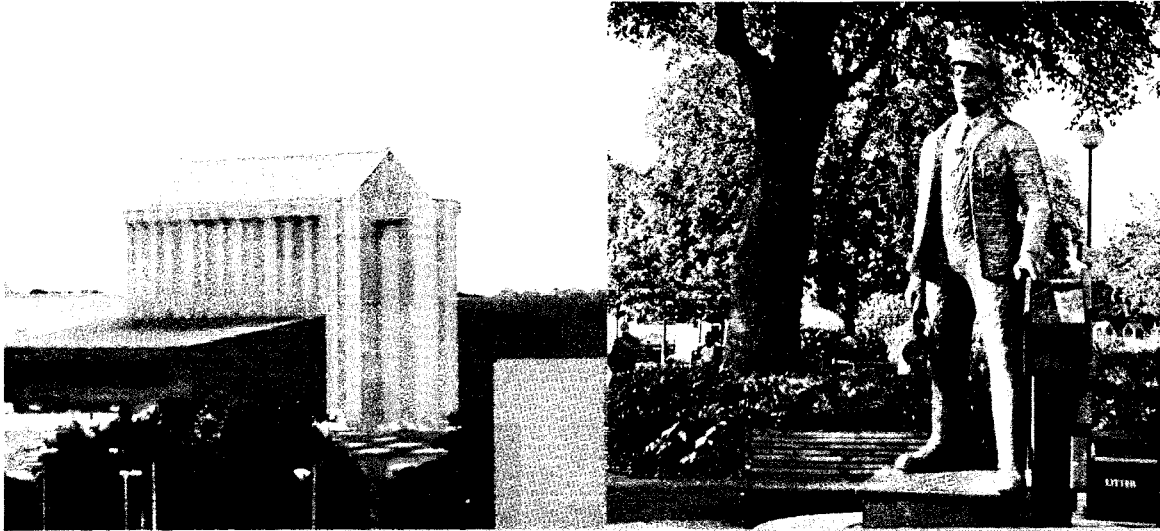
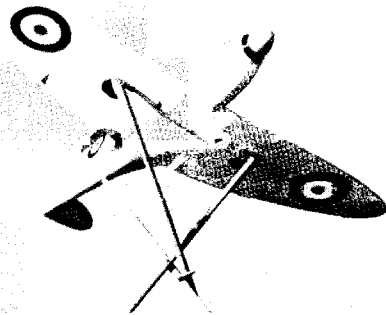


EASTLEIGH & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



The Bombing of the Airport



Paper 66

This is the first of three booklets about Local Industries targeted by the Luftwaffe.

There were too few air-raids in Eastleigh to classify them reliably, but I see them as either, area (1), targeted (3) or random (the rest).

In the area attack there was machine-gunning and High Explosive bombs many of which did not explode. There were some fatalities and some injuries. A separate booklet about this (No.69) has been produced. Another (No.70) is about the random attacks

Most bombings in Eastleigh were probably random, but Luftwaffe files exist with details, maps, and aerial photographs of the Airport, the Railway Works and Pirellis indicating that they were planned. Much damage in Eastleigh was probably caused by our own side. What does up must come down so shells fired at planes over Southampton were likely to come down over Eastleigh.

The Airport

The Airport near Eastleigh.

The Airport was part of North Stoneham Farm. Part was situated in Eastleigh and part in Southampton.

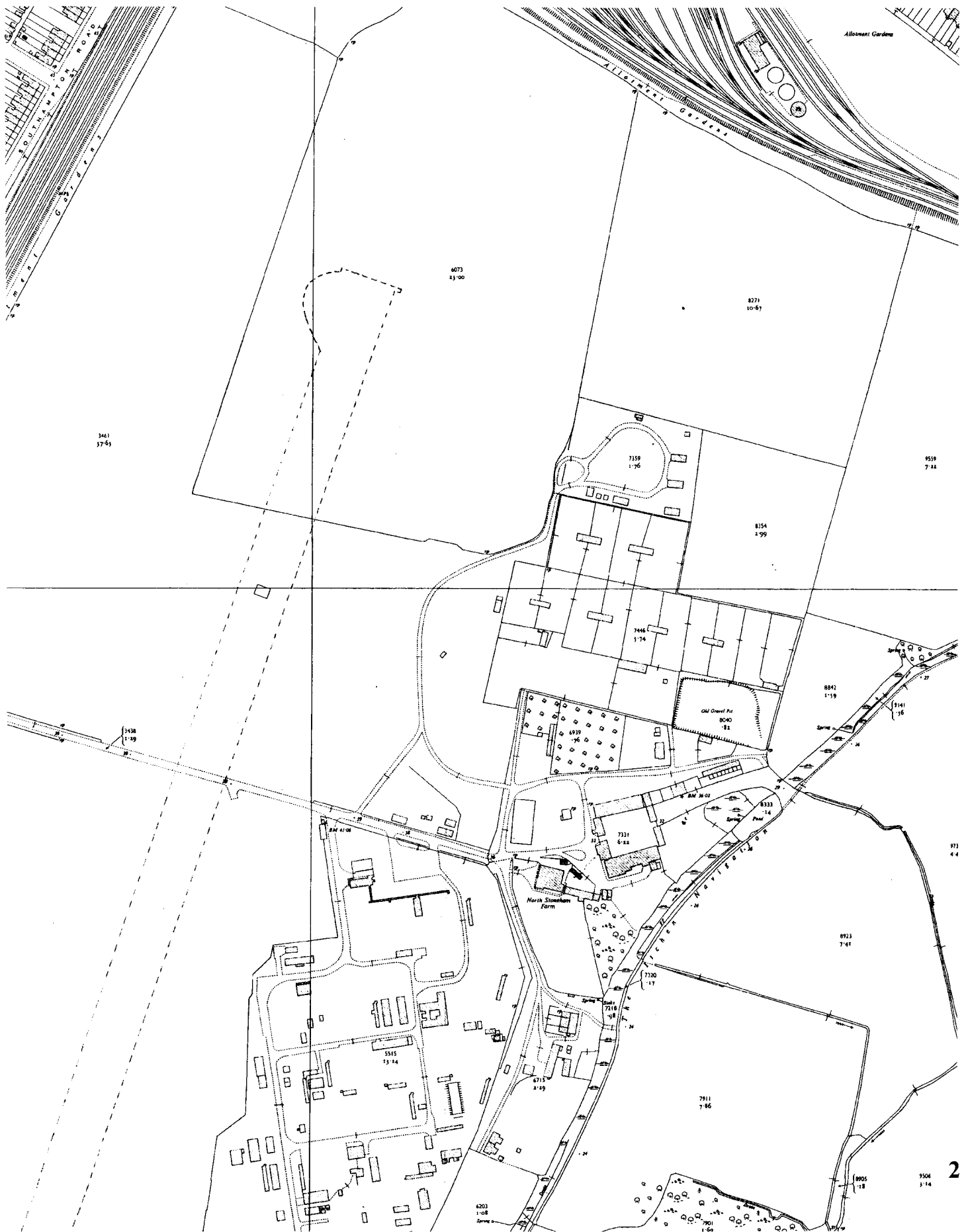
Part of the Farm had been requisitioned by the Board of Admiralty for the shore-based establishment, HMS. Raven.

HMS Raven had a runway which simulated the deck of an Aircraft Carrier used for training by the Fleet Air-arm.

The admiralty also requisitioned the Hampshire School of Flying Ltd. whose hangar was taken over on 18th September 1939 and Club-house on 5th February 1940.



Map of H.M.S. Raven and North Stoneham Farm.





HMS Raven is in the top right hand corner of the picture.

During the War three Companies were based at the Airport. There were Saunders Roe Ltd. with a Canteen and Hangars 3 and 3a, Vickers Armstrong Ltd. with Hangars 1, 1a, 2 and 2a, and the Cunliffe Owen Factory, mainly in the Southampton portion. The Cunliffe Owen Factory assembled and repaired American Lockheed Hudson Planes as well as other secret work.

The planes were kept under cover when not in use and it is said that the grass of the airport was dyed to simulate seasonal changes in the colour of the foliage to make it inconspicuous.

Nothing much happened before the evacuation from Dunkirk at the end of May and early June 1940.

On 22nd August 1940 the Hampshire Control Area incident Book records that 8 High Explosive Bombs fell on the Airport. Being succinct and uninformative. It says No casualties and no damage. [Surely there were eight bomb-craters.]

On September 11th 1940 the Incident Book records that a High Explosive Bomb or bombs fell on Cunliffe Owens new factory at Southampton Aerodrome,

H. M. S. Raven requested an ambulance from Eastleigh and two casualties were taken to hospital.

Nothing was reported in the *Eastleigh Weekly News*.

What had actually happened?

A bomb or bombs had been dropped on the Tool-room of the No. 2 factory at Swaythling and 52 workers were killed at their benches. 92 others were injured. There had been no red-alert, no Town Warnings and no Sirens were sounded.

Just five workers from the Borough of Eastleigh were among the dead.

I found out about this from Dorothy Ingles of O'Connell Road who was working at Cunliffe Owens in the office next to the Tool-room when the bomb exploded. Those in the Office were trapped because the structure distorted and the doors could not be opened. Another person working there was Stanley Brehaut, later to become a well-known photographer and Cameraman with Southern Television who filmed several series of programmes with Jack Hargreaves.

Dorothy Ingles told me about a top-secret Heinkel aircraft that was being kept at the back of a hangar at Cunliffe Owens and that there was a suspicion of there being a German sympathiser on the management of Cunliffe Owens. She also told me of a memorial at the Old Crematorium at Swaythling.

An unrelated anecdote from Peter Rice who lives in Nutbeem Road was that one afternoon, when he was a boy, he and a friend saw some Blenheim Bombers flying over Eastleigh, towards the airport. They were surprised when the planes fired machine guns, and it was then that he noticed German markings and said that they could not have been Blenheim bombers.

A friend of my father, Charlie Meaton, was taken on as an Apprentice at Cunliffe Owens the day after the bombing. His first gruesome task was to search the ruins for body parts.



I then visited the Local Studies Library in Southampton where I found an amendment to a book 'The Cunliffe-Owen Aircraft Story' (Second Edition 1991) by Harold Woollard which clarified the situation.

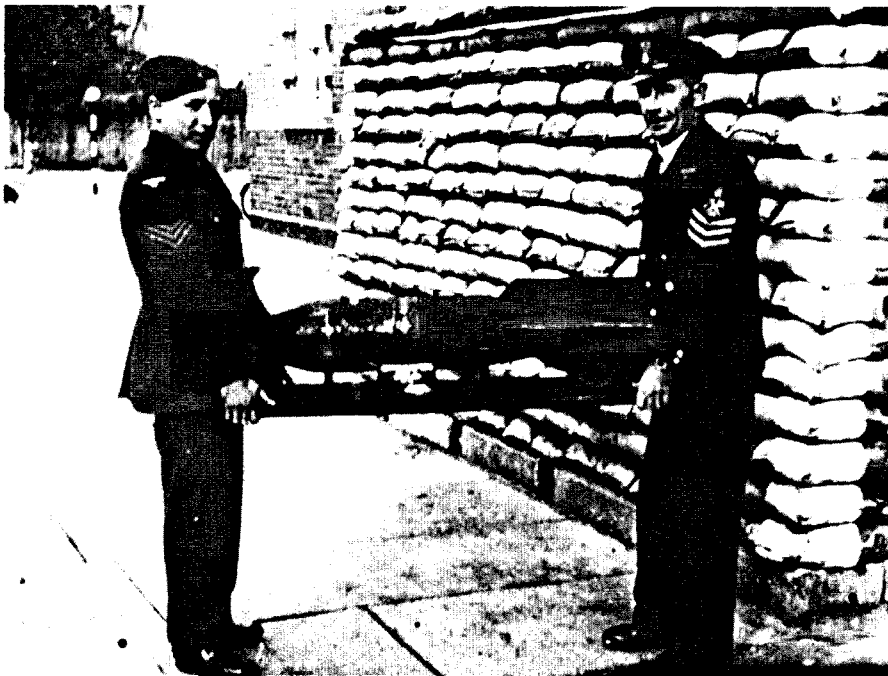
Finally I visited the Imperial War Museum and obtained copies of the Luftwaffe files prepared for raids on the Airport.

The Aerial view of the airport in the file was dated on the day of the fatal air-raid. The file also indicated that German Intelligence was aware of Supermarine, Vickers, A.V. Roe and Cunliffe Owens but appear to have been oblivious of H. M. S. Raven.

It was well known in Eastleigh that the German propagandist William Joyce, nicknamed 'Lord Haw Haw' reported over the radio that H.M.S. Raven had been sunk.



H. M. S. Raven was not a typical Military Camp. The accommodation was in light airy non-identical chalets. I only visited it once long after it had been vacated. It had not been vandalised though it had been stripped of useful materials, and I did not observe it in detail. Bombs were sometimes dropped in the vicinity of H. M. S. Raven but were probably dropped by planes using the Itchen Valley as a navigation aid.



Bomb dropped in a September raid being delivered on 12th October 1940.

Unexploded High Explosive Bomb, converted by men at H. M. S. Raven into a collecting box.

Chief Petty Officer George Spencer R. N. is at the receiving end.

The Hampshire Control Incident Books leave much to be desired as the records are incomplete, inaccurate and secretive.

As mentioned before, on 11th October 1940 an incident was Reported from the part of the Airport under the Southampton Control.

HANTS CONTROL INCIDENT						
DATE 11.10.40						
INCIDENT No.	TIME OF ORIGIN	DISTRICT	LOCALITY	PRÉCIS OF MESSAGE	FIRE	H.E.
2	1810/11	Eastleigh	Southon Ampthorne	<p>TIME OF INCIDENT — 16:20 hours.</p> <p>N.E. bomb or bomb on Cunliffe Owens was factory at Southon Ampthorne.</p> <p>Mr S. Raven requested ambulance from Eastleigh and 2 Constables were taken to hospital.</p> <p>This incident took place in Southampton Control.</p> <p>Approximate position of the aircraft in one Situation Report.</p>		✓

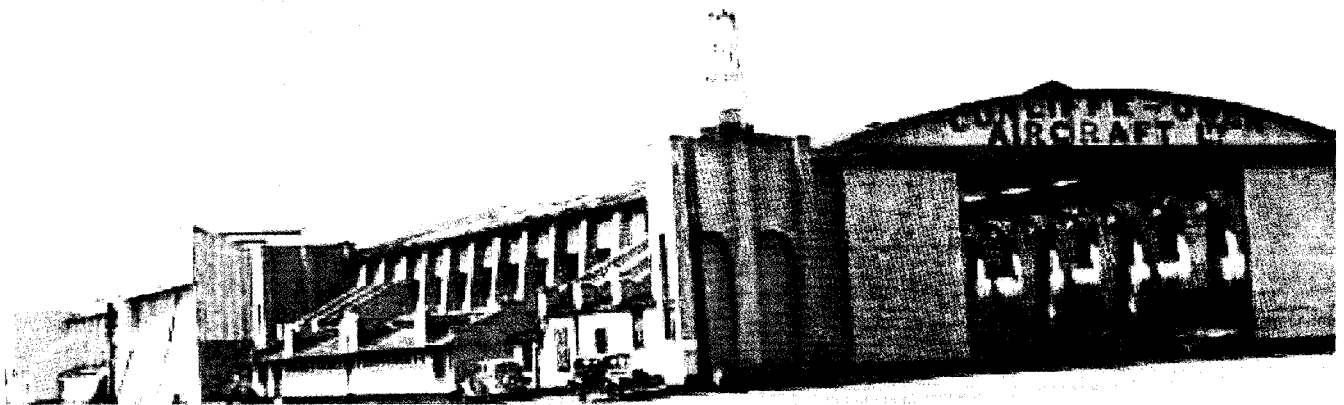
The second edition of the story of the Cunliffe Owen factory had been written by Harold Woollard in 1991. A year later further information was received by the author which explained why and how the attack may have been made.

In collecting information for the History Society mid-20th Century project I spoke to Dorothy Inglis of O'Connell Road, who was in the Office at Cunliffe Owen's Factory at the time of the bombing. Stanley Brehaut, later a well-known television Cameraman with Southern Television, was also there. She mentioned that a captured Heinkel Plane was being guarded in one of hangars at the factory. Those personnel in the office could not escape because the doors jammed as the structure distorted. The busy tool-room next door had received a direct hit.

A friend of my father, Charlie Meaton, became an apprentice at the Cunliffe Owen Factory the day after the attack and for the first week he was employed searching for human mains among the debris.

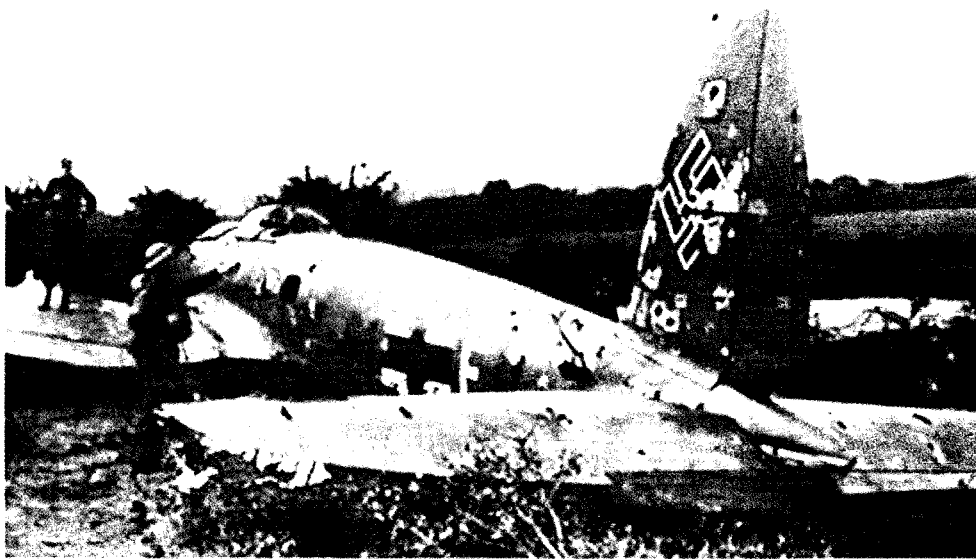
I also spoke to Peter Rice of Nutbeem Road who mentioned that one afternoon when he was about 13, he and a friend saw some Blenheim Bombers swooping across towards the airport which surprised them by firing machine guns. He then said that he must have been mistaken and that they had German markings.

The bombing of Cunliffe Owens was not reported in the Eastleigh Weekly News even though five men or boys from the Borough of Eastleigh were killed.



Apparently the story began when during the retreat from Dunkirk a small number of Blenheim Bombers were left behind which were able to be repaired.

Then a Heinkel 111 plane made an emergency landing in Sussex.



16th August 1940 — Crowds rushed to see the misfortune of the Heinkel 111 bomber after it had flown over Findon and made a remarkable crash landing at High Salvington. The swastika emblem on the tail fin did not survive the hunger of the souvenir hunters and was soon spirited away.

High Salvington is in West Sussex.

The plane was taken to Cunliffe Owen's Factory to await examination by boffins to reveal its secrets.

A secret it may have held was the new X-Gerat system by which set radio beams guided pathfinder planes to their target. It was unlikely that this could have been understood from the receiving equipment alone.

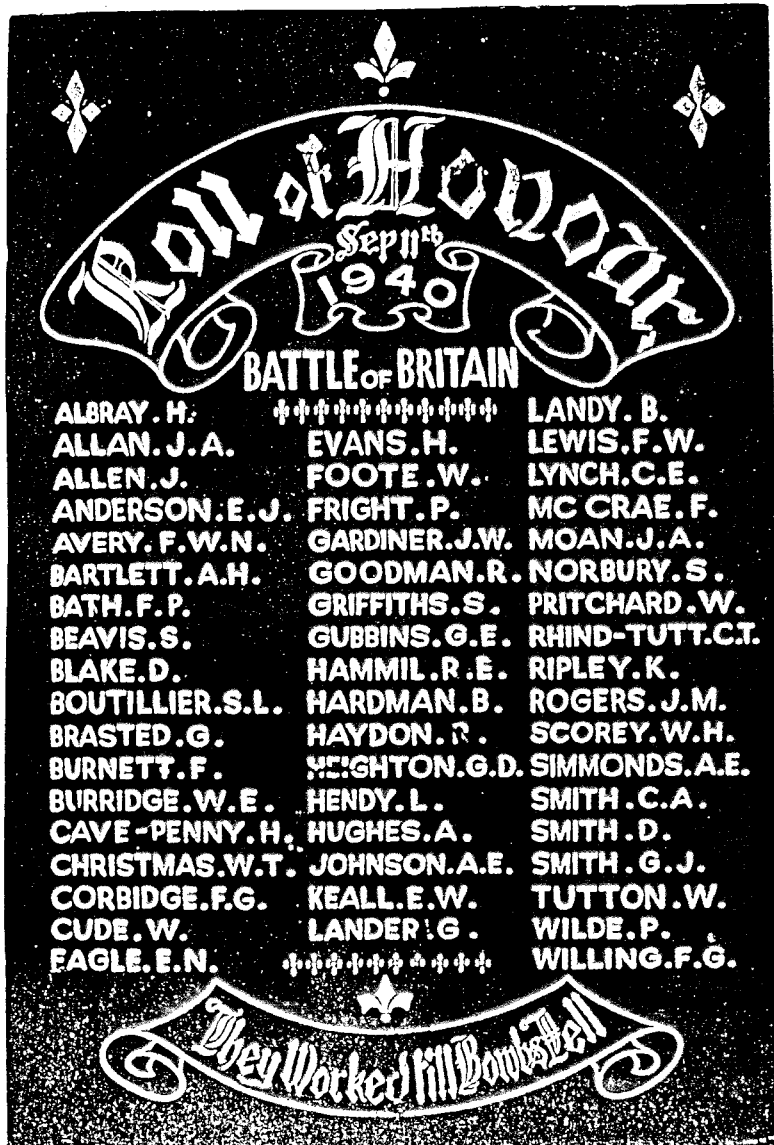
The system was used to devastating effect on 14th November 1940 when Coventry was blitzed.

The Heinkel may have been a target but it may also have been attacked because the factory had been chosen for the production of Typhoon Aircraft.

The aircraft used in the attack were thought to have been Bristol Blenheim Planes captured at Dunkirk. These would have fooled the Observer Corps who often identified the planes from their silhouette.

After the raid many operations were moved to Marwell and in 1941 and 1942 bombs were dropped near Fisher's Pond and Marwell so the Germans must have discovered this.

These are the names of those killed when Cunliffe Owen was bombed.

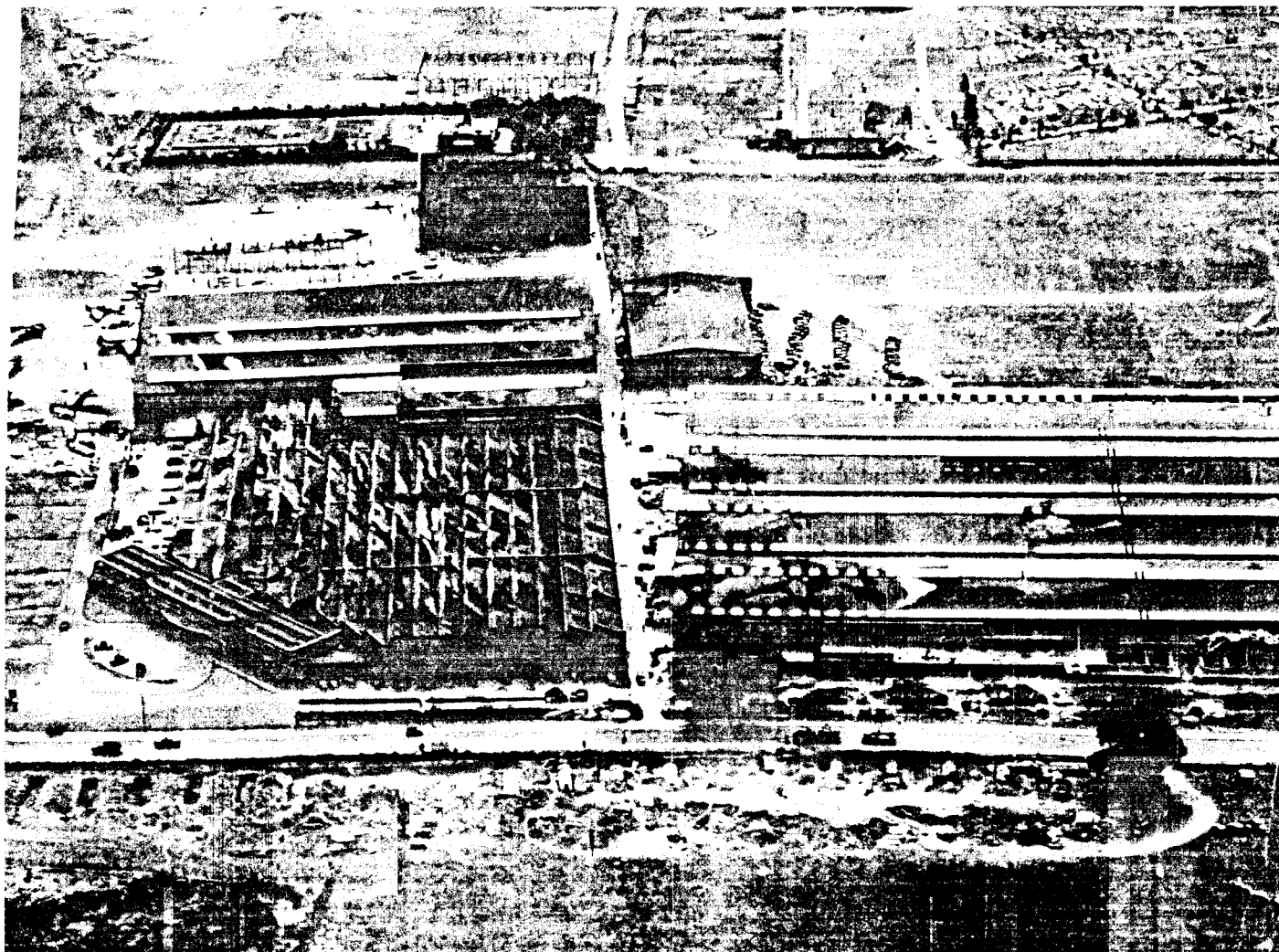


Five of the victims were from Eastleigh.

Those killed who lived in the Borough of Eastleigh			
11 th September 1940	Cunliffe-Owens	Benjamin Landy	aged 28, of 11 Northlands Road.
	Cunliffe-Owens	Kenneth Ripley	aged 15, of 3 Belmont Road, Chandler's Ford.
	Cunliffe-Owens	Montague James Rogers	aged 17, of 93 Desborough Road.
	Cunliffe-Owens	Stanley Letton Norbury	aged 30 husband of Freda Norbury of 56 Edward Avenue, Bishopstoke.
	Cunliffe-Owens	Fred Grosvenor Willing	aged 19 son of Cecil and Edythe Willing of 57 High Street.

Nothing has been found about the 92 people who were injured.

The Cunliffe Owen Bombing - 11th September 1940



This picture shows the damage to the roof of the factory.

In the foreground are air-raid shelters on the west side of Wide Lane approached through tunnels under the road.

Luftwaffe File 1722
With Maps of June 1940

Geheim!

Zielstammtarte (L)

Land: Großbritannien (3)
England (Hampshire)

Ort: Southampton-
Eastleigh
5 km NNO-Southampton-
Mitte
2,5 km S. Eastleigh
Geogr. Werte:
50° 56' 50" N
1° 21' 45" W.

Ziel-Nr. G.B. 74 59
Kartenbl.-Nr.
Engl. 38/ 1: 100 000
G.B. Nr.
Engl. 132/ 1:63 360

1. **Bezeichnung des Zieles:** Reparaturwerkstätte von A.V. Roe & Co., Jersey Aircraft und Vickers.
G.B. 10 205: Flugplatz Southampton-Eastleigh.
G.B. 74 43 : Flugzeugfabrik d. Cuncliffe Owen Aircraft Ltd.
Bgl. mit Ziel-Nr. G.B. 74 46 : Reparaturwerkstatt d. Supermarine Aviation Co. Ltd.

2. **Bedeutung:** Bedeutende Reparaturwerkstatt. (Vickers)

3. Beschreibung des Zieles:

a) **Verkehrsanlüsse:** Straßen- und Gleisanschluß.

b) **Ausdehnung insgesamt:** 35.000 qm
Erbaute Fläche: etwa 18.400 qm
Höhe ü.M.: 17 m.

c) **Art der Anlagen und Einrichtungen,**
Bauteile, Bauweise, Baumaterial, Luftempfindlichkeit, Brandgefahr:

Fast geschlossene Anlage am W.-Rand des Flugplatzes Southampton-Eastleigh (G.B. 10 205).
Hallenbauten in Eisenkonstruktion, bestehend aus 1 dreiteil. Werfthalle, 1 Flugzeughalle und 1 langgestreckten Werkgebäude westl. anschließend.

Einsturz- und Brandgefahr.

d) **Erzeugnisse:** Reparatur von Flugzeugen.

e) **Erzeugungsmenge im Monat:**
Normal und normal,
bei material Schäden und Reparaturen?

f) **Belegkraft:**
Mannsch., Frauen, Hilfskräfte,
politische Einstellung, Dienstleistungen

g) **Lebenswichtige Teile, Wasser- und Kraftversorgung, Sabotage:**

Die Werfthalle.

h) **Rohstoffversorgung:**

i) **Lagerung:**

k) **sonstiges:**

5,5 km im S. liegt Flugplatz-See Southampton (Woolston-Hythe) (G.B. 10 206)
10 km im S.S.O. liegen Flugplätze Hamble (G.B. 1094 u. 1095)
15 km im S.S.O. liegt Fliegerhorst-See Calshot (G.B. 10 31)
18 km im S.O. " " " Lee-on-Solent (G.B. 10 125)

4. **Kritiker und passiver Luftschutz, örtl. Beobachtung:**

Um Southampton schwere und leichte Flak, sowie Ballonsperrstaffeln eingesetzt.

5. **Orientierungspunkte zur Zielerkennung:**

Mündung des River Itchen in Southampton Water 7 km im S.
Eisenbahnbrücke über River Itchen 2,2 km im N.O.
Parkanlagen und Waldstücke etwa 1 km im W.

6. **Bild- und Kartenunterlagen vom Ziel und vom Zielraum:**

a) **Enliedat:**

a: Kartenausschnitt

b/c: Bildauswertung.

b) **Handb. vom Zielraum vorhanden:**

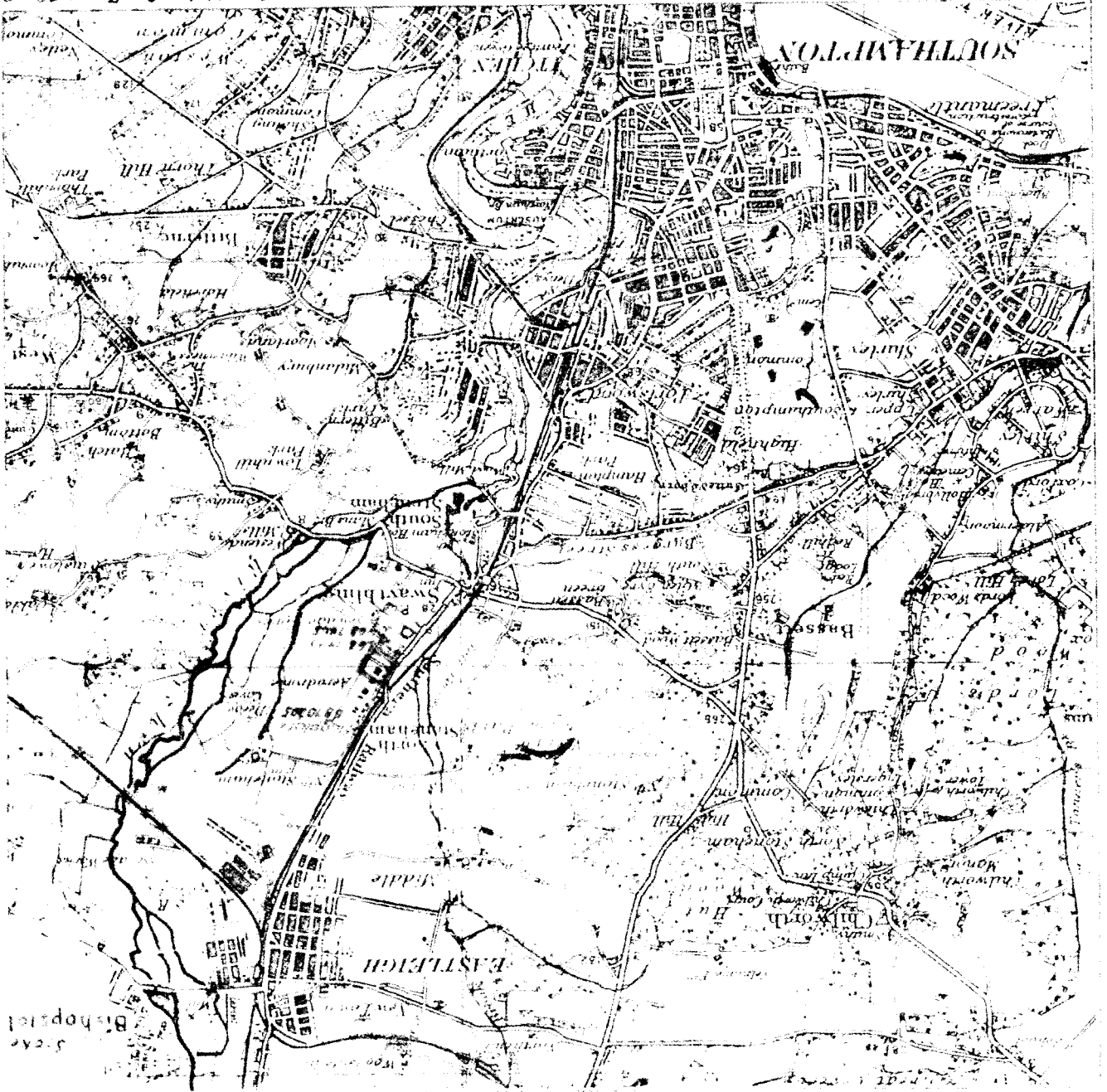
Zielraumkarte 3/4

7. **Zielunterlagen hat:**

Juni 1940

Maßstab 1:50 000
0 1 2 3 4 5 km

LT. Kdo 2, Juni 1940



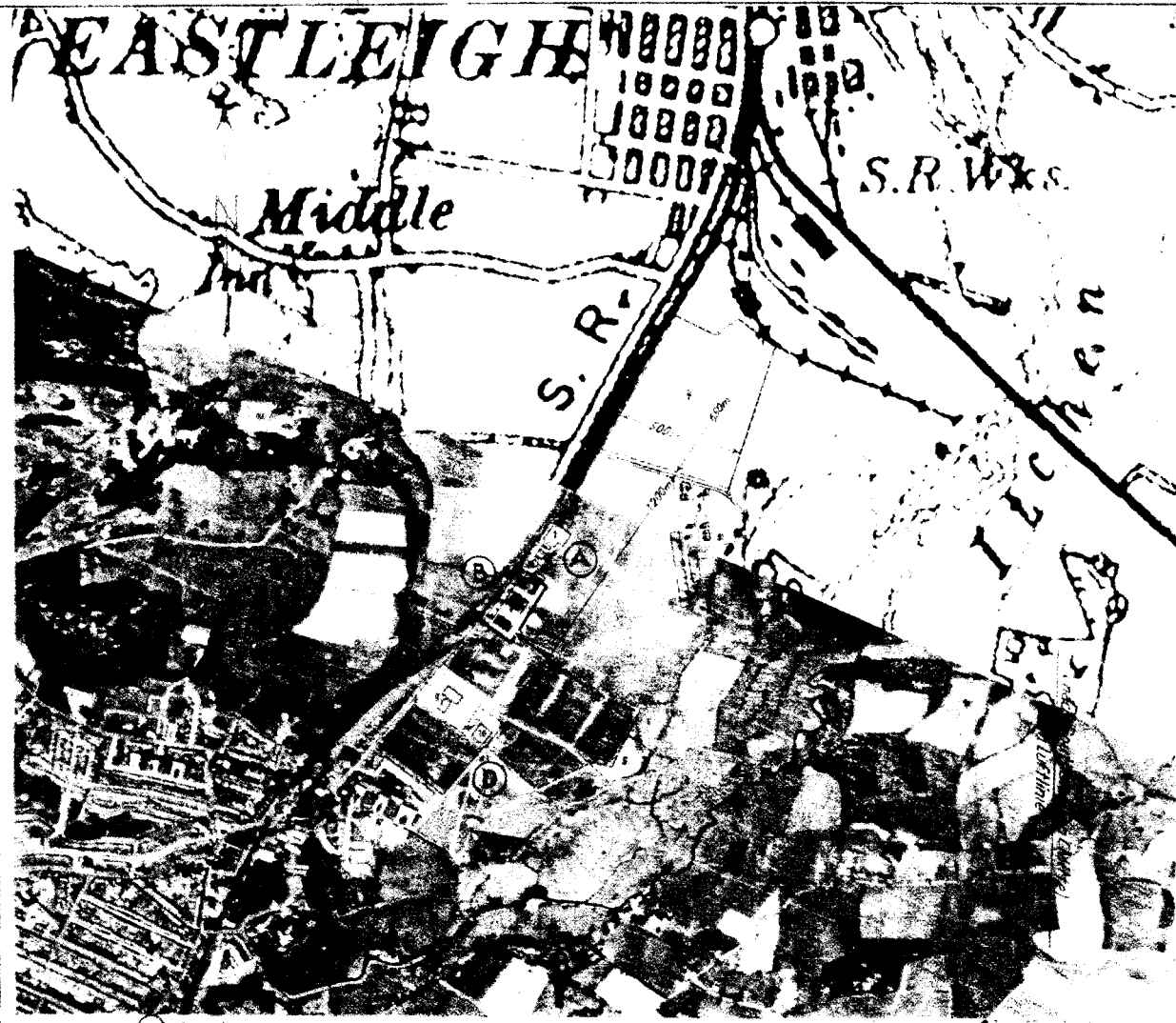
GB
1:100 000 Engl. Maßstab
1:63 360 Engl. Maßstab
(5)

GB 7459 bc

Maßstab etwa 1: 19 500

Southampton-Eastleigh

Reparaturwerkstätte - A.V. Roe u. Co. Jersey Aircraft u. Werke



GB 7459 bc
Geheim

Kriegsaufnahme:
482 V 93
Nachträge:
12. 4. 39.

Karte:
1:100 000
Blatt 38
1: 63 000 ~~363~~
Blatt 132

Länge
(westl. Greenw.):
1 21 30 "
Nördl. Breite:
50 57 0 "
(Bildmitte)

MiBweisung:
- 11 17 "
(Mitte 1938)

Zielhöhe
über NN 17 m

1472

**Luftwaffe File 1386
With an aerial photograph
taken on 11th September 1940
the day that Cunliffe Owen was bombed.**

Nur für den Dienstgebrauch

Zielstammkarte (L)

Land: Großbritannien.
Inland (Hampshire).

Ort: Southampton
(G.B. 10 205)
Cuncliffe Owen Aircraft Ltd.
(G.B. 74 43)
Reparaturwerkstätte v. Cuncliffe Owen Aircraft Ltd.
(G.B. 74 59)

Geogr. Werte: 50° 50' N
1° 21' W

Ziel-Nr.: G.B. 10 205 (74 43)

Karten-Nr.: G.B. 10 205 (74 43)

S & Nr. Engl. 102/100000

1. Bezeichnung des Zieles: Flugzeugfabrik der Cuncliffe Owen Aircraft Co. Ltd. (Vielzweck).

G.B. 10 205 Flugplatz Southampton-Testleigh
(G.B. 74 43 Flugzeugfabrik d. Cuncliffe Owen Aircraft Ltd.)
G.B. 74 59 Reparaturwerkstätte v. Cuncliffe Owen Aircraft Co. Jersey Aircraft Co. (Vielzweck)

Vgl. mit Ziel-Nr.

2. Bedeutung:

Neuzeitlich ausgebautes Montagewerk für Jagdflugzeugbau.

3. Beschreibung des Zieles:

a) Verkehrsanschlüsse: Straßen- und Gleisanschluß.

b) Ausdehnung insgesamt: etwa 60 400 qm

Rebaut Fläche: etwa 40 000 qm
Länge d.M.: 17 m.

c) Bauweise, Bauausführung, Luftempfindlichkeit, Brandgefahr:

- 1 vierteilige Werkshalle in Eisenkonstruktion.
- 3 weitere Montagehallen und 1 (vermutl.) Werfthalle einschließlich der Werksgebäude der Cuncliffe Owen Aircraft Ltd. (74 43) am S-Rand des Flugplatzes Southampton-Testleigh (G.B. 10 205).

Die erstgenannte 4-teilige Werkshalle ist durch mehrere Bombeneinschläge zum großen Teil zerstört.

Einsturz- und Brandgefahr.

d) Erzeugnisse: "Spitfire" Jagdflugzeuge.

e) Erzeugungsmenge im Monat: Monatskapazität etwa 30-40 Spitfire Jagdflugzeuge.
Regelmäßig und normal,
bei mäßigem Schicht- und Arbeitsmaß

f) Schutzhaft:

Räuber, Strafen, Verhaftungsbefugnis,
politische Einflussung, Unterbrechung

2. Bezeichnung des Zieles: ...

3. Bedeutung:

4. Beschreibung des Zieles:

5. Orientierungspunkte:

6. Bild- und Kartenunterlagen:

- 5,5 km in SW Richtung Testleigh (Woolston-Mythe) (G.B. 10 205)
- 10 km in SW Richtung Testleigh (Woolston-Mythe) (G.B. 10 205)
- 15 km in SW Richtung Testleigh (Woolston-Mythe) (G.B. 10 205)
- 18 km in SW Richtung Testleigh (Woolston-Mythe) (G.B. 10 205)

4. Aktiver und passiver Luftschutz, Artl. Bewachung:

Schwere Flakperre im gesamten Raum um Southampton - Portsmouth - Isle of Wight.
Leichte Flakperre im südlich Southampton.
1 schwere Flakbatterie etwa 500 m ostwärts des Flugplatzes Southampton-Testleigh.
Ballonsperre in Richtung Southampton (2 + 4 Sperrballone), auf der Isle of Wight (2 Sperrballone) und um Portsmouth (25 Sperrballone).

5. Orientierungspunkte zur Zielerkennung:

Mündung des River Itchen in Southampton östl. 7 km im S.
Eisenbahnbrücke über River Itchen 2,2 km im NO.
Parkanlagen und Waldstücke etwa 1 km im N.

6. Bild- und Kartenunterlagen vom Ziel und vom Zielraum:

- a) Unterlagen
- α: Kartenausschnitt
- β: Bild mit Einzeichnung
- β/: Bild ohne Einzeichnung
- γ: Anmerkung

β) Material vom Zielraum betroffen:
Ziele markierte 3/4

7. Zielunterlagen hat:

1. September 1945
Milit. G. Amt.

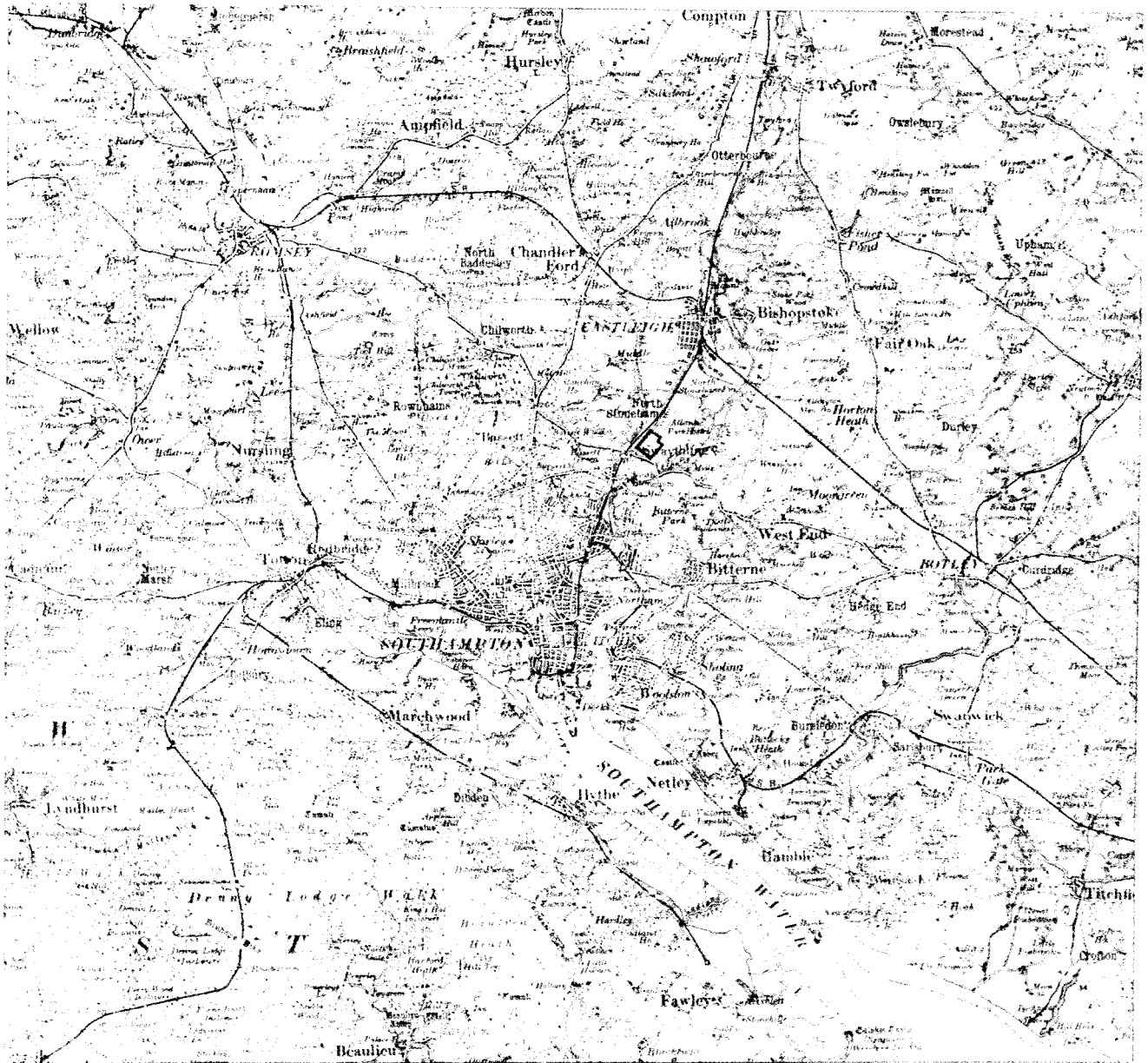
GB 7446 (7443) a
Nur für den Dienstgebrauch

Southampton-Eastleigh

Flugzeugfabrik der Supermarine Aviation Co. Ltd. (Vickers)

Karte 1:100 000
GB/E 38

Länge (westl. Greenw.): 1° 21' 45" Breite: 50° 56' 35"
Mißweisung: — 10' 53" (Mitte 1940) Zielhöhe über NN 17 m



Bearbeitet Sept 1940

Maßstab 1:100 000



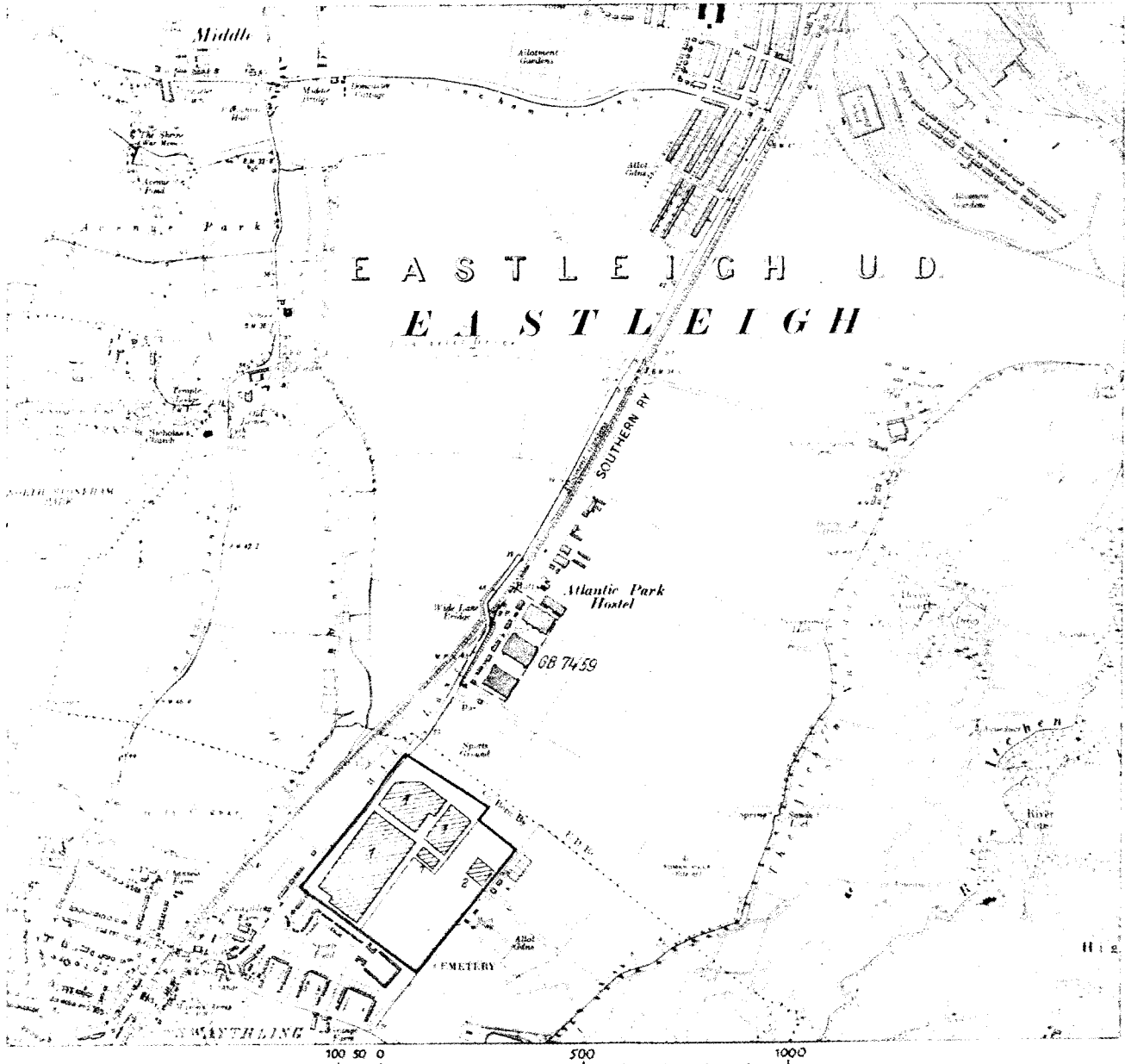
GB 7446 (7443) c
Nur für den Dienstgebrauch

Southampton-Eastleigh

Karte 1:100 000
GB/E 38

Flugzeugfabrik der Supermarine Aviation Co. Ltd. (Vickers)

Länge (westl. Greenw.): 1° 21' 45" N Breite: 50° 56' 35"
Mißweisung: — 10' 53" (Mitte 1940) Zielhöhe über NN 17 m



Maßstab 1:10560

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Scale 1:100,000

Sheet 38

Supermarine Aviation Co. Ltd. (Vickers)

GB 7446 (7443) b
Nur für den Dienstgebrauch

Southampton-Eastleigh

Karte 1:100 000
GB/E 38

Flugzeugfabrik der Supermarine Aviation Co. Ltd. (Vickers)

Aufnahme vom 11. 9. 40

Länge (westl. Greenw.): 1° 21' 45" N Breite: 50° 56' 35"
Mißweisung: - 10° 53' (Mitte 1940) Zielhöhe über NN 17 m

500 0 500 9000 m

Maßstab etwa 1:11 500



© GB 7446 A Vickers Aircraft Co. Ltd. 1943

Next month during the Area Raid perhaps at around 18.40 on of 8th of October 1940 3 Junker 88 planes were reported to have dropped many bombs (most unexploded), machine-gunned numerous people, destroyed the Co-op Store in Market Street by fire and killed two Railwaymen at the Running Sheds. Seven unexploded bombs were found at the airport. There is no doubt that the events occurred but the record of number of aircraft involved, and the timings are not reliable as it was a great deal for just three aircraft to carry out especially as a follow-up report indicates that two RAF personnel were killed and four injured at the airport and that there were many more unexploded bombs (19 at the Airport). The times given are the times when the reports were written and are thus meaningless.

One of the RAF men killed (and another who died the following day) are buried in the Churchyard at North Stoneham.

The RAF personnel killed on 8th October 1940.

Leading Aircraftsman, Stanley BLAYLOCK, 54286, 924/30 Balloon Squadron., Royal Air Force, Aged 21. Son of Ernest and Bertha Blaylock, of Burnley. Buried at Haggate Baptist Chapelyard, Lancashire Grave Ref. Sec. 28. Grave 15.

Aircraftsman 1st Class, Garfield Maurice PRING, 549818, 924 Balloon Squadron, Royal Air Force. Buried at North Stoneham.

Injured and died on 10th October 1940.

Aircraftsman 2nd Class, Frederick Henry GREENING, 1260370, 924 Balloon Squadron., Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, aged 27. Son of John and Emma Greening of Islington, London. Buried at North Stoneham.

War Graves at North Stoneham.



The incident book did not report any activity at the Airport during the raids on Eastleigh and Southampton on 22nd June 1942, and after this there were very few bombings in the area.

On 22nd June 1943 at 03.05 two High Explosive bombs were dropped in the Water meadows near Allington Manor Farm.

On 16th May 1944 there were eleven High Explosive bombs dropped in woodland on a farm at Fair Oak.

Finally on 15th July 1944 a V1 doodlebug fell in the Water Meadows South East of the Airport. Eight houses in Allington Lane, West End, were damaged. Flying bombs were not aimed at anything as small as an airport.

HANTS CONTROL INCIDENT								
DATE	TIME	LOCALITY	M.A. REFERENCE	TIME OF INCIDENT	PRÉCIS OF MESSAGE	FIRE TYPE OF	BOMBS	
					DETAILS OF INCIDENT		M.B.L.B.	HE. 111
					<i>On 15th July 1944 a V1 flying bomb fell in the Water Meadows South East of the Airport. Eight houses in Allington Lane, West End, were damaged. Flying bombs were not aimed at anything as small as an airport.</i>			

A captured V1 Flying Bomb on display.

