

## HISTORY AS IT HAPPENS

In this section weekly, appears a day by day record of the events of history in the making. As some time elapses in the publication of "The Listener," this diary is one week retrospective.

### Thursday, March 6

Eye-witnesses described the German routes across Bulgaria as "solid miles of mechanised vehicles and material." The British note to Bulgaria stated that it was apparent that Bulgaria, far from desiring to remain neutral, was prepared actively to co-operate with Germany.

Russia's note to Bulgaria reached Bulgarians through Bulgarian Communists distributing the full text.

Turkish sources considered that the Soviet's attitude since the occupation of Bulgaria had stiffened beyond belief.

The Chungking radio stated that 70,000 Japanese troops were massed on Hainan Island, besides heavy naval units in Hainan Harbour. Japanese troops landed in Tonking bay.

A British force landed on the Lofoten Islands, Norway, destroyed the fish-oil plant, sank 11 ships totalling 18,000 tons, captured 215 prisoners and brought back a number of Norwegian patriots.

### Friday, March 7

The Greeks were reported to be entirely defiant of the German military threat and satisfied with Turkey's attitude. They emphasised that it was a time for big measures and big risks. Turkey took new defence measures.

Vichy's latest communication to the Japanese Foreign Minister accepted all the principal points of Japan's plan for settling the Thailand-Indo China dispute.

Movements of Italian Consular officials throughout the United States were to be restricted, as retaliation for Italian action against American Consular officials in Italy.

The *New York Times* reported that Germany had sent large bodies of troops, dive bombers and tanks to Libya.

In a review of Canada's war contribution, Mr. Vincent Massey said that to the end of last year British war contracts placed in Canada totalled 1,100,000,000 dollars. New plants have been built and old ones enlarged for every type of equipment. Six hundred war vehicles of all kinds were produced every day.

### Saturday and Sunday, March 8 and 9

H.M.S. *Leander* sank an Italian armed merchantman in the Indian Ocean.

Roosevelt's Lease and Lend Bill was passed by the United States Senate by 60 votes to 31 following 17 days of debate. Despite the big fight by the isolationists the main provisions of the Bill remained unchanged. The President's powers in the Bill are restricted in that there is a limit of 1,300,000,000 dollars on the value of military material to be sent, the President must consult with the Army and Navy chiefs, the powers expire on June 30, 1943, and the President must report to Congress every 90 days.

British forces swept into Abyssinia from the south-east at the rate of 100

miles a day. Five Italian merchant ships with a total tonnage of 28,153, fell into British hands at the capture of Kismayu.

The Germans carried out reprisals on the Norwegian families which assisted in the raid on the Lofoten Islands.

A heavy death roll was caused when a bomb from a German raider burst among dancers in a London restaurant.

### Monday, March 10

Official quarters in Washington reported that the Government was considering a big naval barter deal.

British troops occupied almost two-thirds of Italian East Africa, having captured 100,000 square miles in Somaliland, 29,000 square miles in Eritrea and 60,000 square miles in Abyssinia.

The British Admiralty took over responsibility for the most efficient use of labour in the ship-building industry.

### Tuesday, March 11

Yugoslav defence measures were proceeding rapidly and the Balkan crisis was thought to be reaching a climax.

A threat to order French warships to convoy food ships through the British blockade was made by Admiral Darlan.

An Italian cruiser of the Condottieri "A" class was torpedoed by a British submarine.

France and Thailand accepted and signed the Japanese mediation plan.

### Wednesday, March 12

The Yugoslav opposition to Germany was reported to have stiffened because of the American Lease and Lend Bill, the new Russian attitude, and a flood of "No surrender resolutions."

A bomb exploded in an Istanbul hotel on the arrival of the British Minister to Bulgaria.

The Japanese Foreign Minister, Mr. Matsuoka, left Tokio to visit Germany and Italy.

After rushing through final details of the Lease and Lend Bill, President Roosevelt signed the first order.

The Prime Minister, the Right Hon. P. Fraser, announced at the opening of Parliament that the New Zealand and Australian troops in England had reached the Middle East.

## 4YA MAN WINS D.F.C.

### Three New Dominion Awards

Pilot-Officer W. H. Hodgson, D.F.C., who before his enlistment was a radio operator at 4YA Dunedin, the first member of the staff of the NBS to receive this high award, and *The Listener*, as the journal of the service, is proud to publish his photograph and present the following information which has been received by Air Headquarters from the New Zealand Liaison Officer, Air Ministry.

"The following is an extract which appeared in the *London Gazette* regard-

Messerschmitt 110's and damaged a Heinkel 111. Later in August, 1940, during an engagement against 30 Dornier 215's escorted by about 100 enemy fighters, he attacked one of the Dornier 215's head on, severely damaged it, and then engaged and shot down a Messerschmitt 109. Although Pilot-Officer Hodgson's aircraft was hit and set on fire by a cannon shell, he managed to keep the fire under control until he had effected a landing some distance away. By doing so he undoubtedly avoided causing civilian casualties. This officer has exhibited bravery of a high order and a complete disregard of his own personal safety."

Pilot Officer William Henry Hodgson, 20 years of age.

Information has also reached Air Headquarters, Wellington, concerning other honours awarded to New Zealand pilots, two of which have not previously been made public.

### Squadron-Leader M. V. Blake, D.F.C.

M. V. Blake, the prominent Canterbury athlete, who won the N.Z. Pole Vault Championship in 1936 with a jump of 11 feet, and joined the Royal Air Force in 1937, has recently been awarded the D.F.C. The official citation states: This officer has displayed fine qualities of leadership and has personally destroyed five enemy aircraft. By his splendid example, he has set a high standard to his fellow pilots.

### Sergeant P. B. McLaren, D.F.M.

The official citation states: "Sergeant McLaren has completed 125 hours operational flying as air gunner. During one operation his aircraft was attacked by an enemy fighter but although harassed by its fire he succeeded in shooting it down. This is but one instance of this airman's gallantry and devotion to duty which has been a source of inspiration to other members of his squadron."



PILOT-OFFICER W. H. HODGSON, D.F.C.

ing the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross to Pilot-Officer William Henry Hodgson:

"In August, 1940, Pilot-Officer Hodgson took part with his Squadron in an engagement against more than 250 enemy aircraft, severely damaging several of them. Two days later he operated with his Squadron against 150 bombers and fighters and on this occasion destroyed

### The Bulldog Spirit

London shops are carrying on as usual, though they are called upon to make staggering readjustments at no notice. Wherever you see smashed shop doors or windows, you will see pasted up such amusing signs as — "Open As Usual," "More Open Than Usual," "Business as Usual During Alterations to Europe," "Special Bomb Bargains." One small shop that was completely wrecked, left a farewell sign, "Good-bye, But Carry On, London."

### Radio Priest Annoyed

The American radio priest, Father Coughlin, who some years ago had a following of millions when he spoke on the air, has now decided to close down his radio talks from Detroit. He was annoyed that neither Roosevelt nor Willkie wanted his help in the Presidential elections.

"I won't return to the air," Father Coughlin announced, "until the nation ceases to be war-minded."

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