Group Captain Percy Charles "Pick" Pickard DSO**, DFC 1915 - 1944

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February 2006

Introduction

Harlow is an unlikely venue for a war time drama, but just a few miles from its centre a patch of what is now very ordinary farmland was once the scene of frenetic activity. On a bleak February morning the combined energies of over a thousand men and women were focussed on preparing nineteen attack aircraft for an extraordinary mission.

Amongst this activity, two young men climbed into their aircraft, making the final preparation for what was to be one of the RAF's defining missions of the Second World War. For them this was to be the culmination of four years of almost continuous operational service. But In less than two hours time the extraordinary exploits of 'Pick' Pickard and Alan 'Bill' Broadley were to end in heroic and violent deaths in a burning aeroplane.

The film industry has not been kind to the RAF personnel of the war. In modern times we are used to digital and video cameras pointing at us. Sixty years ago this seemed alien, and men and women looked uncomfortable and stilted in front of a lens. Accents and vocabulary have changed too, conspiring to make our forties forefathers seem stiff and slightly comical. It is unfortunate that the seminal documentary of the WWII, 'the World at War' chose to feature bomber crews describing a raid as 'a wizard prang'.

The classic war films paint a false image of the crews. Richard Todd played Guy Gibson in 'the Dambusters' as the energetic elder brother; Kenneth Moore in 'Reach for the sky' as the kindly uncle. Those that served with them attest to altogether less attractive personalities. The same people also describe Gibson and Bader as being 'men of their time', and this provides the key to how we should perceive them.

Percy Charles Pickard was depicted by both mediums. As the star of a war time propaganda film 'Target for tonight' he seems the classic forties flying gentleman. And twenty five years later his final flight was dramatised in 'Mosquito Squadron', the irony being that the film script was nowhere as interesting as the facts on which it was based.

It is thus hard to gauge the real Pickard. Few contemporary accounts of his personality exist in print; writers seem so intent on describing his extraordinary exploits that the man himself seems forgotten. It is thus to the events of his short life we must turn to for clues of the true identity of the man.

Early years

Percy Charles Pickard was born on May 15 1915 in Handsworth Yorkshire, the youngest of five siblings. He was never known as Percy; 'Boy' to his family, 'Charles' to officialdom and 'Pick to his friends' and comrades. It was in these early years that he discovered the past time of which he would never tire, riding. Shooting was to come a close second. Together, the two would engender flair, co-ordination, ruthlessness and concentration, a winning formula for an operational pilot.

He was sent away to school at Framlingham College, where he did not excel in the classroom. A common class placing for Pick was bottom. Contemporary pupil Norman Borrett described Pickard as an 'enthusiastic' sportsman, to be found in the second XV, full of fun'. In shooting however he excelled, and captained his house, Garrett. He had less opportunity for riding at Framlingham, although legend attests to his Sunday pastime of riding dairy cows in a field close to the college.

In the thirties, the British Empire provided young men with energy, but not necessarily qualifications, ample opportunities for adventure. The father of a school friend owned a farm in Kenya, and invited his son to bring a companion out to Kenya. Pick was duly invited. The 5000 acres of African ranch land offered endless possibilities for riding and shooting. They were not alone there, although trips to parties could mean long journeys. Polo was tailor-made for the east African expatriate, and Pick became an expert. Pickard experienced his first taste of service life joining the 3rd battalion Kings African Rifle Reserve. Even when his friend returned to the motherland, Pickard stayed, having no intention of relinquishing the sporting opportunities offered by the wide open Kenyan landscape.

That was until the darker shadows of Hitler and impending conflict reached even the African plains; Pickard and the polo team were not to be left out, and resolved to return home to volunteer. Tickets aboard the liners to Southampton were not within their budget, so they bought an old car to carry them. The drive from Kenya, through what is now Somalia to Egypt is a journey that few would tackle today, and then only with four-wheel drives and an armed guard. In 1935 it would have been especially hard; Pickard contracting malaria hardly eased the ride. For several days he drifted in and out of fever, too sick to be moved.

Surviving, he rested with the polo team in Egypt whilst recovering, and they then embarked themselves and their car for the trip across the Mediterranean. They made it to London, as did the car, just. It died on the outskirts of South London.

Pickard applied for his commission, but in the Army. They wouldn't have him, so his next stop was the Royal Air Force, who would. The RAF in 1936 was undergoing mass expansion, and a polo player and good shot to boot may have seemed to them to be 'the right stuff'. Pickard was selected to train as a pilot, and initially graded as 'average', although he finished as 'above average'. Whether he hoped to be selected as a fighter pilot is unknown, but it was as a bomber pilot that he was to begin his flying career. Fuelled on the concept that the 'bomber would always get through', it was not seen as lower status in the pre-war years, and morale was high.

Pickard's first posting was to 214 Squadron based at Feltwell, flying Handley Page Harrow bombers. These were slow and ungainly, but this and other squadrons were the seeds that were to grow into the formidable weapon that became bomber command. This underlying philosophy of the supremacy of the bomber was to have longer terms effects, principally complacency that saddled the RAF with crews untrained to operate in anything but good weather, part time air gunners, no dedicated navigator, and virtually no navigational aids at all.

His social life outside of the air force was active. It was at this time that he met the daughter of an ex-Lord Mayor of Belfast, Dorothy, whose parents disapproved of him. Their wedding could almost have been categorised as an elopement – her parents were not told. His wedding present to Dorothy was a dog named Ming, whose affinity with Pickard was to become the stuff of legends. Pickard's elder sister Helena was an actress, married to the well-known actor, Sir Cedric Hardwicke; and through them, Pick and Dorothy became part of the London party circuit. Pickard himself was becoming noticed within the RAF. The tall blonde pipe smoking young pilot was noticeable in any officers' mess. His posting as ADC to Air Vice Marshall John Baldwin, officer commanding training command at Cranwell raised his profile further.

War

On 30 October 1939, Pickard was posted to 7 Squadron flying Hampden bombers at RAF Upper Heyford. This squadron was disbanded to form an operational training unit, and he briefly returned to 214, before a more permanent posting to 99 Squadron at Newmarket Heath.

The 'phoney war' prior to the German invasion of France was a nervous time for Bomber command, led by a command reticent about launching major attacks on German cities. At 99 Squadron, Pickard was flying the Vickers Wellington, easily the best of the early war generation of bomber. Their incessant leafleting raids was said to have kept the German nation supplied with toilet roll for a year. When at last committed to daylight raids for which they had been trained, the failings of Bomber Command strategy was exposed. The

Wellington bomber was protected by hydraulic gun turrets front and rear. German fighter pilots soon realised the turrets could not turn a full ninety degrees, and a side on attack would therefore be unopposed by gunfire. The Wellingtons were mown from the sky, and the heavy bombers were withdrawn from the day war.

Pickard and his comrades turned to night warfare, for which they were untrained. Little known to the crews they were creating devastation amongst the cattle herds of Germany, but little damage to the cities. In fact it often became a topic of debate amongst the German defence forces exactly where the RAF were aiming for.

Slowly, and with the development of electronic aids and navigation techniques, their accuracy improved, and Pickard and his crews began to build up the number of missions flown. It was in his early wartime tour that he 'crewed' up with a fellow Yorkshireman who was to become his friend and comrade to the end, Alan Broadley. Pick became notoriously 'press-on' and there was little that would stop him flying to his target. Ground crews became accustomed to Pickard and Broadley returning in aircraft shredded with flak and night fighter damage.

After flying a mission to the Ruhr, his Wellington took critical flak damage. Pickard nursed the crippled aircraft to the coast, where he safely ditched in the sea. Unfortunately, he had landed the aircraft in a mined area, and a dispatched RAF rescue launch had to wait several hours for their dinghy to drift out of danger. His wife reported his dog 'Ming' awaking in the night at 3.20 am and uncharacteristically howling; she noted the time on their clock. Pickard's watch had stopped at the precise moment of impact in the North Sea several hundred miles away. His watch read 3.20.

Pickard had settled down to a fairly comfortable life living on base with Dorothy and Ming, who moved from London to be with him. Dorothy always knew when Pickard was flying, as Ming would run out of the house staring into the sky. With most horse racing suspended for the duration, Pick acquired two race horses cheaply. Raid or not, Pickard would ride each morning, 'rabbiting' with Ming. As his seniority grew, the post raid routine would usually conclude with a trip in the station Tiger Moth for some aerobatics.

Many accounts of wartime bomber crew focus on the utter exhaustion of crews as they counted trips to the end of their tour. This appears in no account of Pickard and Broadley, to whom non-operational flying was deemed some manner of punishment. By the end of November, he and Bill had racked up 31 operations, and were rested. Pickard however found a means of getting more 'Ops' on the board.

311 Squadron

Pick was posted as squadron commander of 311 Czech squadron at East Wretham. 311 Squadron were not-fully operational, but as part of the 'running-up' process crews were sent on missions over Germany. Pickard became known as a hard task-master amongst the crews, often accompanying pilots on raids on Germany. A pilot accidentally ejecting his window shortly after take-off with Pickard as co-pilot, attempted to turn back for base, only to have 'Pick' point him in the direction of Berlin. Several hours later a hypothermic, but infinitely wiser Czech pilot found his way back to England. Language problems with the Czechs did not help matters either. Pickard decided to concentrate on those pilots with the most hours. An interpreter told him of one Czech named Joe with 2000 hours experience;

Pickard turned his attention to him. After several trips the man was still strangely inept for a man with 2000 flying hours under his belt. Pickard probably felt a little silly when he finally learned that the individual was actually a navigator, with no piloting experience at all. Pick was not deterred, and trained him as a pilot anyway. Ironically, Joe married Pickard's sister Hilary.

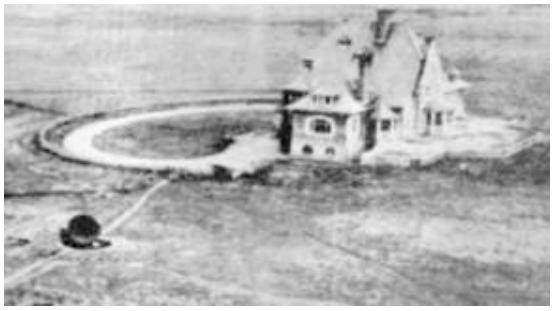
It was during this spell at East Wretham that Pickard was invited to star in the propaganda film, 'Target for tonight'. This film depicted Britain hitting back at the German homeland in the only way she could, from the air, thus catching the public imagination and making 'Pick' into a household name. The film, shot at Blackheath Studios and on a retired Wellington bomber at East Wretham, is now all but forgotten. This is a shame as it is an insight into the mood of a nation at war, and provides us with a first hand view of Pickard. Renamed 'Dixon' for the film, it was his call sign 'F-Freddie' that became the moniker under which the press and public came to know him. His spell with the Czechs earned him his first DSO, and to celebrate, Framlingham headmaster R Kirkman announced an extra days holiday for the school.

His 'rest' over, he joined 9 squadron on 14 May 1941, and was joined by Broadley, now commissioned. Another gruelling and stressful tour of operations followed, and by the end of August 1941, they had chalked up a total of 64 missions, not including his trips as a passenger with the Czechs.

Another rest had him posted to 3 Group headquarters to ferry senior officers between airfields. Even then he managed to get himself some trips over occupied territory, dropping cigarettes to the Dutch. Having done two operational tours, Pickard and Broadley had fulfilled their operational requirements, and need not have done any more operations. But again, he talked his way back into an operational unit.

Bruneval

He joined 51 Squadron at Dishforth in November 1941, to fly Whitleys. Their role was not bombing, but high level photographic reconnaissance. After only a few trips, the squadron was posted to Andover to begin training for a very special mission. Here, Pickard was able to take a very direct role in hitting back at the growing German air defences that were taking an increasing toll of Allied bomber crews. Scientists, anxious for technical information on the German 'Wurzberg' air defence radar, requested direct action from the forces in obtaining a set. A squad of British Commandoes, to be flown by Pickard himself, were to be dropped into France to dismantle and retrieve by boat one of these enormous radar sets at Bruneval. The mission was brilliantly successful, and on the troops return to Portsmouth, Pickard was the first to meet them off the boat. For his



Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

role in the Bruneval raid, Pickard was awarded a bar to his DSO, an award that went down well with the pupils of Framlingham College who were granted another day's holiday as celebration.

Clandestine operations

Pickard had a slightly different definition of "rest" than other pilots. His next tour was possibly the most dangerous of all, Commanding 161 Squadron. Their role was ferrying spies and saboteurs for the SOE (Special Operations Executive) into and out of occupied France. This aspect of RAF work had grown to the point that it was centralised at RAF Tempsford in Bedfordshire, which became the RAF's most secret base. The modus operandi was usually the same. SOE agents were lodged in a local hotel before being ferried to farm buildings that had unusually been left standing within the perimeter track of the airfield. This was the famous "Gibraltar Farm". After final briefings and checks at the farm, the agents were issued firearms in the barn, and then boarded onto an awaiting aircraft flown by one of a team of pilots that included Pickard. If a parachute drop was not deemed suitable, the aircraft would be required to land in darkness in a French field, where they would be met by French Resistance.

Where the landing signal was sent, the small Lysander or Hudson aircraft would have just three torch lights to guide the pilot into a rough field, one at each end of the strip, and one to indicate its width. Having landed, Pickard and his colleagues would not know whether it would be the French resistance greeting him, or the Gestapo. This would often not be a smooth operation. On one occasion he was not met by the expected signal from the ground, and circled the site for almost two hours, using up most of his fuel and only just making it home. On another occasion, his unarmed aeroplane was caught by two German fighters whilst still over France. His slow speed was his one advantage, and by skilfully timing his turns he forced the fighters to overshoot without landing effective shots. They attacked time and time again right across the channel before they fled from British fighters scrambled to escort him home.

Another trip to collect two agents from a field near Tournais became difficult on account of thick fog. It took two hours of attempting to find a hole in the fog before he finally landed the aircraft. Having loaded his passengers, the aircraft promptly became bogged down in mud. It took over two hours, and most of the occupants of a nearby village to get him out of the mud and into the air again. This trip earned him his second bar to his DSO, and the pupils of Framlingham College another day's holiday.

If this type of operation was not dangerous enough, the SOE had security problems of its own. One of his close colleagues who accompanied him on several missions, a Frenchman named Henri Dericourt was revealed post-war as a double agent. Pickard had often remarked on his squadron's luck at not getting caught on the ground whilst retrieving agents. An explanation at Dericourt's post-war treason trial may be provided by the evidence suggesting that the Gestapo had been given orders not to interfere. Pickard characteristically survived the tour almost unharmed. In January 1943, hi-jinks at a party in the Mess led to a broken wrist; Pick flew the next few missions with his hand in plaster.

By May 1943 he had amassed a total of 100 missions, Broadley 70. They were again taken off operations.

140 Wing

In late 1943, the RAF began reorganising for the invasion of the European mainland, and the 2nd Tactical Air Force was formed. The unit absorbed most of the units that would be required for direct support of the allied armies. Self-contained attack wings were formed, designed to allow mobile groups of fighter or light bomber squadrons to be deployed effectively as conditions required.

Pickard was not initially destined to be included in these plans. Instead he was posted to command a non-operational airfield. This was anathema to him and used the contacts he had gained during his service career get a posting back to operations. One of his contacts came good. Basil Embry had been appointed commander of 2 Group, the light bomber unit of the 2nd tactical Air Force. Having a buccaneering attitude to war himself, he was an admirer of Pickard, and happy to bring him into his fold. In October 1943, Pickard took up command of 140 Wing, a Mosquito unit based at RAF Sculthorpe in Norfolk. 140 Wing consisted of three squadrons 21 Squadron, the Australian 464 Squadron, and the New Zealand 487 squadron

The wooden built De Havilland has entered the annals of aviation history as one of the most versatile aircraft of the war. Twin Merlin engines powering a light-weight airframe was the recipe for a very fast aircraft. Used in a variety of roles, it was as a low level fast bomber that it stirred the public imagination. A neighbouring Norfolk airfield, Marham, had pioneered these lightening strikes on Gestapo headquarters, power stations and the like. It was in this role to which Pickard's new strike wing was tasked.

This presented a problem. Pick's bomber experience had been flying heavy bombers at night, and at high altitude. Embry was acutely aware of the dangers to Pickard of this change in role, and planned a period of apprenticeship for him. This mainly entailed Pickard, now re-united with Broadley as co-pilot, flying in a subordinate role on missions to his squadron commanders. His new Mosquito was of course marked F-Freddie, and he and Broadley were soon after launched into their first combat. Attacking the Pont Chateau power station at low-level, their starboard engine was damaged, but made it home. On their very next sortie attacking Cleve, F-Freddie was again damaged, but again made it back to base. By the end of January 1944, 140 Wing had been moved south to Hunsdon. Pickard and Broadley had racked up another four low level missions on Mosquitoes, and were about to receive the call for their final attack.

Operation Jericho - Amiens prison

Important to the success of the planned invasion of mainland Europe was the activities of the French resistance. Operating in small cells to reduce the risk of discovery, these groups had roles as either intelligence or saboteurs. As the invasion approached, so did the Germans efficiency at breaking these cells. By late 1943, there was a very real danger of complete collapse of resistance groups in the Channel areas. The danger manifested itself not only in the number of arrests made, but in the seniority of the personnel being arrested. As is documented, the Gestapo were efficient to say the least at extracting information from their prisoners. The arrest of senior French administrator and resistance leader, Raymond Bonpas, sent shock waves through to Whitehall. There was a very real danger that the breakdown of organised local intelligence and resistance could threaten the timing of the

invasion itself. Removing the danger of further compromises to security was given top priority.

Other news was coming from the area. Prisoners of the Gestapo were held in a wing of Amiens prison. The prison, situated on the outskirts of the town, was a tall concrete and brick structure still used for holding criminals in the other prison areas. The round-up of suspects by the Gestapo was becoming so successful that cell space was becoming an issue, so their local commander, Braumann decided the solution would be to shoot those who had no new information to offer. Word of the impending massacre reached local resistance members on the outside, who set to work gathering intelligence. Commanding them was a resistance fighter named Ponchardier, a successful saboteur who had killed many Germans de-railing troop trains. His appeals to London for assistance in freeing the prisoners were accompanied by information on the schedule of the guards, prison accommodation arrangements and even a set of the original building plans.

Operation Jericho –– The planning

The job of freeing the prisoners was handed to the RAF, who delegated it to Basil Embry and his 2 Group. Work began immediately at his headquarters at Mongewelll Park Manor; and with the French supplied intelligence, his plans quickly took shape. The mission was named "Operation Jericho". Three waves of six mosquitoes of 140 Wing were to attack the prison, with the aim of blasting two escape routes through the walls, and simultaneously shake cell doors from their mounting. The attack would have to take place at precisely midday when the guards took their lunch; a bomb through the canteen roof would account for most of them in one blow. Embry was to lead the raid himself, with Pickard following up in the second wave.

A scale model was built by the group's own model makers to assist in preparations, and the plans went through several iterations of change. It was considered that the only effective means would be to release bombs at a height of about ten feet, meaning the attack was going to be especially dangerous for the crews as they struggled to clear the prison buildings. A significant change was Embry's own commanding officer forbidding him participating in the attack. Embry did not relinquish without a fight, but eventually grudgingly conceded. Command of the operation thus passed to Pickard.

One essential part of the plan is often diplomatically omitted from accounts of the raid - the role of the third wave. Their role is often documented as following several minutes behind the main raid, and if so ordered by Pickard, 'complete the job'. In fact their role was to be far more sinister. If the first two waves failed in releasing prisoners, Pickard would call in the third wave who would then bomb the Gestapo wing with the objective of killing all prisoners. Their justification was that prisoners had said that they would prefer to die under British bombs than by German bullets. It is more likely that the reasoning was that 'dead men don't talk'. Sixty years on this seems ruthless, but at stake was an essential element of the invasion plans. Pickard would thus fly with the second wave so that he could make this decision.

Appeals from the French resistance became more urgent, as the date of February 19th was discovered as the execution date. The weather during the run up to the raid was appalling, threatening the mission itself. Weather deteriorated on the 10th February, and continued bad for the next week. With the deadline approaching, it was becoming imperative to attempt the attack in any condition. RAF Hunsdon was locked down on the 16th, with security preventing

exit or entrance to the base. All phone calls were monitored. Plans for the raid were shelved by weather conditions for the 17th. They were still appalling on the 18th, but the information from the resistance made this the last opportunity. A conference at Mongewelll Park Hall gave the go.

A final preparation had to be made; which squadron would make up each wave? No one wanted the terrible task of being assigned to the third wave. Straws were picked; the English 21 squadron lost and were thus to be the third in. The New Zealanders of 487 would lead, attacking the outer walls. The Australians of 464 Squadron were to be second, destroying the inner walls and the guardroom.

Operation Jericho -– The attack

Briefing was at 8.00 am, led by Pickard who addressing his crews, described their mission as 'death or glory'. Following the briefings from the usual specialists, the crews were asked to spend time studying the model of Amiens prison. The raid was to be accompanied by Tony Wickham of the RAF film unit, who with his cameraman was to fly in the unit's own Mosquito and film close up footage of the raid itself. Their footage records the preparation for the raid; the Mosquitoes parked in line along the Hunsdon grass, Broadley checking his friends life jacket, he and Pickard sharing a smile. These were the last images taken of them.

Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

They took off at 11.00 am at 100 yard intervals directly into a blizzard that did not improve as they reached first turning point east of Reading. They successfully rendezvoused with their Typhoon fighter escort over Littlehampton as the raid was going to take them within visual distance of the Luftwaffe fighters of Amiens-Glisy airbase. The Mosquitoes struggled to maintain formation. Two Aircraft of 464 became detached, and realising that without being part of a cohesive attack, their presence would be useless and turned back. Pickard also became separated, but managed to rejoin his wave. Even flying at wave top height, they were spotted by German defences who tracked their presence across the channel. Dick Sugden of 464 Squadron was shocked to emerge from thick cloud and see another Mosquito converging directly at him. It was Pickard. Crossing the coast at ground level, they were almost immediately engaged by German anti-aircraft fire.

Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

The first wave, led by Wing Commander 'Black' Smith, were three minutes late into the attack. Sweeping up the straight Amiens-Albert road, they split into two sections of three aircraft, to attack

the Eastern and Northern outer walls. Cutting their speed to prevent damage to the bombs on impact, the first section each flew in at ten feet above the ground, releasing their bombs exactly on the eastern perimeter wall followed by a frantic manoeuvre to get their aircraft over and around the prison building. The second section followed in immediately, P/O Merv Darrell and P/O Bob Fowler attacking the northern outer walls, breaching them twice.

Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

The Australians arriving more or less on time could see the new Zealanders attacking, and were forced to put in a large orbit to delay their own arrival. Their diversion took them directly over Amiens-Glisy fighter base, where they could see German crews running for their aircraft. With the New Zealanders clear, the Australians split into two sections. The first section, led by Wing Commander Bob Iredale attacked the inner prison walls at low level. Their attack was more dangerous than the first, as at closer in it was harder to clear the prison buildings. Again, holes were blasted through the wall, and the guardroom flattened. Iredale just cleared the prison walls in his mosquito, to the amazement of watching crews to whom his collision seemed a certainty.

The planners had not considered two things. Firstly, parts of the walls had been badly constructed and the bombs passed through them like they were made of paper. Secondly, they had not considered the effect of bombs hitting snow from low levels. Some of the bombs were hitting the ground and skidding three hundred yards.

Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

The second Australian section led by Ian McRitchie, Pickard as ‘arse-end-Charlie’ swept right to follow in, and were faced with the problem of the air filled with smoke and debris. Below they could see bombs from the other section skidding across the ground, more explosions. Attacking through the smoke, another breach was made in the inner wall.

Inside, the impact was shocking. One bomb had hit a cupboard stocked with hand-grenades, causing a detonation unforeseen in the planning. Structural collapse killed or injured many prisoners. But the plans to neutralise the German guards was mainly successful, with few guards in a position to intervene. Those prisoners whose door had been blown off released those still locked in their cells.

Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

The first rule of low attack raids was to get out quickly. But orbiting the prison, Pickard needed the smoke to clear so he knew whether to call in the third wave to demolish the prison. When it did he would have seen, as the film unit did, scores of prisoners fleeing from the prison. It must have been a relieved man that ordered the third wave home with the code words “red daddy, red daddy”. These were the last words heard from Pickard.

Ian Ritchie was hit by ground fire seconds after the attack, and ploughed into the ground at 200 miles per hour. He miraculously survived, although his observer Sampson did not. Eye witness report Pickard flying low over the wreckage, presumably checking for survivors.

Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum

His last moments were spent fighting two German Focke-Wulf 190 fighters. Attacking at first together, and then from alternate sides the Germans attempted to nail the now lone mosquito. By carefully timing his turns, Pickard and Broadley avoided each attack, even getting a volley of their own into one of the German attackers. As Pickard pulled up into a steep climb, the other German fighter got a clear shot on his fuselage, blowing the tail of his aircraft. The Mosquito rolled over, and crashed in flames on the ground near the village of St Gratien.

Pickard and Broadley were both dead in the wreckage.

French civilians were soon at the aircraft, and using sticks, pulled Pickard’s body from the wreck. His wings, epaulettes, revolver and medal ribbons were cut from his uniform, to prevent German soldiers claiming souvenirs. They were returned to his family after the war.

The raid was ultimately successful. 400 prisoners escaped, of whom 258 remained free. Many were those destined for execution the next morning. Included in the escapers was Raymond Bonpas. The death of 102 French prisoners was tragic, but many were shot by Germans whilst fleeing the prison. However, the resistance were noticeable in their effectiveness in the run up to D-Day; and for this reason if for no other the Amiens mission was a success.

It was months before the death of F-Freddie was reported in the press. The

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PICKARD.—In proud and glorious memory of our darling "Boy." GROUP CAPT. P. C. PICKARD, D.S.O., D.F.C., who with his brave and gallant Navigator for 4½ years, FLT. LIEUT. ALAN BROADLEY, D.S.O., D.F.C., D.F.M., did not return from Amiens a year ago to-day. Remembering also his many friends whom he was not afraid to join.—MOTHER.

Horses he loved, laughter and the sun,
A dog, wide spaces, and the open air.

PICKARD.—GROUP CAPT. P. C. PICKARD, D.S.O., D.F.C. His glorious memory will be the inspiration to his adoring brother and sisters. Till we meet again.—WALTER, PIXIE, MARGERY, and NANCY.

loss of a much-loved war hero was not news the British public needed. Pickard and his friend Broadley were buried side by side in the St-Pierre Amiens cemetery, and for sixty years on the anniversary of the raid, a procession of townspeople marched from the Cathedral to the graves of Pickard and Broadley.

'Pick'

What are we to learn about Pickard from this story? He was not an intellectual or an academic. A family man who returned from missions to his wife and home each night, who was happiest on early morning rides on his horse with his dog. A man described by his friends as quiet and thoughtful. And yet he was man driven to continually get himself in the thick of the fight, flying double the operations required of him, each time in the face of a terrible death in a burning aeroplane. We cannot know whether it was an inner need to 'get the job done' and finish the war, or a hankering for the adrenalin rush of an operational raid that continually pushed him back into the seat of a bomber. What we do know is that he was a true motivator of the men and women around him, and ultimately died a hero's death saving the lives of his comrades.

Today

Pickard and Broadley graves lie well tended in the Amiens graveyard.

Most of the airfields where Pickard operated from were returned to their original use. RAF Newmarket is back in its true role as a racecourse, although from the by-pass can be seen a surviving metal aircraft hanger. East Wretham is farmland, almost impossible to know that it was once a bomber base. Sculthorpe near Fakenham in Norfolk is still occasionally used during military exercises at the Stamford Battle area.

Tempsford is a different story, and well worth a walk if ever in the vicinity. The now disused airfield is situated just off the A1 North of Sandy in Bedfordshire. Turn off the A1 to the village of Tempsford and take the road to Potton. Cross the railway, and on your left you will since the expanse that was once the flying field. A gate on your left is for access for lorries to an aggregate store; the next lane on your left has recognisably military buildings. Pass this by, continue for a short way up the Potton road, and by the hedgerow you will see a public footpath sign. Park, take the left hand path and walk for a few hundred yards up this track. Soon you will be on what was once the perimeter track, and on the left you will see a wide section of runway.

Carry on up the perimeter track, and you will see the barn of Gibraltar farm, where agents were issued with firearms before being ferried to occupied France. The rest of the farm has

been demolished, but the barn has several memorials inside, and is open to the public. In the land in front of the barn can be seen a tree recently planted as a memorial to Pickard and Broadley.

An ordnance survey map in invaluable for these trips; the relevant sections can be freely downloaded from the Ordnance survey at:http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/getamap/

Hunsdon, from where the Amiens prison raid was launched is situated to the north-west of Harlow, near to the road to Hertford. For a quick view, take the country road due south from the village, a gate on your left will afford a good view of what was once this fighter base. A private sign on the gate discourages entry. Do not be discouraged though, and if you have the time park in the village and follow marked public footpaths across the airfield. These public rights of way are maintained by the council with weed killer and cross bare fields. A pair of boots is advisable. The runways have been pared down to thin farm tracks, but allow an outstanding image of what the airfield would have looked like during the war. Notice the dip in the main runway that frustrated many wartime pilots.

Stroll back west and you will see a strip of woodland. Take the time to have a look, as brick trenches still snake through the trees. A solitary building survives on what was the technical site, this was the parachute store, although its days look numbered. Take a little care; this area is used for clay pigeon shooting.

Before you leave, take time to stop on the main runway and listen for the sound of nineteen De Havilland mosquitoes taking off into the snow.

Bibliography

Jack Fishman	*and the walls came tumbling down*	(Souvenir Press).
Alexander Hamilton	*Wings of the night – The secret missions of Group Captain Pickard*	(William Kimber)
Chaz Bowyer	*Bomber Barons*	(Pen and Sword)
Roger A Freeman	*Bases of Bomber Command then and now*	(Battle of Britain International)
Chaz Bowyer	*Mosquito at War*	(Ian Allan Ltd)

Photos

Most are taken by Adrian Orchard; some are from unknown origin; a few are by kind permission of the Imperial War Museum (ref: Yvonne Oliver - Photographs Licensing Dept, IWM; 13 June 2005; YOliver@IWM.ORG.UK)

Michael Evans (S45-48) says the film "Target for Tonight" can be hired from the Department of Film at the Imperial War Museum. He also has a copy of the film himself.

The following Discussion Board is also just about Operation Jericho
http://www.tgplanes.com/Public/snitz/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=1065&whichpage=1

Adrian also provided the following additional background on Pickard's family and his connection to them :-

"*P C Pickards father was a Yorkshireman who moved to London and started a catering company. This was the seed of what was to become the Mecca empire. Pickard's brother was Walter, who in the war was Commander of RAF Lyneham. After the war Walter joined the family business, and became Managing Director of Mecca. Mecca was quite a big organisation even then, and had several concerns. One of these was a pub chain. Walter had a problem pub in Soho, the name I forget, but he talked* ***Bromage Snr*** *into running it, He made a success of it, and it became a public school meeting place. Walter's son Christopher joined him in the Mecca business and ran the Hammersmith Palais. When Christopher married in 1964, I was the page boy! At the Golden anniversary dinner I met another person who attended the wedding, who also turned out to be an OF, Simon someone-or-other. I saw him again at the annual OF dinner last year. At this year's dinner my Wife and I had a drink with* ***John Edwards****, who it turns out was a very close friend of Christopher's in the sixties. Small world."*

In 2011 Pickard's nephew Christopher Pickard stayed with Adrian and brought with him his uncle's "in case of death letter". It is an amazing and humbling document and sets out that he would like his son to also go to the College. Sadly this didn't happen as his widow Dorothy and son Nicholas went to South Africa after the war. With Christopher's permission you can read the letter in full below :-

Read by Mr

ROYAL AIR FORCE

Dear Lord Londonderry,

I am writing this short letter to you and handing it in a sealed blank envelope to my adjutant, to be opened and delivered to you if I should fail to return from a sortie.

For nearly two years now I have had the feeling that one day or night I shall be knocked down, and although myself I am not afraid, I do feel my responsibilities.

The morning you tried to persuade me to take you on a raid, I decided at that moment, that when my son was born, I should invite you to be his God father, as I felt confident that you would do all in your power to help and advise Dorothy as to my son's future.

Financially Dorothy is safe, although I have no money, my pension plus the small income that Dorothy has will be sufficient to look after them both, anyhow it is my wish that Dorothy should marry again, in which case she will have nothing to worry about. My other wish is that Nicholos should be educated at my aold school "Framlingham College" or some other similar school which is not considered expensive. On leaving school at no more than 17½ years, he should be sent abroad for a period of at least three years, with an allowance sufficient only to keep him if that is necessary, no more than £100 per year. At the end of that period I should like him to return to this Country, and join the Royal Air Force and endeavour to obtain a permanent comission. Under no circumstances should his hand be forced if he wishes to remain overseas for good, he may do so, but he is to be given no financial assistance whatsoever and after reaching 21 years his allowance shall cease.

I am not informing Dorothy of my intentions regarding Nicholas, but should like you to communicate with her immediately I am posted as missing.

My adjutant has instructions to communicate with you should this occur and he also has instructions to open the sealed envelope and will find this addressed to you.

Should on the other hand, I be taken prisoner, I would like you to do all you can for Dorothy and the baby, but under

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no circumstances are you to help financially, Dorothy has instructions regarding this matter.

My chances of being taken alive are remote as I always carry a revolver and intend fighting it out. If you hear I am a prisoner, it will be because either I am too badly injured to fight, or because I funked it.

In conclusion, I should like to thank you for what you have done for me, and also to inform you that I have every confidence in you carrying out my instructions. Finally I cannot speak too highly of bomber command, particularly the men who are least mentioned, the wireless ops. and the gunners, their risks are greater than anyones, yet they are the least rewarded.

Good Luck,

Charles Pickard.

The following painting is of the attack on Amiens jail to release resistance fighters. The painting is owned by **H. Patrick Taylor (G43-46)**, who commissioned it from the artist Graham Coton.

The following additional piece appeared in the Spring 2000 OF Magazine :-

Pickard's Lock and Portrait

On a private visit to RAF College, Cranwell last year, the Editor hunted out this portrait of Group Captain P C Pickard, DSO, DFC hanging with many others in the corridors of the College. Graham Coton's painting of Percy Pickard leading the raid on Amien Gaol to release resistance fighers in World War Two was reproduced on pages 44 & 45 of the Autumn 1992 edition. Pickard was killed on his return from the raid and another piece of Pickard history was unearthed by the Editor in the Imperial War Museum in 1995 when he found a large lock (of Amien prison) in a glass case which had been presented by Dr Antonin Mans in memory of the Group Captain. Dr. Mans had been arrested as leader of the 'Century' Resistance Group for the Somme area and was being held in the prison. He could have escaped during the raid but Dr Mans chose to stay behind to tend the wounded both German and French.

His death sentence was lifted and he remained a prisoner until the end of the war when he was liberated by the Allies. There was a book published in 1977 about Pickard under the title *Wings of Night* ISBN 0 7183 0415 2

I found the following picture in the SOF archives at the College. Pickard is left of the Queen Mother.

The following article appeared in the Daily Express in 2004. Note the last paragraph about his dog Ming :-

 TEL NO. 020792 88000 /lmx

Brave pilot's family demand decorations that are his due

Battling for the honour of a wartime hero

By **Katie Fraser**

MANY heroic fliers wrote their legends in the skies over these shores and mainland Europe during the Second World War – but some were more unsung than others. Group Captain Percy Pickard falls into the latter category. Held in equal measures of awe and affection by his RAF comrades, he led one of the conflict's most audacious raids – and never returned from it only because he went back to try to help a friend.

Pickard went to his grave without being decorated for his final exploits. For even though the French wished to reward his courage with their highest wartime honours, they were blocked from doing so by the British Government.

Now, 60 years after his death, his descendants are seeking the posthumous recognition that the last mission of "Pick", as he was known, merits.

By the time of his death at the age of 29, Pickard's bravery had won him his nation's thanks. He became the first airman to be awarded three Distinguished Service Orders in one war. He was also the holder of the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Czech Military Cross.

His nephew Michael Woods, who is at the head of the campaign to have his French decorations granted, says: "In his relatively short life, 'Pick' had become a legend in the RAF. As appearances went, it wasn't hard to see why. At 6ft 4in, and in uniform with his mop of blond hair, he must have cut an impressive dash. But he was more than mere veneer – he embodied the consummate English gentleman: brave, kind, honourable and loyal."

Operation Jericho, which took place one murky morning in February 1944, sealed Pick's reputation – and his fate. It was a daring, low-level raid designed to liberate members of the French Resistance from Amiens Prison in northern France, who were awaiting execution by the Nazis for aiding the Allies.

Time was of the essence because the Germans had already dug a mass grave for the bodies of the dead. The British bombers had to be very accurate. They were to drop bombs not on the prison but on the walls, to allow the prisoners to escape. Should they fail to find their mark, Pick would be faced with a terrible decision: whether to send in a back-up squadron to destroy the jail and all those inside. There was a good reason for this – some of the prisoners had knowledge of the planned D-Day landings in Normandy and it was feared that, under torture, they might reveal details.

The first plane swooped low over the target and released its bomb. It missed. The second and third planes followed suit and this time, two holes were punched in the massive walls. Figures could be seen running out of the prison and scrambling over the walls.

Pick gave the command for the remaining planes to return home but then he noticed there was a plane missing. Unaware that Squadron Leader Ian McRitchie's aircraft had been hit by flak, killing the navigator and causing the pilot to crash land, Pick vainly searched the skies for any sign of a plane in distress.

He accepted there was nothing he could do and turned for home. Then, two German fighter planes appeared and, in a single burst of fire, severed the tail section of Pick's Mosquito. The aircraft flipped on to its back and spiralled away towards the ground.

BACK home, his wife Dorothy instantly knew something was wrong. At almost precisely the moment he was shot down, Pick's old English sheepdog Ming let out a howl of distress. Ming waited for Pick during all his wartime sorties, scanning the skies for his return. After landing, Pick would issue four sharp blasts from a whistle to call her.

Percy Pickard had always wanted to be a farmer but in 1936 put that dream on hold to enlist in the RAF. After war broke out, he swiftly earned a reputation for boldness. With his navigator, Al Broadley, he flew more than 100 sorties. Their special skill was "moonlight missions" – dropping saboteur agents into occupied Europe.

He even starred in the 1941 propaganda film, Target For Tonight. The character he played, 'F' for Freddie, made him a national hero.

Today, Pick's grave is marked by a small white cross, which carries his numerous decorations. Initially, the French wrongly assumed he had been posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross – and the letters VC later had to be removed.

To mark his gallantry, the French also wished to award him the Companionship of the Legion d'honneur and the Croix de Guerre, but the proposals were thwarted by the British policy of refusing to accept posthumous foreign awards.

"Perhaps now, on the 60th anniversary of his death, it is time for Pick to be honoured as he deserved," says Michael Woods. "For as his erstwhile superior, Air Chief Marshal Sir Basil Embry wrote, 'In courage, devotion to duty, fighting spirit and powers of really leading, [Percy Pickard] stood out as one of the great airmen of the war and as a shining example of British manhood I always felt he was part of a character from an earlier, Elizabethan, age'."

In a bizarre postscript to Pick's tale, his widow was to hear again those four distinctive whistles he once made to summon Ming. Eight years after his death, she heard the sound as she let Ming outside. Moments later, she saw the dog – who had been ill for some time – looking up at the skies again. Suddenly, she heard the whistles once more and Ming fell to the ground, dead. Dorothy always insisted it was Pick calling his dog to him one last time.

LEGEND: Percy Pickard with faithful dog Ming; and with wife Dorothy in 1940; his grave in France wrongly showing VC among his honours; a flight lieutenant gets 'Pick' ready to fly

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I have just come across the following article in the Autumn 1990 Magazine :

N. R. MacNicol (43–49) provided a memory of P. C. Pickard (26–32) and of a mystery

I am prompted to write by the story of the gallant death of 'Percy' Pickard told on page 20 of the *OF Magazine* (Spring '90). By the way, in addition to the decorations mentioned he also had the Czech Grand Cross. He was my boyhood hero, without whose influence I would never have been sent to Fram in September 1943. I have a fragment of memory to share with your readers and a question to ask of those who were his contemporaries in 1926–32.

'In 1942, when I was 10, my father, who had suffered a succession of postings since the beginning of the War, was posted to RAF Wyton, Huntingdonshire to be Pickard's adjutant, so we moved house yet again, to St Ives. After a while my father confided to Pickard that he was worried about the way my schooling was being constantly disrupted. Pickard, of course, recommended settling me at Fram, which then became my eighth and last school. Before my third term there, he was dead.

'My one clear memory is of visiting Pickard's house for a tea party with other children and having a glorious romp with the great man on his livingroom floor, yet being awestruck that he could be so relaxed. For I knew that he had probably recently returned from risking his life on a bombing 'trip' over Germany and would undoubtedly soon do it again. My father had strictly warned me not to mention the subject, but I could not help wondering.

'In 1942/43 Pickard was already a public hero. The War Office had cashed in on his fame by featuring him in a War semi-documentary film called 'Target for Tonight' in which he starred as the fearless pilot of the Lancaster bomber F for Freddie. He wrote his name and 'F for Freddie' in my autograph book. At the end of that tour of operations he was sent (I believe) to the USA on a lecture tour to drum up support for the war effort, before returning for his final tour of ops and a heroic end.

'Now for the mystery. Years later, my father told me that Pickard had delegated all the official correspondence and report writing to him and had even asked him (Dad) to read private letters and reply for him. Pickard had admitted that he had great difficulty with the written word and had never progressed beyond the Remove at Framlingham because of it. Despite this, my father admired and respected him.

'Having myself undergone RAF pilot training and been privileged to handle the controls of multi-engined aircraft comparable to those flown by Pickard, I cannot believe that a stupid man would succeed in that profession. The RAF does not tolerate fools in their expensive machinery, but he not only succeeded in mastering the technicalities, he outshone his fellows, and was rapidly promoted to Group Captain.

'My theory is that his problem was dyslexia. That word and the nature of this handicap were unknown then, but we now know that it can afflict highly intelligent people. Can anyone throw any light on this? How stupid did he appear in 1926–32? Or was it a monster hoax on my father?'

The Autumn 1988 OF Magazine contained the following additional information on Pickard :

GP. CAPT. P. C. PICKARD DSO, DFC, Dec'd (26–32)—was featured in a *Daily Telegraph* obituary of René Massigli, the doyen of Anglo-French diplomacy, who died in February 1988. I quote:

'Eventually Massigli was lifted out of France in January 1943 by Group Captain Charles Pickard of the RAF's No. 161 Squadron, one of the two renowned "Moon Squadrons" flying for the clandestine Special Operations Executive.

Although he had recently broken his wrist (following a crash landing from the mess ceiling during a New Year party), Pickard managed to pick up two unnamed passengers at 0315 hours from a field at Issoudun, 70 miles due south of Orleans.

Short of fuel on the return flight, Pickard made an emergency landing in Cornwall, where, to his surprise, one grateful passenger signed his name on the plaster cast which protected his wrist. He recognised it as that of René Massigli.

A few days later Pickard was killed in the celebrated "Operation Jericho", the low-level attack which breached the walls of Amiens jail and enabled Resistance men awaiting execution by the Nazis to escape. Massigli deeply mourned his rescuer's fate.

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I am indebted to Nicholas Watkis, son of **Jack Reginald Watkis (29-33)** for the following pictures of Pickard.

This first one is a rare photo of Pickard whilst at the College, taken by Jack Watkis and Pickard is at the back on the right.

[Since this photo was first included, we have been contacted by Ken Addison to say that the man in the front with glasses was his father, Rex Archibald Addison (27-30). Ken says he had a long and interesting career after leaving Framlingham, ending up working at AWE Aldermaston. He died in Reading on 18 August 1983.]

The other picture below is the last taken of him, shortly before he took off on the raid to Amien Jail in February 1944 :

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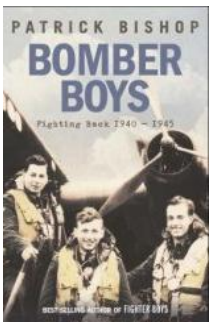
Michael Evans (S45-48) has been in touch to say that he's just finished reading Patrick Bishop's highly acclaimed new biography "Bomber Boy" which features Pickard. He quotes as follows re the Amiens prison raid led by Pickard :-

"Percy Pickard, the seemingly imperturbable, pipe smoking star of "Target for tonight" survived seventy bombing trips & numerous missions dropping agents into France before being given command of 140 wing. Made up of three Mosquito squadrons tasked with low-level daylight bombing. It was an unfortunate appointment. Night bombing was very different from precision daylight raiding and Pickard was it appeared to those around him, worn out. Charles Patterson who flew with him, regarded him as a splendid character "but it was quite plain to me he should not have been allowed to go on".

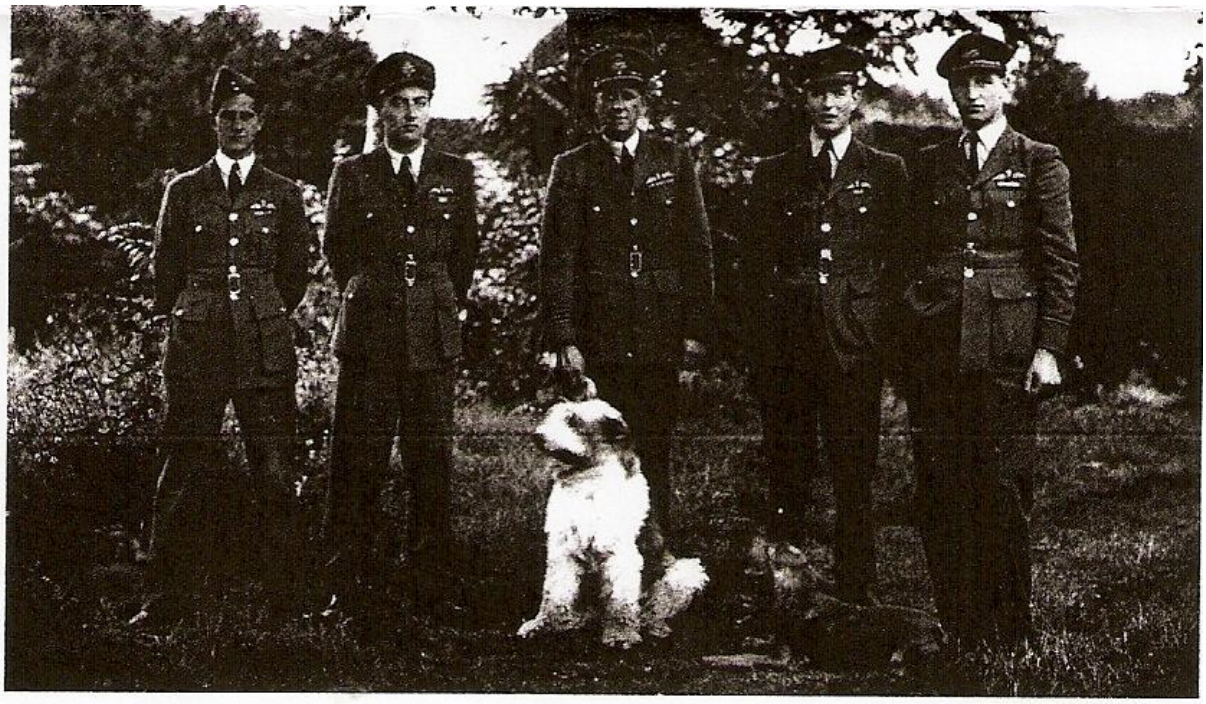
Pickard's fame was such that senior French resistance leaders requested that Pickard should lead operation "Jericho". Air Vice Marshal Basil Embry, who liked taking risks himself (often flying as W/Com Smith) and was not averse to ignoring the rule book, agreed to Pickard's request to lead the raid. The raid was a success, but Pickard whilst circling the target to make sure the walls had been breached was shot down and killed together with his navigator Bill Broadley"



"Bomber Boys" is an excellent read which I heartily recommend to all interested in the wartime history of the RAF."

James Ruddock-Broyd (G46-52) has just been reading "Spy Capital of Britain" by Stephen Bunker and came across the following reference to Pickard and a photo :-

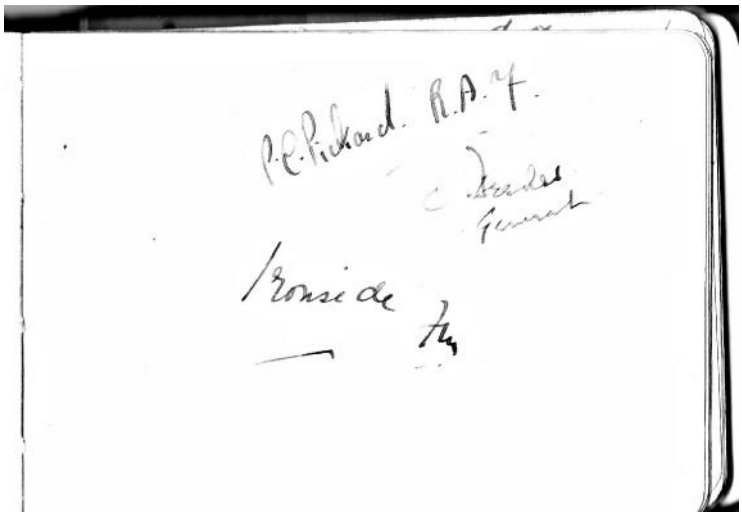
In truth, the pressure of the war took a toll upon men who were far younger than they appear in contemporary photographs. Hugh Verity recalled meeting his Commanding Officer, Wing Commander Charles. Pickard: 'a big man, rather heavily built, with a pointed nose and very fair hair. He smoked a pipe … He was still in his twenties but he seemed ten years older. One got the impression that he was driving himself hard and burning himself up.'[254] An outstanding leader of 161 Squadron, in succession to 'Mousie' Fielden, 'Pick' was dead at twenty eight.



Five of 161 Squadron's remarkable pilots. From left to right: J. A. McCairns; Hugh Verity; P. C. Pickard; Peter Vaughan-Fowler; Frank 'Bunny' Rymills. The dogs in the foreground are Pickard's sheepdog 'Ming' and Rymill's spaniel 'Henry' *(Imperial War Museum, HU60542)*.

The Daily Telegraph on 12 March 2009 carried an obituary for Squadron Leader Tom McPhee, who also took part in the Amiens raid. Reference is made to Pickard and it states that "A post war analysis of the operation concluded : "The attack on Amiens prison will remain one of the RAFs epics" – see
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/4974874/Squadron-Leader-Tom-McPhee.html

John Craske (K39-46) has managed to dig out this fascinating autograph of Pickard's, which is on the same page as that of Field Marshall Lord Ironside GCB CMG CBE DSO



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On 23 June 2012 a new memorial will be dedicated to Pickard, Broadley and others at Hunsdon Airfield near Bishop Stortford – see Hertfordshire Airfields Memorial Group website at http://hamg.co.uk

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the raid on Amiens jail led by **Group Captain Percy Pickard DSO** DFC (G26-32)**, **Patrick Taylor (K43-46)** generously donating to the College an original painting of that historic event (see page 16 above). This painting measures approximately 4 feet by 5 feet and is an oil, commissioned by Patrick himself, and painted by Graham Coton. Its excellent detail is attributed to the fact that the artist was a pilot. There was a formal presentation in the Chapel on 11 February 2014 followed by a short unveiling ceremony in the College library afterwards, that was attended by Patrick, the Headmaster and a number of OFs. There are also personal connotations to this story as Patrick remembers sitting at a desk with Pickard's name carved on it, and also remembers Pickard's visit when he came to talk to members of the College. Patrick has also donating his copy of the film *"Target for Tonight"*, videos of 2 TV films on Amiens and a recent book about the controversy of the raid.

On the next page are some of the photos taken at this event.

The following is **Bill Collard (S55-58**) report on the 70th anniversary memorial service held at Hunsdon Airfield on Sunday 16 February 2014.

Each year the kind people of the small Essex village of Hunsdon remember the three airmen lost during the famous raid on Amiens Prison.

After the wettest winter on record, the morning of Sunday 16th February 2014 dawned bright and sunny with not a cloud in the sky. I had been warned in advance that the trip to the airfield memorial sight along what remains of the old runway was tortuous, with many deep pot holes and so it was! Andrew Payn and myself had kindly been invited to the service by the Chairman of the Parish Council, David Gibbs, who was expecting about 25 people. As my car limped along the flooded roadway I was somewhat surprised to pass many families with young children and soon realised that David had totally underestimated the numbers. I would guess that at least 100 people gathered around the wonderful airfield memorial, erected by volunteers from the Hertford Airfields Memorial Group in 2005.

At 11.45am, the Reverend David Scott (Reader, St Albans Diocese) welcomed everybody and asked us to follow the printed Order of Service. The memorial was flanked by flag bearers from the local British Legion and the Nazeing and Broxbourne Royal Air Force Association. A large gathering of ATC cadets were in attendance from 309 Squadron Sawbridgeworth and 1239 Squadron Broxbourne & Hoddesdon. My attachment shows the two flags being flown at the site. The RAF flag and the New Zealand flag. It had been decided to give the event a slight New Zealand flavour to honour F/Lt Richard ' Dick' Sampson RNZAF, killed by flak while on his way back from the Prison and not mentioned so often as Pickard and Broadley.

The Names of the fallen were read out by Mr Denis Sharp from Hertford Airfields Memorial Group.

Flight Lieutenant Richard Webb Sampson.
Flight Lieutenant John Alan Broadley DSO DFC DFM
*Group Captain Charles Percy Pickard DSO** DFC*

Five wreathes were laid and the last post sounded followed by a two minute silence.

Excitement then mounted as it had been indicated that an aircraft of a suitable vintage would perform a flypast. Fingers started to point as the experts spotted a dot on the horizon. Suddenly, a WW2 Hawker Hurricane11b came screaming in and performed miraculous aerobatics. I found out that the plane was operated and flown by Peter Teichman from the Hanger 11 collection and based at the nearby North Weald airfield. Later Andrew Payn kindly contacted Peter and thanked him for his stunning display and explained the Framlingham link.

We all then adjourned to the local village hall for tea and sandwices. Much interesting memorabilia was on display including a showing of the film shot by the RAF Film Production Unit which accompanied the raid. A wonderful day with new friendships made.

On 70th anniversary of the raid, 18 February 2014, *The* Times published the following story about a new book that suggests a very contrary view on the objective/purpose of the raid.

Daring air raid was really a plot 'to fool Nazis'

Simon de Bruxelles

A daring low-level air raid on a French prison exactly 70 years ago today was part of an elaborate plot to mislead the Germans about the location of the D-Day landings, a new book claims.

The raid on the prison at Amiens, which was codenamed Operation Jericho, became one of the most celebrated RAF missions of the Second World War despite killing 102 French civilians.

At the time, the War Office stated that the raid was ordered because the Gestapo were planning to execute 120 captured members of the French Resistance being held in the prison.

The pilot Percy Pickard and navigator John Broadley both died in the raid

However, research by the author Jean-Pierre Ducellier has found no evidence of impending executions and revealed that the vast majority of inmates were petty thieves and criminals, not members of the Resistance. He believes the raid by high-speed Mosquito fighter bombers was part of Operation Fortitude, the plan to convince Hitler that the Allies were planning to invade Europe via the Pas-de-Calais.

Shortly after the raid, stories were spread in France that it had been carried out to stop the Gestapo questioning a captured secret agent who knew the date of the invasion. Dr Ducellier had been researching the background to the raid since working as a GP to elderly former Resistance fighters in the Amiens area.

Simon Parry, the book's British editor, said: "Amiens was an ordinary prison. There were pickpockets and petty thieves there. If the Germans had bombed Wormwood Scrubs and killed 100 inmates, the Brits would ask themselves 'Why?'.

"Part of the plan was to feed misinformation to the Germans as to where the D-Day landings were going to be. Amiens was in the area where the Germans were convinced D-Day was going to take place, near the Pas-de-Calais.

"Of course, the British couldn't declare they had been prepared to sacrifice the lives of 100 French men, so they fed this idea they were saving the lives of the French Resistance."

In the book, Dr Ducellier says the story that an agent with knowledge of D-Day was in the prison could only have been put about to dupe the Germans.

He said: "It is highly improbable, given the level of security surrounding the planning for D-Day, that anyone with highly classified knowledge would have been placed in a position where he might risk capture.

"Furthermore, the exact date of D-Day had not been decided at the time of the Amiens raid.

"However, if German intelligence officers could be convinced that someone in the prison did have that knowledge, it would suit the aims of the British very well."

The 18 Mosquitos were led by Group Captain Percy Pickard DSO DFC.

His aircraft was shot down by a Focke-Wulf 190 fighter, killing him and his navigator, Flight Lieutenant John Broadley.

The Amiens Raid Secrets Revealed is published by Red Kite.

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Below is a family photo provided by Michael Woods, his nephew.

Pickard Family Members

Back Row, left to right.

1. Person not known
2. Lady Hardwicke, nee Helena Pickard, sister of Charles Pickard
3. Dorothy Pickard, wife of Charles Pickard
4. Dr. Leonard Woods, husband of Marjorie Pickard (my father)
5. Nancy Tibbitt, nee Pickard, sister of Charles Pickard
6. Frank Pickard, distant cousin of Charles Pickard

Front Row, left to right.

1. Norah Pickard, nee Chapman, wife of Walter Pickard
2. Group Captain Walter Pickard OBE, brother of Charles Pickard
3. Jenny Pickard, mother of Charles Pickard
4. Sir Cedric Hardwicke, husband of Helena Pickard
5. Marjorie Woods, nee Pickard, sister of Charles Pickard (my mother)
6. Person not known

The following 2 pages are taken from Michael Ashcroft's book *Heroes of the Skies* and these clearly show that Pickard's medals are now in the ownership of Ashcroft, but we are currently unclear whether they may be on display.

had been awarded to Roderick 'Babe' Learoyd for bravery during a pinpoint bombing raid over Germany in August 1940.

I only started to build up a collection of medals for gallantry in the air in the autumn of 1990. On 15 September, Sotheby's held a special aeronautical sale at the RAF Museum, Hendon, north-west London. The catalogue contained the decoration that had been awarded to William Rhodes-Moorhouse, the first ever VC awarded for action in the air. Among many other flying groups included in the same catalogue were a number of items which also took my fancy, namely 'Ginger' Lacey's Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM) and Bar, 'Pick' Pickard's Distinguished Service Order (DSO) and two Bars, and Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC), along with the DFMs to William Rich and Walter Ellis who had both flown with Learoyd on his VC mission, and the Military Cross (MC) to Sydney Dowse who had become a prisoner of war (PoW) and one of the men involved in the 'Great Escape'. Eventually, I bought all these medals and this set the ball rolling. After that sale, I was constantly on the lookout for outstanding flying gallantry groups, particularly those relating to the Battle of Britain and the 'Dambusters' raid. Today I own more than eighty groups of medals for gallantry in the air, including twelve VCs.

In 2009, I became involved in the appeal to have a permanent Bomber Command Memorial erected in Green Park, central London. I donated a substantial amount – more than £1 million – because I wanted to right a wrong. Rarely, if ever, can any group of servicemen have been more deserving of a memorial to their courage and self-sacrifice than members of RAF Bomber Command. I felt that a new monument would be a fitting tribute to men who helped to shape the world we live in but whose bravery, until now, has not been properly recognised.

Bomber Command consisted of some 125,000 volunteers from Britain, the Commonwealth and Allied countries who had to endure some of the most terrifying combat conditions of the Second World War. Indeed, Bomber Command was the

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that it was now or never: so, too, the nineteen crews (including a photographic unit that was to record the results of the operation from the air). Snow fell the next morning but the raid went ahead regardless. Pickard ended his briefing with the words: 'It's a death or glory job, boys.' After take-off, four aircraft became separated from the main party in the white-out conditions and shortly afterwards, as the Mosquitos linked up with their fighter escort, two of them nearly collided. But as the Operation Jericho team flew over the Channel they were soon in bright sunshine. As they made for their target, they flew at just fifteen feet above the Albert–Amiens road that led to the prison. Brilliant flying skills meant the attack was successful but, as Pickard ordered everyone to head for home, a 464 Mosquito flown by Squadron Leader A. I. McRitchie was hit by flak, instantly killing the navigator, Flight Lieutenant R. W. Sampson. The pilot made a forced landing on French soil and was taken prisoner. Pickard and Broadley were circling over the wreckage, almost certainly to assess if there were any survivors, when 'F-for-Freddie' was suddenly attacked by a Fw 190 fighter. The Mosquito's tail section was shot away by the first burst of fire, causing it to flip on to its back, dive into the ground and explode on impact. The seemingly invincible duo were killed: Pickard was twenty-eight, Broadley twenty-three. Pickard's pilot's 'wings' and medal ribbons were, in fact, taken off his battle dress by a young French girl who found his body and they were returned to his widow after the war. Ming, his dog, was said to be inconsolable.

I purchased Pickard's gallantry and service medals at auction along with various documents and memorabilia, including his pilot's logbooks. The last entry for 18 February 1944 stated: 'Operations, Special Target, Nr Amiens, Missing'. A later stamp recorded: 'Killed in Action'. I subsequently purchased Broadley's gallantry and service medals privately along with his logbook, photographs and various documents. It is thoroughly appropriate that the decorations of these two heroes, who flew

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The following article appeared in the January 2015 edition of the Royal Air Force Association Newsletter – Lyon Branch. **Brian Rosen (S40-46)** is the editor and the article was written by **Bill Collard (S55-58**)

Amiens prison raid

On the 18th February 1944, nineteen Mosquito Mk VI fighter- bombers of 140 wing, 2nd Tactical Air Force, took off from RAF Hunsdon in Hertfordshire on a top secret mission to bomb Amiens prison at low level and set free members of the local resistance. To this day the raid is still surrounded in mystery with important documents apparently missing from the official archives. What is certain is that three Mosquitos failed to reach their target because of engine troubles and two were later shot down. Also the planned fighter escort cover was almost non-existent due to deplorable weather conditions and apparent poor communications. Among the fatalities that day was the leader of the operation, Group Captain PC Pickard DSO and two bars, DFC, and his long time navigator Alan Broadley DSO, DFC, DFM.

By 1944 Pickard was one of the best known allied pilots and was the first RAF officer to be awarded three DSOs in the Second World War. A few years earlier he had a starring role in the very successful propaganda documentary film Target for Tonight that brought him into the public eye and was shown in cinemas throughout Britain and America. In October 1942, the then Wing Commander Pickard assumed command of No 161 Squadron based at RAF Tempsford. This very secretive airfield was used as a centre for clandestine operations into France, Norway, Holland and other countries during the years 1942 – 1945. The highly manoeuvrable single engine Lysander aircraft, that could land in little more than forty yards, took in SOE agents and saboteurs. It was essential for the pilots to find the torch lit landing strips, signal to the resistance ground control, drop the agents and pick up returning passengers in just a few minutes. Pickard seemed to relish these dangerous challenges and soon became well acquainted with the local French resistance personnel and agents. When ever possible, operations were carried out during a period of the full moon to give the pilots the best possible navigation

aids. Pilots and crews were known as 'Moon Men'.

Pickard led by example and continued flying even with his arm in plaster after breaking his thumb. On one occasion in January 1943 his landing in France was delayed and he had to circle while awaiting the correct ground signals. He knew that a special VIP needed to be picked up. Pickard eventually completed the mission with his fuel gauge showing zero. Neither of his French passengers was aware of the drama but both were happy to sign his plaster cast. One was Monsieur Rene Massigni who was soon to be appointed French Ambassador to London by General de Gaulle.

The night of February 24th/25th presented deplorable flying conditions with sleet, snow and fog grounding most of Bomber Command. However, Pickard put himself forward for a long and hazardous mission to Tournus / Cuisery, this time flying a larger twin engine Lockheed Hudson. After a flight of over three hours the target area was reached but the weather was appalling and Pickard made around twenty attempts to get the aircraft down.
To add to the problems his aircraft got bogged down in mud at the end of the runway. The plane was stranded for over two hours with seven very important agents awaiting their flight back to England. Members of the resistance and local villagers had to dig out the plane until the moment when Pickard judged it would be safe to leave; even so he still managed to hit a tree on the way out.
Miraculously, the local Gestapo had been oblivious to all the noise from the circling plane. It was almost daylight as they flew back over France so Pickard asked for fighter protection but it did not arrive.

This successful operation with all its many problems and dangers brought Pickard his third DSO and a special letter of commendation from Louis Mountbatten. Having completed over 100 sorties Pickard was ordered to take a rest, so in May 1943 he reluctantly relinquished command of 160 squadron. Frustration soon set in because of his lack of operational flying but by the summer of 1943 he had talked his way back and was soon being familiarised on the Mosquito MK VI with 140 wing.

Much has been written about the Amiens prison raid and the death of its celebrated leader. The operation was planned with meticulous precision and was a great success. The official Air Ministry report at the time hailed it as 'An Epic RAF Operation'. Late in 1944

Pickard's name was put forward for the supreme award of the Victoria Cross. It seems it was debated for some time without agreement – such an award must be a unanimous decision. It was Pickard's commanding officer, AVM Embry's lone opinion that the raid was nothing special and did not warrant the award of the VC, even though he was party to the official report. This stated that 'tragic though Group Captain Pickard's loss is, there is consolation in the knowledge that it occurred while he was leading probably the most successful operation of his gallant and brilliant career'. The report finished by saying that the execution of the raid was 'one of the most memorable achievements of the Royal Air Force'.

Unbeknown to the British authorities, the French had heard about a possible VC and added the initials to Pickard's grave at St Pierre Cemetery in Amiens. Subsequently, Pickard's widow, Dorothy, was instructed by the UK Air Ministry to travel to France and have the wording removed. Some time later Dorothy received information from the French government that her late husband had been posthumously awarded the Legion d'Honneur and the Croix de Guerre. Rather surprisingly, the UK authorities refused to ratify the decorations saying that they were unable to accept posthumous awards from foreign governments. A double rebuff for Mrs Pickard.

The Pickard family and friends are now contacting the appropriate authorities in England and France and asking that a review be given to the overdue award of Pickard's French decorations, especially as recent investigations appear to show that posthumous foreign awards were being accepted during WW2.

William Collard

Editor's note

'Percy' Pickard was a pupil at Framlingham College from 1926 to 1932 and was just one of 88 pupils from the College who lost their lives during WW2. I was at 'Fram' from 1940 - 46 and we were marched down to the local cinema to see 'Target for tonight'. Soon after we were surprised and excited when the school was 'buzzed' by an RAF 'plane which than landed at the local USAAF base. Our hero had arrived and at the school he gave us an enthralling talk about Bomber Command. William Collard, who wrote the above article was also a pupil at Framlingham from '55-'58 (His father, who served as a Colonel in the Royal Engineers during the war, was also at Framlingham at the same time as Pickard.) William's research has the full backing of the Pickard family. Perhaps someone who reads the article might have information relating to the Amiens prison raid or the subsequent medal confusion? We would be very interested to hear from them.

Brian Rosen

As a result of the above article, Brian Rosen contacted France's English-Language Newspaper "*The Connexion"* and on 27 February 2015 they have published the following story to tie in with a TV programme that night on French *RMC* .

"*Bid to honour British flying ace*

RELATIVES and family friends of a Second World War flying ace are trying to overturn a 65-year-old British decision to refuse him honours that the French wanted to award posthumously.

Group Captain Percy Charles Pickard, who died leading an air raid in occupied France that is the subject of a French television documentary tonight, was to be honoured with a posthumous Légion d'Honneur and Croix de Guerre, but the British government refused.

'Operation Jericho' was a Royal Air Force bombing raid aimed at smashing open Amiens prison, where captured members of the French Resistance were being held.

Pickard died when his plane was shot down by a German fighter at the end of the operation, which was later hailed as 'one of the most memorable achievements of the RAF' in a British official report, according to family friend William Collard, who has researched Pickard's life and the controversy over his awards.

The pilot is known to have been considered for the highest military honour, the Victoria Cross, and the French even put 'VC' on his gravestone in Amiens. However it later had to be removed after officials were unable to agree.

Now the Pickard family have shown Connexion proof that the French government wanted to award him two French honours in thanks for what the French consul in Rhodesia told his widow in a letter was his 'very brilliant conduct in the last war'.

The letter adds: "I am very sorry that my efforts to have a posthumous French reward given... have been unsuccessful on account of the British Government's decision not to allow any English officer to receive a posthumous foreign distinction.

"I want you to know that the Secretary of State for Aviation had decided to give Group Captain Pickard the Légion d'Honneur and the War Cross with Palm."

The Pickard family and friends have been in contact with authorities on both sides of the Channel and say they are hopeful the decision will be reviewed, especially as, they say, they have found evidence that some officers did receive posthumous foreign awards, so the rule appears not to have been applied consistently.

Pickard's nephew, Michael Woods, who lives near Guildford, said: "We have two letters from French authorities which confirm the awards, including the one from the consul in Rhodesia, where my aunt had moved at the end of the war, but it seems the British government had this policy of interfering in foreign awards at that time, during and at the end of the war.

"But William has now found that an awful lot of people were given foreign awards posthumously – he has found at least 10 but thinks he could have gone on and on, finding more."

He added: "Apart from Operation Jericho, I think the French were especially interested in giving him the awards for having played a very big part in the Special Operations Executive [Second World War secret service], which was bringing French agents in and out of France in the dead of night. He was constantly flying in, dropping them off and picking them up."

Connexion has asked the Foreign Office to check further into the policy of refusing posthumous foreign awards. A spokesman said the query is being dealt with by their honours section.

L'évasion de Jéricho, about the Amiens prison raid, is on tonight at 20.45 on the HD digital channel RMC Découverte"

RAF Log Books

Thanks to the kind permission of 'Lord Ashcroft and the Ashcroft Medal Collection', **Bill Collard (S55-58)** and **James Ruddock-Broyd (G46 – 52)** have been able to research and photograph the three RAF log books that once belonged to Pickard.

Some fascinating information and facts have been found including the exact date of Pickard's visit to the college in WW2. Some mystery has always surrounded this trip with alleged records of Pickard flying into the nearby USAAF base in a US bomber or buzzing the college in his Tiger Moth. In fact he arrived at Parham airfield during the afternoon of 19th November 1943 flying his famous 'F for Freddie' Mosquito in which he would tragically loose his life some three months later. 'Pick' went to the College to address the

Boys with "a most interesting and unvarnished account of his experiences delivered in a notably human and intimate style and of absorbing interest".

In December 1943 one of Pickard's passengers in 'F' was noted as W/C Cheshire later to be Group Captain Cheshire VC DSO** DFC. On this day the two friends were practising air firing in preparation for Cheshire's move into Mosquitos. Pickard also flew with W/C Hodges who later became Air Chief Marshal Sir Lewis Hodges.

The records show that Pickard flew nearly 2200 hours during his RAF career in 41 different aircraft and carried out bombing raids and clandestine operations against the enemy on 103 occasions.

As a result of this research, James has put together the following on his flight log. His yardsticks were a first in a series of flights or planes, particularly those with Navigator Broadley, a named important personage carried on board or a destination of interest to OF readers including of course the flight to Parham. All missions and rescues are noted. The varying destinations of 103 Missions undertaken, mostly titled "War Operations" are too numerous to record individually so they have been grouped by months showing once the name of a target town which may have been targeted more than once. Some "Special Ops" were recorded and when names like Tempsford, Tangmere, Lysander and "reception" are used it is operations for the secret Special Operations Executive which arranged "drops" of Agents behind enemy lines, all in France in this case.

GROUP CAPTAIN P C PICKARD DSO & 2 BARS DFC & CZECH WAR CROSS

RAF PILOTS FLYING LOG BOOKS - FORM 414 No 39392

Certificates of Qualification as First Pilot

EXTRACTS - where repeat names appear extract is usually of first entry of that name

BOOK ONE - P C Pickard - Dated 5 April 1938 - Months in varied order

DATE	TIME	AIRCRAFT	A/C NO	PILOT/CREW	DUTY
1936					
Nov-16		DH82		Walker	SECOND PILOT Self 1 Passenger flying
Dec-14		DH82		Self	
1938					
May-23	1550			Self - P/O	
Nov-14	1130	Oxford	K4369	Self	Admiral England

TOTAL FOR BOOK : Record of Service 10 Units; Aircraft 17

BOOK TWO - G/Capt P C Pickard DSO DFC - Dated 5 April 1938

1938					
Dec-01	1200	Wallis	K6321	Self	Revd Woosnam-Jones Cranwell Northolt
1939					
Apr-01	1400	Wallis	K4937	Self	A/C Gibbons Cross country Wireless practice
Jun-03	1115	Mentor	L4482	Self	Rev W-J Cranwell to Biggin Hill
Jun-29	1220	Mentor	L4482	Self	W/C Russell Henlow - Cranwell
Aug-29	1130	Harvard	N7100	Self	W/C Jagoe Mildenhall Feltwell
	1210				Feltwell Mildenhall
(Sept 2 & 3)					(No flights recorded)
1940					
Feb-04	1130	Hampden	L4138	Self	Wilson Brighams Lenvil Air firing beam attack
Mar-04	1050	Hampden	L4160	Self	4 Crew Weston - Porthcawl
Mar-04	1445	Hampden	L4138	Self	Barden Mandale & Beattie Sea firing
Mar-06	1200	Hampden	L4138	Self	Sgt Shewry High Level Bombing
Mar-07	1015	Hampden	L4140	Self	Sgt Lloyd Low Level Bombing
Apr-10	1030	Hampden	L4190	F/O Pickard	P/O Walker S C Sawyer Self Sgt Sheen Submarine bombing (two 250 lbs)
Apr-17	2125	Wellington	G4295	SACH P/O	2nd P - Self Formation to 15000 ft
Apr-15	1510	Wellington	L2326	Self	1 Crew Stradishall - Honnington
Apr-23	2030	Wellington	P9274	Self & 3	War Op Stavanger (Recalled)
Apr-25	2225	Wellington	P9274	Self & 4	War Op Stavanger Bombed shipping
Apr-29	2100	Wellington	P9275	Self & 4	Sgt Broadley War Op Sylt Security Patrol
May-07	1000	Wellington	P9280	Self	Heyford Malvern Stradishall
May mth					War Ops inc: Borkum Sylt Rotterdam Aachen NW Ghent S Brussels Chaleroi Havesbrouck Arlburg
June mth					War Ops inc Bexpoede Rhur Flaves Siossons Genoa Milan Black Forest
July mth					War Ops inc: Gotha Wilhewshoen Hamburg Leewarden
Nov-15	1230	Wellington	N2577	Self & 3	Search & circling dinghy Crew resuced at 1845
Nov-16	1315		N2577	Self & 5 crew	Search for dinghy
Dec					War Ops inc Boulogne Mannheim Ostebd Bremen

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mth					
					Gelsenkirshen
1941					
Jan-18	1030	Wellington		Self & 4	Dinghy Search Fighter Escort
Apr-18	1000	Wellington		Self & 3	Dinghy search Located No crew Also 2 parachutes
					Fighter Escort
May-27	700	Wellington		Self & 3	Operational Sweep Formation Leader
					Search & Prince Eugen
June mth					War Ops inc Dusseldorf Brest Prince Eugen
July mth					War Ops inc Essen Cologne Munster
Dec-07	1700	Whitley		Self & 3	St Nazaire
1942		Whitley			
Feb-27	2215	Whitley		Self & 5	Paratroop Raid 73 Bruneval 10 Paratroops
Jun-19	1600	Whitley		Self & crew	Dropping Americans
Sep-08	610	Whitley		Self & 4	Anti Submarine patrol Spanish coast
Sep-11	645	Whitley		Self & 3	Anti submarine patrol - FW Courier sighted
Sep-24	600	Whitley		Self & 3	Anti U boat Patrol Spanish coast
Oct-28	1530	Lysander	"F"	Self	1 Passenger Tangmere Tempsford

TOTAL FOR BOOK Record of Service 12 Units; Aircraft flown 39

BOOK THREE Pickard P C W/CDR
Stamped "Central Depository Aug 1946 RAF Killed in Action"

1943					
Jan-26	1530	Lysander		Self & 2 crew	To Tangmere
Feb-13	2030	Hudson		Self & 2 crew	6 passengers Spec Op (Successful) 5 Out Mail in
Feb-20	700	Hudson		Self Taylor Figg	1 Passenger Spec Op (Successful) 6 home 1 out
Feb-25	1100	Hudson		Self & 7 crew	Air Test to Newmarket
Feb-25	2230			Self	Taylor Figg Dutt Spec Ops (Successful) 7 home
					(stuck 2 Hrs) Hit trees on take off A/c damaged
Apr-05	2345	Halifax		P/O Foster	2nd P Self Special Ops 2 successful
Apr-16	2200	Lysander		Self	2 passengers unsuccessful reception not there
Apr-19	1500	Hudson		Self	Bridger Broadley Cocker Tangmere Base
Aug-01	1000	Mosquito	M	Self & 2nd P Bowen	Local
Aug-05	1050	Mosquito		Self	2nd P W/C Hodges Local landings (one engine)
Sep-17	1520	Mosquito		Self	1 passenger Low Level Bombing
Sep-28	1130	Mosquito	"F"	Self & Dupont	Local

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Sep-28	1500	Mosquito		Self & Tatnall	
Oct-03	1245	Mosquito	F	Self & Broadley	Operation (Power Works) Pont Chateau (Successful) Starboard engine seized , caught fire after bombing Land Pvedamuk one engine after 370 miles 5 A/c Flak damage; engine hit by flak
Nov-19	1600	Mosquito	F	Self	F/Lt Fowler TO PARHAM
Dec-01	1345	Mosquito	F	Self & Broadley	War Ops Low Level Cleve NW Germany successful attacked barges Rhine A/c damaged
Dec-19	1200	Mosquito	F	Self & W/C Cheshire & F/O Kelly	Local flying and air firing
Dec-21	830	Mosquito	F	Self & Broadley	War Ops against target near Dieppe abandoned
Dec-22	850	Mosquito	F	Self & Broadley	War Op (Shallow dive) Leader of 40 A/c Successful St Nicholas - D'aliermont
Dec-23	1445	Mosquito	F	Self & Broadley	War Ops (low level) St Nicholas - D'aliermont
1944					
Jan-28	1110	Mosquito	F	Self & Broadley	War Op Northern France Shallow dive successful
Jan-30	1108	Mosquito	F	Self & Atcherley	War Op Northern France low level successful
Feb-03	1400	Mosquito	F	Self & Broadley	TO HUNSDON
Feb-18		MOSQUITO	F	G/c Pickard F/t Broadley	OPERATION SPECIAL TARGET Nr AMIENS MISSING (Flying time col): "?"

TOTAL FOR BOOK Record of Service 3 Units Aircraft 2

GRAND TOTAL	DUAL	72.55		
	PILOT	1898.25	plus 2.1	last sheet
	S. PILOT	120.55		
			2074.25	
	Passenger	66.55		

Signed RL Reynolds W/C Flying
RAF Station Hunsdon
Date: March 5 1944

Compiled by James Ruddock-Broyd (G46-52) on 24 April 2015 with kind permission of Lord Ashcroft and the Ashcroft Medal Collection with asssistance from William Collard (S55-58)

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