Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives: Catalogue (Summary)

WILSON, Gp Capt Hugh Joseph (‘Willie’)
(1908-1990)
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Catalogue Reference:
GB0099 KCLMA Wilson H J

URL:
http://www.kingscollections.org/catalogues/lhcma/collection/w/wi57-001

Title:
WILSON, Gp Capt Hugh Joseph ('Willie') (1908-1990)

Date(s):
Created 1928-1990

Level of description:
collection level

Extent and medium of the unit of description (quantity, bulk, or size):
4 boxes or 0.04 cubic metres

Context

Administrative / Biographical history:
Born 1908; educated at University School, Hastings, Merchant Taylors and City of London School; served apprenticeship in cotton trade, 1925-1929; joined RAF on short service commission, 1929; posted to No 5 Flight Training School, Sealand, Flintshire, 1929; served with 111 Fighter Sqn, Hornchurch, Essex, 1930-1932; Flying Officer, 1931; posted to Fleet Air Arm, 1932, and served with School of Naval Co-operation, Lee-on-Solent, Hampshire, 1932-1934; released from RAF, 1934; conversion course on flying boats while on Reserve, 1934; qualified as Flying Instructor, 1935; Chief Instructor and Manager, York County Aviation Club, 1935; Flying Instructor, RAF Reserve School, 1935-1936; Flying Instructor, Blackbourns, Hanworth, Surrey, and Brough, Yorkshire, 1935-1937; Civil Test Pilot, Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, Hampshire, 1937-1939; recalled to RAF as Sqn Ldr, 1939; Commanding Officer, Aerodynamic Flight, Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, Hampshire, 1939-1941; served in World War Two, 1939-1945; temporarily attached to 74 Fighter Sqn, Biggin Hill, Kent, to assess fighter requirements, 1940; Wg Cdr, 1941; awarded AFC, 1941; Chief Test Pilot, Royal Aircraft Establishment, responsible for initial test flights on all captured enemy aircraft, 1941-1945; Test Pilot, British Air Commission, Washington DC, on loan to US Army Air Force, US Navy and US Marine Corps, 1943-1944; Assistant Director (Flying) Special Projects, Ministry of Aircraft Production, 1944-1945; seconded to 616 Fighter Sqn to train pilots on the Gloster Meteor jet fighter, 1944; acting Gp Capt, 1945; Commandant, Empire Test Pilots' School, Cranfield, Bedfordshire, 1945-1947; set new world air speed record of 606 miles per hour in Gloster Meteor IV, 1945; awarded CBE, 1946; Officers Advanced Training School, 1947; Wg Cdr Administrative, RAF Coningsby, Lincolnshire, 1948; retired from RAF, 1948; Managing Director and Chief Test Pilot for Planet Aircraft, 1948-1949; appointed Sales Manager (Engines), Blackburn and General Aircraft Limited, 1953; employed by Rolls Royce Limited, Small Engine Division, 1968; Associate Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society; Member of the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators; died 1990.

Immediate source of acquisition or transfer:
Placed in the Centre by the family in 1996.

Content & structure

Scope and content:
Papers and photographs relating to Wilson's career, 1928-1990, especially his service as test pilot for British and captured German aircraft, 1937-1945, setting the world air speed record, 1945, and his role as Commandant, Empire Test Pilots' School, 1945-1947, including three flying log books, 1928-1944; typescript copy of

System of arrangement:
The chapters of the draft typescript memoir 'Icy calm. Recollections of a wartime test pilot' are arranged into files with relevant contemporary photographs. Other papers and photographs are arranged chronologically in files.

Conditions of access & use

Conditions governing access:
Open, subject to signature of Reader's undertaking form, and appropriate provision of two forms of identification, to include one photographic ID.

Conditions governing reproduction:
Copies, subject to the condition of the original, may be supplied for research use only. Requests to publish original material should be submitted to the Trustees of the Liddell Hart Centre for Military Archives, attention of the Director of Archive Services.

Language/scripts of material:
English

Finding aids:
This Summary Guide, and in hard copy in the Centre's reading room.

Allied materials

Existence and location of originals:
King's College London College Archives

Decorations: CBE, AFC

Description control

Rules or conventions: