

# Dublin Chronicle

March 31st 1940

Volume 1, Issue 8

## BRITISH BOMB GERMAN FLEET

**The Royal Navy has attacked the German Fleet at anchor again, this time using Swordfish torpedo aircraft to attack the Germans in the port of Stettin, in Eastern Germany.**

**A major British Task Force is reported to have sailed into the western Baltic and launched a carrier raid off the coast of Gothenburg towards the German coast.**

It is believed that the Carriers, as yet unnamed, launched two waves of Swordfish attack aircraft to strike at the German fleet in Stettin.

The first group of torpedo bombers struck across the German fleet was able to provide a heavy anti-air barrage as the group arrived, a number of Swordfish aircraft were lost but hits were made on the Hipper and

Blucher, plus another unknown ship. The group then made back for their carriers which were already moving north towards the North Sea.



Swordfish Squadron in formation returning to their unnamed carrier.

The second Swordfish group approached from the north over forest,

arriving over Stettin 12 minutes after the first wave. The Germans were late in bringing anti-air guns to bear and the torpedo bombers were able to get a number of hits on German surface vessels, it is reported that at least 4 major surface units of the Kriegsmarine have been sunk in the shallow port, they will require some major work to bring back into surface.

This is the second time the German fleet has been hit in port and the second time the Luftwaffe has failed to provide protection and air cover to the ships, one must wonder what is happening in the German high command at present.

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## NICE FALLS TO ITALIANS

**A drive along the North Mediterranean coast by troops of the Italian 16th and 11th Corps forced French local divisions to withdraw to Nice and commit to street fighting.**

The French army launched a massed drive along much of the Italian border but was unable to muster the troops to hold back a determined rush along the coast by the Italians, supported by aircraft and naval assets.

It is believed that the city of Nice, now in Italian hands is in ruins, supporting units from Marseilles were unable to reach the city due to the tide of refugees moving west and north, but French troops returning to their lines in the west reported extensive destruction.



The Eastern outskirts of Nice

The attack has also cost the Italians a great deal of men, reports are that at least one of the attacking corps has been dissolved due to extreme losses whilst the other is in no fit state to continue the defence of the city, this may lead in turn to an easy re-occupation of the city by French forces.

# RN Atlantic Fleet in death match

## The British Atlantic Fleet is reported to have entered the Mediterranean Sea to face the Italian Navy.

The British fleet passed Gibraltar as the escort to a number of merchants and moved into the Italian lake on the 11th of the month. The force was immediately engaged by a

group of Italian submarines.

The initial engagement was at night and the Italians appear to have targeted the British Capital ships, with the Royal Sovereign taking a torpedo hit that caused her to lose considerable speed and drop back within the formation. It is believed that a cruiser was attached to support her at this point whilst the rest of the fleet continued at speed.

The morning broke with an 8 hour respite, with the Carrier Ark Royal providing a number of protective air sorties, these were not enough however.

By mid-day the Italians had reopened their offensive against the British battlegroup, with hits being scored by the submarines on a variety of ships, as the force attempted to make speed with zig-zags as possible the group suffered a heavy loss when the Royal Sovereign was sunk with the loss of heavy life. The Italians rubbed salt in the wound when they torpedoed the cruiser sent to pick up the survivors, HMS Hawkins is reported to have taken severe damage.

All was not finished when the Glorious was reported lost south of Malta having taken damage earlier in the day. The Fleet is still reported bound for Alexandria. With reports of further Italian forces ahead of them the Royal Navy must be poised for further bad news.



The Royal Sovereign in better days.

## French Failures

### The French General Staff appear to have learnt nothing from the Great War.

Along the Italian / French border troops of the French Army rose to advance against the forces of the Italian Alpine forces.

The scene was reminiscent of the great advances, or should we say slaughters of the Somme, although today the French soldiers were quicker to call it a day and return to their lines, after having taken significant casualties.

Calls for the removal of senior staff have grown on this front, the troops in this region are however not some of the hardest that the Empire can provide, we wait to see the effects on the Army as a whole.

## Eastern Europe Forgotten

### With the war in the West entering a new phase, we must not forget the actions of the Poles in the East.

The city of Warsaw is the current scene of heroic fighting by the remnants of the Polish Northern Armies. The last reports out of the city early this month indicated that the resistance was on a building by building level and the Germans were taking heavy losses for each yard of ground.

The Hungarians have also taken the opportunity to "show off" some of the captured Polish prisoners in a newly created POW camp in eastern Hungary,

the troops appeared well cared for and the international red cross acknowledged that they had been given full access to the camp.

We should also remember that the Romanians continue to fight against the aggressors of Bulgaria, Hungary, Germany and their own rebel fascists in an effort to liberate the country.

The situation in Romania remains very unclear with reports of friendly units firing on each other, with all forces in the field using much the same equipment such events will only grow in number as the conflict continues.

## SPECIAL REPORT

# Clash in Ardennes opens new phase of war

**The Ardennes forest was the scene of the largest battle yet fought in this war, when both German and French armies launched massive assaults, which hit each other like steam rollers colliding.**

Both nations had been planning their operation for some weeks, if seemed inevitable that both would launch mid March, the key would be who went first, for the other would need to react and change their initial objectives.

The Germans were the first to move forward on the 12th, we have since become aware that this was 6 days prior to the planned assault by the French and British forces.

A spearhead force of 2 armoured groups forced the opening in the eastern Ardennes, crashing into the French 6th Armee as it prepared for its own offensive operations, this caught the French totally off guard and simply rolled over their forward troops.

German bombers caused havoc in the first few days, but were soon facing heavy opposition from allied fighters, particularly from the 18th when the RAF committed over 300 spitfires to the theatre, the local Bf110's were simply too few in numbers to deal with the vast numbers of Allied fighters, within days the Germans had committed additional Bf109's to the region, this evening the fighter ration considerably, the air war was truly in the balance.

By the close of the month estimates of over 300 aircraft lost to each side have been reported (taking both axis and allied assessments).

The German advance moved rapidly through Koblenz with the forward troops breaking through the Metz defences by the 15th, the

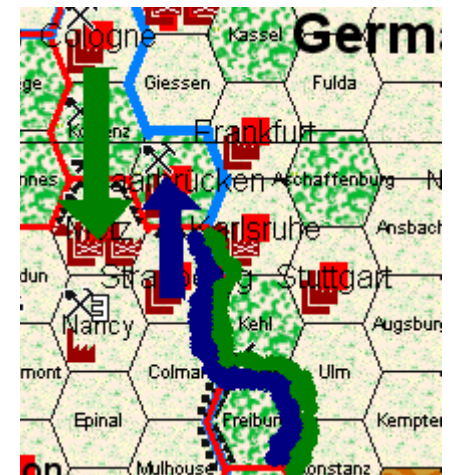


German Troops rest outside Koblenz.

Maginot line defences proving ineffectual due to the flow of French troops passing through the lines and the sheer speed of the German advance.

As French forces attempt to move north they found themselves facing attacks by the Germans towards the main Maginot defences, which although costing the Germans dearly; they prevented reinforcements to the key northern front.

As the Battle for Metz raged, the French launched an assault toward Saarbrücken designed to outflank the Germans. Spearheaded by the 1st Armee Group the French encountered increased German defences that were further swollen by further reinforcements. Limited air support by French and British bomber formations did however start to tip the balance in favour of the French attackers, this coupled



with the fact that many of the German troops were fresh to the theatre allowed the French to secure Saarbrücken by late on the 24th.

The situation around Metz however continued to hang in the balance, with the German armour securing the city outskirts and the southern and western approaches British and French forces approaching from the west, found the road to relieve Metz blocked by Panzer IVs of the German 1st Panzer Corps.

The French Army was slowly being pushed out of Metz to the east, whilst the German 6th Armoured attempted to drive south on Nancy. The French 1st Corps, already having taken heavy losses was having

none of this and held its ground well taking horrendous losses as other French units fled south, the actions of this division saved



Nancy and possibly the entire French Maginot rear. It should be recorded that of this force less than 40% of the manpower remains alive in the field of combat, if ever there was an example of bravery against

**GM NOTE:** This is in effect the battle report for the engaging armies, completed from the scene of the battle. As this action involved so many units and so much action I felt it worth producing here for all to read. This has been produced in place of individual FFO and MOO responses for the relevant players, if players aren't happy with this system then I won't do it again.

odds it was given by the men of the French 1st Infantry Corps.

Whilst the 6th Armoured was moving south the German forces in Metz were engaged in combat with British Expeditionary formations that had moved to Metz from the Verdun area, they were expected to join the general allied advance on Saarbrücken and Cologne.

The British formations had been placed to the west of Metz, the intention to use them as motor support for the main advance. The two corps, 7th and 1st were slowly pushed back by the German panzers and eventually forced into full retreat by the arrival of the German infantry formations.

The final act of French valour came on the 28th when troops of the French Armoured Formations launched a drive into the German flank out of Verdun.

Three divisions of French B1s drove into the German lines causing the German lines to buckle, it was the return of the German 6th that hit the French in the flank that saved the day for the German armoured groups.

The Germans then attempted a second drive on Nancy with an armoured corps, this was broken up by allied air power, again resulting in a major fighter aircraft battle over the border, with heavy losses to the allied bomber forces and equally devastating fighter losses to both sides. The allies at least held onto Nancy for their pains.

As things stand the French have taken Saarbrücken and the Germans have in turn captured Metz. The attack has drained both allied and axis air power whilst also disabling large formations of infantry and armour.

In many ways the battle may have finished off the French Army, mo-

rale has noticeably dropped whilst front line reserves are few and far between, this leaves the French General staff with a problem to solve: the Nation is keenly behind the war, but the Army needs a clear victory to keep it in the field and prevent a collapse.



Add to this the fact that the much vaunted Maginot defences have been broken and we must wonder the next step of the French High Command.

The Germans can not be particularly happy with the final outcome of this action either though.

Much of their army is now tied up in two major infantry actions, the siege of Warsaw and the continued actions in the west. German casualties amongst their infantry must be heavy, having lain siege to Warsaw, Danzig and Metz the German infantry forces have had to face high casualty counts, they can have little to throw into the western breakthrough to take advantage of their gains.

We must also look at the situation the German armoured units are in, they estimated losses of French armour are very high, again they are committed to operations in the West and in Romania and it is unlikely that they can have much in reserve.

The third key arm in the German arsenal has also been heavily battered this month, the Luftwaffe having faced their worst losses of the war.

The month closes with both sides of this conflict having a salient in the enemy, but both salients are dangerously exposed.

## German Raiders at large

The French navy are cursing the British Royal Navy for their inability to support the French Fleet in closing and engaging two German raiders.

The British are the nation most at risk from the loss of international trade, yet they leave their allies, who have a slower fleet with ships of less range to hunt down the German fleet raiders who have been causing havoc in the Atlantic.

The Lorraine was the initial spear of the French Fleet chasing a German pocket battleship down the Brazilian coast before having to disengage for needs of refuelling. The main French fleet simply unable to reach the area in time.

It is now known that one German Cruiser is currently birthed in Portuguese East Africa, most likely ready to raid the Indian Ocean convoys, the others whereabouts remains unknown.

French submarines have had greater success in the Red Sea.

## Singapore bombed

The Japanese Navy continued its operations against the British Crown Colony of Singapore.

Reports from the colony indicate that the airbase has been rendered useless and a large force of RAF aircraft destroyed. The city is now poised for the inevitability of a Japanese invasion, with no aircover and no sign of the Royal Navy the city will be easy pickings for a well trained and determined Japanese Military war machine