

SHOT THREE GERMANS DOWN - AND THEY FOUGHT A FIRE

A night fighter crew of Air Defence of Great Britain fought four successful battles last night - three against the enemy in the air, and one against fire on the ground.

The three raiders were shot down in succession as they approached Eastern England by Flight Lieutenant Joseph Singleton, D.F.C., and his observer Flying Officer W.J. Haslam. Nearing their base after their victory both engines of their aircraft cut.

Ground staff at their station heard that they had crash-landed in a ploughed field, and, after a few minutes, of suspense, came news of their safety. Both had climbed out of their aircraft unhurt and put the fire out themselves.

"The three enemy aircraft we destroyed were all Ju188s", said Flight Lieutenant Singleton. "The first exploded, and bits of the debris hit our aircraft as the Hun dived steeply and disintegrated. The second blew up when hit and the third, after its starboard engine had caught fire, went down to another burst of firing. We could see blazing bits flying off the plane. On the way back to base we had engine trouble when we were down to 900 feet. The starboard engine caught alight and the other cut when I tried to get everything possible out of it to make base. When we force-landed I found both engines were burning gently. We threw soil over the engine and put the fires out".

Twice in the last month Singleton and Haslam have shot down enemy raiders attacking Britain. Their first victim was a Dornier 217 which was sent in flames into the sea, and the second, last Tuesday night, was a Ju188 which broke into two before hitting the ground. Both are former instructors, and were business men before the war. Singleton, who comes from Leyland, Lancs., joined the R.A.F.V.R. as an A.C. 2 in September, 1939, and later spent eight months teaching new pilots the tricks of operational flying. Haslam, who comes from West London, was for eighteen months instructing night fighter observers.

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