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LIMITED EDITION

THE FLYING ELEMENT
WILLI GABRIEL

Autor: Richard Plos

Eleven aerial victories would hardly put Willi Gabriel to the pedestal of the Great War fighter aces. This achievement makes him just something like a „second rate" in the first sight, but it must not be forgotten his fighter career was quite short. It lasted just some four months...

Although the name Willi Gabriel does not figure as a part of the shortlist of the most famous fighter aces of the Great War, his spectacularly decorated Fokker D.VII keeps him in the "lights" and general awareness. The aircraft with blue and orange stripes on the fuselage and elevator is still popular with plastic model producers, artists or even with flying replicas builders. For example, the replica built in 2010 by Engels aeroplanbau for the TVAL company (founded by Peter Jackson) runs across the New Zealand´s skies in Gabriel´s marking and back in the time, the replica built by famous Cole Palen was performing spectacularly during Aviation Days at Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome (USA) in 1960´s. Willi Gabriel's pilot escapades are no less interesting and colourful than his mount. He was through periods of good fortune, as well as painful losses in his life and he also credited himself with one quite important credit.

Flying brothers
At the time, the territory of Poland was part of Prussia, the Bromberg town was what is known as Bydgoszcz today. There, at the very end of the 1893 (December 31), twin brothers Willi and Walter were born in the family of the furniture manufacturer Eduard Gabriel. The two guys were very close each other for most of their lives. Not only because of their relationship, but also thanks to shared interests. As high school students, they liked to drill into various machines, especially in internal combustion engines. Both have learned to drive very early as well, starting with motor racing once they managed to acquire their own car. Also, aviation was drawing attention of technically and adventurously minded young men.

As they had enough wood, glue, and tools on hand thanks to father's factory, the desire to build their own aircraft was no surprise. At the age of eighteen, Gabriels started to build their own replica of Blériot based on plans in Flugsport magazine. Brothers managed to finish the plane, but it never flew, as no suitable engine was available to them. Therefore, they tried their luck

with their own design, but it did not turn out any better. They have felt more aircraft design information would be helpful, so they made a trip to Johannisthal, where Fokker Spin caught their attention. Upon return home, they have bought an Anzani aircraft engine developing some 30 hp and began to build a replica of the Fokker´s successful design. They also invented some improvements, and on August 16, 1912, Walter took off for the first short hop. After that, both brothers continued to hone their piloting skills, as well as the aircraft´s design. Thanks to their efforts and commitment, both become good pilots, albeit without an official pilot's license as it was quite expensive for them to invite representatives of the Deutschland Aero Club from Berlin for examinations. Willi later admitted, his brother was initially better pilot than him.

First flying aircraft of Gabriel brothers was copy of Fokker Spin.

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STARDUST:
FOUR TRIPS TO HELL ON A BORROWED HORSE

JAN ZDIARSKÝ

We have made references to the date of September 11th, 1944, several times now within the pages of our Eduard newsletter. It's not only thanks to the obsession with the date that is held by the author, but also the fact that this date holds many diverse and fascinating aspects that are attached to it. The recounted stories that have been documented here have thus far been tied to the specific conflict between the 13th Combat Wing, notably the 100th Bomb Group, and Jagdgeschwader 4, that has come to be known as the Air Battle over the Ore Mountains.

This time around, we'll take another gander at about the same time window - approximately 1145h to 1215h - but about 250km further to the west. The centre of interest will continue to be the stream of bombers from the 3rd Bomb Division, but we will move from its leading edge, specifically the first three combat boxes headed towards Hyrierwerke Brabag in Ruhland, and shift our attention to the rear of the bomber group, to its fighter escort. The next to last grouping of the 3rd Bomb Division stream was a pair of combat boxes from the 490th and 493rd Bomb Group heading towards the Sudetenlandische Treibstoffwerke AG Brux (this is currently a major chemical production facility called Zaluzi just outside of Most in the northwestern part of the Czech Republic and is visible from the main Eduard building in Obrnice. It is also firmly connected to the history of the company.) Two boxes designated 93A and 93B Combat Wing, located in positions 7 and 8 within the 3rd Bomb Division formation, were under the protection of the 352nd Fighter Group, commanded by Lt. Col. James D. Mayden. The bomber protection duties included close air support as well as clearing the air en route for the bombers as withdrawal support.

The 352nd Fighter Group was composed of three squadrons - the 328th (that day led by Lt. Col. Meyden), the 486th (Capt. Franklyn N. Greene), and the 487th (Lt.Col. John C. Meyer). Each squadron for this mission consisted of sixteen to eighteen fighters and was divided into White, Blue, Red and Yellow Flights, where each flight was made up of four aircraft.

By the time all three squadrons of the 352nd FG and their 53 Mustangs formed up and turned eastwards

Commanding Officer of 487th FS Lt.Col. John C. Meyer in the cockpit of P-51D 'Petie 2nd', s/n 44-14151 at Bodney, Great Britain.

FROM DORNIER TO U-BOAT
Oberleutnant zur See Karl-Franz Heine and his Crew

Jan Bobek

One of our planned new item releases for February, 2021 includes an option for the Dornier Do17Z-5 coded "7T+HH" from Küstenfliegergruppe 606. The Z-5 version was equipped for operations over water and was mainly used by this unit. The crew of "7T+HH" experienced some extremely dramatic moments during an attack on Liverpool that proved fateful for most of them. In the article, I will also touch on the citizens of Great Britain and Malta. There were those that succumbed to the effects of war, while others, as we shall see, were born into it.

Navy Personnel in the Luftwaffe
Küstenfliegergruppe 606 was a unit within the German coastal air service. From the end of 1939, it specialized in patrol duties and attacks on surface vessels. The unit was equipped with the Do 17 and was based at Kiel-Holten. After being engaged against Denmark, Kü.Fl.Gr.606 was moved to the area of Brest in July, 1940, and from September was made subordinate from Navy to Luftflotte 3. The Gruppe was commanded by a former Navy officer, Major Joachim Hahn, who became a naval cadet already in 1923. The unit had put into practice having the crew command functions, and also those of the observer, performed by Naval Officers. In terms of navigation over water, combat tactics and target identification, this was deemed optimal. Over the course of the Battle of Britain, however, the main task of the unit became raids on British cities, attacks against harbors, bombings of military targets from heights of only a few tens of meters, and also target marking for other bombers. Combat missions usually took the crews to western areas of Great Britain. Kü.Fl.Gr.606 was in these tasks very successful and Hahn was awarded the Ritterkreuz in October, 1940 as a result. In 1942, he became Kommodore Kampfgeschwader 6, and he met his fate on June 3rd during an inspection tour, along with two other airmen, in a Messerschmitt Bf 108. Near Le Trepot, they were shot down by Spitfires from No. 401 Squadron RAF, flown by F/Sgt S.C. Cosburn and F/Lt E.L. Neal.

Liverpool Raids
During the Second World War, the second most hit target in Great Britain was Liverpool. The primary target was the city harbor, which was among the biggest on the western shores of Great Britain. Liverpool and the surrounding area lost some 4,000 of

its inhabitants between the summer of 1940 and the beginning of 1942. From one of the destroyed homes of Liverpool, paradoxically, came Hitler's nephew, William Patrick Hitler, who served in the United States Navy during the Second World War.

From the beginning of October, 1940, one of the units defending Liverpool was No. 312 (Czechoslovak) Squadron, based at Speke, which currently is Liverpool's John Lennon Airport. The first kill achieved by the squadron is probably also the quickest in the history of the RAF. F./Lt D.E. Gillam and his wingmen Alois Vašátko and Josef Stehlík were experienced pilots, and they shot down a Junkers Ju 88 A-1, coded "M7+DK" of Küstenfliegergruppe 806 shortly after takeoff. The task of the Ju 88 was to bomb the Rootes aircraft factory at Speke. All three Hurricanes were actually hit by defensive fire coming from the German bomber. The bomber came down in the docks south of Liverpool. The crew commander, Lt. z. S. Herbert was killed by fire from the Hurricanes, and another three crewmen, Oblt. Helmuth Brückmann, Uffz. Helmuth Weth and Obfhr. Horst Lehmann, were taken prisoner. The combat over the city grabbed a lot of attention, and the gates to the air base had to be shut, because massive crowds showed up, wanting to show their appreciation to the Czechoslovak unit. Eighteen crews from Kü.Fl.Gr.606 attacked British targets on the night of October 10th, thirteen of which were tasked with hitting the factory at Speke and the production facility of Rolls-Royce at Crewe. All of the bombers returned to their bases. However, the next event would play itself out differently.

During the evening hours of October 11th, 1940, six Do 17s from Hahn's unit approached the area around Liverpool. One was headed for Birkenhead, and the other five were tasked with again hitting Speke and Crewe. Three of the aircraft were from 1. Staffel and three from 2. Staffel Kü.Fl.Gr.606.

Title photo: Do 17 Z-5 (W. Nr. 2787) „7T + HH" from the 1st Staffel of Küstenfliegergruppe 606 at Lanvéoc-Poulmic base before the raid on October 11, 1940. White part of the fuselage cross is already painted in black, but you can still see the swastika, the unit emblem and white tip of the propeller cone. During the raid on October 11, all of that was already painted black to reduce visibility. The emblem of the unit was an eagle tearing Great Britain. Photo: Chris Goss

Portrait photo: Karl-Franz Heine. Credit: uboat.net

Info at 17:00 CET

Bobek