

## Churchill's Speech to the House of Commons, 4th June 1940

After five disastrous weeks for the British armed forces, Churchill stood to address the House of Commons in an effort to boost the nation's flagging morale. The final part of his speech included some of the most famous phrases in the English language.

“Turning once again, and this time more generally, to the question of invasion, I would observe that there has never been a period in all these long centuries of which we boast when an absolute guarantee against invasion, still less against serious raids, could have been given to our people. In the days of Napoleon, of which I was speaking just now, the same wind which would have carried his transports across the Channel might have driven away the blockading fleet. There was always the chance, and it is that chance which has excited and befooled the imaginations of many Continental tyrants. Many are the tales that are told. We are assured that novel methods will be adopted, and when we see the originality of malice, the ingenuity of aggression, which our enemy displays, we may certainly prepare ourselves for every kind of novel stratagem and every kind of brutal and treacherous manœuvre. I think that no idea is so outlandish that it should not be considered and viewed with a searching, but at the same time, I hope, with a steady eye. We must never forget the solid assurances of sea power and those which belong to air power if it can be locally exercised.

*I have, myself, full confidence that if all do their duty, if nothing is neglected, and if the best arrangements are made, as they are being made, we shall prove ourselves once again able to defend our Island home, to ride out the storm of war, and to outlive the menace of tyranny, if necessary for years, if necessary alone.*

*At any rate, that is what we are going to try to do. That is the resolve of His Majesty's Government—every man of them. That is the will of Parliament and the nation.*

*The British Empire and the French Republic, linked together in their cause and in their need, will defend to the death their native soil, aiding each other like good comrades to the utmost of their strength.*

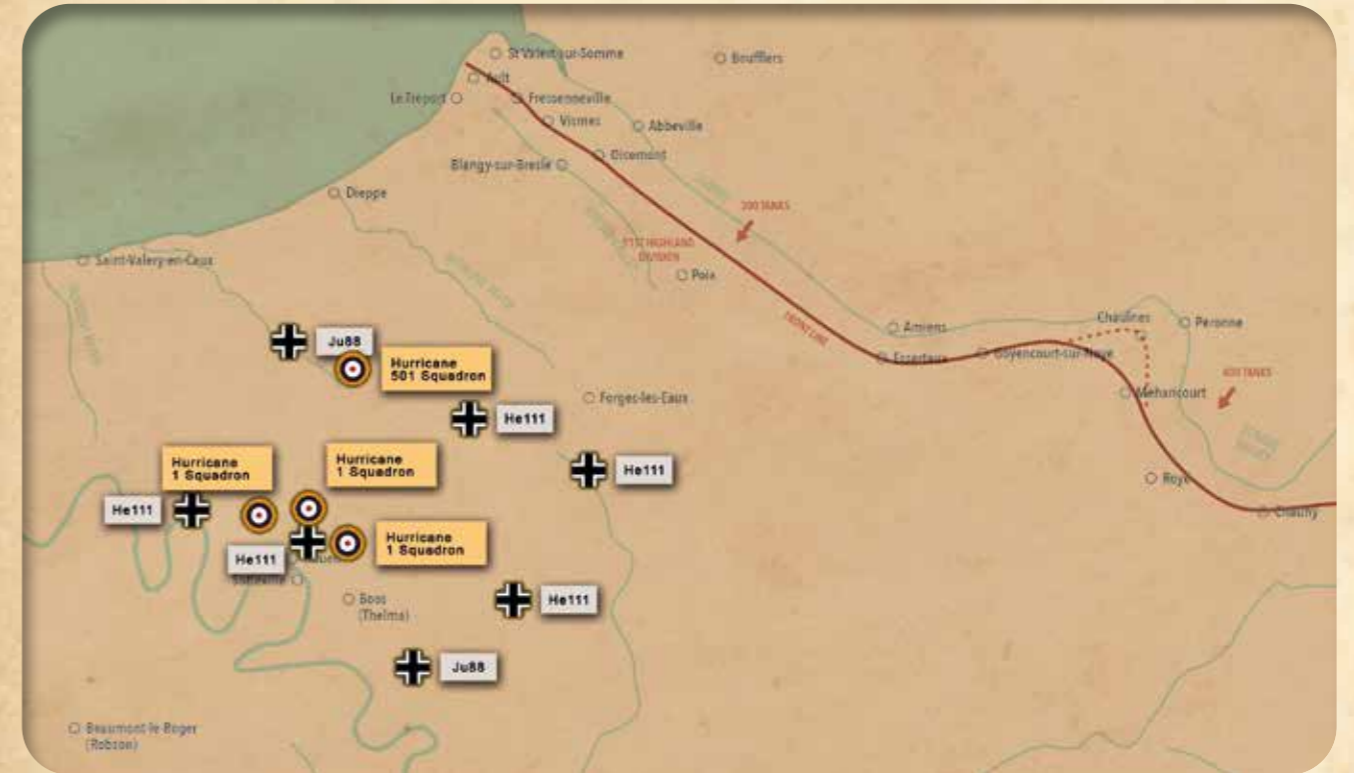
*Even though large tracts of Europe and many old and famous States have fallen or may fall into the grip of the Gestapo and all the odious apparatus of Nazi rule, we shall not flag or fail.*

*We shall go on to the end, we shall fight in France,  
we shall fight on the seas and oceans,  
we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our Island,  
whatever the cost may be,  
we shall fight on the beaches,  
we shall fight on the landing grounds,  
we shall fight in the fields and in the streets,  
we shall fight in the hills;  
we shall never surrender, and even if, which I do not for a moment believe, this Island or a large part of it were subjugated and starving, then our Empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Fleet, would carry on the struggle, until, in God's good time, the New World, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old.*

”

# WEDNESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> JUNE

21 RAF fighters fly 3 patrols from the UK.  
30 RAF fighters fly 3 patrols from French airfields.  
Weather: Scattered cloud, but generally fine.



The German offensive which began on June 5th covered a very wide area. In particular, attacks were pressed at the following points:

- 1/ An advance south-west from St Valéry-sur-Somme and Abbéville which by nightfall forced the 51st Division two-thirds of the way back towards the Bresle. The line in this sector at the end of the day ran from the sea at Ault through Fressenneville and Vismes to Oisemont.
- 2/ An advance south from Amiens by Panzer formations in which the employment of 300 tanks was reported. By night this had penetrated some 10 miles to Essertaux and Goyencourt-sur-Noy. The tanks had apparently forced their way through the French line, which was still holding back the German infantry.
- 3/ An advance south-west from the Péronne area, in which four hundred tanks were said to be participating. By nightfall this had penetrated past Chaunles and Méharicourt nearly as far as Roye.
- 4/ One advance south-west from the La Fère - Chauny area which crossed the Crozat canal on the north-east of Chauny, and the Ailette and Oise Canal on the south of Chauny. These prongs during the day penetrated to the line Bretigny - Besme - Guny.
- 5/ An advance south-west from the Laon area which crossed the Ailette and Oise Canal and reached Chavignon, a midway point on the Laon - Soissons road.

There were other crossings of the Somme and the links to the Aisne, but the above constituted the main threats. It will be seen that these attacks were all in the general direction of Paris, or else of the Lower Seine.

## Fighter Operations based in France

The fighters of the AASF were engaged early on this day. It was suspected that the Germans had laid plans to launch a big air attack on targets in and near Rouen, which was a key-point for the Allied effort. Apart from its industrial output and its obvious importance as a focal point of road and rail communications, Rouen was also a centre of military and air activity both for the French and for the British. No.1 Squadron was therefore up early on patrol from Rouen-Boos aerodrome, and together with French fighters engaged a very large German formation, which was intercepted at 06.00 hours. Accounts of the German formation differ, as the estimate of the accompanying fighters runs from 24 to 60 Me110s, but there is substantial agreement that the bomber force consisted of some 60 He111s and Do17s, and that it was escorted by several Me110s. The exchanges again are variously reported, but four Hurricanes were definitely lost, and it is probable that they destroyed an equal or rather greater number of enemy aircraft. Obviously, however, some of the German force was bound to get through, and it was reported that Boos aerodrome and Rouvray Camp were both bombed. This operation was repeated in the evening, when a smaller force – 12 He111s and 4 Ju88s escorted by 12 Me110s – was intercepted at 18.55 hours by No.501 Squadron. On this occasion the aerodrome and the Camp were again bombed, while attacks were also made on the main bridge, and the power-station, railway station and factories of Sotteville.

## Fighter Operations from the UK

6 fighters carried out a reconnaissance over Calais early on the morning of the 5th June to ascertain if any of our forces were still holding out. There were no signs of continued resistance and the town appeared to be a shambles.

A section of Hurricanes carried out a reconnaissance for Bomber Command Striking Force in the Péronne and Amiens area. As a result, a bomber force of 23 Blenheims was despatched and escorted by 2 squadrons of fighters. When the bombers had concluded their task, the fighters made an offensive sweep but no enemy aircraft were met and all our fighters returned.



Despite the chaos, some Hurricanes were actually salvaged and flew again like this one, L2045 SD-A of 501 Squadron.

## Fighter Command forces available after Operation Dynamo

Fighter Squadrons based in France:

No.67 (Fighter) Wing HQ- Laigne, near Le Mans	No.73 (Fighter) Squadron - Hurricanes - Le Mans
No.1 (Fighter) Squadron - Hurricanes - Chateaudun	No.501 (Fighter) Squadron - Hurricanes - Le Mans

All in Le Mans – Orleans area; but fighters liable to operate from 'South Component' grounds Rouen-Boos, Étrépagny, Estrées-St-Denis, Dreux, Beaumont-le-Roger:

In addition to the squadrons based in France, 16 were in position to operate over the Channel:

During the period 5th – 22nd June, sixteen of the Fighter Command squadrons were employed at one time or another on duties over France. Of these, squadrons 601 (20 patrols), 56 (17 patrols), 79 (16 patrols), 151 (15 patrols), 145 (15 patrols), 32 (14 patrols), 615 (13 patrols) were employed fairly constantly; squadrons 245 (9 patrols), 604 (8 patrols), 213 (6 patrols), 74 (6 patrols) were employed less intensively: while squadrons 65 (5 patrols), 54 (4 patrols), 43 (3 patrols), 17 (2 patrols), 609 (1 patrol) were employed very little. The most that ever operated on one day was ten squadrons (June 11th and 12th – principally to protect the 51st Division attempting evacuation from St Valery-en-Caux).

## Morning Patrols 1 Squadron

### 1 Sqn Intelligence Report

The 11 aircraft which remained at Thelma (Rouen-Boos) overnight took off at 05.50 hours to patrol on a line west of Rouen at 15,000 feet. At 06.00 hours, before reaching patrol height, large formations of enemy bombers were seen at 12,000 feet (approximately 60 escorted by a large number of Me110s, above and behind into the sun).

### 'B' Flight (6 a/c) remarks:

'B' Flight made an echelon attack on 2 formations of Heinkels 111. One enemy aircraft turned on its back and dropped. One own aircraft (F/O Hillcoat) force landed with bullet through radiator, this aircraft caught fire but pilot was not prevented from force landing. One own aircraft (Sgt Arbuthnot) force landed with radiator shot away. One own aircraft (P/O Lindsell) forced landed near Deauville and returned to Thelma. The other 3 aircraft landed at Thelma, one with petrol and oil tank shot through; another crashed on landing, the other landed OK.

### 'A' Flight (5 a/c) remarks:

'A' Flight separated from 'B' when attack commenced. When about to attack bombers, they were themselves attacked by about 20 Me110s; the formation broke up and a series of dog fights ensued. Enemy fighters were avoided and our pilots looked for straggling bombers. F/Lt Brown eventually attacked a Do17, followed enemy aircraft from 20,000 to 5,000 feet, then broke off attack after rear gunner had ceased firing and each engine had been fired at until white smoke and oil came from them. P/O Shepherd reported to have crashed in flames. P/O Browne fired at 2 Heinkels, result not known but tracer seen to find target. F/O Matthews climbed into the sun and attacked single straggling Heinkel at about 19,000 feet. Enemy aircraft dived and Matthews followed down to 14,000 feet, when both engines of enemy aircraft had stopped and rear gunner had ceased firing. The enemy aircraft being crippled and obviously forced to land. Matthews broke away and then attacked another straggler at 8,000 feet, which had only one engine working, fired two short bursts with deflection shots and saw bullets enter target, the rear gunner did not fire at all, and he then broke away.

P/O Boot looked around for stragglers and found a Heinkel and did No.2 attack on it, disabling rear gunner and put one engine out of action; afterwards climbed and put a burst into other engine. The enemy aircraft was obviously disabled and started to glide down. He then broke away and attacked Do17 and disabled its starboard engine, then made an attack on a second Do17 but through lack of ammunition was unable to complete the attack. He then dived down and overtook the Heinkel which was making a forced landing in a field between Thelma and Rouen (5 miles east of Rouen). Two occupants only were seen to leave the a/c on the ground.

Below: French Bloch 152s of GCII/10 were also involved in this combat.



RAF Victory Claims 06.00 hrs

1 Sqn	F/Lt M H Brown	Do17 destroyed	Amiens
1 Sqn	F/O H B L Hillcoat	He111 destroyed	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O P G H Matthews	He111 destroyed	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O P G H Matthews	He111 damaged	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O P M Boot	He111 destroyed	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O P M Boot	He111 unconfirmed	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O P M Boot	Do17 damaged	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O G E Goodman	Me110 destroyed	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O D M Brown	He111 damaged	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O D M Brown	He111 damaged	Rouen
1 Sqn	F/Sgt F G Berry	Me110 destroyed	Rouen
1 Sqn	F/Sgt F G Berry	He111 destroyed	Rouen
1 Sqn	Sgt A V Clowes	Me110 destroyed	Rouen
1 Sqn	P/O N P W Hancock	He111 unconfirmed	Rouen

*Editor's note: French Bloch 152s of GCII/10 were also involved in this combat.*

Below: An atmospheric photo taken during the Battle of France at Betheniville showing pilots of 501 Squadron. Left to right; Flying Officer E J Holden, Sergeant D A S McKay, Sergeant J H "Ginger" Lacey. Squadron Leader A V Clube (CO), Pilot Officer R G Hulse, Pilot Officer D A Hewitt, Sergeant P C P Farnes. To illustrate the fortunes of war, compare the two pilots in the white overalls. 'Dicky' Hulse was killed in action on 8 June 1940 whereas Paul Farnes lived to reach his century. The Canadian Duncan Hewitt, standing between them, survived the Battle of France but was killed in action on 12 July 1940 whilst chasing a Do17 low over the sea.



## RAF Casualties 06.00 hrs

- 1 Sqn Hurricane Landed on fire near Rouen - hit in radiator by return fire. P/O H B L Hillcoat – safe.
- 1 Sqn Hurricane Damaged by return fire from He111s over Rouen. Sgt J Arbuthnot – safe.
- 1 Sqn Hurricane P3590 Damaged by return fire from He111s over Rouen. P/O N P W Hancock – safe.
- 1 Sqn Hurricane Shot down over Rouen. P/O J A Shepherd – killed.



Above: Pat Hancock, one of the 1 Squadron pilots that was hit by return fire during this combat.

## Luftwaffe Casualties 06.00 hrs

- 3/KG27 He111P-2 Shot down during an attack on Rouen. Ff: Gerd Franck, Bo: Fw Joachim Scheunemann, Bf: Uffz Willi Forster and Bm: Uffz Alfons Jenau all PoWs.
- 3/KG27 He111P-2 Shot down during an attack on Rouen. Bm: Uffz Kurt Meier and Bf: Uffz Fritz Wolf killed. Ff: Oblt Hans-Georg Bätcher and Bo: Oblt Siegfried Scholz both PoWs.
- 3/KG27 He111P-2 Damaged during an attack on Rouen. Bm: Uffz Albert Ullmann slightly wounded. Ff: Fw Reinhold Boer, Bo: Fw Hans Hegemann and Bf: Rudolf Hengst safe. 10% damage.

Below: It should be pointed out that this book covers the RAF's battles with the Luftwaffe during this period and not those of the French Air Force. On this day, the French pilots achieved their greatest victory of the campaign when leading German ace Werner Molders was shot down in this Me109 and taken prisoner of war.



Above: Battle weary pilots of 73 Squadron were moving airfields almost on a daily basis as the Germans pushed further south. Here Sgt Pilkington, F/O 'Ginger' Paul, F/O N 'Fanny' Orton and F/O E J 'Cobber' Kain DFC walk past one of their older Hurricanes.

## Morning Patrol 73 Squadron

### 73 Sqn Intelligence Report

In the early morning seven aircraft went on a patrol over Reims area to intercept a large formation of the GAF proceeding westwards. One Dornier was seen and engaged at 11,000 feet over Epernay district. Blue Section fired individual bursts at this Dornier which was seen to have its port engine on fire and going into a spin. It was last seen losing height very slowly over a wood with both engines stopped.

During this combat Flying Officer E J Kain saw an Me109 on the tail of the CO's machine. He very soon accounted for this enemy machine which was seen to break away downwards. He was being shot up from behind by another Me109 – the damage to his aircraft was fairly considerable, he evaded the chase and returned to base.

### RAF Victory Claims 06.50 hrs

73 Sqn	S/Ldr J W C More	Do17 destroyed	Reims
73 Sqn	F/O E J Kain	- shared -	

### RAF Casualties 06.50 hrs

73 Sqn Hurricane	S/Ldr J W C More – safe.	Damaged by Me109s.
73 Sqn Hurricane	F/O E J Kain – safe.	Damaged by Me109s.

### Luftwaffe Casualty

3/(F)22 Do17P 4N+KL Damaged by Hurricanes during reconnaissance over Reims. Ff: Lt Wilhelm Telge, Bo: Fw Walther Rössler and Bm: Ogefr Josef Heims all PoWs.

### Luftwaffe Victory Claims

7/JG53	Fw Hans Galubinski	Hurricane	Poix
7/JG53	Uffz Hermann Neuhoff	Hurricane	Poix

# BRITISH FORCES IN FRANCE

## Evening Patrol 501 Squadron

### 501 Sqn Intelligence Report

Five enemy machines were shot down and one of our pilots lost, in a combat north-east of Rouen at 18.55. Nine of our pilots sighted an enemy force of 12 He111s, 12 Me110s and about 4 Ju88s flying towards the aerodrome and took off to engage them without having received any prior information.

Enemy force was not in formation at outset of combat, and scattered, many individual combats resulting.

Five of our pilots claimed enemy machines shot down: F/O J R Cridland, P/O R G Hulse, P/O J A A Gibson, F/Sgt A A Payne and Sgt J E Proctor; the first three pilots accounting for He111s and F/Sgt Payne and Sgt Proctor for Me110s.

F/O Cridland, P/O Hulse and P/O Gibson, operating as a section, engaged their He111s about 2 miles north-east of Buchy. P/O Gibson saw one engine of his He catch fire, but was unable to follow it down owing to damage to his radiator and petrol tank; this machine was seen going down in flames by Sgt Proctor, who however, expressed the opinion that it was a Ju88.

Sgt A A Payne took off ten minutes after the others, owing to starting difficulties, and encountered low bombing and ground strafing on the N.30 road. Flying in valleys below hills F/Sgt Payne engaged an Me110, experiencing shell bursts to the right. Finding two further Me's attacking him F/Sgt Payne executed a vertical right hand turn, causing them to disappear by his tail. He then continued the attack on his first objective, firing at it until it disappeared into the wood at Maromme, 3 miles north-west of Rouen. The Me was seen to go into the ground by Sergeant Proctor when on his way home.

Sgt J E Proctor saw an Me110 being chased by P/O D A Hewitt, who in turn had 2 other Me110s on his tail. Sgt Proctor engaged one of these, firing a burst at it, but at the same time making sure to keep P/O Hewitt out of his sights. Sgt Proctor closed and fired further shots. He then saw the starboard engine of the Me emit grey vapour. The Me stood on its tail and dived to the ground from a height of 4,000 feet at Vascoeuil, east of Rouen.

P/O A J Claydon, pursued by enemy machines was seen to crash near Dieppe, with his guns firing. Pilot was flung a considerable distance away from the machine.

P/O D A Hewitt engaged 7 Me110s 3 miles east of Rouen, flying at 500 feet, the enemy being 1,500 feet above him. He fired at one Me and definitely saw hits. The Me glided off from the other six. P/O Hewitt considered that this Me was at least seriously damaged, if not shot down.



Above: P/O Claydon of 501 Sqn, killed in action during this combat.

Below: A 501 Squadron Hurricane being serviced in the field in France. Note the unusually compact style of the squadron's SD codes.

# EVENING PATROLS

## RAF Victory Claims 18.55 hrs

501 Sqn	F/Sgt A A Payne	Me110	destroyed	Rouen
501 Sqn	F/O J R Cridland	He111	destroyed	Unknown
501 Sqn	P/O D A Hewitt	Me110	unconfirmed	Rouen
501 Sqn	P/O J A A Gibson	He111	destroyed	Rouen
501 Sqn	P/O R G Hulse	He111	destroyed	Unknown
501 Sqn	Sgt J E Proctor	Me110	destroyed	Rouen

Editor's note: French Bloch 152s of GCII/10 were also involved in this combat.

## RAF Casualties 18.55 hrs

501 Sqn Hurricane P3450 P/O A J Claydon – killed. Shot down near Rouen.

## Luftwaffe Casualties

1/KG27 He111P-2 1G+DH Crashed after being damaged during an attack on Rouen. Uffz Conrad Nuhn and Ofw Erich List killed. Lt Hugo Lavallée and Uff Fritz Deimling PoWs.

1/KG27 He111P-2 1G+KH Shot down during an attack on Rouen. Ff: Fw Heinrich Grube, Bf: Uffz Heinrich Richter and Bm: Uffz Karl-Heinz Pioszyk baled out and captured badly wounded. Bo: Uffz Paul Herbold baled out, PoW.

1/KG27 He111P-2 1G+AH Shot down during an attack on Rouen. Ff: Fw Karl-Heinz Hoffmann, Bo: Uffz Helmut Bertram, Bm: Uffz Martin Töpfer and Bf: Gefr Rolf Ahrenholz all PoWs.

Stab III/LG1 Ju88A-1 Shot down attacking railway targets south of Rouen. Bo: Uffz Georg Weimann and Bf: Ofw Julius Tiedemann PoWs wounded. Ff: Fw Karl Baumann and Bs: Ogefr Karl Franz PoWs.

7/LG1 Ju88A-1 Shot down attacking railway targets south of Rouen. Ff: Fw Johannes Jankowski and Bs: Uffz Kurt Zipperling PoWs wounded. Bo: Ogefr Günther Sirlin and Bf: Gefr Helmut Plate PoWs.

## Luftwaffe Victory Claims not attributable to a particular action

4/JG3	Uffz Erwin Kortlepel	Spitfire	Crevècoeur-le-Grand
6/JG51	Oblt Josef Priller	Spitfire	north west of Calais

