

appeared, I am practically certain that they felt sure of being opposed by nothing worse than gunfire.

#### "WIPE OFF THE MAP."

"We received warning, of course, when the raiding planes were still over the sea, but, unless some of the machines at once sent up from the coastal stations could stop them, there was nothing for us to do but to give them the warmest reception we could with the anti-aircraft guns, which were fairly strong. Our gunners were well trained, and if your planes had kept high, as they would have done if they had been expecting a strong attack by a superior force of protecting machines, they would most probably have been prevented from doing much harm, instead of just about wiping the station off the map, as they did.

"When we had the warning, most of those without special duties went to the abri, which had been provided at all stations for use in case of raids. But I was so concerned over the danger to my own ship that I remained outside. It was quite light by the time they appeared. At first they were flying high, but while they were still small specks I saw them begin to plane down, as though following a pre-arranged plan.

"It was all over in a minute or two after that. Part of them headed for one shed and part for the other. Diving with their engines all out—or so it seemed—they came over with the combined speed from their drop and the pull of their propellers. Down they came, till they seemed to be going to ram the sheds. Then, one after another, they flattened out and passed lengthwise over their targets at a height of about 40 metres, kicking loose bombs as they went.

#### NERVE!

"Our guns simply had no chance at all with them. In fact, one of the guns came pretty near to getting knocked out itself. It was so reckless a piece of work that I couldn't help noticing it, even while my own airship was beginning to burst into flames.

"One of the pilots, it seems, must have found that he had a bomb or two left at about the same time he spotted the position of one of the guns that was firing at him. Banking steeply, round he came, dived straight at the battery, letting go a bomb as his sights came on when he was no more than 15 metres above it.

"Then he waved his hand and dashed off after the other machines, which were already scattering to avoid the German planes beginning to converge on them from all directions. It was one of the finest examples of nerve I ever saw.

"The precaution we had taken of opening the doors of the main shed saved it from total destruction for the airships, instead of exploding, only burned comparatively slowly; but Tondern, as an air station, had practically ceased to exist from that moment."