

14/1/40 - No.1.

FRENCH OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE (Morning).

The following official communique was issued this morning from French G.H.Q.: -

A quiet night. On the 13th an enemy plane was brought down within our lines.

14/1/40 - No. 2

PRESS NOTICE

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE IN ESSEX.

The existence of foot and mouth disease was confirmed yesterday amongst cattle at Tollesbury, Essex.

An Order has been issued which is now in force prohibiting the movement, except by licence, of all cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and deer within an area of approximately 15 miles radius of the infected premises.

The area subject to restrictions lies in the counties of Essex and West Suffolk, and includes part of the existing infected area around East Horndon, Essex.

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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE,
ANIMAL HEALTH DIVISION,
23-25 SOHO SQUARE, W.1.

PRESS NOTICE

The Ministry of Economic Warfare announces that the Enemy Exports Committee have given permission for the delivery of a light and whistle buoy of German manufacture ordered by the Icelandic authorities.

The decision to allow the passage of this life-saving material accords with the Committee's policy of not interfering with the humanitarian activities on which civilised life is based.

It will be remembered that German airmen three days ago attacked a lighthouse tender while she was conveying relief crews to the light vessels off the East Coast.

Referring to this incident, a correspondent in Friday's Times contrasted the attitude of King Louis XIV with whom we were at war in the eighteenth century when his men captured some British lighthouse men. The King ordered their release, saying

"Their work is for the benefit of all nations; I am at war with England, not with humanity."

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MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC WARFARE.

For Monday's Papers.

14/1/40 - No.4.

BOARD OF TRADE ANNOUNCEMENT.

The Board of Trade announce that as from Monday, 15th January, the section of the Export Licensing Department dealing with applications for licences in respect of iron and steel goods and foodstuffs will be removed from 35, Old Queen Street, S.W.1 to Inveresk House, 346, Strand, W.C.2.

Board of Trade.
13th January, 1940.

14/1/40

- No. 5.

FRENCH OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE

The following official communique was issued
from French G.H.Q. this evening:-

"Nothing of importance to report during the day".

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FURTHER DETAILS OF AIR BATTLE OVER THE NORTH SEA

The Air Ministry announces:-

The engagement which took place between enemy fighters of the type Messerschmitt 110 and Blenheim bombers of the R.A.F. in the North Sea on the 10th January was of particular interest from a tactical point of view. The latest accounts of the incident show that the nine Blenheims were at the time on their way to carry out a reconnaissance over an area in the eastern portion of the North Sea.

The Blenheims were flying in formation at an altitude of about 5,000 feet when they were intercepted by the Messerschmitts about 150 miles North-North-West of Borkum. Sighting the Messerschmitts the leader closed up his formation and turned on a North Westerly course to draw the enemy further from his bases. As soon as the enemy attacks developed the leader led his formation down to sea-level so as to reduce the number of directions from which the enemy could deliver attacks, and to confine them to the upper hemisphere.

The top speed of the Messerschmitt 110 is reported to be about 365 miles an hour, which gives it a very considerable superiority over the Blenheim and it is, of course, very heavily armed both with machine guns and cannons. Yet the Blenheims by virtue mainly of admirable leadership and good discipline proved themselves more than a match for Germany's most formidable fighters.

For twenty minutes the crack fighters of the German Air Force strove to break down the cohesion of the British formation. The Messerschmitt fighters delivered their attacks with great rapidity, both from head on, from the beam, as well as from directly astern.

In spite, however, of every effort and of simultaneous attacks from different directions the Messerschmitts failed to make any appreciable impression on the steadiness of the Blenheim formation.

The only loss to the Blenheims occurred in one of the first attacks when the engine of one of our aircraft was put out of action and the aircraft was consequently compelled to fall astern where it was immediately set on by several Messerschmitts and shot down into the sea.

The remaining eight Blenheims immediately closed up again into even tighter formation and soon had the satisfaction of seeing a Messerschmitt receive a full blast of their concentrated fire and throw up a great column of water as it crashed into the sea. This success was soon followed up by further signs of the discomforture of the enemy. After one of the Messerschmitts had attempted a beam attack and had come under heavy fire from the Blenheims, it turned away with every appearance of having been hit and made off, in a South Easterly direction towards the German coast.

This one was soon followed by the hasty retirement in the same direction of another of the Messerschmitts, which must certainly have been seriously damaged. Of these two it is now known that one was forced to come down in Denmark where the crew was interned and it is possible that the other failed to reach land and came down in the sea.

After these losses the remaining enemy fighters held back and attempted no further attacks, confining themselves to following the formation at a distance in the hope, perhaps, of having a chance of a straggler later on. In this they were disappointed.

Meanwhile as soon as the leader saw that the Messerschmitts had been driven off, he turned his formation back on to their original course to the Eastwards and flew on to the extreme limit of the distance ordered, to complete the duties of reconnaissance which he had been given to carry out.

Thereafter the formation flew over the entire reconnaissance area completing its duties in every detail and returned without further molestation to its base.

The Messerschmitts fighters had been thoroughly

beaten by well judged leadership good fighting discipline and steady formation flying, and had entirely failed to prevent the formation from completing and portion of their task.

AIR AFFAIRS

14/1/40. - No. 7.

PRESS NOTICE

The War Office announces that the
leave service from the B.E.F. has been
temporarily suspended.

WAR OFFICE,
Whitehall, S.W.1.