

“70 YEARS ON”

THE SUMMER

OF 1940

MAY – OCTOBER

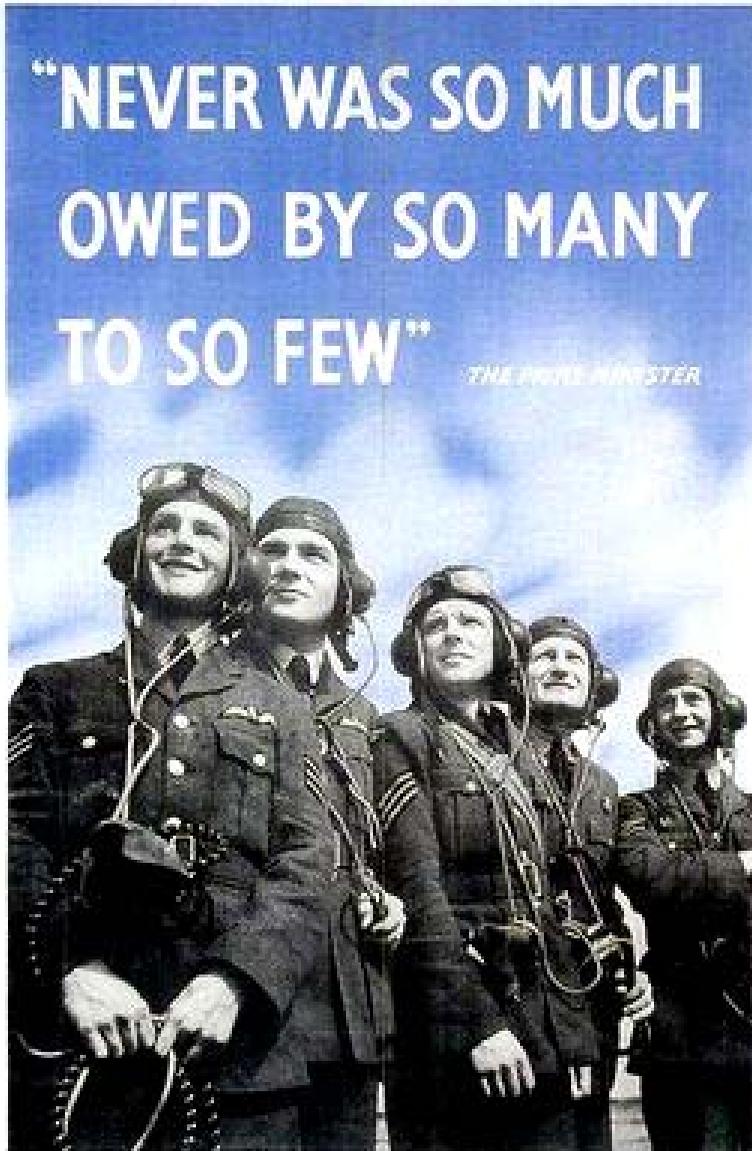
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Panel Three

“The Battle of France is over ...



... the Battle of Britain is about to begin.”

Churchill, 18 June 1940

Keith Gillman

The icon of the Battle of Britain, Keith, an old County (Grammar) School boy, was lost in combat over the English Channel on 25 August 1940.

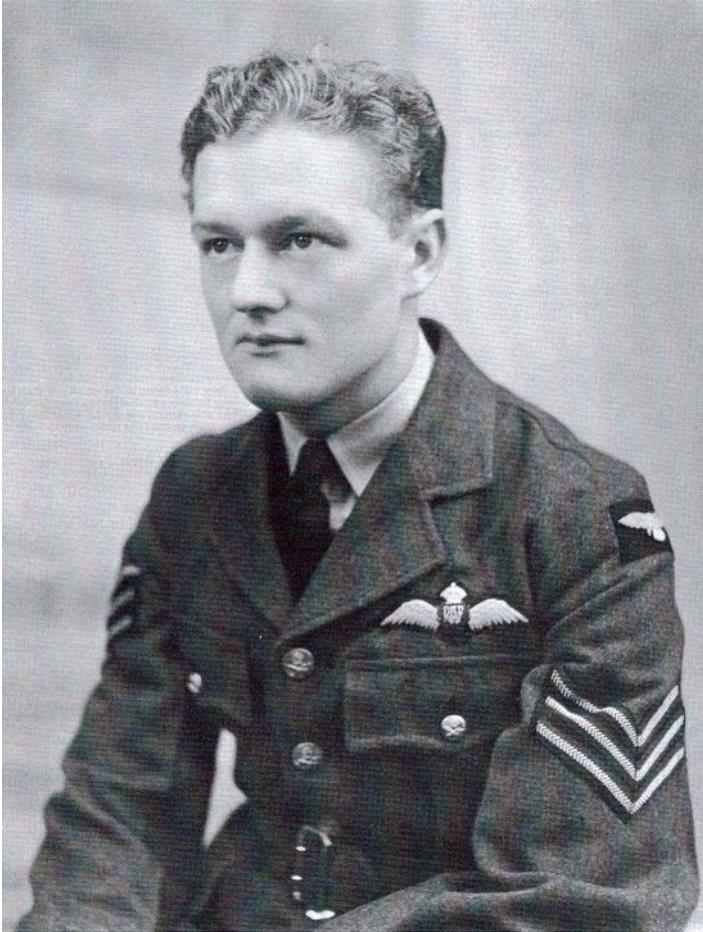
He was 19 years old.



His parents presented a Keith Gillman Memorial Cup to Dover Lifeguards.

The first swimming race, in the Harbour on 1 September 1956, was won by Maidstone. The cup was awarded by Robert E Jones, a comrade from “The Few”.

David Kirton



An old County School boy, David, 21, was shot down in combat over Manston on 8 August 1940.

His father had died during the Great War, and his brother, Squadron Leader Pilot James Kirton, was killed in 1944

Andrew Marrs

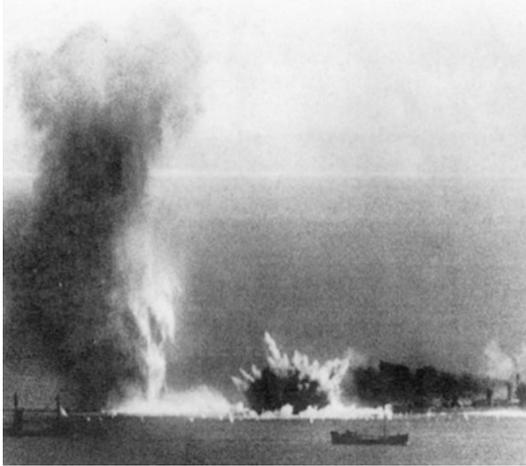


Born at Dover, “Boy” Marrs was cited in 1941 for the Distinguished Flying Cross, having *“participated in numerous patrols and ... led his flight with great skill and coolness”*.

On 24 July 1941 he was shot down escorting raiders at Brest Harbour, France. He had just celebrated his 20th birthday.

“There’s one going down in flames!”

Sunday afternoon, 14 July 1940. On the White Cliffs of Dover, BBC radio correspondent Charles Gardner witnessed the loss of one of The Few.



“The Germans are dive-bombing a convoy out to sea! There are one, two, three, four, five . . . there are about ten German machines dive-bombing the British convoy, which is just out to sea in the Channel.”

“But now the British fighters are coming up! Here they come . . . You can hear our guns going like anything now. . . Oh!”

“There’s one going down in flames! Somebody’s hit a German and he’s coming down with a long streak - coming down completely out of control - a long streak of smoke. And now a man’s baled out by parachute! He’s a Junkers Eight-Seven and he’s going slap into the sea . . . And there he goes - SMASH! A terrific column of water!”

Gardner’s excited patriotism confused his planes. It was a Hurricane, the pilot Michael Mudie, aged 24. Critically injured, he died the next day in hospital.

Exactly four months later, his younger brother Arthur, also a pilot, was killed in Albania.

A volunteer now cares for the grave at Maidstone. Every Christmas he finds a wreath has been laid there.



James Marshall



With several narrow escapes, James survived the Battle of Britain. In April 1941, he was awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross for "*... gallantry and devotion to duty in the execution of air operations*".

On 18 April 1942, Squadron Leader Marshall and two crew crashed at Widford, Essex. His parents lived at Dover.

“Old Dovorians”



Some Battle of Britain pilots were educated at Dover College. They are commemorated on the Memorial inside the school chapel, left.



Stuart Parnall, right, born in 1910 was older than many. He was shot down on 9 September 1940 over Mayfield, Sussex, his Hurricane crashing at Goudhurst, Kent. His brother James had been killed over France four months before.



“The Happy Warrior”, Henry (“Sam”) Sawyer, left, believed in forgetting and smiling, rather than remembering and being sad.

Father to an 18-month son, he died at 25 when his Spitfire stalled on 2 August 1940.



Robert Stevens, 21, was also shot down – but in error by Hawker Hurricane fighters from 312 Czech Squadron. On 13 October 1940 his Blenheim crashed in flames off the Point of Ayr, northwest of The Wirral. Crew-members Sly and Jackson also died

Patrick Watson-Parker died delivering a Spitfire to 610 Squadron at Biggin Hill on 15 July 1940, six months after his brother Derek. Patrick is no longer credited as one of “The Few” as he had not flown operationally.

Roger Hall

Many Dovorians will remember him. During his half-century of residence, he served as Commanding Officer for the Air Training Corps, and on the Management Committee.



His Distinguished Flying Cross was gazetted on 24 November 1942, *"This officer has completed a large number of sorties ... He has always displayed great keenness to engage the enemy."*



His book, "Clouds of Fear" speaks movingly of his career and The Summer of 1940.

He died at home in December 2002 and is buried at St James, near the World War II graves.