

30.1.43 - No.3

INDIAN JOINT WAR COMMUNIQUE

The following communique was received in London from India this morning:

No change has been reported from the Arakan front.

Yesterday (January 29) two Japanese bombers, escorted by a few fighters, dropped bombs in the Maungdaw area on the Naaf river. No damage was caused and no one was hurt.

R.A.F. activity yesterday consisted chiefly of shipping patrols and offensive reconnaissances along the Arakan coast. None of our aircraft is missing.

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WAR OFFICE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST, OR USE ON CLUB TAPES
BEFORE 0030 B.S.T. (i.e. FOR MORNING PAPERS) ON
SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1943
THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING
ANY MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO.

IN THE WAKE OF THE EIGHTH ARMY

LONG-TERM PLANNING FOR THE FIGHTING MAN'S WELFARE

Right down the ages it has been a truism that an army marches on its stomach. In modern warfare this is still an outstanding fact. But an army's requirements are constantly growing as new demands are created by the increase in scientific methods of waging war. The Eighth Army and its leaders themselves know only too well the extent to which the multifarious services that follow in their wake across a thousand miles and more of desert are helping them in their task. Here are brief glimpses of some of the work that is done to keep the fighting man fit.

ALEXANDRIA TO TOBRUK EXPRESS

From Alexandria to Tobruk a road and a railway follow the Mediterranean coastline for close upon 500 miles, the sea on one side and the limitless desert on the other. Along the railway run, perhaps, a dozen trains a day, made up of scores of coaches carrying thousands of tons of stores and supplies. These stores and supplies are a major part of the needs of the Eighth Army.

The Royal Engineers take great pride in the railway. Army engineers completed it and work it. When we retreated they stripped it of rolling stock and damaged the permanent way. When we advanced they repaired the damage done by the enemy, brought back the rolling stock and, in a matter of days, were giving full service again. One of the Sappers' happiest boasts is that at Fort Capuzzo, following hard upon the heels of the Eighth Army's advance guards, they got to work on November 12, the day of the capture, and by November 19 were delivering ammunition, petrol and food at the emergency railhead. Another is that the same success was obtained with the same speed at Tobruk. On November 20 our troops were in the town; on November 27 rail-borne supplies were reaching them. Between El Alamein and rail-head the Germans laid hundreds of mines and attempted to destroy the line in hundreds of places.

A 300-MILE PUSH

When Italy attacked Britain in June, 1940, rail-head was at Mersa Matruh, less than half the way from Alexandria to Tobruk. There it remained during General Wavell's campaign in the Western Desert. As part of the preparation for General Auchinleck's offensive it was carried forward to the frontier at Fort Capuzzo. After the relief of Tobruk in December, 1941, it was pushed on to its present terminus. The extension measured nearly 300 miles.

Despite the pace at which it was driven through, the job was solidly done. A metalled bed was made, sleepers were laid, culverts and bridges were built. The track was single. Therefore many sidings had to be provided, besides the usual equipment of points, signals, platforms and stations. The desert sands saved the builders some difficulties and presented them with others. Keeping the rails above ground always and everywhere was a heavy and continuous task. Yet the construction went ahead at the rate of 3 miles a day.

/ The 300 miles

The 300 miles of line from Mersa Matruh to Tobruk were built by three railway companies of New Zealand Engineers and one Australian Company. New Zealanders also drive the locomotives. The Alexandria to Tobruk Express does not break records; but it never fails to arrive.

TOBRUK AND BENGHAZI

When Tripoli is in full use as a port, the supply problems of the Eighth Army will be much simplified. Meanwhile a great part of the requirement of the fighting troops in water and food, fuel and ammunition, and equipment of all kinds is reaching them by way of Benghazi and Tobruk.

Both Benghazi and Tobruk are fine natural harbours on a coast where harbours of any kind are few. Benghazi is the more extensive but also the more exposed. Neither is a well equipped port as that description is understood in England. Tobruk has a single quay 300 yards long, where the deepest water is only 5 feet. Benghazi has double that yardage with the same depth of water. Italian engineers long ago built the quays of concrete so solidly that subsequent attempts by both sides to destroy them have done little permanent damage; but even with the quays still available, neither Benghazi nor Tobruk is a port at which an experienced docks engineer would choose to discharge over 1,000 tons a day.

Yet that is just the task which the engineers of the Eighth Army have been performing day after day at each port since the first fortnight after its capture. The clearing away of the wreckage left by the Axis is only the beginning of the job.

WHERE THE BRITISH SYSTEM SCORED

Ships are brought into harbour by the Royal Navy. As soon as they cast anchor the Army takes charge. The Royal Engineers provide barges and lighters, supervise the unloading and landing and reloading on trucks, and direct the immediate driving away of all goods to dumps and depots. British practice does not allow any delay at the quayside. As soon as stores and supplies are ashore off they go. This promptitude prevents congestion and denies enemy aircraft targets whose destruction would be a serious matter. When the Axis held the ports a clean quayside was a less absolute rule. Piles of goods accumulated and, as a consequence, British air raids were able to do damage which would have been impossible had the Axis followed the British system. In any case British air supremacy must have meant heavier losses for the enemy. How effective was the work of the British bombers was shown by the large proportions of many cargoes thrown into the harbour from Axis ships desperately anxious to get away.

Within a fortnight of the British entry into Benghazi last November 1,000 tons of supplies were being landed there daily. From that figure the increase was very rapid. Landing facilities were much better than they had been during the previous British occupation. A new type of 120 motor lighter was available, incomparably superior to the wooden orange barges from Jaffa which had been used in large numbers during General Wavell's campaign. The lighters run alongside the quays and their contents are transferred direct to waiting trucks. In this manoeuvre the tideless character of the Mediterranean is an immense help; lighters and barges are always at the convenient level. Another help is the number of Axis landing craft behind everywhere at each evacuation by the retreating Germans and Italians.

A disadvantage against which junior officers and N.C.Os of the Royal Engineers have struggled with astonishing success is the multiplicity of languages. They have to organise and control thousands of workers with whom they have had to communicate in German, Italian, Arabic, Yiddish, two or three Central African dialects and half a dozen Indian tongues. Sometimes English comes in useful. Despite it all orders get understood and the work gets done. The Army's necessities reach the Army and the fuel and ammunition and bombs and other needs of the R.A.F. reach the flying fields.

M.T. IN THE 8th ARMY

"War in the Middle East is a battle of wheels for the movement of two liquids - petrol and water", Lieutenant-General Sir W.G. Lindsell, Lieutenant-General in charge of Administration in the Middle East, observed on one occasion. Today, the 8th Army is being supplied and maintained by a greater amount of transport than is now operating in the metropolitan area. This fact gives an idea of the immensity of the task of those who organise M.T. in the Middle East. The danger run by the men who supply the striking force of the 8th Army and its air components with every bullet, every drop of water, every slice of bread that they need, may be gauged by the fact that in the most recent figures the heaviest casualties in General Montgomery's Command were those sustained by the transport drivers.

The system whereby stores and ammunition are brought to the striking force is of interest. General Transport companies of the Royal Army Service Corps, travelling in a great convoy, carry the stores in bulk from the railhead to a Forward Motor Centre where stocks to last for between five and eight days are maintained in bulk. Here the convoys are split up into smaller transport columns and loaded with the daily requirements of a Division. At Divisional Headquarters stores are split up again and distributed to units. Then the convoy of M.T. returns, perhaps to the railhead, or perhaps to some recently established port in use as a base, carrying with it salvage from the forward area as well as prisoners of war and water tins to be refilled. The General Transport companies maintaining this service are self-contained. They are armed against tanks and aircraft and possess their own repair units. Their journey down a single road, or by desert navigation where no roads run, has been compared to the work of a Malta convoy which must be maintained for 24 hours a day every day of the week, however heavy may be the enemy's attack.

ROYAL ENGINEERS AT WORK

"Never do anything without adequate fighter protection - never, never, never" is advice on which General Montgomery is constantly insisting. Fighter protection always up and always ready has indeed made an essential contribution to the success of the Eighth Army. Its provision has been a triumph for the R.A.F. and the Royal Engineers.

Fighter aircraft depend for their full effectiveness in action on the use of airfields close to the combat area. During the 90 days' advance of the Eighth Army over the 1,400 miles from El Alamein to Tripoli a main duty of the Royal Engineers has been to ensure that such airfields should be available to the fighters in the shortest time possible. Their efforts have meant that, whereas in the past an airfield 200 miles in the rear was not thought unreasonably distant, during recent weeks only for brief periods and in rare places has the nearest landing ground been as far as 20 miles behind the firing line.

In the desert, starting from scratch and using their bull-dozers, which will level a sufficient area in an hour, the R.E.s can get an airfield completely finished in 24 hours. More often they seize upon a ground abandoned by the enemy and put it to rights even more quickly.

PATCHING-UP THE DAMAGE

Hardly have the fighting troops passed on before the first sappers appear. It may be one private alone. Shells are still coming over; there is a battery in action on the sand ridge just in front. But he sets to work without delay, detecting booby-traps clearing away obstacles. By the time the advance has gained another half-a-dozen miles the repair squad with their equipment are on the spot, filling in bomb craters which may be the work of the enemy or the R.A.F. and repairing other damage done by the enemy before his **retreat**.

The first stage is to give the R.A.F. an emergency landing ground. On that ground a fighter forced to come to earth is within the protection of the Army. Next, very quickly, fuel is on hand. Then ammunition. As a consequence a fighter which might have been lost on a long flight home or at best would have been out of action for a day or more is again in action in a matter of hours.

/Behind

Behind the emergency landing grounds are operational airfields and full fledged aerodromes with all the facilities required for the repair and service of hundreds of aircraft. On the transformation scene the R.E.s work day and night, and when the development is complete their task is not over. They are still needed for the maintenance of the aerodromes.

All the way from the Egyptian frontier to Tripoli the enemy has abandoned in his flight scores of airfields, and from these, one after another, has gone up the close fighter protection without which the army could not have advanced. And in another way the R.A.F. has repaid the army the help given by the Royal Engineers. On the repaired airfields immediately behind the troops in the firing line have landed many transport planes bringing many kinds of necessaries most urgently required.

WATERING THE EIGHTH ARMY

Notwithstanding rigorous economy, the Eighth Army needs for its daily use five thousand tons of water every day.

Of this enormous quantity, over four-fifths comes from the River Nile, and makes a mighty long journey before it reaches the troops in Tripoli.

From lakes in the highlands of Kenya, Uganda and Abyssinia, the water travels over 2,000 miles through arid Sudan and upper Egypt before it reaches Cairo and Alexandria.

Twenty five years ago, there was a pipeline from the Nile delta to Gaza through which water was pumped to serve Allenby's campaign in Palestine.

Today there is a similar pipeline to Tobruk, through which it is possible to pump 2,500 tons a day. When the Germans left Tobruk they damaged the pipes, but left the pumping machinery and reservoirs almost intact, so that our engineers were speedily able to restore the water service.

Fifteen hundred tons per day, still from the providential Nile, are shipped to Benghazi, and a further 300 tons per day is landed from lighters on to suitable beaches.

From Tobruk, Benghazi and the various beaches, mobile water tanks and metal containers are the means whereby water is brought over the remaining hundreds of miles to become available to our attacking Army. Every drop of it has thus travelled something like 4,000 miles before it finally goes down the throats of the troops and into the radiators of their motor vehicles.

Local wells or other sources, which are few and far between, plus a certain amount distilled from the sea of the Mediterranean, make up the remaining 700 tons per day to complete the full total of requirement.

But the Nile is the principal and essential contributor. And among the many Herculean tasks of our victorious Army in Libya one of the greatest is that of "taking the Nile to Tripoli".

FEEDING THE TROOPS

In order that every soldier pushing forward in Tripolitania may eat his daily bread, an elaborate organisation must reach back from the desert to three corners of the world.

Bulk supplies are requisitioned six months ahead by supply authorities in Egypt through the War Office, who in their turn plan as much as 12 months ahead of time.

Orders for food are transmitted to America, Canada, South America, Australia, New Zealand, India, Palestine, the Sudan and East Africa, whence bulk supplies are sent direct to Alexandria.

In Egypt big reserves are stored, to cover the requirements of the armies and also to meet contingencies such as the feeding of native population in towns and districts wrested from the Axis occupation.

Scales of rations, from which the bulk figures are built up, are numerous and variable. In the Middle East there are 44 different scales of rations, many of which vary from day to day. Different types of service personnel and different nationalities have different requirements, and every effort is made to meet particular preferences. As a consistent average, it may be said that each man needs a weight of 5 lbs (including food and containers) per day.

From Egypt the bulk supplies are sent by rail, sea and motor transport to specially selected "breaking bulk points" from which the Royal Army Service Corps can distribute to units and formations. As the rail-head is extended forward, or new ports become available, incessant adjustment becomes necessary in the planning of bulk transit.

The nearer the food gets to the continually moving spearhead of the Army, the more complicated becomes the need for improvisation of supply arrangements. Every day brings its change in conditions, in distances and in numbers.

And yet through all this maze of changing problems, the Royal Army Service Corps contrives to supply every man with daily rations which include meat and vegetables, bacon, fruit, tea, sugar, salt, preserves, milk, butter or margarine, bread or flour for the mobile bakeries and tinned fish. Further, each soldier is issued each week with 2 oz. of tobacco of 50 cigarettes and two boxes of matches.

TEA FOR THE FRONT LINE SOLDIER

Across the Tunis border the men in tanks and the men driving the heavy trucks have one common anticipation, however intolerable the burden of the day - a brew-up.

They call it "chaa", Hindustani for what Australians call a "cupper": more briefly tea.

Tough as life in the desert must be, there is always "chaa". It is a simple thing to "brew up" beside the tank or truck.

It has been a very much less simple thing to make sure that the man with the striking force of the 8th Army is in a position to make himself that cup of tea that means so much to him.

There is a long history of planning behind that cup of tea. The leaf was grown, perhaps in the Nilgiri Hills, in the Madras Presidency. Picked when green, the leaf was stored for long months before it was despatched to England. Here those planning the future feeding of the Army earmarked the crop, which in due course went in convoy half way round the world to be landed at a port in the Middle East as part of the reserves for the Army in the desert in the months to come.

"YOUR TEA, SIR"

The time came when the tea was wanted in the forward area - across the Tunisian border. From the base it was transported by train to the rail-head at Tobruk: a distance of some 400 miles. Thence it was taken by ship to Benghazi - another 300 miles or so. From Benghazi past Syrte, Misourata and Tripoli, it was carried to the forward area by truck: over 700 miles along the simple desert road, a favourite target for enemy air attack. The great convoy brought the tea, the tinned milk, the sugar, the all-important water, to a Forward Motor Centre. Thence, trucks took each Division its daily needs, and finally, each unit received its stores from the Division.

Private Tom Smith raises his cup. The drink has come to him through months of planning, across seas infested by enemy submarines, over a desert above which enemy planes pass, sowing destruction. Two swallows - two seconds - the cup of tea is gone. Somebody must start planning again. Fortunately, months ago, years ago, somebody has foreseen this need.

/AID

If you are with the striking force of the 8th Army and are wounded in battle - what happens to you then? What organisation is there to come to your aid, how far back are medical centres where you can receive assistance, and what arrangements are made to convey you to these places as quickly as possible?

The most forward medical outpost is the Regimental Aid Post, near and in close touch with Battalion Headquarters, where the unit medical officer supervises the collection of casualties from the battle front. The wounded are hurried to the Regimental Aid Post with the utmost speed. In the desert, in particular, the collection of the wounded is done mainly by ambulances. Stretchers - which are very heavy, difficult to handle, and a slow form of transport, may be necessary in country where roads are few and far between; but in the desert, ambulances are able to cross almost every sort of terrain. There is little chance of giving more than the simplest medical attention in the Regimental Aid Post, which may be no more than a hole in the ground, or the back of a lorry, and which is probably under small arms fire during an engagement. From the Regimental Aid Post the casualty will be conveyed back by Field Ambulance or Light Field Ambulance to one of 2 Advanced Dressing Stations which may be between 3 and 5 miles from the forward area; thence to the Main Dressing Station, perhaps 10 miles behind the Field Dressing Station.

BLOOD TRANSFUSION IN THE SPOT

Field Ambulances form mobile units of nine Medical Officers and 233 other ranks, including drivers, specially trained for desert navigation, for the eight motor ambulance cars in each unit. Light Field Ambulances are of the same type, but smaller and more mobile. Both these units carry out advanced first-aid treatment, and maintain a reserve of thirty days' supply of essential medical stores.

At the Main Dressing Station serious and complicated forms of medical attention are available - among others may be mentioned blood transfusion.

So far our casualty has been treated in the forward areas; behind the front is the Casualty Clearing Station, at which radiological diagnosis, surgical treatment and facilities for retaining cases after operation are provided. Two hundred casualties can normally be accommodated at a Casualty Clearing Station, which is generally sited at or near a railhead, but considerable expansion is possible. In active operations in the desert, the major problem of evacuation is solved by pushing forward Ambulance Trains and Hospital Ships to receive casualties from the Casualty Station or from vehicles collected from Field Ambulances direct. The wounded are also taken back to Base Hospitals by aeroplane in cases of extreme urgency.

One feature of the treatment of the wounded in this war marks a definite and important advance on anything which has gone before; the work done by Field Surgical Units. These mobile operating teams have done conspicuously fine work in the battle in the desert, performing emergency operations in the forward areas in circumstances of great danger. Many a man owes life or limb to the readiness of these intrepid men to translate instant decisions into unfaltering action in the face of desperate odds.

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MILITARY AFFAIRS

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST, OR USE ON CLUB TAPES
BEFORE 00.30 B.S.T. (i.e. FOR MORNING PAPERS) ON

SUNDAY, January 31, 1943

THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING
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Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 9122

BURMESE PILOTS FOR "BURMA" SQUADRON

Four young Rangoon University students, who joined the Burma Volunteer Air Force when it was formed in November 1940, are today serving in Fighter Command. They are the first Burmese pilots to fly with the "Burma" Fighter Squadron, one of the famous units which fought in the Battle of Britain.

The four Burmese, whose ages range from 20 to 23, were sent to India for their initial training, and graduated for advanced training to New Zealand and were there when Japan entered the war. When their country fell they volunteered for service in England.

One of the four, who was studying to be a civil engineer, followed the footsteps of his father who, in the last war, gave up his career at Rangoon University to take a Viceroy's commission in the 17th Burma Rifles.

"I am proud to have done the same as my father," the young Burmese pilot said, "I was accepted for both the Burma Volunteer Air Force and the Burma Navy Volunteer Reserve. I chose the air force as I considered it more adventurous. We were in New Zealand when Japan started her treacherous attack on the Allies. We were unable to go back to help our country so, when it was over-run, we volunteered to come to England. I hope to gain as much experience as possible fighting the Hun here, and then go back east to fight the Japs."

Another of the pilots, whose father also served in the last war and later held an important public office in the Shan States, was also taking a degree in engineering at the university when he volunteered. A third interrupted scientific studies at the university where he was a sergeant in the University Training Corps (Burma Territorial Service). The fourth pilot was destined for a career in electrical engineering after having matriculated from the teachers' training college.

All four are keen on sports. One of them played soccer for the University. Another had already made a reputation for himself as an amateur boxer. The science student's chief sporting activities are football, swimming, weight-lifting, rowing, long distance running, boxing, roller skating and gymnastics.

Although they are the first Burmese to fly with the Burma Squadron they are not the first from their country to belong to it. In the days when Wing Commander R.R. Stanford-Tuck, D.S.O., D.F.C., and two bars, led the Burma Squadron, its engineering officer was Burmese.

NOTE TO EDITORS: Photos available from P.N.A.

FLYING NURSE NOW W.A.A.F. FOOD EXPERT

Before the war, a young children's nurse was flying over the Alps in an Italian plane when her year-old charge became ill because of the high altitude. Oxygen had to be administered and the nurse was able to save the child's life.

Today, this "flying nurse", who in peace-time flew all over Europe with the children of prominent European families, is a sergeant messing clerk on a fighter station in south-eastern England.

Sergeant Evelyn is responsible for ordering all the food for the sergeants' and airmens' messes on the station. She works out diet sheets, keeps the messing accounts and draws the rations for all the station personnel, including the members of the Norwegian Spitfire squadron serving there.

"The Norwegian boys like raw carrots", she says. "They ask for plenty of fresh fish, too, which sets a bit of a problem."

Evelyn joined the W.A.A.F. in February, 1941, as a cook, although she had never cooked at all in civilian life. "I just couldn't think what else a baby's nurse could do to help the R.A.F", she says.

She was born in Falmouth, Cornwall, and trained in baby-craft at the Welgarth College, London.

30/1/43 - No.10

Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No.9134

W.A.A.F. FLIGHT-SERGEANT AS AUCTIONEER

The enterprise of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force at a unit of Coastal Command has raised £40 for the Red Cross Prisoners of War Fund by holding an auction sale of articles provided from among their ranks.

Flight-Sergeant Julie, senior administrative sergeant, was the auctioneer, and R.A.F. and W.A.A.F. buyers outbid each other for a multitude of items, ranging from a chiffon dress to a banana (from Gibraltar) which brought five shillings.

W.A.A.F. cooks relinquished their chocolate ration for a fortnight before the sale, and were pleased to see it treble its price. Three photographs of Tommy Trinder inscribed by him "You lucky W.A.A.F.", were among the most popular bids. Others were a silk evening shawl, bought by a W.A.A.F. waitress, and a pair of stockings, raffled for £7.10s.

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30.1.43 - No. 11

IN THE WAKE OF THE EIGHTH ARMY

C O R R E C T I O N

Under a side-heading, "Your Tea, Sir" in page 5 of M.o.I. Communique No. 6 issued today, bearing the above title, the words "Forward Motor Centre", which occur in the seventh line, should be deleted and the words, "Field Maintenance Centre", substituted.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST, OR USE ON CLUB TAPES
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SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 1943

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Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 9135

A.T.C. CELEBRATE SECOND ANNIVERSARY

R.A.F. and R.N. pilots gave "experience flights" to over 60,000 A.T.C. cadets during their summer camps last year - 15 times as many as flew in the year before. In addition tens of thousands of cadets were air-borne during routine training visits to Air Force and Naval stations.

Altogether it is estimated that over 100,000 cadets, or about half the cadets in the corps, flew with the R.A.F. or the Royal Navy during the year.

This flying record is one of the highlights in the story of the corps' progress during its second year of official existence.

Today, and tomorrow (Monday) the 230,000 A.T.C. members -- officers, instructors, cadets, and deferred service men -- will be commemorating A.T.C. Foundation Day, February 1st 1941. Many of the 1,663 units now formed all over the country will be holding "birthday" parades. Some units are holding special "weeks", with sports meetings, visits from the R.A.F. and recruiting drives.

A typical week is that organised at an East Anglian town, famous in this war and in the last for its defiance of German raiders. A feature is A.T.C. participation with H.M. Forces and the Civil Defences in a combined invasion exercise, when the cadets will operate a messenger service.

The A.T.C.'s second year has been a record of steady progress in training. Well equipped, and reorganised on the new Command basis, and with officers and instructors increasingly experienced in their work, the corps settled down to its main task of providing an adequate number of young men of the required mental and physical standard to enable them to start their air-crew training. How well it succeeded is shown by the fact that about 25,000 cadets gained their air-crew proficiency certificates during the year.

A special achievement was that about 40% of proficient cadets were ex-elementary schoolboys. They were enabled to "make the grade" for R.A.F. entry largely through A.T.C. training.

With a longer period of training due to the lowered age of entry, now 15 $\frac{1}{4}$, and the greater concentration of training resources, the corps is looking to an even greater efficiency than before. A.T.C. officer training schools, ~~and~~ set up also have the same objective.

(Cont'd)

RECORD CAMP YEAR

During the year summer training camps were attended by 102,679 cadets, as compared with less than 10,000 the year before. That means that roughly half the enrolled cadets spent a week or ten days at the 185 R.A.F. and Fleet Air Arm stations where camps were held. All Commands of the R.A.F. acted as hosts to the young air crews of tomorrow. Here are some of the figures:-

Bomber Command 18,000 cadets; Fighter 24,500; Coastal 7,500; Flying Training 11,000; Technical Training 22,000; Army-Co-operation 4,500.

Over 3,000 cadets spent their week at Fleet Air Arm stations. Stories written by cadets in a national A.T.C. essay competition told of flights made with "crack" pilots, and of intimate acquaintance with aircraft previously known only by name.

Gliding, begun by the A.T.C. experimentally during the year, has made steady progress and is still being developed, mostly at week-ends.

About 20 Gliding schools are now in full operation, each serving a number of squadrons, and sites for many more have been approved. Some gliders have been constructed by the cadets themselves working to approved plans, but most of the gliders are requisitioned standard types.

Glider instruction in the A.T.C. follows a systematised plan which ensures the maximum safety. Over 2,000 cadets have been given training in glider operation, and glider flights. Altogether in 1942/43 there were 10,000 launchings without a single accident to a cadet.

The biggest achievement of the corps during its second year was the number of young men trained up to the standard for entry as air crew. The total runs into thousands a month. About three-quarters of the young men now passing into the Air Crew Receiving Centre of the R.A.F. are either ex-cadets or are deferred service men who have been attached to the A.T.C. for part-time training. To meet the needs of the R.A.F. and Fleet Air Arm more emphasis has been placed on the training of air-crew candidates -- pilots, navigators, air bombers, wireless operator-air gunners, air gunner-flight mechanics, flight engineers, etc.

Many ex-cadets are now in the battle with the operational squadrons of the Royal Air Force. Of them Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, Chief of the Air Staff, said: "I hear excellent accounts of the way former cadets are acquitting themselves in the training schools and in active operations".

With this record of solid achievement the Air Training Corps enters its third year determined to see the job through -- to victory.

30.1.43 - No. 15

THEIR UNKNOWN FRIENDS

In the wardroom of the ex-American destroyer H.M.S. SHERWOOD (formerly the U.S.S. RODGERS) hang two photographs of an American family - father, mother, two sons and two daughters.

For two years, while H.M.S. SHERWOOD has been fighting the battle of the Atlantic, the Bateson family, of Long Island, have played god-parents to the ship.

Though they have never met, there is no-one in H.M.S. SHERWOOD who does not regard the Batesons as old friends. Nobody on board knows the link that caused this family to adopt the ship.

The Bateson family and their friends have kept the ship generously supplied with comforts of every description. One of their many gifts was 100 leather jerkins.

"One of these days we hope to be able to drop in and thank Mr. and Mrs. Bateson for their kindness, but that day hasn't come yet," said the Commanding Officer, Lt. Commander W.R. Hickey, R.N.R.

NAVAL AFFAIRS

MARINES PRACTISE WITH SWASTIKA

Any German tip-and-run daylight raider risking a trip over a certain Royal Marine establishment in this country would be astonished to see his own flag prominently displayed on certain occasions.

It is a large Nazi flag, with the Swastika and Eagle flaunting themselves in black against the red ground. It sometimes makes an appearance in the middle of the parade ground, or the middle of the battle practice field.

But this is not a position of honour. The flag is far from honoured. It is not even treasured as a battle trophy by the Royal Marines, whose battle honours are so numerous that their badge is the Globe and Laurel.

The flag is just used to signify the supposed enemy's position in battle drill, and it is attacked with vigour by the new Marine recruits learning the job. They all hope the next Nazi flag they see will have some real Nazis under it to be captured with it.

The flag once flew over the German Embassy in Reykjavik, Iceland. It was seized by the Royal Marines, when they undertook the original occupation of Iceland. It now bears the signature of the Commanding Officer and all the officers and senior N.C.O's of the Battalion which seized it.

30.1.43 - No. 18

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED BEFORE 11.54 A.M.

MIDDLE EAST JOINT WAR COMMUNIQUE

Cairo, 30th January 1943

In the course of patrol operations yesterday our forward elements in the central sector crossed the Tunisian border. Otherwise nothing to report.

Again bad flying weather hampered air activity during yesterday and the previous night.

From limited operations all of our aircraft returned.

WAR OFFICE

30.1.43 - No.19

PRICES OF FLAVOURING ESSENCES

The Minister of Food has made the Flavouring Essences (Current prices) Order, 1943, under which the prices of flavouring essences, syrups, emulsions and concentrates may not exceed the prices which were being charged on December 1, 1942.

The Order applies to all sales of products of the above type used for flavouring human food, including pre-packed culinary essences. It does not apply to spices, mustard, substances recommended as medicines, or products of which the price is controlled by any other Order made by the Minister and for the time being in force.

The Order comes into force on February 1, 1943.

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MINISTRY OF FOOD

Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No.9142

BEAUFIGHTERS GET TWO MORE

Pilot Officer Leslie Wigg of Streatham, London, an intelligence officer at a Coastal Command station, yesterday made his first operational flight in a Beaufighter. The aircraft in which he flew was one of four on patrol in the Bay of Biscay. They encountered two Ju.88s and in a running fight lasting only eight minutes shot both of them down into the sea.

"It was amazing how soon it was over", said the intelligence officer. "I was standing beside the pilot, Flying Officer Payne, when the Ju's were sighted about two miles astern and flying almost a sea level.

"The Beaufighters immediately turned, dived steeply, and attacked. We opened cannon fire at about 200 yards range and I could see hits along the whole fuselage of one of the Junkers. Then my pilot sprayed the enemy's starboard engine which at once caught fire.

"A second Beaufighter now attacked. The Ju. struggled along on one engine just above the wave tops. Then one wing tip dipped and the aircraft crashed into the sea".

Meanwhile the other two Beaufighters had tackled the other Junkers. After they had attacked smoke poured from one of the engines, and the whole aircraft seemed to disintegrate. Pieces of wreckage could be seen scattered on the water.

30/1/43 - No. 20

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 9143

Air Ministry News Service

ANOTHER ENEMY SUPPLY SHIP SUNK

Australians and New Zealanders of Coastal Command flying torpedo-carrying Hampdens yesterday, in a concerted attack, sank a large enemy ship off the Norwegian coast,

Although the enemy vessel was escorted, the Hampdens went in to attack from 50 to 80 feet and several hits were seen on the ship, causing numerous explosions followed by debris and smoke.

Pilot Officer W.H.S. Martin, of Sydney, Australia, who attacked first, said the escort put up a good deal of flak and the vessel itself fired from a forward gun. Shore batteries, too, intervened, but ineffectively.

After the Australians had carried out their attack, the New Zealanders followed, and six hits were obtained. The gunners opened fire on the vessel as they passed over.

Before leaving, the aircraft circled round and watched the ship sink by the stern.

30.1.43. -- No. 22

AIR MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE

Air Ministry No. 9144

Last night aircraft of Bomber Command made another attack on the enemy submarine base at Lorient.

Four of our bombers are missing.

TRANSFER OF GRAIN AND FEEDING STUFFS ON FARMS

ON CHANGE OF TENANCY

A General Licence issued by the Minister of Food allows the incoming occupier of a farm or holding to take over from the outgoing occupier the threshed home grown grain and the feeding stuffs remaining there at the time the change takes place. Any grain taken over must be considered as having been grown by the incoming occupier and may only be used or disposed of so far as permitted by the Orders regulating transactions in home grown grain.

The General Licence comes into force on February 1st; it does not apply to Northern Ireland.

MINISTRY OF FOOD

30/1/43 - No. 32

ROYAL NORWEGIAN NAVAL COMMUNIQUE

The Commander-in-Chief, Royal Norwegian Navy, regrets to announce that H. Nor. M.S. BODO has been sunk. The next of kin of casualties are being informed.

ROYAL NORWEGIAN NAVAL HEADQUARTERS

Air Ministry News ServiceAir Ministry Bulletin No. 9145

MOSQUITOS BOMB BERLIN IN DAYLIGHT
"A DIGNIFIED CEREMONY OF A MILITARY CHARACTER"

Mosquitos of Bomber Command, led by Squadron Leader R.W. Reynolds, D.F.C., gave Berlin its first daylight raid this morning.

Their estimated time of arrival was 11 a.m. This was also Goering's estimated time of arrival at a microphone in the German Air Ministry, where he was due to speak to the German army, navy and air force as well as to the German nation as a whole.

The Germans gave the occasion every possible publicity. Their propagandists were in so much of a hurry that the Deutschland-sender broadcast in German to Europe began to describe the speech at 11 a.m. precisely. The announcer said that Goering was speaking at the same hour as when a decade ago the destiny of the Reich was laid in Adolf Hitler's hands.

"A dignified ceremony of a military character in the form of a roll call," the announcer continued, "took place in the hall of honour of the Reich Air Ministry. The Reichmarshal Hermann Goering made himself the spokesman of the unflinching fighting spirit of all Germans. High ranks of the armed forces, the leaders of the party formations, and a deputation of twenty National Socialist party dignitaries were rallied round the Reichmarshal in this memorable hour."

What was actually happening, in this memorable hour from 11 o'clock onwards, was revealed on every wireless set in Germany, and wherever any German soldier, sailor, or airman was listening in, for every station broadcasting from Germany to the German people and the German armed forces broadcast this "dignified ceremony."

It had already been announced to the German people, though only half an hour before, at 10.30 a.m., that Goering would speak at 11 a.m. At 11 a.m. there was the opening announcement of the speech. Then a few muffled words were heard; it sounded as if a man was shouting at a considerable distance from the microphone. Then there was a confusion of many voices and a shout - or a bang - at a distance. After that the microphone in the air ministry was apparently switched off and a gramophone record of a march was played. The announcer's voice was faded into the music, he said that the Reichmarshal would be delayed for a few minutes. The music went on for nearly an hour, with the announcer cutting in at intervals to say that the speech would be starting in a few minutes. It was not until 12 o'clock that someone at last got Goering up to the microphone.

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All this was reported to Bomber Command as soon as it happened. Word from the Mosquito crews came as soon as they had landed - in the early part of the afternoon. Their first report was: "Bombed target at 1100 hours."

There was a good deal of thin cloud over Berlin, but the crews saw considerable areas of the city through gaps. Visibility was very good above cloud, sixty to eighty miles. One pilot saw one of the main railway junctions, and all saw the river Spree, and the lakes and woods which are characteristic features of the city.

One man said that Berlin looked like a spider's web. The interrogating officer asked: "Did you get the spider?"

It was difficult for the crews to see the results of the bombing. The Mosquitos had got over cloud before most of the bombs burst and pilots took violent evasive action as soon as the bombs had gone. There was scarcely any flak over Berlin; in all, the crews counted twelve flak bursts on the outskirts of the city.

One Mosquito came back by way of Bremen. There was terrific gun fire and a Focke Wulf 190 attacked. The Mosquito pilot dived right down to 50 feet at a speed of well over 450 miles an hour and shook off the enemy.

Flying Officer Anthony Wickham, captain of one of the Mosquitos, has described his flight.

"We flew over Germany in heavy rain. Then we climbed up through cloud into sunlight. Visibility up there was about 80 miles. There was unbroken cloud below until we were only twenty miles from the target. Berlin itself had to be our first pin point.

"We circled round the town expecting showers of flak. Nothing whatever came up. I turned on to the bombing run which was to take us over the centre of Berlin.

"We dropped our bombs, a long stick of them, and watched them go down in a curve. Then at last the flak came from the outskirts of the city - but nothing like we had been expecting. My navigator counted the shell bursts, and there were only twelve of them - all extremely inaccurate.

"I watched Berlin lying below us but just when our bombs were due to burst clouds got between us and the ground. So we turned for home. We flew through cloud and nothing further happened.

"When we got back they told us how we had blown Goering off the air."

And that was the story Flying Officer Wickham told the world tonight on the British radio. He was timed to speak just after nine o'clock. He was not late.

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AIR MINISTRY NEWS SERVICE

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 947

MOSQUITOS AGAIN BOMB BERLIN

Just before Goebbels began to speak in the Sports Palast in Berlin this afternoon Mosquitos were again over the Capital. There was a break of cloud right over the city and the crews saw everything very clearly.

"It was a very quiet trip," Sgt. J. Massey, a mosquito pilot, said. "The only thing that started me at all was the stillness over Berlin. We only saw one squirt of flak on the way out. Over Berlin I noticed how clearly the lakes stood out. We made for the centre and bombed. When we were well on the way back we saw a fighter. He was in front of us, and as he turned to attack we went into cloud, and that was that. One Mosquito is missing from this second attack.

30/1/43 - No. 36

Air Ministry No. 9146

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE

There was slight enemy activity over the South East coast of England this morning.

Bombs dropped at a town on the coast caused damage and some casualties, including a small number of people killed.

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30/1/43 - No. 37

Air Ministry No. 9148

AIR MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE

Aircraft of Bomber Command have carried out several offensive operations over Germany during daylight today.

Two attacks were made by Mosquitos on Berlin.

Wellingtons bombed Emden and other targets in North West Germany.

One Mosquito and four Wellingtons are missing from these operations.

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U. S. NAVAL CELEBRATION

A ceremony will be held at the United States Naval Operating Base, Londonderry, Northern Ireland, on Friday, 5th February, to commemorate the first anniversary of its commissioning, it was announced tonight at U.S. Naval Headquarters, London.

The Ulster base is the counterpart of the famed Queenstown base of the World War One, which was under the command of Admiral Sir Lewis Bayly, Royal Navy. The first American destroyer division arrived at Queenstown on May 4, 1917 headed by the USS WILDSWORTH, under command of Commander Joseph K. Taussig, USN., of Norfolk, Virginia.

The first U.S. Naval vessel to arrive at Londonderry was U.S.S. Albatross, a minesweeper, on January 17, 1942. The Albatross was headed for Iceland, but came into Londonderry because of severe North Atlantic gales. First U.S. Destroyers to arrive were the USS WILKES, USS MADISON, USS ROPER, and USS STURTEVANT on January 21, 1942.

The first shipload of materials for the construction of the base arrived in the Ulster port from the United States on July 18, 1941. The base was built under the direction of the U.S. Navy's civil engineering corps officers and skilled American technicians.

The first commandant was Captain William J. Larson, U.S.N., who was succeeded on October 13, 1942 by Captain Van Leer Kirkman, U.S.N., of Nashville, Tennessee. Captain Kirkman served out of Queenstown and was awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism while serving as executive officer of the USS SHAW, on the occasion of the collision of that vessel with the HMS AQUITANIA on October 9, 1918.

U.S. NAVAL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON