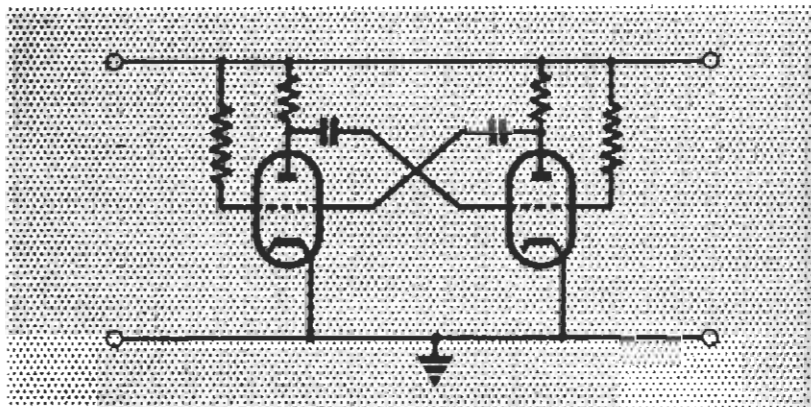


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Vol. I, No. 6

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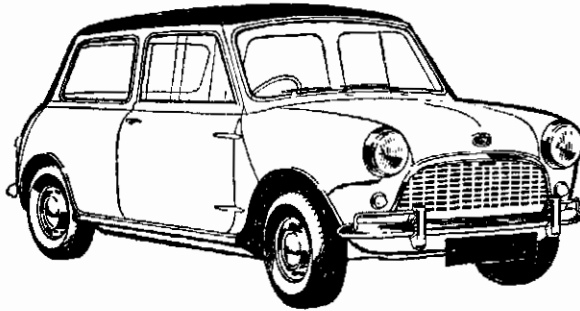
# Contents

EDITORIAL	9
97th ENTRY:-	
Passing Out Parade	11
Address by Reviewing Officer	12
Prize Giving	15
Achievements of the 97th Entry	15
Posting List	16
PROFILE	
Group Captain S. M. Davidson, A.M.Brit.I.R.E.	18
FROM MENDIP TO THE SEA: Chapter 3	21
UP THE POLE WITH A SPITFIRE	25
BRITISH GRAND PRIX	29
“THE GREAT BALLOON RACE”	32
WHAT’S IN A NAME?	36
A SHORT HISTORY OF HAMISH	39
STANDING ORDER PAYMENTS	43
SPORTS AND SOCIETIES:-	
Locking Fencing Club	45
Table Tennis Club	47
Hockey	47
Road Walking	47
Cross-Country Running	49
Handicrafts Club	49
Aircraft Recognition Club	51
Scouts and Guides	51
.303 Shooting	51
EX-APPRENTICE CORNER	53
LETTER FROM LABRADOR	54

See the . .

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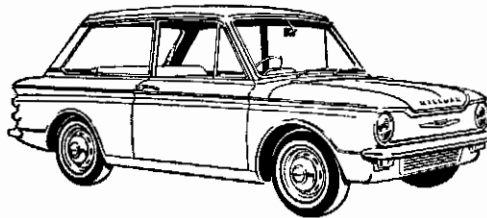
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## Editorial

The background to this edition is again one of change; change in the topography of our station with the rapidly developing building programme, changes in training staff personnel and, finally, change in the editorship of this magazine.

We are very sorry to have to say goodbye to Air Commodore Disbrey and we should like to take this opportunity of wishing him every success in his new appointment, as Director-General of Engineering, at the Air Ministry.

We should also like to welcome his successor, our new Commandant, Air Commodore Howlett who has come to us from Royal Air Force, Boscombe Down.

Finally, as to our own policy; we hope to maintain the standard of *The Locking Review* set by Mr. Gandy, who is now devoting his efforts to our Halton counterpart, and, in particular, we hope to widen the scope and coverage of our journal considerably. It will be noted that we include one item of news about the doings of an ex-Locking man, not eligible for inclusion in Ex-Apprentice Corner and we shall particularly welcome any other contributions of this nature in the future.



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## Passing Out Parade of the 97th Entry of Aircraft Apprentices

**Reviewing Officer : Air Marshal Sir John Grandy,**  
K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Bomber Command

### Parade State

#### Graduating Entry

Parade Commander	F.S.A.A. Pyle, G. S.
Parade Warrant Officer	S.A.A. Hayward, C. G.
No. 1 Flight Commander	S.A.A. Handy, R. B.
No. 2 Flight Commander	S.A.A. Guy, B.L.

#### Supporting Squadrons

Supporting Squadrons Commander	S.A.A. Bengree, N. J.
<b>No. 1 Squadron</b>	
Squadron Commander	S.A.A. Jenkins, J.
No. 1 Flight Commander	S.A.A. Thirlwall, C.
No. 2 Flight Commander	S.A.A. Rafferty, M. R.
<b>No. 2 Squadron</b>	
Squadron Commander	S.A.A. Dorey, V. S.
No. 1 Flight Commander	S.A.A. Price, N. F.
No. 2 Flight Commander	S.A.A. Palmer, N. R.

#### No. 1 Radio School Apprentice Band

Warrant Officer T. D. Williams, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M.

#### No. 5 Regional Band

Flight. Lieutenant. J. Martindale, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.M.

**Address made by Air Marshal Sir John Grandy, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O.,  
Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Bomber Command, on the occasion  
of his Review of the 97th Entry of Aircraft Apprentices at Royal Air Force,  
Locking, at their Graduation on Tuesday, 17th December, 1963**

The Air Marshal said:

Commandant—thank you for your welcome.

Before speaking to the 97th Entry, I would like to say how very pleased I am to see the Chairman of the Axbridge Rural District Council and His Worship the Mayor of Weston-super-Mare with us this morning. I would like to say—although I am not from this Command I am sure I am in order—thank you for the great interest you have both shown in Locking. I, myself, regard your presence here today as recognition by the civic authorities in our country of the important part the Royal Air Force is playing today in trying to keep the peace and I would like to thank you for that recognition.

I am also very pleased to see so many parents here—the Commandant in his remarks made this point—and spoke of the interest you have taken in Locking. I do hope you will continue to keep that interest, through your trades, in the Royal Air Force. We are not an impersonal service—far from it—and any interest you have in your sons' careers will, I know, be tremendously welcomed by your sons' Commanding Officers during their future careers. I am quite certain that you parents as you watched the parade this morning—although you might have felt a bit chilly—must have felt a warm glow of pride. I think parades are very inspiring—particularly so when you can see your own son marching around.

The parade itself of the 97th Entry was, I think, extremely good. The drill was good and I enjoyed watching it and taking part in it and I particularly enjoyed speaking to one or two of you on Parade. If you are as smart in your trades as you were on parade this morning, I shall be very pleased to welcome those of you who are destined to join me in Bomber Command. I do know a bit about parades—my very first one was when I was on your side of the parade rather than the side I was on this morning. I am afraid it was over 30 years ago now and for the life of me I cannot remember who the Reviewing Officer was or any of the words he said. So when we meet again I shall be over 80 and you will be about 50, so if you don't recognise me I shan't be tremendously upset. However, I do trust you will remember something of what I say today during the first few weeks of your time—or early careers—in the Service. If my remarks help you along a bit so much to the good.

The Commandant has mentioned the importance of the electrical trades—electronic trades—in our service today and of course this is very true, particularly so in Bomber Command. It is very vital to our operational chaps that the electronic trades are well carried out,

vital to our safety in fact. The aircrews in my own command, day by day and night by night depend, I can assure you, to a very large extent, on the skills exercised in your trades, to keep their aircraft serviceable and, of course, to keep ground installations serviceable too, and this is where you lads come in. Both today's aircraft and our future ones which you will be concerned with, are highly complex. I do not think that I am exaggerating when I say that nowadays the margin between these highly complex, highly expensive aircraft, being an efficient fighting entity in the air and being unserviceable and immobile on the ground is a small one—a very narrow margin indeed, and you are the lads to clear that margin. It can be done and is being done all the time, but I would like to make the point to you that the aircrews depend entirely on you, the ground crews, to give them the serviceability they need to enable them to do their job.

I think you will find that when you go out into the various commands, particularly those of you working with aircrew, that there is a very close relationship—a very close relationship indeed—between aircrew and ground crew, this has been developed over the years and I think it is a relationship on which we all pride ourselves. There is a great feeling of interdependence—this is a political word I know but I do not mean it as such—I mean there is great understanding of one of the other and therefore your share of the trust and responsibility for the fighting efficiency of the Royal Air Force is a very great one. I say this to you ex-apprentices particularly because you are all skilled men and thus you form a very vital part of our service and you will find on the Station you go to, that standards are very high. I think another thing that you will find when you go out into the service is that life is probably a little bit different to the life you have had here—it is a little more relaxed in some ways, maybe, but if you can believe it you may have to work harder—if you can believe that it is possible to work harder than you have done here—I think you will find that you may be expected to do so and you will also find that you won't be looked after all the time as you were here, you will have to look after yourselves a bit more.

We hear a great deal today about the decadence of the dreadful state of our modern youth. People complain about drain-pipe trousers, long haircuts, "Being with it", the "Mersey beat", being "hip" or "hep"—I am never quite sure which it is—and I am sure that in that language you regard me as a "square", but I have a great admiration for our youth today—there is nothing wrong with it at all—and I can assure you lads that you have great opportunities ahead of you. The chance of a life full of adventure and excitement as ever has been before our young people in this country. But I would warn you that this kind of life does not just happen, you have got to work for it—this is a bit of a bore I know, but it has always been so and I can assure you it will always be so, but this is not a bad thing and I think today's young people are well able to cope with it.

I should like to give you three bits of advice before I finish.

I think the first thing you must do is to make up your minds that you will make the maximum use you can of all the instruction and training and the whole wide sphere of other facilities on training which are available to you—made available to you—by the service at your station. No one can force you to take advantage of these things, it is entirely up to you, but I think it is really a simple matter of determination and will on your part to “have a go” at these things—so my advice to you is—don’t miss a chance.

Secondly, I think it is frightfully important for you to learn to use your initiative, you will be surprised to find how far a little initiative does get you, and you will be awfully surprised how few people exercise initiative. I would suggest to you that you don’t wait to be asked, or told, to do things—if you see something that needs to be done—have a go—get on with it. You may not do it very well at the start but that doesn’t matter, at least you have tried—having a go gets things done, and you will get experience and self-confidence which will help you on your way—so use your initiative.

Thirdly, I think an important thing to do is to learn to accept responsibility. It is a great thing to learn to do right from the start—even if it is only organising the flight tea swindle—this is the beginning of learning the fundamentals of leadership, and developing it. After all, a sense of responsibility is only an attitude of mind, so if you try to develop these three qualities—determination and the will to make every moment count. The guts to seize the initiative. The sense to accept and discharge responsibility, well I reckon you will do all right. If you remember these three things you will develop self-confidence and self-respect and you will not only do well for yourselves but for the Royal Air Force too; like your predecessors you will go on up in the R.A.F. and enjoy a full life in that service.

A final word—I strongly advise you not to lose your sense of humour. It is frightfully important for you sometimes to be able to turn round and have a good laugh at yourself. I think you should do this occasionally, it does you good and stops you from becoming too unbearable.

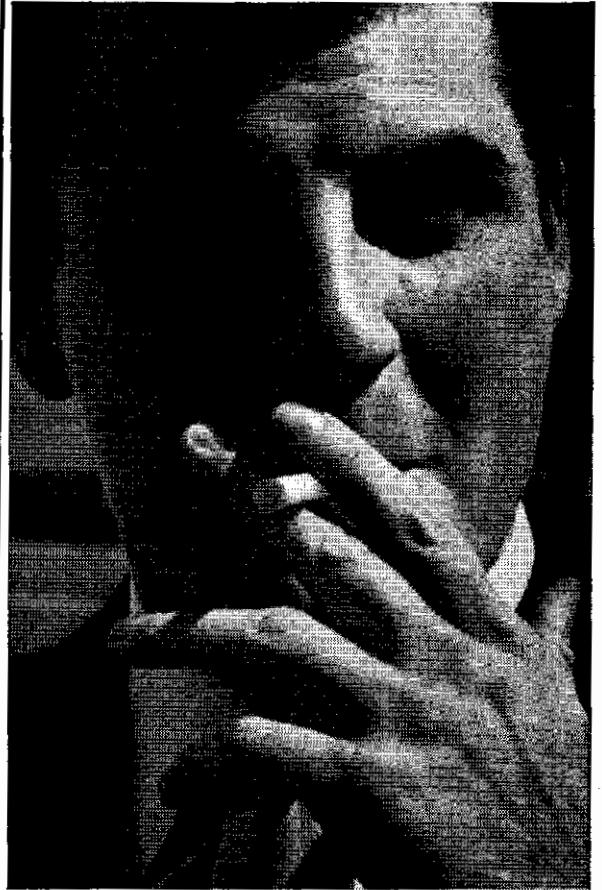
Well, 97th Entry, you are lucky men—all of you—as you begin your careers from the excellent background you have received at Locking. I wish you good luck, success, and a happy and full life in the Royal Air Force.

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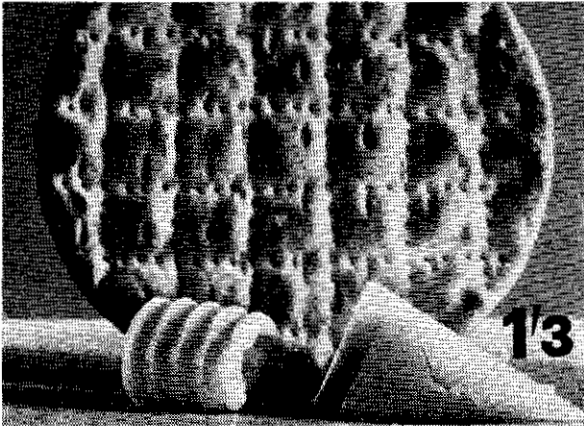


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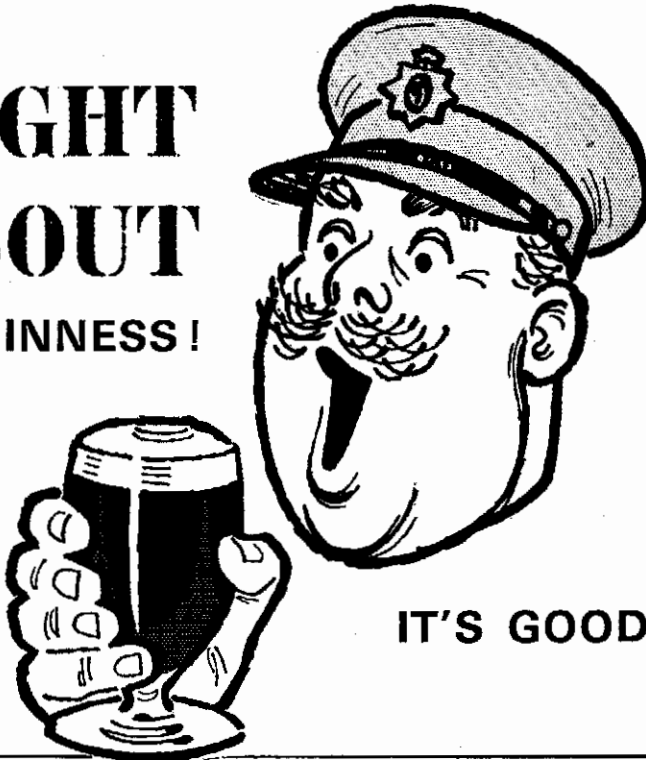
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# Prize List and Achievements

British Institution of Radio Engineers Prize	A.A. Hinson, N. R.
Royal Aeronautical Society Prize	F.S.A.A. Pyle, G. S.
Lord Trenchard Memorial Prize	F.S.A.A. Pyle, G. S.
Air Ministry Prize for Highest Aggregate Marks	A.A. Hinson, N. R.
Air Ministry Prize for Air Radio Fitter	A.A. Callaghan, V. D.
Air Ministry Prize for Ground Radar Fitter	A.A. Hinson, N. R.
Air Ministry Prize for Ground Wireless Fitter	A.A. Robinson, B. J.
Air Ministry Prize for General Service Training	F.S.A.A. Pyle, G. S.
Air Ministry Prize for English and General Studies	L.A.A. Tonge, J. J.
Air Ministry Prize for Best Set Task	A.A. Hinson, N. R.
Baton	

## WING TROPHIES

<b>Victor Ludorum Trophy</b>	A.A. Pedrick, G. S.	<b>Wing Championship</b>	“B” Squadron
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## WING COLOURS

The following Apprentices of the 97th Entry have been awarded Wing Colours in the sports shown:————

<b>Equitation</b>	A.A. Williams, P. T.	<b>Fencing</b>	C.A.A. Norman, P. R. C. C. A. A. Lodge S. L.A.A. Gzella, J. M.
<b>Rugby</b>	F.S.A.A. Pyle, G. S.		
<b>Swimming</b>	A.A. Farmer, M. J.	<b>Soccer</b>	S.A.A. Guy, B. A.A. Pedrick, G. S.
<b>Badminton</b>	A.A. Pedrick, G. S.		
<b>Basketball</b>	S.A.A. Gainey, K. J. A.A. Richards, R.	<b>.22 Shooting</b>	A.A. Carter, D. E.
		<b>Athletics</b>	L.A.A. Watling, D. A.
<b>Cross Country</b>	S.A.A. Stachniczek, G. A. L.A.A. Watling, D. A.	<b>Water Polo</b>	C.A.A. Tait, M. J.
<b>Squash</b>	A.A. Robinson, B. J.	<b>.303 Shooting</b>	A.A. Foster, F. J. A.A. Shores, G. F. A.A. Hinson, N. R.
<b>Boxing</b>	C.A.A. Igo, H. W. A.A. Taylor, N. E. A.A. Newman, R. D.	<b>Hockey</b>	C.A.A. Starr, D. M. A.A. Lenk, R. R.



# 97th Entry Posting List

687085	J/T Bowley, W. G.	R.A.F. Bawdsey
687106	J/T Emmins, D. F.	A.T.C.R.U. Bishops Court
687122	J/T Heath, R.A.	R.A.F. Bawdsey
687125	J/T Hinson, N. R.	R.A.F. Patrington
687128	J/T Hughes, G.	A.T.C.R.U. Bishops Court
687134	J/T Lenk, R. R.	R.A.F. Patrington
687150	J/T Richards, R.	R.A.F. Patrington
687169	J/T Williams, P. T.	R.E.U. Henlow
687079	J/T Bays, B. R.	R.E.U. Henlow
687094	J/T Clasper, I.	R.A.F. Patrington
687123	J/T Hide, J.	R.E.U. Henlow
687130	J/T Igo, H. W.	R.A.F. Patrington
687138	J/T Mabey, R. J.	A.T.C.R.U. Bishops Court
687153	J/T Shores, G. F.	R.A.F. Patrington
687126	J/T Hodges, M.	R.A.F. Bawdsey
687144	J/T Pedrick, G. S.	R.E.U. Henlow
687137	J/T Lyon, A.	A.T.C.R.U. Bishops Court
687168	J/T Williamson, D. R.	A.T.C.R.U. Bishops Court
687103	J/T Eddy, R. A.	R.A.F. Bawdsey
687158	J/T Swash, M. G.	R.E.U. Henlow
687100	J/T Davies, .	R.E.U. Henlow
687113	J/T Gilbert, B.	R.A.F. Bawdsey
687092	J/T Carter, M. R.	242 O.C.U. Thorney Island
687111	J/T Fretwell, I.	R.A.F. Cottesmore
687177	J/T Hamilton, K. G.	R.A.F. Honington
687139	J/T Newman, P. D.	R.A.F. Colerne
687143	J/T Pearce, R. J.	242 O.C.U. Thorney Island
687162	J/T Tonge, J. J.	R.A.F. Finningley
687164	J/T Watling, D. A.	R.A.F. Honington
687086	J/T Brindle, J.	No. 2 F.T.S. Syerston
687095	J/T Clifton, C. E.	R.A.F. Wyton
687096	J/T Cornford, D. A.	R.A.F. Cottesmore
687082	J/T Bigay, A. N.	R.A.F. Wyton
687108	J/T Fincham, P. J.	No. 5 F.T.S. Oakington
687135	J/T Lindsay, P. M.	R.A.F. Cottesmore
687136	J/T Lodge, S.	R.A.F. Marham
687140	J/T Norman, P. R. C.	242 O.C.U. Thorney Island
687180	J/T Shields, R. D.	232 O.C.U. Gaydon
687076	J/T Amy, V. J.	R.A.F. Honington
687105	J/T Elshore, S. T.	R.A.F. Honington
687107	J/T Farmer, M. J.	232 O.C.U. Gaydon
687097	J/T Graham, J. E.	242 O.C.U. Thorney Island
687116	J/T Graham, M. J.	232 O.C.U. Gaydon
687124	J/T Hazell, D. B.	R.A.F. Wyton
687132	J/T Langley, R. W.	R.A.F. Marham
687133	J/T Lee, A. L.	R.A.F. Marham
687151	J/T Robinson, B. J.	R.A.F. Wyton
687155	J/T Stachniczek, G. A.	R.A.F. Coningsby
687156	J/T Starr, D. M.	R.A.F. Lyneham
687163	J/T Wallace, J. J.	R.A.F. Abingdon
687166	J/T Whitten, K. N.	R.A.F. Scampton

687167	J/T Wilkinson, C.	R.A.F. Finningley
687171	J/T Wozencroft, R. W. F.	R.A.F. Scampton
687077	J/T Ballard, M. A.	R.E.U. Henlow
687080	J/T Bennison, P. B.	R.A.F. Watton
687093	J/T Chilton, A.	R.E.U. Henlow
687127	J/T Howarth, C.	R.E.U. Henlow
687141	J/T O'Brien, M.	R.E.U. Henlow
687142	J/T Patrick, J. A.	R.E.U. Henlow
687181	J/T Peachey, A. G.	R.A.F. Watton
687152	J/T Rodgers, J. N.	R.E.U. Henlow
687157	J/T Sussex, R.	R.E.U. Henlow
687160	J/T Thompson, V. K. M.	R.A.F. Watton
687172	J/T Wragg, A. T.	R.E.U. Henlow
687081	J/T Carter, D. E.	No. 57 Sqn. R.A.F. Honington
687098	J/T Cornish, D. J.	No. 57 Sqn. R.A.F. Honington
687099	J/T Crome, K. R.	No. 214 Sqn. R.A.F. Marham
687117	J/T Gzella, J. M.	No. 51 Sqn. R.A.F. Wyton
687149	J/T Raynes, F.	No. 51 Sqn. R.A.F. Wyton
687091	J/T Callaghan, V. D.	R.A.F. Ballykelly
687101	J/T Denby, P. W.	No. 242 O.C.U. Thorney Island
687110	J/T Foster, F. J.	R.A.F. Ballykelly
687118	J/T Halliday, D. C.	No. 242 O.C.U. Thorney Island
687131	J/T King, J. T.	R.A.F. Ballykelly
687090	J/T Butterworth, J. W.	A.T.C.R.U. Bishops Court
687102	J/T Derham, J. R. A.	R.E.U. Henlow
687143	J/T Taylor, W. E.	R.E.U. Henlow
687115	J/T Gower, C. F.	R.A.F. Bawdsey
687148	J/T Ray, G.	R.E.U. Henlow
687909	J/T Guy, B. L.	R.A.F. College, Cranwell
687114	S.A.C. Gosnell, R. W.	No. 2 A.N.S. Hullavington
687129	J/T Hunt, P. E.	R.A.F. Honington
687083	S.A.C. Bolt, R.	No. 242 O.C.U. Thorney Island
687154	J/T Sparshott, M. C.	R.A.F. Cottesmore
687165	J/T White, D. A.	R.A.F. Scampton

## CADETSHIP

687147	Cpl. Pyle, G. S.	Tech. Coll. Henlow
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## DIRECT ENTRY COMMISSION

687078	Cpl. Barnes	9 Sqn Coningsby
686729	Cpl. Handy	No. 242 O.C.U. Thorney Island
687121	J/T Hayward	No. 1 I.T.S. South Cerney

## SUBSTANTIVE CORPORAL

687112	Cpl. Gainey	9 Sqn. Coningsby
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Group Captain S. M. Davidson, A.M. Brit. I.R.E.

## Assistant Commandant and Senior Training Officer

**Profile - Group Captain S. M. Davidson, A.M.Brit.I.R.E.**

Group Captain Davidson joined the R.A.F. as a boy entrant in 1939 and was trained initially as a wireless operator at No. 1 Electrical and Wireless School at Cranwell. Shortly after passing out of the boys' service he returned to Cranwell for conversion training to wireless electrical mechanic, before posting to aircrew duties on Catalina flying boats, in Coastal Command. After a brief air gunners' course, he flew on anti-submarine operations with Nos. 209 and 202 Squadrons, during the Battle of the Atlantic and in support of convoy operations round the Cape to and from the Far East. Group Captain Davidson was commissioned in the General Duties Branch in August, 1942, at the age of 19, and completed a Signals Leaders Course at No. 14 Radio School in 1944. He was mentioned in dispatches in January, 1946. During his 20 month tour with No. 209 Squadron, he flew on operations from bases in Wales, the Shetland Islands, the Middle East, East and South Africa, Madagascar, the Comoro Islands and Mauritius—a fact which speaks volumes for the independence and mobility of the R.A.F. flying boat squadrons in World War II.

When the war in Europe ended, some Coastal Command Liberator Squadrons were transferred to transport duties and Group Captain Davidson converted from flying boats to land planes for the new role. He flew as Signals Leader with Nos. 53 and 220 Squadrons on U.K. to Far East route operations, mainly concerned with the repatriation of British prisoners of war released from the Japanese prison camps. Immediately after the war with Japan, he served as a signals instructor in two of Coastal Command's training units, before taking up his first air staff appointment at Headquarters No. 19 Group in 1947. In early 1948 he completed a Radar Leaders' Course at the Empire Radio School and was promoted to Squadron Leader to continue his work as a Coastal Command staff officer. He was appointed to a permanent commission in the General Duties Branch in September, 1948.

Group Captain Davidson's career as an aircrew officer ended in 1950 when he successfully completed a Signals Officers' Junior Specialist Course at the Technical College and was transferred to the Technical (Signals) Branch. His first technical appointment was a short tour as a course officer for the 10th Entry of Boy Entrants at No. 2 Radio School at Yatesbury. After this he was posted to Fighter Command as Sector Signals Officer, Western Sector, where he was concerned with training and operational exercises involving some of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force squadrons and radar units, which were then very active in support of Fighter Command. He left Fighter Command in early 1953, on posting to Headquarters Middle East Air Force—then based in the Suez Canal Zone—for signals staff duties. During his tour in the Middle East, he worked on signals plans at Ismailia and Air Headquarters, Iraq, at Habbaniya, and subsequently moved with Headquarters Middle East Air Force to Cyprus. He returned to England at the end of 1955 to attend the 1956 staff course at the R.A.F. Staff College at Bracknell.

Then followed a long tour at the Air Ministry, first as a Squadron Leader and later as a Wing Commander, in the Operational Requirements Branch, where he was concerned with research and development projects involving electronic equipment for current and future fighter, transport and maritime aircraft. Group Captain Davidson left the Air Ministry in June, 1960, to attend a course at the Joint Services Staff College and was then posted back to the R.A.F. Staff College at Bracknell, for directing staff duties. He was promoted Group Captain in July, 1963, and took up his present appointment as Senior Training Officer and Assistant Commandant at Locking in August, 1963.

Group Captain Davidson, who is married and has one son at school in Sussex, is well pleased with his posting to Locking. He welcomes the opportunity to serve on the senior staff of the school at which he began his service career as a boy, and is glad of the chance to participate once again in R.A.F. station life after a series of rather specialised staff appointments. And he comes to Locking at a very opportune time: the forward-thinking nature of his last three appointments being very relevant to the work that has to be done to plan and initiate the training of the electronic technicians and fitters for the future, through the new Technician and Craft Apprentice Schemes.



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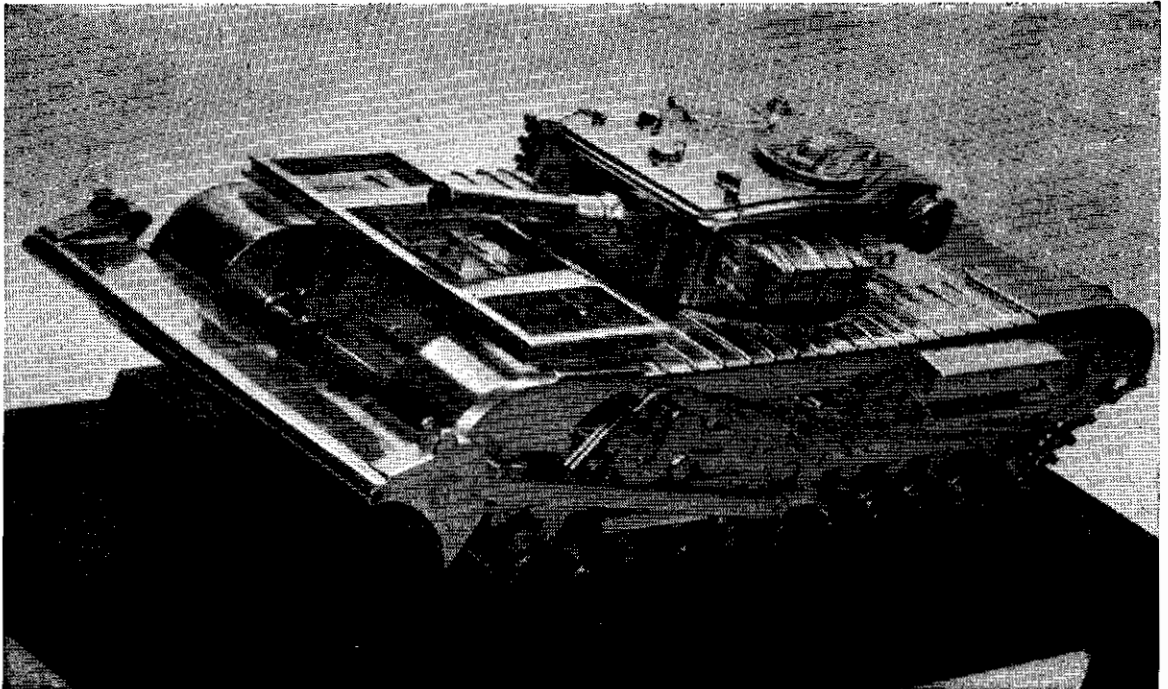
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# From Mendip to the Sea

## Chapter III: THE HOLMS

Steep Holm is the more southerly of the two islands and is easily identified by its rugged appearance. It lies five miles due west of Weston-super-Mare and three and a half miles to the west of Brean Down. The island is elliptical in outline, with its longest axis orientated east and west, in which direction it is 950 yards long. Along the shorter axis, it is only 350 yards. Both eastern and western ends are drawn into points, Rudder Rock and Tower Rock. It has perpendicular cliffs on the northern side and rises abruptly to its highest point, which is 256 feet above sea level. Three counties meet on this small island—Gloucester, Somerset and Bristol. Bristol was given the status of a county by a Royal Charter in 1373 and, ever since that year, a boundary stone has stood in the north-east corner of the island. It is an island of mystery, as approach is very difficult and, when shrouded by the Channel mists, it stands aloof from Weston's crowded beaches, lost in memories of its 360 million years of existence.

The history of the human occupation of the island is a little obscure, until quite recent times. However, that which is available is of interest.

A Priory, dedicated to St. Michael, once stood on the island and is thought to have been founded between 1100 and 1166 by one of the de Ewyas family. In the late thirteenth century, the community consisted of a minimum of two Austin canons, of whom the elder was the Prior. One, William, whose name is mentioned in a document of 1236, is the only Prior whose name has been preserved. John Smyth, writing at the end of the sixteenth century, stated that Maurice the third Lord of Berkeley rebuilt the Priory at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

It is legend that the historian Gildas, who lived between 516 and 572 A.D., retired to Steep Holm for the sake of its solitude and remoteness and that here he wrote his melancholy book, *De Excidio Britanniae*, describing the story of Britain from the Roman occupation until his own time, being one of lament and prophesy of Britain's downfall. It is thought to be the first history of Britain ever to be recorded and written. Apparently Gildas, promising himself deep solitude and complete repose, was bitterly disappointed to have the company of a horde of freebooters, who used the island as a base for raiding and plundering the surrounding coasts. Finally, he tired of the outrages of these ruffians and transported himself to Avallon near Glastonbury, where a colony of hermits existed. Nothing more is known of the pirates who disturbed Gildas. However, in 918 the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that a great fleet from Brittany, under the command of the Earls of Ohtor and Rhoald, put into the mouth of the Severn and commenced to ravish the coasts. An obvious place for their base would have again been Steep Holm.



The island is also connected with the most familiar of all dates, 1066. After the Battle of Hastings mention is made of "Harold's mother Githa and the wives of many good men with her", who "went to the Steep Holm, did there abode sometime, and afterwards went from thence over sea to St. Omer's". The only mention of the island through the span of the middle ages is a list of the owners, compiled by Collinson.

"This island was the property of the family of Bee of Ersby in Lincolnshire and in the time of Edward I was granted by John Bee to Henry de Lair of Lincoln. In the succeeding reign it was in possession of the Berkeleys, of whom Maurice the third Lord Berkeley built a small Priory."

During the war scare of 1860, the island was fortified by the War Office, as part of the chain of the Channel defences. In 1867, six batteries and barracks for fifty men were built, the armament being ten 7-inch muzzle-loading rifled guns. The batteries were protected by earth banks and had underground ammunition stores attached.

Of the six batteries, the Garden, so-called because it stood on what was said to have been the garden of the friars, was the most interesting. During construction, and whilst clearing the earth for a wooden floor, the foundations of the Priory were laid bare and the whole space between the walls was found to be packed with skeletons. Near the same spot, were found many bones of deer, a number of brass rings of primitive design, a coin bearing the figure of an archer, and some old pieces of money. The others are Rudder Rock, Split Rock, Summit, Laboratory and Tombstone Batteries. The last had part of the lid of an ancient stone coffin, a piece of hard blue lias, with moulding, and with a cross cut into it, built into its side wall.

In 1898, there had been a lot of agitation in the House of Commons about the alleged inefficiency of the Channel defences and it was decided to carry out an experiment on Steep Holm. A dummy 9.2-inch gun was mounted on Rudder Rock and protected by a new type of nickel steel gun shield. H.M.S. *Arrogant*, a second class cruiser of ten guns, 5,750 tons and 10,000 horse power, steamed past the island, blazing hundreds of rounds from her guns at ranges varying from 1,800 yards to 2,000 yards. The purpose of the experiment was to see if the old guns could be replaced by 9.2-inch breech loading guns, without the protection afforded by a Barbette.



UPHILL CHURCH AND BIRAN DOWN

Emerging into the present, the island appears as a bastion against the expansion of civilisation. In April of 1953, Lord Wharton, owner of the island, granted a long lease to trustees representing the Bristol Folk House Archaeological Club, Bristol Naturalist Society, the Somerset Natural History and Archaeological Society and the Mid-Somerset Naturalists' Society. In fact, it is a sanctuary for nature and naturalists.

The fauna of the island is, as far as varieties go, quite meagre. Rabbits abound, but there are no other rodents and no snakes, but plenty of slow worms. The entomology has not been tabulated, but its avi-fauna makes a good list. Gulls, of three varieties, nest there by the thousand and, also, large numbers of sheldrake, a few mallard and quite a colony of cormorants. There are also ravens and peregrine falcons. Many small birds nest there and gold-finches and pied flycatchers have been seen on passage.

The flora of the island attracts botanists from all over the country. They come to worship the Single Peony, the plant to be found nowhere else in the British Isles. Its flowering season lasts only two or three weeks, from about the end of May. The seed vessels are produced at the top of the flower spike, in the form of a bird's claw and are particularly attractive in the autumn, when they open out and display very handsome crimson and black seeds. Another distinctive feature is its foliage, which is bluish-green and glistening.

In order to visit this haven of peace today, approach must be made through the Societies, but this is well worth the effort, for here the famous salubrious breezes of Weston are untainted by hamburgers, fish and chips and other such disgusting odours, that are produced at Weston on any hot day.

### **Flat Holm**

Flat Holm is the last outpost of the Mendips. It is two and a half miles due north of Steep Holm and five and a half miles from Anchor Head, Weston-super-Mare (where the ridge of Worlebury enters the Severn). It was once supposed to belong to the parish of St. Stephen's, Bristol, but is now in the parish of St. Mary's, Cardiff. It is for this reason, that information available, is somewhat limited.

The island is of about sixty acres, one and a half miles in circumference, and inhabited by five people—three lighthouse keepers, an old gentleman who supplies teas for visitors and a young lad. It was once used for agricultural purposes, but is now completely covered with tufted grass, which is cropped by a herd of goats. Flat Holm was also a link in the Channel defences, the fortification consisting of four batteries, the Lighthouse, the Castle Rock, the Well and the Farm Batteries. All were armed with muzzle-loading guns, mounted on Moncrieff disappearing carriages. During the construction of these gun emplacements, no archaeological finds were made which revealed the past of the island, only the horns of red deer and a piece of a human skull being uncovered.

The island is dominated by the blazing white tower of the lighthouse, which stands 165 feet above sea level, at the south-east corner of the island, twenty yards from the cliffs. On pressure from the sea traders of Bristol, Trinity House agreed to the establishment of a lighthouse on the island in 1737. Contrary to the usual practice, the document stipulated that the lighthouse should show a fire. One supposes that the local seamen still preferred coal fires to the oil and candle lights. On the 3rd September, 1737, the Corporation granted a lease for 99 years to William Crispe, who erected a round stone tower, to the height of 72 feet, and lit it by an open coal fire, on the 1st December of that same year. He paid a rent of £5, for the first fifty years, and £10 thereafter. The coal fire was replaced by an oil reflector light before the end of the century. It is interesting to note that Aldini's principle of the destructive distillation of coal, the liberated gas being used as fuel for the jet flames, was to be employed at Flat Holm, but was passed over. The first important lighthouse to be lit by coal gas was at Salvore, near Trieste in 1818.

In the early part of February, 1902, the light, normally kept dazzlingly clean, was the scene of a remarkable phenomenon. During the night, a shower of mud fell on the island and the glazing of the lighthouse was covered with a dirty white coating, which stuck to the glass like glue and was only removed with great difficulty. The immediate application of water and long brushes made little impression on it and it was not until the next day that the keepers, with hot water and leathers, were able to get the lantern clean again. The scientific explanation was that a quantity of fine dust, believed by meteorologists to have been carried in the atmosphere from the Sahara Desert, had been converted into mud by the channel mists, thus falling on an area comprising 2,000 square miles of Cornwall and the south-west of England.

The lighting arrangement now employed is a Hood petroleum vapour burner, which was installed in 1923 and which increased the candle power of the light to 35,000. In 1908 a powerful compressed-air fog signal, having two horns of the Rayleigh type, operated by oil engine compressors, was installed in a new building in the centre of the island, close by the keeper's sleeping quarters! The character of the blast is one of seven seconds, interval of three seconds, blast of two seconds, followed by an interval of seventy-eight seconds.

The two names, Steep and Flat Holm, may at first appear perfectly obvious, "Holm" being the Norse for island and they being "Steep" and "Flat" respectively. However, the islands are referred to as "Stepanreolice" and "Bradandreolice" in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, meaning Steep Reel Island and Broad Reel Island. This is probably an allusion to their supposed reel-like shape: Steep Holm jagged and armoured backed, rising abruptly from the Severn, and Flat Holm, the broad flat head of some monster. But, if fantasy is the rule of the day, then the islands could just as well be the bones of the giant Gorm, who fell whilst fleeing from his victor Vincent, head of the Belgae.

# Up the Pole with a Spitfire

by Flt. Lt. E. E. BRAILSFORD, B.E.M.

There I was, quietly minding my own business, filling in my football pools, and drinking my tea, when the phone rang and a voice, absolutely reeking of gold braid, said, "Brailsford, this unit has been allocated a Spitfire for exhibition purposes and I'd like it mounting on a pedestal in flying position. Do you think you could do it?"

Five minutes later, my supervisor walked in and said, "Oh Sir! You do look pale. Is something wrong?" "Indeed there is," I replied. "I can't keep my big mouth shut!"

Anyhow, to cut a short story short, I remembered that a certain Sqn. Ldr. Hartwell, an Engineering Officer, had mounted a Spitfire in a similar manner at Royal Air Force, Horsham St. Faith, so, accompanied by Warrant Officer Henington, the Warrant-Officer i/c Station Workshops, we hopped aboard our serviceable aeroplane and "beatled" (Ouch!) off to see him.

Now, I must confess, that the Squadron Leader practically handed everything, including drawings, specifications, suggested improvements, etc., to us on a platter.

Briefly, the plan was to:

(a) Build a reinforced concrete pedestal, strong enough to support approximately 3 tons of Spitfire at an angle of 5° nose down and 10° bank to port, and able to withstand vibrations caused by gusts of wind up to 90 miles per hour attacking the aircraft.

(b) Build a "U" frame which would span from wing root to wing root, fixed by special bolts to the wing attachment points.

(c) Lift the aircraft at an angle onto the pedestal and secure it by the 31 holding down bolts.

(d) Fasten bracing wires from nose to pedestal, tail to pedestal and wings to pedestal, to give an added bonus of strength and security.

Courageous as I am (with six whiskies inside me), I dared not ask A.M.W.D. to manufacture the plinth, as they were up to their necks in new buildings, bricklayers' strikes, work to rules, and all that kind of thing. However, as luck would have it, there was a detachment of those splendid, and I really mean splendid, tradesmen of the R.A.F., the Airfield Construction Branch, on the unit. They were building the new running track and it proved possible to get them to undertake the task of building the plinth. I must say, I was tremendously impressed by the way they tackled it. Within no time, they had dug a hole, approximately ten feet square and six feet deep. The S.W.O. was so impressed by this that he wanted to cover it with branches, twigs, and grass and march the 99th entry across it, Flight Commanders as well! This suggestion was turned down, on the grounds that the other entries were not fit enough to fill it in!



At this stage the airfield construction boys, often referred to as "A.C.B.'s", really got to work. They laid a steel mesh "matting" of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch steel rods, nine feet square, and approximately one foot deep, with rods crossing every nine inches. Four one inch rods, which originated at the base of the mat, were left protruding in the centre, whilst "Ready Mix" concrete was poured in and vibrated with a pneumatic tool, known as a "Poker Vibrator". This was to eliminate internal pockets of air which might have formed in the concrete as it set.

During the next few days, while the concrete was setting, the wood spoilers of Station Workshops made the wooden shutters (moulds) for the tapered column, upon which the Spitfire was to sit. Meanwhile, the blacksmith, and I must say, a blacker smith I have yet to meet, made the reinforcing mesh for the column. An interesting point here, is that the four threaded rods in the column, to which the mounting plate is bolted, are not one-piece rods passing right through the pedestal, but are actually each composed of three pieces, the first of which I have already mentioned. The idea is that allowance must be made for the aircraft vibrating during winds, which might well cause a rigid column to crack. These rods were positioned in the shutters and the shutters erected and strutted to prevent movement, then finally filled with concrete and allowed to set.

In the meantime, those noble exponents of crib, snooker, and darts, the highly skilled tradesmen of Station Workshops, had not been idle (which was none of their own doing). The machine tool setter and operator had manufactured all the special bolts, links, pins, etc., and the blacksmith, a "U" shaped frame of welded steel plate, which would later be fastened to the aircraft wing root bolts, and, ultimately, to the mounting base. The general fitter had prepared the aircraft and mounting slings and finally, the Spitfire had been painted in its authentic World War II camouflage.

At this stage, I think I ought to mention the Spitfire's history. Spitfire Mk. IX, M.K. 356 was an aircraft of No. 443 (R.C.A.F.) Squadron, No. 144 Wing. This Wing was then commanded by Wing Commander J. E. Johnson, D.S.O., D.F.C. It made several sorties over Normandy between April, 1944, and D. Day plus nine, but shortly after this, the squadron records were lost as a result of enemy action.

After the war, the Spitfire stood for many years at the entrance to R.A.F. Hawkinge, before being transferred to No. 1 Radio School.

To cut a long story even shorter, one fine autumn day in 1962, a ten ton mobile crane arrived from No. 7 M.U. Quedgley. The aircraft was skilfully lifted into position by the operator and, due to the exact positioning of the lifting slings giving an angle of 5° nose down and 10° list to port, it slid into place without any difficulty, and was soon firmly bolted down.

The bracing wires were then measured and taken to an engineering firm in Bridgwater, who machine swaged the adjustable turn-buckles onto the ends.

Both B.B.C. and I.T.V. had expressed a desire to televise the mounting ceremony. Never having done this job before, we thought it prudent to lift the aircraft off and remount it for them the following day. This was to avoid having any amusing incidents or accidents shown on their candid cameras. After all, if Chiefy had trapped his fingers, I doubt if even the most rabid "kitchen sink" producer would have recorded what he said!

I must say, however, that the coverage given by them, was excellent. They preceded the show with true films of the Battle of Britain and then showed the aircraft being placed in position.

I have often heard visitors remark how impressive the Spitfire looks on its mounting. This, I am sure you will all agree, is a tribute to the skilful manner in which the personnel of Station Workshops and the detachment of No. 5004 Airfield Construction Branch carried out the job.

The sequel to the story is that the Wing Commander Admin., after a particularly hectic morning and possibly a hectic night before, suddenly looked out of his window and saw the pilotless Spitfire about to "beat up" his office.

It was then decided to instal the pilot who was named "Flt. Lt. Christie" his head having previously done duty as a hat model in Weston-super-Marc.

*Editor's Postscript*

Flt. Lt. Brailsford, B.E.M., enlisted in December, 1938, as a u/t Flight Mechanic, and was on one of the first entries at Royal Air Force, Locking.

During the war, he spent four years in the Sudan and Egypt and, from 1952 to 1955, he was seconded to the Royal Pakistan Air Force, where he was awarded the B.E.M. for meritorious service.

He was commissioned in the Technical Engineering Branch in January, 1956.

During his tour at Locking, he has been in charge of Training Workshops, M.T. Flight, and Station Workshops, and has also taken an active interest in Station Hockey and the running of the P.S.I. Motor Boat.

However, I think that most of us will remember him for his appearances on the stage in amateur dramatics and with the Y.M.C.A. Shows.

We wish him a pleasant tour in Aden.



## British Grand Prix, 1963

by A/A J. BENFORD (98th Entry)

I think that it is the aim of all motoring enthusiasts to attend a Grand Prix. However, here at R.A.F. Locking it is not the simplest of things to get to a Grand Prix.

I have been a keen follower of the sport of motor racing for well over five years, have visited a large number of British circuits, and have seen a varied collection of cars in action, from a 500 c.c. Cooper-JAP, to a 6.75 litre Ford Galaxie, but, although I have seen many International events, until last year, I had never seen a *Grande Epreuve*, earlier in the year, I had visited Silverstone to see the International Trophy Race, and, with this trip behind me, I knew what to expect.

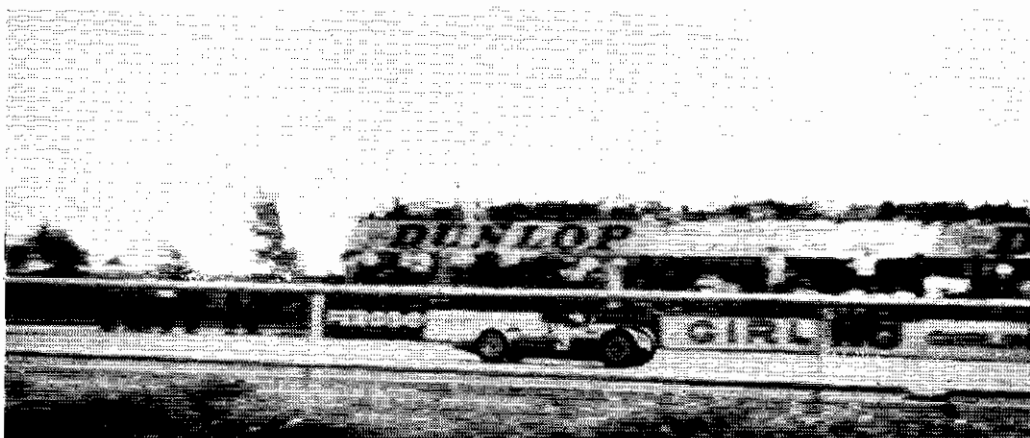
Before I began to make plans to overcome my travel problems, one small obstacle had to be cleared; I had to get a pass, with tongue in cheek, I approached my flight commander, who very kindly consented to give me a pass for the day.

To travel to Silverstone is relatively simple, the journey being quite straightforward, but relying to a great extent on the generosity of other people, since the journey from Oxford is completed by means of hitch-hiking.

My journey began at 5.30 in the morning, when I got up. After washing, dressing, and collecting together all I required for the day, I left the camp at six o'clock to cycle into Weston to catch the six-thirty train.

The train journey was quite uneventful and I arrived at Didcot at about nine o'clock, where I changed trains and eventually reached Oxford at just after ten o'clock.





*Bandini in the Italian owned B.R.M.*

It is virtually impossible to get a lift in the centre of Oxford, and, as a result of my previous journey, I knew that I had to get a bus to the outskirts of the town.

Once outside Oxford, it was about fifteen minutes before I got my first lift, it was a heavy lorry, which took me about three miles on my journey, then he turned off and I had to start walking again. It was only after I had walked another mile, that I got my second lift. It was in a Fiat 500 and was to take me all the way to Silverstone.

However, the journey was not all plain sailing, for, some four miles outside Silverstone, we joined on the end of a traffic queue, and it was over an hour before I eventually reached the circuit, by which time, the saloon car race had just finished, and the thunder of the Ford Galaxies was just settling.

During the break that followed, we were treated to a display of aerobatics and to the sight of a Simca 1,000 being driven around Silverstone on two wheels!

After this break, the British Grand Prix took place.

All the leading works teams were present with the exception of A.T.S.

At the start the initial leaders were Jack Brabham and Dan Gurney, both driving Brabhams, but their lead was short lived since, on the fourth lap, Jim Clark in his Lotus took the lead, never to be lost for the rest of the race. When both the Brabhams had retired, the B.R.M., driven by Graham Hill, and the Ferrari, driven by John Surtees, fought closely for second place, until the B.R.M. began to pull away. Another battle, further back, was in progress between Ginther and Bandini both in B.R.M.s and Bonnier in a Cooper.

On the last lap, the B.R.M. of Graham Hill ran out of fuel and, although he freewheeled to the finish, he lost his second place to Surtees, thus making the final order Clark (Lotus), Surtees (Ferrari), and Hill (B.R.M.).

The final race of the day, saw the first British appearance of the 330P. Ferrari, although the race was won by Salvadori in a Cooper-Monaco. Also in this race a tragedy occurred; Christabel Carlisle, driving a special bodied Austin-Healey Sprite, lost control at the exit of Woodcote corner and slid across the track, striking the pit counter and, in the process, killing a marshal. The car rebounded onto the track, just as Mike Parkes in the 330 P. Ferrari and Jack Sears in a 250 G.T.O. Ferrari rounded Woodcote side by side. Sears took the inside of the track and Parkes had to take to the grass verge. It should be mentioned that both cars were travelling at about one hundred miles an hour at this time.

When the race had finished, I began the journey back to Locking. I soon got a lift with an American, who took me to Bicester, where he turned off from my route, so I walked through the town and, when I had left the town, I received another lift in a Daimler V-8 saloon—quite a step up from a Fiat 500!

Unfortunately, all good things must end, and I left the Daimler when he turned off to go to Towcester. Luckily, I had just crossed the main road, when I got another lift into Oxford, in fact, right to the railway station!

I eventually reached the camp at about ten-thirty: I was very tired, but I had seen a Grand Prix, and I had achieved my goal.

Now, I have to see Le Mans!

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## NOTICE

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### **R.A.F. ARTS AND HANDICRAFTS EXHIBITION, 1964**

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ENTRIES FOR THE ABOVE EXHIBITION—TO BE HELD AT THE AIR MINISTRY IN MAY, 1964—WILL BE GIVEN A PREVIEW AT R.A.F. LOCKING ON 30TH APRIL AND 1ST MAY.

FOR ENTRY FORMS AND FURTHER DETAILS, PLEASE APPLY TO SQN. LDR. BUCHANAN OR FLT. LT. LAMB.



*A "Times" photograph*

# The Great Balloon Race

(on the last day of the 1963 National Gliding Championships)

by P/O J. S. WILLIAMSON

Every year a hundred or more of the top glider pilots compete for the title of National Champion. Lasting ten days, the contest is won by the pilot who gains most points for distance and speed in the different tasks that are set each day. Course lengths of over 200 miles are not uncommon and in good weather a pilot may log 40 hours and over a thousand miles during the contest. On the last day of the 1963 Nationals a strong East wind dictated the task for the day: a race from the base in Hampshire to R.A.F. Chivenor, North Devon.

Immediately after the briefing the pilots gathered outside the big tent to choose their take-off times. The weather was good but was expected to deteriorate later. Optimists calculated that they would take  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hours for the 136 mile race. The cautious decided on about 3 hours, and, since the best speed would be made in the best weather the choice of start time was critical.

At 11.15 a.m. the gliders, behind their Auster and Chipmunk tugs, began to take off. After a ground run of less than 100 yards they climbed quickly to 2,000 feet. The tugs rocked their wings, the gliders released and were freed to find their thermals and pick their own courses. At first the thermals were weak and broken and it was difficult to stay upwind of the start line. As conditions improved the gliders climbed, singly and in small groups, until high enough to turn and speed downwind across the line, when observers clocked them out. Others at Chivenor would log them in, and the glider with the shortest elapsed time would be the winner.

No. 86 left at 12.30 p.m. The red and white sailplane, 60 foot wings flexing in the gusty air, stormed across the line at 90 knots. His two way radio echoed the call signs of his R.A.F. team-mates, some of whom had already started and were well down the course, and confirmed that the weather was as good as they had expected. Two minutes later No. 10 started. After four good tasks he was only a fraction behind No. 86 on total points. The Championship lay between these two and probably depended on the day's flight. With the wind behind them and the thermals growing stronger, they watched the familiar landmarks below go by: Boscombe Down with its huge gleaming white runway, Salisbury Cathedral, spire foreshortened by perspective, the A.30 to Shaftesbury crammed with Whitsun traffic crawling to the West Country, the regimental crests cut in the chalk hills at Fovant.

"Eight Six to crew—fifty-two miles out, going well."

"Roger Eight Six."

"Only forty minutes elapsed so that's an average of—78 m.p.h.! The record's only 65—this can't last!" But the others were still ahead and going fast, so perhaps it could.

No. 10 had made a good start too, but was in trouble now. He had missed a couple of thermals and the lower he got in the turbulent air the more difficult it was to find them. At last, at only 1,000 feet he contacted a good one, climbed up and was on his way again. The delay was nearly five minutes, and at this speed five minutes would mean a lot of points. He couldn't afford to do that again.

"Mallard to crew. Just had a hasty scrape near Boscombe but O.K. now."

"Roger Mallard—Eight Six reported from near Shaftesbury ten minutes ago and going well."

"Roger—out." The pilot doesn't waste time on radio chatter, and switches off quickly to concentrate on the flying.

The R.A.F. pair were calling from near Taunton.

"Four Five to One Seven Five. What do you make of that stuff ahead? Looks a bit clamped."

"Roger Four Five. I'm going south a bit to try and get round it."

"Roger."

No. 86 looked ahead across the Somerset plain, over Yeovil, and beyond trying to assess the prospects. The glider pilots' ideal is a good mixture of blue sky and white cumulus clouds. Too much blue may mean no thermals; too much cloud and the sun can't get through to warm the ground. The cloudless sky ahead meant a diversion right or left. The decision had to be made quickly, and once made could not be reversed. In both directions it looked reasonable, but what of the clamp near Taunton? To the left was more off course but the broken ground around Honiton should throw up good thermals.

"Eight Six to crew—going left of track—should be O.K."

"Roger Eight Six." The crew plotted his position on their map and decided to move south to the A.30 in order to follow his track more closely.

The obvious hot-spots for thermals are the towns and villages. Sherborne and Yeovil both lay in the sun and No. 86 flew confidently over each in turn. Nothing there, though, and he was getting a bit low. The clouds, marking the tops of the thermals were too far above him to be a reliable guide and when Crewkerne produced nothing, he realised the situation was getting desperate. Some heath land to the west of the town looked good and at only 800 feet he felt the first upward surge. Too broken to be used properly, it only just held him at the same height as he was drifted westwards towards Chard. There the ground was really rough and the thermals badly broken up. Barely holding his height he drifted further into the bad country. At last, near Upottery airfield, he spotted a small cliff facing the east wind. He flew across, sinking to less than 200 feet before finding and sharing the lifting wind with a crowd of rooks and a buzzard from the woods below.

"Mallard to crew—I'm at Taunton. A bit of clamp ahead but I can get through easily from this height. Heard anything from Eight Six?"

"Nothing since his Shaftesbury call. He said he was going to go south a bit."

"Roger—I don't know why. It's perfectly O.K. on track."

The sun beat steadily into the valley in front of No. 86 as he waited and hoped for the thermal that must surely break loose soon. After ten minutes over the little cliff he felt the first surge, then a steady lifting and he swung quickly into a steep turn. At that height the thermal was very small and tight turns, accurately flown, were needed to stay with it. Quickly the lift increased until, at 800 feet per minute, he was lofting up into the sky again, and back into the race.

"Eight Six to crew—forty miles to go, 4,000 feet. Just climbed up out of a hole in the ground."

Faintly back—"Roger Eight Six. Thought we had lost you. Well done."

"Thanks. Final glide soon. Out."

When No. 10 calculated that he could reach Chivenor in one glide he set off under a line of good clouds. Soon he was flying as fast as he dared, through strong thermals, and realised he would get in easily. The estuary of the Two Rivers opened up ahead and he was racing high above the mud flats and the low tide. He could see a line of sailplanes on the grass. Was 86 already there? Red fuselage, white wings, same type. Closer now, read the number on the fin. 205! Another of the R.A.F. team. Swinging round with a thousand feet to spare after crossing the finish line at 100 knots, No. 10 dropped into the circuit, flew round and landed by the others. He rolled to a stop, and looked back along the course. In the far distance he could see another sailplane.

"Eight Six—ten miles to go on the final glide." No reply. He was too far ahead and too low to be heard. The view ahead was rather alarming. His calculator declared that he had enough height for the run in to the goal, but with the strong wind behind him the angle to the goal looked awfully flat. More rough country around South Molton but he wasn't worried about that any more. Barnstaple was in the bag, but what about the estuary beyond? Over the town, four miles to go, and he might just do it. Over the estuary he flew smack into Barnstaple's thermal. That clinched it. Nose down, save every second, airfield boundary, sailplanes on the green grass, finish-line observer waves, it's over. He pulled up and round and landed beside No. 10.

"How long?"

He opened the cockpit canopy. "Two hours ten—I got stuck rather badly."

"Oh dear, what bad luck!—I beat you by eight minutes. No. 45 did it in 1 hour 50 minutes, a new record at 71 m.p.h."

The new Champion walked back to his blue and white No. 10. "The Great Balloon Race" was over.

# What's in a Name?

by GALFRIDUS

The study of the origins of family names is at once quite simple and very difficult: its simplicity lies in the fact that surnames can only come into existence in a few well-understood ways; its difficulty is due to the remarkable perversions which names undergo in common speech, to the fine disregard for orthographic regularity displayed by our forefathers, to local variations in pronunciation, and to many other minor causes.

The necessity for surnames became apparent towards the end of the twelfth century when records of business transactions and legal proceedings began to be kept, although they did not become true family names until about a hundred years later. There was little point in issuing a warrant for the arrest of a man called John when about a fifth of the population was called John, and so a second name was added to distinguish him from the others. If we examine any medieval roll of names, we see at once that four such people as:

Roger filius Edwardi  
Richard atte Forde  
Robert le Mercere  
Ralph Goodfellowe

exhaust the possibilities of English name-making. That is to say, every surname must be (i) personal, from a sire or ancestor; (ii) local, from a place of residence; (iii) occupative, from the trade or office; or (iv) a nickname from bodily attributes, character or idiosyncrasies. The majority of names are easily recognisable as belonging to one or other of these classes. For example, Cooper, Mercer, Smith, Taylor and Wright are clearly occupative, while Edwards, Stevens, Jones, Peters and Adams are equally obviously personal, the final "s" being merely the genitive case-ending.

Local names and nicknames are sometimes not so easy to recognise, because frequently the words from which they are derived have become obsolete or corrupted. It is not obvious that Latcham is a corruption of "latch-man", a medieval word for a crossbowman, nor that Morris was once Mareis which meant "marsh". The origin of Duffey is Du Fay which means "by the beach-tree", and hence Duffey is really the same name as Beach. Similarly, Curtis was originally Curteis or Courtois which means kind and gentle, whereas Bone is really Bon which means much the same thing.

Some names appear to have a derivation quite different from the real one. For instance, the timorous-sounding Fear is really the French word *fier* which means proud or fierce, and in medieval times a "lamb" was a hired thug. These examples show that names are

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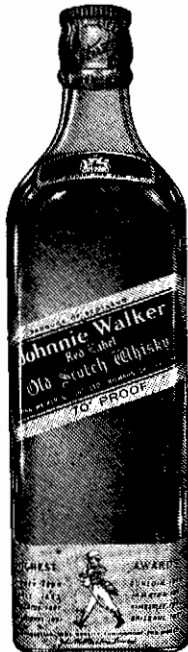


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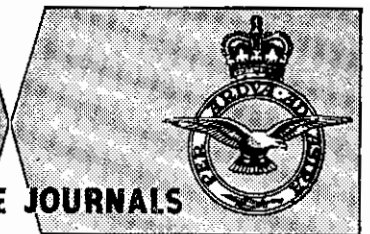
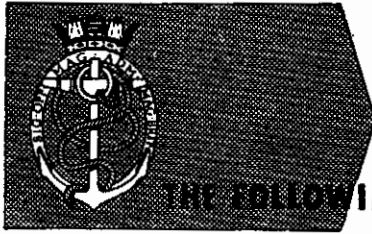
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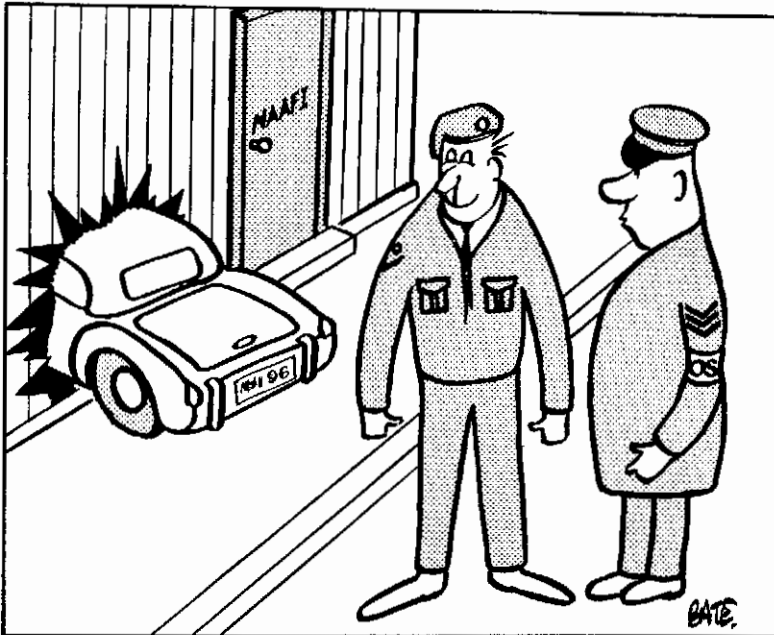
not always what they seem. It is easy to be led on to entirely the wrong track by jumping to conclusions, and the Victorian text-books on patronymatology abound with false derivations which a little research would quickly have disproved. One is apt to assume, for instance, that the original Shore lived by the sea. While this is true, it is not how the name arose. It is, in fact, a corruption of the Saxon name Siweard which became progressively Seward, Sheward, Showard, Shoard, Shord and finally Shore. Fifty years ago, the word "sewer" was regularly pronounced "shore" in Somerset and Devon, and Shoreditch was originally Sewer-dythe, or "sewer dyke". Furthermore, Shore is not a variation of Shaw as many people think it is; a "shaw" is a wooded hill.

Sometimes it is possible to place a local name with some accuracy. For example, there is only one Hannaford in the British Isles and that is a tiny hamlet in North Devon. On the other hand, there are twelve Newnhams, five Nelsons and sixteen Hartleys in England, and the problem of determining which one we are looking for is enormous. Some names do not look like local names but in fact are. One is tempted to look for the origin of Playfoot in some whimsical nickname, but it is really a corruption of Playford, a village near Ipswich. The reverse can also be true: a name may appear to be local but have quite a different origin. There is a place called Martindale in Westmorland, but the surname is derived from the word "mertindael" which was the medieval equivalent of a cattle auctioneer. Scott is another name which it is easy to misread. No doubt some Scotts are descended from Scotsmen, but the ancestors of the noble Scottish family of that name were English. Their name was originally de Escot, which is the old spelling of Ascot.

To illustrate how surnames first came into existence and developed, let us consider a particular example. In 1237, an old man named William died leaving three sons of whom the eldest was also called William. This son inherited part of his father's manor of Rammesden in Kent, and he in turn died in 1268 also leaving a son, William. Here is where the confusion arose because this latest member of the family was known both as William de Rammesden and as William filz William. However, his father had also been known as William filz William, and he had by this time two cousins, one called William filz William and the other William de Rammesden, and when a summons for William filz William de Rammesden to attend the Scottish wars in 1298 arrived, there was some doubt as to who was intended. Now it so happened that all the members of the family were pretty unsavoury characters—all, that is, except for one, who was renowned for his civility and generosity. When the summons arrived, therefore, it was recorded that William de Rammesden le Bone would be attending the king in Scotland. This William had a son John, who was evidently also a good man, because he too was known as Rammesden le Bone. It would not have been surprising if his descendants had ended up with the name Ramsden or Bone, but, in fact, in the early years of the fourteenth century, there were already several families of these two names in Kent, and John's son Henry was distinguished from them by the additional

name le Bel because he was strikingly handsome. By 1375, the family had forgotten the names Ramsden, Bone and Fitzwilliam, and the surname Bell had come into existence.

It was fashionable at one time to claim descent from the Norman followers of William the Conqueror, who landed at Hastings. Why anyone should wish to be associated with a band of brigands who were the scum of Europe is difficult to imagine, but it is now known with some certainty that there are only four families in England which can claim such a descent, in the male line. Many names, which are clearly of Norman extraction, arrived in England during the twelfth century in response to an appeal from the king for some Norman support for his authority. These families were granted great possessions in return for their loyalty to the crown, and this is why so many noble families bear names like Montagu, St. Maur, Devereux, Lascelles and Grosvenor. Nowadays, the fashion is to show descent from the Englishmen who were already here when the Conquerer arrived, and a name like Greenfield (corruption of Grunwald) is better than Neville, Snodgrass (Snotingras) than Grenville. Perhaps it is better still to have a name like Padget, which has six different derivations, of which two are Norman and two are Anglo-Saxon. That way we shall never be out of date.



I USUALLY GET OUT OF MY CAR TO BUY CIGARETTES



252 S.A.A. McCrackers, H.,  
No. 1 (Apprentice) Wing,  
Royal Air Force,  
Locking,  
Somerset.  
February, 1964.

Sire,

#### Promotions and Publicity

I have the honour respectfully to thank you for your recognition of my past services in promoting me to S.A.A. on the 8th February, 1964. The carrot was great.

The publicity of late in the local and national newspapers gave me food for more thought on a topic which I overheard you and Mr. McDonagh discussing some time ago, namely the remarkable lack of knowledge of my personal history by the Apprentices of the Wing.

With your permission sire, I will dictate a "Short History of Hamish" (I already have a volunteer scribe) and submit it for your approval as an appendix to this letter.

I have the honour to be,

Sire,

Your obedient Servant,



(H. McCrackers),  
252 S.A.A.

Wing Commander J. A. Heatherill,  
Officer Commanding,  
No. 1 Wing,  
R.A.F., Locking.

### Editor's Comment

It would appear to be fitting, at this point, to offer our congratulations to Hamish on his well-deserved promotion to the rank of Sergeant, and I am sure, that in so doing, we echo the sentiments of you all.

You may be aware that Hamish McCrackers was adopted, at the end of 1953, as the mascot of No. 1 (Apprentice) Wing, which had just then arrived from Cranwell, and that he was purchased by the Apprentices themselves, by whom, of course, he is still maintained.

What may not be so apparent, however, is the reason why Group Captain Bruce Robinson, C.B.E., the Commandant at that time, chose that particular brand of animal and how it acquired its extraordinary and seemingly geographically inappropriate name.

The answer to the first question is simple—it was obviously necessary to obtain a mascot superior to, that is, larger than, the Halton goat, and, in this, Group Captain Robinson was undoubtedly successful.

The reasons for the name are less obvious, apart from the fact that Hamish is a Shetland pony.

Actually, "Crackers" was his name at birth, appropriate enough, as the happy day was 1st April, 1952, while the "Hamish" and the "Mc" derive from the Gaelic form of the Christian name of the Officer Commanding No. 1 Wing—Wing Commander James Morgan, D.S.O., and from the existence of a strong Scottish contingent on the Staff at that time.

However, perhaps Hamish can explain it all better himself.

## A short History of Hamish

Strange as it may seem to the uneducated—I was born and NOT issued. I well remember the occasion, for I was very small at the time and I suppose that it must have been a blue sky for I've been mucking about with R.A.F. blue for a long time now. Anyway, it happened on All Fools Day, being the first of April, 1952. What a day to get clobbered with! Hence the name CRACKERS and being a Scot, the natural prefix, Mac. Still, I first saw the light of day in Scotland, which is near England and I guess that I was earmarked for export immediately my mother saw my skewbald complexion, shaggy haircut, efficient teeth, sharp hooves, nasty temper and rolling eye, because after I'd been sculling around "ye banks and braes" for eighteen months or so, along came this mon wi' a daft hat on who said: "Hoots Mon, ye're a braw laddie, we'll ye no come along wi' me and jine the colours?" and I, being April Fool by birth and Crackers by name, having the spirit of adventure hot within me, came down to Locking and swore—Gosh I'd a right to—didn't you? I learned later that the man largely responsible for my being pressed into service and the man who was later to become my dear friend and benefactor, was the late Sir Ian Orr-Ewing, M.P. for Weston-super-Mare, so you see I never did have to write to my M.P. for I used to see him quite regularly. Anyway on 25th November, 1953, the Apprentices of the day having dug deep into their pockets with hot, sticky fingers and having parted with some of their ill gotten loot, I signed on for 30 years. Boy, they really saw me coming!

I've often wondered why I was mustered as Agricultural Assistant u/t Ceremonial Mascot. Perhaps the frequent visits of the chaps with wheelbarrows had something to do with it. Still, I dropped the u/t title with the graduation of the 68th Entry in April of 1954 but the wheelbarrows kept coming. (I believe that it was a bumper year for dahlias, but when I went to have a "butchers" at the "Old Man's" garden, he wouldn't let me in and stronger wire was used on my paddock.—Gratitude.—Huh!) However, on the 22nd of May of this same year I found a super new paddock, when just after reveille a feller with a white dog collar on waved to me and came out of his stable to play. Oh what a time we had, jumping about the flower beds and running amongst the potatoes. It was great, but like all the others of the two-legged variety he soon got fed up and took off. (I was later informed that this was one of the local vicars who was not actually overjoyed to find me "on parade" in his paddock. Anyway, my herd leader at the time, Groupy Robinson, now Air Commodore Bruce Robinson, C.B.E., wrote him a nice letter and detailed four volunteers to put the damage right—good lads all.)

In June of 1954 I took the band to Earl's Court and the Royal Tournament. Whilst there I was stabled with the gee-gee's of the Household Cavalry; not a bad crowd for sassenachs, but a bit on the horsey side. There was a lot of marching to be done but nothing really untoward. I resolved even then, that one day, I would take some of the starch out of a queer looking bearded individual who ponced around with another herd. During 1954 I also made several local appearances for the benefit of the natives and the prestige of the School: the Battle of Britain Parade, the Cheddar Horse Show, and miscellaneous illegal sortics after lights out. The last were in order to visit numerous girl friends in the area, despite the wire surrounding the paddock becoming higher and stronger—but just when I was really starting to show my paces, they did it. What a rotten trick. Do you know they introduced me to a chap called VET—I haven't felt the same since!

Following a reasonably quiet period in my career, during which I tried unsuccessfully to get a transparent waterproof coat to wear on parade in inclement weather, and was involved in some literary rudery with that odd individual of the other place (Halton) whom I spoke about earlier, I was promoted to L.A.A. This occurred on 6th December, 1955.

In the early part of 1956, many were the writings in books, periodicals and newspapers of my activities. Everyone seemed to want to know how many well wishing fingers I'd nibbled and how many shins had been scraped a bit, not how even tempered, kind and obedient I am. Well I suppose that's journalism.

Still the months dragged on, '56 spread into '57; rumours of promotion were abroad, but because of long inspections, haircut trouble and periods of sloth when I had to rely on the pony major for support, '57 went into '58 and '59. I wasn't completely inactive during this period—I attended all the best Annual Functions and at least once a month, I had the usual entertainment of watching people jumping round the totem pole on the square. Then it happened. Another spate of press engagements, pets' club lunches and more rumours of promotion which were realised on 8th September, 1959. When I got my long awaited C.A.A.

Nothing much occurred after this for a while, except for an improvement in quarters (in keeping with my promotion) and a strengthening of the fence surrounding them (not in keeping with it). Perhaps they think that I'll be able to grow 'em again—only wish I could, then no matter how strong or how high they built it, I'd have a little nibble here and a little nibble there, cause they wouldn't be able to stop me having a little nibble, but no, this is purely wishful thinking.

In June, 1961, at the Royal Tournament, I saw him. There he was, Lewis II, that smelly scented Billy from the place we don't talk about. For years I'd nurtured the hope and here he was, right in range. I well remember the excited tremble I got, just before he got his—right in the fuselage. I pranged him real proper in front of thousands. All the ah's and the oh's from the assembly were as nectar to my ego, the culmination of years of secret longing expended in one well placed strike—on reflection though I sometimes wish that the target presented had been the tail unit. I got three extra bales of hay for that caper but because of it I again languished in the shadows, a neglected embarrassment.

Then came a few new faces to brighten the scene of my off duty environment, for in January of 1963 I noticed an eagle eye peering at me from the "B" Sqn. C.O.'s office which overlooks my paddock. I wandered over to have a gander at this strange and gleaming pupil—it was definitely speculative. I glared back. Should I have a go? But no, better investigate further. It's a good thing that I did, for my investigations revealed that this particular peeper belonged to Sqn. Ldr. "Buckshot" Buchanan who, when the mood is on him, shoots anything that moves—hence the speculative gleam I'd observed. Needless to say the Squadron Leader and I get on very well together (I keep out of his way).

Later in the year came another Mac in the person of W.O. McDonagh who comes and has a daily chat and varies the old dict a bit with a packet of biscuits or a nice carrot. I must say that things looked up a bit with his arrival. Perhaps it's because with a name like McDonagh he also is an exile—I must ask him sometime. He's my pal; he brings me carrots and biscuits. Wish I had more pals—I SAY I WISH I HAD MORE PALS.

Next came another likely looking candidate in the form of Wing Commander J. A. Heatherill. At the mention HEATHER, nostalgia overwhelmed me and I resolved to have a natter with him at the first opportunity. (Could it possibly be?) The very next morning I waited for him and as he approached his Wing aitchque I neighed over:

"Say J.A., how's about the old S.A.?"

Do you know, he immediately summoned a scribe in the form of Sergeant Hurst who was commissioned to take my dictation in a letter of appeal to the Management. The outcome of this was on the 8th February, 1964: another parade, another carrot, another stripe, and the title S.A.A. McCrackers.

In closing I must take this opportunity of addressing all the Apprenti foaled at Locking, for all those of the past, those of the present and those yet to come, work hard, work well and good luck. Lang may yer lum reek!

(HAMISH.)

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# Standing Order Payments

by F. C. Booley

**Public Relations Officer, Lloyds Bank Limited**

Many people who have had bank accounts all their lives still think they have exhausted the benefits of a banking service when they have paid in their money to the bank and drawn cheques for their disbursements. Banks offer many other valuable services. One of these is the system of standing order payments.

Most of us have certain regularly recurring payments to make—annual subscriptions to societies, insurance premiums, mortgage repayments, or hire-purchase instalments. If we have a current bank account we do not need to remember when each payment is due; we don't have to draw a cheque for the amount, to write a covering letter, or to address and post the envelope. We merely sign a single instruction to the bank to make each successive payment on our behalf. We need do nothing more. When each payment is due the bank debits our account with the amount and credits it to the bank account of the person or organisation that is to receive the money.

Standing order payments can be used for a wide variety of purposes. For instance, we may have obtained a loan from the bank which we wish to pay off over a year or two. We can give a standing order to transfer a certain sum from current to loan account each month—preferably on pay day. We don't miss what we've never had!

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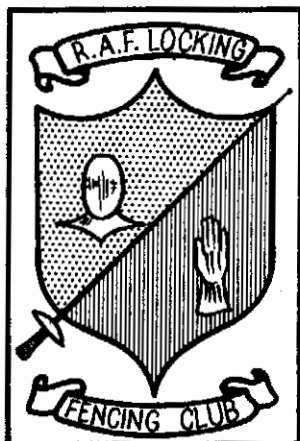
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# Locking Fencing Club



1964 finds us rich in numbers and latent ability, but somewhat lacking in experience—a perennial problem. Inevitably our talented fencers are posted, usually in “clusters”. Our most recent losses include such talented fencers as J/T’s Pete Norman and Simon Lodge (Ex 97th Entry). We wish them every success in both technical and fencing careers.

Coupled with our farewells, we would also welcome to the club our newly elected president, Sqn. Ldr. Hannaford.

Last term’s activities were largely confined to the coaching of our new members by Sgt. Larvan and Mr. McKenzie. Progress has been good, and we should, by half term, have a Ladies’ Foil Team, and a Junior Schools’ Team capable of making a determined bid for the McEwen Trophy.

Competition for the Blair-Oliphant Trophy, as usual, provided some very stimulating fencing. Pete Norman emerged the eventual winner, with, for the third consecutive year, Alan Larvan as runner up. Our thanks to Air Commodore Disbrey for presenting the trophies, and for the interest he has shown in the club, since its inception.

The culmination of the Christmas term was marked by a most enjoyable party held in the Salle. The lady members did us really proud with some excellent refreshments.

## Spring Term, 1964

A good start was made in 1964 when the No. 1 Wing Team defeated Weston-super-Mare Boys’ Grammar School by 15 assaults to 3. Good practice against rather limited opposition.

In mid January, we send a team to Uxbridge and attempt to win the Inter-Unit Cup, or, at least, retain the Junior Inter-Unit Cup.

The Youth Schools’ Championships take place this year at Halton in mid March. We hope our team is successful. The Novices Plaque Competition will precede this event to provide some competitive practice, and also help the team selectors.

Club members now sport a distinctive green and yellow badge when fencing. It is hoped that this badge will become a symbol to be reckoned with in the years to come.

## Membership

Our numbers have doubled since August last year, but we still have room for more, especially from the adult wing and permanent staff. We would also like a few more lady members. Enquiries welcome in Hut 280 any Thursday evening at 20.00 hours.

## Postscript

Best wishes to all club members in 1964. May all your endeavours be “on target”.

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## Table Tennis Club

This season has been a particularly successful one so far. In the local North Mendip League the "A" team is leading the first division while the "B" team are fifth in the same division.

In the Youth Schools' Table Tennis Championships held at Hereford last November, Locking were runners-up to a very powerful Hereford side. A/A Randel was beaten only once, and then by the Hereford No. 1 player. The team consisted of Randel, Wales and Clulow. These three players have been invited to play for the R.A.F. Colts side at Hereford in February.

Tribute must be paid to Mr. Bill Stevens a qualified coach, for the help and interest he has shown in the club. Any Apprentices who are interested in playing competitive table tennis and improving their game should contact A/A Randel, A/A Rolls or other members of the club, as we are in need of some new young players.



## Hockey

The Apprentice Hockey 1st XI team has, to date, played ten fixtures against teams from the surrounding area. Notable wins have been those against Old Bristolians (4-0) and the Y.M.C.A. Hockey Club (4-1).

Despite the ideal weather for the season, cancellations have arisen once again. Bearing in mind the matches unplayed, the 1st XI have acquitted themselves admirably against the strong opposition from the local sides.

The Arborfield Winter Games provided an exciting, but inconclusive match. Both sides were equally strong, in attack as in defence. Once the 1st XI had settled down to accurate and open play, the game then moved into the Arborfield goal area, but to no avail. The final result (0-0) was a fair result, but showed that the final thrust to goal can be all important in such a competition.

The Under 18 team have played only four fixtures to date. It is hoped that the 106th Entry can provide players for what has been previously, an active team. At the time of writing, the preliminary round of the Junior Championships is looming up against Hereford. Hereford have fielded a strong team in the past, but it is hoped that Locking will be able to show their superiority and move into the semi-finals (and the finals!) which are to be played at Halton. Good luck to the Under 18 team.

## Road Walking

This season three Apprentices, A/A Stockley (99th Entry), A/A Sedman and A/A Hanna (102nd Entry) gained Road Walking Association Badges for completing 6 miles in one hour. A/A Sedman has had a very successful season, winning the County Junior Road Walking Championship at Exeter on 8th February.

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# Cross-Country Running

by **REV. J. KNOWLES-BROWN**

**Off. i/c Cross-Country Running**

The enthusiasm which exists in the Apprentice team is founded more on its possible achievements in the future than on any actual achievements in the past.

In its recent history the team has lost some good runners, notably L.A.A. Clark (95th), and more recently C.A.A. Watling and S.A.A. Stachniczek (97th). This leaves behind a team of enthusiastic but less experienced and less developed runners. Time and a good deal of hard training, however, will tell and there is great hope for the future. A good deal of thanks will ultimately be due to Cpl. Moloney in this success.

It is good to see virtually a complete Youth team developing from the 106th Entry alone.

This season the Apprentice team have competed against Millfield School, Weston Grammar School, Chepstow, Junior Leaders and Bristol A.C. The only team win was against Weston Grammar School but notable individual runs were made by A/A's Swanston, Dixon and Barnes.

The course record for this season is held by A/T Doc of Chepstow at 24.32 mins. for the 4½ miles. This was very nearly equalled by A/A Swanston (101st) with a time of 24.50 mins.

The season, however, has been a great success for the Station team. Last season this team was almost non-existent. Now it has developed into a really strong force much to be reckoned with. Except for two occasions when it was unable to field a full team it has remained unbeaten. The Station team has competed against Compton Bassett, Melksham, Yatesbury, Chivenor, St. Athan and Hullavington. Cpl. Price has made many notable runs.

In the R.A.F. Championships last year the Station came ninth. This year we have every hope of doing much better—despite the unhappy loss through a sudden illness of Cpl. Elgie who has been a constant drive and support to both Apprentice and Station teams.

# Handicrafts Club

Throughout the autumn and winter months, the Handicrafts Club has met regularly in the Locking Society Building. Before Christmas there was a high membership, with the lathe in great demand for making fruit bowls and similar items for Christmas presents.

In the spring term a scheme was started whereby a qualified instructor takes two classes a week; one basic and one advanced; tuition is free and the most popular items under construction are record player cabinets and guitars.

The Handicrafts Club is still looking for new members; the facilities available are excellent and an instructor is there on Tuesday and Thursday evenings to give advice.



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## The Aircraft Recognition Club

The Aircraft Recognition Club has had a very successful season this year. The first event on the calendar was a visit to R.A.F. Colerne for the Battle of Britain Air Display. This was followed by participation in the Air Britain Competition and in spite of very heavy opposition from other Service units the club gained second place. This gave members the urge to try even harder in the All-England Competition. In this event we gained second place, being beaten only by the Royal Netherlands Air Force, who won the competition for the twenty-ninth time. This was a tremendous achievement, showing that the Thursday training nights had proved fruitful.

Apart from these highlights, the club has had some very interesting rivalry from the local Royal Observer Corps, and some interesting film shows. Several new members have been recruited, and with their aid we hope to make the 1964-65 season even more successful.

However, the club needs new members, either experienced or novice, and in return for your support can promise some interesting visits. If you are interested, why not come along to a meeting.

## Scouts and Guides

Meeting, it ought to be emphasised, separately, Scouts and Guides have had a chequered existence at Locking, their success being dependent not only upon the enthusiasm of their members, but, also, on the availability and willingness of scouters and guiders to give a lead in the work that is being done.

The Group consists of Rovers, Seniors, Scouts, and Cubs, the Company having Guides and Brownies, and whilst there are no outstanding events to record, all have played their part in maintaining, not always easily, the high standards set by the Movement.

The Rover Crew has made its mark in the district, offering help in many places, and scoring two County successes by gaining first place in the Swimming Gala relay event, and in the County Hike Championship.

An immediate problem faces the Group—that of finding a replacement for the Group Scoutmaster who will be leaving Locking shortly.

There's a welcome for you, and possibly a job to do, if you are interested. Hut 291 for the Scouts, and 288 for the Guides.

## .303 Shooting

The .303 Shooting Club has again had a successful season.

At the 1963 Youth Schools' Championships, held at Bisley, the R.A.F. Locking team came second. Outstanding was A/A Foster (97th Entry) who was the individual youth champion.

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## Ex-Apprentice Corner

### **BAWDSEY (Agent: J/T BESTWICK)**

New Year's Day was the occasion of the engagement of J/T BESTWICK to Miss Daphne Anning. Congratulations and best wishes for the future.

#### **Postings:**

Cpl. Tech. BALL and J/T's GLEDHILL and MILLER have been posted to R.A.F. Newton, where, we trust, they find the change to their liking.

#### **Promotions:**

We congratulate FOREMAN and BALL (ex-93rd) on promotion to Cpl. Tech. last summer. Sorry we omitted the news in the previous issue, but better late than never!

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### **BENSON (Agent: J/T O'NEILL)**

After a spell in hospital, following an accident just before Christmas, our agent is back at work and we trust, is now fully recovered from the car mishap.

#### **Posting:**

To a warmer clime, Cpl. Tech. MILES (ex-90th), now in R.A.F. Gan.

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### **BOULMER (Agent: J/T ROBERTSON)**

We take this opportunity of thanking J/T EAGLES (ex-93rd) for his work as agent. He and J/T WATSON, also ex-93rd, are now on a missile course.

#### **Postings:**

Cpl. Tech. JACKSON (ex-91st) to Boulmer.

Cpl. GIBBS (ex-88th) to Middle East, where he may meet J/T LATTIMER (ex-93rd) who has been detached for three months.

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### **CONINGSBY (Agent: Cpl. Tech. ASH)**

We congratulate Sgt. MARSH (ex-75th) and Cpl. Tech. ASH (ex-93rd) on the birth of a son and a daughter respectively, in October, and trust that all goes well with the new arrivals, named, we understand, Richard and Dawn.

### **FINALLY—A PLEA**

We have always regarded "Ex-Apprentice Corner" as an important part of this magazine, but it may not surprise our readers to learn that its usefulness, even its retention, has been the subject of discussion at Locking, from time to time.

Suffice to say that the Editorial Staff consider this medium of keeping in touch essential. Indeed it has been said that a fair percentage of our readers turn to the back page first, to browse through "Ex-Apprentice Corner".

As you are all aware, we have "agents" serving at many stations, who do their utmost to feed us with snippets of information, and we are grateful for their support and co-operation.

After the leaves have fallen and winter draws on, it may be said that a period of quiet exists. Possibly, too, there is less personnel turbulence through posting, detachment, etc. Even a change in personal state by engagement or marriage may be less attractive.

Nevertheless, irrespective of the time of year, we believe that many of our readers could provide useful information to our agents. The aim must be to preserve and nurture "Ex-Apprentice Corner".

Thus, our plea to all Locking ex-apprentices is to assist agents whenever possible, by submitting items of interest to them for collation and, thereby, build up and maintain an informative and topical diary of events.

## Letter from Labrador

We were very interested to hear, recently, from Corporal Torkington now stationed at Goose Bay, who will be remembered, by many Apprentices, as an instructor on generating sets, in No. 4 Block.

Corporal Torkington left Locking last summer and exchanged the sub-tropical heat of Somerset for the Frozen North. Writing in January to Mr. Barry, also of 4 Block, he mentions, with relish, daytime temperatures of  $-10^{\circ}$  F., night-time temperatures of  $-30^{\circ}$  F., and a total winter snowfall of 73 inches, adding drily, that the Ford V-8 air-cooling trolley is not overworked!

Despite the vigorous use of snow-blowers and ploughs, these conditions rendered the attempts to keep the runways clear, fruitless, with the result, that, at the time of writing, the T.C.A. Vanguard, bringing the mail from Montreal, was marooned on the airfield, unable to take off.

The base itself, apparently is virtually marooned also, as it will be frozen in until about next June and, in the intervening months, can only be reached by air.

Apprehensive and thoughtful Apprentices, particularly of the senior entry, may take heart, however, for Corporal Torkington is by no means downhearted by this situation. Not only does a most efficient central heating system maintain a steady temperature of  $72^{\circ}$  F. indoors, but the Corporal seems to have enjoyed a warm welcome to the seasonal festivities, having spent a very happy Christmas in the home of a Canadian colleague and a more than usually hectic New Year, at a party in the Civilian Club, the high-spot of which, was the arrival of the Commanding Officer, preceded by two pipers, in full Highland dress!

Nevertheless, we feel sure that the Corporal would be glad to receive news from any of his old friends and colleagues at Locking, to help him through the long Arctic Winter.

