

EMPIRE AND ALLIED PILOTS SHARE IN VICTORY

Pilots from many parts of the Empire and from any of the Allied nations shared in Fighter Command's victory over the Luftwaffe yesterday, when 20 enemy aircraft were shot down for the loss of nine of ours.

When the Luftwaffe gave battle it did so with considerable forces. A notable feature was that there were several Me.110's among the aircraft destroyed. The type has been much used for bombing in the small-scale raids on this country, but it is not usually met by our forces as an interceptor.

A Yorkshire flight lieutenant D.F.C. destroyed two F.W.190s although he fired at only one of them.

"I gave one a burst into his cockpit, he flicked over out of control, and in going down collided with another F.W. Both blew up and crashed", said the pilot. The pair were among five destroyed by one wing which was attacked by the enemy as the Marauders it was escorting neared their target - the Beauvais-Tille airfield.

Canadians, Australians, two pilots from Rhodesia, a flying officer from Singapore, as well as Frenchmen, Czechs, Dutchmen and Poles shared in the day's successes.

Two pilots who together destroyed nearly 40 German and Italian aircraft while fighting in defence of Malta each shot down one aircraft.

In his first battle as a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force, F/O. George Beurling, D.S.O, D.F.C, D.F.M. and Bar, who was flying with the Royal Air Force when he became Malta's top-scoring pilot, attacked an enemy he saw flying above him and tore off his port wing. F/Lt. J.A. Plagis, D.F.C. and bar, a Southern Rhodesian, whose score in defence of the George Cross Island was eleven destroyed, also bagged a Me. 109 yesterday.

Plagis flew one of the first Spitfires to arrive at Malta in the aircraft carrier Eagle, and he got four German and Italian bombers in a single afternoon.

Although in the first 24 days of September our fighters' have been engaged primarily in defending bombers striking at Germany's air power and industrial potential in occupied territory, and have therefore faced heavy flak as well as fighter opposition, the destruction of 100 enemy aircraft has been achieved for the loss of a little over half this number of aircraft.
