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**Stanley Douglas Tweddle** Légion d'Honneur, ARCST, CEng, MIMechE,

## **Citation for Honorary Fellowship of IESIS**

Stanley Tweddle had an important career in engineering, particularly with his involvement with the Normandy Landings during World War II. The Ministry of Defence recently submitted citation papers to the French authorities in support of the award of Légion d'Honneur following the latter's expressed wish to honour living servicemen directly involved in the armed liberation of their country in World War II.

Initially educated at Carlisle Grammar School and at Carlisle Technical College, he gained City and Guilds Certificates in Automobile Engineering and Electrical Engineering while working at Graham and Roberts Ltd, a large private car and commercial vehicle distributor and dealership.

He joined Albion Motors, Scotstoun, Glasgow as an apprentice and attended evening classes at the Royal College of Science and Technology (RCST) now the University of Strathclyde. Upon the outbreak of war, he volunteered for the Royal Navy and was eventually reluctantly released by his employer for Naval Service. After passing a trade test he was awarded the rank of Engine Room Artificer (ERA) and after a ten week naval induction, was posted to HMS Vidette, a destroyer based at Gibraltar. Whilst with the Vidette, at the minimum age of 21, he was promoted to Chief ERA. His destroyer service involved hotly contested Mediterranean convoys, intercepting blockade runners and other escort duties.

He was then posted to a landing craft flotilla which took part in the landings on Sicily and on the Italian Mainland, across the Straits of Messina. Whilst on Sicily, Stanley was invited to dinner by Mafia members who were, of course, interested in backing any potential winner in order to restore their influence. In one incident Stanley, in order to ensure a good night's sleep for his tired men, had to resort to firing over the heads of the local noisy fishermen who came down to fish at night.

Upon his return to the UK, while working at Portsmouth he was able to see the quality of prospective engineering officers and remarked upon it to his CO, who suggested that he apply for a commission. He first had to go for an interview with the Engineering Captain (who had been the Engineering Officer of the Vidette on the China Station, prewar!). After the successful interview and attendance at a Selection Board in London he was told to report back to Portsmouth as a Sub Lieutenant (Engineering).

His first posting as a Commissioned Officer was as Engineering Officer for a flotilla of Assault Landing Craft (LCA). The establishment was built up with staff and equipment and was posted to Roseneath on the Gareloch and subsequently to Inveraray on Loch Fyne, for both naval and troop training. Stanley was responsible for all aspects of maintaining and

repairing the LCAs, supervising a wide range of trades. The flotilla was transferred to Poole for further intensive training and took part in Operation Overlord (D Day), landing troops on Gold Beach from the ship Empire Spearhead, a fully equipped floating base with workshops. Repairs were needed to LCAs both on the ship and on the beach whilst under fire. Then followed an intensive period of several weeks landing supplies for the advancing troops via the Mulberry harbours, after which he discovered that he had been promoted to Lieutenant (E) but everyone had been too busy to tell him.

As the need for small landing craft receded, he was posted to a Tank Landing Craft (LCT) flotilla which was involved in action as part of Montgomery's re-taking of Antwerp - again under fire in a successful invasion which took several days of intense fighting. The craft were badly damaged by coastal batteries. In one incident the LCT he was aboard was sunk under him but he did not even get his feet wet as he was able to step onto another of the flotilla which came alongside.

After being demobbed in late 1948 Stanley rejoined Albion Motors and attended the RCST on block release, achieving an Associateship of the College.

In 1950 he joined Fibreglass Ltd, a part of the Pilkington Glass Group, as a production department manager. In 1952 he went to Syracuse University in New York State and gained what would now be described as an MBA. He went on to design, construct, commission and manage a production facility in Bombay, India. On return home, he became Chief Engineer of Fibreglass and was responsible for the design and construction of two further facilities in the UK. He retired in 1981.

Stanley came 'through the ranks' to become a highly competent professional engineer. In particular IESIS now wishes to celebrate in particular his courage and skill in helping, in 1944, to achieve success in what was probably the most complex logistic exercise of all time.

Philip Preston  
IESIS President  
April 2015

Stanley Tweedle died in July 2015.  
He was awarded the Légion d'Honneur posthumously in September 2015