



Beginning with the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, it will be seen by readers of history that, on each occasion when this island home of ours was threatened with attack from the continent of Europe, a chain of observations posts was established to warn the people of impending danger. At these posts beacons were lit when an enemy sail was sighted. Elizabethan coast watchers were no doubt as efficient in ship recognition as their descendants are today in identifying jet aircraft; but the time factor is very different.

As the threat to England receded and danger passed, the system of observation was discontinued. There was no great harm in this discontinuance while the destructive power of warfare was confined to pitched army or naval battles.

With the war of 1914-18, the dirigible and the aeroplane created a new force in warfare as the air arm developed. This island was no longer immune from attack, and during that war Zeppelins, Gothas, and Taubes ranged over the greater part of England. That these machines could fly in the sky over our

countryside, called for a new style of defence.

Thus it was that, after the experience of war, in 1924 the air defence of Great Britain was consolidated, and Fighter Command of the Royal Air Force was charged with the responsibility of bringing it into effect.

The primary need of the air defence was up-to-the-minute information of the position of hostile aircraft, to enable action to be taken by the R.A.F. Fighter Command squadrons, anti-aircraft guns, and balloon barrages.

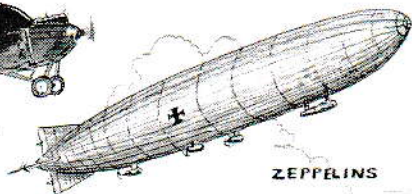
In the beginning

To obtain this information, the Observer Corps was called into being. It was required to plot, record a track, and, through the telephone communication network, report the position of each aircraft to a central point.

To understand more fully the work of the Observer Corps, it is necessary to have a knowledge of the general strategy of Fighter Command. R.A.F. Fighter Command headquarters had the overall responsibility for the strategic control of



RUMPLER TAUBE



ZEPPELINS



GOTHA



LVG. RECCE.

EARLY AERIAL
RAIDERS
OF BRITAIN 1914-1918

all fighter aircraft in the country. On a map showing the whole of Great Britain was displayed the tracks of all hostile aircraft. The Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Fighter Command, was thus able to see the numbers in each hostile formation and assess which were the greatest danger. In this way he could muster his fighter aircraft and direct his fighter group controllers in strategy.

From this mention of fighter group controllers, it will be seen that Great Britain was divided into smaller areas, and that these in their turn were further sub-divided into fighter sectors. These

sectors undertook the actual battle, acting under the general guidance of the fighter group controller, who, with the bigger picture on his operation-room table, knew the position of other enemy formations in his area.

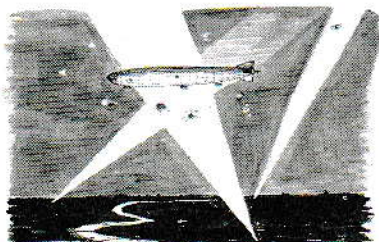
The eyes and ears

The information from which the picture was compiled came from sources spread over the countryside. These were the posts and centres of the Observer Corps.

Reports of aircraft were plotted with counters of different shapes and colours by the plotters round the table on which was drawn the map of the district.

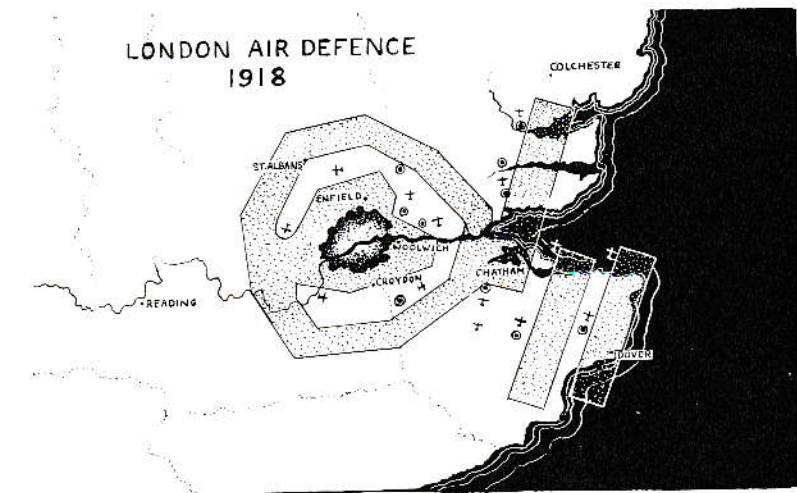
From the observer centre, telephone lines went direct to the operation rooms of both R.A.F. fighter groups and fighter sectors, and the tellers at the observer centre told the plotters in the operation room the position of hostile aircraft, plot by plot. Counters on the tables indicated the track, direction, height, and number of aircraft in the raid.

The reports on which the tracking of aircraft depended came from 1,431 posts spread over the whole of the United



The German Raider 1914-18

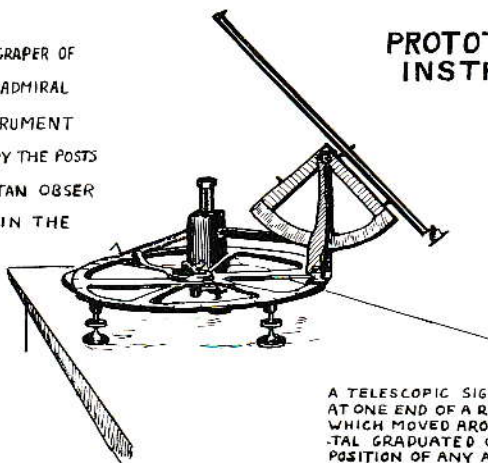
LONDON AIR DEFENCE 1918



 GUN DEFENDED AREAS
  FIGHTER PATROL LANES.
  SQUADRON HEADQUARTERS.

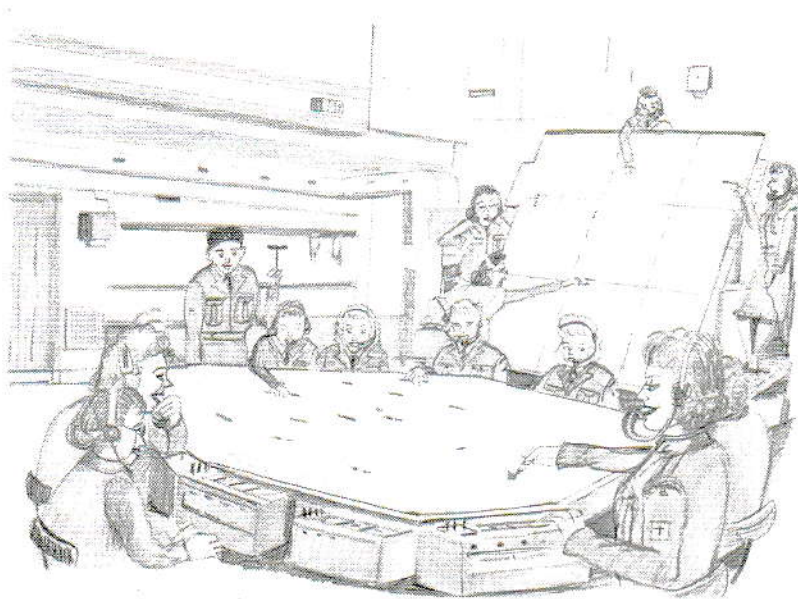
TEN BARRAGE BALLOON "APRONS" WERE PLACED NORTH OF THE THAMES & ONE SOUTH-EAST. AT THE ARMISTICE ELEVEN FIGHTER SQUADRONS, THREE BALLOON SQUADRONS, 415 SEARCHLIGHTS, 304 GUNS & 114 HEIGHT FINDERS IN THE LONDON DEFENCE AREA.

DEvised BY THE HYDROGRAPHER OF THE ROYAL NAVY, REAR ADMIRAL PARRY, C.B., THE INSTRUMENT SHOWN WAS USED BY THE POSTS IN THE METROPOLITAN OBSERVATION SERVICE IN THE 1914-18. WAR



PROTOTYPE INSTRUMENT

A TELESCOPIC SIGHT WAS MOUNTED AT ONE END OF A RADIAL ARM WHICH MOVED AROUND A HORIZONTAL GRADUATED CIRCLE. THE POSITION OF ANY AEROPLANE WAS REPORTED AS TWO ANGLES, A BEARING AND AN ELEVATION, TWO OR MORE TELEPHONED REPORTS TO CENTRE ENABLED AN EXACT "FIX" TO BE PLOTTED.



At the centre

Kingdom. These posts were connected by direct telephone to forty observer centres, which, as has been mentioned already, were connected directly to the R.A.F. fighter group and fighter sector operation rooms.

The scope of radio location to detect the approach of aircraft towards these shores was being improved from day to day. On aircraft reaching the coast it became the task of the Observer Corps to start tracking them and to report their identity.

When the teething troubles of both systems had been lessened, the 'picture' displayed covered a wide field, and the link between the R.A.F. radiolocation and the Observer Corps grew stronger. Today, it promises to grow still stronger.

The Ministry of Home Security officers, who were responsible for sounding warning sirens, watched the tracks as they appeared on the operation-room tables. This warning system grew daily in importance because not only were the public to be given protection, but it was

important that production in the factories should not stop until it became imperative not to imperil the lives of those who were making the weapons that eventually led to victory.

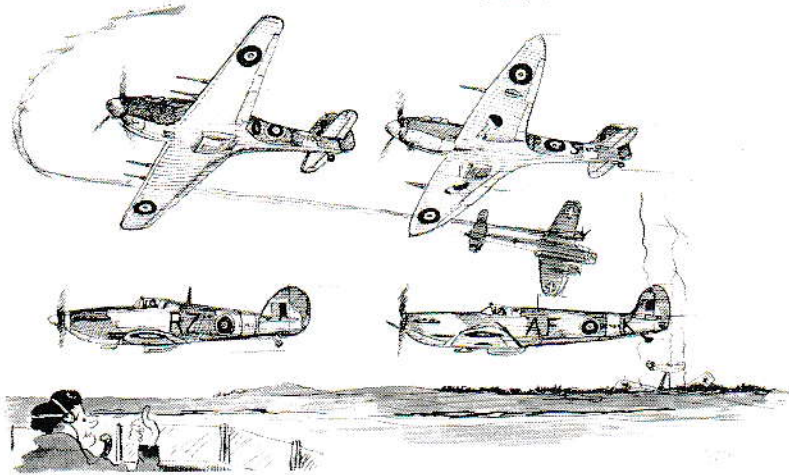
So it can in truth be said that the Observer Corps played its part in the passive defence of this country.

Honour where honour is due

The work of the Observer Corps does not, nor is it indeed desirable that it should, lend itself to publicity, but all who served in the Corps learned with pride that His Majesty King George VI had granted his Royal Patronage to the Corps, and that henceforth it would be known as The Royal Observer Corps. That date – 9 April 1941 – stands out in our annals, coming as it did in the midst of the greatest struggle this nation had been called upon to face.

Who were the people who served in the Royal Observer Corps? They were volunteers who, drawn by a desire to be of some service to their country, in

THE SPITFIRES
AND HURRICANES.



addition to their daily work, undertook to do duty in their spare time. For those who lived in the villages and hamlets near the observer posts, it meant turning out from a warm home at all hours and in all weathers – walking or cycling to a spot which, in order to obtain the greatest possible vantage, was often isolated. For those who lived in a large town it also meant leaving their families, knowing that the town might be attacked by the very raiders that they were tracking in the operation room at the centre. Such is the spirit of those

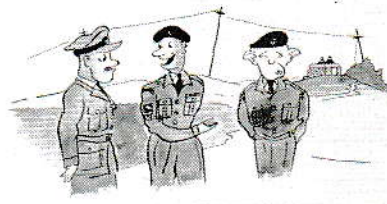
volunteers, both at the posts and centre, that at no time, from that day – 24 August 1939 – when they were called to 'action stations', until 30 June 1945, when they were 'stood down', was a post or centre left unmanned. The greatest number serving at any one time throughout the whole of the Observer Corps was only 34,000, of whom many were women.

Seaborne

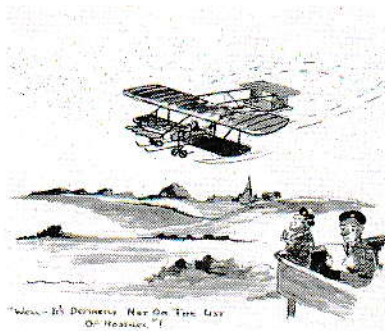
Our naval commanders were always



'Pity them poor blokes at centre – no fresh air – and all that fog!'
(With apologies to Sessions)



'Observer Firkin here is a natural for sound plotting, sir!'
(With apologies to Bill Thacker)



(With apologies to Sessions)

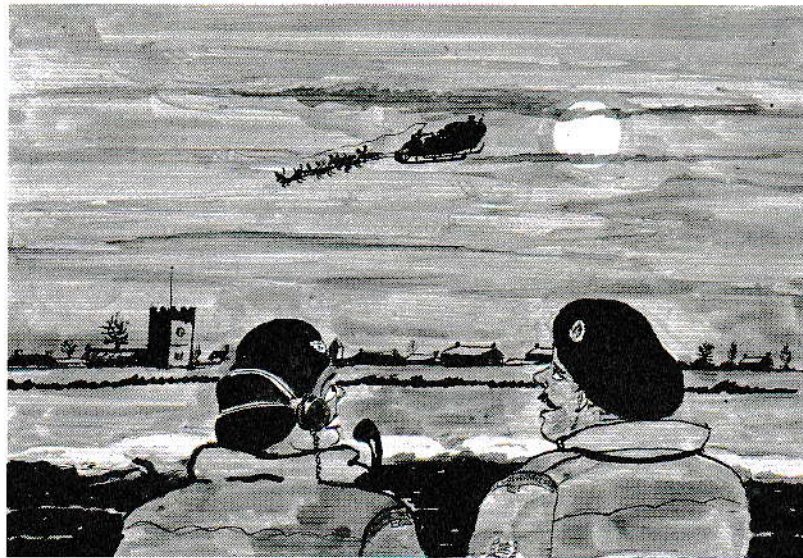
reluctant to allow unidentified aircraft to approach their ships, and opened fire whether they were friendly or not. To lessen the risk to our own aircraft when near the ships of the invasion fleet, the Royal Observer Corps was asked for observers to be with the gun crews on the ships which took the invasion force to the Normandy beaches. Their job over, a month after the landings they

returned to their posts or centres to resume routine plotting.

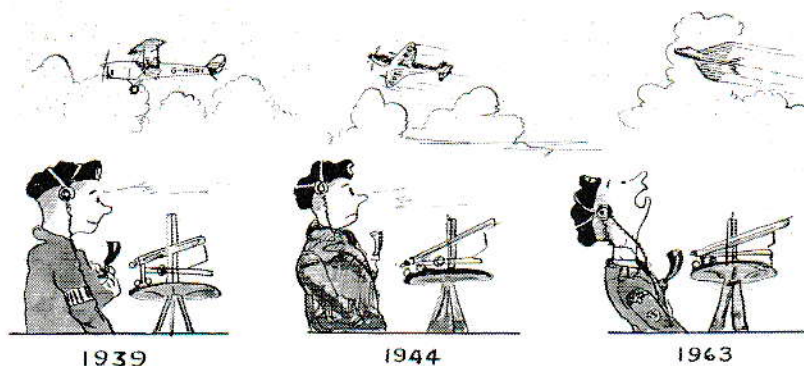
One can imagine the 'line shooting' at post meetings and crew cluster meetings, as the 'spotter sailors' recounted their experiences to the observer land lubbers, although they had only done their voluntary duty as it was asked of them.

That, then, is briefly the history of the Corps up to the stand down in 1945. The experiences gained and hardships endured by these men and women over the whole of our country can only be imagined.

In the Midland area, which covered about a quarter of England, the number of posts in the eleven observer groups increased from 237 at the outbreak of war to 424 at the stand down. There were 7,843 post observers, of whom 248 were women, while at the centres there were 1,075 women observers in a total strength of 2,129. Some 10,000 observers, scattered in posts and centres over this part of the country, are not a lot when the tremendous amount of man hours saved in war production is considered.



'Friendly'



Life in the Royal Observer Corps.

Who were the observers? In the variety of trades and professions there were people one would not expect to meet in peaceful times; fishermen from the North Sea coast, farmers, parsons, tradesmen and clerks, steelworkers and shunters, retired officers, and keen-eyed shepherds and gamekeepers. Whatever their occupation, the spirit that was within these men was the same, and their status in life was not allowed to influence rank in the Corps, in which efficiency in the job was the criterion by which ability to hold rank was judged. A retired general submitted his application for leave to his head observer – a farm labourer – without either seeing anything unusual in this, for each was serving his country to the best of his ability in a civilian organization.

Post stories

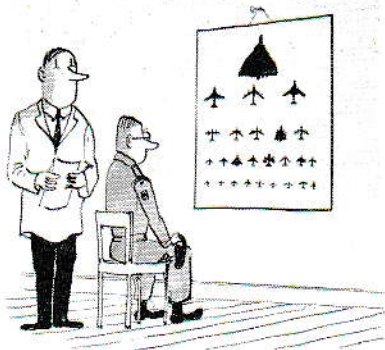
The winter of 1942 was hard, and observers struggled through blizzard and storm to duty. They were often imprisoned for days on the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Wolds. At a post in the Lincolnshire Wolds two observers went on duty straight from market with the week's shopping. The weather clamped down, and they had to stay on duty for twenty-four hours. Their colleagues tried to dig their way through 12-ft snowdrifts from the village in the valley two miles away. When the head observer

struggled through on horseback he found two tired but contented observers with their rations all eaten. They are said to have been apprehensive of the welcome awaiting them at home.

The plight of observers further north, where the weather could be exceptionally severe, can be imagined. At Todmorden post, 1,500 ft above sea level, the group officer had to use skis to visit his posts. In Durham the weather was even worse, but throughout it all the wires were kept free and the work of the Corps went on. Each observer did his war service in the lonely and exposed places in our countryside, accepting his duty as a common lot.

Perhaps the factor which distinguishes the Midland from other areas in the Corps is the great number of aerodromes from which the bombers of the British and American air forces flew.

With the growing bomber offensive the problem of tracking these aircraft became a real one, especially when the bombers were homeward bound. The vigilance and accuracy of the posts, coupled with the centre's liaison with Flying Control Section of the Royal Air Force, saved many lives. Between 1 January 1942 and 31 January 1945 there were 152 recorded instances when aircraft in distress landed safely through the help of the Corps in the Midland area. These figures represent only one



(With apologies to Bill Thacker)

tenth of the cases when aircraft were really in dire need of assistance, and do not include hundreds of other cases of help given.

Dealing with aircraft in distress, this story concerns an American Liberator picked up by posts in the Bedford group. Owing to bad weather they lost track of it, but it was picked up again by the Lincoln posts, only to be lost once more. The bomber was again located and lost, this time by the Derby group. As there was a snow gale the aircraft was assumed to have crashed in the mountainous district. It was eventually established that the pilot and all ten of his crew had bailed out near Boston, Lincolnshire, having set the plane on a course of 290 degrees. The Liberator had flown on for over sixty miles, and the groups at Lincoln, Derby, Leeds, and Manchester had been plotting an empty aircraft. The safe homing of this aircraft would have been extremely difficult.

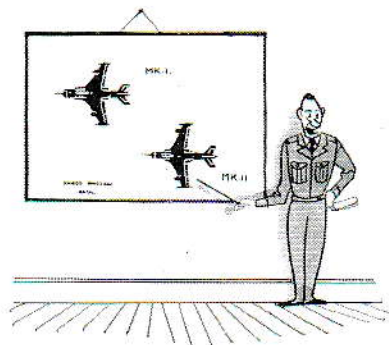
In November 1944 a B17 Fortress collided at 19,000 ft over the Zuider Zee with another aircraft which was lost. Flying control informed the R.O.C. that the Fortress was expected to cross the coast between Yarmouth and Winterton (Norfolk). Despite the heavy activity of returning and outgoing traffic, the

bomber was picked up by the Norwich posts (part of its tail was missing), and plotted from where it crossed the coast near Yarmouth to the base at Horsham St Faith where it made a bumpy but safe landing, and the injured crew were taken off in waiting ambulances.

Again, shortly after midnight on 2 and 3 September 1944, control advised the Corps of a Mosquito off course and in trouble. York group picked up the wooden bomber on the coast near Whitby, and the pilot later made a safe landing, thanks to continuous tracking which enabled control to contact him and keep him on his correct course. These instances could be recounted *ad infinitum*, but they came as ordinary everyday work to the observers.

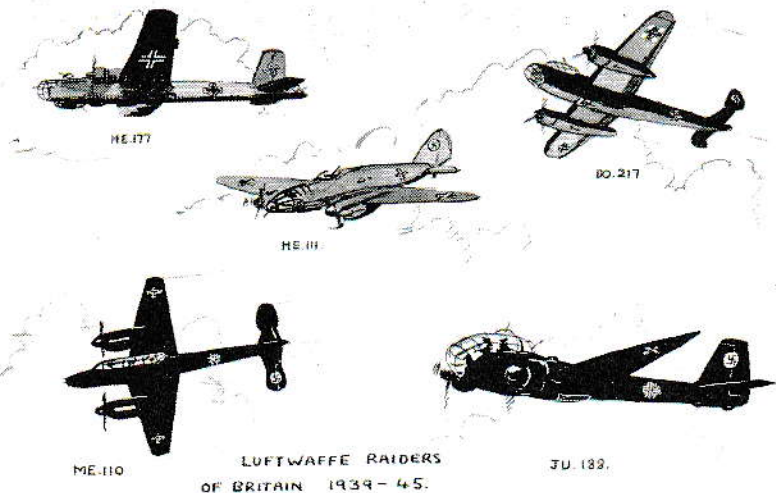
Intruders

The Midland area was extensively concerned with intruders – heavily armed hostile aircraft which hung about an airfield waiting for bombers to take off or land. They mingled with our bombers returning from a raid, and tried to shoot them down when landing or to bomb airfields and runways. It was a hard task for observers to pick them out from our bombers, by sound or method of flying.



'The Mark II differs from the Mark I in mark number only.'

(With apologies to Bill Thacker)



Such a one was the JU88 which came back with the returning Wellingtons of 103 Squadron, Elsham Wolds, in July 1941. Showing no lights, he circled with the bombers until the Corps told control that they suspected a hostile among them. Unfortunately one Wellington was landing, so the flare path was extinguished and, by a pre-arranged code signal, all bombers told to scatter. The intruder, probably realizing that something was wrong, dived down and tried to shoot down the rising Wellington. In this he was unsuccessful, coming under fire from the ground defences. With the sky now clear of bombers and control alerted, the German intruder contented himself by dropping bombs and machine-gunning the drome. His every move was being reported by the nearby posts at Wootton, Winterton, and Barton, and soon they reported another aircraft coming out of the west. It was a Beau-fighter from Kirton Lindsey, and he soon sent the JU88 down in flames near Worlaby. The plotter at centre removed the hostile plaque from the table, and the Wellingtons returned to Elsham.

The night of the first 1,000-

bomber raid on Cologne was a headache for the Corps, and eyebrows were raised when the Eastern posts were giving reports of '800 plus at ten, Spurn Head'. This story concerns the Lincoln Group, when intruders in fair strength had slipped in with our bombers forming up for the raid. The centre operations table showed a larger number of bombers than had ever previously been plotted at one time. Soon, as darkness fell, 'X Raids' (raids of doubtful identity) appeared off the coast, and into the midst of all this preparation came the enemy intruders. Our aircraft were using navigation lights to avoid collision, and airfields were lit as more and more bombers took off.

At Coningsby airfield Lancasters were about to take off, and the Lincoln centre line was switched through direct to the airfield. The following account is by one who was at the observer centre that night.

'Lancasters taxied round the perimeter track and waited at the end of the runway. The voice at Lincoln centre said: "Wait - bandit ten miles north east of you, coming your way". Coningsby's

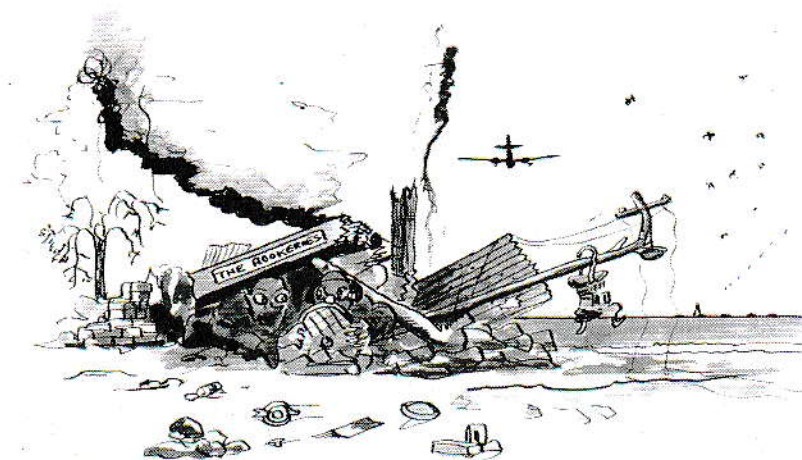
lights went off, and the Lancasters waited. The Hun sped overhead. The voice from Lincoln said: "O.K.," the airfield lights went on, and a Lancaster roared down the runway and off on its mission. Centre observers saw the track of the intruder spin round and dive towards the glow of lights, and again Coningsby was warned and lights dowsed while the second Lancaster awaited its turn. The puzzled Hun scoured the darkness and overshot the airfield. The centre voice again said "O.K. - he's gone away", and another Lancaster took off.'

This procedure was repeated many times, and the intruder dived towards the runway lights only to be confronted with darkness as they were put out. Each Lancaster got safely off the ground. This example of perfect co-operation between the R.O.C. and R.A.F. proves beyond doubt what team work can do.

In other directions the Luftwaffe were doing their dirty work, and on the night of 29 April 1942 enemy raiders began to come in over Flamborough Head at about 02.30 hrs. The first bomb was dropped on York at 02.41 hrs, and from then onwards many incendiary and high

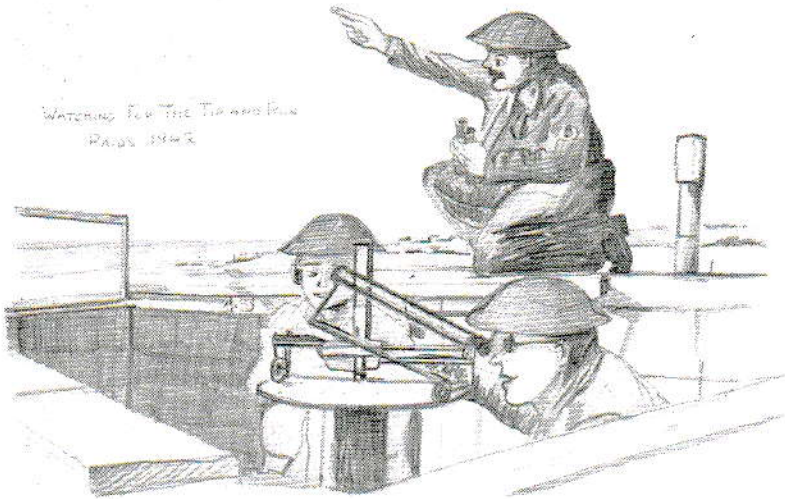
explosives dropped in and around the city. The attack was a heavy one, and the guildhall, post office, and many buildings near centre were completely burnt out. Several high explosive bombs fell close to the centre building, which was hit by three incendiary bombs. Throughout this attack the two duty crews worked through coolly and efficiently plotting the tracks of the bombers as they came in. The post at Winterton, Lincolnshire, plotting a hostile aircraft to centre, was amazed to hear the controller shout 'Hang on a bit, we're getting bombed', and the observer could hear the thud and crump of exploding high explosive in his ear-phones. Special commendation went to the men of the Fulford post in No.10 group who, throughout the raid, reported efficiently the position of both hostile aircraft and our own fighters.

What was later described as one of the most perfect daylight interceptions of the war happened on 2 July 1942 at a post high on the Lincolnshire Wolds. A post meeting was being held by the Assistant Group Officer with a member from centre. They were trying to answer questions put to them by the post



*'— An' you told me to tell centre it sounded friendly!
(With apologies to Sessions)*

Watching For The Tin-can Bombs
PAGES 13-14



observers. A bit disgruntled, these members, after hours of unexciting watching, said 'What good are we doing here anyway?'

Suddenly the two duty observers shouted excitedly 'Some Jerries are coming.' It was a fine summer evening with hardly a cloud in the sky, and to the now satisfied farmer observers, tensely listening to the running commentary of their comrades, their previous words seemed pointless. Two JU88s had come into the area from Lancashire, where cloud cover was good that day. By hedge-hopping and using cloud cover they evaded the intercepting fighters, dropped some bombs, machine-gunned some military establishments (including Chatsworth House in Derbyshire), and came in low, south of Lincoln, on their last lap towards home, still unmolested. A continuous track had been kept by the R.O.C. for 12 Fighter Group, and two Spitfires of a Polish squadron from Kirton Lindsey were in a cloudless piece of sky over mid-Lincolnshire. As the two enemy aircraft flattened out on to the Fens, just in the lee of the hills of the Wolds, a running commentary was

being given by the Lincoln liaison teller, with the result that the Polish pilots shot down the JU88s almost in sight of the sea.

Despite the exposed positions which members of the Corps so frequently occupied, only one observer died on duty. A member of the Hackthorn post in the Lincoln Group was due on duty at 02.00 hrs on 4 March 1945, and, instead of sleeping at the post until his tour of duty, stayed at home to motor to the post. When within a short distance of the post, his car was hit by a JU188 — one of many that were flying at a low altitude over a wide area and using cannon and machine guns. In the crash both the car and the bomber were completely destroyed. The observer must have died instantly, for the debris of the aircraft was scattered over two fields by the roadside.

'24 July 1942 — 00.30 hrs — German airman surrendered to post and handed over to police at 00.40 hrs. 00.55 hrs — another prisoner reported. Taken up to town in Observer E. Bowser's car. Arrested by Observer S. Bayston. As a matter of interest I log the following:

“During air activity I went to the post to see if I could help. On nearing the post I saw two parachutes descending. I got a rifle and ammunition and went in search. I found and arrested a German officer. He had hurt his foot and was very much afraid I was going to shoot him. I took him to hospital and handed him over to the police.” Signed Observer A. S. Bayston.’ This entry was taken from the log book of the Holbeach post, and tells of an exciting night near the Wash. One can well imagine with what joy Observer Bayston ‘got a rifle and ammunition and went in search’. (Each post had two rifles and ammunition – just in case.)

This account of the Midland area can only be a short record of some of the incidents which live on in the minds of the observers in this section of our defensive system. Much has been omitted owing to space. I would like to end this account on a humorous note. Battersford post, in Leicestershire, was concerned in what is believed to be the last cannon and machine gun-attack of the war, when, in March 1945, a JU188 attacked the airfield near the post, and the story told of Walston post, though

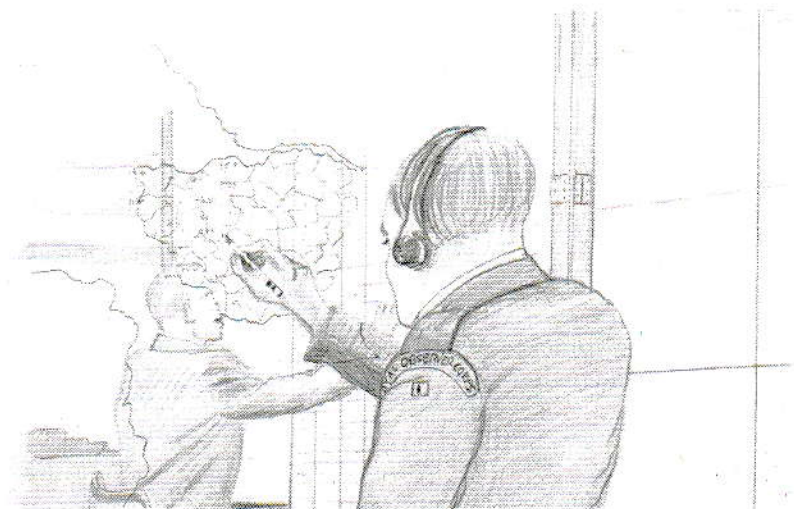
shortened, shows that a sense of humour may survive in trying circumstances. A JU88 made a daylight raid. ‘It’s down’, shouted the observer at another post, but from Walston, on the same post cluster, came the slightly hurt retort ‘Down be damned, the ...’s machine-gunning me.’

Re-formation of the Corps

Although the Royal Observer Corps stood down in June 1945, it was not disbanded because it was required to continue as a component of the defence system. In January 1947 it was re-formed with war-time observers as a nucleus. During the next two years the Corps was reorganized with the same geographical layout as at the end of the war. In recognition of the R.O.C.’s record of service during its twenty-five years, His Majesty King George VI became Air Commodore in Chief, Royal Observer Corps, on 11 April 1950.

The Corps was again reorganized in November 1953, when it became evident that the ever increasing speed of military aircraft needed a change in operating procedure.

During 1955 it was announced that the



Recording fall-out reports in an Operations Room.

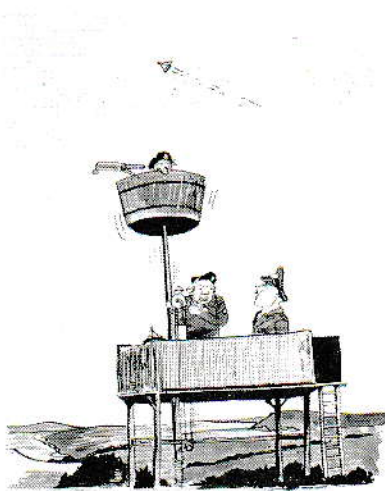
Corps was to undertake the additional task of detecting, measuring, and reporting the radioactive fall-out from nuclear weapons, in order to provide the National Warning Organization with information on which warning to service and civil authorities could be based.

The Royal Observer Corps has been known for many years as the eyes and ears of the R.A.F. With Her Majesty the Queen as Air Commodore-in-Chief today, if nuclear war came to Britain the R.O.C. would be the key to the entire civil defence system. On the information it gives may well depend the lives of hundreds of thousands. It would go swiftly into action as guide and informant to the civil defence organization, the military forces, and the N.A.T.O. countries. Just as in the last war 32,000 men and women observers spotted, plotted, and reported enemy aircraft attacking the United Kingdom, enabling R.A.F. fighters and anti-aircraft gunners to come speedily to grips with the attackers, so in a nuclear war the R.O.C. would be the only organization in Britain equipped and trained to report on deadly nuclear fall-out on a national basis.

New equipment

Following a nuclear bomb-burst, dust and debris, sucked up in the mushroom cloud, later falls as lethal radioactive particles which drift over the countryside. With the aid of sensitive instruments and apparatus, the R.O.C.'s twenty-nine new group headquarters and 1,500 new observation posts would be able to tell the civil defence organizations the fall-out's direction, intensity, and rate of travel, to enable the authorities above the ground to warn the populace in the path of the radioactive dust.

R.O.C. groups cover the whole of the British Isles, and the headquarters of each group has an operation room which is in contact with a network of posts scattered strategically throughout the country. Reaching even the remote Orkneys, Shetlands, and Hebrides, the R.O.C. is ideally suited for its fall-out



*'Our own idea for this high flying stuff'
(with apologies to Sessions)*

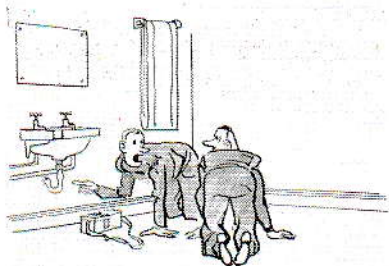
reporting role. And as there still remains the possibility of low-level air attack, even in nuclear war, visual aircraft spotting still remains an important task in the Corps.

R.O.C. is fun

There is a good deal of fun and social life to be had in the R.O.C. There is keen but friendly rivalry between posts and operation rooms in contests, and the good companionship of training evenings where observers get to know each other and also to meet members of the R.A.F. and Civil Defence teams. The highlight of the annual programme is the week which all men and women of the R.O.C. can spend at a summer camp as guests of an R.A.F. fighter station. At these voluntary camps a full-time entertainments officer ensures that observers combine their practical training with a real holiday atmosphere, with dances, concerts, film shows, and amusing prize-winning competitions.

R.O.C. posts

Each post has a furnished underground room, stocked with rations, to give



'According to the radiac meter your wrist-watch is just about here.'
(With apologies to Bill Thacker)

complete protection from radiation for the men and women on duty. Here, with 'bomb power' and 'ground zero' indicators, the observers would be the first to report the explosion of a nuclear bomb, with details which would be of the utmost importance to the scientists of the United Kingdom Warning Organization who predict fall-out and alert the nation. Next, from their survey meters, the post crew would be able to register the amount of radiation in the area and report it to the R.O.C. group operation room.

R.O.C. operation rooms

These rooms are the vital links in the



'Damn it, Simpson, I asked you to get me an Observer - a newspaper!'
(With apologies to Bill Thacker)

chain between posts within the group and the Warning Organization. In the operation room - the focal point of each group headquarters - 'plotters' are training to record instrument readings sent in from the posts, and to display them on a table map of their part of the country. Another table records information from adjacent group operation rooms, so that an accurate picture can be formed of the situation over a wide area. Meanwhile other observers are training to fix precisely the position, height, and power of the nuclear explosion. And, from a balcony overlooking the tables, 'tellers' pass on all this information to the Warning Organization.

The reinforced headquarters, which houses the operation room, has kitchens, canteens, sleeping accommodation, showers, and ventilating plant, so that observers can live and work for several weeks in absolute safety from fall-out.

This, then, is why your spare-time help is needed in the Royal Observer Corps. As the R.O.C. network covers the whole of the British Isles, there must be a post or centre near your home.

Highlights in R.O.C. history

- 1925 Two Observer Groups formed and manned by special constables. Raid Warning Organization became the responsibility of a combined Air Ministry, Home Office, and G.P.O. Committee.
- 1929 The organization was taken over by the Air Ministry, but observers remained special constables until 1939.
- 1939 The Corps was mobilized.
- 1940 The first big trial came with the Battle of Britain.
- 1941 In recognition of the Corps' excellent work, King George VI granted the title 'Royal'. Women joined the R.O.C. for the first time.
- 1944 R.O.C. 'Scaborne' observers helped the invasion operations. The first V1 was destroyed by fighters working on R.O.C. directions.

- 1950 H.M. King George VI became Air Commodore-in-Chief of the Corps. The R.O.C. Silver Jubilee was celebrated. The R.O.C. medal was instituted.
- 1953 H.M. The Queen became Air Commodore-in-Chief of the Corps.
- 1955 The R.O.C. undertook the new role of reporting radioactive fall-out.
- 1956-61 All the posts were rebuilt underground, and the Corps was reorganized into twenty-nine groups, each with protected headquarters. Special instruments for detecting nuclear burst and measuring fall-out were developed and produced.
- Acknowledgement is made to T. F. Winslow for information taken from Forewarned is Forearmed.*



He who does not consider himself fortunate is unfortunate.
(Samuel Butler)

The most difficult secret for a man to keep is the opinion of himself.
(Marcel Pagnol)

Women's styles alter every year, but their designs remain pretty much the same.
(Reveille)

If a man does not keep step with his companions, it may be because he hears a different drummer.
(Thoreau)

When you educate a man you educate an individual. When you educate a woman you educate a whole family.
(C. D. McIvor)

A wife is a great consolation to a man in all the troubles a bachelor never has.
(Archbishop of Canterbury)

Thy friend has a friend, and thy friend's friend has a friend. Be discreet.
(The Talmud)

A man's real possession is his memory. In nothing else is he rich, in nothing else is he poor.
(Alexander Smith)

Because a girl has dreamy eyes it does not follow she is not wide awake.

The closer the man, the harder he is to touch.

The first half of our lives is ruined by our parents, and the second half by our children.
(Clarence D. Darrow)

That Night

Daylight had gone,
And darkness closed with mystery upon
Our flock of sheep, so restless, did they know?
Had their keen senses been forewarned, if so
Were they afraid?
We shepherds were when first we heard the sound
Of choirs singing in the fields around,
A great light suddenly shone about the earth,
The angels told us of the heavenly birth.
Heavenly? Yet to the earth they said He came
For even such as us, we praised His name.
The mystery no longer filled the air,
We hurried to the stable, found Him there,
The baby, in His mother's arms sleeping,
Was He, of all mankind, to be the King?
Morning was near,
The oxen in the stalls looked on, and clear
Above the stable shone a great new light,
The sign long waited for by man. That night
We knelt and prayed.

ELAEN



The Engineer 100 years ago (28 December 1862)

An Engineer's lighter moments

Put forth your force, my iron horse, with limbs that never tire:
The beat of oil shall feed your joints, and the best of coal your fire.
So off we tear from Euston-square, to beat the swift south wind,
As we rattle along the north-west rail, with the special train behind.
Like a train of ghosts, the telegraph posts go wildly trooping by,
While one by one the milestones run, and off behind us fly.
Like foaming wine it fires my blood, to see your lightning speed:
Arabia's race ne'er matched your pace, my gallant steamborne steed.
My blessing on old George Stephenson. Let his fame for ever last;
For he was the man that found the plan to make you run so fast:
His arm was strong, his head was long, he knew not guile nor fear;
When I think of him it makes me proud that I am an engineer.
Now Thames and Trent are far behind, and evening's shades are come;
Before my eyes the brown hills rise, that guard my true love's home.
Even now she stands, my own dear lass, beside the cottage door,
And she listens for the whistle shrill, and the blast pipe's rattling roar.

W.J.M.R.

(Thought to be Professor W. J. Macquom Ranhine (1820-1872))