

# DOWNLOAD PDF FIGHTER COMMAND ORDER OF BATTLE, 7 SEPTEMBER 1940

## Chapter 1 : BBC ON THIS DAY | 15 | Victory for RAF in Battle of Britain

*This article lists the RAF Fighter Command order of battle at 15 September , during the Battle of Britain.*

The change in targeting was driven by Goring and supported by Kesselring, who felt that the anti-airfield campaign had run its course, and that Fighter Command was finished. But Sperrle protested strongly, believing that Fighter Command probably still had a thousand aircraft left, and wished to continue to scourge the No. But it would be a mistake to see the targeting of London as necessarily marking a fundamental change in direction by the Luftwaffe. And London was a vitally important target. Small wonder that it was a tempting target. But just as Goring had rethought his battle plans, so too did Dowding adjust his tactical thinking, and restructured his forces. Thereafter, the frontline squadrons in No. Class B squadrons were fully manned and fully established, and were ready to be called into action, but might be lacking in combat experience or be suffering from a degree of fatigue. Finally, Class C squadrons were those which had suffered severe losses, and were being rested and re-equipped. Experienced survivors from these units were taken as soon as they were ready to act as replacements for pilots killed or wounded in the higher category units. This cut the link between an individual pilot and his original unit, but ensured that newly formed squadrons would have a core of combat-experienced veterans. Meanwhile, Keith Park instructed his controllers and pilots to henceforth obey altitude orders from Group, without making any personal interpretations of the heights given. He did this to ensure that climbing fighters did not emerge below their targets, but it caused delays and sometimes meant that the RAF fighters fought the escorts instead of the bombers, which often flew slightly lower. As if to deliberately confuse Fighter Commander, the Luftwaffe began 7 September as it had begun many of the past days, with a handful of reconnaissance sorties, but thereafter, the radar screens remained clear and the plotting tables empty. The long delay seemed ominous. History records that the first raid counter was placed on the plotting table at Bentley Priory at , and that within minutes counters representing many hundreds of aircraft were on the table. This colossal armada numbered aircraft, stepped up from m to m 14,ft to 23,ft advancing along a Dowding and Park correctly guessed that only London could be the target of such a vast force, and at 11 fighter squadrons were ordered into the air, with 21 units airborne by All available fighters raced towards the capital, with no thought of standing guard over their airfields. The RAF fighters were massively out-numbered by the German escorts, but tore into the enemy with great ferocity. The enemy bombers turned around and were all en route home by , albeit with huge gaps in the neat formations. As the skies above London emptied of aircraft, the fight was taken over by the firemen, who fought the spreading fires with a grim determination. They fought to douse the burning buildings, the wooden-block road surfaces on older streets and even the surface of the River Thames itself where floating liquid sugar ignited , all the while with the warehouses of paint, oil, explosives and ammunition blowing up in terrifying explosions. But it was not just the obviously dangerous materials that exploded - flour and pepper were equally dangerous, and the conflagration threatened to become self-sustaining as the fire sucked in oxygen from the surrounding streets. Burning debris was tossed into the air like straw, setting new fires wherever it landed. The largest was in the Surrey Docks, where the fire was too large to classify, and where it was arbitrarily rated as a appliance fire. At about , the next wave of German bombers began to pour down tons of incendiaries. An enormous pall of smoke hung over the capital, and the fires burned on. The first day cost Fighter Command dear, with the loss of 15 Spitfires and four pilots and 17 Hurricanes with seven pilots. But the Luftwaffe lost 38 aircraft, including 14 Bf s. The balance of attrition was not very different from that suffered during the past weeks, although this changed as the campaign wore on, and the onslaught on London soon became much more costly to the attacker than to the defenders. And the blitz against London lasted long after the Battle ended, bleeding the Luftwaffe white in the process. The attacks continued on 76 consecutive nights, with only a single exception. This was 2 November, when the weather was too poor to allow the German bombers to operate. Perhaps most crucially, the Fighter Command airfields, and the Chain Home stations were given precious

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respite by the switch in targeting. Even the pilots themselves were rested when not actually in the air over London. Squadrons spent whole days without coming to readiness, and there was even time for newly arrived pilots to be taken on training and familiarisation sorties -luxuries which would have been unthinkable only days before.

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## Chapter 2 : RAF Squadrons on 10 May – aircraft equipment and bases

*This article lists the RAF Fighter Command order of battle at 15 September , during the Battle of Britain. Fighter Command RAF Fighter Command Headquarters was located at RAF Bentley Priory, near Stanmore in North London.*

It was formed in to allow more specialised control of fighter aircraft. It served throughout the Second World War. It earned great fame during the Battle of Britain in , when the Few held off the Luftwaffe attack on Britain. The Command continued until 17 November , when it was disbanded and the RAF fighter force was split into two categories; defence and attack. On 23 February , No. Running low on pilots during the battle of Britain , Fighter Command accepted foreign pilots into its ranks. Over the next few years, the Command expanded greatly and replaced its obsolete biplane squadrons – generally outfitted with Bristol Bulldog , Gloster Gauntlet and Hawker Fury biplane fighters leading up to, and through the period of its founding – with two of the most famous aircraft ever to fly with the RAF, the Hawker Hurricane and the Supermarine Spitfire. The supreme test of Fighter Command came during the summer of when the German Luftwaffe launched an offensive aimed at attaining air superiority over the Channel and the UK as a prerequisite to the launch of a seaborne invasion force codenamed Operation Sea Lion. Fighter Command was divided into a number of Groups, each controlling a different part of the UK. In the end, the Germans failed to attain air superiority, although the RAF had been eating into its reserves during the battle, as had the Luftwaffe. By May , the Squadrons based at all the main fighter airfields were now to operate together as integral Fighter Wings, under the tactical control of the newly created post of wing Leader, invariably an experienced veteran of wing commander rank. Various types of short-penetration fighter operations were tried out in a bid to draw the Luftwaffe into a war of attrition, and keep inordinate numbers of fighters tied down in France, particularly after the German attack on the Soviet Union in June Large numbers of Spitfires were sent out with small groups of medium bombers in often vain attempts to lure the German fighters into combat. Most of the factors that had allowed Fighter Command to win the Battle of Britain were now reversed. For example, British pilots who were shot down in and survived would be patched up and sent back to their units as quickly as possible. In , over France, a shot down pilot would, as likely as not, end up a prisoner of war. The year saw RAF Fighter Command claim some Luftwaffe fighters shot down although only were lost from all causes, in combat for losses of approximately RAF fighters lost. Parallel to the day offensive in was the ongoing night bomber attacks against the United Kingdom in January to May. By this time, until May , the Luftwaffe effort was aimed against both civilian and industrial targets. The Bristol Beaufighter became the prime nightfighter , equipped with airborne radar , it proved ever more effective against the bombers, with the ground-based organisation that proved so efficient in now guiding the night fighters to their targets. An increasing number of anti-aircraft guns and searchlights were also radar-controlled, improving accuracy. With the impending invasion of Russia requiring the movement of air power to the East, the Blitz ended in May with Fighter Command in complete control of the night sky over the UK. The difficult task of slowly grinding down the Germans continued into and Fighter Command deployed their new Hawker Typhoon units at this time. The most notable offensive battle took place over Dieppe, France when an ill-fated commando-style raid was mounted there in August Dieppe Raid. Although the RAF succeeded in preventing the Luftwaffe from interfering with the shipping, which was its primary aim, its perceived success was misleading. Despite claims at the time that more German aircraft than British had been shot down kills were claimed by the RAF postwar analysis showed Allied aircraft losses amounted to , including 88 RAF fighters and 18 bombers. Of the fighter losses 29 were from flak, one ran out of fuel, two collided, and one was a victim of friendly fire. Included in that total were 28 bombers, half of them Dornier Do s from KG 2. One of the two Jagdgeschwader fighter wings, JG 2 , lost 14 Fw s and eight pilots killed. JG 26 lost six Fw s with their pilots. In , the most notable event was a very important administrative one. As the name of the former suggests, its primary aim was defence of the UK from attack, with the latter concentrating on supporting ground forces after the eventual

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invasion of Europe. Operation Overlord , the invasion of France was launched on 6 June RAF fighters swarmed over the battle area and, along with their American counterparts, suppressed the meagre German opposition. They also directly supported ground forces by strafing enemy positions and transport. Later in the year, the final major test of Fighter Command renamed back in October [10] in the war occurred against the V-1 flying bomb during Operation Crossbow. RAF fighters also supported the strategic bombing of Operation Crossbow, such as with long-range intruder operations that attacked German airfields and aircraft e. The corps would continue as a civilian organisation but wearing a Royal Air Force uniform and administered by Fighter Command. The ROC was a defence warning organisation operating in the United Kingdom between and 31 December when it was stood down. Initially established for an aircraft recognition and reporting role that lasted through both world wars, the organisation switched to a Cold War nuclear reporting role during the s. The 10, ROC volunteers were trained and administered by a small cadre of sixty nine uniformed full-time professional officers under the command of a serving RAF Air Commodore. However, its target changed from Germany to the Soviet Union. A Canadian fighter wing, No. A long succession of fighter aircraft saw service with Fighter Command during the s and s. The Lightning was the only purely British supersonic aircraft to enter service. That was due to a disastrous defence review in During the mids, the performance of the new surface to air missiles was improving at an enormous rate. Duncan Sandys , the Minister of Defence at the time needed to find cuts in the British defence budget, since the UK was in serious danger of being bankrupted by its defence spending. The rate of improvement of surface to air missiles seemed to indicate that they would soon be able to shoot any manned aircraft out of the sky. Consequently, in an infamous statement in the Defence White Paper the Sandys review declared that manned aircraft were obsolescent and would soon become obsolete. All programmes for manned aircraft that were not too far along were cancelled. The Lightning was the only one of a number of new supersonic aircraft that was too far along to cancel. That decision, combined with the increasing costs of developing aircraft crippled the British aircraft industry and made Fighter Command and the RAF reliant on foreign or jointly developed aircraft. It was now becoming clear that the RAF was simply becoming too small to justify their continued existence as separate entities. Consequently, in , Fighter Command and Bomber Command were joined together to form Strike Command , both becoming groups within the new command.

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## Chapter 3 : RAF Fighter Command Order of Battle - Wikipedia

*RAF Fighter Command - RAF Fighter Command was one of the commands of the Royal Air Force. It was formed in to allow more specialised control of fighter aircraft and it served throughout the Second World War.*

Strategic targets From July coastal shipping convoys and shipping centres, such as Portsmouth , were the main targets. A month later the Luftwaffe shifted its attacks to RAF airfields and infrastructure other useful war targets. As the battle progressed the Luftwaffe also targeted aircraft factories and ground infrastructure. Coastal radar stations were bombed, so that at one point only one radar mast was standing. The British used a back-up system of human observers to get information to the headquarters of Fighter Command. Civilian targets Eventually the Luftwaffe switched to attacking population centres, such as towns and cities , as well as factories. After the RAF bombed Berlin , and German air force bases in France , Adolf Hitler cancelled his orders not to bomb population centres and ordered attacks on British cities. On 7 September , a massive series of raids with nearly four hundred bombers and more than six hundred fighters targeted docks on the Thames in London, day and night. They returned, feeling sorry about their limited success, and blamed the delay on being requested too late. The Luftwaffe began to abandon their morning raids, with attacks on London starting late in the afternoon for 57 nights of attacks in a row. Fighter Command had been suffering low morale, short of men and machines, and the break from airfield attacks allowed them to recover. This meant that, week by week, the defenders were getting stronger, and the losses suffered by the Luftwaffe were growing. On 15 September two massive waves of German attacks were prevented by the RAF, with every aircraft of 11 Group being used on that day. The total casualties on this important day were 60 German and 26 RAF aircraft shot down. The German defeat caused Hitler to order, two days later, the "postponement" of preparations for the invasion of Britain. Afterwards, in the face of increasing losses in men, aircraft and the lack of good replacements, the Luftwaffe switched from daylight to night-time bombing. The German airmen survived to fight a battle against British troops stationed locally. It is said to be the first time in nearly years that armed invaders had fought with British soldiers on British soil. The Dowding system The keystone of the British defence was the detection, command, and control which ran the battle. Its use, plus by information by the Royal Observer Corps, was crucial. It allowed the RAF to intercept incoming German aircraft. Radar operators were linked via telephone whose wires were laid deep underground with concrete anti-bomb protection p47 to an operational centre. This centre was Fighter Command control at Bentley Priory. The performance of the Spitfire over Dunkirk came as a surprise, although the German pilots retained a strong belief that the was the superior fighter. However, the Bf E had a much larger turning circle than either the Hurricane or the Spitfire. The two British fighters had eight Browning machine guns, while most Bf Es had two machine guns and two wing cannons. The Bf E and the Spitfire were superior to each other in key areas; for instance, at some altitudes, the Bf could out-climb the British fighter. He also led the Duxford Wing. German invasion barges waiting at Boulogne Harbour, France during the Battle of Britain Polish squadron pilots, The Battle of Britain anniversary parade at Buckingham Palace in

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## Chapter 4 : Talk:RAF Fighter Command Order of Battle - Wikipedia

*Fighter Command Order of Battle September 15th The Luftwaffe Order of Battle at 7th September Messerschmitt Bf single engined fighter; GRUPPE.*

Page 5 – The battle: Faced with multiple raids and little time to deploy his units, he had scrambled single squadrons to make interceptions. Their success depended on rapidly reaching the optimum altitude to attack the oncoming Luftwaffe German air force bombers or to defend themselves from escorting fighters. These massed formations of fighters could, it was asserted, have a decisive impact against an enemy bomber force. Opponents pointed out that the time taken to form up a wing meant that it would likely strike at enemy bombers only after they had dropped their bombs and were heading home. Trafford Leigh-Mallory Although he considered the Big Wing approach impracticable in the circumstances confronting his group, Park did employ two-squadron formations where possible later in the battle. On that day a bomber force attacked London, the first heavy daylight raid. It quickly became apparent that this was no random event - a succession of raids on the capital followed. From this time night bombing raids on London, which had happened on occasions over previous weeks, also became more intense. With its airfields no longer the primary Luftwaffe target, Fighter Command was provided with a respite, which it used to good effect to restore its position. The reason for this change of strategy - later seen as the decisive moment in the battle - remains unclear. One explanation is that Hitler demanded that the Luftwaffe bomb London in retaliation for an RAF bombing raid on Berlin on the night of August - a raid that was itself retaliation for the first major Luftwaffe bombing attack on London the previous night. German incendiary bombs Underlying the changed German strategy was more likely an over-estimation of the damage that had been done to Fighter Command in the preceding weeks. German intelligence estimates put its strength at no more than machines, when in fact it had more than double that figure. The change of strategy occurred just four days before the scheduled order to launch Operation Sea Lion. If there were hopes that a devastating attack on the capital might cripple Fighter Command, they were quickly dispelled as No. The evidence of continuing resistance led to postponement, on 9 September, of the Sea Lion launching order by three days, soon extended by another three days. Aircraft contrails after dogfight, September On 15 September the Luftwaffe made a supreme effort. A series of raids battered the capital all day, fiercely contested by some British fighters. Park committed his whole force. With no end to British resistance in sight, and the adverse weather of autumn approaching, Hitler accepted that Operation Sea Lion must be postponed at least until the following year. The dispersal of invasion vessels was soon being noted by RAF reconnaissance aircraft. In the meantime, the Luftwaffe continued to batter London and other British cities, an onslaught that would continue well into

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### Chapter 5 : BBC - History - Germany bombs London (pictures, video, facts & news)

*HQ Bentley Priory, Stanmore (Air Chief Marshal Sir Hugh Dowding). NO. 10 GROUP, BOX, WILTS. (Air Vice-Marshal Sir Quintin Brand).*

The punched a hole through Belgium, rolled across France and were preparing for the coup de grace, the invasion of England. Even the ever-confident Hitler was surprised at the speed in which the Germans crushed the allied forces of Britain, France, and Belgium. The German Luftwaffe was preparing to soften up the English coastline for the invasion force by attacking the British airfields in the southeastern corner of Britain. There with air superiority, the Germans felt they could use their smaller and weaker navy to cross the channel and invade. The Germans arrayed three Luftflotten Air Fleets which combined boasted over aircraft of all types but over of which were fighters mainly the BfE which was an equal to the British Spitfire at that time of the war but suffered from a notable lack of range. They were to be totally outclassed by the Hurricanes and Spitfires of the British. The rest were bombers. Mostly the He, some Dorniers, and Ju and about of the vaunted Ju Stuka dive bombers which ran roughshod over Europe but were soon to be seen as sitting ducks when not having air superiority around them. On the British side, when they regrouped after the disaster in France, they had only modern fighters Spitfires and Hurricanes. In just 10 weeks from the withdrawal of troops from Dunkirk, the RAF had doubled the size of its fighter command. The British aircraft industry had answered the bell, in a big way. The British radar system could pickup German formations before they even crossed the English Channel. This allowed for the conserving of pilots and fuel, the radar could pinpoint the location of German squadrons without the need for countless patrols. And when the RAF fighters were alerted, they had a much greater chance of being directed onto the target. Opening Moves, Operation Eagle: The Luftwaffe was ready by August The launched Operation Adler Eagle which was designed to drive the Brits from the skies over southern England. The German staff planned to annihilate the RAF south of the London-Gloucester line in four days and just four weeks to eliminate the RAF as an effective fighting force. They were convinced that the planned invasion could take place with German air superiority in mid-September. Those estimates were very wrong. After poor weather on August 11 limited the Germans to some small raids on the coast, the first big attack occurred the next day with six major raids and several small ones targeting the British airfields and radar installations on the south coast along with shipping in the Thames Estuary. The Battle of Britain had begun. Of the six radar installations targeted, five were damaged but only one was knocked out of action. The Germans lost 31 aircraft, the British losses were 22 fighters. German intelligence was poor. They had little information on British industry and lacked a cohesive plan on which industries to attack. On Day 2, August 13, the Germans flew sorties and included a successful night bombing of a Spitfire factory outside of Birmingham. The Germans lost another 45 aircraft, the British just During that week, the Germans attacked some 30 airfields and aircraft factories. On August 15, the Germans were raiding nearly constantly thru the day, as one attack would finish, another would start somewhere else. They launched bomber sorties and fighter sorties. Their losses were climbing as the British downed 75 aircraft against just 34 of their own. Another sorties followed on August 16 as the Luftwaffe attacked several airfields, severely damaging the one at Tangmere. Another 45 planes were lost. British losses were just The four days were over, the British were supposed to be swept from the skies south of the London Gloucester line. German intelligence, in taking stock of the situation estimated that the British were down to their last fighters. They had nearly double that amount. They foolishly thought that just another one to two days would be all it took to sweep the RAF from the sky. German losses were high, 71 aircraft lost. The RAF losses were 27 fighters. By the 18th, the Germans had lost aircraft of all types. The British losses were shot down and another 30 on the ground. But the Germans withdrew the Stukas, the Ju from the front lines as their losses had been appalling. The problem the British were having was with the availability of trained pilots. While they lost a total of aircraft, the British aircraft industry replaced all but But their losses included experienced pilots. Their training schools had replaced

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them with just. They knew the risks of sending the bombers that far inland and sent an even larger percentage of fighters to cover them. But the bombers got through to Debden. Biggin Hill was the sight of two raids on August 30, doing severe damage and killing 39 people on the ground. On the 31st, the bombers did severe damage to Debden, Biggin Hill, and Hornchurch. German aircraft sorties were around which only were bombers. They attacked the Hawker factories outside of Weybridge where over half of the Hurricanes were manufactured. Out of pilots, were killed and wounded. The German losses totaled. They were going to bomb London. The Blitz Begins Over London: The German High Command believed that the attack on London would accomplish three things. The Germans hoped to get the British to push all of their air assets over London where they could be destroyed. The second was to interfere with the British industry and government and paralyze their decision-making process just prior to the invasion. It was also hoped to terrorize the population into capitulation. And finally, the Germans wanted their pound of flesh. On August 25, a German bomber jettisoned his bombs in the night and they fell on central London, the first time that it happened in the war. On the afternoon of September 7, German bombers escorted by fighters flew up the Thames Estuary. A few bombed the oil installations at Thameshaven, the rest flew on to London itself. The bombers hit the docks east of the city, fires raged out of control in Silvertown. The Germans used these fires for night raids and they kept up the pressure after dark and an additional bombers rained steel and death down on London until dawn. The weather became an issue with daylight raids but London was being hit every night. On September 10, the Germans bombed London again and for the first time shot down more of their enemy 29, than they suffered. But the clock was ticking. Hitler again moved the invasion back to September. The Luftwaffe had three more days to destroy the RAF as the Navy needed a day window to prepare the invasion barges. Two more days of bad weather made for small raids. The invasion was put back to September 28, the last time the tides would be right until late October. He sortied bombers and over fighters to central London. The Spitfires and Hurricanes ravaged their formations where the bombers were either wildly ineffective or jettisoned their bombs over southern London. British losses were just 26 of which 13 of the pilots were saved and could fight another day. A few days later he ordered the dispersal of all of the barges for the invasion, to limit air attacks. There would be no invasion of Britain. Because of bad weather, the Germans were only able to raid London on three more days in September, on the 18th, 27th, and the 30th. His losses were heavy, another aircraft and crews were lost against just 60 for the RAF. But the change in strategy by attacking London and abandoning their attacks on the airfields, while devastating for the citizens, doomed the Germans to failure. The losses by Fighter Command, while heavy were now being kept up with by the aircraft industry. From September 7 and November 13, London was bombed every night save one. By the time the bombers moved east in May of for the Russian invasion, 40, British civilians would be killed, another 46, wounded. Over a million British homes were either damaged or destroyed. The Germans had underestimated the British resolve and her people. Less than seven months later after the Blitz, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and the United States would enter the war. Britain was no longer alone. But the British survival was not guaranteed by the US, but by pilots of Spitfires and Hurricanes who, despite the odds, weathered the storm and persevered.

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## Chapter 6 : The War Over Britain Battle of Britain - 7 September

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Fighter Command RAF Fighter Command Headquarters was located at RAF Bentley Priory, near Stanmore in North London.*

It was formed in to allow more specialised control of fighter aircraft and it served throughout the Second World War. It earned great fame during the Battle of Britain in , the Command continued until 17 November , when it was disbanded and the RAF fighter force was split into two categories, defence and attack. Fighter Command was divided into a number of Groups, each controlling a different part of the UK. It was reinforced by 10 Group, which covered southwest England, 12 Group, in the end, the Germans failed to attain air superiority, although the RAF had been eating into its reserves during the battle, as had the Luftwaffe. Large numbers of Spitfires were sent out small groups of medium bombers in often vain attempts to lure the German fighters into combat. Most of the factors that had allowed Fighter Command to win the Battle of Britain were now reversed, for example, British pilots who were shot down in and survived would be patched up and sent back to their units as quickly as possible. In , over France, a shot down pilot would, as likely as not, the year saw RAF Fighter Command claim some Luftwaffe fighters shot down for losses of approximately RAF fighters lost. As ended, the appearance of the new Fw , with its obvious technical superiority over the current Spitfire Mark V, parallel to the day offensive in was the ongoing night bomber attacks against the United Kingdom in January to May. By this time, until May , the Luftwaffe effort was aimed against both civilian and industrial targets, Fighter Commands defences, however improved almost daily during the first six months of An increasing number of guns and searchlights were also radar-controlled. From the start of , the Luftwaffes losses mounted, with the impending invasion of Russia requiring the movement of air power to the East, the Blitz ended in May with Fighter Command in complete control of the night sky over the UK. The difficult task of slowly grinding down the Germans continued into and , squadrons also found themselves on tiring defensive patrols as small formations of FWs started to fly hit and run nuisance raids all along the South Coast 2. It is described as the first major campaign fought entirely by air forces, the primary objective of the Nazi German forces was to compel Britain to agree to a negotiated peace settlement. In July , the air and sea blockade began with the Luftwaffe mainly targeting coastal shipping convoys, ports and shipping centres, such as Portsmouth. Nazi Germany was unable to sustain daylight raids, but their continued night bombing operations on Britain became known as the Blitz. Its first Chief of the Air Staff Hugh Trenchard was among the military strategists in the s like Giulio Douhet who saw air warfare as a new way to overcome the stalemate of trench warfare, interception was near impossible with fighter planes no faster than bombers. Their view was that the bomber will always get through, Germany was forbidden military air forces by the Treaty of Versailles, but developed aircrew training in civilian and sport flying. In the secret Lipetsk fighter-pilot school began operating, a winter 1934 war game indicated a need for fighters and anti-aircraft protection as well as bombers. On 1 March the Luftwaffe was formally announced, with Walther Wever as Chief of Staff, the list excluded bombing civilians to destroy homes or undermine morale, as that was considered a waste of strategic effort, but the doctrine allowed revenge attacks if German civilians were bombed. A revised edition was issued in , and the central principle of Luftwaffe doctrine was that destruction of enemy armed forces was of primary importance. In the Spanish Civil War, the Luftwaffe in the Condor Legion tried out air fighting tactics, wolfram von Richthofen become an exponent of air power providing ground support to other services. The difficulty of hitting targets prompted Ernst Udet to require that all new bombers had to be dive bombers. Priority was given to producing large numbers of aeroplanes. The speed with which German forces defeated most of the armies in Norway in early created a significant political crisis in Britain. The Germans were so convinced of an imminent armistice that they began constructing street decorations for the parades of victorious troops. Instead, Churchill used his skilful rhetoric to harden public opinion against capitulation, the

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Battle of Britain has the unusual distinction that it gained its name before being fought. In secret conference on 23 May Hitler set out his rather contradictory strategy that an attack on Poland was essential, if this is impossible, then it will be better to attack in the West and to settle Poland at the same time with a surprise attack.<sup>3</sup> He served as a pilot and then as commanding officer of No. 1. Dowding was born at St. After becoming interested in aviation, Dowding gained Aviators Certificate no. Dowding transferred to No. He became commanding officer of the Wireless Experimental Establishment at Brooklands in March, after the Battle of the Somme, Dowding clashed with General Hugh Trenchard, the commander of the RFC, over the need to rest pilots exhausted by non-stop duty. In September the author Duncan Grinnell-Milne joined No 16 squadron as a junior pilot, years later he published an account of his time in the squadron, in which he criticises Dowding as being too reserved and aloof from his juniors, although efficient. He transferred to the command of 9 wing at Fienvillers in June and he was sent to York as chief staff officer to the RAFs senior administrative officer in the area in April. Dowding was a skier, winner of the first ever National Slalom Championship. In May Dowding was appointed director of training at the Air Ministry and he was appointed a Companion of the Order of the Bath on 2 January and promoted to air vice-marshal on 1 January. Dowdings time in office coincided with a period of rapid development in aircraft design. Although without scientific or technical training, he displayed a great capacity for understanding technical matters and he was promoted to air marshal on 1 January and advanced to Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath on 3 June.<sup>4</sup> The district obtained city status in, becoming Englands 50th city in the 50th year of Queen Elizabeth IIs reign, Preston has a population of, the City of Preston district, and the Preston Built-up Area, The Preston Travel To Work Area, in, had a population of, compared to, in the previous census. Preston and its area have provided evidence of ancient Roman activity. The Angles established Preston, its name is derived from the Old English meaning priests settlement, in the Middle Ages, Preston was a parish and township in the hundred of Amounderness and was granted a Guild Merchant charter in, giving it the status of a market town. Textiles have been produced since the century when locally produced wool was woven in peoples houses. Flemish weavers who settled in the area in the 14th century helped develop the industry, in the early 17th century, Edmund Calamy described Preston as a pretty town with an abundance of gentry in it, commonly called Proud Preston. Sir Richard Arkwright, inventor of the frame, was born in the town. The most rapid period of growth and development coincided with the industrialisation and expansion of textile manufacturing, Preston was a boomtown of the Industrial Revolution, becoming a densely populated engineering centre, with large industrial plants. Preston is recorded in the Domesday Book as Prestune in, various other spellings occur in early documents, Prestonam, Prestone, Prestona, Presteton, and Prestun. The modern spelling occurs in, and, the towns name is derived from Old English Presta and Tun, the Tun of the Presta. During the Roman period, Roman roads passed close to what is now the centre of Preston. An explanation of the origin of the name is that the Priests Town refers to a set up by St Wilfrid near the Ribbles lowest ford. This idea is supported by the similarity of the Paschal lamb on Prestons crest with that on St Wilfrids, when first mentioned in the Domesday Book, Preston was already the most important town in Amounderness. When assessed for tax purposes in 1086 it was the wealthiest town in the whole county and it is the only Guild still celebrated in the UK. Before a celebration had been held on an irregular basis, after this, there were breaks in the pattern for various reasons, but an unbroken series were held from to. A full year sequence was frustrated by the cancellation of the Guild due to World War II, the expression every Preston Guild, meaning very infrequently, has passed into fairly common use, especially in Lancashire.<sup>5</sup> Box, Wiltshire is a large village and civil parish in Wiltshire, England, about 3 miles west of Corsham and 5 miles northeast of Bath. To the east the parish includes much of Rudloe, formerly a hamlet but now an estate. Occupation here dates back at least to Roman times, the area is known for its fine stone and for centuries Box quarries were famous for their product. Today Box is perhaps known for its Brunel-designed Box railway tunnel. The settlements are on higher ground above the valley of the Bybrook river. Limestone rock is found in much of the parish, Box Ground, a hard-wearing variety of Bath stone, was extracted at quarries such as Box Mine which are now

closed. As of the remaining source of Box Ground is Hartham Park quarry at Corsham, the southern boundary of the parish follows the Roman road from Silchester to Bath. The road through Box village, descending to Bathford and Bath, was turnpiked in to provide a route from Chippenham and Corsham to Bath, prehistoric settlements in the area were hilltop forts such as Bury Camp, 4 miles north of present-day Box village. There is evidence in the form of numerous re-used standing stones that there may have been a circle on Kingsdown. The Romans built the Fosse Way about 2 miles to the west, near the present-day Box church is the site of a Roman country house which was excavated during the 19th century, again in by Harold Brakspear, and again in There was a rebuilding in the late 3rd or early 4th century which changed it into the largest villa in the Bath area. Room 26 appears to be a presence chamber in the manner of that at Trier. The village is shown on a map and by this time cloth weaving was an important home-based industry, the Great Western Main Line railway crosses the parish, and the Box Tunnel, 1. Construction took place between and with up to 4, men were employed, at first Box station was built close to Ashley, where the A4 crosses the line, Box Mill Lane station was built a mile closer to Box village in Both stations closed in when local services were withdrawn, local lore that the name is derived from the Box bush *Buxus sempervirens* is improbable. There is no supporting evidence at all, and *buxus* is not native to the area, there is, however, a connection with beech. Early documented forms of the name include Bocza, and Bocks, Boekes, Box, Box, Box Hill and places such as Boscombe and Le Bosc all feature extensive beech woods growing on various limestones 6. Wiltshire

Wiltshire is a county in South West England with an area of 3, km<sup>2</sup>. It is landlocked and borders the counties of Dorset, Somerset, the county town was originally Wilton, after which the county is named, but Wiltshire Council is now based in the new county town of Trowbridge. Wiltshire is characterised by its high downland and wide valleys, Salisbury Plain is noted for being the location of the Stonehenge and Avebury stone circles and other ancient landmarks, and as a training area for the British Army. The city of Salisbury is notable for its mediaeval cathedral, important country houses open to the public include Longleat, near Warminster, and the National Trusts Stourhead, near Mere. The county, in the 9th century written as Wiltunscir, later Wiltonshire, is named after the county town of Wilton. Wiltshire is notable for its pre-Roman archaeology, the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age people that occupied southern Britain built settlements on the hills and downland that cover Wiltshire. Stonehenge and Avebury are perhaps the most famous Neolithic sites in the UK, in the 6th and 7th centuries Wiltshire was at the western edge of Saxon Britain, as Cranborne Chase and the Somerset Levels prevented the advance to the west. The Battle of Bedwyn was fought in between Escuin, a West Saxon nobleman who had seized the throne of Queen Saxburga, in the Danes invaded the county. Following the Norman Conquest, large areas of the country came into the possession of the crown, at the time of the Domesday Survey the industry of Wiltshire was largely agricultural, mills are mentioned, and vineyards at Tollard and Lacock. Information on the civil parishes of Wiltshire is available on the Wiltshire Community History website, run by the Libraries and this site includes maps, demographic data, historic and modern pictures and short histories. The local nickname for Wiltshire natives is moonrakers and this originated from a story of smugglers who managed to foil the local Excise men by hiding their alcohol, possibly French brandy in barrels or kegs, in a village pond. The officials took them for simple yokels or mad and left them alone, many villages claim the tale for their own village pond, but the story is most commonly linked with The Crammer in Devizes. Two-thirds of Wiltshire, a rural county, lies on chalk. This chalk is part of a system of chalk downlands throughout eastern and southern England formed by the rocks of the Chalk Group, the largest area of chalk in Wiltshire is Salisbury Plain, which is used mainly for arable agriculture and by the British Army as training ranges. It is the largest in area, covering 9, square miles, five million people live in South West England. The northern part of Gloucestershire, near Chipping Campden, is as close to the Scottish border as it is to the tip of Cornwall, the region has by far the longest coastline in England and many seaside fishing towns. Following the abolition of the South West Regional Assembly and Government Office, the region is known for its rich folklore, including the legend of King Arthur and Glastonbury Tor, as well as its traditions and customs. Cornwall has its own language, Cornish, and some regard it as a Celtic nation, the

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South West of England is known for Cheddar cheese, which originated in the Somerset village of Cheddar, Devon cream teas, crabs, Cornish pasties, and cider. Geologically the region is divided into the largely igneous and metamorphic west and sedimentary east, Cornwall and West Devons landscape is of rocky coastline and high moorland, notably at Bodmin Moor and Dartmoor. These are due to the granite and slate that underlie the area, the highest point of the region is High Willhays, at 2, feet, on Dartmoor. In North Devon the slates of the west and limestones of the east meet at Exmoor National Park, the variety of rocks of similar ages seen here have led to the countys name being lent to that of the Devonian period. The east of the region is characterised by wide, flat clay vales and chalk, the vales, with good irrigation, are home to the regions dairy agriculture. The Blackmore Vale was Thomas Hardys Vale of the Little Dairies, another and these downs are the principal area of arable agriculture in the region. Limestone is also found in the region, at the Cotswolds, Quantock Hills and Mendip Hills, all of the principal rock types can be seen on the Jurassic Coast of Dorset and East Devon, where they document the entire Mesozoic era from west to east. The most densely populated region in the southwest of the United Kingdom, the Brecon Beacons national park covers about a third of South Wales, containing Pen y Fan, the highest mountain south of Snowdonia. Areas to the north of the Brecon Beacons and Black Mountains are generally considered part of Mid Wales, the expression south Wales is not officially defined, and its meaning has changed over time. The southern principality was made up of the counties of Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire, the legal responsibility for this area lay in the hands of the Justiciar of South Wales based at Carmarthen. The Brecon circuit served the counties of Brecknockshire, Radnorshire and Glamorgan while the Carmarthen circuit served Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire, Monmouthshire was attached to the Oxford circuit for judicial purposes.

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## Chapter 7 : Chronology of the Battle of Britain – Historical Excerpts

† Note: The primary source used to list the Squadron names (eg; "Hyderabad" Sqn.), unit code letters, radio call signs and aircraft types of the 71 Officially Accredited Battle of Britain Fighter Command Squadrons and other units which served under Fighter Command is Ramsay , p

According to the RAF, enemy aircraft were destroyed by fighter planes. At least another nine aircraft were hit by anti-aircraft guns. British casualties were much lighter - only 25 aircraft lost with 13 pilots killed or missing. The Air Ministry says the German losses are the highest since 18 August, five days after the Battle of Britain began in earnest. The first big attack came in the morning at hours. A wave of about German aircraft was spotted heading over the Kent coast towards London followed by a second wave of about planes. Spitfire and Hurricane squadrons were sent to meet them and many German planes are reported to have turned away without dropping any bombs. However, Buckingham Palace was hit during this initial raid. Two heavy bombs fell, one on the Palace buildings and one on the lawns. The King and Queen were not in residence and there was only a skeleton staff who were sheltering in the basement. It is the third time this week the palace has been targeted. At about hours another wave of about German planes crossed the coast near Dover - again followed by a second wave of aircraft. They appeared to be heading for targets in south London and railways in London and Kent. Fighter patrols were again ready to meet the enemy and only 70 or so enemy planes reached central London where there were a series of dogfights. The attacks continued with smaller raids on Portland and Southampton. Again the enemy aircraft were successfully driven off by the British fighters. As darkness fell, the raids continued on London inflicting major damage on targets in the south of the city. British intelligence decoded a message from the German General staff to the officer responsible for loading the transport aircraft earmarked for the invasion ordered him to cease the operation. Without this equipment there could be no invasion. Air raids continued over London and the south east of England into October and the German bombers inflicted considerable damage and casualties. But they were also losing planes faster than they could repair or replace them and switched to night-time raids. As summer gave way to autumn and worsening weather conditions, the Germans realised the RAF could not be beaten in and as Germany was preparing to attack Russia, Operation Sealion was cancelled. The actual number of planes lost is far lower than the RAF and Luftwaffe claimed at the time. In fact only 60 German aircraft were shot down on 15 September. In total the RAF claimed to have shot down 2, German planes. The actual figure was more like 1, The RAF lost planes - far fewer than the 3, the Luftwaffe claimed. Stories From 15 Sep.

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### Chapter 8 : BBC - History - Germany attacks RAF Fighter Command (pictures, video, facts & news)

*Naturally, there is a great deal of overlap, but there is also different information provided. This article carries the title of RAF Fighter Command Order of Battle ; adding a clear list of Sectors, Sector Stations and Satellite Aerodromes is justified. To argue that duplicating information is somehow harmful or detrimental to the article is a stretch; the same could be said about the main "Battle of Britain" article, in which a lot of information is duplicated.*

The speed and scale of the German victory in the west caught everybody by surprise. When the British refused to negotiate the Germans were finally forced to plan for an invasion. Work on the new plans began in the summer of , with the Navy starting first. Hitler only began to seriously believe that an invasion would be needed in mid-July, and on 16 July he issued a personal directive ordering the preparations to begin. The German plan was for the air offensive to begin six weeks before D-Day for the invasion. Many Luftwaffe leaders confidently expected a quick victory, with General Staff predicting that it would take two weeks to smash the RAF. The attack was to be carried out by three air fleets, which had around 3, aircraft between them. Luftflotte 5 was based in Norway and Denmark, and played a very minor part in the battle, taking part on one day only. The main burden fell on Luftflotte 2 in Holland, Belgium and north-eastern France and Luftflotte 3 in northern and north-western France. As the battle developed it became clear that the short range of the Bf meant that Luftflotte 2 played an increasingly important part in the battle. Adler tag was originally meant to be 10 August, but poor weather meant that it was postponed until 13 August. Two weeks after Eagle Day Hitler would decide if the invasion was to ahead. This was the location of the famous Control Room, with its map on which every British and German formation was displayed and its location updated. The relevant information was then passed to the individual Groups, each of which had their own Control Room with maps that showed their own and neighbouring sectors. A scramble at Biggin Hill Each of the Groups was further divided into Sectors, each of which had its own Sector Control Room that was responsible for controlling the individual squadrons. Two were further afield - the sector to the south-west of London was controlled from Tangmere, close to the Solent, while the north-eastern part of the Group was controlled from Debden. One weakness of the system was that the control rooms were located on Fighter Command airfields, meaning that even though the Germans were unaware of their existence they were still subjected to heavy attack. As a result some of the coastal stations would prove to be very vulnerable to German attack. The bases nearest to France would actually prove to be too far forward, forcing their fighters to head inland to gain height. Information flowed into the system from a variety of sources. The best known source was radar then known by the code name of R. The line of Chain Home and Chain Home Low stations along the east and south coasts provided Fighter Command with a very important picture of any incoming German raid. At the start of the battle the Germans greatly underestimated the importance of radar to the British defensive system. The advance warning given to Fighter Command by the radar network would make sure that this was not the case. In radar still had its limitations. It could reliably indicate the direction and distance of an enemy force, but not the size or altitude of the raid. The information from the radar network thus had to be supplemented by the Observer Corps, which provided very accurate information on the size and composition of German raids once they reached the coast. This involved a number of different tasks. Fighter Command also had to defend those parts of the aircraft industry that were essential for its survival, including the Rolls Royce engine factories and the factories producing the Hurricanes and Spitfires. Dowding and Park also understood that low British losses were more important than high German ones - if Fighter Command was even temporarily knocked out of action the entire country would be at risk, while the Luftwaffe could afford to take the time to recover from any major blow. Aircraft The Battle of Britain was fought between two very different air fleets. On the British side the fighting was entirely dominated by two single engined fighters, the Hawker Hurricane and the Supermarine Spitfire. Early attempts to use the Boulton-Paul Defiant as a day fighter ended in disastrous failure, while the fighter versions of the Bristol Blenheim were never fast enough to play any significant part

in the battle, even when used as radar equipped night fighters. Although the Spitfire became the iconic aircraft of the battle, the two British fighters were actually well matched during Both were armed with eight. The Spitfire was faster but the Hurricane was a more stable gun platform, and during the battle the two types met with almost equal success. Only after did the later versions of the Spitfire pull ahead of the Hurricane, which was soon outclassed by later versions of the Bf The Luftwaffe only possessed one single-engined fighter during , the Bf , and during the Battle of Britain used the Bf E. The Germans used three twin-engined bombers during the Battle of Britain. The Dornier Do 17 was the least effective of the three, with the smallest bomb load. The Heinkel He was better, with twice the bomb load and almost twice the range. Finally the Junkers Ju 88 was the best of the three, with a similar range and bomb load to the He but a higher top speed. Most books on the Battle of Britain state that the Bf E was armed with 20mm cannon, but the true picture is more complex than this. The Bf E-1 was originally armed with four MG machine guns, although in some aircraft these may have been replaced with two cannon. The Bf E-3 originally carried a single 20mm cannon mounted in engine, but this gun often jammed. Only with the introduction of the Bf E-4 in July did the wing-mounted 20mm cannon become standard. In the second half of the Luftwaffe recorded losing E-1s, 32 E-3s and E-4s, suggesting that a significant number of the Bf s encountered over Britain during the battle were actually armed with four machine guns while others had either one or two 20mm cannon. This helps explain the contradictory evidence from the memoirs of RAF fighter pilots of the period, some of whom considered the Bf to be too lightly armed, while others believed it to outgun their own aircraft. The Bf did suffer from one serious flaw in - its short range. It is often claimed that the advent of air power meant that the English Channel no longer offered any protection from attack, but in that was not the case. London was at the extreme limit of its range, and it could only spend a short time fighting further south. The Gap June-Mid July The fighting in France and the Low Countries had been very costly for the RAF, but luckily the Luftwaffe had also suffered heavy losses, and so for just over a month there was something of a lull. For the first two weeks after the end of the fighting over Dunkirk the Luftwaffe was almost fully engaged in the final stages of the Battle of France. On 17 June the French requested an armistice, and the Germans used the next two weeks to bring their depleted units back up to strength and to move into their new bases in France and Belgium. The first sizeable raids came on the night of June, when around thirty aircraft attacked airfields and other targets near the east coast. This was repeated on the following two nights, and then there was a lull until the French requested an armistice. After that German aircraft raided Britain every night, still in small numbers never more than aircraft. On most nights no more than one or two bombers were lost, and these small scale raids caused massive disruption across the country, triggering air raid warnings in areas that never saw a single German aircraft. This problem was solved by the decision not to sound the warning for every small incursion, and to limit air raid warnings to the areas most directly affected. The lull gave the RAF the time it needed to recover from the very costly fighting in May and early June. In those two months the RAF lost aircraft, including fighters of which came from Fighter Command. On 4 June Fighter Command had operationally serviceable aircraft, of including Hurricanes and Spitfires. By the start of the Battle of Britain most of the aircraft had been replaced, and on 11 August the command had serviceable aircraft of which were Hurricanes or Spitfires, while the number of Hurricanes and Spitfires in the immediate reserve had risen from 36 to The experienced pilots lost in France were irreplaceable in the small time available. This period also allowed the RAF to complete the extension of its radar screen, which in September had only extended as far west as Southampton. One year later the entire south coast was covered. Fighter Command used the time to expand the number of Groups. At the start of June there were only three - No. By the start of the battle No. On this day the Germans began a series of daylight attacks on coastal convoys attempting to reach London along the English Channel. On the first day of the battle one formation of Ju 88s unescorted by fighters managed to attack Falmouth and Swansea without being intercepted, a rare occurrence later in the battle, while further east a force of around 60 German aircraft one third bombers two thirds fighters attacked a convoy. Five RAF squadrons intercepted the Germans, and generally had the better of the clash. The period of convoy battles forced the RAF to fly sorties per day, many

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of them over the waters of the channel. As a result the British air-sea rescue organisation was quickly improved. This period also saw the first British aircraft type to be withdrawn. On 19 July nine Defiants from No. The turret-armed fighter had been designed in a period when nobody was entirely sure what form aerial combat might take in an era of high speed fighters and bombers. One theory had been that speeds were too high for accurate deflection shooting, a possibility that might have made the fixed forward firing guns of the Spitfires, Hurricanes and Bf s obsolete. The Defiant was one of a number of aircraft designed to provide an alternative type of fighter, but it soon became clear that the fast monoplane fighter was king of the skies. After the disaster on 19 July the Defiant was withdrawn from the daylight battle. The German daylight attacks on convoys sank 40, tons of shipping, but almost as much shipping was sunk by mines dropped relatively safely at night. Phase 2 - August - Coastal Battles The second phase of the battle saw a dramatic increase the number of German sorties. They also began to cross the coast in large numbers for the first time. During this phase of the battle most German raids hit targets near to the coast. This meant that of the vital Sector Stations only Tangmere came under prolonged attack, while Manston, Hawkinge and Lympne, all close to the Kent coast, also suffered. On 8 August the Germans attacked a west-bound convoy, starting at Dover and following it to the Isle of Wight. The day saw the British lose 20 aircraft and the Germans 28 or 31 in a series of battles than moved slowly west along the channel. Bad weather intervened on 9 and 10 August, but the Germans returned in force on 11 August, attacking Dover, Portland and Weymouth. The British lost 32 aircraft, the Germans 38, in the most costly day of the battle so far. On 12 August the Germans made their first and only major attack on the British radar network. Five radar bases were attacked Dover, Dunkirk there are a surprising number of Dunkirks in Britain - this particular one is just to the west of Canterbury , Rye, Pevensey and Ventnor. All five bases were hit, but the damage was variable. Dover and Dunkirk were able to continue operations without any delays. Pevensey and Rye were both damaged but were back in use by the next day. Only Ventnor was knocked out for a longer period, and it too was back in service by 23 August. A number of airfields were also attacked. Lympne and Hawkinge were both damaged, while Manston was briefly knocked out of operations. This grand attack got off to a bad start. Five were shot down and six badly damaged, but they did manage to attack the Coastal Command station at Eastchurch believed by the Luftwaffe to be a Fighter Command base.

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## Chapter 9 : The Battle of Britain -

*RAF Fighter Command Order of Battle 's wiki: This article lists the RAF Fighter Command order of battle at 15 September , during the Battle of Britain. Fighter Command RAF Fighter Command Headquarters was located at RAF Bentley Priory, near Stanmore in North London.*

Britain Battle of Britain in rare pictures, The dome of St. In the summer and fall of , German and British air forces clashed in the skies over the United Kingdom, locked in the largest sustained bombing campaign to that date. Victory for the Luftwaffe in the air battle would have exposed Great Britain to invasion by the German army, which was then in control of the ports of France only a few miles away across the English Channel. On July 16, , Hitler issued a directive ordering the preparation and, if necessary, the execution of a plan for the invasion of Great Britain. A formation of low-flying German Heinkel He bombers flies over the waves of the English Channel in The forces engaged in the battle were relatively small. The British disposed some frontline fighters to defend the country. The Germans made available about 1, bombers and dive bombers, and about single-engined and twin-engined fighters. These were based in an arc around England from Norway to the Cherbourg Peninsula in northern coastal France. The preliminaries of the Battle of Britain occupied June and July , the climax August and September, and the aftermathâ€”the so-called Blitzâ€”the winter of â€” In the campaign, the Luftwaffe had no systematic or consistent plan of action: Three anti-aircraft guns flash in the dark in London, on September 20, , throwing shells at raiding German planes. Shells in stacked rows behind the guns leap about as the concussions from the firing loosen them. The British, on the other hand, had prepared themselves for the kind of battle that in fact took place. Their radar early warning, the most advanced and the most operationally adapted system in the world, gave Fighter Command adequate notice of where and when to direct their fighter forces to repel German bombing raids. The Spitfire, moreover, though still in short supply, was unsurpassed as an interceptor by any fighter in any other air force. These London schoolchildren are in the midst of an air raid drill ordered by the London Board of Education as a precaution in case an air raid comes too fast to give the youngsters a chance to leave the building for special shelters, on July 20, They were ordered to go to the middle of the room, away from windows, and hold their hands over the backs of their necks. The British fought not only with the advantageâ€”unusual for themâ€”of superior equipment and undivided aim but also against an enemy divided in object and condemned by circumstance and by lack of forethought to fight at a tactical disadvantage. The German bombers lacked the bomb-load capacity to strike permanently devastating blows and also proved, in daylight, to be easily vulnerable to the Spitfires and Hurricanes. The German dive bombers were even more vulnerable to being shot down by British fighters, and long-range fighter cover was only partially available from German fighter aircraft, since the latter were operating at the limit of their flying range. The German air attacks began on ports and airfields along the English Channel, where convoys were bombed and the air battle was joined. In June and July , as the Germans gradually redeployed their forces, the air battle moved inland over the interior of Britain. On August 8 the intensive phase began, when the Germans launched bombing raids involving up to nearly 1, aircraft a day and directed them against the British fighter airfields and radar stations. In four actions, on August 8, 11, 12, and 13, the Germans lost aircraft as against the British loss of By late August the Germans had lost more than aircraft, the RAF only , but the RAF was losing badly needed fighters and experienced pilots at too great a rate, and its effectiveness was further hampered by bombing damage done to the radar stations. The condensation trails from German and British fighter planes engaged in an aerial battle appear in the sky over Kent, along the southeastern coast of England, on September 3, At the beginning of September the British retaliated by unexpectedly launching a bombing raid on Berlin, which so infuriated Hitler that he ordered the Luftwaffe to shift its attacks from Fighter Command installations to London and other cities. British sources said the bombing that night was the heaviest of the war to date. A great column of smoke billowing upward from a fire started at Plymouth, South West England, in November , as a result of heavy enemy bombardment.

On September 3 the date of invasion had been deferred to September 21, and then on September 19 Hitler ordered the shipping gathered for Operation Sea Lion to be dispersed. British fighters were simply shooting down German bombers faster than German industry could produce them. The Battle of Britain was thus won, and the invasion of England was postponed indefinitely by Hitler. The British had lost more than fighters but had shot down about 1, German aircraft. By February the offensive had declined, but in March and April there was a revival, and nearly 10, sorties were flown, with heavy attacks made on London. Thereafter German strategic air operations over England withered. The tail and part of the fuselage of a German Dornier plane landed on a London rooftop shown Sept. The rest of the raiding plane crashed near Victoria Station. Pre-war theories had led to exaggerated fears of strategic bombing, and UK public opinion was buoyed by coming through the ordeal. Workmen fit a set of paraboloids in a sound detector for use by anti-aircraft batteries guarding England, in a factory somewhere in England, on July 30, The British victory in the Battle of Britain was achieved at a heavy cost. Total British civilian losses from July to December were 23, dead and 32, wounded, with one of the largest single raids on 19 December , in which almost 3, civilians died. With the culmination of the concentrated daylight raids, Britain was able to rebuild its military forces and establish itself as an Allied stronghold, later serving as a base from which the Liberation of Western Europe was launched. Bombs dropping on the port of Tilbury, on October 4, The first group of bombs will hit the ships lying in the Thames, the second will strike the docks. Two German Luftwaffe Ju 87 Stuka dive bombers return from an attack against the British south coast, during the Battle for Britain, on August 19, A bomb is fitted to the wings of a British raider prior to the start of an assault on Berlin, on October 24, A ninety minute exposure taken from a Fleet Street rooftop during an air raid in London, on September 2, The searchlight beams on the right had picked up an enemy raider. The horizontal marks across the image are from stars and the small wiggles in them were caused by the concussions of anti-aircraft fire vibrating the camera. The German pilot released a flare, which left a streak across the top left, behind the steeple of St. People shelter and sleep on the platform and on the train tracks, in Aldwych Underground Station, London, after sirens sounded to warn of German bombing raids, on October 8, The Palace of Westminster in London, silhouetted against light from fires caused by bombings. The force of a bomb blast in London piled these furniture vans atop one another in a street after a raid on December 5, This smiling girl, dirtied but apparently not injured, was assisted across a London street on October 23, , after she was rescued from the debris of a building damaged by a bomb attack in a German daylight raid. Firemen spray water on damaged buildings, near London Bridge, in the City of London on September 9, , after a recent set of weekend air raids. Hundreds of people, many of whom have lost their homes through bombing, now use the caves in Hastings, a south-east English town as their nightly refuge. Photo taken on December 12, All that remains of a German bomber brought down on the English south-east coast, on July 13, The aircraft is riddled with bullet holes and its machine guns were twisted out of action. British workers in a salvage yard break up the remains of wrecked German raiders which were shot down over England, on August 26, A huge scrap heap where German planes, brought down over Great Britain, were dumped, photographed on August 27, The large number of Nazi planes downed during raids on Britain made a substantial contribution to the national scrap metal salvage campaign. A Nazi Heinkel He bomber flies over London in the autumn of The Thames River runs through the image. Mary Couchman, a year-old warden of a small Kentish Village, shields three little children, among them her son, as bombs fall during an air attack on October 18, The three children were playing in the street when the siren suddenly sounded. Bombs began to fall as she ran to them and gathered the three in her arms, protecting them with her body. Someone had look after the children. Air raid damage, including the twisted remains of a double-decker city bus, in the City of London on September 10, A scene of devastation in the Dockland area of London attacked by German bomber on September 17, An abandoned boy, holding a stuffed toy animal amid ruins following a German aerial bombing of London in A German aircraft drops its load of bombs above England, during an attack on September 20, One of many fires started in Surrey Commercial Dock, London, on September 7, , after a heavy raid during the night by German bombers. Fires

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rage in the city of London after a lone German bomber had dropped incendiary bombs close to the heart of the city on September 1, London children enjoy themselves at a Christmas Party, on December 25, , in an underground shelter. The effects of a large concentrated attack by the German Luftwaffe, on London dock and industry districts, on September 7, Factories and storehouses were seriously damaged; the mills at the Victories Docks below at left show damage wrought by fire. The Record Office in London, lit by flames ignited by a German air in Princess Elizabeth of England center , year-old heiress apparent to the British throne, makes her broadcast debut, delivering a three-minute speech to British girls and boys evacuated overseas, on October 22, , in London, England. She is joined in bidding good-night to her listeners by her sister, Princess Margaret Rose. Soldiers carrying off the tail of a Messerschmitt , which was shot down by fighter planes in Essex, England, on September 3, Through bombs and sirens, the Windmill Theatre carried on providing music, revue, and ballet performances for the people of wartime London. The artists sleep on mattresses in their dressing rooms, living and eating on the premises. Here, a scene behind the scenes shows one of the girls having a wash while the others sleep soundly surrounded by their picturesque costumes, after the show on September 24, , in London. A German raid smashed this hall in an undisclosed London district, on October 16, The artist Ethel Gabain, newly appointed by the Ministry of Information to make historical war pictures, at work among bombed ruins in the East End of London on November 28, A forward machine gunner sits at his battle position in the nose of a German Heinkel He bomber, while en route to England in November of Any factual error or typo?