

IR ACE KILLED

Flying Officer Kain In Accident

HERO OF MANY FIGHTS

Had Brought Down More Than 40 Nazi Planes

New Zealand's ace war pilot, Flying Officer Edgar James ("Cobber") Kain, D.F.C., is dead. Advice to this effect has been received from his father, Mr. R. G. Kain, of Masterton, Wellington, in a cable from the Air Ministry, which states that death was the result of an air-fight accident. The profound sympathy of the Air Council is conveyed to Mr. and Mrs. Kain and family.

News of Flying Officer Kain's death has been received with deep sorrow. He first flashed into the news in November as the result of a brilliant single-handed action in which he brought down a Dornier reconnaissance plane. Flying Officer Kain has become a figure symbolic of the courage and daring with which the successes of the Anzacs of 1914-1918 have been up arms in defence of freedom and democracy. Recently his record of bringing shot down 40 German planes ranked with the best individual achievements of the R.A.F.

Born in Hastings 22 years ago, Flying Officer Kain was educated at Croydon School, Day's Bay, Eastbourne, Wellington, and at Christ's College, Christchurch, where he was a boarder at the School House from 1933 till 1935, before leaving to be trained at Rongotai Aerodrome, Wellington, under Squadron Leader G. L. Stedman. He completed his training at Wigram Aerodrome, Christchurch, where he took his licence toward the end of 1936. He went for England shortly afterward, and on his arrival, and on December of that year, went into training at Blackburn. After three months he was posted to Uxbridge, where he qualified as a pilot officer.

On November 10 that New Zealanders first heard how a young New Zealand pilot, whom Daventry described as "tall, dark-haired with a curly nose," shot down a Dornier reconnaissance plane at a height of five miles above an R.A.F. aerodrome in France. He was subsequently identified as Flying Officer Kain.

Story of First Fight.

Describing the fight, "The Times" reported: "The young pilot took off alone and climbed steeply in the face of fire from a German gunner in the tail of an enemy machine. The New Zealander held his own fire till he was in close range, and then loosed a single shot which put out of action the enemy's port motor. The German machine, climbed again, and opened fire.

The New Zealand pilot felt the bullets humming by his head. He then attacked again at a range of 250 yards with a long burst from his guns. He closed in to 50 yards and gave the Germans full bursts.

"After nearly colliding with him, the Dornier plunged into a steep, straight dive, and the New Zealander followed at an incredible speed. A wing of the German plane struck a house and the machine crashed in the main street of a village with the engine full on. It tore a trench 10ft. deep and burst into flames. The bodies of the occupants were thrown 100 yards away."

Fragments of the Dornier machine were subsequently distributed as souvenirs. Soon after this incident French troops conferred on Flying Officer Kain, Lindbergh's nickname, "the flying fool," because his control of his machine was so perfect that he could "sweep off his comrades' caps."

Early in March Flying Officer Kain shot down a Messerschmitt, bringing his total to three. A correspondent of the "Daily Mail" wrote of him: "This amazing young man, who now has three Nazi machines to his credit, wanted to go up again on Sunday, but his commanding officer would not allow him. His mascot is a little jade image suspended from his neck, an old tiki, or Maori god."

Wounded in Leg.

Later in the same month he brought down two more Nazi planes and became the ace of the R.A.F. It was in this engagement that he had to land by parachute after his plane had been shot down in flames. He was later found to have several shrapnel bores in his leg. A correspondent of the Australian Associated Press with the R.A.F. wrote: "The ground staff 'wrote off' 'Cobber' when his blazing plane disappeared into a cloud bank, but he turned up in the mess of a tiny French village that night, his face brick-red from burning oil, his eyebrows singed, bandages on a leg and a hand, and his hair still streaked with oil."

On March 29 it was announced that His Majesty the King had awarded Flying Officer Kain the Distinguished Flying Cross for gallantry in operations against the enemy. In a letter to his parents, written on February 11 he said that there was very little doing at the time of writing. He mentioned that a few days previously B.B.C. representatives visited his post and took a recorded description of one of his flights on patrol. He afterward gave an account of two "scraps," which was also to be broadcast. "Life tends to get very boring out here with all this inactivity," wrote the airman, "but I expect when the weather improves things will begin to buck up."

In April his engagement to Miss Joyce Phillips, an actress appearing in repertory at Petersborough, was announced. It was stated that the wedding would take place, possibly in June. Flying Officer Kain's mother and sister are at present on their way to England.

Tally of Planes.

With the outbreak of major hostilities on the Western Front last month, Flying Officer Kain again figured in the news. On May 23 his "bag" was reported to be 25. On May 27 it was reported that three R.A.F. pilots had shot down nearly 100 German planes

between them in battles on the Western Front. "Cobber" Kain's bag was believed to exceed 40.

How he came to be called "Cobber" was a mystery to his relatives in Wellington, among whom he was known as "Eddie." They assume that it must have been bestowed on him by his Australian friends in the Royal Air Force, perhaps because of the alliteration and because he was a good companion to have along the highways of the sky.

The good companion has passed his duty done. New Zealanders will revere his memory.

FURTHER PERFORMANCES BY THE GUARDS COY.

For patriotic purposes and for the sake of variety and good fun, selected members of the National Guards Coy. took part in tableaux and dance numbers during the programmes of two recent Sunday night concerts at the De Luxe Theatre. Acting on instruction, Area 5, Pte. L. M. Buick-Constable who has had considerable stage experience in civilian life, arranged that the following Diggers, in co-operation with pupils of Miss Hazel Martin's Studios and members of the St. John Ambulance, were able to give a very good account of themselves: L/Cpl Pat Smith, Ptes. McKnight, Russell, Goldsmith and Ritchie.

In one advanced dressing station tableau, staged in connection with the local Sick and Wounded Fund, the boys were clothed in old uniforms that had been plentifully besmeared with orange mud, and torn to represent wounded just in from the field of battle. L/Cpl. Pat. Smith, who was supporting himself quite professionally on crutches, looked a sorry sight with a "shattered leg" beautifully bandaged by capable Red Cross sisters; Pte McKnight grinned cheerily from a "blood-stained" and tattered tunic, with his left arm in a sling; Pte. Goldsmith calmly smoked a fag whilst a nurse bandaged an arm and Pte Russell, whose face could hardly be seen, appeared to be a chronic case of "shrapnel in the head." Altogether it was a brave but grim reminder of what the men of the B.E.F. are putting up with in France.

These Sunday night concerts are always popular and it was a large and extraordinary enthusiastic audience that continually applauded the work of this small band of Home Defence boys, some of whom have been on active service since the outbreak of war.

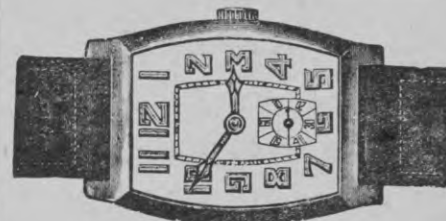
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SERVICES ENTERTAINED

More Than 1000 Men Visit A.N.A. Club

More than 1000 men from the Navy, Army, and Air Force were entertained by the A.N.A. Club in Wellington on Friday and Saturday nights. This was in spite of the sickness prevalent in Trentham Camp at present.

The club expresses appreciation of two hampers for supper received from the Upper Hutt and Masterton branches of the Women's Division of the Wellington District Farmers' Union.

Miss Dawn Mazengarb was in charge of the dancing on Friday night and Misses Valmai Richardson and Cardale on Saturday night.

New Year Carol for the Minister for Information: Ring out the old, ring in the news.

Today's Great Drink

WAITEMATA

"That's the stuff to give the troops!"