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Air Ministry News Service

Air Ministry Bulletin No. 7090

BELGIAN LEADS BRITISH FIGHTER SQUADRON

A Belgian, one of the finest aerobatic pilots in Fighter Command, has now assumed command of a British fighter squadron operating regularly in the offensive on Germany's western front. He is the second Belgian to lead a British fighter squadron.

He destroyed an F.W.190 on one of his first sweeps as leader of the squadron a few days ago.

His promotion stresses the international nature of the forces marshalled against Germany. His squadron, though British, has been adopted by the city of Bombay and includes English, Canadian, New Zealand and Belgian pilots.

The new Squadron Leader who is 26, has flown for eight years. He joined the Belgian Air Force in May, 1934, and was trained as pilot, observer and instructor because of his natural aptitude for aerobatics. He served as a sergeant and was commissioned on the outbreak of war in Belgium, when he was posted to duties in France. On the collapse he escaped to French Morocco and thence to England.

In October, 1940 whilst serving with Coastal Command he shot down the first Heinkel 60 (a single engine bi-plane) to be destroyed over the Channel, a feat for which he received the Croix de Guerre.

Fellow pilots, who are the severest critics, are unstinting in praise of the Belgian's flying. "A perfect master of his aircraft", was the tribute of a group watching him in the air performing slow rolls, half rolls off the top of a loop, and inverted flying.