

## CHAPTER UPDATES

### CHAPTER 2

#### Revised text before Ted Willingham Interview

Boxted Airfield in 1944 was the home to the USAAF 56th Fighter Group. On the 2nd November, a P47 Thunderbolt took off from the airfield, piloted by Lt Wallace W. Knief. The aircraft was stripped of its armament and used as target towing practice. Flying with three other members of the Fighter Group, he was instructed by his leader to carry out evasive manoeuvres.

Soon afterwards, the P47 was seen spinning helplessly from a height of 11,000ft towards the ground. The pilot managed to escape from his cockpit at about 4,500 ft, stating he never saw his aircraft again after opening his parachute. The P47 subsequently crashed into a field at Mount Bures, narrowly missing the Thatchers Arms by only 140 yards. Local inhabitants thought it was a German 'doodlebug'. The pilot landed safely and survived the war.

The subsequent investigation concluded that the accident was 100% pilot error due to poor handling. However, they added in mitigation that 19-year-old Lt Kief was a recent replacement and due to flying restrictions in the USA, he had never carried out such drastic manoeuvres before.

### CHAPTER 21

#### Revised

**(4) Lt Cornard.** This unit had no relevance to Bures, but it is worth mentioning.

At first, this battery was operated by soldiers from a Territorial Army, Royal Engineers Unit, and later by specially trained conscripts who were unfit for overseas service. Three individual searchlights were in the Lt Cornard Battery, consisting of generators, listening devices and numerous lorries.

It was rumoured, in foggy weather when they couldn't track enemy aircraft; they shone their lights for our own aircraft towards the direction of the nearest airfield to assist our pilots in a safe return.

Initially, the men were billeted with the locals, but later accommodation huts were built near to the One Bell Pub

The lights were located as follows:- one near 'Warners Bungalow' Slough Lane, one behind the 'One Bell Pub' and the other

nearer towards Newton Green. The searchlight in Slough Lane was probably the one hit by a German bomb in 1940, resulting

in the loss of the light and three damaged lorries. It was later located in a field behind the Pub.

*Courtesy of Lt Cornard Village Recorder.*

## **CHAPTER 29**

### **Add the end of Chapter**

John Cowlin, in his childhood from Mount Bures recalls:

*The Steam engines were 4x4s which means that they had only eight driving wheels, which considering the engine was pulling some*

*600 tons, meant that it would soon slip on the incline from Bures Station to Mount Bures, which was one in ninety gradient.*

*At times the engines would stop halfway up the incline, then shunt back the four miles to Cornard.*

*Then with a full head of steam, it would take another run at the incline.*

*Often the USA serviceman would stand at the crossing with us waving and cheering as it came towards us in full steam, belching smoke from its chimney.*

*Once it was on the crossing, it was then an easy run towards Chappel.*

## **CHAPTER 32**

### **Revised Introduction**

After the USAAF pulled out of Bures on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1945, the RAF had the unenviable task of clearing up all the munitions left scattered around the countryside.

These RAF MU`s were similarly involved with the clearance of the bomb storage sites at Earsham and Barnham.

Although the war had ended, bombs were still in place some three years later in 1948. Regular RAF jeep patrols were dispatched to the FAD to check on the status of these surplus munitions. The RAF's No. 95MU based at Ridgewell was (probably) tasked with clearing the abandoned ordnance around the local countryside. The recovered was eventually transported to Ridgewell Airfield for temporary storage.

RAF Ridgewell was used by the 95Maintenance Unit (MU) from 15 July 1945 to 31 March 1957.

When the clearance work was complete, the RAF airfield vacated the airfield

With the end of military control, the majority of the airfield was returned to agriculture; the MOD retained the hangars as an extra storage facility for the USAFE at Wethersfield and Alconbury until the early 1990s.

Ref:- The American Air Museum, Duxford

### **CHAPTER 32 Add to end of Chapter**

*NEW SCIENTIST FEBRUARY 2020*

*This article, originally published in November 1995, was updated on 10 February 2020.*

In 1995 more than 4500 incendiary bombs from the Second World War have washed up on beaches around the west

coast of Scotland. They are made of phosphorus, benzene and cellulose, and were designed to ignite on contact with air.

During that year, a four-year-old received burns when he picked up a weapon containing phosphorous that washed up near Campbelltown, one of the Western Isles,

The implication, not yet confirmed by the MoD, is that the bombs had been sent for dumping in Beaufort's Dyke, an underwater trench 50 kilometres long, 5 kilometres wide and about 250 metres deep, which runs within 10 kilometres of the Scottish coast.

According to a letter sent by the MoD in June to researchers at the University of Liverpool, the MoD dispatched vast

amounts of old weapons to Beaufort's Dyke. The ministry dumped some 14,500 tons of 5-inch artillery rockets filled with poisonous phosgene gas in the trench between July and October 1945. Over the

following three years up to 1948, it consigned 135,000 tons of conventional munitions there. Sometimes the vessels did not reach the dyke, they dropped their bombs dumped overboard into shallower waters

instead, in order to save time and fuel.

Detailed records were often destroyed at the time. . Extending the date to 1976, the MoD dropped about 1 million tons

of munitions into and around the trench, making it by far the largest known British military dump