

Radar – A War Winning Invention (From a newspaper article printed in August, 1945)

On August 15th 1945 a ten year secret was lifted with the disclosure in the British press of the story of Britain's war winning weapon, radar.

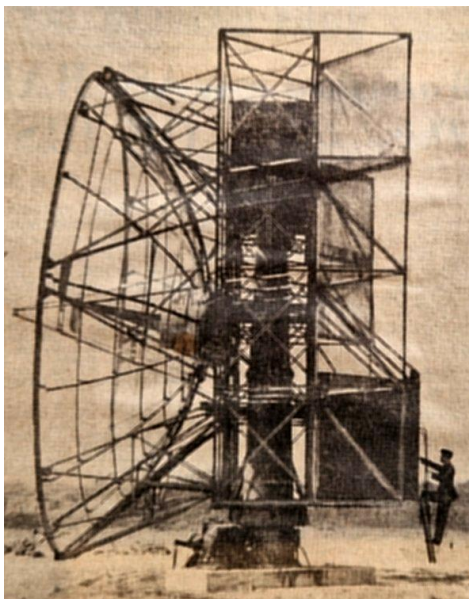
"It is the invention which, as Sir Stafford-Cripps, President of the Board of Trade and former Chairman of the Radio Board, said yesterday, contributed more than any other scientific factor to the victory over Germany. 'It has played a greater part in the war than the atom bomb,' he said, 'and holds far more immediate potentialities of service to the human race than the splitting of the atom.'"

"Radar was entirely a British achievement, it provided, by means of a radio 'echo' a precise method of detecting and identifying objects up to 400 miles away. It has been adapted to many different purposes, and has changed methods of war on land, at sea and in the air. New uses for it are still being found. Radar was produced by a secret mobilisation of brain-power unique in history, and was perfected just in time. Britain, it is now revealed, installed on her coasts in 1935 the first radar stations in the world and by the time the war began had a complete chain of radar 'sentinels' watching her coasts."

"It gave the British fleet the overwhelming victory of Matapan, and helped in the destruction of the Scharnhorst and Bismarck. Radar enabled Malta to hold out against overwhelming odds; it helped to cut Rommel's life-line and so assured victory in North Africa, and made all the difference between success and disaster to the convoys which took vital supplies to Russia."

"Radar made air power the terrible force it became in the bombing of Germany, for without it, the 1,000 bomber raids would not have been possible. At sea, radar made ordinary navigation almost obsolescent and revolutionised naval gunnery."

"Mr. Churchill's support of the development of this great weapon, in which Britain constantly kept ahead of the Germans, was generously acknowledged yesterday by Mr. E. J. Williams, Minister of Information. 'One of the most spectacular qualities of Mr. Churchill – the greatest war leader of our time – was the selection of men who could work harmoniously together. It was unique, and when we stand back and look at the war in its proper perspective, we shall see just how great Mr. Winston Churchill was.'"

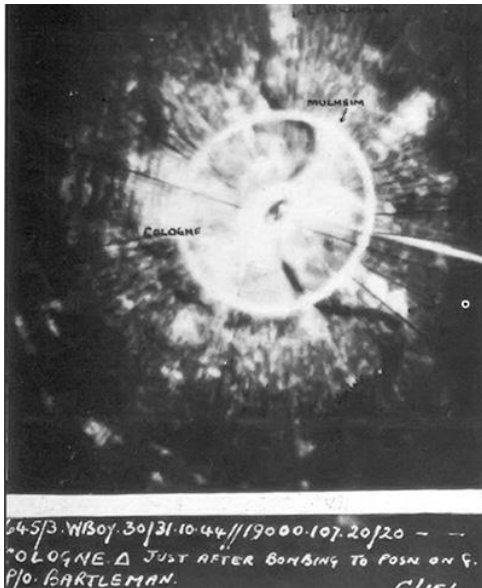


"Sir Robert Watson-Watt, who was one of the pioneers of radar, said the Germans had radar, but lagged behind this country throughout the war."

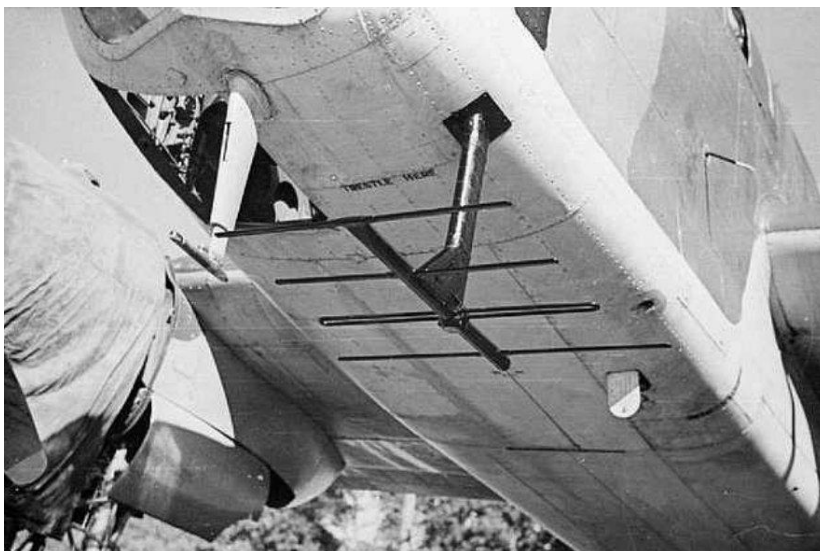
"The picture on the left is a fighter direction aerial system with a cabin mounted on the aerial structure to house both transmitter and receiver."



Left, A view of a 'Chain Home' Low Station, used to detect and report low-flying aircraft. [This type of radar mast helped to secure Britain's victory in the Battle of Britain]. Below, WAAF radar operator Denise Miley, plotting aircraft on a receiver at Bawdsey Chain Home station.



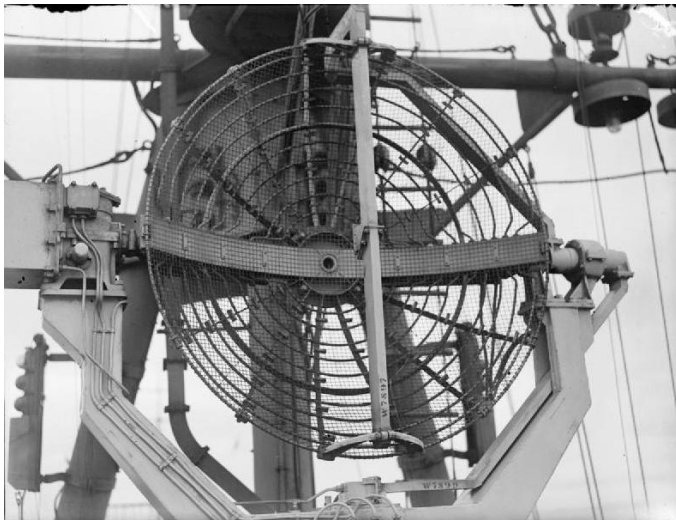
An H2S radar screen on an R.A.F. bomber used for navigation during an attack on Cologne.



Air to surface vessel (ASV), radar transmitter antenna on a Bristol Beaufort. This was used to detect enemy shipping.



Naval Gunnery Radar. Used for targeting enemy ships.



Surface search and aircraft early warning radar on a Royal Navy ship.