

The battle of britain: canadas contribution



The Battle of Britain took place from June 1940 to October 1940. The Germans needed to take control of the English Channel to launch their invasion on Britain. To control the channel, the Germans needed to control the air. They fought against the Royal Air Force (here by RAF) and Royal Canadian Air Force (here by RCAF), which was made up of over one hundred Canadian fighters (The Battle of Britain). Canadians played a major role in the Battle of Britain.

The Canadian contribution went by ignored when in fact Canadian bravery was a contribution on its own; they also helped on the grounds, and fought in the air which ultimately helped win the Battle of Britain. Firstly, Canadians were known to be stubborn by many because of their willingness to push forward. In the war they showed their effort and bravery by always taking on tasks and never backing down. “ The 303 Squadron and 1 Squadron RCAF attacked the first wave of enemy bombers head on” (Canada and the Second World War 1939-1945).

If Canadians had not gone and attacked the first wave of bombers, the Germans could have had a great advantage in the fight and would have taken over a lot more territory. Our bravery proved to be beneficial to the fight. If we hadn't fought then the outcome could have been a lot more tragic. Secondly, Canadian bravery was shown through the Canadian ground crews. “ Ground crews who serviced No. 1 (Canadian) Squadron's Hurricanes, [were] sometimes under fire and routinely under pressure” (The Battle of Britain - Canadian Contribution). Without the ground crews and their courage none of the planes would have been able to go in the air.

Canadians would not have been able to help fight this battle. Finally, Canadians were in the battle from beginning to end. "Canadians also shared in repulsing the Luftwaffe's last major daylight attack. On September 27, 303 Squadron RAF and 1 Squadron RCAF attacked the first wave of enemy bombers." (Battle of Britain - Bulletin Insert). If they had not fought, the battle would have worsened and the German Bombers would bomb more of England, but RCAF's effort was tremendous, "Seven, possibly eight enemy planes were destroyed, and another seven damaged" (Battle of Britain - Bulletin Insert).

This was an accomplishment to many because they destroyed several planes. Therefore, the RCAF's bravery and effort allowed them to push through and help play a major role in this fight. Without the Canadians many of the battles couldn't have been won. Also, Canadians helped in the Battle of Britain on the ground which was another significant contribution that went by unnoticed. One specific group, known as the McNaughton Flying Circus, helped out on the grounds. "The 1st Canadian Division conducted a series of marches and countermarches across the length of southern England.

The goal of the operation was to mislead German aerial reconnaissance" (Canadian Division in Britain-"McNaughton's Flying Circus": July 1940). This played a big role in the Battle of Britain because if they had not done so, the Germans would have attacked faster, not allowing Britain to have the chance to create plans in order to defeat the Germans. This would possibly result into Germans to gaining even more control of the land. Secondly, many different Canadians helped out in this Battle including Lord Beaverbrook. He was a Canadian business owner who helped in the fight.

Beaverbrook produced fighter planes offshore in Canada and was appointed to make fighter planes for the RCAF. " In the month before Beaverbrook's appointment, 256 fighters were produced. In the critical month of September, as RAF losses reached their height, Beaverbrook's system produced 465 fighters" (The Battle of Britain - Canadian Contribution). This great Canadian helped greatly in the couple months of the battle. The RAF and RCAF planes were at a shortage and without Beaverbrook's great contribution many Canadian and British fighter pilots would not have had the amount of planes that they needed.

If there were a shortage of planes the RAF and RCAF could not have won the battle. Lastly, ground crews were courageous and a great help to the RCAF and RAF. Also, ground crew helped Canadian planes restock with fuel, and they maintained the aircrafts on a daily basis, usually working long hours. " Without them, the aircraft, the Spitfires and the Hurricanes, could not have taken off and certainly could not have survived the Battle" (The Ground Staff). Without the ground crews the battle could not have been won.

This is because for an air battle to occur they needed fully operational planes; if the planes were in bad shape then they could not fly well. The ground crews always fixed the planes on time and checked their engines on a regular basis. The fighter pilots did not need to worry about the condition of their planes because they knew it was always ready to be flown. To sum up, the Canadian help on the ground was an important factor in the Battle of Britain. Without them, things could not function and that would have meant that the Germans would win.

Another way Canadians assisted in the Battle of Britain was while fighting against German enemy planes in the air. Not all Canadians fought in the Royal Canadian Air Force “ another 200 Canadian airmen fought in the RAF Bomber and Coastal commandos, which throughout the battle pounded at German invasion ports and other targets” (The Battle of Britain - The Canadians). These fighters were key to the success of the Battle of Britain because as the RCAF fought, and distracted the Germans, others could take down any potential threats or targets. Secondly, Canadians were very skilled at what they did especially one commander named Earnest McNab.

He made strategic plans to defeat the Germans and his plans worked “ after 15 minutes there was hardly a plane in the sky, Germans had run for home” (The Battle of Britain). With strong Canadian leaders, like McNab, the Battle of Britain had made a turn for the better and the odds started coming in the British’s favour. Without him the Battle could not have been won because he was the one that had the ability to make strategic and well thought out plans that would help win the battles. Finally, Canadian squadrons helped out a lot in the Battle of Britain.

The 242, mainly Canadian, squadron went face-to-face with numerous amounts of German planes, single handedly, as the British were regrouping (World War 2 Fighter Ace). The 242 squadron did not see this as a numbers disadvantage, but instead over came that negativity and destroyed many planes. If they had not gone up against these German planes then the Germans may have attacked the British without them noticing and that could have meant that the Battle of Britain would have been won by the Germans.

For these reasons, Canadians helping in the air were a tremendous accomplishment that helped the Battle of Britain become a success.

Therefore, by being courageous, helping on the ground and fighting in the air made Canada the major contributor in the Battle of Britain and Canadians ultimately won the Battle of Britain. Canadians were not afraid of taking risks to get a task done, they were even on foot and across seas and still helped in, a primarily, air battle, and finally they used their brains and bravery in the air to win the Battle of Britain. Canada could not have done anything else to improve on this historic fight. Some may argue that Canada was not the greatest country in World War 2, but many agree that they were the best in the Battle of Britain.