

THE ACCIDENT AT **WIGRAM**

It was a crisp, frosty night, in the year 1939 in a small house on the outskirts of Methven. In this house lived Mary, Fred, and their 12-year-old son Bob.

“You all packed Fred?” came Mary’s voice from down the hall.

“Almost” Fred yelled back excitedly.

Fred was getting ready for what he knew would be the experience of a lifetime, or so he thought.

It was now 6-am in Methven and Fred was getting ready to go to the place of his dreams, Wigram Airbase.

“Are you all set to go?” Mary questioned.

“Yes, I'm going to miss you guys. But I will be back to visit again soon.”

The room filled with a deafening honk and Fred immediately knew what it was.

“Well, I'm off to train for war, look after the house for me,” Fred told Mary and Bob, as he ran out the door and jumped into a camouflaged truck, that would take him to Wigram Airbase. The truck roared into the distance as Fred waved back.

It was a long journey, but finally, after two long hours, Fred had arrived at Wigram Airbase. It was a massive area with 3

gigantic hangers. In the distance, Fred saw a tall, bulky man slowly trudging towards him.

He was wearing a camouflaged jacket and dark blue cargo pants. When he finally reached Fred he introduced himself as Jimmy, his commander. Jimmy explained all the house rules to Fred, and showed Fred to his room. Fred stumbled into his room and looked up to see a poorly finished room. With the paint peeling off the wall and a bed, that looked like it was *made* out of rust. The room also reeked of canned beef, and cheese.

Then Commander Jimmy left Fred to get settled in. But as Jimmy was walking out, he turned to Fred and said “I want you to know something, if you take one step over the line, there will be BIG consequences.” He walked out and slammed the door behind him. “Don't worry about him, he's always like that” came a voice from the shadows.” Fred spun around in fright “Who are you?” Fred demanded as he glared at the stranger on the top section of the bunk.

“The names Pete I'm your roommate.” “ What's your name?”
“Fred” he replied.
Pete leapt down to join Fred on the floor.
“Nice to meet you, Fred,” Pete told Fred.

Another horn sounded and Fred and Pete ran outside and went over to the training course where all the other trainees were standing. “Alright, men, time to get to work,” Commander Jimmy boomed. “Today you will be doing five laps of the base

and ten times round the obstacle course, GO! GO! GO! GO!”
He continued.

Everyone groaned viciously except Fred, he loved to do outdoor activities and was exceptionally fit. Fred immediately took off and left the others behind. He was definitely the fastest in the group and was onto the obstacles in less than two hours.

By the time it was lunch, only Fred had finished, and was now making his way to the cafeteria to have lunch. After he got his food and sat down, a few more people started to roll in, including the commander who strolled over to where Fred was sitting. “Are you on some kind of steroid?” he yelled, “Because you can get kicked out for using steroids.” He continued, still yelling.

“No sir,” Fred replied “I just go for a run every day and night at home sir,” He said starting to tremble. Finally, Commander Jimmy left Fred to eat and then Pete came in and sat next to him. “Man you are amazingly fast” He complimented.
“Thanks” Fred replied.

Fred was getting ready to leave when he tripped over something and bumped into someone, this made him spill his tea. He went red with rage “YOU MADE ME SPILL MY TEA” He blurted out. “In case you don't know me my name is Tom and I will pay you back for what you have done!”
Fred did not know it yet but Tom hated him so much he was going to ruin his life.

It was time for bed and tomorrow was time for Fred's first flying practice. He was so excited he immediately drifted off to sleep.

"GET UP, GET UP NOW!" That was the sound Fred was woken to at 8 am in the morning. Fred had skipped breakfast because he couldn't stop thinking about taking to the skies.

The time came faster than expected and Fred was now lining up for roll call before he got into the plane. In that time Tom had thought of a sneaky plan to pay back Fred for spilling his tea. After his name was called. Tom snuck over to Fred's plane and planted a bomb, he set it to six minutes from the time and dashed back to the line. But he un-intentionally left the bonnet unhooked.

"Alright Tom, you first" screamed Commander Jimmy. Tom sprinted over to his *own* plane and threw himself inside. The engine started with a roar and Tom quickly took off. With some sharp manoeuvres, Tom proceeds to do a double loop and then landed safely on the ground. "Well done Tom" applauded Commander Jimmy. "FRED!" he continued "your turn."

Fred jogged over to his plane and it started with a groan. As he pulled onto the runway he recognised a distinctive beeping noise. Fred decided to ignore the beeping and took off at the speed of lightning. He did some swerves and turns to

warm up and then tried a loop. He got halfway before the bonnet whipped open and the bomb that Tom planted, fell onto Fred's lap. Fred gave a yell as he proceeded to smash the eject button. But, Fred was leaning over too much, and because he was so tall, ejected from the plane, but left his legs behind. Fred yelled out in pain and barely managed to open his parachute in time. He landed near the landing strip and he saw everyone sprinting toward him before he passed out.

"Fred, can you hear me?" The words drifted into Fred's ear.

He woke up in a small room to see, Mary, Bob and a man in a white suit standing over him like mountains.

Fred felt as if he had been hit by a truck.

"What happened? Fred inquired. "Why am I in a hospital?"

"Fred, you were in a plane accident and you have lost your legs in the plane" The doctor quickly explained.

Fred looked down to see the horror that he had been told had happened. When Fred looked down and saw that he was telling the truth, he almost passed out again.

When he finally came to accept what had happened he asked "What am I going to do" He questioned softly. "Without my legs I am useless, let alone be able to be a pilot."

"Don't you worry Fred?" The doctor said cutting in "You won't be able to be a pilot, but we're going to get you some wooden legs so you will be able to move around freely and do light jobs around your home."

The doctor put Fred back to sleep with some gas and a few hours later he had (somewhat) legs again.

Fred was now back home and had Mary and Bob looking after him. He was able to renovate some of his house in his spare time. He enrolled for work at Wigram fixing and restoring planes that had technical, and bodywork problems after a few years of study. After all the trainees left for war overseas, Fred found out that there was an investigation and Tom had been kicked out of the air force, but sent to war only to be sacrificed for the Nazi's.

Written by Caleb Barr



This was a crashed plane in WW2.