



33 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

2019 BATTLEFIELD TOUR GUIDE

ROYAL FLYING CORPS
MILITARY WING

VACANCIES EXIST

FOR
Men aged 18 to 30 of various
mechanical trades, and others of
good education.

They should apply to the nearest Recruiting
Office, or write for particulars to
Headquarters, Royal Flying Corps, (R.N.),
South Parade, Bath.

PAY.

First Class Air Mechanic	£10 per day
Second Class	£8
Third Class	£6
Fourth Class	£4
Flight Sergeant	£12
Warrant Officer	£15

Men selected to be trained as Flyers will
receive in addition £10 or £12 per day.

Free Clothing and accessories, instruction,
allowance, food and light, and medical attendance.

One month's furlough, post money on
full pay.

When transferred to the Army Reserve
a soldier of the Corps will receive an annual
gratuity of £10 in
lieu of Reserve
Pay.

If, while serving in the Reserve, he is
placed on the first Reserve as a Flyer, he
receives a further £10 per annum, subject to
his performing a Quarterly Flying Test.

Men of the following trades and professions
are specially required:

Blacksmiths, Copper-smiths, Artificers,
Welders, Instrument Repairers,
Motor Fitters, and
Aeroplane
Mechanics.

GOD SAVE THE KING



THE END OF THE "BABY-KILLER".

'14 TO '45 - FROM THE B.E.F. AND HOME DEFENCE TO FIGHTER AND BOMBER COMMAND

EXPLORING SOME OF THE ROLES PLAYED BY 33 SQUADRON AND ITS PERSONNEL DURING THE
EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF MILITARY AVIATION IN WARTIME OPERATIONS

**SEE THE
WORLD
WITH THE
Royal Air Force**

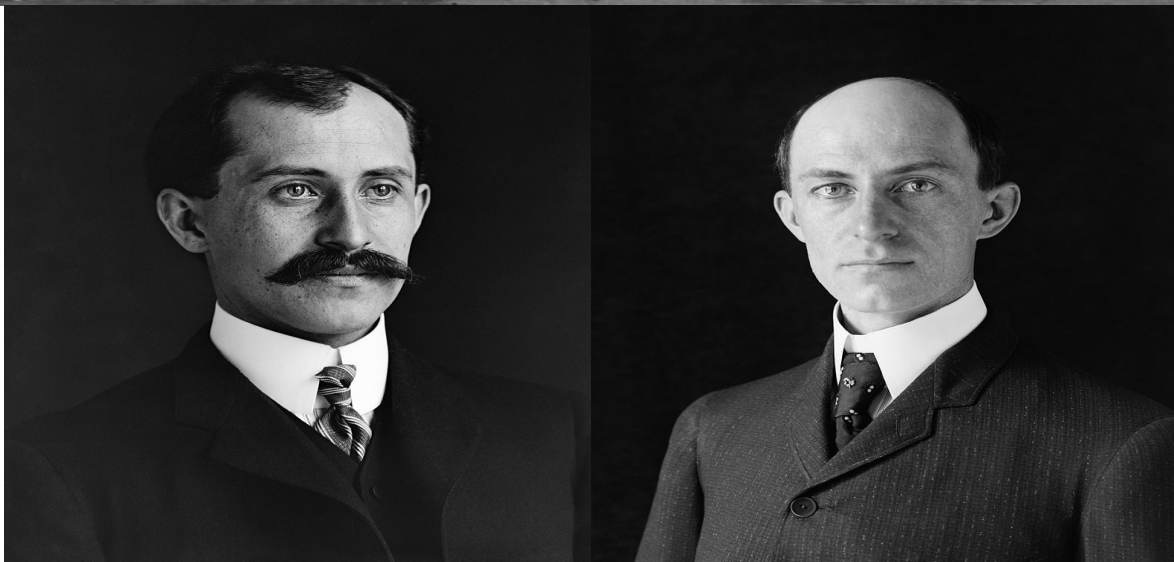
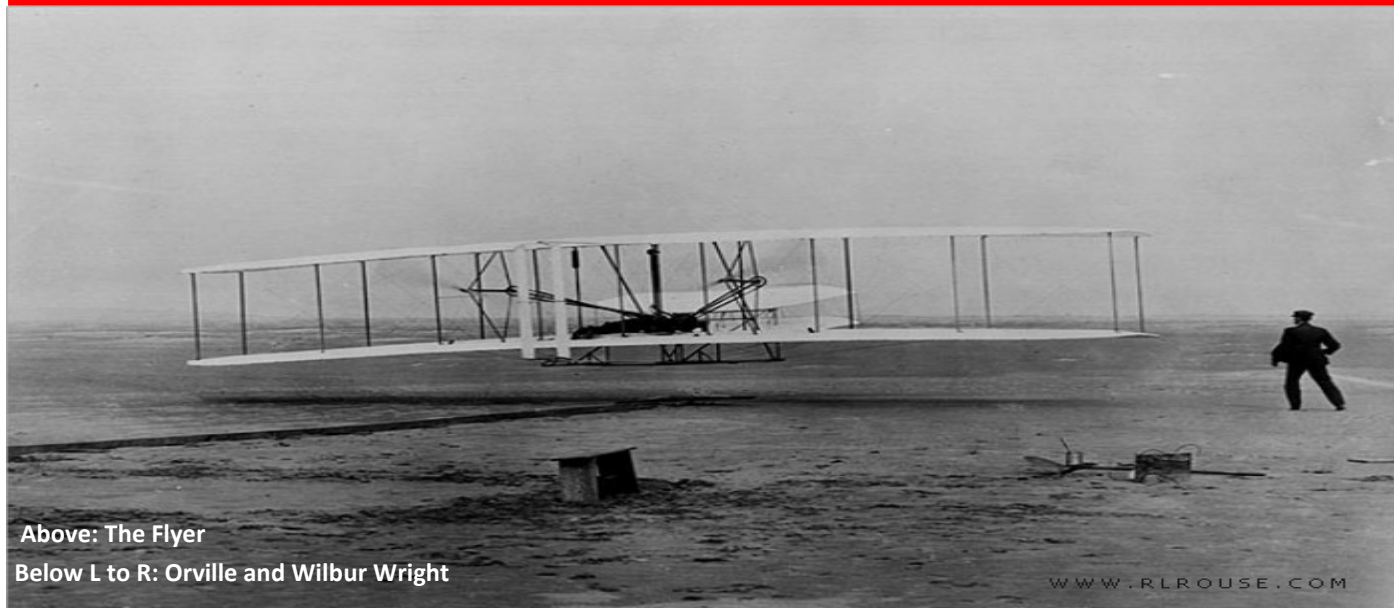
Apply: **INSPECTOR OF RECRUITING.**
4 HENRIETTA ST. COVENT GARDEN, LONDON, W.C. 2.
Or any R.A.F. Unit or Depot.



Time	Dist	Event	Remarks
FRI 4 OCT—DAY ONE			
0730	N/A	Depart for Eastchurch	From Benson and Basingstoke
1000-1130	115	Stand One: Eastchurch Aviation Museum, Isle of Sheppey	Free admission, suggested minimum £1/pp donation/ refreshments and toilets available
1230-1430	47	Stand Two: Kent B of B Museum @ Hawkinge	£8.00 entry (£7.50 over 60s) CASH ONLY / refreshment s and toilets available
1445-1545	4	Stand Three: Battle of Britain Memorial, Capel-le-Ferne	Scramble Experience £6.00 Refreshments and toilets available NB Car Park closes 1600 hrs after 1 Oct
1615-1645	8	Stand Four: RFC Swingate Down , Dover	RFC Memorial
1715	3	Arrive Premier Inn Hotel West, Dover	Night stop / dinner at own expense
SAT 5 OCT—DAY TWO			
0545	N/A	Depart Hotel for Ferry Port	Breakfast on ferry at own expense
0600	7	Book in for Dover-Calais ferry	Planning based on 0725 ferry, looking to take as early a crossing as possible
1015	N/A	Ferry Dover - Calais	1 hr 50 crossing
1045-1115	16	Stand One: Canadian War Cemetery, Saint-Inglevert	Lay wreath at grave of Flt Lt EE Tribble RCAF
1200-1230	36	Stand Two: St-Omer Aerodrome	RFC/RAF Memorial
1245-1445	3	Stand Three: La Coupole V2 Site, Wizernes	€10.00 entry / refreshments and rest rooms available
1515-1615	15	Stand Four: Bois-des-Huit-Rues V-1 site	
1700-1730	27	Stand Five: Railway Dugouts Cemetery	Lay wreath at grave of Maj WCK Birch
1745	5	Arrive Ieper Novotel	Night stop / dinner at own expense
1915	N/A	Assemble in hotel foyer	Walk to Menin Gate
2000	N/A	Last Post Ceremony	3-man Party to lay Association wreath
2030	N/A	Dinner	Plenty of choice in town, at own expense
SUN 6 OCT—DAY THREE			
0800	N/A	Breakfast	Breakfast at own expense
0900	70	Depart Hotel for Schoondijke	Dekker family field on Groeneweg
1100	N/A	Stand One: Short ceremony at crash site	Jan presents plaque to Burgomeester Depart for church at 1145
1150	1	Stand Two: Ceremony at Schoondijke Municipal Church	Lay wreath at grave of WO GJ Roney's grave
1400	100	Depart Schoondijke for Calais	
1600	N/A	Arrive and book in at Calais Ferryport	
	N/A	Ferry Calais - Dover	Dinner on ferry at own expense
	N/A	Depart Dover Ferryport	
	140	Arrive Benson / Basingstoke	2.5-3 hours

33 SQUADRON ASSOCIATION BATTLEFIELD TOUR 2019

Introduction



Military veterans frequently celebrate anniversaries to remember important events in history - the formation of a unit, the end of a war, a particular battle, an act of bravery, someone's death, and so on. Since 2017 our Association has used the Annual Battlefield Tour to commemorate and remember the key events and personnel within 33 Squadron's history. This year we are going back to the turn of the last century to trace the birth of powered flight, the development of military aviation and the role played by some of the very earliest military aviators who would go on to play important roles within 33 Squadron and the Royal Air Force.

It is remarkable to think how quickly the military embraced the new technology in the years after the Wright Brothers made the first ever powered

aeroplane flight in 'Flyer' at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina on 17 December 1903. The Great Powers of the time all began to develop their own air assets in the shape of manned balloons, airships and aircraft in their efforts to 'see over the hill' and gain intelligence regarding an enemy's build up and movement, capabilities that were called into use just over a decade later when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 July 1914. Within a week World War One had begun, with Russia, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Serbia lined up against Austria-Hungary and Germany.

Between January 1916 and May 1945 33 Squadron had 32 commanding officers, a period that covers the formation of the Squadron, the final two years of the First World War, the inter-war years and the Second



Former Commanding Officers of 33 Squadron, RAF Leeming 1958. The names of those officers who served in the RFC are shown in bold italics: (left to right) Wg Cdr AK Furse, Wg Cdr RR Mitchell DFC, Sqn Ldr NPW Hancock, **ACM Sir John Baker MC DFC**, **AVM FP Don**, **ACM Sir Philip Joubert de la Ferte**, Wg Cdr N Poole, **AM Sir Hugh Walmsley MC DFC**, **Wg Cdr W H De W. Waller AFC**, Gp Capt J H McC. Reynolds, **Gp Capt J Bradbury DFC**, Wg Cdr RC Patrick, Wg Cdr RNG Allen

World War. It could be argued that, in terms of technological developments, some of the greatest developments of the century were to do with aviation, ultimately leading to the human race setting foot on the Moon and now considering even longer voyages into space. As yet, 33 Squadron does not have an astronaut within its Squadron or Association strength, but we have many members who have played their part in the past, often in times of conflict, who deserve our commemorations.

To start this Tour we are visiting locations in the south-east of England that either played or commemorate an important role in the development of aviation in Britain. As you will hear, the Isle of Sheppey could be considered the birthplace of aviation in Britain, and Eastchurch became a Naval Flying School during World War One, transferring to the RAF on 1 April 1918. Following our reformation and a short spell at Netheravon, 33 Squadron and its new Hawker Harts were based there from September 1929 to November 1930.

On the way to Dover we are visiting a Battle of Britain airfield - RAF Hawkinge - which was commanded for a while by a former 33 Squadron CO, Robert George, and then looking at the Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-

le-Ferne. By 1940 military aviation and air power had moved on remarkably in the 22 years since the end of the 'war to end all wars' and was being talked about in strategic terms by proponents such as Douet, Mitchell and Trenchard: "Command of the air means victory" "The bomber will always get through" "total war". The performance of 'The Few', which had several future 33 Squadron COs in the cockpits, would prove the importance of air defence against an air offensive.

In 1914 air power was in its infancy, and we will visit RFC Swingate Down, the point of departure for the first RFC squadrons deploying to war and very close to the point that Louis Blériot landed after the first crossing of the Channel in July 1909. Within the ranks of aviators setting off in August 1914 were four future 33 Squadron COs, including the man given the task of forming 33 Squadron at Bristol Filton on 12 January 1916, Captain Philip Joubert de la Ferté.

Once over in France, we will visit the grave of Flight Lieutenant Ed Tribble, a Canadian who had joined 33 Squadron shortly after it had returned from its long tour of duty in the Middle East. He had arrived from 2nd Tactical Air Force (2TAF)'s No.3 Tactical Exercise Unit (TEU), where a former 33 Squadron 'ace' was commanding No. 2 Squadron, Charles Harold

‘Deadstick’ Dyson, a man who had six confirmed victories in the Western Desert in one day. On the day Ed joined 33 it was out on a sortie against the latest military airborne threat, the V-1, and on the day he was killed 33 Squadron participated in a NOBALL mission against Watten.

As 33 Squadron supported a number of Operation Crossbow missions in 1944 to nullify the V-weapons threat to Britain, we will be visiting a V-1 and V-2 launch site in the countryside around the RFC’s main operating base during World War One at Saint-Omer before paying our respects at a grave in one of the many CWGC cemeteries in the region, this time to a former CO from 1916-1917, Captain WCK Birch.

The tour ends with us driving through Belgium to the Dutch province of Zeeland, which witnessed desperate fighting towards the end of 1944. The Allies were attempting to open access to the strategically vital port of Antwerp, which was shielded by the most heavily defended part of Hitler’s Atlantic Wall along the Scheldt Estuary and manned by soldiers who had been ordered by Hitler to fight and die where they stood—or else

their families back in Germany would suffer. Having supported D-Day and Operation CROSSBOW from bases along the south coast, 33 Squadron deployed over to France in late August 1944, and as part of 2 TAF provided air support to the First Canadian Army, who had been given the task of clearing the Germans from the coastal strip in France and Belgium and then capturing the Scheldt.

Our final day will be at Schoondijke where, 75 years to the day after the Canadians launched Operation SWITCHBACK, we will remember another young pilot, New Zealander George Roney, who, like Ed Tribble, was not with 33 Squadron very long. On 6 October 1944, the young 22 year old from Oamaru on South Island made the ultimate sacrifice so that others could be free and live in peace.

LOYALTY



Wreath laid at the Cenotaph by the 33 Squadron Association in November 2018, with national flags representing all of the nationalities known to have served or flown with 33 Squadron since 1916.

Day One - Stand and hotel details

Stand One: Eastchurch Aviation Museum

Address: Wright's Way, off Brabazon Road, HMP Stanford Hill, Eastchurch, ME12 4AA
Telephone: 07450 621217
What3words: bunny. skate. brownish
Maps: Pages 7-8
Background: Pages 9-12

Stand Two: Kent Battle of Britain Museum Trust

Address: Aerodrome Road, Hawkinge, Folkestone, Kent CT18 7AG
Telephone: 01303 893140
What3words: happening. footballers. clipboard
Map: Page 13
Admission: Adult £8.00 / Senior (over 60) £7.50 . CASH ONLY. Cards accepted in the shop and the café.
Background: Pages 14-17

Stand Three: Battle of Britain Memorial

Address: Capel le Ferne, Kent CT18 7JJ
Telephone: 01303 249292
What 3words: manly. grief. coveted
Map: Page 18
Background: Pages 19-20

Stand Four: RFC Swingate Down Memorial

Address: Deal Road, Dover
Telephone: Nil
Map: Page 18
What3words: claw. lotteries. Proof
Background: Pages 21-24

Accommodation: Premier Inn, Dover West

Address: Folkestone Road, Dover CT15 7AB
Telephone: 0870 197 7076
Map: Page 18
What3words: crush. eyepieces. airfield

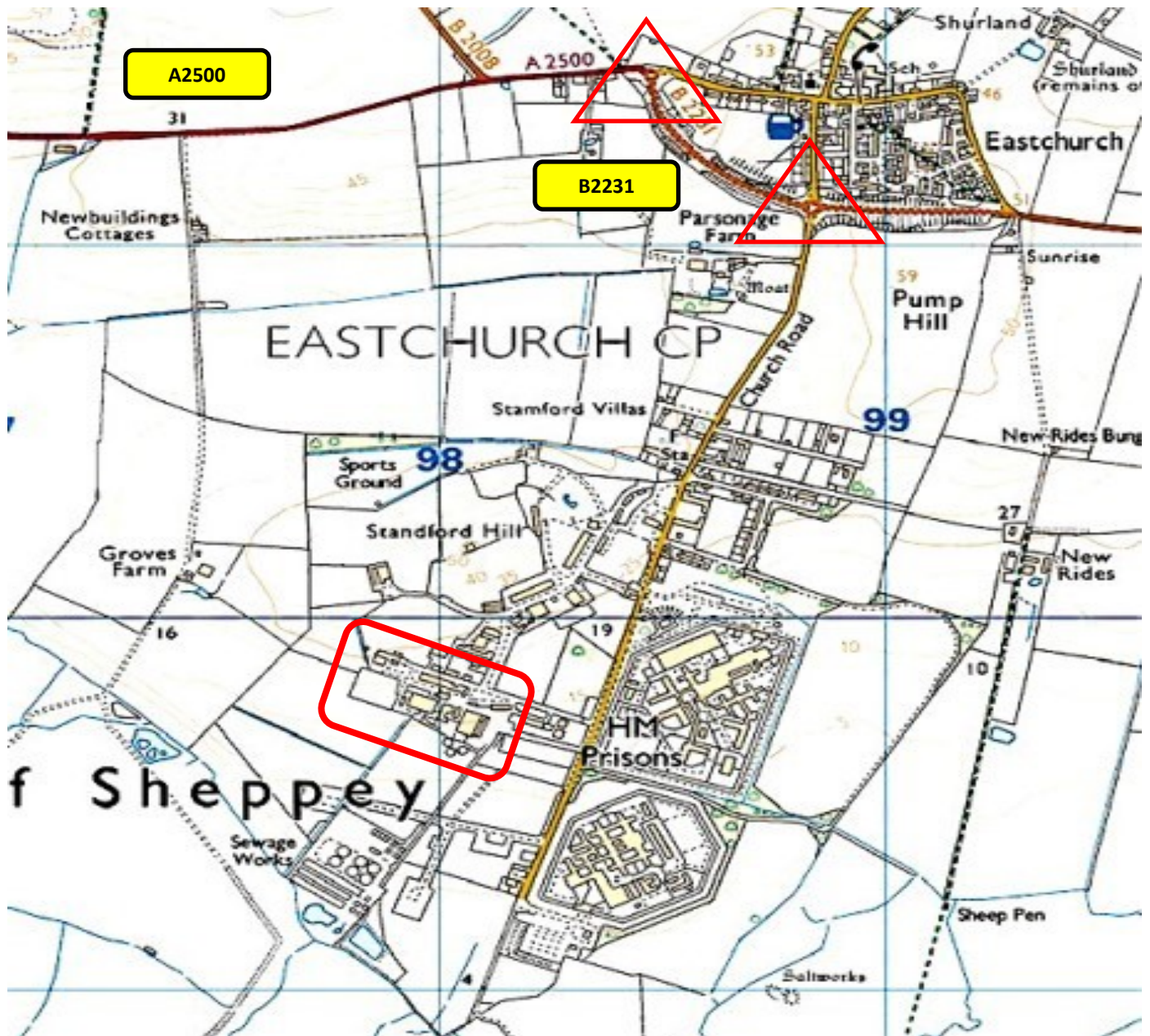
Eastchurch Aviation Museum, ME12 4AA
115 miles

A2500

A249

M2 Junction 5

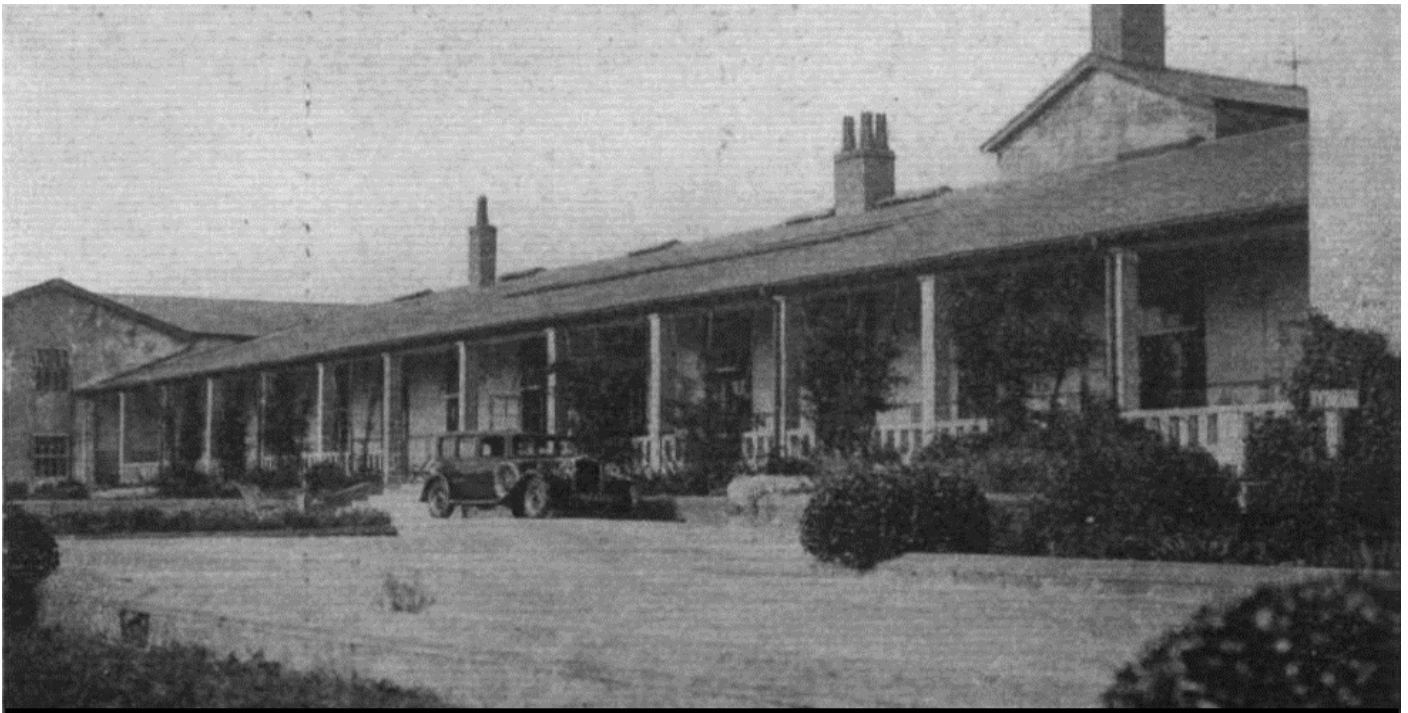
Eastchurch Aviation Museum, ME12 4AA -
turn on to Church Road and follow signs for
HM Prison, the Emporium and the Old Mill
Cafe





Stand One: Eastchurch Aviation Museum

Home to 33 Squadron September 1929 - November 1930



Officers' Mess, Eastchurch

When the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps amalgamated on 1 April 1918 to become the Royal Air Force, Eastchurch was transferred and re-designated Royal Air Force Station Eastchurch, or RAF Eastchurch for short. During the last few months of the War, No. 204 Training Depot Station, the 64th (Naval) Wing and the 58th (Training) Wing were based at Eastchurch.

Inter-War Years - 33 Squadron Reforms

RAF Eastchurch remained active during the inter-war years. No. 33 (Bomber) Squadron formed its HQ and one Flight at Netheravon in April 1929. The squadron was equipped with five Hawker Horsleys, all provided by 11 (Bomber) Squadron. Squadron Leader Francis Percival Don was posted in as the CO, a First World War pilot who had been shot down and captured, his injuries resulting in the amputation of his left arm. Flight Lieutenant TWS Brown was OC A Flt. The Squadron's establishment grew steadily, increasing by two Flights on 29 June and three more Horsleys on 9 August. By September 33 Squadron was fully established with 15 aircraft and relocated to Eastchurch, one of seven airfields in the Wessex Bombing Area (WBA) used by the Air Defence of Great Britain.

On 27 October 1929, Squadron Leader J.J. Breen

arrived to take over command from Francis Don, who had been promoted to Wing Commander on 1 August. 33 Squadron had its pre-AOC's Inspection from 15-19 November, conducted by staff officers from the WBA, in preparation for its first Annual Inspection by the AOC WBA, AVM Sir J.M.Steel, on 29 November.

The Squadron's transition from the Hawker Horsley to the new Hawker Hart commenced on 25 February 1930, and by 8 May there were thirteen new Harts at Eastchurch. The Horsleys were slowly reallocated to 100 Squadron and 504 Squadron, with the last Horsley leaving 33 Squadron in January 1931. Just 6 months after its first Inspection, 33 Squadron was inspected again by the AOC WBA on 13 May 1930, no doubt the AVM was keen to have a close look at the new Hawker Harts.

The following month the squadron attended the RAF Armament Practice camp at North Coates Fittes from 9 -19 June, during which time FLIGHT published its first photograph of the Hart-equipped 33 Squadron on page 625 of the 13 June edition. Twelve aircraft are visible, Hart J9938 having been allocated to the School of Photography on 1 April. Somewhere on the picture is J9946, the Squadron's dual control aircraft.

From 27 September to 3 October 33 Squadron took part in a bombing competition, and Sergeant Skinner (pilot) and LAC Perry (gunner) tied with a crew from 12 (Bomber) Squadron for first place for the Armament Officers Bombing Trophy. At the end of October 33 Squadron displayed their Harts to the public for the first time at the Croydon Air Display, an occasion reported in FLIGHT in their 31 October edition.

On 5 November 1930, 33 Squadron relocated from Eastchurch to Bicester, another aerodrome within the WBA.

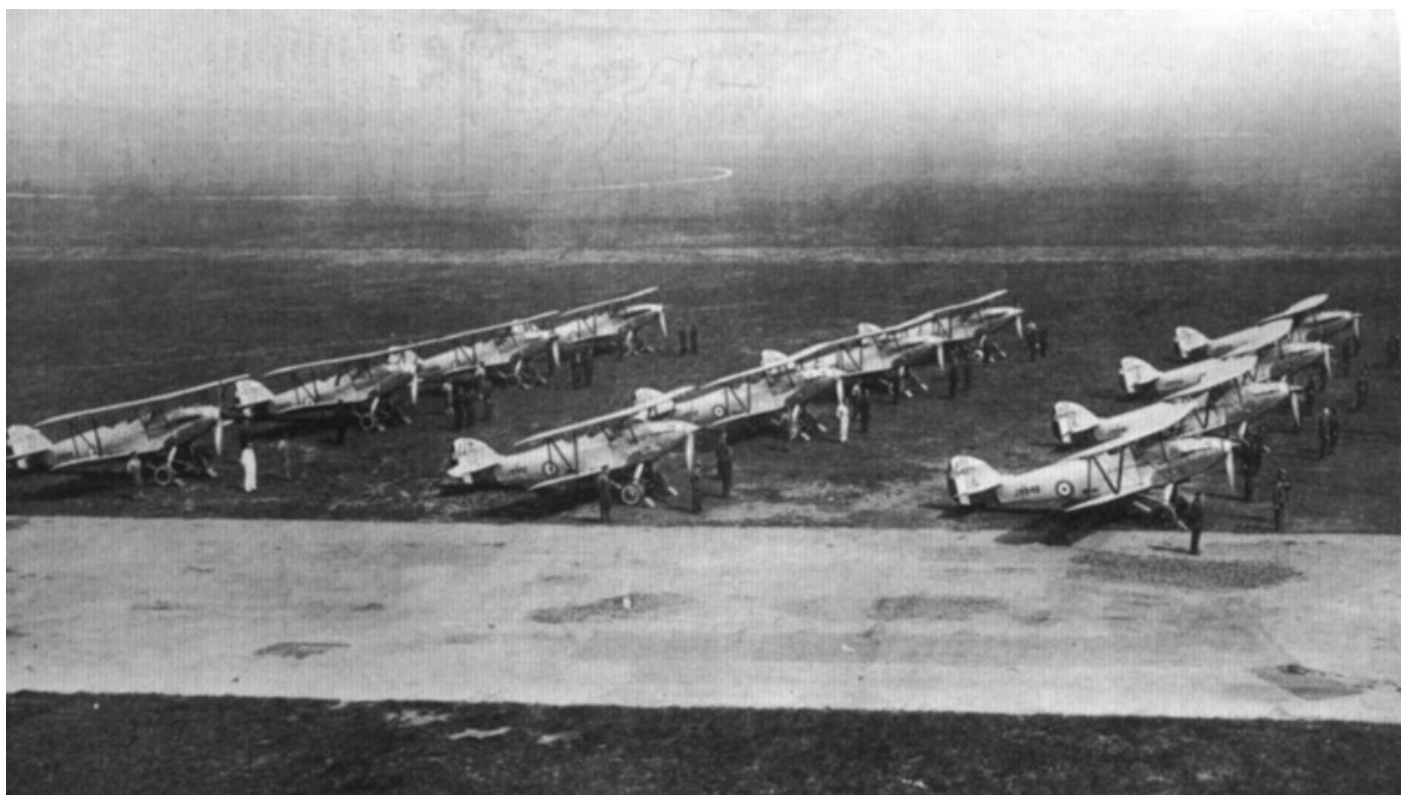
World War Two

Eastchurch was home to No. 266 Squadron during the Battle of Britain and later was part of Coastal Command. A siding was laid to connect RAF Eastchurch with Eastchurch railway station on the Sheppey Light Railway. AM, later ACM, Joubert de la Ferté was AOC-in-C Coastal Command from Sep 1936 to Sep 1937, then June 1941 to February 1943 so it is very possible that he would have visited Eastchurch at some point during the war. RAF Eastchurch closed in 1946.

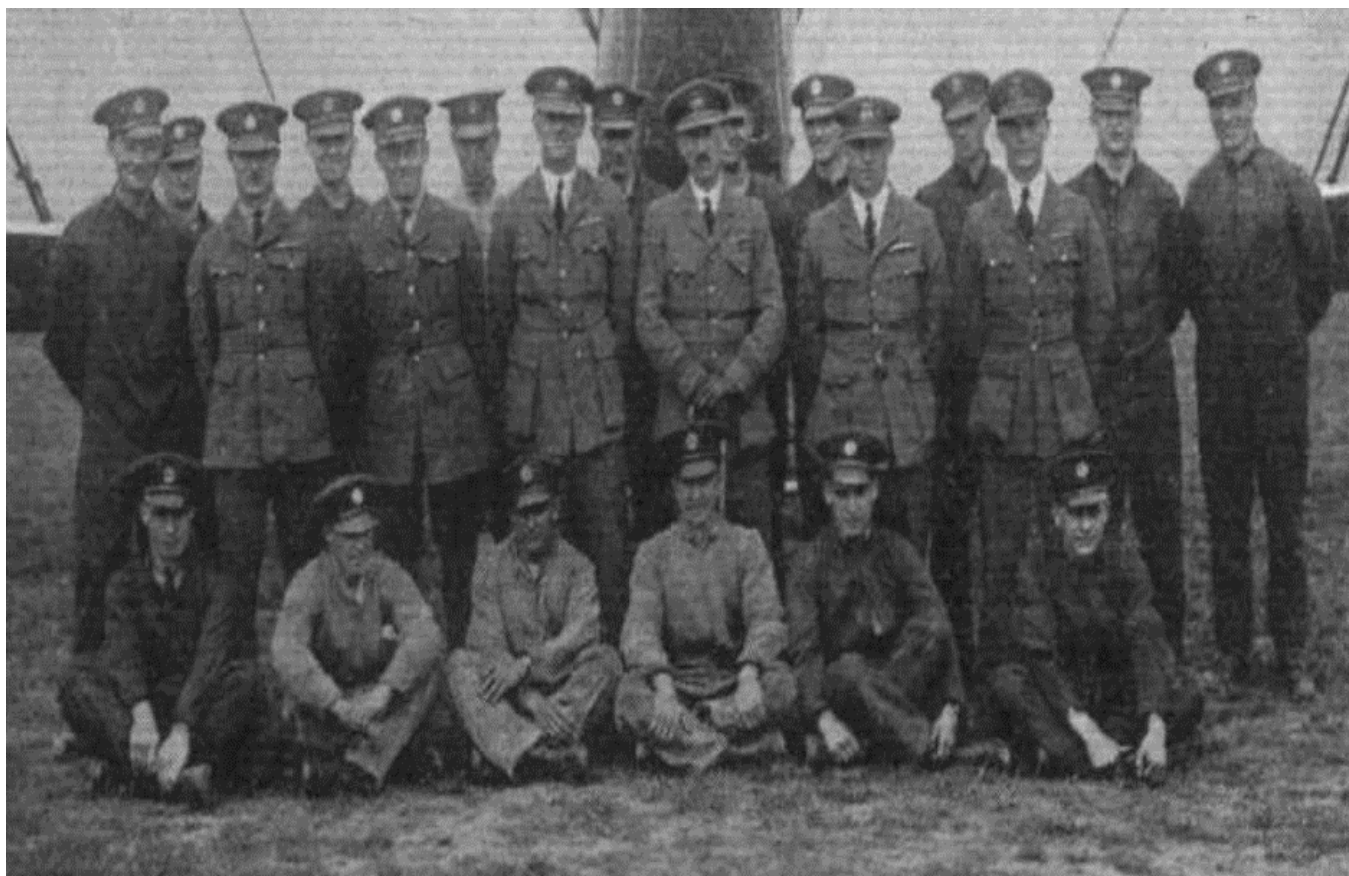
Recent Times

The site is currently used as HM Prison Standford Hill. While there are a number of new buildings some of the original buildings survive, including a number of pillboxes. The main roads in the prison reflect the aviation links; Rolls Avenue and Airfield View, Short's Prospect and Wright's Way. In the entrance to HMP Swaleside are two brass plaques; one records that the prison is built on what was the airstrip of RAF Eastchurch and the other lists the owners of the airstrip from 1909 to the end of the RAF use.

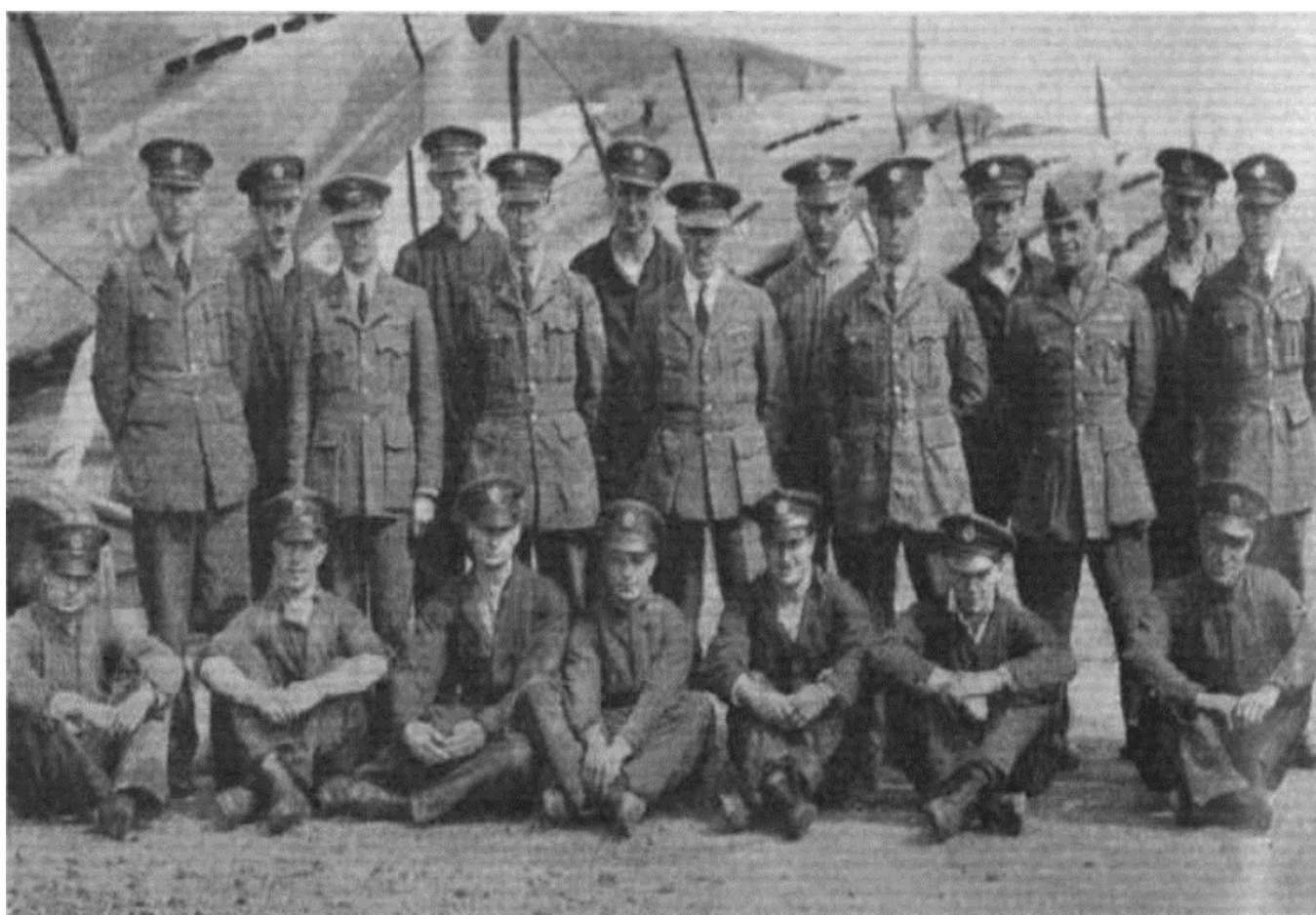
The Eastchurch Aviation Museum is in the Village area at Standford Hill Prison Eastchurch. It was started a few years ago in one of the RAF training rooms built in the 1920s and there are aspirations to extend the Museum into the Eastern hangar complex. Of particular interest in the long term would be the project to restore and renovate the Western hangars. They will be unheated, as they would have originally been, and use them to recreate the period from 1912 to 1914. One of the hangars is said to have roof trusses salvaged from an older building on the base and therefore could be from 1909, making them the oldest surviving part of a hangar in Europe and possibly the world.



No. 33 (Bomber) Squadron at Eastchurch aerodrome. This unique photograph shows the squadron drawn up by flights with its full establishment of 12 machines. The type of aeroplane is the Hawker 'Hart' with Rolls-Royce 'F' type engine, and this is the first squadron to be equipped with this type. 'B' Flight is in front, 'C' Flight in the centre and 'A' Flight in the rear. The officer in the white overalls in front of the nearest 'Hart' of 'A' Flight is Squadron Leader J.J. Breen. (FLIGHT photo.)



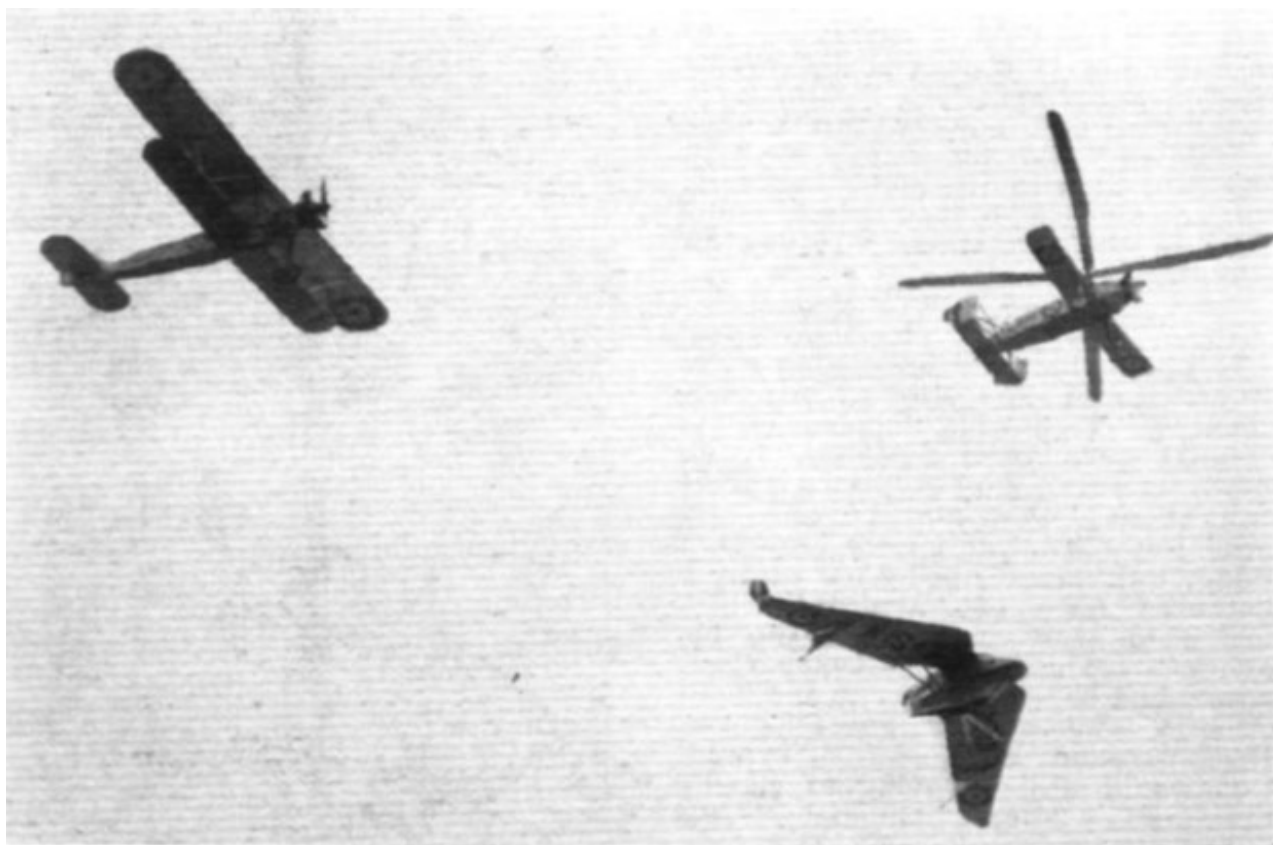
A Flt 33 (Bomber) Squadron – centre row (l-r): Cpl Macken, Sgt Johnstone, FS Wilts, F/L T.W.S. Brown (A Flt Commander), S/L J.J. Breen (CO 33 Squadron) , P/O L. McHardy, P/O G.D. Hoyland



B Flt 33 (Bomber) Squadron – centre row (l-r): Sgt Slade, P/O A.C. Larmuth, FS Dalton, F/L R.J. Sanceau, Sgt Tomkins, 2nd Lt Taie (Iraq Army)



C Flt 33 (Bomber) Squadron – centre row (l-r): Cpl Waddington, Sgt Skinner, F/O CS John, F/O ROO Taylor, FS Pearce, Sgt Richardson, Cpl Knowlton, Cpl Kay



3 July 1930 – 12th RAF Display at Hendon. The R.A.F. Display Committee referred to the flight of three experimental types as 'A Demonstration of Research Types' (L-R): the Handley Page '*Gugnunc*', the Hill-Westland '*Pterodactyl*' and the Cierva '*Autogiro*'. Watching the '*Autogiro*' flying, 33 Squadron had seen its future!

Stand Two: Battle of Britain Museum, Hawkinge

10 July – 31 October 1940



The Kent Battle of Britain Museum brochure says that if you only visit one museum in Kent, then this is the one - they are not joking! It goes on to say that it holds the world's largest collection of aircraft, weapons, flying equipment, uniforms, medals and relics from over 700 Allied and Axis Battle of Britain aircraft. It is certainly comprehensive, as you will see.

First World War

During the First World War the airfield was called RFC Folkestone until 29 December 1916, and RFC Hawkinge later on. The only squadron present during this period was No. 25 Squadron RFC between 19 and 20 February 1916 with Vickers F.B.5, Royal Aircraft Factory F.E.2B and Morane-Saulnier L., presumably on its way from Montrose to France. It reformed here in 1920. An Aircraft Acceptance Park was in residence between 27 July 1917 and 12 October 1917 before being renamed to No. 12 Aircraft Acceptance Park which stayed until May 1919. 38 Squadron, 83 Squadron and 120 Squadron RAF were all disbanded at Hawkinge between February 1919 and July 1919.

Inter-war years

Between the wars a number of squadrons were posted here:

2 Squadron RAF (30 November 1935 - 29 September

1939 - Hawker Audaxes, Hawker Hectors, Westland Lysander I).

17 Squadron RAF reformed 1 April 1924 with Sopwith Snipes and Hawker Woodcock II before moving to RAF Upavon on 14 October 1926.

25 Squadron RAF reformed here on 26 April 1920 with the Snipe before moving to Turkey on 28 September 1922. The squadron returned on 3 October 1923, still with the Snipe, but added the Gloster Grebe I, Armstrong Whitworth Siskin IIIA, Hawker Fury Mk I and II, Hawker Demon and the Gloster Gladiator before being posted to RAF Northolt on 26 September 1938. 25 Squadron returned again on 12 October 1938 and started using the Bristol Blenheim IF before the squadron returned to Northolt on 22 August 1939.

56 Squadron RAF reformed here on 1 November 1922 with the Snipe before moving to RAF Biggin Hill on 7 May 1923.

One of the Station Commanders during this period was Robert Allingham George. In 1914 he had enlisted in the Seaforth Highlanders and was sent to France. He was transferred to the Royal Flying Corps and was awarded the Military Cross for his night bombing. He was OC 100 Squadron (1930-31) and OC 33 Squadron (1932-34) prior to serving as the Station Commander at Hawkinge from 1937 to 1939. After the War he served as Air Attaché in Paris until he retired in 1952. After receiving a knighthood he was Governor of South Australia from 1952-1959.



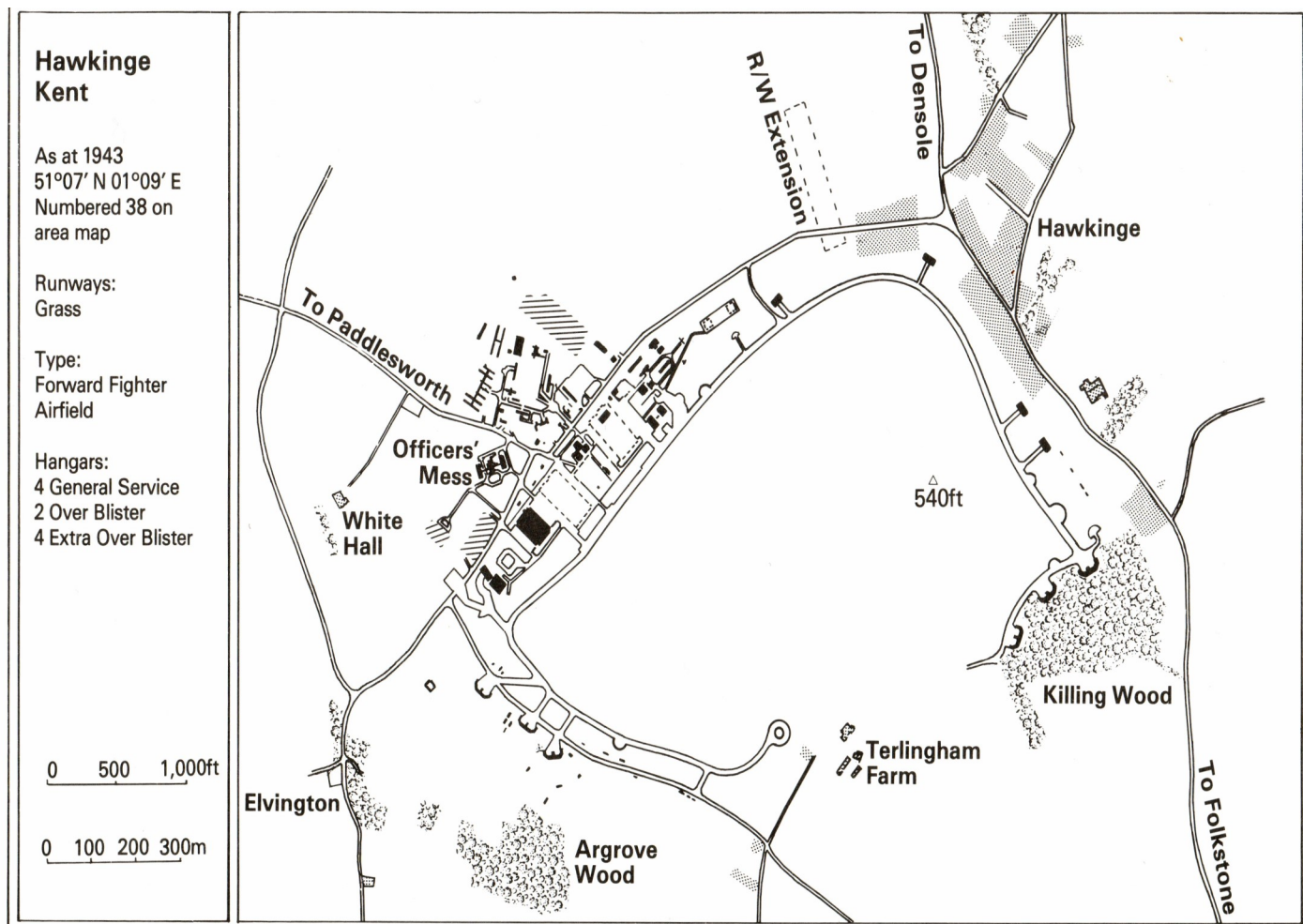
AVM Sir Robert Allingham George MC

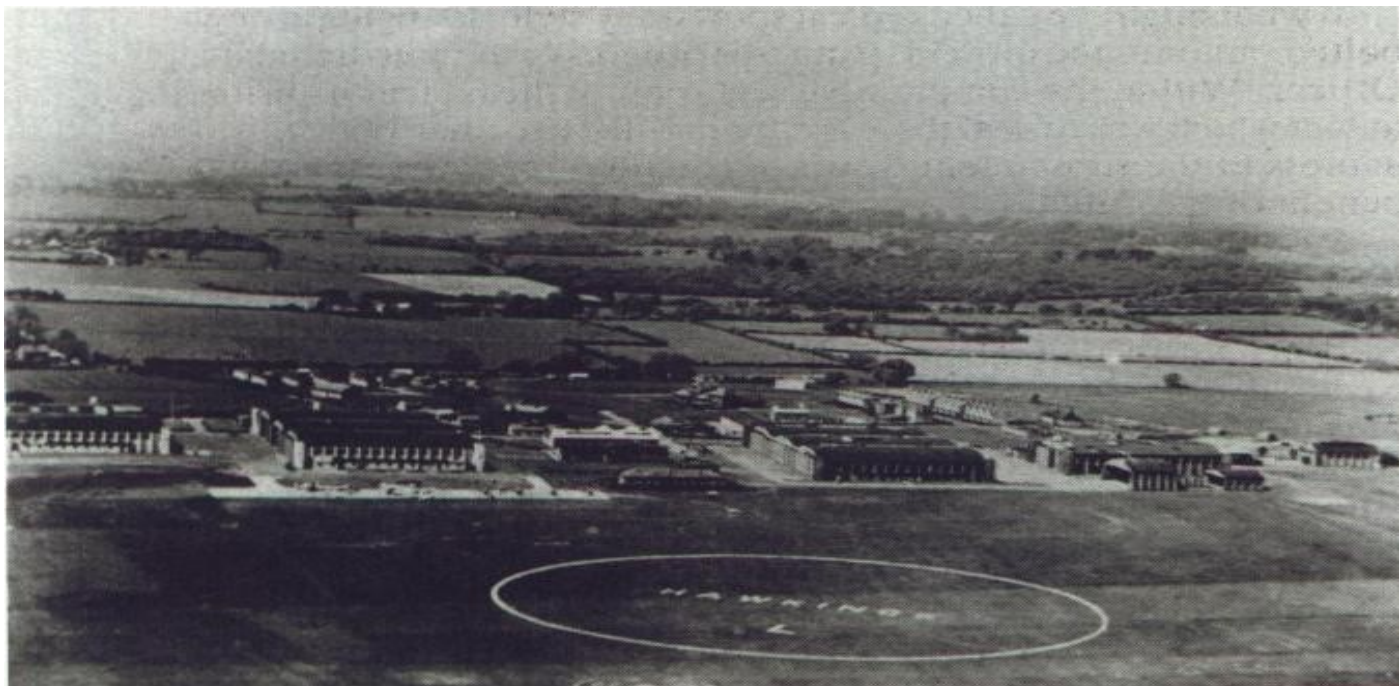
Second World War

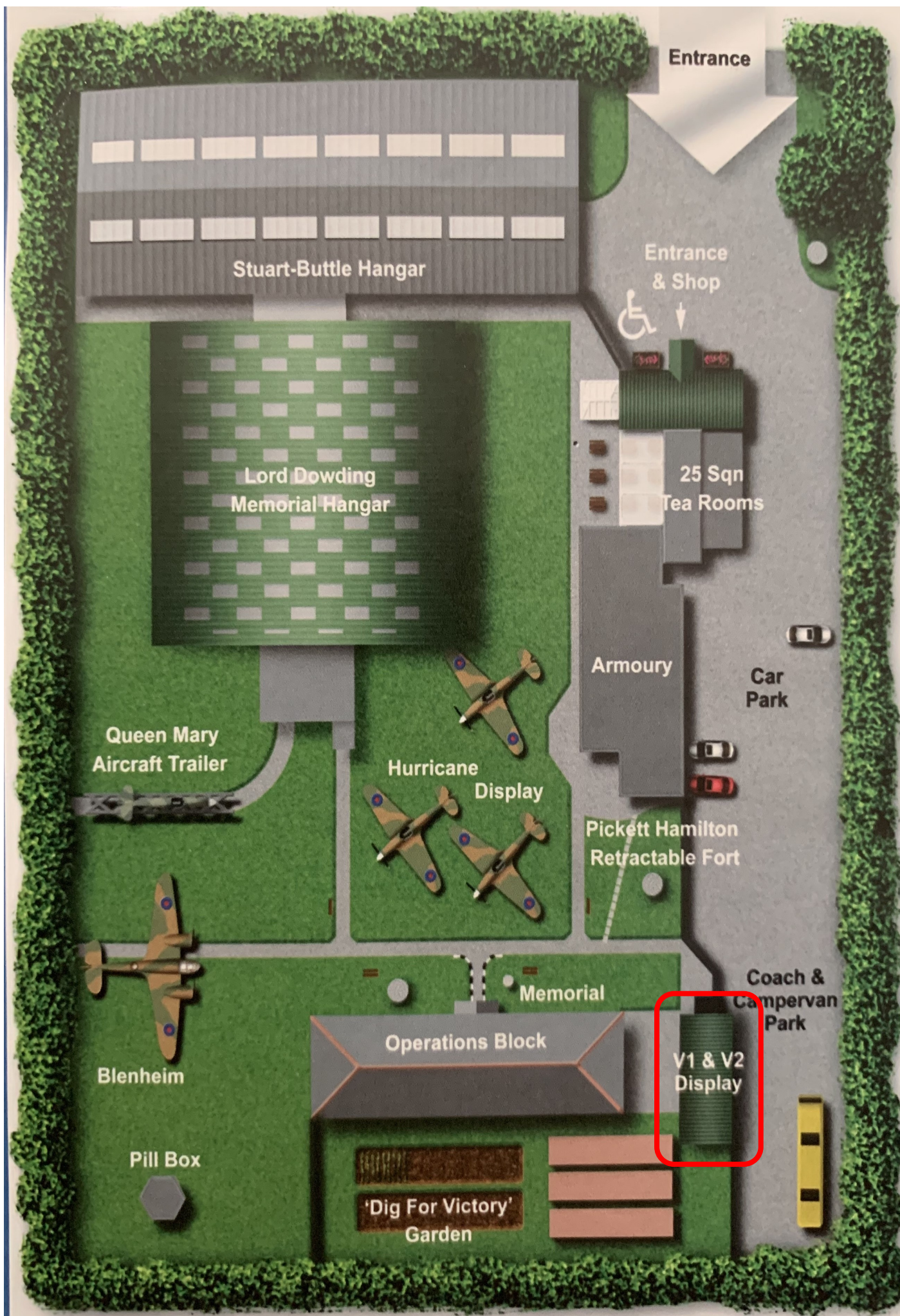
It was from Hawkinge that air liaison was maintained between the Royal Air Force and the British Expeditionary Force during the fighting in France and the famous evacuation from Dunkirk in 1940. While communications remained open targets were selected in accordance with requests from the BEF and Hawkinge was one of the advanced re-fuelling bases when maximum range was required for operations over France. It was a fighter airfield for squadrons of No. 11 Group, and was so severely damaged by German bombing and machine gun attacks during the Battle of Britain that it had to be abandoned temporarily.

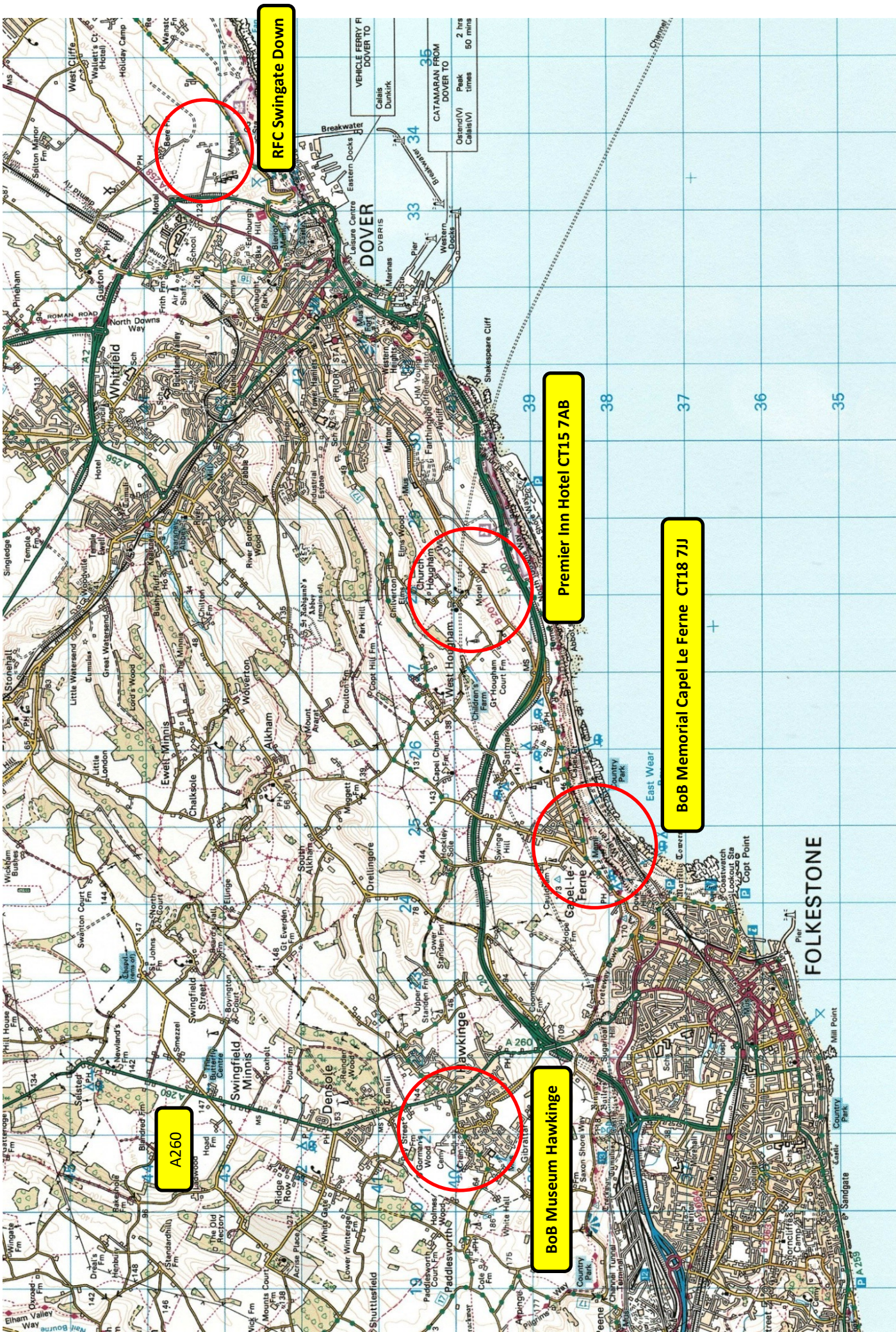
Hawkinge Cemetery is near the site of the aerodrome and most of the 95 Second World War casualties buried there were airmen. About a quarter were killed during the Battle of Britain. Most of the war graves are in a special plot east of the chapel, including 59 German graves, which are together in a group at the south-eastern corner.

In the 1950s, RAF Hawkinge became a Woman's Officer Cadet Training Unit, under the command of Group Officer Conan-Doyle, the daughter of Sir Arthur Conan-Doyle. Group Officer Conan-Doyle went on to become the most senior woman officer in the Royal Air Force with the rank of Air Commandant.









Stand Three: The Battle of Britain Memorial

10 July – 31 October 1940



As RAF veterans we are well aware of the situation facing Britain in 1940. The BEF had been routed, the 'Miracle' of Dunkirk had taken place and the Battle of France had been lost. During the Battle of Britain fewer than 3 000 men and far less aircraft risked their lives daily to prevent the *Luftwaffe* gaining the vital air superiority it needed to cover the amphibious assault from France. More than a third of the aircrew who took part became casualties, including 534 who were killed in action or who died later from their wounds. Only the men who made at least one operational sortie under the control of RAF Fighter Command between those dates are entitled to wear the Battle of Britain clasp. They are 'the Few'. Six of them went on to command 33 Squadron in Egypt, with one bringing the Squadron back to Britain in April 1944 to take part in Operation OVERLORD—the Allied invasion of Europe on 6 June—

see if you can find them on the Wall and then read about their careers inside on the computerised database, which has with details of virtually all of the airmen who participated in the Battle of Britain.

The location of the Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne is breathtaking, hopefully the views across the Channel to France will be as spectacular as those that we enjoyed during the recce last month. There should also be sufficient time for you to have a look at 'The Scramble Experience', which includes a mock up Hurricane cockpit which gives visitors the chance to shoot down 'enemy' aircraft on a video screen.



"Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

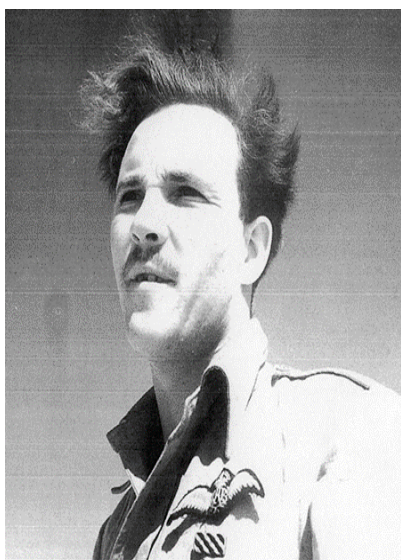
33 Squadron's Commanding Officers who fought in the Battle of Britain



Hector Douglas McGregor DSO



Derrick Leslie Gould DFC



John Ernest Proctor DFC & Bar



John Frederick Fortescue Finnis DFC



Stanley Charles Norris DFC



Richard Ronald Mitchell DFC



Stand Five: RFC Swingate Down, Dover

12-13 August 1914

FLIGHT 5 October 1913.

R.F.C. at Dover.

A DETACHMENT of the 5th Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps is now at Dover with a view to testing the possibilities of Dover as an aviation station. The officers and men are quartered in the Military Prison while the machines, including two Maurice Farman's, are housed in canvas hangars on Swingate Downs, which is being used as a flying ground.

An RFC aerodrome was established in 1913 on Swingate Down opposite the Duke of Yorks Military School within sight of Dover Castle. The first hanger to be constructed on the site was by C S Rolls in 1910 for his cross channel flights just after Louis Bleriot made the first crossing in 1909. The initial use of the base was for the despatch of the first RFC squadrons to France in August 1914, and subsequently other squadrons were formed there before embarking for the Western Front. A Home Defence Flight was stationed at Swingate later in the war to defend the docks and harbour installations at Dover, and No 50 Squadron served there with flights at various satellite aerodromes such as Bekesbourne. Three hangars were erected on the seaward side of the aerodrome, and after the field was vacated by the RFC various aircraft spares were stored there.

The Deployment

The first deployment of RFC aircraft to transit to France in World War One took place here between 13-15 August 1914. According to Patrick Bishop in his book 'Wings' No.1 Squadron was in the process of "switching from balloons to aeroplanes" and, "Two more – 6 and 7 – were being assembled." He then states that: "Two squadrons – Nos. 2 and 4 – were equipped with BE2s. The rest flew with the ill-assorted array of machines acquired in the first rush of growth."

About sixty three aircraft of 2, 3, 4 and 5 Squadrons assembled here before departing for Amiens. It appears they all made the Channel crossing safely, having 'coasted out' in BE.2a, Avro 504, Farman and Blériot aircraft. They were accompanied by two dirigibles, *Delta* and *Silver Queen*. Amiens was a regrouping point, the final destination being Mauberge about ten miles behind the lines of the British Expeditionary Force.

It is claimed the German military had the largest air force when war was declared – 246 aircraft and seven airships. France had 160 aircraft and fifteen airships.

The RFC declared 189 aircraft but it seems that many were worn out and broken, or in use at the Central Flying School. Hence just sixty three departed for combat duties. And indeed, some aircraft from the Central Flying School at Netheravon were allocated to fly to France. In fact one suffered the first fatal RFC accident of WW1 shortly after taking off from Netheravon for Dover with an engine failure. Lieutenant Robert Skene and Air Mechanic R K Barlow, of 3 Squadron perished.

Patrick Bishop takes up the story: "Other mishaps complicated the departure. No.4 Squadron suffered two non-fatal crashes on the way to Dover. No.5 Squadron was held up in Gosport and would have to follow later. But at 6.25 on the morning of 13 August the aircraft that had made it began, on schedule, to take off. First away was Lieutenant Hubert Harvey-Kelly, of 2 Squadron, at the controls of a BE2a." It can only be wondered at as to how most of those pilots felt contemplating crossing the Channel. Many of the pilots of 2 Squadron, having already crossed far more dangerous the Irish Sea, probably took it in their stride? "He (my note: Harvey-Kelley) was followed by Burke, who led his men over the French coast, then turned south towards the mouth of the Somme, which pointed them towards their destination, Amiens aerodrome. Harvey-Kelly was determined to touch down first and broke formation to cut across country, arriving at 8.20."

"The pilots of 2 Squadron all landed safely and by nightfall there were forty-nine aircraft on the base. The local people – who had been in some doubt as to whether the British would come to their aid – gave them an ecstatic welcome."

'Friendly Fire'

During the initial stages of aerial operations in WW1 the pilots on both sides faced the problem of 'friendly-fire' as it was later called. As Patrick Bishop describes in his book Wings: "The British stand at Mons gave way to a long retreat and the RFC fell back with them, setting up makeshift camps at Le Cateau-Cambresis, then St Quentin, then Compiègne, sleeping wherever they stopped, sometimes in a hotel bed, more often in a hayloft or even in the open under the wings of their aircraft. Despite the chaos they managed to maintain a flow of reports to headquarters. The main hazards came from the vagaries of their machines and from ground fire, which rose to greet them indiscriminately



no matter which side of the lines they were over."

'Resupply'

To show how much military aviation had advanced from the Wright Brothers' first flight, it is worth considering the quantity of aircraft being ferried across the Channel towards the end of World War One. An 'M Flaudin' was head of the Allied Air Board and this quote was printed in the American magazine 'Flying' in September 1917: "The average life of an aeroplane at the battlefront is not more than two months. To keep 5,000 aircraft in active commission for one year it is necessary to furnish 30,000. Each machine in the period of it's activity will use at least two motors, so that 60,000 motors will be required."

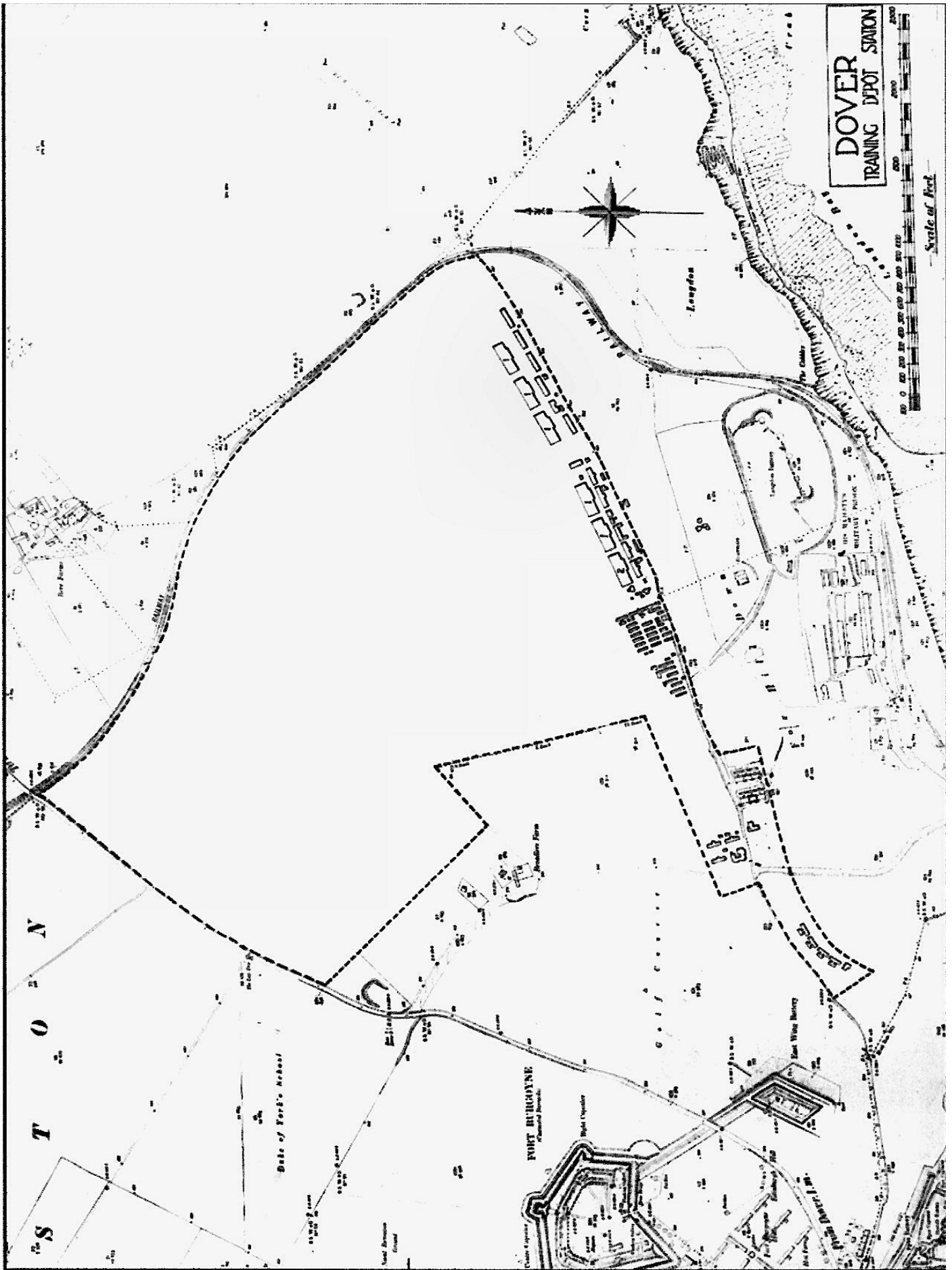
Training Losses

Aircrew training losses in both World Wars was considerable. A question in Parliament during the 1918 Air Estimates debate revealed that during 1917 more men were lost at the training schools than were lost flying on all fronts." This said, those that survived the training programme had a very bleak future to contemplate. In April 1917 for example the average life-expectancy for a RFC pilot on operations was just 17.5 flying hours! It is now reckoned that of the 14,166 pilots who lost their lives in WW1 over half were killed in training.



Above and below: RFC Memorial site on Deal Road





Future Commanding Officers of No. 33 (HD) Squadron who deployed from Swingate Down to France in August 1914.



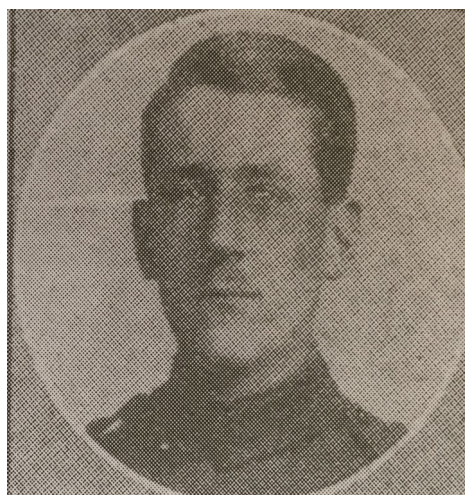
Captain P B Joubert de la Ferté, No. 3 Squadron



Lieutenant WCK Birch, No. 3 Squadron



Lieutenant R M Vaughan, No.5 Squadron



2nd Lieutenant A A B Thompson, No.5 Squadron

Day Two– Stand and hotel details

Dover Ferry Port

Address: Dover Ferry Terminal, Eastern Docks, Dover CT16 1JA

What3words: skies.robots.hoped

Stand One: Calais Cemetery

Address: 138 rue de Hauteville, 62250 Saint-Inglevert , France

Telephone: N/A

What3words: transaction.sincerely.jump

Map: Pages 27-28

Background: Pages 29-31

Stand Two: St Omer Aerodrome

Address: Chemin des Berceaux, Longuenesse, St.Omer, France

Telephone: N/A

What3words: bubbles. Intervals.cactus

Map: Page 32-33

Background: Pages 34-35

Stand Three: La Coupole

Address: Musée Bunker – La Coupole, Rue André Clabaux, 62570 Wizernes, France

Telephone: +33 (0)321 12 27 27

What3words: happening.footballers.clipboard

Map: Pages 36

Admission: Adults €10

Background: Pages 37-41

Stand Four: Bois des Huits Rues

Address: D138 to Morbecque

Telephone: N/A

What3words: crest. finishing.trembling

Map: Pages 42-43

Background: Pages 44-45

Day Two– Stands and hotel details

Stand Five: Railway Dugouts Cemetery

Address: Komenseweg, Ieper, Belgium

Telephone: N/A

What3words: owes. tallest. scrum

Map: Pages 46-47, 51

Background: Pages 48-50

Accommodation: Novotel Ieper

Address: Sint-Jacobstraat 15, Ieper 8900, Belgium

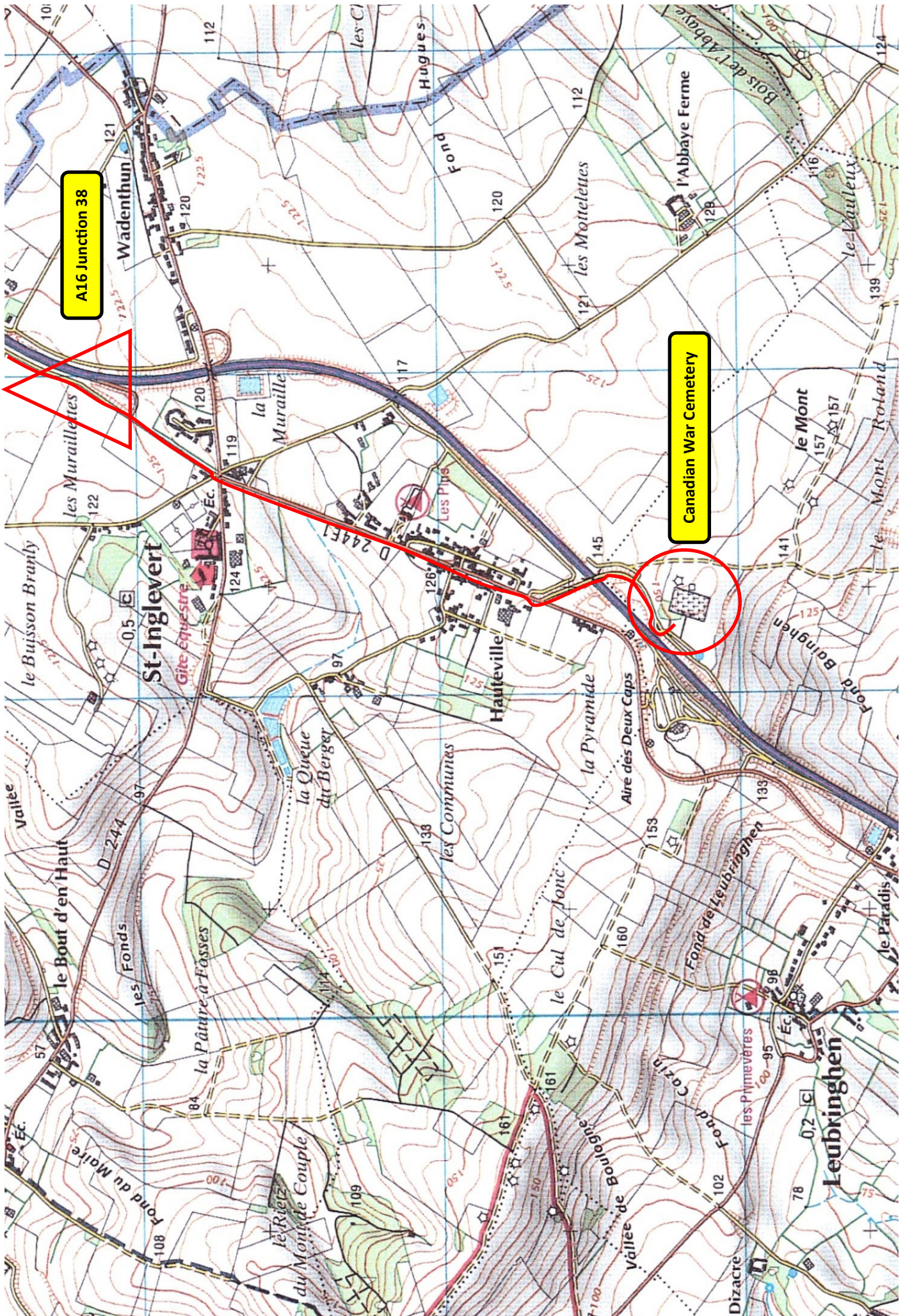
Telephone: 32 57 42 96 00

What3words: happening. footballers. clipboard

Map: Page 51

Admission: Underground car park, with surcharge







Stand One: Flt Lt Ernest Tribble RCAF/33 SQN RAF

‘We will remember them’



Flt Lt Ernest Edward Tribble was flying Spitfire IX MA807 when he was shot down in France on 19 June 1944. He had only been with 33 Squadron for one month, during which time he had flown in support of Operation OVERLORD, the Allied invasion of Europe. His arrival on 33 Squadron, and his death almost two weeks after D-Day, was reported as follows:

F540
33 Squadron
19 May 44
LYMPNE:

Operational flying began today, with the complete wing escorting 14 Mosquitoes in the afternoon. The Mosquitoes attacked YORENCH (Yvrench?), and the wing then swept on to LILLE and DUNKIRK without any enemy opposition.

In the evening of the 19th Nos 33 and 74 Squadrons carried out a sweep of the CRIEL-CAYEUX area, slight ‘flak’ encountered near ABBEVILLE but no enemy aircraft were seen.

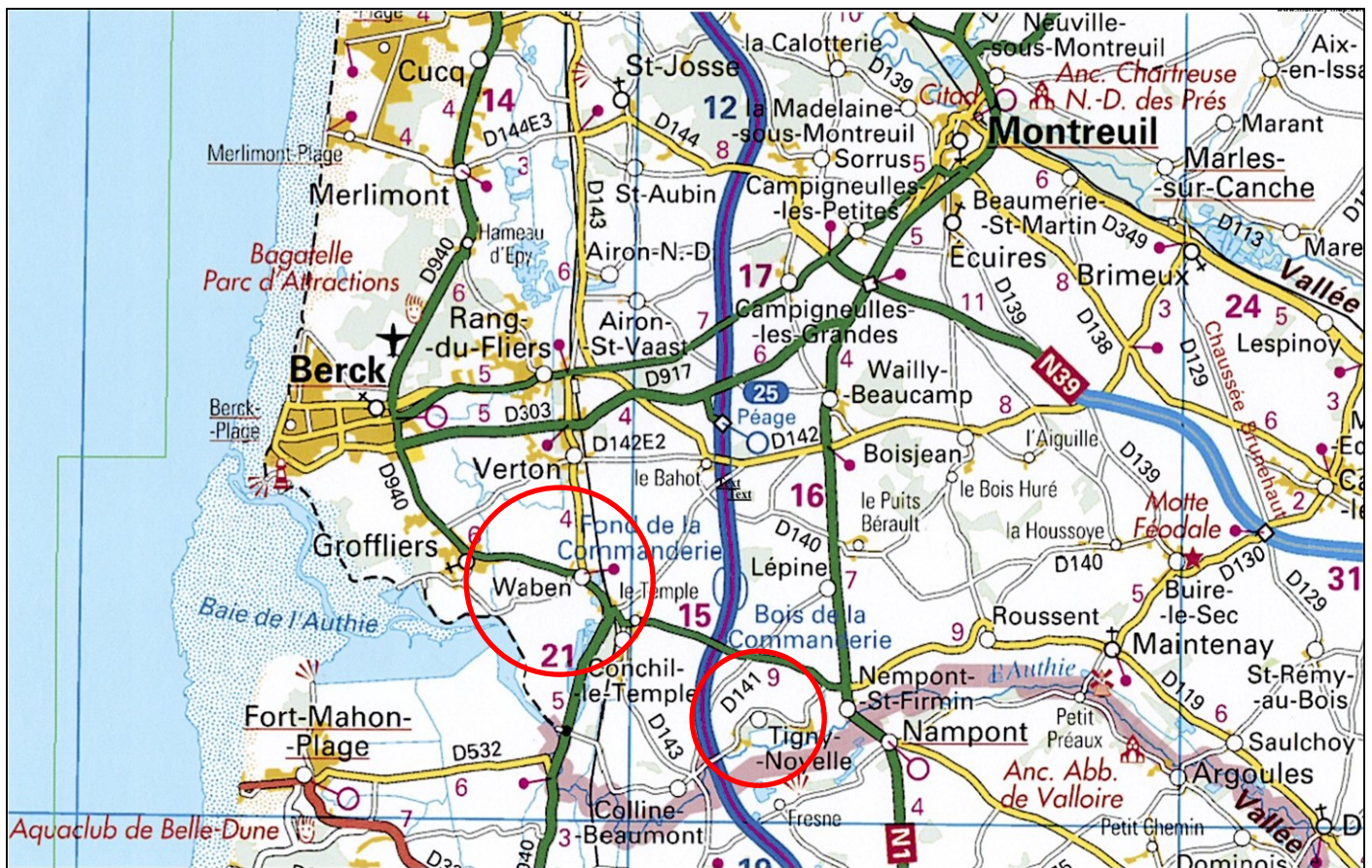
Two more Canadian pilots – F/Lt STARKEY and F/Lt TRIBBLE arrived on posting today from No. 3 T.E.U. this brings the squadron over establishment in aircrew personnel.

F540
33 Squadron
19 June 1944
LYMPNE:

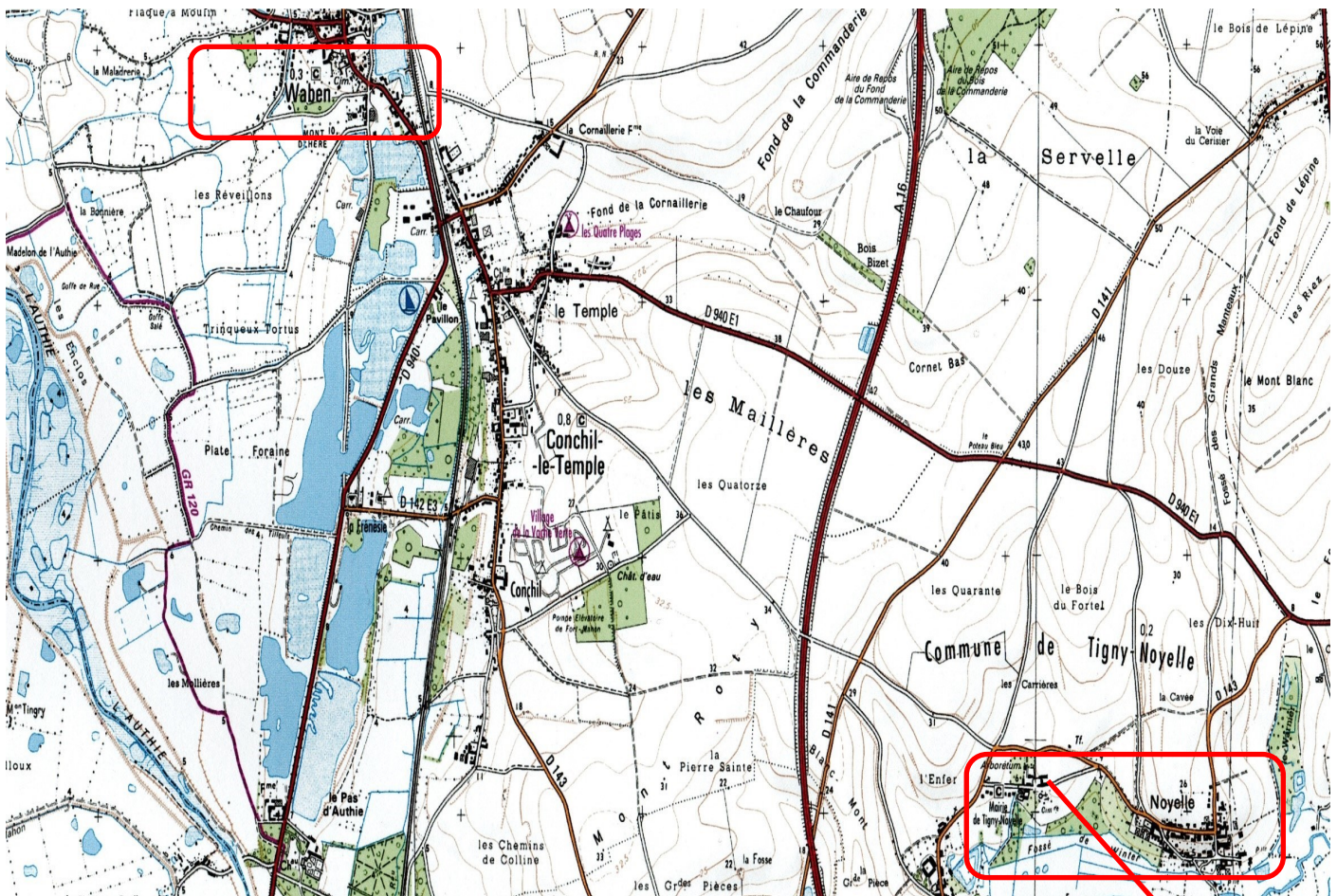
Twelve aircraft were brought to readiness at 13.00 hours, but were later released to carry out operational commitments. There were three uneventful shipping patrols by single sections, and four sections carried out weather recce in the PAS DE CALAIS area. The first section straffed a goods train south of ARRAS, strikes being observed. The second section attacked a train on the roads near BOULLONS (Boulon?) with unobserved results. The third section went in to attack a train at WABEN, but light ‘flak’ guns on the train opened fire and F/L E.E. Tribble’s (RCAF pilot) aircraft burst into flames and crashed. The fourth section attacked railway trucks laden with sacks and cases in a siding North east of MONTREUIL and saw many strikes, a signal box was also straffed and hit repeatedly.

In the evening twelve aircraft (three of which returned early, two with long range tank failures and one with oxygen trouble) escorted eighteen Lancasters which attacked a Noball target at WATTEN. Intense heavy ‘flak’ met the bombers, but at least three direct hits were seen in the target area, and there were many near misses.

The only non-operational flying was one air test.



Flt Lt Ed Tribble Crash Area - IGN 1:250,000 and 1:50,000



Railway—target area

Noyelle Church & Cemetery
Original Burial Site

Flight Lieutenant Tribble's death was reported in the local paper back in Ontario as follows:

'The destruction of the German transportation system was an important phase of the Allied strategy used in defeating the Axis powers and the combined Air Forces did a major part of this job. F/L Ernest Edward Tribble was flying in one of the squadrons briefed for this work when, on June 19, 1944, he lost his life over Boulogne, France.

Twenty-four years of age, the husband of Miss Marion Verna Banks and the son of Edward James Tribble and Elizabeth May Tribble of 23 Palmerston Avenue, the young pilot had had a splendid service career since his enlistment in December 1940. Upon his graduation in October, 1941 at Camp Borden, Ont., he was granted his commission and then served as an instructor in Eastern Canada until he was assigned to overseas duties in December, 1943. He had many sorties over enemy territory to his credit.

Since his boyhood, F/L Tribble had taken a keen interest in military training. While at the Collegiate Institute and Vocational school he was a member of the Cadet corps and later he was a 2nd lieutenant in the 2nd Battalion, Dufferin and Haldimand Rifles of Canada(Reserve). Before his entry in the Air Force, F/L Tribble was on the staff of the Canada Permanent trust Company. He was a member of Brant Avenue United Church.'

Flight Lieutenant Tribble now rests in the Canadian War Cemetery at Leubringen, 138 Rue de Hauteville, 62250 Saint-Inglevert, France. His plot number is 4.H.12, and the cemetery lies to the SW of Calais, en route to Batterie Todt Casemate #3. Research showed that he had originally been buried in the Noyelles Church cemetery after his crash in June 1944.

Approximately 1.5 km SSE of the cemetery is the Mimoyecques Fortress, an underground military complex built by the Germans between 1943 and 1944, intended to house a battery of V-3 cannons aimed at London, 165 km (103 mi) away.

GRAVES CONCENTRATION REPORT FORM BAOR/CONCEN/2697

Report No. **208E-11**

The following ^{has}/_{have} been concentrated here: -

(Name of Cemetery) **Calais-Leubringen Cdn Cemetery, France** *LEUBRINGEN*

(Full Map Reference) **MR.G.784683.Sh/1.1/250,000** *11/1 M. S.W. CALAIS*

NATIONALITY- **CANADIAN** *PAS DE CALAIS 208E-81*

(1) Serial No.	(2) Regt. or Corps	(3) Army No.	(4) Name & Initials	(5) Rank	(6) Date of Death	(7) K/A, D/W or Died	(8) Plot	(9) Row	(10) Grave	(11) Date of Reburial	Previous location of grave France & Map Ref.	Report Number BAOR/ADGR
1	RCAF <i>Pas de Calais 208E-1</i>	23749	Anderson, X.J.K.	F/O	22Jul44	k/a	2	H	3	14Aug45	MR 67663 Sh/1	13087
2	" <i>Somme 124-1</i>	2220077	James, N.T.	Sgt	4Sep44	"	4	H	1	13Sep45	Quend Abbeville Dieppe MR 6864087 Sh/9D	5889
3	Nth NS Highrs	250163	Nelson, A.A.	Pte	7Sep44	"	4	H	5	"	MR 759358 Calais Sh	
4	R Wpg R		Gross, H.J.	Lieut	13Sep44	"	4	H	6	14Sep45	Nr Audinghen MR 700666 Sh/38	8925
5	RCAF	229194	Grier, G.K.	F/O	9Feb45	"	4	H	7	18Sep45	Cassel Comm Cem MR 43058 Sh/2	5090
6	R Regt C	2138424	Barry, E.	Pte	15Sep44	"	4	H	8	"	Hoymille Cem MR 289771 Sh/40	8006
7	RCA	2146020	Sherwood, J.S.	Gnr	18Sep44	"	4	H	9	"	" "	2928
8	RCAF <i>Somme 124-1</i>		Tribble, E.E. (VC)	Offr	19Jun45	"	4	H	12	27Sep45	Noyelles Church Cem MR 17093 Sh/4	5092
9												
10												
11												
12												

Date **12 Dec 45**

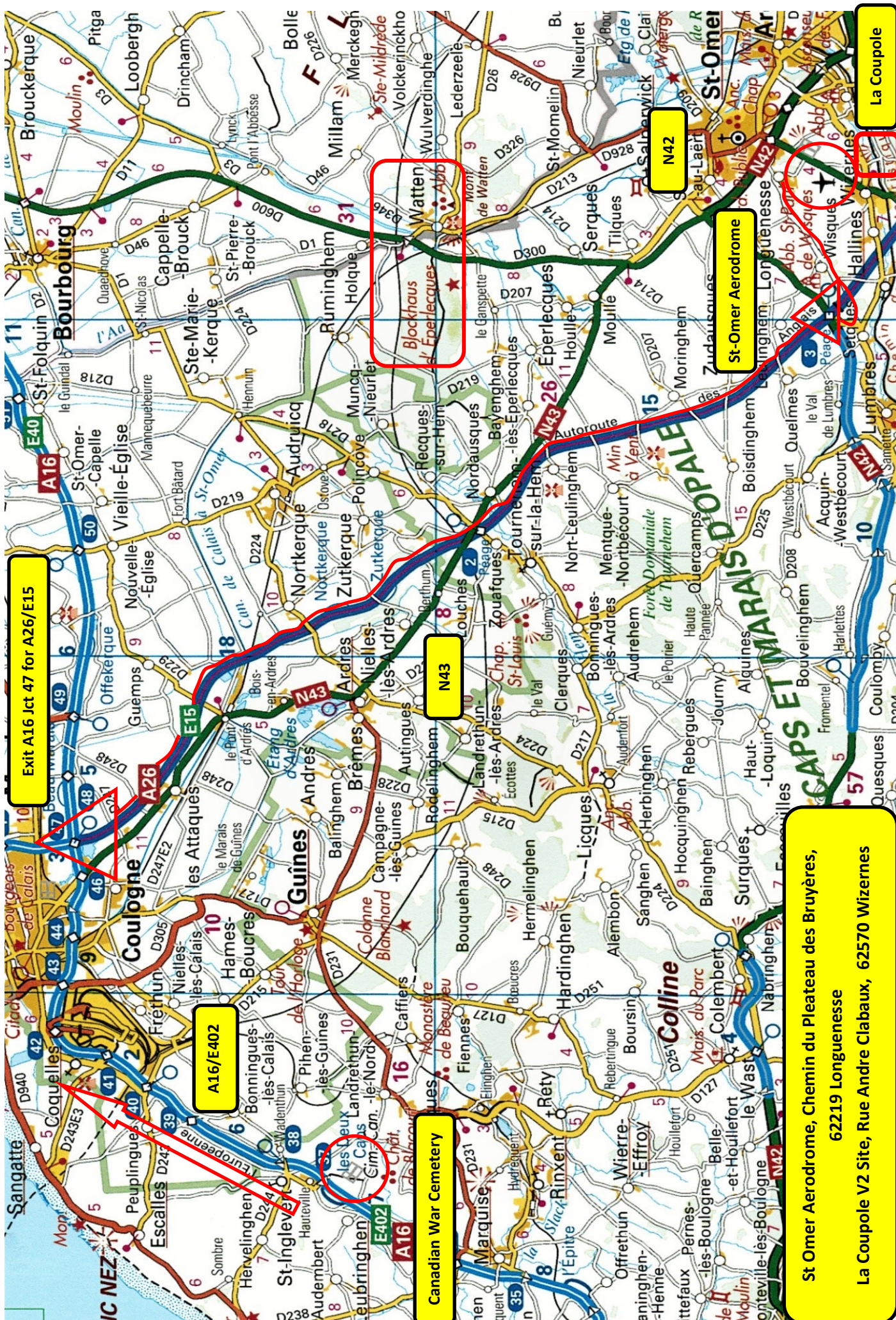
(Signed) *[Signature]* **Col.**

Rank & Appointment **DDGR & BAOR.**

* Where a grave has not already been registered, a Registration Report on A.F.W. 3372 will be prepared, and attached to this FORM.

PSS 2270. 20 M. 6/45

Document showing that Flt Lt Tribble was moved from the Noyelles Church cemetery and reburied at the Calais Canadian Cemetery, Leubringen on 27 September 1945



Exit A16 Jct 47 for A26/E15

A16/E402

Canadian War Cemetery

N43

St-Omer Aerodrome

N42

La Coupole

St Omer Aerodrome, Chemin du Pleateau des Bruyères,
62219 Longueuesse
La Coupole V2 Site, Rue Andre Clabaux, 62570 Wizernes



Stand Two: Saint-Omer Aerodrome

Ironically, the area around Saint -Omer is better known to the British for the V-1 and V-2 missile launch sites of the Second World War, than for the fact that this small aerodrome within sight of La Coupole at Wizernes played a significant part in the birth of British military air power.

Following its initial deployments to the Continent followed by the retreat from Mons in August and September 1914, the fledgling RFC chose Saint Omer as a major airfield and fighting complex, employing over 4,000 technical staff, supplying aircraft and components for the entire Western Front. Throughout its existence the Saint Omer base remained an important headquarters for the RFC and twice housed the GHQ RFC of Major General Hugh Trenchard. Hugh Trenchard, considered by many as the founding father of the RAF on 1 April 1918.

Joining the British Expeditionary Force

As we saw yesterday, Nos 2, 3, and 4 Squadrons took off from Dover to join the BEF in France in August 1914, with No 5 Squadron following a few days behind. They flew directly across to Boulogne, down the coast to the Bay of the Somme then followed the river to Amiens, a journey of some 2 hours for the fastest. Moving forward with the Army to Maubeuge, near the Belgian border, the RFC's first Reconnaissance Flights were flown on 19 August (Joubert de la Ferté / Mappelbeck); shortly afterwards the RFC found itself in the midst of the Battle of Mons on 23 August 1914.

Following the retreat from Mons the RFC fell back to the Marne from where, in September, it identified von Kluck's 1st Army's left wheel against the exposed French flank. In making his manoeuvre in front of Paris von Kluck gave the French a chance to counter attack, turning the tide in favour of the Allies. The German manoeuvre exposed their own flank to the Paris garrison and in the Battle of the Aisne the Germans were pushed northwards. The RFC took aerial photographs for the first time and made use of wireless telegraphy to guide artillery.

As the Race to the Sea developed the RFC moved forward again and on 11 September 1914 the first RFC aeroplane touched ground here. On 8 October 1914, HQ RFC arrived and took up residence in a chateau close to the racecourse in Longuenesse. Within a few days the four squadrons had arrived and for the next four years Saint Omer was to be a central hub for the RFC. The importance of the site grew as logistical support became its primary function and by the end of the war there were nearly 5,000 air service personnel serving at the base. GOC RFC, MG Hugh

Trenchard, held his HQ here up until the end of March 1916 and it returned again for a few months in 1917. The Pilots' Pool was to remain here until the closing stages of the war, and so from this aspect Saint Omer became well known to every pilot in the service.

Hugh Dowding forms IX Squadron

One of the duties of the RFC was to assist the artillery with ranging onto targets. Many systems were tried, and the only thing that looked promising was the wireless. The Wireless Flight of 4 Squadron was increased and reformed here as IX Squadron RFC. CO IX Squadron was Capt Hugh Dowding who would later find himself at odds with Trenchard over the necessity of giving pilots adequate rest periods. For his stance Dowding was sent back to Britain. However as AM Dowding during the Second World War he was to find himself in Trenchard's shoes commanding 'The Few' during the Battle of Britain when his own pilots were to fight to their very limits.

World War Two

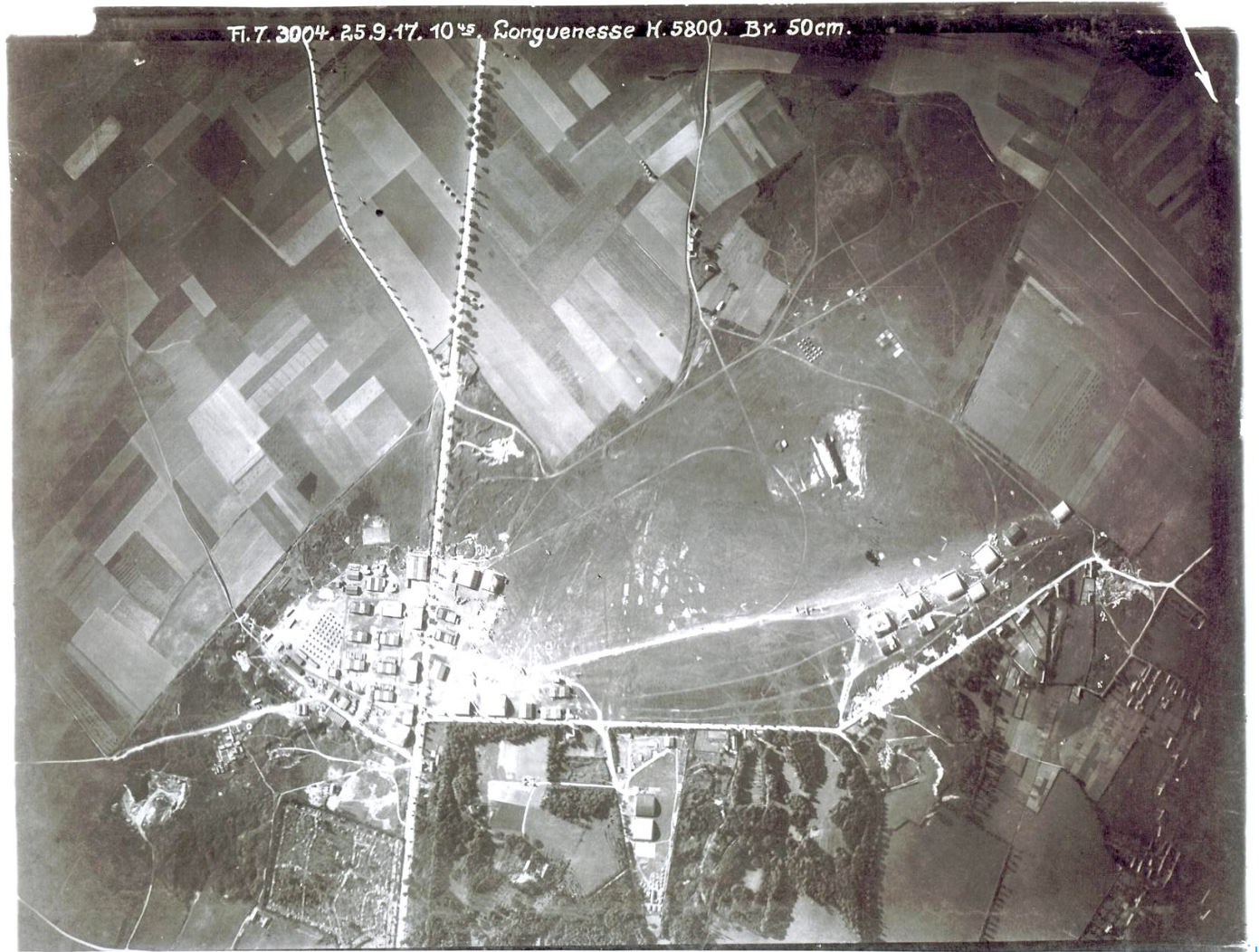
Saint Omer was used as the base of Adolf Galland's *Jagdgeschwader* 26. When Douglas Bader was forced to bail out over Saint Omer on 9 August 1941, leaving his right leg in the cockpit, he was invited to the base by Galland who treated him with great courtesy. Through Goering, Galland arranged for the RAF to drop a replacement limb by parachute over the aerodrome.

RAF Memorial

The Memorial was unveiled by ACM Sir Brian Burridge, C-in-C HQ STC and Lt-Gen Jean Patrick Gaviard of the French Air Force on 11 September 2004. It was designed by Tim O'Brien for the Cross and Cockade aviation historical society. ACdre Peter Dye, HQPTC, who suggested the memorial, said:

"The RAF are here to commemorate the efforts and achievements of the men and women of the British Air Services. We are also here to recognise the debt that we owe them, to reflect on the values of courage and self sacrifice — values that continue to be important to the RAF."

The inauguration was graced by Henry Allingham (At the time a mere 108 years old) who had returned to France for the first time since serving as a mechanic with the Royal Naval Air Service. Henry returned for Armistice ceremonies up until his death in 2009. The unveiling of the memorial coincided with the 90th anniversary of the first British aircraft to arrive at Saint Omer in September 1914.

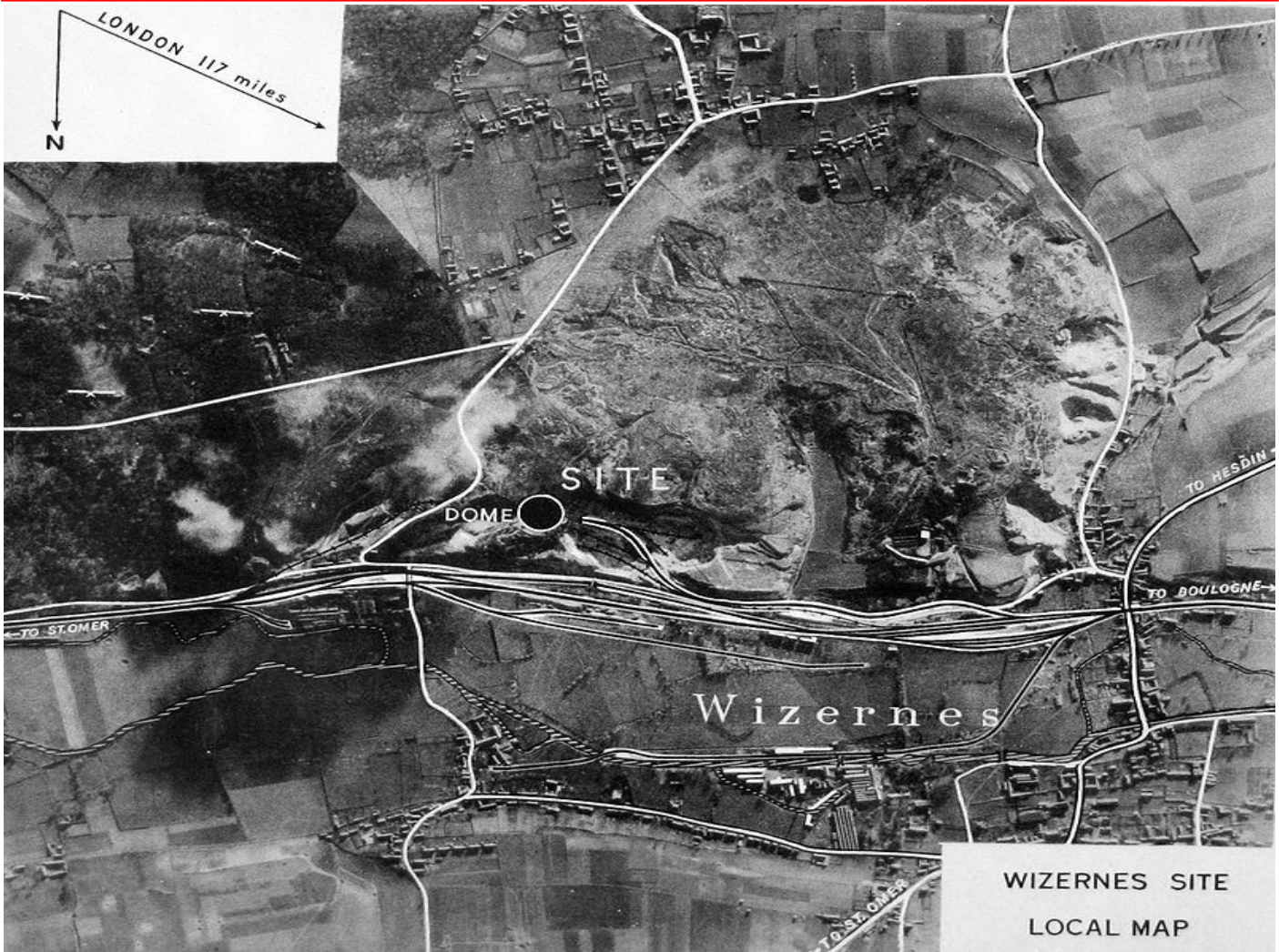




D928

La Coupole

Stand Three: La Coupole V-2 Site, Wizernes



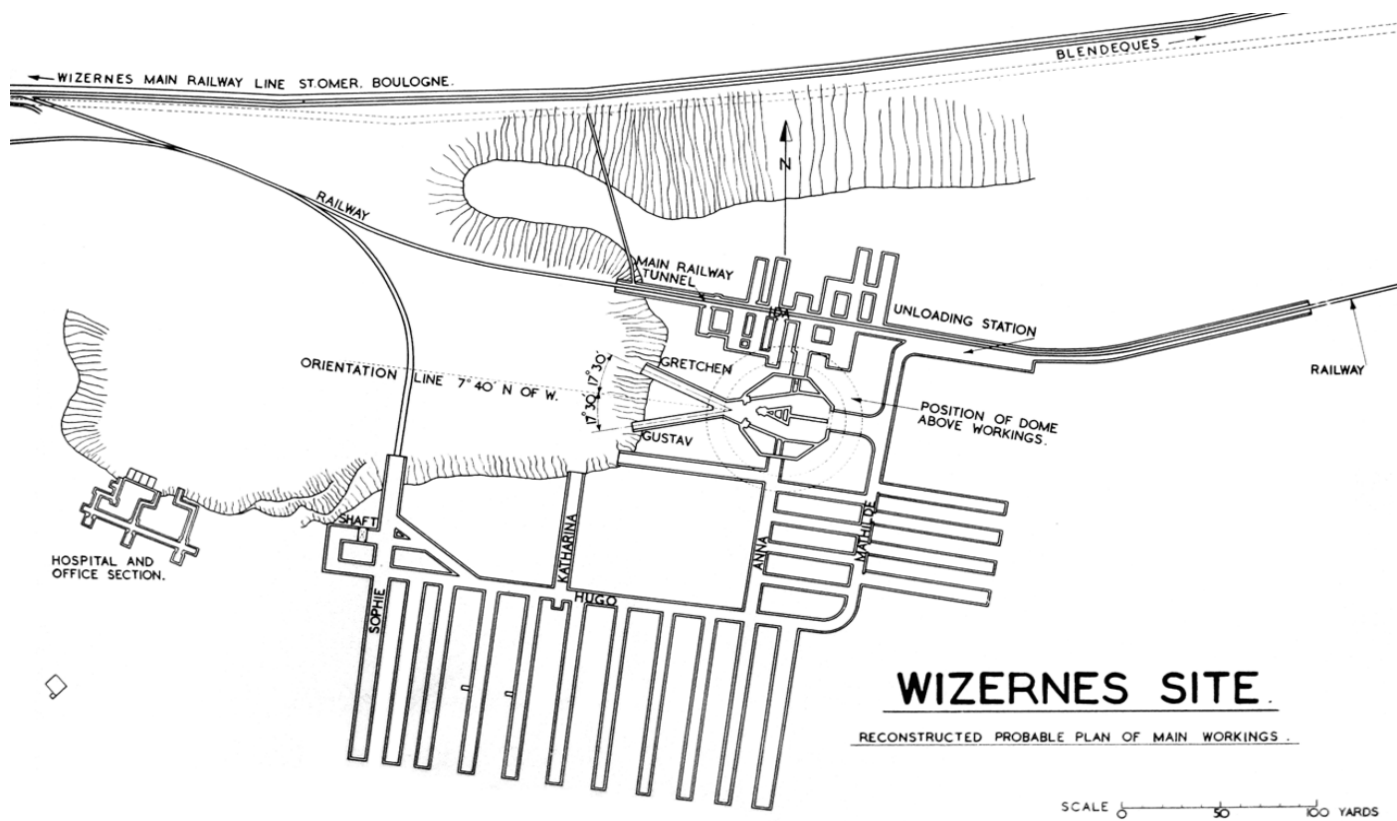
La Coupole (The Dome), originally codenamed *Bauvorhaben 21* (Building Project 21) or *Schotterwerk Nordwest* (Northwest Gravel Works), lies about 5 km (3.1 mi) from Saint-Omer, and some 14.4 km (8.9 miles) south-southeast from the less developed *Blockhaus d'Eperlecques* V-2 launch installation in the same area. It was built by the Germans between 1943 and 1944 to serve as a launch base for V-2 rockets directed against London and southern England, and is the earliest known precursor to modern underground missile silos still in existence.

Constructed in the side of a disused chalk quarry, the most prominent feature of the complex is an immense concrete dome, to which its modern name refers. It was built above a network of tunnels housing storage areas, launch facilities and crew quarters. The facility was designed to store a large stockpile of V-2s, warheads and fuel and was intended to launch V-2s on an industrial scale. Dozens of missiles a day were to be fuelled, prepared and launched in rapid sequence against London and southern England.

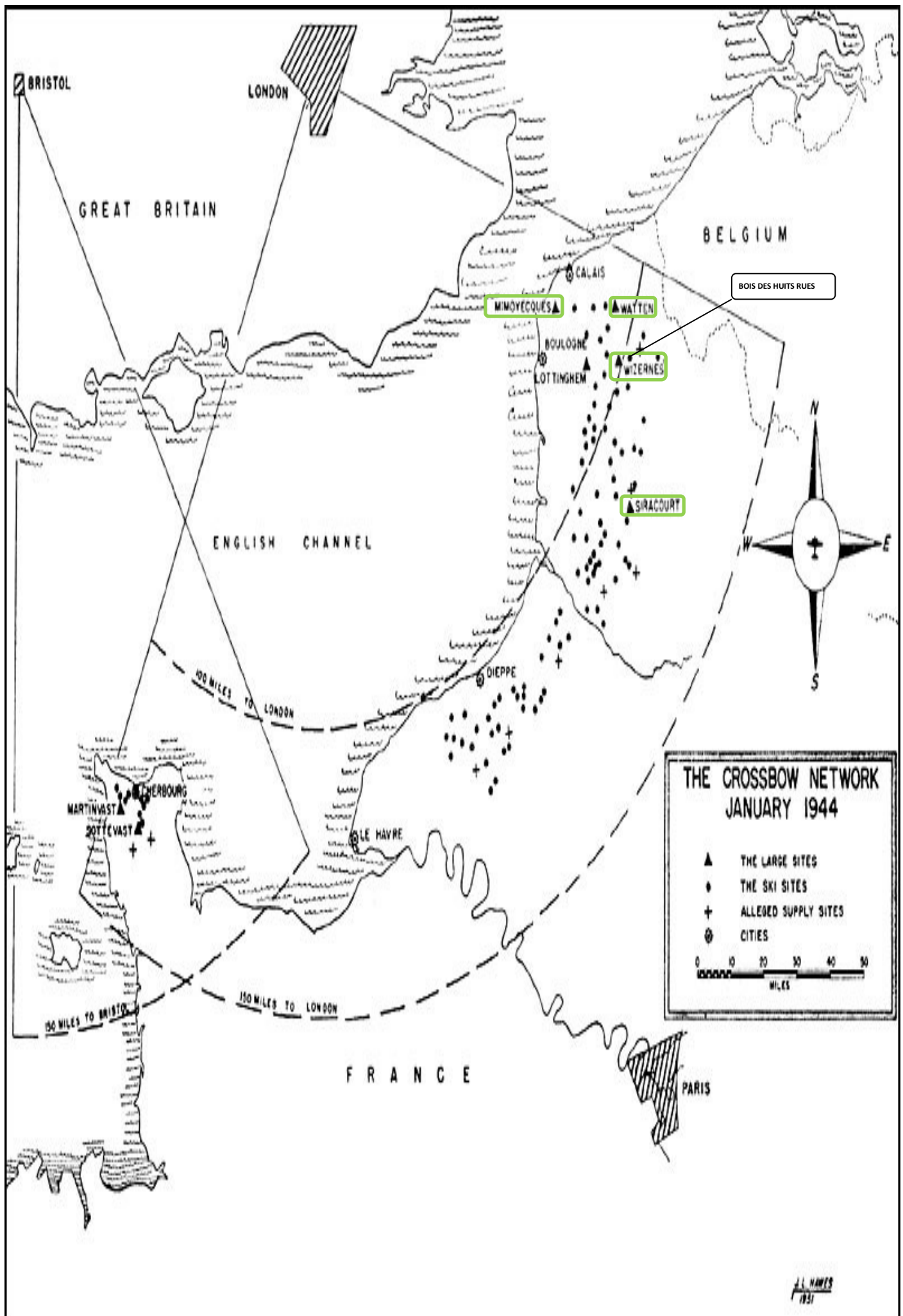
As part of Operation CROSSBOW the Allies launched 14 heavy bombing raids on La Coupole between 11

March and 4 August 1944, seven each by the USAAF and RAF. 617 Sqn dropped several Tallboys on La Coupole on 24 June and twelve Tallboys on 17 July, the latter raid burying the entrance to two launch tunnels. 33 Sqn escorted a 369-strong Bomber Command attack against V-1 sites and La Coupole on 20 July.

Under constant bombardment from the air, the Germans were unable to complete the construction works and the complex never entered service. The site was captured by the Allies in September 1944, partially demolished on the orders of Winston Churchill to prevent its reuse as a military base, and then abandoned. It remained derelict until the mid-1990s. In 1997 it opened to the public for the first time, as a museum. Exhibits in the tunnels and under the dome tell the story of the German occupation of France during World War II, the V-weapons and the history of space exploration.



A photograph taken by an RAF Mosquito flying only 20 metres (66 ft) above the ground shows the dome, still intact, sitting at the centre of the wrecked construction site on 6 July 1944, shortly before its abandonment.



33 Squadron Escort to NOBALL / Bombing Missions (Noball in Bold Caps) May to August 1944

Date	Aircraft Escorted	Target	Remarks
MAY			
22	Mitchells	Douai marshalling yards	
28	Marauders	Mantes Gassicourt bridges	(photos 30 May 44 –Marauderman)
30 pm	Mitchells	Courselles sur Seine	
JUNE			
1	Mitchell		
8	Stirlings	Normandy beach-head	
12 pm	Mitchells	Foret Grimbusq	
14 pm	Lancasters (300)	Le Havre harbour	
15 pm	Lancasters/ Halifaxes (300+)	Boulogne harbour	
19 pm	Lancasters (18)	WATTEN	
20	Mitchells (36)	BOIS COQUEREL/ MOYENVILLE (MOYENNEVILLE?)	
21	Halifaxes(100)/ PF Mosquitos	OISEMONT	
22 pm	Halifaxes (100)	SIRACOURT	(BC images National Archive?)
23	Stirlings (18)	Para resupply NE Caen	
24	Lancasters(100)/Halifaxes(100)	LES HAYONS / BONNETOT	
24	Bostons (24)	NOIALLES (NOAILLES?)	
25	Lancasters (16)	SIRACOURT	
27	Halifaxes (100)	MIMOYECQUES	
29	Lancasters (100)	DOMLEGER	
30	Lancasters (150)/Halifaxes (100)	Villers Bocage enemy concn	
JULY			
2	Lancasters (125)	DOMLEGER	
6	Halifaxes (125)	CAP GRIS NEZ	(Ramrod 1062)
6 pm	Halifaxes (100)	BURES(en Bray)	(Ramrod 1065) (La Val Ygot, Eawy Forest V1 site)
9	Lancasters (52)	PUILLEZ	(Ramrod 1047)
10	Lancasters (200)	NUCOURT	(Ramrod 1072)
11	Lancasters (21)	ABBEVILLE (Gapennes)	(Ramrod 1081)
12	Lancasters (157)	Vaire sur Marne marshalling yards	
15	Lancasters (48)	NUCOURT	(Ramrod 1091)
16	Mitchells (36)	Chartres	
18	Lancasters/Halifaxes (100)	Vaire sur Marne marshalling yards	
19	Lancasters (16)	FRUGES	(Ramrod 1170) (Photo 31 Dec 43 Marauderman)
20 pm	Lancasters(100)/PF Mosquitos	WIZERNES	(Von Stauffenberg plot vs Hitler fails)
22	Lancasters (8)	?	(Ramrod?)
24	Lancasters (8)/PF Mosquitos	VACQUERIETTE	(BC Diary: Arquet & Prouville, photo of Prouville)
25 am	Lancasters(16)	St OMER	
25 pm	Lancasters/Halifaxes(100)	St Cyr airfield, Paris	

Date	Aircraft Escorted	Target	Remarks
JULY			
26	Mitchells(36)/Bostons(24)	Alencon POL dump	(Photo 25 Jun 44 Marauderman)
27	Lancasters(12)/PF Mosquitos	CHATEAU BERKAIRE(?)	(Ramrod 1134)
28	Lancasters (80)	FORET de NIEPPE	
28 pm	Stirlings (14)	St OMER	(Ramrod 1137)
30	Lancasters (100)	Mil targets @ Cahagnes	(Ramrod 1141) (W of Villers Bocage)
31	Lancasters (110)	Marshalling yards S of Paris (Joigny La Roche)	(463 Sqn RAAF filmed this raid – IWM Archive OPX 186)
AUGUST			
2	Lancasters (100)	N of Paris	(Ramrod ?) (Bois de Cassan Ammo / /Eqpt/V1 dump)
3	Lancasters (100)	N of Paris	(Ramrod ?) (Bois de Cassan – good French website with photos)
4	Lancasters (90)	N of Paris	(Ramrod ?) (Bois de Cassan)
5	Halifaxes (100)	25 m N of Paris	(Ramrod ?) (St Leu d’Esserent – good website)
9	Halifaxes (60)	LAUCHING RAMPS	No location given
25	? (161 Bomber Cmd ac)	? (Pas de Calais)	(Ramrod 1230)(5 x V-1 launch and storage sites)
26 am	?	?	(Ramrod 1321)
26 pm	?	?	(Ramrod ?)
27	Lancasters(200)	Homborg	(Ramrod ?) (1st RAF BC daylight raid vs Germany since 12 Aug 41)
28	?	Doullens Oil Dump	(Ramrod 1241)

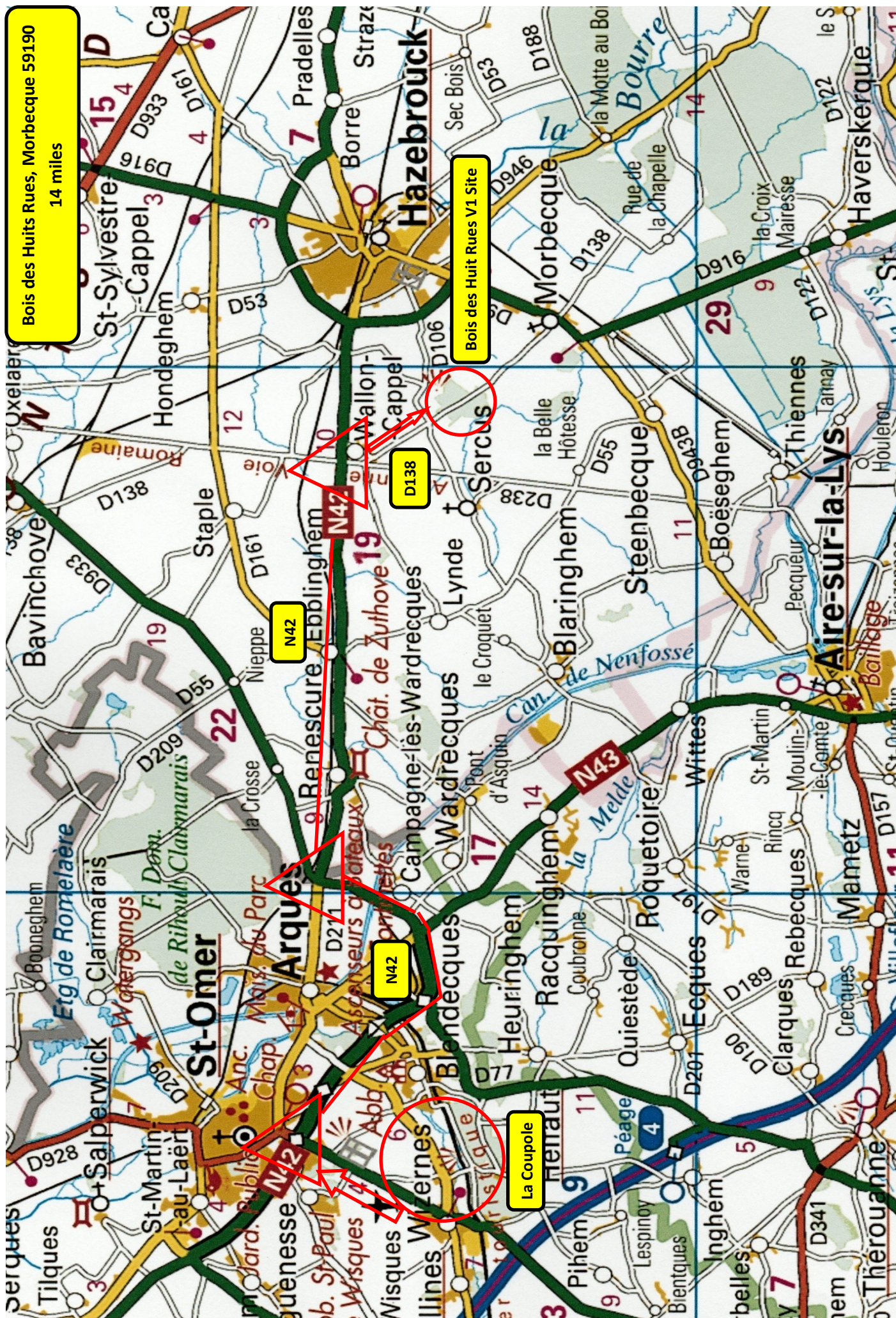
33 Squadron/ 135 Wing NOBALL /Bombing Raids

MAY

24	12 ac	Hoden (Hodenc?) woods	500 lb MC bombs
27	11 ac	Le Petit Bois (Rouen)	500 lb MC bombs
29 am	11 ac	?	
29 pm	12 ac	BOIS COQUEREL	P/O Clinch shot down – POW
30 am	12 ac	VACQUERIETTE	

JUNE

2	12 ac	Bapume sweep / Arras-Boullons road	MT convoy bombed
3	12 ac	Faulx Vraucourt railway station	
4	12 ac	Gravelines radar stations	
17	10 ac	Regneauville (Regneville sur Mer?)	
20	10 ac	BOIS COQUEREL / MOYENVILLE	Follow up from escort mission am (Moyenneville?)





Stand Four: V1 Site - Bois des Huits Rues



The Baby Blitz Begins

On the night of 12-13 June 1944 the British population were the first to witness the arrival of four small and noisy pilot less planes. The distinctive pulsating drone immediately caught the attention of those still awake that night as these unusual aircraft followed their respective courses over Sussex and onto London. One fell short and landed in the Sussex countryside; one fell on Sevenoaks, one on Gravesend and the last on Bethnal Green. Ten had begun the 15 minute journey from their launch sites in Northern France but haste in the German preparations for this new bombardment of London had accounted for the failures.

This weapon was different indeed and though the British Intelligence Services had known of its existence for some years the sheer audacity of having four of them dropped indiscriminately on the population of southern England was hard to bear.

There was a delay of three days while the Germans got their act together and all the operational launch sites in northern France could be coordinated after which the bombardment by the newly christened 'Flying Bomb' or 'Doodle-Bug/Buzz Bomb' began for real. In the following fortnight, around 2,452 bombs were dropped on England. Not all reached their intended target. A third were brought down by anti-aircraft fire over the Channel, or shot down by fighter pilots. About 800 missiles hit London and the surrounding area. The greatest single tragedy took the lives of 121 people when a V-1 landed on the Guards Chapel at Wellington

Barracks during a service.

The first V-2 rocket attacks came on 8 September. More than 2,500 Londoners were killed in the following six months. In total, 9,000 V-2s were fired against England; nearly half were destroyed before impact. Meanwhile, V-1 attacks continued to target London, Southampton, Portsmouth and Manchester, causing 6,184 deaths in total and nearly three times as many injuries. Throughout July to August 1944 launchings were averaging between 120-150 missiles per day and sites in the Pas de Calais, Lower Normandy south of Dieppe, and Upper Normandy on the Cherbourg peninsular, began to bombard London and the south east, Portsmouth, Southampton, Bristol and the south west.

By the end of the first phase of the sustained attack at 0400 hrs on 1 September 1944, some 8,617 flying bombs had been dispatched against English cities. The second phase covered the period 6 September 1944 to 14 January 1945 and included the air launched V-1 attacks. The final phase covering 3 to 29 March 1945 was to be the final throw of modified, longer range missiles fired from Belgium and the ordeal of the V-2 rockets launched from Holland.

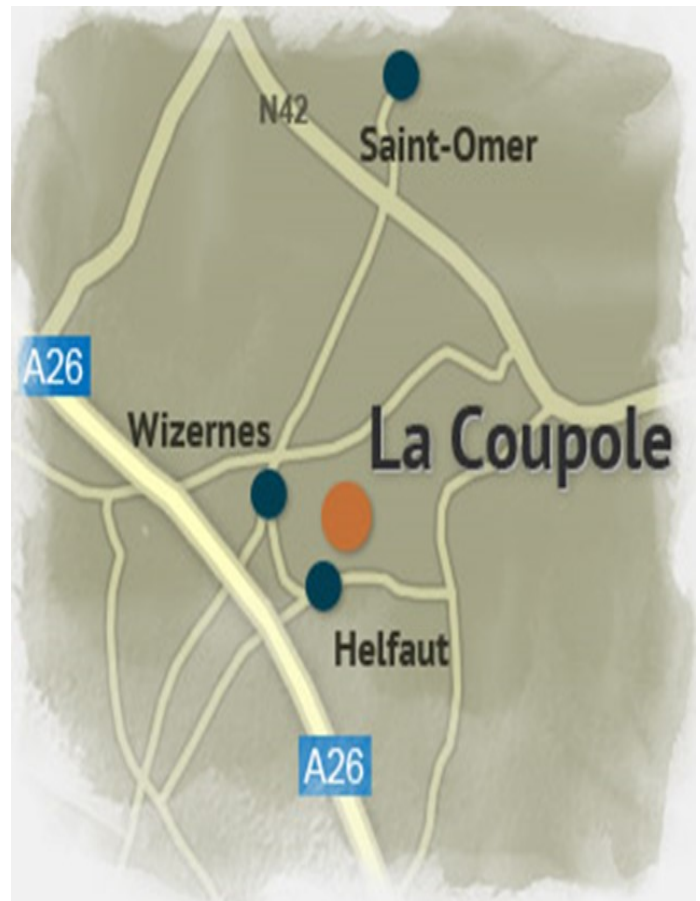
By now though the British were gaining the measure of the V-1 and the co-ordinated efforts of both RAF Fighter Command and the anti aircraft gun defences along the south coast were beginning to take effect.

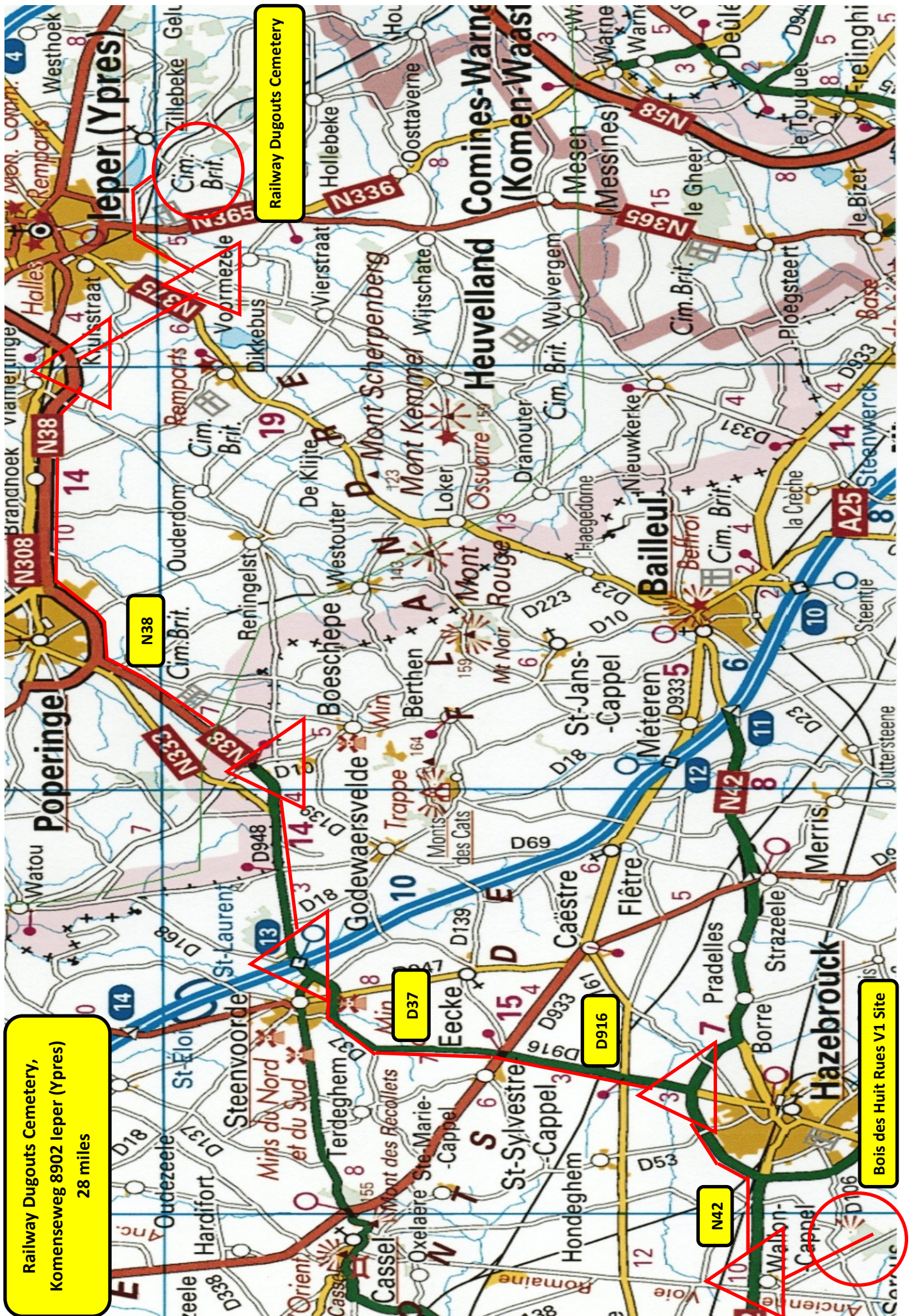
The launch sites in France were quickly being found and overrun by allied troops and both the USAAF and

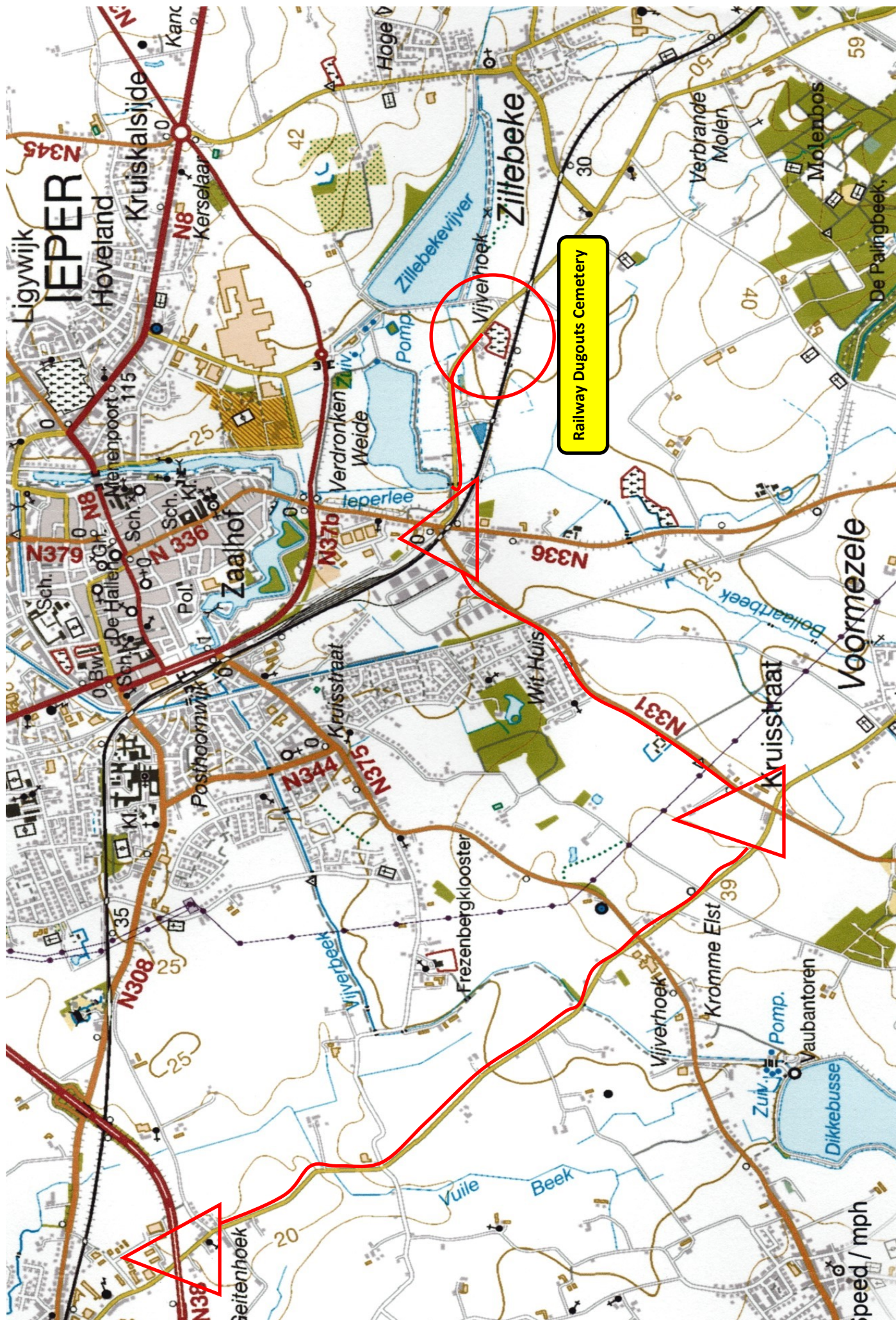
Bomber Command practiced a relentless program of seeking out and destroying both launching and storage sites on a daily basis.

All in all, about 10,500 V-1s were fired at England. Of that total 7,488 crossed the British coast and 3,957 of these were shot down before they could reach their targets. Of the 3,531 which beat the defences, 2,419 reached London. About 30 reached Southampton and Portsmouth and just one hit Manchester. Therefore about three quarters of all the catapult launched missiles failed to reach any target at all, for one reason or another. Those bombs that did get through caused the deaths of 6,184 civilians: an average figure of roughly three deaths for every five bombs launched. A further 17,981 people were injured in one degree or another.

Thus ended the short and somewhat unsuccessful reign of the V-1 and ushered in the beginning of the most sophisticated German weapon of all, the V-2 stratospheric rocket. The V-1 legacy, however, cannot be easily overlooked. The missile was an ingenious weapon and, in many ways, the result of the German obsession for long range bombardment that dated back to the Paris Gun of WW1 with a 76 mile range.









Stand Four: Major William Birch M.C.

2nd Battalion Yorkshire Regiment & Royal Flying Corps

‘We Will Remember Them’



From our formation in January 1916, No. 33 (HD) Squadron pilots had either returned from a front line RFC squadron in France or were destined to leave 33 to join a front line squadron in France after their tour on Home defence duties. This applied as much to the commanding officers as the line pilots, observers, and groundcrew. Our first CO, Major Philip Joubert de la Ferte, had flown with No. 3 Squadron to France on 12 August 1914. He also flew in France with No. 1 Squadron before he was hospitalized, sent back to UK to recover and then tasked to form No. 33 (HD) Squadron on 12 January 1916 at Bristol Filton Aerodrome. Joubert de la Ferte saw 33 established in the North of England before he was posted to the Middle East to command 5th Wing RFC. He was replaced, albeit for a very short period, by Captain Jack Armand Cunningham from 18 Squadron, an ‘ace; who would end the war credited with ten victories. Cunningham’ took over from Joubert de la Ferte 1916, but less than two weeks later he was replaced by Captain William Claud Kennedy Birch, a front line RFC veteran who had also deployed with No. 3 Squadron to France in August 1914. Birch would serve as the CO from 13 June to 5 October 1916.

William Birch was a remarkable young man. He was the only son of Colonel and Mrs. W. J. A. Birch, of Compton Lodge, Walton-on-Thames. William was born at Landor in India on 24 August 1891, his father being in the Indian Army. William was educated at Berkhamsted School and Sandhurst, being gazetted to the Yorkshire Regiment as a 2nd Lieutenant by 4 March 1911. Around this time William’s parents were living in ‘Perrymead’ in Fleet. William was promoted to Lieutenant on 27 October 1913 and at the beginning of World War One he was attached to the RFC. He went to France with No.3 Squadron RFC in August 1914.

No. 3 Squadron (Royal Flying Corps) was formed at Larkhill on 13 May 1912 by the renaming of No. 2 (Aeroplane) Company of the Air Battalion Royal Engineers, under the command of Major HRM Brooke-Popham. Being already equipped with aeroplanes and manned by pilots and air mechanics, No. 2 (Aeroplane) Company was thus the first British, Empire or Commonwealth independent military unit to operate heavier-than-air flying machines, hence the 3 Squadron motto, ‘Tertius primus erit’, meaning "The third shall be the first". On 5 July 1912, two members of the squadron, Captain Eustace Loraine and Staff Sergeant Wilson, were killed in an aircraft crash making them

the first RFC fatalities. In 1913, No 3 Squadron deployed to Halton in Buckinghamshire to support the land manoeuvres of the Household Division. A temporary airfield was set up on what later became RAF Halton's Maitland Parade Square. During the exercise, No 3 Squadron flew a number of reconnaissance sorties and staged the first confrontation between an airship and an aeroplane.

Sent to France on the outbreak of the Great War First World War, the squadron initially operated in the reconnaissance role using a variety of aircraft types. The English ace James McCudden served as a mechanic and later observer with 3 Squadron from June 1913 to January 1916 before leaving to become a pilot.

3 Sqn flew to France from RFC Swingate Down, Dover on 12 August 1914, and were constantly on the move until November that year:

Amiens	13 August
Maubeuge	16 August
Le Cateau	24 August
St Quentin	25 August
La Fere	26 August
Compiègne	28 August
Senlis	30 August
Juilly	31 August
Serris	2 September
Touquin	3 September
Melun	4 September
Touquin	7 September
Coulommiers	9 September
Fere-en-Tardenois	12 September
Amiens	5 October
Abbeville	8 October
Moyenneville	9 October
St Omer	12 October
Gonneham	24 November
Lozingshem	1 June 1915
Bruay	16 March 1916

While in France the Squadron flew a variety of aircraft: Avro 504, BE8, Blériot Parasol, Morane L (Basic Model – Le Rhone 9C 9-cylinder rotary engine), Morane BB (Le Rhone 9j rotary engine), Henri Farman and Sopwith Camel.

In January 1915 William Birch he had had gone out on a bombing expedition in a Morane. His machine was hit many times and he was wounded in the arm. He was

forced to land in a ploughed field in enemy territory and was subsequently reported as 'Missing'. After many adventures he found his way to Flushing and, disguised as a seaman under the name James Buckle, he worked his passage to England. Having been posted 'Missing' Birch was back in England ten days later, and by March he was back in combat in France. He would be twice mentioned in despatches and was awarded the Military Cross on 1 January 1916. On 13 April 1916 he was promoted to Captain, and two months later he was taking command of his own Squadron - 33 (HD) Squadron RFC up at RFC Bramham Moor.

In the book 'The Air Defence of Great Britain 1914-1918' by Cole & Chessman, Captain Birch is mentioned for his actions on the evening of 25/26 Sep 1916. That evening Captain Birch was flying a BE2c from Bramham Moor and was up from 2250 to 0110 hrs in response to an air attack by German airships: "Birch was airborne when L14 appeared to be making for Leeds. After investigating searchlight activity near Goole, with no result, he turned north and at 0028 he saw more searchlights at Collingham, near Wetherby, but L14 had vanished before he could reach the area."

There is a line in Captain Birch's Service Record that states that he ceased to be employed by the RFC from 12 March 1917. We know that Captain Birch rejoined his Regiment in March 1917, serving as the 2nd Yorks Adjutant from 17 June to 20 November 1917 until he was promoted to Major (Temporary Acting).

On 5 January 1918, near Ypres, the Medical Officer of the 2nd Yorks noticed a flame on the ceiling of a tunnel which was being used to provide protection for the troops. The tunnel, known as the Hedge Street Tunnel, filled quickly with fire and smoke. A Lieut. Picken helped evacuate the men and Major Birch was on the scene as well. When he realised that not everyone had escaped he immediately went back down into the flames to see if he could save anyone

The 2nd Yorks Chaplain later wrote the following account of Major Birch's death:-

"We had an awful tragedy on last Friday night in the support trenches - a big tunnel. It is believed that the electric light short circuited and a fire broke out in two places (at 1230 Saturday morning, 5 January). Major Birch and all the other officers in BHQ were awakened, but, alas, he, the acting Adjutant and all the officers in B Company failed to get out, and were burnt to death along with two other officers and a padre and about 15 signallers and runners. A service was held shortly after. The entrances were sealed up as soon as possible to stop the flames and spread the fire. At the enquiry it was decided that no blame attached to the regiment and that everything possible had been done. These officers were really most of the flower of the regiment,

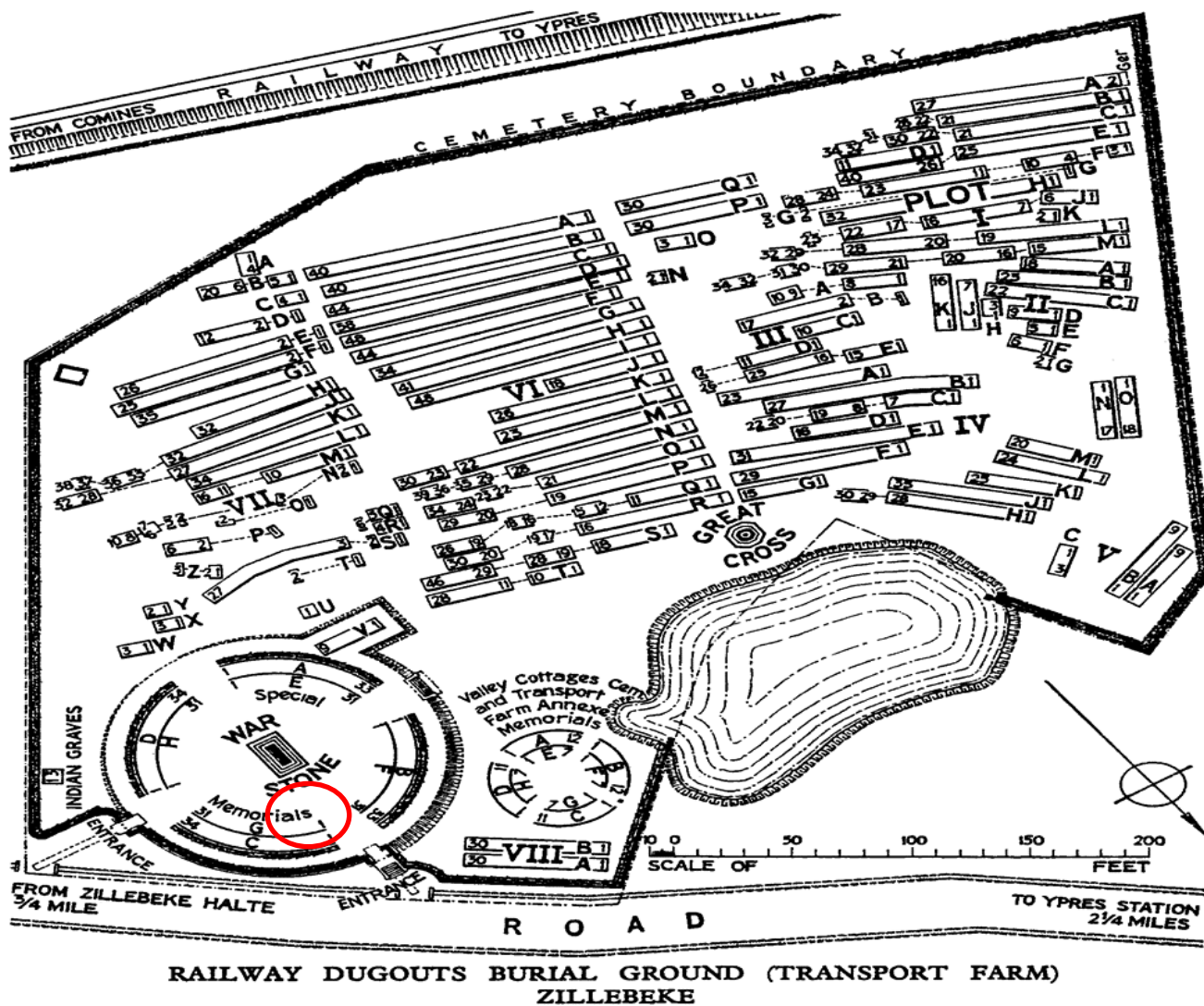
three had won Military Crosses. They were the bravest and the best. One of the men tells me that he (Major Birch) could have got out, and came to the entrance steps, asked if all were out, and was told "No", and so he went back to get them and so gave his life. He was in command of the battalion at the time of writing with acting rank of Major."

Several days later it was possible to reopen the tunnel; doing so sooner had proved impossible due to the intense heat. Inside was found Major Birch, seven other officers and twelve men, a Church of England Chaplain among them.

Major Birch was buried here in Railway Dugouts Burial ground, side by side with his comrades. His brigade commander, Brigadier General G.D. Goodman, wrote:-

"It was only the day before he died that, as I left him in the forward area, I thought to myself how well he was doing in command of his battalion, and how satisfied I was to have him there. I had already recommended him for a permanent command, and in those days officers of his stamp are not very many. He will be much missed, both in his regiment and in the brigade, and was a very gallant soldier."

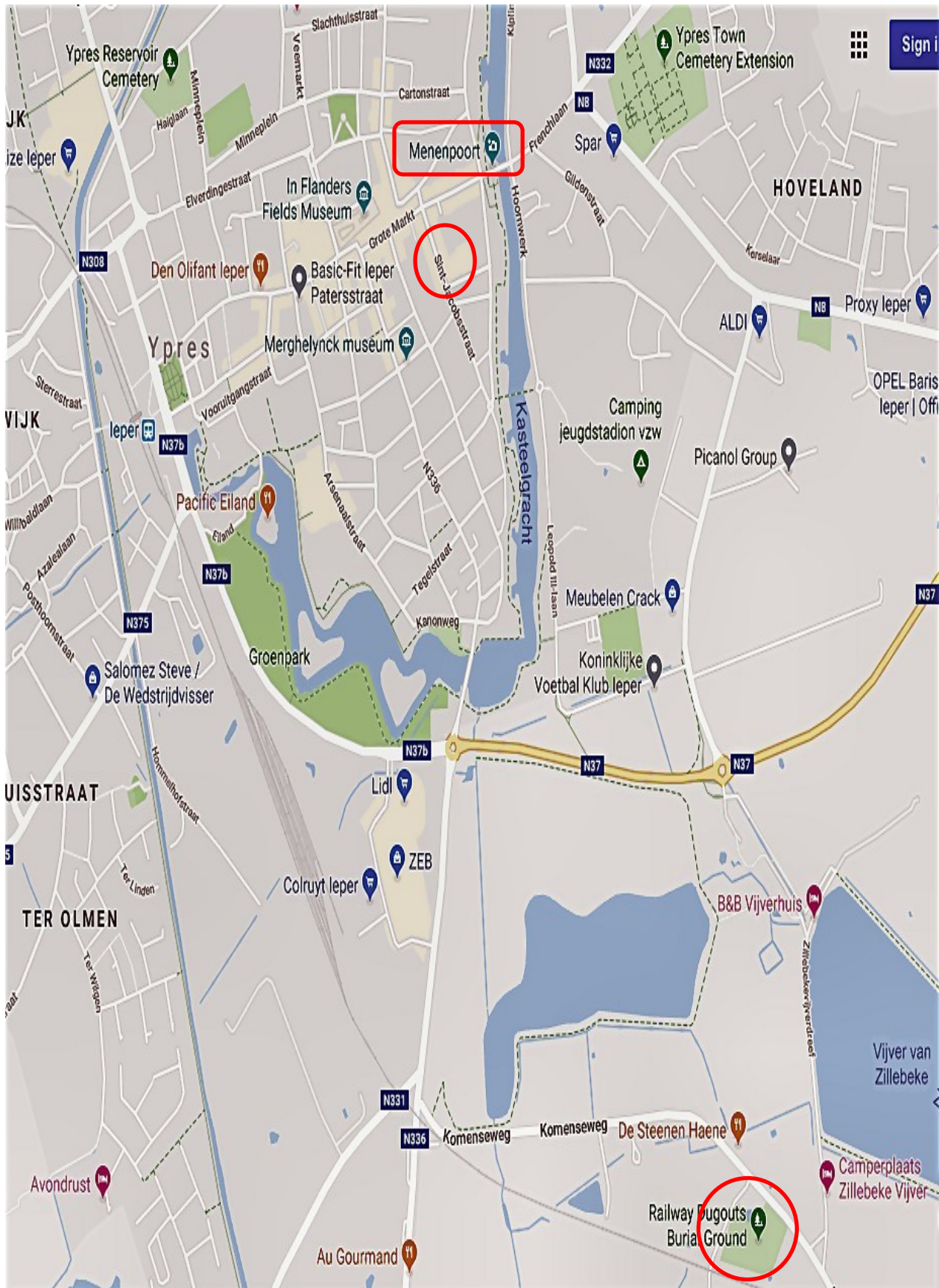
William Claud Kennedy Birch was not a tall man, his records show that he was just 5 feet two and half inches tall, but from his deeds and actions he was a man of immense stature, a former commanding officer that 33 Squadron can be proud of.



375

BIRCH, William Claud Kennedy.
58, Cheyne Court, Chelsea, S.W.

Born 24th August, 1891, **at** Landour, India
Nationality British
Rank or Profession 2nd Lt., Yorkshire Regt.
Certificate taken on Grahame-White Biplane
At The Grahame-White School, Hendon
Date 17th December, 1912



Day Three- Stand and hotel details

Stand One: Dekker Family Maize Field, site of Geroge Roney's crash

Address: Groeneweg, Schoondijke
Telephone: N/A
What3words: drastic. horoscope. untying
Maps: Page 53-54
Background: Pages 55-62

Stand Two: Schoondijke Municipal Church and Cemetery

Address: Dorpstraat, Schoondijke, Netherlands
Telephone: N/A
What3words: stardust. implications.nickel
Map: Page 53
Background: Pages 54-61

Stand Three: Calais Ferry Terminal

Address: P&O Ferries, Terminal car ferry, 62100 Calais, France
Telephone: N/A
What 3words: puts. enigma.deaf
Map: Page 27

leper-Schoondijke 68 miles

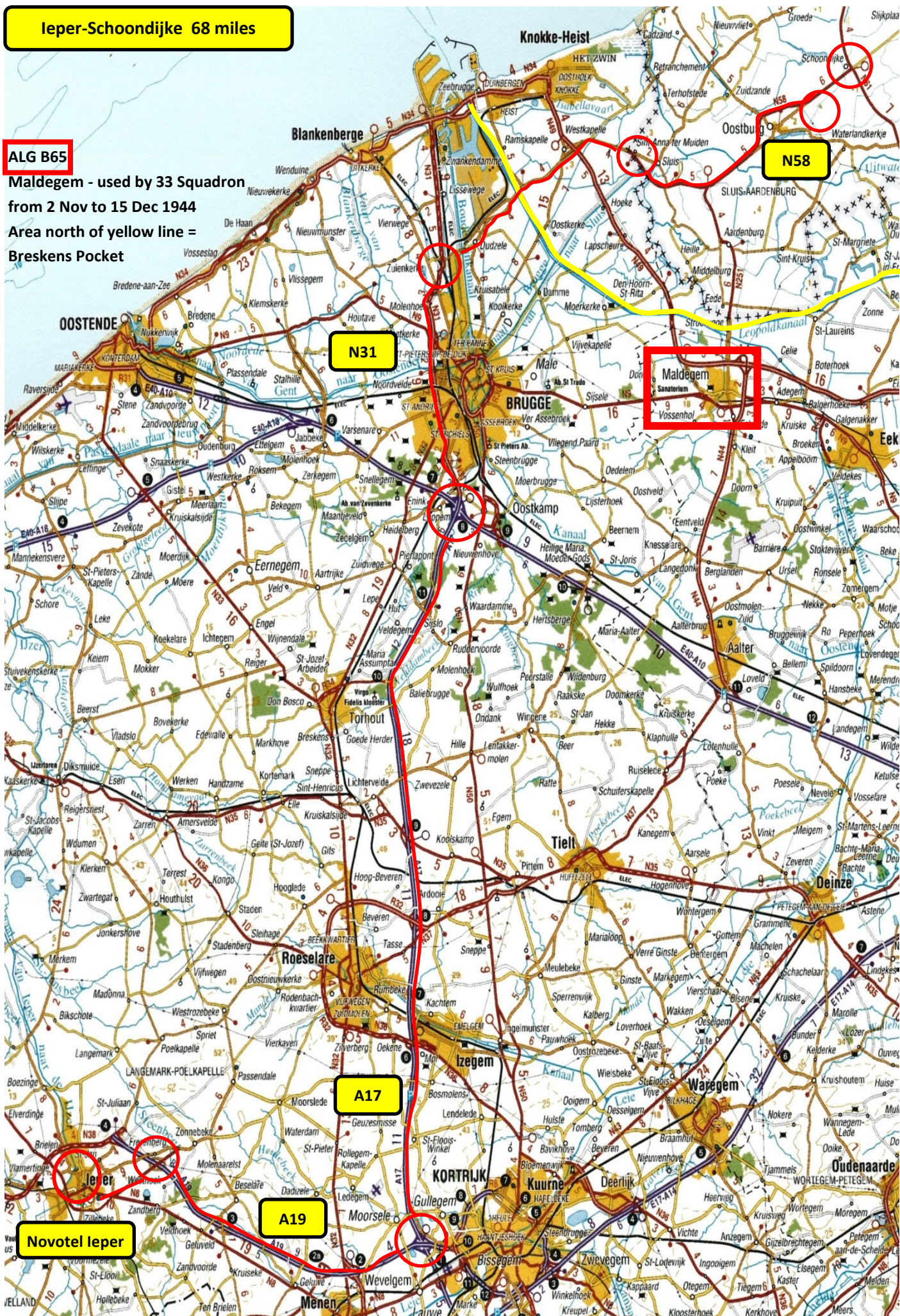
ALG B65

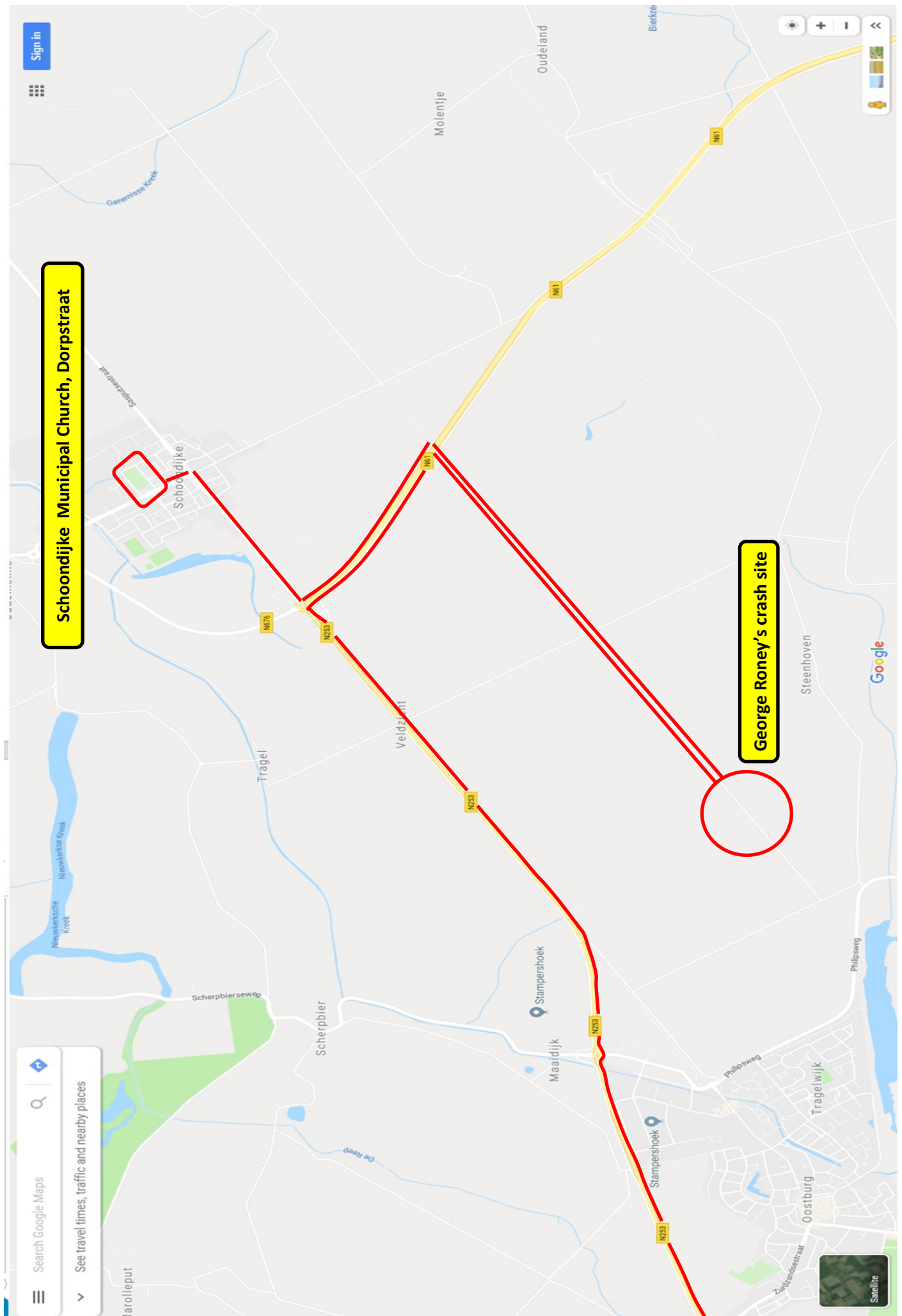
Maldegem - used by 33 Squadron

from 2 Nov to 15 Dec 1944

Area north of yellow line =

Breskens Pocket





DAY THREE: Schoondijke - 'Slag om de Schelde'

INTRODUCTION

This morning we are driving to Zeeland, an area most of the tour party visited in 2017. This region of the Netherlands bore the terrible consequences of Field Marshal Montgomery's 'Narrow Front' gamble as he attempted to bring the war to a hasty conclusion. We are going there to pay our respects to another one of our young men who made the ultimate sacrifice exactly 75 years ago to the day in a series of operations for which 33 Squadron was awarded the Battle Honour 'Walcheren'. This campaign was covered in great detail on the 2017 Battlefield Tour and the Handbook and reader are available on the Association website. One of the pluses from that tour was the involvement of a Dutch military history guide, Meneer Jan Westhoeve, an RNLAf veteran himself. Jan's support to the tour, and his subsequent support to the Association in every respect has been exemplary. Jan deservedly received Honorary Membership status at the Association's AGM this year and we met Jan and his wife, Renate, last night.

BACKGROUND

To recap, history records that 21st Army Group had made rapid advances through Northern France and Belgium, and the capture of Antwerp on 4 September, 1944 was far quicker than the Germans had expected. As supply problems were already influencing Allied operations it was vital to open Antwerp to shipping as quickly as possible, but in order to do that the Allies would have to clear the enemy from the 30-mile long Scheldt Estuary, an aspect that had been overlooked by the majority of the Allied planning staff. The only voice of dissension had been Admiral Ramsay, mastermind behind the evacuation at Dunkirk and the invasion of Sicily.

On 6 September 4th Canadian Armoured Division had resumed its advance towards Bruges and Eecloo, arriving at the Ghent Canal on 8 September. The Germans, naturally, had destroyed all of the bridges in an attempt to slow the Allied advance towards Antwerp and the south bank of the Scheldt as the evacuation of Van Zangen's 15th Army began. On the evening of 8 September the Canadians launched an attack across the Ghent Canal at Moerbrugge, 5 km south of Bruges, and a narrow bridgehead was established. Gradually the bridgehead was extended, but difficult terrain and fierce enemy resistance slowed down progress.

On 9 September, and again on the night of 10-11 September, 1st Polish Armoured Division attempted to create a crossing of the Ghent Canal, halfway between Bruges and Ghent. Encountering heavy German

opposition and difficult terrain they were forced to abandon the attack, and were ordered to relieve 7th British Armoured Division in the Ghent area.

The 4th Brigade of 2nd Canadian Infantry Division were able to move north on 9 of September and occupy the southern outskirts of Bruges, assisting 4th Canadian Armoured Division in that sector. The Germans withdrew without contesting possession of the city. 4th Brigade, 2nd Canadian Infantry Division then turned back and attacked Bergues, a key part of Dunkirk's outer defences, taking the city on 16 September 1944.

On 14 September, shortly before Operation MARKET GARDEN commenced, Montgomery issued a directive to 21 Army Group, which included the following tasks for the First Canadian Army:

"Our real objective is the RUHR. But on the way to it we want the ports of ANTWERP and ROTTERDAM... We have captured the port of ANTWERP but we cannot make use of it as the enemy controls the mouth of the SCHELDT; operations to put this matter right will be a first priority for Canadian Army.

1st Canadian Army. Complete the capture first of Boulogne, and then Calais. DUNKIRK will be dealt with later...The whole energies of the Army will be directed towards operations designed to enable full use of the port of ANTWERP...Having completed the operations for opening of ANTWERP, Canadian Army will operate northwards on the general axis BREDA-UTRECHT-AMSTERDAM."

The Canadian commander, General Crerar, interpreted the directive to mean that the problem of Antwerp would be dealt with after his Canadian Army had taken Boulogne and Calais. Consequently, half of 2nd Canadian Corps would be tied down dealing with the Channel Ports operations, utilising all of the Army-level resources and most of the supporting air and maritime assets. It would be the remainder of II Corps that would have to execute the Scheldt operations.

On 21 September, First Canadian Army's armoured divisions moved northwards roughly along the line of the Ghent-Terneuzen Canal. 4th Canadian Armoured Division was given the task of clearing the area that would come to be known as the Breskens Pocket, a fiercely defended area extending along the coast from Zeebrugge to the Braakman Inlet and down to the Leopold Canal, while 1st Polish Armoured Division headed for the Dutch-Belgian border further east and the crucial area north of Antwerp.

4th Canadian Armoured Division passed through the Moerbrugge bridgehead on the Ghent Canal to find

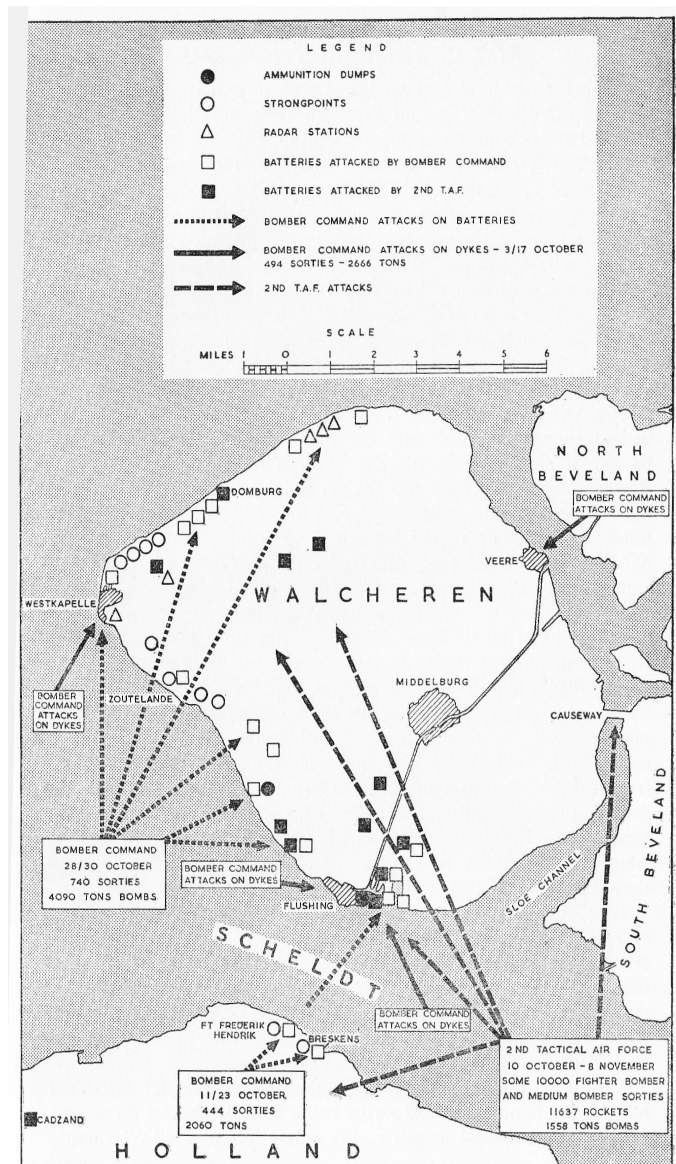
themselves the first Allied force to face the formidable, natural defensive line of the Leopold Canal and Dérivation de la Lys Canal. An attack was mounted in the vicinity of Moerkerke and both canals were crossed, but fierce German counter-attacks and heavy Allied casualties forced the Canadians to withdraw the bridgehead.

Further east, 1st Polish Division enjoyed greater success and, despite stiff resistance and country clearly unsuitable for armour, managed to smash its way to the coast. By 21 September the Poles had occupied Terneuzen and were clearing the south bank of the Scheldt Estuary eastwards towards Antwerp. The Germans were sealed in the Breskens Pocket, yet the evacuation of von Zangen's Fifteenth Army continued for another 5 days. The Allied failure to block the retreat would cost them dearly later in the war.

As we drive around the area you will be able to imagine how the unique geography of this region of the Netherlands is well suited for defence and would make subsequent Canadian operations even more daunting. The south bank of the Scheldt Estuary was 'polder country' - flat floodlands below sea level and enclosed by dykes, while the north of the Estuary - South Beveland and Walcheren - was a well armed and well defended stronghold. The German defensive plan was based upon judicious flooding of the land. It was not necessary for them to flood the whole landscape, as that would have restricted their own ability to resupply and reinforce, but by making fields sodden they denied the Allies the use of wheeled and tracked vehicles.

The flooding constrained the Canadians to moving on foot, using roads and dykes that canalised their advances along very narrow fronts, following routes that were covered by machine guns and pre-registered artillery. The flooded terrain concealed the enemy from the infantry, making aerial reconnaissance of enemy positions a necessity. The Canadians were about to become experts in this new form of infantry warfare - polder fighting - and would write the British Army textbook after the war, but at the expense of many costly and painful lessons.

The provision of strategic and tactical air support during the Battle of the Scheldt was provided by Bomber Command, the Allied Expeditionary Air Force and 2nd Tactical Air Force (2 TAF). No 33 Squadron was part of 135 Wing within 2 TAF and at the time of this battle they were flying from ALG B53 - Merville in France.



AIR OPERATIONS AGAINST WALCHEREN, 3 OCTOBER-8 NOVEMBER 1944

Flight Magazine October 12th 1944

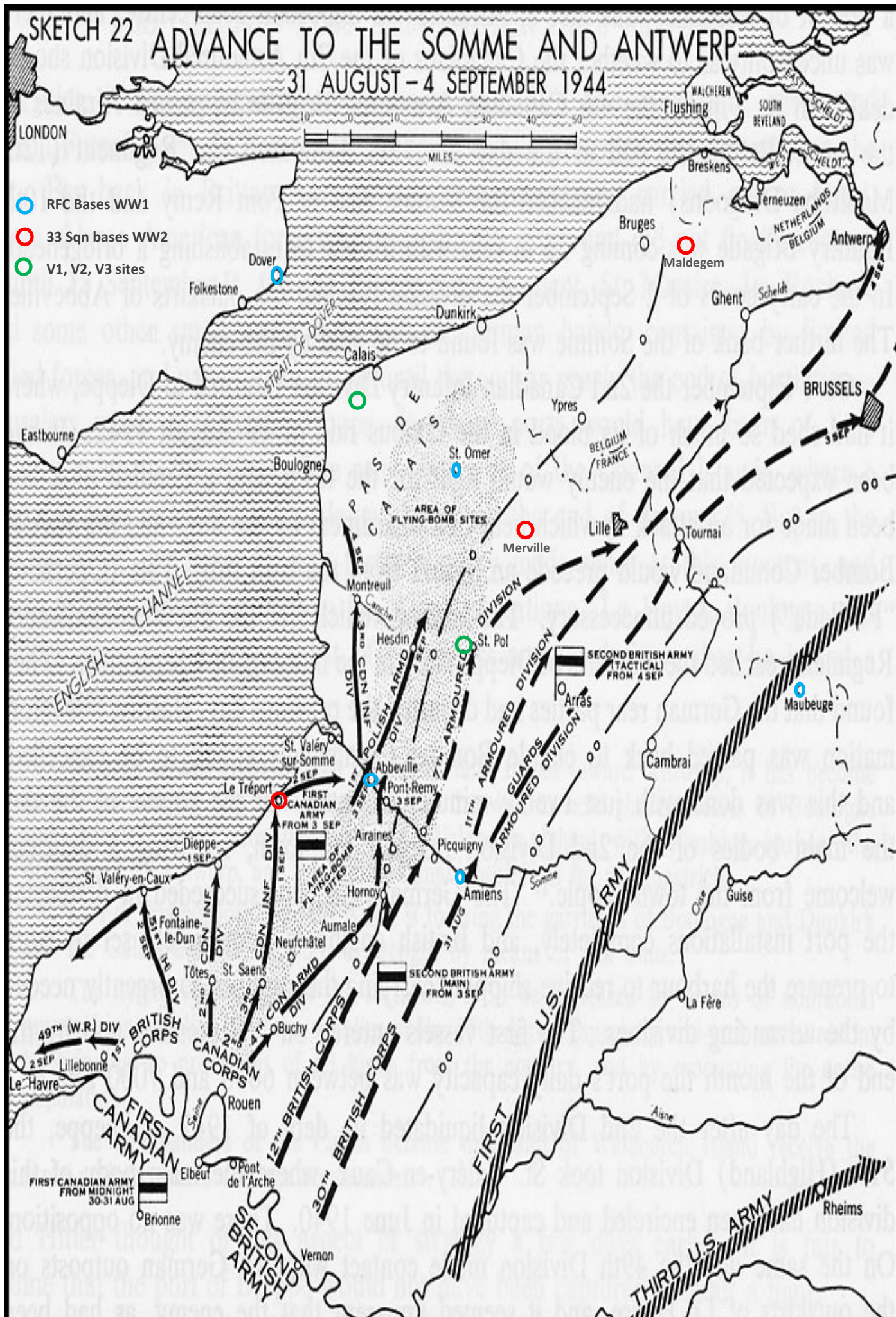
The Outlook

Good Bombing

"...Some ten days after the breaching of the (Ems_ Ed) canal our Bomber Command struck another blow which ought to have a most beneficial effect on the Battle of Holland. After a warning by General Eisenhower to the inhabitants, Lancasters breached the dykes at Westkapelle and let the waters of the North Sea flow over the island of Walcheren. While German guns remained active on that island it was not possible for the Allies to make use of the port of Antwerp. To open that supply line to the Allies must greatly facilitate the attack now on the Siegfried Line. If all now goes according to plan, the Allies will owe much to the grand work of Bomber Command."

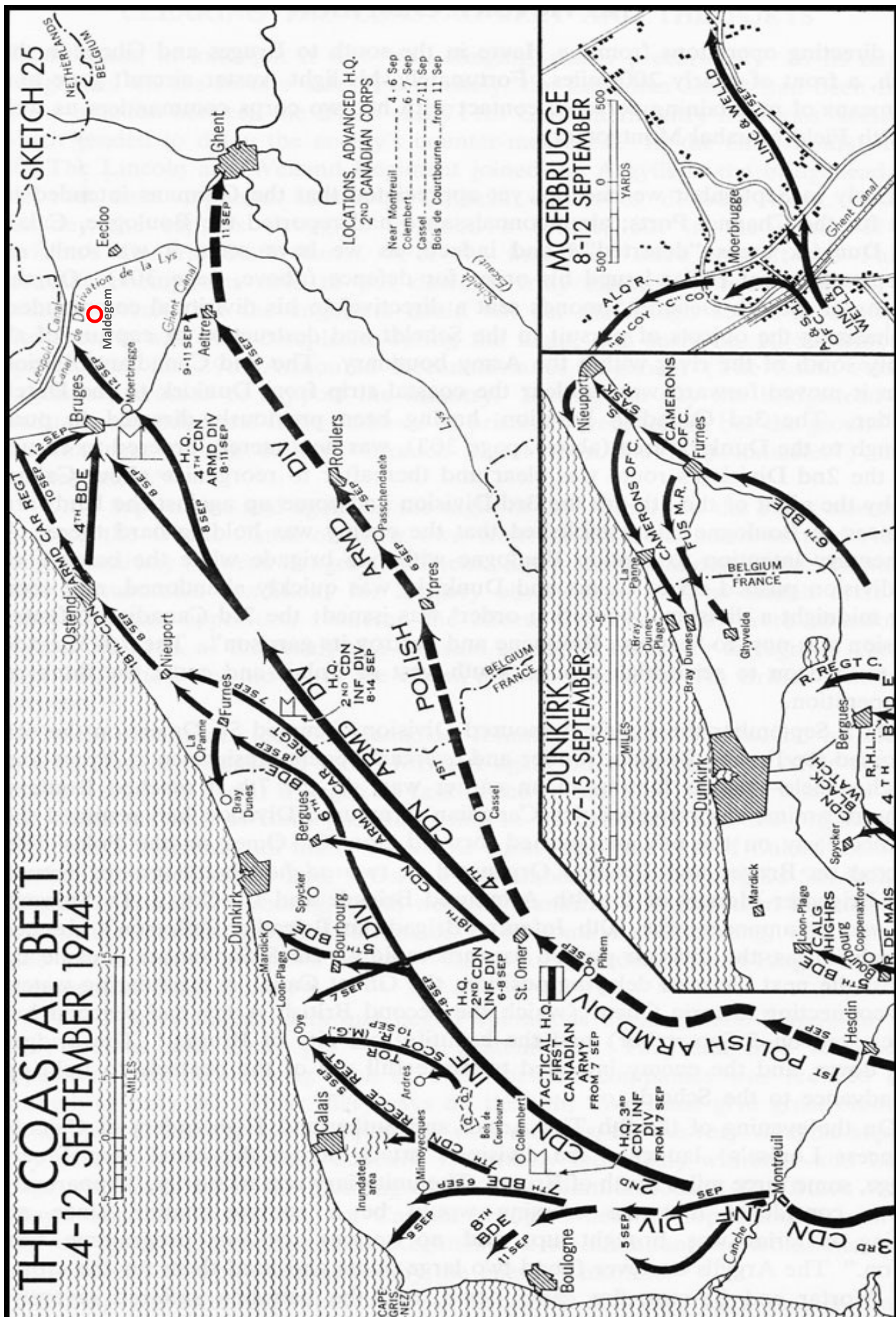
31 AUGUST - 4 SEPTEMBER 1944

- RFC Bases WW1
- 33 Sqn bases WW2
- V1, V2, V3 sites



SKETCH 25

4-12 SEPTEMBER 1944

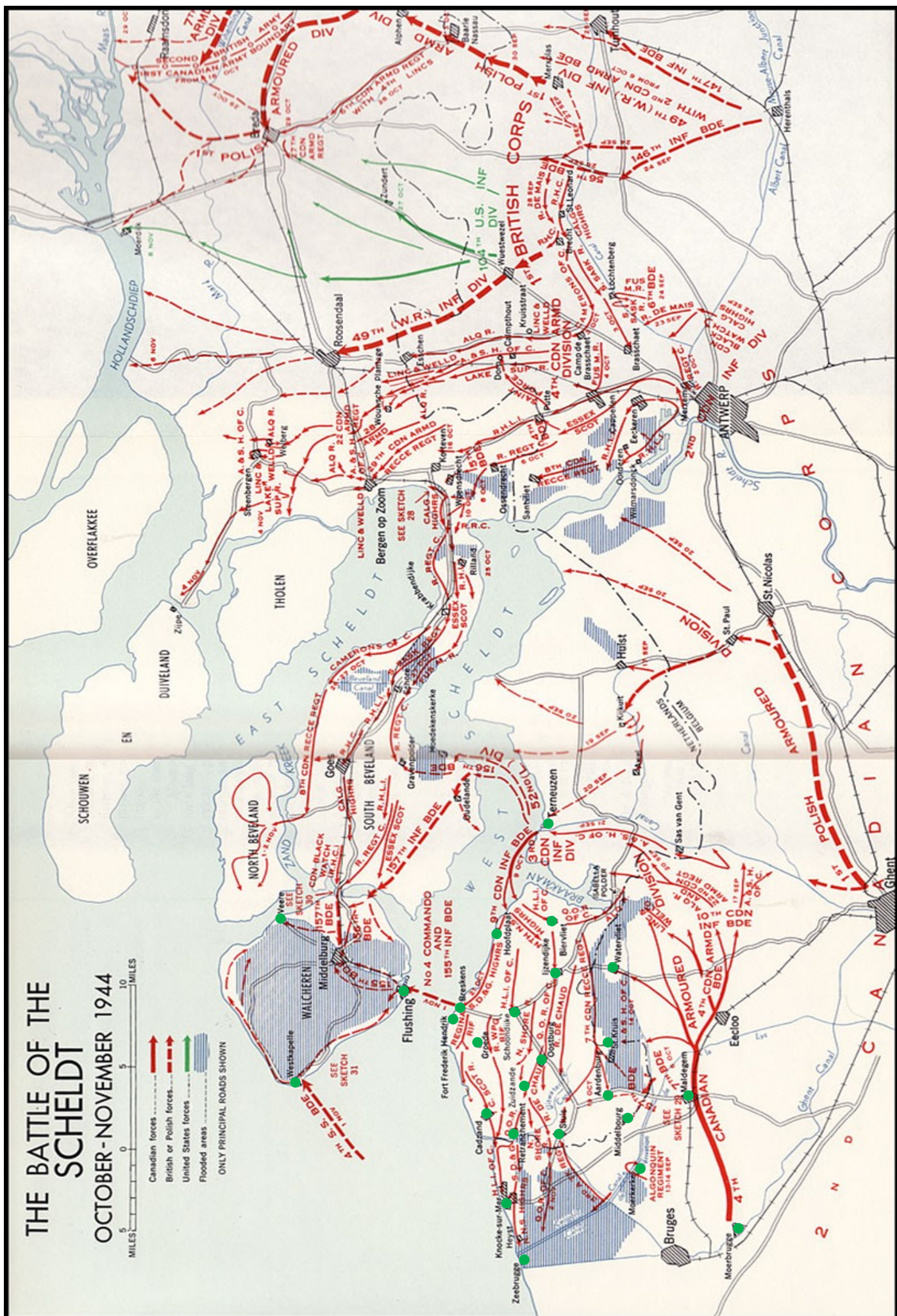


THE BATTLE OF THE SCHELDT

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1944

MILES 0 5 10

- Canadian forces
- British or Polish forces
- United States forces
- Flooded areas
- ONLY PRINCIPAL ROADS SHOWN





Stand One & Two: W/O George Roney RNZAF 33 Sqn RAF 'We Will Remember Them'



2019 marks the 75th anniversary of the liberation of West Zeeuws-Vlaanderen and NV. As we learned in 2017, the liberation was carried out by mainly Canadian troops in an operation known as SWITCHBACK and annual commemorations focus particularly on the Battle of the Scheldt in September-October 1944.

The military-strategic importance of the battle was high. The Battle of the Scheldt was one of the last operations to stop the Allied advance in Western Europe in late autumn 1944, and the liberation of this region was one of the toughest struggles that the Allies encountered. The Scheldt Estuary was a vital strategic location, whoever owned it controlled access to one of the main deep-sea ports on the West European coast, Antwerp. The Canadians had been ordered to conquer and dispose of the enemy along the Scheldt Estuary but only after the failure of MARKET GARDEN did the task get the strategic attention it deserved.

Planning and intelligence experts miscalculated badly,

stating that the operation would be completed within four days—it would be closer to forty. They also badly underestimated the enemy forces, the Canadians thought they were facing 5 000 German soldiers when the reality was closer to 17 000. Fierce battles due to heavy German resistance, and bad weather conditions meant that the region had to wait until 1 November for liberation. The price was high. Those who remained bore much grief and sorrow. There was no exuberant celebrations, but a sincere and heartfelt 'thank you'.

Schoondijke was not spared. The village was very strategic because of the intersection of roads in the centre, strategically useful for the transit of goods, equipment and troops. Due to its location it also became a target of air raids. Artillery fire from the direction of Ijzendijke caused much damage. Allied planes bombarded ground targets and ensured that a large part of the village was destroyed. The town hall was badly damaged and the Roman Catholic church devastated. Official post-war Dutch records state that

Schoondijke was virtually destroyed in 1944, along with several other towns in the Zeeland province.

The Operational Records of the Allied Expeditionary Air Force (AEAF) and Air Defence Great Britain (ADGB) for 6 October 1944 show that the fighter planes and fighter-bombers of both commands carried out more than 1 000 flights above the occupied part of Netherlands that day. In Zeeland, air support was provided for the Canadian ground troops' attack across the Leopold Canal. Air attacks were carried out on German targets near many places in Zeeland-Flanders, including Biervliet, Oostburg and Hoofdplaat in the Breskens Pocket.

We know that George's Spitfire was shot down in the afternoon during a raid on Breskens on the opening day of Operation SWITCHBACK, and that the salvage of the remains of his Spitfire, buried in the Dekkers' maize field that we visited earlier, took place four years later, at the request of the Mayor, a task carried out by the rescue services and members of the gendarmerie post at Schoondijke. On 9 June 1948, George Roney's remains were recovered from the wreckage, along with his paybook, some personal effects and an identity card, a number of French banknotes, a camera and a Smith-Wesson revolver still in good condition. WO Roney was laid to rest here in the local Schoondijke Cemetery on 12 June 1948 and the locals have tended his grave ever since.

In 2017 we were honoured to have George's nephew Rob join us here from New Zealand, and the welcome that we all received - from the Dekker family, the Mayor and the councillors, the pastor and the congregation, the local Air Historical Society and the people - was just incredible. The success of that day was due, in no small part, to the behind-the-scenes efforts of our guide, Jan Westhoeve. Since then Jan and Samira Claeys have arranged with the CWGC for the Association to become the official adoptees of George's grave and they and the people of Schoondijke ensure that George's grave is kept in perfect order.

Except for the local people whose families remember what happened here in the last months of 1944, and for hundreds of families in Canada whose sons gave their lives in the most extreme fighting conditions, the Battle of the Scheldt is considered by many as a forgotten battle, which is somewhat ironic considering that it was an Allied victory. Yet many people can tell you all about Arnhem, a battle the Allies lost, because of the film 'A Bridge Too Far'. That may soon change, as a film about the Battle of the Scheldt is being made as we speak, which may be premiered late next year or in 2021. George's memory will also be remembered in a series of books about the Air War over Zeeland by author Wim de Meester, who has found our research and contact with the Roney family very useful.

Therefore I am especially pleased that we can be here with the people of Schoondijke, and with Jan and his wife, today - Sunday 6 October 2019 - the day that marks the 75th anniversary of the opening battle to liberate this province of the Netherlands, and the day that George made the ultimate sacrifice.



**Liberation Dates
Zeeuws-Vlaanderen
October-November 1944**

