



Partial Transcription of reconnaissance reports from Recon Wing Galliant. Compiled by Communications Group Kent, Signal Division, at the request of HRH King Edward VII, being a summary of reports from IMFS Andover, IMFS Aggressor, and IMFS Bellicose. Signal Division wishes to apologize for the inconsistent nature of these reports, as events unfolded more quickly than could be captured via the aethervox. All speculation is the work of Signal Division, Cyphers Branch, and must be taken with a measure of wisdom.



0636, 1st June, 1906

IMFS Bellicose, under the command of Sir Jacob Ellingray, and with the escorts Andover and Aggressor in support, was dispatched to London to investigate reports of a deluge and subsequent catastrophe. Early reports are harrowing, and unworthy of speculation. Sir Jacob has ordered all hands to stations, and all weapons primed. "We fly to the King!" he declared prior to departure. *(Ellingray may have been the wrong man for the job. His service in Africa and the Oceanic colonies, while worthy of praise, did not prepare the man for what waited in the skies over London)* *(-Admiralty redaction- It won't do to be casting dispersion over the heroes of the Empire. Especially now. Strike this and all other disparaging remarks from the final report.)*

0712, 1st June, 1906

Bellicose reports fair skies and light winds, good visibility. Winds to the east at 3 knots, barometer 17.5k and rising. Air Wing Kent inbound to London. *(Early reports that some sort of channel-bound hurricane, previously unmarked and preternaturally sudden, are not supported by these readings. Further reports from Andover, redacted here, indicate a heavy fog over London proper, terminating in the vicinity of West Kingsdown and Seven Oaks.)*

0825, et al - Bellicose

Sir Jacob has ordered Andover to the west and north, while Aggressor remains behind with Bellicose to provide support. The fog that blankets London is impenetrable at this altitude. Andover will head directly for Kensington, while Bellicose investigates the entrance to the Thames, where the worst flooding is suspected. The rest of Air Wing Kent is awaiting the arrival of the army.



## 0845 - Bellicose

Reports of flooding vastly underestimate the disaster. London is gone. The wreckage of buildings and bodies cover the surface of a vast and shimmering inland sea. *(Ellingray's time at Oxford betrays him here. His initial estimate overstated the destruction. For want of a better phrase, Sir Jacob imagined his words in the history books, and dictated them to his vox operator as such)* We await reports from Andover as to the well-being of the King.

## 0915 - Bellicose

The King lives! Long live the King! Andover established visual communication via signal flag with Buckingham Palace shortly after 0900. HRH has refused extraction, and the docking moors have suffered some sort of damage. Andover's report on the matter is folly, as Captain Hourst insists the moors have become the habitat of giant wasps. *(Again, Sir Jacob underimagines what he sees, and overimagines his capability of addressing it.)*

## 0930 - Bellicose

Previous reports verified. Andover has engaged a swarm of hostiles with light rifle and shot from the portside batteries. Marines have been ordered to the deck. She is preparing to be boarded.

*(There is a significant gap in reporting for the next fifty minutes. What follows is a compilation of speculative reports based on after action debriefings, ship's logs, and an account from witnesses on the ground. Regular reports pick up at 1022, when Sir Jacob re-establishes control of Bellicose's command deck)*

## 0935 - Details unclear

Andover is swarmed and set adrift. Its progress takes it over Buckingham, where witnesses describe a desperate battle on the decks and upper causeways of the anti-ballast. The swarm lifted suddenly from Andover and flew east toward Bellicose.

## 0957

A single garbled message dispatched from Bellicose, warning of hostiles inbound and requesting aid from Aggressor. Aggressor's commander orders the cutter to come about and open fire. A brief and violent struggle follows, during which Bellicose is overwhelmed. Aggressor prepares to accept survivors.

## 1009

As quickly as the swarm attacked, it withdraws. The enemy seems to follow no rhyme or reason in their tactics. Ellingray was forced into the ward room with his officers, and only regains the deck after his Bo'sun and the ship's royal marines secure the quarters. His report, which follows, downplays the severity of the loss.



## 1022 - Bellicose

IMFS Bellicose reports all hands secured, and the attack repelled. Heavy casualties. Contact with Andover re-established. All escorts ordered to rally to Bellicose in preparation for withdraw. (*Admiralty countermands Ellingray's instructions, ordering him deeper into London. The army is preparing for an assault, and need information about the enemy's composition and strength. Out of respect for Sir Jacob's standing in the peerage, we have redacted the precise exchange between Bellicose and Air Station Kent.*)

## 1045 - Bellicose

Andover and Aggressor have formed up on Bellicose and are prepared to drive deeper into the skies over London. A brief flag exchange between the two wounded ships indicate the fighting has cost them both dearly. Andover especially is operating on a skeleton crew. Reinforcements from Aggressor shore up her defenses. The trio proceed toward the only landmark they can find; the dome of St. Paul's, miraculously still intact, and towering over the wreckage of a drowned London.

### III2

IMFS Aggressor takes the lead as Bellicose and Andover limp along behind. The bulk of the Royal Air Force Southern Command has taken up position on the outskirts of London, awaiting the Air Wing's final report, and Admiralty's permission to proceed. A transcript of vox communications between Aggressor and Bellicose, overheard by Air Station Kent, follows.

AGGRESSOR: We have St. Paul's in sight. Command wishes to know how we are to proceed.

BELlicosE: Carefully, Aggressor. Keep your eyes up. What is the condition of the cathedral and surrounds?

AGGRESSOR: The cathedral is intact. Ludgate hill is dry and crowded. Forward observer post reports masses of civilians at the doors of the cathedral. Attempting to signal them now.

BELlicosE: Thank God! As long as St. Paul's stands, there is still a London! (*Again, Ellingray is doubtlessly aware his words are being overheard*) Prepare to stand to and accept—

AGGRESSOR: Sorry to interrupt, Bellicose. There's something wrong with the crowd. They seem unresponsive. They're just standing, staring up at the dome, with their hands to the sky. Shellshocked, perhaps. Away teams are preparing—



Transmission is cut short by violent static. Radio operators at Kent Station and Oxford suffered damaged equipment from the electromagnetic backlash. Backup stations followed the rest of the conversation when it resumed mid-report.

AGGRESSOR: —blinding. Some kind of weapon. Anti-ballast compromised. Repair crews dispatched. Bellicose, are you reading?

BELlicose: Bellicose here. We have eyes on the target. Some kind of light erupted from the dome. Did it strike you?

AGGRESSOR: Unclear. We have—*brief radio silence (Cyber Station Kent insists we include the fact that the aethervox operator transcribing this exchange swears on her life that she could hear whispering voices during this interruption.)*—fifteen, possibly more. Fires along the anti-ballast. Captain has ordered emergency maneuvers and full power, but the engine room is not responding. We are making due with manual control.

BELlicose: Aggressor, there are figures along your topkeel. They look like... like they're on fire. *(By this point, Ellingray has abandoned the vox and secured his place in history. Witnesses and survivors report the Lord Commander was already on his way to the life vessels, marines in tow)* And the crowds around St. Paul's... my God, they're burning! They're—

(long silence)

AGGRESSOR: Bellicose, are you transmitting? Several portals have opened up along our maindeck. Pitched fighting in the engine room. Fires along the gundeck, and the crews are reporting damage to the anti-ballast is critical. Deploying—

ANDOVER: Aggressor, this is Andover. We have sighted bright lights inside the hull of Bellicose. She's either on fire or... or... God, I don't know what. But nothing burns that color! Suggest you abandon course and return to Kent.

BELlicose: —have it in our hands. It's in our hands! God, the veins are turning to light! My hands!

AGGRESSOR: Bellicose, repeat prior transmission! We have away teams prepared to offer assistance. Is your deck secure?

ANDOVER: Aggressor, strongly suggest turning back. Turn back, I say! Bellicose is lost!



AGGRESSOR: There's something outside... outside the door. I can see...

ANDOVER: Aggressor, what is—

AGGRESSOR: Shut up and listen. This is it for me. I just want you to listen... It's a doorway made of fire. There are shadows inside of it... no... coming out of it. They're here. They're—

Witnesses on the ground report seeing Bellicose wheel sharply, clipping Andover before plunging into the waters around St. Paul's. There was no further communication from Aggressor. She drifted south, eventually settling among the fields of Dover, her decks empty and crew missing. They were never recovered, and their fate remains a mystery. As for IMFS Andover, the first zeppelin to tangle with the London threat was the only to survive the fight. When Bellicose fell, Andover turned and made for home, her captain deliriously spouting about burning figures and the murmuring deep.

While this report offers little insight into what happened in the skies above London that day, it is the hope of Admiralty that it will reflect well on the men and women who gave their lives in service to the Empire, and lift the spirits of its fighting forces in the days to come. Long live the King.



*Last known photo  
of Aggressor*

