

40/93 "Italian Raiders Hurricaned!"

The incident was a raid by Italian 'BR20' bombers, escorted by Fiat CR42 (biplane) fighters on 11 November 1940. The target was believed to be the port of Harwich. The enemy formation was intercepted by 3 RAF fighter squadrons, of which No.257 Squadron had particular success. Scenes are as follows:

1. Crashed Italian BR20 bomber in woodland to the east of Woodbridge, Suffolk.
2. Italian Fiat CR42 fighter on its nose on the beach at Orfordness, Suffolk. This aircraft was repaired and flown by the RAF: it exists today at the RAF Museum at Hendon.
3. Italian POWs off-load at a railway station. A sensible guess would be that it is Liverpool Street station.
4. Three Hurricanes from 257 Squadron land at RAF Martlesham Heath (near Ipswich, Suffolk).
5. Flight Lieutenant Blatchford (a Canadian) who led 257 Squadron against the Italians; gets out of his Hurricane.
6. No.257 Squadron's Commanding Officer, Squadron Leader R.R. Stanford Tuck, in the cockpit of his Hurricane adorned with his victory tally.
7. Pilots of No.257 Squadron at RAF Martlesham Heath displaying a few trophies gathered from the downed Italian aircraft.

41/5 Spirit of the RAF (second part)

This sequence shows aircraft and men of No.257 Squadron at RAF Coltishall (No.12 Group) in Norfolk in January 1941. The squadron had arrived there only a couple of weeks earlier after spending the previous 7 months (including the Battle of Britain) in 11 Group's area of SE of England. The squadron had been 'financially adopted' by Burma and hence the name 'Burma Squadron'. The Burmese flag can be seen beneath the cockpit hood on the starboard side of the Hurricanes. Scenes are as follows:

1. Fuel bowser approaches a 257 Squadron Hurricane at RAF Coltishall.
2. A 'scramble' staged for the cameras: 257 Squadron pilots run to their aircraft at RAF Coltishall.
3. Three pilots don their parachutes: left, Flying Officer Martin (a New Zealander); centre, Squadron Leader R.R. Stanford Tuck (the squadron's Commanding Officer) and right, Pilot Officer Barnes.
4. Close-up of Flight Lieutenant Blatchford (Canadian), Squadron Leader Stanford Tuck and Flying Officer Martin. (New Zealander).
5. Pilot Officer Barnes climbs into the cockpit of his Hurricane.
6. Tuck waves from the cockpit of his Hurricane.
7. Three 257 Squadron Hurricanes take-off, S/Ldr Stanford Tuck in the lead in his aircraft marked 'DT-A'.

Geoff Rayner (Sept 1997)