

MILITARY
HISTORY
BATTLE OF BRITAIN
10 JUL - 31 OCT 1940

Presented by Ian Murray



TEN OF MY RULES FOR AIR FIGHTING

1. Wait until you see the whites of his eyes
Fire short bursts of 1 to 2 seconds and only when your sights are definitely 'ON'.
2. Whilst shooting think of nothing else, brace the whole of the body; have both hands on the stick, concentrate on your ring sight.
3. Always keep a sharp lookout. "Keep your finger out"!
4. Height gives You the advantage.
5. Always turn and face the attack.
6. Make your decisions promptly. It is better to act quickly even though your tactics are not the best.
7. Never fly straight and level for more than 30 seconds in the combat zone.
8. When diving to attack always leave a proportion of your formation above to act as top guard.
9. INITIATIVE, AGRESSION, AIR DISCIPLINE, and TEAM WORK are words that MEAN something in Air Fighting.
10. Go in quickly - Punch hard - Get out!



A.G. MALAN, W/Cdr.
10/1/42 - 61 OTU

 A black and white photograph of Winston Churchill. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, a dark bow tie, and a dark top hat. He is making a V-sign with his right hand, a gesture of peace or victory. The background is dark and out of focus.

"The Battle of France is over. I expect the Battle of Britain is about to begin."

The battle received its name from a speech Winston Churchill delivered to the British House of Commons on 18 June 1940.

This speech, as much as any other single factor, kept Britain in the war, ultimately leading to the defeat of Nazi Germany.

Closing to Winston Churchill's speech on 18 June 1940

What General Weygand called the Battle of France is over. The Battle of Britain is about to begin. On this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization.

Upon it depends our own British life and the long continuity of our institutions and our empire. The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned upon us. Hitler knows he will have to break us in this island or lose the war.

If we can stand up to him all Europe may be freed and the life of the world may move forward into broad sunlit uplands; but if we fail, the whole world, including the United States and all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new dark age made more sinister and perhaps more prolonged by the lights of a perverted science.

Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duty and so bear ourselves that if the British Commonwealth and Empire last for a thousand years, men will still say "This was their finest hour."

The Battle of Britain



PHASE ONE

26 June – 16 July

The Channel Battles. Scattered and limited day and night attacks and mine-laying sorties, directed mainly against ports and shipping and towns with aircraft factories.



PHASE TWO

17 July – 12 August

The Eagle Attack. Increasing and larger daylight attacks against shipping, ports, and coastal airfields, with increased night attacks against RAF facilities and the aircraft industry.



PHASE THREE

13 August – 6 September

The Attack on Airfields Large-scale daylight attacks against RAF airfields in South-East England, in order to exhaust the RAF's ability to provide a defence. Night attacks continued.



PHASE FOUR

7 September – 2 October

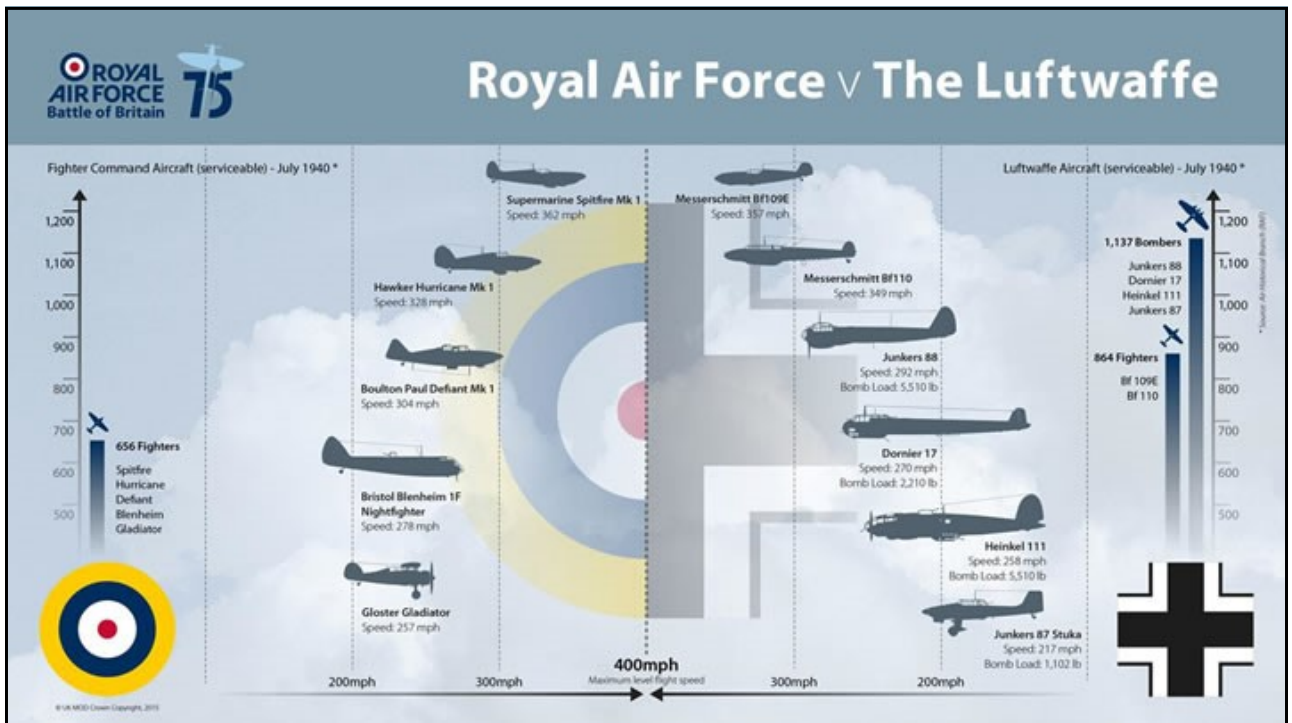
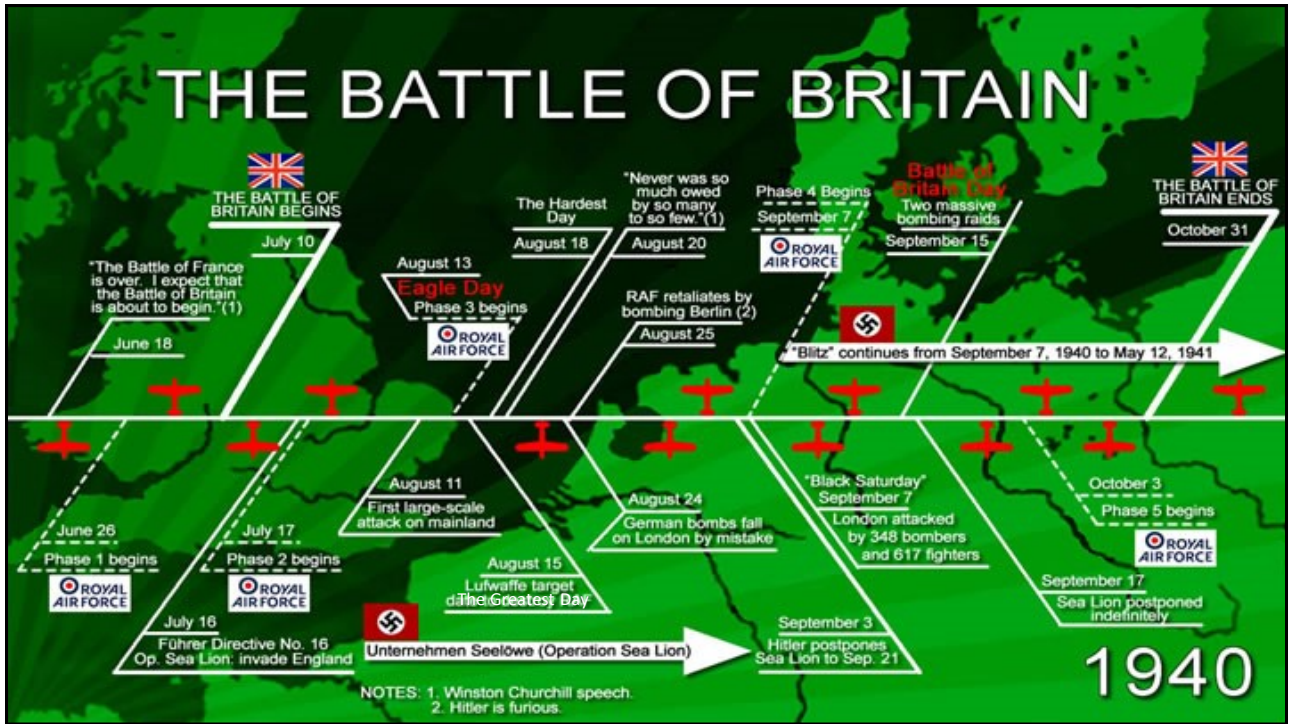
The Blitz (from *blitzkrieg*). Large scale day and night attacks against London, Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow, Hull, Liverpool, Manchester, Plymouth, Portsmouth, and Southampton.



PHASE FIVE

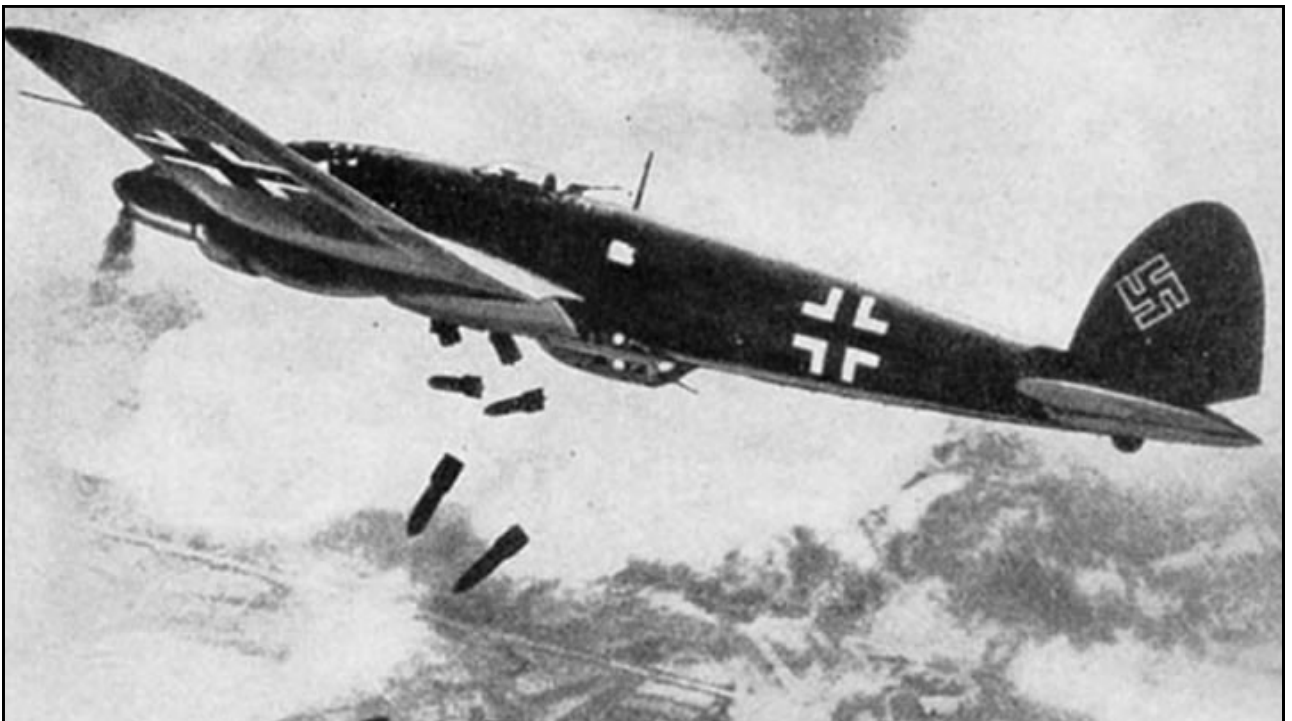
3 October – 31 October

The Blitz. Smaller scale daylight fighter-bombers attacks while large-scale night attacks continued mainly against London.



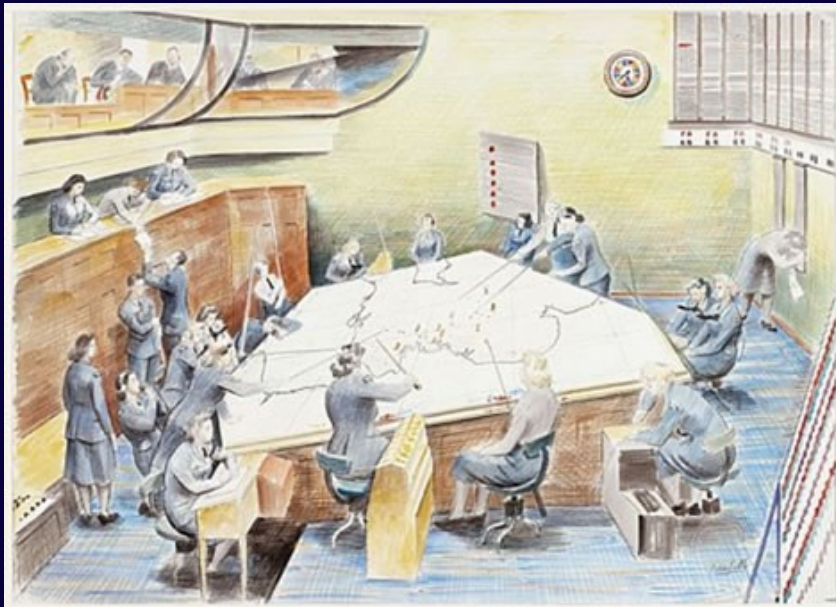
Significant dates

- August 1st** Hitler decreed the Battle of Britain with the command "The German Air Force is to overcome the British Air Force with all means at its disposal, and as soon as possible."
- August 13th** "Eagle Day". The Luftwaffe launched its offensive against Britain, with 1,485 sorties. The Germans lost 45 'planes and the RAF 13.
- August 15th** A day of intense attacks. The Luftwaffe launched a total of 1,790 sorties and lose 75 'planes. The RAF lost 34.
- August 17th** The Germans established an 'operational area' around Britain. In it, any ship was to be sunk without warning.
- August 25th** The RAF launched its first raid on Berlin.
- September 7th** Some 300 German bombers, escorted by 600 fighters, attack London.
- September 15th** The RAF claimed to have shot down 183 German 'planes – a figure later found to be inflated.
- September 17th** Hitler postponed Operation Sea Lion until further notice.
- October 12th** Operation Sea Lion postponed until 1941.





The British had developed a highly effective air defence network



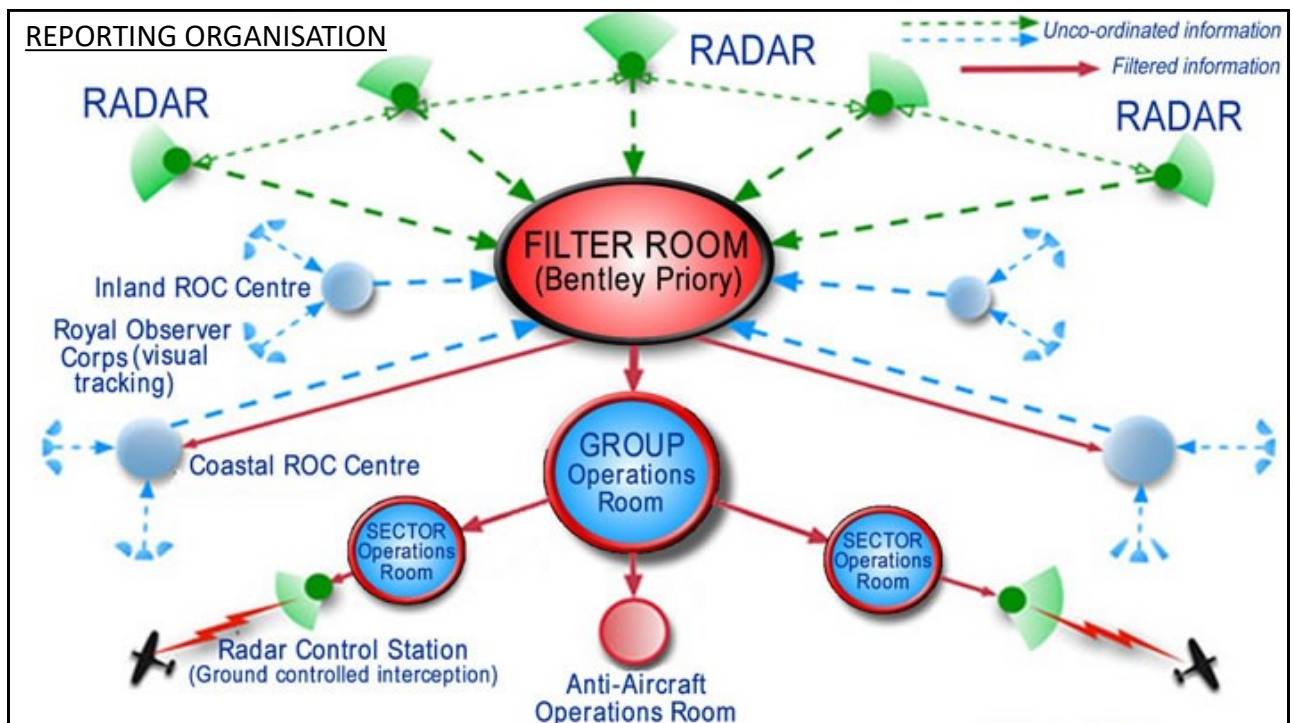
Group Headquarters, Uxbridge: radiolocation plotters, by Roland Vivian Pitchforth.

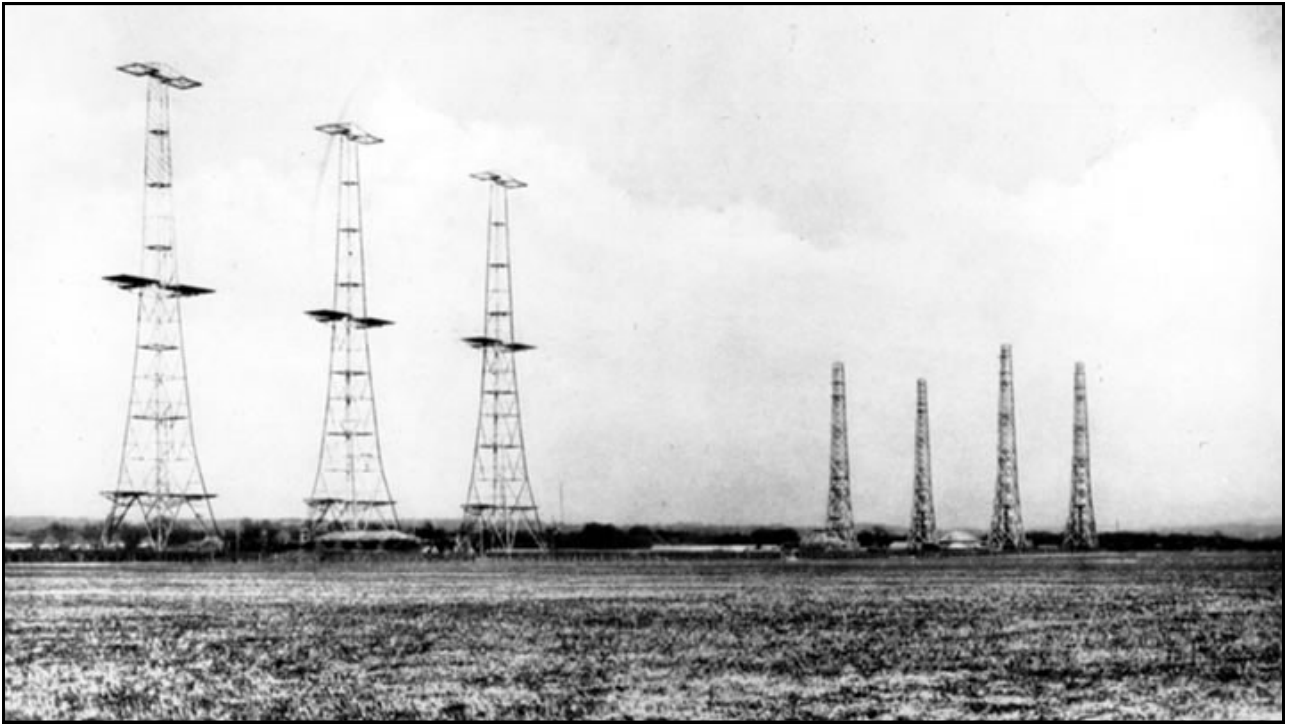
The British developed an air defence network that would give them a critical advantage in the Battle of Britain. The Dowding System – named for Fighter Command’s Commander-in-Chief Sir Hugh Dowding – brought together technology, ground defences and fighter aircraft into a unified system of defence. The RAF organised the defence of Britain into four geographical areas, called ‘Groups’, which were further divided into sectors. The main fighter airfield in each sector – the ‘Sector Station’ – was equipped with an operations room from which the fighters were directed into combat.

Radar gave early warning of Luftwaffe raids, which were also tracked by the Observer Corps. Information on incoming raids was passed to the Filter Room at Fighter Command Headquarters at Bentley Priory. Once the direction of the raid was clearly established, the information was sent to the relevant Group’s headquarters. From there it was sent to the Sector Stations, which would ‘scramble’ fighters into action.

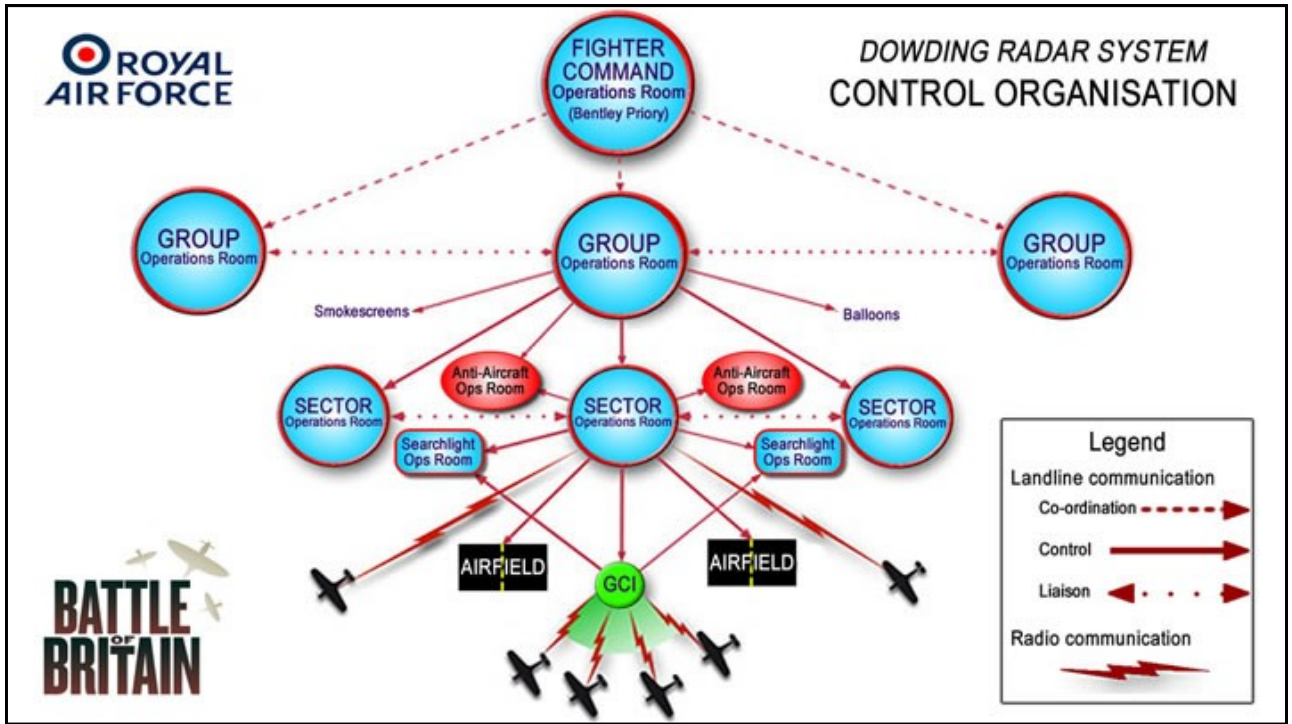
The Sector Stations received updated information as it became available and further directed airborne fighters by radio. The operations rooms also directed other elements of the defence network, including anti-aircraft guns, searchlights and barrage balloons. The Dowding System could process huge amounts of information in a short period of time. It allowed Fighter Command to manage its valuable – and relatively limited – resources, making sure they were not wasted.

<http://www.hillmanweb.com/war/2016/1605.html>

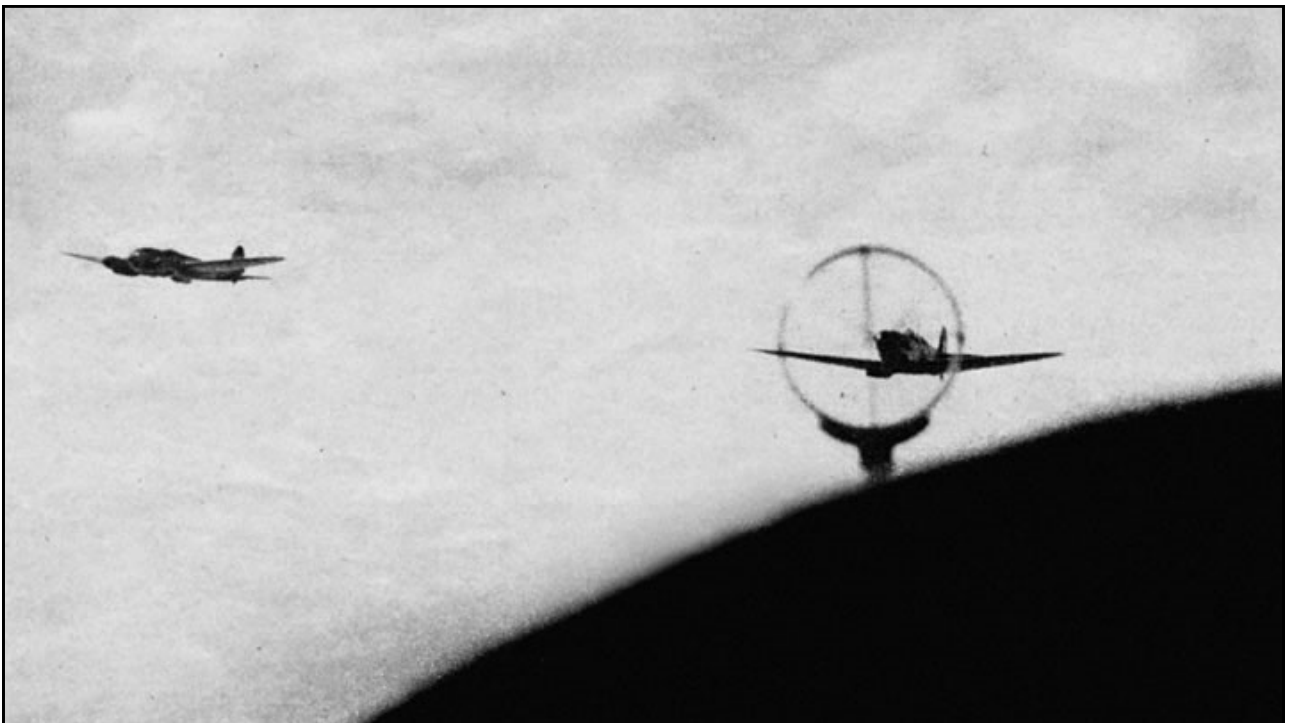
















YEAR	AIRCRAFT		PILOT, OR 1ST PILOT	2ND PILOT, PUPIL OR PASSENGER	DUTY (INCLUDING BRANCH AND EQUIPMENT)	TOTALS CARRIED FORWARD				TOTALS CARRIED FORWARD				
	Type	No.				Hours	Miles	Hours	Miles	Hours	Miles			
July	14	HOBT/1201	A.P.	SELF	TYPE GOLF	25.20	192.00	4.10	2.26			26	12.70	4.20
"	"	"	F.	"	A.P.P.		1.00							
"	"	"	F.	"	"		1.00							
"	16	"	M.	"	SOUTH COAST		1.00							
"	"	"	"	"	APPROX.		1.00							
"	17	"	N.	"	SEA FIRING		2.00							
"	18	"	L.	"	INVESTIGATE 4 ALT. AIRTRK		1.00							
"	19	"	M.	"	"		1.00							
"	"	"	"	"	HEIGHT TEST (21.00)		1.10							
"	20	"	"	"	OPERATIONAL TAKE OFF		1.00							
"	"	"	"	"	"		1.00							
"	"	"	"	"	" (empty slots)		1.00							
"	21	"	M.	"	A.P.P.		1.10							
"	22	"	L.	"	OPERATIONAL TAKE OFF		.90							
"	23	"	N.	"	"		.50							
"	"	"	"	"	A.P.P.		.50							
"	"	"	"	"	OPERATIONAL TAKE OFF		.50							
"	"	"	"	"	"		1.00							
"	8	"	F.	"	2000 LBS. VLS				1.00					
"	14	"	B.	"	OPERATIONAL TAKE OFF		.50							
"	"	"	"	"	"		.50							
"	20	"	N.	"	"		1.00							
GRAND TOTAL YEAR TO DATE						212.00	1270.00	4.10	4.26			26	12.70	4.20
1.16. Hrs. 30. Miles														



*Sorry, mate!
There's
nothing in
here about a
trip across
any water
anytime
soon!*

**Eglatine
Cottage? Go
down the land
past the
Messerschmitt,
bear left and
keep on past the
two Dorniers,
then a sharp
right turn at the
Heinkel and it's
just past the
first Junkers.**

