

The Sandwich Headlines

SANDWICH MUSEUM



Remembering World War 1 (1914 – 1918)

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GERMAN HEAVY BOMBER RAID ON LONDON

JUNE 1917

Up until now bombing raids have been carried out using the Zeppelins but the Germans found that these usually were frustrated by a combination of thick cloud or high winds. The result was bombs were not dropped on the intended targets.

It is reported that in March the Germans had received a new type of aircraft the Gotha G.IV being capable of carrying bombs. Later in some 23 Gothas were sent to bomb London. However due to mechanical problems many had to turn back. Cloud over London caused the remaining bombers to divert and attack Folkestone Port and nearby Army camp Shorncliffe resulting in over 100 deaths in all.

This June a further raid took place on Sheerness and then later a daylight raid on London. Bombs were dropped on a primary school in Poplar killing 18 children and elsewhere in the Capital where over 150 deaths and nearly 500 injuries occurred.

An eye witness for the RFC said that a large number of deaths and injuries was caused by people crowding into the streets to watch and not taking cover.

We must be aware that this development in bombing raids will be devastating and a new phase in aerial bombardment and tactics by the RFC will need to be developed.