



**03 maggio 2012**

**La notizia è di quelle da fare molto clamore e risale a circa due mesi fa (missione 104), la pubblichiamo solo ora dopo le dovute procedure informative alle Autorità Egiziane e Britanniche.**

**Il fronte di Alamein serba ancora grosse sorprese, a chi sa cercarle!**

**La missione 104 di ARIDO ha portato al ritrovamento di un P40 Kittyhawk inglese che a seguito di un atterraggio forzato è rimasto nascosto per 70 anni.**

**Un lungo lavoro di ricerca documentale associata a ricerche assidue sul "campo" hanno permesso questo grandioso risultato: Andrea, Daniele, Mohamed hanno perlustrato il territorio a sud di alamein e hanno ritrovato un pezzo di storia fantastico.**

**Del relitto abbiamo ricostruito la storia, l'identità del pilota e altri dati che di seguito riportiamo.**

**Arido, Arido Desert Academy, Siwa Paradise Expeditions e qattara.it saranno gli interlocutori per tutte le operazioni connesse al recupero e all'assistenza in loco alle squadre deputate alla rimozione per il recupero .**

**A breve altre info e il programma delle prossime missioni.**

**facciamo rinascere la storia!**

















[www.arido.eu](http://www.arido.eu) [www.qattara.it](http://www.qattara.it)



[www.arido.eu](http://www.arido.eu) [www.qattara.it](http://www.qattara.it)

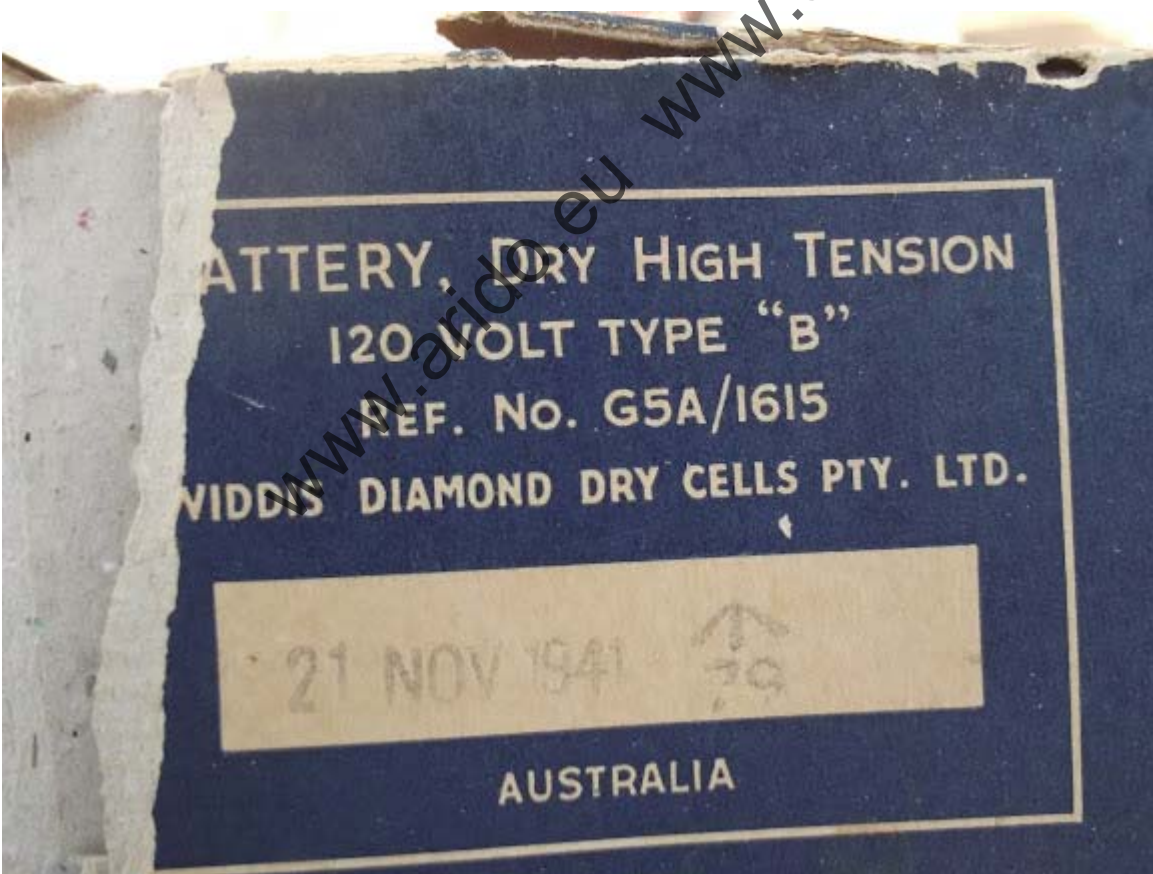




[www.arido.eu](http://www.arido.eu) [www.gattaro.it](http://www.gattaro.it)













260 Squadron Kittyhawks in North Africa







[www.arido.eu](http://www.arido.eu) [www.qattara.it](http://www.qattara.it)



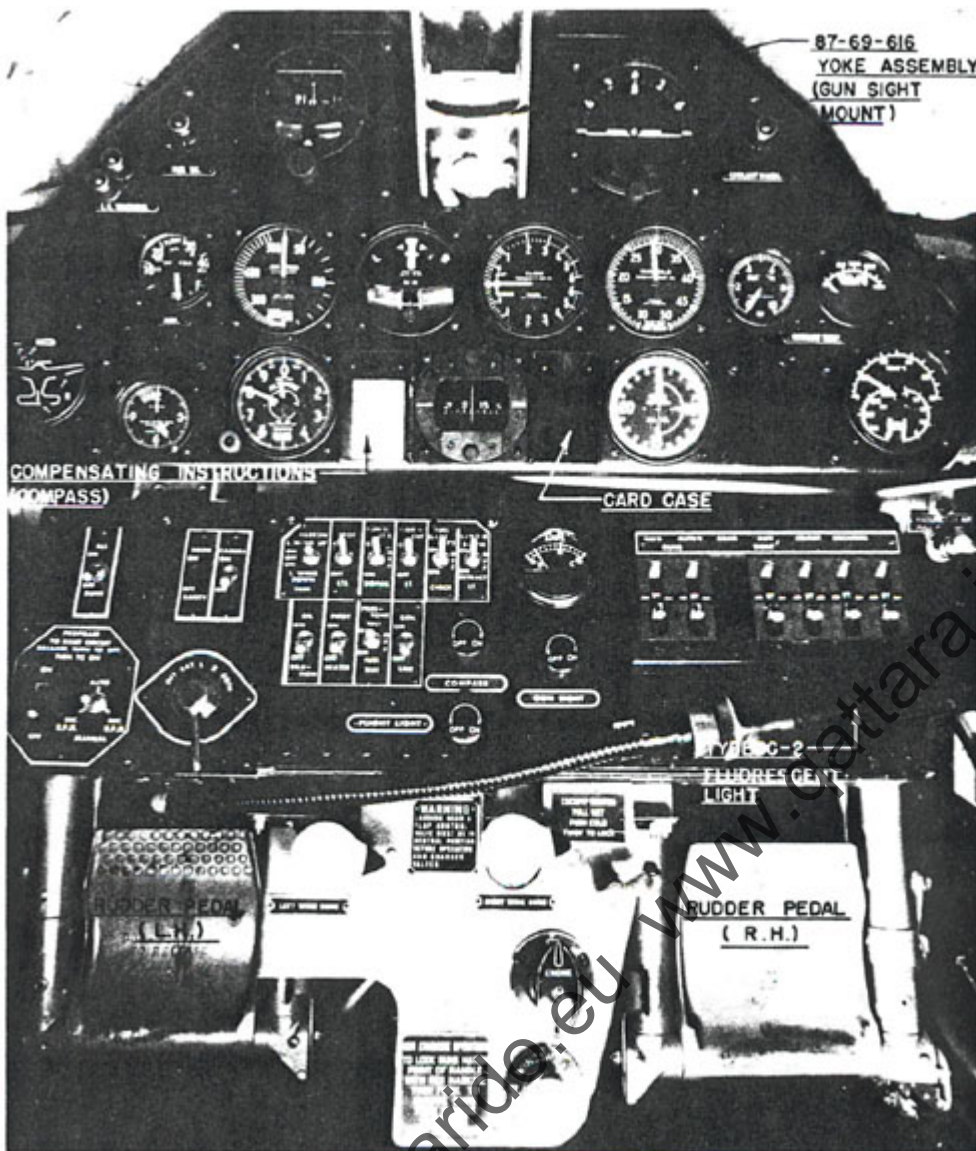
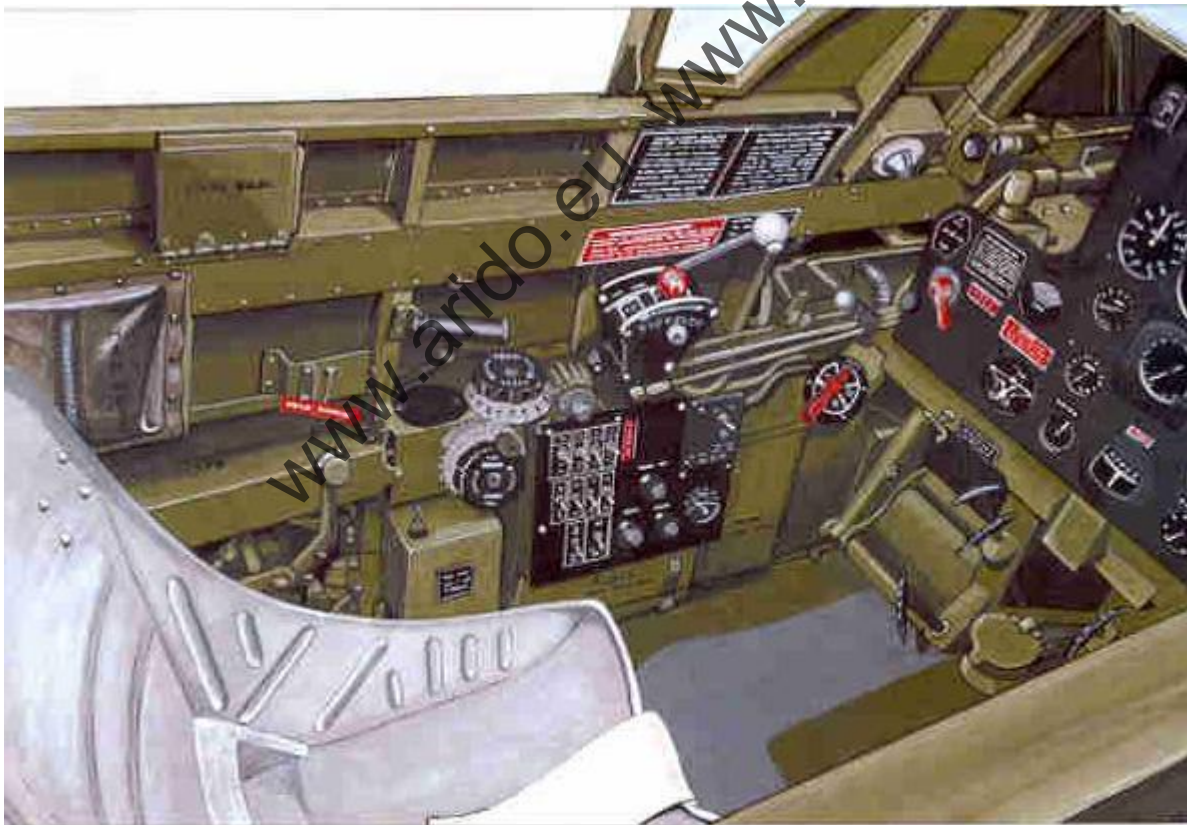
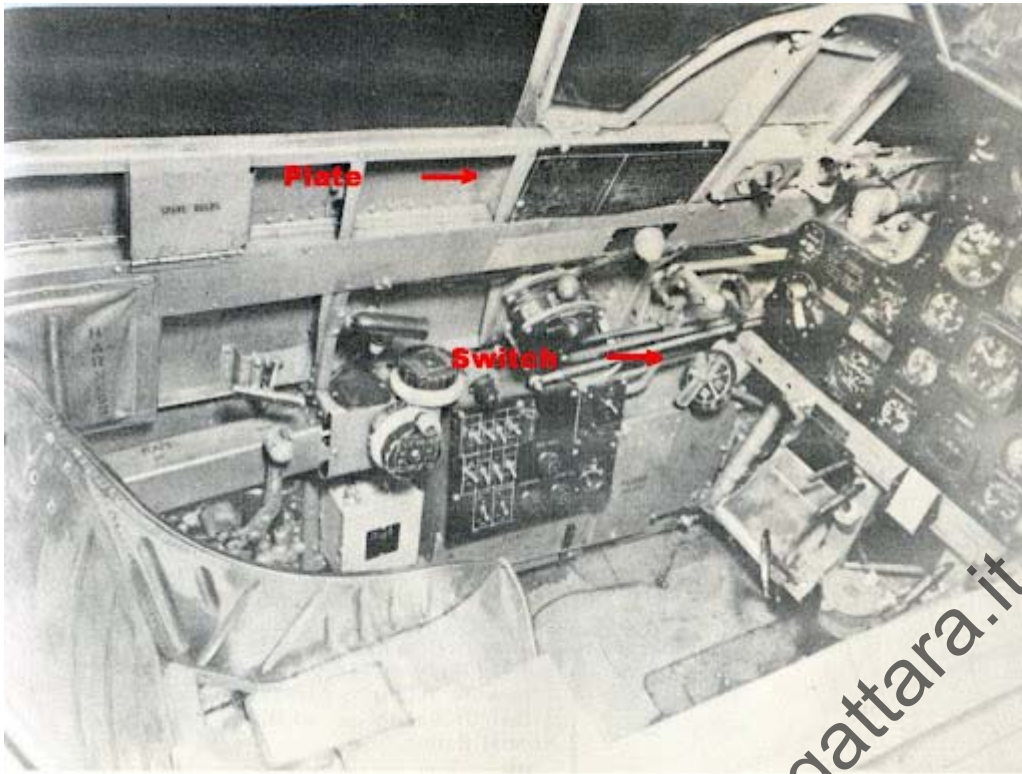


FIG. 106 INSTRUMENT AND MAIN SWITCH PANELS





Pilotni prostor P-40B

P-40B's cockpit



.....On 28th June 1942 ET574 piloted by Flt Sgt D.C.H. Copping 785025 left 260 to fly to an RSU. The A/C flew with the U/C locked down owing to damage.

Flt Sgt Copping set the wrong course and was thought to have crashed in the Desert owing to fuel exhaustion . FLt Sgt Copping listed as missing on this day."

**E' ricordato all' el Alamein Memorial  
COPPING, DENNIS CHARLES HUGHMORE**

**Rank:**

**Flight Sergeant**

**Service No:**

**785025**

**Date of Death:**

**28/06/1942**

**Age:**

**24**

**Regiment/Service:**

**Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve**

**260 Sqdn.**

**Panel Reference**

**Column 249.**

**Memorial**

**ALAMEIN MEMORIAL**

**Additional Information:**

**Son of Sydney Omer Copping and Adelaide Copping, of Southend-on-Sea, Essex.**

**Il 260 Squadron RAF perse questi piloti in nordafrica:**

**Appendix 5: PILOTS OF 260 SQUADRON LOST ON OPERATIONS IN  
NORTH AFRICA**

**Flight Lieutenant Blandinell, 14 December 1941, Missing**

**Pilot Officer Cidman, 18 December 1941, Missing**

**Sergeant Saunders, 23 March 1942, Missing**



**Sergeant Morley, 2 April 1942, Killed**  
**Sergeant Alexander, 7 April 1942, Killed**  
**Sergeant Tregear, 24 April 1942, Missing**  
**Sergeant Wareham, 25 April 1942, Killed**  
**Flight Lieutenant Wylie, 30 May 1942, P.O.W.**  
**Flight Sergeant Viesey, 31 May 1942, Missing**  
**Flight Lieutenant Hindle, 31 May 1942, Missing**  
**Sergeant Clark, 9 June 1942, Missing**  
**Sergeant Wrigley, 12 June 1942, Missing**  
**Sergeant Carlisle, 26 June 1942, Missing**  
**Flight Sergeant Copping, 28 June 1942, Missing**  
**Flight Lieutenant McKay, 14 July 1942, Missing**  
**Pilot Officer MacLean, 18 August 1942, Killed**  
**Warrant Officer Bernier, 3 September 1942, Killed**  
**Pilot Officer Dunbar, 6 September 1942, Killed**  
**Sergeant Stebbings, 20 October 1942, Missing**  
**Warrant Officer Tomlinson, 23 October 1942, Killed**  
**Flight Sergeant Ody, 26 October 1942, Missing**  
**Flying Officer Meredith, 26 October 1942, P.O.W.**  
**Sergeant Mockeridge, 31 October 1942, Missing**  
**Flying Officer Gilboe, 4 November 1942, P.O.W.**  
**Sergeant Hartung, 5 November 1942, Missing**  
**Flight Sergeant Hill, 11 November 1942, P.O.W.**  
**Pilot Officer Mink, 18 November 1942, Missing**  
**Flight Lieutenant Davis, 20 November 1942, Missing**  
**Flight Sergeant McKee, 15 December 1942, Missing**  
**Sergeant Takvor, 19 December 1942, Missing**  
**Pilot Officer Thagard, 20 December 1942, Killed**  
**Flight Sergeant McLive, 20 December 1942, Missing**  
**Sergeant Adams, 20 December 1942, Missing**  
**Flight Sergeant Arklie, 2 January 1943, P.O.W.**  
**Sergeant Cundy, 26 February 1943, Missing**  
**Flying Officer Kent, 27 February 1943, Killed**  
**Flight Sergeant Colley, 10 March 1943, Killed**  
**Sergeant Orr, 21 March 1943, Missing**  
**Flight Lieutenant Fallows, 26 March 1943, P.O.W.**  
**Flight Sergeant Stauble, 29 March 1943, Killed**

#### **Rapporto della missione:**

**On 28th June, 1942 Flight Sergeant Copping and myself were detailed to take the two aircraft that had been shot up to the RSU at LG100, back on the Cairo-Alexandria road, and to collect two replacement aircraft. We were to fly the replacement aircraft to the squadron's rear landing ground at LG085, before returning to the operational landing ground at LG09.**

The aircraft I was flying had been badly damaged in the wings, having been shot up in a fight with the Hun that morning. The holes on the leading edge of the wings were now filled with sandbags and pasted over with canvas to give the aircraft some stability. Copping's aircraft had something or other wrong with it that could not be repaired on the Squadron, including the fact that the undercarriage could not be retracted, so off we went in the early afternoon. The flight was expected to be 30-40 minutes at the very most.

Copping was flight leader, having been the squadron very much longer than me, with me flying on the right wing. We had been in the air for about 20 minutes after taking off on a south westerly heading, and as Copping had made no attempt to turn eastwards, we were still heading south-west. I assumed he would though south after take off to avoid enemy aircraft or flying over enemy positions, because neither of us could use the guns, but having checked the course several times, I began to get worried. I broke radio silence but received no reply so I closed in on him and tried endeavored to signal the easterly direction. I tried all ways to get him to change course, signaling straight ahead and washing it out, pointed at the compass then the sun and my watch, but he did no budge. We must have been 30-35 minutes out and should be at the RSU, so surely he would realize we were off course but, no, he kept on with the original heading. At that point I had to make a decision. I was right and he was wrong, so I flew in close to him, waggled my wings and pointed eastwards. I turned under him and flew away, hoping he would follow. I returned and tried to attract his attention again, but he would not budge so I turned eastwards again on my own. I checked my compass by the sun and also set the gyro compass and held the course for some 30 to 35 minutes, but all I had seen up to then was sand, more sand and desert, and even more sand and desert. My courage was beginning to fail me a bit then, but I reasoned that by flying with the sun on my right and behind me, I had to be flying eastwards, and so I reset my course to the north east knowing that sooner or later I must come to the coast. One hopes sooner rather than later. Then I saw, to the south and away on my right, the Quattara Depression, and knew that I had done the right thing in breaking away and using my own judgment....

...Whilst writing this, I have remembered that reason I was able to fly away from Copping and then catch him up on the return was because of the fault on the undercarriage of his aircraft and he was flying with the undercarriage locked down.

I adjusted my course to the north and, shortly afterwards, saw the River Nile. I made another adjustment of course to that I hoped would be LG100/53 RSU. In actual fact, I hit the road taken 1hr and 50mins for the half hour trip! The first question asked was why there was only one aircraft when two should have arrived and hour ago.

I explained exactly what had happened and it was suggested that I wait and see if Copping turned up. I went for tea in the ops tent and met the doctor who, strange to relate, was from my home town. After an hour, it was decided that Copping was not going to show and must have used all his fuel, pranged somewhere in the desert. I was instructed to collect the new aircraft and fly to LG85, reporting to Base CO for further orders.

Arriving there, I found the Base CO was F/L Wilmot who had been my Flight Commander on joining the squadron. Once again, I had to go through exactly what happened and he thought it hilarious, saying Copping would enjoy that walk back. It was too late to fly up to the operation LG that night and there was always a spare tent and bed, so being keen and enthusiastic, I expected to rush off first thing next morning. However, later in the evening we received instructions to prepare for the reception of all the Squadron. We really were in retreat, and Copping was temporarily forgotten.

---

" At that date 260 Squadron would have been at Landing Grounds 76 and 115. Assuming the former, that would be located about 30 miles due south of Sidi Barrani. The likely base for the RSU is the Cairo area. If so the choice would be to fly along the coast to short of Alexandria then head SE to Cairo, the safer option, or fly direct across the Qattarra Depression. That latter course would take it to within about 50 miles of the reported 'Spitfire' in my earlier post. On a flight of that duration, over pretty featureless terrain, 50 miles is well within the zone of navigational error.."

Contemporary report on Copping's loss "Kittyhawk Pilot" by James 'Stocky' Edwards and Michel Lavigne, first published in 1983;

28th June 1942

"...The order was given to evacuate immediately," Eddie wrote. "All serviceable aircraft were flown off by the light of a few drums set on fire. They landed under similar conditions at LG-106." The Kittyhawks landed at their new base about thirty miles east of LG-09 in the dark. It was about nine o'clock and the day had been long for most, but not long enough for F/Sgt Copping. He didn't make it over the ground convoys who fumbled their way to LG-106 in the dark, pushing their trucks through the heavy sand. Fear gripped the fighter pilots when they heard their orders on 29 June. "Retreat again," was the command that came down. The German spearhead had advanced confidently all day as the Desert Air Force moved



further east. By nightfall, the Afrika Korps had reached an area twenty-five miles south of El Daba, providing the Luftwaffe with operational landing grounds close to the scene of the next battle. 260 Squadron of the RAF and the South African fighter squadrons were ordered back from LG-105 and LG-106 to LG-85 at Amriya during the day. .."



A.R.I.D.O. qattara.it A.R.I.D.O. Desert Academy Siwa paradise Expeditions

By Andrea Mariotti & Daniele Moretto