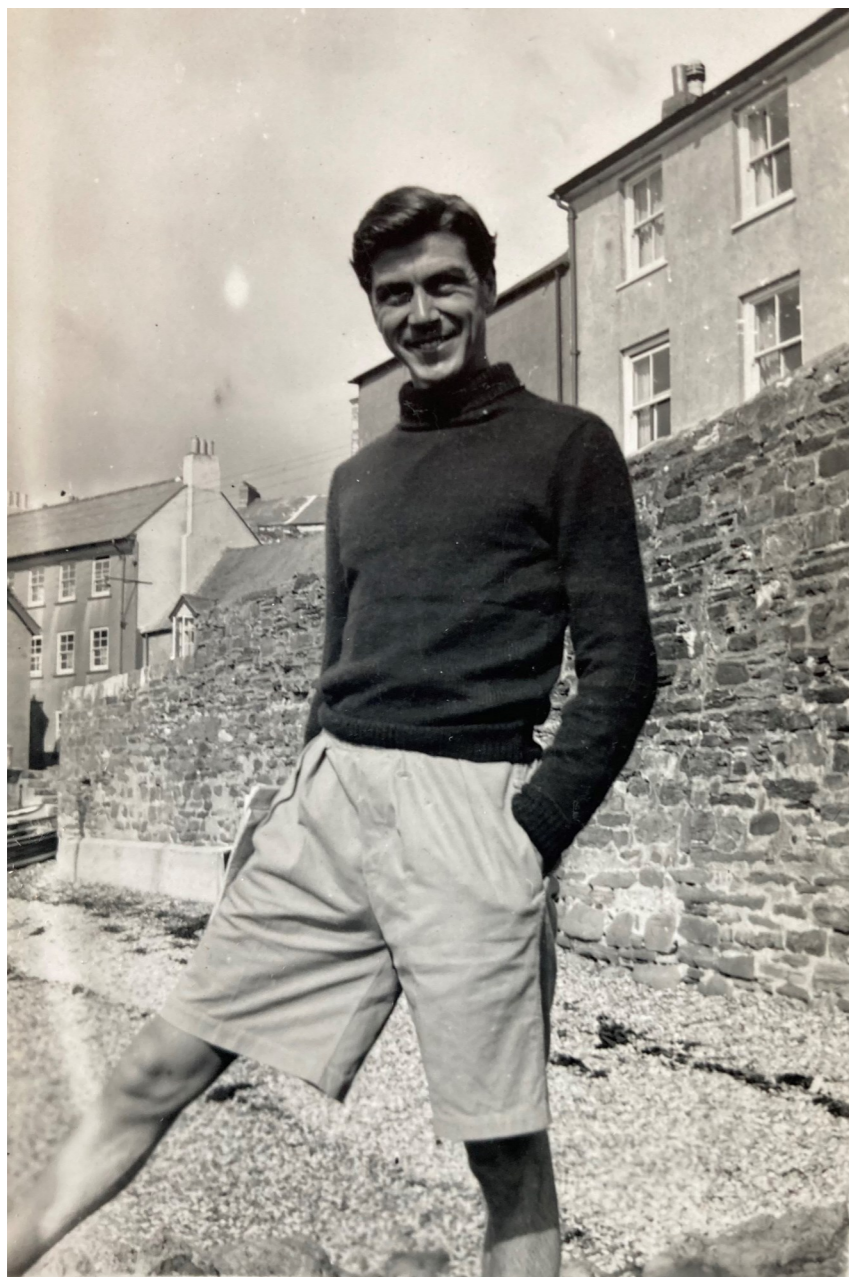


# David Colby - Pilot



David Colby was born on 1st June 1920 in Norwich to Victor and Lily Colby. Never very academic, he shone at cricket and played for Norfolk.

## War Service

In 1939 he was working as a civil servant in Lowestoft town hall so, without hesitation, he joined the RAF and was sent to South Africa later becoming a Pathfinder pilot for Bomber Command from 1942. He was also part of the Photographic Reconnaissance Unit taking aerial photos to improve the targeting of bombs. David was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in December 1945 for his leadership and courage and successful missions.

## Civil Pilot

After the war he joined British South American Airways as a pilot and in The Gambia in March 1946 he met Rita Baines, who was working as an air hostess, and invited her to a dance in Fajara.

*Saturday, March 30th 1946  
Danced with Rita Baines, stepped off "Star Tiger". He had been through once before & we did not notice each other. Took her to Saffron dance in evening & enjoyed her company. She is attractive.*

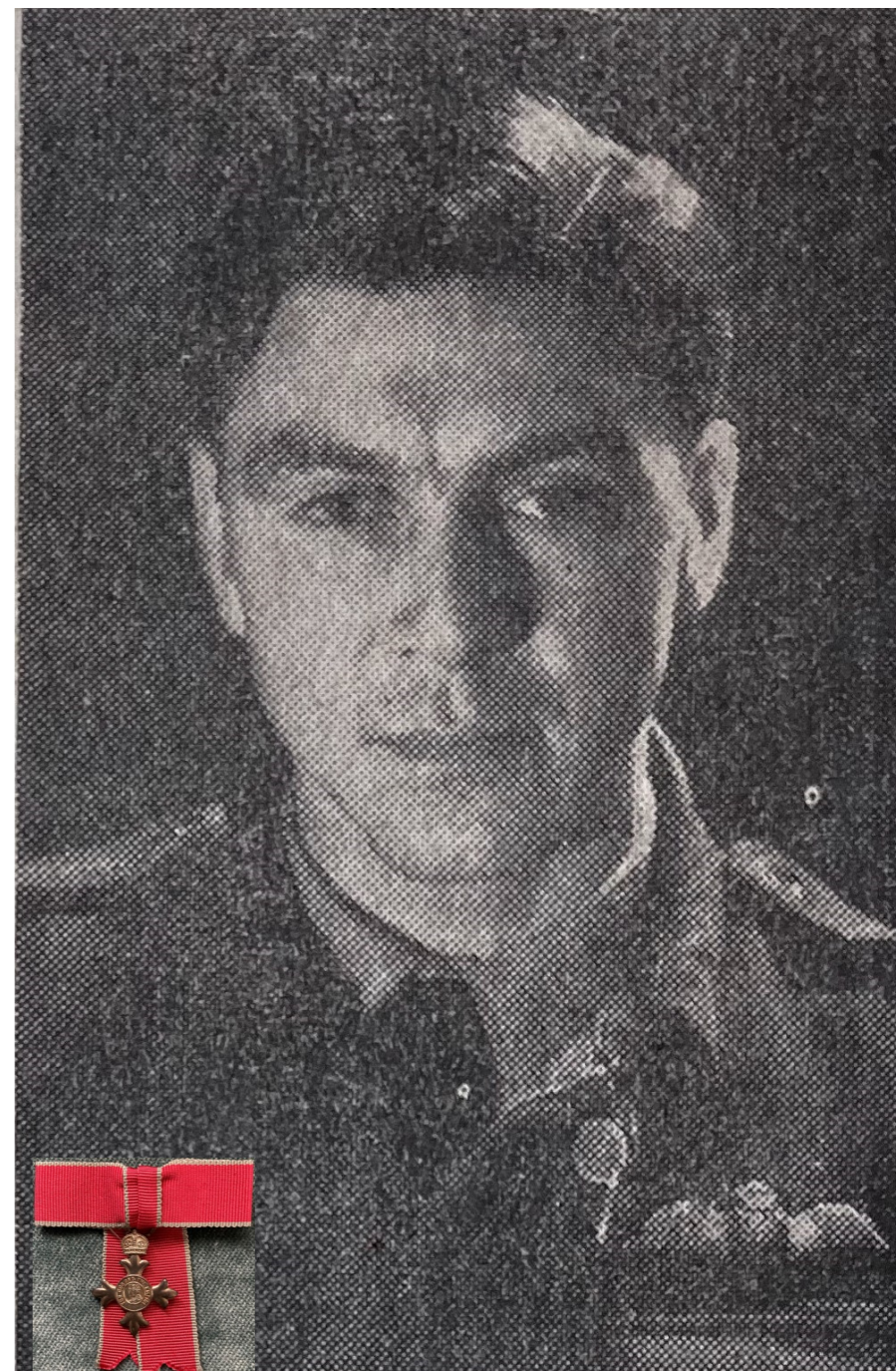
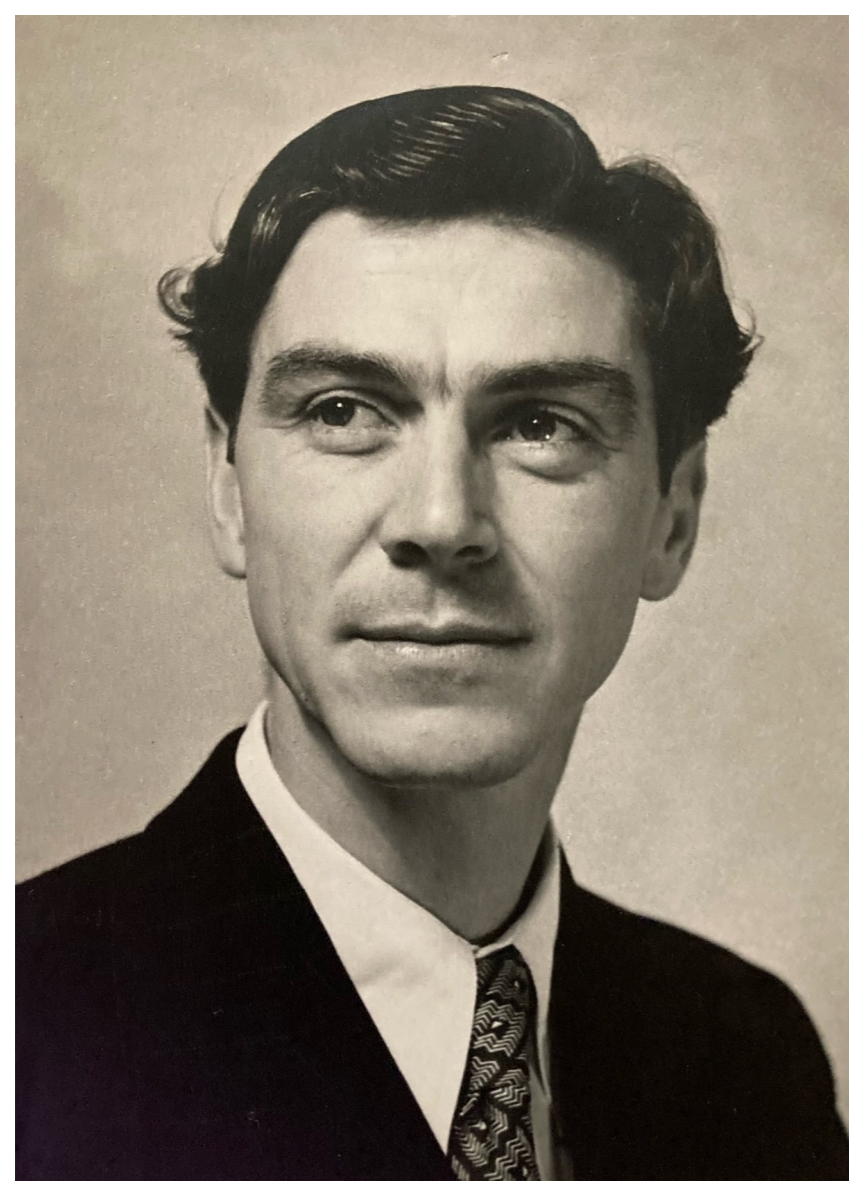
He recorded the meeting in his diary.

Their engagement was announced in September 1946 and they were married in November 1946 at Trentham Church and set up home in Northwood, Middlesex.

## Tragic Mystery

He was pilot of British South American Airways Avro Tudor IV Star Tiger (registration G-AHNP) when it was lost during a multi-leg flight from Lisbon, Portugal to Bermuda. The plane departed the island of Santa Maria in the Azores on January 29th, 1948, following a weather-related delay. Continuing poor conditions blew the aircraft off course. After correcting their route, the captain believed they still had sufficient fuel to get to Bermuda. Somewhere in the early morning hours of January 30th, the Star Tiger, as well as her crew of six and twenty-five passengers were lost in the Atlantic Ocean. The probate statement says: "Died on or near 30th January 1948 near Bermuda, West Indies."

His daughter Caroline was born on 1st June 1948 – the day that her father would have been 28.



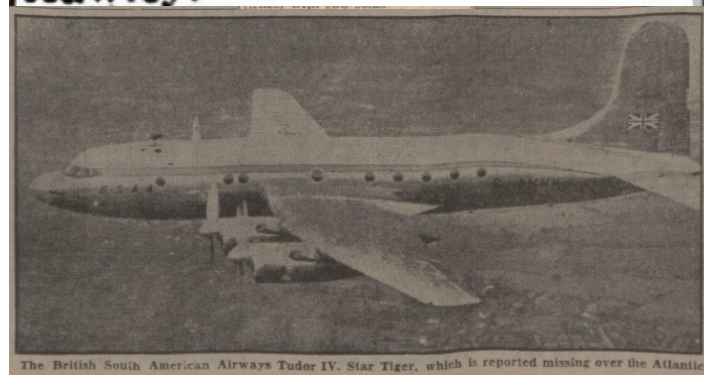
Squadron Leader David Colby, R.A.F.V.R., second son of Mrs. L. F. Colby and the late Mr. V. C. Colby, of 30, The Avenue, South Lowestoft, has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his tour of operations on Mosquitos of Pathfinder Group, Bomber Command. The citation reads: "Squadron Leader Colby has taken part in 44 operational bombing raids including 12 to Berlin. Throughout his tour his leadership, courage and fortitude have been most pronounced, setting such a fine example to all members of the squadron. On the ground and in the air, his untiring efforts have been rewarded by his successful bombing missions and by the respect he commands from the crews under him. He has at all times shown the utmost keenness in carrying out any task assigned to him."

Squadron Leader Colby is now seconded from the R.A.F. to British South American Airways, whose director and general manager is his ex-A.O.C., Air-Vice Marshal D. C. T. Bennett, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O.

## The "Star Planes"

The Star Venture belong to the same company as the Tudor aircraft Star Tiger which disappeared 12 months ago on a flight from the Azores to Bermuda.

Members of two well-known Potteries families lost their lives in the Star Tiger disaster. The pilot or co-pilot, Captain David Colby, was the husband of Miss Rita Baines, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Baines, of Trentham, and herself a former air hostess on British and South American Airways planes, and a passenger was Captain Cyril M. Hawley, youngest son of Mrs. Hawley, of Rough Close, and brother of Mr. Oswald Hawley.



Captain Cyril Hawley and Captain David Colby, both members of well-known Potteries families, who were on board the lost air-liner, "Star Tiger."

## STAR TIGER

### Fate "Will Never be Known"

The fate of the British South American Airways Tudor IV. air liner, Star Tiger, lost on January 30th when flying from the Azores to Bermuda, must remain an unsolved mystery, states the report of the Ministry of Civil Aviation Inquiry.

In the complete absence of any reliable evidence as to either the nature or the cause of the disaster to Star Tiger (the report states) the court has not been able to do more than suggest possibilities, none of which reaches the level even of probability.

The Star Tiger had a crew of six and 25 passengers, including Air Marshal Sir Arthur Coningham. Members of two well-known Potteries families were on board—Captain Cyril M. Hawley, of Jamaica, youngest son of Mrs. Hawley, of Somerville, Rough Close, and brother of Mr. Oswald Hawley and the late Mr. Val Hawley; and Captain David Colby, the pilot or co-pilot, who was the son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Baines, of The Woodlands, Trentham.