

I do not really mind mud. I was enchanted with the green ride and I kept on it until it ended altogether at a gate, on the other side of which was a stream running across my way with no track indicated in any direction. I kept on due south up the wettest field I have ever crossed in my life. I shouldn't like to cross it in February. It must then, I think, become a lake.

At last, as I climbed the next rise I saw before me what I had been longing to see all day – the sails of the windmill at Outwood on the next ridge, behind the park of Harewood House.

I kept on down the other side of the rise until I came to a stream running through the edge of the park, and turned right-handed along a firmly defined and dry footpath parallel with its banks.

This is a jolly stream running between high banks; the sort of place that otters like. After passing a cottage I crossed the water over a bridge, and then climbed the stile into the road and crossed over another stile into another field-path not marked on the map. Be careful of this path, for it does not lead to Outwood.

After three stiles and a gate I found myself going too much to the right, so I then took a very faintly marked track leading left-handed. This led me straight through more muddy fields to a red cottage and the common of Outwood.

There are two windmills close together here, the smaller of which is the most famous windmill in England.

It is a post mill, and was built in 1665 by ancestors of the present owner, William Jupp. That is in itself fairly remarkable. What is much more remarkable is that it is in perfect working order, and grinds its corn whenever there is a wind. Ask Mr Jupp, who was born in 1856 and is as agile as a boy, to show you over, and you will be surprised at the strength of the massive oak centre-post, the size of the big wooden cogwheels, the ease with which one man can turn the whole mill round to face the wind, and the amount of work that can be carried on in the three floors of this ancient, beautiful, and still useful building. The other mill is – alas! – falling to pieces.

After reluctantly tearing myself away from Mr Jupp, who is a farmer as well as a miller, I crossed the common southward, and took the right-hand road past some cottages, and at the fork by the school I took the

left-hand road. This road bears round to the left and then to the right. Immediately after passing Brightleigh and just before *the Castle* inn I took the field-path going off to the left, which led at once to an open field where I got a totally unexpected and extensive view of Leith Hill, the forests, and the weald. There is a notice on a board here pointing to the right: 'O.S. and B.H. Followers Ride the Headland.'

As I was not at the moment following hounds I did not turn to the right, but sat on the stile glorying in the view. This is no part of the journey to hurry over, for after this we have to descend to the flat country.

Not that we lose our wildness or wetness. We don't.

After being refreshed with the view and the halt at the stile, I took the very indistinct footpath going off diagonally to the right that led down the field into and through a delightful copse and beyond it to Rookery Farm. Here I turned a few yards left-handed down the road and then took the gate on my right leading into a straight, broad, wet green track which led me past Burstow Lodge and then continued straight as an arrow to Weatherhill.

Here I joined the road which leads to Horley station. As roads are tedious at any time it is worth turning down the green ride on the left, and then cutting right-handed over the fields just beyond the site of Thunderfield Castle to a track which leads to the main road. You turn right-handed up this road for a little way, and then the first to the left brings you out actually at the station, thus avoiding the tedium of the other route. But the road from Weatherhill is more direct if you are in a hurry.

DEFENCE OF THE REALM – World War 11

The Backbone of the Squadron" *

by Gordon Newall

THE GROUND CREWS

NORMAN GELB in *Scramble* records Pilot Officer Dennis David's comments: "The ground crews, fitters, riggers and others kept working while the Germans were attacking the airfields. ... They kept us flying. The bowser drivers were amazing. What could be more dangerous than driving a 900 gallon petrol tanker when bombs were falling?" Speaking

for his mates Aircraftman Hargraves says: "Bowser drivers not only drove the bowzers, they also refuelled the aircraft. You used to get doused in petrol every day. ... You could always tell a bowser driver. There'd be a yellow halo around his body." (*Op.cit.*).

"It has been stated that the ground crews were cowardly. I never saw any evidence of this ... enjoyed the supreme comradeship and coolness of those around me. One occasion stands out – when the starboard wing of one of our fighters had been pierced by a piece of metal which set the ammo exploding, about 1200 rounds. One of our armourers dashed out to unload the guns while it was flashing around him." D Boots, armourer, 253 Sqdn. RAF Kenley, Aug.1940 – January 1941 (*Jubilee History*).

F/Sgt. John Yates, now living south of Godstone, served at RAF Kenley as a wireless mechanic. He describes the aircrafts' radios as "their lifeline". Those in Hurricanes were the TR9 HF sets, recognised, he says, by the 'washing line' type of aerial stretched between the tailplane and short mast behind the pilot. By contrast Spitfires were fitted with a VHF transreceiver. A new facility with these sets was a voice-operated mode, which turned the radio to transmit as the pilot spoke.

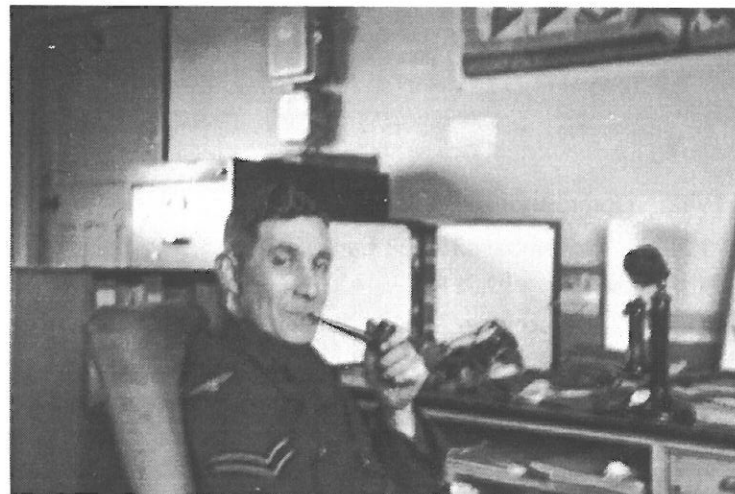
"Another aspect of the Wireless operator's work was cable maintenance." He cites the miles of cable which linked Kenley with Camp B and Camp C. (see *Bulletin* 191). Less conventional duties were sitting on the tailplanes of aircraft while ground crew revved the engines; and filling sandbags. Wing Commander J E Johnson was at RAF Kenley commanding the 'Canadian Wing' Squadrons 403 and 416. John Yates serviced the wireless of his Spitfire J.E.J. Johnnie Johnson was the highest-scoring Allied Ace.

Writing of their first night posted to 501 Sqdn. RAF Kenley (10th Sept to 17th Dec 1940) J Wynn, flight mechanic (engines) relates: "Doggie and I arrived at Whyteleafe from Gravesend the last week of September 1940 ... Our first night at Kenley ... I realised I was waking to the sound of heavy explosions ... On reaching the entrance (to our billet) we were amazed to find that the camp was illuminated as though by giant searchlights and we felt the concussion from bombs and anti-aircraft guns. It was then I realised that the Luftwaffe was paying us a visit." (*Jubilee History*).

Donald Samson, also a flight mechanic (engines) but of 615 Sqdn. at Kenley (22nd May to 29th August, 1940) says: "I feel I should mention that services by NAAFI staff, and the provision of food by the cookhouse,

particularly on 18th August, were excellent – the Sally Army were gems." (*Jubilee History*).

Mr Walter Earl resides in Warlingham. Corporal W Earl served as a fitter (engines) at RAF Kenley, Croydon, Redhill and Gatwick. He witnessed the first raid on Croydon, 15th August 1940, from the roof of a shop in North End. When Kenley suffered a high number of damaged fighters he was transported there to help maintain its establishment. At Redhill Walter deputised as Engineer Officer for eight months, awaiting a replacement.



Corporal Earl, acting in charge as 232 Sqn. Engineer Officer, RAF Redhill

Apart from the Gladiators, Hurricanes and Spitfires, Walter remembers Croydon's Oxfords, used along the south coast "engaged on searchlight and gun calibration." The numbers of these gradually increased so that the enemy became accustomed to their night flights, and they were used on D-Day for deception and sending radio messages to the French Resistance. In fact, on the night of 5th June 1944 Walter had to hastily change a magneto on one Oxford and because it remained over the channel that night claims servicing the first aircraft of the invasion of Europe on 6th June.

Writing of Oxfords reminds me of Mr W J Pope, who served at Croydon where – he said – these Oxfords suffered damage from our own AA shells.

Mr. Pope's career in the RAF commenced in July 1936: Aircraft Apprentice training passing out: Leading Aircraftman, July 1939.

August 1939 - December 1941 Servicing aircraft (a/c) 32 Sqdn. Biggin Hill (4 mths); then 219 Sqdn. Catterick, Redhill, Tangmere (See Bulletin 192). A/c types: Gauntlet, Gladiator, Hind, Hurricane, Spitfire, Blenheim, Beaufighter, Magister. Promoted Cpl. Fitter; later Sergeant. During that period Redhill became not just a night fighter base but hosted Spitfires and Hurricanes during daylight hours landing to refuel and rearm.

Sgt. Pope of Maintenance Flight was billeted in a house at Nutfeld, belonging to a Naval Officer (RN Reserve), situated opposite the *Queens Head* PH. Transport to and from RAF Redhill was a single-deck London bus. The airmen were 50 strong, packing it solid. On the return journey a dozen or so passengers had to jump off and assist by pushing the bus up the final steep gradient to High Street.

January, 1942 - July, 1942: Higher National Certificate Course, Lincoln Technical College.

August, 1942: Commissioned Pilot Officer.

August, 1942 - November 1942: Engineer Officer Training Course, Cosford.

November 1942 - December 1943: Station Engineer Officer, Castle Bromwich. Flying Officer, a/c Oxford and Martinet.

December, 1943 - April, 1944: Engineer Officer 287 Sqdn. Croydon, F/O a/c Oxford

April 1944 - April 1945: Engineer Officer 11&16 Heavy Glider Servicing Echelons, RAF Blakehill Farm, near Cricklade. D-Day, Arnhem. Flt. Lieut. a/c Horsa Gliders

May 1945 - October 1946: Eng.Off, Officer Commanding 7060 Servicing Eschelon Burma, Java and India Flight Lieutenant a/c P47 Thunderbolt

October 1946 - December 1947: 390 Maintenance Unit, Seletar, Singapore. Flt. Lieut. Assembly and testing: Spitfire XIX, XIV and XVIII Major repairs to Spitfire, Harvard, Auster and Dakota aircraft.

Granted permanent Commission and continued career to December 1974, retiring in the rank of Wing Commander

Sources:

* Wing Commander K. W. Mackenzie, DFC, AFC: *Hurricane Combat*.

Norman Gelb: *Scramble, A Narrative History of THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN*.



Mr W J Pope – Cpl. Fitter to Wing Commander

Above: with Flieshman, (*himself*) and Henry Hedges at RAF Blakehill Farm (Horsa Gliders just prior to D-Day)

Left: Wing Commander W J Pope – M.O.D

Richard Hough & Denis Richards: *THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN, The Jubilee History*.

F/Sgt. J D Yates RAFVR, from a talk to Kenley & District Residents' Association.

Cpl. W Earl fitter (engines), Acting Sergeant (other duties), and Engineer Officer.

Wing Commander W J Pope, Chronology of career in RAF.

Erratum:

Bulletin 193 Page 42. The caption to the illustration should read—

'Four of the six airmen who manned the GCI Station at Wartling in April 1941. (Left to right): Cpl. Horace Roberts, LACs Jim Crofts and Arthur Jones and AC Jack Armstrong. Taken outside their billet in Eastbourne.'