

Military Command and Control Organisation

Volume 4

The United States Air Forces in the UK



Version 3 (24-03-08)

Front

Plate 1: TabVee 5 at Upper Heyford
A Hardened Aircraft Shelter on the Victor Alert site

CONTENTS

Part 1 – Introduction	1
1.1 – Structure of the Report	1
1.2 – Notes on Sources and Limitations of the Report	2
1.3 – Introduction	2
Part 2 – Pre World War II	3
2.1 – Background	3
2.2 – WWI Stations	3
2.3 – American Long Range Bombers	4
2.4 – Lead up to WWII	5
Part 3 – The US Army Eighth Air Force	6
3.1 – Origins	6
3.2 – Support Sites	8
3.3 – US Strategic Air Forces in Europe	13
Part 4 – The US Army Ninth Air Force	18
4.1 – Formation	18
4.2 – Airfield Allocation	18
4.3 – Commands	19
Part 5 – United States Air Force	24
5.1 – Definition of ‘Cold War’	24
5.2 – The Setting up of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	24
5.3 – Background to Strategic Air Command	27
Part 6 – Brief Histories of USAF Bases in the UK	36
6.1 – Primary USAFE/SAC Installations, 1950–80	36
6.2 – Secondary USAFE/SAC Installations, 1950–80	43
6.3 – Stand-By and Other USAFE/SAC Installations 1950–1980	45
Part 7 – US Army Air Force Headquarter Sites in the UK (WWII).	52
Bibliography and Source Material	58
Index General	63
Index Geographical	64

TABLES

Table 1 – Eighth Air Force Supply Depots	9
Table 2 – Cost of providing airfields and other sites for USAAF	12
Table 3 – USAAF Principal Headquarters, WWII	17
Table 4 – USAAF HQ sites	52
Table 5 – London Based Headquarters, August 1945	56
Table 6 – Comparison of senior ranks in the British and American armies, and the RAF	57

DIAGRAMS

Fig. 1: RAF and US 8th Air Force Bomber Commands	7
Fig. 2: The US Air Forces in the UK – October 1942	11
Fig. 3: European Bombing Control Policy from September 1944	13
Fig. 4: Eighth Air force Bomber Groups in the UK, (15–384)	14
Fig. 5: Eighth Air force Bomber Groups in the UK, (385–493)	15
Fig. 6: Eighth Air force Fighter Groups in the UK	16
Fig. 7: Eighth Air force Fighter Miscellaneous Flying Units in the UK	17
Fig. 8: The US 9th Army Air Force Structure – Summer 1944	23
Fig. 9: The Military Organisation of NATO, 1962	26
Fig. 10: Allied Command – Atlantic, 1962	26
Fig. 11: Allied Command – Europe, 1962	27
Fig. 12: SAC Command Structure (part)	28
Fig. 13: Wing Organisation, 1965 (example)	28
Fig. 14: USAF Installations in the UK 1953	35
Fig. 15: Eighth Air Force, December 1944	50
Fig. 16: US IXth Air Force Organisation, late February 1944	51

PLATES

Plate 1: TabVee 5 at Upper Heyford	ii
Plate 2: A pre WWII ‘A’ type hangar at Upper Heyford now in Creech Brown style	34

PREFACE

This report is one in a series of five volumes examining the United Kingdom's 20th Century Military Command and Control Organisation. The project was commissioned by English Heritage and its scope extends to the following volumes:

Volume 1: Royal Navy

Volume 2: British Army

Volume 3: Royal Air Force

Volume 4: United States Army Air Force and United States Air Force

There are also two appendices, found in Volume 5:

Army Camps

Volunteer Lists

Research for compiling all four of the main reports was begun in April 2006 and the task was completed at the end of August 2007.

Research on the appendices was conducted between 2003 and 2007.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our first debt is to the staff of The National Archives at Kew, where the bulk of the research was carried out. We would also like to thank Jeremy Lake (English Heritage), Wayne Cocroft (English Heritage), Lieutenant-Colonel Tony Clarke (retired), and Colin Dobinson.

Paul Francis
9 Milton Road
Ware
Herts SG12 0QA

Graham Crisp
33 Rozel Road
Bristol
BS7 8SQ

March 2008

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT

The American military has always been keen on the use of acronyms and numbers. Confusingly, many abbreviations have been over-used. For example TAD has meant; Tactical Air Defense, Tactical Air Depot, Temporary Active Duty and Temporary Additional Duty throughout the last half of the 20th century. The more common usages are given below.

AAA	Anti-Aircraft Artillery
AAC	Army Air Corps
AAD	Army Air Depot
AADA	Advanced Air Depot Area
AAF	Army Air Force
ABG / S	Air Base Group / Squadron
AD	Airborne Division, or Air Depot
ADG	Air Depot Group
AEF	American Expeditionary Forces (WWI) Allied Expeditionary Forces (WWII)
AFSC	Air Force Service Command
ALG	Advanced Landing Ground
ASC	Air Service Command
ASG / S / W	Air Support Group / Squadron / Wing
ATC / G / S	Air Transport Command / Group / Squadron
BAD(A)	Base Air Depot (Area)
BC	Bomber Command
BCS	Base Complement Squadron
BD	Bombardment Division (originally Bombardment Wing)
BG / S	Bombardment Group / Squadron (Bomb Group / Squadron)
BW	Bombardment Wing, later changed to Bombardment Division
CBW	Combat Bombardment Wing (Combat Wing, Bomb Wing)
CCRC	Combat Crew Replacement Centre
EAB / G	Engineer Aviation Battalion / Group
ETO	European Theatre of Operations
FBS / W	Fighter Bomber Squadron / Wing
FC	Fighter Command
FEG / S / W	Fighter Escort Group / Squadron / Wing
FG / S / W	Fighter Group / Squadron / Wing
FIS / W	Fighter Interceptor Squadron / Wing
IDG / S	Intransit Depot Group / Squadron
IRBM	Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile
MAC	Military Airlift Command
MAP	Ministry of Aircraft Production
MATS	Military Air Transport Service (later became MAC)
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MR&RS	Mobile Repair and Reclamation Squadron
MT	Motor Transport (<i>strictly</i> Mechanical Transport)
NBC	Northern Bomber Group

POL	Petrol, Oil & Lubricants
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SAD	Strategic Air Depot
SG / T	Service Group / Team
TAC / D / F	Tactical Air Command / Depot, or Division / Force
TCC / G / S / W	Troop Carrier Command / Group / Squadron / Wing
TDY	Temporary Duty Yonder
TFS / W	Tactical Fighter Squadron / Wing
TRS / W	Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron / Wing
USSAFE	United States Strategic Air Forces In Europe
VHB	Very Heavy Bomber (airfield)

US AIRCRAFT TYPES

A-10	Fairchild Thunderbolt II (Warthog)
A-20	Douglas Havoc (see also DB-7)
A-26	Douglas Invader
B-17	Boeing Fortress
B-24	Consolidated Liberator
B-25	North American Mitchell
B-26	Martin Marauder
B-29	Boeing Superfortress
B-36	Convair 'Peacemaker'
B-45	North American Tornado
B-47	Boeing Stratojet
B-50	Boeing Superfortress (upgraded B-29)
B-66	Douglas Destroyer (Recce version RB-66)
C-47	Douglas Skytrain (upgraded DC-3 Dakota, usually referred to as Dakota by the British)
C-97	Boeing Stratofreighter
DB-7	Douglas Boston (very similar to A-20)
F-4	McDonnell Phantom (Recce version RF-4)
F-84	Republic Thunderjet
F-86	North American Sabre, (Sabrejet)
F-100	North American Super Sabre
F-111	General Dynamics 'Aardvark'
KB-29	Boeing Superfortress tanker
KC-97G	Boeing Stratofreighter / tanker
KC-135	Boeing Stratotanker
P-38	Lockheed Lightning
P-39	Bell Aircobra
P-47	Republic Thunderbolt
P-51	North American Mustang
P-61	Northrop Black Widow

Part 1 – Introduction

1.1 – Structure of the Report

The main body of this volume is divided into the following parts:

Part 1 – Introduction

Part 2 – Pre World War II

Part 3 – The US Army Eighth Air Force

Part 4 – The US Army Ninth Air Force

Part 5 – United States Air Force

Part 6 – Brief Histories of USAF Bases in the UK

Part 7 – US Army Air Force Headquarter Sites in the UK (WWII).

Part 2 covers the history of the United States Air Force involvement in Britain prior to their entry into WWII following the attack on Pearl Harbour.

Part 3 recounts the part played by the ‘Mighty Eighth’ – the US strategic bomber force in the UK during WWII.

Though its stay in Britain was short-lived the Ninth Air Force was active mainly in England from October 1943 until it departed for France shortly after D-Day. Part 4 describes this unit, which was a tactical entity akin to the RAF’s Second Tactical Air Force.

Part 5 covers the return of the Americans to the UK after WWII for the Cold War.

Part 6 is a brief history of the airfields and bases used by the USAF following WWII.

The final part lists the HQ sites used by the Americans. It includes the numerous London establishments used in WWII.

1.2 – Notes on Sources and Limitations of the Report

- a) Unsurprisingly there is not a great deal of information existing in The National Archives relating to the activities of the United States Air Forces in the UK. What does exist describes mainly the bases offered to the Americans, but rarely goes beyond that stage; often those sites offered were not taken up. Hence the principal sources for this report have been confined to a small number of published documents.
- b) The Chief published sources were:
 - Captain Barry Anderson's *Army Air Force Stations*.
 - Richard H Willard's *Installations & USAAF Combat Units in the UK*.
 - Roger A Freeman's numerous books relating to the Eighth Air Force.
 - John F Hamlin's. *Support & Strike: A Concise History of the Ninth US Air Force in Europe*.
 - USAF Office of Air Force History. *Condensed Analysis of the Ninth Air Force in the ETO*.
- c) A comprehensive list of resources is located at the end of the document.

1.3 – Introduction

- a) When the USA entered the First World War in April 1917 it possessed only seven air squadrons. By the end of WWII it had 17 different air-forces and was the largest in the world. The route taken by this expansion was extremely complex when compared to that of the RAF. The Americans had to be able to adapt and modify their overall structure on a frequent basis as the overall direction of the war changed, largely caused by their sudden involvement on an unprecedented scale. One source of confusion consequential from this resulted in the renaming of units, principally commands, groups, divisions etc, which seemed to happen in some cases on a weekly basis. Apart from a general overview this report documents only the units which were involved in the UK.
- b) During WWI there was a small but significant component of American aviation units in Britain. World War II saw two principal air forces, the Eighth and Ninth Army Air Forces operating from 175 airfields, and some 150 other installations within the UK. There were also a number of administrative elements for two additional air forces.
- c) The Army Air Force elements left Britain in the summer of 1945. Within three years international tensions were once again on the increase, which led directly to the Berlin Airlift and the arrival of the first B-29 Superfortress bombers to a few airfields in England.
- d) The North Atlantic Treaty was signed in April 1949. NATO would not attempt to match the vast resource of land forces available to the Soviet Union. Instead it would opt for an air power which could effectively deter a Russian attack. In 1950 there were around 370 US aircraft stationed in Britain; the first nuclear capable machines arrived two years later and by 1954 there were 2,100 US aircraft based in the UK.

Part 2 – Pre World War II

2.1 – Background

- a) The USA declared war on Germany on 6 April 1917. From the time that America entered the conflict until the Armistice, the number of aviators had risen dramatically from just 38 to 1,650 officers, and from 163 to 21,951 airmen. The total number of enlisted men had increased from 239 to 44,125 in a mere eighteen months. Seven air stations were eventually brought into use in the UK and Ireland.
- b) In excess of 31,000 officers and men were eventually based in the UK between 1917 and 1918. The aircraft were mainly provided by the Allies, as the USA had not found it necessary at that time to develop a military air service of any significance.

2.2 – WWI Stations

- a) The principal operational base was the patrol station at Killingholme in Lincolnshire, and was eventually home to 91 officers and 1,324 men. It first came into use on 30 June 1918 and was intended primarily for conducting offensive operations in Heligoland Bight. This proved almost impossible due to the fuel capacities of the aircraft – mostly Curtis H-16 flying boats – so instead convoy protection and shorter patrols were undertaken. A number of attacks on enemy submarines and Zeppelins were carried out during the period, before the base closed in February 1919.
- b) The second base in England was at Eastleigh, Hampshire. This station had been designed and built as an RAF Reception Park, but was transferred to the US naval forces in June 1918. It was an ideal site as its main function was to support the units of the Northern Bombing Group (NBG) in France, by acting as an aircraft reception, assembly, and overhaul aerodrome.¹ Not only was the base within flying distance of the European based aerodromes, but its location adjacent to port of Southampton with its excellent rail connections, proved essential for both this task, and its secondary function as a supply depot for the NBG and the Killingholme station. This base remained active until April 1919.
- c) Five aerodromes established in Ireland proved essential as staging posts, and for testing and training aircrew replacements. They were located at:

Lough Foyle	Queenstown	Wexford
Whiddy Island	Berehaven (Castletownbere).	
- d) American flying units were also attached to three other bases in the UK:
 - Great Yarmouth: a number of US Navy pilots flew with the British on North Sea patrols
 - Portland: in the early months of 1919 the Royal Naval Air Station was used by some US Navy pilots for training patrol flights
 - Stonehenge: a flying school at which some NBG pilots trained in land-plane night bombers.

¹ The NBG consisted of four day, and four night bombing squadrons tasked with attacking the German submarine bases in northern Belgium.

2.3 – American Long Range Bombers

- a) In June 1917, an aircraft production board had been set up in America; a study group called the Bolling Commission was created and sailed for Europe to gain information for the American aircraft programme. One month later the mission issued a recommendation for the production of the Italian three-engined Caproni triplane, and later, that consideration should also be given to a Handley Page design. In London the Chief of Air Staff, Hugh Trenchard, devised a plan in January 1918, for incorporating American crews as well as British, thus creating an inter-allied bombing force based around the Handley Page O/400 aeroplane.
- b) An initial contract was then awarded in America, to the Grand Rapids Airplane Company for the wooden components for 1,000 sets of aeroplanes. The Standard Aircraft Corporation and the Mullins Steel Boat Company also won contracts for the metal fittings; later the contracts were increased to 2,000 units, most of which were to be shipped over to the UK for final assembly. In September, the first American-built O/400 was delivered to the American Air Service. It was known as 'Night Bombardment, Short Range, Type XII' and was powered by twin 350hp Liberty 12N engines.
- c) A site for the final assembly of American-built aircraft, was found in Oldham, where there was a large female workforce normally engaged in the Lancashire cotton industry. On grounds of cost and the pool of female labour, it was decided to requisition the No.2 Gorse Mill at Hollinwood, and the Lilac Mill at Shaw. It was further decided to erect a number of buildings for aircraft assembly and storage, and to provide an Aircraft Acceptance Park. Construction began in February, and the Alliance Aeroplane Company (Waring and Gillow Ltd) was appointed as managers. The first shipments of parts arrived on 20 August, but by the Armistice, on 11 November 1918, only ten aircraft had been partially assembled.
- d) Meanwhile during 1918, Trenchard had conceived the idea and then began to shape the embryo of the future United States Strategic Bombing Command, by authorising construction of five aerodromes in Sussex for training and mobilisation. The planning and construction of Ford Junction and Tangmere was already well advanced as a pair of aerodromes belonging to an RFC Training Depot Station Mobilisation Wing. In addition to the completion of the 1917 aerodrome buildings, these two sites now required the construction of a Handley Page erection and repair shed.
- e) New aerodromes were also to be built at Goring-by-the-Sea, Rustington, and Southbourne. It is unlikely however, that Goring and Southbourne were ever handed over to the Americans before the November Armistice.
- f) Back in July 1918, Trenchard had also authorised the use of aeroplanes normally required at the front, to form nine special flights of Handley Page and the BE 2.² These were to be sent to Ford, Rustington and Tangmere for the advanced tuition of hundreds of Americans to be stationed with the newly-formed RAF.
- g) At the end of WWI, RAF Wyton was commandeered as the principal American holding base for some 750 men until early 1920.

² Designed by Sir Geoffrey de Havilland and manufactured by the Royal Aircraft Factory, the 'Bleriot Experimental' was a reconnaissance aircraft of dubious reputation.

2.4 – Lead up to WWII

- a) The United States Air Force did not come into existence until after WWII. Prior to that conflict American air force activity, like that of the UK during WWI, was undertaken by both the army and the navy. At that time the Americans possessed four separate home based Army Air Forces, each in a geographic area and denoted *First Air Force (North-East)*, to *Fourth Air Force (South-West)*. As late as April 1938, American aircraft manufacturers were barely able to keep in business due to the thin stream of orders. The Army was still limited by statute to an air force of 2,300 aircraft, and the Navy to 1,000.
- b) At the likelihood of the USA being drawn into an international conflict increased, plans were made for the formation of new units which would operate overseas. Pearl Harbour triggered the creation of several new air forces, the first of which would obviously be called the ‘Fifth’ and was intended for an invasion of north-west Africa following a transfer to the UK. Almost immediately however it was renamed the ‘*Eighth Air Force*’, as the intervening numbers, five to seven, had been allocated for other duties. When Britain went to war with Germany the total American Air Force numbered less than 20,000 men. It had increased five-fold by 1941, and reached 283,300 in early 1944, some 185,000 being based with the Eighth in the UK.

2.4.1 Lend-Lease

- a) Perhaps the most important development in United States foreign policy was the signing of the Lend-Lease Act on 11 March 1941. This had a two-fold role, the USA could now send weapons abroad to help nations fighting the Axis, and the country itself would re-arm and train a great military force to protect itself should it be attacked.
- b) From this date onwards, war supplies; foodstuffs, aircraft, tanks, ammunition, watercraft, raw materials, motor vehicles, ordnance, petroleum products, and machinery, were being sent to the UK, China, and Russia. On 7 December 1941, the threat to the USA suddenly materialised at Pearl Harbour, but by now the country had two million men already under arms, and was thus in a far better position to protect itself.
- c) Under the original terms the Lend-Lease act would have expired on 30 June 1943, but on 11 March that year the Senate extended it. Following the passing of the act, the President issued two directives, thus putting the Lend-Lease programme in motion:
 - Directive No.1 declared that the defence of Great Britain was vital to the defence of the United States
 - Directive No.2 declared that the defence of Greece was also vital to the defence of the USA.

On 26 January 1942, the first WWII American soldier landed on European soil at Londonderry in Northern Ireland. This was part of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF), and marked the beginning of what became a world-wide program of Reverse Lend-Lease aid – a vast program of supplies and services to American forces abroad, made available by the Allies without any cost to the USA.

Part 3 – The US Army Eighth Air Force

3.1 – Origins

- a) As a means of coastal defence in the early 1930s the Army Air Service had forecast the requirement for a long-range aircraft capable of carrying a bomb load of 2000lb, at a speed in excess of 200 mph. Years later the culmination of this project would produce the B-17 Flying Fortress, however during the period in which the Nazis rapidly overtook Europe, the Army Air Corps, as it then had been renamed, possessed just 13 of an early version of this aircraft. Known as the Y1B-17, it was already faster than the fighters of the time.
- b) The later specification produced a machine powered by four supercharged engines, capable at flying at over 300 mph at a height in excess of four miles. Unusually it was armed with half-inch machine guns, whereas Europe had standardised on the .303. A revolutionary and top secret precision bomb-sight, the Norden, was claimed to give unmatched accuracy at this height.³ Interestingly despite the secrecy associated with the unit, plans had been given to the Nazis in the late 1930s, who dismissed it as they considered that precision bombing was best achieved via their low-level Ju-87 Stuka dive bombers.
- c) Some months before Pearl Harbour, the Roosevelt administration had started preparing for a probable involvement in the European war, partly influenced by the unhealthy rise in Nazism, but they also considered that an eventual conflict with Japan would be probable. Like the RAF they believed that massed bombing could win wars. Plans to use Britain as a base for the aerial bombardment of enemy-occupied Europe were already at an advanced stage, when they were forced into the conflict in December 1941.
- d) In February 1942 seven US Army officers arrived in the UK to study the methods in use by the RAF in attacking enemy targets in occupied Europe. Their leader was Brigadier-General Ira C Eaker, who would soon become Commanding General Eighth Bomber Command.⁴ They were based at Daws Hill, close to RAF Bomber Command's HQ at High Wycombe, and were already aware that early experiments by the British with the B-17 had not been successful.
- e) An initial plan was to send 3,500 aircraft to the UK in 60 combat groups. These would consist of 17 heavy, 10 medium, and 6 light bomber units; supported by 12 fighter, 8 transport, and 7 observation groups.
- f) Earlier, in May 1941, the first of a series of elaborate RAF Bomber Command expansion schemes was instigated. Designated 'Target Force E', it was expected to culminate in 3,000 aircraft, and even at this time plans 'F', 'G', and 'H' were also under consideration.⁵ Hence a significant Air Ministry airfield building program was already in existence, and the imminent arrival of a sizeable number of American units did not give rise to immediate difficulties.
- g) An agreement in the summer of 1942 involving the US Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, and Sir Charles Ingram Courtenay Wood, (2nd Earl of Halifax) allowed the USAAF to operate from the UK. Initially it was expected that Britain would supply the necessary facilities, but due to acute

³ It was found to be around five times more accurate than the Mark XIV used by the RAF.

⁴ Later Lieutenant-General, Ira Clarence Eaker, KCB KBE (1896–1987)

⁵ The arrival of large numbers of US bombers into the UK resulted in the truncation, or cancellation of these schemes.

labour shortages it soon became necessary for the Americans to introduce their own aviation engineers to build the required airfields.

- h) It was also decided that stations constructed for their forces would be larger than RAF counterparts, in order to accommodate a complete combat group, plus a service unit. As RAF bases were typically designed to accommodate 36 aircraft, either a single 3-flight squadron, or two, 2-flight units, the original aim had been to spread each American 4-squadron group across two stations. All new USAAF bases would now be designed to accommodate 50 aircraft, as a combat group would consist of four squadrons of between eight and twelve aircraft.

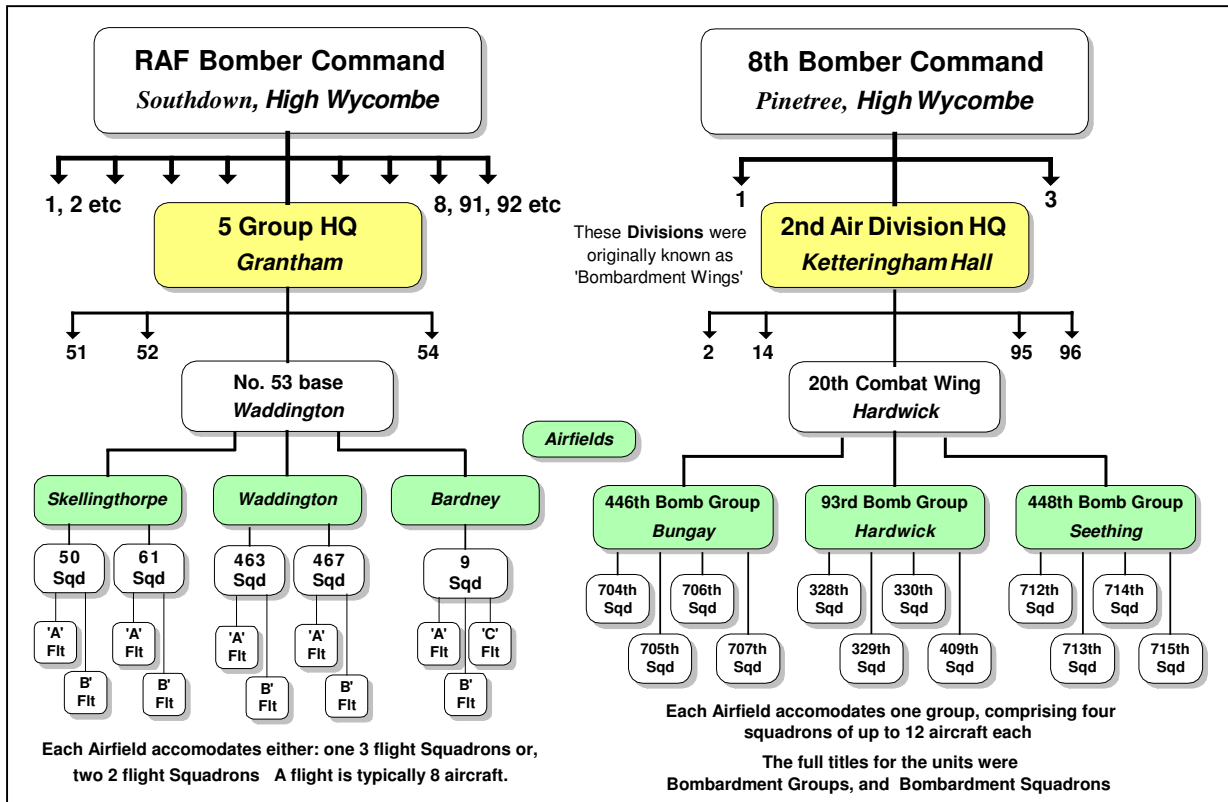


Fig. 1: RAF and US 8th Air Force Bomber Commands
showing the command structure from HQ to aircraft level

- i) The primary plan called for a total of 75 airfields housing five divisions / wings of 15 groups. Each group would be based on an individual airfield:
- First Wing B-17s based around Cambridge (mostly to the west)
 - Second Wing B-24s using airfields in central and south Norfolk
 - Third Wing B-25 & B-26s operating from Suffolk
 - Fourth Wing B-17s in north Essex and south-east Suffolk
 - Fifth Wing B-24s based in central and south Essex.
- j) Due to the rapid changes in the war, especially in the Pacific, this ambitious plan was never completed. The Third Wing was equipped with the B-24, and the Fourth Wing consisted of a small number of B-26 groups, which were quickly transferred to the Ninth Air Force; the Fifth Wing was cancelled. The plan was then amended to replace all the B-24s by B-17s; again this did not happen.

- k) New bases for the RAF bomber expansion had begun in an area centred around Huntingdon, and these airfields were released to the American units as soon as possible. Further expansion had also started in East Anglia. Over 140 airfields were eventually constructed or enlarged from existing RAF stations for use by the Americans; the Eighth and Ninth occupying all with the exception of Air Transport Command which used seven. Some stations were temporarily allocated to the Twelfth and Fifteenth Air Forces until they departed for North Africa.
- l) The RAF had always assessed its power by the number of squadrons; the Americans preferred to base their strength on the number of groups, the latter consisting of an HQ, plus four squadrons. In the early days these consisted of eight to ten aircraft, however by 1945 most squadrons were operating twelve. The term Bombardment Group was frequently shortened to Bomb Group.
- m) Groups sent to the UK were numbered 88–100, or 301–308, as the range 101–300 was reserved for the home-based National Guard.
- n) Command Assignments were usually either operational or administrative, though in a few cases one organisation would perform both tasks. Generally a command or division would exercise administrative control, whereas operational control would be from the combat bomb wing. Confusingly groups were occasionally assigned to one particular air force, but were under the operational control of another.
- o) The Bradley Plan, a series of recommendations regarding the functions and operations of the US units from the UK was actioned between February and May of 1943. It called for series of implementations, notably:
 - A rapid build of the Eighth Air Force for heavy strategic bombing of enemy industrial targets
 - The establishment of Base Depots, principally at Burtonwood, with Warton and Langford Lodge as divisions
 - Preparing the groundwork for the eventual arrival of tactical units
 - The allocation of 255,000 men for the Strategic Air Force, and 230,500 for the Tactical.
- p) By late 1944 there were 185,000 officers and men in the Eighth Air Force.

3.2 – Support Sites

3.2.1 The Air Force Service Command

- a) Air Force Service Command (AFSC) was a very large unit which formed as a service and supply agency, operating not only with the Eighth Air Force, but with the ASC in the USA, and the Services of Supply– European Theatre of Operations.
- b) Maintenance and supply issues were handled initially via two new airfields at Langford Lodge in Northern Ireland, and Warton in Lancashire. Burtonwood, an MAP repair airfield close to the latter, was also loaned to the Americans. These units were termed Base Air Depots; later the term Area was added, (BADA) to encompass the large number of sub-sites which were associated with each depot.⁶

⁶ 1 BADA was Burtonwood, 2 BADA was Warton, and Langford Lodge became 3 BADA.

- c) Advanced Repair and Supply Depots were to be established in each of the five intended bomber wing areas. For many months the proposed locations of these units changed on almost a weekly basis. Little Staughton was developed as a major servicing base, but was then handed back to the RAF, after a lengthy dispute involving Boreham and Ridgewell. Stansted actually became the 5th Bomb Wing Depot, until it was transferred to the Ninth Air Force. However by 1944, there were only three divisions and the maintenance bases, now called Strategic Air Depots (SAD) were named not after the local airfield, but after another local parish; in several cases, these were several miles from the depot. The SADs were large organisations, each with a workforce of 4,000–5,000 men. They were located at:

SAD	Name	Airfield	Air Division	AAF No
1	Troston	Honington	1st	595
2	Abbots Ripton	Alconbury	3rd	547
3	Neaton / Griston	Watton	2nd	505
4	Hitcham	Wattisham	Fighters	470
–	Eccles	Snetterton Heath	abandoned	548

- d) *Supply Depots* for non-aviation items were also required, and a base was quickly established at Poynton in Cheshire. Initially controlled by the US Service of Supply, the base was transferred to the AFSC; a number of other depots, some of which would supply bombs and ammunition, were also constructed, often using purpose built sheds erected in country parks.

Table 1 – Eighth Air Force Supply Depots		
Depot	AAF	Function
Aintree, Lancs	-	Motor vehicles and spares
Ashchurch, Glos	-	Motor vehicles and spares, chemical supplies
Barnham & Warren Wood, Suffolk	517	Munitions for 3rd Air Division, (inc. chemical weapons)
Braybrooke, Northants	521	Munitions
Bures, Essex	526	Munitions, (later transferred to Ninth AF)
Earsham, Norfolk	545	Munitions for 2nd Air Division, later MT storage
Huntingdon, Hunts.	-	General Engineering
Kettering, Northants	596	Quartermaster's stores
London	-	Quartermaster's stores
Melchbourne Park, Beds	572	Motor vehicle storage, Chemical Weapons
Melton Mowbray (Gaddesby), Leics	520	Munitions, later MT storage
Poynton, Cheshire	571	General stores
Rushden, Northants	-	MT maintenance, Medical Equipment maintenance
Sharnbrook, Beds	583	Munitions for 1st Air Division
Stowmarket, Suffolk	501	Quartermaster's stores
Thatcham, Berks	-	Quartermaster's stores
Thrapston, Northants	584	Medical Supplies
Wellingborough, Northants	580	Quartermaster's stores
Wortley, Yorks	581	Munitions, later MT storage

- e) The need to move essential supplies around the UK at short notice was performed by the 27th Air Transport Group, with its Headquarters at Heston aerodrome. This base was chosen as it allowed excellent communications with the adjacent Eight Air Force HQ at Bushy Park. The Group operated two squadrons which were based at Hendon and Warton.
- f) All American personnel arriving in the UK who were not immediately attached to a unit were processed by the Replacement and Control Depot. This was located at Stone in Staffordshire, with its main site a couple of miles down the road at Yarnfield. Sub-depots were urgently needed and were established in Lancashire, at Chorley and Bamber Bridge. The original requirement had been to handle some 4,000 men at a time, however due to the huge numbers of personnel arriving in the UK in late 1943, the requirement to process influxes of up to 32,000 was made possible.

3.2.1.B – Composite Command

- a) Two training bases were also provided initially just outside London at Bovingdon and Cheddington. These were termed Combat Crew Replacement Centres (CCRC). Later they would be relocated to the west, releasing the eastern bases for operational use. A small number of stations in Northern Ireland were used as support bases. In December 1944 a fifth SAD was established at Merville to assist allied aircraft which had forced landed in France.

3.2.2 Eighth Operational Command

- a) In May 1942 the first UK operational units arrived in Northamptonshire, consisting of the 15th Bombardment Squadron based at Grafton Underwood Airfield, and the 689th Quartermaster Company at Wickstead Park, closely followed by the 2nd Air Depot to Molesworth Airfield, Huntingdonshire.
- b) The Eighth AF became officially located in Britain on 18 June 1942, with the arrival of Major-General C A ‘Tooey’ Spaatz.⁷ The 1st Air Division HQ was established at Brampton Grange near Huntingdon, to control eight bomber airfields:

Alconbury	Bassingbourn	Bovingdon	Chelveston
Grafton Underwood	Kimbolton	Molesworth	Thurleigh.

- c) The 8th Fighter Command HQ was set up at Bushey Hall near Watford, with its first airfield Debden. Later, it would be supplemented by the arrival of the 6th Fighter Wing for operational control.
- d) The first aircraft to arrive in Britain were the B-17s of the 97th Group, landing at Prestwick on 1 July 1942, soon followed by more bombers and a number of P-38 fighters during the month. The first raid over enemy territory was made just three days later. The first US heavy bomber operation took place on 17 August, using twelve B-17s from Grafton Underwood. For the next six months the majority of missions were flown from Bassingbourn, Chelveston, Molesworth, and Thurleigh.
- e) Fighters initially sent to the UK were either the P-38 Lightning, or the P-39 Aircobra; both were inferior to RAF equivalents at the time. The former was a revolutionary new design exhibiting initial teething troubles, often caused by the high humidity cold air encountered over

⁷ Later General, Carl Andrew Spaatz (1891–1974)

Europe. In addition only the low powered version was made available to the Eighth in its early days.

- f) A significant number of other units arrived during the summer of 1942, typically medium bomber units equipped with the A-20 and DB-7 and stationed at Horham and Podington. Equipped with the C-47 Skytrain, transport groups then arrived, to be located at Aldermaston, Keevil, and Membury. The Eighth expansion plans received a severe setback in September 1942 when a large number of its active units were transferred to the Twelfth Air Force, for a projected attack on French North Africa (Operation Torch). Effectively four bomb groups, three fighter groups, plus four other groups were allocated to this assault.
- g) At the end of 1942 four B-26 groups arrived in the UK, designated for the 3rd Air Division with its HQ at Elveden Hall. The first squadrons were assigned to Rattlesden and Bury St Edmunds. Later in the year they would be transferred to the Ninth Air Force.
- h) The majority of aircraft received from late 1942 would be the B-17 and B-24 heavy bombers. They would arrive from the USA via the North Atlantic ferry route to Prestwick; or to Valley, St Mawgan or St Eval, if the southern route had been used. Following modification at one of the Air Depots they would then be transferred to an operational airfield. The attrition rate was high and a surplus of aircraft was rarely a problem in the early days.

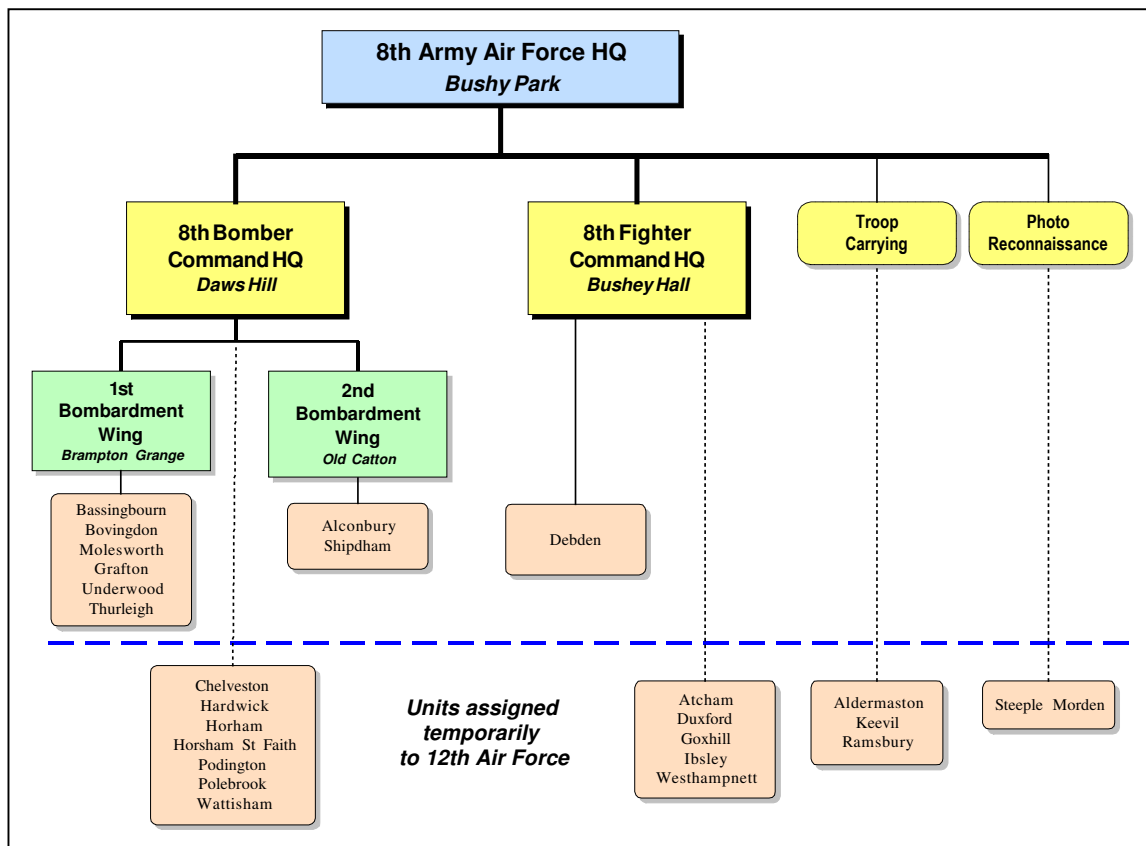


Fig. 2: The US Air Forces in the UK – October 1942
showing the Eighth and Twelfth Air Force Allocation

- i) Like the RAF, the Eighth would have to modify its strategy on a regular basis as the enemy became accustomed to their tactics, and after a few long range raids which suffered very heavy losses, principally caused by lack of fighter support, the leadership changed from Eaker to Spaatz. This took place at the same time as the USSAFE took command (see later).

- j) Earlier, it had been hoped that fighters escorts would be somewhat of a luxury, the bombers being capable of defending themselves against enemy fighter attack, due to the combination of the tight formations they flew and their heavy machine guns. This was not to be the case and fighter protection became a necessity. Most of the bomber losses happened in the period after the fighters had returned to the UK, due to fuel limitations. Fighter airfields were chosen close to the coast in order to maximise aircraft range. They also tended to use airfields which were felt to be sub-standard for heavy bomber use.
- k) The introduction of a new fighter changed the fortunes of the bombers. The P-51 Mustang, used for the first time in December 1943 as a bomber escort, was later escorting the heavies all the way to Berlin and back.⁸ Cannon armament, plus a Merlin engine had produced a match for any Luftwaffe aircraft which opposed it.
- l) The original call for 75 bomber groups, later amended to 45–60, actually produced 51 which were active within the Eighth at some period during WWII. Forty of these were operational on D-Day, which represents over 2,000 heavy bombers, supported by 17 groups of fighters, most consisting of three squadrons of 16 aircraft each.
- m) At the end of the European war, the Eighth was assigned to the Pacific, but it took no part in the Japanese conflict, and the majority of units returned to the USA within a short period.

3.2.3 US Airfield Construction

- a) The first airfield built by the Americans was at Great Saling in Essex. Completed in January 1943 its name was changed to Andrews Field the following May.⁹ Thirteen other stations were eventually built exclusively by the US engineering battalions:

Birch	Boreham	Chipping Ongar	Debach
Eye	Glatton	Gosfield	Great Dunmow
Harrington	Matching	Nuthampstead	Raydon
Stansted Mountfichet.			

- b) There was a wide variation in the number of personnel accommodated on each airfield; the domestic sites were constructed to accommodate typically 2,900 personnel on a bomber station, and 1,700 on a fighter airfield. Actual staffings were normally 2,500–3,000, compared with 1,500 to 2,200 on an equivalent RAF base. Some British involvement came in the form of civil engineering staff, and a liaison officer; British communications equipment was usually installed to achieve a level of standardisation.

Table 2 – Cost of providing airfields and other sites for USAAF		
Note: figures are in £million, and exclude Northern Ireland		
Task	By Air Ministry	By USAAF
Cost of constructing new airfields for USAAF	24	6.1
Extending former RAF Stations for USAAF use	34.1	1
Constructing proposed USAAF stations, but later returned to RAF	18.7	0
Support sites, i.e. non airfield stations	4.2	1.3
Totals	81	8.8

⁸ Made possible by the addition of two 75 gallon drop tanks. 108 and 150 gallon tanks were also available for the P-47.

⁹ Lieutenant General Frank M Andrews [Overall Commander, US European Theatre of Operations] was, in based in London during 1943. Born in 1884; he was killed on 3 May 1943 in a B-24 Liberator crash in Iceland.

3.3 – US Strategic Air Forces in Europe

- a) The US Fifteenth Air Force, with its HQ at Bari in Italy had been operating since December 1943 principally against targets in the Mediterranean area. On 4 Jan 1944 its overall command, together with the that of Eighth Air Force was merged into a new structure, the USSAFE. It took over the existing Eighth HQ at Bushy Park, Teddington, whilst the latter moved back to High Wycombe. Later that year the overall policy regarding the strategic attacking of enemy targets by both the US and the RAF came under review and a new system was developed to economise, and maximise the effect of the bombing. The Eighth Bomber Command with its HQ at High Wycombe was disbanded and the revised Eighth Air Force HQ took its place.
- b) This new unit also had administrative control over the Ninth Air Force. At the end of the conflict the USSAFE became the US Air Force in Europe.

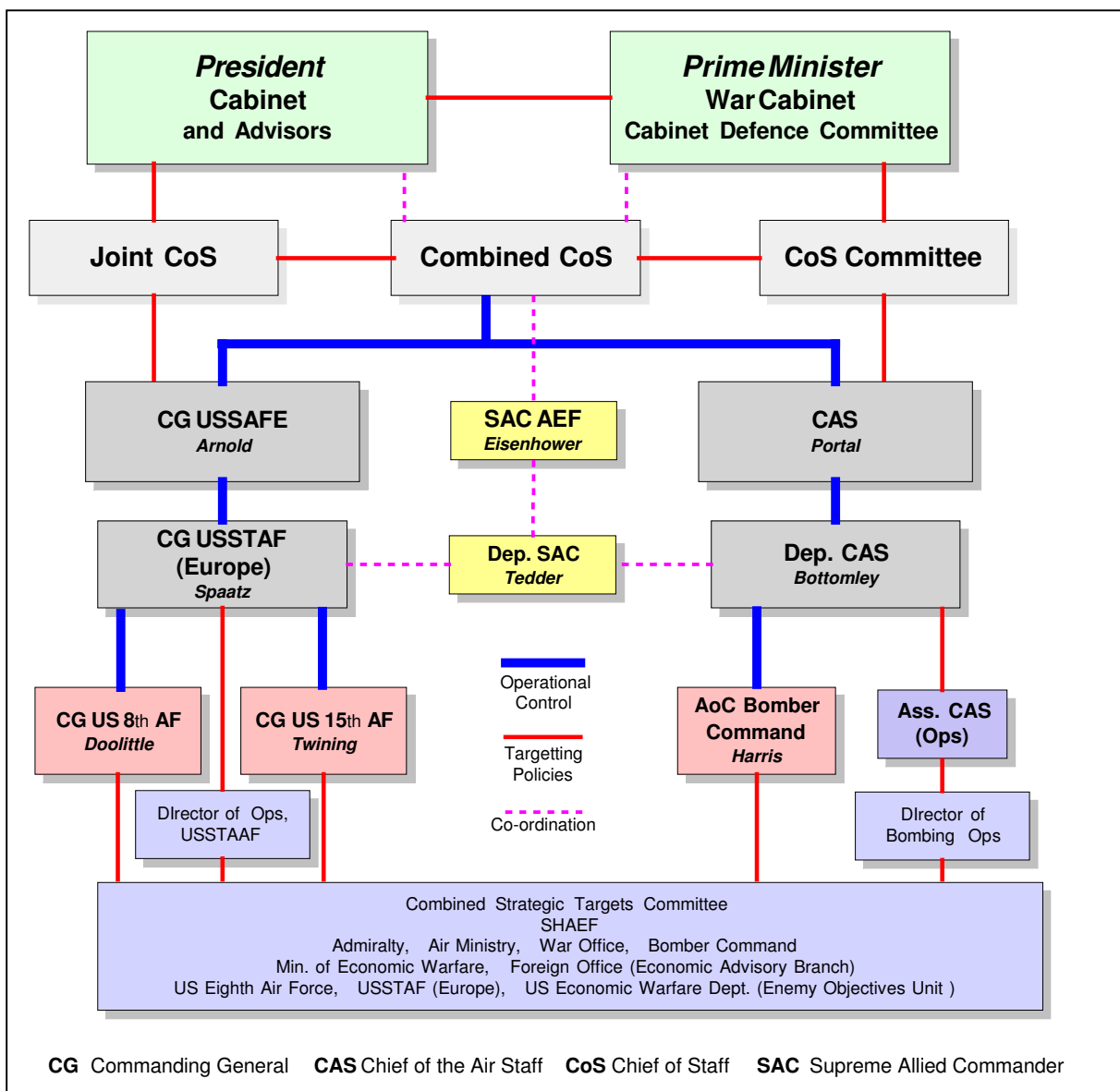


Fig. 3: European Bombing Control Policy from September 1944

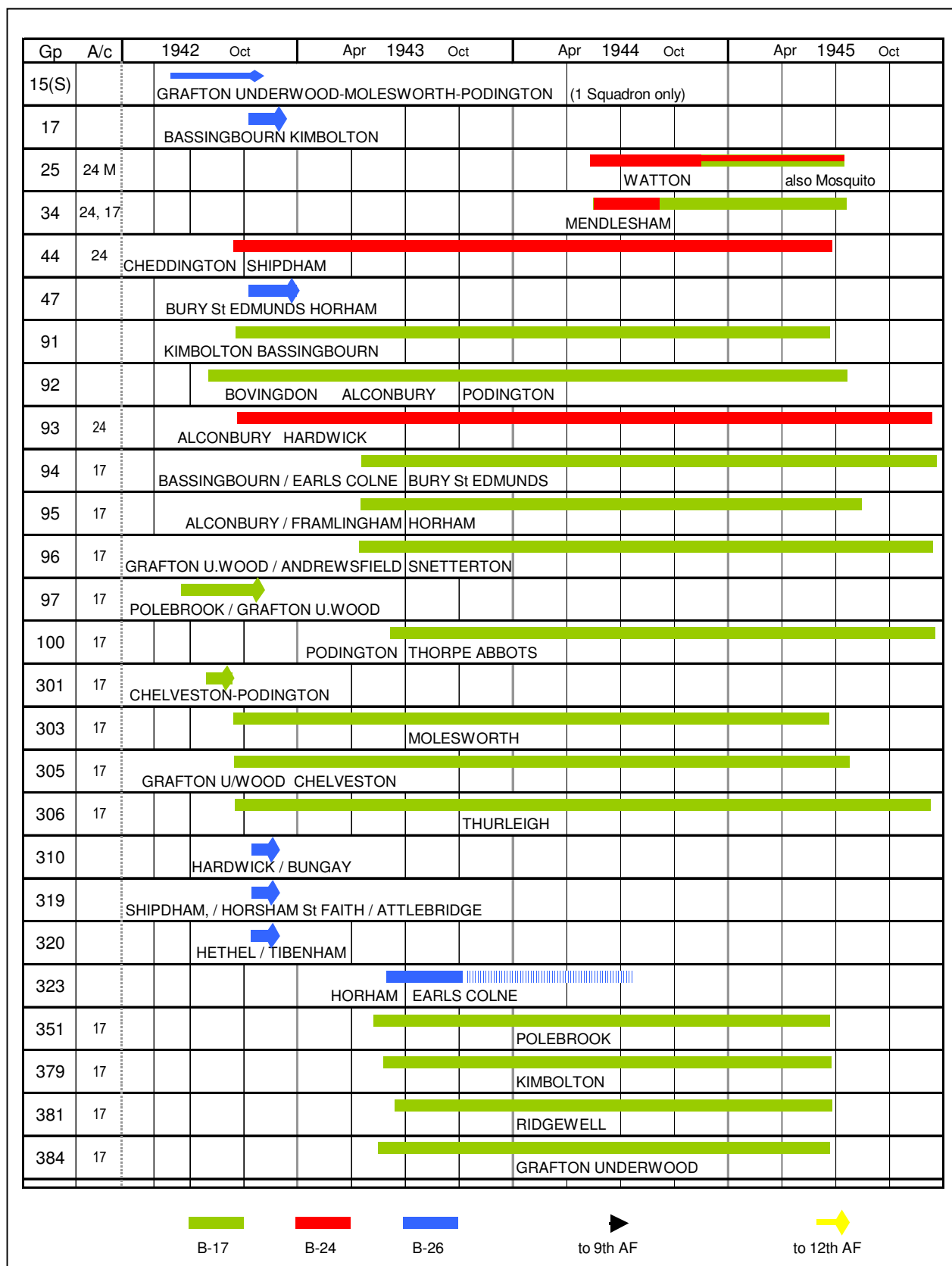


Fig. 4: Eighth Air force Bomber Groups in the UK, (15-384)



Fig. 5: Eighth Air force Bomber Groups in the UK, (385–493)

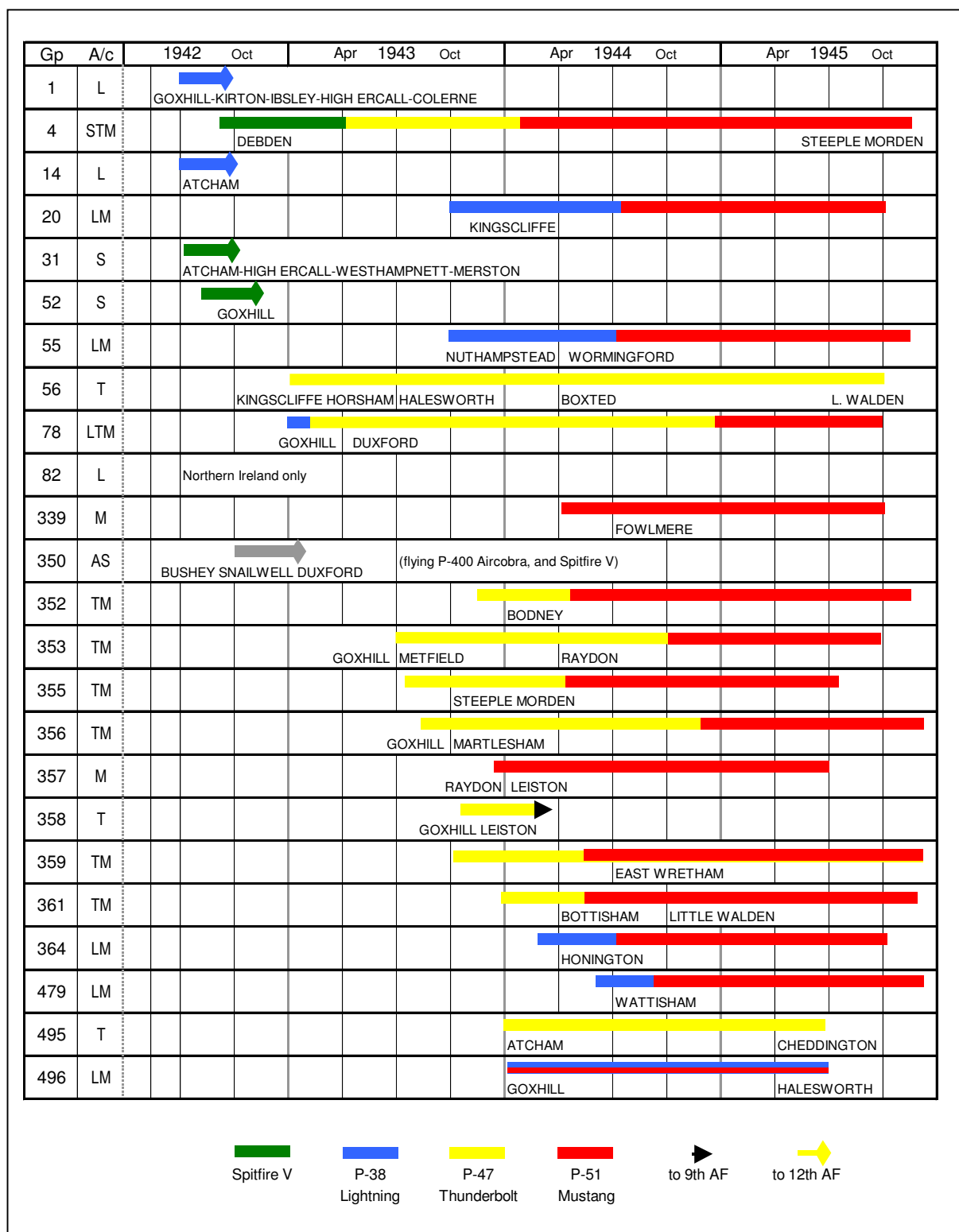


Fig. 6: Eighth Air force Fighter Groups in the UK

3.3.1 Headquarter sites

Location	HQ Function	Station No.	Codenames
Bushy Park, Teddington, Middlesex	Eighth Air Force USSAFE	AF-586	Widewing, Camp Griffiss ¹⁰
Bushey Hall, Watford ¹¹	Eighth Fighter Command	AAF-341	Ajax
High Wycombe, Bucks.	Eighth Bomber Command Eighth Air Force	AAF-101	Pinetree, Camp Lynn
Elveden Hall, Suffolk	3rd Air Division	AAF-116	Camp Blainey
Old Catton, Norfolk	2nd and 14th Bomb Wing	AAF-108	Camp Thomas

¹¹ The spelling of **Bushy** (Park) and **Bushey** (Hall) is also frequently misquoted, even in official documents.

Part 4 – The US Army Ninth Air Force

4.1 – Formation

- a) On 7 Dec 1941 'V' Air Support Command was formed in the USA; four months later it was redesignated as the US IXth Air Force, before moving to Egypt later that year. It disbanded and then reformed 16 August 1943 in the UK with its HQ at Bushey Hall, Watford. Although it also served as the HQ for the USAAF in the Middle East, it was primarily a tactical entity operating from southern England. Its function was similar to that of the recently formed RAF 2nd Tactical Air Force – to support ground forces in the invasion of Europe. Additionally, a number of short-range strategic missions would be undertaken, similar to those performed by the Eighth Air Force.
- b) The home component was formed principally from existing organisations and commands already operating from Britain, and throughout its existence the Ninth involved the following commands:
- | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 9th Bomber | 9th Fighter | 9th Tactical Air | 12th Tactical Air |
| 19th Tactical Air | 29th Tactical Air | 9th Troop Carrier | 9th Air Force Service |
| 9th Engineer | 9th Air Defence. | | |
- c) In October 1943 the Eighth Air Support Command was redesignated Ninth Air Force; its HQ was at Sunninghill Park, Ascot, Berkshire.¹² The Eighth Air Force 3rd Bomb Wing at Marks Hall became the 9th Bomber Command. Over the next few months 60 airfields, and in excess of 100 units would be transferred to the Ninth Air Force.

4.2 – Airfield Allocation

A large number of airfields were handed over to the new air force in the autumn of 1943. Originally, their functions and commands were allocated on a geographical basis. However due to the rapidly changing requirements of the Ninth, there was considerable re-distribution during the period.

4.2.1 The Essex Bomber Units

- a) Initially, eleven airfields were allocated to the Ninth, all being in Essex:
- Four airfields were already equipped with B-26 Marauder bombers:

Andrews Field	Chipping Ongar	Earls Colne	Great Dunmow.
---------------	----------------	-------------	---------------
 - A further four were soon allocated:

Boreham	Matching	Rivenhall	Stansted Mountfichet.
---------	----------	-----------	-----------------------
 - Three A-26 Havoc groups were then added:

Birch	Little Walden,	Wethersfield.
-------	----------------	---------------
- b) Eventually this Essex component would number some 700 plus medium bombers, which would be supported by fighter stations at Boxted and Wormingford, plus Raydon across the border in Suffolk. Gosfield was also used by fighters, until the arrival of B-26s in April 1944, and A-20s a month later.

¹² Previously designated as 8th Ground Air Support Command

- c) These units would operate until July 1944, when an interim move to the south coast, followed by relocation to Normandy would occur.

4.2.2 Transport and Troop Carrying Stations

- a) Sixteen airfields were allocated to transport and observation duties:

Aldermaston	Blakehill Farm*	Broadwell*	Chalgrove
Chilbolton	Down Ampney*	Fairford*	Greenham Common
Grove	Keevil	Membury	Merryfield
Ramsbury	Tarrant Rushton*	Upottery	Welford.

- b) Many of these were within a reasonable distance of Salisbury Plain, however those asterisked were later released to the RAF, and a further section of airfields centred around Grantham in Lincolnshire was later allocated to the Ninth for troop carrying duties:

Balderton	Barkston Heath	Bottesford	Cottesmore
Folkingham	Fulbeck	Langar	North Witham
North Luffenham*	Saltby	Spanhoe	Woolfox Lodge*.

- c) Some of the above stations were already occupied by the RAF and had to be vacated, whereas North Luffenham and Woolfox Lodge would be retained by the RAF.

4.2.3 Advanced Landing Grounds

A number of small airfields were constructed in the south and south-east of England which would act as forward bases:

- Seven airfields were allocated to the south west of Ashford:

Ashford	Headcorn	High Halden	Kingsnorth
Lashenden	Staplehurst	Woodchurch.	

- The New Forest Fighter / Bomber Group:

Beaulieu	Bisterne	Christchurch	Holmsley South
Hurn	Ibsley	Lymington	Stoney Cross
Warmwell	Winkton.		

- The Salisbury Plain Fighter / Reconnaissance Group:

Andover	Chilbolton	Middle Wallop	Thruxton.
---------	------------	---------------	-----------

4.3 – Commands

4.3.1 The 9th Air Defence Command

- a) Formed officially in Hampstead, London, it was responsible for the defence of all Ninth Air Force installations in the UK, and comprised:

8 AAA brigades	2 fighter control squadrons
2 signal air warning battalions	The 71st Fighter Wing
2 night-fighter squadrons.	

- b) The RAF also loaned two sectors of 85 group. The entire command moved to France in August 1944.

4.3.2 The 9th Fighter Command

This unit was formed at Middle Wallop on 16 October 1943, its primary function being to train and equip tactical air commands in order that they in turn could support front-line troops. Later it would also occupy the airfields at Charny Down and Scorton, flying the P-61 Black Widow.

4.3.3 The 9th Tactical Air Command

- a) The 9th Air Support Command was formed in December 1943 at Aldermaston Court. Two months later the HQ moved temporarily to Middle Wallop, and then to Uxbridge on 15 Feb 1942. The name changed to from the 9th ASC to the 9th Tactical Air Command in April. The aim of the command was to protect the invasion force as it crossed the Channel and moved forward into Normandy.
- b) It consisted of:
 - 70th Fighter Wing with four Groups, New Forest Airfields
 - 71st Fighter Wing with three Groups, Salisbury Plain Airfields
 - 84th Fighter Wing with four Groups, New Forest Airfields.
- c) All units moved into Normandy as soon as possible, and during this period operational control was temporarily transferred to Channel based ships via the 1st Air Combat Control Squadron. Land based control was then established for the 70th Fighter Wing.

4.3.4 The 12th Tactical Air Command

Originally part of the Twelfth Air Force, this unit became active in France. It was attached to the Ninth Air Force for just six weeks.

4.3.5 The 19th Tactical Air Command

- a) The unit was created at Middle Wallop on 4 January 1944 as an Air Support Command, later becoming the 19th TAC in April, by which time the HQ had moved to Aldermaston Court. It controlled two wings, which departed to France in July:
 - 100th Fighter Wing with four Groups, Ashford ALGs
 - 303rd Fighter Wing with four Groups, Ashford ALGs.
- b) Operational control was as for the 9th TAC.

4.3.6 The 29th Tactical Air Command

Though a vital part of the Ninth Air Force, this unit did not become active until footholds had been obtained in Germany. It had no components in the UK.

4.3.7 The 9th Troop Carrier Command

Three groups transferred from the Eighth Air Force in the winter of 1943 formed the nucleus of the TCC, with Headquarters first at Cottesmore and then Bottesford airfield. By April 1944 three wings had been formed, again having airfield HQs at Exeter, Cottesmore, and Greenham Common.

4.3.8 The 9th Air Force Service Command

- a) Reforming from the Ninth Air Service Command this unit arrived in England on 16 October 1943, with its HQ at Sunninghill Park, Ascot. Its name changed from ASC to the AFSC on 29

January 1944. Tasked with the maintenance of the military hardware belonging to the Ninth, the command soon developed a number of sub-units called, in order of size:

- Advanced Air Depot Areas (AADA)
 - Tactical Air Depots (TAD)
 - Air Depot Groups (ADG)
 - Service Groups (SG)
 - Service Teams (ST).
- b) The relationship between these units changed significantly during the first few months until a workable system finally evolved with the two principal HQ units, the AADAs, located at:
- Haseley Court, Oxfordshire
 - Arborfield House, Berkshire.
- c) Each AADA controlled three Tactical Air Depots which were sited on airfields:
- 1 AADA: North Witham, Stansted, Grove
 - 2 AADA: Kingston Bagpuize, Chilbolton, Membury.
- d) Each TAD had two Air Depot Groups, plus a number of Service Groups, each generally specialising in a particular type of aircraft.
- e) Each TAD (and its pair of ADGs) would consist of two each of the following:
- HQs and HQ squadrons
 - Repair Squadrons
 - Supply Squadrons
 - QM Platoons
 - QM Truck Companies
 - Mobile Repair / Reclamation Squadrons
 - Ordnance Maintenance Companies.
- f) Also available were:
- An Aviation Signal Company
 - An MP Company
 - An Ordnance Depot Company
 - A Medical Supply Platoon.
- g) Some TADs also had Ordnance and Chemical Supply Companies.
- h) Service Groups were attached to combat units on airfields, and each had two Service Teams, which would be associated with a particular combat group. Each team its own Aircraft Service Squadron, and Ordnance Supply / Maintenance Company; but would share a QM Company, a QM Truck Company, a Signal Company, and a Chemical Company.
- i) By the end of 1943 a number of Mobile Repair and Reclamation Squadrons had been formed principally to undertake work away from airfields. Each MR&RS had nine self supporting teams, and a number of these units found themselves to be amongst the first Ninth units to be sent to Normandy.

- j) A number of specialised bases were set up early in the life of the AFSC, examples being:
- Filton, Gloucestershire – located a short distance from the principal Ninth Air Force docks at Avonmouth, this was used by a number of MR&RS units for the rapid erection and assembly of aircraft – particularly the A-20
 - Crookham, Berkshire – adjacent to Greenham Common Airfield, this site was used for glider assembly
 - Baverstock, Wiltshire – this was selected as the reception area for all Ninth supplies, and was termed the Base Air Depot Area. It became an enormous site, which encompassed Groveley Wood as an ammunition storage area. Detachments were later required at Bristol, London, Southampton, and Cardiff (St Mellons).
- k) After D-Day a significant number of units moved to France, and at the end of hostilities the AFSC was one of the slowest to close down owing to the massive quantities of stores and equipment which were under its control.

4.3.9 The 9th Engineer Command

- a) Formed on 30 March 1944, the unit's function was to construct airfields and support sites in France following the Invasion. It would also refurbish enemy installations after they had been captured.
- b) On 6 June it consisted of 16 engineer aviation battalions, 4 combat communications teams, plus many other essential units – in all a total of 17,000 men. Some units crossed the Channel on D-Day itself, the majority were in Normandy by September, at which point over 50 airfields had been made available. The short term HQ sites in the UK are unknown.

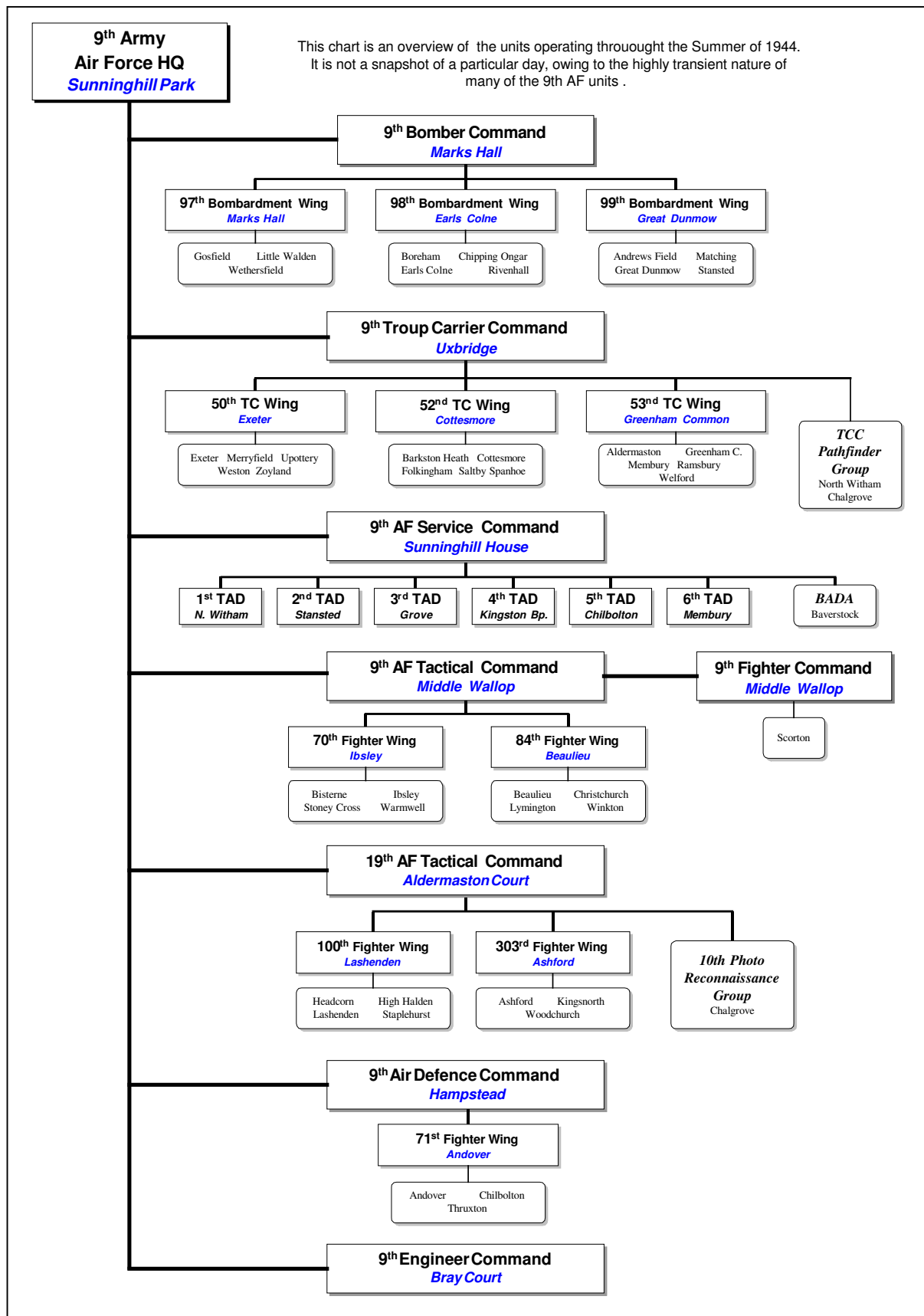


Fig. 8: The US 9th Army Air Force Structure – Summer 1944

This chart represents an overview of the Command Division & Wing Structure in the Summer of 1944

Part 5 – United States Air Force

5.1 – Definition of 'Cold War'

- a) The Cold War was a period of East-West competition, tension and conflict, short of full-scale war, characterised by mutual perceptions of hostile intention between military and political alliances. The period is also characterised by real wars, often called 'proxy wars' because they were fought by Soviet allies, rather than the USSR itself. Another characteristic was the competition for influence in the Third World, but the most important was the Superpower Arms Race.
- b) There is no definite date for the beginning of the Cold War, important turning points are believed to be:
 - The Yalta Conference between 4 and 11 February 1945¹³
 - The end of War in Europe in May 1945
 - Churchill's Fulton speech on 5 March 1946.¹⁴
- c) Similarly there are disagreements regarding the end of the Cold War. It could be that the 1985 appointment of Gorbachev as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, was the beginning of the end, or the Reagan build-up of the Star Wars project that eventually drove the Soviets to bankruptcy. There is also the possibility that the Cold War began and ended at different times in different places.

5.2 – The Setting up of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

- a) The British Prime Minister, in his telegram of 12 May 1945 to President Truman, expressed his anxiety in the following terms, *'What will be the position in a year or two when the British and American armies have melted, and the French have not yet been formed on any major scale, and when Russia may choose to keep 200 or 300 divisions on active service?'*
- b) He went on, *'An iron curtain is drawn down upon their front (Russia) (see also footnote 14). We do not know what is going on behind'.*
- c) This, it may be noted, was the first occasion on which the subsequently familiar metaphor was used.
- d) Soon after the German surrender, the Western democracies, in keeping with their wartime pledges and to popular demand, began to demobilise. The USA and UK quickly withdrew the bulk of their armed forces from Europe. They demobilised most of their troops, with the exception of occupation forces and units committed in other parts of the world.
- e) The armed strength of the Allied Forces in Europe at the time of the surrender of Germany was approximately five million men – just one year later this had been reduced to 880,000.

¹³ The famous meeting of the 'Big Three' (Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin) at the former palace of Czar Nicholas on the Crimean southern shore of the Black Sea. Having now occupied Poland, Stalin's army had reached the Ode River and was poised for the final attack on Berlin, but Stalin had ordered Zhukov to pause while the conference was in session. Eisenhower's men were still west of the Rhine. RAF and USAAF strategic bombing had by now devastated the German capital.

¹⁴ Winston Churchill presented his Sinews of Peace speech, at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. In it is the now famous sentence *From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an Iron Curtain has descended across the Continent.*

- f) During WWII, the Soviet Union had begun its territorial expansion, by the annexation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, together with certain parts of Finland, Poland, Rumania, NE Germany, and Eastern Czechoslovakia. This expansion continued after the war, and was supplemented by a policy of control over the countries of Eastern Europe.
- g) Faced with Soviet expansion, the free countries of Europe, recognised the need to seek a means of maintaining its freedom. On 12 March 1947, President Truman told Congress, '*It must be the policy of the USA to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities, or by outside pressure*'. Following that statement, which became known as the '*Truman Doctrine*', congress authorised some \$400m of aid to Greece and Turkey. The Truman Doctrine was designed to deal with the specific threat to Greece and Turkey, but the immediate situation in Western Europe was more of one of economic collapse.
- h) On 5 June 1947, in a speech at Harvard University, the Secretary of State of the US, General George C Marshall, initiated the idea of a Programme for European Recovery, and proposed that the USA should come to the help of Europe. He added that his policy was, 'directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos'.
- i) This offer of economic assistance was open to the Soviet Union and the countries behind the Iron Curtain. Stalin refused all offers of American aid, and forced the satellite countries to do likewise.
- j) The world found itself split into two blocks, and as far as Western Europe was concerned, it was felt that the only way of re-establishing a balance of forces was to have an alliance. To this end Ernest Bevin, the Foreign Secretary suggested a formula for Western Union, consisting of a network of bilateral agreements on the lines of the Dunkirk Treaty.
- k) This Treaty had been signed on 4 March 1947 by France and the UK, and was a Treaty of alliance and mutual assistance of 50 years duration, according to which the two countries would unite in the event of any renewed attempt at aggression by Germany. The new European Treaty became known as the *Brussels Treaty*.
- l) On 4 March 1948 representatives of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the UK met in Brussels to consider the terms of a treaty of mutual assistance, and was signed on 17 March. These countries pledged to build up a common defence system, and to strengthen their economic and cultural ties.
- m) The Brussels Treaty had scarcely been signed when, in June 1948, the Russians started the blockade of West Berlin. It was to last for 323 days and was only countered by the organisation of an air-lift by the Western Powers. This blockade concentrated the mind in the setting up of western defence.
- n) From July 1948 onwards, representatives from the United States and Canada attended Brussels Treaty meetings. In September a military body was created within the treaty known as the Western Union Defence Organisation. Field Marshal Montgomery was appointed Chairman of the C-in-C Committee, and set up his HQ at Fontainebleau, France.
- o) Meanwhile preliminary talks had taken place in America between the State Department and the Ambassadors of Canada, and of the Western Union Powers, which ended on 9 September with full agreement of the principle of a defensive pact for the North Atlantic area.

- p) On 15 March 1949 the Brussels Treaty invited Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway, and Portugal to accede to the treaty.
- q) On 4 April 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington by the Foreign Ministers of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom and the United States.
- r) Subsequently three other countries joined the original 12, Greece and Turkey were invited in September 1951 – acceded on 18 February 1952 – and the Federal Republic of Germany was invited following the signature of the Paris Agreements in October 1954; it officially became a member on 9 May 1955.

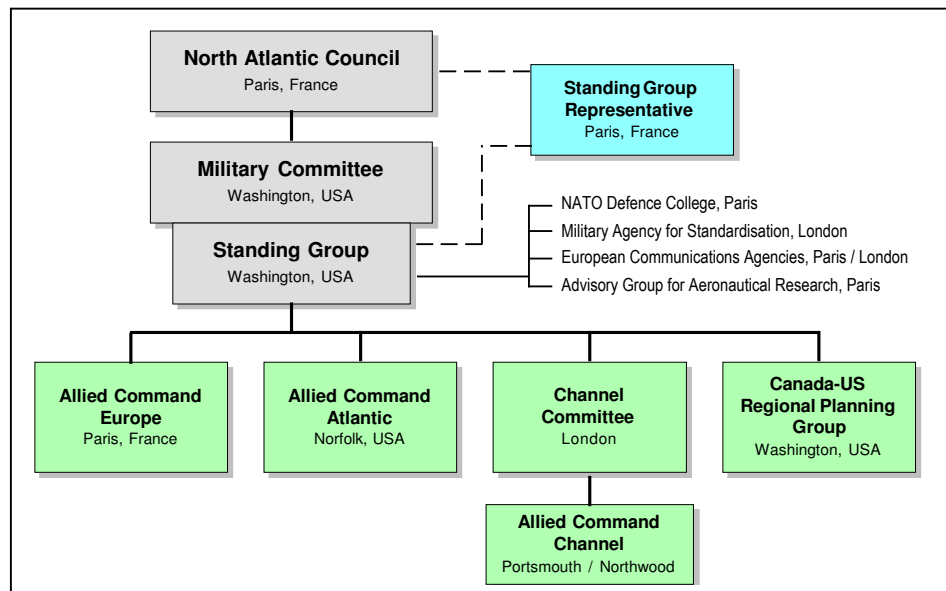


Fig. 9: The Military Organisation of NATO, 1962

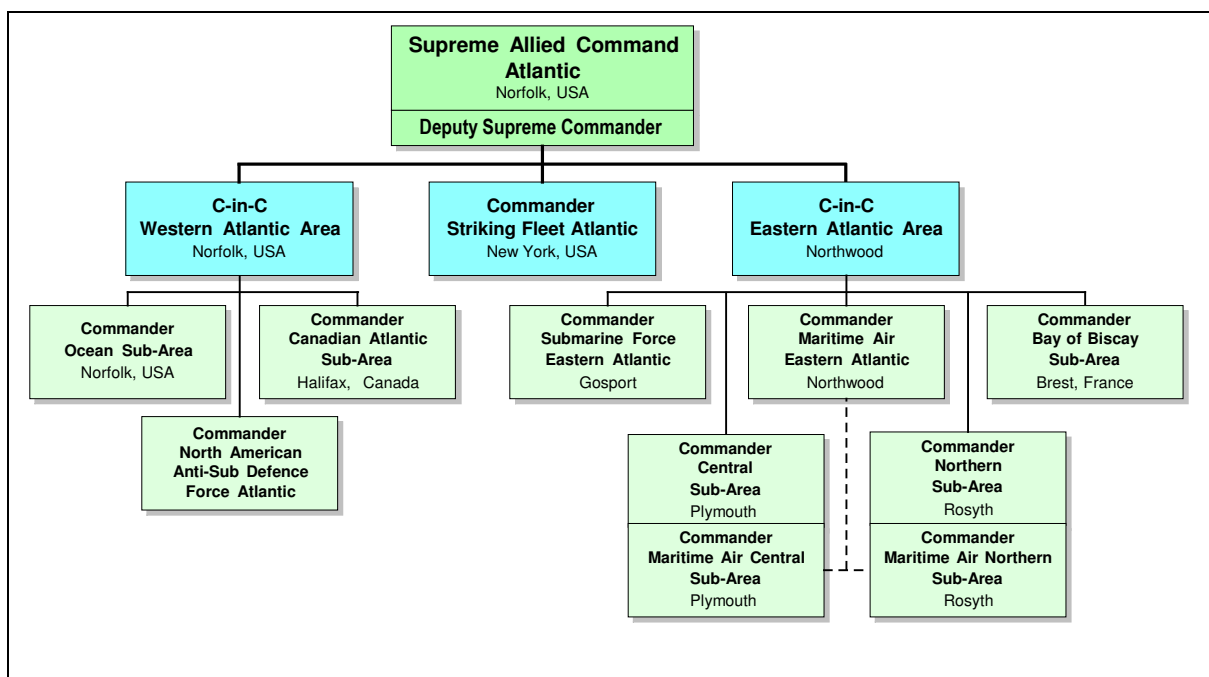


Fig. 10: Allied Command – Atlantic, 1962

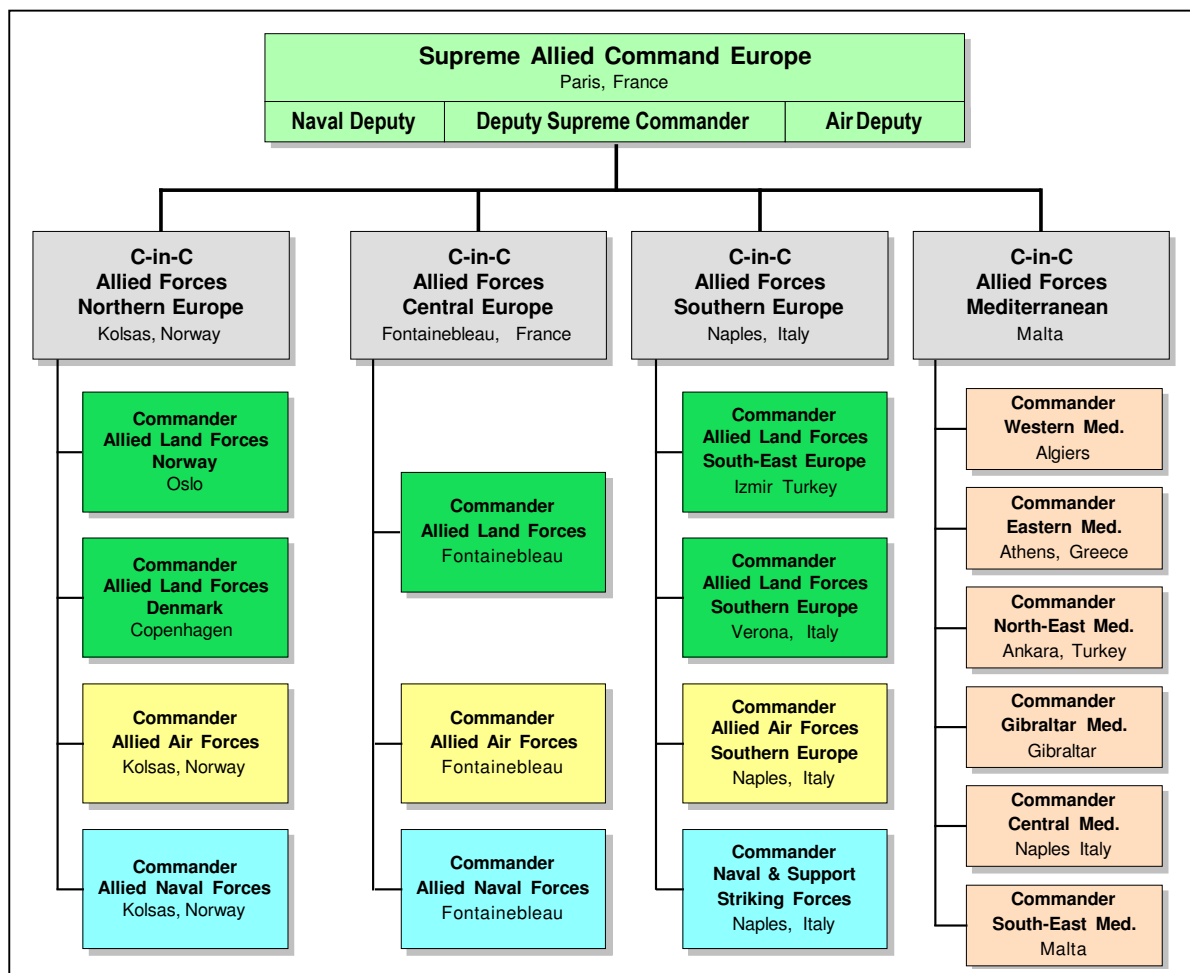


Fig. 11: Allied Command – Europe, 1962

5.3 – Background to Strategic Air Command

- a) Strategic Air Command (SAC) was formed from the Continental Air Forces on 21 March 1946, as one of three combat commands of the United States Army Air Force (USAAF).¹⁵
- b) On 16 September 1947 the United States Air Force (USAF) was established as a separate and equal element of the American armed forces. It immediately discarded the old army organisational structure – in which decisions were made at a high level by officers with no flying experience – during November of that year and implemented the ‘Hobson Plan’. That effectively gave supreme authority to an operational or combat officer.
- c) SAC’s basic organisational unit now became the Base Wing, whereby squadrons were assigned to combat groups, which in turn were assigned to a wing. The latter consisted of four tactical squadrons made up of three bombardment and one air-refuelling squadron, which were supported by four maintenance squadrons. All of these (both tactical and maintenance squadrons) carried the same numeric designation. SAC Wings were assigned to a numbered air force, those stationed in the UK coming under the Third Air Force. Between the numbered air force and a wing is the Air Division, which was assigned to all bases that had more than one wing.

¹⁵ The other two were the Tactical Air Command (TAC), Air Defense Command (ADC)

d) In simple terms the SAC Command Structure was as follows:

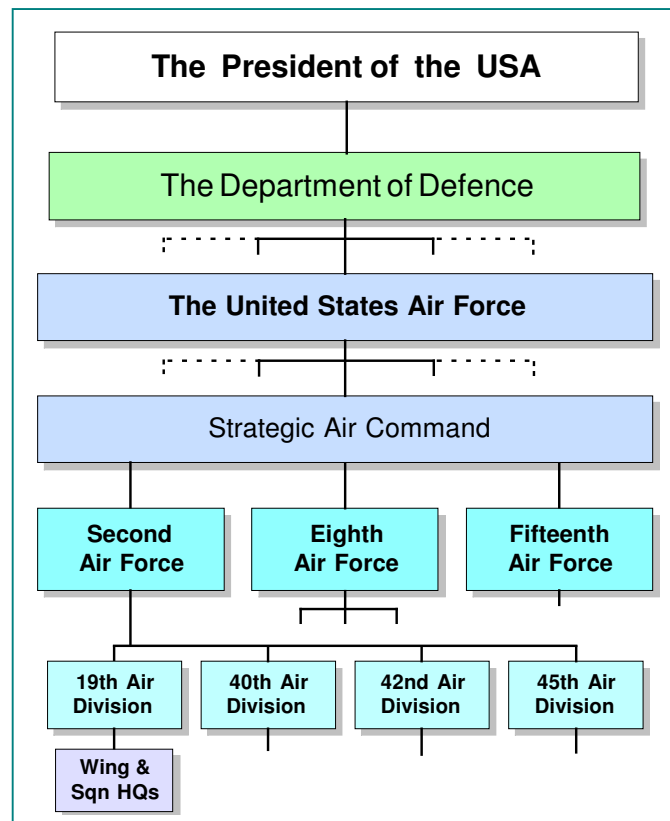


Fig. 12: SAC Command Structure (part)

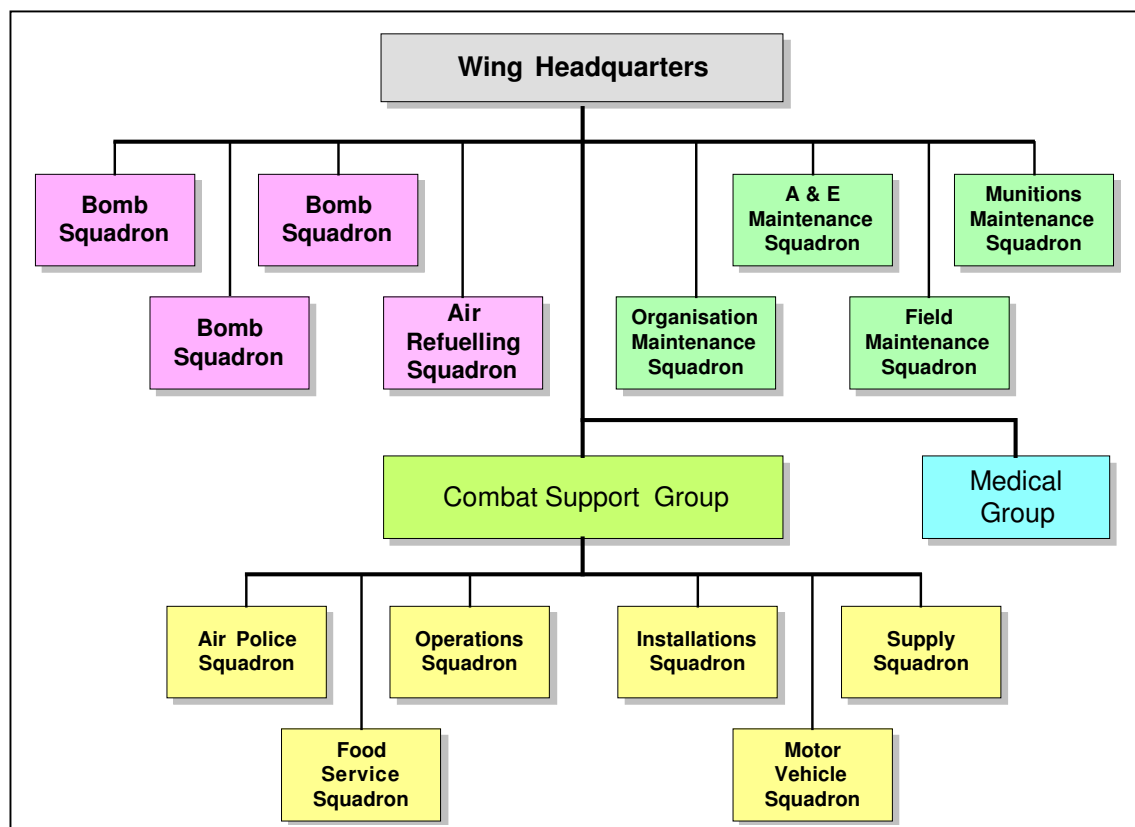


Fig. 13: Wing Organisation, 1965 (example)

5.3.2 Strategic Air Command in the United Kingdom 1948-1965

- a) The first key point of post-WWII, Anglo-American air co-operation was marked by the USAF's return to Britain in July 1948 which was a direct result of the Russian blockade of Berlin.
- b) A contributory factor to the success of the final outcome of the Berlin crises began in 1944 when the Air Ministry had decided to build a new type of military airfield known as a Very Heavy Bomber (VHB) station. At this time three RAF airfields (Marham, Lakenheath and Sculthorpe) closed for reconstruction to the new standard with Marham re-opening in January 1946, and Lakenheath in August 1948.
- c) Known as Operation 'Ferryboat' the first American B-29 bombers arrived between July and the first two weeks of August 1948 and were based at Marham, Scampton, and Waddington. When Lakenheath became available, the 2nd Bomb Group arrived.

<u>Airfield</u>	<u>Bomb Group</u>	<u>Squadrons</u>
Marham	307th	370th, 371st
Scampton	28th	77th, 717th, 718th
Waddington	307th	307th (Air Refuelling?)
Lakenheath	2nd	20th, 49th, 96th

- d) The Third Air Division was formed provisionally at Marham and assigned to Air Forces in Europe. Its primary job was to administer and control attached bombardment organisations deployed from the United States for training purposes. At this time these units were only expected to take part in 30-60 day temporary duty cycles, which became known as Temporary Duty Yonder (TDY). On 23 August 1948, the 'provisional' title was dropped and on 8 September the Third Air Division moved into quarters at Bushy Park and remained there until April 1949 when it moved to the Victoria Park Estate, South Ruislip. From 1948 until 1950 all combat air units in the United Kingdom were under operational control of the Third Air Division. Throughout this period SAC bombers rotated for 90-day periods and as from December 1948, RAF Sculthorpe had been added to the list of bases.
- e) Another key point was the introduction during the spring of 1949 of the 509th Bomb Group to the UK, the USAF's first 'atomic' wing. For its TDY it brought 30 bombers plus a number of B-29 tanker aircraft. Two squadrons (393rd and 715th) going to Marham, and 830th Squadron to Lakenheath where it stayed for a 120-day TDY.
- f) Meanwhile, the RAF had been negotiating the Mutual Defence Aid Pact for the loan of several squadrons of B-29s (later known as the Washington Mk.1) but the only stations in the UK that could realistically handle them were the original VHBs.
- g) In June 1950 war broke out in Korea, which called for large numbers of United Nations troops. To ensure that this situation did not escalate into Europe while fighting was going on in the east, a strengthening of European defences was required. The act of war in Korea, set in motion the USA/UK Emergency War Plan (EWP) which enabled a forward deployment of additional atomic-capable bombers to airfields in the UK as part of a temporary dispersal programme. For this purpose use was made of Mildenhall, Oakington, Waddington, and Wyton.
- h) The Korean War also enabled, and led to the signing of a 'Special Construction Programme' in February 1951, it was designed to provide a solid base for tactical and strategic air operations

in Britain. This called for 26 bases in addition to the four already covered by the ‘Ambassador’s Agreement’ (see below). These bases were required for both SAC and USAFE as part of their emergency and standby programmes.

- i) The growing size and complexity of the American military presence in the UK required a larger command and organisational structure which resulted in the disbanding of the Third Air Division which took place on 1 May 1951. It was replaced by the Third Air Force which formed to oversee tactical air operations from the UK, and to provide logistics and support to the 7th Air Division.

5.3.3 The Midland Group of SAC Bases

- a) As evidence of Soviet expansion mounted, plans were drawn up to rebuild four USAF bomber bases with America and Britain sharing costs. Because of the vulnerability of the East Anglian airfields, it was decided to place these new bases behind a protective screen of RAF fighter stations. The two partners agreed that the B-29 stations would be sited at Fairford, Brize Norton, Upper Heyford and later at Greenham Common – collectively known as the ‘Midland Group’. The return of the East Anglian VHBs to RAF control was seen by the RAF as a convenient exchange for the ‘new’ airfields of the Midland Group. An agreement was then reached between Air Chief Marshall Sir John Slessor and General Hoyt S Vandenberg that no more than two USAF wings (60 aircraft) could be stationed in the UK at any one time. The Washington fleet then went to Marham, but the station was shared with USAF until it was vacated by them in January 1952.
- b) The agreement for building the Midland Group bases was signed in April 1950 by the US Ambassador Lewis Douglas and the UK Under-Secretary for Air, Aidan Crowley, and was known as the Ambassador’s Agreement. Construction costs were reduced by using US army engineers with their own plant to carry out a large percentage of the grading, levelling, drainage and earth removal.¹⁶ These Engineer Aviation Battalions (EABs) also undertook construction of the runway, taxiways hardstandings and roads, along with British contractors.
- c) Brize Norton was designated ‘depot base’ with Fairford, Upper Heyford and Greenham Common as satellites.
- d) To activate the station, organise reconstruction, administration and provide support for the EABs the 7503rd Base Complement Squadron (BCS) arrived at Brize Norton from Marham in mid-1950 and following the re-designation of this unit to 7503rd ABG, three subordinate squadrons were formed: 7508th ABS remained at Brize Norton, 7507th ABS went to Fairford, and the 7509th ABS to Upper Heyford.
- e) The 7th Air Division (an SAC sub-command) was formed on 20 March 1951 to handle the strategic operations of SAC bombers from UK bases, while the Third Air Force had the responsibility for logistical and tactical activities of SAC in the UK. The division was responsible for nine SAC Air Base Groups and Air Base Squadrons which were created on 16 May 1951 to administer operations at Bassingbourn, Lakenheath, Lindholme, Manston, Marham, Mildenhall Waddington and Wyton. The division participated in alerts exercises and operational readiness inspections, evaluations, and provided intensive training programs to provided a combat-ready force.

¹⁶ Such as the 801st Engineer Aviation Battalion at Upper Heyford – see www.rafupperheyford.4t.com

- f) With the creation of the 7th Air Division to manage the SAC stations (which prior to this had been the responsibility of the Third Air Force), during May 1951 these three squadrons were raised in status to Air Base Group level.¹⁷ The original 7503rd ABG was also raised in status, becoming the 7503rd Air Support Wing. This arrangement was a 'technical' designation as the bases had yet to be formally handed over to the 7th Air Division, and hence this organisation was only in place while the bases were being rebuilt.
- g) The managing of the civil engineering projects for these three bases came under the auspices of the 928th Engineer Aviation Group with its two HQ organisations, the 916th Engineer Aviation Depot Company and the 620th Engineer Aviation Maintenance Company. The 810th EAB became responsible for the reconstruction of Upper Heyford, the 803rd EAB for Brize Norton and the 917th at Fairford.
- h) During its period of reconstruction Greenham Common came under the 7501 ABS (later Group) and the 804th EAB carried out the civil engineering work between December 1951 and September 1953.
- i) The reconstruction of Fairford and Greenham Common, and to a lesser extent (in the initial stages) of Brize Norton and Upper Heyford, involved a completely new planning arrangement from the traditional WWII, and subsequent post-war VHB three-runway design. Instead of three runways, a single 9,000ft by 200ft runway was planned either aligned along the existing east-west main runway, or in the case of Greenham Common parallel to it. This was to be served by two 80ft wide 'high-speed' taxiways running parallel (one north, one south), and from which were other tracks leading to aircraft hardstandings for up to 45 aircraft. Runway length which had been debated by the British and US Governments had originally been set at 8,000ft (adequate for the B-29), quickly amended to 9,000ft (for the B-36). During 1952, however, in order to cope with new B-47s then under construction it was changed to an 'ideal' nominal length of 10,000ft (SAC actually wanted 11,300ft but accepted 10,000ft).¹⁸ Where possible another 1,000ft over-run at either end was also to be allowed for but the runway at Upper Heyford could not be extended beyond 9,600ft.
- j) These airfields were also classified as VHB stations but their design was a natural progression from the WWII VHB arrangement. The original plans included the modern concept of a single runway but retained the old idea of having hardstandings based on maximum dispersal. This was then changed to a more compact layout, designed to cut down the time in getting aircraft to the high-speed taxiway and this became the standard for all future bomber and fighter stations. It was at this design phase that led to the new SAC bubble type hard-stand for very heavy bombers (such as the B-52). These were built from 1951 at the new Midland Group airfields as well as the old VHB stations.
- k) Other early units to be assigned to the Midland Group SAC airfields were Aviation Field Depot Squadrons (AFDS) to handle special weapons, and the Chemical Smoke Generator Companies, parented by 6th Chemical Smoke Generator Battalion at Brize Norton.

¹⁷ This organisation was replaced by the 'Combat Support Group' organisation, such as the 20th CSG that was RAF Upper Heyford's operating unit from 1 April 1970 – see Figure 13

¹⁸ 10,006ft Brize Norton, 9,997ft Fairford, 10,010ft Greenham Common, 9,604ft Upper Heyford

5.3.4 New Bases

- a) On 9 September 1951, the Third Air Force received its first permanent tactical unit – the 81st Fighter-Interceptor (later Bomber) Wing at Bentwaters and this was followed three months later by the 123rd Fighter-Bomber Wing. More nuclear-capable units followed during June 1952 with the 48th Bomb Wing and the 20th Fighter-Bomber Wing, thus providing the Third Air Force with four tactical units.
- b) The task of developing the necessary base reconstructions was governed by the signing of a US/UK cost sharing agreement which took place during September 1953. This set about a clear idea of exactly what each nation would contribute. Basically this called upon the UK government to offer \$60m towards construction; the US would make the remaining \$240m available. This would make 43 major airfields available for use in times of peace and war, and was at a time when USAF plans called for a major SAC overseas wartime deployment, however, the programme was downgraded in later years. It came about due to the change in international climate, plus the development of new weapons systems and technology – including the development of aerial refuelling.
- c) During 1953, the 7th Air Division had organised a base alignment plan such that 33 UK bases were reorganised into seven complexes and two bases, – these being South Ruislip and Brize Norton.
- d) With the end of the Korean War, came a period of deceleration (between 1954 and 1958). The massive Burtonwood Air Depot was phased down, the 49th Air Division was disbanded on 21 March 1956 and its two wings were assigned directly to the Third Air Force. The disbanding of the 406th Fighter Interceptor Wing (which had replaced the 123rd Wing at the end of 1951) took place on 15 May 1958. The switch from 90-day rotational tours to much shorter post-strike operations effectively halved the size of the 7th Air Division. All US army anti-aircraft smoke generating units of the 32nd Anti-Aircraft Brigade and 928th Engineer Aviation Group with a total strength of 4,400 men left Britain during 1958. All of these developments meant that the number of UK sites was reduced from 43 to 26.
- e) In 1941 the Ministry of Fuel and Power had decided to construct a pipeline to simplify the transfer of petrol for both aviation and motor purposes through certain areas of the UK. It expanded throughout WWII, eventually connecting large numbers of bomber airfields in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and East Anglia, with storage depots and refineries. This network was expanded in the 1950s, now coming under the generic name of POL (Petrol, Oil, Lubricants). The extended POL pipeline covered 650 miles and was completed during May 1957.¹⁹
- f) On 1 June 1958, the Third Air Force implemented ‘Victor Alert’ VA operations, initially under the name ‘Operation Blast Off’. These were intended to get fully armed aircraft into the air within minutes of a emergency. Special top-security areas were constructed inside the airfield and close to one end of the runway. The aircraft, typically between four and six, were housed in small hangars affectionately known as ‘barns’.

¹⁹ By the end of the century the UK NATO POL system comprised 10 separate fuel storage and distribution systems with a total of 7,500 miles of pipeline linking storage depots, airfields, refineries and ingress points. Of these systems, two are multi-national and eight are national systems.

- g) Flash points during the mid to late 1950s included Indo-China (1954), Hungary (1956) and Lebanon (1958). During these years Third Air Force Wings updated their aircraft, replacing F-84s and F-86s with F-100s, and the B-45s with B-66s.
- h) The missile-age era began in earnest with co-operation between the USAF and the RAF. The two governments agreed to base 60 Douglas Thor PGM-17 intermediate-range missiles in Britain was signed on 22 February 1958. The USAF provided the equipment and assisted in construction, but the RAF handled operations. By the end of the year the first weapons were operational. By mid-1960 all 60 IRBMs were in position and under RAF control, with the 7th Air Division charged with management of the warheads. Within two years there were sufficient numbers of operational long-range intercontinental ballistic missiles sited within the USA, and the need for intermediate missiles had passed. The Thor units began to disband during April 1963 and this exercise was completed at the end of that year.

5.3.5 Withdrawal from France

- a) The next phase of USAF's Cold War history in Britain had commenced in 1959 when President de Gaulle placed certain limitations on tactical American forces in France. As a result two combat wings moved to Britain – the 10th Reconnaissance Wing to RAF Alconbury and the 48th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) to Lakenheath This was performed under operation '*Red Richard*'.²⁰ This formed the first stage of a total withdrawal from France and the move effectively strengthened the Third Air Force to five wings. This did not last however, as on 1 July 1961, the five wings reassigned to 17th Air Force. These were:

47th Bomb Wing	10th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing
20th Tactical Fighter Wing	48th Tactical Fighter Wing
81st Tactical Fighter Wing.	

- b) Conventional explosives stored in France were eventually relocated to a new site, RAF Caerwent between Cardiff and Newport. Purpose built magazines had been constructed on the disused Royal Naval Propellant Factory.
- c) The first USAF radar control centre known as 'Anglia Radar Air Traffic Control' opened at Wattisham during February 1959, followed by Upper Heyford – 'Midlands Radar Air Traffic Control' in November 1960.
- d) In 1960 the British Government had agreed to sitting the third link in the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System at Fylingdales Moor. This station provided early warning of ballistic missile attacks on the UK and America and was commissioned on 17 September 1964.
- e) Around this time American intelligence revealed that the Soviets were building hardened aircraft shelters on their bases. This eventually prompted the US Secretary of Defence to form an Air Force working group, to study and analyse the subject of '*Theatre Air Base Vulnerability*' (TABV). The report issued in 1965 recommended, amongst other issues, the dispersal of aircraft into protected shelters. These became known as Hardened Aircraft Shelters (HAS) by the British, and TAB VEEs by the USAF. The Victor Alert (VA) areas were upgraded using hardened control centres and TAB VEES for up to eight aircraft. Tall towers were used for either security purposes as in the VA and supplementary (nuclear) storage facilities at Upper Heyford; or the control building at Elvington. They were known as S/F

²⁰ The withdrawal of US military forces and nuclear weapons from France.

towers. Many of the larger buildings on USAF airfields were painted in a beige / brown colour scheme. This was christened 'Creech Brown' after the originator who wanted to improve morale by making facilities look more pleasing.²¹ Apparently the scheme worked well in south-west USA, but was criticised elsewhere as it did nothing for station camouflage.



Plate 2: A pre WWII 'A' type hangar at Upper Heyford now in Creech Brown style

- f) The 7th Air Division's area of responsibility was primarily of base construction and renovation, which included building complexes to accommodate bombers and fighters. Other complexes included stations or buildings of special function such as communications, weapons storage, aircraft parts, and navigational aids. The division was formed at South Ruislip and remained there until the end of June 1958 when it moved to High Wycombe Air Station. With the withdrawal of SAC from the UK, the division was disbanded on 30 June 1965. Headquarters Third Air Force was then re-organised, and four of the surviving wings were reassigned to the operational control of the Third Air Force on 1 September 1963.
- g) The next few years saw a contraction of US military presence in the UK, some support squadrons at South Ruislip in ancillary bases being returned to the Air Ministry, these included Bovingdon, Bushy Park and Denham. In 1963 Project 'Clearwater' halted the large-scale bomber deployment to Britain and consequently Chelveston, Fairford, Greenham Common and Sculthorpe were soon handed back to the RAF, followed by the massive depot at Burtonwood during 1965. Brize Norton was returned on 1 April 1965 and around this time SAC finally departed from the UK, while Upper Heyford was relegated to stand-by base status. All SAC bases, still occupied by American forces were handed over to USAFE.
- h) During March 1966 the French Government made public its decision to withdraw from military participation in NATO and as a result the 515th Troop Carrier Wing moved to Mildenhall. Upper Heyford was again raised to the status as a primary base for the arrival of the 66th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing (TRW), an additional squadron of the 10th TRW went to Alconbury. Additionally the 322nd Air Division, Military Air Lift Command moved to High Wycombe Air Station. During this phase, the tactical USAF units were re-equipped with the McDonnell F-4 Phantom II.
- i) In June 1972, daily operational control of tactical units in the UK was transferred to HQ US Air Forces in Europe at Ramstein AB, Germany. Third Air Force still retained command of the units but the command was reduced in personnel strength and moved to Mildenhall.

²¹ General Wilbur L Creech (1927–2003) was the commander of Tactical Air Command in the USA

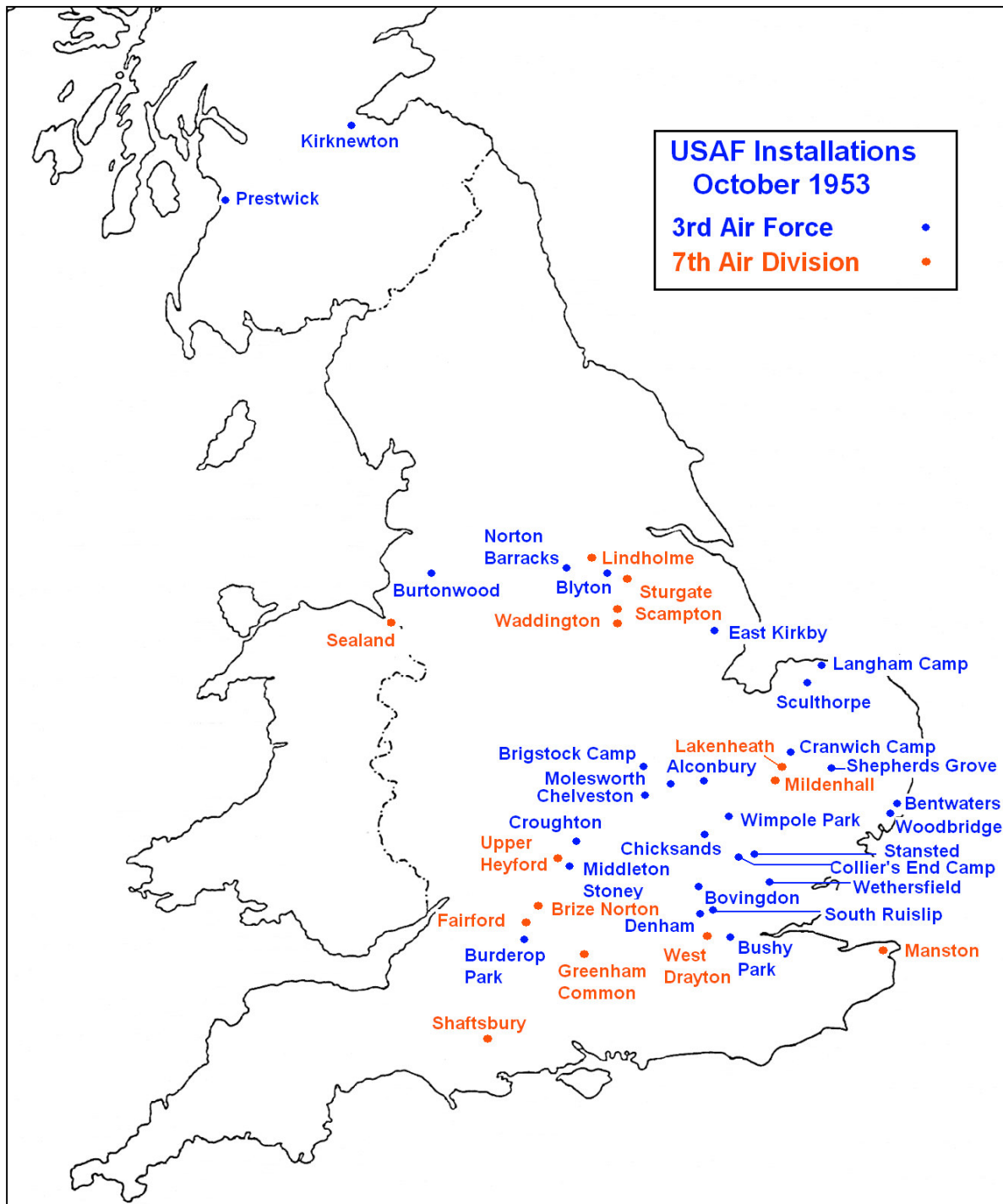


Fig. 14: USAF Installations in the UK 1953

Part 6 – Brief Histories of USAF Bases in the UK

6.1 – Primary USAFE/SAC Installations, 1950–80

6.1.1 Alconbury

- a) Third Air Force authorised a re-construction program and designated Alconbury as a future primary installation on 25 August 1951. Designated a USAF construction site on 1 September 1953, becoming a temporary satellite of Sculthorpe 20 September 1953 to April 1957, then re-assigned primary base status on 1 May 1967. Main runway, extended, taxiway and aprons completed 1955–6.
- b) Flying operations commenced May 1957. 10th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing (TRW) arrived August 1959, Alconbury became a four-base complex that included Bruntingthorpe, Chelveston and Molesworth. Electronic reconnaissance missions begin after B-66s arrived, 1959–60; base also supported day and night photo reconnaissance, electronic reconnaissance, and electronic counter-measures in the 1960s. RF-4s replace RB-66s, 1965–66.
- c) Additional base facilities added in 1968 and major runway rehabilitation completed, 1969–70. New facilities provided for dual-based TRS during July 1970. New aircraft maintenance shop, bulk fuel storage facilities, completed 1973–1974. F-5 operations began 1976, 36 F-5 HAS shelters constructed 1976–1978, two hard operations buildings, wing operations centre, communications facilities, liquid oxygen, and POL shelters added 1977–80. Major housing renovation project completed 1979. Reconnaissance interpretation facility completed mid-1981.

6.1.2 Bentwaters

7506th Air Support Group formed at Bentwaters on 15 March 1951. Station transferred from RAF Fighter Command to USAFE on 7 September 1951. Two days later the 81st Fighter Interceptor Wing assigned to Third Air Force.

6.1.3 Brize Norton

- a) Based at Brize Norton from 10 July 1950, the 928th Engineer Aviation Group managed the reconstruction of the Midland Group SAC airfields. The civil engineering work at Brize Norton was carried out by 803rd EAB. Main runway extended from 6,000ft to 9,000ft. and its width from 150ft to 200ft.
- b) Once the station became operational, the 3920th ABG took over responsibility of operations from 7508th ABG who had overseen the reconstruction of the base. This took place on 1 November 1952, and operational TDY flying commenced in early December of that year. The station was handed back to the RAF on 23 November 1965.

6.1.4 Burtonwood

- a) During WWII Burtonwood was the largest military airfield in Europe. The depot was also responsible for a large number of sub-sites throughout the UK:

Barnham	Baverstock	Braybrooke
Bristol	Bures	Burtonwood
Constitution Hill	Earsham	Eggington
Greencastle	Groveley Wood	Haydock

Huyton	Langford Lodge	Leicester
Little Heath	Liverpool	Melchbourne
Melton Mowbray	Poynton	Riseley
Sharnbrook	Smethwick	St Mellons
Stansted	Sudbury (Derbyshire)	Tostock Park
Wapley Common	Warton	Watford
Williamstrip	Wortley	

- b) The base reverted back to US control in 1948, to support US bases in the UK and to undertake all major aircraft servicing. The 59th Air Depot Wing arrived 13 September 1948. The unit was given Berlin Airlift maintenance work on 11 October 1948. On 1 March 1954 the station transferred from Third Air Force to Air Materiel Forces, Europe. The new MATS Air Passenger Terminal opened on 1 July 1956.
- c) Major reconstruction projects included the massive Header House on Site 8, the extension of the runway to 9,000ft and the building of the new control tower and passenger terminal. By 1965 the base passed back to RAF control and two years later the US Army took command.

6.1.5 Bushy Park

HQ Third Air Division moved to Bushy Park on 8 September 1948 and stayed until April 1949 when it moved to South Ruislip. The 1813th Airways and Communication Service Group then formed with its HQ at Bushy Park. The 28th Weather Squadron reorganised with new mission, HQ at Bushy Park. London Area High School opened at Bushy Hall. Under the London Area Consolidation Plan, the 7533rd ABS moved on 1 October 1962. Bushy Park was vacated on 29 October 1962 and handed over to the Ministry of Works.

6.1.6 Chicksands

- a) Chicksands Priory was designated as a secondary installation (sub-base) on 8 November 1950. USAF reconstruction commenced in 1951 for 10th Radio Squadron, Mobile. This unit assumed US control of the base on 10 November 1950; the station was then re-activated as a primary installation of Third Air Force on 8 November 1950. 7534th ABS hosted units of Third Air Force and Field No.2 of the National Security Agency 1951–58.
- b) General base reconstruction 1951–57, including central heating plant, bowling alley, married quarters, 143-pupil school, library and an exchange added in 1957. Electronic Security Command assumed control 1 July 1958. Became off-base installation of Alconbury from 1 July 1956 to 30 June 1958. A theatre was added in 1960, married quarters during 1967, a commissary in 1969, and an officer married quarters estate in 1970. Became primary installation again on 1 July 1958, assigned to 6950 Radio Group until 20 January 1967. No.7518 Communications Squadron was present 1 September 1959 to 1 July 1962, 6950 Support Squadron from 1 August 1963 to 20 January 1967, and 6950 Support Group from 20 June 1967 to 1 October 1978.

6.1.7 Denham Studios

Denham was designated as a primary USAFE installation on 1 September 1953. The 7500th ABG moved from Stanmore to Denham Studios on 1 October 1953. During the reshuffle of Third Air Force, this unit then moved to South Ruislip on 12 August 1961 and the base closed

as a result of the London Area Consolidation Plan. The 7532nd Air Materiel Squadron left the base on 1 October 1962.

6.1.8 Fairford

- a) The 7507th ABS (later 7507th ABG) formed on 7 July 1950 to manage the station's reconstruction with the civil engineering work carried out by 817th EAB. Runway lengthened, initially to a designed length of 8,000ft but eventually to 10,000ft in preparation for housing SAC B-47 rotations. First overseas B-47 Wing deployment (306th Bomb Wing) commenced June 1953. Construction of Special Weapons Stores commenced in May 1951 by 2nd Aviation Field Depot Squadron. After the 7th Air Division had formally accepted the new station on 16 October 1952, the 3919th ABG replaced the 7507th ABG. Operational flying commenced during early September 1952. Supported Reflex Alert operations from January 1958 to 26 June 1964, then returned to RAF control.
- b) Occupied by 7020th ABG from 1 February 1979 to prepare for KC-135 tanker operations. USAFE officially designated Fairford a primary installation on 1 June 1979 with first tankers arriving shortly. The base also hosted SAC B-52 deployments beginning April 1980. With the closure of Upper Heyford c.1993 Fairford became the UK's sole "Trans Oceanic Abort Landing" (TAL) site for NASA's orbital vehicle, the Space Shuttle. Major runway resurfacing took place in the early 21st century.

6.1.9 Feltwell

On 14 September 1966 Feltwell was allocated as a housing annexe to accommodate personnel of the 513th Troop Carrier Wing.

6.1.10 Fylingdales

The Ballistic Early Warning System (BMEWS) opened for operation on 1 September 1963.

6.1.11 Greenham Common

- a) RAF Greenham Common was confirmed as the fourth primary SAC bomber and tanker base on 8 February 1951. The USAF then occupied the site on 23 April with the 7501st ABS managing the reconstruction, carried out by the 804th EAB. The period of work was between December 1951 and September 1953, and involved the construction of a completely new main runway.
- b) Most facilities were completed in 1953 and the station was assigned to USAF during June under the 3909th ABG. The first SAC B-47 unit arrived early 1954 but was immediately transferred to Fairford because of poor runway construction at Greenham. Runway reinforced 1954–56 and base then selected as a deployment base for KC-97G tankers, 1956–64. Base inactivated and returned to RAF control on 30 June 1964, then reactivated as an off-base US installation of South Ruislip Air Station.
- c) Became NATO stand-by base, and reopened to support relocation of USAF units transferring from French airfields on 11 November 1968. Base became responsible for RAF Welford until January 1977. Upper Heyford assumed control on 1 June 1976 followed by 7273rd ABG on 1 January 1979; runway, aprons and hardstandings were reinforced. Preparation work was also undertaken for the arrival of 501st Tactical Missile Wing which arrived during July 1982.

6.1.12 High Wycombe 'Pinetree' Daws Hill

- a) Disused since the end of WWII, the underground bunker called '*Pinetree*' was reoccupied by the 7th Air Division with the 3929th ABS taking the site over during May 1952. The site became USAF Site, Wycombe Abbey, a satellite of 3911th ABG, West Drayton. The 7th Air Division moved its HQ on 1 October from South Ruislip and the 3929th ABS became independent. Personnel from Bovington, Denham, West Drayton, and Bushy Park were then centralised at West Ruislip and High Wycombe.
- b) Expansion followed, including married quarters estates and two 210-bed dormitories in 1961. The total area covered by the base at this time was 67 acres. The 7563rd ABS formed and assigned to the 7500th ABG. From June 1966 the 322nd Air Division (MAC) relocated from Châteauroux Airbase, France and became operational on 5 August 1966. In June 1967 following the disbanding of Seventh Air Division, control of the base switched to Third Air Force and USAFE. The 7563rd ABS was activated on 30 June 1965 to provide support until the site closed in 1971.
- c) From 1971 until the early 1980s the bunker was abandoned, the above ground facilities being used by the London Central High School for American children who relocated there from Watford.
- d) Following the 1982 announcement that the site was to be developed as an alternative wartime command HQ, the bunker was completely refurbished and fitted out with updated communications equipment. The 7520 ABS was formed on 1 April 1987 to provide administrative and logistics support for the USAF and Department of Defence until August 1991 when the bunker finally closed. The above-ground facilities are now used for housing by the US Navy.

6.1.13 Hillingdon

During September 1956, the first units moved into the new Third Air Force Combat Operations Centre.

6.1.14 Lakenheath

- a) Closed from May 1944 until May 1948 for runway reconstruction, the base then re-opened as a RAF VHB station. Allocated to USAFE along with Scampton, Waddington and Marham for use by SAC as short-term deployment bases in July 1948. B-29s of 2nd Bomb Group arrived 11 August 1948, which was the first of a continuous flow of B-29, KB-29, C-97, B-50, B-36, and B-47 rotational units. During the Korean war, Lakenheath transferred from USAFE to SAC on 1 May 1951, the operational unit being 3909th ABG (SAC). Returned to USAFE control as part of the 'Red Richard' operation on 1 October 1959. The withdrawal of American units from French soil brought the 48th TFW on 15 January 1960.
- b) Then followed a massive expansion programme for an increase in base population, a new theatre opened in March, junior high school in May, high school on 6 September, and an auditorium in May 1961. Forty-five phase II brick housing units were constructed in 1961. During runway resurfacing work between May and September 1961 the 48th TFW operated out of Mildenhall. Local Base Rescue detachment No.3 relocated from France between September and October 1966.

- c) Between 1961 and 1962 a large base hospital was constructed which became the primary hospital for US armed forces in the UK. Another phase of married quarters (408) was handed over during January 1966, an airmen's dining hall was completed on 3 January 1967, and a 53 base elementary school classroom extension was also completed during August 1969. The following year saw three-storey dormitories occupied, runways were resurfaced, and a flight simulator building was completed in preparation for the introduction of the F-4 aircraft. During 1973 additional family housing was built adjacent to the existing houses. With the conversion of 48th TFW to the F-111 aircraft, a massive construction programme began: 60 HAS, a hardened avionics facility, squadron operations building, and a command post were all erected during the 1970s. Lakenheath is currently the 7504th ABG.

6.1.15 Mildenhall

- a) The 7511th ABS (ABG from 22 August 1950) formed on 11 July 1950, to manage the station, and on this date became a USAF B-29 base with B-50s. On 16 May 1951, station transferred to SAC with the operations unit being 3910th ABG. B-47s followed 1952–53, and KC-97s during 1953–58. The station then closed for runway repairs and reconstruction.
- b) Following the draw-down of Burtonwood Depot, the Military Transport Service was transferred to Mildenhall on 1 March 1959 to become 'The Gateway to the UK'. The station then passed from SAC to USAFE on 1 September 1959. The US European Command (USEUCOM) moved its Airborne Command Post from France to Mildenhall on 1 July 1966. From this date the base has the role of deploying US and Allied units as directed by HQ USAFE. From June 1966 the 513th Troop Carrier Wing relocated from Evreux, France and was assigned to Third Air Force, the move being completed on 1 September. During 1968 an airmen's dormitory and service club were opened. The runway closed in 1969 for resurfacing.
- c) During 1970 a combat operations centre was also completed. Two years later 48 single-officers' quarters were built. A new aircraft parking and loading apron became available during 1972. HQ Third Air Force transferred from South Ruislip on 12 June 1972. Major construction in the mid 1970s included airmen's dormitories, gymnasium, POL storage plant, and four large hangars. Revised east taxiways were completed in 1978, and over the next four years improved airfield lighting, revetments erected for protection of aircraft and major base housing schemes were implemented.

6.1.16 Molesworth

- a) The station was assigned to the Third Air Force during July 1951 and a single runway was overlaid on the existing three-runway site, and a new control tower built. The 7582nd ABS moved to Molesworth from Fairford; the station was then designated a Third Air Force primary installation on 24 August 1951. In February 1954 the 582nd Air Resupply Group (ARG) arrived with B-29s, aimed at rescuing crews brought down over enemy territory. In the middle of 1956 the 47th Bomb Wing with new B-45s arrived from Alconbury to use Molesworth while the home base had its runway resurfaced.
- b) On 29 October 1956 the 582nd ARG became re-designated as part of the 42nd Troop Carrier Squadron (TCS), the unit remaining at Molesworth until the end of May 1957. After the 42nd TCS had disbanded at Alconbury during December 1957, Molesworth became a USAF family housing annexe of Alconbury, and a supply/spare parts storage depot. On 5 July 1966, the station became designated as a storage site and housed the Redistribution and Marketing

function formally at Mildenhall. The airfield was closed to flying during 1973 and runways, hardstandings and virtually all WWII buildings were demolished during 1980.

- c) Beginning in 1980 the Amey Roadstone Company began a two-year demolition project at Molesworth, which involved razing many of the deteriorating buildings and the removal of the wartime and early cold war runways and other unused structures. On December 12, 1986 the 303rd Tactical Missile Wing was activated. However, the Ground Launched Cruise Missiles (GLCM) and the wing did not stay long. The United States and the Soviet Union signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987 which led to the removal of all nuclear missiles from the base by October 1988. The 303rd TMW deactivated on January 30, 1989.

6.1.17 Sculthorpe

- a) The base was re-built between 1944 and 1948 as one of three RAF VHB airfields.²² It was then occupied by USAF from 17 January 1949, the operating unit being 7502nd ABG (7502nd Air Support Wing from 26-09-50). SAC heavy bomber wings and squadrons, on three-month rotational duties from USA, began to arrive from 7 February 1949; this ended October 1950. Station transferred from SAC to USAFE, the operations unit being 3911 ABG which took over from 7502nd ASW on 16 May 1951. 1st Tactical Support Squadron assigned to Third Air Force on 5 June 1952.
- b) For the next nine years the station housed the 49th Tactical Air Division. The principal flying unit being the 47th BW with B-45 aircraft, followed by B-66 jet bombers. From 11 May 1954 to 10 January 1959 the station also housed RB-45s of the 19th TRS. This unit was followed by 420th Refuelling Squadron with KB-50 tanker aircraft from 4 October 1955 to 25 May 1964. On 22 June 1962 the 47th BW deactivated and the base was handed over to RAF control on 30 June. Since then, until the end of 1992 when it was handed over to the Air Ministry, the base has served as a stand-by station as well as becoming a USAF Storage Site (at the end of 1966) for materiel being sent from France.
- c) Civil engineering projects included VHB hardstandings, supplementary weapons store complex, nose docking sheds, parachute store, workshops and tower. Large reconstruction of domestic site included Z-form two and three-storey dormitory blocks, bowling alley, officers' club, NCO club and commissary.

6.1.18 South Ruislip, West Ruislip

- a) Headquarters Third Air Division moved to South Ruislip on 15 April 1949. 7550th Special Investigations Unit formed then moved to West Drayton. 7th Air Division established as SAC Command in UK on 20 March 1951. In May 1951 7500th ABG reorganised and assigned newly designated squadrons to South Ruislip, Northolt, Bovingdon, Bushy Park and Chicksands. Later in the year it assigned a squadron to West Ruislip. Third Air Division discontinued and was replaced by Third Air Force during 1951.
- b) West Ruislip was assigned to Third Air Force on 1 December 1955. On 21 March 1956, 49th Air Division disbanded and was absorbed by Third Air Force. On 8 July 1957 the Third Communications Group was activated at South Ruislip. Third Air Force took over function of surveillance of water ports from Northern Air Materiel Area, Europe. The 7th Air Division moved from South Ruislip to High Wycombe on 7 October 1959.

²² Lakenheath and Marham were the other two.

6.1.19 Upper Heyford

- a) Following on from the Berlin Crises of 1948 and onset of the Cold War, this station was designated as a standby dispersal base. The 7509th ABS – later Group – arrived 7 July 1950 to take command and to co-ordinate airfield reconstruction work; the civil engineering task being carried out by 801st EAB. After extensive runway renovation and construction of base support facilities, the Third Air Force relinquished operational and administrative control to the 7th Air Division (SAC), and the 3918th ABG replaced the 7509th ABG on 28 January 1952. SAC commenced KC-50 tanker rotations in December 1951, making it the first of the new Midland Group bases to re-open. B/RB-36 bomber rotations began the following year. This was followed by B-47 rotations between 1953 and 1965, with SAC Reflex Alert operations finally ending in January 1965. The station was then reduced to dispersal base status until 1 September 1966.
- b) The 7514th Combat Support Group formed on 8 February 1965. USAFE had regained control on 1 April 1965, and then with the arrival of the 66th TRW from Laon, France; the station once again became a main operating base on 1 September 1966, providing support for the 20th TFW after its arrival from Wethersfield on 1 April 1970. Meanwhile the 7514th Tactical Group was discontinued, making way for the 66th TRW HQ at 'Heyford. Local Base Rescue detachment No.2 was relocated from France between September and October 1966.
- c) Construction of two maintenance hangars, three nose docks, a 72-unit officer housing facility, were all completed in 1972. Construction of additional equipment including storage sheds, base engineers' offices, renovation of airmen's dormitories, a new bowling alley, NCO club, base exchange, shopping centre, taxi-track, aircraft weather shelters, fuel storage facilities and ammunition storage facilities were all completed between 1974 and 1975. In 1976 the runway was reinforced and fitted with dual BAR-12 arrester devices. A gymnasium was also built. Nineteen ammunition storage igloo structures and eight multi-barrel ammunition igloos were then built 1977/8. Between 1979 and 1982 a new parallel taxi-track, the construction of 31 HAS, and a Victor Alert HAS area was built, together with a composite medical facility.

6.1.20 Welford

In 1955 this ex WWII airborne forces airfield was taken over and eventually became the primary ammunition supply base for the Third Air Force. It was extensively modified, and a link road was eventually added from the M4 motorway.

6.1.21 Wethersfield

- a) Wethersfield was assigned to Third Air Force on 24 August 1951, and designated as a secondary installation until 6 June, after arrival of 20th Fighter-Bomber Wing, when it became a primary base. The 20th FBW was assigned to the 'nuclear capable' 49th Air Division along with its partner, the 47th BW at Sculthorpe. The strength was raised to four wings, becoming the 20th TFW on 8 July 1958, which remained until the base closed to flying. Wethersfield was managed by 20th ABG from 5 July 1952, until the 20th Support Group took over on 26 January 1956, which in turn was replaced by 20th Combat Support Group in 1965 until the base closed.
- b) A detachment of 1 Tactical Support Squadron arrived 14 August 1952, being replaced with 1 Tactical Depot Squadron (TDS) from 8 July 1954, which remained in residence until 15 May 1958, when it was replaced with 4 TDS, until 1962.

- c) The 7520th ABS arrived on 8 February 1954 staying until 26 January 1956. Local Base Rescue detachment No.9 relocated from France between September and October 1966.

6.1.22 Woodbridge

- a) First USAFE units arrived 1 April 1952 to provide support as a satellite station for Bentwaters, with the 3928th ABS. The base operated as a SAC fighter-bomber (later fighter) unit and received logistical and administrative support from Sturgate until June 1952.
- b) The airfield was evacuated from 1 October 1954, for reconstruction work, including repair and reinforcement of runway, preparation of hardstandings, and erection of hangars; reopening later in 1955.
- c) It operated as a 'twin base' from 8 July 1958, and then as a single unit from 1 February 1959, with Bentwaters under the 81st TFW. Local Base Rescue detachment No.9 relocated from France between September and October 1966. The 67th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron moved in on 15 January 1970. As part of the expansion of the 81st TFW to a total of six A-10 squadrons during 1979, USAFE activated the 509th Tactical Fighter Squadron (TFS) at Woodbridge and moved the 91st TFS there on 1 February 1980.

6.2 – Secondary USAFE/SAC Installations, 1950–80

6.2.1 Bruntingthorpe

On 1 March 1957 the 7th Air Division took over Bruntingthorpe – 3912th ABS. In July 1959 following General de Gaulle ordering all foreign nuclear forces from France, the 49th TFW moved their F-100Ds from Étain-Rouvres Airbase to Spangdahlem; displacing the 10th TRW which moved to three bases in the UK; Alconbury, Bruntingthorpe and Chelveston. Bruntingthorpe then housed the 19th TRS which had only just moved from Sculthorpe to Spangdahlem. In March 1962 the 10th TRW moved to Toul-Rosières and with it moved the 19th and the 42nd TRS. Bruntingthorpe then closed to flying.

6.2.2 Manston

- a) Manston passed from RAF to SAC control and the 7512th ABG moved in on 11 July 1950, followed by the 20th FBW from Langley Field. The 31st Fighter Escort Wing (FEW) followed in January and the 12th FEW six months later. Following the transfer from USAFE to SAC, the 3917th ABG took over operations, but all SAC units had departed by the end of November 1951. The station then passing to the Third Air Force, USAFE. The next unit was the 123rd FBW (National Guard) with F-84s. Around this time new hardstandings were built and the runway was confined to the central section of the crash strip. During July 1952 the 123rd FBW disbanded, and its aircraft used to form the 406th FBW (512th, 513th and 514th Fighter-Bomber Squadrons).
- b) In November 1953, the 406th FBW received its Sabre aircraft and became a Fighter Interceptor Wing (FIW). A year later the 512th FIS moved to Soesterburg, Netherlands, and was replaced by the 92nd FS from Bentwaters. The 406th FIW finally disbanded during May 1958, the airfield passing to RAF Fighter Command on 30 June and the airfield being reduced to C&M status.

6.2.3 Chelveston

- a) In September 1952, a detachment of 7503rd Air Support Wing (ASW) (later re-designated as 7523rd Air Support Squadron) arrived to reopen the station and two months later the 817th EAB moved in to build a new 12,000ft runway (the longest in the UK), plus hardstandings, and an aircraft servicing platform superimposed over the WWII airfield. This work had been completed towards the end of 1955; the 3914th ABS then took over as the operating unit and the runway opened on 1 May 1956. In 1958 the introduction of Reflex Alert Rotations were common place until June 1959, the last SAC detachment being 301st Reconnaissance Wing, equipped with RB-47s
- b) During July 1959 following General de Gaulle ordering all foreign nuclear forces from France, the 49th TFW moved their F-100Ds from Étain-Rouvres to Spangdahlem; displacing the 10th TRW which moved to three bases in the UK, Alconbury, Chelveston and Bruntingthorpe, with the 42nd TRS to Chelveston. In March 1962 the 10th TRW moved to Toul-Rosières, and with it moved the 19th and the 42nd TRS. Chelveston then closed to flying, before the base was handed over to RAF control on 19 June 1964. At the end of December 1966 the station became a USAF storage site for materiel being moved from France.

6.2.4 Edzell, Scotland

USAFE long-range signals facility belonging to the National Security Agency from August 1951 to 25 May 1955, then returned to the Air Ministry. Re-allocated to US Navy, 11 February 1960.

6.2.5 Prestwick, Scotland

Used as a major Transatlantic Ferry Terminal, by the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), plus air-sea rescue facilities, from 1951. The main runway was extended in several stages, and a new subsidiary was added together with a massive parking, followed by a new terminal building and control tower. The 1631st ABS was soon resident. The 67th ARS departed in 1966 and on 30 September 1966, all base facilities were returned to MoD, except for one warehouse and certain pipeline facilities.

6.2.6 Shepherds Grove

- a) Occupied by US units between 16 March 1951 and 1 April 1959. Operated by 7519 ABS (Support Squadron from 25 June 1957). From 27 August 1951 it housed the F-86 Sabres of the 116 FIS, followed on 5 September 1951 by the 92nd FIS (both units from the 81st FIW). On 1 November 1952, 116 FIS was redesignated as 78 FIS, and then 78th FBS on 1 April 1954 and soon afterwards received F-84s. The 92nd FIS was similarly redesignated and equipped before moving to Manston on 28 March 1955. Between 9 August 1955 and the autumn of 1958, the 78th FBS was joined by the 77th FBS from Wethersfield and on 8 July 1958 both units were re-designated as Tactical Fighter Squadrons.
- b) All flying ceased in December 1958 when the 78th TFS was transferred to Woodbridge, the 77th TFS having meanwhile returned to Wethersfield. On 1 April 1959 the airfield returned to the Air Ministry and was subsequently developed as an RAF Thor missile base. The domestic sites continued to be retained by RAF Lakenheath as a married quarters. Civil engineering projects included an extension to the main runway, hardstandings, and a special weapons store complex.

6.3 – Stand-By and Other USAFE/SAC Installations 1950–1980

6.3.1 Ayr

The airfield was used as a storage site for USAF Prestwick from 1951 to 1977.

6.3.2 Barford St John

Designated as a USAF minor installation on 29 November 1950. Used as a communications facility paired with Croughton.

6.3.3 Bassingbourn

USAFE Support squadron established 27 January 1951.

6.3.4 Beaulieu

Allocated for USAFE on 1 April 1953 but never occupied and returned to Air Ministry control on 8 September 1955.

6.3.5 Blyton

Occupied by USAF from 9 October 1952 to 5 July 1956. The first unit was a detachment of 60 Supply Squadron until 1955. 7536th ABS, 25 March 1953 to 25 July 1955 immediately followed (re-designated?) by 7536th Air Materiel Squadron (AMS) to 19 October 1955. A detachment of 7536th AMS remained until 5 July 1956.

6.3.6 Bovingdon

In 1948 Bovingdon was a civilian airport when it began to be used as a communications centre in December 1948 by the 3rd Air Division (later Third Air Force) at South Ruislip. In May 1951 the enclave was operated by 7531st ABS with its own fleet of C-47s. Became a lodger unit of RAF Bovingdon until the American unit transferred to Mildenhall during October 1962. The 7531st ABS left Bovingdon on 1 October, eight days later the installation was handed over to RAF control.

6.3.7 Burdrop Park

7505th Hospital Group (HG) activated at Burdrop Park on 19 December 1950, became a USAF site during March 1951. The 5th Hospital Group formed 14 January 1952. The base was returned to the British Government on 29 June 1965, the 7505th HG disbanding in the process.

6.3.8 Carnaby

Stand-by airfield between 1952 and 1958, allocated for USAF use from 1 April 1954, but was never used. Returned to RAF control on 24 October 1958 as a Bloodhound and Thor missile site.

6.3.9 Charterhall

Reserved for USAFE but never occupied.

6.3.10 Colliers End Camp

Allocated to Third Air Force, returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 6 August 1957.

6.3.11 Cranage

Allocated to Third Air Force, returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 17 July 1957.

6.3.12 Croughton

Occupied by US signal units from 16 October 1951 to date. Designated as USAF minor installation on 29 November 1950.

6.3.13 Croft

The MATS facility closed and the station was returned to Air Ministry control on 28 February 1959.

6.3.14 Dunsfold

Reserved for USAFE but never occupied.

6.3.15 East Fortune, Scotland

Allocated for USAFE but never occupied.

6.3.16 East Kirkby

Occupied by SAC from 17 April until c.31 October 1958. Housed the 3931st ABG from 17 April 1954 to 1955; and the 3917th ABS from 1955 until 1 July 1958. Projects included a 1,230 yard extension to the main runway and a large servicing apron. The station was only used by visiting C-47s of the 7th Air Division's rescue squadrons. Returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 31 October 1958.

6.3.17 Elvington

Allocated to Third Air Force, returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 5 December 1958.

6.3.18 Full Sutton

Allocated as a USAFE war reserve base – handed back to RAF control by 1 February 1957.

6.3.19 Holme-on-Spalding Moor

Housing annexe for US personnel detached to RAF Elvington, 15 January 1954 to 1957. The 7536th Materiel Squadron was present from 19 October 1955 to 15 August 1957. Station returned to Air Ministry control on 9 August 1957.

6.3.20 Homewood Park

3915th ABS disbanded on 1 November 1957.

6.3.21 Kirknewton, Scotland

Housed US ground units 10 March 1952 to 1 August 1966, including 7532nd ABS, mobile radio squadrons, 7535th USAF Dispensary, family housing annexe, and off-base storage facility. On 1 April 1966, the 7535th Dispensary was disbanded in conjunction with the withdrawal of USAF Security Service personnel. The station was returned to the Air Ministry on 1 August 1966.

6.3.22 Langham Camp

Allocated to Third Air Force returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 25 September 1957.

6.3.23 Lasham

Reserved for USAFE but never occupied.

6.3.24 Lindholme

Occupied by USAF units between 27 January 1951 and 1956. The operations unit was 7518th Air Support Squadron (USAFE), from 27 January 1951 to 16 May 1951, followed by 3916th ABS (SAC) until 1956. In November 1950 the station was to have housed B-50s of 341st Bomb Squadron, but this move was cancelled and it deployed to Lakenheath instead. Lindholme was returned to RAF control on 3 December 1956.

6.3.25 Marham

February 1949, 7503rd Complement Squadron formed at Marham, moved to Brize Norton on 17 June 1950. Third Air Division support squadron established 27 January 1951.

6.3.26 Middleton Stoney

Attached to Upper Heyford, occupied by US Hospital units from 10 March 1952 to 1 January 1957.

6.3.27 North Pickenham

Allocated to Third Air Force, returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 1 December 1958.

6.3.28 Norton

Third Air Division support squadron established at Norton on 27 January 1951.

6.3.29 Oakington

Allocated to USAFE as a war reserve base, handed back to RAF control on 1 February 1957.

6.3.30 St Mawgan

Earmarked as a Transatlantic Ferry Terminal. Occupied by USAF construction units from 13 November 1952 to 1 January 1956.

6.3.31 Sandtoft

Allocated for USAF use 1 April 1953, but never occupied by US units, and returned to Air Ministry control 8 September 1955.

6.3.32 Scampton

Vacated February 1949.

6.3.33 Sealand

Storage Depot for motor vehicles, occupied by US units between 20 April 1951 and 24 October 1957. The Third Motor Transport Squadron moved to Burtonwood.

6.3.34 Shaftesbury

Military Hospital occupied by US personnel and special investigation units from 5 April 1951 to 30 June 1957. 7551st Personnel Processing Group formed 5 April 1951.

6.3.35 Spilsby

Allocated to Third Air Force, it returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 11 March 1958.

6.3.36 Stansted

Earmarked as an SAC base for tanker aircraft, Stansted was occupied by the US from 10 November 1958. The operations unit being the 7522nd ABS until September 1953, then the 7532nd, which was re-designated as the 7532nd Support Squadron. Civil engineering work was carried out by 803rd EAB, constructing a new runway and hardstandings. The 3913th ABS (SAC) was based there from 1952 to 1955, followed by 3930th ABS from 1955 to 1 October 1958. The 7th Air Division took over the base on 1 February 1957. The station was never used for its original purpose, and was returned to RAF control on 14 November 1958.

6.3.37 Sturgate

Allocated to USAF on 30 July 1952, and was used from June 1953 to 1 August 1958, then returned to Air Ministry control. The operations unit was 3928th ABS from June 1953, becoming 3928th ABG during 1954. The station was used operationally for a three-month period for TDY by fighter escort groups. One of these, the 27th FEG, stayed there with its 75 plus F-84s between May and August 1955. On 1 July these groups were transferred to Tactical Air Command, and on 1 August 1958, the 3928th ABG closed down. Eleven days later the station passed to the Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle'.

6.3.38 Swinderby

Allocated as a War Reserve Base, handed back to RAF control by 1 February 1957.

6.3.39 Tibenham

Allocated to Third Air Force, returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 7 March 1958.

6.3.40 Ullenwood Camp

Allocated to Third Air Force, returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 7 August 1957.

6.3.41 Tuddenham

Allocated to Third Air Force, returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 30 June 1958.

6.3.42 Waddington

RAF station used on an emergency basis by US units between July 1948 and February 1949, initially by one B-29 squadron from 307th BG from Marham (July to November 1948); then by a B-29 detachment from the USA, between November 1948 and February 1949. This practise then largely ceased as Sculthorpe had become available, although one further 97th BW squadron, (now equipped with B-50s), used the station between August 1950 and February 1951. Operationally the station came under 3914th ABS from 16 May 1951 to March 1955. The station then returned to RAF control on 31 March 1955 but continued to be used jointly with the RAF until c.1964.

6.3.43 West Drayton

Occupied by US Reconnaissance, Security and 7550th Special Investigation Unit between 20 January 1950 and 1 July 1959.

6.3.44 Weybourne Air Range

Allocated to Third Air Force, returned to Air Ministry under 'Big Shuffle' on 26 September 1957.

6.3.45 Wigsley

Although reserved for use by USAF units, Wigsley remained undeveloped.

6.3.46 Winfield

Reserved for USAFE but never occupied.

6.3.47 Wimpole Park

Attached to RAF Bassingbourn, occupied by 7510th Hospital Group from 24 May 1951 to 1 January 1957 when it moved to Lakenheath. On 15 December 1959 Wimpole Park was returned to the Air Ministry.

6.3.48 Witchford

From 1950 to 1952 the old RAF airfield was used by the USAF as a stores depot.

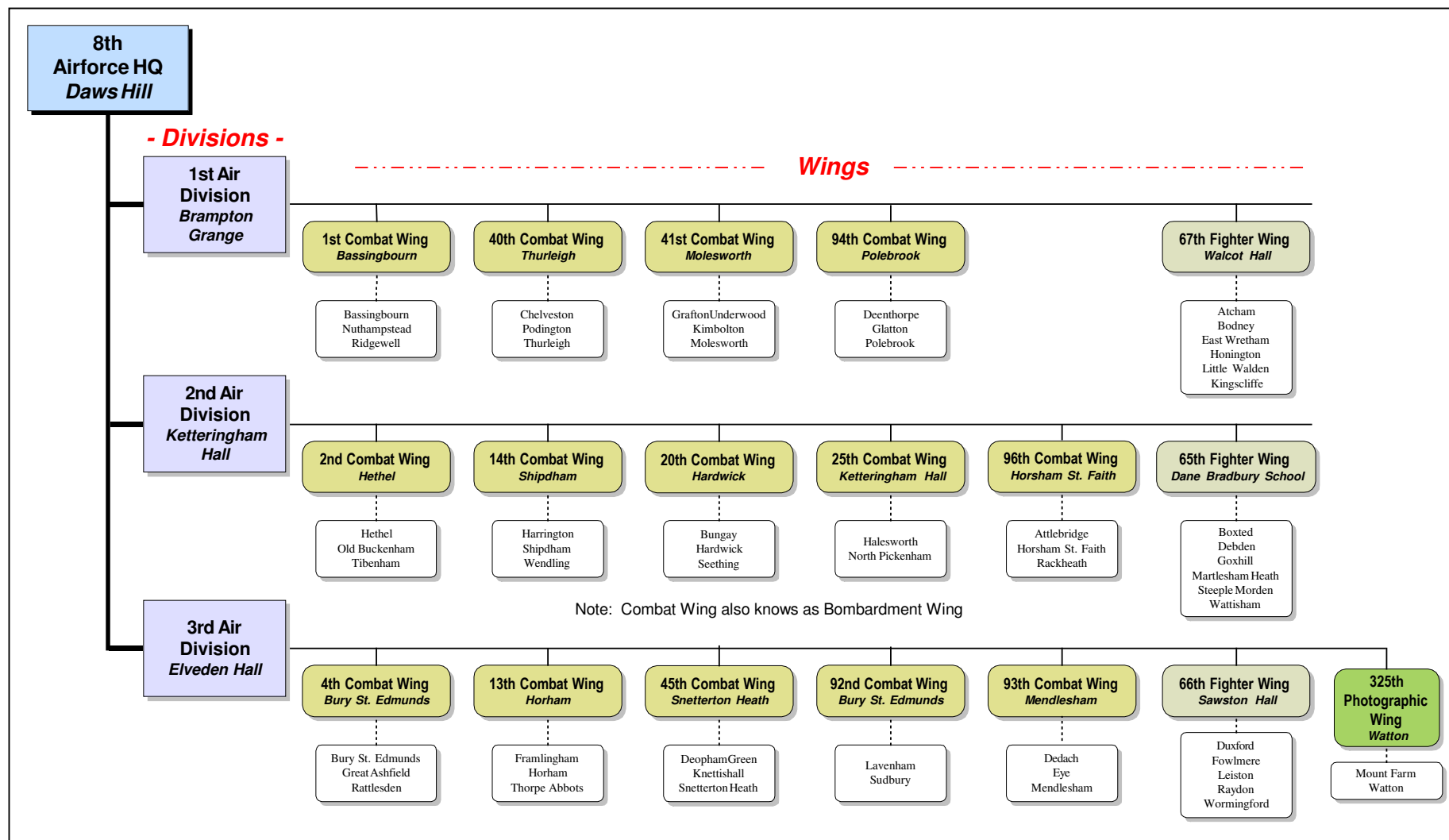


Fig. 15: Eighth Air Force, December 1944
Showing Command Division & Wing Structure

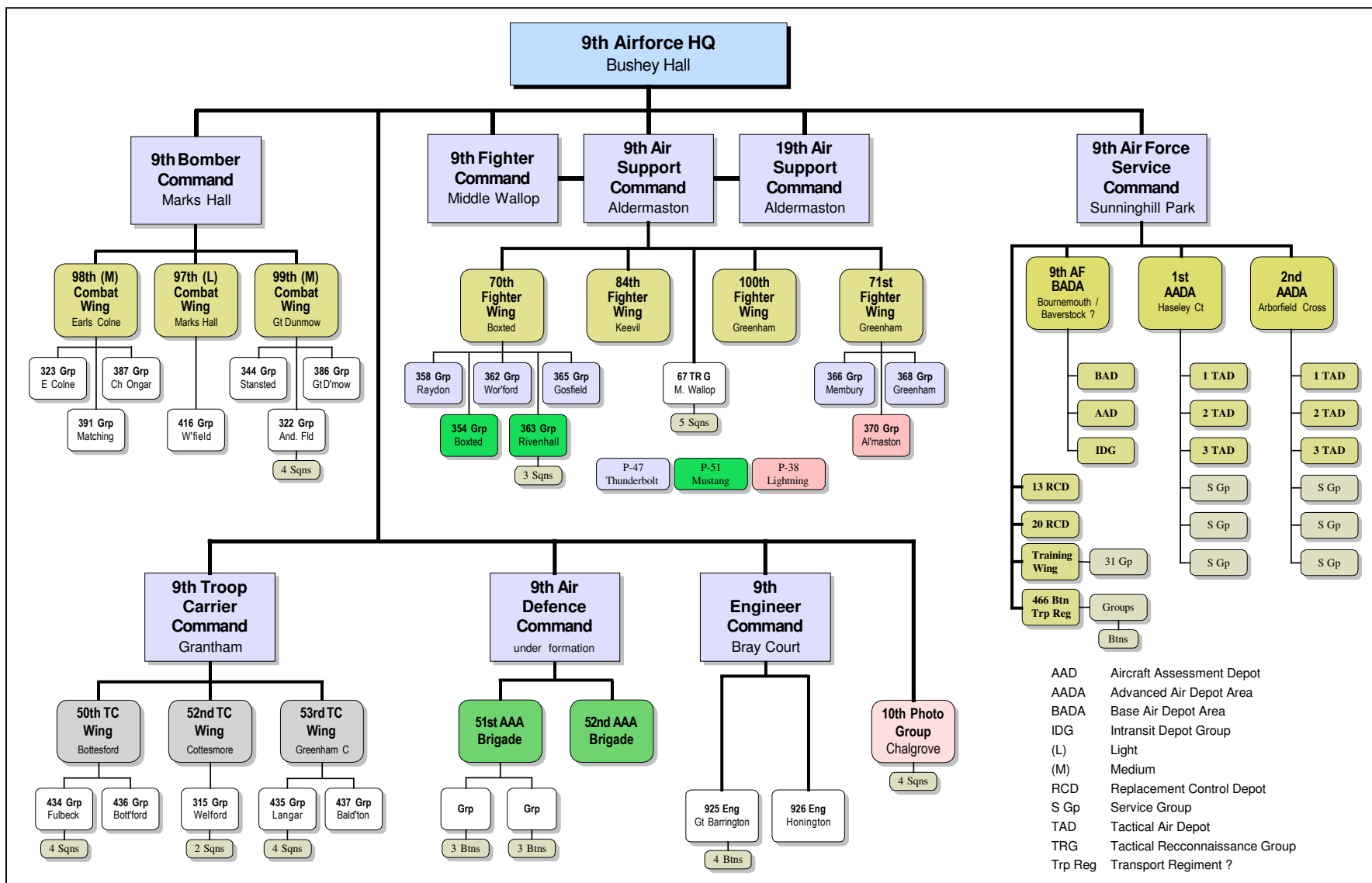


Fig. 16: US IXth Air Force Organisation, late February 1944

Source USAF, Condensed Analysis of the Ninth Air Force in the ETO. Abbreviated HQ names may be found in Part 7.

Part 7 – US Army Air Force Headquarter Sites in the UK (WWII).

US Army Air Force bases in the UK were usually denoted by their Station Number (SN), rather than their geographical location. These numbers ranged from AAF-101 to AAF-925; confusingly not all numbers were used; and a few locations were not allocated a number. In addition certain units, notably the fighter stations used a different prefix for the base, e.g. Duxford was known as F-357, and not AAF-357. These numbers were also not unique to the UK referring in a few cases to stations in Belgium, France, Holland, Iceland, and Russia. London based Headquarters are shown in a separate table.

Table 4 – USAAF HQ sites						
HQ	SN	Location	Group	Cmd	Period	Notes
Aldermaston	467	Airfield	71st Fighter Wing	9th AF	12/43 – 1/44	
Aldermaston Court	476		9th Tactical Air Command	9th AF	2/44 – 7/44	to France
			14th Tactical Air Command HQ	9th AF		
Andover	406		71st Fighter Wing	9th AF	3/44 – 7/44	to France
Ashford	417		303rd Fighter Wing	9th AF	3/44 – 7/44	to France
Bassingbourn	121	Airfield	41st Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Beaulieu	408	Airfield	84th Fighter Wing	9th AF	3/44 – 6/44	to France
			98th Combat Bomb Wing	9th AF	7/44 – 8/44	to France
Bottesford	481	Airfield	50th Troop Carrier Wing	9th AF	1/43 – 4/44	
Bournemouth		Hampshire	Base Air Depot Area	9th AF		
Boxted	150	Airfield	70th Fighter Wing	9th AF	12/43 – 4/44	
			100th Fighter Wing	9th AF	11/43 – 12/43	
Brampton Grange	103	Huntingdon	1st Bombardment Div	8th AF	9/43 – 1/45	
Bray Court	491	Berks.	9th AF Engineer Command HQ	9th AF	end 43 – ?/44	to France
Bury St Edmunds	468	Airfield	14th Bombardment wing	8th AF		
			4th Bombardment wing	8th AF		
			92nd Bombardment wing	8th AF		

VOLUME 4: THE US AIR FORCES

USAAF HQ sites (contd)						
HQ	SN	Location	Group	Cmd	Period	Notes
Bushey Hall	341	Watford	Eighth Fighter Command			Ajax
Bushy Park	586	Teddington Middx	US Strategic Air Forces, Europe		1/44 – 8/45	HQ 8 th and 15 th Air Forces, became USAFE
			8th USAAF HQ	8th AF	6/42 – 1/44	Camp Griffis, Widewing
Cheddington	113	Airfield	HQ Composite Command	8th AF		
Cottesmore	489	Airfield	9th Troop Carrier Command	9th AF	10/43 – 12/43	
			50th Troop Carrier Wing	9th AF	10/43 – 11/43	
			52nd Troop Carrier Wing	9th AF	2/44 – 3/45	to France
Daws Hill Lodge	101	High Wycombe	8th USAAF HQ BC only?	8th AF	2/42 – 1/44	Camp Lynn
			8th USAAF HQ	8th AF	1/44 – 5/45	
Earls Colne	358	Airfield	98th Combat Bomb Wing	9th AF	11/43 – 7/44	
Elveden Hall	116	Suffolk, 4m WSW Thetford	3rd Bombardment Div	8th AF		Camp Blainey
Exeter	463		50th Troop Carrier Wing	9th AF	4/44 – 10/44	to France
Grantham	480	St Vincents	9th Troop Carrier Command	9th AF	12/43 – 9/44	
Great Dunmow	164	Airfield	99th Combat Bomb Wing	9th AF	11/43 – 9/44	to France
Greenham Common	486	Airfield	100th Fighter Wing	14th TAC	12/43 – 1/44	
			70th Fighter Wing	9th AF	11/43 – 12/43	
			71st Fighter Wing	9th AF	1/44 – 3/44	
			53rd Troop Carrier Wing	9th AF	3/44 – 2/45	to France
Grove	519	Airfield	302nd Air Transport Wing	9th AF	7/44 – 9/44	
Hampstead	405	Elsworth Road & Wadham Gardens	9th AF Air Defence Command HQ	9th AF	7/44 – 8/44	to France (locations in St Johns Wood London)

UK MILITARY COMMAND AND CONTROL ORGANISATION.

USAAF HQ sites (contd)						
HQ	SN	Location	Group	Cmd	Period	Notes
Hardwick	104	Airfield	20th Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Heston	510	Airfield	HQ 27 th Air Transport Group	8th AF		
Hethel	114	Airfield	2nd Bombardment wing	8th AF		
High Wycombe	101	Bucks.	Eighth Bomber Command	8th AF		Pinetree, Camp Lynn
Horham	119	Airfield	13th Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Horsham St Faith	123	Airfield	96th Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Ibsley	347	Airfield	70th Fighter Wing	9th AF	4/44 – 6/44	to France
			100th Fighter Wing	9th AF	12/43 – 1/44	
Keevil	471	Airfield	84th Fighter Wing	9th AF	1/44 – 3/44	
Ketteringham Hall	147	Norfolk, 4m WSW Norwich	2nd Bombardment Div	8th AF	9/43 – 1/45	
Lashenden	410	Airfield	100th Fighter Wing	9th AF	1/44 – 7/44	to France
Little Walden	165	Airfield	97th Combat Bomb Wing	9th AF	3/44 – 9/44	to France
Marks Hall	160	Coggeshall, Essex	9th Bomber Command	9th AF		
			97th Combat Bomb Wing	9th AF	11/43 – 3/44	
Mendlesham	156	Airfield	93rd Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Middle Wallop	449	Airfield	9th Tactical Air Command	9th AF	1/44 – 2/44	
			14th Tactical Air Command HQ	9th AF		
Milton Ernest	506		AFSC HQ	8 th AF	2/44 –	
Molesworth	107	Airfield	94th Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Nascot Lodge	549	Watford, Herts.	HQ ?Combat Support Wing			

USAAF HQ sites (contd)						
HQ	SN	Location	Group	Cmd	Period	Notes
Old Catton	108	Norfolk,	2 nd and 14 th Bombardment Wing	8th AF		Camp Thomas, adjacent to Horsham St Faith
Polebrook	110	Airfield	1st Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Rudloe Manor	451	Wiltshire	9th Tactical Air Command	9th AF	??	
Saffron Walden	370	(former grammar school outside town)	65th Fighter Wing	8th AF		originally subsite of RAF Debden
Sawston Hall	371	7m South of Cambridge	66th Fighter Wing	8th AF		
Snetterton Heath	138	Airfield	45th Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Sunninghill Park	472	Ascot	9th AF Service Command HQ	9th AF	7/44 – 8/44	
			9th AF Command HQ	9th AF		
			9th Troop Carrier Command	9th AF	9/44 – 9/45	
			9th AF Service Command HQ	9th AF	11/43 – 6/44	to France
Thurleigh	111	Airfield	40th Bombardment wing	8th AF		
Uxbridge	409		9th Tactical Air Command	9th AF		
Walcott Hall	372	Lydbury North, Shropshire	67th fighter Wing	8th AF		
Watton	376	Airfield	325th Photographic wing	8th AF		

Table 5 – London Based Headquarters, August 1945		
US Strategic Air Forces (Rear)	Station HQ, Medical, Ordnance, Armament Representative	4 Bryanston Square W1
	Station HQ (part), HQ Services, Historical Section	6 Bryanston Square W1
	Administration, Personnel Directorate, QM, RAF Liaison, Training	5 Bryanston Square W1
	Air Document Research	59 Weymouth Street
	British Army Liaison, Medical, OIC & Staff, Statistical Control	7 Bryanston Square W1
	Intelligence Directorate	9 -14 Bryanston Square W1
	Post Hostilities Plans	11 Bryanston Square W1
Air Transport Command	Public Relations	28 Grosvenor Square W1
	London Passenger Terminal	18 Old Quebec Street W1
5th Army Airways Communications System Wing, 89 th AAF Base Unit	Public Relations	1 Great Cumberland Place W1
	131 st AACS Wing (det)	1 Great Cumberland Place W1
	131 st AACS Wing Sqd 'D'	19 Upper Brook Street W1
	5 th AACS Wing	20 – 22 Upper Brook Street W1
	Section 'E' 132 nd AACS Squadron	22 Upper Brook Street W1
Air Technical Services Command (Europe)	Station HQ	15 Bryanston Square W1
	Station HQ (part), Fiscal Section	7 Bryanston Square W1
	Air Inspector.	6 Bryanston Square W1
	Air Technical Section	Cavendish Square W1
	Maintenance Directorate	St John's House, Smith Square, SW1
	Petroleum Section	117 Park Street W1
	Transportation Office	14 Duke Street (W1?)
	UK Procurement Section	2 South Audley Street W1
302 nd Transport Wing	London Traffic Office	20 North Audley Street W1
Strategic Bombing Survey		20 Grosvenor Square W1

Table 6 – Comparison of senior ranks in the British and American armies, and the RAF		
British Army	US Army	RAF
Field Marshal	General of the Army	Marshal of the Royal Air Force
General	General	Air Chief Marshal
Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Air Marshal
Major-General	Major-General	Air Vice-Marshal
Brigadier	Brigadier General	Air Commodore
Colonel	Colonel	Group Captain
Lieutenant-Colonel	Lieutenant-Colonel	Wing Commander
Major	Major	Squadron Leader
Captain	Captain	Flight Lieutenant
Lieutenant	First Lieutenant	Flying Officer
Second Lieutenant	Second Lieutenant	Pilot Officer

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCE MATERIAL

PRIMARY SOURCES

AIR 1/639/17/122/182	Transfer of Killingholme Air Station to US Naval Authorities.	1918
AIR 1/62/15/9/79	United States Air Service – Northern bombing operations policy.	1918
AIR 1/417/15/243/5	Correspondence to and from Great Yarmouth Air Station	1915–19
AIR 1/449/15/306/3	Key Plan of RAF. Station, Yarmouth	1918
AIR 2/7759	Eighth USAAF HQ: tactical liaison	1942
AIR 2/8240	Airfield facilities for United States Eighth Air Force	1942–44
AIR 2/8240	US Eighth Air Force: airfield facilities	1942–44
AIR 2/8339	History of the Eighth US Air Force: RAF co-ordination	1943–44
AIR 2/12640	USAF deployment in UK	1957–1959
AIR 2/11553	USAF in the UK: increase in runway lengths at MB & SR bases	1952–1956
AIR 2/13015	Bushey Park: USAF accommodation; works services policy	1954–62
AIR 2/13298	Buildings, runways specifications on RAF and USAF stations	1955–58
AIR 2/13390	USAF accommodation in the London area	1955–62
AIR 2/14027	Basing of American Air Force units in the UK	1948
AIR 8/555	RAF Expansion: Target Force "E"	1941
AIR 8/633	Air Forces expansion: Target Force "F"	1942
AIR 8/749	American Heavy Bomber Forces: distribution	1943
AIR 8/1052	American Air Forces in UK	1942
AIR 8/1804	USAF: airfield and land requirements and works services	1950–60
AIR 8/2394	USAF: facilities in the UK	1950–59
AIR 14/921	Bomber Command and USAAF maps, allocation of aerodromes	1943
AIR 14/999	No.8 Group: take-over by USAAF	1942

AIR 14/1049	Transfer of Bomber Command units to USAAF	1942–45
AIR 14/1113	Target Force E: expansion	1941–42
AIR 14/3842	Visit of USAAF. Bomber Groups: operation "Ferryboat"	1948
AIR 15/225	USAAF Squadrons: Provision of facilities	1942–43
AIR 16/594	Location of USAAF Fighter Groups	1942–43
AIR 16/595	Location of USAAF Fighter Groups	1943
AIR 16/739	HQ VIII Fighter Command USAAF: Signals organisation.	1943–44
AIR 19/274–5	RAF expansion: Target Force `E'	1941
AIR 19/284–5	RAF expansion: Target Force `G'	1942
AIR 19/367–8	RAF expansion: Target Force `H'	1943–45
AIR 19/673	U.S.A.F. in U.K.: policy; plans etc.	1951–58
AIR 20/835	USAAF: co-operation	1941–44
AIR 20/836	American Air Forces in UK: deployment	1942–45
AIR 20/837	American Air Forces in UK: operational procedure	1942–44
AIR 20/2802	American bomber force in U.K.: employment	1943–44
AIR 20/5070–1	Operation "Bolero": American Forces arrival in Great Britain	1942–43
AIR 20/2983	RAF and Dominion expansion: Target Force "E"	1941
AIR 20/2984	RAF expansion: Target Force "F"	1942
AIR 20/2985	RAF expansion: Target Force "G"	1942
AIR 20/2986	RAF expansion: Target Force "H"	1942–43
AIR 20/3817–18	RAF expansion: Target Force "G"	1942
AIR 20/3819–20	RAF expansion Target: Force "H"	1942–43
AIR 20/4892	Bombing Offensive: joint statement by Air Ministry and USAAF	1944
AIR 20/6230	Target Force "G": analysis of airfield requirements	1942
AIR 20/8551	USAF airfield requirements	1952–58
AIR 20/11312–4	USAF airfield requirements in UK	1948–50

UK MILITARY COMMAND AND CONTROL ORGANISATION.

AIR 20/11338	RAF/USAF nuclear strike plans: co-ordination	1956–58
AIR 20/11815	USAF use of UK airfields	1966–1968
AIR 22/326	USAF location of units: UK and NW Europe	1944–46
AIR 23/1684	History of air support of Eighth Army operations Aug 1944–May 1945	1945
AIR 23/2407	USAAF expansion programme correlation with RAF.	1944
AIR 23/2807	USAAF deployment and airfield requirements: forward planning	1944–45
AIR 23/2826	RAF. and USAAF: expansion programmes	1944
AIR 23/6603–4	Co-operation between USAAF and RAF. in supply matters	1943
AIR 29/798	Master Provision Office, Bushey Park, later Burtonwood	1943–47
AIR 29/912	2nd Air Division Substitution Unit, Ketteringham	1944–45
AIR 29/2494	RAF Liaison with IX Troop USAAF Carrier Command	1943–45
AIR 29/2495	USAAF IX Troop Carrier Command Substitution Unit	1943–45
AIR 40/1095	Condensed Analysis of the Ninth Air Force in the European TO	1946
AIR 40/1126	Origins of the Eighth Air Force, Plans Orgs, Doctrines to 17 Aug 1942	1944
AIR 51/44	15th Air Force, USAAF	1943–44
AIR 51/184	Supply, manning, conversion of airfields for B-29 aircraft	1944–45
AIR 51/124	Repair and replacement of USAAF aircraft	1944
AIR 51/157	Movements of units: USAAF and RAF	1944–45
AIR 51/168	NAAF USAAF station lists and RAF orders of battle	1942–43
AIR 51/327	`Overlord': formation of HQ Combined TAF; RAF and USAAF	1944
AIR 51/302	2nd TAF and IXth USAF: accommodation for headquarters	1943–44
AVIA 15/1926	Transfer of Burtonwood repair depot to USAAF.	1943
AVIA 15/1927	Transfer of Burtonwood repair depot to USAAF	1943–44
AVIA 15/1931	Transfer of Burtonwood repair depot to USAAF	1943–44
CAB 123/174	Arrangements for the provision of accommodation for American forces in London	1942-1944
CAB 123/175–6	Arrangements for the provision of hospitality for American forces in the UK	1942-1944

DEFE 7/516	Airfields and other works services in UK: provision for the USAF	1949–50
ES 1/324	Greenham Common airfield: use by USAF	1950–58
FO 371/126705	US air force (USAF) bases in UK	1957
HS 3/60	Liaison arrangements: USAAF	1942–43
LAB 8/669	Supply of civilian labour for US army authority, Burtonwood.	1942–44
PREM 3/142/4	Directive for integration of British and American Air Forces	1943

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Anderson, Barry (Capt.). 1985. *Army Air Force Stations*. Alabama: USAF Historical Research Centre
- Anderton, David A. 1975. *Strategic Air Command*. Shepperton: Ian Allen
- Bishop, Clift T. 1986. *Fortresses of the Big Triangle First*. Bishops Stortford: East Anglia Books
- Bowman, Martin W. 1997. *USAAF Handbook 1939–1945*. Stroud: Sutton
- Campbell, Duncan. 1984 *The Unsinkable Aircraft Carrier, American Military Power In Britain*. London: Michael Joseph
- Fessey, Wayne, (Ed.). 1992. *USAAF – 50th Anniversary in Great Britain 1942–1992*. Hadleigh: Winchester Group
- Freeman, Roger A. 1994. *Airfields of the Ninth – Then & Now*. London: Battle of Britain Prints Int. Ltd.
- Freeman, Roger A. 1978. *Airfields of the Eighth – Then & Now*. London: Battle of Britain Prints Int. Ltd.
- Freeman, Roger A. 1992. *The Friendly Invasion*. Sudbury: Terence Dalton
- Freeman, Roger A. 1972. *The Mighty Eighth*. London: Macdonald & Jane's
- Freeman, Roger A. 1978. *The Mighty Eighth War Manual*. London: Jane's
- Hamlin, John F. 1991. *Support & Strike: A Concise History of the Ninth US Air Force in Europe*. Peterborough: GMS Enterprises.
- Holmes, Harry. 1998. *The World's Greatest Air Depot – The US Air Force at Warton 1942–45*. Shrewsbury: Airlife.
- Jackson, Robert, 1986. *Strike Force – The USAF in Britain since 1948*. London: Robson Books
- Porter, P. (Ed), ? *Command & Combat, A History of Brampton HQ and Glatton*. Kettering: Tri-Services Magazines
- Ramsey, Winston G, (Ed) 1995. *The High Wycombe Air HQ*. After the Battle magazine No. 87
- Reed, J 1982. *London's Wartime Headquarters*. After the Battle magazine No. 37
- Willard, Richard H, 1975. *Installations & USAAF Combat Units in the UK*. Office of History: HQ 3rd Air Force, USAFE.
- Willis, S and Hollis, B, 1987. *Military Airfields in the British Isles*. Kettering: Willis & Hollis
- Unknown, 1984. *Condensed Analysis of the Ninth Air Force in the ETO*. Washington: USAF Office of Air Force History
- Various, 1992. *USAAF – 50th Anniversary in Great Britain 194 –1992*. Hadleigh: Winchester Group

INDEX GENERAL

A

Air Force Service Command, 8, 9, 20, 22, 54
Alliance Aeroplane Company, 4
Army Air Corps, 6
Army Air Service, 6

B

Big Shuffle, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49
Bolling Commission, 4
Brussels Treaty, 25, 26

C

Clearwater, 34
Cold War, 1, 24, 33, 42
Creech Brown, iv, 34

F

Ferryboat, 29, 58
Fifteenth, 8, 13

H

Hobson Plan, 27

I

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, 41

K

Korea, 29

L

Lend-Lease, 5

M

Midland Group, 30, 31, 36, 42

N

North Atlantic Treaty, 2, 24, 26
Northern Bombing Group, 3

O

Operation Torch, 11

P

Pinetree, 17, 39, 54

R

Red Richard, 33, 39

S

Strategic Air Command, 27–32, 34, 36, 38–48

T

Temporary Duty Yonder, 29
Thor, 33, 44, 45
Twelfth, 8, 11, 20

V

Victor Alert, 32, 33, 42

W

Waring and Gillow Ltd, 4

Y

Yalta Conference, 24

INDEX OF PLACES

A

Abbots Ripton, 9
 Aintree, 9
 Alconbury, 9, 10, 33, 34, 36, 37, 40, 43, 44
 Aldermaston, 11, 19, 20, 52
 Andover, 19, 52
 Andrews Field, 12, 18
 Arborfield House, 21
 Ascot, 18, 20, 55
 Ashchurch, 9
 Ashford, 19, 20, 52
 Ayr, 45

B

Balderton, 19
 Bamber Bridge, 10
 Barford St John, 45
 Barkston Heath, 19
 Barnham, 9, 36
 Bassingbourn, 10, 30, 45, 49, 52
 Baverstock, 22, 36
 Beaulieu, 19, 45, 52
 Bentwaters, 32, 36, 43
 Birch, 12, 18
 Bisterne, 19
 Blakehill Farm, 19
 Blyton, 45
 Boreham, 9, 12, 18

Bottesford, 19, 20, 52
 Bovington, 10, 34, 39, 41, 45
 Boxted, 18, 52
 Braybrooke, 9, 36
 Bristol, 22, 36
 Brize Norton, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 47
 Broadwell, 19
 Bruntingthorpe, 36, 43, 44
 Burdrop Park, 45
 Bures, 9, 36
 Burtonwood, 8, 32, 34, 36, 40, 47, 59
 Bury St Edmunds, 11, 52
 Bushey Hall, 10, 17, 18, 53
 Bushy Park, 10, 13, 17, 29, 34, 37, 39, 41, 53

C

Caerwent, 33
 Cardiff, 22, 33
 Carnaby, 45
 Castletownbere (Berehaven), 3
 Chalgrove, 19
 Charmy Down, 20
 Charterhall, 45
 Cheddington, 10, 53
 Chelveston, 10, 34, 36, 43, 44
 Chicksands, 37, 41
 Chilbolton, 19, 21
 Chipping Ongar, 12, 18
 Christchurch, 19

Colliers End, 45
 Constitution Hill, 36
 Cottesmore, 19, 20, 53
 Cranage, 46
 Croft, 46
 Crookham, 22
 Croughton, 45, 46

D

Daws Hill, 6, 39, 53
 Debach, 12
 Debden, 10, 55
 Denham, 34, 37, 39
 Down Ampney, 19
 Dunsfold, 46

E

Earls Colne, 18, 53
 Earsham, 9, 36
 East Fortune, 46
 East Kirkby, 46
 Eastleigh, 3
 Eccles, 9
 Edzell, 44
 Eggington, 36
 Elveden Hall, 11, 17, 53
 Elvington, 33, 46
 Exeter, 20, 53
 Eye, 12

F

Fairford, 19, 30, 31, 34, 38, 40
 Feltwell, 38
 Filton, 22
 Folkingham, 19
 Ford, 4
 Fulbeck, 19
 Full Sutton, 46
 Fylingdales, 33, 38

G

Gaddesby, 9
 Glatton, 12, 60
 Goring, 4
 Gosfield, 12, 18
 Grafton Underwood, 10
 Grantham, 19, 53
 Great Dunmow, 12, 18, 53
 Great Saling, 12
 Greencastle, 36
 Greenham Common, 19, 20, 22, 30, 31, 34, 38, 53, 59
 Griston, 9
 Grove, 19, 21, 53
 Groveley Wood, 22, 36

H

Hampstead, 19, 53
 Harrington, 12
 Haseley Court, 21
 Haydock, 36

Headcorn, 19
 Hendon, 10
 Heston, 10, 54
 High Halden, 19
 High Wycombe, 6, 13, 17, 34, 39, 41, 53, 54, 60
 Hillingdon, 39
 Hitcham, 9
 Hollinwood, 4
 Holme-on-Spalding Moor, 46
 Holmsley South, 19
 Homewood Park, 46
 Honington, 9
 Horham, 11, 54
 Huntingdon, 8, 9, 10, 52
 Hurn, 19
 Huyton, 37

I

Ibsley, 19, 54

K

Keevil, 11, 19, 54
 Kettering, 9, 60
 Killingholme, 3, 58
 Kimbolton, 10
 Kingsnorth, 19
 Kingston Bagpuize, 21
 Kirknewton, 46

L

Lakenheath, 29, 30, 33, 39, 40, 41, 44, 47, 49

Langar, 19
 Langford Lodge, 8, 37
 Langham, 47
 Lasham, 47
 Lashenden, 19, 54
 Leicester, 37
 Lindholme, 30, 47
 Little Heath, 37
 Little Walden, 18, 54
 Liverpool, 37
 London, 1, 4, 9, 10, 12, 19, 22, 37–39, 52, 53, 56
 Londonderry, 5
 Lough Foyle, 3
 Lymington, 19

M

Manston, 30, 43, 44
 Marham, 29, 30, 39, 41, 47, 48
 Marks Hall, 18, 54
 Matching, 12, 18
 Melchbourne, 9, 37
 Melchbourne Park, 9
 Melton Mowbray, 9, 37
 Membury, 11, 19, 21
 Merryfield, 19
 Middle Wallop, 19, 20, 54
 Middleton Stoney, 47
 Mildenhall, 29, 30, 34, 39, 40, 41, 45
 Molesworth, 10, 36, 40, 41, 54

N

Neaton, 9
North Luffenham, 19
North Pickenham, 47
North Witham, 19, 21
Norton, 30, 36, 47
Nuthampstead, 12

O

Oakington, 29, 47
Old Catton, 17, 55
Oldham, 4

P

Podington, 11
Portland, 3
Poynton, 9, 37
Prestwick, 10, 11, 44, 45

Q

Queenstown, 3

R

Ramsbury, 19
Rattlesden, 11
Raydon, 12, 18
Ridgewell, 9
Riseley, 37
Rivenhall, 18
Rushden, 9
Rustington, 4

S

Salisbury Plain, 19, 20
Saltby, 19
Sandtoft, 47
Scampton, 29, 39, 47
Scorton, 20
Sculthorpe, 29, 34, 36, 41-43, 48
Sealand, 47
Shaftesbury, 48
Sharnbrook, 9, 37
Shaw, 4
Shepherds Grove, 44
Smethwick, 37
Snetterton Heath, 9, 55
South Ruislip, 29, 32, 34, 37-41, 45
Southampton, 3, 22
Southbourne, 4
Spanhoe, 19
Spilsby, 48
St Eval, 11
St Mawgan, 11, 47
St Mellons, 22, 37
Stansted, 9, 12, 18, 21, 37, 48
Staplehurst, 19
Stone, 10
Stonehenge, 3
Stoney Cross, 19
Stowmarket, 9
Sturgate, 43, 48

Sudbury, 37, 60

Sunninghill Park, 18, 20, 55

Swinderby, 48

T

Tangmere, 4
Tarrant Rushton, 19
Thatcham, 9
Thrapston, 9
Thrupton, 19
Thurleigh, 10, 55
Tibenhams, 48
Tostock Park, 37
Troston, 9
Tuddenham, 48

U

Ullenwood Camp, 48
Upottery, 19
Upper Heyford, 30, 31, 33, 34, 38, 42, 47
Uxbridge, 20, 55

V

Valley, 11

W

Waddington, 29, 30, 39, 48
Wapley Common, 37
Warmwell, 19
Warren Wood, 9
Warton, 8, 10, 37, 60
Watford, 10, 17, 18, 37, 39, 53, 54

Wattisham, 9, 33

Watton, 9, 55

Welford, 19, 38, 42

Wellingborough, 9

West Ruislip, 39, 41

Wethersfield, 18, 42, 44

Wexford, 3

Whiddy Island, 3

Wickstead Park, 10

Williamstrip, 37

Wimpole Park, 49

Winfield, 49

Winkton, 19

Witchford, 49

Woodbridge, 43, 44

Woodchurch, 19

Woolfox Lodge, 19

Wormingford, 18

Wortley, 9, 37

Wyton, 4, 29, 30

Y

Yarmouth, 3, 58