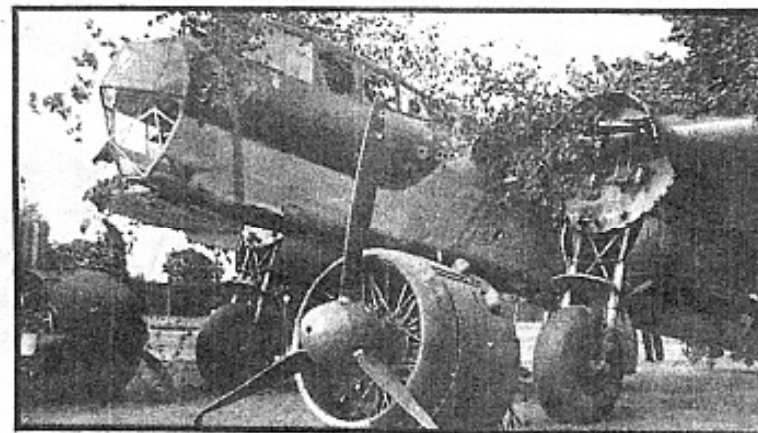


## AIRMAN LINK WITH CITY'S MOST FAMOUS LUFTWAFFE VISITOR

# 'For you the war is over'



On parade: Dornier in Eaton Park, September 1940.

**ASTONISHING** revelations about Norwich's most famous wartime Luftwaffe visitor have been made — by a former German airman!

Ex-Oberleutnant Joachim Hellmers was the observer aboard the Dornier Do-17Z that thousands of Norwich people flocked to see paraded on Eaton Park in the late summer of 1940.

His report of the aircraft's ill-fated last bombing mission over Britain was traced by local aviation historian Bob Collis, of the Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum.

In his fascinating account, Hellmers tells of the comic-opera nature of the crew's capture by a Home Guard unit that would have made the perfect model for Captain Mainwaring's Warmington-on-Sea Dad's Army force.

"They were very friendly to us," he recalled. "The man in charge who took us prisoner took everything off us, photos, money, cigarettes, etc, but failed to see the pistol that I was carrying.

"It was only when I asked him what I was going to need a pistol for in a prisoner of war camp that he said, amidst hoots of laughter from the other soldiers, that I was to hand it over to him."

The story of Hellmers' crew's last foray was revealed for the first time in Whiffler's City last November... and later a number of readers, former members of a Norwich territorial anti aircraft battery, claimed to

## Dornier man's last mission

have shot the Dornier down while they were based at RAF Duxford in August, 1940.

Attempts to trace members of the crew continued with Bob Collis finally tracking down Hellmers' own account that had been made to a fellow correspondent.

Hellmers, who was the squadron CO, was 26 at the time of the mission to raid motor factories in Coventry. He records how their aircraft was caught by AA fire that set their port engine alight and struck the tail unit.

The bombs were jettisoned into a field, but shortly after the other engine lost power and the pilot was forced to crash land.

Just how close Norwich's citizens came to missing out on a glimpse of the aerial raider is shown when Hellmers states: "We tried to set fire to our plane with the incendiary bombs supplied, but these failed; Unteroffizier Seidel... was unable to fit them in the specially built holes in the wings and they kept following him as he slid to the ground."

It's good to see that the mishaps were not restricted to our side!



Luftwaffe airman: Joachim Hellmers, a crewman aboard the Norwich Dornier.