



Victory Parade, Tunisia, May 23rd, 1943

Daimler
goes to war

On the 20th September 1944 a troop of armoured cars commanded by Capt Able Smith of the 2nd Household Cavalry approached the River west of Nijmegen.

The look out car was surprised too see a tug boat towing three large barges approaching at a steady four knots. The tug was flaunting a Nazi Swastika Flag at the masthead and sailing upstream towards Nijmegen – presumably out of touch with the latest situation.

Rapid messages passed over the wireless.

Dutch or German it must not be allowed to progress further and endanger the vital bridge.

The northern bank was still entirely in enemy hands and apart from the regiments armoured cars patrols, there were yet no British troops west of Nijmegen on the south bank.

In view of the importance of the convoy Lieutenant Palmer decide to persuade the Nazi tug master to heave to and come quietly assure. Moreover it was felt that the barges might be usefully employed latter on by forming part of a ferry service than they would at the bottom of the Waal River.

Corporal of Horse Kendrick placed himself with two armoured cars looking over as much of the river as possible. If the enemy refused to stop, then the barges were to be sunk.

Peremptorily the man at the wheel was hailed but either did not hear or was forced at pistol point to ignore all orders to halt, and so both the two pounder guns opened fire aiming at the waterline. While the BESAs sprayed the decks.

It was a one sided and unorthodox affair from the start. The armour piercing shots tore through the sides of the tug and fearful clanking noises came from within.

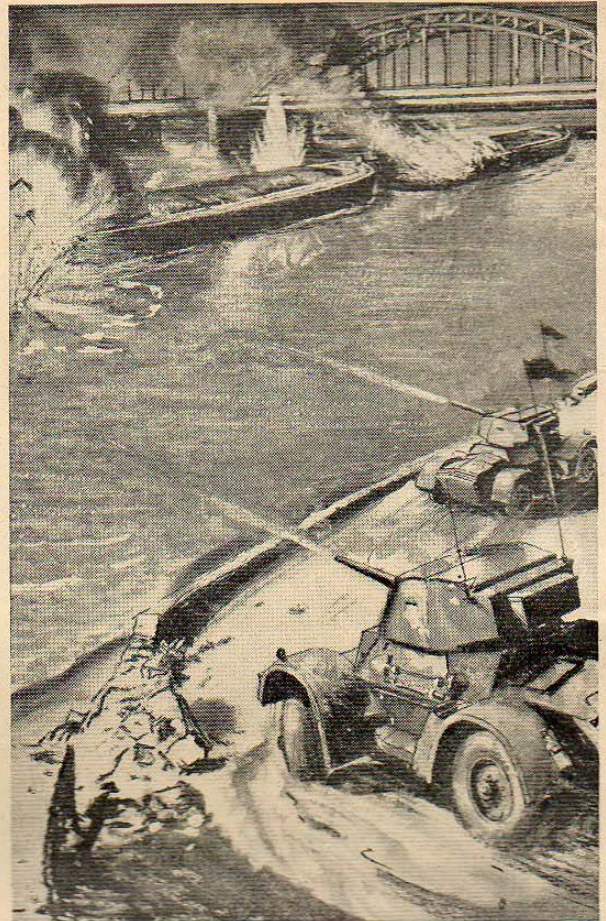
Steam began to hiss from the deck and with a despairing wail on its siren the wretched vessel attempted to turn its screw thrashing wildly.

The barges with full way on were unable to conform and soon became entangled with there hawsers. In short time to a chorus of cheers from the Dutch audience the tug sank, while the barges riddled with holes settled into the mud

Over the wireless the troops Captain AJR Collins reported 'am engaging' followed by an equally terse report of the termination of the engagement and had all the traditional brevity of a the Navy.

Major FFG Hennessy, headquarters Guards Armoured Division entered into the spirit of the occasion replying 'congratulations on a brilliant naval engagement – splice the main brace'.

This signal gained a certain amount of notoriety at the time.



'NAVAL ENGAGEMENT'

'Congratulations. Brilliant naval action. Splice the main brace.' Such was the message flashed by Divisional Headquarters to a squadron of the Brigade of Guards after an armoured car patrol of the Household Cavalry had sunk at Nijmegen Bridge three of a string of four enemy barges. (*vide The Times, October 9th, 1944.*)

It has been confirmed that the armoured cars were DAIMLER.

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Details obtained from The book Household cavalry at War by ORDE

IN THE FIRST DUTCH VILLAGE!



British official photograph

Daimler Armoured Cars of the British Second Army enter Valkenswaard, the first Dutch village to be liberated.

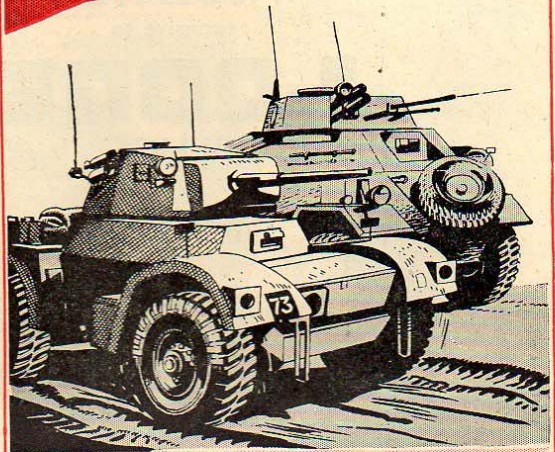
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March 25, 1941

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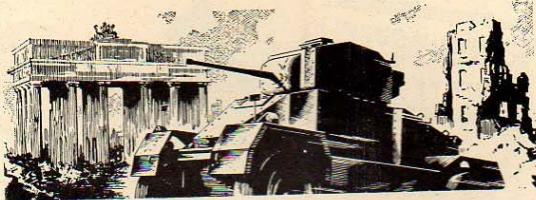
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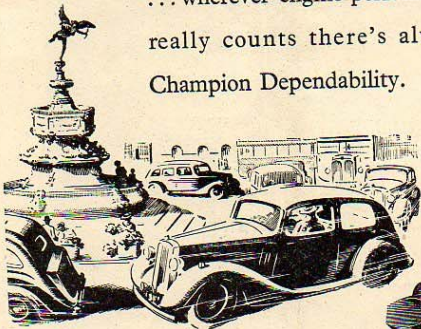
DAIMLER AG, KARLSRUHE, GERMANY



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