

**Life Of
Colin Frederick Chambers.
Son of Frederick John And Mary Maud Chambers,
Of 66 Pretoria Road Edmonton London N18.
Born 11 April 1917.
Occupation Process Engraver Printing Block Maker.
(A protected occupation)
Married 9th July 1938 To Frances Eileen Macbeath.**

**And
RAFVR SERVICE CAREER OF
Sergeant 656382 Colin Frederick Chambers
Navigator / Bomb Aimer
Died Monday 15th March 1943
Buried FJELIE CEMETERY Sweden
Also Remembered With Crew of Halifax DT620-NF-T
On A Memorial Stone At Bygaden 37, Hojerup.
4660 Store Heddinge Denmark
Father
Of
Michael John Chambers
Grandfather
Of
Nathan Tristan Chambers
Abigail Esther Chambers
Matheu Gidion Chambers**



Dad as a young boy with Mother and Grandmother



Dad at school age outside 66 Pretoria Road Edmonton London N18
His Father and Mothers House



Dad with his dad as a working man.



Mum and Dad's Wedding 9th July 1938



The full Wedding Group



Dad (top right) with Mum (sitting centre) at 49 Pembroke Road Palmers Green London N13 where they lived.



After Volunteering Basic Training

Some Bits From Dads Training And Operational Scrapbook TRAINING



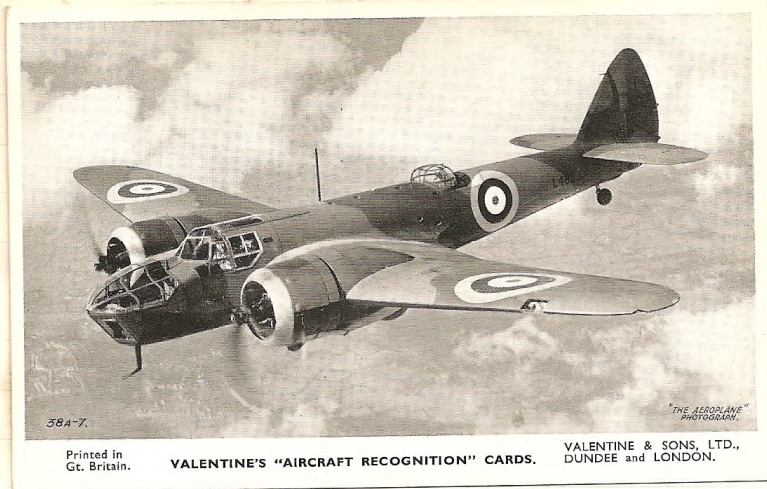


IN TRAINING. DUMFRIES. JANUARY 1942



Dad second from left, no names for rest of people in photograph

OPERATIONS



DAYLIGHT OPERATIONS. BICESTER. JUNE 1942

The Plane is a Bristol Blenheim



On leave from operations



The plane is a Wellington



Colin, Ken, Johnny, Wally.

Before being posted to Tempsford Navigators had to served on at least 30 operations.

He Joined 138 squadron at TEMPSFORD on the 13th October 1942



Printed in
Gt. Britain.

38A-8
VALENTINE'S "AIRCRAFT RECOGNITION" CARDS.

VALENTINE & SONS, LTD.,
DUNDEE and LONDON.

NIGHT OPERATIONS. TEMSFORD. NOVEMBER 1942

The Plane is a ARMSTRONG WHITWORTH WHITLEY



CROWN COPYRIGHT
RESERVED.

HANDLEY PAGE "HALIFAX"—4 Engine Bomber

384-1078

This is the last page of the scrap book and had no notations as to when he started flying the HALIFAX



Dad (right standing), on his right his father, his brother Alan (left standing) sitting below their mother and me centre sitting, both on leave at 49 Pembroke Rd



Mum and Dad

TEMPSFORD

In a shallow valley straddling the Hertfordshire/Bedfordshire county border, RAF Tempsford was located largely in the parish of Everton. Some 500 acres 41 miles due south of St Neots and a mile from the A1 trunk road and Tempsford village, was taken over in late 1940 for airfield construction. Built to Class A standard as a satellite for Bassingbourn, the three concrete runways were 01-19 at 1,200 yards long, 07-25 at 1,580 yards and 13-31 at 1,333 yards. The usual 36 pan hardstandings were put down round the perimeter track. The technical site lay to the south between runway heads 01 and 31 and the bomb stores on the north side between runway heads 19 and 25 and close to Woodbury Lodge Farm and Woodbury Low Farm.

Although the station was far from complete, in December 1941 Wellingtons from No. 11 OTU at Bassingbourn commenced using the runways while work was in progress on those at the home station. But Tempsford had been selected as a base for the special duty units, which mostly operated under No. 3 Group. In January 1942, No. 109 Squadron arrived with Wellingtons engaged in experiments with new radio equipment. They were soon joined by the Wellingtons of No. 1418 Flight also engaged in radio developments although both units were soon to move to other airfields.

In March 1942, No. 138 Squadron arrived flying Whitleys, Halifaxes and Lysanders joined the following month by No. 161 Squadron with Whitleys and Lysanders, both units tasked with the air support of the Special Operations Executive. Tempsford had now become the main centre for this most secret of activities: the despatch of agents and material aid to resistance forces in occupied countries.

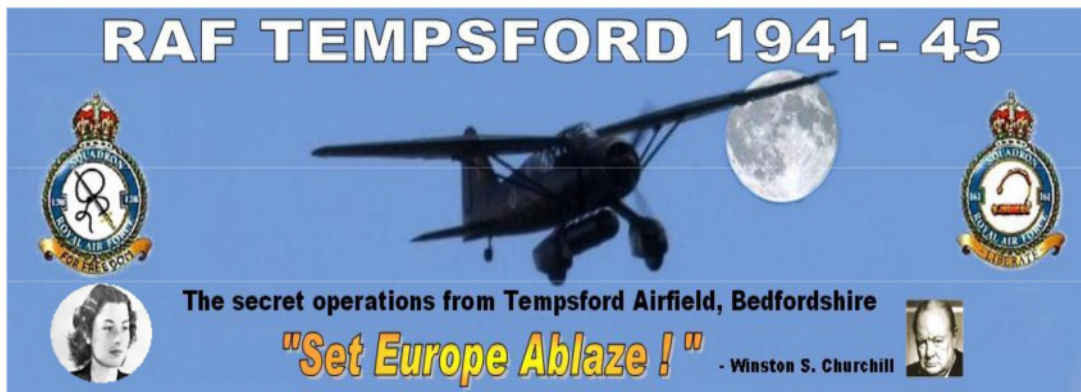
To meet the expanding requirements of SOE, Tempsford was further developed. In 1942 runways 01-19 and 07-25 were extended on their northern ends to comprise overall lengths of 1,610 and 2,000 yards respectively. Perimeter track extensions were added to the ends of the runway extensions and the number of pan hardstandings raised to 50. Hangar building now involved four Type T2s on the technical site while a B1 was erected near Biggingwood Spinney, not far from the Everton crossing gates on the LNER main line, which paralleled the west side of the airfield. The following year two more T2s were added on the east side of the technical site, south of runway head 31. Three pan standings were lost to this and other work, three loop standings being constructed elsewhere on the airfield as replacements. In addition to the large hangars Blister types were put up on four of the pan standings to provide shelter for Lysanders. The seven domestic, two communal and sick quarters site were dispersed in fields mostly on the south side of the

Tempsford-Everton road, while the combined WAAF communal and domestic site was sited in Everton village. Total camp accommodation was put at 1,722 male and 240 female. Whitleys were gradually withdrawn from the Tempsford squadrons and replaced with Halifaxes although several other types, principally Stirlings, Albermarles, Liberators, Hudsons and Havocs, were employed during the 39 months the station supported SOE activities. Operations with Lysanders were mostly flown from forward airfields to reduce the range. During the winter of 1943/44, over 40 aircraft were often present at Tempsford but by the following year activity had dropped off to a point where the work could be handled by one squadron. Early in March 1945, No. 138 Squadron was transferred to Tuddenham for bombing operations, being rebuilt with Lancaster crews and aircraft. At this time, No. 3 Group relinquished control of No. 161 to No. 38 Group of Transport

Command. During SOE and other operations flown directly from Tempsford, a total of 126 aircraft failed to return or were lost in crashes. This total was made up of 16 Whitleys, 80 Halifaxes, 18 Stirlings, 4 Hudsons, 5 Lysanders, 2 Lancasters and a Liberator.

No. 161 Squadron was disbanded in early June 1945, Tempsford then becoming a base and modification centre for Liberators employed by Transport Command. This lasted for a year after which the airfield passed to Maintenance Command. The RAF had withdrawn by 1950s and early in the following decade the hangars and land were sold. The majority of airfield concrete was removed for hard core apart from strips used as farm access roads. All the T2 hangars were removed but the solitary B1 still survives.

When the airfield was constructed, the buildings of Gibraltar Farm on the eastern side of the site came to be isolated within the perimeter track but were not demolished and the farm barn was used as the holding point for SOE agents before they were taken to the aircraft that was to deliver them. This building has been preserved and carries an appropriate plaque acknowledging its historic past.



The Secret "Moon" Squadrons and the Special Operations Executive

Among the best kept secrets of World War 2 were the secret nighttime activities of 138 and 161 Squadrons, RAF, flying into enemy occupied Europe by moonlight, often landing in torchlight fields, to drop SOE agents and supplies to the resistance forces. Tempsford Airfield has long since been returned to private agricultural use, so passers-by today can be excused for not knowing just what amazing activities went on there between 1941 and 1945. The local villagers were quite ignorant of it's real activities, and many of its secrets were only released from the Official Secrets List in 1998 !

"...find this viper's nest and obliterate it." -Adolf Hitler

138 Squadron aircraft, flying out of their forward base at RAF Tangmere in December 1941, supplied the Czech resistance, leading to the ambush and assassination of the "Beast of Prague", S.S. Intelligence Chief Reinhard Heydrich on 27 May 1942 (by which time, 138 Squadron had moved to Tempsford). Hitler himself knew of Tempsford's role, but the "Abwehr" (Military Intelligence) never pin-pointed its exact location. During the war, at least 2 German agents were apprehended in the vicinity of Tempsford and were later executed as spies.

In all, 995 SOE agents and resistance fighters were dropped into enemy occupied Europe

(and a similar number were brought out), but at the cost of 126 aircraft that failed to return, many of the crews and the agents they were carrying being killed.

The Tempsford Veterans and Relatives (T.V.A.R.) is a private association, exclusively for the veterans, their families and the families of those who flew from Tempsford, (either as aircrew or as agents), never to return. The TVAR meets regularly to recall those brave times and to honour those who made the greatest sacrifice, so that Europe could be free. It was from Tempsford that SOE agents ("Joes"), resistance fighters and their supplies were flown, and dropped into enemy occupied Europe on "moon" nights (the 8 day period each month around the full moon). In some cases the agents had to parachute in, other times the Lysanders ("Lizzies") and Hudson aircraft landed in fields, torchlight by the local resistance, either to drop off or pick up agents (and although it never got officially recorded, to "liberate" countless bottles of French cognac and champagne). From the mist of secrecy still surrounding Tempsford, come names such as Odette & Peter Churchill, Violette Szabo (immortalised in the film "Carve Her Name With Pride"), Wing Commander Yeo-Thomas and "Operation Gunnerside", the destruction of the Heavy Water Plant in Norway (later the basis of the film "The Heroes of Telemark").

The Memorial in St. Peter's Church, Tempsford.

Visitors to Tempsford are reminded that the official memorial for those who wish to pay their respects to those who flew or served at RAF Tempsford is the Memorial Chapel in St. Peter's Church, Tempsford. The barn on the airfield is a PRIVATE memorial, mainly for veterans and relatives. Any veterans or relatives who have not already done so, are asked to e-mail us at the TVAR (Tempsford Veterans & Relatives), so that we can advise of special events.

Gibraltar Farm Barn was a building on the airfield (adapted to continue looking like a normal farm barn, to fool German air-reconnaissance) where agents were supplied with their equipment...and their cyanide pills, in case of capture. Inside, there are moving memorials to individual R.A.F. aircrews and S.O.E. agents.

"We had some hairy take-offs, often under fire"

German forces often arrived as the aeroplanes were taking off from their secret torchlight fields in occupied Europe and the aircraft regularly returned to Tempsford, riddled with bullet holes. On one occasion in February 1944, after a heavy landing in a French field, the wheels of F/O Affleck's aircraft got so deeply stuck in mud, it couldn't be dug out. Despite the constant threat of passing German patrols, an hour later, local farmers turned up with oxen to pull it out !



"My dog always came with me"

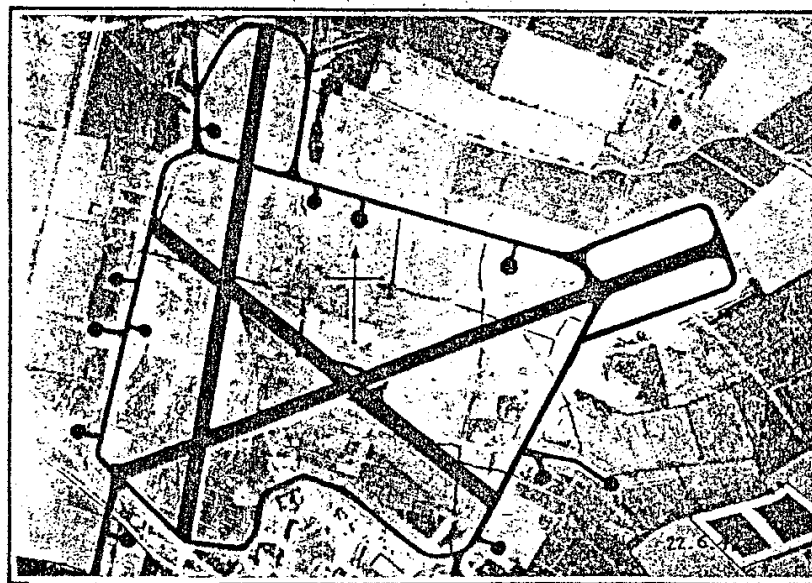
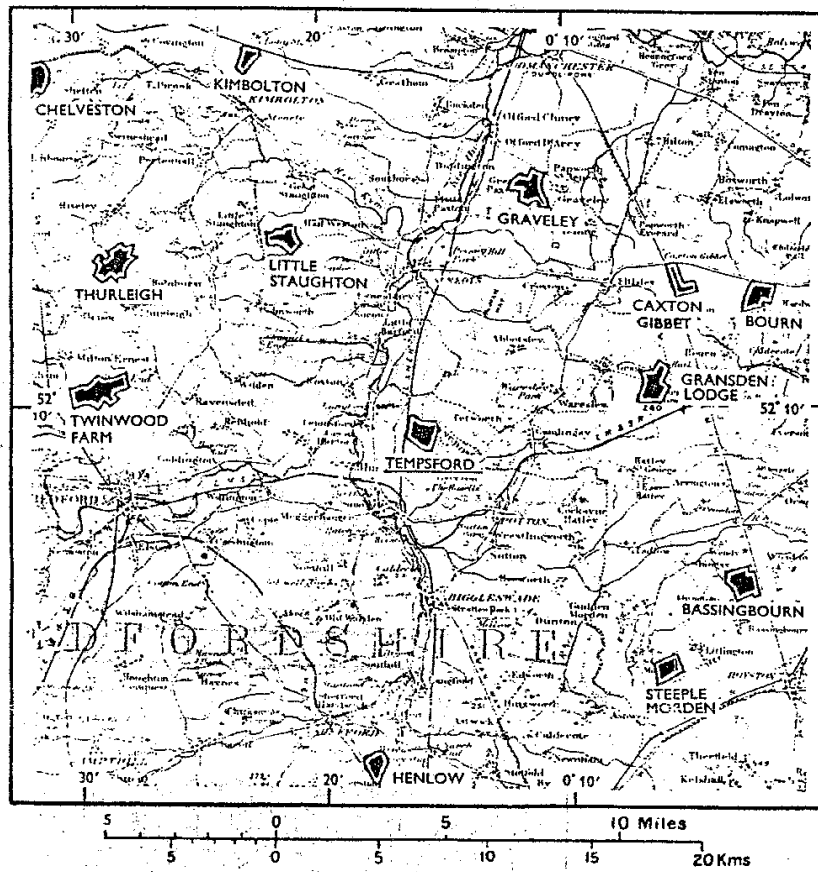
Halifax rear Gunner Jasper Matthews took his miniature short-haired terrier on every trip. One of the WRAFs who packed parachutes at Tempsford, made a special small parachute for the dog to wear ...just in case... When he DID have to bale out though, Gunner Matthews, stuffed the dog in his flying jacket before he jumped, rather than test the dog's own special parachute

"Please let us have the petrol first, before you destroy the 'plane'"

When a Polish Air Force crew of 138 Squadron had to crash land their Halifax in occupied France at night, due to engine trouble, the pilot (F/O Krzehlik), was attempting to set light and destroy the aircraft when the French Resistance turned up and begged him to allow them to drain all the petrol out of the aircraft first ! Once completed, they helped destroy the aircraft before the Germans arrived. The entire Polish crew were spirited through France to Spain by the Resistance, then on to Gibraltar, from where they got a boat back to England !

TEMPSFORD

Lat. 52° 09' 30" N. Long. 00° 15' 45" W. 60 FT. A.S.L.



A.M. STATE RM. S.D. 386

22-6-42



R.A.F. TEMPSFORD

The 138 Squadron

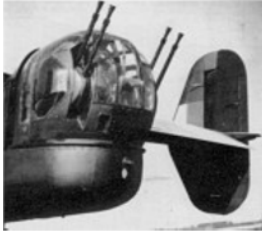
[The Handley-Page Halifax](#)





The Handley-Page Halifax

Rear Turret



the entire rear turret. Visibility was the key to survival, and often gunners removed the Perspex panel immediately in front of them to improve the view, despite the stunning cold of the wind blast. The eyes of an alert, professional rear gunner were the salvation of many a bomber crew, and the chilling cry of "Corkscrew starboard, GO!" as the gunner opened fire on a night fighter bearing down on them caused an instinctive and immediate violent reaction in any Bomber Command pilot. Later in the war the new Rose turrets were introduced which contained two 0.5 inch Browning machine guns giving the bombers greater firepower against the more heavily armoured night fighters.

Mid Upper Turret



stealthily from astern and below, indeed, with the advent of Schräge Musik, the inclined cannon armament system fitted to German night fighters, the majority of the attacks occurred from almost directly below, completely out of sight of the mid upper gunner. There were some aircraft fitted with belly or ventral gun positions such as the Lancaster Mk II and several versions of the Halifax, but these were not brought into widespread service although many aircraft on the production line were perfectly capable of having

them installed. Since it was a simple matter to extrapolate the direction of attack from the damage done to the aircraft which managed to return after being attacked, and several engineers in Bomber Command remarked upon the attack patterns in official reports, it is a matter of conjecture how many lives would have been saved by the deletion of the traditional mid upper turret and the acceptance of ventral positions as the norm in reply to the tactics employed by the German night fighter force. In many late production aircraft the ventral position designed into the Lancaster and Halifax was taken up with the H₂S ground mapping radar head.

Cockpit



Most heavy bombers only had one pilot who sat on the left hand side, the exception being the Short Stirling which was fitted with full dual controls. Most of the bomber types had relatively heavy controls, so the long range bomber raids could have been exhausting without the simple auto-pilots fitted to most types. The instrument panel was made up of the standard RAF blind flying 'T' of instruments, which was added to as various navigation and bombing aids were developed. The centre and right panels were largely taken up with engine instruments. On the right hand side of the Halifax and Lancaster cockpits was a fold down seat that the flight engineer used. The centre mounted throttles could be reached by both the pilot and flight engineer, on take-off the flight engineer handled these while the pilot concentrated on keeping the heavily laden aircraft straight. The flight engineer was there to assist the pilot, monitor the engines and fuel levels and transfer fuel to maintain the balance of the aircraft. The presence of these skilled crew members meant that the pressure of pilot training was reduced and Bomber Command could deploy a larger force of aircraft.

Navigator's Seat



of reasons, not least of which was the difficulty of predicting and evaluating the upper

winds accurately over the continent once it was all in German hands. As a result, in early raids it was common for only one bomb in fifty to fall within 50 miles of its intended target. Great efforts, both scientific and operational, were made to counter this deficiency. During the course of the war a series of electronic aids were developed to assist navigation, such as Gee and H₂S. The Pathfinder Force was also introduced to act as navigation leaders to the main force, dropping marker flares at turning points and over the target itself as guides, as well as spoof and decoy flares to confuse the defences. The Pathfinders were considered the cream of Bomber Command navigators, a small number of men responsible for the overall effectiveness of an entire force. Consequently, they were often the first units to receive the new navigation aids.

Bomb Aimer's position



At the beginning of the war the navigator also used to do the bomb aiming as well as the navigational duties. As time went on, however, and bomber crews were reorganized, a separate bomb aiming position was created. This meant that the navigator could concentrate more on his main duties, vital to the success of any crew. This resulted in bomber crews becoming more specialised and professional in their fields. The bomb aimer had the duty of releasing the bombs at the right point, which considering they were often released between eighteen and twenty-eight thousand feet, from an aircraft moving at anything up to 380 mph, was a considerable computational task. These variables were further complicated by the wind over the target, known as 'drift' by airmen of the day, and the make-up of the bomb-load itself, different bombs having different aerodynamics. To assist the bomb aimer in this task, the accuracy of bomb-sights improved during the course of the war, culminating in the remarkable SABS bombsight of 1944, an incredibly accurate semi-computerised device, much used by 9 and 617 Squadrons to drop the twelve and twenty-two thousand pound 'Tallboy' and 'Grand Slam' bombs. The bomb aimer also manned the front gun or turret when required.

Dinghy



There was faint hope of rescue, reliant on the position report the wireless operator may have managed to send prior to ditching, which may be several hours old by the time rescuers arrived in the area. All bombers had dinghys on board and the crew were trained how to use them. The aircraft also carried with them homing pigeons so if a crew ditched or crashed they could release the pigeons with a message of their approximate position. Even with this system some crews were not found for days and many were never found at all. One account describes how 4 members of a crew were afloat on the English channel for 9 days with only a small tin of Horlicks tablets, a small tin of chocolate and about a pint of water. They were eventually spotted and picked up by an RAF high-speed rescue launch

Bomb Bay



The size of the bomb bay on Bomber Command aircraft varied enormously between designs, and the maximum bomb load would of course be limited by this factor, as well as other aerodynamic, range and all-up weight considerations. For example, a Handley Page Hampden's official maximum bomb load was 4,000 lbs, although usually only half of this was carried to allow greater range by trading the weight of bombs against the fuel load. An Avro Lancaster's official maximum bomb load was 18,500 lbs, but in order to reach Berlin this could be reduced to 10,000 lbs or less, dependent on the forecast winds.

The Handley Page Halifax had small compartments in the inner wing sections which could take single bombs or mines in the early versions of the aircraft, as well as the main bomb bay. Both this aircraft and the Short Stirling suffered from one drawback, the structure of the aircraft impinged on the bomb bay, limiting the maximum size of any bomb that could be carried. The Avro Lancaster suffered from no such limitation, it is said that in order to design the Manchester, the forerunner of the Lancaster, Roy Chadwick began with a thirty-three foot long hole and built a bomber around it! This huge area was capable of taking any bomb in the Bomber Command arsenal, and was modified at times to take special weapons such as the Bouncing Bomb, Tall Boy and Grand Slam. For the Bouncing Bomb, the bomb doors were taken off and the apparatus installed which could hold and

rotate the bomb, giving it the backspin required for it to work properly. A Grand Slam bomb weighed 22,000 lbs so could only be carried by specially strengthened and lightened Lancasters with the nose and mid-upper turrets removed. As the bomb was so large, again the bomb doors were taken off.

The Mk. I Halifax heavy bomber carried a crew of seven, these being pilot, engineer, bomb aimer/observer, navigator, wireless operator, mid-upper gunner and tail-gunner. It was powered by four Rolls-Royce Merlin X engines each generating 1,280 hp using three-bladed, variable pitch, metal propellers. It had a maximum speed of 265 mph (426 km/h) at 17,500 ft (5,300 m), with a ceiling of 22,800 ft (6,950 m) and a range of 1,860 miles (3,000 km). It carried six 0.303 in. machine guns, two in the mid-upper position and four in the tail turret. It was capable of hauling 13,000 lbs (5,890 kg) of bombs, mines, or in Tempsford's case, supplies and agents.

The Mk. II had more powerful Merlin engines, a single Vickers K machine gun for the bomb aimer and a redesigned tail structure that improved handling characteristics considerably.

The Mk. III was the second major production variant. It had a radical change in engine, with the Merlin being replaced by the Bristol Hercules XVI air-cooled engines each developing 1,615 hp. At the time Merlin engines were in great demand and the AVRO Lancaster with Bristol engines proved to be underpowered, so it got the Merlins and the Halifaxes got the Bristols.

No. 138 Squadron

Motto: "For freedom".

Badge: A sword in bend, the point uppermost severing a reef knot. The design symbolises the squadron's activities in the liberation of occupied territories.

Authority: King George VI, August 1944.

No. 138 Squadron, RAF was formed on 30th September 1918. It was mobilising as a fighter-reconnaissance squadron at Chingford when the war ended and disbanded in February 1919.

In its next incarnation from August 1941, No. 138 was reformed at Newmarket as a "special duties" squadron.

The squadron's Second World War activities began in 1941 after the formation of the Special Operations Executive (SOE) - an organisation whose function was to promote sabotage against the enemy by stimulating subversive activities, spreading political discontent, disorganising and dislocating communications. The agents, ammunition and equipment to achieve this were dropped inside enemy territory, the first being flown by Lysanders of No. 419 Flight (later No. 1419 Flight) which formed at North Weald in August 1940.

Very quickly the task grew too big for a solitary flight and although Bomber Command was hard pressed at that time for aircraft and crews, it was decided that the strategic importance of sabotage operations warranted the formation of a full squadron. Thus it was

that in August 1941, No. 138 Squadron was re-formed at Newmarket from the nucleus of No. 1419 Flight to do the job; it was now designated No. 138 (Special Duties) Squadron. For more than three and a half years the squadron ranged Europe from Norway in the north to Yugoslavia in the south and at times far into Poland. First with Whitleys and Lysanders, then with Halifaxes and later with Stirlings it flew out from Newmarket, Stradishall and Tempsford with, agents, arms, explosives, radio sets and all the other equipment of the saboteur, parachuting them down at rendezvous points where reception committees of local underground members waited. Another, but far less frequent, type of "cloak and dagger" operation undertaken by No. 138 - beginning in September 1941 - was the "pick up" in which the aircraft (always a Lysander) landed to collect some prominent public man, or an agent, or special plans and articles. During 1942 the squadron operated with the bomber force when not required for special duties.

Early in March 1945, after "repeated requests from Headquarters Bomber Command", No. 138 Squadron was switched from special duties to the main force of No. 3 Group. It went to Tuddenham, re-equipped with Lancasters and, before the European war ended, flew 105 sorties on 9 bombing missions and dropped approximately 440 tons of bombs on the enemy. No. 138 also carried out food-dropping operations over Holland and POW repatriation flights during which it brought home nearly 2,500 men before VE Day.

Bomber Command WWII Bases:

- Tuddenham : Mar 1945 onwards

Bomber Command WWII Aircraft:

- Avro Lancaster B.I : Mar 1945 onwards

Code Letters:

- Not known (possibly "NF").

First Bombing Mission in WWII:

- 29th March 1945 : 3 Lancasters bombed the Hermann Goring Iron Works & Coke Ovens at Hallendorf.

Last Operational Mission in WWII:

- 22nd April 1945 : 14 Lancasters bombed Bremen.

Last Mission before VE Day:

- 7th May 1945 : 16 Lancasters dropped food supplies to Dutch at The Hague.

In this part of story I will try insert copies of all dads missions at Tempsford on 138 squadron

Only two flight records have been inserted so far :-

The last fatal one and the one to France the previous day.

REPORT OF OPERATIONS UNDESIGNED BY
135 Squadron on Night 1-7-1943

COPY NO:-

Name of Operation

CIRCLE 2

Crew:-

1st Pilot: P/L E. L. 2nd Pilot: R. 316
3rd Pilot: P/L Lister 4th Pilot: P/L Hester
5th Pilot: P/L Hester 6th Pilot: P/L Hester
7th Pilot: P/L Hester 8th Pilot: P/L Hester

Personnel & Equipment carried:-

(a) Personnel: ☒ (b) Containers: ☒ (c) Leaflets: ☒ (d) Coffee: ☒
(e) Packages: ☒ (f) Signals: ☒ (g) Bombs: ☒ (h) Grenades: ☒

Instructions to Captain of A/C.

(a) Area: France
(b) Pinpoint: 48° 36' N. 02° 48' W.
(c) Alternative Pinpoint: None
(d) Action if Pinpoint not located: Return
(e) Reception arrangements: As System Flying M.
(f) A/C's Recognition Signal to Reception: ☒

Result of Operation. (If not completed, state reason.)

No visual pinpoint possible in target area. Not completed.

Times:-

(a) Take-off: 2236
(b) Over target area: 0032 hours, to 0057 hours
(c) Landing: 0302
(d) Action taken on landing away from base: ☒

Captain's Report:-

(a) Was exact pinpoint found? ☒
(b) How was pinpoint identified? ☒

(c) Estimated dropping point: ☒

(d) Time dropped:-

Height above ground:-

Course:-

I.L.B. in n.p.h.:-

(e) Description of target pinpoint (against from lights):-

(f) Recommended for future use.
Not recommended

(g) Reception lights. Report by Captain indicating suggested improvements if necessary:-

(h) There were Leaflets

dropped. (State place & time.)

JUGON at 0005

(i) Route. (State place, time & height when enroute or on ground.)

English coast Thorney Island 2315 height 2000 ft

French coast Point de la Percie 2350 at 1000 ft

AV RANCHES -

French coast Point de la Percie 0147. at 1000 ft

English coast Littlehampton at 0221 at 1000 ft

REPORT OF OPERATIONS UNDERTAKEN BY
THE SQUADRON ON NIGHT 14/15.3.43

1. Name of Operation.

SLATE

2. Aircraft:-

1st Pilot: P/S Smith W/Operator Sgt Reil E/Engineer Sgt C. Smith
2nd Pilot: Sgt Thompson R/Gunner P/S Harrison
Navigator: Sgt Chamberlain Despatcher Sgt Lewis

Eg:- T. 620

3. Personnel & Equipment carried:-

(a) Personnel / (c) Containers 6 (e) Leaflets (g) Coffee /
(b) Packages 6 (d) Pigeons / (f) Bombs / (h) Chocolate /

Instructions to Captain of A/C.

(a) Area:- P.N. and
(b) Pinpoint: Point 604
(c) Alternative Pinpoint: Point 607
(d) Action if Pinpoint not located: Return
(e) Reception arrangements: hand P.N. & flash P
(f) A/C's Recognition Signal to Reception: B

4. Result of Operation. (If not completed, state reason.)

Times:-

(a) Take-off:-
(b) Over Target area from hours, to hours
(c) Landing:-
(d) Action taken on landing away from base:-

5. Captain's Report:-

(a) Was exact pinpoint found?
(b) How was pinpoint identified?
(c) Estimated dropping point:-
(d) Time dropped:-
Height above ground:-
Course:-
I.A.S. in n.p.h.:-
(e) Description of target pinpoint (apart from lights):-
(f) Recommended for future use.
Not recommended
(g) Reception Lights. Report by Captain indicating suggested improvements if necessary:-
(h) Where were dropped. (State place & time.)

(k) Routes. (State place, time & heights when acs are crossed.)

Halifax II DT620 crashed in the Baltic Sea off Store Heddinge 14/3-1943.

The aircraft belonged to RAF 138 Sqn. Bomber Command and was coded NF-T.
T/O 17:50 Tempsford. OP: SOE to Drop Zone Wrona 614 in Poland.

At Fliegerhorst Kastrup Staffelkapitän Oberleutnant Martin Drewes of 7./NJG 3 was alerted by the Jägerleitoffizier of radar "Seehund" who reported that several enemy aircrafts was crossing Sjælland from west towards east at low level. At this level the radar was not able to assist the night fighter and he could only give the course of the aircraft. Just after take off in his Bf 110 coded D5+DR Drewes sighted a Halifax at 200 metres height and opened fire at a distance of 80 metres. After a short bust the Halifax started burning, exploded in the air and fell into the Baltic Sea off Harvig at 21:42 hours. It fell on 8 metres of water 200 metres from the coast east of Fisherman Jens Hansens property.

It was DT620 with the crew of Pilot F/S Leslie R.Smith, Co pilot Sgt Horace R.Harrap RNZAF, Wop Sgt Thomas Mairs, Navigator/Air Bomber Sgt Colin F.Chambers, Air Gnr. F/S Eugene S.Masson RCAF, Wop/Air Gnr. Sgt Donald R.Ross RCAF and Flt Engr. Sgt Arthur C.Sixsmith who all perished. Sgt Mairs have no known grave and is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial while Sgt Chambers rests in Fjellie, Sweden.

His body was found washed ashore next to Villa Hage in Bjerred between Malmø and Halskrona on 4/5 1943 at 20:30 hrs. He was found to carry a parachute harness but no chute. The body was left there for the night guarded by military from the local barracks. In the morning the body was examined by the local police and laid in a coffin and taken to the local chapel in Fjellie. Chambers was laid to rest in Fjellie cemetery on 26/5 1943 with full military honours. Military clergyman E. Eberhard performed the graveside ceremony.

On 15/3 at 00:30 hours a body was found on the beach next to Jens Hansens property. At 06:30 hours one more flyer was found near by. Both bodies were taken to Rødvig and handed over to the German Wehrmacht who brought them to Fliegerhorst Kastrup.

It must have been Mason and Ross who were laid to rest in Copenhagen Bispebjerg cemetery on 19/3-1943 at 11:00 hrs. A Evangelical Clergyman performed the graveside ceremony and personnel from the Swiss Consulate in København was present.

The funeral was ordered by Oberstleutnant and Fliegerhorstkommandant Volbehr and Oberleutnant Gombert was in charge of the funeral procession. With him were 1 Unteroffizier and 4 men from the Horstkompanie Kastrup and 1 Unteroffizier and 8 men from Flakuntergruppe Seeland as well as 1 Ensign and 8 men from the Ln.-Stelle. Dress code was: Service uniform without overcoat, with helmet and carbine, no gas mask. Unteroffizier Ernst of the Bildstelle was present and took three pictures which was afterwards placed with the deceased's documents. The Gruppe Verwaltung der Fl.H.Kdtr. L Kastrup procured two wreaths for the grave. The coffins were borne into the Chapel of the Bispebjerg cemetery and from there through the Untergruppe Seeland to the open grave and lowered into it. The salut of honour was ordered by Oberleutnant Gombert after the consecration of the bodies in the open grave.

On 21/3 a body was washed ashore near Rødvig. It was secured by the Danish police and taken to the hospital at Store Heddinge. The body was severely mutilated and was dressed in a blue grey uniform with three chevrons and a gold crown on the right upper arm.

Futhermore it carried the mark RAF in gold. On 22/3 it is reported that the body had been collected by the Wehrmacht. It must have been Sgt Smith who was laid to rest in Bispebjerg cemetery on 26/3-1943.

A FURTHER REPORT OF THE CRASH

The part in italics is of interest

Halifax II DT 620 shot down in the North sea just outside Stevns 14/3-1943.

The flight belonged to the Royal Airforce 138th Squadron, Bombing command and was coded NF-T. Departure 17:50 from Tempsford with the mission: SOE to drop zone Wrona 614 in Poland.

At Kastrup air station captain of the air squadron lieutenant-colonel Martin Drewes from the night fighter squadron was warned by the duty officer at the radar station "Seehund" which was Tyberg in the middle of Zealand, he reported that there were several enemy planes which were about to cross Zealand from the West to the East in low altitude. In this altitude the radar was not able to help the night fighter and he could only give the course of the planes.

Shortly after takeoff in his Bf 110 code D5+DR Drewes spotted a Halifax at 200 meters height and opened fire at a distance 80 metres. After a short burst the Halifax started burning, exploded in the air and fell into the sea just outside Harvig 21:42 hrs. It fell in 8 meters of water, 200 meters from the coast, East for Jens Hansens house.

The crew from flight DT620 existing of : pilot F/S Leslie R. Smith, Co pilot Sgt Horace R. Harrap RNZAF, Wop Sgt Thomas Mairs, Navigator/ Air Bomber Sgt. Colin F. Chambers, Air Gnr. F/S Eugene S. Masson, RCAF, Wop/Air Gnr. Sgt Donald R. Ross RCAF and Flt. Engr. Sgt. Arthur C. Sixsmith were all lost.

Halifax DT620 came from RAF SQN. 138 had been on a secret mission "operation Slate" for SOE (Special Operation Executive) far away in Poland, where they had dropped 6 containers and 6 parcels for the Polish resistance. The day before d. 13/3 the s plane R316 and same crew had been on "Operation Cockle 2" in France also for SOE.

On the way home to England the route went over Stevns in Denmark.

In the local newspaper "Stevns Avisen" you could read about the aerial combat by the cliff. On Sunday evening many of the local residents of Stevns witnessed an aerial combat between an English and a German plane which met at the cliff between Rødvig and Højerup-

The English plane was hit, burst into flames and crashed in the sea a few meters from Højerup. The Police patrol boat from Rødvig came quickly to the scene but the plane sank almost at once. From Store Heddinge where the crash was also observed, they sent a motor fire engine as they did not know where the plane crashed. On Monday morning several pieces of the crashed plane and two of the crew were washed ashore.

Sgt Mairs has no burial place but is remembered on the Runnymede Memorial, while Sgt Chambers is buried in Fjellie, Sweden. His body was found washed ashore at Villa Hage in Bjerred between Malmø and Halskrona, 4th May 1943-20:30 hrs. He was found tangled in his parachute ropes, without the parachute. At night the body was guarded by the local military barracks. Next morning it was examined by the local Police and put in a coffin and driven to the local chapel in Fjellie. Chambers was buried in Fjellie churchyard 26 May 1943 with full military honours.

The Army chaplain E. Eberhard carried out the funeral ceremonies.

The 15th March 00:30 hrs. a body was found on the beach close to Jens hansens house. 06:30 hrs. another pilot was found near by. Both bodies were brought to Rødvig and handed over to the German Wehrmacht who brought them to Kastrup air station. It must have been Mason and Ross who were buried in Copenhagen in Bispebjerg church yard, 19 March 1943. 21st March a body was washed ashore near Rødvig. It was taken care of by the Danish Police and brought to Store Heddinge hospital. The body was badly mutilated and was dressed in a blue/grey uniform with 3 vinkler and a gold crown on the right over arm. Furthermore it carried the emblem RAF in gold. 22 March it was reported that the body was fetched by Wehrmacht. It must have been Sgt. Smith who was buried at Bispebjerg churchyard on 26 March 1943. 29th March a fisherman brought the body of a pilot to Rødvig harbour. Wehrmachten had engaged some fishermen to look for the plane wreck in the sea, and in doing this they found a body. It was the body of F/Sgt Harrap who was buried in peace in Bispebjerg churchyard on 7th April 1943. 14th April fisherman Jens hansen found a body which was brought to Store heddinge hospital. it was fetched by the air commander from Kastrup the same day. Apparently they were the remains of Sgt Mairs on good authority were identified at the hospital, but to this day he is buried as an unknown pilot in Bispebjerg churchyard.

This Memorial is erected by Halifax group and is sponsored by: Stevns Fire Fund, Diba Bank, Bdr. K. Hansen. The Danish Defence Brothers in Stevns, and Højerup Vestry. You can read more about the project on <http://www.airmen.dk/p143.htm>

The following description of finding Dads body is not very pleasant as he had been in the water for 51 days.

Tuesday, May 4th 1943 , 2030 hrs Police officer E.Bergman Flädie PD reported by telephone that he had been notified, that the body of a male person dressed in a foreign flying uniform had been found in Öresund by villa Haga in Bjerred. Due to the darkness

further investigation of the body had to wait to the following day. The police officer was ordered to retrieve the body from the shore and protect it to the following morning.

Next morning the senior officer G. Emmertz and his assistant Gustaf Olsson and E. Bergman, made the examination of the body. The dead man was dressed in a military flying uniform and missing his headgear and one of the boots, had apparently been in the water for some time, the body was decomposing and the face was gone. Lower arms and legs were broken and the bones were visible.

The body had the parachute harness but no chute, and a life preserver of rubber that was broken and had traces of fire.

During the examination of the clothes the following objects were discovered. 3 bags made of rubber/canvas, the larger one was marked "U.S." and with the text "If this pocket is found it must be handed in to the nearest Police station at once" And another one marked "N.D.", the smallest was unmarked.

These bags contained: 23 American dollars, 100 Norwegian crowns, 150 Danish crowns, 80 gold Francs 1 map of Germany on thin paper, 1 map on slightly thicker paper of Scandinavia and the Baltic's, 2 miniature compasses, 1 rubber rod with an embedded miniature metal saw, & 1 "Identity card for R.A.F and W.A.A.F. personnel/all ranks/" Nr 780202 with a photo, with a note "Chambers" and the numbers "8-10", and 5 more photos, 1 metal bottle containing some Whisky, & 1 Ring of yellow metal stamped with "H.G.&S." and "9 375" and a lying anchor, 1 nail file, 1 uniform button.

One rank insignia was removed from the man's arm "3 stripes". By the finds it was clear that the man was either of British or American origin, so the British consul in Malmö and the American in Gothenburg were notified and promised to investigate the identity of the man.

Gardener Erik Sigvard Pettersen, Villa Haga, Önnarup 10 in Fjellie, that was the one who discovered the body and this is his statement.

Tuesday May 4 1943 between 2000-2300 hrs a worker named Karl Nilsson came in to Pettersen and asked if he had some boots. Nilsson had observed an object in the water approx 10 meters from the shore. Pettersen followed him out . 10 meters out the airman was lying face down they took the body to the shore and notified the police.

After the examination the body was transported in a coffin to the morgue in Fjellie awaiting instructions from the consulate.

This day a phone call from the British consulate confirmed that the dead man was Colin Fredrick Chambers from Stratford on Avon Sgt in R.A.F nr 656382. Lund May 24 1943 G. Emmertz "



Ministry of Defence



Lest We Forget



The Royal British Legion

TEMPSFORD, RAF Personnel Losses - Roll of Honour

1943
138 Squadron
161 Squadron

Roll of Honour with detailed information
Compiled and copyright © 2002 Martin Edwards
additional Polish information by Piotr Wisniewski

14/15 March 1943 - 138 Squadron - Halifax DT620 - NF-T
Crashed in Denmark. Operation SLATE, Poland.

CHAMBERS Colin Frederick

Sergeant 656382, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. [Nav/Ba](#) Died Monday 15th March 1943. Buried FJELIE CEMETERY, Sweden. [Age 25](#)

HARRAP Horace Robert

Sergeant 414286, Royal New Zealand Air Force. [Pilot](#). Died Sunday 14th March 1943. [Age 25](#). Son of Henry Edmond and Rosina Harrap, of Wellington, New Zealand. Buried COPENHAGEN (BISPEBJERG) CEMETERY, Denmark. Grave X. 6. 47.

MAIRS Thomas

Sergeant 625386, Royal Air Force. [Air Gnr](#) Died Sunday 14th March 1943. [Age 23](#). Son of Charles Frederick and Sarah Elizabeth Mairs, of Warrington, Lancashire. Commemorated on RUNNYMEDE MEMORIAL, Surrey. Panel 158.

MASSON Eugene Shadrack

Flight Sergeant R/130273, Royal Canadian Air Force. [Air Gnr](#). Died Sunday 14th March 1943. Buried COPENHAGEN (BISPEBJERG) CEMETERY, Denmark. Grave X. 6. 50.

ROSS Donald Robb

Sergeant R/79133, Royal Canadian Air Force. [W.Op./Air Gnr](#). Died Sunday 14th March 1943. [Age 23](#). Son of Hilton Robin and Edna Martha Ross, of Sherbrooke Province of Quebec, Canada. Buried COPENHAGEN (BISPEBJERG) CEMETERY, Denmark. Grave X. 6. 49.

SIXSMITH Arthur Cyril

Sergeant 572445, Royal Air Force. [Flt. Engr](#). Died Sunday 14th March 1943. [Age 21](#). Son of James and Amy Sixsmith, of Tue Brook, Liverpool. Buried COPENHAGEN (BISPEBJERG) CEMETERY, Denmark. Grave X. 6. 133.

SMITH Leslie Rowland

Flight Sergeant 1110714, Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve. [Pilot](#). Died Sunday 14th March 1943. [Age 26](#). Son of Rowland Evans Smith and Louise Florence Smith, of St. Annes-on-the-sea, Lancashire. Buried COPENHAGEN (BISPEBJERG) CEMETERY, Denmark. Grave X. 6. 48.

BRITISH AIRMAN LAID TO REST IN SWEDISH SOIL

Ceremony at Fjälie Cemetery, May 26th, 1943

The following report, published in the Swedish newspaper "Skanska Dagbladet," dated May 27th, 1943, has been received by Mrs. C. F. Chambers, of 49, Pembroke-road, Palmers Green, whose husband, a Sergeant Observer and Navigator in the R.A.F., was reported missing from air operations on March 14th, 1943:—

"The body of the British airman Colin Fred Chambers, found south of Lilla Haga, Bjerred, was buried with Swedish military honours on Wednesday afternoon at Fjälie Cemetery. There was a guard of honour at the graveside and music was played by the military band of 1/7 Regiment. Among those present were the Commanding Officer of the Malmö Defence District, Colonel G. V. af Sillen, the British Consul at Malmö, H. Castleton, the Vicar of the parish, the Rev. E. Ahrent, members of the Church Council and Board of Guardians, teachers and a large number of the inhabitants of the parish, who came to do honour to the airman who had fallen for his country and now, far from his home, had found a last resting place in a little Scanian churchyard.

"At the beginning of the ceremony the coffin, draped in a Union Jack, was placed on a platform over the grave. The service began with the lowering of the coffin into the grave

and the firing of a salute by the guard of honour. The band then played Chopin's funeral march. This was followed by hymn 174, verse 1. The Army Chaplain, Rev. E. Eberhard, of Trelleburg, conducted the burial service and gave a short address: Text: Rev. XII, 11. Hymn 347, verses 1 to 3, followed; then wreaths were laid. Mr. Castleton, the British Consul, laid a wreath on behalf of the Air Attache, Stockholm, who was unable to be present in person. He said that deceased had done his duty to his King and Country and was honoured in being laid to rest in Swedish soil. The Consul then laid a wreath from the Consulate in Malmö and said that the relatives in England would be informed of the honour done to the deceased and that they would certainly be pleased. The placing of the official Swedish wreaths then followed: Colonel af Sillen laying one from the Malmö Defence District, Captain B. Krook one from the Skanska Wing of the Air Force, and the Rev. Ahrent one from Fjälie Parish. Konsul Hans Ekman laid a wreath from the Anglo-Swedish Society, and the Misses Kockum a wreath and two bouquets. Finally, three little girls from the village placed bunches of flowers on the grave.

"The ceremony concluded with the playing of the Swedish National Anthem and God Save the King."



This scroll commemorates

Sergeant C. F. Chambers
Royal Air Force

held in honour as one who
served King and Country in
the world war of 1939-1945
and gave his life to save
mankind from tyranny. May
his sacrifice help to bring
the peace and freedom for
which he died.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The Queen and I offer you our
heartfelt sympathy in your great
sorrow.

We pray that your country's
gratitude for a life so nobly given
in its service may bring you some
measure of consolation.

George R.I.

Mrs. C.F. Chambers.

THE GRAVE



When first buried with simple wooden cross.

At a later date A standard War Graves Stone



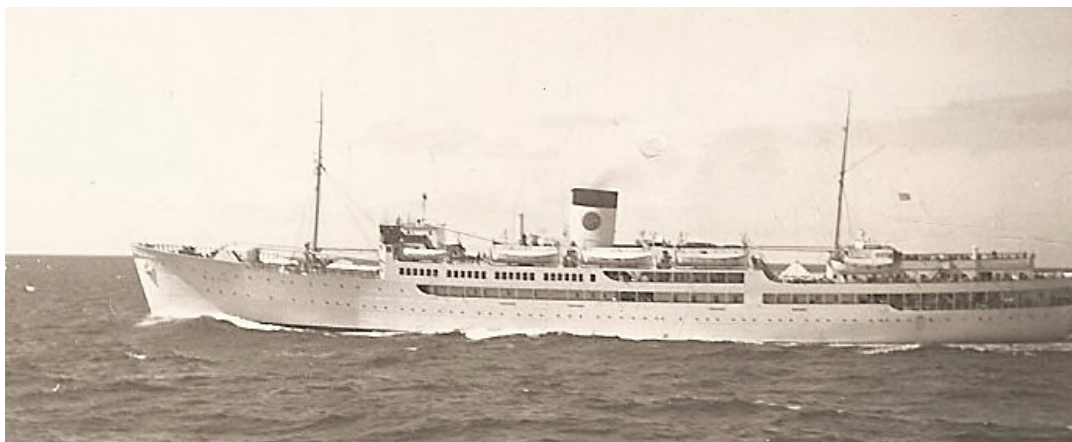
My Visit to Dad's Grave aged 17, 1956



The Lady who I stayed With



The Ship I Travelled On



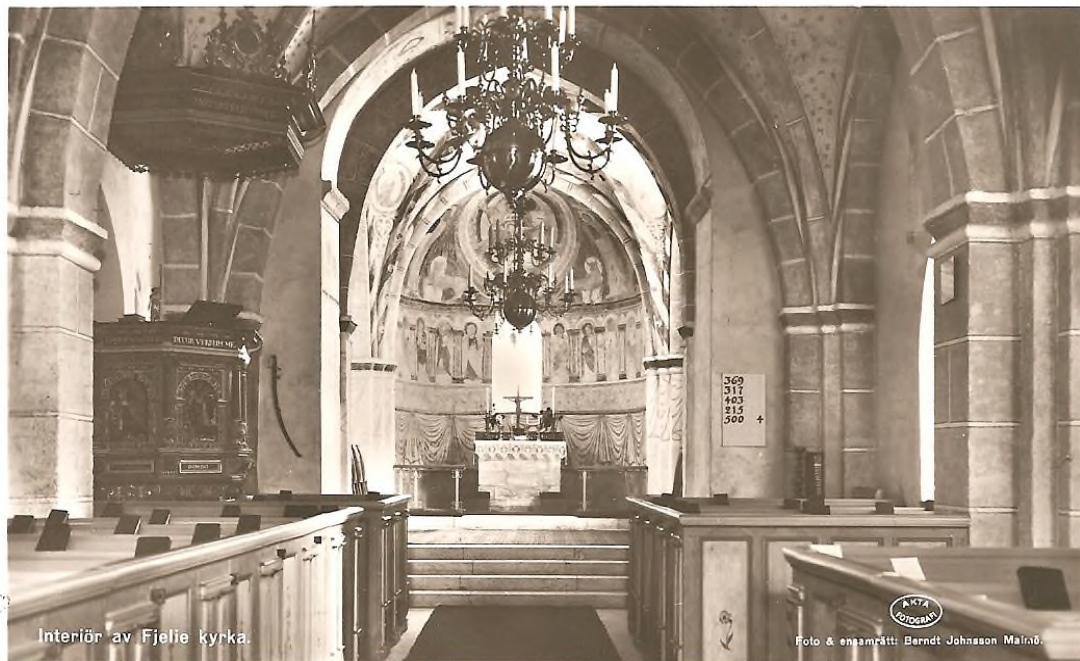
MS PATRICIA

FJELIE CHURCH SWEDEN



Taken 2012

Views of the inside of the Church from my visit in 1956





The right wall of this side chapel is where dad's wreaths hang

In memory of Colin Frederick Chambers



This cross stitch embroidery 105 X 85 cm was presented to Vicar from Fjellie Church who visited the airman's mother in England in 1963.

On that occasion it was presented to the Church and transported to Sweden and placed in the church. The silver plate on the bottom says:

**A present to Fjellie Church 1963
From Mrs M Chambers in
memory of her son Sergeant
Colin Frederick Chambers RAF
of Edmonton London N18
England.**

**Died for his country 1943.
Buried in Fjellie New Cemetery
Sweden.**

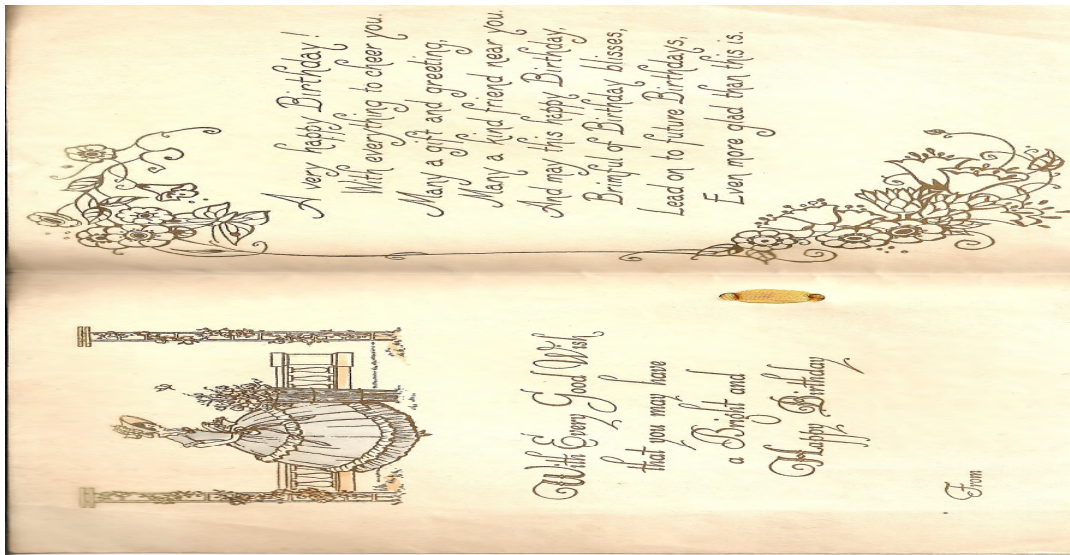


The above memorial ribbons were sent to dad's parents some time in May 1985

Something that has come to light only this year (2012) is that my mother had purchased a birthday card for my father but received the missing in action notification before sending to him and she kept it all these years but has given it to me to keep.
Below is pictures of the card :-

GOD prosper thee
in all that thou doest,
Guide thee
wherever thou goest,
Guard and preserve thee
and bring thee
Safe Home again.





IN 2000 (13th September) THE HEAD STONE WAS CHANGED

On September 5th 2010 A Memorial To The Crew Of Halifax DT 160 Was Erected In Denmark At Bygaden 37 Hojerup, 4660 Store Heddinge. Most Of The Crew Are Buried At Bispebjerg cemetery Copenhagen

Ready For The Unveiling Ceremony



After Unveiling



With Wreaths Laid



So now dad is buried in Sweden and on the crew memorial in Denmark with the rest of the crew.

The following are letters concerning my fathers death ranging, from his brother Alan trying to find out where he was buried, and letters from the pastor's of the church in Sweden over many years, and English chaplain C.H.Bird who contacted my fathers parents after coming across the grave whilst visiting Sweden, and people in Sweden who tended the grave.

Tel. Gerrard 9234.

AIR MINISTRY,
73-77, OXFORD STREET,
LONDON, W.1.

21st March, 1945.

Dear Chambers,

Since your visit here on the 14th March last, I wrote to the Department concerned and requested them to enquire the exact location (number, plot & row) of your brother's grave in Fjallie Cemetery, also I asked them to obtain a photograph if possible. I do not expect a reply for some weeks but if, & when, it does reach me I will pass it on to you immediately.

Secondly, I have made enquiries concerning your brother's effects which were found on his remains.

They include 1 gold Signet ring and a badly dented flask, maps, Compasses, etc. etc. These things were sent to R.A.F. ACCOUNTS 13, WHITTINGTON RD., WORCESTER, about 2 years ago, and I am trying to trace where they are now. As soon as I hear I will let you know.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) - "A.M. FORTEATH",
(Flt/Lt.)

COPY of original

Felie, Sweden 24/9 1946

Höghärad Herr!

Födert brev av den 28/7 1946 har jag
erhållit och tackar hjärtligt därför. Ditt
svar har dröjt så länge på grund av att
jag först ville have undersökt om fotografi
av Föders brors gravplats. Men har jag
ej erhållit det och vill ej vänta längre
med detta svar. Så snart jag fått om-
talade fotografi skall jag sända Föder det.
Föders brors gravplats värdas och underhålls
av kyrkorådet. Samtliga bransband på
de kransar som vid jordfästningen nedlades
vid graven, äro tillvaratagna och uppbevaras
i kyrkan. Blommor pryda graven från
vår till höst. Föde kom också är uppställt
i densamma med Föders brors namn och
fjänstegrad.

Föders förbundne
Famil Ahrent
Eml Ahrent
kyrkoråde.



TELEPHONE
26635

BRITISH CONSULATE
ÖSTERGATAN 11
M A L M Ö

4th October 1946.

Sir,

I have been asked by Mr. Emil Ahrent,
Rector of Fjellie Church, Sweden, to translate
and forward to you the enclosed letter.

Yours faithfully,

Acting British Consul.

1716199 L.A.C. Chambers, A.J.,
134, M.U.A.R.S.,
RAF. Habbaniya,
British Forces, IRAQ.

Translation.

Fjellie,
Sweden.

Dear Sir, *

I have your letter of the 28th July 1946
for which I thank you.

I have been so long replying to this because
I first wanted to obtain a photograph of your
brother's grave. This has not yet been obtained,
but I did not want to wait longer in replying. As
soon as I receive the photograph I will send this
to you. Your brother's grave is looked after by
the Church authorities. The bands which were on
the wreaths laid at the time of the funeral are here
at the church and are being saved. Flowers are put
on the grave from Spring to Autumn. A cross of oak
has been put up with your brother's name and rank
thereon.

Yours faithfully,

Emil Ahrent.



TELEPHONE
26635

BRITISH CONSULATE

ÖSTERGATAN 11

M A L M Ö

21st October 1946.

Sir,

The enclosed photograph and letter has been sent to me for transmission to you.

I am glad to say that your brother's grave appears to be well looked after, and I must inform you that this is ~~due~~ due to the voluntary kindness of the Swedish parson in whose cemetery your brother is buried. We are waiting for the Swedish Government to send in a complete list of British and Dominions graves in the country, after which arrangements are being made by the War Graves Commission to have the graves permanently looked after.

I think it would be a good thing if you write to the parson concerned and thank him for his kindness. His name and address are as follows:-

Kyrkoherde Emil Ahrent,
Fjellie,
Near Lund,
Sweden.

Yours faithfully,

R. Macdonald

1716199 L.A.C. Chambers, A.J.,
134 M.U. A.R.S.,
R.A.F. Habbaniya,
British Forces, Iraq.

Fjellie, Sweden, den 18 okt.1946.

Högtärade Herr Chambers.

Sedan jag i dag fått ett fotografi av Eder brors gravplats på Fjellie kyrkogård vill jag enligt tidigare löfte härmed sända Eder detsamma. Gravplatsen hålles prydd med blommor, något som blott otydligt framgår av fotografiet. Det är med stor glädje jag äntligen är i tillfälle att kunna sända Eder denna hälsning från Eder brors sista vilorum.

Eder förbundne


Emil Ahrent

Translation.

Dear Mr. Chambers,

I have to-day received the photograph of your brother's grave, and would fulfill my previous promise to send it to you.

The grave is always kept beautiful with flowers, but unfortunately these do not show very well in the photograph.

It is with pleasure that I am able to do you the service of sending you this greeting from your brother's last resting place.

Yours faithfully,

Emil Ahrent.

The Grave of:
656382

Sergt.-Observer C. F. Chambers,

Fjelie Cemetery. N^r Lund,
Sweden,

M. 1943

Mrs F. Chambers
66, Pretoria Rd
Edmonton, N. 18.



KYRKÖHERDE EMIL ÅHRENT
FJELIE

Fjellie, 29-12-57.

Dear Friends,

Thank you very much for your letter,
which I received sometime ago. I have bought
a wreath - 1 pound - and placed it on
your Son's grave in our Churchyard on the
22nd of Dec. I will buy some flowers for
Easter for the other pound and place them on
the grave at Easter eve. If possible I will later
send you a photo from the grave with the wreath.

I send you my best wishes for the New Year.
Vicar of the Parish
Fjellie
Near Lund, Sweden

Yours sincerely
Emil Åhrent

From THE REVEREND C. H. BIRD, CHAPLAIN,
ST CATHARINE'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
(Telephone: CAMBRIDGE 5045)

26/9/53

Dear Mr & Mrs Chambers,

I thought you might like to know that during
a holiday in Scandinavia from which I've just
returned I visited a beautiful little church near
Lund & there saw the monument to your son
Olaf Ford. I expect you've seen it yourself -
but still it's very beautiful and surrounded in
those lovely surroundings. When I saw the
very tribute that we still there, I felt suddenly
heartily proud of England and what a young
Englishman had done & said a prayer for you all.
Please don't both to acknowledge unless there should
be any chance to any way in which I could help -

I have some friends in Lund,

Yours sincerely,

Harold Bird

On Friday last Mr & Mrs. F. J. Chambers, of 66 Pretoria Road, Edmonton, received an unexpected letter from a complete stranger which, although bringing back sad memories, was very comforting. It concerned their eldest son, Sgt. ~~Bureau~~ Colin Fred Chambers, who was reported missing in April, 1943, from air operations over enemy territory and whose body was recovered near Lund, Sweden, nine weeks after.

The letter was as follows:-

COPY

From.

The Rev. C. H. Bird, Chaplain
St. Catharines College, Cambridge.

24/9/53

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Chambers,

I thought you might like to know that during a holiday in Scandinavia from which I have just returned I visited a beautiful little church near Lund and there saw the memorial to your son, Colin Fred. I expect you've seen it yourself - but still it is very beautiful and treasured in those lovely surroundings. When I saw the many tributes that are still there, I felt suddenly humbly proud of England and what a young Englishman had done, and said a prayer for you all.

Please don't bother to acknowledge unless there should by any chance be any way in which I could help. I have some friends in Lund.

Yours sincerely,
Hartley Bird.

We are sure this was written by pop Chambers (Dads father)

Dear Mr Chamber.

Thank you for your letter. My friend in
Lund is: A. Sten. Koenigsdorff,
St Laurence's Hostel,
Lund,
Sweden.

He is an American, studying Theology in
Lund with a view to becoming a
minister in the Swedish Lutheran Church
and is very great admirer of the beauty
of the Church in which your son is
buried & I know that he visits it
frequently and knows the minister.

If you care to write to him & mention my
name, I'm sure he will make the enquiry.
I can guarantee that the happy memory
was in position over the plaque in the
Church in which your son is commemorated
and I was not informed by the various
revenues and care with which it was
preserved. Of course, I don't know about the
flowers. But you can be assured that no
one beautiful place could be found and
that there has been the tender, loving
watch for such a sacrifice that it should
commemorate. I'd also like to say that your son, with
all the traditions of Protestant Christianity that

he represented, is still known in that foreign
place & I remember well how a sense of
all unworldly friends made me feel that I must
let those who were so close to him know
that what he stood for was not to be forgotten.
Thus, I do wish you could see it.

Arthur, I believe, is coming to England
this summer & I do so much want to
to see you - though he may not be able
to make a longer. I wish now that I'd
not the remembrance of the Church myself.

So try to come up to Cambridge for the
day some time this summer. It's beautiful

in May or early June & I'd love to show you
round and make you welcome.

I notice that your son's birthday falls
on Palm Sunday this year. It seems an
appropriate day in so many respects.
Surrendering ways. But I'm sure his
very happy now. I'll remember him in
my prayers.

Yours very sincerely
Charles Bird

23 April 1954

Dear Mr Chambers:

Many thanks for your kind letter. I was with the Rev. C. H. Bird when he visited Fjellie Church. It is probably one of the most beautiful churches we have in Sweden, dating from the twelfth century.

At the present time, our House-father and Priest-in-charge here at St Lawrence College, the Rev. Goran Fahlstrom, is also assistant pastor of Fjellie Church. This afternoon he returned from Fjellie with the enclosed pictures, which I am sending on to you. The Vicar at Fjellie Church had taken pictures of the grave some short time ago, so they were ready to send to you. The Vicar sends you his greetings, and will be glad to welcome you when you come to Sweden.

My plans for the summer are still quite uncertain. ~~However if I come to England, I will be most happy to call on you. I am hoping to attend a conference in Abingdon during the early part of August.~~

When you see the Rev. Bird, please give him my greetings.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Arthur Kreinheder

St. Lawrence College
Lund, Sweden

2 September 1954

Dear Mr. Chambers!

Many thanks for your kind letter of 4 July. I sincerely regret that I did not come to England this summer - instead I left Lund on 9 June and journeyed to Istanbul, visiting many places along the way. In July I attended a special course for Theological Students in Switzerland, and later on I drove to Rome, returning to Lund just last week. Please forgive the long delay in answering your letter.

I am wondering if your
grandson made the trip to Lund.
Rev. Garm Sahlström has moved
to another part of Sweden, and
I have not had the opportunity
of speaking with the Vicar at Gjelie.
If you are still planning on the
trip, please let me know, and I'll
be glad to assist your grandson
in every possible way.

With all good wishes -

Yours sincerely,

Arthur Kreindler

St. Lawrence College
Lund, Sweden.

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Chambers:

Many thanks for your very kind letter. I am sorry that you were not able to visit Sweden this year. The Pastor of the Church at Ijolie has asked me to reply to the letter, he also received from you. I have delayed replying, hoping to be able to secure a new photograph for you. But up to the present time, I've not

been able to find someone with a proper camera to go out to the church-yard with me. Today we have snow - and a picture today would be very lovely indeed.

I send you my sincere greetings for a most Blessed Christmastide.

Yours cordially - Arakw Krenheder
8 December 1954

26. 1. 55.

Dear Mrs. and Mr. Chambers!

When I was in the South of Sweden to study about gymnastics at the beginning of this year I met Mr. Arthur Carl Kreinleder, who became a very good friend of mine. He asked me, if I could take a picture from the grave of your son, who had died by the terrible war between our countries. I have taken two pictures and here they are. I hope, I have done it well, though the weather was very misty at that day. The scripture has not a very great size on the stone, but I think you can read it.

I hope you will once forget all the harm that our country has done to you, though you may never forget your son. And I hope too that all people will become friends and that there never is a war again.

I was very glad that I could do this for you, though it is only very little. And I had no costs.

With hearty greetings!

Your Günther Linschen

p.s. I hope you can read my rather bad English and get all what I was writing to you.

Malmö, Sept. 4th
1958.

Dear friends,

I hope you are all well and have had a nice Summer. Just now the weather here is excellently fine, better than it has been all the Summer. Have you been able to go away somewhere? We have, as usual, been to our Summer house by the sea, but the bad and rainy weather rather spoiled everything.

In June. I and two friends of mine motored out in the country and we also went to Tjelie and visited the grave. It looked quiet and peaceful and we put a lovely bunch of flowers there. One of my friends - he is a master of languages - read a prayer in latin and we talked about your dear boy and we sent you our warmest thoughts together with our deepest regrets. We also went into the church and saw the new wreath you have sent.

You can be quite

assured I shall not forget the
grave but visit it is often
as I can and see that it is
kept in proper order! And I
shall put some flowers there—
from you all!

I hope these lines
find you in good health!

My love to you all!

Linnæa Ydell

How is little Roger? Has he got a
brother or sister yet??

Fjelie, 7th of Dec. 1959

Dear Mr and Mrs J. G. Chambers
66 Pretoria Rd
Upper Edmonton N. 18
London.

I am sorry, that my answer to
your kind letter has been delayed.
The beautiful flowers adorn your son's
grave. We'll look after it and honour
it in memory of a noble son of a noble
country.

The reason of the delay is partially
that I recently have come to Fjelie as
the new vicar and have had very much
to do at the entering upon my duties.

Very welcome to us in Fjelie
vicarage. And please tell me what I can
do for you in the future.

With good wishes for Christmas and
the new year

Yours very faithfully,
Harald Blomstrand



The Vicarage, FJELIE, Sweden. 19/11 1961

Dear Sir!

I have received your kind letter and the beautiful flowers for your son's grave. I think you know, that we have in our church a memorial place for your son, just near the baptism-funt. We should be very glad indeed, if you would come to us and see it all.

God bless you!

Yours sincerely,

Harriet Björnström



Felie nov 15th 62

Dear Mrs M.M. Chambers,

I thank you very much for your kind letter. Your flowers for your son's grave we have got and they have been placed there.

I am sorry that you now are alone. But we'll hope that your husband and your son now are united in heaven.

I will pray for you that you may be given strength to carry on.

"Direct us with Thine arm of might,
And bring us, perfected with them,
To dwell within Thy city bright,
The heavenly Jerusalem
O Lamb of God, Redeemer blest,
Grant them eternal light and rest."

Yours,
Hilbert Blomshausen
vicar of Felie



Pastorsämbetet i Fjelle och Flädie
Adr. FJELIE
25. XI. 1967

Pastor in charge
Fjelle Church Fjelle
near Lund
Malmo
Sweden

Dear Mrs Chambers,

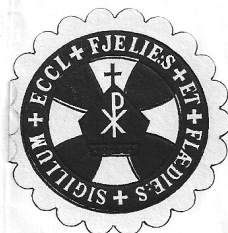
The beautiful flowers are now
placed on your son's grave.

Thank you for your kind letter.

With many good X-mas greetings
from me and my wife

Yours,

Hilmar Blomstrand



Dear Eileen. - We received this letter on Friday
and know you would ^{like} a copy of same. We do
not know the Rev. Gentleman, but its nice to
know there are such people about the world
to day.

From the Revd. C. H. Bird, Chaplain,

St. Catharines College, Cambridge.

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Chambers,

I thought you might like to know that
during a holiday in Scandinavia from which
I have just returned I visited a beautiful
little church near Lund and there saw
the memorial to your son, Colin Fred. I
expect you've seen it yourself - but still its
very beautiful and treasured in those
lovely surroundings. When I saw the many
tributes that are still there I felt
suddenly humbly proud of England and

what a young Englishman had done, and said
a prayer for you all.

Please don't bother to acknowledge
unless there should by any chance be
any way in which I could help.

I have some friends in Lund.

yours sincerely

Hartley Bird.

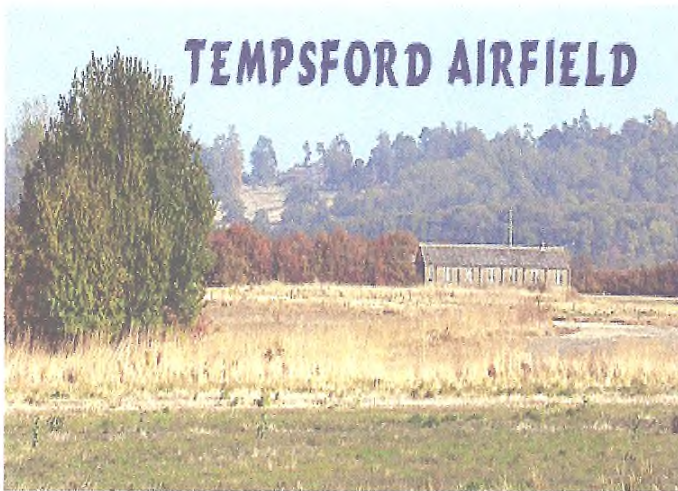


Of course I sent a letter in reply
thanking Revd. Bird for his gracious
action.

Pop.

This is a letter sent by Pop to my mum and confirms the other letter was sent by Pop

Tempsford Today



TEMPSFORD AIRFIELD was used by the Special Operations Executive (S.O.E.); it was from here that underground agents ("Joes") and their supplies were flown or dropped into enemy occupied Europe.

The following brief summary of events uses information, gratefully acknowledged, gained from several websites

One should mention particularly the web pages maintained by Steve Harris. This comprehensive website can be viewed at <http://www.geocities.com/uksteve.geo/blunhistory2.html> and offers detailed descriptions of the activities at this RAF station during WWII.

During the wartime years Tempsford Airfield became associated with a number of legendary names such as Odette and Peter Churchill, Violette Szabo, Nancy Wake and Wing Commander Yeo-Thomas (a.k.a. 'The White Rabbit'). Operations such as the destruction of the heavy water plant at Telemark were also mounted from Tempsford. There were two RAF squadrons based at Tempsford airfield from 1942 until the end of the war - No. 138 Squadron and No. 161 Squadron.

THE VIEW FROM EVERTON towards Tempsford overlooking the Ivel Valley and Everton Heath. The road to Tempsford is visible on the left. To the right of the road in the middle distance are a number buildings of which some formed part of the old Tempsford airfield.



RAF Tempsford was located largely in the parish of Everton. In 1936 the area was surveyed as a possible site for a new airfield and in July 1940 the contractors, John Laing and Balfour Beatty, started to build an airfield to RAF Class A standard on the five hundred acres of land known as Tempsford Flats. It was to serve as a satellite airfield for RAF Bassingbourn.



Three concrete runways, each of approximately 1300 yards in length, were constructed on the site and 36 pan hard-standings were placed around the perimeter track. Although the station was far from complete, in December 1941 Wellingtons from No. 11 OTU at Bassingbourn commenced using the runways while work was in progress on those at the home station. But Tempsford had been selected as a base for the special duty units, which mostly operated under No. 3 Group.

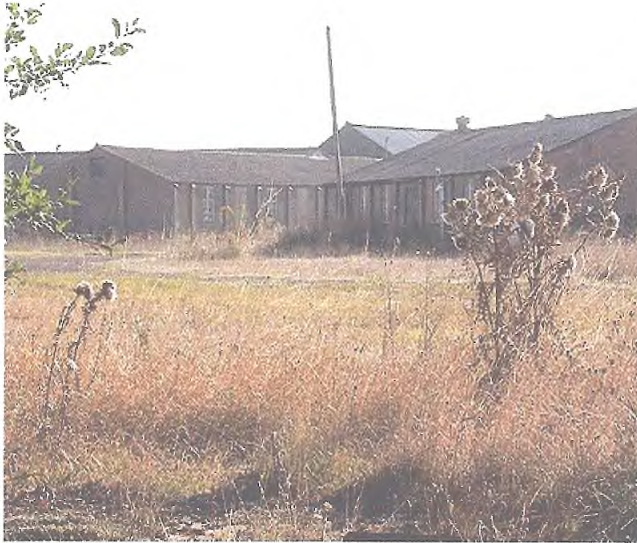
In January 1942, No. 109 Squadron arrived with Wellingtons (later to be joined by the Wellingtons of No. 1418 Flight) and engaged in experiments with new radio equipment (OBOE).

Photographs: Tempsford Airfield in 1943. (above left)

TO MEET the requirements of SOE, the airfield was subjected to further development in 1942. Two of the runways were extended on their northern ends to make them almost two thousand yards long. Perimeter track extensions were also added to the ends of the runway extensions together with more pan hard-standings. Hangar building ultimately reached six large Type T2 hangars on the technical site to the south of the runways and a B1 hangar was constructed on the west side of the airfield not far from the Everton level-crossing gates on the LNER main railway line.



In addition to the large hangars, Blister type hangars were put up to provide shelter for Lysanders. The airfield domestic, communal and sick quarters site was dispersed in fields alongside the Tempsford-Everton road and a WAAF communal and domestic site was placed in Everton village. Total camp personnel at its peak occupation numbered around 1,700 men and 250 women.

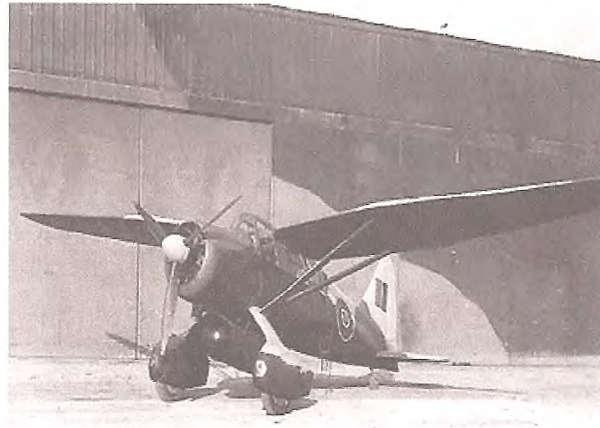


On 11 March 1942 No.138 Special Duty Squadron moved into Tempsford together with their Whitley and Lysander aircraft to start its secret supply and agent delivery missions. Container packing facilities were organised at Gaynes Hall close to nearby St Neots. The first covert supply mission to Northern France was carried out on 18 March.

In April the first Handley Page Halifax IIs modified for SOE operations, and destined eventually to replace the Whitley bombers, were delivered to 138 Squadron. These aircraft are able to carry 15 containers and begin to replace the ageing Whitley aircraft.

Around the same time the buildings of Gibraltar Farm, on the eastern perimeter of the airfield were converted into high security SOE stores and the farmhouse into an agent reception and pre-flight preparation centre. Later in 1942 (September) three US B-24 Liberator bombers were attached to 138 Squadron to be flown by Polish crews for supply missions to Polish resistance groups. And in November facilities were set up at Hazells Hall (close to the airfield), Gaynes Hall (near St Neots) and Tempsford Hall for agents waiting to be dropped into occupied Europe.

That same month Wing Commander Pickard, commanding the recently established Lysander squadron (No 161) at Tempsford, and Flight Lieutenant Bridger fly two agents into a field near Chateauroux and return with three agents in the first double Lysander operation flown out of Tempsford. In February of the following year Hudson aircraft, with greater capacity than the Lysanders, were established at Tempsford and flew their first assignment to Charolles that month.



And in October the first double Hudson pick up was piloted by Wing Commander Hodges who brought back from France ten personnel, including Monsieur Vincent Auriol who later became a President of France. That same month the USAAF 801st (Provisional) Bomb Group special duty aircrews start training at Tempsford and fly "buddy missions" in Halifax aircraft prior to eventually moving into Harrington airfield in Northamptonshire. (Here they became known as the 'Carpetbaggers' and flew B24 Liberator aircraft on secret supply missions.)

In June 1944 aircraft from Tempsford were used for radar deception and other operations connected with the invasion of France. However on the night of 7 June Violet Szabo and three other agents are flown from Tempsford into France in a US "Carpetbagger" B24 Liberator.

Photographs: Old buildings at Tempsford Airfield as they are today (below and previous page). Westland Lysander at Tempsford (previous page).



In August 138 Squadron changes to Short Stirling Mk IV aircraft with increased capacity for pay-loads. (The aircraft were able to carry twenty containers compared with the Halifax's fifteen and were on occasion used also by 161 squadron.) No. 138 Squadron moved to RAF Tuddenham to convert to Lancaster bombers in April 1945. Later, 161 Squadron, which had continued operations from Tempsford until the European war ended in May, was disbanded on the 2nd June.

During the years of operating from Tempsford 995 agents, 29,000 containers and 10,000 packages had been dropped into enemy occupied Europe and an even greater number of VIPs, agents and shot-down RAF aircrew had been brought out. Tempsford aircrew also "liberated" numerous cases of cognac, champagne and premier cru wines! On another occasion in 1943, a dismantled German V2 Rocket, stolen intact by the Polish resistance was flown to Tempsford. Over 80 aircraft were lost from Tempsford during the war together with many of their crews.

In February 1963 many of the buildings on the site that had remained disused for nearly twenty years were sold and the land reverted to the original owners.

Photograph: Handley Page Halifax attached to 138 Squadron at Tempsford (right).



My fathers brother Alan would visit Tempsford every year until he died to lay a poppy wreath in the barn which is now a memorial to the crews and agents lost during the war. Below is a picture of Colin's brother Alan and his wife Doris during one of his visit's.



The Pilot Who Shot Down DT 620

Martin Drewes



Born	20 October 1918 (age 93) <u>Salzgitter</u>
Allegiance	<u>Nazi Germany</u>
Service/branch	<u>Luftwaffe</u>
Years of service	1937–1945
Rank	<u>Major</u>
Unit	<u>ZG 76</u> , <u>NJG 3</u> and <u>NJG 1</u>
Commands held	<u>III./NJG 1</u> <u>World War II</u>
Battles/wars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><u>Mediterranean Theatre</u><u>Anglo-Iraqi War</u> <u>Defense of the Reich</u>

Martin Drewes (born 20 October 1918) was a night fighter ace in the German Luftwaffe during World War II. 52 victories were scored most against British four-engine bombers Handley Page Halifax and Avro Lancaster. Drewes flew variants of the Messerschmitt Bf 110.

Early life

Drewes was born on 20 October 1918 in Lobmachersen-bei-Braunschweig, a small village near Hannover (northwestern Germany). He was the son of a local pharmacist. As the end of the 1930s, Martin Drewes volunteered for the officer's school of the German Army and at the end of the course transferred to the Luftwaffe during 1939.

World War II

Drewes was first assigned to II./Zerstörergeschwader 76 flying the Messerschmitt Bf 110, operating defensive patrols over the North Sea. In May 1941, the Luftwaffe committed Flyer Command Iraq (*Fliegerführer Irak*) which comprised one squadron (*staffel*) of He 111s (4./KG 4), one *staffel* of Zerstörer (Bf 110s of 4./ZG 76), and 12 transports including a number of Junkers Ju 90s to support the Iraqi

rebels during the Anglo-Iraqi War.

The ten day stint in the Middle East included a victory (Gloster Gladiator) for Drewes. Allied air-opposition was light and the Luftwaffe force concentrated mainly on ground support duties. By 26 May, despite cannibalizing two machines damaged in an RAF raid on Mosul, no Bf 110 was left serviceable.[1] Drewes and his unit were evacuated the following day. Soon after ZG 76 was converted to a night fighter unit and renamed Nachtgeschwader 3.

Drewes scored regular night victories over Germany, before being transferred to Nachtjagdgeschwader 1 where he would remain until the end of the war. In 1944 he became *Gruppenkommandeur* III./NJG 1. At the end of hostilities he had flown 252 operations, and claimed a total of 52 victories (including a Spitfire, a Gladiator, 7 American 4-engined bombers shot down in daylight operations, and 43 British night bombers), most of them achieved with his radio man *Oberfeldwebel* Georg "Schorsch" Petz. Drewes was decorated with *Ritterkreuz* and *Eichenlaub*.

He was captured by English forces at the end of the war. In 1949 he emigrated to Brazil, where he still lives, and was still alive at the age of 93 in 2011.

List of victories

235 missions

- 1 Gloster Gladiator
- 1 Supermarine Spitfire
- 1 Short Stirling
- 1 Consolidated B-24 Liberator
- 6 Boeing B-17
- 9 Handley Page Halifax
- 33 Avro Lancaster[Note 4][Note 5]

Awards

- Iron Cross (1939)
- 2nd Class (26 May 1941)[2]
- 1st Class (9 April 1943)[2]
- German Cross in Gold (24 February 1944)
- Ehrenpokal der Luftwaffe (31 March 1944)
- Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves
- Knight's Cross on 27 July 1944 as *Hauptmann* and *Gruppenkommandeur* of the III./NJG 1[3][Note 6]
- 839th Oak Leaves on 17 April 1945 as *Major* and *Gruppenkommandeur* of the III./NJG 1[4][5]

Notes

- ^ 49 confirmed by Luftwaffe and 3 process interrupted in war finish
- ^ 43 victories at night
- ^ 5 Lancasters on 4 May 1944
- ^ 4 Lancasters and 1 Halifax on 22 May 1944
- ^ According to Scherzer as leader of the III./Nachtjagdgeschwader 1. [4]

After completing the story I gave a copy to my sister which she took on holiday with her hence the story has expanded much further. Which can be seen in Part 2.