

A ROSE FOR GERMANY

There is a drama in the interrogation rooms at R.A.F. stations.

The rose garden outside the window took on strange new colours as the dawn broke through the purple clouds, first with narrow streaks of yellow, then with wider gaps of blue and pink.

An officer sat on the windowsill, looking down on the flowers, awaiting the turn of his crew to be questioned by the intelligence officers about their raid on Germany. He knew there was one rose missing from that garden, he had dropped it down the flare chute before the bombs had been released. An English rose for the German people. Why had he done it? No reason at all, he said. Just a whim. Nothing to talk about. Perhaps just the English emblem on enemy territory.

Officers and sergeants shuffled off the forms, leaving room for another crew to face the intelligence officer.

"Had a good trip? What's your aircraft? Did you follow the route....?" Another interrogation had begun.

Yet there was so much that the intelligence officers would not find it necessary to record. That fresh-faced young observer, trying to appear calm, was pleasantly excited. He had just made his first operational flight. How did he feel about it?

"Much more comfortable than I expected. But those searchlights! I'd heard about them, but I never expected to see so many. Not as tired as I thought I'd be. Here's to the next time."

The tall pilot officer, sitting with his crew in the corner, had come of age. This was his twenty-first operation. He would now paint another bomb on the side of his aircraft, with a key underneath it - the key of the door, the key to victory. The twenty-first bomb (for those who keep such a tally of their raids) is an occasion.

A sergeant air-gunner could tell a story too, of queer feelings. He had just made his first raid. Eight years ago he visited Germany as a schoolboy, and in exchange a German boy came over to England. They met at the end of the holiday, each saying how much he had enjoyed the hospitality of the other's country. Was that German boy now in the Luftwaffe?

In contrast there was the flight lieutenant whose thirtieth raid had just ended. He was now due for a few months' rest at an operational training unit, explaining what he had learned to new recruits to Bomber Command.

A sergeant looked up as each crew came in. He was the wireless operator of his aircraft, and was able to let his captain and the observer answer most of the questions. Suddenly his face brightened. Another crew had come into the room and he grinned across at Charlie, another sergeant with a noticeable night's growth of beard. He had begun to wonder whether Charlie had been in trouble with a Messerschmitt or flak. These two had a date. After each operation it was their custom to play snooker before going to bed in the sunlight.

Then, crew by crew, they left the room. The intelligence officers began their detailed work of filling up forms to be submitted to group headquarters - an analysis of the night's raid. The flying men strolled off to breakfast at their various messes, past the rose garden, dew-soaked, radiating scent.

9.9.41 - No. 5

Air Ministry No. 5003

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE

During the night, only a very small number of enemy aircraft, operating singly, have flown over coastal districts in Eastern and South-West England and one was destroyed.

Bombs, which were dropped at a few widely separated points, caused only minor damage, but at one place on the North-East coast a small number of casualties has been reported.

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ANTI-AIRCRAFT NEWS SERVICE

GUNNERS AND THE D.A.D.O.S.

When the guns "open up" again this winter, D.A.D.O.S. will be busier than ever. For every gun fired, every shell or other projectile expended, means additional calls on his services, states the Anti-Aircraft News Service.

He is responsible for supplying, repairing and replacing.

D.A.D.O.S., which means Deputy Assistant Director of Ordnance Services, R.A.O.C., is the universal provider. From him comes all that an A.A. Division needs to continue the Battle of Britain.

From a bag of nails to a battery of big guns, from a simple projector to an intricate predictor the D.A.D.O.S. delivers.

"The R.A.O.C." said the D.A.D.O.S. of an Anti-Aircraft Division, "is both father and mother to the Land Forces, and in this Division we do practically all the shopping for the equivalent of a town of 25,000 inhabitants. In fact, we do everything but feed them."

Every single item of clothing and personal equipment which the gunner wears, whether underclothes, overclothes or respirator, comes from the R.A.O.C.

So do boots and braces; bedding and blankets; capes, anti-gas; knives butchers'; and hundreds of other things designed to make an A.A. site into a self supporting community, replete with every tool and implement which any contingency may demand.

About the guns and shells the D.A.D.O.S. says, "We give them the arms they carry and the guns they fire, searchlights which pick out a target and shells to destroy it when seen.

"We provide those delicate and ingenious instruments which are making our guns the terror of the night raider."

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NOT TO BE PUBLISHED BEFORE PUBLICATION IN TONIGHT'S
"LONDON GAZETTE".

Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No.4946.

GUNNER RESCUED BY PILOT

H.Q., R.A.F.,
Middle East.

A story of courage and disregard for his own safety shown by the rear-gunner of a Bomber aircraft, lies behind the brief announcement made from Headquarters, Royal Air Force, Middle East, today of the award of the M.B.E. to pilot Officer Charles Alfred Patten.

During a raid late in April of this year, the aircraft in which Pilot Officer Patten was rear-gunner crashed and burst into flames.

Fortunately unhurt, and not being trapped in the wreck, he got himself out and at once made his way to the nose of the aircraft where he found that the front-gunner sergeant was alive but unable to get clear of the turret.

The front of the aircraft was burning, and ammunition and flares were exploding in all directions, but Pilot Officer Patten without, any care for his own safety, concentrated on getting the sergeant-gunner clear of the wreck.

Eventually, assisted by two other members of the crew, he succeeded in separating the front turret from the body of the machine.

By this means, he brought to safety the gunner who undoubtedly owes his life to Pilot Officer Patten's bravery.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST, OR USE ON

CLUB TAPES BEFORE 8.30 A.M. ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10.

Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No.5005

TEAMWORK ON THE GROUND

KEEPING THE BOMBERS FIT

When an audience sees a play it may talk much of the cast, seldom, if ever, of the efficiency of the little army of men behind the scenes, upon whom night after night, the success of the show depends.

The ground crews who nurse and tend our heavy bombers are not in the lime-light, but are very much part of the show. As the R.A.F. striking power increases, so do the calls on the ground crews; they answer those calls magnificently, and get their "kites" into the air night after night. No one knows this better than the man with "wings".

Think what it means just to keep an ordinary "baby" car in perfect daily trim. Magnify that a thousand times, remember that the lives of several fully trained men and the success or failure of a blow at the enemy depend on how the ground crews do their job, and some impression may be had of their responsibility.

There is no glamour in oily uniforms, black finger nails, scarred hands, endless watchfulness. According to the type of bomber, the number of the ground crew varies; but to each aircraft there is usually allotted a permanent crew. That aircraft is their's. It's up to them how it does its work.

Every morning they go out giving the machine a complete overhaul. There is the fitter: he maintains the engines, makes sure all plug leads are secure, keeps a watch on engine controls, sees to it there are no oil or water leaks. He has a sharp eye and a nimble hand.

While he is busy, the rigger makes certain that flying controls and general structure are in perfect condition. Meanwhile, the electrician is checking the electrical apparatus. The wireless is the personal charge of the wireless operator.

Each morning they "tinker about", whistling, singing, joking, but never for a moment forgetting the job. A trial flight is made. The captain lands and this or that point is talked over. A final overhaul is made before the machine takes off on the raid.

Then the ground crew are free until the aircraft comes back, when fitters and riggers see it to its dispersal point and talk over its behaviour with the captain. Any serious trouble is attended to at once; minor faults may be left until the morning.

In peace-time, the work of the ground crews was, of course, easier; now, their lives are devoted to the needs and efficiency of one particular machine. Neither sleep, nor meals, nor recreation count.

One flight sergeant who has been on several raids over enemy territory and who was once a fitter, said "of course, the ground crews moan about everything; it's their way of letting off steam; but if there's a job to be done, they have only one aim - to get down to it and do it thoroughly. There's a lot of chaff between the flying personnel and the men on the ground, but really you couldn't find a stronger bond of friendship. We both know how much we need each other. One bit of carelessness, offhand supervision by the men on the ground, and a whole crew and a bomber might be lost. Perfect work by them means a safe landing and a target well bombed. Our lives are literally in their hands. They know it. They don't fail us and so 'wings' gladly salute the men on the ground".

9/9/41 - No.16

Air Ministry No.5006

AIR MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE

The Royal Air Force attack last night was directed against the industrial town of Kassel where there are important railway workshops.

The weather was favourable and many bombs were seen to burst on their targets.

Objectives at Munster and other places in Western Germany as well as the docks at Cherbourg were also bombed.

None of our aircraft is missing.

9.9.41 - No.19

MIDDLE EAST WAR COMMUNIQUE

The following official communique has been issued today from G.H.Q., Cairo:-

LIBYA: In the TOBRUK area there was some exchange of artillery fire.

Our patrols again penetrated deep into the enemy position.

Several light enemy bombing attacks resulted in negligible damage.

In the frontier ~~area~~ there was nothing to report.

WAR OFFICE

HOLLOW-WARE TO BE STANDARDIZED

Board of Trade Order

The Board of Trade has issued an Order - The Hollow-ware (Control of Manufacture) Order, 1941 (S.R. & O. No. 1345) - with the object of effecting economy in the use of labour and materials by standardization in manufacture of hollow-ware in general demand, principally for domestic purposes.

The Order, which comes into effect on September 24, forbids, except under licence, manufacture by manufacturers who are on the Home Trade Register, Class 9, of the Limitation of Supplies (Misc.) (No.11) Order, 1941, of hollow-ware made wholly or mainly of iron or steel. Manufacturers who are not registered under that Order do not require a licence.

Licences must be applied for immediately from the Board of Trade, Industrial Supplies Department, Millbank, London, S.W.1.

A catalogue or list of all hollow-ware which is being manufactured at the present date must be submitted with the application. An out-of-date catalogue may be used for this purpose provided that the sizes and types of hollow-ware being manufactured to-day are clearly indicated.

Directions as to manufacture will be given from time to time. It is anticipated that with the assistance of the trade the supply of essential hollow-ware, subject to the quotas imposed by the Limitation of Supplies Orders, should be more economically and satisfactorily maintained.

Copies of The Hollow-ware (Control of Manufacture) Order, 1941, will be available from H.M. Stationery Office or through any bookseller on September 10, 1941.

NOTE

The hollow-ware effected includes such articles as pots, pans, pails, cans, kettles, buckets and bins of all kinds made from iron or steel whether galvanized, japanned, enamelled or treated in any way.

Standardization is not expected to make fewer goods available to the public. On the contrary, by eliminating a number of sizes and shapes, standardization should make possible manufacture of larger quantities of goods from given amounts of material. Because of economics to be effected in labour and material resulting from standardization the effect of the new Order should be to decrease rather than increase prices.

BOARD OF TRADE

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED BEFORE PUBLICATION IN TONIGHT'S
"LONDON GAZETTE"

WAR OFFICE AWARDS

THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER

Major Raj Kumar Shri Rajendrasinhji (199521),
Indian Army (Cavalry).

After withdrawing a detachment out of the engagement at Mechili Major Rajendrasinhji joined a battery of Royal Horse Artillery on 8th April. The force remained in a wadi until nightfall, and during the night march this officer went forward alone on foot and made several lengthy reconnaissances; he was continually up and down the column helping to extricate vehicles which had stuck in the sand, and during the two actions on the following day he displayed initiative and leadership of the highest order. He led his trucks in action and rounded up parties of the enemy with his revolver, organising the disposal of prisoners among his men. His coolness and general demeanour throughout the action had a marked effect on both British and Indian Troops in the column.

THE MILITARY CROSS

Captain (acting Major) Peter Neil Martin Moore, B.A. (52674),
Corps of Royal Engineers.

On 8th April a party of the enemy were seen climbing out of trucks in a wadi near Mechili and bringing a small gun into action. Major Moore immediately went over to the place in a scout car and engaged the enemy, killing the detachment of four who had been manning the anti-tank gun and putting the rest to flight. Later when a battery of artillery was being pursued on each flank by a large force of enemy vehicles he volunteered to cover its rear with his scout car. When an enemy vehicle which had outstripped the main force came within range he brought his light Automatic into action, with the result that the entire pursuing party stopped and the battery, together with detachments of other units, was able to reach a safe wadi unobserved.

THE DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT MEDAL

No. Q.X.8348 Corporal Gordon Otway Smithers,
Australian Military Forces.

Corporal Smithers was in command of a section of a fighting patrol in the Western Desert in the early hours of 16th May. He was instructed to destroy a medium tank which had been reported on the patrol's left, and after a preliminary reconnaissance he placed his section under cover of an old truck about 15 yards from the tank; unobserved by the enemy in the darkness he led a grenade attack and the tank was set on fire.

The section was immediately fired on by two heavy machine guns and attacked by a number of the enemy who had apparently been sleeping in the vicinity. Corporal Smithers split his section up and silenced both machine guns with hand grenades, and eventually the section returned to its base. Corporal Smithers, who lost his arm in this engagement, showed initiative and courage of a high order throughout.

(continued)

THE MILITARY MEDAL

No. 321202 Corporal Stanley Philip Berryman,
Royal Armoured Corps (Dragoon Guards) (Paddington, London).

Corporal Berryman's Squadron was convened into an Infantry Reserve Company which took over part of the defences on the perimeter of Tobruk during May. While it was in the front line Corporal Berryman led several patrols into and behind the Italian lines and, as a result of the information obtained, a fighting patrol was sent out to attack a working party behind the enemy outposts on the night of 28/29 May. This N.C.O. led an assault on a light machine gun post and was largely responsible for the destruction of the gun and its crew; throughout the action he displayed great courage and when the order to withdraw was given he helped to carry a wounded comrade across open ground under heavy small arms fire. He remained with this man when defensive artillery fire was opened by the enemy, until stretcher bearers were able to come to his assistance. Corporal Berryman has shown high courage and determination on other occasions, notably at the battle of Sidi Saleh and during an earlier engagement on the Tobruk perimeter.

THE MILITARY MEDAL

No. 6914774 Lance-Corporal Edward Walter Bishop,
The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own) (Stratford, London).

When this N.C.O.'s battalion withdrew from a position between Mersa Brega and Agedabia on 2nd April, his carrier was isolated from the rest of the company and while making its way towards the coast became bogged in a Salt Marsh and had to be abandoned. The party then made its way on foot towards Tobruk; they suffered severely from lack of food and water, although they were occasionally assisted by Arabs on the way. On one occasion they narrowly escaped capture by the enemy, and on another they spent the night near a column of enemy transport which was heavily bombed by the Royal Air Force. Two of the party stayed with some Australians at a Senussi Camp, but Lance-Corporal Bishop and another soldier went on, and were eventually guided by an Arab through the enemy outposts into Tobruk where they arrived on 10th May. Although often disappointed in his efforts to contact British forces, this N.C.O. showed great determination and courage in continuing his arduous journey through country largely held by the enemy.

WAR OFFICE

9/9/41 - No. 26

IRANIAN GOVERNMENT ACCEPT ANGLO-SOVIET TERMS

It is announced by the Foreign Office that the British Minister in Teheran this morning received a note from the Iranian Minister for Foreign Affairs stating that the Iranian Government ~~ment~~ accepted the terms put forward by the British and Soviet Governments.

These terms include the closing of the German, Italian, Roumanian and Hungarian Legations and the handing over of the German nationals in Iran to the British and Soviet authorities.

FOREIGN OFFICE NEWS DEPARTMENT

9/9/41 - No. 28

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 5009

Air Ministry News Service

FIGHTERS "SHOT UP" ON GROUND

The 23 years old South African Spitfire pilot who shot down two Me. 109s within half a minute of each other less than a week ago, today made a lone attack on a number of German fighters lined up on an aerodrome in Northern France and left many of them damaged and others burning.

He saw the Messerschmitts as he shot suddenly out of cloud over France and found himself only 500 feet above the ground.

Putting his nose well down and opening up his engine to almost full throttle he shot along the line of aircraft with his guns and cannons blazing. He was less than 100 feet up when he reached the end of the line, after seeing his bullets hit their targets, and pulled into the cover of the cloud.

He then came round again and dived on the same line of aircraft. One German aircraft was well on fire as he came down for his second attack.

Something else which he could not identify because of the flames and smoke was also burning. The crew of the fire engine were endeavouring to put out the flames so he machine-gunned them and saw them dive under the waggon out of the way.

Then he came home to England, and landed back at his base just 45 minutes after taking off.

9/9/41 - No. 31

OFFICIAL ADMIRALTY COMMUNIQUE

Light forces under the command of Rear Admiral P.L. Vian, D.S.O., have been operating against German convoys supplying their troops on the Murmansk front.

These operations have been successful. A German destroyer, an armed trawler, and another vessel have been sunk. The German light cruiser BREMSE, which was damaged by naval aircraft during the raid on Kirkenes in July, is believed to have been sunk. Other ships have probably been damaged.

We sustained no casualties.

Further details are awaited.

ADMIRALTY

9/9/41 - No. 32

The following items are from the September 10 issue of "Die Zeitung" the free German newspaper published in London:-

FREED - FOR FORCED LABOUR

The Nazis try to bribe the Vichy Government into allowing them economic and industrial concessions by promising to free French prisoners-of-war.

Recently, 100,000 French prisoners-of-war were released and sent back to France after the Vichy Government had made a number of new concessions to Germany, but most of these freed prisoners, however, are now miners or agricultural workers in France. They were not allowed to return to their families, but had to go into the mining and agricultural districts of Northern France.

They have to do the same kind of work/^{here}as they did as prisoners-of-war in Germany and once again they are working for Germany.

The Germans thus serve their own purpose only as they are very interested in the exploitation of the French mines, especially in the Loire Inferieure District, where some of the mines were for sometime lying idle and are now being worked again.

BAD PROSPECTS FOR U-BOATS

U-boat commander Kell, addressing German Press representatives, spoke on the recent developments in U-boat warfare and drew their attention to the growing strength of the British defence against submarine attacks. "The Convoys have been considerably strengthened by the building of a large number of so-called 'corvettes'. More aeroplanes are being used to protect convoys and the light nights in the extreme north make attacks more dangerous thus increasing the safety of the convoys. For this reason British aeroplanes and warships have frequently been able to chase the German submarines away."

At the same time, slightly embarrassed, the Volkische Beobachter writes that: "the British propaganda concerning the favourable continuation of the Atlantic battle is only a bluff."

Berliner Lokalanzeiger barks, as it did 25 years ago, that "the effect of the U-boat warfare is becoming more and more deadly", but Transocean confesses quite modestly, "it is quite possible that, as long as Great Britain can maintain her overseas operations, the shipping space sunk by U-boats may, in future, keep well below the record figures of this spring."

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

9/9/41 - No. 37.

Air Ministry No. 5012

MIDDLE EAST COMMUNIQUE

H.Q., R.A.F.,
Middle East,
Tuesday.

SICILY:

Heavy bombers of the Royal Air Force successfully bombed shipping and the harbour at Palermo during the night of September 7/8. Many direct hits were obtained on sheds, docks, main jetties and the dry dock, causing explosions and a large fire visible twenty miles away.

One direct hit on the north jetty caused debris to be thrown high into the air; near the power station further fires broke out. On the return journey from the target our aircraft machine-gunned a coastguard station and railway sheds at Licata.

A reconnaissance has revealed that the merchant ship torpedoed in Syracuse harbour by aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm on the night of August 10/11 now has its stern under water.

CYRENAICA:

Today aircraft of the Royal Air Force raided Derna and Capuzzo and Bardia was bombed by aircraft of the South African Air Force.

From these operations all our aircraft returned safely.

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