalling speed of the Tiger Moth. Occasionally an aircraft would appear in the

circuit and, when flying directly into the wind, would stay in one spot relative to the ground if the pilot adjusted the power to give an airspeed equal to the wind speed. During a transfer of aircraft from Lethbridge to High River the flight encountered unexpected headwinds. As they approached High River several 'fluttered down' out of fuel within sight of the aerodrome. A strong wind was blowing at ground level and we students were called upon to help the ground crew hold the aircraft at the wing-tips so they could be taxied to the hangar.

Another problem in the summer flying at High River was the severe turbulence encountered due to surface heating at mid-day. Consequently, flying was scheduled early in the morning and would sometimes be shut down for a few hours over the most turbulent time of the day. Sudden thunderstorms or hail were also a menace, the latter particularly so, for the Tiger Moth wings and part of the fuselage, were fabric-covered and hailstones could do a great deal of damage. If a hailstorm was thought to be likely, all aircraft on the ground were pushed into the hangar. Those in the air would stay away till the storm passed, or diverted to another base.



Instructor, student and Tiger Moth at No. 5 EFTS High River

The decision to divert would have to be made by the pilot, as there were no radios fitted to Tiger Moths. Indeed there was no electrical communication between student and instructor in the Moth. Gosport tubes had been fitted, which was a simple system developed at Gosport aerodrome in the First World War. It consisted of tubes, rather like a garden hose, between the cockpits, and stethoscope like fittings plugged into it. There were ear-pieces on one's head so the student could hear the instructor's shouts. Most of the conversation was instructor to student and only infrequently, student to instructor.

Parachutes were carried on all flights and we students were told they cost \$450 each and that if we carelessly damaged one we would be charged. There was a requirement for early take-offs in summer, and if one was on flying duty in the morning, we arose at 3:30 am, had breakfast, went to the flight line, and if not on the first detail, found a quiet corner to curl up in.

In a few days, all our course members had flown at least once and most more often. My log book shows that in the week ending the 27th of July I flew six hours and twenty-five minutes. My total time was seven hours and twenty-five minutes and my instructor was satisfied with my progress. Dusenbury tried to keep all his students at about the same level and at the end of the week of the 27th of July my twin had flown an equal amount of time. We knew that if the weather remained good we would most likely be sent solo the following week. Being sent solo for the very first time is a high point in any pilot's life, and the occasion is never to be forgotten.

Because of our increased salary we were able to send \$40 back to the jeweller in Regina and he sent us another Rolex 'Victory' watch. We felt progress was being made in our financial affairs. In addition to the watch we were able to send \$5 to our father on his birthday, which fell on the 27th of July. In the letter that we wrote, we reminded our father of the time a severe hailstorm had ruined the farm's whole crop on the 27th of July, his birthday! I still recall that day. A beautiful summer day, the family was happy, it was our Dad's birthday, but at about 2:00 pm the hail hit and that was that for our crops. I think that the storm was in 1934 or 1935. As I write this in 1993, it is almost fantasy to think of a \$5 gift being important, but our father was very grateful for it. Such were the times in those days.

The food was catered by civilians at High River and except for a very few RCAF officers, there were no airmen of any rank present except those training to be pilots. The food was nicely served at the table with tablecloths and napkins. No waiting in cafeteria line-ups.

Each flying lesson was called a 'sequence'. For example, sequence 1 was air experience, 3 was taxiing, 7 was taking off into wind, 9 was gliding approach and landing. Sequence 10 was 'the big one' - spinning! And this sequence had to be entered into the log book in red ink

because of its importance. This sequence was shown on my 7th flight, and twice more before going solo.

On the 30th of July, Dusenbury had me airborne as his student for one hour and forty minutes, my longest trip to date. After landing he handed me over to an instructor called Blakely who gave me my 'solo check'. This relatively short (thirty minute) trip was to get a second opinion if I was ready to solo. And I was! Authorized for my first solo, I basically took off and landed. I flew only ten minutes, but it was a wonderful experience. I used red ink as I made the entry into my logbook, "SEQUENCE 11 - FIRST SOLO"

Total flying time until going solo was exactly eleven hours, and my twin had a total of twelve hours and five minutes before being sent solo on the 4th of August. I don't recall why there were several days in between our time of soloing but for some reason at the time I went solo, my twin only had slightly over nine hours dual. That meant our flying times were not the same. We were very pleased and happy when we both had soloed, for it meant we were on the first rung of the ladder towards becoming qualified pilots.

At the time of going solo there was an entry in our log books which had to be signed. The entry read: "Certified that I fully understand the petrol system, endurance data, engine limitations, and functioning of the auxiliary controls of the Tiger Moth." Dusenbury said that he was interested in bringing us both up to solo standard and to see if our flying ability was the same (he had said it was), but it was too much trouble for him to tell us apart and keep our training records separate. So shortly after my twin went solo, he was transferred to another instructor, R.M. Pilchard. We both still saw Dusenbury at off-duty times.

Because it was a civilian school and although a member of the RCAF on leave without pay, Dusenbury took a very casual attitude to service life and the inter-mixing of ranks. In the evenings he would often take students into the town of High River. Perhaps part of his attitude stemmed from the fact he was an American and he once said that he felt the English system of a military caste was not to his liking.

One evening we were invited to go into High River with Dusenbury and several other students. Of course we ended up in a beer parlour, (that was the accepted drill). We did not smoke or drink and declined to have a beer, which was unusual as most of the young trainees enjoyed the opportunity to drink. We had never smoked because if we had any money to spend we would buy an aviation magazine.

I am not sure why we didn't drink except we did not care to do so and it may have been our reluctance to spend what little money we had on something that was not tangible. We did want to get a better camera, and film and developing cost money. Before joining the service, and during our service, we always enjoyed taking photos to have and to send

home to our parents. So often we would join with the groups in the beer parlour but later have an ice cream or milkshake as our indulgence.

On one of these occasions when we were in High River at a restaurant having snacks and milkshakes, Dusenbury confessed to us why he had asked for Duke to be given to another instructor. There was a very strict regulation that before sending a student solo, he had to have been shown spins and also be capable of recovering from a spin. It seems that after he had signed one of us out solo, he had a terrible thought! Did he show one of us spins twice and the other none at all! It worried him terribly until the twin who had just been sent solo landed safely. Dusenbury was never able to tell us apart all the time we were at High River.

While at High River, (and all through our lives) we were always aware of where the other was, and what the other was doing. Because of this there was an incident which took place at High River. We were both flying one afternoon and when flying ceased I went to check with Duke but I couldn't find him, So I went to the Flight Commander to ask where they had landed. The Flight Commander checked the authorization sheet and said, "The instructor has signed in so they landed here and your brother has probably gone to his quarters." I was not satisfied as I knew this was wrong! I went out to the hangar, checked the letters on all the aircraft, and counted them. One was missing, and the hangar doors had been closed for the night.

I returned to the flight office, reported my findings, and with obvious irritation, the Flight Commander went out into the hangar and confirmed my statement. At once he sounded the alarm of a missing aircraft and preparations began to launch aircraft for a search. However, just at that time the missing aircraft proceeded to land. They had done the exercise west of the aerodrome and had been blown far away by a strong wind which had become a strong headwind upon their return. An instructor had signed in for his friend because he thought the one airborne had forgotten to do so. He was reprimanded for this.

About halfway through the course there was little ground school but a good deal of flying. Checking our log books, I find that during the month of August 1941 at High River my twin flew fifty-five times for a total of 26:25 dual and 25:10 solo. In my case I flew fifty-one times for a total of 21:15 dual and 26:40 solo. When checking our logbooks at the time of writing this, I found on 19 August 1941, I flew six times that day for a total of 5:40 hours and my twin flew five times for a total of 4:45 hours. One year later we were a section flying Spitfires over the Battle of Dieppe three times for a total of 4:45 hours.

We were kept busy and it was an early to bed, early to rise existence to finish the course on time. Our major time off was on every second Saturday when we had a pass from 5:30 pm until 1:00 am on Sunday. I believe we also were granted two forty-eight hour passes during

the time we were at High River for I reported in one of my letters home to expect us that weekend.

The end of August saw the finish of our training at No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School High River. It was a special point in our training, and we left High River with a total flying time of 60:55 hours for my twin and 57:45 for me. That is what was recorded in my log book.

The posting order read: "Posted to No. 3 Service Flying Training School, Calgary." We then boarded a train in anticipation of the next step to become qualified pilots.



No. 5 EFTS High River. This photo was taken the day we both soloed -a very happy occasion.



North American Harvard Mk II's

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SERVICE FLYING TRAINING SCHOOL (CALGARY AND MEDICINE HAT)

High River to Calgary was a short train trip. We left High River after breakfast on the first of September and we had dinner in Calgary that night after quarters were allocated. The next morning, we were briefed on 'the bad news and the good news'. The bad news was that the course ahead of us was far behind in their flying times and we would not be able to start flying as programmed. The good news was that we would take all the ground school portion of the course first and when we started flying, we would fly all day instead of alternating ground school and flying as was customary. So we proceeded at once to be in ground school all day long and those warm fall days made it difficult to stay awake after lunch sometimes.

At this time No. 3 SFTS was operating old Anson Mk. I aircraft brought over from England. Production was just starting in Canada, and the spares situation was grim, especially so for wheels and tires. To overcome this to some extent, the maintenance crew had serviceable aircraft sitting up on jacks in the hangar but without wheels or tires. When an aircraft went unserviceable, the wheels and tires were taken off and placed on one of the aircraft up on jacks. This aircraft then went onto the flight line at once.

Calgary had a large number of young Americans in the RCAF working on the flight line on menial tasks. These AC2's, the lowest rank possible, were employed on tarmac duties (rather than guard duty as our course had done at Mossbank). There were two versions as to why this occurred. One version said that the government didn't want Americans with rifles guarding defence establishments (We could look after ourselves). The other version said that a group of Americans staged a protest; "They didn't come to Canada to do guard duty, they wanted to fly." So, at least to give them the impression they were going to fly, they put them on tarmac duty while awaiting a flying training course. Had we known about this, and had there been a choice, certainly we all would have chosen tarmac duty as it was much more desirable.

Our ground school covered the expected subjects: technical details of the Anson aircraft such as engine handling, fuel and electrical systems, and operation of the undercarriage. This last was a subject of some concern, for the wheels had to be wound up and down by hand, and a good number of turns of the crank was required.

On the 20th of September a 'Wings Parade' for the graduating class was held and almost sixty pilots were awarded wings. A few were retained in Canada as instructors, with the promise they would be sent overseas in about one year's time. We were looking forward to starting our flying.

Three days later, on the 23rd of September our flying training started at Calgary. I was airborne with Pilot Officer (P/O) Speed for one hour, of which only twenty minutes was counted as dual. The other forty minutes was counted as passenger time, for P/O Speed had two other trainees airborne as well. Each student pilot received twenty minutes instruction at the controls, the remainder of the time one looked over the instructor and student pilot's shoulder to learn a bit about flying the Anson Mk I aircraft. The same applied to my twin, and he received thirty minutes of instruction while airborne for two hours with Sgt. Short.

That was it. Seven of us were notified the next day that we would be sent to No. 34 Service Flying Training School at Medicine Hat because the shortage of available Anson aircraft forced a reduction in the number of students that could be accommodated at Calgary. We were assured that Medicine Hat had good serviceability with the Oxford aircraft flown there. On the 25th of September we departed from Calgary, arriving at Medicine Hat just in time for picking up our blankets, and going to our quarters, before dinner.

Here we joined a course just starting which was all English trainees, for No. 34 SFTS was a Royal Air Force school, manned by RAF personnel, both air and ground. Imagine our consternation, when again we were told that because of a shortage of aircraft we were to take all ground school first before flying. It was suggested that the entire month of October might be needed to finish the resident course before we started flying.

And so it was. All of October we studied the technical details of the Oxford aircraft and other subjects, such as advanced navigation, bomb aiming, wireless operation and Aldis lamp, many aspects of which we had covered before while at Calgary.

The Aldis lamp blinking out messages in Morse code was a difficult subject for many -not to send the message, but to receive it. The procedure was that we students would be assembled some distance from the sender and we had to write down the message being sent. Two rather mature RAF NCO's were in charge of the exam. When our group's turn to receive the message came and the light started flashing, the NCO said, "Now why is he asking what was the name of the film last night?" and we all wrote down, "What was the name of the film last night?" and we all passed that phase of the test. I must confess some of us worried about whether this was the right thing to do. However, the NCO must have known something -for I was never required to read the Aldis lamp after that.

Then a most significant change took place which altered our futures completely. As the course ahead of us were close to finishing the flying portion of their training, an announcement was made stating another type of aircraft would be brought in for our course. So all our

Oxford ground school was for naught, but we were delighted to learn that the replacement aircraft would be the Harvard.

In most instances, students trained on Anson and Oxford aircraft, or later Cessna Cranes, went onto twin or multi-engined aircraft in Bomber Command, night-fighters, or Coastal Command. Those trained on the single engine Harvard generally ended up on operations flying Hurricanes, Spitfires, or Tomahawks. It seemed everyone wanted to be a fighter pilot and the whole course was thrilled by the change of aircraft. But again, we had to start a new series of ground school lectures designed for the training of single engine pilots. No one complained.

The Harvard aircraft (at that time imported from the USA under a peculiar method of flying them to the Canada-US border, then pulling them across for some political reason) was an excellent advanced trainer. With a wingspan of forty-two feet, length of twenty-nine feet, a radial air-cooled engine and top speed of 212 mph, the Harvard was a handful at first for most trainees. It was said if you could fly a Harvard you could fly anything and certainly the first models had a rather vicious ground loop if the pilot was careless. Also, because of the tip speed of the propeller when changing pitch a distinctive “wow-wow-wow” resulted which proclaimed to all far and wide that a Harvard was in the circuit. Later, Harvards were built in Canada at Canadian Car and Foundry with modified wing tips which tamed their ground looping tendencies to some extent.

On the 31st of October, we had our first flight in the Harvard aircraft. Again, it was not realized we were twins but thought to be two people with the same surname. We had previously explained this when we reported for flying at High River EFTS. We were allotted to Flying Officer (F/O) Cherrington, an RAF officer about thirty-eight or forty years old. Shortly we were to discover Cherrington was bitter about being selected to instruct in Canada rather than remaining in the UK on operations. A taciturn man, not at all like Dusenbury in High River, he seemed to discourage any conversation other than that which was strictly necessary. On the other hand, there were several younger RAF officers who were pleasant and outgoing to the ‘Colonials’. All the other students were English except for we seven.

When Cherrington realized that we were twins, and identical twins looking very much alike, there was some discussion as whether we should be ‘split up’ and one of us sent to another instructor. We were not in on the instructors’ meeting about this, but in the end we were both kept as students of F/O Cherrington. Since it was customary just to use the last name, Cherrington called my twin ‘Warren Mk I’ and I was ‘Warren Mk II’. The letters stood for ‘Mark’ which is the way different models of the same piece of equipment was described in the military. For example, the first production Spitfires were called Spitfire Mk I, whereas a later model was called Spitfire Mk V.



34 SFTS North American Harvard Mk II over Medicine Hat

It was quite a big step to go from the relatively light Tiger Moth to the Harvard. Harvards weighed three times as much, with about four times the horsepower and twice the speed. The cockpit was big and roomy, compared to the Moth, and a decided change was having the instructor behind you rather than in front. The centre of gravity (C of G) in the Moth was such that if flown solo, it was flown from the back seat. To get the students used to this we always flew in the back cockpit, dual or solo.

Our new instructor had a habit which we found most annoying, and later on, when we ourselves were experienced and took an instructors course, we discovered it was a dangerous habit as well. At times, if Cherrington became impatient with what the student was doing, he would grab the control column and thrash it about hitting one's knees. Since it was drilled into us the importance of transferring control of the aircraft by the words, "You have control," and the response, "I have control," when Cherrington did this we were never sure who had control at the moment. Sometimes control would be transferred in the normal manner but other days, it seldom was done in the approved way.

Much later when overseas, we met one of the RAF officers who instructed at Medicine Hat. When we brought up the subject of F/O Cherrington and his habits, we were told that not only was he bitter about the task of instructing but he also was suffering from a severe stomach ulcer. This made us feel sorry for him, but he had caused us some worrisome moments.

In the first eight days of November we both flew eight times, and we both soloed the same day, the 8th of November. My solo flight took place after 8:35 hours, and Duke after 8:15 hours of dual. We were proud and happy with our progress, and flying the Harvard at that stage of our military training gave one a great sense of accomplishment.

To illustrate how this habit of F/O Cherrington's of taking control without informing the student affected our training, I give the following example. When landing the early model Harvards, when the tail came down the rudder pedals, which also operated the brakes, had a decided

tendency to vibrate. The first couple of times this happened to me, I thought Cherrington was taking control again and was impatient with my weaving about the runway. So I took my feet off the rudder pedals and then the aircraft would veer badly and he would have to take control. However I did 'twig' to what was happening and managed to master the landing. But it is indicative of our instructor/student relationship that I never asked him who had control when the rudder pedals would vibrate harshly at times.

While our day-to-day flying carried on, we also took ground school training, for there was some difference between the subjects taught to students on single engine aircraft as opposed to students on twin-engined aircraft. One of our subjects was instrument flying in the Link Trainer. A common piece of equipment at the time, it might be called the forerunner of aircraft simulators, albeit a very crude and primitive machine.

There were a number of instructors who operated the Link. One officer in charge, used flying instructors when they were not flying. There was a roster posted for both instructors and students and results of each session were shown as A+, A, B+, B, or B-, etc. The first time I did the Link exercise I got a C+. Duke on the other hand got a B+. On two occasions because of a mix up in times Duke was not able to take his exercise, so to prevent him putting up a 'black', I rushed over and took the exercise under his name. It wasn't that I lied about it, I just walked in and the instructor would have Warren R93530 file on the table and I would be briefed and climb in the Link.

The irritating part was each time I did his turn I got a B or B+, but doing my own I was always C or C+. We believed that the instructors just followed along what had been given before unless there was a radical change. Since it was all subjective, there was little to choose between a C+ or a B.

Near the end of November we started night-flying. Previously we had several hours 'under the hood' flying on instruments. The instructor in the back cockpit would keep a sharp lookout for other aircraft as well as teaching the student instrument flying. Instrument flying was not very popular, but we regarded it as necessary part of our course.

There was some three to four hours of dual instruction given at night before sending the student solo. Night-flying was carried out whenever the weather was suitable, and the necessity of trusting the aircraft instruments and not one's senses was emphasized. Taking off on a black night, even with the normal ground lighting around the aerodrome for a bit of reference was no easy task for young pilots. There were some students who required a good deal more than the four hours of night dual.

At this time our first fatal casualty of training occurred. James Pryor, called 'Jim' by all of us, crashed while night flying and was killed. Strange, but as we were all in the crew room getting dressed for flight Jim had said, "I don't know if I will ever get this night-flying right, every time I



Link Trainers at an RCAF flying school

get up there I don't know what the hell I'm doing." No one paid much attention, for Jim, a bit older than the rest of us (twenty-six years) was always joking and had a great sense of humour. Before joining up he had worked with a newspaper in Lethbridge. Jim Pryor was buried in the Mountain View Cemetery at Lethbridge. Some students were a part of the funeral party. It was a very sad occasion for all of us.

On the 7th of December 1941, the Japanese struck Pearl Harbour and the US was brought into the war. We were shaken by the attack and the devastation wrought by the Japanese carrier fleet. We felt the war was going badly for our side, for although the Americans had not been at war, we at least felt that they were supporting our efforts. Now that they had a war of their own, would they continue to send equipment and supplies such as had been done under a Lend-Lease agreement.

Of course the Americans serving with the RCAF, (we had none in our group) were torn between staying in Canada or trying to get back to the US and enter the American forces. Many stayed in training in Canada. There were two basic reasons for this, I feel. The first was the fact many of those who were training as pilots had tried to join the US Army Air Corp before coming to Canada and were not enlisted. The peace time standards required a college degree. The other reason was that the men who wanted 'to get into action' had a better chance of doing so at an earlier date if they completed their training in Canada. In addition, not only did the USA declare war on Japan, it also declared war on Germany and its allies. All of North America had a common goal from the 7th of December. It was ON TO VICTORY.

December was a very busy month for Course 29 which was the number of the course which we were on. In the first seventeen days of the month, I flew thirty-four times for a total of 45:50 hours. Duke flew almost exactly the same, thirty-five flights for a total 45:05 hours. Included in that total, we both flew 11:00 hours at night. On the 16th of December, after a check ride with the Flight Commander, we were put up for our wings test with the Chief Flying Instructor. There were several other students waiting their tests, but F/Lt. Pexton, the CFI said, "Leave the Warrens for me. They look alike. I want to see if they fly the same."

When he landed after his flight with Duke, (I had flown first) he said in the crew room, "They fly so much alike, I cannot tell them apart by the way they handle the aircraft." We had qualified for our pilot's wings!

On the evening of the 18th, there was a party in the airmen's mess and the course with all the instructors and senior station staff attended. The Station Commanding Officer was Group Captain App Ellis and the C/O of the school was Wing Commander C. Scragg. W/Cdr. Scragg was a famous RAF aerobatic pilot, for he had put on special displays at the RAF Hendon Air Shows near London before the war.

Our instructor, Flying Officer Cherrington, approached us during the evening and told us we had both received an above average mark on our Wings Test. He congratulated us, and then said, "I have a question. Why do you both have the same nickname?" This was a question frequently asked, and we go back to our school days when a teacher explained to the class we were duplicates of each other. Rather than the other youngsters calling us 'Duplicates' they shortened the name to 'Dupes'. Dupe is not a very flattering name, so we changed it to Duke and it stuck and we always referred to each as Duke. (Much later we were to meet the Sherlock Twins in the RCAF, and they always called each other "Twin").

It was a wonderful happy evening for everyone, and F/O Cherrington seemed to be enjoying himself and was very friendly, so perhaps the ulcer was in relapse.

On the 19th of December our Wings Parade was held. An occasion that any pilot who trained in Canada during the war and graduated will never forget. A few friends we had met in Medicine Hat attended and our good friend, Dr. MacLean with the provincial hospital at Ponoka, came down to attend.

Coupled with the joy of graduating as pilots, there was some 'bad news with the good news'. There were 37 graduates, Duke stood 8th in the class and I stood 9th. The first eight students were granted commissions, so Duke became Pilot Officer Warren and I became Sergeant Warren. This was a serious problem and we decided to see if this decision could be rectified.



Doug and his mother in 1941

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PREPARING FOR OVERSEAS

The administrative details of our finishing our flying training at Medicine Hat were soon completed and our class members went our various ways. In general, except for one or two remaining in Canada to train as instructors, all the English were ordered to report for embarkation at Halifax at once. Canadians were granted a few days leave, and our instructions were to be in Halifax on the 5th of January 1942. This meant travelling by train for several days, so we planned to leave Edmonton on the 1st of January.

There is a common saying in the military that whenever anyone has a complaint they are told, "Go see the Padre." Sometimes this is said as a joke to indicate a frivolous complaint but often it was said as the result of some family problem which had emotional overtones. To tell the truth, actual religious problems seemed to be very few, and we had never known anyone who had such a problem.

Located in Calgary was the training headquarters for stations such as Medicine Hat, High River, Calgary, and many others in the west. So this would be the headquarters we would go to for help in sorting out what we perceived as a 'mistake' or 'error' in producing one Pilot Officer Warren and one Sgt. Warren from Course 29 at Medicine Hat on the 19th of December.

We arrived at Calgary and entered the RCAF Headquarters building. At the guard and reception area we were asked our business and who did we wish to see. Not knowing the administrative organization at that time because of our short period in the service, we asked to see the Padre. Escorted to the headquarters Padre's office we stated our case.

The gist of our argument was that our academic marks and the results of our flying tests were remarkably close, and that the arbitrary 'cut off' would not have resulted in this problem had we not been twins. Furthermore, we argued that if it was not possible to rectify the situation by granting me a commission we would be satisfied if the RCAF would cancel Duke's appointment and make him a Sergeant.

The Padre (I am ashamed that after all these years I have forgotten his name.) listened intently and was sympathetic to our case. We were told that there was an army regulation that allowed an older brother to claim a younger brother and who was the oldest. This was never clear in our minds and we had never really thought about it, but Duke quickly said he was the older, and if necessary would claim me. This meant we would have to be together and not divided by his commission.

The Padre made several phone calls and then told us he would take us to the Personnel Section, which he did. Here we were interviewed by first a Flight Lieutenant, then a Squadron Leader. The interviews were

basically the same, "When had we entered the service? Where had we trained?" and, "What were our marks, both ground school and flying." In each interview we were told that our records had not yet arrived and they would have to be examined before a decision could be made. It was heartening to us that no one seemed to 'shoot us down' or scoff at our complaint.

The final interview was with a Group Captain. We were told he was Chief of Personnel at the headquarters. It was not really an interview in the manner of the previous ones, but later when we talked it over between ourselves, we felt he just wanted to talk to us and see what sort of young men we were. There were, in the RCAF during the war, several sets of twins, among them some identical twins but in 1942 we were rather unusual. It may be that we were the first the G/C had heard of or met.

This was our final interview at the headquarters and we were assured that our case would be looked at closely and if our marks, air and ground, were as close as we stated, very sympathetic consideration would be given to commissioning me. But nothing could be done until the records arrived which might take a week or more. Christmas was coming, and in ten days we would be on our way to Halifax so we did not expect immediate results. We were pleased by the way we had been treated at Training Headquarters and felt a high degree of confidence that it would be sorted out. We left with a feeling that the personnel section were genuinely interested in our case and we would not be put in 'File 13' (The waste basket).

Following our trip to Calgary, we took the train north to Ponoka where our parents met us. We knew, and they knew, this would be our last Christmas together for some time. Surely our parents must have felt that it might be the last Christmas that they would ever spend with us. The war was going very badly! With Pearl Harbour, Hong Kong, the loss of the two great battleships, Prince of Wales and Repulse. On Christmas Day, General Maltby surrendered at Hong Kong and the survivors of the battle, men of the Quebec's Royal Rifles of Canada, and the Winnipeg Grenadiers, were taken prisoner. We tried to make light of the dangers which we might face but we could see our parents were not convinced.

Our relationship with our parents perhaps was not as close as some children but we loved and respected them. Perhaps the same could be said about our relationship with our sisters, the older Alta and the younger Joyce. This rather removed feeling I believe was because of the special feelings identical twins have for each other.

From our first awareness of the world around, there always existed an 'us and them' feeling. My twin was always of paramount importance in my life and others were secondary. I know that Duke felt the same. As we matured and were aware of the hardships of the depression we felt sorry for our parents. Their hard, physical labour for little financial

gain and the blows nature dealt in hailstorms, drought, and early frost made their life a constant struggle. We thought of them frequently while serving in the RCAF and kept them informed of our activities as much as we could because we knew they worried about us. For example, in the time between leaving home in March until arriving back on embarkation leave in December, we had written them fifty-two letters.

However as teenagers, we had been firm in our resolve to join the RCAF and leave the farm and we were determined that no matter what happened in the future and after the war, we would never become farmers. The life was too hard and unappreciated by Canadians in general. We spent most of this Christmas visit to the farm eighteen miles west of Ponoka with trips to see friends in Wetaskiwin and Ponoka. In Wetaskiwin, Duke had a 'special friend', the lovely Lois Burroughs, later to become his wife. Mr. Wesley Burroughs and his wife were both very kind to us and we were always welcome in their home. We admired Mr. Burroughs for he was a WW I veteran and an active member of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch in Wetaskiwin.

While spending time on the farm, we helped our father with the chores. Since it was winter there was no work to be done in the fields. However, cows had to be fed and milked. The farm did not have electricity or a telephone. That was to come postwar when farm life in Alberta improved greatly. Roads were still just dirt in many areas, the Calgary to Edmonton highway was a gravel trail. Pigs had to be fattened and taken to market and sold, and there was routine maintenance of pens and fences. On a farm at that time there was always something to do, but with the electrification program, the work eased somewhat. We put on our old clothes and helped as much as we could, taking into account our father had changed some of his procedures when we had been away.

The time at home went very quickly and the bad news about the war every day did not make our parents feel very good. On the contrary, each day their mood became more depressed and it created a very tense situation. We had a battery-operated radio at home which worked very well provided the batteries were in good condition. Edmonton and Calgary stations were the local stations, and KSL in Salt Lake City along with KOA Denver were the American stations. There was little good news about the war at this time.

So the time to say goodbye to our parents came and we hugged our mother and shook our father's hand. Our eyes were wet and we did our best to comfort and assure them no harm would come to us. But it was of little use, for our mother broke down completely and our father turned away crying saying he had something he had to do for the sheep. It was a terribly upsetting situation. At the time we were nineteen. Our mother was forty-nine and our father sixty years old. We felt trapped, for we did not wish to hurt them but there was no changing the situation. We left our parents with a good deal of grief in our hearts at parting.

The train taking us to Halifax left Edmonton that evening and there were many servicemen on board. Some we knew as having trained with us. Some were friends from school who had entered the other branches of the armed forces. It was cold in early January. The train was steam driven, as all Canadian trains were at that time, and we were often behind time at the various stops. When we reached Winnipeg a member of our course boarded, obviously still celebrating New Year's 1942 from two nights ago. His uniform was rather dusty, and for some reason his hands were black with soot. As he lurched down the aisle to join us for dinner he put out his hands to keep from falling. Two of the waiters rushed to his side and escorted him to our table, terrified that he might have left a black handprint on the very white tablecloth they had just laid.

There was a stop-over of some hours in Montreal, so Duke and I visited with a Mr. and Mrs. Hinton, the former Bank of Montreal manager in Wetaskiwin. They had been transferred to the head office which was located there. They were interested in our training, for their son Dick was just starting his RCAF service. Sadly, Dick was killed the 23rd of March 1944 in a training accident.

We arrived at Halifax and here started the physical separation of Duke and I, for he was allocated a room in the Officers Quarters and I in NCO Quarters. However, all drafts (as groups of men were called) paraded together each day so we kept aware of what was happening to each other quite easily.

Our group had reached Halifax the evening of the 5th of January. On the morning of the 8th our draft was told to put all their heavy kitbags on the parade square and be prepared to march to the ship with essential kit only. We did so and a few hours later we were bound for England.



RCAF airmen embarking at Halifax

CROSSING THE ATLANTIC

The Stratheden, a P&O passenger liner, lay at anchor in the middle of Halifax harbour surrounded by other ships waiting for the convoy to be made up before departure. RMS Stratheden, over six hundred feet long and with a beam of eighty feet, had been built in 1937 by Vickers-Armstrongs at Barrow.

Originally designed for and used on the England-Australia route, early in the war she was converted to a troopship. During peace-time, Stratheden accommodated 530 first class passengers and 450 tourist class. When Stratheden was at anchor in Halifax harbour she was accommodating several thousand military men with 'no class at all'. Still manned by the British Merchant Navy crew, with English officers and a mixed crew, many of whom appeared to be Lascars from the far East, the crew had little contact with the soldiers and airmen on board.

As the troops came aboard the ship, the military administrative staff took over, directing each flight to the space allocated to that unit. An accommodation plan had already been made up and the task was efficiently carried out. Officers were placed in staterooms, four junior officers to what had been previously allocated to one first class passenger, two squadron Leaders to such a room, and more senior officers, of which there were a few, had a cabin to themselves if they were lucky.

Airmen were dispatched down into the lower decks, where open spaces had been created when the ship had been transformed to a troop ship, and there a small space was shown each man and he was issued a hammock. There was too little space and too many men in that space, and immediately irritated and demanding voices were raised against the sailing on this particular ship. But, of course this was a useless protest,



RMS Stratheden. During the war, this P&O ocean liner was painted with a camouflage pattern of dark colours.

because by the time the troops and airmen fully recognized their situation, Stratheden had moved to the middle of the harbour and there was no way of 'walking off' as the hotheads suggested.

I was a sergeant and as such was sent below. I could tell, even though I had had no previous Atlantic crossing experience, that our accommodation was going to be very miserable at the best of times and similar to the 'Black Hole of Calcutta' if we had the storms to be expected in winter on the North Atlantic. My speculations also took into account the number of decks to climb to reach the life boats should submarine activity make it necessary. There were no portholes, so I took it to mean we were below the water line, but it may have been just that they had been sealed over to prevent light escaping at night. Stowing my kit bag and personal gear as best I could, I went up on deck to find Duke.

We met on the main deck and walked around looking at the ship and the various items of ship's machinery such as masts, booms, winches and rigging. Leaning over the rail we looked at the activity in the immediate area and speculated as to when we might sail. No one seemed to know and perhaps even those in authority did not know, for the assembling of a large convoy is a complex procedure and depends on many details coming together at the proper time. Later that day we were fed, myself in a long line of airmen in a makeshift kitchen arrangement and Duke in the dining salon where the officers were served at the table.

My first night aboard ship would have probably been a restless one even if I had been in a stateroom by myself because being onboard a ship and ready to sail for Europe was so exciting. The many thoughts I had about the future, and about our parents at home, would have kept me awake most of the night. As it was, crowded together with hundreds of others, in a hammock I felt unsafe in, and with the others as restless as myself, and the dice game in the corner played between rounds by the movement officer's staff, I felt I had never slept a wink as the saying goes. However, I must have, and being young and healthy I got up the next morning feeling no ill effects.

Breakfast was meagre by the standards of the RCAF in Canada, and the line-up long and tortuous as it wound through various areas of the ship. After breakfast, we made our way to the upper decks to find that snow had fallen during the night and the ship was covered in about four inches of wet snow that was rapidly melting as hundreds of men tramped through the stuff checking the latest rumours. The most likely rumour had us sailing that afternoon, and certainly more ships seemed to be 'falling-in' to give the impression of a convoy forming up.

About noon, an open harbour run-about came along side and looking down we could see four or five very senior army officers preparing to climb the short rope ladder which hung over the side from an opening in the side of the ship. Suddenly someone threw a snowball down to the deck of the small boat, and instantly more snowballs followed. The 'brass

hats' were shocked, even stunned at the hail of snowballs pelting them. They screamed with indignation and shouted threats of court-martials and firing squads, but the storm continued. I had never had the occasion before to throw a snowball straight down. Normally one is fighting gravity rather than being assisted by it, and it is surprising how accurate one's throwing can be when the target is near directly below about fifty or sixty feet.

I never did find out who these officers were, but I had to admire them as they began the climb up the ladder into the ship for the bombardment never ceased. Hats were knocked off, a bag or case of some kind fell into the water and floated away, and the crew of the small water-taxi shook their fists in rage and screamed curses up at their tormentors. When all the senior officers had boarded, Duke and I discreetly wandered off, for we did not want to be found in the area when the military police were alerted. However, it was interesting to note that many of the snowball brigade remained at the rail saying, "I hope they arrest me and put me ashore, for I don't want to sail on such a crowded ship."

Our own feelings were that probably all troopships were generally the same (greatly overcrowded) and besides we wanted to get overseas, that is what had brought us this far. To my knowledge there was never anything done about this episode. Probably those in charge realized the futility of trying to find the culprits or perhaps, once inside, the senior officers saw the humour of the situation, or since many involved were wearing army uniforms they vowed to get their own back once they had their units in barracks again.

Later that day we sailed, and as we steamed out of Halifax harbour in company with many other ships, we could not help but wonder when we might be sailing back and when we did, how many on board would have survived the fighting which we expected to be part of being overseas. Many different moods were evident, some men already bragging about what they would do when they reached London, some men bragging about their units and their own capabilities, some men vowing to, "get out of the outfit as soon as possible," and others were quiet with their own thoughts. We watched a Catalina flying boat take off from Shearwater and fly out ahead of us and we in the air force felt a bit more confident of our chances to reach the other side safely. The beginning of 1942 saw a marked increase in U-Boat operations in waters off Halifax and the St. Lawrence, and we were all aware of the danger.

Each man had a lifejacket, and they were either carried or close by at all times. After boarding, everyone was issued with a written instruction as to where his lifeboat station was in case of emergency, and notice was given that a life boat drill would be held each day. Since your emergency station depended on where you were billeted in the ship, and to a lesser extent your unit and rank, it did mean that Duke and I had

separate locations to report to when the drill was called. We did not like this idea but we were fully aware of the need for discipline, and resigned ourselves to the fact that if an emergency occurred we would report to our assigned stations, obey orders, and in the worst possible case if the ship was sunk we would try and contact each other as soon as possible when the situation was sorted out. By reading our instructions, we determined that Duke had to report to the upper deck near a lifeboat and I was to proceed forward to the well between the forecastle and the bridge, by the forward hold.

We were on deck when the first lifeboat drill was called, and we proceeded to our respective areas. There were probably two hundred and fifty men or more who had to assemble in my area, and in a short time a merchant marine officer appeared, mounted the hatch cover, and briefed us on what was expected of us. In general terms we were to have our life preservers with us at all times, report promptly if an alert was sounded, and if possible be dressed warmly. But if at night or on deck, don't waste time, and under no circumstances go back below if we had forgotten anything.

The officer then pointed out the Carley Floats which were like large rafts which floated off the ship should it sink and were equipped with emergency rations and ropes hanging over the side so men in the water could climb on. Next he said, "Each lifeboat can hold eighty men and there are two of them and that will take care of 160 men, and the rest will be on Carley floats." But I was perplexed, and stayed behind, for I could not see any life boats! I realized I was from the prairies, had no nautical knowledge whatsoever, had never been on a large vessel before, and had only been on this one a few hours. I had seen lifeboats on other decks of the ship but could see no lifeboats here although the officer in charge had referred to them and said we or at least some of us, were expected to get in them in the event of an emergency.

I left the area, one of the last to do so, in a confused state of mind but feeling there must be some explanation. Joining up with the rest of the group of young Sergeant Pilots and new Pilot Officers, we stood by the rail and watched the other convoy vessels and navy ships steaming through the moderate swell. The shore slowly dropped below the horizon and our first night at sea was upon us. The ship was blacked out with extra thoroughness for there were certainly U-Boats in the Western Atlantic and ships were being sunk frequently.

The evening meal was served, or rather issued, for we stood in our line up and took what was given us and then often found there was no place to sit except a corner out of the way where one would not be stepped on too often. The food was neither bad nor good, it was just food -sustenance to keep us alive until we reached the UK. Next the problem was to find a vacant wash basin, wash up a bit, find one's hammock, sling it, try and stay in the hammock and sleep, and wait for morning.

We were resigned to about a week on board as the Stratheden was a relatively fast trooper. If the night before in harbour was bad, this next night was many times worse because the swell had increased, and the ship rolled and pitched. Airmen who never had been air-sick became sea-sick, confined to quarters with little ventilation and it all added up to a miserable night for most. The numbers who went for the breakfast the next morning were only a third or less of those who had dined the night before.

When we had parted the night before, we had arranged to meet near one of the stairs on the port side of the ship and I arrived first to be joined shortly after by Duke. We discussed the night and when I told him of the conditions down below he said he would talk with the fellow officers in his cabin to see whether I could join him there. If we shared his bunk there would be lots of room and it would get me out of the 'Black Hole of Calcutta' as I described it. All the cabin occupants would most likely be together just before lunch and he would broach the subject then. We stood by the rail watching the waves, feeling the ship roll and pitch, and talking over the recent leave we had spent at home and wondering how our parents were making out on the farm during mid-winter in Alberta. We were aware of the tough life they had, the depression years, the hailstorms, and each of us had made an allotment of pay to our parents to help them manage.

Again that afternoon we had life boat drill, and again I reported to the forward hatch between the bridge and forecabin. The same officer appeared, briefed us along the same lines, ending up again with the statement, "Each lifeboat can hold eighty men, and there are two of them and that will take care of one hundred and sixty men and the rest will be on Carley floats." And with that he dismissed us. I sidled over next to him, feeling very foolish, and asked him to show me the lifeboats. I was stunned when he said, "They are not there." But when I protested, "But you said they were there for us to use." He replied, "That is what is written on my briefing sheet" and he held out the notes he read from.

When I again remonstrated, the officer explained that the lifeboats were big and heavy and that they were at the stern of the ship. It had been planned that they would be put over the side at Halifax, drawn up to the bow in the water, then lifted and secured at our station. However, the Stratheden had not been in Halifax long enough to do this and so they were still at the stern of the ship. When I said, "I can understand that, but it is crazy for you to tell us we will be in lifeboats if they are not there." The officer replied, "It is on my briefing guide, and besides, you are the only one to enquire about them," and then left me standing there.

I never attended lifeboat drill there again but went to the area where Duke's station was, sort of hid myself in the background, and determined to do my best to board his boat if the time came as I was confident there would be enough confusion -but it never did. I am grateful

to our Maker that we were never torpedoed.

Meeting Duke after the lifeboat drill brought good news, for the other young officers in his cabin had agreed to let me share his bunk and their living space. So I wandered below and surreptitiously brought my gear up from below and deposited it in the cabin. Although rather crowded, there was so much more space than below that I was most grateful to the other members of the cabin (one of whom I remain friends with to this day). I am not sure if the other two survived the war. When night came I bunked with Duke, as we had bunked together all our lives, except for the relatively short period of training in the service. I was careful to let the others use the 'head' first, and took some of my meals in the NCO mess line up. At other times, I would don Duke's uniform and go into the officers' mess. Of course our cabin-mates realized this but regarded it as a great joke that our identical appearance allowed us to do.

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NO. 3 PRC (BOURNEMOUTH)

RMS Stratheden was moored alongside the quay and troop trains were waiting to carry us to various parts of the United Kingdom. We swiftly disembarked and after a short walk carrying our kit bags, we climbed on-board the train. Many comments were made about the size of both coaches and engines for they were considerably smaller than what was customary in Canada and the USA. Some coaches had compartments with an aisle down one side but some had no aisle and we wondered how one would manage on a lengthy journey.

Our RCAF draft was placed in a series of coaches with the aisle and washrooms at the end. Some British troops were placed in the compartmentalized coaches and later at a stop they were disconnected. Because of the way the air crew officers and NCO's were loaded it was easy for my twin and I to end up in the same compartment. In about an hour all was ready, whistles blew, and off we went. At once we realized that, although the trains seemed rather small, they certainly started off much more smoothly than their North American counterparts.

Travelling through the English countryside for the first time was a thrill for most of us. We had studied English history at school, and many of the names were familiar to us. The rather small fields, the hedge rows, the cattle in the fields, the workers with somewhat different wagons and tools, all were very interesting, and the time passed quickly. Somewhere there was an escort officer in charge of the draft and the word spread from him that we were headed for Bournemouth on the south coast and that it was supposedly a holiday town with many evacuees from London - all beautiful girls (so the story went).

As we travelled further south the countryside changed and at this time of year, the third week in January, already there were many signs of spring, a sharp contrast from what we had left in Canada.

I don't recall the exact length of time the journey to Bournemouth took, but we arrived at the station there and were formed up into flights. My flight was an NCO flight of course, and we were marched off to be allocated billets in different hotels. These hotels had previously been used by people coming to the seaside on holiday. When war started they were called No. 3 Personnel Reception Centre (3PRC in abbreviated form). This reception centre, also a holding unit, was destined to become well known to Canadian servicemen particularly the RCAF, and many of them returned to spend their leaves in Bournemouth and not a few married girls they had met there on first arriving in England.

Many of these hotels had been landmarks in Bournemouth for many years. The Royal Bath (where there was an officers mess), the Palace Court, the Norfolk, Carlton, and Branksome Tower. My twin was billeted in the Norfolk, whereas I, as a Sgt. was billeted in Meyrick Court, if I recall correctly. A far more modest hotel than Norfolk, but this was

inconsequential, for each day our draft was paraded and classes detailed for all air crew. On some days we were dismissed after roll call and told to report the next day. In certain cases, short leave was granted and personnel could go to London for forty-eight hours.

We, however, enjoyed being in Bournemouth and looking around the first large city (some 150,000) we had ever spent any time in. Edmonton in 1940, was a city of a little over 50,000. Furthermore, we had only made occasional day visits to Edmonton and had never spent any consecutive days there. A particular delight to us was the library for we were both avid readers and we spent many hours there. Photographic stores, small museums, model aircraft and boat shops -we found them all most interesting. Nineteen years old and in a new environment, there was so much to do and see that we had no desire to travel to London. Here we saw our first real stage musical. Its title was 'The Desert Prince' and we enjoyed it a great deal.

The Bournemouth area, even in January and February was by Canadian standards, very mild and pleasant. The only complaints concerned the fact that there was very little heat to take the damp chill off during the night and early morning.

Routine at No. 3 PRC was not very demanding. Each day after breakfast one reported on parade and the day's activities were detailed. Some days there were lectures to attend or a special drill period, but most days the afternoons were free. It was relatively easy to get forty-eight hour passes and many went to London. Even longer periods of leave could be granted to those men who had relatives in England. Many did, for in 1939 there were a great number of people who were 'first generation Canadians' whose parents had come from the United Kingdom after World War I.

There was one lecture which has remained in my mind all these years. Most lectures we received were about military matters, and these included personal hygiene and the consequences of 'social disease'. We were warned that if a person was so unlucky as to contract one of these, his posting would be held up until he was cured. In addition, graphic films were shown for what would be called 'sex education' in the future. The films were a strong deterrent to many.

But the lecture which I remember so well was delivered by an RCAF Padre who had been a soldier in the trenches during WW I. Rather a short man, he stood on the stage of a large cinema used by the PRC for instructional purposes and spoke to several hundred aircrew members.

The theme of his talk, told in a pleasant voice and without dwelling on 'Hellfire and Brimstone for Sinners', was moral strength to do what was right under the exceedingly trying circumstances which we were likely to face. He said, "You are young, full of confidence and ready to meet the enemy, and this is as it should be, but I want you to remember, if times get really tough, and you feel you need help, I remind you there is a

Power greater than any of us, and you can turn to Him.”

That basically was his sermon, if it can be called that, and such was the social climate in those years that there were few of us who had not attended church on a regular basis for many years. I followed the career of this man throughout the war, and he was involved, although not aircrew, in three serious crashes where others were killed. I believe the Padre later died in Toronto some time in the late 1950's.

Certain administrative details had to be carried out. At this time the regulations were such regarding pay for Canadian servicemen overseas that one was only paid RAF rates of pay and the remainder had to be banked or assigned in Canada. This was later changed so a Canadian could get his full pay. In our case it did not matter, for we continued with RAF pay rates throughout our overseas service. We had assigned pay to our parents to help them out. Just before sailing for Europe in January, Duke wrote a letter to our Mother stating he had assigned \$82 a month to her, of which mother was to bank \$67 and keep \$15 for herself. I don't recall the amount of my assignment but it was a bit less because of my lower rank. We continued to increase our assignments through the war, and in 1944 helped our parents buy a better farm.

We enjoyed Bournemouth but we were impatient 'to get on with the job' -one of the favorite expressions of the time. It didn't help matters very much when Spitfires or Hurricanes would sweep over the city en-route to France. There were, for all practical purposes, no German attacks on Bournemouth at this time. The 'tip and run' raiders came later and a considerable number of Canadians were killed in one attack. Occasionally we also saw Westland Whirlwinds, sometimes used in attacking shipping, fly over. Waiting to commence our advanced training, these glimpses of operational aircraft made us most anxious to get started.

Shortly after arriving in England we had sent our parents a telegram telling of our safe arrival and of course we sent follow up letters. But the first letter we received from our mother was on the 16th of February 1942. The war in the Far East was going badly for the Allies and they were most concerned that we might be overseas for many years. One of the things we most looked forward to was the BBC news each evening, when we gathered around the 'wireless' and heard Big Ben strike the hour before the news was read. Most discouraging news at times, it must be admitted. There were also a number of newspapers to be had, although because of wartime limitations, they were often of poor quality print.

In mid-February, some postings started to come in for men who had arrived about the same time we had. My commission had not yet been decided, but we were told the details of our training had been forwarded to Ottawa and that it looked favourable. Duke and I discussed what our best course of action would be if we were split up.

We knew that there was a good chance we would not be on the same draft for further training at an Advance Flying Unit (AFU). There were several of these for single-engine pilots, and another number for twin-engine pilots. It was a necessary step before proceeding to an Operational Training Unit (OTU). Not only did the training take place on higher performance aircraft than previously flown, but also one became familiar with flying conditions in England. The often cloudy weather, frequent foggy patches of countryside, and the numerous railways going in all directions could easily confuse a young pilot for the first few hours.

Our decision was that we would make no effort to go to the same AFU but, of course, would be happy if we were sent together. However, when we finished our OTU, we would see which squadrons we were sent to and decide who was the oldest who would 'claim' his younger brother! We had never thought about who was the oldest, and I never can recall our mother mentioning it.

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No. 17 ADVANCED FLYING UNIT (WATTON)

We were pleased a few days later that we had reviewed the possible situation, for Duke was called on draft and sent to No. 8 AFU at Hullavington, Wiltshire. Had we not discussed it there would have been no problem sorting the plan out by mail, for we thought so much alike, but it was tidier to be prepared while we were together.

Shortly after, due to a large influx of aircrew arrived from Canada, I was placed on a draft of pilots to proceed to a detachment of No. 3 PRC at a south coast town called Hastings. I looked forward to Hastings, for I realized from my Alberta high school history class this was where the famous Battle of Hastings took place in the year 1066.

The draft travelled to Hastings by train and we billeted in a large sea-front hotel. Civilians were not allowed to reside too close to the beach but the military were. It was heavily mined, surrounded with barbed wire, and patrolled day and night by army personnel. Most of the furniture had been removed from the rooms and the lifts were not working.

My room-mate and myself were allocated a room on the eleventh floor at the very top. This meant that we had twenty-two flights of emergency stairs to climb and descend each time we left the room. Getting our heavy kit bags up those twenty-two flights, as young and as strong as we were, was a task requiring several stops on the way up, for not only were the stairs narrow, but also very steep.

Hastings was a typical English seaside town. The sort of place where families came to spend their vacations. There were many small hotels, almost what we in Canada called boarding houses. These catered to summer visitors and some families would come back year after year until it seemed like the hotel staff and the vacationers were one family. There were fun fairs with rides for children, the usual small stands of the 'try your skill, win a doll for your lady' type. On a nice day, even in February, there would be young people, generally teenagers, walking about spending a few shillings.

My roommate and I got along very well and soon became friends. He had a pleasant personality, was my own age, and from a farming background. His parents, as my parents, were still farmers. We often talked how we regretted leaving our parents to carry on without us, but we had been determined to enlist as aircrew.

Soon after we started walking around together as there were few lectures to attend and we were often dismissed for the day. I noticed my roommate often stopped and talked to young girls twelve or thirteen years old. This rather surprised me, and after a few days I asked my roommate why he liked talking to these young girls. He said, "Yes Duke, I really like talking to them as they remind me of my little sister." I replied, "Yes, I know. I have a younger sister, but we are mature men of nineteen years, let us converse with people in our own age group." He said, "Duke, I know

that but I am going to be killed over here and I will never see my little sister again." I replied, "Nonsense, please don't talk like that. We'll go home on the same boat."

I was not able to change his mind and since I found the conversation rather upsetting, I never mentioned it again and he often spoke to young girls while I stood to one side and looked around.

We took a bus one day to Battle which is the site of the famous encounter where William the Conqueror defeated Harold and changed the course of history. It was a wonderful experience for both of us to be at the spot where such an important event had taken place. Since we both had gone to high school in Alberta we had the same background of knowledge and we enjoyed the day.

About three weeks after arriving in Hastings, a message came through that I had been granted a commission dated from the 19th of December 1941. This gave me the same seniority as Duke. Ordered to report back to Bournemouth, I left my roommate with some regret as we had become close friends. Six months later he died in a flying accident and was buried near Cambridge. He never saw his little sister again.

I arrived back at No. 3 Personnel Reception Centre at Bournemouth on the 12th of March. Duke was now taking advanced training at Hullavington in Wiltshire and I was sorry he was not still in Bournemouth. However, there was a lot of administration and paperwork for me to complete on the transition from Sergeant to Pilot Officer. Since I was now commissioned, one of the first requirements was an officers uniform. I went to Gieves, a very old, established firm specializing in military clothing. Gieves had been in business so long that they were a household word throughout the British Empire. Indeed, it was the custom when an English officer was commissioned he would make an allotment of pay to Gieves and open an account to carry him all through his career. I often wondered how Gieves sorted out the account when a customer was killed.

Once all the details were taken care of, I found I had a lot of time to myself and I haunted the library, bookstores, model shops and dock area at Poole. It was strange, although brought up on the Prairies, we had always had a strong interest in boats and the sea. It has often been said that men from the Canadian West made excellent sailors. No one has offered a satisfactory explanation for this oddity.

The Allied position in the far East continued to deteriorate and on the 11th of March, Rangoon fell to the Japanese. The only bright spot was the raid by British Forces at St. Nazaire on the coast of France. The huge dock there, one of the largest in the world, was critical to the German navy, If the Tirpitz was damaged in the Atlantic and had to put into harbour for repair, St Nazaire was the only port it could use.

The Campbeltown, one of the fifty old American destroyers, was filled with explosives and run into the lock gates. Planned to blow up

shortly after hitting these lock gates, for some reason the detonators did not go off until the next day when German officers and technicians were inspecting the damage, and hundreds were killed.

Time went slowly as I waited for a posting to an AFU (Advanced Flying Unit). I was concerned that Duke would get so far ahead of me in training we might be separated for that reason. This was really the first time we had been apart in our lives for more than a few days. I missed him and frequently thought of him, but not in a manner which would be called "worrying about him." I was always confident that Duke was okay and I know he felt the same about me. It was just that we were apart physically.

Eventually a posting to an AFU came through with my name on it -to No. 17 AFU at Watton, Norfolk. It was located about twelve miles west and slightly south of the main city which was Norwich. I arrived there on the 7th of April and had my first flight on the 10th. I had been off flying for almost four months and only had about one hundred fifty hours total time, but I was sent solo in a Miles Master Mk II after one hour and thirty minutes dual.

There were a series of Master aircraft. The Mk I had a Rolls-Royce Kestrel engine, the Mk II a Bristol Mercury, and the Mk III a Twin Row Wasp Jr. Basically the same aircraft with small detail changes concerning the engine. All Mk's had the same blind flying panel, as indeed most all British-made aircraft did, be it a Lancaster, a Spitfire, or whatever. If one could fly good instruments on one aircraft there was no great difficulty in flying instruments on any other British-built aircraft. The Master was an excellent transition aircraft between training to operational, especially for a fighter pilot going on to Spitfires or Hurricanes at that time.

I was familiar with the Master aircraft because I had taken four days leave while at Bournemouth and gone to Hullavington to visit Duke.



Miles Master Mk II

During this time, I travelled through London and arranged a bank account at the Bank of Montreal, 9 Waterloo Place, where my pay was deposited. I also was able to make a bigger assignment of money to our mother after my commission. In a letter at that time, Duke mentioned my visit and the fact I would send more money home. We often wrote independently when apart and often we wrote of the same things about farming, wishing we could help them more, and asking about our parents' health.

I enjoyed the flying at Watton. It was a necessary step before going to an OTU (Operational Training Unit) where I would be flying either Hurricanes or Spitfires. Naturally I was hoping for the latter, but in the meantime, I was learning a great deal about flying in English conditions. Reduced visibility, instrument flying, and map-reading often presented problems with so much detail and so many railway tracks, as compared to flying in Alberta where we had trained.

Although the heavy Luftwaffe Blitz was over, there were still light bombing raids over England. The ones at this particular time were referred to in the papers as 'Baedeker Raids'. The German Baedeker Travel Book dealing with England listed a series of cathedral towns of interest. It seemed the Luftwaffe was using these towns as targets (at least this was the theory of the English press). One night, Norwich was bombed and we had a grandstand seat for the display of searchlights, ack-ack, and bomb bursts. We did not see any bombers shot down which, of course, was a great disappointment to we young fighter pilots.

The flying schedule at Watton was intended to introduce pilots trained overseas to the conditions in England. The first cross-country was always with an instructor, and lasted about one hour and twenty minutes. The second and third, carried out solo, were both longer. One was two hours and twenty minutes, the other one hour and fifty minutes. It wasn't unusual for a student pilot to get lost but there were so many aerodromes in England that no one had to crash land, at least not on my course. It would happen though that sometimes instructors were sent over to fly that errant young pilot home, which was considered a bit of a disgrace for the pilot concerned. In sixteen flying days I did nineteen trips, three of them cross-country, two solo. I didn't get lost which, I must confess, pleased me.

I left No. 17 Advanced Flying Unit having flown a little over seventeen hours in Master aircraft. The Commanding Officer's name was C.G.H. Crusoe, a Squadron Leader. His fellow officers often referred to him as "Robinson Crusoe" with respect and affection, for he was very experienced and very popular.

My posting was to No. 57 Operational Training Unit which was located at Hawarden, almost due west from Norwich on the opposite coast. I was very pleased with my good fortune, for No. 57 was a Spitfire OTU. Early in April, Duke had been posted to No. 52 OTU at Aston Down, which was also a Spitfire OTU. It might have complicated matters

somewhat had one of us gone to a Hurricane OTU and the other a Spitfire OTU. But our luck held and we were both training on the same type of aircraft.

The Supermarine Spitfire was Britain's premiere fighter throughout World War II and one of the classic aircraft ever designed. Pilots found it to be agile and dependable, a fine air-combat plane capable of great speed and superior high-altitude performance. It was continuously upgraded so that it would match or better the best German fighters at the time. Only late in the war when jet aircraft appeared was the Spitfire made obsolete, although even then pilots in Spitfires shot down Messerschmitt Me262 jets.

The journey to Chester was by train via London. London was, and still is to a large extent, the hub of the rail system in England. It is often much quicker to go a lot further via London than to take a relatively short distance cross country rail trip. I don't think many servicemen complained, as often it was possible to snatch a few hours in London. Besides, it seemed that half of the people in the Royal Air Force had come from London and had family there

However I had no reason to stop, and at that stage I did not know the basics of underground travel so when changing trains, I fought my way on and off busses and carried on to Chester which was the main railhead near Hawarden.



Spitfire Cockpit [Bruce Warren Collection]

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NO. 57 OPERATIONAL TRAINING UNIT (HAWARDEN)

When I arrived at No. 57 OTU it was quite late so I sought the Orderly Officer who allocated me a temporary room in the officers' quarters. The next morning I checked in with the station adjutant as was the routine in those days. All the administrative staff were RAF personnel and the adjutant was a WW I veteran if I recall correctly. In any case, after a brief conversation with him and saluting I turned to leave and he said, "One of your people has been charged with low-flying and is awaiting court martial. He is confined to his quarters and no one goes near him. Would you mind just looking in on him occasionally?" I agreed to this and again turned to leave when he said, "Well really he is not one of yours. He is an American, but you are all alike and from the same side of the Atlantic."

So I collected my kit from the temporary room and found what was to become my permanent quarters while on course. It turned out to be in the same building that the officer awaiting court martial was quartered in. After settling in, chiefly unpacking and finding my way to the washroom for a bath (very few showers in wartime UK), I made my way to the room of the officer who was confined to barracks.

Of course I didn't know it then, but I was about to meet a man who was to become an outstanding fighter pilot, one of the US Army Air Corps best. But like myself at that time, he was a young man just going through training who had got into trouble by unauthorized low-flying. Many accidents, mostly fatal, occurred because of low flying. Sometimes the exercise had been authorized and there was an error in judgment. But often it was unauthorized and inexperienced pilots, and even experienced pilots who should have known better, contravened orders and went low-flying resulting in an accident. A large number of aircraft and aircrew were lost in this manner.

Perhaps it is hard for some one who has never been a pilot to understand why this disregard of orders was so common. There is a tremendous sensation of speed flying close to the earth and a great thrill to 'beat-up' a house to let the occupants, who may be family or girlfriend, know you are up there performing feats of derring-do for them. I am not a psychologist but being a military pilot requires a risk-taking personality to some extent or one would never start training. This type of personality is prepared to contravene regulations if he doesn't exhibit a high degree of self-discipline. Not everyone has that high degree of self-discipline, especially in wartime.

The name of the officer confined to his quarters awaiting court martial, was Don Gentile. It turned out he was an American who had enlisted in the Royal Air Force. Don had some flying time as a private pilot before enlisting, and had tried to get into the US Army Air Corp but was rejected for lack of education. At the time a college degree was required

to enlist as aircrew. This, of course, changed after the US entered the war in December 1941. Don was bitter about his failure to be accepted by his country, especially so since the bombing of Pearl Harbour.

Pilot Officer Gentile, for that was his rank as was mine, was a handsome young man, slightly older than myself, and I was nineteen at the time. But his background was much different than mine as he had grown up in a large city in the Eastern US. I am not sure he would have been called sophisticated by his peers, but I considered him so coming as I did from the Alberta prairies. I was really impressed by his remarks to the WAAF batwomen whose duty it was to bring him his meals from the mess,

Don spoke frankly about his coming court martial and stated he had 'beaten up' the local dog track. I don't know if it was true or not, but he said the dogs ran the wrong way and a Group Captain lost his bet. He laughed about it a great deal, with a touch of braggadocio. I thought to myself that had I been in the same position I would have taken the matter far more seriously.

Don, with nothing to do, slept in each morning so I never saw him until the afternoon when I returned to quarters after flying. I would pop in for a few minutes. He always wanted to know how the flying program for the day went. Then I would wash up and change and go to dinner. Often in the evening I would spend considerable time talking with him as he had many interesting stories to tell about life in the big cities and his flying experience. I got the impression his family had money, from a restaurant business but I was hesitant to ask for details.

I liked Don Gentile but I was not at ease with him in the way I was at ease with my roommate, in Hastings, Eddy Plachner. This is not surprising for our backgrounds were different. There wasn't anything in my life that would be of interest to him I felt, so I never told him about my background. Eddy and I could talk about farming and Alberta but I didn't think Don Gentile would be interested. We did get along well and I did enjoy my talks with him. I felt a bit sorry for him for I was sure he would be found guilty and be grounded.

The war at this time was going very badly in the far East. On May 1st, Mandalay was captured by the Japanese. On the 8th of May, US forces on Corregidor surrendered. On the 11th, Mindanao fell, and in Europe the German Army captured Kerch in the Crimea. The only encouraging news was Admiral Nimitz's victory in the Battle of the Coral Sea. This was the first battle fought by aircraft carriers.

We wrote home frequently and always emphasized that we were only training at this time and were in no danger. Parcels came from our parents every few weeks, generally containing items we had specifically asked for such as film, Lypsil, Noxema, and batteries for flashlights -all items not easily found in England during wartime. Our food in the mess

was good and wholesome. We never felt hungry but a chocolate bar was always welcome. Often friends would send cartons of cigarettes and, since we did not smoke, we would give them to our ground crew or friends who did.

Some two or three weeks after my arrival, the date of Gentile's court martial was set. Again, Don didn't seem to be too worried about it. I really think I was more concerned than he was. After flying on the day of his trial I rushed back to the quarters to find out what happened. Don was overjoyed for he had been found innocent of the charge. I was amazed, as it seemed such an 'open and shut' case to me. And it was, but for a technicality in 'KR and Air' which stands for 'King's Rules and Regulations Air' -The 'Bible' of the Royal Air Force.

In 'KR and Air', low-flying is defined and certainly Don was doing that and was charged with low-flying. But also in 'KR and Air', there is a clause which says when one is landing and taking off by an aerodrome you cannot be charged with low-flying because in these situations one had to be near the ground for a portion of the flight. The area covered by this regulation is three miles around the aerodrome, and it happened the dog track was within this area so the charge was dismissed. Had he been charged with flying in a dangerous manner, or 'hazarding one of His Majesty's aircraft' he would have been found guilty.

Don was put back on flying to finish the course. Imagine my surprise a few days later when we got together for our evening chat and Don bragged to me about beating up the beach at Rhyl in North Wales! "I flew so low I blew sand over the people on the beach," were his exact words. Don went on to have a very distinguished career as a fighter pilot. He joined the American Eagle Squadron after leaving Hawarden. Later he changed to the US Army Air Corps when that became possible.

Duke was about a month ahead of me in his training at Aston Down. Since we were separated, we both wrote to our parents, whereas often when together we would take turns writing to avoid duplication since we were experiencing the same things. We thought so much alike that in effect a letter written by one of us was from both of us. Because we were apart our parents received eight letters from us during the month of May.

When reading one letter after the war I saw the censor had cut out the section where I had told my parents I was at a Spitfire OTU. Unfortunately, on the other side I had written a question. I had asked my parents if they needed any money. But they were aware we were happy to help them at anytime. In one letter we enquired as to where the Alaska Highway would be built. I also reported that a WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force) bat-woman had brought me some flowers for my room. I reported this to my mother adding, "First time a girl did that." They were wild flowers she had picked somewhere. I didn't even know her name.

Our mother's birthday was on the 21st of May, and ours the 28th. I wrote my mother on the 21st after sending her a telegram. In the same

letter I pointed out that we would soon be twenty years old and said a year ago we were doing guard duty wishing we were pilots, and the year before that we were on the farm wishing we were pilots, and the year before that in school wishing we were pilots. We were very pleased that our wishes had come true.

On the 26th a birthday card arrived for me from our mother and on the 28th I phoned Duke and we talked for a few minutes discussing our next postings. He would be going to a Spitfire squadron based in Scotland. We planned that after he got there and if he liked the squadron, he would begin asking his Commanding Officer to arrange my posting to that squadron. If he thought another squadron might be better, he would wait and see where I might be posted to in a month's time. We found our flying times very similar, he had flown thirty-one times in May and I, twenty-nine times.

Meanwhile the war went on. On our birthday, the 28th of May, Mexico declared war on the Tripartite signatories. On the night of 30/31 May, the RAF launched the first mass bombing raid. One thousand planes struck at Cologne and it was a portent of what lay ahead for Germany. Early in June, between the 3rd and 7th at the Battle of Midway, the American carrier fleet won a decisive victory over the Japanese fleet.

Towards the middle of June, Duke called and said he was very pleased with the squadron he had been posted to -165 RAF at Heathfield near Ayr in Scotland. One Flight Commander was English, one Belgian, and the C/O was English. His name was Archie Winskill, and he had escaped from France after being shot down. One of the first RAF pilots to do so, he had walked out through Spain and was a very popular and respected C/O. Squadron Leader Winskill had been understanding and had promised to try and arrange with Fighter Command personnel that I be posted there.

My first Flight Commander at the OTU had been a Canadian, Don Ball. Don had completed one tour of operations flying with the 242 Squadron under the command of the famous Douglas Bader. Midway through my course, Don Ball was posted back to operations and he was replaced by an RAF officer, Bob Doe. Bob was English, had fought in the Battle of Britain, and somewhere he had been badly burned about his face. Perhaps because Don was a Canadian, we exchanged conversation quite often, but I never talked with Bob Doe casually.

When we decided we would try to get me posted to 165 RAF squadron without approaching RCAF Overseas Headquarters in London, I went to F/Lt. Doe and asked to be sent to 165 Squadron when the course was finished. He queried my request and wanted to know why. When told my twin brother was already there, he refused to forward my request saying, "I was on a squadron once with brothers and it didn't work." I said twins are more than brothers and we would at least like to try being together and if it wasn't satisfactory we could then be split up.

F/Lt. Doe was very definite in his opinion and decision. I left his office very disappointed.

The end of the course was approaching and often I had some time off. Hawarden Castle, the Officers Mess, was once the home of Gladstone, who was Liberal Prime Minister of England years ago. Chester, an old Roman walled city was a fascinating place to visit. Chester Rows were unique, a sort of elevated side walk cut into the front of buildings in the centre of the city. I enjoyed each opportunity to visit these places, but was impatient for the course to finish so I could join Duke in Scotland.

The course over, my posting came in -to 403 RCAF Squadron at Digby. It appeared that F/Lt. Doe had had his way. I left for my squadron with rather mixed feelings, glad to be going operational but sorry it was not north to Scotland.

www.bombercommandmuseumarches.com



Focke-Wulf Fw 190

NO. 165 SQUADRON (HEATHFIELD)

I travelled by train to Digby. Digby is in Lincolnshire, south-east of Lincoln and almost due east of Nottingham, not far from Sleaford. This again was one of those cross-country rail trips with several changes and lugging kit bags up and down rail station stairways. All part of living at the time, and fitted in well with the remark one often heard, "There's a war on mate."

When I arrived at Digby aerodrome and checked in with the adjutant I found the squadron had suffered heavy losses on the 2nd of June and morale was understandably low. On a fighter Sweep when the squadron was withdrawing over LeTouquet on the French coast, it was 'bounced' by fifty-plus Focke-Wulf Fw 190's and six pilots and seven Spitfires were lost. One pilot was picked up after ditching in the channel. 403 Squadron was flying Spitfire Mk V aircraft which were badly outclassed by the Fw 190's.

The Squadron commander at this time was Squadron Leader A. Deere, DFC and Bar, a renowned Battle of Britain pilot. He had bailed out so many times he was nicknamed 'The man with nine lives'. A New Zealander who had joined the RAF, he was an exceptional leader -highly respected by all fighter pilots in England. Rather a quiet man, with a sense of humour showing through a rather small smile, I liked him immediately. In a brief interview he told me the squadron was having a session of concentrated training to bring it back up to operational standard after so many losses.

But my stay at Digby and 403 Squadron was very short. In two days time a message reached the station changing my posting from 403 RCAF Squadron to 165 RAF Squadron at Heathfield in Scotland. S/Ldr. Winskill had carried through on his promise to try and get Fighter Command to send me to his squadron and of course I was delighted. I had never mentioned my desire to join 165 to S/Ldr. Deere but when I chanced to meet him just before my departure I explained why I was so pleased about the change. He said very little but seemed quite understanding, and wished me luck.

Again, a cross-country rail journey. I arrived in Glasgow late at night. It was dark, raining, and foggy. It was necessary to take a bus between train stations. I climbed on the bus with my gear and stumbled into a seat. The 'clippie' (ticket-taker who punched one's ticket) asked me for the fare in a broad Scots brogue. I couldn't understand her at first and when she saw I was an air force officer she launched into a tirade. Basically, I was lollygagging about in Glasgow while her brother and General Montgomery with the 51st Highland Division won the war in Africa! I felt sorry for myself as my fellow passengers stared at me.

The journey took a considerable time to reach the other railway station. All the while I am thinking that here I am a Canadian, far from

home, after a miserable journey all day, and I am being accused of doing nothing to help the war effort, which I guess was true to a large extent since I had only been training up to this time. When we reached the other rail station I was glad to leave the bus and the ferocious sister of the Scottish soldier who was fighting in Africa. It was just about this time the German and Italian forces reached El Alamein and it would seem that General Montgomery and the 51st Highland Division were not doing all that well.

I found that the last train for Ayr had left. The next one would not leave for about ten hours so I went to a small hotel near the station and spent the night. The manager was a good deal more pleasant to me as an air force officer for he knew several local men who were serving in the RAF. Glasgow had been badly bombed by the Luftwaffe and he was hoping that I and others like me would reverse the tables and bomb Germany.

The next day I caught an early train to Ayr and transport to the aerodrome called Heathfield. When I checked in with the Adjutant, a man named Blackstone, he was astonished at my similar appearance to Duke. He had known I was coming, and that I was Duke's brother, but he had not realized we were twins. When S/Ldr. Winskill had him send the message to Fighter Command requesting my posting to 165 Squadron he had merely stated we were brothers and no mention of twins. Over the time we served with No.165 Squadron 'Blackie' Blackstone became a staunch friend and was always prepared to recognize us as members of the RCAF with our own headquarters in London in addition to our attachment to the RAF.

I was sent to officers' quarters where I was shown Duke's room and I stowed my kit. Duke knew I was coming but no exact time had been given, nor was it possible to do so with train travel the way it was. For that reason, he was carrying on a normal day of duty and was down on the flight-line. It was a great thrill for both of us when I arrived at 'A' Flight to find him there, for this was really the culmination of all our hopes for the past eighteen months, to be on a fighter squadron together, and here we were. And equally important, we were physically together again. This was also a wonderful feeling which is hard to explain unless you are a twin.

I was interviewed by S/Ldr. Archie Winskill and expressed my



The Warren Twins with 165 Squadron in Scotland

gratitude for what he had done for us. I liked him at once, not only because he had brought us together but he was the sort of officer everyone liked. A very handsome man who, we later found often had calls from the Windmill girls (Windmill was a famous nightclub in London). He had a great sense of humour, never took himself too seriously, and was an excellent leader and squadron commander. He told me that he was placing me in 'A' Flight along with Duke and that he was confident we would be a credit to the squadron in future. I was delighted with my interview. Although I had known I would be satisfied to be on the squadron from what Duke had reported, my impression of the C/O was that we were fortunate to be pilots on 165 Squadron RAF.

Although many Canadians that served overseas did so in Royal Canadian Air Force squadrons such as 403, the majority served in Royal Air Force squadrons. 165 Squadron was formed during World War I but, so late in the war, that it did not see active service before being disbanded as the end of the war approached. It was reformed on 6 April 1942 at RAF Ayr, Scotland as a fighter squadron and became operational on defensive duties on 1 May.

The rest of the day was spent getting my flying kit organized (parachute, helmet, gloves, maps) and checking in with various sections on the station as well as the squadron. I met the other members of 'A' Flight, as well as those of 'B' Flight. It was a very 'mixed' squadron as opposed to those squadrons made up of one nationality. There were English, Belgians, Australians, New Zealanders, and ourselves as the only Canadians. The majority of the pilots were English. Later on it became even more mixed, with Free-French, Americans in the RCAF, and US Army Air Corps pilots gaining experience with us.

After the day's duty was finished, Duke and I went to our room before dinner and caught up on all the news from home as well as various



things that had happened while we were apart. Training with me at 57 OTU had been several English pilots who had been with us at Medicine Hat. I told Duke where some had been posted, and of accidents and deaths that had occurred while training. Duke gave me a sketch of each member of the squadron and their background and personalities.

Throughout our life we always agreed about people, and we never found one of us liking, or disliking, someone that the other saw in a different way. Further, we could meet someone separately, and describe his, or her, features and personality to the other and we would most likely recognize and know who they were without an introduction if we met them alone. If we described a person as, "having a bit of a fat face," the other would know without seeing that person just what, "a bit of a fat face" looked like.

That first evening the other officers in 'A' Flight plus some of 'B' Flight got together with us for a small welcoming party. It was no surprise to them to find I did not drink, for in the short time they had seen us together, they realized that we really were identical twins.

There has been a lot of research done over the years, and still on-going, on the subject of drinking and alcohol. Certainly in all three services in every country involved in the war there was serious drinking. The reasons for drinking are probably as numerous as the men who drank. A lot of drinking occurred because it was the thing to do -your friends went to the pub and you went with them. Duke and I went to museums and historical sites. We saw old buildings, churches, and found all of them very interesting. We did go to pubs if there was a special party and enjoyed being there. Our drink was a 'shandy' which seemed to be a mixture of beer and a soft drink. In the RAF Officers' Mess one signed for drinks and were billed at the end of the month. Some Commanding Officers kept a watchful eye on the amount of liquor charged on a young officer's account and would caution the officer concerned if he thought it excessive.

This first party when I arrived at Heathfield was typical of the many which followed while serving overseas. Following dinner, the group went into the bar and ordered drinks. In a short time singing or story-telling would start and, if a piano was available, so much the better. A piano was generally available if the mess had been in operation pre-war but was not always available in the hastily built aerodromes constructed after the war started. One thing we noticed about English officers was the fact that they seemed to have a much broader background in literature than we did and this in spite of our interest in reading from an early age. We felt it was because of the difference in the school curriculum. It may have been a false impression, but in conversation with English officers, we seemed to have a better knowledge of world geography or maybe it was just the ones we discussed geography with on occasion.

It was a pleasant evening and one which made me feel welcome.

It seemed obvious that Duke had been well accepted and I would be also. We were the only Canadians on the squadron and to some extent we felt this was a responsibility. Towards the end of the evening, one of the English officers recited a poem I had never heard before, but which he said was a well-known poem in English schools if twins were students.

THE TWINS

In form and feature, face and limb
I grew so like my brother,
That folks got taking me for him,
And each for one another.

There were six verses, the author was Henry Leigh (1837-1883)

The next couple of days was spent getting organized with personal gear, reading Squadron and Station Orders, and an interview with the Flight Commander, Campbell Colquhoun. Campbell Colquhoun was a 'character' with a reputation for odd incidents in the RAF. A pre-war officer with 66 Squadron at Duxford, he had flown Spitfires since 1938. The first squadron to receive Spitfires was No.19 at Duxford and their first Spitfire arrived on the 4th of August 1938. The second squadron was No. 66 and they received their first aircraft on the 13th of October 1938. Campbell Colquhoun was with No. 66 at that time, and there was a famous story about an incident when one of Campbell's dogs mistook a very senior RAF Officer's leg for a fire hydrant!

Campbell was never without a dog and at this time he owned 'Ben', a large boxer. 'Ben' was a likable creature and he was friends with all the 'A' Flight pilots and tolerated the 'B' Flight members. For some reason, 'Ben' loathed army personnel and became aggressive and agitated whenever army personnel were present, I must confess some of this attitude was encouraged by the pilots with the friendly chafing that went on between the air force and the army.

Campbell was also a sportsman and liked to hunt birds. To keep in practice he would shoot crows with a small sawed-off 410 shotgun he carried in his flying boot. He believed that birds cannot count and only see groups. For this reason he prepared a blind near a favourite tree the crows would fly to, have three or four of us junior members walk to the blind with him, where he would stay and we would walk back. He reasoned that the birds saw people go and come back and would not realize one had stayed behind. In any event, Campbell Colquhoun shot a lot of crows. One other thing he was noted for were his big ears which fanned out from his head. Campbell joked about this, and said he had to have special earphones made to his measure.

On the 4th of July I made two flights, the first a sector recce to learn the area of our operations, the second to test-fire cannons after maintenance on the aircraft. That evening, Duke and I thought of our

father who always regarded the 4th of July each year as a special day.

Squadron training carried on through the month. Formation flying, gunnery, and ground attacks, all designed to bring the newly formed squadron up to a standard before moving south to where the action was over France.

The day-to-day living went on. The back pay covering my rank of Pilot Officer back dated to the 19th of December came to £98 and my uniform bill was £41. Pay of a Pilot Officer in the RAF was 13 shillings and sixpence a day and that is the money we received. The rest of our Canadian pay was sent home as I mentioned earlier. In a letter home we asked if the farm was making any money, as certainly it made very little when we were there. In reply, we were sent a slip from the sale of 39 pounds of cream, testing 43% butterfat at 29 cents a pound, giving our father \$4.87 for all that work.

No. 165 was flying convoy patrols and scrambling after unidentified aircraft. After a short time on the squadron and after I had been assessed in the air, Duke and I became a more or less permanent section of two. This was the smallest fighting section of a squadron. A flight might be four aircraft, two sections of two, or sometimes six aircraft, three sections of two. Generally, the squadron put up twelve aircraft, in three flights -red, yellow, and blue. Often it happened we flew as Yellow Three and Four. Duke was considered the more experienced since he had arrived first on the squadron, so he flew as Yellow Three and I as Yellow Four.

We had four days leave the end of July and visited our brother-in-law's parents in Arbroath. Our sister had married Jack Adams who had joined the Canadian army. In spite of a keen desire to go overseas he was kept in Canada throughout the war.

Early in August there was a large exercise in co-operation with the army and we flew to Turnhouse near Edinburgh as a squadron formation. It was a mock invasion with the Firth of Forth as the English Channel. We simulated a number of ground attack sorties against the 'invaders' and it was great sport 'beating up' the army convoys. The army reported that the attacks were almost too realistic and it brought home the value of a sharp lookout and the use of camouflage. We flew back to Ayr on the 9th of August with rumors of a move south to 11 Group.

11 Group Fighter Command covered the south-east portion of England. This was the area where most fighter operations took place at this time and corresponded roughly to the area where the Battle of Britain had been fought two years before. In effect we were going into battle.

One night Duke and I had a serious talk about the future and what it might bring. We knew casualties occurred among fighter pilots everywhere, but were far more likely to occur in the south where air-to-air fighting took place. We recognized one or both of us might be injured in a

crash, wounded, or killed and reading the intelligence reports, we recognized this was more than likely, or at least a 50-50 chance.

We were not distressed by our conversation and indeed our main concern was the likely reaction of our parents, or any parent, who lost a son or daughter. We were aware that our parents were against our joining up because of the potential danger. Even before leaving Canada we had witnessed the reaction of parents and families who had lost a member due to a flying accident or other tragic event. We had a Christian belief that everything was in the hands of the Lord, and 'He' would make the decisions.

We did agree on one thing, and cautioned each other not to 'go crazy' if one should see the other shot down, or crash, and go against impossible odds in a fit of rage. Looking back now, perhaps we were being over confident in our ability to maintain self-control under those circumstances, but we were lucky and were never put to the test.

In August 1942, the squadron flew south to join No.11 Group at Gravesend on the Thames, east of London. This was our destination. We were to be part of the famous Biggin Hill Wing. We landed at Woodvale to refuel and I was delayed there because of an engine problem. On the 16th I left for Gravesend, and shortly after take-off I saw two Spitfires collide in the air. Both crashed and there were no parachutes. I landed at Hawarden (where I had suspected the aircraft had come from) and reported the accident and location of the crash. When I arrived at Gravesend I found the squadron had moved to Eastchurch. A further flight of twenty minutes and I was at Eastchurch. Duke already had a room organized for us in the mess.

Now we were part of the famous No. 11 Group of Fighter Command and the Biggin Hill Wing.



No. 165 Squadron Spitfire by J. Cowan

NO. 165 SQUADRON (EASTCHURCH)

No. 165 Squadron was a 'new' squadron that had not operated in the south before and further training was considered necessary. We did two training flights and then a sweep towards Le Touquet, when the Biggin Wing Leader led the formation. These took place on the 17th and then we did another training flight on the 18th.

During the evening of the 18th, a special briefing was held for all the wing pilots. This was rather a surprise for most pilots, including the senior leaders, for we were told that a large combined operation was to take place the following day. Furthermore, because the briefing took place after dinner, the ships carrying a large contingent of Canadian soldiers were already bound for Dieppe (the target). This was very exciting news and it was pointed out that no phone calls were to be made and personnel were not to leave the station.

Following the main briefing, our Squadron Commander briefed our pilots. It was to be a maximum effort and take-off would be at first light, before the sun would be up. Duke and I were to fly together in one of the first sections to take off. So off we went to our room to get some sleep before the early morning call.

Naturally we were very excited about the raid and the fact that the Canadian Army would be in the forefront for we had many friends who had enlisted in various regiments. We had been told it was only a 'raid in force' and there was no intention of staying. There was a small airstrip just outside Dieppe and we were instructed that if we had to force-land there, and did so before 11:00 am, the Canadian Army would take us back to the UK with them. But only up until 11:00 am -after that the Army would have left on their return to the landing craft. Another piece of important information was that the Royal Navy had carte blanche to shoot at any aircraft below 7000 feet, so we were to stay above that height over the ships.

We were in the air at first light. Patrolling at about 18,000 feet, we could see the flashes of gunfire below us and the landing craft near the beach. Of course our flying took most of our attention, and one only caught brief glimpses of the battle but we could see the battle area alight with tracers, with many fires on the esplanade of Dieppe. Several landing craft were grounded offshore. There was little Luftwaffe activity at this time. Enemy aircraft would appear, attack the ships, and quickly turn inland. On my first patrol I flew SK-M for 1:40 hours, a long patrol for a Spitfire. Immediately the ground crew refuelled the aircraft and we were placed on readiness.

My next sortie was about lunchtime. By this time the Luftwaffe had taken to the air with both fighters and bombers. Now there were many dogfights, and Dornier 217's were dive-bombing our ships. Our section of four attacked a Dornier from astern and rear quarter. It appeared that the



**'Warren Twins over Dieppe' by Don Connolly
Bruce Warren is flying 165 Squadron Spitfire 'SK-F'
and Doug is flying 'SK-M'.**

pilot bailed out while the rear gunner was still firing at us! There were only two parachutes. We also engaged in many inconclusive dogfights and there was a general melee of aircraft from both sides. In the harbour below a destroyer was seen ablaze. Many landing craft were sunk or uselessly beached. We noticed our troops pinned down or dead along the ocean wall. We had no trouble appreciating what our troops were going through down below.

This sortie lasted 1 hour and 45 minutes, and we were all very short on fuel when we landed. Several aircraft ran out of fuel as the nose came up on landing and they rolled to the end of the runway and turned off.

The third sortie took place in the afternoon. Once again the Luftwaffe was quiet. The troops had started their withdrawal some time before and we were told there were no more Canadians on the beach, but what they really meant was that there were no more Canadians fighting. They were prisoners if they were still alive. There were many dead and wounded. However we did patrol over the returning boats and covered a pilot who had bailed out amongst the flotilla. We watched a destroyer, in mid-channel, burn and sink. Since we had never seen a large ship on fire we were amazed how well a steel ship appeared to burn. On the way



Canadian Spitfire pilots of 401 Squadron RCAF between flights during the combat over Dieppe

home, my twin reported his engine temperature rising. We gained height in case he had to glide back. As we approached Eastchurch, his temperature went off the clock. He glided in and as he landed, the side panels of the engine compartment were glowing red.

The squadron did a fourth sortie but Duke and I were not on it. It had no contact with the Luftwaffe, chiefly covering the withdrawal of the boats which, by the time of the sortie, were close to the English coast. The final score for the squadron for the day was two Do 217's destroyed, and four damaged, with no loss to ourselves.

Pilots taking part in the combined Operation on the 19th of August knew it was a 'big show' as such episodes were described then. Only later did we learn how big it was, for the RAF had flown almost 3000 sorties, the Luftwaffe 945. At the time, it was thought losses were about equal, 100 aircraft on each side, but it was later found the Germans had only lost 50 whereas the Allies lost 106.

The air battle at Dieppe was the greatest air battle of the war.. Now it wasn't the most important at all, but it had the most aircraft involved in a small space of time in a small area. And in an area not much bigger than our Comox Valley, or roughly the size - if you could imagine Toronto, and probably not as big as Toronto now - you had three thousand sorties by Allied aircraft and almost a thousand sorties by German aircraft. So there were four thousand aircraft overhead in the first five or six hours of the battle. You can see how active it was.

Dieppe, over the years, has become a very controversial subject

for the historians. They all have theories but most agree that, as terrible as the Canadian casualties were, the lessons learned saved many thousands of lives on D-Day two years later.

When Canadian troops and British Commandos made their now famous raid against the harbor town of Dieppe, they were supported and protected by the largest array of RAF and RCAF aircraft ever seen in WW II until that time.

The Allied air forces succeeded in their primary objective over Dieppe. They had put up a virtually impenetrable air umbrella over the landing site and the naval convoy. Attacks by the Luftwaffe were negligible with only one major ship damaged (it was later sunk by the Allies).

Sixty Allied airmen were killed, of which thirteen were Canadian serving with RCAF and RAF squadrons. This number would have been much higher except for the often-unrecognized heroism of the Air-Sea Rescue organization. But this number pales in comparison to casualties



401 Squadron Spitfire pilot Robert “Zip” Zobell, from Raymond Alberta returned from Dieppe with a wound on his forehead and his Spitfire damaged by enemy fire.

Squadron score 2 destroyed 2 damaged no losses.
 4th Yellow section, Flt Captain P. Robinson Duke 26 got a WD 217.
 This section was targeted combined operation yet. 22 was destroyed we lost 25 we
 at Gravesend 21 pilots

Bruce's 'Dieppe Raid' logbook note

1. DIEPPE OVER DIEPPE	1.30	LOG 2 ACFT DOWN - OTHER FIRE
2. DIEPPE OVER DIEPPE	1.45	RAIFORS IN ORDER ON GROUND
3. DIEPPE OVER DIEPPE	1.55	DIEPPE BARRAGE BOMBERS - DIEPPE
4. DIEPPE OVER DIEPPE	2.05	SECTION 27 A BOMB - 2 BOMBERS AT DIEPPE
5. DIEPPE OVER DIEPPE		ONE A BOMB BOMBERS AT DIEPPE
6. DIEPPE OVER DIEPPE		ONE AT DIEPPE

Doug's 'Dieppe Raid' logbook entries

suffered by the Canadian Army at Dieppe.

Having only experienced a single, uneventful combat operation, the air battle over Dieppe was quite an initiation to wartime operations for the Warren Twins.

Shortly after Dieppe, the squadron left Eastchurch. We were sorry to go for we had not had an opportunity to look around the countryside. The station was a famous old RAF station from WW I, and had been an armament test centre at one time. Located on the Isle of Sheppy, sort of mid-way between Maidstone and Canterbury, there were many interesting places to visit. However we flew back to Gravesend where the officers' quarters were in a beautiful old English home, Cobham Hall.

The Twins flew operations with No. 165 Squadron for eighteen months, conducting sweeps over occupied France, escorting bombers, and upgrading their skills and those of others in various training exercises.

The aerodrome was located quite close to Gravesend and the quarters for the officers were about three miles out. We went back and forth by lorry driven by a WAAF with a broad country accent that we found difficult to understand. Some of the English officers were able to mimic her accent and it was great fun to hear them tease each other and the WAAF driver.

Just prior to coming south, our Squadron Commanding Officer had been changed. S/Ldr. A. Winskill was posted and his place taken by S/Ldr. Jim Hallowes -an older man, a pre-war Sgt. Pilot, and a 'Halton Brat'. This is what a person was called who joined the RAF as a boy apprentice and was sent to Halton for his technical training. Halton had been established by Sir Trenchard to ensure good technical training in the RAF. S/Ldr. Hallowes had distinguished himself flying at Dunkirk as well as in the Battle of Britain. Although his commission seemed slow in

coming, his promotions once he was an officer came quickly. Rather more reserved than S/Ldr. Winskill but respected by everyone. We had great confidence in him as our leader.

The war moved along and we heard of the American success at Midway, and Monty's victory at Alam el Halfa. The squadron, working with the Biggin Hill Wing, took part in many sweeps over France. Sometimes we escorted bombers, Blenheims, Venturas, or Bostons. The American Airforce was just starting to use the B-17's in daylight raids. Several times Duke and I laid on a 'Rhubarb' to France but weather conditions changed and we returned early. 'Rhubarbs' were generally flown by two or four aircraft. One might call them small 'pin-pricks', but it kept the Luftwaffe busy. A target would be picked not too far from the coast, and there would have to be some cloud cover to nip into if one was 'bounced' by a large enemy force. Always low-level, flak was the big problem, and if one was hit, often there was insufficient time to bail out. It was a questionable practice really, and some C/O's were reluctant to let their pilots waste themselves on 'rhubarbs'.

Gravesend aeroport had been used as the London terminus along with Croydon before the war. There was good accommodation for both machines and men but there was no surfaced runway when we went there in late August 1942. This had some advantages for it allowed four aircraft to take off together, hence the forming up of the squadron took less time. The squadron C/O and his section became airborne first, and after a short flight in a straight line he would commence a gentle turn, and the two flight sections would 'cut the corner' and fall in behind in a very short time. The CO would then set course for his destination, generally France, but sometimes another aerodrome in England for refuelling before crossing the channel.

Should the operation require it, we would take off from Gravesend and proceed to Biggin Hill where the squadrons there would just be taking off as we arrived. All of this required precise timing and considerable navigational skill from the leaders. In addition, there would often be a rendezvous with the bombers at a certain time and place that had to be calculated carefully. Although we had a good excess of speed over the bombers, if they left the coast before us the distance we took to catch them almost had them over enemy territory without an escort. So precise timing was required from both formations.

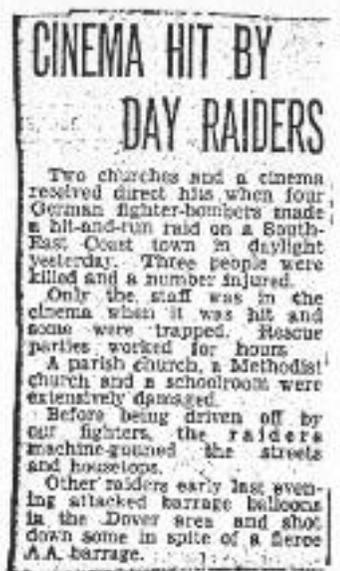
During our two and one-half months at Gravesend we flew thirty operational sorties and were away at Mardlesham Heath for a one week gunnery camp. There occurred a serious accident there when two of our Spitfires collided in the circuit and both pilots were killed. Of special interest at that time was a sortie on the 9th of October when one hundred and eight B-17 Fortress and Liberator aircraft bombed the locomotive works at Lille. We operated out of Tangmere for this mission and some five hundred Spitfires escorted the bombers. Four bombers were lost and

five Fw 190's were shot down. I had a tense fifteen minutes when Duke passed out and left the formation in a slow descent and did not respond to radio calls. His oxygen system had failed. Recovering at a very low altitude, he hedge-hopped out of France and when over the channel, gave our peculiar whistle. Delighted to hear it, I replied with a short note and we knew everything was okay.

One of our pilots went missing and his body was later picked up in the ocean. It was not known what caused this loss. Rather heart-breaking, as 'Griff' had planned on being married on Saturday, but the bride called and delayed it a week as her dress was not ready. We did not know her, but it must have been a terrible shock for her.

During the summer and winter of 1942, the Luftwaffe began what were called 'tip and run' raids which corresponded roughly to our 'rhubarbs'. But for some reason they never penetrated as far inland as our raids did, striking just at the coastal towns or other installations. To counter this activity, Fighter Command put up standing patrols of two aircraft along designated stretches of England's south coast.

On the 22nd of September, Duke and I were on patrol from Beachy Head to Rye on the Sussex coast when just in front of us four Fw 190's nipped in and dropped their bombs on Rye. We saw the explosions first, then the aircraft and we immediately opened our throttles in pursuit. We got behind the enemy aircraft and followed them out to sea, talking on the radio as required. Since we were the only ones on that frequency we dispensed with 'Yellow One' (Duke) and myself 'Yellow Two' just calling 'Duke'. As this went back and forth, the ground controllers became confused and concerned. Operations centre called squadron Ops and said, "Something funny is going on. One of your sections seems to be talking about four Fw 190's to himself calling Duke all the time". The C/O and Flight Commander just laughed and said the twins must have run into some Huns.



We went up to London whenever possible. Train service was frequent and about forty-five minutes en-route to Trafalgar Square. Here we went to museums, libraries, shows, and the cinema. Sightseeing in the famous city we had read so much about was a great thrill. It may seem strange, but because we did not drink we seldom went into pubs unless we were with other pilots on some special occasion. Camera shops, and Bassett-Lowke (the famous model makers) were also an interesting place to visit. All the sights of 'The Big Smoke', as it was called by some, were interesting to young men twenty years old from Alberta.

Wherever there were servicemen in England there were English families to take them into their home. Gravesend was no exception and here we met a wonderful family, Mr. and Mrs. Archie Pratt. Mr. Pratt had been in the Royal Flying Corps in the first World War and he had enlisted again. A technician, he sometimes would come home on weekends and we would meet him. Mrs. Pratt was most kind, and although her hospitality was wonderful for us, the most important thing 'Mrs. P' did was write to our parents in Canada,

'Mrs. P', as we called her, would tell our Mother we were safe and healthy, that we were eating regularly, etc. Since she could give her address in her letters our parents knew where we were and it was a great comfort to them.

One never knows what the future holds, but this friendship with the Pratt family continued over the years and into the next generations. We did take photos of the family and also gave them photos of ourselves. Later in the war during 1944, a fighter pilot friend was returning to base near London when his aircraft caught fire over Gravesend and he bailed out, landing in a small clearing at the back of Pratt's house. 'Mrs. P' did the typical English thing and invited him in for tea. When he was taken into the home, to his amazement there was a photo of Duke and I on the mantelpiece! Although I am sure his remarks to the Pratts were of the customary kind in the circumstances, next time we met he had a few choice remarks, "Into the house for tea and there are two bloody Canadians on the mantelpiece."

The war was moving on and much to our disgust we learned Canadians taken prisoner at Dieppe were shackled. This was said to be because the Germans had found evidence that Canadians had intended to handcuff any prisoners taken at Dieppe to get them back to the boats. But eventually this was sorted out and the shackles were removed.

During this time we had an interesting visit to the Canadian Army and talked to some soldiers who had fought on the beach. One man had lost his brother there and was worried if two of his friends were dead or prisoner, for he had had no word. When we expressed the idea that it must have been really rough on the beach he readily agreed. But then he told how he was crouching by a knocked-out tank, bullets all around him, when he saw a Spitfire shot down and no one bailed out. He told us, "I said to myself, I'm glad I'm down here and not up there." So it shows how we all have our little slots to fit into, and are often glad we don't have the other man's job to do.

Fighter Command had a policy of rotating squadrons through its various stations. In early November, No. 165 was moved to Tangmere, near Chichester, on the south coast, not far from Portsmouth. We were sorry to leave Gravesend, with its proximity to London and the friends we had made there. However Tangmere was a much better location for the winter for it had permanent runways. It was also a very famous fighter



165 squadron pilots at Eastchurch during October 1942.

Doug is looking over the propeller blade to the left, Bruce is looking over the propeller blade to the right. [Bruce Warren Collection]

station that had played a prominent part in the Battle of Britain.

Montgomery in Africa won the Battle of El Alamein, Allied forces landed in Morocco, and Algeria and French Vichy broke off relations with the US.



'Warren Twins taking off' by John Rutherford



The Warren Twins prior to a 'sweep' over France in 1942. The white band on our wrists details some aspects of the flight.

NO. 165 SQUADRON (TANGMERE)

Tangmere was a permanent, pre-war RAF Station with a history as a fighter station for many years. It had been bombed frequently during the Battle of Britain and scars of this were in evidence throughout the station. The officers' mess was still intact and some of the quarters. Our squadron officers were billeted in what once had been senior officers married quarters, not far from the mess. It was convenient and the bicycle which was issued to each aircrew member took us to the flight line.

We landed at Tangmere on the 2nd of November 1942 after a fifty minute flight from Gravesend. On the 8th of October the wing provided rear support for a one hundred aircraft, B-17 raid -the biggest raid to date. The Luftwaffe reacted in great force as the bombers dropped their bombs on Lille and Abbeville-Drucat aerodrome. This last target was the home of some of the 'Abbeville Kids' flying Fw 190's, the official designation was 'Jagdschwader 26'. There was a series of dogfights and we lost one pilot who was later picked up dead in the channel.

The wing was kept busy flying escort to bombers and patrolling the coast to intercept 'tip and run' raids by Fw 190's that would dart inland a few miles to drop their bombs. This latter task was also carried out by the New Zealand Typhoon squadron which shared the station with us. Two other Spitfire squadrons were also part of the Tangmere wing and they were based at Merston and West Hampnett. The intelligence and operations room was nearby at Shopwyke House. A few miles away was the city of Chichester and the well-known Unicorn, a favourite pub of the fighter pilots.

Towards the end of November we, as day-fighter pilots, were very surprised to be told that our squadron was one of three that would be trained as night-fighter pilots on Spitfires. This was in addition to day operations, although we were not committed to these as often as previously. Part of our training was to be twenty-five hours of instrument flight in the Link, the same as we trained in during our time in Canada but more concentrated. There was one major difference in the Link instrumentation. In Canada the Link had a 'needle and ball' to indicate turn and bank, but in the RAF Link it was two needles, one pointing up, the other down. This took a bit of getting used to. We also were given some lectures about night vision, but in general the pilots dismissed this as nonsense with rabbit jokes.

The two other designated 'night-fighter' squadrons on Spitfire aircraft were a Canadian Squadron and a Polish Squadron based near London. The plan, thought up by Fighter Command, was to use the Spitfires in the event the Luftwaffe launched a Thousand Bomber Raid on London in the same way the RAF had launched one on Germany in the spring of 1942. Should this take place, the Spitfires were to be sent to the target area to shoot down any bomber they could see by the light of the

fires below. To overcome the problem of aircraft recognition at night, the Spits were to be allowed to shoot at anything with two engines and the radar equipped twin-engined RAF night-fighters were to be kept out of the target area. So the plan said.

Spitfires were designed as day-fighters and never really intended to fly at night. It was realized they might take off at dawn or land at dusk, but 'dark of the moon' was out. The aircraft had no exhaust dampers and this was a serious fault. We would sit around in the crew room wearing dark goggles to give our eyes night vision, climb in the cockpit, take the goggles off, taxi out and open the throttle, and there went any night vision one might have had as the exhaust flames shot back into your night vision. Once at height and throttled back to cruise speed it was not bad but then when landing, as you throttled back on round-out, the flames blinded you again. Spitfires were definitely not made for night-flying.

Shortly after our starting the night-flying, a highly qualified night-fighter pilot was sent to brief the squadron on what night fighting was all about. His first step was to fly a Spitfire at night, something he had never done before. Like us, he sat in the crew room with the goggles on, went out to his aircraft, and took off. About forty-five minutes later he was back, came in the crew room, sat down, and wrote an eight page report as to why the Spitfire was unsuitable for night fighting. We already knew that but what impressed us was the Squadron Leader's (for that was his rank) ability to write an eight page report. Our administrative talents at that time in our careers were very limited.

During the period mid-November to mid-February 1943, I flew sixteen night sorties and twenty-three operations, and Duke flew twelve night sorties and twenty ops. I am not sure why I got more flying than he at this time. Most of the night sorties were in cooperation with searchlight practice. The searchlights would try and illuminate the aircraft as though it was an enemy aircraft. When caught by the searchlight I would lower my seat, turn the cockpit lights as bright as I could, and fly instruments till the exercise was over.

Also based at Tangmere was the No. 486 New Zealand Typhoon Squadron. Typhoons had only recently become operational, and had more than their share of engine problems. When the Napier Sabre engine, a 'H' type with twenty-four cylinders, kept running it was a potent weapon but at this time they had a number of engine failures. Since the engine had sleeve valves, it was thought they were not being lubricated properly on start up if the engine was cold. Consequently a gang of men went around the squadron all night long starting up engines every four hours. On the good side, the Typhoon was a very sturdy aircraft and could take a great deal more punishment in a force landing than a Spitfire.

There were two spectacular accidents involving Typhoons at Tangmere. There were others, but these I remember well. The first concerned one that crashed on the runway and the aircraft burst into

flames. The pilot was badly injured and could not get out. Both his legs broken high up as well as one knee and a broken arm with compound fractures. Two of our ground crew rushed in and in the face of grave personal danger pulled the pilot out. In addition to the above injuries, he was badly burnt with numerous cuts and bruises. Both crewmen were recommended for the George Cross which eventually came through and we all celebrated.

The other crash concerned two Typhoons on take-off. Mid-way in the take-off run and at about eighty miles an hour, the leader's aircraft blew a tire and swerved across the path of his number two who, in desperation, pulled up and stalled. But his leader passed in front of him, went off the runway, and careened across the aerodrome. A Lancaster on the taxi track had just had a wing replaced and was awaiting pick up by a Bomber Command crew. The Typhoon passed below the wing and the prop, still rotating, chopped the main spar and the wing collapsed. Carrying on across the taxi track, the aircraft hit a blister hangar which collapsed on a Spitfire being serviced inside.

While this was happening, the number two Typhoon was cartwheeling down the runway wing tip over wing tip. When the dust settled, both pilots climbed out and rushed to see what had happened to the other one. Neither were hurt seriously, and they met in the middle of the field and laughed uproariously at their lucky escape. Two Typhoons, one Lancaster, one Spitfire, and a blister hangar were demolished!

Some of us went out to pick up the pieces to help clear the runway, for any small shard of metal left behind might blow another tire with more serious results. Surprisingly, the 20mm cannon gun barrels were twisted like pretzels, but did not break.

Although training for the night flying role, we still carried on with sweeps over France to protect bombers. At this time we heard of the loss of Doug Manley, a friend we had gone to school with in Wetaskiwin. Manley was flying number two when they engaged some Fw 190's. Both he and his number one were lost. At the time it was uncertain who had bailed out but later it was found Doug Manley had crashed and was killed. His number one, Don Morrison, bailed out but lost a leg and was a Prisoner of War.

On a period of leave we visited friends in Gravesend and while there went to London to see the show 'Lilac Time', rather an old musical but we enjoyed it. On another occasion Duke and I flew up to Gravesend in a Tiger Moth. Not a pleasure trip as such, a Spitfire left behind for servicing at Gravesend had to be collected. But it was a pleasant trip and we took photos from the air of several impressive buildings, among them Arundel Castle which looked beautiful, just like a storybook castle.

About this time, we were promoted to Flying Officer, and Duke often acted as section lead - 'Yellow One', if the Flight Commander was not flying. Excellent experience and I continued either as his number two,

or as number three for the section and my number two was designated number four. We liked to fly together, and all things being equal. I preferred flying number two. If the section was broken up we were together and we had every confidence the cross-cover would see any attacking enemy aircraft. Also, if mechanical problems arose we would be together to help the best one could, depending on the circumstances.

For example, on one occasion over France, Duke's engine started running very rough and it seemed as though it would fail. He reported the problem to the C/O and turned for England. I carried out the navigation and talked to the ground controllers while he concentrated on flying his aircraft. Duke was able to land safely back at Tangmere and it was found that the contact breakers in the magnetos had become very dirty.

On the 23rd of December the squadron was night flying and one of our pilots, Sgt. Sage, a New Zealander, went missing. The following day, his body was found where the aircraft had crashed. Sgt. Sage was buried in the Tangmere church cemetery.

Sgt. Sage had crashed at night. This was not known and it was thought that he might have landed at another aerodrome or force-landed somewhere from where he could not report. In any event the next morning it was not known what the situation was concerning his fate. A rather amusing conversation took place before breakfast which was recounted by the Padre. It seems that the Padre and Sgt. Ian Forbes, a Scot on No. 165 Squadron, fell into step as they walked towards the mess in the fog. The conversation went as follows:

Padre: "I'm sorry about your friend last night." Sgt. Forbes "Oh, we don't know what happened. He may be quite OK." Padre (who was impressed by Forbes sincerity): "Then tell me, if you were killed do you think you would go to Heaven or Hell?" Sgt. Forbes: "Heaven." The Padre, who was really impressed with a fighter pilot who was not afraid to die and had such faith he would ascend to heaven asked Forbes: "Why are you so sure?" Sgt. Forbes: "Because I have always been a lucky bloke!"

Night flying in Spitfires was a risky operation. This was due to poor forward visibility on landing and take-off, our level of instrument flying experience (we had a bare minimum), and the lack of navigational aids coupled with a very rigorous blackout. This latter was specifically true for us, for we were only about two minutes flying from the channel and a Jerry night intruder could be over Tangmere almost before he could be reported. One of our pilots returning to base called for the 'Chance' light at the end of the runway to be turned on just before he landed. (The 'Chance' light was a searchlight device which was at the end of the runway. 'Chance' was the name of the maker but we always said you were taking chances if you had to use it).

The light was turned on briefly and then the pilot called for a vehicle to be sent out to lead him in to dispersal. This was not uncommon.

The flying control officer had not seen the aircraft land and checked with the 'Chance' light which had operated if an aircraft had landed. Receiving a negative reply and another call from an irate pilot saying he was beginning to overheat, both the engine and the pilot, the controller told him to shut down while he sorted the situation out.

A quick call to Ford, a nearby aerodrome, solved the mystery. When our Tangmere controller reached Ford tower there was an irate controller on the line complaining bitterly about a Spitfire that had landed on the perimeter track with no warning and now would not answer his radio calls. It was a very lucky incident for the potential for a serious crash was very high.

Christmas Day, 1942 was our first Christmas overseas. We spent the day quietly and thought of our parents and family and friends. But there were periods of readiness and always some aircraft were on standby. It was shared amongst the squadrons so depending on what the controllers considered the risk of an enemy attack determined the number of aircraft on standby. We wondered what the situation would be like next Christmas, and how many Christmases we might be overseas.

We didn't worry about the idea of being overseas at Christmas, it was just speculation about how the war was going. On the 25th of December 1942, the outcome of the war was far from certain. However, it may have been the confidence of ignorance, but there was never any doubt in our minds but what we would win. Realistically, we could see a difficult time ahead. Dieppe had demonstrated that.

On the 30th of December 1942, Duke was sent to Melsham, not far from Bath, on a parachute packing course so we did not spend New Years together. It was an excellent course and Duke became qualified to pack parachutes. When he returned to the squadron he briefed the other pilots on how parachute packing was done and he also was a liaison officer with the station parachute section.

We lost Mike Glover, an English Pilot Officer, who crashed into the sea after being hit by a flack ship near Le Havre. A Wellington force-landed at Tangmere. The navigator was a friend of ours, Laurence Parker from Calgary, and we had a great visit for a day and a half until his aircraft was repaired. Laurence later flew with the Canadian Wellingtons in Africa. He survived the war and became a respected educator in Calgary.

An unusual accident took place before my eyes one afternoon. I had been detailed to do an air test, which I completed, and as I joined the circuit for landing I watched a Halifax bomber start its take-off run. Part way down the runway it swung hard left, and much to my surprise, it broke in half just behind the wing. The front of the aircraft turned towards our dispersal then pointed its nose to the sky with all engines going and stopped. A flood of bodies rushed out of dispersal as they fled before the on-coming Halifax.

However it had stopped in time and as I watched, the crew fled from the crash in fear of a possible explosion. No one was seriously hurt but certainly the Halifax crew were shaken up and the pilots in dispersal had been more than startled. In a short time the runway in use was changed and I landed. Duke got a wonderful picture of the Halifax with one engine still turning.

One foggy day in late January 1943, the Luftwaffe launched a day raid of fighter-bombers on London. It was a panic scramble, the C/O, Duke, and I plus three other pilots all got airborne and streaked to cut them off over Kent. But we never made contact and although fourteen enemy aircraft were shot down, we were disappointed to return empty-handed. About the same time we had an unusually long trip, a sweep in the Abbeville area while Venturas bombed the Caen Aerodrome. We were all very short of fuel when we landed and for some aircraft the engines stopped on the runway when the nose came up. The technique was just to roll off to the side when this happened so following aircraft would not collide with you.

A few days later we conducted another sweep in the same area and we did engage some Fw 190's. Duke and his number 2 had a dogfight at low level over the sea and the Fw 190 he was turning with spun in. Sgt. Donaldson, his number two, had cannon shells and machine gun strikes on his aircraft.

Although not noted in Doug's story, it is known that on 26 January 1943 Bruce was given credit for shooting down an Fw 190 and claimed a second probable when another Fw 190 spun towards the sea at low-level after failing to follow him in a steep turn.



Bruce Warren's logbook entry for 26 January 1943
[Bruce Warren Collection]

We had become separated in this incident and after the Wing withdrew and we were returning to Tangmere, I gave our secret whistle and heard his reply so I knew Duke was okay. It was a very welcome sound as I knew he had been engaged.

Word came back from Malta that Kelly, an American in the RCAF, who had been posted from No. 165 Squadron to Malta had been lost. The story we got was that his engine had packed up, Kelly bailed out but drowned when he parachuted into the ocean. This was really sad news for he was a great character. Even more so, it was very discouraging for

us as Kelly was an exceptional swimmer. We couldn't swim and if a man like Kelly was lost in that fashion, our chances seemed slim.

In early February Duke shot down an Fw 190 off Caen. I had a dogfight but not conclusive and I made no claim. Sgt. Curry and F/O Lewis were lost on a 'rhubarb'. Lewis was flying 'my' aircraft, 'SK-D'. Although we did not operate as sole pilots of an aircraft, we generally were allocated one aircraft to fly most of the time. Duke often flew 'SK-F', and I flew 'SK-D' ('SK' was the squadron code and part every No. 165 Squadron's aircraft markings). Every so often we would switch so we would not become too used to any unusual engine noise that might foretell a failure.

Sharing Tangmere with Spitfires and Typhoons was a composite Squadron of Bostons and Hurricanes. This unusual combination was rumoured to be a brainchild of Winston Churchill. The theory was that the Boston, equipped with radar and a huge searchlight in the nose, would intercept the enemy aircraft. The Boston would then turn on the searchlight illuminating the enemy and the Hurricane which flew in formation with the Boston would nip forward and shoot the enemy aircraft down. To my knowledge this squadron never claimed a victory and it was later disbanded.

Tangmere being a major aerodrome and close to the coast, received a good share of returning bombers that had been battle damaged or suffered engine failure. I recall a Martin Marauder landing one day badly damaged. It couldn't stop and ended up off the runway. We were nearby and watched as one of the pilots was removed with terribly wounded legs. The medical assistant later told us he believed the legs of the pilot were held to his body by his flying suit.

On another occasion a Lancaster landed at night, over-shot the runway, and ended up in a ditch near our dispersal. We rushed out to see if we could help the crew. Fortunately it did not catch fire and the crew were unharmed. While we stood talking, another Lancaster without brakes came hurtling down the runway at us. We all started to run and in the soft mud our feet sank and slowed us down. For a frightening few moments we thought we would be run over by the Lancaster but we were saved by the ditch as another Lanc went up on its nose.

Life settled into a routine: sweeps, readiness, then time off. Duke and I went into Chichester to the library quite often and also visited the church and other places of interest. We met the Parsons family and again we were grateful for the gracious hospitality of the English people. Mrs. Parsons would write to our mother and it was a wonderful relaxing time while visiting with them. My mother would also write to them and send hard to get items to them in parcels. Mr. Parsons was with the local bank and a member of the home guard. A very quiet, unaggressive man, he raised rabbits for the meat but could not kill the rabbits himself for he became too attached to them so the butcher was called in to do the deed.

One night there was a small air raid on Chichester and the enemy aircraft dropped four bombs. We visited 'Chi' the next day and were impressed by the damage that only four bombs created.

Duke was rather unlucky one day and while taxiing in a confined space his wing tip hit a cement mixer and his Spitfire was damaged. We were surprised and very annoyed when he was docked three months seniority for this incident. Other similar minor accidents with pilots had not been treated in the same way. Whether it was because we were 'colonials' or the fact we did not socialize as much in the mess or pubs, it is hard to say. Since for all practical purposes we were teetotallers we often went to read books rather than to a pub-crawl. There is no question that during the war years and after, drinking with one's superior officers did no harm to one's career.

Our flight commander, Campbell Colquhoun' was posted to an OTU and F/Lt. Disney took over 'A' flight. S/Ldr. Hallows was posted to the Air Fighting Development Unit and 'Gin' Seghers, a Belgian, took over the squadron. 'Gin' lived up to his name and was a serious drinker. Further, when drunk he was obnoxious. On the other hand, he had a lot of experience and had been a permanent member of the Belgian Air Force. Who knows what his thoughts were when his family were in a land occupied by the Germans. 'Gin' had one outstanding characteristic. He was a highly qualified meteorologist. He had been trained as such by the Belgian Air Force and this was in addition to his flying duties.

Stefen was 'Gin's dog. A huge, white Pyrenees Mountain dog that seemed to be slobbering at the mouth continuously. He was a friendly dog and we all liked the creature, but we hated to be detailed to look after him. When it came time to give the dog a bath, which 'Gin' insisted be in the same tub we used, we stayed out of 'Gin's way. Someone had to do it and after, the tub had to be cleaned. Luckily for Duke and I, 'Gin' seemed to pick one of his drinking partners to do the job and we were never called upon.

Occasionally we would be called upon to parade for a funeral or the presentation of a medal. For the presentation we would be lined up in our best uniforms and stand to attention during the ceremony. Sometimes a senior officer would speak and then we would be dismissed. Funeral parades sometimes required short marches and the Warrant Officer would have 'kittens' as we young officers were so out of practice at drill.

A Padre always officiated at the funeral, and gave a short sermon. They were, I believe, deliberately short so not to let us dwell on the losses and lower our morale. The Padre also came to the squadron at various times and would go to a quiet corner and offer to conduct a short service for anyone caring to attend. Not many attended, but we always did.

NO. 165 SQUADRON (PETERHEAD, IBSLEY, WARMWELL, EXETER, KENLEY, AND CHURCH STANTON)

Early in March 1943, the squadron went to Marklesham Heath for gunnery camp. There was a bit of a ruckus in Ipswich, the closest town. Some drinking was involved, a fight with civilians, and a policeman struck by a RNZAF Sergeant. Ipswich was put out of bounds for some days.

A few days later the AOC (Air Officer Commanding) of Fighter Command visited us and presented the official squadron crest. At the same time he awarded 'Gin', the C/O, his Distinguished Flying Cross. A few days later 'Gin' was drunk and crashed his staff car. Sgt. Ian Forbes, who was with him, lost some teeth but there were no serious injuries.

In the last week of March we arrived at Peterhead, north of Aberdeen in Scotland. By the time we left Tangmere I had completed sixty-one operations and had a total of seventy-nine operational hours. Duke had completed fifty-five operations and seventy-five operational hours.

The squadron had lost four pilots in action and four in accidents, and had destroyed about the same total number of enemy aircraft. There were twenty-seven pilots on strength, three Australian, two New Zealand, two Belgian, two Free-French, one American in the RAF, two Canadians and the remainder British. A 'mixed' squadron was the way No. 165 was described.

Peterhead RAF station was not a very nice station from our squadron's point of view. No water in the billets, rain and sleet, scattered buildings, and not enough heat. We were all cold and miserable for a time after we first arrived. However by mid-May the weather had improved and we found Aberdeen a very nice and hospitable city.

Early in April, Duke was sent on the Rolls-Royce course at Derby. It was something like the parachute packing course. A pilot was given more than the usual technical information about the Merlin and he could then pass it on to his fellow pilots. Such a pilot was also able to talk over problems with the ground crew much better and was very useful.

When fighter squadrons were withdrawn from the south of England and sent north -to either Scotland or northern England, it was called a rest tour. It was certainly less stressful than operations in the south for we were far beyond the range of the German fighters. Our duties were training new pilots and several old pilots were posted out. Convoy protection was routine, as German bombers did not seem to come in daylight, although sometimes we were scrambled to try and intercept long range German aircraft. On one occasion Duke and his number two were scrambled for a possible enemy aircraft intercept and it turned out to be a lost Wellington aircraft from a bomber OTU.

When Duke intercepted the lost bomber it was about thirty miles out to sea east of Aberdeen. However because of poor visibility, the bomber crew could not see land. When they sighted the Spitfires, Duke reported "They really poured on the coal and came steaming up to us." The bomber was led back to Peterhead where it landed on the fumes left in the tank and the crew vowed to be eternally grateful to fighter pilots.

Reviewing their navigation log, it was apparent a strong wind very different from the forecast had led them astray during the night portion of the flight. The poor vision during the day and cloud conditions did not allow them to take a sun-shot. The grateful crew sent a smart leather wallet and penknife to Duke and his number two when they returned to their base. We often wondered if that crew survived the war.

Not only bombers had problems. While leading a training flight, a new Aussie pilot collided with Duke and chopped off part of his tail. But both pilots landed safely, the Aussie's aircraft with a much shorter prop.

When he brought his parachute into the crew room Duke was ready to really tear a strip off the Aussie but the Aussie never came in. So after a bit it was found he was so embarrassed and ashamed and sorry for what he had done that he wouldn't leave his aircraft. So it ended up that Duke had to go out to him and tell Happy Armstrong (for that was his name), "Don't worry, it could happen to anyone."

My own problem was different. Shortly after taking off, the pitch control of the propeller broke and the prop went into fully coarse pitch. Luckily I was close to the base for I was slowly losing height and nothing could be done about it. I landed on the runway and shut down and the aircraft was towed in. Strange, but Duke's incident was on the 28th of April and mine was the next day. Was someone trying to tell us something?

Aberdeen had a raid by German bombers just about dusk one night and the squadron placed a detachment of Spits down there in case of another. While there, one of the strange happenings of the war took place. Two of the squadron were scrambled in the afternoon to intercept an unknown. It turned out to be a German night-fighter, a Ju 88 aircraft. The Ju 88 put its wheels down as soon as they saw the Spitfires which then led the 88 to Dyce where it landed.

The crew had defected, although one was not keen to do so. The 88 had the very latest radar set and was a real treasure for the intelligence section. The two Spitfire pilots were F/Lt. Art Roscoe and Sgt. Scaman.

Good news! Sgt. Curry, who was lost on a 'rhubarb', returned to the squadron after escaping through France. A quick escape, for it only took him thirteen weeks. Curry had lots of stories to tell about the underground and hospitable French girls. Always an 'operator', Curry regaled the crew room for days with his stories. One of our pilots lost his



165 squadron pilots at Peterhead on 22 March 1943
The Warren Twins are to the left of the propeller.
[Bruce Warren Collection]

nerve after an accident and did not want to fly again. He was posted away for a decision to be made regarding his future.

This time I was sent on a course to a combined operations school at Troon, not far from Glasgow. There was a great golf course in the area and it was rumoured the senior combined ops officers liked golf and that is why that location was picked. Part of the course was on land but we also did several landings from the sea. At the end of the course I again said to myself how wise we were to join the air force rather than the army.

Sgt. Spencer, one of the New Zealanders, was killed low-flying. We had a funeral parade and service at a little stone Scottish church on a bank above the river Dee. A piper played, the churchyard looked so peaceful, and here we buried Spencer far from home. Silently I said to myself, "If I am killed over here I hope I shall be lucky enough to be buried in a peaceful place like this."

We celebrated our birthday quietly on the 28th of May, congratulating ourselves for having almost completed a year on the squadron with no special problems. More importantly we were still alive!

It was realized by the RAF that there was a good chance of escape for a pilot or other aircrew that parachuted or force-landed in France. This was especially so if you were not caught in the first few hours after coming down, for then there was an opportunity for the French underground organization to pick you up and hide you.

For that reason, Escape and Evasion exercises were held at intervals. We pilots would wear old clothes, be taken in a blacked-out truck to a remote rural area, and let out separately to try and make our way back to base without being caught. The local police and army were told that an exercise was on and a potential enemy was in the area. But they were not given any information as to where we were to be let off. It was up to them to cover all their angles and capture us. On one exercise that was held, Duke and Eric Shipp were the first two back which was quite an accomplishment.

We took some leave near the end of June and spent time in Chester and Gravesend. Soon we were to move as a squadron south again and be based at RAF Warmwell.

We flew South to Ibsley near Salisbury via Acklington and Wittering to reach RAF Warmwell. Just before leaving the north, 'Gin' Seghers was posted and S/Ldr. H.A.S. Johnston took over the squadron. Certainly he was a great change and vast improvement over 'Gin', both as a fighter pilot and a person. We did not know it at the time, but this was the start of a close friendship which would last many years after our return to Canada. 'Johnny', as he was known, had served in the UK and Malta. He was an officer with great leadership qualities and one who inspired confidence as opposed to 'Gin' who destroyed it. There was also another Johnnie Johnson, who was later to become the Allied top scoring fighter pilot with thirty-eight confirmed victories. The names were pronounced the same, but with a different spelling.

The first operation the squadron did was a shipping recce off the Channel Island -F/Lt. Disney, Chalkie White, Duke, and I. We reported what shipping we saw, and the navy headquarters would decide if it was worth sending torpedo boats out. At this time the squadron had eight Aussie, two New Zealanders, two Free-French, two Canadians, and ten Englishmen. We were equipped with Spitfire Mk Vc aircraft and used forty-five gallon long range tanks on some missions. Spitfire Mk Vc's were fitted with four 20mm cannons, and were heavier than a Mk Vb because of that extra weight.

Based at Ibsley, we escorted bombers and shipping strikes. The USAF were beginning to build up their B-17 force and twice we provided



The Warren Twins at RAF Warmwell

cover for 240 Fortresses bombing Le Bourget and Villicoublay. On 24th July, the squadron flew to Bradwell Bay and escorted Marauder bombers to Holland. Duke was not on this operation but I was with Curry (recently returned escapee) as my number two. The wing was bounced by a large number of Fw 190's and we lost three pilots, one of them Curry. The others were Andre' Imbert, Free French, and Bill Brown, an Australian on his first operational trip. This seemed to happen quite often. A pilot would be lost on his first trip. We thought it was because it takes a bit of experience to realize what is really happening in a big dogfight. For that reason, we did try to put new pilots on what we hoped would be an easy operation. Of course the Luftwaffe did not always co-operate.

That evening Duke and two other pilots flew up to Bradwell to replace our losses. The next day I flew as Duke's number two escorting Marauders again but this time there were no engagements for our squadron. The Marauder was a sleek two engine bomber with tricycle under carriage. By standards of the time, it had a high take-off and landing speed. A considerable number were lost in accidents because of this.

Although not noted in Doug's story, it is known that on 30 July 1943 Bruce shot down an Fw 190.

About the first of August the squadron was moved to Exeter. On one of the first operations Duke and an Australian, Tommy Vance, shot down two Fw 190's after a long chase to sea. Then a show with Marauders to Merville aerodrome. On this one, Chalkie White, flying Duke's number two, was shot down, and later became a Prisoner of War. Since we were now among the more experienced pilots in the squadron, we were seldom able to fly as a section of two but we did whenever possible. However, when the flight commander was away we often flew as a section of four. The Wing Leader at Exeter at this time was a famous tennis player named Malfour.

The second week in August Duke was sent on the Fighter Leaders School at Charmy Down. This was a course for pilots who were marked to become Flight Commanders, Squadron Commanders, and Wing Commanders. It was a temporary rest from actual operations but simulated operations, and the latest intelligence information was examined closely. It was a 'feather in one's hat' as a fighter pilot to get the course.

At this time the squadron was moved to Kenley. I phoned Duke at Charmy Down and he was quite surprised. So were the rest of us when we were told of the move as we had only been at Exeter a short time. Kenley had been home to Canadian squadrons for a long time and they had been moved into tents for a summer exercise. We enjoyed Kenley, which was close to London and part of the Biggin Hill Wing. Three famous



Bruce, after destroying an enemy aircraft over the sea while based at Exeter fighter pilots were there -G/C Sailor Malan as Station Commander, Jack Charles, a Canadian in the RAF and C/O of No. 611 Squadron, and Rene Mouchotte, C/O of the Free-French Squadron. Wing Commander Smallwood was our wing leader.

Duke finished the Fighters Leaders Course with a very good report. A gem of knowledge he brought back were recommendations from Jeffery Quill, a famous Spitfire test pilot, W/Cdr. Scott-Malden, and the

came to the flight to meet the squadron pilots. He was introduced to us and then said how pleased he was to meet us, for he thought the squadron had a lunatic pilot.

Each morning he would be in the washroom shaving when a Canadian officer would come in, say, "Good Morning, sir," wash, and leave. A couple of minutes later the same man would return, say, "Good Morning sir," wash, and leave. He couldn't understand what was going on with this chap.

The reason that this was our early morning drill was because we only had one electric razor which we shared. Whoever shaved first went and washed up while the other one shaved and then washed up. Since the G/C did not realize there was a set of identical twins on the squadron it was just a crazy pilot to him.

While at Kenley, we flew our escort missions with Marauder and Fortress bombers as the war was going on in the Mediterranean. On the 3rd of September, the Canadians and British land in Calibre, Italy, and five days later the Italian army surrendered. The Germans did not and heavy fighting took place at Salerno where the Americans landed. German oppression in Europe stepped up and Germany took direct control of Denmark after the Danes refused to suppress anti-German activity.

War in the East was still an island-to-island battle with Australian and US forces capturing Salamaua and Lae in New Guinea. The aircraft carrier became the most important component of the giant task forces that roamed the battle area. The land fighting in the Far East theatre was especially bitter as the Japanese culture does not allow an honourable soldier to surrender.

No. 66 Squadron, also part of the Kenley Wing, lost three pilots in dogfights with Fw 190's. Although we saw Fw's, they were diving through our formation at high speed to get at the bombers and would then use their superior speed and climb to gain altitude and repeat the attack.

On the 8th of September, the wing was briefed for a big show which was to be mock invasion of Boulogne. Bombers bombed, Bostons laid smoke screens, fighter sweeps were carried out, and a number of merchant ships started for France. But the German air force did not react and they only flew four reconnaissance missions, one of which was shot down. The BBC made a great 'to-do' about it and some of us laughed and some were disgusted with the propaganda aspect of the report.

Occasionally we would meet Canadian friends who we knew at school or who we had met in training. At such times we would catch up on who had been killed or wounded, who had finished their tour or transferred to another theatre, or married an English girl. Because of the nature of air force operations, far fewer RCAF men married overseas than Canadian Army men. But many did. In the air force it was not unusual for a young woman to marry twice, or even three times to air force aircrew. The woman would know her former husband's friends and they would

come to see her. Both being young and under wartime pressure to enjoy the short time one might have, another marriage would take place with the woman possibly becoming widowed again.

In mid-September we moved again. After a great party in the mess with the other squadrons we packed our gear and flew to Church Stanton. This was a field near Taunton in Somerset, and we lived in an estate called Canon Grove about two miles from Taunton. There seemed to be some duplication of names, as the airfield was sometimes called Culmhead.

The new station was in a very pleasant part of southwest England. The quarters were the standard Nissen hut. The mess was in the large country home called Canons Grove. We roomed with S/Ldr. Blackstone who had been in training command with very little operational experience. He was a very pleasant chap, and we got along fine. He had quite a few good tips about instrument flying. The way our cloud penetrations were carried out, the only pilot on instruments was the formation leader. All other aircraft flew formation with him, and if the cloud became very thick the formation split up and tried to join up on top.

News came through intelligence that Chalkie White, lost while flying Duke's number two, was a Prisoner of War. Also, and we were not sure how this information came to us, but Chalkie was a father.

Finally, our fervent wishes and prayers were answered! For sixteen months we had suffered under the Fw 190's while flying Spitfire Mk V's. Now we were issued with Spitfire Mk IX's and what a wonderful change. For example, the Spitfire Mk V's maximum speed was 374 mph at 13,000 feet. Its ceiling was 37,000 feet. The Spitfire Mk IX's speed was 416 mph at 27,500 feet with a ceiling of 45,000 feet plus a vastly superior rate of climb. At 22,000 feet. and above we had the edge on any German fighter at the time.

At this time Duke had completed 125 hours operational flying on Spitfire Mk V's, and I had flown 130 hours operationally. For Duke it was ninety-one operational sorties, and I had flown ninety-six operations. The comment in his logbook says it all, "165 finally equipped. It's about time we got rid of these trash heaps." One of the very good things about the new aircraft was that all the instruments and the controls were exactly the same as in the Spitfire Mk V so it was easy to feel at home in the cockpit.

The big difference was the power, rate of climb, and the ceiling. We were at 40,000 feet often and with no pressurization and no heat. So we were issued with submariner's big woollen sweaters and socks. Later we received electric booties to keep our feet warm but we found they were prone to short circuits and burning if they were worn very long. When this happened, the pilot had to struggle in the cockpit to pull the heating plug out.

While at Church Stanton several Royal Navy fighter pilots joined us for experience or to keep their hand in while not on operations. One of

these, a special officer, was Lt./Cmdr. 'Dickie' Cork DSO, DSC, who flew with the RAF in the Battle of Britain. But the Lords of the Admiralty would not let him wear an RAF decoration so he had to put up the DSC. (Distinguished Service Cross).

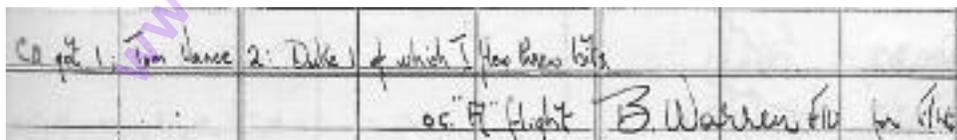
One of the Royal Navy officers who joined us was Lt. Beane. 'Beanie', as we called him, had an impressive name, Arthur Haggie Beane. He was the son of Sir Frances Beane, general manager of Lloyds Bank. We knew that Beane's brother Peter had been killed in an aircraft accident, and Duke and I felt sad about this although we had not known Peter.

Following a short introduction flight to the Spitfire Mk IX, Beanie borrowed Duke's Mae West and flying boots for an operational sortie. It was a sweep over the Cherbourg and enemy fighters were met and engaged and Beane was lost. It was the 26th of November 1943, and Duke put an entry in his logbook, "Lt. Beane (Royal Navy) lost in my kite and wearing my escape boots." We did not know at the time of course, but Lt. Beane had been in the aircraft when it crashed and went into soft earth. His remains were found in 1992, and at first the name Warren was thought to be a fellow naval aviator, but it was corrected later when I was contacted by a RAF friend.

The months of both November and December saw little operational activity. Lots of fog, low cloud, rain or drizzle. The bombers were not making many sorties in our area nor in any other area for that matter. In December Duke flew eight hours and forty minutes in his Spitfire and I had flown ten hours and fifty-five minutes.

Suddenly we were notified that we were to be taken off operations to be sent on a 'rest' in January 1944. At this time Duke had completed 104 operations and I, 110. The slight difference was because of the courses he had been on which took him away from the squadron.

Although disappointed that we were being sent on a rest, we had done eighteen months of operational flying. Between us, we had destroyed four enemy aircraft and we were satisfied with our performance. Further, we knew that there would be a Second Front in less than a year, and we wanted to be ready to return to ops at that time.



Although not mentioned in Doug's story, Bruce's 31 December logbook entry notes that Doug shot down an Me109 which blew up in front of Bruce.

A 'REST TOUR' (GRANGEMOUTH, LINDHOLME, AND INGHAM)

At this stage of the war, the RCAF had a good supply of aircrew and those sent on a rest tour had the option of taking a month's leave in Canada. In practice this meant considerably more than a month since the arrangements for cross-Atlantic transportation took some time. Some aircrew turned the offer down because as a friend said, "I hate the ocean trip and I'm not taking it till I go home." Others had girl friends and sweethearts and decided to stay in the UK for that reason.

We refused the opportunity to go home because of the very emotional trauma our parents went through when we left. We knew if we went home our parents would be terribly upset to see us leave again for overseas. So we did not tell our parents of this option, but we had to sign a form saying we had the opportunity for leave in Canada and we declined. I know other Canadians did the same for the same reason.

Our postings came through to No. 58 OTU at Grangemouth in Scotland. But first I was sent on the Fighter Leaders School at Aston Down -Number 15 Course at the school. This was a unit designed to train and upgrade squadron pilots with potential to become flight and squadron commanders on fighter squadrons. Leadership, detailed and accurate navigation, gunnery, etc. were taught and each student acted as a squadron commander several times on the course. It was considered 'a feather in one's hat' to be put on and pass the course.

So Duke left for Grangemouth on his own with me to follow. Shortly after arriving there he was sent on a short Flying Instructors course at Lulsgate Bottom near Bristol. While there he went to No. 10 Group Headquarters where our former C/O, S/Ldr. Johnston was Ops II. Johnny expected to be there three months before going back on ops and his plan was to get us back on his squadron when we finished our rest tours.

When I arrived at Grangemouth I found it was also called No. 2 TEU, or 'Tactical Evaluation Unit'. I then was moved over to Balado Bridge which was a satellite field. Everything was wartime Nissen huts, very cold, and miserable in February in Scotland. I shared a room with an Englishman called Pearson, a bit older than the average student for he had been put back because of a medical problem. The medical problem which he had and which he had now recovered from was having both ankles badly broken. The story how this happened was typical Pearson and a common one in wartime -drink was at the bottom of it.

Pearson told me one night he had gone into the small town nearby and spent some time in the pub. When the pub closed he and a fellow pilot from the station started walking home. The blackout was in full force and so there were no lights. After a bit, the two, singing and laughing, seemed to find themselves behind a hedge in someone's yard. There was

a stone wall and Pearson decided to climb on the stone wall and jump off into the street. He climbed on the wall, about four feet high, stood up, and jumped off. Pearson claimed he sobered up as he fell, for he had jumped on to the railway tracks which were almost twenty-five feet below. With both ankles badly broken and in great pain, he rolled to one side off the tracks and his companion went for assistance.

Accidents were common in the blackout. People often stumbled and fell, bicycle riders crashed, and car drivers missed the turns. We often thought that it was surprising there were not more serious accidents.

Pearson often went to London to visit his aunt. Duke and I had a wonderful aunt who lived in Edmonton. My father's sister Alma, who was the manager of a department at Woodward's. So I could understand why he would like to visit his aunt thinking about ours. But one day Pearson made a rather strange remark about his aunt and I queried him as to what he meant. Pearson laughed at my innocence and said, "She is not my real aunt. She is an older woman in London who likes to be seen with young pilots and has money to spend, and I just call her 'Auntie'". Pearson was a character.

I liked Pearson and he was the best room mate I ever had other than Duke. We knew that once Duke returned from his course we would room together. Pearson was intelligent, had attended a famous public school, and had not the war changed his life he would have been at one of the best universities.

The Nissen hut we lived in had a small, pot-bellied coal stove which would have been okay except the coal was of such poor quality. To get it starting to burn we used to bring back a partly used oxygen bottle from the flight line. With a bit of wood and paper and the oxygen we could get a good basic fire going. One day Pearson spotted a bigger stove in an unused building so we decided to change our small one for the large one which we did in the dead of night. The large one was much bigger around, but only about two inches or less taller. When we put it in place we had to lift the stovepipes and this created quite a tension on the guy wires holding the pipe in place. However we got the fire going and the replacement stove was a great improvement for the room then became warm.

We had moved the stoves late at night. I was in bed when Pearson had come in and suggested this was the time to do the deed. So all I was wearing during the exchange was my pyjamas, great coat, and flying boots. When we had the bigger stove installed I went back to bed. I was still awake when suddenly the stovepipe fell, smoke poured into the room, and soot poured out of the pipe! It was a shambles. I put my head under the covers while Pearson doused the fire with water.

We realized our scheme was not going to work with the bigger

stove, so nothing to do but switch them back the way they had been. But the mess in our room! We had to leave the pipes down so there was no fire that night. In the morning we complained bitterly about the pipes falling to the mess staff and the batmen cleaned up the room. We did give a small 'tip' to the cleaners to make ourselves feel better but we never told any one how it happened.

After I left Balado Bridge, Pearson finished his training and went to a fighter squadron flying Mustangs on long range sweeps. Sad to say that I believe he was lost on a sortie to Norway in the summer of '44. Many years later I looked up his name on the Runnymede Memorial as one of those who has no known grave.

I only did ten trips at Balado Bridge before I was sent for the last two weeks of February to Bournemouth on a skeet shooting course. The idea was that I would become the skeet shooting instructor. The thinking was that if pilots learned the basics about leading a moving target they could apply this in air-to-air combat. So to Bournemouth I went and I welcomed the change for there I was billeted in one of the fine old hotels.

There were about six or seven on the course and the instructor had been the skeet-shooting champion of England for several years. We fired hundreds of rounds and because I was not holding the shotgun correctly my shoulder got very sore. However, in a short time I could see where my shot was going and make corrections. The pellets looked like a small 'see-through' shadow in flight. Later on, I found 20mm cannon fire gave one the same impression. My assessment from the course basically said I was not a very good shot but was a good instructor.

Duke finished his course at Lulsgate Bottom and came to Bournemouth to visit me. We had a pleasant time together. He had received a 'Q' rating for his course and was assessed as an above average pilot. Our plan was that he would return to Grangemouth and get organized for a room together after my return from the skeet course.

About this time we had a wire from our Mother saying they would like to buy a different farm. The one they had when we left home was quite large, 1240 acres. The new one was quite small in comparison. We decided to help them with money we had saved. We had always sent money home and also had kept some in the UK. In the end we loaned them \$4000 to help buy the farm they wanted. Previously they were located west of Ponoka about eighteen miles. The new one was about the same distance east. Our parents were very happy and it was a lot less work and responsibility for both of them.

On my arrival back at Balado Bridge, I found I was posted to the Air Fighting Development Unit (AFDU) Flight No. 1687 at Lindholme near Doncaster. There was some confusion just how this command structure was set up. It seemed it was also part of the AFDU at Wittering. In any case I was off to Lindholme, and Duke and I decided we would work on

having him join me. It was further south, the climate was better, and the families we knew in Gravesend and Emsworth would be much easier to visit.

The purpose of the AFDU was to teach bomber crews how to cope with fighter attacks, both by day and night. The unit flew Spitfire II and Hurricane aircraft. For the tasks we were performing the Hurricane was the better aircraft. Improved visibility over the nose, a much lesser tendency to heat up on the ground, and the brakes were not as touchy. On the 3rd of March 1944 I flew a Hurricane for the first time, liked it, but realized the famous aircraft had no place on ops at this stage of the war.

Duke (still instructing at Grangemouth) had a serious fire break out in the engine of his Master aircraft while at height. He used the fire extinguisher, killed the engine, and made a 'dead-stick' landing on the aerodrome with no damage to the aircraft. For this excellent performance he was congratulated by the C/O and awarded a green endorsement.

The exercises we did with the bombers were called fighter affiliation, or F/A as it was entered in one's logbook. To see what was involved from the bomber point of view, I flew in a Halifax with Pilot Officer Clark. I was impressed with how big it seemed and the way the crew worked together. But I was satisfied that I was a fighter pilot and on my own in the aircraft.

The chief defensive tactic taught to bomber crews was the 'corkscrew'. This manoeuvre was a diving turn in one direction followed by a climbing turn in the opposite direction. The attacking fighter then had to compensate for lead in two dimensions. Further, when done at night, the bomber slipstream would also throw the fighter's aim off.

After spending a week at Lindholme, the unit was moved to Ingham, just north of the famous cathedral town of Lincoln. It was a grass field but that was no hardship. I had carried out five fighter affiliation exercises before the move. The flying was easy for any experienced fighter pilot for no additional training was required. We briefed the fighter pilot together with the bomber crew -mostly it was just confirmation as to where they would be flying so we could find them after becoming airborne. The bomber crews would have a more detailed briefing about calling directions to the pilot to start the corkscrew. Sometimes the pilot would want to try a special manoeuvre and ask for the fighter pilot to comment on the effectiveness of making the fighter attack difficult. This would be discussed after landing.

The interesting thing about the crews was the fact that I found the individual aircrew members to be rather similar. It reminded me of the saying, 'Birds of a feather flock together'. If the pilot was sharp, the whole crew seemed sharp. If I talked with the air-gunners first and if they seemed a bit below the average, the whole crew seemed a bit below average. Perhaps I was mistaken. In bomber command all the aircrew at an OTU came together in a large room and sorted themselves out as to

who they formed a crew with. For example, a pilot would see a navigator who he knew and liked and felt confident with, so he would ask the man if he would like to be part of his crew. Then the two of them would carry on until they found other crew members. Often air-gunnners who were friends insisted on staying together as there were at least two air-gunnners (rear and mid-upper) in a crew.

Doing night exercises was interesting in several ways. Getting together with the bomber crew, we briefed together to meet over a 'pundit' at a certain time and height. A 'pundit' was a flashing light on the ground spelling out a certain letter in Morse code. These were all over England, and each night the code was changed. The fighter would generally let the bomber take off first, for it had more fuel, and frequently after the Fighter Affiliation they would have other tasks as exercises. The fighter pilot flew with his navigation lights off. The bomber pilot had his on or we would never have found them.

When we sighted the bomber we would carry out an attack on it. The air-gunner, if he saw us in time, would tell the pilot to start the corkscrew and we would attempt to follow which was not easy. On a black night, and most of them seemed black, things could get quite exciting. One of our concerns was the possibility of a collision with a bomber (not the one you were exercising with) but one out-bound to Germany. Often there would be 200 to 300 bombers launched in our area and it was disconcerting to be flying along and suddenly go through the slipstream of a bomber you had never seen.

Surprising at first but we became accustomed to it, often the bomber's rear-gunner would never see us. This, in spite of knowing we were in the area, and our aircraft had no flame dampers on the exhaust. We would get within a few yards of the bomber, approaching it from below, and then turn on our navigational lights. The bomber would start his corkscrew at once to practise it but the crew knew they would have 'had it' if we had been an enemy fighter. Once the corkscrew started, tracking the bomber for an accurate shot was difficult. For one thing the slipstream threw the fighter around -perhaps more than a heavier fighter like an Me110 or Ju88. Many years later, when talking with ex-Luftwaffe night-fighter pilots, they said there were so many bombers in the stream if the bomber started a corkscrew they would break off and find a 'sleepy' bomber.

All four-engined bombers had a powerful slipstream but the strongest and most turbulent was that of the Stirling. Perhaps that was because the propellers were bigger than those on either the Halifax or Lancaster.

Duke finally was posted to Ingham and arrived on the 30th of March 1944. By this time I had done fourteen fighter-affiliations and enjoyed the opportunity to meet the bomber crews. In addition, Ingham had a ground-based school of tactics that received the very latest

intelligence daily. The Battle of Berlin was being waged and some nights the losses were very high. Not only over Germany, but on return in poor weather or a shot-up aircraft that crashed on approach or landing. These were not told on the BBC. The report would go out on the air, "Our bombers made a heavy raid on Berlin last night, fifty-three failed to return." No mention made of the seventeen or twenty-three or whatever the number was that were lost in England.

Occasionally German night-fighters, acting as intruders, would follow the bombers back and try and shoot them down when their crews relaxed over England. This did not happen very often, but crews were warned not to let their guard down on arriving back over the UK.

Also based at Ingham at the time was a man from our area who joined up with us, a Lester Brady by name. His brother, Joe, would occasionally visit Les from the Scampton airbase nearby. Joe was later lost on the Dam Raid.

At Ingham we lived in a brick building, very plain quarters they were and some distance from the mess. However, we made ourselves as comfortable as possible. It didn't seem to be as cold -spring was on the way. They were some distance from the mess, about a fifteen minute walk through a field and down a road. Close by our quarters was an interesting old country house that had been abandoned. We often wandered through it and speculated on the history of the place and what sights the walls must have seen. Not terribly old, as some homes in England are, but most likely somewhere around 150 years. It had been built in about 1800.

On the 6th of April I was told I would be sent on special duty and issued a brand-new Hurricane, 4E-H. The unusual fact about 4E-H was that it had two VHF radio sets. One using Fighter Command frequencies, the other set with Bomber Command frequencies. Eight VHF buttons! Most impressive then, not now of course when small private aircraft can carry hundreds of frequencies. I was ordered to fly to Newmarket where the Bomber Development Unit was located.

At Newmarket I was met and briefed on what my duties would be. I was to take part in the proving trials of 'Village Inn'. Top secret at the time, it was the development of rear-turrets with two .50 machine guns and radar sighting. Even in the darkness of nights the rear gunner could shoot down enemy night fighters. I believe Fraser-Nash made the turrets. Later on the famous professor of physics, Freeman Dyson, used Village Inn as an example of how a scientist can think up a brilliant idea that doesn't work in practise. In this case it was because there was no sure way of identifying the suspect aircraft. So with the large numbers of bombers in the stream, friendly aircraft were more likely to be shot down than enemy. But we didn't know that then and the tests went on.

My task was to fly in 4E-H and carry out attacks on the Lancaster bomber. The test turret was blacked out with paint and the gunner used his radar to track me and cine photos from both Lanc and Hurricane

showed the effectiveness of the system.

It was very effective, for no matter what angle I approached the Lanc from, I found the guns pointing at me. I must confess the first sortie I did was so impressive I thought the gunner must have cheated somehow. So after landing I walked over to the Lanc and very carefully examined the turret to see if a small 'peephole' of paint might have been scraped away.

Several Lancs were involved in testing, but the one I flew with most often was from 49 Squadron. A Canadian named F/Lt. Healey was the pilot. His full name was Welbert Arley Healey, although I did not know that at the time. He was just 'Bill'. We became good friends, as well as the rest of his crew, as we travelled from station to station carrying out the test program. I always took off in formation with the Lanc, and because of the difference in take-off speeds I would be airborne with wheels up and tucked in on the right wing before the Lanc left the ground. The other bomber crews thought this was a great show. I also flew through cloud in formation and this was a surprise to Bill and his crew the first time I did it. In Spitfire squadrons we did it all the time. The mid-upper gunner used to fire his Very pistol at me sometimes, it was a 'fun thing' as we would say now. Often the crew would criticize my formation flying if I did not stay 'tucked in' close enough.

On the 30th of April we had finished our second sortie of the day and were returning to land at Newmarket. In a gentle let down at about 3000 feet, the mid-upper gunner was waving and firing his Very pistol at me. Suddenly the Lanc nose dropped quite sharply. I remained in formation thinking if I didn't the crew would torment me about my poor formation flying. Simultaneously I realized that if I did not break away I would crash. I pulled out with considerable 'G' and the fireball from the Lanc came up beside me.

I was stunned -it all happened so quickly. I landed at the nearest station (Witchford) and reported the accident. The tower had already seen the crash so I took off and landed at Newmarket to report the details of the accident there.

I must confess I was very 'shook-up' for some time. These were close friends as you make in wartime. The night before we had all gone to the cinema together. When we returned there was a message for F/Lt. Healy telling him that he and his crew had finished their tour and were removed from operations because of the nature of the work they were now doing. I always remember the conversation we had. Bill regretted not being able to finish, only three or four more ops would have done it. But the navigator, an Englishman, said, "Bill it's okay for you because you are single, but I am married with two children. My wife will be very happy to hear my tour is finished. I am going to call her." We all understood. He had willingly done his share and we were glad for him. The next day he was dead!

I was detained at Newmarket to await the arrival of a special investigator from the Air Ministry in London. A Wing Commander arrived to interview me. Very brusque, his first words were, "We know the aircraft was in trouble. We have a report from the ground it was firing red Very lights." He was taken aback when I told him that did not mean it was in trouble. The gunner was just shooting at me for fun. He didn't accept this too well, but conceded my point when I talked a bit more. I wasn't able to help him very much it seemed, for I had no explanation for the accident. But just as I got up to leave he asked, "Is there anything you can think of that you haven't mentioned?" I then told him for some reason in my mind I seem to think of yellow fabric. "What did I mean-yellow fabric?". I then said I had trained on Tiger Moths, and their wings were covered in yellow fabric. I was then released from the interview.

The next day they went back along the flight path of the Lanc and in less than two miles found the aircraft dinghy on the ground. The dinghy is stored in the right wing of the aircraft, on ditching a salt water switch releases it so the crew can get aboard. As a backup there is a stirrup-like handle in the aircraft a crew member is to pull in case the switch does not work. Some how it was pulled and since 'Boffins' were on board and it was a bit turbulent, it is suspected one of them might have grabbed it to steady himself and released the dinghy.

F/Lt. Healey and some of his crew were buried at Cambridge. I attended the funerals. There were many Rolls-Royces up from London that brought members of the American business community from there. They were there to honour the rear-gunner, who before enlisting, I believe was the head of the European section of Ponds Cosmetic Company. We had often talked and he had told me Ponds were still paying his regular salary so that is why he had so much money to bet on the horses at Newmarket. He had joined as an air-gunner because the RAF recruiting officer told him that was the quickest way to get into action.

The loss of the Lanc left me without any special duty at Newmarket. I was returned to Ingham for the regular fighter affiliation work. As we flew to and fro to different bomber bases we would often meet up in the air with Thunderbolts and Mustangs and have a friendly dogfight. The Hurricane could easily turn inside both US aircraft and we would soon be on their tail. The practise really didn't prove anything for we hoped the American Pilots would not fight the Germans the way they did when engaging us. I am sure the Thunderbolt pilots thought, "Let's bounce this old Hurricane and show him what we can do" and they were quite shocked to find the Hurricane on their tail after a couple of turns. But it was good practise for all of us.

We kept on flying fighter affiliation exercises with bombers at a good pace. For example, both of us flew twenty-six sorties each in May '44, On the 28th of that month we were twenty-two years old. We congratulated each other on the fact that we were still alive as many who

we knew had never reached their twenty-second birthday. We gave thanks that He had looked after us. We also fretted about getting back on operations, as we expected a Second Front very soon and did not want to miss it. Our former C/O, Squadron Leader Johnston, assured us he would get us back to his squadron as soon as we finished our rest tour. This was scheduled to be about 10th July.

On one of the night sorties I flew on the 3rd of May, the bomber crew, after all the corkscrews, found it did not know its position and after talking it over on the r/t with me asked for help. So I led it back to the airfield where it landed. I never talked to the crew. I suspect the navigator had become ill either due to the violent corkscrews or something he ate. It was something to tease bomber crews about when they would make remarks about fighter's short flights.

Duke had a rather funny adventure on a train trip. We both went on leave but I was delayed for an interview at Newmarket about the crash of ARN. So he was on his own and happened to be in a compartment with a WAAF (Women's Auxiliary Air Force) who he did not know but had said "Hello' to. They were both reading newspapers when the train went through a tunnel at the same time a train going the opposite way was going through the tunnel. Suddenly there was horrendous crash and the WAAF screamed. The train conductor/ticket-taker came rushing in and grabbed Duke thinking he had attacked the WAAF. When the train came out of the tunnel, there was a great lump of coal laying on the floor that must have crashed through the window from the other train. The ticket-taker was most apologetic and they were lucky one or both of them were not hurt.

The month of June 1944 arrived. On the 5th of June we received a letter from S/Ldr. Johnston, telling us he had taken over No. 66 Squadron after Keith Lofts (once a No. 165 Squadron pilot) was shot down. He wanted us to join him. On the 6th of June the invasion was launched -'D Day' had arrived. We would have liked very much to be on a squadron at that time but all we could do was wait! On a flight on the 6th I saw hundreds of gliders lined up waiting to be launched when needed. We were frustrated we were not on a squadron.

During the war, the RCAF and I presume the Army and Navy, had officers going about the UK visiting those Canadians who were attached to British units and hence out of touch with what was happening in the Canadian forces. These seemed to be older men, often WW I veterans. The ones we met were F/Lt's. They had packages of cigarettes but we didn't smoke. They had lots of socks people had knitted in Canada but we didn't need socks. They wondered if we had any complaints but we didn't have any

complaints.

However one day one showed up and we had just read in RCAF orders that aircrew would be taught to swim before they were sent on operations. We wanted to learn to swim, something we never had the opportunity to do on the farm in Alberta. We always flew with our 'Mae West' and knew we might come down in the Channel. We knew we couldn't swim very far even with a Mae West. We did think it would be nice to be able to swim a bit. So we told the visiting welfare officer we would like to learn to swim. He took this information and went his way. We didn't feel very confident that we would learn to swim.

To our surprise, in two weeks time a message from Bomber Command came to our main base at Lindholme saying, "Warrens B. and D. were to be taught to swim." It seems the Group Captain PT Officer at RCAF Headquarters had phoned the Group Captain PT Officer at Bomber Command who sent out the signal. A Pilot Officer PT officer arrived with a Corporal to teach us how to swim. They took us to the local swimming pool in a nearby town and the two of them stood at the edge of the pool with long poles with a sort of hook on the end to catch our swimming trunks with if we started to drown. But we thrashed about and tried to float for about forty-five minutes and then went back to base with the understanding we would come back next week.

But we never did, for much to our delight we were posted to No. 66 Squadron and left Ingham on the 7th of July. Our last flights with No. 1687 BDTF were on 5th of July. At this time Duke had a total of 811 hours, myself 794 hours, and both of us were looking forward to operational flying again.



66 Squadron Spitfire

NO. 66 SQUADRON (THORNEY ISLAND, FUNTINGTON, TANGMERE, AND NORMANDY)

Before returning to operations, we had to funnel through 84 Group Support Unit, to be kitted up for the continent. This only took one day, and on the 8th of July a Sgt. Salmons flew us to Thorney Island in an Anson where No. 66 Squadron was based. While landing he made a serious error by landing downwind and shooting off the end of the runway. It had the potential to be a nasty accident. We and the other passengers might have been seriously hurt or killed. However, as the saying goes -we got away with it but the aircraft was damaged.



66 Squadron was formed in 1916 and destroyed 172 enemy aircraft during twelve months while deployed in Italy during World War I. The squadron was disbanded in 1919 but reformed as a fighter squadron in 1936, flying Spitfires from 1938 until the end of the war.

It was great to be back on a squadron. No. 66 Squadron was part of No. 132 Royal Norwegian Wing RAF flying in No. 84 Group. No. 84 Group came under the Second Tactical Air Force which came under Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Air Force. Basically No. 84 Group supported the Canadian Army, and No. 83 Group the British Army. Our wing was made up of No's. 331, 332, and 66 Squadrons. The first two were Norwegian squadrons and because they did not have enough pilots to man three squadrons, an RAF Squadron, No. 66 joined the wing. It was commanded by an RAF officer, Group Captain 'Zulu' Morris. The Wing Commander flying was a Norwegian, Rolf Berg. Both these senior officers were respected and liked, and the wing was a 'happy' wing. Later on, another RAF squadron, No. 127, and a Dutch Squadron joined the wing. Most of our ground crew were Norwegian. Many had been merchant navy sailors who had been torpedoed and survived. Often Norwegian pilots would be with the squadron if there were too many RCAF pilots in their squadrons.

The Spitfires we were flying were Mk IXB models. The 'B' indicated it was low-level and many had clipped wings -gradually all of them did. Low-level was a relative term, the difference being quite small really. For example, the Mk IXA 'high-level' had a ceiling of 45,000 feet, the B had a ceiling of 42,500 feet. Best speed of the A was 416 miles per hour at 27,500 feet. Best speed of the B was 404 miles per hour at

21,000 feet. A new feature for Duke and I was the gyro gun-sight which helped one's deflection shooting if the enemy aircraft would co-operate and do a steady turn. We each did four or five quick familiarization flights. Duke was made 'A' Flight Commander and I his deputy, and on the 12th of July 1944 we did our first operations with No. 66 squadron. It was typical of so many to follow, escorting thirty-four Liberator bombers to attack the V-1 launching sites. These were called 'noball' targets in intelligence reports. The same day we escorted nineteen Lancasters to bomb V-1 sites and we felt confident we were with a good Squadron and Wing.

The other Flight Commander was F/Lt. 'Pat' Pattison. A New Zealander in the RAF and a good type, we got along fine with him as well as all other members of the squadron. It was a very mixed squadron that included eleven RAF, four Canadians, one Pole, one American in the RAF, three Aussies, and one Norwegian. The other two Canadians were S/Ldr. Bill Foster, recently over from Canada, and Paul Gibbs, a very



The Warren Twins with New Zealander Pat Pattison (at right) and Slim Waterhouse of the Royal Australian Air Force (in the chair)



'Gemini Flight' by John Rutherford
'LZ' was the squadron code for 66.

experienced F/Lt. Both of these became very close friends of ours in a short time. The fact that Duke had just joined the squadron and was made flight commander at once made some of the pilots wonder. Also, myself moving into the deputy flight commander position was a bit unusual. However after the first couple of operations, the other pilots knew that we were well qualified fighter pilots and everything went smoothly. Some members of the flight could tell us apart and others couldn't it seemed, but in any case we were the senior people in 'A' flight so whatever we said was acted upon.

We lived in tents in the south of England and because it was July with little rain, life was sort of a picnic as we ate outside a good deal of the time. The Wing was moved about, Thorney Island, Funtington, and Tangmere, all fairly close to the Portsmouth-Southampton area. At Tangmere the King and Queen came to visit the Wing and talk to the Norwegians and our squadron. Duke and I were introduced to them and they chatted a bit with us. We had met them once before when they visited No. 165 squadron. We felt the senior people were always looking for something interesting to show the King and here were a pair of identical twin pilots from the Dominion of Canada. Now it would be called a 'photo-op'. We found it interesting to meet them and especially the Queen. She seemed a very happy sort of personality who had more questions than the King.

We did several escorts of heavy bombers striking against enemy ground forces and fuel dumps to set up our army forces for a break-out in the Caen area, 1800 heavies dropped thousands of tons of bombs in a

concentrated daylight raid. Some of these fell on our own troops and there were many questions asked about why this happened. We never heard the final story, but such accidents did happen.

One such accident happened when a Typhoon squadron was sent to attack German 'E-Boats' in the channel. When the squadron arrived in the target area, the squadron leader called back to operations saying he thought they were friendly 'E Boats' such as the Royal Navy operated. He was told that they were not and to attack them. The Typhoons did and sank them! Later it was found they were Royal Navy boats. The navy took full responsibility for the error and told all the sailors it was their own command's error. We thought that was showing leadership or ugly rumours might have spread.

The month of July went by quickly as we were very busy. Our first operational trip was on the 12th of July and our last for the month was on the 31st. In between, Duke had completed thirteen operations and I twelve. The squadron had lost several pilots, both on ops and accidents. One accident involving an American in the RAF was a foolish low-flying crash. S/Ldr Johnston was very annoyed as the pilot had been warned against illegal low-flying. Ready to tell the pilot he was going to be court marshalled for destroying one of His Majesty's Spitfires, he went to the hospital. There he found the man seriously injured, most likely never to walk again, so he let the matter drop as he said the pilot had been punished enough.

The squadron did get some time off duty and we went swimming in the ocean. We could not swim, as mentioned before, but we did enjoy our time on the beach which was a most pleasant change. One evening we had the C/O come with us to have dinner with a civilian family we had met. Their name was Parsons, and later when the C/O wrote his book, 'Tattered Battlements', the Parsons and our time with them was mentioned.

When operating with Lancasters carrying out daylight raids we carried drop-tanks. These could be of either forty-five or ninety gallons capacity. External tanks cut down on performance and were meant to be jettisoned when empty or as soon as the enemy were sighted. We all were rather concerned when under fire by flak guns. Furthermore, we questioned whether it was wise to have more fuel on the outside of the aircraft than what was inside. However, on the day the Lancasters had their deepest daylight penetration up to that time, we used the ninety gallon tanks to good advantage.

Taking off from England, we met them at the French coast, accompanied them to the target, Joigny, brought them back to the coast, and we landed at B-11 in France. B-11 was one of the early bases where fighters could land near Caen. Total time was two hours and forty minutes which is a long trip for a Spitfire. Had we engaged the enemy, we would have had to turn back earlier.



66 Squadron Spitfires operating in Normandy

B-11 was in the beachhead. We spent the night there in primitive conditions as German bombers made an attack. We were not especially their target we thought, but there were so many potential targets for the enemy in the beachhead anywhere he dropped a bomb might score a hit. Of greater danger to us was the falling shrapnel from our own anti-aircraft guns. Quite hot sometimes when it returned to earth, it made a little hiss when it fell in the mud puddle by our tent.

We returned to England the next day for there was not enough room in the beachhead for all the fighter aircraft. Although we wanted to get on the Continent, the green fields and pubs were an attraction. The landing strips in the beachhead were terribly dusty and this was an obstacle to operations as visibility was so poor in take-off and landing.

On one occasion, our squadron was landing in very dusty conditions when a British Army platoon of soldiers marched on to the field with rifles over their shoulders. Out of the haze of dust a Spitfire came at them in the landing roll, that big nose and prop turning over and the pilot couldn't see them. But the soldiers saw the Spitfire at the last second and ducked extremely low to the ground. The pilot was amazed to catch a quick glimpse of a number of rifles coming out from under the wing as he passed over them. As he said, "All I could see were the rifle barrels sticking up like a porcupine." This sounded really funny with the Yorkshire accent and it was frequently repeated in the next few days. Sorry to say but one soldier's back was badly wrenched when he was twisted around by the radiator of the Spit which was below the wing. Lucky that many were not killed but they had been slightly to one side so escaped unharmed, but dusty.

On the 11th of August we moved to Ford in preparation to go to the Continent. We stayed in permanent billets while our ground crew and heavy equipment went over by boat. We were allowed ninety pounds of kit to go by sea, of which about sixty pounds was camp gear -mobile bed, etc. Sixty pounds could go by airlift -personal clothes, shaving gear etc. We bought new battle dress and had a tailor sew velvet material around collar and generally spruce them up. Our uniforms were left behind so we had a good battle dress outfit and an every day flying battle dress.

We found out at this time that if the invasion had gone according to plan, we would have gone over on D-Day plus 20. We were about forty-five days behind schedule. This showed us how long the army has been held up by the German defences.

On the 20th of August we moved over to B-16 in France -just north of the railway running north west from Caen and across from Carpequet airfield over which there has been bitter fighting.

In a way it seemed strange to be in France which we had regarded as enemy territory for two years. But it allowed us to spend more time over the target and gave us a closer look at the ground war. On the 23rd of August we were released and Duke and I went up near the front at Caen to Agrenten-Poutanges. Here there had been fierce fighting. Bodies and equipment were still in the area. Again, we congratulated ourselves for having joined the air force rather than the army.

The Battle of Falaise stretched over several days as the Canadian and British armies fought down the road from Trun to Chambois. American forces were met on the 21st of August and the gap was closed. At this time our aircraft were armed with two 20 mm canon and two .50 Browning machine guns. They could be fired independently or all together. It was an armament we particularly liked because the pilot had an option what to use on various targets. Furthermore, if we did not carry drop tanks we could put a five hundred pound bomb under the fuselage, and a 250 pound bomb under each wing.

All accounts of the battle give great credit to the work of the fighter-bombers. Of these, the Typhoons played the major role. They were armed with four 20mm cannons, bombs and rockets. They were especially effective against the German tanks. We Spitfire pilots ensured air superiority as well as doing armed recce and fighter-bomber attacks. Losses were heavy, both in the Typhoon squadrons and Spitfire squadrons doing fighter-bomber work. The flak was plentiful and accurate. Low-level attacks by their nature are dangerous and when hit low down there is very little time to bail out.

We attacked horse-drawn transport along with staff cars and trucks. The German soldiers would hold the horses' bridles as they reared in fright and pain. Duke and I, having grown up on a farm with an intimate knowledge of horses, felt especially sorry for the animals because they could not understand what was happening to them.



The Warren Twins on the road near Caen [Bruce Warren Collection]

B-16 was located near the small village of Villons les Buissons and was what we called a 'tar paper' strip. This was a method of laying down heavy, black, treated paper in an attempt to control the dust during take-offs and landings. The dust was very damaging to the motors. Typhoons were especially vulnerable because of the sleeve valves in their twenty-four cylinder Napier Sabre engines. They experienced more engine failures as the Merlin could eat the dust better than the Sabre engine.

The area around the aerodrome and our living tents had seen fierce fighting between Canadian and German forces. Situated in an orchard with many small trees, it was not unusual to come across a corpse that had been missed when the area was cleared. An order appeared in Daily Routine Orders (DRO's) that personnel who found a dead body was to report to sick quarters with it. We pilots balked at this saying we were trained to deal with aeroplanes not bodies. We tormented our friendly medical officer by indicating only he was qualified to operate on cadavers, in any case, and we never wanted to be a patient of his.

On the 26th of August a group of us went in a staff car and travelled the Trun-Falaise road. En-route we stopped at a village square where there seemed to be a commotion of some sort. Women were



After the Battle of Falaise [Bruce Warren Collection]

running about screaming and men were shouting at them and each other. We found out that the Maquis, (another name for the French Resistance fighters) were settling some scores.

Local women who had been friends with the German occupying force were sat in a chair in the middle of the square where their hair was shaved off. Sometimes men did the cutting and shaving, sometimes women. It was a difficult scene to watch but we understood the reasons behind the liberated villagers action. When we inquired what happened to men who had been friends with the Germans we were told in no uncertain terms that they had been 'accidentally' shot during the fighting.

The Maquis and French Resistance were a mixed lot to our way of thinking. Some men looked, acted, and talked as though they had been taking an active role in harassing the Germans and risking their own lives while doing so. Others gave the impression they had only joined the resistance movement the last few days of the war. Some were only teenagers who we suspected had just put a loop of cloth around their arm, picked up a rifle, and became an instant Maquis.

When we reached the road where the retreating Germans were caught in the open, the devastation was awe inspiring. Bodies of men and horses were everywhere. The scene was something like Dante's Inferno.

French civilians, chiefly men but with a few women, were picking up discarded equipment, items of clothing, small arms, etc. They were checking the pockets of the dead enemy -our fallen had already been removed and temporarily buried. Tires for cars were extremely hard to get for civilian cars at this time. We saw a man jack up a German vehicle, toss two German bodies under the frame and let the car down. He then let his friend take the jack to use at another spot. To us who did our fighting in the rather impersonal sky it was an entirely different war. The whole scene reminded us of the historical accounts of the aftermath of a battle in the Middle Ages.

Our party picked up discarded small arms and a few items of enemy equipment for souvenirs. There was more than enough for all. One item was a 'jerry can' of petrol which on the blackmarket was worth its weight in gold. We stopped at a farmhouse. One of our group who was bilingual made a deal with the farm lady that we would give her the petrol if she would give us a drink. There were five pilots present which she counted but I indicated I did not want a drink. The farm wife broke into a tirade basically all about the honour and glory of France, General DeGaulle, (several times), the King of England, and Winston Churchill, plus Montgomery and Eisenhower! I gathered all these people would be terribly insulted if I did not have a drink with her. I must confess that I felt we were being taken for Madame only had a small flask and five very small glasses which she filled and handed to us. We were giving her a tin of very hard to get petrol. However, "Vive La France," and it was down the hatch. I was stunned. It burnt my throat. I couldn't breathe and I gasped for air! It was my introduction to Calvados, a raw brandy made from apples peculiar to Normandy. Even the experienced drinkers in our group were impressed. We returned to the airstrip having seen the war from the 'ground-pounders' viewpoint. It was not a pretty sight.

The next day, while returning to base from an operation a good distance behind enemy lines, my number two, an Englishman in the RAF, ran out of fuel and had to bail out. Fortunately, it was on our side of the front lines. He landed okay and I circled him. I saw him limping to a road and then had to leave him for I was short of fuel. He had a story to tell when he got back to the squadron a few days later.

He reached the road but his leg was hurting so he sat down hoping some one would pick him up. Soon an ambulance came along and stopped, saw that he was injured, and said they would take him to hospital. To his surprise they opened the back of the ambulance, took out a stretcher with a body on it, explained that he had died, laid the body beside the road, and put my number two on the stretcher placing him inside. The pilot thought this was pretty rough but realized it was a practical way to deal with the situation.

However, the man on the stretcher above was terribly wounded and bleeding badly. Blood dripped down on him and the man above died

before reaching the hospital. To make matters worse, the ambulance drove right by the airstrip and he shouted to be let out but was told that their duty was to bring in a full ambulance and they would get into trouble trying to explain why they only had three patients.

The good part of the story is that the injured pilot was put in a Canadian field hospital and thought the nurses were both efficient and beautiful,

The end of August came and Duke had completed thirty-four operational sorties and I, thirty-three. Both of us had been hit by flak several times but nothing serious. The wing had lost eight pilots and some more taken prisoner after bailing out on the other side of the front. The army was beginning to move but Patton and Montgomery hated each other. Both were men of ability and each wanted to be 'top dog'.

While we were busy fighting on the Western Front the Russians were advancing in the east. Towards the end of August, the Russians were in Constanza, Polesti, and Bucharest. Florence was liberated on the 22nd of August, and on the 24th General Leclerc's armoured division entered Paris. Although we had flown over Paris often and saw the beautiful city below, we never had the opportunity to visit Paris during the war. De Gaulle entered Paris as a hero on the 26th of August and dissolved the Conseil National De La resistance on the 31st of August.

As the Canadian Army moved along the coast fighting German pockets of resistance we moved with it, first to B-33. This airstrip was more or less a rough wheat field that had been somewhat smoothed out after fences were removed. We had just a short stay there. It rained and we slept in a straw-stack a couple of nights before moving on to Lille Nord.

Duke and I had 'liberated' a small German Volkswagen staff car and painted 'Dukeswagen' on the front. We were forced to leave it behind. Rightly or wrongly, the story was that so much enemy motor transport had been picked up by the allied forces that they were consuming a large amount of valuable and much-needed fuel. We suspected that it was a story made up by the people in the rear-echelons who wanted vehicles for themselves.

The squadron moved to Lille on the 11th of September. This had been the home of some of the best German fighter pilots and here we were. The city had just been liberated a day before and was still celebrating. The Wing went to a French bar or pub where a great party was in progress and we, as fighter pilots, received a royal welcome. Wine and champagne in abundance and also beer and cognac.

Duke and I never drank but we had a wonderful time with our group and enjoyed a sort of lemonade-squash drink. About 10:30 pm, a French gendarme arrived. We were not sure if he wanted to close the place or not. However, he was wearing a beautiful cap with gold braid that de Gaulle himself would have envied. Known as a 'kepi', it had a flat,

circular top and horizontal peak or visor. We decided we would have the 'kepi'.

I managed to stand close to the gendarme. Duke went to the light switch. When we were both were in position, Duke switched off the light and I grabbed the cap. I was surprised. The policeman was quick and took a firm hold on my arm. I passed the cap away at once. The lights came back on, and the policeman was screaming "Ou est mon kepi?" I pretended ignorance and offered him my rather beat up field cap which he declined and let go of my arm. There was a great deal of shouting and by chance the policeman ended up by the door of the ladies washroom. Just at that time the door opened and a stout lady tried to come out. The crowd surged forward and pushed them into the washroom together and held the door closed.

I should mention that a lot of the French civilians were also involved in this episode and they were having as much fun as we were. It was a wild party to celebrate the departure of the Germans and their oppressive control of the people of Lille. If someone were to judge our attempt to steal the gendarmes hat as a bit outrageous, they should have seen what some of the Norwegian pilots were doing with French girls. It was a never to be forgotten night.

The next morning we were in a shack on the airfield, a good one with hard runways and some accommodation. We heard a sort of screaming and wailing out the back of the building. We went out to see what was happening and discovered the Germans had used that area as an execution area. Members of the Resistance and others had been shot there and crudely buried. Now the French were there exhuming the bodies. The relatives of those killed were also present and there were many grim and heart-rending scenes as the bodies were lifted from the earth. It was a terrible contrast to our experiences of the night before when all was gaiety.

Operations continued. The Germans had left pockets of men in Le Havre, Calais, Boulougne, Ostend, and other places. Now the Canadian army was fighting to get them out. We continued to support them with low-level attacks and bombing. We seldom saw a German fighter as they were held back to intercept bombers or defend against the British Army.

But what we were doing was dangerous for all these places had lots of anti-aircraft guns. Further, the gunners had been practising with live targets since 1940 and were accurate. So we lost pilots all the while.

One of the puzzles we thought about for some time was why pilots didn't bail out when they lost a wing. This was fairly common because if the wing was hit by flak, it would be seriously weakened and break off when the 'g-force' built up in the pull-out. The aircraft seemed to fall quite slowly with seemingly gentle rotation. Following a number of these, the medical officers found that when the wing broke off, the initial rotation was so fast it flung the pilot's head sideways and broke his neck.

On my 44th operational sortie I almost 'bought it', which was the expression used when someone was killed. The squadron had been detailed to bomb heavy artillery sites at Calais. We approached at about 15,000 feet. I trimmed for the dive and then there was a loud explosion under the aircraft and sunlight came through a hole in the left side of the cockpit. An 88 flak gun had exploded a shell just under my left wing. A piece of flak entered the cockpit and drove the trim-wheel into my leg and tore through the Mae West. It then carried on up, bending my parachute 'D' ring as it passed, and ended up in a small tin box in my upper left breast pocket.



Doug with shell fragment and the small tin box

One might ask why fighter pilots would be flying with a small tin box in their pockets. This was a special box used as part of an escape kit. If a person was shot down and was trying to evade and hide from searchers, it was difficult to get drinking water. In the small box there was a large rubber balloon which one filled with water from a ditch or dirty pond, popped in a tablet, shook it up well, and in fifteen minutes one could drink it. It tasted like water from a ditch but all the bugs in it were killed. The fragment of shell had pierced the tin box deeply. But had the box not been there it would have pierced my body and perhaps my heart.

One reads stories, and I have, how the bible your mother gave you as you left home saved your life when a bullet struck your breast pocket. I found a tin box also is a good thing to have in one's breast pocket.

Since I had been trimmed for the dive in level flight at normal speed the aircraft was difficult but not impossible to control. Duke realized I had been hit but could also tell I still had control, so proceeded with the attack while I returned to base. I could smell something burning but was not aware where it was coming from which was rather a worry. After landing, I found that the red-hot fragment had ignited the kapok in the Mae West and it was smouldering. I kept the fragment, the 'D' ring, and box for souvenirs.

Along with the tin box, we were also issued with other items to help us escape if one came down on the wrong side -small compasses, silk maps, and emergency energy rations. We wore brown British army battle dress, and carried Smith and Wesson revolvers. We were told that

the German army had taken such a hammering from the fighter-bombers that if we came down near German soldiers they might just shoot us. However, if we could hide and were later picked up they might think we were just ordinary British soldiers. We were also told that it would only be small units that might do this and if we were taken to an officer, it would not likely happen. Cheerful thoughts to run through your mind as one waited to take off.

Although Doug doesn't mention it, fighter pilots operating over the continent were issued with large caliber revolvers for self-defense should they be shot down. Considering the amount of flak and the type of flying which was tactical for the most part (as the Allies had achieved air superiority in that theatre) this was a very real possibility not to mention that the airfields were often very close to the front lines to facilitate that tactical support of the front line troops.

The revolvers were heavy and bulky in the cockpit as well as very visible once you might be on the ground so the Warren Twins obtained two small automatic pistols which they hid in their flying boots as a last resort in case they were shot down, captured and their revolvers seized. With the small pistols, which are only effective at very close range, they thought they would have at least one last chance of effecting their escape.

Bruce kept his pistol after the war as he was slated to go on to command a fighter squadron after his secondment to Avro. Doug kept his with him during his postings in Canada, Korea and Germany.



Most fighter pilots were leery of flak. It seemed so impersonal. Fighting another aircraft in a dog-fight one can think it's another man in there and I am as good or better than him. But flak was just there, and many good pilots were shot down. You could see small black puffs. When they were closer the puffs were bigger and when they were really close the puffs were big with red centres. When you could hear the big black puffs with red centres explode with a loud bang you knew your time was limited if you didn't get out of there.

While part of the Canadian Army was slogging along clearing the channel ports, another part of the army captured Antwerp. Not only captured it, but because of wonderful work the Belgian underground forces, the harbour remained intact. However, the Scheit was still in German hands so the harbour could not yet be used. On the 12th of

September, Le Havre was taken, Boulogne on the 22nd, and Calais on the 30th. Hitler, by now a desperate man, on the 25th of September mobilized all men between the ages of sixteen and sixty into the Volkssturm.

One of the major battles of the war took place in the period of the 17th to the 28th of September when airborne troops jumped at Arnhem in Holland. We escorted some of the C-47s or Dakas as they were called (short for Dakotas). Because they flew fairly low for the parachute jumpers, a good number were shot down. Then the weather was not as good as was predicted, supplies ran short, and it ended up a hopeless situation for some troops who were then taken prisoner.

We continued to have losses due to flak and some pilots were getting 'twitchy' about flying. One of the tasks officers have is to censor mail for the airmen and NCO's. Our mail is also censored at some level and sometimes we do other officers who we do not know. One day I was censoring a letter from a NCO pilot who had a lot of blarney in it to his wife. For example, "I think of you all the time. I have your picture on the instrument panel of my aircraft. I carry your letters next to my heart."

Of course this might have been true except I checked his aircraft and there was no picture on the panel. The tone of the letter was very much feeling sorry for himself and he was deeply troubled by operational flying. I went to his flight commander and told him to keep an eye on the NCO for I felt he was near a breaking point. Normally if a person had done a reasonable tour I would have tried to get him sent on a rest tour but this man had barely started operational flying.

Two days after I read his letter and spoke to his flight commander, the NCO took off and deliberately pulled up his undercarriage too soon crashing on the runway. He was sent away in disgrace as unsuitable for operational flying. He achieved his purpose but it was too bad he had to wreck a good aircraft to do it.

Most pilots wanted to stay on operations. It was a feeling you got on a good squadron. A sense of being one with your fellow pilots and a determination to do your utmost to deserve their respect and friendship. I firmly believe pilots often flew when their medical condition should have required treatment but they did not want to let the squadron down. In the bomber crews, the same feelings existed within the crew.

NO. 66 SQUADRON (GRIMBERGEN, BELGIUM AND WOENSCRECHT, NETHERLANDS)

We continued operations from Lille-Nord until early October when we were moved to B-60 at Grimbergen, a few miles north of Brussels. We both took leave before the move and because Duke was a Flight Commander and I his deputy, we could not go on leave together. This meant that the one on leave was concerned with what was going on at the squadron. We fully realized we were having losses almost every day. We liked to fly together.

Duke often led the squadron when the C/O was away and the way things worked out, we each had a section of four. When flying as a squadron of twelve aircraft there was Red, Blue, and Yellow section. So if the C/O was flying he would be Red One, Duke would be Yellow One, and I would fly as Yellow Three. Our number two's were Yellow Two and Yellow Four. But if Duke was leading the squadron he would be Red One and I would fly as Yellow One. It may be because we were twins, but while flying we seemed always to be well aware of what the other was doing. For both offensive and defensive air fighting this was very valuable to us and kept us out of difficulty on more than one occasion.

One of our pilots was an English officer who was coming back on operations after a rest. He was with us just to get his hand back in before taking over a flight in another squadron. One day he was telling us that on his first squadron he had a series of dreams. Each night he dreamt one of his fellow pilots would be shot down and in each case the next day they were. He said it was eerie and he was almost afraid to go to sleep at night. But he stopped dreaming and there were many losses in the squadron so it must have been a coincidence. The next day we lost him. However he did survive and within weeks came back. The army had moved forward and caught up with his captors before he was shipped to a Prisoner of War camp.

Another pilot was a Polish officer. Older than the rest of us, he had been a pre-war regular officer in the Polish Air Force. He had fought in France and then joined the RAF after Dunkirk. There was a girl in Scotland, Margaret, who he was close friends with and where he spent his leave. It fell to me one day to tell him he was to be sent on a rest-tour. He protested this and I told him he had done his share, deserved a rest, to go and visit Margaret, and that he was not as young as he once was. He thought about this and said, "Perhaps so, I used to fly all day and sleep with the girls all night. Now when I fly all day and sleep with the girls all night, sometimes in the morning I feel a bit tired!"

Grimbergen was a small village close by the aerodrome. It had been previously used by the Luftwaffe and we took over their quarters. Our officers' quarters were in a fairly modern chateau. We estimated it had been built in about 1880 or 1890. There were two rooms right at the

very top of the chateau. The C/O and Bill Foster, (Canadian S/Ldr. Supernumerary) and Paul Gibbs, (another Canadian and the other Flight Commander) took the other with Duke and I. We all got along very well and had great meetings in one room or the other discussing squadron operations and the progress, or lack of it, of the war. We had one worry. We were up at the top with four flights of narrow stairs to get to the ground floor. If somehow a fire got started, we knew we would be in a tight spot.

Strangely, we all faced a high degree of danger each day flying but we were more concerned about what might happen to us in the chateau. To remedy this Duke and I scrounged a heavy coil of rope. This we kept in our room and were prepared to go down the outside of the building which was stone in case of fire. But we never had to and we left the rope for the next squadron when we moved.

The Canadian army was having a hard time clearing the Scheit. The bitter fighting through the polder fields caused heavy casualties. We supported them with low-level attacks. We could hit almost pinpoint targets as we were directed by a ground controller. For example, on the 11th of October we (the Wing) operated all day long against a small village called Sluis near Knokke-sur-Mer to deny its use to the enemy. A section of four took off every five minutes, three squadrons were involved, and 144 five-hundred pound bombs were dropped. We each flew four operational sorties on the 11th and I did a short air test. Bill Foster was badly hit by flak. He wanted to bail out but his hood jammed. He brought the aircraft back with fifty flak holes.

The month of October was hectic, Duke flew thirty-three operational sorties and I flew thirty-two. This was a bit more than most pilots in the squadron who probably averaged about twenty-five. The C/O and flight commanders always flew the most sorties. Our losses were nine pilots killed and four taken prisoner and alive, we hoped. In addition, at least thirty percent of our aircraft had to be replaced. A problem with the Spitfire wing was that it was extremely difficult to repair.

On the 20th Duke had a very close call, something like my Calais adventure. It was on a low-level bombing mission, where we dropped five hundred pound bombs with eleven second delay fuses. When Duke dropped his it went off instantaneously underneath him. I was close behind and was stunned when the cloud of smoke and debris went up because it looked like his aircraft had exploded. Imagine my relief when I saw him come out the other side. His aircraft was badly damaged, and never flew again with the squadron. So we gave thanks that Someone seemed to be looking after us.

Another day a pilot flying with Bruce pulled in so close to Bruce's Spitfire that his propeller began chewing Bruce's tail off. Again Bruce was fortunate to get back on the ground alive.

American forces took Aachen on the 21st of October and on the 24th their navy defeated the Japanese navy at the Battle of Leyte. So we realized there was more happening in the world than just our little corner. Certainly our corner was important, for the Scheldt had to be cleared so supply ships could enter Antwerp Harbour. This was vital because the long truck routes from the channel ports to the front used up a lot of gasoline that was required at the front.

The V-2 weapon entered the picture about this time and foretold the future although we did not realize the implications. This was a large rocket with an explosive charge and it travelled faster than the speed of sound. The Germans fired them from upper Holland, around the Amsterdam area. They went high in an arc to England and Antwerp and dived almost straight down to hit their targets. There would be a terrific explosion, and then a sonic boom. One crashed on a cinema in Antwerp killing hundreds of people. In addition to the V-2s, there were V-1 'Buzz-Bombs' going by quite often.

A letter arrived from our parents telling us of the nice farm they had bought with our help. We were pleased for we knew how they had worked so hard for so little during the depression years. Our parents worried about us all the time. Often they would send parcels to us and to our friends in England. The one item we found hard to get was film, but they had a good contact with a shop in Ponoka that gave them a certain amount of film to send to us.

One day when Duke and I had some time off we went in to the city. The civilians of Brussels were near rioting. The black market was rampant and to try and control it a sudden currency change had taken place. A person could only change so much of the old money for new, and for any more you had to have a good reason. We service men could only have military scrip and money of the country we were in -theoretically.

On the particular day the announcement by the government about the money regulations was made, we were in Brussels in the town square. The square was seething with a large crowd of civilians with a few service men among them. The square had the large old town hall on one side, with office buildings and stores on the other three sides. Duke and I were at one corner and to get out of the mass of people to see better, we had gone up a few steps and into a recessed doorway. It was an office building or a bank. We were only interested in watching the crowd. It didn't seem open -at least people were not coming out. We couldn't understand what the people were saying but they seem to be getting angrier all the time. Suddenly four police men appeared below us calling out loudly to the crowd to let them through. A few people heard them but made no movement. Much to our surprise one of the policemen took his sten gun, and aiming low at the sidewalk, fired into the crowd. This certainly cleared the way for the crowd quickly parted and the policemen went forward towards the town hall.

When the policeman fired you could see the bullets making sparks as they bounced along the pavement and of course the crowd saw them as well. Strange, but we did not see anyone fall although there were several people screaming. We decided we didn't want to be mistaken for rioters even though we were in uniform. From what we had witnessed it was obvious the police were not too particular where they shot. We left the area and went to look in some of the shops.

We were surprised when we landed on the continent that there were many things available that had disappeared from shops in England for example cameras, film and special perfumes. A great number of artists and entertainers were working. In England all labour and material was directed to the war effort and artists were no exception. However, on the continent everyone was trying to do as little as possible to help the Germans fight the war so labour and materials would go into civilian use,

Because the street cars ran all over Belgium it was easy to take a street car from the aerodrome into Brussels. This we did several times and went to the Brussels' Opera House for the evening performance. This was a wonderful opportunity for us for we had not been to a classic opera before and we enjoyed them very much. There was often a short ballet before the opera and at first we were not sure what was happening on stage. However, we commented to each other on the wonderful music. The men in tights and leaping about didn't impress us all that much. However we did amuse ourselves by labelling them with military rank. When the main male dancer leapt on stage we said, "Here comes the Wing Commander Flying!"

Squadron activity went on all through October supporting the Canadian army and interdiction sorties. 'Interdiction' was the name given to a program to cut the German supply lines as much as possible. The squadron would fly with bombs and long-range tanks to Germany and try and destroy anything that moved or that might be bringing up supplies to the German lines. Trains, trucks, horse drawn transport, staff cars, and motorcycles were all targets. The Ruhr and its factories were a prime target but also a hornet's nest of flak guns. It was especially dangerous and we all gritted our teeth a bit at the briefings. But it had to be done.

Every pilot, or any serviceman, no doubt has their own way of dealing with fear. From our viewpoint the waiting after briefing was the most worrisome time. You knew that there was a certain element of danger involved and you could think about it. However once you started engines and began to taxi, you were so busy taking care of what you had to do that you didn't think about the danger. In the air you had so much going on around you that required your attention and action there was not the time to be afraid. But, as I said, when the big black puffs with the red centre and loud bang were near you there was considerable concern as to what the outcome might be.

We continued to lose pilots and planes, almost all to flak for we seldom met Luftwaffe fighters. Yet the No. 83 Group people were on their front. The German army in the Schelt area, on Walchern and Flushing, were left to fight on their own and delay the Canadian advance which they did very effectively and Canadian casualties were high. In the period from the 1st of October to the 8th of November, the Canadian army lost almost 13,000 men killed, wounded, or missing.

In mid-October the wing was visited by Air Marshall Conningham, Officer Commanding 2nd Tactical air force with the Air Officer Commanding No. 84 group, 'Bingo Brown'. In the evening we met the senior officers and talked quite informally with them. Both men gave us confidence that we had good leadership. Perhaps we were mistaken, who knows about these things? All of the men who met these two remarked that their interest seemed to be to win the war. There did not seem to be the 'politicizing' that General Montgomery and Patton were always into. Nor did they seem to be the egotistical characters the above two men were.

Towards the end of October we were informed that our C/O and friend, S/Ldr. Johnston, was to be replaced, having finished his third tour. We were sorry to learn of this as we had hoped that we would finish our tours at the same time.

S/Ldr. Johnston had been our C/O for a time in No. 165 Squadron. We had kept in touch while he and we were on our rest tours. 'Johnny' had arranged for us to join No. 66 after our rest-tour. He had confidence in us as fighter pilots and we had confidence in him as a fighter pilot and C/O. It worked both ways to keep us alive. A squadron with a 'shaky' C/O had more losses and was an unhappy squadron with low morale. All we could hope for was that his replacement would be as well qualified.

The replacement arrived, S/Ldr. Dick Easby. A nice chap but not up to the standard of Johnston. Also not such a keen type although he did his share. A good or bad thing, depending how one looked at it, was that he was away quite a bit. He was an 'operator' of sorts and we felt on the fringes of the black-market. On one occasion he borrowed a small carry bag from us to go on a trip with but it really wasn't a duty trip. When he returned the bag had been "lost" somewhere. That concerned him. Easby had one of us write a letter to the military police that the bag had been stolen on a certain date. That way if it was found in some black-market raid it would not reflect on him.

The good part of this was because of being absent quite often a flight commander would lead the squadron, and since if the Wing C/O was absent a Squadron C/O would lead the wing -and sometimes it fell to our squadron so one of us would lead the wing -a rare opportunity for a F/Lt.

Weather in October and November was very marginal a good number of days but by the end of October we both had done seventy-

seven operational missions. Both of us had his share of near misses and close calls and we both felt the flak gunners were throwing a lot of ammunition our way. Knowing our tour would be up in the next few months made us think about holding on. Perhaps because it seemed more tragic it caught our attention strongly that it seemed people often got shot down on their last mission. Naturally we didn't want that to happen.

It was always tough when we lost someone. One of our English pilots was a happy father of a few weeks, looking forward to his leave so he could see his new baby. He was shot down and killed and never saw his child -and the heartbreak for the young wife. A difficult task for the friend from the squadron who went to tell his wife the details when he was on leave in England.

There were many wartime romances and marriages. Senior officers would often discourage pilots getting married because they had the idea it was distracting. The pilot might be thinking of his wife or impending marriage when he should be concentrating on the operation.

Around the middle of November the CO told us he had recommended us for the Distinguished Flying Cross. These awards were not always granted. He said if it was rejected he would put it forward again. In the meantime, of course, we were to carry on. There was a great party for S/Ldr. Johnston to mark his departure.

The weather during that time of the year, and that year especially, was very poor. Lots of low cloud, fog and rain. The enemy were grateful for it of course, but our army hated the poor weather because we could not support them. They had to slog on through the mud and water attacking well-prepared positions.

The Canadian army was very short of replacements at this time. For that reason we understood men were going into combat with minimal training. This shortage was blamed on the 'Zombie' question in Canada. To placate Quebec, MacKenzie King said no one would be sent overseas unless they volunteered. A large contingent of trained men remained in Canada while overseas the units begged for replacements. This was largely a Quebec question where the French Canadian felt it was not his war. We found that difficult to understand, for if they were proud of their culture one would think that they would want to liberate France. But it seems that they didn't.

Even in the poor weather we went out on operations. Typical is the entry in Duke's diary for one day's activities: "Been rather a hectic day. Went on an interdiction target east of Roermond this morning in very bad conditions. Bags of flak and two people hit -Waterhouse and Sinnot though not badly. We managed to cut rails at two indefinite places. This afternoon we went to shoot up Klundert, a little village north of Roosendall. Low cloud again and very hectic though very effective. Bruce De Vere extremely lucky -a 20 millimetre explosive hit his windscreen. Bits of glass in his eyes but not bad. Jock Brydson had half his elevator

shot away. Woodhouse and Sinnot have crash-landed away and nothing is known about them but they should be okay. No. 322 lost Lt. Sunder who had to bail out and whose chute did not open till too late. No. 127 lost Dickie Lloyd and No. 331 a Sgt. All missing believed killed. Rather a hectic day."

Numerous V-1's went by en-route to Antwerp. Antwerp also got V-2 attacks. We were glad the V-2 seemed reasonably accurate so they didn't end up hitting us. However we feel sorry for the civilians in both London and Antwerp who have to live with these attacks around the clock.

A report came in that Wing Commander Guy Gibson VC, was missing on operations but this had not been confirmed. We thought that we might be sent home after one hundred operations but G/Capt. Morris said he would not consider us to be tour expired with only one hundred missions.

The Canadian officers' club in Brussels was the Hotel Atlanta. There you could rent a room and towels and have a nice hot bath in a proper bathtub. It was a centre for Canadian news although generally of special concern to the army. There was rumour about the RCAF on one of our visits that said at the end of hostilities in Europe one third of the RCAF would be released, one third would be with the occupation forces, and one third would go to the Far East conflict. Some time before we had written a letter to RCAF Headquarters Overseas asking to join the permanent RCAF. A nice letter came back saying in essence, "You are doing a great job now. Let's see if you are alive at the end of the war and we'll talk about it." In fairness to RCAF Headquarters, we also felt being alive at the end of the war was important.

The enemy at this time were firing V-1's and V-2's at Antwerp at a high rate. One day they received 127 V1's (Buzz-Bombs or Doodle Bugs as they were called) and 76 V-2's. This took place in early December just after we returned from leave in England. On the 3rd of December we went on an operation to Aachen. Intelligence had information that the Luftwaffe was going to launch ninety Fw 190's against the Americans who were occupying the city. The ninety Fw 190's never appeared. When we found a hole in the clouds over Aachen and went down to see if enemy aircraft were around, we were shot at by both sides. So we climbed smartly back up and returned to base.

At this time Paul Gibbs, who had 'B' flight, finished his tour and I took over as 'B' Flight Commander. This was a great occasion for Duke and I, both flight commanders in the same fighter squadron. Every senior officer we spoke with said they had never known of such a situation before. Further, the fact we were Canadians and identical twins at that level in the Royal Air Force was quite unique. It really went smoothly, for we had roomed with Paul Gibbs so we knew all the 'ins and outs' of 'B' flight as well as 'A' flight. There were many in the squadron who didn't

even try to tell us apart, because there was really no need. We were recognized by our rank and position and the pilots followed the orders that came down. One thing that was not so good was that we often flew separately with a small section so that cut down on our operations together. However, on a squadron show we would both be flying.

The supply situation had greatly improved, for on the 28th of November the first supply ships sailed into Antwerp. In spite of three months of bitter fighting and the heavy casualties of the Canadian army there was no senior Canadian representative at the welcoming ceremony.

Weather in December was no better than that of November. We were often waiting in our dispersals for the order to come to take-off but operations were frequently cancelled after the briefing. The wings were all connected by land line telephones, and weather checks were shared. This meant if a weather check at Eindhoven was carried out we would get the result and it might mean cancelling.

Pilots sat around and read magazines or the odd paper brought back from England by some one who had been on leave. We talked about the conduct of the war and how much longer it might last. On one occasion Duke and I talked about the November 11th Remembrance Day services in Wetaskiwin where we had most of our schooling. A man who stood out in our memory was a Mr. Wes Burroughs who often spoke about the 'war to end all wars' and here we were at war again and had been for five years.

On the 5th of December our squadron escorted No. 609 Squadron of Typhoons to bomb oil plants in Northern Holland. Their C/O was shot down on the way out but bailed out okay. Some of the new ME 262 jet fighters were reported but we did not see any. The Typhoons with rockets, bombs, and cannons do a better job of low level attacks than we do because of their heavier armament. They certainly had their share of losses as well.

Germany continued to be pounded and continued to fight. On the 11th of December it was reported that three thousand bombers were over Germany. On the 16th of December Germany launched an offensive in the Ardennes to be known as the Battle of the Bulge. Ten days of bitter fighting in snow and cold, and on the 26th the Germans started retreating after an American army relief unit reached Bastogne. For four critical days the weather prevented any Allied aircraft from attacking the Germans.

When the weather cleared, the fighter-bombers hammered the German army who had very little or no air cover. It was the German army's last gasp on the Western Front. After the Battle of the Bulge it was mostly a controlled retreat. But many on both sides were still to die.

The following anecdote is quoted from "Sixty Years" by Larry Milberry. In it, Doug relates details of a dogfight that took place on 18 December 1944 with Messerschmitt 109's. Immediately following dealing

with the Me109's, his squadron's Spitfires were attacked by American Thunderbolts:

I was flying Blue 1 on an armed recce of the Cologne-Koblenz area. In the neighbourhood of Duren, Red 1 went down through cloud to investigate a lone a/c. I remained above with my section and after five minutes I called Red 1 and asked him if I should come down and join him. He told me to remain above cloud. I turned port 180 degrees and was steering a course of 300 degrees approximately at 11,000 feet when I sighted 15+ aircraft slightly below some 10,000 feet passing from 11 to 10 o'clock at 1000 yards.

I ordered Blue section on to main tanks and to jettison auxiliary tanks. We dived down from 9 o'clock on the aircraft. They were flying in a squadron formation and I wanted to make sure they were not friendly. When I closed in I recognized them as Me109's. I gave orders to attack and the e/a did a gentle turn to port climbing slightly still in loose formation. I had no difficulty in closing and opened fire on the leading a/c in starboard section from 30 degrees slightly above port. This e/a broke port hard and went into cloud which was a thousand feet below. By this time the e/a seemed to be in a large circle just flying around while Blue 1, 2, and 3 turned inside shooting. Blue 4 had disappeared through cloud in pursuit of a 109. I got on the tail of another 109 who took evasive action by throttling back and violently skidding and slipping. I found this a very difficult manoeuvre to follow with the Gyro sight so concentrated on the bead only. All this time the other e/a seemed to be circling merely watching and displaying no aggressiveness. My e/a seemed to steady down and slowly do a port roll onto his back. At this time I saw a large flash on his cowling just forward of the pilot's cockpit. I then overshot and e/a went into cloud at a steep angle.

I then saw a Spitfire firing at a 109 being followed by a 109 firing at the Spitfire. I made an attack from 45 degrees port and he broke away into cloud. I did not expect any results due to the large angle and hurried attack.

About this time I saw a 109 going into cloud smoking badly. Thunderbolts (USAAF aircraft) came in from the north above and the 109's all started to dive into cloud. A Thunderbolt made a very persistent attack on me and after continuous firing for a turn and a half he rolled away and down. I ordered Blue section to climb away from the engagement. Two more Thunderbolts made attacks but did not fire. As we were climbing, another Thunderbolt attacked Blue 3 who broke and the Thunderbolt passed beneath us. I called up Blue 4 who said he was being attacked by Thunderbolts and told him to pop into cloud and come home. We set course for base where we arrive at 1600 hours. E/A were camouflaged greyish-green, majority seemed to have jettison tanks below fuselage. I only witnessed one aggressive attack but there were

numerous opportunities for them to attack us. I claim one Me109 damaged.

On Christmas Day we flew just like any other day. Our mission was an armed recce to the Enschede area. On an operation such as that we looked for transport, trains, river barges, any troop movements. The pilot carries out his regular type of attack but is also supposed to remember what he sees to report to the intelligence officer on landing. This information was then called into the central control centre where senior officers made the decision as to what action to take. Sometimes after giving his report a pilot might be sent back to destroy the target, or look for more.

Duke and I often thought we were like a bunch of bees in a hive. For bees have a way of foraging for food and when they find it, they return to the hive and do a 'dance' to tell the other bees where it is. Our hive was the aerodrome, and we were the bees flying around in our Spitfires.

We will always remember Mac McCloud because of what happened on Christmas Day 1944. Mac was a New Zealander and a popular member of No. 66. Hit by flak he went straight in with no hope of survival. It seemed especially hard on Christmas day. More so for he had been scheduled to go on leave to the UK with an English friend. However, somewhere a decision was made that a man with a home in England would go and Mac, because there was no hope of him getting home, would go later. It must have been a double blow to his family in New Zealand.

On the 22nd of December 1944, the Wing moved to Woenscrecht at the foot of the Beveland Isthmus and below Bergen-Op-Zoom. The Germans had been pushed back, increasing the range to London and most of the V weapons targeted at England were now aimed at Antwerp. We were now on the main pilotless aircraft flight path. The pulse-jet engine made a Br-r-r-r noise as it went along, until the timer cut the motor and deflected the elevators. The weapon then dived steeply and exploded when it hit the ground. As long as the Br-r-r-r was heard it could be ignored but if the noise suddenly cut out most people took shelter, and all prudent people did.

V-1s could be shot down by aircraft and they were, both on the continent and in the UK. The V-2's couldn't be shot down by an aircraft unless it was before launch and it was caught on the firing stand. I never heard of that happening but it might have been done. Some people, both service and civilian, found the V-1 attacks very trying and some suffered nervous breakdowns. One of the more serious of these was a Norwegian military policeman who suddenly began shooting at anything that moved, including pilots on the ground.

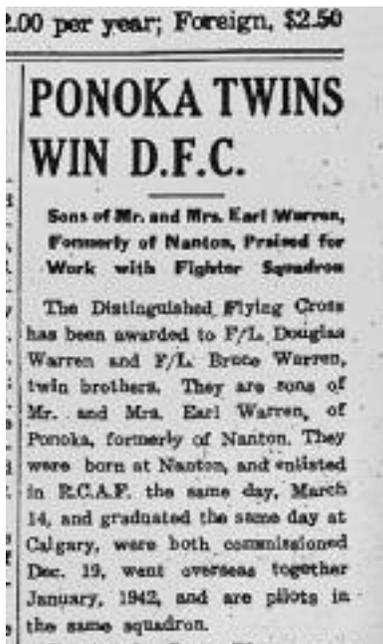
A special regiment of anti-aircraft guns were brought in and positioned around our aerodrome to shoot down V-1's on their way to Antwerp. They used the GL Mark3c Radar system and the shells were proximity fused. Both of these were new developments and Canadian scientists had played an important part in their invention. We visited one of the A/A sites one day and were amazed we could watch the flight of the shell on radar. The A/A was quite effective but did not shoot them all down. Occasionally one would be 'wounded' and fly in an erratic way frightening everyone till it crashed. After the war it was determined that 1610 V-2's and 8696 V-1's had been sent against Antwerp.

In mid-December a signal arrived at No. 132 Wing Headquarters granting the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross to Bill Foster, Paul Gibbs, George Reeder, Duke, and myself. When Paul Gibbs left and we moved to Woensdrecht (B-79) we started rooming with Bill Foster and became very good friends. Bill, with the PF number of C910, had done a long session of instructing in Canada before coming overseas. We understood he had been offered a Canadian squadron because of his seniority but he declined. Common sense told him he lacked the experience and he liked the squadron he was serving with.

The citations for our DFC awards read: Flight Lieutenant Bruce Warren: "This officer has led his flight with such skill and determination in attacks on ground targets that more than twenty vehicles have been damaged and many probably destroyed. During his numerous sorties, he has destroyed two enemy fighters and participated in the destruction of a hostile bomber. His fine fighting spirit and zeal have set an excellent



Distinguished Flying Cross



Nanton News Article

example to all.” Flight Lieutenant Douglas Warren: “Flight Lieutenant Warren during two tours of operational duties has shown outstanding skill and courage. His determination to engage and destroy the enemy in the air and on the ground is worthy of high praise. He has completed numerous various missions on heavily defended ground targets and enemy shipping. He has participated in the destruction by cannon fire of twenty enemy vehicles and the explosion of the magazine of a large enemy strong point. By accurate bombing he has destroyed one enemy aircraft and shared in the destruction of another. On another occasion his accurate bombing severed an important rail link in Germany.”

As 1944 drew to a close, by the 31st of December Duke had flown 111 operational missions, and I, 114. A friend of ours, a senior RAF officer at Group Headquarters, told us he was checking around to see if any Wing needed two Squadron Commanders as he would like to keep us together. He thought it would be a fine example to other fighter pilots to see what we had accomplished as twins. This we found very interesting indeed.

The first of January 1945 started with a large scale, low-level fighter attack by the Luftwaffe which struck at all the northern fighter bases. Eindhoven, Evere, Melsbroek, and Grimbergen. We lost about two hundred aircraft destroyed on the ground. However many of the attacking fighters were shot down, either by anti-aircraft fire or allied fighters that engaged them in the air. In our own case we escorted bombers to the St. Vith area and we saw the German fighters below us. Control would not let us leave the bombers to go after them. We both flew four hours and forty-five minutes of operations on the 1st of January. It was an interesting start to 1945.

On the 2nd of January the BBC radio announced we had shot down 384 German aircraft. A letter was sent out from Group Headquarters saying this announcement was nonsense and they were investigating where such wrong information could have come from. On the other hand, Germany claimed they had destroyed 500 aircraft and that was a lot of nonsense as well.

We had a night out in Brussels. We drove down in S/Ldr. Easby's staff car. Easby was a wild driver, almost as dangerous as ops. We spoke with a S/Ldr. Neil of the RCAF who said that we would most likely go home in February. However, all other Canadians in the wing were being sent to No. 83 Group to Canadian squadrons. We were too close to being tour-expired for them to bother with us. He also told us Bill Foster may get a Canadian squadron soon.

Bad news came from our former No. 165 Squadron intelligence officer, 'Spy' Greenwood. All Intelligence officers were called 'Spy' in the RAF. He told how Jimmy Quinn was killed in an air accident over England. Then a good friend of ours, 'String' Dring, a Wing Commander Flying with a Typhoon wing, lost his life when his aircraft left the runway,

hit a snow bank and overturned breaking Dring's neck. We knew the end of the war in Europe was near, and these last accidental deaths seemed particularly sad. Both Duke and I felt a bit irritable, sort of 'touchy' about small details. We recognized these symptoms as indicating operational fatigue and talked it over between ourselves. We had been told we should go home in February so we felt we could hold on for a few more weeks.

On the 17th of January we did a show to bomb a midget submarine base near Rotterdam. A No. 127 Squadron pilot was hit during the run up to the target and he called up in an agonized voice. It was terrible to hear him on the radio. He had just joined No. 127. We were not sure what had happened to him. Some pilots felt he was dying in the cockpit. Another report told of the loss of a man we knew well, 'Gin' Seaghers, once our No. 165 Squadron C/O. He had just married and he blew himself up by colliding with a buzz-bomb over England.

Elsewhere in the world the Americans landed on Luzon in the Philippines on the 9th of January. The Russians took Tannenberg in East Prussia on the 21st. Our operations continued between fog and some snow storms. One day we all were out on the runway with shovels borrowed from the army. Throwing snowballs reminded us of home and school days. We received mail from home congratulating us on our DFC's. It seemed they were announced on the wireless on the 1st of January. Our parents were very proud of us even though they wish we were home, which is natural. Our father was very much against us going overseas.

Towards the end of the month it was rumoured we would be going to a gunnery camp soon. The Norwegian squadrons had been doing a series of fighter sweeps and had shot down a number of enemy aircraft. We are not sure how these things come about, but the Norwegian Squadrons seemed to do most of the fighter sweeps. Could it be W/Cdr. Berg was looking after his own? We knew he preferred fighter sweeps to bombing, who didn't? It was reported the Russians were only two hundred miles from Berlin.

One evening Bill Foster and ourselves talked about the squadron personnel who seemed to have lowered their performance recently. It may be that many pilots believed the end of the war was near and didn't want to be the last one shot down. This was a common thought to many. Certainly the thought had occurred to us that it would be a shame to get killed now. But we were still prepared to do the job to the best of our ability, flak or no flak. It may have been that the C/O, Dick Easby, did not seem to have the personal drive Johnston had. Pilots notice these things.

For all of January the buzz-bombs blasted Antwerp. Seldom there was not an anti-aircraft gun pounding away somewhere in the vicinity. Bill Foster had a theory how he would like to scoot straight down a railway track and meet an engine coming so he could throw his bomb straight into the boiler. Bill was more serious, and older (really old, all of thirty years)

so we teased him about various things at times. He thought he would like to get married, but hesitated back and forth.

On the 28th of January, I led a section of four to bomb a Gestapo Headquarters in Dortrecht, Holland. It was near the railway station and we were given photos and detailed maps. We had been told that the building was very distinctive. The time to attack would be during the Gestapo agents' coffee break. We were not told where all this information came from but later we found there was a telephone line to the Dutch resistance in Dortrecht. So off we went. It was easy to find the city, the railway station, and see the Gestapo Headquarters. We threw the bombs into the windows when we attacked them.



Spitfires over France
[Bruce Warren Collection]

On our return and talking it over with the other section pilots, I was not confident that we had really done an effective job of destroying the Gestapo Headquarters. No one was sure just what the results were -the bombs, having an eleven second delay, went off after we passed. As we climbed out, we looked back and saw a lot of smoke and debris in the air but whether it was from the Headquarters or some other building on the other side we were not sure. However a few days later, Group Captain Zulu Morris came and congratulated us on the excellent job we did in destroying the Headquarters in Dortrecht. The Dutch underground had phoned through to our intelligence staff at Group Headquarters.

Then a very bad and sad loss occurred to the wing. Rolf Berg, who was to stop operational flying as his tour was over, took 'one last trip', and was shot down and killed. A wonderful chap, an inspiring leader -the RCAF had lost one of its best. This happened on the 3rd of February.

Once I led the squadron on a blind bombing mission under control of a Mobile Radar Control Post. (MRCP). They had a mobile radar set, knew the winds in the area, and they had a special 'bombsight' mechanism. The squadron flew straight and level on the desired course and when ground control said 'drop' we dropped our bombs -just like Fortress squadrons. We were told it worked well and unless I was mistaken, we were the first squadron in No. 84 Group to do it.

Three days later we lost Bill Foster on a trip to Groningen. The squadron, led by Duke, found three trains at a siding near the town and attacked. Bill was hit in the propeller spinner by flak and was losing oil all



Comments in Bruce Warren's logbook (2-6 February)

Although not included in Doug's story, Bruce notes that Doug shot down a 'Doodlebug' (V-1 Flying Bomb) on 3 February

over his windscreen. He couldn't see so Duke formatted on him to lead him back to our lines. But Bill's engine failed and he had to crash-land. However he called on the R/T and waved so we knew he was okay. Taken prisoner later, he was part of the mid-winter march from the east to the west the Prisoners of War had to do.

In mid-February, the C/O told us that they were trying to find replacements for us as we were near tour-expired. On the 15th of February, No. 127 and No. 66 Squadrons were to go to a practice gunnery camp at Fairwood Common in Wales. We were to be taken off the squadron there. On the 13th of February. I did my last operational flight, number 143, to the Breda area with a new Canadian pilot, Marvin Silver. Duke also flew his last operational flight that day, having completed 144. We were thankful to Him that we had survived.

Bad weather grounded the squadron for several days and while waiting to go to the UK we had a great bonfire made of German pyrotechnics and army artillery gun powder. The bonfire got out of hand. The C/O and I burned our hands and Duke singed his hair.

One of the last things we did in Holland before leaving for England was to attend a performance of Handel's Messiah at Breda. Wonderful and impressive, but in a cathedral with no heat. How those taking part managed so well is hard to understand, for we were huddled in heavy clothing and we were cold. The squadron attempted to fly to Fairwood Common on the 21st of February but was recalled shortly after take-off because of poor weather. A report came in that No. 84 Group was losing between twenty and thirty pilots a week even though the Germans faced sure defeat. Almost all were due to flak which seemed to be increasing as the enemy were forced into a smaller area. On the 22nd the weather was beautiful and we flew to Colerne, refuelled, and then to Fairwood Common. These were the last Spitfire flights of our wartime flying.



The Warren Twins following their two combat tours

FAIRWOOD COMMON, BUCKINGHAM PALACE, WARRINGTON, THE USS MOUNT VERNON, AND HOME

Fairwood Common was near Swansea, Wales. The squadron was given motor transport without restriction so we were able to go to dances or pubs with no trouble. The station personnel appeared to want to make the squadron's stay as pleasant as possible which was a very nice change from some stations we had been on. Sorry to say that on some of the big permanent peace time RAF stations, senior ground crew rather resented us because of the rapid promotion at a young age and the aircrews' often boisterous ways. Aircrew in general did not pay very much attention to rank. After returning from a dangerous mission, no one is impressed by a man who was not there, no matter what his rank.

En-route to Fairwood Common we had refuelled at Colerne where No. 616 Squadron was flying Meteors. This was very interesting and we talked with the pilots about their performance. Had it been possible we would have liked to have switched to No. 616 and do a tour on Meteors, as they thought they were going to the continent shortly. But this was wishful thinking -furthermore, we were pleased to be going home.

On the 27th of February a farewell party for Duke and I was held in the officers' mess. A great concession by the mess was to allow our squadron NCO's to attend. This was seldom done and we were honoured in the way it was carried out. We rather regretted leaving the squadron. A close bond develops among men who share a common danger and depend on each other for survival. Because we were twins, the big thing with us was to be together. Although our friendship with others was important, it ranked very low compared to our relationship with each other.

On the 2nd of March we attended a dance at Brangam Hall which is in the Civic Centre in Swansea. The next day we went to Bournemouth to No. 3 Personnel Reception Centre. We were living in the Royal Bath Hotel which was complete luxury after the continent.

During March of 1945 there were a lot of Canadian aircrew waiting to go home so we were able to take leave. Our mail caught up with us, and one letter was from Air Vice-Marshal E.G. Huddleston, Air Officer Commanding No. 84 Group, addressed to Duke. It read: "Dear Warren: I wish to extend to you my warm congratulations upon the award to you of the Distinguished Flying Cross. It was thoroughly well earned and deserved." Then, in handwritten words, "and your brother a very happy coincidence." signed, Yours sincerely -E.G. Huddleston. There was a short note to someone called Frank, perhaps a staff officer, which read: "Dear Frank, Will you please pass on the enclosed newspapers to the Warren brothers who, though they are very anti-publicity minded, may never-the-less be glad to have the copies to send home."

A message arrived telling us that we were to attend an investiture at Buckingham Palace on the 20th of March. In addition, we were able to invite two guests to witness the ceremony. For this very special and happy occasion we invited our friends from Emsworth, Mr. and Mrs. Parsons. They had been very kind to us, wrote letters to our parents, and we enjoyed their home and hospitality. We were delighted to have them with us and they were thrilled by the invitation to attend.

The reason we were selected to attend at Buckingham Palace was because we were doing nothing but waiting to go home. Men awarded the DFC and still flying operationally on a squadron were not sent to London for an investiture. Most often the award was presented at the squadron level by a senior RAF officer.

On the 20th we were part of a large group of men assembled in one of the great rooms of the palace. There were representatives of all services and some civilians who were to receive awards. Mostly young men, but there was one older Chief Petty Officer from the Royal Navy who was probably in his forties. Whereas we youngsters were all laughing and talking, he was looking around in awe thinking that he was in Buckingham Palace. In a short time three officers came in, a Commander Royal Navy, a Lt. Col. British Army and a Wing Commander Royal Air Force.

The Commander RN called for attention and briefed us. Lined up in our service group, we awaited King George VI. The drill was to give your name to the senior officer of your service who would call your name. For example, a Squadron Leader spoke to the RAF Wing Commander who called out, "Squadron Leader Jones of No. 124 Squadron is awarded the DFC." The S/Ldr. would step forward before the King who was standing on a dais, a member of the palace staff handed the medal to the King who pinned it on and shook the S/Ldr.'s hand. The S/Ldr. then marched off.

When the Chief Petty Officers turn came, he marched up, gave his name and went before the King. The King was tall and looked down. The CPO was short and looked up. The King pinned his award on, shook his hand and the CPO couldn't let go of the hand. He was so excited he just kept looking up at the King who looked down rather confused at all the hand shaking. After a few seconds, which seemed like a long time to the watchers, the Commander RN stepped forward, pulled the hands apart and led the CPO away. The only explanation of course is that the CPO was so excited he really lost his mind there for a bit.

Our turn came. Duke first (B before D in the alphabet). Duke received his DFC from the King, and marched off. When I appeared before the King, looking the same and with same surname, he looked rather bewildered and said, "I don't think I have ever done anything like this before." -meaning awarding similar decorations to a pair of twins.



The Warren Twins at Buckingham Palace following the investiture

Following the ceremony we left the palace and had tea with the Parsons who then caught the train back to Portsmouth, near to Emsworth where they lived.

During these days some dramatic victories took place. Dresden was bombed in February and the US marines land at Iwo Jima. Turkey declared war on Germany and the meeting at Yalta between President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Premier Joseph Stalin was held. The bridge at Remagen was captured and the Americans crossed the Rhine. On the day of our investiture, Mandalay in Burma, fell to the Anglo-Indian army. We felt very left out of it and rather wished we could have stayed until the end.

We were sent to Warrington near Manchester, another personnel centre where one waited for a ship to go home on. In Manchester we discovered the wonderful library they have and spent almost all our free time there. We could sit and read for hours. We never took a book out for we knew one had to board a ship on very short notice. On the 12th of April, President Roosevelt died and Truman took over. On the 14th we went aboard an American navy transport, the USS Mount Vernon, a converted passenger liner, full of US personnel with only seven or eight Canadians. If you were a Captain or above you went to the dining room, if below that rank you went to the mile-long lineups at the cafeteria style mess hall. We were lucky for F/Lt.'s were of Captain rank.

On the ship with us was S/Ldr. 'Gopher' Woolfenden who kept us

laughing the whole trip. A tremendous character with a great store of stories and jokes. We got to know him well and formed a friendship that has lasted over the years. 'Gopher' was a close friend of Bill Foster and was very interested to know we had been on No. 66 with Bill.

We were delighted to be on the USS Mount Vernon for the food was excellent -especially so to those of us who had been overseas for several years. All the usual North American items -steak (real steak, not horse meat), corn on the cob (unheard of in the UK), ice cream, etc. The dining room was very crowded but that was no hardship. 'Gopher' was always joking. One day we came in for lunch -we all stood till every one was by their seat as the tables were so close together. When told to sit down there was a moment of silence before people started talking. 'Gopher' chose this moment to slam the table with his fist and shout, "Chicken again, God dammit, chicken again." There was a stunned silence for we all had not seen chicken for a long time, when suddenly the Americans saw the humour of the situation and the dining room broke into a loud roar.

Another habit of 'Gopher' was to come up near an American Navy officer and say in a loud voice, "Come on fellows, let's go back to the blunt end" (or the "sharp end"). The navy officer would leap six inches into the air, then see our air force uniforms and shake his head in disgust.

We were told we would probably dock in Newport News, Virginia and the voyage would take about nine days. The crossing was uneventful, although sixteen depth charges were dropped by an escort vessel. A church service was held on the deck on the Sunday. There were many walking wounded on board and I recall a black man using crutches holding a Bible for a white man with no arms while a hymn was sung. They were some distance from us or I would have asked if they had belonged to the same unit or had met while they were in the hospital.

On the 23rd of April we disembarked at Newport News and took a train to Lachine near Montreal. Lachine was another personnel centre where we had some administrative details. A military band played as we got off the train. We found the personnel operating the centre rather disagreeable. Furthermore, quite often people reported items of a kit 'lost' which the staff could never find. Later the word went out Lachine personnel were helping themselves to souvenirs from the baggage of returning personnel.

While in Montreal for a brief time, we saw a family we had known in Wetaskiwin, the Hintons. They had lost their son Dick in a flying accident in Canada. We also visited the Marvin Silvers family and had dinner there. On the night of April 25th 1945, we got on the train in Montreal for the trip west and to return home after three and a half years overseas and four and a half years in the RCAF.



USS Mount Vernon



The Warren Twins back in Canada in April 1945

WITH THE RCAF IN CANADA (1945-1948)

On Sunday the 28th of April we arrived in Wetaskiwin where we had done most of our schooling, We were met by Lois Burroughs, a beautiful and charming girl we had gone to school with and with whom Duke had an understanding with while we were overseas. Shortly after we were home, Duke and Lois became engaged and set the wedding date for the 11th of June. Lois's father and mother were wonderful people who we had known for a long time.

The same afternoon we went down to Ponoka where our parents were on their farm, the one which we had helped them to buy. They were terribly happy to see us and our mother especially seemed quite hysterical. We knew it had been a terrible strain on them while we were on operations overseas, as it would be on any parents. The newspapers and radio reported casualties. For instance, they told us how very worried they were at the time of Dieppe when it was announced some one hundred Allied planes had been lost and how relieved they were when they received mail from us after the Battle of Dieppe.

The war in Europe ended on the 8th of May and was celebrated in all cities, towns and villages of Canada and elsewhere. We were on the farm and felt very let down that we were not in on the celebrations. We sort of felt guilty because we knew how happy our parents were to have us home but we wanted to be near where the celebrations were on. Duke and I talked over the war, remembering the friends we had lost and the friends we had made. And we thanked Him for bringing us home safely.

On Monday, the 11th of June, Lois Burroughs and Bruce Warren were married in the United Church in Wetaskiwin. I was best man and our mother and father attended. Mr. and Mrs. Burroughs were there of course and many of Lois's friends. I had invited a special person for me, Melba Bennett from Edmonton, who would later become my wife.

We had finished our disembarkation leave in June and had been ordered to report to No. 2 Air Command at Winnipeg. Here there was a release centre and after a few days we were instructed to report there. It was located just across the road from the Air Command Headquarters.

We refused to do so, saying we wished to remain in the RCAF. This created a great deal of consternation among the administrative types who said, "You can't do that, you have to take your release and leave the RCAF." However, I was a 'news-freak' even then, and had cut from the paper a small article which said no one would be released from Canada's armed forces against their will until the final decision was made about the permanent forces. We showed it to them and we were told we would have to report to Group Captain Carling-Kelly who would deal with such recalcitrant officers as we were.

We appeared before G/C Carling-Kelly who said, "What is this about you two refusing to take your release?" We explained we wanted to

join the permanent air force. The war in the East was still being fought and we had volunteered for that theatre. The G/C told us what wonderful officers we were, that we had done a great job, and we should get out and get a good job before they were all gone.

At that time there was a system of points which determined your date of release. We had a surplus of points because of our service. However we insisted we wanted to stay in the service. We argued back and forth for a bit and asked the G/C about what was said in parliament. We produced the clipping from my wallet. The G/C stated he didn't give a damn about what was said in parliament but we stuck to our guns. In desperation he pounded his fist on the desk and said, "Mark my words, if you don't go across the road and take your release you'll be in Trenton Monday morning and they will make instructors out of you." We replied that we were prepared for that because the permanent air force would need instructors. We were in Trenton Monday morning.

Trenton, Ontario was a famous RCAF station for many years. It was said it was built as a 'make-work' project during the depression. In any case it was the most modern and best station in Canada, and the home of many units, one of them being the Central Flying School (CFS). It was here we commenced No. 5 Course at the CFS to learn to be flying instructors. Before doing so we acquired new flying logbooks, as we did not want to take a chance of losing our wartime logbooks. We had to total our operational time which was all on Spitfire aircraft. Duke had 248 sorties, 336:15 hours operational flying and a total of 734:40 hours on Spitfire aircraft of various marks. I had 254 sorties, 341:50 hours operational, for a total of 709:15 hours flying Spitfires.

We started the flying portion of the instructor's course on the 16th of June 1945. The war in the east was still going on and we had volunteered to go. There were quite a few instructors at Trenton who had spent all the war in Canada. Many of them said it was unfair if we were sent to the Far East before them as they had volunteered and wanted to get a crack at operations. However in mid-July, a list went up on all the bulletin boards in connection with the point system for release. Among other things it showed whether a man had volunteered for service in the Far East. Alas, a good number of those, although they said they "had volunteered," did not have their name on the list. Most embarrassing for them!

Actually, there was considerable friction at Trenton at this time between men who had been on operations and those who had not. It is true that many men retained in Canada as instructors sincerely wished to go overseas on operations. But is also true many felt they really did not want to go so did their best to stay in Canada.

A friend told me his story. He received his wings and despite his wishes was selected for and trained as an instructor. When he arrived at his station he told his C/O he wanted to go overseas. The C/O informed

him that he was last on the list. The list had about twenty-five names on it. So he went to work as an instructor. A few months later he was called in and asked if he still wanted to go overseas. He replied yes, but felt there was little chance as he knew only seven men had left the unit for overseas since his arrival. The C/O told him this always happened. When a posting came in and he started down the list some men always had excuses why they did not wish to go at that time. So his name had come up. The C/O said many of these men were good instructors and were needed, so he was satisfied that they stayed. My friend went overseas and did a partial tour.

One day the Station Commander, G/C Bell-Irving, called a parade and blasted the overseas veterans about our poor standard of dress, particularly our head gear, for many were without stiffening bands and had the 'fifty mission crush' as it was called. He ended up stating we were totally unsuitable to be officers and would never amount to anything. We were a disgrace to the uniform.

Shortly after that time, one of our group came across an Illustrated London News Magazine showing Guy Gibson receiving the award of the Victoria Cross from the King. He was wearing his hat, band removed with a really good fifty mission crush. The picture was cut out, a paper frame made, and posted on the Officers Mess bulletin board with a note in large letters underneath. It said, "Here is an unsuitable, disgraceful officer receiving his VC from the King." It was an old photo, for Gibson had been killed in a Mosquito while serving as master bomber sometime before. But it got the point across.

Again Duke and I were called in by the C/O of CFS and we were told to take our release. We declined again and the Wing Commander seemed to pay more attention to the statement in parliament than the Group Captain in Winnipeg had. Lois and Duke got a small apartment in Trenton and I often visited them there. All the officers on the course had been operational fliers and we shared many common interests. Those married had their wives with them and were enjoying life without being shot at. We found this a great relief.

One day Duke and I were ordered to report to the Station Commander G/C Bell-Irving in our best blues. Since this was the officer who had blasted the course for poor dress we wondered what we might have done wrong. But dressed in our best blues we proceeded to the C/O's office in the administration building. We reported to the adjutant who escorted us into the C/O. He was seated at his desk and as we stood before him he said, "I see you have the DFC". "Yes Sir," we replied. "Well, you've got another one now" and jumped up from behind his desk and came towards us with a paper in his hand.

We were very much surprised. The C/O then started to read from the message in his hand. It said, "The President of the United States is pleased to award the American Air Medal to J9286 Warren B. and to

J9735 Warren D.” We started to laugh. This was far different than a DFC and not too highly regarded by the RAF that we had flown with in Europe. Bell-Irving became annoyed and told us it was not a laughing matter, but a serious award which we should be proud of. He next called the supply officer and asked him if he had any American Air Medal ribbon for us. When the reply was negative he bawled out the supply officer and told him to order some at once. We were then dismissed.

When we were out in the hall we looked at each other, shook our heads, and burst out laughing again. Later the award was entered in official orders. There were two entries -one said the President of the USA granted Air Medals to six RAF officers, of which we were two, and the King of England granted the France Germany star award to six USA flyers. We think somewhere an RAF officer and an army Air Corps officer sat side by side in a Headquarters building on a dull day and said, "Let's swap a few of these minor awards." And that is why we wear the ribbon of the American Air Medal.

Douglas Warren's American Air Medal citation reads: "He has at all times displayed great courage and determination in pressing home his attacks and on numerous missions has operated in direct support of the United States forces."



Doug Warren's American Air Medal

At Trenton we flew Cornells, Ansons, and Harvards. All were used as training aircraft in Canada. The Cornell for the first phase of flying, the Anson and Harvard for advanced training, depending whether you were selected bomber or fighter types. We found the course interesting, liked the flying, and did well. My report read, "A capable pilot and instructor. Should do well with experience." Duke's report was a bit higher, "This officer gave a good test. Potentially above average."

Never mind the flying, the big accomplishment for us at Trenton was learning to swim. There was a nice outside pool at the officers' mess. After flying we went there every afternoon that we could and gradually learned to swim. It gave us a great sense of satisfaction the day we swam across the pool at the deep end.

In early August the war with Japan ended with the dropping of the atomic bomb.

We left Trenton the middle of September to go to No. 2 Flying Training School at Yorkton Saskatchewan. We were granted leave before reporting there and spent time in Alberta, both at our parents' farm and also in Edmonton where Melba Bennett lived. While apart we carried on a courtship by mail and I was delighted to be in her company again. Duke was also very fond of Melba, which was not unexpected, as we always like the same people. On the 15th of October we reported to Yorkton for flying duties.

The RCAF was still winding down at this time and really there was very little to do till the final plans were confirmed. We did fly, Ansons and Cornells, but there really was only a token program to keep current. Duke and I often flew together in an Anson which we rather enjoyed. It was quite a bit different than solo in a Spitfire.

On the 7th of December we were shocked and greatly saddened when our Mother suddenly had a serious heart attack and died. Our mother was quite young, only fifty-two years old, but life as a farm wife during the depression was especially hard. Furthermore, the stress that our mother was under with her two sons as fighter pilots overseas put a tremendous strain on her heart. We were flown to Edmonton in an Anson and went to the funeral in Ponoka. Our father was lost without her and we were sorry that we were so far away. However we had two sisters in Edmonton, and that helped a great deal.

We returned to Yorkton for a few days and then took Christmas leave. Melba Bennett and I were married in the North West Air Command chapel by the RCAF Padre on the 27th of December 1945. Although only about three weeks after my mother's death, we had already planned our wedding. The uncertainty of postings and the RCAF in general meant the planned date might be the only opportunity for some time. Duke was my best man, Melba's parents, our father, and our beloved Aunt were there. Also many others attended. On the 2nd of January Duke and I returned to Yorkton. Melba and Lois remained in Edmonton.

We returned to Yorkton and found the unit was to be closed down shortly. Very little flying was being done and it was a few days later that we were posted to No. 1 FTS Centralia. Before leaving Yorkton, one of our friends there asked us to drive his car from Regina to Centralia for him. He had a wife and small baby, and did not want to take them by car in the winter. However we jumped at the chance for it meant Melba and Lois could drive with us. We arranged that they meet us in Regina, which they did.

The trip across the States to Centralia in January in a 1937 Pontiac coupe with a poor heater was an adventure. We did get more heat when we put a cardboard cover over the radiator, but not much. There was no Trans Canada Highway then, not that it would have been any better in the winter.

We arrived at Centralia which is north of London, Ontario. We got the best accommodation we could in the town of Exeter which was close by. Again there was really very little going on, for there were no students and very little activity of any kind. It was a dreadful time for the RCAF. The politicians couldn't make up their minds what they wanted in the way of military forces. The men who were in the service at that time were also a bit unsure of what they wanted and often would decide to leave on the spur of the moment.

It was different with us. We had for a very long time wanted a career in the RCAF and the temporary setbacks did not worry us. Besides we were together, newly married, and enjoying our new life completely. Then another blow to our family, Mr. Burroughs died. Lois left for home to attend the funeral. We were all very saddened by this loss.

Again another posting. This time to No. 1 Komposite Training School Toronto. Why the spelling of composite was that way we couldn't find out. However it was an administrative school so perhaps they had their reasons. Especially designed to bring wartime air crew up to a certain standard of basic RCAF administration. Duke and I, plus about twenty-five others were sent on the course which was held in the Old Hunt Club on Avenue Road. We arrived there on the 12th of February and left on the 4th of April. Lois did not return to Toronto as it was known we would be there only a very short time.

The course was over in early April and here Duke's and my careers started to diverge. We knew this would happen because the RCAF was to be reduced to only 12,000 personnel and we might be too senior for both to be in one place. A special group of eight ex-fighter pilots were kept behind for additional training. We were part of that group.

The plan behind the special training for this group was to qualify them to be both adjutants and instructors at auxiliary fighter squadrons that were to be formed at major cities in Canada. When we left KTS, Duke was sent to Winnipeg and I to Halifax. Just before leaving I was

fortunate enough to get a small Studebaker car and we drove down. Duke went by train to Winnipeg and Lois joined him there.

However, although they were planned, for a long time the squadrons were not authorized by the government. When I reported to the Chief Organization officer at Eastern Air Command he asked me, "Why are you here Warren?" and I told him I was to be the Adjutant of the auxiliary squadron when it was formed. The man was G/C Hanchet-Taylor, and he said, "No reflection on yourself Warren, but if you ask me, they bought the cap before the yacht." I do not know what reception Duke got, but shortly after his arrival he was sent on a senior Link instructors course at Trenton. Following that the summer was spent flying air cadets at Paulson Air Cadet Camp.

I was given odd jobs, closing out stations, court martials, reviewing and destroying files. Halifax was an impossible place to find accommodation. We ended up sharing the upstairs of a house in Dartmouth with another young couple, Betty and Bill Holroyd. This began a friendship which after fifty years is still strong and close.

In September of 1946 the RCAF announced that the forming of the post war permanent force would take place on the 1st of October 1946. This was designated Reversion Day. The wartime RCAF would revert to peacetime RCAF. It was commonly called 'R' day. There were drastic personnel changes expected, changes in rank, releases, and postings. Duke and I knew this was what we had been waiting for. Were we going to be accepted for the Permanent Force? 'R' day came -many officers were reduced in rank, some technical officers returned to senior NCO rank, some personnel were discharged, and some had the option of taking their release. It was a shambles and a personal turmoil for many men.

We were fortunate. We retained our Flight Lieutenant rank and seniority and were granted a Permanent Commission. Did that letter we wrote during the war help? We didn't know, but we were very pleased and happy. Our new life as Permanent Air Force Officers began on the 1st of October 1946.

Many years later, when numerous books were published about the war, I read many of them concerning the war in the air. Reading them over, and the casualties suffered by aircrew on operations made me realize how extremely fortunate we were to survive. That we did it flying together so often, and while often hit by enemy fire, we were never shot down. Further, although we did have some engine problems, we were never forced to bail out. I give the credit for this to the devoted ground crew who serviced our aircraft. I know when we first arrived together on the squadron, and took part in operations, the ground crew who worked on our aircraft worried about what would happen if one of us were lost. What would be the effect on the survivor? I believe that after they saw

what sort of men we were, that they felt we could cope with any situation. Ground crew personnel have kept in touch with me over these many years.

Perhaps the remarks of our Squadron Commander and friend, Hugh Anthony Stephen Johnston (Johnny) CMG, OBE, DFC who was our CO in both No. 165 and No. 66 Squadrons Royal Air Force would be of interest. In his book 'Tattered Battlements', he wrote,

"The Dukes were Canadian twins, known without distinction - for few could distinguish one from the other -by a name which was neither theirs nor that of the parents who had christened them, Bruce and Douglas. The origin of the nickname was not known; nor was it certain who was the elder, but Bruce was known as Duke I and Douglas as Duke II. Their father and mother were of Ulster and Rhineland descent respectively, and they had grown up on a farm in Alberta. They were of the same height to an eighth of an inch, the same weight to a couple of pounds, always dressed alike and, though different in characters, were as similar physically as two peas. Everything they did they did together, and everything they had they shared, even their bank balance was common to both. As pilots they had the right mixture of determination, discretion and dash to be successful and formidable; between them they organized and had 'A' flight.

"On the ground, while not overburdened with academic learning, indeed they often made heavy weather in the pronunciation of unfamiliar words, they both had vigorous inquiring minds and little patience with tradition-bound methods or ways of thought. They had remained together throughout their careers in the service and liked to say that if they had both not joined up, but only one, they could have worked alternate weeks. They were typical of their trade in never taking exercise but unusual in that they neither smoked or drank. Photography was their main preoccupation and delight. They represented the New world at it's best and each, with an impartiality and detachment which was sometimes puzzling, called the other 'Duke'."

Hugh A.S. Johnston had been an outstanding student at Oxford and I can understand his remark, "not overburdened with academic learning" for we had only completed Grade 12 in Alberta. He did not say it to be mean or petty. It was interesting his remarks about calling each other 'Duke'.

We became good friends with Eric and Allan Sherlock, also identical twins, who had done two tours on heavy bombers. People did not try to tell them apart -but called each 'Sherlock'. However, they themselves called each other 'Twin'.

During our time in England we met many wonderful English and Scottish people. However, it would have been distracting to the military side of this account to go into detail of the time spent with them. Through our brother-in-law, John Adams, we had relatives in Scotland at Arbroath whom we visited. When we were on leave we were welcomed into their homes and they shared their rather meagre rations with us. Sometimes the mothers wrote to our mother telling her that her sons were okay, and I am sure this was a great comfort to our parents.

Our contact with the people we met caused us to admire them greatly as they suffered under the Blitz, Buzz-Bombs, shortage of food, and wartime restrictions. We had left England with a great affection for the country and the people.

To return to the last paragraph of the foreword to this story, which read, "How these two young men had arrived at the railing of the Stratheden, how they fared after they reached the war zone in Europe, and their life after that war was over is what this story is all about."

We were of the generation of Canadians that took part in WW II. Most of those who fought in that war were born between 1915 and 1925, although some senior people had taken part in WW I. The story I related was very typical of what thousands of young aircrew in the Royal Canadian Air Force experienced. Navy and Army personnel were in the same age group and have their own stories to tell. In spite of friendly inter-service rivalry, we admired the men and women in all services as well as the contribution of the civilian population. All Canadians worked towards a common goal -the defeat of the Axis forces.

A terrible price was paid by our generation -over 42,000 killed and more than 54,000 wounded.

I have kept the narration factual using the material I worked with such as diaries, log books, and official records. I judge our efforts to be average, many men did more, many men did less.

Professional historians over the years have found much to criticize (with the advantage of hindsight) in the conduct of the war. But we were proud of Canada, and felt honoured to serve in the Royal Canadian Air Force both in war and peace.

Following their being granted permanent commissions on 1 October 1946, the Warrens spent almost two and a half years at a variety of postings in Canada.

Bruce flew Harvards, Mustangs, Dakotas, Expeditors, and B-25 Mitchells during postings at Winnipeg, Saskatoon, and Rivers, Manitoba.

Doug had various postings including Flying Schools at Trenton and Yorkton, Eastern Air Command (Halifax), the Detachement Annciene Lorette as O/C, and spent some time in charge of 'Character and Leadership Training' at 1 FTS Centralia where the RCAF was training its first post-war pilots.

Then, in February 1949, the Warren Twins were both posted overseas to the UK at the same time but went their separate ways. Bruce was selected to attend the Empire Test Pilot's School at Farnborough, while Doug went to West Raynham to the RAF's Day Fighter Leaders School.



Bruce Warren spent most of February 1948 flying a DC-3 (Dakota) while attached to '6 Comm. Flight' based in Edmonton. He made four flights to Baker Lake, NWT to deliver 45 gallon drums of oil and aviation fuel. On other flights he carried lumber, fish, a twelve foot sleigh and dog team, and an injured native.

BRUCE WARREN'S POSTWAR CAREER

by Dave Birrell

YEAR		AIRCRAFT		HOURS, IN 1ST PILOT
MONTH	DATE	Type	No.	
June				
	9	Campfire V	W412	Self
	10	Avian VII	509	Self
	13	Avian		Self
	13	Avian		Self
	13	Olympia	W401	Self
	14	Firefly leader	W403	Self
	16	Campfire II	W420	Self
	16	Mosquito I	W415	Self
	17	Domestic	715	Self
	20	Mosquito I	W416	Self
	22	Domestic II	W430	Self
	22	Lincoln II	W456	Self
	23	Olympia	W401	Self
	23	Hawker		Self
	24	Orford	504	Self
	24	Meteor II	330	Self
	26	Orford	504	Self
	29	Hawker		Self
	29	Olympia	W401	Self
	29	Olympia	W401	Self
	30	Campfire	W42	Self
		Northway Fuel		Self

In March 1949, Bruce began a nine month course at the Empire Test Pilots School at RAF Farnborough, southwest of London. During his time on the course, he flew fifteen different types of aircraft, acquiring 8:40 hours on the Mosquito, 23:50 hours on the Firefly (a carrier based version of the Spitfire), 20:55 hours on the Mk VII Lancaster that was also referred to as the Lincoln, 14:05 hours on the Meteor jet fighter, and 16:30 hours on the Vampire jet.

As you can see from his logbook entries at left, during a twenty-two day period in June, Bruce flew eleven different types of aircraft including two jet fighters, a four-engined bomber, a twin-engined fighter-bomber, and a glider.

The Vampire Bruce flew for 45 minutes at Farnborough would become the RCAF's first jet fighter aircraft. He also logged time on the Hawker Sea Fury which served with the Royal Canadian Navy based both on-shore and on the aircraft carrier HMCS Magnificent. It was one of the fastest piston-engine aircraft ever built. Bruce graduated sixth out of the twenty-seven pilots

in the class. Interestingly, graduates one through five all held university degrees in engineering.

Bruce was then posted to the Winter Experimental Establishment (the WEE Flight), Edmonton from January 1950 until May 1950.

The RCAF's Winter Experimental Establishment (WEE) was a major testing and development unit that began operations in 1943 and continued until 1960 when it became part of the Central Experimental and Proving Establishment at Rockcliffe, Ontario. WEE ranged widely over the winter barrens of northern Canada and enjoyed an international reputation as it collected and analyzed data related to the design and functionality of aircraft systems necessary for successful winter operations in the Canadian Arctic. The RCAF carried out testing programs for the Canadian forces as well as for British and American air forces

Most of Bruce's flights during this posting were in the de Havilland Vampire which was the RCAF's first jet fighter and had become operational. One of the most interesting aircraft that he flew while with the WEE Flight was the de Havilland D.H. 103 Sea Hornet. This was a smaller version of the legendary Mosquito but as a naval version, featured folding wings for storage aboard aircraft carriers.

Following his time with the WEE Flight in Edmonton, Bruce was posted to No.1 IFS (Instrument Flying School) at Centralia, Ontario where he took an Instrument Rating Qualifying Course from May 1950 until July 1950. The aircraft flown during the course was the Beechcraft C-45 Expeditor.

Then on 17 July 1950, Bruce was seconded to Avro for two years, accepting a test pilot position with AVRO Canada. The company was extremely busy at this time with the design and development of the Avro Jetliner, CF-100 and CF-105 Arrow aircraft, a period which is viewed by many as the "Golden Age" of the Canadian aviation industry.

Sir Roy Dobson, head of Avro in England during World War II, had been impressed with Canada's work developing the capability to build Lancaster Bombers during World War II. He believed that there would be post-war opportunities in Canada for aircraft design and construction. Dobson acquired the Victory Aircraft plant which had produced Lancasters during the war and established Avro Canada Ltd.

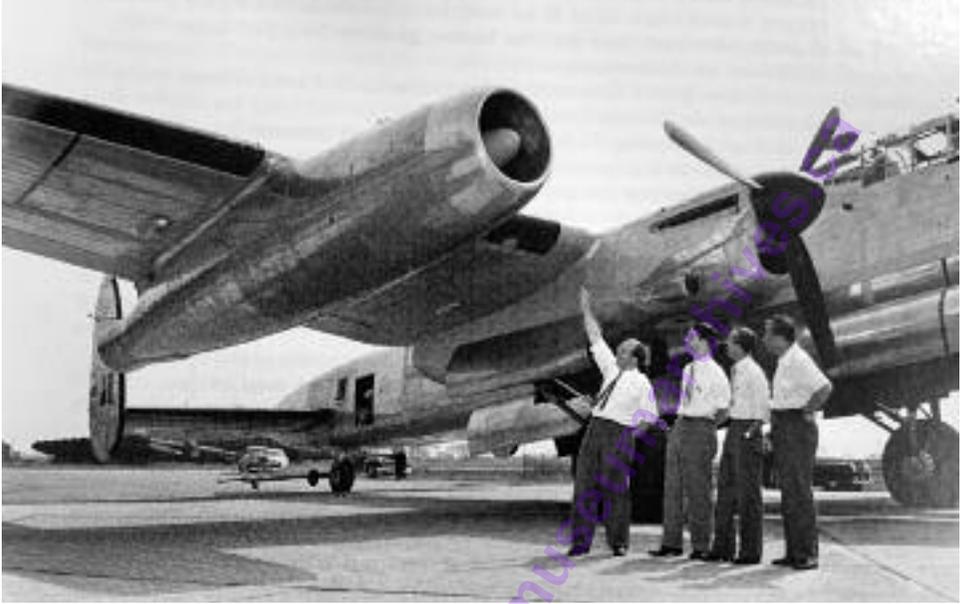
Amongst the design engineers when Bruce arrived at Avro was James C. 'Jim' Floyd. His early career included wartime work with Avro in the UK as an engineer on the Anson, Manchester, Lancaster, York, and Lincoln aircraft. In 1952, Jim was named Chief Engineer, overseeing the Avro Jetliner, CF-100 Canuck jet fighter, and the highly advanced CF-105 Avro Arrow supersonic interceptor programs. Through the development of these aircraft, Jim Floyd and Canada became recognized as international

leaders in aeronautical engineering.

During his time with Avro Canada, Bruce was involved with the post-war development of the Lancaster, the Avro Jetliner, but primarily his focus was as a test-pilot on the CF-100 program.



www.bombercommandmuseum.com/s.ca



Avro Canada extensively tested the Orenda engine on Lancaster FM209

AVRO LANCASTER

During his time as an Avro test pilot, Bruce Warren flew a total of ten hours on Lancasters, one hour and thirty-five minutes of which were as the pilot of Lancaster FM209, the only Lancaster designated as a Mk X 'O'. This aircraft was loaned to Avro Canada and developed as a flying test-bed for the Orenda jet engine that was being developed for the Avro Jetliner and the CF-100 fighter.

The bomb-aimer's position and nose turret removed, the tail turret was replaced by tail-cone and observation windows were installed on each side of the fuselage for photographic test recording. The Lancaster's nose was faired over and the two outboard Rolls-Royce Merlin engines were replaced by Orenda jet engines.

The first test-flight was made on 13 July 1950. According to Jim Floyd, "This initial test was followed by many others, first to confirm satisfactory stability and control of the aircraft/engine combination and then to carry out the exhaustive air tests necessary to prove the satisfactory performance and handling of the new engines at altitudes up to 30,000 feet."

Flying on its two jets alone, with the propellers on its two inboard Merlins feathered, Lancaster FM209 was able to fly as a Lancaster with four of the Merlin V-12's.

Bruce flew Lancaster KB919 on three occasions. This was the proto-type Mk X MR, a version that was developed to enable the post-war RCAF to patrol Canada's coasts, primarily to monitor and deter Russian submarines as the Cold War developed. The modifications included radar operator and sonobuoy operator stations in rear centre section, nose and tail gun-turrets only, and the installation of a four hundred Imperial gallon bomb-bay tank while fifteen bomb carrier positions remained available. Bruce's flights focussed on the initial flight tests following the modifications, including the testing of the newly installed dual flight controls. He also flew KB919 when it was used as a photo-platform during the Jetliner development.



Lancaster FM209 in flight



Avro Canada Jetliner [Bruce Warren Collection]

AVRO CANADA JETLINER

Following the war, Trans-Canada Airlines became interested in the next generation of airliners and Jim Floyd became the design engineer for a jet transport project tailored to meet T.C.A.'s requirements. The project was given the designation C-102, and the aircraft was given the name Avro Canada Jetliner.

Coincident with the development of the Jetliner, the CF-100 all-weather jet fighter and the Orenda engine were under development..

The Avro Jetliner was the first jet transport to fly in North America and the second to fly in the world, beaten by the De Havilland Comet DH106 by only thirteen days (It should be noted, however, that the Comet's first flight was simply a short hop of just a few feet into the air before descending back to the runway). The Jetliner first flew on 10 August 1949, some eight years before the first American commercial jet transport. It's first flight was approximately one hour in duration and reached an altitude of 13,000 feet.

The Jetliner's flight program was a mixture of test flights and demonstration flights. An early demonstration flight was from Toronto to New York City's Idlewild airport. Little was known about jet engines in their early days. The airport manager at Idlewild insisted that the Jetliner park away from the terminal and had pans placed under the "fire-spitting" engines to catch any dangerous drippings.

This was the first flight of a commercial jet transport in the U.S., and it carried the first jet airmail in North America. The flight attracted the attention of many newspapers including the New York Times which featured the photo of the Jetliner over New York on its front page. Many newspapers questioned why Canada had a commercial jet transport flying and the United States did not.

The prototype was highly successful in all of its many test flights and demonstrations. Howard Hughes personally tested the Jetliner for his airline, personally flying it from his private airfield at Culver City, California. Although somewhat short in range, the design's great potential was never realized. Despite intended orders from airlines, the United States Air Force, and Howard Hughes as well as "genuine interest" by other American and European airlines, the Jetliner program was shelved in 1951.

Canada was now involved in and focussed on the war in Korea. The government ordered Avro Canada to concentrate all its efforts on the CF-100 development and production. Originally, contracts for the CF-100 were for only ten pre-production aircraft. With the onset of the Korean War, they suddenly increased this to an astounding twenty-five per month.

For several years, the Jetliner kept flying in support of the CF-100 program, acting as a chase plane and as a photographic platform for tests. Finally in December 1956, after over seven years and some five

hundred hours of flying, the Jetliner was grounded because of fears of possible corrosion. Another factor was that Avro was now committed to designing and producing the Avro CF-105 Arrow and there was little or no prospect of the Jetliner going into production. Attempts to donate the Jetliner to a museum were unsuccessful so the decision was made to scrap the prototype. Fortunately the nose section of the C-102 Jetliner prototype was saved and may be seen at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum in Ottawa.

Bruce Warren was involved with the Jetliner project, becoming the third pilot to be endorsed as a captain on the type. However he only flew it as a 'second pilot', most of his flights being with Avro Canada's chief test-pilot, D.H. 'Don' Rogers. Bruce flew the prototype on ten occasions for a total of 10 hours and 25 minutes. Don Rogers and Bruce flew the Jetliner from Toronto to Chicago at the request of United Airlines. Over the next two days, they made four 'Demonstration Flights' from Chicago to Milwaukee and back.



Avro Jetliner [Bruce Warren Collection]



The Jetliner in Chicago [Bruce Warren Collection]



The Avro Jetliner over New York City in 1950



Jetliner cockpit at the Canada Aviation and Space Museum



F/Lt. Bruce Warren climbs aboard an Avro Canada CF-100

AVRO CANADA CF-100

The development, production, and operation of the CF-100 represents one of Canadian aviation's outstanding achievements. It remains the only Canadian designed and built combat aircraft to reach operational status and the "Canuck" played a critical role in this country's participation in the defence of North America and Europe during the first two decades of the Cold War.

Following the defeat of Hitler, Canada's and the western world's attention became focused on the new threat posed by the Soviet Union. To play its part in the defence of North America, Canada needed a long-range, all-weather interceptor capable of confronting the only threat seen at that time, Soviet bombers travelling across the Arctic Ocean carrying nuclear weapons.

In 1946, Avro Canada began design work on a twin-engined jet fighter. The first CF-100 (18101; FB-D) flew on 19 January, 1950 with S/Ldr. Bill Waterton in the cockpit. A two-seat fighter crewed by a pilot and navigator, it was designed with two powerful engines and an advanced radar and fire control system housed in its nose that enabled it to fly in all-weather or night conditions. It only needed a short takeoff run and featured a high climb rate, making it well suited to its role as an interceptor.

Although the three programs were occurring during the same time period, Bruce's involvement with the Lancaster X MR prototype and the



Bruce Warren (fourth from the left) and others in front of the first prototype CF-100 (18101 'FB-D')



CF-100 18101 and the Jetliner

Jetliner were clearly secondary to his work with the CF-100 program during which he made eighty-one flights in the aircraft.

Bruce's initial flight in the CF-100 was in the second prototype (18102; FB-K) on 26 July with S/Ldr. Waterton at the controls. 'FB-K' had made its first flight earlier that month.

During the latter half of 1950, the CF-100 prototypes flew demonstrations at Ottawa, Montreal, and Andrews Air Force Base in Washington, DC. A Toronto-Montreal flight was made at an average speed of 638.5 mph.

On 25 August, Bill Waterton and Bruce flew to Boston to demonstrate the aircraft at an airshow. However, there were some difficult moments for the CF-100.

On one takeoff where Waterton was going to rip the plane off in his usual crowd-pleasing way, one engine wound down just as the plane left the ground. Meanwhile, Bruce was reading a colourful commentary but not keeping an eye on Waterton's aircraft. As Bruce described the CF-100's incredible climb rate, S/Ldr. Waterton was staggering along above the runway on a single engine, just managing to remain airborne.

A few days later at the Canadian National Exhibition air show, S/Ldr. Waterton flew through another wing-bending experience to demonstrate the CF-100 to a Canadian audience.

It wasn't until his eleventh flight in the aircraft on 11 October that



The Warren Twins at Avro next to a CF-100 prototype

Bruce flew in the front seat as the pilot and, of course, soloed. Just six days later while evaluating stalls at 30,000 feet, he was tested, writing in his logbook, "Lost both engines at 30,000" -successful relights at 19,000.



The second CF-100 prototype (18102) piloted by Bruce Warren

Date	Altitude	Position	Notes	Pilot	Remarks
5	CF 100	Pilot	Self	Fred Matthews	wing deflection with G
8	"	Pilot	Self	---	w/o retraction test
8	"	Pilot	Self	F. Matthews	fuel consumption Y2-KB-Y2
9	"	Pilot	Self	John Bentley	fuel consumption Y2-41-24-22-68-1
10	"	Pilot	Self	---	Flt test
11	"	Pilot	Self	S. Howland	Speed calibration with P.C. pressure by May 1951
12	"	Pilot	Self	F. Matthews	Speed calibration with P.C. pressure by May 1951
13	"	Pilot	Self	---	top speed 3000 at 30000 - M-0.8
15	"	Pilot	Self	Bob Osterman	high speed run at 30000 - M-0.8
17	"	Pilot	Self	Bob Osterman	P.C.s on Runway 14
16	"	Pilot	Self	---	lateral stability with boosters out
19	"	Pilot	Self	F. Matthews	flight with top tanks, fuselage, fuel, top
19	"	Pilot	Self	B. Osterman	high speed run at 30000 - M-0.8
23	"	Pilot	Self	---	handling w/o boosters - 10000 ft
22	"	Pilot	Self	F. Matthews	using top tanks, fuselage, fuel, top
22	"	Pilot	Self	---	handling w/out fuel, 30000 ft
24	"	Pilot	Self	---	handling w/o boosters - 10000 ft
24	"	Pilot	Self	---	handling in motor 20000 ft - 10000 ft
25	"	Pilot	Self	S. Howland	Stability, success at 10000 ft
29	"	Pilot	Self	S. Howland	Stability, weather etc
30	"	Pilot	Self	S. Howland	Stability, 30000 ft
30	"	Pilot	Self	S. Howland	Stability, 30000 ft

Bruce Warren's Logbook entries for January 1951

It has been written that S/Ldr. Waterton was very reluctant to let anyone else fly the airplane, as he felt that it slowed down the testing program. However, from this point on, Bruce began to fly the CF-100 on a regular basis and to play a major role in the program.

Bill Waterton left Avro in February 1951 to resume test flying of the Gloster Javelin in England. At this point the CF-100 test flying program was handed over to Bruce Warren.

On 28 February, Bruce flew to Wright Field, a USAF base in Ohio where the aircraft was evaluated by the United States Air Force. While there, Bruce made arrangements to 'borrow' an F-86 Sabre from Chuck Yeager, the legendary American test pilot. Bruce went for a forty-five minute test flight during which he went supersonic, noting in his logbook, "WARREN is Supersonic!!"

On 10 March, Bruce faced what must have been a challenging landing, writing, "Successful landing after complete loss of aileron control due to nut jamming in control circuit."

Another noteworthy flight was on 25 March when he wrote, "2 hrs, 30 minutes above 40,000 feet, highest point 43,000 feet, very cold."

Tragedy struck Avro on 5 April 1951. F/Lt. Bruce Warren was on a test flight in 18102 (FB-K) with observer Robert Ostrander of Brampton, Ontario aboard. They were evaluating the aircraft's long-range performance flying at high altitude in preparation for a possible Trans-Atlantic flight. While flying near London, Ontario, his aircraft suddenly dived straight into the Komoka Bog from high altitude killing both aboard.

According to newspaper accounts, "When it crashed it scattered debris, most of it unrecognizable, for up to mile. The explosion did not start a fire, but a mushroom cloud was visible for miles."

"Witnesses "thought it was an atomic bomb," recalled Mark Matthys, a tobacco farmer who bought the property where the jet crashed. Other witnesses described, "an impact crater roughly thirty feet in diameter and twenty feet deep. It was big enough to fit a one thousand square-foot house into."

There was no evidence pointing to anything mechanically wrong with the airplane, and it was in the hands of a very competent pilot. But it was known that the CF-100 suffered from failures in the canopy seal which could result in oxygen problems for the crew or explosive decompression. Either could lead to pilot incapacitation.

One contemporary who looked into the tragedy noted, "It was later found that the small valves in the oxygen mask F/Lt. Warren was wearing had been removed for cleaning and had not been replaced. The pilots were not completely familiar with the mask, and in spite of huge amounts of money being spent on the CF-100, much of it for publicity, three test pilots had to share one mask! A possible cause of the accident could



certainly have been the defective oxygen mask.”

At the time of the accident, Bruce Warren had accumulated 59 hours and 10 minutes as a test pilot on the CF-100 prototypes.

It is noteworthy that of the twenty-eight pilots in Bruce Warren's Empire Test Pilots School class, ten had died within a few short years of graduation, over a third of the best pilots selected by their air forces to be trained. It was a time of tremendous technical advancement in engines and airframes and thus very hazardous as well.

Following the crash, Avro cancelled plans to fly the CF-100 across the Atlantic to the 1951 Farnborough air display. Sir Roy Dobson had been anxious to show it there and plans for the flight were being made.. Pressurization uncertainties and then the accident put a damper on those plans.

What researchers learned from the tragic accident undoubtedly helped protect the lives of hundreds of airmen who would fly the 692 CF-100's that were eventually manufactured'

The 'Canuck' continued flying with the Royal Canadian Air Force, and later the Canadian Armed Forces until 1981. Both its role and weaponry changed through the years as some squadrons of CF-100's were based in Europe as part of NATO and others served at home with NORAD. The aircraft's armament evolved from machine guns to rockets and guided missiles.

In its prime, the "Canuck" was known as a rugged, dependable aircraft. One of the best all-weather fighters available, it served Canada, NORAD, and NATO well.



W/Cdr. Douglas Warren DFC

DOUG WARREN'S POSTWAR CAREER

by Douglas Warren

In February 1949, Doug was posted to the Royal Air Force's Fighter Leaders School at West Raynham where he flew the Gloster Meteor, the first British jet fighter and the Allies' only jet aircraft to participate in combat operations during the Second World War. Later that year, he joined 410 Squadron at St. Hubert where he checked out on the De Havilland Vampire.

410 had become Canada's first jet squadron when it began equipping with eighty-six Vampires during December 1948. The squadron soon gained fame as it toured Canada and the United States putting on spectacular air shows with its Blue Devils demonstration team.



De Havilland Vampire at RCAF Chatham in 1950

FLYING THE F-86 'SABRE'

I first flew the F-86 at Chatham on 18 April 1952, when it was just being introduced into RCAF inventory. Chatham still had Vampires on strength at the OTU. I already knew a good deal about the F-86, for my brother, Bruce, while a test pilot at Avro Canada, had visited Wright-Patterson AFB where he flew a USAF F-86 on 1 March 1951.

Bruce spoke highly of the F-86, telling me how easy it was to go supersonic with a little help from gravity. The comparison between the controls at speed of the CF-100 and F-86 found the former sadly lacking. Bruce had been test-flying CF-100's so knew what he was talking about.

Shortly after Chatham, I was transferred to the RCAF Station at North Luffenham in the East Midlands of England as OC 410 Squadron.

Duke was appointed commanding officer of 410 'Cougar' Squadron on 14 May 1952 and would continue to hold this post until 14 August 1954. 410 was the first RCAF squadron to fly Sabres and was the first RCAF squadron to be deployed overseas equipped with Canadian-built aircraft. It was based at North Luffenham until the fall of 1954, when the squadron moved to Baden-Soellingen, Germany where it was attached to No. 4 Fighter Wing until March, 1955.



S/Ldr. Warren, C/O 410 'Cougar' Squadron



S/Ldr. Warren in his Sabre at North Luffenham in 1952. Duke added a red flash along the top of the rear fuselage and the leading edge of the tail to distinguish his as the 410 commander's aircraft.

I was delighted with this, as our F-86s were the best fighters in the UK and Europe at the time. In spite of all the admin and paper work, I managed to fly twenty-two hours my first month at 410. On 1 August, I had the squadron at Soesterburg, Holland, for the big air show at Ypenburg Airport, The Hague. Before we created any supersonic booms, I checked with air show organizers regarding all the local greenhouses. Did they really want the booms? I was assured they did, so we did. And, as expected, there was a lot of broken glass, but that was all taken care of by the air show people.

During his time at North Luffenham, Doug made a special request to participate in a ceremonial formation flypast.

One flypast that gave me great personal pleasure was at Dieppe on 19 August. I had flown a Spitfire at the Battle of Dieppe, shared in the destruction of a Do 217, had seen many aircraft, both friend and foe, shot down, watched with anxiety the Canadian army below, and lost several friends with whom I attended school in Alberta. And here I was, leading a squadron of supersonic fighters over the now-peaceful Dieppe shores. It had only been ten years, and none of my fellow pilots on 165 Squadron that August day in 1942 would have believed that we would be flying overhead in 1952 had I been able to make a prediction.

The RCAF Sabre squadrons were well known for pulling stunts on one another some of which were quite elaborate. In one case, Duke was one of the perpetrators. One evening (after hours and during the squadron's time at St. Hubert), "certain individuals" from 410 Squadron procured a horse and painted its backside with 441 squadron's colours. It was then led into the office of 441 Squadron's boss, Andy Mackenzie, and

left there with a bale of hay and a bucket of water. Its presence was not noticed until Monday morning when S/Ldr. Mackenzie arrived for work. But this prank was not forgotten . . .



Duke presenting the painting to 441 Squadron C/O S/Ldr. Andy Mackenzie

There were always skits going on between the squadrons. When Andy Mackenzie was leaving North Luffenham (*Both 410 and 441 Squadrons operated from North Luffenham.*) for Korea, we had a mess dinner in his honour. I lived in a little village called Uppingham in the UK at the time and enquired around as to whether there was a local artist. I was directed to a small cottage, where I found the man I was looking for.

I told him that I wanted a painting of a horse. He happened to have a book showing horses, and I selected an average bay. Then I explained that what I really wanted was a painting of a horse in an office, looking down at a desk where there was a name plate that said 'S/Ldr. Mackenzie'. This rather surprised the artist, but he had visited our base and was aware that Mackenzie and I were both squadron commanders there. 'Anything else?' he asked.

Now I had to get into the finer details, and I explained that I wanted the hind quarters of the horse to be black and white checkerboard. This really floored the artist, but he got the connection as he had seen the 441 colour scheme before on the 441 Squadron Sabres.

The painting was ready in about a week, and the fifteen pound fee was duly paid. The presentation went over big. Mac enjoyed every moment of the evening as we all laughed about putting one over on him back at St. Hubert.

Andy Mackenzie flew combat operations in Korea and was shot down over North Korean territory (actually by an American squadron-mate), becoming the only Canadian Prisoner of War during the Korean conflict. He was transported to China where for two years he was held in solitary confinement and subjected to very harsh treatment.

His captors tried to wring a "confession" from him, demanding that he admit that he had flown into Chinese airspace and been shot down. Finally, MacKenzie realized there was only one way out. He fabricated a story and "confessed". He was released in late 1954, two years after his capture and almost a year and a half after the armistice was signed.

S/Ldr. Warren took his squadron to gunnery practice at RAF Acklington during 1953. Nearby there were excellent range facilities, even



Duke (second row; fifth from left) and 410 Squadron pilots

for the worst of UK weather. Included was excellent radar coverage over the North Sea of the Northumberland coast. Even the smallest vessels could be seen on the radar, and the air-to-air controllers were so experienced that they could simultaneously watch and position drogue and firing aircraft in very limited visibility.

The squadron flew to Acklington on 28 April. This was a famous World War II night fighter station, but now was the RAF's main gunnery camp. I knew several of the senior RAF officers at Acklington, and we got into some lively discussions about armament on the Sabre and the radar ranging gun-sight. The RAF chaps were quite scornful of our light .50 guns compared to the much heavier cannons standard on British fighters like the Meteor, Hunter, and Swift. I agreed with the effectiveness of the cannons, but pointed out what a fine job aircraft like the Mustang, with its .50s, had done against the cannon-armed Fw 190's and other Luftwaffe wartime fighters. Discussions were always very friendly and interesting - just fighter pilots airing their views about combat theory.

One day a Meteor tow plane from Acklington was struck by a round of .50 calibre. It landed safely, but the canopy rail was damaged, preventing the pilot from getting out of the cockpit for some time. We immediately viewed the gun camera film from the Sabre involved. What we saw was that the attack had been normal, all angles-off within limits. But my mischance one round glanced off the tow bar and ricocheted forward to strike the Meteor.

When the Meteor was more closely examined, it was found that after striking the canopy, the round then penetrated the main spar, causing Cat.A damage!

I now looked forward to meeting again with my RAF friends, and when we were well into it I said, 'I know our point fives are not as effective as 20 mms, but one of our out-of-date rounds, by only ricocheting off the bar, cut the main spar of a Meteor. Image if a six-gun Sabre firing armour-piercing and incendiary ammo had unloaded at the Meteor?' Hereafter the controversy subsided considerably, but I must admit I took some delight in pushing the needle into my RAF friends, quoting their views about our 'relatively ineffective' point fives.

I spent thirteen months at North Luffenham, logging 190 hours, that in spite of admin tasks, standing in as COpsO when the Wingco was away, and shortages of aircraft because of the troublesome (at the time) situation with inverters and gun-plugs. It had been enjoyable, but I was very pleased when notified on 1 July 1953, that I was posted to Korea.



Duke Warren's 410 Squadron Sabre by J. Cowan

KOREA

S/Ldr. Duke Warren arrived in Korea on 21 July 1953, and flew his first mission with the 39th FIS at Suwon two days later. The war was just winding down and the truce about to be settled. Although he flew 67 missions, Warren would see no combat. Had he come across an enemy MiG 15, they were an aircraft to be respected. As a lecturer at staff college had explained to Duke, "Any fighter that could fly faster, higher, with greater fire power, and comparable manoeuvrability was a better airplane."

The war was winding down and the truce about to be agreed to, but the situation in Korea continued to be very unstable. Although he flew sixty-seven missions, S/Ldr. Warren would see no combat.

On 27 July, my flight commander notified me that I was to take three other pilots over to Tsuiki, Japan, and return with four Sabres from the maintenance depot there. I briefed my flight, and we then waited at the AMU for a C-47. A USAF major arrived with ten other pilots in tow, "Are you Warren?" he asked. I acknowledged, and he surprised me by simply turning the nine over to me, saying that I was in charge.

Just then the C-47 flight was called and off we went. On arrival at Tsuiki, I assembled the pilots and briefed them -get lunch, then we would see which aircraft were which for the ferry flight, and get airborne as soon as possible. While briefing, one pilot picked up his gear and wandered off. I enquired of the group and someone replied, "Oh, that's so-and-so. He's in a rush to get back to Korea to get in a MiG mission before the truce."

After lunch, while we were getting organized with the Sabres, one taxied quickly by. I soon determined that it was our keener, having helped himself to an aircraft. My immediate reaction was to call the tower and have the runway blocked, but as the operation had started so hurriedly in Korea, I let it go. But I must admit, it did give me some satisfaction when the tower called me a few minutes later: "Are you in charge of the F-86 pilots? Well, the fellow who just took off has bailed out over the strait. We think the Japanese are picking him out of the water right now."

I got my whole group away that afternoon, except for myself. I was still there at nightfall and was set to go (the USAF was not much in favour of flying the F-86's at night). But I was anxious to get back. It was rumoured and later confirmed, that each side would only be able to keep the number of aircraft in Korea that it had when the truce was signed.

At 2200 I climbed aboard my Sabre and cranked up, only to have a crew chief signal with a flashlight to shut down. My state of mind after a gruelling day was such that I felt like taxiing straight out regardless. However, I complied, climbed out and found that one of the drop tanks had been leaking. That was that, and it was back to the officers' club till things got squared away.

After the truce, I flew a few patrols east-west along the buffer zone. I also did many ferry trips to Japan. I enjoyed those, as did the young pilots I flew with. I viewed the flights as training missions, having the new pilots do the flight planning, navigation and leading under my direction. The USAF had certified me as an instructor, and I also checked pilots out when they first joined the squadron from the States. I was also being checked out as a C-47 pilot and flew as co-pilot on several trips. One off hem ended as a “wild west” scene. After we landed, a group of Koreans under a US Army NCO came to unload us. It turned out that the NCO was a renegade with a Korean gang and was dealing in the black market.



Duke Warren (left) with his flying buddy 'Tex' Monague, USMC, while on duty in Korea

Later, I was transferred from the 39th to the 51st Wing HQ working in operations. This gave me a wider view of USAF procedure at the wing level. Here I worked closely with BGen Benjamin O. Davis, the commander, and the first coloured man to reach general rank in the USAF (His father was the first in the US Army). While working in ops at the 51st, one of our C-47's was stranded at K-2 (Taegu) with a faulty starter. K-2 was a hell-hole to be stuck at so, as no other transport was available, I volunteered to fly the spare down in an F-86. I was at K-2 in 30 minutes and didn't shut down as the C-47 crew chief removed the starter from my radio compartment. I then had him run over to ops and tell them that I'd not be shutting down, but returning immediately to base.

A minor incident then erupted which I later reported to Wing HQ: “Upon taxiing out to the runway, the major in charge of Base Operations came out in a jeep and got up on the wing to tell the under-signed it was required by USAF Regulations to refile a DD-175.

The following factors were brought to his attention: a) Sufficient fuel existed for the return flight; b) Pilot had left K-13 20 minutes ago and was familiar with route and weather; c) In no way was the return flight endangering property or personnel of US government; d) Pilot was aware of AF Regulation but requested clearance for this flight due to circumstances.”

I also sent a message to Gen. Davis explaining the incident (I had taken off in spite of the snarly major). He was sympathetic but reminded

me that I had, in fact, violated flying regulations, and that was that. I got a bit more consolation from one of the pilots who declared, "We have too many chicken-shit regulations, and I'm glad someone showed up how foolish some of them can be." At the end of November, I left Korea, returning to the UK. I was back on 410 on 15 December 1953.

In a report Duke submitted following his six months in Korea, he described the patrols he was involved with and the high state of alert despite the truce.



Duke Warren -Sabre Pilot

Four patrols were flown each day weather permitting, two up each coast. The west coast patrol went as far as the mouth of the Yalu and the east coast the range of the F-86F was the limiting factor. Pilots were instructed to remain three miles offshore and precautions were taken to prevent flying over land; if undercast existed, patrols skirted edge or aborted sortie.

Alert was continuous with four aircraft on ORP with pilots in cockpit plus four aircraft with pilots standing by. Eight aircraft were on five minutes availability in dispersal area. A further eight aircraft were available on fifteen minutes notice one hour before dawn and one hour before dusk. Unfortunately it was felt that although the numbers of aircraft that were available for scrambles and interceptions was ample, their effectiveness was considerably reduced by the poor controlling, lack of immediate R/T instructions on getting airborne, and poor warning.

An example of this was when a defecting North Korean MiG pilot was first noticed when he landed at K-14 (down wind). He then rolled up to ORP and got out and started talking to the pilots on alert duty.

BACK AT NORTH LUFFENHAM WITH 410

Duke relates some happenings during the latter part of his time as commanding officer of 410 Squadron at North Luffenham.

1954 was a more or less routine year of F-86 flying -air-to-air gunnery, Canberra interceptions, dogfights with Meteors and USAF F-86s. I visited an RCAF exchange officer with the RAF at a grass training strip and showed up in a Sabre. My landing was normal, but getting stopped on the grass was a bit different. For a moment I thought I wasn't going to stop within the aerodrome boundaries, but things worked out. Takeoff was routine. I haven't heard since of a Sabre operating from a grass strip.

On a visit to a Royal Canadian Navy detachment at Gosport, I was asked on departure to do a little air show to "show the Royal Navy what we can do." The weather was miserable, with a low ceiling, so I wasn't about to do anything foolish. The only thing I thought that might impress them was a good takeoff. I held it down and built up a good head of steam, pulled up and rolled over, getting into cloud upside down at three hundred feet. Once inside, I smartly rolled right-side up. The Sabre's instruments were so good that this sort of thing was no problem.

In 1954 W/Cdr. Lindsay was posted away from the COpsO position at 1 Wing, and I became permanent acting until W/Cdr. Parks arrived. He was new to fighter ops and to the Sabre, and I worked closely with him as he got his feet wet. Unfortunately Parks was killed in a flying



410 Squadron Sabres over Europe

accident shortly after, and I was then appointed COpsO. In early 1955 the Wing moved to Marville, near the Belgian border northeast of Paris.

As I was placed in charge of the airlift, my F-86 flying was cut back. In the first four months of the year I managed just 16:25 hours flying it, but piled up countless hours in the C-119 going back and forth across the Channel. That June I was posted to Staff College in Toronto.

Of his time at Staff College, Doug recalled, "I didn't do as well as I'd hoped. My final report was very well done and accurate, stating, 'This poor devil can hardly read or write. All he wants to do is fly.'"



**Duke Warren at Chatham
in 1956**

In 1956 I was lucky enough to get back on Sabres, this time at the Chatham OTU as Chief Flying Officer. That was just ideal as it meant lots of Sabre flying, working with a crowd of bright young officers coming along, and having the challenge of seeing them develop into promising fighter pilots. I also worked with Jim Kasler, a well-known USAF pilot who I knew from my Korean days.

FLYING WITH THE LUFTWAFFE

During March 1957, the German Air Force (Luftwaffe) established Waffenschule der Luftwaffe 10 (WS-10), a unit similar to No. 1 (F) OTU and Chatham, Ontario to train its future fighter pilots.

In March 1957, Capt. Jim Kasler and I went over to the Air Division to liaise with Sabre squadron commanders about the training of pilots we were sending them. After this, I was ordered to report to our embassy in Bonn. There I, and four other RCAF officers were tasked to plan a Sabre OTU for the Luftwaffe. In April, I returned to Chatham, instructing as usual on Sabres and T-33s. Meanwhile, the Luftwaffe completed its preparations and, unknown to me, had requested me as CO of the RCAF detachment. Joining me were fifteen other Canadian pilots.

Thus, on very short notice, I was ordered to Oldenburg in August 1957. My last flight at Chatham was on 13 August, and my first in Germany (at 4 Wing) on 19 September. Between those dates I had my family moved from Chatham to north Germany.

Although it was rather flattering to have the Luftwaffe wanting me for their Sabre operation, I arrived with mixed feelings. After all, I had experienced some bitter fighting during the war, and I still wondered if we were doing the right thing in re-arming the Germans. Even so, I was anxious to meet the German fliers (I had already met General Galland in Bonn), and was enticed by having a new flying position, and further opportunity to fly the Sabre -that's what it was really all about.

WS-10 was rather slow in starting up, and I was the only RCAF officer there for some time. To keep current, I flew Sabres and T-33s with the Air Division. My first trip in a Sabre "mit dem Disernen Kreuz" was on 29 November 1957, and I must say that it was a strange feeling for some time to look out and see those crosses on an aircraft that 'I' was flying!

In January 1958 flying commenced at WS 10, and I was involved checking out instructors on the T-33 and Sabre. All of the sixteen RCAF instructors under me were post-war pilots, so I was the only Canadian at Oldenburg with combat experience. My staff of pilots, admin, supply and technical people were all of the highest calibre. I recall that in our first briefing I stressed that we were here to do a job, not to talk politics, and not to remind the Germans who had won the war. To my knowledge there was never any friction in that regard.



**Canadian Advisory Group
Shoulder Patch**



Luftwaffe F-86 Sabre

At this time the Luftwaffe was so short of pilots that if one were to be given a ground job, permission had to be obtained from the Minister of Defence. We had one German pilot on the unit who had been shot down in the Battle of Britain. He waited out the war as a POW and hadn't flown for seventeen years. He was a nice chap but rather unsuitable for flying. I liked him and he would have fit ideally in a ground position, but 'der Kommandeur' would not hear of it, and insisted that the fellow fly.

On 10 February 1958, I checked out the famous Erich Hartmann in a T-33. He was a smooth pilot, with excellent vision in the air. Surprisingly modest and with a great sense of humour, he was proudest of the fact that he had never lost a Number 2, in spite of a combat career that included a personal score of 352 aircraft shot down. We became very good friends and have kept in touch over the years.

Another pilot at WS-10 was Paul Schauder, who had flown an Fw 190 at Dieppe when I was flying a Spitfire there. We both ended the war with a healthy respect for each other's equipment. I visited both Paul and Erich in 1982, the Fortieth Anniversary of Dieppe.



Duke Warren and Paul Schauder



Duke Warren and Erich Hartmann at Waffenschule

The RCAF technicians had gone to Oldenburg with over a decade of experience on jet aircraft -Vampires, T-33s, Sabres, and CF-100's. They were to make an outstanding contribution to the fledgling Luftwaffe. The Luftwaffe technicians showed great respect for us and, once trained themselves, proved highly competent. Our admin staff also managed extremely well, and there were few complaints once the PX lines and gas coupon systems were working smoothly.

RCAF training assistance to the Luftwaffe proved invaluable, and within months of Oldenburg opening, the Germans were forming operational squadrons equipped with the new, Canadian-built Sabre Mk VI's. Like everyone else in Europe, the Germans knew that they had the ideal combination: the best training and the best day fighter in the world.

While serving with WS-10, S/Ldr. Warren had what he referred to as, "an unusual experience."

On 11 May 1959, the Swedish firm which made the Safeland Barrier was to demonstrate their product at Ahlhorn. The Wing there was under the command of OTL Hartmann. I forgot the reason exactly, but I was asked to participate in the testing which would take place on the main runway. The barrier was like a large tennis net suspended across the runway. The plan was to drive a Sabre down the runway and into the net to show that its strong nylon meshing could safely stop an aircraft. I queried the Swedish engineer about what would happen if the net came over the nose and up past the canopy. He assured me that this could never happen, and explained that when the aircraft went between the two



Duke's Sabre following the 'tennis net' experiment

flags marking the centre of the net it would stop smoothly, as he put it, 'like a baby carriage.'

I must confess that I still had my doubts, and before we went ahead, I talked with Jack McDonnell, the Canadair tech rep and asked him to put all the pins in the ejection seat, and remove the seat cushion. When all was ready, I taxied out and began my run. I build up speed, then throttled back and flamed out at 120 knots just short of the barrier, headed right between the two flags, Just before I went into the net I ducked by head low, the Sabre struck the barrier, reared up like a wild horse, left the ground and came back on the tailpipe, breaking the fuselage. The canopy, where my head had just been was cut clean off!

As I lifted my head to look out I saw people rushing over. Jack McDonnell was very happy to find me still in one piece, and I looked around for my Swedish friend. I spotted him, and when I started towards him to talk about what happened, he just turned and walked quickly away. As it happened, I had been between him and the hangar line, and he headed straight into the middle of the airfield. I never saw him again. Remembering what he had assured me about the system, then seeing what had just happened, he may have feared that I had something in mind a bit more severe than a little chat between professionals.

On 1 July 1960, Doug Warren completed his duties at WS-10. In a letter to the AOC, No. 1 Air Division, Herbert Wehnelt, commander of WS-10, noted of Warren, "He was especially suited as Commanding Officer of his Advisory Group, and advising partner during the activation of Waffenschule-10." He went on to comment about Warren's outstanding flying abilities, his interest in studying the German language in order to gain a better understanding of the Germans, his ability to run his operation with no friction between German and Canadian, and finished by saying, "I am in the position to give S/Ldr. Warren the best testimonial without restriction for the time of his assignment at Oldenburg."

As a going away gift, Duke was pleased to be presented with 'honourary' Luftwaffe pilot's wings.

WITH THE ITALIANS IN SARDINIA

In July 1960, S/Ldr. Warren was transferred as COpsO to Decimomannu on the Italian island of Sardinia.

'Deci' was a tri-service gunnery base on Sardinia used by the Italians, Canadians and Germans. It seemed that the AOC of Air Division thought I was just the man for the job, and he put it this way: "You got along well with the Germans. Now let's see how you do with the Italians." In my first month at Deci I managed thirteen sorties in the F-86 and three in the T-33. It was at this time that the RCAF squadrons in Europe had the finest gunnery teams.

One persistent technical problem we had was with the radio failures. When the tower was u/s you had Sabres, F-84s, G.91s and even the occasional North Star all milling around and acting like mid-air collisions looking for a place to happen.

The chief controller had early on assured me that whenever the power failed there was a stand-by generator that would automatically cut in. One day we had an RCAF North Star which had been forced to circle extra long. I became impatient and stormed up to the tower to protest. "Show me what happens when the power fails," I insisted. The controller explained, "We send a man out to start the generator." "But you said it was automatic," I protested. "Yes," he said, "We automatically send a man out to start the generator."

I am telling the truth when I say that the failures were directly the result of the tower radios and the espresso machine in the canteen being on the same circuit. When they were both in use the circuit breaker popped!

In August 1961, after serving for a year in Sardinia, I was posted to the Flight Safety Directorate at headquarters in Ottawa. I was able to get the occasional Sabre trip from Uplands, but the Sabres there were eventually withdrawn. I finished my Sabre flying days with 840 hours on type.

I often look back to my Sabre career, when the RCAF Air Division was the foremost fighter force in Europe, and when RCAF pilots were renowned for their gunnery, and when to be C/O of a Sabre Squadron was the highest honour a fighter pilot could have.

DUKE'S FINAL POSTINGS

Following four years in Ottawa as Chief of Aircraft Accident Prevention, Duke was posted to RCAF Station Baldy Hughes as commanding officer in 1965. Baldy Hughes was a radar base near Prince George, British Columbia that was part of the 'Mid-Canada Line', the network that operated during the Cold War to monitor northern North American airspace on behalf of NORAD. This posting was followed by three years at NORAD headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colorado. In 1970, Doug accepted a final posting to CFB Comox as Base Operations Officer and Deputy Base Commander. W/Cdr. Warren retired in 1973.



RETIREMENT

Duke enjoyed an exceptionally active retirement. He volunteered with the United Way and CNIB, and was a charter member of the Filberg Lodge and Park, the Comox Archives and Museum, and the Coast Guard Auxiliary. He also served with the Canadian Marine Rescue Society and the Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons. Together, he and Melba drove for Meals on Wheels for thirty-three years. Always a supporter of Air Cadets, Douglas was Commanding Officer of the summer Air Cadet Camp in Penhold, Alberta for three years. Active with Branch 160 of the Royal Canadian Legion, he served as Branch Padre for twenty-four years, and also for a time as Padre for the 888 Wing of the Air Force Association of Canada and the Korean Veterans Association. For many years Douglas was a popular speaker at area schools discussing the importance and meaning of Remembrance. He wrote a bi-weekly column "On the Docks" for the local newspaper and hosted a bi-weekly TV interview program "The Blue Review".

Duke was recognized for his community work when he was awarded the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award in 2002. In 2006 he was awarded the Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation, and was accorded the Freedom of the Town of Comox. Also in 2006 he was appointed Knight of the Legion of Honour by the President of France.

Regarding these extraordinary efforts, Duke commented, "My twin and I had planned on doing community work together after retiring. Since he was not with me, I felt I must work for the two of us."

Douglas Warren passed away in 2011.



The Warren Twins Memorial Garden is at the entrance to the Bomber Command Museum of Canada.



Duke and a young air cadet at the Bomber Command Museum of Canada

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