



# SERVICE AVIATION

"Flight" photograph.

**CONTRAPROPPED:** An experimental version of the Fairey Firefly IV fighter reconnaissance machine with contra-rotating Rotol airscrew. The standard Firefly IV is still being produced at a healthy rate.

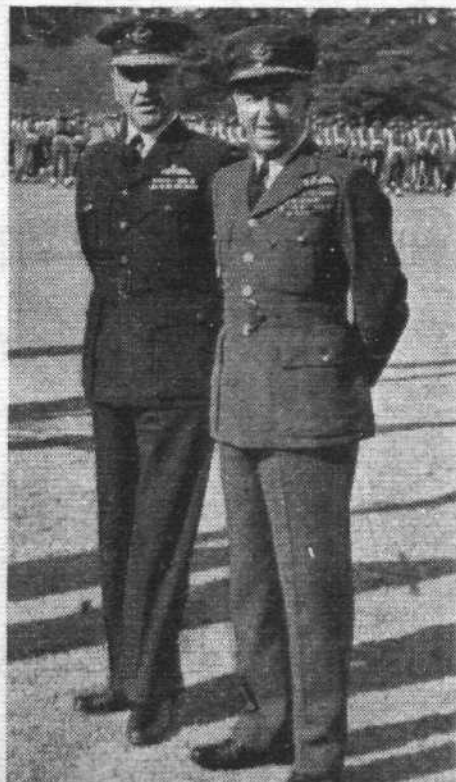
## Award

### British Empire Medal

*Corporal William John May, Royal Air Force, R.A.F. Station, West Malling.*

ON Saturday, February 1, 1947, following severe frosts, a fault developed in the foundation of the station water tower. The tower is of braced metal construction, ninety feet high, and carries two static tanks. At the time of the occurrence there were 120 tons of water in one tank, whilst the other was empty, thereby imposing an unequal strain on the tower. Due to the strain the tower began to lean until it was 3ft 9in out of plumb from the base. It was apparent that unless the water could be released from the full tank the entire structure would collapse and cause damage to surrounding buildings. It was discovered that, owing to frost, the emergency relief valve for the tank was frozen and inoperative, and a volunteer was called for to climb the tower and attempt to free the valve with a blow-lamp. Corporal May immediately offered his services, ascended the tower, and remained at the tank for 30 minutes, working on the relief cock. During this time the structure was in a dangerous state, as the tower was still gradually subsiding and cross-members were progressively shearing. Corporal May only descended at the last moment when the collapse of the tower appeared imminent but, unfortunately, he had not succeeded in freeing the relief cock. It was immediately necessary to resort to rifle fire to release the water and thereafter the tower remained stationary, although by this time the majority of the bracing structure had parted. Corporal May showed nerve, initiative and a high sense of duty in ascending the tower in an attempt to release the water and thereby prevent severe damage to other station

## Royal Air Force and Naval Aviation News and Announcements



**TOKYO PARADE:** Air Vice-Marshal C. A. Bouchier, C.B., C.B.E., D.F.C., Air Officer Commanding B.C.A.I.R. (right), with A.V-M. J. P. J. McCauley, C.B.E., Chief of Staff, B.C.O.F., at the parade in Tokyo to celebrate the Royal Wedding.

installations. He is typical of that rather rare type of junior N.C.O. who, by his conduct and the example he sets at all times, does so much, unselfishly and without thought of reward, to improve the standard of discipline and morale in the Service. The example he set on the particular occasion cited above is typical of him and linked with his conduct generally is deserving of recognition, Corporal May, by his initiative and hard work, has at all times been an example to other N.C.O.s and airmen and he has made a considerable contribution to the raising of morale within his unit.

## Australian Appointment

G/C. F. HEADLAM, lately returned from the R.A.F. Staff College, has been appointed Director of Training at Royal Australian Air Force H.Q. He joined the R.A.A.F. in 1934.

## More Squadrons for Auxiliary Regiment

NEW squadrons of the Royal Auxiliary Air Force Regiment are now forming in seven areas. They are No. 2502 (Ulster), at R.A.F. Aldergrove, Northern Ireland; No. 2504 (County of Nottingham) at R.A.F. Hucknall, Notts; No. 2602 (City of Glasgow) at R.A.F. Bishopbriggs, Glasgow; No. 2605 (County of Warwick) at R.A.F. Honiley, Warwicks.; No. 2608 (North Riding) at R.A.F. Thornaby, Middlesbrough, Yorks; No. 2612 (County of Aberdeen) at R.A.F. Dyce, Aberdeen; and No. 2616 (S. Yorks) at R.A.F. Municipal Airport, Doncaster, Yorks.

Recruiting is open to all suitable candidates wishing to undertake paid spare-time service, but ex-servicemen, especially those who served in the R.A.F. Regiment during the war, will receive priority. Apart from gunners there are

*Air Officer*