



The Operations Diary is a hardcover notebook with no outer markings. It is well worn with the spine completely broken and the covers held on with tape. Obviously looked at many many times. No newspaper clippings after page 81, except for the very last page. The clippings stop at mission 31 without comment.

An endorsement on Page 5 says:

"S/L Powell is the navigation officer of #405 Squadron. To this date he had 55 operational trips in."

It is undated. It's written on page 5, Operation #2 : "Hagen".

October 1/2, 1943.

The book 'only' goes to Operation #48 and just ends.

There is one loose page in the very back with a clipping.

I duplicated the first inner page from the front to the back to force the pages to line up correctly, otherwise it is just as photographed.

The text is a report of each raid detailing how navigation equipment functions, numbers of planes in raids, time in air, bomb run conditions and accuracy, and the numbers lost, both overall and at the squadron and other details of each flight.

Best way to view: let it load, then save to your hard drive as

Operations Diary.pdf.

Open it in .pdf Reader or Acrobat.

Set View; Zoom; Fit Height, and

Set View; Page Display; Two Page Scrolling.

Doug Bowman for

Bomber Command Museum of Canada 2013

Donated to
NANTON LANCASTER SOCIETY AIR MUSEUM

by Susan McCarthy

OPERATIONS #1 - DARMSTADT - SOUTHERN GERMANY

This operation took place on the night of Sept 23/24, 1943. Darmstadt was the spoof target for the raid on Mannheim, which is about 30 miles S.W. Our trip was uneventful as we saw no fighters and had only one searchlight beam on us entering the target. We bombed one minute late on Red 1's dropped less than a minute before. We got a grandstand view of Mannheim which was very much ablaze when we passed it. The crew saw one aircraft come & shot down over the main target. The return journey was very quiet, but long and tiring. Our Gee refused to work so navigation was entirely O.R. which was okay because of light winds. We arrived at Base okay and we were 3rd to land. All aircraft of this squadron returned safely. We got a very good photo which showed plenty of built-up area. It was regarded as a good raid, 32 aircraft were missing altogether. It's a good feeling to have #1 in.

This operation took place on the night of Oct 1/2, 1943. It was a new target that had never been attacked before. We went over the Zuider Zee and turned south just beyond Franster where the w/ops spotted 2 Ju 88's which the gunners could not see, but we evaded them. Coming in to the target we encountered a great amount of flak but searchlights were kept down by 10% cloud which prevailed over the whole trip. We bombed red T's on time, at least we bombed the reflection of them. A picture was unobtainable because of cloud. The homeward trip was uneventful until we reached the French coast where the gunners spotted what they thought was an ME 109 but it didn't seem to notice us. Base was reached on E.T.A. There were only 5 aircraft from this station took part and all returned safely, we had a couple of holes in one wing. Only 2 bombers were lost from the raid.

184 ESCAPED IN R.A.F. RAID, STILL FREE

Reynolds Radio Service

ONE hundred and eighty-four British prisoners-of-war, who escaped from the Stalag camp during the recent R.A.F. raid on the town, are still at large. Only a small number were recaptured.

A broadcast warning has been made by the Gauleiter of Westphalia that anyone giving refuge, food or information to the men will be put to death for high treason.

Anyone who reports the hiding places of the escaped Britons will be rewarded. Policemen, military persons and other officials will be promoted.

The appeal adds that some of the escaped Britons are "dangerous" as they are in possession of arms, which they have taken from the guards when they overwhelmed when the camp was hit.

OUR PRISONERS ESCAPED—FED BY GERMANS

Daily Mail Radio Station

NINE hundred Allied prisoners of war in Germany who escaped when bombs fell near their camps during an R.A.F. raid on Hagen, in Westphalia, were hidden and fed by the German people, said the B.B.C. in a German broadcast last night.

This is proved by a decree which has been issued by the Mayor of Hagen, stating:

"Several war prisoners' camps were hit during the Hagen raid. It has been ascertained that 900 prisoners of war who escaped are being lodged and fed by the population.

"They must be immediately reported to the nearest police station. Offences against this order will be punished."

4 Navigators Get DSO

By Daily Mail Reporter

FOUR navigators are among seven R.A.F. men awarded the D.S.O., it was announced last night.

They are masters of their science who have taught others to follow their courses safely through the German sky unerringly to their targets.

These are the men:

Squadron Leader Peter Geoffrey Powell, D.F.C., of Shepperton Green, Middlesex, aged 26, a Yorkshireman.

Acting Squadron Leader Donald Kenneth Allport, D.F.C., of Birmingham, aged 26.

Acting Squadron Leader Edward Lister Hould, D.F.C. and Bar, of Turramurra, New South Wales, aged 34.

Acting Squadron Leader John Turnbull, D.F.C., of Edinburgh, aged 30, Glasgow born.

Squadron Leader Powell "is a navigator whose unerring skill has contributed in a large way to the success achieved on many sorties, including the recent heavy attacks on Peenemunde and Berlin," says the official citation.

Trained Others

"In addition to his operational tasks, Squadron Leader Powell has rendered yeoman service in the training of other navigators, and his excellent work has been reflected in their numerous successes. This gallant officer has set an inspiring example."

S/L Powell is the navigation officer of #405 Squadron. To this date he has 55 operational trips in.

Operation #3 - MUNICH - SOUTH GERMANY.

This operation took place on the night of Oct 2/3, 1943. Our trouble started when the rear gunner had to have his turret doors jammed shut. Later his turret went up/s and remained so for the duration of the trip. We got very far south of track and ended up doing a time-wasting leg over Switzerland. The visibility was very good & it looked lovely. We were 19 mins late getting to the target which was visible well over a half hour before we reached it. It was quite a hot target with lots of searchlights, flak & fighters which followed us all the way to the French coast, dropping flares continually. As we crossed the English coast, just past Beachy Head our "Gu" & "Y" equipment blew up scaring hell out of the W/op & myself, thinking we had been hit by flak. We found we had not enough petrol to reach base so we called up "Darky" and got an answer from Bungold where we landed. Jim Litchback also landed there. We stayed there over night & flew back next morning via Reading. Our photos only showed fire streaks. All the aircraft from 405 returned but 7 were missing from the raid.

OPERATION #4 - HANOVER - NORTH GERMANY.

This operation took place on the night of Oct 18/19, 1943, 373 aircraft taking part, 14 aircraft from this squadron. We took off very early, 5:30 P.M. so we went a great part of the outward journey in partial daylight. While still over the sea we saw two Lancs turn back. Because of wind change we passed over the outer defences of Bremen. On E.T.A. target we arrived over a small red glow thru' the clouds which we couldn't identify as the target so we orbited until it was visible thru' breaks in the clouds. We bombed the centre of a group of yellow T.I's 10.5 mins late. The homeward journey was quite uneventful. I got flak bearings off Munster, got a fix which put us pretty well on track. When we finally came back we were about 4 n.miles north of track. When we got to Base our TR. 1196 was w/s so we had to circle until we got a green. All the aircraft from #405 returned although a couple got shot up a bit. P/O South got a hit in the shoulder which put him in hospital for quite some time. 17 aircraft from this all-hand raid are missing from the raid. We were down early and in bed by 12:30.

Jerry South got a D.F.C. out of this, well deserved too.

96 tons at a time on Hanover

Our bombers, the four-engine Lancasters, stated "in strength," and they were on Monday night. This was the 2nd attack on Hanover, one of the most important industrial centres.

The fires which "turned the clouds red" again raged and were seen by our crews 50 miles away from the city.

The Lancasters, which have a bomb-load capacity of eight tons, went in waves of up to 12 to unload.

The attack broke a ten days' lull in major night assaults on the Reich. The last was on October 8, when Hanover was also the main target.

Mosquitoes bombed Berlin and Western Germany for the second successive night. Seventeen of our bombers are missing.

Nazi fighters too late

Germany's night-fighter packs, with their lanes of flares, were absent when a strong force of Lancasters attacked Hanover on Monday night.

A few fighters arrived towards the end of the attack. The rear-gunner of a Lancaster said: "I saw a night fighter below us and I said to the skipper, 'There's one coming in.'"

"The enemy plane caught fire as I was speaking, so I added: 'All right. It's going down.'"

A large explosion was reported by crews. Seventeen planes were lost.

"Pathfinder" Pilot Wins D.F.C.

A "PATHFINDER" pilot (one of the men who lead our raiders over Germany), Flying-Officer G. J. South, of Sandown-drive, Sale, has been awarded the D.F.C. His father, Mr. Percy South, is General Circulation Manager at the Manchester office of Kemsley Newspapers, Ltd.



Flying Officer South

Flying-Officer South was 21 years of age on October 21, two days after the operation for which the D.F.C. was awarded. He entered the Royal Air Force in November, 1940. He was commissioned in February this year and had been on many operational flights over the Continent.

He is an old boy of Manchester Grammar School and at the time of his enlistment was in a Manchester solicitor's office. He is at present in hospital.

THE LIGHTS GO ON AGAIN IN SALLE-ST., HANOVER



REASON: The RAF is overhead — note the Lancaster bottom left. The lights come from thousands of incendiaries outlining Salle-strasse, with some of its intersecting streets, like a broad white ribbon.
Picture taken during the raid on the night of October 8.

Plane of the future

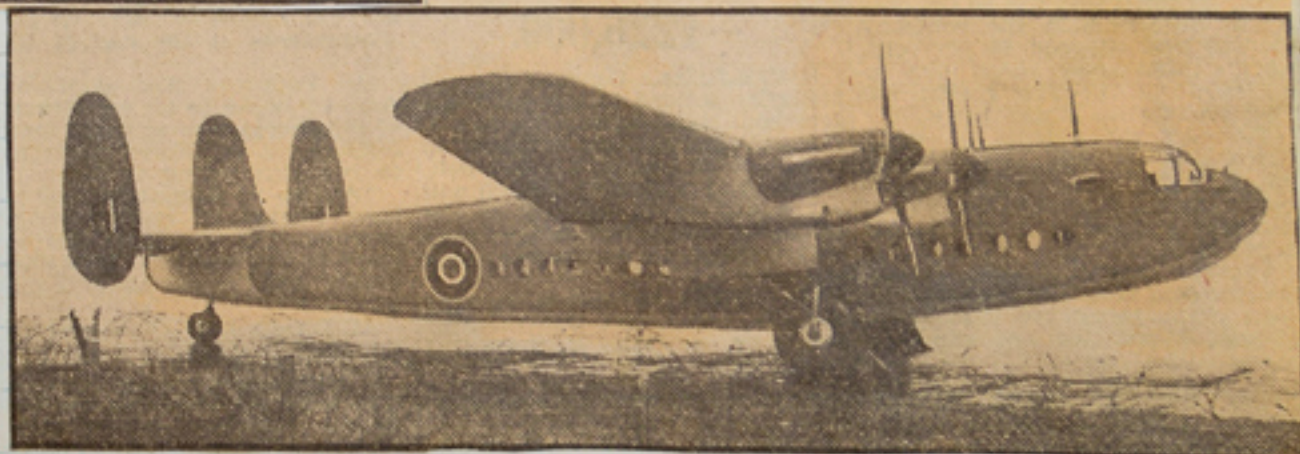


Express Air Reporter

THE Air Ministry are showing this air liner of the future in a new poster about to be displayed by 2,000 Air Training Corps units throughout the country.

The queer tailless wing is compared with the modern four-engine bomber, with the caption "Today and Tomorrow," to encourage recruiting for the A.T.C. for after-war purposes as well as for the present.

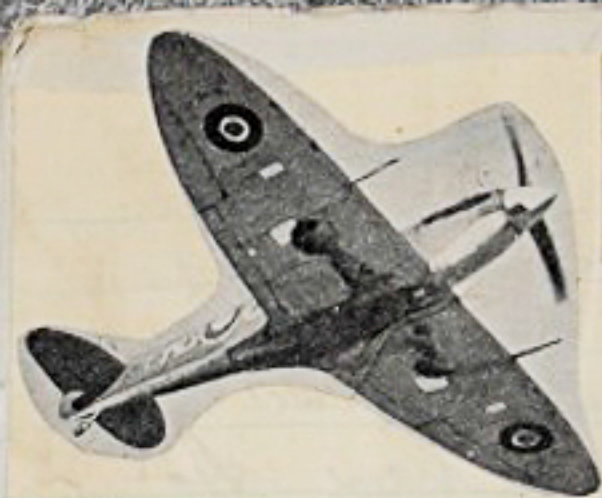
Aircraft designers throughout the world are known to be experimenting with prototypes of tailless aircraft. The machines are reported to be far more air-worthy than the present types, and more economical in storage space. It is possible that in less than a decade the four-engine aircraft of today, with the long fuselage and tail, will look as antiquated as Stephenson's engine does now.



OPERATION #5 - LEIPZIG - SOUTH OF BERLIN.

This one took place on the night of Oct 20/21, 1943, 370 Lancasters taking part, 14 from this squadron taking part. It was also an early take off, about 1730 hrs. We encountered bad weather shortly after reaching the enemy coast, and we could not get above it. We flew for a long time in cloud & while doing a time wasting leg just west of Berlin, between Brandenburg & Magdeburg, our two inboard motors quit due to icing and we lost height to 10,000' where we dropped our bombs possibly on Magdeburg. We set course for home at about 11,000', 120 knots P.H. & on 3 engines, thru' cloud. We did a lot of Altung course to miss defended areas and we came out on the northern part of the Huns. We had to dodge cloud all the way back over the North Sea but we got to base okay. We did a 3 engine landing, a bit rough but quite safe. We were glad to be back & give Mac all the credit for "hanging back". This squadron lost 1 kite, P/O Wood (an Aussie) "Zeki" Redpath was his navigator, who I came over in the boat with & he'd never much. The raid wasn't much of a success due to 100% cloud over the target.

It has been stated since that the target hasn't been touched by the last raid. Seventeen bombers are missing altogether.



LEIPZIG AND BERLIN

Heavy Bombers Out In Strength

THE RAF SWITCHED THEIR MAIN ATTACK TO LEIPZIG LAST NIGHT—THE FIRST TIME THIS IMPORTANT TARGET HAS BEEN RAIDED SINCE NOVEMBER, 1940.

A city of 700,000 inhabitants and big railway centre, Leipzig is said to be the new home of industries from the wrecked Ruhr.

This afternoon's Air Ministry communique said: "Aircraft of Bomber Command were over Germany in strength last night, with Leipzig as the main objective. Mosquitos bombed targets in Berlin and Western Germany. Seventeen of our aircraft are missing."

Nearly 600 miles away from London by air, Leipzig, apart from its new industries, has aeroplane



and munition factories, and important metal, textile and chemical works, besides factories producing scientific instruments, leather and rubber.

Berlin today claimed that the "strong formations" of bombers were prevented from launching a concentrated attack.

"At least twelve of the bombers were shot down," it claimed.

Last night's raid was the tenth night attack on Germany by the RAF this month.

It followed yesterday's day raid on the vital non-ferrous metal plant at Duren, in Western Germany, by strong formations of Flying Fortresses.

Paris radio said that an alert was sounded in Geneva at dawn today.

R.A.F. RETURN TO LEIPZIG

HEAVY RAID IN BAD WEATHER

BIG NEW CENTRE OF AERO INDUSTRY

From Our Aeronautical Correspondent

A strong force of R.A.F. Lancasters flew more than 1,200 miles in very bad weather on Wednesday night to make the first attack since November, 1940, on Leipzig, the fifth largest city in the Reich, an important aircraft component manufacturing centre and one of the most important railway junctions on the supply route to the eastern front.

Crews of the Lancasters described the weather as about the worst they have encountered for some time. Conditions began to deteriorate as soon as the raiders reached the enemy coast, and clouds in some places



reached a height of five miles. Hail fell in sheets, blinding the pilots for minutes at a time, and snow penetrated the cockpits. Violent electrical storms rocked the Lancasters and lightning played on the aircrews and guns.

The weather also upset the German defences. Searchlights were blocked by the clouds, and in such conditions it was very difficult for the fighters to find our bombers. Although some were attacked, most of them got through without seeing an enemy aircraft. The fighters, too, had a wide front to defend. Berlin or half a dozen towns on or near the route might have been the target for the night. Partly because of the weather and partly perhaps because the Germans were in doubt until the last moment where the attack was going to fall, there were few fighters over Leipzig itself.

Leipzig, a city of 700,000 inhabitants, has more than 20 firms engaged in its principal industry of aircraft components which has been steadily built up in the city for some years. Since the war the large buildings where the Leipzig Fair was held have been converted into workshops for the repair of Junkers aero-engines. In addition to its strategical railway system there are three extensive marshalling yards.

The Air Ministry report on Wednesday night's raid said:—

Aircraft of Bomber Command were over Germany in strength, with Leipzig as the main objective. Mosquitoes bombed targets in Berlin and western Germany. Seventeen of our aircraft are missing.

Hide and seek over Leipzig

LANCASTERS played a game of hide-and-seek with German flare-dropping fighters and searchlights among thick clouds over Germany on Wednesday night—and won.

The clouds were so thick in places on the 600-mile route to Leipzig that the searchlights could not even light them up from below, and flares merely glowed feebly.

But while the weather hampered the German defences it also made difficulties for the raiders, which flew through snow, terrific hail and electrical storms. Great blue flames of lightning glowed round the planes, blinding the fliers.

HAND DELIVERY

Most of the planes got through to Leipzig, aircraft building city of 700,000 people, without sighting a single German fighter. They unloaded their bombs through gaps in the clouds.

One Lancaster, however, piloted by Flight Sergeant F. J. Stuart, of Newcastle, had to fight off seven air attacks on the round trip. The bomb release gear was damaged, but the crew delivered their cargo by hand.

At least one German fighter was shot down by the Lancasters.

Mosquitoes bombed Berlin the same night, causing more damage than is usual in their raids, according to Berlin reports.

We lost 17 bombers.



Practise your navigation under all conditions

This one took place on the night of Oct 23/24, 1943
555 aircraft taking part, although the main attack
was on KASSEL as only 26 went to Frankfurt. Take off
was 1804 hrs, we were routed in south of Brussels
and south of the Ruhr. We climbed all the way thru
cloud but on reaching the target not a cloud was
in sight and we bombed visually between a red
T.I. & the river bend. The defences were light, at
least the flak was but the searchlights were well
over 200 strong, but we weren't either touched by
flak or coned by lights. The raid seemed a bit
scattered but pretty well all over the town. Shortly
after leaving our target we could see Kassel very
brilliantly lit up. As we passed it we got a
perfect view of it and it was indeed a hub of a raid
& beautifully concentrated. There were no defences at
all compared to Frankfurt. On the way home the
crew saw a fighter shot down, between Hannover
& Osnabruk. We descended thru cloud across the
North Sea coming home just north of the Zuider Zee.
No aircraft were missing from #405 but 44 were
missing altogether.

It is said now that Kassel was hit in a real
true RAF fashion as it is now a complete ruin. A picture
of it is farther on.

'T.I. RED': IT BEATS THICK CLOUD

BOMB THE FLARE

RAF Reveal Big Secret of Night Bombing

R.A.F. bombers bound for the Continent were heard last evening flying above the clouds over a S.E. coast area.

By COLIN BEDNALL, Daily Mail Air Correspondent

THE Air Ministry last night revealed one of the greatest secrets behind the mighty bombing offensive launched on Germany by Air Chief Marshal Harris.

The secret made possible the R.A.F.'s part in the record-breaking 4,000-tons bomb assault on the Reich on Wednesday, when our great four-engined raiders ended the day by plastering Dusseldorf with 2,000 tons in 27 minutes.

The newly revealed secret is the "Target Indicator"—a super-type flare dropped by the Pathfinders, which can be seen at night from the sub-stratosphere through almost total cloud.

The dramatic transformation of air raids into mass onslaughts, wiping out whole cities in a night, threatening the entire structure of Hitler's Germany, became possible with their use.

Air crews know the Target Indicator simply as "T.I. Red" or "T.I. Green," according to the colour—which is changed to prevent the enemy leading the bombers astray by setting fake indicators ablaze in open country.

Every target attacked now by the R.A.F. is marked out as simply and precisely as, say, a strip of ground to be excavated is marked out with tapes.

The bombers do the "excavating" of the target by streaming up to the area and simply pouring their bombs inside the marked area.

4,000 Tons of Bombs What it Means

IN a 12-hour onslaught on Germany on Wednesday, R.A.F. and American heavy bombers dropped 4,000 tons of bombs—the greatest weight ever to fall on the enemy homeland in one day and night.

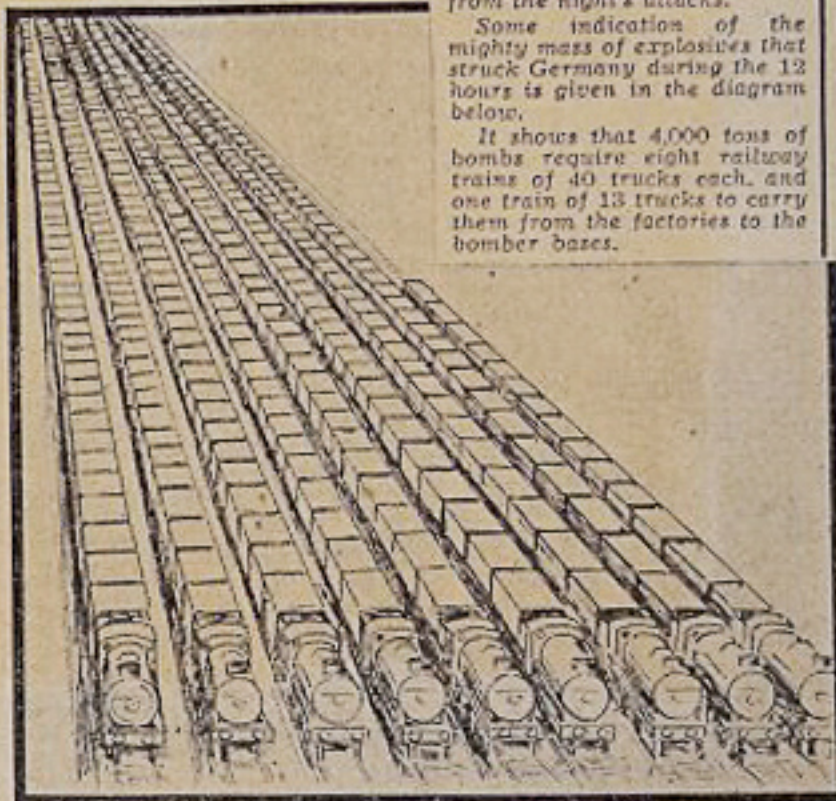
The R.A.F. raiders, striking in great strength, dropped 2,000 tons on Dusseldorf.

In addition, Cologne was also attacked by what the Air Ministry calls a "small force."

All but 10 bombers returned from the night's attacks.

Some indication of the mighty mass of explosives that struck Germany during the 12 hours is given in the diagram below.

It shows that 4,000 tons of bombs require eight railway trains of 40 trucks each, and one train of 13 trucks to carry them from the factories to the bomber bases.



This has enabled the amazing concentration of attack which swamps both the defences and the enemy's ability to stem the fires and havoc created.

It has made possible the devastation of cities even when they are completely covered by cloud—and it is the basis of the famous promise of Air Chief Marshal Harris that he would bomb Germany in "all weathers."

Visual bombing, in which intrepid pilots swooped down to chimney-top level to identify their targets before they released their loads, is obsolete.

The bomb-aimer no longer searches for what he thinks is, or should be, the target. He simply bombs the Target Indicator.

And this is very seldom out of place. It is always dead on the target—the Pathfinders ensure this.

The Air Ministry's summing-up of Wednesday's 2,000-ton blow at Dusseldorf says:

"Pathfinder tactics are tested after each raid by reference to night photographs taken during the attack. Last night's photographs brought back by crews show that the Pathfinders had marked out the target with accuracy."

The usefulness of the "marking" was described by the pilot of a Lancaster.

TRAINING AID

He said that when he arrived over Dusseldorf the Pathfinders' Target Indicators had been well-placed and concentrated.

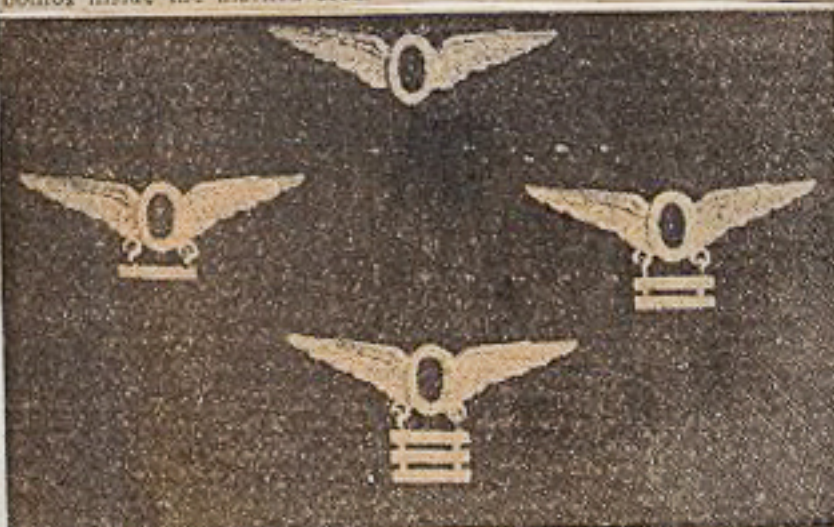
"We ran in over the town and dropped our bombs dead on these brilliant markers," he said. "Fires were already springing up around them as we made our way out of the danger area."

The new "T.I." method has been proved by experience to be infinitely more accurate than the old form of "visual bombing."

And behind the scenes of Bomber Command the new technique has had immense importance in making it possible to simplify and standardise the training of our great army of war-time airmen.

Although the Air Ministry kept silent about the indicators for nearly two years, the enemy has talked about them a great deal.

This has been done partly in appeals to the German public to help extinguish the flares when they appeared on the ground, and partly in the hope that it might induce the R.A.F. to betray the secrets behind them.



NEW INSIGNIA—The R.C.A.F.'s new operational wing (top), which will be awarded members of air crew who complete a tour of operations, has been augmented with the addition of a bar for each additional tour. One bar to the wing (left) indicates that the wearer has completed two tours of operations, two bars (right), three tours, and three bars (lower centre) show that four tours of operational flying have been completed. Hundreds of R.C.A.F. air crew will soon receive their wing, many with a bar. The number of sorties constituting a tour has been laid down, and air crew who qualify for the award, both in Canada and overseas, will be entitled to the new wing. The certificate presented with the gold wing reads, "In recognition of distinguished services, in that he has completed a tour of operational duty in action against the enemy."—R.C.A.F. photo.

OPERATION #4 - COLOGNE - "HAPPY VALLEY"

This one took place on the night of Nov 3rd 1943. It was the spoof for a very heavy raid on Dusseldorf, also in the Ruhr. Nearly 500 aircraft were on the main target and 62, all PFF, went to the spoof. Take off was at 1725 and we circled base for 15 minutes to get height. Everything went quite well going in & we stayed pretty well on track. While we were wasting time the first T.I.'s went down, a bit early if anything. I homed on the target with the A.P.I. & we dropped our bombs 4 of a minute early. The defenses were practically nil and searchlights didn't seem to try very hard. I developed cramps very badly and had to make a trip to the rear of the kite, not a very pleasant experience. We could see T.I.'s on the main target as we passed it. We came home a bit too far south & came near the defenses at Antwerp. However we were about 8th to land on reaching base on E.T.R. All PFF kites & all from this station returned safely. 19 main force kites are missing altogether. A very quiet trip.

BRITISH bombers raided Cologne last night after more than 1,000 U.S. planes attacked Wilhelms-haven in the greatest daylight attack ever made on Germany.

This tremendous flare-up in the assault against Germany was heightened by further raids made yesterday by 200 U.S. medium bombers. R.A.F. fighters and fighter-bombers were also out.

'TERROR RAID'

The great renewed onslaught falls into four sections.

1-COLOGNE: The German News Agency reported early today: "British terror raiders last evening attacked Cologne. Bombs were dropped on residential districts.

"The cathedral was hit very heavily. A broad section of the left aisle was torn out and debris was scattered all over the cathedral square.

"Heavy destruction was caused inside the cathedral."

Cologne cathedral is close to the railway station and the Hohenzollern Bridge which carries a vital railway and road across the Rhine.

After previous raids on Cologne (pop. 788,426)—the third most heavily bombed city in Germany—the Germans reported the cathedral as completely destroyed.

NIGHT RACE

The great success of Wednesday night's attack on Dusseldorf provided a dramatic tribute to the accuracy of the weather forecasts provided by the R.A.F. meteorologists.

Meteorologists predicted that fog was possible at any time after midnight, and it was therefore essential that all the aircraft should be back at their bases early.

The bombers reached Dusseldorf shortly before eight o'clock. They were back and bedded down at their airfields well before midnight.

They started off early in the evening to find that over the North Sea the clouds were more than three miles high.

"We just pounded on, trying to get above the filth," said a pilot, "and we did not find a break for mile after mile."

Then, nearing Dusseldorf, clouds thinned, and when the bombers were only ten miles from the town they came out in clear sky.

There was fairly thick haze over the target, but this presented no difficulty—because the Target Indicators had been dropped by the Pathfinders.

The German night fighters had not had much of a chance along the route because of the clouds, and those which were up—they were not so numerous as in many recent attacks—were flying round over Cologne and Dusseldorf.



Cologne Hit Last Night Say the Germans

THE German News Agency announced early to-day: "British terror raiders last evening attacked Cologne. Bombs were dropped on residential quarters of the city.

"The cathedral, which has repeatedly been the target of British bombers, was hit particularly heavily.

"A bomb tore out a broad section of the left side aisle at a height of about 45ft.

"Heavy destruction was also caused in the interior of the cathedral."

Cologne was last raided by the R.A.F. on September 22.

4,000 tons of bombs from morning to midnight,
Germany given worst-ever air bombardment

R.A.F. REVEAL SECRET OF PATHFINDERS

FOUR THOUSAND tons of bombs rained down on Germany on Wednesday and Wednesday night—the greatest aerial bombardment ever made in a single dawn to midnight.

And last evening R.A.F. planes were heard going out towards the Continent again. According to Berlin radio later, "British bombers made a nuisance raid on Western Germany this evening. Bombs were dropped at several places."

Half of Wednesday's tonnage was dropped by the American raid on Wilhelmshaven in daylight. R.A.F.'s Bomber Command was responsible for the rest with an evening cascade raid on Duesseldorf and a subsidiary raid on Cologne.

The secret of success, not only of the Duesseldorf raid, but of all the heavy raids on Germany, is the "Pathfinder force," about which the Air Ministry News Service last night gave details.

The Pathfinder force arrived over Duesseldorf just before "zero" hour. It was their task to mark out the targets with brilliantly coloured flares, and a few minutes after the attack had opened crews in the great striking force which followed could see the flares burning for a long time on the ground.

CLEARLY SEEN

"There was quite a haze over the target," said one pilot, "but the flares lit up the ground so well that I clearly saw the river and other landmarks many thousand feet below."

Even had there been thick cloud, the flares, called target indicators, would have shown up through all but the thickest. The haze over the town was no obstacle to a concentrated attack.

The night's saturation bombardment—it was all over in 27 minutes—would have been scarcely conceivable without these flares.

They were first used early in 1942, and without them it would have been impossible to have 1,000 bombers over so distant a target as Cologne and conclude the attack in an hour and a half and in darkness.

GREAT STRIDES

Since that time enormous strides have been made. In the early days there were no target indicators, but the first aircraft over the target were loaded with incendiaries with which to start fires to serve as a mark for the main force.

There was always a risk that the fires could not get going quickly enough, or that, unless they were very large, the more inexperienced crews might mistake dummy fires for real ones.

But target indicators are varied from night to night like recognition signals.

It was only a step to the formation of the Pathfinder force. Its first operation was on August 18, 1942, and since then Bomber Command has become increasingly independent of weather over the target.

WELL PLACED

Wednesday night's attack was a race against time. Fog was possible at any time after midnight, and it was therefore essential that our aircraft should have bombed and be back at their bases early. Our bombers reached Duesseldorf shortly before eight o'clock and were back at their airfields well before midnight. Our losses were 19 planes.

The German Overseas News Agency version of the day's raids was: "The attacks on Wilhelmshaven and on Duesseldorf and Cologne were made under extremely bad weather conditions.

"This explains why the raiders' losses were relatively light."



Air Commodore Bennett, D.S.O.

First man to wear

The Pathfinder badge



ABOUT a year ago R.A.F. pilots began to appear wearing the gilt eagle of the officers' cap badge on the flap of the left breast pocket, under their flying wings.

The first wearer was Air Commodore D. C. T. Bennett, D.S.O., former Imperial Airways pilot, who established the world distance record of 6,946 miles from Dundee to South Africa in the Mayo Composite seaplane.

From such signs at home and from statements made by the Germans and information trickling from Germany through neutral sources it became known that Bomber Command was in process of evolving a new technique to improve the accuracy of their night attacks.

VETERAN CREWS

This was the badge of a specially selected corps within Bomber Command—the Pathfinders. They were the highly-skilled and veteran bomber crews who could locate targets, even under difficult conditions, and mark them for the stream of bombers which followed them into the target area.

Now these gilt "Pathfinder" wings are to be seen on the breast pockets of many of Bomber Command personnel, for they are officially recognised as the badge for all crew members of the bombers which have the most hazardous job of leading and directing the night attacks.

During the past year the technique of the Pathfinders has been constantly improved: it is still being bettered so that the maximum number of heavy bombers may be able to drop the greatest load of bombs on a given target area in the shortest possible time.

Because the Germans have learned to their cost much of this technique, some of it may be discussed. In the early days of bombing Germany the target area was often missed by bomber crews owing to weather making navigation difficult and cloud obscuring the target. It was natural that the idea should be born of a leader for the bomber procession.

IN ANY CONDITIONS

First and most important qualification for the Pathfinder crew was that it should be able to find its way under the most difficult conditions to the target. For a start the Pathfinder crews dropped very large incendiary bombs.

Next they developed the technique of bombing en masse. Sometimes selected machines stay over the target throughout the raid, taking pictures and compiling a detailed record of its progress.

With the advancement of Pathfinder technique has come a parallel improvement in the method of systematically destroying German cities section by section. The Harris method of bomber destruction has now become a fairly exact science—weather permitting.

HOW THEY LIGHT UP TARGETS

THE secret of the Pathfinders' work in our heavy night raids on Germany can now be revealed.

These specially selected Bomber Command pilots who "blaze the trail" have been operating since August, 1942.

Their job is to arrive a few minutes before the main force, find the target and drop their brilliant flares.

The whole success of the raid depends on the accuracy of their work. The flares burn brightly for a long time and so enable the bombers to go in and bomb without worrying about target-spotting.

Colours Changed

It would have been impossible to have repeated 1,000-bomber raids without the Pathfinders.

It would also have been impossible to concentrate on saturation raids lasting less than an hour by a force of seven or eight hundred four-engine planes.

With the target clearly defined by the coloured flares, the bombers drop their bombs on their first run, and know that they are within the target area.

The colours of the flares are changed and kept secret, so that the enemy cannot put out decoy flares away from the target.

At first considerable difficulties were encountered, but now the Pathfinders rarely make a mistake. **Great Courage**

Great courage and determination are needed.

Timing is the important thing. With a mass of bombers following, a heavy raid could become a fiasco if the Pathfinders had not arrived or had failed to light the target.

Before the Pathfinder technique was evolved, the first planes over the target dropped incendiaries and those following bombed by the light of the fires.

The drawbacks to this were the danger of the incendiaries not starting fires, and the use of decoy fires by the enemy.

#405 Sgdn. PATHFINDERS LEAD ATTACK

Work of Flare-Dropping
Aircraft Disclosed
On Thursday

When details of Wednesday night's attack on Duesseldorf was announced the role played by Pathfinders was revealed for the first time. First over the target, with their cargo of flare markers, these leaders of the bomber armadas have successfully been kept out of the public eye for many months.

The story of the first RCAF bomber squadron to be formed in Britain now can be told. Selected to assist Coastal Command in anti-submarine patrols during the North African invasion a year ago, the squadron left coastal duties to return to Bomber Command.

Under the leadership of G/C John F. Fauquier, D.S.O., D.F.C., Ottawa, the squadron began its Pathfinder work. G/C Fauquier left important duties at headquarters of RCAF Bomber Group to return to the command of the squadron which he led before the Group was formed.

The operational flights of the crew members run into high figures. Eighteen members of the squadron hold, between them, 21 decorations. They have led the attack on many of the important targets of the past few months, including Dortmund, Duesseldorf, Essen, Mulheim, Munich and three visits to Berlin.

Bomber crews flying with the Pathfinder units are entitled to wear on their left breast pockets a gold albatross insignia which denotes their membership of the Pathfinder force.

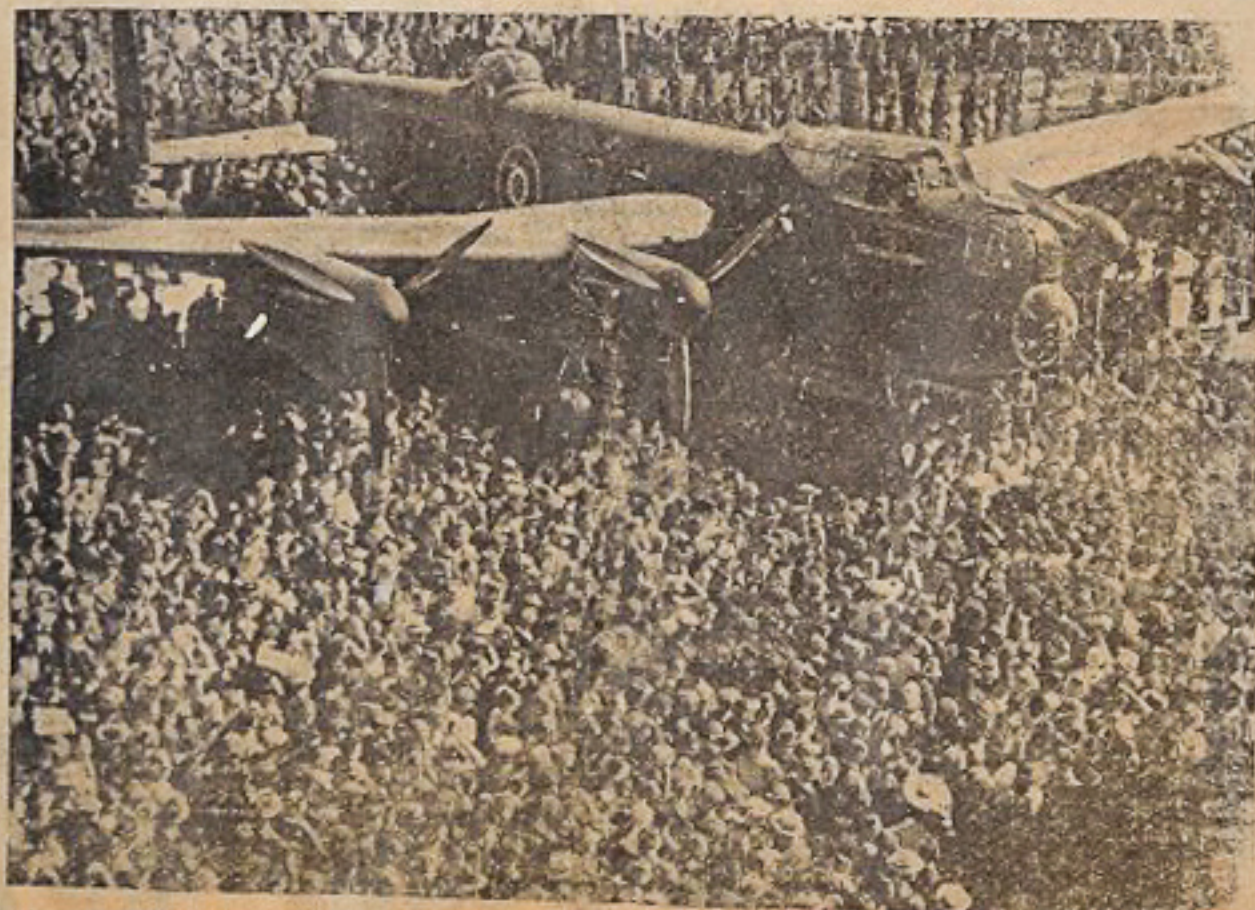


KASSEL CASCADE

A SHORT while ago this outlined factory area in Kassel, Germany, identified as Beck and Henkels, was working 24 hours a day making engines of war. Then on the night of October 22-23, R.A.F. Bomber Command made a "cascade" raid. Reconnaissance photographs showed the works, among many other industrial areas, to be wiped out.



"Ruhr Express" Symbolizes Canada's Munitions Might



Canada launched its first Lancaster recently and sent it overseas with a picked R.C.A.F. crew for immediate operations against the enemy. Produced by Victory Aircraft Lim-

ited at Malton, Ont., this bomber is the most powerful weapon made to date in this Dominion. Eight thousand people look unusually small

alongside the "Ruhr Express." The large crowd at Victory Aircraft's Lancaster launching showed no timidity in swarming around the monster plane.



LOADING 'COOKIE'

First

Inside

Camera

Story

HOW the heavyweight 4,000lb. bombs are loaded into R.A.F. aircraft has long puzzled many people. Here, in "Daily Sketch" exclusive pictures, merging interior and exterior scenes, is the answer.

Under the Lancaster, bomb-bay doors are open as a "cookie" swings into place, hoisted by means of two geared winches, one of which is seen in the body of the plane (top picture). The armory officer is watching the operation which will be completed when 200 turns on each winch have lifted the bomb 5ft. off the ground into the bomb-bay. The two containers on ground each carry more than 100 incendiaries.

This op took place on the evening of Nov 17, 1943. It was entirely a P.F.F. do, no main force B-24's took part in the raid and no T.I.'s or route markers were laid. Altogether 75 aircraft took part but there were nearly 10 turn-backs. Take-off was 1730 and we were routed Reading-Beachy/Hd-etc. It was a very quiet trip. Our nav-turret was up before take-off but was fixed in time. However it went up shortly after leaving the French coast. The #1 also went up about the same time. Due to a terrific wind change we were 8 mins. late on the target but so was everybody else. We bombed fires, which were fairly concentrated. We didn't attempt a photo as a fighter was seen & we took evasive action. We ended up north of track on the way home, near Boulogne. We had a 2nd Dickie with us & he flew nearly all the way home. Mac landed after about 3 attempts due to very poor visibility. There was only one aircraft missing from this raid and it was from #408. The skipper was F/S Hanson & the navigator 1st Lieut. Peterson. They also had a F/S 2nd Dickie with them. This was our first marker trip although we carried no T.I.'s.

Our 2nd Dickie was F/O Drew who later on crashed on return from his 1st op with his crew. To-day 8-3-44 he came back after being in hospital and convalescing for some time. F/S Dick Hanson flew "D" George before me did.

Sgt. Oliver John Haralson, Erickson, Buried In Germany



SGT. O. J. HARALSON

Sgt. Oliver John Haralson, of Erickson, who was reported missing following air operations over Germany in May, is now reported dead, according to word received from Germany.

He was on a raid over Bochum May 14, when he was killed. The Germans have reported that he was buried at Munchen Gladbach, Germany, May 18.

Sgt. Haralson was educated at Erickson, and prior to enlisting in the R.C.A.F. in August, 1941, was employed at Trail, B.C., for several years. He trained at Brandon, Medicine Hat, Edmonton and High River, and graduated as an air gunner at Macdonald, Man., in November, 1942, leaving shortly after for overseas.

Besides his father and a sister, Ethel, at home, there are two brothers, Clarence, at Dunrea, Man., and Arthur, at Sherridon.

This op took place on the night of Nov 18, 1943 with about 480 aircraft taking place. There was about the same number on a raid on Berlin, and T's were dropped on Frankfurt. We carried T's, yellow fog route markers + greens for the target but we were unable to drop them due to a up's bomb sight. As usual, our up was up. We arrived at Mainz about 2 1/2 mins early so did a time waiting leg and a couple of orbits and by then the yellow route markers were down so we set course for them. I then did a timed run from there to the target and we bombed on time. The B/A saw the aiming point so bombed visually but our shot slightly due to the bomb sight being unserviceable. It was a very nice + concentrated raid when we left it. The only defenses were hundreds of searchlights + flak fairly low down. The homeward journey was quite uneventful + we ended up slightly north of track and came home same as the night before. We were 3rd to land + Mac made a honey of a landing. 32 aircraft were missing from our raid + the Berlin do, but none from #405 were missing. P/O Bennett + S/Lt Satterly who were on Berlin landed at some other dome but are okay. We got a perfect picture, the only crew from this station to get one and it was about 800-1000 yds from the aiming point.



CENTRE: LEFT-F/L, Frank Carter (Ingersoll, Ont.) celebrating

Berlin, Ludwigshafen Get Heavy Pounding

Canadian Lancaster Squadrons Hit Reich

Between 700 and 1,000
Heavy Bombers
Take Part

By ROBERT N. STURDEVANT

LONDON, Nov. 19—(A. P.)

—The greatest armada of R.A.F. and R.C.A.F. heavy bombers ever dispatched to Germany—at least 700 planes and perhaps a full thousand—blasted Berlin and Ludwigshafen last night.

The R. C. A. F. Bomber Group dispatched its biggest force of big bombers with the R.A.F. attackers. The exact number is not known but at least six Canadian squadrons were sent out with two Lancaster formations blasting Berlin and four Halifax squadrons raiding Ludwigshafen.

Losses in the twin raid were 32 aircraft, of which seven were Canadian.

Incendiary bombs and high explosives dumped on the German capital started large fires that lit up the skies, although cloud formations prevented immediate observation of the results of the first heavy raid there since Sept. 3.

The exact number of bombers participating in the tremendous dual blow was not made known, but between 700 and 800 heavy bombers participated in some of the raids that levelled Hamburg and the air ministry announcement said last night's total topped all previous assaults.

The announcement indicated that the main strength of the night formations struck Berlin with "a great weight of high explosives and incendiary bombs."

Clearer weather prevailed over Ludwigshafen—home of the world's largest chemical works—and the second straight night assault on that industrial city resulted in large explosions.

On the basis of last night's attacks, two successive American daylight assaults on vital targets in Norway, and the R.A.F. smash Wednesday night at Ludwigshafen, some London quarters promptly suggested that the Allies may be opening the greatest bombing offensive ever attempted against Europe.

The air ministry announced that last night's dual attack was made "by the largest force of heavy bombers yet dispatched to Germany."

"A great weight of high explosives and incendiary bombs" was dropped on Berlin, the ministry's announcement went on, lighting up the sky "by the reflection of large fires."

Halifaxes Also Included in Heavy Attack- ing Force

LONDON, Nov. 19—(C. P. Cable)

—Big Lancasters and Halifaxes from the Canadian Bomber Group joined the R.A.F. last night in its two-pronged attack against Germany. Goose and Thunderbird squadrons comprised of Lancaster bombers thundered over Berlin without loss while Halifaxes from the Lion, Bison, Bluenose and Iroquois squadrons hit Ludwigshafen.

The airmen fought freezing temperatures all the way, the mercury sometimes hitting 37 below.

Wing Cmdr. Alex Mair of Brantford, Ont., commanding officer of the Goose squadron, took his outfit to Berlin. They encountered no night fighters on the run, but were bounced around by heavy flak.

Maritimers in the squadron were Flt. Sgt. Lloyd Beer of Picton, N. S., and Flt. Sgt. Roy McKay of Truro, N. S.

It was the 13th operation for Flt. Sgt. Steve Saprunoff of Trill, B.C., who went to Ludwigshafen in a Halifax bomber skippered by Sqdn. Ldr. Eric Hockey, Kentville, N. S.

"Everything seemed to light up at once," said the westerner, describing the run. "We saw one tremendous fire and several smaller ones develop."

Swedish Report

STOCKHOLM, Nov. 19—(A. P.)

—Large formations of R.A.F. bombers last night struck "mainly at the outskirts of Berlin where some fires could be seen," the Berlin correspondent of the Swedish newspaper Aftonbladet reported today.

Considerable Nazi industry is concentrated on the fringes of the German capital.

At the same time, it was announced here that the Swedish university town of Lund was thrown into a panic last night when showered by incendiary bombs by "a single foreign plane" and at least one high explosive which fell in a garden. The only casualty reported was one woman cut by glass. The incendiaries burned one building.

"Mass Attack"

A DNB broadcast from Berlin called last night's R.A.F.-R.C.A.F. operation an "attempted mass attack." Some damage was acknowledged.

"British bomber formations flew over northwest Germany under unfavorable weather conditions," DNB said, "and attacked Berlin and a few other localities with high explosive and incendiary bombs."

Coastal observers said it took the bombers more than an hour to cross the Channel on the return flight.

The German agency Transocean also reported attacks "on various places in southwestern and northern Germany," and the Vichy radio said targets in northern France likewise were hit by the R.A.F. last night.

Last night's attack, the 57th by the British on Berlin since the war began, was the first assault on the German capital by heavy bombers since Sept. 3.

at last we get the "Big City" on the night of Dec 2nd, 1943. Around 350 Lancasters took part, including the P.O. Kites. We took off about 1720 hrs and climbed over base for about 10 minutes before s/c. We had to climb fast to get over a front which was over the North sea. We were at about 16,500' at Egmond when I decided we were going to be late on the target unless we put the div. speed up, so we did 150 knots all the way to the target. Just before we reached the led route markers a lone Red T.I. went down with a green + a yellow T.I. later on. The winds seemed to be from all corners of the earth + I couldn't get the charges as low as I went w/o crossing the Dutch coast. About 2004 the first reds went down and were still a few minutes away and also there were a lot of Wanganui flares down. Mac climbed up to about 21,500' ft. thus cutting the T.A.S. down but we did that as we did not want to be early. We bombed reds at 2010.1, 2.1 minutes late. Everyone was late, most were about 4-9 minutes. We bombed at 20300', 160 K.P.H. + came out of the target at 180-190 knots. After we left the target I got out of my cubby hole + had a look at what we had been thru + it shook me rigid. It was indeed a lucky sight although there was a lot of flak + searchlights, but the s/c were kept down by clouds. It is a huge target + the T.I.'s made it look grand. We could see the target about 45 mins after we left the target. The homeward journey was quite good although we were south of track for awhile but got back on in a hurry. We started high over the Dutch coast, at about 22,500' + then descended at 200 knots. We were about 3rd home + 3rd to land. Anxiety was caused over Jim Libback who was 1/2 hour late getting home. All the aircraft from #405 arrived back safely, but 41 aircraft were missing altogether. This was the first time we had dropped T.I.'s.



Mosquitoes Follow The Heavies

By 'Daily Sketch' Air Correspondent

GERMANY threw in literally everything she had—fighter squadrons, masses of searchlights, light and heavy A.A.—in a frantic bid to keep the R.A.F. from Berlin on Thursday night. But she failed.

The heavy bombers swept in to plaster the German capital again with 1,500 tons in half an hour, hitting new targets and starting gigantic fires that the pilots could see when they were 200 miles away on their journey home.

Last night many of these fires were still raging, and thousands of Berliners, fearing that the flames would act as guides for another R.A.F. force, spent the night in the open outside the city, say messages reaching Stockholm.

Thirty or forty "block-busters" were dropped during the raid, according to one report, and there has been an official German admission of "heavy damage."

The southern suburbs which had escaped in previous raids were apparently the main objective, but one of the most terrific battles ever seen in the night sky raged over the whole city for two hours.

Mosquitoes roared in for a follow-up raid after the mighty force of Lancasters and Halifaxes had dropped their bombs.

Great Night Sky Battle

The German fighters were reinforced time after time for this great battle that was fought in a patch of clear sky above the city—a sky arena with clouds as the walls, brilliantly lighted by enemy flares and the glare from fires below.

The first bombs fell a few minutes after eight o'clock, when there was still a low moon.

It was clear above the clouds and there was good visibility in the clear patches of sky. At times the raiders had to make their bombing runs across a huge expanse of cloudless sky, with the city below and great banks of cloud all round. And all the time night fighters were lurking.

"Fighter flares were dropped all over the target area," said Flying Officer J. A. Cameron, a Lancaster pilot from Melbourne.

"For 50 miles the Germans were dropping the flares to catch us and the way to Berlin was brightly lit up in a straight line in front of us."

Another Lancaster pilot said: "When I reached the city the attack was just coming to an end. Huge fires were burning fiercely below us, and smoke had reached a height of about three miles."

Sergeant D. Baines, wireless operator in another Lancaster, said that after he had bombed an orange flame shot up through the clouds.

Towards the end of the attack

masses of smoke were rising to a height of several miles.

Forty-one out of the many hundreds of bombers which made the assault are missing.

This was the fifth major attack on Berlin in 14 nights.

And in those five raids 7,500 tons of bombs—more than the Luftwaffe dropped in the 11-month blitz on London—were dropped.

Berlin was completely paralysed after the raid, said a report received through Stockholm. No morning papers appeared in the capital, and street traffic was blocked.

Not one house remained undamaged in the Charlottenburg

district after the raid, according to one report.

"Great damage was caused by the heavy phosphorous bombs which penetrated buildings for several storeys," said another report.

High explosives also dropped in the once-busy Alexanderplatz in the heart of Berlin, which is now devastated.

No trains are running into or out of the Potsdamer and Stettiner railway stations, which are mere fire-scarred shells.

The Swedish Minister to Berlin, Dr. Richert, was among the passengers returning to Stockholm by plane yesterday from Germany.

The number of homeless Berliners is now officially given as over one million. About 30,000 have lately arrived in Munich and Vienna.

Thousands last night were billeted in warehouses, factories and churches.

Army field kitchens and emergency community kitchens have been set up, but the food supply organisation is still chaotic.

In many parts of Berlin gas, water and electric supplies were out of action yesterday.

Long queues were turned away from grocers' and bakers' shops because of the shortage of potatoes and bread.

'No' To Evacuation

The municipal authorities of Berlin, it is stated, have appealed to Goebbels, gauleiter of the capital, to order a partial evacuation of the city.

Goebbels is reported to have refused on the grounds that Berlin is too important in Germany's war effort.

Himmler yesterday ordered that half the fire-fighting personnel must be replaced by women, for whom training will be set up all over Germany.

In Berlin, he said, every fire squad must have another squad in reserve to step into the place of those killed.



PO Dick McDonald Reported Missing

Pilot Officer D. R. C. "Dick" McDonald, son of Mr. and Mrs. R. T. McDonald, of Minnedosa, has been reported missing after air operations overseas, a cable received by his parents states.

Born at Magnet, Man., Dick had lived in Minnedosa since 1928. He was an active member of the Boy Scout troop, and took an active part in all school activities. He was interested in track and field sports, and was a mainstay on track teams at the inter-school field days. In 1940 he captured the Alexandra cup at the Scottish games in Winnipeg.

Enlisting in the R.C.A.F. in the fall of 1940, he trained at Brandon, Prince Albert, Sask., Boundary Bay, B.C., and received his pilot's wings at No. 12 S.F.T.S., Brandon, in August, 1941, going overseas shortly after. He acted as an instructor overseas for a time, but had been on operations for some months.

Besides his parents there are two brothers, Sgt. Jack McDonald and Tpr. Dennis McDonald, both overseas with the Lord Strathcona Horse, and one sister, AW Doris McDonald, with the R.C.A.F. (W.D.), at Rockcliffe, Ont.

I Bomb Berlin —See 'V' Fires

By A. W. V. KING

SUPERB in the savage beauty of light, terrifying as a spectacle of devastation by explosive and burning.

That was how a portion of Berlin appeared last night from a Lancaster in one of the Australian bomber squadrons in which I flew.

It was a picture typical of a heavy concentrated bombing attack.

It was an enthralling, breathtaking spectacle.

Hundreds of searchlights probed the skies and coned several bombers.

Scarecrow flares soared upwards, burst into a cascade of lights which turned night into day. Other flares broke into ominous red and green orbs. Flak burst in angry blobs.

"Cookies" Explode Like Mushrooms

The skies over the target were indeed turmoil.

The target area itself was in even greater turmoil as four-thousand-pounders—"cookies"—smashed into the built-up areas and incendiaries cascaded down and took hold of blocks of buildings in fantastic alphabetical designs.

Symbolic of the purpose of the attack, one of the early strings of incendiaries flared up in an almost perfect "V"—for Victory. Other strings formed "Is," "Ts," and "Ls."

"Cookies" exploded in seemingly slow mushroom-like glows and burnt dull red for some time. Then they died out in plumes of smoke.

The pilot of the crew with whom I flew was 23-year-old Squadron-Leader William A. Forbes, whose parents live at Hornsby, New South Wales, and his wife at Bundaberg, Queensland.

The flight engineer was Pilot-Officer Frank Miller, of Laidley, Queensland. Others comprised two Scots, two Englishmen and a Canadian. They were doing their 27th operation together, and their Lancaster, G for George, his 11th.

Trips To The Land Of The Big Mugs

It is not scarred, not even scratched, from the previous ten sorties, which are represented on the fuselage not by the orthodox bomb replicas but by foaming mugs of beer.

"Why that symbol?" I asked a member of the ground crew, Sergt. Laurie Parker, of Bundaberg, Queensland, when I was standing by to board George.

Parker grinned: "Trips to the land of mugs—big mugs," he said laconically.

The experienced crew brought George efficiently and uneventfully past the heavily defended

areas en route to the "King of Targets."

Then the crux of the tense drama began. Cloud had protected us for practically the whole way. Then 10 miles from the target it became wispy.

Visibility was perfect over the target itself. The clouds, almost miraculously, had been drawn aside like a curtain over Berlin, for as soon as he left it George was blanketed again.

But if the break in the clouds made the job easier for the bomb-aimers, it also enabled the defenders to concentrate hundreds of searchlights and light and heavy flak against our planes.

The Germans used all their defensive devices, but we saw one of our planes perfectly coned in searchlights without fighters attacking it or without flak directed towards it, although both up to this had been used extensively when a bomber was coned.

George was among the first wave of bombers over the target, which had been defined with remarkable clarity by the Pathfinder Force a few minutes earlier. The target indicators were of different colours.

The Most Exciting 10 Minutes Of My Life

The bomb-aimer's particular objectives stood out like a beacon amidst the confusion of colours.

From the time we sighted them about 10 miles out until we passed beyond them was the most exciting 10 minutes I have ever lived through.

The two central figures in that brief period were Forbes and the bomb-aimer—Pilot-Officer William Grime, of Ealing, London—two "Bills" who co-operatively directed and instructed each other on the "intercom."

I stood behind the imperturbable Forbes and watched the fascinatingly fantastic scene over his shoulder.

As soon as he sighted the target-indicators, for which he was on the look-out, Forbes asked Grime whether he had seen them. Grime answered confidently, "Yes."

Then he gave the pilot a slight alteration of course, adding, "You can weave a bit, Bill." Bill Forbes weaved to lessen the danger from flak.

It was only for seconds. Then Forbes settled down to hold his vehicle of destruction to the level, undeviating run so essential for accurate bombing.

Flak poured upwards, though none burst close enough to George to threaten the safety of the crew.

But they were those few seconds which bomber-crews dread. They must summon up all their courage, determination and imperturbability. . . .

The few seconds in which they never know whether the next burst of flak is going to extinguish life, smash limbs and cripple their life, or whether enemy fighters will slip past the gunners for the "kill."

The flak, to anyone as uninitiated like myself, seemed desperately dangerous, but according to George's veteran crew of youngsters "it wasn't much."

Whether heavy or light, it failed to disturb George's steady bombing run.

Magic Words That Never Fail To Thrill

Over the inter-com, from the bomb-aimer's compartment came Grime's calm voice, "Bomb doors open"—magic words that thrill even the most hardened crew.

"Okay," from Forbes.

Then, from Grime, the even more magic words in his unruffled voice:

"Cookie gone."

"Okay," from the equally unruffled Forbes.

I counted slowly to myself, "One, two, three, four, five." Then Grime spoke again: "Incendiaries gone."

"Okay," from Forbes.

We had delivered—free of charge—to Hitler and Company a 4,000lb. building-blaster and morale-shaker, and several thousand pounds of fire-raisers.

This climax to our flight came when we were almost four hours from the base to the target.

Down below—four miles below—early comers had already set the fires going and our waves stoked them thoroughly.

We Saw Reflections Of The Fires For Miles

As the lightened George continued, I, the spare part on the plane, had the best opportunity to watch those fires increase in number and expand, seemingly to merge in an immense conflagration.

Among it glowed the cookies' angry explosions like boils on white flesh. The smoke billowed and grew in volume over the flames.

Below George another Lancaster nosed forward and was silhouetted sinisterly against the flaming background like a shark in an aquarium pool.

It wasn't without cost that the inferno in Berlin's heart was made. Three flak-bursts seemed simultaneously to hit one Lancaster.

It burst into flame. Another seemed to get into difficulties, and a little later several parachutes could be seen floating down.

For many miles beyond the outskirts of Berlin, the flames and their reflections in the sky could be seen.

Later waves had done their work as efficiently as the early-comers. All the bombing was completed in less than a quarter of an hour.

Forbes and his crew compelled admiration by their thoroughness, confidence and attention to their duties.

Although emphasis has been given to the climax of the drama, both the earlier and later acts had their fascinating features.

We set off with a sliver of blood-red sun sitting prettily on top of a bank of slatey-grey cloud.

We soared up over lovely English fields, and as we gained height George's occupants busied themselves in the settling-in process.

Forbes completed odds and ends of instructions and the checking which would be necessary for success. Everything was ship-shape within five minutes, and George began the steady climb which was to take him and us into the high regions where the crew were instructed to fly and where the perspex soon became frosted.

No Back Chat A

La Hollywood

We rose above the clouds, and the sun again became a full red ball and set the broken sky aglow with rose, mauve, scarlet and orange, only slowly and unwillingly surrendering his kingdom to a wisp of a flapper moon—silver until the real darkness turned her to gold.

It was a scene of strange, ineffable beauty. There was little sensation of flying. George was as steady as the deck of an ocean liner in a smooth sea.

The moon shone on a weird and wonderful cloudland far below us like a crumpled snowfield. Now and again we saw other bombers.

All, like George, were pursuing height. The oxygen was turned on after half an hour, and from then on we wore masks, looking like characters in a Wellsian fantasy for six hours, the crew silently intent for long periods

Forbes, like all good skippers, dislikes inter-com. "patter" which fictionalists and film-producers have romanticised.

Miller confided presently that the temperature was 32 degrees of frost. He traced this information and the height on the frosted perspex with his finger.

The flight proceeded without incident until we crossed the coast of an enemy-occupied country.

There flak for the first time, and feebly, challenged us, doing us the service of breaking the monotony, which is one of a bomber-crew's most insidious enemies.

Anxious Watch Against Collision

The crew kept an anxiously intent watch against collision with other bombers in the cloud masses through which we passed, but no danger from that cause appeared. The crew occasionally reported sighting other kites.

We knew that bombers from dozens of other stations were linking up in this large attacking force—a real procession of bombers to Berlin.

Orange and red bursts of flak studded the clouds from time to time along the route, entrancing to watch at a distance; but it remained for a strongly defended area to provide the most remarkable spectacle of the outward journey.

A thick band of cloud interposed itself between George and the ground.

Eighty or a hundred searchlights ranged in rows with almost geometrical precision, probed upwards through our protecting cover but failed to penetrate it.

The crests of searchlights seemed to squat on top of the clouds like large diamonds on a black cushion in a jeweller's shop. This area "pooped" more flak upwards.

We picked up the markers which the Pathfinders had laid for us and saw the first of the lanes of red fighter flares which recently have become a feature of Germany's aircraft defences.

Soon after passing this strongly defended area the run into Berlin began and brought the outward flight to its climax.

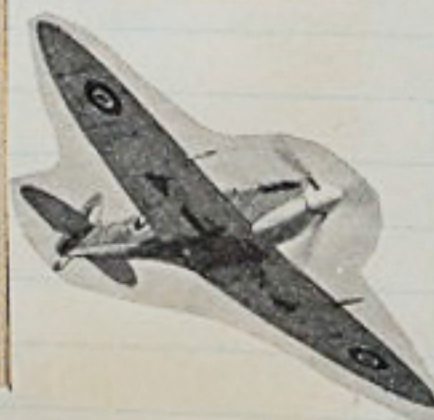
On the homeward journey flak gave us a nasty three or four minutes with several bursts sufficiently close beneath George to set him tossing resentfully.

It was like a small boat smack-ing big waves bow on.

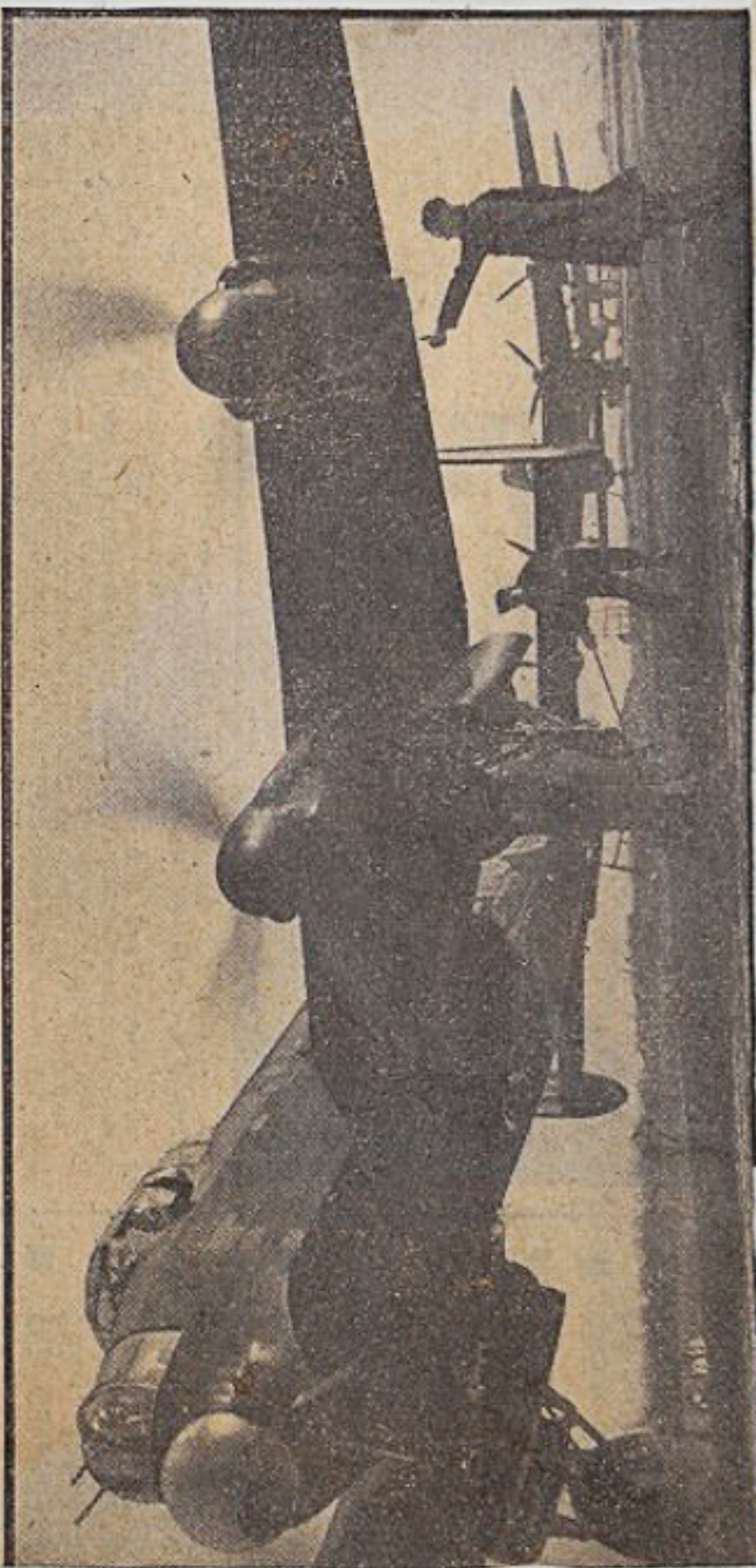
The rest of the homeward leg was sheer monotony. We were in complete cloud until the last half-hour, when we descended into clearer levels.

Then came the thrill of the aerodrome's welcoming lights. After circling it several times to allow early arrivals to land, George at length touched down as smoothly as he had left.

At least one human inside him—myself—breathed a sigh of happy relief, despite the thrills of an experience I would never have missed.—World Copyright Reserved.

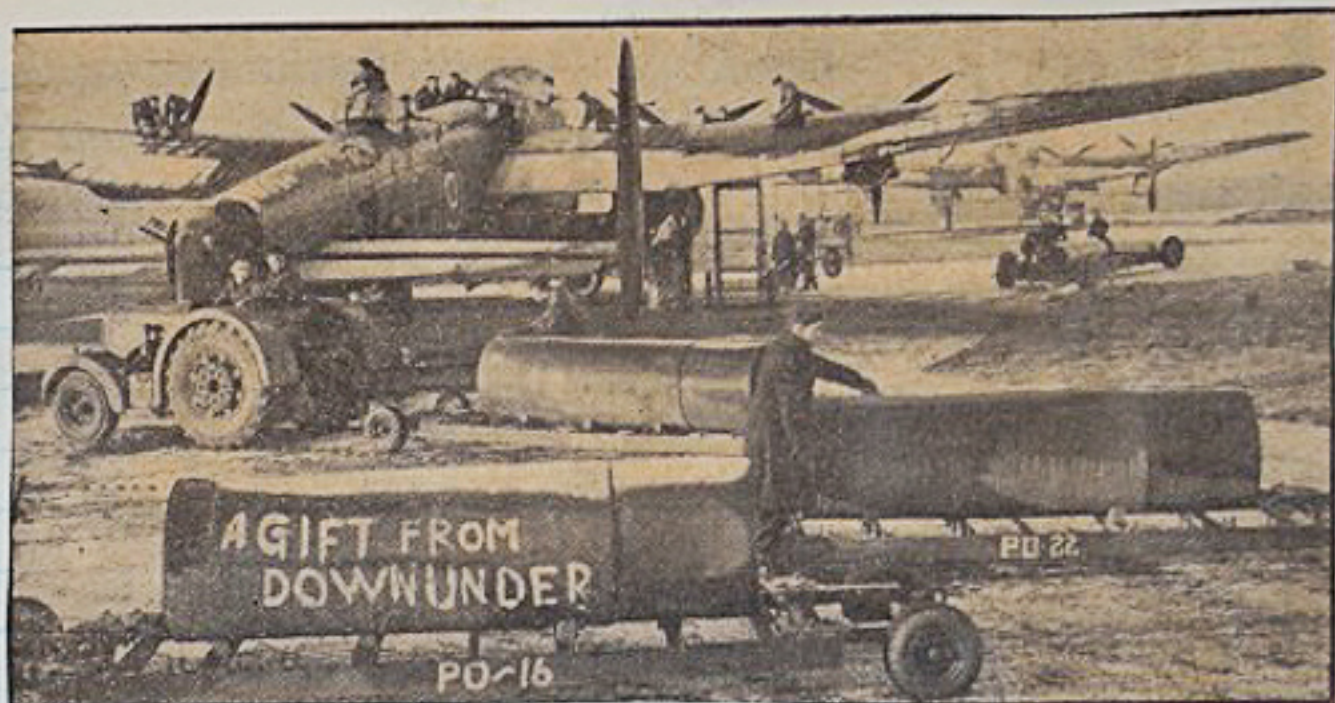


Massed Fighters Fail To Save Berlin 1,500 TONS IN 30 MINUTES



"Let her go!" Engines running as the wheel-chocks are removed, the leading Lancaster of an Australian squadron sets out for Berlin. Pilot and ground engineer part company with thumbs up.

This picture and another on Back Page were taken by a "Daily Sketch" cameraman who saw the raiders off.



Block-Busters For Berlin

The "gift from down under"—a 4,000lb. block-buster—was personally presented to the German capital by an Australian Lancaster squadron. This "Daily Sketch" picture was faken as ground crews checked over the bombers and loaded for Berlin.

This one took place on the morning of Dec 4, 1953, taking off at 0034. About 500 aircraft took part including about 80 P.F.F. kites. We were about 10 mins. late in taking off so had to o/c as soon as we were airborne. For a change our "if" worked beautifully so we stayed on track quite well. Just near Hanover we were attacked by a fighter & it followed us for nearly 100 miles but did not come very close. It was very nerve racking as the monica kept rattling away. However the gunners gave a very good running commentary on it which helped a lot. As we neared Brandenburg a lot of flak came up and the o/c's started feeling about but the Red route markers went down & we got the lake in the way "if" so we turned south for Leipzig. Running up to the target we nearly collided with a blazing Lancaster. We went on and dropped our T.I.'s & bombs at 0406.9, 1.1 of a min. late. Out of the target urban area the greens which gave us a good track. The return trip was very uneventful and we stayed on track & came out bang on at the French coast. We came the rest of the rest of the way at a good lick & were arrived home before about 5 kites. One kite from here is missing S/O Norm. Bowling, "Andy" Anderson his B/A, Sgt Belcher his Nav. The B/A & Norm both slept in this billet & were two grand fellows. 23 aircraft were missing altogether from the trip. The radio to-day claims that it was a bang on raid & that the centre of the city was a wholesale wreck & was still blazing when P.C. U. was over. All the photos taken were of cloud & searchlights.

This raid was one of the best raids P.F.F. ever pulled off.

This is a typical "op" of any Lancaster crew.

AIR COMMENTARY

480 minutes with a hero

★ Found among the papers of an airman lost recently in action, this minute-by-minute diary of a night bomber-raid on Germany is the most remarkable thing of its kind I have ever seen (says Colin Bednall).

Calmly and methodically, every incident in the long flight of a Lancaster, from take-off to cut-down, is recorded exactly as it occurred. No normal member of an air-crew would be able to make such a complete diary as this. He would not have the time. The author was one of the flying-cameramen whose pictures have done so much to show the public what the R.A.F. is doing.

18.00 hours: We have just climbed into the Lancaster K for King. It is still light outside, and a cool breeze is blowing across the aerodrome. Inside, it is hot and heavy with oil fumes, and sweat is pouring from our faces. All have taken their places and are settling down as the engines start up.

18.12 hours: We are taxiing out cautiously, because workmen are still constructing the aerodrome. Looking from a small window on the starboard side of the aircraft I can see three Lancasters following us around the perimeter track. Altogether to-night well over 600 heavy bombers are scheduled to take off. Germany must be waiting uneasily—knowing the weather to be good.

18.18 hours: We are just taking off. Underneath our belly lie tons of high explosive, but with no apparent effort the machine takes to the air like a great black bird.

18.40 hours: We are now at 6,000ft., still climbing—the aerodrome is over to our port side, just visible through a haze on the ground. Towards the west the sun is beginning to set, mixing up its golden colours with dark grey in long streaks of cloud. Oxygen has been checked and is working perfectly. I always hold my rubber tube until I can feel the gas forcing its way through in bubbles.

18.43 hours: The wireless operator has wound out the trailing aerial.

19.06 hours: We are just over 10,000ft. and have put on our oxygen-masks. They will be our life-line for the next six hours. We are still climbing, and beneath us, through wispy cottonwool cloud, lies the Humber estuary. England looks so very quiet and peaceful.

19.15 hours: The aircraft seems to be climbing too slowly, and the flight engineer changes gear. The whole aircraft shudders as though hit, and then starts a more rapid rate of ascent. The temperature is -4deg. C., but I do not feel

cold as yet—if anything, a little warm.

19.20 hours: The navigator has drawn the curtains over his little compartment, where he will remain with his charts, working by the light of a small table-lamp for the rest of the trip.

19.31 hours: The temperature is -8deg. C., and we are 16,500ft. and still climbing. Below us is a thick, white, impressive blanket of cloud, with a golden sun setting on the horizon.

19.50 hours: I was sitting next to the wireless operator, but the heat from the aircraft's heating system was too intense, and I have moved through the bulkhead door into the black, greasy seat designated "The Bed." It is too cold here, but it is impossible to strike a happy medium of temperature anywhere.

20.02 hours: We are leaving England. The coast below feels so far away as to be almost ridiculous. It is now quite dark: we are 18,500ft. and still climbing. The temperature is -15deg. C. One feels very remote from everything, but quite compact in a little hot whirring machine world peopled by men who look like gnomes in their flying helmets and hairy, cumbersome garments.

20.17 hours: The enemy coast can be seen ahead, with heavy flak coming up over to starboard—it will be a little while before we cross it, though.

20.37 hours: We are just crossing the enemy coast. Already through a hole in the bottom of the aircraft I can see the flashes from the flak. The aircraft has just flown straight and level for a few minutes so that the bomb-sight can be set. The bombs are fused.

21.08 hours: We are flying at 20,000ft., it is bumpy, and the temperature is around -17deg. C. Here at the back of the aircraft one is quite alone, and over the hole the cold can be felt. The cine-camera hangs over the hole, looking quite precarious. Behind me stretches the fuselage of the aircraft, like a long, sombre tomb, with a faint red glow at the end and from the lights where the wireless operator and navigator are working. My mouth feels dry and parched with the oxygen.

21.26 hours: Things are very quiet—nobody has been saying very much, and for the past quarter of an hour there has been scant activity from the ground. We should be at the target in about 20 minutes or so.

21.40 hours: We have altered course for the target, which is lying straight ahead.

21.42 hours: There is a fair amount of flak bursting in flashes underneath the aircraft. Everybody is keyed up to bomb, and my camera is just waiting the flick of a switch to set it in motion.

21.59 hours: We are just leaving the target area. As we approached the target, the flak seemed to die down, and flares came up to help the German night-fighters. We made a big swing to port, and went into the bombing run. As the bomb-doors opened, the whole aircraft vibrated and the noise and whistle of wind increased. I switched on my camera as the target came into view. As our bombs left the aircraft, the incendiaries seemed to scatter away from the like sticks of liquorice. There was a lurch as the 4,000lb. bombs parted company with us. I could see the ground beneath, and although

early in the raid the fires seemed to be getting well started, if a little scattered.

22.15 hours: Although clear weather over the target, the cloud is now 10-10ths beneath us. I have been working on the same piece of chewing gum for the past hour and find it very bitter in the mouth.

22.19 hours: We have altered course. I can still feel bumpiness from the slipstream of other bombers. They must be all around us.

22.24 hours: Sparks stream out from the engine exhausts, in fact, have been all the time. As they whip past the tail, one feels as though we are leaving a very conspicuous fire trail behind us. My helmet is very irritating to my ears and my oxygen-mask chafes my cheeks. We are still at 20,000ft. and the temperature is -17deg. C.

22.47 hours: Nobody has said a word for 20 minutes. We have left Germany behind and are now over France in the fighter belt. The aircraft is behaving perfectly; all four engine temperatures being perfectly even.

22.56 hours: "George," the automatic pilot, is flying the aircraft. The trailing aerial is let out again by the wireless operator. It is very dark and black below the aircraft and quite cold. I shall be relieved when I can move back to the warmth of the nose cabin.

23.01 hours: The navigator has altered course. Everybody is very quiet.

23.15 hours: On my body I have a vest, shirt, collar and tie, pull-over, roll-neck sweater, long red scarf, battledress top, and trousers with wool underpants, Irving jacket, with long leather fur-lined trousers, Mae West and parachute harness; on my head a helmet; on my hands two pairs of gloves; and on my feet three pairs of socks and flying wool-lined boots—but I still feel as though I'm sitting in a refrigerator.

23.20 hours: The long silence has been broken by a pungent remark from the navigator, telling us we may expect flak ahead very shortly. We are about 40 miles south of Paris. Moisture dripping from my oxygen-mask on to my knees sticks there forming little pools of ice.

23.37 hours: From Chartres some flak is being shot up, but it is about ten miles away and nothing to worry about. The navigator says that he has managed to get a fix and finds us on track. The cold is really bitter.

00.00 midnight: Everything very quiet in the aircraft and on the ground. A deluge of sparks is spraying from the engines. My ears are quite painful.

00.02 hours: We alter course and start to descend. The French coast is expected to be crossed in around 12 minutes. I expect they'll have a pop at us as we leave—they nearly always do. My torch is growing very faint—it will just about last me back to base.

00.14 hours: We are just leaving the French coast, and contrary to expectations they did not fire a shot or put up a searchlight. We are descending and steering due north.

00.18 hours: The flight engineer has changed gear again and the whole aircraft seemed to stop for a moment, shudder, and then surge forward. We are at 16,000ft. and the temperature is -2deg. C. At last I am beginning to regain my circulation.

00.32 hours: Crossing the English coast—I think everybody breathed a sigh of relief. There are a few beacons flashing, but the navigator does not really need them. We are still descending.

01.20 hours: Base called up on the R/T. There are five aircraft to land before us, and we have started circling base at 4,000ft. We shall probably go round for half an hour before it is our turn to land.

01.45 hours: Control has told us to prepare to land. There are seven other aircraft to land after us. Our wheels are down.

01.50 hours: Control tells us to PANCAKE.

01.59 hours: Landed in a shower of sparks from all engines. The aerodrome seems very dark as we taxi to our dispersal point.

THE 'HELL' THAT WAS KASSEL

Pillars of Smoke and Flame Tower Over Fire-Ravaged City

From GEORGE HARRISON, "News of the World" Special Correspondent

A BOMBER STATION in Britain, Saturday.—In the pre-dawn murk and darkness of this October morning I stood with a little knot of R.A.F. personnel watching the return to this enormous field of some of the great bombers which struck a devastating blow during the night at the heart of industrial Germany. Their target was the great railway centre of Kassel, roughly the same distance from Berlin that London is from Manchester.

To the Nazis this junction of railroads between Central and Western Germany is of incalculable importance. Through its widespread marshalling yards passes much of the arms traffic to the Russian front.

Furthermore, the city accommodates six huge factories of the Fieseler and Henschel groups, employing many thousands of workpeople on the manufacture of aircraft, armoured vehicles, locomotives, and aircraft components.

Five months ago bombs on the Meeme and Eder dams sent a tidal wave of destruction roaring through Kassel and wiping out under its flood acres of homes and business premises.

But it had become known to the Allies that the city was getting somewhere back to normal again, so Kassel went on the bombing list with priority marked against its name. Last night it got its second nightly raid in three weeks.

Fighting a Way In

Battling their way through 1,000 miles of clouds, electrical storms, and ice, our bomber squadrons dropped a terrific tonnage of high-explosives and incendiaries on the congested two-mile circle of this key town in German war industry.

During the brief period into which the attack was crowded, Nazi fighters criss-crossed the sky for 20 miles around with parachute darts.

Despite the far-flung opposition of anti-aircraft defences and night fighters—and some of the latter challenged our planes nearly 100 miles before they got to Kassel—the giant armada smashed through to deliver a deadly blow.

Crews to whom I have been speaking all tell the same story of a patchwork of fires and great explosions over the whole area.

"There was one column of thick black smoke running up to at least 18,000ft. when we left for home," said Flight-Lieut. Charles Hill, of Bournemouth, who piloted a Lancaster.

"The cloud we had gone through on the way across cleared miraculously 40 miles from Kassel, and visibility was perfect over the target.

"The place was a mass of flames when we arrived a few minutes after the attack began, and out of the middle of the fires came this huge column of smoke. It was an astounding sight."

Mystery Spiral of Flame

When the Lancaster, "Y for Victory," with Pilot-Officer Bill Buckel, of Gravesend, at the controls, was 50 miles from the burning town, the crew also saw this same fantastic pillar of smoke suddenly streaked for 4,000ft. or so with a vivid gust of flame.

NEWS FOR THE LADS OVERSEAS

Over one million Sunday and weekly newspapers have been sent out to our fighting men overseas since General Alexander made his appeal a few weeks ago, but more are wanted.

Help to reach the two million mark by posting this copy of the "News of the World" after you have read it, under a 1d. stamp, to "Newspapers for the Forces, 23, Farringdon-avenue, London, E.C.4."

"Goodness only knows what it was that went up, but it certainly was some fire," Buckel commented. "As we were leaving, my rear-gunner called on the inter-com 'Look at that explosion.' I turned round, and saw a great burst of fire right at the base of the towering smoke column. "It must have been hell down there."

Sixty miles from the English coast on the way home Buckel's

aircraft developed engine trouble, and only three of its four motors were running when he landed safely here.

There were many dramatic fights in the night sky by the yellow glare of the flares the Nazi fighters dropped.

Immediately his aimer had called "Bombs gone," Rear-gunner Sgt. Leslie Willis, of Erith, spotted a Dornier 217 a couple of hundred yards away.

"I gave him a few seconds' burst point-blank, and saw the tracer tearing into his fuselage," Willis told me.

"He promptly began firing back, but his engine was in flames, and I watched him curl down in a steep dive towards the ground."

The adventures of Sgt. Alan Wiggins, a laughing Leeds youngster, and his fellow-gunner, Pilot-Officer Henry Williams, of Sydney, Australia, reached a climax at the end of the bombing run of their Lancaster.

A Messerschmitt 210 swept in on them from astern. Williams and the Nazi opened fire simultaneously at 600 yards. The German fighter swung away, and as it did so Wiggins released a full broadside.

Avenues of Flares

"I saw my tracer and the stuff from our tail gun getting home," he said, "but within a minute I was too busy to trouble any further with that particular Messerschmitt."

"A Junkers 88 was coming at us on the other side, and I just had time to swing my guns round and give him four seconds. He, too, dived out of the way. I don't think he was one of the keen fellows."

Flying-Officer Bob Burr, of Cragley, Sussex, who was on the previous raid on Kassel on the night of Oct. 3-4, told me the ground defences were stronger last night.

"Their fighters were a bit of a nuisance, too," he commented. "They strung out their flares in long avenues leading up to the target, and there were clusters of them over Kassel itself."

"In the circumstances there was only one thing to do—plough straight through the flares and hope for the best. That is what all our fellows seem to have done."

"Our own bombs went smack into the middle of the fires, and while they were on their way down we saw the bombs from other planes exploding all over the target."

The promise of a spectacular step-up in the day and night bombardment of Germany is coming to rapid fulfilment.

It betrays no secret to write that this latest attack on Kassel was probably one of the most crushing ever accomplished by an exclusively four-engined bomber force.

TOWN WAS BURNING 8 DAYS

THE ruins of Kassel were still smouldering on Saturday afternoon, eight days after Bomber Command's 1,500-ton attack on the night of October 22.

Vast fires had evidently raged unchecked through the town, which has a population of a quarter of a million, the Air Ministry said last night.

Within the town industry is for all practical purposes destroyed, and there is extremely heavy industrial damage in the suburbs.

A number of specialised plants make Kassel of outstanding value to the enemy's war effort. The most important is the Henschel locomotive works, producing locomotives, armoured fighting vehicles, lorries and military transport.

All the three main Henschel factories were hit.

Two factories producing rolling stock, an oil plant, a works making precision instruments, another making machinery, and a cable works were among the many industries destroyed or damaged. So were textile industries.

BLITZ LULL: 13,000 TONS HIT NAZIS

BAD weather has been the cause of the lull in our bombing offensive of Germany. October was a poor month.

Apart from five good nights in the first week, fog covered the whole area of our operational bases.

Yet 13,000 tons of bombs were dropped on industrial areas in Germany.

The principal attacks were on Hagen, Munich, Kassel, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Hanover and Leipzig.

Weather Handicap

While bad weather interrupted the bombing offensive, the hunt for the U-boat and the protection of shipping was almost unbroken.

Coastal Command operated on submarine searches and reconnaissance on 30 of the 31 days.

Action by the enemy was on a greatly increased scale. On 22 nights and on one day bombs were dropped on this country.

Yet the grand total of enemy aircraft crossing our coast was only 260. Twenty-four of them were destroyed.

To that figure must be added 102 enemy aircraft destroyed over Europe.

Our Losses

Our losses were 227 over Europe and none over this country.

Eighth Air Force United States Bomber Command dropped 4,698 tons of high explosives and incendiaries on Germany during the month. In October last year 291 tons were dropped.

"Forts" and Liberators shot down 784 planes, probably destroyed 130 and damaged 347 others. American losses were 176 bombers.



SQUADRON OFFICERS WITH "THUMBS UP" SEE THE BOYS OFF TO KASSEL.

Raiders Flew Out To Berlin—Then Turned

AIR CHIEF MARSHAL HARRIS sent his great force of Lancasters and Stirlings flying straight for Berlin on Friday night. Then, a few miles from the capital, the pilots suddenly switched south for Leipzig.

The strategy succeeded. German fighters were completely misled and the sky over Leipzig was clear of them. The town's defenders had to fight it out with searchlights and A.A. guns alone. And the bombers won.

Twenty-three British planes were lost—just about half the previous night's loss of 41 in the raid on Berlin. In both attacks the number of bombers sent out were approximately equal. In both attacks 1,500 tons of high-explosive and incendiary bombs were unloaded over the target with great effect.

Great Fighter Forces Up

Reports that Leipzig's A.R.P. services had been stripped to aid battered Berlin were strengthened by the sight which met a reconnaissance pilot who flew over the city yesterday afternoon. He reported devastating fires, out of control, sweeping the town.

Smoke was rising in a great canopy to 20,000ft. and was blowing a very great distance out into the country. The pilot lost sight of the vast billowing clouds only when he crossed the German frontier on the homeward flight—at least 250 miles from Leipzig.

Great forces of German fighters came up to meet the Leipzig raiders in the early part of their flight. But at the turning-point, when the bombers switched south, most of the fighters lost touch. Then, while the Lancasters and Stirlings flew steadily for Leipzig, the baffled German pilots dashed off to protect Berlin.

Sirens Go In Capital

The attack on Leipzig lasted half an hour. Just as it was coming to an end the hurriedly re-directed enemy fighters began to appear over the city to give battle to the bombers. Their flares began to fall. But it was then too late. Most of the great British force was miles away on its homeward journey.

The stories of individual pilots indicate the success of Air Chief Marshal Harris's strategy. Before the bombers turned south, a Halifax pilot said, the enemy used scores of flares to light up the route. He declared: "The sky was lighted at one point for 100 miles. Streams of bullets stretched everywhere. Then the bulk of the fighters went one way and we another. We had them properly fooled."

Another pilot said: "When we arrived over Leipzig fires were well-concentrated. A few fighters were beginning to drop flares, but they did not really get going in earnest until we left."

Berlin's sirens did sound. In addition to the main British raiding force, Mosquitoes flew to the capital and dropped their bombs on the city, still blazing after Thursday's raid.

The attack on Leipzig was made late to escape the moon, which set about 10.30 p.m. The first bomb fell on the city at 4 a.m.

Important Centre

As a result, the sun was rising yesterday when the returning bomber fleets crossed the British coasts homeward bound.

Says the Air Ministry: "People in England were finishing their breakfasts when the last bombers back were passing overhead. Some did not touch down until eight o'clock."

Leipzig is the super-"Crewe" of Europe. Its Central Station, with more than 30 platforms, is the world's largest—and the most important traffic centre of Hitler's Fortress of Europe.

The town has 700,000 population, working in a vast number of war factories, many of them evacuated from the Ruhr and Rhineland.

The people are among the most unruly in Germany. From a morale point of view, Air Chief Marshal Harris could not choose a better target to attack.

Leipzig's last raid was on October 21. Before that it had not been attacked since 1940.

The Germans say: "The terror attack caused casualties among the civilian population and devastation. Several public buildings, including cultural monuments, were hit."

In the Mosquito raid on Berlin the outskirts only were attacked. A.A. fire was lively. The sirens sounded at 3 a.m. and the raid lasted two hours. One particular objective is known to have been hit.

Half Berlin Gone

Meanwhile, reports poured in yesterday about the extra damage caused in Berlin by Thursday's great raid—the fifth on the capital in a fortnight.

Stockholm estimates that half the city is now destroyed or damaged.

Fires were still burning yesterday, 30 hours after the attack.

A Swiss journalist who has toured Germany's raid areas wrote in his Zurich paper:

Berlin is colossally damaged, but even worse are many places in North and North-West Germany, Hamburg, Hanover, and Cassel present a terrible picture.

Entire generations will be needed to make good the damage.

Presumed Dead



PO Fred Edward Wickstrom, son of O. A. Wickstrom, of Erickson, previously reported missing following air operations overseas, is now for official purposes presumed dead. A wireless air gunner, Wickstrom arrived overseas in April, 1942, after graduating at the head of his class at No. 2 Wireless School, Calgary. He took further training at No. 3 Bombing and Gunnery school, Macdonald, and was commissioned there January 5, 1942.

FIVE countries of Nazi Europe were covered by a great aerial armada which drove up to the very gates of Berlin on Saturday morning, and then deliberately withheld its 1,500-tons bomb load for a sudden and overwhelming assault on the vital city of Leipzig, lying to the south.

Just one aircraft in this force was a Lancaster Mark I, No. JA683 (call sign, E—Edward), of an Australian squadron. In her heavy black frame were a cookie and, standing over it, agog with the most memorable experience of his life, your correspondent.

The cookie and I parted company running up to the heart of Leipzig. I flew on to make what an intelligence officer has described as a "Cook's tour" of Europe in order to get home.

It was broad daylight when I stepped out on to the tarmac of an aerodrome in England. The attack may well prove to have been one of the most remarkable and successful of the year.

Leipzig, with a population of 720,000, the largest railway station in Europe, and an industrial significance roughly equal to two large English manufacturing towns put together, was the biggest objective left in Germany to be blitzed.

All through the night it was buried beneath 10-10ths cloud. For this reason the attack was a supreme test of the amazing new Pathfinder technique.

300 COOKIES

The Pathfinders simply marked out, with target indicators, an exact pattern of the target on the roof of the clouds above it. It was this pattern which the great force bombed.

While I was over the target myself at least 300 cookies must have exploded on the city beneath.

As JA683 left the target the glow of fires was seeping through the cloud cover like blood saturating a lint dressing over a freshly opened wound.

I do not ever expect to have another experience so terribly fascinating, completely mesmeric as this target indicator attack.

It was about ten months since I had been over Germany at night. The changes which have taken place in that interval, both in the development of the R.A.F.'s tactics and the enemy defences, had to be seen to be believed.

In all the history of human conflict, I do not believe there have been many military developments more rapid and sure.

It was not only a gallant assembly of more than 1,000 airmen, superbly mounted, which the enemy had to meet before daybreak on Saturday morning. It was a scientific mass devastation of terrifying efficiency, with all the sky over Germany mastered by the R.A.F.

Let me here give just one small illustration of the technical achievements, over and above Pathfinder technique, with which the enemy had to contend. It concerns the degree of concentration achieved by Air Chief Marshal Harris.

DEAD ON TIME

Although they flew across a vast defensive network, through darkness and at great altitudes, a total distance of more than 1,400 miles, the Lancasters from my station arrived home at almost precisely the same intervals at which they departed. The intervals were only a matter of minutes, and in some cases seconds.

The unknown heroes here were the navigators who flew with the bombers and scores of officers like those of Flying Control, who work behind the scenes.

It was to see the new bombing technique in operation that I made this long trip, every inch of it breathing artificial supplied oxygen.

As things turned out, the attack had another aspect which would interest none but myself. But if I may be forgiven for touching briefly on the purely personal side, I would like to record my gratitude for a very great privilege.

This was the privilege of flying on this particular occasion with my pilot, Flight Lieut. E. A. G. Utz, D.F.C., his crew, his squadron, and the others in the force.

On two successive days prior to the attack on Leipzig I had climbed aboard bombers destined for very distant targets. On both these occasions I had failed to get off the ground for reasons beyond human control.

There had been three war correspondents on the station. The other two got away on the Berlin attack the previous night. I waited up until almost dawn Friday morning to welcome them home, but they did not come back.

When at about midday on Friday it looked certain that I would be able to go on a second attack on Berlin that night, certain plans were changed to enable me to do so.

Before the take-off, the station commander, Group Captain H. I. Edwards, V.C., D.S.O., D.F.C., gave me the lucky charms which he has carried on his famous exploits.

THE FEINT

It was just a gesture, but I made one of the most stupid remarks I have ever made. I will always remember my confusion. "I'd rather not take them," I said. "I might lose them . . . You know, pul. out my handkerchief or something and drop them."

The Group Captain simply smiled and pushed them into my pocket without hesitation. So I carried to Leipzig five lucky dice and a St. Christopher medallion. And to-day, I am pleased to say, they are safely back in the V.C.'s own possession.

Most of the squadron had been to Berlin the previous night, and all day Friday the crews had been expecting another long trip. When late at night we were summoned to briefing, we saw immediately that our outward track was almost exactly along the route followed the previous night.

The vital red cord pinned across the face of the big operations map stretched out over the North Sea, across Holland, and right up to the outskirts of Berlin.

There, instead of crossing the heart of the capital as usual, it was twisted southward at right angles slap on to Leipzig.

The meaning of this was that Bomber Command had decided to collect its first big bonus from the Battle of Berlin. And, as I saw later, its tactics worked like a dream.

The risk involved in asking the crews to fight their way back again through the hornets' nest they had stirred up the previous night proved to be completely justified. As I watched the enemy fighters swarming up to Leipzig just three or four vital minutes behind us, I felt I could almost hear the angry curses

The final decision to make this cunning feint attack was not made until late in the day. Briefing was only a short while before the take-off, and in the sticky, depressing cold of a winter's night we left the cheerful fires of a Nissen hut and made our way out to the aerodrome.

Taking off in darkness on a long major operation is an experience singularly devoid of glamour. For no reason at all, one's mind becomes full of grudges. "Damn the night," you mutter. "Damn the cold," "Damn the Hun." "Damn everything, including the job of war correspondent."

From every quarter came the nerve-racking roar of engines as the Lancasters prepared to move into position for take-off.

THE BIG CLIMB

In the dark I could hardly make out the features of our crew, and until we returned home I was to know them only by their Christian names and their voices coming over the inter-com.

We followed the captain into the fuselage and scrambled up to our positions. The ground crew, never-failing friends of every bomber crew, called out "Good luck" and slammed the door shut.

To a precise schedule—one time laid down for taxi-ing out of the dispersal point, another for moving round the perimeter track, and another for entering the runway—we got into line with the rest of the squadron.

Then in an astonishingly short time we began to roll, first slowly and then rapidly, and I watched the runway lights flash past.

Despite a tremendous load of petrol plus the cookie, JA683 successfully achieved what to me never ceases to be a miracle—the transformation of a heavily-loaded four-engined bomber from a landborne to an airborne vehicle.

Once off the ground we immediately began to circle for height, climbing in a great spiral above the aerodrome. It was a long job in itself.

Before we set course across the North Sea we had climbed to a height from which it would be possible to look down on many of the greatest mountains.

The skipper had given the order to switch on oxygen before we were halfway up this great spiral.

ZERO HOUR START

I first became aware of the company of the two unseen gunners stationed back along the fuselage when the skipper called over the inter-com: "O.K. Jack? O.K. Ted? Keep a sharp look-out for other 'kites'."

The concentration of the attack was putting hundreds of bombers into the air.

At zero hour they all set course simultaneously. We were in the last phase.

It was just as necessary for the crew to keep a close look-out here as on any part of the journey over enemy territory. The danger of collision was at times a real one.

But that was just one of the many signs by which I could recognise the changes which had taken place in the bombing of Germany.

When the time came for us to set course it was again a split-second movement. It was made with the aid of synchronised chronometers.

As the great force swung eastwards I could see Lancasters on every hand, and later on, when they could not be seen, it was very comforting to know that most of them were still around you somewhere in the night.

Crossing the sea there was a sudden enormous flash far down beneath the clouds. It was the explosion of a cookie, revealing that one of our number had met trouble and been forced to jettison its bomb-load.

Approaching the Dutch coast a flak ship opened up on us, but today anything less than a mass concentration of anti-aircraft batteries can seldom disturb a Lancaster

The first sign of one of these flak concentrations came immediately after the navigator announced that we had crossed into enemy territory.

First of all there was one on the starboard beam, and then another on the port side, and then at times the whole sky as far as one could see was dotted with cloud reflections of gunfire and searchlight beams.

I could hardly be expected to have forgotten the experience of being hit by flak, but this time, in the words of the bomb-aimer, the ground defences "just hadn't got a clue."

We all enjoyed watching the searchlights striving in vain to penetrate the huge cloudbank below us. You could see them roaming round like countless little pools of quicksilver.

Only when the time came to barge head-first across a defence belt did the gunfire ever become at all personal.

But in the defence belts now and again I became conscious of how extraordinarily slow, relatively the speed of an aeroplane still is. At a great height, above searchlights and guns, it seemed to take an age to move an appreciable distance.

Contrary to general belief, long stages are crossed in a bomber flight without a single word being said over the inter-com. Every man knows his job and concentrates on it. We must have flown from a point roughly in line with Amsterdam, right across to somewhere well inside Germany without a sound inside the aircraft.

The inter-com. came into much more use, however, when we began to sight fighter flares for the first time. The lives of everybody aboard then depended on their being reported quickly.

BATTLES IN SKY

"Fighter flares on the starboard bow! Two, three, four of the swine," somebody called. "O.K.," replied the skipper, "keep a close watch out on the port side."

The danger was that we would be silhouetted in the gun-sights of any fighter coming in from that quarter.

This sort of thing became more and more frequent as we began to move up on Berlin. Suddenly in the night around us I saw the flash of tracers as some other bomber became embroiled in combat. There was a brief reply of fire and then just a black void once again.

Somebody had a terrific battle below us at one stage, but bomber and fighter disappeared in the cloud before I could see the result.

I missed some other actions as I strained my eyes forward for the first sight of Berlin. It was covered in cloud, but as we turned right beside it I saw the flash of bombs there and great corkscrews of anti-aircraft fire climbing into the sky.

A few Mosquitoes had flown straight on over the heart of the capital to make quite sure that the enemy took the feint seriously.

We skirted the fireworks without a care, and soon the approach to the real target put Berlin completely out of my mind.

More speed was put on then and we fairly rushed to our objective. I wish I could describe faithfully the excitement of going in to bomb. It transcended any experience I have ever had.

"There she is," said the bomb-aimer, and dead ahead I could see a carpet of vivid, almost beautiful lights being laid rapidly across the crown of the clouds.

There was a mixture of colours, laid not haphazardly but like a careful artistic study. Each colour had a secret meaning to the crews, who read the target indicators like train-drivers read the signals along a railway track.

We jockeyed into position, watching with extreme care now not only for enemy fighters but for other bombers which, unless the pilot knew what he was about, would jeopardise us or be jeopardised by us.

The nose of JA683 was pushed a little downward, and we surged into a great arena of light smoke, and battle. There was one eerie moment as another Lancaster swung suddenly across our track, only about 100ft. above. Others were sailing around the sky beside and beneath us.

REACTION

Here, still in position, right on course, right on schedule, was the great force which had been assembled over England several hours back.

I was standing in the cabin behind the flight engineer. The light in the sky grew so intense that you could see every detail around you.

It was like standing on the promenade deck of some fantastic ship sailing across a strange new world of fire. I jammed my head into a transparent blister on the side of the cabin and tried to count the bomb bursts below.

I just could not keep up with them, and the flash of each one came clearly and sharply up through the great mass of clouds below.

There was a bit of a lurch as we parted company with our own cockpit, and I got so excited trying to catch sight of its burst that for a moment I thought I was going to push my head straight through the Perspex.

The run across the target was rather a long one, but there was so much going on that you did not notice the passage of time.

When we finally drew away, the bomb bursts were beginning to thin out, but every few seconds a new one would show up angrily dead on the mark.

Then suddenly the flares dropped by the fighters who had tried to catch up with us from Berlin began to fall to our rear in cascades. There seemed to be hundreds of them, but to the triumph of the R.A.F. and the despair of the Luftwaffe, they fell on one side of the target and we were scooting off on the other.

For more than an hour afterwards I could still see the glow of the conflagration that was Leipzig. Then, perhaps partly from reaction and partly as a result of the long

spell on oxygen, I began to get extremely drowsy.

This was the moment which for a combatant member of a crew is often the most dangerous of a whole flight. If his vigilance relaxes for a second a fighter may claim the aircraft.

One moment I actually went to sleep on my feet, and another time I came to with a start to find myself down on my haunches at the bottom of the cabin.

The clouds cleared at one point and below us I could see a beautiful pattern which seemed to be made up of snow-covered hills. But I couldn't muster much interest in it.

ATTACK BY CRAMP

I even began to observe with almost detached interest the occasional fighter flares and the further great ground defence belts encountered on the way home.

It is true that the inescapable anxiety—call it fear if you like—experienced on these raids is much more acute on the way out to a target.

I have never felt sorer for any man than I did for the pilot at this stage. "George," the automatic pilot, had decided to be frolicsome, and so the skipper was obliged to handle the controls throughout the whole flight.

I could see him writhing as cramp gripped his legs, and bouncing up and down in his seat to ease the stiffness elsewhere.

Never once did he complain, and if a question came through on the inter-com he answered it always with the same patient, calm, and almost casual voice.

On the way home you have the feeling that, whatever happens then, the job in hand has at least been done, and it is not until you reach the last leg of your journey across enemy territory that you become conscious of a fresh surge of interest in self-preservation.



THE RETURN

This trip was a bit too long and too exhausting to enjoy fully the grand feeling of exhilaration that comes when you finally sight your home airfield.

But it was still unmistakable when, after landing, the crews came rolling in to the interrogation room.

On this occasion bombers were lost from the total force, but the squadron I flew with did not have a single casualty. It made amends for a rather severe mauling the previous night.

With a tot of rum in one hand and a cup of tea in the other, the crews compared notes.

A flight lieutenant said it was the best concentration attack he had ever seen; a warrant officer pilot reported having seen fires 200 miles away from the target on the homeward journey.

The end of one raid is just the beginning of the preparations for the next one. I would like, nevertheless, to finish this all-too-personal story of a great feat of arms by quoting a letter which reached me not long before I reported to the squadron.

It read: "Dear Air Correspondent, —After the last war manufacturers of machinery in this country were put out of business by products of Leipzig dumped on the world's markets at cut-throat prices.

"The whole of this city's great manufacturing resources must have been turned over to war production. Is Leipzig going to be allowed to get away with it again? This is a vital matter. Can't you do something about it?"

PALL OVER SAXONY

Blazing Leipzig—the first picture

BENEATH this mountain of smoke Leipzig lies burning.

The picture was taken many hours after Bomber Command's heavy night attack of December 3-4.

The pall spread by the R.A.F. rose to 20,000 feet, obscuring three-quarters of the city and drifting hundreds of miles across Germany towards the Dutch coast.

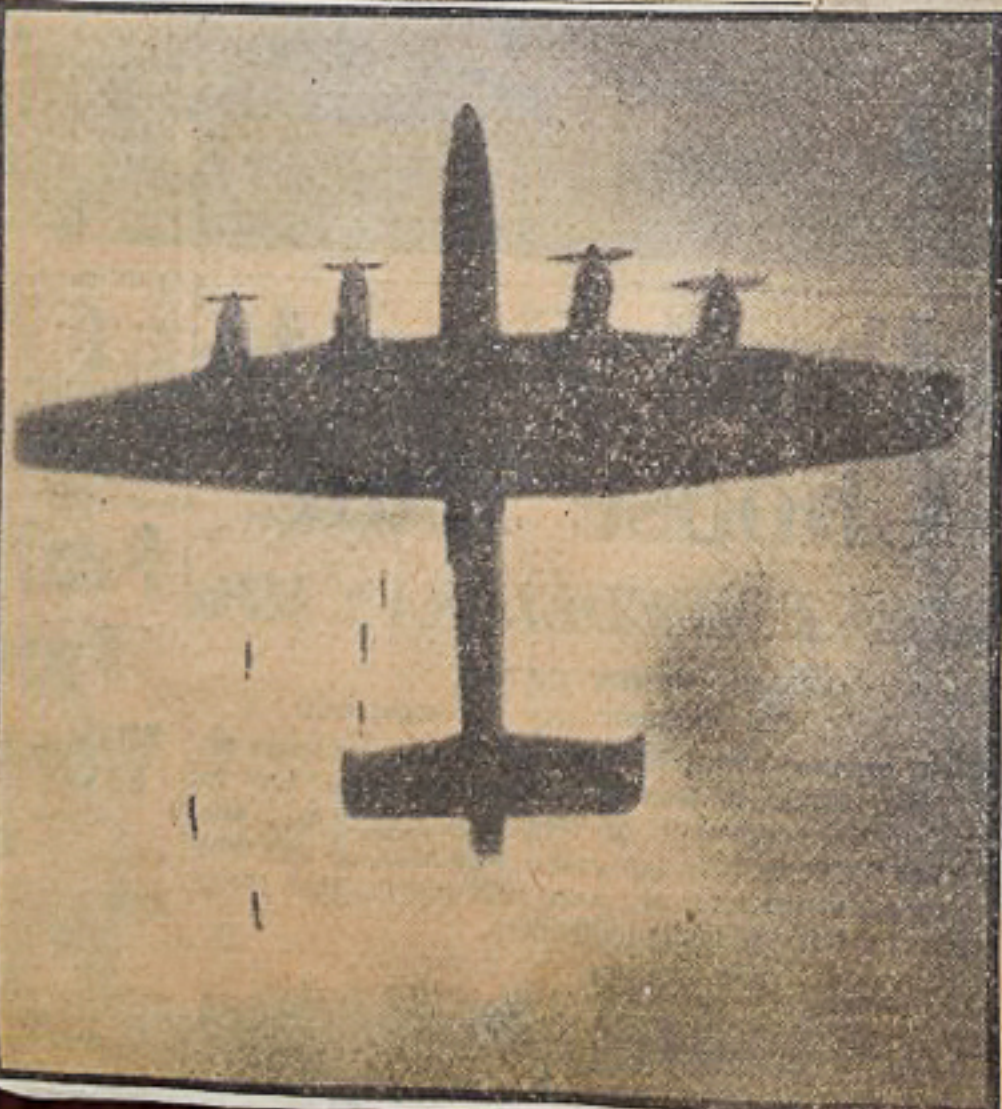
Leipzig, the largest city of Saxony, with a population of 700,000, is a key railway centre and in recent years has been heavily engaged in aircraft production and repair.

The buildings that housed the famous Leipzig Fair—indicated in the picture—were used as workshops for the repair of Ju. aero-engines.

CENTRAL STATION

The Bombs go Down on Leipzig

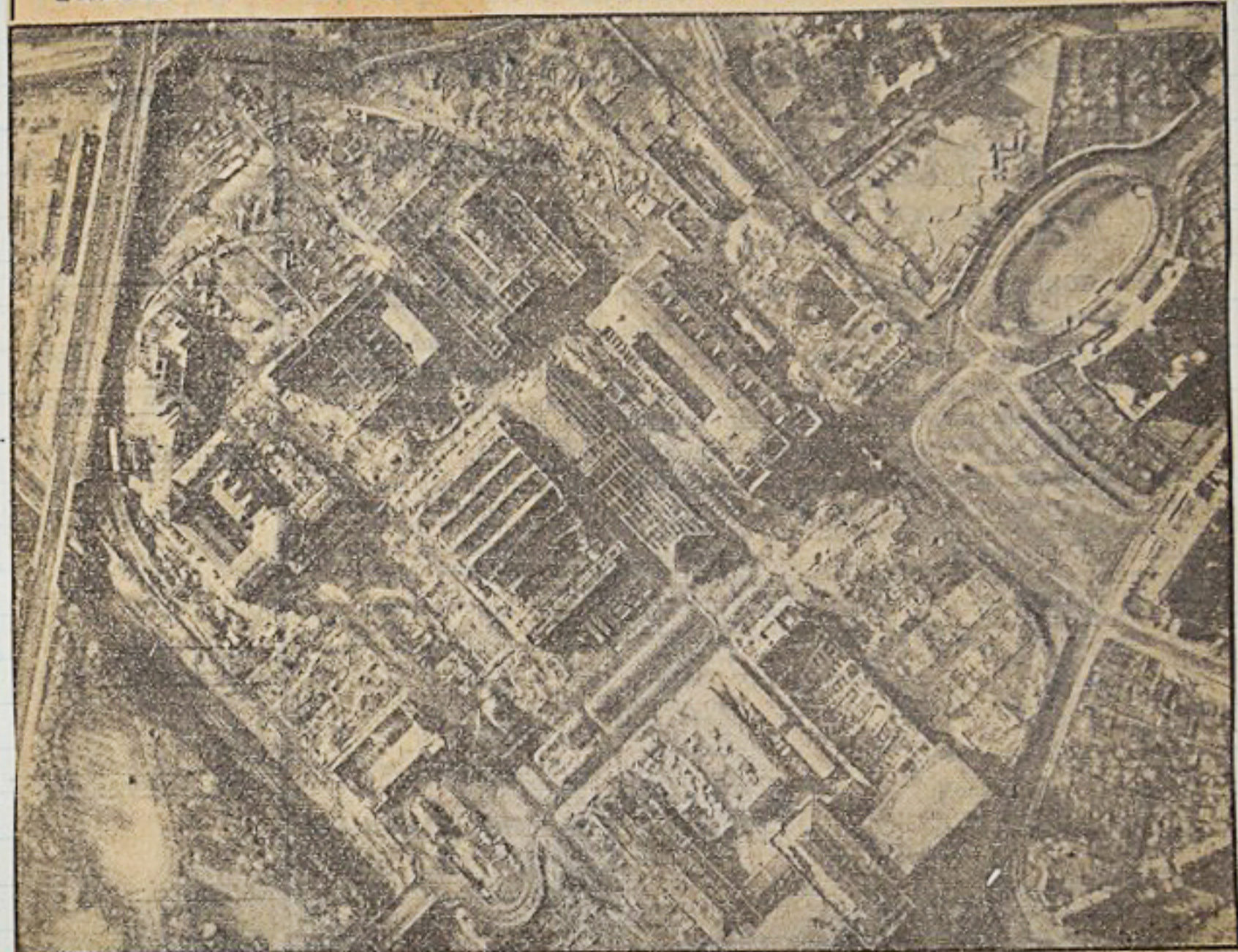
ILLUMINATED by the glare from fires in Leipzig three miles below, a Halifax soars into the clouds as its bombs go down to add to the devastation. Picture was taken from another bomber during the great attack early this month.



LEIPZIG FAIR

The D.F.M. is awarded to Flight-Sergt. Elmer John Trotter, aged 29, a Canadian ex-farmer, whose plane, severely hit over Berlin, was thrown out of control and dived down towards the target. Sergt. Trotter, the pilot, ordered his crew to don parachutes, but by magnificent skill and coolness he regained control of the crippled bomber, beat off a fighter attack, and brought plane and crew safely home.

And so the Fair ended at Leipzig



LEIPZIG FAIR—after the R.A.F. had finished with it in their 1,500-ton raid of December 4.

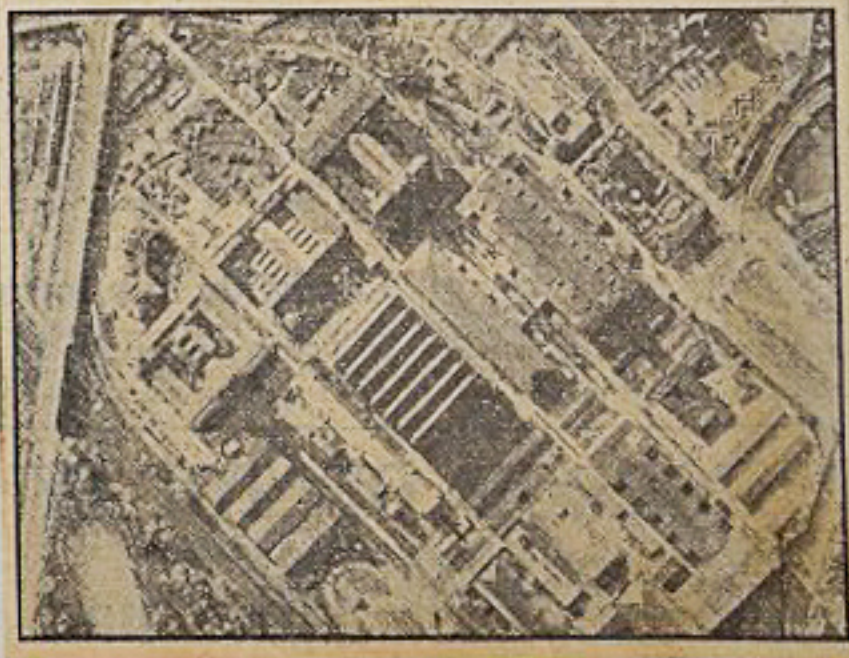
Practically every large building in this area—the pre-war trade exhibition covered 120 acres—has been blitzed or burned out.

Since Germany went to war the fair has been used for air-

craft repairs and the manufacture of components for Junkers, as well as for general engineering.

First attempts to secure reconnaissance pictures were hampered by the dense smoke-pall over the city.

For comparison, the same area, in a picture taken before the raid, is shown below. . . .



This one took place on the night of Dec. 16, 1943. Over 500 aircraft took part, all Lancasters, including about 85 P.F.F. kites. It was a daylight take-off, about 1630 hrs and there was 10% cloud which we went up thru and it's ^{was} really lucky. The sun was just going down & the sky was filled with Lances. We went straight out to sea where we wasted some time, and then went on to the Dutch coast. The "Yee" wouldn't work but the "if" was bang-on which helped us all the way to the target. It was very quiet going in and we stayed very close to track all the way. On reaching Brandenburg we were slightly north so we altered down to the target and bombed a concentration of roads pretty well on time. We were backing-up so dropped greens. After leaving Berlin I looked out of the astro-dome and had a good view of the things. There were red Ti's and Wanganui flares scattered east & west and the clouds - 10% were lit up from searchlights and there were a great many fighter flares. The "if" worked really crossing the coast near Rostock and crossing over Denmark. We took a bit of astro over the sea & when Yee came back we were about 8 miles north of track. We were 4th to call-up at base and we circled above the cloud. Then we came down to 350 feet before we could see the dome and Mac made a lucky landing for which we thank him. He had to do a 50° bank at 200 ft to get in. There were only 5 kites landed as 8 others ^{were} diverted. Three of them crashed F/O "Mac" M. Clennan, F/L Allen + F/O Drew. Then "gen" (joker) crew F/O Cloutier + F/O Neville landed at Bourne. Mac + F/O "Shep" Sheppard were killed, F/L Allen's crew were all killed but him + all of F/O Drew's crew except his R/G + himself. 30 kites were lost altogether over the continent but we didn't lose any. We were back-up on this trip, our fifth marker trip. Two weeks later F/L Allen died in hospital and he never regained consciousness.

Rocket Battle Over Berlin

FIRST TIME AGAINST NIGHT BOMBERS

By Daily Mail Air Reporter

FIGHTERS equipped with rocket guns were in action against the large force of Lancasters which on Thursday night deluged Berlin with 1,500 tons of bombs in 30 minutes. This is the first reported use of rocket guns against our night bombers.

There is no evidence that rocket-firing fighters were used on a large scale, but the fact that the Luftwaffe is employing them at night is a measure of its desperate anxiety to counter the R.A.F.'s devastating attacks on the Reich capital, now blasted by 18,500 tons of bombs.

First news of the night rockets came from a Lancaster gunner, Sergt. J. Hattihard, of Deptford.

"On the way to Berlin," he said, "I saw rockets following us to the rear. They were shooting towards us horizontally from several thousand yards away.

"It was just like flak except that it was parallel with our course. We dived, and saw nothing more."

The German fighters may have been experimenting with the use of rocket guns in conjunction with the flares they are dropping in ever-increasing numbers.

The rockets have a long range and the fighters may have been seeking opportunities to loose off their "shells" while they see our bombers momentarily silhouetted against the parachute flares.

Rocket guns are probably more difficult to use by night than by day, and they are not likely to cause our bomber crews any more anxiety than the Fortress crews.

SKY 'V'

Fighters—and probably larger types of planes as well—showered more flares over Berlin on Thursday night than ever before.

Two separate lanes of light formed a giant V, each arm of which stretched for ten miles.

"There was a fantastic number of flares," said Squadron Leader G. D. H. Pike, of Herne Hill—on his twelfth big raid and the sixth on Berlin.

"They were laid on both sides of our route for at least ten miles, running into the city. There was another lane stretching out from Berlin for an equal distance on another track."

A Stockholm message says the centre of the city was among the areas badly battered in the latest attack, which brings the tonnage of bombs rained on the Reich capital this year to over 16,000 tons.

The attack began just before 8 o'clock, the raid being timed to avoid the late moonlight.

It followed by only a few hours heavy raids by American Fortresses and Liberators on targets in North-West Germany, one of which, according to the Germans, was Bremen.

"Heavy damage was caused," said the German communiqué, "particularly in Bremen."

Our Lancasters bombed Berlin

through a great roof of cloud which has covered much of Germany for several weeks.

The Air Ministry revealed last night that this has prevented our reconnaissance aircraft from taking pictures of Berlin's changed face since the first of the last six great attacks was launched on November 18, less than a month ago.

Day after day—sometimes twice a day—R.A.F. spy planes have flown to Berlin in daylight, only to return with beautiful cloud pictures.

The cloud that hinders our photo planes did not, however, worry our bombers on Thursday night. They rained their bombs inside the now familiar pattern of Pathfinder target indicators.

Twenty minutes after the first cookies crashed down, the cloud pall was lit up by a mass of fires which still glowed brightly when a Mosquito sent to reconnoitre some time after the raid reached the burning city.

Thirty bombers are missing from the night's work, which included mine-laying and Mosquito attacks on targets in Western Germany.

At least four enemy fighters were destroyed by the Berlin raiders.

C. E.

'WAVES OF FIRE'

Ralph Hewins, Daily Mail Correspondent in Stockholm, last night cabled this account of the attack:

THURSDAY night's raid may be considered one of the most successful yet made in the Battle of Berlin.

Reports speak of "giant waves of fire rising against the morning sky," and of damage "as great as in the first November attack."

The centre and western parts of the city are reported to have suffered heaviest, while the south-western suburbs, seat of some of the city's greatest industries, were also severely hit.

A number of underground stations are reported to have been bombed, and communication between the various suburbs is almost non-existent.

A large ammunition dump just outside the city blew up after a direct hit, and the Tempelhof aerodrome is also reported to have been hit.

Swedes arriving from Berlin report that the attack swamped the defences.

One engineer said: "Everyone had to fight fire bombs, whether they were in shelters or not."

And in this fire-fighting task, say Swedes, Berlin failed.

Swedes report that large parts of the city, just tidied up after the earlier raids, are again suffering from wrecked communications and shattered gas, water, and electricity services.

The attack took Berliners by surprise. The cold weather, they thought, would prevent a major attack.

The Germans to-day try to excuse the failure of the defences to cope with the raids on the grounds that the Allies have "changed their tactics."

"Earlier bombers," they say, "came over only on clear, moonlit nights. Now the Englishmen come for choice on cloudy, rainy nights, when the German night fighters have difficulty in spotting them."

9,000 Tons in a Month

But the bomber pilots found that the clouds kept the searchlights down, and the ground defences blindly sent up a heavy barrage in the effort to keep the raiders high.

This is how the rocket planes work. In the words of Sergt. J. Hattihard, a mid-upper gunner, of Deptford, London:

"I saw the rockets following us to the rear. They were shooting towards us horizontally, from several thousand yards away. It was just like 'flak,' except that it was parallel with our course. We dived and saw nothing more."

The technique is to stand off at a considerable distance from the bombers—out of range of our guns.

This latest assault, from which 30 bombers are missing, brings to more than 9,000 tons the weight of bombs dropped on Berlin in the six big raids of the past month. At least four German fighters were shot down.

The weather prevented immediate observation of results, but after the attack was over a pilot on reconnaissance reported large fires.

'All Berlin Districts Hit'

An air passenger who reached Stockholm last night told of the bombing of a huge ammunition dump which went on exploding long after midnight.

"Practically all Berlin districts were hit," he said, "and the Tempelhof airport appeared to be damaged." He believed that some hangars were hit.

He described the morale of Berliners as "very depressed," and added that whenever two people get together they speak of nothing but peace.

Among the many buildings destroyed are the houses of Marshal Kesselring and Minister Alfred Rosenberg, both in the Dahlem district, said a Stockholm message.

Bremen was named in the German communiqué yesterday as Thursday's daylight target for the U.S. bombers. Heavy damage was reported.

Fighters Escorted Raiders—Nazis

THE German Official News Agency early to-day gave this version of Thursday night's raid on Berlin by the R.A.F.:

The British bombers were supported by night fighters which flew in front, below, and at the flanks of the attacking force, which came over in four waves.

Neither the new tactics, nor attempts to divert the German defences by a mock attack against another target, nor false orders transmitted from British short-wave stations to the German night-fighters, nor the projection of special luminous rays succeeded.

On the contrary, the German command realised immediately the true objective of the raiders.

OPERATION #13 - FRANKFURT - WESTERN GERMANY.

This one was on the night of Dec 20th, 1943. Over 600 aircraft took part including a small number that raided Mannheim, to the south. Take-off was about 1720 hrs with about 10 mins climbing time. We had a marshalling point at sea so as we would go over the coast to gether for safety's sake. The islands on the Dutch coast came out nicely on the "if" so went in right on track. When quite near the target we found ourselves very much south of track and had to enter the target between Mainz & Darmstadt on a northerly heading and bombed slightly late. The raid on Mannheim had already started & seemed scattered. Yellow T.I.'s were also scattered and Eddie (P/C) bombed for his first time on the centre of the T.I.'s. Shortly after leaving the target I had a good look at it & it looked pretty hot to me. There were plenty of searchlights and bags of flak & fighter flares. Fires were well started and smoke was rising. We were supposed to have bombed on "if" as our passing out test for blind markers but at that time our set was up so we'll have to try again. We came home pretty well on track and we were 4th to land at base. Everyone from this Squadron arrived back okay but 42 kits were lost altogether from both raids. A few photos were taken but few turned out because of cloud. The raid was figured quite good but to the east of the city. The one on Mannheim was a total loss.



CENTRE: LEFT—Three Ontario aircrew men standing among the ruins—(left to right): Sgt. Leslie F. Dutton (Toronto), P/Sgt. R. F. Carter (Wesley, Ont.) and Sgt. Arthur Hamilton (Sarnia, Ont.)

RAF Tricked Them at Frankfurt—Again

By COLIN BEDNALL, Daily Mail Air Correspondent

AIR Marshals of the Royal Air Force will spend hours when the war is over discussing the tactics of battles such as that fought for Frankfurt over all Germany on Monday night. It was a great battle. It left a city of 550,000 people in flames. It cost us 42 aircraft; between 200 and 300 men.

It is as an appreciation of the magnitude of these conflicts that air crews will especially relish the message just delivered to them from Mr. Churchill on his sick-bed.

The Secretary for Air (Sir Archibald Sinclair), conveying the Prime Minister's message to Bomber Command, says:

"The Prime Minister has been receiving full details of recent operations. He asks me to convey his congratulations to crews who have taken part in the series of great battles over Berlin and Leipzig, and in the associated attacks."

Bomber Command's chief, Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, has replied:

"Please convey to the Prime Minister our gratitude for his message, and our heartfelt wishes for his speedy convalescence and return. His support, advice, and unflinching encouragement through four dark and strenuous years have been the mainspring of our efforts."



THIS latest assault on Frankfurt, with many remarkable features of its own, was even greater in scale than that on Leipzig. Greater opposition, too, was met.

I got a first-hand picture of the city's close-in defences during the "Cook's tour of Europe" on which I was captured when returning from the Leipzig attack.

Guns and searchlights, amazingly closely spaced, had been moulded into a great belt around Frankfurt which was many miles wide.

They constituted a most formidable barrier—and also a most complete betrayal of the fact that the enemy had in Frankfurt something of tremendous value to him.

His anxiety may have centred particularly on a vast aircraft propeller plant, known to be the largest in Germany and believed to employ about 10,000 people.

Such is the present fury of the Battle of Germany that any target connected with the production of his defence fighters is now of paramount importance to the enemy.



THAT Frankfurt would soon be picked out for an attack on a major scale seemed obvious. On Monday night it received this expected blow—plus additional attention of a new kind.

After the main force had departed, unloading more than 2,000 tons of high explosive and incendiary bombs in 30 minutes, including 8,000lb. and many 4,000lb. block-busters, a special force of Mosquito bombers moved in to the attack.

Instead of being concentrated to the utmost degree like the main force, the Mosquitoes were spread over intervals, so that the bombs they brought would hinder as long

as possible the fighting of the fire then mounting high below.

And it is, incidentally, a mistake to imagine that the Mosquito carries only the small bomb-load of an average fighter-bomber. A force of them can, in themselves, to-day inflict substantial damage.

Bomber Command knew from the enemy's preparations that it must expect a very hot reception over the target itself. Planning was therefore applied to reducing to the minimum the effect of the additional opposition which would be met on track to and from its objective.

Zero hour over the target was fixed for 7 p.m.—earlier than on any other attack for many months. Before darkness fell on Monday evening, therefore, the raiding force had already been airborne for a considerable time.

The total force involved was so large as to create a show of activity which the enemy could not fail to detect early. Quite clearly he began quickly to marshal his fighter squadrons all over Germany and the occupied territories.

Squadrons which were still licking their wounds from preceding daylight battles with the Flying Fortresses at Bremen, and with Libertors as far south as Augsburg, would not have escaped this general "call-up."

Air Chief Marshal Harris directed his bombers on a course most likely to delay the final concentration of the enemy's fighters.

So, as they roared across the Continent the bombers feinted first in one direction and then another—suggesting that any one of a number of key German places might be their objective for the night.



THE main force, however, held together until it was close upon Mannheim-Ludwigshafen. Then it would have seemed that the only alternative targets to this already heavily blitzed centre were places like Stuttgart and Augsburg, farther south.

Before Mannheim the force suddenly divided. The smaller part flew on to attack that place in what, for the purposes of this battle, amounted only to a diversionary raid. In actual fact, however, it was almost as heavy as the biggest raids London has suffered, and raised big fires.

The bulk of the force, instead of continuing southward, turned at a sharp angle north-eastwards. Then, without any further change of course, it raced straight to Frankfurt.

Aircraft attacking Mannheim-Ludwigshafen actually observed enemy fighters there suddenly turn away and race off in chase of the main force when the enemy realised that Frankfurt was to be the primary objective.

At one time there appears to have been complete confusion, with bombers going in one direction and fighters in exactly the opposite one.

The Luftwaffe's highly developed flare system was also thrown out of gear—and in a manner which seems to leave no further doubt as to the functions of the four-engined aircraft recently encountered by our night bombers.



ON three occasions the bomber force was met with a cascade of fighter-flares without a single actual fighter attack taking place in the dazzling light they provided. It seems that the enemy had one set of aircraft dropping the flares and another deputed to make the attacks.

Usually they work in good unison, but on these occasions on Monday night Bomber Command's tactics ruined their liaison.

Our aircraft were so long over enemy territory, however, that the Luftwaffe had time to recover its balance, and skilful interceptions were carried out against some sections of the raiding force.

Long lanes of fighter-flares were finally laid along the "leg out" from Frankfurt. One pilot who had to get past these said afterwards that the sky was lit up with such intensity that "he felt like a moth trying to fly among spotlights."

Mannheim raid split fighter defence

OVER 2,000 tons of bombs crashed down on Frankfurt, one of Germany's important centres for the manufacture of arms and chemicals, on Monday night.

While the main force of our heavy bombers—Lancasters and Halifaxes—rained down their bombs on the city, sometimes at a rate of 70 tons a minute, Lancasters were bombing Mannheim-Ludwigshafen to such effect that smoke was soon rising to a height of 12,000ft.

It was the R.A.F.'s third major attack on Frankfurt, and the night's operations, which included Mosquito raids on Western Germany and Belgium and raids on Channel shipping, cost us 42 aircraft.

The attack on Mannheim-Ludwigshafen, nearly 50 miles to the south of the principal target, split the great force of night fighters which had swarmed to the Upper Rhineland from all over Germany.

From one detachment of Lancasters there are reports of five battles with fighters over Mannheim in a quarter of an hour.

Before the attack on Mannheim-Ludwigshafen was over, some crews reported that fighters were racing back from there towards Frankfurt.

TWO-WAY TRAFFIC

"There was a two-way traffic as we were leaving Frankfurt," a pilot said.

"We were going home and the fighters were chasing back to where we had come from.

"They seemed so keen on getting to our target that they hadn't time to bother about us."

Eight-thousand-pounders, as well as a great number of 4,000-pounders, were dropped on Frankfurt.

It was one of the earliest attacks of the last few months, beginning just before 7.30 and ending about 8 o'clock, though Mosquitoes arrived about half an hour later to bomb and hinder the work of the fire brigades.

GREAT FIRE GLOW

Crews saw a huge oval of burning incendiaries running from east to west across Frankfurt. Later this merged into a great fire glow shining through the clouds.

Many of the crews saw an explosion of red flame from which shot up dense columns of black smoke reaching some 14,000ft.

Fighter flares began to drop round the stream of bombers when they were still 100 miles from the target.

"I felt like a moth flying amongst spotlights," a Lancaster pilot said.

DUMMY FIRES

The Germans had an extensive system of dummy fires working.

Sgt. J. Morgan, a Halifax mid-upper gunner from Swansea, said that the fighter flares were so powerful that it was almost like daylight over Frankfurt.

Canadian and Australian squadrons took part in the attack.

Frankfurt, already severely damaged in attacks this year, is one of Germany's 21 major industrial cities. It has a population of well over half a million and is a great centre of the enemy's chemical industries.

Our 3rd trip to the big one took place on the morning of Dec 24th 1943, take off at 0021 hrs. It had been planned for zero hour at 2045 but it was put back to 0400 because of poor vis. Everything went very well going out over the sea and over the Dutch coast, down between Aachen + Liege. Just after leaving the Cag (R/S) had to change helmets + had oxygen trouble. Gordie (w/op) spent nearly 1 1/2 hrs. with him back there + I made one trip back + nearly passed out from lack of oxygen. Just short of the target we got him in the mid-upper turret + Scottie (m/p) in the rear turret + everything was under control. It was over passing test so we had to do a "if" run on Berlin. On the way in we were "boxed" by predicted flak so we went round + came in again. The target was really hot but thank God there was some cloud to keep the searchlights down. Shortly after leaving the target there was a mix-up between Trac + 2 and we steered a wrong course but found our mistake after about 10 mins + got back on track. The trip home was quite uneventful but slow because of head winds. The gunners saw quite a few kites go down in but we saw no fighters. We were 4th back and got down without any trouble. Nearly 500 aircraft took part in this raid and only 12 were lost which was a good show. No kites from here were lost but a couple were shot up a bit. We got a picture and so did G/L Bennett but all the rest got just clouds or fire tracks. We were all very tired as we didn't get to bed until 9:30 in the morning. It was considered a very good and concentrated raid from what they knew so far.

Berlin's defences foxed in second 2,000-ton blow

SWEEPING in to attack "like a well-disciplined army, shoulder-to-shoulder"—as one of the pilots put it—a great force of our heaviest bombers gave Berlin its second 2,000-ton blow on Wednesday night.

Yet, although Bomber Command was out in massive strength, most crews reported a "quite uneventful" attack.

Once again the defences of the Nazi citadel were tricked.

Sham targets ringing Berlin were bombed while the main force of Lancasters and Halifaxes took a "distraction" route before switching to the capital at the last moment.

FIGHTERS GROUNDED

The few night fighters that were up were kept guessing as they patrolled above the thick cloud which kept grounded many of their comrades.

The cloud blanket, too, blocked searchlights and confused A.A. gunners, helping to keep our bomber losses down to 20—a lower percentage than in the 2,300-ton attack on November 22.

First reports on the bombing tell a story of tremendous new fires raging in Berlin piercing the cloud with their glow and visible for 200 miles.

"SKYMARKERS"

The Pathfinder force marked the target with parachute flares—they were called "skymarkers" officially last night—which drifted down towards the target in a tight concentration.

Violent explosions, including a vivid orange flash, were seen by many crews in the centre of a ring of "skymarkers."

"It was a contrast to my last trip to Berlin," said an Australian pilot. "This time there was no lane of flares and flak was not very troublesome."

"MY EASIEST TRIP"

One Halifax flew for nearly 1,000 miles with a streamer of flame coming from an engine—flak had hit it—an obvious beacon for any fighter. Not one was seen.

"It was the easiest of the seven trips I have had to Berlin," said a Lancaster mkt-upper gunner, "and also of all the 21 operational flights I have made."

"TERRIBLE DAMAGE," SAYS MAN FROM BERLIN

Stockholm, Thursday. — The Neukoeln district of Berlin, heavily damaged in previous raids, was one of the R.A.F.'s main targets in last night's attack, said an eye-witness just arrived here.

"Terrible damage was done to Eastern and Southern Berlin," he said.

"As we left Tempelhof aerodrome I saw the burnt-out remains of three planes. Administrative buildings and hangars were also damaged.

"There were several craters near the runway, and barracks were hit.

"In Friedrichshafen factories were damaged, and Koenigstadt, which has both factories and workers' flats, was also heavily hit."—Reuter.

THREE YEARS AGO TO THE NIGHT

Three years ago, on December 29, 1940, the Luftwaffe sent 150 planes which dropped 10,000 incendiary bombs and devastated large areas of London.

Buildings burned out included Guildhall, eight Wren churches, three hospitals, hundreds of buildings.

St. Paul's was surrounded by blazing buildings. The second Fire of London illuminated the whole capital.

The area laid waste that night remains the largest bomb scar of the war in Britain.

Scientist tells of R.A.F. secret bomb-sight

'Berlin was a raid by television'

From GORDON YOUNG

STOCKHOLM, Thursday.— It is clear that Wednesday night's 2,000-ton raid on Berlin was a considerable triumph for the new "television" bomb-sights, which enable the Allied air forces to do accurate bombing through cloud and in darkness.

The principles on which this sight works were described by a Swedish scientist in the Dagens Nyheter today.

He said that the sight uses a method similar to television, with this difference—that instead of visible light rays the image is produced by infra-red rays, which are not obstructed by cloud and fog.

According to this account, the method making television photo-electric cells susceptible to infra-red rays was perfected about three years ago by a Russian scientist, V. K. Zvorykin, at the Electronic Laboratories, in Camden, New Jersey.

Cut by a half

Another fact is becoming ever clearer—that Bomber Harris is winning the Battle of Berlin.

Reports flowing into Stockholm tonight, though not tallying in every detail, show with remarkable unanimity that the British bombs have achieved three main triumphs.

1. They have disrupted Germany's central administration to an extent which the Swedes estimate at more than 60 per cent. of its pre-blitz efficiency.

2. They have disorganised seven main railway lines which converge on Berlin, and thrown an immeasurable burden on the Reich's railways right across Northern Germany.

3. They have reduced war production of Berlin factories by at least half, and probably more.

Observers here believe that the next two weeks will be critical, and will decide whether the Germans will try to maintain the capital as a going concern, or will be forced to order wholesale evacuation.

Squads inadequate

This is how the crisis has developed:—

When the major raids began last September, the extent of the damage exceeded German anticipations. The fire services were caught partly unprepared, and rescue and clearance squads were inadequate.

The Germans made a quick recovery from the initial shock, and rushed prisoners and foreign workers to help essential repair work.

They increased the city's defences. They believed they could maintain Berlin's vital production and administrative services.

They believed they could inflict losses on the R.A.F. that would make the raids too costly.

That was their hope, and it was encouraged when the Luftwaffe claimed that the R.A.F. lost 58 planes in one raid. [Actual highest loss was 41 planes on December 2.]

Falling behind

Since then, this hope has steadily died as R.A.F. losses have fallen. Gradually, repair work has been falling behind new damage. Berlin has lost ground, while R.A.F. losses have dropped.

If the present spell of fine flying weather over most of Northern Europe goes on all efforts by Goebbels, as Gauleiter, to keep Berlin in action may be overwhelmed.

The first plane from Berlin to Sweden tonight brought passengers whose tired faces showed clear signs of the anxious night they had passed.

One business man told me: "The raid was one of the most destructive Berlin has had. It was a nasty night, with drizzling rain. We heard hundreds of planes, which seemed to come in over the city from all directions."

Ribbentrop villa

"Most of the damage seemed to be in the east, south and south-west districts, including Neukoeln, Dahlem—where many members of the German Government, including Ribbentrop, have villas—and Tempelhof, around the airfield.

"Koenigstadt, which has many factories, was heavily hit. So were the Frankfurterallee and the Moritzplatz, with their fashionable shops.

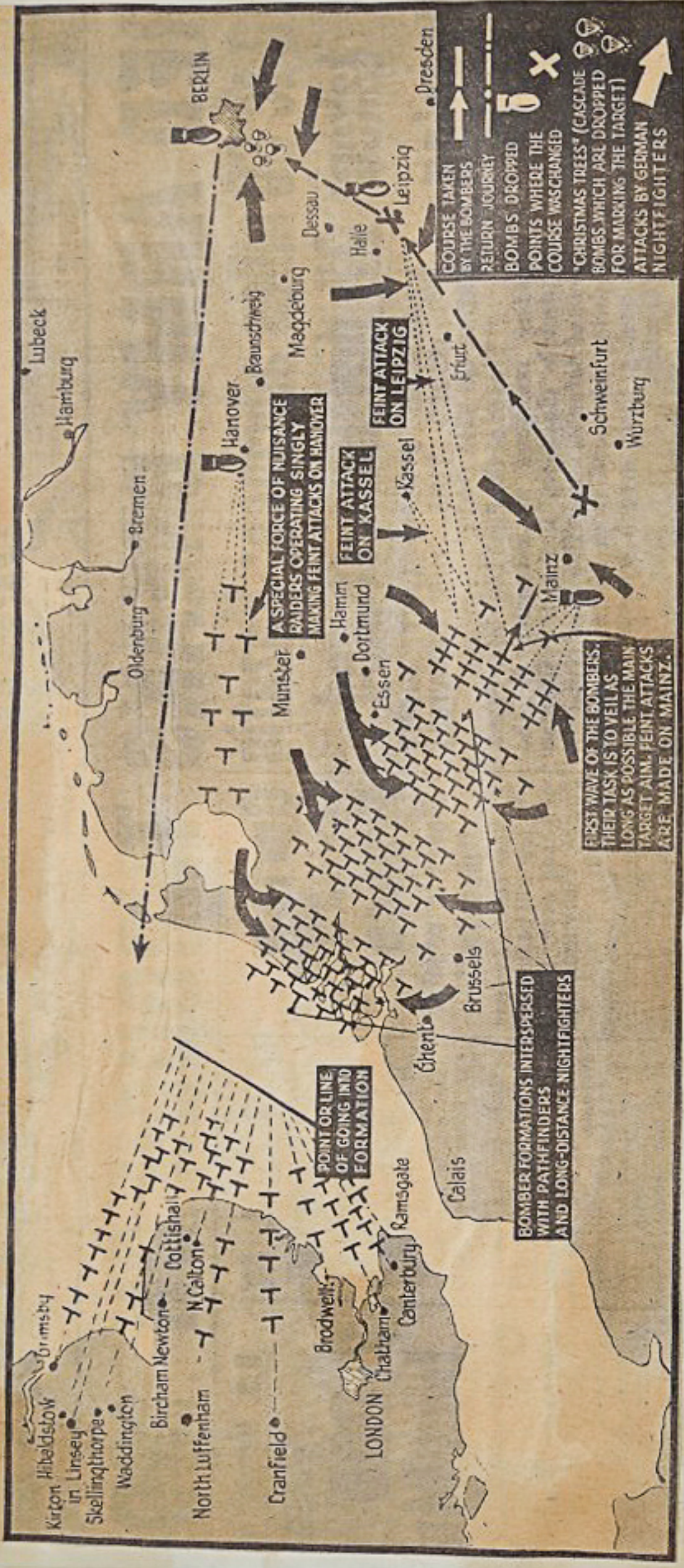
"All the windows in the Tempelhof airport's main administrative building were blown in, and the airfield was carpeted with splinters. There were craters near the runway, and the Swedish airliner had its tyres punctured by flying fragments of glass."

LATEST UNTER DEN LINDEN A 'SKELETON'

Unter den Linden is now a street of skeleton buildings, says a traveller reaching Sweden last night. The only buildings standing in the heart of Berlin are Hitler's Chancellery and Göring's Air Ministry.—Reuter.

And still another to the capital of the Reich on Dec 29, 1943 and it was one of the largest raids ever held on Berlin with 708 aircraft to take part. We took off about 1730 hrs after all the other boys had s/c as we were secondary blind markers and had to drop "greens" 1 min. before the raid ended. The trip to the target was quite uneventful so "if" worked all the way. We went down south of Hanover to first about 15 miles north of Leipzig where we dropped route markers in the form of yellow T's. We were then to make a timed run from a small town which we were unable to pick up and instead of going on we looked for it & wasted so much time we were late. The target itself was as usual very warm with flak but s/c's were kept down by 10/10 cloud. After leaving the target on a northerly heading we turned due west & when we picked up Hanover on "if" we were about 13 miles north of Hanover. From there to the coast we were on track and went straight thru' between TEXEL & the island north of it. From there we cut straight across to Base by Gee studding and got home about 7 out of 14 which was good as we should have been lost. All the kites from here returned but s/c McAnade landed at Woodridge after having flown from Bremen on two motors. F/L Gord Bennett also flew from Berlin on 2 engines & his kite was very badly shot up. Altogether 20 aircraft were lost in the whole raid which was very good. The raid was assessed as very concentrated but from a personal point of view I think it was an understoot. No one got a photo as there were 10/10 cloud.

How the R.A.F. Attack Berlin: A German Version



This was our 4th trip to Berlin and was on the morning of Jan 2, 1944. 456 Lances took part with 87 P.F.F. kites. Briefing was at 20:00 + take off at 0030. 2 kites had a bit of a collision at take-off so we had to wait for awhile and then go around them on the grass. We were to be on the target at zero + 7 a secondary blind markers so were #13 to take off. On reaching the Dutch coast I found we were going to be late so we put up the A/S but the winds had died down & we never did catch up. We got south of track on the way in but got back on in time to do a timed run from a small town north of Brandenburg and bombed 3.2 mins late. The target was covered by 10% cloud but the predicted flak was terrific. As I looked out of the astro dome I saw a PFF kite explode + TI's & flares went all directions. The target had no TI's or flares on it when we went over it but it seems everybody was late. After leaving Berlin we were about 4 miles starboard of track + stayed there till we got near Leipzig. Further on, south of Bonn we dropped route markers which first went down thru' the cloud out of sight. The rest of the trip home was comparatively quiet. We were 5th home which was very good as we should have been about last. We landed at 0715 and the sky was starting to show signs of daylight. 2 kites didn't return, F/O Allan Campbell crew - 90th Bomber navigator Lt Dan Thompson MUF 9. + F/O Donnelly O.F.M. Altogether 28 kites were lost, 10 of which were from P.F.F. Group. We didn't get a picture because of cloud. F/O Coldrey (Capt. Court - his nav.) got shot up pretty bad over Berlin and had to land at another dome. He got hit by a fighter that he never did see.

Girl From Berlin Says 'It Was Worst Raid'

WHOLE CENTRE ABLAZE

From RALPH HEWINS, Daily Mail Correspondent

STOCKHOLM, Thursday.

A GIRL passenger on the Swedish Air Lines plane out of Berlin this afternoon told me to-night when she arrived in Stockholm: "The centre of Berlin as I left was a blazing, smoking mass of wreckage.

"Much of the damage I saw was new, caused by last night's 2,000-tons British raid.

"I have lived in Berlin two years. I have lived through the previous seven heavy R.A.F. attacks this winter, and I know that last night's raid was as bad, if not worse, than any of them.

"Everyone I spoke to thought the same. The strain was terrible.

"I am an authority on British raids on Berlin; you can see that by this scar on my lip. The British gave me that.

"I have been living in the suburbs, and to get to Tempelhof Airport this afternoon Swedish Air Lines had to send a taxi to collect me. It was impossible to reach the blazing centre of the city by a direct means.

"So far as I could see all parts of Berlin were hit last night. All the way on my roundabout journey to the airport I saw bombed-out people carrying their salvaged belongings to wherever they could find a roof.

Rocket Shells

"Overcrowding in the city now is really a terrific problem. All the same, we who live in Berlin do not bear you any particular malice. We realise it is part of the war.

"What we are really interested in is the struggle to survive."

Other eye-witnesses of the raid who were on the plane said that the German A.A. guns were using rocket shells last night for the first time.

Smoke, they said, was still pouring steadily upward this afternoon from the burning city, forming a vast pall more than three miles high. The great fires started last night appeared to be out of hand.

Vast new sections of the city's industrial and communications centre are in ruins. The underground, tram, and bus services are badly disrupted.

One plane passenger declared: "We could hear hundreds of bombers flying in over Berlin from all sides at once. They seemed all to let go their bombs and incendiaries at once, as if at an agreed signal."

Another passenger said that terrible new damage was done to the whole of Eastern and Southern Berlin. Tempelhof and Neukölln districts were worst hit.

Airfield Craters

He said: "As we took off from Tempelhof Aerodrome I saw the burnt-out wrecks of three planes.

"Administrative buildings and hangars were damaged; there were several craters near the runway.

"A barracks near the aerodrome were hit and I know that some of the soldiers were killed.

"One very bright blaze I saw during the raid looked like a petrol fire. Many factories were hit in Friedrichshagen.

"I saw many bombed-out shops as I came along the Frankfurter Allee and Moritz-Platz. Many had been hit previously, but a lot of the damage was new.

The first thin reports of the raid cabled from Berlin by Swedish newspaper correspondents concentrate on the unprecedented weight of flak thrown up by the A.A. defences.

Their descriptions of the wonders of the ground defences—without mention of bomb damage—are obviously the official German attempt to calm the German people.

The Berlin correspondent of Aftonbladet cabled this afternoon: "Berlin's anti-aircraft artillery

played first fiddle during the attack by British bombers last night.

"The raiders flew under thick cloud cover, and as the first wave approached in the distance one could hear intense A.A. fire far away.

"It soon increased to a continuous barrage, but neither searchlights nor flares were to be seen.

"One could picture the British plane formations flying through curtains and showers of A.A. shells.

"One could hardly ever remember before having heard anything like the ear-splitting cannonade of the defences."

The reports indicate that General Loeper, chief of the Berlin defences, abandoned his tactics of last Thursday when aerial flare paths lighted the way to Berlin and hundreds of night fighters patrolled looking for the attacking forces.

Presumably he brought up the unprecedented numbers of A.A. batteries in anticipation of the R.A.F. again using cloud cover instead of attacking on a clear night.

But Air Chief Marshal Harris's men obviously pushed their attack home through all this, successfully.

Ludwig Steeg, Mayor of Berlin, declared in a statement to the Press to-night: "The stern air attacks to which the capital has been subjected have changed its face."

The question of rehousing the people who had been bombed out had become a serious problem, he said.

The S.S. newspaper *Das Schwarze* declared to-day: "Millions of Germans are soldiers now in the sense that they do not possess more than they can carry in a knapsack.

"Germans are lucky that the Allied raids came after, and not before, Stalingrad.

"In those days the German people were still not worried. To-day, they demand of life as little as the Russians. This is the prerequisite of total war."

'PERFECT RAF OPERATION'

By Daily Mail Air Reporter

GERMAN night fighter pilots stood airport beside their grounded aircraft on airfields right across the route to Berlin when the huge armada of R.A.F. bombers roared overhead on Wednesday night to drop another 2,000 tons of bombs on the Reich capital.

The attack—eighth major assault on the German capital since the Battle of Berlin opened on November 18—will go down in R.A.F. history as the "Perfect Operation."

It was brilliantly timed to give our Lancasters and Halifaxes full advantage of dense cloud which, while screening the attacking force from the ground defences, prevented the German fighter packs from rising until the British squadrons were nearly home.

Bomber Command had meteorological forecasts which indicated that later in the evening the weather would clear and be more favourable to the defence.

Once again the experts were right. Most of our crews saw neither flares nor fighters until they were approaching the enemy coast on the way home.

This clever exploitation of weather conditions was only one of a number of factors which made the latest Berlin blitz the R.A.F.'s perfect raid.

Once again the main R.A.F. attacking force was sent on a track which left the defences in doubt to the very last moment as to whether Berlin really was the main target.

"The route was planned," said

the Air Ministry last night, "to take the bombers to a point where they could make a last-minute turn to Berlin."

Light attacks were made on several places not far from Berlin, and the Germans fell right into the trap. The ground defences at the sham targets reacted with as great violence as the guns of Berlin.

As a result, only 20 bombers were lost in the night's operations, which included Mosquito raids on targets in Central and Western Germany. This gives an even lower percentage of loss than that on November 22, when 2,300 tons were showered on Berlin for the loss of 26 bombers. C. E.

Any Trick To Save Berlin

By WING COMMANDER CHARLES BRAY

THE Battle of Berlin has become a battle of wits. Each night, as the attack is stepped up to its climax, the Luftwaffe chiefs switch their defensive tactics in a frantic attempt to prevent raids that may knock 12 months off the war.

On Saturday night practically no fighters were encountered over Berlin.

On Sunday night our bombers had to "fight their way in by the front door and then shoot our way out again," as one pilot put it.

It was another 1,000-tonner, and to avoid the moon a late start was made.

This the enemy had foreseen. He sent up fighters from airfields some distance away from Berlin. These joined into packs, which swept on towards the capital, gathering reinforcements on the way.

Lanes of fighter flares were laid as far away as Hanover, so that the packs should be in no doubt as to the route they should take.

Panic Changes

Some of the fighters had obviously been given instructions to intercept the bombers en route. The result was that fighting was almost continuous during the last 100 miles of the journey.

These tactics were totally different from those adopted by the German fighters the previous night.

There is not the slightest doubt that the enemy is trying every conceivable trick, every possible move and changing his tactics with almost panic rapidity to make the Berlin raids too costly for us.

Packs of fighters raced our bombers to Berlin and then turned and attacked in force. Many of our pilots reported the opposition tougher than they had ever experienced before.

But the bombers went through undaunted, and our losses were no

higher than normal—27 bombers out of a total force of probably over 400.

Yet let it not be forgotten that this battle is not being fought without losses on both sides.

Since it started on the night of November 18 there have been ten raids and 272 of our bombers have been lost.

Over 14,000 tons of high explosives and incendiaries have been dropped on Berlin.

Although we have not been able to obtain the photographic proof that we should have liked, there is no doubt that colossal damage has been done to the German capital and to the morale of Berliners.

But 272 bombers lost means roughly over 2,000 trained air crews lost, probably twice as many men as were lost in the four days' battle of the Sangro River.

This loss of personnel, serious as it is, remains probably only a fraction over six per cent. of the

total engaged, and for every bomber lost since the battle began well over 50 tons of bombs have been dropped on Berlin.

Not only have the bombers to fight their way through lanes of enemy fighters and ack-ack barrage, but they have to fight gales, serious icing conditions.

Colossal Damage

On Sunday night enemy fighters flew on a parallel course to the bombers on the way home and dropped innumerable flares indicating the raiders' course, so that other fighters could wait and attack.

With all the accumulated lag of clearing up debris from the heavy attacks of the last seven weeks, and trying to get services running, 1,000 tons now produce damage and dislocation which there is small hope of tackling quickly. Berlin is probably approaching the crumbling stage.

The city has been burning almost continuously for more than two weeks. In many districts the devastation equals that of Hamburg.

In ten nights more than 14,000 tons of bombs have been dropped for a loss of 272 bombers—an average of more than 50 tons for every missing plane.

Despite all the enemy's efforts fires were soon burning in the capital and smoke rose to 15,000 feet.

So rapid was the attack that at one stage 70 tons of bombs were falling every minute.

The pilot of a Mosquito which went over on a special reconnaissance reported that the fires merged into two great concentrations.

HITLER'S CHANCERY 'LAID IN RUINS'

Hundreds reported trapped

From GORDON YOUNG: Stockholm, Monday night

HITLER'S gaudy Chancery—the Reichs Chancellor's Palace, rebuilt to his special design in 1938—is today a heap of ruins wreathed in smoke among streets which tonight were still cordoned off by police.



The Chancery—"a direct hit."

Flames caused by the latest R.A.F. attack this morning still leap from the ruins of buildings close at hand.

The balcony on which Hitler reviewed countless goose-stepping parades of the Wehrmacht, and took the salute as thousands cheered his victories over the democracies, is just a pile of stones in the middle of ruins.

These are some of the details of this morning's raid given by passengers who arrived in Stockholm late tonight by airplane.

Said one traveller: "We heard that hundreds of people were trapped in the huge shelter under the Chancery." This shelter was used by Chancery officials and staffs from other Nazi offices.

No bread

A business man, red-eyed with his ordeal, said: "The raid was three-quarters of an hour of hell. When we came out early this morning the whole Wilhelmstrasse was wreathed in smoke.

"The Auslands Club, where once Ribbentrop entertained visiting British politicians, was hit again. "Traffic in Berlin is at a standstill. No trams are running.

"No bread was delivered today. All we had for breakfast was ersatz coffee and a little potato."

Travellers arriving at Malmö airport said: "Evacuation of Berlin is in full swing. People are being evacuated from the suburbs to safer places in the provinces."

Bombers fight way in— flare lanes for 200 miles

Express Air Reporter BASIL CARDEW

BOMBER COMMAND shot their way into Berlin through the front door early yesterday morning, then shot their way out again. These are the graphic words of a pilot who took his plane through one of the fiercest night air battles ever fought.

Packs of German fighters swept in from airfields all over Northern Germany.

Lanes of flares were laid thickly along the route to Berlin; they began 200 miles from the capital.

For the last 100 miles of the bombers' journey there was fighting all the way. The Germans knew it was Berlin we were after, and they threw up one of the biggest night fighter forces they have ever put in the air.

A late start to avoid the moon, and a 90 m.p.h. gale over Germany, prevented the bombers taking a roundabout route.

AGAINST GALE

It had to be the front door. They got in; they duly delivered another 1,000 tons of bombs; and then they fought their way out—against the swarms of fighters and against the gale.

And yet the total R.A.F. loss was 27 planes—one fewer than the previous night.

The Lancasters' gunners did a great job as the fighters weaved in between the bombers to attack.

Flight Sergeant H. Glasby, a radio operator from Queensland, said: "The enemy dropped a line of flares for 30 miles from Berlin on the homeward route. We got

past this all right, and then found that fighters were flying parallel to us and dropping more flares, in clusters of three, to mark our route.

"Far ahead we could see a regular line of flares, spaced out in intervals. Every now and then we saw exchanges of tracer, showing where a bomber had strayed off its course and was being attacked."

TRAILED

Sergeant W. Leary, D.F.M., of Manchester, a gunner in Q for Queenie, said: "We were half-way home when an Me.110 caught us up. It had been trailing us for nearly half-an-hour, dropping flares.

"It kept edging nearer and nearer to us, and when it was within 300 yards I let go with a two-second burst. It turned over on its back and went down."

Fires started in Berlin merged into two main concentrations, and smoke poured up more than two miles high.

The Battle of Berlin has now reached a stage when 1,000 tons

of bombs probably have the physical and moral effect of 2,000 tons at the start of the battle.

Pathfinders Work all through Raid

By Daily Mail Air Reporter

THE largest force of Lancasters and Halifaxes yet sent to the German capital by Bomber Command finished their task—from a comparatively low level—in half an hour, which means that the city was plastered at the rate of nearly 80 tons a minute.

The tonnage unloaded in the latest attack was probably a good deal larger than in the previous heaviest raid—on the night of November 22.

As on that occasion, our raiders bombed through cloud with the aid of sky markers—flares which hang on parachutes to mark the target.

Last night the Air Ministry let out another secret about the Pathfinders' technique. They disclosed that their job is not completed, as is commonly supposed, by the time the bomb-aimers of the main force start pressing their buttons.

"A great cluster of sky markers," the Air Ministry said last night, "was continuously maintained over the target from 7.30 p.m. until 8 o'clock."

Fighters gathered over the target in large numbers as the attack developed, and the crews of one bomber group reported 40 sightings "all over the target area." Thirty-five aircraft are missing.—C. E.

Every Enemy Fighter Up to Meet RAF

SWARMS of fighters were waiting over Berlin yesterday morning for the R.A.F. Lancasters and Halifaxes, which, after battling with a 90-miles-an-hour gale and fighter packs that tried to head them off, dropped another 1,000 tons of bombs on the German capital.

It was Bomber Command's second attack in 24 hours.

The gale cleared away the fog and cloud that kept many Luftwaffe night fighter squadrons grounded during the two previous raids.

Messerschmitts, Junkers, and Focke-Wulfs attacked our bombers hundreds of miles from Berlin, and others were waiting in packs over the capital.

There were running fights all along the last 100 miles to the target. Flying along inside the R.A.F. formations the fighters waited their chance to fire whenever they saw a raider.

In this latest raid, which brought the Battle of Berlin bomb tonnage well past the 14,000 mark, there was no feinting—no mock raids on targets near the real one to draw off the fighters.

Shot It Out

Finessing was ruled out by the late start needed to avoid the moon and the strong gale. As one pilot said: "We had to shoot our way in by the front door and then shoot our way out again."

Twenty-seven bombers are missing.

An interim balance-sheet of the Berlin battle shows that the ten big attacks have cost the R.A.F. 272 heavy bombers.

This means that one bomber has been expended for every 50 tons of bombs dropped—a high price, but one that has purchased tremendous results.

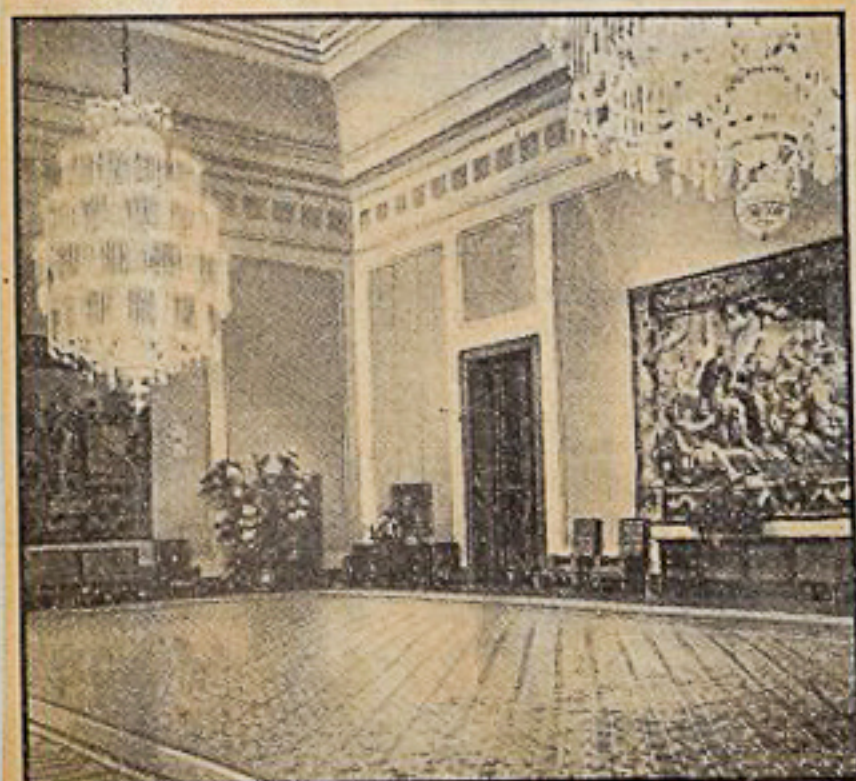
If the average bomber takes three tons of bombs to Berlin, as recent official statements have led us to believe, the capital has been attacked since November 18 by nearly 5,000 planes.

This, our 5th trip to Berlin, took place on the early morning of Jan 3rd 1944. It was a midnight take-off, exact time 0001 was our airborne time. About 420 aircraft took part including about 80 PFF Kites. This was our first shot at being primary blind markers and it was very successful as we dropped route markers north of Berlin, Wanganui flares + red TD's on the target + route markers south of Hanover. The trip out was very good as our "if" worked perfectly. We had to do a bit of hard pushing to get over a front as ice was starting to form on windshield + turrets. When we got over the lakes north of the target we did a run + dropped green flares for route markers. We did a timed run from there taking fixes on New Ruppin all the way in. We bombed 1.2 of a min. late + our Wanganui's burst in the middle of a good concentration. The target wasn't as hot for flak as it has been but long lanes of fighter flares were dropped on the way out. Everything went okay and we dropped some green flares south of Hanover again. The rest of the trip was quite easy as our "if" worked perfectly and the ground zero looked lovely + was very clear + we got fixes from a range of 26 miles. As usual we got stoddged home over the sea + to base + for the first time since we started to operate we were first to land + it is a grand feeling. There were 3 turn-backs from this squadron, F/S McQuade, F/S Burrows + F/S Bonikowsky. We lost 1 kite w/o Robinson, one of the few English pilots on the squadron. "Zeke" Blakely was his engineer and his navigator F/S Elliot had only been here about 3 days. No photos were taken as no cameras were carried. but it is reported to be a very successful raid even though only about 200 aircraft got to the target. Altogether 27 kites were lost, 9 from the P.F.F. group. Ken Wilson's navigator, Jack Atkinson got a fractured leg from a bit of flak picked up over Hanover.

**HITLER'S
HOME
BLITZED**



THIS is Hitler's new Chancellery in Berlin, three-quarters of which is reported to have been destroyed in Sunday night's raid. It was completed in January 1939, and adjoins the old Chancellery. Its total street frontage was more than a quarter of a mile.



AND this is—or was—Hitler's private reception room at the Chancellery. It was 26yds. long, 18yds. wide, and 37ft. high.

RAF Wreck Hitler's HQ in Berlin

Chancellery Down: Hundreds Buried 'Major Blow'

From RALPH HEWINS,
Daily Mail Special Correspondent
STOCKHOLM, Monday.

GERMAN pioneers are to-night reported to be digging frantically to rescue hundreds of people trapped in the shelters under Hitler's Chancellery in Berlin.

Three-quarters of this mighty building—centre of Government and symbol of the Nazi Party's rise to power—were laid in ruins by last night's R.A.F. attack.

Travellers reaching Stockholm from Germany to-day report that "block-busters" smashed down on the fortress-like pile, reducing most of it to rubble.

They describe the blow as a major disaster. Hitler was not in the building, but many important officials are believed to be buried under its ruins.

Huge, three-storied shelters were constructed under the Chancellery, and by Hitler's order most of them were reserved for women and children.

The safety of those under his personal protection became a point of honour for the Führer. Hence the arrival of mobile cranes and bulldozers and thousands of men at the Chancellery at dawn.

But their task is well-nigh impossible. When Hitler completed the Chancellery early in 1939 he thought that its roof of 9ft. of concrete and massive walls would be proof against an bombs.

ROOF CRASHED IN

He failed to foresee the block-buster, and last night the great roof was brought crashing down to trap the shelterers deep under ground.

The new Reich Chancellery had a frontage of a quarter of a mile from the Wilhelmstrasse to the Hermann Göringstrasse.

The finest marbles and stones that Germany could produce were brought to Berlin to make it the show place of Nazi power.

Huge bronze double doors gave entrance to a "court of honour" which in turn gave way to marble halls, tapestried galleries, and beautiful gardens.

In the very heart was Hitler's huge workroom. Now all this is reported to have been swept away.

Last night's tenth mighty blow against the German capital appears to have been one of the most devastating since the Battle of Berlin began seven weeks ago.

Although the tonnage of bombs was less than in some attacks the destruction is reported to be at least as great as on the worst previous night.

A report quoted by the Swedish newspaper *Aftonstidningen* says that so far 2,760 people are known to have been killed and 140,000 made homeless.

CITY EMPTIES

The German detector apparatus registered 730 planes attacking the city.

Non-stop evacuation is reported to have reduced the population from 4,000,000 to about 1,000,000.

Three Regular divisions of the German Army have been tied down in Berlin by the R.A.F., according to a Swedish engineer, G. P. Cedergren, chief of Stockholm's A.S.P.

Back from a tour of inspection in the German capital, he confirmed earlier reports that troops are being rushed to fires which the civilian authorities could not cope with.

Another duty of the soldiers is to prevent riots, demonstrations, or mutinies by the hundreds of thousands of foreign workers and prisoners camped in and around Berlin.

Cedergren told a Stockholm audience how Berliners were often kept in their cellars 12 hours after the "All Clear" for fear of time-bombs; how fires suddenly broke out a whole day after a raid owing to undetected fires started by incendiaries.

He was full of awe for the R.A.F.'s ingenuity in dropping a few explosive bombs from time to time along with incendiaries dropped by the Pathfinders.

This tactic had the effect of driving A.R.P. workers under cover at the beginning of a raid, and thereby giving illuminating fires a better chance of getting going before the main attacking force reached the target.

Absence of corridors connecting basements of individual buildings had resulted in thousands being trapped.

AREA BY AREA

STOCKHOLM, Monday. Sven Hansson, correspondent of the Swedish newspaper *Seenska Dagbladet*, who returned from Berlin to-day, said: "Last night's raid was extremely heavy in the centre, as well as the outer districts."

"The attack on the centre of the city was concentrated on the Potsdamerplatz and its surroundings, which were badly hit."

"It is obvious that the British are systematically bombing and destroying one district after another. The west was first to be attacked, followed by the Stettiner Bahnhof district, then the south and south-east, but the east has not yet been smashed."

"So many buildings with sirens attached have been destroyed that the alarm is now much weaker than it used to be."

"Evacuation from both districts is proceeding at a rapid pace."—*Reuter*.

RAF Bombers Out Early This Morning

By 'Daily Sketch' Air Correspondent

WAVE upon wave of our heavy bombers crossed the East Coast early this morning flying towards the Continent—less than 24 hours after the R.A.F.'s first "obliteration-scale" raid on Berlin this year.

Nazi radio stations had another black-out last evening—usually a sign that Allied bombers are in action. Calais, Paris (long-wave), Friesland, Rennes (Brittany), Bremen, Strasbourg, Brussels and Hilversum (Holland) all went off at 8.30. Vichy and Toulouse followed at 11.45.

Coast watchers in a South-East England town saw A.A. shells bursting over the Boulogne area.

The Berlin radio announcer used a lip microphone when he read the midnight news bulletin—the usual practice when a raid is in progress. It excludes outside noises.

Using an all-Lancaster force, Bomber Command dropped well over 1,000 tons of bombs on the German capital at 3 o'clock yesterday morning. Once again the R.A.F. outwitted the Luftwaffe defence. The defending night-fighters were lured away by feint attacks on Hamburg and targets in Western Germany.

Battle Is 'Charted'

Late last night Berlin was still burning and a thick smoke pall hung over the city, said a Stockholm report.

It was the 100th raid on Berlin and the ninth major attack made by the R.A.F. in just over six weeks. The bomb load brought the total tonnage in the Battle of Berlin to considerably more than 13,000. Twenty-eight of our planes are missing from the night's operations, which included attacks on Northern France.

Bomber Command now recognise officially that the Battle of Berlin is on. While yesterday's attack was in full swing their Intelligence Room Staff at H.Q. were busy filling in a chart headed "Battle of Berlin."

While clearly recognising that the Battle has by no means reached its closing stages, Bomber Command say that the omens "are certainly favourable."

The weather may have pre-

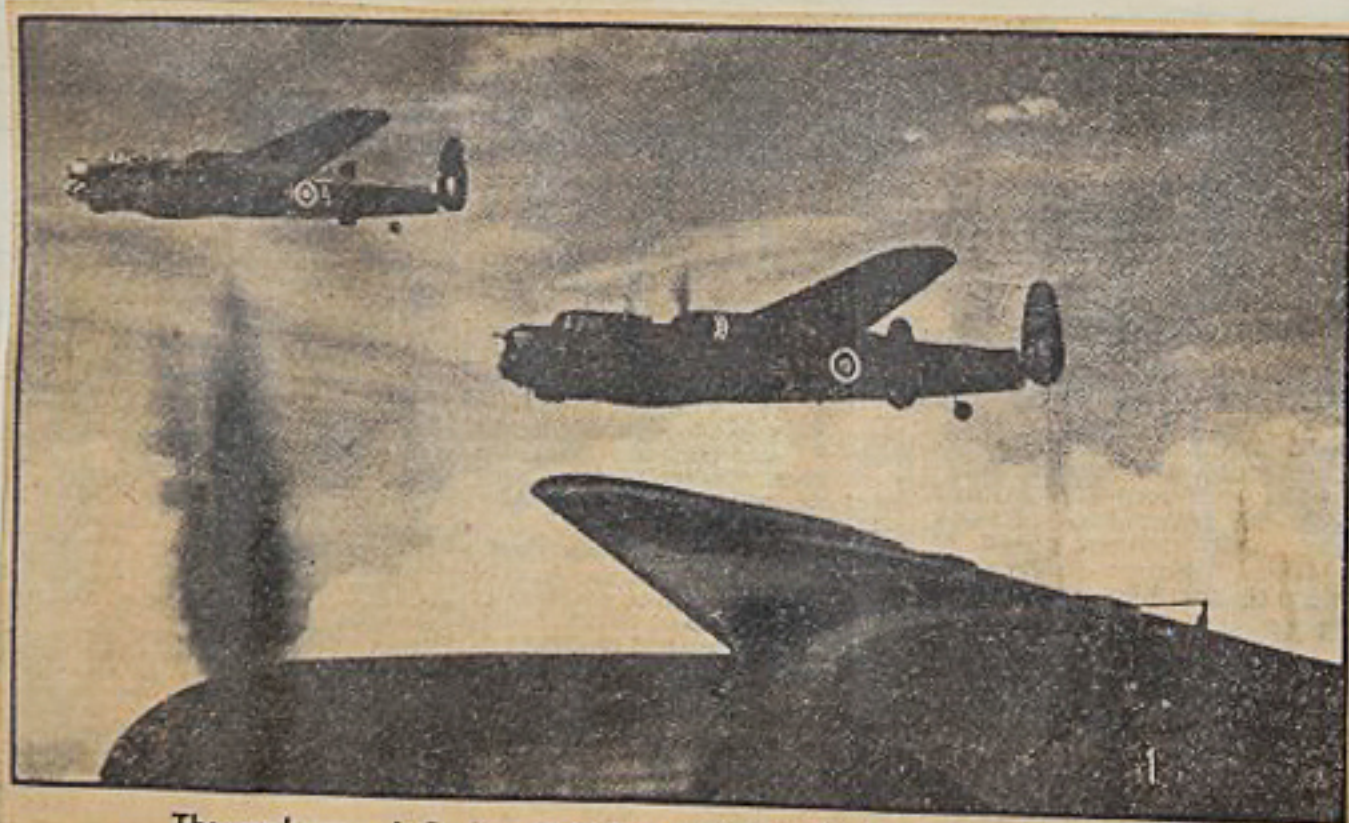
vented the Germans using large numbers of fighters, though some met the bomber stream when it was still 150 miles from the target, and again on the way back there were sightings near the French coast.

The enemy's main fighter disposition did not appear to have reached Berlin at all.

Within 15 minutes of the first bombs dropping on Berlin vast columns of smoke were seen billowing up above the main cloud bank, 8,000 feet high.

Describing the attack on his return, Wing Commander R. L. Bowes, D.P.C., of Wimbledon, said: "One very big explosion lit the clouds with a great yellowish-red glow."

One pilot, Flight-Sergeant E. V. Baron, of Windsor, said he saw no fighters or any tracer from air combat. "But," added Baron, "I did see a number of rockets shoot horizontally through the air."



The rendezvous is Berlin. British bombers on their way to the target.

Fires Still Burning Round the Wilhelmstrasse

FIRES were still burning round the Wilhelmstrasse when conferences were held for the foreign Press, according to Stockholm reports. The Berlin correspondent of the

Stockholm *Tidningen* telegraphed to his paper yesterday: "On one side of the Wilhelmstrasse (at the Ministry of Propaganda) we received from authoritative military sources

the darkest description so far of the situation in the East. Immediately afterwards we were edified on the other side of the street (at the Foreign Office) with the expected invasion."

GREATER BERLIN IS HALF WIPED OUT

Chaos Grips Battered Capital

HALF Berlin has now been laid in ruins by the R.A.F., according to the latest information from neutral quarters. The German administration is losing the desperate fight to retain control of the daily deteriorating situation.

Chaos is taking the city in its grip. Each new raid is more effective than the last.

Here are last night's reports on the battle:

FROM BERNE: Allied bombings have so far completely destroyed 50 per cent. of Greater Berlin, rendering homeless three of its seven million population, said the *National Zeitung*.

Another 25 per cent. of the city is badly damaged, and the rest mostly without windows or roofs. An area of several square miles has been completely wiped out.

Highly developed air-raid shelters have kept the number of dead within its "endurable" limits of 20,000 to 30,000.

FROM ZURICH: Mass evacuation of Berlin has been going on for the past two days without interruption, report travellers reaching Zurich from the German capital.

FROM STOCKHOLM: Fire which burned furiously for four hours after the last R.A.F. raid gutted Hitler's sprawling Chancellery, and left hardly a room that could be used.

A traveller who has just arrived in Sweden from Berlin reported that hundreds of firemen battled with the flames without success.

They Rush Out

This picture of Berlin was given yesterday by the correspondent of the *Morgen Tidningen*:

"By every possible—and impossible—means of transport people are fleeing from the burning and shattered city.

'Heavies' Out Early to-day Over East Coast

ANOTHER great force of British heavy bombers flew out across the east coast towards the Continent early this morning.

The bombers, whose engines woke many people in coastal areas, appeared to be taking a course to the south and south-east.

At one point the procession took nearly an hour to cross the coast.

"Hundreds of thousands of people leave the city daily. It is feared above all that workers in war industries will give way. In many factories during the past few days only half the staff have arrived for work.

"The food situation is chaotic. Many warehouses stocked with reserve provisions have gone up in flames. Traffic is paralysed.

"In the badly hit districts of Mariendorf, Lankwitz, Steglitz, and Neukoeln fires are still burning and the streets are blocked with the dust and the debris of thousands of smashed houses.

BY BERLIN RADIO: An urgent appeal was broadcast last night calling on the people not to lose their tempers when they find that their telephones cannot be connected.

"This bitterness by the German people must stop, as all calls have to be restricted to a minimum and everyone who does telephone must be brief," said the announcer.

This was our 7th trip to the Big City and certainly the quietest one of all. It took place on the night of Jan 20, 1944, and was a maximum effort. Nearly 800 aircraft took part including 102 P.F.F. kits. Take-off was around 1630 hrs, we took off slightly later than the rest because we were secondary blind markers. It was a daylight take-off + it was a grand sight heading out to see with the bomber stream, Halifax, Lancasters, Stirlings + even a few Fortresses around about. Our route took us well out to sea, along towards Kiel, over the canal + down between Hamburg + Lubeck to the lakes north of the target. On one of the lakes we dropped a route marker in the form of a green + yellow flare. We then did a timed run and from the start we could see the T.I.'s + wagsnails and our "J" run took us right over them. We bombed at 1941.2, .8 of a min early. After leaving the target our "J" was as good as useless but we kept working at it. Our route took us north of Leipzig, south of Hannover between Munster + Osnabruck + then north to Lechelling. It was all very quiet except for some fighter flares around Lueuwarden but no fighters were seen. For the first time I saw an enemy twin engine, twin tailed fighter, just outside the target going like hell in the opposite direction. The crew saw a fighter shot down just outside Berlin + a gunner from this squadron #40 Griffin, claims one. We got home pretty well on E.T.R. and were about 7th to land. Good Bennett couldn't find the dome so were about last to land even though the first to call-up. The raid was said to be a success + fairly well concentrated. No kits were lost from this squadron + none shot up. Altogether 35 aircraft were lost, most of them Halifax. P.F.F. group lost 5, Gandy 3, Wyton 1 + Bourne 1. We didn't carry a camera so no pictures were taken. The route was covered by 10% cloud all the way.

CITY 'DIVE-BOMBED' BY LANCASTERS

From WALTER FARR

STOCKHOLM, Friday.

BERLINERS are to-day convinced that last night's 2,300-ton attack on the German capital was more terrifying than all the assaults that have gone before, Swedes who experienced the raid and who have reached Malmö, reported late to-night.

The raid, they say, was paralysing despite the fact that a "sixth sense" had warned many Berliners that it was "just the right night for an attack."

People queued at the entrances to the capital's deep shelters long before these were opened at five o'clock, and most of them stayed underground until the early hours of this morning—though Berlin's final "All clear" had sounded about midnight.

All eye-witnesses stress that the British squadrons bombed from a lower level than previously. One of them told me: "It seemed as if thousands and thousands of planes were diving straight for our shelters."

It is clear now that a great deal more than half Berlin has been laid waste. Casualties in last night's raid alone are believed to be in the region of 3,000 dead.

Here is the story of the "super attack" told to me by a Swede whose name I cannot give because he expects that in the future he will be compelled to return to Berlin.

"Last night seemed to come very near to the November vintage. Somehow Berliners sensed that there would be a raid.

"There was nothing really to go on. It was a night much like any of the other nights since January 2 (the date of the previous big raid), but Berliners now claim they have a 'sixth sense' about raids.

"People rushed home from theatres, which all finish about 5 o'clock, and there were very long queues outside the deep shelters all afternoon

FEINTS

"No one may go into them until five, but people were sure 'they' were coming and decided to make certain of a place down below.

"The R.A.F. tactical feints have played heavily on Berliners' nerves.

"When news comes out that a great fleet is heading for the capital and is then switched somewhere else it shakes people up.

"In the shelters last night the people were saying 'Perhaps they won't come after all, but somehow it seems to be the right sort of night, and they have not been over now for nearly three weeks.'

"That was just before 7 o'clock.

"Some people brought tiny bottles of precious liquor down with them, remnants of extra Christmas rations.

"Suddenly there came the roaring of the bombers—first faintly, then louder, then louder still, so that instead of sounding like a roaring sound it became a thunderous, crashing chorus.

"The best way I can describe it is that the din of the low-flying planes was like massed drums, and call the A.A. fire the orchestra—but what ear-splitting drums!

"To cope with the desperate housing shortage the Germans have moved into Berlin large numbers of sleeper coaches stolen from some of the great European expresses, mostly from those operating in France.

"I was told that some of these were hit last night.

"In earlier attacks I have occasionally gone up from my shelter and taken a peep at what was going on. But last night I stayed where I was.

"That deep engine roar and the ceaseless crash of high explosive changed my mind.

"As if to brighten the people up the Germans hastily announced that ten British bombers had been shot down in the first ten minutes.

"The attack last night appeared to be concentrated on the south and south-eastern areas of Berlin. It centred particularly around the highly industrialised area known as Neukölln, most of which district has been totally destroyed.

STILL ABLAZE

"Reports say that the British pilots plastered the factories making tank and aeroplane engines and left them crumbled and blazing.

"When we took off from Tempelhof aerodrome this afternoon for Stockholm we could still see huge columns of smoke and flame rising over Southern Berlin and the glare of fires reflected against the smoke pall which covered the city.

"Many blocks must still be ablaze.

"There were at least several hundred planes in the raid—but judging by the noise it might have been many more.

"German sources reported that 11 factories in the east and south-east had been destroyed, and some people to whom I spoke said that they counted 30 major fires over the city after the 'All clear' had been sounded.

"The attack (from the first warning to the final all clear) lasted longer than usual, from seven until nine."

Another pointer to the terrifying effect of the attack is that 15 men who reached Stockholm airport to-night from Berlin looked more shaken by last night's raid than any other travellers who have arrived since the big raids began.

One man was unshaven, his face was deadly pale. In a very nervous state he mumbled to me:

'JUST HELL'

"It was like sitting in Hell to be in a Berlin shelter last night. I have never heard anything like the noise."

Most of the passengers looked jittery and badly shaken up. One who was in the Tiergarten district when the raid began said: "We had 25 minutes' warning of approaching planes. Though bombs dropped miles away their dull boom could be clearly heard in our shelter."

"Long after the raiders had gone Berlin was a dead city: no undergrounds, no trams nor buses, and, of course, no taxis.

"I had to walk back to the hotel and narrowly missed being knocked down by fire engines, some of which were driving three abreast down the main street, dashing from one blaze to another. Over towards the south-east the whole Berlin sky was red with fire."

The ten German passengers on the plane looked the most worried.

Another eye-witness told me: "The German spokesmen emphasised repeatedly that the attack was a terror raid, usually a good indication of the extent of the damage.

"Berlin after nearly three weeks without any real raid had begun to look a little cleaned up—just a little.

"Great gangs of Italian and Russian labourers had cleared a lot of wreckage away, and some streets that had been blocked for weeks were free again.

"This morning it was as bad as ever.

"Last night it was colder than on recent nights and that did not help matters.

'PEP FILMS'

"When we climbed out of the shelters early this morning big fires were burning in Berlin suburbs and some in the centre.

"All sorts of rumours were abroad about factories having been destroyed.

"German authorities, apparently in an effort to control stampede evacuation, have decreed that evacuees' ration cards are no longer valid in any other area unless stamped by 'home district' officials.

"Usually Berliners get extra food after a raid, but up to the time I left this morning I saw no evidence of this.

"Goebbels has ordered 'pep news films' to be distributed to all cinemas.

"They claim to show battles between German fighters and Allied bombers. There is a lot of noise and smoke, and most of the film is taken up with Fortresses crashing in flames over and over again.

"The films end by showing a group of American pilots captured

after a raid. Some of them are grinning.

"The audience at the cinema I visited the other morning watched the film in silence. Shots follow each other at a terrific rate and they are a little confusing."

Other eye-witnesses say that Berliners are gradually getting the "feel" of the raids. They now know the rhythm of the attacks and the sequence of bombs.

"First," they say, "come the small bombs, then the bigger ones, then phosphorus and incendiaries, and then block-busters."

Berlin's newest shelters have been constructed to sway with the force of an explosion.

Reliable travellers told me that Spandau, Siemensstadt (home of the great Siemens electrical concern), and Mariendorf were heavily hit. Bombs also fell in Wilmersdorf, Friedenau, and Tempelhof.

Unconfirmed reports reaching Sweden to-night say that the big Friedrichstrasse station was hit in last night's raid and the surrounding area badly damaged. Traffic was dislocated and only a skeleton bus service was in operation this morning.

BLAMED CLOUD

The German radio was busy to-night blaming cloud cover for the success of the attack.

"A 'home front' reporter said: 'The sky was filled with the deep droning of the enemy's heavy bombers. The hard fight of the defence was made even more difficult by weather most unfavourable for the night fighters.'

"As on many previous occasions, the enemy made use of the weather over Germany and based his attacks on the bad visibility and the thick layers of cloud over the capital.

"Our fighters went up to intercept them and prevented them from bombing the capital in a 'concentrated attack.'

"First the flak opened up, firing without interval and then came the silence which heralds the bitter and exciting battles high up in the sky between our fighters and the enemy bombers.

"Rain began to fall just while the raid was at its peak."

A night fighter told listeners: "I was in the sky for 31 minutes. There were four-engined planes everywhere—to the left, to the right, before us, behind us."

A plane piloted by Prince Zuy Sayn-Wittgenstein, commander of a night-fighter squadron and holder of the Oak Leaves decoration, was rammed by an R.A.F. machine in the heavy air battles over Berlin last night.

"The Prince had to break off the engagement and, in spite of the damage, he succeeded in making a smooth landing," the report added.

FOOTNOTE.—In a pep talk from Berlin a commentator told the people: "Keep your chin up in these difficult days. You have no right to offend others. What you need is more politeness and love for your neighbour."

This op took place on the night of Jan 31/22, 1944 and was another big effort with over 700 aircraft taking part. It was planned to fool the defences by going straight for Berlin and then turning south about 50 miles from it. We took off at about 2000, 4, in line and went out to sea again and entered the continent between Hamburg + Bremen. All down past Heligoland + the night the flak was really hot, the worst we had seen for a long while. Even when on track we were predicted and had to do a bit of weaving. Our "if" worked beautifully all the way up to the target + then it went absolutely scabby so we had to withhold our T.I's. We bombed on time, 2342 hrs. The target wasn't too hot but for a supposedly undefended city they had a lot of guns. Shortly after leaving I had a good look at the things + it looked very concentrated. There was about 3/10 cloud so it was a wanganui effort even though green T.I's were dropped. A lot of fires were started when we left and an awful lot of fighter flows were going down. Our route out took us past Brunswick + up between Bremen + Hamburg. We had to face the flak again and it was even hotter + we could see a lot of kites come over these cities but we didn't see any shot down. We cut a crafty corner to make up a bit of time and so we were about 3rd home. #405 lost one kite "S" with Ken Wilson as pilot. He slept in our billet so we knew him very well. He was on his 4th op. Altogether 55 aircraft were lost which was pretty high. We got a photo but it was nearly all cloud + unplateable. Our bombs hit our bomb base when falling and really made a mess of them, that was the only damage we got. Everybody reported the heavy flak around the coast going in + out.

Over 2,000 Tons On Magdeburg

Germans Sent Only 90 Planes Here: Ten Down

STRIKING evidence of the R.A.F.'s now tremendous superiority over the Luftwaffe was provided by the weight and power of the bombing attacks carried out by the respective forces during Friday night and in the early hours of yesterday.

Whereas the R.A.F. sent several hundred heavy bombers to drop more than 2,000 tons on Magdeburg, one of Germany's key war production cities, the Luftwaffe could muster only 90 planes for two attacks on London and South-East England.

In addition to the Magdeburg raid a light attack was also made by a mixed force of Lancasters and Mosquitoes on Berlin.

This, although in the nature of a diversionary raid, was alone probably heavier than the two raids on London.

As there was an interval of six hours between the two German raids, it is possible that some machines took part in both attacks, thus reducing the number of planes actually employed.

And whereas the R.A.F. was able to carry out a concentrated attack which saturated the defences and devastated yet another German city, the German raids were spread over a wide area and our defences were never stretched.

The R.A.F. completed its night's work by bombing targets in Northern France and laying mines in enemy waters.

From all these diverse operations, in the course of which probably 1,000 planes were used, 52 of our bombers (not 53 as at first announced) are missing.

It was announced last night that ten of the German raiders were destroyed.

Thus the percentage loss of the Germans was double that of the R.A.F.

smoke which had reached a height of many thousands of feet."

Other crews reported seeing the glow of the fires when they were 150 miles on the return journey.

Sergt. L. S. Sumak, a Lancaster mid-upper-gunner from Hamilton, Ontario, who has been on 15 war flights, noticed five fighters in a row heading for the target.

"Fighter flares were being dropped on the way in," he said, "and in the light of these we saw the five fighters in line astern."

"There was one terrific blue and green explosion while we were over the target."

Sergt. R. D. White, a Lancaster rear-gunner, of Harringay, London, said that through a clear patch in the cloud over the middle of the town he saw what seemed to be an oil fire burning in the target area.

"There were two or three fighters in the distance," he added, "but they did not worry us."

"We watched one bomber diving down on Magdeburg with a fighter following it; both disappeared in the cloud."

Thirty Over London: See Page Three.

MANY AIR BATTLES

FIRES WERE VISIBLE FOR 150 MILES

Although the R.A.F.'s raid on Magdeburg was not quite so concentrated as during the previous night's raid on Berlin, nevertheless over 2,000 tons of high explosive and incendiary bombs were dropped in 34 minutes.

The Germans apparently believed that another heavy attack was to be made on the German capital, for they put up every available squadron of the Luftwaffe to break up the large force of Lancasters and Halifaxes sent out.

The battle between the fighters and the bombers began soon after the bombers crossed the enemy coast, and the fighting went on all along the route, and then again on the return journey.

The bombers had the advantage of cloud cover most of the route, and some of the bombers appear to have got through without being spotted by the enemy. Others sighted two or more fighters before they arrived over the target, and several had combats.

"The enemy made a supreme effort last night to stop us," said one experienced squadron commander. "But although they did everything they could to break us up, we arrived over the target dead on time, and when I left there were four big areas of fire merging into one."

Most of the crews agreed that despite all the careful planning by the Luftwaffe, the fighters did not reach Magdeburg until after the attack had started.

P.O. L. A. Coxhill, of Southend, a Lancaster pilot who was one of the first to bomb, found the defences very ill-prepared.

"There were hardly any search-lights," he said, "and the flak seemed very mild after Berlin. We bombed between the flares dropped by the Pathfinders, and did not see any fighters while over the city."

RINGED WITH FLARES

Later arrivals reported that, although some of the fighters had hurried off to defend Berlin against the small force of Lancasters and Mosquitoes sent there to confuse the enemy forces, the fighter packs were up in such strength that several of them reached Magdeburg in time.

Enemy flares kept going down in great numbers.

"They tried to ring the whole town," a pilot said, "so that none of us could get through without being spotted. Even when the attack was over and we were on our way home, the enemy dropped a great many flares on the route."

"They followed us for a good part of the journey."

Three rockets were seen by the pilot of a Halifax—F.O. A. Wimberley, of Forest Side, near Chichester.

"I could not make out from where they had been launched," he said, "they were bright red cylinders—about four feet long, I should think."

"They moved at a great speed, but the three which were fired at us fizzled out before they reached us."

"There were several fighters over the target showing lights. None of them attacked us, and we dropped our bombs and made our way out again. There was a large area of fire with a column of white

2,000 Tons of Bombs Hit Nazi Tank Town

MAGDEBURG, ancient capital of Saxony, and one of the most important cities in Central Germany, on Friday night received a cascade of over 2,000 tons of H.E. and incendiary bombs in a heavy attack made by Bomber Command. Huge fires were left burning.

The onslaught, which was concentrated into 34 minutes, was the first heavy attack on Magdeburg, which has a population of 320,000.

Last night Stockholm Radio, quoting the Svenska Dagbladet, described the damage as terrific and compared the raid with those on Hamburg.

The greatest sugar refinery in Germany was destroyed, said the Radio. Fire brigades were hampered because many of their members had been sent away to reinforce the Berlin firefighters.

Magdeburg lies on the River Elbe, 88 miles south-west of

Berlin, and is the junction of main line railways to Leipzig, Brunswick, Cassel and Hamburg. It also has three harbours for river traffic on the Elbe.

Before the war Magdeburg's main industries were its great ironworks—a branch of the Krupp works, Grusonwerke being there—and its sugar refineries.

Grusonwerke made tanks, and the town was also one of the main centres for aero-engine manufacture. It also had two explosive factories and a synthetic oil plant.

The Air Ministry communique, yesterday, also reported a light attack by Lancasters and Mosquitoes on Berlin, other raids on targets in northern France and mine laying in enemy waters. Fifty-two of our bombers are missing.

10 Planes Lost in Raids Here

Ten were shot down when 90 planes made two raids on S.E. England and the Home Counties on Friday night.

The first raid was before midnight, the second in the early hours of yesterday, and H.E. and incendiary bombs were dropped at a number of places, causing fires and casualties.

Thirty of the raiders came to London, where the A.A. fire was heard at its heaviest, and quickly broke up the formations.

A German military spokesman, quoted by the German Overseas News Agency, yesterday, said that completely new German bomber formations were used.

The Luftwaffe dropped about 90 tons of bombs, says Air Commodore J. A. Chamier.

This was #8 to this place and took place on the night of Jan 27/28, 1944. Take-off was at 1750 hrs and a daylight one with a terrific cross-wind. (pepi-1000) 550 aircraft took part, all Lancasters, including 85 P.F.F. Kites. Once again we took the sea route cutting into the Continent between Leeuwarden and Groningen, then down south of Hannover and turned north-east south of Brunswick and along a line from Stendal. All went well until an enemy aircraft was seen + Mac stuck the nose down and Vic + I were picking up raw Kit for a good 15 mins afterwards. We were supposed to drop a route marker at Stendal but didn't because of time shortage. We ran up to the target on track, doing only one S-turn to port. Berlin came out beautifully on the "if" and we dropped our bombs at 2036.3, .3 of a min late. There were already quite a few waggons down + ours went pretty well in the centre of them. There was very little flap but the city was encircled by fighter flares. Search lights were kept down by '9/10' cloud at about 6-7000 ft. We then went down past Leipzig and from there to Kallberg and so out to the coast. About 50 miles from the sea an ME 110 formed on us and then attacked us from the port but failed to open fire but our P/W gave him a couple of short bursts and that was ^{all} we saw of him. Shortly afterwards we did a detailed 30° P turn for 10 mins. The rest of the trip was easy as "G" worked very well and we cut the usual corners. We were 4th back which was pretty good as we were on the target at zero + 6. All the Kites from here arrived back safely but 34 aircraft were lost altogether including a Halifax raid on Emden. The raid was claimed to be a success and certainly very concentrated.

FUEHRER'S H.Q. IN RUINS

BERLIN'S great Chancellery, symbol of Nazi power, with its 9ft.-thick concrete roof, lies almost in ruins following the R.A.F. 1,000-ton raid in the early hours of yesterday.

The building was three-parts destroyed, according to people who reached Stockholm from Berlin last night.

Hitler is not in Berlin, but rumours are going round the city that many important officials may have been trapped in the debris.

Two fires still burned in the ruins yesterday morning, said one eye-witness who was able to get within 60ft. of the building although the area was cordoned off.

City of Desolation

Tremendous damage in the city is admitted by newspaper correspondents. A Berlin message to *Afton-tidningen*, of Stockholm, describes it as "about the heaviest since the battle of Berlin began."

The city yesterday was a picture of desolation. There was no real fighting against the phosphorus bombs, which caused havoc. In many cases the fire fighting apparatus had been destroyed.

Thousands of people are leaving the city; in fact the Germans are reported to be using every available train to evacuate "non-essentials." Every outgoing train is crowded.

'730 Attackers'

Ordinary internal traffic was paralysed. There were no trams or surface railways. The Underground alone was functioning. The newspapers were printed but not delivered. There were no bread deliveries.

Extensive damage is admitted to "public buildings," says *Afton-tidningen's* correspondent, and the German detector apparatus registered 730 planes attacking the city.

The National Socialist Welfare Committee estimated that 140,000 more Berliners were homeless.

Among the other targets hit was the Tempelhof aerodrome, the main administrative building of which was blazing yesterday afternoon.

Returned airmen have told their story of one of the greatest air battles of all time, fought out in a night sky swarming with enemy fighters, while below, fires started in another 1,000-ton raid 21 hours earlier, still burned angrily.

Fought Gale, Too

It is a story of great triumph for the R.A.F. navigators who battled with a 90-mile-an-hour gale across Germany.

Despite the gale the pathfinders timed the attack—fixed for a quarter to three—so that they arrived over Berlin "on the dot." The bombers had to wrestle with the gale almost the whole way home, and some took an hour and a quarter longer on the journey than on the way out.

This time the great bomber force went almost straight for Berlin still burning from the previous morning's attack. Yet the bombers, all Lancasters, got through to make a swift saturation raid sometimes at the rate of 70 tons a minute.

From as far away as Hanover flare paths guided the fighters to the bomber stream.

One pilot said: "They tried to stop us before we got there. When they failed they tried to break up our

formations as we went in to drop our bombs. On the last few miles we had to fight every inch of the way."

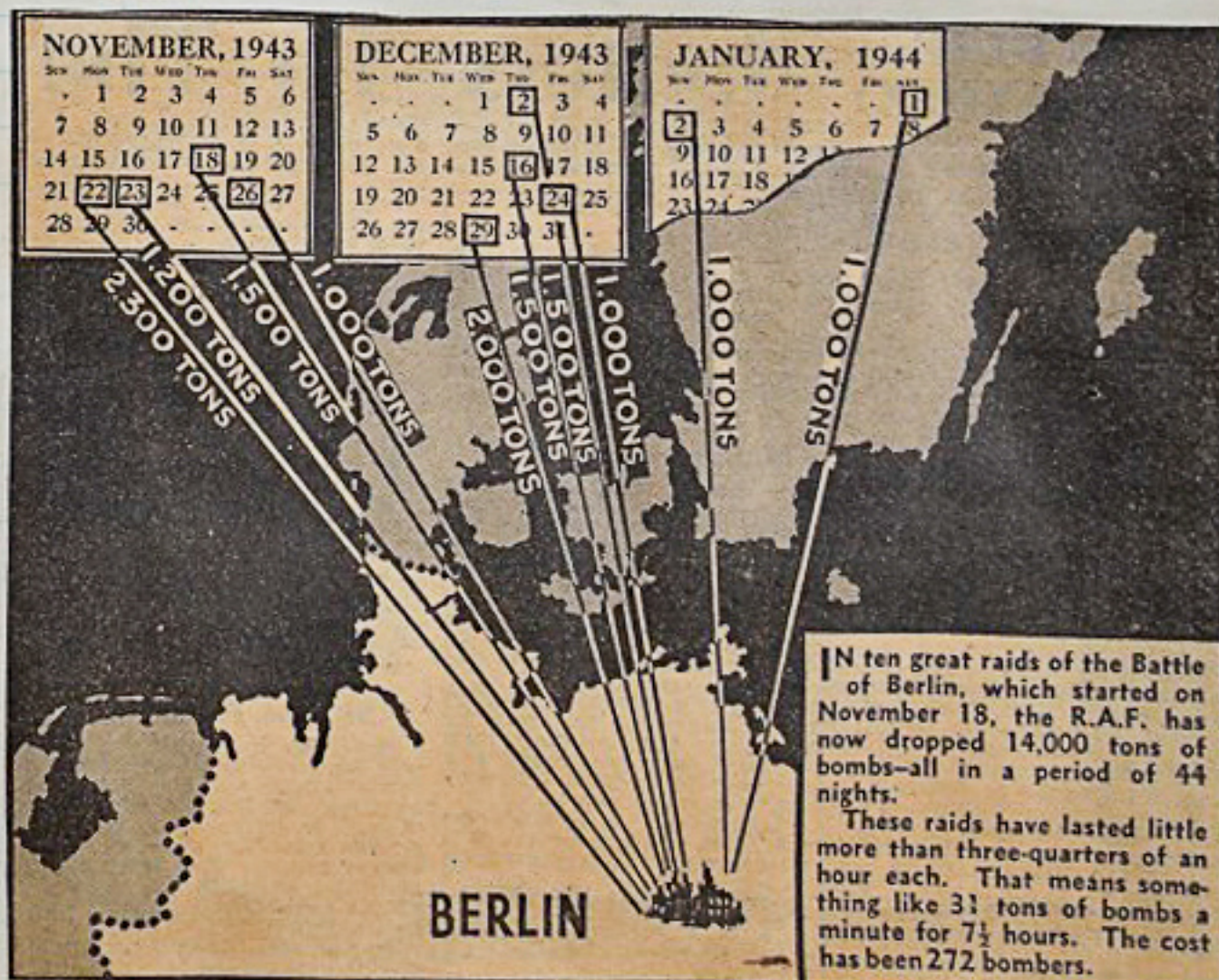
Another pilot said: "We had to shoot our way in by the front door and then shoot our way out again."

The smoke from burning Berlin rose to 15,000 feet, and Flt.-Lt. K. Ames, D.F.C., of Streatham, said the clouds were lit by a vivid red glow from the fires below.

A Mosquito pilot, who made a special reconnaissance over the capital after the attack, said that the fires had then merged into two main concentrations.

Twenty-seven planes are missing from the night's operations.

TAILPIECE.—Berlin radio was off the air again at 12 minutes after midnight. Leipzig was on reduced energy. Vichy and Toulouse also went off. Fighter formations continued the offensive against the French coast yesterday afternoon.



This was our 9th trip to the German capital and took place on the night of Jan 28/29, 1944. 706 took part including 107 PFF kites. Take-off wasn't until 0000 because of a lot of spoofing. Heligoland raided Heligoland and Mosais raided Hannover & dropped windows over Berlin. This trip took us up over Denmark and down past Denmark Rastock. Everything went very well out to sea except that our rear turret went u/s. if worked. Luckily so we got to the Danish coast O.K. We met an awful lot of fighters on the way in, the most we have ever encountered. Also we got a lot of flak near Rastock even though we were on track. We were on as B/B/U. and so on about 10 mins after the raid started. The wargenies already down looked very concentrated and some fell pretty well in the middle of the nest. Over the target the flak was like it used to be when we first went there. On the way out the fighters were very active. Just about 20 miles from there I lost my divider due to a bit of evasive action and I never did find them. The rest of the trip was very quiet and we stayed very close to track. Coming back over the sea was like coming from Stettin and we had the radio ^{on} as soon as 6:30 came. When we reached the coast we came down to about 1500 ft to fly on the clouds. The cloud base was at 700 ft and we came down below it just over base. We were 3rd to land and 12th to take off so wasn't bad. All our kites returned safely but there were 3 turn backs because of icing. Altogether 43 were lost. The raid was considered very much a success according to all reports.

New Berlin Targets An Arc Of Fire

NEW targets are being shattered in Berlin now that the RAF has blown out the centre of the capital.

Travellers reaching Stockholm last night said that Thursday night's raid by the RAF spread great arcs of fire and ruin around the capital.

Flames swept the bomb-wrecked industrial suburb of Moabit in the north-east, through Spandau, Neu-Köln, Tempelhof, Lichtenberg, Erkner, Koepenick, Treppau, Friesenau in the east, round to Marienfelde and Charlottenwerke-Siemensstadt in the south.

One eye-witness said: "The day that your bombers can do to other German industrial towns what they have done to Berlin, Germany will be out of the war. I am convinced of that."

Another eye-witness said:

"Great damage was done to surrounding property when a direct hit caused a terrific explosion in the Spandau munition works.

"A land-mine landed right on the Tempelhof radio works, which are some distance from the aerodrome. So great was the blast that all windows in the aerodrome buildings were smashed."

Couldn't Believe It

This traveller, who passed through Siemensstadt, said he saw the remainder of wrecked factories on each side of the road.

"At Erkner, tramway cars were blown off the lines on to the pavement. Sewers, water, electricity and gas mains were gaping open.

"I could not believe that the ruins I saw were those of the same town I had seen an hour before. It was so terrible that I have not been able to eat since.

"Worse than the damaged factories and houses was the stream of bombed-out people plodding wearily along the roads, and the rescue workers and ambulances carrying away the dead.

"Fires in the outer districts were started by explosives. The flames created currents, the draught from which blew through the streets, fanning smaller fires into bigger ones."

M and Z

A third traveller said: "The raid was ghostly.

"It was cloudy; first came Mosquitoes dropping flares. Then came the heavy bombers, but they were so high up I could only faintly hear the sound of the motors."

The Berlin correspondent of the Stockholm newspaper "Allehanda" reports that raids have effaced away many of Berlin's visitors, including P. G. Wodehouse, frequently seen in the streets after his return from Paris.

A Canadian gunner returning from the raid said the flak shells over Berlin seemed to form the letters M and Z. "They appeared to be grouped to catch you whichever way you turned."

Wing Commander Charles Bray writes:—

The Battle of Berlin is half over. Since it began on November 18, over 18,000 tons of bombs have been dropped on the city.

The attack on Thursday night by the biggest ever force of Lancasters yet sent out was the 12th major raid. We have lost a total of 343 planes.

It has been estimated that it would take 25,000 tons of bombs on Berlin to win the battle.

75 Tons A Minute

This battle, the greatest Bomber Command has yet undertaken, is being increased in intensity. On Thursday more than 1,500 tons were dropped in 20 minutes—over 75 tons every minute.

The 34 planes we lost were probably due to night fighters and to weather conditions. Icing is still a menace to our bombers.

Dr. Robert Ley, Germany's Labour Front leader, told the leaders of blitzed provinces yesterday: "Our housing problem, due to terror raids, is acute. People must build for themselves makeshift homes."



This was our 10th trip to this place & I wish it was our last. It took place on the night of Jan 30/31, 1944, about 440 aircraft taking part. Take-off was 1730 hrs so it was daylight when we crossed the coast between Cromer and Harbouro. Our route took us almost the same as the last trip, at least on the way in. The trip out was fairly quiet and going over Denmark & other lands. flew real close to us in fact it was such bright moonlight an awful lot of kites could be seen. We dropped route markers on Lake Druity and did a timed run to the target. Berlin was covered with fighter flares, the most we have ever seen. So between those flares and the moon it was just like daylight and there were bags of fighters. Going out of the target Cag gave evasive action for a "fighter" which turned out to be a plane which dived under us. Just then saw "cockie" which had hung up, went crashing thru the bomb doors with a thud. The moon was still up on the way home and our route took us south of Magdeburg, Hanover and up past Osnabruck and along "the old tram lines" and so across the quinden Zee and home. It was tricky business on that route as it's hot for fighters and the dirty old moon didn't help matters. Once again we did some cloud flying when over the English Coast. We were 11th to take-off and 6th back. This was a bad night for our Squadron with 3 crews missing and one shot up. Missing are P/O Roberts navigator Stewart Guiton (Stew). P/O Bonikawsky and his navigator was P/O "Ardy" Labuge O.F.C. + P/O Shabelton + crew. P/O Bider crash landed at Oakington and 3 of his crew are in hospital but not in too bad shape altogether 33 aircraft are missing from a raid that was more than a bit nerve-wracking.

Berlin's Worst Night

GREAT AERODROME KNOCKED OUT

HITLER last night staged a reprisal raid on London after Allied bombers had given the Reich its biggest day and night bombing of the war. Berlin was hit on Friday and Americans staged their heaviest day raid on Frankfurt yesterday.

A tremendous barrage greeted the German aircraft as they came over the capital. Compared with our blows on Berlin, the enemy's raid was insignificant. Heaviest-ever bomb-load on the Reich within 24 hours was dropped between Friday night and last night.

THE STOCKHOLM AFTONBLADET LAST NIGHT RECEIVED THIS MESSAGE FROM ITS BERLIN CORRESPONDENT: "WE HAVE ALL BEEN THROUGH ONE OF THE MOST TERRIBLE NIGHTS SINCE THE BRITISH ANNIHILATION RAIDS AGAINST BERLIN BEGAN.

"The whole extent of the terrible drama can only be realised by those who saw it and felt the ground shaking under the terrible power of land mines, or those who tried to make their way through a rain of sparks and flames."

Travellers arriving from Berlin report that Berlin's factory belt has been reduced to a mile-long heap of rubble and every branch of the German capital's war industry has been crippled, says Reuter's Stockholm correspondent. The great Tempelhof aerodrome is believed to have been knocked out.

800 WENT OUT

Never before in the history of air bombardment has a target area been devastated in daylight as was Frankfurt yesterday. Eight hundred U.S. planes took part in the raid on this great industrial centre in south-west Germany.

In this assault and that on Berlin, well over 2,000 Allied planes must have been dispatched from Britain.

PATHFINDERS FIRST

First official reports of yesterday's massive onslaught say that the heavy bombers blasted industrial installations in Frankfurt and that medium bombers attacked military objectives in Northern France.

No figures of losses or of enemy planes destroyed are given in these preliminary announcements.

Previous biggest force sent out by the Americans was officially put at "over 700."

Crews who took part in Friday night's attack on Berlin were unanimous that the raid

was one of the most successful since the present battle opened (says Air Ministry News Service).

The target area had been clearly marked out by sky markers, and by target indicators dropped by pathfinders.

When the main force arrived they could see through gaps in the cloud some of the pathfinder flares burning on the ground.

One pilot said: "As we were leaving Berlin there was one particularly big explosion and a fierce white flare lit up the sky. It was followed by two or three smaller explosions. The fires were burning strongly and we could see the glow in the sky 150 miles away."

It has been estimated that 50,000 tons of bombs would be needed to paralyse the Reich capital as Hamburg was knocked out. In under seven hours' actual bombing since the all-out Battle of Berlin began, well over 20,000 tons have been hurled down.

From the many hundreds of bombers sent out early yesterday, 47 are missing.

The Germans massed at least 100 fighters over Berlin itself, as well as other packs on route, in an unsuccessful "counter-attack." Towards the end of the assault they were the capital's only defence.

Medium bomber-fighter hammering of the cross-C "secret weapon" coast during the day.

This wasn't quite a Big City trip but it was a spoof for it. This Frankfurt is about 25 miles east of Berlin. It took place on the night of Feb 15/16, 1944. This is the biggest raid we have been on with 859 aircraft, all heavies, taking part. Take off was at 1707 and we had about 14 mins. climbing time. It was daylight well out to sea and we could see a lot of kites in the stream. We carried Mk. III H2S and we had seen new kites, both for the first time on ops. We never did see the Danish coast and we were well past the route markers when they went down. We couldn't get any joy out of "Y" and we got off track pretty bad. Vic worked like a slave at his set but never got a fix until just short of the target, from which I did a timed run. We could see the raid on Berlin getting on and it opened slightly early.

Eddie (S/C) had to do the bombing as the "Y" was absolutely useless. We passed by Berlin on the way home and the raid on it looked lonely and concentrated. Our target was a lulu, no flak, no S/C's and no fighter flares which is what we really love. The only flak we got was near Bremen + Emden on the way home. We got the enemy coast on the "Y" but not very clear. We stayed high till quite near our own coast. We were about turn 7 and while circling we had fun playing with the Sandra lights.

All from this squadron returned safely and only one kite was shot up at all. 18 kites were lost from this group and 45 lost altogether. We chalk it up as an easy trip but a very poor one navigationaly.

BERLIN'S WEST END WIPED OUT

'All Capital Seemed To Be Burning'

From WALLACE KING, "Daily Herald" Reporter.

STOCKHOLM, Wednesday

WHAT was left of Berlin's West End was wiped out by last night's record R A F raid.

A passenger who arrived on the plane from Berlin to-night told me this. This man has been in most of the Blitzes on the capital. It was easily the most severe raid.

About 20 per cent. of Berlin is utterly destroyed, he said. Of the rest, probably less than 10 per cent. is totally undamaged.

A Swedish opera singer who travelled on the plane told me that she saw the raid—and heard it—from a suburb a few miles from Berlin.

"It seemed as if all Berlin was ablaze. The sky was full of planes, searchlights and flak," she said.

"New fires flared up everywhere. When I travelled through the capital this morning I saw buildings burning everywhere.

"Fires were particularly bad at Schoenberg, the hardest hit of the suburbs. It was terrible."

All-Day Rescue Work

Other eye-witnesses speak of planes coming in from the north and west. All say that there seemed to be a constant procession by an overwhelming number of planes from 8.45 p.m. till 9.30 p.m. when the last bombs fell.

The defences and the A.R.P. services were overwhelmed.

The temporary Swedish Legation building was set on fire early in the raid, and could not be dealt with for a very long time.

To-day all Berliners were engaged in fighting the flames and digging for people buried in shelters and cellars under collapsed houses.

Gaping Craters

When the passengers left for the airport after lunch-time to-day—but there was no lunch for most Berliners to-day—most of the rescue workers were carrying on at full pressure.

The plane left the Tempelhof more or less on time, but with considerable difficulty, since old, filled-in craters were bordered by new gaping bomb-holes.

"Street traffic was almost at a standstill," one passenger said.

"The suburban electric railway, as well as the underground and the elevated railways, ran on some sections—sometimes."

Hitler's Reich Chancellery, already damaged, was again hit.

80 TONS EVERY MINUTE HIT BERLIN FOR HALF AN HOUR

EVERY minute between 9.15 and 9.45 on Tuesday night over 80 tons of bombs fell on Berlin in the greatest attack ever made in air warfare on a single objective.

A total of well over 2,500 tons—nearly six times the biggest tonnage dropped on London in a single night—rocked the German capital.

More than 1,000 bombers were over Germany during the night, the great majority, four-engined Lancasters and Halifaxes, concentrating on Berlin.

While they were hammering the city, starting great fires that were still burning last night, other Lancasters were making a feint attack on Frankfurt-on-Oder and Mosquitoes were bombing targets in Western Germany.

Goebbels cuts raid reports

From Our Special Correspondent

STOCKHOLM, Wednesday.

LAST night's tremendous blitz on Berlin has produced no detailed reports from Swedish correspondents in the German capital.

It is suggested here that censorship has been made even more strict and that probably there is so much confusion in the city that telephone communication has been temporarily limited to urgent or State calls.

★

The Berlin correspondent of the Stockholm "Aftonbladet" was given a ration of three minutes telephone time this morning in which he stated that the temporary buildings housing the Swedish Legation and the Swedish Church were damaged.

Nothing else so far has been allowed to reach the outside world, although a Swedish diplomat is reported to have said that practically nothing is left of Western Berlin after the raid, which was the worst Berlin has suffered.

43 MISSING

It was the first all-operational 1,000 bomber assault ever launched. No crews were drawn from training stations, as they were in 1942 when Cologne, Bremen and Duesseldorf were pounded by a thousand planes.

And in this four-figure attack the bomb tonnage was nearly twice as big as those of two years ago.

From this great night air armada 43 planes are missing. The first official figure of losses was 45; but last night it was known that two more aircraft had reached their bases.

More than an hour after the main attack Mosquitoes were over Berlin and their crews reported an enormous pall of black smoke over the city, rising to 20,000ft.

PEAR-SHAPED GLOW

Under the smoke and a thick layer of cloud a great pear-shaped glow of fire stretched across the target.

Flak was so violent when the first sky-marker bombs were dropped that it was evident the main enemy night fighter force was late.

Scattered fighter flares later began to appear, but even in the last stages of the attack many crews bombed without opposition from fighters, some of which may have been grounded by the weather.

Here are facts and figures about the organisation of Tuesday night's great air offensive:

4,000 GROUND STAFF

It took 4,000 men five hours to get the bombs into the 1,000 aircraft.

About 7,000 flying personnel were briefed.

Fifty men were working on the ground for each bomber that took off.

Over 1,000,000 gallons of petrol, thousands of gallons of oil and a great volume of fluid needed for under-carriages, de-icing systems and various pumps were used.

About 750,000 rounds of ammunition were stowed aboard the bombers after being packed in belts.

"Herald" Air Correspondent BRITAIN'S new giant bomber, the four-engined Halifax III, was in action in the latest Berlin Blitz.

It was the heaviest raid yet on any objective in aerial warfare.

The new Halifax is faster and carries a greater bomb-load than the original. Greatly-improved Lancasters, which now have a far greater bomb capacity, were also used.

The weight of the attack was equal to throwing six to eight divisions into a land battle.

But with these differences, the damage inflicted was infinitely greater. The loss in men and armour—taking planes as tanks—was many times smaller.

4 Per Cent. Loss

In just over half an hour, 2,500 tons of bombs hit Berlin at the rate of 80 tons of bombs a minute on Tuesday night.

More than 1,000 aircraft flew over Germany. The vast majority went to Berlin. On Frankfurt-on-Oder, 60 miles to the east, a few made a feint attack.

We lost 43 aircraft; roughly 4 per cent.

Losses in air crew were correspondingly low. About 7,000 were briefed. The casualties could not have been more than 350.

The raid was a magnificent feat of organisation.

Including all ancillary personnel, probably more than 100,000 were engaged.

Smoke 20,000 Ft.

It took roughly 4,000 men to get the bombs into the 1,000 aircraft, and the work took over five hours.

Fifty men were working on the ground for each bomber that got into the air. We used well over 1,000,000 gallons of petrol.

Pilots returning from the raid said:

An enormous pall of smoke covered the whole of the city. It rose 20,000 feet high.

Defences swamped by the weight of the attack. Little enemy fighter opposition. Flak, fierce at first, weakened and died away.

This was our 3rd attempt at pranging this place and was a real battle. It took place on the night of Feb. 19/20, 1944 and nearly 800 aircraft took part. It was a late take-off, 0010 hrs and we had to climb up thru' cloud shortly after airborne and we had a nice bit of icing. The winds were much lighter than expected and we had to waste 30 mins before the enemy coast. Our "if" worked lovely so we had no trouble getting over the coast on track. The fighters started just over the coast & kept up fighting all the way in. Between Hannover & Stendal we had to waste 18 more mins. and the kites were going down around us like flies. We stoddged around the T.D.'s at Stendal and got on track by fires from the lake & Brandenburg. We went to do a little time wasting on our last turning point when fighter planes went down all around us so we had to move pretty fast. Our run in was spoiled by trying to waste time so we didn't drop any T.D.'s. The target itself was not hot and there was 10/10 cloud so it was a Wagoner raid. We bombed a minute early at 0357.0. The trip home was quite good as "if" worked lovely and we were never more than a mile off track at any time. We saw a couple of kites go down in flames over the Dutch coast which shook us a bit. The rest of the trip was dazy enough and we were first to arrive at base. No kites were lost from this squadron but altogether 19 kites were lost. The raid was pretty good according to all reports and fairly concentrated but the losses were terrific. We didn't get a photo because of the clouds.

BERLIN IS NOW 'HAMBURGED'

Double the Bomb-Load

By Daily Mail Air Reporter

AFTER the R.A.F. had dropped another heavy load of bombs on Berlin in 25 minutes on Sunday night in the third major raid on the capital in four nights the city had received, in 14 obliteration attacks in ten weeks, almost exactly double the tonnage needed to destroy Hamburg.

Destruction of the once-great German port is a valuable yardstick with which to measure the probable effects of Bomber Command's sustained bombing of Berlin.

Hamburg, Germany's second largest city, measured 160 square miles. It took 11,000 tons of bombs last summer to wipe it off the war map.

Berlin, measuring 341 square miles, is rather more than twice the size. And up to last night Bomber Command had sent 22,000 tons crashing on the German capital since November 18.

Three-quarters of all Hamburg's buildings were flattened or burnt out. There are several reasons, however, why it would be unwise to assume that the same fate has already befallen Berlin, double the size of Hamburg, simply because it has received double the bomb tonnage.

Surprise Factor

Berlin, lying many hundreds of miles inside Germany, is much more than twice as difficult a target as Hamburg, in attacking which the R.A.F. was able to introduce an element of surprise because it fringes the North Sea.

Another factor to be considered is that in raiding Berlin there is greater chance of wasting bombs on districts already flattened.

Hamburg was smashed—in four big R.A.F. raids and two smaller American attacks in daylight—for the loss of 103 bombers out of some 2,700 thrown into the battle. Its reduction, according to official figures, cost £6,250,000 in equipment lost and the loss of 1,000 flyers killed or captured.

In the Battle of Berlin, waged alone by the R.A.F., about 400 heavy bombers and 2,800 men have already been lost.

It is impossible to give an exact figure, because losses announced by the Air Ministry for the nights of the 14 big Berlin attacks included aircraft missing from diversionary raids.

8,000 Tons

For this expenditure it can reasonably be assumed that Berlin is half destroyed. One of the bases for this calculation is the fact that after the first 9,000 tons of bombs had been unloaded on the capital in the great battle, 17 out of every 100 buildings had been destroyed definitely, and one in every four probably destroyed.

Sunday night's Berlin raid brought the total bomb tonnage showered on Germany in 72 hours of day and night blitz to about 8,000—an average of 1,600 tons for each of three R.A.F. night raids on Berlin and two day raids by U.S. bombers—the first on Frankfurt, and the other on Brunswick and Hanover.

Ministries Leave Blazing Berlin

Reports are current in London that as a result of the bombing of Berlin all the principal departments of the German Government have been evacuated to Breslau, writes the Daily Mail Diplomatic Correspondent.

From WALTER FARR

Stockholm, Monday.

BERLIN has been burning continuously for four days and nights. Latest word from the doomed capital is that last night's R.A.F. raid started dozens of new fires in the densest industrial areas of all Germany.

Phone Line to Berlin Cut Again

Daily Mail Special Correspondent

Stockholm, Monday Night.

TELEPHONE communication between Sweden and Berlin was cut again to-night.

Soon after black-out German medium-wave radio stations reduced power.

At 10 p.m. both German News Agency long-wave transmitters went off the air.

Earlier in the evening there had been a delay of at least six hours in telephone calls from Stockholm to Berlin and to Zurich and Budapest via Berlin. Only one of the three lines from Stockholm to Berlin was open.

There is also unprecedented dislocation of air traffic in and out of Germany and all over the Reich and occupied countries. No planes have left Berlin or been able to land there since Friday.

On Saturday planes from neutral countries tried to land there but were turned back. Yesterday all plane services were cancelled, and to-night I was officially informed that no planes could fly to or leave Berlin throughout the day and the services have now been cancelled for "an indefinite time."

They Blame Fog

First stoppage was because of serious damage to the Tempelhof airport. But normally such damage can be quickly repaired and the aerodrome can function within a few hours of bombs hitting runways and administration buildings.

The prolonged dislocation of air traffic indicates damage far more serious than before. And the cutting of plane and phone services has isolated the city for a record period.

Germans say that the reason for airways cancellations is foggy weather, but give no explanation for the telephone silence.

A large area is without water, following the bombing of Berlin's waterworks, according to one report.

Hundreds of members of the National Socialist Party and the German Labour Front who had

planned a parade through the capital yesterday, celebrating the 11th anniversary of the Nazi seizure of power, had to cancel the parade and help to clear the bomb damage.

Revised figures put the death toll in the city's last two raids at 18,000, and 4,600 in Frankfurt.

Many factories which were not hit were not working to-day because the workers had either been killed, wounded—or refused to go to work.

Stricter orders have been issued, threatening death to workers who run away from their jobs.

All reports say that the continuous raids of the last five days have brought a considerable lowering of morale in the Reich, and the authorities in Berlin are admitting that they are able to retain control of what is left of the civilian population only "with great difficulty."

At Brunswick, Duisburg, and Frankfurt enormous raid damage and casualties are reported.

The oldest part of Frankfurt has been totally destroyed. Hundreds of time bombs and land mines are delaying the clearing of wreckage.

The raid came so suddenly at noon that a party of Nazi officials had not time to get down to shelter; all were killed in the street.

Footnote.—On the German radio last night Dr. Scharpin, one of Goebbels' principal spokesmen, said: "No terror must break our hopes for post-war reconstruction. We must master difficulties which seem unbearable. In previous wars it was customary that half of the population of towns perished during a siege."

At one time in Southern and Central Berlin there were between 50 and 60 great tongues of flame ranged in an arc 15 miles long.

Though scores of fire brigades were rushed from neighbouring towns to reinforce Berlin's men, most of these fires raged beyond control.

Hundreds of surrounding buildings had to be blown up to stop the spread of flames.

Many fire-fighters collapsed at their posts, exhausted. Early to-day troops were sent to reinforce their ranks.

One of Berlin's central telephone buildings, built deep underground, was hit, and this dislocated telephones over a wide area of the Reich and abroad.

Telephones between Germany and Sweden, Switzerland, Hungary, Denmark, France, Spain, and Holland were cut off from eight o'clock last night until ten o'clock this morning.

This was our first trip here and took place on the night of Dec 20/21 1944 take off at 0035 hrs. Nearly 700 aircraft took part in this raid. We were on as BBU, using our Mk III "Y" so were about 11th to take-off. Once again we had to climb thru' cloud shortly after take-off but it wasn't very thick. Our route took us down heading - Beachy Hd. way. Our "Y" packed in shortly after heading and our "Y" absolutely refused to work. We used flak bearings & radio to go down on and it worked pretty well. Once again we were ahead of time and had to waste time so we just kept on the track we were keeping for a few minutes. When the red route markers went down and we made for them to do a timed run. However like a miracle our "Y" gave us a good picture of Lake Constance so we homed to the turning point and started to do a timed run, and in a few seconds our picture disappeared again.

Eddie did the bombing as we retained our T.E.'s and we bombed on time at 0403.1 It was quite clear our the target, about 3/10, but there were no S/L's and very little flak. It was very concentrated and both Eddie & Vic saw the ruin on our starboard as we ran out. The rest of the trip was quite easy as we didn't see any fighters flares or run into any flak areas. We ran a bit north of track on the way out but we stayed there as it was much safer that way. Gordie changed the alternator on the "Y" so it worked all the way home. We were 11th to take off and 2nd to land. Only 10 kites were lost from this raid and none from this squadron. We got a picture of fire tracks and only one saw get any ground detail at all.

LEIPZIG HAMMERED TWICE IN A DAY

TARGET
OF RAF

By COLIN BEDNALL, Air Correspondent

LEIPZIG, bombed and burned by a 2,300-ton R.A.F. raid in darkness on Sunday morning, was hammered again yesterday in the greatest and most hazardous daylight operation ever undertaken. Two thousand aircraft took part.

The largest force of heavy bombers ever employed on a day operation launched the attack, a U.S. Army communiqué announced last night.

They were escorted by American, R.A.F., and Dominion fighters.

Fighters destroyed 61 enemy aircraft. Twenty-two American bombers are missing. One Allied fighter was destroyed and three others are missing.

The number of enemy aircraft shot down by the bombers has not yet been determined.

The assault was directed against fighter aircraft assembly plants and air-frame factories in Germany.

It was so successful that Major-General H. H. Arnold, Chief of the U.S. Army Air Force, announced in Washington last night that 25 per cent. of all Germany's fighter plane production had been knocked out. That estimate was a conservative one.

He said that this, the biggest united air mission in history, had employed more than an infantry division—15,000 men.

In Leipzig, main target of the attack, at least 20 major air-frame and aero-engine firms had become a vital source of the Luftwaffe's present power.

Other towns attacked were Brunswick, Gotha, Bernberg, Tutow, and Oscherleben. Each is a centre for fighter assembly plants.

Flying Fortress crews, many of them unaware that the R.A.F. had heavily attacked Leipzig on Sunday morning, thought that the smoke rising from the burning city was a defence screen.

At one stage in the great night attack the smoke pillars rose to a height of 22,000ft.

R.A.F. Bomber Command suffered its heaviest losses of the war. 79 aircraft are missing.

The German defences, staggered by the weight of the R.A.F. attack, were able to offer only comparatively light opposition to the great day force of Fortresses and Liberators.

This vital round-the-clock assault had been carefully planned beforehand.

Marauder bombers of the U.S. 9th Air Force which struck at targets in Holland yesterday morning took along their usual heavy escort of Allied fighters, but did not sight a single enemy aircraft throughout their journey.

Crews who took part in this mission have described it as being "as uneventful as a Sunday ride."



MAP shows the relation of Leipzig—target both of the great R.A.F. night raid and the American day raid—to England.

A THIRD DESTROYED

Leipzig had not been attacked previously since the night of December 3, when in one of the most successful Pathfinder attacks of the war nearly 30 per cent. of the built-up area of the city was destroyed.

I accompanied the R.A.F. Bomber Force on that occasion, and from my experience then it is possible to give an indication of the very treacherous nature of the defences which the attacking force had to penetrate on Saturday night.

The bombers are exposed to interception by the main German fighter forces for several hours on end. While outwitting these, they must fly a tortuous course around many vast belts of anti-aircraft guns and searchlights.

Delicate timing and perfect navigation are necessary to avoid straying into these belts. They can easily be upset by prolonged fighter combat or by unexpected weather conditions, such as unfavourable winds.

THE WIND

Neither the immensity nor the ferocity of the Battle of Germany has ever been fully appreciated. The margin of superiority which enables our bombers to smash their objectives in Germany is not yet so great that it cannot occasionally be upset by difficult circumstances.

It is clear from official accounts of Saturday night's attack that our bombers met an unexpectedly strong tail wind on their way to Germany.

This would have thrown them off their intricate schedule and resulted in the force crossing Germany not in one compact mass as usual, but strung out somewhat thinly.

The bombers were therefore much more exposed to fighter interception.

A very great number of aircraft were engaged in the attack, and although unusually high, the losses were not any greater proportionately than when 58 aircraft failed to return from a Berlin assault in August last year.

NEARLY 1,000 AIRCRAFT IN NIGHT ACTION

From Our Aeronautical Correspondent

Sending out almost 1,000 aircraft for the second time in less than a week, the R.A.F. dropped more than 2,300 tons of bombs on Leipzig, their principal objective, in the early hours of yesterday morning. Smaller raids were made on Berlin, several places in western Germany, Holland, and northern France, and there was extensive minelaying.

Saturday night's activities exacted the heaviest toll the R.A.F. has yet suffered in a single night. Seventy-nine aircraft are missing, which is 21 more than the previous highest—58 from the attack on Berlin on the night of August 23 last. The force sent to Leipzig was, however, very much bigger, and the percentage of loss was no higher. Though it would be foolish to minimize the seriousness of the heavy loss, the explanation is to be found not only in the great force sent out but also in the severe icing conditions encountered and the deep penetration of the enemy's defensive belt which an attack on Leipzig entailed. It lies 600 miles from London and cannot be reached except after a long flight over strongly defended territory.

There is nothing to suggest that the enemy used any new defensive weapon. He relied mainly on packs of night fighters which dropped great numbers of flares and there were very many combats. The clear sky above the cloud bank helped the defenders to locate the bombers.

This was the third heavy attack on Leipzig, which is the fifth biggest city in the Reich and an important war industries and communications centre. The World Fair buildings there had been adapted for aircraft production and the city contains a number of other aircraft and aero-engine factories, as well as heavy engineering, armament, textile, and synthetic oil plants. In the last attack on Leipzig, on the night of December 3, when 1,500 tons of bombs were dropped, the World Fair buildings were largely destroyed.

THICK ICY CLOUDS

The latest attack started a minute before 4 a.m. yesterday and was carried out by hundreds of Lancasters and Halifaxes. Thick, icy clouds and variable winds made timing extremely difficult, so that some bombers arrived before zero hour. Once the pathfinders' markers had gone down, the attack developed swiftly. When the last bombs had been dropped smoke was rising to a height of 22,000ft. and bright fires glowed through the clouds. More than one explosion was seen through the clouds.

A Dornier 217 was shot down by an Australian rear gunner and a Junkers 88 crashed in flames after colliding with a Lancaster, which got back to base although severely damaged.

The Air Ministry report said:—

On Saturday night aircraft of Bomber Command were out in very great strength. Over 2,300 tons of high explosives and incendiary bombs were dropped on Leipzig, where the glow of very large fires was seen through cloud.

Mosquitoes attacked Berlin, and objectives in western Germany, Holland, and northern France were also bombed.

Many mines were laid in enemy waters. Seventy-nine of our aircraft are missing.

This op took place on the night of Dec 24/25, 1944 and was done on a new system. In the afternoon the Yanks had bombed it quite heavily and at night we went in in 2 waves. Each wave was above 350 kts each. Take-off was about 1500 hrs for the first wave and about 2000 hrs for our wave. As usual we had no "if" so stoodged on with astro + flak bearings. When crossing the fighter belt nearly 200 miles away, we could see the first wave start their raid and we never really lost sight of the target till we reached it. Near Stuttgart Vic got in the nose and pin-pointed rivers right up to the target. When we got there at 0103.5 the whole town was ablaze and was really a sight. The opposition for us was practically nil as the first wave had taken the beating. After leaving the target I had a good look out and it was truly worth seeing. The ground was a mass of flame and smoke with V's cascading and others burning on the ground. Vic continued to pin-point on rivers until the snow disappeared and it was impossible then. When returning we could see fires burning 250 miles away. The trip home was very quiet and uneventful so Vic + I had a good rest. When we hit the coast we were about 3 miles north of track. From our wave we didn't lose any kts but Sp Christon - nav, Sp Sharity + F/O Jackson - nav Sp Ladford were missing from the 2nd wave. Altogether 36 bombers were missing which shook us as we thought the losses would be small. Our picture was $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the aiming point which was the closest of the lot on the squadron. We were first to land again to - night.

GREAT FIRES STARTED IN STUTTGART

2,000 TONS DROPPED BY THE R.A.F.

In its second heavy attack in two nights and the third of the four great allied air assaults since early on Sunday morning the R.A.F., operating in great strength, dropped about 2,000 tons of bombs on Stuttgart in the early hours of yesterday morning.

The attack was made by a force not very much smaller than that which went to Leipzig on Saturday night. The night's work, which included Mosquito raids on Munich and other objectives and extensive minelaying, cost the R.A.F. 10 machines.

After the loss of 79 bombers in the attack on Leipzig this sharp drop in the casualty rate emphasizes the wisdom of taking a long view of losses which have always shown a tendency to fluctuate according, among other factors, to the weather and the type and distance of the target.

There was some improvement in the weather on Sunday night and the bombers suffered much less interference from fighters than on the previous night. Whereas the force that went to Leipzig was harassed all the way to the target, many crews bound for Stuttgart reported reaching their objective without seeing a single fighter.

STRAIN ON LUFTWAFFE

An experienced pilot who went to Stuttgart expressed the view that the *Luftwaffe* was feeling the strain of meeting successive heavy day and night attacks on Germany. This has been apparent for some time. The *Luftwaffe* has long ceased to reserve special types for night work, and is obliged to use its machines—and probably its men too—for day and night interception.

Stuttgart, one of the most important industrial centres in Germany, also has connexions with the aircraft industry. The firm of Bosch has a factory there making aircraft components and electrical equipment. Other factories make aero engines, submarine engines, fuel injection pumps, magnetos, and sparking plugs.

As the force of Lancasters and Halifaxes neared the target a little after 4 a.m. cloud which had lined the route began to break up, and through the gaps the crews could see Stuttgart. Some flares dropped by enemy fighters were seen after the attack had started, but the defence had to rely on its anti-aircraft barrage. One Lancaster pilot who has made 10 flights to Berlin described the *Flak* as the heaviest for weeks.

The pathfinders did their work well, and there were many fires when the attack had been in progress only a few minutes. Before it ended the cloud had thinned considerably, and crews were able to see the result of their work. The industrial area was "ploughed with deep red furrows of flame."

The Air Ministry report was:—

Aircraft of Bomber Command were out in great strength with the important industrial city of Stuttgart as the main objective. Cloud over the target began to clear towards the end of the attack, and crews report seeing intense fires burning among factories in the city.

Mosquitoes bombed Munich and objectives in enemy-occupied territory. Many mines were laid in enemy waters. Ten of our aircraft are missing.

KING AND QUEEN VISIT PATHFINDERS

The King and Queen heard yesterday first-hand stories of raids on Berlin and other German targets from the pilots and crews who lead the attacks.

Their Majesties visited three Pathfinder stations of R.A.F. Bomber Command and a United States Eighth Army Air Force airfield.

Air Vice-Marshal D. C. Bennett, A.O.C. Pathfinders, a Queenslander, who at 34 is the youngest air vice-marshal, led their Majesties round the Pathfinder stations and introduced many officers and crews.

At the first station the King and Queen met pilots and air crews of a squadron which has marked targets on all the successful big-scale R.A.F. attacks in the past 14 months.

A young flight-sergeant of the R.A.A.F., from Canberra, was the first to be introduced to the Royal visitors. He told them that he had four other Australians in his crew and had helped to lead our forces in the last two raids on Berlin.

At each station most of the airmen wore decorations. Two tall wing commanders, one an Englishman, the other a Canadian, have each made over 60 operational trips. One has the D.S.O. and D.F.C., the other the D.S.O., D.F.C. and bar.

AN R.C.A.F. STATION

Another station visited is entirely manned by the R.C.A.F., and Air Vice-Marshal Anderson (Deputy A.O.C.-in-C., R.C.A.F., Overseas) met the King and Queen there.

Among the officers under him is a young American captain from Memphis who joined the Canadian Air Force, was transferred to the United States Army Air Corps when America joined the war, and has since received special permission to continue serving with the R.C.A.F. as a Pathfinder.

The King and Queen had a long talk with a Norwegian major who fought his way out of Norway with the British forces in 1940. He told them that he had carried out 36 Pathfinder operations.

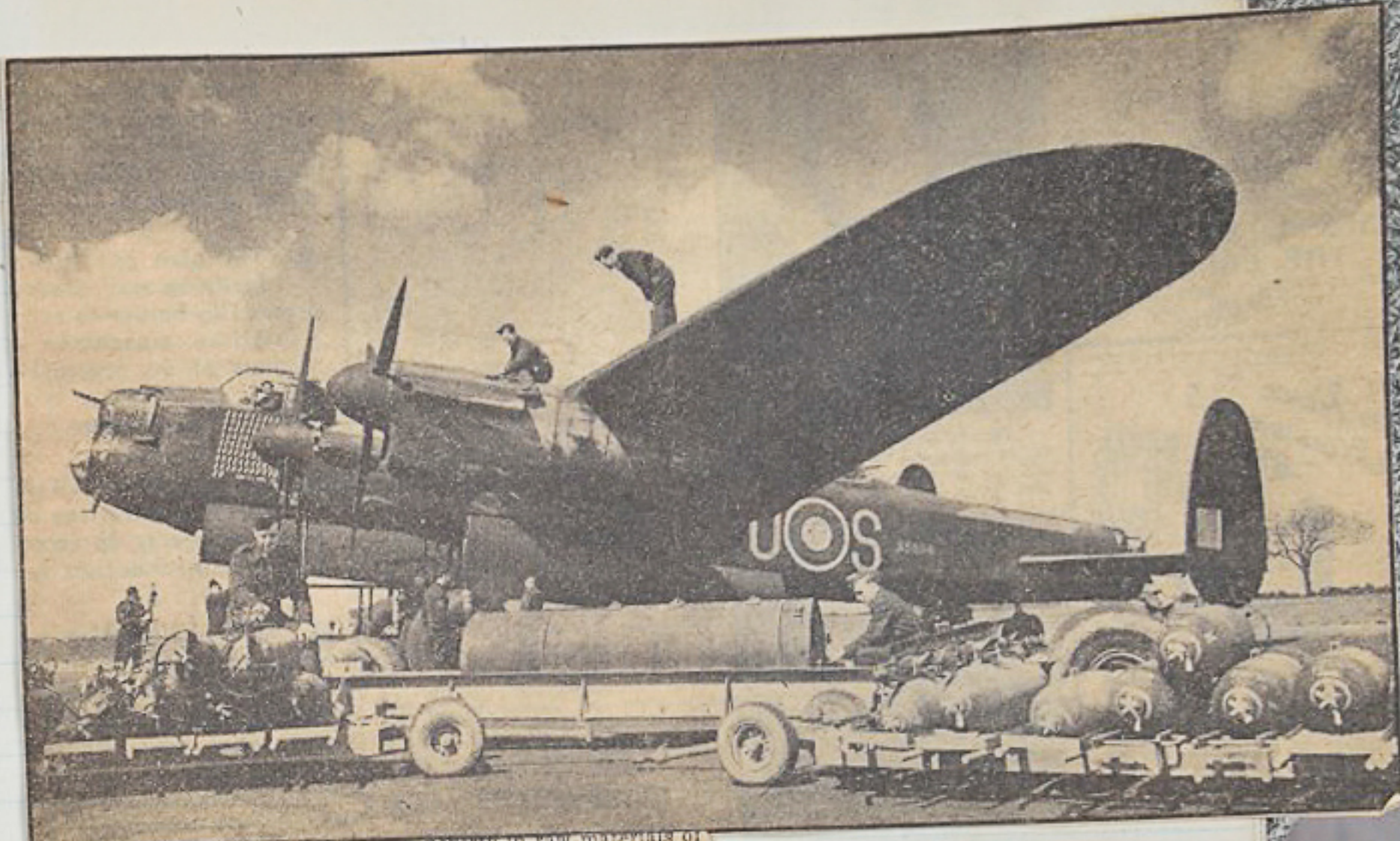
U.S.A.A.F. Station Visit

At the United States Eighth Army Air Force station they were received by Maj.-Gen. Doolittle, the Commanding General who led the bombers to Tokyo. It was his first official appearance since taking command.

After the inspection their Majesties were taken to the officers' mess for tea and cakes, which had been baked by Red Cross girls assigned to the field. The Queen talked at length with Rhoda Robbins, of Barry, Vermont, one of the girls.

Maj. John R. Roche, Davenport, Iowa, later said that the King talked to him about flying and operations. "He knows combat tactics, and asked a lot of intelligent questions. He was easy to talk to," said Maj. Roche.

Our 3rd op to this place and was a bit more exciting. It took place on the night of March 15, 1944, and was the biggest effort we had ever been on with 1000 aircraft, all heavies, taking part. Take-off was about 1930 hrs and we were first to take off and first to land back at base. We had about 30 mins to climb over base and we got to about 8000' before op. We were routed down Reading Selby and down thru France. The kites went started going down just over the enemy coast which shook us a bit as we expected rather a quiet trip. As usual an "if" was up and we got away south of track and so into Switzerland. By a bit of luck we got a fix or two off Lake Constance so we were able to start our timed run. While I was taking and on astro shot a kite exploded just beside us which gave us all heart failure. Running in on to the target we got a couple of fixes but we were unable to blind mark so Eddie bombed visually. The raid was scattered all over hell's half acre and to us seemed a complete failure. The route home was very quiet and we got bags of fixes so we were happy. Just before crossing the French coast we were caught in the middle of a searchlight belt but had no trouble getting thru it. We cut a bit of a corner and went straight to Reading instead of going to Selby. We got home about 0130 hrs and landed with no trouble at all. One kite from this squadron didn't return, F/L Type was the pilot and some of his crew were F/L Dan Quigley - nav. No. 10 & F/O Edwards - gunners. They were on their 30th op. Altogether 42 kites were missing from a hell of a poor op in our estimation. We didn't get a picture as there was 100% cloud and no cloud was expected as they had visual on. Max finished his 1st tour to-night, we'll soon be there too I hope.



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CANDIDUS

IN reviewing a scientific book in the *Sunday Times* yesterday, Edward Shanks observed that it might seem odd for him to venture an opinion on such a work.

His excuse for writing about it, he went on to explain, was that while he was quite incompetent to say whether the author was telling the truth or not, he, Mr. Shanks, was fully competent to say whether or not the author conveyed his facts and theories in such a manner as to make them intelligible and interesting to a reasonably intelligent reader.

I am in much the same position about a book which has been sent to me. Entitled *Science and Salvage* (Crosby Lockwood, 12s. 6d.), it reviews the whole field of Germany's achievement in the production of valuable materials from the air, the sea and the forests, and her unremitting salvage of raw material from every kind of waste.

★ ★ ★

poverty in raw materials of sorts would render it impossible for her to wage a war for long than eighteen months, or for two years at the most.

When I alluded to Germany's production of substitutes I was laughed at. And, indeed, *ersatz* soon became a popular jargon. But that it was no joke the book and Germany's ability to continue the fight for over five years demonstrate.

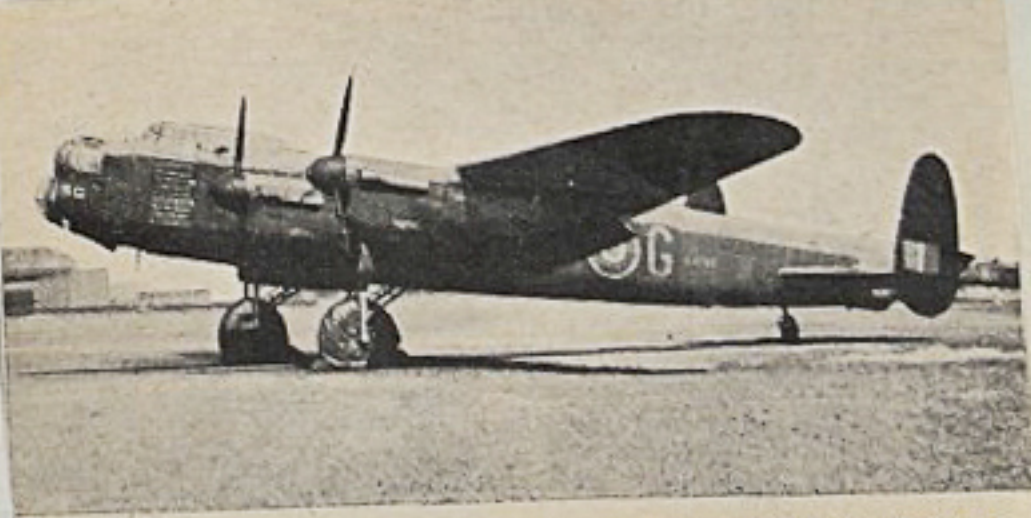
Some of the chapter headings indicate the scope and nature of the book's contents: "Wealth From the Air," "The Sea as Source of Raw Materials," "Forestal Products," "Utilisation of Scrap and Waste Materials," and "Raw Materials From Sewage."

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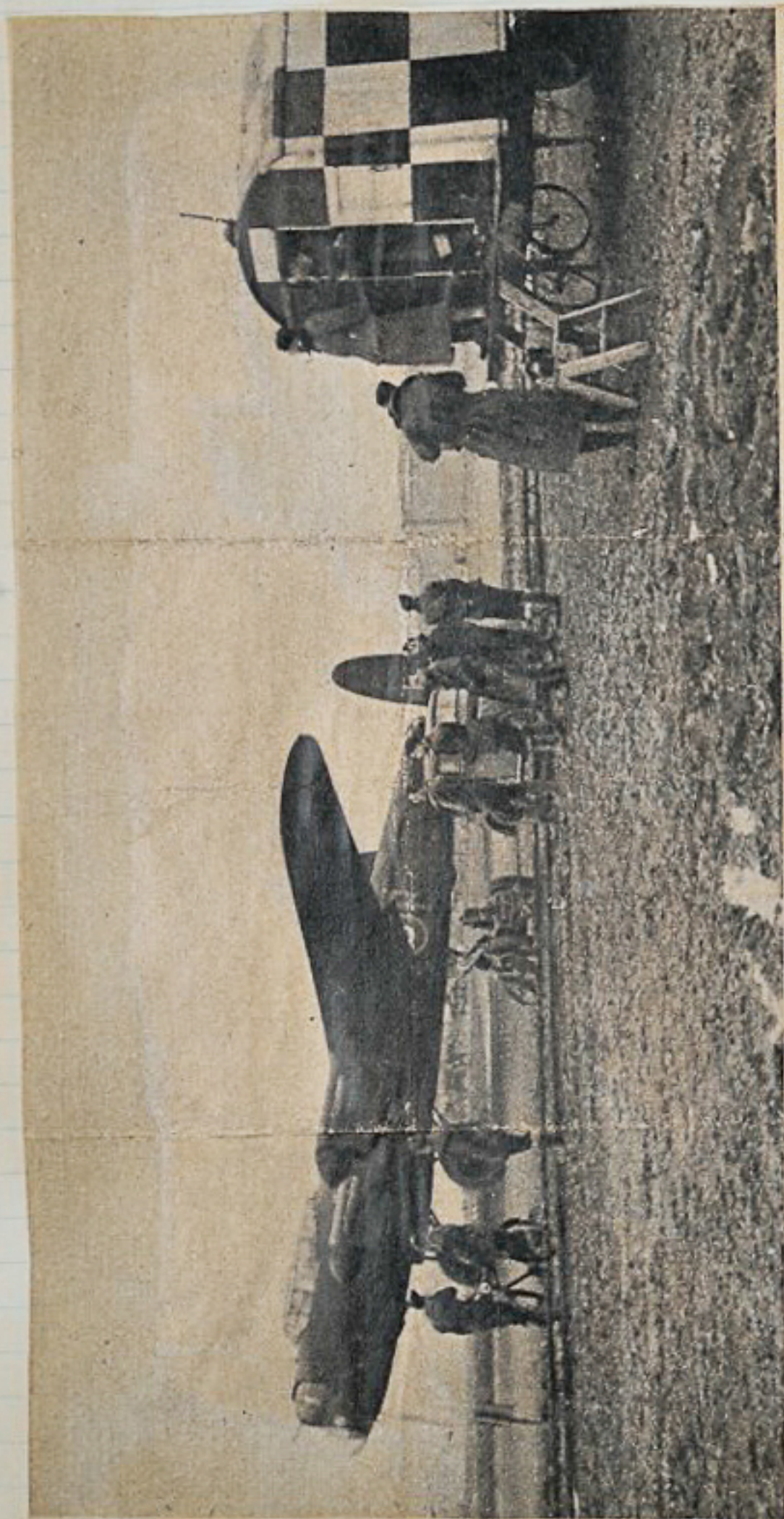
THE information given in the book and other chapters is largely technical and is, therefore, unsuitable for recapitulation here, even if I were equipped, which I am not, to epitomise it accurately.

But the details are for other people to consider; what concerns the ordinary man is the broad results of Germany's quest for the sinews of war (and peace) from the elements and from sources whose potentialities up to recent years were never tapped or even imagined.

When the war finishes we shall be, if not a "new" nation, at



HONOURABLE RETIREMENT: With 90 "ops." to its credit, this R.A.A.F. Lancaster I, "G for George," has been presented to Premier John Curtin for the Australian War Museum at Canberra.



AT THE CONTROL POINT. A LANCASTER IS SIGNALLED INTO POSITION FOR THE TAKE-OFF. THEY LEAVE AT MINUTE INTERVALS

R.A.F. DROP 3,000 TONS IN BIGGEST RAID EVER

1,000 HEAVY BOMBERS OUT: STUTTGART BLOW

LOSSES WERE LESS THAN 4 PER CENT.

AMERICANS STRIKE BY DAY AT AUGSBURG AND ULM

More than 1,000 heavy bombers took part in the mightiest air assault of the war on Wednesday night, when the R.A.F. dropped over 3,000 tons of bombs on Stuttgart, Munich and other targets.

Within 12 hours of this devastating blow at Germany, strong forces of American bombers, escorted by fighters, also struck in the same area. Augsburg and Ulm, according to Berlin radio, were attacked.

The R.A.F.'s greatest air operation was carried out at a cost of 40 aircraft, representing a loss of less than four per cent. of the great force used.

Stuttgart, important aircraft and precision tool city of 500,000 people in South-West Germany, was the main objective. It was left blazing under a canopy of cloud.

While a huge load of bombs was pulverising this city, other aircraft struck at Munich and targets in North-West Germany, and Stirlings, Halifaxes and Mosquitoes attacked Amiens, railway centre in Northern France.

The Luftwaffe was up in strength to meet this formidable night onslaught, and the bombers were attacked both on the way to Stuttgart and over the target area.

"We were attacked twice on the way to Stuttgart, and a third time just after we had bombed," one pilot said. "Time and again, as we were on our way there, the sky was stabbed by tracer as combats broke out between the fighters and our bombers. It seemed that the whole of Bomber Command and the whole of the Luftwaffe were going at it hammer and tongs."

There was thick cloud, three miles high in places, when the bombers set out from England, the Air Ministry stated last night. The cloud cleared a little as the force swept over the sea, and there were breaks here and there over the Continent.

Stuttgart was covered by cloud about a mile high and just sufficiently thick to prevent the Germans from using their searchlights.

Not many fighter flares were dropped, but visibility above the clouds was very good, bright enough for the German "cat-eye" pilots to pick out the bombers.

RED FLARES PATH Battles Over Target

Flyg. Offr. P. E. SINCLAIR, of Moree, N.S.W., said that instead of the usual fighter flares the Germans laid red flares along the path taken by the bombers.

"We saw several enemy fighters," he went on, "the first near the coast. There were many more in the target area, where numerous combats were taking place. One fighter which we did not see made a head-on attack on our Halifax without doing any damage."

One squadron of Halifaxes shot down two fighters. One fell to the guns of two Canadian officers, the other to a Leeds rear-gunner, Pilot Offr. L. LAZENBY, D.P.M. It was Pilot Offr. Lazenby's second encounter within a few minutes.

The Canadians, Pilot Offr. R. DEARL, of Toronto, and Pilot Offr. D. MAW, of Winnipeg, also had two combats, the first a close range duel with a single-engined fighter, which eventually broke off his attack.

About two minutes later a P.W. 150 took up the challenge. Before it could fire, however, bullets from the two Canadians were striking it. They think they must have killed the pilot, for his aircraft stalled and nose-dived to the ground out of control.

RECORD BOMB-LOAD A Single Night's Work

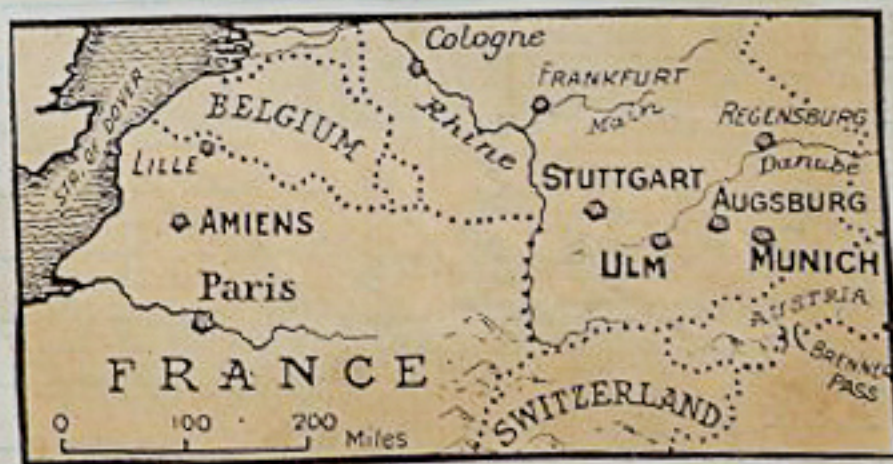
Wednesday night's bomb-load of 3,000 tons is the heaviest yet announced as having been dropped in a single night, and for the first time yesterday's Air Ministry communiqué mentioned the use of "more than 1,000 heavy bombers."

In 1942 Cologne, Essen and Bremen experienced "1,000-bomber raids," but the machines then were not all of the heavy four-engined type.

Stuttgart, is one of Germany's most important war centres, because of its very extensive and specialised engineering industry. Its many factories turn out large quantities of aero engines, submarine engines and motor components, such as fuel injection pumps, magnetos, sparking plug and pistons.

Two firms that are particularly well known are the great electrical equipment and aircraft component works of Bosch, at Stuttgart-Sourbach, and in Stuttgart itself, and the Daimler Benzo A.G. motor and military transport works at Stuttgart-Unter-Türkheim.

Munich, home of the Nazi party, was last bombed on the night of March 1, when the R.A.F. also attacked Stuttgart. Both Stuttgart and Munich are also important railway junctions for traffic between Germany and Italy.



Once more we visit this "lost" of Bomber Command. This raid took place on the night of 18/19 March and was another all out effort of over 850 kites taking part. There was a visual on so we were B.M.I.'s & dropped hooded flares & green T.I.'s. Take off was again about 1930 hrs. and we climbed over base to about 8,000 before s/c and it was lovely above the clouds. Our route was straight out between Dunkerque & Ostend and everything went quite well in the way in and as our "if" worked perfectly we had no trouble staying on track. We ran in south of Bonn and did a timed run from a small town north of the city (target). Our run was okay and we bombed at 2055 with no trouble at all. The target was covered by haze and it was impossible for the visuals to see the aiming point. Shortly after leaving it we had to run thru a heavy s/c belt but got thru it okay. The rest of the trip home was easy enough but slow because of a head wind. For once nobody saw any other kites shot down or any kites down. Before we started to let down the gunners were detailed to fire their guns & see if they would freeze, and ours didn't. As usual I see studded over the sea and back to base. We were 3rd to land and Mac made a lub. All the kites from #405 returned okay as we expected but 22 kites were lost altogether. We only got a photo of fire & f/l. Macdonald got one of fields the only one pletable. Intelligence claims the raid was quite successful although Train Force had a difficult time seeing the markers because of the haze & high cloud. One more to go on our 1st tour.

The '1,000' Raid will be Regular Super-Lancasters Hit Stuttgart

By COLIN BEDNALL,
Air Correspondent

THE heaviest air blow ever delivered—a 3,000-ton assault on Germany by R.A.F. Bomber Command on Wednesday night—marked a dramatic step-up in the size of the striking force at Air Chief Marshal Harris's disposal.

The plain meaning is that 1,000 heavy bombers—instead of about 700, the figure a year ago—is now the size of the threat which Germany can expect any night of the week.

Some of the objectives left in the Reich are just not big enough to be attacked by a force of that size without a wasteful "splash over" of bombs.

While, therefore, the R.A.F. will not always send out 1,000 "heavies," Wednesday night nevertheless saw a display of actual front-line strength in Bomber Command.

Higher Speed

Flying with the spearhead of the attacking armads were super-new Lancasters, powered with four of the engines now carried singly by the world's most sensational fighter.

The new Lancasters, flying faster and climbing higher than their famous predecessors, have the Packard-built Rolls-Royce Merlin "28" motors, which, according to latest official figures, take the Mustangs to Berlin at speeds up to 425 m.p.h.

In this superb example of Anglo-American co-operation a British bomber is employing an American-made engine of British design. Previously Bomber Command's front-line aircraft have always been exclusively of British manufacture.

It is reported that the new Lancasters have already been made available for the Pacific War and are flying in Australia.

Recently it was revealed that greatly improved Halifax bombers, powered by contrast with Bristol radial engines, were also with Bomber Command.

So great has been the increase in the bomb-lifting capacity of the attacking forces—made possible by both more and better four-engined aircraft—that Wednesday night's load was twice as great as that carried in the 1,000-bomber trial raids of 1942.

Hard to Hit

Stuttgart, a difficult objective because of surrounding hills was the main target. Munich, Amiens, and targets in North-West Germany were also attacked. Forty bombers—representing a four per cent casualty rate—are missing.

New figures on the progress of the offensive made available last night show that Wednesday night's attacks brought the total tonnage of bombs now dropped by Bomber Command to more than 280,000.

In 1940 the total was 12,795 tons. The next year saw it raised to 31,185. In 1942 it became 45,285 and in 1943 157,160. So far this year the total is just under 40,000 tons.

Confirming recent American opinions that the Luftwaffe can be expected to offer serious resistance whenever the attacking bombers seriously threaten key objectives, fighter opposition at Stuttgart was as great as it has ever been before.

"It seemed as if the whole of Bomber Command and the whole of the Luftwaffe were at it hammer and tongs," said one pilot. "My own aircraft was attacked twice on the way out, and a third time just after we had bombed."

A Halifax squadron shot down two fighters.

NEVER 'ALL CLEAR'

The All Clear never sounds in many German cities now being subjected to R.A.F. "obliteration" raids, because all power systems and other communications, together with most things in the target area, are wrecked.

To meet this crisis and persuade people that the danger is sufficiently reduced for them to come out of their shelters and help clear the ruins, the German authorities have introduced a system of firing guns when the bombers depart.

Flew Bomber to Stuttgart—and He's 48 It's a Tradition

By Daily Mail Air Reporter

A VETERAN of the last war, 48-years-old Air Commodore A. M. Wray, was captain and pilot of one of the huge force of Lancasters which bombed Stuttgart on Wednesday night.

All the members of his crew were "green"—seven sergeants who were making their first operational flight.

It is an unofficial tradition among veterans of Bomber Command to take out freshly trained crews.

Air Commodore Wray, who holds the D.S.O., M.C., D.F.C. and Bar, and A.F.C., and also the Polish V.C.—the *Virtuti Militari*—has been lame in the right leg since he was wounded while serving with the R.F.C. in the last war.

Although he has been flying for 28 years and commands a bomber base from which a famous Australian squadron operates, he insists on going on "ops." with his crews.

He was one of the first to bomb Germany. The bar to the D.F.C. was awarded to him in 1942 for diving low over the Ruhr to bomb targets in face of fierce enemy fire.

He is married and has three children—Mary (8), Margaret (7), and John (5)—and lives at Whitwell, Hertfordshire.



"NOW FADES THE GLIMMERING LANDSCAPE ON THE SIGHT!"—An excellent photograph of an Avro Lancaster III flying at height over the English countryside. The Lancaster III, with Packard-built Rolls-Royce Merlin 28 motors and other small modifications, is now flying in large numbers and will probably replace the Lancaster I in production.

THIRD CANADIAN TO WIN TWIN GONG IN THIS WAR

Former Bush Pilot Had 300,000 Air Miles
To His Credit Before
Enlistment

COMMANDED VANCOUVER SQUADRON

For the third time in this war the bar to the Distinguished Service Order has been awarded to a Canadian. Group Captain John E. Fauquier, Montreal, received the decoration only a few weeks after W/C L. V. Chadburn, DSO and Bar, DFC, and S/L Julten Sale, DSO and Bar, were accorded a similar honor.

FAUQUIER

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BAR

TO

DSO

King of the Pathfinders

WINS SECOND D.S.O.



Group Captain Fauquier

The "King of the Pathfinders" over Berlin, Dusseldorf and other heavily bombed Nazi targets and one of the Mohne and Eder "dam busters" figure in a list of R.A.F. awards to-day as winners of bars to the D.S.O.

The "Pathfinder King," Acting Group Captain J. E. Fauquier, commander of No. 400 R.C.A.F. squadron, has frequently been to distant and well-defended targets, including several visits to the German capital.

His squadron, formerly on anti-U-boat duty, now locates targets for the following bombers. As "Master of Ceremonies" Group Captain Fauquier flies high above the target watching over the flare-dropping pathfinders.

After winning the D.F.C. in 1942—he led his squadron on two 1000 bomber raids—he went to a desk job, but returned to "ops" to win the D.S.O. last September after raiding Peenemunde and Berlin.

Operational

During his nine months as commanding officer of the RCAF City of Vancouver Squadron, Johnny Fauquier frequently took part in the squadron's bombing operations over Germany.

His career as an operational bombing pilot goes back nearly three years. He confesses to several "tough" flights during this period.

One occurred on a return from an attack on the German capital some time ago. Short of fuel, he was forced to set the bomber down at an emergency landing



field that had been strewn with steel pilings as an anti-invasion measure during the battle of Britain. Fauquier's handling of his heavy machine under these conditions was outstanding. The crew was unhurt.

In addition to the usual brushes with flak, night-fighters and rocket-pyrotechnics, which are the lot of any veteran bomber pilot, the group captain has clashed with an enemy barrage balloon cable. He brought his aircraft back to base with a piece of the cable embedded in the wing.

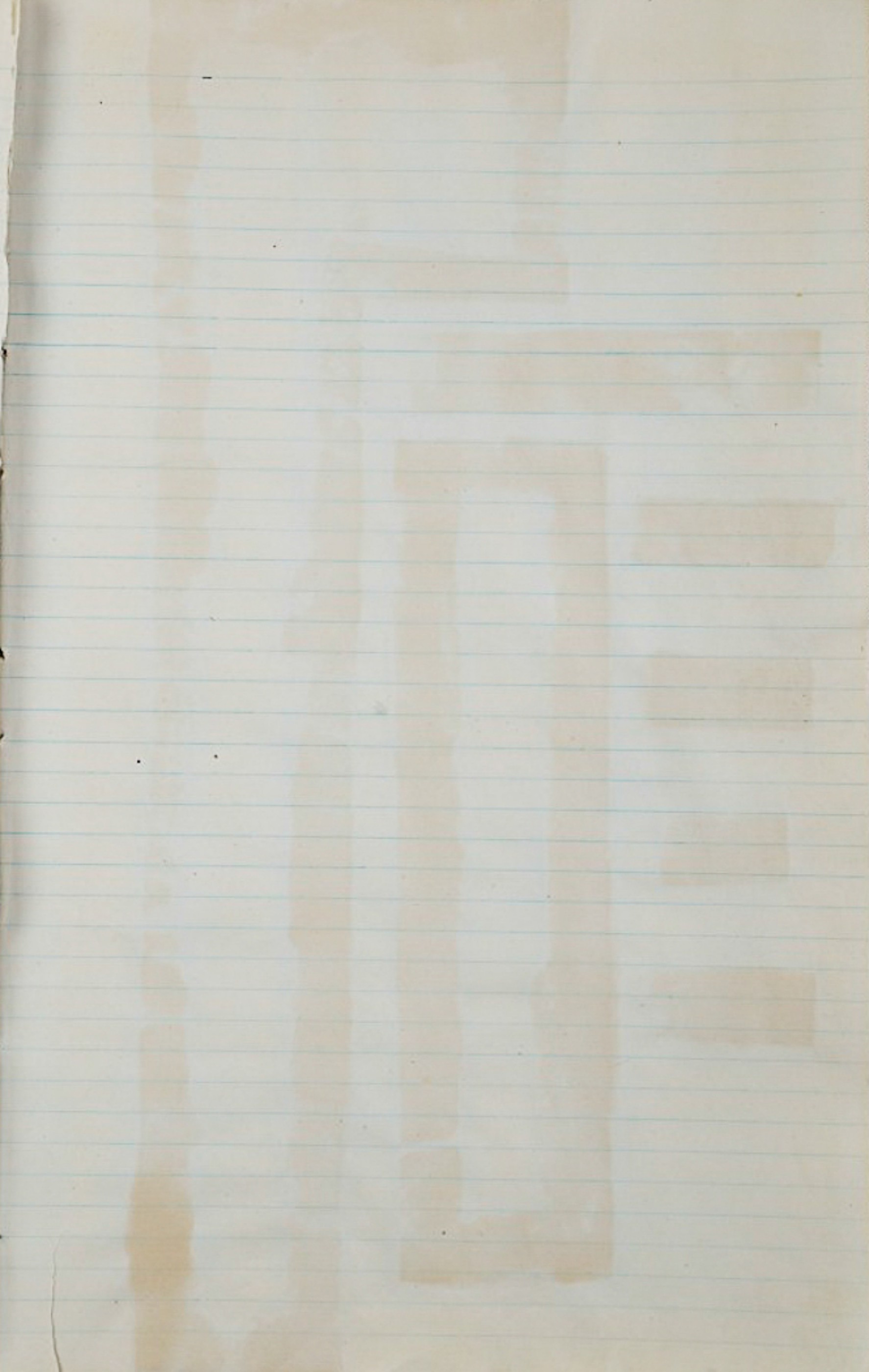
Group Captain Fauquier is no Johnny-come-lately flier. Long before the war he left his Montreal job as a bond salesman to learn flying. With a commercial licence tucked away in his pocket he went into bush flying on his own account. He had lugged freight and passengers across 300,000 miles of Canadian skies before war came.

Joined Up.

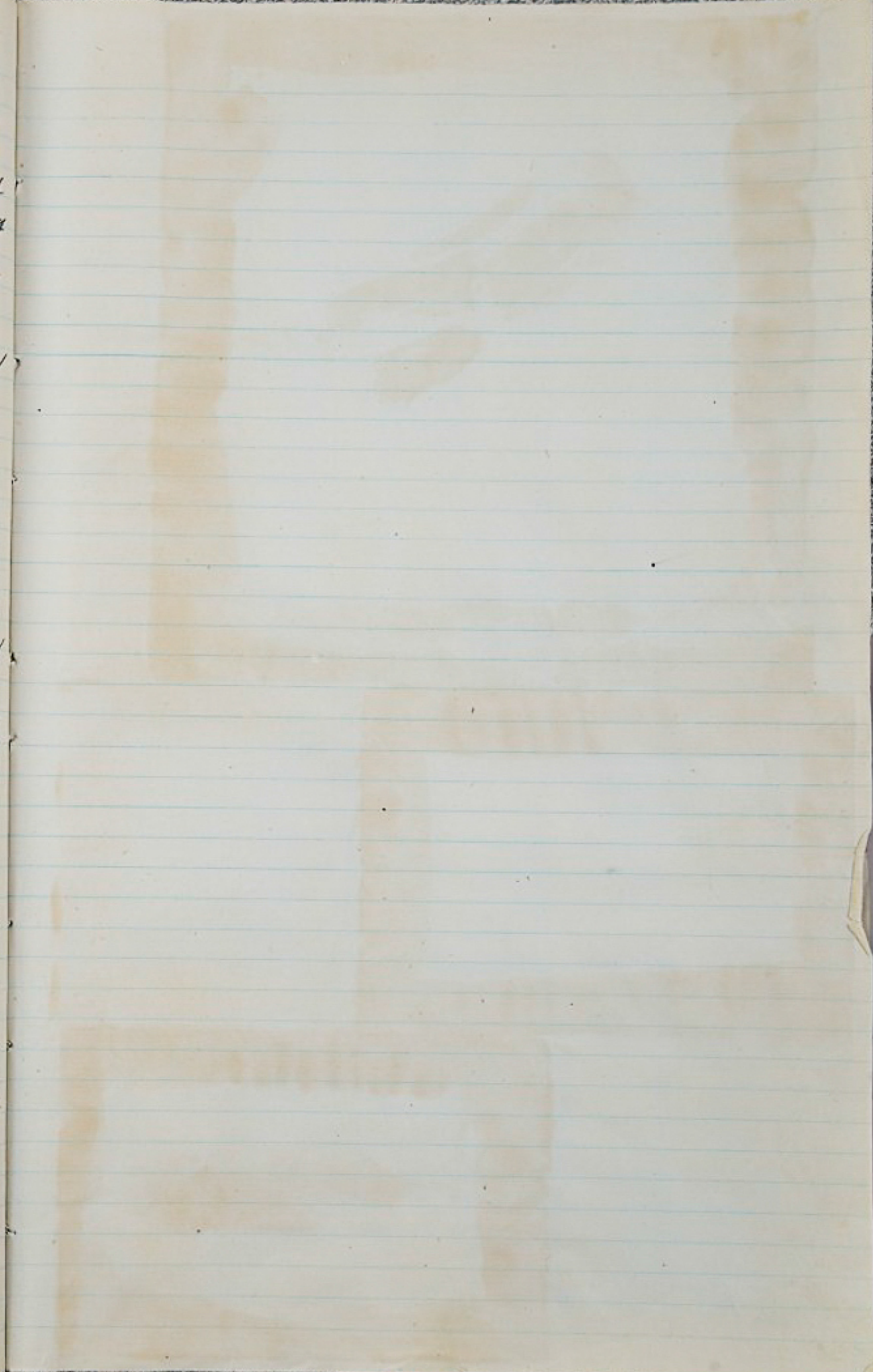
He joined up immediately and became one of the pilots with the first RCAF bomber squadron formed in Britain.

Able to shoulder responsibilities as well as handle a plane with the best men in the business, promotion came fast and honors often to Johnny Fauquier.

Although couched in official phraseology, the citation for his latest decoration reflects the opinion of the many men who have served under him when it states, "He is a forceful and gallant leader, whose outstanding ability and unswerving devotion to duty have been reflected in the fine operational work performed by the whole



This was #11 to the "Big City" and wasn't at all bad. It took place on March 24/25, 1944 and was a big effort of 180 kites. The method was to be a lowbomber with W/C Millward carrying Sgt Johnny Baker as a visual. Everybody was in a flap at briefing as the target was very uncertain but we finally got airborne about 1830 hrs. We were 2nd to take-off as were B.M.'s again. It was a lovely daylight take-off + it was light when we crossed the English coast. Going out over the sea was as usual but somewhere between our turning point and the Danish coast as we (+ everyone else) ended up about 25-30 miles south of track. We got sight in the "if" + altered north to the turning point. Crossing Denmark the wind speed increased to 120-130 knots which made navigation terrifically difficult. However we reached the target okay and made a bang on run + bombed on time. It wasn't like Berlin really but then we went in first so didn't get much. We didn't drop our flares as usual was impossible due to 8/10 cloud. W/C Lane (C/O) with Sgt Glenn Ellwood as navigator did an M.C. for nearly 20 minutes in a Super Duke Lancaster. The trip home was as hard as the way in because of the terrific winds + a lot of clouds got in the "Happy Valley". We got home first and down on the ground first. W/C Millward - navt-Pat Culpin landed at Bourne and so have heard that late about it. Everyone from here got back okay but Sgt Drains - Smith got shot up a bit from Rher flak. Altogether 13 kites were lost, 7 of them were P.F.F. aircraft. We took some pictures of our P.P.I. tube but we got no photos with our other cameras. Sgt Buff of Sgt MacDonalds crew flew with us as our R/B broke his collar bone. Closed a good trip by all of us.

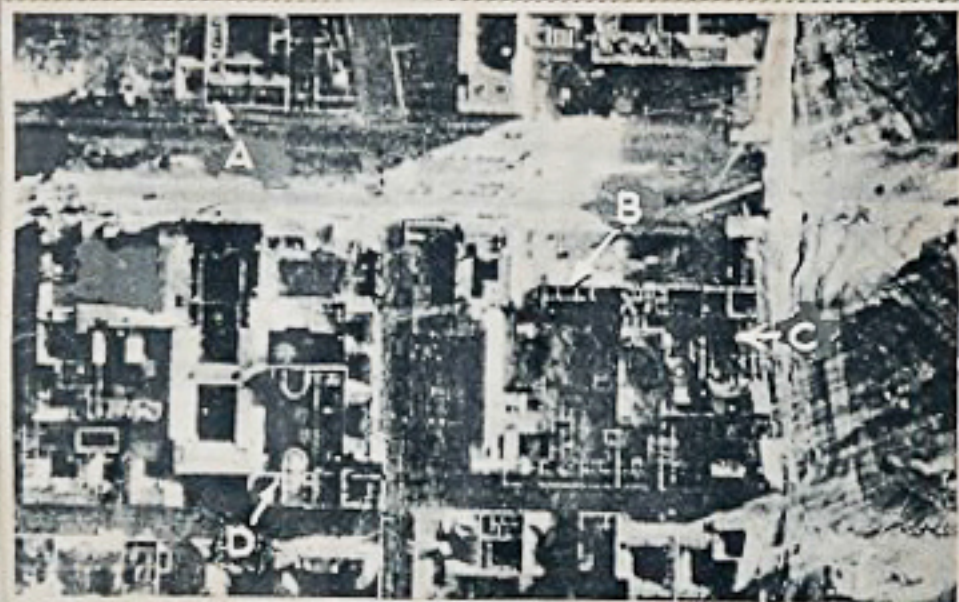




MHOC

A MAP OF BERLIN SHOWING THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF FIFTEEN MAJOR AERIAL ATTACKS BY THE R.A.F. NIGHT BOMBERS FROM NOVEMBER 18, 1943, TO FEBRUARY 20 LAST. THE BLACKED-OUT AREAS INDICATE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OR SEVERE DAMAGE TO 316 FACTORIES AND OTHER PROPERTY, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS.

This map of Berlin covers fourteen square miles, of which the blacked-out areas indicate the total destruction or severe damage done to Government, industrial, commercial and other buildings from November 18, 1943, to February 19-20, 1944. It includes the results of fifteen full-scale attacks, totalling a weight in bombs of 23,800 tons at a loss of 466 R.A.F. machines in night raids, and the loss of 3262 British airmen. Since then, U.S. heavy bombers have mounted five more big daylight sorties on this city covering an area half that of London. The number of factories destroyed or damaged in the air attacks by the R.A.F. is at least 326, and of these 103 industrial plants rank in the Ministry of Economic Warfare's list of key-points. Other photographs of the destruction of Berlin are on pages 374 and 375.



DAMAGE IN CENTRAL BERLIN: (A) MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DAMAGED BY FIRE; (B) FRENCH EMBASSY GUTTED; (C) MINISTRY OF ARMAMENT AND MUNITIONS GUTTED; (D) ARMY RECORDS OFFICE SEVERELY DAMAGED BY FIRE.



(A) THE RESULT OF HIGH EXPLOSIVE AND FIRE IN AN IRON FOUNDRY; (B) RADIO VALVE-MAKERS' PREMISES GUTTED; (C) LARGE BUILDINGS DESTROYED IN A WORKS MAKING TURBINE PARTS.

THE BATTLE OF BERLIN



ANOTHER DEVASTATED AREA, THE MOABIT DISTRICT, NORTH-WEST OF THE TIERGARTEN. AGAIN THERE IS OVERWHELMING EVIDENCE OF A TREMENDOUS SPREAD OF FIRE. LEFT CENTRE IS THE HANSA PLATZ, AND THE RIVER SPREE RUNS FROM BOTTOM RIGHT TO TOP LEFT.

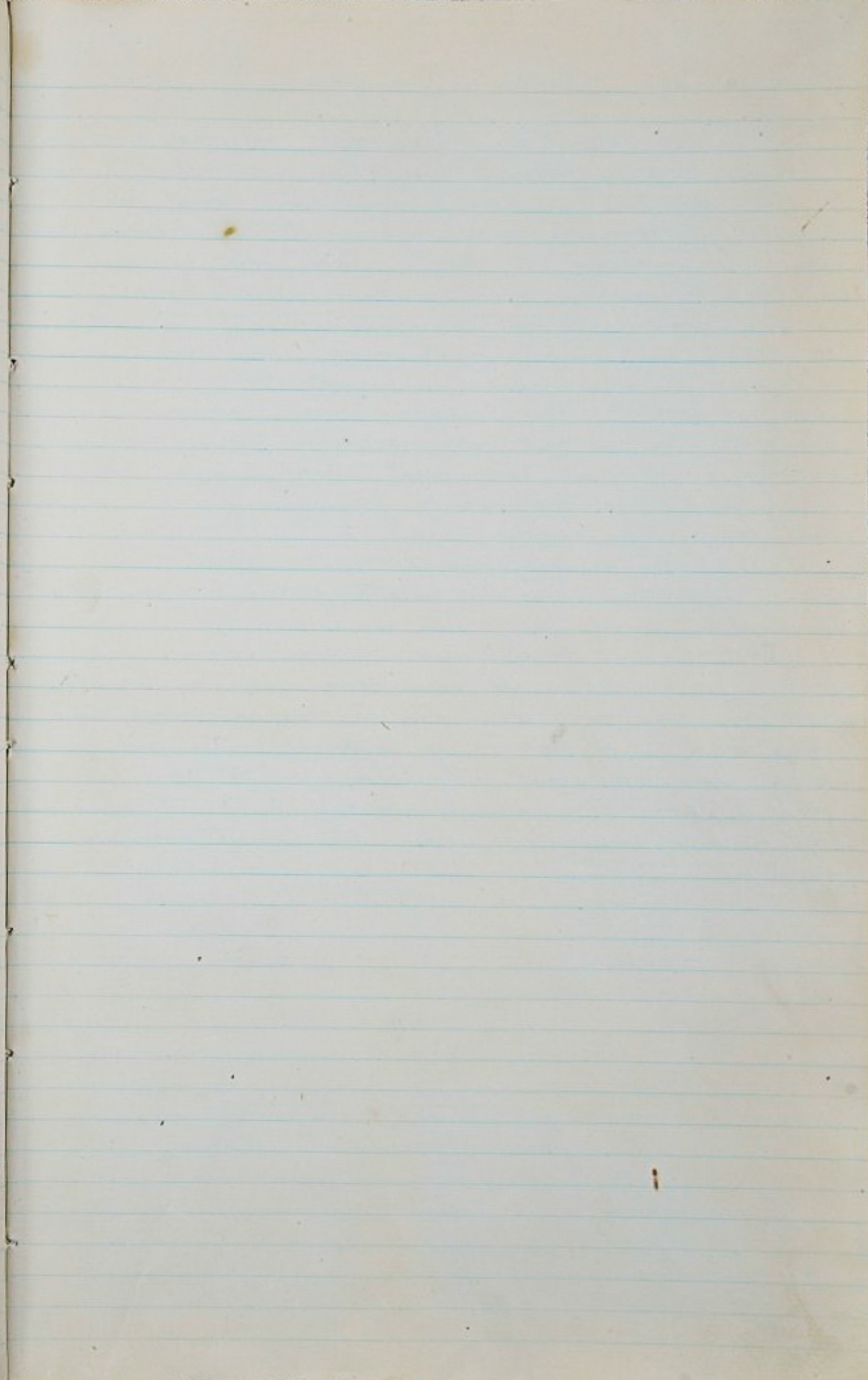


MORE DAMAGE IN THE CENTRE OF THE CAPITAL: (A) TOP FLOORS OF KAISERHOF HOTEL BURNED OUT; (B) TREASURY ROOF DAMAGED; (C) MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND STATE RAILWAYS DIRECTORATE

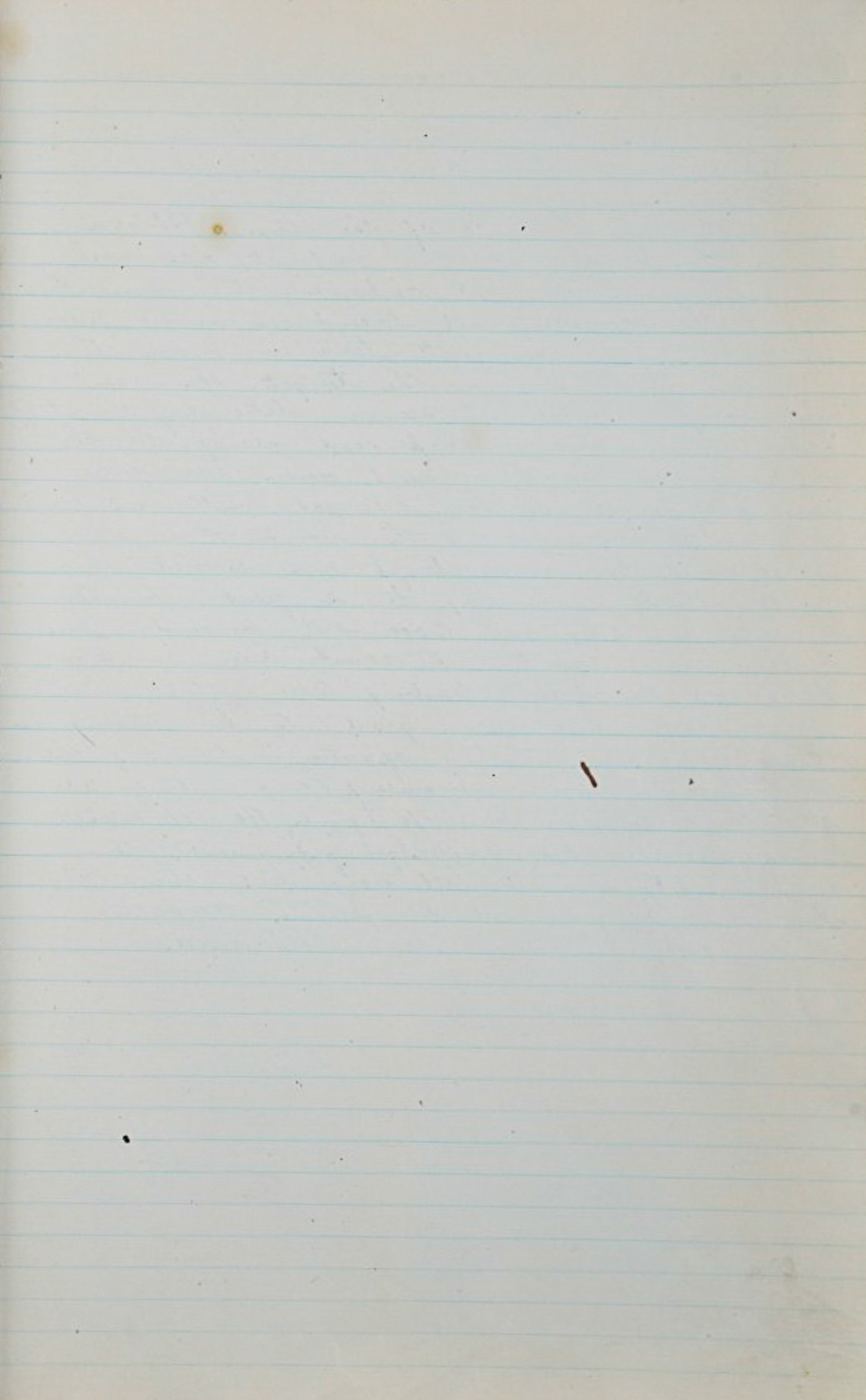


THIS PICTURE AND THE ONE ADJOINING SHOW DAMAGE IN THE TIERGARTEN DISTRICT: (A) AN ENTIRE BLOCK OF BUSINESS PREMISES GUTTED; (B) PREMISES OF TIMBER AND COAL MERCHANTS DESTROYED.

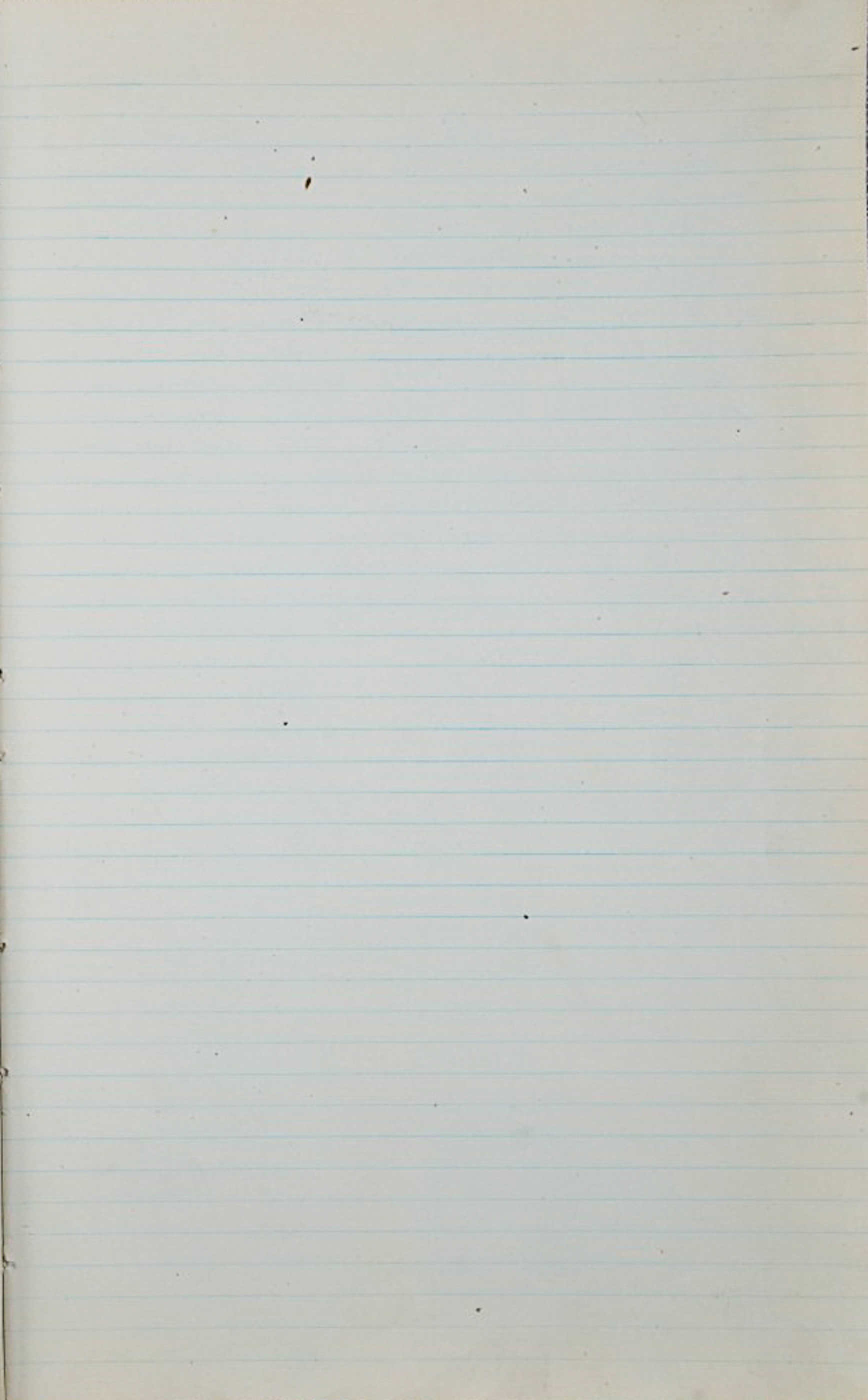
This was our first trip to this place & took place on the night of March 30/31, 1944. It was a pretty big effort with about 850 kites on the raid. It was to be a visual raid but 10/10 cloud soon stopped that. Take-off wasn't until 2220 hrs but the moon was up so it wasn't pitch black exactly. Our route out took us near Brussels, Liege & that district. Our "if" worked okay until nearly Bonn when it went for a complete Burton so astro was our only aid. We got a P/L off Kassel where Massier dropped reds & greens. We were nearly on top of the target before anything went down but we were heading straight for it only we were 2.7 mins. late! The target itself wasn't very heavily defended, at least not when we went thru, with only very little heavy flak & of course no S/L's because of cloud. After we left the target we ran over Stuttgart where they took rather a dim view of us & threw up all kinds of trash. The rest of the trip home was quiet enough and Vic & I spent most of our time on astro. We ended up a bit north of track when we finally hit the French coast. Our route home took us Lebus, Reading, Base. We were first home and first to land when though a lot of kites came back north of London because of being so far north of track. All of this Squadron returned okay but S/L Jim Lisbach got shot up a bit over Stuttgart but nothing serious. I doubt if was a very good raid at it was a wanganic effort. The losses were the highest the R.A.F. had ever had - 9+ aircraft which rather shook everybody - including all of #405 Squadron. The whole raid was done in brilliant moonlight, thus the high losses.



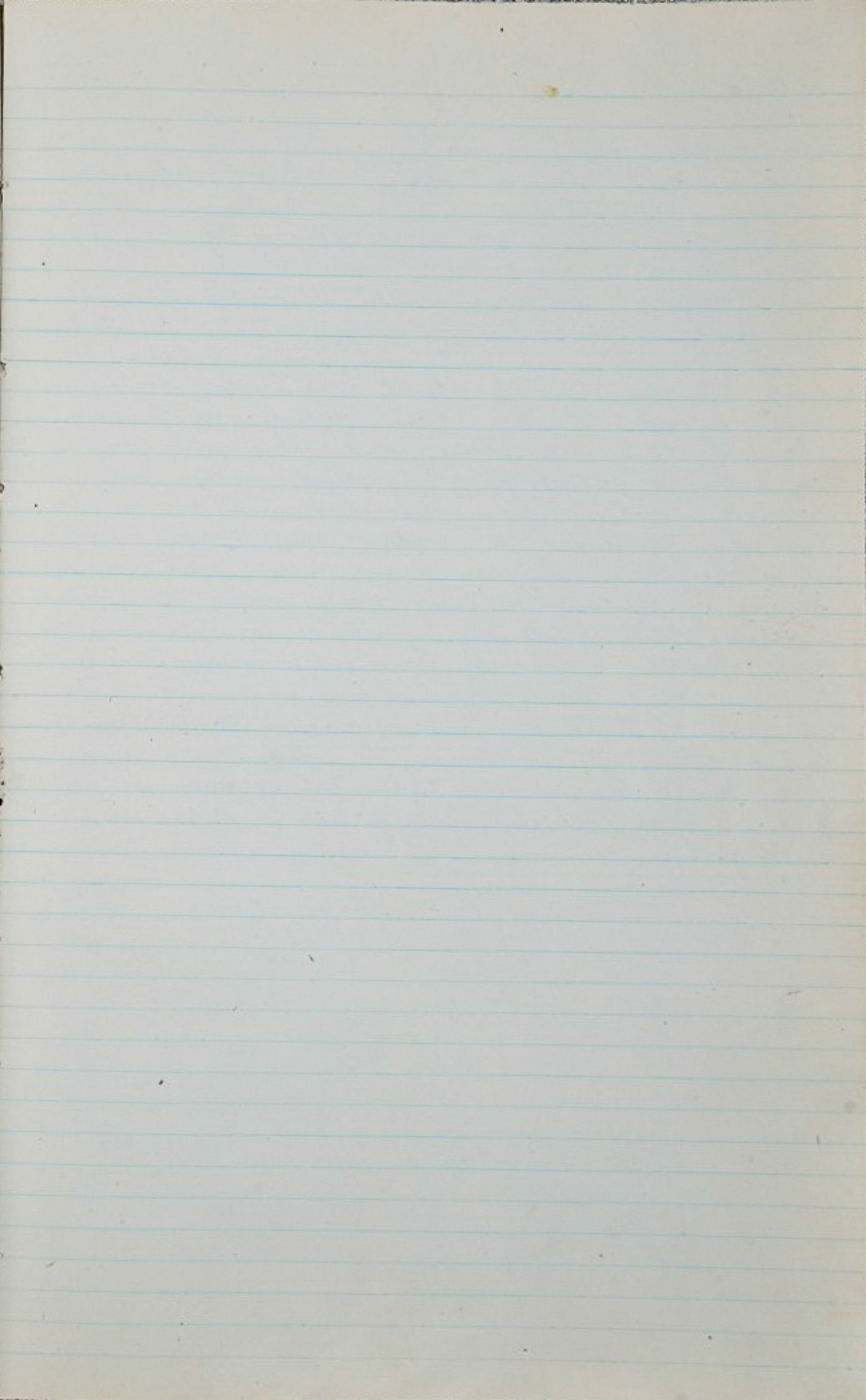
This op took place on the night of May 3, 1944 and was a very small effort and was all P.F., about 80 kites took part in all. This was our first op. in a long time + was our first with P/O Baroni, our visual bomb-aimer. The target itself was an airfield although the actual aiming point was a huge hangar in the centre of the technical site. We took off at 2250 hrs + climbed for 18 mins. before s/c. Our route was Reading, Selby + so on to the target. The trip out was quiet until we ran into a s/c belt near Abbeville but we avoided them skag and just then the first T.I.'s went down on the target. We waited for the "Master of Ceremonies" to tell us what to do and his orders were to bomb north of the green T.I. Baroni visually identified the target + he saw our bombs burst on the airfield. I came out of the target on the G.P.I. + it was bang-on. We bombed at about 9,000 + came home between 6 + 7,000. I didn't do very much work on the way home but we did skag until very near home when due to some-one having their finger well in it took us a little while to find our dome. We were about 3rd back + 3rd to land. P/O Macdonald + crew (P/O MacIntyre navigator) failed to return. Only 4 kites were lost from this target but 4-9 were lost altogether.



This op took place on the night of May 6/7 1944. There were 147 pilots took part in this raid which was on the marshalling yards to the north of the north of the town. It was another late take-off, in fact it was nearly 10 o'clock before we got airborne. We were off with Borrower right behind us, as we were both illuminators. Our route took us Bradwell-Pungness and so on to the target. The moon was terrifically bright, it seemed like day almost. Baroni was able to map-read nearly all the way in and as the T.I's went down we were heading straight for them. We got instructions from the Master Bomber where to bomb and it's just as well as the target was covered by smoke, which was rising to a great height. We bombed at about 7,000 and remained there until over the French coast. Our route home was Beachy Hd - Reading - Base. We were first down and damn glad to be home from a very scarring operation. Worst of all was that P/O "Bob" Borrower D.F.C. & crew failed to return. His crew were P/O Squier P/O Mitchell was P/O Hinchcliffe B/A w/o's Montgomerie Spearman & Patrice were the rest. We all feel very bad about the loss of a bang on lot of fellows. Altogether 10 aircraft were lost from this raid.

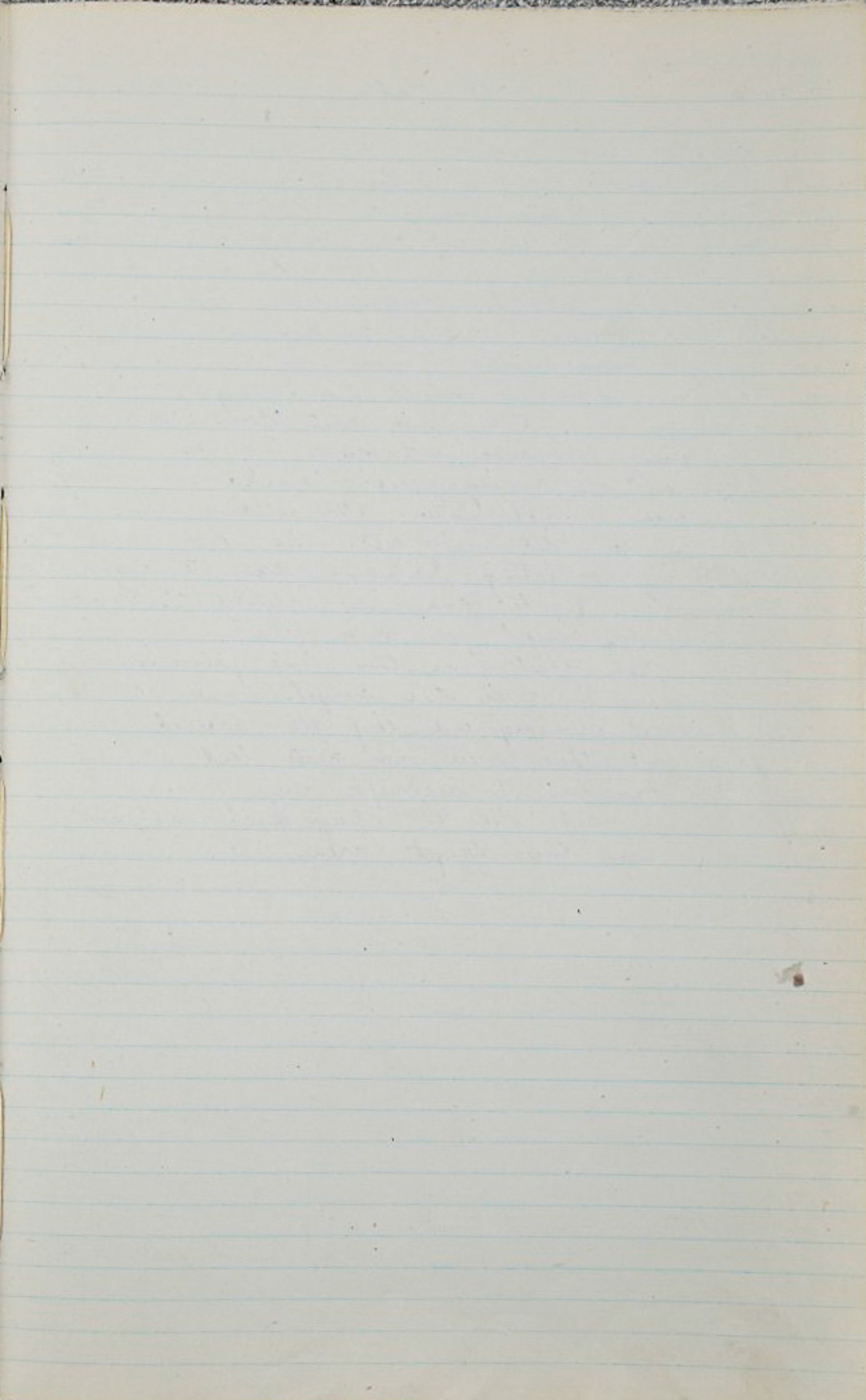


On the 10th of May 1944 we were briefed to attack the marshalling yards at Ghent. It was an all-Canadian effort as we did all the marking and #6 Group did the bombing. There was about 130 kites altogether so not a big effort. We took off at 2235 hrs and then out to Oxfordness and so to the target. Zero hour was at 2345 & we were on slightly before then. We had to do 2 runs as the first time we dropped flares, as we were illuminators, and then dropped our bombs the 2nd time round. It was a long-on raid as the bombing was very concentrated and the smoke went up to a terrific height. The trip home was very quiet and it wasn't long before we were well out to sea. We got first home and first to land. We got a picture 150 yds from the aiming point which wasn't bad. No aircraft were lost on this raid at all.



Another nice close one, which took place on the night of 11th May, 1944 and the target was the roundhouse on the southern tip of Boulogne. It was another Canadian effort with #405 + #6 Group doing the dirty work. The man to be the Master Bomber - S/L George Sweeney as B/A, and S/L John Macdonald was the Deputy Master Bomber. We took off at 2230 and went out via Reading + Dover. The first of our troubles started when the bomb-sight refused to work thus forcing us to retain all our TI's. Everything went very well on the way out and we got to the target pretty well on time. While doing our first oval orbit we got hit by flak, at least the cockpit cover was baled in two places. We did about 4 runs, meanwhile giving instructions to main force where to bomb. Sweeney saw the aiming point so the bombing was easily directed. The trip home was very quiet and we came Beachy Hd - Reading + so on to Base. We were 3rd to land this time. For the first time since we got "G" George we flew in a different kite "M" Mother S/L Bennett's kite. No aircraft were lost. It was reported later that 2 kites are missing.

These are the sort of ops. we've always longed for, because of the distance of course. We took off at 2259 hrs. shortly after some of the other boys left for Le Mans. There was only 39 kites on this target, all Pathfinders. It was very small and difficult to hit because the lack of land marks. Our route was out by Ipswich & then south to the target. There was a bit of light flak crossing the coast but very little at the target. We were supposed to bomb green T.I.'s dropped by the mossies but they never showed up so we had to bomb blind. It was one of our more unsuccessful trips as our picture was over 2000 yds. We came home via Bradwell Bay, crossing the Thames Estuary. The gunners saw a kite shot down as we were leaving the enemy coast & it was confirmed later on. We were first home and so first to land & this was our shortest op up to date. It was carried out at 10,000' but we bombed even lower than that. All the aircraft from 4405 returned but one kite was missing in the group. S/L Johnny Baker (7 sqdn) who used to be here went missing on Le Mans as a master bomber.



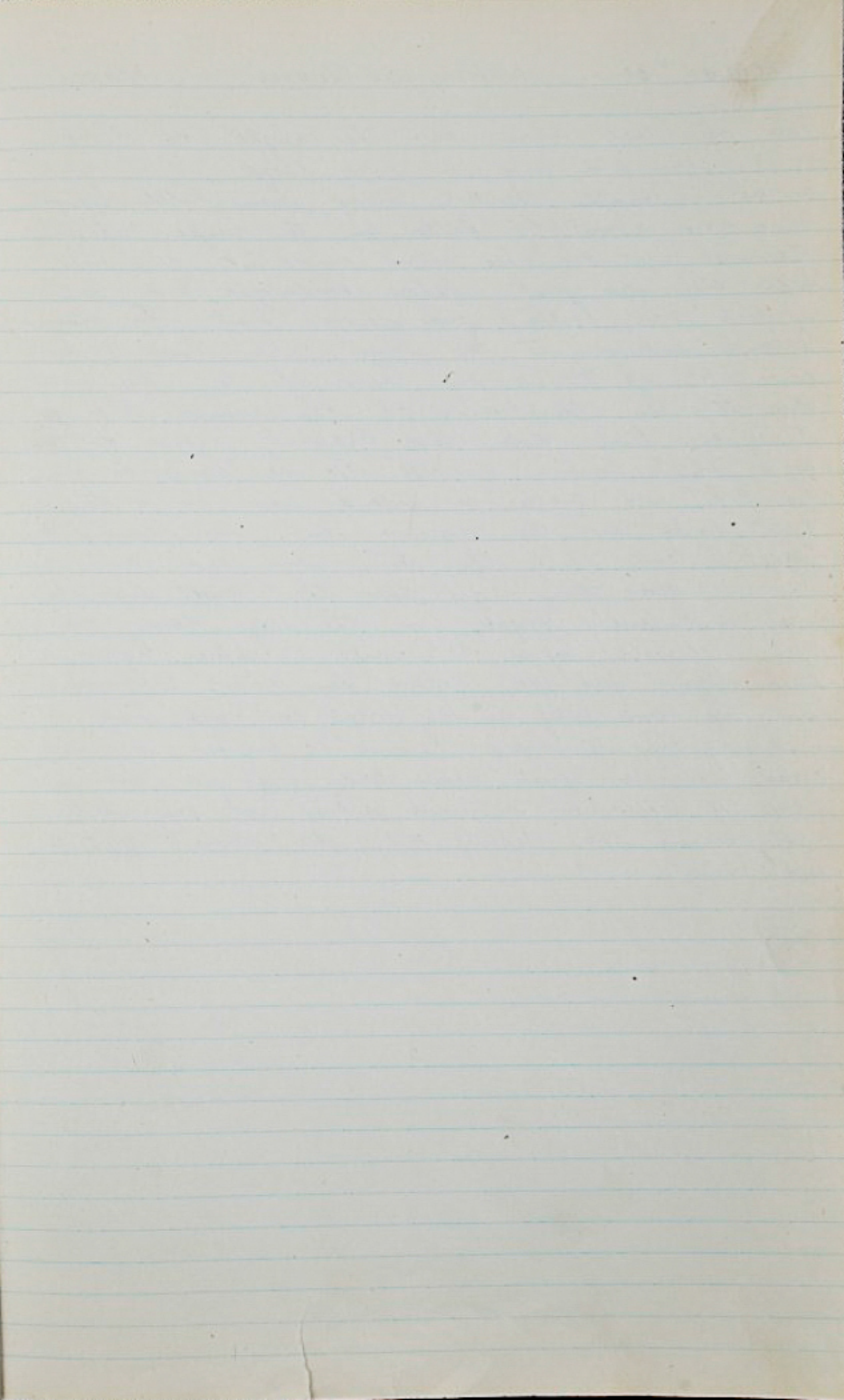
OPERATION #37

LE MANS -

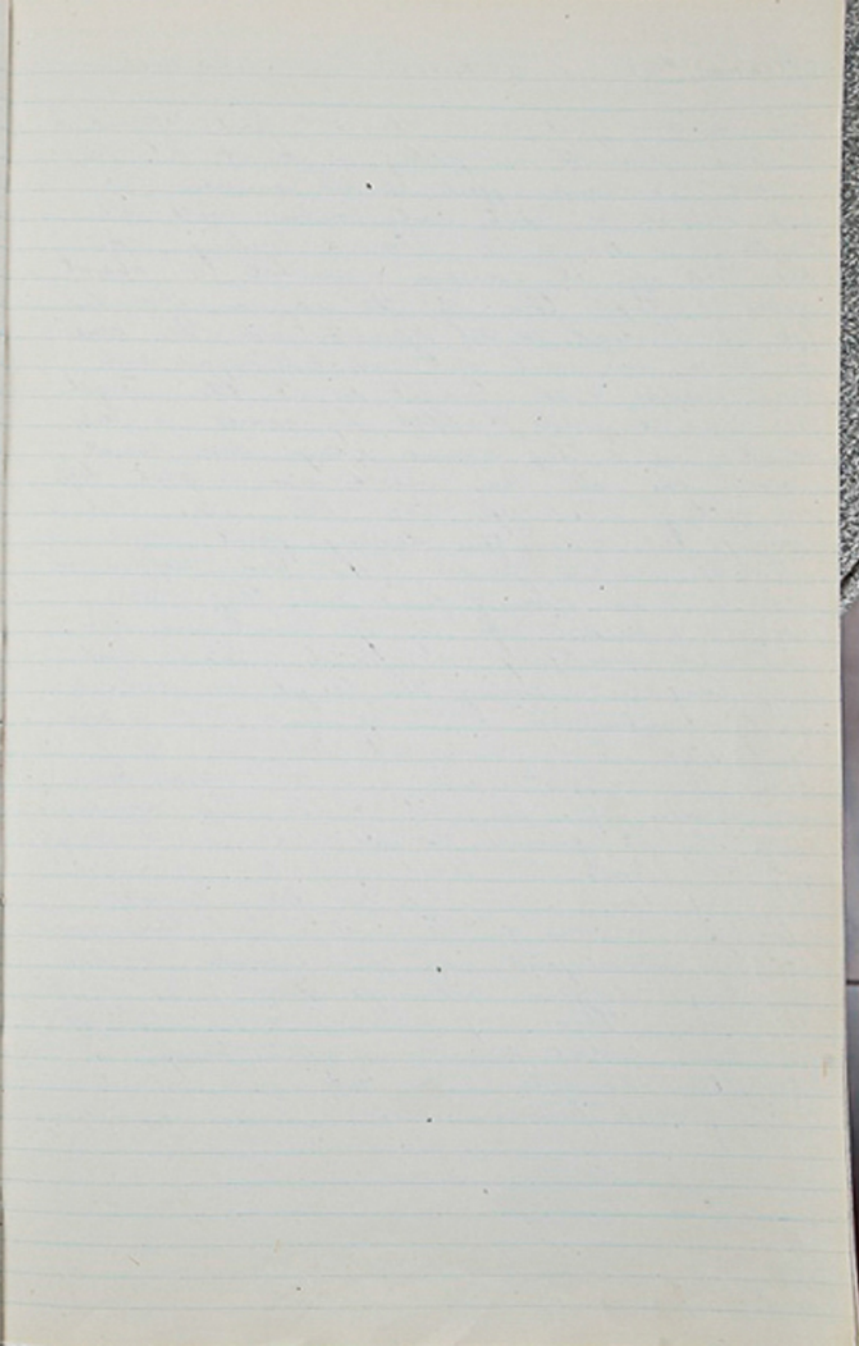
LE MANS

FRANCE

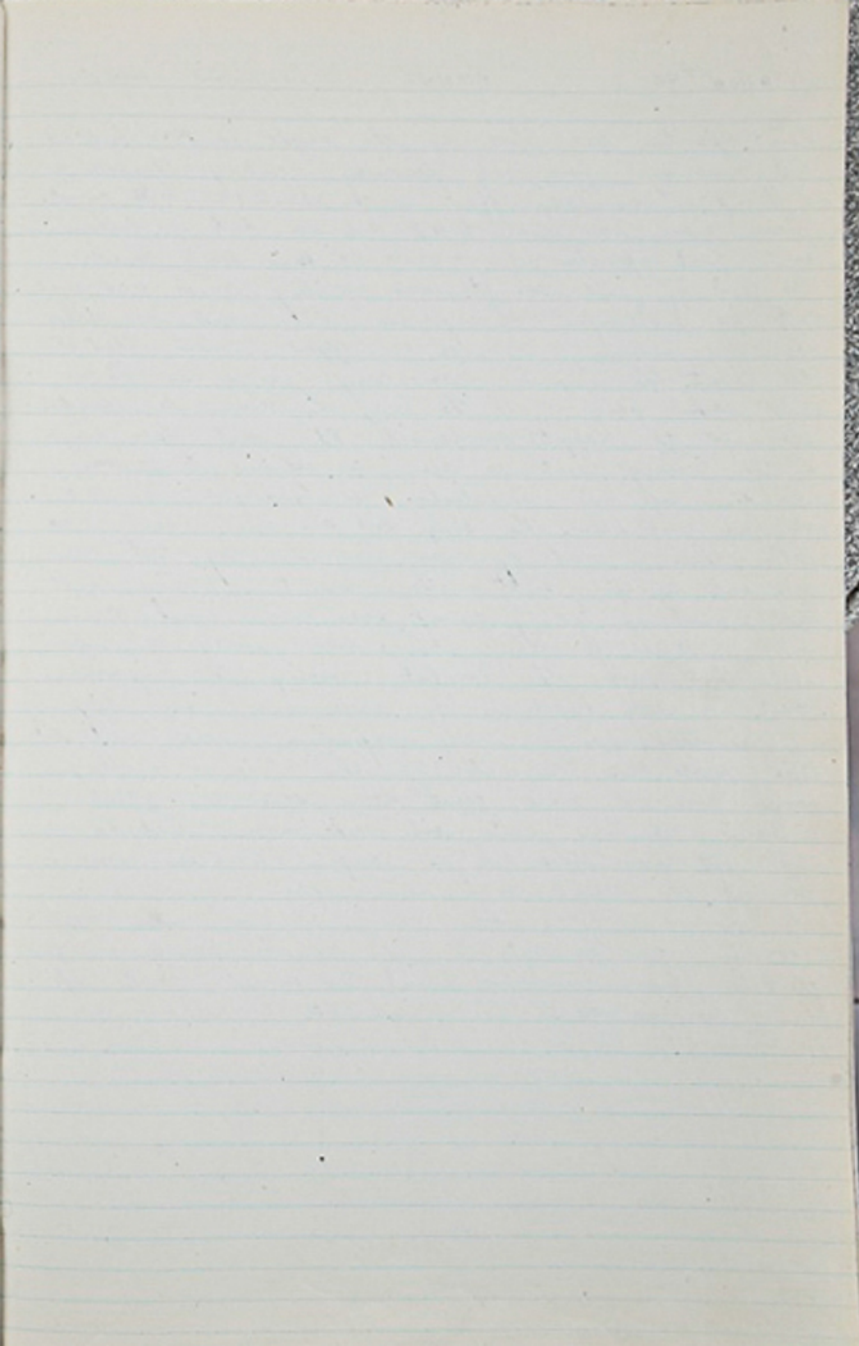
This operation took place on the night of May 22nd, 1944. with #405 + 6 Group once more working together. We were deputy M.C. with S/L John MacDonald D.F.C. as M.C., but we did all the marking. The whole effort was about 150 kites with our squadron doing all the marking. We took off shortly after midnight and of our route with was leading - Littlehampton + down past Le Havre. Our trip in was very quiet and we got there pretty near on time. The flares went down bang-on but our first run was a dummy. On the next run Ross saw the aiming point + marked it perfectly, as the pictures showed later. We did 4 runs + then decided to call it quits. We had great difficulty in contacting MacDonald due to R.T. disturbance. Our route home was nearly the same as the way in except we came via Selsey Bill. We were not first home this time because we were 20 minutes over the target. Some of our boys were at Duisburg and they all arrived back safely. In fact there were no kites lost at all from the squadron. 2 aircraft are missing from the Le Mans raid. P.R.U. claim great destruction was caused in the target area.



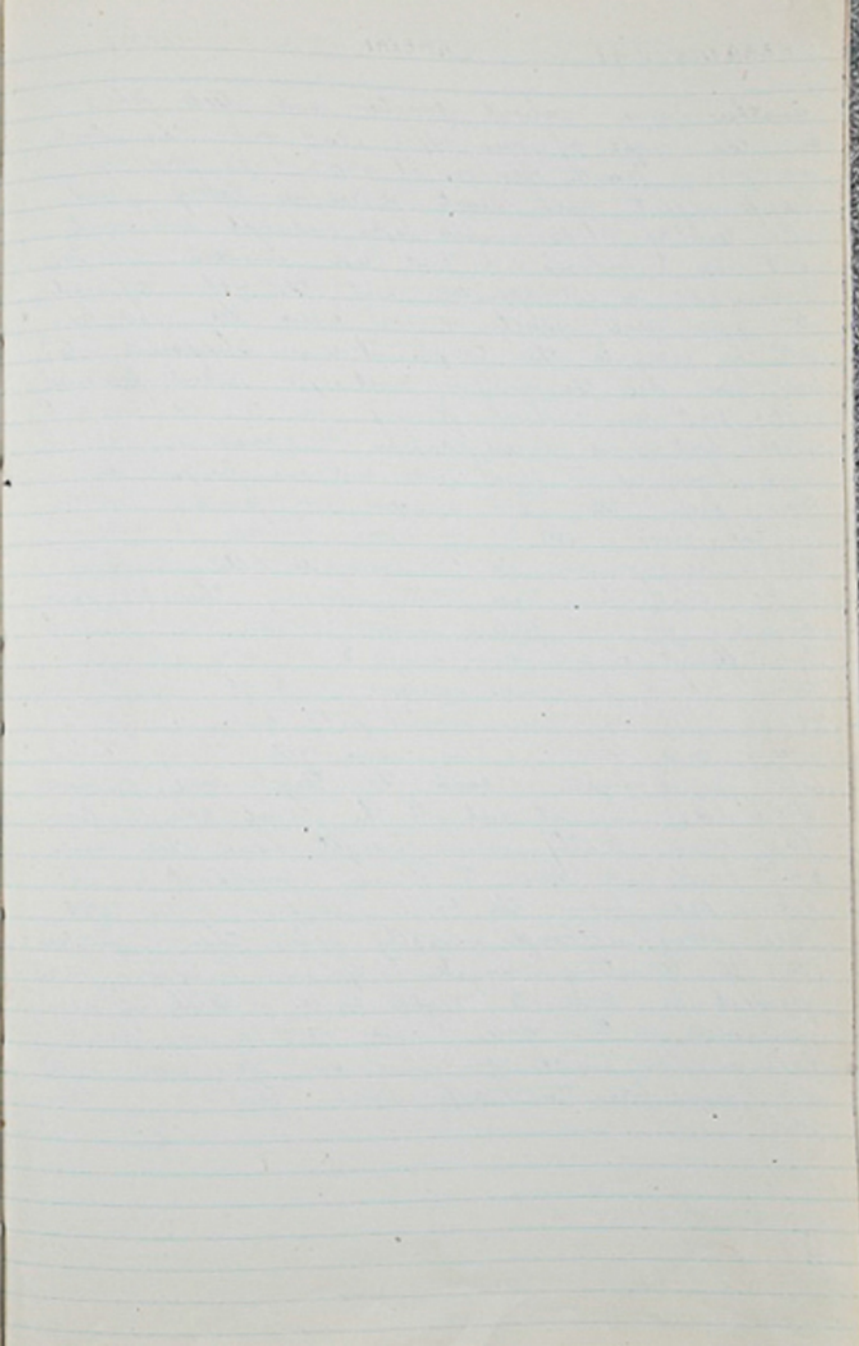
This op. took place on the night of May 27/28, 1944 and was a P.O. effort. We were on as illuminators, the M.C. being from Little Stangton. There was about 85 kites on to wipe out the technical night on this very important airfield. Take off was just before midnight and we set out via Portland and flew past the Channel Islands and so to the target. We had to put our IAS up to 160 and hold it for the whole due to the strengthening of the winds. We got there on time and then dropped flares on the H2S which Baron reported to be long-on. Being the P.O. we made a second run so as to drop our bombs on the aiming point. On leaving the target I looked out the det. dome and saw a gov. down right over the target and it was a lousy sight. On the way home we were followed by a kite with 2 blue lights on each wing, but we evaded him okay. We came home the same way as we went out and had to stick rigidly to track because of English defended areas. We were first home and first to land. All from the squadron returned okay but one kite was missing, the deputy M.C. We didn't get a photograph.



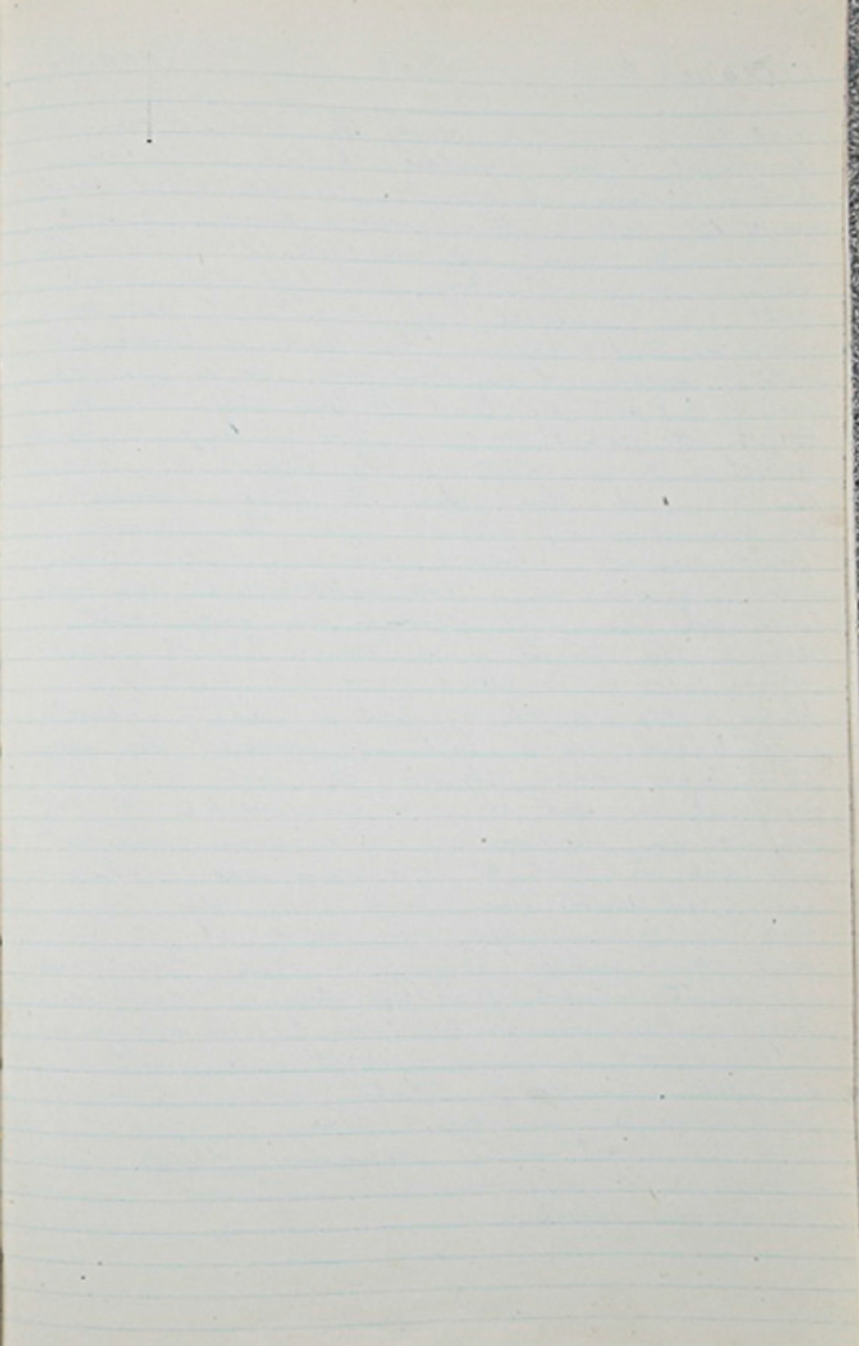
This was our first since the 2nd front opened as we were glad to be getting in on it. It was a 4005 + 6 Group effort, 80 all-Canadian. We were detailed as Deputy master Bomber with S/L Macdonald as H.C. + S/L Stomach backing up. We took off at 2315 hrs. + climbed to about 8,000 + stayed there till the way in. We had 1/2 at Wilcocks as set operator and Vic was on beam. We went out via Chelmsford and near Dieppe + so straight on to the target. We saw the nets dropped by masses of down ahead of us + they seemed okay. We homed down the Gee line which was a great help in getting lined up. The illuminator did a lovely job and the aiming point was clearly visible for all B/H's. Para dropped his load on the aiming point and they were assessed + backed up by S/L Mac Donald. The raid was beautifully concentrated + didn't last very long. On leaving the target we saw a great number of bits of down and a couple of fighters. Our route out took us very close to the battle area and we could see gun flashes etc. The rest of the trip home was straight forward as we were in the range at all times. We flew in cloud nearly all the way home which hid us from enemy fighters. We were 4th to land + about that some to be interrogated. S/L Mac Stomach (S/L Alex Armstrong - navigator w/ Phillips set-up) failed to return. We knew them very well as Mac + Alex slept in our billet and we most certainly miss them. Altogether 29 bits were lost. We got an aiming point picture which is truly gratifying.



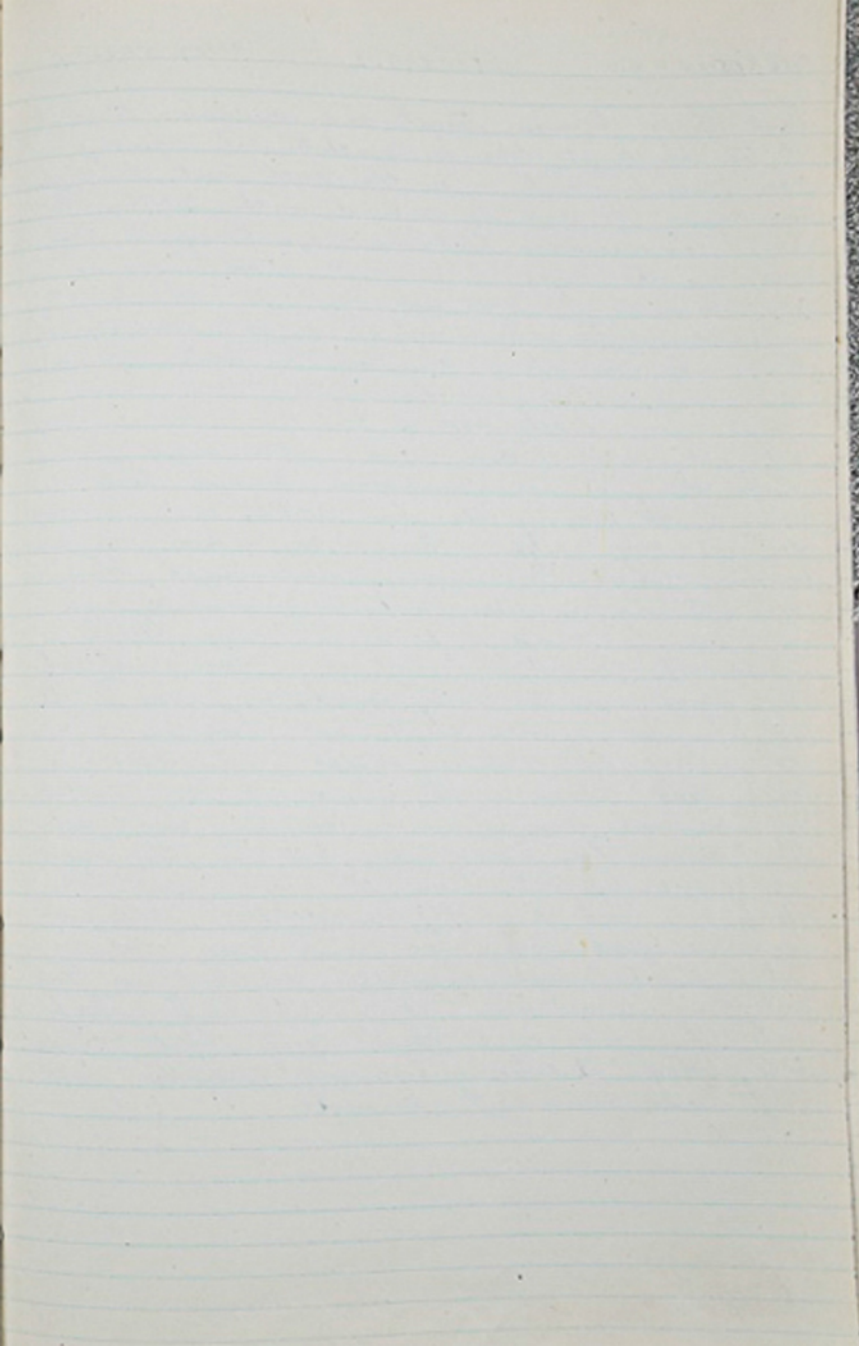
This operation took place on the night of June 13, 1944 and was one for real precision bombing. It was a Group + #405 Sqdn effort with about 100 kites on it. Once more we were D.H.B. and we had 40 balloons so our set operator - Sfc Macdonald was Master Bomber. We took off just as it was getting dark and went out via C. Helmsford + Hungness. We went in all the way between 8 x 10, 000' + dropped below that at the target. The trip in was easy enough as all our aids worked bang on all the way + Baron pin-pointed us into the target. Macdonald's TI's went down bang on the aiming point so all we had to do was back them up. The concentration was beautiful, the best we had ever seen. We only did one run which was better than a lot of runs. On the way out we ran into a Sfc belt + they weren't kidding as it took a lot of getting away from. We saw quite a few kites go down behind us + always a red flare just before the combat. Crossing the English coast we saw hundreds of gliders on their way out and they made a very impressive sight with all their lights on. The rest of the trip was easy enough and we were first home and so first to land. All our belts got back safely but 27 were lost from this and a couple of other raids. We got an aiming point photograph as did everybody else in the Squadron. Since it has been said that this was the best of night precision bombing up to date. It was Sfc John Robert Macdonald's last trip. Some of his crew are Sfc Bill Wright D.C.M. Sfc Bellamy D.C.M. Sfc Blöbe + Sfc Duff.



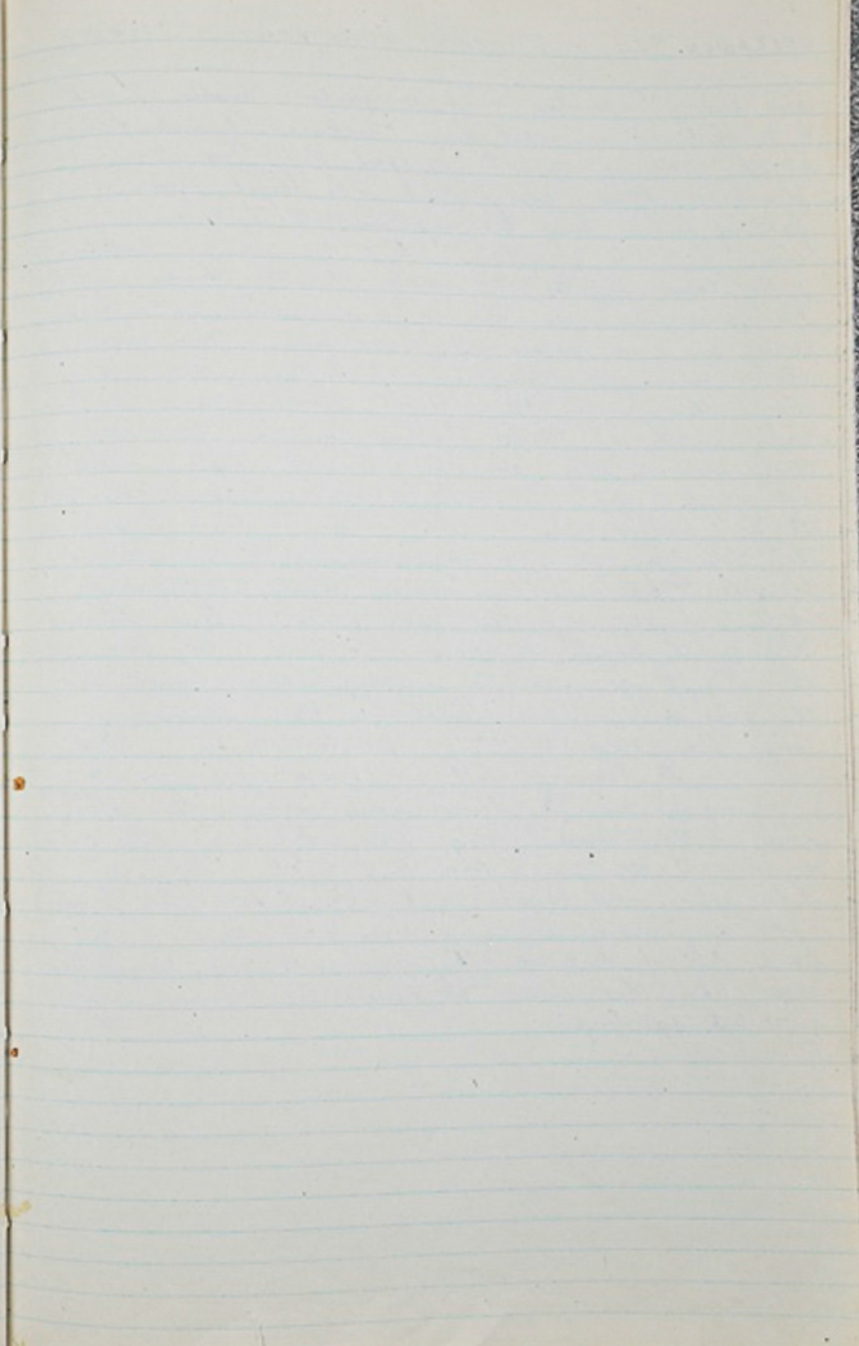
Another French railroad junction and took place on the night of June 14/15 1944 and this time we were Probst Bomber. It was a 2:00's and 1/2 Group effort with about 100 Halifax taking part. We took off at 25 minutes before midnight and went out via Fordness and just near Bunkirk, S/L George Swainby D.F.C. as set operator but the set refused to give good results so we used the nearly all the way to the target. It was supposed to be clear all the way in but 10/10 cloud prevailed until just near Cambrai forcing us to go down to 5,000' but as we neared Cambrai it cleared so we went back up to about 7,000 and we dropped our load from there. On arrival we found a Red 11 on the aiming point so Beroni bashed it up & did a lovely job too. P/O Fisher as O.N.O. came in & on instructions from Trac bombed the concentration consisting of our fellows & Messie Red. This he did beautifully so all Trac had to do was to tell Trac Force to bomb fellows but at first their bombs fell all over Hill's half acre. We did 4 runs and then hit for home after being chased by a Jerry fighter around the target area. Between D.P.E. & H.S. we got out to the coast sky & from there came pretty well straight home. We were 34th back and had to do an overshoot as we got a Red from the A.C.P. All our kites got back okay although slightly later than expected. P/O Stan Armstrong, navigator of S/L Jim Tribbach's crew finished his apt. to night with a total of 66 operational sorties. Fisher & us got aiming point pictures, the fourth consecutive one for us. Only 2 Halifaxes from 1/2 Group were lost in this raid.



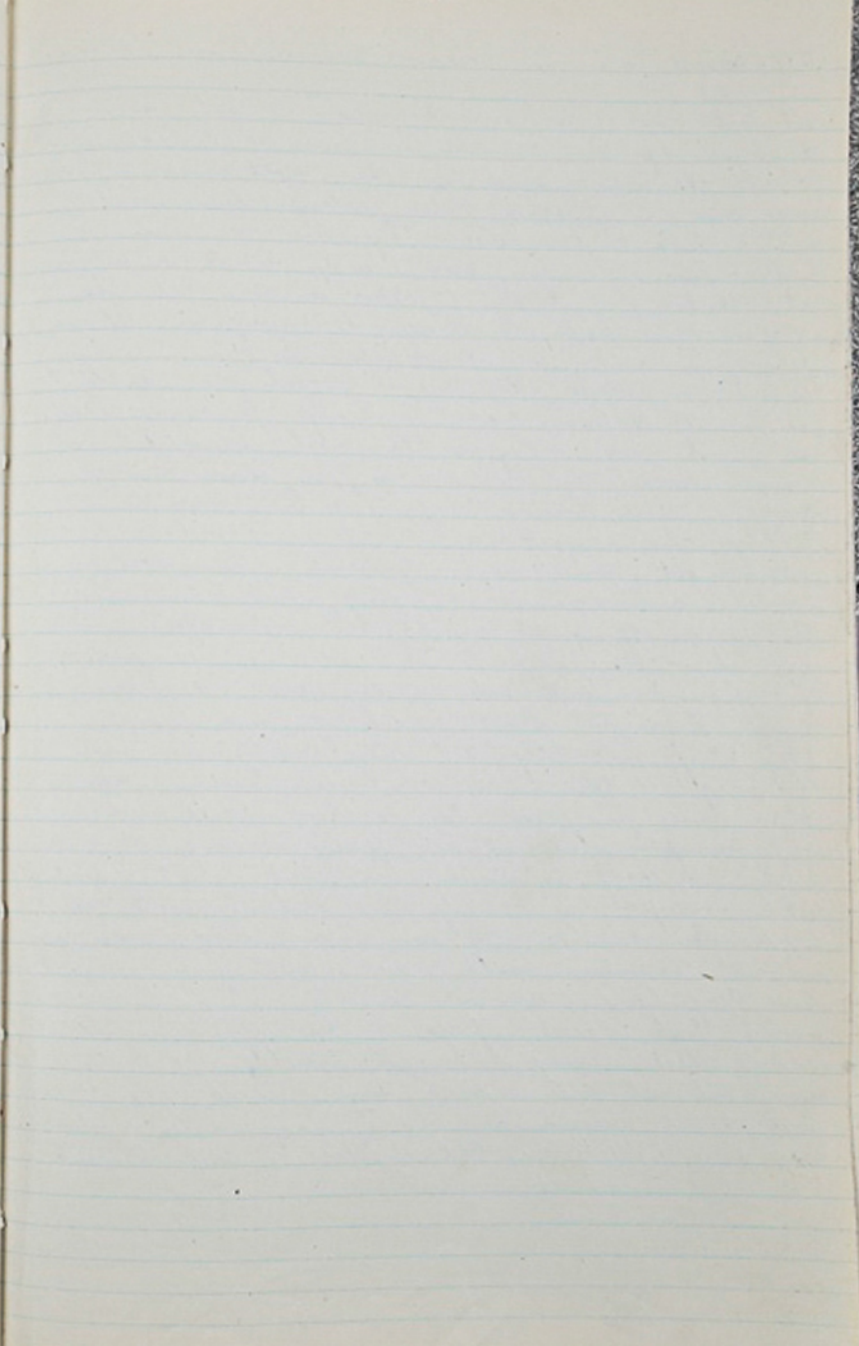
2nd in a row and nearly the same place as the night before only that the time we were just a bomb. It was an all PFF effort with nearly 100 kites in all, masses & lanes. It took place on the night of June 15/16 1944, take-off being 2339 hrs. We were 2nd off and went out via Bradwell Bay and went out down near Dunkirk again. We had Sgt Pender D.F.C. with us again so we had our full crew. We were in and out of cloud all the way to the target at about 10-11,000. On reaching a point about 15 miles short of the target we heard the H.C. give orders when to bomb. However on our run up Baroni saw the aiming point and so bombed visually. The marking & bombing were very concentrated while we were there. The chance of collision was very great around the target so we were told to bank from 7,000 & the cloud was at 7,500. On leaving the target we had a bit of trouble with flak & S.F.'s but we waded them sky. We came home almost the same way as we went in and it was impossible to cut any corners. However we got home about 3:45 and had to wait as some crews were making a beam approach. The cloud base was 800 ft but it was bulky & clear below it so we had no trouble landing. 2 kites from here failed to return, probably due to collision. They were Sgt Kenar (crew Sgt Wilkins 1/3 kites & 1/3 bombs) & Sgt Stewart & crew. 1 aircraft was lost altogether. We got a photo but it wasn't very clear as we didn't carry a flash. However most of the Squadron photos were good so it is assumed the raid was a bang-on effort.



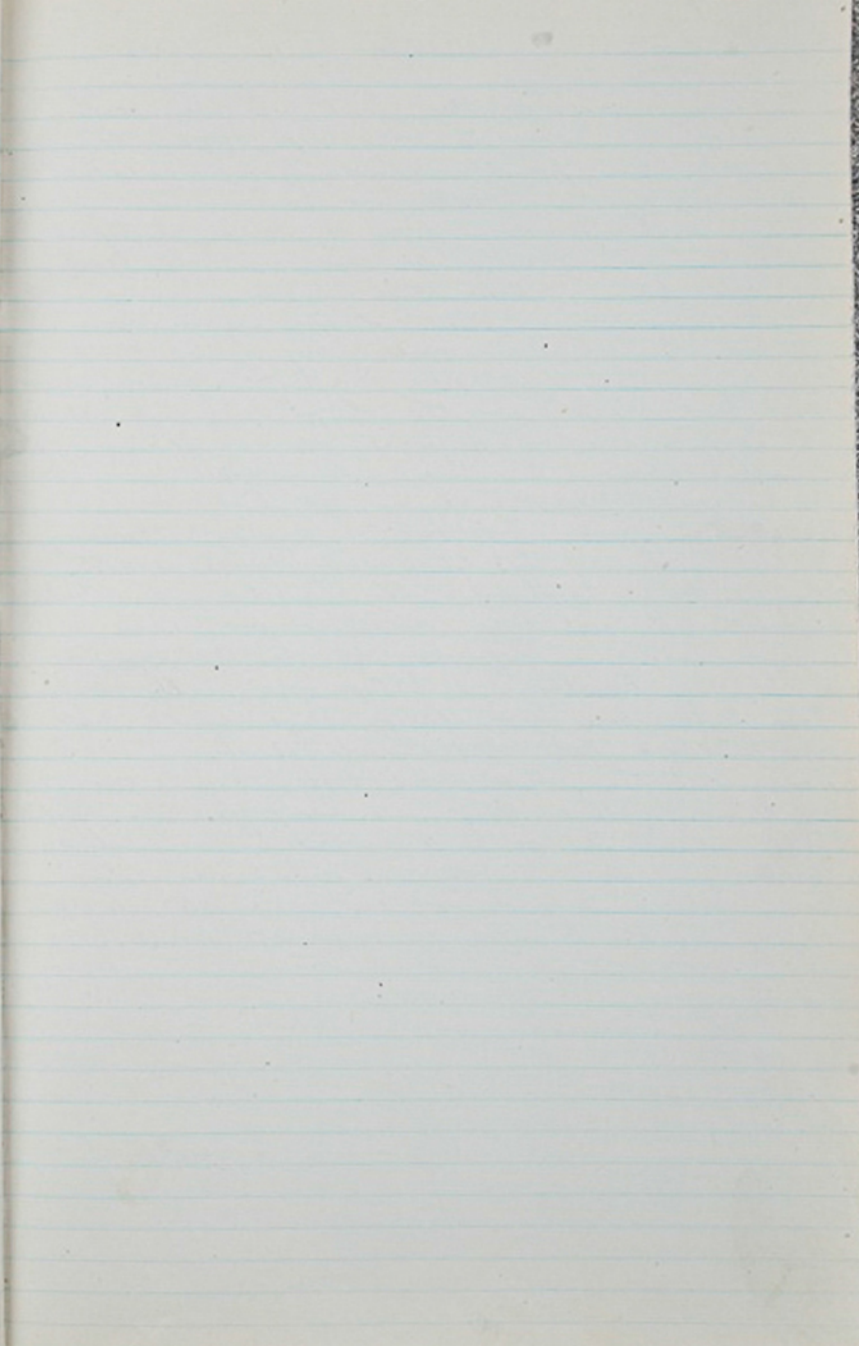
Back to a German target and we sure knew it too. The target was a synthetic oil refinery near Sterkade which is in the North west part of the Rhur. We were on as I.S.U. with 2 other kites from this squadron 1/2 Fisher + 1/2 Perry. It took place on the night of June 16/17, 1944. Take off was 2330 hrs. + we went out west for about 50 miles so as to get a bit of height. Unfortunately the winds changed + we had to put up in speed thus stopping us from getting very much height. Our route took us out near home loft and just north of The Hague. It was a bit shaky going in as there were combats all around us scaring the life out of us. We never did get any higher than 15,300' which was our bombing height. On reaching the target there were no markings down + our "if" was up so we had to bomb on I.S.U. We very likely missed the target but we were bound to hit some place in the "Valley" as it is very well built up. On leaving the target we flew in cloud for a long time which helped my nerves a great deal believe me. We had no nav. aids on the outward journey which took us dead over the Guider Zee, so we came out to the coast by guess + by God. From there we just flew straight a cut a crafty corner thus getting us home in good time. The cloud base was a bit higher to night, about 1500' we had no trouble in getting down. Our 3 kites got back okay but all a bit fierce about going back to the "Happy Valley". 32 kites are missing altogether from this raid. Mac's 45th to night.



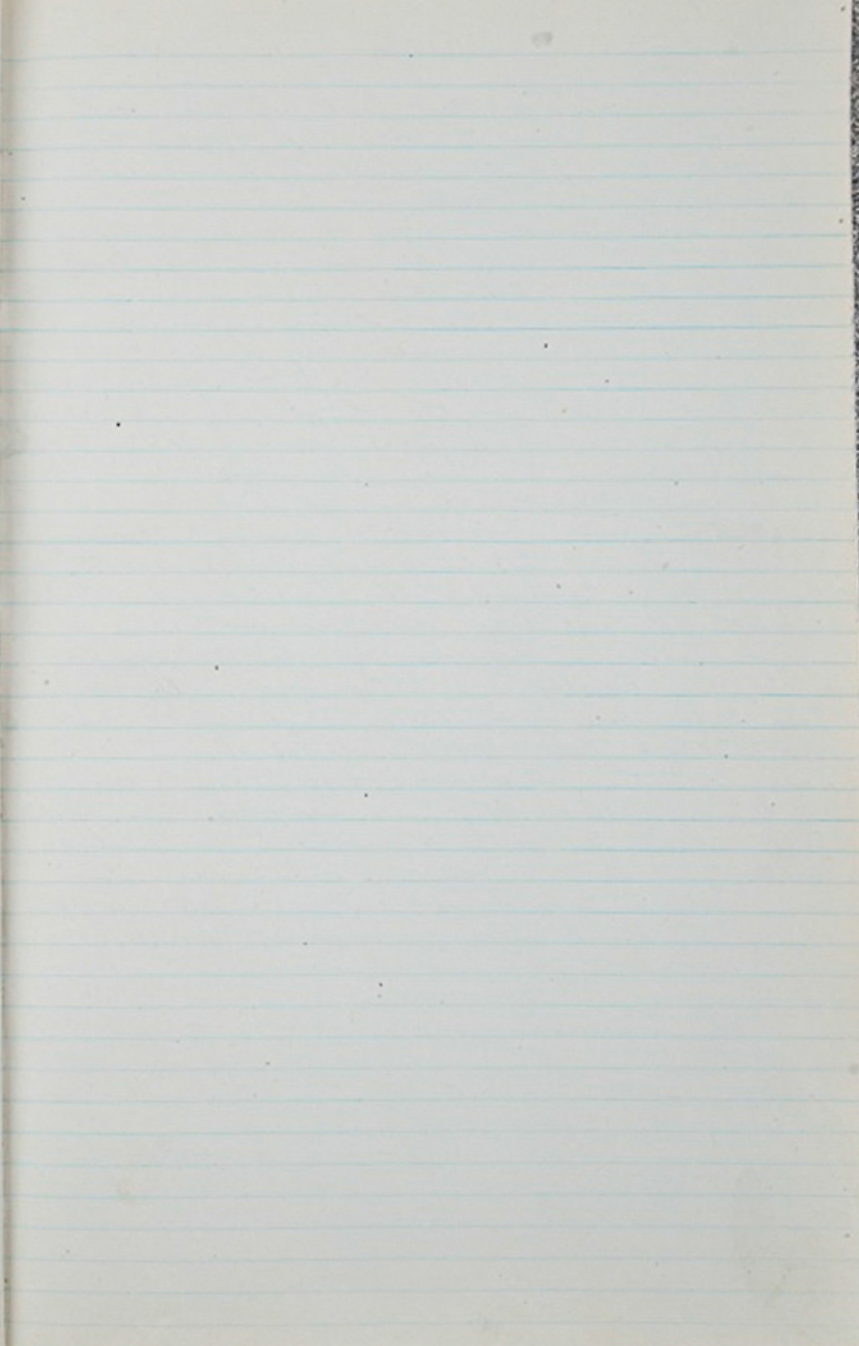
This was 4th operation in 4 consecutive nights which is a bit of a record I'm thinking. It took place on the morning of 18th June 1944 and there were about 100 kites taking part. The target was a factory where they are supposed to be making those pilotless airplanes that are giving London hell these nights. We were Master Bomber with W. Fisher (St. Cyprian - nav) as our Deputy + C/O John Perry as our back-up. Our route took us down heading + hungoness, to a point out to sea + then in to the target which was about 6 miles south of Abbeville. On the run in we could see a glow in the clouds from red W's dropped by the Messier. We were told not to go below the clouds because this place is defended by sp's + some heavy guns. So on arrival Mac gave Main Force orders to bomb certain parts of the glow + he told the Deputies to bomb the glow also. We stayed around the target for awhile hoping for a break in the clouds but no luck so we beelied home. We had to stay up to 10,000 until we were to heading but then we did go down in a hurry on to the clouds where we did some lumpy cloud flying. The sky was beautiful as it was nearly 4:30 A.M. and getting quite daylight. We were about 3rd back and Mac made a lumpy landing. All our kites got back okay and so they should have. Another one like that + we'll have our own long awaited 45 trips.



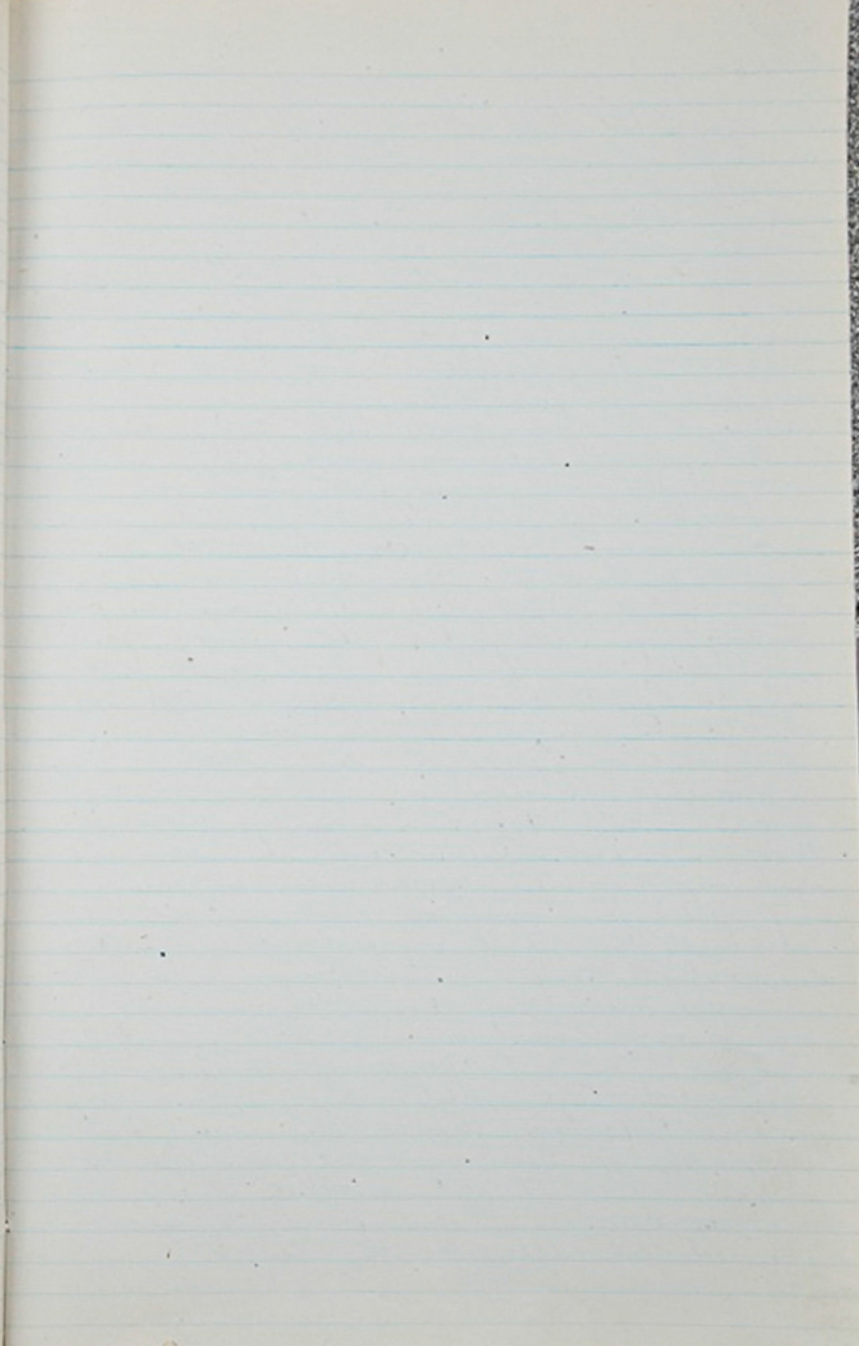
at last we realize our ambition to get a daylight op and it was on June 21st 1944. It was the same place as the night raid a few days ago, a pitiless glass factory. There were only 2 PFF kites on this raid & they were us and P/O Fisher & crew who were our deputy. We were airborne at 1500 hrs and Fisher formatted on us all the way so I had to do all the navigation. It was funny to be on an op while the sun is shining. When we crossed the English coast we could see the 100 Halibos from the 6 Group following behind us & it was by far the most beautiful sight I have ever seen. There was 10% cloud so we dropped our bombs by "if" & the main force telling the main force to do an orbit. What a sight, some went starboard, others port which scared hell out us thinking maybe they did the same thing at night. We dropped from 11,000' to 8,000' hoping to catch a glimpse of the ground but no such luck so Mac told them to pack up & go home which they very promptly did. We did 3 runs over the target & then hit for home trying like the devil to pass the Halibos which we very promptly did. It was lovely coming home & I did exactly no navigation but just looked out & enjoyed the scenery. We came quite close to London on the way home & we had a lovely view of Windsor Castle. Mac cloud flew all the way home & was it ever fun. Fisher landed just ahead of us so we both arrived back without having had any trouble. No kites were lost at all which was a good show. And so we finish our 45th trip after having seen our billets emptied & filled many times.



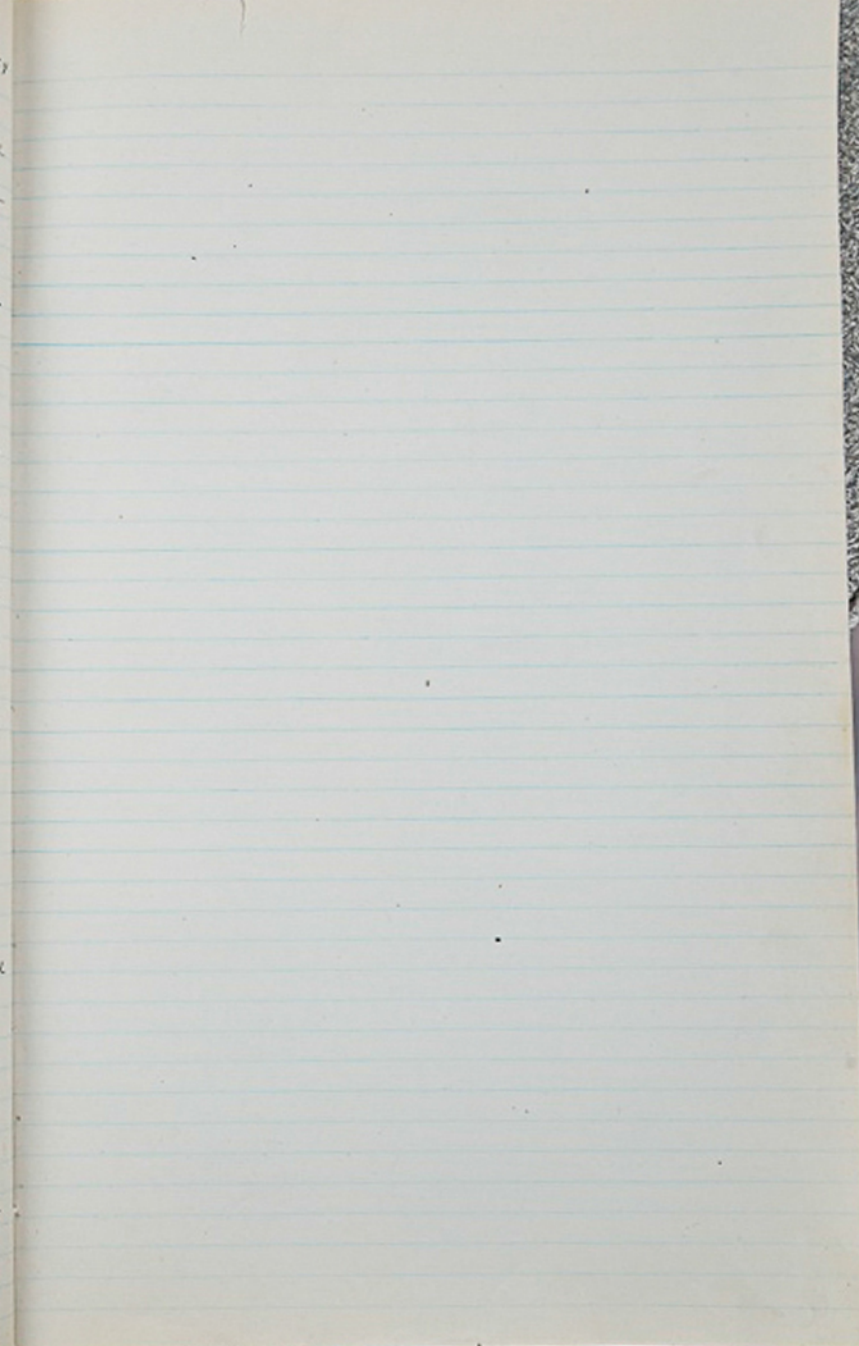
Another daylight, but it was clear with hardly a cloud in the sky and certainly none around the target area. It took place on June 24, 1944, take-off being 1555 hrs. and 4 hours about 1800 hrs. Once again we were Master bomber with Lt Fisher as deputy and 100 Ballies from 46 Group doing the bombing. We formed to the target again so 1/2 Johnson had an easy time of it once more. Our route took us but over Gravesend, Eastbourne + out past Dieppe. I had a good look at Dieppe and it is sure one awful mess from bombing, but then nearly the whole coastline is spick. marked with shell holes. The French country side looked very pretty but the absence of animals in the fields and traffic on the roads was very noticeable. Missie's went down pretty well on the aiming point & we just packed them up. at first Main Force were bombing short so Mac instructed them to bomb with a 1 sec overshoot and after that they really made a job of it. In a matter of seconds the whole forest was covered with smoke making observation impossible. We did 3 runs + then got for home, this time we followed Fisher home so I just looked out the whole way. a couple of times some Ballies formed on us but didn't stay long. They had a very concentrated stream going in that it was very scattered coming out. On return we did a half short-up of the dome in formation. We landed shortly after 6.14 making it 2:10 mins. flying time. The photos we took turned out beautifully showing the whole of the target area ablaze + covered with smoke. No Pils were lost at all - bang on.



Another of these pelatous bomb locations and this time we were to back up mossier T.I.'s. It took place on the night of June 21, 1944. And nearly our whole squadron was on it along with 100 hours from "5 Group. I didn't have a set operator as Vic (Vic Victor Knicker D.F.C.) has been screened and it is a very short trip so we don't really need one. It was quite clear with very little cloud and we went out via Bradwell, North Soken and past Calais to the target. Starting at N. Soken I did a Gee run so had no trouble staying on track. The mossier T.I.'s went down first ahead of us but were scattered so we bombed on a Gee bombing + the centre of the T.I.'s. We didn't waste much time around the target but method hit straight out sea and so on home. We could see them shooting at the Pelatous bombs over London and they were really shooting. The trip home was easy enough as I just Gee studded and we were about 2nd or 3rd home. All the Kites got back home from what we call a very nice easy op. Our photo flash failed to go so we couldn't expect a picture in fact our camera didn't even turn over. So now we have one more to do before we're finished, I hope it's soon.



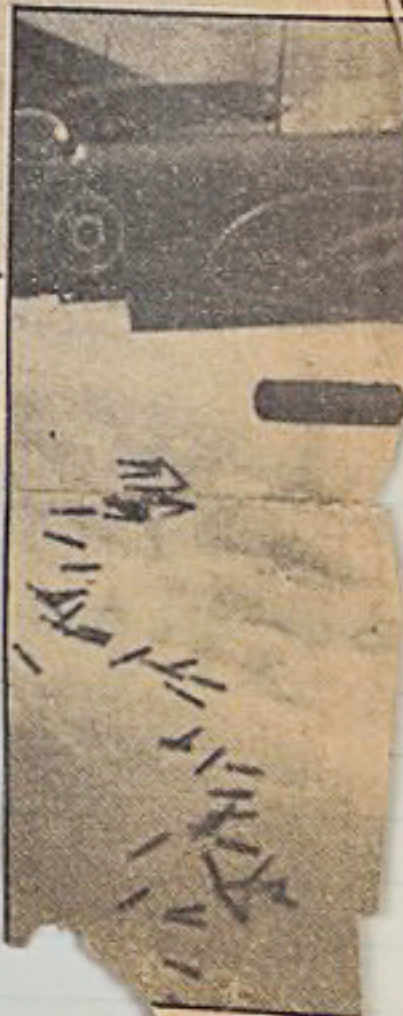
Here, our last trip and it took place on
 the night of June 28, 1944 and for a change
 it was quite a lengthy op. We had S/P
 Sweeney H.C. as our set operator, we had to
 have him to finish us off. The target is
 situated about 15-20 miles west of Saarbuckers
 which is just near the Franco-German Boundary.
 We were doing a Master Bomber job with
 P/O Fisher as a deputy H.C. Our route took
 us down Reading, Worthog and down thru
 France. We had a good trip going out &
 we really enjoying the navigational end of it.
 We stayed very close to track on the
 way except very near the target where we
 found ourselves about 4000 miles south of the
 target and had to alter course very sharply
 to assure our visual B/A of Baroni a good
 bombing run. We marked the aiming point
 very well on the first run so the blind
 markers dropped the plane almost on top of
 the target. Our deputy also did a good run
 and his T-1's landed on top of ours. He
 immediately left for home but we did
 5 runs all the time giving orders to
 the main force where to bomb. The raid
 was very successful which made us feel
 very good for a finish. We set of for
 home and saw quite a few kites shot
 down on the way. As we came past Le Havre
 we could see the flashes of our own
 and enemy guns. The rest of the trip
 was quiet and the sight of the "G.I." on
 our control tower made our hearts leap
 with satisfaction. So ends our operational
 career, an exciting one, but nice to have
 behind us. We lost one kite P/O
 and our crew. 22 aircraft were lost out
 of 111 that attacked the target



**500,000 OF THE
GUTTED DUISBURG RUIN**



High above Duisburg, Germany's greatest inland port until Saturday last, an incendiary shower is dropped from the bomb-bay of a Lancaster. This is one aircraft's quota. Half a million fire-bombs were dropped. . . . A hole in the clouds, through which incendiaries are pouring, can be seen on the left. Reconnaissance planes reported last night that the ruined city was still blazing.



of incendiary
this
a 4,000-pound

Donated to
NANTON LANCASTER SOCIETY AIR MUSEUM

by Susan McCarthy

