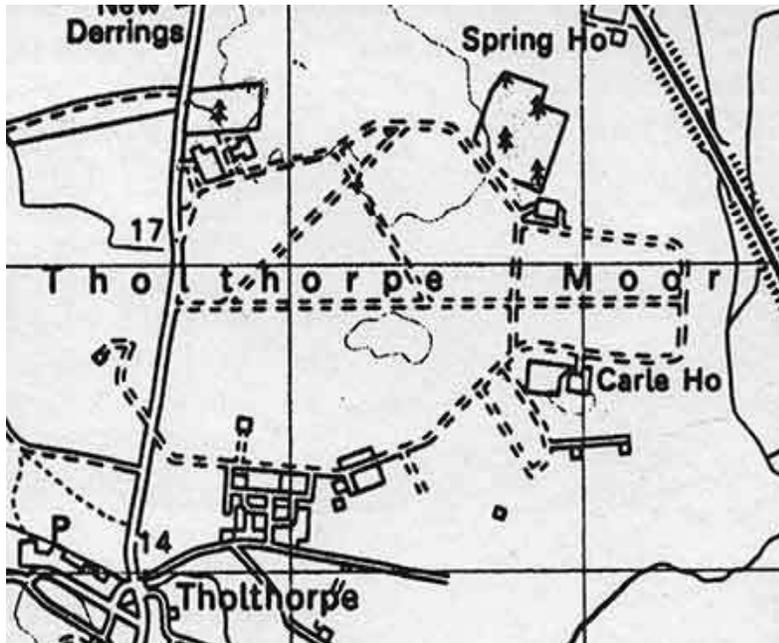


Tholthorpe Air Station, Yorkshire – England



Just a few months after War was declared in September, 1939, the Royal Air Force took possession of a large area of meadow called Tholthorpe Moor, that was located about 20 km northwest of the city of York. The RAF opened the aerodrome in late 1940 – with a grass field, as a satellite airfield for the Operational airfield at Linton-on-Ouse.

Winter operations in 1940/41 proved the turf field to be unsuitable for 'Whitley' aircraft, and in late 1941 work

commenced to construct concrete runways at the airfield. Runway 10/28 was 6,000 feet in length, runway 05/24 and runway 16/34 were both 4,200 feet long.

After completion of the works to bring the airfield up to RAF Class 'A' standard, in the summer of 1942 - Tholthorpe Air Station remained as a Satellite/Dispersal airfield for aircraft from the main Base at Linton-on-Ouse.

In June of 1943, the airfield was allocated to the new No. 6 (RCAF) Group that had been formed in October 1942. No. 434 Squadron RCAF was then formed at Tholthorpe in June, 1943, flying 'Halifax' B.Mk.V aircraft, and in May, 1944 B.Mk.III 'Halifax'.

In July, 1943 No. 431 'Iroquois' Squadron RCAF transferred in to Tholthorpe with 'Halifax' B.Mk.III aircraft.

In August of 1943, both No. 431 and No. 434 Squadrons began a series of missions to bomb targets in northern Italy, and four months later - in December, 1943 - those two Squadrons were transferred to Air Station Croft.

In December 1943, RCAF Squadrons No. 420 and No. 425 - both returned from five months service in Tunisia with No. 331 RCAF Wing – and arrived at Tholthorpe to convert from 'Wellington' to 'Halifax' B.Mk.III aircraft. The two Squadrons flew their first missions from Tholthorpe in February, 1944, and remained at that Air Station on Operations until their last missions in April, 1945.

No. 420 and No. 425 Squadrons RCAF converted to 'Lancaster' B.Mk.X aircraft in May of 1945, but never flew the aircraft on Operations. They did fly the Lancasters back to Canada in June, 1945.

RCAF Squadrons based at Tholthorpe – 1943 to 1945

No. 434 'Bluenose' - No. 6 RCAF Group - June 13th, 1943 to December 10th, 1943

No. 431 'Iroquois' - No. 6 RCAF Group - July 15th, 1943 to December 9th, 1943

No. 425 'Alouette' - No. 6 RCAF Group - December 10th, 1943 to June 12th, 1945

No. 420 'Snowy Owl' - No. 6 RCAF Group - December 12th, 1943 to June 11th, 1945



Tholthorpe Air Station – ca. 2010 (Google Earth photo)

The Royal Air Force did not activate Tholthorpe Air Station at the end of the war, and for a few years the airfield was used for Private flying, with the runways and hangars in fair condition. But by the 1980's the hangars and most buildings had been removed, and the runways began to disintegrate.

Farming activities have now taken over the airfield, and light industry has taken over the technical site. The 1943 Control Tower is now a private home.

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