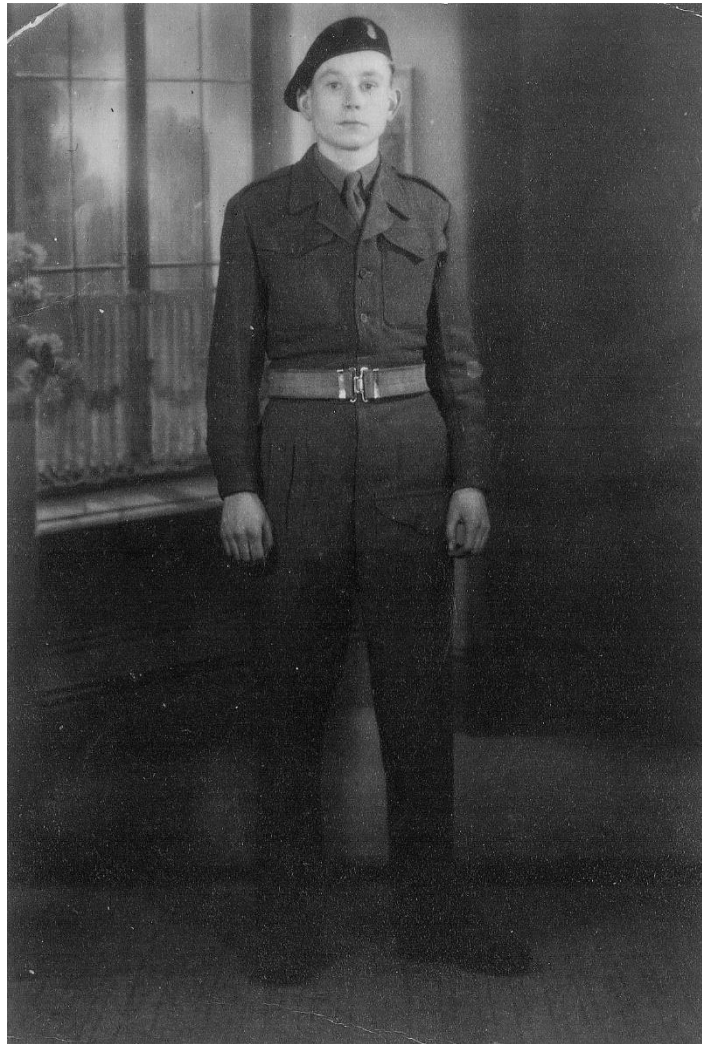


Edward Smoczynski (1928-)



Private Edward Smoczynski, 1946.

Edward was born in Szczucin, 85 km east of Kraków in South-Eastern Poland.

September 1939 and WWII broke out, I was 11 years old and for me it meant the end of school, it was something, which had a dramatic effect on my life. I became illiterate, something which caused me much pain and embarrassment. 1940 saw me deported by the Germans from my hometown and thrown straight into work. The Germans were not interested in educating Poles. The work was out on the land on the Sudeten (land taken over by the Germans). A year later and I was allowed a break and I left for Poland by train. Those were different times in occupied Poland and I travelled about 600km. I remained in Poland and then in 1942 I was deported again. This time to Western Germany and straight into hard labour, working for a Bauer, extremely challenging for a young boy.

I was in Germany for three years on the farm and was liberated by the Americans on the 1st of April 1945 on the very day that President Roosevelt died. The Americans took us to the displaced persons camp in Podberborne for a few months (1st May 1945). Here the Poles organised training for young people.



Top: Edward Smoczynski, Stanislaw Strzelczyk and ? Kotula taken in Zoes, Germany. Photo taken near one of dams breached by the dam busters.

With the war over, I was 17 years old. The British were recruiting into the army and this is where I remained – in the British 8th Army for 3 years until 1948 when I arrived in Harwich, England. From there to Cambridge where I lived for a few weeks staying in transit camps. On to Attleborne, Norfolk and finally on to Rotherham where I worked in the steel works.

This account was put together after interviewing Edward Smoczynski.



Bill – Sgt. Alldridge, Wally – Hewitt the Quartermaster, John – Sgt. Stonelink and Edward of course me!



Bad-Lib school of Offensive Air Support. An Air Force School under the British 8th Army 21st Group with my friends.



Taken near Zoes, where the dambusters succeeded.



In more modern times at home.