

Eye Witness Vim Jansen

First air fight 1939

England and Germany are at war with each other. In Holland we are neutral, although our army is mobilised. All through the country, defence works have been erected in case of military attack, but in the First World War, we stayed neutral and this should also be the case this time.

On the second Easter day, 14th April 1940, I was with my brothers and sisters in our family home, playing games.

Father was in the living room doing accounts.

Suddenly, he ran out of the room outside and shouted 'there is shooting'

We ran after him and we heard machine guns and saw an airplane with a couple of smaller airplanes shooting at the first airplane. The airplane started smoking

and disappeared behind a cloud. After the cloud, the airplane came towards us smoking even more. Not for long though, because in a black smoke plume, the plane dove straight down and crashed.

The small airplanes flew away.

The aircraft crashed in Babberich, on Dutch territory, a few hundred meters from the German Border.

The crew consisted of three Englishmen who all died.

The aircraft was a light bomber, Blenheim type.

The aircraft was undertaking photo reconnaissance flight and was stationed at an RAF base in France.

On the 10th May, war did come and we saw many air fights and crashes.

Vim Jansen, September 2018

