

ROCKET MEN

The Hawker Typhoon took some time to perfect, but by the spring of 1944, with powerplant and structural troubles under control, it was in a position to spearhead the British and Canadian offensive into occupied Europe. There were, however, unforeseen problems to overcome before the rocket-armed machines of No 121 Wing were able to make their full contribution in Normandy **WORDS:** CHRIS THOMAS





On 1 April 1944, RAF Holmsley South in the New Forest, Hampshire, was subjected to an unfamiliar sound: the howl of massed Napier Sabre engines, when from mid-afternoon more than 50 Hawker Typhoons appeared out of the rain and gloom. These aircraft belonged to Nos 174, 175 and 245 Squadrons, previously based at Westhampnett — now Goodwood — and under the control of No 121 Airfield, one of the 2nd Tactical Air Force's original mobile airfield units formed in the wake of Exercise 'Spartan' a year earlier. It moved to Holmsley and set up camp — the unit would be under canvas until it left for France, and none of its personnel were allowed to use any of the permanent facilities.

Holmsley South had been built for Coastal Command and during 1943 had housed Halifax squadrons. However, in the spring of 1944 the process of transferring 2nd TAF units out of their winter quarters and familiarising some newer personnel with the process of deploying into and out of temporary bases began. The next, momentous, three months at Holmsley would see challenging and ever-changing targets, mounting casualties, unexpected technical problems and operations from locations uncomfortably close to the German lines.

The relocation to Hampshire was part of the repositioning of 2nd TAF and US 9th Air Force fighter-bombers as near as possible to the invasion beaches. Even so, the planned British and Canadian beach-head would be around 120 miles away. After forming up — two or three squadrons were usually involved — and crossing the 100 miles of Channel at low level, the

Typhoons would have 20 minutes or less to locate and attack their targets.

All three units had been equipped with 'Hurribombers' but had spent a year or more flying the Typhoon, the 2nd TAF's chosen prime fighter-bomber to support the forthcoming invasion of occupied Europe. However, No 121 Airfield's Typhoons were not destined to continue as 'bombers'. Many were already capable of carrying rocket projectiles (RPs) which had been introduced operationally on the type some six months earlier.

When RPs were first used on operations, they were considered an alternative to bombs, depending on the target, but changing the weapon fit was an unnecessary burden on overworked groundcrews.

In addition, methods of delivery differed considerably and constant practice with one type of weapon would produce greater accuracy. It was therefore decided that all 18 of

the 2nd TAF's Typhoon squadrons would specialise in one or the other. Seven continued as bombers while the others would be RP-equipped, and the No 121 Airfield squadrons were among the latter.

After nearly three weeks of exercises and practice on the ranges operational flying resumed on 19 April when No 174 Squadron, as part of a larger formation from nearby Hurn, set out to attack gun positions close to Fécamp. It was not an auspicious start as the target was obscured by cloud and the squadron brought its RPs home. Undaunted, it set out again in the afternoon to a similar objective west of Montebourg, with a satisfying result. All RPs were seen to burst in the target area.

Two days later the other two squadrons flew their first

“The Typhoons would have 20 minutes or less to locate and attack their targets”

TOP: JR142 was No 175 Squadron's last 'car-door' Typhoon. It was badly damaged on 29 May 1944 when a tyre burst on take-off and finished up standing on its nose and one wingtip. Repaired, modified and stored, '142 saw no further active service.

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LEFT: A pair of No 174 Squadron Typhoons raising dust on airstrip B-5 at Le Fresne-Camilly. With the top surface removed and runways made of SMT (square-mesh track), intensive use caused huge dust clouds that not only damaged engines and blanketed the whole airfield, but gave away the strip's location and use to the German gunners.

IWM



ABOVE: When the Typhoons arrived at Holmsley South in April 1944, only No 174 Squadron had been using RPs operationally. Most RP Typhoons had the new sliding hood but still in 174's inventory there were half-a-dozen with the old 'car-door' canopy. This one, JP671, was among the last to be used operationally. It was finally shot down by flak, with the loss of its pilot, on 29 July 1944.

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BELOW RIGHT: On 10 June Fg Off Bill Smith, who had bailed out into the Channel five days earlier, became the first Typhoon pilot to make a wheels-down landing in France. Hit by flak attacking a Panzer HQ, with engine vibration and oil spraying onto the windscreen, he was instructed to land at the newly constructed B-2 Bazenville. He was met by a bevy of photographers and film crews who had been expecting the arrival of AVM Harry Broadhurst to make the first landing there — he followed a little later.

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operational sorties from Holmsley, which coincided with a visit from the supreme commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, Gen Dwight D. Eisenhower, and the 2nd TAF's 'top brass', Air Marshal Trafford Leigh-Mallory with AVMs Harry Broadhurst and Arthur Coningham. The VIPs observed 245 perform an 'operational take-off' and the briefing and debriefing of 174 and 175 for an attack on a railway

viaduct. At the debrief Eisenhower congratulated 174's Plt Off Watson, who had hit the viaduct with a broadside of eight rockets. It was 175's first operational use of RPs. There would be plenty of practice over the coming weeks. When the general's C-47 departed, 245 escorted it out of the area.

The Typhoon had been greatly troubled with technical problems in its first 18 months of service. The two dominant maladies had been engine failures, particularly sleeve valve seizures, and structural failures resulting in the catastrophic fracture of the rear fuselage forward of the tail unit. Solutions were at last found during 1943 and the Typhoon force had been completely re-equipped with aircraft fitted with modified Napier Sabres. Serviceability thereafter equalled or even surpassed that of other high-performance powerplants. Modifications to the elevator counterbalance prevented the

elevator flutter and consequent rear fuselage failure that had destroyed around 20 Typhoons.

Having had little chance to gain rocket-firing expertise, No 245 Squadron flew to No 18 Armament Practice Camp at Eastchurch on 25 April to attend an RP course.

It proved an unfortunate visit. As the weather conditions declined, the course was curtailed and eventually cancelled, but not before three

Typhoons were lost. The first landed with wheels still retracted, owing to "inadequate cockpit drill". The second was flown straight into the sea on the Leysdown range from a 45° RP dive, which proved fatal for the pilot. Apparently no attempt was made to recover, the crash possibly caused by what is now known as

“ We found we could push fingers through many of the control surfaces ”

'target fixation.' The third suffered an engine failure and was put down on the Isle of Sheppey, bursting into flames, but the pilot escaped injury.

The initial RP operation for 245 came on 2 May, in conjunction with 174 and 175. The target was obscured but coastal defences on the eastern side of the Cherbourg peninsula were attacked. The second week of May saw 245 returning to Eastchurch to complete the RP course it had been obliged to abandon, fortunately without further mishap. No 184 Squadron flew in from Westhampnett to take 245's place for the 10 days of its absence. In July this unit would rejoin the wing to make a fourth squadron.

A regular pattern was established, wing-strength formations making the trip across to occupied France most days, sometimes twice a day. The targets were initially transport-orientated: road and rail junctions, bridges, viaducts, marshalling yards and occasionally gun sites or troop encampments. However, on 7 May Typhoons of all three squadrons were fitted with a long-range tank and two RPs under each wing, making longer sorties possible. Thus equipped, Wg Cdr Charles Green led them east of Le Mans to attack a large number of rail tanker wagons gathered in sidings. Many were destroyed but, much to the disappointment of the pilots, they seemed to be empty.

That afternoon Green took 175 on another operation, successfully blasting rail sheds at Formerie. The Typhoons had flown to Tangmere to carry out the mission, returning there to refuel before repositioning to base. Soon after take-off Fg Off Gerrie Clermont's mount burst into flames and the Royal Canadian Air Force pilot was killed when it dived into the ground north of Emsworth.



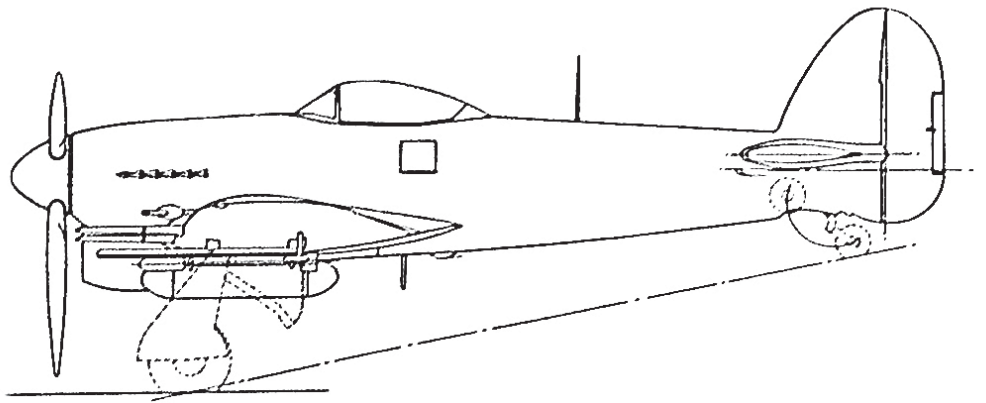
Experience showed that some organisational changes were required in the 2nd TAF structure. As part of this process, airfield units such as No 121 Airfield were renamed as wings. Previously, two of the airfield units had been under the control of one wing, which proved unwieldy.

The radar site at Cap Gris-Nez was targeted on 22 May, the first of several assaults against similar objectives over the next two weeks. This was all part of a grand plan to 'blind' German radar, but it was a costly campaign. No 121 Wing was fortunate to escape with fewer casualties than some of the other Typhoon wings.

On 24 May the radar station at Le Havre was the focus of attention. New tactics were planned, with a pair of anti-flak Typhoons accompanying each section of four Typhoons in their RP attack. However, on arrival the target was found to be obscured by low cloud. The alternative, the radar at Houlgate on the other side of the Seine Estuary, was duly 'pranged'.

The wing returned to Le Havre in the afternoon and made a successful strike but with the loss of Plt Off 'Sten' Finlayson, RCAF. As he pulled out after his dive on the target the rear fuselage and tail unit of his No 175 Squadron Typhoon was seen to break away, giving him no chance of escape. Had it been hit by flak or was it the return of the dreaded structural failure? The latter prospect initiated a hurried check of all the wing's aircraft. It revealed that many had not received the modifications that answered the problem. These omissions were urgently remedied.

The servicing wing faced another unsuspected challenge, the result of repeated low flying over the sea and the effect of salt-water on the lightweight structure of the ailerons. Plt Off N. J. Wilson, the technical adjutant, later recalled, "One of the fitters was doing a routine inspection one morning and put his thumb straight through the control surface. What was happening was that the aircraft were picking up salt-water internally and, being highly corrodible alloy, its surfaces were being seriously affected. On closer inspection we found we could push fingers through very many of them. There was tremendous panic then to get the repairs done or to replace them. ➤



ABOVE AND BELOW: No photographs of 'Abdullah' Typhoons have come to light but these 1944 Hawker general arrangement drawings show the Abdullah aerials on each wingtip. 'Black boxes' occupy the port fuel tank space and long-range tanks are carried to restore the consequent loss of fuel capacity. The No 1320 Flight Typhoons did not carry RPs. CHRIS THOMAS COLLECTION

TESTING 'ABDULLAH'

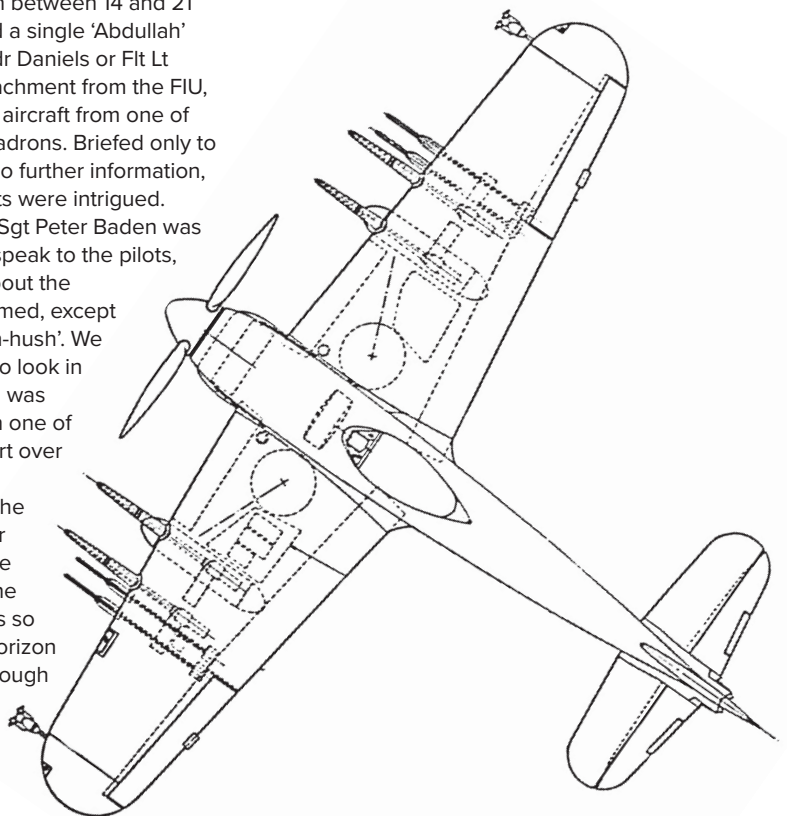
On 12 May 1944 three Typhoons (MN236, MN263 and MN296), devoid of any unit markings, flew to Holmsley South for 'special duties' and were discreetly parked away from the operational aircraft. No 1320 Flight, an offshoot of the Fighter Interception Unit (FIU), was tasked with the operational trials of 'Abdullah' — ARI5613, a device developed by the Telecommunication Research Establishment for homing onto radars, and in particular the Würzburg, the Germans' flak-directing radar. The timing of their arrival was no coincidence, for the campaign against the comprehensive array of German radars that dotted the coast of occupied Europe was about to begin.

These trials were flown between 14 and 21 May. Each sortie involved a single 'Abdullah' Typhoon flown by Sqdn Ldr Daniels or Flt Lt Jones, who were on detachment from the FIU, escorted by two or three aircraft from one of Holmsley's Typhoon squadrons. Briefed only to act as escort and given no further information, the regular Typhoon pilots were intrigued.

No 175 Squadron's Flt Sgt Peter Baden was one of them. "We didn't speak to the pilots, and were told nothing about the aircraft, which were unarmed, except that they were very 'hush-hush'. We weren't supposed even to look in them. With another pilot I was merely told to formate on one of the aircraft as close escort over the Channel, wherever it went; no information on the purpose of the mission or where we were going. We learnt nothing more on the sortie as the weather was so hazy that there was no horizon and we saw nothing, although from the flight time I assumed that we must have been close to the French coast at about 500 or 1,000ft.

After landing we sneaked a look in the cockpit while the [aeroplane] was unattended but saw no CRT [cathode ray tube] or other indicator, just a few small black boxes with switches."

This was in fact the pattern of all 14 'Abdullah' sorties, which were flown over a period of one week. No 1320 Flight established that, technically, the equipment worked as intended; signals could be picked up at around 50 miles' range at sea level. Tactically, however, it was of little use, mainly because the radar operators, seeing a formation heading directly towards them, lost no time in shutting down their transmissions. Besides, in the present campaign at least, the locations of all the German radar stations were plotted and photographed.



RIGHT: An armourer plugs in the firing leads (known as 'pigtails') to the rear of the RP rails. After some inadvertent firings in Normandy, this act was performed at the last possible moment, when the Typhoons would pause briefly before entering the runway for take-off.

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BELOW: With eight RPs, time over occupied France was limited, so No 121 Wing Typhoons used two 44-gallon long-range tanks in conjunction with a reduced load of RPs, as shown, to probe further inland. When operating from temporary airfields the Typhoons were fitted with mesh debris guards in front of the vulnerable radiator.

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And it had to be done very quickly or it would mean grounding the aircraft with D-Day almost on us."

On the second day of June, Wg Cdr Green headed 18 RP-equipped aircraft of Nos 174 and 245 Squadrons, with 10 machines from 175 in the 'anti-flak' role, to attack the radar station at Cap de la Hague, north-west of Cherbourg. Despite the numerous cross-Channel sorties over the previous two months, the wing had managed to avoid any of its pilots bailing out or ditching in the sea, but on this day that record was tragically broken. Sgt Denis Lush's Typhoon was badly damaged by flak and he was forced to bail out some seven or eight miles north-north-west of Cherbourg. He was seen in the water but did not get into his dinghy. Other Typhoons circled above him, transmitting for a 'fix'. His commanding officer attempted to drop his dinghy to him, but was unsuccessful. The downed pilot was seen to be active in the water for at least half an hour. After 40 minutes an air-sea rescue Supermarine Walrus arrived, but it was immediately damaged by German shelling and was unable to complete the rescue. Eventually a second Walrus made an attempt to recover Lush's now lifeless body, but it slipped out of the Mae West and slid beneath the waves.

Everyone on the station had been expecting D-Day soon but at last there was a tangible sign as, on 4 June, groundcrews were ordered to paint the famous black-and-white stripes on all the Typhoons. In fact



they were a day early as the great event was delayed due to unsuitable weather. Time, then, for yet another radar site attack.



Just after 08.00hrs all three squadrons were airborne to strike the radar at Auderville. This time 174 took the anti-flak role and went in first, followed in turn by 245 and finally 175. Fg Off Bill Smith's No 245 Squadron machine was badly hit and streamed glycol, and eventually he bailed out 30 miles off Cherbourg. He had some difficulty in escaping the cockpit but finally kicked the stick forward, was thrown out and was soon seen safely in his dinghy. One of his comrades circling overhead, Flt Lt Bill Reynolds, watched his own engine temperature climb off the clock and took to his

parachute. He too made it into his dinghy. A third pilot was in trouble as he climbed away after his attack. WO J. H. Pugh, an Australian on his first operational sortie, reported his engine cutting. A third parachute blossomed and he entered the sea 15 miles off the coast. Pugh, though, was not seen to climb into his dinghy and his parachute swiftly disappeared underwater.

Two Walruses turned up to rescue the surviving airmen. This proved less than straightforward. A 12ft swell in the Channel damaged both floats of the Walrus that picked up Smith. With great skill its Dutch pilot managed to get airborne, lowering and raising the undercarriage to stabilise the aircraft. While Smith was soon in a hot bath, Reynolds' rescue aircraft suffered a cracked hull in the heavy seas and taxied back to the English coast, a journey of some four hours.

The loss of Pugh, so soon after Lush in similar circumstances, had a bad effect on the pilots. But morale was lifted that evening when the tannoy crackled into life and summoned "all pilots to report to intelligence at 20.00hrs". The briefing took more than two hours. Tomorrow would be the big day.

It is doubtful whether many, if any, of the pilots managed to sleep before they were roused at 03.30hrs on 6 June and placed at readiness from first light. The initial operations of the day were part of a pre-planned wave of attacks. No 245 Squadron, led by Green, was the first airborne at 07.13hrs, closely followed by 174.

The already poor weather over the beaches worsened just as the No 121 Wing Typhoons arrived, pushing them down to 800 or 900ft to keep below the cloudbase. Visibility





BATTLING THE DUST

Sqn Ldr Bill Pitt-Brown (centre, bare-headed) and No 174 Squadron pilots with servicing commandos at one of the 'refuel and rearm' strips in France during mid-June 1944. The Typhoon has the first anti-dust precaution — a disc mounted in the centre of the debris guard. IWM

With the surface vegetation removed by the airfield construction groups and a spell of better weather, intensive use of the forward strips by fighters and fighter-bombers raised ever-increasing clouds of a fine dust. A concerned Allied Expeditionary Air Force engineering officer, having noted Typhoons already suffering unserviceability problems due to a build-up of siliceous deposits on the spark plugs, delivered samples of the Calvados dust to the Royal Aircraft Establishment for analysis. He was particularly concerned about the effects on the life of the Typhoons' Napier Sabre engines. It was established that more than 80 per cent of the dust consisted of hard, abrasive material.

By mid-June the 2nd TAF knew it had a serious and previously unsuspected problem. Most Spitfires in service were already fitted with filter systems and the situation with Mustangs was more complex but in hand. Although three Typhoons had undergone trials in North Africa with what was known as the tropical air intake and a dozen aircraft had been prepared to tropical standard, policy changes had precluded their use in the Mediterranean theatre. The tropicalised aircraft were returned to normal and no further examples were similarly equipped. So, the Typhoon force was now feeling the impact of the unavoidable swirling dust.

All units were ordered to fit a circular plate in front of the air intake as an emergency measure. They were attached

to the centre of the debris guards that were used on Typhoons operating from temporary strips. The armourers used the lull in activity on D+13 to thoroughly clean the cannon, which had been suffering frequent stoppages due to the dust. Joints were taped and ejector slots had tissue doped over them; in the air the first shell case would break the seal.

At Holmsley technical officers arrived on D+16 with temporary filters for trial. While the RAE had worked with Vokes to come up with an installation of a cylindrical air filter, Napier quickly designed and started manufacturing a modified version of the circular plate first suggested. The efficiency of the flat plate deflector was calculated to be 53 per cent but Napier's dome deflector, which was fitted to the cut-back outer ring of the oil cooler extension piece, proved 88 per cent efficient at take-off power. The Vokes/RAE filter system was even better, at 93 per cent. There were pros and cons with both systems, 200 of the Napier design being ordered along with 1,500 of the Vokes/RAE version.

The need was urgent. Of the 14 Typhoons No 175 Squadron flew back from Normandy on D+18, no fewer than 11 required engine changes. The servicing wing saw frantic activity as extra personnel and serviceable powerplants were sought from around the country. Something had to be done quickly or this vital asset would be lost at a crucial time in the battle. The first 300 Vokes/RAE filters were delivered by 2 July with the remainder being supplied in little more than two weeks. Once these devices were fitted there were no reported problems with the Typhoons operating in Normandy.



ABOVE: In a fantastic response to the dust crisis, Napier designed, built and flight-tested its deflector in one day! By midnight that day, half the company's sheet metal workers had started turning them out and within a week the whole Typhoon force had been equipped.

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ABOVE RIGHT: The Vokes/RAE dust filter was a little behind Napier's device but was rather more sophisticated. Basically a drum filter on its side, it also had 'cuckoo doors' which opened outwards to accommodate backfires, which had tended to project red-hot Napier filters across the airfield. CHRIS THOMAS COLLECTION

Bill Smith, also pictured on page 44, survived his third Typhoon emergency on 20 June when MN625 suffered an engine failure on take-off from Holmsley, probably due to Normandy dust ingestion over the previous few days. MN625 would be repaired but saw no further active service; Smith completed his tour with No 245 Squadron and later returned to operations as commanding officer of No 184 Squadron. He was killed in a DH Vampire after the war. CHRIS THOMAS COLLECTION



BELOW:
One of only three 'car-door' Typhoons left with No 174 Squadron by D-Day, JP671 had been with the unit for more than nine months, including a spell as Gp Capt 'Paddy' Woodhouse's personal mount and taking part in the Amiens prison raid as escort to the Mosquitos.

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along the whole of the beach-head area was severely compromised by smoke from the intense naval bombardment and No 245 Squadron could not locate its gun positions at Tailleville. It found and blasted huts in a military encampment instead. 174 destroyed its two designated targets, gun positions at Reviars.

By 08.45hrs the first wave was back on the ground at its bases, except for Fg Off Gordon of No 245 Squadron who had sustained head injuries when his Typhoon was hit by flak, shattering the canopy. He made it back to Ford and was hospitalised, the only No 121 Wing casualty on this momentous day.

After the planned attacks, there was a frustrating delay for the pilots, keen as they were to be

further involved. Camp beds at the dispersals and a steady supply of sandwiches kept them going but they were not called upon until 15.27hrs, when No 175 Squadron was airborne at last. This began a rota of armed reconnaissance patrols at approximately hourly intervals. More gun positions, strongpoints, armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs), transport and a staff car all suffered as a result.

Opposition had been light, with little sign of the Luftwaffe and even the usual flak much reduced. Life would get a lot more difficult for the Typhoon pilots, starting the next day.

Each of the squadrons flew three or four operations during D-Day plus one (D+1), seeking out and attacking more transport and

AFVs. Flak was more intensive and accurate than before, and on its second operation of the day No 245 Squadron lost two of its number to that scourge. One pilot crashed in flames but the other pulled off a successful wheels-up landing and was seen running from his machine. Later in the day long-range tanks were employed to allow extended periods in the target area and incursion further behind the lines. This proved to be the downfall of another 245 pilot who experienced problems (not uncommon) with his tanks and had to land behind enemy lines in France. Both he and the pilot who survived the earlier crash-landing evaded capture successfully.

Ops on D+2 were curtailed by weather and the following day they



were cancelled entirely. After a brief return on D+4 when No 245 Squadron made two attacks on Panzer HQs, the weather closed in again on D+5.

Normal operations resumed on D+6. No 174 Squadron was particularly busy, flying four sorties during the day, three of which were in search of transport down the Cherbourg peninsula. During the last, Flt Lt L. McNeill bailed out of his Typhoon which was streaming white 'smoke' after being hit. Although he was spotted climbing into his dinghy some four miles west of Biville, night was approaching and he was never found.



Operations took on a new dimension during D+7 when, after rocketing infantry and guns in a wood near Bréville, Nos 174 and 175 Squadrons landed in Normandy at one of the newly prepared strips, B-3 at Sainte-Croix-sur-Mer. Having refuelled and rearmed, they attacked positions in another wood near Moul, south-east of Caen, before setting course for Holmsley. This style of operation continued for the next few days, sometimes using airfield B-2 at Bazenville, as well as their home base. Taking off from the latter on 15 June, No 175 Squadron lost another pilot in the sea when, just 10 miles out from the Isle of Wight, WO O. D. Leitch from the RCAF turned back and bailed out just four miles short of the coast. A Walrus arrived promptly but was unable to land because of high seas, while coastal motor boats came too late to save him. This was the last fatality suffered by the wing while it was based at Holmsley; although No 245 Squadron lost a flight commander the same day, he was later reported as a PoW.

Preparations for basing No 121 Wing in France continued. With the existing strips in huge demand there was pressure to move into new ones straight away, but they were dangerously close to the German lines. The Typhoons continued operating from B-2 and B-3 while the ground parties arrived by sea and air (in a dozen Dakotas) on 16-17 June, D+10 and 11, respectively. They occupied B-5 Le Fresne-Camilly, which was still under shellfire. There was no aerial activity on D+13 due to weather.

No 174 Squadron again flew from B-2 on D+14, and 175 from B-3 as B-5 was still being targeted by German shelling. No 245 Squadron

moved to the perilously positioned B-6, nearer the front at Coulombs. It was joined there by the whole of No 124 Wing from Hurn, meaning there were now 65 Typhoons crowded on the strip. The next day there was no flying, again because of bad weather, though an opportunist Bf 109 reconnaissance pilot flew the full length of the strip at 50ft. This prompted 245's diarist to record, "we shall be bombed or shelled soon and this will be expensive with no blast shelters for the aircraft". He was right.

The first salvoes arrived on the morning of D+16, and by 10.30hrs 150 shells had landed on the airfield. A significant number failed to explode, but even so many aircraft sustained minor damage and one was destroyed. The Typhoons were ordered back to their Hampshire airfields. Sixty of them recrossed the Channel, leaving four temporarily unserviceable and the single write-off. The Holmsley squadron found its previous dispersals occupied by a complete wing of Polish Mustangs.

The remaining No 121 Wing Typhoons in France were ordered back to the UK on D+18, thanks to mounting dust problems and shelling. The wing's groundcrews stayed at B-5 despite the onslaught. Special working parties arrived at Holmsley on D+20 to carry out emergency rectification, and there were a lot of aeroplanes to deal with. In addition to No 121 Wing's aircraft, Nos 182 and 184 Squadrons made a total of around 90 Typhoons. The Polish Mustang wing had moved out to Ford.

Thanks to the station servicing wing, 24 of No 121 Wing's Typhoons were serviceable on D+21, fitted with filters and able to return to France. The remainder soon followed. The eight aircraft that arrived in Normandy on the last day of the month were particularly welcome as their gun bays were stuffed with fresh bread.

The crisis had passed. Over the next few days the squadrons built up to full strength once more — 18 Typhoons each — and were now in a position to resume their vital support for the British and Canadian armies. This proved particularly effective in the coming weeks and made a significant contribution to victory in Normandy. Nearly 70 years later, it was no coincidence that the modern RAF's first expeditionary wing of Eurofighter Typhoons was titled No 121 Expeditionary Air Wing. 

Farming continued on and around the Normandy strips. Four RCAF pilots from No 245 Squadron study their maps amidst the harvest at B-5.

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Although not a precision weapon, RPs were used for cutting railway track, with some success as shown here. Average error as recorded at armament practice camps at this time was in the region of 30 yards.

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