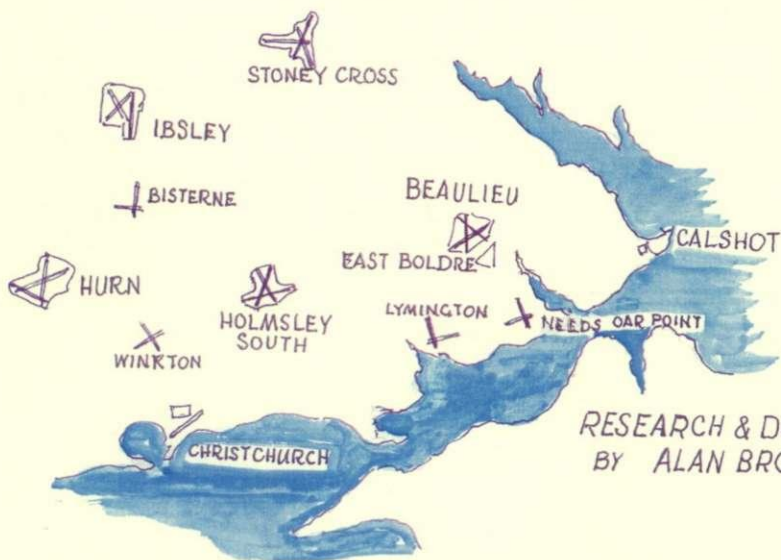
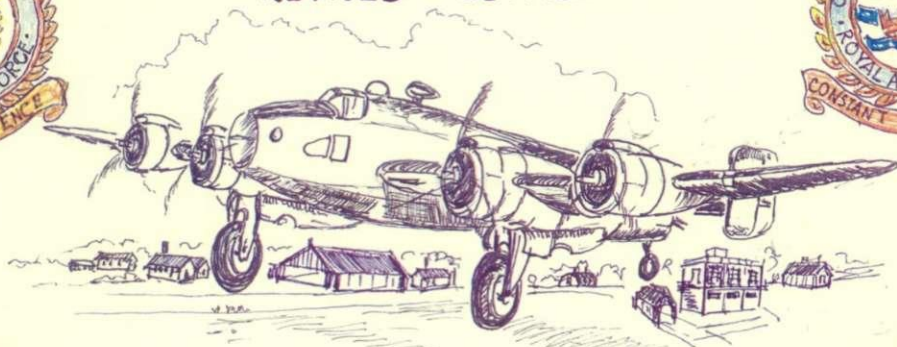


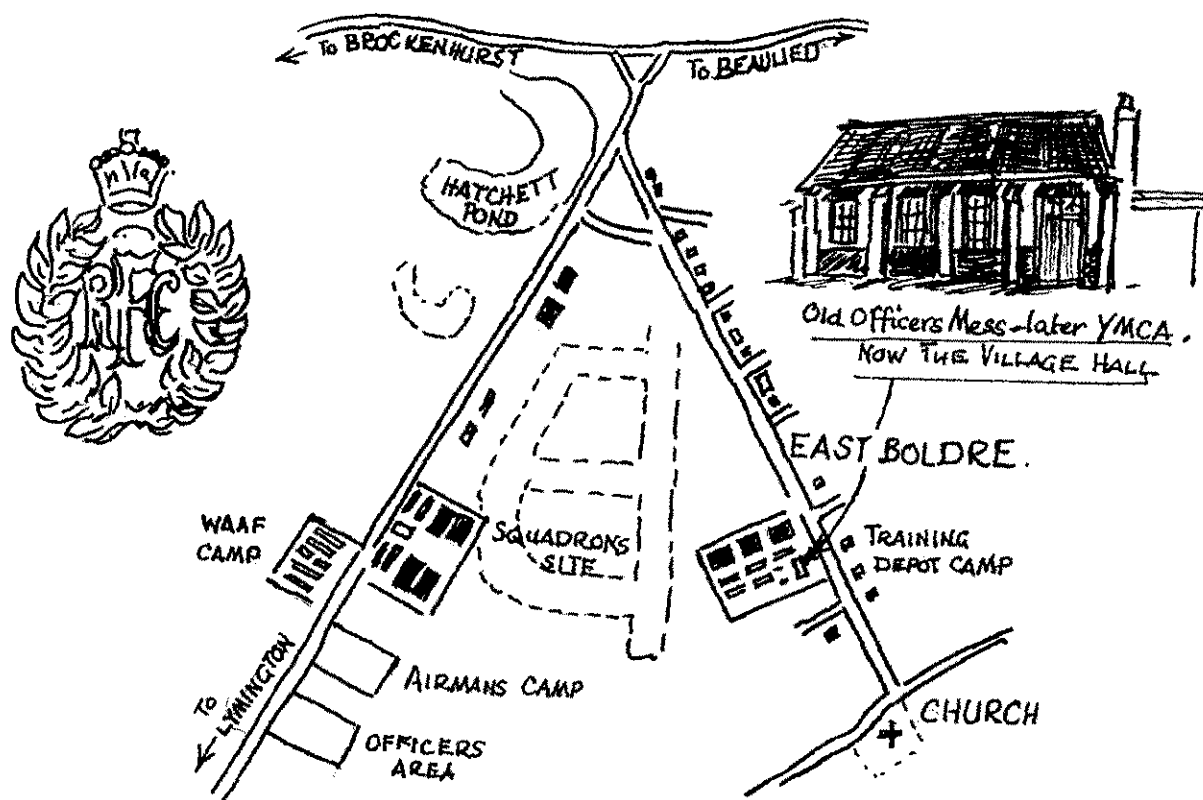
# TWELVE AIRFIELDS

REVISED EDITION



RESEARCH & DRAWINGS  
BY ALAN BROWN

# BEAULIEU-EAST BOLDRE.



The first airfield in the New Forest was on the heathland at East Boldre. It was the New Forest Flying School established in 1910 by William McArdle and J Armstrong Drexel. They advertised a course of flying for £80. They closed the school in 1912.

In 1915 the Royal Flying Corps built a Flying Training camp with three metal frame hangars, huts and workshops near East Boldre village. This flying training unit was No 16 Reserve Squadron, later joined by 23 and 87 Reserve Squadrons. They trained pilots, observers and ground crew for the squadrons on the Western Front.

In early 1918 a much larger camp was constructed near the Beaulieu to Lymington Road to house the squadrons being built up before moving to France.

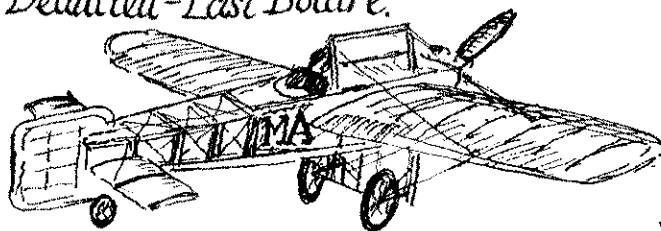
The camp had many accommodation buildings, four large G.S. Hangars, a Power House, Officers Camp, and a separate camp for WAAF personnel.

No. 84 and 103 Squadrons were both formed at Beaulieu before entering operations. No. 79 Squadron, 59 Squadron, No. 2 Training Depot Squadron and an Aircraft Repair Unit were all at the airfield at various times. On the 1st April 1918 the R.F.C. and the RNAS became the Royal Air Force and Beaulieu continued as one of its Training Depots. When the War ended training ceased and the camp closed in 1919. The buildings were removed, but in the 1920's and 1930's it was still listed as a flying field, but seldom used. It was not used in WW2.

Between 1945 and 1950 the old airfield site was used as a Parachute Dropping Zone for test work by Airborne Forces Experimental Establishment at (W)2 Beaulieu.

# Beaulieu-East Boldre.

New Forest Aviation School  
Beaulieu. 1910



WILLIAM McCORDLES BLERIOT



ONE OF THE SHEDS USED BY THE AVIATION SCHOOL.

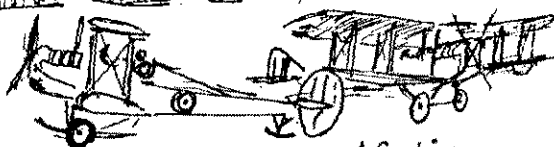
The School opened in May 1910 with three sheds in between the houses of East Boldre. The Blériots were flown from a strip cleared of bushes on Bagshot Moor, in front of the houses. In 1910 Drexel and McCordle went to the Southbourne Air Meeting and five other flying events. The School closed by early 1912.



Training Squadron  
3 Hangars

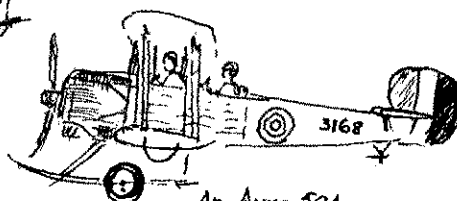


RFC PILOTS WINGS



A BE 2c Trainer

A Curtiss  
Jenny



An Arco 504

No 16 Reserve Squadron  
Royal Flying Corps.  
1915

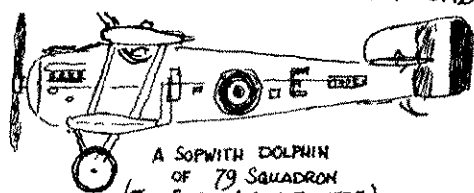
Between 1912 and 1914 the Bagshot Moor went back to quiet grazing land but in 1915 the R.F.C. decided to build a training camp at the southern area of the old airfield. For the next two years it turned out pilots and ground crews for the squadrons on the Western Front and other front lines. Then it was decided to enlarge the airfield to the north.



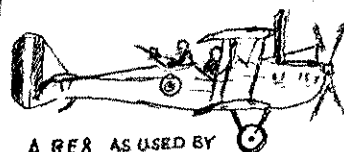
ONE OF THE 2 PAIRS OF TRUSS HANGARS & THE POWER HOUSE  
NEAR THE LYMINGTON ROAD



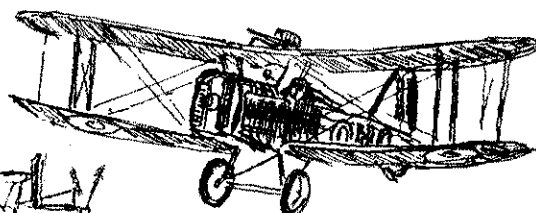
BESSONAU CAKVAS HANGAR



A SOPWITH DOLPHIN  
OF 79 SQUADRON  
(THE FIRST 4 GUN FIGHTER)



A RE8 AS USED BY  
103 SQDN.

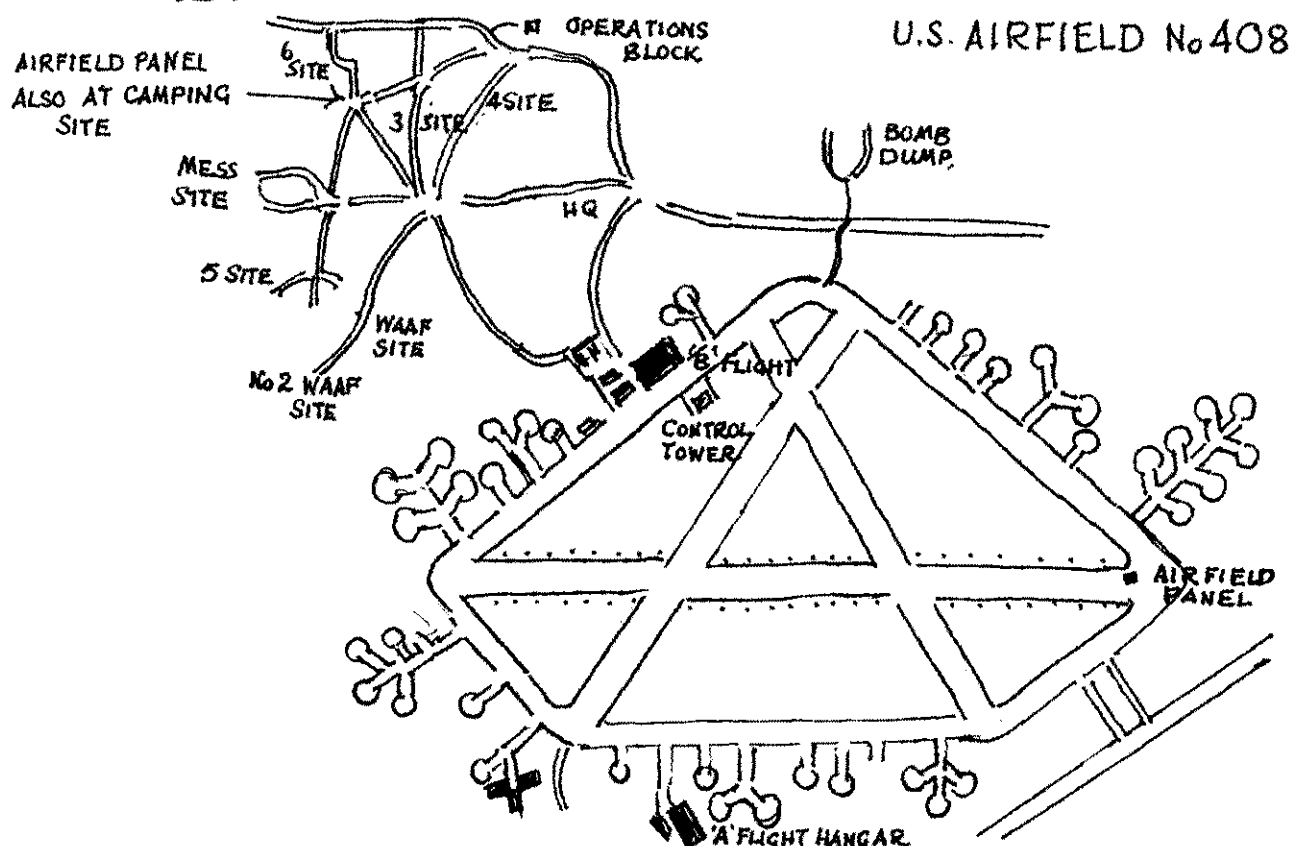


A SE5A FIGHTER  
AS USED BY 84 SQUADRON  
LATER IN FRANCE

The new part of the airfield was used by Squadrons forming before moving to France. No's 84, 79, and 103 Sqdns. all spent their early months at Beaulieu. With the end of WWI in Nov. 1918 RAF Beaulieu closed in 1919 and all buildings except the Village Hall were removed. East Boldre site was not used for flying in WW2, but between Jan. 1945 and Sept. 1950 it became a Parachute D.Z. There were often parachute drops of men, containers and panniers to test new aircraft and equipment.



# BEAULIEU AIRFIELD



The old site East Boldre was too small and so, in 1941-2, a new airfield was built and opened in August, 1942 as a Coastal Command base. 224 Squadron with Liberator aircraft arrived to do anti-Uboat patrols over the Atlantic, later joined by Halifaxes of 405 Sqn. RCAF and 158 Sqn. RAF. In early 1943 the work was taken over by 311 Czech Sqn, 53 Sqn. and even a Liberator OTU.

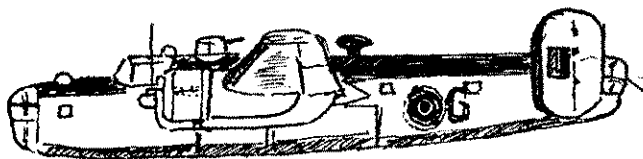
In Feb. 1944 19 Group Coastal Command moved out and Beaulieu became a base for Typhoon fighter bombers of 257 and 263 Sqn's RAF and 486 Sqn. RNZAF. They were making attacks over France in the build-up to D. Day.

In March 1944 the 365th. Fighter Group 366, 367 & 368 Sqn's of the 9th. U.SAAF took over from the Typhoons at Beaulieu. They had moved from East Anglia to fly P47 Thunderbolts in attacks on the French coastal area. After 6th. June they flew missions in support of the troops ashore. The 365th Group moved to a French airfield in late June to be replaced by the 323rd Bomb Group U.SAAF 453, 454, 455 & 456 Sqn's who flew Marauder B26 medium-bombers in support of allied attacks across Normandy. They moved to France in late August.

From December 1944 to September 1950 Beaulieu was used by the Airborne Forces Experimental Establishment to test Parachutes, Aircraft, Gliders, Glider Tugs and early types of helicopters. Flying ceased in 1950 when AFEE moved to Boscombe Down.

In November 1959 the land was returned to the Forestry Commission.

# Beaulieu Airfield.



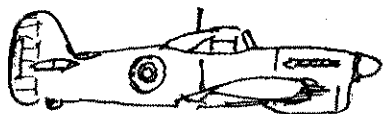
A LIBERATOR OF 224 SQUADRON AUGUST 1942

When 224 Squadron moved out in April 1943 53 Sqn, 311 Czech Sqn and a Liberator O.T.U. took their place until Jan 1944.

When Beaulieu Airfield opened in August 1942 Coastal Command was under great pressure to provide more aircraft to patrol the Eastern Atlantic and Bay of Biscay. 224 Sqn Liberators were reinforced by 405 & 158 Halifax Sqns of Bomber Command.



A HALIFAX OF 405 SQUADRON RCAF

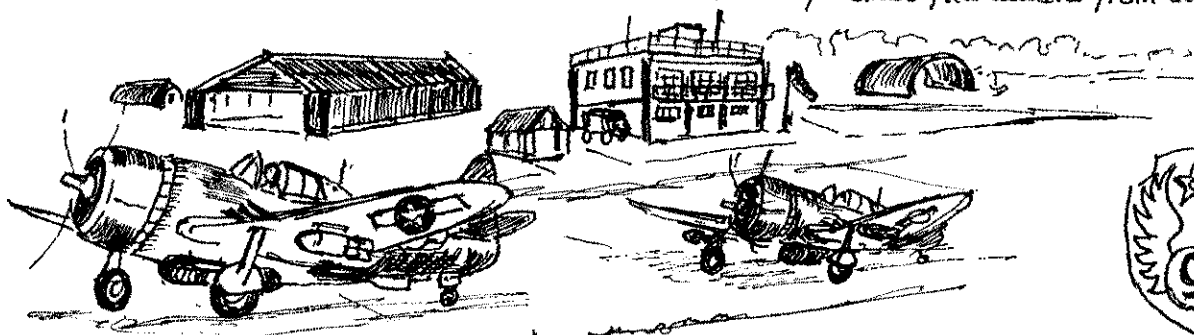


HAWKER TYPHOON

In January 1944 to March three Sqdns. of Typhoons 257, 263 and 486 operated from Beaulieu. No. 88 Sqn. also flew attacks from the airfield.



DOUGLAS BOSTON



P47D THUNDERBOLTS OF THE 365TH GROUP APRIL - 28th JUNE 1944

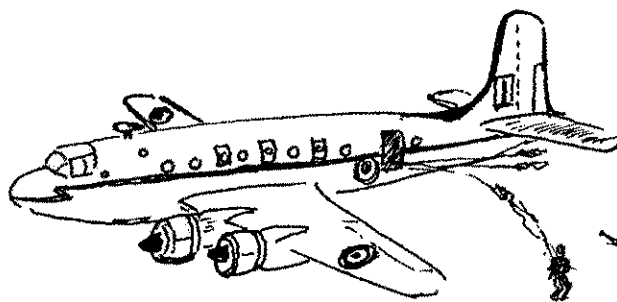
NINTH AIR FORCE USAAF

When the Thunderbolts moved to an airfield in France their place was taken up by 4 squadrons of B26 medium bombers for July & August.



B26 MARAUDER

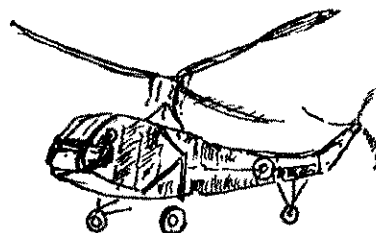
From Dec-1944 to September 1950 Beaulieu was the home of Airborne Forces Experimental Establishment testing Parachutes, Aircraft, Gliders & Helicopters



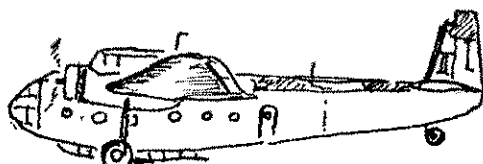
HASTINGS GLIDER TUG & PARACHUTE AIRCRAFT.



HEAVY DROP 16 PDR GUN



SIKORSKY R4 HELICOPTER



A MK10 HAMILCAR GLIDER (POWER ASSISTED)