

3 Centurion Drive, Leeds.

June 2nd (Sunday) 1940.

Dear Susan & Geoff. Thank you for your letter rec^d yesterday (written May 12th). I am very glad Bill is with you again, please remember me to him. I am glad he has fully recovered from the 'flu'. Well we are in the midst of the war, & things look difficult but all feel we shall win in the end tho' we expect losses & hard trials. I am very glad Geoff says that you are in Canada & engaged on work that will be of vital importance. The King of the Belgians has disappointed everyone. The Belgians & he did fight hard against superior numbers & he lost many men, but help was coming to him as fast as it could, & others were also fighting to help Belgium & without warning the French or English he gave in, but some of the troops would not lay down their arms but are fighting with us. All factories are now working longer hours & on Sundays. General Fort is a hero of Ireland now. All aliens are being interned - the women aliens & their children

are being sent to Port Erin in the F. O. M.
where all the hotels & apartment houses are
filled with them - the little seaside place is
wired in, but they can enjoy the sand & lovely
views & wander about in the encampment -
these are supposed to be friendly aliens but
there has been so much spying & treachery
that everyone has to be suspect - the ones
are in a different encampment, Sir Oswald
Mosley & his friends are also interned; they
are Fascists, about time they were interned -

It is such lovely weather it does seem hard
to have to make weapons of destruction, one
thinks of the lines 'where every peasant
glares, & only man is vile' Every where it
is so green, we are growing a few lettuce &
Scarlet runners & peas. They are doing
quite well so far & we enjoy watching their
progress every day - we have had a good
many heavy showers. Capt. Coe went
to see Brian on Wednesday & Mr Dalton
went on Thursday but he was there some
where in the grounds & could not be
found. However he was told how busy

much better he is. I had a letter from
Bouam & he said one of his letters to you
had been returned to him but I will enclose
his letter. I wonder why the Policeman had
to ring you up at night & did you get the stuff
any cheaper as it was confiscated. The BBC
announced that in Norway there were Austri-
-ans fighting against Norway & some of these
spoke Norwegian fluently because they were
refugees as children & in Norway during
the last war!! & now they come back &
attack the land that sheltered them!!

Jeanne is very anxious about her sisters
^{Louise.}
one is in a hotel in Paris but was ill with
some form of poisoning & had to be evacuated
in an ambulance to another place & the
other one - a widow - fears daily she will
have to leave her house & probably have it
destroyed - Well they blamed the older genera-
-tion for the last war - but this one is most cer-
-tainly one caused by the younger generation
of Germans for they have been taught war from
very infancy. Our butter & sugar rations are

now being decreased but it will still be suf-
-ficient. Auntie M. & her sister were here
on Thursday. Auntie M. did not look at all
well. her sister has been busy digging & setting
vegetables, they have so many things, they eat
up the green leaves. They will have Strawberries
gooseberries, raspes, black currants & peas
beans, potatoes & marrowes. We greatly appre-
-ciate the long light days. I use no light
now as it is quite light when I go to bed at 10, it
is really q. Mr. Waigh is going to Lawrence's to
have a little experience with the business
there, as he may take over Lawrence's business
if he should be called up for service - he is due
to be called up in Nov. but may be called earlier -
oh what a pity you have not an old lame horse
or pony on wh. Amarah could ride to & from
school. but it is a long way for so young a child -
better if others were going too. John's oldish boy
used to ride on an old white pony when we were
in Canada. but probably he was older.

With dear love also says from
Your loving Mother

XXXXXXXXXX AXXXXXXXXXX BXXXXXXXXXX T

Chester Mental Hospital
Chester
29. 5. 40.

Dear Mother, Dad & Auntie.

Thank you for
the letters.

Capt Cox came this afternoon, Dorothy
is still away.

No I do not need my watch
changing, although this one did stop
last night, & it took a lot
of shaking this morning to get it
started, but it has run all
day, so I consider whatever was
wrong is closed now.

Fourteen Crosville buses & several
ambulances last Sunday brought

have to be more careful of
what I write, so as there
is very little to write about
of interest, I will write once
every two weeks.

I see in the paper Daily
Mail that 1,000 passengers are
going to America, Americans
& paying £75 each for the
trip, I expect you would read it.
Do not please bother bringing
any bacon when you come.

from your
loving son
Brian.

I have had no further letters from Canada.

MEN LANDED IN EN

HOW B.E.F. MEN CAME HOME

WORN OUT BUT CHEERFUL AFTER LONG, DESPERATE FIGHTING

GRIM STORIES OF EXPERIENCES

Some of the British Expeditionary Force warriors who have been fighting in Belgium and Northern France and who, according to the Ministry of Information, have already reached this country, arrived back two days ago. They have been withdrawn from Belgium with great difficulty, and were landed at a South-East coast port during the afternoon.

Later, further troops arrived, and the men, though some of them were worn out after their grim experiences and lack of sleep, all appeared in good heart.

Long Period In Action

Some of the men had been in action since the invasion of the Low Countries, and they told of terrific German losses in the battle for the Channel ports. They praised the undoubted superiority of the R.A.F., and bitterly condemned the machine-gunning of refugees and the bombing of hospitals. All ranks emphasised that every member of the B.E.F. was still fighting with great courage and determination. When further men arrived, it was noticed that a few had been slightly wounded. On one ship there were four German prisoners.

The Salvation Army had sent mobile canteens to the South-East coast. The men waved cheerfully to soldiers who were guarding the streets, and people who were looking from their windows, as they were taken along the sea front in buses to a restaurant. The military authorities cleared the front and placed armed guards at all approaches while disembarkation was taking place.

With one party were half a dozen sailors wearing coats of varied styles, but still holding their tin helmets, and one British airman, who had been picked out of the sea by one of the ships off the coast of Belgium after dropping from his machine by parachute. He was carrying his wet parachute with him.

STREAM OF TROOP TRAINS

EXHAUSTED MEN ASLEEP

British Expeditionary Force forces returning from France were stated to be arriving yesterday in thousands at a South coast port. People living in houses alongside the railways in some southern suburbs of London watched a stream of troop trains bringing men back. Many of the trains were made up of L.M.S. dining cars. Through the windows, tired-out soldiers, some with several days' growth of beard, could be seen sprawling ~~and~~ asleep, their heads on the dining tables.

Train after train went down empty on South-East coast lines, many through

volunteers among the citizens to cut sandwiches and hand out cups of tea.

Men told of the terrific and incessant bombardment they had undergone from the air. More terrible still were their descriptions of the mass murder of refugees by the German aeroplanes. "Flying only 200 feet above the ground they spared neither man, woman nor child," said one, typical of others. "They mowed them down with machine gunfire like grass under a mower."

Weight of numbers had been a deciding factor. An N.C.O. who fought in the last war said: "I never saw anything like the barrage we put up to stem the advance. But the Germans advanced right into it. Their losses must have been enormous."

French Troops Come With British

All the time they were being embarked the troops were bombed and machine-gunned from the air. Many were still wet through from having to swim and wade out to the ships to take them aboard.

The gallant naval crews who brought them home had to be relieved on arrival. They were dropping from their exhaustion after achieving acts of epic heroism. Not less cheerful than the British were the French troops. Though landing in a friendly but strange country they were full of confidence in the final defeat of Hitlerism.

STORIES OF THE ORDEAL

"IT HAS BEEN SIMPLY HELL"

Graphic stories of the B.E.F.'s gallantry in facing the Germans were told last night when officers and men of the Belgian and French Armies and naval ratings arrived from France in England. They were given a tremendous ovation by crowds.

"It has been simply hell," one officer said, "but we are getting off the boys who have stood in the triangle and resisted the worst that the Germans could do to them, and, believe me, the Nazis don't love you. Their planes are everywhere. Our airmen have done magnificent work, but it is volume we need. From the minute we got to France we were continually bombed and machine-gunned from the air—hospital ships, troopships, everything."

No Sleep For Three Days

"When our vessel was hit we swam ashore, but when she did not go down we swam back again to take her out of the harbour. But she turned turtle and we had to swim again. Some of us were swimming for hours, and then were picked up by a British warship."

"I was very thankful," said another naval officer, "when after swimming

GREAT WORK BY THE R.A.F.

77 PLANES SHOT DOWN IN A DAY

The Air Ministry announced last night:—

"Throughout Wednesday the main effort of the R.A.F. was concentrated on relieving the pressure on the flanks of the Allied Armies in Flanders.

"Our fighter aircraft, in a magnificent series of actions, repeatedly broke up formations of enemy fighters and bombers. Very severe losses were inflicted on the enemy.

"The latest reports show that at least seventy-seven enemy aircraft were destroyed by our fighters during the day. Meanwhile, R.A.F. medium bombers were attacking enemy transport columns and armoured fighting vehicles and destroying bridges and machine-gun emplacements. These operations continued all day. All our aircraft returned. One attacking Messerschmitt was shot down.

All-Night Bombing

"Operations by heavy bombers followed during the night. Aircraft of the Coastal Command and of the Fleet Air Arm engaged in reconnaissance and bombing operations on the French and Belgian coasts shot down two enemy aircraft and damaged two others. Ten of these aircraft are missing, but the crews of at least three have been rescued.

"Fuller reports have now been received of operations which took place on Monday in the Sedan area. Medium bomber aircraft of the R.A.F., operating from France, attacked a number of enemy aerodromes, causing extensive fires in the hangars and surrounding buildings. They also successfully bombed supply depots and a train. All our aircraft returned.

"On the same day our fighters on offensive patrol in this sector shot down eleven enemy aircraft and damaged three more. It was on this occasion that one of our Auxiliary Fighter Squadrons engaged a formation of twenty-four enemy bombers escorted by twenty fighters and shot down nine bombers and one fighter without loss to themselves. In the Narvik area on May 27 and 28, thirteen enemy aircraft were destroyed by our fighters."

DEFIANT SQUADRON'S EXPLOIT

50 VICTIMS IN THREE DAYS

A single squadron of twelve British Defiant fighters shot down thirty-seven enemy aircraft on Wednesday, bringing their "bag" for the past three days up to fifty. On their morning patrol they met more German fighters and dive bombers than they could count. They brought down seventeen fighters as well as a dive bomber, and on their second patrol in the afternoon they shot down nineteen, possibly twenty-one bombers.

During the first engagement one of

stream of troop trains bringing men back. Many of the trains were made up of L.M.S. dining cars. Through the windows, tired-out soldiers, some with several day's growth of beard, could be seen sprawling in sleep, their heads on the dining tables.

Train after train went down empty on South-East coast lines, many through the night, and returned full of weary looking figures in khaki. A woman shopkeeper opposite one railway station said yesterday: "We have lost count of them going up, I think it is thirteen or fourteen since breakfast. Two more went through shortly afterwards, and it was then only 2.15 p.m."

When one train was halted by signals at one South-East London junction, I chatted with the returning soldiers (writes a *Daily Post* reporter). Unshaven and unkempt they were, with uniforms much the worse for wear, and minus any regimental markings. Many men on this particular train were too tired even to look from the carriage windows. Some did lean from the windows as if to take in to the full the quiet atmosphere of home sweet home. But few smiled.

"Thumbs Up"

"Do you know where you are going?" I asked one. "We don't know, we just got into the train," they replied. One stocky chap, with several days' growth, said: "We've had a terrible time this last fortnight, swimming canals, nights without sleep and bombing attacks. Fifty or more Jerry planes would come over and drop their bombs. Just as we were recovering over would come another fifty, and so on in relays."

On some trains yesterday, however, the Tommies were waving cheerfully to passengers on platforms and several outstretched hands displayed "thumbs up."

They all tell the same story—urgent need for more air help. The indomitable spirit of the British and French Armies shone through the grime-stained, war-soiled faces of the men as they marched briskly ashore. Crowds kept back by barriers to allow free passage through the streets for the waiting motor buses and Army lorries, stood silently to give them sympathetic greeting. But there was no spirit of dejection among them. They were the first to wave cheerfully to the crowds.

Yet all had been through an indescribable inferno. Few had had very little sleep for weeks and many had been without food for several days.

Rush To Cut Sandwiches

The transport organisation worked perfectly, and there was a constant stream of vehicles ready to take them to the railway station where trains were also waiting. No provision had been made to feed them, but shops were quickly emptied of supplies to enable

"When our vessel was hit we swam ashore, but when she did not go down we swam back again to take her out of the harbour. But she turned turtle and we had to swim again. Some of us were swimming for hours, and then were picked up by a British warship."

"I was very thankful," said another naval officer, "when after swimming about seven or eight miles I was able to get hold of a table, and another fellow and I sat in it until we were picked up. All of us were almost naked, and we have had no food since yesterday at midday and no sleep for three days."

"But it's back again now to help the Army in its great stand. If only they would give us more planes we could tell the Germans a different story. As it is they have got as much as they have given, and we have not been bombing and machine-gunning men in the water."

Astounded By Leopold's Surrender

Five Belgian officers in the party said that they were astounded when the order came for the Belgian Army to cease fighting. "We do not intend to cease fighting on the order that came from King Leopold," said one. "And there are thousands of other Belgian soldiers who are of the same opinion. The British and French are still making a magnificent show in the North."

One of a fairly large party of French infantrymen said that they fought a rearguard action back from Lille, fighting continuously. "The British and French Navies are putting up a great show," he said, "and the Allied Army are coming through. They are fighting all the time."

One man stated that the R.A.F. men among the party had crossed from France to a South-East Coast port on board a fishing-vessel, and that when they were some distance out from the Belgium coast Nazi bombers flew low over them. They expected the Germans to bomb and machine-gun them, but they did not.

WOUNDED MARCH 30 MILES A DAY LIVERPOOL SOLDIER'S EXPERIENCE

Wounded B.E.F. men who arrived at Sunderland last night told of the withdrawal from Belgium. A private from Liverpool said he had marched with a machine-gun bullet in his foot more than thirty miles a day for several days to the coast. But in spite of his experiences he is determined to go back when his wound is healed. "I cannot forget the way those Huns treated refugees," he said.

A sergeant-major from Whitley Bay said: "Although we have come back wounded we have given them plenty to remember us by. At times the slaughter was wholesale. Column after column was mown down by our Bren guns. The morale of our men was superb. When they were embarking, bombers did the ships, and one of the gun crews was put out of action. Wounded men went to take their share in feeding the guns."

Private Bridge, of Barnoldswick, told how he was in ambulance convoy when he was intensely bombed from the air. Ambulances were wrecked, and some of the wounded men had to walk ten or twelve miles to the coast.

A Bloodstained Doll

A private from Taunton carried with him a bloodstained cloth doll as a present for his young daughter. It had been blown out of a toyshop window in a Belgian town by a bomb. The blood on it was his own. He said that German planes had intensely bombed them, but that the aircraft batteries claimed to have shot down 200 in ten days. The seaman Bradley, of Hendon, Ireland, said that

enemy aircraft on Wednesday, bringing their "bag" for the past three days up to fifty. On their morning patrol they met more German fighters and dive bombers than they could count. They brought down seventeen fighters as well as a dive bomber, and on their second patrol in the afternoon they shot down nineteen, possibly twenty-one bombers.

During the first engagement one of the squadron's air gunners, apparently believing that his machine had been vitally hit, "baled out" over Belgium. Otherwise every Defiant pilot and gunner returned safely.

The Defiants first sighted seven Messerschmitt 109's over Dunkirk. They immediately attacked and one of the Germans was shot down. Hardly had this fight finished when the British airmen were surprised by four more Nazi fighters diving on them out of the sun and firing a screen of cannon shells.

Bombs Fall In Sea

One of the Defiants was hit, but was able to return home. It was from this machine that the gunner jumped. After a fight between the remaining Defiants and the other Messerschmitts the Nazis vanished. Then the British squadron saw two formations of nine Heinkel bombers that were attempting to bomb Dunkirk, but all their bombs fell into the sea.

These were attacked by British Hurricanes, so the Defiants looked for their quarry. Circling above them ready to dive and attack were a number of Messerschmitt 110 twin-engined fighters. In the fight which followed sixteen of the Nazi aircraft were destroyed.

Mixed up in this engagement were thirty to forty JU 87 bombers, which were also trying to bomb Dunkirk. One of these was also shot down by the Defiants. The British fighters continued the action until they had exhausted their ammunition, then made for home.

On their second patrol the Defiants again encountered large numbers of dive bombers. They shot down eighteen JU 87's for certain, and possibly another two as well. The R.A.F. men had still some ammunition left, and resumed their patrol. They met a JU 88 flying on its own and this, too, was sent crashing to earth.

Seaplane Base Bombed

An Air Ministry announcement yesterday said:—"Naval aircraft carried out an attack on an enemy seaplane base on the Dutch coast. Hangars were destroyed and a number of seaplanes were seen to be wrecked. Other naval aircraft shot down an enemy bomber over the North Sea and disabled another."

"With a daring attack on the German-occupied harbour at Bergen, Norway, the pilot of a Coastal Command aircraft on Wednesday set on fire a 3,000-ton German supply ship. He then escaped from six Nazi fighters."