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FAMOUS INTRUDER PILOT TO TEACH OTHERS

A few nights ago Wing Commander D.R.O'D Hoare carried out his eightieth "intruder" patrol over airfields in occupied territory from which the Germans raid this country. It was probably his last.

The Wing Commander was one of the pioneer "intruders" of Fighter Command and a veteran before the Command's increasing night offensive. He brought other pilots' names to the fore in this work, and has now left his squadron to take up the training of young fighter pilots. Eighteen months of regular "intruder" work have brought Wing Commander Hoare the D.F.C. and bar. The citation for the latter, given in June of this year, said, "He has at all times set an inspiring example."

Wing Commander Hoare, who was born at Brighton in 1912, entered the R.A.F. with a short service Commission in 1936.

He began "intruding" in January 1941, and was largely responsible for evolving the technique of these now-successful night offensive patrols against the enemy.

Before he took up night fighting, Wing Commander Hoare's night flying experience had been confined to peace-time. His first "intruder" flight, in a Blenheim armed with five machine guns fired by the pilot and carrying eight small bombs, was against an airfield in the Lille area. His observer had never previously flown on operations at night.

On one occasion the Wing Commander pressed home his attack on an opponent to such close range that when the enemy bomber turned in a vertical bank the two aircraft touched and the Blenheim came home with a piece of the bomber embedded in the wing. On another occasion, to make sure of his victim, he dropped his bombs from so low a level that fragments punctured a tyre of his aircraft, made a hole in one wing, and almost severed the flying control.

Since his pioneer days on Blenheim night fighting Wing Commander Hoare has seen his squadron successively re-equipped with new and greatly improved types of "intruder" aircraft. Now, with a record number of "intruder" flights to his credit and a score of at least six enemy aircraft destroyed in combat at night, he has left his old squadron to instil his ideas, skill and enthusiasm for night fighting among the intruders of to-morrow.

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