

## BILL THE GUNNER

The soldier fought hostilities with bayonet and the gun,  
To take a life was always thus since modern wars begun,  
The airman dropped his bombs, knew not the number killed,  
Sent aloft in aeroplanes where `ere his bosses willed.

The sailor fired from battleships, sending men to doom,  
Or delivered death by depth charge with underwater boom,  
All the fighting services were trained in what they do,  
Stood for King and country and all that's right and true.

Alas the Merchant Seaman aboard his sitting duck,  
Steamed about defenceless unless he had the luck...  
To have an anti-aircraft gun mounted on the deck,  
Perchance to hole a bomber `afore it made a wreck.

Officials issued Orelikans, a Vickers or a Bren,  
Usually pretty ancient, unfamiliar to our men,  
They were taught the `hose-pipe` method - in a sort of  
sermon,  
And it wasn't very easy to shoot a flying German.

But I knew a certain Captain - the Skipper of a trawler,  
Patrolling down the East coast, he shot `em down to order,  
As his score just mounted, the Navy mused how high,  
For when the foe approached him, he shot `em out the sky.

He was pressed to give a lecture before the convoy started  
off,  
To a bunch of gunner ratings and a Royal Navy toff,  
The Skipper wasn't quite prepared as he rolled in through the  
door,  
So said he'd answer questions from that lot on the floor.

It was the ribboned Admiral who spoke and said like this;  
"Skipper, pray please tell us, of how you rarely miss,"  
'Tis easy said the Master, we don't fret at all,  
I send to get my Mate out - he's a man whot likes a brawl.

"There's another coming Bill," I sez, "go shoot the bugger  
down,"  
So he ups and mans `is orelikan with conceytrated frown....  
`Cus he tends to wait a bit `till he sees the pilot guys,  
Then `e sprays `em in the cockpit - an` right between the  
eyes.

That's the one that gets `em , `an puts `em off their stroke,  
They nose dive to the water in a cloud of spray and smoke,  
I winks at Bill and throws the chalk - so `e can keep a tally,  
And mark the ones we've blown up, `an sunk there in Bomb  
Ally.

Joe Earl