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A JOCKEY SHOTS DOWN A FIGHTER

Douglas A. Weatherill, who used to ride winners during the flat racing seasons before the war, now rides to Germany in the mid-upper turret of a Halifax bomber.

Weatherill was beginning to make a name for himself as one of the most promising of the younger jockeys. He had ridden ten winners up to the time he joined the R.A.F. in 1941.

Since then, he has made many operational flights to Germany, France and Northern Italy as a sergeant-gunner. Now he has been commissioned and is a pilot officer.

He has taken part in three attacks on Berlin, and on the last occasion, shot down a Messerschmitt 110 and helped the rear-gunner to damage two Junkers 88s. One of the engines of the Halifax stopped over the target area, and while the aircraft was brilliantly illuminated by flares and searchlights, it was attacked by about ten fighter - Junkers, Messerschmitts, and Focke-Wulfs. Two Junkers came too close to be good for them, and were driven away with bullets in them. The Me.110 was <sup>more</sup> persistent, and although it was hit as it came in from the port side, it climbed above the Halifax. Weatherill, however, gave it a ten-second's burst and saw his bullets striking the underside. The Messerschmitt turned over, dived down, and was seen to crash on the ground.

During the attack on Peenemunde, Weatherill damaged a Focke-Wulf. He has now taken part in 28 operational flights, and has had an exciting time. His first target was Mannheim, and on his return to England, he and other members of the crew were ordered by the pilot to bale out. All of them made a safe landing.

Weatherill, at 5ft. 1inch, is the smallest member of his squadron. He has no opportunity of horse riding at his North of England airfield, but is generally in the saddle again when he goes on leave to his home in Ascot, South.

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