

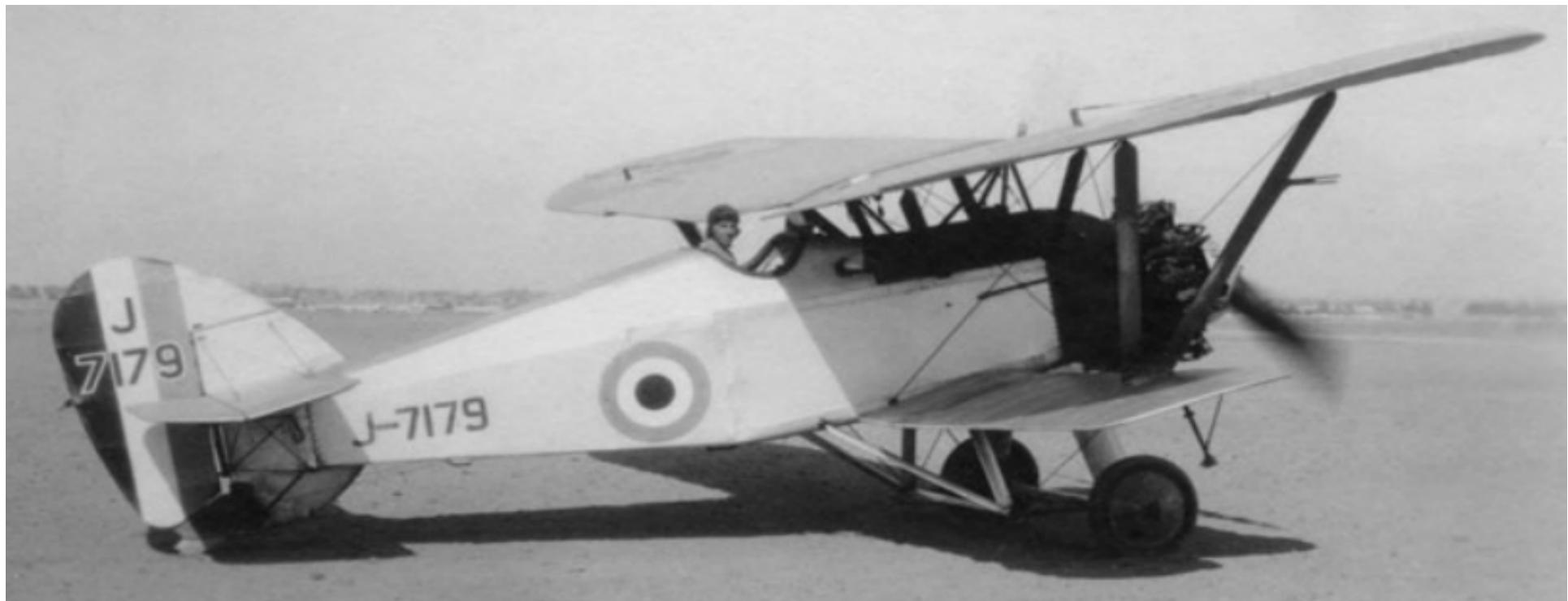
Royal Air Force Historical Society and

The RAF's contribution to the Kenyan Mau Mau conflict 1953-56

Wg Cdr Steve Chappell



Registered Charity Number: 219279



- <http://www.raf.mod.uk/history/rafhistoricalsocietym.cfm>



Registered Charity Number: 219279



How to Join ▶

Membership is open to anyone with an interest in RAF history, irrespective of whether they have ever had any direct connection with the Service

▶ [How to Join](#)



The Two Air Forces Award ▶

The Historical Society established the Two Air Forces Award in collaboration with the United States Air Force Historical Foundation...

▶ [The Two Air Forces Award](#)



The Committee ▶

The Committee of the RAF Historical Society consists of Serving, ex-serving and civilian personnel...

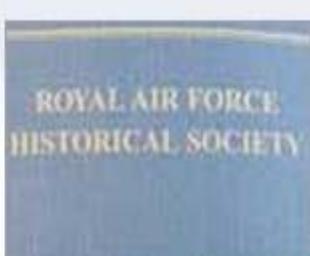
▶ [The Committee](#)



Next Event ▶

The next event will be a seminar on 'Guided Weapons' to be held at the RAF Museum, Hendon on 1 April 2015.

▶ [Next Event](#)



Society journals ▶

The Society's back-catalogue of publications are made available on-line courtesy of the RAF Museum...

▶ [Society journals](#)



Links to AHB and RAF Museum ▶

Links to the Air Historical Branch

▶ [Links to AHB and RAF Museum](#)



Some of No 72 Sqn's Bristols wore this distinctive double-chevron marking.

Access to journals



Lt S D Macdonald with one of No 72 Sqn's Spads.



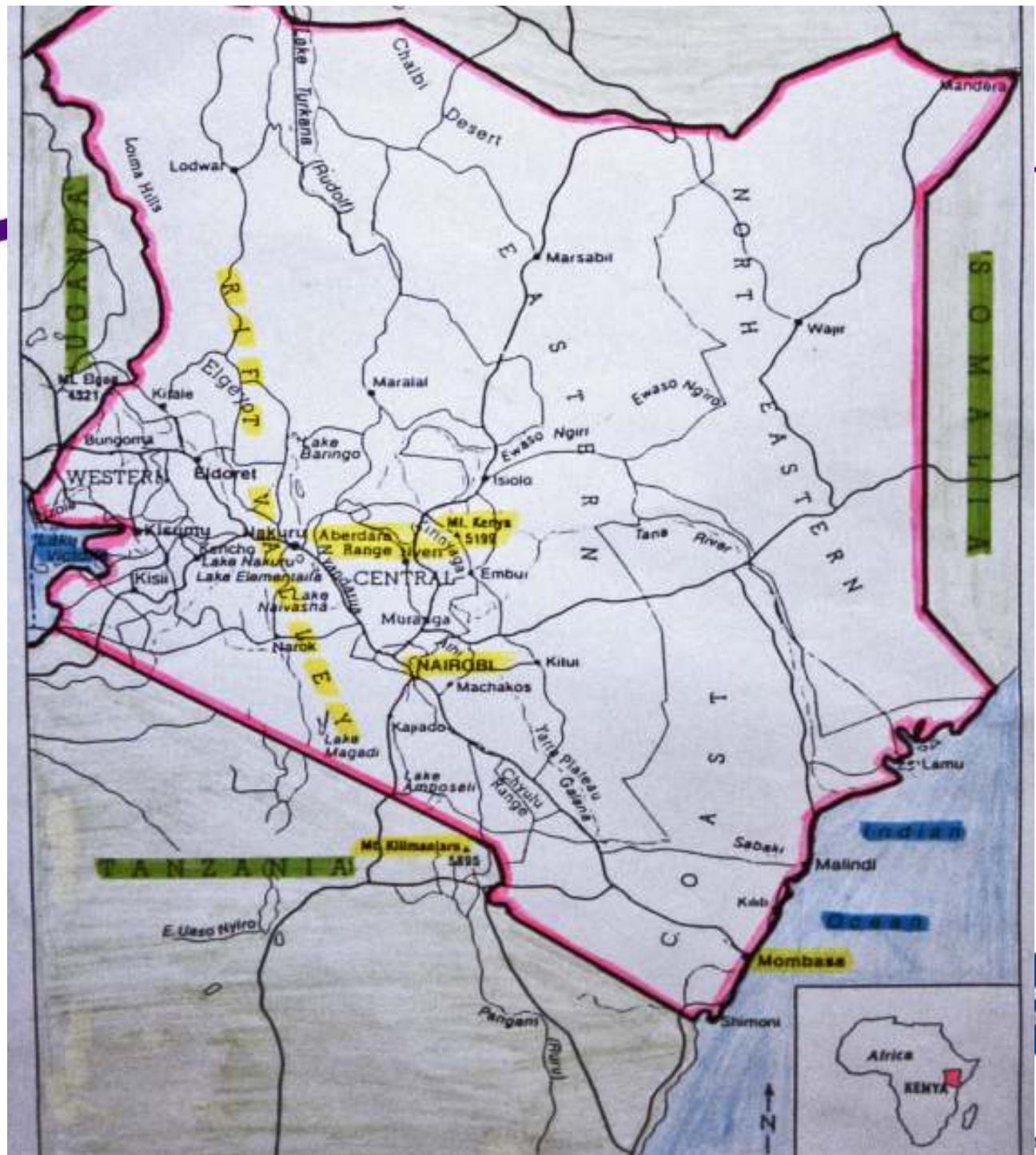


The RAF's contribution to the Kenyan Mau Mau conflict 1953-56

Wg Cdr Steve Chappell

03 February 2015



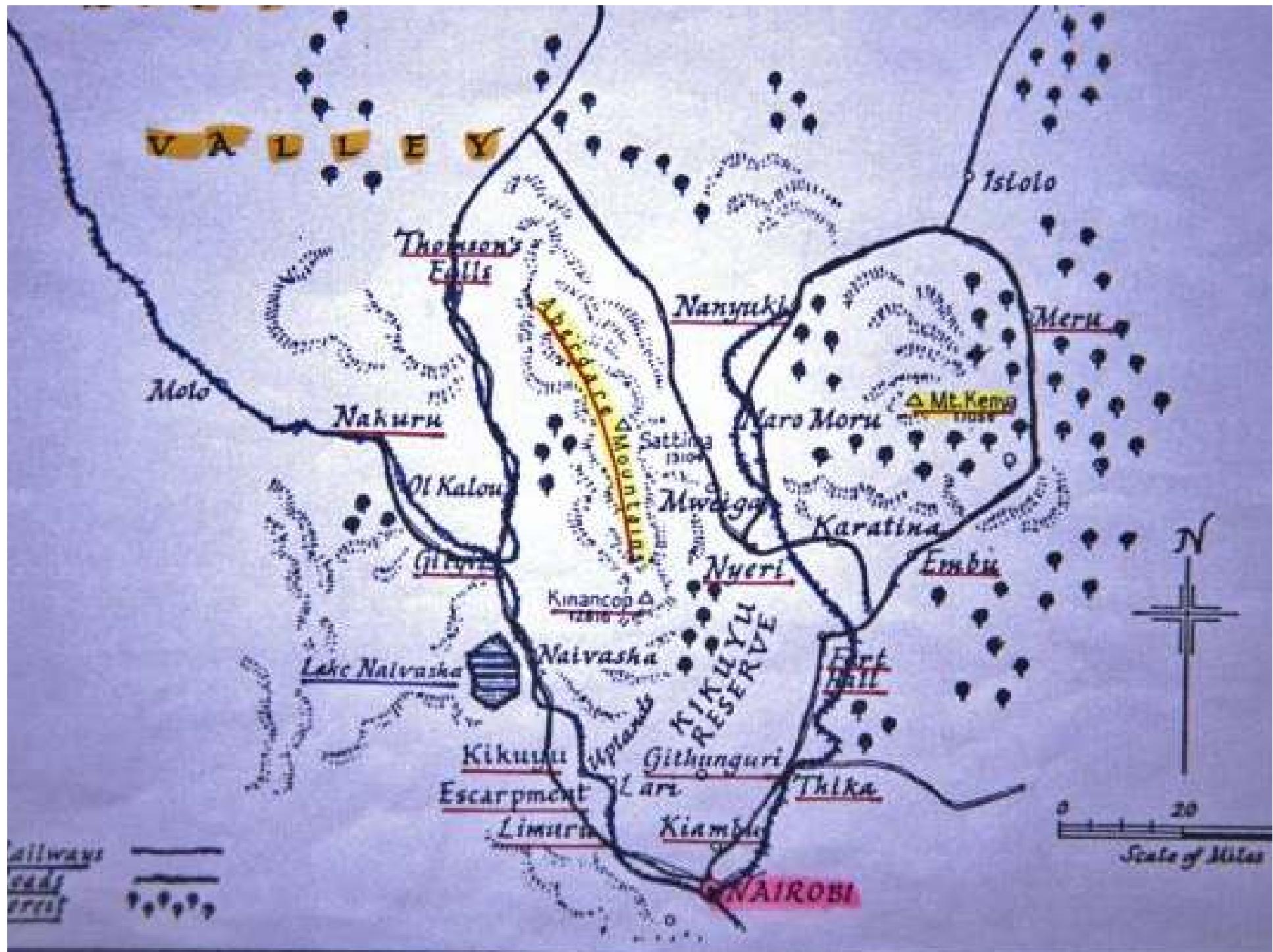


shoulder
Service

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Registered Charity Number: 219279





**Shoulder to shoulder
with all who Serve**

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Registered Charity Number: 219279



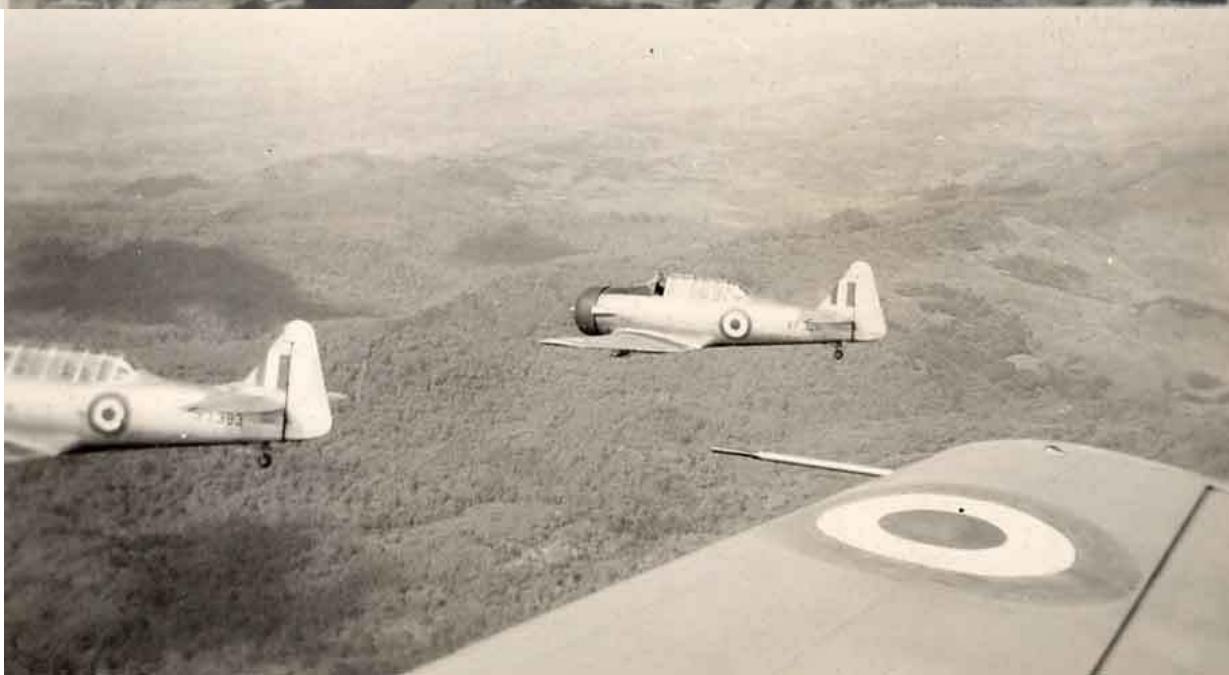




The efficacy of airpower?

- • ‘Lancaster’ bombers bombed the Mau Mau’...!!
- *‘The RAF were called in to bomb and strafe the forests, though in the thick foliage and steep ravines, their contribution was probably more symbolic than efficacious’...[N Craven, Daily Mail article 22nd Oct 2002].*
- *‘RAF not only alienated the local population, but it also did little to influence the Mau Mau...most of us preferred to work without noisy and dangerous air cover’.* [A Waters, Kenyan Police].
- *‘I saw no evidence that the bombing had any effect on the terrorists, not least because it was possible to hear the aircraft well before they arrived.’* ...[Brian Lees, Colonel ret’d [1st Bn Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry, Mount Kenya & Aberdares 1953-54].



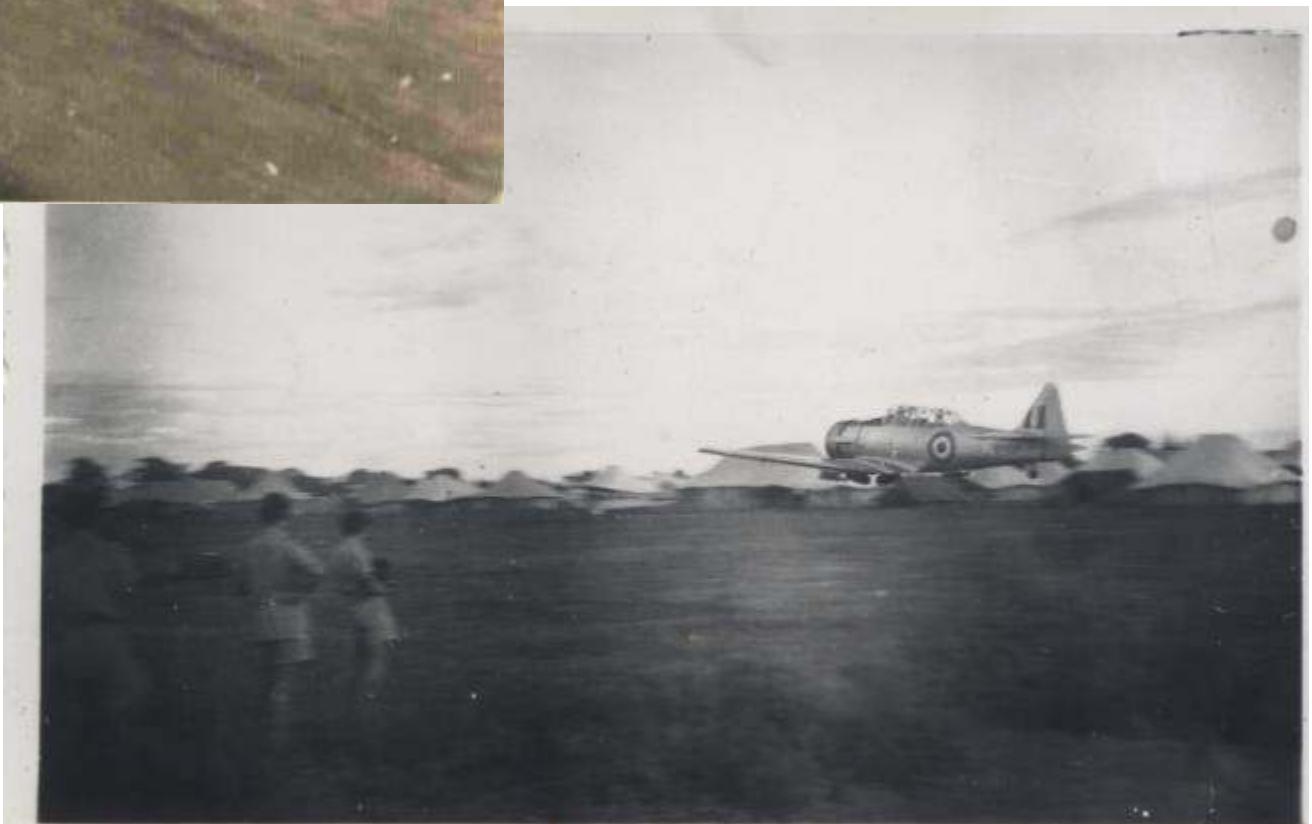
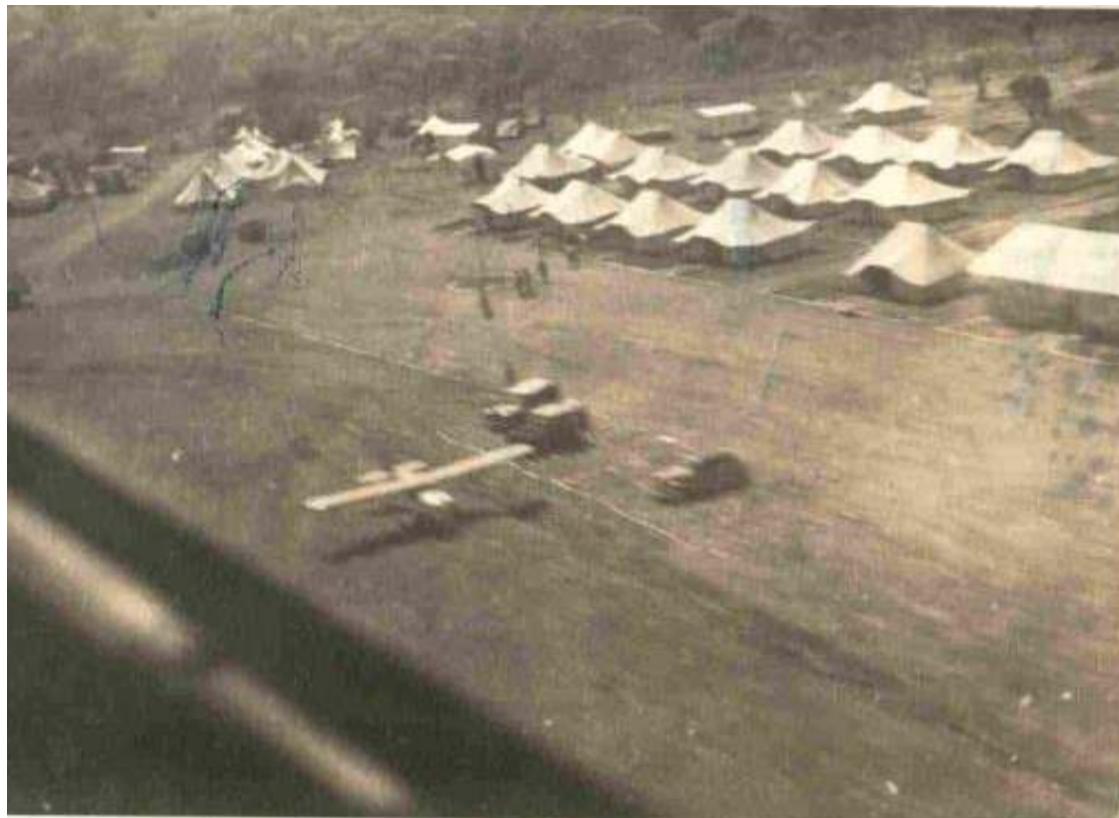


Shoulder to shoulder
with all who Serve

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Registered Charity Number: 219279







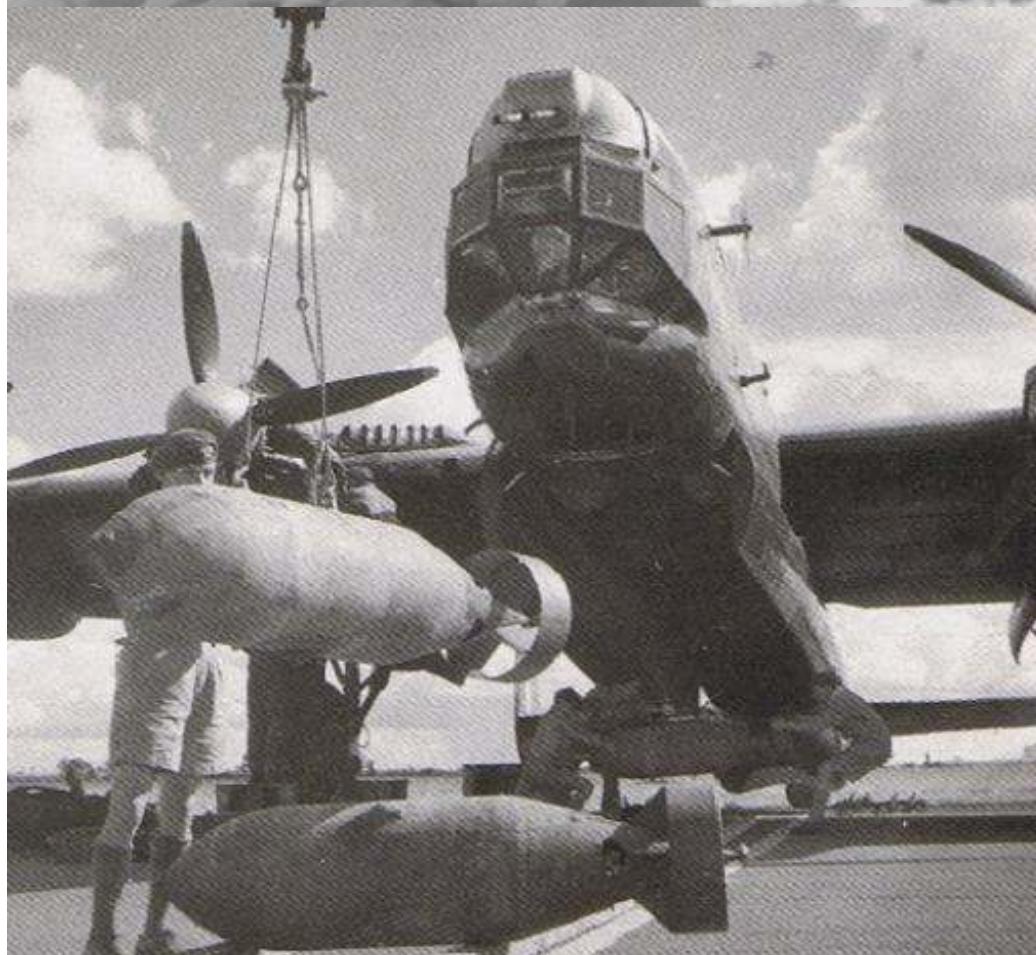


Shoulder to shoulder
with all who Serve

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Registered Charity Number: 219279



Proportionality

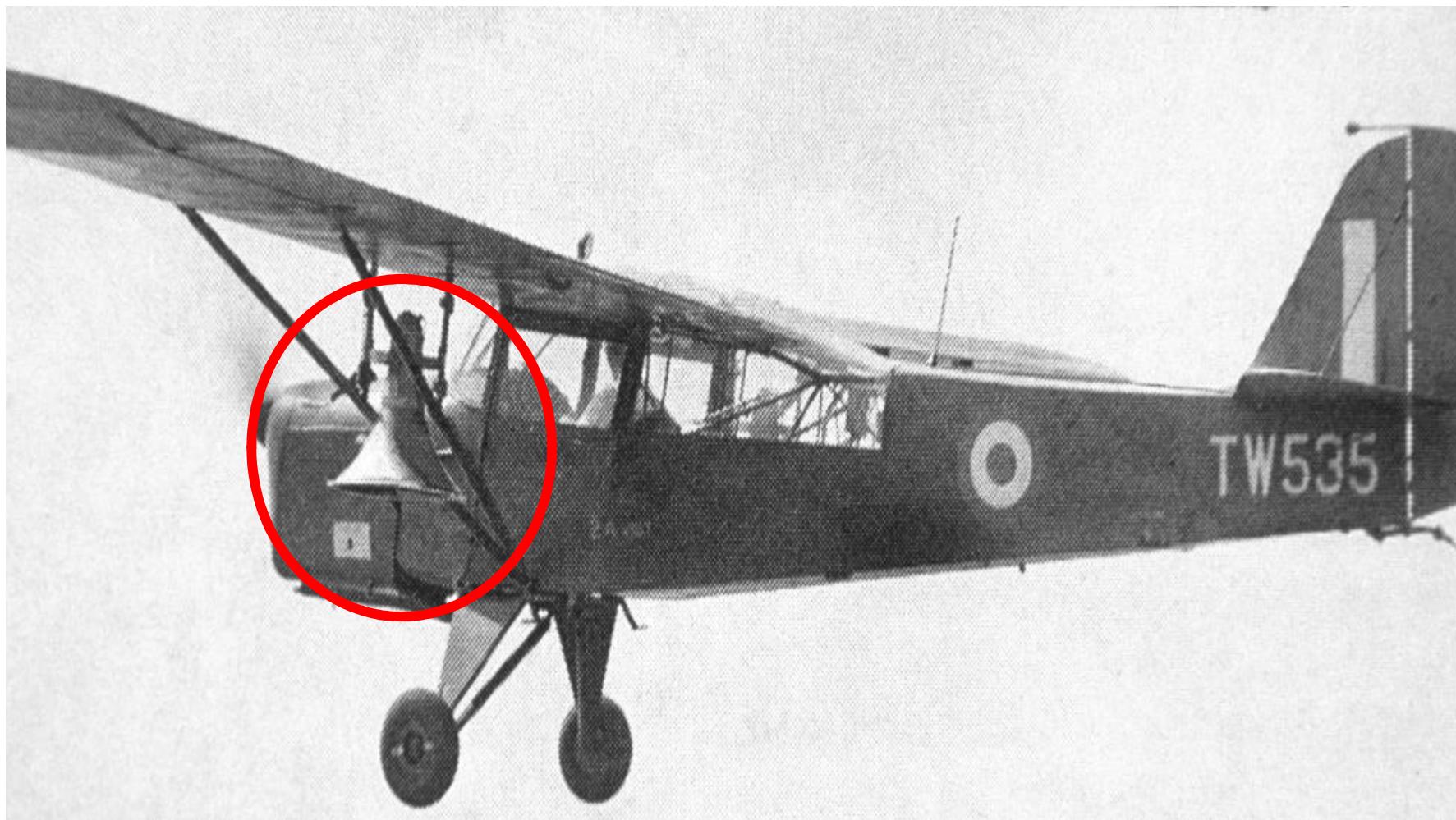
- Crucial to apply and then enforce a strict policy of avoiding civilian casualties.
- ‘...[aircraft] will not take armed offensive action against **any** target outside the prohibited areas. It is emphasised that it is of the **greatest importance** that our own forces and loyal Africans should not be subjected to offensive action from the air.’ WO:276/233: Royal Air Force bombing raids: Emergency Directive No.6, 3/5/1953, 4.
- CAS, the Cabinet and Winston Churchill in some cases approved any bespoke operations.

Coordination

Target Number	Aircraft	Ordnance to be used	Target Marker	Time on target	RV position	Height of target (ft)
5	6 harvards	8x19lb plus strafing per ac	No	1400	N/A	9800
1A-1B	2 Lincolns	10x500lb bombs plus strafing per ac until 1455	1 Pacer	1430	RZR2735	9200
2A-2B	2 Lincolns	10x500lb bombs plus strafing per ac until 1525	1 Pacer	1500	Gura waterfall	9800
7A-7B	2 Lincolns	10x500lb bombs plus strafing per ac until 1555	1 Pacer	1530	Sasuma Dam	9000
7C	6 Harvards	8x19lb plus strafing per ac	No	1600	NA	9000

'WO: 276/458: Joint Operations Centre Air Operations Order No 4/54 dated 19 Feb 54 signed by Wing Commander Newman.

Sky shouting Auster 6



shoulder to shoulder
with all who Serve

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Registered Charity Number: 219279



Ore tenintodol olkitok le Security Forces ena pasi naa keylolou enchere niyien nisaisho naa ekintaas enaltaase ilungana tena nyoraroto nejuk naatal.

ENINKO PEE IBIKOO

THE BEARER OF THIS PASS WISHES TO SURRENDER. He is to be given fair treatment, food and medical attention if required. He will be detained but is NOT to be prosecuted for any offence connected with the Emergency which he may have committed prior to January 18th, 1955.

ANAYEBEBA BARUA III ANATAKA KUJITOLEA. Mpe msaada mwema, chakula na atibiwe ikiwa anahitaji. Atafungiwa lakini batashakiwa kwa ajili ya uovo wo wote wa Mau Mau allifanya mbele ya Januari 18, mwaka hunu wa 1955.

ORE OLOOTA ENA PALAI NAA KEIYUU NFISHOYO KEWAN
Nchoo cretoio nanare, anaa, endaa, o embaata tenelyen. Eikenori hake meiguuareki tengaraki engaruoisho poké e Mau Mau. Naidipa ataada tedokoya Januari 18 tebe ari le 1955.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE ERSKINE
Commander-in-Chief

SIR EVELYN BARING
Governor

Shoulder to shoulder
with all who Serve

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Registered Charity Number: 219279



The efficacy of airpower?



'...the alternative of not using the RAF would have been the employment of three Regiments of Artillery and another Infantry Bde,

...neither of which would have been a good answer and both considerably more expensive.'

'Op HAMMER [extensive ops in the Aberdares Aug 54] would not have been possible without air support and the many supply drops conducted by the RAF'

'I use the air forces to a maximum, but it is the kind of thing that cannot be supported with facts and figures.'

Lt Gen G Erskine GOC-in-C East Africa Apr 55.

‘...The chief characteristics of Air forces are flexibility and great hitting power. Flexibility enables targets to be hit anywhere in the operational area at short notice...[and] switch the emphasis of operations from one area to another without any administrative redeployment...

...The hitting power of bombs (particularly in the case of Lincolns) vastly increased the value of a successful contact ...

...whilst ground forces are being primarily directed against targets in the Reserves, heavy bombers and Harvards represent the chief weapon in our hands for attacking terrorists in the forest.’





Shoulder to shoulder
with all who Serve

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Registered Charity Number: 219279

Royal Air Force Historical Society and The RAF's contribution to the Kenyan Mau Mau conflict 1953-56

Questions?

03 February 2015



Registered Charity Number: 219279