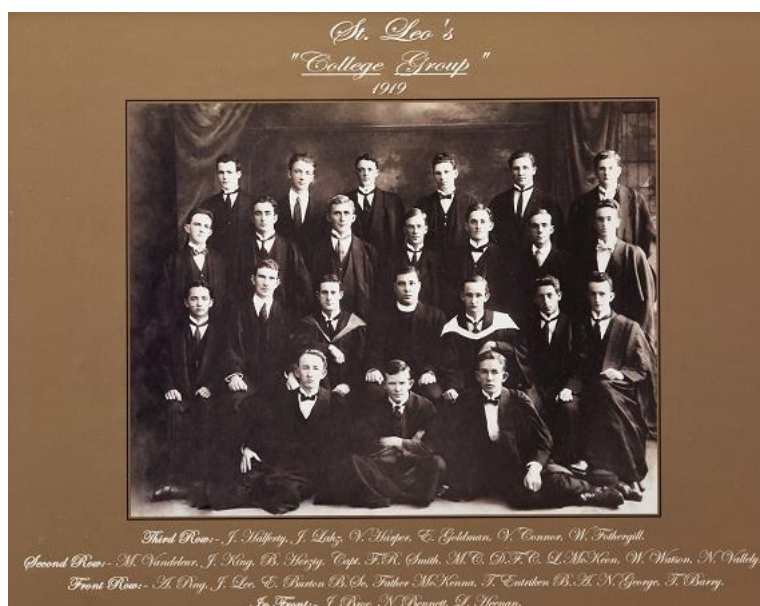


Biography- Captain Francis Ryan Smith, MC, DFC,

Part II Post War

Frank's AIF appointment was terminated in Brisbane on 13th August 1919, though along with many of his comrades from the days of the AFC he was involved with the fledgling Australian Air Corps. Whilst settling back into civilian life, he took the opportunity to enrol at St Leo's University College, Wickham Terrace, Brisbane to pursue a course in the faculty of engineering. And is shown (second back row, centre) in a 1919 "College Group" photo.



Even as early as mid 1918, Australian authorities were working to expand the aerial arm, and the British saw fit to provide some training aircraft. The newly formed RAF allotted some 20 Avro 504K aircraft from Manchester, England to No 6 Stores at Ascot for packing and dispatch to Australia. These were loaded aboard SS Berrima, departing England on 24th Dec 1918 and arriving in Melbourne in February 1919. Although several machines were damaged in transit all were received at Central Flying School, Point Cook on 25th April 1919.



Avro 504K serial number E3747 at Pt Cook (Photo via Brendan Cowan)

With the home arrivals of the overseas troops and airmen, government officials had decided to open 'Peace Loan' bonds in an effort to reduce war costs. The use of these aircraft would be ideal in promoting these bonds and allowing the public witness the skills of their wartime pilots. So the likes of Capt Les Holden, MC,AFC, Capt Adrian L.T. "King" Cole, DFC, MC, Capt Harry Butler, AFC, Capt Garnet F Malley, MC, Capt Frank

McNamara, VC, AFC, Capt Roby Manuel, DFC & Bar, Capt Frank R Smith, DFC, MC and several others were to conduct these 'Peace Loan' flights throughout Victoria, South Australia, NSW and Queensland.



Frank was to be involved as he discusses with a newspaper reporter: *“I have secured an “Avro” machine, fitted with an 80 h.p. engine. This machine will pass through Toowoomba in the course of a few days, in charge of a few mechanics. When it gets to Brisbane I will do some stunts in the air. I will go up in Brisbane, and perform stunts in the air in furtherance of the Peace Loan campaign. After I have given some exhibitions in the metropolis I will make a flight from Brisbane to Toowoomba, and in your city – and my own city – I will go up again. After that I will, in all probability, fly to Warwick, and if I have time in the three weeks at my disposal I will try and cover, by medium of the machine, as much of Queensland as I possibly can.”*

Frank and his aircraft mechanic Colin Whitworth Campbell would set up a base at Lytton for the forthcoming flights in the Avro 504K registered E3747. (Colin Campbell was 19 years old when he enlisted on 14th June 1917, at Footscray, Victoria in the AFC. Previous he had been apprenticed as a ‘turner and fitter’ and then as a ‘journeyman’ for 4 years with McPhan Ferguson, Footscray and John Danks, Melbourne. Sailing with the AFC Reinforcements on A60 HMAT ‘Aeneas’ as a 2nd Class Air Mechanic, he disembarked at Devonport, England on 27th December 1917. He was with ARS Leighterton, 6th Training Squadron, then attached to the ARS sub section, 1st Wing AFC, Minchinhampton on 15th May 1918, where he remained until 3rd Feb 1919. Thence returned to Australia with the AFC contingent on ‘Kaiser-i-Hind’ disembarking at Melbourne on 16th June 1919, and discharged from AIF on 9th July 1919. Colin was one of the mechanics selected to maintain the Avro on its Queensland flights. As mentioned in the articles below, he was with Frank Smith on the Gympie flight and crash, and returned with the aircraft wreckage to Laverton, Victoria where the aircraft was repaired. After the establishment of the permanent Air Force, Colin joined the service on 3rd July 1922 with 1st Aircraft Depot, Laverton. He reengaged with the RAAF on four occasions which saw him in the RAAF throughout the inter-war years and WWII. Retired on 31st December 1952 at a Warrant Officer.)



Flt Sgt Colin Campbell (c WWII)

A satisfactory test flight was carried out on 5th September, after assembling the aircraft on arrival from Melbourne and carrying out the rigging adjustments. *“Captain Smith's trial run yesterday was made from Lytton. He flew over Nundah, Clayfield, Hamilton, Ascot, and adjacent suburbs, and many thousands of residents had the pleasure of seeing some fine aeroplane exhibitions.”*

The following day, 6th September, the Loan Committee had organised an exhibition of the Peace Loan aeroplane at the Kedron Park racecourse for the afternoon, starting at 3 o'clock. Prior to this event, Frank conducted several flights putting his plane through loops, half rolls, nose dives and scattering leaflets over Brisbane which read - *“All U gentlemen in the streets on the earth - I'm up now.*

It would have been all up to you if the sailors and soldiers had not fought for you.

Show your gratitude by investing in the Peace Loan.

Kind regards Francis R Smith (Captain)

Up in the Air.”

The event was explained in the papers: *“As to give everyone an opportunity the committee has decided that the prices of admission shall be: Adults 1s, children 3d. This will be the only occasion on which, this aeroplane will be able to give an exhibition here, and it behoves every parent to give their children an opportunity of attending this instructional and entertaining exhibition. The Peace Loan Committee notifies that the whole of the afternoon will be devoted, to aeroplaning, and that there will not be any horse racing.”*





Captain Francis R. Smith's Avro biplane at the Kedron Park Racecourse Kedron Brisbane Queensland September 1919, John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, Image: 29917-0001-0006



CAPTAIN FRANCIS R. SMITH, M.C., D.F.C.
Starting in his Avro biplane on a flying exhibition at Kedron Park
racecourse on Saturday afternoon. Photo H. Hall.



PEACE LOAN PLANE AT KEDRON PARK RACECOURSE 1919



As can be seen by the accompanying photographs the Kedron Park event was a huge success and the Peace Loan Committee was rapidly advancing to their target quota for the Queensland subscription.

Next on 9th September 1919, a more distant flight was undertaken, being the first flight from Brisbane to Toowoomba – Frank's home town. The 'Darling Downs Gazette' and "Brisbane Courier Mail" both profusely described his homecoming and the experience of witnessing the arrival of this first aircraft; "*Despite gusty westerlies and bitterly cold weather Flight Captain Francis R. Smith, M.C., D.F.C., yesterday accomplished for the first time in Queensland, the task of flying by aeroplane from Brisbane to Toowoomba. Conditions were all against the young Toowoomba aviator, but that did not prevent the carrying out of his enterprise. . In view of the strength of the westerly wind which prevailed at daybreak it was thought by many persons that the flight would be postponed. They need have been under no misapprehension in response to inquiries by telephone with Brisbane, it was learned that the aeroplane with Captain Smith and Mechanic Campbell on board has left the metropolis shortly after 10 o'clock. It was also learned that Captain Smith had stated he would safely reach Toowoomba though possibly he would be a little delayed by the wind. As early as 11 a.m. hundreds of Toowoomba residents were looking towards the Range from the city. It was a case of "eyes right" for the next 80 minutes and many spots were chosen as vantage points. A large crowd gathered at Picnic Point which served as an ideal viewing centre, while Webb Park, which is easier to get at, was also well patronised. At the Racecourse the gathering at noon, at which hour it was announced that the aviator would reach Toowoomba, numbered only a couple of hundreds, but half-an-hour later the gathering had increased considerably. A few minutes past 12 o'clock all eyes were riveted on the skyline just above the fringe of trees along the Range, and more particularly at Picnic Point. The sky was clouded but the sun shone brightly, though the wind blew with gale force almost unceasingly. Just about 10 minutes past the hour the sharpest eyed of the sightseers discerned a small speck in the clouds, flying at what appeared to be a tremendous distance from the ground. At first it was difficult to keep one's eyes riveted on the spot but gradually the size of it increased, and within a few minutes watchers were able to make out the length of the planes and get a better idea of the shape of the machine. Contrary to anticipations the machine appeared to come from over the direction of Webb Park and kept more to the northern end of the town. Watchers on the crest of the Range had a magnificent view of the aeroplane as it came up from Helidon. To those at Clifford Park it appeared at first to be making towards the course, and the big tar-topped fire was lighted to give the pilot an indication of the strength and direction of the wind. Then the machine appeared to turn at right angles with the idea of circling over the town and a 'corkscrew', dive brought it down considerably, the plane's glinting bristly in the sunlight. Nearer and nearer to the course it came, the roar of the engine being plainly audible. Then it headed towards town again and turned at right angles and volplaned steadily towards the centre of the course.*

SCENE AT THE LANDING.

A beautiful landing was effected and the crowd rushed forward to greet the intrepid aviator and his companion. For some moments the police authorities and the squad of soldiers had a difficult task in keeping back the crowd, but an appeal by the police resulted in a cleared space being left around the machine. A hearty cheer was given as Flight Captain Smith was noticed in the machine and in reply to greetings from the Mayor, Sergt. Russell and others, he exclaimed that he was "very near frozen, honestly." His appearance bore out the statement, for it was only with difficulty and suffering from cramp that he alighted from the machine. His companion had also been affected by the extreme cold. Captain Smith is a young man, of medium build, fresh-featured, and alert looking. He seemed of all those on the ground the least concerned over the successful venture. Congratulated on his exploit he remarked that the wind had been 'very fierce', resulting in the trip occupying two hours instead of one hour.

A BRIEF INTERVIEW.

Shivering in the cold Captain Smith was led over to the remains of the big fire used as a guide for alighting purposes, and here he courteously afforded a few details to representatives of the Press. As he unbuttoned the thick leather coat which covered his khaki uniform, he expressed delight at being near the fire again and thawing out his feet, as he expressed it.

One of the first inquiries was for his father, Mr. W. Smith, well-known, in Toowoomba. 'Is dad here', he asked and though not on the spot at the moment it was only a matter of a few seconds before dad arrived — needless to say, looking particularly pleased. Congratulations between father and son were mutual. Captain Smith in

response to inquiries by the 'Gazette.' said that he left Kedron Park, Brisbane at 10.15, carrying no portmanteau but his pyjamas in his coat near the breast. The trip throughout had been exceedingly bumpy, and the wind blew at between 35 and 40 miles per hour. The maximum height attained was 6000 feet, which was reached just prior to the machine passing over the Range. Here the wind had made the machine bump badly, for it had been found necessary to ascend considerably. As instancing the force of the wind on the Range it may be stated that the machine took roughly about half an hour to pass between Helidon and Toowoomba. The average speed of the aeroplane between Brisbane and Toowoomba was said to be about 50 and 60 miles per hour.

MAYOR'S CONGRATULATIONS.

Warmed up somewhat by a cup of hot coffee, kindly provided by some lady friends, and the smouldering embers of the fire Flight Captain Smith was accorded a welcome in the presence of a gathering of several hundreds of persons. The Mayor said he wished to extend to the young aviator their appreciation and also to heartily welcome him to his home town after his safe journey from Brisbane to Toowoomba. The 'stunt,' perhaps was only a small one compared with those accomplished by Captain Smith on the other side of the world, but Toowoomba realised that she had boys and men within her area who were capable of carrying out all work of the kind accomplished by Captain Smith that day. (Applause) The people of Toowoomba were filled with admiration for the task which Captain Smith had succeeded in accomplishing, and they expressed their appreciation and extended him a hearty welcome back to his own native city. (Applause) They remembered him as a boy and in the days to come felt sure that he would do his best, for Australia in general and Toowoomba in particular. (Cheers) Cheers were then given for Captain Smith and his mechanic, followed by the singing of 'For He's A Jolly Good Fellow.' Opportunity was also taken to make an appeal for subscriptions towards the Peace Loan. The speakers were the Mayor and Dr. T. A. Price, The latter welcomed Captain Smith and pointed to the necessity of everyone subscribing something towards the loan. He then called for cheers for Captain Smith and the 'diggers,' which were heartily given.

MACHINE INSPECTED

The large crowd present then took the opportunity of closely inspecting the machine as it stood on the grass jealously guarded by a number of soldiers. A special appeal was made to those present not to touch the straining wires and other portions of the machine and the request was acceded to. As is well known, the machine is of the 'Avro' type. It is a biplane, and proved very valuable for training purposes at the front. The machine was railed to Brisbane from the South in sections, and at the metropolis was assembled, and has flown successfully on a number of occasions. Mechanic C. W. Campbell, from the Laverton Aviation School, Victoria, accompanies the machine. The hero of the day, together with his father, was next entertained at lunch by the members of the Peace Loan Committee at the Club Hotel.

DEPARTURE FOR WARWICK.

Shortly after 2 o'clock he left the hotel for the racecourse in preparation for a resumption of the journey to Warwick, it had been stated originally that the aviator would probably take one or two passengers for short flights with him, and though offers of up to £20 were made for the privilege, it was not found possible, owing to the adverse weather conditions, to carry out the proposal. It is understood that 20 applications were put forward locally.

There was some little delay at the Course while the machine was got into position for a continuation of the flight. Just before the departure a number of speeches were delivered by Dr. Price, Sgt. Russell, the Mayor and Aldermen Mayes, and each congratulated the aviator and wished him a successful flight to Warwick. A whirl of the propeller, a graceful run along the turf, and the machine glided away over the fence at the end of the Course near the caretaker's cottage. Rising as it proceeded over towards Gowrie Road, it quickly gained considerable speed and within a few moments had again encircled the city and with its engines purring loudly it said farewell to Toowoomba and went on to Stanthorpe. Captain Smith anticipated trouble with the wind when he departed at 3.20 and as he rose over the city it was seen that the planes were being tilted by the wind. During the afternoon however, word was received that the machine had landed safely at Warwick at 4.20 p.m. — just an hour after leaving Toowoomba.”

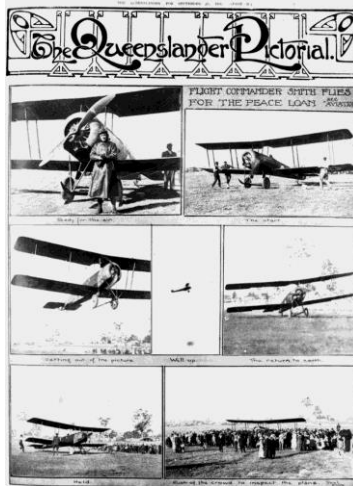


Frank and Colin left for Warwick via Laidley. They distributed peace loan literature and then flew over the town. Before leaving Frank gave a thrilling exhibition of looping the loop and nose diving. Although the town of Allora, as reported in their local paper, was disappointed in not receiving a visit, they saw the plane pass overhead. After overnighing at Warwick they set off for Stanthorpe, on 10th September, at 11.40 in the morning. Leaving Stanthorpe, a blown tyre occurred whilst landing at Boonah, which set back the schedule. A temporary repair using 'Ford' motor car parts, allowed a return to Brisbane on Saturday, 12th September 1919, whilst awaiting a replacement undercarriage to be sent from Melbourne.



With blown tyre at Boonah.

Back in Brisbane, On Saturday 13th September, Frank undertook an aerial display in the morning, then in the afternoon he flew across to New Farm, and *"after going through various manoeuvres he looped the loop twice right in front of the chief organiser's house, which is situated on the cliff at the end of Collins and Sons' wharves. He flew so low on the second dive that a man in a rowing boat on the river instinctively flattened himself out in the bottom of his boat. Afterwards, the airman dropped an autographed flag into the grounds for one of Mr. Dash's children, whose birthday it happened to be. There was a big gathering of people along Bowen Terrace watched as he flew across, to the R.M.S. Orsova, to drop a farewell message to Mr. Denison Miller, governor of this Commonwealth Bank, who left for Sydney by that boat at about noon. After circling round and round the vessel and flying almost close enough to be in speaking distance he followed the boat down the river for some distance and then returned to his base at Lytton. That Mr. Denison Miller appreciated this farewell compliment was shown by the following wireless message which reached the Central Peace Loan Committee on Saturday night: "Flight-Commander .Smith gracefully 'waved farewell, when flying close above the Orsova on its passage down the river. May his successful flight be a good omen to the final success of Queensland in obtaining her full quota of the Peace Loan.— Signed, Denison Miller."*



A further flight was planned about noon on Monday, 15th September, with an expected arrival of a new undercarriage to reach Brisbane in the course of a day or two. A limited country tour would then be immediately embarked upon. It was impossible, however, for the committee to carry out its original intention of sending the machine to Townsville and through the north-west.

Frederick William Thiel was one of the youngest professional photographers in Brisbane, who had been chronicling the History of Brisbane during the First World War. One of his photographic coups was to be the first to photograph Brisbane from the air. Frank Smith and Fred Thiel took off from Lytton shortly after midday on 16th September 1919 for a forty minute flight over the city of Brisbane. Fred said that he *didn't realise that Brisbane could look so large and beautiful from the air*. They circled and at times Fred had to stand up in his seat while at the same time Commander Smith banked the aircraft. He also said he *enjoyed the experience of his first flight and did not feel nervousness as he had complete confidence in the ability of Commander Smith*.



F.W. THIEL



No. 1The Pilot, Captain F. R. Smith, M.C., D.F.C.
 No. 2The Aeroplane at 2,000 feet.
 No. 3The Photographer, F. W. Thiel.

The first photograph (F.W. Thiel with camera, Capt F.R. Smith piloting) to photograph Brisbane from an Aeroplane'. From Brisbane from The Air, 1919. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland



On Wednesday, 17th September, Frank set off on the northern series of flights and flew to Nambour, which was the first occasion on which an aeroplane had flown to the town and landed. Mr John James Knight, mentioned in the photo caption, was the Managing Director of the Brisbane Newspaper Company, publishers of the Brisbane Courier. The plane landed gracefully on the racecourse and was welcomed by the Mayor William Sedgman and a crowd of onlookers.

“The aeroplane arrived over the Nambour Show Grounds at 11.10, but considerable difficulty was experienced in landing. The Nambour Show Ground, a pretty spot, which had been marked by a smoke fire and a large cross chalked on the ground, appeared to fit the bill, but it is fringed with trees, some of great height, and although a picturesque adjunct to the ground, these are against the aviator. Flight Commander Smith circled over the town, and then proceeded to Rosemount, and apparently at first thought it possible to land, but with the quick perception marking the experienced airman he just as quickly made up his mind that it could not be done, and sought to rise. With a low power machine, such as he controlled, this is not done so easily, but he managed to skirt around, and ultimately made an effective landing in Mr. William Harwood's paddock at Burnside. The ground was clear of trees, but was very bumpy; nevertheless, he made a splendid landing. A large number of residents on foot and in carts, cars, and other vehicles had assembled at the show grounds, and it was some time ere they realised that the visitors were awaiting them. Then they quickly flocked to the aviators, who were given a most cordial reception. The visitors having been officially welcomed, Mr. J. J. Knight addressed the gathering, urging the people to do their duty in regard to the Peace Loan. - The local "Courier" agents each received a small parcel of "Couriers," which were eagerly sought after as souvenirs, and Councillor Lowe and Mr. L. H. Collins each received letters from the chief organiser of the Peace Loan (Mr. G. M. Dash). The aeroplane left again at 12.15 amidst the cheers of the crowds.”

This was where the first Brisbane to Gympie air post was handed over, which included bundles of the Courier and a letter to Mayor Sedgman from his Brisbane counterpart, Charles Buchanan, also then chairman of the Queensland Peace Loan Committee. *“The citizens of Brisbane send greetings to the citizens of Gympie. We wish you every success in your efforts to raise your quota for the Peace Loan”*. An immediate appeal for subscriptions to the Peace Loan raised £3,000.



ARRIVAL AT NAMBOUR, AN HOUR AFTER LEAVING LYTTON.
Mr. J. J. Knight, who was a passenger, is seen shaking hands with Mr. Tucker, an old pioneer of the district.

After stopping for an hour at Nambour, the aircraft flew on to Gympie, arriving at 12:52 pm., landing nicely at the Racecourse, some 37 minutes after departing Nambour.

“The trip over the mountains was successful, but naturally cold, and at times a little bumpy Flight Commander Smith, however, handled his machine with remarkable skill, and just before 1 p.m. the aviators were over Gympie, where all vantage points were occupied by citizens and school children. He made a splendid landing amidst the applause of the crowd assembled on the show ground. As at Nambour, there was just room to get on to the ground, which is surrounded by forest giants. The mayor (Alderman H. Sedgman) and other prominent citizens and district residents welcomed thee visitors, who were cheered as they descended from the aeroplane. The Mayor expressed the feelings of the people and called on Mr. Knight, who delivered a short address on the Peace Loan, his remarks being punctuated by applause, especially when he referred to the fact that Gympie had saved Queensland in the early days, and he appealed to the people of Gympie to give other cities a lead in saving the loan from being collected by compulsion.

Flight-Commander Smith's achievements at the Front and in the air were referred to by the mayor, and the aviator mounted his machine, and, having acknowledged the compliment paid him, appealed for contributions to the loan. In less than half an hour £9000 was subscribed, the Flight-Commander conducting the canvas with enthusiasm.”

At Gympie, air mechanic Colin Campbell was to take Mr Knight's place for the flight to Maryborough during the afternoon.

After lunch, the aeroplane was to continue on to Maryborough but crashed into a stringbark tree on takeoff. A crowd quickly gathered at the site and were so relieved that the occupants were uninjured they gave a hearty cheer.

The episode is best described by the “Gympie Times” :- *“When Capt. Smith returned from lunch, arrangements were at once made to continue the flight to Maryborough. The aeroplane was run from the position where it landed towards the town entrance, then it was turned round and faced towards south-west. Flight Capt. Smith again took command, but had with him his mechanic, Mr Campbell who took Mr Knight's seat in the plane. With wishes of ‘good luck’ the machine started off. It ran lightly along the ground on its wheels for some distance, then lifted about a foot from the surface, and for over fifty yards owing to a sudden drop in revolutions of the propeller, hung at that. Meanwhile the aviators readily advanced towards the fence round the racing track, at the point just below the straight. When it seemed as if the machine would not clear the rails it sharply rose and quickly got up level with the tree tops. Just at the moment when a safe ascent seemed within reach of*

the aviators, the right wing brushed through the leafy tops of a tree and this seemed to cause the plane to lose way. It dropped slightly and the left wing struck a sugar gum, knocking off some of the bark and taking away a small limb. Disaster quickly followed. Two substantial gum saplings upwards of six inches in diameter were struck and broken off close to the ground, and the aeroplane, which was now dropping fast next came into collision with a stringy bark tree, and remained fast in its limbs. The aeroplane struck the trunk of the tree a glancing blow with its nose, breaking off one blade of the propeller, and denting the projecting cover of the motor. The left wing was broken off but still attached by wires, whilst the right wing rested on the surface, with the body of the aeroplane hung in the tree about 10ft from the ground, and the tail extending back at about the same height.



Wreckage of the Peace Loan Aeroplane which crashed in Gympie 1919. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland. Neg 177705



Wreckage of a Peace Loan Aeroplane that crashed in Gympie 1919. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland. Neg 189582

With the first crash the crowd made a rush to the disabled aeroplane and great was the satisfaction when one man was seen to be able to move about and then the second. The relief felt was given expression to in a hearty cheer. It seemed remarkable that both men should get off without a scratch, but such proved the case. Mr Campbell had not been able to have his lunch owing to being in charge of the machine, and he had taken it with him. He was getting ready to appease a keen appetite when the accident took place, but he decided not to let such a little incident affect his intention, even though the aeroplane might be hard and fast in the top of a tree. With the assistance of those around, Capt. Smith and his companion were soon got out of their uncomfortable position. The work of salving the aeroplane was then taken in hand, whilst innumerable cameras were engaged in snap shooting the unusual sight. Trophy hunters rushed the broken aeroplane to endeavour to get some souvenir of the wreck, and doubtless would have taken the aeroplane away piecemeal, had not the powers in authority been present.

The wonderful strength of the modern flying machine was well exemplified by the manner in which the light, shattered framework held the aeroplane aloft. It was some time before the machine was brought to the ground, and it was then taken to the railway station to rail south for repairs. Many spectators gave willing assistance. All agreed that it was a regrettable ending to the aeroplane's visit but much satisfaction was felt that the aviators had escaped injury."



Wreck of the Peace Loan Aeroplane at Gympie. The photograph shows the machine after it had been cut down. John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland. Image 702692-19190927-0026

Thus ended Frank's flying for the 1st Peace Loan Appeal which was highly successful, being oversubscribed, and setting the base for a 2nd Appeal in 1920. The aircraft was returned to the Aeroplane Repair Section at Point Cook/Laverton in October and repaired, though was struck off strength in April 1920. In recent years the RAAF Museum at Point Cook has rebuilt an airworthy replica Avro 504K, and has seen fit to paint it in Frank's Peace Loan aircraft colours. See the following photographs.



Frank would be placed on the Reserve of Officers List, as a Captain, on 1st July 1920, though with his next episode in life he would be obliged to offer his resignation on 27th June 1924.

With his obvious charm and personality, Frank had been networking with men of influence and business dealings throughout his life. Even whilst in England through the war years, where he was most probably introduced to Mr William Snell Orr, London principal of Boyd & Co., he made the most of his networking skills. He now saw opportunities to further his career in a new direction. On 2nd January 1920, Captain Frank Smith embarked on the ship “Aki Maru” for a voyage to Amoy, China, where he had accepted a position with the firm of Boyd and Co., General Merchants, as a General Office Assistant.



Boyd & Co. had been established in Amoy in 1862 by Thomas Deas Boyd and continued as a family company until 1934. Amoy(Xiamen) along with Canton (Guangzhou), Foochow (Fuzhou), Ningpo (Ningbo) and Shanghai, was one of the five Treaty Ports opened for foreign trade in China under the Treaty of Nanking which had ceded Hong Kong island to Britain. When Frank arrived in Amoy, the company was run by Mr Edward Thomas and Mr William Snell Orr and successfully trading as general merchants, importers, exporters, shippers and commission agents.

Frank excelled in the business affairs here, and although it is not known if he returned to Brisbane before 1925, he had been maintaining contact with his aunt Annie Power and his cousins Nance and Marie, of 'Beaumaris' 356 Bowen Terrace New Farm, Brisbane. (another cousin L/Cpl Francis Bryan Power, # 3878, 47th Bn had died of disease, septic abscess left leg, on 15th July 1917). An obvious romantic attachment had formed between Nance (born 11th Jan 1905) and Frank. In January 1925, Frank is reported to have returned to Sydney and then Brisbane whilst on leave from China, probably escaping the northern winter, he was a noted figure around the

highways in a puggareed helmet and sensible summer togs. Later that year, Frank became the Managing Director and a principal shareholder of Boyd and Co.

With the same enthusiasm and organizational abilities he had shown throughout his life, he was now established firmly in a successful business career. On another return trip to Brisbane he proposed to Annie (Nance, some 9 years his junior) Power, as was announced in a late January 1926, in the Brisbane Telegraph, for a pre-wedding dinner party. They then both sailed on Monday 1st February 1926 for Amoy, China.

Shortly after their arrival in Amoy, China, on 27th February 1926, Annie and Frank were married.

Having settled into the comfortable life style of colonial business in China, the couple were with the birth of two daughters: first Barbara Anne Therese Smith, born 1927, and then Shirley Desmond Smith, born 1929.

The family, Frank, Nan and the baby Barbara, arrived on the SS 'Marella' on a visit to Australia for a six month pleasure and business tour of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. Nan was able to catch up with her mother and family. Frank gave an interview to the 'Brisbane Courier' on 22nd May 1928, where he expressed his views as a businessman on trade with China –

"Mr. F. R. Smith, a young Queenslander, who had spent nine years in Amoy, China, as the representative of the well-known English firm of Boyd and Co., general merchants, importers, exporters, shippers, &c. returned to Brisbane by the Marella last week, on a six months' business and pleasure trip. In the course of an interview with a representative of the "Courier" yesterday. Mr. Smith expressed the view that China offers tremendous possibilities for the expansion of Australian trade. He added that whilst, perhaps, 10 years ago, the great bulk of Chinese were not educated up to Western tastes in food and dress, a great change had come over the nation, and even within the past five years there had been a marked partiality shown for American and European tinned goods, woollens, hams, cheese, &c. "There is nothing wrong with the quality of our Australian goods," continued Mr. Smith, "but it must be borne in mind that our greatest competitor in the Far Eastern market is America. The Americans spare no pains to put up their goods in attractive containers, and have already established a big hold. Chinese are very conservative in their habits, and once they become accustomed to a certain brand they stick to it religiously. The Americans have carefully studied and learned the Chinese markets, and have their own organisations on the spot. They have spent a considerable amount of time and money in advertising and pushing their wares. It is very difficult to compete against a particular line, once a brand or "chop" is firmly established, even with goods of the same or superior quality."

SOUTH CHINA RECOVERING.

Mr. Smith went on to say that South China was now recovering fairly rapidly from the terribly bad state it was in while the Russians were in power at Canton, and the Chinese seemed to have entirely got over their temporary antipathy towards the British, which, of course, had been engendered and encouraged by the Russians. North of Shanghai, to where the seat of war had shifted, trade conditions were probably as bad as they possibly could be owing to the movement of troops, &c. For the proper expansion of Australian trade with the East it was necessary to have: (1) a proper knowledge of the special demands of the Chinese market; (2) a careful study of packing, labelling and advertising; (3) proper representation on the spot by firms doing business in the East; (4) shipping freights comparable with those existing from the American Pacific coast.

At the present time, added Mr. Smith, Americans could ship their goods a greater distance than Australian exporters at a much lower rate. It might be possible to correct that with shipping companies if business were offered to them. He also thought that experiments might be made in shipping oranges and other fruit without putting them in cold storage. If the experiment were successful, there would be an extensive and rapidly increasing market in China for all classes of fruits. There was also a considerable market in China for flour, but the chief obstacle seemed to be that Australian millers did not turn out a product cheap enough for the Chinese demand, whilst the heavy freights also increased the difficulty. Some Australian flour was sold at Hongkong, but it was of better quality than that required by the majority of Chinese consumers. Products such as cow sinews, tallow, bones, and the by-products of cattle and pigs were also in demand.

POLICY OF "SQUEEZE."

In conclusion, Mr. Smith said: "I think the tide has turned with the discrediting of the Bolsheviks, and we all hope that the Southern Government succeeds in taking Peking, so that the foreign Powers will have some authoritative body to deal with. At present the burden of illicit taxation, or, "squeeze," imposed by military commanders is a heavy yoke. After the just excise and Customs dues have been paid, it is no uncommon thing for as much as 50 per cent, to be demanded as "squeeze" by the military commanders before delivery of goods can be taken."

One of the business ventures that Frank established in 1928 was the founding of the Far East Aviation Company and the Far East Flying Training School at Hong Kong. The Far East Aviation Company (FEACo) was organised late in 1928 in Hong Kong by F R Smith (ex-AFC) and Wing Commander R Vaughan-Fowler (ex-RAF), who became the company's Managing Director. FEACo were agents for the British firms Armstrong Whitworth, Avro, Saunders Roe and Westland. In 1929 they imported an Avro Avian seaplane, which was allotted the first Hong Kong civil aircraft registration, VR-HAA. The FEACo sold a large number of Armstrong Whitworth AW 16s, Armstrong Whitworth Atlases, Avro Avians, Avro 624s, Avro 626s, Avro 631s, Avro 637s, Saunders Roe Cutty Sark and Westland Wapitis, mainly to Chinese warlord air forces.
Vaughan-Fowler, Raymond: Managing Director, Far East Aviation Co., Ltd.



BORN February 5, 1899, at Londonbridge, England, son of G. and Amabell (Winstanley) Vaughan-Fowler; married Winifred Hazel Fowler, daughter of F. W. Fowler of Butterfield & Swire, in Shanghai, 7th January 1932; daughter, Joan Hazel:

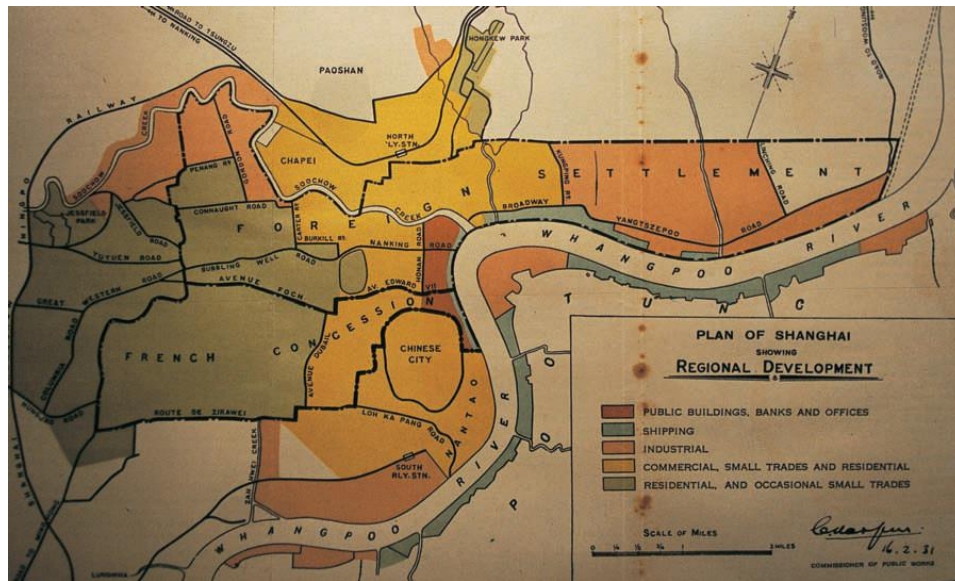
Clubs, Royal Aero of London; Hongkong and Sports, of Hongkong; Shanghai Race: Associate Member Royal Aeronautical Society of Great Britain; (A.M.I.Ae.E.); Holder of British "A" Licence for piloting all types of aircraft; Companion of Order of the Rising Sun, Japan; British War Medals; Gold Medal of the Aero Club of Japan.

With more than 3,000 hours in the air as a pilot, and having flown 176 types of aircraft, including light aeroplanes, two-seaters, multi-engined machines, seaplanes and flying boats, Mr. Vaughan-Fowler's 17-year career in aviation has been an extremely active one. As a boy, he had his first flight in 1912 at Eastchurch as a passenger with Mr. Z. Jezzy, and at the age of 17 joined the Royal Naval Air Service in 1916, serving until the end of the Great War, in France and on coast defence. In 1919 he joined the Handley-Page Air Transport Co. as an airline pilot, and was the first British pilot to fly a commercial aeroplane to Berlin after the war in 1920, and in the same year set a time record for the London-Copenhagen flight, 5 hours, 23 minutes.

Coming to the Orient, he was an instructor to the Imperial Japanese Naval Air Service, 1921-22, and was decorated for his services. A test pilot at the British Experimental Station, Martlesham Heath, 1923 to 1927, he went to Hong Kong in April of the latter year as Adjutant to the Royal Air Force, and retired in December, 1928, to assume the management of the Far East Aviation Co., Ltd., aeroplane agents, operating in Shanghai, Hongkong and Canton. Mr. Vaughan-Fowler was an organiser of the Hong Kong Flying Club and was closely identified with the British gliding movement, 1922-23. He was educated at the Forest School, Epping.

Despite the unrest in Shanghai, it was still the business capital in China especially along the Bund, Shanghai. The International Settlement housed numerous banks and trading houses from Britain France, America, Italy, Russia, Germany, Japan the Netherlands and Belgium as well as the consulates of Russia and Britain, a newspaper, the Shanghai Club and the Masonic Club, And was wholly foreign controlled by British, Americans, Danes, Italians and Germans.

Due to his business interests Frank moved the family from Amoy to Shanghai in 1930.



1931 plan of Shanghai



The Bund, 1928

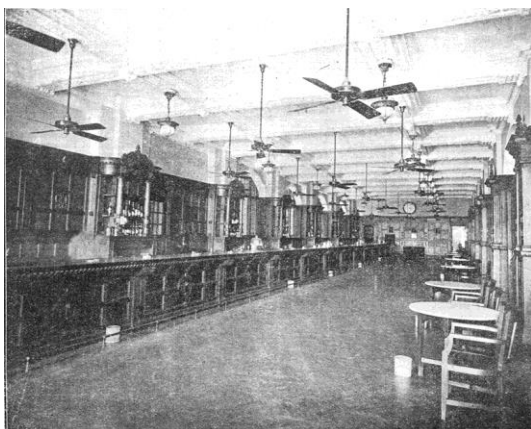


Aerial view of the Bund 1920s

Frank was a member of Shanghai Club and Country Club. The Shanghai Club, located No 2 The Bund, was the principal men's club for British residents of Shanghai. Membership was restricted to white males of a certain class. Even the famous 100 foot 'Long Bar' on the second floor was subject to a strict hierarchy- the prime Bund-facing end of the mahogany bar was the territory of the 'tai-pans' (*a senior business executive or entrepreneur operating in China or Hong Kong*) and bank managers, with the social scale falling as one moved down the length of the bar.



Shanghai club building on the right



The Famous Long Bar in the Shanghai Club

Nan Smith (Mrs FR Smith) returned to Brisbane on 6th July 1931, after disembarking SS 'Changte' from Shanghai, to visit her mother Annie Power of Bowen Terrace, New Farm. Accompanied by her two young

children and *amah* (nursemaid), she was reported to have said that “*life in Shanghai is very gay, and altogether China was a delightful place in which to reside, largely owing to the excellent service rendered by Chinese servants.*”

Upon Nan’s return to the Shanghai International Settlement, the unrest in Shanghai was about to increase. The Japanese population in Shanghai had reached 18,000 to become the largest foreign community. Anti-Japanese boycotts intensified and their interests in Shanghai were threatened with their population becoming anxious, even ‘aggressive, desperate and bellicose’. On 22nd January 1932, Japan sent 15 warships to Shanghai, including an aircraft carrier and two destroyers. The longest period of uninterrupted peace that Shanghai had enjoyed for decades, and by far the most prosperous, came to an abrupt end on the evening of 28th January, when in Chapei, which had been drawn up as the defence line of the International Settlement, nearly 2,000 members of a Japanese naval landing party clashed with the 33,500-strong Chinese Army. The Japanese had planned to teach the Chinese a stern lesson by smashing their resistance within two days. The Chinese Army defence forced the battle to rage for five weeks. The Japanese landed an army using the wharves in Hongkou and marching through the International Settlement on 13th February. The Japanese Air Force caused immense damage to properties and killed thousands of innocent civilians as Chapei was razed under shellfire and incendiary bombs. Though the majority of International Settlement remained untouched and the war would be observed from the banks of the Suzhou Creek. This whole episode was referred to as an ‘incident’ but an incident that marked the end of Shanghai’s heyday.

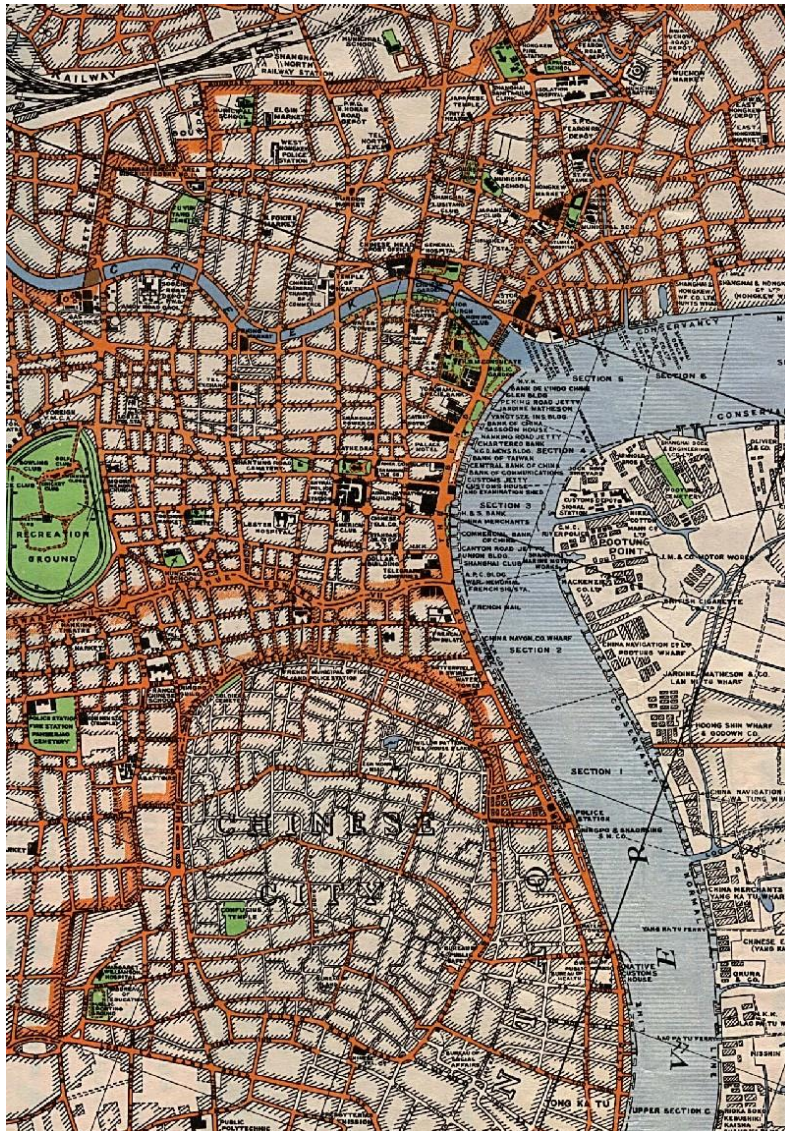
Although the Japanese invasion of Manchuria late 1931 and this January ‘incident’ began to undermine business confidence and building works, Frank proceeded with his business dealings, though during the first five months of 1932 the market was practically dead.



Aerial map showing Hongkou (top) central Shanghai, racecourse and old town (bottom right)

Perhaps fearing the recent troubles, Mrs Annie Power, Nan’s mother, decided to visit the Smith’s at their home in Shanghai. Although we don’t know how long the visit was, Annie returned home to Brisbane in November

1935 with the knowledge that Frank, Nan and the children were planning a trip to Australia early the following year.



The Bund, Shanghai, 1933



Nanjing Road viewed from racecourse to the Bund

By 1935 Frank was Managing Director of Boyd & Co, Ltd; also Chairman and Managing Director of the Metropolitan Land Co, Ltd & the International Underwriters, Ltd; as well as Chairman and Managing Director of the International Assurance Co., Ltd; Director of the Underwriters Savings Bank, Director of Taishan Insurance Co. Ltd., Shanghai, Director of China Engineers Ltd. and Aircraft China Ltd, Shanghai and Founder and Director of the Far East Aviation Co., Hong Kong and of the Far East Flying Training School, Hong Kong.



MR. F. R. SMITH *foto by Jacobs*

Frank as General Manager and Chairman of Directors of the Metropolitan Land Company was instrumental in having The Commercial Bank of China built by the Metropolitan Land Company in 1934. From Company papers (provided by Frank) the structure of the company was:-

“Metropolitan Land Company, Limited

Directors: F.R. Smith, Esq, (Chairman), Sir Robert Calder-Marshall, K.B.E., G.E. Marden, Esq, E Sigaut, Esq, O. Okamoto, Esq, M. Reader-Harris, Esq, Yuson Yeo, Esq

General Manager: F.R. Smith & Company, Limited. (Incorp. Hong Kong)

Bankers: Hong Kong & Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC)”



The Commercial Bank of China (1934) was built by the Metropolitan Land Company and designed by Davies, Brooke & Gran. Its concave facade completed the circus at the junction of Jiangxi and Fuzhou Roads.

Also from Company papers (provided by Frank) the structure of the International Assurance Company, Limited was:-

“International Assurance Company, Limited

F.R. Smith (Chairman of Directors)

Directors: Sir Robert Calder-Marshall, K.B.E., H.E. Arnhold, Esq, C.V. Starr, Esq, G.E. Marden, Esq,

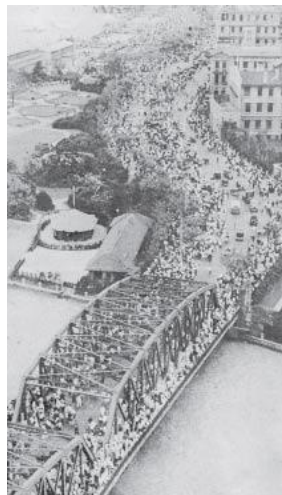
Sir Shou-Son Chow, KT.LL.D., W.A. Hale, Esq, E Sigaut, Esq, C.E. Sherwin, Esq.

Head Office: 17 The Bund, Shanghai.

Company underwrote Fire Accounts, Marine Accounts, Accident Accounts and Life Accounts “

Frank and Nan did visit Australia again in 1936 and the Brisbane Courier-Mail reported on 1st October that they had spent a month in Sydney and Melbourne prior to their return to Brisbane. They would be guests of Mrs Annie Power before returning to their home in Shanghai by the ‘Astuta Maru’ on 2nd November.

After months of tension in Shanghai, China and Japan went to war, and on ‘Bloody Saturday’ 14th August 1937 the first major fighting of the Second World War occurred in the northern suburbs of Shanghai. Hundreds of thousands of residents of Hongkou, Chapei and Shanghai’s outlying areas sought sanctuary in the foreign settlements. The Bund was transformed into a makeshift refugee camp, the International Settlement was awash with desperate Chinese refugees. Moored in the Huangpu River, near the Japanese Consulate, the aged cruiser ‘Idzumo’, the flagship of the Japanese fleet, was busy shelling Chinese positions around Woosung. The Chinese Air Force attempted to attack the ‘Idzumo’, but they prematurely released two bombs which blasted the side of the Cathay Hotel, killing in excess of 1,500 people. A third bombing at ‘The Great World’ entertainment centre killed over 1,000 and wounded over 500. Those in the neutral sanctity of the foreign settlements were no longer immune to the wartime horrors.



Flood of refugees across the Garden Bridge



Japanese Cruiser 'Idzumo'



The destruction outside of the Cathay Hotel after the bombing on 14th August 1937.

Shrapnel rained down on the settlement from anti-aircraft fire, a curfew was imposed and Shanghai's famed nightlife was extinguished. The Chinese fought a bitter battle for Shanghai, but were forced to retreat.



Destruction caused by incendiary bombs on the wooden structures of the Hongkou and Chapei



Smoke from Chapei rising over Shanghai

The marauding Japanese Army ruthlessly laid waste all in their path, turning Chapei into an inferno. The northern and eastern suburbs of the International Settlement lay in ruins, with street after street of former terraces razed and transforming huge tracts of land into scorched earth and rubble.

Frank's family were witnessing at first hand the horrors of this onslaught, though through the efforts of the British Consulate, the Royal Navy provided for the evacuation of some 1150 women and children, on Tuesday 18th August, who were brought to safety in Hong Kong away from the horrors of the bombardment of Shanghai. Frank stayed in Shanghai, purportedly to secure vital business papers but more likely to organise affairs with other members and friends at the Shanghai Club. Meanwhile Nan and the children safely in Hong Kong, as refugees, she took the time to write to her mother Annie Power, of their ordeal. *"Just to be away from the sound of the bombing is a tremendous relief. . . No words could convey the reality of what is happening in Shanghai. I should like people at home to know what it means to be British in this outside world, it means that you will be protected by the Navy and the Army when humanly possible, and the sound of the cheery Cockney sailors somehow restored our confidence from the moment we heard them. Australians may be proud of their Cockney accent and all it stands for. She expressed fears for the safety of her husband; who had remained in Shanghai to try to recover important documents from his office on the Bund. Even when half the Japanese fleet —or so it seemed— steamed up the river they did not believe that the disturbance wouldn't be settled, the letter continues. However, 'hell began to pop' on Friday. It was the first time she had ever heard shell fire, and it was by then too late to get away. The Chinese troops poured in from Nanking and entrenched on both sides of the river. The*

warships between them fired all the time. On Saturday 1200 people were killed by bombs in the Settlement. Reassuring Children 'It became a commonplace for the Chinese and Japanese 'planes to chase each other over the house. We have two souvenirs of anti-aircraft bullets dropping on our roof, and we are at least three miles away from where the anti-aircraft guns were. I tried to prevent the children from realising what was going on. At night we had a loud fan in the room, and by day I explained that the fighting was a long way away even though the noise seemed near. But as the aeroplanes grew more numerous it was hard to keep the fiction going. The house used to rock from the more violent explosions. The bombs sometimes killed 600 at once. I wish you could see the holes they made. By Monday I began to feel we were trapped, for it seemed impossible that, any boat could get up the river, but at night we got the news that the British women and children were to be evacuated. It seemed preferable to make the dash than to face some very horrible prospects for the children. On Tuesday morning we went by car to the Shanghai Club with our allowance of two suitcases and food for one day. The sailors were simply marvellous, laughing and joking, and generally giving the impression that the whole thing was a huge picnic. They served lime juice and tea. When they reached the liner 'Rajputana', and were waiting for the baggage, they were subjected to shell fire. On board the children were in their element, and quite forgot Shanghai. If her husband reached her alive she would never regret the experience of the last 10 days, Mrs. Smith concludes. It was a fear that ended all fears, and she felt it would be a long time again before she worried over the ordinary difficulties of everyday life."



Three Armstrong Whitworth XVI's (Panther) at Shanghai.

The ruins in the background were hangars, before a Japanese bombardment

The Japanese controlled all the land around the settlements and occupied over half the International Settlement, controlling vital services of electricity and water supply, and 90 per cent of the river front. The Japanese staged a 'Victory March' through the International Settlement on 3rd December, in a boast of conquest. Foreigners were not allowed into areas north of Suzhou Creek until 27th December 1937, which were guarded by Japanese sentries on all the bridges. Their presence was notorious when checking papers; they delighted in humiliating those going about their business.



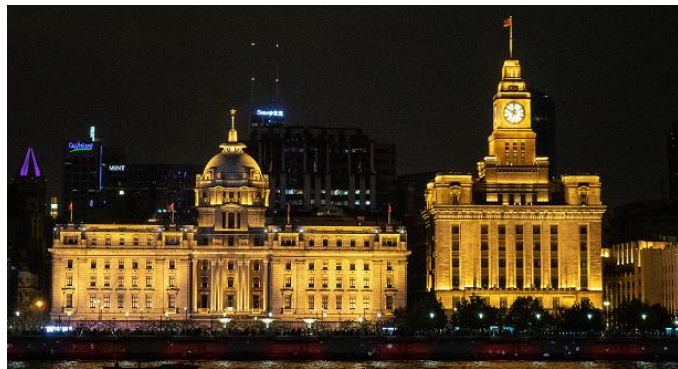
Japanese Soldiers in Shanghai, 1937

After several months the situation had settled in Shanghai to allow Frank to resume business dealings and for Annie (Nan) and the children to return. Annie wrote regularly to her relatives on their life in Shanghai trying to allay any concerns. She was quoted in the 'Sunday Mail' on the August, 1940 as saying "she and her husband are apparently untroubled by the international situation". Frank maintained his business activities as best as he

could under the Japanese occupation. He chaired the Tenth Annual General Meeting of Shareholders of the International Assurance Company, Limited, held in the Head Office of the Company, 17 The Bund, Shanghai, on 4th June 1940. Frank was also a good friend of the Australian Trade Commissioner in Shanghai, Mr V G Bowden. (*Vivian Gordon Bowden was appointed Managing Director of A. Cameron and Co. (China), Ltd., in Shanghai until 1935 when he became Trade Commissioner. After the August 1937 Battle of Shanghai, it was decided that he would remain in the city (as the Trade Commission was located in the HSBC Building, The Bund, corner Bund and Nanjing Road, within the relative safety of the International Settlement) to keep the government informed on developments in the conflict and to work on "measures for the protection of Australian lives and property". For his work in Shanghai, he was appointed as Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 1941. Bowden served in Shanghai until September 1941 when he was appointed Australia's Official Representative in Singapore. Following the fall of Singapore in he was captured by the Japanese at Banka Island and subsequently executed the day after Australian Nurses and other force members had been massacred, 17th February 1942).*



Vivian Gordon Bowden, CBE,
Trade Commissioner in Shanghai, May 1937.



HSBC Building and Custom House

Frank reached a conclusion that business was not going to improve in Shanghai in the immediate future, with Japan continuing its bellicose intent. He resigned his positions with his business obligations and returned with his family to Brisbane in November 1940.

Upon their return to Brisbane the family took up residence at 'Briamon' Toorak Road, Hamilton, Brisbane.





Some recent views of 'Briamon'

Frank took up an office in the city, probably at or near the E S & A Bank Chambers, Creek Street, Brisbane. He also became a strong advocate for preparations to start in Australia for future dangers. As he was reported in the 'Inverell Times' and the 'Toowoomba Chronicle' on 13th June 1941 that there's a strong need for a total war effort by every person in Australia. *"I feel that Australia for the first time in her history is definitely in danger. The threat is from Japan. Not today, nor tomorrow, but ultimately. I have seen what Japanese soldiers have done to Chinese women and children and would hate like hell to have that happen here. I have been 21 years in China, running a business, I have resigned my position there, and have come back to put my entire effort into whatever war work I can get. That is my object in returning to Australia, I feel so strongly about it. While proclaiming that, I am able to ask the next man what the hell he is doing, I think we will lose this war unless we put everything we have into it. I am not a defeatist in any sense of the word, but my opinion is that while people are apathetic, we are fighting a losing battle, but as soon as we put everything we have into it then we will start to win."*

Captain Smith spoke with a vehement and convincing manner when he referred to the menace of the Japanese Empire. He said he was under no delusion that actual physical combat between Australian sons and the little brown men of the Mikado's Army was an impossibility. Frank had been appointed an honorary organiser of the country committee for the Queensland R.A.A.F. Recruiting Drive Committee and was in Toowoomba for the civic farewell of the combined recruit rally draft for the AIF.

Frank applied for service with RAAF on 8th June 1941 and was appointed Squadron Leader and deputy to the Wing Commander of Air Training Corps in Queensland on 2nd September 1941. In his application, Frank indicates that he logged 300 hours of flying on SE5s, Camels, Avros and Pups (AFC experience) and that his friendship with Mr V.G. Bowden, Australian Trade Commissioner, Shanghai and with Wing Commander Garnet Malley (recently returned from China) would verify his business credentials.

The Air Training Corps was established in 1941, to provide Air Force cadet training for 16-18 year olds, providing instruction in mathematics, theory of flight, radio work, navigation and drill for those desiring to enter the RAAF. In short it would bring them up to Initial Training School standards and take about three months off the time need to train them as aircrew personnel. ATC Wings were to be formed in each state, No 3 Wing Qld formed 23rd August 1941 under Wing Commander Walter Wyndham Pike, (President of Queensland AFC Branch and distinguished RFC pilot).

Cadets would be issued clothing – one set of RAAF pattern to be issued to each cadet. Squadrons would be formed when sufficient cadets available. Formation of Squadrons should begin in capital cities and more important country areas. Plans were for the formation of 34 City Squadrons and 50 Country Squadrons

throughout Australia. These were later increased with Queensland having 16 Squadrons upon establishment on 10th September 1941 and increasing to 17 in October 1943.

Of the 300 cadets initially enlisted in Queensland Wing Commander Walter Wyndham Pike said “They are a splendid lot; they will wear the uniform of the Air Training Corps with credit to themselves and honour to the RAAF”. They would get all the preparation necessary for them to enter RAAF initial training schools when they are old enough.



ATC recruit with Wing Commander W.W. Pike, South Brisbane, 12th October 1941

Frank was assigned as a deputy to Wing Commander Pike and was responsible for setting up the organisation of the initial 16 Squadrons ATC, earmarked for the No 3 Queensland Wing. Like many of the veteran fliers of the AFC, WWI, he had volunteered his services on a honorary basis. On 28th February 1942, Squadron Leader F.R. Smith (organisation) and Squadron-Leader Francis (training), addressed the forty youths who attended the first parade of the Ipswich Air Training Corps at the Boys’ Central School. Included among the gathering were school teachers who have volunteered their services as coaches. Frank said that the corps had got off to a good start.

The organisation of No 3 Wing (Queensland) ATC consisted of the following Squadrons and establishment dates:-

53 Sqn (Brisbane)	23 rd August 1941
54 Sqn (Fortitude Valley)	23 rd August 1941
55 Sqn (South Brisbane)	1 st October 1941
56 Sqn (East Brisbane)	1 st October 1941
57 Sqn (Ipswich)	17 th December 1941
58 Sqn (Toowoomba) QATC	17 th December 1941
59 Sqn (Mackay)	7 th March 1942
60 Sqn (Rockhampton)	13 th April 1942
61 Sqn (Bundaberg)	12 th June 1942

62 Sqn (Townsville)	12 th June 1942
63 Sqn (Cairns)	12 th June 1942
64 Sqn (Gympie)	12 th June 1942
65 Sqn (Maryborough)	28 th July 1942
66 Sqn (Southport)	1 st October 1942
67 Sqn (Correspondence)	2 nd March 1942
68 Sqn (Brisbane)	22 nd July 1942
153Sqn (Charters Towers)	9 th April 1943
154 Sqn (Warwick)	6 th September 1944

Having established the QATC on a successful path and with the advent of more personnel in this growing organisation, Frank resigned and his appointment with the RAAF was terminated on 1st January 1944.

With his war effort commitments now concluded, and his business interests now centred in Sydney; Frank, Annie and the two girls moved to 'Enderley', Florida Rd, Palm Beach, NSW, where Frank continued to enjoy his interests in golf, tennis swimming and sailing. Before this Frank had built a beach house at Southport upon his return from China. The family appears to have spent many Christmas vacations here enjoying the beaches with family and friends. A report in the Brisbane 'Courier Mail' on Monday, 24th December 1945 mentions :
"The strong surf was well patronised, although heavy showers periodically cleared the sand of its swarms of sunbathers.

Every home seems to have its house party, and many places have far more accommodation than their outside appearance suggests. For instance, there is a tiny picturesque home at Surfers' Paradise which, with its latticing and cream and green exterior, is known to local residents as 'the Walt Disney House.'

It was built by Mr. F. R. Smith and his wife (formerly Miss Nancy Power, Brisbane), when they returned from China some years ago, and with double-decker bunks and built-in furniture they have achieved maximum accommodation and labour-saving devices in a small space. They are calling it 'Kulangsu,' after the foreign settlement where they lived in Amoy (China). Killara (Sydney) is now their home, but they have come to Kulangsu for Christmas. With them are their daughters, Barbara and Shirley, Mrs. Smith's mother (Mrs. J. P. Power, New Farm), and Mr and Mrs. A. MacKenzie (China), and their daughter. "

Barbara and Shirley had been educated in various boarding schools in China and Australia and then provided for in various expensive hotels and drama schools in Canada and England. Both the girls were inclined to the artistic ventures of the stage and departed overseas. Barbara was accepted as a student at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London. Shirley spent three months in New York before arriving in London in October 1948 where she auditioned and was accepted as a student with the Old Vic Theatre Drama School, Waterloo Rd, London. This school formed part of the expansion plans for the National Theatre Movement of Old Vic Company directors Lawrence Oliver, Ralph Richardson and John Burrell in re-establishing the prominence of theatre in post war Britain. The school was limited 120 students and with 600 yearly applicants, student needed exceptional talent and ability. Whilst at the school, students would learn acting, scene and costume design, production and lighting. Both Shirley and Barbara shared a flat in London while studying.

In January 1949, Frank and Annie flew up to Brisbane to see her mother and to meet her sister, Marie, who is coming to live in Australia after an absence of several years.

Frank also continued with his business dealings, one of which was the purchasing, leasing and then selling a property in Ryde.



The 'Willandra' House, Glebe Road, in Ryde, Sydney is now a National Trust property, though post WWII it was purchased by Kenneth Roy Bernard-Smith, A solicitor, of Piper Point. Then in October 1951 he sold it to Francis Ryan Smith. Smith 'reserving certain rights' leased it out to Walter Ernest Howard, a garage proprietor of Ryde, who in February 1952 "took over the service station". Frank sold the property to the Shell Company of Australia in 1952.

The in June 1953 the Sydney press reported that Barbara is with the Old Vic Company and was in the cast, of Tyrone Guthrie's 'Henry VIII' when the Queen attended the first performance. She is now in the cast of 'Murder in the Cathedral,' in which Robert Donat plays the lead. Shirley is, at the moment, playing in 'Quality Street' with the Bromley Rep.

Then just a couple of weeks later the paper was able to announce that Shirley, is to star in J.C. Williamson's production of "For Better, For Worse", opening at the 'Theatre Royal,' Sydney in August. Frank and Annie were reported as being highly excited awaiting 'the plane to touch down with its precious cargo.'

In 1953 Frank and Annie moved to Bellevue Hill in Sydney. And in this year Barbara, who used the stage name of 'Barbara St Ledger', was in the cast of a BBC produced film called 'the Troubled Air' playing the part of *Jane Bartlett*.

Meanwhile, after "For Better, For Worse", Shirley was playing in a modern drama, 'Ionesco', produced and starring Peter O'Shaughnessy, who was active in the Australian theatre scene and known as an actor, director, producer and writer. Their relationship blossomed and on 9th April 1954 Shirley and Peter married in Melbourne.



Shirley Smith



PETER O'SHAUGHNESSY and SHIRLEY O'SHAUGHNESSY in Ionesco's "The Lesson", Q Group AMP Theatre, Sydney.

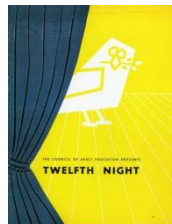
Frank and Annie flew to Melbourne and Annie the excitement in planning for the wedding and making preparations for an overseas trip. Shortly after the wedding they left on a six month holiday travelling through Europe to England and returning home to Sydney via America.

Whilst in London, they were able to visit Barbara (stage name Barbara St Ledger) for the first time in more than two years. Barbara was then the understudy lead in play "The Moon is Blue".

She returned to Australia in 1955, again welcomed by Frank and Annie. Upon her return Barbara joined the theatrical scene in Melbourne, where Shirley and Peter were active. Barbara's first role was in Shakespeare's 'Twelfth Night' produced by the Union Theatre Repertory Company, (which was established by the University of Melbourne) opening at the Union Theatre, Parkville, Melbourne, on the 14th March 1955. Another cast member was a young Barry Humphries. The performance of 'Twelfth Night' was taken on an extensive tour of Victorian towns in June, July and August in appreciation of the enthusiastic support of the country people.



BARBARA ST LEDGER



BARRY HUMPHRIES

The next role she received was in J.C. Williamson's 'Sailor Beware' which played at the 'Theatre Royal' in Adelaide on 16th June 1956 and at the 'Theatre Royal' in Sydney, August 1956.



Barbara pictured at Potts Point promotion (courtesy of SMH)

Barbara had fallen romantically for David George Castle and they married in Sydney in 1956. And returning to establish their home in Melbourne, Barbara's final role was in 'King Lear' at the 'Arrow Theatre, Middle Park, Melbourne on 9th July, 1957. Although she would keep in touch with friends in the theatre, though Shirley and Peter, Barbara would raise three children Adrian, Linda and Philippa Castle. Sadly she would die at an early age of 45 years at Kew, Melbourne in 1972.

Shirley and Peter O'Shaughnessy were keenly active in the Melbourne theatrical scene and Peter is probably best known as a mentor to and collaborator with Barry Humphries in his early career. Barry has acknowledged that, "without O'Shaughnessy's nurturing and promotion, the character of Edna Everage would have been nipped in the bud after 1956 and never come to flower, while the character of Sandy Stone would never have taken shape as a presence on the stage".

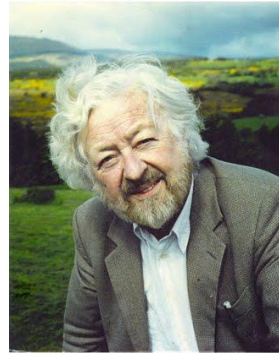
Possibly with the birth of his daughter, Peter, with the co-operation of Humphries, Jeff Underhill and Don Whitelock scripted the children's story '*The Bunyip and the Satellite*' in 1959. The following Christmas season the show was modified to a Bush Musical, '*It's Beaut to be a Bunyip*' with Lyrics by Barry Humphries and music by Val Fawcett. Barry played the Bunyip with Peter writing "*Barry's performance as The Bunyip was the finest and most touching he had ever given in the theatre, and the character very close to his secret heart.*" Humphries was quoted as saying: '*I notice Mrs Everage sometimes behaves in a slightly Bunyippy way.*' Peter and Shirley had two daughters Caitilin, b1957 and Sally, b1961.

In the 1967 Sydney production of '*Othello*', Peter starred and directed, but received a scathing newspaper review. Taking legal action, the case was argued before the High Court before the case was settled. It had a lasting impact on his career, so he and family, Shirley, Caitilin and Sally departed for London, ending his career on the Australian stage. Peter and Shirley lived in a flat at Winchester, Hampstead, until a separation and divorce in 1983. Shirley died on 23rd May 1984 in the Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead, aged 54 years.

Peter O'Shaughnessy received OAM in January 2013 "*for service to the performing arts as a writer, theatre director, actor, historian and folklorist*". Though he was to die only a few months later after a short illness, on 17th July 2013, aged 89 years. He was farewelled at a small family funeral the following Friday, 26th July at St John's Chapel, Winchester, England.



Peter O'Shaughnessy, 1947
(Australian Portrait Gallery)



Feisty thespian

In 1958, Frank was a 62 year old, successful businessman and still a Company Director when he and Annie moved to 12 Redgum Avenue, Killara, Sydney, NSW, and proud of their daughters' achievements, marriages and birth of grandchildren.

Frank was not to see Christmas in 1961; he died on the 24th December 1961 in Balmain, NSW. A private funeral was held for him on 26th December.

Annie (known as Nan to family) survived another 22 years and moved to Darling Point, Sydney. She died on 24th April 1983.



Captain Francis Ryan SMITH MC DFC
31st Battalion, 5th Division
No. 2 Squadron, Australian Flying Corps
AIF
Egypt, Western Front.

Regimental number 298
Date of birth 23 July 1896
Place of birth Toowoomba, Queensland
Religion Roman Catholic
Occupation Clerk
Address c/o Royal Bank,
Queen Street, Brisbane, Queensland
Marital status Single
Age at embarkation 19
Height 5' 9"
Weight 124 lbs
Next of kin Brother.
Reginald James Smith, Telephone
Exchange, Toowoomba, Queensland
Previous military service
Served in 7th Infantry
Enlistment date 20 July 1915
Place of enlistment
Brisbane, Queensland
Rank on enlistment Sergeant
Unit name 31st Battalion, A Company
AWM Embarkation Roll number 23/48/1
Embarkation details
Unit embarked from Melbourne, Victoria,
on board HMAT A62 Wondilla on 9 November 1915
Rank from Nominal Roll Captain
Unit from Nominal Roll Australian Flying Corps
Fate Returned to Australia 6 May 1919
War Service: Egypt, Western Front.
Medals: Military Cross, Distinguished Flying Cross,
1914-15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal
Date of death 24 December 1961
Place of death Balmain New South Wales

