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Storying the self: A symposium, University of Brighton. 29th March 2017

The Last Argosy ([www.lastargosy.com](http://www.lastargosy.com))

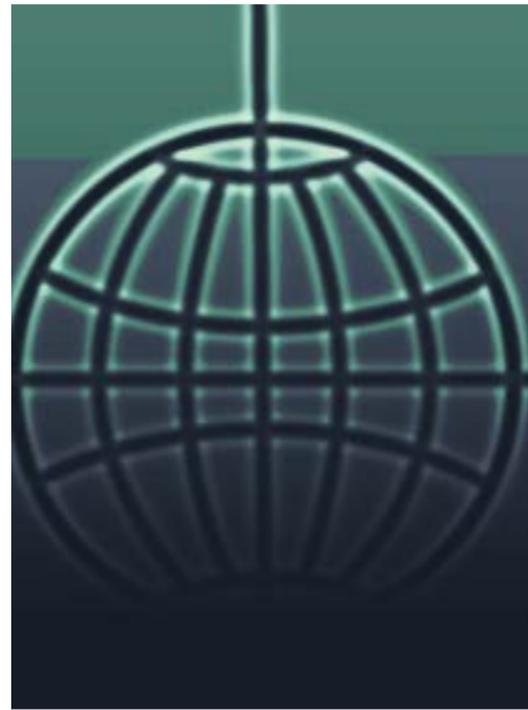
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Abstract



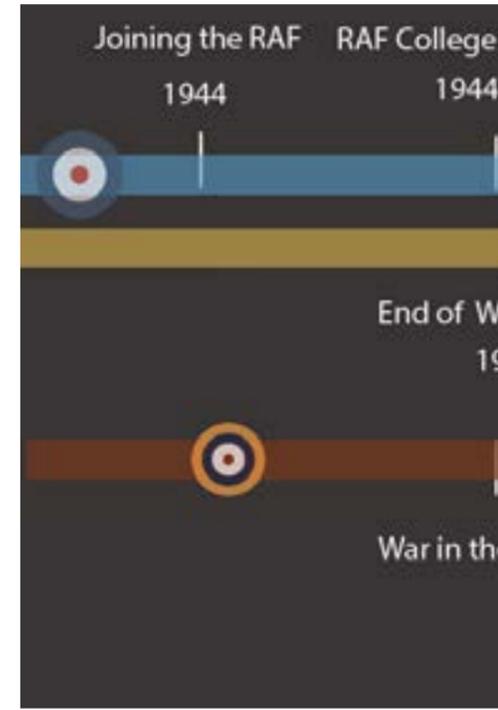
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Graphic designer as custodian of stories



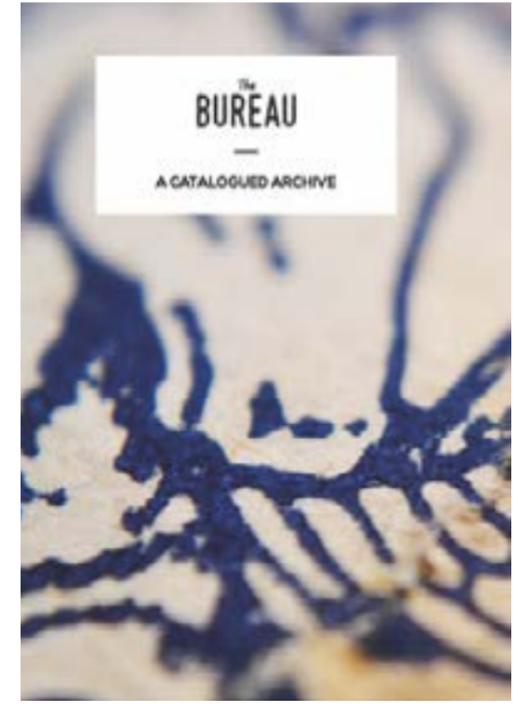
02

Mixing of narrative from out of the archive



03

Student engagement with storytelling



04

Summary





*Edward.C Rigg: An ordinary yet extraordinary life.*

This paper proposes to address verbal and visual storytelling contained within found items and archives.

As a graphic designer, I am currently researching the archive of Edward C. Rigg. This is the story of an ordinary yet extraordinary life. Rigg's personal archive is a rich resource of detailed historical content, focusing on his time in the RAF just after the Second World War and documenting his profession as a jet test pilot and transport pilot during the 1950s and 1960s.

Data shadows & Visual residues in the generation of written and visual narrative.

Auto-ethnography analyses personal experiences as part of a wider reflection and understanding of character and diversity of cultural experiences.

Examined through my own self reflective narratives



Transcribed prints from the slide archive of Edward.C Rigg

Graphic design methodologies and the design process have been fundamental in the creation of distinct visual outcomes. The final images, which feature on the Last Argosy website ([www.lastargosy.com](http://www.lastargosy.com)), are part of the narrative distilling process, which in turn creates its own visual data. The graphic design process helps to connect stories from out of the archive and to a wider cultural audience through physical exhibition and online digital platforms.

Auto-ethnography key in building a framework to bring together ways of storying the self.

The paper accounts for the role of the graphic designer as custodian of stories

The mixing of narratives and student engagement with storytelling



Original slide and physical archive.

## 1. Graphic Designer as custodian of stories and transcription into visual graphic forms

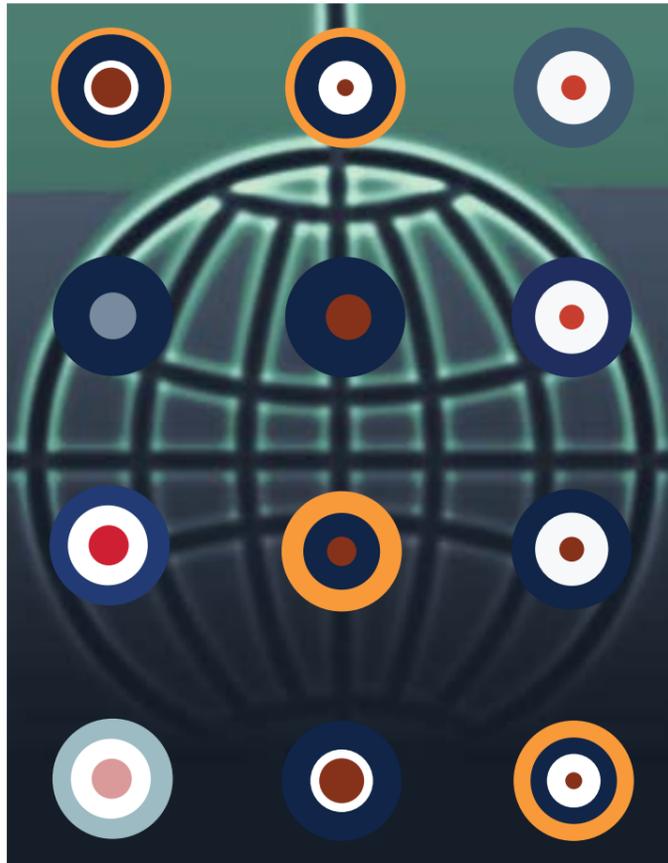
The archives of Edward C. Rigg are multi-faceted, providing historical factual data, such as planes tested, times and dates of various missions, but also interesting personal stories and anecdotes.



Physical archive.

Slide archive.

Video archive.



*Icon design development generated from the slide archive.*

I have now known Edward for three years and his memory is deteriorating. On occasions, I have to retell the stories to Edward to remind him, what he himself told to me; which reminds us of the fragility and mutability of memory in the 'storying of the self'. Edward has no immediate family and the likelihood this archive of experiences will be lost forever has caused custodian (Rigg) and researcher many sleepless nights.

Graphic designer, part of a narrative transcription.

Design and development (design process).

Type selection, composition, colour, paper stock, formats.

Media channels: Print, Installation, Web & Interactive.

*Timeline* LAST ARGOSY Edward C. Rigg Themes Main content

Edward C. Rigg  
Neglected memories mementoes

“I've come to join the RAF.”

On Edward's eighteenth birthday, he came out of school and walked down to the local recruiting centre, based in Rochdale Town Hall. Still wearing his school blazer and cap, he made his way to the reception desk. The man behind the desk looked up and said, "And what do you want young man?". Edward replied, "I've come to join the RAF." The recruiting officer replied "You cannot join the RAF until you are eighteen". "I am eighteen" was Edward's response, to which the officer said, "Oh! and when are you eighteen?" Edward replied, "This morning". This was the beginning of a remarkable flying career.

Edward C. Rigg  
First posting Guterloch, G Just after the

Joining the RAF 1944	RAF College Cranwell 1944 - 46	RAF Keewil 1946 - 47	No. 3 Squadron 1947 - 49	No. 26 Squadron 1947 - 49	Central Gunnery School 1945 - 52	Empire Test Pilots School 1953	A. & A. Establishment 1954 - 56	Empire Test Pilots School 1961 - 64
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2. Mixing of narratives in the storying of the self – what this reveals?

Interactive timeline, intertwining storying of personal experience.

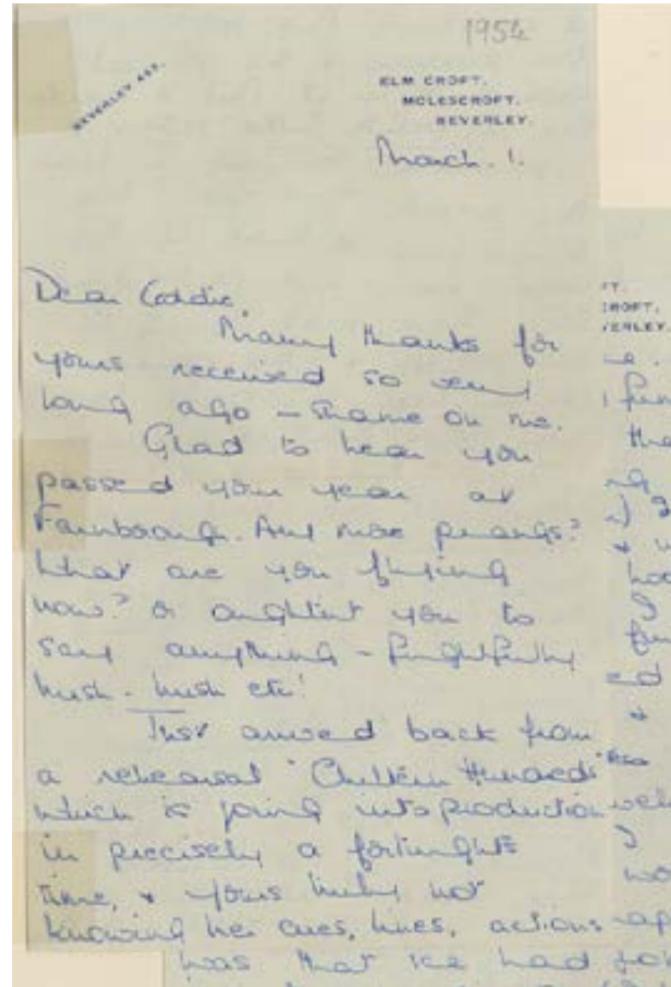
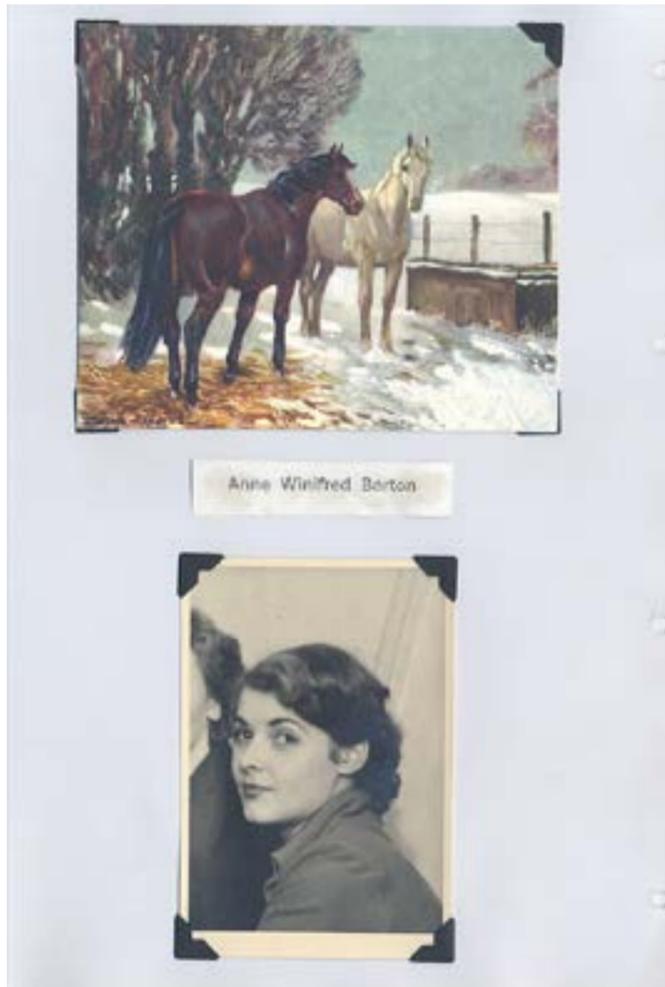
The physical archive has presented many design challenges. Firstly, I thought about creating a facsimile of the original by sourcing paper stock of the original time periods of the 50's and 60's; re-creating the archive as a physical installation. This was more a response to the notion that I would never possess or own the archive.

Personal.

Cause and effect.

Current social, political & economic.

The viewer's personal timeline.



Edward with Anne

Everything we experience is subject to decay and although Edward still retains vivid memories of his life and times they are subject to loss, fragmentation and collision. I have recorded many interviews with Edward and on occasions recorded the same stories to analyse any fluctuation in the story process.

Multiple changing story lines.

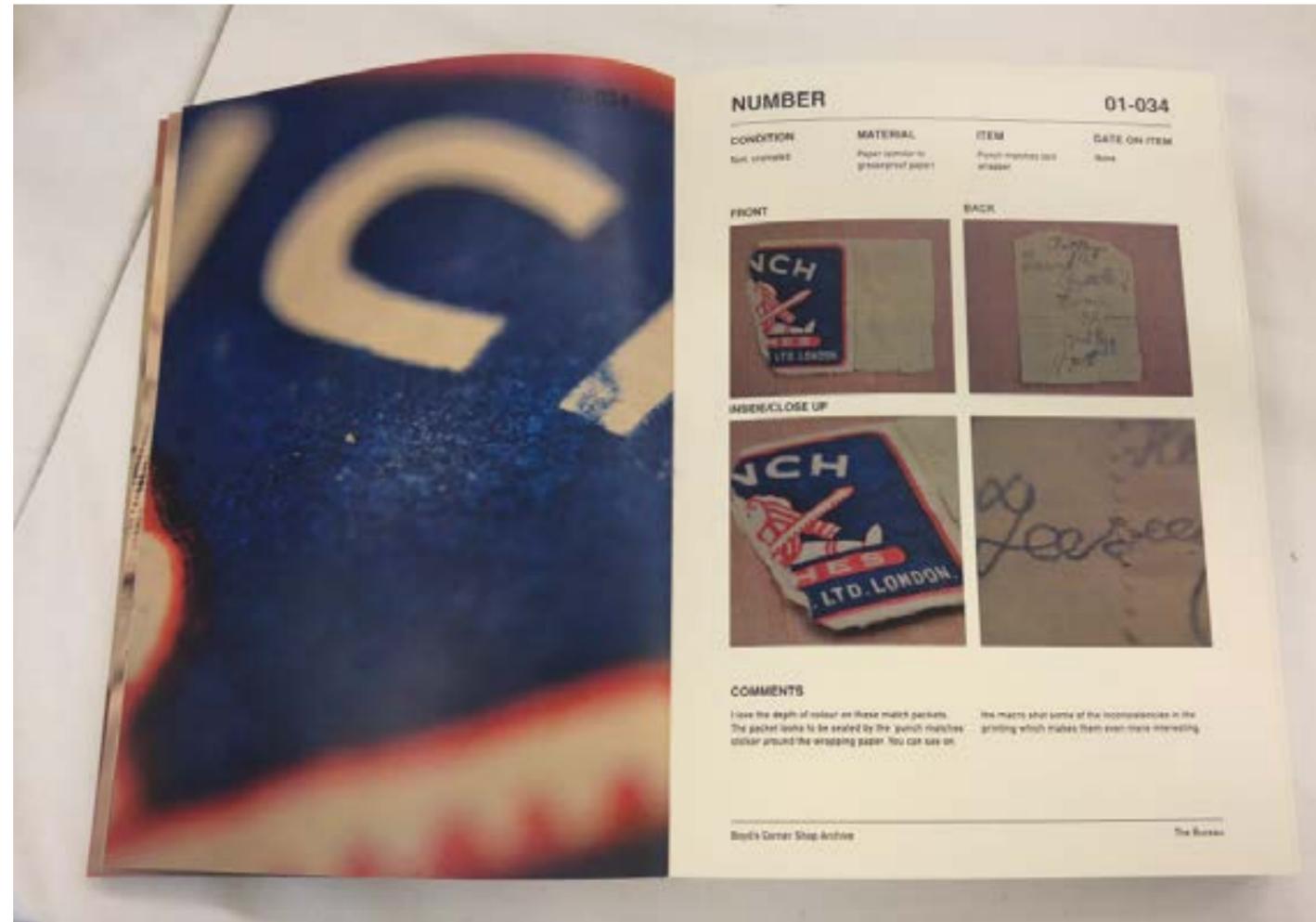


*Accrington corner shop records*

### 3. Student engagements with storytelling – the mechanisms of auto-ethnography and inter-generational experience

As a mode of graphic design communication, narrative is pivotal in establishing the contexts of events, including historical and personal experiences. Techniques of deconstruction and reconstruction are embedded within storytelling. Important factors are at play in establishing a sophisticated graphic language.

I introduce students to found items and encourage analysis of materials, time periods, construction, content and possible narrative development. In the early process of narrative development, I use a vintage leather writing folder circa 1970's, which contains two French train tickets, writing pad, envelopes and a calendar. I encourage the participant to develop personal perspectives and develop characters and narrative from the object.



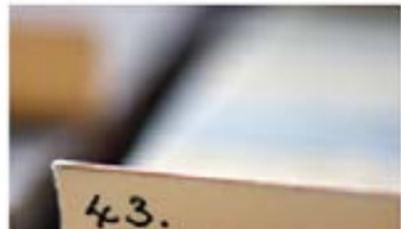
*The Bureau, transcribed from the Accrington corner shop records.*

Two boxes of accounts and advertising strategies found in a derelict corner shop in Accrington from the 40's through to the 70's. The boxes contain assorted ephemera including Football pools coupons. For some students involved in the deconstruction process it will be the first time they have seen a pools coupon. Links are established to contemporary equivalents such as on line/mobile betting.

transcribed the values and advertising strategies of the original corner shop boxes, to develop a contemporary think tank brand, 'The Bureau'. This outcome is a well-informed cotemporary multi channel; content rich design solution promoting sustainability and healthy living.



The Last Argosy



In the News



Gallery



Edward.C Rigg: An ordinary yet extraordinary life.

## Summary

Edward has designed the archive and selected and arranged the materials contained within. As a designer I have extracted aspects of the materials to make compositions and used the archive as the basis to instigate Edward's narration of events. The audience can then engage with these arrangements of fragments and read them through their own experience.

Storying the self has highlighted, how narrative development elevates and enriches graphic design practice. It creates a visual and textual knowledge base, which encourages debate and further contributions. The auto-ethnographic process has proved valuable in terms of encouraging conversations and ultimately insights, which inform and influence the design process.