

19/9/42 - No. 26

R.A.F. Middle East News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 8109

MacROBERT FIGHTERS TAKEN OVER BY DESERT SQUADRON

Four Hurricane fighters were presented to an R.A.F. squadron serving in the Middle East this morning.

They were the gifts of Lady MacRobert, and they will carry on the work of her three sons, all killed while flying. Her second son, the late Flight-Lieutenant Sir Roderic MacRobert, was serving in this squadron when killed in action in May 1941.

The ceremony was performed by Air Vice-Marshal W.A. McClaughry, C.B., D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C. Air Officer Commanding in Egypt.

On arrival at the aerodrome, he inspected a guard of honour, and then met the four pilots who are to fly the MacRobert fighters, which bear the family crest. They are named Sir Roderic, Sir Iain, Sir Alasdair, and "MacRoberts Salute to Russia ('The Lady')".

Air Vice-Marshal McClaughry addressed the squadron, and read out the following message received from Lady MacRobert :-

"The name MacRobert returns to the squadron on these aircraft. My boys, whose names they bear, were fighters. Their spirit lives on. They inspire confidence and would never let you down. I am proud of them. I shall be proud of you who pilot the MacRobert fighters. My heart and thoughts will be with you. I am confident you will strike hard for victory. I salute everyone in the squadron. May yours be the spirit of the few. God bless and keep you all. Rachael MacRobert."

In his address A.V.M. McClaughry said :-

"Ever since I first heard of Lady MacRobert, I have been filled with admiration for her courage. Fortunately, there is never any lack of brave men in the British race. Mothers who show equal courage, usually obtain less publicity, and it is only right that this aspect of the war effort should be brought to our notice as it is today.

"While we have mothers like this one, there is little fear that the British people will fail to win through, no matter what the difficulties. This is an example, a woman's example, of what we should all strive to be and to achieve. How many of us can claim to have the spirit and courage like hers, which willingly gives all and then only regrets she cannot do more in the service of her country?

"It should be the aim of all of us to show a spirit and courage like hers, to learn to face adversity, and suffer the rigors of war, with all its trials and discomforts, with only one desire - to come up smiling, hitting back hard, and doing our duty to the best of our ability, without thought of self.

"You will observe the crests and the names of these four aircraft, and whenever you see them I am sure you will receive special inspiration from the circumstances in which the squadron acquired them".

-----OO-----