

22/10/43 - No. 3

Air Ministry No. 11839

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE

Last night there was slight enemy activity over the Kent and Sussex coasts, a small number of enemy aircraft flying to the London area.

Bombs were dropped at a few points causing a little damage and a small number of casualties.

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WATER POSTMAN OF THE SUNDERBUNDS

Twice a month a lanky sun-baked R.A.F. Corporal clambers aboard a 120 ft launch, and away she chugs towards the Bengal Sunderbunds - 8,000 square miles comprising the largest delta in the world. By the time he returns from each trip he has covered 350 miles of winding creeks and waterways.

He is "skipper" of the launch and has travelled more than 12,000 sea miles in his unusual job as "water postman" - carrying mail and supplies to airmen at their lonely posts.

With a crew of nineteen Indian engineers, on each trip he carries a special pilot to navigate some of the more dangerous channels and narrow creeks bordered by tiger-infested jungle. At each outpost a dinghy is lowered and the Corporal is the first man ashore with a mail bag over his shoulder. The crew - often the only human beings who come into contact with the men of these lonely outposts - receive a tremendous ovation when they arrive.

Rations, petrol, clothing and equipment are also delivered - a job in the hands of a L.A.C. from Leeds who can produce from the launch at a moment's notice anything from a live goat or duck to a wireless aerial.

During these adventurous journeys the Corporal has had many exciting times shooting wild game, including crocodiles. "However, my bag at the moment only amounts to two deer, and I am preserving the skins and antlers to take home when the time comes" he says.

His most trying experience was when the launch was caught in the terrific cyclone at the end of 1942 and buffeted by gigantic waves for two days and was only prevented from overturning by skilful navigation.

The "skipper" Corporal, whose home is at Hessle, Hull, and who was specially chosen for this work because of his knowledge of Diesel engines, acts as travelling grocer for the men who are stationed in these lonely surroundings and collects orders for goods to be delivered on the next trip. It is his modest boast that his men always deliver the goods.



VENGEANCE BOMBERS OVER BURMA

Blasting Japanese positions in Myitha Valley, Vengeance aircraft of the R.A.F. dropped over 60,000 pounds of high explosive bombs in three days recently.

The bombs were rained down in a series of concentrated raids by a squadron under Squadron-Leader D.R.Gibbs, of London, W. which had been giving close support to the army in breaking up enemy movements.

These Vengeance aircraft dived down to 3,000 feet to release their loads on troop reinforcements, regimental headquarters and enemy positions cunningly hidden in the valley and the hills.

"We had a first-class view of the fires which preceding formations of Vengeances had started", Warrant Officer Tullett, of Aberdeen, formerly a student, and his gunner, Sergeant A. Mason, of Barry, South Wales, said.

"As we dived we followed down a 'box' of our aircraft which had razed enemy buildings nearby. We could see the bombs bursting and fire breaking out in buildings on the ground. Then we turned away, diving from 10,000 feet, and released our bombs on the targets selected for our formations.

Facing fierce anti-aircraft fire Warrant- Officer Pilot N. Holland, aged 25, of Port Arthur, Ontario, formerly a book-keeper (known to the squadron as "Dutch"), who has made 29 sorties with the squadron, and his gunner, Flying Officer W. Shipton, of Potters Bar, Middlesex, formerly in an advertising business, bombed a Japanese supply line and store buildings and then found one of their petrol tanks had been hit.

"I was half-way down my dive through cloud when I got a slash of petrol in the cockpit, but we continued bombing and then turned for home as soon as I could", the Warrant-Officer said.

"Anti-aircraft fire must have hit my aircraft just as we were releasing our bombs. I handed over to the airgunner, who flew with the dual control for a time, and I managed to check the petrol wastage. There was enough left to get us over the hills and safely home".

22/10/43 - No. 8

Air Ministry No. 11842

AIR MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE

Last night, Mosquitos of Bomber Command, without loss, attacked objectives in Western Germany.



22.10.43 - No.9

MIDDLE EAST AIR COMMUNIQUE

Headquarters, Royal Air Force,  
Middle East,  
22nd October,

During the night of October 20/21 Royal Air Force bombers attacked the airfields at Maritza (Rhodes), bursts occurring on the runway and in the landing area.

Fighters destroyed a Ju.88 in the Eastern Mediterranean on October 20.

From all operations none of our aircraft is missing.

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22.10.43 - No.10

INDIA JOINT WAR COMMUNIQUE No.252

October 22, 1943.

Troop positions and communications were again the principal targets for R.A.F. bombers and fighters over Burma yesterday. Vengeances dive-bombed Japanese troops in the Kalamyo area with good effect, while Beaufighters attacked two groups of army huts at Monglong, about 70 miles north east of Mandalay, and left many of them on fire.

Other Beaufighters patrolling the railways in the Shwebo district heavily damaged four locomotives, a storage dump and a number of wagons.

In the small hours of Thursday morning Wellingtons dropped bombs on Meiktila airfield and the railway yards at Sagaing.

On Wednesday, in addition to the operations reported in yesterday's communique, Vengeance dive-bombers and Hurricane fighters attacked enemy troops in the Buthidaung area.

From all these operations none of our aircraft is missing.

It is now learned that in the air raid on Chittagong on Wednesday A.A. gunners damaged four enemy aircraft, of which three were probably destroyed.

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WAR OFFICE



NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE ON  
CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1943.

NOT TO BE BROADCAST IN THE MIDNIGHT NEWS OF OCTOBER 22/23.

THIS EMBARGO SHOULD BE RESPECTED OVERSEAS BY PREFACING  
ANY MESSAGES FILED WITH THE EMBARGO

SERVICE OF TURKEYS IN CATERING ESTABLISHMENTS

The Minister of Food has issued a Direction under the Meals in Establishments Order for regulating the service of turkey in catering establishments at Christmas time. Except on Christmas Day, turkey will not be served during the period December 22 to 30 inclusive. Any part of a turkey, however, remaining over after service on Christmas Day, may be served the next day.

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEFORE  
DELIVERY AT 3.30 P.M.

MR. HUBERT MORRISON AT METROPOLITAN WATER BOARD

Speaking at a Metropolitan Water Board meeting in London today, Mr. Herbert Morrison, Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security, said that there is a pre-war chapter to the story of London's water supply which ought to be told. It is one which redounds to the great credit of the Central Authority as well as of those who direct our Public Services. Before anybody could imagine what the bombing of London would be like, plans were drawn up to deal with the effects of raids on the water supply and other Services -

"We have heard so much - from me among others - about the lack of preparedness, a lack of foresight and a lack of realism, in our pre-war Britain" said Mr. Morrison. "Here is one case at least where there were preparations, there was foresight and there was realism on the right lines:

"I do not propose to disclose what our plans are. I am content to leave the enemy to see to his own plans. I believe the fruits of our experience could have been, and would in the future be of increasing value to him in meeting our growing air offensive. We had sound plans before the battle began, we have improved our organisation and arrangements - but at a cost. The enemy is buying his experience at a far heavier cost. That is why I am not giving anything away.

"Repair problems were tremendous. During the September and October 1940 blitz, over 3,000 mains were damaged, but by the end of October, nearly 3,000 were repaired. This was due, not only to the devotion of the repair men on the spot, but to reinforcements of highly skilled workers from other water authorities, some coming from as far away as Scotland".

Mr. Morrison pointed out that not only did the Metropolitan Water Board supply the water by which Londoners lived to fight; they also provided the essential weapon with which the enemy fires were fought. All the courage of the Civil Defence workers and the people, and all the elaborate fire fighting equipment would have been <sup>little</sup> more than useless without water.

He then went on to speak of that grand team which is the Metropolitan Water Board, giving a special word to the turncocks and their assistants. "The turncocks - working in close co-operation with the Civil Defence Services - followed the bombs, in good company with the Fire Service, the Rescue Service and the Wardens. To do what? To shut off the damaged mains, thus maintaining the water supply; and to make the best possible arrangements for directing available water supplies where the Fire Service needed them. The turncocks and their assistants were, therefore, a vital ancillary to our defence of London. But we must wait until the end of the war before the full story can be told of how water was directed by ingenious, unexpected, and often very unconventional means, to where it was urgently needed for fighting fires.

"The Metropolitan Water Board carry a heavy responsibility. They will, I know, acquit themselves well whatever the calls made upon them."

MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY



ON NO ACCOUNT FOR PUBLICATION  
IN BRITISH EVENING NEWSPAPERS  
NOT FOR BROADCAST BEFORE 0030  
D. S. T. ON OCTOBER 23, 1943.

22.10.43. No. 15

I T A L Y

BY NOEL MONKS REPRESENTING THE COMBINED BRITISH PRESS

Naples,  
Friday.

We are fooling ourselves if we think all Italians are our friends and want to help us defeat their former allies, the Germans.

This little incident happened during an air raid last night: at the time of the raid British soldiers guarding an important military post noticed a torch flashing from a roof-top within two hundred yards of the post. With fixed bayonets a party went to investigate the torch flashing. They found a U.S. colonel living in the villa with four Italian servants doing his chores. The colonel was unaware that anything strange was going on and helped the British patrol to search the house. They found footsteps going up to the roof-top - the locality is muddy - and the same footsteps coming down. The four Italian servants were marched off for proper investigation.

Angot officials are becoming short-tempered at the absurdity of claims being made by rich Italian Fascists - oh yes, there are still plenty of Fascists about - on damage done to their properties by the R.A.F. An American member of Angot put it aptly to me when he said: "They must take us for a bunch of suckers."

MINISTRY OF INFORMATION

22/10/43 - No.16

PRESS NOTICE

The Treasury announce that in order to simplify Exchange Control administration and reduce the volume of blocked sterling in non-resident ownership, new arrangements have been made whereby the majority of payments which until now have had to be made to blocked accounts will in future be transferable. Details may be obtained from any bank in the U.K. It has not been possible to extend these relaxations to payments to Canada, Newfoundland, Switzerland and the Argentine because of the nature of transfer arrangements between the U.K. and those countries.

The payments of which transfer will be allowed include certain payments of a capital nature, e.g., legacies, and the proceeds of maturing or redeemed securities. The changes all have retrospective effect and, if such blocked sterling funds have been invested in securities, application may be made to sell the securities and transfer the proceeds. No change is made in the position of other sterling securities owned by non-residents, except that non-residents wishing to change from one sterling security to another are given a wider choice of securities in which to reinvest.

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TREASURY



22.10.43 - No. 18.

NORTH AFRICA COMMUNIQUE No. 344

Allied Force Command Post  
October 22, 1943

ARMY: In the 8th Army sector positions gained are being consolidated and patrols continue to be active against varying enemy resistance. The 5th Army continue to push northwards in spite of enemy counter-attacks which were repulsed. Enemy rearguards are active and demolitions are being extensively encountered. PIEDIMONTE D'ALIFE and ALIFE have been captured.

AIR: Heavy bombers of the North West African Air Forces yesterday attacked railroad bridges and tracks at MONTALTO DI CASTRO, ACQUAPENDENTE and ORBETTELLO, scoring direct hits in many places, and the fighter escort shot down six enemy aircraft.

Fighter-bombers attacked the marshalling yards at SKOPLJE in YUGOSLAVIA, hitting the locomotive sheds. Light and medium bombers attacked the bivouac area at CASSINO. Fighters and fighter-bombers were over the entire battle area, attacking motor transport, bridges and gun positions.

Three small ships were damaged off the coast of YUGOSLAVIA and six Ju.87s were destroyed.

During the night of October 20/21, light bombers attacked bridges and road junctions in the battle area.

In all these operations twelve enemy aircraft were destroyed. One of our aircraft is missing.

The railway and bridge at GIULIANOVA were attacked by night bombers last night.

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22.10.43. No. 19

The King has been pleased to grant unrestricted permission for the wearing of the following decoration which has been conferred upon the undermentioned non-commissioned officer in recognition of services in the cause of the Allies:-

Decoration conferred by

The President of the United States of America

Silver Star.

Corporal Oakau Sailasa,  
Fiji Defence Force.

WAR OFFICE



# MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

55, WHITEHALL,  
LONDON, S.W.1

(FISHERIES DEPARTMENT)

PRESS NOTICE

22nd October, 1943  
M.A.F. 1055

## INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES CONFERENCE

An International Fisheries Conference has recently been concluded in London after several days' sitting at which the Governments of the following countries were represented by delegates:- Belgium, Canada, Eire, France, Iceland, Netherlands, Newfoundland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom: and the following observers:- Denmark, Sweden and the United States of America.

The Conference was presided over by the Fisheries Secretary to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (Mr. A.T.A. Dobson) supported by representatives of the various Government Departments concerned.

The Conference met to discuss the possibility of concluding, on the termination of hostilities, an International Fisheries Convention to replace and, where necessary, to supplement the Anglo-French Convention of 1839, the North Sea Convention of 1882 and the Anglo-Danish Convention of 1901, to which some of the above countries are already parties, by one single up-to-date Convention, conforming to modern practice. It was also proposed to incorporate in any proposed new Convention, the provisions of the International Convention of 1937, dealing with the use of nets with meshes below a certain size, and the taking, landing and selling of certain kinds of fish below a certain size. This latter Convention, although substantially operated by the United Kingdom, had never formally become effective, as all the countries who had signed it had not ratified it prior to the outbreak of war.

Satisfactory progress was made at the Conference and the delegates completed the preparation of a draft Convention which they unanimously decided to submit to their respective Governments for consideration, with a view to final agreement at a further conference to be convened as soon as circumstances permit.

22/10/43 - No. 23

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ARMISTICE DAY

The King has decided that the usual service at the Cenotaph shall not be held this year; and the Government feel that, in present circumstances, it would be preferable that other large services which it has been the custom to hold throughout the country on Armistice Day should not be held. In view of the risk of confusion with the air raid warning signals, it will not be possible to signal a Two Minutes' Silence as was done before the war.

The 11th November will, however, be observed as Poppy Day, as hitherto, and the British Legion are making the usual arrangements for the sale of Poppies in aid of Earl Haig's fund.

In past years it has been the general practice to hold special Services in places of worship on the Sunday before Armistice Day. This year, it is proposed that Sunday, the 7th November, shall be observed as a Day of Remembrance and Dedication.

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HOME OFFICE



22/10/43 - No 27

PRESS NOTICE

Dress for all officers attending the funeral of the late Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., will be monkey-jackets, overcoats and brown gloves.

Neither swords nor mourning bands are to be worn. Previous instructions about the wearing of swords are cancelled.

Officers who cannot obtain greatcoats may wear "british warms".

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ADMIRALTY



22/10/43 - No. 28

PRESS NOTICE

In connection with the arrangements for the funeral of the late Admiral of the Fleet Sir A. Dudley P.R. Pound, G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., the near relatives have asked that no flowers be sent, but that friends who so desire will send contributions to King George's Fund for Sailors, Trinity House, E.C.3.

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ADMIRALTY

22.10.43 No. 29

It is announced by the Air Ministry (Air Ministry No. 11844) and Headquarters European Theater of Operations, United States Army Communique No. 129 that United States Air Force Marauders (B-26s) escorted by R.A.F. Dominion, and Allied Spitfires, attacked the Evreux-Fauville airfield this morning. No enemy aircraft was encountered by the Marauders and their escort, and all returned safely.

Other Spitfire Squadrons which carried out supporting sweeps destroyed eight enemy aircraft for a loss of one of ours.

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22.10.43 - No. 32

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST, IN OVERSEAS BULLETINS OR USE  
ON CLUB TAPES BEFORE 2330 B.S.T. ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1943.  
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BRIGADIER LAYCOCK TO BE CHIEF OF COMBINED OPERATIONS

The War Office announces that His Majesty the King has been pleased to approve the appointment of Brigadier R.E. LAYCOCK, D.S.O., Royal Horse Guards (The Blues) as Chief of Combined Operations in succession to Admiral the Lord Louis Mountbatten, G.C.V.O., C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C., Supreme Commander, South East Asia. He is granted the acting rank of Major General.

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WAR OFFICE



BIOGRAPHY OF MAJOR GENERAL LAYCOCK

(See M.o.I. Issue No. 32)

Major General R.E. Laycock, D.S.O., born 1907 the son of Brigadier General Sir J.F. Laycock, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., educated at Eton College. Went to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst where he became Senior Under Officer in 1926. Commissioned in the Royal Horse Guards (The Blues) in 1927. Became Adjutant of The Blues. Was appointed Instructor at the School of Military Engineering. Was serving as a Captain at the War Office at the outbreak of the War. Went to France as a Captain on the Staff of G.H.Q., B.E.F., and was re-called in June 1940 to go through the short war-time Staff College at Camberley. He had already been posted to G.H.Q., Middle East when the first call was made for volunteers for Special Service in July 1940 which subsequently led to the formation of Commandos. He was promoted from Captain to Lieutenant-Colonel and instructed to raise a Commando. He sailed for the Middle East in June 1941 in Command of a Special Service Battalion consisting of three Commandos which he had brought from Great Britain and two Commandos which had been locally raised in the Middle East. This force became known as "Layforce". As a full colonel he commanded the successful raid on Bardia in April 1941. In May 1941 he took three Commandos to Crete during the battle fought on that island. His force played an important role in the delaying action fought in the mountains of Crete during the evacuation.

Colonel Laycock left in the last convoy to leave the Island. During this time other Units of his command carried out raids from Tobruk and in particular the Litani River in Syria. He was recalled to England for consultations and subsequently flew back to the Middle East with instructions to re-organise a Commando force in that area.

In November 1941 he commanded the detachment that landed from submarines on the North African coast, part of which force under the command of the late Lt.-Colonel Geoffrey Keyes, V.C., carried out a raid on Rommel's Headquarters. Owing to bad weather Colonel Laycock was unable to re-embark any of his force. He and Sergeant Terry, R.A., spent 41 days living in the desert behind the enemy lines before the 8th Army came up and captured that area. During this time he suffered severe privation. (An account of "The Exploits of 'Layforce'" appears in Chap. 5 of the M.o.I. pamphlet Combined Operations 1940-1942.)

On return to Cairo he found an order awaiting for him instructing him to return to Great Britain to take command of Special Service Brigade with the rank of Brigadier. In this appointment he commanded all Special Service troops in Great Britain which carried out numerous raids on the continent. He divided his time between Combined Operations, H.Q.'s and the H.Q.'s of his Brigade in the country. He was responsible for the training and organisation of these troops and took part in the planning of all raids carried out by Combined Operations Command.

In the early summer of 1943, Brigadier Laycock went to North Africa to command the Special Service troops taking part in the invasion of Sicily. He landed in the initial assault on the Pachino Peninsular in command of Royal Marine Commandos attached to the Canadian Division. He was awarded the D.S.O. Later in the Sicilian campaign, the Army Commando Units engaged also came under his Command, serving directly under General Montgomery's orders he planned a successful landing on the Messina Peninsular in the final stages of the campaign. Brigadier Laycock was then attached to the 5th Army and commanded the Special Service troops both Army and Royal Marines which landed in the Gulf of Salerno. He led units of this force in a number of engagements during the critical 11 days fighting in this area. Heavy casualties were suffered by the Commando Units who found themselves with Infantry equipment holding positions upon the beaches against attacks by tanks, artillery and aircraft.

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22/10/43 - No.37

Air Ministry No.11848

AIR MINISTRY AND MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY COMMUNIQUE

During daylight there has been nothing to report.

It is now known that one enemy aircraft was destroyed last night.

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22/10/43 - No. 39

Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 11849

FIRST D.S.O. TO BE AWARDED TO NIGHT FIGHTER OBSERVER

Flight Lieutenant C.F. Rawnsley, 39-year-old observer to Wing Commander John Cunningham, the night fighter pilot, has been awarded the D.S.O. - the first to be given to a night fighter observer in Fighter Command. He already holds the D.F.C. and the D.F.M. and bar.

Rawnsley, one of the oldest members of aircrew in the Command, has shared in 16 of his pilot's 18 night bomber "kills" over this country. He was also flying with Cunningham when the Wing Commander shot down a daylight raider last year.

The famous partnership began three years ago - in the winter of 1940 to 1941, when the Luftwaffe started their mass night attacks on British cities. Rawnsley was then a sergeant and Cunningham a flight lieutenant, in the county of Middlesex squadron.

During the first five months of 1941 he helped his pilot to shoot down a dozen German raiders, a "bag" which included three in one night. For his share in these victories he won the D.F.M. and bar, and soon after he was commissioned in the same year he won the D.F.C. On this occasion the official citation mentioned "the brilliant tactics and perfect teamwork" which both pilot and observer had displayed in their fight with the night bomber.

Last year both Rawnsley and Cunningham spent six months training new night fighter crews and since their return to operations early this year they have accounted for three enemy aircraft - all of them fast F.W.190 fighter-bombers.

One night recently they came home on one engine - the other had been put out of action by the debris of an enemy aircraft they destroyed - and on another occasion a bullet from a rear gunner of a Ju. they were attacking passed between them.

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22/10/43 - No. 40.

Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry No. 11850

RAILWAY VIADUCT BOMBED BY WHIRLWINDS

An important railway viaduct in the Cherbourg Peninsula was damaged this afternoon when Whirlwinds of Fighter Command bombed it at low level.

A pilot officer reported afterwards that he saw broken girders hanging from the side of the viaduct as he turned for home.

"The whole show went exactly as planned," he said. "We met no opposition and the flak only started after we had completed the job. We went in at tree top level with perfect visibility."

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22/10/43 - No. 41

Air Ministry No. 11851

AIR MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE

Typhoons, without loss, attacked the enemy airfields at Triequeville and Abbeville this morning.

R.C.A.F. Mustangs on offensive patrols destroyed an enemy bomber and damaged several locomotives: and Whirlwind bombers damaged a viaduct in the Cherbourg Peninsula.

A Beaufighter of Coastal Command on patrol off the Dutch coast attacked two enemy trawlers, Both vessels were hit and one of them was left in flames.

One Typhoon is missing from patrol today and six Boston bombers are missing from offensive operations over the Low Countries this afternoon.

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