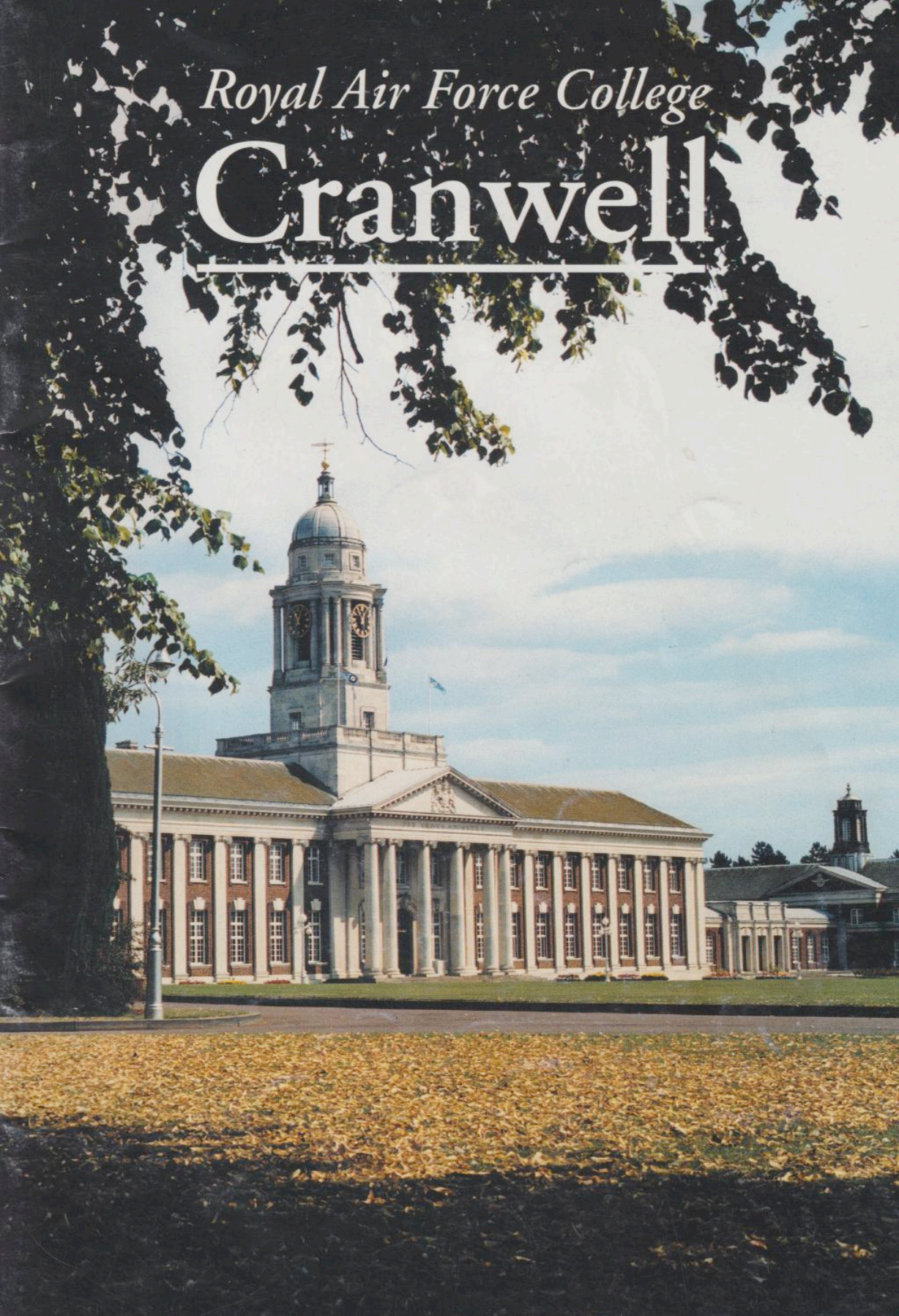


Royal Air Force College

Cranwell





Visits to the Royal Air Force College can be made by members of the public by writing to the following address:
College Secretariat, Royal Air Force College Cranwell,
Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 8HB.

*Photographs, design and artwork created by the
Visual Media Department, Babcock HCS,
RAFC Cranwell*

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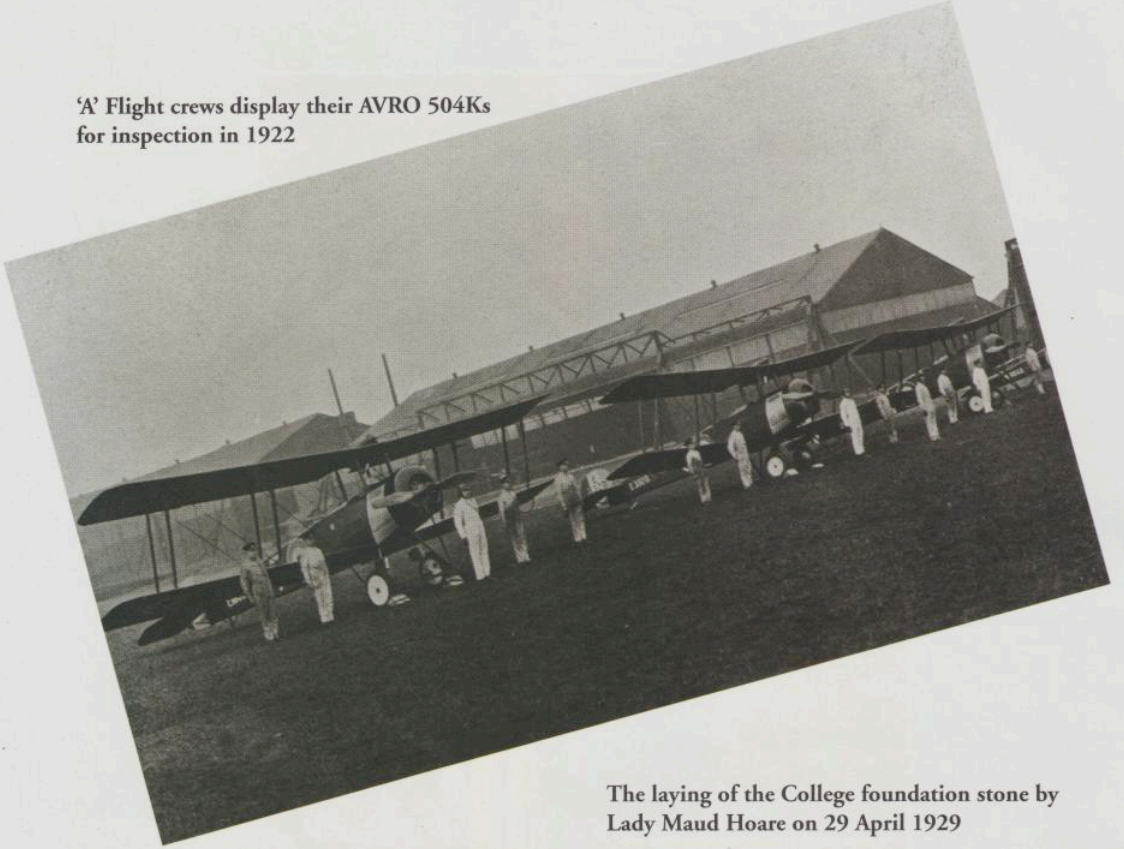


All who enter College Hall are likely to be impressed by its magnificence. This booklet has been produced in response to a clear demand from the many hundreds of people who visit each year and request a permanent memento.

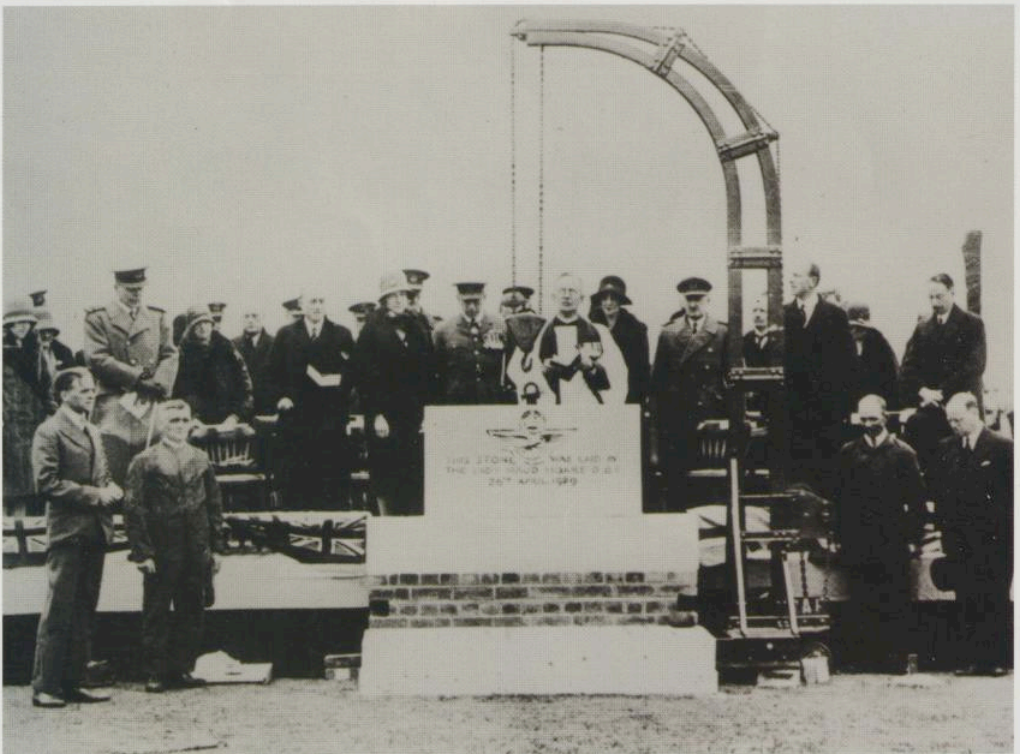
Her Majesty The Queen honoured the Royal Air Force College in 1960 by becoming its Commandant-in-Chief and, following five enjoyable months in 1971, when I lived and worked in College Hall whilst qualifying for my Pilot's Wings, I became Patron of the flourishing Old Cranwellian Association in 1978. I hope that you will also gain pleasure from spending a few moments walking around this handsome building which plays such an important role in the life of the Royal Air Force.

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales

'A' Flight crews display their AVRO 504Ks for inspection in 1922



The laying of the College foundation stone by Lady Maud Hoare on 29 April 1929



The Early Years

Cranwell's association with aviation began during the First World War. The Admiralty needed to establish a series of air stations around the south and east coasts to supplement the coastguard system and to alert our shore defences against sea and air invasion. In 1915 the Royal Naval Air Service sought to establish a single unit at which officers and ratings could be trained to fly aeroplanes, observer kite balloons and airships. Tradition has it that a young Naval pilot was briefed to fly around until he found a piece of land that was both large enough and flat enough for the purpose. It is said that he flew over Cranwell and thought it quite admirable. True or not, by November 1915 the Admiralty had requisitioned some 2,500 acres of farmland, mainly from the Earl of Bristol's estate. In the following month, construction of a hutted camp and aircraft hangars began. The Royal Naval Air Service Central Training Establishment Cranwell was commissioned on 1 April 1916, under the command of Commodore Godfrey M Paine. Cranwell later became known as HMS *Daedalus*. This was not strictly correct but arose because the officers and ratings of the Central Training Establishment at Cranwell were borne on the books of HMS *Daedalus* which was a hulk in the Medway and the nominal depot ship for all Royal Naval Air Service personnel serving on other stations. In addition to flying training and airship operations, a Boys' Training Wing was also established at Cranwell. Its task was to train Naval ratings as air mechanics and riggers.

In February 1918 Prince Albert, later Duke of York and King George VI, was appointed Officer in Charge of Boys and subsequently Officer Commanding No 4 Squadron of the Boys' Wing. He left Cranwell in August 1918. With the amalgamation of the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps on 1 April 1918, ownership of Cranwell was placed in the hands of the Royal Air Force. The former Naval base title was replaced by the designation Royal Air Force Station Cranwell.

After the First World War, the Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Hugh Trenchard, was determined to consolidate the Royal Air Force's position as a single, independent Service. One of his priorities for the future was the establishment of a cadet college to

provide basic training and flying instruction for the future leaders of the Royal Air Force. He chose Cranwell as the location because, as he told his biographer:

Marooned in the wilderness, cut off from pastimes they could not organise for themselves, the cadets would find life cheaper, healthier and more wholesome.

The Royal Air Force College, which was the first military air academy in the world, was opened on 5 February 1920 under the command of Air Commodore C A H Longcroft. The Chief of the Air Staff's message to the first entry of cadets left them in no doubt of his expectations for the College:

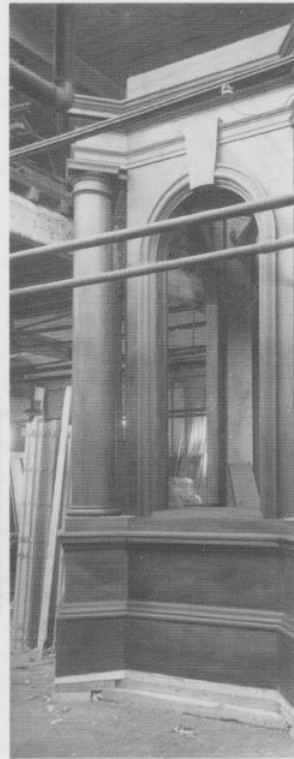
We have to learn by experience how to organise and administer a great Service, both in peace and war, and you, who are present at the College in its first year, will, in future, be at the helm. Therefore, you will have to work your hardest, both as cadets at the College and subsequently as officers, in order to be capable of guiding this great Service through its early days and maintaining its traditions and efficiency in the years to come.



Construction of the Central Tower c.1930



Above: West wing under construction c.1930



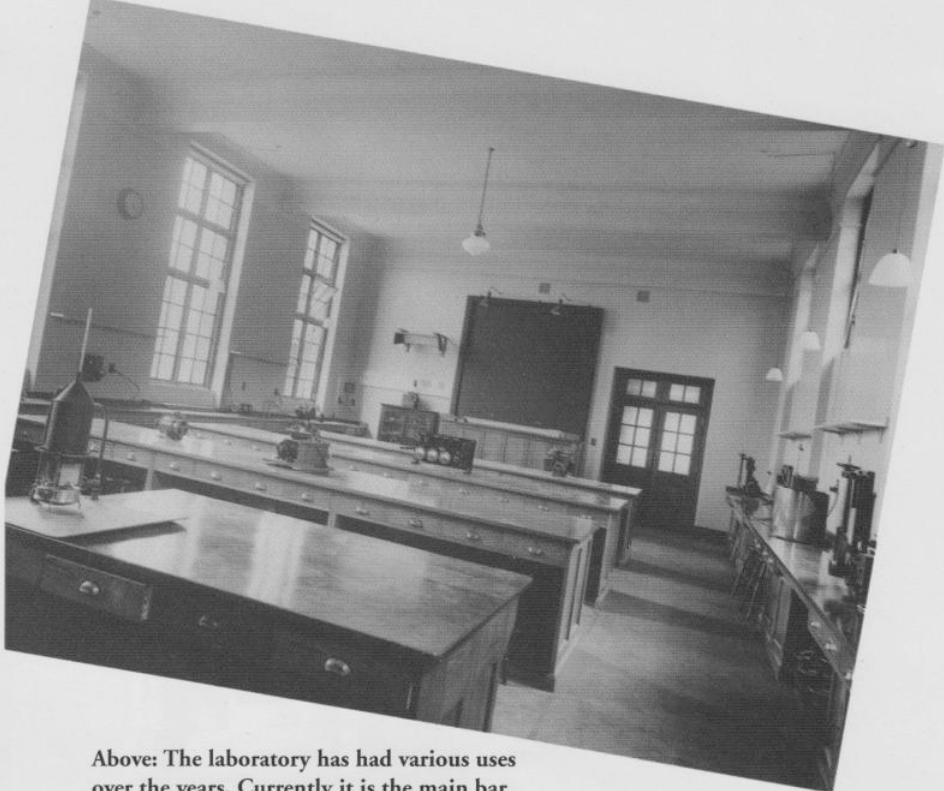
Above: Preparations being made for the erection of the small towers on the wings of College Hall



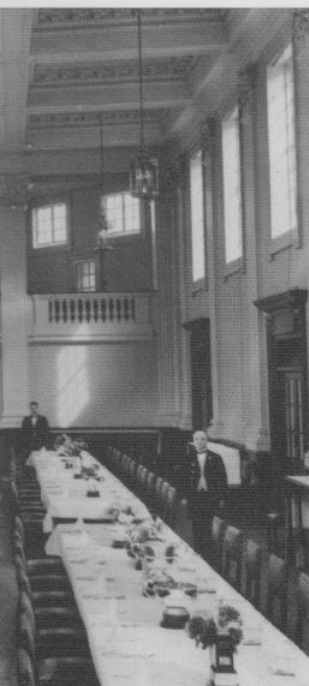
Above: An officer cadet in his room in the Royal Air Force College, Cranwell in 1938



Above: College Hall dining-room prepared for a formal dinner in 1934



Above: The laboratory has had various uses over the years. Currently it is the main bar



Above: The Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Harold Macmillan, P.C., M.P., inspects the Cadet Wing during a visit to the College on 1 April 1959 - the 41st Anniversary of the founding of the Royal Air Force



The College Hall Building

In 1922 it was decided that the wartime Naval huts should be replaced by permanent College buildings. Sir Samuel Hoare, later Lord Templewood, who was the Secretary of State for Air in Baldwin's first two governments, gave this idea his whole-hearted support, but it nevertheless proved extremely difficult to secure both the money and the backing of the Government for such a project. In 1929 Hoare got approval to obtain an architect's plan for the new College, but the General Election was close and it was very doubtful if any succeeding government would support the plan. To save time Hoare gave the task of designing the new College to the Ministry of Works. When the plans were received, Hoare was dismayed:

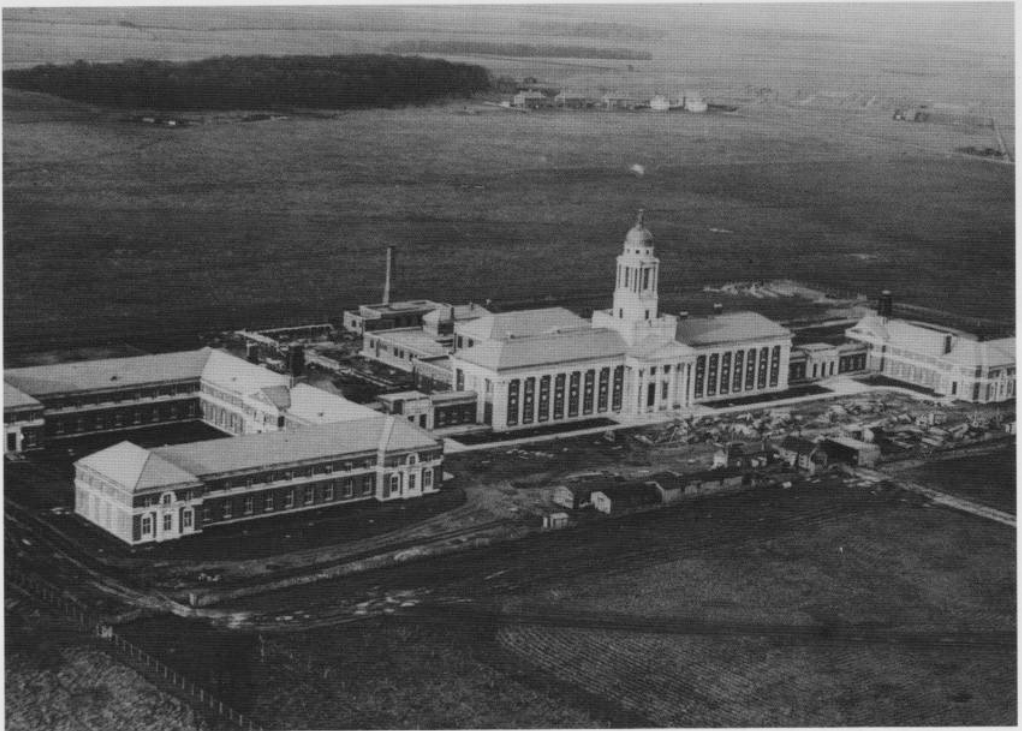
I found that with true bureaucratic conservatism they had been based on the pseudo-Gothic of St Pancras Station diversified by the influences of a Scottish hydro.

Left: The front elevation of College Hall
Below: Aerial view of the College c.1932

I at once rejected a design that was unsuitable for the training College of a flying Service

Hoare took the architect, James West, to visit Wren's Royal Hospital in his own constituency of Chelsea and the new design reflected this influence. The result is the Cranwell of today which so gracefully reflects the best of Wren's ideas. The battle was still not over, as only the plans had been approved. Hoare wrote:

To make sure that the building proceeded, whatever government might succeed Baldwin's, Trenchard and I arranged for an official laying of the foundation stone before the dissolution of Parliament. My wife was asked to perform the ceremony which was fixed for 26 April 1929. Accordingly, with the General Election hanging over us, we journeyed to Cranwell on a wet and windy day and proceeded to a hayfield, where my wife duly laid the stone. No expenditure had as yet been authorised for anything more than the plan. Ours, therefore, was frankly an act of bluff, but it was also an act of faith that was afterwards justified by works.





The building was completed in September 1933 at a cost of £321,000. It is built of rustic and moulded brick with the more important features faced in Portland Stone. It has a roughly rectangular central block linked by narrow corridors to the quadrangular accommodation wings on each side, giving a frontage of over 800 feet. The facade of the central block is designed on classic lines with a central portico of six Corinthian columns surmounted by a pediment, tower and dome. The tower has a pilastered drum with the columns breaking forward and paired at the angles. On top of

the dome at a height of 130 feet is a rotating beacon giving a white light which flashes twenty times a minute. On either side of the portico the elevation has columns carried from the ground to the roof flanking each pair of windows. Each wing is surmounted by a smaller tower. In front of the College is its parade ground and a large circle of grass known as the Orange, which is flanked on either side by an avenue of lime trees presented by Sir Samuel and Lady Hoare.

The imposing entrance gates are of wrought iron with matching lanterns surmounting the stone pil-



The front of the College viewed from the South East

lars on either side. The gates and lanterns were made in the 1930s by Flight Sergeant Benton, a coppersmith and blacksmith serving at the Royal Air Force College.

The building was officially opened by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, later Edward VIII, on 11 October 1934.

The central block is floodlit at night, enhancing the natural beauty of the building. The lights create a sense of depth, with the pillars in front of the main entrance being lit in silhouette to give added character. The clock tower is illuminated to give a three-dimensional effect with the shadows created by the natural contours of the stonework and the windows lit from inside. The floodlights have been mounted in pits so that they are unobtrusive during the day and, bearing in mind the nearby airfield, the design also takes into consideration the need to avoid glare.

The Entrance Hall and Corridors

The Entrance Hall

Passing up the steps under the portico, the foundation stone can be seen to the left of the main door. The stone was laid over an airtight box, which contains a record of all who were present at the ceremony, together with the names and details of every cadet who had passed through the College since its inception in February 1920. On the right of the main door is the stone which commemorates the opening of the building on 11 October 1934. Above the door is King George V's cypher which is surmounted by the College Coat of Arms in Portland Stone.

Entering through the main door and walking on the carpet of the entrance hall are experiences denied to officer cadets until the day of their graduation. They march off the parade ground to the strains of *Auld Lang Syne*, and passing through this door onto the hall carpet marks their transition to commissioned status.

The entrance hall is dominated by the portraits of Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh which hang on the two pillars opposite the main entrance. The pictures were painted by Norman Hepple; that of Her Majesty was completed in 1960, the year in which she graciously consented to become the Commandant-in-Chief of the College. The painting was exhibited in the Royal Academy Exhibition in the summer of 1961 and was hung in the College later that year.

Underneath the portraits of the Queen and Prince Philip are two cases which contain the Queen's Colour Record Books. Every time the Queen's Colour is paraded, details of the parade are recorded in a book. The information includes the occasion on which the Colour was paraded, the names of the Reviewing Officer and Colour Party, the condition of the Colour and the state of the weather on the day.

On the east wall is the heraldic portrayal of the first Queen's Colour for the Royal Air Force College which was presented by Her Majesty on 25 July 1960. The Colour now hangs in the Church of St Michael and All Angels, the College Chapel, together with the Colour presented by King George VI in July 1948.

On either side of the main door hang the Letters Patent granting the College its Armorial Bearings. The Arms of the College were granted in 1929 and they are particularly appropriate to the historical associations with the village of Cranwell and to the role of the Royal Air Force College. Based on the arms of the de Cranewell family, discovered in the village church in the seventeenth century, they feature three cranes with wings spread: emblematic of long-distance flight. The background of the shield is blue typifying the sky, and the three lions' faces in gold on a red background allude to the College's royal connections. The chevron is a military symbol, as is the mantled helmet. The crest is the figure of *Daedalus*, the mythical first aviator, reminiscent of the Royal Naval Air Service personnel who established Cranwell during the First World War. The legend *Superna Petimus* means 'we seek higher things'.

The second of the Letters Patent is that granting the College the right to bear supporters on its existing Armorial Bearings. The Senior College Illustrator, Mr J B Ellingham, undertook the task of designing what is known as a full achievement of arms in 1970. Eagles were chosen to represent modern birds of the air, silver aircraft. Their red legs and beaks established a link with Lord Trenchard whose own coat of arms bore red eagles as supporters. Around the necks of the eagles are the astral crowns of the Royal Air Force. There are two *fleur-de-lys*: one edged with green to show the College's close association with Lincolnshire and one edged with red to indicate the College's former ties with Bedfordshire: the home of the Royal Air Force Technical College Henlow which merged with Cranwell in 1966. The Letters Patent granting authority for the addition of supporters to the Arms of the Royal Air Force College Cranwell were signed and sealed by Garter King of Arms in October 1971. The certified copy of the Armorial Bearings and Supporters was duly registered and signed as a true copy by the Windsor Herald in May 1972. It now hangs in the entrance hall close to the Hall Porters Lodge.

On the west wall of the entrance hall is a plaque cast in bell metal which commemorates the College's gratitude to the Shell Group who arranged to



The Entrance Hall

have a peal of chiming bells installed in the clock tower in 1952. The chime of the bells sounds "Retreat" daily at 1600 hours in winter and 1800 hours in summer when the College House Flag and the Royal Air Force Ensign are lowered. The gift is a permanent daily reminder of the Old Cranwellians who lost gave their lives in the service of their country. There are six bells in all, the heaviest being the tenor which weights $1\frac{1}{4}$ tons. A complicated system of three motors and seventeen hammers operates the bells to sound "Retreat", the quarter-hourly Westminster chime and the hourly strike. The bells were dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Croydon, the Right Reverend C K N Bardsley, on 30 July 1952. Among the representatives of the Shell Group who were present at the ceremony was Group Captain Sir Douglas Bader.

Hanging in the rotunda, above the entrance hall, are the Standards of temporarily disbanded Royal Air Force Squadrons. A Standard is awarded to a squadron by order of the Sovereign, when it has earned the Sovereign's appreciation for especially outstanding operations or when it has com-

peted twenty-five years of service. On each Standard the squadron badge and battle honours can be seen. A battle honour is awarded to commemorate any notable battle, action or engagement in which the squadron played a memorable part. Up to eight battle honours may be displayed on squadron standards. Royal Air Force Squadrons which are reformed have their Standards returned during a ceremonial parade which takes place in the College entrance hall. Standards are consecrated symbols and those squadrons which are permanently disbanded have their Standards laid up in their local church or in the Royal Air Force Church of St Clement Danes in London.

The Corridors

Leading from the entrance hall to the cadets' accommodation wings are two impressive corridors which are dominated by the portraits of King George V and Queen Mary.

In the west corridor is Patrick Phillips' portrait of Lord Templewood (Sir Samuel Hoare). The picture was presented to the College by Headquarters Flying Training Command, and unveiled by Air Marshal Sir Patrick Dunn at a ceremony attended

by Lord Templewood's nephew, Paul Paget, on 5 July 1966. Also in the west corridor is Howard Barron's painting of the banquet held at Lancaster House on 1 April 1968 to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Royal Air Force. Her Majesty The Queen, His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh and other members of the Royal Family can be seen in the picture.

In the east corridor is William Dring's painting of the ceremony that celebrated the consecration of the Church of the Royal Air Force, St Clement Danes, on 19 October 1958. The Church was reduced to a charred and smoking ruin after it was subjected to a hail of firebombs during an air raid on 10 May 1944. The restoration work was started in 1955 and culminated in the opening ceremony which was attended by the Queen, Prince Philip and other members of the Royal Family. Nearer to the end of the corridor is A R Thompson's painting of the Commemorative Dinner held on 1 April 1958 at Bentley Priory to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Royal Air Force.

On the walls near the entrance hall hang photographs of the past Commandants of the College and drawings of the former Assistant Commandants. It is not known why there is a distinction in depicting the College's previous leading men, but the tradition is being perpetuated.

In 1978 the seven ante-rooms on the ground floor were distinguished by the names of famous units and aircraft. From east to west the names were: 'Tangmere', to record the Battle of Britain; 'Wunstorf', to record the Berlin airlift; and 'Changi', to represent the Far East Air Force. 'Lancaster' and 'Spitfire', represented wartime aircraft, whilst 'Tornado' and 'Hawk' represent more modern aircraft. When the Central Flying School arrived at Cranwell in 1965, its memorabilia were displayed in the 'Tangmere' room, which then became the 'Pelican' room – the pelican being on the crest of the School's Coat of Arms.

The main bar, which was originally a chemistry laboratory, was known during the 1940s and 1950s as 'FGS'. This acronym stood for Fancy Goods Store, from which the cadets bought beer, cigarettes, sweets and cakes.

The rotunda adorned by the Standards of temporarily disbanded Squadrons





The Founders' Gallery



Looking along the Founders' Gallery

The area behind the royal portraits is known as the Founders' Gallery. The portraits in the Founders' Gallery commemorate those who were principally involved with the establishment of the Royal Air Force and the Cadet College at Cranwell. On the far left of the Gallery is Field Marshal Jan Christian Smuts who was appointed as Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Air Organisation and Home Defence in July 1917. The British public had been outraged by the German air raids over London in June 1917 and the Committee was tasked with taking appropriate action to prevent a recurrence. In August 1917, Smuts submitted a memorandum to the War Cabinet that outlined his proposals to form a separate air force. In November 1917 Royal Assent was given to the Air Force (Constitution) Act which authorised the creation of the Royal Air Force. The portrait was painted by Duby Georges and was a gift of the South African Air Force. The Field Marshal is depicted in Service uniform with a view of Table Bay and Table Mountain in the background. It was presented to the College by the High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa, Dr A L Geyer, on 4 February 1953.

The portrait of Marshal of the Royal Air Force The Viscount Trenchard was painted by Antoine Verpilleux and presented to the College by the Old Cranwellian Association in 1936. Born in February 1873 in Taunton, Hugh Trenchard entered the Army in 1893. After service in South and West Africa, he was appointed Assistant Commandant of the Central Flying School at Upavon in 1913. From 1915 to 1917 he commanded the Royal Flying Corps in Western Europe and it was during this time that he became convinced of the important role air power would play in modern battle. In 1918 Trenchard was appointed as the first Chief of the Air Staff. However, a dispute with Lord Rothermere, the Secretary of State for Air, led to his resignation. When he was reappointed as the Chief of the Air Staff in 1919 Trenchard set about the job of building the foundations for the new separate Service, and he outlined these in a paper to Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for Air, in December of the same year. It was part of this paper that dealt with the creation of a cadet college. Trenchard was Chief of the Air Staff until 1929 and Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police from 1931 to 1935. He was created Viscount Wolfeton in 1936, and died on 10 February 1956. He is still regarded as the 'Father of the Royal Air Force'. In the case, on the wall opposite the portrait, Trenchard's service cap and sword can be seen.

On the right of the engraved stone, which gives a brief summary of the College's history, hangs the portrait of Air Vice-Marshal Sir Charles Longcroft. Longcroft was the first Commandant of the Royal Air Force College from 1920 to 1923. Commissioned in the Welsh Regiment in 1903, he learnt to fly and joined the Royal Flying Corps in 1912. During the First World War he served with the Royal Flying Corps in France and at the Central Flying School. He was selected by Trenchard for the crucial task of establishing the new College. He retired from the Royal Air Force in 1929 and died in 1958. The portrait is also by Verpilleux and was presented to the College by the Old Cranwellian Association in 1939. In the case opposite, Air Vice-Marshal Longcroft's cap, sword and medals are on display.

The final picture in the Founders' Gallery is



Field Marshal Smuts

that of Sir Winston Churchill. Sir Winston was Secretary of State for Air from 1919 to 1920 and it was he who, with Trenchard's assistance, persuaded Lloyd George that the Royal Air Force should be maintained in independent existence. The painting, which is by Cuthbert Orde, is perhaps the most striking in the Gallery. It is impossible to escape Sir Winston's gaze or, indeed, his accurately directed left knee! The picture was presented to the College by Lord Hives on behalf of Rolls-Royce Limited in 1952.

In the remaining display cabinets in the Founders' Gallery are books containing the photographs of the flight cadets and officers who have graduated from the College. Perhaps the most interesting album is to be found in the centre cabinet. It contains photographs dating back to the first entry of flight cadets in 1920. One of the cadets depicted in the 1922 photograph has a heavily bandaged right hand. In those days cadets were issued with a motorcycle to supplement their engineering knowledge. This cadet had parted company with his machine with obviously painful results.



Above: Air Vice-Marshal Sir Charles Longcroft
Above right: Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord
Trenchard. Opposite: Sir Winston Churchill

The Photograph Galleries

In the centre of the College is the lecture hall. With its stage and projectionist's room, the lecture hall is used not only for teaching but also as a thea-

tre and ballroom. The walls of the corridors that surround the lecture hall are covered with the photographs of officers and flight cadets who have graduated from the College. The well-informed eye will pick out many who have since risen to the highest appointments in the Service, but a few are worthy of special mention.

In the corridor by the dining room the graduation photograph of His Royal Highness



Flight Lieutenant The Prince of Wales is located in the top row of the left-hand wall. Behind him in the picture sit the first four Women's Royal Air Force officers to graduate from the College. In the centre of the right-hand wall of this corridor are the boards showing the names of the Commandants and the Assistant Commandants past and present.

Further along the left-hand wall from the boards, and dated 1930, is a photograph of Sir Douglas

Bader. It was taken just over a year before he lost both his legs in a flying accident. Across the corridor on the left of the dining room door is a photograph of Senior Flight Cadet Whittle. Sir Frank Whittle wrote his thesis entitled "Future Developments in Aircraft Design" whilst he was at Cranwell from 1926 to 1928. This was to be the forerunner to his first patent on a form of gas turbine engine.



Top left: Group Captain Douglas Bader
Bottom left: Wing Commander
Hugh Gordon Malcolm VC

Top right: HRH The Prince of Wales
Bottom right: Air Chief Marshal
Sir Richard Johns

The Dining-Room

The large dining room with its pillared walls and ornate ceiling is illuminated by seventeen elevated windows. At the east end is the Minstrels' Gallery with its balustrade. The room seats over 200 and is used for many functions ranging from the routine meals for the cadets in training to formal banquets for royalty and other dignitaries.

The west end of the room is dominated by the large bronze eagle, which was presented by Sir Philip Sassoon who was Secretary of State for Air in 1933. In its grasp is the Queen's Colour for the Royal Air Force College. The present Colour was presented to the College by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales on 19 July 2001. In a frame below the Colour is the Queen's letter to the College in which Her Majesty outlines the importance of the Colour and Her expectations of those who are to serve their country.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon, a flight cadet at the College from 1957-1959 was Chief of the Air Staff between 1992 and 1997. The portrait, painted by Andrew Festing, was presented by the Old Cranwellian Association.

Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Keith Williamson was a flight cadet from 1948 to 1950. He flew with the Royal Australian Air Force in Korea in 1953 and was awarded the AFC in 1968. He retired from active service in 1985, having been Chief of the Air Staff since 1982. The painting by Carlos Sancha was presented to the College by the Old Cranwellian Association in 1988.

The painting of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Dermot Boyle is by Norman Hepple, who painted the royal portraits seen in the entrance hall. Sir Dermot Boyle was a flight cadet from 1922 to 1924 and the first to become Chief of the Air Staff. The painting was presented to the College by the Old Cranwellian Association in June 1959.

The next painting is that of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Thomas Pike who was the second ex-flight cadet to become Chief of the Air Staff. Sir Thomas entered Cranwell in 1925 and was CAS from 1960 to 1963. The portrait is by H Holt and was presented to the College by the Old Cranwellian Association in 1966.

Also by Holt is the portrait of Air Marshal Sir Richard Atcherley, who was the first ex-flight ca-

det to become Commandant of the College. Sir Richard was a natural pilot who won the King's Cup Air Race in 1929 and established a world speed record of 332 mph in a "Supermarine" Rolls-Royce S6 at the Schneider Trophy Contest in the same year. He retired from the Royal Air Force as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Flying Training Command in 1955.

Wing Commander Hugh Gordon Malcolm became a flight cadet in 1936 and is the only graduate of the College to have been awarded the Victoria Cross. On 4 December 1942 he led the Blenheim fighter-bombers of No 326 Wing to attack a German fighter airfield in North Africa. Although the attack was successful, the aircraft were intercepted by enemy fighters whilst returning from their target. Malcolm struggled valiantly to maintain formation but eventually he was shot down and killed. The painting is by Cuthbert Orde and was presented by the Bristol Aircraft Company in 1948.

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales was trained as a pilot at the College between March and August of 1971. He graduated as a member of No 1 Graduate Entry. The painting by Mara McGregor shows the Prince standing in front of the College with a Jet Provost aircraft passing overhead. It was unveiled by Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Dermot Boyle in November 1971.

Cuthbert Orde's portrait of Group Captain Sir Douglas Bader was painted at about the time of his retirement from the Royal Air Force in 1946. Awarded the DSO and Bar and the DFC and Bar, he was eventually shot down and captured by the Germans and, after several escape attempts, was imprisoned in Colditz Castle. After the war, he became Managing Director of Shell Aircraft Limited and he died in 1982. The portrait was presented to the College by the Shell Petroleum Company in 1947.

Sir Wallace Kyle grew up in Kalgoorlie, Australia, and was a flight cadet in 1929. Serving in Bomber Command during the Second World War, he was awarded the DFC and the DSO. He was Assistant Commandant of the RAF College from 1951 to 1952 and was to be the last Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Bomber Command, before its disbandment in 1967. After retirement from

the Service he was appointed Governor of Western Australia. The painting, by Mara McGregor, was presented to the College by the Old Cranwellian Association and unveiled by Air Chief Marshal Sir Keith Williamson in 1982.

Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Andrew Humphrey was a flight cadet in 1939. Sir Andrew was the first ex-flight cadet to become Chief of the Defence Staff. He fought in the Battle of Britain and was awarded the DFC in May 1941. In 1954 he captained the Canberra B2 aircraft, *Aries IV*, which made the first flight by a British jet aircraft to the geographical North Pole. The portrait by Mara McGregor, was painted in commemoration of Sir Andrew who died in 1977 while in office as Chief of the Defence Staff. It was unveiled by Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Neil Cameron in December 1977.

The portrait of Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Johns was painted by Theo Platt and presented to the College in June 2000 by the Old Cranwellian Association. Sir Richard was a flight cadet in 1957, and was Prince Charles' flying instructor, at the College, in 1971. He was Chief of the Air Staff from April 1997 to April 2000.

Howard Barron's portrait of the Earl of Bandon was unveiled by Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Constantine in 1965. Known affectionately to his friends as "Paddy", the 5th Earl of Bandon entered Cranwell in 1923. He was awarded the DSO in 1940 and the CVO in 1953, following his organisation of the Coronation Review fly-past whilst he was Air Officer Commanding No. 11 Group.

**The dining-room during a formal function.
The Queen's Colour is permanently on display**





The Rotunda and Staircase

Access to the rotunda can be gained by leaving the dining room by the west door and taking the west staircase. Halfway up the stairs is a painting of Air Chief Marshal Sir John Thomson, who was Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Strike Command from 1992 to 1994. To either side are the portraits of former cadets who have distinguished themselves in recent conflicts. At the head of the stairs is another former cadet, Marshal of the Air Force Aryan Sing, who became Chief of the Indian Air Staff.

On the walls along the corridors leading to the rotunda and around the rotunda itself are the Prize-winners' Boards. There is an excellent view of the entrance hall from the rotunda and the detail in the Squadron Standards can be seen quite clearly from this position. On formal occasions, trumpeters of the College Band stand around the rotunda and play a fanfare to announce that dinner is served. With its copper-coloured domed ceiling, impressive octagonal brass hanging light, and attractively decorated plasterwork ceiling, the rotunda lends majesty to the centre of the College

On the east staircase Gerald Coulson's painting of the *Sinking of the Tirpitz* can be seen. The action shown in the picture was carried out by modified Lancaster bombers of Nos 9 and 617 Squadrons which took off from Lossiemouth on 12 November 1944. Direct hits were made with 12,000 lb Tall Boy bombs and the Tirpitz capsized with the loss of over 1,000 lives. The attack was led by Wing Commander J B Tait who was a flight cadet from 1934 to 1936.



Above: Gerald Coulson's painting of the Sinking of the Tirpitz. The painting was presented to the College by Rolls-Royce Limited in November 1969



The portrait of Sir Frank Whittle was painted by Edward Halliday in 1960. Sir Frank began his career in the Royal Air Force as an aircraft apprentice and was awarded a cadetship to the Royal Air Force College in 1926. After an active flying career he took the Mechanical Sciences Tripos at Cambridge and graduated with First Class Honours in 1936. His work on the jet engine culminated in the first flight to be made by a jet aircraft in the United Kingdom, when the Gloster Whittle E28/39 flew from Cranwell for seventeen minutes on 15 May 1941. The painting was originally hung in the Cadets' Mess at the RAF Technical College at Henlow and was transferred to Cranwell when the Colleges merged in 1966. He was the first ex-flight cadet to have received the honour of a knighthood, to be made a Fellow of the Royal Society and to be awarded the Order of Merit.



Above: Sir Frank Whittle

HEADQUARTERS, FIGHTER COMMAND,
ROYAL AIR FORCE,
BENTLEY PRIORY,
STANMORE,
MIDDLESEX.

SECRET

16th May, 1940.

Sir, I have the honour to refer to the very serious calls which have recently been made upon the Home Defence Fighter Units in an attempt to stem the German invasion on the Continent.

2. I hope and believe that our Armies may yet be victorious in France and Belgium, but we have to face the possibility that they may be defeated.

3. In this case I presume that there is no-one who will deny that England should fight on, even though the remainder of the Continent of Europe is dominated by the Germans.

4. For this purpose it is necessary to retain some minimum fighter strength in this country and I must request that the Air Council will inform me what they consider this minimum strength to be, in order that I may make my dispositions accordingly.

5. I would remind the Air Council that the last estimate which they made as to the force necessary to defend this country was 52 Squadrons, and my strength has now been reduced to the equivalent of 36 Squadrons.

6. Once a decision has been reached as to the limit on which the Air Council and the Cabinet are prepared to stake the existence of the country, it should be made clear to the Allied Commanders on the Continent that not a single aeroplane from Fighter Command beyond the limit will be sent across the Channel, no matter how desperate the situation may become.

7. It will, of course, be remembered that the estimate of 52 Squadrons was based on the assumption that the attack would come from the eastwards except in so far as the defences might be outflanked in flight. We have now to face the possibility that attacks may come from Spain or even from the North coast of France. The result is that our line is very much extended at the same time as our resources are reduced.

8. I must point out that within the last few days the equivalent of 10 Squadrons have been sent to France, that the Hurricane Squadrons remaining in this country are seriously depleted, and that the more squadrons which are sent to France the higher will be the wastage and the more insistent the demands for reinforcements.

Under Secretary of State,
Air Ministry,
LONDON, W.C.2.

Above:
Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh
Dowding's letter to the Under
Secretary of State for Air in 1940.
Right:
One of the many wartime combat
reports which are on display in
the library.

-2-

9. I must therefore request that as a matter of paramount urgency the Air Ministry will consider and decide what level of strength if to be left to the Fighter Command for the defence of this country, and will assure me that when this level has been reached, not one fighter will be sent across the Channel however urgent and insistent the appeals for help may be.

10. I believe that, if an adequate fighter force is kept in this country, if the fleet remains in being, and if Home Forces are suitably organised to resist invasion, we should be able to carry on the war single handed for some time, if not indefinitely. But, if the Home Defence Force is drained away in desperate attempts to remedy the situation in France, defeat in France will involve the final, complete and irremediable defeat of this country.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

G.P.S. Dowding
Air Chief Marshal,
Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief,
Fighter Command, Royal Air Force.

PERSONAL COMBAT REPORT.

305
3750

quarters, No. 2 Group.
quarters, 2nd T.A.F. (MAIN).
th April, 1944.
/I....
uito VI.
1339 hours.
Time of attack : 1) 1515 hours. Time Down : 1840 hours.
Place 1) Near Esbjerg. 2) 1610 hours.
Our Casualties: NIL. 2) Near Aalborg.
Enemy Casualties : 1 HE.111, 1 FW. 58 destroyed.

Wing Commander Braham DSO DFC, Navigator P/Lt. Gregory De
DEM on Ranger to Denmark level to enemy coast west of Esbjerg at low
level, saw lighthouse on the coast and two hoarding installations
inland near a hutted camp. A HE.111 was seen orbiting the
hoardings at 300 feet in a rate 2 turn. Mosquito climbed to turn
with Heinkel and closed on the port quarter, opening fire with cannon
at 300 yards, closing to approximately 200 yards with a three second
burst. By this time combat was off shore. Strikes were seen on
the port engine and port wing and enemy aircraft fired with cannon
port engine on fire and exploded on impact with water. Weather seen on
was 3/10ths cloud at 2,000 feet. Mosquito flew north and in the
area 20 miles north west of Viborg, saw a stationary ~~FW.58~~ in the
middle of a ploughed field with a person in the turret and two or
three other people alongside.

Mosquito flew on to fifteen miles east of Aalborg and flew
round to the north of the town. 3 enemy aircraft were seen over
the town of Aalborg and the nearest, a FW.58 flying at 500 feet was
closed from above on the port quarter. Fire was opened with cannon
and machine gun at 300 yards, closing to less than 200 yards. Flak
were seen on the port wing and the cockpit, and two explosions in
the starboard engine of the enemy aircraft, which nosedived and hit
the ground. As Mosquito broke off over the enemy aircraft, two
ME.109's were seen approaching from the south. The leading
ME.109's opened fire at about 600 yards on Mosquito's port
quarter, Mosquito doing a tight turn up into cloud which was 9 to
10/10ths at 1,000 feet. Light flak was being fired from ground
defence at the same time. Mosquito regained cloud and returned
to base. 90 HEI and 90 SAPI cannon rounds fired in first
engagement. 90 HEI and 90 SAPI cannon, 480 x .303 rounds fired in
second engagement. C.C.G. automatically exposed in both encounters

R.D. Braham
Log Supp. etc.

The Library

The College Library contains over 60,000 books, reports and documents. In the west room hang two prints taken from charcoal and colour wash drawings of Manfred von Richtofen and Oswald von Boelcke. The two First World War aces are shown wearing the Blue Max. The pictures were presented to the College in 1938 by General Milch, the German State Secretary for Air. Also in the west room are details of the Cranwell-to-Walvis Bay record-breaking flight made by Squadron Leader O R Gayford and Flight Lieutenant G E Nicholletts in 1933.

In the main reading room are portraits of Squadron Leader A G Jones Williams and Flight Lieutenant N H Jenkins, who established a world record for long distance flying, in 1929, when they flew non-stop from Cranwell to Karachi in 50hrs 48min. There is also a portrait of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Arthur Harris, which hangs above the desk which he used in the operations room of Headquarters Bomber Command. On the ends of the bookcases are drawings of the flying accident in which a Whitley Bomber crashed into the College on 18 March 1942. The crew of

three was killed in the accident and the College was badly damaged both by fire and by water from firemen's hoses. A plate taken from one of the aircraft's engines is also on display. On the centre table are albums containing photographs of royal visits made to the College over the years. On the ends of other bookcases are letters from Churchill and Dowding. The one from Dowding is that in which he asks the Secretary of State for Air for more resources for the air defence of Great Britain in 1940.

The north room of the library is called the Lawrence Room. It is named after T E Lawrence who served at Cranwell as an Aircraft Mechanic from 1925 to 1926 under the pseudonym Aircraftman Shaw. The portrait of Lawrence is a copy of an original by Augustus John and it was presented to the College by Rupert de la Bere who was Professor of English and History at Cranwell from 1921 to 1938. The Lawrence Room is a treasure trove of wartime letters and reports. There are letters from Montgomery and Mountbatten, and combat reports from both the World Wars which describe engagements with the enemy in vivid detail.

**Below: Marshal of the Royal Air Force
Sir Arthur Harris**



Below: T E Lawrence





The College Library is one of three Libraries at Cranwell



LAWRENCE ROOM



The Church of Saint Michael and All Angels

In 1962 the Church of Saint Michael and All Angels was built close to the south-east wing of the College, to replace three existing Cranwell churches: the Memorial Chapel, the Hangar Church and Saint Christopher's Church. Saint Christopher's Church was the equivalent of the parish church for those who lived and worked at Cranwell, whilst the Hangar Church served as the College Chapel for weekly parade services and for major College functions. The Memorial Chapel had been created in 1952 when the southwest corner of College Hall was being rebuilt, after the damage caused, when it was struck by the Whitley bomber in 1942. The Chapel remained in being for ten years, until the Church of St Michael and all Angels was built and the Memorial Chapel was recreated within its walls. The original Memorial Chapel is now the suite of offices occupied by the Commandant and his staff.

The general impression of the Church is that of a light and airy building. This is deliberate and the Trustees are not allowed to take any action which would deny this impression. The interior of the Church, panelled with oak below pure white walls and furnished with oak pews and choir stalls, is simple, restrained and dignified. The High Altar, with its rich golden-coloured curtain extending beyond the Sanctuary Arch, was presented in 1961 as a memorial to the son of Air Vice-Marshal F C Halahan, a former Commandant. It was made in the Cadets' Instructional Workshops by Chief Technician Cooke, who also made the Credence Table, the Frontal Chest and the Prayer Desk at the Bishop's Chair. In the Lady Chapel, to the south of the

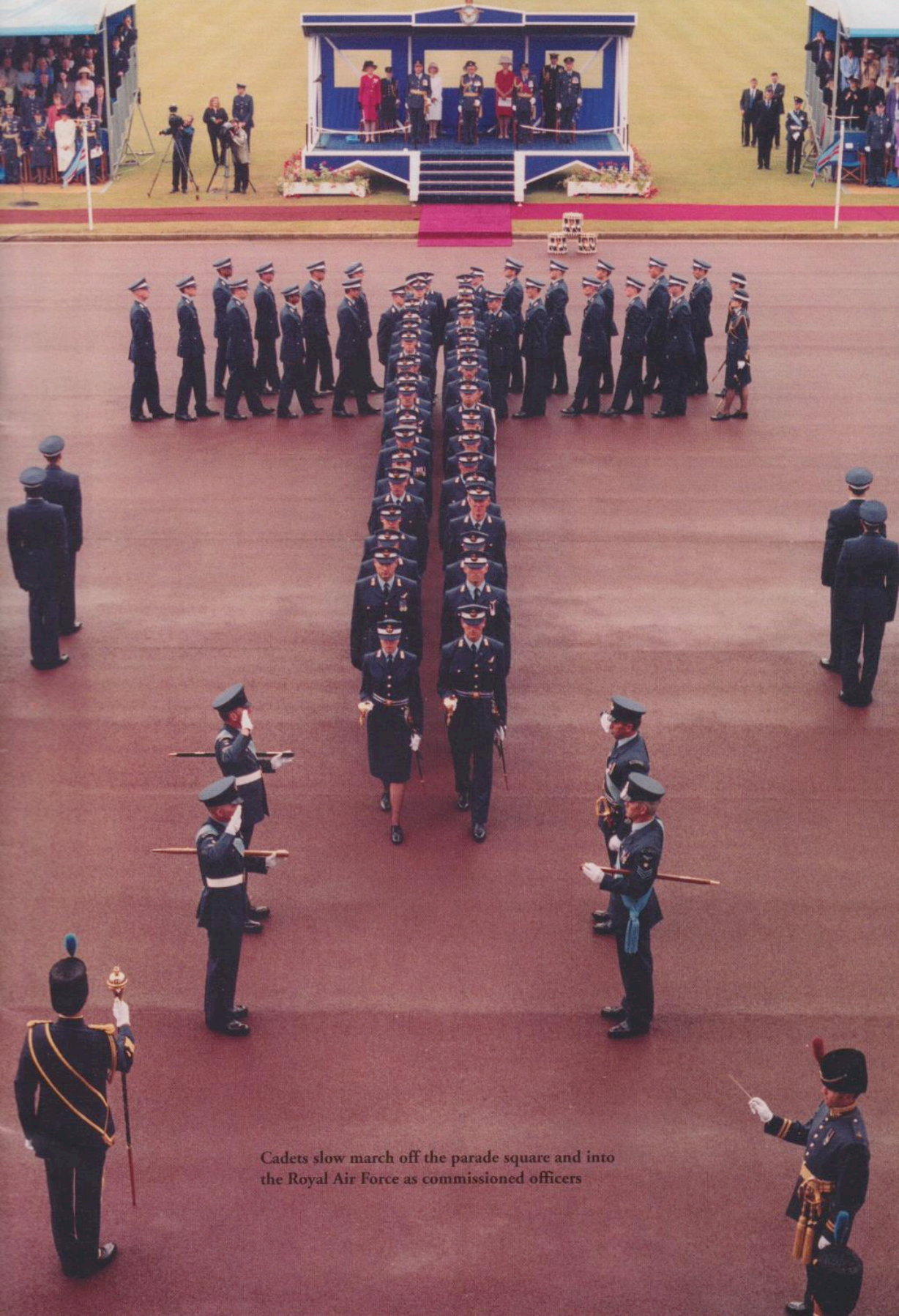
choir, is the font decorated with the badges of Maintenance Command, No 42 Group and No 43 Group. The Lectern, which was hand-carved by Air Commodore J M Pack, bears the image of a falcon and is inscribed with the names of Cranwellians killed on duty. It was moved from the old Hangar Church, as was the Organ with its fine Renaissance Screen.

Over the archway leading from the Nave to the Memorial Chapel is the Royal Arms. Directly opposite, over the south door, also known as the "Commandant's Door", is painted the College Arms, whilst above the west door is the Arms of the Diocese of Lincoln. Along the north side of the nave hang the former Sovereign's Colours of the College which were laid up at the end of their ceremonial life. The earliest Colour was the first to be granted to the Royal Air Force. Each has a letter from the Sovereign explaining its significance. Beneath the Colours are cases containing the Books of Remembrance for flight cadets and graduate entrant officers from the opening of the College to August 1945, and from August 1945 to the present.

Passing beneath the Royal Arms one enters the Memorial Church, which has been rebuilt almost exactly as it was in College Hall. On the right and through a door in the panelling is a corridor where the Processional Cross, made of beaten copper in the design of the Distinguished Flying Cross, is kept. Also in this corridor is the roll of Senior Chaplains who have served at the College. The roll is surmounted by the badge of the Royal Air Force Chaplains Branch which is in the shape of a Cross of the Knights of St John. The eight points of the badge are a reminder of the Beatitudes and the four arms stand for Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude and Justice.



The Memorial Chapel is now part of the Church of St Michael and All Angels



Cadets slow march off the parade square and into the Royal Air Force as commissioned officers



The Early Years

Cranwell's association with aviation began during the First World War. The Admiralty needed to establish a series of air stations around the south and east coasts to supplement the coastguard system and to alert our shore defences against sea and air invasion. In 1915 the Royal Naval Air Service sought to establish a single unit at which officers and ratings could be trained to fly aeroplanes, observer kite balloons and airships. Tradition has it that a young Naval pilot was briefed to fly around until he found a piece of land that was both large enough and flat enough for the purpose. It is said that he flew over Cranwell and thought it quite admirable. True or not, by November 1915 the Admiralty had requisitioned some 2,500 acres of farmland, mainly from the Earl of Bristol's estate. In the following month, construction of a hutted camp and aircraft hangars began. The Royal Naval Air Service Central Training Establishment Cranwell was commissioned on 1 April 1916, under the command of Commodore Godfrey M Paine. Cranwell later became known as HMS *Daedalus*. This was not strictly correct but arose because the officers and ratings of the Central Training Establishment at Cranwell were borne on the books of HMS *Daedalus* which was a hulk in the Medway and the nominal depot ship for all Royal Naval Air Service personnel serving on other stations. In addition to flying training and airship operations, a Boys' Training Wing was also established at Cranwell. Its task was to train Naval ratings as air mechanics and riggers.

In February 1918 Prince Albert, later Duke of York and King George VI, was appointed Officer in Charge of Boys and subsequently Officer Commanding No 4 Squadron of the Boys' Wing. He left Cranwell in August 1918. With the amalgamation of the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Flying Corps on 1 April 1918, ownership of Cranwell was placed in the hands of the Royal Air Force. The former Naval base title was replaced by the designation Royal Air Force Station Cranwell.

After the First World War, the Chief of the Air Staff, Sir Hugh Trenchard, was determined to consolidate the Royal Air Force's position as a single, independent Service. One of his priorities for the future was the establishment of a cadet college to

provide basic training and flying instruction for the future leaders of the Royal Air Force. He chose Cranwell as the location because, as he told his biographer:

Marooned in the wilderness, cut off from pastimes they could not organise for themselves, the cadets would find life cheaper, healthier and more wholesome.

The Royal Air Force College, which was the first military air academy in the world, was opened on 5 February 1920 under the command of Air Commodore C A H Longcroft. The Chief of the Air Staff's message to the first entry of cadets left them in no doubt of his expectations for the College:

We have to learn by experience how to organise and administer a great Service, both in peace and war, and you, who are present at the College in its first year, will, in future, be at the helm. Therefore, you will have to work your hardest, both as cadets at the College and subsequently as officers, in order to be capable of guiding this great Service through its early days and maintaining its traditions and efficiency in the years to come.



Construction of the Central Tower c.1930