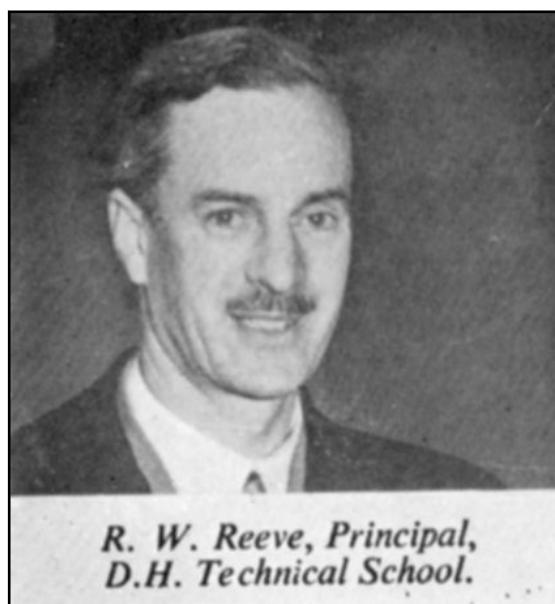


## **Robert William ‘Bob’ Reeve, DFC, AFC, MM**

**Farm hand, soldier, air force pilot, pleasure flying proprietor, flying instructor**  
*and*

**Principal of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School**  
**1941-1959**

A brief biography compiled by Roger de Mercado  
for the  
**de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School Association**  
[www.dhaetsa.org.uk](http://www.dhaetsa.org.uk)



*de Havilland Gazette, August 1948*

## Robert William 'Bob' Reeve, DFC, AFC, MM Principal of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School 1941-1959

Born on 3rd April 1893 in King's Norton, Worcestershire. Robert William Reeve was the son of William James Reeve, a pianoforte tuner, and his wife Mary Ann, formerly Glover. They were married in 1891.

In the census of March 1901 the family was at Four Oaks Villa, Lichfield Road, Sutton Coldfield. Robert was seven and had a younger brother, Herbert Joseph, who was six.

In the census of April 1911 Robert was on a farm at Ivingtonbury, near Leominster in Herefordshire. The farm was occupied by Richard Bright. One of his sons was Albert George Bright, 27, 'farmer's assistant'. Robert William Reeves (sic), 18, was also a 'farmer's assistant'. His parents and brother were at a different address but still in Sutton Coldfield; his brother Herbert Joseph Reeve was an apprentice merchant seaman, age 16.

Bob's Army records have not been located, but his RFC/RAF papers have been. They record that he transferred from the Herefordshire Territorial Force. On one sheet it was noted that his 'Occupation in Civil Life' was 'farming', his employer being Mr A G Bright (partner), Ivingtonbury, Leominster, Herefordshire, from January 1911 to August 1914. The reference to 'partner' is taken to mean that Albert Bright was in partnership with his father, not with Bob. It seems that Bob was in the Territorials and was called up on the outbreak of war.

In August 1914 the 1st Battalion of the Herefordshire TF was at The Barracks, Hereford. It was part of the Welsh Border Brigade in the Welsh Division and moved on mobilisation to Pembroke Dock, then to Oswestry and by the end of the month was at Irchester and Rushden before moving on to Bury St Edmunds in December 1914. In April 1915 it was transferred to the North Wales Brigade, in the same Division, and moved to Bedford in May 1915. During this time Bob was commissioned:

**The London Gazette 26 April 1915:** The Herefordshire Regiment: Company Quartermaster-Serjeant Robert William Reeve to be Second Lieutenant. Dated 27th April 1915.

In May 1915 the formation became the 158th Brigade in the 53rd (Welsh) Division. On 16th July the Division embarked at Devonport on SS Euripedes. The unit history records that 'their divisional artillery had been left behind in England under orders for France, and the Division had no other wheeled transport and no horses. There were 29 officers and 969 other ranks. On reaching Port Said the Battalion was reduced to 25 officers and 750 ORs; these men went on to land at 'C' beach at Suvla Bay on Gallipoli at 7.20am on 9 August 1915'. It is assumed that Bob was among that number, because he was always said to have been awarded the Military Medal for service in the Gallipoli Campaign.

The War Diaries of the Regiment record that Herbert Joseph Reeve died of dysentery on 24th

### FOUR OAKS.

DEATH OF A LIEUTENANT.—News has been received at Four Oaks of the death of Second Lieutenant H. J. Reeve, aged 20, the son of Mr. W. J. Reeve, of Grasmere, Clarence Road, Four Oaks. Lieutenant Reeve joined the Hereford Regiment with his elder brother in the early days of the war as a private, but quickly gained promotion. He went out with his regiment to the Dardanelles about three months ago. He saw a deal of active service there, and was given his commission as second lieutenant. He unfortunately contracted dysentery, and died on September 24. He received his education at Sutton Grammar School. Of fine physique, standing over 6ft. in height, and being well proportioned, he was a good all-round athlete, but excelled at swimming, being a prominent member of the Sutton Coldfield club. He won many prizes, including the Coronation medal.

September 1915, having been taken to hospital a week earlier. His death was reported in local newspapers, including the Walsall Observer & South Staffordshire Chronicle of 16th October 1915. His father's name and address are as in the 1911 census and this is clearly Bob's younger brother. He was buried in the Pieta military cemetery in Malta. Just a month earlier, on 20th August, the London Gazette recorded that Private Herbert Joseph Reeve of the Herefordshire Regiment was commissioned as 2nd Lt from 21st August. The Regimental Museum holds his War and Victory medals and the Memorial Plaque ('Dead Man's Penny') sent to his parents. His medal roll index card shows that he had been promoted to corporal and lance-sergeant, so as one would expect had not been commissioned directly from private. The card also records his date of 'entry into theatre' as 9/8/15. [Bob's card implies that he did not

apply for his war medals until 1922 and his card does not give a date of entry into theatre. However it is probable that the brothers were mobilised together.]

The Hereford Times recorded that on 15th November 2nd Lt Reeve left Hereford to take up duties with 1st Herefordshire Regiment. The Regimental Diary records that on 8th December 'about 2am Capt Green, 2nd Lts Wallis and Reeve rejoined HQ with 8 men.' On December 15th 'Reveille 4.30am; breakfasted and left camp still standing. Marched to South Pier and about 2pm embarked in SS Tunisian. The following officers embarked: Lt Col Drage, Capts Green and Lewis, Lt Ashton and 2Lts Wilson, Wallis and Reeve and 113 men'. The destination was Alexandria.

The Diary records that 2nd Lt RW Reeve transferred to the RFC on 7th November 1916.

**London Gazette 20 February 1917:** Royal Flying Corps – Flying Officers – 2nd Lt R W Reeve, Hereford. R. T.F. 14th Jan. 1917.

**London Gazette 9 March 1917:** Herefordshire Regt: - 2nd Lt R W Reeve is seconded for duty with the R.F.C. 14th Jan. 1917.

**London Gazette 7 June 1917:** undermentioned 2nd Lts, T.F, to be temp Lts while serving with R.F.C., 1st May 1917.....R.W Reeve, Hereford R.

**London Gazette 26 September 1917:** Herefordshire Regt. – 2nd Lt. R.W. Reeve to be Lt., with precedence from 1st June 1916, next below Lt. G.J. Williams, and to remain seconded. 4th July 1917.

Neither of the brothers' Army records seem to have survived, but Bob's RFC/RAF records have done. They are on several sheets and some of the writing is indecipherable. The main record sheet was started on 5th June 1918 recording his attachment to 113 Squadron, which was responsible for reconnaissance and trench spotting over Palestine. However it seems to record his transfer earlier in April/May for a course of instruction 'at Bde' [Brigade HQ, presumably.] The next entries are after the Armistice and he seems to have been moved around. On 24th February 1919 he was 'on leave' and on 15th April 1919 he was posted to 86 (Comm.) Wing 'for No. 1 Communication Sq.'. (From January to September 1919 No. 86 (Communication) Wing ran a scheduled service from Hendon to Paris using Airco DH4 & 4A, also HP 0/400 aircraft, mainly carrying delegates and mails to the Peace Conference.)

He was transferred to the Unemployment List on 3rd July 1919. A separate sheet notes 'Types flown M.F.SH [Maurice Farman Shorthorn]. Avro, BE2C & 2E, RE8, Sop pup (sic), Nieuport Scout'. That sheet also records under 'Casualties, Honours and Rewards, etc': '22/1/19 Mentioned in Despatches (Egypt) and 8/2/19 Distinguished Flying Cross (Palestine, Egypt).'

In the first quarter of 1919 Bob married Marion Fryer in London, no doubt whilst on leave. She was born in 1896 in Kington, about 12 miles west of Ivington, and was there at the time of the 1911 census, her father James Fryer then being a motor dealer. Marion's brother Arthur James Fryer served in the RFC/RAF in WW1. He gave his uniform and one of Bob Reeve's log books, No. 11, to the Sywell Aviation Museum in Northamptonshire. This log book records his flights between 29th July 1918 and 22nd June 1919.

At the start of the book he brought forward 447 hours flying, so had already accumulated a good deal of experience. Many of the first entries report 'pursuit' flights in Nieuport Scouts. One records 'guns jammed when firing at EA (*enemy aircraft*)' and another 'saw 6 EA, BFs (*Bristol Fighters*) shot down 4. We could not climb fast enough to engage'. A period of patrols and target practice followed. After the activity around General Allenby's offensive starting 19th September 1918 (see next page), a period of instructing followed. On 24th November he 'escorted General Allenby's special train'. His last flight in Palestine was on 14th December 1918; his next flight was in England on 1st May 1919 when he and seven other pilots were flown as passengers in a 'Handley Page' from Kenley to Hounslow. Later that morning he flew an 'Avro' back to Kenley. Oddly, the flights on the next page of the log book are undated. They list various positioning flights and flights to and from Paris with mails or a passenger. The last page records just two flights, on 22nd June 1919, to Hendon in a DH4 to collect a new DH4, in which he returned to Kenley. This was just before he was transferred to the Unemployment List. By then he had logged 588 hours.

The log book concludes with an affidavit from his Commanding Officer:

*This officer has served with me for over 2 years and has proved himself to be one of the best Flight Commanders I have ever had - conscientious hard working and very capable. A thoroughly sound pilot on all types of machines who has done invaluable work on Service, in training pilots and on communication work in connection with Peace Conference London-Paris.*

*W Harold Primrose*

*Officer Commanding 86 (Communications) Wing*

On 19th September 1918 the British forces in Palestine renewed their offensive against the Turkish lines north of Jerusalem. Supported from the air, XXI Corps launched its attack against Turkish positions in what is known as the Battle of Megiddo. The London Gazette published the citation for Bob's DFC on 8th February 1919, for action on 19th September. His log book records those four flights, which were all in Nieuport Scout B3591.

- 0500 1:15 Ground offensive patrol M.G. all transport.
- 0730 1:00 Ground offensive patrol M.G. all transport.
- 1030 0:35 Special Recs: Locating bombing target.
- 1545 1:10 Special Recs: Locating Div. HQ's.

DATE	HOUR	TYPE	PILOT	TIME		DUTY	REMARKS
				H	M		
467-45							
11-9-18	1110	N.S. B. 3591	SELF.		45		Flew over to III & No. 1 to see H.P.
12 "	1640	" "	"		55	Off. Patrol	
13 "	0850	" "	"		30	Practice	Target in Sea.
19 "	0500	" "	"	1	15	ground offensive patrol M.G. all transport	
"	0730	" "	"	1	0	"	" " " " " "
"	1030	" "	"		35	Special	Reco: Locating bombing target
"	1545	" "	"	1	10	"	" " Div. HQ's.
20 "	1325	" 6788	"	1	20	"	" Reporting on roads & movements
"	1630	" 3591	"	1	15	ground offensive patrol	Nablu.
21 "	1015	" "	"	1	5	Special	Reco locating our Cavalry.
22 "	0535	" "	"	1	45	"	" " bombing targets.
26 "	1435	" "	"	1	15	Tenin track along railway very low.	
5-10-18	0745	" "	"		30	To ADS. PANLEH. held: all our troops.	
7 "	0950	RE8 4708	"	1	0	HAIFA	Went up to lunch with
"	1530	" "	"		50	SARONA	Emmett & B Flight took Sgt
19 "	0530	Avrom. 1653	" Sgt. Jones.	1	5	EL RINAL	Becks along.
"	0730	" "	" Cdt Spillette		35	AERODROME	Instructions
"	0805	" "	"		10	"	TEST.
484-45							

**Lieut. (A./Capt.) Robert William Reeve. (EGYPT).**  
 An officer of outstanding merit, whose gallantry and reliability are proverbial. On 19th September he made four flights, attacking hostile troops with machine-gun fire at a low altitude, displaying marked courage and disregard of danger. The information he brought in of the enemy positions was of the greatest value.

Above: London Gazette citation



Above right: Nieuport Scout 23bis B3591. Image X003-2602-22083 from RAF Museum article at <https://www.rafmuseum.org.uk/blog/the-evolution-of-the-nieuport-fighter/>. Date stated to be 1918/19.

## The West of Scotland Aviation Company Ltd.

On 14th August 1919, six weeks after Bob's release from active service, Flight Magazine published this notice. J Fryer was presumably his father-in-law, James Fryer.



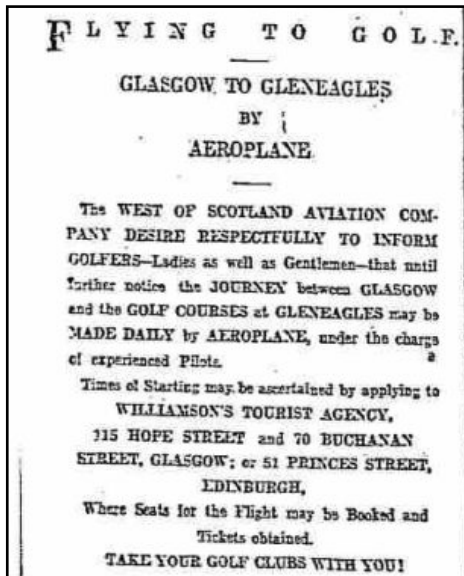
The website [www.airhistory.org.uk](http://www.airhistory.org.uk) lists three Avro 504Ks registered to the new company on 26th August. War surplus serviceable 504Ks were available in large numbers from the Aircraft Disposal Company, for prices as low as £600.

G-EAHY Avro 504K H7513/G-EAHY West of Scotland Aviation Co, Renfrew 26.08.19  
[Later to Wm Beardmore & Co Ltd. Withdrawn from use 1928.]

G-EAHZ Avro 504K H2411/G-EAHZ West of Scotland Aviation Co, Renfrew 26.08.19  
[Reg cancelled 1925 (may have crashed in 1923)].

G-EAIA Avro 504K F8717/G-EAIA West of Scotland Aviation Co, Renfrew 26.08.19  
[Later to Border Avn Co. Withdrawn from use 1921]

West of Scotland Aviation advertised flights for golfers and took part in displays:

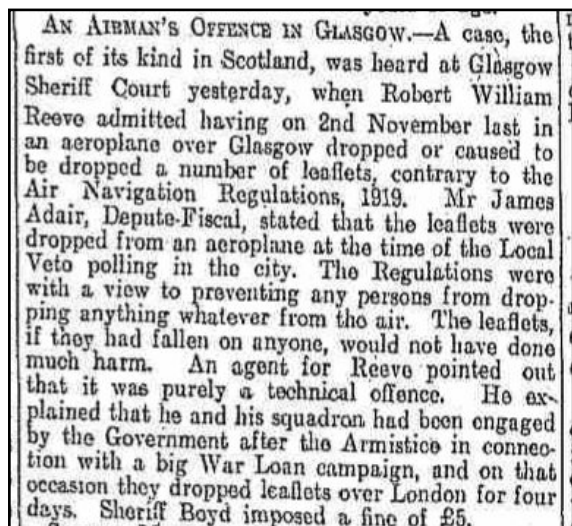
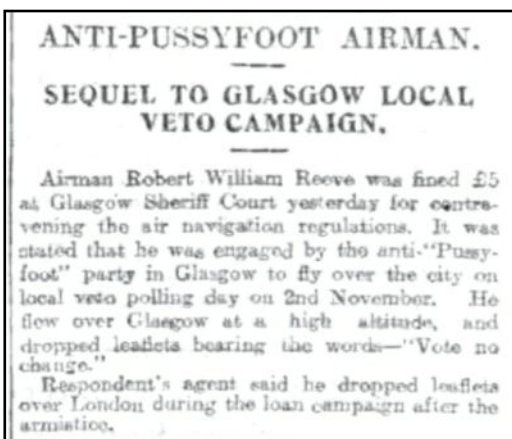


The Scotsman 26/9/1919



The Dundee Courier 14/8/20

The Company was fined for dropping leaflets over Glasgow in 1920, as reported by the Aberdeen Press & Journal (below left) and The Scotsman (below right) on 9/2/1921. This was in connection with a temperance campaign in Scotland, seeking prohibition by means of referendums in each licensing area. (A fierce campaigner was an American, William 'Pussyfoot' Johnson.)



## Flying Instructor

In 1923 Bob became an instructor at the RAF Reserve Training School at Moorpark, Renfrew, as a member of the Reserve of Air Force Officers (RAFO). Five existing commercial schools were initially contracted by the Air Ministry to provide refresher training for Reservists, the first being de Havilland at Stag Lane on 1st May 1923 and the third being Beardmore at Renfrew on 23rd July. The other three were Bristol at Filton, Armstrong Whitworth at Whitley and a Blackburn subsidiary at Brough. (Information from 'Reserve and Auxiliary Forces', the RAF Historical Society, 2003.)

He was promoted to Flying Officer in February 1924 and moved to the de Havilland Reserve Training School at Stag Lane, Edgware, in that year. He became chief instructor there in 1929, his duties also covering the company's School of Flying. Flight magazine of 4th August 1927 recorded his promotion in the RAFO from Flying Officer to Flight Lieutenant.

In February 1927 Flight pictured him with one of his civilian students - one of the many women then taking flying lessons, among them the Duchess of Bedford ('The Flying Duchess').



BACK FROM INDIA L.N.A.

The Duchess of Bedford photographed on her return from India. She is seen here with Capt. Reeve, of the De Havilland School of Flying, about to leave Stag Lane for her home at Woburn, Bedfordshire



["FLIGHT" Photograph  
BECOMING "AIR-MINDED": Mrs. Bell, wife of Squadron-Leader J. R. Bell, Assistant Liaison Officer of the Royal Australian Air Force at the Air Ministry, is undergoing a course of flying lessons at the de Havilland School. Mrs. Bell is here seen with her instructor, Capt. R. W. Reeve, before going up for a "lesson."

'The Bystander' of 19th September 1928 published this photograph of him with the Duchess on her return from India.

Electoral Register records, only available on line for some years, list him at these addresses:

1927, 1928, 1929, 1930: Robert William Reeve & Marion Reeve, 5 Elmwood Crescent, Kingsbury.

1929, 1930: Robert William Reeve, Brocket Hall, Hertfordshire.

1931: Robert William Reeve & Marion Reeve, 353 Stag Lane, Kingsbury.

DH decided to move the Reserve Flying School away from the congested air space around Stag Lane and Hendon, and bought land at Hatfield in early 1930, transferring the School there in June. The company had been reconnoitring for some time, so was Bob's presence at Brocket Hall coincidence or part of a survey? (As a householder, he was entitled to vote in Kingsbury as well as a resident at Brocket Hall, so he was not just "passing through".) He was responsible for opening up the new aerodrome in 1930. His wife Marion managed the London Aeroplane Club restaurant and later organised refreshments at White Waltham.

### In 1933 'Who's Who' recorded:

REEVE, Flight Lieut. Robert William D.F.C., M.M., R.A.F.O.; instructor to the De Havilland School of Flying since 1925; joined the Herefordshire Regt., 1914; served in Gallipoli; learnt to fly with the R.F.C. in Egypt, 1916; served as an instructor and in Palestine; after the War continued as an instructor in Egypt; posted to No. 1 Squadron in connection with the Peace Conference, 1919; left the service, 1919; pilot to a "joyriding" concern in Scotland, 1919-23; completed instructor's course at C.F.S. and joined Wm. Beardmore and Co., Ltd.; joined the R.A.F. Reserve 1923. Appointed to the G.A.P.A.N. Panel of Examiners for Instructors Certificate. Club: R. Aero. Add.: De Havilland School of Flying, Hatfield Herts.

No. 1 Elementary and Reserve Flying Training School (ERFTS) was created at Hatfield on 4th August 1935. In November No. 13 ERFTS was formed at White Waltham, near Maidenhead, by DH under contract with the Air Ministry and Bob was put in charge. He was awarded the Air Force Cross in May 1937, recorded in the London Gazette entry of 11th May 1937, presumably for 'services rendered'. (The AFC is for 'an act or acts of valour, courage or devotion to duty whilst flying, though not in active operations against the enemy'.) The cutting below appears to be from an edition of the de Havilland Gazette and was provided by Mr J Prettyman of DHAeTSA.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO FLIGHT-LIEUT. REEVE

WELL DESERVED is the honour conferred on Fl.-Lieut. R. W. Reeve, (typical photograph below) who received the Air Force Cross in the Coronation List.

After seeing service in Gallipoli, where he won the Military Medal, he joined the R.F.C. and learnt to fly in the beginning of 1916; subsequently, for his gallantry in Palestine as a pilot, he received the D.F.C. He left the Service in 1919 and was one of the first pilots to start joy-riding before Civil Aviation was properly established.

On the formation of the Reserve, he acted as instructor at Renfrew and, later in 1924, joined the de Havilland Aircraft Co., Ltd., at Stag Lane, in the same capacity. Towards the end of 1929 he was appointed Chief Instructor, and in this position he opened up the aerodrome at Hatfield in 1930 and Maidenhead in 1935. The latter aerodrome needed stupendous efforts to get ready and was urgently wanted to start training pupils for the expansion programme. On many mornings Reeve could be seen on the field at 7 o'clock carting grass

seed in his own car and supervising levelling operations.

In addition to his good work as Chief Instructor, Fl.-Lieut. Reeve has flown some thousands of miles over Europe. He is well known and liked in the aviation world, and we are sure that readers will join with us in congratulating him on receiving this honour from H.M. The King.

WITH the unassuming title of "The Fly Paper."

The photograph below, from Bob's nephew Nick Male, is of the instructors at White Waltham in 1937. Bob is fourth from left, front row.



13 EFTS moved to Peterborough in January 1940. It is not known whether Bob moved with it or whether he returned to DH before becoming Principal of DHAeTS in 1941, succeeding Wing Commander O W Clapp. His promotion to Squadron Leader (temporary) in the RAFO was gazetted in June 1940.

## D.H.Ae.T.S.

'Squadron Leader Reeve, Principal of the School, interviews a candidate for apprenticeship' - from a two-page spread about the School in the de Havilland Gazette, June 1947



His retirement was recorded in the DH Gazette of June 1959.

### RETIREMENT OF SQUADRON LEADER R. W. REEVE

With the retirement, on May 31, of Squadron Leader Reeve, The de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School loses a kindly and much loved Principal, under whose guidance since 1941 the School, which was formed in 1928 out of earlier apprenticeship training arrangements, has grown in importance and international prestige with each succeeding year.

Bob Reeve joined the Army as a young man in 1914 and after serving in the Gallipoli campaign, where he won the Military Medal, transferred to the Royal Flying Corps in 1916 and learned to fly in Egypt. While serving with No. 113 Squadron in Palestine he won the D.F.C.

At the end of the war he was one of the first to start joy-riding with a company in which he was partner and pilot. This continued until 1923 when, with the formation of the R.A.F. Reserve, he became a flying instructor at the school at Renfrew.

It was in this same capacity that he joined the de Havilland Aircraft Company at Stag Lane in 1925, becoming the chief flying instructor towards the end of 1929. In this position he was responsible for opening up the aerodrome at Hatfield in 1930.

From 1935 until 1941 Squadron Leader Reeve was the C.F.I. of No. 13 E.F.T.S., R.A.F. Reserve, operated by de Havilland at White Waltham. He was awarded the A.F.C. in 1937.

The many thousands of Technical School apprentices who have benefited from "Reeve's" wisdom and judgment will join all his other colleagues in wishing him many years of good health to enjoy his well-earned leisure.

Since the war, as training responsibility has gradually been assumed by the individual D.H. companies, the Technical School function has

become largely one of co-ordination, policy, uniformity of apprenticeship and trainee terms, organising of further training, etc.

\* \* \*

Following Squadron Leader Reeve's retirement these duties will be undertaken by Mr. G. W. Trevelyan as Education Manager of de Havilland Holdings Ltd. He has been Education Manager of the Aircraft Company since January, 1957.

### Children of Bob and Marion Reeve

The Reeves had three children: James, who worked for de Havilland's as a service engineer before going to Africa; Roderic, who served in the RAF during WW2 and later became a schoolmaster, and Gill.

Marion's sister Dorothy married Charles Male and their son is Nick Male, a DH Engine Co. apprentice at Stag Lane 1949-1954 and a current member of DHAeTSA.



## Bob Reeve died on 8th May 1966

The announcement below was in the Winter 1966 issue of Pylon, the DHAeTS magazine.

### **Squadron Leader (Capt.) R. W. Reeve, D.F.C., A.F.C., M.M.**

We are deeply sorry to record the death of the well-loved and respected principal of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School (1941-59), who guided and helped so many students through their courses for some eighteen years. He was such a sympathetic and unassuming man that no student ever hesitated to go to him with a problem. He was always ready to give help and advice. He was always fair and so kind that one never heard anybody speak ill of him. We are sure that Old Boys receiving this news, wherever they may be in the world, will regret the passing of such an outstanding character—a man of the highest principles whose influence will undoubtedly live on.

#### **Sqn Ldr Reeve**

We record with regret the death, in his 74th year, of Sqn Ldr R. W. Reeve, DFC, AFC, MM, principal of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School, 1941-60, and CFI of the DH School of Flying and No 13 EFTS, 1925-40. He was one of Britain's outstanding figures in the field of flying tuition and technical training.

'Flight', 26 May 1966

'Flight' 9 June 1966

#### **Remembering Bob Reeve**

SIR,—It was a sad day for me when I read your notice [page 860, May 26] of Bob Reeve's death. I worked under him at Stag Lane and at No 1 E&RFTS for six years and I have never met a finer gentleman in my life; he will be very much missed. Bob must have been pretty well the only officer to have been decorated by King George V with the MM, as he had never served in the ranks in his life. When he was called out from the Reserve in the General Strike to fly VIPs and mails to Paris he reported for duty in his RFC "maternity jacket," etc, as he had never been issued with any other uniform. It caused something of a sensation, especially as his DFC ribbon (like all the original ones) had the stripes running horizontally and not diagonally.

When in due course I had a command myself, many were the occasions when I found myself thinking "now, what would Bob do on this occasion?". It never failed.

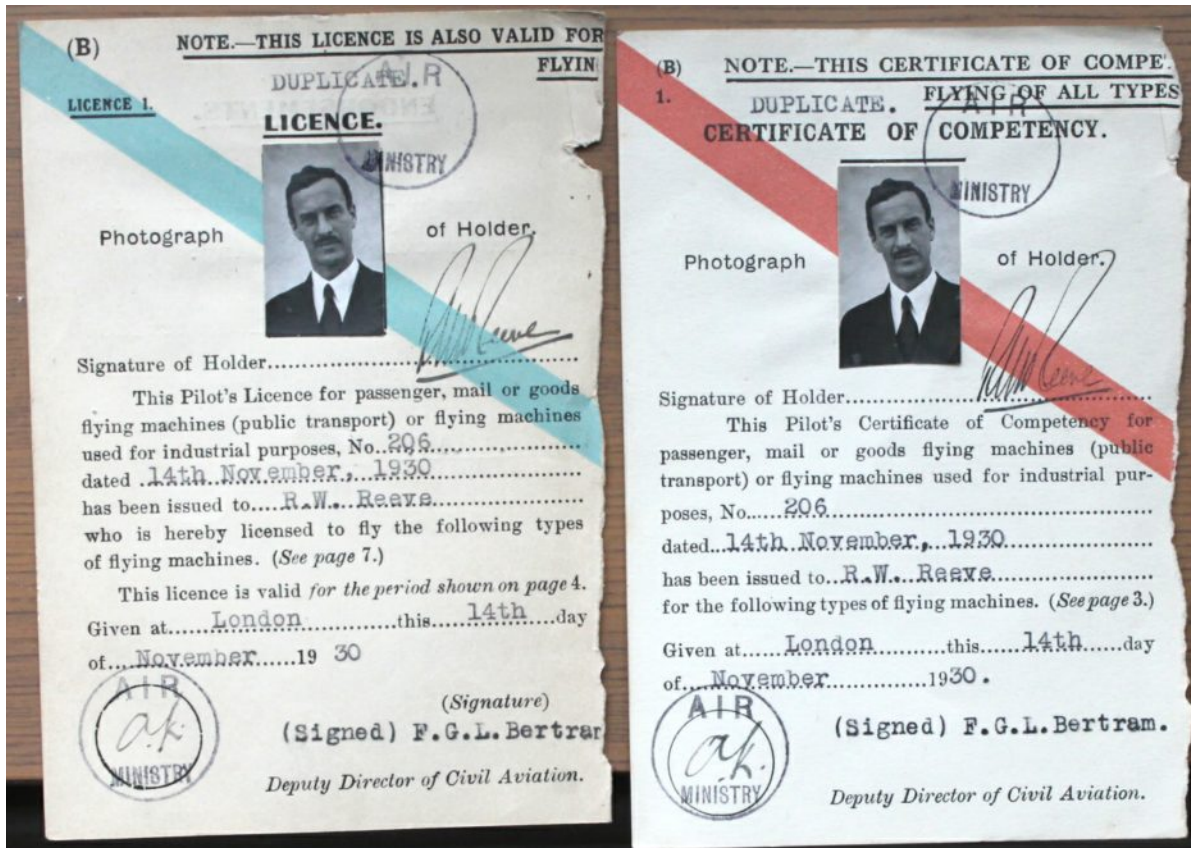
*Andover, Hants*

RIVERS OLDMEADOW,  
Sqn Ldr, RAF(RET'D)

The probate record named Roderic and Marion as his executors.

REEVE Robert William of Lindford House Lindford Bordon Hampshire died 8 May 1966 at Haslemere Hospital Surrey Administration Lewes 19 July to Marion Reeve widow and Roderic Hodson Reeve schoolmaster. £7222.

One of Bob Reeve's flying log books was seen and bought by Mr Stephen Ham, who later found a previous version of this article on the DHAeTSA website and made contact with the Association, who put him in touch with Bob's nephew Nick Male. Stephen passed the log book on to Nick, but not before listing all the aircraft recorded and researching the history of all 36. Most flights do not include the aircraft registration so the number of different aeroplanes flown is likely to be much larger. The log book is the standard civilian type, is not numbered and no flying hours had been brought forward as was usually done, nor were the title pages filled in other than with his name. The first date is September 1930 and the last is November 1937. Inside it were the Licence and Certificate shown below.



Some of the flying recorded is in DH60G G-AAGA, owned by Lt Col Andrew Hamilton-Gault (jointly with his wife) and based at Stag Lane, then from 1933 at Hatfield. Gault had served in the Boer Wars with the Canadian contingent. At the outbreak of WW1 he wrote to the Governor-General of Canada offering to raise a battalion for service in France. The offer was accepted and Gault raised and equipped, at his own expense, 1000 men of the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry. He served with the regiment, was wounded five times and lost a leg. He was MP for Taunton 1924-1935.

The first entry, against the dates of 12th Sep and 1st Oct 1930, is a summary of a trip around Europe in G-AAGA, acting as navigator for Gault. There was another trip around Europe in June 1932.

Much of the log book records instructional flights at Stag Lane, Hatfield and finally Maidenhead (i.e. White Waltham). There is also a record of ten hours training at CFS Wittering on a Lynx-engined Avro 504 in 1932 and a single reference to a twin-engined machine, a 'works test' on DH84 Dragon G-ACAP at Stag Lane.

From Nov 1935 onwards entries state variously 'Guild Test', 'School Test' and 'Reserve'. The latter two must refer to the EFTS School and to Reserve

Pilot.	Remarks.
See Instructions (5) on flyleaf of this book.	
Stag Lane - Synthe. 1-5.	
a. - Cologne. 1-35.	
O. - Amsterdam. 1-15.	
A. - Cologne. 1-25.	
C. - Birmingham. 2-10.	
B. - Berlin. 1-30.	
B. - Hannover. 3-5.	With Col. A.H. Gault
H. - Osnabruck. 1-20.	Self Navigator.
O. - Amsterdam. 2-45.	
A. - Brussels. 1-25.	
B. - Paris. 2-20.	
P. - Synthe. 2-15.	
l. - Oldenburg. 7-55.	
B.S. Hatfield. 2-0.	
Hatfield local. 1-25.	
Hatfield to S. 3 with Mrs. P. 1-25.	
Hatfield - S.I. 10	
	28-5



## Memories and Recollections of former students

### Mike Ramsden 13/4/17

He was truly well liked and respected by everybody - the perfect “headmaster” who had done all (and more) of what he taught, and a gentleman of great kindness and courtesy - very much in the mould of GdeH, who picked him for the job.

### John Bellam 9/5/17

There was an interim period after W/C Clapp left and S/L Reeve arrived, during which time the School was run by instructors, mainly Mr Blackburn and Mr Seely. S/L Reeve was a gentle and polite man, not forceful and indeed rather laid back. He was interested in people and when he became Principal he invited students singly to meet him.

### Tony Smith 18/5/17

I remember S/L Reeve as an extremely polite gentleman when I joined the Tech School in 1950. I spoke to him several times in my first couple of years. I also remember my father mentioned meeting him in the RFC, presumably in Egypt or Mesopotamia where my father flew Sopwith Camels in the 1916/17 period.

### Philip Geddes 19/5/17

Ah memories: Back yonder in 1947-52 S/L Reeve’s trusty mechanic, name lost, lectured my group at Salisbury Hall on shop practice. Wonderful old guy who reeked of the aviation oil used in the RFC and on. *[This was probably the instructor remembered some years ago by Ian Newton as Mr Vaisey. - RdeM]*

## Revision history

Version 1 published August 2017.

Version 2 published October 2017 with minor revisions and more pictures.

Version 3 published January 2018 with minor revisions, another picture and a cutting probably from the DH Gazette.

Version 4 published February 2018 with major revision including log book extracts.

Version 5 published July 2023 with inclusion of new log book information and minor additions.

*Please advise any corrections or additions to [r.demercado@ntlworld.com](mailto:r.demercado@ntlworld.com)*

## About the Author

I was a DHAeTS student at Hatfield from 1957 to 1962. S/L Reeve may have been at my interview in December 1956, but I have no recollections of him. The day to day running of the School was then done by John Dillon-Godfray, an ex student. I joined the Flight Development Department at Hatfield in January 1962 as a data analyst, later becoming a flight test engineer on the DH125 executive jet, the Trident airliner and later the BAe146 regional airliner. Prior to the closure of Hatfield in 1993, all flight test activity was moved to Woodford (near Manchester). I retired from there in 1995.

I became the Secretary of the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical Association in 2015, the post previously being held for some 30 years by the late Bruce Boshier, and added the post of Chairman in 2021.

*Roger de Mercado, 12 July 2023*