

= Adrian Cole (RAAF officer) =

Air Vice Marshal Adrian Lindley Trevor Cole , CBE , DSO , MC , DFC (19 June 1895 ? 14 February 1966) was a senior commander in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) . Joining the army at the outbreak of World War I , he transferred to the Australian Flying Corps in 1916 and flew with No. 1 Squadron in the Middle East and No. 2 Squadron on the Western Front . He became an ace , credited with victories over ten enemy aircraft , and earned the Military Cross and the Distinguished Flying Cross . In 1921 , he was a founding member of the RAAF .

" King " Cole rose to the position of Air Member for Supply in 1933 and gained promotion to group captain in 1935 . The following year he was appointed the first commanding officer of Headquarters RAAF Station Richmond . During World War II , he led North @-@ Western Area Command in Darwin , Northern Territory , and held a series of overseas posts in North Africa , England , Northern Ireland , and Ceylon . As Forward Air Controller during the Dieppe Raid in 1942 , he was wounded in action and awarded the Distinguished Service Order . Cole served on corporate boards of directors following his retirement from the RAAF in 1946 . He died in 1966 at the age of seventy .

= = Early life and World War I = =

Adrian Cole was born in Glen Iris , a suburb of Melbourne , to barrister and doctor Robert Cole and his wife Helen (née Hake) . He was educated at Geelong Grammar School and Melbourne Grammar School , where he was a member of the cadet corps . When World War I broke out in August 1914 , Cole gained a commission in the Australian Military Forces , serving with the 55th (Collingwood) Infantry Regiment . He resigned his commission to join the Australian Imperial Force on 28 January 1916 , intending to become a pilot in the Australian Flying Corps .

= = Middle East = =

Posted to No. 1 Squadron (also known until 1918 as No. 67 Squadron , Royal Flying Corps) , Cole departed Melbourne aboard HMAT A67 Orsova on 16 March 1916 , bound for Egypt . He was commissioned a second lieutenant in June and began his pilot training in August . By the beginning of 1917 , he was flying reconnaissance and scouting missions in Sinai and Palestine . He took part in an early example of Allied air @-@ sea cooperation on 25 February , directing French naval fire against the coastal town of Jaffa by radio from his B.E.2 biplane . On 20 April , Cole and fellow squadron member Lieutenant Roy Maxwell Drummond attacked six enemy aircraft that were threatening to bomb Allied cavalry , scattering their formation and chasing them back to their own lines . Both airmen were awarded the Military Cross for their actions ; Cole 's citation was published in a supplement to the London Gazette on 16 August 1917 :

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty . With another officer he attacked and disorganised six enemy machines that were about to attack our cavalry with bombs . The engagement was continued until all six machines were forced to return to their lines . His skill and courage on all occasions have been worthy of the greatest praise .

The day after the action that earned him the Military Cross , Cole was flying a Martinsyde G.100 " Elephant " over Tel el Sheria when he was hit by ground fire and forced to crash land behind enemy lines ; after setting his aircraft alight he was picked up and rescued by Captain Richard Williams . On 26 June , following an eight @-@ plane raid on Turkish Fourth Army headquarters in Jerusalem , Cole and another pilot suffered engine seizures while undertaking a similar rescue of a downed comrade ; all three airmen were forced to walk through no man 's land before being picked up by an Australian Light Horse patrol .

= = Western Front = =

Promoted to captain in August 1917 , Cole was posted to France as a flight commander with No. 2 Squadron AFC (also known until 1918 as No. 68 Squadron RFC) . Flying S.E.5 fighters on the

Western Front , he was credited with destroying or sending out of control ten enemy aircraft between July and October 1918 , making him an ace . In a single sortie over the Lys Valley on 19 August , Cole shot down two German fighters and narrowly avoided being shot down himself immediately afterwards , when he was attacked by five Fokker Triplanes that were being pursued by Allied Bristol Fighters . On 24 September , he led into battle a patrol of fifteen S.E.5s that destroyed or damaged eight German fighters over Haubourdin and Pérenchies , claiming one Pfalz D.III for himself .

Cole was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions on 7 October 1918 , when he led No. 2 Squadron through " a tornado of anti @-@ aircraft fire " in a major assault on transport infrastructure in Lille . During the raid he successfully bombed a goods engine and a troop train , and put several anti @-@ aircraft batteries out of action , before leading his formation back to base at low level . The announcement and accompanying citation for his decoration was gazetted on 8 February 1919 :

On 7th October this officer carried out a most successful flying raid on enemy railway lines and stations . The success of the attack was largely owing to his cool and determined leadership , and our freedom from casualties was mainly due to the methodical manner in which he collected and reorganised the machines after the raid . He himself displayed marked initiative and courage in attacking troops and other objectives . Since May Capt. Cole has destroyed four hostile machines .

= = Between the wars = =

Returning to Australia in February 1919 , Cole briefly spent time as a civilian before accepting a commission in the Australian Air Corps , the short @-@ lived successor to the Australian Flying Corps , in January 1920 . On 17 June , accompanied by Captain Hippolyte De La Rue , he flew a DH.9 to a height of 27 @,@ 000 feet (8 @,@ 200 m) , setting an Australian altitude record that stood for more than ten years . He transferred to the Royal Australian Air Force as a flight lieutenant in March 1921 , becoming one of its original twenty @-@ one officers . On 30 November , he married his cousin Katherine Cole in St Peter 's Chapel at Melbourne Grammar School ; the couple would have two sons and two daughters . Squadron Leader Cole was posted to England in 1923 ? 24 to attend RAF Staff College , Andover , returning to Australia in 1925 to become Director of Personnel and Training . Promoted to wing commander , he was in charge of No. 1 Flying Training School (No. 1 FTS) at RAAF Station Point Cook , Victoria , from 1926 to 1929 . The first Citizens Air Force (reserve) pilots ' course took place during Cole 's tenure at No. 1 FTS ; although twenty @-@ four accidents occurred , injuries were minor , leading him to remark at the graduation ceremony that the students were either made of India rubber or had learned how to crash " moderately safely " .

Cole held command of RAAF Station Laverton from 1929 until his appointment as Air Member for Supply (AMS) in January 1933 . The AMS occupied a seat on the Air Board , which was chaired by the Chief of the Air Staff and was collectively responsible for control and administration of the RAAF . In March 1932 , Cole accepted an invitation from the Lord Mayor of Melbourne to serve as Deputy Chairman of the 1934 MacRobertson Air Race from England to Australia , to celebrate Melbourne 's Centenary . Provision of the RAAF 's radio facilities and technicians was considered a boon for contestants , though Cole later recorded that his role involved " twenty months ' hard work , without pay ... with loads of scurrilous and other criticism " . Promoted to group captain in January 1935 , he became the inaugural commanding officer (CO) of Headquarters RAAF Station Richmond , New South Wales , on 20 April 1936 . The new headquarters , which had been formed from elements of two of the base 's lodger units , No. 3 Squadron and No. 2 Aircraft Depot , supplanted an earlier arrangement where the CO of No. 3 Squadron had doubled as the station commander . Cole was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in the Coronation Honours of 11 May 1937 , and attended the Imperial Defence College in London the following year . He returned to RAAF Station Laverton as CO in February 1939 , taking over from Group Captain Henry Wrigley .

= = World War II = =

As part of the RAAF 's reorganisation following the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 , No. 2 Group was formed in Sydney on 20 November , with Cole in command . The group controlled Air Force units in New South Wales . Cole was raised to temporary air commodore in December , and took charge of Central Area Command , which supplanted No. 2 Group , when it was established in the new year . In September 1941 , he was sent to North Africa as Officer Commanding No. 235 Wing RAF of the Desert Air Force , where he helped establish a new anti @-@ submarine warfare unit , No. 459 Squadron RAAF . Posted to England with Headquarters No. 11 Group in May 1942 , he served as Forward Air Controller of the Dieppe Raid on 19 August , responsible for co @-@ ordinating Allied air cover off the French coast aboard HMS Calpe . In doing so , he was seriously wounded in the jaw and upper body when German fighters strafed the ship ; he required plastic surgery and spent several weeks recuperating . His gallantry during the action earned him the Distinguished Service Order , the announcement being published in a supplement to the London Gazette on 2 October 1942 . The same month , he was made Air Officer Commanding (AOC) RAF Northern Ireland , with the acting rank of air vice marshal , though the command was described in the official history of Australia in the war as a " backwater " .

In May 1943 , Cole returned to Australia , taking over as AOC North @-@ Western Area Command from Air Commodore Frank Bladin in July . Based in Darwin , Northern Territory , he was responsible for regional air defence , reconnaissance , protection of Allied shipping and , later , offensive operations in the New Guinea campaign . Cole found the command in " good shape " but considered its air defence capability inadequate , recommending augmentation by long @-@ range fighters such as the P @-@ 38 Lightning . He nevertheless had to make do with the three squadrons of Spitfires already on his strength , and the possibility of calling on the USAAF 's Fifth Air Force for reinforcements as necessary . During August and September , he reduced regular reconnaissance missions to " increase bombing activity to the limit " , following a request from General Douglas MacArthur to provide all available support for Allied assaults on Lae ? Nadzab . North @-@ Western Area B @-@ 24 Liberators , Hudsons , Beaufighters and Catalinas carried out raids to destroy Japanese bases and aircraft , and divert enemy forces from Allied columns . Through March and April 1944 , Cole had thirteen squadrons under his control , and was supporting amphibious operations against Hollandia and Aitape . In May , he directed bombing from North @-@ Western Area on Surabaya as part of Operation Transom .

Cole handed over North @-@ Western Area to Air Commodore Alan Charlesworth in September 1944 . He took up an appointment as Air Member for Personnel (AMP) in October , but was removed soon afterwards following an incident at RAAF Headquarters , Melbourne . The Chief of the Air Staff , Air Vice Marshal George Jones , received an anonymous letter alleging that Cole had become drunk and lost control at a mess meeting on 8 November . Investigating the matter , Jones was unable to establish whether or not Cole had been drunk but was satisfied that he had not behaved appropriately , and issued him a warning without charging or otherwise disciplining him . Under pressure from the Federal government , Jones dismissed Cole from the position of AMP and posted him to Ceylon in January 1945 as RAAF Liaison Officer to South East Asia Command . Cole served in this role until the end of the war , taking part in negotiations for the Japanese capitulation and acting as Australia 's senior representative at the formal surrender ceremony in Singapore on 12 September 1945 .

= = Retirement and legacy = =

Cole was summarily retired from the RAAF in 1946 , along with several other senior commanders and veterans of World War I , primarily to make way for the advancement of younger and equally capable officers . In an earlier minute to the Minister for Air , Arthur Drakeford , regarding post @-@ war command prospects , Air Vice Marshal Jones had assessed Cole as having failed to display " certain of those qualities expected to be possessed by senior officers of such rank " . In any case , his role overseas was redundant . Cole , for his part , later wrote to the Melbourne Herald that he considered the RAAF 's administration during World War II to be " weak " , and that as a

consequence he felt " a lot happier to serve most of the War with the Royal Air Force " .

Ranked substantive air commodore and honorary air vice marshal , Cole was officially discharged from the RAAF on 17 April 1946 . He resented being forcibly retired , and stood for election as the Liberal Party candidate for Drakeford 's seat , the Victorian Division of Maribyrnong , in the federal election that year . Cole stated that his candidacy was " an endeavour to bring some sense and stability to Government administration " but was unsuccessful , and Drakeford retained the seat . Cole subsequently served as a director with Pacific Insurance and Guinea Airways . He died in Melbourne of chronic respiratory disease on 14 February 1966 . Survived by his wife and four children , he was buried in Camperdown Cemetery , Victoria , following a funeral at RAAF Base Laverton .

Cole Street and the Cole Street Conservation Precinct at Point Cook Base , RAAF Williams , are named for Adrian Cole . His decorations were held by the Naval and Military Club , Melbourne , where he had been a long @-@ standing member . In July 2009 , following the club 's dissolution , the medals were to be auctioned along with other memorabilia . This action was challenged by Cole 's family , who argued that his decorations were only on loan to the club , and should be donated to the Australian War Memorial (AWM) . As the Supreme Court of Victoria deliberated on the case , the parties involved negotiated a settlement whereby Cole 's medals would be transferred to the AWM .