

**The Forgotten Career of Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, 1892-1937: A
Social and Cultural History of Leadership Development in the Inter-War Royal Air
Force**

By

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Abstract

This thesis examines how an officer with so many perceived detractors reached senior leadership positions in the Royal Air Force of the Second World War; that officer is Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory. Utilising prosopography as a methodology, and grounded in an understanding of leadership theory, though recognising the limitations of applying modern language to historical analysis, this thesis surveys the development processes used by the RAF to nurture officers for senior positions. Furthermore, this thesis argues that the RAF, bounded by the Service's culture and ethos, took an interest in the leadership development of its officer class as it had a stake in producing able leaders capable of defending its independence. This was done through modern conceptions, such as socialisation, job assignments, action learning and nurturing. These concepts formed the basis of nurtured officers shared experiences, and this thesis illustrates how Leigh-Mallory was representative of the type of officer the RAF wanted to lead the Service. The experiences outlined in this thesis focus on training, education and job assignments, which included aspects, such as the importance of Staff College attendance, command experience and staff duties. Participation in these key shared experiences made officers such as Leigh-Mallory 'visible' to those able to further nurture officers careers while giving them the knowledge required to lead at the senior level. By understanding the culture and context of the development of the senior leadership of the RAF of the Second World War, this thesis now allows for a more considered understanding of the effectiveness of officers such as Leigh-Mallory during that conflict.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my niece and nephew, Emilie and Robert, who have put up with an absent Uncle while he has written it. I hope that they will one day get some use out of it, even if it is just an Uncle walking them around the Royal Air Force Museum and giving them a discussion on the aircraft and their history.

Acknowledgements

This thesis owes its origins to a remark made by my then MPhil supervisor, Professor Gary Sheffield. Gary commented that given the subject of that work – the role of the RAF during Operation JUBILEE, the raid on Dieppe in August 1942 – that its air commander, the future Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, seemed an opportune subject for academic study. I would also like to thank him for his constant encouragement and friendship, and most importantly for suggesting that I work with my supervisor, Air Commodore (ret'd) Dr Peter Gray. Any attempt to quantify my gratitude to Peter would be a poor substitute for the support and faith he has shown in my work and in me. Nevertheless, Peter's supervision and friendship has constantly encouraged me to explore ideas and avenues of research that have often yielded valuable results. Peter has even supported my need to give numerous conference papers when I should have been writing. *Mae culpa*. Peter's encouragement led this thesis to its current form, when, in April 2012, I lamented that I had not started writing about Leigh-Mallory's Second World War career despite having produced more than half the thesis in its then state. Peter's simple reply was, 'Is that such a problem?' It clearly was not, and, with any luck, the completed thesis is representative of Peter's belief in the subject matter and in me. Peter has been a true *Docktorvater*.

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Abbreviations

N.B All rank abbreviations are derived from *The Air Force List* of March 1939.

ADGB	Air Defence of Great Britain	CWN, C	Chevalier of the Order of the Crown, Belgium
AC	Air Commodore	CWN, O	Officer of the Order of the Crown, Belgium
ACM	Air Chief Marshal	DCAS	Deputy Chief of the Air Staff
AEAF	Allied Expeditionary Air Force	DDefS	Director of Defence Studies (RAF)
AFC	Air Force Cross	DDSD	Deputy Director of Staff Duties
<i>AFL</i>	<i>The Air Force List</i>	DFC	Distinguished Flying Cross
<i>AFS</i>	<i>Armed Forces and Society</i>	DNE	Director of Naval Education
AHB	Air Historical Branch	DoP	Director of Personnel
AM	Air Marshal	DOI	Director of Operations and Intelligence
AMP	Air Member for Personnel	DOSD	Director of Organisation and Staff Duties
AMSR	Air Member for Supply and Research	DoT	Director of Training
AMWO	Air Ministry Weekly Orders	DS	Directing Staff
Air C-in-C	Air Commander in Chief	DSC	Distinguished Service Cross
AOC	Air Officer Commanding	DSM (US)	Distinguished Service Medal, US
AOC-in-C	Air Officer Commander-in-Chief	DSO	Distinguished Service Order
AP	Air Publications	EMF	Experimental Mechanized Force
ASC	Army Service Corps	FL	Flight Lieutenant
ASM	Air Staff Memorandum	<i>FSR I</i>	<i>Field Service Regulations Part I - Operations</i>
AVM	Air Vice-Marshal	GD	General Duties Branch
<i>BDD</i>	<i>British Defence Doctrine, Joint Doctrine Publication 0-01</i>	GC	Group Captain
<i>BJS</i>	<i>British Journal of Sociology</i>	GI-O	Officer of the Royal Order of George I, Greece
CAS	Chief of the Air Staff	GOC	General Officer Commanding
CB	Companion of the Order of the Bath	IDC	Imperial Defence College
CdeG (B)	Croix de Guerre, Belgium	<i>JCH</i>	<i>Journal of Contemporary History</i>
CdeG (F)	Croix de Guerre, France	<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Military History</i>
CdeG (P)	Croix de Guerre with Palms, France	<i>JRUSI</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal United Services Institution</i>
CFS	Central Flying School	JSCSC	Joint Services Command and Staff College, Shrivenham
CID	Committee of Imperial Defence	<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Strategic Studies</i>
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff	KBE	Knight of the Order of the British Empire
CME	Council for Military Education	KCB	Knight of the Order of the Bath
CMG	Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George		
COS	Chief of Staff		
CVO	Commander of the Royal Victorian Order		

LHCMA	Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College London	SMMV	Silver Medal for Military Valour, Italy
LoH, C	Legion of Honour, Croix de Chevalier, France	SMSL (O)	St Maurice and St Lazarus, Officer, Italy
LtCol	Lieutenant-Colonel	SOWC	Senior Officers' War Course, Royal Navy
MajGen	Major-General	SPSO	Senior Personnel Staff Officer
MC	Military Cross	SS2	St Stanislas, 2nd Class, Russia
MiD	Mentioned in Dispatches	SS3S	St Stanislas, 3rd Class with Swords, Russia
MoD	Ministry of Defence	SV4	St Vladimir, 4th Class, Russia
MRAF	Marshal of the Royal Air Force	SV4SB	St Vladimir, 4th Class, with Sword and Bow, Russia
OBE	Officer of the Order of the British Empire	TNA	The National Archives, Kew
OC	Officer Commanding	TNR	<i>The Naval Review</i>
OSw (K)	Knight of the Order of the Sword, Sweden	VC	Victoria Cross
OTC	Officer Training Corps	WgCr	Wing Commander
PME	Professional Military Education	WiH	<i>War in History</i>
<i>psa</i>	Passed Staff College, Andover		
<i>psc</i>	Passed Staff College, Camberley or Quetta (Pre-First World War)		
<i>qs</i>	RAF Officer who successfully completed a Course at Staff College, Camberley or Quetta, of the RN Staff College, Greenwich		
R, C	Commander of the Order of St Saviour the Redeemer, Greece		
RAF	Royal Air Force		
RAFM	Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon		
<i>RAFQ</i>	<i>The Royal Air Force Quarterly</i>		
RFC	Royal Flying Corps		
RN	Royal Navy		
RNAS	Royal Naval Air Service		
RPAS	Remotely Piloted Aerial System		
RUSI	Royal United Service Institution		
SA3	St Anne, 3rd Class, Russia		
SASO	Senior Air Staff Officer		
SD3	Staff Duties Class 3		
SEAC	South East Asia Command		
SL	Squadron Leader		

Introduction

I.1 Collective Memory and Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory

Generated by cognitive distortions, Josh Tosh noted that collective memory leads ‘us to highlight some aspects of the past and to exclude others’.¹ Reinforced by cultural artefacts like film, art and media sources, these distortions revolve around processes of learning, forgetting and remembering. This process develops a repository of perceived understanding, which underpins identity and drives popular historical perceptions. Nowhere is this perhaps truer in the history of the Royal Air Force (RAF) than the career of Air Chief Marshal (ACM) Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, who holds a specific place in the Service’s collective memory.² This view can be summed up by the interpretations of the late Vincent Orange and Williamson Murray; Orange stated that Leigh-Mallory was either ‘misguided or incompetent, or at worst both’, while Murray claimed that he was ‘ambitious and duplicitous’.³ These are serious accusations. They not only concern Leigh-Mallory’s competency, but also raise questions over the organisation that nurtured him.

Represented by three key images, this negative view has filtered into the public’s collective memory. The first image is Air Vice-Marshal (AVM) Trafford Leigh-Mallory, Air Officer Commanding (AOC) 12 Group, RAF Fighter Command in 1940, while the second is ACM Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, Air Commander-in-Chief (Air C-in-C) of the Allied Expeditionary Air Force (AEAF) during Operation OVERLORD, the invasion of Normandy, in 1944. This is strengthened by a third, more powerful image, the portrayal of

¹ John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*, Third Edition (London: Longmans, 1999), p. 1.

² All rank abbreviations are derived from the March 1939 edition of *The Air Force List*. When first mentioned, officers are referred to by their full name and the rank applicable to the reference. Subsequently, they are referred to by their surname. If referring to a specific event, then their appropriate rank will be used.

³ Vincent Orange, ‘The British Commanders’ in Sebastian Cox and Henry Probert (eds.), *The Battle Re-Thought: A Symposium on the Battle of Britain* (Shrewsbury: Airlife, 1991), p. 40; Williamson Murray, *Military Adaptation in War: With Fear of Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 175.

Leigh-Mallory by Patrick Wymark in Guy Hamilton's iconic 1969 film *The Battle of Britain*, which is, perhaps, most responsible for fixing a negative image of the latter in the public's collective memory.⁴ Wymark's selection was significant given his portrayal of the Machiavellian businessperson John Wilder in *The Plane Makers* and *The Power Game* between 1963 and 1969.⁵ Wymark would have been instantly recognisable to audiences, who would have transplanted this characterisation onto Leigh-Mallory. Indeed, the fictional depiction of Leigh-Mallory's debates with AVM Keith Park in ACM Sir Hugh Dowding's office in the film has left an indelible mark on our understanding of both the Battle of Britain and Leigh-Mallory's abilities as a leader.⁶ While the film, based on Derek Wood and Derek Dempster's 1961 book *The Narrow Margin*, initially performed poorly on release, its regular appearance on terrestrial television has reinforced specific, but questionable, views of the battle and its key commanders.⁷ For example, Park, before the aforementioned scene, flies into an unidentified RAF station, while Leigh-Mallory did not, thus juxtaposing an image that suggested the latter was not a flyer; however, the image of the flyer, as Martin Francis showed, was central to RAF culture and ethos.⁸ Such cinematic images, as this thesis illustrates, distort and decontextualise Leigh-Mallory's rise to senior leadership in the RAF. For example, little is known about 2nd Lieutenant Leigh-Mallory of the 4th Battalion of the Lancashire Fusiliers and the wound he suffered at Bellewaerde Ridge on 16 June 1915

⁴ Leonard Mosley, *Battle of Britain: The Making of a Film* (London: Pan Books, 1969), pp. 157-72; S.P. Mackenzie, *The Battle of Britain on Screen: 'The Few' in British Film and Television Drama* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 75-98; Michael Paris, *From the Wright Brothers to Top Gun: Aviation, Nationalism and Popular Cinema* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 132-33; Garry Campion, *The Good Fight: Battle of Britain Propaganda and The Few* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 276-7

⁵ In 1965, Patrick Wymark received a British Television Award for Best Actor for these portrayals.

⁶ The scene is based on details of a meeting held at the Air Ministry on 17 October 1940 to discuss tactics employed by Fighter Command towards the end of the Battle of Britain, see: TNA, AIR 16/735, Minutes of a Meeting held in the Air Council Room on October 17th 1940, to discuss Major Day Tactics in the Fighter Force.

⁷ Derek Wood and Derek Dempster, *The Narrow Margin: The Battle of Britain and the Rise of Air Power, 1930-1949* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2003 [1961]).

⁸ Martin Francis, *The Flyer: British Culture and the Royal Air Force, 1939-1945*, Paperback Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 14-31.

while serving with the 2nd Battalion of the South Lancashire Regiment. Similarly, the career of Wing Commander (WgCr) Leigh-Mallory, who was closely involved in the development of ideas surrounding tactical air power in the RAF during the 1920s, has largely been ignored; however, these important ‘characters’ in Leigh-Mallory’s leadership development need to be understood to contextualise his progress in the Service. Thus, the narrative of Leigh-Mallory’s rise to senior leadership requires revision before any attempt to judge his effectiveness can be undertaken. This thesis provides that revision by analysing Leigh-Mallory’s leadership development within his organisational context and through a comparison with his peers.

I.2 Literature Review

Split into four sections, this literature review examines views relating to Leigh-Mallory, the historiography of the inter-war RAF, relevant material covering the British Army and Royal Navy (RN), and finally a brief overview of key leadership works that informed the conceptual framework used in this thesis.

Through a teleological view of history, distorted views of Leigh-Mallory’s career remain which have filtered through the historiography and shaped historians understanding of his effectiveness. Flanked between the experience of the First and Second World Wars, this teleological view mirrors broader patterns in the history of inter-war air power, which often assumes a direct causality between the two conflicts with little examination of contingency. For example, Alistair McClusky’s recent chapter on direct air support during the Battle of Amiens in 1918 assumed:

to a large extent the lessons from Amiens were responsible for the flawed conduct of Air-Land operations in France and Flanders in 1940 and the resultant catastrophic Allied defeat.⁹

McClusky subsequently claimed that this was because of the ‘dysfunctional outlook of the Air Staff in the interwar period’.¹⁰ This ‘dysfunctional outlook’ was, according to McClusky, a serving British Army officer in 2014, an outgrowth of the RAF’s focus on fighters in air superiority roles that degraded their ability to ‘attack ground targets’, which was left to bombers that suffered heavy losses from ground based air defences during the French campaign of 1940.¹¹ However, this analysis, clouded by service bias, ignores broader conceptual discussions about air power employment that were on-going between the RAF and the Army and the context of inter-service friction that characterised much of the period. As Chapter Seven notes, inter-service co-operation between the wars was more complicated as it related to debates in the Army over future force structures and over the way the RAF, as the supporting service, worked with them. Importantly, Leigh-Mallory was involved in these debates.

Bill Newton Dunn’s and Orange’s writings concisely represent the debate over Leigh-Mallory’s competency, as they are the antithesis of one another. Dunn was hyperbolic and hagiographic, and set out to defend Leigh-Mallory, while Orange was heavily critical; though, as an academic, at least the work of the latter was more rigorous concerning source analysis. Explained by his familial relationship to Leigh-Mallory, Dunn’s hagiographical approach is highlighted by his continual reference to the former by his

⁹ Alistair McCluskey, ‘The Battle of Amiens and the Development of British Air Land Battle, 1918-1945’ in Gary Sheffield and Peter Gray (eds.), *Changing War: The British Army, the Hundred Days Campaign and The Birth of the Royal Air Force, 1918* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), p. 232.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

¹¹ *Ibid.* For more balanced analyses of the RAF during the Battle of France, see: David Ian Hall, *Strategy for Victory: The Development of British Tactical Air Power, 1919-1943* (Greenwood, CT: Praeger, 2007), pp. 41-54; Matthew Powell, ‘Army Co-Operation Command and Tactical Air Power Development in Britain, 1940-1943: The Role of Army Co-Operation Command in Army Air Support’, (PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2014), pp. 71-106.

sobriquet, L-M; Leigh-Mallory's friends used this moniker in communication with him. Dunn is Leigh-Mallory's great nephew, as his mother, Barbara Newton Dunn, was the daughter of Leigh-Mallory's eldest sister, Mary.¹² In his own words, Dunn laudably set out to understand 'What forces create two men like him and his legendary brother?'¹³ Leigh-Mallory's eldest brother was the noted mountaineer, George Mallory.¹⁴ The book, however, failed to rehabilitate Leigh-Mallory's reputation due to poor scholarly standards. At a basic level, Dunn struggled with the military context and sub-text of his subject. For example, Dunn referred to Operation JUBILEE, the raid on Dieppe on 19 August 1942, an operation for which Leigh-Mallory acted as air commander, as Operation SLEDGEHAMMER, an entirely separate contingency operation planned for 1942 to relieve pressure on the Eastern Front.¹⁵ More worrying is Dunn's lack of references and that he did not attempt to explain context and contingency in the evidence deployed. Basic research would have solved many mistakes in Dunn's work, such as claiming that there is no evidence for why Leigh-Mallory sought to join the Royal Flying Corps (RFC) in 1915; however, an examination of Leigh-Mallory's 1925 RAF Staff College essay would have solved that conundrum.¹⁶ When discussing the Normandy Campaign, Dunn cited verbatim, without any references, Leigh-Mallory's operational diary, which he maintained during the campaign. Simply, Dunn claimed that Leigh-Mallory's 'thoughts and aspirations [...] are

¹² Bill Newton Dunn, *Big Wing: The Biography of Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory* (Shrewsbury: Airlife, 1992).

¹³ *Ibid*, p. 4.

¹⁴ For the most recent account of George Mallory, see: Wade Davis, *Into the Silence: The Great War, Mallory and the Conquest of Everest* (London: The Bodley Head, 2011).

¹⁵ On the RAF at Dieppe, see: Ross Mahoney, "'The support afforded by the air force was faultless": The Royal Air Force and the Raid on Dieppe, 19 August 1942', *Canadian Military History*, 21(4) (2012), pp. 17-32.

¹⁶ Dunn, *Big Wing*, p. 23; The National Archives, Kew (TNA), AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Wartime Service (1914-1918) by Wing Commander T.L. Leigh-Mallory, 28 September 1925.

best expressed in the following extracts from his diary'.¹⁷ Placing these thoughts into the context of the Normandy Campaign, and what fellow commanders wrote, would have been a more fruitful exercise, and the failure to do so highlights Dunn's lack of academic training.

Orange criticised Leigh-Mallory's abilities. For example, in a 1995 review of John Ray's work on the Battle of Britain, which provided a balanced view of the debates over fighter tactics extant in Fighter Command in 1940, Orange stated resolutely that, 'Dowding and Park were right, Douglas and Leigh-Mallory were wrong'.¹⁸ Orange's views were coloured by his sympathy for ACM Sir Keith Park, the subject of his first biography.¹⁹ Furthermore, Orange argued that the failure of a paper exercise on 29 January 1941, which sought to test whether large fighter formations were appropriate in the context of 11 Group's defensive operations, showed Leigh-Mallory's 'incompetence'.²⁰ There is no evidence that this system was used operationally, and Leigh-Mallory's experimentation through a paper exercise arguably illustrated a leader testing new ideas. Orange's bias transposed to other officers with whom Park clashed. In his 1936 work *Air Power and Armies*, WgCr John Slessor, later a Marshal of the Royal Air Force (MRAF) and Chief of the Air Staff (CAS), criticised 48 Squadron's performance in 1918, which Park, then a Major, commanded.²¹ From Park's perspective, this created enmity between these two officers. As Orange argued, Park believed that ACM Slessor, then Air Member for Personnel (AMP), blocked his substantive promotion to ACM on the former's retirement

¹⁷ Dunn, *Big Wing*, p. 126. Leigh-Mallory's Normandy Diary can be found in TNA, AIR 37/784, Daily Reflections on the Course of the Battle by Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, KCB, DSO, 5 June to 15 August 1944. Leigh-Mallory dictated this diary to his personal assistant, Hillary St George Saunders.

¹⁸ Vincent Orange, 'The Battle of Britain – New Perspectives: Behind the Scenes of the Great Air War by John Ray (Book Review)', *Journal of Military History (JMH)* 59 (2) (1995), pp. 348-9.

¹⁹ Vincent Orange, *Park: The Biography of Air Chief Marshal Sir Keith Park GCB, KBE, MC, DFC, DCL* (London: Grub Street, 2001 [1984]).

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 138.

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 31; J.C. Slessor, *Air Power and Armies* (Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press, 2009 [1936]), p. 54. Oxford University Press first published Slessor's important work in 1936.

in 1946.²² Significantly for this thesis, Orange began planning a biography of Leigh-Mallory in 1985; however, he abandoned it when he found out someone else, presumably Dunn, had completed a similar project.²³

Besides numerous memoirs, autobiographies and biographies of key officers, the historiography concerning the RAF divides into works on policy, doctrine and personnel. The best biographies remain Orange's work on MRAF Lord Tedder, Denis Richards' sympathetic work on MRAF Viscount Portal and Henry Probert's biography of MRAF Sir Arthur Harris.²⁴ The literature primarily focuses on policy and doctrine, which is paradoxical given the importance that CAS, MRAF Viscount Trenchard, then an Air Marshal (AM), placed on the RAF's human element in 1919.²⁵ This is, in part, to borrow Malcolm Smith's description, because the RAF's history has been 'short, complex and

²² Orange, *Park*, p. 240.

²³ Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College London (LHCMA), Personal Papers of Group Captain Eric Douglas, File 5, Correspondence between Vincent Orange and Mrs Douglas-Jones, 21 November and 7 December 1985.

²⁴ In addition to Dunn's and Orange's works already cited, key memoirs, autobiographies and biographies for officers considered in this thesis include: Andrew Boyle, *Trenchard: Man of Vision* (London: Collins, 1962); R.H. and J.J. Clark-Hall, *Air Marshal Sir Robert Clark-Hall, KBE, CMG, DSO: Autobiographical and Biographical Reminiscences* (Christchurch, NZ: The Raven Press, 1995); Air Vice-Marshal Raymond Collishaw with R.V. Dodds, *Air Command: A Fighter Pilot's Story* (London: William Kimber, 1973); Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Douglas, *Years of Combat: The First Volume of the Autobiography of Sholto Douglas, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Lord Douglas of Kirtleside* (London: Collins, 1963); Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Douglas with Robert Wright, *Years of Command: The Second Volume of the Autobiography of Sholto Douglas, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Lord Douglas of Kirtleside* (London: Collins, 1962); Anthony Furse, *Wilfrid Freeman: The Genius Behind Allied Survival and Air Supremacy, 1939-1945* (Staplehurst: Spellmount, 1999); Air Marshal Sir Victor Goddard, *Skies to Dunkirk: A Personal Memoir* (London: William Kimber, 1982); Marshal of the Royal Air Force Air Arthur Harris, *Bomber Offensive* (London: Greenhill Books, 1990 [1947]); Prudence Hill, *To Know the Sky: The Life of Air Chief Marshal Sir Roderic Hill* (London: William Kimber, 1962); Air Chief Marshal Sir Philip Joubert de la Ferté, *The Fated Sky: An Autobiography* (London: Hutchinson, 1952); John Laffin, *Swifter than Eagles: A Biography of Marshal of the RAF Sir John Salmond GCB, CMG, CVO, DSO* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1964); John Lea, *Reggie: The Life of Air Vice-Marshal R.L.G. Marix CBE, DSO* (Bishop Auckland: The Pentland Press, 1994); John L. Pattinson, *LAP: The Life of Air Marshal Sir Lawrence Arthur Pattinson KBE, CB, DSO, MC, DFC* (Privately Published, 2011); Arthur Longmore, *From Sea to Sky, 1910-1945* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1946); Roderic Owen, *Tedder* (London: Collins, 1952); Henry Probert, *Bomber Harris - His Life and Times: The Biography of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Arthur Harris, the Wartime Chief of Bomber Command*, Paperback Edition (London: Greenhill, 2006); Sir Patrick Playfair and John Jarvis, *'Pip' Playfair: A Founding Father of the RAF* (Ilfracombe: Arthur H. Stockwell, 1979); Denis Richards, *Portal of Hungerford: The Life of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Portal of Hungerford, KG, GCB, OM, DSO, MC* (London: Heinemann, 1977); Dudley Seward, *'Bomber' Harris: The Authorised Biography* (London: Cassell, 1984); Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor, *The Central Blue: Recollections and Reflections* (London: Cassell, 1956).

²⁵ See: TNA, AIR 8/12, A Memorandum by the Chief of the Air Staff on the 'Permanent Organization of the Royal Air Force', 25 November 1919.

controversial'.²⁶ Viewed through a teleological lens, RAF history is controversial because of the focus on inter-service debates and campaigns like the strategic air offensive against Germany during the Second World War. It is complex because of the character of the Service's antecedents, the RAF's controversial relationship with the other services, the development of air power theory and doctrine, and enduring questions over its efficacy. Apart from John James' 1991 study *The Paladins*; little serious attention has been focused on the RAF's human element from an organisational perspective or in terms of experience or development processes.²⁷ Other than E.B. Haslam's narrative of the RAF (Cadet) College at Cranwell, only Tony Mansell's work on recruitment has offered an insight into officers' social backgrounds and pre-service education, while C.G. Jefford provided a competent discussion of the place of non-pilots in the RAF.²⁸ Mansell, however, did not place enough weight on the degree of continuity between the RAF and the Army regarding their respective relationships with public schools, which, they believed, produced officers with the right leadership characteristics while reinforcing class proclivities. While the RAF Staff College at Andover has formed a sub-section of numerous works, the focus has been on its role in the production of doctrine rather than its primary purpose of developing educated staff officers who would emerge as senior leaders.²⁹ Even Allan English did not go far enough in this respect due to his focus on the links between Andover and Air Staff policies, which are indicative of the aforementioned historiographical challenge.³⁰ Mark Wells and Maryam Philpott, with a focus on the Second and First World Wars respectively,

²⁶ Malcolm Smith, *British Air Strategy between the Wars* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 1.

²⁷ John James, *The Paladins: A Social History of the RAF up to the Outbreak of World War II* (London: Futura Publications, 1991).

²⁸ E.B. Haslam, *The History of Royal Air Force Cranwell* (London: HMSO, 1982); Tony Mansell, 'Flying Start: Educational and Social factors in the Recruitment of Pilots of the Royal Air Force in the Interwar Years', *History of Education*, 26(1) (1997), pp. 71-90; Wing Commander (ret'd) C.G. Jefford, *Observers and Navigators and other Non-Pilot Aircrew in the RFC, RNAS and RAF* (Shrewsbury: Airlife, 2001).

²⁹ From this point on, the RAF Staff College will be referred to by its location, Andover.

³⁰ Allan English, 'The RAF Staff College and the Evolution of RAF Strategic Bombing Policy, 1922-1929', *Journal of Strategic Studies (JSS)*, 16(3) (1993), pp. 408-31.

examined elements of combat experience, but no one yet has detailed this process for the inter-war RAF.³¹ Francis' *The Flyer* focused more generally on broader cultural elements of the RAF, including its relationship with the civilian population.³² While Philpott is more chronologically relevant to this thesis, Wells' study contained a useful chapter on leadership and morale covering what the RAF understood by such concepts.³³ Philpott's work is disappointing. First, its comparative approach – justified on the basis that both organisations were high-end users of technology – led to a light touch on both organisations compared, the RN and the RFC. However, this comparison is questionable, as the former was a service, while the latter was an arm of the Army and influenced by its cultural processes. Philpott failed to recognise differences generated by this distortion and made many basic mistakes, such as describing Arthur Marder as the official historian of the RN while the official history of the RAF is described as written by 'veteran pilots'.³⁴ The authors of the RN's official history of the First World War were Sir Julian Corbett and Sir Henry Newbolt.³⁵ While H.A. Jones, the author of volumes two to six of the RAF's official history, was a retired officer, Philpott's claim ignored the status of his predecessor, Sir Walter Raleigh, who was Merton Professor of English Literature at the University of Oxford from 1904 to his death in 1922. After Raleigh's death, there was a drawn out process to select the latter's replacement, with T.E. Lawrence being amongst the candidates.³⁶ Eventually, Jones was selected; however, he appeared at the bottom of several

³¹ Maryam Philpott, *Air and Sea Power in World War I: Combat and Experience in the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Navy* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2013); Mark Wells, *Courage and Air Warfare: The Allied Aircrew Experience in the Second World War* (London: Frank Cass, 1995).

³² Francis, *The Flyer*.

³³ Wells, *Courage and Air Warfare*, pp. 137-60.

³⁴ Philpott, *Air and Sea Power*, p. 14, 48.

³⁵ For example, see: Sir Julian Corbett, *Naval Operations Volume I: To the Battle of the Falklands, December 1914* (London: Longmans, 1920); Sir Henry Newbolt, *Naval Operations Volume IV: From Jutland to February 1917* (London: Longmans, 1928).

³⁶ Specifically, see: TNA, AIR 5/497 Pt I, Appointment of a Successor to Dr Hogarth for Continuation of "The History of the War in the Air", date opened 24 March 2914; TNA, AIR 5/495 Pt II, Appointment of a

lists of authors because of his lack of reputation.³⁷ In addition, Philpott failed to make use of documents, like officers reflective essays from Andover, which would have enriched her work. Grounded in a socio-cultural framework inspired by Joanna Bourke, her doctoral supervisor, Philpott, unlike Wells, focused on negative aspects of leadership, did not refer to what the services understood by the term, and failed to cite key works, such as Gary Sheffield's *Leadership in the Trenches*.³⁸ Similarly, Philpott did not discuss what teaching officers received on leadership, despite discussing morale, which was the cornerstone of the British military's understanding of the concept at that time.³⁹ In 2002, Richard Overy remarked that, 'The sociological analysis of [Air force] personnel is still in its infancy'.⁴⁰ Sadly, despite the above cited works, this remains the case.

The dearth of research on the human element of the RAF is countered by that focused on strategy, policy and doctrine. The standard work on British air policy remains H. Montgomery Hyde's ineloquent, but thorough, study on the subject.⁴¹ Malcolm Cooper furthered Hyde's work by examining the emergence of the RAF as an independent service

Successor to Sir Walter Raleigh for Continuation of "The History of the War in the Air", date opened 27 May 1922. For a specific reference to Lawrence, see: TNA, AIR 2/495 Pt 1, Minute from CAS to the Secretary of State for Air, 24 March 1924.

³⁷ TNA, AIR 5/497 Pt I, List B of Names Considered in 1922. On the issue of Jones' reputation, see: TNA, AIR 5/497 Pt I, Minute to CAS and Secretary of State for Air, 24 March 1924. For an examination of the RAF's official history of the First World War, see: Christina Goulter, 'British Official Histories of the Air War' in Jeffrey Grey (ed.), *The Last Word? Essays on Official History in the United States and British Commonwealth* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), pp. 133-46; John J. Abbatiello, *Anti-Submarine Warfare in World War I: British Naval Aviation and the Defeat of the U-Boats* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), pp. 131-41.

³⁸ G.D. Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches: Officer-Man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army in the Era of the First World War* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000). For the purpose of this thesis, references derive from the 1994 PhD thesis on which the book is based, see: Gary Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations, Morale and Discipline in the British Army, 1902-22', (PhD Thesis, King's College London, 1994).

³⁹ Philpott, *Air and Sea Power*, pp. 70-1; Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing: Face-to-Face Killing in Twentieth Century History* (London: Basic Books, 1999).

⁴⁰ Richard Overy, 'Introduction' in Sebastian Cox and Peter Gray (eds.), *Air Power History: Turning Points from Kitty Hawk to Kosovo* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), p. xi

⁴¹ H. Montgomery Hyde, *British Air Policy between the Wars, 1918-1939* (London: Heinemann, 1976). Research for this work was conducted while Hyde held a Leverhulme Research Fellowship at the Royal Air Force Museum in the 1970s. The original typescript of Hyde's work can be found at the Archives Division at the RAF Museum, see: Royal Air Force Museum (RAFM), Hendon, DC 76/48/1-4, Typescript of *British Air Policy between the Wars, 1918-1939* (1975).

during the First World War.⁴² Smith focused on the inter-war years and placed the emergence of the doctrine of the ‘knock-out’ blow in its social and political contexts, while Barry Powers focused on the development of strategic thinking during this period.⁴³ David Omissi’s study into air policing provided a key marker in the debates over independence that feature in works on air policy.⁴⁴ As Omissi contended, the RAF argued that air power provided an efficient method of managing internal threats to the British Empire, which maintained Service independence. Linked to this is the evolution of RAF thinking and doctrine as derived from higher policy and Tami Davis Biddle has provided an erudite examination of British thinking on strategic bombing.⁴⁵ Scot Robertson argued that rather than doctrine, the RAF had a policy, backed up by theory. However, the problem with Robertson’s work stems from his argument that ‘almost no *realistic* effort was made at exploring the [translation of] strategic hypothesis into sound doctrine’ (emphasis in original).⁴⁶ Though, for a work intent on exploring doctrine, Robertson only cited the RAF’s capstone manual, AP1300, *The War Manual*, once, which raises the question, which the author never satisfactorily answered, of whether he analysed doctrine or theory.⁴⁷ Similarly, while numerous articles from the *Journal of the Royal United Services Institution (JRUSI)* and *The Royal Air Force Quarterly (RAFQ)* appeared in his bibliography, Robertson made little use of these, which makes his overall argument unconvincing. Conversely, Neville Parton’s 2009 PhD thesis provided a thorough examination of the production of

⁴² Malcolm Cooper, *The Birth of Independent Air Power: British Air Policy in the First World War* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986).

⁴³ Smith, *British Air Strategy*; Barry Powers, *Strategy without Slide Rule: British Air Strategy, 1914-39* (London: Croom Helm, 1976).

⁴⁴ David Omissi, *Air Power and Colonial Control: The Royal Air Force 1919-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990).

⁴⁵ Tami Davis Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality: The Evolution of British and American Ideas about Strategic Bombing, 1914-1945* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

⁴⁶ Scot Robertson, *The Development of RAF Strategic Bombing Doctrine, 1919-1939* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1995), p. 95.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 132, fn. 28.

RAF doctrine at all levels and took account of both formal and informal sources. Informal sources included *JRUSI* and *RAFQ*, which officers contributed to, and which formed a key aspect of their leadership development.⁴⁸ However, when writing about Andover, Parton naturally focused on its importance in a doctrinal sense rather than in terms of leadership development, which cannot be discounted, but rather re-conceptualised. This is, in part, because of Parton's background as the modern RAF's Director Defence Studies (DDefS) between 2006 and 2009. DDefS is responsible for military academic advice to CAS, speech writing and manuscript drafting, and the RAF's post-graduate programme; therefore, Parton's professional understanding of military education cannot be unduly ignored in his analysis. The importance of this foregoing literature review is that the officers examined in this thesis, including Leigh-Mallory, interfaced with strategy, policy and doctrine in differing ways and with increasing degrees of responsibility as those nurtured rose to senior leadership positions. This relationship ranged from their studies at Andover to developing policy and doctrine in staff positions at the Air Ministry, or applying it in operational commands.

While leadership and leaders remain a key element in the process of formulating and applying policy and doctrine, their development and an understanding of the organisation that developed them remain understudied areas. For example, there is currently no effective study of the evolution of the Air Ministry from an organisational perspective. The last volume to deal with the Air Ministry remains C.G. Grey's 1940 volume *A History of the Air Ministry*.⁴⁹ Grey was the founding editor of *Aeroplane* and a noted aviation journalist up to his death in 1953. Grey held strong views on the importance of aviation, and, as his obituary in *Flight* noted:

⁴⁸ Neville Parton, 'The Evolution of Royal Air Force Doctrine, 1919-1939', (PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge, 2009).

⁴⁹ C.G. Grey, *A History of the Air Ministry* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1940).

he never once failed to express either an original thought or to reveal an unexpected viewpoint on some current topic.⁵⁰

While Grey is a useful contemporary source, his work now requires revision. Filling this historiographical gap would allow for an understanding of why policy and doctrine evolved in the manner they did. Related to this would be a broader study of the organisational culture that shaped policy and doctrine. Chapter Two, from a leadership perspective, provides a start to that discourse. One recent study that has bridged the conceptual gap amongst the three strands of policy, doctrine and personnel, though focused on one particular controversy, the strategic air offensive against Germany, is Peter Gray's examination of the leadership challenges involved in this campaign.⁵¹ Grounded in modern leadership theory, Gray's examination involved a consideration of key officers' backgrounds.⁵² Thus, this thesis builds on Gray's brief reflection on officers' backgrounds by delving into the social, cultural and operational issues that underpinned leadership development in the RAF.

Given that, this thesis examines issues related to pre-RAF backgrounds, like education and service in the Army or RN; it is worth highlighting works that have informed this study. Concerning public schools and their links to the development of leaders, Gary McCulloch's study *Philosophers and Kings* offered a necessary corrective to the so-called 'British disease' school of thought advanced by Martin Wiener.⁵³ The 'British disease' is the argument that from 1870 onwards, the British economy went into absolute decline, a view that historians like David Edgerton have more recently challenged with, in

⁵⁰ "C.G.G.", *Flight*, 18 December 1953, p. 803.

⁵¹ Peter Gray, *The Leadership, Direction and Legitimacy of the RAF Bomber Offensive from Inception to 1945* (London: Continuum, 2012).

⁵² *Ibid*, p. 40..

⁵³ Gary McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings: Education for Leadership in Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Martin Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*, Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 132-136. Wiener's influential work first appeared in 1981.

the latter's case, particular reference to Great Britain's arms industry.⁵⁴ Revisionists like Edgerton suggested that rather than absolute decline, the British economy went through relative decline. Therefore, the question is how countries such as Germany and the United States became productive, rather than why Britain declined.⁵⁵ Wiener's 'cultural critique' contended that public school education was a key cause of decline; however, W.D. Rubinstein has countered this by noting the widening of recruitment at these institutions and that pupils tended to follow in their fathers professional footsteps.⁵⁶ Furthermore, McCulloch, though not uncritical, placed public schools into their pedagogical context and suggested that given their purpose of creating public leaders, they were, in part, successful in this aim. J.A. Mangan's *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School* remains the key work on sport in public schools and its role in developing leadership traits.⁵⁷ Chapter Four, however, discusses the use of the term 'athleticism' and notes that its appropriateness to the development of military leaders remains open to question. Reinforced by J.D. Campbell's 2012 study of physical culture in the Army, the key work on sport in the military is Tony Mason's and Elisa Reidi's excellent 2010 study, which illustrated the importance of such activity to the services and how it related to building ethos and spirit amongst personnel.⁵⁸

Several notable works on the Army and RN provided useful context not only to the careers of officers considered in this thesis, but also to the influence these organisations

⁵⁴ In particular, see: David Edgerton, *Warfare State: Britain, 1920-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

⁵⁵ David Edgerton, 'The Decline of Declinism', *The Business History Review*, 71(2) (1997), p. 202.

⁵⁶ In general, see: W.D. Rubinstein, *Capitalism, Culture, and Decline in Britain, 1750-1990*, Paperback Edition (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 102-39.

⁵⁷ J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology*, New Edition (London: Routledge, 2000).

⁵⁸ Tony Mason and Elisa Reidi, *Sport and the Military: The British Armed Forces, 1880-1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); J.D. Campbell, *The Army Isn't All Work: Physical Culture and the Evolution of the British Army, 1860-1920* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012). The role of sport in the RAF remains a historiographical gap to be filled.

had on the RAF's evolving structures and culture. David French's study of the Army's regimental system highlighted the many tensions created by this structure. As Chapters Two and Three suggest, the emergence of the General Duties (GD) Branch was an attempt to remove the problem of seniority associated with the regimental system.⁵⁹ French utilised an understanding of culture that reinforces points made in this thesis concerning the relationship amongst culture, organisational structure and leadership. Timothy Bowman and Mark Connelly's 2012 study on the Edwardian Army provided a useful counter-balance to more progressive analyses of this period, like Spencer Jones' 2012 analysis of tactical reform in the Army.⁶⁰ While recognising that change did occur, Bowman and Connelly, utilising a bottom-up analysis, showed how class and social divisions fragmented the Army before the First World War. While the RAF did broaden its recruitment base, as Chapter Four discusses, elements of class and social division did remain, which, arguably stemmed from the Service's Victorian and Edwardian origins and illustrates a degree of continuity between the services. Robert Davison's analysis of the challenges faced by the Executive Branch of the RN illustrated how changing social and cultural factors encouraged change as the Service sought to professionalise. This change emerged as the Executive Branch's position became increasingly tenuous in the face of technological change and the professional ethic of engineers.⁶¹

While this thesis fills a historiographical gap concerning the inter-war RAF, it is also necessary to consider the state of leadership literature, as concepts from this field provide the conceptual framework for this study. Given the scope of the literature on leadership,

⁵⁹ David French, *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People c. 1870-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); John James, 'The Branch Structure of the RAF', *The Royal Air Force Quarterly incorporating Air Power*, 18(3) (1978), pp. 249-60.

⁶⁰ Timothy Bowman and Mark Connelly, *The Edwardian Army: Recruiting, Training, and Deploying the British Army, 1902-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Spencer Jones, *From Boer War to World War: Tactical Reform of the British Army, 1902-1914* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012).

⁶¹ Robert Davison, *The Challenges of Command: The Royal Navy's Executive Branch Officers, 1880-1919* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).

what follows is but a brief overview of key trends and debates as they relate to this thesis.⁶² As with many constructed concepts, leadership, split into its historical, social science, psychological and business schools of thought, continues to evolve and become more complex. However, it remains a field that suffers, as Chester Barnard stated in 1948, from being ‘the subject of an extraordinary amount of dogmatically stated nonsense’.⁶³ This so-called ‘nonsense’ emerges from the fact that everybody with some form of leadership experience believes they are qualified to write on the subject. An entire genre exists of ‘airport lounge’ texts, which pervades the business school, with many drawing analogies from ideas developed from the writings of major military thinkers like Sun Tzu and Carl von Clausewitz while failing to understand their context.⁶⁴ Retired officers offering their services to business does not help this situation. For example, Colonel (ret’d) John Warden III, a noted United States Air Force air power theorist, set up Venturist Incorporated in 1995 to provide:

an eloquent, comprehensive approach to strategy creation and execution that provides leaders and managers with a powerful new tool to prevail in the toughest competitive environments.⁶⁵

Clearly, Warden is trying to sell his military expertise to a market ready to accept a ‘one-size fits all’ solution to leadership problems. Developed through the so-called Prometheus Process, this system emerged out of Warden’s writings on air power theory before his

⁶² For a useful broad overview and introduction to leadership, see: Richard Bolden, Beverley Hawkins, Jonathan Gosling and Scott Taylor, *Exploring Leadership: Individual, Organizational and Societal Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

⁶³ Chester Barnard, ‘The Nature of Leadership’ in Keith Grint (ed.), *Leadership: Classical, Contemporary, and Critical Approaches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 89. This chapter originally appeared in Chester Barnard, *Organization and Management* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1948).

⁶⁴ For example, see: Gerald Michaleson, *Sun Tzu: The Art of War for Managers – 50 Strategic Rules, New Edition* (Avon, MA: Adams Media Corporation, 2000).

⁶⁵ Quote taken from Venturist Incorporated website; <http://www.venturist.com> – Accessed on 17 November 2013

retirement.⁶⁶ Similar challenges exist in the literature on leadership development, with biographies and autobiographies on noted businesspeople filling shelves for those seeking a panacea on how to succeed.

Leadership studies divides into four key approaches that have progressively followed, and built upon, one another: trait, situational, contingency and constitutive.⁶⁷ Trait theory emerged out of Thomas Carlyle's 1841 work on heroes and heroic history, which formed the historic basis of 'Great Man' theory, which sought to identify leadership qualities.⁶⁸ This is contextually significant for this thesis, as it formed the basis of writings present during Leigh-Mallory's career that he might have read. As Chapter One explains, leadership during this period, in a heroic mould, focused on the way it was done rather than what it was. It is here that historical analysis is useful to furthering an understanding of leadership. For example, Sheffield's work highlighted the importance of paternalism and deference in officer-man relations in the Army of the First World War, while both Jonathan Fennell's and Wells' works, albeit in differing service settings, illustrated the interrelationship between leadership and morale.⁶⁹ These elements were key considerations during the inter-war years in military writings. Post-Second World War, situational analysis emerged based on R.M. Stodgill's work on leadership in organisations, which stressed factors like context and culture, which shaped leadership styles.⁷⁰ More recently, this

⁶⁶ John Andreas Olsen, *John Warden and the Renaissance of American Air Power* (Dulles, VA: Potomac Books, 2007), pp. 286-8.

⁶⁷ Keith Grint, *The Arts of Leadership* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 2.

⁶⁸ Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic History* (London: James Fraser, 1841). Philippa Levine argued that Carlyle did not exemplify the emerging history profession of the nineteenth century but was an essayist and reviewer, see: Philippa Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional: Antiquarians, Historians and Archaeologists in Victorian England, 1838-1886*, Paperback Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 3.

⁶⁹ Sheffield, *Leadership in the Trenches*; Jonathan Fennell, *Combat and Morale in the North African Campaign: The Eighth Army and the Path to El Alamein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 188-218; Wells, *Courage and Air Warfare*, pp. 137-60.

⁷⁰ R.M. Stodgill, 'Leadership, Membership, Organization' in Grint (ed.), *Leadership*, p. 113. This piece first appeared in *Psychological Bulletin*, 47 (1950), pp. 1-14.

understanding evolved into contingency and constitutive approaches. These focused on understanding and challenging the nature of a leader's context. These approaches developed an increasing understanding of the role of context and culture in developing leadership styles, which also influenced a leader's development. While focused on command, Eitan Shamir rightly observed the role organisational culture plays in attempting to change leadership styles and leaned heavily on Edgar Schein's own important writings on the subject.⁷¹ Chapter One explores the interrelationship of command and leadership; however, it is worth noting here that much of the literature on the former, like Martin van Creveld's *Command in War*, focused on the system rather than the leaders in charge of it.⁷²

Social scientists dominate the leadership literature; however, historians increasingly provide necessary context to the subject. For example, as Gray's work illustrated, cross-pollination between the two fields can engender greater understanding of complex problems.⁷³ This is not a one-way process with social scientists drawing heavily on historical data for analysis. Keith Grint's work on the Normandy Campaign applied leadership concepts, notably Horst Rittel and Melvin Weber's notion of 'tame' and 'wicked' problems, to examine decision-making challenges that confronted leaders in 1944.⁷⁴ Linked to management, 'tame' problems relate to the idea that some challenges may be complicated but have pre-identified solutions.⁷⁵ Correlated to leadership, 'wicked' problems are complex and ambiguous and have no definite short-term solutions.⁷⁶ Grint built on this taxonomy to include 'critical' problems, and he is a good example of a social scientist

⁷¹ Eitan Shamir, *Transforming Command: The Pursuit of Mission Command in the US, British, and Israeli Armies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), pp. 19-23; Edgar Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, Fourth Edition (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010). Schein's work was first published in 1985.

⁷² Martin van Creveld, *Command in War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985).

⁷³ In general, see: Gray, *Leadership*.

⁷⁴ Keith Grint, *Leadership, Management and Command: Rethinking D-Day* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008); Horst Rittel and Melvin Weber, 'Dilemmas in the General Theory of Planning', *Policy Sciences* 4(2) (1973), pp. 155-69.

⁷⁵ Keith Grint, 'Problems, Problems, Problems: The Social Construction of 'Leadership'', *Human Relations*, 58(11) (2005), p. 1473.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

utilising history effectively.⁷⁷ ‘Critical’ problems focus on self-evident issues with short timelines for solutions, which Grint associated with the role of the commander.⁷⁸ While a useful construct, it is, however, worth relating, as Chapter One notes in general, that such a distinct demarcation between command, leadership and management is potentially unhelpful. Gray and Sebastian Cox’s 2002 edited collection *Air Power Leadership* provided a well-balanced comparison of theoretical and historical explorations of leadership in an air power context.⁷⁹ From the perspective of leadership development, Dennis Drew’s chapter on professional competency provided a framework that Chapters Five, Six and Seven explore: training, education and experience.⁸⁰ The use of historical data by non-historians, however, can lead to poor and biased analysis. This is notable amongst psychological works. Based on extreme examples and lacking an understanding of context, Norman Dixon’s 1976 work *The Psychology of Military Incompetence* represented this field. Driven by Dixon’s training as a psychologist, it holds a place in the historiography that defies academic rigour.⁸¹ In development terms, Dixon failed to understand the structures involved in the production of leaders in the military while also holding biased views towards the public school system. Similarly, Pois and Langer, whose work also lacks rigour despite their backgrounds as an historian and psychologist respectively, utilised a narrow analysis to argue that Harris, ‘Like the cat, [...] never believed there was life beyond the box’.⁸² While there is something to this argument, Pois and Langer’s analysis, unlike Gray,

⁷⁷ This cross-pollination is perhaps unsurprising given that Grint and Gray were colleagues at the United Kingdom’s Defence Academy when the latter served as Director of the Defence Leadership and Management Centre.

⁷⁸ Grint, ‘Problems, Problems, Problems’, p. 1473.

⁷⁹ Peter Gray and Sebastian Cox (eds.), *Air Power Leadership: Theory and Practice* (London: The Stationary Office, 2002).

⁸⁰ Colonel Dennis Drew, ‘The Three Pillars of Professional Competency: Imperatives for Air Power Leaders’ in Gray and Cox (eds.), *Air Power Leadership*, pp. 54-67.

⁸¹ Norman Dixon, *On the Psychology of Military Incompetence* (London: Pimlico, 1994 [1976]).

⁸² Robert Pois and Philip Langer, *Command Failure in War: Psychology and Leadership* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004), p. 169.

ignores wider contextual elements that influenced Harris' leadership, while also being driven by an agenda to discredit the strategic air offensive of the Second World War on moral grounds.

Besides Grint, notable names in the leadership field include John Adair, Bernard Bass, J.M. Burns and Barbara Kellerman. Illustrated by the fact that the latter is the James MacGregor Burns Lecturer in Public Leadership at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, Burns and Kellerman exemplify some of the high quality work done in the leadership field. Adair, who developed the concept of action centred leadership, which focused on 'team', 'task' and 'individual', is highly relevant, as his ideas emerged from his teaching at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and have become standard in the British military since the 1960s.⁸³ Before Adair's work, a valid question existed: whether and how leadership, rather than command, was taught in British military establishments. However, Adair's model has been criticised for being too authoritarian, which is probably a product of the context from which it emerged. Burns, a historian and political scientist, has been instrumental in the shift towards contingent models of leadership based on the distinction between transformational and transactional leaders that Bass built upon with his 'Full Range Model of Leadership', which sought to balance these two factors.⁸⁴ Transformational leadership refers to those leaders able to enact change by identifying challenges and applying vision to inspire and motivate followers. Transactional leadership refers to those leaders who rely on contingent rewards, such as pay, to lead. Bass suggested that there are four key elements to effective leadership: individualised

⁸³ For Adair's first leadership work, see: John Adair, *Effective Teambuilding: How to Make a Winning Team*, New Revised Edition (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2009). Published in 1968, Adair has since published up to forty books expounding his concept of team, task and individual. On the introduction of the formal study of leadership at Sandhurst by Adair, see: Patrick Mileham, 'British Army Officership: Paradigm Evolution, 1960-2001', (PhD Thesis, University of Lancaster, 2001), p. 139.

⁸⁴ James Macgregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper and Row, 1978); Bernard Bass, *Leadership and Performance: Beyond Expectations* (New York: Free Press, 1985).

consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealised influence. However, separating transformational from transactional leadership is problematic as good leaders recognise which is appropriate based on the context of the situation. Nevertheless, the broad importance of the shift towards contingency and constitutive approaches, which these authors represent, lies in the recognition that followers influence leadership. Followership is an area that Kellerman explored with specific reference to the impact of bad leadership and empowerment.⁸⁵ Driven by good morale, empowerment in subordinates derives from effective leadership, which is important for two reasons. First, morale and its relationship with leaders was how the RAF viewed the subject of leadership. Second, Leigh-Mallory is often portrayed as a ‘bad leader’. Cox, Head of the RAF’s Air Historical Branch (AHB), used Leigh-Mallory as an example of a ‘bad leader’ in a 2006 conference paper on the subject of leadership. Cox questioned Leigh-Mallory’s level of professional competence and raised questions concerning his development.⁸⁶

Research into situational and contingency models of leadership has moved thinking towards the idea that effective leaders can be developed rather than just born. As with leadership itself, the literature is large and often open to fashions that fix to specific organisational paradigms. David Day offered the clearest overview of the subject in his 2000 *Leadership Quarterly* article.⁸⁷ Day recognised a clear delineation between leader and leadership development, and separated the subject between processes that develop skills and functions and those that produce greater benefits for organisations. However, many authors, including contributors to Harry Laver and Jeffrey Matthews’ 2008 edited

⁸⁵ Barbara Kellerman, *Bad Leadership: What It Is, How It Happens, Why It Matters* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2004); Kellerman, ‘Bad Leadership – The Role of Followership’ in John Jupp (ed.), *Air Force Leadership: Changing Culture* (Sleaford: Royal Air Force Leadership Centre, 2007), pp. 34-5.

⁸⁶ Sebastian Cox, ‘Sholto Douglas and Leigh-Mallory’ in Jupp (ed.), *Air Force Leadership*, p. 47.

⁸⁷ David V. Day, ‘Leadership Development: A Review in Context’, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 11(4) (2000), pp. 581–613.

collection *The Art of Command*, utilised the latter term as convenient shorthand.⁸⁸ In conjunction with John Fleenor *et al*, Day has provided a timely update to his article, which reiterated many of the points made in 2000.⁸⁹ Additionally, related to development processes is the emergence of specific patterns and career rhythms, which are framed by an organisation's culture and ethos.⁹⁰ As subsequent chapters illustrate, interfacing with these patterns as a military professional supported an officer's development. More broadly, this literature parallels early writings on civil-military relations and professionalisation, especially that of Morris Janowitz, who suggested that specific career patterns existed for those seeking to enter the realms of the military elite.⁹¹ This is significant, as Leigh-Mallory and his peers viewed themselves as professionals and, ultimately, became members of the military elite. Indeed, as Alistair Finlan noted, while Janowitz and Samuel Huntington might not have used such language, their work on the sociological organisation of armed services has helped frame discussions over military culture, which inform Chapter Two.⁹²

I.3 Thesis Rationale, Research Questions and Structure

Rather than rescuing Leigh-Mallory's reputation, this thesis seeks to understand his rise to senior positions through a balanced and objective analysis of his leadership development up to 1937. This is a logical end to Leigh-Mallory's development. Thereafter, Leigh-Mallory

⁸⁸ *Ibid*; Harry S. Laver and Jeffrey J. Matthews (eds.), *The Art of Command: Military Leadership from George Washington to Colin Powell* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2008).

⁸⁹ David V. Day, John W. Fleenor, Leanne E. Atwater, Rachel E. Sturm, Rob A. McKee, 'Advances in Leader and Leadership Development: A Review of 25 Years of Research and Theory', *The Leadership Quarterly*, (2013), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.11.004>

⁹⁰ Victor P. Corona, 'Career Patterns in the U.S. Army Officer Corps', *Public Organization Review*, 11(2) (2011), pp. 109-34.

⁹¹ Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (New York: NY: Free Press, 1960). For an overview of the development of civil-military relations, see: Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen and Leadership in Wartime* (New York: NY: Free Press, 2002), pp. 225-48.

⁹² Alistair Finlan, *Contemporary Military Culture and Strategic Studies: US and UK Armed Forces in the 21st Century* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), p. 2; Samuel P. Huntington, *Soldier and the State: The Theory and Practise of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959).

occupied a number of increasingly senior appointments in times of peace and war, which moved from group command to his final position of Air C-in-C AEAF. These positions increasingly encompassed challenges like implementing vision, managing relations with key constituents, operations, and training, amongst other aspects. However, while the leadership literature separates out between the roles of lower-, middle- and senior-level leaders, which move from technical knowledge through applying policy and strategy to conceptualising vision, formal distinctions like these do not easily translate to command at the tactical, operational and strategic levels of war.⁹³ While group command suggests a middle-level position, this ignores the fact that officers in these roles were involved in formulating and providing feedback on policy. In many respects, they were on the cusp of senior leadership, and many would emerge into roles where they influenced and shaped policy and doctrine within both an operational and organisational capacity. Furthermore, as Chapter One suggests, the RAF did not explicitly define what was required at different levels. Rather, the RAF, from the perspective of succession planning, recognised that attendance at Andover and the IDC, and relevant job assignments like staff duties, developed the capacity necessary to undertake senior roles. Furthermore, the idea that senior officers of two-star and above all operated at the senior/strategic level is incorrect. For example, Dowding, as an ACM, a senior leader, did not operate at the strategic level, as Fighter Command's mission related to the operational level of war, the area at which campaigns are planned and fought.⁹⁴ This brings into question Stephen Zaccaro's modern view that senior leadership embraces three- and four-star officers, though this was derived

⁹³ David V. Day and Robert G. Lord, 'Executive Leadership and Organizational Performance: Suggestions for a New Theory and Methodology', *Journal of Management*, 14(3) (1988), p. 459.

⁹⁴ On the debate over the operational level of war, see: Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy: The Logic of War and Peace*, Revised and Enlarged Edition (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 112-37. On Britain's experience in general, see: Hew Strachan, 'Operational Art and Britain, 1909-2009' in John Andreas Olsen and Martin van Creveld (eds.), *The Evolution of Operational Art: From Napoleon to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 96-136.

from an examination of the American military and cannot be easily transferred to historical examples.⁹⁵ Nevertheless, if it is accepted that senior leadership involves greater strategic planning and the targeting of areas like policy and resources, then command at the group level did indicate elements of this. For example, in his 1937 RUSI lecture on air policing, AC Portal noted that he was required, as AOC Aden Command, to interface with various external organisations.⁹⁶ Accepting this methodological challenge of defining senior leadership, this thesis accepts that one- and two-star appointments were at least moving towards this sphere for which officers had been nurtured; the focus of this study.

This thesis examines Leigh-Mallory's rise to senior leadership through an interdisciplinary methodology utilising prosopography and modern leadership theory. It seeks to answer several questions concerning Leigh-Mallory and, more broadly, the RAF's development of leaders. First, it strives to understand how an officer with so many perceived detractors reached senior leadership positions by comparing his experience to 385 peers from March 1918. Second, it answers the question of how the RAF viewed leadership and examines its links to the development of social and organisational capital. Third, it considers whether the RAF implemented a policy of succession planning through the adoption of specific career processes and promotion procedures, which actively nurtured specific officers' abilities in preparation for senior leadership. Finally, this thesis argues that to understand specific career rhythms and patterns, an understanding of an organisation's culture and ethos is required to conceptualise how leadership development is both constrained and reinforced by this factor.

⁹⁵ Stephen J. Zaccaro, *The Nature of Executive Leadership: A Conceptual and Empirical Analysis of Success* (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association Press, 2001), p. 27.

⁹⁶ Air Commodore C.F.A. Portal, DSO, MC, *idc*, 'Air Force Co-Operation in Policing the Empire (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 82 (1937), pp. 343-58.

While summaries appear at the start of each chapter, this thesis is split into seven sections and follows a thematic outline with each section building a layered interpretation of the RAF's leadership development processes. Chapters One and Two provide the intellectual context for this thesis. Chapter One examines key leadership concepts while seeking to understand how the RAF defined and applied this term. In particular, it focuses on the relationship between leadership and fighting power, which formed the nexus of the RAF's understanding of the concept at this time, though the language used to describe it was immature. This chapter then links this understanding to a discussion of leadership development and of how the RAF used modern techniques like nurturing, socialisation, action learning and job assignments to develop its organisational capacity. However, the use of such language remains a challenge, given what the RAF understood by such terms and how the Service measured and tracked performance. Nevertheless, these techniques are linked to a framework that identifies training, education and experience as the key pillars of leadership development, which form the core of Chapters Five, Six and Seven. Chapter Two builds on the previous chapter by exploring the organisational culture and ethos of the RAF. It argues that the assumptions, beliefs and values that underpinned RAF culture found their outgrowth in its organisational structure, the GD Branch, and its leadership development processes. This was further reinforced by pilot ethos, which led to the targeting of specific types of officers for nurturing. Chapter Three begins the process of analysing data that emerged from the prosopography study of Appendices Three and Four. It highlights the key patterns that emerged, which form the basis of a broader qualitative analysis in subsequent chapters, and then discusses some of the challenges inherent in the promotion system of the RAF as they relate to leadership development. Chapter Four begins the process of broadening the analysis of the patterns identified in Chapter Three by examining the importance of public school education and related

aspects, such as partaking in team sports and membership of the Officer Training Corps (OTC). It highlights the transposition of broader social values, as taught through various means in public schools, to those valued by the military. Chapter Five examines the role of training in terms of providing a shared experience and ethos for those officers considered in this thesis. However, this chapter recognises the challenge of considering the role of training, given that it was split between pre-war regulars, who went through Army and RN regimes, and those who received wartime preparation. Key here was the role of pilot training in reinforcing the emerging ethos of flying. Chapter Six examines the important issue of military education and covers attendance at Andover, the other service's staff colleges and the IDC, as well as considering whether anti-intellectualism pervaded the RAF through an examination of what officers wrote. This latter aspect is identified as a key aspect of action learning and did not retard promotion prospects, but was limited to trusted officers who had Staff College experience, thus highlighting the importance of this job assignment. Finally, Chapter Seven examines the role that key job assignments like operational command experience, staff duties, and teaching and training positions played in the career patterns and leadership development of nurtured officers. This aspect is important because it was widely recognised that, while it was crucial, education could not counteract the value of experience.

I.4 Methodology and Sources

Leigh-Mallory's sudden death on 14 November 1944 created a methodological conundrum for this thesis; his Avro York, which was transporting him and his wife to his new command as Air C-in-C South East Asia, crashed into a mountain ridge east of Grenoble

in France.⁹⁷ Principally, unlike many peers, Leigh-Mallory never wrote a memoir and left scant personal papers. Held by the RAF Museum (RAFM) and described by Guy Revell, Assistant Curator in the Archives Division, as ‘disappointingly devoid’ of any paperwork relating to his RAF service, Leigh-Mallory’s paltry papers are a collection of photographs and letters covering personal aspects of his early life and military service.⁹⁸ While Jeremy Black lamented that ‘Military biography has provided another way to make operational military history commercially successful’, Leigh-Mallory’s papers are hardly enough with which to construct a rigorous academic biography.⁹⁹ However, biographies by authors like Orange, Richards and Probert represent useful examples of the genre that are grounded in more than just personal papers, which could distort objectivity and interpretation. Treated with care, these have been used accordingly in this thesis. Furthermore, a biography would provide little insight into the organisational culture that nurtured Leigh-Mallory’s leadership competency, and would therefore not allow this thesis to answer its central question of how he reached senior leadership positions. Another research challenge related to access to the RAF’s Annual Confidential Report (ACR), Form 367, which would offer an insight into an officer’s abilities. However, those ACRs, contained within service records, related to officers who served after 1922 are held by the RAF and are only available to relatives. Therefore, this thesis utilises prosopography as a methodology to construct a comparative career map of Leigh-Mallory and his peers as they emerged into senior leadership positions during the inter-war period, thus overcoming the source issue identified above. Alongside an examination of key job assignments, this methodology suggests that the RAF nurtured

⁹⁷ Paperwork related to issues that emanated from Leigh-Mallory’s crash can be found in various Air Ministry files. For example, see: TNA, AIR 2/10593, Court of Inquiry into the disappearance of aircraft York MW 126 on 14 November 1944 with Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory on board; TNA, AIR 37/1109, Missing York aircraft carrying Air Chief Marshal Leigh Mallory, date opened 15 November 1944.

⁹⁸ Letter to the author dated 13 June 2008.

⁹⁹ Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), p. 37.

officers like Leigh-Mallory. It is through this methodology that this thesis delivers its social aspect, as it examines the shared experiences and characteristics of a group of officers who reached senior leadership positions.

Prosopography gained prominence amongst ancient and medieval historians, who used it to re-discover the collective history of groups of people lost to the present. It has also been utilised by political historians seeking to analyse quantitative patterns related to career and social backgrounds. Recent key proponents have been Gideon Cohen, Kevin Morgan and Andrew Flinn, who worked on an Economic and Social Research Council funded project on the prosopography of ‘Communism and the British Labour Movement’.¹⁰⁰ The project analysed:

the activities of communists within the broader labour and trade union movement and specifically their contribution to the distinctive patterns of British industrial relations. (Emphasis added)¹⁰¹

The emergence of ‘distinctive patterns’ is the key advantage of prosopography, as it allows for an analysis of typical patterns that occur in the population. While prosopography remains an underused tool in military history, several recent studies into Army officers of the First World War have made use of it to examine patterns in their selected prosopography populations.¹⁰² Peter Hodgkinson, a clinical psychologist and historian, utilised *The Army List*, in both its quarterly and monthly variants, in much the same way this thesis uses *The Air Force List (AFL)* to provide basic biographical details from which to

¹⁰⁰ For details of this project, see: ‘Communism and the British Labour Movement: A Prosopographical Analysis’, Economic and Social Research Council - <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/my-esrc/grants/R000237924/read> - Accessed on 16 January 2014.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.* The key output from this project remains Kevin Morgan, Andrew Flinn and Gidon Cohen, *Communists and British Society 1920-1991: People of a Special Mould* (London: Rivers Oram Press, 2007). Also, see: Gidon Cohen, ‘Propensity-Score Methods and the Lenin School’, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 36(2) (2005), pp. 209-32.

¹⁰² Peter Hodgkinson, *British Infantry Battalion Commanders in the First World War* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015). Hodgkinson’s book is based on his 2014 University of Birmingham PhD of the same name. Also, see: Paul Harris, ‘The Men who Planned the War: A Study of the Staff of the British Army 1914-1918’, (PhD Thesis, King’s College London, 2014).

analyse the similarities and disjunctions in each work's respective prosopography populations.¹⁰³ In its basic form, prosopography is:

the inquiry into the common characteristics of a group of historical actors by means of a collective study of their lives.¹⁰⁴

Essentially a collective biography, prosopography parallels methods utilised in sub-disciplines like biography and genealogy, which all have a role in providing data for the process. From a leadership perspective, John Shoup argued that, 'Leadership studies will benefit from [...] prosopography on exemplary and competent leaders'.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, it is accepted that leadership development will also benefit from prosopography because it encourages interdisciplinary study.¹⁰⁶ Thus, bringing together a conceptual framework linked to leadership theory, this methodology allows for a consideration of how the RAF and its institutions nurtured future leaders and their development, as well as examining wider questions, such as the role and effectiveness of military education generally and Andover more specifically. Furthermore, prosopography allows for an examination of key career patterns and job assignments present for those officers who reached Air Rank by 1939 as well as the rhythms extant in the selected population. By identifying key similarities and disjunctions between Leigh-Mallory and his peers, it is possible to offer an insight into which factors and processes were present in the RAF that led to his rise in a comparative context.

¹⁰³ Hodgkinson, *British Infantry Battalion Commanders*, pp. 6-7.

¹⁰⁴ Lawrence Stone, 'Prosopography', *Daedalus*, 100(1) (1971), pp. 46-79. Stone remains the common cited work on prosopography; for example, for a recent citation, see: Kathleen E. Kennedy, 'Prosopography of the Book and the Politics of Legal Language in Late Medieval England', *Journal of British Studies*, 53(3) (2014), p. 566, fn. 2. For a broader examination of prosopography's definition, see: Koenraad Verboven, Myriam Carlier and Jan Dumolyn, 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography' in K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (ed.), *Prosopography Approaches and Applications: A Handbook* (Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research, 2007), pp. 37-41.

¹⁰⁵ John R. Shoup, *A Collective Biography of Twelve World-class Leaders: A Study on Developing Exemplary Leaders* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005), p. 12.

¹⁰⁶ Verboven, Carlier and Dumolyn, 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography', p. 60.

Prosopography, however, as with any methodology, is not free from criticism. In 1973, just two years after Lawrence Stone's commonly cited work on the subject, T.F. Carney provided a critique of prosopography.¹⁰⁷ Carney was critical of the question of sources used in prosopography and argued that their variable quality, as it related to the classical world, meant that historians had to make assumptions about their subject matter, which in turn affected the quality of subsequent analysis.¹⁰⁸ This also applies to modern studies where memoirs, biographies and autobiographies tend to be key sources. The challenge here is that such published works have already been through one analytical filter, and their overuse can lead to the acceptance of inherent bias. Similarly, the overuse of published sources tends to lead to a focus on those leaders who have produced their own memoir or have had a biography written about them, which raises the challenge of source subjectivity and their utility. While this thesis makes use of biographies and memoirs, an attempt has been made to abrogate against the aforementioned methodological challenge by returning to primary material, like personal papers and operational records, to develop an empirical study. Other potential challenges include the thematic nature of the prosopography population and the ability to differentiate between correlation and causality. By focusing on Leigh-Mallory's peers, this thesis examines only those officers who were pilots. However, the importance of this is that it brings into sharp relief a key aspect of the RAF; the importance of pilot ethos and its links to leadership development, which is considered in Chapters One and Two.¹⁰⁹ On the challenge of correlation, the use of primary sources concerning the key themes examined in this thesis allows for a qualitative analysis that seeks to correlate between the general patterns identified and how they relate

¹⁰⁷ T.F. Carney, 'Prosopography: Payoffs and Pitfalls', *Phoenix*, 27(2) (1973), pp. 156-79.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 164-73.

¹⁰⁹ Verboven, Carlier and Dumolyn, 'A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography', p. 51-2.

to Leigh-Mallory specifically, in order to reconceptualise his place in the RAF's leadership development processes.¹¹⁰

The key contemporary source utilised to construct the prosopography population is the *AFL*.¹¹¹ Utilisation of the *AFL* grounds the analysis in this thesis in a consistent source around which other material is used to build up an understanding of leadership development in the RAF. First published in April 1918 and underused by academic historians, the *AFL* is widely used as a genealogical tool to trace individual careers. James, in his social history of the inter-war RAF, *The Paladins*, remains the only study to substantively utilise the *AFL*. James, a civilian psychologist who worked for the Air Ministry during the Cold War, introduced some of the social and organisational issues faced by the RAF in this period; however, he did not utilise the *AFL* in a systematic manner to examine them. Instead, statistics drawn from the *AFL* reinforced James' assumptions rather than driving analysis. James' chapter on 'Officers and Pilots' made selective use of data from the May 1933 edition of the *AFL* to outline details of officers postings, but did not analyse patterns derived from this source.¹¹² James made no further use of these statistics in his study. Nevertheless, the *AFL* contains a multitude of useful information, though it was an ever-evolving document with changing content. For example, by 1939, due to the expansion of the RAF, the *AFL* only provided a list of squadrons rather than including officers attached to these units. The *AFL* also outlined the RAF's structure, from the Air Ministry and Air Council down to individual squadrons. Provided in various ways, information on officers in the *AFL* ranged from their rank and

¹¹⁰ On the challenge of qualitative and quantitative analysis in prosopography, see: Gidon Cohen, Andrew Flinn and Kevin Morgan, 'Towards A Mixed Method Social History: Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in the Study of Collective Biography' in Keats-Rohan (ed.), *Prosopography Approaches and Applications*, pp. 211-30.

¹¹¹ For a brief outline of *The Air Force List*, see: Simon Fowler, Peter Elliott, Roy Conyers Nesbitt and Christina Goulter, *RAF Records in the PRO* (London: PRO Publications, 1994), p. 30.

¹¹² James, *The Paladins*, pp. 133-4.

seniority in the gradation list to their appointments and postings details, highlighting the date at which each position began. It is also possible to track individual careers through the *AFL*. It is possible to map the rise and fall of the service's strength using the gradation list, as the total number of officers is given at the end of each rank in each RAF branch. For example, in March 1920, there were six AVMs in the GD Branch, whereas there were 24 by March 1939.¹¹³ This was Leigh-Mallory's rank in 1939.

Instead of using data selectively to track the career of an individual officer, the *AFL* is used to map the careers of Leigh-Mallory and 385 of his peers. Found in Appendix Three, this mapping exercise focused on officers holding appointments as either Squadron or Wing Commanders in the March 1918 editions of *The Army List* and the January 1918 edition of *The Navy List*; the latter was produced quarterly. Chosen as this was the last month before the formation of the RAF on 1 April 1918, March 1918 provided an opportunity to compare officers of similar ranks and appointments from the RFC and Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS). The prosopography population divides into 295 Squadron and 91 Wing Commanders, which were appointments rather than ranks.¹¹⁴ Squadron Commanders in the RFC held the rank of Major, while Wing Commanders were Lieutenant-Colonels (LtCol). These officers represent Leigh-Mallory's peers and include notable names such as Portal and Tedder. Of the officers selected, 57 Squadron Commanders and 14 Wing Commanders remained in service in March 1939. This thesis focuses on patterns and rhythms extant in the careers of those 71 officers, though more specifically it engages closely with the 43 who reached Air Rank by March 1939. Left out are notable names like Slessor and Park, which illustrates the key limitation of this thesis: the arbitrary decision to start the analysis of officers' progression in March 1918. However,

¹¹³ *The Air Force List*, March 1920; *The Air Force List*, March 1939.

¹¹⁴ *The Army List*, March 1918; *The Navy List*, January 1918

while both significant officers; Slessor and Park were Flight Commanders in March 1918. The addition of this group would have made the methodology unnecessarily large and time consuming for the purpose of the analysis herein, though it is admitted it might have further enriched this study. Nevertheless, broadly, both Park and Slessor went through similar patterns, such as attendance at Andover and the IDC, and staff work; though, as noted elsewhere, the former did not experience positions in the Air Ministry, nor as DS. While Slessor did serve as DS and experienced Air Ministry appointments, he did not attend the IDC due to the outbreak of the Second World War, but did become its Commandant in 1948.¹¹⁵

Besides the *AFL*, and in an attempt to avoid being criticised as being hagiographic, this thesis draws on numerous sources to develop a qualitative understanding of officers careers. In terms of printed materials, contemporary sources like *The London Gazette* and *Flight*, and secondary material including biographies and *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, are utilised to confirm biographical details and key events. This thesis draws on material extant in personal papers located at archival institutions, such as Portal's papers at Christ Church, University of Oxford. For officers who reached Air Rank, the author has been able to draw on public relations files held at the RAFM, which contain information collated by the RAF during careers.¹¹⁶ On personal papers, it is worth highlighting that, while a valuable source, they vary considerably both in scope and quality. Some, like the papers of AVM Sir Hazleton Nicholl and Group Captain (GC) George Carmichael, contain useful unpublished memoirs with valuable information of experience both during and pre-

¹¹⁵ However, it should be recognised that Slessor's appointment as Commandant was tied up in the question of who should succeed Tedder as CAS, see: Orange, *Tedder*, p. 319.

¹¹⁶ Held at the RAFM, this material can be found in DC76; however, it should be noted that records of service in these files are not available to members of the public.

service.¹¹⁷ Andover's records, located at the RAFM, have been assiduously used, as have personal recollections by Staff College students, which are located in AIR 1 at The National Archives, Kew. Additionally, files drawn from Admiralty, Air Ministry and War Office files at Kew provide the necessary context to many of the experiences shared by these officers. This information, combined with the *AFL*, allowed for the construction of a comparative biography that provides a firm foundation for analysing the markers laid out above and examined further in subsequent chapters.

¹¹⁷ RAFM, Personal Papers of Air Vice-Marshal Sir Hazleton Nicholl, X005-0949/001, *Journeys and Records, 1915-1939* (Unpublished Memoir, ND); RAFM, Personal Papers of Group Captain George Carmichael, B2191, *Life Record of Group Captain George Ivan Carmichael RAF, DSO, AFC* (Unpublished Memoir, ND).

Chapter One

Leadership, Leadership Development and the Royal Air Force

The modern system of command has in fact guillotined generalship, hence, modern battles have degenerated into saurian writhings between headless monsters.

Major-General J.F.C. Fuller¹

While focused on aspects of heroic leadership, simply defined as that done by ‘gifted, committed, brave, ambitious or [...] exceptional, individuals’, Fuller’s work suggested characteristics, like courage and creative thinking, that military leaders required in order to be effective, as well as offering thoughts on how to remedy the problems that he identified in British generals of the First World War.² On courage, Fuller suggested that it was the ‘driving force’ of an army because it was ‘a living thing, built of flesh and blood and not iron and steel’.³ While not using modern language, Fuller argued that effective leadership development abrogated against what he perceived as the impersonal effects of modern industrialised warfare, which he suggested, in part, led to the challenges encountered in the First World War. Most radically, Fuller supported the Napoleonic view that generals over 45 should not be active; though, significantly for this study, he also advocated effective education as the most appropriate basis for a leader’s development.⁴ Fuller’s study is a key example of inter-war leadership literature and replicated themes prevalent in British military doctrine. Fuller also lectured at Andover, which key officers attended.⁵ By 1939, Fuller’s

¹ Major-General J.F.C. Fuller, *Generalship – Its Disease and their Cure: A Study of the Personal Factor in Command* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933), p. 16.

² Bolden *et al*, *Exploring Leadership*, p. 15.

³ Fuller, *Generalship*, p. 14.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 32-5.

⁵ RAFM, AIR 69/57, Lecture on the Supremacy of Air Power by Colonel J.F.C. Fuller, CBE, DSO, 30 November 1928.

work *Generalship* regularly appeared on the reading list at Andover.⁶ However, Fuller, as a leading military thinker, pursued an agenda on how he felt the Army and the broader military establishment should be managed. Fuller also held strong opinions on senior leaders like Field Marshal Earl Haig. For example, with specific reference to 'Plan 1919', which Fuller drew up in 1918 as a means of breaking trench warfare, he wrote in his memoir that the concept remained a 'sealed book to Sir Douglas Haig and his like'.⁷ However, as Albert Palazzo argued, the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) could afford neither the manpower nor the materials required to implement Plan 1919 despite Fuller's subsequent views.⁸ Furthermore, as Sheffield and David Jordan illustrated with specific reference to air power, Haig used Trenchard as a subject matter expert and regularly listened to his key advisors, which counters Fuller's critique.⁹ However, Fuller's focus on heroic leaders fits the 'Great Man' theory of history predominant in leadership writings of the period. Fuller quoted Carlyle, writing that 'heroism' is 'the divine relation' that 'unites a Great Man to other men'.¹⁰ Nevertheless, to this day, leadership remains an often discussed but widely misunderstood phenomenon. For example, as Gray suggested, leadership during the inter-war years was more about 'what one did, rather than what was studied'.¹¹ However, as this chapter illustrates, officers did understand something about the subject. Thus, this chapter does not seek to expound a new paradigm, but rather explores key leadership thinking and its development to provide the conceptual framework to this

⁶ RAFM, AIR 69/279, Appendix "B" to Exercise No. 10 on Reading – Leadership and Morale: Bibliography of Books Available in the Library, 17th Course, RAF Staff College, April 1939, p. 5. It is interesting to note that a typographic error crept into this list and listed Fuller's work as *Comardeship – Its Disease and their Cure*, which was probably not what was being aimed for.

⁷ Major-General J.F.C. Fuller, *Memoirs of an Unconventional Soldier* (London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1936), p. 461.

⁸ Albert Palazzo, 'Plan 1919 – The Other One', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research (JSAHR)*, 77 (1999), pp. 39-50.

⁹ Gary Sheffield and David Jordan, 'Douglas Haig and Air Power' in Gray and Cox (eds.), *Air Power Leadership*, pp. 264-82.

¹⁰ Fuller, *Generalship*, p. 19.

¹¹ Gray, *Leadership*, p. 39.

thesis. First, linked to the concept of fighting power, this chapter argues that leadership was the nexus of RAF thinking on war. It then considers what the RAF understood by leadership and the key characteristics it valued. The chapter then focuses on the interrelated themes of leader and leadership development and suggests that the RAF tangentially recognised elements of both processes as it sought to nurture future senior officers. It then links this to professionalism and succession planning.

1.1 The Importance of Leadership

Before examining RAF views on leadership, it is useful to outline its relationship to the effective application of military force that centres on the delivery of fighting power. Defined as the effective delivery of military capability to fight battles, campaigns and wars, modern capstone *British Defence Doctrine (BDD)* separates fighting power into a trinity of moral, conceptual and physical components, which Diagram 1.1 illustrates. Capstone defines doctrine that enunciates strategic principles to a service, or, in the case of *BDD*, a joint concept of operations for the British military. Each component splits further, with the conceptual element consisting of the principles of war, doctrine and theoretical innovation.¹² The generation of effective fighting power is central to military organisations, as it is what they spend their time training for in peace. The physical component consists of manpower, equipment, readiness, sustainability and collective performance, while the moral constitutes morale, motivation and, most importantly, leadership.¹³ Fighting power as a term is inconsistently applied; for example, Murray, Allan Millett and Kenneth Watman lacked a clear differentiation between it and combat power, while Stephen Biddle preferred

¹² *British Defence Doctrine*, Joint Doctrine Publication 0-01, Fourth Edition (Shrivenham: The Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, 2011), pp. 4-1.

¹³ *Ibid.*

the term ‘military power’.¹⁴ As suggested below, the RAF, and the British military in general, understood the term fighting power with specific reference to the moral component of war. However, a reciprocal relationship exists between these components, with leadership forming the core of this trinity as it drives the moral component on which the success of other elements is contingent. With reference to the conceptual component, the development of doctrine requires capable leaders to develop it while effective manpower management develops morale and motivation in the moral sphere. Even Creveld admitted that leadership, ‘perhaps more than any other [factor,] decides the outcome of wars’, while Alan Howley argued, ‘It is axiomatic in a military population that fighting power requires appropriate leadership’.¹⁵ Geoffrey Sloan challenged this argument, suggesting that both the physical and moral components are contingent on the conceptual element, which highlights a doctrinal view of the delivery of fighting power that Biddle supported.¹⁶

¹⁴ Allan Millett, Williamson Murray and Kenneth Watman, ‘The Effectiveness of Military Organizations’ in Allan Millett and Williamson Murray (eds.), *Military Effectiveness, Volume 1: The First World War* (Boston, MA: Unwin Hyman, 1988), pp. 2-3; Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 5-9.

¹⁵ Martin van Creveld, *Fighting Power: German and US Army Performance, 1939-1945* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1983), p. 127; Alan Howley, ‘People not Personnel: The Human Dimension of Fighting Power’ in Hew Strachan (ed.), *The British Army, Manpower and Society in the Twenty-First Century* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 213. This trinity has been replicated in leadership theory, see: Brian Howieson and Howard Kahn, ‘Leadership, Command and Management: The Officer’s Trinity’ in Gray and Cox (eds.), *Air Power Leadership*, pp. 15-40.

¹⁶ Geoffrey Sloan, ‘Military Doctrine, Command Philosophy and the Generation of Fighting Power: Genesis and Theory’, *International Affairs*, 88(2) (2012), p. 243; Biddle, *Military Power*, p. 1.

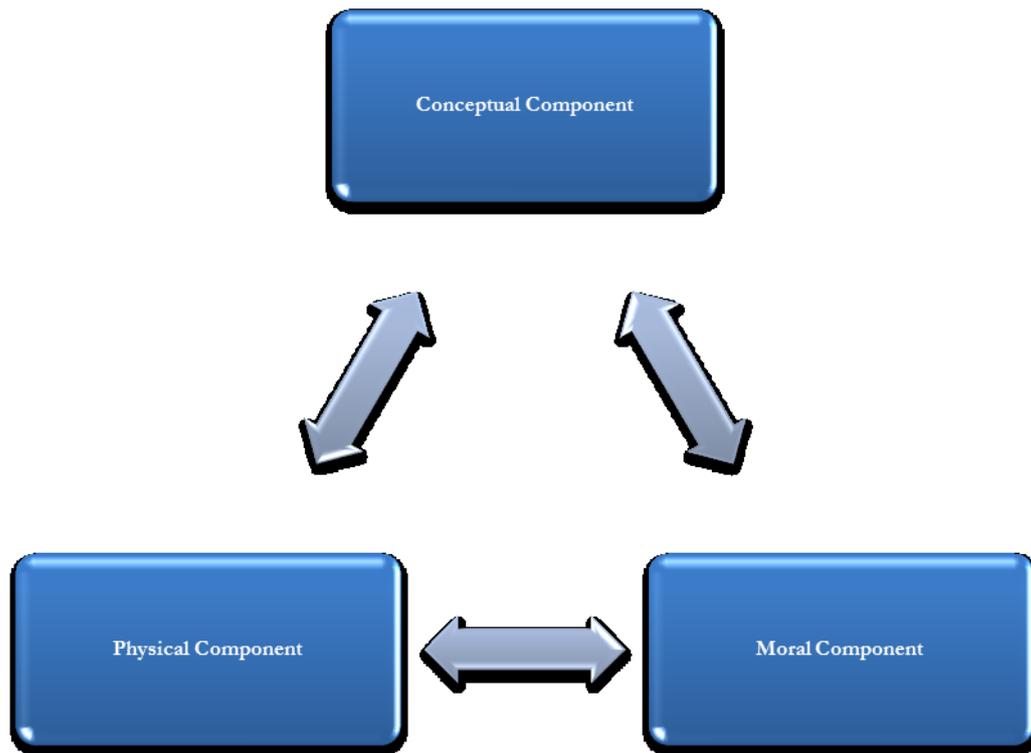


Diagram 1.1 – The Three Components of Fighting Power (Source: BDD)

Sloan's doctrinal view derived from the British military's own refocus towards the operational level of war in the 1980s, which sought to find a panacea to the challenges of modern war in the late- and post-Cold War era.¹⁷ Before this, the British military maintained a more flexible doctrinal approach that relied heavily on a leader's decision-making abilities, which is an aspect lacking in both Biddle's and Sloan's analysis. While doctrine is a useful guide to how a service thinks about its role, it can be easy for it to become a set of prescribed rules, as well as being influenced by external factors, such as changing perceptions of the character of the defence establishment. For example, in 2013,

¹⁷ In general, see: Sangho Lee, 'Deterrence and Defence of Central Europe: The British Role from the Early 1980s to the End of the Gulf War', (PhD Thesis, King's College London, 1994). It worth noting that the modern RAF have been supportive of this doctrinal shift, and, in conjunction with factors like the establishment of the post of DDefS in 1977, the Service has slowly felt its way towards a new capstone doctrine of its own, AP3000 *British Air Power Doctrine*, which was first published in 1991, see: Lee, 'Deterrence and Defence', pp. 168-170; Group Captain Christopher Finn, 'British Thinking on Air Power: The Evolution of AP3000', *RAF Air Power Review (APR)*, 12(1) (2009), pp. 56-67. For a modern critique of AP3000 and its perceived shortcomings at identifying differences between the strategic and operational levels, see: Squadron Leader John Moloney, 'Talking Point – A Critique of RAF Air Power Doctrine', *The Hawk Journal* (1995), pp. 72-8. *The Hawk* was the independent journal of the RAF Staff College and is discussed in Chapter Six.

AP3000, *British Air and Space Power Doctrine* became Joint Doctrine Publication 0-30, *UK Air and Space Power Doctrine*, which illustrates the further integration of the RAF into the joint sphere that has become increasingly common in the twenty-first century.¹⁸ The modern conception of authoritative doctrine is potentially unhelpful in any analysis of the period covered in this thesis, as the codification of such terms was immature.

For the RAF, its conception of command, leadership and morale paralleled modern thinking on the moral component of war. RAF officers grasped the importance of leadership and its implications for generating fighting power. This was because the RAF argued that good leadership affected factors such as morale, motivation and *esprit-de-corps*, which influenced unit cohesion and effectiveness.¹⁹ External factors like different doctrines, language, training and culture also created friction and played a contingent role in influencing the actions of leaders and their ability to generate fighting power. A failure to recognise the importance of these factors can lead to the mishandling of inter- and intra-service relations and those in coalitions. Concerning Leigh-Mallory, at a senior level, there are genuine questions surrounding his ability to manage friction in his relationships with fellow commanders and the influence this had on the generation of fighting power at the operational and strategic levels. For example, valid questions can be asked of Leigh-Mallory's ability to enunciate aspects like doctrine and operational directives to subordinates, of how well he managed the preparations of the physical components of his commands, such as manpower, and regarding the implications this had on their

¹⁸ *UK Air and Space Power Doctrine*, Joint Doctrine Publication 0-30 (Shrivenham: The Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, 2013).

¹⁹ RAFM, AIR 69/61, Conference No. 5, *Morale: Esprit-de-Corps* in the RAF, RAF Staff College, 7th Course, 18 July 1929. WgCr Arthur Tedder oversaw this conference. For a useful overview of cohesion, and one that stresses the role of leadership, see: W.D Henderson, *Cohesion: The Human Element* (Washington DC: National Defence University Press, 1985). The starting point for discussion on the relationship between cohesion and motivation remains Edward Shills and Morris Janowitz, 'Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 12(2) (1948), pp. 280-315. For an up to date overview, see: Simon Wessely, 'Twentieth-Century Theories on Combat Motivation and Breakdown', *Journal of Contemporary History (JCH)*, 41(2) (2006), pp. 269-86.

effectiveness as at 12 Group in 1940. Additionally, Leigh-Mallory's management of key relationships with the other services of the British military and with allies in 1944 requires further examination. This discussion, while ostensibly lying outside of the scope of this thesis, stimulates questions concerning Leigh-Mallory's preparation for senior leadership that constitute its focus, and asks whether he was suitable for the responsibilities ultimately devolved to him through various appointments.

Flexible leadership was recognised as vital in generating fighting power. In 1939, General Sir Archibald Wavell suggested in his Sir Lees Knowles Lectures at Trinity College, University of Cambridge that commanders required an effective knowledge base about each service and their respective doctrines to 'bring success for a future war'.²⁰ Wavell's views derived from both his personal experience and the Army's *Field Service Regulations (FSR)*. *The Times* published these lectures as a pamphlet in 1941, and, despite his most recent biographer contending that they were not widely distributed, a copy can be found in AM Ralph Sorley's papers at the RAFM, which illustrates their distribution within the services.²¹ A more overt statement concerning the importance of leadership emerged as early as 1913 in an article on naval tactics in the first issue of *The Naval Review (TNR)*. It stated:

All the elements of fighting power are functions of the human element. It is evident that leadership is the central influence of the battle; on its direction depends the right application of all the other elements of force. (Emphasis added)²²

²⁰ General Sir Archibald Wavell, *Generals and Generalship* (London: The Times, 1941), p. 10; RAFM, Personal Papers of Air Marshal Ralph Sorley, AC 72/19/26/5, Personal Copy of *Generals and Generalship*.

²¹ Victoria Schofield, *Wavell: Soldier and Statesman* (London: John Murray, 2006), p. 124.

²² Anon, 'Studies in the Theory of Naval Tactics – I', *The Naval Review (TNR)*, 1(1) (1913), p. 24. This article was attributed to Captain E.W. Harding RMA, who served as the assistant to the Director of Naval Operations. See: Appendix C: 'Author List for *The Naval Review* 1913-1930' in James Goldrick and John B. Hattendorf (eds.), *Mahan is Not Enough: The Proceedings of a Conference on the Works of Sir Julian Corbett and Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond* (Newport: Naval War College Press, 1993), pp. 341-405. On the history of *The Naval Review* see: Peter Hoare (ed.), *From Dreadnought to Daring: 100 Years of Comment, Controversy and Debate in The Naval Review* (Barnsley: Seaforth Publishing, 2012).

Flanking the period covered by this thesis, both of these sources illustrate the continuity present in many military writings of this period as well as the prevalent focus on the moral component that made its way into RAF capstone doctrine. Chapter III of AP1300 on ‘Command, Leadership and Morale’ further stated that ‘success in war’, the generation of fighting power, ‘depends more on moral than on physical qualities’, illustrating a cognitive link between these facets of fighting power, with leadership driving the physical components.²³ A degree of osmosis appeared between the services thinking on the subject of fighting power, and, as Parton further noted, CD22, the RAF’s first capstone doctrine, derived from *FSR I - Operations*, and this influence filtered into AP1300.²⁴ Indeed, the line ‘Success in war depends more on moral than on physical qualities’ in AP1300 is a direct quote from the 1909 edition of *FSR I*.²⁵ These ideas derived from a shared set of ‘Principles of War’, which, as Alaric Searle argued, helped the British military develop a broad strategic culture based on common ideas.²⁶ Broadly, leadership thinking in the British military followed this path and provided a common framework from which such principles emerged. As Chapter Six illustrates, effective military education through the staff colleges and the IDC provided the leadership development necessary to produce officers conversant in broad strategic principles, as well as those of their own service, which influenced the conceptual component of war. AP1300 further noted that the application of the principles of war required leadership skills like perception and balanced judgement that emerged from a ‘sound knowledge of war based on practical experience and study’.²⁷ While this was tempered by RAF culture and the recognition that ‘personal experience’ could be

²³ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 1.

²⁴ Parton, ‘Royal Air Force Doctrine’, p. 73

²⁵ War Office, *Field Service Regulations Part 1 – Operations* (London: HMSO, 1909), p. 11.

²⁶ Alaric Searle, ‘Inter-service Debate and the Origins of Strategic Culture: The ‘Principles of War’ in the British Armed Forces, 1919–1939’, *War in History (WiH)*, 21(1) (2014), pp. 4-32.

²⁷ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. I, Para. 10.

‘strictly limited’, job assignments like staff duties prepared nurtured officers to look up and out of their single service ‘silo’.²⁸ Furthermore, in a 1932 *RAFQ* article, WgCr H.N. Gordon-Dean wrote:

War is, and will ever be, a matter between human beings, and [...] the intimate relationship between mankind will still be the greatest factor in the art of war.²⁹

This link between leadership, morale and fighting power remained explicit in various publications including *The Hawk*, Andover’s journal.³⁰ Leadership as a central influence on the conduct and outcome of war was a precept that Leigh-Mallory understood.

1.2 Defining Leadership

Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery, as with many former senior officers, like the former’s *bête noir* Field Marshal Viscount Slim of Burma, understood the intangibles associated with leadership and recognised the challenges inherent in ensuring one’s subordinates followed orders.³¹ In his 1961 volume *The Path to Leadership*, Montgomery noted:

Expressed in its simplest terms, a leader is one who can get people to follow him. Such a person can, of course, be good or bad.³²

Slim’s view centred on an understanding of maintaining morale to deliver fighting power.³³ This focus on leader-follower relationships is, in a modern sense, indicative of transformational leadership. Burns and Bass saw the need to maintain a balance between

²⁸ *Ibid*, Chap. 1, Para 10; Gray, *Leadership*, pp. 2-3.

²⁹ Wing-Commander H. Gordon-Dean, AFC, *psa*, RAF, ‘The Development of Leadership and Morale in the Royal Air Force’, *The Royal Air Force Quarterly (RAFQ)*, 3(1) (1932), p. 23.

³⁰ Anon, ‘Leadership and Morale’, *The Hawk: The Journal of the Royal Air Force Staff College*, 2 (1929), pp. 161-71; Anon, ‘Leadership and Morale’, *The Hawk*, 11 (1938), pp. 119-20

³¹ The relationship between Slim and Montgomery became contentious when the latter preferred and mentored Lieutenant-General Sir John Crocker as his successor as Chief of the Imperial General Staff in 1949. Instead, the Prime Minister, Sir Clement Attlee, appointed Slim, which created tension, see: Ronald Lewin, *Slim: The Standardbearer* (London: Wordsworth, 1999 [1976]), pp. 263-5; Douglas Delaney, ‘A Quiet Man of Influence: General Sir John Crocker’, *JSAHR*, 85(3) (2007), pp. 185–207.

³² Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, *The Path to Leadership* (New York: Putnam’s and Son, 1961), p. 9.

³³ Field Marshal Viscount Slim of Burma, *Defeat into Victory: Battling Japan in India and Burma, 1942-1945* (London: Cassell, 1956), p. 182.

leader-followers as a prerequisite to improve organisational performance.³⁴ Bass further suggested that this relationship is generated through influence, motivation, stimulation and consideration. It is a relationship based on balancing factors like morale, cohesion and empowerment of subordinates. However, Bolden *et al* rightly identified that transformational leadership can quickly become toxic, which has been an area of enquiry for the modern US Army during recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.³⁵ While falling outside of the scope of this thesis, given the prevailing, but questionable, views on Leigh-Mallory's competency, it is tempting to suggest that the focus on heroic leadership by the RAF, which paralleled the charismatic aspects identified here, saw his conduct go 'toxic' during the Second World War. This question requires a deeper psychological study of Leigh-Mallory to suggest whether he illustrated the characteristics indicative of a toxic leader, which include being insular, intemperate, inflexible and narcissistic, and a bully amongst others. It is worth recognising, however, that either Leigh-Mallory was just a bad leader or his leadership style did not always suit some of those under his command. Similarly, many views of Leigh-Mallory's leadership emerged after the Second World War, when he was not able to defend himself. Furthermore, Kellerman's own 2004 study into toxic leadership was actually entitled *Bad Leadership*, thus illustrating the conflicting nature of this modern term and the potential pitfalls of applying it historically.³⁶

³⁴ In general, see: Burns, *Leadership*; Bass, *Leadership and Performance*.

³⁵ Colonel George E. Reed, 'Toxic Leadership', *Military Review* (2004), pp. 67-71; Bolden *et al*, *Exploring Leadership*, pp. 31-2.

³⁶ Kellerman, *Bad Leadership*. Also, see, Jean Lipman-Blumen, *The Allure of Toxic Leaders: Why We Follow Destructive Bosses and Corrupt Politicians--and How We Can Survive Them* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).



Diagram 1.2 – A Simple Interrelationship of Leadership, Command and Management (Source: Howieson and Kahn, ‘Leadership, Command and Management: The Officer’s Trinity’, p. 16)

Modern theory discusses the relationship between leadership and management. However, Brian Howieson and Howard Kahn’s ‘Officer’s Trinity’, which Diagram 1.2 illustrates, discussed the addition of the third factor of command, which found its way into Stephen Bungay’s model of the ‘Executive’s Trinity’, where authority, as a form of legitimate power, and responsibility are now more widely recognised as key contingent factors in this relationship.³⁷ Bungay borrowed *BDD*’s conceptualisation of fighting power and split this relationship into its moral, conceptual and physical components, with the moral heavily reliant on Adair’s functional work on ‘team’, ‘task’ and ‘individual’.³⁸ Indeed, Diagram 1.2 graphically illustrates the problem of deconstructing leadership, command and management as each is clearly reliant on the other. Furthermore, *BDD* recognises

³⁷ Howieson and Kahn, ‘Leadership, Command and Management: The Officer’s Trinity’, pp. 15-40; Stephen Bungay, ‘The Executive’s Trinity: Management, Leadership – and Command’, *360°: The Ashbridge Journal*, (2011), pp. 34-9. While Bungay did not cite the origins of his idea in this idea, he did reference Howieson and Kahn in his recent work on leadership, see: Stephen Bungay, *The Art of Action: How Leaders Close the Gaps between Plans, Actions and Results* (London: Nicholas Brealey, 2011), p. 272, fn. 19.

³⁸ Bungay, ‘Executive Trinity’, p. 36.

command as an all-embracing construct under which leadership and management occurs, and notes that the former is ‘a critical aspect of command’.³⁹ AP1300 also stressed the importance of command as an all-embracing concept where Chapter III employed the taxonomy of ‘Command, Leadership and Morale’. AP1300 defined commanders as having ‘a strong and resolute will and a ready acceptance of responsibility’.⁴⁰ Concerning command, *BDD* defined it as a position that:

embraces authority, responsibility and accountability. It has a legal and constitutional status, codified in *The Queen’s Regulations*, and is vested in a commander by his or her superior.⁴¹

This definition stressed responsibility as a key aspect of command, and, for Leigh-Mallory, outlined in the 1924 edition of *The King’s Regulations and Air Council Instructions*, those responsibilities were ‘discipline, training and efficiency of the air forces in his command’.⁴² *BDD* defined leadership as the ‘projection of personality and purpose to influence subordinates to prevail in the most demanding circumstances’, while the definition of leadership in AP1300 was even simpler: ‘the power to inspire and influence men’.⁴³ This latter statement enunciates a central tenet of leadership; influence in the leader-follower relationship. The idea that leadership is about influencing people and encouraging followers to undertake tasks remains present in the literature. In the military sphere, it ultimately comes down to leading and influencing people in an act of violence; either its commission or avoidance. Thus, the above definitions provide two key pillars that link modern to historical thinking: influence and responsibility.

³⁹ *BDD*, p. 4-10.

⁴⁰ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 4.

⁴¹ *BDD*, p. 5-2.

⁴² TNA, AIR 10/974, AP958 – *The King’s Regulations and Air Council Instructions for the Royal Air Force Volume 1 – Regulations*, 1924, p. 6.

⁴³ *BDD*, p. 4-10; TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 8.

There is, however, discord between modern and historical thinking concerning the process of management, for which no definition existed in AP1300. Simply defined, management relates to control of resources, both human and physical.⁴⁴ Modern critiques suggest that drawing a distinction between leadership and management is unhelpful and actually discredits the importance of the latter.⁴⁵ This is because a semantic and distinct line is often drawn between the ‘art’ of leadership and the ‘science’ of management, which has led to the denigration of the latter and is arguably a distinction that would not have been recognised by the RAF. In 1945, ACM Sir Robert Brooke-Popham decried the proposed use of the term ‘Man Management’ in a planned Air Ministry pamphlet on ‘The Duties of an Officer’ when he wrote:

Management of poultry, yes, when to give them castor oil and when a peppercorn, but not to men, or women either, Leadership is quite enough.⁴⁶

Brooke-Popham emerged as a recognised authority on the subjects of leadership and education in the RAF due to his own job assignments, which included attendance at the Army Staff College at Camberley between 1910 and 1912, service as the first Commandant of Andover, 1922 to 1926, and service as Commandant of the IDC, 1931 to 1933.⁴⁷ Apart from the historical need to recognise what was written in AP1300, this critique of leadership and management is one of the reasons this thesis prefers to link both terms together rather than provide an explicit distinction. While management involves dealing with complexity and leadership relates to change, they are inexorably linked; for example, coping with the latter typically involves applying vision to enact transformation. This was

⁴⁴ Howieson and Kahn, ‘Leadership, Command and Management: The Officer’s Trinity’, p. 21.

⁴⁵ Bolden *et al*, *Exploring Leadership*, pp. 24-25.

⁴⁶ LHCMA, King’s College London, Personal Papers of Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, 9/11/6, Letter from Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham to Air Commodore G.F. Smylie, Director of Technical Training, 24 April 1945.

⁴⁷ From this point onwards, the Army Staff College will be referred to as Camberley. Similarly, the Indian Army Staff College at Quetta will be referred to by its location.

certainly the case in the RAF, and vision was a trait recognised by the Service. Additionally, *BDD* avoids the explicit use of the term ‘management’, but does recognise that ‘control’, as the preferred terminology, allows for ‘the co-ordination of activity, through processes and structures that enable a commander to manage risk and to deliver intent’.⁴⁸ The RAF was not ignorant of the need to ‘co-ordinate’ its activities. The second part of the *War Manual*, AP1301, which outlined organisation and administration, preferred the latter term, which it defined in terms of control of personnel and material that was enacted by a command’s ‘policy staff’. This referred to key staff officers who enacted a commander’s directives, which is similar to modern conceptions of management of resources.⁴⁹ This, however, did not form part of the RAF’s primary thinking on the subject of leadership, but rather was subsumed by it.

AP1301 provides an important insight into RAF thinking on the subject of command and control, and first appeared in 1929 as a provisional manual. Unlike AP1300, AP1301 did not receive a second edition until 1954 and remains an underutilised source by historians.⁵⁰ Instead, it was continuously updated through various amendments during the 1930s, which filled in missing sections. For example, chapters on organisation, command and staff duties appeared in 1929, while intelligence appeared as a later amendment. As staff duties was a core subject at Andover, nurtured officers, who also served in staff positions, would have been aware of the concept of control enunciated in AP1301. This was decentralised execution, which formed the core of RAF command culture, which centred on the importance of communication to empower change and decentralise

⁴⁸ *BDD*, p. 5-3.

⁴⁹ Air Ministry, AP1301 – *Royal Air Force War Manual Part II – Organization and Administration of the Royal Air Force*, 1st Edition with Amendment List No. 10 (London: Air Ministry, 1939), Chap. 1, Paras, 10-12.

⁵⁰ TNA, AIR 10/2313, AP1301, *Royal Air Force War Manual Part II – Organization and Administration (Provisional)*, 1st Edition, August 1929.

decision-making.⁵¹ Broadly, philosophical debates over command and control tend to shift between discussions over mission versus prescriptive top-down styles, which, from an air power perspective, transposed onto the considerations over centralised control and decentralised execution.⁵² AP1301 noted:

Commands decide upon a suitable policy and issue the necessary orders and instructions to groups. Groups in turn decide upon the best action to take to implement the instructions passed down to them by commands and then issue appropriate orders to their wings and stations, who finally decide upon the detailed employment of the units.⁵³

This decentralisation required effective leadership and skills, like the ability to influence and empower subordinates to achieve specific goals, which were only attainable through effective development. There is clearly an issue of balance in how much a follower is empowered before they potentially become insubordinate. Thus, the management of this relationship is contingent on the leadership styles an organisation adopts, the culture created in it and the vision of senior leaders.

Rather than management, morale was the third aspect of the officers' trinity for the RAF. Morale was defined as 'the general spirit or state of mind of a group as reflected by their behaviour under all conditions'.⁵⁴ This conception, in conjunction with the RAF's view of command, illustrates an understanding of the importance of the interrelated facets of followership and empowerment that transcends levels of responsibility and highlights the inter-personal skills required of leaders.⁵⁵ It recognises that maintenance of morale

⁵¹ This is similar to modern ideas surrounding matrix management, see: Kevan Hall, *Making the Matrix Work: How Matrix Managers Engage People and Cut through Complexity* (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2013).

⁵² For two recent discussions of this side of the debate over leadership and command, see: Shamir, *Transforming Command*; Patrick Rose, 'Allies at War: British and US Army Command Culture in the Italian Campaign, 1943-1944', *JSS*, 36(1) (2013), pp. 42-75. On the debate over command and control of air forces, see: Air Commodore Stuart Peach, 'The Airmen's Dilemma: To Command or Control?' in Peter Gray (ed.), *Air Power 21: Challenges for the New Century* (London: The Stationary Office, 2000), pp. 123-52.

⁵³ TNA, AIR 10/2313, AP1301, 1939, Chap. I, Para. 5.

⁵⁴ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 13.

⁵⁵ See: Keith Grint, 'Followership: The Anvil of Leadership' in Jupp and Grint (eds.), *Air Force Leadership*, pp. 135-50.

allowed for the exploitation and achievement of goals through effective leadership. It also provides the reason for Brooke-Popham's preference for the inclusion of management under the rubric of leadership in 1945, as well as providing a conceptual link to fighting power. AP1300 suggested that good morale allowed officers to 'rise to heights of achievement which could not be attained by professional skills alone', which derived from a belief in traits like skill and temperament.⁵⁶ These were believed to be necessary for effective leadership.

Exposed to the above ideas, officers attending Andover regularly examined command, leadership and morale through the prism of noted leaders and their forces. SL Portal's 1922 essay examined morale in the forces of Oliver Cromwell, Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson and Giuseppe Garibaldi.⁵⁷ Influenced by Brooke-Popham's teachings at Andover, these essays formed the RAF's body of knowledge on leadership, which derived from doctrine and the state of understanding during this period. Portal's essay stressed characteristics like 'desire', 'discipline', 'patriotism', 'ambition', 'confidence' and 'comradeship' as key to generating good morale and further noted, 'Personal courage in the leader ha[d] a triple value in securing high morale'.⁵⁸ This linked to the views present in AP1300 and in Fuller's work, which argued that success in war depended more on 'moral' than 'physical' aspects, which related to the idea that the interrelationship of leadership and morale was key to generating fighting power.⁵⁹ Interestingly, at the end of the First Course at Andover, Portal and several fellow students utilised the leadership themes they had

⁵⁶ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 14; Carlyle, *On Heroes and Hero Worship*; Nathan Harter, 'Great Man Theory' in Antonio Maturano and Jonathan Gosling (eds.) *Leadership: Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 69; Kenneth Levine, 'Trait Theory' in Maturano and Gosling (eds.) *Leadership*, pp. 163-64.

⁵⁷ TNA, AIR 10/973, Squadron Leader C.F.A Portal, 'An Essay on Morale', in AP956 – *A Selection of Lectures and Essays from the Work of Officers attending the First Course at the Royal Air Force Staff College, 1922-1923* (December 1923), pp. 143-9. This collection contained two more essays on the same subject by Squadron Leader L.L. Maclean and Flight Lieutenant N.W. Wadham, which both espoused similar views.

⁵⁸ TNA, AIR 10/973, Portal, 'An Essay on Morale', in AP956, pp. 143-5.

⁵⁹ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 1.

explored as the basis for a play, which illustrates that they had at least tangibly taken on board the importance of these concepts.⁶⁰ Portal completed his essay noting that good leaders 'have no fears for the fighting spirit of [their] men'.⁶¹ Many of these writings, including Portal's, were published and distributed amongst the RAF as Air Publications (AP), which were expected by 'Command of the Air Council' to be read by 'all concerned'.⁶² Presumably, this was aimed at those officers seeking to attend Andover who would go on to lead the RAF during the Second World War. APs containing essays from Andover's cohort emanated annually and contained at least one piece on an aspect of leadership; this continued when *The Hawk* emerged at Andover in 1927.⁶³ Similar ideas appeared in publications like *JRUSI* and *RAFQ*, which, as Chapter Six illustrates, officers engaged with from 1919 onwards.⁶⁴ As key repositories of knowledge, these sources illustrate RAF thinking about key subjects such as leadership, which mirrored those of the Army and RN. Codified in pre-First World War Army doctrine like *FSR I* and *Infantry Training*, the prevalent focus on morale emerged from nineteenth century conceptions of war that stressed the role of moralism and *esprit-de-corps*.⁶⁵ Though not codified, the RN held similar views because, as already noted, the first volume of *TNR* contained several articles that illustrated its view of leadership, which was broadly consistent with those held by the

⁶⁰ RAFM, AIR 69/28, Script for End of Course Play, 28 March 1923.

⁶¹ TNA, AIR 10/973, Portal, 'An Essay on Morale', in AP956, p. 149.

⁶² *Ibid*, front page.

⁶³ TNA, AIR 10/1109, Squadron Leader Sir N.R.A.D. Leslie, Bt, CBE, 'Morale' in AP1097 – *A Selection of Lectures and Essays from the Work of Officers attending the Second Course at the Royal Air Force Staff College, 1923-1924* (August 1924), pp. 107-17; TNA, AIR 10/1159, Wing Commander J.T. Babington, DSO, 'The Relative Value of Enthusiasm and Discipline in a Fighting Force' in AP1152 – *A Selection of Lectures and Essays from the Work of Officers attending the Third Course at the Royal Air Force Staff College, 1924-1925* (July 1925), pp. 82-97; TNA, AIR 10/1269, Squadron Leader Hon. R.A. Cochrane, AFC, 'A Study of Marlborough and Napoleon' in AP1233 – *A Selection of Lectures and Essays from the Work of Officers attending the Fourth Course at the Royal Air Force Staff College, 1925-1926* (October 1926), pp. 76-90.

⁶⁴ For example, see: Flight Lieutenant Edgar Kingston-McLoughry, 'Morale and Leadership', *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution (JRUSI)*, 74 (1929), pp. 305-11; Gordon-Dean, 'The Development of Leadership and Morale in the Royal Air Force', *RAFQ*, pp. 18-24.

⁶⁵ *FSR Part 1* (1909), p. 11; War Office, *Infantry Training* (London: HMSO, 1914), pp. 1-3.

Army and latterly the RAF.⁶⁶ This osmosis illustrates the continuity of organisational and cultural practices between the RAF and its antecedents; Brooke-Popham's own views undoubtedly stemmed, in part, from his time at Camberley, despite Sheffield's and Timothy Travers' divergent warnings of its influence.⁶⁷

1.3 The Characteristics of Leadership

In a 1929 *JRUSI* article, Flight Lieutenant (FL) Edgar Kingston-McLoughry, whom Robin Higham identified as one of the RAF's key intellectuals, wrote that morale was the product of confidence and enthusiasm, which was reliant on good leadership, as there was an inherent relationship based on 'faith' in a commander's ability.⁶⁸ Kingston-McLoughry identified key characteristics that he felt produced good leadership. These were 'will', 'reason' and 'imagination', and the identification of such characteristics opens the question of what features the RAF expected its officer class to display; many of them are readily identifiable with the idea of how you 'do leadership'.⁶⁹ Driven by its heroic view of leadership, AP1300 discussed concepts like 'ability', 'resolution', 'responsibility',

⁶⁶ See: Anon, 'Individual Preparation for War', *TNR*, 1(1) (1913), pp. 44-52; Anon, 'A Suggested Training for Naval Cadets', *TNR*, 1(2) (1913), pp. 76-81. While published anonymously, the former article can be traced to a Captain W.H. Boyle RN.

⁶⁷ Gary Sheffield, *The Chief: Douglas Haig and the British Army* (London: Aurum Press, 2011), pp. 25-8; Tim Travers, *The Killing Ground: The British Army, the Western Front and the Emergence of Modern War, 1900-1918* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2003 [1987]), pp. 85-100.

⁶⁸ Kingston-McLoughry, 'Morale and Leadership', *JRUSI*, pp. 305-11; Robin Higham, *The Military Intellectuals in Britain, 1918-1939* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1966), pp. 220-30

⁶⁹ Kingston-McLoughry, 'Morale and Leadership', pp. 305-11. One recent study into military leadership identified what its editors viewed as its nine essential characteristics, which included 'integrity', 'determination', 'vision', 'adaptability', 'charisma', 'understanding', 'exemplification' and 'technological knowledge'; Laver and Matthews (eds.), *The Art of Command*. To this can be added 'intelligence', 'decision-making', 'communication', 'flexibility', 'inspiration', 'courage' and 'character' as well as numerous other concepts that might fit any author's working paradigm of effective leadership. For various overviews of military leadership characteristics, see: G.D. Sheffield, 'Introduction: Command, Leadership and the Anglo-American Experience' in G.D. Sheffield (ed.), *Leadership and Command: The Anglo-American Military Experience since 1861*, Revised Edition (London: Brassey's, 2002), pp. 1-16; Lieutenant General Walter F. Ulmer Jr., 'Introduction' in Christopher Kolenda (ed.), *Leadership: The Warriors Art*, Second Edition (Carlisle, PA: Army War College Foundation Press, 2001), pp. xxix-xxxvi; Lieutenant General Gregory S. Newbold (USMC Ret.), 'Foreword' in Robert Taylor, William Rosenbach and Eric Rosenbach (eds.), *Military Leadership: In Pursuit of Excellence*, Sixth Edition (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2009), pp. xiii-xvi.

‘professional knowledge’, ‘self-confidence’, ‘courage’, ‘sympathy’, ‘energy’, ‘patriotism’, ‘*esprit-de-corps*’ and ‘discipline’ as characteristics required of RAF officers, as well as being key organisational values.⁷⁰ This heroic focus developed from the nature of aerial combat and the intellectual context of the time, though they remain present in modern RAF writings on leadership.⁷¹ However, concepts like sympathy had their antecedents in Army practices and resembled the concept of paternalism, which suggested that society was hierarchical and that each class had specific responsibilities. For the middle and upper classes, for example, this included providing appropriate guidance and leadership to the working class.⁷² Specifically, concerning sympathy, AP1300 noted that leaders needed to understand the ‘needs and interests of others’, a clear example of paternalism.⁷³ Furthermore, organisationally, the personnel structure of the RAF favoured pilots. A symbiosis existed between pilots, the Service’s organisational structure and public schools that espoused broader social ideas that fitted with the characteristics noted above. This was because the RAF preferred recruits from public schools, as they were perceived to have the right leadership abilities. While there existed a degree of class self-reinforcement by senior officers who preferred public school recruits, it is clear that concepts like courage gained currency between these institutions, as illustrated in the discussion of Portal’s Andover essay above. This heroic view was widely held at the time; for example, Wavell, writing on the subject of ‘The Good General’, extolled virtues prevalent in trait theory, suggesting that

⁷⁰ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III. For a post-Second World War RAF view on these characteristics, see: Air Chief Marshal Sir John Slessor, ‘Command and Leadership’, *RAFQ and Commonwealth Air Forces Journal*, 1(2) (1949), pp. 89-96.

⁷¹ A 2005 anthology by the Royal Air Force Leadership Centre outlined ‘Sense of Belonging’, ‘Duty and Service’, ‘To Be a Leader’, ‘Morale’, ‘Courage’, ‘Communication’, ‘Leading by Example’, ‘Know Your People’, ‘Vision and Decisiveness’, ‘Trust’ and ‘Command’ as key leadership values for the RAF, see: John Jupp (ed.), *Leadership: An Anthology* (Sleaford: The Royal Air Force Leadership Centre, 2005). While the language has shifted, in 2009, the second edition of this anthology outlined similar leadership values. For an examination of the argument that the RAF maintained a focus on heroic leadership until at least the 1970s, see: Oscar Grusky, ‘Education and Military Commitment’, *Armed Forces and Society (AFS)*, 6(1) (1979), pp. 132-47.

⁷² Sheffield, ‘Officer-Man Relations’, pp. 8-14.

⁷³ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 10.

an ‘unconquerable sprit’ was at the heart of good leadership.⁷⁴ In a publically available declaration on *The Royal Air Force as a Career* from 1925, it was affirmed that the RAF sought recruits who had ‘Individuality, resource, and rapid judgement’, and that by the time they graduated from Cranwell, they would have ‘a high standard of self-respect, reliability, and professional keenness’.⁷⁵

While the RAF identified characteristics desired of officers, the Service struggled, or did not feel the need, to conceptualise leadership at different organisational levels. Nevertheless, GD Branch officers took on a number of differing leadership responsibilities ranging from operational command to staff duties in the Air Ministry, which reinforces the importance of job assignments as part of the RAF’s nurturing process. As already noted, leadership was about how you ‘did it’, and studies into its relevance at different levels of responsibility did not exist. Apart from *The Kings Regulations*, which focused on a commander’s legal responsibilities, only AP1301 and Air Ministry Weekly Order (AMWO) No. 284 in 1928 outlined potential leadership roles. Specifically, these focused on staff and the administrative duties of Officer Commanding (OC).⁷⁶ These were prescriptive outlines concerned more with responsibility and authority than with the leadership vision required to implement them. It was generally felt that able officers nurtured though methods described below would feel their way towards understanding their leadership responsibilities as their careers progressed towards senior positions. In 1923 and 1928, AMP produced reports into issues facing the GD Branch concerning promotion, age and

⁷⁴ Wavell, *Generals and Generalship*, pp. 1-10, p. 26.

⁷⁵ TNA, AIR 10/1112, AP1100 – *The Royal Air Force as a Career* (1925) p. 6, 32. This publication was available to purchase for the price of 3s.

⁷⁶ TNA, AIR 10/2313, AP1301, Chaps. III-VI; TNA, AIR 72/10, Air Ministry Weekly Order (AMWO) No. 284 – Administrative Duties of Commanding Officers, 26 April 1928.

the RAF's requirements of an officer.⁷⁷ While CD52, the 1928 report, outlined the opportunities and processes available for officer advancement, it did not enunciate the characteristics required for those seeking development. However, in addition to CD52, AMWO No. 426, which, while published before the former was based on findings from its investigation, did highlight an important taxonomy; specifically, it was noted that the RAF required four classes of personnel:

- (i) Officers for Command, staff and administrative duties.
- (ii) Officers for technical duties.
- (iii) Personnel for junior flying duties.
- (iv) Skilled tradesmen⁷⁸

While not proscribed, it is clear that the first class of officers were those who were nurtured for senior leadership. For example, in the prosopography population in Appendix Four, only one per cent of officers undertook specialist training such as engineering or navigation; the balance clearly focused on command and staff duties. While this might well have changed in time, it is worth reflecting that AMWO No. 426 also clearly stated, on dismissing the need for a technical branch:

Under this policy the danger is avoided of developing technical branches out of touch with flying and fighting requirements, and out of sympathy with officers who fly and fight.⁷⁹

While altruistically stating that this should not bar specialist officers from senior positions, the formation of a separate Technical Branch, as Chapter Two notes, suggests this was not the case. Thus, characteristics outlined in AP1300 generally became those applied to all levels of command. As with the maturation of many ideas, the inter-war period represented

⁷⁷ TNA, AIR 10/1208, SD5 – *Analysis of the Officer Position in the Royal Air Force as Regards Promotion and Age*, July 1923; TNA, AIR 10/1336, CD52 – *An Inquiry into the Requirements in Officers of the Royal Air Force: Part 1*, September 1928.

⁷⁸ TNA, AIR 72/10, AMWO No. 426 – *The Constitution of the General Duties Branch*, 21 June 1928, p. 1.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 2.

a time when the RAF felt its way towards a broader understanding of leadership. This lack of codification paralleled the British military's approach to doctrine.

Modern theory differentiates between lower-level leadership focused on technical and administrative knowledge and that employed at the highest levels where the focus is on developing organisations and strategies.⁸⁰ Senior, or strategic, leadership is about setting vision, tempo and goals within an organisation while developing the competencies required to deliver them.⁸¹ The ability to move through leadership levels requires a step-change in awareness. Central is the concept of vision, which the RAF recognised as a trait. Thus, it was here where the RAF recognised the need to equip officers with the knowledge to support their development as potential senior leaders. Air Commodore (AC) Brooke-Popham, in his 'Preliminary Lecture to Students' at Andover, suggested that once students completed the course, they were expected to operate outside of their 'own little command', which suggests they were being prepared to set the vision necessary to transcend different organisational levels.⁸² Further developed if officers attended the IDC, vision, a concept shared between the services, provided an inter-organisational perspective for nurtured officers that would allow them to operate effectively at the senior level, thus providing a step-change in their leadership development. Brooke-Popham further emphasised that students emanating from Andover would have to begin to consider problems from an organisational perspective, a key difference between leadership at lower and senior levels where the former focused on short-term challenges.⁸³ For Adair, taking responsibility for

⁸⁰ David Day and Robert Lord, 'Executive Leadership and Organizational Performance: Suggestions for a New Theory and Methodology', *Journal of Management*, 14(3) (1988), p. 459.

⁸¹ Bolden *et al*, *Exploring Leadership*, pp. 84-91.

⁸² LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 1/5/6, Preliminary Lecture to Students, N.D., p. 3. For a brief overview of Brooke-Popham's career, see: Wing Commander G.S. Evans, '70 Years of Brooke-Popham', *The Hawk*, 52 (1992), pp. 83-94. Brooke-Popham is one key RAF officer deserving of a thorough academic biography.

⁸³ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 1/5/6, Preliminary Lecture, p. 3.

the organisation was central to a senior leader's responsibilities.⁸⁴ The key issue with the RAF's recognition that vision was important, and that a step-change in understanding was required, was that, as an organisation, it was limited to those able to pursue development through Staff College attendance. This route gave Leigh-Mallory and those of his peers who reached Air Rank access to the military elite as the system sought to nurture identified officers. However, these views, apart from dissemination through the publications already noted, were not widely available outside of this small select group of officers. The acceptance of this narrow development process raises the question of what the RAF understood by leadership development and succession planning.

1.4 Professionalism, Leadership Development and Succession Planning

Any discussion of leadership and its development links to questions over an organisation's professionalism. Underpinning this is the problem of defining professionalism and its related derivatives of professionalisation and professionals. David Trim offered a useful prescriptive list of seven factors that define professionals: occupational identity, formal hierarchy, permanence, formal pay systems, distinctive expertise and means of education, efficiency in expertise, and distinctive self-conceptualisation.⁸⁵ While a useful list, which largely conforms to Huntington's definition that military professionals are distinguished by expertise, responsibility and 'corporateness' [sic] concerning the central skill of managing violence, it also opens up questions regarding the applicability of these factors.⁸⁶ For example, the issue of identity relates to the question of ethos, which Chapter Two argues

⁸⁴ Adair, *Effective Strategic Leadership*, p. 1.

⁸⁵ David J.B. Trim, 'Introduction' in David J.B. Trim (ed.), *The Chivalric Ethos and the Development of Military Professionalism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), pp. 6-7.

⁸⁶ Huntington, *Soldier and the State*, pp. 8-11. For a broader conception of the characteristics of professionals, see: G. Harries-Jenkins, 'Professionals in Organizations' in J.A. Jackson (ed.), *Professions and Professionalization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 58-9.

encapsulates an organisation's culture and separates out organisational distinctiveness. For example, the Army's regimental ethos in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries created friction against an emerging professional ethic that was at odds with its amateur tradition. In the RAF, pilot ethos, linked to the Service's culture, separated GD Branch officers from other professionals. This delivered power and prestige to those who were part of this 'tribe', to which they owed their loyalty.⁸⁷ Additionally, it was to GD Branch officers that the RAF looked for senior commanders, which reinforces the view that this structure carried more cultural weight and importance within the Service than other branches. Furthermore, command was a key element of this identity. In terms of CAS, all except Trenchard and MRAF Sir Edward Ellington experienced squadron command. This replicated the pervasive system that senior officers in the services came from certain regiments, posts or career paths.⁸⁸

Despite the challenge of defining professionals, Huntington provided a framework for understanding military professionalism, defining professionals as those officers who were competent in their field and in the management, planning, generation and application of fighting power, which, as this thesis suggests, was centred on effective leadership. However, as Brian Linn reflected, Huntington's analysis encapsulated a 'cherished belief' in

⁸⁷ Military organisations can be broken down into their tribal elements, for example, as Finlan wrote concerning the Army, the 'concept of the regiment dominates the ideational and tribal realm of the service', see: Finlan, *Contemporary Military Culture and Strategic Studies*, p. xv. For a recent modern air power based view of the concept of 'tribalism', see: Mark Wells, 'Tribal Warfare: The Society of Modern Airmen', *Air and Space Power Journal*, 29(3) (2015), pp. 82-7.

⁸⁸ While the appointment in 2013 of ACM Sir Andrew Pulford as CAS represents a subtle shift away from fixed wing pilots holding the RAF's most senior post, he would have at least undertaken *ab initio* training on fixed wing platforms, thus giving him tangential membership of this 'tribe'. Pulford spent much of his career as a rotary wing pilot, and until this point, CAS had always been, albeit with variable experience, a fixed wing pilot. Interestingly, the recent appointment of AVM Richard Knighton, an engineer, to the position of ACAS, represents a key moment in the RAF's professionalisation as it illustrates a broadening of posts available to non-pilots and the ability of the Service to 'break the glass ceiling'. Similarly, AVM Sue Gray, also an engineer and currently Director of Combat Air at Defence Equipment and Support, was the second female in the RAF to be promoted to two-star rank, which suggests that as the Service evolves it is not only becoming more professional but also more diverse. However, this was clearly not always the case. On the politics of integration of women, see: Kathleen Sherit, 'The Integration of Women into the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force, Post-World War II to the Mid 1990s', (PhD Thesis, King's College London, 2013).

the American military that they would self-reform if left free from political interference, which ignores the need for some political oversight in any system.⁸⁹ Additionally, Huntington's historical analysis was too deterministic and did not take account of the 'many wrong turns' encountered in the post-US Civil War era, which were a key focus for his thesis.⁹⁰ Nevertheless, membership of the GD Branch made officers like Leigh-Mallory the RAF's core military professionals because as pilots and, by 1918, as squadron commanders, they were involved in the generation of fighting power at the tactical level. As Chapter Three notes both flying and command were key criterion for promotion. However, this did not mean they exuded the leadership characteristics noted above. In addition, the numerous entry routes into the British military, which, from the perspective of permanent officers, did not change until the 1960s, nullified the existence of a professional ethic in the services as a homogenous group.⁹¹

Related to the process of leadership development outlined below, Janowitz furthered the idea of professionalism by suggesting that a process existed whereby officers who entered the military elite developed and managed their careers through 'many years of professional education, training, and experience', which paralleled the pillars of professional competencies recognised to reinforce leadership.⁹² While subsumed by the debate over civil-military relations and associated considerations of social conflict between political and military elites, the latter term related to those directly in control of military forces at a senior level. While emerging from an aristocratic model, it is clear that Britain maintained a democratic ideal of civil-military relations due to the maintenance of political control over

⁸⁹ Brian McAllister Linn, *The Echo of Battle: The Army's Way of War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), p. 41.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ It worth noting that a study remains to be undertaken to understand the extent to which the RAF has gone through a process of professionalisation since its formation.

⁹² Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, p. 125; Drew, 'The Three Pillars of Professional Competence', pp. 54-67.

the military, with positions like Secretary of State for Air providing oversight and being responsible to Parliament.⁹³ The connection between CAS and the Secretary of State remained important, and Trenchard's fractured relationship with Lord Rothermere, which ended his first term as CAS, and his successful association with Winston Churchill and Viscount Templewood, illustrate this. Considered for the position of AMP in 1944, as an AC, Leigh-Mallory had entered the ranks of the military elite by 1937 and steadily progressed through them until his death.⁹⁴ In 1945, Trenchard described the position of AMP to ACM Sir Wilfrid Freeman as 'challenging', and one that, if undertaken successfully, could lead to appointment as CAS.⁹⁵ Applied to Leigh-Mallory, this would have required him to have what Freeman described in 1944 as 'wide operational experience', 'knowledge of the RAF', 'competen[ce] to stand up to the Civil Service', and, have 'vision'.⁹⁶ Thus, training, education and experience provided the methods for developing leadership that professionals engaged with to provide organisational capacity. This led to preferred characteristics that emerged through immersion in the developmental processes of the RAF, which formed the basis of the Service's succession planning.

It is worth identifying the difference between leader and leadership development, as it had implications concerning the RAF's ability to produce effective senior leaders. Defining these ideas helps one understand whether the RAF was developing individual leaders or those who build:

networked relationships among individuals that enhance cooperation and resource exchange in creating organizational value.⁹⁷

⁹³ Morris Janowitz, 'Military Elites and the Study of War', *Conflict Resolution*, 1(1) (March 1957), pp. 9-18.

⁹⁴ Christ Church, University of Oxford (CC), Personal Papers of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Portal of Hungerford, File 7, Folder A, Letter from Air Chief Marshal Sir Wilfrid Freeman to Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Charles Portal, 25 May 1944.

⁹⁵ CC, Portal Papers, File 3, Folder K, Letter from Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Trenchard to Air Chief Marshal Sir Wilfrid Freeman, 5 January 1945.

⁹⁶ CC, Portal Papers, File 7, Folder A, Freeman to Portal, 25 May 1944.

⁹⁷ Day, 'Leadership Development', p. 585.

The above suggests a focus on the importance of socialisation, which allows leadership development to expand ‘the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes’.⁹⁸ Conversely, leader development centres on developing an individual’s ‘knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with formal leadership roles’, which mirrors the definition Bernard Burnes gave for management development.⁹⁹ This semantic difference further reinforces the problem of separating terms like command, leadership and management. However, the key difference here is that leader development focuses on human, rather than social, or organisational, capital. At its conceptual base, this is the difference between intrapersonal and interpersonal leadership, and leader development links to the idea that individuals are effectively equipped to pursue specific functions in an organisation. In the RAF, this was about equipping an officer with skills necessary to command a unit and perform adequate staff duties or related administrative functions. This required self-awareness and motivation to achieve those objectives and positions in a hierarchical organisation through promotion and the development of professional knowledge. Conversely, leadership development is about developing leaders who are able to look up and out of their ‘silo’ and provide organisational capacity and deliver value by equipping officers with the vision to cope with unforeseen challenges that they increasingly encounter at senior levels.¹⁰⁰ While military education acted as a nexus to leadership development, this remained a much more complex process to achieve and required broader engagement that was not just limited to formal conceptions of training. It included areas like officers thinking about and engaging with their profession, such as writing for and lecturing on aspects of their job as well as undertaking and being identified

⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 582.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 584; Bernard Burnes, *Managing Change: A Strategic Approach to Organisational Dynamic*, Fifth Edition (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2009), p. 598.

¹⁰⁰ For a consideration of the ability to do this, in the context of the RAF and with specific links to the Casablanca Conference, see: Gray, *Leadership*, pp. 208-12

for appropriate appointments. This required individuals to take ownership of their development while seeking to expand their competencies beyond those simply required for everyday functions. Central to this was the decision to pursue job assignments like attendance at Andover. However, for the RAF, or any military organisation, it is not realistic to separate professional knowledge from leader or leadership development process. In a modern sense, as Bolden suggested, an integrative approach to development between leader and leadership approaches provides for a balanced consideration that is contingent on social, organisational and cultural perspectives that shape context.¹⁰¹

Returning to the ways of leadership development, for the purpose of this thesis, the processes of training and education are separated and conform to the definitions provided in 2007 by the then Director of the United Kingdom's Defence Academy, Lieutenant-General Sir John Kiszely, who defined the former as 'preparing people, individually or collectively, for given tasks'. Education concerns 'developing [...] mental powers and understanding'.¹⁰² It is worth highlighting that this separation was indistinct in the RAF, which labelled courses as training regardless of whether they developed something more than just specific skills. As Chapter Five explores, it is worth noting that training includes aspects of education. AMWOs grouped all courses under the rubric of 'Courses of Instruction'.¹⁰³ Officers were encouraged to attend various courses and rewarded with time antecedents for promotion. On 18 January 1939, the outgoing Commandant of the IDC, AM Sir Arthur Longmore, described 'Training for Higher Command' in a RUSI lecture that represented an educational view of an officer's rise to senior command and highlighted

¹⁰¹ Richard Bolden, 'An Integrated Framework for Leadership Development' in Richard Bolden (ed.), 'Leadership Development in Context', *Leadership South West Research Report 3* (Exeter: Centre for Leadership Studies, University of Exeter, 2006), pp. 53-6.

¹⁰² Lieutenant-General Sir John Kiszely, 'Post-Modern Challenges for Modern Warriors', *The Shrivenham Papers*, 5 (2007), p. 14.

¹⁰³ TNA, AIR 72/7, AMWO No. 799 – Programme of Instructional Courses for Officers, 31 December 1925

the stove piped process of development already alluded to.¹⁰⁴ For Longmore, the route to senior command ran from initial officer training through the staff colleges, senior officer courses and the IDC. However, Longmore was adamant that attendance did not guarantee an effective 'Higher Commander' but might lead to 'an extremely intelligent and highly trained staff officer', and that development was also contingent on 'His past record with his unit in the less senior ranks'; this highlights the relationship amongst education and training with the third pillar of development, experience.¹⁰⁵ This was a clear indication that heroic leaders were expected to emerge as well as being nurtured by the RAF, which is, in part, why public schools were an important part of leadership development. As the second edition of the provisional manual of *RAF Drill and Ceremonial* stated in 1926, 'Leadership is not born of learning; it depends on straightforward human qualities'.¹⁰⁶ In many respects, this provisional manual illustrates that the RAF was still working its way towards an understanding of leadership. Nevertheless, the RAF placed great faith in public schools to develop those 'qualities' before an officer joined up, though of course this also reinforced class boundaries.

Perhaps the clearest indication that the RAF understood something greater than leader development is that it recognised the value that attendance at institutions like Andover and the IDC generated. Due to be delivered by Trenchard, who was unable to attend, this broader value was enunciated in the opening address to students at Andover on 4 April 1922 that was delivered by AOC Inland Area, AVM Sir John Salmond. It was stated that Andover was to be 'the cradle [...] of our brains'.¹⁰⁷ While written for a captive audience of senior officers and students of Andover's First Course, this phrase is often

¹⁰⁴Air Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', *JRUSI*, 84 (1939), pp. 463-78.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 476.

¹⁰⁶ Air Ministry, AP818 – *Royal Air Force Drill and Ceremonial (Provisional)*, Second Edition (London: HMSO, 1926), p. 3.

¹⁰⁷ TNA, AIR 5/881, Opening Address at the RAF Staff College, Andover, 4 April 1922.

linked to the development of doctrine; however, a deeper inference can be derived from this statement. This statement made clear that officers attending Andover delivered value to the RAF not only in specific areas like policy, but also in its organisational leadership capacity, because the Air Ministry regularly reminded the Commandant that it was from these men that future senior leaders would emerge.¹⁰⁸ The RAF also understood that it was necessary to learn and interact with the other services and regularly sent officers to Camberley, the Indian Army Staff College at Quetta and the Royal Naval Staff College at Greenwich, as well as the RN Senior Officers' War Course (sic) (SOWC) and the Army Senior Officers' School (sic).¹⁰⁹ Trenchard was a fervent supporter of the IDC, as he understood the advantages that such a combined institution had for both officers and the RAF. Broadly, these courses not only allowed for the development of professional knowledge, but also introduced a process of socialisation into their development that was useful during the course of the Second World War, as many officers had a shared language that allowed them to communicate effectively at the operational and strategic levels.¹¹⁰

The RAF, however, did not effectively measure development in a manner readily identifiable today. Modern methods like 360-degree feedback, executive coaching and mentoring simply did not exist, as the latter two processes require a one-to-one interaction that was alien to the RAF. While coaching, practical goal focused one-to-one learning and mentoring – pairing juniors with senior leaders to learn – are increasingly used in the modern military, 360-degree feedback continues to struggle to find widespread acceptance

¹⁰⁸ For example, see: TNA, AIR 2/355, Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to Commandant, RAF Staff College, 4 June 1931.

¹⁰⁹ In this thesis, the term 'Greenwich' is used to describe the RN Staff College. However, it is recognised that Greenwich was home to the Royal Naval College more broadly and included the SOWC, which is referred to by this abbreviation in this thesis. The Staff College was just one element of Greenwich, see: Harry Dickinson, *Wisdom and War: The Royal Naval College Greenwich, 1873-1998* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013).

¹¹⁰ On the debate over socialisation in the modern British military, see: Anthony King, 'Unity is Strength: Staff College and the British Officer Corps', *The British Journal of Sociology (BJS)*, 60(1) (2009), pp. 123-44.

because it requires views from a wide range of peers.¹¹¹ Nevertheless, it is possible to identify the presence of several processes related to leadership development in the RAF. Rather than intrapersonal interaction, the closest evidence that a similar process to coaching and mentoring occurred in the RAF was at an organisational level, which can be characterised as ‘nurturing’ officers through key job assignments. As Table 1.1 highlights, the RAF recognised networking, job assignments and action learning, though it did not use the language present here. Socialisation, a term this thesis uses, is a more appropriate term for networking, a process defined as ‘fostering broader individual networks’.¹¹² Action learning is a process whereby leaders learn from undertaking project-based assignments to solve challenges they will encounter.¹¹³ In the RAF, this typically occurred in Andover’s classrooms and found an outgrowth in pedagogical methods employed, such as war games. Table 1.1 ascribes some of the key aspects of Leigh-Mallory’s career to these processes. Broader discussions of the relationship of these processes form the basis of subsequent chapters and illustrate the significance of key institutions like Andover. The question of training is dealt with in more depth in Chapter Five; however, here it is suffice to note that, apart from the shared identity generated through pilot training, there is little identifiable leadership development in this sphere. Nonetheless, effective training, and the improvement in skills based knowledge, which linked to leader development, produced core competencies required by military professionals that formed the basis of further

¹¹¹ In general, see: Day, ‘Leadership Development’, pp. 581-613; Air Commodore Peter Gray and Jonathan Harvey, ‘Strategic Leadership Education’ in Colonel Bernd Horn and Lieutenant-Colonel Allister MacIntyre (eds.), *In Pursuit of Excellence: International Perspectives of Military Leadership* (Kingston ON: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2006), pp. 81-96. Nevertheless, there has been some call for the introduction of 360-degree feedback, which is being increasingly used on the Defence Strategic Leadership Programme run by the UK Defence Academy. For example, see: Thomas X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2004), pp. 237-9. ¹¹¹

¹¹² Day, ‘Leadership Development’, p. 596.

¹¹³ See: Michael J. Marquardt, ‘Action Learning and Leadership’, *The Learning Organization*, 7(5) (2000), pp. 233-40.

nurturing. Effectively undertaking these competencies made officers visible for further development through processes identified herein.

	Training	Education	Experience
Nurturing	Not present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAF Staff College Imperial Defence College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directing Staff at the Army Staff College, Camberley School of Army Co-Operation
Networks and Socialisation	Not present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAF Staff College Imperial Defence College Royal United Services Institution 	
Job Assignments	Not present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAF Staff College Imperial Defence College 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Squadron School of Army Co-Operation Directing Staff at the Army Staff College, Camberley RAF Member at the Geneva Disarmament Conference Staff Appointments
Action Learning	Not present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAF Staff College Imperial Defence College Royal United Services Institution 	

(Source: Derived from Day, ‘Leadership Development’, p. 588)

Apart from ACRs, produced by an officer’s OC, the RAF failed to assess officers’ development and progression effectively. While AMP’s Department managed personnel files and RAF promotion processes, there is some tentative evidence to suggest that certain officers were nurtured, like those selected to attend staff courses. ACRs began with an OC providing their view of an officer’s capability.¹¹⁴ These reports went through three more levels as a wing or station commander, and then a group commander provided comments, and finally remarks were made by an AOC or other OC. ACRs formed the key source of information in RAF promotion procedures. The ACR was split into four sections, with the first part dealing with administrative details like rank, branch, type of commission held and

¹¹⁴ TNA, AIR 2/506, Copy of Form 367, Annual Confidential Report (Officers) for 1930.

duties upon which engaged.¹¹⁵ The second section dealt with ‘Conduct’ and covered issues like temperament, performance and an officer’s ability to set an example, which was explicitly noted as being significant for officers above the rank of SL.¹¹⁶ In dealing with an officer’s conduct concerning ‘the handling of men’ and ‘performance of his duties’, OCs were given a choice of four descriptions to apply: ‘Exceptional’, ‘Above the average’, ‘Average’ and ‘Below the average’. The third section on ‘Ability’ is particularly instructive, as it utilised the aforementioned criteria in a series of questions dealing with technical, administrative, professional and staff knowledge. It also qualified an officer’s flying abilities by recording the number of hours flown. It sought to qualify an officer’s ‘Power of command’ and ‘Power to impart knowledge’, which suggests that the RAF placed significance on knowledge transfer and leadership. Combined with the idea of providing an adequate ‘example to his juniors’, which appeared in the ‘Conduct’ section, it is clear that leadership by example was an aspect of an officer’s progression, because, as Chapter Three illustrates, command experience was a criterion for promotion. The final section dealt with ‘General’ aspects like medical fitness and referred to participation in sport and knowledge of foreign languages. Sport was important, not only in terms of officers keeping physically fit for active duty, but also due to its perceived links with developing leadership characteristics. This was particularly important given the links between sport in public schools and its importance to the RAF. Two key aspects of the ACR were that, first, the final section sought to provide recommendations as to an officer’s eligibility to attend Andover and whether he was in the promotion zone. The second aspect concerned the nature of these reports and their links to leadership development. While the reports were described as confidential, officers were aware of their contents, with it stated that,

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

‘Whatever be the nature of the annual report, it is to be communicated to the officer reported on and the fact noted hereon’.¹¹⁷ While aware of their OC’s views of their performance, officers had no right of reply and only saw a senior officer’s view if the report was adverse. For example, in 1934, SL Leslie Hollinghurst formally questioned what he believed to be an ‘adverse’ comment on his ACR. While it is not possible to examine the comment, the reply it elicited from the Air Council illustrated the closed nature of such reports when it was noted ‘that protests of a trivial nature [...] regarding remarks of their superior officers [...] [were] to be deprecated’.¹¹⁸ This closed view potentially shut officers off from understanding their own progression, though, in the case of Hollinghurst, being aware of an adverse report did not hinder his rise to senior leadership; Hollinghurst retired as an ACM. Thus, while the ACR tracked performance for the RAF, and was the key source of information for promotion, it had little value to the individual, as they could not question its contents. Its only potential value was in giving officers an indication of what their direct superiors thought of them, though only if it was adverse. This in itself provided an indication of their potential for progression, though they did not receive personal feedback on how they might improve their leadership abilities. A similar confidential report was produced on officers completing ‘Courses of Instruction’, like at Andover. Here, recommendations were made concerning the award of the post-nominal *psa* (Passed Staff College, Andover).¹¹⁹

The above consideration of how the RAF tracked performance opens up the link between leadership development and succession planning. This concerns the question of

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ RAFM, Personal Papers of Air Chief Marshal Sir Leslie Hollinghurst, AC 73/23/95, Letter from the Air Officer Commanding, Royal Air Force, India to the Officer Commanding, 1 (Indian) Group, RAF, 8 October 1934.

¹¹⁹ See: Peter Helson, *A Private Air Marshal: The Biography Air Marshal Sir George Jones, KBE, CB, DFC* (Canberra: Air Power Development Centre, 2010), p. 100. Jones attended Andover in 1928 as a Dominion officer and went on to serve as CAS of the Royal Australian Air Force between 1942 and 1952.

whether the RAF recognised that it was selecting, identifying and educating future officers for senior leadership by implementing structures that nurtured leaders' abilities. Succession planning:

is more than knowing who will take the reins if the corporate jet crashes tomorrow. It's about growing your own talent to ensure your company's future over the long term.¹²⁰

It is a process driven by an organisation's senior leadership, and, as Adair noted concerning the functions of high-ranking leaders, one key element of their role concerns the process of succession planning and leading by example.¹²¹ Trenchard's biographer, Andrew Boyle, historicised the debate over succession planning in the RAF when he suggested that certain officers were marked out for senior command.¹²² Specifically, Boyle highlighted three of Leigh-Mallory's peers, Portal, Tedder and Slessor, whose names Trenchard is presumed to have marked out in a copy of the *AFL*.¹²³ By the time Boyle published his biography of Trenchard, Portal, Tedder and Slessor were the first three CASs to emerge from those officers without pre-First World War experience.¹²⁴ They were obvious examples to be included in a passage stressing Trenchard's centrality to the development of the RAF. While this copy of the *AFL* might have existed, Boyle failed to identify where it resides. Boyle went further and suggested that in stepping aside as CAS for his brother, ACM Sir Geoffrey Salmond, ACM Sir John Salmond had, 'at one improvident stroke', broken 'the line of succession prepared by Trenchard'.¹²⁵ This episode led to the appointment of ACM

¹²⁰ William Rothwell, 'Putting Success into your Succession Planning', *Journal of Business Strategy*, 23 (3) (2002), p. 32.

¹²¹ Adair, *Effective Strategic Leadership*, p. 95.

¹²² Boyle, *Trenchard*, pp. 517-8.

¹²³ The current Lord Trenchard can find no trace of this document. It resides neither in his grandfather's papers held at the RAF Museum nor those left in the family's possession. Email from Lord Trenchard to the Author, 6 May 2013.

¹²⁴ See: Harold Balfour, *Wings over Westminster* (London: Hutchinson, 1973), p. 56; Vincent Orange, *Tedder: Quietly in Command* (Abingdon: Frank Cass, 2004), pp. 70; Richards, *Portal*, p. 93. Balfour's list of Trenchard's 'young men' differs from Boyle in that it includes MRAF Lord Douglas rather than Tedder.

¹²⁵ Boyle, *Trenchard*, p. 678.

Ellington as CAS, whom Orange described as a ‘liability’.¹²⁶ Orange’s views reinforced Boyle’s by noting that Ellington did not have ‘necessary training or self-confidence to assert himself’ at the senior level, where he was required to interact with ministers during a period of rapidly changing geo-strategic priorities.¹²⁷ Historians like Parton have repeated these claims, writing, ‘Ellington appeared to be afraid of taking on the political establishment’.¹²⁸ Conversely, the Marquis of Londonderry, who served as Secretary of State for Air during Ellington’s tenure, described him as a ‘tower of strength’ and the right officer to succeed Geoffrey Salmond, despite emerging younger officers; however, Londonderry clearly had his reputation to defend in his memoir.¹²⁹

While officers like Portal and Slessor maintained correspondence with Trenchard after 1929, it is not clear that this had a purpose other than keeping a key RAF advocate in the House of Lords and a serving five-star officer informed of current developments.¹³⁰ Thus, Trenchard was able to defend RAF interests even after his term as CAS ended. Furthermore, while, in 1963, MRAF Lord Douglas recalled his ‘admiration’ for Trenchard for taking him ‘under his wing’, such recollections should be treated with care, as they come from senior officers viewing the latter through a hagiographic lens.¹³¹ No evidence exists that Leigh-Mallory maintained correspondence with Trenchard. Therefore, his post-1929 career needs to be explained more systematically than just relying on patronage;

¹²⁶ Vincent Orange, *Churchill and His Airmen: Relationships, Intrigue and Policy Making, 1914-1945* (London: Grub Street, 2013), p. 109.

¹²⁷ Boyle, *Trenchard*, p. 679.

¹²⁸ Parton, ‘Royal Air Force Doctrine’, p. 160.

¹²⁹ Marquis of Londonderry, *Wings of Destiny* (London: Macmillan, 1943), p. 162. Ellington’s tenure as CAS requires a more balanced analysis shorn of the politicised views presented, as he effectively began the process that prepared the RAF for expansion and laid the foundation for its structure that would take it through the Second World War.

¹³⁰ For example, see: RAFM, Personal Papers of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Trenchard, MFC 78/23/2, Correspondence with Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Portal, 2 May 1940-2 January 1952; TNA, AIR 75/134, Personal Papers of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor, Wartime correspondence with Lord Trenchard and Air Marshal Sir Charles Portal.

¹³¹ Douglas, *Years of Combat*, p. 181.

though, as Chapter Seven illustrates, they did know each other in the 1920s, and this could not have hurt his career. As Haslam suggested, only in 1940, while vying for a senior position himself, did Trenchard have some further influence over RAF appointments.¹³² Rather than the perceived importance that Boyle inferred of Trenchard's direct patronage, it was nurturing and socialisation with senior officers at an organisational level that was a factor in nurturing careers. This came through contact with senior officers during service at the Air Ministry, which was a key pattern in a nurtured officer's rise to Air Rank.

While familiarity with Trenchard was advantageous, this thesis argues that, from the perspective of leadership development, his key role was in having the vision to develop the institutions and structures that nurtured officers and provided a foundation for subsequent career progression. The existence of Andover highlights the importance of the institutions as the RAF recognised the need to offer development opportunities. Effective senior leaders such as Trenchard recognised the need for long-range planning that might not come to fruition for several years. It was this, rather than mentoring individual officers, that Trenchard understood. Trenchard's 1919 paper on 'The Permanent Organization of the Royal Air Force' recognised the need for Andover, stating that it 'must be opened as soon as possible'.¹³³ The Air Ministry and the Secretary of State for Air vehemently opposed any suggestion that either Cranwell or Andover be located close to or merged with similar Army or RN institutions, which both the War Office and Admiralty desired. The Air Ministry recognised the value of these institutions in maintaining independence as well as providing nurtured officers with ascribed cultural practices.¹³⁴ Furthermore, this

¹³² Group Captain E.B. Haslam, 'How Lord Dowding came to leave Fighter Command', *JSS*, 4(2) (1981), pp. 175-86.

¹³³ TNA, AIR 8/12, Permanent Organization of the Royal Air Force,, p. 6. This memorandum was presented to parliament with a note by the Secretary of State for War and Air, Winston Churchill, on 11 December 1919.

¹³⁴ Hansard, HC Deb, 21 March 1922, Vol. 152, Cols. 342-394.

challenges the suggestion by Janowitz and Arthur Davies that officers reaching the pinnacle of their profession followed a less conventional career path.¹³⁵ While Trenchard is an example of this, it is not the case for other RAF officers of this period who emerged to take up senior leadership roles. The typical process for the RAF, as this thesis illustrates, was for officers to follow characteristic paths through institutions like Andover, whether formally laid down in regulations or not. For example, from Appendix Three, Alexander Shekleton, who joined the RFC in 1913, only became a GC in 1935 and remained in this rank until his death in 1941. Shekleton's protracted promotion rate is explained by his decision to specialise in engineering rather than staff duties, which was the more characteristic route. Longmore's conception of the process of reaching senior command through the staff colleges and the IDC is indicative of the existence of emblematic lines of succession planning that allowed officers to enter the military elite.¹³⁶ Written 21 years after the foundation of the RAF, Longmore's article suggested that by 1939, a typical path had emerged that saw officers engage with accepted processes. Watched over by the Air Ministry and Trenchard, these processes encouraged action learning and socialisation by officers through appropriately timed job assignments, despite little formal understanding of leadership development. By following these structures, officers delivered organisational value to the RAF while ascribing to its cultural practices. Thus, Trenchard's greatest achievement was not in mentoring these men but in creating structures and processes that provided the RAF with a committed body of military professionals through broad succession planning arrangements.

1.5 Summary

¹³⁵ Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, p. 151; Arthur K. Davies, 'Bureaucratic Patterns in the Navy Officer Corps', *Social Forces*, 27(2) (December 1948), pp. 143-53.

¹³⁶ Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', pp. 463-478.

This chapter has highlighted the challenge of utilising a modern understanding of leadership theory and applying it to the past. It is clear that modern terminology and conceptions would be alien to those officers under consideration in this thesis. However, it opens up valid questions concerning what the RAF understood by leadership and its related conceptions. The RAF had a clear conception of what it viewed as leadership, which linked to the conduct of war and the need to generate fighting power. The RAF readily identified that an officer's primary purpose linked to war fighting, and, thus, they should be prepared for such ends. The emphasis on morale, which was evident in RAF doctrine and teachings, had its roots in nineteenth century military thinking that stressed the importance of moralism and *esprit-de-corps* in offensive doctrines.

Despite a simpler view of leadership, the RAF grasped the idea that it was required as a profession to provide some form of leadership development, though officers were expected, through public school attendance, to already have some of the basic leader traits necessary. If one chose to pursue technical rather than command and staff training, this limited oneself to leader development. As officers progressed through Andover and the IDC, they were exposed to broader conceptions of organisational leadership underpinned by professional knowledge. These institutions became the archetypal sources of senior leaders' development, despite the RAF's inability to engage in some form of coherent management of the process beyond the use of ACRs. However, the establishment of institutions like Cranwell, Andover and the IDC highlights the recognition that there was some need to strategically plan through the implementation of a succession planning system, which identified and nurtured key talent. Given that these processes were in evidence, albeit constrained by the lack of understanding as to what these modern terms meant, this thesis uses the concepts of leadership development and succession planning as

the basis of analysing Leigh-Mallory's progression through his training, education and experience.

Chapter Two

Leadership and Royal Air Force Culture and Ethos

Malleable, Nebulous, but Useful.

Jeremy Black¹

Black's critique of culture illustrates both its advantage and disadvantage, as it can be a useful analytical lens but has been used in differing ways by scholars. As with leadership, culture remains an often used but ill-defined concept, despite its increasing use. However, broadly, culture is the values, beliefs and behaviours common to any group. Since the so-called 'Cultural Turn' of the late 1960s, which led to the emergence of 'New Military History', cultural analyses of military history have focused on the common experience of warfare and the behaviours of those involved.² Since the 1970s, however, culture has increasingly been used in strategic studies to examine policy options pursued by states. The concept of strategic culture emerged from Jack Snyder's 1977 RAND study on the Soviet Union and links to the question of ways of war, which splits into national, military and service level analysis.³ Strategic culture also mirrors on-going debates over 'Revolutions in Military Affairs' and military innovation.⁴ More recently, scholars like Elizabeth Kier have examined these policy choices in terms of organisational culture.⁵ However, Kier, writing on the development of British defensive doctrine, neither adequately defined RAF culture

¹ Jeremy Black, *War and the Cultural Turn* (London: Polity Press, 2012), pp. 42-3; Edgar Schein, 'Organisational Culture', *American Psychologist*, 45(2) (1990), p. 111.

² See: Joanna Bourke, 'New Military History' in Matthew Hughes and William Philpott (eds.), *Palgrave Advances in Modern Military History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006), pp. 258-80.

³ Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Limited Nuclear Operations* (Santa Barbara, CA: RAND, 1977); Searle, 'Inter-Service Debate', p. 6.

⁴ See: Adam Grissom, 'The Future of Military Innovation Studies', *JSS*, 29(5) (2006), pp. 916-9; Elizabeth Kier, 'Culture and Military Doctrine: France between the Wars', *International Security*, 19(4) (1995), pp. 65-93. For a useful overview that bridges the discussion between 'ways of war' as a school of historical thought and modern strategic cultures, see: Lawrence Sondhaus, *Strategic Culture and Ways of War* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006).

⁵ Elizabeth Kier, *Imagining War: French and British Military Doctrine between the Wars* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

nor noticed similarities between the services. For example, on discussing leadership, Kier criticised the Army for its focus on drill while writing that the RAF was more liberal and free thinking due to its technological foundations.⁶ This ignores the shared leadership values between the services, and, as Chapter Four makes clear, the RAF recruited from the same sources as the Army; public schools. Nevertheless, leadership, and the development of leaders, is contingent on cultural factors, which influence an organisation's behaviour, its structure and how it perceives itself. However, while Francis broadly talked of the 'distinct culture and ethos' of the RAF, beyond talking about the 'allure of the flyer', he failed to define this.⁷ Similarly, Markus Mäder, writing on modern RAF doctrine, provided an overview of what he described as the Service's culture in terms of being the 'junior service'; however, Mäder, like Francis, provided no definition of the concepts underpinning this culture beyond a doctrinal discussion of independent air power.⁸ This chapter seeks to reverse this trend.

This chapter examines RAF organisational culture and ethos, its relationship to leadership, and how individual officers interfaced with Service philosophy as they emerged as senior leaders. This is important because officers like Leigh-Mallory regularly interfaced with the sources that underpinned culture. In particular, this chapter explores and codifies RAF culture and defines it in terms of its key assumption, basic belief and core value. The chapter also explores the relationship between pilot ethos and culture and highlights the significance of membership of the GD Branch and of flying as the core competencies for the military professionals of the RAF. This use of culture as an analytical lens brings together a top-down, or organisational, analysis with a bottom-up, or social, examination to

⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 129-33.

⁷ Francis, *The Flyer*, p. 14.

⁸ Markus Mäder, *In Pursuit of Conceptual Excellence: The Evolution of British Military-Strategic Doctrine in the Post-Cold War Era, 1989-2002* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), pp. 105-12.

consider how the two interfaced in the realm of the leadership development processes of the RAF, as it was the bridge between them.

2.1 Leadership and the Importance of Culture

The idea of culture is important due to the relationship between service, or organisational, culture and a nation's way of war. For the British, historically, the preferred way of war has been to conduct campaigns in the most efficient manner possible, which, as French illustrated, has seen a continuing shift between continental commitments and naval approaches.⁹ The decision over preferred commitments derived from the question of efficiency, and the use of a naval blockade and commitment to the Western Front during the First World War illustrate this preference, as they were, despite debates, considered the most effective way of conducting the conflict.¹⁰ While the question of means concerning land, naval or air power remained a contextual variable, as Searle showed, the British military shared a common awareness of principles governing war, which contributed to a joint strategic culture.¹¹ A preference for efficiency found its way into air power theory through the idea of the knockout blow, presupposing that the application of concentrated air power on selected targets would end wars quickly. Doctrinally, RAF culture can be framed in terms of the logic of efficiency, with ideas revolving around control of the air linked to the most effective manner of conducting operations. For example, the idea of blockades as an efficient form of conducting war found its way into air power thinking.¹²

⁹ David French, *The British Way in Warfare, 1688-2000* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990).

¹⁰ On the debate over British strategy, in particular the debate between 'Westerners' and 'Easterners', in the First World War, see: David French, *British Strategy and War Aims, 1914-1916* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986); Brock Milman, *Pessimism and British War Policy, 1916-1918* (London: Frank Cass, 2001).

¹¹ In general, see: Searle, 'Inter-Service Debate'.

¹² Air Commodore P.F.M Fellowes, DSO, 'Aerial Blockade', *JRUSI*, 82 (1937), pp. 530-5.

As Major-General (MajGen) Frederick Sykes, CAS from 1918 to 1919, noted in his 1918 memorandum on the 'Air Requirements of the Empire':

Highly specialised air forces are now essential components of all fighting efficiency, and aviation also provides a distinct and separate striking force of tremendous potentiality. (Emphasis added)¹³

Furthermore, in his 1925 work *Paris, or the Future of War*, Basil Liddell Hart, who coined the phrase 'British Way in Warfare', suggested the use of air power to secure victory, and Brooke-Popham recommended it to Trenchard.¹⁴ This was because Liddell Hart viewed technology as a force multiplier that could reduce casualties. Liddell Hart's views were heavily influenced by his assessment of the conduct of the First World War and his belief that the war was conducted inefficiently. However, Liddell Hart's preference for the indirect approach ignored the historical reality, noted above, that Britain had never overlooked its continental commitment.¹⁵ The broader strategic idea of efficiency filtered into the beliefs and assumptions that defined aspects of RAF culture. For example, efficiency influenced RAF organisational structures. The creation of the GD Branch can be viewed as part of a desire to manage personnel efficiently while developing a feeling of membership through the shared ethos of being pilots.

¹³ TNA, CAB 24/71/79, Memorandum by the Chief of the Air Staff on 'Air Power Requirements of the Empire', 9 December 1918, p. 1. The idea that air power was an efficient means of conducting war was not unique to Britain and pervaded the prevailing views of many theorists, including Giulio Douhet and Brigadier William Mitchell, of the inter-war years, see: Mark Clodfelter, *Beneficial Bombing: The Progressive Foundations of American Air Power, 1917-1945* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2010); Thomas Hippler, *Bombing the People: Giulio Douhet and the Foundations of Air-Power Strategy, 188-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

¹⁴ RAFM, Trenchard Papers, MFC 76/1/140, Air Vice-Marshal Robert Brooke-Popham to Captain T.B. Marson, 17 July 1925; B.H. Liddell Hart, *The British Way in Warfare* (London: Faber, 1932); B.H. Liddell Hart, *Paris, or the Future of War* (London: Kegan Paul, 1925).

¹⁵ French, *British Strategy and War Aims*, p. xi. Liddell Hart's idea of the 'British Way in Warfare' first appeared in a 1931 RUSI lecture, see: Captain B.H. Liddell Hart, 'Economic Pressure and Continental Victories', *JRUSI*, 76(503) (1931), pp. 486-510. This was then further developed in 1932, see: Hart, *The British Way in Warfare*. Further editions were published in 1935 and 1942. For an overview of the legacy of Liddell Hart's idea, see: Brian Holden Reid, 'The British Way in Warfare: Liddell Hart's Idea and Its Legacy', *The RUSI Journal*, 156(6) (2011), pp. 70-6.

Underpinning culture are the assumptions, beliefs and values which are codified in ‘artefacts’, ‘histories’, ‘stories’, ‘rituals’ and ‘symbols’.¹⁶ Assumptions and beliefs are established concepts based either on experience or on a preconscious recognition of their importance. Learned rather than instinctive, values require greater awareness of what they deliver to an organisation.¹⁷ More broadly, as Charles Kirke argued, these processes remain ‘consciously or unconsciously learned rather than innate’; thus, the officer class of the RAF was influenced and moulded by its culture as they were gradually exposed to it through processes like military education.¹⁸ Ethos, described below, also played a role in shaping RAF culture. In addition, RAF culture delivered self-identity by developing a feeling of belonging that mirrored the pillars involved in leadership development. By generating a distinct culture, though not using the language deployed here, the RAF affected an overt influence on the Service’s defence mission by shaping perceptions and behaviours related to the debate over the use of air power. This was enacted by officers who emerged through the leadership development processes of the RAF, who subsequently defended its independence, as they were well versed in its views while also able to manage relationships with the other services. Under the rubric of efficiency, RAF culture can be broadly defined in the following terms: a key assumption of independence, the basic belief in ‘Command of the Air’ and the underlying value of the ‘Air Force Spirit’. These ideas were not monolithic, and the RAF reshaped views on ‘stories’ like doctrine. These cultural markers derived from the RAF’s understanding of its primary defence mission, as this justified its ‘existence and

¹⁶ For useful overviews of military culture, see: Peter Wilson, ‘Defining Military Culture’, *JMH*, 72(1) (2008), pp. 11-41; Allan D. English, *Understanding Military Culture: A Canadian Perspective* (Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004).

¹⁷ Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, p. 14.

¹⁸ Charles Kirke, ‘Social Structures in the Regular Combat Arms of the British Army: A Model’, (PhD Thesis, Cranfield University, 2002), p. 9.

claim on resources’, which allowed the Service to manage external threats.¹⁹ This mission was the defence of ‘national and imperial safety’, with air power viewed as the most efficient means of achieving this end.²⁰

While acting in accordance with a general set of strategic principles as a way to conduct operations efficiently, the RAF argued that air power was the preferred means, albeit in a joint environment. This preference was conditioned by pilot ethos, which influenced leadership and organisational preferences through the Service’s beliefs and assumptions. Air Staff Memorandum (ASM) No. 43, *The War Aim of the Royal Air Force*, a document that Leigh-Mallory, as a GC and Deputy Director of Staff Duties (DDSD), had responsibility for disseminating, stressed the inherent tension between the ends of Britain’s strategic culture and its ways and means.²¹ ASM No. 43, and subsequent re-drafts, is contentious amongst historians, as Biddle noted that, in conjunction with Trenchard’s May 1928 memorandum to the Chiefs of Staff (CoS) Committee, it left a ‘confused legacy’ for the RAF.²² Trenchard argued that the war aim of the RAF was ‘to break down the enemy’s means of resistance’, and this included industrial targets. While Trenchard’s memorandum sought to answer questions surrounding the legality of this strategic view of air power’s employment, it generated enmity from both the Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS) and the First Sea Lord.²³ Furthermore, Trenchard failed to illustrate broader RAF thinking on air power, which might have lessened the other services hostility; for example, as

¹⁹ Wilson, ‘Defining Military Culture’, p. 18.

²⁰ TNA, AIR 6/19, Memorandum of the Post-War Functions of the Air Ministry and the Royal Air Force, 13 November 1918.

²¹ RAFM, Air Staff Memoranda No. 43 - *The War Aim of the Royal Air Force*, October 1928; TNA, AIR 2/675, Air Vice-Marshal Philip Joubert de la Ferté, Commandant, RAF Staff College to Group Captain Trafford Leigh-Mallory, Deputy Director of Staff Duties, 25 May 1933.

²² Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 94-102. Trenchard’s Chief of Staff Memorandum is reprinted in Webster and Frankland’s official history, see: ‘Appendix 2 – Memorandum by the Chief of the Air Staff and Comments by his Colleagues, May 1928’ in Sir Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, *The Strategic Air Offensive against Germany, 1939-1945 – Volume IV: Annexes and Appendices* (London: HMSO, 1961), pp. 71-83.

²³ For CIGS’s and the First Sea Lord’s notes, see: Frankland, *Volume IV: Annexes and Appendices*, pp. 76-83.

Chapter Six illustrates, officers were clearly able to think deeply about the broader use of air power.

In leadership terms, assumptions, beliefs and values built upon, related to and provided the foundation for the developing identity and ethos of the RAF, and, while it seems axiomatic, effective leaders were vital in generating culture. Schein argued that leaders shaped culture as they communicated an organisation's vision and beliefs and transferred them through leadership development processes.²⁴ Therefore, the methods of leadership development identified in Chapter One not only provided organisational capacity, but also shaped individual ability in a manner considered desirable by the RAF. For example, socialisation allowed for the communication of key cultural values between key stakeholders, both in an inter- and intra-service context, which linked to those able to innovate. The military innovation literature recognises this aspect of leadership development; as Stephen Rosen suggested:

if military leaders [...] attract talented young officers with great potential for promotion to new ways of war and then [...] protect and promote them they [can] produce new, usable military capabilities.²⁵

This is because nurtured officers made themselves visible for further development and promotion as they interfaced with key practices in the RAF. Therefore, nurtured officers became trusted agents able to enunciate a new military capability. This identification allowed senior leaders to promote cultural change through nurtured officers who encountered processes like military education. Senior leaders who had the necessary vision were able to set targets and goals for the organisation as well as generating change as represented by John Kotter's Eight Stage Process, which includes the following aspects:

²⁴ In general, see: Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*.

²⁵ Stephen Rosen, *Winning the Next War: Innovation and the Modern Military* (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 252. For a view that innovation is externally shaped, see: Barry R. Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain and Germany between the World Wars*, (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1984).

creating urgency, guidance, vision, communication, empowerment, determination and flexibility.²⁶ While Trenchard illustrated aspects of this modern concept, applying a current, conceptual framework like Kotter's is fraught with challenges. Notably, Kotter's model, as a list for enacting change, can be criticised for being too mechanistic. Additionally, Kotter's top-down focus did not take account of the social aspects of an organisation and the experience of people within it. Similarly, while establishing how change can occur, not enough consideration is given to how this is maintained. Thus, understanding leadership development in an organisation like the RAF is vital to a consideration of how to maintain cultural change. As such, despite the issues identified above, Trenchard was central to the development of the RAF, as his views, outlined in his 1919 'Permanent Organization' paper, influenced service culture.²⁷ In this important cultural 'artefact', Trenchard recognised the need for an effective framework for the development of officers by creating urgency and communicating his vision for the Service through the establishment of key institutions like Andover. While Trenchard argued that squadrons would provide an 'identity' like the regimental system, this remained challenging and is why identifying as a pilot, as a member of the GD Branch, became a more pervasive identity in the RAF of this period.²⁸ Additionally, it should be noted that 'Permanent Organization' was written for a Secretary of State, Churchill, who had an Army background and would have identified with Trenchard's line of reasoning concerning the regimental system. Furthermore, as Gray asserted, Trenchard illustrated the ability to interface with both his organisation and its wider context while ensuring RAF survival.²⁹ Concerning the production of official statements on air power, such as ASM, Slessor recalled of Trenchard in 1978:

²⁶ John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Harvard, CT: Harvard Business School Press, 1996).

²⁷ TNA, AIR 8/12, Permanent Organization of the Royal Air Force.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 3.

²⁹ Gray, *Leadership*, pp. 101-3.

He'd send for you and talk away. Well you'd go and produce the paper that he told you to produce, you bring it back next morning, and by that evening, you'd be sent for and be told, "This is a very bad paper. You haven't understood me at all", and then it would be covered in Lady Trenchard's writing because his writing was ineligible. He then would say, "Now go away and produce another one" and off you go and produce another one and eventually you get the right answer, or more or less the right answer.³⁰

This recollection illustrates Trenchard's hands on style of leadership as well as his role in controlling key 'artefacts', 'histories' and 'stories' that underpinned RAF culture. These sources ranged from formal doctrine like ASM and capstone publications like AP1300, through to external and informal 'stories', such as the official history of the RAF in the First World War, articles in *JRUSI* and *RAFQ*, and key books on air power that emerged during this period.³¹ The themes identified in many of these 'artefacts' tell historians as much about RAF culture as they do about its thinking. External 'stories' included statements written by serving officers but published for general consumption. While many titles were published on air power, perhaps most significant of these sources was J.M. Spaight's *Air Power and War Rights*, which gained acceptance outside of the RAF due to his position in the Air Ministry and his experience as a jurist.³² Several key future senior RAF officers, like Slessor and Kingston-McCloughry, also produced notable volumes.³³ The importance of these 'histories' and 'stories' is that several appeared on reading lists at key points in an officer's development. They also reinforced and furthered RAF cultural practices to both an open internal audience and external onlookers as the Service sought to

³⁰ IWM, 3176, Interview with Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor, 3 August 1978.

³¹ For a personal overview of the emergence of RAF doctrine in this period, see: Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, 'The Development of Royal Air Force Doctrine', *RAFQ and Commonwealth Air Forces Journal*, 2(2) (1950), pp. 111-4.

³² J.M. Spaight, *Air Power and War Rights* (London: Longmans, 1924). *Air Power and War Rights* received new editions in 1933 and 1947. Spaight also wrote for the *RAFQ*, see: J.M. Spaight, CB, CBE, LLD, 'The Chaotic State of the International Law Governing Bombardment', *RAFQ*, 9(1) (1938), pp. 24-32. On Spaight's influence, see: Gray, *Leadership*, pp. 54-7.

³³ Slessor, *Air Power and Armies*; Air Vice-Marshal E.L. Gossage, *National Defence – The Royal Air Force* (London: William Hodge and Company, 1937); E.J. Kingston-McCloughry, *Winged Warfare: Air Problems of Peace and War* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937).

inform on-going debates on air power and promote air-mindedness.³⁴ This was especially the case with officers like Leigh-Mallory who were involved in ‘selling’ air power to the other services, either through writing or as DS at Camberley. Potentially, these cultural sources represented a form of indoctrination that limited thinking if an officer’s views did not fit the organisation’s prescribed assessments. However, as Chapter Six suggests, there was a great deal of variety in the material produced by nurtured officers. Finally, while senior officers are important for the development of culture and leadership, they cannot be separated from their situational context.³⁵ For example, as Chapter Four examines, there were clear links with broader social views that were developed through public schools. This had particular resonance for the RAF, as public schools were its preferred source of recruitment.

2.2 Beliefs, Assumptions, and Values

The development of key assumptions and basic beliefs was imperative for RAF culture because officers engaged with these concepts during their leadership development. These processes were underpinned by various characteristics, such as the RAF’s attitude towards war, military education and its perceptions of itself as a profession. As suggested elsewhere, the RAF perceived itself as a profession that encouraged meritocracy and the provision of education opportunities. However, these characteristics often reinforced a self-perception that the RAF desired as it sought to set itself apart from its antecedents. The overarching assumptions and beliefs of the RAF found outlets in both formal and informal statements

³⁴ For the most recent analysis of air-mindedness in Great Britain, see: Brett Holman, ‘The Next War in the Air: Civilian Fears of Strategic Bombing in Britain, 1908-1941’, (PhD Thesis, University of Melbourne, 2009). This has recently been published as *The Next War in the Air: Britain’s Fear of the Bomber, 1908-1941* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

³⁵ Martin Chemers, ‘The Social, Organisational and Cultural Context of Effective Leadership’ in Barbara Kellerman (ed.), *Leadership: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Englewood, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984), p. 91.

on air power that officers read, studied or even produced. For example, ‘Command of the Air’ was the basic belief of the RAF and derived from Andover’s opening address, where parallels were drawn with the naval conception of ‘Command of the Sea’.³⁶ Given the broader educational and leadership implications of this speech, which have been alluded to in Chapter One, this concept was significant for a nurtured officer’s development as they engaged with views that influenced it. Brooke-Popham, as a Major then serving in the Army, used the phrase as early as 1912 in an article in *The Army Review*, which derived from a lecture he delivered at Camberley on 3 November 1911 while a student there.³⁷ At a conceptual level, this belief filtered through from the *Army Manual of Military Ballooning* through the RFC *Training Manual* into AP1300. A doctrinal term, ‘command of the air’ incorporated concepts, such as control of the air, air superiority and neutralisation, which became increasingly prevalent.³⁸ Therefore, while ‘Command of the Air’ presented an overarching cultural concept, at the doctrinal level it is clear that it was anything but monolithic and it diffused into joint doctrine, such as the *Manual of Combined Operations*.³⁹ Doctrinally, it was inherently offensive in nature, as AP1300 stated:

The maxim that offence is the best defence applies truly in air warfare more than any other operation of war.⁴⁰

The question of how ‘Command of the Air’ was to be achieved incorporated elements of both technological and cultural assumptions, as bombers were seen as the key method of employment, while centres of morale, like industry, were targeting choices due to the belief in their fragility. This morale-based view of the offensive had its antecedents in nineteenth

³⁶ TNA, AIR 5/881, Opening Address, p. 2.

³⁷ H.R.M. Brooke-Popham, ‘Military Aviation’, *The Army Review* (1912), p. 96. For a recent, and most thorough, examination of the concept of air superiority in early British air power doctrine, see: James Pugh, ‘The Conceptual Origins of the Control of the Air: British Military and Naval Aviation, 1911-1918’, (PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2012).

³⁸ On the use of neutralisation in RAF doctrine, see: Air Ministry, AP1300 – *Royal Air Force War Manual, Part I – Operations*, Second Edition (London: Air Ministry, 1940), Chap. VII, Paras. 15-24.

³⁹ For a discussion of this, see: Mahoney, “‘The support afforded by the air force was faultless’”, pp. 17-9.

⁴⁰ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. VII, Para. 5.

century military thinking, and it paralleled the idea of spirit prevalent in leadership philosophy of the period.⁴¹ As Gray noted, doctrine in this period was more akin to ‘principles of belief’ that slowly evolved as the RAF did as an organisation.⁴² Doctrine manuals and various APs were also cultural ‘artefacts’, as they contained the knowledge that underpinned RAF assumptions, values and beliefs and were a key form of transmitting this information. While the RAF held a strategic view encapsulated by the need for air superiority as the most efficient manner of conducting operations, the ways, means and ends of this doctrinal language, as Pugh highlighted, as well as its physical application, continued to evolve in the same manner as leadership.⁴³ The RAF was quick to begin a codification process, if only to stake a claim on the subject of air power employment and ensure its assumption of independence. By comparison, the Army only published its first capstone doctrine in 1909, while the *Naval War Manual* of the RN did not appear until 1925.⁴⁴ This has led some historians to prefer to use the idea of an ethos of doctrine, rather than a doctrinal culture, for the earlier services, while the latter is more appropriate for the RAF.⁴⁵ Some historians’ narrow focus on strategic bombing ignores the broad scope of both parts of the *War Manual*, which was inherently flexible in conception. Rather than acting as a proscriptive manual, AP1300 was a statement of intent.⁴⁶ Finally, as suggested below, belief in ‘Command of the Air’ found an outgrowth in RAF ethos and in its organisational structure through the focus on pilots and flying as a key element of a GD

⁴¹ Tami Davis Biddle, ‘Air Power Theory: An Analytical Narrative from the First World War to the Present’ in J. Boone Bartholomees Jr (ed.), *US Army War College Guide to National Security Policy and Strategy*, 2nd Edition (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), p. 340.

⁴² Gray, *Leadership*, p. 19.

⁴³ Pugh, ‘Control of the Air’, pp. 20-6.

⁴⁴ TNA, ADM 186/66, *Naval War Manual* (1925); *FSR Part 1* (1909).

⁴⁵ For a recent example, see: Jones, *From Boer War to World War*, pp. 37-70; Albert Palazzo, *Seeking Victory on the Western Front: The British Army and Chemical Warfare* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), pp. 8-17.

⁴⁶ On doctrine in the RAF more generally, see: Parton, ‘Royal Air Force Doctrine’.

Branch officer's career. Therefore, many of the themes picked up in doctrine codified processes inherent in cultural aspects of the RAF.

Independence, the key assumption of the RAF, owes its existence to the findings of the Smuts Report, which emerged from the government's 1917 Committee on Air Organisation and Home Defence against Air Raids, which noted that an 'air service [...] can be used as an independent means of war operations'.⁴⁷ This independent view of air power's efficacy as the strategic arm of Britain's defence establishment remained constant throughout this period. It was a key reason for the internecine battles between the RAF and RN over the apportionment of resources that characterised inter-service relations in the 1920s. Indeed, independence remained an assumption because the perceived efficiency of an independent air force had not been proven. Thus, this assumption also formed part of an on-going pursuit to ensure independence. Therefore, by nurturing of suitable officers well versed in aspects of their profession, the RAF sought to ensure independence as these officers both 'sold' and educated the other service about the role of air power in war. For the RAF, and its officer class, there was a clear link between its ethos and technology that saw the emergence of a more efficient means of conducting military operations. This was reflected more broadly in the emergence of what Edgerton described as 'liberal militarism' in Britain's body politic.⁴⁸ In 1938, an Air Staff paper on 'The Role of the Air Force in National Defence' argued that due to air power, the traditional methods of defence, centred on the RN, were at a disadvantage and that the best source of deterrence now lay

⁴⁷ TNA, AIR 8/2, Second Report of the Committee of the Committee on Air Organisation and Home Defence against Air Raids, 17 August 1917. Also, see: John Sweetman, 'The Smuts Report of 1917: Merely Political Window Dressing?', *JSS*, 4(2) (1981), pp. 152-74.

⁴⁸ David Edgerton, *England and the Aeroplane: An Essay on a Militant and Technological Nation* (London: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 41-3.

with an independent air force.⁴⁹ However, the RAF did not discount the fact that it must operate in a joint environment. For example, in terms of leadership development, Leigh-Mallory's army co-operation specialism did not act as a bar on his career progression as he bridged the intellectual gap between the assumption of independence and a realisation that future conflict required co-operation between the services. In 1931, Leigh-Mallory stressed the need for air superiority as the most efficient means of supporting the Army, thus further illustrating the links between cultural concepts, doctrinal statements and the broad thinking the RAF engendered.⁵⁰ Key institutions like Cranwell and Andover acted as key enablers in the development of the assumption of independence as they established and nurtured a feeling of membership for the officer class of the RAF.

The assumption of independence found an outgrowth in RAF material culture, which highlighted the Service's need to define its activities in the eyes of politicians. As Dalia Gavriely-Nuri suggested, the award of decorations represents an act of legitimatisation by governments concerning the use of force, as 'they support the conversion of physical-military power into social-symbolic power' and in return they convert 'social power and interests into military power'.⁵¹ From an organisational perspective, through its relationship with pilot ethos, RAF cultural 'artefacts', such as ranks and medals, encapsulated the Service's culture and saw its activities legitimised by the state, which helped develop a feeling of membership. Ranks and medals also linked to the belief in 'Command of the Air', as the titles chosen for such 'artefacts' stressed the importance of flying. While the RAF assumed the importance of its own independence, these 'artefacts'

⁴⁹ TNA, AIR 8/243, Role of the Royal Air Force in National Defence, 5 July 1938. On air power and the concept of deterrence in this period, see: Richard Overy, 'Air Power and the Origins of Deterrence Theory before 1939', *JSS*, 15(1) (1992), pp. 73-101.

⁵⁰ Wing Commander T.L. Leigh-Mallory, 'The Maintenance of Air Superiority in a Land Campaign', *RAFQ*, 2(2) (1931), pp. 245-52.

⁵¹ Dalia Gavriely-Nuri, 'It is not the heroes who need this, but the nation': The Latent Power of Military Decorations in Israel, 1948-2005', *Journal of Power*, 2(3) (2009), p. 403.

also replicated its views on the subjects that came out in ‘stories’ like doctrine, as the Service sought to pursue freedom from the other services during this period. In 1919, the Air Council recognised that the adoption of distinct ranks was important for ‘preserving a separate identity’ for the RAF.⁵² This distinct identity underpinned independence and provided the RAF with an image set apart from its sister services. It also highlighted the relationship between the parochial issue of inter-service tribalism and ownership amongst the RAF and the other services over the basic assumption of independence. As ‘tribes’, the Army and RN sought the return of what they perceived as their air arms. In terms of cultural ‘artefacts’, this issue was usefully summarised by the Admiralty’s displeasure over the rank of AC in 1919. The RN utilised the rank of Commodore as a specific appointment conferred on senior Captains, and they believed that the RAF was impinging on naval tradition.⁵³ The Admiralty suggested the rank of Air Brigadier and believed that, as the senior service, their traditions were more significant than either the Army’s or the newly formed RAF’s.⁵⁴ Similarly, during discussions over the status of military decorations in general in 1926, the principle of area of actions and demarcations as applied to the award of medals was raised by AMP, AVM Sir Philip Game, who stressed that air power had changed the terms that should be applied concerning direct contact with the enemy.⁵⁵ The RAF preferred the use of the term ‘flying’ in its medals, as it represented its primary

⁵² TNA, AIR 1/9/15/1/33, Minutes from the 81st Meeting of the Air Council with notes relating to ‘New Titles for Officer Ranks of the RAF’, 18 March 1919. In 1917, to provide a degree of distinctiveness to the RAF, a series of Gaelic titles were suggested for the RAF. They were ultimately rejected, and the suggestions can be found in TNA, AIR 2/105, Proposed Rank and Title for RAF Officers, date opened 22 October 1917.

⁵³ The appointment of Commodore in the RN did not become a substantive rank until 1997.

⁵⁴ TNA, AIR 1/9/15/1/33, Admiralty to Secretary, Air Ministry, 13 June 1919.

⁵⁵ TNA, AIR 2/294, Air Member for Personnel to Keeper of the Privy Purse, Sir Frederick Ponsonby, 6 February 1926. This letter portends a similar debate twenty years later concerning the award of a Bomber Command Medal. See: Peter Gray, ‘A Culture of Official Squeamishness?: Britain’s Air Ministry and the Strategic Air Offensive against Germany’, *JMH*, 77(4) (2013), pp. 1349-77.

function; for example, the proposed Conspicuous Flying Medal started life as the Aviation Medal, and the change of title reinforced pilot ethos.⁵⁶

The key element of RAF culture related to leadership was the value of the ‘Air Force Spirit’. Values require greater awareness than assumptions and beliefs, as they necessitate an explicit understanding of what they bring to an organisation’s development, rather than directly framing ‘stories’. Additionally, elements of both beliefs and assumptions can be found in values; for example, concerning education, which was an outgrowth of the ‘Air Force Spirit’, nurtured officers defended the assumption of independence as trusted agents of the Air Ministry, as they were well versed in the belief in ‘Command of the Air’. From a leadership perspective, the value of this spirit, enacted through key institutions like Andover, was to develop an understanding of its importance. Trenchard enunciated the importance of this concept in his 1919 paper on ‘Permanent Organization’, which contained a sizeable section on the ‘Extreme Importance of Training’ and stated:

We now come to that on which the whole future of the Royal Air Force depends, namely, the training of its officers and men.⁵⁷

Trenchard directly linked independence to the importance of education and training as pillars of RAF development and that of its personnel. Trenchard further noted that to create ‘an Air Force worthy of the name, we must create an Air Force spirit’.⁵⁸ Andover was a key element of this, but Cranwell was the central institution that laid the foundation for new entrants to the RAF. However, it is worth reiterating that the idea of Andover as the ‘Brain’ of the RAF was a furtherance of the value of the ‘Air Force Spirit’ as the Staff College was seen as important to the Service’s development. Furthermore, the Air

⁵⁶ TNA, AIR 2/294, Air Member for Personnel to Keeper of the Privy Purse, Sir Frederick Ponsonby, 19 May 1926.

⁵⁷ TNA, AIR 8/12, Permanent Organization of the Royal Air Force, p. 4.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Ministry's continual reiteration, as Chapter Six illustrates, of the importance of officers with *psa* suggests that the idea of the 'Air Force Spirit' was not just a tacit acknowledgement of the importance of education, but that it had enduring relevance for RAF leadership development processes. On Cranwell, in 1922, the Secretary of State for Air, Captain Frederick Guest, described it as the 'home of our future chiefs of the Air Staff'.⁵⁹ A great deal of time was spent considering modes of entry and education required for service in the RAF, which placed emphasis on public school backgrounds and saw an independent cadet college as vital.⁶⁰ As the Secretary of State for War and Air, Churchill, noted in a debate on 15 December 1919 concerning RAF pay and conditions, Cranwell was 'the Air Force Sandhurst'.⁶¹ Churchill drew out the analogy that an independent service required its own cadet college and recognised its significance, and this was reinforced in leadership terms when, in 1932, GC Douglas Evill enunciated at length the advantages of Cranwell graduates compared to officers holding a Short Service Commission.⁶² Churchill's view of Cranwell's importance probably derived from his own time at Sandhurst, which he recalled in 1930 as being a 'hard but happy experience'.⁶³

2.3 Codifying RAF Ethos

⁵⁹ Hansard, HC Deb, 21 March 1922, Vol. 152, Col. 291. The first CAS to emerge from Cranwell, MRAF Sir Dermot Boyle, followed many of the patterns present in this thesis, including attendance at Andover and the IDC, see: Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Dermot Boyle, *My Life: An Autobiography* (Privately Published, 1989).

⁶⁰ See the files contained in TNA, AIR 2/100, Conference to Discuss the Regulations of the RAF Cadet College, file opened 18 June 1919; AIR 2/100, Appointment of Committee under Lord Hugh Cecil on the Preliminary Education of Candidates for Commissions, file opened 27 January 1919; Longmore, *From Sea to Sky*, pp. 84-7.

⁶¹ Hansard, HC Deb, 15 December 1919, Vol. 123, Col. 135.

⁶² RAFM, Personal Papers of Air Chief Marshal Sir Douglas Evill, AC 74/8/27, The Cranwell Entry by Group Captain D.C.S. Evill, DSC, AFC, 1932. This derived from a report Evill, as a WgCt, wrote in 1931, which is discussed further in Chapter Four.

⁶³ Winston S. Churchill, *A Roving Commission: My Early Life* (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Son, 1930), p. 59.

Ethos, as with leadership and culture, remains a nebulous term; however, it can be broadly considered the ‘characteristic spirit of a culture or community’.⁶⁴ As already suggested, RAF ethos bounded its culture.⁶⁵ Peter Lee, in examining the modern challenge of remoteness concerning Remotely Piloted Aerial Systems (RPAS) and pilot ethos, recognised the nebulous nature of the latter. In quoting modern RAF thinking on the subject, Lee identified elements of character and shared identity developed through tradition that are central to the production of ethos and generation of *esprit de corps*.⁶⁶ This mirrors broader sociological literature on military culture, which suggests that, alongside discipline, cohesion and ceremony, professional ethos is a reciprocal element of an organisation’s behaviour. As English suggested, officers play a key role in generating and modifying both the culture and ethos of an organisation.⁶⁷ For the RAF, ethos can be characterised in terms of being a pilot and flying, which was reinforced by the Service’s organisational context. While Christopher Coker argued that the RAF was professional compared to the ‘swashbuckling’ *Luftwaffe*, and Francis highlighted the importance of flying, neither recognised its formal legitimacy through the GD Branch and the importance of pilots as the military professionals and preferred future senior leaders of the RAF.⁶⁸ Flying was a codified element of an officer’s development. Therefore, despite John Buckley’s criticism that the focus on ‘fighter aces, chivalry and flying’ has distorted the historiography of the First

⁶⁴ AP1 – *Ethos, Core Values and Standards*, 2nd Edition (Royal Air Force, 2008), p. 4.

⁶⁵ For an overview of the RAF’s evolving ethos, see: Michael Paris, ‘The Rise of the Airmen: The Origins of Air Force Elitism, c. 1890-1918’, *JCH*, 28(1) (1993), pp. 123-41; Squadron Leader Anthony Seabright, ‘RAF Ethos and Culture in the 21st Century: Aircrew or Air Power?’, *APR*, 7(1) (2004), pp. 90-110; Air Commodore Peter Dye, ‘The Aviator as Superhero? The Individual and the First World War in the Air’, *APR*, 7(3) (2004), pp. 65-74; Peter Lee, ‘Remoteness, Risk and Aircrew Ethos’, *APR*, 15(1) (2012), pp. 1-19.

⁶⁶ Peter Lee, ‘Remoteness, Risk and Aircrew Ethos’, pp. 3-4; AP1 – *Ethos*.

⁶⁷ English, *Understanding Military Culture*, pp. 5-7.

⁶⁸ Christopher Coker, *The Warrior Ethos: Military Culture and the War on Terror* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p. 107; Francis, *The Flyer*, p. 32.

World War in the air, from a leadership perspective, flying provided an officer's professional context, which was reinforced by the character of the GD Branch.⁶⁹

The challenge for the RAF in 1919 was that it lacked any real tradition to help ensure continued independence. By codifying its ethos, the RAF reinforced ownership of air power related resources. Institutions, 'stories' and 'artefacts' reinforced this emerging ethos by transmitting key cultural values and behaviours. Furthermore, at least in Britain, during this period, being a military pilot was a profession unique to the RAF. This was certainly the case until 1937, when the RN regained control of the Fleet Air Arm. In America, where being a military pilot was a profession split between the US Army and Navy, the competition for resources made it difficult for both sides to enunciate effectively their air power requirements.⁷⁰ This highlights one advantage of having a single service that is able to generate a culture and ethos commiserate with its defence mission, though those values can create inter-service rivalry.⁷¹ However, being a pilot remains the key element in rising to the pinnacle of the RAF. AM Sir John Curtiss, who served as a navigator in Bomber Command during the Second World War and as the Air Component Commander during the Falklands War, remarked in his foreword to Jefford's *Observers and Navigators*, 'It's a pilots air force', and 'pilots have always been more equal than others'.⁷² Curtiss is an

⁶⁹ John Buckley, *Air Power in the Age of Total War* (London: UCL Press, 1999), p. 42.

⁷⁰ For a useful view of the debates between the US Army and Navy, and in particular the role of Brigadier General William Mitchell, in this period, see: Thomas Wildenberg, *Billy Mitchell's War with the Navy: The Interwar Rivalry over Air Power* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2013).

⁷¹ The issue of pilot ethos remains an ever-present issue for the RAF. In 2013, the RAF awarded pilot wings to its first group of specifically trained, rather than transferred, RPAS pilots, see: Jasper Copping, 'The first deskbound drone pilots get their RAF wings', *Daily Telegraph*, 2 April 2013 - <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/9967186/The-first-deskbound-drone-pilots-get-their-RAF-wings.html>. While serving a practical purpose like developing knowledge that surrounds their profession, like air law, meteorology and flight planning, the continued presence of *ab initio* fixed-wing training for future RPAS pilots illustrates the continuing persistence of this core military ethos in the RAF.

⁷² Air Marshal Sir John Curtiss, 'Foreword' to Jefford, *Observers and Navigators*. As an outgrowth of pilot ethos, during this period, non-commissioned ground crew received the unfortunate sobriquet of 'erks'. This originates from the naval term *lower deck* rating (emphasis added), though one writer suggested in 1945 that it came from air mechanic, see: Flying Officer J.L. Hunt and A.G. Pringle R.A. (eds.), *Service Slang: A First Selection* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943), p. 30; Eric Partridge, *A Dictionary of R.A.F. Slang* (London: Michael

exception to the general rule that non-pilots could not rise to senior ranks in the RAF. Despite this, it is worth noting that many officers, including Portal and Leigh-Mallory, started their flying careers as observers, albeit in a period when it was normal to shift between these roles.

In 1919, Lord Hugh Cecil's report on the preliminary education of those seeking commissions in the RAF began a process of codifying pilot ethos when it stated, 'every officer in the air force should learn to fly'.⁷³ On 31 July 1919, AMWO No. 866, which dealt with Permanent Commissions, stated that, with certain exceptions, all officers so awarded were required to 'qualify as pilots within 12 months from 1st August 1919'.⁷⁴ Additionally, AMWO No. 866 recorded that, except for Stores Branch officers, commissioned service in the RAF would only be open to 'flying officers'.⁷⁵ Further codified in 1929, AP1334 stated flying requirements for officers up to the rank of WgCr:

2. An officer [...] employed on ground duties in a flying unit or at a ground training school will fly at least four hours per month.
3. An officer [...] employed on staff duties at a station where there is a flying unit will fly at least four hours per month.
4. An officer [...] employed at the Air Ministry or at a station where there is no flying unit will fly at least six hours per annum.⁷⁶

AP1334 derived from *The Kings Regulations* and various AMWOs published from 1918 onwards. AMWO No. 1042 of 19 September 1918 stated that officers 'commanding flying

Joseph, 1945), p. 8. Nevertheless, this term was endearingly used, and, as Leigh-Mallory, as an AM and AOC-in-C Fighter Command, recalled in a book on service slang, such terms were used by the men who worked "flat out" to win the Second World War, see: Air Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, 'Foreword' in Hunt and Pringle (eds.), *Service Slang*, p. 5. For a look at the life of an 'erk' during this period, see: Anthony Brian Tinsley, *One Rissole on my Plate: Reminiscences of an Erk who Served between the Wars* (Braunton: Merlin Books, 1981).

⁷³ TNA, AIR 2/100, Report of the Committee on the Preliminary Education of Candidates for the Royal Air Force Commissions, 1919, p. 1. No date appears on the report, but it is clear through correspondence in AIR 2/100 that it was submitted between July and September 1919. Given the AMWO quoted below, this author believes it came earlier rather than later.

⁷⁴ TNA, AIR 72/1, AMWO No. 866 – Award of Permanent Commissions in the RAF, 31st July 1919, p. 2

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ TNA, AIR 10/1730, AP1334, *Extract from the King's Regulations and Air Ministry Orders 1928: Regulations Relating to Flying*, 1st Edition, March 1929, p. 259.

units should look on flying as a definite part of their routine duties'.⁷⁷ Concerning promotion, ACRs regularly recorded the numbers of hours flown by officers, and this ethos became pervasive in publications like *RAFQ*. In 1932, an article appeared on the subject of 'Compulsory Flying' under the pseudonym "Seagull", which was derived from AP1334.⁷⁸ The significance of this pseudonym derives from the analogy that to get a seagull to fly, you must throw stones at it; suggesting an epithet for officers less than willing to undertake flying duties. Despite later distortions created by popular media, like the enduring image of him as a non-flyer in the 1969 film *The Battle of Britain*, Leigh-Mallory and his peers identified with pilot ethos, as it formed a core competency of their chosen profession, with flying hours regularly recorded and flying encouraged by senior officers.⁷⁹ It is also reasonable to presume that Leigh-Mallory continued to enjoy flying. By the time Leigh-Mallory was appointed as AOC 12 Group, he did have a personal pilot; however, this was not unusual, as AM Sir Patrick Playfair, as AOC 1 Group, Bomber Command, also had a personal pilot. For Leigh-Mallory, the geographical scope of 12 Group defined his need to have a pilot, as the command stretched north to Scotland from a line that dissected the Britain east to west just north of London. Not until the formation of 13 Group in March 1939 did that geographical scope change. Twelve Group remained a more geographically dispersed command than 11 Group and had fewer squadrons spread over this area. To inspect airbases and units effectively, it was reasonable that Leigh-Mallory required a personal pilot for longer flights, which could have allowed him to conduct vital work while being flown around.

⁷⁷ TNA, AIR 72/1, AMWO No. 1042 – Flying by Senior Officers', 19 September 1918.

⁷⁸ "Seagull", 'Compulsory Flying', *RAFQ*, 3 (2) (April 1932), pp. 201-5. This pseudonym remains a common term in the RAF to this day.

⁷⁹ For views of the film, see: Tony Aldgate, 'The Battle of Britain on Film' in Paul Addison and Jeremy Crang (eds.), *The Burning Blue: A New History of the Battle of Britain* (London: Pimlico, 2000), pp. 213-15; Mackenzie, *The Battle of Britain on Screen*, pp. 75-98; Campion, *The Good Fight*, pp. 275-7.

From a leadership perspective, ethos, in terms of shared identity and unit cohesion, was vital to generating *esprit de corps*, which was vital to maintain morale and generate fighting power. The challenge, which the RAF recognised, was the transient nature of its primary combat formation, the squadron, which, due to the character of the GD Branch, had personnel transferring in and out of the unit. Unlike regimental loyalties in the Army and sailors' similar feeling towards their ships, RAF personnel did not identify themselves with squadrons as institutions, though they might have positively recalled service with a specific unit. For example, Leigh-Mallory's 1925 Staff College essay describes with some pride the work 8 Squadron performed with the Tank Corps in 1918; however, there is no evidence that he desired to return to it at any further point.⁸⁰ The challenge of identity was regularly discussed at Andover, with it being questioned whether allegiance was held at station, rather than at squadron, level.⁸¹ This conundrum was never fully solved, though the RAF readily identified the problem of generating *esprit de corps* at squadron level; therefore, the development of pilot ethos as a shared identity was vital to maintaining morale, which mapped RAF writings on leadership.

2.4 Leadership, Culture, Pilot Ethos and the General Duties Branch

The GD Branch encapsulated key aspects of RAF culture and ethos. Additionally, officers still serving post-1923 were members of this organisational structure, which essentially formed the executive branch of the RAF. However, it is worth reflecting here that, while the RAF stated a preference for pilots early on, the GD Branch evolved slowly as the Service reduced in size. The first mention of the 'GD Branch' in the *AFL* came in April 1923; until this point, it was referred to as the 'General' or 'Gradation List', and officers

⁸⁰ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory.

⁸¹ RAFM, AIR 69/61, *Esprit de Corps* in the RAF, Conference No. 5, 7th Course, RAF Staff College, 5 July 1929, pp. 1-2.

were still associated with various ‘branches’, though these tended to relate to current duties rather than any fixed definition. For example, Chart 2.1 illustrates that in 1919, 62 per cent of officers from Appendix Three were members of the Aeroplane Branch, though such definitions were often derived from whether they served with the RFC or RNAS.⁸² For example, all officers listed as part of the Aeroplane and Seaplane Branch were formerly members of the RNAS. Similarly, those who made the RAF their career, as Chapter Three illustrates concerning airship officers, ensured they retrained as heavier-than-air pilots, which highlights the potential challenge of correlating patterns from the prosopography population. Nonetheless, the GD Branch provided the RAF with a structure consistent with its mission and values, which, as Max Weber suggested in 1920, were central to defining institutional authority.⁸³ While little has been written about this aspect of the RAF, James suggested that the decision to form the GD Branch derived from Trenchard’s regimental experience and that the RAF was a ‘single regiment’.⁸⁴ While the GD Branch might be thought of as a ‘regiment’, there is little archival evidence to support James’ assumption beyond Trenchard’s reference in ‘Permanent Organization’ and the fact that his previous service might have influenced the organisational context of the RAF. While Trenchard was certainly influential, such assumptions ignore the effect that the evolving branch system of the RN had on organisational choices.⁸⁵ As Chapter Four relates, in its early years, the senior leaders of the Air Ministry split evenly between those with Army or RN backgrounds and their influence on key decisions cannot be dismissed. The branch

⁸² Chart 2.1 can be found in Appendix Two.

⁸³ Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, translated by A. M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons, Edited with an introduction by Talcott Parsons (New York: Free Press, 1947). Weber’s text originally appeared in German in 1920 and was eventually translated in 1947.

⁸⁴ John James, ‘Alternative Models for the Royal Air Force’, *RUSI: Journal of the Royal United Service Institute for Defence Studies*, 119(4) (1974), p. 69. This argument was further refined, see: James, ‘The Branch Structure of the RAF’, pp. 249-60.

⁸⁵ On the challenges that faced the RN branch system, in general, see: Davison, *The Challenges of Command*, *passim*.

system of the RN separated out command functions from technical branches in much the same way the RAF would by 1940. Furthermore, given Trenchard's experience of the regimental system, it can be argued that he was seeking a more flexible system. If there was an Army influence, it came from the specialist corps of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, whose branch system was derived from the idea of merit and allowed for horizontal and vertical promotions and appointments, which is what the GD Branch did for the RAF. By ignoring the RAF's naval antecedents, James did a disservice to an evolving branch system that sought to bring together the best of the Army's and RN's systems while avoiding their pitfalls.

The GD Branch encapsulated RAF culture, and of specific importance was the belief in 'Command of Air', though a reciprocal relationship existed with the assumption of independence. The GD Branch was a group of officers who held a shared identity, encouraged by pilot ethos, which helped ensure independence by promoting RAF culture. As related above, GD Branch officers were expected to be pilots, and this occurred before any technical specialisation took place, thus subsuming technical to heroic leadership. Furthermore, as Chapter Three illustrates, RAF promotion procedures referred to both flying and command experience; thus, through the GD Branch, pilot ethos linked to leadership development.⁸⁶ In addition, most RAF officers shared a common interest in flying that reinforced and engendered feelings of membership, and pilots were the pervasive form of senior personnel in the RAF. Similarly, for the period covered by this thesis, with the exception of non-military professionals like doctors, all officers reaching senior leadership positions belonged to the GD Branch. For example, while logistics, managed by the Stores Branch, was a vital element in enabling air power, officers who

⁸⁶ TNA, AIR 2/100, Preliminary Education of Candidates for the Royal Air Force Commissions, p. 1.

staffed this branch struggled until the outbreak of the Second World War to enter the military elite. Similarly, Stores Branch officers were not entitled to apply to attend Andover until 1928, which was six years after this important institutions foundation.⁸⁷ Indeed, until this time, regulations for entrance to Andover explicitly noted that candidates had to be ‘qualified as pilots’, thus reinforcing this value of this aspects of RAF culture and ethos.⁸⁸ While Trenchard’s 1919 ‘Permanent Organization’ paper suggested that appropriate technical specialisation would not bar officers from senior positions, illustrating his altruistic, and possibly egalitarian, hopes for the RAF, this was not to be the case, as typical patterns emerged that focused on flying, Staff College and staff experience.⁸⁹ The pace of technological change, which led to the formation of the Technical Branch in 1940 to manage maintenance in the RAF, did not help this egalitarian hope.⁹⁰ The Second World War also saw further branches form, such as Administrative and Special Duties Branches that worked against Trenchard’s ideals. In essence, pilots, and by default senior officers, were not to be burdened with responsibilities beyond their specialisation of flying and the conduct of air warfare. By 1951, questions were raised about the potential creation of an ‘Air List’ that would see selected officers appointed to it for ‘the purposes of posting and higher promotion’.⁹¹ These officers would come from all branches.

From a leadership perspective, the preference for so-called ‘heroic’ traits was reinforced by the preference generated by membership of the GD Branch. Technical

⁸⁷ TNA, AIR 72/10, AMWO No. 22 – Regulations for Entry of Students to the RAF Staff College, 12 January 1928.

⁸⁸ TNA, AIR 72/8, AMWO No. 536 – Regulations for Entry of Students to the RAF Staff College, 7 October 1926.

⁸⁹ TNA, AIR 8/12, Permanent Organization of the Royal Air Force, p. 5

⁹⁰ Wing Commander M.E. Pulvermacher, ‘The Development of the RAF Technical Branch’, *JRUSI*, 103 (1958), p. 404.

⁹¹ Wing Commander K.R.C. Slater, OBE, AFC, ‘Is the Branch System Producing the Leaders we need in the Royal Air Force?’, *RAFQ and Commonwealth Air Force Journal*, 3(2) (1951), p. 138. The same edition of *RAFQ* saw a proposal to merge the Equipment and Technical Branches into one Material Branch, see: Korax, ‘A Material Branch for the Royal Air Force’, *RAFQ and Commonwealth Air Force Journal*, 3(2) (1951), pp. 131-7.

leadership, which focused on developing specific skills for particular roles, was secondary to officers' primary concerns, despite them receiving rewards for undertaking specialist courses. For example, while the Army recognised the importance of administration and set up a 'Class for the Administrative Training of Army Officers' under Halford Mackinder at the London School of Economics in 1907, which was re-established in 1924 after the First World War, there is no evidence the RAF sent officers to this course.⁹² Given that the RAF regularly sent officers to experience various Army and RN courses, this decision reinforces the Service's negative view of administration. Even the Army closed this course down in 1932. Nevertheless, the rapid expansion of the RAF in the 1930s forced it to consider the question of administration more closely, and, as a 1939 report on this subject stated, 'the inexperience of junior officers [made] it difficult to delegate responsibility to any great extent'.⁹³ This report led to the formation of the Administrative Branch and School of Administration in 1940. The formation of this branch separated administrative functions from the GD Branch; in part, because it did not fit the RAF paradigm:

[T]o become fully efficient in operational and flying matters an officer cannot afford to divert any part of his time or energies to other subjects.⁹⁴

Given the importance of staff duties as a job assignment, this interesting quote illustrates the tensions between GD Branch officers' operational responsibilities and the need to understand administration as it linked to leadership and command through key experiences. Furthermore, through senior staff positions, GD Branch officers still typically led those involved in administration. A job assignment undertaken rather than sought, GD Branch officers continued to serve in staff positions, and, as MRAF Sir William Dickson recalled in

⁹² Geoffrey Sloan, 'Haldane's Mackinder: A Radical Experiment in British Military Education?', *WHI*, 19(3) (2012), pp. 322-52.

⁹³ RAFM, X004-0415, *Report of the Committee on Royal Air Force Administration*, 1939, p. 6

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

1978, when the issue of increased pay for staff officers was raised, Trenchard apparently retorted:

“certainly not”, he did not agree for staff pay for air staff officers [...] They were merely flying in another capacity.⁹⁵

During this period, through the GD Branch, the RAF showed an evidential preference for pilots. The RAF nurtured selected GD Branch officers as future leaders, as they exhibited the traits that the Service valued, which linked with the generation of a distinct culture and ethos that has been considered herein. This was, as Chapter One related, more focussed on those with command and staff experience. Those who specialised in areas such as engineering, as Chapter Four notes, struggled to be nurtured. This reinforces the view that leadership, and its development, was contingent on organisational and cultural practices, and the ability of officers to engage with these allowed them to emerge into senior leadership positions.

2.5 Summary

The importance of the foregoing discussion has been to illustrate that, while not using the language deployed here, the RAF quickly developed a cultural identity built around concepts like efficiency, independence and the ‘Air Force Spirit’, which found their outgrowth in pilot ethos, which, in turn, influenced the Service’s organisational structure, the GD Branch. Furthermore, the RAF codified its ethos through AMWOs, and, linked to its leadership preferences, this suggested a specific type of officers that it wished to nurture; pilots. The above concepts underpinned aspects of leadership development because, as subsequent chapters illustrate, nurtured officers engaged with institutions like Andover and

⁹⁵ IWM, 3168, Interview with Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir William Dickson, February 1978. Such a retort might well be the origins of the commonly utilised term in the RAF and other air forces of ‘flying a desk’.

the Air Ministry; the latter through staff duties as a job assignment. Officers such as Leigh-Mallory and his peers in the prosopography population of Appendix Four were, in part, successful because they engaged with this culture and made themselves 'visible' for nurturing and promotion. A desire not to engage with these cultural sources hampered officers' promotion prospects and development. Thus, they found it difficult to progress their careers. In 1919, LtCol F.L.M Boothby, formerly a RNAS officer, wrote a scathing indictment of the Air Ministry in the pages of *TNR* that suggested:

The time has now come when the RAF should be taken over by the Admiralty, and run as a separate department, similar to the Royal Marines.⁹⁶

Boothby, unsurprisingly, decided not to pursue a permanent commission in the RAF, and it is hard to see how he would have progressed had he so chosen, given his views concerning independence.

⁹⁶ Lieutenant-Colonel F.L.M. Boothby RAF, 'The Air Ministry: A Suggested Policy', *TNR*, 7(4) (1919), p. 444. This view remains a contentious issue between naval and air power historians, with Cumming recently noting that the 'dynamic' RNAS should have absorbed the 'moribund' RFC. See: Anthony Cumming, 'Smuts: An in-depth examination of the personalities and circumstances which lead to the formation of The Royal Air Force', *The Phoenix Think Tank History of Air Power Series*, No. 1 (2011) – Accessed at <http://www.phoenixthinktank.org/2011/07/smutts-report-the-birth-of-airpower-series-paper1/>. It is worth noting that the Phoenix Think Tanks is an external pressure group seeking to defend the status of the RN.

Chapter Three

Career Patterns and Promotions in the Royal Air Force

The formation of the RAF in 1918 meant it became responsible for the career management, and by implication the leadership development, of its officers. Central to this was an effective promotion system. In a 1928 *JRUSI* article, C.G. Colebrook, aviation correspondent for *The Times* from 1923 to 1930, wrote that the RAF had developed a promotion system that was ‘an ingenious marrying of promotion by seniority and by merit’.¹ The nexus of this ‘ingenious marriage’ was the GD Branch, which allowed for horizontal and vertical promotions and appointments, unlike the limitations placed on the Army and RN by their respective branch systems. As Chapter Five notes, the promotion systems of the Army and RN, based on seniority, were complicated by problems like patronage and favouritism. Promotion provided key markers in an officer’s career, and, on average, those listed in Appendix Four spent four years at each rank. Awarded a permanent commission as a SL on 1 August 1919, Leigh-Mallory became a WgCr on 1 January 1925, GC on 1 January 1932, AC on 1 January 1936 and AVM on 1 November 1938. This compares well to Portal, who, on receiving his permanent commission as a SL in 1919, was promoted to WgCr on 1 July 1925, GC on 1 July 1931 1932, AC on 1 January 1935 and AVM on 1 July 1937.²

Through promotions and appointments, certain characteristic career trajectories became identifiable in large organisations like the RAF. These career rhythms and patterns were influenced by factors like emerging professionalism and culture.³ In a modern sense,

¹ C.G. Colebrook, ‘Promotion in the Royal Air Force: The New Scheme’, *JRUSI*, 73 (1928), p. 737.

² All promotion dates in this chapter derive from *The Air Force List*. For a brief overview of Portal’s career, see: Henry Probert, *High Commanders of the Royal Air Force* (London: HMSO, 1991), pp. 23-6.

³ Corona, ‘Career Patterns in the U.S. Army Officer Corps’, pp. 109-34.

successful officers interacted with RAF culture and structures to make themselves ‘visible’ to senior leaders, who identified and nurtured talent. This occurred through an interaction with key job assignments like staff duties and military education. Drawn from work on civil-military relations, such as David Moore and B. Thomas Trout’s ‘Visibility Theory of Promotion’, this axiomatic deduction had specific relevance for the RAF because the Service’s culture shaped officers who chose the military as their profession.⁴

Using the prosopography populations in Appendices Three and Four, this chapter explores the key rhythms and patterns, both before and during his time in the RAF, that relate to Leigh-Mallory’s rise to senior leadership. The patterns that emerged from this analysis are further explored in subsequent chapters and are compared with the experience of his peers. This chapter also explores the challenges that affected the promotion procedures of the RAF as it sought to learn from the defects present in the systems of the Army and RN. Finally, as a key marker in the process of professionalisation, though not one generally affecting officers in Appendix Four, the introduction of the RAF’s promotion examination is considered to illustrate how the Service sought to develop its personnel.

3.1 Pre-Service Educational Patterns

Before examining the key service patterns in Appendices Three and Four, it is worth considering some of the trends identifiable concerning pre-service experience. Specifically, this relates to the importance of public school education to those RAF officers who reached Air Rank. Chart 3.1 illustrates that 82 per cent of officers in Appendix Four

⁴ David W. Moore and B. Thomas Trout, ‘Military Advancement: The Visibility Theory of Promotion’, *The American Political Science Review*, 72(2) (1978), pp. 452-68.

attended public school.⁵ While discussed in detail in Chapter Four, it is worth noting here that, in general, public schools were non-local, endowed, predominantly boarding, used by well-to-do families, dedicated to the education of boys, and had a long and prestigious history which imbued them with traditions and an ethos that transferred into pupils. However, the term ‘public school’ remains contested, and it is questionable how many of these institutions had a long history. For example, Haileybury School, which Leigh-Mallory attended, only formally opened in 1862, though it could trace its lineage to 1806. Linked to the gradual professionalisation of society during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, and increasingly used by the aspirational middle class, public schools were a vehicle for social conditioning. While four per cent of officers attended either a grammar or state secondary school, this ignores the fact that these institutions readily mimicked practices established by public schools, which were believed to produce more rounded individuals, both in leadership and in academic spheres.⁶ Thus, the officer class of the RAF developed a feeling of social membership through this shared experience. This was furthered by military service and the predisposition of the RAF for candidates who attended public schools. Nevertheless, there are some interesting divergences in secondary education, and Chart 3.1 illustrates that seven per cent of future senior officers attended the Royal Naval College at Osborne, which was the first element HMS *Britannia*. For example, while AM Sir Philip Babington attended Eton College, his brother, AM Sir John Tremayne Babington, attended *Britannia*, which highlights the contingent character of the prosopography population, as many future RAF officers did not choose the military as their first career. Conversely, while ACM Sir Christopher Courtney attended Bradfield College, he left aged 15 to attend

⁵ Appendix Four lists the schools attended by these officers. Additionally, all charts cited in this chapter can be found in Appendix Two.

⁶ McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings*, p. 15.

Dartmouth and chose the RN as his profession.⁷ However, *Britannia* was widely considered the RN's public school, thus replicating the issue of educational osmosis that also occurred between public and grammar schools during this period.⁸ Figures presented here reinforce those in David Boyd's 1973 study *Elites and their Education*, which showed that at the end of 1939, 66 per cent of 34 AVMs in the *AFL*, had public school backgrounds; similar figures exist for MajGens in 1939 but not for the RN, as its cadets typically entered *Britannia* aged 13.⁹ While Boyd's statistics are useful, his interpretation that these institutions maintained exclusivity has been questioned by historians. For example, Rubinstein suggested that due to the rise of the professions, 'elite' recruitment broadened.¹⁰ For Rubinstein, the social background of pupils included the landed gentry, businessmen and the professions, which encompassed both the upper and middle classes.¹¹ However, as the professions widened, their desire to become part of the establishment increased, and they used public schools as a tool of social conditioning, though pupils tended to follow in their fathers professional footsteps.¹² Thus, while broadening the recruitment sources for public school, they also reinforced exclusivity as leading jobs, including senior military positions, went to students from this source.¹³ Even post-Second World War, many senior officers maintained a belief in public schools; Slessor, who attended Haileybury, stated in his memoirs *The Central Blue* that he saw it as the key source of senior officers.¹⁴ AVM Robert Willock, who attended

⁷ 'Obituary – Sir Christopher Courtney', *The Times*, 25 October 1976, p. 15.

⁸ For example, see: Anon, 'Dartmouth College: The Naval Public School', *TNR*, 9(1) (1921), pp. 66-70.

⁹ David Boyd, *Elites and their Education: The Educational and Social Background of Eight Elite Groups* (Slough: NFER Publishing, 1973), pp. 82-3. On the RN and the education of its officers in the nineteenth Century, see: H.W Dickinson, *Educating the Royal Navy: 18th and 19th Century Education for Officers* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007).

¹⁰ W.D. Rubinstein, 'Education and the Social Origins of British Elites, 1880-1970', *Past & Present*, 112(1) (1986), pp. 163-207.

¹¹ Rubinstein, *Capitalism, Culture, and Decline*, pp. 115-19.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 119.

¹³ In general, see: Boyd, *Elites and their Education*. For the contention that many Whitehall 'mandarins' had a 'public school and Oxbridge education', see: Gray, 'A Culture of Official Squeamishness?', pp. 1374-5.

¹⁴ Slessor, *The Central Blue*, p. 4.

Cheltenham, was proud of the connections that his 'Old School Tie' provided him, as noted in his unpublished memoir.¹⁵ While treated with care, these views reinforce the idea that senior officers illustrated a preference for nurturing candidates who came from similar class backgrounds, thus reinforcing those values in RAF structures.

Unlike the Army, a greater proportion of RAF officers from Appendix Four had a university education. In comparison to Army figures of 11 per cent in 1913, Chart 3.2 shows that 35 per cent of officers in Appendix Four attended university.¹⁶ This was an aberration, as by 1929, only 16 per cent of Permanent Commissions in the RAF came from universities.¹⁷ However, of 17 officers reaching four- or five-star rank in Appendix Four, 41 per cent attended university; thus, men like Leigh-Mallory, Portal, Douglas and Tedder were distinct when compared to their Army counterparts and the average for the RAF. However, it must be considered that they were not distinct, in terms of being an absolute majority, when compared to peers, though this was a product of the plurality of sources from which the middle and senior leadership of the RAF came from. While both Portal and Douglas did not complete their degrees due to the outbreak of the First World War, they nevertheless, as Chapter Four notes, took lessons from their time at university. This distinctiveness further diverged from the preference of the RAF for technical degrees because of the character of the qualification gained; a liberal arts degree. The RAF wanted some officers to have degrees, but, typically, only those it could use, like mathematics or engineering. This view, arguably, links to the naval heritage of the RAF, where education was overwhelmingly technical. This is perhaps understandable given the technological basis of the RAF, the aircraft, though views did change, as Chapter Four shows. These figures reinforce the contingent relationship between the First World War and an officer's pre-

¹⁵ IWM, Private Papers of Air Vice-Marshal Robert Willock, RPW 1, Unpublished Memoir, 1965, p. 16.

¹⁶ Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, pp. 12-3.

¹⁷ TNA, AIR 2/936, Memorandum dated 28 November 1929.

service background, which illustrates the bifurcation of experience between university education and initial military training at cadet institutions. It is arguable that many officers, including Leigh-Mallory, might not have pursued military careers had it not been for their First World War experiences. Leigh-Mallory was on the verge of a law career when war broke out.¹⁸

Concerning universities, the most significant issue was institutional choice. Of those officers with a university background in Appendix Four, 57 per cent, including Leigh-Mallory, attended either Oxford or Cambridge, which were the Edwardian era's dominant institutions. Another three attended the University of London, which was also widely considered an 'elite' institution. The growth of higher education in the late-nineteenth century saw the emergence of a systematised taxonomy with Oxford, Cambridge and London at the top, followed by new civic universities and technical and training colleges.¹⁹ The elite status afforded to Oxbridge and London extended to St Andrews in Scotland and stemmed from their historic place in Britain's educational landscape. Using Benjamin Disraeli's 1845 conception of 'two nations' as an analogy, François Bédarida suggested that the systematisation of higher education, also linked to public schools, increased social bifurcation between 'elites' and the rest.²⁰ However, as Rubinstein illustrated, our conception of what constituted the former during the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods shifted as the number of professions grew.²¹ Members of the professional middle class increasingly used the 'elite' education mechanism to educate their children. Given that, as Chapter Four recognises, RAF recruitment came from a wider

¹⁸ Dunn, *Big Wing*, p. 17.

¹⁹ R.D. Anderson, *Universities and Elites in Britain since 1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995 [1992]), p. 2, 13.

²⁰ François Bédarida, *A Social History of England, 1851-1990*, 2nd Edition (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 154.

²¹ Rubinstein, 'Education and the Social Origins of British Elites', pp. 163-207.

spread of occupations, officers' backgrounds mirrored social and educational practices prevalent in society.

While Leigh-Mallory and several of his peers might not have considered it as a career pre-First World War, as Chart 3.2 illustrates, the military remained the profession of choice for many men, including those who entered through the reserve route. Taken as a whole, military service accounted for 44 per cent of officers preferred post-18 educational background in Appendix Four. Of those listed as 'Military Reserve', ACM Sir William Mitchell joined the Special Reserve battalion of the Dorsetshire Regiment in 1906; AVM John Tyssen was a Territorial Force officer, while AC Sydney Smith attended a crammer while a Special Reserve officer in 1913. Furthermore, AC A.A.B. Thomson joined the Special Reserve of the RFC as a 2nd Lieutenant on 25 June 1913, which illustrates a proclivity for adventurism and a desire to fly. Amateur routes like the Militia, the Territorial Force and the RN Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) existed for those who failed entry exams to cadet establishments or started their careers part-time. The balance for officers in Appendix Four split amongst traditional routes like Sandhurst (11 per cent), Woolwich (seven per cent) and *Britannia* (12 per cent), while five per cent attended the Royal Naval Engineering College at Keyham.

Chart 3.3 highlights the key divergence prevalent between Appendices Three and Four about military training, in that there was a lack of homogeneity in this experience. For WgCrs listed in Appendix Three, three-quarters were pre-First World War regulars, compared to one-fifth for Squadron Commanders. While these divergent experiences are explored further in Chapter Five, here it is sufficient to note that training, in comparison to education, leaned more towards leader development due to its focus on skills, though it provided the foundation for further advancement. Pre-First World War officers went through cadet institutions, Woolwich, Sandhurst and *Britannia*, which helped them identify

as military professionals. The final route, and one directly associated with Leigh-Mallory, is wartime training in the Army; no officer in Appendix Four joined the RN during the course of the First World War. As Chart 3.3 illustrates, 42 per cent went through this experience. The figure distorts from that in Chart 3.2, as several officers listed as 'None' in the latter are represented in Chart 3.3 as 'Other Ranks'. For example, Nicholl enlisted as a Private in the London Scottish Volunteers during the Second Boer War, though he did not serve overseas, and then transferred to the South Rhodesia Volunteers and reenlisted in 1914.²²

3.2 Career Patterns in the Royal Air Force

Axiomatically, officers in Appendix Four received Permanent or Short-Service Commissions. Conversely, not all in Appendix Three received them, because by March 1920, approximately 25 per cent of this population had left the RAF, and by March 1921, this had risen to around 55 per cent had left. This illustrates a key challenge in correlating patterns in a prosopography population that does not map the changing strength of the RAF, which shrunk after 1918 and then began to expand in the 1930s. As such, while the qualitative evidence herein broadly supports the argument presented in this thesis, it should be treated as indicating general patterns. Officers left the RAF for a variety of reasons, including returning to civilian life or to the Army or RN; even though the latter decision could potentially hold back an officer's career progression. For example, as early as 2 October 1918, OC 10 (Operations) Group, Colonel Arthur Bigsworth, wrote to General Officer Commanding (GOC) South Western Area, MajGen Mark Kerr, stating that there existed 'considerable anxiety on the part of both senior and junior officers [...] as to their

²² RAFM, Nicholl Papers, *Journeys and Records, 1915-1939*, pp. 5-57.

future career'.²³ In particular, Bigsworth noted that since he had joined the Naval Wing of the RFC in 1912, he had little experience of RN operations, and if not awarded a Permanent Commission he would have to return to that service, which would set back his career.²⁴ Conversely, placed on the Unemployed List at his own request to work for Handley Page, Douglas was an exception to the typical experience of officers in Appendix Four. Apparently, at Trenchard's request, Douglas returned as a SL on a Short-Service Commission, which became permanent on 25 November 1920.²⁵ Douglas' recollection should be treated with care given the reverence he had for Trenchard. However, Douglas claimed that Trenchard's suggestion came by chance through a meeting. Given that Handley Page was a key aircraft supplier to the RAF, there might be some truth to the recollection. Douglas' experience, however, highlights different routes into the RAF post-1919, Permanent or Short-Service Commissions, which sought to alleviate the key personnel challenge for the RAF, the provision of enough officers to operate the Service in the short-term while providing for long-term senior leadership. This was a case of balancing current operational needs against providing the basis for future strategic requirements and was a problem that the Deputy Director of Air Personnel Service, Colonel Robert More, enunciated in a 1918 memorandum on 'Permanent Commissions'.²⁶ Key to solving the latter aspect was Cranwell's foundation, but the RAF also introduced Short-Service Commissions to manage operational needs and create a ready reserve. Promulgated through AMWO No. 781 of 7 July 1919, which covered those officers not granted Permanent Commissions in August 1919, and embodied in AP783, *Regulations for*

²³ TNA, AIR 2/90, OC 10 (Operations) Group to GOC South Western Area, 2 October 1918.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ TNA, AIR 72/2, AMWO No. 1003 – Grant of Permanent Commission to Officers holding Short Service Commissions, 25 November 1920; Douglas, *Years of Command*, p. 13.

²⁶ TNA, AIR 2/90, Memorandum on Permanent Commissions by the Deputy Director of Air Personnel Services, 14 October 1918.

Short Service Commission in the Royal Air Force, officers served for five years then transferred to the reserves for another four years, which could be extended to eight.²⁷ As noted in AMWOs, suitable short-service officers, including Douglas and Slessor, received Permanent Commissions where possible, which suggests a move towards a meritocratic approach to keeping capable personnel.²⁸

Returning to Permanent Commissions, in 1919, AMWO No. 99 applied four key metrics to temporary officers seeking permanent commissions: age limit, details of war service, suitability as an officer and medical fitness.²⁹ Concerning ‘Majors’ (Squadron Commanders) in Appendix Three, the age metric dictated a range between 25 and 38, while any officer older than 24 required at least three and a half years’ war service. While vaguely described as ‘educationally and morally’ fit for service, ‘suitability as an officer’ squarely focused on those with a public school background. Medical fitness was described as being ‘Fit[ness] for G.S. [general service] as such’.³⁰ Applications were made through ‘superior officers’ and channelled to Area Commands for forwarding to a Selection Board chaired by Brigadier-General Tom Webb-Bowen.³¹ However, while seeking to be meritocratic, the RAF sought officers based on a qualitative character assessment rather than any quantitative evaluation of capability. This clearly allowed bias to creep into the system. Leigh-Mallory met these criteria and applied for a Permanent Commission. The formal process of awarding Permanent Commissions saw the production of two nominal rolls,

²⁷ TNA, AIR 72/1, AMWO No. 781 – Scheme for Immediate Temporary Entry of Officers into the RAF, 7 July 1919; Group Captain Philip Joubert de la Ferté, CMG, DSO, RAF, ‘The Supply and Training of Officers of the Air Force in Time of War (lecture)’, *JRUSI*, 69 (1924), p. 44; TNA, AIR 2/147, AP783 – (*Provisional Regulations for Short Service Commissions in the Royal Air Force (General Duties Branch)*), Revised July 1921. It is interesting to note that Higham dates the scheme as starting in 1924, see: Robin Higham, *Two Roads to War: The French and British Air Arms from Versailles to Dunkirk* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2012) p. 77.

²⁸ TNA, AIR 72/2, AMWO No. 1003.

²⁹ TNA, AIR 2/90, AMWO No. 99 – Permanent Commissions in the RAF for Flying, Technical, and Administrative Officers now holding Temporary Commissions therein, 17 January 1919, pp. 1-2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

which were communicated to operational commanders for comments and adjustment. Compiled from recommendations made by GOCs, the first nominal roll contained officers selected for Permanent Commissions, while the second enclosed those placed on a supplementary list.³² Granted in a communication to HQ RAF, Army of the Rhine on 13 August 1919, Leigh-Mallory's Permanent Commission as a SL, as with all awarded, was backdated to 1 April 1918.³³ Concerning leadership, the language extant in an officer's Permanent Commission certificate noted concepts like 'Trust and Confidence in your Loyalty, Courage and Good conduct' as well as exercising:

discipline in Arms both the inferior Officers and Men serving under you and use your best endeavours to keep them in good Order and Discipline.³⁴

These ideas mapped to the heroic concepts explored in Chapter One and reaffirm the idea that leadership in this period was more action than study.

Once commissioned, selected officers shared several service experiences: military education, staff duties, teaching and command, which established a characteristic pattern for future aspirants to senior leadership. Officers in Appendix Four gained experience in each of these professional pillars, which influenced their leadership development. An examination of officers in Appendix Three who still served in 1939 but had not reached Air Rank illustrates how the lack of one or more of these experiences acted as a bar on promotion. As Chart 3.4 shows, Staff College attendance was the nexus of this process in general, with the RAF preferring those emerging from Andover. Chapter Six explores the importance of Andover in more detail; however, it is worth highlighting a 1931

³² TNA, AIR 1/1161/205/4/2516, Director of Personnel to GOC Royal Air Force in the Field, June 1919.

³³ TNA, AIR 1/1161/205/4/2516, Nominal Roll of Officers Recommended for a Permanent Commission in the Royal Air Force in the Rank of Major (N.D.); AIR 1/1161/205/2/2518, Letter for the Air Staff to GOC HQ RAF, Army of the Rhine, 13 August 1919.

³⁴ RAFM, Personal Papers of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Salmond, AC 71/20/5/13, Certificate of Permanent Commission for Air Vice-Marshal Sir John Salmond, 2 August 1919.

memorandum sent to the Staff College's Commandant, AC Philip Joubert de la Ferté, which stated:

It is from among officers awarded *p.s.a.* that the Air Council will, eventually, look to find their higher commanders, and it is improbable that an officer will ever reach a position of high command who is incapable of carrying out normal staff work.³⁵

Joubert highlighted this section of the letter to stress its importance. In leadership terms, the Air Ministry viewed those with the post-nominal *psa* as delivering organisational capacity to the RAF as they became experts in staff duties and conceptual aspects of war. In many respects, these officers became walking best practice for the RAF and an example for others to follow. Andover's first four courses were the most statistically significant for future senior RAF officers of the Second World War. Of 80 officers on these courses, 57 reached Air Rank during the Second World War, including three MRAFs and ten ACMs, including Leigh-Mallory. Other notable names included Portal, Douglas, Park, Slessor, ACM Sir Richard Peirse, Kingston-McCloughry, ACM Sir Roderic Hill and ACM Sir Norman Bottomley. Of nine ACMs in the *AFL* at the time of Leigh-Mallory's death in November 1944, only ACM Sir Frederick Bowhill lacked any staff qualification. Of the other eight, only Dowding lacked *psa*; instead, he held *psv* (Passed Staff College), as he attended Camberley pre-First World War.³⁶ Bowhill's lack of military education is interesting, as he represents a quarter of officers in Appendix Four who progressed to Air Rank despite lacking this experience. Five of 11 officers in this sub-sample, ACMs Bowhill, Mitchell and Sir Charles Burnett, and AMs Playfair and Philip Babington, reached three- or four-star ranks, which further reinforces the contingent nature of the first permanent

³⁵ TNA, AIR 2/355, Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to Commandant, RAF Staff College, 4 June 1931.

³⁶ On Dowding's time at Camberley, see: Orange, *Dowding*, pp. 16-7. According to Wright, it was at Camberley that Dowding earned his nickname, 'Stuffy', see: Robert Wright, *Dowding and the Battle of Britain* (London: Macdonald, 1969), p. 29.

officers of the RAF in 1919. Apart from Babington, each of the above officers served in the RFC before the First World War. By the time Andover opened, these officers, except for Mitchell, who was a senior WgCr, were GCs. This placed them outside the rank framework for Andover that provided education for officers from senior FLs through to junior WgCrS. This further changed after the opening of the IDC in 1927, which catered for WgCrS and GCs; thus, Andover provided military education primarily to SLs. Despite the discordant experience of the above noted officers, those with military education typically ended their careers at least at one- and two-star ranks.

Another interesting aspect of Chart 3.4 is the number of officers selected to attend the staff colleges of the Army and RN. As Chapter Six explores, the Air Ministry selected, with no recourse to entry examinations, officers for these institutions. More broadly, Staff College experience was characteristic for officers in Appendix Four, but not for the RAF as a whole. Only 46 out of 386 officers in Appendix Three had Staff College experience as either students or DS. Of those, 34 reached Air Rank, which reinforced the importance of attendance in an officer's progression to senior leadership, even though Staff College was not a mandatory career element. IDC attendance, as the next step in the leadership development of nurtured officers, was not characteristic. Only 28 per cent of Appendix Four, including Leigh-Mallory, experienced IDC as a student.

Staff College attendance also raises the issue of experience as DS. For nurtured officers, this job assignment was part of a process that vested trust and responsibility into those appointed. Such officers, especially those serving at the IDC or Camberley, which, apart from Andover, were the only other institutions with RAF DS, acted as subject matter experts who provided trusted commentary on air power's evolution, development and employment. These officers attempted to develop air-mindedness amongst the services to preserve RAF independence by educating Army and RN personnel in the use of air power;

they were not always successful in this aim. The uniqueness of these appointments is illustrated by the fact that only 26 per cent of officers in Appendix Four experienced them. Three officers, Portal, Douglas and Joubert, also served as DS at the IDC. At any point, there was only one member of the DS from each service at the IDC, and they served for three years in this appointment. Thus, those noted above represent three-quarters of RAF DS appointments to the IDC in its 12-year history before the outbreak of the Second World War. Furthermore, three of five inter-war Commandants of Andover, ACMs Sir Arthur Barratt, Freeman and Joubert, emerged from Appendix Four. Another, AM Sir Bertine Sutton, served as Commandant during the Second World War. Similarly, Longmore served as one of two RAF Commandants of the IDC pre-war. The other was Andover's first Commandant, AM Brooke-Popham; this was a position that rotated between the services. Thus, out of 17 officers reaching four- or five-star rank from Appendix Four, 59 per cent served as Commandants, DS, or both. Notable exceptions were Burnett, Bowhill and Mitchell, who were arguably too senior to serve as DS, and their lack of Staff College experience probably precluded their service as Commandant. Other exceptions were Hill, Harris and AM Sir Robert Goddard, though the former served as Andover's Commandant from 1942 to 1943.

Another key area for nurturing was staff experience. The GD Branch encouraged officers to integrate with staff duties as part of a triumvirate of operational appointments and, where selected, education or training postings. Most officers in Appendix Three served in a variety of staff positions; however, there were categorisations that separated out officers' experience as they rose to senior positions. Key staff positions in the nurturing process were appointments at the Air Ministry or as a Chief Staff Officer or Senior Air Staff Officer (SASO) at command level, or, at best, both. These experiences developed nurtured officers' knowledge of lines of responsibility and accountability as well as an

understanding of the organisation that they were being prepared to lead; Leigh-Mallory undertook both roles during his career. Added to this is the reality that there existed a hierarchy of senior staff positions in operational commands. As Chapter Seven suggests, SASO was preeminent alongside positions like Senior Engineering Officer and Senior Personnel Staff Officer (SPSO). However, Air Ministry experience, or service as SASO, was not typical for the officer class as a whole but rather limited to those emerging senior leaders. Derived from Appendix Three, of officers active in March 1939, only 23 had experience as SASO, while 43 had served in the Air Ministry. Nineteen officers with experience as SASO appear in Appendix Four, while 33 from this sample had Air Ministry knowledge. That Leigh-Mallory experienced each of these processes illustrates his active participation in RAF leadership development processes that made him more 'visible' for promotion as well as nurturing by the system. However, there are officers rated as Wing Commanders in 1918 who were too old to attend Staff College, an increasingly important qualification for this role, but still gained Air Ministry and senior staff experience. Bowhill, 59 in March 1939, served as Chief Staff Officer at Coastal Area from 1921 to 1924 and as Director of Organisation and Staff Duties (DOSD) in the CAS's Department from 1929 to 1931, despite not having any military education. Conversely, there were those, like GC Ivor Lloyd, who had experienced characteristic patterns but had not entered the ranks of the military elite by 1939. Lloyd attended Andover in 1929 and served in the Directorate of Training in AMP's Department between 1932 and 1934. In September 1939, Lloyd, as a GC, was serving as SASO at 18 (Reconnaissance) Group, Coastal Command, and eventually retired as an AC. This comparison between Bowhill and Lloyd illustrates the challenge of deriving general patterns from the prosopography population as undertaking key experiences did not always guarantee promotion. Other contingent factors, like contributing to service knowledge, also played a role in an officer's rise to senior positions.

Linked to these experiences was the issue of promotion rates, and Chart 3.5 illustrates this for 15 selected officers from Appendix Three. These 15 officers represent a sample from AMs down to WgCrS in 1939. Officers from Appendix Three who still held a commission in 1939 represent 18 per cent of the prosopography population, and, of these, only 28 per cent were AVMs; Leigh-Mallory's rank in 1939. These men represented 63 per cent of serving AVMs present in the *AFL*. When focused on just Leigh-Mallory's direct peers, Squadron Commanders in March 1918, this figure drops to 24 per cent, while the characteristic rank for this population in 1939 was GC, at 46 per cent, though, as Chart 3.6 illustrates, this drops to 38 per cent when combined with Wing Commanders. For the remaining WgCrS in March 1939, the typical rank was either AVM or AM. No Squadron Commander had reached AM by March 1939. Based on the career trajectory of GC John Sowrey, who retired at the rank of AC, and given the evidential preference for GCs in Chart 3.6, the trend line in Chart 3.5 shows that officers like Leigh-Mallory enjoyed a faster rise to Air Rank. While distorted by factors like the conjoined nature of Wing and Squadron Commanders, officers whose careers conformed to the patterns discussed above clearly enjoyed better promotion prospects. The sample in Chart 3.5 purposely included two officers, Shekleton and WgCr J.V. Steel, as a base comparison with those not actively engaged with the leadership development processes identified in this thesis. In comparison, Leigh-Mallory interfaced with all of them, thereby making himself more 'visible' in an evolving system and improving his promotion chances. Additionally, in comparison with contemporaries in the Army and RN, the average age of RAF officers was significantly lower in equivalent ranks. The average age of officers still serving in 1939 from Appendix Three was 49. Leigh-Mallory reached two-star rank at 46, while his fellow component

commanders for OVERLORD, General Montgomery and Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsey, did not reach the same rank until 50 and 52 respectively.³⁷ They also spent longer in their respective services, suggesting that, as a young organisation, the RAF promoted nurtured talent more rapidly.

This discussion has statistically shown, as Janowitz recognised in 1960, that certain ‘Tactics of Promotion’ or experiences emerged as characteristic.³⁸ Officers able to engage with these experiences increased their chances of entering the military elite. However, apart from nurturing through job assignments, these ‘tactics’ included other key elements of modern leadership development like socialisation and action learning, which improved an officer’s knowledge as well as developing the organisational capacity of the RAF. Key amongst these was playing a role in the development of the professional knowledge, such as writing for military journals. A careerist, as evidenced in this thesis more broadly, Leigh-Mallory undertook every opportunity and contributed to RAF thinking on air power. It is clear that Leigh-Mallory, as a military professional, was developing his capacity and ensuring success, which many of his peers also did. Even Orange, while arguing that Park was ‘ambitious’, admitted that the key reason Park’s career did not prosper in the same way as his peers was because:

[Park] never held an Air Ministry position, nor did he serve on the directing staff at the RAF Staff College at Andover, he never held an inter-service appointment at the Army Staff College at Camberley nor at the Imperial Defence College.³⁹

In Park’s case, operational excellence did see him rise to senior positions, but this tended to be the exception rather than the rule.

³⁷ Montgomery was promoted to Field Marshal on 1 September 1944.

³⁸ Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, pp. 145-8.

³⁹ Orange, *Park*, pp. 264-5.

3.3 Promotion and Appointments in the Royal Air Force

The previous section discussed the rhythms and patterns that emerged from the analysis of the prosopography population. The promotion system of the RAF underpinned these patterns. This system saw officers move through the hierarchy of the RAF and was supported by the inherent flexibility provided by the GD Branch. RAF promotion procedures stemmed from an attempt to adjust the flaws in the seniority based systems of the Army and RN while managing its own organisational choice to promote on merit.⁴⁰ This suggests a progressive attitude, which sought to offer fair opportunities rather than carry over problems from the Army and RN. Furthermore, the GD Branch encouraged easier rotation amongst job assignments to develop officers' leadership abilities and allowed for smoother reintegration into operational positions to gain further experience. This was because officers did not rotate out of their 'regiment'. Instead, GD Branch officers expected to be employed on a variety of duties to gain experience; for example, staff duties were accepted as a normal posting. This was conditioned, however, by the recognition that the RAF, through the GD Branch, preferred pilots as its future senior leaders. Nevertheless, in 1918, the Air Ministry, through the Master-General of Personnel, MajGen Sefton Brancker, sought opinions from GOCs on preferred promotion methods.⁴¹ The views put forward, as Vice-Admiral Cecil Lambert, who became the RAF's Director of Personnel (DoP) in 1919, admitted, often represented those developed from the officers

⁴⁰ For an overview of British Army promotion in this period, see: David French, "An Extensive Use of Weedkiller?: Patterns of Promotion in the Senior Ranks of the British Army, 1919-1939" in David French and Brian Holden Reid (eds.), *The British General Staff: Reform and Innovation, 1890-1939* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), pp. 159-74. Promotion systems remain an understudied area in military history.

⁴¹ TNA, AIR 2/90, Master-General of Personnel to GOCs of Operational Areas, 19 September 1918. Interestingly, Brancker's biographer, Basil Collier, did not discuss the challenges Brancker faced as Master-General of Personnel apart from his unfortunate dealings with Violet Douglas-Pennant, whom he dismissed as Commandant of the Women's Royal Air Force in August 1918, see: Basil Collier, *Heavenly Adventurer: Sefton Brancker and the Dawn of British Aviation* (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, 1959), pp. 89-129.

Army or RN experience.⁴² GOC North Eastern Area, MajGen the Honourable Sir Frederick Gordon, preferred for promotion to Major ‘to be guided by seniority’ (emphasis in original), which arguably represented his class views.⁴³ In general, however, many officers sought to break free from the problems of the older systems, and on 25 September 1918, GOC London Air Defence Area, MajGen E.B. Ashmore, stressed his preference for a selection-based system.⁴⁴

Despite occasional divergent views, the RAF settled on a broadly meritocratic system when AMWO No. 1176 of 30 October 1919 announced the formation of the Service’s first Selection Board.⁴⁵ The board’s function was to regulate promotion processes and debate the merit of recommendations received to fill ranks up to GC, though appointments to the latter rank and WgCr also required approval by the Secretary of State for Air.⁴⁶ This political oversight sought to ensure suitability and enforce civilian control due to the responsibilities associated with appointments linked to these ranks. This oversight became increasingly important with appointments to Air Rank. The question of civilian control lies at the heart of the debate over civil-military relations and the British system focused on increased military professionalism to achieve objective control, or that related to idea that civilians set policy and the military enact it, which relies on the institution to self-govern. The alternative to this system was subjective control through civilianisation or politicisation, which sees the generation of increasing political oversight in defence strategy.⁴⁷ While Janowitz argued that the latter could be used to increase civilian

⁴² TNA, AIR 2/90, Rear Admiral Cecil Lambert to the Master General of Personnel, 25 September 1918.

⁴³ TNA, AIR 2/90, GOC North Eastern Area to the Master-General of Personnel, 8 October 1918.

⁴⁴ TNA, AIR 2/90, GOC London Air Defence Area to the Master-General of Personnel, 25 September 1918.

⁴⁵ TNA, AIR 72/1, AMWO No. 1176 – Post-War Officers – Selection Board, 30 October 1919.

⁴⁶ TNA, AIR 2/233, Constitution and Functions of the Promotion Selection Board, 17 September 1922.

⁴⁷ Cohen, *Supreme Command*, pp. 227-228; Erik Hedlund, ‘Civil-Military Control over the Swedish Military Profession: An Analysis from the Perspective of the Officer Rank and Officer Education’, *AFS*, 39 (1) (2013), pp. 137-41. For an interesting view of the move from subjective to objective control in Spain as it transitioned to democracy after the dictatorship of General Francisco Franco, see: Narcis Serra, *The Military*

engagement and increase democracy, it was also a method of control readily identifiable in totalitarian regimes.⁴⁸ This is a key critique of subjective control as it relates to the abuse of power by political elites, something also possible in a democratic society. Conversely, the lack of effective oversight regarding objective control can lead to the military gaining power. Both ideals rely on a degree of trust in the area of civil-military relations that can easily break down.⁴⁹ Arguably, the answer lies in what Douglas Bland referred to as a unified theory of civil-military relations, which takes account of differing circumstances, historical perspectives and contexts, and accounts for change in societal values, issues, interests, personalities and threats that are at the centre of this relationship.⁵⁰

For the RAF, in specific zones of promotion for each rank, officers had to meet key criteria like age, time in rank and war service. SLs were required to be a minimum of 32 and have four years' service in their present rank before promotion to WgCr. OCs produced ACRs outlining an officer's suitability for promotion, which they forwarded to AOCs, who in turn fashioned two lists; one consisting of those meeting required criteria, and one of those who did not. These were forwarded to the Selection Board, which consisted of CAS, AMP, Air Member for Supply and Research (AMSR) and the Air Secretary to the Secretary of State for Air, for discussion and decision.⁵¹ The Air Secretary and the Military and Naval Secretaries existed to guide and manage officers' careers, and they were important appointments, as they acted as a gate on the suitability of potential senior leaders. However, the RAF disestablished this position in 1923 after the last post

Transition: Democratic Reform of the Armed Forces (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). From 1982 to 1991, Serra served as Minister of Defence in the Spanish government.

⁴⁸ Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, pp. 347-416.

⁴⁹ For example, the decision in 2010 to enshrine Britain's Military Covenant into law illustrates the challenge created when trust and, from a leadership perspective, responsibility break down. On the evolution of the Military Covenant, see: Sarah Ingham, *The Military Covenant: Its Impact of Civil-Military Relations in Britain* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014).

⁵⁰ Douglas Bland, 'A Unified Theory of Civil-Military Relations', *AFS*, 26 (1) (1999), pp. 7-25.

⁵¹ TNA, AIR 2/113, Minute to P.4 from the Director of Personnel, 1 December 1919; TNA, AIR 2/233, Constitution and Functions of the Promotion Selection Board.

holder, GC Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt, was appointed to another command. No evidence has been found why this occurred; however, what is clear is that the position was established at the behest of the Secretary of State for War and Air, Churchill, in 1919 and that its disestablishment in 1923 coincided with the establishment of the position of AMP in 1922 as a separate seat on the Air Council.⁵² It is arguable that the Air Council felt that AMP, who sat on the Selection Board, could fulfil a similar role. However, the lack of an Air Secretary post-1923 had the potential for the increased misuse of powers through favouritism by both senior officers and politicians alike. The post of Air Secretary did not re-emerge until 1957, and a 1956 report authored by DoP, AC R.W.L. Glenn, admitted that the lack of this post meant that RAF 'career planning [was] generally on an "ad hoc" basis'.⁵³ The Glenn Report made clear that by 1944, it was widely recognised that the AMP's department was too overloaded with work to manage careers effectively, despite that, in theory, this had been its primary focus through the 'Maintenance of the Royal Air Force in officers'.⁵⁴ In practice, the directorates that made up the AMP's department were too disparate to provide coherent career planning, though clearly the RAF thought it could cope. This lack of central planning, underpinned by leadership development, reinforces the view that the RAF nurtured rather than mentored officers like Leigh-Mallory who emerged by making themselves 'visible' to suitable senior leaders, who then brought them up through the ranks by sending them to institutions like Andover that further developed their abilities. As Chapter One noted, it is difficult to find evidence of individual patronage; therefore, it appears that RAF senior leaders collegiately nurtured officers whose potential for high rank was identifiable by making favourable impressions. This was, as Chapter Six

⁵² For correspondence with the Treasury over the establishment of the Air Secretary's post, see: TNA, AIR 2/121, Air Secretary, date opened 12 February 1919.

⁵³ AIR 2/13309, Report on the Proposed Introduction of an Air Secretary's Department into the Permanent Organisation of the Air Ministry by Air Commodore R.W.L. Glenn, 16 February 1956, p. 20.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-3; TNA, AIR 20/7502, *Air Ministry – List of Staff and Distribution of Duties*, 11 July 1924, pp. 31-5.

notes, particularly notable at Andover, which was a key gate in the leadership development process.

The Selection Board's composition paralleled that used by the Army.⁵⁵ Two key promotion criteria reinforced RAF culture – command and flying experience – and, apart from the addition of a Promotion Exam in 1926, the principals established remained largely unchanged during this period. Promotion to WgCr and GC explicitly noted the need to have 'held an actual command in his present rank'; therefore, SLs had to have held a command appointment to be promoted.⁵⁶ For most in Appendix Four, this covered their First World War experience, though SL Arthur Wright was passed over for promotion in June 1924 when the Selection Board noted that he 'should be given a command' to develop his abilities.⁵⁷ By 1929, the Air Council clarified the question of squadron command for such appointments and concluded that this included positions that 'call[ed] for the display of very similar qualities'. This consisted of twin-engine bomber flights, RN carrier appointments and flying boat flights, commanding officers of a squadron of flight cadets at Cranwell, and chief instructors at flying training schools.⁵⁸ Driven by the RAF's small size, this offered sufficient suitable command experiences to developing officers.

Codified in AP1334, the importance of flying ethos concerning promotion went further as the RAF showed a preference for 'heavier-than-air' pilots.⁵⁹ During the Washington Naval Conference in 1922, the RAF decided to remove airships from its force structure, which placed airship officers in an awkward position.⁶⁰ The RAF did not wish to

⁵⁵ French, 'Patterns of Promotions', p. 161.

⁵⁶ TNA, AIR 2/233, Secretary to the Air Ministry to all Air Officers Commanding, 15 August 1922.

⁵⁷ TNA, AIR 2/233, Minutes and Decision of the June 1924 Promotions Board.

⁵⁸ TNA, AIR 2/233, Letter to AOC operational commands, June 1929.

⁵⁹ TNA, AIR 2/233, Note in connection with half-yearly meeting of Promotion Selection Board, December 1922; TNA, AIR 10/1730, AP1334.

⁶⁰ 1922 [Cd. 1619] *Proceedings of the Second Air Conference held on 7th and 8th February 1922*, p. 10. Airship development would continue after abolishing the branch under the Director of Civil Aviation but effectively

lose well-trained officers, and encouraged them to re-train for ‘flying duties on heavier-than-air craft’.⁶¹ For example, both WgCr A.D. Cunningham and SL Douglas Harries re-qualified as pilots to enhance their promotion prospects.⁶² Both Cunningham and Harries also illustrate one challenge of drawing conclusions from a correlation of the data in Appendix Three; namely that in 1919 these officers were graded as staff officers rather than members of the Airship Branch. This is because this represented their job assignment in 1919 and not their operational background. However, as the Secretary of State for Air, Guest, stated in 1921, airship officers would be ‘absorbed [...] according to their qualifications and abilities’.⁶³ This was a simple and elegant solution to a potentially challenging problem, and it fitted with the policy that GD Branch officers should be graded as pilots. This problem also led to much needed clarification concerning the criteria of command and flying experience regarding promotion to Air Rank.⁶⁴ In the background of discussions over airship officers, AMP, in preparation for the December 1922 meeting of the Selection Board, clarified the position regarding officers seeking promotion to GC. Successful completion of a minimum of two years’ service as a GC was the necessary springboard to Air Rank. AMP stressed that WgCrs must be ‘chosen because of their outstanding fitness for advancement’ to GC and beyond.⁶⁵ Because of this, officers were to be qualified ‘heavier than air’ pilots and have proven operational command abilities. The

ended with the crash of R.101 in 1931, see: Robin Higham, *The British Rigid Airship, 1908-1931: A Study in Weapons Policy* (London: G.T. Foulis, 1961).

⁶¹ TNA, AIR 2/249, Minute from AMP to CAS and AMSR, 10 October 1923.

⁶² TNA, AIR 2/249, Air Ministry to the AOC RAF Iraq, 12 November 1923.

⁶³ TNA, AIR 2/249, Minute from S.7 to AMP, 19 September 1923.

⁶⁴ TNA, AIR 2/249, Wing Commander W.C. Hicks to the Secretary, Air Ministry, 29 November 1923; AIR 2/249, Squadron Leader E.J. Sparling to Air Commodore John Steel, 11 December 1923; AIR 2/249, S.7 to Wing Commander A.D. Cunningham and Squadron Leader Douglas Harries, 8 April 1924.

⁶⁵ TNA, AIR 2/233, Note in connection with half-yearly meeting of Promotion Selection Board – December 1922.

system was also expected to be flexible enough to cope with ‘war or sudden and unforeseen circumstances’.⁶⁶

Besides managing promotion up to GC, the Air Ministry also established a Senior Promotion Board that examined appointments to Air Rank. Promotion to GC and above did not require examination, and candidates were considered on merit due to the political sensitivity of many appointments that went with these ranks.⁶⁷ For example, as noted elsewhere, the outgoing AOC Aden Command, AC Portal, recalled in 1937 that his command required the management of several stakeholders, including co-operation with the Army and political agents in country.⁶⁸ Similarly, appointments to Air Rank brought with them attendant responsibilities, a key element of good leadership, which reinforced the need to appoint those deemed most appropriate for the position. Additionally, by 1939, many would have experienced appropriate appointments such as attendance at Andover. Promotion zones for ACs and AVMs were two to four years, after which officers were typically retired or placed on half-pay. Due to potential sensitivities, appointment to Air Rank required the approval of the Secretary of State for Air. All appointments above three-star level additionally required Royal Assent.⁶⁹ An examination of the *AFL* shows that officers like Leigh-Mallory were regularly promoted over those more senior, thus illustrating a progressive attitude to meritocracy. For example, when promoted to AC on 1 January 1936, Leigh-Mallory was, in November 1935, seventeenth out of 68 GCs in the *AFL*.⁷⁰ Aided by RAF expansion in the 1930s, the promotion of more capable officers to Air Rank linked to the relative size of command appointments. On formation, 12 Group,

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ TNA, AIR 2/875, Air Ministry Order No. 280 – Promotion and Retirement in the Ranks of Air Commodore and Group Captain in the General Duties Branch, 13 October 1932.

⁶⁸ Portal, ‘Air Force Co-Operation in Policing the Empire (lecture)’, pp. 343-58.

⁶⁹ AIR 2/289, Minute from the Chief of the Air Staff to the Permanent Secretary to the Secretary of State for Air, 17 July 1925.

⁷⁰ TNA, AIR 2/875, Minute from the Chief of the Air Staff to Secretary of State for Air, 7 November 1935; *The Air Force List*, November 1935.

which Leigh-Mallory took over on 17 December 1937, was, as with many operational groups, an AC appointment. In 1936, after the formation of the functional commands of the RAF, the Air Ministry agreed with the Treasury that 1 and 2 (Bomber) Groups and 11 (Fighter) Group would be commanded by AVMs with an AC as SASO because they had an establishment of 'fourteen to sixteen squadrons'.⁷¹ As Britain's geo-strategic position changed and the RAF expanded, so did 12 Group tasks, which, in turn, led to an expansion of Leigh-Mallory's responsibilities in geographical terms and squadron numbers. This explains the date of seniority for his appointment as an AVM on 1 November 1938, which was out of alignment with standard promotion dates.

While the RAF established promotion criteria and procedures, it was not without its challenges and criticism. The key challenge for the RAF emerged during expansion in the 1930s. Expansion forced the RAF to ensure a steady flow of middle-ranking officers through to Air Rank as well as increasing recruitment at lower levels. Key to managing these changes was AMP, AM Bowhill, who suggested in 1935 that the promotion zone to FL should be reduced from five to two and a half years to cope with increased officer recruitment.⁷² In effect, the RAF introduced 'time' promotion based on officers' seniority; a system used by the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers.⁷³ Similarly, in 1938, to ensure flow through to Air Rank, King George VI assented to an 'abnormal' procedure that allowed for the promotion of officers outside established criteria.⁷⁴ This allowed for promotion of WgCr to GC and then to Air Rank. Bowhill recognised this problem in 1935 when he wrote a minute to CAS, Ellington, noting that promotion zones required shifting to cope

⁷¹ TNA, AIR 2/1805, Deputy Secretary to the Air Ministry to the Secretary to the Treasury, 9 May 1936.

⁷² TNA, AIR 2/2247, Notes on Decisions made from a Meeting on the RAF Expansion Programme concerning Organisation and Personnel Aspects, 28 October 1935.

⁷³ French, *Military Identities*, p. 149.

⁷⁴ TNA, AIR 2/3923, Private Secretary to King George VI to the Secretary of State for Air, 15 November 1938.

with changing operational requirements. However, to ensure promotion based on merit, it was stressed that AOCs should only forward names of those in whom they had the ‘fullest confidence’, whilst:

only the very best officers should be forwarded and their recommendations should be based entirely on ability and no question of hard luck should arise.⁷⁵

Nonetheless, the RAF’s meritocratic system was open to potential manipulation due to favouritism or patronage, which was an on-going debate in the services during the inter-war years.⁷⁶ While merit remained simple to define, the quality of being good at something, the process of assessing it as it related to leadership development, remained problematic, as the RAF did not use any form of discrete psychometric testing.⁷⁷ However, this is perhaps an unfair critique given that it was not until the Second World War that the Army introduced such techniques to select suitable officers.⁷⁸ During the inter-war years, the RAF felt it could qualitatively assess, through ACRs, officers leadership potential, despite this being a stove piped document that had little real benefit for the officer to whom it related. Furthermore, as suggested below, ACRs could be a source of abuse, for positive and negative reasons, by OCs and AOCs. This problem was exacerbated by the lack of an Air Secretary after 1923 to manage careers.

In hierarchical organisations, senior officers’ views mattered, as favouritism and patronage could support promotion. While direct and substantial evidence is hard to locate,

⁷⁵ TNA, AIR 2/3925, Minute from AMP to CAS, 15 May 1935; TNA, AIR 2/3925, Letter from the Secretary to the Air Ministry to AOCs, 19 July 1935.

⁷⁶ Lieutenant R.D. Foster, RA, ‘Promotion by Merit in the Army’, *JRUSI*, 70 (1925), pp. 685-692; Commander C.N. Robinson, RN, ‘Promotion by Merit in the Navy’, *JRUSI*, 71 (1926), pp. 42-51.

⁷⁷ On psychometric tests in general, see: Bolden *et al*, *Exploring Leadership*, pp. 43-45.

⁷⁸ During the Second World War, the Army introduced the War Office Selection Board to test candidates abilities as potential officers. However, the RAF’s aircrew selection system, as Wells noted, ‘relied on their own internal and essentially non-professional expertise’ that eschewed any form of psychometric support, see: Wells, *Courage and Air Warfare*, p. 5; David French, *Raising Churchill’s Army: The British Army and the War against Germany, 1919-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 74-5; Jeremy Crang, *The British Army and the People’s War, 1939-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 31-8. The German Army was, from a military perspective, the first organisation to introduce psychometric evaluation through assessment centres in the 1930s, which evaluated officers leadership potential, see: T.J. Newton, ‘Discourse and Agency: The Example of Personal Psychology and ‘Assessment Centres’’, *Organization Studies*, 15(6) (1994), p. 885.

certain key senior leaders held strong views on some officers' suitability for promotion, which came out in ACRs. At the June 1924 meeting of the Selection Board, SL P.A. Shepherd, passed over for promotion based on the recommendation of his AOC, AC Webb-Bowen, was noted as having 'reached the limit of his promotion'; however, by modern standards, there was no data to support this view.⁷⁹ When, in 1938, time came to promote officers outside established criteria, superiors opinions mattered more than usual, as seen in the example of WgCr J.V. Steel, then SPSO at 11 Group. In addition to normal procedures, AOCs were required at this time to forward lists of officers outside of criteria suitable for promotion to the Air Ministry.⁸⁰ Steel's AOC, AVM Ernest Gossage, let his opinion be known to the Senior Selection Board that:

he has not shown ambition to advance himself in the Service, nor that extra effort beyond what is normally expected, which should be shown by an officer of his seniority.⁸¹

Steel's seniority dated to 1 January 1928, and he had informed Gossage that he was considering retirement. Steel had already been passed over for promotion to GC seven times. Conversely, WgCr R.J. Mounsey, promoted to GC at this time, had only been recommended once.⁸² The continued employment of Steel rested largely on the expansion of the RAF and the need for middle-ranking officers. While AOCs played a key role, so did officers in the Air Ministry, including CAS, who chaired the Selection Boards. In extolling the merits of an officer, Trenchard could be a harsh but fair critic. When recommending GC Joubert for promotion, he noted that he was an 'officer of some considerable ability and originality' but that he could sometimes be a 'little overwhelmed'.⁸³ Conversely, in

⁷⁹ TNA, AIR 2/233, Minutes and Decisions of the June 1924 Promotion Board, p. 2.

⁸⁰ TNA, AIR 2/3923, Under-Secretary of State for Air to AOC-in-C Fighter Command, 12 November 1938.

⁸¹ TNA, AIR 2/3923, AOC 11 Group to AOC-in-C Fighter Command, 2 November 1938.

⁸² TNA, AIR 2/3923, List of Wing Commanders who have passed out of their zone of promotion, November 1938.

⁸³ TNA, AIR 2/804, Minute from CAS to the Secretary of State for Air, 17 April 1929.

1928, Trenchard extolled AC Dowding's merit, describing him as having 'intelligence, initiative and knowledge' and noting that he 'ha[d] been of great assistance to the Air Force since it was formed'.⁸⁴ This compares favourably to their relationship in 1916, when Trenchard described Dowding as a 'dismal Jimmy', or a person who is always pessimistic. This sobriquet emerged after Dowding questioned the effect Trenchard's offensive policy during the Battle of the Somme had on squadron morale.⁸⁵ Furthermore, some officers were not averse to using their position to influence promotions. In 1937, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C) Bomber Command, ACM Sir John Steel, made representations for GC Wright, who had been passed over for promotion to AC on 1 January 1937. Using his position, ACM Steel persuaded the Senior Promotion Board to reverse its decision, illustrating the prestige that the RAF invested in its most esteemed operational command.⁸⁶

3.4 The Promotion Exam and Education

French, writing on officer education and training in the Army in this period, noted that promotion examinations were a compulsory element of an officer's future development.⁸⁷ This also applied to the RAF post-1926, though discussions over the implementation and appropriateness of promotions examinations began as early as 1922. On 23 February 1923, the Director of Training and Staff Duties, AC T.C.R. Higgins, suggested to AMP, AVM Oliver Swann, that 'examinations for promotions of officers should be started in due

⁸⁴ TNA, AIR 2/804, Minute from CAS to the Secretary of State for Air, 9 October 1928.

⁸⁵ Boyle, *Trenchard*, p. 184; Vincent Orange, *Dowding of Fighter Command: Victor of the Battle of Britain* (London: Grub Street, 2008), pp. 32-6.

⁸⁶ TNA, AIR 2/875, Minute from CAS to Secretary of State for Air, 21 June 1937.

⁸⁷ David French, 'Officer Education and Training in the Regular British Army, 1919-1939' in Gregory C. Kennedy and Keith Neilson (eds.), *Military Education: Past, Present and Future* (Greenwood, CT: Praeger, 2002), pp. 109-110

course'.⁸⁸ This suggestion sought to forestall any potential criticism levelled at RAF promotion procedures. The origins of RAF promotion examinations emerged as a command level innovation in 1922.⁸⁹ Here, command described RAF key functional formations; for example, Inland Area. In June 1924, the then Director of Training (DoT), T.C.R. Higgins, noted to AOC Inland Area, AC Webb-Bowen, that Coastal Area had, in 1922, 'inaugurated a scheme by which two written examinations were held every year' before selection for promotion.⁹⁰ In parallel, these schemes and discussions merged to produce a standardised RAF promotion examination. Traced to their service in the Army and RN but merged with an attempt to remove defects identified in their respective systems, the introduction of a promotion exam derived from senior RAF officers' previous experience, which informed its introduction. Swann had served in the RN pre-First World War, while both Webb-Bowen and Higgins had been Army officers. Furthermore, the introduction of promotion examinations supports J. van Doorn's contention that a 'special, well-integrated body of knowledge and skill' strengthens professionalisation in organisations; officers who associated with their profession was a key element of leadership development in the RAF.⁹¹

Promotion examinations, alongside doctrine, formal and informal, developed and reinforced RAF culture while developing the professional knowledge required by officers. However, only 12 per cent of Appendix Four ever undertook an examination because, by the time of its introduction, most officers considered were WgCrs. Thus, while officers like Leigh-Mallory were immersed into RAF culture through institutions like Andover, they

⁸⁸ TNA, AIR 2/311, Minute from Director of Training and Staff Duties to AMP, 23 February 1923.

⁸⁹ On bottom-up innovation, see: Adam Grissom, 'The Future of Military Innovation Studies', pp. 920-4. For a modern leadership perspective, see: Sanford Borins, 'Leadership and Innovation in the Public Sector', *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 23(8) (2002), pp. 469-72.

⁹⁰ TNA, AIR 2/311, Director of Training to AOC Inland Area, June 1924.

⁹¹ J. van Doorn, *The Soldier and Social Change* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1975), p. 35.

were not exposed to it further by the promotion exam. Promoted to WgCr on 1 January and 1 July 1927 respectively, two exceptions to this were Harris and AM Sir Richard Peck. The promotion examinations, called “A”, “B” and “C”, were applicable to officers up to the rank of SL. Flying Officers took Promotion Examination “A” for promotion to FL, “B” for FL to SL and “C” for SL to WgCr. A key criticism, as with attendance at Andover and other aspects of the RAF, was that exams initially only applied to GD Branch officers, which reinforced the Service’s proclivity for heroic leadership. During its development, the promotion examination came under other criticisms. In 1924, while debating subjects for the examination, AMP and AMSR held opposing views over the balance between technical and conceptual knowledge, which illustrates the tension inherent in the RAF in this area.⁹² Eventually, examination content became increasingly conceptual in character as officers progressed through to WgCr, which illustrates that the RAF sought to change how developing leaders thought as they moved into more senior positions. It was a move from tactical, or technical, knowledge to broader strategic, or vision based, thinking that was being encouraged in this process. Concerning technical questions, on 3 March 1927, AOC RAF India, Sir John Salmond, wrote to the Air Ministry complaining that exam questions related to air-cooled engines, a type not used in his command, which he felt placed officers at a disadvantage.⁹³ While sympathetic, the Air Ministry failed to offer any practical solution, as they thought that the latter form of engine would ‘eventually disappear’ and that most officers posted to India were trained on air-cooled engines and thus fully conversant with their properties.⁹⁴

⁹² TNA, AIR 2/322, Précis of Promotion Examination with views from AMP, AMSR and Commandant Staff College, 29 September 1924.

⁹³ TNA, AIR 2/311, AOC RAF India to the Secretary to the Air Ministry, 3 March 1927.

⁹⁴ TNA, AIR 2/311, DOSD to AOC RAF India, 24 July 1927.

Although not directly relevant to Leigh-Mallory and many of his peers, it is worth briefly considering the examinations character because they illustrate how the RAF sought to provide a firm professional basis for the development of the Service's officer class. Officers studied subjects like airmanship, drill, law, organisation and administration, air operations, imperial geography, and sanitation which sought to test the required knowledge of leaders several steps above their current duties and illustrated a move to the conceptual understanding required of senior leaders.⁹⁵ Based on various sources of knowledge, like the *King's Regulations*, the *Manual of Air Force Law* and, from 1928, the *RAF War Manual*, and while these tests were undeniably dry in content, each focused on the transmission of RAF culture.⁹⁶ The second edition of the *Manual of Air Force Law*, published in 1933, suggested that, while the first edition was by its very nature a derivative of the *Manual of Military Law*, the previous 12 years had seen the RAF adapt its laws to its organisational context, though clear parallels existed amongst each of the services.⁹⁷ Thus, this 'stories' development reinforces the importance of the assumption of independence, as by having its own legal manual, the RAF made a statement about its independent status. The *Manual of Air Force Law* also included an overview on the evolution of the RAF and its relationship to the manual.⁹⁸ Thus, studying key texts like these and both volumes of the *War Manual* was an aspect of leadership development, which inculcated officers with knowledge that mapped to RAF culture and drove the Service's evolution. For example, AP1300 outlined doctrinal elements of the belief in 'Command of the Air' in various chapters that discussed air operations and examined concepts such as air superiority. In Question II on 'Air Operations' in the September 1931 "C" examination, candidates were asked what the

⁹⁵ TNA, AIR 2/311, AMWO No. 181 – Promotions Examination – Officers, March 1925.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ TNA, AIR 10/822, AP804 – *Manual of Air Force Law*, 2nd Edition, January 1933 (Embodying Amendment List Nos. 1-8, 1939), p. iii.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-7.

primary role of air power was in land operations. The examiner's report noted that this referred to air superiority and stated that the answer could be found in Chapter XII of AP1300, which examined army co-operation and argued that the principal task of the RAF was to gain 'air superiority'.⁹⁹ Overall, in this respect, paralleling the experience of the Army, but without its inherent structural flaw of the regimental system, the RAF used promotion examinations as an educational tool to prepare officers for future leadership by developing their professional knowledge.¹⁰⁰ Made explicit in AMWO No. 181 in 1925, which stated that the purpose of the exams was to ensure that 'officers attain and maintain the necessary professional knowledge' expected of them, the Air Ministry, in various AMWOs, continuously reiterated this.¹⁰¹ The clearest indication that the RAF sought to professionalise its officer class and valued continuing development came from Trenchard, who stressed that the exam's purpose was not to produce officers who 'can pass exams' but those with 'qualifications necessary for the running of the service'.¹⁰² In essence, the RAF developed officers who could make the Service fit for its defence mission by encouraging effective organisational leadership.

3.5 Summary

This chapter has examined some of the key elements that underpinned the experience of leadership development, like promotion. It has also examined the patterns and rhythms that emerged amongst the officer class of the RAF for those who entered the military elite by 1939. The RAF established a promotion system based on the idea of merit; however, though not unusual for the period, it relied on the opinions of senior officers to judge the

⁹⁹ TNA, AIR 10/1828, AP1446 – *Report of the Royal Air Force Examinations "B" and "C" held on 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th September*, March 1932, pp. 42-45; TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. XII, Para. 2.

¹⁰⁰ On issues in the Army's regimental system more generally, see: French, *Military Identities*.

¹⁰¹ TNA, AIR 2/311, AMWO No. 181.

¹⁰² TNA, AIR 2/311, Minute from CAS to AMP and AMSR, 14 October 1924.

worth of nurtured officers. Thus, the procedures underpinning development were not without their challenges, like the potential abuse of key information sources, such as the ACR, which was used by the selection boards. However, key markers like attendance at Andover became preferred routes to senior leadership, and by making themselves more 'visible', officers such as Leigh-Mallory continued to be identified for development. Concerning public schools, this helped officers get in to the Service because, as Chapter Four illustrates, the RAF perceived that these institutions produced men with the right leadership characteristics, though there was admittedly an element of senior leaders re-affirming their predilection to appoint officers who shared their class background. This process was constrained by RAF culture, and by linking flying to the duties of a GD Branch officer, the Service made a firm statement about its preferred class of personnel.

Chapter Four

Social Origins, Pre-Service Education and the Development of Leaders

Mansell, in his study of the educational and social factors affecting the recruitment of RAF pilots in this period, observed that one function of the Service's senior leadership was to:

recruit men who could create a distinctive ethos in its officer corps and also meet its technical demands.¹

This challenge led to the GD Branch's formation with a view of immersing officers in RAF culture. Mansell's article was an important contribution to understanding the social composition of the RAF, but failed to adequately build on the links between the Service's and public schools views of leadership. The RAF's heroic view of leadership included concepts such as courage, honour and duty that, as this chapter illustrates, were readily identifiable in aspects of public school curricula, though, as Sheffield noted concerning paternalism, many of these values could also be found in society more broadly.² However, the link here is that it was believed that those from public schools were 'imbued with leadership qualities' and 'shared a certain set of social values'.³ Furthermore, as this chapter shows using WgCr Evill's 1931 report on Cranwell students, the RAF clearly believed technical skills could be taught, while broader leadership education could only be reinforced from that received at an earlier age in public schools. As earlier chapters show, technical knowledge, subsumed by pilot ethos, was viewed as a specialism within the GD Branch. As Bédarida suggested, education systems replicated and mapped the 'prevailing values of [...] society' on to students; therefore, a reciprocal relationship emerged between

¹ Mansell, 'Flying Start', p. 71.

² Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations', p. 8.

³ *Ibid*, p. 113.

the RAF and public schools.⁴ Thus, future senior RAF leaders transplanted their public school values and class based views onto the Service. More specifically from a leadership perspective, these values revolved around a reciprocal relationship among concepts, skills and organisations that was important for the development of leaders. While contingent issues like career choice and the role of the First World War must be recognised as factors in the development paths of officers considered in the prosopography population, it is possible to identify the transmission of wider societal values that interfaced with the RAF to develop the type of officer it wanted. While Bédarida might be correct that education systems implant widely held values onto pupils, it can also be suggested that the preference for public school educated officers derived from a desire to maintain class structures in the RAF. However, it should not be assumed that this desire came from the upper class, because, as Rubinstein illustrated, it was the professional and middle classes that predominately made use of public schools.⁵

This chapter analyses the pre-service background of officers from Appendix Four by examining several key developmental areas as well as exploring Leigh-Mallory's own progression. First, it examines officers' social origins and notes that, in general, these men originated from the business and professional elements of the middle class. While remaining contested terms due to perceptions of class conflict, Victorian and Edwardian society split into the two aforementioned sections plus the working class. The working class ranged from labourers through to educated workers. The middle class was even more expansive and ranged from clerks to members of company boards. A defining aspect of the middle class was the rise of the professions, which could be further split into lower and upper sections. The upper class proper was primarily limited to members of the gentry but

⁴ Bédarida, *A Social History of England*, p. 153.

⁵ Rubinstein, 'Education and the Social Origins of British Elites, 1880-1970', pp. 163-207.

also included elements like the clergy and legal professions.⁶ Apart from any horizontal segregation of class, it separated along vertical lines too; for example, between the ‘old rich and the new’.⁷ Second, this chapter examines the importance of public schools and how the RAF attempted to foster and maintain relationships with these establishments during this period, thus highlighting their value to the Service. Third, it examines the importance of team sports to an officer’s development, both in public schools and in the RAF. Fourth, the emergence and importance of the OTC is considered. Finally, a survey of officers’ university education completes the chapter.

4.1 Social Origins

Born on 11 July 1892 in Mobberley, Cheshire, Leigh-Mallory was the youngest of four children, the most famous of which was his oldest brother, George, who died climbing Mount Everest in 1924.⁸ His father was a Rector at the local Anglican Church, where his forebears had been parsons for several generations. Leigh-Mallory’s upper class status, afforded to him by his father’s position, saw him develop links with important persons of the age; his Godfather was Sir Lees Knowles, 1st Baronet, noted philanthropist and politician, who maintained an interest in military history and bequeathed money to support the Sir Lees Knowles Lectures at his *Alma Mater*, Trinity College, University of Cambridge. Leigh-Mallory’s peer, Tedder, delivered these lectures in 1947.⁹

The social origins of officers who reached Air Rank by March 1939 in Appendix Four parallels the divergence and broadening of occupations in this period. By the late-

⁶ Bédarida, *A Social History of England*, pp. 36-72.

⁷ Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880*, New Edition (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 62.

⁸ Background biographical information stems from: Dunn *Big Wing*; Vincent Orange ‘Mallory, Sir Trafford Leigh- (1892-1944)’ *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004 – [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/34483>, accessed 18 May 2007].

⁹ Arthur Tedder, *Air Power in War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948).

Victorian era, professionals like the civil service had gained stronger credence in society; before the Industrial Revolution, professions in Britain were limited to clerical and legal occupations.¹⁰ The emergence of the middle class and the broadening of Britain's industrial base post-1750 led to greater state involvement and an associated growth in the number of civil servants who carried out policy. Similarly, the business class, who drove industrialisation, became more prominent in society as manufacturing overtook agriculture as the key economic sector. The professionalisation of society drove up living standards and shifted social structures from a class base to a professional hierarchy. This was not, however, obvious at the time, and the landed gentry remained present as a social and political entity throughout the late-Victorian period. Furthermore, the middle classes increasingly sought to identify themselves with the more established professions as well as ingratiating themselves with the upper or landed classes, and used public schools as one enabling mechanism to achieve this.

While the broadening of the class system was not readily identifiable in the officer classes of the Army and RN, it was present in the RAF. Studies into the late-Victorian and Edwardian Army make clear that its officers largely emerged from upper-middle or upper classes, with a specific preference for those whose fathers' occupational backgrounds included military, clerical and legal experience.¹¹ As Bowman and Connelly argued, the Army consistently struggled to broaden its recruitment base in the face of social changes.¹² For example, a third of Edwardian Army officers were sourced from 'Gentlemen'; those who could support the costs required to be an officer. Similar challenges faced the

¹⁰ T.R. Gourvish, 'The Rise of the Professions' in T.R. Gourvish and Alan O'Day (eds.), *Later Victorian Britain, 1867-1900* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988), pp. 13-35.

¹¹ Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, p. 9; Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations', p. 3; Christopher Moore-Bick, *Playing the Game: The British Junior Officer on the Western Front, 1914-18* (Solihull: Helion and Company, 2011), p. 21.

¹² Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, pp. 9-12; French, *Military Identities*, pp. 145-7.

Executive Branch of the RN, which struggled to cope with the impact that its Engineering Branch's professionalisation had on both recruitment and status.¹³ Derived from a variety of sources like birth records, obituaries and memoirs, Chart 4.1's classification of father's occupation compares well to the Army and illustrates that officers from Appendix Four emerged from a broad conceptualisation of class.¹⁴ The RAF, in part due to contingent factors like volunteerism during the First World War, gradually widened the sources of its recruitment base. Twenty-seven per cent present in Chart 4.1 are classified as 'Not Known', though it is safe to presume that the figures presented are representative. The established professions are broadly represented, though the business class continued to dominate at 23 per cent. Even this classification can be further broken down into a variety of career paths including merchants, bankers and small landowners. For example, AVM Sir Paul Maltby's father was a landowner and tea planter in Travancore, South India, while Mitchell's father owned a brewery in Sydney, Australia.¹⁵ Despite increased occupational breadth, the military, as a profession, continued to play a role in the origins of RAF officers, with 14 per cent emerging from this context. Largely split between the British and Indian Armies, the only exception was Peirse's father, who was the only RN officer present. Peirse's father, Admiral Sir Richard Peirse, served as Inspector of Target Practice, 1909 to 1911, and Commander-in-Chief of the East Indies Station, 1912 to 1916.¹⁶ Classified as 'Other', Portal's father, Edward Robert, lived by independent means due to

¹³ In general, see: Davison, *The Challenges of Command*.

¹⁴ Charts for this chapter can be found in Appendix Two.

¹⁵ 'Obituary – Sir Paul Maltby', *The Times*, Tuesday 6 July 1971, p. 14; Robin Woolven, 'Mitchell, Sir William Gore Sutherland (1888-1944)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; Online edn, Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/35047>, accessed 27 Oct 2012].

¹⁶ 'Obituary – Admiral Sir Richard Peirse', *The Times*, Thursday 11 July 1940, p. 7. Usurped by a cheaper version developed by Captain Frederick Dreyer, and one part of the problem that led to the RN's losses at the Battle of Jutland in 1916, significantly, Admiral Peirse was supportive of the development of Arthur Pollen's rejected computer-based fire-control system, see: Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *In Defence of Naval Supremacy: Finance, Technology, and British Naval Policy, 1889-1914*, Paperback Edition (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 154. On the debate over fire control at the Battle of Jutland, see: John Brooks, *Dreadnought Gunnery and the Battle of Jutland: The Question of Fire Control* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006).

the family's success as wine merchants in the early- to mid-nineteenth century. This prosperity allowed Portal's father to pursue a successful legal career and retire as an unpaid Justice of the Peace aged 30. This allowed the family to move into the upper class; a rare case of social mobility in this period.¹⁷ Thus, Portal was Leigh-Mallory's and Sutton's class peer, as their fathers were clergy, who had their own hierarchy and were socially distinct from the broader upper-middle class core present in Appendix Four.¹⁸ The only officer in this sample who had links to the landed gentry was AVM Henry Cave-Browne-Cave, whose father was Sir Thomas, who in turn was the third son of Thomas, the third son of the ninth Baronet, Sir William. While classified as upper class, the family's removal from the hereditary line saw descendants seek alternative occupations; Cave-Browne-Cave's father ended his Army career in 1900 as the Deputy Accountant-General.¹⁹ However, despite this general broadening of occupational backgrounds, it needs to be remembered that these officers shared the public school experience, which reinforced class boundaries.

Chart 4.2 represents an under-recognised aspect of RAF officers' origins, their imperial character, which is best represented by Joubert, who was born in India. Twenty-four per cent of officers from Appendix Four were born outside Britain in the empire; for example, Joubert's father was a Doctor in the Indian Medical Service, which was a remnant of the East India Company and served as a reserve to the Indian Army while providing a vital civilian function.²⁰ It is clear that future officers born around the British Empire were there due to its expansion and the movement of the various professions in it. In this

¹⁷ Richards, *Portal*, pp. 6-11.

¹⁸ 'Obituary – Air Marshal Sir Bertine Sutton', *The Times*, Tuesday 1 October 1946, p. 9; Keith Robbins, 'The Churches in Edwardian Society' in Donald Read (ed.), *Edwardian England* (London: Croom Helm, 1982), p. 118.

¹⁹ Charles Mosley (ed.), *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage & Knightage*, 107th Edition, Volume 1 (Wilmington, Delaware: Burke's Peerage, 2003), p. 728.

²⁰ Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, p. 8; Lieutenant-Colonel (ret'd) Donald McDonald, BM, FRCSEd, IMS, 'The Indian Medical Service: A Short Account of its Achievements, 1600-1947', *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 49(1) (1956), p. 16.

imperial context, the diffusion of professions linked back to Britain through education, thus illustrating a reciprocal relationship between them. Immersed into a system that developed a feeling of shared experience, these officers enjoyed an upbringing in the empire but were then sent back to Britain for education, typically to public schools.

The character of these officers' social origins raises several considerations that have implications for this chapter as a whole. Tempered by recognition of contingent factors, these officers were broadly representative of the changing professional character of the nineteenth century, which had a reciprocal relationship with public schools that was important to members of the emerging professions. However, the key factor is the relationship between career choice and the outbreak of the First World War. Caught up in the jingoistic atmosphere of 1914 and 1915, those RAF officers who did not seek a military career before the First World War largely volunteered out of patriotic duty. These officers, 42 per cent of the prosopography population, had, as Chapter Three illustrated, potentially begun to pursue other education and employment avenues. While at university, Leigh-Mallory considered pursuing a legal career, whilst Tedder had begun to build a successful Civil Service career as a Colonial Office cadet in Fiji.²¹ While Orange illustrated that Tedder did not volunteer out of some sense of 'pseudo-patriotism', it is clear that the latter felt his OTC training might be of use in the war.²² However, it is also clear that while patriotism might have been a contributing factor to joining up, the desire to fly was also present; for example, 13 per cent of officers joined the Special Reserve of the RFC in the early phase of the war, though these figures themselves can be questioned. For example, *The Army List* in March 1918 gives Harris as a member of the Special Reserve of the RFC, though it is known that his original service came with the Rhodesian Regiment in 1915. Nevertheless, if

²¹ Dunn, *Big Wing*, p. 17; Owen, *Tedder*, pp. 45-51; Orange, *Tedder*, pp. 17-22.

²² Orange, *Tedder*, pp. 21-2.

these officers, as a group, are to be considered effective leaders, it must be recognised that, much like the birth of the RAF itself, these men were products of the circumstances of the First World War and the contingent nature of their decision to volunteer for military service.

4.2 The Definition and Importance of Public Schools to the British Military

Sheffield argued that the Army's pre-First World War 'officer class was educationally homogenous', which supported C.B. Otley's 1973 contention that even into the early 1970s, public schools remained the key source for officers.²³ This was an issue for the RAF, and on 21 November 1923, the Deputy DoP, GC Joubert, noted in a RUSI lecture that the RAF looked 'primarily to the Public Schools and Universities to provide our needs for officers', as they were perceived to produce those who could lead by example.²⁴ For example, as Chapter Three explored, 82 per cent of officers from Appendix Four shared the public school experience. In 1919, when commenting on Cecil's recommendations for the education of boys seeking Permanent Commissions in the RAF, the Director of Research, GC Brooke-Popham, who attended Haileybury, supported the view that a general 'classical' education was desirable for future candidates.²⁵ Public schools, however, are a controversial subject; for example, in 1975, Geoffrey Best argued that they were a breeding ground for militarism, particularly through the OTC.²⁶ As the Introduction noted, economic historians like George Allen accused the system of being a cause of the 'British Disease' of industrial decline. Allen wrote that they 'instilled a distaste for the pursuits

²³ Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations', p. 4; C.B. Otley, 'The Educational Background of British Army Officers', *Sociology*, 7(2) (1973), p. 204.

²⁴ Joubert, 'The Supply and Training of Officers', p. 40

²⁵ TNA, AIR 2/100, Memorandum from Director of Research to Director General of Supply and Research, 24 October 1919.

²⁶ Geoffrey Best, 'Militarism and the Victorian Public School' in B. Simon and I. Bradley (eds.), *The Victorian Public School: Studies in the Development of an Educational Institution* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1975), pp. 129-146.

which had made the country rich and powerful'.²⁷ Concerning the Edwardian Army, Bowman and Connelly argued that public school Army Classes were 'dumping grounds' for failing pupils.²⁸ These pluralistic, though teleological, perspectives remain questionable due to their simplistic analyses, which fail to consider public schools' primary pedagogical purpose, leader development. Conversely, both McCulloch and Rupert Wilkinson recognised this role while arguing that public schools were key factors in the preparation of future leaders for civic duties while delivering value to the organisations they led. However, McCulloch at least recognised that an aspect of this was about preserving social values of the time.²⁹

Defining what a public school was, and is, is challenging, as it remains a malleable and transient term in the British education system; Mangan recognised this challenge as he noted that several emerging institutions used the term in the late-Victorian period.³⁰ In general, public schools were non-local, endowed, predominantly boarding, used by well-to-do families, dedicated to the education of boys, and had a long and prestigious history, with institutions like Eton founded as far back as 1440. They were part of an educational system that was split into two parts, one for the 'elites' and one for the 'masses'; though, as already noted, the definition of the former term is open to debate. However, three key sources illustrate the challenge of definition. A first key definition emerged from those schools named by the Clarendon Commission, a Royal Commission set up in 1861 to examine the

²⁷ George Cyril Allen, *The British Disease: A Short Essay on the Nature and Causes of the Nation's Lagging Wealth* (London: Institute of Economic Affairs, 1979), pp. 37-38; Wiener, *English Culture, passim*. For a critique of the Allen/Wiener argument, see: Hartmut Berghoff, 'Public Schools and the Decline of the British Economy 1870-1914', *Past & Present*, 129 (1990), pp. 148-67.

²⁸ Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, p. 14.

²⁹ McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings*, p. 22, 24; Rupert Wilkinson, 'Political Leadership and the Late Victorian Public School', *BJS*, 13(4) (1962), pp. 320-30.

³⁰ Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, pp. 1-3.

problems inherent with the financial mismanagement of Eton.³¹ The Clarendon Report in 1864 examined nine schools – Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Charterhouse, St Paul’s, Merchant Taylors’, Harrow, Rugby and Shrewsbury – and led to the passage of the Public Schools Act in 1868, which formalised ‘some’ into ‘the’ public schools and standardised their governance.³² Additionally, many of the institutions subject to the Taunton Commission of 1864 to 1868 were considered public schools by 1900; this commission examined the management of the remaining 784 endowed grammar schools.³³ This commission led to the passage of the Endowed Schools Act in 1869. Finally, emerging from the Taunton Commission and formed in 1869, the Headmasters’ Conference harmonised the actions of grammar schools that morphed into ‘public’ schools. Under the leadership of Edward Thring, Principal of Uppingham, the Headmasters’ Conference initially consisted of 14 members. By 1889, when the Headmasters’ Conference published its first *Public School Year Book*, it consisted of 49 members, while J.R. de S. Honey calculated the existence of 64 leading institutions in the period 1880 to 1902.³⁴ Many of the Clarendon schools never joined the Headmasters’ Conference. Haileybury, which Leigh-Mallory attended, appeared in both Honey’s modern calculation and the Headmasters’ Conference list of 1889. Boyd, in his 1973 study, identified Haileybury as a ‘well-known’ public school.³⁵ The Clarendon Commission could not have considered Haileybury, as it did not open until 1862 on the grounds of the former East India Trading Company

³¹ On the Clarendon Commission more generally, see: Colin Shrosbree, *Public Schools and Private Education: The Clarendon Commission, 1861-64, and the Public Schools Acts* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988).

³² Parliamentary Papers (PP), 1868, *An Act to make further Provision for the good Government and Extension of certain Public Schools in England*.

³³ PP, 1867-68 (3966) *Schools Inquiry Commission: Volume I – Report of the commissioners*; Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy, *The Public School Phenomenon* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977), pp.98-9.

³⁴ *The Public School Year Book* (1889); J.R. de S. Honey, ‘Tom Brown’s Universe: The Nature and Limits of the Victorian Public Schools Community’ in Simon and Bradley (eds.) *The Victorian Public School*, pp. 19-33.

³⁵ Boyd, *Elites and their Education*, pp. 41-43; Gail Savage, *The Social Construction of Expertise: The English Civil Service and Its Influence, 1919–1939* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996), p. 20.

College, which had existed to train the company's civilian administrators, and closed in 1858.³⁶

The Headmasters' Conference coordinated public schools' growth, which by 1900 consisted of 200 members.³⁷ This growth, driven by the emergence of an aspirational middle class, led to a greater number of public schools that were run by headmasters who had moved from old to new institutions. Thus, the late-Victorian period saw the transformation of small local grammar schools into more expensive and 'elite' public schools. The Headmasters' Conference was an important point of contact between the military and public schools, and in 1919, gave advice to the RAF on Cranwell's curriculum.³⁸ Haileybury itself highlights the diffusion of public school ideals. In 1874, Haileybury fostered an offshoot, the United Services College (USC), when a group of Army officers led by MajGen Sir Charles Daubeney founded a limited company to provide public school education at a low cost for sons of serving officers who sought to enter the military. Carmell Price, then Head of Haileybury's Modern Side, noted for being fair and authoritative on the best way to enter the Army, was USC's first Headmaster.³⁹ USC eventually became part of Haileybury again; USC was absorbed by the Imperial Service College in 1906, which in turn merged with Haileybury in 1942. Furthermore, Haileybury produced several notable senior RAF officers. For example, besides Leigh-Mallory, Brooke-Popham, Dickson and Slessor all attended Haileybury. The latter two both served

³⁶ Harold Raugh, *The Victorians at War, 1815-1914: An Encyclopaedia of British Military History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-Clio, 2004), p. 5; R.J. Moore, 'The Abolition of Patronage in the Indian Civil Service and the Closure of Haileybury College', *The Historical Journal*, 7(2) (1964), pp. 246-57; John Bourne, 'The Civil and Military Patronage of the East India Company, 1784-1858', (PhD Thesis, University of Leicester, 1977), pp. 214-32.

³⁷ McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings*, p. 15; David Ward, 'The Public School and Industry after 1870', *JCH*, 2(3) (1967), p. 39.

³⁸ TNA, AIR 2/100, W.A. Bulkeley-Evans, Secretary to the Headmasters' Conference, to the Secretary to the Air Ministry, 30 June 1919.

³⁹ L.S. Milford (ed.), *Haileybury Register, 1862-1891*, Second Edition (Hertford: Stephen Austin and Sons, 1891), p. vi; L.S. Milford, *Haileybury: Past and Present* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1909), pp. 58-9.

as CAS, while Dickson was the first Chief of the Defence Staff in 1959. Slessor recalled that during Exercise PANDORA in 1948, six of the senior officers in attendance were products of Haileybury.⁴⁰

A reciprocal relationship existed between public schools and the Army. This formalised when ‘Army’ classes emerged in the late-Victorian period. ‘Army’ classes were a response to criticism from the Army’s Council of Military Education (CME), which sought to improve the educational standards of officers emerging from public schools. Formed on 1 June 1857 after the Crimean War, the CME supported the Clarendon Commission’s views on public schools and placed great faith in its reforming zeal.⁴¹ The relationship was not always smooth, and the CME challenged the Clarendon Commission’s curriculum priorities. However, as the CME had a stake in ensuring that the Army recruited the ‘right’ type of officer, this criticism was never vocalised outside controlled environments like the Clarendon Commission and *JRUSI*.⁴² The Victorian Army, despite meritocratic aspirations through the abolition of purchase in 1871, maintained a socially restrictive officer class that remained in place throughout the Edwardian era, as upper class, and by default public school educated, recruits were perceived as having natural leadership abilities.⁴³ The CME considered public schools as the best way of providing an effective general education for ‘gentlemen’ before entering the Army; by 1900, 62 per cent of Army officers came from public schools.⁴⁴ At the CME’s behest, the Army evened out marks awarded between

⁴⁰ Slessor, *The Central Blue*, pp. 3-4.

⁴¹ PP, 1860 (2603) *Report of the Council of Military Education*, p. 3; TNA, HO 73/59/34, Montague Bernard, Secretary of the Clarendon Commission to Major-General William Frederick Forster, Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, 27 January 1863; PP, 1865 (3502) Report from Rev. Osborne Gordon, Examiner in Classics, in the *Second General Report by the Council of Military Education*, p. 23.

⁴² Colonel F.J. Graves, hp, late 20th Hussars, ‘Military Education’, *JRUSI*, 36 (1892), p. 638.

⁴³ On the Victorian Army’s officer class, see: Spiers, *Late-Victorian Army*, pp. 89-117.

⁴⁴ PP, 1865 (3502) *Second General Report by the Council of Military Education*; Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, p. 97.

mathematics and classical subjects for the entry exams for Sandhurst and Woolwich, which ensured a steady flow of successful public school cadets.⁴⁵

Continuity existed between the experience of the Army and that of the RAF; however, it diverged from the preferred route of early recruitment through *Britannia* for the RN. The key body affirming this continuity was Cecil's 1919 committee, which examined pre-service education. In examining the officer recruitment and training systems of both the Army and RN, the committee concluded:

boys educated at Osborne and Dartmouth became too specialised and lacked the general cultivation which is better obtained at an ordinary public school.⁴⁶

Instead, Cecil's committee stressed that the Army's methods offered opportunities to develop the mental faculties required of officers. This is an interesting conclusion given the technical context of the RAF, which suggests that the RN's system was unbalanced; though, as Chapter Five notes, there was some continuity between curriculum elements. In rejecting technical, or 'specialised', education, the RAF sought a progressive solution to the provision of balanced and effective education for officer recruits. The recognition that public schools were the best source of officers suggests that these institutions remained a vital aspect of the educational, social and cultural ideology of the period. As McCulloch noted, in contrast to teleological and ideologically laden criticisms from authors like Peter Parker, the First World War was 'in fact widely taken to be a triumphant vindication of the public schools' contribution to society'.⁴⁷ However, McCulloch recognised that the public school system played a role in preserving the social order of the time and those organisations, such as the OTC 'provided a lasting reminder of this kind of public service'

⁴⁵ TNA, HO 73/59/34, Enclosures E and F, Memorandum by the Council for Military Education transmitted with the preceding letter, Major-General William Frederick Forster, Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, to Montague Bernard, Secretary of the Clarendon Commission, 12 March 1863.

⁴⁶ TNA, AIR 2/100, Preliminary Education of Candidates for the Royal Air Force, p. 3.

⁴⁷ McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings*, p. 24; Peter Parker, *The Old Lie: The Great War and the Public School Ethos* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007 [1987]).

in that they helped 'legitimise' views of civic duty prevalent in curricula.⁴⁸ This desire to 'preserve' social boundaries can be seen in the RAF's desire to integrate closely with public schools. Despite this criticism, Cecil's committee recognised the importance of studying English, history and maths, while classics developed 'suppleness, receptivity, and sense of proportion in the mind of the pupil'.⁴⁹ This broad knowledge was important for those who rose to senior leadership positions, as it gave them a degree of mental agility to manage challenges confronting them. Citing a series of works like Edmund Burke's 1790 book *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Cecil's committee recognised the importance of character alongside intelligence.⁵⁰ The committee defined character as:

a high standard of courage, self-control, and honourable conduct, and seemly and considerable manners and deportment.⁵¹

This definition of character bears similarity to that found in various RAF publications.⁵²

While not dismissing grammar or secondary school education outright, Cecil's committee noted that such institutions did not:

usually furnish boys so good an opportunity of acquiring the sort of cultivation which [was] desired as [did] the public schools.⁵³

This preference for the Army's model of officer recruitment is interesting for two reasons. First, 1918 and 1919 were the years when RAF culture and institutions emerged, which had a long lasting impact, like the preference for pilots as senior leaders. Second, in November 1919, just as Trenchard submitted his 'Permanent Organization' paper to the Secretary of State for War and Air, former naval officers ran three out of the four directorates in CAS's Department. AC John Steel was DCAS and Director of Operations and Intelligence

⁴⁸ McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings*, p. 24

⁴⁹ TNA, AIR 2/100, Preliminary Education of Candidates for the Royal Air Force, p. 4

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 5-6.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 1-2.

⁵² TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 4

⁵³ AIR 2/100, Preliminary Education of Candidates for the Royal Air Force, p. 4.

(DOI), Admiral Lambert was DoP, while AC C.L. Lambe was Director of Equipment. Apart from Trenchard, only AC Game, Director of Training and Organisation, was formerly an Army officer. For issues of balance, a committee like Cecil's typically consisted of officers with RFC and RNAS backgrounds.

While Cecil's committee was a marker in the decision-making process, the RAF had already tacitly recognised the importance of public schools. In October 1918, the Director of Manning, Colonel K.G. Brooke, wrote to all area commands requesting that they make every effort to recruit prospective public school candidates.⁵⁴ Brooke's memorandum, prompted by concerns in the 'Press and elsewhere' that the Service was not recruiting enough personnel from public schools, stressed that these institutions were not receiving the necessary information about the RAF as a career.⁵⁵ This was because the RAF did not have the familial links that were a key feature of Army and RN recruitment. It took until 1925 for the RAF to implement a plan for liaising with public schools, when suggestions were made that 'old boys' deliver lectures besides developing links with the OTC.⁵⁶ On 12 January 1926, the Treasury approved the Air Council's plans for public school liaison, and the RAF established ten positions at various institutions.⁵⁷ The decision about which schools to liaise with was based on those who supplied the highest proportion of candidates to Sandhurst.⁵⁸ Schools chosen were Charterhouse, Harrow, Marlborough, Haileybury, Winchester, Wellington, Eton, Bedford and Rugby.⁵⁹ WgCrs Portal, Sutton, SLs Slessor, and J.V. Steel acted as liaison officers to Winchester, Haileybury, Eton and

⁵⁴ TNA, AIR 2/85, Colonel K.G. Brooke, Director of Manning, to General Officers Commanding, Area Commands, 28 October 1918.

⁵⁵ TNA, AIR 2/85, Memo to Deputy Director of Aerial Intelligence, 22 October 1918

⁵⁶ TNA, AIR 2/286, Secretary to the Air Council to Secretary to the Treasury, 31 December 1925.

⁵⁷ TNA, AIR 2/286, Secretary to the Treasury to Secretary to the Air Council, 12 January 1926.

⁵⁸ TNA, AIR 2/286, Minute from Drummond for Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to the Permanent Secretary to the Secretary of State for Air, 17 May 1926.

⁵⁹ TNA, AIR 2/286, Appendix "B": RAF Liaison Officers appointed to Public School, Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to Air Officers Commanding Inland Area, Coastal Area, Cranwell and Halton, 2 February 1926.

Charterhouse respectively. Bedford declined the invitation and was replaced by Clifton College, while Trenchard insisted on Lancing College's addition.⁶⁰ The implementation of this scheme illustrates the importance the RAF placed on public schools. It also mirrored similar visits undertaken pre-First World War; for example, Slessor recalled a visit by Major Brooke-Popham to Haileybury in 1912, and, as Pugh noted, RFC officers visited public schools to 'sell' air power, reinforcing the former's recollection.⁶¹

The clearest indication that public schools were central to the RAF came in a 1931 report authored by Cranwell's Assistant Commandant, WgCr Evill. Titled, 'An Analysis of the Cranwell Entry', Evill classified various schools into the three grades illustrated in Table 4.1. The aim of the report was twofold. First, the report examined changes in the composition of the 'Cranwell Entry', and second, it considered whether those emerging from 'better known schools' were more suited to being officers.⁶²

Table 4.1 – The Grading of Schools in 'An Analysis of the Cranwell Entry'

Grade I Schools	Grade II Schools	Grade III Schools
Charterhouse	Aldenham	Ampleforth
Cheltenham	Downside	Bedford
Clifton	Berkhamsted	Blundell's
Eton	Bradfield	Brighton College
Haileybury	Christ's Hospital	Canford
Harrow	Cranleigh	Dover College
Malvern	Dulwich	Dublin University
Marlborough	Edinburgh Academy	Epsom College
Rugby	Felsted	Fettes
Stowe	Imperial College	Service Lancing
Wellington	Liverpool College	Loretto
Winchester	Mill Hill	Merchant Taylors
	Oundle	Pangbourne

⁶⁰ TNA, AIR 2/286, Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to Cuthbert Blakiston, Headmaster, Lancing College, 8 July 1926.

⁶¹ Slessor, *The Central Blue*, p. 2; Pugh, 'Conceptual Origins', p. 110.

⁶² RAFM, Evill Papers, AC 74/8/27, An Analysis of the Cranwell Entry, 16 November 1931, p. 1.

Radley	Repton
Rossall	St Bees
St Paul's	Sedburgh
Sherborne	Shrewsbury
Stonyhurst	Tonbridge
Trent College	Uppingham
Westminster	Wrekin

(Source: RAFM, Evill Papers, AC 74/8/27, An Analysis of the Cranwell Entry, 16 November 1931, p. 1)

Table 4.1 closely conforms to the aforementioned hierarchy of public schools, but it is interesting to note that several Clarendon schools – St Paul's, Merchant Taylors and Shrewsbury – are not listed as Grade I institutions, while Haileybury is. Grades I and II included institutions readily identifiable as public schools. From Evill's analysis, schools listed as Grade I and II dominated at Cranwell and constituted 59 per cent of the intake from 1920 to 1931.⁶³ While not as high a figure as the report's tone suggested, Evill preferred officers from these routes, which is interesting given his own educational background having attended *Britannia*. The figures suggest that RAF recruitment was broader than the Army's was; however, as noted earlier, in 1900, 63 per cent of officer recruits for the Army came from public schools. This reinforces the view that the RAF mirrored Army practices concerning public schools. Furthermore, it must be remembered that both grammar and state secondary schools - who made up the balance of recruits - mimicked aspects of the public school ethos, such as the focus on sport. Evill's report discussed three aspects of a cadet's development: examinations, flying and 'officer-like qualities'. Concerning examinations, those from Grade I schools performed worse due to weakness in 'Mathematics and Mechanics'.⁶⁴ Thus, Evill's point mirrors many criticisms evident in the historiography concerning public schools. In terms of flying, it was found that those from better schools were more effective, while the final area of 'officer-like

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 3.

qualities’, something left undefined by Evill, showed that cadets from Grade I institutions had ‘outstanding characteristics’ that were graded based on an assessment of their character that ranged from ‘Of outstanding merit’ through to ‘Rather poor material’.⁶⁵ The clearest indications of the importance of public schools to the RAF are delivered in Evill’s conclusion, which stated:

Boys from the higher grade schools, whether due to hereditary or training, have in particular valuable qualities which the Service must still seek, and it seems the answer to the question at the end of para. (2) is that we must still seek to *maintain* a high proportion of these boys at Cranwell. (Emphasis added)⁶⁶

Evill’s report made clear that the RAF accepted and recognised the technical limitations of cadets emerging from public schools. This echoes the Army’s and CME’s willingness to accept the lack of scientific education prevalent in officers joining in the Victorian and Edwardian period in favour of the more balanced pre-service education provided by public schools. Valued by the RAF, which believed technical skills could be easily taught, public schools placed greater importance on character and leadership qualities that mirrored conceptions found in AP1300.

4.3 The Public School Experience

Clearly, the RAF viewed public schools as important; thus, it is useful to contextualise this shared experience to understand what officers might have taken from it. Recollections are replete with thoughts about the importance of public schools; for example, Willock recalled the advantages of his time at Marlborough:

the good friends I made, the understanding of leadership and sportsmanship and the end product of becoming an O.M. (Old Marlburian), which in itself has been a magical password and an invaluable open sesame to me in my

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

career. There are some people who resent and ridicule the Old School Tie, but I am proud of it.⁶⁷

Willock's recollection highlights three key aspects of the public school experience: an understanding of leadership through the curriculum and extra-curricular activities, the feeling of membership and socialisation, and team sports. Analysed below, it is worth noting here that the latter reinforced the former by amplifying lessons learnt in class. Placed into Melvill House under Housemaster Percy Latham at Haileybury, Leigh-Mallory began his public school experience in 1906.⁶⁸ Dunn noted that during his time at Haileybury, Leigh-Mallory developed self-confidence, initiative and even a glimpse of leadership.⁶⁹ This contrasts with Latham's own final evaluation:

He is a good straight fellow and could have a good influence but it is doubtful whether he has 'guts' to use it. I should say spoilt at home. He is too self-centred. Too easy going. There is no doubt that he has a pleasing manner and presence which he might use to advance in life but he is self-centred and conceited and has little notion of making his life of value to others. Aim is having a good time and taking a good place in society.⁷⁰

Treated with care, neither recollection actually criticised Leigh-Mallory's academic ability, which continued to develop with the award of a History Exhibition to go to Magdalene College, University of Cambridge. Furthermore, Latham's view illustrates some positive aspects, his criticism actually focused on Leigh-Mallory's home life, and given Dunn's description of this and his parents role, it appears that little structure existed.⁷¹ However, while this analysis is open to question, it does appear that Leigh-Mallory made every attempt to take in the public school experience, and, while linked to personal development and maturity, Latham's criticism should be read with this consideration in mind rather than

⁶⁷ IWM, Willock Papers, Unpublished Memoir, p. 8.

⁶⁸ 'Recollections of Trafford Leigh-Mallory', Email from Toby Parker, Archivist at Haileybury School, 10 June 2010.

⁶⁹ Dunn, *Big Wing*, p. 14.

⁷⁰ 'Recollections of Trafford Leigh-Mallory'.

⁷¹ Dunn, pp. 5-14.

as an outright critique of his character. Leigh-Mallory's subsequent rise to senior leadership in the RAF suggests that if Latham's critique of being 'too easy going' was accurate in 1910, then, as subsequent chapters illustrate, Leigh-Mallory did at least apply himself to his chosen profession. Interestingly, according to Dunn, Leigh-Mallory's family felt that he had exhibited signs of idleness.⁷² Additionally, the criticism of being 'conceited' might have some truth in it; for example, Douglas recorded in *Years of Command* that, Leigh-Mallory's 'strong personality led him to be somewhat self-opinionated', and, that, '[s]ome found him arrogant'⁷³ Despite having determination, it seems that this character flaw was never fully managed, as his dealing with the Americans and some RAF officers during the planning and conduct of OVERLORD illustrates. However, as his operational diary from 1944 recollected, Leigh-Mallory was aware of the challenges of his position and personality.⁷⁴

Returning to Willock's assertion concerning 'the understanding of leadership', this statement raises the question of what pupils were taught. Imbued with Arnoldian values of the 'Christian gentleman', by the mid-nineteenth century, public schools stressed:

personal endurance, self-reliance, an unquestioned devotion to 'duty', and the ability to administer justice, or punishment.⁷⁵

The ideal of the 'Christian gentleman' was underpinned by the concept of muscular Christianity, which linked piety to physical health through participation in sport, which was a key aspect of leader development. Muscular Christianity was a key theme in Thomas Hughes' book *Tom Brown's Schooldays* as well as Charles Kingsley's *Westward Ho!*; these books popularised the importance of public schools and aspects of its curricula, like sports, which were deemed to be important in developing leaders. Furthermore, from a leadership

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 14.

⁷³ Douglas, *Years of Command*, p. 99

⁷⁴ In general, see: TNA, AIR 37/784, Daily Reflections.

⁷⁵ Fabrice Neddham, 'Constructing Masculinities under Thomas Arnold of Rugby (1828-1842): Gender, Educational Policy and School Life in an Early-Victorian Public School', *Gender and Education*, 16(3) (2004), p. 305.

perspective, and with links to the evolution of ‘Great Man’ theory, William Winn noted that Carlyle’s work on heroes influenced Kingsley and wrote:

Kingsley introduced into literature the huge British hero who always fought victoriously and who spread the doctrines of the English Church.⁷⁶

This idea of civic duty was important in a curriculum that stressed concepts like courage, which also found their way into RAF leadership thinking. By the end of the nineteenth century, these ideals fused with social Darwinism, which led public schools to stress the importance of self-confidence and leadership.⁷⁷ While the term social Darwinism was only used in a limited sense at this point, it is clear that a series of Darwinian ideals, based around the concept of survival of the fittest, emerged in the late-nineteenth century and, as Mangan noted, merged in a ‘precarious fusion’ with the views espoused by the ethic of the Christian Gentleman. Primarily, Mangan defined these as ‘imperial Darwinism’, the view that the white man had a God given right to rule and civilise other races, and ‘institutional Darwinism’, which involved ‘physical and psychological cultivation’, through public schools, of men to lead the empire.⁷⁸ These ideals linked education to leadership, reinforced by masculinity, and aimed to produce leaders who would take on key roles in the middle to higher echelons of public institutions including the military. These values were of particular importance to those seeking military careers, as they further fitted with ideas like paternalism, which was prominent both in the armed services and in wider Victorian and Edwardian society.⁷⁹ Furthermore, paternalism fitted with the views espoused in Cecil’s

⁷⁶ William E. Winn, ‘Tom Brown’s Schooldays and the Development of “Muscular Christianity”’, *Church History*, 29(1) (1960), pp. 66-7.

⁷⁷ Michael Sanderson, *Education and Economic Decline in Britain, 1870 to the 1990s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 40-3; Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, pp. 135-6.

⁷⁸ Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*, p. 136. Also, see: J.A. Mangan, ‘Social Darwinism and Upper-Class Education in Late Victorian and Edwardian England’ in J.A. Mangan and James Walvin (eds.), *Manliness and Morality: Middle Class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), pp. 135-59.

⁷⁹ Sheffield, ‘Officer-Man Relations’, pp. 8-14.

1919 report on the character required of officers.⁸⁰ Embedded in the Army, as both Sheffield and Christopher Moore-Bick illustrated, the transposition of ideas like paternalism demonstrated the amorphous nature of shared cultural practices between organisations and wider society.⁸¹ As with public schools more broadly, the RAF took the Army as its reference point concerning what it sought from its officer class due to the perception that it had a more balanced outlook towards leadership; however, this preference also helped reinforce class structures through the character of personnel recruited into the GD Branch.

During the Edwardian period, public schools consisted of three classes, ‘Classics’, ‘Modern’ and ‘Army’, which sought to develop leaders in related ways. The late-nineteenth century saw the emergence of ‘Army’ and ‘Modern’ classes that offered broader curricula with a greater focus on the sciences and mathematics, which was a response to the greater number of middle class students entering public schools and seeking professional careers.⁸² By 1902, to specialise for the entry examinations, which included the use of crammers, prospective candidates for the military transferred to ‘Army’ classes aged 14.⁸³ Joubert recalled that while in the Army Class at Harrow, he required a crammer for Woolwich’s entry examination as he had not been ‘working very hard’, despite his father paying for extra tuition.⁸⁴ This was because of Joubert’s weakness in mathematics, a key element of Woolwich’s entry exam, and his over-involvement in sport. Mathematics was one area where public school curricula could have been improved, though this did not compensate for Joubert’s weakness in the subject, which he might have been covering for in his

⁸⁰ TNA, AIR 2/100, Preliminary Education of Candidates for the Royal Air Force.

⁸¹ *Ibid*; Moore-Bick, *Playing the Game*, p. 22.

⁸² Gathorne-Hardy, *Public School*, p. 101.

⁸³ 1902 [Cd. 982] Appendix IX, Memorandum written at the wish of the Headmasters’ Committee for the Headmasters’ Conference in 1899 by A.A. Somerville, Eton College to the *Report of the Committee appointed to consider the Education and Training of Officers of the Army*, p. 66. Hereafter the *Akers-Douglas Report*.

⁸⁴ Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, p. 20.

autobiography. Crammers were people, or institutions, who provided intense coaching to help pupils pass entry examinations. They became an essential link between public schools and the Army but were also prevalent in other areas like supporting people taking the Civil Service examination. Colonel H.J. Graves, late 20th Hussars, noted the importance of crammers when lamenting what he considered the failure of the general education provided by public schools in 1892.⁸⁵ As Evill's 1931 report demonstrated, the lack of technical knowledge derived from an effective grounding in mathematics remained an issue subsumed by character and other 'gentlemanly' qualities.⁸⁶

Despite evolving slowly, public school curricula focused on two key areas of leader development: first, the teaching of classics, and second, the role of sport. In defence of public schools, A.A. Somerville, a Master of Eton, noted in an 1899 memorandum:

We see the imperious and imperial necessity of developing every faculty, mental and bodily, in our future officers, in the most healthy and thorough way. Is the new system likely to fulfil this need? Why should the public schools be thwarted in their hitherto successful endeavour to send into the Army men, healthily trained, in mind by preparation for a reasonable literary test, hardened physically by constant outdoor exercise and, above all practised in leadership and management of their fellows during the last two or three years of their time at school?⁸⁷

This memorandum was produced on behalf of the Headmasters' Conference and condemned the new regulation changes for the Militia examination. It formed part of the Headmasters' Conference's evidence provided to the Akers-Douglas Committee, which was created in 1902 to examine questions surrounding the perceived deficiencies in the education and training of Army officers in light of problems identified during the Second Boer War. Somerville attempted to defend the status quo in a system, which, while

⁸⁵ Graves, 'Military Education', p. 638. Similar criticisms can also be found in G.G. Coulton, *Public Schools and the Public Needs: Suggestions for the Reform of our Teaching Methods in the light of Modern Requirements* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and Company, 1901).

⁸⁶ RAFM, Evill Papers, AC 74/8/27, An Analysis of the Cranwell Entry.

⁸⁷ 1902 [Cd. 982] Appendix IX to the *Akers-Douglas Report*, p. 66.

providing education to future leaders, did show a sluggishness to evolve in key areas that might have made it more effective. Nevertheless, classics remained a key curriculum area, with the Headmasters' Conference's position on its importance reiterating the Clarendon Commission's view that the subject supplied:

the most graceful [...] poetry, the finest eloquence, the deepest philosophy, the wisest historical writing.⁸⁸

Classics was perceived to develop the intellectual capacity and understanding necessary for gentlemen who would become leaders in their respective fields; a link reiterated in Cecil's report and a view that persisted until the 1960s. The weakening of classics was, as McCulloch noted, a post-Second World War reaction to the 'elitism of the nineteenth-century public schools'.⁸⁹ It was a shift from education for the 'elite' to that for the 'masses'.

Willock, while noting that he did not enjoy studying classics, was certain that the subject imbued him with an 'understanding of leadership'.⁹⁰ In terms of intellectual ability, which does not automatically translate into effective leadership, because, as Adair noted, intelligence is reliant on experience, Douglas recalled that only the 'brightest boys were picked out for the 'Classical' side'.⁹¹ Furthermore, the relationship, as noted by Longmore in 1939, between effective command, education and experience was a point accepted by the military.⁹² Douglas excelled in classics and earned a Classical Scholarship at Lincoln College, University of Oxford.⁹³ Leigh-Mallory entered the Classical Side at Haileybury in

⁸⁸ PP, 1864 (3288) *Report of Her Majesty's commissioners appointed to inquire into the revenues and management of certain colleges and schools, and the studies pursued and instruction given therein*, p. 28.

⁸⁹ McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings*, p. 108.

⁹⁰ IWM, Willock Papers, RPW 1, Unpublished Memoir, pp. 7-8;

⁹¹ Adair, *Effective Strategic Leadership*, pp. 70-3; 'Notes reference Lord Douglas' Personal History', Interview between Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Douglas and Robert Wright at Dorland House, 29 January 1959, p. 8. I am grateful to Lord Douglas' daughter, Dr Katharine Campbell, for making this file available to me.

⁹² Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', p. 476.

⁹³ Douglas, *Years of Combat*, p. 35.

1906, though in his last year, he moved over to the Modern Side.⁹⁴ Dunn suggested that early on, Leigh-Mallory did well in various subjects including mathematics, but he peaked in 1908.⁹⁵ However, in his move to the Modern Side in 1910, Leigh-Mallory apparently did well in history, which presumably led to his attendance at the University of Cambridge.⁹⁶ Nevertheless, despite any of Leigh-Mallory's potential academic limitations identified by his move to the Modern Side, classics reinforced perceived leadership qualities and traits like 'deference', 'respect', 'heroism', 'duty', 'honour' and 'sacrifice', which, it was believed, a man should have, and mapped onto characteristics apparent in RAF writings.⁹⁷ It remained up to individuals to translate these concepts as they developed professional experience that allowed them to apply them in appropriate circumstances. However, writers like Fuller noted the need for a 'creative mind' to deal with the complexity and ambiguity of strategic leadership challenges.⁹⁸ It was perceived that the development of this mental capacity emerged during an officer's formative school years but would be reinforced through Staff College attendance. Ideas were introduced through works like Homer's *The Iliad* and Cicero's *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum (On the Ends of Good and Bad Things)*. In *The Iliad*, heroism meant standing up for values, which governed society, and translated into the paternalism prevalent in Victorian and Edwardian Britain. Cicero's work stressed civic duty, pride and willingness to sacrifice. From a military history perspective, pupils were likely to have read not only Plato, but also the works of Xenophon and Thucydides, which provided useful imagery for developing leaders and inculcating them with character, and reinforced responsibilities in a stratified society. As Christopher Kolenda noted, 'The ancients [...]

⁹⁴ Dunn, *Big Wing*, pp. 10-4.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 11.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 14.

⁹⁷ In general, see: TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III.

⁹⁸ Fuller, *Generalship*, pp. 19-20.

provide us a wealth of ideas about leadership that transcend time and context'.⁹⁹ Kolenda argued that these works introduced readers to modern concepts like vision, which was a notable skill for effective senior leaders.¹⁰⁰ Despite an increasingly diverse provision in the 'Army' and 'Modern' classes, grounding in the classics remained a core element of all public school curricula.

The study of history in Victorian and Edwardian Britain, with its focus on positivism – in historical terms, the idea that logical laws governed events – and empiricism – a focus on experience and evidence – reinforced much of what classics taught.¹⁰¹ With a focus on events and peoples of the period, positivism worked in parallel with the 'Whig' interpretation of progression prevalent in the nineteenth century, which included authors such as Carlyle. The 'Whig' school saw a logical progression from 'the inferior to the superior' and sought to develop lessons from the past, though it underestimated the 'differences between past and present'.¹⁰² Positivism was a view that fitted with the belief in British national spirit and the spread of its values around the world. However, nineteenth century British historians such as Lord Acton viewed themselves empiricists rather than positivists due to the rejection of its theoretical underpinnings, though, as Phillipa Levine asserted, this was an artificial distinction, as the former was based around a theory of 'detailed reconstruction'.¹⁰³ This was significant because the Clarendon Commission suggested that history, in combination with classics, formed a key curriculum element.¹⁰⁴ This was arguably because the focus on 'Great' men and events illustrated characteristics desired by society in future leaders. Nevertheless, T. Miller Maguire, a noted crammer and

⁹⁹ Kolenda, 'What is Leadership? Some Classical Ideas' in Christopher Kolenda (ed.), *Leadership*, p. 25.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 9-16; Tosh *The Pursuit of History*, p. 120

¹⁰¹ Jeremy Black and Donald M. MacRaid, *Studying History*, Second Edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 43-6.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, p. 44.

¹⁰³ Levine, *The Amateur and the Professional*, p. 87.

¹⁰⁴ PP, 1864 (3288) *Clarendon Report*, p. 34.

military historian, argued in evidence to the Akers-Douglas Committee that the study of modern history was ‘scandalously’ absent from public schools; however, while not modified since 1888, by 1912, Harrow School did offer history as a stand-alone subject in its higher classes.¹⁰⁵

Apart from the themes developed in the curriculum itself, extra-curricular activities reinforced leader development. These included, for example, being a prefect, participating in debating societies and being a member of the OTC. Viewed as an important element of the system, prefects:

were selected to maintain discipline, promote uniformity and help to foster a moral and spiritual *esprit de corps*.¹⁰⁶

This was an important consideration for leader development, as it gave those who undertook the role experience of what was, in the context of public schools, a senior role amongst peers. Made a dormitory prefect in 1910 and then a college prefect in March of that year, presumably Leigh-Mallory illustrated some ability to be appointed to these positions, though it might have been that he ingratiated himself into the system.¹⁰⁷ However, the lack of archival evidence makes it difficult to assess Leigh-Mallory’s effectiveness beyond the view that his appointment stands in contrast to views, noted above, that he was idle. As the 1944 Fleming Report on ‘The Public Schools and the General Educational System’ noted, the role of prefects introduced pupils to responsibilities such as the welfare of their fellow pupils and ensured discipline amongst their cohort. Viewed as a ‘valuable contribution to society’, the Fleming Report recommended that other secondary institutions imitate public schools, and, from a military perspective, these ideas mapped to notions of morale, motivation and vertical unit

¹⁰⁵ Appendix XV, Answers to Questions by the Military Education Committee by Dr. T. Miller Maguire, MA, FRHistS, *Akers-Douglas Report*, p. 77; ‘The New Time Table’, *The Harrovian*, 26 October 1912, pp. 110-1.

¹⁰⁶ McCulloch, *Philosophers and Kings*, p. 14.

¹⁰⁷ ‘Recollections of Trafford Leigh-Mallory’.

cohesion.¹⁰⁸ Thus, from a young age, officers like Leigh-Mallory, Portal, Tedder and Douglas undertook this much sought after duty, which fostered their leadership abilities in the key area of responsibility.¹⁰⁹ While Parker suggested that prefects held a power that could be misused, some pupils recognised the influence their responsibilities wielded.¹¹⁰ For example, one aspect of the role of prefects, ‘fragging’, received scant respect from these men. Douglas described it as:

one aspect of public school life [...] which I felt at all strongly and to which I really took exception, and that was corporal punishment. When I became a prefect I firmly declined to have anything to do with it. I felt then, as I do now, that corporal punishment brutalises those who administer it, and that it stirs up in the person upon whom it is inflicted too strong a feeling of resentment.¹¹¹

This progressive attitude formed a firm basis for the leadership styles of these officers.

Debating societies developed cognitive faculties as well as promoting self-confidence. Specifically, they reinforced participants’ ability to discuss and consider opinions before coming to measured conclusions, an important generic skill for senior leaders who had to manage a wide variety of information when handling complex problems. This would, as Chapter Seven explores, be further reinforced by staff duties as a key job assignment. Dunn noted Leigh-Mallory’s participation in a debate on morality, while Harris’ obituary recorded that he took part in several debates concerning themes like compulsory military training and stag hunting. Probert noted that this played a role in his development as he displayed maturity and self-reliance beyond his years.¹¹² Compared to Dudley Seward’s biography of Harris, Probert’s work is grounded in not only personal papers, but also operational files to provide context, and he was willing to be critical of his

¹⁰⁸ PP, *The Public Schools and the General Educational System: Report of the Committee on Public Schools appointed by the President of the Board of Education in July 1942* (HMSO, 1944), pp. 40-1.

¹⁰⁹ Richards, *Portal*, p. 21; Douglas, *Years of Combat*, p. 32; Orange, *Tedder*, p. 5.

¹¹⁰ Parker, *The Old Lie*, p. 73.

¹¹¹ Douglas, *Years of Combat*, p. 32.

¹¹² Dunn, *Big Wing*, p. 14; Probert, *Bomber Harris*, p. 25.

subject.¹¹³ For example, in concluding his biography, Probert, who retired as an AC in the Educational Branch of the RAF and then served as Head of the AHB, noted that there was ‘truth in such criticism’ related to Harris’ self-confident leadership style and the friction it created.¹¹⁴ Nevertheless, Harris’ self-confidence did aid him when holding operational command and in handling the Air Ministry at various points during his career.

4.4 The Role of Team Sports

A key element of the public school experience that developed leadership skills was participation in sport; in particular, team events. This emerged from the concept of muscular Christianity, and, despite Parker’s teleological overstatement that sport did not develop moral leadership or patriotism, contemporaries in both wider society and the military viewed it as doing so, and participation was part of this pedagogical process.¹¹⁵ Both Mangan and Sheffield highlighted the importance that athleticism played in Victorian and Edwardian public schools in general and the impact it had on the development of Army leadership in particular.¹¹⁶ However, this thesis prefers the term ‘team sports’ rather than the more readily accepted adjective ‘athleticism’, which evokes imagery of athletics and individual events. This is inappropriate from a leadership perspective; it was participation in a team that mattered as suitable leadership skills emerged like working together, getting the best out of colleagues and decision-making. While examining the role of sport in the British military, Mason and Reidi suggested four key areas of analysis, including preparation for war, the development of *esprit de corps*, use as a recruitment tool,

¹¹³ Dudley Seward, *‘Bomber’ Harris: The Authorised Biography* (Cassell: London, 1984)

¹¹⁴ Probert, *Harris*, p. 413.

¹¹⁵ Parker, *The Old Lie*, p. 83.

¹¹⁶ Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School*; Sheffield, ‘Officer-Man Relations’, pp. 119-128.

and as an instrument for developing relations with broader society.¹¹⁷ Transplanted onto the RAF's future officer class, the former two issues were important to the organisation, as officers regularly participated in sports in some form at public school. It is here that cultural osmosis existed between practices within and outside the military. Believed to build an ethos of patriotism, self-confidence, courage, obedience, fair play and leadership skills, sport was an aspect of public school life that also filtered into broader Victorian and Edwardian society.¹¹⁸ As Campbell showed concerning physical culture in the Army, sport was the means to foster, maintain and channel aggression and develop a feeling of team spirit that affected decision-making abilities.¹¹⁹ While a clear tension existed between the perception of sport being 'mimic war' and the reality of combat, which was not replicated on public school playing fields that stressed fair play, it was the ephemeral concept and belief in spirit, morale and identity that paralleled military considerations concerning the maintenance of cohesion.¹²⁰ By understanding the significance of these concepts in a civilian sense, it was not a leap of faith to apply it to the martial arena because, as Sheffield noted, military leadership is not just about combat, but included aspects such as training where these ideas also had relevance.¹²¹ In addition, the codification of team sports, notably rugby and football, in the late-nineteenth century introduced future officers to rules and regulations that formed the basis of command cultures and processes.¹²² The predilection for sport in public schools might have produced traits deemed necessary for effective leadership, but participation could have potentially damaging effects. In his autobiography,

¹¹⁷ Mason and Reidi, *Sport and the Military*, p. 254.

¹¹⁸ N.J. Humble, 'Leaving London: A Study of Two Public Schools and Athleticism, 1870–1914', *History of Education*, 17(2) (1988), pp. 149-62. On the relationship of sport in Victorian society, see: Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004).

¹¹⁹ In general, see: Campbell, "*The army isn't all work*".

¹²⁰ In general, see: J.D. Campbell, "Training for Sport is Training for War?: Sport and the Transformation of the British Army, 1860–1914", *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17(4) (2000), pp. 21-58.

¹²¹ Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations', pp. 126-7.

¹²² *Ibid*, pp. 119-29.

Joubert recalled his belief that he could have become a member of Harrow's first Cricket XI, which almost damaged his chances of entering Woolwich as he lacked focus concerning his academic studies. As already noted, Joubert required a crammer order to pass the exam at his second attempt.¹²³ Despite Joubert's experience, the public school proclivity for sport diffused into the lower stratification of the education system, with grammar schools and state-funded institutions imitating them.¹²⁴ Used as a training tool, more significant is the fact that this sporting ethos was prevalent in cadet establishments; for example, Evill excelled at games during his time at *Britannia*.¹²⁵

Sport remained central to the RAF as it developed. Transformed into the Royal Air Force Officers' Sport Fund in 1918, as early as 1912, the RFC formed a Central Mess Fund for officers to coordinate and 'promote all forms of sport and recreation', with the stated aim of fostering *esprit de corps*.¹²⁶ As Chapter One noted, spirit was a key element of RAF views on leadership, and, given the Service's predilection for public school educated recruits, it is here that a relationship emerges among this concept, doctrine and sport. Underpinned by fostering competition, which occurred on public school playing fields, it is not straining verity to suggest that one origin for the RAF's most basic belief, 'Command of the Air', in part, emerged from this source. In an undated paper relating to the RFC Athletic Association's formation in 1917, the planned objectives were to foster the 'OFFENSIVE SPIRIT & ESPIRIT DE CORPS' (emphasis in original) necessary to create a

¹²³ Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, p. 20.

¹²⁴ J.A. Mangan, 'Grammar Schools and the Games Ethic in the Victorian and Edwardian Eras', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 15(4) (1983), pp. 313-35; Kathleen E. McCrone, 'Play Up! Play Up! and Play the Game! Sport at the Late Victorian Girls' Public School', *Journal of British Studies*, 23(2) (1984), pp. 106-34; Colm Fintan Hickey, 'A Potent and Pervasive Ideology': Athleticism and the English Elementary School', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 28(13) (2011), pp. 1852-90.

¹²⁵ Robert Wright, 'Evill, Sir Douglas Claude Strathern (1892-1971)', rev. Christina J. M. Goulter, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2011 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31090>, accessed 3 Nov 2012].

¹²⁶ TNA, AIR 2/71, Membership form for the Royal Air Force Officers' Sport Fund, N.D (1918).

physical culture commensurate with the offensively minded RFC.¹²⁷ Seen by the RAF to develop the faculties desired from officers, team sports fostered discipline, team spirit, efficiency and group cohesion through controlled competitive activities, with cricket singled out as creating the right ethos of ‘playing for the side’.¹²⁸ Sport was deemed of such importance that, on the announcement of the formation in late 1917 of the RAF, GOC, Training Division RFC, MajGen Charles Longcroft, suggested that gymnastic staffs were required to provide effective physical training for future trainee officers; on 1 June 1918, the Physical Training Branch of the RAF formed.¹²⁹ Furthermore, as Trenchard noted in a letter to Sir Charles Wakefield, who donated two trophies for boxing competitions between units, such activities helped build traditions, or culture, as well as fostering friendly rivalry that it was perceived would lead to greater efficiency.¹³⁰

Sport was also the shared experience for officers emanating from public schools. They all participated in some form of sporting activity, which developed necessary skills. Leigh-Mallory’s own experience consisted of playing in Melville House’s Rugby XV and Cricket XI. In addition, Leigh-Mallory, ‘very anxious to keep fit’, was a prominent gymnast and represented Haileybury in shooting in the College VIII.¹³¹ Given that Leigh-Mallory excelled in an individual sport, it is tempting to suggest that this influenced his subsequent leadership performance. This misses the point that, like so many of his peers, Leigh-

¹²⁷ TNA, AIR 2/5, Untitled paper detailing the purpose of a RFC Athletic Association, N.D (1917); AIR 2/145, Draft Letter concerning the formation of an Air Ministry Cricket Club, November 1921.

¹²⁸ Regarding the British Army, these ideas are examined in Eliza Reidi and Tony Mason, “Leather” and the Fighting Spirit: Sport in the British Army in World War I, *Canadian Journal of History*, 41(3) (2006), pp. 486-516.

¹²⁹ TNA, AIR 2/5, Major-General Charles Longcroft, GOC Training Division, to Major-General John Salmond, Director General of Military Aviation, 24 December 1917; TNA, AIR 2/92, Physical Training Branch for the RAF.

¹³⁰ TNA, AIR 2/71, Air Marshal Hugh Trenchard, Chief of the Air Staff, to Sir Charles Wakefield, 28 January 1920. Wakefield was Lord Mayor of London and a noted philanthropist, businessperson and supporter of aviation. In 1916, after the German airship attacks on London, Wakefield offered a bounty of £500 and medals for the first German airship destroyed over British soil.

¹³¹ ‘Recollections of Trafford Leigh-Mallory’.

Mallory took part in games, worked as a team player and developed a spirit, based on gentlemanly concepts, that permeated the social context from which he emerged. By excelling in individual events for his house, Leigh-Mallory was involved in the broader permeation of team spirit in this context by ‘playing the game’. Of Leigh-Mallory’s peers, Portal was a member of the first Cricket XI at Winchester, and Richards noted that he also held an interest in hawking and excelled at football and fencing.¹³² Tedder and Mitchell were keen rugby players, with the former playing two seasons in Whitgift School’s first Rugby XV, while the latter was a member of Wellington’s first XV.¹³³ Orange noted that Tedder took part in cross-country activities, while Owen suggested that cricket was not a sport of choice.¹³⁴ Other noted contemporaries of Leigh-Mallory also enjoyed taking part in sport. Not all excelled at sport; Probert noted that Harris played for both Allhallows’ Rugby XV and Hockey XI, though the teams themselves did not perform well, with the rugby team losing 156-0 to a team from Dartmouth.¹³⁵ Douglas lamented in his autobiography that he had wanted to be good at cricket but was not able enough and took up rowing instead.¹³⁶ It is significant that many officers recalled their enjoyment of sport and the sporting prowess of their peers, which had repercussions for leadership abilities.

4.5 The Royal Air Force and the Officer Training Corps

Another key shared experience was OTC participation. On 25 February 1907, in a debate over the Army estimates in the House of Commons, the Secretary of State for War, Richard Haldane, announced the OTC’s formation to provide ‘a very substantial addition

¹³² ‘Obituary – Lord Portal of Hungerford’, *The Times*, 24 April 1971, p. 14; Richards, *Portal*, pp. 26-7; Denis Richards, ‘Portal, Charles Frederick Algernon, Viscount Portal of Hungerford (1893–1971)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2011 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/31561>, accessed 3 Nov 2012].

¹³³ Orange, *Tedder*, p. 5; Woolven, ‘Mitchell, Sir William Gore Sutherland (1888–1944)’.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*; Owen, *Tedder*, p. 30.

¹³⁵ Probert, *Bomber Harris*, pp. 24-5.

¹³⁶ Douglas, *Years of Combat*, p. 31.

to the number officers which we have got at the present time'.¹³⁷ A War Office committee created the scheme under the chair of the Permanent Under Secretary of State for War, Colonel Sir Edward Ward, and formal notice of the OTC's formation came in a Special Army Order on 16 March 1908 that stated:

The object of this Corps is to provide students at schools and universities with a standardized measure of elementary military training, with a view to their eventually becoming Special Reserve or Territorial Officers.¹³⁸

While the OTC sought to provide a body of trained officers embedded with standardised training and military ethos, it failed to provide the numbers expected before the expansion of the Army during the First World War.¹³⁹ The OTC consisted of Junior and Senior Divisions, with the former existing in public schools while the latter formed contingents at universities, which included artillery and cavalry sections besides infantry. Cadets who passed the Certificate 'A' and 'B' qualifications received exemption from four or eight months' training respectively in the Special Reserve, while holders of the former received 200 marks towards the Civil Service Examination for entry into Sandhurst or Woolwich.¹⁴⁰ By 1914, there were 23 OTC units at universities and 166 at schools. The formation of the OTC formalised an amateur tradition of volunteer rifle corps at public schools and universities that dated back to the 1860s. Haileybury's own Rifle Corps formed in 1887 and included Clement Attlee, Prime Minister from 1945 to 1951, amongst its members.¹⁴¹ These units emerged after the French invasion scares of the 1850s, and, by 1899, there were 36

¹³⁷ Hansard, HC Deb, 25 February 1907, Vol. 169, Col. 1323.

¹³⁸ 1907 [Cd. 3294] *Interim report of the War Office Committee on the provision of officers (a) for service with the regular army in war, and (b) for the auxiliary forces*; TNA, WO 32/8675, Special Army Order – Officers Training Corps, 16 March 1908, p. 1.

¹³⁹ Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, pp. 140-6; K.W. Mitchinson, *Defending Albion: Britain's Home Army, 1908-1919* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), p. 6, 14.

¹⁴⁰ TNA, WO 32/8675, Special Army Order – Officers Training Corps, 16 March 1908, p. 4.

¹⁴¹ Milford, *Haileybury*, p. 188; John H. Brookeshire, *Clement Attlee* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 147.

cadet corps and six cadet battalions.¹⁴² According to Sheffield, this figure increased to ‘eight cadet battalions, three Rifle Volunteer Battalions and 152 cadet corps or companies’ by 1907.¹⁴³ This formalisation, as well as other parts of the wider reforms enacted by Haldane, was driven by influences like debate over national efficiency and conscription to strengthen the Army after the Second Boer War. Haldane’s preference for the reform of the volunteer reserve rather than an expansion of the Army derived from Britain’s preference for a small standing military. Ian Beckett conceptualised this as part of an on-going amateur military tradition.¹⁴⁴ In addition, underpinning these debates was the invasion scare literature, which was used to great effect by organisations like the National Service League.¹⁴⁵

Apart from its place in Haldane’s reforms, the historiography of the OTC focuses on two primary aspects. From the perspective of social and educational history, Best placed the OTC into the context of growing militarism in Victorian and Edwardian public schools by describing their relationship with the volunteer cadet corps and the OTC.¹⁴⁶ In the military sphere, both sociologists and historians have examined the OTC’s significance by placing them in terms of military experience and socialisation. Otley stressed the OTC’s statistical importance for the Army concerning officers’ educational background, while Ian Worthington’s study into officer recruitment discussed the significance of socialisation as

¹⁴² Ian F.W. Beckett, *Rifleman Form: A Study of the Rifle Volunteer Movement, 1859-1908* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2007 [1982]), p. 109.

¹⁴³ Sheffield, ‘Officer-Man Relations’, p. 106.

¹⁴⁴ Ian F.W. Beckett, *Britain’s Part-Time Soldiers: The Amateur Military Tradition, 1558-1945* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2011 [1991]), pp. 197-224. This idea has gained limited credence in air power history, though for one exception, see: Michael Paris, ‘The Amateur Military Tradition: Further Considerations – the Air Volunteers, 1909–1914’, *The RUSI Journal*, 138(1) (1993), pp. 53-4.

¹⁴⁵ R.J.Q. Adams, ‘The National Service League and Mandatory Service in Edwardian Britain’, *AFS*, 12(1) (1985), pp. 53-74; A. Michael Martin, ‘The Creativity of War Planners: Armed Forces Professionals and the Pre-1914 British Invasion-Scare Genre’, *ELH*, 78 (4) (2011), pp. 801-11. On the role of the media, see: Glenn Wilkinson, ‘The Blessings of War’: The Depiction of Military Force in Edwardian Newspapers, *JCH*, 33(1) (1998), pp. 97-115. Air power played an important role in much of this literature, see: Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 11-20; Michael Paris, *Winged Warfare: The Literature and Theory of Aerial Warfare in Britain, 1859-1917* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992).

¹⁴⁶ Best, ‘Militarism and the Victorian Public School’, pp. 136-7.

part of the officer recruitment process, which emerged after the Corps' formation.¹⁴⁷ More recently, Sheffield developed this understanding by examining the relationship between militarism, socialisation and public schools in the context of the Army's understanding of leadership and the development of ideas like paternalism and deference.¹⁴⁸

Otley's study into militarisation in public schools suggested that on the eve of the First World War, 79 per cent of all public schools had an OTC unit.¹⁴⁹ While, as Sheffield concedes, the description used to link OTC units to 'public schools' was weak at best, in the First World War's early phase, those with this form of experience were coveted by the expanding Army.¹⁵⁰ Volunteers with OTC experience readily received commissions, though the Clarendon schools only accounted for 13 per cent of commissions.¹⁵¹ In 1914, officer recruitment stressed OTC experience, and Army Form B. 201, used for the appointment of officers to commissions in the Special Reserve, requested information on past military experience that included service in the Corps.¹⁵² From 1916 onwards, the formation of Officer Cadet Battalions to train wartime officers maintained the OTC's ethos. Many Officer Cadet Battalions were located in universities, and, while a general broadening of the officer corps occurred, these units undertook social conditioning to raise the perceived quality of men promoted from the ranks.¹⁵³

The OTC was a source for RAF senior leaders. While aspects of training and motivation for joining are examined in subsequent chapters, 34 per cent of officers,

¹⁴⁷ Otley, 'The Educational Background of the British Army Officers', pp. 191-209; Ian Worthington, 'Socialization, Militarization and Officer Recruiting: The Development of the Officer Training Corps', *Military Affairs*, 32(2) (1979), pp. 90-5.

¹⁴⁸ Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations', pp. 106-10.

¹⁴⁹ C.B. Otley, 'Militarism and Militarization in the Public Schools, 1900-1972', *BJS*, 29(3) (September 1978), pp. 330-2.

¹⁵⁰ Sheffield, 'Officer-Man Relations', p. 108.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² TNA, WO 339/24452, Army Form B. 201 – Application for Appointment to a Commission in the Special Reserve of Officers, Application for George Ranald MacFarlane Reid, 25 August 1914.

¹⁵³ Moore-Bick, *Playing the Game*, pp. 47-9.

including Leigh-Mallory, from Appendix Four had some OTC experience.¹⁵⁴ Reaffirmed in the reforms of the volunteer force that led to the Territorial Force's formation in 1908, Leigh-Mallory's housemaster, Latham, was a Captain in the OTC and would have been a key influence, in addition to peer pressure, in his decision to become a member.¹⁵⁵ This experience developed some basic knowledge of military service that could be useful to future senior leaders who were exposed to it. The figure quoted above is distorted by two factors. First, it includes those who joined the RN and Army pre-First World War. Second, it also embraces those too old to have joined the OTC, as it only emerged in 1908. For example, born in 1882, Burnett was too old for OTC service.¹⁵⁶ In addition, some future officers who had already chosen to volunteer for the military did not join the OTC. Separated out, with only volunteers who joined the military in 1914 and 1915 considered, this figure increases to 53 per cent.

The OTC developed two aspects of military skills and leadership knowledge that were potentially useful to officers in their future careers. First, it introduced students to military training through skills development that produced the requisite knowledge and provided influence at an early age. While developing a sense of uniformity and obedience in subordinates, the early experience of drill in the OTC also reinforced the need for cohesion and commonality in small units that were outgrowths of effective leadership at this level. As Anthony King suggested, drill generated ritualised practices that developed group cohesion; however, he has been criticised for focusing too narrowly on functional

¹⁵⁴ TNA, WO 339/28812, Attestation Papers of Trafford Leigh-Mallory, 6 August 1914, p. 1.

¹⁵⁵ *The London Gazette*, 3 November 1908, p. 7927.

¹⁵⁶ David Jordan, 'Burnett, Sir Charles Stuart (1882–1945)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Oct 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32188>, accessed 29 Aug 2013].

structures without taking account of broader social and cultural factors.¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, as Kirke noted, some of King's research derived generalised conclusions from the study of a specific organisation, the Royal Marines.¹⁵⁸ Nevertheless, drill's importance in instilling widely held leadership values like 'discipline', 'resolution', 'comradeship' and '*esprit-de-corp*s' mirrored those espoused in publications like AP1300 and military journals.¹⁵⁹ Given this context, OTC experience gave some officers, based on the views of the time, some advantage over other volunteers in 1914/15. In *Years of Combat*, Douglas, who served in both the OTC's Junior and Senior Divisions, recollected the utility of this experience when he noted:

We who had learnt our drill at the University OTC's were the only ones who were at all competent to handle the eighteen-pounder which we were going to use.¹⁶⁰

This passage related to his early service in 1914 with the Royal Field Artillery's No. 1 Depot in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Douglas continued that this experience led him to be involved in the instruction of both officers and gunners, including his Commanding Officer (CO); Douglas served in the artillery section of his OTC contingent. Exposed to the rigours of military life through annual summer camps, these men's socialisation, acclimatisation and adaptation to military life became easier as they were further introduced to discipline and comradeship, which were part of the wider public school experience. In this respect, this was a complimentary element between these experiences. Exposure to

¹⁵⁷ In particular, see: Anthony King, 'The Word of Command: Communication and Cohesion in the Military', *AFS*, 32(4) (2006), pp. 493-512. King's article generated an interesting debate over the issue of cohesion, training and culture that included sociological (King), psychological (Siebold) and anthropological (Kirke) perspectives. In addition to King's article, see: Guy Siebold, 'The Essence of Military Group Cohesion', *AFS*, 33(2) (2007), pp. 286-95; Anthony King, 'The Existence of Group Cohesion in the Armed Forces: A Response to Guy Siebold', *AFS*, 33(4) (2007), pp. 638-45; Charles Kirke, 'Group Cohesion, Culture, and Practice', *AFS*, 35(4) (2009), pp. 745-53.

¹⁵⁸ Kirke, 'Group Cohesion, Culture, and Practise', p. 750.

¹⁵⁹ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III; Major M.C. Festing, DSO, *pvc*, RMLI, 'The Value of Close Order Drill in Training Soldier for War', *JRUSI*, 66 (1921), pp. 114-6.

¹⁶⁰ Douglas, *Years of Combat*, p. 44.

issues like cohesion, even in its basic sense, also allowed officers who served in the OTC to develop an understanding of leadership, which presumably remained with them and was seen as valuable when men, such as Leigh-Mallory, volunteered in 1914 and 1915. As a WgCr in 1925, Leigh-Mallory reflected on the importance of cohesion based on his service in the trenches in 1915 in his Staff College reflective essay.¹⁶¹

Recognising that contingency played a role in this experience, many men did not join the OTC to pursue military careers or join the reserves as intended by Haldane; thus, the application of this knowledge during the First World War and in their subsequent careers was of secondary effect. Willock recalled that he joined Marlborough's OTC contingent 'just for the fun of it', as he did not expect to join the Army.¹⁶² Conversely, Playfair did not join, as he was a member of the Army Class at Cheltenham College and had already chosen the Army as a career; therefore, he thought that he did not want to 'rush [his] fences, but wait until the time arrived'.¹⁶³ From a leadership perspective, OTC service reinforced, complemented and paralleled key themes found in public school classrooms and the sport playing fields, which, it should be recognised, would have been applicable to the careers that these would have undertaken had the First World War not interfered with their career paths. Specifically, the OTC played a role in moulding the character of students by encouraging leadership concepts like duty and responsibility through active engagement with aspects of military life. Owen, in his 1952 biography of Tedder, makes much of the effect that OTC service had on the latter's life, noting that, despite being an 'introvert', he was 'unusually keen on the OTC'.¹⁶⁴ In 1976, Hew Strachan, based on Owen's biography, cited Tedder's experience in his history of Cambridge's OTC

¹⁶¹ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience of Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, pp. 1-2.

¹⁶² IWM, Willock Papers, RPW 1, Unpublished Memoir, 1965, p. 8.

¹⁶³ Playfair and Jarvis, *'Pip' Playfair*, p. 23.

¹⁶⁴ Owen, *Tedder*, p. 31.

contingent and noted that service in the Corps was an ‘inspiring addition to the formula of athletics for the body and education for the mind’.¹⁶⁵ This supports the view that a complex interplay of a classical curriculum, sport and the mechanism of the OTC provided the ethos necessary to provide the British military with the raw material needed to lead it at the tactical level. Despite not actively seeking a military career, Tedder took his duty seriously, and this filtered into his later career; in the University of Cambridge’s OTC Senior Division, Tedder eventually rose to be a Scout Corporal and college commander for Magdalene College.¹⁶⁶ However, as Bowman and Connelly noted, the quality of OTC contingents, and the military experience of the officers attached to them, varied greatly.¹⁶⁷ Thus, there was a lack of uniformity in the experience that future senior officers received, which makes it difficult to assess the overall influence that the OTC had on officers beyond the recognition that some, like Douglas, recalled their experience in positive terms.

For the RAF, the importance of these themes coalesced after the First World War, as the OTC remained significant to the pre-service development of its future leaders. Furthermore, two schemes emerged with their antecedent in the OTC, and SL Leigh-Mallory, SD3 in the Directorate of Organisation and Staff Duties, charted their importance in a letter to the University of Cambridge’s Vice-Chancellor on 6 September 1924.¹⁶⁸ Key reasons included the need to increase the number of entrants into the RAF as well as building up a reserve of pilots. Related to this was the issue of the perception of the RAF at this time and the need to develop air-mindedness amongst the population, which underpinned the Service’s belief in ‘Command of the Air’. These processes sought to

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 39; Hew Strachan, *History of the Cambridge University Officers Training Corps* (Tunbridge Wells: Midas Books, 1976), p. 137.

¹⁶⁶ Owen, *Tedder*, p. 39. Interestingly, Orange did not cite this achievement but did note that Tedder was a Cyclist Sergeant in the Junior OTC at Whitgift School, see: Orange, *Tedder*, p. 5.

¹⁶⁷ Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, pp. 141-46.

¹⁶⁸ TNA, AIR 2/311, Squadron Leader Trafford Leigh-Mallory, Directorate of Organisation and Staff Duties, to Vice-Chancellor, University of Cambridge, 6 September 1924.

strengthen the RAF's association with educational establishments that provided recruits by encouraging this development. First, as noted above, the RAF fostered relations with public schools deemed to provide candidates with the right character for military service. It was with the OTC contingent that these liaison officers coordinated their relationship with selected schools. 'Air platoons' were originally envisioned; however, financial stringency led to the adoption of the liaison scheme.¹⁶⁹ Under this scheme, the RAF exposed members of the OTC to service life through lectures and visits to bases during their summer camps.¹⁷⁰ By 1938, the OTC had formed Air Sections for those students who had completed their Certificate 'A' qualification.¹⁷¹ Second, despite challenges at an institutional level, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge formed the first two University Air Squadrons in 1925.¹⁷² In a 1929 RUSI lecture, WgCr Arthur Garrod, then Chief Flying Instructor at the Cambridge University Air Squadron, outlined the need for, and the success of, these units in fostering the 'Air Force Spirit'. As the AHB narrative noted:

All these needs were achieved, and graduates were encouraged, through the University Air Squadrons, to take up a career in the Royal Air Force.¹⁷³

Established for Sandhurst and Woolwich, the RAF maintained the pattern of awarding marks to members of the OTC when undertaking the Civil Service Examination for entry to Cranwell; those from the Senior Division were entitled to an additional 400 marks.¹⁷⁴

The Air Council considered a declaration of 'efficiency' from the OTC as part of the

¹⁶⁹ TNA, AIR 2/286, Secretary to the Treasury to the Secretary to the Air Ministry, 12 January 1926.

¹⁷⁰ TNA, AIR 2/286, Letter to Squadron Leader A.W.F. Glenny, 1 February 1926.

¹⁷¹ TNA, AIR 41/65, *Plans and Policy for Manning of RAF during Second World War*, p. 240.

¹⁷² On the various challenges, see: TNA, AIR 2/311, OTC Scheme for Universities, file opened, 29 October 1923.

¹⁷³ TNA, AIR 41/65, *Plans and Policy for Manning of RAF during Second World War*, p. 239; Wing Commander A.G.R. Garrod, MC, DFC, RAF, 'The Cadre, Auxiliary Air Force and University Air Squadrons (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 74 (1929), pp. 325-327.

¹⁷⁴ TNA, AIR 2/114, FS Publication 121 – *Revised (Provisional) Regulations for the Royal Air Force (Cadet) College, Cranwell*, March 1920, p. 5.

nomination process to a Cadetship at Cranwell.¹⁷⁵ For this purpose, Air Ministry Form 538 established a series of qualitative metrics for measuring efficiency, which included whether a candidate had worked 'hard' while an OTC member.

4.6 University Education and the Royal Air Force

Despite its technical nature, the RAF held a definite view of what it wanted from its permanent officers. In general, the RAF sought candidates that it could mould to its culture through the mechanism of Cranwell; however, this did not mean that the Service ignored the value of having officers with a university background. Early editions of AP904, regulations covering university entrants for Permanent Commission, preferred nominated students to have a degree in engineering, general or aeronautical, or a qualification in physics or mathematics.¹⁷⁶ This policy emerged as early as 1919 when the Deputy DoT, Colonel Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt, stated in a section concerning training permanent officers in notes prepared for the Secretary of States for War and Air:

It is proposed to open this door rather more widely than is the case in the Army, mainly with a view to the inclusion of engineering and science pupils whose education has throughout been directed towards these vocations.¹⁷⁷

Primarily, the RAF hoped to entice technical students from university with an interest in aviation to consider a career to reinforce entrants from Cranwell. This is where a key difference splits between those officers considered in this thesis with those recruited after 1920. Specifically, officers like Leigh-Mallory, who attended Magdalene College, University of Cambridge between 1911 and 1914, undertook liberal arts degrees; Leigh-Mallory graduated with a Third in History and a Third in Law. As Chapter Three explored, 35 per

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid*, p. 10.

¹⁷⁶ TNA, AIR 2/935, AP904 – *Regulations under which Permanent Commission in the Royal Air Force may be Obtained by University Candidates*, March 1922, p. 4.

¹⁷⁷ TNA, AIR 8/10, Notes on Training Submitted for the Information of the Secretary of State for War, in reply to his Notes dated 10 June 1919, Prepared by Deputy Director of Training, 15 July 1919, p. 4.

cent of officers from Appendix Four who reached Air Rank in 1939 had undertaken a university education. This compares well to the figure for 1929, when 16 per cent of officers with Permanent Commissions came from universities.¹⁷⁸ However, there was a shift in RAF policy, as Permanent Under-Secretary to the Air Ministry, C.B. Bullock, outlined in a letter to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of London on 7 March 1933.¹⁷⁹ It stated that only three permanent commissions from an engineering background would be guaranteed to the 15 awarded to university candidates, thus recognising the need for officers with wider knowledge. This was driven by several factors, including the recognition that technical skills could be taught to those who chose to specialise in engineering after their first five years as well as a need to avoid limiting officers to their specialism and giving them a fair chance of reaching senior command. Nevertheless, despite this shift, and recognising the potential utility of other degrees, the number of two-star officers and above with a university background in 1939 stood at 17 per cent, which was still smaller than that which emerged into the post-First World War RAF.¹⁸⁰ However, while the RAF showed a preference for engineering degrees, many officers with such qualifications would have emerged through an education system that would have introduced pupils to leadership concepts, through subjects such as classics, which the Service valued.

In pedagogical terms, degrees that officers like Leigh-Mallory, Douglas, Portal and Tedder undertook had transferable skills that underpinned their development. In a modern sense, their courses introduced them to writing, research, analysis, self-management, teamwork and communication skills that were central to effective leadership. Given these officers later experience of military education, these skills should have stood them in good stead to excel in areas like staff duties, which had repercussions for succession planning

¹⁷⁸ TNA, AIR 2/936, Memorandum dated 28 November 1929.

¹⁷⁹ TNA, AIR 2/936, C.B. Bullock to Vice-Chancellor, University of London, 7 March 1933.

¹⁸⁰ Boyd, *Elites and their Education*, p. 90.

and their career trajectories. Tasked to produce reports and memoranda, staff officers required the ability to write, research and analyse various questions ranging from the development of doctrine to personnel issues. While easy to overstate, as academic ability does not automatically translate into operational competency, this sub-group certainly had the skills to support their development as leaders in the RAF. It was also perceived that university attendance also reinforced abilities developed in public schools. For example, despite showing a troubling and tiresome attitude towards his studies at Magdalene College at the University of Cambridge, Tedder had academic ability.¹⁸¹ Based on research undertaken in his fourth year and cited to this day, in 1916, Tedder published a history of the RN in the restoration era of Charles II.¹⁸² His key tutor at Magdalene, A.C. Benson, recalled that Tedder was ‘cautious in statement’ but had ‘independence of judgement’.¹⁸³ This judgement would work well for him as he rose through the ranks. Although he was senior by one year, Tedder was Leigh-Mallory’s contemporary at Magdalene, and their socialisation offers an insight into their respective abilities. In his wartime memoirs *With Prejudice*, Tedder made no link between his and Leigh-Mallory’s shared experience, and Orange claimed that ‘Tedder had disliked him since their undergraduate days at Cambridge’.¹⁸⁴ This is a tendentious claim based on Orange’s teleological analysis of their Second World War relationship, and one for which he provides no evidence. Orange actually admitted that the prestigious Kingsley Club at Magdalene inducted both Leigh-Mallory and Tedder into its ranks on the same day in October 1912; therefore, they knew

¹⁸¹ On Tedder’s time at Cambridge, see: Orange, *Tedder*, pp. 7-12.

¹⁸² Arthur William Tedder, *The Navy of the Restoration from the Death of Cromwell to the Treaty of Breda: Its Work, Growth and Influence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1916). Republished by CUP in 2010, Tedder’s work now appears as part of their naval and military history library collection. For an example of a modern work citing Tedder in its bibliography, see: J.D. Davies, *Gentlemen and Taraulins: The Officers and Men of the Restoration Navy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

¹⁸³ Cited in Orange, *Tedder*, p. 9.

¹⁸⁴ Orange, *Tedder*, p. 15; Vincent Orange, ‘Arthur Tedder and the Transportation Plans’ in John Buckley (ed.), *The Normandy Campaign, 1944: Sixty Years On* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p. 150.

one another. However, there is little evidence regarding how this relationship developed at university.¹⁸⁵ More tellingly, Orange noted that the Kingsley Club, founded by Benson in honour of Charles Kingsley, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge and described as ‘an exciting teacher’, was the preserve of the college’s ‘intellectual elite’, thus suggesting that both Leigh-Mallory and Tedder were well regarded by their tutors.¹⁸⁶ Recorded in hyperbolic terms as having an influence that ‘helped to build the new society there of the 1920s and 30s’ due to ‘his presence, his generosity and his encouragement’, Benson undoubtedly had an influence on Tedder’s and Leigh-Mallory’s outlook and development.¹⁸⁷ Additionally, the aim of attending university in this period was not specifically to gain an honours degree, but to socialise and network with key peers and emerge with a pass BA; thus, this key social activity was just as important as academic development. As Douglas recalled, university attendance ‘was the socially desirable thing to do’ because it was seen as finishing the process begun at public school.¹⁸⁸ While only attending the University of Oxford for a year, Douglas, in *Years of Combat*, provided a useful overview of its importance beyond academic aspects. Douglas recalled the importance of the atmosphere at Oxford as being the key to the development of his political outlook; as a peer, he sat on the Labour benches in the House of Lords. Douglas stressed that the atmosphere generated in the ‘elite’ universities allowed him to mature in a convivial environment designed to foster moral leadership and stress concepts of duty and respect.¹⁸⁹ Despite challenges in the late-nineteenth century, the ‘elite’ universities allowed for the continued process of education for leadership established in public schools. The military

¹⁸⁵ Dunn, *Big Wing*, p. 15; Orange, *Tedder*, p. 15.

¹⁸⁶ Orange, *Tedder*, p. 15; Peter Searby, *A History of the University of Cambridge: Volume III – 1750-1870* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 258.

¹⁸⁷ Christopher N.L. Brooke, *A History of the University of Cambridge: Volume IV – 1870-1990* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1993), p. 49.

¹⁸⁸ ‘Notes reference Lord Douglas’ Personal History’, p. 9.

¹⁸⁹ Douglas, *Years of Combat*, pp. 35-9.

valued these due to the perceived relationship between the processes, noted elsewhere, that allowed for personal development, knowledge, and skills that supported officers abilities.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has highlighted some of the key pre-service practices that emerged for the senior officer class of the RAF of the Second World War. Diverging from the experience of the Army and RN in terms of social origins, though Leigh-Mallory's own background mapped closely to those of the other services, the RAF moved to more broadly represent the changing character of the British class system. However, the RAF followed the Army's preference for officers with public school backgrounds, as the ethos that these institutions developed provided men with the right character that fitted with the Service's heroic paradigm concerning leadership. By accepting that technical knowledge could be taught, as highlighted by Evill's 1931 report, the RAF aimed to recruit officers who had developed 'natural' leadership abilities through the interaction of a classical education, sports and OTC experience. These factors then found outgrowths in the RAF as it sought to define what it wanted from officers and the best methods to recruit them. While continuity between the Army and RAF existed, it is worth reiterating the contingent nature of these factors on the officers considered in this thesis. As noted, not all of these men sought military careers. Concerning university education as an example, with the exception of AM Sir Ernest Gossage, who attended the University of Cambridge and was commissioned into the Royal Artillery on 19 July 1912, each of these men either had, or were about to embark on, careers. As noted, Leigh-Mallory pondered entering the legal profession in 1914, while, post-war, some, as Douglas did, briefly left the RAF.

Chapter Five

Leadership and Officer Training in the Army and Royal Navy and their Air Arms

In a thesis that examines an RAF officer's leadership development, it might appear counter intuitive that this chapter focuses on training in the Army and RN. However, given that a third of the officers in Appendix Three served in the British military pre-First World War, clearly these men emerged from the training systems of the Army and RN; the rest, like Leigh-Mallory, were wartime volunteers in the Army. Examining Army and RN training methods highlights the disparate nature of the development of RAF officers who emerged as senior leaders by 1939. However, while training developed competencies required as the basis for leadership development, the diverse background of the prosopography population raises questions about the influence initial training had on these officers and the challenge of correlating patterns from the data in Appendix Three. Nevertheless, flying training was an important element of this experience, as it developed a shared identity, related to flying, in the RFC and RNAS that filtered into the professional ethos of the RAF and provided the operational context to Leigh-Mallory's career. However, even this was a challenge, because, as Chart 2.1 illustrated, 30 per cent of officers were not classified as heavier-than-air pilots in 1919, thus there was even some discord in this experience. Nonetheless, even this is problematic as these branch designations were representative of current duties rather than operational backgrounds.

This chapter examines the training and promotions procedures of the Army and RN up to 1916, as by this point, all officers in Appendix Three were members of the British military. Leigh-Mallory's own experience of training occurred as a Private in the 10th (Territorial) Battalion, King's Liverpool Regiment (The Liverpool Scottish) before transferring to the 4th (Special Reserve) Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers as an officer. It was

with the latter unit that Private Leigh-Mallory undertook basic training. Helen McCartney described this unit as a ‘Cuff and Collar’ battalion because the Liverpool Scottish recruited from the middle and upper classes before the First World War.¹ The Liverpool Scottish maintained much of its social exclusivity during the First World War, which, in part, given his background, explains why Leigh-Mallory volunteered as a Private in this unit.² This chapter then examines flying training in the RFC and RNAS up to 1916. Leigh-Mallory’s own experience began as an observer at No. 1 School of Aeronautics before graduating as a pilot through the Central Flying School (CFS). The experience of his various peers illustrates the discordant nature of training in the nascent air arms, though significant changes occurred after 1916.

An enduring debate remains over the pedagogical purpose of training and education, which relates to the difference between leader and leadership development. As related to leadership development, training has largely been side-lined due to concerns that it relates, as Dennis Drew remarked, to a ‘checklist-dominated’ mentality that is drawn from the need to develop the skills-based competencies a professional requires.³ This is overly simplistic, and it ignores the importance of initial training and the influence it had in shaping officers outlook and professional identity. At institutions like Sandhurst, Woolwich and *Britannia*, education sits alongside training, though, arguably, the latter retains greater importance. Furthermore, as Jörg Muth suggested, initial training experiences inculcated officers with a ‘command culture’ that was derived from an organisation’s leadership

¹ Helen McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers: The Liverpool Territorials in the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 27, fn. 8.

² TNA, WO 339/28812, Attestation Papers of Trafford Leigh-Mallory, 6 August 1914; McCartney, *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 25-56.

³ Drew, ‘The Three Pillars of Professional Competence’, p. 59.

preference.⁴ The tension between education and training in the military is represented by Harry Dickinson's description of 'Athens in Sparta'.⁵ Athens represents education, while Sparta characterises training, and the difference between the former and latter is based on these ancient societies philosophies related to youth development. As an organisation, training is, and remains, central to the RAF, as it promotes uniformity of purpose across new recruits while developing a sense of belonging; an important starting point for future leaders. However, due to the disparate sources of officer recruitment in the prosopography populations of Appendices Three and Four, this was missing amongst Leigh-Mallory and his peers. Thus, pilot ethos, which, from a training perspective, was developed during initial flying lessons, was of more importance to the group under examination, as it remained their shared experience throughout their careers. Nonetheless, effective training should be morally neutral and allow for the skills development necessary for military professionals to undertake their core missions while developing task competencies, decision-making and communication abilities at an early stage in their careers. Significantly, military professionals are not educated to kill, but rather trained to, and it is the one activity that militaries spend much of their time in peace performing as units constantly seek to perfect skills and knowledge as well as integrating new methods and equipment.⁶ Even during high tempo operations in 1918, RFC/RAF squadrons spent a third of their time training and acclimatising new members with their respective duties in the unit. Skills that are developed have to be maintained to deliver fighting power, and, as both Edgar Jones and Bourke recognised, military training is the process through which civilians are psychologically

⁴ Jörg Muth, *Command Culture: Officer Education in the US Army and the German Armed Forces, 1901-1940, and the consequences for World War II* (Denton, TX: University of North Texas, 2011).

⁵ Harry Dickinson, 'Athens in Sparta: Making the Case for Naval Education – I', *TNR*, 90(3) (2002), pp. 243-8; Harry Dickinson, 'Athens in Sparta: Making the Case for Naval Education – II', *TNR*, 90(4) (2002), pp. 337-41. Dickson's title is a development of that used by John Novell in his history of the US service academies, *Neither Athens nor Sparta: The American Service Academies in Transition* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 1979).

⁶ Dickinson, 'Athens in Sparta – I', p. 244.

conditioned to deal with the process of killing.⁷ This is an important consideration when conceptualising Leigh-Mallory's experience, as he was a civilian volunteer who was given military training to kill. Clearly, despite any association with the OTC, whose training regime was of variable quality, previous military experience was not typical. Furthermore, training also inculcated civilians with unit cohesion through the implementation of standardised techniques; however, in the context of the First World War, it is difficult to ascertain the effectiveness of this due to various entry routes and the diversity of methods used.⁸ These divergent entry methods raised questions over leadership development, as training in this context leaned towards value for the individual rather than what it delivered to the organisation; the RAF.

5.1 Cadet Training in the British Army and Royal Navy

As Chart 3.3 illustrated, 58 per cent of officers from Appendix Four had some form of pre-war military experience. This experience split between amateur routes, like the Militia and RNVR, and regular paths through the cadet training establishments of the Army and RN. Formed in 1720 and 1802 respectively, Woolwich and Sandhurst were the cadet training institutions of the Army, while, by the outbreak of the First World War, the key training establishment for the RN, *Britannia*, consisted of Osborne and Dartmouth.⁹ Osborne opened in 1903 to unify entry routes into the RN through the Selborne Scheme, which was announced by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Earl Selborne, in 1902 and sought to create

⁷ Edgar Jones, 'The Psychology of Killing: The Combat Experience of British Soldiers during the First World War', *JCH*, 41(2) (2006), p. 19; Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing*, p. 60.

⁸ A key proponent of cohesion through military training is King, see: Anthony King, *The Combat Soldier: Infantry Tactics and Cohesion in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 266-337.

⁹ *Britannia* is used as an overarching term unless specifically discussing Osborne or Dartmouth.

'homogenous training of Executive, Engineer, and Marine Officers'.¹⁰ Through the Selborne Scheme, RN recruits joined Osborne aged 13 for two years and then progressed to Dartmouth for a further two.¹¹ Before this, future members of the Executive Branch entered *Britannia*, which was a hulk based on the River Dart, while engineers passed through Keyham.¹² The plurality of these entry routes raises concerns over the professionalism of the Army and RN, especially in the former when failure to pass entry examinations led officers to enter through the 'back door' of the Militia; a method followed by Trenchard.¹³ 'Amateur' officers accounted for 16 per cent of future RAF senior leaders from Appendix Four. For example, Bowhill failed *Britannia's* entry exam before attending the Thames Nautical Training College and entering the Merchant Marine.¹⁴ Bowhill then joined the RNVN and, after gaining his Royal Aero Club Aviator Certificate, was gazetted a Lieutenant on the Supplementary List of the RN in 1912.¹⁵ To take another example, commissioned into the 4th Battalion the Devonshire Regiment in 1906, Mitchell subsequently transferred to a regular battalion of the Highland Light Infantry in 1909.¹⁶ As Bowman and Connelly noted, the variety of routes available to the Army provided 'variable training', and this plurality of experience makes it difficult to quantify the impact that such service had on leadership development of RAF officers.¹⁷ Furthermore, neither the Army's nor the RN's officer recruitment phase specifically identified leadership ability. This was because the military presumed those applicants social backgrounds produced effective

¹⁰ 1902 [Cd. 1385] *Memorandum dealing with the Entry, Training, and Employment of Officers and Men of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines*, p. 11

¹¹ Davison, *The Challenges of Command*, p. 104.

¹² For a history of Keyham, see: G. Penn, *HMS Thunderer: The Story of the Royal Engineering Colleges, Keyham and Manadon* (Emsworth: Kenneth Mason, 1984).

¹³ Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, p. 21; Jordan, 'The Battle for the Skies', p. 69.

¹⁴ Alan Smith, 'From Sail to Wing: The Career of Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill, GBE, KCB, CMG, DSO and Bar', *Cross and Cockade: The Journal of the Society of First World War Historians*, 25(1) (1994), p. 1.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Woolven, 'Mitchell, Sir William Gore Sutherland (1888–1944)'.

¹⁷ Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, p. 8.

leaders, and this filtered into RAF thinking in the 1920s. This, coupled with alternative entry routes, created challenges for the provision of effective leadership training.

Cadet institutions curricula reflected distinct organisational choices and included a mix of practical provision for skills development and didactic classroom learning.¹⁸ These choices were grounded in the skills officers required for their chosen profession. At Osborne, engineering remained a key component, as did scientific subjects at Woolwich.¹⁹ As the Director of Naval Education (DNE), J.A. Ewing, a civilian physicist and engineer who had been Professor of Mechanism and Applied Mechanics at the University of Cambridge, noted in his 1905 report about Osborne, ‘The large part taken by practical engineering is a novel element in the training of such young boys’.²⁰ As Andrew Lambert noted, the RN’s system before 1902 at *Britannia* was ‘essentially mathematical’.²¹ Furthermore, Dickinson argued that ‘the old *Britannia* system continued to exert an influence’ on initial training into the early-twentieth century.²² The RN made a powerful organisational statement in appointing a civilian to the newly established post of DNE; however, it also reinforced the service’s predilection for technical education, given Ewing’s scientific background. For this reason, as Chapter Four noted, the RAF rejected the recruitment and training system of the RN. Cecil’s committee on pre-service education dismissed *Britannia*’s curriculum as too ‘specialised’ due to the early age at which cadets

¹⁸ While several overviews of Sandhurst and Woolwich exist, they have been given scant attention by academics. Conversely, two useful PhDs exist that have considered *Britannia*, see: Mary Jones, ‘The Making of the Royal Navy Officer Corps, 1860-1914’ (PhD Thesis, University of Exeter, 1999), pp. 79-111; Elinor Romans, ‘Selection and Early Career Education of Executive Officers in the Royal Navy, c. 1902-1939’ (PhD Thesis, University of Exeter, 2012), pp. 139-200. Both suggest a possible framework for looking at the initial experience of RAF officers and the importance of Cranwell.

¹⁹ TNA, ADM 7/936, Appendix B – Royal Naval College, Osborne: Timetable of the First Term, Report of the Director of Naval Education for the Year 1904, January 1905, p. 18; Colonel K.W. Maurice-Jones, DSO (ret’d), *The Shop Story, 1900-1939* (Woolwich: The Royal Artillery Institution, 1954), p. 11.

²⁰ TNA, ADM 7/936, Report of the Director of Naval Education for 1904, p. 1.

²¹ Andrew Lambert ‘The Development of Education in the Royal Navy, 1854-1914’ in Geoffrey Till (ed.), *The Development of British Naval Thinking: Essays in Memory of Bryan Ranft* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006), p. 41.

²² Dickinson, *Educating the Royal Navy*, p. 210. Ewing went on to manage Room 40, the section of naval intelligence responsible for cryptanalysis, which deciphered the Zimmermann Telegram in 1917, see: Dickinson, *Wisdom and War*, pp. 114-5.

entered the system.²³ However, given that technical subjects did appear on the curriculum at Cranwell, its formation can be seen, in part, as an attempt to merge the heroic leadership training extant in the Army with the technical preferences of the RN. Practical elements of curricula focused on subjects like drill, tactics and navigation that developed basic professional competence. At Sandhurst, this included annual training camps to apply classroom knowledge through experiential learning.²⁴ These, like military manoeuvres, also occurred once commissioned, and the Military Wing of the RFC regularly participated in them before the First World War.²⁵ Gradual changes in Army cadet training emerged in the aftermath of the Akers-Douglas Committee of 1902, which also considered broader issues related to entry from public schools and universities.²⁶ In providing necessary professional skills, both the Army and RN began a process of leader development that continued during an officer's early career. As Joubert recalled, after passing out of Woolwich, he attended specialist courses at the former and Shoeburyness, while Royal Engineers went to Chatham and infantry officers went to the School of Musketry at Hythe.²⁷ RN officers typically continued training in preparation for their Lieutenants exam, which, as AC C.R. Samson's example illustrates, was heavily technical in character and included subjects like 'Boat Work' and 'Signals'.²⁸

While, from a leadership perspective, there were challenges over the oscillation between practical and general elements of cadet training, before the First World War, there were attempts to broaden curricula. The pre-First World War reports of the DNE on *Britannia* show that the RN attempted to introduce a more general education for cadets,

²³ TNA, AIR 2/100, Preliminary Education of Candidates for the Royal Air Force Commissions, p. 3.

²⁴ Alan Shepherd, *Sandhurst: The Royal Military Academy* (London: County Life Books, 1980), p. 109.

²⁵ In general, see: Andrew Whitmarsh, 'British Army Manoeuvres and the Development of Military Aviation, 1910-1913', *WIH*, 14(3) (2007), pp. 325-46

²⁶ 1902 [Cd. 982] *Akers-Douglas Report*, p. iii.

²⁷ Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, p. 24.

²⁸ IWM, Personal Papers of Air Commodore C.R. Samson, Copy of Examination Certificate for Lieutenant, Part 1, Royal Naval College, Greenwich, 4 November 1902.

which included increased provision in subjects like history. This sought to widen knowledge and understanding but also introduced cadets to RN culture as a form of indoctrination in nurturing shared identity. Reading on the history syllabus at Osborne included Hamilton Williams' *British Naval Power* and Julian Corbett's biography of Sir Francis Drake; both reinforced prevalent views of the RN as a great naval power.²⁹ Williams served as an Instructor in English Literature who also taught history at *Britannia*, while Corbett went on to be a key RN lecturer and naval theorist before the First World War. AM Sir Robert Clark-Hall described Williams' teaching of history as being 'about dates' and little else of value.³⁰ History also featured at Sandhurst and Woolwich, and while Bowman and Connelly criticised the lack of specific leadership training at these institutions, they were unfair in selectively citing recollections that ignore the pedagogical role the study of the past had in inculcating leadership lessons and nurturing a sense of identity.³¹ At this level, this was reinforced by the study of tactics and the use of camps for experiential learning. Before the Akers-Douglas report, the Professor of Tactics tried to increase military history provision in lieu of law and administration; however, even in 1902, it was noted that the former still mainly focused on the Napoleonic period.³² That the Professor of Tactics argued for the need for a balanced relationship between history and tactics shows that, from an Army perspective, a balanced curriculum was required to develop officers' competencies. However, the inculcation of a service's culture remains a key element of modern Initial Officer Training and underpins appropriate skills development. As Finlan correctly noted concerning *Britannia* in the late-twentieth century, 'it is the place

²⁹ TNA, ADM 7/936, Appendix A – Royal Naval College, Osborne, Report of the Director of Naval Education for the Year 1908, February 1909, p. 20; Julian Corbett, *Sir Francis Drake* (London: Macmillan, 1890); Hamilton Williams, *Britain's Naval Power: A Short History of the Growth of the British Navy from the Earliest Times to Trafalgar* (London: Macmillan, 1894).

³⁰ Clark-Hall, *Air Marshal Sir Robert Clark-Hall*, pp. 9-10.

³¹ Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, pp. 26-6.

³² 1902 [Cd. 982] *Akers-Douglas Report*, p. 22; Shepherd, *Sandhurst*, p. 109.

where the cultural regeneration process occurs for newly joined officers'; this has always been the case and is why Cranwell was vital to RAF independence and the development of its officer class.³³ This 'cultural regeneration', adjusting civilians to a military organisation, was one of the key challenges the RAF faced in 1919 as it began to shape its own military professionals focused on its requirements.

One element of leadership education that pervaded the Army and RN systems, and mirrored that used in public schools, was the focus on team sport. As Mason and Reidi recognised, even at Keyham, which trained RN engineering recruits, rugby, football and cricket were key pedagogical tools.³⁴ In general, this was because it was thought that sport developed leadership character, and, as Campbell noted concerning the Army, it improved the:

wellbeing of the British soldier, enhance[d] unit morale and *esprit de corps*, and develop[ed] individual initiative and leadership qualities.³⁵

This illustrates the links between morale and cohesion that underpinned the British military's understanding of leadership in both practical and conceptual terms. As Chapter Four noted, team sports were widely seen to engender leadership skills through 'playing the game', which included channelled aggression, team spirit, 'unit' cohesion, and understanding rules and regulations. In the Army, team sports were naturally subsumed under the rubric of physical training; though in 1914, the *Manual of Physical Training* recognised that:

The value of active games and sports as adjuncts to physical training cannot be over-estimated.³⁶

³³ Alistair Finlan, *The Royal Navy in the Falklands Conflict and Gulf War: Culture and Strategy* (London: Frank Cass, 2004), p. 4.

³⁴ Mason and Reidi, *Sport and the Military*, pp. 15-49.

³⁵ Campbell, *The Army Isn't All Work, 1860-1920*, p. 3.

³⁶ War Office, *Manual of Physical Training, 1908 with 1914 Amendments* (London: HMSO, 1914), p. 8.

Here, the balance between physical training and sport reflects the debate of ‘Athens in Sparta’. Physical training reflects the need to generate basic standards required for military service, with sport seen as part of a more general leadership education. This balance is illustrated by GC Carmichael’s recollection of his time at Woolwich between 1907 and 1908. Carmichael recalled:

On Wednesday afternoons, games held sway. In winter; rugger, hockey, soccer and in later winter athletic sports, gym and swimming as side lines.³⁷

Carmichael’s recollection of individual events as ‘side lines’ is interesting and suggests that not much was learnt from these experiences, while team sports had a greater influence on his development.

Leigh-Mallory’s experience, and that of 42 per cent of officers in Appendix Four and four-fifths of Squadron Commanders in Appendix Three, centred on the training regime of the Army in the early phase of the First World War, which attempted to cope with rapid expansion. Leigh-Mallory was representative of a group of public school educated officers that Peter Simkins described as having:

Uncomplicated patriotic ideals and an innate sense of obligation to King and Country [through] public school codes of duty, self-sacrifice, and discipline which had permeated every level of society through the education system.³⁸

Public school educated officers provided what the Army perceived as natural leaders to fill its ranks. Leigh-Mallory’s first training experience occurred as a Private, which centred on a regime of route marches, parades and drill as well as providing work parties for the Liverpool docks.³⁹ After commissioning, Leigh-Mallory’s experience relied on regimental

³⁷ RAFM, Carmichael Papers, *Life Records*, p. 30. It is interesting to note that Wednesdays are still held over for sport in the modern British military.

³⁸ Peter Simkins, ‘The Four Armies, 1914-1918’ in David Chandler and Ian Beckett (eds.), *The Oxford History of the British Army* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 239. This did not apply to all personnel joining the British military before the introduction of conscription in 1916. For a view from a working class perspective, see: David Silbey, *The British Working Class and Enthusiasm for War, 1914-1916* (Abingdon: Frank Cass, 2005).

³⁹ A.M. McGilchrist, *The Liverpool Scottish, 1900-1919* (Liverpool, 1930), p. 13.

based training led by regular Non-Commissioned Officers, whom new officers expected to learn from while relying on their previous educational backgrounds. Officers also had access to manuals like *Infantry Training* that contained the organisational memory of the Army about the employment of various combat arms.⁴⁰ Mirroring other manuals of the period, the 1912 *Yeomanry and Mounted Rifle Training Manual* stated ‘The object of training is to prepare leaders, men, and horses for war’.⁴¹ *Infantry Training* stressed the need to develop ‘the soldierly spirit’ through efficient drill. It was recognised that this emerged from good leadership centred on concepts of morale and motivation through ideas like duty, paternalism, self-reliance and responsibility that had been inculcated at public schools.⁴² While these basic precepts existed, regimental training lacked uniformity and provided a poor basis for effective leadership that was only overcome through operational learning. For example, in 1923, SL Hill recalled how in 1915, he felt inadequately trained on deployment to France with the Northumberland Fusiliers.⁴³ While officers had access to manuals, it is open to question whether they would have read them and how much they would have understood had they done so. It was only through wartime experience that initial leadership experience emerged for future RAF officers. It is reasonable to presume that this was Leigh-Mallory’s view, given that he started his 1925 reflective essay in 1915 when he deployed on operations.⁴⁴

5.2 Promotion in the British Army and Royal Navy

⁴⁰ *Infantry Training* (1914); War Office, *Cavalry Training* (London: HMSO, 1907).

⁴¹ War Office, *Yeomanry and Mounted Rifle Training* (HMSO: London, 1912), p. 10.

⁴² In general, see: Sheffield, ‘Officer-Man Relations’, *passim*.

⁴³ TNA, AIR 1/2387/228/11/37, War Experience, 1914-1918 by Squadron Leader Roderic Hill, September 1923 p. 2.

⁴⁴ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 1.

Before examining pilot training, it is worth considering the challenge of promotion in the Army and RN as it provided the career framework for an officer's development before joining the RAF. Primarily, Army and RN promotion procedures have been criticised over the abuse of patronage and seniority. While promotion exams existed in both systems, the Army, as Bowman and Connelly noted, was:

too tied to seniority and, arguably, patronage with the regimental system creating further problems for advancement of promising officers.⁴⁵

Seniority was a holdover from the abolition of purchase of commissions in 1871 as part of the reforms of the Secretary of State for War, Edward Cardwell.⁴⁶ Concerning the RN, Davison argued that 'the Navy was semi-aristocratic and yet professional', and as the service professionalised in the late-nineteenth century, certain career routes, like the gunnery branch, led to senior leadership positions.⁴⁷ Both services attempted reform, the RN most notably through the Selborne Scheme; however, out-dated attitudes remained up to 1914. In 1906, in the pages of *JRUSI*, Major Lord Douglas Compton of the 9th Lancers wrote that promotion by seniority 'cannot be bettered', which was a view arguably based on his social background and desire to maintain class barriers in the Army.⁴⁸ Senior officers like the Chief of the General Staff, General Sir William Nicholson, supported promotion by seniority as it reinforced the regimental system of the Army, which they did not want to see diminished.⁴⁹ Patronage also remained an issue for the RN; for example, the rise of Rear Admiral Hugh Evan-Thomas to command the 5th Battle Squadron of the Grand Fleet, as Andrew Gordon illustrated, was inherently linked to his service on the Royal

⁴⁵ Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, p. 8.

⁴⁶ Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, pp. 16-19, 90-3.

⁴⁷ Davison, *The Challenges of Command*, p. 20; Jones, 'The Making of the Royal Navy Officer Corps', p.142.

⁴⁸ Major Lord Douglas J.C. Compton, 9th (Queen's Royal) Lancers, 'The Shortage of Officers in the Army', *JRUSI*, 50 (1906), p. 796.

⁴⁹ French, *Military Identities*, p. 151. Nicholson was Chief of the General Staff from 1908 to 1912. The title changed in 1909 to CIGS.

Yachts and his association with the Royal Family.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the emergence of the so-called 'Rings' in the 1890s centred on the control pervaded by both Field Marshals Viscount Wolseley and Earl Roberts over appointments during their respective terms as Commander-in-Chief.⁵¹ However, as Beckett suggested, the 'Rings' emerged to deal with problems in the promotion procedures of the Army, such as the provision of effective officers.⁵² While, in principle, Military and Naval Secretaries managed promotion and career planning, even these appointments received criticism, and French, with reference to postings from Woolwich and Sandhurst, noted:

cadets who missed out on their preferred choices found themselves posted by the Military Secretary willy-nilly.⁵³

This lack of succession planning was abrogated by the regimental system's influence, whereby COs had more influence over appointments than the War Office.⁵⁴ Due to these issues, adventurous officers sought alternative options for employment that often included service in the British Empire. While undoubtedly underpinned by an interest in aviation, the problems of the promotion system led some officers to view the newly founded RFC as an opportunity for career advancement. Jordan noted of Trenchard:

When he became Assistant Commandant of the CFS Trenchard was a forty-five year old major, with no obvious prospects for advancement. Five years later, he was a major-general and regarded as Britain's leading airman.⁵⁵

Other pre-war officers, like Joubert, benefitted from their decision to join the fledgling arm. Joubert, who attended the CFS as a Lieutenant in 1913, finished the First World War as an acting Colonel and was gazetted a WgCr in 1919 with a Permanent Commission.

⁵⁰ Andrew Gordon, *The Rules of the Game: Jutland and British Naval Command* (London: John Murray, 1996), pp. 215-42.

⁵¹ Stephen Badsey, *Doctrine and Reform in the British Cavalry, 1880-1918* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 155-6; Kochanski, *Sir Garnet Wolseley*, pp. 271-2; Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, pp. 68-9.

⁵² Ian F.W. Beckett, 'The Annual Confidential Report and Promotion in the Late Victorian Army', *British Journal for Military History*, 1(1) (2014), pp. 12-28.

⁵³ French, *Military Identities*, p. 55.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 151.

⁵⁵ Jordan, 'The Battle for the Skies', p. 70.

Officers like Brooke-Popham and Dowding illustrated abilities that might have seen them rise to senior Army positions. As Stephen Roskill noted in 1969, the loss of officers like Bowhill, Longmore and Courtney was an ‘irreparable loss’ to the RN but a gain to the RAF.⁵⁶ Furthermore, Roskill claimed to have identified only one officer who returned to the RN post-war, which reinforces the view presented by Bigsworth in Chapter Three about being put back in his career if he returned to his original service.⁵⁷

This advancement was contingent on the expansion of the British military generally, and air arms specifically, during the First World War. Of all the arms of the First World War Army, the RFC expanded the most, from 1,244 officers and men in August 1914 to 291,748 in October 1918; additionally, in August 1914, there were 600 officers and men in the RNAS.⁵⁸ Dictated by the need to fill operational and staff appointments, promotion relied on the availability of suitable officers. Typically, this meant public school recruits with OTC experience, as exemplified by Leigh-Mallory. This growth led to the use of acting, temporary and brevet ranks to deal with operational situations. Temporary ranks predominated during the First World War and were utilised for those ‘appointed to command and extra regimental positions’ like staff positions or the RFC, whose expansion saw the transfer of permanent and volunteer officers to the Corps.⁵⁹ Evidence of this system, albeit utilising a pre-war officer, comes through Major Bernard Vernon-Harcourt, who was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the 4th Battalion South Wales Borderers, a militia unit, on 4 September 1897, earned his Royal Aero Club Aviator Certificate on 10 August 1915, and was appointed a flight commander in the RFC on 19

⁵⁶ ‘Introduction’ in Stephen Roskill (ed.), *Documents Relating to the Naval Air Service: Volume I – 1908-1918* (London: Spottiswoode printed for the Navy Records Society, 1969), p. xvii.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*; TNA, AIR 2/90, OC 10 (Operations) Group to GOC South Western Area, 2 October 1918.

⁵⁸ TNA, AIR 8/13, *Synopsis of the British Air Effort during the War*, 1 January 1919, p. 16. This paper was issued to Parliament in April 1919 as Command Paper No. 100.

⁵⁹ 1917-18 [Cd. 8642] *Report of the Committee on Promotion of Officers in the Special Reserve, New Armies and Territorial Force, together with a note by the Army Council*, pp. 4-5.

October 1915.⁶⁰ By March 1918, Vernon-Harcourt, through seniority, was a Captain in the Welsh Regiment, to which he had transferred in 1899, and a temporary Major in the RFC. However, the problem of expansion did not remove favouritism or nepotism, and, while Churchill chaired a committee that examined promotion from the Army perspective, it is clear that issues filtered into the RFC and the RAF in 1918.⁶¹ For example, in his 1923 Staff College essay, SL John Quinnell, OC 104 Squadron in 1918, claimed that promotion was less than fair to those officers who served in France. Quinnell suggested that on returning to Britain, reports were produced on their suitability for promotion, and if recommended, officers were automatically promoted without reference to other factors; a clear accusation of favouritism, which demonstrates that merit was not evaluated by any metric.⁶² Despite these problems, in general, during the First World War, the British military appointed appropriate officers to leadership positions; however, this success came more from personal ability rather than any identifiable and consistent succession planning process. These officers achieved promotion through what SL Forster Maynard, a flight commander in 1 Squadron RNAS in 1916, referred to as the 'hard work and constant strain' of leadership that required self-confidence and effective decision making abilities, without which morale and unit cohesion would be reduced.⁶³

5.3 Flying Training, Shared Identity and Pilot Ethos

While divergent training experiences had limited impact on leadership development in the RAF, there was one aspect that coalesced and brought officers in Appendix Four together.

⁶⁰ *The London Gazette*, 3 September 1897, p. 4938; Royal Aero Club Minute Books, Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee of the Royal Aero Club on Tuesday, the 24th August, 1915; 'The British Air Services', *Flight*, 12 November 1915, p. 869.

⁶¹ 1917-18 [Cd. 8642] *Report of the Committee on Promotion of Officers*.

⁶² TNA, AIR 1/2386/228/11/28, An Account by Course Students of War Experiences: Squadron Leader John Charles Quinnell, 25 September 1923, p. 4.

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 16.

This was the shared identity of being pilots, which had its outgrowth in RAF ethos and was formalised in the GD Branch. This provided continuity between the wartime and post-First World War experience of officers through the professional competencies that formed the basis of future development. However, even here, problems existed. As Chapter Three noted, not all officers were fixed-wing pilots; for example, AVM Harries trained to fly airships in the RNAS.⁶⁴ However, it was only through the experience of the First World War that aircraft were recognised as more versatile than airships.⁶⁵ By 1924, airship pilots like Harries had retrained as fixed-wing pilots. Harries is unique amongst officers in Appendix Four, as the remainder had fixed-wing backgrounds. However, as already noted, 30 per cent of the prosopography population in Appendix Three were not classified as heavier-than-air pilots in 1919; for example, there were three officers rated as members of the Kite Balloon Branch, including two former RNAS officers who would have trained at RNAS Calshot. Interestingly, these three officers had left the RAF by 1920. However, the same is not true of those graded as staff officers in 1919; for example, SL Geoffrey Bromet, a pre-1914 RN officer who trained at the CFS, retired as an AC in 1938. Bromet returned to service in September 1939 and rose to be an AVM, thus highlighting the difficulty of generalising on training, branch membership and subsequent career patterns.⁶⁶ Pilot training was further complicated by the system's evolutionary nature.⁶⁷ RFC training split into three phases. First, pre-First World War training centred on initial private tuition through the Royal Aero Club and then proceeding to the CFS, which was a joint establishment formed in 1912 between the Army and RN. Around thirty per cent of

⁶⁴ 'Obituary – Sir Douglas Harries, Airships and Aircraft', *The Times*, Saturday 9 December 1972, p. 16.

⁶⁵ For a pre-First World War view of airships, see: Major B. Baden-Powell, 'How Airships are Likely to Affect War', *JRUSI*, 54 (1910), pp. 555-81.

⁶⁶ RAFM, DC76/74/126, P.R.4 biographical file on Air Vice-Marshal Sir Geoffrey Rhodes Bromet, 1945-1951.

⁶⁷ David Jordan, 'The Army Co-Operation Missions of the Royal Flying Corps/Royal Air Force, 1914-1918', (PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 1997), pp. 45-74; Philpott, *Air and Sea Power*, pp. 28-41.

Appendix Four were pre-First World War trained and consisted of some of the more adventurous members of the British military. Second, there was a phase up to late 1916, which saw the emergence of the RFC Training Brigade and a series of units focused on specific tasks, such as *ab initio* training. This was a period of experimentation, with variable results. Finally, from late 1916 onwards, and in reaction to the challenge of increased losses, the RFC introduced the so-called Gosport System, named after the Gosport Training School commanded by Major Robert Smith-Barry.⁶⁸

Leigh-Mallory's own training experience occurred during the second phase, which Robert Morley characterised as 'An Atmosphere of Haste'.⁶⁹ Leigh-Mallory applied for observer duties in 1915 with the hope of becoming a pilot.⁷⁰ Many, including Douglas, gained initial training as observers with operational squadrons before transferring back to the home establishment for conversion to flying. Douglas described his experience as being haphazard with a lack of rigour, and Leigh-Mallory mirrored these feelings, describing his training as 'tedious' due to the lack of effective instructors and flying time.⁷¹ This was perhaps understandable given the expansion of the RFC, which placed great strain on all aspects of its operations. SL John D'Albiac recalled in 1929 that the RNAS faced similar problems during the same period.⁷² On 4 January 1916, Leigh-Mallory reported to No. 1 School of Military Aeronautics, where he received instruction in observation, passed with ease, and was identified as a potential pilot. After this point, Leigh-Mallory undertook basic flying training with 12 (Reserve) Squadron, which consisted of basic flying manoeuvres and

⁶⁸ TNA, AIR 1/676/21/13/1773, Notes on Training – Home – Part 1.

⁶⁹ Robert Morley, 'Earning their Wings: British Pilot Training, 1912-1918', (MA Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 2006), pp. 49-76.

⁷⁰ TNA, WO 339/28812, 2nd Lieutenant Trafford Leigh-Mallory to the Adjutant, 4th Lancashire Fusiliers, 1 October 1915.

⁷¹ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 2; Douglas, *Years of Combat*, pp. 73-74.

⁷² TNA, AIR 1/2390/228/11/128, Service Experience by Squadron Leader J.H. D'Albiac, 7 May 1929, p. 2.

initial dual-control instruction, and graduated from the CFS on 6 June 1916.⁷³ This skills development sought to achieve a level of professional competency to undertake flying duties. While Leigh-Mallory eventually graduated through the CFS, training in this early period of the war was still of variable quality; for example, at the end of 1915, Trenchard brought the example of Lieutenant A.G.R. Garrod to the attention of the Director-General of Military Aeronautics, MajGen David Henderson. Trenchard noted that Garrod was rated as 'fair' on the Royal Aircraft Factory BE2, despite the latter claiming that he had never flown this type.⁷⁴ Despite challenges, many officers recalled the shared enjoyment of flying developed through training. AVM George Reid recalled his first solo flight as 'a strange and vitalising experience', while Willock recalled killing a sheep on his third flight 'but flew solo after 6 hours' dual instruction'.⁷⁵

The adventurous spirit of officers filtered into their shared identity. SL Raymond Collishaw, a noted 'ace' of the First World War and future AVM, recalled three characteristics that contributed to successful pilots. These were:

- a) Confidence, self-reliance and love of responsibility.
- b) Wiliness, nonchalance and subterfuge.
- c) Ingenuity, foresight and alertness of mind.⁷⁶

These concepts mirrored characteristics taught in public schools and reinforced through training. As one suggested series of training 'Maxims' noted in 1916, 'Everyone who takes up flying becomes converted from disbelief to enthusiasm'.⁷⁷ This 'enthusiasm' underpinned many officers motivation for becoming pilots, with Nicholl recalling that as

⁷³ TNA, WO 339/28812, Commandant, Central Flying School to Director of Air Organisation, War Office, 9 July 1916.

⁷⁴ TNA, AIR 1/131/15/40/218, Trenchard to the Director of Military Aeronautics, 31 December 1915.

⁷⁵ IWM, Personal Papers of Air Vice-Marshal George Ranald Macfarlane Reid, *"Fly Past"*, Unpublished Memoir (1972), p. 5; IWM, Willock Papers, Unpublished Memoir, p. 20.

⁷⁶ TNA, AIR 1/2387/228/11/40, War Experience of Squadron Leader Raymond Collishaw, 23 September 1924, p. 6.

⁷⁷ TNA, AIR 1/676/21/13/1773, Copy of a letter from Major B.C.H Drew to OC Administrative Wing, RFC with appended 'Maxims', Notes on Training – Home – Part 1

soon as he decided to re-join the Army in 1914, he ‘immediately applied to join’ the RFC.⁷⁸ For some, like Leigh-Mallory, it was an opportunity for ‘freedom, breadth of vision, and possibility of personal initiative’.⁷⁹ The RFC, despite technical elements related to training, appeared to offer leadership opportunities where officers applied their desire for adventurism in an aggressive context. This ‘spirit’ was apparent in doctrine, and, as Pugh suggested, the RFC mirrored the ‘moral’ tendencies of its parent organisation, the Army, which, during the First World War, pursued an aggressive culture with a ‘doctrine that placed significant weight on aggression, moral superiority, and the offensive’.⁸⁰ This filtered into the RFC *Training Manual*, distributed amongst units, and codified early doctrinal conceptions related to the belief of ‘Command of the Air’.⁸¹ While the RNAS *Training Manual* was more technical in conception, it is possible to suggest that similar ‘moral’ aspects filtered into RN thinking as its own senior leadership shifted between what Gordon described as ‘ratcatchers’ and ‘regulators’, or the difference between proscriptive and mission command as the basis for operations.⁸² While centred on the personalities of Admirals of the Fleet Earl Beatty and Earl Jellicoe respectively, it is possible to argue that, while lacking clear conceptual doctrine, RNAS operations of the First World War suggested an aggressive outlook, as exemplified by the Cuxhaven Raid of Christmas Day 1914, in which AVM Charles Edmonds participated.⁸³ Thus, the perceived psychology required of a pilot fitted with the culture and ethos of the air arms parent organisations, which in themselves developed from moralism present in aspects of military thinking in the

⁷⁸ RAFM, Nicholl Papers, *Journeys and Records*, p. 58.

⁷⁹ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 2.

⁸⁰ Pugh, ‘Conceptual Origins’, p. 181.

⁸¹ In general, see: War Office, *Training Manual, Royal Flying Corps – Part II (Military Wing) Provisional* (War Office: London, 1915), Chap. II.

⁸² Andrew Gordon, ‘Ratcatchers and Regulators at the Battle of Jutland’ in Gary Sheffield and Geoffrey Till (eds.), *SCSI Occasional Paper No. 38 - Challenges of High Command in the Twentieth Century* (Camberley: Strategic and Combat Studies Institute, 2000), pp. 44-51.

⁸³ In general, see: R.D. Layman, *The Cuxhaven Raid: The World's First Carrier Air Strike* (London: Conway, 1985).

late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. This psychology was underpinned by training, which began the process of forming the professional identity for future leaders of the RAF and provided the context for development, as it was among pilots of the GD Branch that the Service sought its leaders.

5.4 Summary

Conceptually, it is clear that, despite Drew's concern over a tick box approach, training provides an important basis for further leadership development. Using the analogy of 'Athens in Sparta', skills-based procedures provided the basis for leadership development by developing professional competencies. These competencies, and the choice of which were most appropriate, were shaped by the culture and ethos of the service, which generated a shared identity for officers. However, the challenge for those considered in this thesis is that the impact of the competencies developed through the Army and RN were not strictly those required in the RAF. This was further complicated by the variety of entry routes, which makes it difficult to ascertain whether skills developed had any real effect on further development. However, it is the role of flying training that was most significant here, as it not only developed a set of competencies that filtered into officers shared identity and ethos, but also became a nexus of RAF culture through the GD Branch. In being members of this group, officers like Leigh-Mallory who chose to make the RAF their profession ensured that they had the desired skills necessary to allow them to identify with the Service's culture, which influenced inter-war leadership development despite their varied service training and backgrounds.

Chapter Six

Military Education and Leadership Development in the Royal Air Force, 1919-1939

On 18 January 1939, the outgoing Commandant of the IDC, Longmore, lectured to RUSI on the subject of 'Training for Higher Command', in which he outlined his view of the military education officers required to reach senior leadership positions.¹ As previously noted, an enduring debate over the balance and meaning of training and education exists, and while Longmore used the former term, the institutions he identified fitted the latter.² Attendance at institutions Longmore identified – individual service staff colleges, the RN's SOWC, the Army Senior Officers' Schools and the IDC – emerged as characteristic in an RAF officer's rise to senior leadership.³ Longmore also identified the role of RUSI in developing officers intellectual ability, but this did not fit the patterns identified in this chapter and was more fragmented in its use by the RAF.⁴ Broadly, this chapter prefers the phrase 'military education' to the more modern 'Professional Military Education' (PME) for the processes described here. This distinction is needed because military education in this period was not mandatory as PME is in the modern military.⁵ However, the continuity between military education in this period and PME today is that, as Cynthia Watson noted, it 'targets the fields which are crucial to the officer's specific rise to the upper ranks of

¹ Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', pp. 463-78.

² The problem of the interchange of the terms 'training' and 'education' remains a key concern of those involved in modern Professional Military Education. For a perspective from the US, see: Joan Johnson-Freese, 'The Reform of Military Education: Twenty-Five Years Later', *Orbis*, 56(1) (2012), pp. 136-8. For a modern British perspective, see: Kate Utting, 'Beyond Joint-Professional Military Education for the 21st Century: the UK's post-Defence Training Review Advanced Command and Staff Course', *Defence Studies*, 9(3) (2009), pp. 310-28.

³ Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', pp. 470-76.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 474.

⁵ The modern RAF promotes development through AP7000, *Through-Life Generic Professional Military Development (Air)*, which provides an overall framework for career planning that was lacking in this period. AP7000 states that development is 'mandatory for all personnel joining the RAF'. PME forms a central aspect of this process, see: AP7000, *Through-Life Generic Professional Military Development (Air)* (2009), p. 1-1.

service'.⁶ Linked to this is the identification and nurturing of talent by senior officers who selected those who attended courses that developed such 'fields'. Furthermore, military education is used, rather than staff education, to encapsulate the broader pedagogical purpose of institutions examined herein. If staff education had been their aim, then shorter courses, as occurred during the Second World War, could have been established.

Concerning Andover, it was believed that attendance on such courses 'broaden[ed] the mind'.⁷ This broadening of the 'mind' allowed the RAF to develop 'fields' such as leadership, command and staff abilities amongst nurtured officers while improving professional knowledge. Apart from service specific considerations, such as air operations, this development of professional knowledge focused on what today would be broadly considered as strategic studies and included imperial geography and ideas surrounding the principles and the conduct of war through historical study, which focused on both service specific operations and those in the combined, inter-service spheres. As Searle suggested, a general set of principles of war emerged amongst the services that helped foster a strategic culture in the inter-war British military.⁸ However, while tangentially noting the importance of Staff College lectures on the principles of war in propounding a unified strategic culture, Searle did not explore the importance of such institutions in developing the leaders who developed these views. Modern conceptions of socialisation through the staff colleges and the IDC ensured that a common language emerged amongst officers operating in the joint sphere in the Second World War. In addition to nurturing and socialisation, military education in the RAF promoted leadership development through modern ideas like job

⁶ Cynthia Ann Watson, *Military Education: A Reference Handbook* (Greenwood, CT: Praeger, 2007), p. xv.

⁷ "Seagull", "*p.s.a.*", *RAFQ*, 3(3) (1932), p. 325.

⁸ Searle, 'Inter-service Debate', pp. 4-32. In this period, in the British military, the term 'combined' referred to inter-service, while 'joint' meant between nations, even though the former was, doctrinally, typically applied to amphibious operation, see: Ross Mahoney, 'The Royal Air Force, Combined Operations Doctrine and the Raid on Dieppe, 19 August 1942', (MPhil Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2009), pp. 46-58.

assignments and action learning. Therefore, military education acted as the nexus of the nurturing process for an officer's rise to senior leadership during this period, and it is the closest the RAF came to succession planning without the use of psychometric methods and career planning. While Longmore was adamant that the so-called 'Great Captains of History' were born and not made, he recognised that effective education refined and underpinned the leadership development of potential senior leaders.⁹ From Longmore's lecture, it is possible to identify several themes key to an officer's development, like responsibility, the ability to work outside one's 'silo', and understanding the knowledge that underpinned professional identity.¹⁰ In essence, military education developed candidates' intellectual agility to operate with ever-increasing responsibility at different levels by encouraging officers to think and reflect on their profession. This enabled officers to contextualise their development and deliver organisational capital to the RAF. This is particularly relevant concerning the award of the symbol *psa* and subsequent employment following Andover.

Longmore recognised that education could not guarantee to develop an effective senior leader, but might just produce a 'highly trained staff officer', and it was the relationship amongst education, training and experience that acted as a 'guide as to his potential executive ability', and even this was no guarantor of success.¹¹ Leigh-Mallory experienced each of the processes described above, and his experience generally mirrored that of his peers from Appendix Four. WgCr Leigh-Mallory successfully attended the Fourth Course at Andover in 1925/1926; however, he did pass the entrance examination for the Third Course, but was not nominated by the Air Ministry to attend the course. This was not, however, because of some form of nefarious motive, but rather concerned his

⁹ Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', p. 464.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 464.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 476.

then job assignment in the Air Ministry, which precluded attending this course.¹² Before attending Andover, SL Leigh-Mallory attended the Army Senior Officers' School during his first posting to the School of Army Co-Operation in 1922. Leigh-Mallory did not attend Greenwich, nor Camberley or Quetta, but did serve as DS at the latter.¹³ It might have been viewed as cruel to send officers on two separate staff courses, though Portal did attend the SOWC in addition to Andover and the IDC; however, this was exceptional. GC Leigh-Mallory eventually attended the IDC's Eighth Course in 1934. The time between attending Andover and the IDC is explained, in part, by his job assignments in the intervening years. Finally, from 1930 onwards, Leigh-Mallory engaged with wider professional education outside the confines of service institutions as he contributed articles to both *JRUSI* and *RAFQ*.¹⁴ Leigh-Mallory became a member of RUSI in 1931.¹⁵

6.1 The Royal Air Force Staff College, Andover

The Staff College stood up at RAF Andover in November 1921, co-located with its parent headquarters, 7 Group. Its formation marked an important step in the evolution of the RAF. In announcing the 1922/23 Air Estimates, the Secretary of State for Air, Guest, noted Andover's significance when he remarked that it allowed the RAF to form the world's first fully trained Air Staff embedded with an independent view of air power employment, which, in essence, encapsulated RAF culture. Guest noted that the problems confronting the RAF were 'just as complicated, just as far-reaching, and quite different' to

¹² TNA, AIR 72/5, AMWO No. 820 – Entrance of Students to RAF Staff College for Third Course Commencing 1 May 1924, 27 December 1923.

¹³ Unless referencing Quetta specifically, this chapter uses the term Camberley as a catch all term for the Army Staff Colleges, as they were widely considered mirrors of themselves.

¹⁴ Wing-Commander T.L. Leigh-Mallory, DSO, 'Co-operation between the Army and Royal Air Force during 1929', *RAFQ*, 1(1) (1930), pp. 37-44; Wing-Commander T.L. Leigh-Mallory, DSO, RAF, 'Air Co-Operation with Mechanized Forces', *JRUSI*, 75 (1931), pp. 565-77; Leigh-Mallory, 'The Maintenance of Air Superiority in a Land Campaign', pp. 245-52.

¹⁵ 'Secretary's Notes', *JRUSI*, 76 (1931), p. xxiv.

those faced by the Army and RN.¹⁶ As with Cranwell, questions concerning its location and independence remained a constant theme in debates over the Air Estimates. In 1934, the Under-Secretary of State for Air, Sir Philip Sassoon, reiterated that staff colleges existed to work out service specific problems and that Andover's location was dictated by operational requirements; officers up to the rank of WgCr were required to maintain flying proficiency.¹⁷ Andover reinforced the assumption of independence, which linked effective military education to leadership development by the promotion of the 'Air Force Spirit'.

Andover was not the location of choice for the Staff College; in 1919, Trenchard suggested Halton, while in January 1918, the Director of Air Training suggested to the Admiral President of the Royal Naval College Greenwich that 'a school for higher education' for the RAF could be founded there.¹⁸ Andover's Operations Record Book noted that the first official mention of a Staff College appeared in Trenchard's 1919 'Permanent Organization' memorandum in the section detailing training and the development of the 'Air Force Spirit'.¹⁹ While Trenchard appreciated education's importance, this was not the first mention of Andover. The idea did not develop in a vacuum, as Sykes discussed founding a Staff College in a draft memorandum on the RAF's post-war organisation in October 1918.²⁰ Sykes' belief in the value of military education derived from his Quetta experience in 1908.²¹ Conversely, Trenchard's views might have been due to his lack of military education.

¹⁶ Hansard, HC Deb, 21 March 1922, Vol. 152, Col. 293.

¹⁷ Hansard, HC Deb, 8 March 1934, Vol. 286, Cols. 2150-2151.

¹⁸ TNA, AIR 8/12, Permanent Organization of the Royal Air Force, p. 6; Dickinson, *Wisdom and War*, p. 121. At this point, 'RAF Greenwich' was being used to train 450 2nd Lieutenants for the RFC, see: Dickinson, *Wisdom and War*, pp. 119-22.

¹⁹ TNA, AIR 29/527, Operations Record Book, RAF Staff College, Andover, November 1921.

²⁰ TNA, AIR 2/71, Appendix F: Training after the War, Draft Memorandum by the Chief of the Air Staff on Considerations affecting the Strength, Organisation and Constitution of the Royal Air Force after the War, 21 October 1918.

²¹ Sir Frederick Sykes, *From Many Angles: An Autobiography* (London: George G. Harrap, 1942), pp. 70-3.

Appointed in late 1921, DS attended the annual combined operations exercise at Camberley in preparation for teaching at Andover. Andover's first Commandant was AC Brooke-Popham, a noted commander and staff officer of the First World War, who was a Camberley graduate; Brooke-Popham attended Camberley between 1910 and 1912 under the progressive tutelage of MajGen Sir William Robertson.²² C.G. Grey suggested that Brooke-Popham only took the appointment when shown the list of other candidates for the position of Commandant, and exclaimed that he had better take it, though the former provided no source for this claim.²³ Except for GC Clark-Hall, the Assistant Commandant, DS were Camberley or Greenwich graduates. This was an important factor in their selection. Furthermore, two of the first four DS, GC Joubert and WgCr Freeman, would become Commandants themselves.²⁴ Increasingly, DS emerged from officers who passed through Andover's early courses and while it can be suggested that this ensured that 'internal ideologies' were perpetuated, this, as noted below, ignores the wide character of the curriculum.²⁵ Significantly, Joubert recorded his frustration when posted away from Andover in 1923, and, as noted below with specific reference to DS at the IDC, this job assignment was viewed as important for nurtured officers.²⁶

Distorted by a misunderstanding of its purpose, the historiography on Andover focuses on a narrow element of its curriculum; the development of air power doctrine.²⁷ AVM (ret'd) Tony Mason suggested that Andover 'lamentably failed' in providing a developed air power theory for the RAF, while Orange argued that it served:

²² David R. Woodward, *Field Marshal Sir William Robertson: Chief of the Imperial General Staff in the Great War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), pp. 4-5.

²³ Grey, *Air Ministry*, p. 188.

²⁴ TNA, AIR 29/527, Operations Record Book, RAF Staff College, Andover, November 1921; AIR 2/251, Minute from Director of Personnel to Director of Training, 16 September 1921.

²⁵ Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, p. 92.

²⁶ Air Chief Marshal Sir Philip Joubert de la Ferté, *Fun and Games* (London: Hutchinson, 1964), p. 80.

²⁷ See: R.A. Mason, *The Royal Air Force Staff College, 1922-1972* (Bracknell: RAF Staff College, 1972); Hall, *Strategy for Victory*, p. 18; Parton, 'Royal Air Force Doctrine', pp. 97-100; English, 'The RAF Staff College', pp. 408-31. The latter is based on the author's MA Thesis from The Royal Military College of Canada.

as a disseminating station for approved doctrine, seasoned by essays on riding, hunting and how to cope with the bazaars of Baghdad.²⁸

Mason's view, while open to criticism, cannot be unduly ignored. GC Mason was the first DDefS at the RAF Staff College at Bracknell from 1977 to 1985, and remains a widely respected air power expert. This doctrinally based view of Andover, however, requires revision in light of a more developed understanding of the Staff College's purpose. This doctrinal view emerged from a misinterpretation of a phrase in Andover's opening address, which described officers attending Andover as 'the cradle as I call it, of our brain'.²⁹ Linked to the idea of a school of thought for the RAF, and while an aspect of military education, this was not Andover's primary purpose. This phrase had much broader pedagogical connotations, which linked education and leadership development by creating leaders able to lead the RAF. The idea of a general staff being the 'brain of the army' was a popular euphemism. In 1890, Spenser Wilkinson published *The Brain of the Army*, which popularised the on-going debate in the Army concerning the adoption of a general staff, as advocated by officers including MajGen Henry Brackenbury.³⁰ Recognising that general staff systems were required to manage the military and develop plans, the Army and RN adopted them in 1904 and 1912 respectively after much debate.³¹ As Brian Bond asserted, the concept of staff colleges as schools of thought was prominent at Camberley before the First World War, suggesting continuity between the Army and RAF.³² As leaders administered and

²⁸ Tony Mason, 'British Air Power' in John Andreas Olsen (ed.), *Global Air Power* (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2011), p. 26; Orange, *Churchill and His Airmen*, p. 87.

²⁹ TNA, AIR 5/881, Opening Address.

³⁰ Spenser Wilkinson, *The Brain of an Army: A Popular Account of the German General Staff* (Macmillan: London, 1890); Hew Strachan, 'The British Army, its General Staff and the Continental Commitment' in French and Reid (eds.), *The British General Staff*, pp. 80-1; Christopher Bassford, *Clausewitz in English: The Reception of Clausewitz in Britain and America, 1815-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 85-96. On Brackenbury, see: Christopher Brice, *The Thinking Man's Soldier: The Life and Career of General Sir Henry Brackenbury 1837-1914* (Solihull: Helion and Company, 2012).

³¹ On the British Army's general staff, see: French and Reid (eds.), *The British General Staff*. On the RN's war staff, see: Nicholas Black, *The British Naval Staff in the First World War* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2009).

³² Brian Bond, *The Victorian Army and the Staff College 1854-1914* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1972), p. 259.

organised the general staff, it was necessary to develop their abilities through the provision of suitable military education, which indicates the relationship between these two areas. The RAF readily identified this and had an Air Staff from its foundation.

Andover's purpose derived from the nature of the system it served. The Air Staff specifically, and the Air Ministry more broadly, managed information, developed strategy and doctrine, and produced directives and orders for operational commanders. Furthermore, staff officers in operational commands had to understand how to translate Air Ministry directives into physical outcomes as well as managing duties at that level. To work in a staff organisation, officers had to develop knowledge and professional understanding, which underpinned their leadership development. In addition, while Biddle suggested that Andover indoctrinated officers – and there was an element of this – indoctrination was important to ensure that students emerged able to speak the same language in order to operate as effective staff officers.³³ Brooke-Popham recognised this developmental challenge when he noted:

From the start, it was emphasised that our job must be, not only to produce good staff officers but also to lay the foundations for those who could become commanders in the future.³⁴ (Emphasis added)

In the First Course's opening address, Brooke-Popham applied an orthodox classification to Andover's purpose. Brooke-Popham stated that the Staff College's aims were to:

- a) To train officers for work on the staff not only in war but also in peace.
- b) To give future commanders some instruction in the broader aspects of war, whether on sea, or land, or in the air.
- c) To found a school of thought and to assist in solving problems regarding the organisation, training or employment of the Air Force.³⁵

³³ Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 92-3.

³⁴ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 9/12/52, Draft article on the Formation of the RAF Staff College (N.D.) pp. 3-4. Subsequently published as Air Chief Marshal Sir R. Brooke-Popham, 'The Formation of the Royal Air Force Staff College', *The Hawk*, 12 (1950), pp. 18-20.

³⁵ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 1/5/3, Address at the Opening of the RAF Staff College, 4 April 1922, pp. 1-2.

This taxonomy moved from a narrow focus on producing staff officers towards developing leaders grounded in the challenges and ambiguities that they might face as senior leaders, like combined operations, which accounted for much of the third term's work at Andover.³⁶ Derived from his experience of Camberley, Brooke-Popham admitted that anti-intellectualism pervaded the British military and that a key element of Andover's curriculum and ethos was to challenge this attitude. Brooke-Popham argued that Andover graduates should be able to 'think and act quickly' and 'to change attitude of mind'.³⁷ The idea of Andover as a driver in the doctrinal development of the RAF came last in Brooke-Popham's taxonomy, though doctrine and strategy did have a place in the pedagogical context of leadership development through action learning. The key challenge facing the Air Ministry, Brooke-Popham and his successors was in how they nurtured officers for senior positions while developing knowledge required for roles in their current ranks. The ability to balance these competing requirements remains a key aspect of effective senior leadership. Because of this leadership challenge, it is here that this thesis diverges from previous works on Andover and argues that leadership development, rather than doctrine, drove the curriculum. This allowed the RAF to develop its organisational capacity by producing officers who thought broadly about their profession. Doctrine was clearly an element of this, but not the only aspect required to develop capable officers, as illustrated by Brooke-Popham's quote above. Throughout this period, the RAF recognised that Staff College education provided a foundation for nurturing identified officers. To support this, Andover's curriculum was broad in conception, which helped develop officers who could lead the Service while developing coherent plans, strategy and doctrine. This protected RAF independence while furthering its culture through shared identity and encouraging a

³⁶ RAFM, AIR 69/158, Books and Papers that may be Studies in Connection with 3rd Term's Work, 7th Course, RAF Staff College, 1 August 1929; Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', pp. 472-3.

³⁷ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 1/5/3, Opening of the RAF Staff College, p. 1.

common language and experience. This allowed successful officers such as Leigh-Mallory, Douglas and Portal to be conversant in the ideas and thinking that underpinned RAF culture, but also acquainted with broader military matters, which allowed them to work with the other services. For some officers, including Leigh-Mallory, IDC attendance reinforced this broader understanding.

Apart from Andover's first two courses, for which Trenchard and Brooke-Popham handpicked students, selection was by OC's recommendation, entrance examination, and final nomination by the Air Ministry and the Commandant.³⁸ The Air Ministry was the arbiter in the selection process and ensured only those deemed capable attended after they passed the initial examination. In some respects, this went beyond nurturing by moving from a passive to an active state of selection whereby the Air Ministry, took an interest in guaranteeing a steady flow of suitable graduates. Thus, entry in itself acted as a gateway to success, as the Air Ministry believed these officers would form the core of the RAF's future senior leadership. The award of *psa* was a significant cultural marker for this very reason. Nevertheless, by the early 1930s, concerns arose over the quality of officers recommended, and crammers, a holdover from the Army, were increasingly advertised in *RAFQ*. The First Course brought together many emerging leaders, including Portal, Douglas, Peirse and Park, and, on Brooke-Popham's advice, no students from either the Army or RN attended; though, as with their respective staff colleges, this aspect of inter-service socialisation soon became a feature at Andover.³⁹ In 1930, a series of articles appeared in *RAFQ*'s first volume, which advised prospective candidates how best to prepare for entry exams, described the Andover experience, and reinforced advice provided through AMWO and

³⁸ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 9/12/52, Formation of the RAF Staff College, p. 8; TNA, AIR 72/5, AMWO No. 321 – Entrance of Students to RAF Staff College – Examination, 31 May 1923.

³⁹ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 9/12/52, Formation of the RAF Staff College, p. 7; Lord Ismay, *The Memoirs of General the Lord Ismay* (London: Heinemann, 1960), p. 41. For a personal view of the First Course, see: Air Marshal Sir John Baldwin, 'Guinea Pigs', *The Hawk*, 12 (1950), pp. 21-2.

AP reports on the qualifying exams from the Third Course onwards.⁴⁰ In addition to RAF doctrine, compulsory pre-course reading included titles such as Corbett's *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, G.F.R. Henderson's *Science of War* and C.E. Callwell's *Small Wars*.⁴¹ Alfred Thayer Mahan's *Naval Strategy* was an alternative to Corbett, while neither Clausewitz nor Henri Jomini appeared on the list.⁴² Mahan's *Influence of Sea Power upon History* also appeared on the suggested reading list. Alongside various periodicals like *JRUSI*, Spaight's *Air Power and War Rights* and the various official histories of the First World War appeared as suggested reading as they were published.⁴³ No compulsory air power titles appeared. Thus, even before attendance, the RAF sought to develop officers' broad understanding of the principles of war that underpinned their development.

Andover's curriculum was broad in conception and split into five areas: administration and organisation, staff duties, history of military operations, strategy and leadership, and included aspects related to the RAF's sister services. Andover's schemes of work show that only about 20 per cent of the initial curriculum dealt explicitly with aspects directly related to the RAF as an organisation, though, naturally, discussions on air power emerged in lectures on subjects such as the First World War.⁴⁴ While this proportion grew, it only ever accounted for a third of the lectures delivered by DS. Where air power featured more prominently was in student delivered sessions that drew on their operational

⁴⁰ TNA, AIR 10/1123, AP1118 - *Report on the Qualifying Examination for RAF Staff College Andover, held on 24th, 25th and 26th September 1924, with copies of the examination papers and remarks thereon*, March 1925; AIR 72/5, AMWO No. 136 – Entrance of Students to the RAF Staff College, 26 February 1925; Squadron-Leader R. Graham DSO, DSC, DFC, *psa*, 'Some Notes on Preparing for the Staff College', *RAFQ*, 1(1) (1930) pp. 10-6; Graham, 'Some Notes on Preparing for the Staff College (concluded)', *RAFQ*, 1(4) (October 1930) pp. 658-65.

⁴¹ TNA, AIR 72/7, AMWO No. 136 – Entrance of Students to the RAF Staff College, 26 February 1926

⁴² TNA, AIR 72/7, AMWO No. 136; Alfred Thayer Mahan, *Naval Strategy Compared and Contrasted with the Principles and Practice of Military Operations on Land* (New York: Little Brown, 1911).

⁴³ Spaight, *Air Power and War Rights*. Spaight was proud to have his work included in this list, see: Gray, *Leadership*, p. 55.

⁴⁴ RAFM, AIR 69/19, Programme of Work for the 1st Course, RAF Staff College, 4 April 1922 to 30 March 1923. Many of the lectures delivered at Andover are preserved at the RAF Museum and remain a largely untapped source concerning the RAF's history.

experience. Staff work, including the ability to produce clear and concise orders, remained part of the curriculum but included broader leadership too. The first lecture of the course was on this very subject, and Brooke-Popham reiterated that a staff officer's role was to act as 'agents employed by a Commander to do details' and the 'medium through which the commander transmits his orders'.⁴⁵ While Slessor was critical of the administrative education present at Andover, the above was a leadership lesson that stressed that staff officers had to be accurate, truthful and definite.⁴⁶ However, as suggested elsewhere, there was a pervading opinion that administration was not something that GD Branch officers should undertake. Students also attended lectures in English Language to stop perennial complaints of a poor standard of English amongst RAF officers.⁴⁷ Brooke-Popham's, and later Commandants, lectures on the 'Principles of War' stressed the need for co-operation amongst the services that reinforced the nurturing of selected officers.⁴⁸ Rather than producing narrow-minded officers, and despite challenges like training in administration, Andover's curriculum contributed to the intellectual development of nurtured officers and equipped them with a broad conception of war and their profession. Many, such as Leigh-Mallory, emerged as recognised subject matter experts.

Teaching at Andover consisted of lectures, conferences and exercises based on experiential and didactic methods. Typically, teaching took place in the morning, with the afternoons free for preparation, reflection and assignments. AM Sir Thomas Elmhirst described the academic environment in the following terms:

Lectures and seminars every morning. One had to do a great deal of exercise every week. You had writing on some such subject as had been lectured on and

⁴⁵ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 1/5/6, Preliminary Lecture, p. 4; RAFM, AIR 69/43, Lecture on 'The Responsibilities of a Staff Officer' by Wing Commander B.E. Sutton, Delivered to the 4th and 5th Course, RAF Staff College, 24 March 1926 and 26 March 1927.

⁴⁶ Slessor, *The Central Blue*, pp. 94-5

⁴⁷ RAFM, AIR 69/65, Report on the 7th Course, RAF Staff College, 28 February 1930, p. 4.

⁴⁸ RAFM, AIR 69/20, The Principles of War by Air Vice-Marshal R. Brooke-Popham, 1922 to 1926.

we were kept very hard on it in our writing. Occasionally in our seminars, committees of three and four would spend a week on producing an answer on some set question.⁴⁹

Considered an element of the pedagogical process that differentiated higher education from training, this mix of methods closely mirrored modern practices where so-called timetabled 'white space' occurs. Reflection also appeared in assignments, with students producing essays on recent service experience. This form of action learning allowed officers to contextualise and distil appropriate lessons that had value for both their leadership development and the RAF. SL Portal lamented the lack of his administrative experience during the First World War, while Leigh-Mallory's essay primarily examined the issue of inter-service co-operation through his work with the Tank Corps in 1918.⁵⁰ Placed in Andover's library, these pieces represented an aspect of encouraging officers to engage with problems that they would experience in both staff and leadership positions.⁵¹ These recollections also generated cultural 'stories' for the RAF as they appeared in APs and *The Hawk*, Andover own journal.⁵² *The Hawk* existed to ensure that material produced at Andover could be circulated around the RAF as a whole and was a good example of the Service sharing what was perceived as best practice.⁵³ Conferences closely related to the modern conception of seminars, while exercises included syndicate work. It was here that specific problems were examined and solutions determined. They also encouraged socialisation amongst students, and Leigh-Mallory's course included the future ACMs Sir Ralph Cochrane, Hugh Lloyd and AVM Thomas Medhurst. Students also delivered

⁴⁹ IWM, 998, Interview with Air Marshal Sir Thomas Elmhirst, 20 December 1977.

⁵⁰ TNA, AIR 1/2386/228/11/1, War Experiences of Squadron Leader C.L.A. Portal, September 1922; AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory. These essays remain a largely untapped source concerning the experience of RFC/RNAS officers in the First World War. For example, Philpott, in her recent work on combat and experience in the RFC and RN, makes no use of them, see: Philpott, *Air and Sea Power*.

⁵¹ TNA, AIR 1/2385/228/8, Outline of War Experience Exercise, RAF Staff College, 1923

⁵² For an example from Leigh-Mallory's course, see: TNA, AIR 10/1269, Flight Lieutenant S.C. Strafford, DFC, 'War Experiences, 1918-21' in AP1233, pp. 14-28.

⁵³ TNA, AIR 72/11, AMWO No. 674 – The Journal of the RAF Staff College, 31 October 1929.

lectures on selected subjects to develop their powers of communication; Leigh-Mallory surveyed 'Army Co-Operation' on 23 June 1925.⁵⁴ By the 1930s, officers were also encouraged to use term breaks to travel abroad, and produced reports on foreign air forces and their activities, which were then disseminated amongst the Air Staff.⁵⁵ War games were increasingly used to explore various strategic and operational problems confronting the RAF. Two readily identifiable campaigns concerned Mosul and Hong Kong and closely resembled German *Kriegsspiele* with the production of staff appreciations and operational orders, which were mapped to team responses.⁵⁶ These differentiated pedagogical methodologies gave broad scope for officers learning and encouraged them to engage with material in a variety of ways while developing personal abilities.

While Chapter One noted broad factors of leadership education at Andover, it is worth reiterating its importance as an element of the curriculum. The methods utilised illustrate the process of pedagogical engagement already noted, with lectures delivered by the Commandants and student conferences on leadership and morale.⁵⁷ Both drew on historical examples and personal experience, with students engaging in reflective processes when writing assignments and in conference. As with reflective essays, the advantage of this methodological mix was that it developed a cognitive link between theory and practice

⁵⁴ IWM, Reid Papers, "Fly Past", p. 27; RAFM, AIR 69/38, Programme of Work for the 4th Course, RAF Staff College, 23 June 1925.

⁵⁵ TNA, AIR 2/9367, Report by Flight Lieutenant L.K. Barnes and Flight Lieutenant D.F.W. Atcherley on Visit to Germany, April 1936; AIR 2/9371, Report on Visit by Staff College Students (Squadron Leader Pike and McEvoy) to Belgium, Germany, Czecho-Slovakia and Austria, August 1937. See: Vincent Orange, 'The German Air Force Is Already "The Most Powerful in Europe": Two Royal Air Force Officers Report on a Visit to Germany, 6–15 October 1936', *JMH*, 70 (4) (2006), pp. 1011-28. Orange considered a similar report written by Atcherley and Squadron Leader Rowley. It is unclear whether this was a specific Andover sanctioned trip, as Rowley was not a student at this time; however, it seems that this visit was based on Atcherley's earlier experience. Orange claimed that this report 'has never been published and "probably went unread, for the minute sheet is blank."' (p. 1012). This was because this copy is in the files of the Directorate of Intelligence (AIR 40), which was its end destination. The minute sheet for the above AIR 2 files illustrates that these reports were widely read in the Air Staff, including the Directorate of Plans.

⁵⁶ RAFM, AIR 69/137, Exercise No. 11 – Mosul War Game, 15th Course, RAF Staff College, February 1938.

⁵⁷ RAFM, AIR 69/42, Some Notes in preparation for exercise on Morale, 4th Course, RAF Staff College; AIR 69/54, Directing Staff Notes Conference No. 3 – Morale, 6th Course, RAF Staff College, March 1928.

so officers could apply lessons to future scenarios. In an essay on morale by SL Douglas in 1922, Brooke-Popham remarked that it was a 'good bit of work', whose deductions he agreed with.⁵⁸ Those deductions were that leaders should be able to motivate people and have aim of purpose, resolution and authority.⁵⁹ Motivation would be increasingly vital to understand as officers emerged into senior positions in an organisation that devolved execution as low as possible. Motivation would also be needed to influence and empower subordinates to achieve objectives. This represented what the RAF understood by leadership as it sought to apply it to maintain morale and drive fighting power. External experts also lectured on specific subjects, thus highlighting a willingness to move beyond narrow service conceptions on subjects. For example, J.L. Birley, the Consulting Physician to the RAF, though a civilian, delivered lectures on the 'Psychology of Courage', which was a key leadership value for the Service.⁶⁰ Much of what was taught paralleled the contemporary view of heroic leadership grounded in 'Great Man' theory and utilised historical examples like Garibaldi, Nelson, General Robert E. Lee, Napoleon I and Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington.

Combined operations were a key aspect of the curriculum and undertaken in the course's third term. It was here that lectures on air power's employment took place, with strategy and doctrine widely discussed and debated. It was an area where modern conceptions of action learning related to doctrinal development. It is accepted that the First Course edited the RAF's first capstone doctrine, CD22.⁶¹ Students on subsequent courses were encouraged to read and discuss this, and its replacement, AP1300, as the basis for

⁵⁸ RAFM, AIR 69/26, Essay by Squadron-Leader Sholto Douglas on 'Morale', hand written feedback by Brooke-Popham.

⁵⁹ RAFM, AIR 69/26, Essay by Squadron-Leader Sholto Douglas on 'Morale', pp. 7-8.

⁶⁰ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 9/1/1, A Lecture on the Psychology of Courage by J.L. Birley, Consulting Physician to the Royal Air Force. This article was published in *The Lancet*, 201(5199) (1923), pp. 779-85.

⁶¹ Parton, 'Royal Air Force Doctrine', pp. 97-100.

classroom discussions and as pre-course reading for the entry examination.⁶² Parton pointed out that clear similarities existed between lectures and capstone RAF doctrine throughout the period, and Commandants delivered the classes on the principles of war and air strategy.⁶³ Lectures covered aspects of air power employment and the working of various key departments in the Air Ministry. Here, education reinforced RAF culture. As Philip Meilinger reflected, Andover was, perhaps, guilty of institutionalising a specific view of air power employment.⁶⁴ However, a deeper exploration of the character and variety of air power writing of the period shows that, while linked by the belief in 'Command of the Air' through the necessity of air superiority, there was recognition that this could be applied to a variety of environments, as exemplified by Leigh-Mallory himself. From a leadership perspective, this infers that officers emanated from Andover immersed in RAF culture but able to think about their place in the defence establishment. This was, in part, because of the value placed on education through the 'Air Force Spirit'. As the RAF evolved, officers were able to employ this doctrinal knowledge in job assignments, where they advocated the most appropriate methods of air power employment in both joint and combined environments. As Sir Michael Howard noted in 1974:

I am tempted to declare that whatever doctrine the Armed Forces are working on, they have got it wrong. I am also tempted to declare that it does not matter that they have got it wrong. What does matter is their capacity to get it right quickly when the moment arrives.⁶⁵

⁶² RAFM, AIR 69/19, Programme of Work for the 1st Course; Anon, 'The Royal Air Force Staff College', *Flight*, 7 December 1922, p. 720; Major C.C. Turner, 'Air Staff College : Strategy of the New Arm : A Visit to Andover', *The Daily Telegraph*, 1 December 1922; English, 'The RAF Staff College', pp. 411-2; Parton, 'Royal Air Force Doctrine', pp. 95-8; Gray, *Leadership*, p. 61.

⁶³ Parton, 'Royal Air Force Doctrine', p. 220; TNA, AIR 5/299, Letter from Commandant, RAF Staff College to Director of Organisation and Staff Duties, 12 February 1926; RAFM, AIR 69/19, Lecture on The Principles of War by Air Vice-Marshal Robert Brooke-Popham; AIR 69/41, Lectures on Air Warfare by Air Vice-Marshal Robert Brooke-Popham, 4th Course, June/July 1925; AIR 69/13, Lectures on the Employment of Air Forces in War by Air Commodore Philip Joubert de la Ferté, 1930-1933.

⁶⁴ Philip Meilinger, 'Trenchard, Slessor, and Royal Air Force Doctrine before World War II' in Philip Meilinger (ed.), *The Paths of Heaven: The Evolution of Airpower Theory* (Maxwell, AL: Air University Press, 1997), p. 42.

⁶⁵ Michael Howard, 'Military Sciences in the Age of Peace', *JRUSI*, 119(1) (1974), pp. 3-4.

This has become a hackneyed quote, and it is worth reflecting that the ability to ‘get it right’ was based, at least in part, on the opportunity afforded by attendance at institutions like Andover for study and reflection. It also mirrored writings on leadership development, which suggested that the key to managing change was to develop leaders able to respond to new challenges. Given that, during the Second World War, the RAF adapted to shifting operational and strategic circumstances, it is possible to suggest that, through Andover, the Service generated flexible and capable leaders able to adapt and ‘get it right’ when it mattered. Thus, Andover generated organisational capacity at the senior level through leadership development. The impact of this form of action learning in this period was limited by exogenous factors like economic and strategic imperatives, which restricted the apportionment of resources and created tension at senior service levels. Nevertheless, as Chapter Seven suggests, there was limited success in bridging conceptual gaps between the services, and Leigh-Mallory was involved in this due to his service at the School of Army Co-Operation and as DS at Camberley. Concerning appointments as Staff College DS, only 26 per cent of Appendix Four served in such a position, thus illustrating the trust placed in officers like Leigh-Mallory to educate other officers. This can be taken further for Leigh-Mallory as he was appointed as DS at Camberley, thus not educating his own service, but officers of the Army. Therefore, the RAF vested a degree of trust in Leigh-Mallory’s ability to help shape and inform Army colleagues on the character of air warfare.

Early lectures had a Clausewitzian feel, and while *On War* itself never found its way onto the reading list at Andover, they highlight the influence that Camberley had on Brooke-Popham’s teachings where the work of Henderson remained prominent.⁶⁶ Henderson served as Professor of Military Art and History at Camberley between 1892 and

⁶⁶ On the links between Henderson’s work and Clausewitz, see: Bassford, *Clausewitz in English*, pp. 79-81.

1899, during which time he published a major operational military biography, his 1898 study of Lieutenant General ‘Stonewall’ Jackson during the American Civil War.⁶⁷ Writers influenced by Clausewitz, like Corbett and Henderson, were present on Andover’s reading list. However, it is difficult to quantify Clausewitz’s influence on air power theory in the RAF, as he is never explicitly mentioned in Andover’s lectures. Nonetheless, in a 1921 *JRUSI* article, GC John Chamier paraphrased Clausewitz’s often quoted dictum as, ‘War is a continuation of national policy’, showing at least some familiarity with his writings.⁶⁸ It also illustrates that Clausewitz codified a dictum that was an immutable belief about the nature and purpose of war that remains relevant today despite continuing debate on the subject. This phrase not only made its way into Andover’s lectures, but also those delivered at other RAF units, such as Flying Training Schools.⁶⁹ While Michel Foucault reversed Clausewitz’s view and suggested that politics is a continuation of war by other means, the views of the latter mirrored those of his contemporaries and drew on works like Nicolò Machiavelli when composing his views on the nature of war.⁷⁰ Furthermore, as Christopher Bassford noted, Clausewitz, in his dialectic in Book One of *On War*, superseded this phrase when he constructed his trinity of violence, chance and reason.⁷¹ The nature of this has been much debated as it has commonly been simplified as government, army and people.⁷² Nonetheless, the character and evolution of Clausewitz’s writings illustrate the

⁶⁷ Lieutenant-Colonel G.F.R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War*, 2 Vols. (London: Longmans, 1898).

⁶⁸ Group Captain J.A. Chamier, CMG, DSO, CBE, RAF, ‘Strategy and Air Strategy’, *JRUSI*, 66 (1921), p. 641.

⁶⁹ RAFM, Personal Papers of Group Captain John Sowrey, X005-7215/002/004, Lectures for Flying Training Schools – Air Strategy, 1925.

⁷⁰ Foucault first presented these views in 1975/76 during his ‘Society Must be Defended’ lectures at *Collège de France*, see: Michel Foucault, *“Society Must be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-76*, edited by Mauro Bertani and Alessandro Fontana. Translated by David Macey (New York: Picador, 2003). On the influence of contemporaries and antecedents on Clausewitz, see: Thomas Waldman, *War, Clausewitz and the Trinity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 73-102.

⁷¹ Christopher Bassford, ‘The Primacy of Policy and the “Trinity” in Clausewitz’s Mature Thought’ in Hew Strachan and Andreas Herberg-Rothe (eds.), *Clausewitz in the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 74-90.

⁷² *Ibid.*

development of his own thinking on the complex and potentially contradictory nature of war. Ultimately, both Clausewitz and Foucault, through the lens of power relationships, identified the ‘connectivity of war to politics’, but from opposite ends of the viewfinder.⁷³ This connectivity is an unstable relationship, which requires capable leaders to manage the ambiguities that emerge between elements of the trinity. Therefore, an awareness of such complex concepts through the study of texts derived from military thinkers like Clausewitz helped nurtured officers to mature intellectually in preparation for challenges they faced as senior leaders, like managing relationships with politicians and civil servants. For selected officers, this was further developed at the IDC, where they worked in syndicates with civil servants. Thus, while the advent of air power affected the character of war and the perceived means of achieving victory, it did not change its nature or principles. This was because, as Antulio Echevarria related about the trinity and policy, ‘technological advances will not alter the framework of war since they affect the grammar of war, not its logic’.⁷⁴ This, in part, helps explain the similarities between the capstone doctrines of the British military; for example, as Searle noted, Brooke-Popham recognised the importance of Fuller’s 1916 *JRUSI* article on the ‘Principles of War’ in an Andover lecture of the same name. Searle also acknowledged the influence that Clausewitz had on Fuller as well as the varied nature of the development of strategic thought.⁷⁵ This illustrates that the development of strategic thought derived heavily from historical experience, which was

⁷³ Julian Reid, ‘Foucault on Clausewitz: Conceptualizing the Relationship between War and Power’, *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, 28(1) (2003), p. 23. Also, see: Jason Edwards, ‘Foucault and the Continuation of War’ in A. Plaw (ed.), *The Metamorphoses of War* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2012), pp. 21-40; Roger Deacon, ‘Clausewitz and Foucault: War and Power’, *Scientia Militaria: South African Journal of Military Studies*, 31 (1)(2003), pp. 37-48.

⁷⁴ Antulio J. Echevarria II, ‘War, Politics and RMA – The Legacy of Clausewitz’, *Joint Forces Quarterly*, (Winter 1995-96), p. 78.

⁷⁵ J.F.C. Fuller, ‘The Principles of War with Reference to the Campaigns of 1914-1915’, *JRUSI*, 61, (1916), pp. 1-40; Searle, ‘Inter-Service Debate’, pp. 6-11. It is interesting to note that the volumes of *JRUSI* from 1902 to 1924 in the library in the Archives Division of the Royal Air Force Museum are from Brooke-Popham’s collection.

used as an analytical prism to codify thinking; for example, Fuller's own writings derived from his First World War experience. Therefore, while the teaching of key principles of war remained consistent among the services during this period, their origins remain complex. Additionally, a thorough understanding of these shared principles also contributed to the British military's burgeoning strategic culture as they influenced the leaders the services nurtured and allowed them to converse in a common language. Conversely, the inclusion of writers like Mahan on Andover's reading lists suggests an attempt to draw lessons from a variety of sources and give officers a broad conception of strategic thought, and not the rejection of the past as discussed below.

While, as Gray noted, it is easy to overemphasise the significance and influence that a Staff College education had on officers' development, there is one aspect of Andover that has largely been ignored. This is the value placed on the post-nominal *psa* and its role in succession planning.⁷⁶ This is explained, in part, by the aforementioned narrow view of Andover's purpose concerning doctrinal development. By ignoring leadership development, historians have only partially considered Andover's broader implications. English's focus on strategic bombing led him to assert, correctly, that by the 1930s, an ever-increasing proportion of officers undertaking staff duties in the Air Ministry passed through Andover; however, he failed to place this into the context of the career development of these men, and he stopped at the implications it had on RAF policy.⁷⁷ The Air Ministry actively nurtured capable officers, and the award of *psa* became a symbol of prestige amongst officers who typically moved into key positions. For example, officers

⁷⁶ Gray, *Leadership*, p. 41.

⁷⁷ English, 'The RAF Staff College', pp. 425-6.

regularly recalled that the course was ‘much-prized’ and that, as a FL, it was ‘something that one ought to do’.⁷⁸ This paralleled the Army’s experience, as French stated:

After 1918 increasing numbers of officers recognised that the initials “p.s.c.” were becoming an indispensable passport to the higher ranks.⁷⁹

The prestige of *psa* is illustrated by the example of Andover’s initial DS who attended Camberley, Quetta or Greenwich. They were awarded the post-nominal *qs*, which denoted the successful completion of a course at one of these institutions; however, *psa* replaced *qs* in the *AFL* once a tour of duty as DS at Andover was completed. This reinforced the pre-eminence the RAF placed on the former symbol as Andover reinforced Service culture. By awarding *qs* rather than *psc* to those officers selected to attend Camberley or Greenwich, the RAF made a statement concerning its preference for Andover, though, as illustrated below, this was not as monolithic as it appears, as officers regularly attended the former institutions. Key was that officers attending Camberley or Greenwich, like Tedder, often returned to Andover as DS. However, it is worth reflecting here on the ‘elite’ character of Staff College attendance in Appendix Three. Focussing on just Andover, seven per cent of the prosopography population in general enjoyed this experience, and only one officer, Bromet, had retired before 1939, though this figure does increase to 35 per cent when correlated to those 71 still serving. However, as noted in Chapter Five, Bromet returned to service and became an AVM. More broadly, taking into account attendance at Camberley or Greenwich, this figure only increases to 13 per cent, and of those 54 officers, 46, or 85 per cent, remained in service, thus highlighting the Service’s desire to keep well qualified people in service. Of 71 officers from Appendix Three still serving in 1939, 76 per cent experienced Staff College education in general. More specifically, as Chart 3.4 highlighted,

⁷⁸ IWM, Reid Papers, “*Fly Past*”, p. 27; IWM, 3183, Interview with Air Chief Marshal Sir Theodore McEvoy, March 1979.

⁷⁹ French, *Military Identities*, p. 161.

75 per cent of officers from Appendix Four had Staff College education, which included those who eventually became DS. This reinforces the power of symbols such as *psa* and *qs*, and the reason Staff College was viewed as something officers should do.

The power to award *psa* rested with the Commandant and his confidential reports on students' performance during the course. In 1924, the Air Ministry informed Brooke-Popham that students deemed not 'likely to succeed' as staff officers were not to be entitled to use *psa* in the *AFL* despite finishing the course.⁸⁰ This was reiterated in 1927 when the DOSD, AVM Ivo Vesey, informed the Commandant, AVM Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt, of several key considerations related to the award of *psa*.⁸¹ First, an officer completing the staff course might not necessarily be able to fill all types of staff positions. Second, consideration should be given to officers likely to develop their skills and experience further. Third, the granting of *psa* should be withheld if the officer was deemed deficient for staff work. Finally, the failure to gain *psa* was not to be a bar on an officer's future 'regimental' employment and promotion.⁸² Regarding the first two points, the Air Ministry noted that Andover could only lay the foundation for an effective staff officer and that students were judged on their status and suitability for future staff duties. There was little fear of withholding *psa*, with Brooke-Popham's confidential report on Leigh-Mallory's course noting that at least one candidate was not deemed sufficiently capable of being awarded it.⁸³ Interestingly, Vesey was an Army officer with significant staff experience who was loaned to the RAF in this period while its staff system developed and until suitably qualified officers emerged. The significance of *psa* for promotion and leadership

⁸⁰ TNA, AIR 2/251, Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to Commandant, RAF Staff College, 24 March 1924.

⁸¹ TNA, AIR 2/355, Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to Commandant, RAF Staff College, 22 July 1927.

⁸² TNA, AIR 2/355, Considerations for Awarding "psa", note attached to letter from Director of Staff Duties to Commandant, RAF Staff College, 22 July 1927.

⁸³ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 1/5/13, Report at the end of the Fourth Course, RAF Staff College, 30 March 1926.

development was made explicit in 1931 when DOSD wrote to the Commandant, now AC Joubert:

It is from among officers awarded *p.s.a.* that the Air Council will, eventually, look to find their higher commanders, and it is improbable that an officer will ever reach a position of high command who is incapable of carrying out normal staff work.⁸⁴

Therefore, there was a clear relationship amongst leadership development, Andover and staff duties, and while concerns existed, they related to the quality of officers being recommended for Andover. The Air Ministry's position concerning *psa*, outlined to the Commandant throughout the 1920s, could be found in *The King's Regulations* and was publically noted in *Flight*, which stated:

The College does not exist only to turn out efficient staff officers, but it is to the graduates that the Service naturally looks for its future leaders.⁸⁵

The wider implication of DOSD's 1927 memorandum and its continuous reiteration both publically and in regulations was that officers were not penalised for their lack of Staff College experience, as the RAF recognised that they could provide useful service in operational roles.⁸⁶ Access, however, to the most senior ranks was closed to those who did not successfully complete Staff College, as it typically cut an officer off from service in the Air Ministry. For example, Tyssen, who temporarily commanded 12 Group as an AC before Leigh-Mallory, had air staff experience in operational commands but never served in the Air Staff due to his lack of Staff College experience. Tyssen finished his career as an AVM.

6.2 Military Education with the British Army and Royal Navy

⁸⁴ TNA, AIR 2/355, Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to Commandant, RAF Staff College, 4 June 1931.

⁸⁵ Major F.A. de V. Robertson, VD, 'The Royal Air Force Staff College', *Flight*, 20 July 1933, p. 725; TNA, AIR 2/355, Air Ministry to AOC-in-C, Air Defence of Great Britain, 2 July 1931.

⁸⁶ For example, the importance of *psa* was noted in *RAFQ* in 1933, see: "Seagull", "*p.s.a.*", pp. 325-8.

The Air Ministry regularly selected officers to attend military education courses run by the Army and RN, and while it is not necessary to delve into the minutiae of these institutions development, it is worth considering their significance to the RAF and its implications for succession planning. Concerning the role of the staff colleges, the First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Charles Madden, reflected in the discussion session of a 1928 RUSI lecture on 'The Modern Staff Officer' by MajGen Edmund Ironside, a former Commandant of Camberley:

We appreciate that it is a great benefit to be allowed to send two officers a year to the Staff College at Camberley and one to the RAF College at Andover to widen our views on staff work.⁸⁷

While Madden did not expand on the idea of this 'great benefit', understanding how staff systems and colleges of sister services worked through action learning and socialisation was important. The RAF readily accepted this view.⁸⁸ By adopting a policy of selecting officers to attend the other services staff colleges, the RAF encouraged this 'great benefit'. It was also a reciprocal process, as Army and RN officers regularly attended Andover from the Second Course onwards. A third of officers from Appendix Four attended Camberley, Quetta or Greenwich, with eight attending both these institutions and Andover in various guises. There was no correlation between officers' previous service in the RFC or RNAS and the institutions they attended; for example, Tedder, originally an RFC officer, attended Greenwich, while Longmore, an RNAS officer, attended Camberley. Thus, sending officers to the opposite Staff College from their original service appeared to have been a progressive and sensible practice to develop individual and organisational knowledge, though, admittedly, this might not have been a factor considered in their selection.

⁸⁷ Major-General Sir W.E. Ironside, KCB, CMG, DSO, 'The Modern Staff Officer (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 73 (1928), p. 447.

⁸⁸ Joubert, 'The Supply and Training of Officers', p. 44.

The above institutions foundation is marked by their service's recognition that officers' intellectual capabilities needed development if they were to lead the modern militaries that emerged in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Leadership challenges like the shifting pace of technological change, the military's social composition, and the need to professionalise in the face of external competition from industry all contributed to changes in the character of command, and officers required education in how to cope with this. This challenge was characterised by the establishment of staff systems to manage these changes. The development of these systems was not always smooth, as illustrated by the Army's rejection of key elements of the second report of the 1890 Hartington Commission, which examined administration in both services.⁸⁹ Camberley, founded in 1858 by converting Sandhurst's Senior Department into the Staff College, emerged on the orders of the Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Cambridge.⁹⁰ This was part of wider reforms to Army education introduced by the CME in the late 1850s and 1860s.⁹¹ Before the First World War, Camberley's status was culturally constrained by the regimental system, which disdained professionalism and staff officers; however, it increasingly became, as with Andover, the typical route for officers seeking to become senior leaders. The number of applicants for Camberley reached a ratio of four candidates for every position by 1904.⁹² Quetta, founded at Deolali in 1905, moved to its permanent home in 1907, and it was widely considered a mirror of Camberley with some regional variations.⁹³ Unlike the Army, the RN did not formally institute a Staff College

⁸⁹ See: Halik Kochanski, 'Planning for War in the Final Years of *Pax Britannica*' in French and Reid (eds.), *British General Staff*, p. 25.

⁹⁰ PP, 1860 (2603) *Report of the Council of Military Education*, p. 3.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* The key work on Camberley remains, Bond, *The Victorian Staff College*. On officer education in the inter-war Army, see: French, 'Officer Education and Training in the British Army', pp. 105-28.

⁹² French, *Military Identities*, p. 160.

⁹³ 'Staff College, Quetta' in Lieutenant-Colonel F.W. Young (ed.) *The Story of the Staff College, 1858-1958* (Camberley: Staff College, 1958), p. 49; Ironside, 'Modern Staff Officer', p. 447. For an overview of Quetta in

until 1919 when it stood up at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich.⁹⁴ Recognised during the First World War after the institution of a War Staff Course, the importance of Greenwich emerged after an initial two courses ran as an adjunct to the SOWC in 1913 and 1914. These courses began after the Naval Staff's foundation in 1912 and represented what Davison described as the change in the 'culture of command' that confronted the Executive Branch of the RN as it coped with the service's technological change in the late-nineteenth century.⁹⁵ The staff colleges shared a common purpose, which recognised the need for effective military education and an introduction to the professional knowledge that underpinned an officer's profession. Each acted as part of a leadership development process for future senior leaders that was present in the services, and by 1919, were accepted elements of an officer's career progression.⁹⁶ They also, as Searle recognised, shared common views on the principles of war, which suggested more continuity amongst the services rather than the focus on their differences.⁹⁷

The key difference amongst the staff colleges lay in course length. Camberley was a two-year course split between Junior and Senior Divisions, while Greenwich was ostensibly only for a year; however, the latter formed part of an educational process that led some officers to undertake the SOWC. Continuation to the Senior Division of Camberley was dependent on successful completion of the Junior Division. Attendance on the SOWC was not dependent on the completion of the RN Staff College course because the latter only

this period, albeit from a doctrinal perspective, see: Pradeep Barua, *Gentlemen of the Raj: The Indian Army Officer Corps, 1817-1949* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), pp. 98-100.

⁹⁴ Anon, 'The Royal Naval Staff College', *TNR*, 20(1) (1932), pp. 6-34; Dickinson, *Wisdom and War*, p. 134. On RN staff education during this period, see: Anthony R. Wells, 'Staff Training in the Royal Navy, 1918-1939' in Brian Bond and Ian Roy (eds.), *War and Society: The Yearbook of Military History – Volume 2* (London: Croom Helm, 1977), pp. 86-106.

⁹⁵ Davison, *The Challenges of Command*.

⁹⁶ Ironside, 'The Modern Staff Officer', pp. 441-2; Vice-Admiral W.H.D. Boyle, CB, 'The Higher Study of War in the Services (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 76 (1931), p. 367; Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', pp. 470-3.

⁹⁷ Searle, 'Inter-Service Debates', pp. 4-32.

began in 1919, though there was symbiosis due to their co-location at Greenwich after 1920. Rear-Admiral H.H. Smith suggested that to rise to the rank of Captain, an officer had to pass through both the Staff College and SOWC, and Ironside, in considering the grander purposes of Camberley, labelled it a War College due to the focus on the 'higher art of war' in the Senior Division.⁹⁸ This differed from Andover, whose course lasted a year, and while discussions took place concerning a refresher course for senior officers, this failed to emerge before the Second World War.⁹⁹ A view held was that too much was crammed into Andover's curriculum; for example, the Commandant, Ludlow-Hewitt, noted in 1930 that when the Fifth and Sixth Courses were lengthened to 15 months, it gave them a better feel.¹⁰⁰ Andover quickly reverted to a year once the course start dates moved into alignment with Camberley and Greenwich. While curriculums at Camberley and Greenwich examined naval or land operations, as with Andover, they did not predominate. Aspects of the other services were discussed to broaden officers' conceptual knowledge that would give them the necessary grounding to operate both as staff officers and as senior leaders in the future.¹⁰¹

Pre-dating its Staff College, the RN established the Naval War Course at Greenwich in 1900, which from 1907, became the Royal Naval War College at Portsmouth until it moved back in 1914 as a wartime exigency. Re-established in 1920 as a constituent part of Greenwich's establishment, the SOWC, broadly conceived, sought to introduce senior Captains to issues of strategy and move naval education away from its technological

⁹⁸ Ironside, 'The Modern Staff Officer', p. 441; Rear-Admiral H.H. Smith, DSO, 'The Education of the Naval Officer to fit him for Eventual Higher Command', *TNR*, 26(4) (1928), pp. 722-4.

⁹⁹ Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', p. 473.

¹⁰⁰ RAFM, AIR 69/65, Report on the 7th Course, RAF Staff College, 28 February 1930, p. 2.

¹⁰¹ TNA, WO 32/3098, *Staff College Regulations (Camberley)*, April 1921, pp. 12-16; TNA, ADM 203/100, Curriculum of the Royal Naval Staff College Greenwich, 1919-1924.

focus.¹⁰² Before the First World War, the SOWC codified British naval thinking, with Corbett being a noted lecturer on the course.¹⁰³ The SOWC was in marked contrast to the education systems of the both the RAF and Army, which both lacked a course specifically designed to examine only strategic issues. Thus, sending officers to the SOWC was a means of bridging an educational gap and delivering value to the RAF. Conversely, the Army Senior Officers' School, set up at Woking in 1920-21, had its antecedents in ad-hoc attempts by the Army to establish appropriate training and education regimes before the First World War. In 1908, GOC 3rd Division, MajGen W.E. Franklyn, established a 'War School' where 40 regimental officers undertook a regime of lectures and practical problems.¹⁰⁴ The course lasted two months, and, while viewed as an affront to the abilities of regimental officers, it was an essential educational experience for Majors seeking battalion command at the tactical level rather than the strategic thinking encouraged at SOWC.¹⁰⁵ It was also an attempt to create a uniform and common tactical doctrine, and was a necessary step in promotion to LtCol. The course covered a variety of subjects ranging from logistics to barrack services, included lectures on both naval, and air warfare. It also made thorough use of war games to examine tactical problems.¹⁰⁶ Leigh-Mallory's selection for this course reinforces the argument that the Air Ministry actively nurtured officers at appropriate points in their careers; in 1922, SL Leigh-Mallory was serving at the

¹⁰² Dickinson, *Wisdom and War*, pp. 110-3, 137.

¹⁰³ Boyle, 'The Higher Study of War', p. 367; Lambert, 'Education in the Royal Navy: 1854-1914', pp. 43-4; Andrew Lambert, 'The Naval War Course, *Some Principles of Naval Strategy* and the Origins of "The British War in Warfare"' in Keith Neilson and Greg Kennedy (eds.), *The British Way in Warfare: Power and the International System, 1856-1956: Essays in Honour of David French* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 219-56.

¹⁰⁴ French, *Military Identities*, p. 159. As with Camberley, a sister school to the Senior Officers' School was set up on the Indian establishment at Belgaum, see: Alan Jeffreys, 'Training in the Indian Army' in Alan Jeffreys and Patrick Rose (eds.), *The Indian Army, 1939-47: Experience and Development* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), p. 75.

¹⁰⁵ RAFM, Sowrey Papers, X005-6545/004/010/001, Commandant's Opening Address at the Senior Officers' School, 6 May 1930; French, 'Officer Education and Training in the British Army', p. 111; French, *Raising Churchill's Army*, pp. 60-1; Jeffreys, 'Training in the Indian Army', p. 75.

¹⁰⁶ RAFM, Sowrey Papers, X005-6545/004/006, Précis of a Lecture on Preparation and Conduct of a War Game, Senior Officers' School, 18 June 1930.

School of Army Co-Operation, which worked closely with the Army. The Senior Officers' School had only recently re-opened; therefore, Leigh-Mallory's selection at such a point was important in a career trajectory that continued to see him specialise in army co-operation in the 1920s.

The value placed on education by the RAF saw the Service learn from the challenges that confronted its predecessors, and, while Andover was not immediately established, the Service appointed officers to attend courses at both Camberley and Greenwich from 1919 onwards. Camberley's regulations made clear that RAF officers entered 'by selection by the Air Ministry'.¹⁰⁷ The Air Ministry specifically selected officers to attend these institutions, and Orange suggested that Trenchard himself sent Tedder to Greenwich.¹⁰⁸ Trenchard certainly played a role in this process; however, Orange's reliance on Derek Waldie's 1980 PhD decontextualised this process, as the latter implied that the appointment of officers to the staff colleges started in 1923.¹⁰⁹ Before 1923, RAF officers were attending Camberley or Greenwich, with both WgCr Joubert and SL Evill attending Camberley in 1920 and 1921 respectively.¹¹⁰ Air Ministry selection illustrates that marked out officers were the most appropriate to gain experience from the other services, which allowed for the development of knowledge that would support the RAF's improvement. It indicates a reciprocal relationship between nurturing and action learning where the Air Ministry vested trust in selected officers. As RAF representatives, these officers were required to deliver lectures on air power. Through what is now considered action learning, nurtured officers educated both the Army and RN as trusted Service representatives as they 'sold' RAF culture by illustrating how the Service could co-operate with the Army and RN

¹⁰⁷ TNA, WO 32/3098, *Staff College Regulations*, p. 4

¹⁰⁸ Orange, *Tedder*, p. 70.

¹⁰⁹ Derek Waldie, 'Relations between the Army and the Royal Air Force, 1919-1939', (PhD Thesis, University of London, 1980), p. 99.

¹¹⁰ RAFM, Evill Papers, AC 74/8/1, "Recollections", p. 1; Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, pp. 82-4.

to make their operations more efficient. Tedder, while attending Greenwich in 1923, delivered a lecture on 'The Bomb as a Weapon against Ships' that no doubt caused much debate.¹¹¹

Attendance was a development of an ad-hoc process established between the SOWC and Camberley when Corbett began lecturing at the latter in 1905 on the subject of combined operations.¹¹² No RN officer attended Camberley as a student, though Royal Marine officers like MajGen Sir George Aston did.¹¹³ Aston attended as student and DS between 1904 and 1908, though his influence in the latter position was dependent on the patronage of the Commandant. During Aston's time, Camberley held a series of combined operations exercises that led to the development of the *Manual of Combined Naval and Military Operations*, published in 1911 and 1913, which set a precedent for those held amongst the three staff colleges in the inter-war years.¹¹⁴ As Jim Beach noted, apart from developing some knowledge of amphibious operations, the key advantage of the exercise was 'the interaction between the two sides, both socially as well as professionally'.¹¹⁵ This became prominent in post-war years when in 1919, Camberley's Commandant, MajGen Hastings Anderson, recognised that the RAF needed to be included in the combined operations exercises to develop a holistic view that incorporated observations concerning the employment of air power.¹¹⁶ That the first two RAF officers, including Joubert, attended Camberley in 1920 cannot be viewed in isolation from this recognition.

¹¹¹ TNA, ADM 203/100, Lecture No. 77 - 'The Bomb as a Weapon against Ships', 16 March 1924, Curriculum of the Royal Naval Staff College Greenwich, 1923-1924.

¹¹² Lambert, 'Education in the Royal Navy', pp. 52-4.

¹¹³ Jim Beach, 'The British Army, the Royal Navy, and the 'big work' of Sir George Aston, 1904-1914', *JSS*, 29(1) (2006), pp. 148-54.

¹¹⁴ TNA, WO 33/569, *Manual of Combined Naval and Military Operations* (1911); TNA, WO 33/644, *Manual of Combined Naval and Military Operations* (1913).

¹¹⁵ Beach, 'Sir George Aston', p. 151.

¹¹⁶ TNA, ADM 116/2086, Major-General Hastings Anderson, Commandant, Army Staff College to the Director of Staff Duties, War Office, 7 January 1920.

Joubert described his time at Camberley as composed of heated debates over the respective roles of the Army and RAF, but noted that all disagreements were solved ‘over a round of pink gin in the Mess’.¹¹⁷ Longmore also noted the role of social activities when attending Camberley in 1922:

Golf and hockey matches were arranged and both sailors and airmen went with the famous Staff College drag-hunt.¹¹⁸

Several RAF officers, including Harris and Slessor, recalled having horses and being able to partake of the drag hunt; the former was suitably impressed with a certain LtCol Montgomery who was DS in 1928.¹¹⁹ While neither Owen nor Orange identified any overt socialisation for Tedder’s time at Greenwich in 1923, he attended the course with future senior officers like Vice-Admiral Frank Pegram, who served as the Fourth Sea Lord during the Second World War; therefore, it is reasonable to presume that it occurred.¹²⁰ Similar advantages were present at the Army Senior Officers’ School and the SOWC. This flexibility and pragmatism in the socialisation amongst the services suggests that in the First World War’s aftermath, each service sought to learn from their joint experiences. For example, while Gray suggested that Portal might have preferred it if Harris had attended Andover, this perhaps ignores the broader value the RAF placed on attendance to the other service’s staff colleges and was more to do with the latter’s personality than his education; though as noted below, Harris’ lack of IDC attendance perhaps reinforces Gray’s criticism.¹²¹ However, a key senior leadership challenge remains the necessity to break down cultural barriers to effect the application of aim and vision, which is

¹¹⁷ Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, p. 83.

¹¹⁸ Longmore, *From Sea to Sky, 1910-1945*, p. 100.

¹¹⁹ IWM, 3765, Interview with Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Arthur Harris, 30 May 1978; Slessor, *The Central Blue*, p. 98.

¹²⁰ TNA, ADM 203/100, List of Students for the Royal Navy Staff College, Greenwich, 1923-1924; Owen, *Tedder*, pp. 86-8; Orange, *Tedder*, pp. 70-2.

¹²¹ Gray, *Leadership*, p. 43.

particularly noticeable in the joint environment.¹²² As officers attending Staff College were marked for future senior command as part of succession planning, the process of socialisation was of inestimable value, as it allowed them to understand the culture and viewpoints of the other services, thus preparing them for these challenges. Reinforced annually through combined operations exercises, these activities had a twofold impact: first, they introduced officers to ideas and doctrines of the other services; and second, they began to breed a degree of understanding amongst them that influenced the evolution of a common strategic culture in the British military. The existence and acceptance of this socialisation process compared well to the French military education system. Joubert, who visited the French *Écoles Supérieures de Guerre* in Paris with Brooke-Popham in 1921, was critical of the lack of cooperation with the French Navy and their equivalent school.¹²³

6.3 The Imperial Defence College

Established in 1927, the IDC was the final element in developing the future senior leadership of the British military. Its foundation represented a step change in military education provision for the British that also had implications for the evolution of inter-service strategic culture. In any organisation, leaders drive strategic culture, and the provision of effective education for nurtured future senior leaders allowed the British military to engage in a process of leadership development that was of value to the individual services. It also created a cadre of officers well versed in concepts and relationships that ultimately contributed to victory in the Second World War. Before the opening of the IDC, there was no joint institution to educate officers in the strategic

¹²² Mary B. Teagarden, 'Best Practises in Cross-Cultural Leadership' in Jay. A Conger and Ronald E. Riggio (eds.), *The Practice of Leadership: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders*, First Edition (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006), pp. 300-30.

¹²³ Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, pp. 87-8.

challenges faced by Britain, the Dominions and the Empire. Thus, one of the IDC's key roles was in furthering individual officers 'vision' and ability to see the broader strategic picture by translating strategy into manageable operational objectives. This remains a key element of effective organisational leadership at senior levels.¹²⁴ In the words of Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, the central purpose of the IDC was to produce senior leaders versed in the 'broadest sense of grand strategy', while Maurice Hankey, in his 1945 Sir Lees Knowles Lectures, described it as a 'veritable nursery for leaders'.¹²⁵ The IDC's mission statement was:

The training of a body of officers and civilian officials in the broadest aspects of imperial strategy.

At the senior level, officers needed to be able to manage relationships with key civilian partners, from Civil Servants to ministers, thus socialisation at the IDC provided a necessary foundation for understanding these relationships and balances of power. The IDC's curriculum focused on the higher direction of war, the organisation of the services and civil defence in their domestic and imperial contexts, the influence of politics on war, foreign relations, and economic and industrial policy as it related to imperial defence.¹²⁶ To use a phrase from modern leadership theory, selected officers were schooled to deal with 'wicked' problems at the strategic level where ambiguity existed.¹²⁷ This was achieved through a common educational framework, which was heavily reliant on experiential

¹²⁴ On strategic leadership, see: Adair, *Effective Strategic Leadership*, pp. 87-116.

¹²⁵ Hansard, HC Deb, 27 March 1928, Vol. 215, Cols. 1031-1032; Maurice Hankey, *Government Control in War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945), p. 59. The Royal College of Defence Studies, as the IDC was renamed in 1970, now offers students the chance to study for an MA in International Security and Strategy, which is an apt qualification that makes the IDC's core theme of strategy more relevant today in an ever-changing geo-strategic landscape.

¹²⁶ TNA, T 225/11, CID Paper No. 689-B, Report by the Chiefs of Staff on the Imperial Defence College, 27 March 1926, p. 2; T.I.G. Grey (ed.), *The Imperial Defence College and the Royal College of Defence Studies* (London: HMSO, 1977), p. 3; Longmore, *From Sea to Sky*, pp. 175-6. Longmore's account remains the fullest account of the IDC's activities and is heavily based on his 1938 *JRUSI* article.

¹²⁷ On 'Wicked' problems, see: Rittel and Weber, 'Dilemmas in the General Theory of Planning', pp. 155-169. Also, see: Grunt, 'Problems, Problems, Problems', pp. 1472-9.

learning techniques and fostered effective working relationships between key stakeholders. The term ‘wicked problems’ relates to those that generate the most resistance and are based on relationships with a number of interdependencies where stakeholders meet. Thus, they require a degree of vision to find solutions to often-contradictory views that emerge from stakeholders holding different values. This is particularly noticeable when the different services, who often have divergent cultures and values, work together. Vision remains a key leadership ability, though, as noted earlier in this thesis, demarcating such attributes between command, leadership and management in potentially unhelpful as each process relies on being good at the other.

During the First World War, the British military lacked sufficient senior officers who could operate at the strategic level, where they had to communicate with other services, the government, the civil service and coalition partners. Those who could, did so more by luck than education. While on the DS at Camberley in 1919, LtCol John Dill produced a paper outlining the need for a higher war college set apart from staff colleges, which mirrored Haig’s feelings in 1920.¹²⁸ In 1923, the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) accepted the need for the provision of education concerning strategic aspects of the conduct of war for middle ranking officers who would go on to senior leadership and staff roles.¹²⁹ This decision was based on a report authored by the Sub-Committee on the Institution of a Joint Staff College, which consisted of Churchill, Vice-Admiral Herbert Richmond (Director of the SOWC), MajGen Cecil Romer (Director of Staff Duties at the

¹²⁸ Barry Hunt, *Sailor-Scholar: Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond, 1871-1946* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1982), p. 150; LHCMA, Personal Papers of Field Marshal Sir John Dill, 1/11, Note on Training of Commanders and Staff, 2 February 1919.

¹²⁹ TNA, T 161/685, Extract from the 178th Meeting of the Committee of Imperial Defence, 19 December 1923

War Office) and John Salmond (AOC Iraq Command).¹³⁰ Richmond went on to become the first Commandant of the IDC.¹³¹ However, the failure to set up the IDC until 1927, as William Philpott suggested, must be understood in the context of the internecine service debates of the period that failed to establish a unified Ministry of Defence (MoD).¹³² These debates were framed over issues like the apportionment of resources and RAF independence. Throughout these discussions, Trenchard supported the idea of a MoD and the formation of the IDC, though this position derived from his pragmatism in the face of the organisational challenge that threatened RAF independence. As Powers noted, the inherent advantage of a joint IDC was that it would give the RAF the appearance of the same status as the other services.¹³³ While Lord Salisbury's Committee on National and Imperial Defence eventually led to the establishment of the CoS Sub-Committee of the CID as well as acceptance of the need for the IDC, it did not lead to a unified MoD. This was, in part, because of Hankey, who supported the idea of the IDC, but did not support the MoD's formation for fear that it 'would usurp the functions of his cherished CID'.¹³⁴ Changes in government in 1923 and 1924 also held up the IDC's formation until a new sub-committee under Lord Irwin in 1926 re-examined the question of its formation, which the CID accepted on 29 March 1926.¹³⁵

Unlike the staff colleges, those selected for the IDC were specifically identified by their representative administrative body and did not go through the process of nomination by OC and entry examination. Simply, the War Office, Admiralty and Air Ministry selected

¹³⁰ The Sub-Committee initially consisted of Richmond, Major-General Hastings Anderson and Air Vice-Marshal Philip Game. Anderson was Commandant at Camberley while Game was AMP.

¹³¹ Hunt, *Sailor-Scholar*, pp. 149-66

¹³² William J. Philpott, 'The Campaign for a Ministry of Defence, 1919-36' in Paul Smith (ed.), *Government and the Armed Forces in Britain, 1856-1990* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1996), pp. 109-54.

¹³³ Powers, *Strategy Without Slide-Rule*, p. 187.

¹³⁴ Philpott, 'The Campaign for a Ministry of Defence', p. 134.

¹³⁵ TNA, T 225/11, CID Paper No. 689-B, Report by the Chiefs of Staff on the Imperial Defence College, 27 March 1926.

officers deemed suitable for the course.¹³⁶ Here, the services nurtured an officer's career at a point where they were experienced commanders, had staff experience and had attended Staff College. By sending officers to the IDC, the British military accepted that these leaders were being prepared for future strategic challenges in an ever-changing defence landscape. Willock, who attended the IDC in 1937 as a GC, recalled that it 'was a mecca for future senior officers'.¹³⁷ The Air Ministry recognised this and advised Andover's Commandant that students successfully awarded *pisa* were potentially being marked out for attendance at the IDC.¹³⁸ Confidential reports produced at Andover specifically noted whether a student was suitable for this next step.¹³⁹ Of 57 officers who reached Air Rank from Andover's first four courses, 21 attended the IDC. In general, prior Staff College experience was essential, despite Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham's recollections that he never attended Greenwich; however, he is slightly disingenuous, as he had undertaken the SOWC.¹⁴⁰ Typically, for the RAF, officers were WgCrs or GCs and equivalents in the Army and RN. On average, WgCrs were six years away from Air Rank or the point at which the knowledge gained at the IDC could begin to have real meaning, and attendance attracted a return of service for five years, which meant the knowledge developed fed back into the organisation, unlike the staff colleges.¹⁴¹ Selection at this level also provided adequate distance between an officer's previous educational experiences at Staff College. This space allowed officers to continue to build on their operational experience in staff, training and command positions before being identified to take the necessary next step in their leadership development. While Leigh-Mallory waited eight years

¹³⁶ Longmore, *From Sea to Sky*, p. 175; IWM, Willock Papers, Unpublished Memoir, p. 40.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ TNA, AIR 2/355, Notes for Deputy Director of Staff Duties on Suggested Agenda for Meeting at the Air Ministry on the Subject of the Staff College Course to be held on 27 April 1927.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham, *A Sailor's Odyssey: The Autobiography of Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham of Hyndbope* (London: Hutchinson, 1951), pp. 138-9.

¹⁴¹ IWM, Willock Papers, RPW 1, Unpublished Memoir (1965), p. 40.

to attend the IDC, this was not unusual, as Park, who attended Andover in 1922, did not go until 1937. These differences are principally explained by job assignments like Leigh-Mallory's appointment as DDSA between 1932 and 1934, which was part of his career rhythm and the nurturing processes in the RAF. The RAF consistently filled its quota of officers for the IDC, but often identified future talent at a lower level than its sister services, as occasionally, officers at the rank of SL attended the course, which suggests that the Service had a progressive attitude to nurturing able individuals.

The clearest indication that these officers were identified and developed for senior leadership roles stems from the work undertaken at the IDC. Here, officers examined and analysed issues at the strategic level as well as the future character of war, with particular reference to the experience of Britain and the Empire. This examination was based on a syndicate teaching system that relied on a mix of experiential and didactic pedagogical methods, where officers scrutinised contemporary and future strategic threats that they could expect to face. At service staff colleges, officers had already been inculcated with common knowledge on subjects like the principles of war, which underpinned further study at the IDC. This effective mix of pedagogical methods owed their use to the IDC's first Commandant, Richmond, who, as described by his biographer, Barry Hunt, hoped to create an open atmosphere for learning with no relevant subjects off limits.¹⁴² Both students and DS had ready access to information from the CID to prepare reports and staff solutions and run exercises that found their way into the formulation of policy or doctrine; thus, the IDC fulfilled a role as a learning organisation that influenced British strategic thinking and culture. The DS, whom Reid described as the 'super-stars' of the services, included notable rising officers like the future Field Marshal Sir John Dill, Admiral

¹⁴² Hunt, *Sailor-Scholar*, p. 158.

Sir Bertram Ramsey, Field Marshal Alanbrooke, and, from the RAF, Portal, Joubert and Douglas.¹⁴³ While it is easy to overstate the impact of staff exercises, students were being prepared for senior leadership roles. Both Capel, a student in 1939, and Douglas, both a student and DS, recalled this process of strategic planning by ‘fighting on paper’ as the key element of their IDC experience.¹⁴⁴

As significant as the DS were, the Commandant’s selection was vital to the IDC’s success, as they needed to be rigorous in the application of the standards sought. Richmond was the most appropriate choice for the first Commandant given his close association with academic study in the RN, with Tedder describing him as ‘that rare phenomenon, [...] a sailor who is really well educated’.¹⁴⁵ Richmond did not hold RAF officers in high regard, and this showed in his ‘constant carping’ at the service in some of his lectures. Richmond was reminded of this point by a former student in 1942, the Vice-Chief of the Air Staff, AM Freeman, who noted that his views on air power had shifted since his time as Commandant.¹⁴⁶ This bias is interesting given that Tedder, Portal, Douglas and Leigh-Mallory all attended university, suggesting that this experience was not as widely valued in the other services as it perhaps should have been. The two pre-Second World War RAF Commandants, Brooke-Popham and Longmore, were excellent choices. By the time he became Commandant in 1931, Brooke-Popham had expansive staff and educational experience, and as Andover’s first Commandant, he was ideal for the position as he had experience of working with the other service’s staff colleges. Longmore also had staff and education experience, having served as Cranwell’s Commandant between 1929 and 1933.

¹⁴³ IWM, Reid Papers, “*Fly Past*”, p. 28.

¹⁴⁴ Douglas, *Years of Command*, p. 29; IWM, 3166, Interview with Air Vice-Marshal Arthur Capel, 21 February 1978.

¹⁴⁵ Orange, *Tedder*, p. 76.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 77; Hunt, *Sailor-Scholar*, pp. 160-1; Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, p. 101; Douglas, *Years of Command*, p. 20.

As Greg Kennedy illustrated, the CoS Committee used reports and assessments produced by students, and the Commandant, for planning British military strategy in the Far East during the 1930s.¹⁴⁷ These formed part of the CoS' discussions about imperial strategy. The IDC examined numerous scenarios and covered a wide range of situations, including war with all the major powers, on their own or in a coalition; Leigh-Mallory's course in 1934 considered the possibility of war in the Far East and defence of the Empire.¹⁴⁸ Through their syndicates, students integrated service specific knowledge with that of other members to create solutions that considered all aspects of national strategy; syndicates included members of the Civil Service and Dominion representatives, thus broadening officers' perspectives.¹⁴⁹ In the area of doctrine, the CoS Committee took account of the Commandant's recommendation in 1935 that the *Manual of Combined Operations* be updated to consider the process of producing appreciations and planning for combined operations more fully.¹⁵⁰ This was based on the use of the *Manual of Combined Operations* in syndicated exercises. This began a process whereby the British military accepted combined operations in their broader sense as the RAF had advocated as early as 1922.¹⁵¹ At a practical level, students used staff rides and experiential learning to explore imperial strategy; introduced by Richmond's successor, MajGen W.H. Bartholomew, who, based on his Camberley experience, saw them as useful pedagogical methods.¹⁵² While John McCarthy criticised these pedagogical methods, Peter Caddick-Adams argued that they

¹⁴⁷ Greg Kennedy, *Anglo-American Strategic Relations and the Far East 1933-1939* (London: Routledge, 2011 [2002]), p. 10, 14.

¹⁴⁸ TNA, WO 106/5136, Imperial Defence College Exercise No. 3, 1934; TNA, CAB 53/19, Imperial Defence College Exercise No. 2, 1928; TNA, CAB 53/19, Imperial Defence College Exercise No. 7, 1928.

¹⁴⁹ Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', p. 475

¹⁵⁰ TNA, CAB 53/25, Commandant of the Imperial Defence College to Sir Maurice Hankey, Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, 23 July 1935

¹⁵¹ Mahoney, 'The Royal Air Force, Combined Operations Doctrine and the Raid on Dieppe', pp. 58-64.

¹⁵² Peter Caddick-Adams, 'Footsteps Across Time: The Evolution, Use, and Relevance of Battlefield Visits to the British Armed Forces', (PhD Thesis, Cranfield University, 2007), pp. 326-7. For an examination of the modern pedagogical value of staff rides, see: Nick Lloyd, 'Battlefield Tours and Staff Rides: A Useful Learning Experience?', *Teaching in Higher Education*, 14(2) (2009), pp. 175-84.

were an important tool and not just an examination of the past with the benefit of hindsight.¹⁵³ The CoS Committee renewed the allowance needed for the tours each academic year, thus sharing the view that this was a useful method of preparing future senior leaders.

During the first course, students undertook lectures, produced appreciations and conducted staff exercises on a variety of topics including: the strength and dispositions of the Armed Forces of the Crown relative to Imperial commitments; France, the British Empire and Japan; the principles of war; the British Empire, France and Belgium versus Germany; and the general policy governing the distribution and development of each of the fighting services of the empire during the next decade.¹⁵⁴ These themes remained largely consistent up to 1939, and any changes reflected the geo-political situation in Europe and the Far East.¹⁵⁵ Noted senior government civil servants and experts, such as Fuller, Hankey and Lord Ismay, delivered lectures. In 1939, Ismay gave a lecture on the subject of the CID, which was based on his *JRUSI* article of the same theme.¹⁵⁶ Use of these subject matter experts ensured students received up to date information for the problems they examined while reinforcing the importance and prestige of the course. Other subjects varied from 'Economics in Modern War' to the 'Food Supply of London'.¹⁵⁷ Concerning leadership, of particular interest was the lecture delivered by the Commandant, Brooke-Popham, to Leigh-Mallory's cohort in 1934 on the subject of the 'Higher Direction

¹⁵³ John McCarthy, *Australia and Imperial Defence, 1918-1939: A Study in Air and Sea Power* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1976), p. 66; Caddick-Adams, 'Footsteps Across Time', pp. 326-8.

¹⁵⁴ TNA, CAB 53/14, Report by the Commandant on the First Session of the Imperial Defence College, January to December 1927, 22 December 1927.

¹⁵⁵ Longmore, *From Sea to Sky*, p. 176.

¹⁵⁶ TNA, CAB 21/1197, 'The Machinery of the Committee of Imperial Defence', Lecture by Major-General Hastings Ismay, 1 March 1939; Major-General H. L. Ismay, 'The Machinery of the Committee of Imperial Defence', *JRUSI*, 84 (1939), pp. 241-57.

¹⁵⁷ TNA, CAB 21/1197, 'Economics in Modern War', Lecture by Major Desmond Morton, Director of the Industrial Intelligence Centre, February 1939; TNA, MAF 60/447, 'Food Supply of London', Lecture by Mr R.J. Foley, Mercantile Marine Department, 28 January 1928.

of War'. This leadership-based lecture developed many of the themes that Leigh-Mallory would have been familiar with from his lectures by Brooke-Popham at Andover. It built on these by introducing students to values relating to the direction of war at the strategic level that corresponded to principles of war.¹⁵⁸ It examined both the positive and negative aspects of the war cabinet system and the role of responsibility, and, as with his lectures at Andover, Brooke-Popham utilised historical analysis to illustrate his argument. Inherent in this lecture was the difficulty of defining the strategic level. Brooke-Popham used the explanation provided by the *Naval War Manual* of 1925, which defined strategy in terms of the management of war and its resources, principally its human element.¹⁵⁹ Brooke-Popham was clear that leadership was required at the highest level through the management of relationships and resources, which emerged from the provision of strategic 'vision', and he reinforced the idea of being able to talk the same language as officers from other services and cultures, a theme stressed throughout the IDC's course.¹⁶⁰

Modern conceptions of socialisation were present in all that the students and DS did at the IDC. Both Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, a student on the first course in 1927, and Joubert, who was DS between 1927 and 1929, recalled that during the Second World War, those officers who attended the IDC all spoke a common language, which, while based on hindsight, was a reasonable deduction based on experience.¹⁶¹ The integration of service cultures allowed officers to work with a degree of flexibility during the Second World War. For example, the key wartime CoS exhibited the ability to look up

¹⁵⁸ LHCMA, Brooke-Popham Papers, 9/7/2, Lecture on the Higher Direction of War at the Imperial Defence College, 1934.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 23

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 22

¹⁶¹ Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, 'The First Year at the IDC' in Grey (ed.), *The Imperial Defence College*, p. 32; Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, p. 100.

and outside their service ‘silos’ when working with one another and in coalition settings.¹⁶² However, while adhering to common strategic principals, there were times when specific services differing perspectives on the means of enacting them challenged key senior leaders. For example, the issue of air support for the Army stretched relations between Portal and Alanbrooke and highlighted challenges related to both the apportionment of resources and differing conceptions related to air power’s employment.¹⁶³ Differences often represented alternative views over the means, rather than the ways, of achieving common strategic principles shared amongst the services and highlighted continuing tensions that characterised leadership at the senior level. This did not, overall, damage the conduct of the Second World War, as problems tended to be solved by the CoS system. The wartime success of CoS was, in part, due to all, except for Ironside and Pound, attending the IDC as either students or DS, or, for Portal and Alanbrooke, as both. However, Higham suggested that few who went to the IDC achieved positions of influence and that the College was an attempt to overcome the ‘parochial training’ of the service staff colleges.¹⁶⁴ On the latter issue, it is possible to suggest that the IDC was actually a progressive attempt to build on the foundations provided by institutions like Andover, and one that did not go un-noticed by other countries. As James Corum noted, the IDC’s success at preparing senior leaders was copied in Germany when, in 1935, the *Wehrmacht* established the *Wehrmachtakademie*, which aimed to provide education to selected staff officers in higher

¹⁶² For Portal’s time as a student, see: Richards, *Portal*, p. 99. On Alanbrooke’s and Cunningham’s experiences, see: David Fraser, *Alanbrooke* (London: Hamlyn, 1983 [1982]), pp. 93-4; Cunningham; *A Sailor’s Odyssey*, pp. 138-40.

¹⁶³ For example, see Alanbrooke’s diary entry of 11 March 1942. See: Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, *War Diaries, 1939-1945*, edited by Alex Danchev and Daniel Todman (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2001), pp. 238-9.

¹⁶⁴ Higham, *The Military Intellectuals in Britain*, p. 29.

forms of warfare in the joint environment.¹⁶⁵ On the issue of influence, French remarked concerning the Army that attendance was an indication that you had been:

earmarked as likely to become full generals and to serve as either commanders-in-chief or chiefs of staff.¹⁶⁶

The IDC's influence is clear when its register is examined and the names of those who attended are analysed. For example, Appendix Five illustrates that 85 per cent of RAF officers who attended the first ten courses at the IDC reached Air Rank, and many reached influential positions at the strategic and operational levels.¹⁶⁷ Figures of 68 and 75 per cent respectively existed for the Army and RN. However, attendance was clearly 'elite' in character as only four per cent of officers from Appendix Three attended the IDC; of these, only Capel, who actually attended in 1939 as a GC, did not hold Air Rank in 1939, though he would go on to become an AVM. This increases to 15 per cent when focused on those in Appendix Three who still served in 1939, and, clearly, this 'elite' education was part of preparation for senior positions, and these officers all had some prior Staff College experience. Additionally, attendance had imperial influence, with representatives from the Indian Army and the services of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Besides the names readily identifiable in Appendix Five, other notable attendees included: Auchinleck (1927) and Slim (1937) from the Indian Army; Generals Andrew McNaughton (1927) and Henry Crerar (1934) and Lieutenant-General E.L.M. Burns (1939) from the Canadian Army; ACM Lloyd Breadner (1935) from the Royal Canadian Air Force; and AM Sir Richard Williams (1933) of the Royal Australian Air Force.¹⁶⁸ Through a symbiosis of

¹⁶⁵ James Corum, *The Luftwaffe: Creating the Operational Air War* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1997), p. 253.

¹⁶⁶ French, 'Officer Education and Training in the British Army', p. 111.

¹⁶⁷ Figures derived from LHCMA, Personal Papers of Major-General Denis Talbot, TALBOT 4/8, The Imperial Defence College Register, 1927-1967

¹⁶⁸ LHCMA, Talbot Papers, Imperial Defence College Register. On McNaughton and Crerar's experience, see: Paul Dickson, *A Thoroughly Canadian General: A Biography of General H.D.G. Crerar* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), pp. 95-7; John Nelson Rickard, *The Politics of Command: Lieutenant-General A.G.L.*

nurturing, action learning and socialisation, the IDC encouraged an ability to understand differing views at all levels.¹⁶⁹ These men led the British Imperial military to victory in the Second World War. However, there were two notable exceptions to this career rhythm, Harris and Montgomery, who might have benefitted from attending the course.

6.4 Knowledge Transfer and Writing for Military Journals

In his 1938 RUSI lecture, Longmore advocated the use of the Institution as part of an officer's rise to senior leadership and noted that it 'ha[d] done so much [...] to further the scientific study of war'.¹⁷⁰ RUSI's perceived importance raises questions about RAF officers' professionalism and ownership of leadership development through informal socialisation and action learning to further their career aspirations. Engagement with theory, knowledge and skills related to an officer's chosen profession illustrates a desire from both the individual and the organisation to engage with constructs underpinning development and reinforcing institutional professionalism. For the RAF, this meant the nascent air power theory that emerged in this period, exploring its uses as well as explaining the Service's purpose while developing a culture based on the efficient use of military aviation. Officers writing in journals were the RAF's military intellectuals, defined simply as those who wrote articles, contributed to, and engaged with professional knowledge, rather than just a specific consideration of the merit of their works.¹⁷¹ The emergence of such officers highlights a tension between the RAF's heroic view of leadership and those

McNaughton and the Canadian Army, 1939-1943 (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2010), p. 26. Both Braedner and Williams served as Chief of Staff to the Royal Canadian Air Force and Royal Australian Air Force respectively. Years of attendance provided in brackets.

¹⁶⁹ French has identified 19 British Army divisional commanders of the Second World War that attended the IDC, see: David French, 'Colonel Blimp and the British Army: British Divisional Commanders in the War against Germany, 1939-1945', *The English Historical Review*, 111(444) (1996), p. 1188.

¹⁷⁰ Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', p. 474.

¹⁷¹ This definition comes from Linn's work on the US Army's way of war, see: Linn, *The Echo of Battle*, p. 247, fn. 3.

pushing knowledge in a new sphere of military art and science. The small number of RAF officers writing for and partaking in the opportunities presented by organisations and journals like RUSI and *RAFQ* suggests that the Service was not effectively able to relax this tension. The historiography concerning RAF officers writing in military journals has been limited to its relationship to the development of doctrine. Powers recognised that through military journals, the RAF managed to evolve ‘a generalised concept about the future impact of air warfare’, while Parton noted that between 1918 and 1923, RAF officers wrote roughly six per cent of articles in *JRUSI*.¹⁷² However, neither Powers nor Parton recognised the relationship amongst writing for military journals, officers’ career progression and leadership development. Moving beyond simple statistics and considering career trajectories indicates a more nuanced picture that suggests that the RAF recognised the value of writing, as many of those who wrote emerged as senior leaders. Nevertheless, more broadly, anti-intellectualism did remain amongst the officer class as a whole.

Concerning writing in the RAF during the 1920s, the historiography has focused on Trenchard’s role and his concern over the publication of SL C.G. Burge’s book *The Basic Principles of Air Warfare*, as the latter was the former’s Personal Assistant.¹⁷³ Higham claimed this book was Trenchard’s ‘*Clausewitz*’, while Parton contradicted this, arguing that he did what he could to stop its publication.¹⁷⁴ Burge claimed that the key reason that the Air Ministry initially banned the book was because of Trenchard’s concern that it might generate criticism. Specifically, both Boyle and Liddell Hart claimed that Trenchard was concerned about criticism from Sykes and his potential influence on his father-in-law, the Prime Minister, Sir Andrew Bonar Law; Sykes, who served as CAS in 1918, retired as

¹⁷² Powers, *Strategy Without Slide-Rule*, pp. 206-7; Parton, ‘Royal Air Force Doctrine’, p. 94.

¹⁷³ “Squadron-Leader”, *The Basic Principles of Air Warfare: The Influence of Air Power on Sea and Land Strategy* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1927).

¹⁷⁴ Higham, *Two Roads to War*, p. 80; Parton, ‘Royal Air Force Doctrine’, pp. 143-4.

Controller-General of Civil Aviation in 1922 and entered the House of Commons as MP for Sheffield Hallam.¹⁷⁵ Liddell Hart noted:

Trenchard had said he did not wish any officer to write books – as writing, the means to clarity of ideas, was the RAF's weak point in my opinion. (Emphasis in original)¹⁷⁶

Tellingly, Sykes made no mention of this episode in his autobiography *From Many Angles*. Burge's book was eventually published under the pseudonym of 'Squadron-Leader', and Parton suggested that it effectively curtailed his career in the RAF, though he went on to edit *RAFQ*, which became a key output for writing about air power in the 1930s.¹⁷⁷ Despite Burge having served as Trenchard's Personal Staff Officer, it fell to an Army officer, Ironside, to supply the book's foreword, which runs counter to Higham's view of Trenchard's support. However, understanding that Trenchard's concern related to books, which were publically available, rather than journal articles, whose primary audience was the military and interested parties, should frame Liddell Hart's caution. Concerning journal articles, the RAF and Trenchard encouraged qualified engagement with this process to shape air power debates and to promulgate Air Ministry thinking on topical issues.

Despite Trenchard's concern and his attempts at control, the Air Council was aware of the potential advantages that engagement with service audiences through writing delivered, primarily the ownership of ideas concerning air power's employment. On 22 April 1920, AMWO No. 354 outlined regulations governing the publication of articles written by serving officers.¹⁷⁸ The Air Council encouraged officers to write where applicable and provided the necessary guidance for this process. This encouragement

¹⁷⁵ LHCMA, Personal Papers of Captain Sir Basil Liddell Hart, 11/1927/1, Personal Diary, 9 February 1927; Boyle, *Trenchard*, p. 445, 448, 464, 518.

¹⁷⁶ LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 11/1927/1, Personal Diary, 9 February 1927.

¹⁷⁷ Neville Parton, 'Basic Principles of Air Warfare (Historic Book Review)', *APR*, 10(2) (2007), pp. 94-98.

¹⁷⁸ TNA, AIR 72/2, AMWO No. 354, Publication of Articles by Officers of the Royal Air Force, 22 April 1920.

allowed the RAF to develop its intellectuals, which allowed the Service to overcome what Trenchard decried as the lack of a 'Royal Air Force Clausewitz or Hamley or Mahan'.¹⁷⁹ Trenchard hoped to develop key principles related to air power employment as they concerned the most efficient way of war. However, by 1923, Trenchard illustrated some concern over the writing of articles as evidenced by the advice received by Andover's Commandant, Brooke-Popham, from CAS's Private Secretary, Captain T.B. Marson, which suggested that publishing would cause controversy.¹⁸⁰ This statement is contextualised, however, by the RAF's lack of critical mass at this point concerning the number of officers who had passed through Andover. Trenchard's seemingly ambivalent position highlights the axiomatic view that attendance at Andover was increasingly important for those wishing to write on air power. Not until enough officers had passed through Andover would Trenchard feel at ease about them writing on air power. While this suggests an attempt to produce an indoctrinated view of air power employment, this ignores the broad character of Andover's curriculum noted above and the variety of material written by officers. This critical mass arguably was not reached until Trenchard stood down as CAS in 1929. Additionally, *RAFQ*'s foundation in 1930 suggests that it was at about this point that the RAF felt safe to make its own statements on air power through its own journal, and until that point, writing in other spheres fell to selected officers, which included members of Andover's DS. Nevertheless, by issuing the aforementioned AMWO, the Air Ministry encouraged officers to engage in informal action learning through a discussion of their profession and its conceptual knowledge. This development process encompassed writing for military journals like *RAFQ* and *The Army Quarterly*, and membership of RUSI. *TNR* was closed to RAF officers, as membership was only open to officers of the RN and

¹⁷⁹ Air Marshal Sir H.M. Trenchard, 'Aspects of Service Aviation', *The Army Quarterly*, 2(1) (1921), p. 18.

¹⁸⁰ RAFM, Trenchard Papers, MFC 76/1/140/5, Letter from Captain T.B. Marson to Air Commodore Robert Brooke-Popham, 23 October 1923.

commonwealth navies, and certain other individuals in the Admiralty.¹⁸¹ This closed off this avenue of debate concerning air power's employment except for articles by Fuller on the supremacy of air power, which were similar to those lectures he delivered at Andover.¹⁸²

Ostensibly independent, RUSI was the key body for officers and existed for 'promoting and advancing naval and military science and literature' in an environment conducive to its discussion; though, as Damien O'Connor illustrated, it received official support when appropriate.¹⁸³ RUSI membership came from serving and retired officers of all three services and was the closest that the military came to having a learned society to promote the study of their profession. A marker in the evolution of professionalism of the British military, similar parallel organisations existed for other established professions, which promoted and supported members' development. From 1920 onwards, the Air Council encouraged RUSI membership and regularly noted its 'real value [...] for the advancement of professional education' of officers.¹⁸⁴ The RAF also attempted to get its emblem placed on the RUSI crest, while Trenchard joined RUSI in 1925 and became the first RAF officer to hold the position of Vice-President.¹⁸⁵ In valuing RUSI, the Air Council understood that, besides owning and shaping air power debates, it had a stake in encouraging personal development through the advantages of socialisation that integration into the intellectual activities of the Institution sought to deliver. RUSI reinforced this by

¹⁸¹ Admiral W.H. Henderson, 'Editorial Note', *TNR*, 1 (1) (1913).

¹⁸² J.F.C. Fuller, 'The Fiends of the Air: The Influence of Aircraft on Imperial Defence', *TNR*, 11(1) (1923), pp. 81-115; RAFM, AIR 69/57, Lecture on the 'Supremacy of Air Power'. Fuller's writing on air power has been little examined in any meaningful manner. Even Reid subsumes it into a broader discussion of strategy in his series of essays on Fuller and Basil Liddell Hart, see: Brian Holden Reid, 'Fuller and the Theory and Practice of Strategy' in *Studies in British Military Thought: Debates with Fuller and Liddell Hart* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), pp. 93-116.

¹⁸³ Captain E. Altham, CB, RN, 'The Royal United Service Institution, 1831-1931', *JRUSI*, 76 (1931), p. 245; On RUSI in general, see: Damien O'Connor, *Between Peace and War: British Defence and the Royal United Service Institute, 1831-2010* (London: Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, 2011).

¹⁸⁴ TNA, AIR 72/2, AMWO No. 659 – Royal United Service Institution, 22 July 1920.

¹⁸⁵ O'Connor, *Between Peace and War*, p. 150, 187; 'Secretary Notes', *JRUSI*, 75 (1930), p. 1; 'Secretary Notes', *JRUSI*, 70 (1925), p. xx. The RAF also held an exhibition of aircraft models in RUSI's museum in 1930 and 1934.

deciding in 1928 to make CAS, CIGS, the First Sea Lord and the Staff College's Commandants *ex officio* council members.¹⁸⁶

Despite the value placed on RUSI by the RAF, Chart 6.1 suggests that the Service struggled to recruit members.¹⁸⁷ Only in 1935/1936 did the number of officers joining RUSI reach greater than 50. However, RAF membership maintained a steady rate during this period, being broadly comparable with that of the RN. In 1928/1929, 14 RAF officers joined RUSI, compared to 24 from the RN. In 1929, the GD Branch contained 2,512 officers, compared to 8,363 in the Army, excluding those on the Indian establishment, and 6,276 in the RN.¹⁸⁸ Nonetheless, key is the question of who joined RUSI, and Leigh-Mallory was in a large minority, with 40 per cent of officers in Appendix Four being members.¹⁸⁹ Joining dates highlight a difference in officers' motivation for becoming RUSI members, with two key reasons identifiable. First, officers joined when they were due to attend Staff College; Douglas and Portal joined in 1922 when they attended Andover as SLs, which was no coincidence, as Staff College candidates were encouraged to read journals, especially *JRUSI*.¹⁹⁰ Another reason linked to personal professional development, for which there is no clear pattern. Leigh-Mallory, who joined RUSI in 1931 after giving his lecture on the subject of 'Air Co-Operation with Mechanized Forces' on 5 March 1930 while he was serving on the DS at Camberley, is part of this latter group. This experience probably encouraged him to experience RUSI's benefits. Lieutenant-General Sir Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd, who in 1918 was Chief of Staff to the Fourth Army, which Major Leigh-Mallory's 8 Squadron operated with, chaired his lecture. Both reasons suggest

¹⁸⁶ 'Secretary Notes', *JRUSI*, 73 (1928), p. viii.

¹⁸⁷ This chart can be found in Appendix Two.

¹⁸⁸ PP, 1928-29 (54) *Army estimates of effective and non-effective services, for the financial year 1929*, p. 8; PP, 1928-29 (62) *Navy estimates for the year 1929*, p. 12. RAF figures come from *The Air Force List* for 1929.

¹⁸⁹ Names extracted from the 'Secretary Notes' published as front matter in *JRUSI* from 1920 to 1939. Membership dates are shown in Appendix Four.

¹⁹⁰ Graham, 'Some Notes on Preparing for the Staff College', pp. 10-6; Graham, 'Some Notes on Preparing for the Staff College (concluded)', pp. 658-65.

a desire on the part of these officers to take ownership of their education and development while improving their career opportunities by making themselves more ‘visible’ for promotion.

Apart from the advantage of being a RUSI member, with the attendant benefits of use of its library and admittance to lectures, another aspect of engaging with this form of personal leadership development was the opportunity to contribute to the development of informal doctrine. While this thesis does not focus on the development of doctrine, it was an element of an officer’s leadership development through the modern process of action learning. As Parton argued, articles in *JRUSI* and other publications represented a source of informal doctrine that was indicative of the RAF’s broad thinking, which was owned by a small number of appropriately qualified subject matter experts.¹⁹¹ This was furthered when *RAFQ* appeared in 1930. As *Flight* noted in 1930, ‘It was quite time that the Royal Air Force should possess a quarterly review of its own’.¹⁹² *RAFQ* paralleled *The Army Quarterly* rather than *TNR*, as it was publically available through its publisher, Gale and Polden. Officers writing for *RAFQ* not only informed service discussions over air power employment, but also ‘sold’ air-mindedness, a distinct element in the belief in ‘Command of the Air’. *RAFQ* was supported by the Air Ministry, which encouraged officers to write for the journal as well as providing it with an advisory committee.¹⁹³ *RAFQ* acted as the RAF’s semi-official outlet concerning its evolving thinking on air power employment. It is significant that an article by Leigh-Mallory, an army co-operation specialist, appeared in its first edition, albeit a summary of his final army co-operation report that he produced as

¹⁹¹ Neville Parton, ‘The Development of Early RAF Doctrine’, *JMH*, 72(4) (2008), pp. 1174-5.

¹⁹² F.A. de V. Robertson, “‘The Royal Air Force Quarterly’”, *Flight*, 10 January 1930, p. 102.

¹⁹³ TNA, AIR 72/11, AMWO No. 516 – Publication of “The RAF Quarterly”, 22 August 1929; ‘Notices – RAF Quarterly’, *RAFQ*, 1 (1) (1930), front piece.

OC, School of Army Co-Operation at RAF Old Sarum.¹⁹⁴ This illustrates the diverse character of RAF air power thinking that moved beyond the subject of bombing as presumed by some historians.

Articles in publications can be split into three categories: theory and strategy, operations, and personnel. Parton's figure of six per cent concerning articles written by RAF officers in *JRUSI* in the period 1918 to 1923 remained relatively constant throughout this period.¹⁹⁵ Out of 1,052 articles published in *JRUSI* between 1919 and 1939, 15 per cent focused on air power broadly defined, with about seven per cent written by RAF officers.¹⁹⁶ This figure is distorted by the inclusions of air power advocates like Oliver Stewart, a retired RFC 'ace', who contributed to on-going debates. Many officers in this period also wrote under pseudonyms for reasons of anonymity, which makes identifying their service background problematic. Anonymity raises the question of these officers' subsequent career trajectories and of whether they wrote under a pseudonym to protect their career prospects, though this was not a significant issue for those deemed capable. However, unlike land or naval matters, and due to its infancy, there existed a feeling amongst the services that air power was a subject on which everybody could write. Except for Liddell Hart or Fuller, it was rare to find commentators from the other services writing on naval or military subjects. The perception of air power as a free subject mirrored aspects of the inter-service debates of the period and RAF culture. An analysis of the inter-war *The Army Quarterly* supports this contention. From 1919 to 1939, *The Army Quarterly* published 24 air power articles. Of these, RAF officers contributed six, including one article under Trenchard's name and three by Chamier. Army officers wrote a further four articles, while

¹⁹⁴ Leigh-Mallory, 'Co-Operation between the Army', pp. 37-44; TNA, AIR 10/1777, AP 1390, *Army Co-Operation Report, 1929* (March 1930).

¹⁹⁵ Parton, 'The Development of Early RAF Doctrine', p. 1174.

¹⁹⁶ Figures based on an analysis of articles in *JRUSI* from 1919 through to 1939.

two retired RAF/RFC officers, Stewart and Rothesay Wortley, wrote nine. This division amongst the services is best represented by the RAF's belief in 'Command of the Air'. For the RAF, the doctrinal element of 'Command of the Air' was a conceptual state that allowed freedom of action for all services. Conversely, 'Command of the Air' for the other services was a physical state and related to their desire to recover what they perceived as their lost air arms.

A broader examination of contributions illustrates the importance of those who wrote as well as what was written. Higham identified Slessor and Kingston-McCloughry as high order contributors to journals. While these men were unique in the RAF concerning their volume of output, it is illustrative that Leigh-Mallory produced three articles in the early 1930s, which was notable when compared to other future senior leaders.¹⁹⁷ Like both Slessor and Kingston-McCloughry, Leigh-Mallory took part in essay writing competitions such as the Gordon-Shepherd Memorial Prize, which was founded in 1919 to promote study on 'reconnaissance and kindred subjects' after Sir Horatio Shepherd bequeathed money to support its foundation in memory of his son, Brigadier-General Gordon Shepherd.¹⁹⁸ In 1932 and 1934, the same time as he was writing in journals, Leigh-Mallory came second in the Gordon-Shepherd Prize, while Douglas came first in 1922 and 1923 while at Andover.¹⁹⁹ This engagement illustrates that officers like Leigh-Mallory viewed extra-curricular activity as beneficial to both their personal and professional development, and it is clear that they were encouraged and valued by the Air Ministry, as evidenced by such officers' career trajectories. Furthermore, as Parton noted concerning contributions to

¹⁹⁷ Leigh-Mallory, 'Co-Operation Between the Army'; Leigh-Mallory, 'Air Co-operation with Mechanized Forces', pp. 565-77; Wing-Commander T.L. Leigh-Mallory, DSO, *psa*, 'The Maintenance of Air Superiority in the Land Campaign', pp. 245-52

¹⁹⁸ TNA, AIR 72/1, AMWO No. 914 – Gordon Shepherd Memorial Prize, 14 August 1919.

¹⁹⁹ *The Air Force List* (April 1939), Cols. 873-875.

RAFQ, a high proportion of officers writing in military journals held either *psa* or *qs*.²⁰⁰ While not explicit in AMWO No. 354, by the late 1920s, the authorisation process took account of an officer's status concerning their military education; thus, a relationship existed between key elements of an officer's leadership development and Staff College attendance and the ability to comment on air power issues. Leigh-Mallory represented this relationship. By the time of *RAFQ*'s foundation in 1930, a critical mass of appropriately qualified officers, which was Trenchard's concern in 1923, was reached. This contributed to the desire to both found and support such a professional publication. It also demonstrates that these officers were trusted to produce informal doctrine for broader dissemination, and, as Parton noted, actually allowed for 'a considerable divergence of opinions within the service on what air power both could, and should, do'.²⁰¹ However, despite encouraging divergent views, the reality is that of those officers in Appendix Four, only a quarter contributed to journals. While some accepted the benefits of RUSI, generally as a group, RAF officers failed to contribute to the advancement of their professional knowledge, thus highlighting the tension between intellectualism and heroic leadership in the RAF that had been Brooke-Popham's concern. Nevertheless, Leigh-Mallory, and other officers like Douglas, Portal, Courtney, Peck and Gossage, aligned intellectualism with professional development and still rose to senior command.²⁰² This runs counter to Liddell

²⁰⁰ Parton, 'Royal Air Force Doctrine', p. 151.

²⁰¹ Parton, 'The Development of Early RAF Doctrine', p. 1177.

²⁰² Apart from Leigh-Mallory's articles, those produced by officers in Appendix 4 are: Group Captain Christopher Courtney, CBE, DSO, *psa*, 'The Strategic Mobility of Air Forces (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 75 (1930), pp. 287-301; Wing Commander W. Sholto Douglas, MC, DFC, 'A Floatplane Tour in the Southern Sudan', *RAFQ*, 2(2) (1921), pp. 211-21; Wing Commander W. Sholto Douglas, MC, DFC, 'The Heavy Fighting Aeroplane: A Reply', *RAFQ*, 2(4) (1931), pp. 597-600; Garrod, MC, DFC, RAF, 'The Cadre, Auxiliary Air Force and University Air Squadrons', pp. 317-30; Wing Commander A.G.R. Garrod, MC, DFC, *psa*, 'Air Strategy', *RAFQ*, 1(1) (1930), pp. 28-36; Group Captain A.G.R. Garrod, OBE, MC, DFC, RAF, 'Recent Operations in Kurdistan (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 78 (1933), pp. 231-53; Wing Commander E.L. Gossage, DSO, MC, 'Air Co-operation with the Army (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 72 (1927), pp. 561-78; Joubert, 'The Supply and Training of Officers'; Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command'; Group Captain L.A. Pattinson, DSO, MC, D.F.C., RAF, 'Minor Air Tactics – Defence', *JRUSI*, 75 (1930), pp. 587-93; Air Vice-Marshal L.A. Pattinson, DSO, MC, DFC, 'The Training of an Air Force Pilot (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 83 (1938), pp. 11-21; Wing

Hart's argument concerning Trenchard's aforementioned view of writing. The RAF encouraged officers educated at Andover to contribute to service knowledge; however, it realistically took time to build up a cohort of officers capable of this.

The articles written by these officers ran the full spectrum of themes identified and illustrate the wealth of experience that they collectively held in the areas of education, training and operations. Articles reached forward towards a nascent air power theory in an attempt to codify its planned employment and were not a rejection of history in the production of doctrine as Murray contended.²⁰³ As Parton noted, doctrine is not only based on an analysis of past lessons, but also indicative of deeper beliefs that the organisation holds to be true.²⁰⁴ Thus, they were a complex attempt to innovate in a field with little empirical data to support the assertions formed, as well as being influenced by RAF culture. Any criticism of the development of theory and doctrine in the RAF must be placed into the context that writers like Leigh-Mallory examined the implementation of a new dissonant technology that revolutionised the character of warfare. Even up to 1939, it is not straining verity to describe the whole process of air power employment as experimental. Murray failed to heed his own advice concerning the need to understand culture in analysing military change, as in trying to develop a coherent air power doctrine, the RAF did not ignore the past; though, as Biddle suggested, they might have

Commander R.H. Peck, OBE, 'Aircraft in Small Wars (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 73 (1928), pp. 535-50; Portal, 'Air Force Co-operation in Policing the Empire', pp. 343-58; Squadron Leader B.E. Sutton, DSO, OBE, MC, 'Some aspects of the work of the Royal Air Force with the BEF in 1918', *JRUSI*, 67 (1922), p. 336-48; Squadron Leader A.A. Walsler, MC, DFC, 'The Influence of Aircraft on Problems of Imperial Defence', *The Army Quarterly*, 5(1) (1922), pp. 38-49; Group Captain A.C. Wright, AFC, 'The Royal Air Force in the Far East (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 80 (1935) pp. 529-39; Group Captain A.C. Wright, AFC, *qs*, 'Air Exercises, 1935 (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 80 (1935) pp. 824-32.

²⁰³ Williamson Murray, 'Reflections on the Combined Bomber Offensive' in Williamson Murray, *War, Strategy and Military Effectiveness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 234. This piece was originally published in *Militär-geschichtliche Mitteilungen*, 51(1) (1992). Murray has most recently repeated this claim in his work on military adaptation, see: Murray, *Military Adaptation in War*, p. 198. This volume is indicative of how an inability to keep up to date with shifts in scholarship leads to continued production of out-dated conclusions that fit specific cultural paradigms that seek a simple and out-dated explanation for organisational change.

²⁰⁴ Parton, 'Royal Air Force Doctrine', p. 6.

misinterpreted it at times.²⁰⁵ Murray cited ASM No. 11A as evidence of the RAF's rejection of history. Concerning discussions relating to the strategic objectives of an air force, this memorandum stated:

The latter alternative is the method which the lessons of military history seem to recommend, but the Air Staff are convinced that the former is the correct one.²⁰⁶

While this appears to validate Murray's argument, it ignores the wider context of both the memorandum itself and broader RAF doctrine as a whole. The memorandum did not reject history so much as it sought to extrapolate an alternative strategy that stressed efficiency and speed in the face of what the officers writing it understood of military and naval theory. The memorandum was based on modern conceptions of action learning present at Andover, where historical lessons in aspects of strategy were taught with shared concepts on the principles of war. These derived from the study of history. The role of history is highlighted by Chamier's 1921 *JRUSI* article on 'Strategy and Air Strategy', in which he stated:

some would say no air strategy *can* exist. [...] But without necessarily denying the [...] existence of air strategy, it may be asserted that the time is not yet ripe for a definition of its principles. Strategic principles are derived from the study of history, and aerial warfare has the shortest of histories. [...] History has therefore a great deal to teach us and we may confidently expect to throw light on the possibilities of air strategy.²⁰⁷

Chamier, highly regarded by Trenchard, served as Deputy DOI on the Air Staff before retiring in 1929 at his own request. Based on a historical analysis of the perceived advantages of air power as it stood compared to the conduct of traditional naval and

²⁰⁵ Murray, 'Military Culture Does Matter' in *War, Strategy and Military Effectiveness*, pp. 83-97. Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 69-81.

²⁰⁶ TNA, AIR 8/71, ASM No. 11A – Air Strategy in Home Defence, March 1924, p. 1.

²⁰⁷ Chamier, 'Strategy and Air Strategy', p. 641.

military strategies, Chamier concluded that an air force's ability to react quicker at the decisive point meant that it could force a decision in war more quickly.²⁰⁸

Rather than rejecting the past, these articles were grounded in the RAF's recent experience of both the First World War and colonial campaigns. Used as a didactic tool, history allowed officers to draw out appropriate lessons and develop ideas. Given Leigh-Mallory's higher education background, a rejection of history as a cognitive tool would have been out of character. Officers like Leigh-Mallory also regularly requested information from AHB to support their writings, thus making use of the RAF's corporate repository of historical knowledge.²⁰⁹ Formed as the Air History Section of the Historical Section of the CID under the directorship of Captain Charles Fairburn in July 1918, the AHB's purpose was to collate historical records and supply:

historical information [...] as required by the Air Ministry, Committee of Imperial Defence, and other Government Departments, and the official historians.²¹⁰

More broadly, this included supporting officers writing for both lectures and publications that used history to develop air power's language and conceptual base. Nevertheless, returning to writing on air power, as both Buckley and Pugh noted, the very vernacular used to describe the RAF's key doctrinal belief in air superiority, or control of the air, was used both inconsistently and interchangeably.²¹¹ Pugh's critique of Overy's lack of definite terminology concerning the concept of air superiority also mapped the debate of methods used to achieve that conceptual state as it shifted during this period and was dependent on

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 661.

²⁰⁹ For evidence of Leigh-Mallory using the AHB, see: TNA, AIR 2/1228, Compilations of Work undertaken by the Air Historical Branch, 1928, p. 8; TNA, AIR 2/1228, Compilation of Work undertaken by the Air Historical Branch, 1929, p. 8, 12. I am grateful to Julia Dawson, a PhD student in the Defence Studies Department at King's College London, for this reference.

²¹⁰ TNA, AIR 20/12276, The Record Holders (Air Historical Branch (RAF) 1918-1977) by Dennis Bateman (Air Historical Branch (RAF)), December 1977, pp. 1-2

²¹¹ Pugh, 'Conceptual Origins', pp. 20-6; Buckley, *Air Power in the Age of Total War*, pp. 50-1.

operational conditions.²¹² As this author has illustrated concerning the development of the *Manual of Combined Operations*, methods both changed and shifted in scope as technology and conceptual ideas developed.²¹³ Thus, it should be recognised that the use of history provided a conceptual basis for the development of doctrine, but that it was further advanced as experience emerged.

In his 1931 *RAFQ* article on ‘The Maintenance of Air Superiority in the Land Campaign’, Leigh-Mallory defined air superiority as ‘the attainment of operational freedom by our own aircraft, and denying it to the enemy’.²¹⁴ This paralleled the definition provided in AP1300 but lacked an explicit statement concerning its effect on morale and illustrated the contingent nature of the use of conceptual ideas. This article also illustrated Leigh-Mallory’s ability to apply capstone doctrine to the operational level when the RAF lacked any formal ideas in this area. Furthermore, each of Leigh-Mallory’s articles drew on historical analysis of his own experience of combined arms warfare in 1918 and trials with the Experimental Mechanized Force (EMF) on Salisbury Plain in 1928, which allowed him to extrapolate what he viewed as the most appropriate lessons for air power’s employment in support of ground forces. In a modern sense, Leigh-Mallory’s *RAFQ* article on air superiority advocated the use of an offensive counter-air strategy at the operational level long before Slessor published *Air Power and Armies* in 1936. Leigh-Mallory’s conclusion also mentioned concepts that still have relevance today, such as the concentration of force at the decisive spot, decentralised execution and centralised control. Concentration of force was to be achieved by focusing on whichever target set was identified as the enemy’s ‘weak spot’.²¹⁵ These remain enduring principles of air power doctrine, with the former idea

²¹² Pugh, ‘Conceptual Origins’, p. 24.

²¹³ Mahoney, ‘The Royal Air Force, Combined Operations Doctrine and the Raid on Dieppe’, pp. 58-64.

²¹⁴ Leigh-Mallory, ‘The Maintenance of Air Superiority in a Land Campaign’, p. 245.

²¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 252.

analogous to the idea of targeting for effect that emerged in RAF thinking, with a focus on morale as a target-set as well as industrial-web theory, which emerged at the United States Army Air Corps' Air Corps Tactical School.²¹⁶ This idea was revitalised in 1988 by Warden in his work *The Air Campaign* and his Five Rings Model.²¹⁷ Debates over command and control also remained a perennial concern throughout the Second World War, and AM Sir Arthur Coningham, in his 1946 RUSI lecture on the 'Development of Tactical Air Forces', reinforced the importance of air superiority as the prerequisite for the effective air power employment in support of ground forces.²¹⁸ The continuing legacy of the ideas encapsulated in Leigh-Mallory's 1931 *RAFQ* article lies in the fact that it was republished in a 2003 edition of the modern RAF's academic journal *RAF Air Power Review*.²¹⁹

A final aspect of knowledge transfer and socialisation that needs to be recognised is work undertaken by officers outside the confines of a service setting. Slessor remains the commonly cited example of an RAF officer engaged in producing publically available material; however, there is evidence that Leigh-Mallory and several of his peers engaged in informal socialisation outside their own service. For example, Tedder, while serving in the First World War, had his study of the RN in the Restoration era published by Cambridge University Press, which was recently reprinted in 2010.²²⁰ Gossage was invited by the Board of Military Studies at the University of London to deliver lectures on the RAF in 1936 as part of a series on the subject of national defence. Published in 1937, these lectures focused

²¹⁶ For the best overview of the development of thinking on strategic bombing in both Britain and America, see: Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, pp. 69-175. On the evolution of American ideas, and especially the role of the Air Corps Tactical School, in general, see: Clodfelter, *Beneficial Bombing*, pp. 35-66.

²¹⁷ John A. Warden III, *The Air Campaign*, Revised Edition (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2000). *The Air Campaign* was originally published in 1988. On Warden's career generally and the development of the Five Rings Model specifically, see: Olsen, *John Warden and the Renaissance of American Air Power*, pp. 108-22.

²¹⁸ Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham, KCB, KBE, DSO, MC, DFC, AFC, 'The Development of Tactical Air Forces (lecture)', *JRUSI*, 91 (1946), pp. 211-26.

²¹⁹ Wing Commander T.L. Leigh-Mallory, 'The Maintenance of Air Superiority in the Land Campaign', *APR*, 6(1) (2003), pp. 153-9.

²²⁰ Tedder, *The Navy of the Restoration*.

on air power's development, RAF co-operation with the other services, and imperial and home defence. While delivering a Service based view, they provided a useful sketch of the perceived place of the RAF in national defence in co-operation with the other services.²²¹ Of interest is that no serving RAF officer gave the Sir Lees Knowles Lectures on military science at Trinity College, University of Cambridge, during this period, though Sykes and Charlton did in 1921 and 1934 respectively after their retirements.²²² It would not be until 1947 that Tedder, as CAS, delivered his lectures on 'Air Power in War'.²²³ Of greater significance were links with key military thinkers of the period, and Leigh-Mallory knew both Fuller and Liddell Hart. Liddell Hart, appointed the Military Advisor for the fourteenth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1927, recalled in his memoirs that he selected both Leigh-Mallory and Douglas to produce articles.²²⁴ Leigh-Mallory's article examined the subject of 'Co-Operation of Aircraft with the Army', a subject on which he was eminently qualified to write, and it was probably through his involvement with the Army's 1925 manoeuvres that he came to Liddell Hart's attention.²²⁵ These manoeuvres are discussed in Chapter Seven. However, Leigh-Mallory was not Liddell Hart's major correspondent in air power matters. From 1936 onwards, that role fell to Peck, who commented on the air power aspects for Liddell Hart's 1939 book *The Defence of Britain* as well as supplying him notes on subjects like substitution and imperial defence.²²⁶ Fuller devoted a chapter in his 1920 work *Tanks in the Great War* to the subject of army-air force

²²¹ Gossage, *National Defence*.

²²² Charlton's lectures were published as *War from the Air: Past Present Future* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1935). Sykes' lectures were published as *Aviation in Peace and War* (London: Edward Arnold, 1922); Sykes, *From Many Angles*, p. 298.

²²³ Tedder, *Air Power in War*. It is interesting to note that the Directorate of Command and Staff Training distributed these lectures in the RAF as Air Ministry Pamphlet 235.

²²⁴ B.H. Liddell Hart, *The Memoirs of Captain Liddell Hart – Volume One* (London: Cassell, 1965), p. 84.

²²⁵ TNA, AIR 9/39, Various Lectures and Articles Received at the Air Ministry, 1925-1929.

²²⁶ LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, LH 1/572, Letter with attached notes from Air Commodore Richard Peck to Basil Liddell Hart, 4 January 1938; LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, LH 1/572, Letter with attached draft chapter from Basil Liddell Hart to Air Vice-Marshal Richard Peck, 12 May 1939.

co-operation, and careful reading shows that it was heavily based on Leigh-Mallory's 'History of Tank and Aeroplane Co-Operation' report produced in January 1919.²²⁷ Fuller wrote that 'The first essential of successful co-operation [is] comradeship', while Leigh-Mallory's report stated:

the first essential of really successful co-operation, a thoroughly good liaison was established between the Flights and units with whom they were working.²²⁸

This influence was not unattributed, with Fuller thanking Leigh-Mallory in the book's introduction and noting that the latter's:

energy resulted not only in the cementing of a close comradeship between the two supreme mechanical weapons of the age but of a close co-operation which saved many lives in battle.²²⁹

As Chapter Seven illustrates, this recognition was not unwarranted given the co-operation and socialisation between 8 Squadron and the Tank Corps from June 1918 onwards. Unfortunately, this form of socialisation was, as with writing, limited to but a few officers. They undertook this on their own initiative and received approval from the Air Ministry, and, while it was besides their normal duties, it did not affect their career prospects.

6.5 Summary

This chapter has explored the institutions that were central to leadership development in the RAF. These institutions were vital as the RAF nurtured officers for senior leadership, and while, in general, the Air Ministry was successful in nurturing, there were issues, such as the lack of academic register that is now commonplace in modern PME. Many thought

²²⁷ The Liddle Collection (LC), University of Leeds, AIR 189, Trafford Leigh-Mallory, 'History of Tank and Aeroplane Co-Operation', 31 January 1919; J.F.C. Fuller, *Tanks in the Great War* (London: John Murray, 1920). A copy of Leigh-Mallory's report can be found at Kew but it is missing the last pages of the report, see: TNA, AIR 1/725/97/10. An un-accessioned copy also resides in the Archives Division of the RAF Museum. This was a copy given to Reverend J.A.G Haslam who, as noted in Chapter Seven, served in 8 Squadron in 1918.

²²⁸ LC, AIR 189, History of Tank and Aeroplane Co-Operation, p. 1; Fuller, *Tanks in the Great War*, p. 243.

²²⁹ Fuller, *Tanks in the Great War*, p. xiii.

that the course at Andover was not long enough for its broader purpose of developing leaders' knowledge of war rather than just a narrow conception of staff work, and it was an area that could have been improved. There was also the question of what type of future conflict officers were being prepared for. Unlike modern PME, which examines a whole spectrum of military operations from traditional war fighting to peace support operations, the inter-war staff colleges focused on their service's primary role. For the RAF, this tended towards broad discussion of how to use air power to achieve a decision in war. Even discussions on how to use air power in colonial operations mirrored this conception. However, an examination of the various curricula illustrates an attempt to grapple with many challenges officers would encounter. This was especially the case for those officers who attended the IDC, where they were introduced to scenarios that they would have to cope with at the senior level. Overall, leadership development through military education was an 'elite' experience for future senior leaders, and socialisation was vital as officers began to feel their way towards a shared vernacular and grammar of war that was of inestimable value during the Second World War. Suitable military education also influenced the RAF's attempt to shape the debate over air power's employment. Officers attending Staff College became the trusted experts in this respect, while the RAF as a whole remained largely anti-intellectual. Staff College attendance was the nexus of an officer's rise to senior leadership, and without it, and unless illustrating operational excellence, access to the military elite was limited, as officers would not be visible enough for further development and promotion.

Chapter Seven

Operational Job Assignments and Leadership Development in the Royal Air Force

This chapter examines Leigh-Mallory's development related to specific operational job assignments. Unlike training and education, Leigh-Mallory's operational experience, especially that related to the First World War, is easier to examine due to greater source availability, such as War Diaries and Squadron and Operational Record Books as well as several pieces that he wrote. Notably, in early 1919, Major Leigh-Mallory authored a paper on the 'History of Tank and Aeroplane Co-Operation', which the AHB preserved, while in 1925, he produced a reflective essay on his war experience while attending Andover.¹ As already evidenced in Chapter Six, Fuller used Leigh-Mallory's 1919 tank co-operation paper in his history of the Tank Corps published in 1920.² Leigh-Mallory's history was also utilised in the RAF's official history *The War in the Air* when Jones cited the work of 8 Squadron in volume six.³ Furthermore, a deeper examination of archival sources highlights the organisational value of the posts held by Leigh-Mallory in this period. Due to source availability, this chapter focuses more on Leigh-Mallory's specific experience while still relating his career patterns to nurturing in the RAF and, where relevant, the development of his peers in Appendix Four. By furthering our understanding of the nature and significance of Leigh-Mallory's job assignments in their organisational context and of their importance to leadership development, this chapter, in part, helps reconceptualise his rise to senior positions by suggesting that he was little different to other RAF leaders of the

¹ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory; TNA, AIR 1/725/97/10, History of Tank and Aeroplane Co-Operation by Major Trafford Leigh-Mallory, 31 January 1919. As noted in Chapter Six, the most complete copy of this resides at The Liddle Collection, University of Leeds in AIR 189.

² Fuller, *Tanks in the Great War*, p. xiii, pp. 242-9.

³ H.A. Jones, *The War in the Air: Being the Story Played in the Great War by the Royal Air Force*, Volume Six (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), pp. 464-7.

Second World War who had been earmarked for advancement. This stands in contrast to the ‘ambitious’ officer that Leigh-Mallory has been characterised as by some historians.⁴ While this thesis makes clear that Leigh-Mallory was a careerist, this must be placed within the context of the leadership development opportunities afforded him. From this chapter’s perspective, this is because Leigh-Mallory held job assignments, like staff positions and operational commands, that were, despite the generalised character of the analysis of the prosopography population, largely characteristic of the rhythms present in the careers of his peers.

From a leadership development perspective, the idea of patterns in the modern conception of job assignments remains a constant. In discussing professionalism, Janowitz suggested that effective careers are ‘interspersed with operational military assignments’, while Donald Campbell *et al* stated:

appropriately timed job experiences and work events represent another major method used by organizations to develop leadership.⁵

Thus, timely job assignments were a vital aspect of rhythms inherent in a leader’s rise to senior positions, as they allowed nurtured officers to ‘acquire leadership capacity as a result of the roles, responsibilities, and tasks encountered in their jobs’.⁶ While examining an officer who reached the pre-eminent operational position in the Army of the First World War, Sheffield, in his recent study of Haig, wrote:

Douglas Haig barely put a foot wrong. He acquired a balanced ticket of regimental soldiering, operational experience that included both command and staff work; had attended Staff College; and done some formidably demanding staff jobs that put him at the centre of army reform.⁷ (Emphasis added)

⁴ For example, see: Murray, *Military Adaptation in War*, p. 175.

⁵ Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, p. 126; Donald J. Campbell, Gregory Dardis and Kathleen M. Campbell, ‘Enhancing Incremental Influence: A Focused Approach to Leadership Development’, *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 10(1) (2003), p. 36.

⁶ Day, ‘Leadership Development’, p. 598.

⁷ Sheffield, *The Chief*, p. 368.

Sheffield correctly adduced that there were certain patterns that Haig engaged with in his rise to senior leadership. This can be applied to most successful officers. As already noted in Chapter Three, Orange recognised that Park's failure to undertake specific postings limited his post-Second World War employment.⁸ Orange also made a similar point concerning Coningham. Coningham was reputed to be proud of his lack of Staff College and staff experience before 1939, and requested that the announcement of his retirement due to the lack of aforementioned experience be noted as being by his own request, which was, unusually, granted, though probably due to his wartime successes.⁹ Significantly, appropriate job assignments gave officers experience of transitioning to positions with unfamiliar responsibilities, helping create change, and managing internal and external relationships. Success in these areas helped mark officers out for further advancement.¹⁰ In the RAF, key operational job assignments consisted of command experience, staff duties, and training and education positions. These are further separated between command at lower and senior levels, staff duties in either the Air Ministry or operational commands, and training and education, which included positions at Flying Training Schools, Cranwell or Staff College DS. While explicit career planning was absent from the RAF, in part due to the lack of an Air Secretary from 1923 onwards, the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that there was tacit understanding of appropriate job assignments being used to nurture officers. These assignments allowed officers to display their leadership abilities; an approach recognised as best practice in modern environments.¹¹ These experiences allowed the RAF to develop its collective leadership capacity by giving officers the opportunity to

⁸ Orange, *Park*, pp. 264-5.

⁹ Vincent Orange, *Coningham: A Biography of Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham* (London: Methuen, 1990), p. 34, pp. 246-7

¹⁰ Irwin L. Goldstein and J. Kevin Ford, *Training in Organizations: Needs Assessment, Development, and Evaluation*, Fourth Edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2002), pp. 317-9.

¹¹ Kevin Groves, 'Integrating Leadership Development and Succession Planning Best Practices', *Journal of Management Development*, 26(3) (2007), p. 244.

succeed or fail, which then allowed successful individuals to emerge into the military elite by 1939.

7.1 The 'Grammar' of Command

In his biography of Tedder, Orange used the phrase 'Learning the Grammar of Command' to describe the former's early experience of military operations in 1915/16. Orange observed that during this formative period as a junior officer, Tedder learnt how to manage and motivate those personnel under his command.¹² This learning experience held Tedder in good stead as he rose to senior positions. However, this was not a unique experience. As Chart 7.1 illustrates, before service in the RFC, officers in Appendix Three, except for 10 per cent unknown and two in the Army Service Corps (ASC), all served in combat arms.¹³ Even those members of the Engineering Branch of the RN would have been exposed to combat conditions when serving aboard ship. The same would have been the case for AVM Richard Saul, who joined the ASC in 1914 and transferred to the RFC as an observer on 14 August 1916.¹⁴ While the First World War was the primary experience, pre-war regulars also had combat experience; for example, Burnett served as a Private in the Imperial Yeomanry during the Second Boer War and subsequently saw action with the West African Frontier Force in Nigeria as an officer before relinquishing his commission in 1909.¹⁵ Leigh-Mallory's key ground combat experience came in 1915 while serving as a 2nd Lieutenant with the 2nd Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment, 7 Brigade, 3rd Division around Hill 60 and Hooge.¹⁶ Early work with the battalion included time served as

¹² Orange, *Tedder*, pp. 29-30.

¹³ Charts for this chapter can be found in Appendix Two.

¹⁴ TNA, WO 339/20122, Application for Appointment to a Temporary Commission in the Regular Army for the Period of the War signed by Richard Ernest Saul, 10 September 1914.

¹⁵ Jordan, 'Burnett, Sir Charles Stuart (1882-1945)'.

¹⁶ TNA, WO 95/1414, War Diary of the 2nd Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment, 6 April 1915.

pioneers, which in 1925 Leigh-Mallory described as ‘rather irksome’, though GOC 3rd Division, MajGen Sir James Aylmer Haldane, praised them for their work in this role.¹⁷ Under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Edmund Allenby’s V Corps, 3rd Division attacked Bellewaerde Ridge on the night of 16/17 June 1915 to remove a salient protruding into the BEF’s lines at the end of the Second Battle of Ypres. Leigh-Mallory was wounded during this attack while the battalion served in a reserve role to construct assembly trenches and consolidate gains made by the attacking units.¹⁸ After this experience, Leigh-Mallory joined the RFC.

Officers drew relevant leadership lessons from these combat experiences. For example, in his 1925 essay at Andover, Leigh-Mallory reflected on the need to understand soldiers’ backgrounds and motivations.¹⁹ This acknowledged the existence of paternalism as Leigh-Mallory recognised that, as an officer and gentleman, he had responsibility for ensuring his men were looked after and motivated.²⁰ Leigh-Mallory also noted that motivation had ramifications for the maintenance of morale, the lack of which damaged unit cohesion and military effectiveness.²¹ Linked to the issue of morale was the frustration at the lack of information available to commanders at the tactical level, and while Leigh-Mallory sympathised with his superiors need to send soldiers out on raiding operations for

¹⁷ IWM, Personal Papers of Major-General F.A. Dudgeon, 86/51/1, Major-General Haldane to Commanding Officer, 2nd Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment, 22 June 1915; TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 2.

¹⁸ Brigadier James Edmonds, *Military Operations – France and Belgium, 1915, Volume II: Battles of Aubers Ridge, Festubert, and Loos* (London: HMSO, 1928), pp.97-101. Edmonds’ description of the attack on Bellewaarde Ridge is largely based on a report found in the 3rd Division War Diary, see: TNA, WO 95/1377, Appendix ‘A’: 3rd Division Report on Operation 16 June 1915, War Diary, 3rd Division General Staff, April to August 1915. During this attack, Leigh-Mallory’s battalion suffered one officer and 23 men killed and three officers and 107 men wounded, see: H. Whalley-Kelly, *‘Ich Dien’: The Prince of Wales Volunteers (South Lancashire), 1914-1934* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1935), pp. 30-1; Overall casualties for the 3rd Division was 140 officers and 3,391 men, see: Edmonds, *Military Operations 1915, Vol. II*, p. 102.

¹⁹ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 2.

²⁰ Sheffield, ‘Officer-Man Relations’, pp. 8-14.

²¹ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 2

no apparent gain, he was concerned at the effect this had on cohesion.²² Additionally, Leigh-Mallory assiduously picked up the difference between relations among officers and men in the RFC/RAF of the First World War and those in the trenches.²³ These recollections show that WgCr Leigh-Mallory, as a rising mid-ranking officer in 1925, was able to conceptualise and translate key leadership issues from his recent past and recognise their implications for his current career, thus highlighting his ability to develop professional knowledge through reflection on successes and failures.

Axiomatically, in a population that reached senior leadership positions, command experience was a necessary pre-requisite. Appendix Four makes clear that of all processes described in this thesis, squadron command experience was, axiomatically, the prescriptive element of an officer's leadership development. However, for those rising to senior positions in Appendix Four there was a balanced ticket of command, education and staff duties that had to be experienced. As with flying, the ability to command was noted in ACRs, and specific qualitative metrics were applied, as Chapter Three discussed.²⁴ Command was the job assignment where officers translated their understanding of leadership while illustrating their suitability for further development and promotion. This job assignment had a tangible and quantifiable impact on an officer's prospects. Failure would stop an officer's career from progressing. As Chapter Three noted, in June 1924, SL Wright, later an AC, was passed over for promotion when it was noted that he 'should be given a command' to further his development.²⁵ Command experience came in three forms: first, operational command of a front-line unit either deployed with the metropolitan air force or overseas on operations; second, command of a flying or non-

²² TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 2

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ TNA, AIR 2/506, Copy of Form 367, Annual Confidential Report (Officers) for 1930.

²⁵ TNA, AIR 2/233, Minutes and Decision of the June 1924 Promotions Board.

flying training unit; or finally, command of a non-operational administrative unit, such as the RAF Depot at RAF Uxbridge. Of five officers from Appendix Three who commanded the RAF Depot in either Britain or the Middle East during this period, only two still served in 1939; both GC Frederick Sowrey and GC A.H. Jackson remained in that rank for the rest of their careers. This job assignment did not aid an officer's development due to the RAF's view of administration and stores positions, which were not deemed the key roles for GD Branch officers even though many still occupied such commands. Leigh-Mallory's own command experience encapsulated the former two aspects but not the latter. Leigh-Mallory commanded 12 (Training) Squadron, the School of Army Co-Operation twice (including its operational element), No. 2 Flying Training School, and, most significantly, 8 Squadron in 1918. While Major Leigh-Mallory's command of 8 Squadron occurred just as the RAF formed in 1918, as illustrated below, his specialisation, which evolved out of his successful leadership of this unit, influenced further job assignments in the 1920s.

As Chapter One noted, command has a legal status. While leadership is central in influencing the direction and drive of subordinates, particularly in the maintenance of morale, command and the associated organisation of resources, both human and physical, encompassed much of an officer's responsibilities at squadron level. Codified in *The King's Regulations* and the *Manual of Air Force Law*, command was viewed as a physical transaction with responsibilities for the discipline of officers and men through training, maintenance and administration.²⁶ AP1300 defined commanders as having 'a strong and resolute will and a ready acceptance of responsibility'.²⁷ Command at squadron, wing, group and command levels was a complex interplay of the factors noted above and represented a key

²⁶ TNA, AIR 10/822, AP804; TNA, AIR 10/974, AP958, pp. 6-19.

²⁷ TNA, AIR 10/1910, AP1300, Chap. III, Para. 4.

leadership challenge due to the lines of responsibility and accountability in organisations.²⁸ At squadron level, lines of responsibility went downwards to flight commanders and officers in charge of stores, which, amongst other aspects, included logistics and engineering elements, and the unit adjutant in charge of administration. Up the chain of command, squadron commanders were, during the First World War, responsible to their wing commander, who in turn reported to brigade and the RFC/RAF in the Field. In 1918, for Leigh-Mallory, 8 Squadron was responsible to V Brigade through 15th (Corps) Wing, though, due to the unit's dispersed character during the latter part of the war, it was also accountable to III Brigade when in its area of operation.²⁹ This latter challenge allowed Leigh-Mallory to manage a number of different relationships. The RFC/RAF in the Field was ultimately responsible to the War Office, and then from 1918, the Air Ministry. Squadron commanders also managed other unit elements, such as medical officers, who were also accountable to group level. This complex maze required effective leadership to ensure the efficient operation of the squadron. The fact that the ability to do so was recorded on ACRs illustrates that the RAF placed great value on this experience. Additionally, the ability to manage these structures was important, as it involved the empowerment of subordinates to achieve aims and objectives. In his autobiography, Collishaw outlined his command experience and functions based on his time as OC 203 Squadron in 1918. Tellingly, Collishaw's description paralleled leadership precepts like maintaining morale and acclimatising new pilots to the unit, though he noted

²⁸ This is a theme picked up in: T.T. Paterson, *Morale in War and Work: An Experiment in the Management of Men* (London: Max Parrish, 1955), pp. 17-25. During the Second World War, Peterson worked in operational research for the RAF and was involved in studies into how to improve operations rooms in Fighter Command, see: Anon, AP3368 – *The Origins and Development of Operational Research in the Royal Air Force* (London: HMSO, 1963), p. 19. Subsequently, Paterson, who held a PhD, went on to work at the University of Glasgow and as Professor at the University of Strathclyde, where he specialised, based, in part, on his Second World War experience, on industrial relations and administration.

²⁹ 'Appendix XXVI – Strength of Royal Air Force, Western Front (including Independent Force and 5th Group), 11 November 1918' in H.A. Jones, *The War in the Air: Being the Story of the Part played in the Great War by the Royal Air Force*, Appendices (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1937), p. 127.

administration's importance.³⁰ Collishaw drew out one command lesson that never left him; the responsibility of writing letters to parents of dead officers and men. As Collishaw recalled:

These letters were extremely painful to compose and yet they had to be done and it was a job that I could not foist off on anyone else.³¹

This was a painful recognition of a commander's responsibility and was replicated by other officers, as evidenced by the letters that Major Philip Babington, OC 46 Squadron, sent to the mother and aunt of Captain George Pollard Kay, a Flight Commander in his unit, in June 1917.³²

The issue of responsibility became increasingly complex as officers moved up the command chain. When Leigh-Mallory reached Air Rank in 1937, the point at which this thesis ends, he dealt with a growing number of different responsibilities, like operations, training and personnel issues, relationships with superiors, subordinates and members of other services, and, in some areas, relations with politicians and civilians in an imperial context.³³ Thus, from a leadership perspective, senior officers at Air Rank acted as cross-cultural leaders who operated across several interfaces. They required the right attitude, interpersonal skills and knowledge of the organisation, and, as Mary Teagarden suggested, a cumulative process of leadership development led officers to the point at which they were

³⁰ Collishaw with Dodds, *Air Command*, pp. 163-4. For a useful overview of modern squadron command, albeit from the perspective of the United States Air Force, see: Jeffrey F. Smith, *Commanding an Air Force Squadron in the Twenty-First Century: A Practical Guide of Tips and Techniques for Today's Squadron Commander* (Maxwell, AL: Air University Press, 2003).

³¹ Collishaw with Dodds, *Air Command*, pp. 163-4.

³² Captain George Pollard Kay, "Letters from Bob": *Flight Commander, 46th Squadron, Royal Flying Corps* (Melbourne: Melville and Mullen, 1917), pp. 139-42. This collection of letters was published posthumously with an introduction by Kay's former Headmaster, Reverend F.E. Brown of the Geelong Church of England Grammar School in Corio, Victoria.

³³ RAFM, AP1301, Chap., II, Para. 7.

equipped to undertake this role.³⁴ This cumulative development is underpinned by appropriate job assignments and military education, which provided officers with a balanced ticket of experience; for example, as Chapter Six made clear, officers with *psa* had been identified and nurtured for senior command.³⁵ The ability to work across cultures was an important development process for those rising to senior rank, and one that relied heavily on an AOC's relationship with his staff. Thus, experience of staff duties was vital to foster a spirit of understanding and smooth running of leadership and administration at this level. Statistically, senior command experience as an AOC was important, as around 70 per cent of officers in Appendix Four undertook this role before 1939. However, there were exceptions, like Douglas, Peck, Evill, Barratt, Freeman and Philip Babington, though these all experienced senior staff appointments in the Air Ministry, which introduced them to certain aspects of responsibilities and relationship management.

7.2 Major Leigh-Mallory and Leading 8 Squadron, 1918

Leigh-Mallory's key operational command experience came in late 1917 when he was appointed OC 8 Squadron as a Major with the RFC/RAF in the Field in France. During this period, Leigh-Mallory grappled with the importance of effective leadership in the production of fighting power at the cusp of the tactical and operational levels. Leigh-Mallory's leadership of 8 Squadron illustrates several aspects, like responsibility, courage and vision, which were widely valued. In many respects, Leigh-Mallory understood what would now be referred to as action centred leadership by identifying the unit's 'task' as he managed and developed his 'team' while challenging it's 'individuals' by having them work

³⁴ Teagarden, 'Best Practises in Cross-Cultural Leadership', pp. 300-30. On applying this concept in the military sphere, see: Kerry E. Irish, 'Cross-Cultural Leadership: Dwight D. Eisenhower' in Laver and Matthews (eds.), *The Art of Command*, pp. 93-124.

³⁵ For example, see: TNA, AIR 2/355, Director of Organisation and Staff Duties to Commandant, RAF Staff College, 4 June 1931.

together and with other units.³⁶ Leigh-Mallory's importance in 1918 has been widely recognised by historians, unlike other areas of his career.³⁷ Bryn Hammond, in his analysis of tank co-operation with other combat arms between 1916 and 1918, recorded:

Between July and November 1918, this relatively junior officer [Leigh-Mallory] played a vital role in an important area of tactical development - a situation incongruous with the BEF's supposed centralised attitude to command and inflexible approach to military operations.³⁸

Given the historiography surrounding Leigh-Mallory's later career, if taken *prima facie*, this quote suggests that something must have gone wrong in the intervening years. However, as shown elsewhere in this thesis, the picture concerning Leigh-Mallory's nurturing and rise to senior leadership is more complex than previously presumed. Such a simplistic view is more indicative of the myopia found in the historiography surrounding the Battle of Britain and the Normandy Campaign of 1944, rather than a rigorous analysis of leadership development in the RAF.

From the point of taking command of 8 Squadron in November 1917 through to July 1918, Leigh-Mallory faced the challenge of organising his unit and its resources in the face of changing operational conditions. Nineteen-eighteen saw the land war on the Western Front shift from static to mobile warfare after the launch of the German Spring Offensive on 21 March.³⁹ This shift saw Leigh-Mallory manage 8 Squadron as it moved amongst new airbases and maintained lines of communication with wing and brigade

³⁶ John Adair, *Leadership and Motivation: The Fifty-Fifty Rule and Eight Key Principles of Motivating Others* (London: Kogan Page, 2009), pp. 19-36.

³⁷ Jones, *OH Vol. 6*, pp. 464-7; Tim Travers, *How the War was Won: Command and Technology in the British Army on the Western Front, 1917-1918* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2005 [1992]), pp. 129-30; Paul Kennedy, 'Britain and the First World War' in Millett and Murray (eds.), *Military Effectiveness, Volume 1*, p. 70; Peter Hart, *Aces Falling: War above the Trenches, 1918* (London: Phoenix, 2008), p. 97, pp. 285-6; John Sweetman, *Cavalry of the Clouds: Air War over Europe, 1914-1918* (Stroud: Spellmount, 2010), p. 178; James McWilliams and R. James Steel, *Amiens, 1918* (Stroud: Tempus, 2004), pp. 38-9; Edward Hooton, *War Over the Trenches: Air Power and the Western Front Campaigns, 1916-1918* (Hersham: Ian Allen, 2010), p. 270.

³⁸ Bryn Hammond, 'The Theory and Practice of Tank Co-Operation with Other Arms on the Western Front during the First World War', (PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2005), p. 275.

³⁹ On this period from a German perspective, see: David Zabecki, *The German 1918 Offensives: A Case Study in The Operational Level of War* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2006).

headquarters; from February to November 1918, 8 Squadron moved 12 times.⁴⁰ Leigh-Mallory was aided in this by the well-developed logistical system of the RFC/RAF, which, as Peter Dye noted, was able to cope with the multifarious needs of a high-technology combat arm/service by 1918 due to in-built resilience in sustaining operations.⁴¹ Underpinning this logistical challenge was the delivery of fighting power through the maintenance of operational tempo. Chart 7.2 illustrates the numbers of sorties flown by 8 Squadron between February and November 1918 and highlights the unit's operational tempo in this crucial year of the First World War, with clear spikes that cover the periods of the German Spring Offensive and the Hundred Days Campaign. It is worth noting that a large proportion of sorties were 'Test' and 'Practice' flights, which covered training of new pilots, testing replacement airframes and work undertaken to test operational methods employed by 8 Squadron in its army co-operation role. Practice flights spiked in July 1918 while conducting tank co-operation experiments with the Tank Corps, with 309 sorties undertaken. Eight Squadron's roles covered the panoply of operations undertaken by army co-operation units, including reconnaissance, bombing and contact patrol work.

In late 1917, Leigh-Mallory faced a more crucial leadership challenge; the replacement of exhausted officers in 8 Squadron, as the unit had been heavily involved in fighting on the Western Front, including the Battles of Arras and Cambrai. It is clear from Leigh-Mallory's 1925 essay that this period of operations meant he needed to inject fresh personnel into the unit to maintain effectiveness; a view supported by the squadron's own

⁴⁰ TNA, AIR 1/1669/204/109/8-9, 8 Squadron Record Books, February to May 1918; TNA, AIR 1/1670/204/109/10-13, 8 Squadron Record Books, June to December 1918. For the most recent overview of the RAF in 1918, see: David Jordan, 'The Genesis of Modern Air Power: The RAF in 1918' in Sheffield and Gray (eds.), *Changing War*, pp. 191-206.

⁴¹ TNA, AIR 1/8/15/1/7, Notes on System of Supply for the Royal Air Force in France during the War by Air Commodore Robert Brooke-Popham, 20 September 1920. The study of logistics that support air power operations remains a limited area of study. The most useful brief overview is Peter Dye, 'The Genesis of Modern Warfare: The Contribution of Aviation Logistics' in Sheffield and Gray (eds.), *Changing War*, pp. 171-90. For a fuller examination, see: Peter Dye, 'Air Power's Midwife: Logistics Support for Royal Flying Corps Operations on the Western Front, 1914-1918 (PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2013).

history.⁴² One of those replacement officers was Flying Officer Ferdinand West, later an AC, who trained as a pilot under Leigh-Mallory in Britain and recalled the paternalism that the latter had for the officers and men under his command.⁴³ Having commanded a training squadron, Leigh-Mallory was able to select fresh pilots whom he identified as effective. West eventually won the Victoria Cross while serving as a Flight Commander under Leigh-Mallory, who would have provided the initial recommendation that led to the former's citation. Despite this relationship, West's later career did not appear to have been influenced by Leigh-Mallory's rise to senior leadership. It appears that after 1918, Leigh-Mallory's and West's careers diverged, which strengthens the importance of the recollections of the latter. Returning to the redeployment of personnel, the reasons given do not appear to have been nefarious, but born out of concern for the morale and motivation of the officers and men of 8 Squadron. Reasons ranged from rest and recuperation to poor service as well as posting back to Britain for pilot training. For example, in November 1917, just after taking command, Leigh-Mallory posted Lieutenant C.A. Hyde back to the Home Establishment for rest after nine months service and recorded that he had performed 'good service'. Conversely, on 6 December 1917, Leigh-Mallory recommended that 2nd Lieutenant A.W. Newham 'be returned to his unit'; the ultimate restriction applied to an officer deemed unfit for operational flying duties.⁴⁴ These two examples illustrate that Leigh-Mallory was able to deal with the difficult process of managing personnel to maintain unit efficiency. It also highlights Leigh-Mallory's ability to manage the 'leader-follower' relationship and meet both individual and group needs while

⁴² TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory; TNA, AIR 1/688/21/20/8, Short History of 8 Bombing Squadron Royal Air Force, January 1915 to 1921 (N.D.), pp. 15-7.

⁴³ P.R. Reid, *Winged Diplomat: The Life Story of Air Commodore 'Freddie' West, VC* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1962), p. 76.

⁴⁴ TNA, AIR 1/1671/204/109/20, Transfer Report for Lieutenant C.A. Hyde, November 1917; TNA, AIR 1/1671/204/109/20, Report on Inefficient Officer – 2nd Lieutenant A.W. Newham, 6 December 1917.

ensuring vertical unit cohesion through trust.⁴⁵ J.A.G Haslam, an officer who served with 8 Squadron, recalled how, when he joined the squadron, he was ‘Quickly made to feel at home’, which suggests that Leigh-Mallory, from both an individual and group perspective, was able to generate an atmosphere conducive to efficiency while strengthening his ‘team’.⁴⁶

Shared experience of flying duties influenced leadership and unit cohesion and generated an identity central to RFC/RAF culture. Leigh-Mallory recognised the importance of flying when experimenting with the Tank Corps during the Battles of Hamel and Amiens in July and August 1918 respectively. Leigh-Mallory flew the first missions for both operations and took responsibility by translating his vision into reality. This helped prove Leigh-Mallory’s concept of operations to his ‘team’ as well as reinforcing confidence in 8 Squadron concerning their experimental role. Understanding responsibility by linking flying to command was not new territory for Leigh-Mallory, who, on 24 April 1918, undertook a special reconnaissance mission rather than delegate to a subordinate.⁴⁷ Leigh-Mallory also identified talented officers in 8 Squadron; West was one of those and recalled that Leigh-Mallory made sure that new personnel understood their mission and role.⁴⁸ Leigh-Mallory emerged as an effective OC with an understanding of both unit cohesion and the organisation of resources, and West held him in high regard and noted of the formation of the RAF:

There was a tremendous *esprit de corps* developing, comparable to that in some of the very oldest regiments. It was a joy and inspiration to us. Men like Leigh-Mallory were at the roots of it.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Grint, ‘Followership’, pp. 135-150; Bass, ‘Leading in the Army after Next’, p. 288.

⁴⁶ LC, AIR 150, Transcript of an Interview with Reverend Group Captain J.A.G. Haslam, October 1976, p. 7.

⁴⁷ TNA, AIR 1/1669/204/109/9, 8 Squadron Record Books, 24 April 1918.

⁴⁸ Reid, *Winged Diplomat*, p. 76.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 88

Eight Squadron's attachment came from a request from GOC Tank Corps, MajGen Hugh Elles.⁵⁰ Elles sought to formalise the ad-hoc relationship between the RFC/RAF and the Tank Corps, which had primarily focused on attempts to solve communication between aircraft and tanks. While identifying a specific reason for 8 Squadron's secondment to the Tank Corps remains difficult, by mid-June 1918, Leigh-Mallory's unit had been earmarked for this role.⁵¹ Leigh-Mallory's own 1919 analysis of co-operation with the Tank Corps is split into three phases: first, a period of preparation from 1 July to 8 August; second, the Battle of Amiens; and finally, Third Army battles from 21 August to 11 November.⁵² Eight Squadron's role in late 1918 saw it operate in a transient state as individual flights co-operated with specific Tank Corps brigades, which illustrates Leigh-Mallory's ability to lead the unit over wide distances and maintain relationships with other constituents. 'A' Flight co-operated with 3rd Tank Brigade, 'B' Flight with 1st Tank Brigade and 'C' Flight with 5th Tank Brigade, while Leigh-Mallory co-located himself with HQ Tank Corps.⁵³ Key developments between the RAF and Tank Corps involved the refinement of Tank Contact and Counter Attack Contact Patrols, and offensive work. Methods for co-operation evolved during July and were used at the Battle of Amiens, with Leigh-Mallory recording that 8 Squadron's perceived success led to an expanded role with reinforcement from 73 Squadron.

A vital element of these developments was Leigh-Mallory's relationship with several different constituencies. At an organisational level, this included relationships between the RAF and the Tank Corps as well as with senior officers like Elles, GOC RAF in the Field,

⁵⁰ TNA, AIR 1/1074/204/5/1665, Major-General Hugh Elles to Major-General John Salmond, 17 June 1918.

⁵¹ TNA, AIR 1/1511/204/58/17, HQ RAF in the Field to 1st, 3rd, 5th Brigades RAF, 22 June 1918.

⁵² TNA, AIR 1/725/97/10, History of Tank and Aeroplane Co-Operation. For the most comprehensive treatment of Third Army operations, see: Jonathan Boff, *Winning and Losing on the Western Front: The British Third Army and the Defeat of Germany in 1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

⁵³ TNA, WO 95/94, HQ Tank Corps War Diary, 1 July 1918; TNA, AIR 1/1511/204/58/17, HQ RAF in the Field to 1st, 3rd, 5th Brigade RAF, 1st, 3rd, 4th Armies and HQ Tank Corps, 28 June 1918.

MajGen John Salmond and his Senior Staff Officer, Brigadier-General Game. At the tactical level, Leigh-Mallory's key organisational relationship was amongst those brigades to which his flights were attached. Leigh-Mallory recognised the need to develop a connection with officers with whom 8 Squadron would be operating. At all levels, Leigh-Mallory was successful. Socialisation with senior officers was achieved through regular reports detailing developments amongst the various flights and tank brigades as well as attending conferences on subjects like communication. This allowed Leigh-Mallory to build relationships while acting as a conduit between various constituencies. In late July, Leigh-Mallory authored a detailed, six page plan for co-operation with the Tank Corps that Game described as going 'too far' beyond the capability of the RAF based on current experience; however, it illustrates a leader developing solutions to complex problems.⁵⁴ Even if it went 'too far', it triggered further conversations between the RAF and Tank Corps to solve common challenges, such as communications.⁵⁵

At the lower level, Leigh-Mallory advocated socialisation amongst units to improve relations, morale and operational understanding for 'individuals' as his 'team' operated in a dispersed manner. This ranged from the co-location of flights with brigades to officers being introduced to their Tank Corps counterparts; Army officers were taken for flights, while those of 8 Squadron enjoyed tank rides.⁵⁶ The Chief Signals Officer of 1st Tank Brigade, Major E.F. Churchill, recalled this socialisation process:

I went over to Enguingatte from time to time and had a very jolly time in the R.A.F. Mess. [...] Working with us at this time were the 8th Squadron R.A.F. under Leigh Mallory, an awfully nice fellow who often used to come into the Mess.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ TNA, AIR 1/1074/204/5/1665, Brigadier-General Philip Game to Major-General John Salmond with attached paper on Co-Operation of Aeroplanes with Tanks, 27 July 1918.

⁵⁵ TNA, AIR 1/1074/204/5/1665, Major-General John Salmond to Major-General Hugh Elles, 28 July 1918.

⁵⁶ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 11.

⁵⁷ IWM, Personal Papers of Major E.F. Churchill, *Memories, 1914-1919 by a Signals Officer*, Unpublished Memoir, pp. 33-4.

The leadership lessons provided through his work with the Tank Corps did not leave Leigh-Mallory. As evidenced in Leigh-Mallory's 1925 essay, socialisation was a key method of leadership development that inculcated officers with a broader understanding of organisations and their inner workings.⁵⁸ Leigh-Mallory developed an understanding of the Army that led to him being a recognised expert on army co-operation in the 1920s.

It is not necessary to detail 8 Squadron's operations with both Fourth and Third Armies apart from highlighting some of the conditions and challenges under which co-operation occurred.⁵⁹ An undated report on the Battle of Amiens by HQ Tank Corps noted that 8 Squadron carried out 'their duties with great skill, pertinacity and courage'.⁶⁰ Despite 8 Squadron's co-operation with the Tank Corps, it is also illustrative, as Chart 7.2 shows, that late August and September saw a spike in other roles like Artillery Patrols. This was because both the Tank Corps and 8 Squadron struggled to overcome communication issues that would allow for greater co-ordination during the breakout phases of operations. Specifically, after the breaking of the Hindenburg Line on 29 September 1918, co-operation with the Tank Corps decreased as assets dispersed during the mobile operations of the Hundred Day Campaign. However, on 5 September 1918, each British army was reminded of the need to co-ordinate their plans with 8 Squadron when tanks were used in any numbers.⁶¹ Experiments in communications did occur and ranged from wireless to the use of identification discs to support advancing tanks.⁶² Communication was the key theme of a conference at HQ Tank Corps on 1 September 1918, which Leigh-Mallory and Game

⁵⁸ TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/80, Experience on Active Service by Leigh-Mallory, p. 11.

⁵⁹ For the two most useful overviews of air power during the Hundred Day period, see: S.F. Wise, *Canadian Airmen and the First World War* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp. 518-78; Jonathan Boff, 'Air/Land Integration in the 100 Days: The Case of Third Army', *APR*, 12(3) (2009), pp. 77-88.

⁶⁰ TNA, WO 95/94, Report on the Battle of Amiens, HQ Tank Corps War Diary, N.D., p. 4

⁶¹ TNA, AIR 1/1074/204/5/1665, Chief of the General Staff, Advance GHQ British Armies in France to First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Armies, 5 September 1918.

⁶² TNA, AIR 1/752/97/10, History of Tank and Aeroplane Co-Operation, pp. 2-3.

attended; however, problems over wireless were ultimately devolved onto the Home Establishment. A more prosaic solution was developed to cope with this command and control conundrum at the front. Information sent to a Central Information Bureau via wireless was distributed to the appropriate tank unit through message dropping stations linked to each tank brigade; Leigh-Mallory ended his 1919 history of tank and aircraft co-operation noting the effectiveness of message dropping and hypothesising the advantages of wireless communication.⁶³ During 8 Squadron's work with Third Army, weather was a constant factor that limited its work. Leigh-Mallory recognised this when he recalled that 'August 21st was quite the most disappointing day's work the Squadron had with the Tanks'.⁶⁴ Fog meant that 8 Squadron was unable to support Third Army operations until six hours after H-Hour, 4.55am. As Jonathan Boff noted in his examination of Third Army in 1918, both weather and length of daylight influenced operations in this period, with a particularly pronounced impact on the techno-centric actions of the RAF.⁶⁵ While Leigh-Mallory's unit had been tasked with a specialist function, it remained a multi-role squadron and regularly returned to standard operating roles, either when the Tank Corps was not involved in major operations or when co-operation broke down during the breakout phase. Such close air support for land operations remained challenging during the inter-war years, and, despite various experiments with the EMF, in which Leigh-Mallory was involved, the RAF continued to prefer interdiction as the most meaningful mode of support to the Army, as direct support during mobile operations was found to be problematic even during the Second World War. Even Leigh-Mallory, as a WgCr, in his 1931 *RAFQ* article,

⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 18.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p.9

⁶⁵ Boff, *Winning and Losing*, pp. 32-3.

espoused a preference for interdiction and the paralysis of enemy rear areas rather than direct support.⁶⁶

Leigh-Mallory's work with the Tank Corps influenced the production of doctrine and knowledge transfer amongst RAF commands.⁶⁷ Concerning the latter, on 27 August 1918, the Director of Flying Operations at the Air Ministry, Brigadier-General P.R.C. Groves, wrote to GOC Middle East Area, MajGen Geoffrey Salmond, regarding various developments emanating from the Western Front.⁶⁸ While Groves did not directly name Leigh-Mallory, it was 8 Squadron's experience to which he referred when noting that reports from the RAF in France had already been sent to Salmond that stressed the success of close co-operation between the RAF and Tank Corps during August. Groves wrote, 'that the recent show has had a terrific effect upon the Boche morale'.⁶⁹ While Groves was able to think about air power at the operational level, in the post-First World War period, he became a proponent of the concept of the knockout blow that sought to avoid attrition as the main strategy in any future conflict.⁷⁰ At the tactical level, by early-September 1918, 8 Squadron's experience was being codified for inclusion in the future edition of S.S. 135 *The Training and Employment of the Divisions*, which was to include an appendix detailing co-operation between tanks and aircraft that was drawn up by GHQ Tank Corps and HQ

⁶⁶ Leigh-Mallory, 'The Maintenance of Air Superiority', pp. 245-52.

⁶⁷ The influence of the RAF on the production of formal doctrine in the British Army is a little understood process, and one that neither Hammond nor Harris considered in their works on the Tank Corps, see: Hammond, 'Theory and Practice of Tank Co-Operation'; J.P. Harris, *Men, Ideas and Tanks: British Military Thought and Armoured Forces, 1930-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 159-94. From an air power perspective, Jordan failed to consider the same problem, see: Jordan, 'Army Co-Operation Missions'. For an examination of the production of formal doctrine in the Army during the First World War, see: Jim Beach, 'Issued by the General Staff: Doctrine Writing at British GHQ, 1917-1918', *WIH*, 19(4) (2012), pp. 464-91.

⁶⁸ IWM, Personal Papers of Brigadier-General P.R.C. Groves, 69/34/1, Letter from Brigadier-General P.R.C. Groves to Major-General Geoffrey Salmond, 27 August 1918.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ On Groves, see: Higham, *The Military Intellectuals in Britain*, pp. 170-6.

RAF in the Field.⁷¹ This minor involvement illustrated several key issues for an emerging leader. First, Leigh-Mallory was involved in the British military's learning process on the Western Front that, with specific reference to the production of formal doctrine, as Beach noted, did not 'mature until mid-1918'.⁷² This saw Leigh-Mallory intimately involved in the problems confronting his profession, a necessary skill to master in order to foster one's career development. Second, in his specific context, Leigh-Mallory was the key personality in adaptations that emerged once appointed to work with the Tank Corps. As related above, several constituencies and relationships had to be managed to drive adaptation, defined here as 'change to tactics, techniques or existing technologies to improve operational performance', between the RAF and Tank Corps.⁷³ This process was not simple and required vision on Leigh-Mallory's part to create change. Third, this was both a top-down and bottom-up process that relied on Leigh-Mallory's appointment to work with the Tank Corps on the orders of HQ RAF in the Field. Without HQ RAF in the Field being willing to order work with the Tank Corps, the bottom-up adaptations developed by 8 Squadron would not have evolved, as local initiatives would have lacked control and codification as they had before July 1918. Fourth, the adaptation was also horizontal in character, as it involved the co-ordination of two separate organisations, though the fact that the RAF in the Field on the Western Front continued to act as a part of the Army aided this relationship. Finally, the management of these aspects showed Leigh-Mallory's ability as an effective leader, as he was able to balance 'task', 'team' and 'individual' by

⁷¹ TNA, AIR 1/1074/204/5/1665, Major-General John Salmond, GOC RAF in the Field, to Major-General Hugh Elles, GOC Tank Corps, 10 September 1918; AIR 1/1074/204/5/1665, Brigadier-General Philip Game, Senior Staff Officer, HQ RAF in the Field to Major Trafford Leigh-Mallory, OC 8 Squadron, 10 September 1918. For Leigh-Mallory's comments on the draft produced by GHQ Tank Corps and HQ RAF in the Field, see: TNA, AIR 1/1074/204/5/1665, Notes on Co-Operation between Tanks and Aeroplanes by Major Trafford Leigh-Mallory, 12 September 1918.

⁷² Beach, 'Issued by the General Staff', p. 491.

⁷³ Theo Farrell, 'Improving in War: Military Adaptation and the British in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 2006–2009', *JSS*, 33(4) (2010), p. 569.

providing vision to the group's actions while communicating and developing the necessary elements, and influencing behaviour between different organisations. Therefore, Leigh-Mallory, with the underlying support of his superiors, set the pace for this important wartime adaptation. Furthermore, Leigh-Mallory developed and engendered team working, cooperation and morale while also managing 8 Squadron's requirements during a period of high-tempo operations. In this latter respect, Leigh-Mallory also possessed good management skills, which reinforces the challenge of separating the latter concept from leadership as they clearly overlapped.

It would be easy to describe Leigh-Mallory's service with 8 Squadron in hyperbolic terms; however, his peers, axiomatically, also developed command experience. Eight Squadron's role was not unique. While the development work emerged under Leigh-Mallory, 73 Squadron subsequently supported 8 Squadron in operations; in part, because of workload and airframe suitability.⁷⁴ Furthermore, from 1915 onwards, various squadrons had undertaken development work related to Contact Patrols; 6 Squadron, under Major George Pirie, later ACM, worked with the Cavalry Corps in 1918. Pirie's example illustrates that other mid-ranking officers were also able to affect adaptations that influenced the conduct of operations.

During the inter-war years, squadron command remained a marker in an officer's rise to senior command; for example, WgCr Portal, while commanding 7 Squadron at RAF Worthy Down, led the unit efficiently and gained the respect of his subordinates.⁷⁵ In 1927 and 1928, Portal's squadron won the Laurence Minot Bombing Trophy with him personally acting as the bomb aimer in 1927. This was an example of action centred

⁷⁴ TNA, WO 95/94, Report on the Battle of Amiens, HQ Tank Corps War Diary, N.D., p. 4

⁷⁵ Richards, *Portal*, pp. 93-8. Earlier in July 1927, WgCr Portal won the seven-hour reliability race that formed part of the Hendon Air Display; the previous holder was Harris' 58 Squadron, and, as Probert noted, the latter's reaction is not recorded, see: Probert, *Bomber Harris*, p. 58; 'The Eight RAF Display', *Flight*, 7 July, p. 459.

leadership that engendered respect and maintained morale in the unit as Portal merged ‘task’, ‘team’ and ‘individual’ by identifying the squadron’s mission, taking an interest in how its personnel performed and led by example while challenging personnel to excel in their role. Given that 7 Squadron was a bomber unit, it was Portal’s responsibility to ensure it was efficient at this core capability. Furthermore, while it was in Portal’s interest to maintain this capability, he did not have to, as Richards’ biography recalled, polish and burnish the practice bombs used for the exercise.⁷⁶ While Richards’ biography was sympathetic to its subject, clearly, Portal as a professional, much like his peers in Appendix Four, took his job seriously and sought to progress his career by ensuring he was as successful as possible. Richards recorded in his autobiography that he had ‘great admiration for Portal’, and, having met him twice during the Second World War, he was impressed by his ‘quiet air of authority’.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, while sympathetic of his subject, Richards was an established scholar whose work was not only grounded in Portal’s personal papers, which could have led to hagiography, but also contemporary operational files to reinforce subjectivity.⁷⁸ It is also worth remembering that RAF ACRs recorded an officer’s ability to set an example, which was explicitly noted as being significant for officers above the rank of SL. Additionally, it also covered an officer’s conduct concerning ‘the handling of men’ and ‘performance of his duties’. These were clearly important metrics for the RAF in its consideration of an officer’s leadership ability.⁷⁹ As a group, these men were on the frontline of developing new ideas and tactics regarding air power’s employment, which

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁷⁷ Denis Richards, *It Might Have Been Worse: Recollections, 1941-1996* (London: Smithson Albright, 1998), p. 226.

⁷⁸ Richards served as a Historian at the RAF’s AHB and was a co-author of the Service’s authorised history of the Second World War. In 1931, Richards graduated with a Double First in History from Trinity Hall, University of Cambridge. He served as Principal of Morley College during the 1950s and between 1965 and 1968 held the Longman Fellowship in History at the newly established University of Sussex. In general, see: *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ TNA, AIR 2/506, Copy of Form 367, Annual Confidential Report (Officers) for 1930.

required leadership traits, such as vision to implement change. They were also committed military professionals with command experience. Finally, as Omissi correctly asserted:

Whatever the training value of policing operations, there is no doubt that the men who guided the RAF into and during the 1939-45 war had spent many of their formative air force years in the Empire.⁸⁰

Clearly, command experience in this period was often imperial in character and related to air policing, which not only helped maintain the Service's independence but also, as Brad Gladman suggested, ensured, at the middle level, that relations with the Army remained cordial.⁸¹ For example, GC Peregrine Fellowes, as OC of the hastily formed Constantinople Wing, SL Charles Blount, as OC 4 Squadron, and SL Tedder, as OC 207 Squadron, all deployed during the Chanak Crisis of 1922 and 1923.⁸² However, Leigh-Mallory never experienced this as a commander; though, as noted below, he did serve in Iraq as SASO.

7.3 The Importance of Staff Duties

Despite staff duties importance, and the associated emergence of staff systems, it remains an under researched aspect of military history from both an operational and leadership perspective. This is despite Dennis Showalter identifying the emergence of staff systems as 'Arguably the distinguishing feature of modern war making'.⁸³ While several studies have examined the emergence of Army and RN staff systems, as Aimee Fox-Godden noted in her work on brigade staff in the First World War, there has been limited scholarship on the subject of staff duties themselves. This has led staff duties to be viewed as 'a single,

⁸⁰ Omissi, *Air Power and Colonial Control*, p. 147.

⁸¹ Brad Gladman, *Intelligence and Anglo-American Air Support in World War Two: The Western Desert and Tunisia, 1940-43* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 34-8.

⁸² TNA, AIR 1/2388/228/11/79, Experience since the Great War, 1914-1918: The Expedition to Turkey, September 1922 – September 1923 by Wing Commander C.H.B. Blount, 4th Course, RAF Staff College, September 1925; Orange, *Tedder*, pp. 64-9. On the Chanak Crisis in general, see: J.G. Darwin, 'The Chanak Crisis and the British Cabinet', *History*, 65(213) (1980), pp. 32-48.

⁸³ Dennis Showalter, 'Foreword' in David Zabecki (ed.), *Chief of Staff: The Principal Officers behind History's Great Commanders – Volume 1: Napoleonic War to World War I* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2008), p. ix.

homogeneous entity with very little attempt to differentiate their respective roles'.⁸⁴ If studies into staff duties in the Army remain limited, though Harris' recent PhD on staff officers in the Army on the Western Front is a welcome addition to the literature, then those on the RAF are non-existent. There is little understanding of staff functions at command level and in the Air Ministry despite the Air Staff featuring highly in most works on the RAF.⁸⁵ However, staff duties, as an element of leadership development through timely job assignments, which often followed attendance at Andover, played a vital function in both the administration and the command and control of the RAF at all levels. The omission of staff duties from the history of the RAF is explained by two factors. First, the historiography of the RAF has focused on either policy debates related to issues surrounding independence or its doctrinal development. Second, staff duties tend to be uninteresting; therefore, apart from noting the significance of socialisation, this job assignment remained an inferred element of many RAF officers' recollections. Joubert, in his autobiography *The Fated Sky*, drew the following analogy on the role of staff duties in the RAF that could be applied to officers of all services:

When they go shopping our wives "make an appreciation of the situation" and then, in the form of a shopping list, they write their operation orders which they hand to the shopkeepers for execution.⁸⁶

This draws out staff duties central purpose, which AP1301 noted was the co-ordination of the 'machinery of command' through the 'smooth co-ordination of the work of a

⁸⁴ Aimee Fox-Godden, "'Hopeless inefficiency?': The Transformation and Operational Performance of Brigade Staff, 1916-1918' in Michael LoCicero, Ross Mahoney and Stuart Mitchell (eds.), *A Military Transformed?: Adaptation and Innovation in the British Military, 1792-1945* (Solihull: Helion and Company, 2014), p. 140.

⁸⁵ See: Harris, 'The Men who Planned the War'.

⁸⁶ Joubert, *The Fated Sky*, pp. 82-3.

headquarters', which included the production of appreciations and ensuring the execution of orders.⁸⁷

The staff system of the RAF was influenced by the organisation used by the Army, which it inherited from the RFC.⁸⁸ The system consisted of three branches, first, the Air, or operations, Staff managed operational aspects in commands, which included planning operations, intelligence and organisation. Second, there was a Personnel Staff, which administered manpower policy. Finally, the Equipment Staff, latterly engineering, administered maintenance policy. By 1939, the latter two aspects had merged into an administrative staff and associated services. RAF views on staff duties were codified in AP1301, which marked out a clear hierarchy of staff positions with the Air Staff pre-eminent over other branches at all levels of the RAF.⁸⁹ The head of the Air Staff, the Chief Staff Officer or eventually SASO, typically held a rank one level higher than the equivalent head of the Personnel or Equipment Staffs; Leigh-Mallory was an AC while SASO at HQ British Forces in Iraq, while the equivalent SPSO and Senior Equipment Staff Officers were GCs. As Chapter Three noted, only 23 officers active in March 1939 had experience as SASO, while 43 had served in the Air Ministry. AP1301 noted, concerning co-ordination of staff branches:

The commander may, therefore, delegate much of this responsibility to the Senior Air Staff Officer. [...] In the temporary absence of the commander the SASO will represent him.⁹⁰

AP1301 stressed that SASOs acted as the key conduit for presenting a consistent view to commanders.⁹¹ This delegation was based on the principle of centralised control and

⁸⁷ TNA, AIR 10/2313, AP1301, Chap. II, Para. 23-24.

⁸⁸ TNA, AIR 2/279, Memo from Air Officer Commander-in-Chief, Air Defence of Great Britain to Director of Organisation and Staff Duties, 17 June 1925. For a brief overview of the British Army's staff system in the period, see: David Zabecki, 'Introduction' in Zabecki (ed.), *Chief of Staff – Volume 1*, pp. 15-6.

⁸⁹ TNA, AIR 10/2312, AP1301.

⁹⁰ RAFM, AP1301, Chap. II, Paras. 27-28.

decentralised execution, or, in a modern sense, mission command. As SASO in Iraq, Leigh-Mallory provided much needed support to his AOC, AVM Mitchell, in a period of regional instability, as exemplified by the assassination of the Iraqi Army's Chief of the General Staff, General Bekir Sidki. Sidki had been instrumental in the 1936 *coup d'état* against the government of Yasin al-Hashimi; Leigh-Mallory attended Sidki's funeral as the British government's representative.⁹²

This division of responsibilities was mirrored in the Air Ministry.⁹³ The three key Air Ministry departments for much of this period were that of CAS, AMP, and AMSR. Broadly speaking, CAS held responsibility for providing advice to the government on air operations, policy, intelligence and organisation while maintaining RAF efficiency.⁹⁴ AMP administered personnel policy and training, while AMSR organised the provision of aircraft, administration of supply and experimental work.⁹⁵ Each held a seat on the Air Council alongside the Secretary of State for Air and, with the exception of AMP, until 1922, the Controller-General of Civil Aviation. A key change occurred in January 1935 when AMSR split into the positions of Air Member for Supply and Organisation and Air Member for Research and Development. In July 1940, responsibility for training moved from AMP's department and rose to a position on the Air Council as Air Member for Training. Each department consisted of various directorates that administered specific aspects of RAF policy, and, as with the evolving structure of the Air Ministry, these also moved; the period of 1919 to 1924 can be considered one of experimentation in the evolution of the Air Ministry. For example, the removal of the position of the Master-

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² 'Iraqi General Murdered', *The Manchester Guardian*, 13 August 1937, p. 9. In 1932, power in Iraq transferred to the Hashemite dynasty under the terms of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930, which allowed British forces to remain in the country to protect British interests in the region.

⁹³ This section is derived from an analysis of the *AFL*.

⁹⁴ TNA, AIR 20/7502, *Air Ministry – List of Staff and Distribution of Duties*, July 1924, p. 23

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31, 36.

General of Personnel in 1919 led to all directorates being placed within CAS's department. However, the establishment of AMP's department in 1923 saw various directorates moved around the Air Ministry as Trenchard sought to evolve an organisation that was fit for purpose. Initially, the Directorate of Organisation, in 1923, became part of AMP's department, while training remained part of the Directorate of Training and Staff Duties. However, by 1924, training became a directorate in its own right in AMP's department, while organisation, as a deputy directorate within the newly formed Directorate of Organisation and Staff Duties, returned to CAS's remit. Similarly, staff duties formed the other deputy directorate in the Directorate of Organisation and Staff Duties. The key directorate in CAS's department was the Directorate of Operations and Intelligence, which was referred to as the Air Staff in the *AFL*. Its Director also served as DCAS until 1938. DCAS's position split from this function as the RAF expanded and various additional Assistant Chiefs of the Air Staff for plans and intelligence emerged; Douglas, as an AVM, served as DCAS in 1940. This made the Directorate of Operations and Intelligence *primes inter pares* amongst Air Ministry directorates, though service at *Adastral House* in general brought officers into direct contact with senior officers capable of shaping and nurturing careers. As with other changes in the 1930s, the *AFL* began to classify the whole of CAS's department as the Air Staff from 1935 onwards. The importance of this discussion is to highlight the degree of change on-going in the RAF as it sought to develop its structures. It helps to contextualise the challenge of career management mentioned earlier because these changes in directorates provide the background to the bureaucracy that managed that process.

In a March 1926 lecture by WgCr Sutton to Leigh-Mallory's course at Andover, it was noted that a staff officer's key function was to eliminate friction and engender shared

responsibility amongst commanders, units and staffs.⁹⁶ Further leadership knowledge developed by this job assignment included the ability to change outlooks by creating wider unit cohesion in larger organisations like groups and commands by solving problems amongst stakeholders. This was because staff officers acted as a conduit through which control and smooth operations were conducted in co-operation with other staff branches. This job assignment allowed mid-ranking officers to gather an insight into the higher mechanics of the military bureaucracy, which, as potential senior leaders, they would lead. This knowledge allowed officers to navigate the internal politics of the RAF, which included negotiating relationships with those who did not form the core military professionals of the Service, like members of the Stores Branch. Effective staff officers generated space to allow their commander to lead by undertaking responsibilities that freed senior officers to ensure the efficiency of their command. This space emerged through influence on other members of the policy staff and OCs. The ability to influence and coerce subordinates remains a central aspect of effective leadership. Even at squadron level, the RAF recognised that an adjutant:

should attend to all purely routine matters with a view of giving his Commanding Officer more time to study the general efficiency of the Unit and Station.⁹⁷

Concerning Air Ministry service, officers in Appendix Four who rose to four- or five-star rank typically served, on average, four years in the Air Ministry. Some, like Douglas and Portal, with seven years each, served longer, while Evill and Barratt served slightly less at three years. They also served in senior positions as either directors or deputy directors of various Air Ministry directorates. Leigh-Mallory, for example, served as DDSD between 1932 and 1934, while Douglas served as Director of Staff Duties from 1936 to

⁹⁶ RAFM, AIR 69/43, Lecture on the Responsibilities of the Staff Officer by Wing Commander B.E. Sutton.

⁹⁷ RAFM, R021812, AP837 – *Handbook for Adjutants of the Royal Air Force*, June 1921, p. 1.

1938. Leigh-Mallory's appointment followed an established pattern of appropriate job assignments whereby former DS at Camberley moved on to become DDSD in their next posting. DDSD's responsibility encompassed aspects like RAF mobilisation arrangements, the preparation of training and operational manuals, including the *War Manual*, liaison with all staff colleges, promotion examinations, and liaison with the Dominions and the Army.⁹⁸ Given his experience to date, this was an appropriate appointment for Leigh-Mallory.

Leigh-Mallory served as DDSD twice. First, after his predecessor GC Owen Boyd was posted as OC Aden Command in August 1931, Leigh-Mallory's period as DS at Camberley finished early to replace Boyd as DDSD. Then, in late 1931, Leigh-Mallory's service was again broken while appointed a supernumerary attached to 1 Air Defence Group when he attended the Geneva Disarmament Conference as a GC. Leigh-Mallory then returned as DDSD in late 1932 before attending the IDC in 1934. Supernumeraries were used to keep officers performing alternative duties on the active list rather than placing them on half-pay. Up to late 1931, the RAF's representative to the League of Nations, as well as serving as air advisor to the British delegation at the Geneva Disarmament Conference, was GC John Babington, a staff officer in the Directorate of Operations and Intelligence. Babington sat on the Air Commission, but as the conference grew in scope, additional service members were appointed to help.⁹⁹ Initial service representatives included Babington, Vice-Admiral F.C. Dreyer and Brigadier A.C. Temperley.¹⁰⁰ Leigh-Mallory acted as the RAF's representative on the Air and Chemical Warfare Commissions.¹⁰¹ It is not necessary here to detail the negotiations at Geneva other than to note that while Babington and Leigh-Mallory provided expert advice, the failures at

⁹⁸ TNA, AIR 20/7507, *Air Ministry – List of Staff and Distribution of Duties*, October 1931, p. 34.

⁹⁹ Hansard, HC Debate, 25 May 1932, Vol. 266, Cols. 339-40; Hart, *Memoirs, Vol. 1*, pp. 206-7.

¹⁰⁰ Hansard, HC Deb, 22 May 1931, Vol. 252, Col. 2399.

¹⁰¹ Hansard, HC Debate, 25 May 1932, Vol. 266, Cols. 339-40.

Geneva must be attributed to the politicians who could not agree solutions to the challenges that confronted them. Nevertheless, it remains difficult to assess the effectiveness of the advice that service representatives like Leigh-Mallory provided due to conflicting views both within the British government and between it and the Services, which, as Meilinger argued, was particularly noticeable concerning air power.¹⁰² Most politicians, with the exception of Templewood, wished to abolish bombers, while the Air Ministry took a strategic view and suggested that such a move was short sighted if civil aviation was not also limited. Indeed, the RAF was not above using the levers of power to support its views; for example, in 1932, Portal, then Director of Plans in the Directorate of Operations and Intelligence, informed Trenchard, who, in 1930, was created a Baron and sat in the House of Lords, of the Air Staff's position on various discussions including the abolition of air forces.¹⁰³ One potential solution was the concept of the international air force, which both pre- and post-dated Geneva but was widely seen as the key method to managing the abolition of air power through a form of collective security based on the ideals of internationalism – the idea that increased co-operation between states generates greater rewards.¹⁰⁴ The contradictory between the politicians and the Air Ministry placed Babington and Leigh-Mallory in a difficult and ambiguous position as they sought to provide effective advice that ran contrary to politicians' aims. Additionally, the RAF was also in a difficult place, as if it supported abolition; it could have affected its own independence. However, Temperley, in his 1938 recollection of Geneva, noted that the

¹⁰² Philip Meilinger, 'Clipping the Bombers Wings: The Geneva Disarmament Conference and the Royal Air Force, 1932-1934', *WiH*, 6(3) (1999), pp. 306-30. For further views relating to the RAF and Geneva, see: Gray, *Leadership*, pp. 113-22

¹⁰³ RAFM, Trenchard Papers, MFC 76/1/43, Group Captain Charles Portal to Trenchard on the subject of 'The Royal Air Force and Disarmament', 5 August 1932.

¹⁰⁴ On internationalism and the idea of an international air force in British politics, see: Brett Holman, 'World Police for World Peace: British Internationalism and the Threat of a Knock-out Blow from the Air, 1919–1945', *WiH*, 17(3) (2010), pp. 313–32. Gray suggested that the debates surrounding the abolition of air forces probably reinforced both Portal's and Harris' belief in offensive air power as the ultimate guarantor of British national security, see: Gray, *Leadership*, p. 122

Chemical Warfare Commission was ‘the only one ever appointed [...] that conducted their business in an impartial and scientific spirit, untinged by politics or national passions’.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, Temperley argued that ‘When the politicians were confronted with an insoluble problem or wished to waste time, the invariable device was to appoint a technical committee’, while also suggesting that politicians used the commissions to shift blame when they failed to come to an agreement.¹⁰⁶ Temperley’s views are useful given that Anthony Eden MP, who, as Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, attended the conference, recorded that, despite divergent views, the latter became ‘an arbiter at Geneva’ in his area of expertise, thus suggesting that the former’s views cannot be dismissed. Ultimately, the British government did not believe in the conference’s ideas and what the country was being asked to forego.¹⁰⁷ Despite being in a difficult position, Geneva’s failure did not unduly affect either Babington’s or Leigh-Mallory’s career trajectories, as both reached Air Rank, while the latter returned to the Air Ministry. This was because the blame for the conference’s failure fell on the politicians involved, and it is reasonable to presume that Leigh-Mallory’s and Babington’s ‘visibility’ was enhanced by providing guidance to political leaders, though it could also have been because they represented the views of the RAF and defended its interests in a challenging context.

It is possible, based on a taxonomy of roles encompassing staff, command and training duties, to classify an officer’s ability based on their first posting after attending Andover, which was, in part, created to educate staff officers. Chart 7.3 classifies postings under five headings, of which the most significant was staff duties, either in the Air Ministry or at command or group level. This is followed by command and

¹⁰⁵ Major-General A.C. Temperley, *The Whispering Gallery of Europe* (London: Collins, 1938), p. 197.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

¹⁰⁷ For an overview of Britain’s role at Geneva, see: Carolyn J. Kitching, *Britain and the Geneva Disarmament Conference* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

education/training positions, which the RAF valued. The final category includes those officers posted out to any positions, including squadron adjutants. Chart 7.3 can also be further separated amongst those posted to the Air Staff and those who went to other directorates in the Air Ministry. Nevertheless, the taxonomy does suggest a degree of success by certain officers who went on to reach senior command. For example, after attending Andover, Portal held a posting in the Directorate of Operations and Intelligence in 1923, while Douglas moved to the Directorate of Training. This taxonomy is complicated by factors such as postings being based on an officer's suitability for an appropriate open vacancy. On completion of his course at Andover, for example, Leigh-Mallory was posted to the Air Staff of 22 Group. Twenty-two Group was the controlling agency for many of the RAF's education and training formations, which included the School of Army Co-Operation. Given the rhythms evident in Leigh-Mallory's career and in those of his predecessors at the School of Army Co-Operation, Gossage and Boyd, it is reasonable to conclude that this posting was made so that he could gain useful Air Staff experience until he could replace Boyd as OC in 1927.

AP1301 stated, 'All staff appointments are made by or with the concurrence of the Air Council', which highlights the relationship amongst socialisation, nurturing and the identification of talent for appropriate job assignments.¹⁰⁸ While direct patronage is hard to identify, it is clear that, in the short-term, identification by senior officers could produce advantageous ACRs, which in turn led to nurturing through key job assignments and attendance at Andover. For example, Trenchard knew Leigh-Mallory during his first posting in the Air Ministry between 1923 and 1925; Leigh-Mallory served in both the Directorate of Training and the Deputy Directorate of Staff Duties in CAS's department.

¹⁰⁸ TNA, AIR 10/2312, AP1301, Chap. III, Para. 2.

This is evidenced by the fact that Slessor, as a FL, who served in the Directorate of Training and Staff Duties at this time, recalled that Trenchard got Leigh-Mallory and he mixed up.¹⁰⁹ As an SD3 in the latter directorate, Leigh-Mallory, as a SL, was responsible for ‘Co-operation with Army’ and liaising with officers at education and training establishments.¹¹⁰ Again, this is an example of the RAF making appropriate appointments based on prior experience, and given that his next appointment was to Andover as a student, the RAF were clearly developing his professional knowledge for further nurturing. Furthermore, in 1964, Portal recalled that his work in the Directorate of Operations and Intelligence in 1923 as a SL ‘brought [him] into close contact with Lord Trenchard’.¹¹¹ Additionally, the Air Ministry’s small size made it easier to identify nurtured officers for further development through socialisation. More broadly, the socialisation inherent in staff duties filtered down to operational commands, with Willock, who served on the Air Staff at HQ Fighting Area between 1931 and 1933 as a WgCr, describing his work for his AOC, Bowhill, as a pleasure. Willock’s duties included liaison with stations and squadrons under the control of Fighting Area as well as the organisation of conferences examining operational matters and the refinement of fighter tactics.¹¹² Thus, undertaking staff duties not only introduced officers to responsibilities like acting as a conduit for senior officers, but also, through socialisation, it made them more ‘visible’ for development.

There was, however, one staff position that generated mixed results for an officer’s career progression. This was the conundrum of the Air Attaché. In 1918, it was recognised that the RAF required attachés to maintain relationships with foreign air forces, to act as an advisor supporting the work of British aviation companies overseas and as part of a semi-

¹⁰⁹ Slessor, *The Central Blue*, p. 46.

¹¹⁰ TNA, AIR 20/7502, *List of Staff and Distribution of Duties*, p. 26.

¹¹¹ CC, Portal Papers, *Recollections of Service in the Air Ministry*, extracted from the *AFD Society Journal* (May 1964), p. 5

¹¹² IWM, Willock Papers, Unpublished Memoir, pp. 31-2.

official intelligence network; an Air Attachés line of accountability ran to the Deputy Director of Aerial Intelligence.¹¹³ This was a diplomatically sensitive position, which required an experienced officer to manage relationships, which, in part, explains why this appointment was not helpful to officers wishing to make themselves ‘visible’ for further development and promotion, due to the length of the appointment. Furthermore, officers accepting such appointments were out of sight of those who nurtured careers. Here, there was an inverse relationship amongst career patterns, ability and visibility, and it was one method of utilising experienced long-serving WgCrs/GCs who passed out of the zone of promotion and were unsuited to further development. For example, GC Malcolm Christie served seven years as Air Attaché in Washington and Berlin before retiring at this rank in 1930 due to ill health, though it is unlikely that he would have been promoted further given his time in rank.¹¹⁴ Eleven officers from Appendix Three served as attachés; however, of these, 45 per cent retired directly after this appointment. Rising to 50 per cent once WgCr John Fletcher is added to this list, this figure illustrates that, despite its sensitive character, this was not a position that furthered an officer’s career. Fletcher served in one more appointment before retiring. Only three of these 11 officers, Gossage, Reid and Willock, reached Air Rank by 1939. Thus, Gossage, Reid and Willock clearly showed ability in other spheres that kept them ‘visible’ for promotion. For example, Gossage was well thought of

¹¹³ TNA, AIR 2/88, Copy of Instructions Issued to Air Attaché, Attached to a Letter to the Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office, 19 February 1919. Directed to furnish appropriate information, they nevertheless provided evidence for various handbooks detailing the organisation, tactics, doctrine and equipment of overseas air forces, see: TNA, AIR 2/88, Memorandum on the Instructions for the Guidance of Air Attachés, Attached to a Letter to the Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office, 19 February 1919, p. 1. For an example of the handbook produced, see: TNA, AIR 10/1645, SD128 - *Handbook on the German Air Force* (1939). For an overview of the Air Attaché experience, see: Reid, *Winged Diplomat*, pp. 133-42. Reid details the experience of Ferdinand West as the first Air Attaché to Finland. For a modern view, see: Air Commodore Ian Elliott, ‘Viewpoint - The Life of an Air Attaché: Alcohol, Cholesterol and Protocol?’, *APR*, 13(1) (2010), pp. 81-4.

¹¹⁴ Despite his poor health, Christie, as a business person in retirement, continued to furnish the RAF and the Defence Requirements Committee with vital information on German developments through the office of the Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Sir Robert Vansittart, see: Wesley K. Wark, ‘British Intelligence on the German Air Force and Aircraft Industry, 1933-1939’, *The Historical Journal*, 25(3) (1982), pp. 636-8.

by the Air Ministry, and, even in 1916, he was considered as a liaison officer with the French Army.¹¹⁵ A common factor related to Gossage's, Reid's and Willock's experiences and subsequent progress was their Staff College attendance, which other Air Attachés lacked, which reinforces the importance of military education to leadership development.

7.4 Training and Teaching at the School of Army Co-Operation and the Army Staff College, Camberley

The RAF, as a means of developing officers, and as part of its emerging culture, placed great value on training and education. Therefore, appointments at institutions such as Cranwell, training establishments and staff colleges were a common element in nurturing future senior leaders. In particular, 75 per cent of officers in Appendix Four undertook at least one of the above postings; however, only 26 per cent undertook the DS role, which was an important appointment. Focussing just on DS, this percentage decreases to 10 per cent when compared to those still serving in 1939 from Appendix Three. This figure excludes three officers, such as Clark-Hall, who had retired before 1939. Of these officers, 85 per cent had reached Air Rank by 1939, and those excluded would do so during the Second World War. Thus, it is clear that such job assignments were reserved for nurtured officers whom the Air Ministry trusted. In particular, this job assignment allowed nurtured officers to act as trusted subject matter experts while transferring concepts that underpinned RAF developments both in a Service context and to the other services while also socialising with those with the influence to nurture careers. For example, in a 1928 letter from Trenchard to CIGS, Field Marshal Sir George Milne, the former noted that he

¹¹⁵ TNA, WO 339/8543, Major-General Hugh Trenchard to Deputy Director of Military Aeronautics, War Office, 7 April 1916. On liaison between the RFC and the French Air Service, see: Pugh, 'Conceptual Origins', pp. 241-8

wanted those conversant with the 'Air Force faith' as DS at Camberley.¹¹⁶ The RAF wanted officers involved in transferring knowledge to exhibit leadership skills, like setting an example and motivating those under tuition. Many officers in Appendix Four exhibited these attributes; for example, it is worth reiterating that, except for Brooke-Popham and Ludlow-Hewitt, three of Andover's five inter-war Commandants are present in Appendix Four. These were Joubert, Freeman and Barratt. Two Commandants, Longmore and Mitchell, and three Assistant Commandants, Philip Babington, Barratt and Evill, of Cranwell are also present in Appendix Four. Furthermore, several officers, including Barratt, Evill, Freeman, ACM Garrod, Gossage, Hill, Joubert, Portal, Sutton and Tedder, served as DS at Andover, Camberley and the IDC. Of his time as DS at Andover, Evill recalled the socialisation aspects of his role that included teaching Leigh-Mallory, who, he recalled, was well liked.¹¹⁷ As Assistant Commandant at Cranwell, Evill also recalled the honour and enjoyment of teaching future RAF officers.¹¹⁸ Leigh-Mallory spent much of the 1920s in training or education roles at the RAF's School of Army Co-Operation and as DS at Camberley. These roles were linked, and Leigh-Mallory was selected for the latter position based on his performance at the former.

With reference to Slessor, Leigh-Mallory's successor as DS at Camberley, Meilinger wrote:

When told by the Army chief [...] that the RAF officer detailed to teach at the Army Staff College was unable to discuss [...] the broader aspects of air power, Trenchard assured him that the next officer [...] would be a fine tactician, a strategic thinker and someone well connected to the Air Staff who would be conversant with current policy. That person would be Jack Slessor.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ TNA, AIR 5/280, Chief of the Air Staff to Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 10 December 1928.

¹¹⁷ RAFM, Evill Papers, "Recollections", p. 20.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 23.

¹¹⁹ Philip Meilinger, 'John C. Slessor and the Genesis of Air Interdiction' in Philip Meilinger (ed.), *Airmar: Theory and Practice* (London: Frank Cass, 2003), p. 66.

This interpretation is wrong and representative of the distortion present in the historiography concerning both Leigh-Mallory and the development of tactical air power in the RAF. David Ian Hall's work on British tactical air power up to 1943 was also illustrative of this distortion, as it did not engage with discussions from the 1920s, the role of Leigh-Mallory or the School of Army Co-Operation.¹²⁰ Gladman at least recognised the existence of the reports that emanated from Old Sarum, though he did not link them to Leigh-Mallory.¹²¹ The implication of Meilinger's assertion is that Slessor's predecessor was an incapable DS, a clear indictment of Leigh-Mallory's leadership development up to this point; however, the letter cited did not mention the former but the latter. It forms part of correspondence between Trenchard and the respective CIGS, Field Marshals Earl of Cavan and Milne, which dated from 1923 onwards and concerned broader issues of army/air force co-operation. The letter stated that Trenchard was unhappy with the current incumbent at Camberley, Boyd, as he was not able to instruct on subjects like 'air strategy', though the latter was limited by what was dictated to him by the War Office.¹²² Trenchard noted that Leigh-Mallory, as evidenced by a visit to the School of Army Co-Operation, was able to 'give instruction in more advanced principles of Air Operations'.¹²³ Trenchard suggested to CIGS that the next DS would 'be qualified' to lecture on broader aspects of air power employment.¹²⁴ That this was Leigh-Mallory illustrates his engagement with RAF leadership development processes, including attendance at Andover. In addition, by being effective in his role at the School of Army Co-Operation, Leigh-Mallory made himself more 'visible' for further development. In addition, Trenchard knew Leigh-Mallory from

¹²⁰ Hall, *Strategy for Victory*, pp. 13-40.

¹²¹ Gladman, *Intelligence and Anglo-American Air Support*, p. 33.

¹²² TNA, AIR 5/280, Chief of the Air Staff to Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 10 December 1928. Meilinger cited a copy of this letter from Trenchard's papers.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

the latter's time in the Air Ministry and appreciated his ability, while the latter's leadership competency developed steadily as he progressed through appropriately timed job assignments, though whether this was a case of patronage remains difficult to confirm due to the lack of sources. Milne, in his reply to Trenchard, also noted the possibility of finding an officer with *psa* to act as DS; a cultural symbol that Leigh-Mallory possessed, which made him an ideal candidate for the position.¹²⁵ Neither of Leigh-Mallory's predecessors, Gossage and Boyd, were Andover graduates. Leigh-Mallory's tenure at Camberley ended early, not from any perceived incompetence, but because of the need to replace Boyd as DDS. Trenchard's influence, however, can be overstated, as illustrated by his displeasure with Boyd's ability, as the latter still rose to be an AM.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, Trenchard nurtured and identified potential talent, and this filtered through to further appointments.

WgCr Leigh-Mallory was the third OC of the School of the Army Co-Operation to become DS at Camberley. WgCr Gossage, who stayed briefly after attending the staff course at Camberley, preceded Boyd.¹²⁷ The appointment of RAF DS dated to 1922, when Ironside, Camberley's Commandant, requested senior officers to deliver lectures; Salmond and Brook-Popham initially delivered these.¹²⁸ The question of RAF DS for Camberley was a key topic for discussion at the first annual conference between the RAF and Army on combined training in 1923.¹²⁹ Trenchard was concerned that there would not be enough work for DS, but supported the position's establishment. Trenchard was also concerned over the use of junior students at Camberley to discuss aspects of air power employment outside their experience due to the potential for misrepresenting key elements of the RAF's

¹²⁵ TNA, AIR 5/280, Chief of the Imperial General Staff to Chief of the Air Staff, 14 December 1928.

¹²⁶ TNA, AIR 5/280, Chief of the Air Staff to Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 10 December 1928.

¹²⁷ TNA, AIR 5/280, Note by Director of Training and Staff Duties on the Agenda for the Conference on the Subject of Combing Training of the Two Services, 18 January 1923.

¹²⁸ RAFM, Trenchard Papers, MFC 76/1/220, Trenchard to Ironside, 6 and 10 May 1922.

¹²⁹ TNA, AIR 5/280, Agenda for Conference between CAS and CIGS on the Subject of Combined Training of the Two Services, 18 January 1923, p. 1

views.¹³⁰ This related to the question of relevant qualifications, specifically *psa*, which in turn links to Leigh-Mallory's Andover experience that played a role in his appointment as DS. No corresponding positions appeared at Andover or Greenwich. However, relevant students and visiting Commandants did lecture at these establishments.¹³¹ This arrangement linked the small size of these establishments and the perceived inefficiency of attaching specialist DS from the other services. Leigh-Mallory's principle responsibilities included delivering lectures to both the Junior and Senior Divisions on air power subjects as well as immersing himself in the life of Camberley. At this point, Leigh-Mallory encountered the future General Sir Miles Dempsey and Field Marshal Dill; the latter was then, as a MajGen, Commandant of Camberley and a future CIGS, while the former was a student and future GOC 2nd Army during the Normandy Campaign in 1944.¹³² During the 1920s and 1930s, lecture content did not significantly change and included themes like 'The Function of the Royal Air Force', 'Air Co-Operation with the Army in the Advance' and 'Air in the Attack'.¹³³ Leigh-Mallory was involved in battlefield tours, a key pedagogical method at Camberley that allowed students to apply theories and ideas taught.¹³⁴ In 1931, Leigh-Mallory led a tour to Cambrai to discuss the 1917 battle, which illustrates his willingness and ability to engage with a range of pedagogical processes and subjects beyond those

¹³⁰ TNA, AIR 5/280, Minutes and Conclusions of the Conference between War Officer and Air Ministry, 13 February 1923, p. 3; TNA, AIR 5/280, Commandant, Army Staff College, Camberley to Director of Staff Duties, War Office, 28 February 1923.

¹³¹ TNA, AIR 5/280, Commandant, RAF Staff College to Secretary to the Air Ministry, 27 February 1923.

¹³² On Dempsey, see: Peter Rostron, *The Military Life & Times of General Sir Miles Dempsey: Monty's Army Commander* (Barnsley, Pen and Sword, 2010).

¹³³ Joint Services Command and Staff College (JSCSC), Camberley Reds, Staff College Lectures 1929 Junior Division Vol. 1 and Staff College Lectures 1929 Senior Division Vol. 1. The lectures delivered by Leigh-Mallory at Camberley and preserved in the so-called 'Camberley Reds', the collection of lectures delivered to both the Junior and Senior Divisions by the Directing Staff, were destroyed in a decision taken in 1940 by the Chief Librarian at Camberley to begin a clearing process. The librarian started with 1929 and got to 1933 before the process was thankfully abandoned.

¹³⁴ Caddick-Adams, 'Footsteps Across Time', p. 313

directly related to air power.¹³⁵ Given Leigh-Mallory's experience with the Tank Corps in 1918, this was an appropriate subject given the role of tanks in this battle.¹³⁶ Dill was impressed with Leigh-Mallory's work, and service at Camberley was the culmination of a decade of work in army co-operation, which, rather than hindering his career progress, actually marked him out as a capable officer.¹³⁷ Leigh-Mallory was able to immerse himself in RAF culture while recognising the need to work with the other services.

Leigh-Mallory's time at the School of Army Co-Operation came in two phases. First, from 1921 to 1923, Leigh-Mallory commanded the Co-Operation Squadron that, in 1924, became 16 (Army Co-Operation) Squadron, which was the School of Army Co-Operation's operational element and worked with the school and local Army units from Southern Command, such as the School of Artillery at Larkhill. Leigh-Mallory's responsibilities largely matched those concerning his command of 8 Squadron in 1918. Second, Leigh-Mallory returned as OC in 1927 when the School of Army Co-Operation was intimately involved with the Army's mechanisation experiments on Salisbury Plain. These assignments built on Leigh-Mallory's expertise in army co-operation and saw him socialise with the Army, thus improving his ability to work across different organisational silos. In between these postings, Leigh-Mallory was still involved in developing and managing relations with the Army. For example, in September 1925, the Army held its first corps sized manoeuvres since the end of the First World War. Unlike the manoeuvres of 1913, when the Army called on its own organic air arm, the RFC, the 1925 exercise required co-operation from the RAF to replicate modern battlefield conditions.¹³⁸ The key

¹³⁵ JSCSC Archives, BTC072, Foreign Tour 1931, Syndicate No. 3, The 4 Corps in the Battle of Cambrai, 20-23 November 1917.

¹³⁶ On Cambrai, see: Bryn Hammond, *Cambrai 1917: The Myth of the First Great Tank Battle* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2008).

¹³⁷ JSCSC Archives, BTC072, Foreign Tour 1931, Syndicate No. 3, Typed notes by Dill.

¹³⁸ On the 1913 manoeuvres, see: Whitmarsh, 'British Army Manoeuvres', pp. 325-46.

criticism levelled at the RAF in 1925 was the perennial problem of command and control, which was not solved until the Second World War, and was one Leigh-Mallory reiterated in his 1930 RUSI lecture.¹³⁹ Appointed to the Conduct of Operations Staff for the manoeuvres DS, Leigh-Mallory served alongside AVM Webb-Bowen and was responsible for the management of resources between the two opposing forces.¹⁴⁰ While at Andover, Leigh-Mallory was seconded to this appointment during the break between the first and second terms. Given his previous service, Leigh-Mallory was identified as an appropriate officer to support RAF functions during these manoeuvres while furthering his professional development. While nothing, in terms of doctrine, came out of the manoeuvres, Liddell Hart described them as being ‘worth doing, even more for their negative than their positive lessons’.¹⁴¹ Several other students from Andover also worked on the Air Staff, showing the importance of using Staff College qualified personnel to support exercises and present RAF views. WgCrs Barratt and Gossage, both at Camberley as a student and DS respectively, were involved, as was Boyd, then OC, School of Army Co-Operation.¹⁴² The RAF, through the mechanism of Andover, used this exercise as a means of developing officers in operational conditions related to large-scale manoeuvres with the Army. Including Leigh-Mallory, the names presented above represented four OCs, School of Army Co-Operation and these men went on to hold senior leadership positions during the Second World War. Apart from work with units on Salisbury Plain and the EMF, Leigh-Mallory’s key work on assuming command at the School of Army Co-Operation involved delivering a variety of courses in army co-operation to RAF and Army

¹³⁹ WO 279/56, *Report on Army Manoeuvres, 1925*, December 1925, pp. 44-5.

¹⁴⁰ LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 15/8/67, *Report on Army Manoeuvres, 1925*; Major F.A. de V. Robertson, VD, ‘The RAF and Army Manoeuvres’, *Flight*, 20 August 1925, p. 540.

¹⁴¹ Captain B.H. Liddell Hart, ‘Army Manoeuvres 1925’, *JRUSI*, 70 (1925), p. 647.

¹⁴² TNA, WO 279/56, Instructions regarding Training in the Manoeuvre Area for 1925, 27 July 1925.

officers.¹⁴³ Four key courses existed: one for mid-ranking Army officers designated Branch Intelligence Officers/Intelligence Liaison Officers and Squadron Artillery Officers; a Senior RAF Officer Course designed to familiarise officers with army co-operation practices before postings with operational squadrons; a general Army Co-Operation Course; and finally, a ten-day Senior Army Officer Course, which was designed to inculcate Army officers with RAF practices and ‘sell’ the conception and belief of ‘Command of the Air’. This course began under Leigh-Mallory’s tenure as OC and continued due to its initial success.¹⁴⁴ This required Leigh-Mallory to relate to and socialise with senior officers; for example, the course held from 25 November to 4 December 1929 consisted of five MajGens and five Brigadiers.¹⁴⁵

The context to this job assignment was the relations between the RAF and the other services. The formation of the RAF raised questions over the apportionment of resources amongst the services and their role in the British defence establishment. As Chapter Six noted concerning articles on air power, this challenge centred on the conception of the belief in ‘Command of the Air’, which had implications for independence. Even at the tactical level, differences abounded over the ownership and indivisibility of air power. In 1935, Captain I. Macgregor wrote of the need for an ‘Army Air Arm’ in the pages of *JRUSI*.¹⁴⁶ This brought the reply from an unidentified author who wrote that Macgregor did not understand that:

The creation of a separate Army Air Arm appears to be a rather cumbrous method of solving the difficulty of adequate liaison between the Army and RAF.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ The term ‘EMF’ is used for consistency, even though in 1928 it was known as the Experimental Armoured Force, see: TNA, AIR 10/1759, AP1372, *Army Co-Operation Report 1928*, March 1929, p. 21.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁴⁵ TNA, AIR 29/678, Brief History of the School of Army-Co-Operation, School of Army Co-Operation, Operations Record Book, p. 15.

¹⁴⁶ Captain I MacGregor, RA, ‘The Army and the Air’, *JRUSI*, 80 (1935), pp. 500-4.

¹⁴⁷ ‘LIAISON’, ‘The Army and the Air - A Reply’, *JRUSI*, 80 (1935), p. 823.

This was even more prevalent at senior levels. Despite espousing the value of air power to officers of the EMF in September 1927, Milne insisted on describing the RAF as an ‘arm’ and not a service in a 1933 letter to the Secretary of State for War, Viscount Hailsham.¹⁴⁸ Milne argued that air power’s primary role was reconnaissance and air observation, therefore, control should be returned to the Army. Given this context, Leigh-Mallory’s command of the School of Army Co-operation had implications for nurturing relations between the RAF and Army. Leigh-Mallory was adept at influencing relationships linked to his command. Key amongst these was GOC 3rd Division, MajGen John Burnett-Stuart, who oversaw the EMF exercises in 1927 and 1928. French described Burnett-Stuart as one of the few Army officers to grasp the changing character of warfare in the 1920s, while J.P. Harris considered that he thought of himself as ‘progressive’.¹⁴⁹ As cited below, the evidence indicates that Burnett-Stuart recognised the importance of air power and the work of Leigh-Mallory and the School of Army Co-Operation. The EMF was set up to test ideas around the use of tanks and disbanded in 1929 to examine other avenues. The contradictory position of the Army on mechanisation presented a challenge to the RAF, as it was the supporting force behind any developments undertaken. To sum up this position, Major B.C. Denning of the Royal Engineers wrote in *JRUSI* in 1927 that it was difficult to get the various arms to agree on what type of modernisation they were seeking.¹⁵⁰ Adding independent air power into the mix made the whole process a challenging one that required an able officer to influence thinking on the subject.

¹⁴⁸ LHCMA, Liddell Hart Papers, 11/1927/7, Copy of the ‘Address to the Officers of the Mechanized Force by the CIGS at Tidworth’, 8 September 1927; LHCMA, Personal Papers of Field Marshal George Milne, 1st Baron Milne, Box 3, Letter to Secretary of State for War, 10 February 1933.

¹⁴⁹ French, *Raising Churchill’s Army*, p. 20; Harris, *Men, Ideas and Tanks*, p. 214. The key academic biography of Burnett-Stuart remains: Harold Winton, *To Change an Army: General Sir John Burnett-Stuart and British Armoured Doctrine, 1927-38* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1988).

¹⁵⁰ Major B.C. Denning, MC, RE, ‘The Obstacles in the Way of Mechanization of the Army’, *JRUSI*, 72 (1927), p. 784.

While Leigh-Mallory did not broadly change Army views, he did have some impact, as evidenced by the correspondence between Trenchard and Milne cited above concerning DS at Camberley. Leigh-Mallory recognised that effective co-operation between air power and mechanised forces could bring mobility back to the battlefield, and of particular interest to the RAF during these experiments was how fighter aircraft could co-operate with ground forces despite continuing communication problems.¹⁵¹ In some respects, from a modern perspective, Leigh-Mallory acted as a transformational leader by seeking to enact change by identifying challenges and developing a shared vision for an evolving concept of operations, as illustrated by his 1931 *RAFQ* article, and an ability to apply RAF thinking to the problem.¹⁵² That Leigh-Mallory was not fully successful stems from factors outside of his control, such as difficult relations between the RAF and Army at the senior level. Furthermore, in a covering letter to General Officer Commander-in-Chief Southern Command, Montgomery-Massingberd, Burnett-Stuart drew out Leigh-Mallory's role and importance. This set the tone of his later recollections in 1931 when appointed to the lead Southern Command and in his unpublished memoir.¹⁵³ In the covering letter, Burnett-Stuart described Leigh-Mallory's co-operation as 'invaluable'. Burnett-Stuart's only criticism was that there might have been too much support and that he was concerned that 'the Armoured Force ha[d] come to rely on it too much'; a portent of the degree of integration evident in the Army's operational method during the latter half of the Second World War.¹⁵⁴ The clearest indication of Leigh-Mallory's ability to relate to the other services

¹⁵¹ Leigh-Mallory, 'Air Co-operation with Mechanized Forces', p. 565; TNA, AIR 10/1759, AP1372, *Army Co-Operation Report 1928*, p. 21.

¹⁵² Leigh-Mallory, 'The Maintenance of Air Superiority', pp. 245-52.

¹⁵³ LHCMA, Personal Papers of General Sir John Burnett Stuart, Paper entitled "Training", Dated 1931; LHCMA, Burnett-Stuart Papers, Unpublished Memoir, p. 50. The latter reference comes from Chapter XVI of Burnett-Stuart's unpublished memoir, which gives a good overview of his role as a divisional commander and also his experience of the EMF.

¹⁵⁴ TNA, WO 32/2828, GOC 3rd Division to GOC Southern Command reference Armoured Force Training Report, November 1928, p. 6.

appeared in a letter from the Army Council, who, on 13 December 1929, made their 'appreciation' known to the Air Ministry concerning his services.¹⁵⁵ The Air Ministry subsequently noted their 'pleasure' at the content of the letter, ensuring that Leigh-Mallory was made aware of this. Service as an army co-operation specialist clearly did not damage Leigh-Mallory's career and potentially enhanced his 'visibility' for nurturing, as was the case for other officers, such as Gossage.

A final indication of Leigh-Mallory's ability in this area comes from the annual Army Co-Operation Reports that appear to have emerged during his tenure at the School of Army Co-Operation. While difficult to describe them as formal doctrine in the sense that they did not seek to espouse a concept of operations, they were a key element of the School of Army Co-Operation's role by detailing RAF work in that sphere. Based on information provided by various commands and squadrons in the field as well as the work of the School of Army Co-Operations, the reports remained a key source of information on developments in army co-operation. Split into four sections, the reports covered training arrangements, the year's work, communication and equipment. While signed by CAS, the School of Army Co-Operation acted as the co-ordinating organisation for the production of these reports. Leigh-Mallory provided a précis of the 1929 report in the first edition of *RAFQ*.¹⁵⁶ While the OC did not write the reports on their own, Leigh-Mallory's *RAFQ* contribution illustrates that they oversaw and co-ordinated its production, thus indicating that he worked with various stakeholders in army co-operation, like the Air Ministry, deployed squadrons and various commands. Published in 1928, the reports began

¹⁵⁵ TNA, WO 339/28812, Secretary to the Army Council to Secretary to the Air Ministry, 13 December 1929; TNA, WO 339/28812, Secretary to the Air Ministry to the Under-Secretary of State, War Office, 30 January 1930.

¹⁵⁶ For the reports written during Leigh-Mallory's tenure as Commandant, see: TNA, AIR 10/1708, AP1313, *Army Co-Operation Report 1927*, January 1928; TNA, AIR 10/1759, AP1372, *Army Co-Operation Report 1928*, March 1929; TNA, AIR 10/1777, AP1390, *Army Co-Operation Report 1929*, January 1930; Leigh-Mallory, 'Co-Operation between the Army', pp. 37-44.

in 1927 when Leigh-Mallory became OC, and no similar reports appear for comparable fields like naval co-operation, which suggests much about the attitude of the RAF towards the RN and maritime air power in this period.

As during the First World War, Leigh-Mallory was an officer attempting to influence thinking at the tactical and operational level by informing the RAF of key developments. It is, of course, difficult to measure the influence the reports had; however, several indicators suggest that they were more than just ephemeral pamphlets. First, signed by CAS, they went through an Air Ministry approval process and were seen by various constituencies involved in relations with the Army, like the Directorate of Organisation and Staff Duties and the Directorate of Training, which suggests dissemination at least at the RAF's senior level. However, they were probably more widely disseminated as they were produced as APs, which were not limited in their distribution within the RAF. Second, publication of Leigh-Mallory's précis in *RAFQ* suggests an attempt to illustrate the wider implications of RAF co-operation.¹⁵⁷ This is significant given that these articles went through an approval process. Finally, the reports continued after Leigh-Mallory's departure from the School of Army Co-Operation; thus, his successors and the Air Ministry must have placed some value on their production.

7.5 Summary

While this chapter focused on Leigh-Mallory's career specifically, it is possible to suggest from his experience that the RAF, while lacking a formal career planning system, did not ignore the need to nurture and appoint officers to job assignments cognisant with their experience and ability. Leigh-Mallory's staff appointments in the Air Ministry are the

¹⁵⁷ Leigh-Mallory, 'Co-Operation between the Army', pp. 37-44.

clearest indication of nurturing, as highlighted by his work as DDSD, which involved co-operation with the Army; a field in which he was highly experienced. Through this job assignment, Leigh-Mallory underwent socialisation with key members of his peer group in the Air Ministry, but most significantly with senior officers who could further nurture his development. While there is no evidence to suggest that Leigh-Mallory corresponded with Trenchard, he was known to him through the former's work at the School of Army Co-Operation. While patronage is always difficult to map, Trenchard's awareness and implicit belief in Leigh-Mallory's abilities, as evidenced by the former's 1928 letter to Milne, cannot have harmed the latter's prospects. Appointment as DS at Camberley was a highly selective position, with only six officers holding this posting during this period. It was also unique amongst the staff colleges, with no reciprocal posts at either Andover or Greenwich. A degree of trust, similar to that placed on DS at Andover and the IDC, was placed in Leigh-Mallory's ability. The same argument can be posited concerning his service in Geneva. That Leigh-Mallory returned to a post in the Air Ministry supports the view that his nurturing continued post-Geneva despite the problems identified with the conference by historians. Finally, as noted in this chapter's introduction, these various job assignments exposed officers to experiences that developed their leadership knowledge, like managing the transition to a position with unfamiliar responsibilities and succeeding, helping create change, and managing relationships both internally and externally, which helped mark them out for further advancement.

Summary

The 'Peter Principle'?

Leigh-Mallory's appointment as AOC 12 Group in December 1937 remains a conundrum given his lack of experience in fighter operations. This cuts to the central question of how an officer with so many perceived detractors, reached senior leadership positions in the RAF. The challenge is that this author has not found any archival evidence as to why this appointment was made; therefore, there are two potential answers. First, based on the notion of the 'Peter Principle' – the idea that people are promoted based on their current position and rise to the level of their incompetence – Leigh-Mallory's appointment was based on his previous service as SASO in Iraq, and that the RAF simply sought to fill a newly created position.¹ Given the challenges identified concerning career management in the RAF, this might be a reasonable deduction. However, the evidence presented in this thesis suggests that the RAF tended to make appropriate appointments based on prior experience, which makes this seem unlikely. Therefore, the second possible answer is that the RAF nurtured Leigh-Mallory for senior leadership. While the RAF clearly did not understand terms such as networking, socialisation and job assignments that have been used in this thesis, the Service did recognise that it was responsible for developing its future senior leaders. Indeed, it is worth restating what is meant by leadership development, which Bolden described as:

the facilitation of dialogue, experience, relationships and the recognition of shared values and purpose within and beyond organizations.²

¹ Laurence J. Peter and Raymond Hull put this idea forward in their 1969 book, *The Peter Principle: Why Things Always Go Wrong* (New York: HarperCollins, 1969). This book has been continually reprinted with a new edition published in 2014.

² Richard Bolden, 'A Yearning for the Vast and Endless Sea: From Competence to Purpose in Leadership Development' in Jupp (ed.), *Air Force Leadership*, p. 113.

Through its culture and ethos, the RAF developed officers who were exposed to these factors. The RAF, as early as Trenchard's 1919 'Permanent Organization' paper, recognised the need to develop its officers to engender the value of the 'Air Force Spirit'. By developing this element of RAF culture, the Service created organisational capacity to produce leaders who could drive it forward while defending the assumption of independence in an era of financial austerity. This emerging organisational capacity was generated by inculcating leaders with elements of its culture, which found its organisational outgrowth in the GD Branch. However, rather than using methods associated with modern leadership development such as mentoring, the RAF created structures and institutions such as Andover, which allowed the Service to nurture officers while developing their intellectual capacity through what would now be accepted as action learning, socialisation, and appropriate job assignments. This is because the RAF collegiately nurtured officers who made themselves 'visible' by interacting with the processes identified in this thesis. Indeed, for example, the award of *psa* and its relationship with succession planning in the RAF is a clear indication that the Service prepared and nurtured selected officers for future leadership roles. Thus, the evidence presented in this thesis suggests that the most likely scenario concerning Leigh-Mallory's appointment to a senior position in 1937 is that throughout his career he had made himself 'visible' to the system. By successfully doing this, and interacting with both RAF culture and the Service's leadership mores, Leigh-Mallory was the type of officer desired; public school educated, a pilot with command experience, knowledge of staff duties and Staff College educated. Indeed, based on the patterns that emerged from the study of the prosopography population in this thesis, though recognising the challenge of correlating general patterns to specific individuals, the above fitted the RAF's view of a typical senior leader. Furthermore, based on this comparison with his peers, such as Portal, Douglas and Tedder, it is clear that Leigh-

Mallory's experience during the inter-war years led him to gain a 'balanced ticket' that made him the type of officer that RAF wanted.

While Leigh-Mallory was clearly nurtured by the RAF, it is worth reiterating the point made by Longmore in 1939 that, for all the training and education the former received, this might just make him an 'an extremely intelligent and highly trained staff officer'.³ Indeed, it is further worth recognising that while the RAF perceived itself to be nurturing the right type of officer; there were challenges for the system. For example, the RAF's early insistence on focussing on officers of the GD Branch reinforced Service cultural preferences, such as the idea that all officers should be able to fly. This meant that potentially capable officers from the Stores Branch, who did not represent Service ethos, did not receive the same opportunities as their GD Branch counterparts. Similarly, the preference for public school recruits reinforced class proclivities in the Service as highlighted by Evill's 1931 Cranwell report, though the RAF clearly believed that recruits from this source had the best leadership abilities, which was an idea it shared with the Army and other professions at this time. Finally, the challenges of career management were never fully grappled with by the RAF. For example, the lack of an Air Secretary post-1923 was a major issue as was finally recognised in 1956. Similarly, while the RAF sought to promote based on merit, as Chapter Three recognised, it was a system open to its own challenges, such as the qualitative use of metrics emanating from ACRs. Therefore, while the RAF nurtured potential senior leaders, and given some of the challenges noted, it would take the outbreak of the Second World War to test whether the decision by the Service to appoint Leigh-Mallory and his peers to senior positions was the correct one, and

³ Longmore, 'Training for Higher Command', p. 476.

whether they were able to translate the lessons learned from their prior job assignments to the challenge of high command in war.

Appendix One

The Career of Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, KCB, DSO, psa, IDC

This appendix covers Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory's promotions, appointments and awards received during his career. The information presented here has been compiled from a variety of personnel and operational records as well as *The Air Force List*. It includes Leigh-Mallory's pre-service experience, though exact dates remain unclear.

Year	Date	Promotion	Appointment	Award	Other
1892	11 July				Born in Mobberley, Cheshire
1906					Attended Haileybury School
1910					Attended Magdalene College, University of Cambridge on a History Exhibition scholarship
1913					Graduated from Magdalene College, University of Cambridge with two 3 rd Class degrees in History and Law
1914	6 August	Private	10 th (Liverpool Scottish) Battalion, Liverpool Regiment, Territorial Force		Discharged on 5 September 1914 upon appointment as 2 nd Lieutenant
	15 August	2 nd Lieutenant	4 th (Special Reserve) Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers		Seniority backdated to this point.
1915	6 April		2 nd Battalion, South Lancashire Regiment		
	16/17 June				Wounded at the Battle of Bellewaerde Ridge
	21 June	Lieutenant			
	22 June		Home Establishment		

1916	21 July		on Leave 4 th (Special Reserve) Battalion, Lancashire Fusiliers	
	4 January		No. 1 School of Aeronautics, Reading	
	7 July	Flying Officer and seconded		
	22 February		12 (Reserve) Squadron, Central Flying School	
	31 March		20 (Reserve) Squadron, Central Flying School	
	13 July		7 Squadron, France	
	20 July		5 Squadron, France	
	2 November	Flight Commander and Temporary Captain		
	1917	22 April		Home Establishment on Leave
10 May			Officer Commanding, 15 (Reserve) Squadron, Britain	
14 May		Squadron Commander and Temporary Major		
27 November			Officer Commanding, 8 Squadron, France	
1918	20 November		12 Wing for temporary duties	
	6 December		Officer Commanding, No, 8 Squadron, France	Forms part of the Army of Occupation
	30 December			Mentioned in Despatches
1919	1 January			Distinguished Service Order
	31 July		Home Establishment on Leave	
	1 August	Squadron		Awarded

	Leader		Permanent Commission in the RAF. Seniority backdated to 1 April 1918
	15 September	86 Wing, RAF Kenley	
	1 October	1 (Communications) Squadron	
	28 October	Storage Park, RAF Kenley	
	15 December	Inspector of Recruiting	
1921	1 February	Officer Commanding, Operational Squadron, School of Army Co-Operation	
1922	22 September	For Course of Instruction at the British Army's Senior Officers' School, Woking	
	16 December	Officer Commanding, Operational Squadron, School of Army Co-Operation	
1923	7 May	Staff Duties, Deputy Directorate of Staff Duties, Directorate of Organisation and Staff Duties, Department of the Chief of the Air Staff	
1925	1 January	Wing Commander	
	4 May	Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	<i>psa</i>
1926	1 April	Supernumerary, 7 Group, Inland Area	
	14 April	Air Staff Duties, 22 Group, Inland Area	
1927	10 April	Commandant, School of Army Co-Operation	

1930	1 January	Directing Staff, Army Staff College, Camberley	
	5 March		Lecture on 'Air Co-Operation with Mechanized Forces' at the Royal United Services Institution Awarded 2 nd Prize in the Gordon Shepherd Memorial Prize
1931	7 August	Deputy Director of Staff Duties, Directorate of Organisation and Staff Duties, Department of the Chief of the Air Staff	
	1 December	Supernumerary, 1 Air Defence Group, Air Defence of Great Britain	Appointment while serving as a member of RAF staff at the Geneva Disarmament Conference
1932	1 January	Group Captain	
	1 October	Deputy Director of Staff Duties, Directorate of Organisation and Staff Duties, Department of the Chief of the Air Staff	
1934	16 January	Student, Imperial Defence College	IDC
	19 December	OC, No. 2 Flying Training School, 23 Group, Inland Area	Awarded 2 nd Prize in the Gordon Shepherd Memorial Prize

1935	22 November		Senior Air Staff Office, HQ British Forces in Iraq
1936	1 January	Air Commodore	
1937	17 December		Air Officer Commanding, 12 Group, Fighter Command
1938	1 November	Air Vice-Marshal	
1940	11 July		Companion of the Order of the Bath
	11 July		Mentioned in Despatches
	18 December		Air Officer Commanding, 11 Group, Fighter Command
1942	29 May		<i>Polonia Restituta</i> , 2 nd Class (Poland)
	13 July	Air Marshal (Acting)	
	18 November		Air Officer Commander-in-Chief, Fighter Command
1943	1 December	Air Marshal (Temporary)	
	1 January		Mentioned in Despatches
	1 July		Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath
1944	15 November		Air Commander-in-Chief, Allied Expeditionary Air Force
	15 December	Air Chief Marshal (Acting)	
	1 January	Air Marshal (Substantive)	
	16 August	Air Chief Marshal (Temporary)	
	15 October		Allied Air Commander-in-Chief, South East Asia
	14 November		Died in

1945	30 January	Legion of Merit, Degree of Chief Commander (US)	Grenoble, France
	30 January	Order of Kutuzov, 1 st Class (USSR)	

Appendix Two

Charts

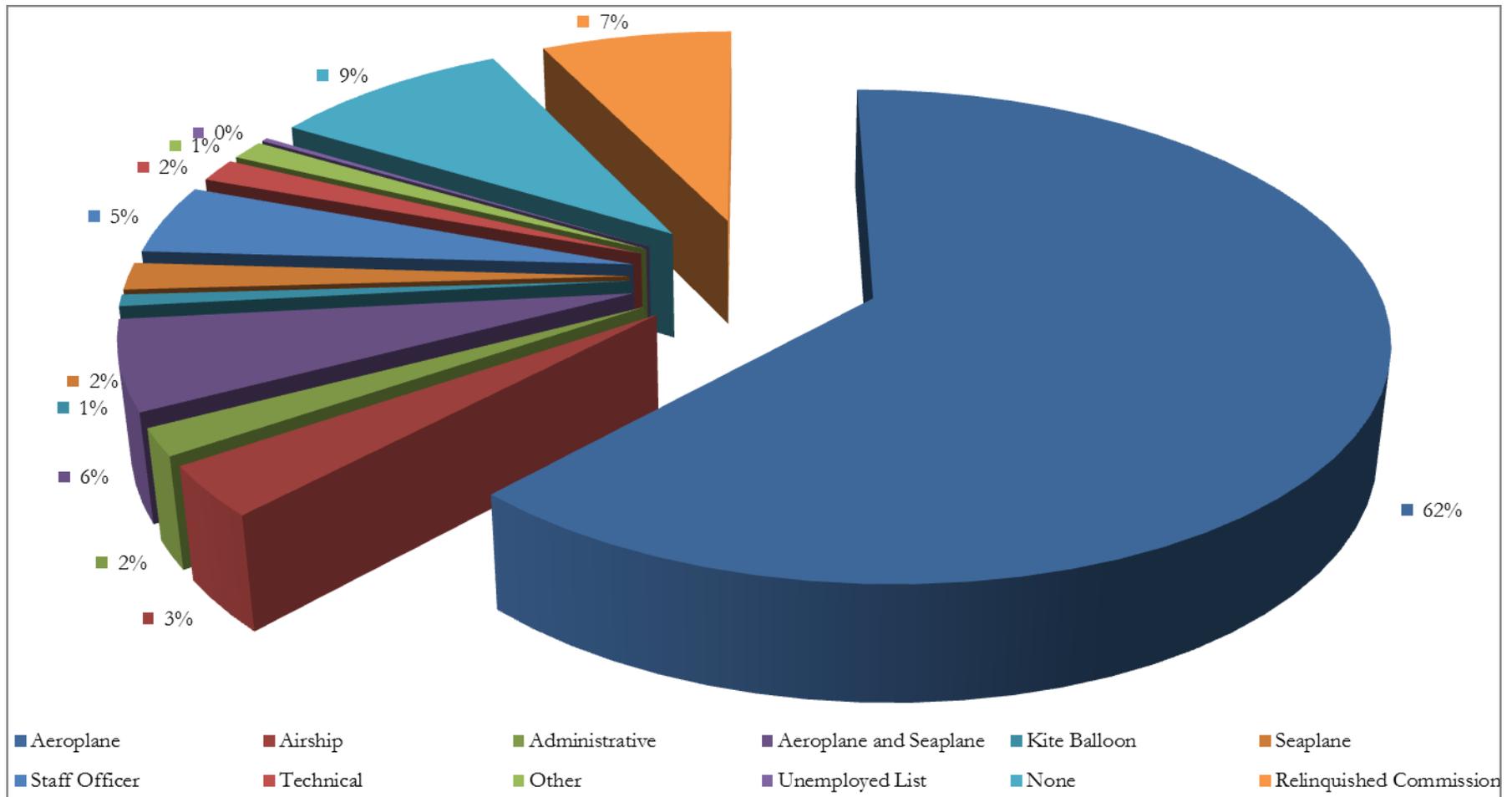


Chart 2.1 – Original RAF Branch Classification for Officers from Appendix Three as listed in *The Air Force List* of March 1919 (Source: Appendix Three)

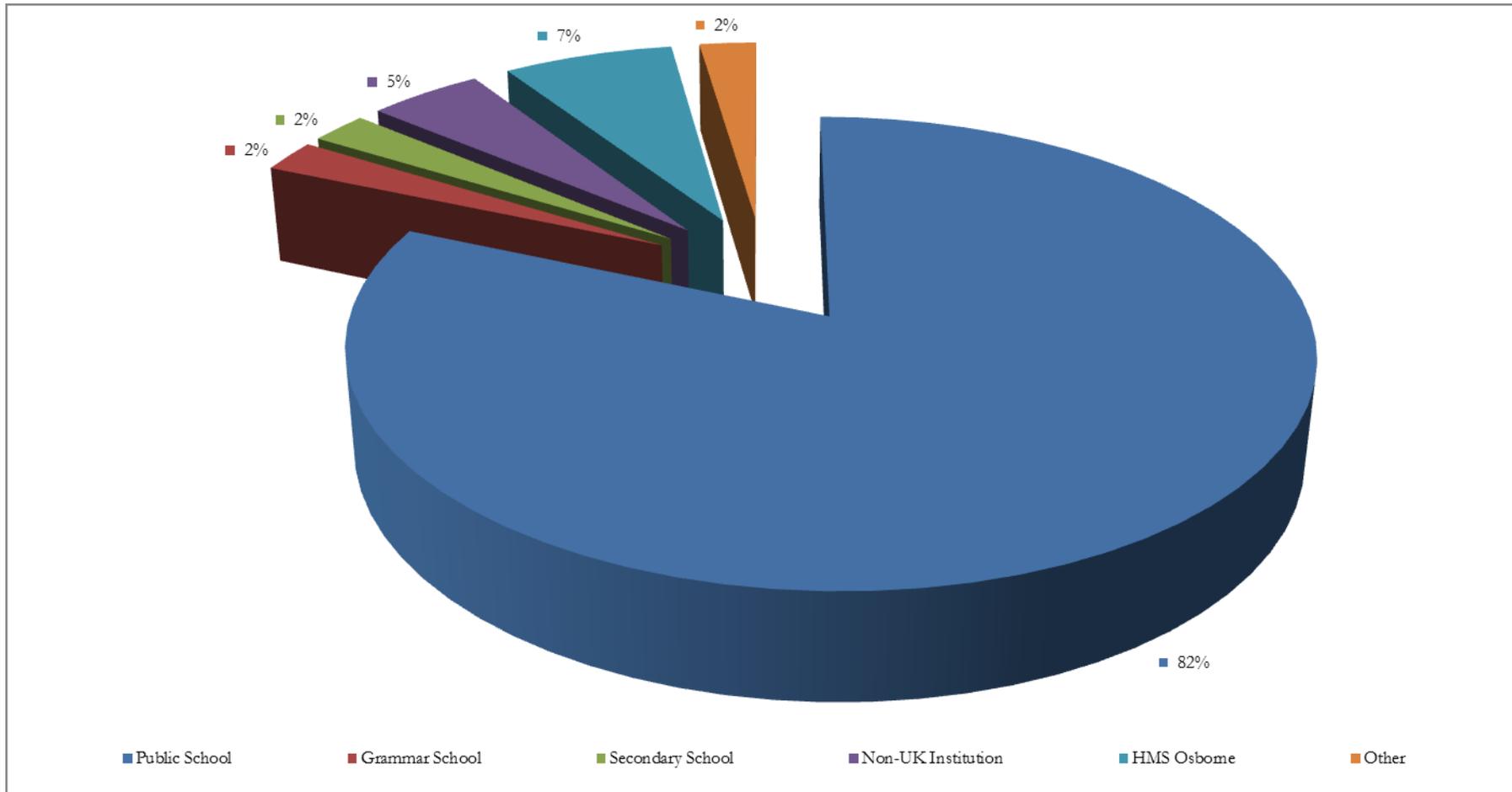


Chart 3.1 – Secondary Education Experience for those Officers who reached Air Rank by March 1939 (Source: Appendix Four)

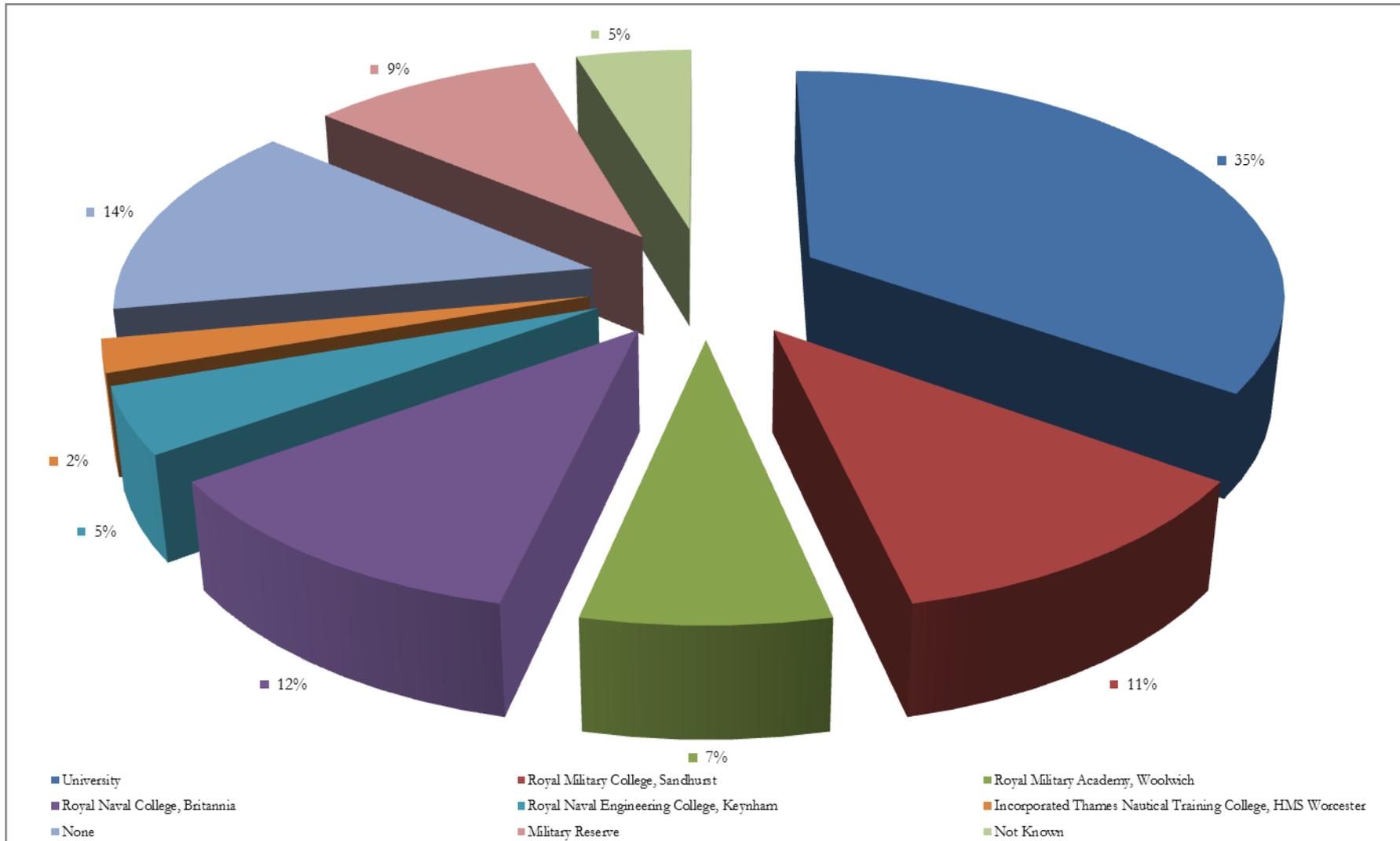


Chart 3.2 – Primary Post-Secondary School Experience for those Officers who reached Air Rank by March 1939 (Source: Appendix Four)

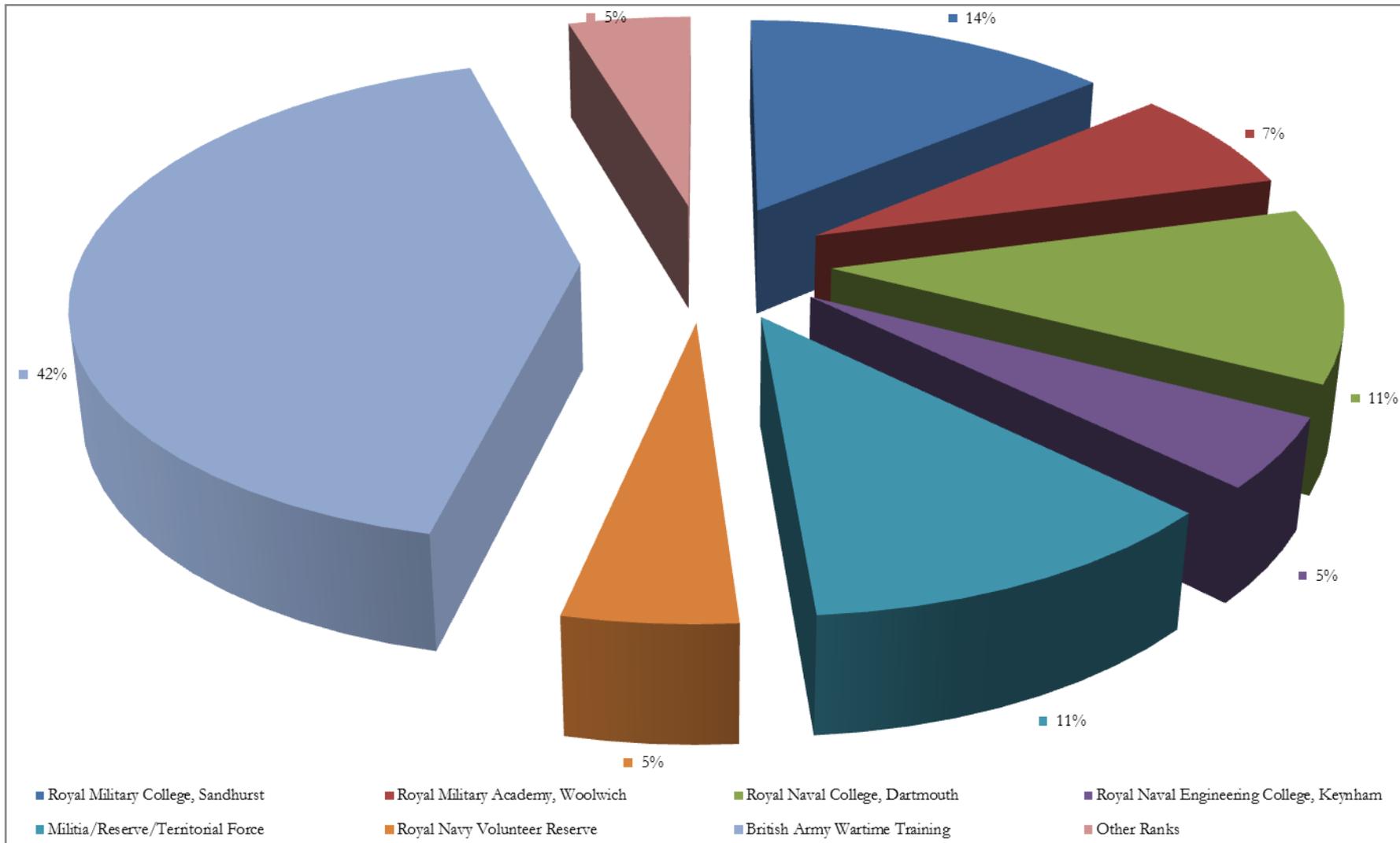


Chart 3.3 – Source of Military Training for those Officers who reached Air Rank by March 1939 (Source: Appendix Four)

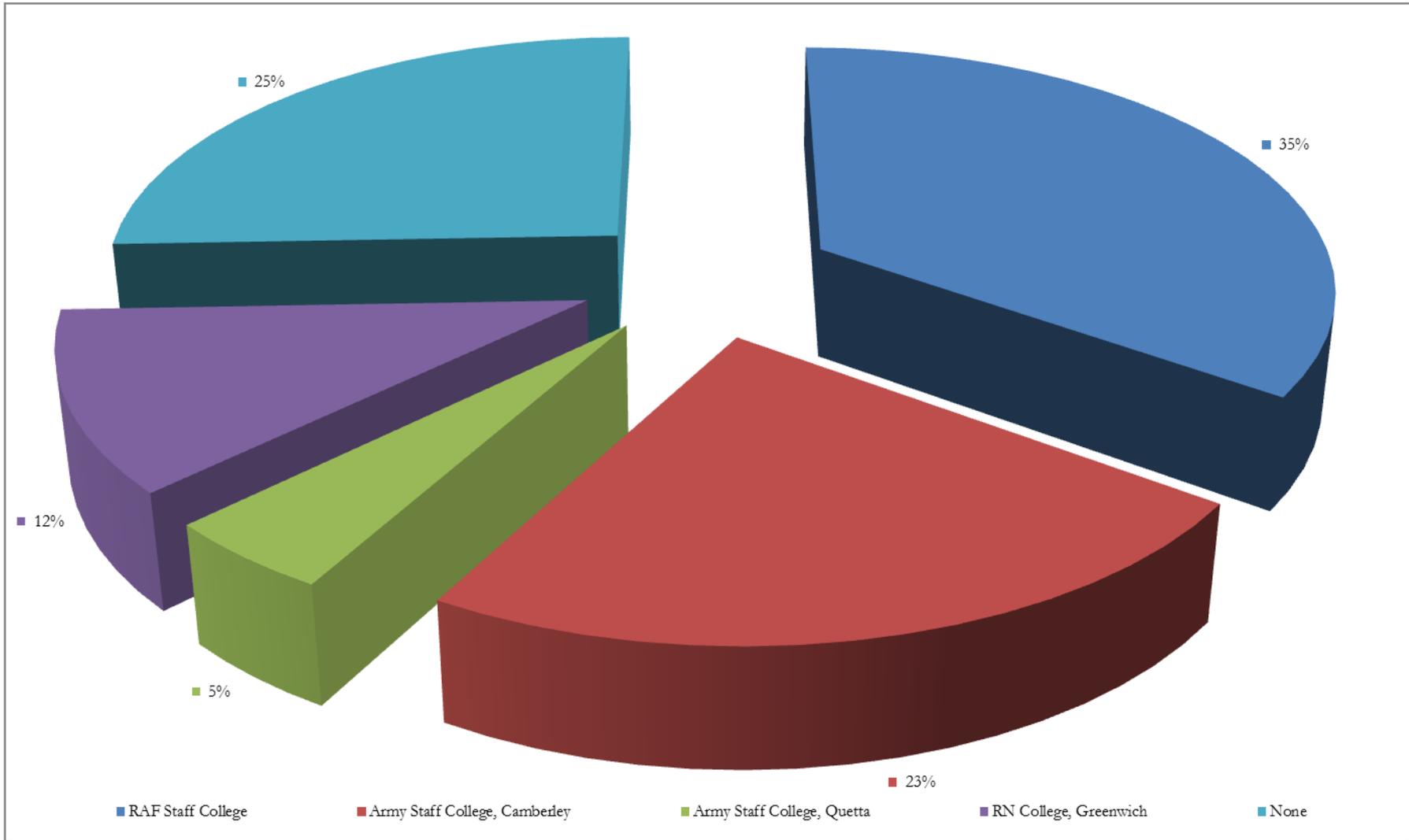


Chart 3.4 – Experience of Staff College Education for those Officers who reached Air Rank by March 1939 (Source: Appendix Four)

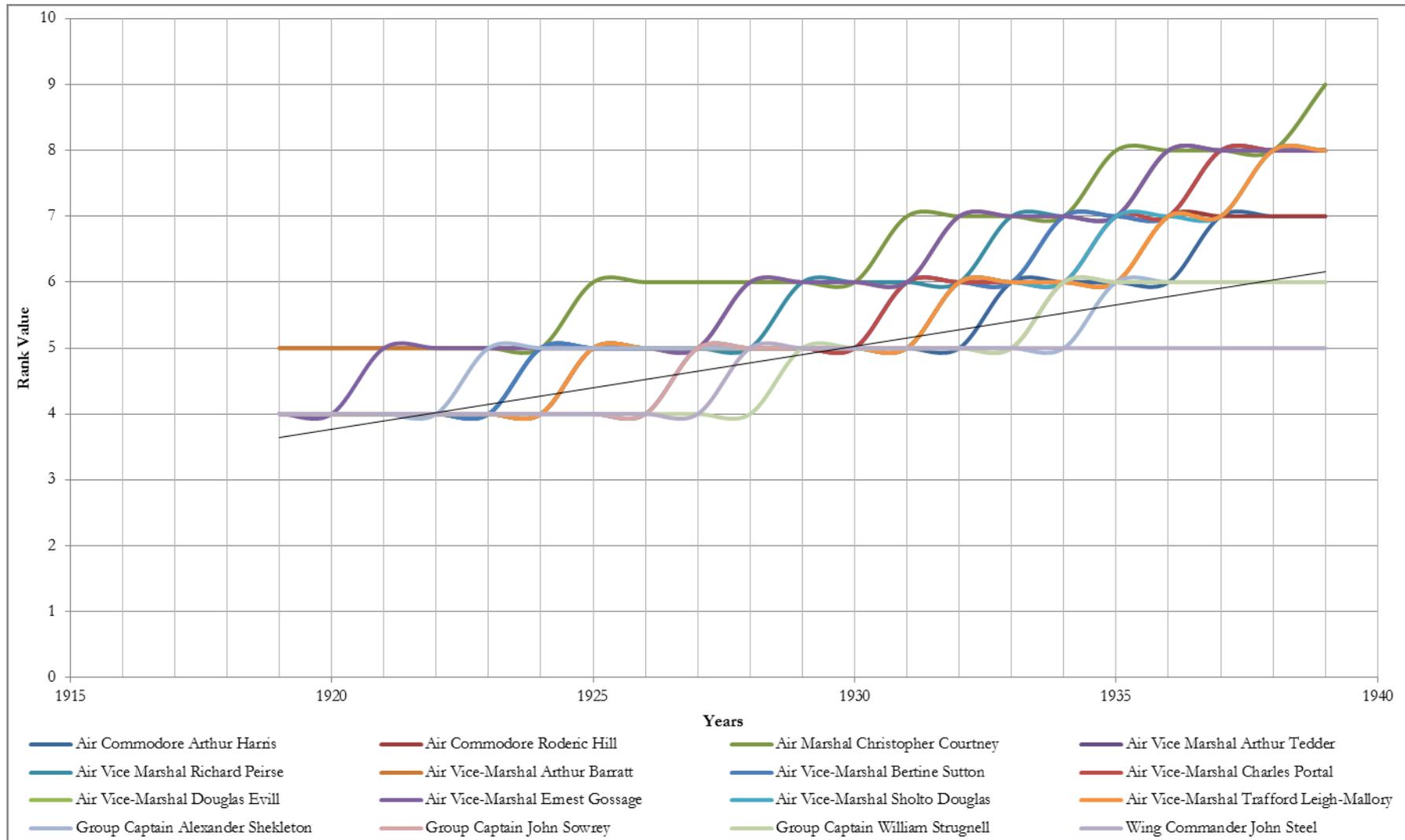


Chart 3.5 – Promotion Rhythm of a Sample of Officers still Employed by the RAF in March 1939 (Source: Appendix Three)

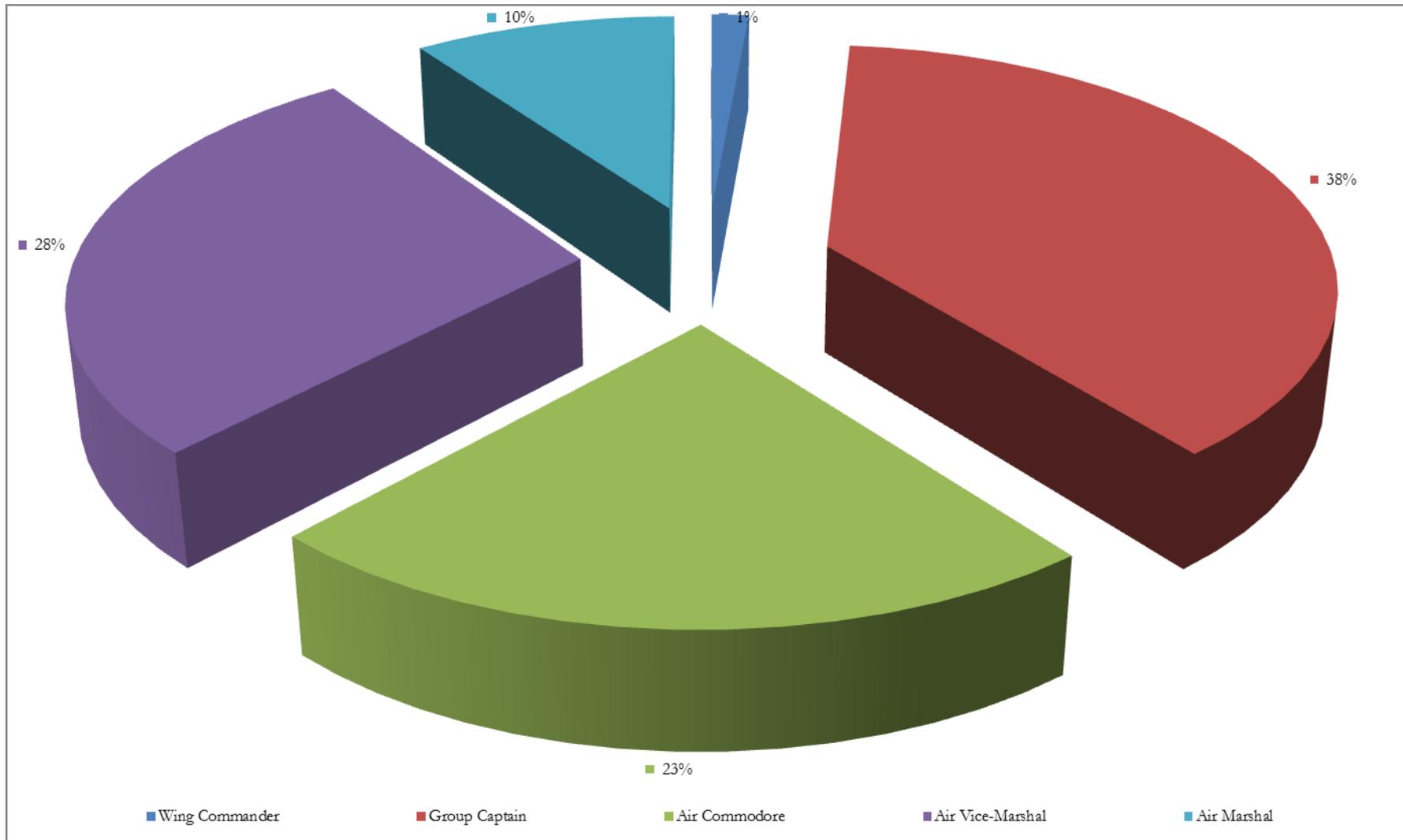


Chart 3.6 – Rank of Officers still employed by the RAF in March 1939 (Source: Appendix Three)

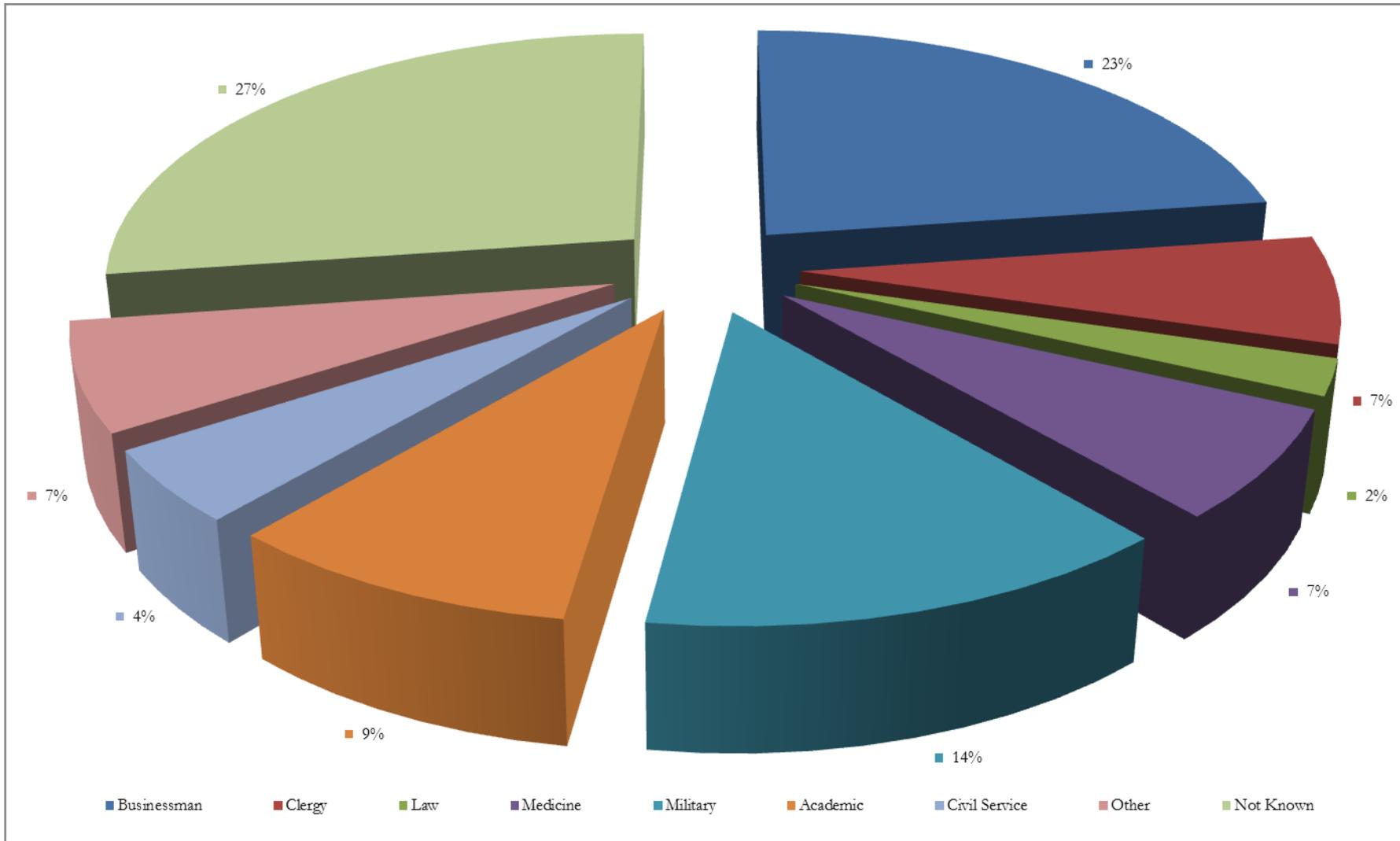


Chart 4.1 – Father’s Occupation of Officers who reached Air Rank by March 1939 (Source: Appendix Four)

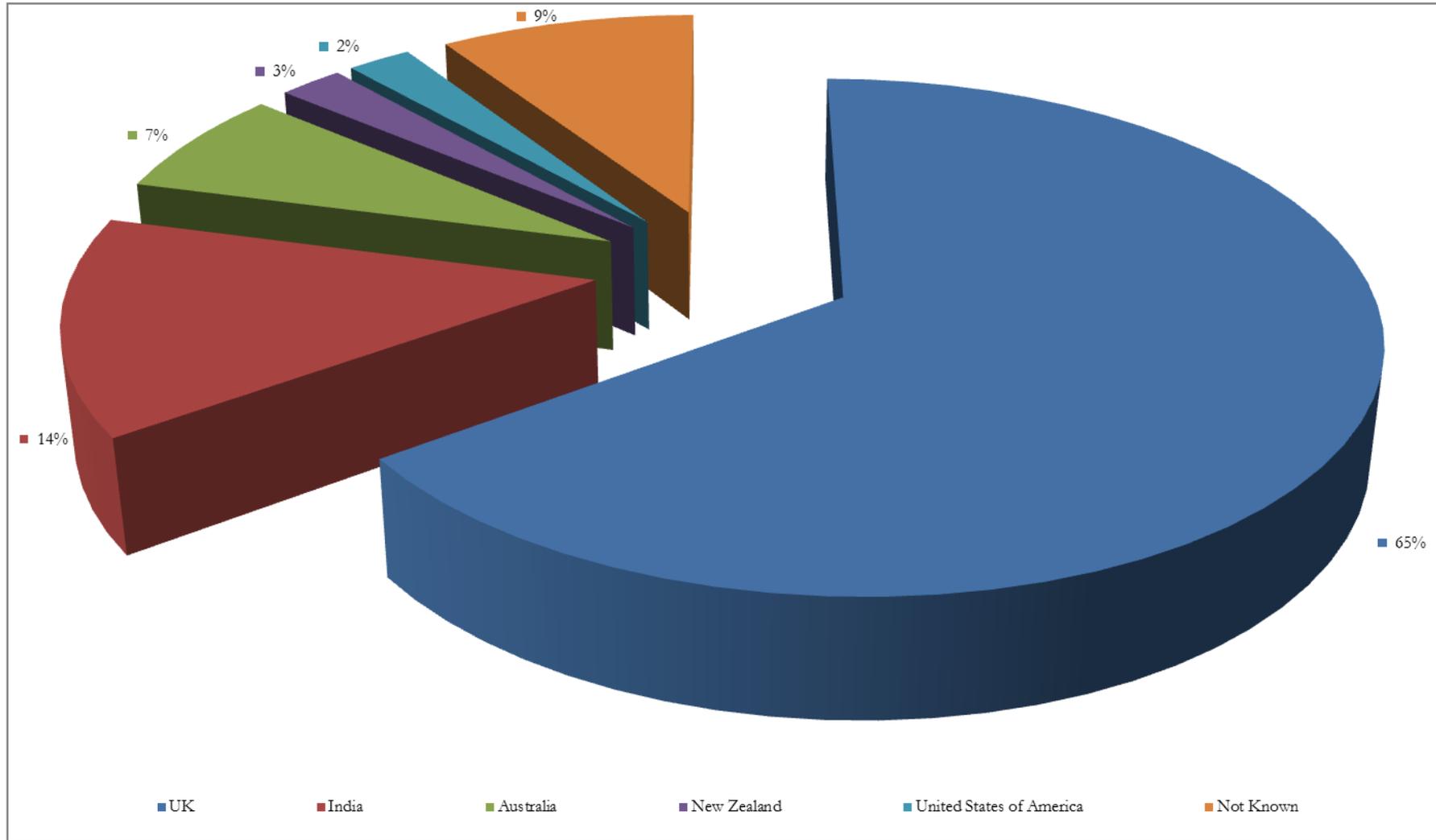


Chart 4.2 – Country of Birth of Officers who reached Air Rank by March 1939 (Source: Appendix Four)

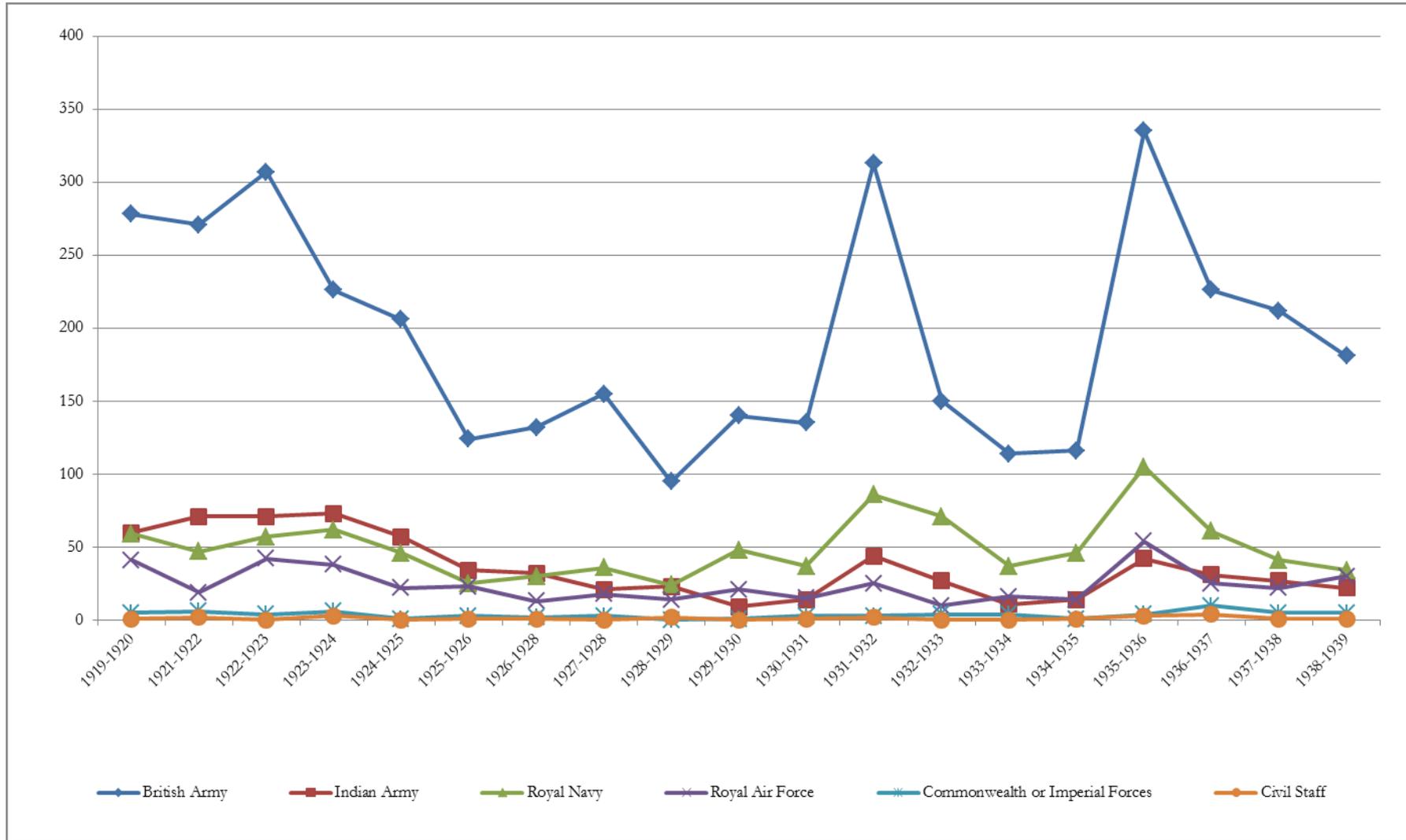


Chart 6.1 – Annual Number of Officers joining the Royal United Services Institution from 1919 to 1939 (Source: ‘Secretary Notes’ in the *JRUSI*)

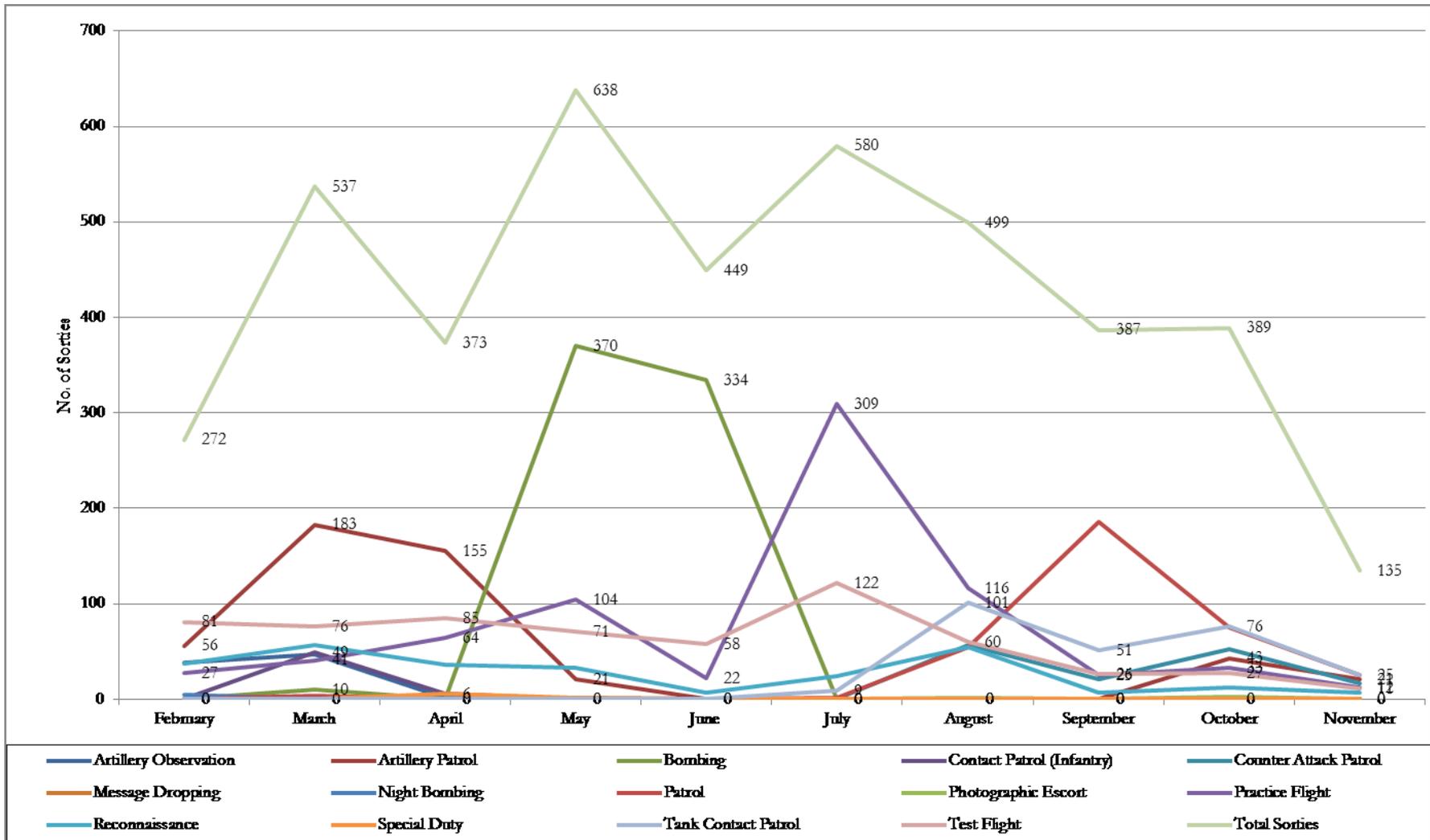


Chart 7.2 – Frequency of Sorties Flown by 8 Squadron RFC/RAF from February to November 1918 (Source: TNA, AIR 1/1669/204/109/8-9 and AIR 1/1670/204/109/10-13, 8 Squadron Record Book, February to November 1918)

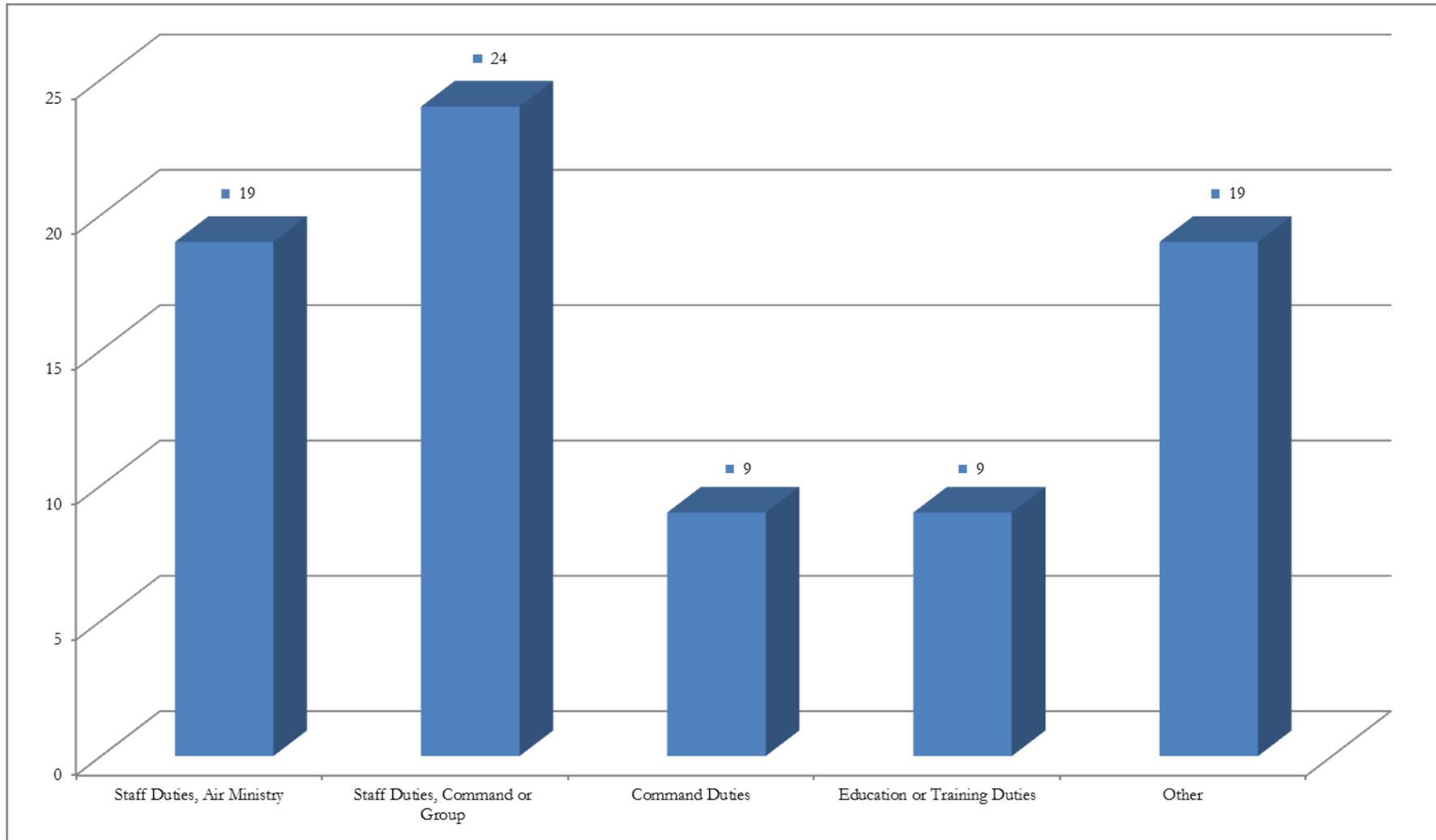


Chart 7.3 – Postings on Conclusion of Course of Instruction at the RAF Staff College (First four courses) (Source: TNA, AIR 29/527, Operations Record Books for the RAF Staff College, 1922-1926)

Appendix Three

Prosopographical Analysis of Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory and his Peers

This thesis utilised prosopography as a methodology to construct a comparative career map of Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory and his peers as they emerged into senior leadership positions during the inter-war period. It utilised an EXCEL spreadsheet to layout the analysis, which necessitated the use of the attached CD-R. This thesis used *The Air Force List* to map the careers of Leigh-Mallory and 385 of his peers. This mapping exercise focused on officers rated as either Squadron or Wing Commanders in the March 1918 editions of *The Army List* and the January 1918 edition of *The Navy List*; the latter was produced quarterly. Chosen as this was the last month before the RAF's formation on 1 April 1918, March 1918 provided an opportunity to compare officers of similar ranks and appointments from the RFC and RNAS. Officer careers were mapped through to the March 1939 edition of *The Air Force List*. The prosopography population divides into 295 Squadron and 91 Wing Commanders, which were appointments rather than ranks. Squadron Commanders in the RFC held the rank of Major, while Wing Commanders were Lieutenant Colonels. These officers represented Leigh-Mallory's peers and included notable names, such as Portal and Tedder. Of the officers selected, still listed as active in March 1939 were 57 Squadron Commanders and 14 Wing Commanders. This thesis focused on patterns and rhythms extant in the careers of those 71 officers, though, more specifically, it engaged closely with the 43 who reached Air Rank by March 1939, which are outlined in Appendix Four. The primary information gained from this methodology split into ranks, date of seniority, appointment, and date of appointment. Additional information, such as appointments before the First World War and regiments/arms of service were also collected, which added an extra interpretative layer to the analysis found in Chapter Three. It is worth noting, however, that, as an evolving document, *The Air Force List* contained idiosyncrasies, like not listing date of appointments until 1922; hence certain gaps exist in the spread sheet. This methodology provided the social element of this thesis by comparing the shared experience of the officers under consideration.

Appendix Four

List of Officers Reaching Air Rank by March 1939

Derived from Appendix Three, the following chart lists key demographic information relating to the 43 officers who reached Air Rank by March 1939.

Name and Rank ¹	Awards and Post-nominal ²	School or Royal Naval College, Osborne	University or Cadet College	Staff College	Imperial Defence College	Member of the Royal Unites Services Institution (Date of Joining)	Fathers Profession	Date of Birth
Air Marshal Sir Philip Babington	MC, AFC, MiD (2)	Eton College				1933	Zoologist	25 Feb 1894
Air Marshal Sir John Tremayne Babington	CB, CBE DSO, <i>psa</i> , LoH	Royal Naval College, Osborne	Royal Naval College, Dartmouth	Student, RAF Staff College, Andover		1924	Zoologist	20 July 1891
Air Marshal Sir John Baldwin	DSO, OBE, CB, <i>psa</i> , <i>idc</i> , Cwn, O, CdeG (B)	Rugby School	Royal Military College, Sandhurst	Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	Student		Officer, Indian Army	13 April 1892
Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Barratt	CB, CMG, MC, <i>psa</i> , Cwn, O, Cwn, C, CdeG (P), CdeG (B)	Clifton College	Royal Military Academy, Woolwich	Student, Army Staff College Camberley Directing Staff and Commandant,			Officer, British Army	25 February 1891

¹ Final rank and titles on retirement.

² Includes foreign awards and the number of times Mentioned in Dispatch received by March 1939.

Air Vice-Marshal Charles Blount	OBE, MC, <i>psa</i> , SMMV, Cwn, C	Harrow School	Royal Military College, Sandhurst	RAF Staff College Student, RAF Staff College			Officer, British Army	26 October 1893
Air Chief Marshal Sir Frederick Bowhill	KCB, CMG, DSO and Bar, SV4SB, R, C	Blackheath School	HMS <i>Worvester</i> (Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve)					1 September 1880
Air Vice-Marshal Charles Breese	E.*, CB, AFC	Magdalene College School	Royal Naval Engineering College, Keyham					23 April 1889
Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Burnett	KCB, CBE, DSO, N3, OSw (K)	Bedford Grammar School	Royal Military College, Sandhurst				Landowner	3 April 1882
Air Vice-Marshal Henry Cave-Browne-Cave	E.*, CB, DSO, DFC	Dulwich College	Royal Naval Engineering College, Keyham	Royal Naval Staff College Greenwich			Deputy Accountant General of the Army	1 February 1887
Air Chief Marshal Sir Christopher Courtney	CB, CBE, DSO, <i>psa</i> , SA3, LoH, C	Bradfield College	Royal Naval College, Dartmouth	Student, Army Staff College, Quetta		1923	Editor, <i>Fortnightly Review</i>	27 June 1890
Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Douglas Douglas	DFC, MC, <i>idc</i> , <i>psa</i> , CdeG (F)	Tonbridge School	Lincoln College, University of Oxford	Directing Staff, RAF Staff College Student, RAF Staff College	Student and Directing Staff	1922	Academic	23 December 1893
Air Chief Marshal Sir Douglas Evill	N., DSC, AFC, <i>idc</i> , <i>psa</i> , LoH, C	Royal Naval College, Osborne	Royal Naval College, Dartmouth	Student, Army Staff College, Camberley	Student		General Practitioner	8 October 1892

Air Chief Marshal Sir Wilfrid Freeman	KCB, DSO, MC, <i>psa</i> , LoH, C	Rugby School	Royal Military College, Sandhurst	Directing Staff, RAF Staff College Student, Royal Naval Staff College, Greenwich		1922	Stone Merchant	18 July 1888
				Directing Staff and Commandant, RAF Staff College				
Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Guy Garrod	OBE, MC, DFC, <i>idc</i> , <i>psa</i>	Bradfield College	University College, University of Oxford	Student, RAF Staff College	Student	1922	Barrister	13 April 1891
Air Marshal Sir Ernest Gossage	CB, CVO, DSO, MC, <i>qs</i>	Rugby School	Trinity College, University of Cambridge	Student and Directing Staff, Army Staff College, Camberley			Businessman and retired British Army Officer	3 February 1891
Air Vice-Marshal Sir Douglas Harries	AFC, SMSL, C	Merton Court School Royal Naval College, Osborne	Royal Naval College, Britannia				Merchant	31 March 1893
Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Arthur Harris	OBE, AFC	Allhallows		Student, Army Staff College			Indian Civil Service	13 April 1893
Air Chief Marshal Sir Roderic Hill	E., AFC and Bar, MC, <i>psa</i>	Bradfield College	University College London	Student, RAF Staff College			Academic	1 March 1894
Air Chief Marshal Sir	KCB, CMG, DSO, <i>idc</i> , <i>psa</i> ,	Harrow School	Royal Military Academy,	Student, Army Staff College,	Directing Staff	1920	Officer, Indian Medical Service	21 May 1887

Phillip Joubert de la Ferté	SMSL, C, CdeG (I)		Woolwich	Camberley					
				Directing Staff and Commandant, RAF Staff College					
Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory	DSO, <i>idc, psa</i>	Haileybury School	Magdalene College, University of Cambridge	Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	Student	1931	Clergy	11 July 1892	
				Directing Staff, Army Staff College, Camberley					
Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore	KCB, DSO, <i>idc, psa</i> , Cwn, O, LoH, C, CdeG (F), SMSL, O, CdeG (I)	Foster's Academy (Australia)	Royal Naval College, Dartmouth	Student, Army Staff College, Camberley	Commandant	1923	Stationmaster	8 October 1885	
Air Vice-Marshal Reverend Cuthbert Maclean	CB, DSO, MC, LoH, C	Wanganui Collegiate School (New Zealand)	Auckland University				Clergy	16 October 1886	
Air Marshal Sir Paul Maltby	DSO, AFC, <i>idc, psa</i>	King's College Canterbury	Royal Military College, Sandhurst	Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	Student	1925	Tea Planter	5 August 1892	
Air Vice-Marshal Arthur Maund	CBE, DSO, <i>psa</i> , CdeG (P), CdeG (B), SS2, SV4	St Pauls School		Student, RAF Staff College, Andover			Explorer	30 July 1891	
Air Chief Marshal Sir William Mitchell	KCB, CBE, DSO, MC, AFC	Wellington College	Militia Route				Brewery Owner	8 March 1888	
Air Vice-	CB, CBE, <i>qs</i> ,	St George's		Student, Army				14 January 1882	

Marshal Hazleton Nicholl	LoH, C	School Ascot		Staff College, Quetta				
Air Marshal Sir Lawrence Pattinson	CB, DSO, MC, DFC, <i>qs</i>	Rugby School and Wesley College Melbourne	Jesus College, University of Cambridge	Student, Army Staff College, Camberley		1930		8 October 1890
Air Marshal Sir Richard Peck	OBE, <i>qs</i>	St Paul's School	Brasenose College, University of Oxford	Student, Army Staff College, Camberley		1930		2 March 1893
Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Peirse	CB, DSO, AFC, <i>idc, psa, CdeG (I)</i>	HMS <i>Conway</i>	King's College London (Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve)	Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	Student		Officer, Royal Navy	30 September 1892
Air Marshal Sir Patrick Playfair	CB, CVO, MC, SS3S, DSM (US)	Cheltenham College	Royal Military Academy, Woolwich				Doctor	29 November 1889
Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Portal	CB, DSO and Bar, MC, <i>idc, psa</i>	Wellington College	Christ Church, University of Oxford	Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	Student and Directing Staff	1922	Own Means	21 May 1893
Air Commodore John Quinnell	N., DFC, <i>idc, psa</i>	Royal School of Dungannon		Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	Student		Newspaper Owner	7 January 1891
Air Vice- Marshal George Reid	DSO, MC and Bar, <i>idc, psa</i>	Malvern College		Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	Student	1926		25 October 1893
Air Commodore John Russell	DSO, <i>psa</i>	Fettes College		Student, RAF Staff College, Andover				6 March 1895
Air Vice- Marshal Richard Saul	DFC, <i>qs</i>	St Andrews College	Ross College, Dublin	Student, Army Staff College, Camberley				16 April 1891
Air	OBE, <i>qs</i>	Oundle School	Special Reserve	Student, Army				

Commodore Sydney Smith Air Marshal Sir Bertine Sutton	DSO, OBE, MC, <i>idc, psa</i>	Eton College	University College, University of Oxford	Staff College, Camberley Student, Army Staff College, Camberley	Directing Staff	Clergy	17 December 1886
				Directing Staff, RAF Staff College, Andover			
Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Tedder	CB, <i>idc, psa</i>	Whitgift School	Magdalene College, University of Cambridge	Student, Royal Naval Staff College, Greenwich	Student	Civil Servant	11 July 1890
				Directing Staff, RAF Staff College, Andover			
Air Commodore Arthur Thomson Air Vice- Marshal John Tyssen Air Commodore Andre Walser	AFC, MC and Bar	Wellington College	Special Reserve				2 April 1895
	MC	Wellington College	Territorial Force				20 June 1889
	DFC, MC, <i>psa</i> , CdeG (F)	St Paul's School	University of London and Zurich University (Territorial Force)	Student, RAF Staff College, Andover	1930	Silk Merchant	8 April 1889
Air Vice- Marshal Robert Willock Air	<i>idc, qs</i>	Cheltenham College		Student, Army Staff College, Camberley	Student	1938	Wine Merchant 17 December 1893
	AFC, GI-O	Stanley	St John's			1920	18 September

Commodore Arthur Wright	Secondary	College, Battersea	1888
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Appendix Five

List of Officers attending the First Ten Courses at the Imperial Defence College, 1927-1936, including an indication of those reaching a minimum of One-Star Rank

Course Date	Royal Air Force	Final Rank	Royal Navy	Final Rank	British Army	Final Rank
1927	Wing Commander R.E.C Peirse	Air Chief Marshal	Captain J.C. Tovey	Admiral of the Fleet	Lieutenant-Colonel R.H. Haining	General
	Wing Commander W.S. Douglas	Marshal of the Royal Air Force	Captain R. Leatham	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel A.F. Brooke	Field Marshal
	Wing Commander E.L. Tomkinson		Captain H.R. Moore	Admiral	Colonel W.H. Gribbon	
	Squadron Leader G.C. Pirie	Air Chief Marshal	Captain E.L.S. King	Rear-Admiral	Colonel C.G. Liddell	General
			Captain A.F. Pridham	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel A.G.C. Dawney	Major-General
			Lieutenant-Colonel R.D. Ormsby RM	Lieutenant-General	Lieutenant-Colonel C.G. Ling	
1928	Wing Commander J.E.A. Baldwin	Air Marshal	Captain W.S. Chalmers	Rear-Admiral	Colonel E.H. Kelly	
	Wing Commander C.C. Miles		Captain H.T. England	Rear Admiral	Major H.C. Lloyd	
	Squadron Leader L.G.S. Payne	Air Commodore	Captain R.H.T. Raikes	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel E.F. Norton	Lieutenant-General
	Wing Commander A.W. Tedder	Marshal of the Royal Air Force	Captain G.P. Thomas		Lieutenant-Colonel J.H.T. Priestman	Major-General
			Captain N.A. Wodehouse	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel E.K. Squires	Lieutenant-General
1929					Lieutenant-Colonel M. Kemp-Welch	
	Squadron Leader C.J. Mackay		Captain T.P.F. Calvert	Rear-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel A.P.Y. Langhorne	Major-General
	Squadron Leader C.E.H. Medhurst	Air Chief Marshal	Captain A.B. Cunningham	Admiral of the Fleet	Lieutenant-Colonel W.G. Lindsell	Lieutenant-General
	Wing Commander	Marshal of the Royal Air Force	Commander V.H.	Rear-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel	General

1930	C.F.A. Portal Wing Commander C.W.H. Pulford	Force Air Vice- Marshal	Danckwerts Captain J.W.S. Dorling	Vice-Admiral	B.C.T. Paget Lieutenant- Colonel T.S. Riddell- Webster	Lieutenant- General
	Wing Commander J.C. Quinnell	Air Commodore	Captain J.G.P. Vivian	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant- Colonel H.J. Simson	
	Wing Commander R.M. Bayley		Captain G.F.B. Edward-Collins	Admiral	Colonel the Honourable H.R.L.G. Alexander	Field Marshal
	Wing Commander N.H. Bottomley	Air Chief Marshal	Captain G. Layton	Admiral	Lieutenant- Colonel L. Carr	Lieutenant- General
	Squadron Leader R.M. Drummond	Air Marshal	Captain P. Macnamara		Lieutenant- Colonel M.H. Dendy	
	Squadron Leader J.W.B. Grigson	Air Commodore	Captain A.H. Taylor		Lieutenant- Colonel H.R.S. Massy	Lieutenant- General
	Squadron Leader D.F. Stevenson	Air-Vice Marshal	Captain F.L. Tottenham	Admiral	Lieutenant- Colonel P. Neame VC	Lieutenant- General
1931					Lieutenant- Colonel F.P. Nosworthy	
	Squadron Leader J.J. Breen	Air Marshal	Lieutenant- Colonel A.G.B. Bourne RM	General	Lieutenant- Colonel Sir R.F. Adams	General
	Wing Commander D.G. Donald	Air Marshal	Captain B.W.M. Fairbairn		Lieutenant- Colonel G.J. Giffard	
	Wing Commander P.C. Maltby	Air Vice- Marshal	Captain H. Fitzherbert		Lieutenant- Colonel A.E. Grasett	Lieutenant- General
	Squadron Leader F.H.M. Maynard	Air Vice- Marshal	Captain H.H. Harwood	Admiral	Lieutenant- Colonel T.J. Hutton	Lieutenant- General
	Wing Commander W.A. McClaghry	Air-Vice Marshal	Captain H.D. Pridham- Wippell	Admiral	Lieutenant- Colonel A.F.A.N. Thorne	General
			Captain C.P. Talbot	Admiral	Lieutenant- Colonel F.E. Hotblack	Major- General
1932	Wing Commander F.G.B. Hards	Air Vice- Marshal	Captain A.R. Dewar		Lieutenant- Colonel H.C. Harrison	
	Wing Commander M. Henderson	Air Vice- Marshal	Captain R.H. Halifax		Colonel V.H.B. Majendie	Major- General
	Wing Commander G.R.M. Reid	Air Vice- Marshal	Captain N.F. Laurence	Admiral	Lieutenant- Colonel R.P. Pakenham-	Major- General

1933	Squadron Leader H.K. Thorold	Air Vice-Marshal	Captain R.W. Oldham		Walsh Lieutenant-Colonel H.R. Pownall	Lieutenant-General
	Wing Commander A.T. Williams		Captain R.R. Turner	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel J.N. Thomson	
			Captain L.F. Potter		Lieutenant-Colonel the Honourable E.H. Wyndham	
	Wing Commander C.B. Dacre	Air Commodore	Captain E.B.C. Dicken		Lieutenant-Colonel W.P.J. Akerman	Major-General
	Group Captain D.C.S. Evill	Air Chief Marshal	Captain the Honourable G. Fraser	Rear-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel S.C.M. Archibald	Major-General
	Group Captain A.G.R. Garrod	Air Chief Marshal	Captain W.H. Gell		Lieutenant-Colonel R.L. Bond	Major-General
	Group Captain R.H. Peck	Air Marshal	Captain L.E. Holland	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel G.N. Macready	Lieutenant-General
	Wing Commander R.H.M.S. Saundby		Captain C.E. Kennedy-Purvis	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel E.L. Morris	
			Captain I.B.B. Tower		Lieutenant-Colonel H.B.D. Willcox	Lieutenant-General
	Group Captain J.S.T. Bradley	Air Marshal	Captain R.S. Benson		Lieutenant-Colonel R.H. Dewing	Major-General
1934	Squadron Leader O.R. Gayford	Air Commodore	Captain H.H. Bousfield		Colonel R. Evans	Major-General
	Wing Commander A.W.F. Glenny	Air Commodore	Captain J.H. Edelsten	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel E.G. Miles	Major-General
	Group Captain T.L. Leigh-Mallory	Air Chief Marshal	Captain L.H.K. Hamilton	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel R.B. Pargiter	Major-General
	Squadron Leader A.P.M. Sanders	Air Chief Marshal	Captain C.E. Morgan	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel V.V. Pope	Major-General
			Captain W.G. Tennant	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel J.G. des R.	Lieutenant-General

1935	Wing Commander G.B.A. Baker	Air Vice-Marshal	Captain A.W.S. Agar		Swayne Lieutenant-Colonel F.G. Beaumont-Nesbitt	Major-General
	Wing Commander the Honourable R.A. Cochrane	Air Chief Marshal	Captain H.C. Bovell	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel F.H.N. Davidson	Major-General
	Group Captain C.C. Darley	Air Commodore	Captain C.S. Daniel	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel G. LeQ Martel	Lieutenant-General
	Wing Commander H.H. Mcl. Fraser	Air Vice-Marshal	Captain I.G. Glennie	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel F.N. Mason-Macfarlane	Lieutenant-General
	Wing Commander A.S.G. Lee	Air Vice-Marshal	Captain H.B. Rawlings	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel R.N. O'Connor	General
			Captain A.G.B. Wilson		Lieutenant-Colonel A.E. Percival	Lieutenant-General
1936	Group Captain R. Graham	Air Vice-Marshal	Captain L.H. Ashmore	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel N.M.S. Irwin	Lieutenant-General
	Wing Commander B.J. Silly	Air Commodore	Captain J.G.L. Dundas	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel S.W. Kirby	Major-General
	Squadron Leader R.S. Sorley	Air Marshal	Captain J.W. Durnford	Vice-Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel O.M. Lund	Lieutenant-General
	Wing Commander J.L. Vachall	Air Commodore	Captain C. Moody	Admiral	Lieutenant-Colonel C.C. Malden	
	Wing Commander H.A. Whistler		Captain A.J.L. Phillips		Lieutenant-Colonel H.G. Martin	Lieutenant-General
			Captain R. Shelley		Lieutenant-Colonel C.A. West	
Total	48		57		59	

Percentage of Officers attending the Imperial Defence College reaching a minimum of One-Star Rank

Royal Air Force	Royal Navy	British Army
85%	68%	75%

Source: LHCMA, Personal Papers of Major-General Denis Talbot, TALBOT 4/8, The Imperial Defence College Register, 1927-1967 compared with the Survey of the Papers of Senior UK Defence Personnel, 1900-1975

Bibliography

This bibliography consists of three sections: first, archival sources; second, contemporary printed material; and finally, the secondary literature covering themes examined in the thesis. For the purpose of this thesis, contemporary printed material includes that produced by contemporaries after the time but based on recollections, such as memoirs.

1. Archival Sources

1.1 The National Archives, Kew, London

Admiralty Files

ADM 7 – Admiralty Miscellanea

ADM 116 – Admiralty Record Office Cases

ADM 203 – Correspondence and Papers related to the Royal Naval Colleges, Dartmouth and Greenwich

Air Ministry Files

AIR 1 – Air Historical Branch Papers (Series I)

AIR 2 – Registered Files of the Air Ministry and Ministry of Defence

AIR 4 – Aircrews' Flying Log Books

AIR 5 – Air Historical Branch Papers (Series II)

AIR 6 – Minutes and Meetings of the Air Board and Air Council

AIR 8 – Registered Files of the Department of the Chief of the Air Staff

AIR 9 – Registered Files of the Directorate of Operations and Intelligence and Directorate of Plans

AIR 10 – Air Publications and Reports

AIR 20 – Papers accumulated by the Air Historical Branch

AIR 29 – Operations Record Books, Miscellaneous Units

AIR 37 – Registered Files and Reports of the Allied Expeditionary Air Force, later Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (Air), and 2nd Tactical Air Force

AIR 41 – Air Historical Branch Narratives and Monographs

AIR 72 – Air Ministry Orders

AIR 75 – Personal Papers of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor

Cabinet Office Files

CAB 21 – Registered Files (1916 to 1965) of the War Cabinet, the Cabinet and the Committee of Imperial Defence (post First World War)

CAB 53 – Minutes and Memoranda of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, Committee of Imperial Defence

Ministry of Food Files

MAF 60 – Ministry of Food and Board of Trade Food Departments 1916-1936

Prime Minister's Officer Files

PREM 4 – Confidential Correspondence and Papers

Treasury Files

T 161 – Registered Files (S Series) of the Supply Department of HM Treasury
T 225 – Registered Files (DM and 2DM Series) of the Defence Policy and Materiel
Division of HM Treasury

War Office Files

WO 32 – Registered Files (General Series) of the War Office and successors
WO 33 – Reports, Memoranda and Papers (O and A Series)
WO 95 – First World War and Army of Occupation War Diaries
WO 106 – Correspondence and Papers of the Directorate of Military Operations and
Military Intelligence, and predecessors
WO 279 – Confidential Printed Material of the War Office and Ministry of Defence
WO 339 – Officers' Services, First World War, Long Number Papers

1.2 Christ Church Archive, University of Oxford

Personal Papers of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Portal

1.3 Imperial War Museum, London

Interview with Air Vice-Marshal Arthur Capel (3166), 21 February 1978
Interview with Air Chief Marshal Sir Kenneth Cross (10481), 12 November 1988
Interview with Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir William Dickson (3168), February 1978
Interview with Air Marshal Sir Thomas Elmhirst (998), 20 December 1977
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Interview with Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor (3176), 3 August 1978
Personal Papers of Major E.F. Churchill
Personal Papers of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Douglas
Personal Papers of Brigadier-General P.R.C. Groves
Personal Papers of Air Vice-Marshal Edgar Kingston-McCloughry
Personal Papers of Air Vice-Marshal Sir George Ranald MacFarlane Reid
Personal Papers of Air Commodore C.R. Samson
Personal Papers of Air Vice-Marshal Robert Peer Willock

1.4 Joint Services Command and Staff College, Shrivenham

Staff Ride Records
Army Staff College Lectures

1.5 Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, King's College London

Personal Papers of Field Marshal Sir John Dill
Personal Papers of Group Captain Eric Douglas
Personal Papers of Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham
Personal Papers of General Sir John Burnett-Stuart
Personal Papers of General Baron Ismay
Personal Papers of Captain Sir Basil Liddell Hart
Personal Papers of Field Marshal Baron Milne
Personal Papers of Major-General Denis Talbot

1.6 Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon, London

AIR 69 – Reports and Papers of the Royal Air Force Staff College, Andover

DC 76/48/1-4, Typescript of h. Montgomery Hyde, *British Air Policy between the Wars, 1918-1939* (1975)

Personal Papers of Group Captain George Carmichael

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Personal Papers of Air Chief Marshal Sir Leslie Hollinghurst

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