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After converting to jet bombers, Steele served on Canberras with No 617 Squadron before becoming one of the early pilots to join the new V-Force.

His participation in the H-bomb tests was followed by three years in the Air Ministry, after which he returned to the V-Force as chief instructor at the Valiant and Victor conversion unit at RAF Gaydon. He then served at HQ 3 (Bomber) Group and at HQ Bomber Command, and was appointed CBE.

In June 1969 Steel assumed command of the large airbase at Wyton, the home of the RAF's strategic photographic and electronic reconnaissance forces with squadrons of Victor, Comet and Canberra aircraft.

On promotion to air commodore, he was Air Commander in Malta, then Commandant of the Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre at Biggin Hill. He retired from the RAF in 1978.

For a number of years, Steele was the house manager at Boughton House, the Northamptonshire home of the Duke of Buccleuch. For 23 years he was honorary president of No 1101 (Kettering) Squadron of the ATC, an organisation he held in great regard.

A skilful carpenter and handyman, in the 1970s Steele restored and converted a seagoing boat, which he moored on the Thames and used as a family home during one of his tours in the MoD.

Arthur Steele married, in 1944, Eileen Sellon. She died in 1979, and he is survived by his second wife, Rachel, and by two daughters of his first marriage.



Vickers Valiant Bomber