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AUSTRALIAN COMMANDS "CHURCHILL'S OWN"

"Churchill's Own" - one of the most famous fighter squadrons in the R.A.F. - has a new commanding officer, an Australian.

He is Squadron Leader David William McCormack, D.F.C. and Bar, of Seddon, Melbourne, Victoria.

"Churchill's Own" was so named because the Prime Minister is its honorary Air Commodore, and takes a very personal interest in its activities.

Squadron Leader McCormack, R.A.A.F., became associated with "Churchill's Own" when he came to England, and German soldiers who manned the heavily-armed flak ships in the North Sea for months were the chief targets of the squadron. One day the squadron swooped on an enemy convoy, sank two flak ships, damaged five others, and sank a 4,000 ton supply ship. Thirty Messerschmitt fighters gave battle and, in the running fight which followed, two were shot down.

In the face of fierce ack-ack fire, the squadron later shot up eight Nazi "E" boats, sinking two, leaving another two in flames, and putting the rest out of action.

Squadron Leader McCormack was leader of a fighter squadron which escorted Manchester, Halifax and Stirling bombers on a raid on the German battle cruisers when they were at Drest. Few of the Messerschmitts which gave battle penetrated the British screen, and all McCormack's squadron returned to their base. For his work in Britain, McCormack was awarded the D.F.C.

When he arrived in India, McCormack remained with "Churchill's Own", and led many low-level long-range attacks over Burma with outstanding skill and courage. For his work in Burma he was awarded a Bar to his D.F.C.

For a time McCormack was in charge of a fighter training unit, but now he is back with his old squadron, this time as its commanding officer.