



A photograph of pilots of 452 (Australian) Squadron which achieved a remarkable record flying Spitfires in 1941 in operations over Europe. Second from right is 'Bluey' Truscott; third from the left is the Irishman 'Paddy' Finucane, who succeeded Bob Bungey (centre) in command of the squadron. None of these three outstanding leaders survived the war.

found the RAF still in command of the skies. The Luftwaffe's losses had become insupportable. The British regarded lost pilots as more serious than lost aircraft (and most of their pilots who parachuted to safety or crash-landed were soon back in the air while Germany's trained cadre was lost irretrievably). British factories were replacing their fighters at a rate of 500 per month, against the enemy's production of 140 a month.

On 17 September 1940 British Intelligence code-breakers decoded a Wehrmacht order that invasion plans were to be discontinued.

'ENIGMA' AND THE 'ULTRA SECRET'

This Intelligence was one of the first products of Britain's success in discovering the workings and code of the Wehrmacht's Enigma machine, which was used in its thousands by enemy units. An Enigma had reached England via Polish and then French Military Intelligence. It was a sort of typewriter whose drums could be revolved to produce millions of settings; at Bletchley Park mathe-

matical geniuses produced the first of the world's 'computers' to process the data. Until the war's end Churchill was able to read many of Hitler's orders to his armed forces via 'Ultra', passing on the Intelligence gained ('Boniface') to his generals, who were informed that it came from an 'extremely reliable source'. Until war's end the Germans, whose code settings were changed daily (and just as quickly decoded by their enemy), had no idea of the British success in breaking their codes. 'No wonder we lost!' one German general exclaimed. Ultra was the war's best-kept secret and remained so until 1974, when its use was revealed.

Annex D JP
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