



War Diary

16.12.1940
Monday

SITUATION REPORT

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Home Commands

F.O.I.C. Humber considers that the Acoustic Mining situation in the Humber Approach Channels renders it inadvisable for Destroyers to proceed in and out for working up practices if other facilities are available.

Operation P.V.I. to locate and destroy E-Boats minelaying in the swept channel off Harwich was carried out between 2030 and 2230 tonight to practice the Aircraft concerned and the intercommunication required.

Submarines at Lorient and Bordeaux were attacked last night by our Aircraft, and a Patrol from Dyce to Flamborough and return was flown during the forenoon.

Plymouth was attacked during last night by aircraft which dropped 4 H.E. Bombs in the sound and a few incendiaries in the Town; and at 1150 today H.M. Drifter UBERITY had a machine-gun action with one enemy aircraft off Lowestoft in which 4 men were wounded, 2 dangerously, and the aircraft reported herself damaged.

There is evidence that enemy traffic along the Norwegian Coast is increasing in importance, and it is proposed to lay a Minefield to impede it between Egersund and Point Jaederens. Aircraft minelaying continues; and during a routine sweep at Dover today one Mine was found and 4 explosive cutters.

The French Destroyer BRANLEBAS left Dartmouth as escort to a west-bound Convoy 1800/13 with orders to return to Dartmouth by 1000/15. She has not since been heard of and must now be presumed lost, probably by heavy weather.



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SITUATION REPORT

Operations Against Vichy French

OREGON has been ordered to call at Gibraltar to repatriate 88 French merchant seamen and officers anxious to return to unoccupied France. The French Admiralty has approved on condition that she transports no merchandise.

Consul, Las Palmas, reports that the French CAPITAINE SAINT MARTIN arrived there on Monday from Casablanca.

North Atlantic

Azores Patrol

BERWICK has been ordered to leave Gibraltar tomorrow to patrol off the Azores.

After CIRCASSIA leaves patrol in Area G.3. tomorrow, Admiralty have notified F.O.C.N.P. that it will be unnecessary to maintain an A.M.C. on patrol in the vicinity of the Azores, and A.M.C.'s returning to Western Patrol can therefore be employed in the more direct trade routes.

ASPHODEL and CALENDULA (corvettes) on passage from Londonderry to Freetown, left Ponta Delgada this afternoon. C.O., ASPHODEL considers it impracticable to oil a destroyer off the Azores in winter months.

RESOLUTION and VINDICTIVE, with destroyer escort, arrived at Gibraltar this morning from Freetown.

A report having been received from Consul Malaga, that silver was to be transhipped last night from a pilot boat to an Italian warship off that port VELOX (destroyer) and aircraft were sent to investigate. VELOX returned with nothing to report, but the London flying boat saw a large swirl beside the pilot boat which might have been a submarine.



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North Atlantic-Contd.

Tangier

Spanish infantry, estimated at between 3,000 and 4,000 are arriving at Tangier to replace Moorish troops transferred to Larache and Melusa.

Bordeaux-
Lisbon Convoy

Consul-General, Lisbon, learns that the Germans are organising in Bordeaux a large convoy to be escorted to Lisbon within territorial waters.

South Atlantic

Neutrality
Zone


Until further orders no merchant ship is to be stopped within the American neutrality zone without definite instructions. This includes all French Ships.

NATIA

A boat has been found of the British NATIA, which made a raider report on 22/10 from latitude just north of the Equator on her way to Buenos Aires.

Transport of
Aircraft

FURIOUS has been informed by D.N.A.D. that 27 of the Hurricane aircraft transported on her last trip were in action by December 12. She landed 33 Hurricanes at Takoradi on November 29.

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Dodecanese.

C.in C. Medit. and C.in C. Mid East have sent a joint appreciation on this subject.

Fleet.

The Fleet (1st Division 1st B.S., ILLUSTRIOUS, 3 Cruiser Squadron and destroyers) has left Alexandria to assist the Greek operations.

Bardia.

During the night of 16-16 Dec., 36 bombers carried out an attack on Bardia, in order to force the enemy to evacuate the town. Hits were made on barracks and stores, starting large fires.

SollumSollum and Fort Capuzzo have *been occupied.*Italian U-boat.The Italian submarine sunk by ^{*}destroyers on 14/1850 in 32°03'N. 25°36'E., about 30 miles N. of Sidi Barrani was the *NAIADE* [redacted]. Five officers, 10 petty officers and 32 men were taken prisoner.

* HYPERION & HEReward. See p. 456.

East Indies.Troop Convoy.

Convoy W.S.4 B (10 transports) escorted by DEVONSHIRE and SHROPSHIRE left Durban for Suez this morning.

Distress Signal.

A "Q" distress signal was intercepted this afternoon by s.s. SHILLONG, then S.E. of Maldive Islands, but was broken off incomplete without position or name of transmitting ship. C.in C., East Indies, ordered HOBART and CAPETOWN to the vicinity, and RANCHI, which arrives Mahe, Seychelles, to refuel within the next 12 hours, to proceed afterwards eastward along the trade route. WESTRALIA is to R.V. with oiler APPLELEAF early on 18/12 to escort her to the Maldive Islands.

China.Air Mission.

Air Ministry is unable to agree to the despatch of an air mission to the Chinese Government, having neither personnel nor aircraft to spare.

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America and West Indies.

"Town" Destroyers.

The ex-American destroyers RIPLEY and ROXBOROUGH left St. John's N.F. this afternoon for U.K.
ROYAL SOVEREIGN left Halifax today to cover H.X. and S.C. convoys.

American Neutral Zone.

C.in C., America and West Indies, has ordered that until further notice no neutral ship is to be stopped within American neutral zone waters as defined by the Declaration of Panama, 1939, except upon express orders from the Admiralty or himself. This includes French ships. C.O's are not to be influenced by the zone limits when investigating ships flying neutral colours suspected of being disguised enemy ships.

Australia.

Minesweepers
For Med'n.

Australia Commonwealth Naval Board has agreed to the Admiralty suggestion to release certain of the new BATHURST class minesweepers for service in the Mediterranean.

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SITUATION REPORT.

U-Boat Campaign.

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Duel in
S. Atlantic.

S.S. NEWTON PINE reported this evening that when in the vicinity of Freetown on 13/12 she was attacked by torpedo, which was avoided, and then had a gunnery duel with the U-boat for half an hour. She had no casualties or damage and estimates that the submarine was damaged.



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HOME COMMANDS.

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Policy.

Air Decoys.

It has been agreed that where several interests are concerned in Decoy arrangements the primarily interested party should co-ordinate the method of control of the Decoy. Request you prepare scheme of control for Petroleum Board Decoy at Polmont, and consider requirements for control of Decoys at Letham Moss for Grangemouth, Abercorn for Port Edgar, and Loch Feny for Rosyth. (D of L.D. 1114/16 to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Exercise Area
for Portuguese
S/M's.

A.M.373. A. Para. 2b. Following area has been agreed. (A.C.N.S. F. 1126/16:A.M.611A.)

9th M/L.
Flotilla.

Minth M.L. Flotilla consisting of M.Ls. 169, 170, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176 and 178 is to assemble and remain based in Clyde area at Troon. M.L. 169 is to join flotilla on arrival of M.L. 133 at St. Christopher. One division of this flotilla is to be made available for special A/S trials as required by NIMROD. Base maintenance crew 'I' from Portsmouth is to proceed to Troon when trained. Base flotilla stores are to be sent accordingly. Accounts of this Flotilla to be carried in FORTITUDE. (D.T.S.D.1336/16.) for D.T.S.D.

Staff at
Seydisfjord.

Your 1732/13. As only Icelandic fishing vessels are affected and the amount of store ships using Seydisfjord appears to be small, it is requested you will give further details as to why a N.C.S. Staff is required. In any case the acute shortage of personnel will not permit of a staff of four Officers being appointed to Seydisfjord. (A.C.N.S.T. 2159/16 to F.O.I.C. Iceland.)



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Defence of U.K.

Isle of Man.

Your 1007/13. No Naval operational orders in force in Isle of Man except anti invasion arrangements to demolish portion of Queens Pier Ramsey and to immobilise all cranes in Douglas Harbour. No A/P patrols based on the island. (N.O.I.C. Isle of Man 1100/16 to Adty.)

"Deluge".
DELUGE.

At 1130/16. (D.C.1154/16) At 2330/16. D.C. 2350/16.)

Movements.

AMAZON.

Your 2130/15 and my 1556/15. Sailed for Escort as in F.O.C.N.P. 1302/14. (N.T. M.V. 2)
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0045/16.)

RAMILLIES.

Cannot make it. E.T.A. 1030/17. Intend pass through following positions.
(RAMILLIES 0315/16 to C. in C.W.A.)

See next page

RODNEY.

Screened by 3 Destroyers to sail for Rosyth at 2200/16. (C. in C. HF.0927/16) My 0927/16. For 2200 read 2359. Speed to be adjusted to pass Oxcars Gate at 1400/17. (C. in C. H.F. 1153/16 to RODNEY).

ARGUS.

Owing to severe weather have been unable to complete disembarkation of damaged aircraft and other return stores or to embark provisions urgently required. Until this is done and weather moderates it will be impossible to arrange programme for flying on aircraft. (ARGUS 1013/16 to Adty.)

CIRCASSIA.

Route to Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.P.1040/16.)

KELLY
WHITSHED.

My 1156/14, C. in C.H.F. 1347/15, and A.C. W.A. 1914/15.

F.O.I/C Humber considers that the acoustic mining situation in The Humber Approach Channels renders it inadvisable at present for destroyers to proceed in and out for working up practices if other facilities are available. Propose therefore that KELLY and WHITSHED should proceed to Scapa to work up for 14 days. (C. in C. Nore 1202/16 to A.C.W.A.)
Your 1202/16. Agree so far as KELLY is



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Movements.Contd.

concerned. (C. in C.W.A. 1906/16 to C. in C. Nore.) Your 1202/16. Concur (C in C. HF. 2238/16 to C. in C. Nore.)

CATTISTOCK.
HOLDERNESS.
FERNIE.
CLEVELAND.

As RAMILLIES cannot now arrive Plymouth before 1030/17, intend sail Destroyers PM/17 to arrive Nab 0900/18. Regret this will delay C.E.19. (C in C.WA.1312/16 to C. in C. Nore.) *See previous page.*

SHELDRAKE.

Sailed 1306. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1312/16.)

Intend to take Fleet to sea when Force K sails in order to take opportunity of exercising with aircraft and to carry out tactical exercises.(C. in C.H.F. 1417/16 to Adty.)

Northern Patrol.

Lines tonight. 4 Trawlers. (F.O.C.O.S. 1520/16.)

SALOPIAN.

Leave N.P.42 to arrive ^{*Reykjavik*} ~~Reykjavik~~ PM/18, leaving AM/19 by following route to Clyde. (F.O.C.N.P. 1546/16.)

WORCESTERSHIRE.

To avoid U-boat alter course as follows (C. in C.W.A. 1612/16 and 1938/16 to WORCESTERSHIRE.)

EGLINTON.)
QUORN.)

Sailed 1704 (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1721/16.)

DIDO.

Your 1414/15. Can now be taken in hand on arrival (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1747/16 to C. in C. H.F.) Proceed at 0300/17 to Tyne. (C. in C. H.F. 2329/16 to DIDO.)

READING.)
RAMSEY.)

Sailed. E.T.A.Ranse Head 1600/17. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1755/16.)

NAIAD.

With C.S.15, left Scapa 1800. E.T.A. Greenock 1500/17. (F.O.C.O.S. 1810/16.)

KIPLING.

Sailed 2050. E.T.A. Avonmouth 1200/17. C. in C.W.A. 2211/16.)

BONAVENTURE.

Sailed for Clyde. (C. in C. Rosyth 2355/16.)



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Operations.

Operation
P.V.1.

Will be carried out from 2030 to 2230 tonight to practise A/C and inter-communication. Flares may be dropped or towed between these times.
C. in C. Nore 1127/16.

Cancel my 1050/8/12. Following Operation will be known as P.V.1. Details. (C. in C. Nore 2000/16.) See Operations volume.

Western
Patrol.

MARSDALE, CAMITO, DERBYSHIRE to patrol in following areas respectively.
(F.O.C.N.P. 1920/16 to Western Patrol.)
My 1530/16. Amend areas as follows.
(A.C.N.S.T. 2238/15 to F.O.C.N.P.)
(F.O.C.N.P. 2346/16 to Western Patrol.)

Operation.
P.V.3.

Following operation will be known as P.V.3. Details. (C. in C. Nore 2252/16.)
See Operations Volume.

Submarines.

TUNA.

Remains West of 5 W, until she has reported engine defects made good.
(S.2.0646/16 to TUNA.)

TRIDENT.

To proceed by route in my 1003/16 to carry out Patrol in Adty's M.022797/40 with amendment No. 1 and addendum No.1. To leave Patrol after dark 6/1. Home-ward Route to Wolf Rock. (S.2.1009/16.)

THUNDERBOLT.

To leave Patrol after dark 17/12.
(S.2.1156/16.)

SEAWOLF.

S.5's 0940/15. Sailed 1420/16 (C. in C. Portsmouth 1537/16.)

Greenock Area.

Movements (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1541/16.)

UNBEATEN.

Sailed escorted by WHITE BEAR. E.T.A. Barrow 1130/17. (F.C.I.C. Greenock 1603/16.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/17.
(VA.S. 1638/16 and 1801/16.)

MCST SECRET.



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HOME COMMANDS.

O.23.

Arrived Dundee. (S.9.1643/16.)

L.23.

In Scapa Flow tomorrow (A.C.O.S.1729/16.)

SEVERN.

Arrived Clyde. (F.O.I.C. Greenock
2100/16.)



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British Air Activity.

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Patrol.

By Blenheim A/C from Dyce to Flamborough and return being flown 0845 to 1215 today (C. in C. Rosyth 0900/16).

Bordeaux.

217 Sqdn to attack S/M's in Basin tonight (H.Q.C.C. 1420/16).

Lorient.

53 and 59 Sqdns to attack S/M's and Dockyard tonight (H.Q.C.C. 1422/16).

TIRPITZ.

22 Sqdn to attack TIRPITZ tonight in Vauhagen at Wilhelmshaven. Alternative Target shipping at Emden (H.Q.C.C. 1424/16).

Enemy Air Activity.

Unknown Ship.

AAAA at 0853 (Port Patrick Radio 1004/14)

Unknown Ship in distress about 13 miles N.W. of Mull of Kintyre (Port Patrick Radio 1004/16).

If in vicinity proceed to assist ship bombed in 55° 28'N 6° 2'W. (C. in C. W.A. 1055/16 to ORCHIS, ELLESMERE).

Your 1500 to N.O.I.C. Belfast. Continue search towards 55° 55'N 6° 51'W. (C. in C. W.A. 1804/16 to ELLESMERE).

BIC ISLAND.

(British, 3921 Tons) Bombed 300 miles West of Tory Island (F.O.I.C. Greenock. 1018/16 to Adty).

Detach one Corvette to assist in about 54° 12'N 17° 45'W separated 1120/16. Corvette to report position of Convoy when well clear of Convoy. (C. in C. W.A. 1250/16 and 1400/16 to WHITEHALL).

Corvette has not yet reported. (C. in C. W.A. 0022/17 to WHITEHALL).

GENTIAN was detached at 1402/16. Position of Convoy 53° 42'N. 15° 10'W. (WHITEHALL 0200/17 to C. in C. W.A.).

/Plymouth.....



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Enemy Air Activity. (contd).

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Plymouth.

Small raid on Night 15/16. 4 H.E. in Sound, few incendiaries in town. Examination Steamer SIR WALTER RALEIGH slightly damaged by near miss. 1 serious casualty, 4 slight. (C. in C. W.A. 1321/16).

UBERTY.

(H.M. Drifter). In machine-gun action with A/C at 1150/16 near East Newcombe Buoy. Very slight damage to ship, but 2 dangerously wounded 1 seriously 1 slightly. Ship returned harbour. (N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1505/16 to Admty).

Dover.

At about 2100/15, two Mines from A/C fell between Castle and Fort Burgoyne. Very slight damage and one slight casualty. (V.A. Dover 1525/16).

Mining.

SYLVANA.

Request additional seagoing steam driven Dan laying vessel may be allocated to Granton. Diesel yacht SYLVANA is only vessel available at present. (C. in C. Rosyth 1145/16 to Admty).

Yarmouth.

AMROTH CASTLE reported sighting enemy A/C dropping parachute mine 5 miles N.W. of No. 5 buoy. Area being searched by S.A. and L.L. Trawlers. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 1145/16 to C. in C. Nore).

Proposed Minefield Norwegian coast.

Evidence enemy traffic along Norwegian coast is increasing in importance. Desired to lay minefield to impede this traffic, between Egersund and Jaedereas Point. INTREPID and ICARUS can be made available and sailed to reach Scapa 24/12 with outfits of Mark XVII mines. Early remarks requested. (D.D.O.D.(M) 1331/16 to C. in C.H.F.).

Operation.
ZME 7

To be carried out 17/12 or as soon after as possible, position 51° 04.5'N, 05° 19.5'W, 119° length 7 miles. (D:D.O.D.(M) 1333/16 to C. in C. W.A.).

/Humber.....



HOME COMMANDS.

Mining (continued).

Humber.

Departures 16/12 TEVIOT BANK, ICARUS in company at 1355 (F.O. Humber 1416/16).

Dover.

Routine sweeps to 0800/16. Found 1 mine and 4 explosive cutters (V.A. Dover 1504/16).

Thames Estuary.

Following explosion in addition to mines exploded by sweepers occurred in Thames Estuary during night of 15th/16th /12. Possibly near No. 12. Barrow Buoy resembled mine exploding in mid air except that flash was white instead of the usual orange. There were the usual falling fragments. The mine exploded by the sweepers at 0520 near No. 15 Barrow Buoy appeared to throw up fragments resembling incendiary bombs which continued to burn for about 1/2 a minute. (S.O.T.L.D.F. 1455/16 to C. in C. Nore).

Technical.

Immunity from D/F.

Admiralty's 1219/14. In view of highly satisfactory results obtained in Netherlands East Indies with regard to immunity from D/F and importance of trials in connection with possible submarine action and other operations S.O.D.S. proposes that wireless Officer on Staff of B.D.Z. makes contact with Admiralty representatives to co-ordinate and arrange trials. (S.9. 1127/16 to V.A.S.).

Captain (S) 9's 1127/16 with which I concur is passed to you herewith. While it is improbable that sufficient submarines will be available for some time to enable the proposed scheme to be put into operation it is recommended that the wireless officer on the staff of B.D.Z. should discuss details with D.S.O.'s representative. (V.A.S. 1729/16 to Adty).

Homing of Bombers.

I have been interested to learn of the methods used by long range fighters to "Home" on the ships which they are protecting (A.F.O.'s 457/40) and also of the procedure laid down in A.F.O's 548/40 for our fighters to "Home" direct of enemy shadows. I understand

/that.....



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Technical.

Homing of Bombers.
(continued).

that the former system has been used in practice, but that there has as yet been no opportunity for testing the latter system.

2. It would seem a short step to develop the system which I have seen so successfully used by the Italians, and which is also used by the Germans whereby our bombers could "Home" on a reconnaissance machine in touch with an important enemy unit. Would you let me know if such a scheme is in force and whether it has been tried.

3. I would welcome any opportunity to exercise these schemes, and would suggest that the procedure in A.F.O's 348/40, or perhaps that in paragraph (2) above, might be tried on 19th December when a fleet unit will be at sea.

4. If this is agree to in principle a further signal will be made giving details.

(C. in C.H.F. 1436/16 to C. in C. Rosyth)



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CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

FRAMLINGHAM COURT.

(British, 4888 Tons) Ashore off Lismore Lighthouse. Require Tugs (Port Patrick Radio 0105/16).

ETTRICK.

(British, 11279 Tons) Dragged anchor at 0100/16 and collided with FRANCONIA and KARANJA. Damage to hull, davits, and motor-launch. (P.S.T.O. Clyde 0730/16 to D.S.T) Propellor may be damaged. (P.S.T.O. Clyde 1818/16).

KARANJA

(British 9891 Tons) Lost one anchor by collision with ETTRICK at 0100/16. (P.S.T.O. Clyde 0730/16 and 1818/16).

FRANCONIA

(British 20,175 Tons) Details of damage by collision with ETTRICK at 0100/16 (P.S.T.O. Clyde 1818/16).

BRANLEBAS.
lost.

F.S. BRANLEBAS sailed Dartmouth with westbound convoy at 1800/15 with orders to return to Dartmouth by 1000/15. She has not been heard of since and has not answered W/T signals. Aircraft is being sent to search. (C. in C. W.A. 0818/16).

My 0818/16 not to all addresses. Enquiries of ships in convoy which BRANLEBAS was ordered to escort and which have now arrived in harbour have failed to throw any light on the fate of BRANLEBAS. Aircraft search has proved fruitless. It is therefore regretted that she must now be considered as lost and that the loss is most probably due to heavy weather. (C. in C. W.A. 2055/16 to Adty).

EDOUARD VAN
VLANDEREN.
(A/S Trawler)

Arrived with engine defects. (N.O.I.C. Belfast 1030/16).

FURIOUS.

Condition of engines and boilers renders possibility of serious breakdown ever present consideration. Port Outer H.P. has stripped further blades since leaving U.K. on 16th November but not at present vibrating. Many boiler tubes now almost thickness of paper and unlikely to sustain effects of heavy concussion without bursting with dangerous consequences to boiler room personnel. Above does not indicate that ship is unfit to sail "~~monsoon~~" ^{monsoon} but is intended as warning that possible reduction of speed to eighteen knots or below must constantly be borne in mind. (FURIOUS 1205/14 to Admtty).

/DORANDO.....



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CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

DORANDO,
PIETRE.

(N.C.S. Motor Drifter) While lying alongside S.S. RAMON DE LARRINAGA at 1500/15 sustained damage to stern. No damage to other vessel. N.C.S. Vessel ~~Swedish~~ but making water in heavy weather. Request A.S. Rosyth may arrange survey.
(N.O.I.C. Methil 1237/16 to Adty).

SKEENA.

Details of defects. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1316/16 to Adty). Consider ship unable to steam more than 10 knots (Capt. D. Greenock 1816/16 to Adty).

EMPIRE ELK.

ENGLISHMAN assisting SUPERMAN to tow (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1330/16).

SHIKARI.

Am returning Londonderry with serious defects in lubricating system.
(SHIKARI 1744/16 to C. in C. W.A.).

KRONPRINSESSAN ^{MARGARETA} Swedish KRONPRINSESSAN ^{MARGARETA} and British
(Swedish. 3746 Tons) ship SERINGA in collision Belfast Lough about 1400 today. Former holed amidships but no immediate danger.

SERINGA.
(British 4729 Tons) Latter bows damaged but expected dock here tonight. No casualties amongst crews reported.
(N.C.S.O. Belfast 1830/16 to Adty).

My 1830/16 and 1130/17 Swedish KRONPRINSESSAN MARGARETA docked safely 1600 today.
(N.C.S.O. Belfast 1800/17 to Adty).

GOLIATH.
(Rescue Tug)

Immobile with boiler defects until P.M. 18th. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 2331/16 to Adty).



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Shipping.

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Convoys.

Estimated positions 0900/16. (D.T.D. 1135/16 to C.in C. H.F.)

F.S.62.

Postponed 24 hours, weather. (C.in C. Rosyth, 1157/16).

F.S.61.

66 ships. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 0948/16).

F.N.

F.N.Convoys will in future leave Southend at 0830. (C.in C. Rosyth 0939/16)

H.X.94.

Route. (D.T.D. 1024/16) Meet 17 ships. (C.in C. W.A. 1116/16 to SHAIKARI, SKATE, SCIMITAR, ARABIS, MALLOW). List and distributions. (C.in C. W.A. 1516/16).

W.N.54.

List. (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1057/16).

B.H.X.98.

List. (Navy Control, Bermuda, 1201/16).

B.H.X.97.

Left. Ocean escort COMORIN, returning Halifax. (N.O.I.C. Bermuda, 1203/16).

W.N.55.)
W.N.56.)

Retard sailing 25 hours, weather. (N.C.S.O. Greenock, 1221/16).

E.N.42.

Amending his 1650/15. (N.C.S.O. Methil 1223/16).

E.N.42.)
E.N.43.)

Each postponed 24 hours due to W.N.55 and 56 postponements. (C.in C. Rosyth, 1225/16)



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Shipping. (Contd.)

H.X.93.

Situation at noon. ACTIVE, ANTELOPE with top mast carried away and LADY MADELINE with 6 ships 57.54 N., 11.11 W. HEATHER with 11 ships believed to be 20 miles to N.W. and is being searched for by ACHATES. NORWICH CITY standing by 1 ship with damaged steering gear, position unknown. PICOTEE and remainder of convoy position unknown. Weather. (ACTIVE, 1230/16).

H.X.95.

Time of arrival at R/V to be delayed 24 hours to 0900 G.M.T./23. (D.T.D. to AUSONIA 1351/16).

H.X.96.

Route. Escort RANPURA, returns to Halifax. (D.T.D. 1353/16, to C.in C. W.A.)

H.X.97.

Route. C.O.A.C. Halifax requested to signal route west of 35° W and time of sailing direct to WORCESTERSHIRE. (D.T.D. 1356/16).

O.B.260.

Sailed 1310/16, 14 ships. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1423/16). List and destinations. (1424/16).

S.L.57S.

10 ships unescorted. Meet. (C.in C. W.A. 1446/16, 2033/16 to AMBUSCADE, AMAZON, HEARTSEASE, CROCUS).

F.S.61.

List. H.M.T.'s STELLA LEONIS, and KINGSTON OLIVINE. (N.C.S.O. Humber, 1602/16).

S.C.16.

My 1114/15. ROYAL SOVEREIGN sailed p.m./16 to contact S.C.16. Route. (R.A.3.B.S. 2047/16).

S.L.58.

Route. (D.T.D. 2059/16 to KENT.)



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

16.12.40.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

469

S.L.57.

ORARI has arrived Clyde proceed to join
convoy S.L.57.
(C.in C. W.A. 0726/16 to VANQUISHER).

W.N.53.

Scapa departures 1000 FLEETWOOD and
ALYNBANK to escort convoy W.N.53.
(A.C.O.S. 1035/16).

S.C.15.

Your 1848/12. S.C.15 not met. My p.c.s.
at 1300/16 G.M.T. 053° N., 035° W., 087° S.
(CILICIA, 1310/16 to Adty).

S.C.15.

Your 1310/16 to Adty. Commodore S.C.15
has been instructed by W/T to pass through
R/V in Adty's 1840/12 at time and date
stated.
(C.in C. W.A. 1954/16 to CILICIA).

S.L.59.

Departure 1400/16/12 H.M.S. CATHAY to
join and act as ocean escort to S.L.59
and thence to Greenock in accordance with
C.in C. S.A. 1231/14/12.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 1601/16).

F.N.60.

Great Yarmouth 16/12 Departure H.M.Y
TARANSAY at 1630 to join F.N.60.
(F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 1637/16).

C.E.19.

My 2156/15 and C.in C. W.A. 1312/16. Owing
to non arrival of escorts C.E.19 postponed
24 hours.
(C.in C. Nore, 1656/16).

F.N.61.

Intend sailing FITZROY tomorrow Tuesday
to join F.N.61 thence to Grimsby.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1708/16).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

16.12.40.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.)

470

CLAN MURRAY.

Remain with CLAN MURRAY until she rejoins convoy. If not under way by 1900 report situation stating whether tug is required.
(F.O.Harwich 1810/16 to SHELDRAKE)

S.L.57.

Inward escort S.L.57 S, AMBUSCADE, AMAZON, HEARTSEASE, CROCUS, LILIAN. AMBUSCADE is Senior Officer.
(Capt: D. Greenock 1825/16).

W.N.56.

Sailed GAVOTTE and PIROUETTE for W.N.56. E.T.A. Clyde Boom 0800/17.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 2329/16).

O.G.Convoys.
Dispersal
Point.

Several ships have recently been torpedoed in positions which indicate that they have left O.G.Convoys farther North than is desirable and have proceeded thence direct towards destinations in Portugal and on the west coast of Spain. The attention of Commodores and Masters is to be called to Admiralty Message 1746/3/8 and they are to be informed of the sinkings referred to above.
(D.T.D. 2352/16).

W.S.5.A.

Your 2250/6. (para.8.) and my 1753/11 Intend to sail NAIAD for Clyde p.m./16. If a second cruiser is not required for this operation intend that NAIAD should be taken in hand as early as practicable for outstanding defects.
(C.in C. H.F. 1448/16, to Adty).

Sailed - Sep 458

* Sail at 1800/16 and proceed to Avonmouth Escort RANGITIKI thence to R/V with convoy W.S.5.A. slow (position) at 1700/18. KIPLING thence proceed to Liverpool to fuel and await orders. If RANGITIKI cannot make R/V in position (A) KIPLING is to escort her to R/V with W.S.5.A. slow in position (B) at 0930/19. KIPLING then proceed to Lough Foyle to fuel and await orders.
(C.in C. W.A. 1500/16 to KIPLING).

** Sailed - Sep 458*



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

16.12.40.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

471

OREGON.

Your 1724/9 and N.A. Madrid 1245/14.
OREGON should be diverted in accordance
my 1225/11 for repatriation of Vichy
element.
(Hd. of M., 1125/16 to F.O.C.N.A.)

CAPITAINE
ST. MARTIN.

Arrival 14/12. French steamer CAPITAINE
SAINT MARTIN from Casablanca.
(Consul, Las Palmas, 1900/15 recd. 1345/16)

Admiral
D'Harcourt.

Following received Consul General Tangier
(begins) While speaking to (? Elias)
Consul Casablanca Admiral D'Harcourt
(Casablanca) stated he was not anti
British but like Weygand pro French. He
further said French Authorities had been
greatly annoyed by British action recently
taken to stop French Cruiser PRIMAUGUET.
There was also considerable resentment
because certain trawlers from Saint
Pierre had been taken to Gibraltar. No
T.R.R. 15/12 (ends). This further confirms
attitude of Admiral D'Harcourt as described
in N.A.Lisbon's despatch to D.N.I. 19/11.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1706/16 to Adty).

North Atlantic.

Azores
Submarine
Patrol.

TRIDENT estimated in vicinity Lands End
at 0100 G.M.T. 19/12 proceeds (route) to
relieve CACHALOT on patrol in accordance
with Admiralty letter M.022797/40 of 30/11.
(S.2. 1003/16 to CACHALOT, TRIDENT).

Azores,
Oiling of
Destroyers.

Consider it impracticable to oil destroyer
off Azores in winter months.
(ASPHODEL 1121/16 to D.N.I.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

16.12.40.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (Contd.)

472

ASPHODEL and CALENDULA proceeded from Ponta Delgada 1930 G.M.T. 16/12. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 1840/16).

A.M.C. for Azores.

My 2146/30/10 para.5, my 0210/15, and F.O.C.N.A. 1218/16. Western Patrol. After CIRCASSIA leaves patrol in Area G.3. on 17/12 it will be unnecessary to maintain an A.M.C. patrol in the vicinity of the Azores. A.M.Cs. returning to Western Patrol could therefore be employed on the more direct trade routes. It is requested that an anti-clockwise patrol should be established by MARSDALE in Area P.3., Q.3., and R.3, and a clockwise patrol by CAMITO in Areas Q.1., R.1., and S.1. (D. O.D. (F) 1538/16 to F.O.C.N.P.)

BERWICK Azores.

Request you will sail BERWICK as soon as practicable tomorrow 17/12 for Azores patrol issuing orders for her patrol and information as to submarine patrol. (D.O.D.(F) 2215/16 to F.O.C.N.A.)

DERBYSHIRE.

Intend to sail DERBYSHIRE for Patrol F.2. at 1800 today. (F.O.C.N.A. 1218/16 to V.A.N.P.)

RESOLUTION VINDICTIVE.

Gibraltar arrival 16/12 1100 RESOLUTION VINDICTIVE, FORTUNE, FOXHOUND. (S.O.(I) Gibraltar 1232/16).

German A/C, Palma.

At least 12 German Heinkel bombers passed over here today at 1330 proceeding in South East direction. (Palma 1550/16).

Malaga Reccn. by A/C.

Daily Summary Operations. One London airborne 0100 G.M.T. to carry out recco. in vicinity of Malaga. Information was received to effect that Italian warship would be loading three ^{hundred} tons of silver at Malaga night of 15/16th. Pilot saw alongside pilot vessel off Malaga large swirl as of submarine. Did not bomb as swirl in territorial waters.

16.12.40.
Monday.

WAR DIARY.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (Contd.)

473

Malaga
Reconn.
by A/C.
(Contd.)

Aircraft remained in vicinity until 0630 G.M.T. Nothing further seen. (200 Group 1710/16 to Air Ministry).

Malaga
Reconn.
VELOX.

Following received from Consul Malaga at 2355/15 "some 300 tons silver will be transhipped tonight Sunday from pilot boat to Italian warship off Malaga". VELOX and aircraft were sent to investigate forthwith. H.M. Ship sent ordered patrol of (? 15) Alboran bombing aircraft till noon December 17th. VELOX returned to Straits patrol at 0900/16 nothing to report. Aircraft reported at 0300/16 sighted motor boat in position 209 Malaga six, also considerable swirl in water as if submarine had just dived. Motor boat having tried to shine a light on aircraft made off in direction of Malaga. Aircraft at 1630/16 also reported having seen another destroyer in addition to VELOX in vicinity. This vessel had all lights burning and is considered to be probably Spanish as a Spanish minelayer of JUPITER Class passed through Straits westbound from that direction at 1040/16. Consul Malaga is being asked elaboration. (F.O.I.C. Gibraltar 1720/16 to Adty).

Tangier
Garrison.
(B.2.)

One Battalion of Spanish infantry arrived here yesterday another arrive today and a third is reported to be arriving tomorrow, to replace Moorish troops who have been transferred from Tangier to Larache and Melusa. Estimated that this garrison will be between three and four thousand strong, representing a slight reduction. Spanish not Moorish troops are to be used. (Consul Gen., Tangier, T.H.I. 1840/16).

Enemy Convoy.
Bordeaux,
Lisbon.

Reliably reported Germans are organising in Bordeaux a large convoy which will proceed strongly escorted to Lisbon. Convoy will travel by day only presumably to keep within territorial waters without risk of going ashore. Full report by bag. (Consul.Gen. Lisbon, 1927/16 to M.E.W. repeated Adty).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

16.12.40.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

474

ESPERANCE BAY.

Arrived 0930/16. (S.O.(I) Freetown 1103N/16)

Tanker.

Your 1434/14 (tanker sighted by ^{M/V} SUTLES) suggest vessel may have been EUROFELD, sailed Las Palmas 3/9 and not since located. (D.D.I.C. 1115/16 to S.O.(I) Freetown).

American
Neutrality
Zone.

Until further notice no neutral ship to be stopped within American neutrality zone except on receipt of definite orders. This includes all French ships. (R.A.S.A.D. 1134/16 to S.A.D.S.A.Station)

NATIA
Wreckage.

(British 8715 tons). OGNA (Norwegian) reports having stopped at 006° 49'N., 052° 38'W on 5/12 to examine ships life boat with NATIA, Southampton, on stern. Boat was waterlogged. (N.C.S.O. Rio de Janeiro 1150/16).

ENTERPRISE.

Departure Plate 16/12 ENTERPRISE for Simonstown due 27/12. (R.A.S.A.D. 1234/Z/16 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown.)

St. Vincent.
Sal.

Your 1759/14 and Adty. 1953/15. Summary of information received since September (details) . Doubtful report that Italian air services are maintained with Brazil via Sal every fortnight. (C.in C. S.A. 1815/16 to Adty).

BULOLO.

Sailed for Freetown with following on board for W.Africa. (Military details) (W.O. to G.O.C., W.A. 1540/16).

ELSWICK PARK.

Due Freetown 12/12 (from Milford Haven 22/11) has not arrived (S.O.(I) Freetown 0948/16).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

16.12.40.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (Contd.)

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FURIOUS
Hurricanes.

For your information. 27 of the Hurricanes transported by FURIOUS on last trip were in action by December 12th. (D.N.A.D. 1825/16 to FURIOUS).

Enemy
Intelligence.

For Spears Mission. Following received from French Mission, Accra. Usual reliable source reports Army details. Navy. Richelieu 2 cruisers 3 destroyers 4 submarines seen Dakar 6/12. Air. Number of planes A.C.F. approx. 200. Sunk an aeroplane storage tanks constructed Thmatferd, cylinders Kaolack Dakar General. 20 Officers and N.C.O's attempted to desert to Gambia 3/12 but prevented by road block. Arrested and taken to Dakar. As consequence military and naval patrolling increased. Reliably informed Cayla replaced by Anet. (20 M.M. Brazzaville 1430/16 to W.O.)

Polish
Volunteers.

General Ismay for Spears Mission, London, re 28 Poles 10 of which are Jews not renewing their contracts and wishing to join Polish Army or Palestine Legion, request instructions. (20 M.M. Duala 1725/16 to W.A.)

Mediterranean

See pp. 479-480.

East Indies.

SHROPSHIRE,
DEVONSHIRE,
W.S.4.B.

SHROPSHIRE and DEVONSHIRE escorting convoy W.S.4.B. sailed E.T.A. position W.(date) E.T. A. Suez (date). (N.O.I.C. Durban 0703/16 to P.S.T.O. Suez).

ANTENOR.

To leave Colombo 0400Z/17 and proceed to 005° N., 092° E and then patrol between that position and 002° N., 080° E. (C.in C. E.I. 0710Z/16 to ANTENOR)

MOST SECRET.

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Monday.

WAR DIARY.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

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Wreckage.

Three lifeboats marked "Mugomedom" and 1 tin of Cow and Gate food found in 7° 23.5'N., 09° 47.5 E on 10/12. (C.in C. E.I. 1010Z/16).

CORNWALL.

To leave Aden 19/12 and proceed to Simonstown. (C.in C. E.I. 1228Z/16 to S.N.O. Red Sea).

Q Distress Signal.

Following from SHILLONG begins, my position 002 35'N., 075 25'E. Following Q distress signal received 1520 G.M.T. position 000 02'S., Strength of signal 2 647 broke off no further information received. T.O.O. 1715/16 G.M.T. ends. (C.in C. E.I. 1856Z/16 to E.I.Sqdn.)

My 1856/16. Following dispositions are being made.

(a) HOBART in approx. position 007° 20'N., 074° 45'E at 2000/16 towards position 000° 070' with despatch.

(b) CAPETOWN in approx. position 004° 45' N., 064° 25'E at 2015/16 towards position 000° 067' at 18 knots.

(c) RANCHI arrives Mahe Seychelles to refuel within the next 12 hours and then proceeding eastwards along trade route at 17 knots.

(d) WESTRALIA will R/V with Oiler APPLELEAF in position 002° 15'N., 075° 45'E at 0330/18 and escort her to Addu Atoll Maldive Islands arriving about 0630/19 December.

(e) Oiler APPLELEAF leaving Colombo at 2330/16 for R/V.

(ii) All times are G.M.T.

(iii) H.M. Ships in para. 1 are to decode signal addressed Force V.

(C.in C. E.I. 2312/16).

Cables.

Middle East combined Signal Board letter CRME/944/17/10 of 5/12/40. Observations. Not considered proposal to appoint a Commander for the control of cables only is justified. (C.in C. E.I. to C.in C. Med. et., 1114/Z/16).



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

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Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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East Indies. (Contd.)

CORNWALLIS.
INVESTIGATOR.
FALMOUTH.
SEABELLE.
PARVATI.
RATNAGIRI.

F.O.C.R.I.N. 0429/11 and S.N.O. Persian Gulf 1520/14. (1) Concur change over of CORNWALLIS and INVESTIGATOR as proposed by F.O.C.R.I.N. S.N.O. Persian Gulf is requested to sail CORNWALLIS accordingly. (2) As FALMOUTH's A/S spares are now at Bombay, intend FALMOUTH to dock and repair before SEABELLE docks. In order that strength of Persian Gulf Division shall not fall below these ships intend PARVATI or RATNAGIRI, whichever ready for service first to proceed to Persian Gulf temporarily until relieved by INVESTIGATOR (date). (3) S.N.O. Persian Gulf requested to sail FALMOUTH for Bombay on arrival in Gulf of PARVATI or RATNAGIRI (date). SEABELLE to proceed to Bombay on return of FALMOUTH.
(C.in C. E.I. 0608Z/16 to F.O.C.R.I.N.)

MANTAI MARU.

S.O.(I) Bombay 0604/22/11 to Arfar regarding Cargo from German ship RHEINLAND shipped in Japanese ship MANTAI MARU to Basrah for Aleppo. MANTAI MARU passed Singapore 14/12 for Basrah. (2) Reference para. 2 (c) of a.m.2100/13/11 should vessel be sent in to British port in view of enemy origin of cargo (3) Cargo reported to consist of earthenware and cotton goods.
(C.in C. E.I. 1052Z/16 to Adty).

CRICKET
APPLELEAF
PARAMATTA.

CRICKET escorted by Oiler APPLELEAF will sail from Colombo at 1130Z/17 for Cochin where CRICKET will refuel from APPLELEAF. The two ships will then proceed to Bombay. PARAMATTA will escort CRICKET to Aden via Masirah where PARAMATTA will supply fuel and water to CRICKET. Estimated requirements. S.N.O. Red Sea requested state if delay in arrival of PARAMATTA at Aden can be accepted. No other ship available for escort of CRICKET as APPLELEAF required for another operation.
(C.in C. E.I. 1148Z/16 to F.O.C.R.I.N.)

For later signal see previous page.



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

16.12.40.
Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

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Port
Facilities,
Aden.

Request N.O.I.C. Rangoon will report dimensions and weights of craft referred to by C.in C. E.I. in his 0718/12 bearing in mind that they would presumably require to be shipped to Aden in ships able to lift them with their own gear.
(D. of S.T. 1931/16 to C.in C. E.I.)

Boom
D.V's.

Admty. 1838/2 and my 0646/5. Owing to repairs to B.D.V. BARNET and difficulties regarding crew for B.D.V. BARBETTE sailing of these vessels have been delayed.
(C.in C. E.I. 1152Z/16 to C.in C. Med. etc.)

China.

Free French
Singapore.

From De Schompre for General De Gaulle. Begins Number thirty organisation of my office at Singapore completed (details) Possible further increase due to expansion of propaganda activities in liaison with Far Eastern Bureau of British Ministry of Information. Ends.
(C.in C. China 0945Z/16 to Adty).

Air Mission
to Chinese
Government.

Consideration given to despatch of air mission to Chinese Government. We cannot spare personnel for mission nor aircraft for Chinese. On the other hand we are prepared to accept your recommendation in the F.E.61 12/12 provided you or India can find suitable officer.
(Air Min. 1730/16 to C.in C. Far East).

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Dodecanese.

Reply from Cs-in-C. to Chief of Staffs No. 31. (H.Q. R.A.F., M.E., 0833/16)
See Mediterranean Vol.

M.W. 5A.

Convoy M.W. 5A. Following British ships, LANARKSHIRE and WAIWERA sailed 2100 B/16 due seaward end of Malta Channel (b) 1800/19. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 2205/16).

Operation M.C.2.

Fuelling programme. (C.in C. Med., 1121/16).

Spain.

Bi-Weekly Report. German troop movements Bordeaux-Hendaye. Spanish actions in Tangier. (Madrid, 2015/16).

U.S.7.

Convoy U.S. 7 arrived Suez p.m./14. (S.B.N.O. Suez, 1008/16).

Attacks on Bardia, Tobruk, etc.

Operational Summary No. 189, up to 1200/16.
Egypt. My A.864 15/12.
Para. 2. 11 Wellingtons dropped over 26000 lbs of bombs on Bardia night 14/15 Dec. starting very large oil fire near Stores Buildings which was visible at distance of 60 miles.
Night 14/15 Dec. 12 Blenheims operating independently bombed landing grounds at Bomba, Gazala, El Gubbi, Tobruk, El Adem, Gambut and Menastir and Sollum Barracks. Day 15/12.
7 Blenheims operating independently attacked landing grounds at Appollonia Bomba, Tmimi, Gazalla and El Adem.
4 Blenheims with Fighter escort attacked Tobruk, bombs falling beyond target to fault in release gear caused by frost. Hurricanes made offensive patrols westward to Tobruk.
Hurricanes and Gladiators with F.A.A. Gladiators patrolled over our advanced forces. Night 15/16/12. 36 aircraft including Bombays Blenheims, Wellingtons and F.A.A. aircraft maintained sustained attacks on Bardia throughout night to force enemy to evacuate the town. Direct hits by Wellingtons on Barracks and Stores at started large fires visible at distance of 60 miles. G.H.Q. M.E. report Halfaya evacuated by enemy 15/12, Sollum and Capuzzo still occupied. (H.Q. R.A.F., M.E., 1242/15).



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Mediterranean. (Contd.)

Malta Air Report.

To 1700/16. All times G.M.T. 0738/16. Sunderland reconnaissance western portion Ionian Sea for enemy naval units. Nil report. Air operations planned for tonight cancelled due to weather conditions. No enemy air activity over Malta. No naval or military items.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1700/16).

Sollum and Capuzzo captured.

We have captured Sollum and Fort Capuzzo. T.O.O. 2001/16. (C.O.I.S. Alexandria, 2010/16).

Enemy Intelligence.

Roumanian Military Attache (most reliable) tells me that German Assistant Military Attache visited him two successive days saying he had received two urgent telegrams from his Military Attache in Berlin, asking for following information:

1. From which air bases in Greece are British Air Force operating.
2. Have British troops disembarked Greece, if so at what port.

Roumanian M.A. truthfully replied he did not know.

(M.A. Ankara, No T.O.O./16 to Brit. M.M., Athens).

Leros Raid 26/11.

Report from Turkish secret source; damage in Leros Air Raid, ~~22/11.~~ (query 26/11)

Naval base store burnt with contents. Military club and ordnance offices completely destroyed by two bombs. Air Force W/T destroyed. Coast defence guns damaged. Italians claim seven of our aircraft brought down; source states correct one only; Pilot wounded but Italians killed him.

(Wolffson, Beyoglu, 1748/16).

Note. by N.I.D.

This refers to attack by 15 Swordfish from ILLUSTRIOUS on 26/11. Little information has been received previously concerning the damage caused.

Dodecanese.

Your 2214/13, (Islands for Turkey) confirmed name of islands mentioned in my 1651/11 were Rhodes and Kos. Athens and Ankara being informed.
(C.in C. Med., 2011/16 to Admty.).



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

REVENGE.
T.C.8.

Your 2240/6 REVENGE and T.C. 8 sailed 1300/16 G.M.T. routed through (particulars) expect to reach position (a) (particulars) 22/12 (R.A.3.B. S 1001/16 to Admty). Departures 16/12 ASSINIBOINE, RESTIGOUCHE local escort REVENGE ocean escort T.C.8. (S.O(I) Halifax 1235/16 to Admty).

RIPLEY.
ROXBOROUGH.

Sailed for U.K. 1530/16 G.M.T. Routed as in E. 926/31 from R.A.3. (N.O.I.C. St. John's N.F. 1259/16 to R.A.3 for Capt (D)).

HERCOGS ~~JER~~ABS.

Your 1633/14. If Latvian HERCOGS ~~JER~~ABS sails she is not to be interfered with (Hd of M. 2351/16 to C. in C. A. & W.I.).

ST. CROIX.

Sailed for Halifax 1600/16 G.M.T. (N.O.I.C. ST John's N.F. 1503/16).

ROYAL SOVEREIGN.

Departure 16/12 cover for HX and SC convoys (S.O. (I) Halifax 2005/16 to Admty).

DESPATCH.

Left Bermuda accordance my 2232/13 E.T.A. Kingston 0700R/20. (C. in C. A.W.I. 1503/16).

LEOPOLDVILLE.

Admty. 1823/12. Will LEOPOLDVILLE be available to take 200 troops on return voyage to U.K. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1601/16).

Neutral Ships.
American Zone.

Until further notice no neutral ship is to be stopped within American Neutral zone except upon express orders from the Admiralty or C. in C.A.W.I. Neutral for this purpose includes French Ships and my 1251/23/11 is modified accordingly. Limits of neutral zone as affecting America and West Indies Station were defined by declaration of Panama 1939. Commanding Officers must not be influenced by these limits when investigating ship's flying neutral colours who are suspected of being disguised enemy ships. (C. in C.A.W.I. 2202/16).



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Australia.

BATHURST.class
Minesweepers.

Your 0121/15. Arrangements will be made accordingly (A.C.N.B. 0515Z/16 to Admty).

New Zealand.

Troop
Transport.

D.S.T's 1458/15. Re use of EMPRESS OF RUSSIA in same convoy as QUEEN MARY. Reluctant (unless necessary) to take AWATEA off Vancouver run. Capacity of AWATEA. Dates of embarkation and sailing. (N.Z.N.B. to A.C.N.B., 1019/16).

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War Diary.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

SPEZIA Arrival 14/12. (Valencia 0115/16) 483

ATLAS Departure 13/12 for Marseilles.
(Valencia, 0115/16).

MARIA LOUISA (Bulgarian ship) loading with tobacco
14/12 for Germany via Roumania.
Sailing date not yet known.
(Consul, Samsun, 1130/16).

ARKADIA)
LARISSA) Left in ballast for Russia.
(Galatz, 1142/16)

TISZA Passed down river for Istanbul.
(Galatz, 1142/16)

BADEN Left Teneriffe 0400/16. (Consul,
Teneriffe, 1225/16)

RIO GRANDE,)
IDARWALD) Your 1551/15. Should RIO GRANDE read
IDARWALD? (D.D.I.C. to C.in C. S.A.,
1302/16). *see page 446 + reply. P. 515.*

ANNELIESE
ESSBERGER. My 0754/10. Cancel reference to
ANNELIESE ESSBERGER (Capt. O.S. Singapore,
1033/16). Reported sale to Japanese.

SPICA. Now discharging her cargo of pyrites
at Ayamonte, where she has been
since October, 1939. (D.S. 468).

TINOS. Discharging a quantity of manganese ore
temporarily at Valencia before docking.
(D.S. 468).

BELLONA Arrived 14/12. (Valencia 2035/16).

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

CONTE DI SAVOIA)
SATURNIA) B.2 report states recently lying at
OCEANIA) Trieste in the Ports Duca d'Aosta close
NEPTUNIA) to the shipbuilding yard (D.S. 468).
VULCANIA)

CELENO Arrived from Batoum, cargo of 8,000 tons
gas oil. (Varna, 1030/16).

MAURO CROCE Left for Genoa 13/12. (Barcelona,
1249/16).

DERNA. Left for Genoa 14/12. (Barcelona
1249/16).



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MOST SECRET.

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Monday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

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Ships Attacked.

ORARI
(torpedoed 13/12) Has arrived Clyde. Proceed to Belfast.
(C.in C. W.A. 0728/16 to ELLESMERE and STELLA POLARIS).

MACEDONIER
(torpedoed
12/12) Belgian, 5227 tons. In Convoy H.X.92, sunk by torpedo 1 mile W. of St. Kilda 57.52 N., 8.42 W. at 0130/12. Eight officers and 29 men landed at Fleetwood, 4 of crew missing (D.S. 468/16/12).

VICTORIA CITY)
VILLE D'ARLON)
(torpedoed 2/12) In Convoy H.X.90, torpedoed on 2/12, are now presumed to have sunk. (D.S. 468/16/12).

TOWA
(torpedoed 11/12) Dutch, in Convoy H.X.92, torpedoed 11/12, is now presumed to have sunk. Master and 16 survivors have been landed. (D.S. 468/16/12).

NEWTON PINE
(escaped 13/12) See S/M's attacked.

ROTORUA
(sunk 11/12) Sinking of ROTORUA (HX 92) by U-boat at 1315/11 in position 58° 56' N. 11° 08' W. Senior officer of escort (VETERAN) states ROTORUA (Commodore) was 125 miles ahead of expected position but local escort were not aware of this until ship was torpedoed. Signalmen Ex ROTORUA state all W/T messages from Commodore were passed by lamp to CARDITA for transmission by short wave. A.M./10 signal made giving R/V's for local escort at 0400 and 0845 on 11/12. 0930/11 signal made giving Commodore's position course and speed. Neither of these signals ever reached local escort. Naval Control, Greenock, asked to investigate this matter with Master of CARDITA. Also allegation that plain language signal was made on same wave at about 0930/11. Further evidence of survivors gives following description of attack. (Abridged). 1315/11 ships in company (list). ROTORUA torpedoed starboard side and sank in 20 minutes. Signals made indicating side of attack and ordering convoy to scatter. 5 minutes after attack U-boat surfaced on port quarter among boats and her C.O. took cinematograph of sinking ship whilst others made off. After 10 minutes U-boat dived. 10 minutes later surfaced again and CARDITA opened fire and claimed one direct hit producing oil and smoke. No further attack on convoy. (Details of survivors' rescue) (Capt. D., Liverpool, 1805/16).

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Monday.



War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

S/M's Reported.

- 485
- 1345. 54.53 N., 05.54 W. (C.in C. W.A., 1712/16).
 - 0752. Bergen area, position indefinite (D.S. 468).
 - 0349. About 60° N., 20° W., position indefinite (D.S. 468).
 - 1850. 59.50 N., 2.50 E., approx. position (D.S. 469).
 - 1223. D.F., probable U/B 57.40 N. to 58.20 N., 15° - 17° W. (D.D.I.C. 1312/16).
 - 1223. 58.20 N., 17° W. approx position (D.S. 469).
 - 1547. 59°N., 22. - 23° W., indefinite position (D.S. 469).
 - 1516)
1620)
1750) 54.30 N., to 56° N., 16° - 19° W., indefinite positions of 3 Italian U/B's. (D.S. 469).
 - 1620. 48.40 N., 12.20 W., approx. position of Italian U/B (D.S. 469).
 - 0121. Westward of Brest, indefinite position of German U/B (D.S. 469).

Dutch intelligence Curacao reports first officer F.H. **BEDFORD JR.** sighted conning tower of submarine in position 21 miles 030 degrees from Aruba at 1730/11. Other members of crew saw wake. Not reported to N.C.S.O. S.N.O. Curacao grades C.3. Ship sailed Aruba 12/12 for New York. (S.O.I. Kingston 1000/16 to C.in C. A. and W.I.).

Submarines Reported.

TARTAR pass to SEVERN. Following received from Larne examination steamer. S/M periscope also top part of conning tower roughly two cables Eastwards Hunter Rock Buoy appeared bound to S.E. time of origin 1345/16, (ends) BRITISH HONDURAS from Larne and 4 A/S trawlers from Belfast investigating. (C.in C. W.A., 1520/16 to TARTAR).

/ Estimated U-boat dispositions..

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U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

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Estimated U-Boat
dispositions.

Italian.

1 about 300 miles W. or W.N.W. of
Madeira.

1 Near Azores.

2 in N.W. Approaches one of which may
be about 54° N. 20° W.

1 may be about 42° N. 15° W. bound for
Azores.

German.

1 was about 650 miles S.W. of Freetown
on 13th. No further report.

1 possibly Italian S.W. of Dakar.

1 may arrive Lorient to-day.

1 may be about 47° 40' N, 8° W. bound
for Lorient.

1 North of 55° N. east of 12° W.

1 about 58° 30' N. 17° W.

1 north of 58° N. and west of 22° W.

1 about 60° N. 20° W.

1 entering Bergen.

(D.D.I.C. 1313/16).

Submarines Attacked.

1825/14.

JH: s/m NAIADE

My 1111/15. At 1825/14 HYPERION with
HEREWARD in company obtained contact
in position 032° 03' N. 025° 56' E. and
attacked firing one pattern. Shortly
afterwards U-Boat surfaced.

Both ships opened fire and U-Boat
surrendered. U-Boat sank before boats
reached her.

(C.in C. Med., 1721/16 to Admty.)

By NEWTON PINE
2300/13.

Position 2200 G.M.T./13, 08.16 N.,
15.25 W. Torpedo attack avoided,
followed up by a severe engagement with
gunfire. Anticipate submarine damaged
after 30 minutes action. No casualties,
ship is not damaged. (NEWTON PINE,
via Freetown W/T 2230/16 to C.in C. S.A.)
Further report see 18/12.



War Diary

17.12.1940
Tuesday

SITUATION REPORT

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Home Commands

Force K.

Force K - FORMIDABLE (aircraft carrier) NORFOLK (cruiser) and four destroyers - is to sail from Scapa to rendezvous to the westward with Convoy W.S. 5 A.

M.T.B.
Sweep

Weather permitting, Motor torpedo boats are to operate between Ostend and Hook of Holland. Any vessel met east of 2° 15' E may be attacked without challenge.

BIRKENFELS

Sunk by M.T.B. torpedo at anchor off Fishing (GD.403(2))

British Air Activity

L'Orient
Wilhelmshaven
Bordeaux

Air attacks to be made night of 16/17 on Wilhelmshaven, and on L'Orient and Bordeaux.

Enemy Air Activity

SS. MENTOR

Greek SS MENTOR, 3050 tons, has been attacked in 52° 51' N., 14° 17' W. (Channel Approach)

Mining

Thames &
Medway

Five small merchant vessels have been sunk by mines in Thames off Southend. Thames and Medway have been closed.

ACHERON

ACHERON (destroyer) has been sunk at 0640 by an explosion off the Needles (Isle of Wight) while carrying out trials.

Stadlandet
(Norway)

SUNFISH (submarine) states that during her patrol (1/12- 7/12) there were no indications of mines off Stadlandet.

Minelaying

ADVENTURE is leaving Milford Haven to lay mines. Operation ZME 7.



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17.12.1940
Tuesday

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SITUATION REPORT

Shipping and Convoys

H.X. 93.

H.X. 93 (Halifax homeward) is entering North Channel at 1630.

E.N. 42.

E.N. 42. (East Coast to West, North about) left Methil (Forth) at 10 p.m. - 7 ships with escort of 1 destroyer, 1 anti-aircraft ship, 1 A/S yacht, 2 armed trawlers.

Motor vessels, six, left the Needles for Dartmouth, escorted by two A/S Trawlers.

Foreign Stations.

Vichy French

Traffic,
Dakar

A regular steam boat service has been established between Marseilles and Dakar.

Gibraltar

French sloop passed Gibraltar escorting ship West to East and returned escorting three ships East to West.

Mediterranean *(should be on next page)*

Operation
M.C. 2.

It has been decided that Convoy M.G. 1. will be run to Gibraltar. The MALAYA is to accompany it to join Force H (see North Atlantic)

Operation
M.C. 3.

The C. in C., (WARSPITE flag) 1st Division 1st Battle Squadron, H.M.S. ILLUSTRIOUS, 3rd Cruiser Squadron (GLOUCESTER flag) and destroyers, ~~due~~ due to leave Alexandria Dec. 16th to meet 7th C.S. (ORION flag) to carry out operation M.C. 3. on night of 18/19th as follows (a) 7th C.S. to raid into Straits of Otranto as far as line Bari- Durazzo (~~by~~ battleships to bombard Valona)



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17.12.1940
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SITUATION REPORT

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North Atlantic

Force H.

Force H (RENOWN, ARK ROYAL and 6 destroyers) has been ordered to return to Gibraltar (Note- Force H left Gibraltar on 14/12 to patrol off the Azores)

BERWICK (cruiser) has left Gibraltar for Azores patrol.

Submarines

The submarines UPHOLDER, USK and UNIQUE ordered on 14/12/40 to patrol in Bay of Biscay have been ordered to continue their passage to Gibraltar.

ORANGELEAF

The tanker ORANGELEAF (on her way to join Force H.) has been ordered to return to Gibraltar. The VELOX (destroyer) is to meet and escort her.

South Atlantic

NEPTUNE

NEPTUNE (flag of F.O.C. Force ^MH) has arrived at Freetown

French Foreign Legion

The C. in C., South Atlantic has asked for confirmation of arrangements to send French Legion to Freetown for transhipment and convoy.

U-Boat Attack on SS NEWTON PINE

The British SS NEWTON PINE reports being attacked by U-Boat on Dec 13/2200 G.M.T. in 8° 16' N., 15° 25' W. Torpedo was avoided and a gunfire action lasting 30 minutes followed. Master considers the submarine was damaged.

Mediterranean. (See previous page.)



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SITUATION REPORT

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East Indies

Raider

There is no further indication of raider since SS SHILLONG's distress signal off the Maldives on Dec. 16. The Cruisers **HOBART** and **CAPETOWN** are off the Maldives giving cover to shipping. The cruiser **DAUNTLESS** is to patrol West of Achon Head (Sumatra)

America & West Indies

Merchant Vessels
Armament

Allied ships (Norwegian and Greek) are reluctant to sail without armament. C. in C., requests early information as to shipment of Hotchkiss machine guns to Bermuda.

Australia

Raider
TRIASTER
VINNI
TRIONA

Nothing further has been heard of the ships **TRIASTER**, **VINNI** and **TRIONA** which were due at Nauru, (Gilbert Islands, British Mandate) on Dec. 7th and 8th and were supposed to have been captured by the raider which attacked Nauru on Dec 8th.

U-Boat Campaign

ROTORUA

With regard to the sinking of British SS **ROTORUA**, 10890 tons, in convoy H.X. 92 (Halifax homeward) on Dec 11th at 1315 in 58° 56' N., 11° 8' W., the senior officer of escort in **VETERAN** (destroyer) states that the **ROTORUA** was 125 miles ahead of her expected position and that the local escort was not aware of this till the report came in of her being torpedoed. The signalmen rescued from **ROTORUA** state that all signals from Commodore of Convoy were passed to British SS **CARDITA**, that the signal giving a rendezvous for local escort was passed on Dec 11 at 0400 and 0800. Neither of these signals reached the escort.



MOST SECRET

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SITUATION REPORT

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U-Boat Campaign-Contd.

It is estimated that some 15 U-Boats are at sea. viz 8 German and 7 Italian. The areas of operation are approximately as follows:-

Azores & Madeira	- German	2 Italian
Cape Verde	2 (No further report)	
West of Spain (bound for Azores)		1 or 2
British Isles West & Northwest	3	4
Bay, arriving L'Orient	1	
Shetlands (Outward)	1	
North (60°N 20°W)	1	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	8	7 or 8



War Diary.

17. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

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Policy.

Methil.

Your 1007/13. Following is List of Standing Operational Orders now in force in Methil Sub-Command.(N.O.I.C. Methil 1141/17 to Adty.)

Iceland.

Adty. 2159/16. As it is understood that timely arrival of Fish Cargo in U.K. is desirable, intend to continue routing as in last paragraph of my 1732/13. (F.O. Iceland 1221/17 to Adty.)

A.M.C's.

The following steps to increase maximum Gun-Range and improve Fire-Control of A.M.C.'s are now in hand.(D.T.S.D.1840/17.)

Western Approaches.

My 2010/1 had a torpedo bomber Striking Force been at my disposal, an excellent opportunity would have occurred this afternoon of attacking a convoy off Ile Vierge reported by Pru aircraft on return from reconnaissance. (C. in C. W.A. 1854/17 to Adty.)

Defence of U.K.

"Deluge".

At 1130/17. (D.C.1154/17.) At 2330/17. (D.C. 2344/17.)

Gosport.

Net Layers MINSTER and TONBRIDGE will carry out experimental lay PM/20. (B.D.O. Gosport 1637/17 to D.B.D.)

Dungeness.
A/A.Battery.

Your 1220/15. Request assurance that Guns will remain at my disposal for a definite period.(H.O.F.O.R.S. 1133/17 to Adty.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

17. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

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Movements.

→ RODNEY.)
ESCAPADE,)
ELECTRA,)
ECLIPSE.)

Sailed Scapa 2359/16. (A.C.C.S.0251/17.)

DIDO.

Sailed Scapa 0334 (A.C.O.S.0336/17.)
Arrived (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1657/17.)

Nore Command.)
Ships out of)
Action.)

C. in C. Nore 0746/17 to Adty.)

WITHERINGTON
WITCH.

Arrived (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0900/17.)

BONAVENTURE.

Weather permitting is to arrive Greenock by 1000/18 and will be required to embark Personnel mentioned in A.M. 2112/13. (C.S.15. 0944/17.) Sailed Rosyth 2230/16. E.T.A. Greenock 0500/18. (C.in C. Rosyth 2236/16.)

CURACOA.

Arrived Scapa 0923. (A.C.O.S. 1030/17.)

RAMILLIES.
FERNIE,
CATTISTOCK.
HOLDERNESS,
CLEVELAND.

Arrived Plymouth. (C. in C.W.A. 1138/17.) Destroyers sailed 1709/17 for Patrol to Portsmouth. E.T.A. Nab. 0900/18. (C.in C.W.A. 1755/17) Please route Destroyers as follows. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1503/17 to C. in C.W.A.)

Force K.
W.S.S.A.

S.O. Force K in FORMIDABLE, with NORFOLK and 4 Destroyers, to sail from Scapa at 1700/18 to R/V. with Convoy W.S.5.A. in 54°10' N. 25°W at about 1100/22, whence Destroyers part company and return to Scapa. Route. (C. in C.HF.1159/17.)

→ RODNEY.

Arrived 1430 from Scapa. (C. in C. Rosyth 1436/17.)

NAIAD.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1459/17.)

Northern
Patrol.

Trawler Line tonight. 4 Trawlers. (A.C.O.S. 1540/17.)



War Diary.

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Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

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British Air Activity.

Patrols.

Patrol by Blenheim from Dyce to Flamborough and return being flown 0845 to 1215 today.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0818/17.)
Being flown today. ~~SA.2~~ in lieu of ~~MUGGY~~, ~~STAB~~, ~~SA.2~~, SA.2, and S.A.3. (C.in C. Rosyth 0820/17.)

A/C. Homing Trials.

Your 1436/16. The procedure outlined in para. 2 has not been standardised, but has been practised in low visibility. It has been estimated that aircraft can home on to one another at the maximum range of 20 miles.

2. 18 Group have agreed to carry out trials in accordance with para. 2 of your signal.

3. Two Hudsons will be available PM/19.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1113/17 to C. in C.H.F.)

Lorient,
Wilhelmshaven.
TIRPITZ.

Repeat tonight operations detailed for 53,59,22, and 812 Sqdns., on Night 16/17. (H.Q.C.C. 1245/17 to 16 Group Thorney Island, North Coates.)

Bordeaux.

217 Squadron to repeat tonight attack on U-Boats at Bordeaux. (H.Q.C.C. 1247/17 to 15 Group, St. Eval.)

Enemy Air Activity.

MENTOR.

(Greek, 3050 Tons.) Attacked by A/C. in 52° 51' N 14° 17' W. (MENTOR 1035/17.)

SANDA.

(British, 1028 Tons.) Arrived Belfast 1800/16. Reports bombed and machine-gunned in 55° 28' N 6° 2' W. at 0945/16 B.S.T. by one A/C. Six near misses, slight damage, no casualties. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1300/17.)

Mining.

Thames and Medway.

Closed owing to mines. (Cmdre. in Charge, Sheerness, 1001/17.)

Z.M.E.7.
ADVENTURE

Intend leave Milford Haven 1800/17 for operation Z.M.E.7, to lay at IX 2145 returning on completion about 2400.

Operation completed. (ADVENTURE 2314/17.)



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Tuesday.

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HOME COMMAND.

Mining Contd.

Stadlandet.

Your 2249/14 para.1 (B). Between 1/12 and 7/12. SUNFISH extensively covered area (details) off Stadlandet. During patrol nothing seen or took place to indicate presence of enemy mines. Before another S/M patrols anxious to know (1) is minefield referred to a German field or the British declared area, (2) if German can it be established whether these mines were laid before or after SUNFISH's first attack on 5/12. (V.A.S. 1126/17 to Admty.)

C.M. Field.

Hope to complete relaying of C.M. Field on 19/12. The two mine loops are laid. Both tested and worked well. (O.C.C.M. Party ~~1403/17~~, 1403/17.)

Nore.

1 red mine detonated 0945/17 by L.L Tugs 102^o No. 1. Yantlet Buoy 3 cables near inside. Very heavy explosion under electrode of short leg. (Capt. M/S. Sheerness 1414/17.)

Southend.
AQUEITY.
BELVEDERE.
INVER.
MALRIX.
BENEFICIENT.

M/V. AQUEITY. (Br. 370 tons.) sunk at Southend 17/12. Casualties 3 dead 1 injured. S.S. BELVEDERE (Br. 869 tons) sunk at Southend 17/12. S.S. INVER (Br. 1543 tons.) sunk at Southend 17/12. Seriously injured 1. (N.C.S.O. Thames 1641/17 to Admty.) S.S. MALRIX (Br. 703 tons.) sunk at Southend 17/12, 6 missing, believed dead, 4 injured. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 2251/17.)

CARRY ON
sunk.

(B.B. Drifter) Mined by enemy action 17/12. 7 crew (including Skipper) missing presumed killed (Comdre. I.C. Sheerness, 1718/17.)

Plymouth.

Since my 1705/8/12 one red mine detonated 210^o 8½ cables Breakwater Light at 1450. (C. in C. W.A. 1815/17)

THOMAS CONOLLY.

(Boom Working Trawler) Mined 0940/17 half mile east of No. 5 Bury charted position. (Comdre I.C. Sheerness 2150/17.)

Proposed
minefield.
Norwegian
Coast.

Your 1331/16. Concur. Additional proposals. (C. in C. H.F. 2329/17. to Admty.)

Tyne.

Following received from LEGION begins:- Have exploded acoustic mine at 2 cables, my position 054^o 57' 22" N, 001^o 09' 36" W speed 30 knots. T.O.O. 1045/17 ends. (C. in C. Rosyth 2359/17 to Admty.)



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HOME COMMANDS.

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Mining Contd.

Thames Estuary.

Following mines detonated by S.A. gear 17/12. By SUNLIGHT at 1325 320° No. 3 Medway Channel buoy 1/2 mile bearing Green 30° 50 yards. Detonation was followed immediately by explosion in approximate position 285° Nore L V 7 cables. By DELPHINUS at 1350 175° No. 1 Yantlet buoy one cable bearing ahead 3 cables and at 1403 184° No. 1. Yantlet buoy 1/2 cable bearing green 90° 1/2 cables. At 1218 two mines were observed by DELPHINUS to explode when gear not operating 000° No. 1 Yantlet buoy 6 cables. (Capt. M/S. 1714/17 to C. in C. Nore.)

Harwich.

Paddlesweepers East of Longsand Head searched 75% of area extending for 7 cables S.E. of line joining 51° 50' 7 01° 44.6' and 51° 45.1' 01° 40' 2 mines destroyed. One detonated in 51° 49.1' 01° 44.5'. One German 'W' Type mine dragged in sweep, sunk, by rifle fire. Russian type sinker recovered. (F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1825/17.)

Yarmouth.

Skid Drifters 17/12 using North Polarity detonated mine in 050° 8 1/2 cables from North Pier, entrance to Yarmouth Haven. Mine was seen to drop by parachute on morning of 14/12. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth, 1950/17 to C. in C. Nore.)

English Channel.

Dangerous area due to mines exists north five miles of position 50 degs. 31' 30" North and 001 degs. 32' 00" West. (V.A.S/Ms 2016/17 to PROTEUS).

Enemy Intelligence.

Off Weser.

At 0440/16 in 53° 40' N. 8° 20' E. A/C saw 3 large and 2 small ships apparently proceeding to Bremen. (H.Q.B.C. 1804/17 to Air Ministry.)

Heligoland Bight.

At 0452/16 in 53° 55' N. 8° E. A/C saw 3 large and 3 small stationary ships showing no lights. (H.Q.B.C. 1804/17 to Air Ministry.)

Off Yarmouth.

Suspected E-Boat near 52° 38' N. 2° 15' E. at 2135. (C. in C. Nore 2157/17 to LOWESTOFT.)

Western Channel Approach.

A/C. reports Searchlight flashed at 1912 in 49° 9' N. 5° 30' W. Investigate. (C. in C.W.A. 2233/17 to FERNIE) (V.A.S. 0026/18 to PROTEUS.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

497A

17. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

ACHERON
sunk.

Regret to report that ACHERON has been sunk following an explosion while carrying out high speed turning trials at 0640 today in approximate position 165°. Needles 8½ miles. Cause at present unknown. Some Survivors have been picked up. Further report follows.
(C. in C. Portsmouth 1053/17 to Adty.)

NORWICH CITY.

(A/S. Trawler). Tug SCHELDE proceeding to your assistance. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1807/17 to NORWICH CITY) Was in 250° Dubh Artach 5 miles at 1730 today. LADY MADELINE standing by. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2015/17 to SCHELDE.)



HOME COMMANDS.

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Shipping.

Convoys.

Estimated positions 0900/17. (D.T.D., 1158/17 to C.in C. H.F.).

F.N. 61.

Left Southend with H.M.T. SAPPHIRE 27 ships (N.C.S.O. Thames 0845/17, 1107/17).

H.X.97.

Admty. 1356/16. Sailing 1700 G.M.T./18. Route. (C.O.A.C. Halifax 1004/17 to WORCESTERSHIRE).

W.N. 53.

Arrived 1000/17. (N.C.S.O. Methil 1007/17).

S.C.17.

Prospective date of sailing. (C.O.A.C. Halifax 1150/17).

O.B.O. 260.

Sailed 0400/17, 7 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1215/17).

O.B. 263.

Route. (D.T.D. 1228/17).

H.G. 48.

Route. (D.T.D. 1229/17).

O.B. 259.

Route to avoid U/B. (C.in C. W.A. 1302/17 to SHIKARI, SCIMITAR, SKATE, ARABIS, MALLOW).

H.X.94.

List of ships not in company. (RAJPUTANA, 1653/17 to C.in C. W.A.)

F.N. 63.

Postponed 24 hours. (C.in C. Rosyth 1729/17).

S.C.16.

Date and route. ROYAL SOVEREIGN to cover to 30° W., return to Halifax. (D.T.D., 1847/17 to C.in C. W.A.).

S.L.59.

Date and route. Escort CATHAY. (D.T.D. 1856/17 to C.in C. W.A.).

S.L.S. 59.

Date and route. (D.T.D. 1857/17 to C.in C. W.A.).

O.B. 263.

Date and route. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 1900/17).

F.N. 60.

Humber 17/12 departure H.M. Tug RESTIVE at 0300, to join F.N.60 Methil for onward routeing to Campbeltown. (F.O. Humber, 0944/17).

2 M.V's.

Your 1031/16 and 1805/16. Arrival 2 M/V's escorted by RUBY and PEARL. (C.in C. Portsmouth 1203/17 to N.O.I.C. Dartmouth).

6 M.V's.

Intend to sail Group of 6 M/Vs escorted by PEARL and RUBY from Needles 1715 today for Dartmouth. 0815/18. (C.in C. Portsmouth 1243/17).

My 1243/17 sailed 1730 less one M/V. (C.in C. Portsmouth 1847/17) / O.B.262



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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.)

499

O.B. 262.

1100 on 20/12. (Route).
(N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1253/17).

F.N. 61.

Great Yarmouth 17/12 Departure H.M.Y. TARANSAY at 1335 to join F.N.61 at Sheringham Light Buoy at 0630/18. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth, 1430/17).

H.X.93.

Am not in touch with HEATHER. Request she be instructed to rendezvous with H.X.93 who should enter by North Channel about 1630 today as she will be required to escort Liverpool section. (ACTIVE 1045/17 to C.in C. W.A.).

H.X.93.

Rendezvous with H.X.93 expected to enter north Channel at 1630 today Tuesday you will be required to escort Liverpool Section. (C.in C. W.A. 1514/17 to HEATHER).

H.X.93.

R/V for H.M.S. ROSEMARY with H.X.93 B. 0700/18 in 053° 46' N. 005° 08' W. (C.in C. W.A., 1532/17 to N.O.I.C. Holyhead).

RICHMOND CASTLE.

RICHMOND CASTLE sailing 0200/18 for Cape Town. Speed of advance 15 knots. (Route).

O.B. 259.

Lost contact with O.B. 259 position, intend return Londonderry. (NORTHERN DAWN, 1645/17).

H.X.94.

Following ships are not in company with H.X.94:- WINDFLOWER, PENDEEN, SINE, WOENSDRECHT. last seen after convoy hove to in latitude 055 degs. 40' Longitude. AGRA, TRILLIUM, LA PAMPA, OAKMAN. (RAJPUTANA 1653/17 to C.in C.W.A.) .

→ W.N. 54.

1243, CURACOA sailed to cover Convoy W.N.54. (A.C.O.S. 1701/17).

SATURNUS

My 1054/12 (Re Swedish Ship SATURNUS) Immediate action and reply is requested. (N.A. Stockholm 1747/17 to Admty.)

8 M.V's.

Intend sailing at 1645/18 8 M/V's including two large tankers for Hartland Gap. Falmouth state they cannot take one of the tankers which is Diesel driven. Request necessary escort may be arranged. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth 1913/17 to C.in C.W.A.)

6 M.V's.

Intend sailing at 1730/18 6 M/Vs all loaded. Expected time of arrival Needles 0845/19. Request escort. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth, 1916/17).

→ W.N. 54.

Scapa arrival 2150 CURACOA from convoy W.N.54. (A.C.O.S. 2158/17).



HOME COMMANDS.

500

Shipping. (Contd.)

E.N. 42.

2200/17 H.M.T.'s STELLA CAPELLA, HORNPIPE. Additional escorts LONDONDERRY, TIERCEL, ALYNBANK. 7 ships. 1 for Clyde. (N.C.S.O. Methil 2230/17).

W.N. 54.

Following received at Aberdeen W/T from HUGH WALPOLE:- W.N.54 passing Rattray Head. (N.O.I.C. Aberdeen, 2020/17).

C.W. 20.

Provided escorts arrive Sheerness in time, intend to sail CW 20 from Southend at 1000/21. Timetable.

M.L.'s detailed are to be towed between Sheerness and North Goodwin, and whilst in tow engines and dynamos are not to be used. Number of M/V's in convoy 15. (C.in C. Nore 2112/17).

F.N. 62.

F.N. 62 cancelled.

VANITY and WESTMINSTER are to proceed to Rosyth independently at 0830/18. Speed not to exceed 12 knots unless attacked by aircraft until after passing Shipwash Light Vessel, thence with moderate despatch. Fighter protection will be asked for. (C.in C. Nore 2130/17).

C.in C. Nore's 2130/17.

F.N.62 will commence from 62 D buoy, VANITY and WESTMINSTER are to arrive there at 1900/18, ships from Humber to be sailed accordingly. 20 buoy 0500/19 and 20 R buoy 0800/19 for ships from Tees and Tyne.

(C.in C. Rosyth, 2303/17).

Troop Convoys.

T.C.8.

W.S.5 B.

T.C.8. comprising CAPETOWN CASTLE, PASTEUR and PENNLAND with 1500, 3100 and 2600 Canadian troops respectively are due to arrive Clyde (date).

Vessels are then to be prepared for W.S.5.B.

(D. of S.T. 0155/17 to P.S.T.O. Clyde D.S.T.O., Glasgow).

W.S. 5A.

A.T. 1823/14 and A.T. 2150/14

Cancel R/V (Y).

Route for W.S.5 A from R/V (X)

is as follows;

thence to outer end of swept channel

into Freetown. (D.O.D.(F) 0218/17

to C.in C. W.A. H.F., F.O. Force K.)

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Tuesday.War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.

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Shipping. (Contd.)W.S. 5A.

My 1711/13 amend as follows:-
W.S.5A fast, sails from Bar Light
Vessel 1700/19.
R.V. Clyde Ships. Additional secret
positions.
(N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 0949/17).

Escorts.

Intend sailing Liverpool Section W.S.5A
slow group at 1600/18 speed of advance $10\frac{1}{2}$
knots escorted by WELLINGTON, WITHERINGTON,
WITCH, CLEMATIS, JONQUIL, CYCLAMEN,
GERANIUM, RANGATIKI from Avonmouth
rendezvous in position $53^{\circ} 38' N.$
 $3^{\circ} 48' W.$ at 1700/18. Liverpool Section
rendezvous with Clyde Section, CAIRO
escort and Belfast Section and escort
in position 180 degrees Oversay 5 miles
at 0930/19. Route thence in accordance
with Admiralty's 1709/12 and 0218/17.
CLEMATIS JONQUIL CYCLAMEN and GERANIUM
to be detached as necessary to fuel at
Ponta Delgada, Azores, thence to
Sierra Leone.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1030/17 to Admt.)

Admiralty 2250/6. Convoy W.S.5A Slow.
A/S escort (A) Liverpool portion.
WITHERINGTON, WITCH, CLEMATIS, CYCLAMEN,
GERANIUM, JONQUIL.
(B) Belfast portion. VENOMOUS.
(C) Clyde portion. BATH, ST MARYS,
ST ALBANS, WORCESTER, WATCHMAN.
Senior Officer of A/S escort BATH.
A/A escort. NAIAD or (repeat) or
BONAVENTURE from Clyde. WELLINGTON
from Liverpool. CAIRO will not sail
with convoy. (C.in C. W.A., 1152/17).

W.S.5A.

Reference Western Approaches convoy
instructions A G diagram (xii) ships will
be in following position when you join
convoy.
(WELLINGTON 1914/17 to BATH).

Intend sailing Liverpool Section W.S.5A
(fast) 1700/19 speed of advance $14\frac{1}{2}$ knots
with FURIOUS escorted by KELVIN, BEVERLEY
and KIPLING to rendezvous with Clyde
Section at 0900/20 in position $56^{\circ} 08' N.$
 $7^{\circ} 30' W.$ HIGHLANDER and HARVESTER
will rendezvous from Lough Foyle. Convoy
thence in accordance with Admiralty's
1709/12 2150/14 and 0218/17.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2210/17).

LEOPOLDVILLE.

Speed 15 knots, carrying 1580 R.A.F. Naval
and Canadian personnel, will be ready to
sail from Clyde on 18/12. She will be
sailed with Convoy W.S.5(A) remaining in
company with them to R/V (X) in $25^{\circ} W$ and
thence proceeding independently to Halifax.
(D.O.D.(H) 1110/17 to C.in C. W.A.).



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Operations Against Vichy French.

COMMANDANT
DELAGE.

** No trace.*

French Sloop M/S, passed Gibraltar West to East 1030/17 escorting PALLAS. Returned East to West, escorting KAKOULIMA, SINFRA and BOREAS at 1400 (S.O.I. Gibraltar, 1435/17).

French
Shipping.
Dakar.

Following received from Navy Department, from Dakar, regular steamship service has been established between Marseilles and Dakar. If ships continue freely from (? Port) this service will be extended to Ivory Coast. It is expected also that a regular passenger service to South America will be established soon.
(N.A. Washington 1033/17 to Admty).

French
Crews.

Your 1338/16. All Seamen ex VICTORIA embarked in FRANCONIA vide my ?1824/7 and are now in U.K. CHARLES PLUMIER can not be sailed until further crew is found vide my 1724/9 (refusal of French crew to navigate ship to U.K.) since numbers of Free French and D.B.S. available here are not sufficient.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1802/17 to Admty).

French
Admiral
Mediterranean.

Your 1045/11. Owing to recent change of appointment I now have no contact with new French N.A. who has not called on me. It is confirmed, however, from Syria reliable source that Admiral Laborde is in command of French Mediterranean Fleet and is being retained although due to retire on November 29th.
(N.A. Washington 1235/17 to Admty).

CUBA.

My 1157/27/11, 1901/15 and your 1338/16. Following personnel now remain in CUBA Naval Officers and ratings, 321, ships Officers and crew 201. Request information whether further arrangements for repatriation can be expected in the near future either by Spanish or Portuguese ships.
(C. in C. S.A. 2043/17 to Admty).



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

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Tuesday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.
North Atlantic.

Azores,
Force H.

Return with your Force to Gibraltar at best convenient speed. F.O.C.N.A. is requested to recall ORANGELEAF. (D.O.D.(F), 0125/17 to F.O. Force H, F.O.C.N.A).

RENOWN, ARK ROYAL escorted by 6 destroyers left patrol off Azores a.m. 17/12 for Gibraltar. BERWICK sailed 1100/17 to patrol off Azores, route. (F.O.C.N.A. 1132/17 to CANTON, DERBYSHIRE, VELOX).

Force H. now returning to Gibraltar (V.A.S. 1551/17 to TRIDENT).

ORANGELEAF.

Position, course and speed 1200/7 (details) to Gibraltar routed through (details) (F.O.C.N.A. 0430/17 to S.O. Force H.).

Estimated position course and speed ORANGELEAF 1200/18 (details) Part company with DERBYSHIRE as requisite to R.V. with ORANGELEAF during daylight 18/12 and escort her to Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1130/17 to VELOX).

BERWICK.

Gibraltar departure 1030/17 in accordance with Admty 22 15/16 Route (S.O. (I) Gibraltar 1142/17 to Admty).

TRIDENT,
CACHALOT

TRIDENT leaves near Lands End 0100/19 G.M.T. to relieve CACHALOT routed (details). BERWICK leaves Gibraltar 17/12 for Azores patrol. My 1410/15 this force now returning Gibraltar (F.O.C.N.P. 1630/17).

Destroyers
fuelling.

Request signal your view on possibility of obtaining lee for fuelling destroyers in conditions experienced by recent Azores patrols (D.O.D. (F) 1619/17 to F.O. Force H).

/S.M. Patrol.....



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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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North Atlantic (continued).

Submarine
Patrol.

Your 1026/14 UPHOLDER, USK UNIQUE should be ordered to leave patrol and continue passage to Gibraltar after dark. 18/12 (D.O.D. (H) 2320/17 to V.A.S).

Tanker.

Your 1115/16 (tanker sighted by SUTLEJ) Submit German EUROFELD has not got a cruiser stern according to Lloyds and from a photograph, due to dark background type of stern is difficult to distinguish (S.O.(I) Gibraltar 0944/17 to Admty).

WISHART.

Gibraltar arrival 1210/17. (S.O. (I) Gibraltar 1328/17).

Daily summary
operations.

2 routine A/S patrols (200 Group 1630/17).

Malaga
Incident

My 1720/16 Transhipment of silver to Italian warships. Spanish minelayer JUPITER left Malaga during the night in question. (F.O.C.N.A. 1012/17 to Admty).

South Atlantic.

Foreign Legion
Movement.

Reply to T.2. cipher 13/12 War Office 0745/17 to No. 20 Military Mission Brazzaville).

My 2051/14 and my 1126/16 Request early confirmation that arrangements will be made to send French Legion to Freetown in TOUAREG and CAPO OLMO by (date) for transhipment and onward journey. Request you will explain to Free French authorities that NEURALIA will sail in convoy and only means of joining this is by transferring at Freetown. (C. in C. S.A. 1755 N/17 to N.C.S.O. Duala).

ELSWICK PARK.

My 0948/16. ELSWICK PARK arrived 17/12 (S.O.I. Freetown, 1038/17).

/Minesweepers.....



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (continued).

Minesweepers.

Minesweeper group 142 consisting of SOTRA, SARNA, SOIKA SVANA left Simonstown 0900/17 for Durban. E.t.a. 0400/22. (N.O.I.C. Simonstown 0903Z/17 to N.O.I.C. Durban).

NEPTUNE.

Arrivals 0800/17 NEPTUNE, flying flag of F.O.C. Force M. (S.O. (I) Freetown 1025N/17 to Admty).

DELHI.
MILFORD.

Lagos arrival 16/12 DELHI: Departure MILFORD for Freetown. (S.O. (I) Freetown 1047N/17).

NEWTON PINE.
(British 4212 tons)

Following received from NEWTON PINE begins. Position at 2200/13 G.M.T. 008° 16'N 015° 25'W torpedo attack avoided followed up by severe engagement gunfire anticipate submarine damaged after 30 minutes action. No casualties ship not damaged or splintered 2230/16 ends. (C. in C.S.A. 1226/17 to S.A. Stn. Sqdn).

A/S Vessels

My 1800/13 S.D.F. A/S vessels sailed from Durban 15/12. Date due Alexandria (S.N.O. Simonstown 1545B/17 to Admty).

NORSEMAN.

NORSEMAN leaving 0000 22'S 47° 36'W for 3° 13'S 38° 58'W. (N.C.S.O. Rio de Janeiro, 1610/17 to Admty).

Suspicious
Ship.

Your 1434/14 addressed S.O. (I) Gibraltar, Lloyds state no CAMPSA tanker was near position on that date and that they have no knowledge of any recent transfer of oilers to Spanish flag. (D.D.I.C. 1818/17 to S.O.(I) Freetown). See P.404.

CATHAY.
S.L. 59

CATHAY after refitting from 16/9 arrived Freetown 1300/15, 7 hours after convoy S.L 59 had left. Completion delayed, and further delay caused by diversion on passage and bad weather. Ship left 16/12 and will join convoy when 3 days on passage on 18/12. Evaporating arrangements unsatisfactory. Deck of dynamo room above No. 1 block tank is leaking. Also reports ballasting non complete and stability is affected. Request ship be reballasted with rock ballast as necessary and modification to evaporation plant carried out on Arrival. Vessel is required as early as possible. (C.inC.S.A. 1559/17 to Admty)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

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Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean.

Operation
M.C. 5.

Now decided that Convoy M.G. 1 is to be run to Gibraltar and that MALAYA is to accompany it to join Force H. Operation M.C.2 as amended by my 1315/15 (1407/15?) will be adhered to (exceptions). Orders for escorts. Force A (MALAYA etc). Force D (WARSPITE's screen), and M.E. 5A Convoy (C. in C. Med 1155/17, 1217/17).

OTUS
OSIRIS.

Orders for patrol, leaving Alexandria 0900/19 (Capt S.1. 0957/17).

TRUANT.
TRITON.

Routes for (V.A. Malta, 1059/17).

R.M. Group.

My 1645/13. Until R.M. Group is required for a special operation under your orders, suggest it should be deployed for service in Middle East as decided between yourself and C. in C. M.E. (D. of L.D. to C. in C. Med. 1640/17) See Med. Vol.

A.S.10.

A.S.10. arrived Piraeus 16/12 (Athens 1901/17).

Suda Bay.

Arrivals and departures (S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 1435/17).

ABINGDON
TRUANT.

ABINGDON returning due to weather. Remaining to North West of line 250° from end of searched channel. TRUANT expects to enter sanctuary in position 035° 34'N 014° 10'E about 0200/18 (V.A. Malta 1131/17 amended 1837/17).

Durazzo
bombed.

Greece. Day 15/12. A reconnaissance of Durazzo and San Giovanni Di Medua reported 11 ships between 12,000 and 15,000 tons in Durazzo 2 small cargo boats in San Giovanni Di Medua. Night 15/16th. 2 Wellingtons bombed Durazzo Harbour stating one large fire. Large explosions also caused in docks.

/Egypt.....



MOST SECRET.

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Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean. (continued).

Tobruk etc.
bombed.

Egypt. Night of 15/16th. 7 Blenheims bombed Tobruk the bombs falling among buildings in north east corner of landing ground. 16/ 12 Blenheims bombed Derna Bomba Gazala Tobruk El Gubbi El Adem and a number of enemy satellite landing grounds. Reconnaissance made of Benghazi Derna Bomba Tobruk and Maddelena - Bardia areas. 5 ships 400 feet long and several smaller ships in Benghazi. No offshore shipping. Night 16/17 11 Wellingtons attacked Bardia bombs falling on buildings north and east of harbour stating large fire near W/T station.

Sollum and
Capuzzo
occupied.

G.H.Q. M.E. report Sidi Omar Sollum and Capuzzo occupied by our troops 16/12. 10 Cr. 42's captured intact at Sollum and Capuzzo. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1241/17).

Aerodromes.

X. 742 17/12. Your O/877 13/12 Under certain circumstances aerodromes in Morea may be necessary. Will you include in your reconnaissance Argos Kalamata and any other likely areas as well as those at Araxos. (Air Ministry 1603/17 to H.Q. R.A.F.M.E.)

Air Report.
Malta.

To 1700/17. All times G.M.T. 0854 enemy aircraft approached from the north and after circling for 15 minutes about 15 miles from East Coast turned away without approaching the Island. 6 Hurricanes up no intercepting. 0911 - 1156 Sunderland 228 Squadron reconnaissance Western Ionian Sea for enemy Naval and Merchant ships. Nil report. 0707 - 1200 Glen Martin 431 Flight Photographic Reconnaissance Naples and Messina. Naples - 1 cruiser in dock between jetties western side of harbour. Approximately 11 M/V's averaging 5,000 tons in harbour. 4 M/V's entering without escort Messina - 1 cruiser anchored in harbour. 2 submarines alongside western part of harbour. 2 M/V's in harbour and 1 M/V entering harbour. 0746 - 0937 Glen Martin. Reconnaissance Taranto returned owing bad weather - nil report.

/B.B.C.....



WAR DIARY.

17.12.40.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean. (Contd.)

F.A.A.
Raids.

Intend issuing following Communique, F.A.A. Aircraft attacked Rhodes (Rodi), Stampalia and Scarpanto, on morning of 17/12 Weather conditions made observation of result difficult but some fires were seen to have been started. All of our aircraft returned.
(C.in C. Med. 1208/17).

My 1407/15. Five aircraft attacked Stampalia result difficult to observe owing to cloud but fires started. Owing to bad weather only one aircraft reached Rhodes Aerodrome which was bombed from low altitude. One aircraft bombed Scarpanto. Pamphlets were also dropped on the target. All aircraft returned.
(C.in C. Med., 1205/17 to Adty).

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Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean (continued).

Air Report
Malta. (contd).

B.B.C. announcement yesterday 16/12 that raid on Malta of 14/12 caused no damage creates undesirable impression locally that facts are being suppressed damage was reported in my 1.160 14/12. No Naval or Military items. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1700/17).

Valona.

Following is repeated for information. Military Attache Athens from Military Attache Belgrade. 14/12 Yugo Slav Government have information that Italians are organising a heavily defended bridgehead round Valona, whether to cover disembarkation reinforcements or evacuation they do not know. (1. S.L. 1918/17 to C. in C. Med).

M.C. 2.

Operation M.C. 2 GRIFFIN sailed for rendezvous 1300 zone - two. (V. A. Malta 2223/17 to C. in C. Med).

Operation
Orders.

Your 1950/17 to C. in C. (Originated by War Reg. notifying C. in C. Mediterranean parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 of signal 1315/15, also signal 1121/16, not received. Signal 1121/16 and part 5 of 1315/15 now received and circulated separately). C. in C.s. 1315/15 and 1121/16 are amendment to operation orders not held by you neither of these signals was addressed to you (R.A.L. 2246/17 to Admty).

East Indies.

B.N. 12.

Convoy B.N. 12 leaves Bombay (date) R.V. with Force Q. Red Sea R.V. (position and date) (F.O.C. R.I.N. 0438Z/17 to C. in C.E.L. CALEDON, etc).

CRICKET.

Movements in my 1148/16 postponed further signal will be made. (C. in C. E.I. 0504z/17 to F.O.C. R.I.N.).

Air Report.

Ops. Summary 190 to 1200/17. No naval items (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1242/17).

/Mombasa.....

17.12.40.
Tuesday.

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WAR DIARY.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

Mombasa.

H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. Ops. Summary No. 190 to 1200/17. para.4 Kenya 14, 15 and 16/12. S.A.A.F. made 3 patrols Mombasa reconnoitred Gaddana and El Wak areas and made one reconnaissance south of Zanzibar to investigate warship reported by coast observers. Warship identified as British. 3 Transports and 1 cruiser escorted in Mombasa. Bombs dropped by reconnaissance aircraft on El Wak.

(H.W. R.A.F. M.E. 1243/17).

HOBART.
CAPETOWN.

My 2312/16 HOBART now proceeding 20 knots to conserve fuel and will arrive $000^{\circ} 070^{\circ} E.$, about 0015Z/18 CAPETOWN will arrive $000^{\circ} 067^{\circ} E.$, about 2⁰⁰00Z/17. (C.in C. E.I. 0514Z/17 to Force V).

My 2312/16 if no further information of raider is received HOBART and CAPETOWN to reduce to economical speed on arrival respective positions on Equator and then proceed as follows, HOBART give cover to shipping E. of $068^{\circ} E.$, adjusting movements to arrive Addu Atoll for fuel about 0530Z/19. CAPETOWN search around $000^{\circ} 10'S.$, $065^{\circ} 50'E$ which is estimated position CITY OF CAIRO at 1520Z/16. Give cover to shipping East of $065^{\circ} E.$, and adjust movements to arrive Addu about 0530X/20. Should opportunity arise of concerted action against raider HOBART at once take CAPETOWN under his orders. Keep good look out for wreckage.

(C.in C. E.I. 1244Z/17 to Force V.)

ANTENOR.

My 2312/16 (disposition of ships) ANTENOR to form part Force V. ANTENOR left Colombo at 0400Z/17 for $002^{\circ} 10'N.$, 081° and then proceed to $005^{\circ} N.$, 092° . (C.in C. E.I. 0518Z/17 to E.I. Sqdn.)

Colombo departure 0410Z/17 ANTENOR.
(S.O.(I) Colombo 0520Z/17 to Adty).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

17.12.40.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

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DAUNTLESS.

My 0518/17 DAUNTLESS to form part of Force V. DAUNTLESS in approx. 006° N., 090° at 0900Z/17 is establishing a patrol to westward of Achin Head.
(C.in C. E.I. 0948/17 to E.I.Sqdn.)

At 1630Z/17. DAUNTLESS then in about 006° N., 092° E., to proceed towards Dondra Head at 15 knots for 24 hours, giving cover to SOMALI and other shipping. Then to proceed towards Achin Head at 12 knots.
(C.in C. E.I. 1354Z/17 to Force V.)

YARRA.

Departure YARRA 2005Z/17 for W.S. 4.A.
(N.O.I.C. Aden 1025Z/17 to Adty).

Troop
Transport.

Your 0430/14 in addition to two ships mentioned in my 1234/11 three more suitable ships could be made available by replacing them by four British India Ships. These would have requisitioned and fitted out and would not be entirely suitable for British Troops.
(S.S.T.O. Bombay 1315/17 to D. of S.T.)

CARLISLE.
INDUS.

Arrival 0500Z/17 CARLISLE. Departure 0855Z/17 INDUS for B.S.10 $\frac{1}{2}$ and W.S.4A.
(N.O.I.C. Aden 0917/17 to Adty).

PERTH
KINGSTON
B.S.10 $\frac{1}{2}$.

Arrived 1300Z/17 PERTH; 1400Z/17 KINGSTON and Aden ships from B.S.10 $\frac{1}{2}$.
(N.O.I.C. Aden 1405Z/17).

Convoy
B.N.11.

Departures 2300Z/17 CALEDON, AUCKLAND, FLAMINGO, SHOREHAM with convoy B.N.11.
(N.O.I.C. ²³¹²2312/17 to Red Sea Force).

17.12.40.
Tuesday.

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WAR DIARY.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

EAST INDIES.

Assab
Attacks.

Summary No. 188 for 24 hours ending 1500/17. Following 28 Squadron night sorties attacked Assab. At 2015 1 Blenheim to piers numbers 1 and 2 medium Level Salvoes fell in each target area. 1330 1 Blenheim 8 Squadron made bombing and propaganda raid Assab. All bombs hung up due electrical failure. In above 2 raids 2000 Arabic and 500 Italian pamphlets briefly notifying fall of Sollum and Capuzzo dropped at Berbera Burao Hargeisa Zeilah and Assab water front.
(A.H.Q. Aden, 1836/17).

America and West Indies.

Troop
Convoys.

Details embarked 0800/16 in CAPETOWN CASTLE, PENNLAND, PASTEUR.
(C.O.A.C. Halifax 0253/17).

PORPOISE
MONTCLARE.

Arrival 17/12 PORPOISE from U.K. MONTCLARE from H.X.92.
(S.O.(I) Halifax 1045/17).

ANTHEA
MAASDAM,
collision
8/12.

Your 1357/16. At 0300/8 in position 048° 44' N., 046° 37' W., MAASDAM course 238 ran into convoy H.X.93. course 35° and collided with ANTHEA. Crew of latter vessel were taken off by MAASDAM and vessel abandoned in sinking condition. MAASDAM was unable to stand by owing to weather. Master of ANTHEA reports all books were left on board. Position is on convoy track but derelict has not since been reported and is presumed sunk.
(C.O.A.C. Halifax, 1558/17 to Adty).

"Town"
Destroyers.

Halifax departure 17/12 WELLS, NEWARK for St. John N.B.
(S.O.(I) Halifax, 1640/17).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

17.12.40.
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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (Contd) **513**

M.V.
Armament.

My 1051/24/8. Allied ships particularly Norwegian and Greek continue to show reluctance to sail without armament. VANJA was advised to refuse to sail without armament by Norwegian Controller of Shipping New York. Consider supply of A.A. Machine Guns to these unarmed ships is of utmost importance. N.O.I.C. Bermuda's 1147/7. Request early information as to shipment of Hotchkiss machine guns to Bermuda.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 1756/17 to Adty).

Australia.

TRIASTER.
VINNI.
TRIONA.

Your 2203/12 and N.B. 1829/12. Nothing further known of TRIASTER, VINNI, AND TRIONA. Moorings at Nauru carried away in gale 8/12 loading impossible until they have been replaced. Anticipate TRIENZA with new moorings and food supplies will arrive Nauru escorted by MANOORA (date)
(A. C.N.B. 0300/17/Z to Adty).

Nauru
Moorings.

My 0300Z/17. Requested that no ships be sailed for Nauru until moorings have been replaced and protective measures for shipping to and loading at Nauru have been arranged by A.C.N.B.
(A.C.N.B. 0305Z/17 to C.in C. China.)
(Cancelled by 0608/5/5/1941)

Nauru
Raided.

Pass to Phoscom Cheltenham from Poscem Melbourne number 21. Please communicate to (relatives). Enemy raider seen near Nauru 8/12 attacking shipping detained there by bad weather a ship seen burning no information whether crew passengers transferred to raider. All ships near Island ordered to proceed direct to safe Port. No Further news yet except arrival safely to Port of one ship not owned by Commissioners.
(D.N.O. Victoria 0955Z/17 to Adty).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

17.12.40.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia (Contd.)
America and West Indies. (Contd.) 514

Nauru
Raided.
(Contd.)

72.

Pass to Poscem Cheltenham from Phoscem Melbourne No. 22. TITOKI 13th SILKSWORTH 15th at Suva, KOMATA wreckage washed up Ocean Island, no news yet of TRIASTER TRIONA VINNI. As EVINOS in bad order, suggest discharging cargo Risdon/Port Kembla without further delay, when repaired, return loaded for U.K. (D.N.O. Victoria, 0957Z/17 to Admty).

Merchant
Ship W/T.

Admty. message D.W. and Notice to Mariners 2779/1939. Many British Merchant ships still arriving in Australia with undesirable type of W/T receivers. A.C.N.B. has had to adopt policy of refusing permission to sail until undesirable types of receivers have been modified, replaced, or removed. Action also being taken to reduce excessive numbers of private and other entertainment receivers installed. QUEEN MARY on last arrival in Australia had over 200 private receivers installed, of which a considerable proportion was of undesirable types. (A.C.N.B. 1056/17 to Adty).

MANOORA.

MANOORA left ^{Gavanium} ~~CHANDLER~~ Harbour 2232Z/15 for Darwin. (A.C.N.B. 1423/17 to Adty).

Unidentified
Seaplane.

Unidentified seaplane similar to Heinkel 114 sighted by Coastal Defence Post (Officer and man) at 15,000 feet above Sydney 0640Z/17. Disappeared on course 90° (Grading B.one) Searching aircraft reported sighting object like S/M in 034° 17'S., 152° 16' E., at 1912Z sighted three times in 18 minutes. (Grading C.4.) (A.C.N.B. 2359Z/17 to Adty.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

17.12.1940.
Tuesday.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

515

BADEN.

Left Teneriffe 0400/16. (F.O.C.N.A. 1207/17).
Description (F.O.C.N.A. 1257/17).

NORBURG
DELOS

Arrived Macrae, Galatz, 1056/17).

IDARWALD

My 1551/15. For RIO GRANDE read
IDARWALD (ships succumbed). (C.in C. S.A.,
0955 N/17).

ITHAKA

Arrived Trebizond 20/12. Reported she will
discharge war materiel in transit to
Persia and load cotton for Germany.
(S.O.I. Alexandria 1542/17 to Admty. etc.).

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Tuesday.

War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

516

H.X.90.
(attacked 2/12)

My 0191 of 9/12 concerning H.X.90. Further evidence from Captain Mac Millan of MODAVIA confirms beyond doubt that he sighted part of U.Boat at 1630/2 observed through binoculars at range 5 cables. Several observers confirm this was not conning tower but may have been bow. U.Boat was stationary, unstable and apparently in distress. Possibly making vain attempt to surface. (Capt. D. Liverpool, 1627/17).

WESTERN PRINCE.

What is reply to my 2201/14. (Whether Mr. Howe, Canadian Minister of Munition and Staff among survivors picked up by BARON KINAIRD). (D.C. 1515/17 to ACTIVE).

Request early confirmation of reported safety of Mr. Howe, Canadian Minister of Munitions, and party. (C.N.S. Canada, 1543/17 to N.O.I.C. Greenock).

ROTORUA
(sunk, 11/12)
signals.

Following is a portion of Capt. D. Liverpool's 1805/16. (Sinking of S.S. ROTORUA (H.X. 92) by U-Boat at 1315/11 in position 58 deg. 56' N. 11 deg. 08' W., re signals). Request signal officer on your staff may assist N.C.S.O. in investigating question of signals passed via CARDITA with particular reference to wave on which these were passed and whether receipts were obtained. (D.S.D. to F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1540/17)

Submarines Attacked.

1140.

ACTIVE and ANTELOPE attacking firm contact in position 055° 38' N. (?008°) 30' West. (ACTIVE 1140/17, to C.in C. W.A.).

My 1140/17. 8 attacks were carried out but target was in same position for last 3 attacks giving the idea S/M was on the bottom or contact was on a wreck. After receiving A/C report am of the opinion S/M may be damaged and surfaced in reported position. Am continuing hunt. (ACTIVE, 1600/17).

Your 1600. It now appears that Aircraft report was originated as a result of seeing you and ANTELOPE investigating a contact. Use an electrically fired depth charge if weather permits. (C.in C. W.A., 1816/17 to ACTIVE).

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Tuesday.



War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

517

Submarines Reported.

0103.

60°N., 18 - 22° W., indefinite position
 (D.S. 469).

2007.

D.F. bearings indicate U/B (Italian) south
 of 46° N., and east of 05° W. (V.A.S.,
 2038/17).

Am over enemy submarine in position
 55° 55' N., 7° 25' W.
 (A/C 1225/17, to Aldergrove).

Air reports enemy submarine in position
 055° 55' North 007° 25' West at 1225.
 (C.in C. W.A. 1316/17 to W.A. Command,
 ACTIVE).

Am proceeding to investigate enemy S/M
 reported in C.in C., Western Approaches.
 1316/17. Have left ANEMONE with S/M. H.32.
 (SARDONYX 1410/17 to N.O.I.C. Londonderry).

Estimated U/B
 dispositions.

Italian 1 to westward of Madeira
 1 near Azores
 1 or 2 may be about 40° N. 18° W.
 possibly bound for Azores Area.
 1 about 50° N. 15° W. outward
 bound.
 3 were between 54° 30' N. and
 56° N. 16° W. and 19° W.
 P.M./16th.

German No further report of the two
 between Equator and Cape de Verde
 Islands.
 1 may arrive Lorient P.M. to-day.
 1 possibly still north of 55° N.
 east of 12° W.
 1 between 58° N. and 59° N. about
 17° W.
 1 north of 57° N. west of 22° W.
 1 about 60° N. 20° W.
 1 may be off Muckle Flugga outward
 bound.

(D.D.I.C. 1311/17, V.A.S. 1504/17,
 F.O.C.N.P. 1721/17).

1. The arrangement of the War Diary is as follows:-


- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| HOME COMMANDS | - Policy |
| (Classification | - Defence of United Kingdom |
| by subjects) | - Movements |
| | - Operations |
| | - Allied Air Activity |
| | - Enemy Air Activity |
| | - Mining |
| | - Enemy Intelligence |
| | - U-Boats |
| | - Navigational |
| | - Technical |
| | - Casualties and Defects |
| | - Shipping and Convoys |
| FOREIGN STATIONS | - North Atlantic |
| (Classification | - South Atlantic |
| by stations) | - Mediterranean |
| | - East Indies |
| | - America and West Indies |
| | - Australia and New Zealand |
| | - U-Boat Campaign |

Additional subject headings are sometimes employed temporarily, e.g. when an important operation is in progress.

2. The following volumes should be used to supplement the War Diary: the dates given in brackets are those on which the series held by War Diary commences:-

- (a) Movements of H.M. Ships (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (23 February 1940).
- (b) Western Approaches (daily) Situation Reports (1 September 1943).
- (c) Dispositions and Movements (Foreign Stations) (1 September 1943).
- (d) Convoy Returns (Positions of convoys and composition of escorts, positions of independent ships and H.M. ships: from Combined Plot) (1 March 1941).
- (e) Daily Convoy Summary (Report made by Admiralty to Connav, giving arrivals and departures, with composition of convoy) (21 June 1943).
- (f) Air Staff Operational Summary (prepared by Air Ministry War Room) (1 July 1941, No.222)
- (g) Daily Operations Report for First Lord (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (13 September 1939).
- (h) List of abbreviations.
- (i) List of Convoy letters.

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18.12.1940
Wednesday
War DiarySITUATION REPORTHome Commands

C. in C., H.F. in NELSON, with HOOD, REPULSE 5 cruisers and 10 destroyers left Scapa at ~~1845~~ this ~~evening~~ to carry out tactical Exercises S.W. of the Faroe Islands.

At 0330 this morning M.T.B's 29, 31 and 32 on patrol off the Belgian coast sighted a M/V in ballast of from 6000 to 7000 tons one mile from Nieuwe Sluis. M.T.B's 29 and 32 fired one torpedo each; both torpedoes hit; and the M/V was seen to sink. M.T.B. 31 also fired one torpedo at a Guard ship of Trawler type further inshore; an explosion was heard; and the Guard ship ceased to fire. No casualties or damage occurred to any of the M.T.B's.

Two British M/V's were attacked by enemy aircraft at 0847 and 0900 this morning respectively in the Irish Sea about 30 miles S.W. of the Isle of Man; and an aircraft of unknown nationality was reported to be flying south-westwards over County Cork at about the same time.

In addition to the Mines which sank 7 vessels yesterday in the Sheerness-Southend area, C. in C., Nore reports today that a number of spontaneous explosions occurred in the same area yesterday, one explosion being sometimes followed immediately by another. The port of Belfast was closed this morning at 0442 on account of suspected minelaying by aircraft, but was re-opened at 1314 for the use of the swept channel only. The M/S Trawler REFUNDO was sunk off Harwich by a small Ground Mine at 1355 this afternoon; and a Mine was exploded just before midnight about 4 miles 110° from Spurn Point Lighthouse.

The French, but British-manned, Destroyer MISTRAL arrived at Dartmouth this evening with 3 survivors from the BRANLEBAS; which from the survivors' accounts, appears to have broken in half at about 1910 on Saturday evening near the Lands End, though N.O.I.C. Dartmouth considers it more likely that the loss occurred off the Lizard.



War Diary

18.12.1940
Wednesday

SITUATION REPORT

Vichy French

French
Convoy

French COMMANDANT DELAGE (M/S sloop) passed Gibraltar eastbound this morning escorting the French merchant ships VENDEMIAN and LORRAINE.

North Atlantic

Submarines

Submarines UPHOLDER, UNIQUE and USK were ordered to leave their patrols in the Bay of Biscay this evening for Gibraltar and will be considered as entering the North Atlantic Command from 0001/21.

South Atlantic

Libreville
Report

Until DRAGON and DUNEDIN become available, Admiralty agree that the Duala Patrol must be vacated temporarily owing to other commitments.

Raider

The British DUQUESA, 8651 tons, Montevideo to Freetown and U.K., reported at 1400Z that she was being shelled by an enemy raider about 700 miles S.W. of Freetown. Her signal, although incompletely received, indicated that the raider was the ADMIRAL SCHEER. S.O., Force M., with NEPTUNE and DORSETSHIRE, was ordered to 08° N., 21° W to cover trade routes to north and north eastward, and left Freetown at 1700. These 2 cruisers have been placed at the disposal of C. in C., S.A., for raider hunting until further orders. HERMES and DRAGON were ordered to St. Helena with despatch to fuel, and ENTERPRISE to re-join R.A., South America Division in 28° S., 43° W.,



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SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean

Adriatic
Sweep

V.A.L.F. in ORION with 3 destroyers made a sweep into the Adriatic as far as the line Bari- Durazzo this evening but sighted nothing. C. in C., Mediterranean, proceeded up the Straits of Otranto in support.

Submarines
Lost

Submarines NARVAL (French) and TRITON are 50 and 30 hours overdue respectively and must be considered lost. NARVAL left Malta 2/12 to patrol westward of Lampedusa and TRITON on 28/11 for patrol in the Southern Adriatic.

TRUANT
Attacks

S/M TRUANT reports on the night of 13-14/12 she sank certainly one and possibly two laden merchant vessels off Spartivento, escorted by a sloop. On the night of 15-16/12, she sank a large southbound tanker off Colonne, accompanied by the Italian CARALIS, which escaped.

U-Boat Campaign

WORCESTER^{SHIRE} (A.M.C.) reports that about 8 rounds were fired at her in moonlight at 0650 this morning by an enemy vessel, believed to be a U-Boat, about 360 miles west of Blacksod Bay. There were no hits.



War Diary.

18. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

All B-Class.
Destroyers
to Home
Fleet.

When ready for service BOREAS and BOADICEA are to be sailed to join Home Fleet.

2. All B class destroyers are to be transferred to the Home Fleet and DOUGLAS, KEPPEL and VIMY transferred to the Western Approaches as convenient to C. in C. and C. in C. H.F.

3. WIVERN, WILDSWAN, VANSITTART and WITHERINGTON are to be transferred to the command of C. in C. Portsmouth, WITHERINGTON now and the remainder on relief in Western Approaches by WITCH, VANOC and VOLUNTEER. (A.C.N.S. H. 1543/18.)

5th D.F.

To be transferred to administration of C in C. W.A. on 1/1/41. (A.C.N.S. H. 1553/18.)

Allocation
of
Destroyers.

On completion of duty with W.S.5(A) WORCESTER and VESPER, should rejoin Nore Command and WITHERINGTON Portsmouth Command.

2. WITCH should remain under command of C. in C. Western Approaches in accordance with my 1543/18.

3. VENOMOUS and WATCHMAN are to be transferred to command of C. in C. in exchange for EXMOOR and PYTCHLEY who have joined C. in C. Nore. (A.C.N.S. H. 1600/18.)

U.S. Naval
Observers
in H.M.
Ships.

Following instructions as to information to be afforded replace those in A.M. 2327/24/10. (Head of M.1606/18.)

Defence of U.K.

"Deluge"
Ships.

At 1130/18. (D.C.1200/18.) At 2330/18. (D.C. 2331/18.)

Movements.

JERSEY.)
JUPITER)

Sailed Plymouth 1035/17. (C. in C.W.A. 0012/18) To R/V with PUNJABI area 2.2 miles. Rame Head Chapel at 1700. (C. in C.W.A. 1255/18.) *See also p 523*



War Diary.

18. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. Contd.

> ESCAPADE,
ELECTRA.
ECLIPSE.

Arrived Scapa 0100/18.

BONAVENTURE.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0731/18.)

NIAGARA.

Sailed 0630 as by C. in C. W.A. 1636/12.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0802/18.)

Home Fleet.

My 1159/17. Intend to sail in NELSON, with HOOD, REPULSE, 5 Cruisers, and 10 Destroyers at 1600/18 to carry out Tactical Exercises. Fleet will proceed towards 59° 30' N. 11° 40' W. at 16 knots weather permitting. FO. Force K requested to arrange programme of R/C and Shadowing exercises and dummy Air Attacks on Fleet between 1030/19 and 1215/19, and to provide A/S Escort for Fleet from 1030/19 to 1230/19. On completion Force K to proceed in execution of previous orders. C. in C. Rosyth provide A/S Air Escort from 1230/19 till dark. Position at 1230/19 will be 59° 40' N. 12° 40' W. Fleet will return to Scapa about 1200/20. (C. in C.H.F. 0904/18 to F.O. Force K. HOOD with C.S.2 and ARETHUSA are joining me in position 000° Dunnet Head 3 miles and NIGERIA joining F.O.C. 18th C.S. in position 315° Dunnet Head Eastbound at 1645, Swept Channel C. 16 knots. Course from end 282° (C. in C.H.F. 1120/18 to F.O.C. 1st. B.C.S.) Scapa departure 1540 NELSON. HOOD. and REPULSE with MANCHESTER, EDINBURGH, NIGERIA. ARETHUSA and AURORA screened by COSSACK. TARTAR. BEAGLE. ESCAPADE, ELECTRA, ECLIPSE. DOUGLAS. SIKH, BRILLIANT, BULLDOG. (A.C.O.S. 1815/18 to Adty.)

FERNIE,
CLEVELAND.
CATTISTOCK,
HOLDERNESS.

Your 1330/17. Arrived. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1013/18 to A.C.W.A.)

ACHATES,
ANTELOPE,
ACTIVE.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1018/18.)



War Diary.

18. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. Contd.

VIMY
SALOPIAN.

Proceed passing Switha 2000 to-day to R/V in 061° 00' N. 015° 30' W. at 1200/20 with SALOPIAN. SALOPIAN leaves Reykjavik a.m./19 for Clyde routed through Minch speed of advance 15½ knots. Provide escort to Butt of Lewis. When released return to Scapa. (R.A.D. HF. 1031/18 and 1718/18 to VIMY. SALOPIAN arrived 1610 G.M.T. (F.O. Iceland 2230/18) VIMY sailed 2023/18. (A.C.O.S. 1135/19.)

FURIOUS.

For information. On arrival at Liverpool on 15th December FURIOUS had only 100 tons I.E. 2.6 per cent of usable fuel remaining. Route now ordered for W.S.5A. will necessitate FURIOUS not exceeding 10½ knots from position X" and, except with head wind, flying only in emergency. (FURIOUS 1500/18 to Adty.)

Northern Patrol.

Trawler lines tonight. 4 Trawlers. (A.C.O.S. 1521/18.)

ARGUS.

Intends carry out Flying Operations tomorrow as programme had to be abandoned today owing to weather. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1640/18.)

VULCAN.

Request you sail for Portsmouth where she is to be prepared for special service. (D.O.D. H. 1744/18 to C. in C Nore.)

FORMIDABLE.
NORFOLK.

Departed Scapa 2007, screened by BEDOUIN, MATABELE, MASHONA, and ESKIMO (A.C.O.S. 2019/18.)

Dutch and
Belgian
Coasts.

Operations.
Arrived M.T.B's 29,31,32 at 1022. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1030/18.)



War Diary.

18. 12. 40.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Operations Contd.Enemy M/V.
torpedoed.

Your 1048/17/12. Coast was made at Zeebrugge, closed to 1 mile from shore. Sighting nothing, altered course for Flushing Roads. Visibility which had been good deteriorated to about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. At 0330 a large M/V was sighted 000 degrees 1 mile from Nieuwe Sluis, M.T.B.'s 32 and 29 opened out to northward and fired a torpedo each. Both hit, M/V was seen to break up and sink. Heavy machine gun from M/V opened fire, without hitting, just before M/V sunk. On retiring 32 sighted guard boat of trawler type and fired a torpedo which missed, but guard boat was seen to be hit by machine gun fire. M.T.B. 32 then disengaged to seaward with 29 M.T.B. 31 seeing M/V torpedoed, proceeded up the Roads and became engaged with guard ships. A torpedo was fired at 1 of trawler type, an explosion was felt and guard ship ceased fire, 31 then disengaged and retired with 32. Estimated M/V was 6,000 to 7,000 tons in ballast. No casualties or damage, but 31's engine room partially flooded from unknown cause. Her second torpedo was jettisoned to lighten boat on this account.
(BEEHIVE 1120/18.0C. in C. Nore.)
(C. in C. Nore 1606/18 to Adty.)

Operation.
P.V.3.

Will be carried out tonight commencing at 2000. Tracks in 40 Q.Z.S., 20 miles each side of Smith's Knoll Light Float.
(C. in C. Nore 1249/18.) Cancelled tonight
(C. in C. Nore 1605/18.)

Western
Channel.

PUNJABI, JERSEY, JUPITER to patrol tonight between 4° W and 6° W, on about 49° 45' N., returning to arrive 2.2 miles South of Rame Head Chapel at 1030/19. To destroy any Enemy Vessels approaching Coast. (C. in C. W.A. 1534/18 to JERSEY.)
See p. 520

WELLARD.

Proceed so as to be at 1500/19 in 055° 77 miles from your noon 18th position. Patrol in the vicinity till dark then if nothing met return to base.
(C. in C. WA. 1914/18 to WELLARD.)

Operation "Specimen".

Zero day for Operation ^{"Specimen"} (PEGASUS) is 19/12.
(H.Q.F.C. 1915/18.)



War Diary.

18. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Submarines.

TRIBUNE. Movements. (S.2. 1021/18.) (V.A.S. 1024/18 to S.2). (S.2. 1905/18.)

PROTEUS. To be transferred temporarily to 5th Flotilla from date of arrival in U.K. (V.A.S. 1033/18.)

RUBIS. Arrived Dundee (S.9. 1237/18.)

O.23. Movements (S.9. 1403/18.) Exercises cancelled. Proceed to execute previous orders. (S.9. 1417/18 to O.23).

L.23. In Scapa Flow tomorrow. (A.C.O.S. 1603/18.)

Greenock Area. Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1636/18.)

Positions. For following 24 hours at 0800/19. (V.A.S. 1821/18.)

British Air Activity.

Patrols. Following Patrols being flown today. (C. in C. Rosyth 0002/18.) My 0002/18. ~~My 0002/18.~~ ~~S.9.~~ all cancelled, and ~~My 0002/18.~~ and ~~S.9.~~, not being flown today. (C. in C. Rosyth 1254/18 to C. in C. H.F.) Patrol S.T.I. for AM/18 abandoned. S.T.2. at 0950/19 and ST.1. at 1400/19. (C.O. N.A.S. Stonoway 1412/18 to A.C.O.S.)

Norwegian Coast. Offensive Patrol. If weather suitable propose carrying out our offensive patrol against enemy shipping in the vicinity of Haugesund and Bommel Fjord with 4 Skuas leaving Hatston 1100/19. (Hatston 1056/18 to A.C.O.S.) Your 1056/18. Approved. (A.C.O.S 1721/18. to Hatston.)

Kite in TONBRIDGE. Approval is given to C. in C. Portsmouth's proposal to fly one Kite up to 3,500 feet from TONBRIDGE between 1000 and 1200 hours on 19/12 in West Solent Area. Kite not to be flown if cloud base is below 1000' and visibility is less than 1500 yards. Warn Pilots. (Air Ministry F.O.6.1130/18 to H.Q.B.C.)



War Diary.

18. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

Hatston.

Your 1523/15. Against an initial equipment of 20 aircraft 42 and 22 squadrons at present each hold 18 Beauforts. In view of ease of reinforcing 42 squadron (2 hour flight) considered unnecessary to send detachment 22 squadron until situation demands it. Emphasise in addition that all coastal command aircraft on patrol are available for attack of fleeting target. (Air Ministry 1220/18 to Adty.)

~~GILBERT~~ "Silent"
~~Escorts.~~ "Sinker"
Escorts.

Your 1100/18. Request you will inform me in what areas in Irish Sea and North Channel Fighter, Escort can be provided for ~~Escorts~~ and ~~Sinker~~ on 19th. (C. in C. W.A. 1306/18 to H.Q.F.C.)

TIRPITZ.)
Lorient)
Brest.)

22 Sqn. to attack TIRPITZ tonight at Wilhelmshaven.
53 Sqn. to attack S/M's at Lorient.
59 Sqn., to attack S/M's and Dockyard at Brest. (H.Q.C.C. 1315/18 to 16 Group, North Coates, Thorney Island.)

Bordeaux.

217 Sqn. to attack S/M's in Basin tonight. (H.Q.C.C. 1411/18 to 15 Group St. Eval.)

Torpedo Bomber.

Your 1854/17. No. 42 Squadron is at Wick and not yet up to operational strength. No. 22. Squadron is in the Wash Area. These 2 squadrons are the only R.A.F. squadrons trained for T/B attacks, and may have to reinforce each other.

Striking Force at Plymouth.

Fleet Air Arm squadrons when available are employed on minelaying duties, but at times obtain squadrons awaiting embarkation may be available as a torpedo bomber striking force. At present time no Fleet Air Arm Squadron is so available.

When the necessary R.A.F. personnel has been trained to drop torpedoes it is hoped that a torpedo bomber striking force will be based conveniently for use in the Plymouth area. In the mean time it will be necessary to make the best use possible of aircraft with their bomb armaments. (V.C.N.S. 2204/18 to C. in C.W.A.)

Enemy Air Activity.

TWEED.

(British, 2697 Tons.) Bombed and machine-gunned in 53 40' N. 5 W. Hit in No. 1. Hold. (Cleethorpes W/T. 0847/18.)

War Diary.18. 12. 40.
Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Enemy Air Activity. Contd.CAMBRIA.

(British, 436 Tons.) Attacked by A/C in 53° 20' N. 5° 30' W. (Portland Radio 0900/18.)

Unknown
A/C over
County
Cork.

Aircraft of unknown nationality passed over Castle Freake at 0840 hrs. going south west, over Dunmanway. 0840 hrs., over Ballingearry 0845 hrs., over Galley Head 0845 hrs. (Received at 0845. C. in C.W.A. 0911/18. to Adty.)

KERNERVEL.

(Trawler) Repeatedly attacked by A/C. at 1700/8/12 while fishing 20 miles S.S.E. of Fastnet. No damage or casualties. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1132/18.)

Mining.Thames Estuary.

Following 7 vessels sunk yesterday by Mines in Sheerness/Southend area. A number of spontaneous explosions of mines occurred during the day, one explosion being sometimes followed immediately by another. (C. in C. Nore 0034/18 to Adty.)

Belfast.

Closed. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 0442/18.)
Open. Ships must not leave Swept Channel (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1314/18.)

TEVIOT BANK.
ICARUS.

Arrived 1050. (F.O. Humber 1105/18.)

INTREPID
ICARUS.

My 1331/16. To disembark Guns at Immingham and be ready to sail for Scapa by 22/12 having embarked Mining Huts, Taut Wire Gear, and full outfit of Mines. Details of Mines (A.C.N.S.H. 1137/18 to C. in C. Nore.)

Dover Area
sweep.

269. Sweeping carried out to 0800/18th December. In Q.Z.S. 105 area to Westward of 'A' and No. 4 buoys extended 2 cables 75 per cent also 40 per cent searching sweep from Lydd float to S.W. gate. Negative result 40 per cent exploratory sweep between number 4 and Sandhead buoys found one mine and 5 explosive cutters. (V.A. Dover 1225/18.)



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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Q.Z.X.42.

I consider it most unlikely that Moored Mines now exist in Q.Z.X. 42 if indeed they ever existed, and suggest Q.Z.X.42 be cancelled. Reasons. Also consider that Mines about to be laid off this Coast should be laid well inside the 100 fathom line. (V.A.S. 1638/18 to Adty.)

W.(C. in C. H.F. 2329/17.)

REFUNDO.

(M/S. Trawler). Sunk by small Ground Mine at 1355/18. B.S.T. in 51° 55' 36" N. 1° 21' 12"E. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1752/18)

Harwich
~~Harwich~~
Area
Sweep.

Intend sailing 6 Fleetsweepers at 1630 on 19th or 20th December to carry out night search of 117 Q.Z.S. Sweeping to commence at S.Falls at approx. 0500 the following morning, ships arriving position 'X' at 0815.

(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1944/18. to C. in C. Nore)

Spurn Point.

At 1032/18. D.W.Fitzgerald exploded a Mine in 110° Spurn Point Lighthouse 4 miles with S.A. gear. (F.O.Humber 2335/18 to Adty.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Thames Estuary.

Believed E-Boats at 2325 near No. 56 Buoy, steering Eastwards. (C.in C. Nore 0023/18.)

Suspicious Vessel.

Suspicious vessel 059° 34' North 016° 47' West, steering varying course, high speed for type - timber carrier. Foremast stepped well forward funnel close abaft bridge. Found with Dutch WOENSDRECHT and made off on approach. (MARON 1240/18 to C. in C.W.A.) Had WOENSDRECHT anything to report about suspicious vessel. (C.in C.W.A. 1504/18 to MARON.)

Your 1504/18. WOENSDRECHT suspicious. Reported to be bound for Oban. No chart. Request instructions. (MARON 1900/18 to C. in C.W.A.)

Your 1900/18. Proceed to execute previous orders. (C.in C.W.A. 1410/19 to MARON.)

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Wednesday.HOME COMMANDS.Technical.

M/F. D/F.
in
Destroyers.

Your 1818/14. M/F D/F has proved valuable in destroyers navigation and for effecting rendezvous with ships or A/C. I would, therefore, deprecate its permanent removal and recommend every effort be made to retain it even if only a small set as fitted in merchant ships. Request further particulars of the factors which might necessitate its removal. (C. in C.H.F. 1130/13 to Adty.)

Casualties & Defects.CLAUDIUS MAGNIN.

(British, 2310 Tons.) Broken down between 20.D. and 20.E. Buoys. Tug WATERMEYER sailed to tow to Tyne. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1618 to Adty.)

NORWICH CITY.

(A/S. Trawler) In 100° Skerryvore 5 miles at 0100/18. Proceed there with all despatch (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0214/18 to Tug SCHELDE) SCHELDE reports ship in tow at 1055 (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1210/18.) Proceed to Clyde with NORWICH CITY (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1800/18 to SCHELDE). Arrived in tow of SCHELDE. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1732/19.)

EMPIRE ELK.

At 0800 in 040° Rathlin Island 3 miles proceeding with EMPIRE ELK towards Rothesay Bay. (ENGLISHMAN 0810/18 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.) Arrived in tow of ENGLISHMAN and SUPERMAN. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2215/19.)

MARAUDER.

(Rescue Tug) Requires dockyard repairs. Being sailed PM/18 as by your 1722/16. (N.C.I.C. Stornoway 1034/18 to N.C.I.C. Greenock.)

BRANLEBAS.

Following received from MISTRAL. Have picked up three survivors from French ~~8-8~~ BRANLEBAS foundered 0900 Saturday 14th. (C. in C. W.A. 1216/18 to Adty.)

French destroyer MISTRAL on passage Plymouth - Dartmouth picked up 3 survivors from BRANLEBAS, apparently foundered in vicinity of Prawle Point at 1215 approximately. Keep a good look out. (C. in C. W.A. 1336/18 to JERSEY, JUPITER, and 1442/18 to Adty.)



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HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

BRANLEBAS.

Where did you pick up survivors and is there possibility of more being found? (C. in C. W.A. 1338/18 to MISTRAL.) Your 2055/16. F.S. MISTRAL has arrived with following three survivors from F.S. BRANLEBAS.

From accounts of survivors it appears that BRANLEBAS broke in half due to stress of weather at about 0910 on 14/12 near Lands End but it is considered more probable loss occurred off the Lizard. Written report is being forwarded. (N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 1939/18. to C. in C.W.A.)



HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

- Convoys. Estimated positions (D.T.D., 1047/18 to C.in C. H.F.).
- F.S.62. Sailed 0230. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 0310/18).
- W.N.55. 2228/17, escorts SPURS, FANDANGO.
11 ships. (N.C.S.O. Greenock 0927/18, 0937/18).
- W.N.55 O. 1300/18, escort SAON. 14 ships. Route.
(N.C.S.O. Oban, 1037/18)
Sailed 1430/18 (N.C.S.O. Oban 1550/18)
- H.X.97. Sailing telegram, escorts HEPATICA,
COMORIN (C.O.A.C. Halifax 1114/18)
List of ships (S.C.N.O. Halifax 1119/18).
- W.N. 57. Code "Material" 2300/20, escorts PAYNTER,
ARCTIC EXPLORER.
12 ships. (N.C.S.O., Greenock, 1206/18).
- H.X.95. Sailing telegram as amended Admty.
(D.T.D., 1410/18).
- S.C.13. Scattered, weather, hove to in N.W.
App. Casualties. (D.T.D., 1413/18 to
N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).
- H.X.94. Escorted by SCIMITAR, ARAB, EL CAPITAN,
MARLOW. Route. (C.in C. W.A., 1455/18
to C.in C. H.F.).
- H.G.48. Meet. 19 ships, DEPTFORD. (C.in C. W.A.
1528/18 and 1908/18 to SCARBOROUGH,
VANSITTART, CALDWELL, WESTCOTT, BLUEBELL,
HONEYSUCKLE)
- E.N. 43. 1830/19 MORRIS DANCE, DRANGEY. 23 ships
(13 overseas). Codes, Usage, "Monitor"
(E.N.L. portion) "Mixture" (E.N.O. portion).
- H.X.92. Report whether my 1330/6 changing date of
R.V. was received by MONTCLARE and passed
to Commodore. (D.T.D. to R.A.3, 1708/18)
- F.N. 60. Arrived (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 1727/18).
- F.N.62. My 2303/17. N.O.I.C. Humber reports no
ship from Humber for F.N.62. (C.in C.
Rosyth 0121/18).
Cancel my 0121/18. F.N.62 entirely
cancelled VANITY and WESTMINSTER proceed
direct to Rosyth. (C.in C. Rosyth 1225/18)
- H.X.93 B. H.X.93 B. not met. My position 053° 46'N.,
005° 08' W., visibility 5 miles.
(ROSEMARY, 0845/18).
- S.C.16. My 1101/(?11). Further machinery defect
in LACONIA prevents joining S.C.16 in
time to be of value, you should therefore
pay special attention to covering this
convoy. (F.O.C. 3rd B.S. 1106/18 to
ROYAL SOVEREIGN).



HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.)

Convoys (Contd.)

E.N.41.

000° Cape Wrath at 0940 (A.C.O.S. 1124/18).

S.L.S.58.

MARSDALE leave patrol to join S.L.S.58 (routed). To R/V with local escort (position) at 0900/26 for inward escort to Clyde. (F.O.C.N.P. 1130/18 to Western Patrol)

E.N.42.

Routed as follows, thence arrive Pentland Firth 0600/19. (R.A.(D) H.F. 1215/18 to ALYNBANK)

E.N.43.)
W.N.56.)

Sail 1400/19 for Methil. Act subsequently as additional A/A escort to E.N.43 sailing 1830/19. On meeting transfer to W.N.56 due Cape Wrath 0330/21 and Duncansby 1330/21. (C.in C. Rosyth, 1547/18 to FLEETWOOD).

Troop Convoys.

W.S.5A.

A/S escort for W.S.5A slow, BATH, ST.MARY'S, ST. ALBANS, WORCESTER, WATCHMAN, VENOMOUS, WITHERINGTON, WITCH, CLEMATIS, CYCLAMEN, GERANIUM, JONQUIL. S.O. BATH. Additional A/A escort, WELLINGTON. A/S escort for W.S.5A fast HIGHLANDER, HARVESTER, KELVIN, KIPLING, BEVERLEY, OTTAWA, ST. LAURENT, PIORUN. S.O. HIGHLANDER. (C.in C. W.A. 1118/18 to S.O. Force K).

O.B.M. 261.

1716/18. DERBY COUNTY, YORK CITY, 10. (N.C.S.O. Milford H., 1730/18) List and destinations (1732/18).

C.E.19.

List. (N.C.S.O. Portsmouth 1843/18).

S.L.O.57.

VISCOUNT and S.L.O. 57 expect to arrive Oban 0600/19. VISCOUNT requiring fuel. (VISCOUNT, 1800/18).

S.L.57 B.

Detach YORK CITY in time to rendezvous S.L.57 B in 053° 46'N. 005° 08'W. at 1100/19. (C.in C. W.A. 1844/18).

W.S.5A (contd.)

Intend sailing Clyde portion of W.S.5A slow 12 ships escorted by BONAVENTURE, BATH, ST. ALBANS, ST. MARYS, WATCHMAN, WORCESTER 2200/18 to R/V in accordance with F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1030/17. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1155/18 to Admty.)

Request information whether Clyde portion of W.S.5A slow will be ready to sail a.m./19th and, if not, earliest time of sailing. (C.in C. W.A. 1155/18 to F.O.I.C. Glasgow).



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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

Troop Convoys
W.S.5A. (Contd.)

Admiralty 2250/6.

A/S escort for convoy W.S.5A fast:-
Liverpool Portion. KELVIN, KIPLING,
BEVERLEY.

Clyde Portion, OTTAWA, ST.LAURENT, PIORUN.
HIGHLANDER, HARVESTER, will join from
Londonderry.

S.O. of escort HIGHLANDER.

Further orders will be given for escorts
leaving convoy.

(C.in C. W.A. 1212/18 to F.O.I.C.
Liverpool).

Your 1155/18. T.L.C's all loaded and
all ships at Fall of Bank except MAHSEER.
MAHSEER will proceed down river 19/12 and
should be swung and ready for sea p.m./19
Thursday evening. Thursday night 19/12
is earliest time for all six to sail and
this time depends on weather moderating
and above difficulties being overcome.
D.S.T. O. Glasgow is replying regarding
other ships concerned.

(F.O.I.C. Glasgow, 1535/18).

Sailed WELLINGTON, WITHERINGTON, WITCH,
CLEMATIS, CYCLAMEN, GERANIUM, JONQUIL.
escorting W.S.5A (Slow) 1615.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1817/18).

Sailed Belfast portion of W.S.5A slow
escorted by MONTGOMERY to rendezvous
in accordance with F.O.I.C. Liverpool's
1030/17. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 2335/18).

Your 1155/18. All troop transports
included in W.S.5A (slow) will be ready
to sail 2200/18. EMPIRE TROOPER has
defective capstan and may have to slip
cable. LEOPOLDVILLE will sail without
adjusting compasses. 1900/18.

Reference W.A. Convoy instructions
section G diagram (xii) ships will be
in following positions when you join
convoy. WITHERINGTON, GERANIUM,
CLEMATIS, JONQUIL, CYCLAMEN, WITCH
(b) (c) (d) (e) (g) (n) respectively.
WELLINGTON will then be part of anti-
aircraft escort. Request you as Senior
Officer of anti-submarine escort readjust
position as desired.

VENOMOUS from Belfast is also expected to
join 0930/19 (WELLINGTON, 1914/18 to BATH)

BATH, ST. MARYS and ST.ALBANS to proceed
to Belfast to complete with water after-
wards sailing to rejoin convoy.
(N.O.I.C. Greenock, 2255/18 to BATH).

Sailed Clyde portion...

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W.S.5A (Contd.)Shipping.

Sailed Clyde portion W.S.5A slow escorted by BATH, ST. MARYS, WORCESTER and WATCHMAN to R/V in accordance with F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1030/17.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 2350/18 to Admty.)

6 M/V's.

N.C.S.O. Dartmouth's 1916/17 (sailing of 6 M.V's), detail one A/S trawler as escort. (C.in C. W.A. 1104/18).

My 1916/17. Sailed for onward routing. Escort A/S trawler PEARL. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth 1817/18).

8 M/V's

N.C.S.O. Dartmouth's 1913/17 (sailing of 8 M.V's). detail 2 A/S trawlers as escort; to arrive off Q.Z.S. 180 at 0900/20 thence to Falmouth (C.in C. W.A. 1112/18).

My 1913/17 and your 1112/18. Sailed 5 M.V. for Hartland Gap. Escort A/S trawlers KINGSTON ANDALUSITE and VICTRIX. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth 1736/16).

7 M/V's

Approx. 7 small M/V's escort MOLLUSC for Tees and Tyne will be sailed from Humber 20/12. (C.in C. Nore 2330/18)

SATURNUS.

Your 1747/17. Swedish Naval Attaché was informed December 13th that it was in order for SATURNUS to report every 4 hours, and undertook to inform Swedish authorities. Naval Attaché states that this has been done.

(Hd. of M. 1219/18 to N.A. Stockholm).

E. Coast Shipping.

Cancel my 2227/11. Ministry of Shipping has now been requested to rearrange temporarily its programmes to ensure that minimum number of ocean going motor ships will discharge on East coast south of Firth of Forth also that as many motor coasting vessels as possible will be transferred from East to West coast trading. There will remain however a number of motor ships essential for maintaining supplies on East coast, and subject to Admiralty agreement, these may proceed. The instructions already given with regard to towage at Tyne, Tees and Blyth still remain in force. Important that ocean going motor ships should keep their engine revolutions as low as possible, consistent with navigability, in waters where acoustic mines are suspected. Such ships should be instructed that, when they leave convoy to enter a harbour or for any other reason, they should not increase

/ their

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.).

E. Coast Shipping.
(contd.)

their engine revolutions above what they have been using whilst in convoy. Motor coasting vessels, when approaching harbours and particularly between Humber light vessel and Grimsby roads and also between the Sunk light vessel and Southend are to be instructed to reduce their engine revolutions to half speed, or as low as safety permits, although this may entail temporarily parting from convoy.

The number of ocean going motor tankers coming to East Coast ports will be decided as at present by direct consultation between the Oil Board and Admiralty.

Subject to above instructions, motor vessels on the East Coast now being held should be allowed to proceed. (D.T.D. 1852/18 to A.I.G.47).

My 2212/13 Admiralty Agreement for coasting and ocean-going motor ships to proceed may be assumed to have been given unless specific signals to the contrary for named ships are made by the Admiralty.

(D.T.D. 1853/18 to A.I.G.47).

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

SERPA PINTO.
MOUZINHO.

SERPA PINTO and MOUZINHO leave Casablanca for Lisbon on 20/12 and 23/12 respectively after transporting French nationals from Freetown at the request of British Government. Request patrols be instructed to give these ships free passage.
(N.C.S.O. Lisbon 1628/18 to F.O.C.N.A.).

Intelligence
Shipping
and French
Warships.

Following shipping movements have been given to me by a source: VILLE DE MAJUNGA from Madagascar with Governor-General Caykosti on board is now at Casablanca. She will proceed to Marseilles any time. Submarine which torpedoed RESOLUTION (the BEVEZIER) is at Casablanca. ~~SS~~ COMPIEGNE arrived at Casablanca with a cargo of sugar from Lisbon. ~~SS~~ MARRAKECH left Casablanca for Dakar on 17/12 with 46 officers 372 non-commissioned officers and 400 men all aviation personnel: please see my tel. 0912 to F.O. Para 2 of 15/12.
(Originator not stated Received via Gibraltar W/T. 0945/18 to Admty and C. in C. S.A.)

Dakar.

My 1617/3 (report of warships and Naval units at Dakar). Following information from Norwegian and Belgian Seamen escaped Dakar 8/12 believed reliable. Warships then in Port, RICHELIEU, GEORGES LEYGUES, MONTCALM, Destroyers LE FANTASQUE, MALIN, LE HARDI, X 101 102 82, A 86 56 52 DENTRECASTEAUX, Submarines 4 large 3 medium 1 very small. Ref. para 3 information confirmed that another small Submarine of different type arrived and left around 24/11.
(C. in C. S.A. 1617/18 to Admty).



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Submarine
Patrols.

My 1026/14 UPHOLDER UNIQUE USK have been ordered to leave their patrols after dark on 18/12 to proceed to Gibraltar joining route ordered in my 1258/5 at position C. reporting e t a at E to F.O.C.N.A. 12 hours beforehand. Submarines will be considered as entering N.A. Command at 001/21.

(V.A.S. 0112/18 to C. in C. Med).

RENOWN.
ARK ROYAL.

H.O. 4 (a) 0800/19 (b) RENOWN 0000 ARK ROYAL 0200 or later (c) RENOWN. RENOWN's position course and speed at 1930 A 036° 00' 011° 11' 092° 23 knots. (S.O. Force H. 1501/18 to F.O.C.N.A.).

Daily Summary
Operations.

2 routine A.S. Patrols.
(200 Group 1700/18 to Air Min.).

VIDETTE.
CIRCASSIA.

Gibraltar departure 2030/18 VIDETTE to rendezvous CIRCASSIA.
(S.O.(I) Gibraltar 2048/18).

BERWICK.

Steer to the northward. Instructions follow.
(V.C.N.S. 2350/18 to BERWICK).

South Atlantic.

Libreville
Patrol.

Your 1815/14. Your difficulties are fully realised. Until DRAGON and DUNEDIN become available the Duala patrol must be vacated temporarily as necessary for other commitments.
(D.O.D. (F). 0004/18 to C. in C. S.A.).

W.S.5A.

Your 2017/14 total arriving Freetown from U.K. in NEURALIA 1765 of which 1600 are for Freetown 160 for Takoradi and 5 for Lagos. Presume can arrange for onward conveyance of personnel for Takoradi and Lagos.
(D. of S.T. 0346/18 to C. in C. S.A.).

SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA

Simonstown arrival 18/12.
(N.O.I.C.Simonstown 0930/18).

/Raider.....



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (continued).

Raider actions.
ALCANTARA.
CARNARVON CASTLE.

Your 1204/13 re report on encounter between ALCANTARA and CARNARVON CASTLE and raiders. In both cases A.M.Cs. were patrolling areas near lines of traffic. These patrols were ordered in relation to general plan of patrolling local areas which is varied in accordance with ships and information available. In the case of ALCANTARA, R.A.S.A.D. considered indications D/F and other were that a raider was bound for South Atlantic, tendency appeared to be for raiders to strike in Pernambuco area first, and patrols of which ALCANTARA was one were ordered on this basis. ALCANTARA was subsequently ordered south as the further movements of the raider were anticipated. No detailed information re CARNARVON CASTLE but patrol was ordered on the same general principle. Contacts were not therefore the result of organised search or quite fortuitous, but rather the result of careful anticipation of the possibilities and probabilities by R.A.S.A.D. and C. in C. S.A. in selecting areas in which to operate which met with deserved good fortune. (C. in C. S.A. 0917N/18 to C. in C. E. Indies).

CARNARVON CASTLE.

Your 1359/13 re Enemy reports transmitted by CARNARVON CASTLE request your remarks without breaking W/T silence as to reason of no reception of these signals. (C. in C. S.A. 1106/18 to S.O.S.A. Div).

Convoys.

Your 2219/26/11 Paragraph (2) (a) and your 2150/14/12 Paragraph (VII) Presumed speed of advance of fast and slow groups combined $10\frac{1}{4}$ knots. (C. in C. S.A. 1157/18 to Admty).

Enemy Unit.

Bearings obtained at 2259/17 G.M.T. on 5510 Kcs. Probably from enemy unit in vicinity of 7°N . 30°W . (D.D.I.C. 1025/18).

Surface Raider.

D/F bearings - indicate presence of German surface unit probably on great circle Bermuda-Capetown at 2257Z/17. (C. in C. S.A. 1309N/18 to R.A.S.A.D.).

DUQUESA.
Raider Report.

British 8651 tons Following has been read. DUQUESA $00^{\circ} 57'\text{N}$, $22^{\circ} 42'\text{W}$ (Freetown W/T T.O.R. 1401Z/18 to Flowerdown W/T).

/Reference.....



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (continued).

DUQUESA
Raider Report.
(contd);

Reference RRR report from DUQUESA. Further signal received much mutilated (?gives) position $000^{\circ} 57' N 022^{\circ} 42' W$ word battleship quite clear and letters P.O.Z. C.K preceding. Considered pocket battleship. NEPTUNE and DORSETSHIRE in harbour told to raise steam with all despatch. (C. in C. S.A. 1327N/18 to Admty).

NEPTUNE.
DORSETSHIRE.

Proceed with NEPTUNE and DORSETSHIRE for $008^{\circ} N$ (? 021°) W to act as cover for trade routes to North and North Eastward. If no other instructions or information received carry out search in that area and to North and North Eastward of raider's reported position. (C. in C. S.A. 1531/18 to S.O. Force M)

Departure 1700/18 S.O. Force M. in NEPTUNE with DORSETSHIRE in accordance with C. in C. South Atlantic's 1531/18 (Force M. to proceed to act as cover for trade routes and to carry out search eastward of raider's position). (S.O. (I) Freetown 1851N/18 to Admty).

Your 1327/18 NEPTUNE and DORSETSHIRE are at your disposal for raider hunting until further orders. (D.O.D. (F) 1907/18 to C. in C. S.A.)

At 1400Z/18 RRRR message received from DUQUESA, reporting being shelled in $00^{\circ} 57' N 22^{\circ} 42' W$. Further much mutilated signal was received with word battleship quite clear and letters POZCK preceding. Considered that raider is ADMIRAL SCHEER. (D.D.I.C. 1954/18 to "A" Message H. and A)

HERMES.
DRAGON.

Proceed ST. Helena with despatch to fuel. (C. in C. S.A. 1335/18).

ENTERPRISE.

Rejoin R.A. S.A.D. (C. in C. S.A. 1345/18 to ENTERPRISE).

R/V with CUMBERLAND in $028^{\circ} S 045^{\circ} W$ at 1600Z/20. (R.A.S.A.D. 2108/18 to ENTERPRISE).

/WILLEM.....

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War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (continued).WILLEM VAN
DER ZAAAN

My 0703/13 Onward programme of Netherlands Minelayer WILLEM VAN DER ZAAAN subject to satisfactory weather conditions is as follows. Capetown leave P.M. 22 etc.

Requirements at Durban and Mauritius. (N.O.I.C. Simonstown 1530Z/18).

QUEEN OF BERMUDA.

Arrived Montevideo 1000/18 departs on patrol 0950/19.
(QUEEN OF BERMUDA 1501Z/18 to Admty)
(See also 1132Z/21/41)

Foreign
Legion
Movement.

Following from Col. Williams Captain (?Porter) suggests legion should proceed direct to Cape after calling at Pointe Noire. If transhipment military this could then take place at Cape which is not much further from Pointe Noire than Freetown. (Commander Nigeria Area, Lagos 1735/16 to W.O.).

Shipping
Interception.

Your 1525Z/14 (Re interception of South American owned ships on coastal groups) H.M. Ambassador endorses policy outlined in your 0908Z/6 and has repeated it to F.O. While recent incidents are still fresh he would deprecate any interception of neutral vessels within zone off Brazilian coast except in case of war necessity. He appreciates that action in zone in the case of French s.s. KATIOLA may be necessary but hopes that if possible, there will be no further incident off Brazilian Coast for present.
(N.A. Rio de Janeiro, 1740/18 to R.A.S.A.D).

Walvis Bay.

Your 2518/15. N.C.S. Staff will be sent to Walvis Bay as soon as practicable. Question of A/S and M/S vessels is being taken up with D.S.T.D. Request information whether Union Government should be asked to provide (A) Examination service (B) port war signal station (C) fixed defences.
(S.N.O. Simonstown 1927B/18 to Admty).

NEWTON PINE.

Report of attack by S/M on 13/12 and counter attack by NEWTON PINE - C. in C S.A. 1947N/18 (see U-Boat Campaign).

/BALUCHISTAN.....

MOST SECRET.18.12.1940.
Wednesday.
War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (continued.)BALUCHISTAN.

Reference A.I.G. 37 622 A T.O.O.
1954/1 Departure 18/12 1800 G.M.T.
British ship BALUCHISTAN, Capetown
(N.C.S.O. Port of Spain 2533/18).

ASPHODEL.
CALENDULA.

My 1817/14 para (E). Am informed
Consular Shipping Adviser Ponta
Delgarda that have received
information of Corvettes ASPHODEL
and CALENDULA left that port 0930/16.
They will not therefore arrive
Freetown until about 24/12 and escort
will not be available for "~~ASPHODEL~~"
until after that date.
(C. in C. S.A. 1059N/18 to Admty).



541

541

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.18.12.40.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.NARVAL.
TRITON.
Overdue.

French submarine NARVAL is now 50 hours and TRITON is 30 hours overdue. Neither ship has reported its position. Following books were carried by both submarines. They were not issued with extracts from S.P.02218. In addition TRITON carried (list). In addition French S/M NARVAL carried (details). She was not instructed in emergency scrambling procedure. NARVAL left Malta p.m./2 for patrol to westward of Lampedusa and was due back a.m./16. TRITON left Malta p.m./28 for patrol in Southern Adriatic and was due back a.m./17. (V.A. Malta, 1123/18 to C.in C. Med.)

OLYMPUS.

As programme prohibits ABINGDON and FERMOY (? helping) you, attack to-day. UPRIGHT leaves at 1715/18 through position 035° 32' N., 014° 12' E. If weather suitable for A/S work 19/12 you must complete D/F swing by 1015. If A/S Trawlers do not make R/V return to harbour. (V.A. Malta, 1205/18 to OLYMPUS).

Bardia
bombed and
entered by
Army.

Operational Summary No.191 up to 1200/18. 1. Egypt. Night 16-17/12. 7 Blenheims bombed Bardia starting several small fires on the outskirts and destroying 2 A.A. gun posts. 1 Blenheim bombed Derna aerodrome. Day 17/12. 14 Blenheims bombed Bardia. Hurricanes continued to harry retreating enemy columns on road near Tobruk making low-flying machine-gun attacks and inflicting heavy personnel casualties and damage to M.T. Hurricanes shot down 1 CR.42 and 1 Macchi 200 confirmed and probably destroyed 1 CR.42 and 1 Macchi 200. Reconnaissance of coast from Derna to Bardia and of Bardia area. G.H.Q.M.E. report our troops entered Bardia on 17/12 but situation is still obscure. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1321/18).

Air
Reconnaissance

Air reconnaissance 18/12 Taranto, two damaged CAVOUR near one cruiser five destroyers seven large merchant vessels. Brindisi, 10 large merchant vessels berthed inner harbour alongside. Bari fog prevented observation. Messina one cruiser one destroyer. (V.A.Malta, 1511/18).

MOST SECRET.18.12.40.
Wednesday.
WAR DIARY.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.Albania
supplies.

Your 1248/13. (G.H.Q. stressing importance of preventing Italian materials of war from reaching Albania.) Greek G.H.Q. reports 10,200 prisoners up to December, 13th. (N.A. Athens, 1543/18 to N.A. Belgrade.)

Asdic
Sets,
Greece.

Amty. 1806/17/11. In anticipation of requirements one type 127 asdic set suitable for AETOS class destroyer and one type 128 asdic set suitable for KING class destroyer are being sent Malta first opportunity. Reply awaited concerning asdic fitting of Italian-built destroyers referred to as SPETSAI class in former message. (D.A/S.W. 1657/18 to C.in C. Med.)

Malta
Air
Reports.

Combined services report Malta up to 1700/18 all times G.M.T. 0932/0947 enemy aircraft approached to within 6 miles of the coast. 6 Hurricanes up but no interception. Enemy did not cross the coast. 0545 to 1505 Sunderland reconnaissance Western Ionian Sea. Nil report, 0700 to 1230 Glenn Martin reconnaissance Taranto and Brindisi. Taranto outer harbour usual 2 CAVOUR battleships 1 damaged and 1 sunken. By arrangement with V.A. Malta, sunken CAVOUR will not in future be included in reconnaissance reports of Taranto. 7 M/V's 10,000 tons 3 destroyers. Inner harbour 1 6-inch cruiser, 2 destroyers Brindisi, 9 M/Vs. 7000 tons 1 M/V 10,000 tons leaving harbour. Bari not reconnoitred. Low clouds snow and rainstorms encountered. No opposition. 0828 to 1105 Glen Martin recco. Massina. 1 Condottieri Class Cruiser 1 destroyer in harbour 1 M/V 7,000 tons heading up the Straits. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1700/18).

M.C.2.

Operation M.C.2. Enclosures G para. two. Convoy M.G.1. will pass through following positions. (V.A. Malta, 1721/18 to Med. Fleet).

MOST SECRET.18.12.40.
Wednesday.WAR DIARY.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (Contd.)TRUANT.
R. of P.

TRUANT preliminary report: Night of 13/14/12 sank certainly one and possibly a second laden Merchant vessel off Spartivento Cape. Vessels were steering N.E. and were escorted by a sloop. Night of 15-16/12 sank large laden Southbound tanker off Colonne. Tanker was accompanied by Italian vessel CARALIS which escaped. All shipping proceeding by night only. Heard 14 distant explosions during forenoon 16/12 Italian vessel CARALIS was heard calling up REGGIO and Taranto probably for motor anti-Submarine boat.
(V.A. Malta 1743/18 to C.in C. Med.)

Lorries
for
Greece.

Your Q/30600 17/12. (? All) captured lorries and arms can offer gratefully accepted. As many lorries as possible should be petrol driven owing to shortage Greece of workshops spare parts and fuel for Diesel engines. Greek Government suggest transport lorries on decks TANAIIS ARTEMIS PITTA ISIS now will leave (? as arranged) and by YDREOS leaving Piraeus 22/12. Presume you will arrange convoy.
(Mil. Mission. Athens. 1800/18 to C.in C. M.E.)

East Indies.Air
Menace.
Japan.

Reply to Air Ministry X.305 of 14/12 re prospective threat of air attack from French Indo-China or Thailand. (Air H.Q. India 1045/18).

QUEEN
ELIZABETH.

Your 1254/22 and 1304/23. Balance of advantage appears to be in use of Trincomalee while only one QUEEN MARY class is operating. Date she is expected to be available. Capacity of QUEEN ELIZABETH QUEEN MARY and NIEUW AMSTERDAM.
(D.O.D. (F) 1927/18 to C.in C. E.I.)

Reply: p. 771



WAR DIARY.

18.12.40.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

W.S.4.A.

Departures at 0251Z/18 KINGSTON and two merchant ships for W.S.4.A. (N.O.I.C. Aden, 0303Z/18 to Adty, CORNWALL, KANIMBLA, etc.)

Departures PERTH and CARLISLE at 0400Z/18 to join W.S.4.A. (N.O.I.C. Aden, 0410Z/18).

WESTRALIA
SOUTHAMPTON
PERTH.

Admty. 0120/15 WESTRALIA will leave Colombo p.m./23 for Fremantle. SOUTHAMPTON will escort W.S.4.B. to Suez arriving (date) to join Mediterranean Fleet. PERTH will escort W.S.4.A. to Suez arriving 13/12 to join Mediterranean Fleet. (C.in C. E.I. 0746/18).

WESTRALIA.
HOBART.
CAPETOWN.

My 1234/17 and my 1232/17 to Force V only. If no further information is received WESTRALIA is to fuel from Oiler APPLELEAF as convenient without delaying HOBART or CAPETOWN but is to patrol outside Addu Atoll during night of 19/20/12. WESTRALIA is to leave area for Colombo about 1100Z/12/20 provided CAPETOWN has completed fuelling. H.M.A.S. HOBART after fuelling is to proceed at 16 knots to position 002° N., 083° E giving cover to ? (shipping) and then to Fremantle along Colombo-Fremantle trade route. HOBART is to transfer to WESTRALIA any ratings stores or mails for Colombo. (C.in C. E.I. 1244/Z/18 to Force V.)

RANCHI.

Subject to no further information being received RANCHI on arrival position 004° 065° E., to proceed to position 009° S., 055° E., at 15 knots and thence to Mombasa adjusting speed to arrive a.m./23. (C.in C. E.I. 1246Z/18 to Force V.)

Port
Sudan
Bombed.

Day 17/12. 3 formations each of 3 S.79's and 1 of 4 S.79's bombed Port Sudan at half four hour intervals destroying 10,000 gallons of petrol. No casualties resulted. Gladiators and Hurricanes engaged first 3 formations damaging 1 S.79. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1322/18).



WAR DIARY.

18.12.40.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

Mine-
sweepers.

A.M. 1712/20/10 A.M. 2113/29/11 and minesweeping summary No. 48 para. 13. Request information as to intended allocation of SARNA, SOIKA, SOTRA, and SVANA as it is not clear which if any are to be initially based at Aden. (C.in C. E.I. 1402Z/18 to Adty).

Air
Report.
Convoy
Escorts.

Summary No. 189 and Operational Summary. Following for 24 hours ending 1500 18/12. 4 Blenheims 203 Sqdn. provided fighter escorts 2 for convoy B.S.11 and 2 for convoy W.S.4A. 2 Blenheims 203 Sqdn. en route to Karaman for convoy duties made air sweeps of Red Sea prior to night passage of convoys. All times G.M.T. (A.H.Q. Aden, 1621/18).

W.S.4.B.
B.S.11 $\frac{1}{2}$.

My 0632/15. W.S.4.B. is now expected to pass Aden 25/12 and arrive at Suez (date). My 0634/15 B.S.11 $\frac{1}{2}$ will now sail on 25/12. (C.in C. E.I. 1434Z/18 to S.N.O. Red Sea et.c)

China.

Cables.

Only Route at present to Hongkong Shanghai Manila North China and Japan is via Montreal and then Compac route from San Francisco. This means Government TFC must pass through U.S.A. Please acknowledge. (Cables and Wireless No. T.O.O./18 to Adty)

OLE
JACOB.
TEDDY.
(raider
victims.)

Navy department has following information received from Tokyo. Steamer TEDDY was captured by German raider 6/11 and was later sunk. Norwegian Tanker OLE JACOB was captured by raider 13/11. OLE JACOB was prepared to fight but German effected capture by posing as British ship. German raider described as a merchant vessel 10,000 - 13,000 tons, 18 knots, mounting six inch guns and torpedo tubes, equipped with aeroplanes and painted to resemble ship of P and O line. Ship has dummy equipment to permit various disguises and has been very successful using them.

/In ...



WAR DIARY.

18.12.40.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. (Contd.)

OLE JACOB.
TEDDY.
(raider
victims)

In crew TEDDY when captured were 4
Australians who were not among those
sent to Japan on OLE JACOB and transferred
to SCHARNHORST at Kobe.
(N.A. Washington 1721/18 to Adty).

America and West Indies.

Bahamas.
Shipbuilding .

Governor of Bahamas has requested considera-
tion be given to question of constructing
small craft for Admiralty Service in
Bahamas. Yard can undertake 7 wooden
ships of 500 tons and lighter craft
including boats and rafts. 40% of timber
required can be found in colony. Remainder
and all manufactured fittings can probably
be procured in Canada whence opportunity
of direct shipments are frequent. Suggest
these yards be used in preference to
ordering small craft in U.S.
(C.in C.A.W.I. 1026/18 to Adty).

CARADOC
WAR BRAHMIN
DIOMEDE.

CARADOC leaves Nassau A.M./19 and proceeds
to Bermuda so as to arrive P.M./21. Oiler
WAR BRAHMIN leaves Nassau A.M./19 and
proceeds to Bermuda. DIOMEDE leaves
Kingston Jamaica P.M./20 and proceeds to
Trinidad so as to arrive 23/12.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 122/18).

HEPATICA.
H.X.97

Halifax departure December 18th H.M.S.
HEPATICA local and ocean escort.
(S.O.(I) 1235/18 to Adty etc.)

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.18.12.40.
Wednesday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Australia.Mines.

Japanese broadcast states that a Japanese ship sighted German floating mines while en route from Melbourne to Japan. The broadcast continued "it is presumed that the mines were intended for the QUEEN MARY". (D.S.470).



WAR DIARY.

18.12.40.
Wednesday.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

AEGINA.

Probably at Naples or Genoa, is believed to be sailing for Valencia 18/12. (D.S.470).

SPARTA.

Docking at Genoa on 18/12 (D.S. 470).

NORDERNEY.

Has completed loading 1,000 tons bunker coal. (N.C.S.O. Para. 1539/18).

BADEN.

C.A.F.O. 422/40. (BADEN, Hamburg, America Line) Sailed from Tenerife night of 15/16/12. Description. Ship may be making for French West Coast port possibly St. Nazaire. (V.A.S. 2119/18 to Submarines Area B.) (C.in C. S.A. 2011N/18 to S.A.Station).

IDARWALD.
RHEIN.
reports
of
Scuttling
on 8/12
and 11/12.

Your 1957/13. (account of interceptions required required for propaganda Dutch E.I.) IDARWALD and RHEIN left Tampico a.m.29/11 CARADOC and VAN KINSBERGEN ordered to Florida Straits and DIOMEDE to Yucatan Channel to intercept. 2 Dutch aircraft chartered at Curacao and sent to operate from Jamaica. Oiler WAR BRAHMIN ordered to Nassau as advanced fuelling base. German ships known to be proceeding independently and speed not exceeding 6 knots owing to dirty bottoms. On 10/12 (?) a W/T message to Berlin from IDARWALD was intercepted by a British tanker stating coal was very bad, and ship would be unable to reach even Azores. Interception IDARWALD. DIOMEDE carrying out search close to Cuban coast sighted IDARWALD at 1320/8. Dutch aircraft also searching this area sighted IDARWALD about same time and pointed out position to DIOMEDE. IDARWALD brought to by DIOMEDE with shot across bows, abandoned ship which was on fire on bridge and in engine room. Boarding party sent from DIOMEDE. DIOMEDE picked up crew after preventing escape of boat by machine gun fire across bows and then went alongside IDARWALD. Fire was got under control, but ship making water slowly. Submersible pump used but unable to compete with flood. Fire again broke out but again got under control.

/At ...

MOST SECRET.18.12.40.
Wednesday.
WAR DIARY.GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.IDARWALD
RHEIN
reports
of
scuttling
on 8/12
and 11/12.
(Contd.)

At midnight IDARWALD labouring and DIOMEDE forced to withdraw boarding party and lay off. At daylight 9/12 DIOMEDE again went alongside and attempted to tow IDARWALD with view to beaching. Ship settling by head and DIOMEDE again forced to abandon. IDARWALD sank at 1252 on 9/12.

Interception of RHEIN. VAN KINSBERGEN carrying out search to north west of Tortuga Bank sighted suspicious vessel at 0130/11. Closed and switched on searchlight and identified as RHEIN. On being ordered to stop RHEIN turned away zigzagging. Brought to by shot across bows. Explosion in RHEIN followed immediately with flames and smoke from Funnels. Crew abandoned ship. Boarding party sent from VAN KINSBERGEN but RHEIN burning fiercely from stem to stern and fire beyond control and forced to withdraw. Crew taken on board VAN KINSBERGEN and later transferred to CARADOC at request of C.O. VAN KINSBERGEN. RHEIN continued to burn fiercely and listed heavily. CARADOC arrived to assist at 1400 but fire intense and weather too rough for going alongside. Hulk useless except for scrap iron and sunk by gunfire from CARADOC. CARADOC reports RHEIN no attempt at disguise. Captain's written orders state ship sailing under orders of German Admiralty and Naval discipline enforced. Scuttle and burning drill frequently exercised. First destination Teneriffe Captain of DIEG (Sig. Letters Undecypherable ? DIEU (RHEIN)). Senior Officer at Tampico and issued orders to sail. Cargo reported nil but forward hold suspected to contain petrol in drums. Behaviour of prisoners quiet and subdued. Captain was submarine officer in last war. Both ships reported to have Derricks slung out board to hamper ship alongside.

Scuttling of DHMF IDARWALD subsequently ascertained to have been carried out by removal of man hole doors to ballast tanks under cargo in hold and opening of main ballast line.

(C.in C. A.W.I. 1132/18 to Adty).

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.18.12.40.
Wednesday.ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.GRADISCA.

Told at 1530/17 to enter harbour (Bari) immediately and pilot would take her to dockyard. She replied at 1600 unable to do so at present on account of bad weather and high seas.
(D.S. 470).

MAURO CROCE.

(ex GALLIPOLI) 1049 tons, sailed from Barcelona on 15/12 for Genoa.
(D.S.470).

MOST SECRET.18.12.40.
Wednesday.
WAR DIARY.U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.EMPIRE -
JAGUAR.* BR. 1337 states 8/12.

Torpedoed on 9/12. Now presumed to have sunk. (D.S. 470).

WESTERN PRINCE.Arrived S.S. BARON KINNAIRD with survivors of WESTERN PRINCE including Mr. Howe and Mr. Bone.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0444/18).WORCESTERSHIRE
A.M.C.One enemy vessel bearing 090 distance 8 miles position 54.14 N., 21.46 W.
(WORCESTERSHIRE 0739N/18).My 0739. Enemy probably submarine.
(WORCESTERSHIRE 0650/18).My 0650. About 8 rounds fired at me in moonlight by unseen enemy presumably S/M. No hits.
(WORCESTERSHIRE 0658/18).DUNSTER
GRANGE.56.50N., 20.25W. DUNSTER GRANGE, submarine on surface, visibility good, cloud base 3000 feet.
(Portishead Radio 1050/18).S S S S 56.50 N., 20.12 W. DUNSTER GRANGE sighted conning tower, visibility good.
(Bank ship, Scapa, T.O.R. 1126/18).Following intercepted by Box 25 Barnet on 6680 K/Cs. at 1106 G.M.T. (Begins)
S S S 56.10N., 20.25W DUNSTER GRANGE submarine on surface. Visibility good. Cloud base 3000 feet. T.O.O. 1051/18(Ends.)
Also the following (Begins)
S S S Corrected position of DUNSTER GRANGE 56.50 N., 20.25 W. T.O.O. 1205/18 (Ends)
(F.O. Humber 1326/18 to Adty).PENDRECHT.Following read. Position 59.05 N. 17.48 W., approx. PENDRECHT torpedoed.
(Lyness W/T 1434/18).Detach one ship to proceed to position of PENDRECHT torpedoed in 059° 05' N., 017° 48' W., at 1535.
(C.in C. W.A. 1555/18 to SCIMITAR).Following read. Submarine Raider Signal. 59.05 N., 17.48 W., PENDRECHT torpedoed, lost two lifeboats asking immediate assistance, only one lifeboat left.
(Lyness W/T T.O.R. 1605/18).

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.18.12.40.
Wednesday.U/BOAT CAMPAIGN. (Contd.)

Have been detached in accordance with your
1555/18 to SCIMITAR.
(ARABIS 1740/18 to C.in C. W.A.)

DALFONN.

Following read. 58.28 N., 18.11 W.,
DALFONN attacked by submarine, suspicious
tanker flying Dutch flag in vicinity.
(Lyness W/T T.O.R. 1743/18).

NAPIER
STAR.

Following read. 58.58 N., 23.13 W.,
NAPIER STAR torpedoed.
(Lyness 1835/18).

Detach one ship to assistance of
NAPIER STAR torpedoed in position 058° 58'
N., 023° 13' W., at 1937. Report name
when well clear of convoy.
(C.in C. W.A. 1955/18 to SCARBOROUGH).

Following from O.I.C. Resolution Island
(Begins) 1834 G.M.T. " S S S 58.58 N.,
23. 13 W., NAPIER STAR torpedoed. Advise
naval no bearings possible.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa. 2146/18).

18.12.1940.
Wednesday.War Diary.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN. (Contd.)Submarines Attacked.THUNDERBOLT.
15/12.Jt. S/M TARANTINI
Sunk. (See p. 683)

Successfully attacked Italian U-boat probable Italian S/M ARGO class escorted by 3 trawlers on 15/12 in 045° 25' N. 001° 23' W. Hunted 2 sloops p.m./17 in 045° 38' N. 001° 28' W. Three armed trawlers occasionally encountered by day and by night.
(THUNDERBOLT, 0645/18 to V.A.S.).

NEWTON PINE,
Action with S/M
13 18/12.

0.65

NEWTON PINE's 2230/16. Have seen Master of NEWTON PINE, summary of report as follows. Ship 8½ knots had just completed zig zag alteration 35° to port when torpedo observed to break surface 1500, green 145 degs. Course was altered to port and torpedo passed 15 feet off starboard bow. Shortly after explosion was heard astern and submarine seen to have surfaced and firing from about 8000 yards thought to be twin gun flashes. As crew came on deck with lifebelts Master hoisted Ensign at masthead and all hands prepared to fight. NEWTON PINE opened fire at 6000 yards, and manoeuvred to keep U-boat astern. U-boat inclination about 120 degs. Ship fired shot for shot with U-boat. U-boat fire became very accurate and straddled ship for line, shot falling one each side about engine room. Master decided to alter course to throw out range and altered 60 degs. to starboard.

First salvo after alteration straddled ship just over and short but next three salvos were well over. By this time ship's firing was right for line and 20th shot landed apparently on target blotting it out with spray and also black smoke. This was the only fall of shot at which smoke appeared as well. Next shot also in line blotted out target but no smoke. Submarine appeared to roll heavily towards ship then right herself much lower in water then disappeared from view of bridge crew's nest saw submarine's conning tower appearing just above water 2 or 3 times for 1½ to 2 minutes after. Submarine ceased fire and did not fire again after 20th shot from ship. Consider it probable that 20th shot hit submarine and possibly 21st damaged external tanks in any case and caused roll and partial submergence. Whether main hull damaged not possible to say but odd that submarine should break off

/ action ...

MOST SECRET.

18.12.1940.
Wednesday.



War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Attacked. (Contd.)

NEWTON PINE,
Action with S/M
13 WA/12. (Contd.)

action immediately and by diving unless had to, range was 10,000 yards, sea calm. Important that area of this action should not be suggested and Master Woolner anxious that neither his name nor ship's be mentioned in broadcast or press. Consider he and ship put up fine performance.
(C.in C. S.A., 1947N/18, to Admty.)

MOST SECRET.

18.12.1940.
Wednesday.
War Diary.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN (Contd.)Submarines Reported.

1127. 56.50 N., 20.12 W., C/T sighted by DUNSTER GRANGE. (D.S. 470-.)
1030. Off Gironde, indefinite position of Italian U-boat. (D.S. 470).
1543. A.F. message 59.05 N., 17.48 W. at 1443 G.M.T./18. (D.D.I.C., 1611/18).
1323. Bearings obtained at 1223 G.M.T./18 probably from a U/Boat between Sierra Leone and 30° W. longitude. (D.D.I.C. 1705/18).
1935. A.F. message 58.58 N., 23.13 W. at 1835 G.M.T. (D.D.I.C. 2024/18).

D/F Bearing at 1005Z/18 indicates U.Boat may have been within 100 miles of line joining position 003° N. 010° W. and position 005° N. (?059°) West. Probability 50 per cent. Most likely position 004° N. 020° W. (C.in C. S.A. 1821N/18).

Estimated U/B dispositions.For information.

Italian 1 to westward of Madeira. 1 will shortly leave Azores area on being relieved from Bordeaux. 1 off Gironde at 1030/18 probably entering. 1 in 54° 14' N. 20° W. at 0700/18. 1 in 56° 50' N. 20° 12' W. at 1127/18. 1 between 54° N. and 56° N. 15° W. and 18° W. 1 may be between 52° N. and 53° N. 17° W. and 19° W.

German No further report from South Atlantic. Possibly 1 S.W. of Ireland outward bound. 1 north of 55° N. east of 14° W. and probably west of 10° W. 1 west of 20° W. probably north of 57° N. 1 between 57° N. and 59° N. 15° W. and 18° W. 1 about 60° N. 20° W.

(D.D.I.C. 1322/18, V.A.S., 1532/18).

MOST SECRETWar Diary19.12.1940
ThursdaySITUATION REPORTHome Commands

C. in C., Nore estimates that as a result of the recent heavy minelaying in the Thames Estuary about 12 single Explosions of an apparently spontaneous character occurred on the 17th in the Sheerness-Southend area, in some cases with no ships near them; and one further Mine was detonated in this area by S.A. gear today. Today also the British Tanker ARINIA was mined and sunk 2 to 3 cables West of the Nore Lightship and the Dutch Schuyt TWEE GEBROEDERS close to N. 2 Yantlet Buoy.

Submarines at Lorient, Brest and Bordeaux were attacked last night by our Bombers and No 22 Squadron attacked TIRPITZ at Wilhelmshaven.

The Swedish ISOLDA of 261 tons was bombed and sunk off the South Wexford coast this morning near the Barrels Light Vessel and inside Irish territorial waters, six of her crew being killed



War Diary

MOST SECRET

557

19.12.1940
Thursday

SITUATION REPORT

Troop Convoy

Convoy W.S. 5 A, 19 transports with troops and supplies for the Middle East, left Liverpool and the Clyde today, escorted by the cruiser BONAVENTURE aircraft carrier ARGUS 7 destroyers, 1 sloop and 4 corvettes. BONAVENTURE and ARGUS will leave the convoy after BERWICK joins from Gibraltar.

Vichy French

French Admiralty has advised that 3 more French submarines escorted by 1 destroyer will pass Gibraltar westward on 22/12 to relieve submarines now in Atlantic.

F.O.C., North Atlantic states in reply to an Admiralty inquiry that he had not sufficient destroyers to carry out Operation "Ration" (interception of ships) whilst Force H is away from Gibraltar. (see Admty. to F.O.C.N.A., 1255/13 and 1440/13 for policy re interception of merchant vessels see F.O.C. North Atlantic, 1224/5/12 and Admty. reply 1133/11/12) F.O.C.N.A. suggests use of ships returning from Azores patrol.

North Atlantic

Force H

Force H. RENOWN (battlecruiser) ARK ROYAL (cruiser) and destroyers FAULKNOR, FURY FORESTER, DUNCAN, ISIS and ENCOUNTER have arrived at Gibraltar. (Note: recalled from Azores patrol)

Azores

Now that BERWICK (cruiser) has been withdrawn from Azores Patrol, DERBYSHIRE (A.M.C.) is to be moved to areas F.2., G.2., H.2. CIRCASSIA (A.M.C.) is to be sailed for areas Q.2., R.3., and S.3., when ready.

A conference has been held at Gibraltar to discuss additional measures for the security of the naval harbour at Gibraltar, and proposals including indicator nets, loops, and loop mines outside the entrances have been forwarded by F.O.C.N.A., for consideration.

MOST SECRETWar Diary19.12.1940
ThursdaySITUATION REPORTSouth AtlanticRaider

FORMIDABLE (aircraft carrier) and NORFOLK are to proceed westward of the Azores to carry out a sweep for the German pocket battleship en route to Freetown. DORSETSHIRE will probably join Force K in lieu of ~~BERWICK~~.

HERMES and Force L, including PRETORIA CASTLE, are to search on the western edge of the Cape- U.K. route.

NEPTUNE and DORSETSHIRE (cruisers) are to search areas on the South America- St. Vincent and Freetown route.

There are indications of an enemy auxiliary North West of Ascension on 18/12, which might have been in 1° N., 27° W. possibly on way to meet warship Raider.

CUMBERLAND
NEWCASTLE
ENTERPRISE

R.A. South American Division in CUMBERLAND (cruiser) has ordered NEWCASTLE (cruiser) to pick up oiler and fuel then leaving oiler to fuel ENTERPRISE, to join him in South Atlantic.

Mines

Masters of merchant ships have been warned of the danger of mines again being laid off Cape Agulhas (S. Africa, Cape) and directed accordingly.

MOST SECRETWar Diary19.12.1940
ThursdaySITUATION REPORTMediterraneanOperations

The Mediterranean fleet carried out a sweep into the Adriatic on the night of 18-19/12. The 7th C.S. swept up as far as a line Bari-Durazzo. The battleships bombarded the port of Valona. Enemy batteries did not open fire till after withdrawal had begun. No enemy warships or merchant ships were found at sea. (See Operation M.C. 3. Situation Report 17/12/40)

NARVAL

C. in C., reports that all books held by Free French submarine NARVAL (overdue and considered lost) must be considered compromised. Fresh orders have therefore been issued to submarines UPRIGHT and REGENT. OTUS has been ordered back to Alexandria.

Destroyers

"K" class destroyers from the Red Sea are to relieve NUBIAN and MOHAWK (Tribal class) in 1941, when the latter will rejoin the Home Fleet, in which the rest of the Tribals are serving.

Malta Raid

Malta was raided by 2 aircraft between 2225 and 2255 last night, the first dropping 6 bombs into the sea off Grand Harbour and the second 4 bombs in the sea and 2 others on land near Tigne. The latter was shot down by a Hurricane.



War Diary

19.12.1940
Thursday

SITUATION REPORT

East Indies

Raider,
Cover to
Shipping.

█ CARTHAGE (A.M.C.) is to leave Durban on 21/12 to give cover to shipping on Durban to Madagascar route.

█ DAUNTLESS (cruiser) is to proceed to Penang.

█ CAPETOWN (cruiser) is to proceed due West from Addu Atoll (Maldivé Is.) to give cover to shipping. The oiler APPLELEAF is to leave Addu Atoll as arranged by CAPETOWN.

China

Aerodromes,
Far East

C. in C., Far East is not satisfied with the scale of protection to aerodromes.

Australia & New Zealand

Convoy U.S. 8.

Convoy U.S. 8 two ships escorted by ACHILLES (cruiser) left Wellington for Sydney.



War Diary

19.12.1940
Thursday

SITUATION REPORT

Ships Attacked

AMICUS

British SS, 3660 tons, torpedoed at 1814/19 in 54° 10' N., 15° 50' W., WESTCOTE (destroyer) was sent to investigate by C. in C., W.A., at 1930/19.

Tug SEAMAN sent from Greenock at 2104/19

There are some 12 U-Boats at sea of which some 10 are to westward as follows:-

Azores and Madeira	- German	1 Italian
Cape Verde	1 (a)	
North West & West	2 (a)	4
	3	
North of 60° N.	1	

(a) Indications vague or doubtful.

War Diary.

19. 12. 40.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Dummy S/M's.
at Harwich.

3 Dummy submarines moored at Harwich have been severely damaged in recent Gale and are now beached. It is estimated that cost of repairs would be very heavy. With departure of submarines from Harwich the primary purpose of these dummies no longer exists. Propose subject to approval to break them up and release valuable material for other requirements. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1802/19 to Adty.)

Defence of U.K.

"Deluge"
DELUGE.

At 1130/19. (D.C. 1153/19.) At 2330/19.
(D.C. 2350/19.)

Flare Signals.
for Invasion.

Intend to hold demonstration of Green and Red Flares now in force to give warning of Invasion from 3 vessels off Dungeness, Dover, and Hastings at 1800 on a selected day not before 21/12. Request concurrence. (V.A. Dover 1903/19 to G.O.C's)

Movements.

BONAVENTURE.

Sailed to R/V as by F.O.I.C. Liverpool's 1030/17. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0330/19.)

SKATE, SARDONYX.

Arrived 18/12. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 0957/19.)

SALOPIAN.

Left Reykjavik. E.T.A. Clyde 1200/22.
(F.O. Iceland 1030/19.)

Clyde.
CLYDE.

All movement on Clyde held up by fog.
(F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1252/19.)

Northern Patrol.

Trawler Lines. 3 Trawlers. (A.C.O.S. 1520/19.)

EGLINTON. QUORN.

Sailed 1702. (F.O.I.C. ^{Harwich} 1707/19.)

NIGERIA.)
AURORA.)

NIGERIA to sail to R/V with AURORA in 310⁰
Dunnet Head 10 miles at 1000/20 and carry
out W.P. 51. serial 45. (C.S. 18.1927/19.)

WHITEHALL.
WINCHELSEA.
VANQUISHER.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2258/19.)



War Diary.

19. 12. 40.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

PUNJABI. Arrived Plymouth 1100.(C. in C.W.A.2328/19.)
JERSEY.
JUPITER.

Operations.

Operation
"Specimen" Arrived PEGASUS. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 0722/19.)
Your 1904/18.(re boiler cleaning of
PEGASUS.) Approved. (V.C.N.S. 1501/19 to
C. in C. W.A.)

Western
Patrol. CAMITO relieve MARSDALE in areas Q3,R3,S3,
arriving S.3. at 1200/20, by which time
MARSDALE is to be clear of that area.
(F.O.C.N.P. 1040/19. to Western Patrol.)

Submarines.

PROTEUS. Proceed on surface at best speed to R/V
before dark with KINGSTON AMBER in 50°
31' N. 0° 40' W. (S.5. 1446/19 to PROTEUS).
KINGSTON CEYLONITE will R/V with you in
50° 31' N. 0° 40' W. at 0845/19.
(S.5.1501/18 to PROTEUS.)

Greenock
Area. Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1607/19.)

SEAWOLF. Intend to sail as by your 0913/19. Expect
depart 1800/20 unescorted to arrive 50°
31' N. 0° 40' W. at 0845/21. Route.
(N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 1615/19 to S.5.)

Positions. For following 24 hours at 0800/20.(V.A.S.
1647/19.)

L.23. In Scapa Flow tomorrow. (A.C.O.S. 1739/19.)

British Air Activity.

Patrols. Being flown today ~~TRIST~~ ^{"Trest"} ~~SEAB~~ ^{"Seab"}, S.A.2, and
S.A.3. ~~SEAB~~ will not be flown.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0750/19.) Blenheim Fighters
flying from Dyce to Flamborough Head and
return. (C. in C. Rosyth 0832/19.)
S.9. is being flown P.M. today.(C. in C.
Rosyth 0836/19.).
My 1056/18. (Norwegian Coast Offensive
Patrol.) Weather unsuitable. Intend to
postpone. (Hatston 0905/19 to A.C.O.S.)
My 0750/19. S.A.3 cancelled owing to
weather. (C. in C. Rosyth 1038/19 to
C. in C. H.F.)



War Diary.

19. 12. 40.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

My 2244/30/11. Patrol "~~COLDENAP~~" has been cancelled. (C. in C. Rosyth 1730/19 to C. in C. HF.)

My 0905/19. Propose to carry out this operation as soon as weather permits. (Hatston 1851 to A.C.C.S.)

(Patrol "~~FAIR~~". A/S. Patrol.) Cancel my 1300/17 and my 0212/12. The following Patrol "~~FAIR~~" will be flown during moonlight or on clear nights beginning 20/12. Cross-over Patrol 59° 52' N. 1° 27' W. to 59° 52' N. 1° 8' W. to 58° 35' N. 1° 27' W to 58° 35' N. 1° 8' W. (C. in C. Rosyth 1758/19.)

Lorient.
Brest.

53 Sqn. to attack S/M's at Lorient. 59 Sqn. to attack tonight S/M's and Dockyard at Brest. (H.Q.C.C.1145/19 to 16 Group, Thorney Island.) 217 Sqn. to attack tonight S/M's at Lorient. (H.Q.C.C.1146/19.)

Kites.
Operational
Heights.

The maximum operational height to which balloons will be flown is to be increased to 6000 ft. Kites will, however, be flown up to 10,000 ft. within the Portsmouth and Plymouth barrages. Request all concerned be notified forthwith. This increase in operational height will not be brought into force until all Flying Units have received adequate warning. Request addressees signal the Air Ministry immediately they are satisfied that this has been done. Air Ministry signal X.991 19/12 refers. (Air Ministry 1106/19. to All Home Commands)

Enemy Air Activity.

ISOLDA.

** Should be British
(S.S. 734)
B.R. 1337 Page 45.*

* (Swedish, 261 Tons.) Bombed and sunk off South Wexford Coast vicinity Barrels light vessel this morning. Six ratings killed. (Irishlights, Dublin 2123/19.) (See 594)

Thames Estuary.

Request following information as to report that 45 Mines were recently dropped in area Yantlet Gate-Medway Gate. (C. in C. Nore 0002/19 to Adty.)



War Diary.

19. 12. 40.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Thames
Estuary.

In view of recent heavy mine laying in area Eastern End Yantlet Channel Thames Estuary would there be any objection to trial, if technically practical, of Naval 20 barrel U.P. weapon mounted in vessels afloat and linked with local A.A. communication system.
(A.C.N.S.H. 0003/19 to Air Ministry.)

Thames and
Medway.

Cancel my 1001/17. Thames and Medway are now open. Vessels to use only southern half of Thames Gate. (Cdre. Sheerness 1113/19 to Adty.)

INTREPID.

Adty. 1222/15. Intend sail 0845/20. E.T.A. Humber 1500/20. (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 1145/19 and 1357/19.)

Thames
Estuary.

Your 1310/18. (A) When s.s. INVER was mined near North Thames Gate, a mine exploded at same time close to DELPHINUS not operating near No.1. Yantlet buoy.

(B) When SUNLIGHT detonated a mine in 320° No. 3 Medway Channel buoy, another mine detonated in 285° Nore Lt. Vessel 7 cables.

(C) Two explosions occurred near s.s. ACCLIVITY and s.s. SEDULITY both at anchor as reported in N.C.S.O. Thames 1117/18 the mines being about one cable apart. Both masters of these vessels confirm that the interval between the two explosions was sixty to ninety seconds. The evidence in these three cases is reliable. It is estimated from reports that about twelve single explosions of an apparently spontaneous character occurred during the day, in some cases with no ships near them including one seen to explode off Garrison Point during night and one off No. 1 Yantlet buoy by day.
C. in C. Nore 1216/17 to Adty.)

Dover Area.

Sweeping carried out to 0800/19 December. In Q.Z.S. 105, A buoy to number 4 buoy 90% to total width of 5 cables. Detonated two mines in sweep and two sweeps cut by explosive cutters. Exploratory sweep number 4 buoy to Sand-head buoy negative result.
(V.A. Dover 1235/19.)

War Diary.19. 12. 40.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining Contd.Operation.
Z.N.E.8.

To be carried out on Night 20/21, or as soon after as possible. From 50° 56' N. 4° 55' W. in direction 299° for 5 miles, and thence 090° for 2 miles. (V.C.N.S. 1342/19 to C. in C.W.A. and ADVENTURE.)

Thames
Estuary.

FENTONIAN reports one Mine detonated by S.A. gear at 1325 in 108° No. 2 Yantlet Buoy 2 cables. (Capt. M/S. Sheerness 1558/19 and 1806/19 to C. in C.W.A. and ADVENTURE.)

Off Stavanger.

Your 2329/17. Intended to cancel Q.Z.X.42 Prefer following position for laying. INTREPID and ICARUS have been directed by Adty. 1137/18 to be ready to sail for Scapa by 22/12. If you concur request you will issue operation orders. (A.C.N.S.H.1755/19 to C. in C. H.F.)

TWEEGEBROEDERS.

(Dutch Schuyt) Mined close to No. 2 Yantlet Buoy and beached on Shoebury Sand. Crew standing by. No casualties reported. (N.C.S.O. Thames 2012/19.)

ARINIA.

(British Tanker, 8024 Tons.) Mined and sunk on fire in about 2 - 3 cables North of Nore Light Vessel. Believed one survivor landed at Sheerness. (N.C.S.O. Thames 2012/19. to C. in C. Nore.)

AROSA.

(Norwegian, 5043 Tons.) Damaged at 0830 today by underwater Explosion in 130° Bull Fort 3 to 4 cables. Now docked safely at Immingham. (F.O. Humber 2346/19.)



War Diary.

19. 12. 40.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence

Walcheren.
Hook of Holland.

Several M/V's seen at 1200. A/C. report.
(Chatham A.C.H.Q. 1440/19.)

Belle Ile.

One Destroyer, one M/V, and one Warship seen
by A/C. at 1245. (St. Eval 1615/19.)

Bordeaux.

First class observer in Bordeaux 15/12 reports
2 Italian S/Ms and S/M parent ship DE GRASSE
sunk and 7 other S/Ms in wet dock. Belgian S S
BAUDOINVILLE 10,000 tons moored alongside
Place Des Quinionses is S/M depot ship where
S/M officers live. All other Italian and German
officers live in Hotel Splendide on same Place.
In last raid bomb killed 2 sentries at hotel
entrance but (?hotel) undamaged. Aerodrome
temporarily unserviceable, all aircraft moved to
Casaux (Cussac)(?) Germans are very afraid for
both bridges and also for power house on opposite
bank from town above railway bridge. This pro-
vides all power for the district and is most
conspicuous target. (A.2.) (N.A. Madrid 1845/19
to D.N.I.)



War Diary.

19. 12. 40.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

ST. ALBANS.

Returned with defects. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0151/19.)

CASTLETON.

Request as to time ship will remain at Portsmouth. Defects will require about 6 weeks. (A.S. Portsmouth 1040/19) Ship sent to Portsmouth for Stage 2 refit. Stay at Portsmouth is governed by this (D.O.D.H. 1823/19 to C. in C. Portsmouth.)

NEPHRITE.

(British, 927 Tons) In collision with Blyth Examination Vessel FANO. Estimate 8 days to repair damage. (H.O.I.C. Blyth 1250/19.)

Boats and Raft.

Patrol A/C on ST2 reports sighting a waterlogged lifeboat, a white raft, and a broken boat in various positions 59° 35' N. 6° 36' W, 59° 40' 6° 10' 59° 48' N 5° 32' W between 1100 and 1132. Area carefully searched but no persons seen. (A.C.O.S. 2001/19 to Adty.)



War Diary

19.12.1940
Thursday

HOME COMMANDS

Shipping

Convoys

- Estimated positions 0900/19 (D.T.D., 1119/19 to C. in C., H.F.)
- W.N. 56 O 1300/19, escort GAVOTTE. 4 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1114/19) *See also next page*
- O.B. 261 Sailed 1018/19. 16 ships. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1135/19) List (1137/19)
- S.C. 15 Commodore in DARTFORD with 5 ships ordered to join H.G. 48 at 1100/20. (C. in C., W.A. 1404/19 to DEPTFORD, SCARBOROUGH, etc.)
- E.N. 44. 2230/20. Escorts HUGH WALPOLE, PENTLAND FIRTH, additional escort WOLFHOUND. 16 ships (12 overseas) Codes, "Paddle Monitor (L portion)" "Mixture" (O Portion) (N.C.S.O. Methil 1704/19)
- S.C. 16 Sailed from Halifax 15/12. Route. Covered by ROYAL SOVEREIGN to about 30° W. LEOPOLDVILLE, who sailed with W.S. 5.A., to meet ROYAL SOVEREIGN to proceed to Halifax. (D.O.D. (H) 2223/19)
- S.L. 57)
O.B. 258) Arriving 1000/19 with 2 ships ex S.L. 57 and 1 ship ex O.B. 258 with engine trouble (WINCHELSEA 0312/19 to N.O.I.C. Greenock)
- E.N. 44)
W.N. 57) Sail 1430/20 for Methil WOLFHOUND to act as A/A escort to E.N. 44. Sailing 2230/20 on meeting transfer to W.N. 57 due Cape Wrath 0130/23 and Duncansby 1530/23. (C. in C., Rosyth 1159/19 to WOLFHOUND)
- C.W. 20 Intend sail BERKELEY and CLEVELAND at 2330/19 for Sheerness for escort of C.W. 20 arriving Sandhead Buoy 0730/20 and Sheerness 1230/20. (C. in C., Portsmouth 1307/19)
- O.B.O. 261 Expect sail O.B.O. 261, 0030/20. Escort COLUMBINE 10 ship (N.C.S.O. Oban 1501/19 to C. in C., W.A.)
- W.N. 55 57° 52' N., 08° 15' W., at 1503/19 (A.C.O.S.)
- O.B.M. 262 Sailed 1652/19. Escort LEEDS UNITED. 10 ships (N.C.S.O. Milford Haven, 1742/19 to C. in C., W.A.)
- F.N. 63 Intend sailing SELKIRK 20/12 to join F.N. 63 off Harwich for Grimsby (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1835/19 to F.O.I C. Humber)

/E.N. 44.....

MOST SECRETWar Diary19.12.1940
ThursdayHOME COMMANDSConvoys-Contd.Shipping

E.N. 43. Sailed 1830/19. Escorts MORRIS DANCE, DRANGEY (trawlers) additional escort FLEETWOOD (sloop) 19 ships. (N.C.S.O. Methil 1939/19 to A.C.W.A.)

F.S. 63. 38 ships. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 0948/19)

C.E. 19 Passed Dover 0630. No shelling. (V.A. Dover, 0655/19 to Admty.)

S.C. 16
H.X. 97 You may pass convoy S.C. 16 (?unescorted) in about longitude 039° 00' W. ROYAL SOVEREIGN is providing cover for this convoy. Corvette HEPATICA is in company with convoy H.X. (? 97) (R.A. 3 B.S. 1056/19 to WORCESTERSHIRE)

W.N. 56 1231/19. H.M.Trawler PIROUETTE, 4 ships. Naval commodore with W.N.O. joining at R/V 1230/20 GAVOTTE senior Officer escorting W.N.O. from Bloody Bay to R/V thence Methil. (N.C.S.O. Greenock 1257/19)

W.N. 56 Sailed W.N. 56 (O) Code word Limited 1330/16 escort H.M.T.GAVOTTE. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1631/19)

LA PAMPA
AGRA Have lost contact. Area searched for 2 hours position, course and speed 056° 22' N., 009° 07' W., 122° 15 knots. Request instructions. Was escorting ships LA PAMPA, AGRA. (TRILIUM 2100/19 to F.O.I.C. Greenock)

Troop Convoys

W.S. 5 A.

My 2350/18. The following did not sail, BENRINNES, ADVISER, MAJSEER, BARRISTER, H.M.S. ST ALBANS returned with defects WORCESTER pass to Commodore. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0151/19) *See also next page -*

Sailed BATH and ST MARYS to join W.S. 5 A (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1010/19 to C. in C., W.A.)

Intend sailing Clyde portion of convoy W.S. 5 A fast with ARGUS, NAIAD, escorted by OTTAWA ST LAURENT PIORUN at 2100/19 in accordance with F.O.I.C. 2210/17. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1053/19 to Admty.)

Sailed - See p. 570

/2330/18

MOST SECRETWar Diary19.12.1940
ThursdayHOME COMMANDSShippingW.S. 5 A Contd.

2330/18 sailed MONTGOMERY escorting M/V STENTOR and CITY OF DERBY to join W.S. 5A. MONTGOMERY continues with convoy. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1121/19 to C. in C., W.A.)

Following ships unable to sail from Clyde with W.S. 5 (A):- ADVISER, BARRISTER, MAHSEER and BENRINNES. If ready, and providing they can make good 14 knots, ADVISER and BARRISTER should be sailed with W.S. 5 (A) Fast, a reduction of $\frac{1}{2}$ knot in speed of convoy to R/V "X" being accepted. MAHSEER and BENRINNES should be sailed for Freetown in the next available O.B. Convoy. (D.O.D. (H) 1215/19 to C. in C., W.A.)

DUNEDIN and M.T. ships CLAN CUMMING, EMPIRE SONG, CLAN MACDONALD, ESSEX and NORTHERN PRINCE are to leave convoy W.S.5.A and proceed through Straits of Gibraltar (date) DUNEDIN to part company as ordered by F.O. Force 'H' and proceed to Gibraltar to fuel and then to proceed Freetown. (D.O.D. (F) 1322/19 to DUNEDIN)

Operation
"Excess"

(Passage of M.T.
ships thro' Med.)

BONAVENTURE and ARGUS are to leave convoy W.S. 5 A when necessary (but not before BERWICK joins) so as to reach Gibraltar (date)

On completion of Operation "Excess" BONAVENTURE is to accompany ARGUS and JAGUAR to U.K.

Convoy S.L. 58 S is expected to be in position 47 degrees, 23 $\frac{1}{2}$ degrees on 23rd December and SS DURHAM in 46 $\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, 23 degrees on 24th December.

Expected positions of friendly submarines at 1200 24th December. TRIDENT 39° N., 18° W 240° 9 knots.

CACHALOT 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ ° N., 23° W., 060° 9 knots. (D.O.D. (F) to BONAVENTURE) (1323/19)

Admty. 1323/19, para. 1. Consider it preferable that ARGUS should act as proposed in para 4 of my 0915/13 (S.O. Force H., 2358/19 to Admty.)

My 1542/19 as HIGHLANDER has already been nominated as Senior Officer of escort request that on this occasion you will place yourself under his orders. (C. in C., W.A., 1540/19 to LE TRIOMPHANT)

/LE TRIOMPHANT....



War Diary

MOST SECRET

570

19.12.1940
Thursday

HOME COMMANDS

Shipping

W.S. 5 A.
Contd.

→ LE TRIOMPHANT to sail with Clyde portion of W.S. 5 A fast. VESPER to join convoy from Londonderry. (C. in C., W.A., 1542/19 to F.O.I.C. Greenock)

Sailed Liverpool section W.S.5 A (Fast) with FURIOUS escorted by KELVIN, BEVERLEY and KIPLING. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool. 1730/19 to Admty.)

→ Sailed Clyde portion W.S. 5 A fast with C.S. 15 in NAIAD and ARGUS escorted by OTTAWA, ST LAURENT, PIORUN, LE TRIOMPHANT in accordance with F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2210/19 to Admty.)



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

French S/M's.

French N.A. on behalf of French Admiralty states (begins). Three more French S/Ms escorted by one destroyer will pass Gibraltar westward December 22nd between 1000 and 1200. Object is to relieve S/Ms now in Atlantic which will begin to enter Mediterranean about end of December. East movement will be advised (ends). N.A. Madrid, 1202/19 to Admty.)

SERPA PINTO,
MOUZINHO

N.C.S.O. Lisbon 1628/18. (SERPA PINTO and MOUZINHO transporting French nationals.) Request instructions as I am unaware at present of any guarantee to prevent these vessels carrying cargo and/or enemy nationals from Casablanca to Lisbon. (F.O.C. N.A. 1210/19 to Admty.)

French
Convoy.

Gibraltar 1050/19 French sloop M/S COMMANDANT DELAGE escorting BOURGES, OUED TIFLET, VILLE DE STRASBOURG, BANFORA, passed east to west. 1255/19 French armed trawler ASPIRANT BRUN escorting CHAMPAGNE, VILLE DE TAMATAVE passed west to east. (S.O.(I) Gibraltar, 1537/19 to Admty.)

North Atlantic.

Azores
Patrol.

My 1900/8 paras. 4 and 5. Positions at 1200/19 estimated as follows (S.L. 58 and KENT, S.L. 58 Slow, and BERWICK returning to Gibraltar). (D.O.D.(F) 1146/19 to CACHALOT, TRIDENT).

Operation
"Ration".

Will you have sufficient destroyers to carry out operation ~~RATION~~ whilst Force H is away from Gibraltar? (1 S.L. 0155/19 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Your 0155/19. No. Only one destroyer will be left for all duties. Your 2100/13. As suggested in my 0110/14 the chances of intercepting French escorted convoy from Casablanca to Mediterranean appear remote. Most favourable chance would appear to be a Lisbon-Casablanca convoy. Timely notice of departure should be available from Lisbon. Opportunity to provide overwhelming force might be taken by use of ships returning from Azores patrol. Signals referred to have been passed to S.O. Force "H". (F.O.C.N.A. 1110/19, to Admty.)

Force H.

Gibraltar arrivals 19/12 1000, S.O. Force "H" in RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, FAULKNER, FURY, FORESTER, DUNCAN, ISIS, ENCOUNTER. (S.O.(I), Gib., 1048/19 to Admty.)

/ BERWICK



FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (Contd.)

BERWICK.

Now that BERWICK has been withdrawn from Azores patrol it is requested that DERBYSHIRE be moved to patrol in areas F.2, G.2, H.2.

DERBYSHIRE
CIRCASSIA

F.O.C.N.P. 1130/18 not to S.O. Force H. and 1040/16. It is considered desirable that areas Q.3 R.3. S.3 should be patrolled. It is requested that CIRCASSIA be sailed for patrol in these areas when ready.
(D.O.D.(F) 1715/19 to F.O.C.N.P.)

Air Report.

Daily summary operations. 2 routine A/S patrols. 2 Surface Reccos. to East 1 co-operating with FIREDRAKE in attempt to intercept German ship which possibly left Malaga during night. No interception. 1 Surface recco. to West. Area covered 7° West to 2° West.
(200 Group, 1700/19).

Conference held to discuss additional measures for security of Naval harbour. Following proposals put forward for consideration.
Indicator nets to be placed between boom vessels outside the entrances.
Laying of indicator loops and loop mines outside the entrances.
Your 2058/1/12. Request I may be informed when A/S motor launches are expected to be available. (F.O.C.N.A., 1800/19 to Admty.)

South Atlantic.

FORMIDABLE.
NORFOLK.

FORMIDABLE and NORFOLK will not join Convoy and are to proceed forthwith, passing to Westward of R/V "X" and of Azores, and carrying out a sweep for pocket battleship en route to Freetown as arranged by C.in C. S.A.
DORSETSHIRE will probably join Force K in lieu of BERWICK.
(D.O.D.(F) 0005/19 to F.O. Force K.)

Destroyers.

A.T. 0005/19. Request you will sail two destroyers to Freetown as required by C.in C. S.A. These destroyers will also be required for FURIOUS - vide A.T. 1742/12, para. 2. (D.O.D.(F) 0020/19 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Reference Admty. 0020/19. In view of forthcoming operation in Mediterranean requiring all available destroyers can you accept 2 destroyers leaving Gibraltar for Freetown a.m.25/12.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1030/19 to C.in C. S.A.).



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

19.12. 1940.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (continued).

SAVORGNAN-DE-BRAZZA. Arrived Simonstown 1130/18 and will sail 1130/20 for Durban. G. in C. S.A. requested to inform Marine, Pointe Noire. (N.O.I.C. Simonstown 1057B/19 to C. in C.S. A.).

Walvis Bay.

My 1927B/18 regarding Walvis Bay para. 4 delete reference to 60 pounder Howitzers. These have been replaced by two 12 pounders Guns. (S.N.O. Simonstown 1305B/19 to Admtly).

BRIDGEWATER.

Arrival 1200/19 BRIDGEWATER (with ENGLISH TRADER). (S.O.I. Freetown 1355N/19).

DELHI.

Lagos departure 0900/19 DELHI for (S.O.I. Freetown 1357N/19).

Whalers.
WHALERS.

Arrival 1115/19 H.M. Whalers SWONA SKUDD 3,4 and 5. (S.O.I. Freetown 1435N/19 to Admtly).

FORT LAMY.

Your 1515/18 para 2 (not to C. in C. S.A.). Confirm FORT LAMY carrying guns as mentioned in my 1738/9. She arrived Duala 19/12 and will continue South as soon as passengers and cargo of cattle and foodstuffs have been embarked. With re-opening of Gabon there is a large outstanding military and civil traffic to clear. (N.C.S.O. Duala 1501/19 to M. of Shipping).

Cape Agulhas
Shipping Route.

Attention of N.C.S.O.'s drawn to fact that although merchant ships should normally be routed 40 miles south of Cape Agulhas there are cases where Masters of low powered and heavy laden ships consider their ships endangered by so doing owing to prevailing weather conditions. Found in such cases the masters have to cross about 15 miles south of Cape Agulhas. This is the most dangerous area. Masters of such ships, including neutrals, if forced by the weather to keep to the northward, should pass either (a) within 5 miles of Cape Agulhas or (b) 25 miles off Cape Agulhas.

/Masters.....



War Diary.

19.12.1940.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (continued).

Cape Agulhas
Shipping Route.
(contd).

Masters should be warned that this deviation from their route is only to be made if absolutely necessary. If any ship is reported making such deviation N.C.S.O. at the next port of call is to make a full investigation.

Masters are to be made to realize the danger of mines again being laid off Cape Agulhas.
(S.O.I. Capetown 1524B/19).

GUINEA.

Mast 92. Your Mast 166. I have instructed Companhia begins:- To send Portugues Ship GUINEA to Freetown arriving about 30/12. She can carry approximately 350 passengers. Is a further ship required (?).
(N.C.S.O. Lisbon 1616/19 to Admt'y for M. of Shipping).

Belligerent
ship in Argentine
ports.

H.M. Ambassador has informed me Argentine Minister of Agriculture will issue this evening decree taking power to requisition as necessary belligerent ships taking refuge in Argentine ports with object (of) ? acquiring necessary tonnage to export Argentine products.
(B.N.A. Buenos Aires, 1847/19 to D.N.I).

Enemy
Auxiliary.

Indication of enemy auxiliary on line 310° from Ascension on 18/12 this might have been in 001° N 027° W and be moving to meet Warship Raider. HERMES and Force L including PRETORIA CASTLE to proceed and search through J.35 (b) and in I 35 area on Western edge of Cape - U.K. route and possible fuelling areas then through J. 35 to St. Helena for fuel. NEPTUNE and DORSETSHIRE after searching as directed in my 1551/18 proceed and search through H.34 and I 34 areas on South America St. Vincent and Freetown route and possible fuelling areas. Then to Freetown for fuel when required.
(C. in C. S.A. 2015N/19 to S.O. Force M. HERMES.).

/NEWCASTLE.....



MOST SECRET.

19.12.1940.
Thursday.

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic (continued).

NEWCASTLE.
ARNDALE.
ENTERPRISE.
CARNARVON CASTLE.

Proceed so as to pick up Oiler ARNDALE who arrives at South end of sea rendezvous "~~ARNDALE~~" (between 024° 20'S. 044° 10'W and 024° 55'S 045° 00'W) at daylight 21/12 and complete with fuel from ship at "Lam" or "Pig" as quickly as possible. On completion leave ARNDALE at anchor to fuel ENTERPRISE and join me in position 025° W reporting expected time of arrival as soon as known and stating position of ARNDALE. (R.A.S.A.D. 2115Z/18 to NEWCASTLE).

Oiler ARNDALE (?inside) position "~~ARNDALE~~" and "~~ARNDALE~~". She is fitted for stirrup fuellings with either five inch or 5½ inch hose. If possible without delay transfer CARNARVON CASTLE's ammunition to ARNDALE. (R.A.S.A.D. 2117Z/18 to NEWCASTLE).

Mediterranean.

Alexandria
Raid.

Air raid at 0300, 1 machine, 8 bombs all in sea. (R.A. Alexandria 1316/19).

SYDNEY.

Admty 0120/15. Before proceeding necessary for SYDNEY to have her rudder repaired, estimated time about 8 days. Intended to dock her at Malta about 23/12 (C. in C. Med 1233/19). (Note SYDNEY is proceeding to Australia).

Dodecanese.

My 2214/13. Please confirm ^{Rhodes} RHODES and ^{Kas} KOS were intended in your 1651/11. (D.N.I 0012/19 to C. in C. Med). (Note:- Answered affirmatively by C. in C. Med. 2011/16 recd in Admty 1333/19).

Operation B.S.

Operational S/M Sanctuary in force in area 033° 08'N 013° 06'E 000° 22-36 for one S/M from 0001/20 T.O.O. (V.A. Malta 0809/19).

Cased M/T
for Egypt.

Following for Sir Edward Beatty, Arrangements for assembly of cased M/T on arrival Egypt necessitate majority of ships passing through Suez Canal. Loading of India cargo in these ships means either inconvenient and slow discharge at Suez or incurring heavy expense for canal dues. Request every endeavour be made to make up separate shipment of India cargo not in same vessels as cased M/T for Egypt. If this cannot be arranged, confine India cargo to as few ships as possible Agree to military. (P.S.T.C. Egypt 1045/19 to N.O.I.C. ? Haifa).

/Air.....



War Diary.

19.12.1940.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (continued).

Air Report.
Libya.

OPERATIONAL SUMMARY No. 192. up to 1200/19. Night 17/18 Dec. 9 Blenheims bombed enemy M.T. vehicles on road between Bardia and Tobruk. Day 18/12 No bombing operations. Hurricane offensive patrols covering our advanced troops and ships discharging at Sollum shot down 1 S. 79 in flames. Reconnaissance of coast revealed no movements between Bardia and Tobruk but 500 vehicles seen inside Bardia defences.

Greece. Day 18/12. Offensive reconnaissance Valona harbour by 5 Blenheims located large numbers of enemy shipping. Bombs fell near seaplane hangers setting 1 warehouse on fire. 1 Sunderland searched eastern Ionian Sea for enemy shipping.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1147/19).

Fulmar
Convoy.

A.282 19/12. Following signal from Takoradi is repeated for your information. A. 789 18/12. Third Fulmar Convoy left for Lagos en route Aboukir 1315 G.M.T. Expected time of arrival Aboukir 23/12. Time of origin 1330/18.
(Air Ministry 1200/19 to Admty).

Operations
Communique.

Intend issuing following press communique
Units of Mediterranean Fleet carried out a sweep into the Adriatic on night of 18th/19th/12 to afford support to the Greeks. Advance forces swept up to a line joining Bari and Durazzo. Meanwhile units of the battle fleet bombarded the port and military establishments of Valona. Enemy batteries did not return fire until after the withdrawal began, firing only a few rounds. No enemy warships or merchant ships were found at sea during these operations.

(ii) One of our S/M's reports sinking on 13-14/12 one and possibly 2 laden merchant ships off Cape Spartivento, despite their escort and also a large laden southbound tanker off Cape Colonne on night of 15-16/12.

(iii) Off the coast of Libya, naval units and supporting units have been working in co-operation with the Army and R.A.F. Sollum was bombarded as necessary to assist the army in its capture and similar support is now being given against Bardia. On 17/12 a close range attack was made inside Bardia Harbour during which 3 small ships were left sinking (Cinc Med 1252/19 Admty)



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MOST SECRET.War Diary.

19.12.1940.

Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (continued).

NARVAL (lost)
books compromised.
UPRIGHT
REGENT.

All books held by French Submarine NARVAL must be considered compromised. UPRIGHT is not to proceed to area T U but is to be ordered to operate in area South of $36^{\circ} 00' N$ and West of $15^{\circ} 00' E$ leaving area not earlier than p.m./22 to arrive at Malta a.m./24. REGENT is to be ordered to leave area G.10 operate to south of latitude $33^{\circ} 00'$ crossing that latitude p.m./22 to arrive Malta a.m./25. These instructions to submarines considered sufficiently broad to be safe to venture in compromised cypher. Warn all submarines at sea that their books are compromised. (C. in C. Med 1235/19 to V.A. Malta).

Destroyer
Reliefs.

When AVON VALE, FARNDALE, SILVERTON, and ERIDGE are ready for service and worked up they will be sailed to the Red Sea to relieve K class destroyers. They will be fitted for tropical service. K. class destroyers should then relieve NUBIAN and MOHAWK who should rejoin the Home Fleet. N class destroyers will be sailed to reinforce Mediterranean Fleet in accordance with my 2309/8. (D.O.D. (H) 1306/19 to C. in C's).

Boom Defences.

Your 1247/14 Following Boom Defence Stores shipped in NALGORA, sailed 8/12. Additional five cables of A/T double will be shipped early January and further supplies as stores become available. ATREUS has sufficient material for two controlled minefields. (D.B.D. 1658/19 to C. in C. Med).

Sollum Defences.

Information just received from 202 group indicates two or three new gun emplacements in grid reference 52233875. (R.A.I. 1715/19 to N.O.I.C. Sollum);

/Malta.....



War Diary.

19.12.1940.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (continued).

Malta
Air
Report.

Combined Services report Malta to 1700/19. All times G.M.T. 0714 - 1545 Sunderland on reconnaissance Western Ionian Sea for enemy naval and commercial units. Nil report. 0735 - 1231 Glenn Martin photographic reconnaissance Naples for naval and commercial units. One cruiser in dry dock - 9 M/V's over 5000 tons and some fleet auxiliaries. 2 M/V's 10,000 tons anchored outside harbour entrance. 0812 - 1223 Glenn Martin photographic reconnaissance Taranto. Outer Harbour one battleship and eight M/V's over 5000 tons. Inner harbour two cruisers and several small M/V's and fleet auxiliaries. Night 18/19, 2225 2255 two separate raiders approached from the north. First raider dropped six bombs in sea off Grand harbour and left before illuminated by searchlights. Second raider dropped 4 bombs in sea and 2 others on land near Tigne. This raider was picked up by searchlights - identified S 79 and shot down in flames into sea by Hurricane. No damage or casualties by bombs. A.A. did not engage as fighter on patrol. No enemy survivors. 0045 - 0050 a.m. enemy aircraft approached from the north but turned back 15 miles from the island. Probably searching for destroyed aircraft. One Hurricane no interception. 2015, 1 Wellington despatched to attack Tripoli and report on weather conditions for larger attack. Unable to reach objective due weather. Operation cancelled. (H.Q.R.A.F. Malta 1720/19).

Valona
bombed.

Operational Summary No. 35 A.M./19
9 aircraft No. 84 Squadron despatched on offensive recco., 6 to Valona 3 to Krionero. At Valona 11 ships seen in harbour. Much movement Terpelene to Valona Road towards Valona. Bombs dropped buildings North part of town, barracks, petrol dump and M.T. park, smoke seen from petrol dump and barracks. Only 2 Blenheims reached Drionero as 1 returned engine trouble. 7 ships seen in harbour. A direct hit was scored on road and some buildings North part of town, barracks, petrol dump and M.T. park, smoke seen from petrol dump and barracks. Only 2 Blenheims reached Krionero as 1 returned engine trouble. 7 ships seen in harbour. A direct hit was scored on road and some buildings set on fire HQBAFGI 7302

MOST SECRET.War Diary.19.12.1940.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (continued).Fast
Personnel
Convoys.

Admty 2524/14/11 and S.O. Force H. 2105/7/12. Requested you will signal your remarks as soon as practicable. The convoy would be in the order of 12 ships with a speed of 15 knots. (D.O.D. (f) 1842/19 to C. in C. Med).

Since 1842/19 from Admiralty states speed of convoy is 15 knots my 2105/7 does not appear to apply. (S.O. Force H. 2359/19 to C. in C. Med).

REGENT.

Leave area G. and operate to South of 033° North. (V.G. Malta 1921/19 to REGENT).

OTUS.

Return to Alexandria forthwith, arrive Sanctuary 0600/20. (Capt S.I. 2257/19 to OTUS).

Operations
"Hide".
"Seek".

Following is outline of operation "~~Hide~~", involving passage of MALAYA, two M/T ships and five destroyers (Force F) to Gibraltar. Four destroyers of Force (H) (Group 2) leave Gibraltar for Eastward a.m./20 at economical speed, carrying out A/S sweep en route. Remainder of Force (H) (Group 1) leave Gibraltar p.m./20 making feint to the westwards until after dark unless weather forecast necessitates earlier start. Groups 1 and 2 rendezvous South of Balearic Islands 21/12, and weather permitting Group 2 proceeding night 21-22, to carry out operation "~~Hide~~", which is moonlight and dawn search of area West of Skerki Bank to cover Force F between Skorki (?Channel) and 0900/22 rendezvous. (S.O. Force H, 2525/19 to C.in C. Med.).



MOST SECRET.

19.12.40.
Thursday.

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WAR DIARY.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

CARTHAGE.

To leave Durban a.m. 21/12 to patrol 030° S., 034° E., and 022° S., 040° E., to give cover to shipping; to leave later position p.m. 24/12 and proceed Colombo to arrive (date) Will arrive Bombay for docking and refit (date)
(C.in C. E.I. 1128Z/19 to CARTHAGE).

DAUNTLESS.

At dusk 19/12 to proceed Penang at 15 knots unless otherwise ordered by C.in C. China.
(C.in C. E.I. 1126Z/19 to Force V).

Destroyers.

Reliefs for "K" Class. (See Mediterranean 1306/19).

CAPETOWN.
APPLELEAF.

On completion of fuelling CAPETOWN to proceed on a course 270 from Addu Atoll at 12 knots until dusk 21/12 to give cover to shipping and then proceed Colombo through equatorial channel so as to arrive Colombo A.M. 24/12. APPLELEAF is to leave Addu Atoll for Colombo on 22/12 as arranged by CAPETOWN so that cover to APPLELEAF is given on passage.
(C.in C. E.I. 1404Z/19 to Force V).

Aden Air Report.

Summary 190 and Operational Summary for 24 hours ending 1500/19. 6 Blenheims 203 Sqn. provided fighter escort three for convoy one and three for convoy Q/4A. Three Blenheims 203 Squadron carried out A.S. patrols covering latter convoy. Seven of these aircraft used advanced base Kamaran, three remaining overnight. 0338 to 0510 one Blenheim 8 Squadron searched Gulf of Aden for Tanker reported drifting with engines U/S. Tanker found being towed by tug. 0120 unidentified enemy aircraft believed one S.79 approached and encircled Aden remaining outside S.L. ring. One Gladiator 94 Sqn., took off but made no interception through lack of S.L. location partly due cloud. Only two rounds indirect A.A. About seven bombs in East South and West. Seven H.E. and some incendiaries North of Sheikh Othman. Two flares used. No damage or casualties.
(A.H.Q. Aden, 1553/19).

WAR DIARY.19.12.40.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Free
French
Movement.

From De Schompre for De Gaulle No.36.
Administrateur Adjoint De 2 Eme Classe, who is
in Pondichery to join me here and he in charge
or propaganda and broadcast either in Batavia
or here.
(C.in C. China, 0533Z/19 to Adty).

Far
East
Aerodromes
protection.

Following for Chiefs of Staff. Preliminary
investigation into problem of Aerodrome defence
am not satisfied with the present scale of
protection. Aerodromes in Singapore are
less well protected than aerodromes in India.
As an immediate measure to improve this
G.O.C. Malaya is taking over the external
defence of Seletar, although this can only be
done at the expense of troops available for
the Defence of the Island and Johore.
This reinforces need for a few Battalions
for static duties. Indian States force or
territorial battalions would be suitable
therefore request permission to deal direct
with India regarding provision of these
battalions.
(Easfar, 0721/19 to Air Ministry).

America and West Indies.SIBONEY,
M.Lesto.

Re Jean Lesto, passenger in U.S. SIBONEY from
Lisbon to U.S.A. with plans for increasing
production of Ford lorries for Germany in
France. (N.A. Madrid to S.O.(I) Bermuda
1130/19).

SALISBURY
RICHMOND
NEWPORT.

Expect to sail from St. John's on 23/12.
Route to Belfast. (F.O.3.B.S. 1058/19 to
Adty etc.)

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.19.12.40.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. (Contd.)

LEOPOLDVILLE. LEOPOLDVILLE will sail 18/12 for Halifax with the personnel on board. (details)
Homewards vessel will be used for berth passengers and cargo, operating line being C.P.R. Presume you will embark 200 troops for passage U.K. in accordance with your 1601/16.
(D.S.T. 0300/19 to H.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

NEW
NORTHLAND.

C.in C. South Atlantic 1711/18. Please make necessary reply. Ample warning of intended sailing of NEW NORTHLAND must be given to enable route for passage arrangements to be settled. D. of S.T. 0129/6/12, refers.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa), (1046/19 to C.O.A.C. Halifax)

Town
Class
Destroyers.

SALISBURY RICHMOND NEWPORT sailed 19/12 for St. John's N.F.
(S.O.(I) Halifax 1446/19).

PORPOISE.

My 2341/22/11. PORPOISE is to be sailed if possible with H.X. 98.
(D.O.D.(H) 1626/19 to R.A.3.B.S.)

Your 1626/19. Regret weather damage to PORPOISE precludes sailing before H.X. 99. Four W/T generators flooded and gun out of action. Some damage due to reloading torpedoes breaking loose.
(F.O.3.B.S. 1614/19 to Adty).

New Zealand.U.S.8.

ACHILLES escorting New Zealand portion of convoy U.S.8. consisting of H.T. EMPRESS OF RUSSIA and DOMINION MONARCH left Wellington 1930Z/19 for Sydney, expected time of arrival 1800Z/22.
(S.O.(I) Wellington. 2040Z/19 to Adty etc.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

19.12.1940. 583
Thursday.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

NORDERNEY.

Para reports completed loading 1000 tons bunker coal. (S.O.I., Montevideo, 1207Z/19).

LA PLATA.

German ship LA PLATA sailed 2245 tonight. (Consul, Vigo, 2316/19).

TARONGA,
potential
raiders.

My 0150/29 and 1747/7 (Wilhelmsen ships fitting out as raiders) a further report (C.3) states that another Wilhelmsen Line ship is fitting out as A.M.C. Motor ship TARONGA 7003 tons gross, 20 knots, in raider trim. (D.N.I. 1836/19 to C.in C's).

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

CLIZIA
AVILES.

Arrival CLIZIA, ^{* at Aviles, Spain} ~~AVILES~~ (as received, ~~AVILES~~?) from Gijon 15/12 for laying up. (Gijon T.H.I., 1840/19). * W. I. R. No 42. 27/12/40
Page 27.

DERNA.

Left 18/12 for Genoa. (Barcelona, 1614/19).

FRENCH MERCHANT SHIPS.

LORRAINE)
VENDEMIARE)

Passed Gibraltar eastward, destination unknown. (F.O.C.N.A., 0931/19).

War Diary.19.12.1940.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.AMICUS

(British, 3660 tons), torpedoed
54° 10' N., 15° 50' W. at 1814/19.
(Valentia Radio, recd. 2037)
Torpedoed 54° 10' N., 15° 50' W.
(Plymouth recd. 1919/19)
Torpedoed 54° 10' N. 15° 15' W.
apparently for 15° 50' W. at 1914.
Investigate (C.in C. W.A. 1930/19 to
WESTCOTT).
Sailed tug SEAMAN to assistance of
AMICUS torpedoed in 54° 10' N.,
15' 50° W. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2104/19).

SAN CARLOS
(sunk 16/12)

Reported on good authority Spanish Ship
SAN CARLOS was sunk by gunfire from
unknown submarine at 2000/16 on passage
from Cape Juby to South of Isle
Fuerteventura, crew picked up by Spanish
Steamer and landed here yesterday evening.
(Consul, Las Palmas, 1155/19). (D.S. 472)
Note by N.I.D.:-

The only Spanish Vessel of this name is
one of 223 tons belonging to Jose Trujillo
Alamo of Santander. This is not one of
the shipping lines mentioned in the orders
to Italian Submarine Commanders re
sinking Spanish ships.

NAPIER STAR.

Your 1915/18 and my 2315/18. (No trace
War Registry) No trace NAPIER STAR or
survivors. Intend to continue search
until dark Friday 20/12 and then return
to harbour. Wind S.S.W. force 7
visibility poor.
(CALDWELL, 2105/19 to C.in C. W.A.).

H.X.90.

An analysis of the submarine attack on
H.X.90 indicates a possibility that the
route from 35° West to the R/V with local
escort may have been compromised.
It is appreciated that this is highly
improbable but owing to great importance
of the matter it is requested that you
will investigate.
(D.T.D. 1856/19 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Your 1540/17. Following is report of
signal officer on my staff after inter-
view with W/T operator of S.S. CARDITA.

ROTORUA
(sunk 11/12)

W/T operator states that during forenoon
9/12 ROTORUA asked CARDITA by V/.S if she
was fitted with short wave transmitter.
On 10/12 between 1030 and 1100 zone plus 1
ROTORUA passed message of 30 groups M.N.
code by light to CARDITA for transmission
on short wave. No time of origin was
received so 1106/10 was added.

/ CARDITA

War Diary.19.12.1940.
Thursday.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked. (Contd.)

CARDITA called Portishead Radio G K A at 1245 G.M.T. on 24 metres delay being due to temporary defect in W/T transmitter G.K.D. answered at 1302 G.M.T. when message from CARDITA secret call sign MESN and repeated due to fading R was received from G.K.D. at 1320 G.M.T. At end of message W/T operator made in P/L 'received by lamp' to indicate office of origin since from VAYP CDE 30" was also made before the text. No other signal was received in W/T office from ROTORUA and operator has no knowledge of message 0930/11 referred to but a distress message was made for ROTORUA at 1339/11 G.M.T. W/T operator has been told that P/L is not to be used except in emergency and correct procedure explained. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1904/19 to Admty.)

Submarines Reported.

0334. D.F. bearings received, transmission probably originated from U-boat, considered impossible to estimate her position. (D.D.I.C. 0832/19).
1210. D.F. probable U-boat 58° N. to 58° 30' N., 19° to 21° W. Unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 1256/19).
1610. Number of Home Guard reported S/M from Taytallich Loch Sween. Stated was in view 50 mins., conning tower painted grey. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 2005/19 to Admty.)
1637. D.F. bearings indicate you may have been sighted by a U-boat. (D.D.I.C. 1709/19 to S.O. Force H).

Estimated U/B dispositions.Italian.

1 still patrolling to westward of Madeira Azores area patrol continued probably by relief boat or boats.
4 in N.W. Approaches on or to eastward of 20° W. between 53° N. and 57° 30' N. 1 of which was about 54° N. and one 57° N. A.M./18.

German.

Very vague indications from area south of Cape de Verde Islands west of Sierra Leone. Doubtful indications of one approaching N.W. Approaches from South and another from North possibly now about 60° N. 12 degs.W. 1 north of 55° N. east of 15 degs.W. S. or S.E. of Rockall.
1 in 59° 05' N. 23° 13' W. at 1930/18, may move to southward.
1 in about 59° N. 18° W. at 1543/18 probably also attacked DALFONN at 1841/18 in same position.
1 about 60° N. 20° W.
(D.D.I.C. 1209/19.)



War Diary

20.12.1940
Friday

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

The Home Fleet returned to Scapa at 0930 this morning from a Practice Cruise to the westward.

It has been decided that a second submarine is to accompany homeward-bound H.X. Convoys in future, and ~~SEVERN~~ is to be sailed for Halifax for this duty as soon as possible.

See p. 590.

Two more TOWN class Destroyers are to be manned by Norwegians who will take them over during January; and, pending the finding of a Board of Inquiry into the loss of BRANLEBAS, C. in C., W.A., recommends that Ships of her class should not be allowed to proceed to sea.

An unidentified Aircraft was plotted at 1242 today about 25 miles West of Hoy steering East. The Aircraft maintained this course along the North shore of Pentland Firth where it was sighted for an instant by a section of our Fighters on patrol, and then disappeared to the eastward of Sandwick in South Ronaldsay. At 1907 another Enemy Aircraft flew low over the Shipwash; and at about 2100 tonight the L.M.S. Mail Steamer HIBERNIA was attacked by an aircraft while entering Kingston Harbour and thus well inside Irish territorial waters. A German seaplane flew yesterday over the rooftops of Rosslare.

In the Sheerness area, the Swashway is not to be used by shipping until further orders, though a swept channel 3 cables wide from a Medway Channel Buoy to No 1 Yantlet Buoy may be used. Sweeping was carried out during the day in the Dover area, off Harwich, and ahead of convoy W.N. 55. from Kinnaird Head to Cruden Bay.

/C. in C.,.....

War Diary20.12.1940
FridaySITUATION REPORTHome Commands-Contd.

C. in C., Nore reports that the S.A. gear cannot be considered satisfactory until it is able to detonate Acoustic Mines at a greater distance from the sweeper than is now possible.

VETERAN and VERITY were in collision last night. Both were anchored this morning off Moville, VERITY holed and her engine-room flooded and VETERAN with her stern slightly damaged, and both reported unfit for sea.

ShippingConvoys

It is proposed to amend the cycle of convoys to provide for 2 H.X. convoys, 1 S.C. convoy, 1 S.L. convoy and 1 H.G. convoy and 3 O.B. convoys, 1 O.B. (S) convoy, and 1 O.G. convoy, sailing every 10 days. The 2 H.X. convoys would sail alternately at 4 and 6 day intervals.

Operations Against Vichy French

The C.O. of KINGSTON TOPAZ (armed boarding vessel) reports that he closed the French SS COMPIEGNE when she left Lisbon to test the reaction of the French destroyer BRESTOIS, who was cruising in the vicinity. When the latter realised what was happening he bore down on KINGSTON TOPAZ with all guns cleared away.
Note- this refers to question of interception of French ships.

War Diary20.12.1940
FridaySITUATION REPORTNorth AtlanticFuelling
at Sea

Senior Officer Force H reports that he had just reached position N.E. of Azores when recalled. This area is unsuitable for oiling at sea owing to long heavy swell. Area S. of St. Miguel reported by SHEFFIELD 4 days out of five, ~~unsuitable~~. *See p. 605*

UPHOLDER
USK
UNIQUE

Three submarines are on way to Gibraltar.

Convoy
W.S. 5 A

Troop Convoy W.S. 5 A fast, of 5 ships has sailed.

South AtlanticCARNARVON CASTLE

CARNARVON CASTLE arrived at Capetown today after her action with a German raider on 5/12.

TRIBESMAN

British SS TRIBESMAN 6242 tons due at Durban from U.K. 15/12 is overdue (~~see East Indies, SS LORNATON~~) *see p. 606*

MediterraneanMALAYA

MALAYA, with 3 destroyers, 1 A/A ship and 2 troopships arrived Malta 0230 and sailed p.m. to rendezvous with Force H (RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD and 6 destroyers) off Galita Is. (coast of Tunis)

Force H.

RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD and 6 destroyers left Gibraltar 0930/20.



War Diary

20.12.1940
Friday

SITUATION REPORT

East Indies

LORNASTON

British SS LORNASTON, 4934 tons, due at Durban 16/12, from Fremantle, is overdue (see South Atlantic, SS TRIBESMAN)

Convoy
W.S. 4 B

10 troop transports for Middle East escorted by SHROPSHIRE and DEVONSHIRE, left Durban on 0900/16.

Patrols

CERES (cruiser) is leaving Mombasa to patrol off Kismayu (Ital. Somaliland) and to rendezvous with COLOMBO (cruiser) which is to proceed to Mombasa.

China

Protection
of Trade

C. in C., states that present resources are so limited that he can do little more than provide intermittent cover for trade on Achin Head (Sumatra) area.

German Merchant Ships

REGENSBURG

REGENSBURG, 8068 tons, which had been at Yokohama since war began, left there this afternoon.



War Diary.

20. 12. 40.

Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Use of
Red Cross
by
Italian
Aircraft.

The Italians have given notice that certain of their aircraft are marked on their fuselage and wings with red crosses contained within red circles. H.M. Government have warned the Italians that immunity will only be accorded to such aircraft when solely engaged in transporting wounded by air and that they cannot be permitted to fly near allied territory or ships or over areas of sea which are the theatre of operations. Accordingly any Italian aircraft bearing red cross markings.

- (a) which come within range of H.M Ships or of coastal anti-aircraft defences are to be fired on;
- (b) which are encountered by British Aircraft in the vicinity of, or approaching British, Allied, or Egyptian territory or ships are to be attacked. (V.C.N.S.0110/20)(A.M. 624A.)

H.X. Homeward
Convoys.

My 2541/22/11. It has been decided that a second Submarine is to accompany homeward-bound H.X. Convoys. SEVERN should be detailed and sailed for Halifax as soon as available.(V.C.N.S. 1752/20 to V.A.S.)

Loch Ewe.

Your 1551/20/9. Only vessel at Aultbea capable of maintaining Patrol at entrance of Loch Ewe in winter months is H.M.Drifter FAIRWEATHER which must refuel at Stornoway every 2 weeks. If Patrol to be maintained request another armed Drifter be allocated to Aultbea.(A.C.O.S. 1956/20 to Adty.)

PUNJABI.

Should rejoin C. in C. H.F. on return of KIPLING and KELVIN from duty with Convoy W.S. 5A. (A.C.N.S.H. 2137/20 to C. in C.W.A.)

2 more
TOWN-class
Destroyers to be
manned by
Norwegians.

1. It has been agreed with the Norwegian Authorities that 2 more TOWN class destroyers should be manned by Norwegians. They are prepared to take them over in January.

2. In order that training may be arranged, you are requested to select 2 ships for the purpose which will complete repairs towards the end of January stating the dates when they should be ready to commission.
(2nd. S.L. 2214/20 to C. in C. W.A.)



War Diary.

20. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy Contd.

BRANLEBAS-class
Destroyers.

78. My 2055/16. Board of Enquiry is being held to report on loss of BRANLEBAS, on seaworthiness of this class of ship and to make recommendations as to future employment.

Recommend that for the present they should not be allowed to proceed to sea.
(C. in C. W.A. 2321/20 to Adty.)

Defence of U.K.

At 0630/20. (D.C. 0700/20.)
At 1130/20. (D.C. 1140/20.)
At 2330/20. (D.C. 2356/20.)

Movements.

MANCHESTER.

Arrived Scapa. (F.O.C.O.S. 0404/20.)

EDINBURGH.

[REDACTED]

EGLINTON,

Arrived 0937. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0948/20.)

QUORN.

NELSON.

→ Arrived Scapa 0930. (A.C.O.S. 1040/20.)

HOOD.

REPULSE.

ARETHUSA.

COSSACK,

TARTAR.

ESCAPADE.

DOUGLAS.

BRILLIANT.

SIKH.

ELECTRA.

ECLIPSE.

BEAGLE,

BULLDOG.

ROCKINGHAM,

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1237/20.)

STANLEY.

Arrived Scapa 1150. (A.C.O.S. 1250/20.)

NIGERIA,

AURORA.

Northern

Trawler Lines tonight. 4 Trawlers.

Patrol.

(A.C.O.S. 1442/20.)

CLEVELAND.

Arrived Sheerness 1200 (C. in C. Nore

BERKELEY.

1646/20.)

SCIMITAR.

Arrived. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1936/20.)

MOOLTAN.

Adty. 1645/7 and C. in C. W.A. 1855/29.
Leaves Clyde unescorted at 1200/21 for Tyne and Methil. Route.C.in C. Rosyth requested to arrange onward route from Methil and for Fighter cover throughout. (F.O.C.N.P. 2330/20 to MOOLTAN.)



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

20. 12. 40.
Friday.

592

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements (Contd)
Defence of U.K.

PUNJABI.
JERSEY.
JUPITER.

Sailed Plymouth 1700. (C. in C. W.A. 2358/20)

Force K.

F.O.C. Force K reports his speed 20 knots from 0503/19. (C. in C. H.F. 0930/20 to Adty.)

VULCAN.

Adty. 1744/18. Should be sailed when ready in F.S. Convoy to Southend for onward routing to Portsmouth. (C. in C. Nore 2050/20 to BEEHIVE.)

Operations.

→ Western Patrol.

615 DERBYSHIRE proceed to Area H 2 and patrol H 2 and F 2 in an anticlockwise direction remaining in each area 24 hours. My 1040/19 CAMITO carry out sweep in area Q. 3. R. 3. S. 3 leaving 1200/23 and resume patrol originally ordered in 1920/16 commencing on arrival Q1.F.O C N A to sail CIRCASSIA when ready for areas Q 3. R 3. S 3 to be patrolled in anti-clockwise direction remaining in each area 24 hours commencing on arrival Q 3. (F.O.C.N.P. 0200/20 to Western Patrol.)

Iceland.

The only ship available for transporting military personnel round Iceland is small Norwegian Coasting ship designed for service in Fiords. This ship is not safe in weather now being experienced. Strongly urge Ministry of Shipping be requested to provide Ocean going ship of good engine power capable of carrying 150 Officers and men to East and North Coast in safety. (F.O.I.C. Iceland 1637/20 to Adty.)

→ Northern and Western Patrols.

I.N.P. No. 3. Patrol areas are to be extended on the same scale to the Southward and letter numbered T1, T2, T3, U1, U2, U3, and V1 and V2. U3 is to extend to Southward to coast. (F.O.C.N.P. 2220/20 to N.P. and WP)

Proposed Operation.

F.O.I.C. Iceland 1307/13/12 to Adty. Suggest preferable to find Personnel from U.K. (Alabaster 1342/20 to War Office) See Operations Volume.

MOST SECRET.War Diary.20. 12. 40.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Submarines.O. 21.

Intend carry out submerged Torpedo Trials 4 miles South of Bell Rock from 1100/22. Request you report weather at 0700/22 and whether above R/V suitable for Trials. (S.9. 1001/20 to WHITE BEAR.)

PROTEUS.

Arrived. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1123/20.)

TIGRIS.

Intend sail escorted by STELLA POLARIS from Rothesay at 1000/21 for near Wolf Rock and thence unescorted to patrol. (S.2. 1519/20.)
Estimate off Wolf Rock 0600/23, thence to 47° 42' N. 6° 9' W. to patrol in Bay of Biscay North Zone. (S.2. 1521/20.)

L. 23.

Exercising in Scapa Flow tomorrow. (A.C.O.S. 1551/20.)

Greenock Area.

Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1551/20.)

SEAWOLF.

Trawler KINGSTON AGATE will R/V with you in 50° 31' N. 0° 40' W. at 0845/21. (S.5.1803/20.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/21. (V.A.S. 1853/20.)

H. 33.

Will be exercising with A/C between 1500 and 2300/21 within 10 miles of 56° N. 7° W. and may be unescorted. Ships to keep clear. (C. in C.W.A. 1942/20.)

British Air Activity.

Offensive
Patrol,
of Norwegian
Coast.

Your 1851/19 approved. (A.C.O.S. 0027/20 to Hatston.) Intend to send 4 Skuas leaving Hatston 1100 today. (Hatston 1010/20 to A.C.O.S.) All A/C returned to base without reaching objectives owing to lack of cloud cover. (Hatston 1430/20).

Patrols.

Patrols today ~~ROSE~~ ^{"Hornli" "S126"}, ~~SPAD~~, S.9., ~~SPAD~~ ^{"fan"} by moonlight. (C. in C. Rosyth 0752/20.)
Routine Summary at 0800/20 for 15, 16, and 18 Groups. (H.C.C.C. 0853/20.)
4 Blenheims will sweep area 59° 15' N. 1° W, 56° 45' N. 1° W on track 065° to depth of 160 miles from about 1500, returning Dyce at dusk. (C. in C. Rosyth 1304/20.)



War Diary.

20. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

Following A/S. Patrol ^{"Viking"} ~~Viking~~ will be flown daily during daylight hours. 2 circuits of cross-over. 59° 30' N. 0° 42' E., 61° N. 1° 18' E., 61° N. 0° 42' E., 59° 30' N. 1° 18' E. (C. in C. Rosyth 1450/20 to C. in C. H.F.)
Summary of Operations. 2 Routine A/S Patrols. 1 surface R/C to West and 1 to East. 1 A/S sweep to East for H.M. ships. Area covered 230W. to 9 W. (200 Group 1710/20 to Air Ministry.)
My 1758/19. Patrol ~~Viking~~ is not being flown tonight. (C. in C. Rosyth 1850/20 to C. in C. H. F.)

Night Flying in Firth of Forth.

C. in C. Rosyth 1525/18 and Craill 1905/17. Agree local night flying within 5 miles of Craill and 3 miles of Dunino may be carried out without I.F.F. and without W/T so far as local air defences are concerned. (H.Q.F.C. 1215/20 to Air Ministry)

Bordeaux.

217 Sqdn. to attack tonight S/M's in No. 1. Basin. Alternative Target the Naval Dockyard at Brest. (H.Q.C.C. 1507/20.)

Brest.

53 and 59 Sqdns., to attack tonight Power Station, Naval Dockyard, and Shipping in Brest. Alternative Target the Oil-Tanks at Cherbourg. (H.Q.C.C. 1508/20.)

Wilhelmshaven.

22 Sqdn. to attack tonight TIRPITZ in Vauhafen. (H.Q.C.C. 1509/20.)

Air Decoys.

A.M. 1148/7 and Commander Blunt's 1007/13. Request C.E. in C. Bath and DEE. may be directed to put following work in hand. (C. in C. W.A. 2205/20 to Adty.)

Enemy Air Activity.

ISOLDA
sunk.

OSAGE
(Br. Tanker).
1010 Tons.)
sunk.

Great Western S.S. ST. PATRICK, reports the sinking of the Irish T.H.K. ISOLDA by German plane on 19/12 inside territorial waters close to Rosslare. Six killed several wounded. On the 18th a German plane attacked the British Tanker OSAGE close to the ARKLOW lightship. This ship was first machine gunned which put her steering gear out of action then three bombs burst close to ship under water and sank her. Crew safe. On December 19th a German seaplane flew over the rooftops of Rosslare. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1048/20 to Adty.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

595

20. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

A/C. over
Pentland
Firth.

At 1242 an unidentified aircraft was plotted about 25 miles west of Hoy steering 090 degrees height 10,000 feet. The aircraft reduced height to 5,000 feet maintaining its course over the north shore of the Pentland Firth until over Sandwick in South Ronaldsay. Here it altered course to 070 degrees and at 1321 the plot faded at about 70 miles. While over the Pentland Firth the aircraft was sighted by a section of Fighters on patrol but contact was immediately lost and the aircraft remained unidentified.
(A.C.O.S. 1641/20 and Scapa W/T 1910/20.)

Convoy
WN. 55.

Attacked by one Float Plane at 1720 in 58°N. 2°8'W. No damage. (CURACOA 1858/20 to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Shipwash.

Low-flying Enemy A/C reported by Gunsites as flying over Shipwash from 1907 to 1915. Not reported by any Patrols nor plotted by C.H.L. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1944/20 to C. in C. Nore.)

HIBERNIA.

N.O.I.C. Holyhead report following from L.M.S. Mail Steamer HIBERNIA Holyhead to Kingstown attacked by E/A at about 2100 tonight while entering Kingstown, well inside territorial waters.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2224/20 to Adty.)

A/C.gives
correct
Recognition
Signal.

A/C. met by A/A Barrage at 2330 fired one red three white stars followed by correct Recognition Signal. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 2340/20 to C. in C. Nore.)

Mining.

INTREPID.

Sailed 0915. E.T.A. Humber 1500/20.
(N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 0933/20.)

Arrived - See p 597

Z.M.E.8.

Intend leave Milford Haven tonight, lay at 2230, return on completion about 0045. (ADVENTURE 0940/20.) Operation completed. (ADVENTURE 2307/20.)

Sheerness.

Group Officer in Force reports explosion at 0920/20 in 135 Outer Bar Buoy 7 cables. (Capt. M/S. Sheerness 1111/20.)



20. 12. 40.

Friday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects. (Should be p. 595^A)

Manning.

INTREPID.

Has defect in stern tube inner bush. Will probably require docking. Request dockyard assistance. (D.20. 1918/20 to F.O. Humber. -)

LANCASTER.

Intense condensation and serious electric lighting defects. Following work proposed. (C. in C. Portsmouth 0005/20 to Adty.)

PROFICIENT.

(Motor Drifter) Stranded on Whitby Sands 200 Yards North of West Pier. Crew of 4 landed safely. (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 0520/20 to F.O.I.C. Tyne.)

VETERAN.
VERITY.

VETERAN and VERITY in collision last night VERITY holed and engine room flooded. VETERAN slightly damaged in stern. Neither ship fit for sea. Both ships now anchored off Moville. Further details will be signalled when known. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 0903/20 to C. in C.W.A.)

HILDENA.
METHIL HILL.

Collision between H.M. Trawler HILDENA and S.S. METHIL HILL 648 tons at Methil 1810/19 in 090° St. Abb's Head 2 miles HILDENA returned to Granton under own power and beached for examination. Damage to bow possibly fractured stem post. METHIL HILL brought into Leith by Tugs with damaged bow. (N.O.I.C. Leith. 1045/20 to Adty.)



War Diary.

20. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

S.A. Gear.

Mining. Contd.

956. Out of the mines detonated by both A and C type of S.A. gear a proportion, including the last three swept, have detonated at about 30 yards from the sweeper. In addition to damage to material the shock to personnel is severe and it is asking almost too much of the crews to continue sweeping under these conditions. It has been suggested that this may be due to mines with weak batteries but the S.A. gear cannot be considered satisfactory until means is found to detonate all acoustic mines at a greater distance.
(C. in C. Nore 1138/20 to Adty.).

Newhaven.

P.W.S.S. reports heavy Explosion about 125° at 1147. (N.O.I.C. Newhaven 1153/20 to Adty) Explosion caused by Time Bomb at Friston. (N.O.I.C. Newhaven 1154/20 to Adty.)

Thames Estuary.

C. in C. Nore 1949/13 and my 113/19. Swashway is not to be used until further orders. Swept channel 3 cables wide to East of line from No. 3. Medway Channel Buoy to No. 1. Yantlet Buoy may be used. (Cdre. Sheerness 1302/20).

Dover Area.

Sweeping carried out to 0800/20. In Q.Z.S.105. A buoy to No. 4 buoy channel extended one cable to westwards 75%. No. 4 buoy to Sandhead buoy channel swept 75%. One mine. Ten sweeps cut by explosive cutters two cutters swept up. (V.A. Dover 1432/20 to Adty.)

Harwich.

Intend sailing 5 Fleet Sweepers at 1600 today to search 117 Q.Z.S. starting at South Falls at 0500/21. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1437/20 to C. in C. Nore.)

Sweep off Peterhead.

Intend commencing experimental M/S searching ahead of W.N. 55 due Kinnaird Head North 5' approx. 2030/20/12. 19th M/S Group R/V 5' North Kinnaird Head at 1900/20/12, and search war channel until Cruden Bay 090 degrees 6' then return to Peterhead.
(N.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1609/20 to C. in C. Rosyth.).

INTREPID.

Arrived 1620. (F.O. Humber 1621/20.)



War Diary.

20. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining Contd.

Acoustic Mines.
Precautions.

A case has occurred of a destroyer causing an acoustic mine to explode whilst turning with one engine ahead and the other astern, in order to straighten up before proceeding through the boom gate. It is most important to maintain a steady speed when passing through waters where acoustic mines are likely to exist. It is equally important that ships should not be delayed when approaching the gate thus causing them to get broadside on or drift out of the channel. (C. in C. Nore 1656/20.)

Milford Haven.

At 1155 M/S Trawler COURTIER detonated a Type C Mine in $250^{\circ} 11\frac{1}{4}$ cables from Great Castle Head Lower Light. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1808/20.)

Granton.

At 1255 M/S Trawler STAR OF BRITAIN detonated a Type B Mine in $56^{\circ} 2' 54''$ N. $3^{\circ} 15' W.$ (Cdr. M/S. Granton 1825/20.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Off Ushant.

At 0610/20 an 8000 Ton M/V in $48^{\circ} 46' N.$ $4^{\circ} 18' W.$, proceeding Westerly at speed. A/C. report. (H.Q.B.C. 1935/20.)

Casualties & Defects.

DORADE II.

Examination Vessel F.O. Milford 1525/17. Arrived Oban 1230/20 with engine and deck defects. No facilities for repair at Oban. Request instructions. (N.O.I.C. Oban 1530/20 to C. in C. W.A.)

CAMITO.

Paravane bracket badly damaged. Can complete patrol but not advisable to return North in present condition. Request arrangements be made to proceed to Gibraltar on completion of patrol for removal of bracket thence proceeding without paravane protection. (CAMITO 1905/20 to F.O.C.N.P.)

Cancelled Cont: on p. 596

20.12.1940.

Friday.

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War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping.Convoys.

- O.B. 261. My 1215/19. BENRINNES, ADVISER and BARRISTER sailed in O.B.261 at 2046/19. (A.S.O., Admty., to C.S.15, 0015/20).
- F.S.64. Departure Humber 1200/20/12 RADIANT to join F.S.64 for Southend for onward routeing to Portsmouth (F.O. Humber 1258/20)
- S.L.57B. Arrived consisting of BECKENHAM escorted by YORK CITY (N.O.I.C. Barry, 1321/20).
- W.N. 55. CURACOA, LONDONDERRY left Scapa 1300/20 for convoy W.N. 55. (A.C.O.S. 1400/20).
- W.N. 58. Sailed A/S trawlers CAPE ARGONA, FOXTROT for W.N.58, e.t.a. 2100/20. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1420/20). *See also next page*
- O.B. 264. Your 1156/17. Concur CRISPIN will be required for O.B. 264. (C.in C. W.A. 1542/20 to F.O.C.N.P.)
- H.X.94 B. R/V with H.X.94 B. 053° 46' N., 005° 08' W. at 0100/21. (C.in C. W.A. 1544/20 to LEEDS UNITED).
- F.N. 63. Departure Harwich 1545/20 SELKIRK for Grimsby with F.N.63. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1552/20). *See also next page*
- H.X.98. LACONIA sailing as ocean escort returning to Halifax on completion. (F.O.C. 3rd B.S. 1951/20). *See p. 668*
- S.L.S. 58. My 1130/18 inward route. Delete 054° 10' N., 021° 51' W. (V.A.N.P. 2150/20 to MARSDALE).
- Convoys. Estimated positions 0900/20. (D.T.D., 1225/20).
- O.B.263. Amending his 1900/17, (route). (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 0939/20).
- H.X.97. Date and route. Escort HEPATICA to U.K. WORCESTERSHIRE joins at sea and proceeds to Clyde. (D.T.D., 1147/20 to C.in C. W.A.)
- F.N. 63. 1000/20. 25 ships. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1244/20).
- F.S. 65. Sailed. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 1507/20).
- S.L. 57. Following arrived (List). (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 2245/20).
- O.B.C. 262. Sailed 2058/20. List. (N.C.S.O. Clyde, 2335/20).

20.12.1940.
Friday.



War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.)

Convoys. (Contd.)

- H.X.91. Hove to for 48 hours, 5/12, much scattered. All now arrived except DIONYSSIS STATHATOS, abandoned, weather damage. (D.T.D. to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1336/19).
- F.S. 64. 30 ships. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 0946/20). Tyne ships arrived. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 1627/20).
- O.B.M. 263. 1615/21. HUDDERSFIELD TOWN, 9. (N.C.S.O. Milford H., 1025/20).
- F.N. 63. Left 1000/20 with COVENTRY CITY. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1144/20).
- O.B. 261. Sailed Oban 0030/20. 11 ships. Escort COLUMBINE. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1206/20)

BEACONSFIELD to be diverted to Freetown for onward routeing. (D.T.D. 1900/20 to C.in C. W.A.).
- F.N. and F.S. Forecast of sailings and escorts. (C.in C. Rosyth 1217/20).
- H.X. 96. Amendment of route. (D.T.D., 1536/20 to RANPURA).
- S.L. 57. Arrived (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 1559/20).
- O.B.O. 262. Expect to sail 0145/21. 11 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1604/20).
- O.B. 264. 1300/24. Route. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 1707/20).
- O.B. 262. Sailed 1130/20. 10 ships. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 1755/20) List and destinations (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 1756/20).
- F.S. 63. Arrived except STEPNEY. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1853/20).
- O.B.O. 261. DOVERHILL destination changed to Savannah. (D.T.D. to C.in C. W.A. 1901/20).
- W.N. 58. 1400/22. Escorts CAPE ARGONA, FOXTROT, 8 ships. Code "Metric". (N.C.S.O. Greenock, 1430/20).
- E.N. 43.)
E.N.44.) My 2305/19. Add includes tug RESTIVE for Campbeltown, Departure HUGH WALPOLE, PENTLAND FIRTH latter as additional escort to Pentland Firth area, with E.N.44 (C.in C. Rosyth 2242/20).

/ 2 M.V's.)
CHESAPEAKE,)
KONGHANG.)

20.12.1940.
Friday.

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War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping. (Contd.)2 M.V's,
CHESAPEAKE,
KONGHAUGYour 1835/19 and C.in C. Portsmouth
1833/19. Arrived 0939/20. (N.C.S.O.
Dartmouth 1228/20).5 M.V'sHumber departure 1400/20. MOLLUSC
escorting five Merchants ships to
Tyne thence to Blyth.
(F.O. Humber 1405/20).5 M.V'sMy 1203 (no trace in War Reg.) sailed
5 M.V's escorts A/S trawlers LORD ESSENDEN
and RUBY.
(N.C.S.O. Dartmouth, 1751/20).H.G. 48.After passing through 53° 20' N. 15° 30' W.
H.G. 48 to steer for 55° 00' N., 12° 20' W.
thence by route ordered. (C.in C. W.A.
0706/20 to Deptford)
If contact not made with AMICUS by
1100/20 intend joining H.G. 48.
(WESTCOTT, 0945/20 to C.in C. W.A.)H.X.94.Expected to arrive Oban with GREY COUNTY
and ORAN 1200/20. MALLOW escorting B
portion, NORTHERN DAWN, WELLARD have not
been in company.
(SCIMITAR 0440/20 to C.in C. W.A.).~~44.~~My 0440/20. Have picked up WOENSDRECHT
→ For ORAN read VARAND.
(SCIMITAR 0915/20).C.W.20.My 2112/17. Escorts for C.W.20 as
follows:- Destroyers BERKELEY or
CATTISTOCK, CLEVELAND.
A/S Trawlers KINGSTON OLIVINE,
LADY PHILOMENA, GREENFLY, M/S Trawlers
ACACIA, DEODAR, ASH, BLACKTHORN. ████.
M.B.B. Vessels SAMBUR, ROEBUCK, PINGOUIN,
HASLEMERE, MAMMOUTH, PINTADE.
M.L's 113, 116, 117, 118, 142, 165 and
Chasseur 43. (C.in C. Nore, 1156/20
to Admty.)Owing to damage to BERKELEY it is
probable that CATTISTOCK will have to
take her place as escort of C.W.20 21/12.
Further signal will be made.
(C.in C. Nore, 1350/20).Confirmed that BERKELEY will be unable
to sail with C.W.20. CATTISTOCK is to
take her place leaving Sheerness as
ordered by CLEVELAND.
(C.in C. Nore, 1520/20).

20.12.1940.
Friday.

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War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping. (Contd.)Convoys. (Contd.)S.L.(S) 57.

Following is repetition of my 1126/20 addressed AMBUSCADE, AMAZON, HEARTSEASE, CROCUS, LADY LILIAN from C.in C. W.A. escort detailed for Oban portion S.L.(S)57 after arrival at Oban will be required to escort about eight ships from Oban to North Channel.
(C.in C. W.A. 1130/20 to LADY LILIAN).

E.N. 42.
S.L.S.57.

Following is a repetition of my 1608/20. Addressed - AMBUSCADE, AMAZON, HEARTSEASE, CROCUS, STELLA CAPELLA, LADY LILIAN, HORNPIPE, From C.in C. W.A. Estimate E.N. 42 will overhaul S.L.S.57 about 2000/20 off Oversay Light 1608.
(C.in C. W.A. 1616/20 to LADY LILIAN).

S.L. 57.

My 1026/20. AMAZON detailed in lieu of HEARTSEASE for B. Portion. Expected time of arrival 053° 48' 005° 08' now 0800/21. Commodore's expected time of arrival 280 Bar 1630/21. (AMBUSCADE 1655/20 to C.in C. W.A.).

S.C.17.

In absence of other instructions intend sailing MALOJA as ocean escort for S.C.17. Regret cannot guarantee to produce one for future S.C. convoys with present number of armed merchant cruisers in N.A. Escort Force.
(F.O.C. 3rd B.S. 1946/20 to Admty.)

Convoy
Cycles.

My 2147/20 (see U-Boat Campaign). Proposed to send following signal to Naval Authorities concerned. Your remarks are urgently requested.
The cycle of convoys is being amended as follows:-
Two H.X. convoys, one SC convoy, one SL convoy and one HG convoy to sail every 10 days. The HG convoy will rendezvous with a SL (S) convoy at sea, the whole then being known as HG.
3 OB convoys, one OB(S) convoy and one OG to sail every 10 days. The OG convoy will include Slow ships for the South Atlantic. The outward bound and homeward bound convoys will be so arranged that every 10 days the escorts of 2 OB convoys transfer to HX convoys and the escorts of the OB(S) OG and one OB convoy transfer to the SC, HG and SL convoys respectively.

/ Normally

War Diary.

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Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping. (Contd.)Convoy Cycles
(contd.)

Normally those OB convoys whose escorts will meet HX convoys will be routed well to the northward. Ships of low endurance for the South Atlantic should not be included in these convoys. Ships in OB convoys whose escorts will meet SL convoys will normally be routed further South as will OB(S) and OG convoys.

This 10 day cycle of convoys will commence as follows:- (dates).

It will be noted that HX convoys sail alternatively at 4 and 6 day intervals. (D.T.D. 2158/20 to C.in C. W.A.).

Troop Convoys.W.S.5 A.

Unless you have made other arrangements H.M.C.S. OTTAWA should act as Senior Officer A/S escort until arrival of H.M.S. HIGHLANDER as French Light Cruiser LE TRIOMPHANT has not yet worked up. (C.in C. W.A. 1314/20 to C.in C. H.F.).

W.S. 5 A.

Convoys WS 5A (Fast and slow) and aircraft carriers escorted by BERWICK and other H.M. Ships pass through position 054 deg. 10' North, 025 deg., 00' West A.M./22/12 routed through 053 deg. 00' North, 025 deg. 00' West 046 deg. 00' North, 026 deg. North west 039 deg. 40' North, 021 deg. 50' West 012 deg. 45' North 019 deg. 30' West 008' deg. 20' North 015 deg. 00' West thence to Freetown. Speed 15 and 11 knots.

M.T. Ships, one aircraft carrier and escorts will leave main convoy probably 26/12 and pass through Patrol area to Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.P. 2230/20 to Western Patrol).

Ref PL/G17/19/12 not to Stranraer. Cancel first sortie by Aldergrove. Stranraer to escort secret convoy W.S.5A fast with one Lerwick from First Flight 20/12. Convoy should be in position GKQL at 0800 hrs. on route from North channel to CPCH 0041 and KFS 2900. Speed $14\frac{1}{2}$ knots. Datum Point GKQL 0000. Naval escort NAIAD FURIOUS ARGUS H44 H19 G37 G91 H64 H60 H83 G65 H02 and I75. 0715/20.



War Diary

20.12.1940
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Operations Against Vichy French

COMPIEGNE
BRESTOIS

C.O. of KINGSTON TOPAZ reports closed French SS COMPIEGNE when she left Lisbon to ascertain reaction of French destroyer BRESTOIS who was cruising near. As soon as BRESTOIS realized that KINGSTON TOPAZ was closing COMPIEGNE former bore down on KINGSTON TOPAZ with all guns cleared away and manned. (A.S. Gibraltar 1132/20 to Admty.)

French
Destroyers

Your 1210/10. N.C.S.O. Lisbon has no justification for the request in his 1628/12 as this is a matter of Contraband Control not in his province.

If these ships were intercepted holding ship Navicerts they would naturally be allowed to proceed. If without they would be sent in. (D.E.W.D. 1054/20 to F.O.C.N.A.)



WAR DIARY.

20.12.40.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

RHONE,
fire.

? S. PIERRE in position 028° 33'N., 012° 02'W at 0930/20 reports RHONE on fire ten miles West of her. (~~British 209 tons~~). (in p. 607)
(MARSDALE, 1043/20 to F.O.C.N.P., F.O.C.N.A.)

CIRCASSIA.

Intend sail CIRCASSIA for patrol in accordance with your 0200/20 on 26/12. (F.O.C.N.A. 1130/20 to V.A.N.P.)

Your 1130/20. If ready for sea and local escort available request CIRCASSIA be sailed 24/12 for area R.3 and S.3. (F.O.C.N.P 2300/20 to F.O.C.N.A.)

CIRCASSIA
VIDETTE.

See under Mediterranean p. 608

Force H.
Oiling at
sea.

Your 1619/17. Force H had just reached position N.E. of Azores when recalled. In this area conditions were definitely unsuitable for oiling at sea owing to long and heavy swell. SHEFFIELD reports on 4 out of 5 days in area south of St. Miguel conditions were suitable for oiling. This confirms to some extent RENOWN's previous experience that this area is probably the best. Heavy ships normally oil close under lee of land. Information required concerning the extent to which swell persists under the lee and locality least likely to be under shore observation. 1145/20.

UPHOLDER
USK
UNIQUE.

At 0001 /21. UPHOLDER, ~~USK~~, UNIQUE from U.K. expect to cross 041° 00'N., routed through 038° 30'N., 010° 46' W., 036° 46'N 009° 22'W to Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1547/20).

Aircraft
Equipment.

Your 1844/8 not to ARGUS. Four external L.R. tanks being sent in ARGUS with 21 (X) Flight. Any more requirements be provided by ARK ROYAL, no more available in U.K. (D.N.A.D. 1834/20 to S.O. Force H.)

DUNCAN etc.
Force H.

See under Mediterranean p. 610.



20.12.1940
Friday

War Diary

FOREIGN STATIONS

North Atlantic-Contd.

TRIDENT

A.T. 1323/19. Para 5 amend TRIDENT's estimated position course and speed to read (details) (D.O.D. (F) 1857/20 to BONAVENTURE)

BERWICK

Cancel my 1122/20. Admty 1805/20, enter Gibraltar as soon as possible tonight 20/12 after 2200 zone - 1. (F.O.C.N.A. 2052/20 to BERWICK)

KINGSTON TOPAZ
KINGSTON TURQUOISE

See under No. 1, p. 610

South Atlantic

CARNARVON CASTLE

Capetown arrivals 20/12. CARNARVON CASTLE (N.O.I.C. Simonstown, 0703/20 to Admty.)

TRIBESMAN

Overdue shipping TRIBESMAN due Durban 15/12 from U.K. not arrived. (S.O.(I) Capetown, 1005B/20)

LORNASTON

Overdue shipping. LORNASTON due Durban 16/12 from Fremantle not arrived. (S.O. (I) Capetown, 1015B/20)

MILFORD

Arrival 0930/20 (S.O.(I) Freetown, 1231N/20)

Whalers

4 Whale Catchers sail from Freetown for St. Helena 21/12 thence to Walvis Bay. (C. in C., S.A., 1249/20)

/Contd.

MOST SECRET.20.12.40.
Friday.
WAR DIARY.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (Contd.)Whalers.

Whale catchers SWONA, SKUDD three, SKUDD four, and SKUDD five, sail Freetown 21/12 for St. Helena thence to Walvis Bay and Simonstown and except to arrive Walvis Bay 6/1/41 and will require total of 250 tons fuel. Request you will arrange.

(C.in C. S.A. 1301/20 to Capt: i/c Simonstown).

SAVORGNAN
DE BRAZZA.

Simonstown departures 1300/20 December Free French Sloop SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA for Durban. E T 1100/23.
(N.O.I.C. Simonstown, 1305Z/20 to N.O.I.C. Durban).

DELHI.

Arrived Manoka 1300/20.
(DELHI 1310/20 to C.in C. S.A.)

FURIOUS.

Following aircraft despatched FURIOUS 19/12. (details)
(Air Min. 1735/20 to R.A.F. Station Takoradi).

Destroyers
Force K.

Your 0020/19 Request confirmation that 2 destroyers mentioned are for operations with Force K.
(C.in C. S.A. 1827/20 to Adty).

Your 1827/20. Destroyers are to enable Force K to be escorted in and out of Freetown and for escort of FURIOUS pending arrival of Corvettes.
(V.C.N.S. 2355/20 to C.in C. S.A.)

Enemy
Unit.

D/F Bearings at 2108/20 G.M.T. of probable surface unit making - ZZ. FMS. SZQ. ECM. NJBC.
(D.D.I.C. 2316/20 to C.in C. S.A.)



War Diary

20.12.1940
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean

MALAYA
NUBIAN
DIAMOND
DEFENDER
WRYNECK
WAIWERA
LANARKSHIRE

Arrived 0230/20 MALAYA, NUBIAN, DIAMOND, DEFENDER, WRYNECK, WAIWERA, LANARKSHIRE. (V.A.Malta, 0135/20)

GRIFFIN
GREYHOUND
GALLANT
DAINTY
HASTY

Arrival 0430/20 GRIFFIN, GREYHOUND, GALLANT, DAINY, HASTY. (V.A.Malta 0343/20)

Italian
R.D.F.

Capt. (S) 1st S.F.'s 1229/17. No positive information is available concerning use of R.D.F. by enemy screen vessels. Frequent instances of M.A.S. or Destroyers closing at high speed from outside visibility range have been reported. In some instances M.A.S. have passed directly overhead shortly after submarine had dived but in no instance has any hunt or attack developed. This led to theory that some enemy escorting ships were probably equipped with a device detecting submarines on the surface at range exceeding 4 thousand yards. (Lt. Com. (S) 0927/20 to Admty.)

Brindisi
Raid

A 225 20/11. Operational Summary. Night 19/20 3 Wellingtons 70 Sqdn. carried out successful raid on oil tanks and railways at Brindisi. Visibility made observation results difficult but aircraft bombing from 8000, 5500, and 3000 feet put all bombs target area. Large fires were started and subsequent explosions observed. Extremely severe A/A fire met, was very accurate up to 10,000 feet and followed aircraft around target. One Wellington was hit on one engine, and air-screw shot away. Balloons seen north of town. (H.Q., R.A.F., G. 0940/20)

CIRCASSIA
VIDETTE

Gibraltar arrivals 0745/20 CIRCASSIA, VIDETTE. (S.O. (I) Gibraltar 1044/20 to Admty.) *Should be under N Atlantic p 605.*

/Operational...



MOST SECRET

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War Diary

20.12.1940
Friday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Mediterranean-Contd.

Operational
Summary No 193
Up to 1200 hrs.
20/12.

Egypt.

Greece.

Sudan. 19/12. 1 Blenheim made submarine search ahead of convoy.

(H.Q., R.A.F., Middle East, 1222/20 to Air Min.)

Spanish
Trade

For information. There seems to be large increase of traffic between Spanish East Coast and Sete e.g. Valencia departure 17/12 Spanish sailing vessels CARMEN, ESTELA, PAULITA, CALAMA, RZERO, NUEVO CORAZON.

Unknown
Submarine

Las Palmas reports on good authority that Spanish ship SS SAN CARLOS sunk by gunfire by unknown submarine between Cape Juby and Fuerteventura on 16/12. From intercepted wireless signal it appears also that French S.S. RHONE and SFAX have also sunk in that vicinity. No British submarines in that vicinity. (S.O.(I) Gibraltar, 1222/20 to N.A.Madrid)

M. T. Convoy

F.O. Force H. 2358/19. If you wish to, request you will amend Admiralty 1322/19 and 1323/19 as necessary but it would appear that extra destroyers will be required to escort ARGUS and DUNEDIN back into Gibraltar.

ARGUS
DUNEDIN

If ARGUS is kept with M.T. Convoy BONAVENTURE should remain with DUNEDIN until it is necessary for her to proceed ahead to Gibraltar so as to fuel and transfer 60 military personnel to Mediterranean destroyers. (D.O.D. (F) 1241/20 to C. in C., Med.)

BONAVENTURE

BONAVENTURE has on board 4 Army Officers and 56 other ranks comprising 4 groups of special troops trained for raiding from submarines. They are to be transferred at Gibraltar to destroyers for onward passage to Malta. They will be under operational control of C. in C., Med. (D.O.D. (F) 1245/20 to C. in C., Med.)
Cancel position (d) proceed from position (c) direct to position (e) (D.O.D.(H) 1303/20 to C.S. 15 BONAVENTURE)

/KINGSTON TOPAZ....



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

20.12.1940.

Friday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

KINGSTON TOPAZ,
KINGSTON TORQUOISE

Gibraltar departure 1300/20
KINGSTON TOPAZ for T. 1 South
KINGSTON TURQUOISE protecting T 1
North. 1326/20. *Should be under N. Atlantic*
p. 606

REGENT.

My 1921/19. Concentrate on Coastal
route keeping to S. of 33° N. between
014° E. and 015° E.
Leave Patrol P.M.23/12 to pass through
position 035° 32' N. 014° 13' E. to
arrive off Grand ~~Harbour~~ Harbour 0700/25.
Delimara Light will be exhibited from
0200/25. Times Zone minus one.
(V.A. Malta, 1551/20 to REGENT).

UPRIGHT.

Leave 034° N. 013° E. pass through
positions 035° 00' N. 014° E., 035°
35' N. 014° 10' E. to arrive off Grand
Harbour 0700/24. Delimara light will
be exhibited from 0200/24 time zone
minus one.
(V.A. Malta, 1559/20 to UPRIGHT).

Air Report.

Combined Services report - Malta to
1700/20.
(H.Q. Med. 1700/20 to Air Min.)

Greece.

Operational Summary No. 38. No naval
items. (H.Q. B.A.F., G., 1640/20).

A/S information
to Greek Naval
Authorities.

Information on A/S matters may be
disclosed to Greek Naval Authorities as
considered necessary, with the following
exceptions. No information should be
given on A/S Experimental matters
including detection of U-Boats by R.D./F.,
nor on methods of identification,
including loop identification signals.
Selected Commissioned Officers of Royal
Hellenic Navy undergoing instruction in
asdic gear and methods may be given
access to Confidential Books as
considered necessary. Strict reticence
should be observed with regard to
present and future anti-U-Boat measures
being adopted in the approaches to the
United Kingdom.
(D.A/S.W. 1737/20 to C.in C. Med.)

DUNCAN,
ENCOUNTER,
ISIS,
WISHART,
JAGUAR,
FORCE H

Gibraltar departures 0930 20/12 DUNCAN,
ENCOUNTER, ISIS, WISHART, JAGUAR.
1815 S.O. Force H in RENOWN, ARK ROYAL,
SHEFFIELD, FAULKNER, FURY, FOXHOUND,
FORTUNE, FIREDRAKE, FORESTER in
accordance with S.O. Force H.
2325/19/12. (S.O.(I) Gibraltar
1818/20 to Admty.) *Should be under N. Atlantic*
p. 606



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

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Friday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

Air Operation.

Wellington and Swordfish aircraft will be visiting Tripoli (Africa) tonight 20/21 T.O.O. 1905/20.
(V.A. Malta, 1911/20 to Med. Fleet).

Fast M.T. Ships,
troop transports.

Fast M.T. ships and troop transports are urgently required in U.K. Request you will consider passing a convoy of such ships westward to Gibraltar during operation ~~XXXXXX~~ and forward your remarks.

It is recognised that there would be risk to ships on passage but this could be accepted in view of urgency of their return.

Vessels particularly required are LANARKSHIRE, ORION and STRATHMORE and any others of suitable speed.

As these ships are not fitted with paravanes, would it be possible to sweep them through mineable waters.

Commercial cargoes could be loaded so far as time permits, also MALAYA's tubes if available as they are required at Gibraltar as soon as possible.

(D.O.D.(F) 2156/20 to C.in C. Med.)

East Indies.

Convoy B.S.11.

Sailing telegram 1100 G.M.T./19. Route. Escorts CLIVE and GRIMSBY from 20/12. (S.B.N.O. Suez, 1223/19, recd. Admty. 0315/20).

Kenya Defences.

Admty. 2037/26/9 (Re tug whalers for interception of dhows from British East Africa). To bring Kenya coastal patrol H.A. protection up to reasonable standards, 6 Lewis guns are necessary in addition to those already held at Killindini. None available from naval sources on East Indies station. Request supply from U.K.
(C.in C. E.I., 0408/20, to Admty.)

W.S.4B.

Convoy sailing telegram. W.S.4B. 0900 G.M.T. 16/12, 17 knots. Route. Escorts, SHROPSHIRE and DEVONSHIRE, transports, ANDES STRATHALLAN, ORCADES, VICEROY OF INDIA, STRATHAIRD, DUCHESS OF ATHOLL, EMPRESS OF CANADA, REINE DEL PACIFICO, OTRANTO, STRATHNAVER
Cmdre E.G. Robinson (DUCHESS OF ATHOLL)
(N.O.I.C. Durban, 0910B/20).

DEVONSHIRE.

Durban arrival 20/12 DEVONSHIRE.
(N.O.I.C. Durban, 0410Z/20).

KIMBERLEY.

KIMBERLEY arrived 0400Z/20.
(N.O.I.C. Aden, 0501Z/20).

/ CERES
COLOMBO ...

MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

20.12. 1940.
Friday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

CERES
COLOMBO.

CERES is to leave Mombasa A.M./22
and proceed to patrol off Kismayu.
CERES is to arrange to rendezvous
with COLOMBO A.M./23.
COLOMBO is to proceed to Mombasa on
relief by CERES.
(C.in C. E.I., 1244Z/20).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

COLOMBO.
CORNWALL.

My 0630 December 15th COLOMBO will reconnoitre Mogadishu evening 21/12 from outside range of shore guns assumed to be 15000 yards. If shipping is seen there and COLOMBO's fire is ineffective at this range CORNWALL will bombard from same range evening 22/12. (C.in C. E.I. 1456Z/20 to Admty.) *no shipping was seen. p. 647*

Assab Raids.

Summary No. 191 for 24 hours ending 1500/20. 0850 3 Blenheims 8 Squadron attacked water pumping station at Harsile $3\frac{3}{4}$ miles south of Assab salt pans. 0900 to 0920 1 of these aircraft reconnoitred Assab Area. No activity or changes seen Assab Harbour Macaaca aerodromes and bombing range 2 Satellites and Bailul landing ground. 3 Blenheims 203 Squadron returned from convoy duties based Kamaran. (A.H.Q. Aden, 1526/20 to Air Min.)

SAGITTA.

1910Z/20 departure SAGITTA. (N.O.I.C. Aden, 1916Z/20).

China.

Intelligence.

For Eastern Weekly Intelligence Report 9. No major change. (C.O.S. Singapore, 0406Z/20).

N.E.I.
Navy.

Following received from C.in C. Netherlands East Indies Begins. Informative Reference Staff Discussion Netherland Indies Government agree to following points:
Exchange of Liaison Officers.
Organization of communication cypher code for combined action consisting of three. Co-ordination of Intelligence.
Contact of officers of Air Force for organization of co-operation of Air Forces.
Visit of B.R. Staff Officer to Netherland Indies. Proposal will be made to carry out points. Ends. (C.in C. China 0415Z/20 to Admty.)

Enemy
Raider
Policy.

Your 0830/11. Concur generally with C.in C. E.I. 1548/12 and 1750/15. My present resources are so limited that can do little more than provide intermittent cover for trade in Achin Head area. (C.in C. China, 0517Z/20. N.B. Melbourne.)

/ TIRRANNA



War Diary.

MOST SECRET

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20.12.1940.

Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. (continued).

TIRRANNA.

Your 0737Z/17 to S.O. (I) Hong Kong.
Can you ascertain date TIRRANNA was sunk and name of Yugo-Slav vessel. Could she have been DURMITOR, sailed Lourenco Marques 26/9 for Batavia. (D.D.I.C. 1218/20 to S.O.(I) Shanghai).

Hong Kong works schemes

In view of present conditions Board has approved following revised statement of policy concerning works schemes at Hong Kong.
Request Commodore, Hong Kong report present state of all proposed works.
(Head of M. 1607/20 to C.in C. China).

America and West Indies.

Raider Report.
EMPIRE SIMBAR.

R.R.R.R., 51.10 N., 35.06 W. EMPIRE SIMBAR sighted. (Via Lyness W/T, no T.O.O. recd. 1010/20). Following has been read:-
From EMPIRE SIMBAR, cancel my R.R.R.R.0920. (T.O.R. 1148/20).
Raider reported by EMPIRE SIMBAR is WORCESTERSHIRE (WORCESTERSHIRE 0709/20, to Admty.)

H.X.90,
Convoy
Conference.

Masters of 3 ships in H.X.90 state convoy conference not held before sailing.
N.C.S.O. Bermuda reported having said he did not believe in conferences. Request you investigate and report.
(D.T.D., 1409/20 to C.in C. A.W.I.).

H.X.99.

Your 1414/18. Date of sailing of H.X.99 and R.V. (N.C.S.O. Bermuda, 0908/20).

ALAUNIA.

ALAUNIA arrived Halifax 20/12 from BHX 96. (S.O.(I) Halifax, 0929/20 to Admty.)

LEOPOLDVILLE

Your 0030/19 not to N.O.I.C. St. John, N.B. LEOPOLDVILLE will proceed to St. John, N.B. from Halifax for cargo and passengers. Now estimated sailing from St. John, N.B. direct for U.K. (date and accommodation). (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1113/20 to D. of S.T.)

BAYANO

My 1545 9th Sailing of BAYANO delayed till 24/12 on account of fruit loading difficulties.
(N.O.I.C. Kingston, 1445/20 to C.in C. S.A.)

DESPATCH

Kingston arrival DESPATCH. Bermuda pass to CARADOC.
(N.O.I.C. Kingston 1500/20 to C.in C. A. and W.I.).

Japanese Shipping.

My 0949/18.
Los Angeles reports Japanese lines are refusing to sign cargo contracts for delivery at given date and place without cancellation of clause. YASUKAWA MARU sailed Manzanilla 2/12 for Yokohama direct / omitting



FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (Contd.)

Japanese shipping.
(contd.)

omitting usual call at Los Angeles.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1604/20, to Capt. O.S. Singapore).

Bermuda,
leakage.

Admiralty 1856/19 and your 1812/19 not to Admiralty. After investigation I am confident that possibility leakage at Bermuda is Negligible.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 1731/20, to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

REVENGE,
T.C.8,
H.X.100.

My 2240/6. Owing to possibility of appearance of raider in North Atlantic REVENGE is to leave convoy T.C.8 on 21/12 and return to Halifax. REVENGE should be sailed to cover HX 100. Cancel my 1224/18/12 and my 2133/18/12 (D.O.D. (H) 1714/20 to R.A. 3 B.S.).

Australia.

Raider,
Nauru.

Statement for Press by Navy Minister, Mr. Hughes, on raider attack on shipping off Nauru on 8/12. (A.C.N.B., 1436Z/20 to Admty.) (Original in Lion Copy only).

BATHURST,
MANOORA.

BATHURST left Westernport 0230Z/19 arrived Port Phillip Bay 0736Z/19. MANOORA escorting local transport ZEALANDIA left Darwin 2229Z/18 for Thursday Island.
(A.C.N.B. 1254Z/20 to Admty.)

ADELAIDE
WAIRUNA

ADELAIDE departed Sydney 0245Z/19 escorting WAIRUNA towards ~~1411~~ until 0200Z/24 when ADELAIDE will return to Sydney.
(A.C.N.B. 1812Z/20 to Admty.)

CANBERRA.

CANBERRA arrived Sydney 2122Z/19.
(A.C.N.B. 1914Z/20 to Admty.)

FOREIGN STATIONS

Australia.

615d

SECRET.

MESSAGE

1436Z/20 December.

From Navy Board, Melbourne.

Date 12.12.40.

Recd. 1058.

Naval Cypher X by Cable.

Addressed Admiralty.

53. The Minister for the Navy, (Mr. Hughes) today issued the following statement regarding the raider incident at Nauru to Australian press only, not broadcast (begins) Sufficient time having now elapsed to ensure the safety of other shipping, it is possible to throw some light on the course of events at Nauru on Sunday 8th December. At the time when raider activity off Nauru was reported from that island, it was known that seven vessels were in the area embracing Nauru and Ocean Islands. Of these seven, five were in the immediate vicinity of Nauru. Their concentration was due to stress of weather. Owing to the peculiar formation of Nauru and the lack of harbourage, ships are unable to load in heavy westerly weather. A continuance of such weather over a period results in an accumulation of ships lying off the island, drifting in order to conserve fuel. These conditions obtained on 8th December when five ships were drifting in the offing waiting for the weather to moderate. Some of them had dropped beyond sight of the island. The visibility was poor at the time. Thus only one of the vessels known to be drifting in the vicinity of the island was visible from the shore at daybreak on 8th December. She was seen to be on fire, and two other strange vessels, one of about 3,000 and the other of about 6,000 tons were apparently standing by her. At the time it did not appear from the shore that the strange vessels were hostile, and no distress messages were heard from any of the ships known to be in the area. Visibility then became worse, and the three ships were obscured from view. For some time no shipping at all was seen from the island. It was afternoon before the weather cleared sufficiently for renewed observation from the shore. A vessel was then seen to be on fire some miles South of the island and the larger of the two strange vessels was lying to, a mile or so from her and apparently shelling her. Shortly afterwards the burning vessel disappeared. The other then made off at high speed. Since then no shipping has been seen from Nauru. This was expected, as immediately news of the happenings was received in Australia, instructions were broadcast to all shipping to avoid the area, and ships known to be in the vicinity were ordered to disperse and make for a safe port elsewhere. At the same time, all possible steps to safeguard shipping and locate the raider were put into operation. A period of waiting for news, during which little could be made public, then ensued. Obviously the ships which had been ordered to disperse would not use their wireless for fear of giving away their positions to any possible enemy. Equally obviously no information could be given which would tell the enemy what ships had escaped him and might yet be caught.

The first definite indication that some ships had escaped came with the report of the arrival of one of the seven at a safe port two or three days later. A second turned up safely on Sunday 15th December/12. Meanwhile a hurricane developed in the area, with high winds and high seas, and the possibility of some at least of the other five ships being safe but hove to or delayed by weather had to be considered.

Sufficient time has now elapsed, however, for them to have reached port even with such delay, and their destruction or capture by the raider must be presumed. Such a fate may be assumed with some certainty in the case of two of these vessels. One was definitely seen from Nauru to be on fire and under fire from the raider. Wreckage from another has since been washed ashore. There is as yet no tangible evidence as to the fate of the other three. So far there is no indication as to the fate of the crews of the missing ships and the few passengers who were aboard. From the fact that the raider apparently had an attendant vessel, there are good grounds for belief that they have been made prisoners and taken on board the enemy ships. The relatives of all concerned have been kept informed. Arrangements have been made to safeguard the important phosphate trade. Obviously it is not in the public interest to disclose the nature of those arrangements. It can be stated that they are such as, in view of the

circumstances.

circumstances, will afford the best possible protection. (Ends)
Request such action as may be desired as regards publicity may be
taken by Admiralty. Whether published or not request inform
Phoscom Cheltenham for information of next of kin.

1436Z/20.

Advance copy 1st Lord. C.S.O. to 1st S.L. Ops.
O.D. Press.

1st Lord.
1st S.L.
V.C.N.S.
A.C.N.S. (F)
A.C.N.S. (T)
Nav. Sec.
Parly. Sec.
C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
M. (2)
D.N.I. (4)
Ops. (4)
O.D. (3)
D.T.D. (3)
D.T.D. (M)
Cdr. Holbrook.
D. of S.T.
O.I.C. (2)
D.S.D. 9.
I.F. (3)
D. of P. (3)
W.D.
Press Division for action.
Rm. 52 Arch S.
Admiral Bellairs.
E.P.S.
D.S.D. (2)
File X.

LH

20.12.1940.

Friday.

War Diary.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

LA PLATA.

German ship LA PLATA sailed from Vigo 2245/19. (D.D.I.C. 0240/20 to F.O.C.N.A.)

LA PLATA.

German LA PLATA sailed from Vigo 2245 19/12. Description. (F.O.C.N.A. 0751/20).

FULDA.
SCHARNHORST.

Japanese transport at Woosung 26/11 and in Yangtse estuary 17/12 identified as German ship FULDA which left Dairen 15/8, description.

Kobe 15/12 no alteration or new construction observed in German SCHARNHORST.

(Capt. on Staff, Singapore 0837/20 to Admty.)

JOA PESSOA

JOA PESSOA left Bilbao 2130/19 Destination unknown. (Bilbao, (1745/20 to D.N.I. ?) (1755/20

PLUS
(German, 2449
tons).

My 2316/19 (re German ship LA PLATA) PLUS also left harbour last night but later returned to her anchorage and is still here. (Consul Vigo, 0912/20).



U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Attacks on
Convoys,
N.W. Approaches.

Enemy U-Boats in the N.W. Approaches have been attacking our convoys in 20° to 25° West in the area beyond the point which can be reached by our escorts, particularly in bad weather. To meet this attack and at the same time to reduce the strain upon our escorting forces following policy has been decided upon.

2.(a) To make use of dispersion to maximum extent that the endurance of merchant ships and the limitation of the N.W. Approaches permit;

(b) Routes of H.X. convoys will be spread between about 57° N.; and 63-1/2°.

Routes for SL, SC and Gibraltar convoys will be spread between about 57°N. and 54°N. or as far south as the danger from aircraft can be accepted.

Routes of outward bound convoys will conform.

(c) To open out the cycle of all convoys except the Gibraltar convoy with the object of reducing the strain on our escort forces.

(d) In Summer it is proposed to make the maximum use of of Northern waters in order to gain the high degree of protection against present U-Boat tactics given by the perpetual daylight.

Fuel Bases,
Loch Ewe,
Iceland. *Hvalfjord*

3. To allow of escorts on the more Northerly routes proceeding further to the Westward it is intended to establish refuelling bases for escorts at Loch Ewe and at Hvalfjord in Iceland. A depot ship and at least one rescue tug will be stationed in the latter harbour.

4. It is further intended to make use of the Minches for some outward and homeward convoys for which purpose additional buoyage is being established.

(D.T.D. 2147/20).

Ships Attacked.

SAN CARLOS,
Spanish.

(Sunk 16/12) See S.O.I., Gibraltar, 1222/20, under Mediterranean.

RHONE,)
SFAX)

French, sunk in region between Cape Juby and Fuerteventura (no dates given). S.O.I., Gibraltar 1222/20. See Mediterranean.

CARLTON.

The following has been read. 55° 36' N. 18° 00'W. CARLTON submarine chasing. (Valentia Radio, 0840/20).



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

20.12.1940.
Saturday. 618

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked. (Contd.)

The following has been read:
Submarine Attack.
55°-33'N. 18°-10'W. CARLTON being
chased by submarine.
(Valentia W/T, 0919/20).

The following has been read.
55° 36'N. 18° 00'W. CARLTON submarine
chasing we firing at him 0822/20.
(Via Lyness W/T, T.O.R. 0930/20).

CARLTON.

Cancel my submarine distress message
my 0915 20th December.
(CARLTON via Valentia Radio, 1157/20)

The following has been read.
55° 18'N. 18° 49'W. submarine
(CARLTON, 1254/20.)

The following has been read.
55° 18 N. 18° 49 W. CARLTON torpedo
crossed ahead 1259/20. (CARLTON,
1301/20).

PENDRECHT.

Dutch ship PENDRECHT reports being
torpedoed in 59° 05' N. 17° 47' W.
at 1429/18? G.M.T. Has large hole on
starboard quarter and no boats. Have
ordered her to proceed to Greenock.
Her position, course and speed 56°25'N.
07° 22'W. 171° 9 knots. As she is in
no danger of sinking am not escorting
her. (SANDWICH, 1045/20 to C.in C. W.A.)

PENDRECHT safe. Return to base passing
through 058° 28' N. 018° 11'W. where
DELTON reported she was attacked by
submarine 1743/18. (C.in C. W.A.
1414/20 to ARABIS).

LEGION reported at 1715 she was in 55°
31'N. 6° 22'W. escorting torpedoed
PENDRECHT to Clyde.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 2116/20 to C.in C.
W.A.).

NAPIER STAR.

Ship is searching for you now in
position you gave. (Admty. Devonport
1112/20 to NAPIER STAR.)

Continue to search for NAPIER STAR
as long as fuel permits.
(C.in C. W.A. 1755/20 to CALDWELL).

OREGON.

The following has been read.
Cancel SSSS re OREGON.
(OREGON, 1245/20).

The following has been read.
8 miles bearing 260° Skerries attacked
by submarine. (OREGON, T.O.R.
1330/20).

/ Following received ...



U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked. (Contd.)

Following received from WOODCOCK
E Y A M 37 begins:- Received 1245
G.M.T. S S S OREGON 8 miles bearing 260°
Skerries, attacked by submarine. T.O.O.
1229. Ends. (F.O. Humber 1425/20
to Admty.)

VARANBERG.

VARANBERG 55° 30' N. 1925 W. attacked
by submarine torpedoes missing.
(Plymouth W/T T.O.R. 1335/20).

55° 30' N. 19° 25' W. VARANBERG attacked
by submarine. (Valentia Radio,
1335/20).

The following has been read.
55° 30' N. 19° 25' W. VARANBERG
attacked by submarine.
(VARANBERG, T.O.R. 1347/20).

AMICUS

Your 0945/20th. Continue search for
AMICUS until dark 20/12.
(C.in C. W.A. 1324/20 to WESTCOTT).

CARLTON
VARANBERG

Proceed to attack submarines reported
chasing CARLTON in position 055° 18' N.
018° 49' W. at 1455 and VARANBERG in
position 055° 30' N. 019° 25' W. at
1435. Both ships outwardbound.
Sunderland Aircraft should arrive about
1900 to co-operate.
(C.in C. W.A. 1532/20 to WESTCOTT).

Submarines Reported.

1719.

By D.F. 54° to 56° N., 17° to 20° W.
(D.D.I.C. 1926/20).

Loch Sween
(at 1610/19)

Your 2005/19 investigation reveals that
Cable ship IRIS painted grey was near
Loch Sween at 1610/19 and uses Loch for
night anchorage. (N.O.I.C. Oban 1028/20).

Italian.

Indications Italian U-boats approaching
Bordeaux cross meridian 007° W. between
045° and 046° N. (V.A.S. 1851/20 to
S/M's on patrol Area B).

0935.

A.F. message 55.36 N., 18° W. at 0835
G.M.T. (D.D.I.C. 0958/20).
Italian.

Estimated U-boat
dispositions.

One to Westward of Madeira.
One in Azores area.
4 in N.W. Approaches in triangle 57 degs.
N. 20 degs. W. 54 degs. N. 20 degs. W. and
54 degs N. 15 degs. W. of which one was
in 54 degs. 10' N. 15 degs. 50' W. at
1919/19; one in 55 degs. 36' N. 18 degs.
W. at 0935/20, others probably near
20 degs. W.

MOST SECRET.

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Saturday 620



War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported. (Contd.)

Estimated U-Boat
dispositions.
(Contd.)

German.

Probably one in Sierra Leone area.
One was west of Cape Juby at 2100/16.
One may be about 55 degs. N. West of
15 degs. W. proceeding Northwards.
One may be N.W. Rockall proceeding West.
One about 58 degs. N. 20 degs. W. at
1210/19.
One to North Westward of this position.
One was North of 60 degs. N. and West
of 20 degs. W. at 0121/20.
One may be S. of S.E. of Rockall.
(D.D.I.C. 1255/20).

War Diary21.12.1940
SaturdaySITUATION REPORTHome Commands

It is under consideration that the A.M.C's employed on the Northern Patrol should be based on Halifax, making regular trips of 30 days between Halifax and Reykjavik and return of which 22 days would be spent in effective service. In this way the ships would not enter the U-Boat zone at any time during their passage, they would be free from Air attack in harbour and at sea, and congestion at the Clyde would be relieved.

Submarines at Bordeaux, the Power Station Naval Dockyard and Shipping in Brest, and the TIRPITZ at Wilhelmshaven were attacked last night by our Bombers, and all the routine patrols except Patrol ~~XXXX~~ were flown by our aircraft today. A single Enemy aircraft dropped one bomb on Fair Island at 0920 this morning without causing any damage, and at 0930 a second single aircraft approached Scapa Flow from the Eastward but was driven off by our Fighters before actually reaching the Flow. During last night's Air Raid on Liverpool it is now reported that considerable damage was done to dock sheds, at least 12 discharging berths in the North Liverpool Docks having been made useless, the frontage of the Melias Depot building seriously injured and its offices rendered unusable. There was however only very slight damage to the Birkenhead Docks and none to the South Docks at Liverpool. Six M/V's were damaged, and the AUSTRALIA in Brocklebank Graving Dock was undamaged though near-missed by some 6 feet only.

Convoy ^{"Agent"} ~~AGENT~~ was shadowed for some time just before noon close to the Nore Light Vessel, but was not attacked; and between 1745 and 1805 this evening several H.E. Bombs were dropped on and near Harwich causing some damage to property in the town.

C. in C., Nore reports that of the Mines dropped in the Medway-Thames area during the night 12/13 when 29 were seen to drop and more were doubtless dropped unobserved a total of 40 are now accounted for, 9 having sunk or damaged one ship each, 6 acoustic and 3 magnetic having been swept, and 22 having exploded spontaneously.

/2 further...



War Diary

21.12.1940
Saturday

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

2 further Mines were detonated in this area today by sweepers and 2 tugs and 1 Barge were mines and sunk there. Trials are to be made, if technically possible, of U.P. weapons mounted in surface vessels to deal with enemy minelaying aircraft. Flares and Fireballs from Enemy aircraft continued to be seen at intervals last night in the Thames Estuary and Harwich areas.

A report that the Kiel Canal is temporarily blocked appears to be supported by the fact that about 20 M/V's were seen by our aircraft at anchor without lights $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles West of Kiel Lightship at 0521 today.

Shipping

Convoy
T.C. 8.

11 destroyers have been detailed by C. in C., Western Approaches to meet Convoy T.C. 8. (PASTEUR, PENNLAND and CAPETOWN CASTLE, with 7,000 troops for U.K.) in 57° N 22° W., at 1300/22 and escort to the Clyde in 2 portions. The convoy left Halifax on 16/12. The transports will be prepared for W.S. 5 B, sailing in the New Year.

North Atlantic

BERWICK left Gibraltar at 1600/21 to meet Troop Convoy W.S. 5 A which left the U.K on 18/12. She will R.V. with 15th C.S on the morning of the 24th.

The German M.V. HEINRICH ARP left Ferrol at midnight last night.



War Diary

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21.12.1940
Saturday

SITUATION REPORT

South Atlantic

An enemy raider is estimated to be within 10 miles either side of a line joining $10^{\circ} 30' S.$, $13^{\circ} 40' W.$, and $12^{\circ} S.$, $13^{\circ} 20' W$ HERMES, DRAGON and PRETORIA CASTLE are in the vicinity. An alternate appreciation puts the raider in vicinity of $18^{\circ} S.$, $13^{\circ} W.$, or (?) $29^{\circ} S.$, $11^{\circ} W.$

Force K is to cover an area west of the traffic route between the U.K. and South Africa through which a raider might approach to attack trade.

CARNARVON CASTLE arrived at Capetown yesterday for repairs, after her raider action. Alternate proposals have been submitted for permanent or temporary repairs which would take $4\frac{1}{2}$ months or $3\frac{1}{2}$ weeks respectively.

Mediterranean

10 F.A.A. Swordfish attacked Tripoli Harbour last night, 6 carrying "cucumbers" and the other 4 22 bombs of 250 lbs and 14 incendiaries. The former were all "planted" 4 south of the main channel and 2 definitely in the channel. Good results were obtained from the bombs. All the aircraft returned untouched, despite heavy and accurate A/A fire.

9 R.A.F. Wellingtons raided Castel Benito aerodrome last night. Others bombed the inner mole of the harbour at Benghazi Alexandria was raided by 1 aircraft early this morning, but all bombs fell in the sea.



MOST SECRET

624

War Diary

21.12.1940
Saturday

SITUATION REPORT

East Indies

COLOMBO reports no shipping at Mogadishu (Italian Somaliland)

America & West Indies

In view of D.F. reports of an enemy surface vessel, VOLTAIRE has been ordered to keep as far westward as possible without delaying her junction with convoy H.X. 98 and CARADOC is to search from Bermuda towards B.H.X. junction in 44.55 N 51.55 W.

China

The German REGENSBURG left Yokohama yesterday afternoon.

German Merchant Ships

HEINRICH ARP, which had been at Ferrol since 1/9/1939 left at midnight last night for an unknown destination.



War Diary.

21. 12. 40.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

A.M.C's of
Northern
Patrol.

It is under consideration that the A.M.C's employed on the Northern Patrol should in future be based on Halifax.

2. If this were done an A.M.C. would proceed from Halifax as ocean escort to an H.X. Convoy to about 23°W. and then proceed to Reykjavik, a total distance of about 2,000 miles, taking 11 to 12 days of which 10 days would be as escort.

3. At Reykjavik the A.M.C. would refuel and proceed to patrol for about 12 days, return to Reykjavik, refuel, and return to Halifax, taking probably 6 days.

4. The round trip would therefore take about thirty days, of which 22 would be spent in effective service. H.X. Convoys leave at alternate 4 & 6 days intervals, and the Northern Patrol A.M.C. would have to leave Halifax about every 10 to 13 days in order to keep one patrol line occupied.

5. With three ships running this could be done, giving them five days in harbour at Halifax. It is considered that four ships would be required in order to allow for maintenance etc.

6. It would be necessary to increase the fuelling facilities at Iceland.

7. Advantages.

(a) The ships do not enter the U-Boat zone at any period during their passage.

(b) They are free from air attack in harbour and at sea.

(c) The congestion in the Clyde would be relieved.

(d) One or two A.M.C's could be released from Halifax to work on the trade routes.

8. Request your remarks.
(A.C.N.S.(T) 1751/21 to F.O.C.N.P.)

Reply: Page 716



War Diary.

21. 12. 40.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K.

Use of Searchlights
against Minelaying
A/C.

Your 1252/19. Air Ministry agree that whenever the chance of engaging hostile mine-laying aircraft is enough to outweigh risk of disclosing local features searchlights sited to illuminate such aircraft should engage them.

(Air Ministry. 1756/21 to Adty.)

"Deluge".

At 1130/21. (D.C. 1200/21) At 2330/21.
(D.C. 2330/21.)

Movements.

Nore Command
Ships out of
Action.

My 0746/17. Add BERKELEY at Chatham till about 28/12 and INTREPID at Immingham time unknown (C. in C. Nore 0808/21.)

EGLINTON.

Sailed for Chatham 1010. E.T.A. Sheerness 1300. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1022/21.) Arrived Sheerness 1407 (C. in C. Nore 1550/21.)

MOOLTAN.

My 2330/20. Amend Position K to 56° 40' N. 2° 15' 18" W. (F.O.C.N.P. 1212/21 to MOOLTAN.) Sailed unescorted for Tyne. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1245/21 to F.O.C.N.P.) E.T.A. Tyne 0800/23 (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1613/21) Route to Tyne from position in latitude W.N.D. in F.O.C.N.P. 2330/20. (C. in C. Rosyth 1901/21 to MOOLTAN.)

Northern Patrol.

Trawler Lines tonight. 4 Trawlers.
(A.C.O.S. 1520/21.)

ROCKINGHAM.

Delayed by weather. E.T.A. Hartland Point 0330/22 and Plymouth 1500/22. Request Fighter protection during daylight tomorrow from near Longships. (ROCKINGHAM 1828/21. to C. in C. W.A.)

VIMY
SALOPIAN. }

My 1300. Unable locate SALOPIAN. Now proceeding to arrive Butt of Lewis 2200 when, if nothing heard, intend steer for original R/V at 12 Knots. (VIMY 1830/21 to R.A.D. H.F.)

PUNJABI.
JERSEY.
JUPITER.

Arrived Plymouth 1110. (C. in C.W.A. 0024/22.)



MOST SECRET.

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War Diary.

21. 12. 40.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

Troop
Embarkation.

GLENGYLE arrived and proceeded up river (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1600/21.)

Iceland.
HECLA.

HECLA is now required as Depot and Repair Ship in Iceland and not as in my 2208/8/12. To be completed with sufficient W/T gear to permit passage to Iceland, but completion date should not be delayed. (V.C.N.S. 1613/21 to A.S.C.B.S.)

Submarines.

UNIQUE.

Expect arrive Position E. 2030/21. (UNIQUE to FOCNA). *See also p. 640.*

H. 32.

Sailed 21/12 escorted by CLARKIA (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 0951/21.) Arrived Rothesay (S. 7.1710/21.)

THUNDERBOLT.

Arrived Clyde with CUTTY SARK. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1253/21.)

SEAWOLF.

Arrived. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1353/21.)

Greenock
Area.

Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1445/21.)

L. 23.

Exercising in Scapa Flow tomorrow. (A.C.O.S. 1651/21.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/22. (V.A.S. 1806/21 and 2056/21.)

SEVERN.

Adty. 1752/20. In view of Northerly route now being taken by Convoys, propose SEVERN be escorted to Scillies and then proceed independently. (C. in C.W.A. 1858/21 to V.A.S.)

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

Cancel ^{"Sark"}~~SARK~~. (F.O.I.C. Portland 0603/21 to H.Q.F.C.) Following Patrols ordered today: SA.IA., SA.2, SA.3, ~~SARK~~, and S.9. (C. in C. Rosyth 0802/21.) 2 Blenheim Fighters leave Dyce 0845 to Flamborough Head and return. (C. in C. Rosyth 0804/21.) My 0802/21. Add Patrol ~~SARK~~: (C. in C. Rosyth 1034/21.) Patrol ~~SARK~~ will not be flown tonight. (C. in C. Rosyth 1540/21.)



21. 12. 40.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Coastal
Command.

British Air Activity. Contd.
Routine Summary at 0800/21 of 15, 16, and 18 Groups. (H.Q.C.C. 0900/21 to Air Ministry.)

Wilhelmshaven.
Lorient.
Brest.

22 Sqn. to attack tonight TIRPITZ at Wilhelmshaven. Alternative Target, Shipping in new inner harbour at Emden.
53 Sqn. to attack tonight S/M's at Lorient. Alternative Target, Aerodrome at Rennes.
59 Sqn. to attack tonight Shipping in Grand Bassin at Brest. Alternative Target. Aerodrome at Rennes. (H.Q.C.C. 1445/21 to 16 Group, North Coates, Thorney Island.)

Bordeaux.

217 Sqn. to attack tonight with 2 A/C the S/M's in No. 1 Basin at Bordeaux. And 2 A/C to attack tonight A/C at Merignac Aerodrome, Bordeaux. (H.Q.C.C. 1447/21 to 15 Group, St. Eval.)

Flares in
Thames
Estuary.

Detailed report of 16 Flares dropped for practice from 2109/20 to 2205/20 along track 5 miles East of Swept Channel from N.E. Swin Light. Results and suggestions. (A.C.H.Q. Chatham 1755/21 to H.Q.C.C.)

Lights off
Harwich.

Coloured Lights reported to seaward from Harwich. Our A/C with flares to investigate patrolling once from 52° 10' N. 2° E. to 51° 40' N. 2° E. and return. (Chatham 2340/21 to Adty.) A/C will drop Flares between 0030 and 0130 tonight along 2° E. from Aldeburgh Light Vessel to North Falls. (C. in C. Nore 2341/21.)

Enemy Air Activity.

Fair Island.
Scapa Flow.

At 0920 single enemy aircraft attacked Fair Island one bomb being dropped but no damage or casualties reported. No. R.D.F. plots received before attack. At 0930 a second enemy aircraft identified as Do. 17 or 215 approached Flow from East at 5000 feet and was engaged by ground defences with U.T.P. E/A altered course to south before reaching Flow and retired chased by fighters which had been ordered up. E/A not intercepted due to poor visibility and low cloud, but good plots received throughout. (A.C.O.S. 1125/21 to Adty.)

Convoy "Agent"
Scapa Flow.

Being shadowed by one A/C bearing 150° from Nore Light Vessel. (VIMIERA 1133/21.) Position 51° 28' N. 0058' E. Course 045°, speed 6 knots (Convoy ~~Agent~~ 1135/21) Being shadowed by one A/C circling Nore Light Vessel. (VIMIERA 1153/21.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

21. 12. 40.
Saturday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

Following damage caused by air raid night 20/21.

Liverpool
Air-Raid.
damage.

MAPLIN.
EUROPA
LA PLACE
EASTERN PRINCE
SAMARIA
BRITANNIC.

MAPLIN - Slight fire on main deck from bomb probably oil incendiary which penetrated to engine room S.S. EUROPA fore hatch flooded near miss.S.S.LA PLACE U.X.B. in cargo in No. 3 hold. EASTERN PRINCE damaged by H.E.H.M.S. AUSTRALIA near missed 6 feet in Brocklebank graving dock. Dock three-quarter flooded some doubt whether bomb exploded. SAMARIA and BRITANNIC slight damage by I.B. Considerable damage to dock sheds principally at Canada and Huskisson. Estimated at least 12 discharging berths made useless in North Liverpool Docks. Damage to Hydraulic pressure at Hornby Dock and Gladstone, Hornby Langton and Canada system temporarily immobilised. Hoped to restore pressure p.m. today. Further report will be made. No damage Liverpool South Docks and very slight damage Birkenhead Docks.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1225/21 to Adty.)

My 1225/21. Confirm O.B.V. MAPLIN hit by large oil bomb estimated diameter of case about 18". Consider bomb which near missed AUSTRALIA definitely exploded; no damage. Hydraulic pressure restored Gladstone Lock. U.X.B. in SS. LAPLACE located, apparently not larger than 50 kg. but possibly A.A.shell.(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1801/21. to Adty.)

Owing to presence of unexploded mine and suspected unexploded bomb in vicinity of Melias depot, it has been necessary to close depot temporarily. Hoped resume work on Monday morning but this not certain. Unexploded bomb is also in vicinity of sub depot at C.W.S.warehouse and this has also been closed. Frontage of Melias building seriously damaged by blast and offices rendered temporarily untenable. Temporary arrangements being improvised but some dislocation of work inevitable. Damage to store as yet ascertained is very small.(S.V D.Liverpool 1811/21 to D. of V. Bath.)

WALLACE.

Am being shadowed by Enemy A/C.(WALLACE 1319/21.)



21. 12. 40.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

HIBERNIA.

My 2224/20. Following from Master S.S. HIBERNIA begins: After passing East Pier I heard aircraft flying low. I ordered all lights out. Within one minute I saw flares then heard whistling bombs followed immediately by flash of an explosion followed by another within a few seconds, I asked for all pin lights to be put out. All passengers were disembarked in darkness. The first bomb dropped on the main road about quarter of a mile from us. Ends. Ship berthed Kingstown at 1936/20. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1558/21 to Adty.)

Explosions
and Fireworks
in Thames
Estuary.

Following seen during Night 20/21.
(SO.T.L.D.F. 1923/21 to C. in C. Nore.)

Harwich
Air-Raid.

Attack by single A/C. at 1745 6 H.E's and some incendiaries dropped all round Gate Vessel 2 or 3 of H.E's not yet exploded. At 1759 single A/C dropped 2 H.E's in Harwich one fell centre town damaging property. At 1805 another single a/c dropped 2 H.E's on open ground near Harwich and 2 or 3 other single a/c dropped bombs about this time within a few miles of Harwich. One small H.E. fell foreshore Shotley. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1930/21.)

Harwich Area.

Following Flares and Fireballs reliably reported during Night 21/12. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0015/22 to C. in C. Nore.)



HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Sheerness Area
Night 12/13.

Cdre. Sheerness reports 1 Mine reported dropped by A/C at 2144/12, 23 Mines dropped between 0018/13 and 0310/13, 1 Mine dropped at 0455/13, and 4 Mines at 0630/13. In all 29 Mines were reported dropped and doubtless many more unobserved. Most A/C appeared to be flying above Balloon height which was 3500 feet. Details. (C. in C. Nore 0054/21 and Recd. 0255/21 and 1057/21 to Admty).

My 0054/21 Number of mines accounted for up to present in Medway Thames Area.

- (A) Ships sunk or damaged 9, one mine each.
- (B) Swept 3 magnetic 6 acoustic making 9.
- (C) Spontaneous or sympathetic explosions 22.

Total 40.

With exception of one magnetic mine swept on 14th none of the mines appear to have become active before the 17th. There are probably some more mines in Q Z X 252 which has not been searched.

(C. in C. Nore 1100/21 to Adty).

Liverpool.

Closed owing to suspected Minelaying (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0146/21).

Operation
ZME.9.

To be carried out on Night of 25/12 or as soon after as possible, subject to ADVENTURE not being required by C. in C. W.A. for Operation G.Q.2. To lay 7 miles 180° from 51° 46' N 6° 21' W.

(A.C.N.S. H.1205/21 to C. in C. W.A. and ADVENTURE.).

Thames Estuary.

Mine detonated by S.A. Gear Type A. at 1455/20, 50 yards South of No. 3. Medway Channel Buoy. (Capt. M/S. Sheerness 1546/21 to C. in C. Nore).

Proposed laying
of A. Mark I Mines
by M.T.B's.

Following considerations and proposals submitted. (C. in C. Nore 1626/21 to Adty) See Operations Volume.

/Fowey.....



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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining (continued).

Fowey and
St. Austell Bay.

Ports now open (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1738/21)

RIVER THAMES.

(Tug) Mined and sunk at 1542/21 between sites 11 and 7 to the South of East Nore Sand Buoy. Only one known survivor. No R.A.F. Personnel on board. (952 Sqdn. 1740/21 to B.B. H.Q) (C. in C. Nore 2259/21).

Barge TEC.12.
(Motor Barge).

Foundered at 1850 as result of explosion which sank RIVER THAMES. All crew saved (952 Sqdn 1905/21 to 30 Group) (Cdr. Sheerness 1251/22 to Adty).

U.P. Defence
against
Minelaying A/C.

U.P.

In view of recent heavy mine laying in area Eastern End Yantlet Channel Thames Estuary trials will be carried out if technically practical of naval 20-barrel ~~up~~ weapon mounted in vessels afloat. These vessels will be linked to A.A. command system and will be under same fire control as A.A. guns.
(Air Ministry 1815/21 to B. and C. Commands).

Adty 0003/19. No objections
(Air Ministry 1820/21 to Adty).

Sweep off
Aberdeen.

Intend sailing 12th M/S Group to R/V 10 miles 090° Scurdy Ness at 2300/22 and search War Channel ahead of convoy E.N. 45 as far as Cruden Scaurs 090° 6 miles, then return to Aberdeen. (N.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1818/21 and 2031/21 to C. in C. Rosyth).

INNISFALLEN

(British, 3071 Tons) Mined at 1640/21 in River Mersey off the Canada Dock Entrance. Ship being beached.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1820/21).

Sheerness.

One Red Mine detonated by L.L. Tugs at 1125/21 in 010° No. 3 Medway Buoy 1½ cables. (Capt M/S Sheerness 1820/21).

SUN IX

(Tug) Mined and sunk about midway between Nos. 1 and 2 Buoys in Yantlet Channel at 1243 today. (C. in C. Nore 2259/21) 1 killed, 1 missing, 4 survivors landed at Southend.
(N.C.S.O.Thames 2358/21 to C. in C. Nore).

MOST SECRET.



War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.

Kiel.

Result of photographic R/C today.
(PIU 2030/21) (PIU 0010 and 0417/22).

Bremen, Bremerhaven, P.R.U. Sortie on 21/12
Nordenham, Vegesak. (PIU 0057/22);

Off Kiel.

At 0521/21 A/C saw about 20 Ships
anchored without lights $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles due
West of Kiel Lightship.
(H.Q.B.C. 0437/22).



MOST SECRET.

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Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

RAMILLIES.

After consultation with C.I.N.O. one 15" gun in "Y" Turret in RAMILLIES has been provisionally condemned and immediate exchange recommended. P Provided unforeseen delays are not experienced it is anticipated that gun can be exchanged and work completed p.m. 31st December. There is a large amount of other gun mounting work to be done in this ship but this can not be undertaken unless date of completion of RAMILLIES is postponed until 6/1 or alternatively men are taken off EXETER and EMERALD which will involve corresponding delays in these ships. Request immediate decision. (C. in C. W.A. 1225/21 to Adty).

Your 1225/21. Approved to replace right gun of Y. Ship is to be ready to sail on January 4th. As much other gunmounting work as possible should be undertaken while ship is in hand. Consequent delay to EMERALD and EXETER must be accepted if necessary. (D.O.D.(H) 1515/21 to C. in C. W.A.).



HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

Convoys.

E.N. 44.

2230/20. Escorts HUGH WALPOLE, PENTLAND FIRTH, additional escort WOLFHOUND. 17 ships. (N.C.S.O. Methil, 0007/21)

W.N. 57.

2250/20. Escorts PAYNTER, ARCTIC EXPLORER. 17 ships. (N.C.S.O. Greenock 0939/21) Amend number of ships to 16 (1259/21)

W.N. 57.

List. (N.C.S.O. Greenock, 1511/21)

W.N. 57 O.

1300/21. Escort SAON. 8 ships. To R.V. with "Material". (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1037/21) 1400/21. 6 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1551/21).

H.X.95.

Meet. (C.in C. W.A., 1226/21 to ABERDEEN, WOLVERINE, CAMELLIA, ARBUTUS, COLUMBINE). *See also next page.*

O.B.O. 262.

Sailing, 0145/25. 12 ships. List. (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1231/21).

C.W.20.

LOUISE sailed with 6 balloons and minesweeper with 1 Mark 6. (952 Sqdn R.A.F. to Balloon Command, 1330/21) 1049/21. 17 ships. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1411/21, 1625/21) Departures for Ramsgate (N.C.S.O. Thames 1648/21).

F.N. 64.

List. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1426/21). Southend 21/12, departure for Harwich with F.N. 64, LARCHOL and TURQUOISE. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1439/21).

F.S. 66.

Sailed 1400/21 - 10 ships. (N.C.S.O. Methil, 1545/21) List (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 1638/21) Code word after passing Tyne - Area 2. (C.in C. Rosyth, 2254/21) 4 ships and 1 trawler from Humber joining. (C.in C. Rosyth 2052/21)

O.B.M. 263.

Sailed 1618/21. HUDDERSFIELD TOWN. 6. (N.C.S.O. Milford H., 1645/21) List (1700/21) Proceeded to Clyde. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1750/21).

O.B.M. 264.

Sailing 1340/23. ROSEMARY. 10. (N.C.S.O. Milford H., 1645/21).

H.X.96.

Sailing telegram as amended by Admty. (D.T.D., 1700/21) Not to arrive at R.V. till 0900/27. (C.in C. W.A. 1908/21 to RANPURA).

O.B. 263.

F.O.I.C's 0146/21 (Port of Liverpool closed.) O.B. 263 delayed 24 hours. (N.C.S.O. Mersey 1705/21, C.in C. W.A., 1852/21) My 1839/19. O.B. 263 will not disperse till 25° 00' W. is reached. (D.T.D., 1902/21).

/ F.N. 63.

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Convoys. (Contd.)F.N. 64 and
F.S. 66.

Additional escort, WIDGEON.

O.B. 262.

Londonderry departures 21/12 BROKE, SHIKARI, SARDONYX, LA MALOUINE, HELIOTROPE, ANEMONE, ST. KENAN, ST. ZENO for O.B.262. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 0947/21).

W.N. 56.

W.N.56 expected time of arrival Rattray Head 2000. Request all lights. (GAVOTTE. 1050/21).

W.N.56.

Scapa departures 1045 ALYNBANK for Convoy W.N. 56. (A.C.O.S. 1101/21).

H.X. 95.Meet H.X.95 unescorted, 24 ships 1000/23. (C.in C. W.A. 1152/21 to ABERDEEN, WOLVERINE, CAMELLIA, ARBUTUS, COLUMBINE.) *See previous page.*Troops.

Your 93423 (Q(M)2) 18/12. Further to 277/2 of 20th. Agree no troops to be embarked. Movements Commandeth Lisburn 1217/21, to W.O.).

S.L.60.

Sailing telegram. S.L.(slow) 60. 1100 G.M.T./21. Commodore Swabey R.N.R. ST. CLEARS (N.C.S.O. Freetown, 1329/21).

2 M.V's.

My 1443/21 (re 2 M.V's escorted by LORD ESSENDEN and RUBY), sailed. (C.in C. Portsmouth 1736/21).

?

Southbound Convoy 1500/21. Escort LADY LILIAN. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1750/21).

E.N. 45.
W.N. 58.

Sail at 1415/22 for Methil. Act subsequently as additional A/A escort to E.N. 45 sailing at 1830/22. On meeting transfer to W.N. 58 due Cape Wrath 0530/24 and Duncansby 1530/24. Code word for E.N. 45 "might" and for W.N. "metric". (C.in C. Rosyth 1801/21 to JASON).

KENT.

KELVIN and KIPLING should meet you at 1000 B.S.T./23. Route to Plymouth. Fighter protection will be arranged. (C.in C. W.A., 1846/21, to KENT.)

F.N. 65.

Convoy F.N. 65, 0900/22, ships to date 29, additional escort A/S Trawler SAPPHIRE, BASSET and TURQUOISE joining from Harwich. (C.in C. Nore 2146/21 to WALLACE, VIVIEN).

C.W.20.
Shelled.

C.W.20 passed Dover at 2110. Batteries at Wi and Gris Nez fired about sixteen rounds between 2037 and of which six fell in Dover Harbour and one probably behind the town. No damage or casualties reported. (V.A. Dover 2325/21, amended no T.O.O./22).

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Saturday.

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War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.)

Convoy Cycles.

Your 2158/20. Concur proposals. Assume no convoy will exceed 40 ships. Following are my remarks on part (iv) O.G. Convoys do not disperse. H.G. 49 will be met on (date) and H.G.50 on (date) not H.G.60. (C.in C. W.A. 1218 /21, to Admty.)

Independent Sailings.

Cancel my 1157/15/11 and amend para. (a) of my 1612/19 to read as follows. (A) All independently sailed ships between the U.K. and North America and West Indies are to be routed so as to cross 25° W. between 59° 30' N. and 63° N. and are not to be routed south of 59° 30' N. between meridians of 25° W. and 15° W. Those sailing between the U.K. and S. Atlantic and West African ports are to be routed so as to cross 40° N. between 19° W. and 33° W., keeping out of sight of land when passing or proceeding through the Azores, and to the Westward of 25° W. when north of 50° N. These ships should cross 25° W. between 56° N. and 59½° N. and may pass north or south of, but not less than 70 miles from, Rockall. Care should be taken not to establish focal points, particularly in the neighbourhood of 56° N. and 25° W. (D.T.D. 1859/21 to N.C.S.O.'s).

Troop Convoys.

T.C.8.

Your 1909/14 and C.O.A.C. Halifax's 0253/17, request confirmation that COLUMBIA is in T.C.8. and what numbers are on board. (D. of S.T. 0201/21 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

My 0155/17 following are details of numbers on board vessels of T.C.8. PASTEUR, CAPETOWN CASTLE and PENNLAND. Dutch vessel COLUMBIA is also included in T.C.8. with troops on board and details will be signalled later. Details of commercial cargo on board all vessels will also be signalled. (D.S.T. 0205/21, to P.S.T.O. Clyde, D.S.T.O. Glasgow).

T.C.8.

Undermentioned destroyers are to meet convoy T.C.8 in position 57° 00' N. 22° 00' W. at 1300/22 B.S.T. and escort to Clyde in two portions as follows:-
(A) OTTAWA (S.O.), ST. LAURENT.
LE TRIOMPHANT, PIORUN, WORCESTER WATCHMAN escort. PASTEUR, CAPETOWN CASTLE speed eighteen knots.
(B) BATH (S.O.) ST.MARY'S, MONTGOMERY, WITHERINGTON, WITCH speed 13½ knots.
(C.in C. W.A. 1304/21, to REVENGE, OTTAWA, BATH).

/ Twelve hours

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War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.)

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Troop Convoys.(Contd.)

Twelve hours after parting company report position course and speed of convoy T.C.8.

T.C.8.

For CAPETOWN CASTLE only. If not met by escort at rendezvous your convoy is to continue on approach course for 67 miles. (D.T.D. 1330/21 to G.B.M.S. Area 1).

T.C.8.

Following sent to CAPETOWN CASTLE. If not met by escort at rendezvous your convoy is to continue on approach course for 67 miles. (D.T.D. 1330/21 to G.B.M.S. Area 1).

T.C.8.

Following sent to CAPETOWN CASTLE. If not met by escort at rendezvous your convoy is to continue on approach course for 67 miles 1330/21. (D.T.D. 2248/21 to C.in C. W.A.).

W.S.5A. /

My 2230/20. ^{p603} From position 054 degs. 10' North 025 degs. 00' West W.S.5A Fast and Slow proceed as one convoy speed 11 knots. (V.A.N.P. 1230/21 to Western Patrol).

W.S.5A.

My 1603/21 (Sailing of DUNEDIN to R/V with W.S.5A.) sailed. (C.in C. Portsmouth 1821/21).

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Saturday.

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War Diary.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

French Repatriees.

Your 1054/20. I was instructed that it was most urgent I should obtain ships to repatriate French nationals from Freetown. After lengthy negotiations with Portuguese authorities and shipping companies the COMPANHIA COLONIAL agreed to take these troops on my undertaking that they would not be interfered with by our patrols due to fact that they were calling at Casablanca. In fulfilment of this pledge I sent my signal to F.O.C. N.A. as I thought it quite probable that our patrols, if they saw this ship apparently breaking our blockade, would seize her whether she carried a navicert or not. Regret I did not make position clear to F.O.C. N.A. (N.C.S.O. Lisbon, 1215/21 to Admty.)

North Atlantic.

BERWICK.

Your 1805/20. Intend to sail BERWICK 1600/21 to join convoy A.M. 24/12. (F.O.C. N.A. 1014/21 to Admty.)

Gibraltar arrival 0503/21 departure 1600 BERWICK to join W.S.5A in accordance with her 0740/19. (S.O.(I) Gibraltar, 1648/21).

H.M.S. BERWICK sailed to rendezvous with you during daylight a.m. 24/12. (F.O.C.N.A., 1840/21 to F.O.C. 15th C.S.).

BERWICK sailed 1600/21 routed through 036° 00' N. 011° 00' W. 046° 00' N. 026° 00' W. (F.O.C.N.A. 2141/21).

CIRCASSIA.

My 1130/20 CIRCASSIA bent starboard propeller while berthing. Divers' examination shows necessity of fitting spare propeller. Intend docking ship 24/12 and cleaning bottom, which is due. Anticipate ship will be ready for service p.m. 28/12. (F.O.C.N.A. 1208/21 to Admty.)

Enemy Convoy.
Bordeaux.
Lisbon.

1927/16. Reference British Consul Lisbon Arfar 959 16/12. It is probable that convoy would be forced to navigate outside three mile limit on Portuguese coast only between 4128 and 4142 north as sea breaks heavily in depths up to 25 fathoms if there is any swell. (N.A. Lisbon, 1233/21 to Admty.)

UPHOLDER,
USK
UNIQUE.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (Contd.)

UPHOLDER,
USK,
UNIQUE.

UPHOLDER course position and speed 1200 21/12 037° 54' N. 010° 55' W. 132° 8 knots routed through 036° 46' N. 009° 22' W. to Gibraltar. USK position course and speed 1200 21/12 040° 42' N. 010° 40' W. 180° 8 knots route as for UPHOLDER. UNIQUE expected to have crossed 041° 00' N. in meridian 010° 45' N. at 0001 21/12 speed 8 knots route as for UPHOLDER. (F.O.C.N.A. 1431/21 to BRIDPORT).

UNIQUE

Your 0830/21 adjust speed to R/V 1100/22 in 260° Cape Trafalgar 25 miles with ERIN who will escort you to Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1628/21 to UNIQUE). See p. 627

Daily Summary
Operations.

2 routine A.S. patrols.
(200 Group, 1710/21 to Air Min.)

Suspicious Ship.

Position 38° 58' N. 22° 32' W. THALA sighted suspicious ship 1730 G.M.T. (Via Lyness 1735/21).

Following has been read:-

Confirmation ? ? ? 20/21 cancel My 17 (? group omitted) 21 vessel identified. (THALA, 1950/21 to Gibraltar W/T). Remainder of message undecypherable. Presumably refers to 1735/21 received via Lyness W/T .

DURHAM,
MONARCH OF BERMUDA
ALICE ROBERT

DURHAM Capetown 8/12 Liverpool 14 knots 009° S. 012° W. 009° N. 021° W. 016° N. 021° W. 029° N. 022° W. 038° N. 023° W. MONARCH OF BERMUDA Freetown 19/12 Liverpool 17 knots 011° 25' N. 020° 08' W. 022° 58' 022° 38' 035° 20' 021° 17' 048° 35' 024° 50'. French ALICE ROBERT Dakar 17/12 Northward. Four French submarines left Dakar 18/12. (F.O.C.N.A. 1912/21).

Enemy Raider.

South Atlantic.

Admiralty's 2316. There are indications that an enemy surface unit in area probably J 36 A and I 36 C. (C.in C. S.A. 0009N/21 to HERMES).

My 0009/N. More reliable indications suggest square J 35 B and D. 45% probability within 10 miles either side of a line joining position 010° 30' S. 013° 40' W. and 012° 20' S. 013° 20' W. (C.in C. S.A. 0205 N/21 to HERMES).

My 2316/20. Additional bearings:- Freetown 001/1. Ascension 340/3 (flat). (D.D.I.C. 0315/21 to C.in C. S.A.).

By D/F 0059/21 G.M.T. enemy surface vessel indicated in area 35° N. to 43° N. 47° W. to 57° W.

Bearings:- Simonstown 308/2. Freetown 325/2. Bermuda 050/3. (D.D.I.C. 0904/21 to Force K).

/ If raider was



FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (Contd.)

If raider was not near line given in 0205/21 at 2108 Z/20 next most likely areas are in order of probability of vicinity of 018° S. 013° W. or 029° ? S. 011° W. (C.in C. S.A. 0959/21 to HERMES).

Your 0904/21. Uncorrected north westerly bearings from Freetown often contain plus errors. Correction minus 8° should probably have been applied. This suggests most likely area enclosed by line joining position 042° N. 052° W. 040° N. (?049°) W. 037° 30' N. 054° 30' W. 039° N. 056° W. (C.in C. S.A. 1113/21 to Admty.)

HAWKINS.
NEPTUNE.

WS54.

805. As it appears likely raider is South it is for consideration if other escort can be provided for W.S. five A that HAWKINS should be (? retained) either (? to ? reinforce) force L or form a group with DEVONSHIRE due Simonstown 27/12. HAWKINS sails from Simonstown for Freetown 21/12 and for present will be available for either purpose. If more definite information becomes available that raider is South rather than North NEPTUNE might be used for W.S.5A. (C.in C. S.A. 1251/21 to Admty.)

Enemy Raider,
Force K.

0005/19 Admiralty. Force K to proceed from 039° 30' N. 033° 20' W. on route approximately through 032° N. 028° W. 015° N. 027° W. thence to Freetown and carry out search on passage. Traffic between U.K. and South except for route of convoy S.L.60 lies east of a line between eastern extremity of Azores and Cape Verde Is. Object is to cover an area to west of this traffic through which a raider might approach to attack traffic and to be in position on passage to take advantage of any raider reports from traffic area. Request Admiralty inform me when Force K sailed or will sail in order that destroyer rendezvous may be arranged. (C.in C. S.A. 1221N/21 to S.O. Force K).

Your 1221/21. 1700 18/12.
(D.O.D.(F) 2246/21 to C.in C. S.A.).

CARNARVON CASTLE.

Capetown arrival 20/12.
(N.O.I.C. Simonstown 0703Z/21).

LORNASTON

Overdue ships my 1015 20/12 LORNASTON arrived Durban. (S.O.(I) Capetown, 0935B/21).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

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South Atlantic. (Contd.)

QUEEN ADELAIDE.

Overdue shipping. QUEEN ADELAIDE departure Milford Haven 17/11 for Alexandria via Cape not reported Cape. (S.O.(I) Capetown, 0945B/21).

A/C Transport.

Air Min. has informed R.A.F. Takoradi 1735/20 that FURIOUS carries 40 Hurricanes with certain spares which will be flown off, also 4 stressed skin Hurricane mainplanes 80 guns 46 cases valves to be unloaded at Freetown for onward passage to Takoradi. Presume you can arrange for DELHI to embark these items for transport to Takoradi during operation "Monsoon". (D.O.D.(F) 1144/21 to C.in C. S.A.)

GUINE

Your 2043/17. N.C.S.O. Lisbon's 1616/19 reported Portuguese ship GUINE arriving Freetown about 31/12 to repatriate 330 persons. Ministry of Shipping are requesting him to charter further ship to take remaining 200. (Head of M. 1252/21).

C.in C. S.A. 1205/16.

(1) Investigation by Dockyard Officers shows that damage to internal installations such as fire control, fire main, sanitary system degaussing, etc., is greater than originally anticipated although damage to structure is not so serious since temporary repairs at Monte Video.

(2) The following are alternative proposals.

(a) Time required to make good action damage at Capetown three months. At end of this period it would be desirable to dock ship at Simonstown for one week. Main engine refit could be done concurrently with damage repairs provided spare parts from U.K. are delivered by early February. Other refitting work would extend time probably by six weeks.

(b) Alternatively temporary repairs could be limited to what can be done concurrently with degaussing. Time required three and a half weeks. Some main engine defects could be done concurrently but major defects could not be done owing to lack of spare parts from U.K.

(c) A second alternative is to send ship elsewhere in her present condition.

CARNARVON CASTLE
repairs.

21.12.1940.
Saturday.

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (Contd.)

CARNARVON CASTLE
repairs. (Contd.)

(3) I recommend proposal in para 2(b) but would point out that ship could not be considered a fully efficient fighting unit and that escort may be necessary if proceeding to U.K.
(S.N.O. Simonstown, 1543B/21 to C.in C. S.A.).

Foreign Legion
Movement.

My 1943/11 and previous signals on this subject. Following arrangements made. FORT LAMY with Motor Transport 50 personnel of Foreign Legion left Duala 19/12 bunkering Port Harcourt embarked at Point Noire six officers and 60 Moroccan thence to Port Sudan via Cape. Remainder of French Legion personnel will sail from Duala 24/25 in TOUAREG and CAPOLMO for Freetown and transhipment to NEURALIA. Exhaustive enquiry shows that nothing is known of existence of French Brigade referred to in Director of Sea Transport's 2102/11 my 1951/12 and Admt. 2324/13.

ARNDALE.
NEWCASTLE.

Your 2115Z/18 fuelling completed ammunition transferred. ARNDALE anchored "Big". Expected to arrive position 025° 30' S. 042° W. at 0830P/22.
(NEWCASTLE, 2241Z/21 to R.A.S.A.D.).



WAR DIARY.

21.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean.

Castel
Benito
Aerodrome.

Attack on by 9 Wellingtons 148 Sqdn.,
2320-2350/20, (4) and 0050-0130/21 (5).
Special operational Summary I, 172.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Mediterranean 0730/21).

Social
Relations
Egypt.

Chiefs of Staff No.36 to C.in C's re
fostering friendly personnel relations with
Egyptians.
(I.S.L. to C.in C. Med. 1546/21).

Military
Convoy.

Summary of cargoes in "Excess" ships -
armaments, ammunition and aircraft.
(D.O.D. (F) 2124/21 to C.in C. Med.)

Fast
Personnel
Ships.

Remarks on Adty. 2324/14/11 as to forces
required.
(C.in C. Med. 1945/21 to Adty) See Med. Vol.

Attack
on
Tripoli.

I.173 21/12. Special operational Summary
night 20/21. 10 Swordfish 830 Squadron
F.A.A. despatched to attack Tripoli Harbour.
6 carried cucumbers and 4 carrying total
load 22 bombs of 250 pounds each and 14
incendiaries. At 0403 cucumber aircraft
detached in vicinity of Ras Ta Jura at
6,000 feet. Cucumber aircraft lost touch
with leaders whilst losing height and all
aircraft dropped cucumbers independently -
4 appeared planted south of main channel -
2 definitely in channel. Bomber flight
proceeded to position 3 miles south of town
when formation broke up and attacked at 2
minute intervals after first flare. 8
bombs fell in sea. 6 bombs on seaplane
station. 1 bomb on road short of hangar.
Direct hits on main hangar followed aided
by minor explosions same hangar. 2 bombs
on slipway. Fire seen during all 20
minutes when aircraft over target. 8
bombs fell on landing quay northern Mole
of which 6 on warehouses. Small fires
seen near warehouses by subsequent aircraft.
A.A. fire heavy and fairly accurate over
target. Firing observed from at least 20
Guns situated around town. Light A.A.
ineffective being directed against flares.
Cucumber aircraft not attacked.
Searchlights nil. Weather conditions ideal.
All aircraft returned untouched by A.A.fire.
(H.Q. Malta, 1100/21).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

Air Report.

1. Egypt. (R.A.F. operations in Libya, no naval items).
2. Greece. Operations against Brindisi night 19/20th Dec. and Berat day 20/12 reported in H.Q. B.A.F. Greece signal A.225 Day 20.9. Gladiators intercepted large number of enemy bombers escorted by many fighters and shot down 2 S.79's and 1 S.81 confirmed damaging others. Locality of interception not reported.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1232/21).

TRITON
NARVAL
Cost.

Regret to report TRITON and French submarine NARVAL are now overdue three and four days respectively and must be presumed lost. TRITON was operating in Southern Adriatic and French Submarine NARVAL off East coast of Tunisia.
(C. in C. Med. 1357/21).

Malta
Air
Report.

'I' 170 21/12. Combined services report Malta up to 17 hours 21/12. All times G.M.T. Glenn Martin photographic reconnaissance Naples. 2 battleships moored along north side of Molo Angloiro. 4 cruisers, one of which is in dry dock. 2 destroyers, 2 M/V's 5,000 proceeding from Pantellaria northwards. Glenn Martin photographic reconnaissance Spezia. 1 Cavour battleship, 2 Condottieri B class cruisers, 1 Trento class cruiser, 5 modern destroyers, 3 smaller destroyers, 1 submarine. Considerable M/V shipbuilding along N.E. shore. 2 M/V's 4,000 tons and several smaller. 20 miles north of Maritimo Aegedean Islands - 1 submarine on surface course 140 towards Palermo. Photos taken Spezia 3,000 feet. Glenn Martin photographic reconnaissance Tripoli. In harbour - 3 destroyers. 3 torpedo boat destroyers, 3 M/V's 8,000 tons, 5 M/Vs 6000 tons, 6 smaller M/V's weather fine. Photos taken 16,000 feet. No opposition. 16.08 - 15.00 Sunderland reconnaissance western Ionian Sea for enemy shipping. No ships seen. Operations by Wellington 148 Squadron night 20/21/12. Against Castel Benito reported in my 'I' 172 21/12 and by Swordfish No. 830 Squadron against Tripoli night 20/21/12. In my 'I' 173 31/12. No enemy air activity over Malta today.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta. 1700/21).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

21.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

646

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

Dodecanese.

Your 0012/19. It is confirmed that Rhodes and Kos were the two islands mentioned in my 1651 of 11th December.
(C.in C. Med. 1921/21 to Adty).

Enemy
Intelligence.

Source (B.3.) reports five German merchant vessels carrying German troops sailed from Trieste yesterday evening for unknown destination. Persistent rumours of German troop movements into North of Italy continue here. (A.N.A. Belgrada 1218/21 to C.in C. Med.) N.I.D. Note. Several reports were received at the end of November of troops having embarked on German ships at Trieste but no confirmation has been forthcoming that German troops were included. Many unconfirmed rumours of the presence of German troops in Trieste have also been received and it is therefore possible that this new report may be true.

Shore-
Based
Air
Recco.
Inadequate.

Again draw attention to inadequate shore based air reconnaissance in Mediterranean. This is due to no fault of those concerned in its operation but to shortage of aircraft. We have been carrying out important operations of passing through MALAYA and 2 M.T. ships to Western Mediterranean without any idea of whereabouts of main Italian unit (See Adty. 1742/20 para.(b)). Unless this reconnaissance can be improved it would be unwise to carry out any operations of type proposed in Adty. 2324 of 24/11.
(C.in C. Med. 1941/21 to Adty).



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

21.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

647

East Indies.

CARTHAGE.

CARTHAGE sailed in accordance with C.in C. East Indies' 1128/19. (to cover trade routes and then to Bombay after 24th Dec., for refit).
(N.O.I.C. Durban 0852Z/21 to Adty etc.)

Force
"Assurance".

Force "Assurance" will be ready to sail Bombay 23/1/41 for Port Sudan. Consisting four personnel and four M.T. ships. Names will be given later.
(S.S.T.O. India (Bombay 1055Z/21 to C.in C. E.I.)

FALMOUTH
SEABELLE.

My 0608/16. para 2., the periods to be spent by FALMOUTH and SEABELLE at Bombay will be regarded as annual refit and docking periods and all defects should be made good.
(C.in C. E.I. 1246Z/21 to S.N.O. Persian Gulf etc.).

COLOMBO,
Mogadishu.

My 1456/20. COLOMBO reports no shipping at Mogadishu.
(C.in C. E.I. 1628Z/21 to Adty etc.)

Assab,
Air
Raid.

Summary No. 192 and Operational Summary for 24 hours ending 1500 G.M.T. 21/12. 3 Blenheims 8 Squadron attacked Harsile pumping station $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of Assab Salt pans at 1010 G.M.T. no direct hits, damage improbable.
(A.H.Q. Aden, 1700/21).

Free
French
Movements.

From De Schompre for De Gaulle. No.37 A.M. starting organisation committee. (Appointments). I leave the committee of Batavia as it is. I am asking all those committees to send me their financial requirements.
(C.in C. China, 0213Z/21 to Adty).

21.12.40.
Saturday.

WAR DIARY.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

648

East Indies. (Contd.)

KONGSO.
ELSIE
MOLLER.
(Br.
1136 tons).

British ship KONGSO chartered to Chinese having cleared for Haikow 1/12 proceeding to Wenchow against express instructions from N.C.S.O. When at anchor off Wenchow Point 4/12 ship was boarded by Japanese who demanded ship's papers and disabled one engine by removal of the heavy part of the machinery. On leaving they took Russian Master and Charterer's representative to Destroyer. ELSIE MOLLER in company weighed escaped into Wenchow. Same night Destroyer bombarded shore forts near by endangering berth whereon Chief Officer weighed proceeded into Wenchow where ship now remains. Am informed Master and Chinese now held on board German Mohlenhof detained at Tinghai. Charterers claim to have had permit to enter Wanchow from Japanese Chamber of Commerce. Hence protested and demanded immediate return of personnel and machinery. Have also protested recent removal of main stop valve of EDITH MOLLER now under detention at Tinghai.

(N.L.O. Shanghai, 0303/21 to C.in C. China).

America and West Indies.

Laying of
A/S device
in Gulf
of Paria.

Following from British Minister Caracas begins: So far as I am concerned laying of A/S device in Gulf of Paria can proceed. In view of probable Venezuela protest loop laying should be done as unnoticeably as possible since while I am prepared to express regret for violation of Venezuela waters by our ships and to explain reason in general terms the presence of A/S device if included in protest will necessitate very delicate negotiations and if there is any possibility of device being laid undetected and so remaining I should much prefer position of GAINER. Ends. Request permission to proceed with laying of loops 6 and 7.

(N.O.I.C. Trinidad 0947/21 to C.in C. A.W.I.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

21.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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America and West Indies. (Contd.)

Enemy
Raider.

D/F bearings indicate enemy surface vessel in area 035° N., to 043° N., 047° W to 057° W at 0059Z/21. Keep as far to Westward as possible without delaying arrival at junction with H.X.98. (C.in C. A.W.I. 1041/21 to VOLTAIRE).

My 1041/21. Amend possible enemy area to read area enclosed by line joining 042° N., 052° W., 040° N., 049° W., 037° 30' N., 054° 30' W., 039° N., 056° W. On completion of fuelling search at 18 knots direct towards B.H.X.98 junction position 044° 55' N., 051° 55' W. At sunset 23/12 alter course to pass through (a) 041° N., 051° W (b) 038° N., 055° W., thence return to Bermuda. (C.in C. A.W.I. 1551/21 to CARADOC).

HOPEPEAK.
KOTA
AGOENG.

HOPEPEAK sailed Townsville 12/11 KOTA AGOENG sailed Penang 17/12 have not arrived Panama. (S.O.(I) Kingston 1041/21 to Adty).

MALOJA.

S.C.17 Ocean Escort MALOJA instructed to leave Convoy 36 hours before arrival at rendezvous to return to Halifax. (F.O. 3rd B.S. 1201/21 to Adty).

HAMILTON.

Your 2041/11/11, my 1711/23/11. It is assumed Admiralty will pay cost of repairs as a result of damage caused by stranding HAMILTON at St. John NB. Canada to pay for alterations and additions to fit her for use in R.C.N. as in the case of other Town Class Ex-American taken over by us. (C.N.S. Canada 1239/21 to Adty).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

21.12.40.
Saturday. 650

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (Contd.)

SALISBURY.
RICHMOND.
NEWPORT.

SALISBURY, RICHMOND, NEWPORT arrived here 1500.
(N.O.I.C. St. John's 1245/21).

Dutch
Submarines.

N.C.S.O. Mersey and Glasgow are instructing masters that Dutch S/M's are frequently on patrol in the vicinity Curacao and Aruba. S.N.O. Curacao reports no longer on patrol.
(S.O.(I) Kingston, 1750/21 to Adty).

CARADOC.

Bermuda 21/12 CARADOC arrived 1300 Q sailed 1700 Q in accordance with my 1551/21 (C.in C. A.W.I. 1803/21).

Halifax
Force.

Your 1831/21. Intend proceeding in RESTGOUCHE with ASSINIPOINE, COLUMBIA, and ST. FRANCIS at 0400/22 arriving position 039° N., 056° W. at daylight 23/12 thence sweeping to North Eastward.
(S.O. Halifax Force, 2310/21 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Force
K.

Your 2151/14 and my 0005/19. Force K. is now proceeding to Freetown. Admiralty intention is to direct the general area in which Force K. is to operate and then place the force under the detailed direction of the C.in C. concerned.
(D.O.D.(F) 2339/21 to C.in C. A.W.I.)

Australia.

Nauru
Raider.

Your 1436/20, It has been decided that no publicity will be given at present to raider incident at Nauru and any messages for Press arriving here will be stopped. Phoscom Cheltenham will be informed confidentially of Minister's statement for private information of next of kin and also of above decision.
(D.P.D. 2127/21 to A.C.N.B.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

21.12.40.

Saturday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

New Zealand.

MONOWAI
A.P.1.

Departure Auckland 2215Z/21 H.M.S. MONOWAI
for Convoy A.P.1.
(S.O.I. Wellington, 2331Z/21).

MOST SECRET.

21.12.1940.
Saturday.



War Diary.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

652

HEINRICH ARP.

Left Ferrol 0001/21, destination unknown.
(Gregatt, Coruna, 1010/21). Informing
North Atlantic Station. (F.O.C.N.A.
1505/21). Informing S/M's on Patrol,
Area B, (V.A.S., 2111/21).

REGENSBURG.

Yokohama reports sailed p.m./20. (C.O.S.,
Singapore, 0529/21).

VARNA.

Arrived in ballast for bunkering.
(Varna, 1200/21).

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

MAYA

Arrived with 5000 tons gas oil from
Batoum. (Varna, 1200/21).



U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

653

• Ships Attacked.

PENDRECHT.
(torpedoed 18/12)

Arrived LEGION escorting torpedoed tanker
PENDRECHT. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0308/21).

FARMSUM
(torpedoed 2/12)

Arrived AMBUSCADE with 15 injured of
FARMSUM. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0737/21).

O.G. 47.
Convoy.

O.G.47 attacked at 2117 in 40.47 N.,
16.47 W. Am not in contact. Search
being made with star shell.
(LEITH, 2146/21 to F.O.C.N.A.)
Informing North Atlantic Station.
(F.O.C.N.A., 2345/21).

Submarines Reported.

0810.

1 s/m bearing 340° distance 1 mile,
course unknown, my position 56.20 N.,
16.25 W. (ARGUS to Plymouth W/T, 0810/21).
My 0810/21). My 0810, HIGHLANDER is
investigating. (ARGUS, 0850/21)
U/B sighted by ARGUS (position).
Carry out search with your destroyers for
as long as fuel permits. (C.in C. H.F.,
0957/21, to BEDOUIN). Informing BEDOUIN
that HIGHLANDER is also investigating.
(C.in C. W. A. 1134/21).

1058.

Probable U/B south of Freetown, most
likely position within 50 miles of 01° N.,
11° W. (C.in C. S.A., 1058/21 to
G.B.M.S., 6A).

0800/20.

Graded as known fact, s/m on surface
6 miles N.W. Smalls at 0800/20 steaming
fast S.S.W. (Dublin, 1210/21 to Admty.)

1447.

D.F., U-boat report 58½° to 59° N.,
17° to 17½° W., good fix. (C.in C. W.A.,
1530/21 to ships in W. App. North).

1622.

D.F., at 1522/21 G.M.T. Italian U/B within
60 miles of great circle joining 42° N.,
17° W., and 35° N., 22° W. (D.D.I.C.
1750/21).

2014.

D.F., at 1914/21 G.M.T., estimated
position of U/B in vicinity of 34°15' N.,
16° 20' W. (D.D.I.C., 2349/21).

Estimated U/B
dispositions.

Italian. 1 may still be to westward of
Madeira.
1 or 2 patrolling in Azores area.
1 probably Italian off Cape Juby.
4 in N.W. Approaches between
54 degrees N. and 47 degrees N.
17 degrees W. and 20 degrees
W. of which 2 or more may be
between 55 degrees N. and 56
degrees N. 18 degrees 30' W.
and 20 degrees W.

/ German



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

21.12.1940.

Saturday.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

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Submarines Reported (Contd.)

Estimated U/B
dispositions.
(contd.)

German. 1 or 2 to westward of Sierra Leone.
Possibly 1 to southeastward of Rockall.
1 in 56 degrees 30' N. 16 degrees 25' W. at 0810/21.
Possibly 1 to northwestward of Rockall.
3 between 20 degrees W. and 22 degrees W. may be respectively about 58 degrees N. 39 degrees N. and 60 degrees N.

(D.D.I.C. 1237/21.).



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

22.12.40.
Sunday.

655

SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

In view of the recent heavy minelaying in the Yantlet Channel of the Thames Estuary special vessels mounting naval U.P. weapons are being sited in that area; and it has now been agreed with the Air Ministry that hostile minelaying A/C should in future be engaged by A/A Defences including Searchlights whenever there is a reasonable chance of success and even though the Searchlights so used may disclose local objectives, to the enemy.

Small forces of our heavy bombers attacked Lorient, Brest and Bordeaux last night causing in all cases fires in the Dock areas, and in one case, severe damage to a jetty; and mining operations off one of Germany's main Ports were also successfully completed by our aircraft during the night.

A heavy air-attack coming chiefly from Dieppe and the Channel Islands was concentrated tonight on Liverpool - Manchester area; and it is reported today by F.O.I.C. Liverpool that the Naval Victualling Depot in Melias Buildings, Liverpool, was entirely destroyed by fire and H.E. Bombs during last night's air-raid together, it is feared, with all its stores and records, as well as the Sub-Depot at Preston. Some damage was also caused last night to FORESIGHT during the same raid; and no destroyer or sloop escorts can be sailed from Liverpool until the damaged Hydraulic pressure in the Docks has been restored. An H.E. Bomb fell at 1950 today in the Camber at Portsmouth, sinking 3 boats, as well as some Incendiary bombs in VERNON and many in the Town; but no naval casualties were caused. All our East Coast Convoys were reported by enemy aircraft today, but no convoy was attacked. An enemy A/C passed over the Firth of Forth at 1405 today and, owing to some misapprehension of her character, was not engaged.

Considerable enemy air activity was observed in the Thames Estuary last night and at 1123 today a Mine exploded close to GARTH off Sheerness causing some damage to her engines. At 1526 the British Tanker ELAX was mined, but not sunk, off No.10 buoy at Liverpool; a Tug was mined and sunk at 1915 off the Canada Dock there; and at 2320 the port of Liverpool was closed.



MOST SECRET 656

WAR DIARY.

22.12.40.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

Raider
Hunt.

R.A. South American Division hopes to concentrate about 24/12 in South Rio area. Failing further information he will remain there until about 26/12 and then gradually move south to the Plate.

DUQUESA, 8651 tons, which reported she was being shelled by a raider on 18/12 has not arrived at Freetown. She was due on 19/12, from Montevideo.

Mediterranean.

HYPERION.
Mined.

The destroyer HYPERION was mined and sank at 0853 this morning 25 miles W.N.W. of Pantellaria. Only 3 Mediterranean destroyers will therefore be available for S.O. Force H for Operation "Excess". Including CAMERON (feared a total loss after an air raid on Portsmouth on 5/12) this makes a total of 40 destroyers lost since war began.

America and West Indies.

Convoy
Escorts.

C.N.S. Canada, has been asked if any further escorts can be provided for shipping in the N.W. Approaches during the lean period of the next two months, after which our resources will increase considerably.



MOST SECRET.

657

WAR DIARY.

22.12.40.
Sunday.

SITUATION REPORT.

America and West Indies. (Contd.)

PRINCE ROBERT (Canadian A.M.C.) is to visit Valparaiso for 24 hours on 25/12 and afterwards resume patrol off Talcahuano.



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

22.12.40.
Sunday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Dutch T/B.Z.7.

To be paid off at Portsmouth.
(D.O.D.H. 1253/22 to C. in C.W.A.)

Use of Searchlights against.

Air Ministry and Admiralty agree that it is desirable that hostile mine-laying aircraft should be engaged by A.A. Defences whenever there is a reasonable chance of success and that attainment of this object Outweighs risk that searchlights may disclose to enemy local features of objectives in their endeavours to illuminate target aircraft. Please issue orders therefore to effect that those searchlights sited to illuminate hostile mine-laying aircraft may engage such aircraft whenever conditions are suitable. (H.Q.F.C. 1540/22.toA.A.Command.)

Minelaying A/C.

U.P. weapons against Minelaying A/C.

In view of recent hostile mine-laying activities in Eastern part of Yantlet Channel of Thames Estuary special vessels mounting naval twenty barrel U.P. weapons are being sited for protection against these activities. These vessels will be linked to A.A.Command shore system and will be under same fire control as A.A. guns. To reduce possible risk of these or other vessels opening fire on our own fighters operating low over Thames Estuary ll group is to arrange to notify command operations officer before any such operations commence at night. Command operations officer will pass information immediately to Chatham area combined headquarters via direct lines of N.L.O. or C.C.L.O. at these headquarters. (H.Q.F.C. 1540/22 to A.A. Command.)

Request your views on proposals as a whole. (D. of L.D. 1856/22 to C. in C. Nore.)

Defence of U.K.

"Deluge"

At 1130/22. (D.C. 1154/22).
At 2330/22. (D.C. 2359/22).

Movements.

KEPPEL.

Sailed. E.T.A. Scapa 2230/22.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0926/22.)



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

22. 12. 40.
Sunday.

659

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

VETERAN. Sailed 0900 (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 0952/22.)

UNDAUNTED. Due sail for Clyde 29/12. E.T.A. Barrow 1000/28. Request Escort. (N.O.I.C. Barrow 1123/22 to C. in C.W.A.)

VIMY. Arrived Scapa. (A.C.O.S. 1135/22.)

ROXBOROUGH. E.T.A. 1500/22. (ROXBOROUGH 1150/22 to N.O.I.C. Belfast) Arrived (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1515/22.)

COTSWOLD. Intend sailing 1730/22. E.T.A. Rosyth 0700/23. (R.A.D. 1435/22.) Sailed from Scapa (A.C.O.S. 1747/22.)

SALADIN. Arrived 1525. (N.O.I.C. Barrow 1525/22.)

Northern Patrol. Trawler Lines tonight. 4 trawlers. (F.O.C.O.S. 1539/22.)

ROCKINGHAM. Arrived Plymouth 1500 (C. in C. W.A. 1646/22.)

SALOPIAN. Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1755/22.)

Operations.

Iceland. H.M.T. VAN OOST sailed Reydarfjordur. (F.O.I.C. Iceland 1201/22.)

H.U. Patrol. My 0920/22. Patrol not covered. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1717/22.)

Western Patrol. Orders for CAMITO, MARON, CAVINA, CIRCASSIA. (F.O.C.N.P. 1800/22.)



War Diary.

22. 12. 40.
Sunday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Submarines.

SEALION.

Leaving 1100. Proceeding Northwards.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0854/22.)

O.14.

Arrived Dundee. (S.9. 1127/22.)

H.34.

Request inclusion in W.N. Convoy sailing
Clyde to Methil (S.7. 1134/22. to C. in C.
Rosyth.)

Greenock
Area.

Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1510/22.)

MINERVE.

Intend sail 1630/23 for Holy Loch with
STELLA POLARIS (C. in C. W.A. 1554/22.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/23.
(V.A.S. 1639/22.) (D.C. 1833/22.)

TRIBUNE.

Attacked tanker with trawler and air escort
course 140° in 046° 46' N 002° 38' W. at
1121/16. Also M/V escorted by one German
MOWE class destroyer course 50° position
047° 21' N 004° 14' at 1012/19. Results of
both attacks uncertain. Trawler patrol
steering N.E. of 046° 51' N. 002° 14' W.
at 2125/17 was only anti submarine patrol
encountered. (TRIBUNE 1748/22 to Capt. S.2.)

Attacks on
M/V's.

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

2 Blenheim Fighters leave Dyce 0845 to
Flamborough and return. (C. in C. Rosyth
0812/22). Patrols ~~cancel~~, ~~cancel~~, S.9.
ordered today. (C. in C. Rosyth 0818/22.)
Cancel ~~cancel~~. Weather unsuitable.
(F. O. I. C. Portland 1010/22.)

TIRPITZ.

Operations for 22 Sqn. tonight as in my
AP/689/21/12. (H.Q.C.C. 1235/22 to 16
Group, North Coates.)

Enemy Air Activity.

SUPERMAN.

(Tug) Attacked 3 miles North of Rathlin
Island. (Port Patrick Radio 0834/22.)
Still being attacked. (C. in C.W.A. 0841/22
to Adty.)



War Diary.

22. 12. 40.

Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

661

Enemy Air Activity.

ARINBJORN
HERSIX.

Attacked by A/C between Oversaye and Mull of Kintyre. (Port Patrick 0903/22.) Proceed to assist (C. in C.W.A.1055/22 to ARABIS) Proceed to assist (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1109/22 to ENGLISHMAN, SUPERMAN.) Sailed ENGLISHMAN and SUPERMAN (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1244/22.) Ship abandoned. Tug rescued crew in 55° 28' N. 6° 22' W. C. in C. W.A. 1222/22 to ARABIS.) Arrived SUPERMAN at Campbeltown with survivors of ARINBJORN HERSIX (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1607/22 to C. in C. W.A.) Do you require assistance of ENGLISHMAN (N.O.I.C. Greenock 1850/22 to ARABIS.)

Harwich.

Bomb on ~~Canons~~^{Ganges} Road at 1800/21. Minor damage, estimate £100. No casualties (Works, Shotley Gate 1035/22.)

Liverpool
Air-Raid.

H.M. Naval Victualling Depot Melias Buildings Liverpool entirely destroyed by fire and H.E. last night 21/22. Feared all stores and records destroyed. Also Sub-Depot at Prestons Furniture Factory. No casualties. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1223/22 to Adty.)

Thames Estuary.

A/C and Fireworks seen during Night 21/22. (SO.T.L.D.F. 1503/22 to C. in C. Nore.)

East Coast
Convoys.

Enemy A/C have reported all Convoys on East Coast. (C. in C. Rosyth 1634/22.)

Liverpool.
FORESIGHT.
damaged.

Raid damage Night 21/22, H.M. Ships no damage except FORESIGHT near miss slight damage fore superstructure and hole above water line. Two merchant vessels sunk and six others damaged in North Docks. At least another 10 discharging berths out of commission all in Liverpool North Docks. Some damage to Bridge Sand, and ~~systems~~ and ~~systems~~ systems again out of action owing to failure of hydraulic pressure. Until restored no destroyer or sloop escorts can be sailed. Considerable damage to sheds and warehouses both at Liverpool and Birkenhead, and Liverpool ship repair firms considerably affected but extent not yet known. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1701/22 to Adty.)



22. 12. 40.
Sunday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity Contd.

Firth of Forth.

Enemy R/C. Aircraft passed over Firth of Forth at 1405 today. (C. in C. Rosyth 1721/22.)

Portsmouth.

At 1950 a H.E. Bomb fell in South Camber sinking 3 boats. A few incendiaries in VERNON. No damage or casualties. 2 H.E. Bombs and many incendiaries in Town. (C. in C. Portsmouth 2244/22.)

Mining.

Off Aldeburgh.

Heavy Explosions heard to East of Aldeburgh. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1006/22.)

Nore.

At 1143/20 a mine exploded 50 yards from BERKELEY in 320° 3 cables from Outer Bar Buoy. (C. in C. Nore 1006/22 to Adty.)

INTREPID.

Adty. 1545/21. Will be ready for sea PM/24. (F.O. Humber 1224/22.)

Dover.

Sweeping carried out 0800/21 to 0800/22. Q.Z.S.190 and 105 from Sandhead Buoy to No. 4 Buoy Swept 90%. Three sweeps cut by explosive cutters and one explosive cutter swept up in the channel. One mine cut close westward of the channel. Channel from Sandhead Buoy to A Buoy now considered clear but it is not intended to reopen until it has been reswept and clearance operations have been extended towards the shore. (V.A. Dover 1301/22.)

Thames Estuary.
GARTH engine
damage.

At 1123/22 a Mine exploded 50 yards from GARTH in 519° 29' 10" N. 0° 45' 3" E. causing some engine-room damage. (GARTH 1313/22 to Adty.)

Walton-on-Naze

At 1410 a loud Explosion and large column of water 150° 3 miles from Walton. Nothing near. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1415/22.)

Liverpool.

Port open (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1500/22.)
Port closed owing to minelaying by A/C. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2320/22.)

ELAX.

(British Tanker, 7403 Tons) Mined off No.10 Buoy, Liverpool. Requires Tugs. (Burnham-on-Sea Radio 1526/22 to Adty.) Position C.11. Red Buoy, River Mersey. Possibly safe. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1915/22 to Adty.)



22. 12. 40.
Sunday.

War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining Contd.

POOLGARTH.

(Tug) Mined and sunk off Canada Dock South Pierhead. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1915/22.)

Harwich Area.
Proposed
sweeps.

Weather permitting intend sailing 5 F M/S.
(A) At 0830/29 to search 151 Q.Z.S. and part of 117 Q.Z.S. to 5 miles south of position X.
(B) At 1600/6 to search 117 Q.Z.S, commencing sweep at S falls at Daylight 7th.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1614/22 to C. in C. Nore.)

Harwich Area.

One Mine detonated by L.L. Drifter at 1125/22 in 51° 48' 18" N. 1° 20' 51" E. (N.O.I.C. Brightlingsea 1657/22.)

Peterhead.
Proposed
Mine.

Weather permitting. Intend sailing group 19 from Peterhead at 2359/22 to search War Channel from Buchanness 090° 6' to 58° 25' N 2° 40' W due 1200/23, then return search of War Channel ahead of W.N.57 to Buchanness 090° 6' due 2359/23, then return Peterhead. (N.O.I.C. Aberdeen. 1750/22.)

Kiel Canal
blocked.

Enemy Intelligence.

- (1) My 1628/20 to D.N.I. Observed at Gothenburg evening 21st three or four German steamers awaiting orders for southward voyage.
- (2) German shipping agent informed dependable Swedish official that Kiel Canal expected blocked another eight days. He ascribed blocking to British bombs. A one. (N.A. Stockholm 1134/22.)

Weser.

Following vessels observed building on 2/12 on Weser River. (N.A. Stockholm 1140/22 to D.N.I.)

Main German
Units.

Positions on 29/11 and 14/12, 18/12, and 21/12. (D.D.I.C. 1216/22.)

Enemy Destroy-
ers, Minelayers,
and U-Boats. }

Positions on 21/12 by Air R/C. (D.D.I.C. 1251/22.)



MOST SECRET.

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Sunday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

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Casualties & Defects.

ERNEBANK.

(British, 5388 Tons) [REDACTED] ST. MARYS reports at 2040/21 ERNEBANK broken down in 55° 45' N. 22° 44' W. Requests [REDACTED] ST. MARYS leaving at midnight being short of fuel. (C. in C. W.A. 0606/22 to Adty.) Sailed SUPERMAN to assist (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0555/22.) Request you detach WELLINGTON to stand by. (C. in C. W.A. 0744/22 to BONAVENTURE). Intend sail Tug TENACITY PM/23. F. O.I.C. Belfast requested to sail SOUTHERN PRIDE to R/V with TENACITY. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1939/22 to C. in C.W.A.) Proceed to R/V with SOUTHERN PRIDE in 000° Tony Island Light 10 miles at 0900/24 and then in company to 55° 45' N. 22° 44' W. to assist ERNEBANK. WELLINGTON is standing by. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1410/23 to TENACITY.) If you still need help report position, course and speed. (C. in C.W.A. 2156/23 to ERNEBANK) ERNEBANK located in 55° 57' N. 7° 23' W. Does not require assistance. (C. in C. W.A. 2110/24 to WELLINGTON.)

St. MARYS.

Submit needs docking for repairs. (ST. MARYS 1054/22 to S.O. 1st. M/L Sqdn.) Arriving Lough Foyle 2000/23. Requires docking for repair of propeller and Asdic Gear. Request where to send her (R.A.M.L. 1042/23 to Adty.) E.T.A. Port Z.A. 0900/24. (ST. MARYS 1908/23 to RAML.) Arrived Z.A. 0915/24. (TRELAWNEY 0920/24.)

LLANDILO.

(British, 4966 Tons.) Aground on Nore Sands. Back broken amidships. Shall try to tow her further on sand next tide if floatable. (Capt. Brooks 1344/22 to Adty.)

CAMPANULA.

(Corvette) Arrived with defects. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1757/22.)

H. 31.

Following received from NIMROD begins. H 31 flooded from engineroom bulkhead aft. All crew safe. She is alongside quay with stern resting on bottom. Engine room hatch, both engine muffler valves, group exhaust valves and roturbo outlet open. Engine room bulkhead holding. Engine room hatch may clear at low water. Salvage pumps are standing by. 1945 Ends. Comdr. S with divers sent in Z 8. Expected time of arrival Campbeltown 2130. Salvage craft sailing from Rothesay.

(S.7. 2041/22 to V.A.S.)



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Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

H.31.

Cause is understood to be accidental loss of buoyancy while alongside with after hatch open. (V.A.S. 2349/22 to Adty.) H.31 now afloat. Intend sail her for Rothesay at 0900/25. F.O.I.C. has arranged towage. (V.A.S. 2227/24 to Adty.)

ANTHIPPI
N. MICHALOS.

(Greek, 3298 Tons) Sunk in collision with BEAVERDALE, which is landing 26 survivors. (N.C.S.O. Belfast 2100/22 to Adty.)

BEAVERDALE.

(British, 9957 Tons.) Arrived 1800/22, damaged by collision with ANTHIPPI N. MICHALOS. (N.C.S.O. Belfast 2100/22.)

ABERDEEN.

Side plating slightly damaged by collision with COLUMBINE at 1900/22 in $61^{\circ} 8' N. 14^{\circ} 25' W.$ Proceeding to R/V with HX.95. (ABERDEEN 2230/22 to C. in C. W.A.)

COLUMBINE.

Corvette holed forward and fore-peak flooded by collision with ABERDEEN at 1900/22 in $61^{\circ} 8' N. 14^{\circ} 25' W.$ Proceeding to Stornoway via North Minch escorted by WOLVERINE. (ABERDEEN 2230/22 to C. in C. W.A.) Proceed forthwith to assist (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0419/23 to SUPERMAN) sailed SUPERMAN (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0730/23.) Reports position at 1200/24 to be $60^{\circ} N. 11^{\circ} 45' W.$ steering 120° and making 8 knots (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1820/24 to SUPERMAN.)



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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

Convoys.

Estimated positions at 0900/22
(D.T.D. 1141/22 to C. in C. H.F.).

C.E.20.

Intend to sail from St. Helens on
26/12. C. in C. Portsmouth
requested to retain CATTISTOCK until
sailing of convoy. (C. in C. Nore
0954/22).

F.N. 63.

My 1639/21. Tyne and Middlesbrough
ships did not sail (F.O.I.C. Tyne,
0955/22).

W.N. 55)
W.N. 56)

Arrived 0930/22 (N.C.S.O. Methil
1001/22).

F.N. 63.

Humber ships arrived except RÖSTEAN
(N.C.S.O Humber 1150/22).

F.N. 65.
F.S. 65.
F.S. 66.

Left Southend 1015/22)
Due Southend 1700/22 } (C. in C. Nore
Due Aldeburgh 0800/23 } 1200/22).

S.L. 58.

Meet . Unescorted 31 ships 1000/24.
Route (C. in C. W.A. 1224/22 and
2324/22 to BROKE, MELVIN, SHIKARI,
KIPLING, SARDONYX, ANEMONE, LA MALOUINE,
HELIOTROPE).

C.W. 20.

Arrived 1130 (C. in C. Portsmouth
1323/22).

H.X. and
S.C. Routes.

Desirable to give more spread to H.X.
and S.C. convoy routes over the
present narrow lane on the Newfoundland
Bank, by giving a more southerly
route in your area to H.X. convoys
which have the shorter ocean routes
as issued by Admty. Positions should
be included in Convoy sailing telegram
(D.T.D. 1627/22 to C.O.A.C. Halifax).

S.L. 60.)
S.L.S. 60).

List of ships delayed by mishaps etc.
(N.C.S.O. Freetown 2011/22).
S.L. 60 Sailing telegram (N.C.S.O.
Freetown 1817/22).

/F.S. 65.....



War Diary.

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Sunday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Convoys (contd).

Shipping. (continued).

F.S. 65.

Your 2317/21. My position is 052° 57'N. 002° 09'E., speed seven knots. Fast ships could reach the Nore Light Vessel by 1500 at eight knots but slow ships are unlikely to reach The Nore before dark. (WOLSEY 0530/22 to C. in C. Nore).

My position course and speed are TLCE 0952 210 degrees 12 knots. 27 ships of F.S. Convoy 65 now ahead of me, no others in sight. Consider six rear ships have little chance of arrival before dark. (VERDUN 1045/22 to C. in C. Nore).

Your 0530. Those ships which can reach the Nore Light Vessel by 1700 are to enter gate tonight. Remainder are to anchor between B one and B three buoys. One escort is to remain in company of those anchored. Report whether fuel is essential for one or both escorts. (C. in C. Nore 1046/22 to WOLSEY, VERDUN)

O.B. 262.

OREGON destination changed to Houston. (D.O.D. 1038/22 to C. in C. W.A.).

F.S. 64.
F.N. 65.

Order F.S. 64 to weigh and enter then join F.N. 65. (C. in C. Nore 1155/22 to VIVIEN).

F.S. 64.

Southend arrival 22/12/40 H.M.Y. RADIANT with Convoy F.S. 64. (N.C.S.O. Thames. 1554/22).

S.L. 60.

Departure 0600/22 BRIDGEWATER as local escort to Convoy S.L. 60. (S.O.I. Freetown 1333N/22 to Admty).

E.N. 44.

Your 1715/21 Rendezvous for two ships for Mumbles Head 057° 00'N. 007° 08'W at 1000 tomorrow Monday with E.N.44. (C. in C. W.A. 1402/22 to N.C.S.O. Oban).

F.S. 66.

VULCAN is to sail tomorrow Monday 23/12 to join F.S. 66 due the Sunk L.V. at about 1000/23. To Southend for onward routing to Portsmouth. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1541/22);

Humber 22/12 departure H.M.T. BOTANIC at 1400 to join F.S. 66 for Southend for onward routing to Dover. (F.O. Humber 1610/22).



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War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Convoys
(contd)
O.B. 268.

Shipping. (continued).

Request you will inform me whether CRISPIN will be ready to sail with O.B. 268. (C. in C. W.A. 1626/22 to F.O.C.N.P.).

W.N. 59.

Code "^{"Muster"}~~MUSTER~~" 1900/24 H.M. Trawlers CAPE MARIATO and INDIAN STAR. 16 Ships (N.C.S.O. Greenock 1741/22)

H.G. 48.

My 0945/22 to C. in C. W.A. only. Sailed ROSEMARY ~~at 0945~~ H.G. 48 ~~at 0945~~ in splitting position. (F.O. Milford H. 1742/22).

F.S. 67.

My 1550/22. MOOLTAN 2 hours ahead and F.S. 67 1 hour ahead. INVERLANE proceeded northwards in tow at 1700/22. (C. in C. Rosyth 1808/22).

F.S. 69.

My 1217/20. Additional escort for F.S. 69 COTSWOLD. (C. in C. Rosyth 1851/22).

E.N. 45.

1830/22 H.M.T's SPURS, FANDANGO Additional escort H.M.S. JASON. 16 ships. 3 ships for Clyde. (N.C.S.O. Methil 1931/22).

H.X. 95.

VETERAN sailed ^{from} ~~for~~ Londonderry 0900/22 to meet H.X. 95. (C. in C. W.A. 2002/22 to ABERDEEN, WOLVERINE, CAMELLIA, ARBUTUS, COLUMBINE. *See p. 659*)

H.X. 98.

Sailing telegram (S.C.N.O. Halifax 1123/22) Ships carrying war material. (C.O.A.C. Halifax 1934/22) Sailing telegram 1300A.S.T./22 Escorts LACONIA, VOLTAIRE (COAC. Halifax 1418/22).

H.X. 99.

Advance sailing telegram. (S.C.N.O. Halifax 1721/22).



HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (continued).

Troop Convoys.

T.C. 8.

Your 1329/21. At 1800 G.M.T./21
T.C. 8 in position course and speed
055° 57'N 029° 11'W, 075° 12½.
Estimated 2 hours late at rendezvous.
Expect to arrive Halifax 1900
G.M.T./25 approaching course 256 degs.
(REVENGE 0249/22 to Admty).

My 1303/21. The two portions of
convoy T.C. 8 are to remain in
company until further orders.
Route follows.
(C. in C. W.A. 1052/22 to OTTAWA, BATH).
Route for T.C. 8 from 57° 00'N 22° 00'
West through:-
(A) 57 degs 18' North 20 degs 00' West.
(B) 57 degs 30' North 17 degs 30' West.
Further route follows.
(C. in C. W.A. 1111/22).

My 1111/22. Further orders will
be given to proceed from position
(b) either:-
(1) by south route through:-
(c) 56° 45'N 15° 00'W.
(d) 56° 45'N 11° 30'W.
thence to North channel,
or (2) by North route through:-
(c) 58° 30'N 15° 30'West
thence to North channel.
(C. in C. W.A. 1122/22 to OTTAWA, BATH).

Not met. My position, course and
speed are 057° 00'N 021° 38'W 255° 15.
Intend steering 075° at 1500.
(OTTAWA, 1415Z/22 to C. in C. W.A.).

(corrupt groups) 1328/22 convoy and
(other) escorts not met. H.M.S.
WATCHMAN in company. In view of
weather conditions am returning to
harbour.
(WORCESTER 1515/22 to C. in C. W.A.).

Your 1515/22. It is important you
should join the escort of this convoy
should weather improve, although at
present there is no such indication.
Estimate position course and speed
of convoy at 2030/22 is 057° 18'N
020° W routed through 057° 30'N 017°
30'W and 058° 30'N 013° 30'W thence
to North Channel speed 12½ knots.
(C. in C. W.A. 2012/22 to WORCESTER).

/EUMAEUS.....



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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Sunday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (continued).

EUMAEUS

S.S. EUMAEUS with 100 naval personnel will be ready to sail from Liverpool on 27/12. C. in C. W.A. requested to sail EUMAEUS to R/V with SALOPIAN when latter is ready on or about 27/12 and to arrange A/S escort. SALOPIAN is to escort EUMAEUS to Western Patrol, whence EUMAEUS is to proceed independently as ordered by N.C.S.O. Liverpool. (D.O.D.(H) 2115/22).

LOCHNAGER.

^{"Valentine"}
~~Valentine~~ Plan. LOCHNAGER will sail unescorted under M.C. Edinburgh arrangements first week in January with not more than one hundred personnel.
(W.O. No T.O.O./22 to Movements Edinburgh).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

22.12.40.

Sunday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

Foreign
Legion
Movement.

Your 1943/14 as CAPO OLMO with crew of TOUAREG on board has not yet arrived Duala to avoid the possibility of delay by diverting SCYTHIA at present homeward bound from Capetown. Request you arrange accordingly.

(D. of S.T. 1153/22 to C.in C. S.A.)

French
Repatriates.

Your 1215/21. When negotiating with Portuguese in similar cases any undertaking by you that ships will not be sent in to Gibraltar can and must only on subject to such ships obtaining a Ship Navicert at Freetown. Fears expressed in penultimate sentence of your 1215/21 are groundless as a ship holding ship Navicert would not be sent in if intercepted.

(D.E.W.D. 1128/22 to N.C.S.O. Lisbon).

North Atlantic.

Warning
Submarines
of attack
on O.G.47.

Report from LEITH states convoy O.G.47 was attacked in position 040° 47' N., 016° 47' W at 2117/21.

(F.O.C.N.A. 0020/22 to TRIDENT, CACHALOT.)

Free
French.

Admiralty has reported 100 Free French are in Tangier. Request information whether they have had Exit visas and if they would be brought to Gibraltar about 31/12 if VALKYRIEN and (? expenses) were sent them. (F.O.C.N.A. 1154/22 to Consul General Tangier).

Daily
Summary
Operations.

Two routine A/S patrols.
(200 Group 1545/22 to Air Min.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

22.12.40.
Sunday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (Contd.)

R/V of
destroyers
with Force
K.

Your 1157/22. Confirmed.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2140/22 to C.in C. S.A.)

South Atlantic.

Coaling
Freetown.

My 1633/10/8 and my 2035/12/11.
In order to carry all cargo possible from
loading ports, coal burning ships for
United Kingdom should take all advantage of
increased bunkers now available at
Freetown namely 400 tons per ship and
should only bunker sufficient to allow
this amount to be taken at Freetown.
(C.in C. S.A. 0301/22 to Capt: I/C
Simonstown).

SOTRA.
SARNA.
SOIKA.
SVANA.

SOTRA, SOIKA, SARNA and SVANA arrived
here.
(N.O.I.C. Durban, 0400Z/22).

See also p. 576.

Italian
Aircraft.

Italian Aeroplane left here yesterday
afternoon December 21st carrying 500
kilogrammes of cargo including cigarettes
coffee and Soap.
(Vice Consul Natal 0850/22 to Adty).

NORSEMAN.

Cable ship NORSEMAN now proceeding to 7°
23' S., 34° 35' W.
(1030/22).

Suspicious
Ship.

A fully loaded tanker with Spanish colours
painted on bows and quarters and word
Espana on bridge structure and on board
abaft the funnel was sighted in 031° 06' N.,
021° 38' W at 1015 G.M.T. 5/12
Enquiries indicate tanker whose behaviour
was suspicious was not spanish.
Description as follows, about 6,000 tons;
black hull with short forecastle line
flush to stern straight stem cruiser stern.
White (? box) like bridge structure with
taller cowls close abaft, white poop
structure in middle of (? black)
funnel average size with white band and red
star device therein, derrick on fore side
of foremast main mast half way between
bridge and poop, structure no rake flying
bridge, inconspicuous and tank (? tops/
invisible). (C.in C. S.A. 1133N/22 to S.A.
Station Squadron.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

22.12.40.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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South Atlantic. (Contd.)

Destroyers
Force K.

My 1221 21/12 and my 1941/19/12 and your 1030 19/12. Request destroyers be sailed to rendezvous with Force K in position 015° 00' N., 027° 00' W. at 0900/N/30/12. Request confirmation that this can be done. (C.in C. S.A. 1157N/22 to F.O.C.N.A.)

DORSETSHIRE.
HAWKINS.
BERWICK.
DEVONSHIRE.
NEPTUNE.

Your 1251/21. Two cruisers should escort W.S.5.A. Freetown to Durban DORSETSHIRE and HAWKINS considered most suitable. Consequents on this decision reference my 0005/19 para.2 BERWICK to join Force K instead of DORSETSHIRE after arrival of W.S.5.A. Freetown. Desired to send DEVONSHIRE and NEPTUNE home to U.K. as soon as situation allows. They are placed temporarily at your disposal and possibly you may consider it necessary to stiffen the escort for FURIOUS during operation "Monsoon".
(D.O.D. (F) 2159/22 to C.in C. S.A.)

Whalers.

Departure P.M. 21/12 ~~whalers~~ ^{whalers} SWONA, SKUDD three four and five in accordance with C.in C. S.A. 1301/12.
(S.O.I. Freetown 1315N/22).

Raiders
Search.

Hope to concentrate about 24/12 in South Rio area. Failing further information will remain there until about 26/12 then gradually move south to Plate. Have ordered Oiler ARNDALE and BALTAZIA to Plate and Oiler BROOMDALE to return to Falkland Is. to load A.M.Cs will remain in focal areas to counter merchant ship raiders.
(R.A.S.A.D. 1400Z/22 to C.in C. S.A.)

ARNDAL.
ENTERPRISE.

For Consul - requirements:- for ARNDAL and ENTERPRISE.
(ENTERPRISE, 1430Z/22 to N.S.O.(I) Montevideo).



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

22.12.40.

Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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South Atlantic.

POLAR V,
SKUDD VI.

Sailed whale catchers POLAR V and SKUDD
6. (N.O.I.C. Ardrossan 1659/22).

DUQUESA,
overdue.

DUQUESA due Freetown 19/12 from Montevideo
Departure 6/12 not arrived.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 1836/22).
(Note: DUQUESA reported she was shelled by
a raider on 18/12).

22.12.1940.
Sunday.War Diary.Policy.
Turkey.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

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Conversation 18/12 between Adm. Kelly and D.C.N.S. Turkey. (Ambassador, Turkey, to F.O., 0435/22) Chiefs of Staff No. 34. Views regarding assistance to Turkey. (1 S.L. to C.in C. Med., 1117/22). See Mediterranean Vol.

HYPERION.
mined.
sunk.

HYPERION mined and sunk in position 37.04 N., 11.31 E. ILEX returning to Malta. Only 3 Mediterranean destroyers will therefore be available to S.O. Force H for "Excess". (C.in C. Med., 0853/22).

Italian Morale.

Italian banker just arrived from Rome informed observer that Italian food still not bad, but public very disturbed by recent resignations and by stories from Albania. Libya is too far away to affect them much.

British bombing causing alarm. If it continues and Greeks have further successes Italy will probably collapse. (Madrid, 1059/22, to Admty.)

(N.I.D. Note. No actual shortage of essential foods in Italy but prices are high.

Distinct lowering of Italian morale during past month, but though signs are encouraging it is not considered that an early break up of Fascist regime can yet be looked for.

All reports agree that British bombing is causing alarm and that its continuance is likely to have wide-spread effect.)

Mines.

Mines are reported in Sicilian Channel within 3.5 miles from 37.05 N., 11.32 E. (D.S. 475).

Malta Air Report.

Combined services Report - Malta up to 1700/22. All times G.M.T. 0540 - 1412 Sunderland reconnaissance North West Ionian Sea for naval and commercial units. Nil report. 0909 - 1300 Glenn Martin reconnaissance Palermo. Unable to take photographs due to low clouds and rain. In port - 2 cruisers - same position as yesterday - 8 M/V's 8000 - 10,000 tons. 1014 - 1522 Sunderland search for missing Swordfish from ILLUSTRIOUS, nothing seen. ^{Night} 21-22/12, 2230-0730, Sunderland moonlight A.S.V. patrol between Sicily, Sardinia and Tunis ahead of West bound convoy. 0515 1 ship seen, bot identified due darkness, position 37. 48 mins. N. 8. 39 mins. E., course 180 degrees, speed 20. 0745-0805 2 enemy formations approached from North East, 1 to within 10 miles of Grand Harbour and then receded, the other skirted island to East ..

22.12.1940.
Sunday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean. (Contd.)Malta Air Report.

East and South before withdrawing.
Our Hurricanes up; no interceptions.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Med., 1710/22).

Air Report,
Greece.

Ops. Summary No. 40.
Raid on Durrazzo planned for 70 Squadron night of 21-22/12 cancelled owing adverse weather. No.84 Squadron provided 9 Blenheims for raid on oil plant at Kucove a.m.22/12. Photographs show all bombs 6 aircraft well in target area. Formation attacked by 5 Macchi 200 persistently for 15 minutes. 2 our aircraft shot down in flames crews believed lost, 5 aircraft hit explosive bullets and 2 air gunners wounded not seriously. One E.A. believed shot down. A.A. fire reported target area intense and most accurate encountered Albania. (H.Q. B.A.F. G., 1720/22.).

East Indies.Minesweepers.

Your 1402Z/18. Intention that LL whale-catchers SOTRA, SOIKA SARNA, SVANA should proceed initially to Alexandria, subsequent movements of these ships being decided by C.in C. Med. (D.M S. 1224/22 to C.in C. E.I.).

China.DAUNTLESS.

Penang arrival 21/12. (S.O.(I)
Singapore, 0449Z/22).

America and West Indies.

RESTIGOUCHE,
ASSINIBOINE,
ST. SAINTE FRANCIS.

Halifax departures 0400/22 RESTIGOUCHE
ASSINIBOINE, ~~SAINTE~~ FRANCIS. (Halifax Force)
(S.O.(I) Halifax, 0730/22).

Laying of A/S device
in Gulf of Paria.

Your 0947 December 21st. Approved.
(C.in C. A. and W.I. 1052/22 to Capt I/C
Trinidad).

B.H.X. 90.
Conference.

Your 1409/20. Conference not held for B.H.X.90 because convoy consisted mainly of ships of B.H.X. 89 which had been recalled to Bermuda shortly after sailing. Conference for B.H.X. 89 had been held. All masters again seen by N.C.S.O. except 4 ships which subsequently arrived just in time to join B.H.X.90 on sailing. Allegation that N.C.S.O. does not believe in conference is incorrect. (C.in C. A.E.I., 1112/22 to Admty.)

W

/ PRINCE ROBERT.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (Contd.) 677

PRINCE ROBERT.

My 1251/9. Proceed into Valparaiso a.m. 25/12 for 24 hours visit. On completion resume patrol off Talcahuano. Oiler SANADOLFO ordered rendezvous with you in 36° 40' S. 74° 00' W. at 1000Z/10/1/41. Callao pass PRINCE ROBERT. (C.in C. A. and W.I. 1221/22 to PRINCE ROBERT).

H.X.90,
Leakage,
Bermuda.

Your 1856/19. (Submarine attack on H.X.90) Investigations at Halifax, Sydney and Bermuda have so far failed to find any cause of possible leakage and C.in C. A. and W.I. confident that no leakage at Bermuda.

Caps

Seven ships of which six neutral returned to Canada from H.X.90 for various reasons. Of these master of STAD ~~AMSTERDAM~~ had previously been suggested as anti-British but sealed envelopes in all these ships were correct on their returns. Master of Norwegian INGER who completed passage had previously been thought unreliable by N.C.S.O. Halifax. No previous suspicion of any other master or crew.

C.O.A.C. Halifax submits following suggestion: (a) in allocating standard route non-British ships should be farthest from convoy route.

(b) 2 terminals for standard route be provided 40 miles apart - B for British, N. for Non British.

(c) Ref. Admty. 1613/24/10. A further secret position should be established by N.C.S.O. Halifax (N.S.) and passed only to Admiralty in rerouteing convoy as a whole. This position to be passed in a signal of its own and not included in sailing telegram.

(d) Admiralty to make a practice of rerouteing all convoys about 8 days after sailing using specially secret position in (c) above. This would diminish possibility of leakage from this side or from ships originally sailing in convoy being of use to enemy.

(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1223/22 to Admty.)

Messages for Force K,
and H.M. Ships.

For security reasons until further notice Messages for S.O. Force K, Force K, C.S.15, FORMIDABLE, NORFOLK, BONAVENTURE, FURIOUS, ARGUS, DUNEDIN, NAIAD, and BERWICK are being routed on Broadcast H.D. and A. and W.I. and Gibraltar routines. During this period Delivery Groups from Reserve Block are being used for all Messages passed to these ships and Authorities. Ships are maintaining normal W/T Watch accordingly to the station on which they actually are. (D.S.D. 1435/22 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

/ IRENE MARIA

22.12.1940.
Sunday.



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America and West Indies. (Contd.)

IRENE MARIA.

Your 0230/29/11 Br. Ship IRENE MARIA has not yet arrived. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1456/22 to M. of Shipping).

Scarcity
of Escorts.

Personal from First Sea Lord.

(A) The safety of shipping in North West Approaches is primarily a question of number of escorts available.

(B) Our resources will increase considerably in about a couple of months but in meantime very short of escorting craft.

(C) Can you give us any further help during this lean period? If so shall be deeply grateful.

(D) If there are any ships you can send us please say when they would be ready to sail.

(1st S.L. 2156/22 to C:N.S. Ottawa).

Australia.

ADELAIDE,
WAIRUNA

My 1812Z/20. ADELAIDE now escorting WAIRUNA to Lautoka and will then visit Suva. (A.C.N.B., 0456Z/22 to Admty.)

MANOORA.

Arrived Thursday Island 1117Z/21 departed for Cairns 1305Z/21. (A.C.N.B. 1119Z/22.)



MOST SECRET.

22.12.40.

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Sunday.

WAR DIARY.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

EUROPA.)
BREMEN.)

At Bremenhaven on 21/12. (D.S. 474).

TRAPANI.

Known to be at Genoa, much damaged on 19/12 (D.S. 474).

PROCIDA.)
LIVORNO.)

At Leghorn, may shortly proceed to sea. (D.S. 474).

NORDERNEY.

Para reports German NORDERNEY left quay and anchored. (N.S.O.(I) Montevideo, 0203Z/22 to R.A.S.A.J)

LA PLATA.

22/12. LA PLATA arrived here morning 22/12. (Bilbao, 1225/22 to D.N.I.)

My 0240/20. German ship LA PLATA arrived Bilbao 22/12. (D.D.I.C. 2345/22 to F.C.C.N.A.)

Suspicious Vessel.

Your 1115/16 and S.O.(I) Gibraltar 1649/15. After further consultation with Commodore and Staff in SUTLEJ thought tanker was not EUROFELD or German naval tanker SAMLAND. C.in C. S.A. 1133/22. (S.O.(I) Freetown 1814/22 to Adty). Subject: Vessel may have been EUROGELD sailed September 3rd not since located.



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

22.12.40 680
Sunday.

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

LELLO.

Has arrived at Genoa from Spain with cargo of fruit. (D.S. 474).

SAN GIUSTO.

Addressed in an en clair passage on 20/12 from Rome as an hospital ship, and Naval Authorities at Taranto and Bari informed that ship is appointed for service at Bari. (D.S. 474).



22.12.40 ⁶⁸¹
Sunday.

WAR DIARY.

U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships attacked.

MANGEN.
(torpedoed
21/12.)

Mocenigo

(Swedish, 1246 tons). In convoy O.G.47.
Sunk 2117/21 040° 47'N., 016° 47'W.
Survivors picked up by GARM now ordered to
proceed to Lisbon. No contact obtained
am rejoining convoy. (LEITH 0042/22 to
F.O.C.N.A.)
Torpedoed by U/Boat probably Italian
homeward bound from Bordeaux in
40° 47'N., 16° 47'W at 2117/20.
(D.D.I.C. 1147/22 to TRIDENT).

SARASTONE.

*not sunk
on 29 Dec 41
by air*

(British 2473 tons) Attacked by S/M in
41° 18'N., 15° 14' W. (Valentia Radio 1511/
22).
S S S S 41° 18'N., 15° 14'W. attacked by
S/M.
(Port Patrick Radio 1517/22).
Following received from Box 25 Burnit
begins, SARASTONE 41 18'N., 15 14'W,
attacked by S/M 1511 G.M.T.
(Hull Base 1731/22).

Submarine Reported.

1914/21.

By D/F 034° 15'N., 016° 20'W.
(F.O.C.N.A. 0357/22).

2017/21.

Ref: Adty. message A.F. 40° 47'N., 16° 47'W.
2017/21 G.M.T.
(D.D.I.C. 0510/22).

0012.

Bearings received. Preamble and first 2
groups of message were:- 0118/22 JB DT LKEZ
U/B probable in vicinity of 09° N., 21° W.
(D.D.I.C. 1000/22 to C.in C. S.A.)

1309.

By D/F probably U/B in area 53° 30' to
55° N., 20° to 25° W may have reported you.
(D.D.I.C. 1356/22).



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

22.12.40.

Sunday.

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U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

1511.

Enemy submarine in $041^{\circ} 18' N.$, $015^{\circ} 14' W.$ (V.A.S. 1651/22). D/F bearings indicate probable U/Boat within 30 miles of (a) $007^{\circ} N.$, $028^{\circ} W$ or (b) $008^{\circ} N.$, $019^{\circ} W.$ (C.in C. S.A. 1055/22).

1104.

Indications of U/Boat in area bounded by $006^{\circ} N.$, $009^{\circ} N.$, $029^{\circ} W.$, $018^{\circ} W.$ (C.in C. S.A. 1104/22).

BEDOUIIN.

If not in contact and assuming that information has been received return to Scapa with your destroyers (C.in C. H.F. 1951/22 to BEDOUIN).

1118.

$52.30 - 53^{\circ} N.$, $18^{\circ} W - 20^{\circ} W.$ indefinite position of Italian U/Boat. (D.S.475).

1758.

$52.30 N.$, - $53.30 N.$, West of $22^{\circ} W.$ indefinite position of German U/Boat. (D.S. 475).

Estimated U/B Dispositions.

Italian.

1 patrolling westward of Madeira leaving soon.
1 or 2 patrolling Azores area.
1 off Cape Juby.
1 bound for Gironde about $42 \text{ degs. } N$ $15 \text{ degs. } W.$
5 between $52 \text{ degs. } 30' N.$, and $57 \text{ degs. } N.$ $18 \text{ degs } W.$ and $20 \text{ degs } W.$ one of which was about $52 \text{ degs } 30' N.$, $19 \text{ degs } W$ at 1118/22 probably homeward bound, others perhaps following.

German.

1 to westward of Sierra Leone possibly about $9 \text{ degs } N.$, $21 \text{ degs } W.$
1 homeward bound maybe to northward of Madeira.
1 within 150 miles of Rockall to S.W. or W.
4 between $57 \text{ degs. } N$ and $60 \text{ degs. } N.$ $19 \text{ degs } 30' W$ and $21 \text{ degs } 30' W.$ One has been relieved and will return to Bergen. Two other reliefs may be coming from there. (D.D.I.C. 1338/22 V.A.S. 1528/22).



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

22.12.40.

Sunday.

U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.

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Submarines attacked.

Obtained Echo position 63° 38'N., 16° 00'W.
Attacked twice with no results. Lost
Echo.
(NORTHERN GIFT. 1330/22).

THUNDERBOLT.
R. of P.

THUNDERBOLT reports 6 torpedoes fired at Italian U/boat at 0920/15. Enemy and escort zigzagging independently when first sighted at 0830. All column of water observed followed by an explosion 4 minutes 9 seconds after firing torpedo. Two minutes later enemy bow or stern sticking out of water. Further look revealed no trace of U/Boat and depth charging started five minutes after explosion of torpedo. During Hunt on 17/12 enemy passed over THUNDERBOLT and superficial damage was caused probably by explosive sweep. Since no further explosions were heard, although A/S sweeping continued for about 1-1/2 hours C.O. is doubtful whether enemy had firm contact at any time.
(V.A.S. 1449/22 to Adty.)

*THUNDERBOLT was originally the THETIS, which foundered in Liverpool Bay in June, 1939, and was later salvaged.
(The Times, 4.1.1941)*

The U/boat "TORRENT" sunk.



MOST SECRET

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War Diary

23.12.1940
Monday

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

The decision to route Trade Convoys further North in the N.W. Approaches has necessitated the provision of more Escort Ships; and the first five N- Class Destroyers, which it had been proposed to send to the Mediterranean, are accordingly to remain in home waters for the present, joining C. in C., W.A., when worked up.

In view of a possible attempt by the enemy to effect the passage of Raiders through the Iceland-Faroes passage, B.C.1. in HOOD with EDINBURGH and 4 Destroyers is to sail at 1600 tomorrow to patrol to the Eastward of that passage.

One of the E-Boats which attacked the Dutch STAD MAASTRICHT in Convoy F.N. 66 late tonight off Yarmouth was engaged at 2210 by VERDUN and is believed by her to have been sunk or badly damaged. WESTMINSTER reports slight superficial damage and 5 wounded, 3 seriously, in this action; and the STAD MAASTRICHT, though torpedoed, is still afloat.

British Air Activity

Shipping and Barges at Flushing, Dunkirk and Calais were attacked tonight by our Bombers; and a convoy of 5 ships 15 miles from Bremerhaven was also attacked. In our Air Patrol areas, except that of Plymouth, Hampden Patrols are now cancelled and Fighter Night Patrols substituted. On suitable nights up to 20 single-engined Fighters are kept over these Areas, while Guns are silenced and Searchlights doused.



War Diary

23.12.1940
Monday

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SITUATION REPORT

Enemy Air Activity

Six long-distance Fokke Wulf Bombers are reported to have left Bordeaux at 1100 today, possibly to attack Convoy W.S. 5 A; and considerable Enemy aircraft activity continues near and over Rosslare. At 1848 today the north wall of the Torpedo Depot at Portsmouth was badly damaged by H.E. Bombs and 40 casualties were caused; but no one is reported killed and most of the casualties were slight.

Mining

At Liverpool WARWICK was damaged by a Mine about one mile 100° from the Bar Light Vessel at 2111 to-night, but by 2357 had been successfully beached in Tranmere Bay with her engine and boiler rooms flooded; and the M/V ATLANTIC COAST was slightly damaged by a near Mine this afternoon. Of the mines recently dropped off Liverpool 14 have not been accounted for; of which 3 were apparently fired by the Isle of Man Steamer VICTORIA without damage to herself, 3 were exploded by sweepers, 1 by an examination vessel, and most of the remainder self detonated. The Port, which had been re-opened at 1000 today, was closed again at 1800; and F.O.I.C. Liverpool has recommended today the extinction of certain Navigation Lights and the issue of precautionary navigational instructions.

In the Sheerness area, also, it has been ordered that, so far as is tactically possible, the positions of craft which may act as sea marks for minelaying aircraft should be constantly changed.



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

23.12.40.
Monday.

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SITUATION REPORT.

South Atlantic.

There is no further news of the raider reported on 21/12. HERMES, when she has searched the area ordered by C.in C. in his 0959/21, is to operate on the western limits of the trade route S.E. of St. Helena until necessary to return to St. Helena to fuel.

N.C.S.O. Duala reports that Buenos Aires broadcast on the night of 20.21/12 that the French Foreign Legion would be leaving Duala, Cameroons, on 25/12, would pick up convoy at Freetown, and would then proceed to Port Sudan. The Free French authorities attribute the leakage to military carelessness.

Mediterranean.

C.in C. Mediterranean, has again drawn attention to inadequate shore-based air reconnaissance, owing to lack of aircraft. Important operations of passing MALAYA and 2 M.T. ships to the Western Mediterranean have been carried out without any idea of the whereabouts of main Italian units.

East Indies.

LEANDER will form Force R for Convoy B.N.12. which she will continue to escort west of 53° E., as arranged by S.N.O. Red Sea.



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

23.12.40.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

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America and West Indies.

The ex-American destroyers SALISBURY, RICHMOND and NEWPORT left St. John's N.F. for the United Kingdom this afternoon.



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HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Western Approaches
Destroyers.

VENOMOUS forthwith, WITCH and WATCHMAN on 24/12, VIMY, DOUGLAS, KEPPEL, VANOC, VOLUNTEER on date to be arranged, will join my Command VANSITTART will leave my Command for Portsmouth on 26/12 and WIVERN and WILD SWAN for Portsmouth on relief by VANOC, VOLUNTEER. (C. in C. W.A. 1504/23).

5 N-class
Destroyers
to join
C. in C. W.A.

My 1306/19 paragraph 3. Consequent on the decision to route trade convoys farther North in the North Western Approaches, it is necessary to provide more escorts. 2. The first five N-Class destroyers will therefore remain in Home Waters for the present and are to join the Command of C. in C. Western Approaches when worked up. 3. The question of sending them to the Mediterranean will be reconsidered when four or five are available. (1st S.L. 1528/23).

Iceland
Prohibited
Area on
East Coast.

Icelandic Government have requested my assistance in regard to prohibited area on east coast. They point out that present limits preclude fishing from east coast ports. Situation would be greatly alleviated if (A) fishing were permitted within eight miles of coast and (B) if northern end of western limit were shifted as far as possible to north eastward to allow more sea room around Papey Island. (F.O.Iceland 1724/23 to Adty)

Greenock.

Relations with Greenock Harbour Trust and Port Emergency Committee. Proposed alteration in their personnel. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1906/23 to Adty)

KENYA.

To be at 4 hours Notice for Steam (A.C.N.S(H) 1907/23 to C. in C. W.A.).

Oban.

In view of Air Attack today, request an A/A Ship be stationed there until shore A/A defences are provided. (C. in C. W.A. 2324/23 to Adty).



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

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Defence of U.K

At. 1130/23 (D.C. 1130/23 and 1623/23).

At. 2330/23 (D.C. 2356/23).

My 1903/19 Demonstration takes place today (V.A. Dover 1201/23 to G.O.C's).

"Deluge"
REVISION.

Invasion
Flares.

Movements.

Nore Command
Ships out of
Action.

My 0746/17. Delete HOLDERNESS, EREBUS. Amend WHITSHED completion date 25/12. INTREPID 24/12. Add GARTH at Sheerness 25/12 (C. in C. Nore 0746/23).

ROCKINGHAM

Arrived Plymouth 1500/22 (C. in C. W.A. 0808/23).

VULCAN

Sailed 0838/23 to join Convoy for Southend (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0846/23).

HOLDERNESS.

Sailed Sheerness 0940/23 (C. in C. Nore 1050/23). Arrived 1403 (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1411/23).

MOOLTAN, MALINES.

Arrived (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1114/23)

DOUGLAS, KEPPEL)
LETITIA, CHITRAL.)
CALIFORNIA.)

RANP 2240/20. Proceed passing Switha 0001/24 to R/V with LETITIA, CHITRAL, CALIFORNIA in North Minches and escort to 61°N. 15° 50'W. returning Scapa when detached. (RAD 1155/23 to DOUGLAS KEPPEL) Sailed LETITIA, CHITRAL CALIFORNIA as by FOCNP 2240/20 (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1340/23) Expect A/S Air Escort tomorrow. (C. in C. Rosyth 1512/23 to LETITIA).

MALLOW, HARVESTER.)
HIGHLANDER.)
WITHERINGTON.)

Arrived 23/12 (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1305/23).

KASHMIR, PUNJABI,)
JERSEY.)

Leave Plymouth 1630/23 to sweep from 49° 15'N 3°W to Ushant, returning Plymouth 1030/24. (C. in C. W.A. 1318/23 to Adty).

SANDWICH.

Arrived Sheerness for London 1305 (C. in C. Nore 1440/23).

/AUSTRALIA.....



War Diary.

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Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements (continued).

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AUSTRALIA.

When ready for sea should proceed to Scapa or as ordered by C. in C. H.F. (A.C.N.S. H. 1526/23).

Northern Patrol.

Trawler Lines tonight. 4 Trawlers. (ACOS 1531/23).

SKEENA.

Arrived 1540 (N.O.I.C. Hartlepool 1542/23).

MONTGOMERY.

Arrived (N.O.I.C. Stornoway 1623/23).

WITCH.

Your 1100/23. After fuelling at Lough Foyle proceed to Liverpool. (C. in C. W.A. 1624/23). Arrived (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 2011/23).

QUORN, HOLDERNESS.

Sailed 1707 (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1715/23).

VANITY.

Expect arrive 62.D. at 0630/24 (VANITY 1725/23 to F.O.I.C. Humber).

KELVIN.)
KENT.)
KIPLING.)

My 1500/23. (KENT not met) My position at 2000 G.M.T. 51° 15'N. 16° 11'W. as by Adty 1712/7 (KENT 1805/23 to C. in C. W.A.). Steer towards 54°N. 15°W. (C. in C.W.A. 2102/23 to KENT). Destroyers to meet KENT in 54°N. 15°W. at 0930/24. Route to arrive Rame Head 1030/27. (C. in C.W.A. 2124/23).

WESTCOTT. VANSITTART.)
DEPTFORD. CALDWELL.)
BLUEBELL. HONEYSUCKLE.)

Arrived (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1130/23)

Operations.

Troop Embarkation.

GLENGYLE should be ready sail for Tail of Bank 0700/24. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1207/23) Cancel my 1315/23. GLENROY should leave Tail of Bank for Dock not later than 1500/24. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 1641/23 to D.C.D.).

HOOD to patrol.

I consider that the enemy may try to take the opportunity of Christmas period to effect passage of outward or inward bound raiders.

Intend therefore to sail B.C.S.1 in HOOD tomorrow with one Cruiser and 4 (four) destroyers to patrol to eastward of Iceland-Faroes passage. (C. in C. H.F. 1214/23 to Adty).

/B.C.....



MOST SECRET.

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HOME COMMANDS.

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Operations.

HOOD to patrol.
(contd)

B.C. One in HOOD with EDINBURGH and four destroyers is to sail from Scapa at 1600 tomorrow to patrol to the Eastward of the Iceland-Faeroes passage. In the absense of other instructions the force is to return to Scapa p.m./29.
(C. in C. H.F. 2249/23 to B.C.1).

Operation "Spekman"
~~STRENGTHEN.~~

Intend embark only 2 A/C for repetition Operation as transfer of third A/C from Hangar to Catapult is not possible (PEGASUS 1800/23 to C. in C. W.A.).

P.V.1.

Cancel my 1240 (Flare-dropping exercise) P.V.1. to be carried out instead at 2015 tonight.
(C. in C. Nore 1917/23 to Adty).

E-Boat engaged.

One E-Boat bearing 200° distance $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in 52° 32'N. 2° 8'E. Consider E-Boat sunk or badly damaged. Can find no trace. (VERDUN 2210/23).
E-Boat disappeared behind smoke screen. (WESTMINSTER 2215/23) E-Boat probably damaged. Last seen steering south. (WESTMINSTER 2217/23).
My 2217. Slight superficial damage and 5 wounded, 3 seriously. Request instructions. (WESTMINSTER 2330/23 to C. in C. Nore).

STAD MAASTRICHT
(Dutch, 6552 Tons).

Torpedoed by
E-Boat.

Torpedoed in about 052° 35'N 002° 03'E. Ship is afloat and appears likely to remain so. SHEARWATER has survivors and is standing by until daylight. Request tugs be sent then.
(WOLSEY 2255/23 to C. in C. Nore).

Tug KROOMAN sailed 0020/24 from Yarmouth to assist. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 0030/24)
Tug NORMAN sailed 0055/24 from Yarmouth to assist. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 0059/24).
Tug KENIA sailed Harwich 1205/24 to assist. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1222/24). If towing well, continue to tow towards Southend as long as visibility permits.
(C. in C. Nore 1745/24 to SHEARWATER).

Vessel sunk under tow in Gun Fleet Beacon 340° 3.6 miles. Bulkhead evidently collapsed. She sank in 30 seconds before she could be towed clear of channel. Propose to return to Harwich with tugs and survivors.
(SHEARWATER 1012/25 to C. in C. Nore).

Your 1012/25. Buoy position of wreck as accurately as possible and return to Harwich with Tugs (C. in C. Nore 1125/25 to SHEARWATER).



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Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

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Submarines.

H.34.

Cancel my 1134/22. H.34 now required Sheerness 6/1 (S.7. 1459/23).

MINERVE.

My 1554/22. Sailing postponed 24 hours (C. in C. W.A. 1508/23).

Greenock Area.

Movements (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1509/23).

L.23.

Exercising in Scapa Flow tomorrow. (A.C.O.S. 1629/23).

Proposed S/M
anti-U-Boat
Patrol in
N.W. Approaches.

A. Our submarines have recently had little success in the Approaches to Lorient and it is proposed that for the time being this patrol should be discontinued.

B. If 'A' is approved suggest the submarine thus released should carry out anti-U-Boat patrol in N.W. Approaches clear to the N.W. of the area in which our convoy local escorts work.

C. If 'B' is approved propose that the submarine proceed to and from patrol via Lands End. This will keep her as clear as possible of own shipping and will give her a chance to attack U-Boats on passage between Lorient Bordeaux and N.W. Approaches.

D. Propose SEVERN carries out a short patrol of this nature while on passage to Halifax. (V.A.S. 1756/23 to Adty).

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

Patrol ~~FAIR~~^{"Fair"} will take off at 0230 (C. in C. Rosyth 0156/23).
2 Blenheim Fighters leave Dyce 0845 to Flamborough and return (C. in C. Rosyth 0740/23).
Patrols ordered today ~~STAB~~^{"stab"} and ~~STAB~~^{"stab"} (C. in C. Rosyth 0742/23).
My 0742. Add Patrol ~~TRIST~~^{"Trist"} (C. in C. Rosyth 1112/23).

/Lorient.....



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HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. (continued).

Lorient)
Brest.)

59 Sqdn. to attack tonight S/M's Docks at Lorient. 53 Sqdn. to attack tonight Power Station and Dockyard at Brest (H.Q.C.C. 1220/23 to 16 Group).

Bordeaux.

217 Sqdn. to attack tonight S/M's in No. 1 Basin at Bordeaux. (H.Q.C.C. 1222/23 to 15 Group).

Night Fighter
Patrols
replacing Hampden
Patrols.

A.522 23/12. My 2337 / 1/12. Hampden patrols now cancelled and fighter nights substituted. On clear nights up to 20 single engine fighter Group arrangements while guns are silenced and searchlights doused. Patrol areas include same ports excepting Plymouth which is deleted. Request similar co-operation with local A.A.Commanders. (H.Q.F.C. 1340/23 to Adty).

Night Attacks.

Shipping and Barges were attacked at Flushing, Dunkirk, and Calais during the Night 22/23; and a Convoy of 5 Ships 15 miles from Bremerhaven was bombed by our A/C (H.Q.B.C. 2032/23 to Air Ministry).

Enemy Air Activity.

6 A/C leave
Bordeaux.

Six Fokke Wulf A/C left Bordeaux at 1100 B.S.T., probably to attack W.S.5A. (D.D.I.C. 1235/23 to C.S.15. FURIOUS, ARGUS) (C. in C. W.A. 1218/23 to Ships).

A/C over
Rosslare.

My 1048/20. Captain of G.W.R. Steamer reports considerable German activity over Rosslare and vicinity, aircraft coming so close that markings can be seen with naked eye. Irish papers have suppressed news of sinking of ISOLDA and are consistently taking a Pro-German attitude. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1240/23 to Adty).

Portsmouth
Damage in
Air-Raid.

At 1848/23 H.E. bombs fell in torpedo depot and on coal heaps N.E. corner No. 5 basin. North wall of torpedo depot badly damaged. Extreme damage to roof and window glass in eastern part of the yard.

Forty casualties mostly slight. No report of any killed. (C. in C. Portsmouth 2120/23 to Adty).

Oban.

Enemy A/C over Convoy Anchorage at 1800 (N.O.I.C. Oban 1815/23).



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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

→ Operation
ZME.9.

Intend leave Milford Haven 1800 tonight lay at 2200, and return on completion about 0030/24 (ADVENTURE 0932/23). Operation completed (ADVENTURE 2241/23).

Liverpool.

Re-opened. (F.O.I.C. 1000/23). Port closed (F.O.I.C. 2241/23).

Thames Estuary.

Have been trying to sink Floating Mine in 045⁰ B.6 Red Spherical Buoy one mile. Trawler No. 16 now trying to sink mine. (SANDWICH 1030/23 to C. in C. Nore).

Operation
D.Z.

Adty 1545/21. Intend sail INTREPID, ICARUS from Immingham 1030/24. (D.20. 1410/23 to C. in C. Nore). Your 1755/19. Concur. Short Title D.Z. has been allocated. (C. in C.H.F. 1529/23 to Adty). Adty. 1137/18 and 1545/21. Request you sail INTREPID, ICARUS to arrive Scapa about 1030/25. (C. in C. Nore 1720/23 to F.O.I.C. Humber).

Falmouth.

Mine exploded P.M. today about 1½ miles ESE. of St Anthony. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1738/23).

Oban.

Enemy A/C over Convoy Anchorage at 1800/23. Flares dropped. Suspect Mines. Port has been closed. Request Sweepers (N.O.I.C. Oban 1815/23). Sweepers detailed (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1935/23 to N.O.I.C. Oban) Port now open (N.O.I.C. Oban 2250/23 to Adty).

→ Operation.
G.Q.2.

My 1348/4. To be carried out on Night 28/12 or as soon after as convenient (C. in C. W.A. 1836/23 to ADVENTURE).

Liverpool.
Proposed
precautions.

Experience last two nights shows that enemy aircraft minelaying approaches definitely make use of Channel lights especially between Bar and Queen's Channel. Consider essential these lights be extinguished forthwith and that consequent delays in movements must be accepted. Reported that use of Bell and Light Float is also being made and this should also be extinguished if approved request instructions be promulgated.

/(1).....



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HOME COMMANDS.

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Mining.

Liverpool
Proposed
precautions.
(contd).

- (1) No vessels to approach within 20 fathom line during dark hours.
 - (2) Essential that vessels keep strictly to the Swept Channels.
 - (3) Convoys to anchor Moelfre Bay for the night when necessary.
 - (4) No vessels to anchor anywhere within 20 fathom line when making Liverpool until reaching examination anchorage Crosby Channel.
- (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1947/23 to Adty).

WARWICK.

Damaged by Mine in about 1000 l mile from Bar Light Vessel. Engine and Boiler Rooms flooded. No casualties. Towed into river and Lope beach at Tranmere Bay tonight (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2111/23).
Now beached at Tranmere Bay (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2357/23 to Adty).

Nore Command.
Precaution against
Minelaying A/C.

Your 0054/21, paragraph (H).
2. As far as possible compatible with tactical requirements positions of all craft which may act as sea marks to enemy mine laying aircraft should be constantly changed.
(D. of L.D. 2113/23 to C. in C. Nore).

Liverpool.
ELAX
ATLANTIC COAST

My 1915/22/12 and 2111/23/12 hoped tanker ELAX will be berthed Birkenhead docks A.M./ 24. WARWICK now beached Tranmere Bay. M.V. ATLANTIC COAST slightly damaged by near mine B.M. today 14 mines now accounted for 3 apparently fired by the Isle of Man steamer VICTORIA steaming 20 knots, no damage to vessel. 3 exploded by sweepers one possibly by Examination vessel and remainder self detonated all except four in area between Bar Lt. Vessel and Queens Channel entrance.

Enemy Intelligence.

Off Stadlandet.

A/C saw one 8000-Ton M/V in 62°4'N 5°5'E. at 1135, steering 225°. (C. in C. Rosyth 1238/23 to S.M. 0.23).

German Rescue
Float.

Float No. 24 drifted inshore at Sandgate Has been salvaged and towed to Dover. (V.A. Dover 1635/23 to Adty).

E. Boats.

There are indications of E-Boats activities tonight. (C. in C. Nore 1915/23)

Stavanger.

R/C on 20/12 (PIU 2352/23).



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CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

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BEVERLEY.
(ex U.S.A.
Destroyer.)

E.T.A. Inistrahull 1900/23. Have following urgent engine-room defects. (BEVERLEY 1100/23 to C. in C. W.A.)

IWATE.

In 52° 35' N. 12° W. Forehold full of water at 1237/23. Making for Berehaven. (Valentia Radio 1336/23.)

ALYNBANK. (N/A ship)

(~~British, 5151 Tons~~) In collision in 57° 31' N. 1° 35' W. Holed port side. Proceeding Rosyth 5 knots. Request Tug to stand by. (ALYNBANK 2245/23 to C. in C. Rosyth.) Making 8 knots. Negative Tugs. (ALYNBANK 2346/23 to C. in C. Rosyth.) Your 0020/24 to C. in C. Rosyth. Tug ST. OLAVES from Peterhead proceeding to your assistance. If in danger of sinking proceed to Aberdeen. If still proceeding to Rosyth comply with my 0026/24. (C. in C. Rosyth 0100/24 to ALYNBANK.) Making water in engine-room. Tug required to stand by. (ALYNBANK 0020/24 to C. in C. Rosyth.) E.T.A. May Island 0900 (ALYNBANK 0130/24) Water under control. No danger of sinking. (ALYNBANK 0230/24.)



MOST SECRET.

23.12.40.

Sunday.

WAR DIARY.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

697

Convoys.

Estimated position of convoys 0900/23.
(D.T.D. 1207/23).

W.N.58.

1715/22. H.M.Trawler FOXTROT. 6 ships
(N.C.S.O. Greenock 0945/23).

³
F.S.67.

17 ships, 4 additional from Middlesborough
(F.O.I.C. Tyne, 0951/23).
All Tyne ships arrived. (F.O.I.C. 1116/23).

³
F.N.63.

All Tyne ships arrived. (F.O.I.C. Tyne
1034/23).

³
F.S.66.

Tyne ships arrived. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1033/23)

O.B.M. 263.

Arrived (list). (N.C.S.O. Clyde 1045/23).

O.B.265.

1330/26. Route. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1045/23)

C.E.20.

My 0954/22. Time table and route.
(C.in C. Nore 1046/23).

³
F.S.65.

JERNFJELD

Humber and Wash ships arrived.
(N.C.S.O./Humber 1052/23). Arrived except
~~JERNLAW~~, NORWICH ~~TRADER~~, latter
reported sailing in F.S.67 from
Middlesborough. (N.C.S.O. Thames 1101/23).

³
F.N.64.

Arrived 1115/23. (N.C.S.O. Methil 1139/23).
Tyne ships arrived. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1614/23).

S.L.58.

My 2324. Meet. Add (3 ships)
(C.in C. W.A. 1310/23 to BROKE,
SHIKARI, SARDONYX, LA MALOUINE) Route of
S.L.58 Slow. (D.T.D. to C.in C. W.A.
1547/23).



HOME COMMANDS.

(Convoys contd.)

Shipping. (Contd.)

H.X.95.

Estimated position at 0630/24. (C.in C. W.A. to ABERDEEN, 1320/23).

O.B. 262.

To steer for 51° N., 23° W., and not to disperse until this position is reached. (C.in C. W.A. 1354/23 to BROKE) My 1354. KENT to keep clear. (C.in C. W.A., to KENT, 1410/23 and 1732/23). Your 1354. Escort left at 1400. Unable to pass your message to Commodore before convoy dispersed at dock today. (BROKE, 1640/23).

O.B.M. 264.

1318/23 YORK CITY, 6. (N.C.S.O. Milford H., 1405/23, 1510/23).

S.C.17.

Sailing telegram Escort MALOJA (S.C.N.O., Halifax 1408/23, C.O.A.C. Halifax 1403/23).

S.L. 61.

Advance sailing telegram. (N.C.S.O. Freetown 1444/23).

F.S. 48.

Sailed 1500/23. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1509/23). List (1611/23).

O.B.O. 263.

0230/24. 14 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1530/23).

S.L.S.60.

Date and route. (D.T.D., 1606/23 to C.in C. W.A., F.O.C.N.P.)

S.L. 60.

Date and route. Escort ESPERANCE BAY. (D.T.D., 1622/23)

O.B.264.

My 1251/19. Cancel last sentence. Convoy will not disperse until 22° is reached. (D.T.D. 1653/23).

S.C.16.

Sailing telegram as amended by Admty. (D.T.D., 1719/23).

O.B.O. 263.

Will not sail due to suspected enemy mining. (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1840/23 C.in C. W.A., 2046/23, to ROCHESTER).

O.B.M. 263.)
O.B.C. 263.)

Sailed 2133/23. (N.C.S.O. Clyde, 2235/23).

F.S. 69.

My 1851/22. COTSWOLD will act as additional escort to F.S.69 thence proceeding to Harwich. (C.in C. Rosyth 0917/23).

W.N. 57.

ALYNBANK left Scapa to cover convoy W.N.57. 1000/23.

H.G.48.

SCARBOROUGH rejoined H.G.48 at 0900/23. (SCARBOROUGH, 1058/23).

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HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.)

Convoys (Contd.)

E.N. 46.
W.N. 59.

Sail at 1430/24 and act subsequently as additional A/A escort to E.N.46 sailing at 2230/24. After passing Dunnet Head proceed to Scapa A.C.O.S. is requested to sail FLEETWOOD to join W.N.59 due Duncarby 1130/27. (C.in C. Rosyth 1215/23 to FLEETWOOD).

F.N.366.)
F.S.368)

Cancel my 1152/22/12. Additional escort for F.N. 66 and F.S.68 SHEARWATER. (F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1340/23 amended 1435/23).

C.in C. Nore 1200/23. Amend convoy F.N. 66 due Sheringham light float 0030/24. F.S.68 due Flamborough Head 0330/24. (N.O.I.C. Harwich, 1806/23 to QUORN).

→ S.L.58.

KENT not met. SL. 58 met 1045. Proceeding with KIPLING along route. (KELVIN, 1500/23 to C.in C. W.A.).

F.S.67.

Intend sail ELSIE CAM and LIBYAN at 1700/23 to rendezvous with F.S. 67 T. No.5 buoy. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth, 1515/23).

Great Yarmouth 23/12 departure to join F.S.67 for Sheerness ELSIE CAM and LIBAN at 1710. 1725/23.

→ S.L.S.58.

HIGHLANDER, HARVESTER, BEVERLEY to meet convoy S.L.S.58 in position 053° 30' N. 016° 30' W. 1000/26. (C.in C. W.A. 1540/23 to N.O.I.C. Londonderry).

5 M.V's.

My 2139/22. Sailed 5 M/Vs. Escort KINGSTON ANDALUSITE and PEARL. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth 1737/23).

F.N.367.
F.S.369.

Take PRIMULA under your orders and sail to join F.N. 67, SHELDRAKE to return at dawn North of Sheringham. PRIMULA join F.S.69. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 2246/23 to SHELDRAKE and PRIMULA).

→ S.L. 58.

Admty. 1659/21. Request you sail VICTRIX to arrive Milford Haven 27/12. F.O.I.C. Milford Haven is requested to sail VICTRIX as escort for s.s. AGATHA and s.s. ANTONIA ex S.L.58, to arrive Brixham at 0900/1. (C.in C. W.A. 1556/23 to F.O.I.C. Greenock F.O.I.C. Milford Haven).

Your 2012/22. Am endeavouring to join convoy p.m.23/12, but have been unable to fix my position. WATCHMAN in company. (WORCESTER 1040/23 to C.in C. W.A.).

/ Not met



HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.).

700

Convoys. (Contd.)

Not met 60° 33' 15" 00'.
(ABERDEEN 1131/23 to C.in C. W.A.).

Your 1107/23. Have not sighted convoy since 2130/21 nor have trawlers been seen. Convoy will be late. Further signal will be made when touch is regained. My noon position 038° 05' N. 012° 47' W.
(LEITH, 1316/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Convoy not met. Am returning to harbour expected time of arrival Greenock 1500/24 WORCESTER and WATCHMAN. Both ships have defective domes probably require docking.
(WORCESTER, 1832/23 to C.in C. W.A.).

My 0800 position 057° 34' north 016° 38' west checked by aircraft. Since daylight have searched 20 miles front to 058° 11' north 013° 46' west aircraft assisting and thence to position 057° 45' north 012° 36' west at 1645. My course and speed 124° 14 knots. Intend continuing until daylight. (OTTAWA, 1846/23 to C.in C. W.A.).

Harwich December 23rd departure M/S
TEHANA Trawler ~~FRANCO~~ at 1714 to join southbound
(See 22.12.40) convoy a.m. 24/12 for London.
Page 724. (F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1915/23 to Admty.)

O.G.48.

Turkish ferry boats EXIBIT, GEMLIK, ERDEK and KIYLE to be sailed with O.G.48.
(D.T.D. 1914/23 to N.C.S.O. Clyde).

Escort Groups.

Order of sailing of escort groups for O.B. and O.G. Convoys to 13/1. (C.in C. W.A. 1542/23).

Ocean Escorts for Gibraltar Convoys.

In view of increased U-Boat activity near route of Gibraltar convoys, consider it desirable that ocean escort of these convoys should be increased to 3 sloops and essential that it should be increased to 2.
On basis of 2 sloops per convoy for the cycle given in A.M. 2017/21, 12 sloops are required.
Excluding BIDEFORD 9 sloops are now allocated to this command.
Propose that three should be transferred from East Coast as soon as they can be relieved by HUNT Class destroyers.
Request completion of BIDEFORD may be hastened. 1656/23.

/ Independent Sailings ..

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Shipping. (Contd.)Independent Sailings.

Your 1859/21/12. Cape Verde Islands are not mentioned. Request confirmation that ships bound to and from U.K. and Freetown and other South Atlantic ports should now be routed either side of Cape Verde Islands and all regulation of N. and S. bound traffic by a dividing line as laid down in Admiralty 1758/26/11 defined in sub paras. (2) and (3) of (A) of Admty. 1612/19/11 is also cancelled. Presume ships should still pass out of sight of Cape Verde Islands. Are 13 knot ships still to be sailed independently as in Admiralty's 1157/15/11 which is now cancelled. (C.in C. S.A. 1757/23 to Admty.)

Troop Convoys.W.S.5B.

20 liners with military personnel to be ready to sail (date). List of sailing ports and orders for destroyer escort, A/A escort (one DIDO class and one A/A cruiser), ocean escort by RAMILLIES. (D.O.D.(H) 2350/23 to C.in C's W.A., H.F., etc.)

T.C.8.

If not met, ordered to steer 075° for 290 miles from R.V. 57° N., 22° W. (C.in C. W.A. 0956/23 to OTTAWA).

EUMAEUS
ABOSSO

Cancel my 2115/22.
Now approved to embark 246 Naval personnel in EUMAEUS and 220 Naval, Military and R.A.F. personnel in ABOSSO. Ships will be ready to sail from Liverpool on 27/12, and 28/12 respectively:
Both vessels should be sailed to R.V. with SALOPIAN.
A/S escort should be provided.
SALOPIAN to escort both vessels to Western patrol whence they are to proceed on their voyages independently.
(D.O.D.(H) 2147/23 to C.in C. W.A.).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

702

Operations Against Vichy French.

CAPITAINE-SAINT-MARTIN.

French CAPITAINE SAINT MARTIN expected to complete loading 23/12 expected to sail for Casablanca night 24/12. British Consul Las Palmas 1230/23 to Admty.

Las Palmas reports French steamship CAPITAINE-SAINT-MARTIN expected to complete loading tonight and to sail from that Port for Casablanca night of 24/25. Very desirable that this ship should be intercepted and sent to U.K. or Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1821/23).

Free French.

Your 1154/22. These Free French Men are not in Tangier but in French Zone. I should not like them to come here as Spanish would quite possibly refuse "to play".

2. They should be got away from Protectorate and not via Tangier. I am trying to get nominal roll for despatch to Foreign Office. Consul General, Tangier, 1930/23 to F.O.C.N.A.)

New Caledonia.

Sautot, Governor New Caledonia, states intercepted letter from Saigon written by Colonel Denis former Commandant Supérieur, Noumea, and later Governor of New Caledonia elected by Vichy contains boast that he will return to New Caledonia about January with French Naval Force to re-establish Vichy regime in New Caledonia. (D.N.I. Melbourne, 07032/23, to C.O.I.S. Singapore).

Brazzaville, Liaison.

British Liaison now organised as follows:- Spears Mission, Brazzaville, is link between H.Q., Free French Forces and London and also between H.Q. Free French Forces and Milwestaf and C.in C. South Atlantic. (details).

This organisation must be considered as temporary and depending on ultimate decision regarding Spears Mission, Brazzaville.

(20 M.M., 1640/23, to W.O.)

Dakar Intelligence, RHONE and S/M SFAX reported torpedoed.

* CAPITAINE LUIGI

* GRANDLIEU

Following from Navy Department. From Dakar. Following French ships movements occurred 21/12: Arrival FELIX HENRI, GROIX, * CAPLUIGI, and AISNE from north, latter two 4000 and 6000 tons coal respectively for Merchant Marine. EDEA from South, SAN PEDRO and * GRANDIDIER sailed for French Guiana and Casablanca respectively.



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French. (Contd.) ⁷⁰³

Dakar Intelligence.
RHONE and S/M
SFAX reported
torpedoed

From (corrupt Group): French tanker RHONE and French submarine SFAX are reported as torpedoed on Atlantic side of Straits during 20/12 with loss 150 officers and men. Admiral D'Harcourt commanding at Casablanca believed attacking submarine was either British or Italian though he did not know for certain nationality.
(N.A. Washington, 1736/23, to Admty.)

North Atlantic.

7th A/S trawlers.

In view of recent augmentations of 7th anti-submarine group propose trawlers be sent to U.K. in turn for docking unloading and leave as is being done with 13th Destroyer Flotilla. As majority of trawlers ships' companies live in Scotland or North of England request ships should refit at Northern port and that name of port be communicated before sailing. Request early decision as it is desired to sail KINGSTON CHRYSOLITE to U.K. in H.G. 49 about 29th December.
(F.O.C. N.A. 1052/23 to Admty.)

M.T. Convoy.

Admty. 1241/20 and S.O. Force H's 2358/19. To enable rendezvous and escort to be arranged request early decision.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1100/23 to C.in C. Med.).

Azores
Patrol.

Situation Report 1200/23. Convoys, Force K, etc. (D.O.D. (F) 1817/23 to TRIDENT, CACHALOT).

USK,
UPHOLDER,
UNIQUE,
HAARLEM.

Gibraltar arrival 23/12 1515 USK, UPHOLDER, UNIQUE escorted by HAARLEM. (S.O.(I) Gibraltar, 1600/23).

Daily summary
operations.

2 routine A.S. Patrols.
(200 Group, 1710/23 to Air Min.).

CILURNUM.

My 1912/20. CILURNUM was released by Contaband Control Service Officer for reasons stated in his message 1741 T.O.O. 1800/13 reply Adty. 1310/20. Master was warned that if he sailed in future without ship's Navicert or ballast clearance when in ballast he would be sent in. Ships sent in by Western Patrol Trawler invariably require extra bunkers and provisions to get them to their destination in addition to which trawler can only supply an armed guard for 1 (one) vessel which she does not recover until her return.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1759/23 to Admty.)

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South Atlantic.

- WILLEM VAN DER ZAAN. Capetown departure 1515/22. Netherlands M/L WILLEM VAN DER ZAAN for Durban. Speed of advance 12 knots. E.T.A. P.M./26. (N.O.I.C. Simongstown).
- DELHI. Lagos arrival 22/12. (S.O.(I) Freetown, 1039N/23.).
- ASPHODEL.
CALENDULA. Arrival ^{Freetown} 1015/23/12 ASPHODEL and CALENDULA. 1055N/23.
- Leakage. Have just been advised by French Authorities that Buenos Aires broadcast on the evening of Friday/Saturday last that the French Foreign Legion would be leaving Duala Cameroons on the 25/12, would pick up convoy at Freetown and would then proceed to Port Sudan. Free French Authorities consider leakage has occurred through military carelessness and consequently over frontier into Spanish Guinea. Need for greatest secrecy had been impressed on Governor and 2 officers concerned. (N.C.S.O. Duala 1105/23 to C.in C. S.A.)
- BALTAVIA Departure 23/12 on patrol. (N.O.I.C. Falkland Is., 1650/23).
- Whale Catchers. Whale Catchers left Ardrossan routed through 056° 00' N. 010° 00' W. 056° 00' N. 017° 00' W. 052° 00' N. 022° 00' W. thence to Ponta Delgada, Las Palmas and Freetown. (F.O.C.N.P. 1710/23).
- Enemy Raider. When you have searched area in my 0959/21/12 proceed to operate on Western limits of Trade Route South East of St. Helena until necessary to return to St. Helena to fuel. (C.in C. S.A. 1857/23 to HERMES).
- BRIDGEWATER. My 1107/15/12. BRIDGEWATER reported submarine resembled "Redoubtable"-class French Submarine. Considered very probable, four of this class having been reported recently at Dakar vide my 1617/ 3/12. (C.in C. S.A. 1949/23 to Admty.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean.

HYPERION
(mined 22/12)

My 0853/22. Preliminary report. HYPERION obtained a firm contact in position (?218) MALAYA and fired one pattern, contact was regained astern and approximately 20 minutes later a second pattern was dropped. Speed was then reduced to 15 knots and then 12 knots and contact (?regained) firmly on port quarter. While altering to port and having turned 90 degrees explosion occurred approximately in tiller flat. Ship was flooded aft up to officers cabin flat. Both screws out of action, ships structure badly buckled. Ship sunk by torpedo from JANUS on my orders that ship was to be sunk if (corrupt group) not steam. Casualties two ratings missing, blast killed one officer, and eight ratings cot cases and four ratings non-cot cases. From available evidence it is considered that HYPERION hit a mine.
(C.in C. Med., 1035/23, to Admty.)

Convoy
M.E.5A.

Arrived a.m./23. (N.C.S.O. Alexandria, 1153/23 to Admty.)

Operations.
20/12 - 22/12.

My 1221/19. Fast and slow convoys arrived without incident at Malta and M.E.5 sailed for Alexandria at 1500/20. MALAYA proceeded through Narrows on night 21/22, during passage HYPERION was mined or torpedoed and sunk as reported in my 0853/22. On night 20/21 ten Swordfish of 830 Squadron attacked Tripoli (Africa), four Cucumbers laid south of main channel and two in channel. Remaining aircraft scored hits with 250 pound bombs on seaplane station, slipway and buildings on north mole (?dockyard) several fires started. All aircraft returned. On night of 21/22 fifteen of ILLUSTRIOUS aircraft attacked Tripoli. Ten of the aircraft dropped bombs on Spanish Quay one Warehouse blew up and other set well alight. Army store depot also attacked and set on fire. Army H.Q. and anti-aircraft batteries hit latter silenced. 250 pound bombs and incendiaries used. Considerable long and close range anti-aircraft fire but all aircraft returned safely. During 21/12 a reconnaissance from ILLUSTRIOUS sighted at 1300 a convoy of three merchant ships escorted by a destroyer about 20 miles East of Kerkenah Island. Nine Swordfish with torpedoes and Duplex pistols brought off attack at 1605. One 3000 ton merchant vessel seen to blow up and disappear one of 6000 tons / also ...

23.12.1940.

Monday.

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War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (Contd.)Operations.20/12 -22/12. (Contd.)

also sunk. Destroyer and remaining merchant ship were very small and were not attacked. One aircraft failed to return from reconnaissance. Destroyer returning from sweep in Adriatic observed fires burning at Valona from which it appears bombardment was successful. (C.in C. Med., 1223/23).

Your 2124/23. Request -

(a) details of personnel for Malta embarked in ships other than "ESSEX".

(b) Confirmation that "ESSEX" has no personnel or cargo for Greece or Middle East.

(c) Confirmation that there is no cargo for Malta in ships other than "ESSEX".

(d) Confirmation that all four ships referred to in (c) have cargoes for both Greece and Middle East.

(e) Confirmation that cargo for Greece can be off loaded before cargo for Middle East. (C.in C. Med. 1343/23 to Admty.)

Shore-Based
Air Recon.

Following received from C.in C. Med. (Quotes his 1941/21/12).

Request information as to present state and probable date of reinforcements. (D.N.A.D., 1324/23 to Air Ministry).

Air Report.

Operational Summary No. 196 up to 1200 hours 23/12.

Para. 1 Egypt. (Details of aircraft casualties from commencement of military operations in Western Desert on 9/12 to date). Totals 63 confirmed 38 unconfirmed. Aircraft operating from Malta destroyed 19 additional unidentified aircraft on ground confirmed. R.A.F. including those

destroyed in operational area not

necessarily through enemy action one

Wellington 4 Blenheims 3 Hurricanes

5 Gladiators one Lysander destroyed.

Total 14. 21-22/12 3 Wellingtons bombed

Tobruk wharves, jetties and buildings,

all bombs except 4 falling target area.

5 Wellingtons bombed Berka and Benina

aerodromes, starting explosions and fierce fires among the hangars at Berka.

22/12. No bombing operations.

(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1228/23).

Tobruk
bombed.

/Malta Air Report.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

Malta Air Report.

Combined services report Malta up to 1700 hours. 23/12. All times G.M.T. 1150 hours off Cape Spartivento 6 MVS 3,000 tons heading 270 degrees towards Messina Straits. 0811 to 1403 Glenn Martin 431 Flt. - photographic recco. Brindisi and Taranto. Brindisi - 3 cruisers in outer anchorage east of seaplane station. In harbour 5 destroyers alongside quay and 5 MVS of 1,000 moored at right angles to Mole. Taranto convoy of 8 MVS - 8,000 to 10,000 tons escorted by 2 battleships of which 1 Littorio and 1 Cavour and 5 destroyers bearing 220 degrees 3 miles from entrance to harbour course 040 degrees. In outer harbour quarter mile from main entrance. One battleship supported by barges making slowly for inner harbour. Evidently the damaged CAVOUR 8 MVS 6 to 8 thousand tons anchored off north west of entrance. Inner harbour twelve destroyers and five cruisers along destroyer pens from west to East. A.A. intense at 6000 feet but inaccurate. No enemy activity over Malta. (H.Q. Malta, 1700/23).

Air Operations
Tripoli,
Convoy attacked.

Intend issuing following press Communique. Naval Aircraft attacked harbour of Tripoli (Libya) in North Africa on the night of 20th and 21/12. The attacks were extremely successful the quay being repeatedly hit. Warehouses were set on fire and one was seen to explode. The seaplane station was also heavily hit. On the afternoon 21/12 our Naval Aircraft attacked with torpedoes a convoy of 3 merchant ships escorted by a destroyer. One 3000 ton ship was seen blown up, another 6000 ton ship was also sunk. One aircraft failed to return from these operations. (C.in C. Med., 1209/23).

East Indies.

HINDUSTAN

Departure 0500Z/23 for Perim patrol. (N.O.I.C. Aden, 0515Z/23).

PRABHAVATI,
SOPHIE MARIE

Bombay arrivals 0230 Z/23 PRABHAVATI 0345 SOPHIE MARIE. (S.O.(I) Bombay 0645/23).

LEANDER,
B.N. 12.

LEANDER will form Force R for B.N.12, and will continue to escort convoy west of 053° E. as arranged by S.N.O. Red Sea. (C.in C. E.I. 0738Z/23).

RANCHI

Mombasa arrived 0825/23 G.M.T. RANCHI. 0832Z/23.

Kishimayu.

Air photographs of Kishimayu 21/12 reveal 14 large ships and 2 small ships. Total therefore ...



FOREIGN STATIONS.

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East Indies. (Contd.)

Kishimayu (contd.)

therefore unchanged since 6/12. My 1054/7 refers. (C.in C. E.I. 1006/23)

WESTRALIA.

Colombo departure 1047Z/23. (S.O.(I) Colombo, 1100/23.)

W.S.4A.

Convoy W.S.4A arrived Suez 0750Z/23. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1014/23).

SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA

Free French sloop arrived. (N.O.I.C. Durban, 1128Z/23).

CRICKET
PROTECTOR

My 1148/16 and 0504/17 CRICKET with tug PROTECTOR in company will sail from Colombo at 1130 Z/24 for Cochin where CRICKET will refuel from Commercial Stocks. CRICKET to signal and fuel requirements before departure Colombo. After refuelling ships will proceed in company to Bombay. PROTECTOR is to proceed independently from Bombay to Aden without undue delay. Arrangements for onward passage of CRICKET to Aden will be signalled later. (C.in C. E.I., 1234Z/23 to F.O.C.R.I.N.)

PARRAMATTA

Bombay departure 1230Z/23 for Aden. (S.O.(I) Bombay 1235/23).

SHILLONG

My 1856/16. Re distress signal from SHILLONG. No confirmation SHILLONG's report yet been received. Request Masters who were near may be questioned. (C.in C. E.I. 1416Z/23 to A.C.N.B.)

RANCHI
NIEUW HOLLAND
WESTERNLAND

Mombasa left 1455/23 G.M.T. RANCHI NIEUW HOLLAND, WESTERNLAND. (N.O.I.C. Kilindini 1530Z/23).

TAIREA

Arrival and departure 22/12 Hospital ship. (N.O.I.C. Port Sudan, 1654Z/22).

China.

Aerodromes,
Malaya.

Admty. 1854Z/29, (re provision of 1942 F.A.A. war requirements in Singapore area). Suggestions re additional aerodromes (C.in C. China 0931Z/23 - see Operations ~~Vol.~~)

TIRRANA
SALLENRAND

Your 1218/20 not to R.O. Kobe. Norwegian Consul Kobe states in letter to Dodwells, Shanghai, that Norwegian TIRRANNA was shelled and captured June 9th, prize crew and ship despatched home. Information presumably obtained from OLE JACOB or Norwegian TEDDY survivors. (S.O.I. Shanghai, 0737Z/23, to Admty.).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

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America and West Indies.

MONTCLARE.
ELK.
HUSKY.
WISON.

Arrival MONTCLARE escorting ELK, HUSKY, WISON.
(N.O.I.C. Bermuda 1153/23).

MALOJA.

MALOJA sailed from Halifax 23/12 Ocean escort S.C. 17 1505/23.

SALISBURY.
RICHMOND.
NEWPORT.

SALISBURY, RICHMOND, and NEWPORT sailed for U.K. 1405/23 G.M.T. (1512/23)
(Noic. St. John's N.F.)

HILDA KNUDSEN.
PACIFIC PRESIDENT.

Following ships have now arrived. Your 1900/29/11 HILDA KNUDSEN Your 1230/2 PACIFIC PRESIDENT.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1534/23 to M. of Shipping)

Australia.

ACHILLES.
EMPRESS OF RUSSIA.
DOMINION MONARCH.

ACHILLES escorting EMPRESS OF RUSSIA and DOMINION MONARCH arrived Sydney 2037Z/22. 0719Z/23.

New Zealand.

AWATEA.

S.O.I. Wellington 2040/19 presume AWATEA was also included in convoy. (U.S.8) See P.582. (D. of S.T. 2103/23 to N.Z. Naval Board).



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

25.12.1940.
Monday.

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GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

HEINRICH ARP

German ship HEINRICH ARP arrived
from Vigo 2300/22.
(Consul Bilbao 1705/23).



War Diary.

23.12.1940.
Monday.

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U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

ARACATACA.
(torpedoed 29/11).

British POTARO arrived Buenos Aires today with 17 crew and one passenger survivor ARACATACA. All well, names in my immediately following telegram to Admiralty only.
(N.C.S.O. Buenos Aires. 2140/23 to Adty).

Submarines Reported.

0600.

006°N, 015°W (C. in C. S.A. 1508/23).

0633.

Bearings obtained. Consider U-boat near 6°N, 15°W. (D.D.I.C. 1500/23 to C. in C. S.A.).

1208.

By D/F, probably U boat 55°N, 17°- 19°W. Unreliable fix (D.D.I.C. 1248/23).

1530.

058° 03'N, 007° 12'W. (Graded C.3)
(A.C.O.S. 1757/23);

2015.

By D/F Italian U-boat between 39° - 42°N 9° 30' - 11°W. (D.D.I.C. 2206/23).
(F.O.C.N.A. 2323/23).

2318.

By D/F Italian U-boat near Cape Finistere probably homeward bound.
(D.D.I.C. 0013/24) (V.A.S. 0003/24).

Near Aruba.

Your 1000/16. N.C.S.O. New York has interviewed Chief Officer. States clearly saw submarine with whole upper deck awash. No guns and no marks; about 250 feet in length painted dull greenish brown and much weather worn.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa).

Estimated U/B dispositions.

Italian

- 1 may be leaving Madeira area.
- 1 or 2 patrolling Azores area.
- 1 in area Canaries-Cape Juby.
- 1 bound for Gironde about 43 degrees 30'N. 12 degrees 30'W.
- 1 bound for Gironde about 50 degrees N. 17 degrees W.
- 4 between 53 degrees N. and 57 degrees N 18 degrees W. and 20 degrees W. probably tending to move southwards.

/German.



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

23.12.1940.
Monday.

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U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Estimated U/B
dispositions.
(contd).

German.

1 to westward of Sierre Leone.
1 may be northbound somewhere about
36 degrees N. or 37 degrees N.
15 degrees W.
1 between 55 degrees N. and 55 degrees
30' N.
17 degrees W & 19 degrees W.
1 may be West of 20 degrees W. north
of 52 degrees N.

3 between 57 degrees N. and 60 degrees
N. near or to West of 20 degrees W.
1 eastbound probably for Bergen may
be between Shetlands and Faroes.
(D.D.I.C. 1249/23).



War Diary

MOST SECRET

24.12.1940
Tuesday

713

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

As proposed yesterday by C. in C., H.F., B.C. 1. in HOOD with EDINBURGH and 4 Destroyers left Scapa at 1740 today to patrol to the Eastward of the Iceland-Faroes passage in order to intercept any Raider which may seek to use it. This patrol is at present intended to return to Scapa during the afternoon of the 29th.

During the operations of one or more E-Boats ~~last~~ last night off the coast between Yarmouth and Lowestoft it was reported this morning that the M/S Trawler PELTON was sunk while night-sweeping alongside No 5 Buoy, only one survivor being rescued; and the torpedoed Dutch STAD MAASTRICHT in tow of 2 tugs, with SHEARWATER standing by, was ordered at 1745 tonight to continue to tow towards Southend.

One aircraft carrying Flares was carrying out the anti-E-Boat operation P.V.1. to the Eastward of Q.Z.S. 30 from 2200 tonight for 4 hours; and M.L's acted in the same area as an anti-E-Boat Striking Force from 1900 tonight until daylight, keeping to the South of 52° 30' N.

3 M.T.B's left Harwich also at 2105 to operate between Ostend and the Hook of Holland, with orders to visit Flushing Roads if possible and to attack without challenge any vessel met to the Eastward of 2° 15' E.



MOST SECRET

714

War Diary

24.12.1940
Tuesday

SITUATION REPORT

Enemy Air Activity

It is reported today that during the Air Raid upon the Convoy Anchorage at Oban yesterday 8 Bombs were dropped and 4 M/V's were damaged, of which one Dutch subsequently sank and one was beached. The attack was made by 2 or probably 3 Bombers approaching the Anchorage from the S.W.; and N.O.I.C. Oban considers it essential that the Port and Anchorage should be declared a Prohibited Area to all aircraft except those engaged in operational training. The whole question of the A/A defences of Oban is now to be reviewed.

Mining

A Mine detonated at 1107 today 2 miles 160° from Rame Head some two minutes after an A/S Trawler had passed slowly over that position; and the Port of Liverpool was re-opened at 1056.

North Atlantic

"Ration"

Operation "Ration" is to be carried out as opportunity offers and forces allow on 26/12, 27/12 and 28/12.

South Atlantic

Enemy Units

C. in C., reported that D.F. bearings indicated an enemy surface unit in neighbourhood 26° S.; 07° W., at 2300N/23. Bearings available at the Admiralty however, give positions near Ascension. A later bearing at 0706/24 G.M.T. gave a position near 5° S., 15° W., which C. in C. considers to be a different unit to that on the 23rd.

/Sabotage.....



War Diary

24.12.1940
Tuesday

SITUATION REPORT

South Atlantic-Contd.

Sabotage

Capetown reports that a fire in SS SHAHRISTAN, with Government stores from Swansea to Suez, on 15/12, appears to have been started by Sabotage. Further search is to be made at Suez.

Cables

It is under consideration to cut the Brest-Dakar and Casablanca-Dakar cables.

Mediterranean

Castel Benito aerodrome and Tripoli Harbour and town were attacked last night by Wellingtons of the R.A.F. Only 1 aircraft was able to locate the former, but 9 attacked Tripoli with good results.

One aircraft raided Alexandria at 0345 and dropped 4 bombs into the sea.

East Indies

C. in C., East Indies draws attention to the urgent need of a satisfactory system of recognition between H.M. ships and merchant ships by day and night.

America & West Indies

R.C.N.
Destroyers

In response to a request for assistance with escorts, Canada is to send ASSINIBOINE, RESTIGOUCHE, ST FRANCIS and COLUMBIA to the Western - Approaches. Halifax destroyer escort force will then be reduced to only one seaworthy "Town" class.



MOST SECRET. 716

War Diary.

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Oban
Proposed Prohibited
Area for A/C.

Consider essential that Oban and Convoy Anchorage should be prohibited area to all air craft except operational training. Craft flying low at present moment are likely to be fired upon particularly by merchant ships.

(N.O.I.C. Oban 1055/24 to F.O.I.C. Greenock).

A.M.C.'s on
Western Patrol.

Your 1751/21. There are at present 9 A.M.C.'s available for Northern and Western Patrols and allowing for refits boiler cleaning etc. there are never more than 8 serviceable at one time.

2. If 4 A.M.C.'s are detached and based on Halifax as proposed, 5 remain with which to keep a second ship in Denmark Strait vide C. in C. Home Fleet's 1579/HF 1252 of 27th September and 1754/19/11 and to provide A.M.C.'s for Western Patrol, which will reduce the number on Western Patrol at any given time to one. From now until the Spring the desirability of a third ship in Denmark Strait is to be considered.

3. I consider that if the proposals in your 1751/21 are adopted they should be carried further and that the four A.M.C.'s together with the A.M.C.'s of the present Halifax Escort Force should be worked in rotation to keep two or possibly three ships when required in Denmark Strait leaving the remaining five for Western Patrol.

4. In addition to increased fuelling facilities in Iceland fresh water supply is necessary.

5. The reduction of the existing regular communication facilities with Iceland may cause inconvenience.

(F.O.C.N.P. 1502/24 to Adty).

HECLA.

Cancel my 1615/21. HECLA proceed to Greenock as in my 2208/8. Other arrangements are being made for Iceland. (V.C.N.S. 1848/24).



War Diary.

24. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K.

"Deluge".

At 1130/24. (D.C. 1147/24.)
At 2330/24. (D.C. 2330/24.)

Oban.

Request R/C to assess practicability and scale of proposed A/A Defences. (D. of L.D. 1911/24 to Air Ministry.)

Dungeness
M.N.B.D.O.
Battery.

My 1212/11 and Hofors R.A. 3091/17. Battery will not be removed before 1/4/41. M.N.B.D.O. South Shields Battery will accompany R.M. Group to Middle East. (V.C.N.S. 1538/24.)

DOUGLAS,
KEPPEL.

Movements.
Sailed Scapa 0001/24. (A.C.O.S. 0031/24.)

PHOEBE,
AURORA.

My 2239/23 and C. in C. H.F. 0022/24. Ships are required to provide A/A protection for Trade at Oban. (A.C.N.S.H. 0749/24 to C. in C. H.F.) Arrived. (N.O.I.C. Oban 1610/24.)

BEDOUIIN,
MASHONA,
MATABELE,
ESKIMO.

Arrived Scapa 0420. (A.C.O.S. 0805/24.)

QUORN,
HOLDERNESS.

Arrived 0901 (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0906/24.)
Sailed 1705 (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1714/24.)

BRIGHTON.

My 1057/22. Regret again delayed. Hope sail AM/25. (C. in C. W.A. 1121/24.)

Intend to sail Group of 5 MV's and tug towing B.P. target escorted by KINGSTON-ANDALUSITE and PEARL from Needles 1715 today. E.T.A. Dartmouth 0815/25. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1237/24 to Adty.)

Sailed - See p. 727

VIMY.

Sailed 1255 (A.C.O.S. 1320/24.)

SANDWICH.

Arrived Tilbury 1445. (F.O.I.C. London 1530/24.)

Northern Patrol.

Trawler Lines today. 4 Trawlers. (A.C.O.S. 1539/24.)

HOOD,
EDINBURGH,
COSSACK,
ECHO,
ESCAPADE,
ELECTRA.

Sailed Scapa 1740. (A.C.O.S. 1747/24.)



War Diary.

24. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

VANSITTART, }
HONEYSUCKLE }
BLUEBELL, }
CALDWELL, }
VISCOUNT. }

Arrived (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1934/24.)

MONTGOMERY.

Arrived Scapa. (A.C.O.S. 2230/24.)

WORCESTER, }
WATCHMAN, }
LE TRIOMPHANT, }
PIORUN, }
CAPETOWN CASTLE. }

Arrived Clyde (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1851/24.)

Operations.

At 2210/23 VERDUN Escorting F.N.66, reported engaging an E Boat which was either sunk or badly damaged in 52° 32' N. 2° 8' E. At 2215 WESTMINSTER with F.S.67 reported that an E Boat sighted at 2205 in 52°39' N. 2° 10' E, had disappeared steering south behind a smoke screen probably damaged. WESTMINSTER also reports slight superficial damage and 5 wounded on board as a result of this encounter. At 2255 Dutch s.s. STAD MAASTRICHT (6500 tons.) in F N 66 reported torpedoed in 52° 35' N. 02° 03' E. Entire crew uninjured on board SHEARWATER who is standing by and reports damage unknown. Ship listing apparently settling. Rescue tugs KROOMAN and NORMAN proceeding from Yarmouth. Feared H.M. trawler PELTON also sunk. (C. in C. Nore. 0144/24 to Adty)

PELTON.

(M/S. Trawler.) Sunk by E. Boat while night sweeping alongside No. 5 Buoy. One survivor (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth 0150/24 and 1715/24.).

P.V.1.

P.V.1. will be carried out tonight by one A/C carrying Flares only.

P.Y.A.

P.Y.A. will also be carried out and M/L's will act as striking Force. (C. in C. Nore. 1043/24.)



War Diary.

24. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Operations.

P.V.1.

P.Y.1.

My 1043. P Y A and P V 1 will operate Eastward of Q.Z.S. 30 keeping South of 52° 30' N, commencing P.Y.A. at 1900 till daylight/25th. P.V.1 at 2200 to 0200/25. M.L's will show minor War vessels recognition signals when in touch with enemy in vicinity of friendly warships or convoy. O patrol will keep to the Northward of No. 5 buoy (latitude 52° 30' N) arriving there at about 2100. (C. in C. Nore 1454/24.)

→ M.T.B.'s.
between
Ostend and
Hook.

44. Weather permitting M.T.B's are to operate tonight between Ostend and Hook of Holland. If conditions suitable Flushing Road should be visited. Any vessel met east of 2° 15' E. may be attacked without challenge. (C. in C. Nore 1128/24.)

M.T.B's 22,31, and 32 sailed 2105 (F.O.I.C. Harwich 2107/24.)

Patrol in
Faroes-
Iceland
Passage.

Intend to leave Scapa in HOOD with EDINBURGH and four destroyers about 1730/24 and proceed along meridian 4° west speed of advance 17 knots to operate near line joining 63° N. 4° W, and 66° N. 007°W. Request I may be informed of any intended air co-operation. (B.C.1. 1415/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

Two M.L's operating 5 miles to Eastward of Channel between number five and Aldeburgh. Three M.T.B's leave Harwich 2100 returning daylight 25th Dec. proceeding by South Shipwash Buoy and Galloper. One aircraft may drop flares between 2200/24 and 0200/25. vicinity of M.L's. (C. in C. Nore 1550/24. to EGRET.)

Submarines.

MINERVE.

Cancel my 1554/22. (C. in C. W.A.1132/24.)

Patrol off
Lorient to
remain.

Your 1756/23. It is considered of great importance that the reconnaissance of the area referred to in paragraph A should not be withdrawn at the present time. A submarine should therefore remain in this area. 2. The proposal, however, for SEVERN to carry out a short patrol of the nature referred to is approved. (V.C.N.S.1258/24 to V.A.S.)



War Diary.

24. 12. 40. 720
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Submarines.

Greenock Area.

Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1320/24 and 1810/24.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/25.
(V.A.S. 1547/24.)

G. 13.)
G. 15.)

Sailed. E.T.A. Bangor Bay 0200/25.
(N.O.I.C. Holyhead 1920/24.)

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

~~Patrol~~ will not be flown tonight.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0030/24.) Following being flown today: S.9., ~~W.9.~~, ~~W.10.~~ Southern half only, Q.S.A. 1A., S.A.2., and S.A.3., (C. in C. Rosyth 0746/24.) 2 Blenheims leave Dyce 0845 for Flamborough and return (C. in C. Rosyth 0748/24.) Patrol ~~W.10.~~ not being flown today. (C. in C. Rosyth 1100/24.) My 1214/23 and 2249/23. Request Patrol similar to ~~W.10.~~ during period of B.C.1's Patrol. (C. in C. H.F. 1422/24 to C. in C. Rosyth.) Your 1422/24. ~~W.10.~~ will be flown daily between 25/12 and 28/12 inclusive by one Sunderland. (C. in C. Rosyth 1744/24 to C. in C. H.F.) ~~W.10.~~ will not be flown tonight. (C. in C. Rosyth 2300/24 to C. in C. H.F.)

Enemy Air Activity.

PETERTON.

(British, 5221 Tons.) Attacked by A/C. in 54° 51' N. 13° 13' W. (Plymouth W/T 0910/24.) Bombed and gunned. (Portishead Radio 0912/24.) Sailed Tug RESTIVE from Campbeltown at 1122 to assist. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1215/24 to C. in C. W.A.) A/C. attacking in 081° Tory Island 146 miles (Valentia Radio 1422/24.) Detach one Corvette to stand by. Latest position given is 54° 54' N. 12° 29' W. at 1422. (C. in C. W.A. 1700/24 to BROKE.) Proceed to assist (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2120/24 to SOUTHERN PRIDE.)

Portsmouth.

My 2120/23. Apparently no H.E. fell in Dockyard. Damage due to large explosion outside. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1440/24. to Adty.) Following damage caused by Air-Raid at 1848/23. (Supt.C.E. Portsmouth 1515/24.) Damage to R.N. Barracks. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1553/24.)



24. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

721

HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

Liverpool.

Following damage to Adty Establishments in Air-Raids of Nights 20/21 and 21/22/12. (S.C.E. Liverpool 1742/24 to C.E. in C.)

Oban.

My 1815/23. Further details as follows:-

BREDA.

(Dutch, 6941 tons. Damaged near miss. Endeavoured beach but sunk in 13 fathoms Lochnell Bay. *See also P. 968.*)

TUVA.

(Dutch, 4652 tons. Direct hit heavy calibre bomb in No. 4 hold. Seven killed including three engineers. Vessel got under way with assistance and beached about 2350/23 on Bogha Na Garbhard, on rock. Salvage prospects good. Captain reports he opened fire. Several hits probable.)

DAN-Y-BRYN.

(British 5117 tons) Damaged above water-line. Bomb entered forecastle, emerged through shell plating and failed to explode. Requires repairs.

FLYNDERBORG.

(British, 2022 tons) Hit by two bombs. One unexploded (500 kilos) rendered safe by B.S.O. damage slight. Second wireless operator seriously injured. Ship machine gunned. Two bombers, probably three, made the attack on convoy anchorage. Eight bombs reported dropped after red flares. Approach made from seaward on northeasterly course. Detailed written report follows. (N.O.I.C. Oban 1935/24 to Adty.)

Harwich.

Shingle Street reports heavy Explosion seen and heard 152⁰ 5 miles from Lock-out. Several vessels near. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0900/24 to C. in C. Nore.)

Liverpool.

Port re-opened. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1056/24.)

INTREPID.
ICARUS.

Sailed 1155. E.T.A. Scapa 1030/25. (F.O. Humber 1202/24.)



War Diary.

24. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

722

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

War Channel Search.

Intend sailing 12th M/S group search war channel from 090° Cruden Bay 6 miles to Kinnaird Head 000° 6 miles, R/V at 2230/24/12, thence returning searching war channel ahead of convoy W N 58 to Girdleness 090° 7 miles due 0700/25/12. (N.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1441/24 to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Your 1208/15.

1. Programme is concurred in generally but it is desired to lay S.N.71 before S.N.7.

2. The proposals contained in your 1650/19 are concurred in but it is essential that the minimum amount of ground be taken up to the southward of S.N.11 and that the mines should extend as far as possible towards the ice. (V.C.N.S. 1802/24 to R.A.M.L.)

Plymouth.

Since my 1815/17 one mine detonated at 1107 in approximate position 160 degrees Rame Head 2 miles. A/S Trawler JASPER passed over position at slow speed 2 minutes previously. (C. in C. W.A. 1951/24.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Harwich Area.

127th Infantry Brigade report that at 2120/23 their platoon post in position 815600 heard motor boat about 600 yards off shore proceeding in N. Easterly direction. Engines of boat described as sounding like aero engines. Report originates from one sentry said to be unreliable source and is not confirmed by any other. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0030/24 to C. in C. Nore.)

Norwegian,
Coastal
Traffic.

Aircraft reconnaissance today observes eight merchant ships of 2,000 to 5,000 tons used inner canals between Stadtlandet and Kristansund. (V.A.S. 1919/24. to SEATON.)

009?

24. 12. 40.
Tuesday.



War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

Casualties & Defects.

WAR WING.

(M/S Trawler) Ashore on Cork Sands.
Sailed Tug KENIA 0300 to assist. (F.O.I.C.
Harwich 0308/24.)

LORD HOWARD.

(H.M. Drifter) Sank in S/M Basin at 0300
today after collision with H.M. Yacht
RADIANT. No casualties. (V.A. Dover 0951/24).

DAGFRED.

(Norwegian 4434 Tons) In collision with a
Trawler at 0258. Z/25/11 in 12 miles
South of Mull of Kintyre. Slight damage
to both. (S.O.I.) Cape Town 1225 B./24.)

Y.C. 23.
(H.M. Lighter)

Foundered in deep water after being salvaged.
Pump suction choked. (N.O.I.C. Falmouth
1820/24.)



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.40.

Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

724

Shipping.

Convoys.

O.B. 265.

Cancel my 1840/23. Sailing 0230/24
(N.C.S.O. Oban 0130/24).

F.N. 66.

Engagement of VERDUN (escort) with
E-boat (C. in C. Nore 0144/24) See E-boats.

C.B.O. 265.

Cancel my 2046/23. Oban portion has
now sailed (C. in C. W.A. 0258/24).
List (N.C.S.O. Oban 1353/24 1715/24).

H.X. 95.

Estimated position at 0630/24
(C. in C. W.A. 0320/24 to ABERDEEN).

W.N. 60.

Code "Chitty" 0930/26. Escorts
BLACKFLY, BERKSHIRE 5 ships.
(N.C.S.O. Greenock 0948/24).

W.N. 59. (O).

0700/24. No escort available Oban .
11 ships (N.C.S.O. Oban 1103/24).

O.B. 265.

Amend my 1045/23 (N.C.S.O. Liverpool
1153/24).

H.X. 100.

Date and route (D.T.D. 1256/24).

H.X. 95.

8 hours late at R.V. Heavy gale 14/12.
All ships now reported except ANTHEA
sunk in collision
(D.T.D. to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa, 1342/24).

H.X. 92.

Heavy W. gales. R.V. position and date
changed. Convoy 14 hours early. 11
ships then in company. ROTORUA, TOWA
and MACEDONIER torpedoed and sunk
while unescorted. STUREHOLM not
reported. (D.T.D. 1356/24 to N.S.H.Q.
Ottawa).

F.N. 367.

0920/24. 72 ships. (N.C.S.O. Thames
1407/24.) Harwich to Hull ships sailed
1500/24 (N.C.S.O. Harwich 1556/24).

W.N. 58.

Duncansby Head 1430. E.T.A. 57° 50'N,
2100 (CAPE ARGONA, 1430/24).

O.B.O.

O.B.O. sailed 0530/24 (N.C.S.O. Oban
1455/24).

E.N. 343.

Arrived (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1502/24).

F.S. 69.

Sailed 1400/24. 4 ships.
(N.C.S.O. Methil 1515/24).

F.N. 365.

All Tyne ships arrived. (F.O.I.C. Tyne
1524/24) Humber ships arrived
(F.O. Humber 1642/24). Tyne section
(less REAVELEY) arrived (N.C.S.O. Methil
1650/24).

/O.B. 266.....



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

725

Shipping.

Convoys (contd).

O.B. 266.

1530/28. Route. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1546/24).

O.B.O. 264.

0600/25. Escort LADY MADELINE.

S.L.S. 61.

Route (D.T.D. 1659/24 to N.C.S.O. Freeton)

E.N. 45.

To proceed outside Hebrides.
(A.C.O.S. 1752/24) Your 1752.
Proceeding outside Minches. (SPURS 2220/24).

S.L. 58.

My 1859/19. Destination changed.
(D.T.D. 1857/24). A/C report of position at 1245. (C. in C. W.A. 1922/24 to BROKE).

W.N. 59.

Sailing 1903/24. H.M.T.'s CAPE MARIATO and INDIAN STAR. 15 ships (N.C.S.O. Clyde 1945/24).

S.L.S. 58.

24 hours late. Estimated position at 0800/25. (C. in C. W.A. 2326/24 to WELLINGTON).

E.N. 46.

2230/24. H.M.T.'s GAVOTTE, PIROUETTE. Additional escort FLEETWOOD. 24 ships (N.C.S.O. Methil 2353/24 2354/24).

E.N. 45.

000° Duncansby at 840/24 (A.C.O.S. 0845/24). C. in C. Rosyth 1450.
Convoy to proceed outside Hebrides (A.C.O.S. 1752/24).
My 1536/24. E.N. 45 proceeding outside Hebrides (A.C.O.S. 1944/24).

F.S. 69.

My 1939/23 (movement of COTSWOLD and F.S. 69) Cancel concluding entry under departure (C. in C. Rosyth 0927/24). See p 698

F.N. 68.

Proceed to form additional escort to F.N. 68 in place of SHEARWATER (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0940/24 to GUILLEMOT).

/H.X. 95.....



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

726

Shipping.

Convoys (contd).

H.X. 95.)
O.B. 263.)

To keep clear of H.X. 95, amended route for O.B. 263 (details) then by route previously ordered. (C. in C. W.A. 1108/24 to ROCHESTER).

O.B. 263.

Sailed ROCHESTER, WILD SWAN, PERIWINKLE, FLEUR DE LYS and GARDENIA all to escort O.B.263. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1130/24). Sailed WILD SWAN to overtake convoy (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2145/24).

S.L.S. 58.

Meet S.L.S. 58 9 ships unescorted 1000/26 (position and route) thence to anchorage in Lynn of Lorn North of Black Is. MARSDALE for Clyde joins 1000/26. (C. in C. W.A. 1152/24 to HIGHLANDER, HARVESTER). My 1152/24. Amend time of R/V para (a) to read 1000/27. Convoy is 24 hours late. (C. in C. W.A. 2328/24 to HIGHLANDER).

O.B. 264.

Sailed GEORGETOWN escort for O.B. 264. (F. O.I.C. Liverpool 1215/24 to C. in C. W.A.);

O.B. . 264.
O.B.M. 264.
O.B.C. 264.

Liverpool Section of O.B. 264 cancelled. YORK CITY to escort O.B.M. 264 to rendezvous with O.B.C. 264 in 000° Altacarry 8 miles at 1300/25. If relieved by GEORGETOWN YORK CITY to return to base. Further signal will be made appointing Commodore. (C. in C. W.A. 1352/24 to YORK CITY).

O.B. 264.

C. in C. W.A. 1528/24 request cancel instruction given Master of MOVERIA to act as Commodore as far as Oban rendezvous. S.S. CRESdene as with Milford Haven portion. (N.C.S.O. Clyde 1810/24 to ACTIVE).

Cancel my 1352/24 and 1528/24 not to all addresses Commodore and one other ship sailed Bar Light Vessel at 1710/24 speed 10 knots and should join O.B. 264 at Clyde rendezvous. (C. in C. W.A. 1852/24 to ACTIVE).

/B.H.X. 99.....



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

727

Convoys (contd).

B.H.X. 99.

Ocean escort AURANIA returning Halifax through 45.25N. 60.00W. by 1/1 Capt 1/c Bermuda 1145/24).

F.S. 71.

Intend sail BARLAKE 1400/26 to join F.S. 71 at 20C. Buoy for Gransby. (N.O.I.C. Blyth 1444/24).

W.N. 57.)
F.N. 65.)
F.S. 69.)
E.N. 46.)

Rosyth movements.
(C. in C. Rosyth 2351/24).

TEHANA

My 1915/23 for TRANIO read TEHANA (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0849/24).

Independent Sailings.

My 1859/21 refers to routeing only. Ships of 15 knots and over to continue to be sailed independently. Routeing as regards Cape Verde Is. to continue to conform with instructions contained in Admty 1612/19/11 and 1758/26/11. (D.T.D. 1705/24 to A.I.G. 17).

H.X. 95.

Add to 1536 (1531/22 intended) H.X. 95 058° 07'N, 011° 12'W 135° at 0300 altering to 143° (A.C.O.S. 1722/24).

My 2211/24 (ready "Following ships reported by VETERAN by aircraft in H.X. 95. should read, following ships in HX 95 reported not present by VETERAN via aircraft. (C. in C. W. A. 0912/25).

4. M.V.'s.

Intend sailing 4 mv/s including one tanker 1730/24.E.T.A. Nab. 0900/25. Request escort may be arranged. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth 0957/24 to C. in C. W.A.)

My 0957 postponed 24 hours. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth 1056/24).

5. M.V.'s.

Your 1737/23 arrived. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1454/24).

My 1237/24 (Re sailing of Group of 5 M.V's and tug towing B.P. target escorted by KINGSTON ANDALUSITE & PEARL from Needles) sailed. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1910/24).

See p 717.

/H.X. 99.....



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

728

Shipping.

Convoys (contd).

H.X. 99.

Intend sailing ALAUNIA and PORPOISE as ocean escorts for H.X. 99 both returning to Halifax.
(F.O.S.B.S. 1544/24 to Admty).

S.L.S. 58.

S.L.S. 58. Meet (List)
(C. in C. W.A. 1826/24 to HIGHLANDER, HARVESTER). See p 726

O.B. 264 (S).

Escort GEORGETOWN from Liverpool, ACTIVE, ANTELOPE, TARANTELLA, PICOTTEE, from Clyde, and LADY MADELINE from Oban ACTIVE is Senior Officer.
(Capt D. Greenock 1243/24).

Troop Convoys.
W.S. 5B.

Following are proposed embarkation arrangements for W.S.5 B. (20 ships) (Code Number, Present position, Preliminary Movements, Embarkation Port, Number to be embarked, Embarkation Dates) (D.S.T. 0344/24 to D.S.T.0's)

W.S. 5A.

Route for W.S. 5A. Position H. is to be transferred fifty miles 270°. (D.O.D.(F) 1830/24 to BERWICK).

Left convoy W.S.5A. in 046° 30'N 025° 56'W. at 1330 B.S.T. All well. DUNEDIN had not joined. Intend to pass through position (a) 051° 30'N 016° 30'W (b) 056° N. 015°W (c) 056° 40' N 009° 20' W and thence via Minches to Scapa.
(C.S.15. 2342/24 to Admty).



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French. 729

Foreign
Legion
Movement.

Am anxious to know if CAPO OLMO taking part of Legion to Freetown has arrived Duala. (C.in C. S.A., 1005N/24 to DELHI).

Your 1153/22 CAPO OLMO arrived Duala 23/12 and should be able to sail with TOUAREG 25/12 as in my 1615/21. (C.in C. S.A., 1247/24 to D. of S.T.)

Your 1153/22 to N.C.S.O. Duala and your 1005/24. CAPO OLMO arrived Duala 1900/23. (DELHI, 1646/24 to C.in C. S.A.).

Operation
"Ration".

Operation ^{"Ration"}~~"RATION"~~ is to be carried out as opportunity offers and forces allow on 26th, 27th and 28th/12.

My 2100/13 and your 0110/14. Operation should be carried out as on previous occasions. After one or two interceptions it seems probable that escort will accompany ships beyond Spanish territorial waters and occasions will then arise to stop an escorted vessel or convoy. (V.C.N.S. 1849/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)

North Atlantic.

Suspicious Ship.

Following has been read:-
QQQQ de GLD (Lands End Radio) 37° 32' N.,
22° 42' W., MAHSUD being followed by
suspicious vessel.
(Plymouth W/T 0814/24).

S/M Patrol.
Gijon.

Patrol report of USK and UNIQUE blank. UPHOLDER reports more traffic off Gijon than is reasonable, particularly three tankers apparently Spanish totalling 16 thousand tons westbound in ballast all outside territorial waters. Most Merchant vessels seen by UPHOLDER by day had Spanish colours. (F.O.C.N.A., 1104/24 to V.A.S.).

Force H.

Arrival 1300/24/12 S.O. Force H in RENOWN, MALAYA, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD, FAULKNER, FORESTER, FOXHOUND, FURY, FORTUNE, FIREDRAKE, DUNCAN, ISIS, WISHART, ENCOUNTER, JAGUAR, HERO, HERWARD, HASTY, CLAN FORBES, CLAN FRASER. (S.O.(I), Gib., 1304/24).

/ Convoy W.S.5A.

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. (Contd.)

730

Convoy W.S.5A.

Admiralty 1322/19 and 1323/19. ARGUS and BONAVENTURE are to remain in company with DUNEDIN and M.T. ships. ARGUS BONAVENTURE, DUNEDIN and M.T. ships part company from convoy W.S. five A as requisite to rendezvous with escort in position 057° 00' N. 016° 00' W. at 1400 zone - one, Friday 27/12. Escort consists of HERO, HEReward, FIREDRAKE, VIDETTE, VELOX ordered to pass through rendezvous steering 275 degrees. Speed of convoy is to be adjusted to pass Europa Point at 0500 zone - one Sunday 29/12. BONAVENTURE is to part company as requisite to pass Northern Entrance of Gibraltar at 1830 zone - one Saturday 28/12. Orders regarding Flying off and Relief Escort follow.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1330/24 to ARGUS, BONAVENTURE, DUNEDIN.)

Air Report.

2 routine A.S. patrols. 1 surface recco. to west. 2 A/C. escorts for H.M. ships. Area covered 3 degs. West to 9 degs. West. (200 Group 1700/24).

TRIUMPH,
UPHOLDER,
UNIQUE.

S.O. Force H 1601/20 to V.A. (S). After discussions with submarine Commanding Officer intend to sail TRIUMPH, UPHOLDER and UNIQUE p.m./27 to carry out patrol required by S.O. Force H on 31/12 whilst on passage to Malta. Request rest period for submarines be arranged at Malta.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1706/24 to C.in C. Med.).

TRIUMPH.

V.A.(S) 1248/5/11. My 1706/24/12. Is it intended that TRIUMPH should also proceed to Malta after patrol?
(F.O.C.N.A. 1720/24 to Admty.)

Azores Patrol,
Situation.

Situation Report 1200/24:
S.L.59 32° 20' N. 21° 15' W. 011° 8
S.L. 59(S) 28° 40' N. 22° 20' W. 011° 6½
Force K 35° N. 30° W. 155° 15
W.S.5A. 46° N. 26° W. 170° 11
S.S. MONARCH OF BERMUDA 38° N. 22° W. 355° 17.
S.S. HELENUS 41½° N. 22° W. 355° 11½.
EL ARGENTIN 38° N. 23° W. 350° 11.
(D.O.D.(F) 1749/24 to TRIDENT, CACHALOT).

Force K.,
signals.

For security reasons as from 0001 G.M.T. 26/12 messages for S.O. Force K, Force K, FORMIDABLE, NORFOLK, FURIOUS, and BERWICK are to be routed on America and West Indies, and North Atlantic, and South Atlantic routines. As from 001 G.M.T./26 messages for C.S.15, NAIAD, BONAVENTURE, ARGUS, and DUNEDIN are to be routed in normal manner. (D.S.D. 1837/24, to C.in C's and F.O.C.N.A.) (489).



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

24.12.1940.

Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

731

Enemy Raider.

842. D/F bearings indicate presence of an enemy surface unit in neighbourhood 026° S. 007° W. 2300 N/23.
(C.in C. S.A. 0335N/24 to S.O. Force L).

Your 0335N/24 and my 0821/24.
Bearings available her give positions near Ascension. (D.D.I.C. 0853/24 to C.in C. S.A.).

D/F bearing at 0706 G.M.T. 24/12 indicates enemy surface unit possibly near position 5° S. 15° W. Probably not alternative position for unit mentioned in my 0335/24 but different unit. Possible alternative position for unit mentioned in my 0335/24 is between St. Helena and Ascension.
(C.in C. S.A. 1125 N/24 to S.O. Force M.)

Shipping,
Cape Agulhas.

Following is gist of S.O.(I) Capetown's 1524/19/12: - Although merchant ships should normally be routed 40 miles south of Cape Agulhas cases have occurred where masters of heavily laden and low powered ships have considered their ships endangered thereby on account of prevailing conditions, and have therefore crossed about 15 miles south of Cape Agulhas. This is the most dangerous area. If forced by weather to keep to northward Masters should pass either within 5 miles or outside 25 miles of Cape Agulhas and this deviation to be made only if absolutely necessary as the danger of mines being laid is always present and the best safeguard is deep water.
(S.O.I. Freetown to N.C.S.O's, Freetown Intelligence Area 0808/24).

SHAHRISTAN,
sabotage.

C.A.F.O. 1419/40. Fire occurred suddenly in number three hold of SHAHRISTAN at 0005Z/15 vessel carrying government stores from Swansea to Suez. Seat of fire traced to cases containing tins of rolled bacon loaded 21/11 at Swansea as top cargo. From available evidence appears fire could only have been started by sabotage. No possibility of spontaneous combustion. Swansea agents Strick Gorch, Stevedores Bayana. Supply note shows cases indexed 405/21 and 405/22 and cases marked J A H and Company Liverpool and St. O C P and Company Limited. Vessel is oil burning. Further search should be made when cargo is discharged Suez. (S.O.(I) Capetown 1201/24 to Admty.)

/ FURIOUS,
R.A.F. personnel



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

24.12.1940.

Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (Contd.)

732

FURIOUS
R.A.F. personnel.

X/743/24 reference our X 322/20 to A.O. C.in C. Following additional R.A.F. personnel on board FURIOUS will require onward passage to Takoradi. Officers 42 civilians 2 Warrant Officers 4 Flight Sergeants and Sergeants 55 Airmen 44. (Air Min., 1421/24 to N.O.I.C. Freetown).

DELHI.

Arrived Cameroons River 1630/24.
(DELHI, 1708/24).

DELHI.

Lagos departure 0934/23 for Manoka.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 1733N/24).

CANTON.

Arrival 1630/24.
(S.O.(I) Freetown, 1721N/24).

Brest-Dakar,
Casablanca-Dakar
Cables.

It is under consideration to cut Brest-Dakar, Casablanca-Dakar cables since enemy are using these to advantage. Is French cable ship still in vicinity? (D.S.D. 1832/24 to C.in C. S.A.)

EMPIRE VOICE,
HYDROUSSA.

EMPIRE VOICE due Freetown 19/12 from U.K. 2/12 and HYDROUSSA due Freetown 20/12 from Capetown 4/12 have not arrived. (S.O.(I) Freetown, 1838/24 to Admty.)

COLONIAL.

Your 1628/21. Have arranged for Portuguese COLONIAL to call at Freetown. Request number of berths required. (N.C.S.O. Lisbon, 1727/24 to C.in C. S.A.)

American Neutral
Zone.

Until further notice No Neutral ship is to be stopped within so-called American Neutral Zone except upon express orders from Admiralty or C.in C. S.A. Neutrals for this purpose include French Ships. Limit Zones are given in my 1929/24. (C.in C. S.A., 1927N/24).

My 1927/24. The limits of so-called American neutrality zones are lines passing through following positions:
(a) 044° 46' North 060° West.
(b) 020° north 060° west
(c) 005° north 024° west
(d) 058° south 057° west
(e) 058° south 080° west
(f) Equator 097° west
(g) 015° north 120° west
(h) 048° 30' north 136° west.
(C.in C. S.A. 1929N/24).

24.12.1940.

Tuesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean.

733

Transport of Aircraft.

My 1844/8. Additional proposals.
(S.O. Force H., 1930/24)
See Mediterranean Vol.

Cables, Sollum.

Impossible provide Sollum cable diversion in period of less than three months owing to difficulty in getting suitable ship on to spot. Improvement of this situation under active consideration. Meanwhile cable ship RETRIEVER is to proceed with repairs in Red Sea. Is any additional land cable or wireless equipment required to improve Sollum communications? (W.O. 0730/24 to C.in C. M.E.).

Special Operational Summary.

Dusk 23/12. 10 Wellingtons 148 Squadron despatched in 2 echelons to attack Castel Benito aerodrome. Only one aircraft able locate target and dropped 3000 lbs. G.P. and 480 lbs. incendiary in 2 sticks from 2500 feet. Perimeter near large hangars and Northern boundary straddled. 3 explosions followed. Remaining 9 aircraft attacked Tripoli Harbour and town. First echelon 5 Wellingtons dropped 14750 lbs. G.P. and 2400 lbs. incendiaries from 6000 feet. 20 bombs seen to explode on Customs houses and jetty. Seaplane hangar hit resulting in large white fire. Near misses on Castello and railway station. Hits on jetty just North of power station and incendiaries east of same. Second echelon 4 Wellingtons dropped 12000 lbs. G.P. and 1920 lbs. incendiaries from 8000 feet. Custom House jetty hit several times resulting in many fires and one explosion. Power Station straddled. S.W. of seaplane hangars 9 explosions and fires were started. Extensive seen 50 miles away and several confirmations that explosions near seaplane hangar were caused by fuel. Considerable efforts were made to locate Castel Benito some aircraft searching for nearly 2 hours through heavy ground haze. Then chose Tripoli for target attracted by A.A. fire. All aircraft returned safely, and undamaged by A.A. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 0835/24).

Alexandria.

Air raid 0345, one machine, 4 bombs in sea. (N.O.I.C. Alexandria, 0926/24).

/ Warning of A.C. Approach. ...



FOREIGN STATIONS.

734

Mediterranean.

Warning of
A.C. Approach.

Your 1651/27/11. The limitations referred to apply almost equally to type 281 as to type 279. Conversion by ships staff is impracticable. Dockyard time about 6 weeks. Stores required for conversion will not be available for 6 months. (D.S.D. 1057/24 to C.in C. Med.)

OTUS
OSIRIS

My 1105/21. (No trace in W/R). After passing through D. 034° 30' 014° (?18') proceed to Malta as directed by V.A. Malta adjust speed to arrive OTUS dawn 28/12 OSIRIS dawn 29/12. (Capt. S.1, 1131/24, to OTUS, OSIRIS). *See also next page*

Greece.

Situation. R.A.F. heavily bombed Valona this morning. Numerous aircraft on ground destroyed. 24 large merchant ships in the harbour. Also cruisers off Saseno and what seemed to be submarines in the harbour. (British M.M., Athens, to C.in C. M.E. 1203/24).

Air Report.
Libya.

Operational Summary No. 197 up to 1200 hours 24/12.
Para 1. Egypt. Day 23/12.
No bombing operations. Offensive patrols by Hurricanes between Bardia and Tobruk shot down 2 S.79's and 1 CR.42 confirmed and 1 S.79 unconfirmed. Reconnaissances by Hurricanes and Lysander of Bardia Tobruk and Giarabub reported camps at Gambut and El Adem evacuated. 60 M.T. vehicles at Giarabub. No change in military situation Bardia. (H.Q. R.A.F., M.E., 1212/24).

Malta Air Report.

"I" 179 24/12. Combined services report. Malta up to 1700 hours 24/12. All times G.M.T. 0705 - 1210.

Naples.

Glen Martin 431 flight reconnaissance Naples. In harbour 1 LITTORIO battleship 1 ZARA class cruiser in Dry Dock 5 destroyers - 2 Fleet auxiliaries 10,000 tons - 4 M/Vs. 12,000 tons - 1 hospital ship and a number of small M/Bs. up to 2,000 tons. 1 M/V 7,000 tons entering harbour. 1 S, 79 shot down into the sea in flames.

/ Taranto

24.12.1940.

Tuesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean. (Contd.)Taranto.

0745 - 1214. Glenn Martin 431 flight reconnaissance Taranto. Outer harbour - 1 damaged CAVOUR battleship with 3 destroyers alongside. 1 other battleship and 1 cruiser - 12 M/V's. 6,000 tons 1 M/V 5,000 tons. Inner harbour - 6 cruisers 9 destroyers - and 1 M/V 6,000 tons. 29 Cant.Z. 501's or 506's. Balloons were flying at 8,000 feet from Southern Jetty and southern reaches outer harbour. Operations by Wellingtons of 148 Squadron against Tripoli harbour and Castel Benito night 23/24 December reported in my "I" 178 24/12. No enemy air activity over Malta. (H.Q. R.A.F., Med., 1700/24).

OTUS
OSIRIS
TRUANT
PARTHIAN
TETRARCH

Captain (S) 1's 1131/24. From D proceed direct to 035° 31' North 014° 31' East thence to arrive off grand harbour at 0700 on day ordered. Delimara Light will be exhibited from 0200 on both days. TRUANT will leave Malta at 1715/28 through (corrupt group) 38' N. 014° 07' E. thence on approximate course. PARTHIAN and H.M.S. TETRARCH will probably leave Malta at about (?same time) through same position thence South to 35° North before proceeding on patrol. All times zone minus (-) one. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 2015/24 to OTUS and OSIRIS). *See previous page*

Main Force.

Arrivals 24/12 C.in C. Mediterranean in WARSPITE, ILLUSTRIOUS, VALIANT, DAINTY, DIAMOND, ILEX, FIONA, PERTH, 14th Destroyer Flotilla (less GRIFFIN). (S.O.I., Alexandria, 1825/24).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

24.12.40⁷³⁶
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies.

Contraband
Trade,
Persian
Gulf.

From Brigadier French (Inspector General of Censors) 24/12. Following is gist of memorandum on the Gulf Trade compiled from intercepts by Bombay Censorship. Normally Bombay is the clearing centre for business correspondence concerning this trade. Goods are reaching Iran via Black and Caspian Seas from Germany. Iran pre-war exported wheat now trying purchase 30,000 tons Karachi. Iraq carefully watching exports. There may be leakage to enemy of commodities from Java India Straits Ceylon through Bahrein Kuwait Dubai Gwadar and Iraq. Authorities in these places when they exercise control do not appear to stop goods marked on arrival for re-export presumably assuming countries of origin watch this. Doubtful whether these countries appreciate resultant risk. Indian currency regulations permit finance by India of goods shipped Japan and Dutch East Indies to Persia to countries classified as Empire. All Gulf ports not in Iran are so classified. Memorandum posted by air 19/12. Please say if your evidence confirms above information.

Contraband Control and stronger naval forces in Gulf are best means of hampering this trade but severe limitation of exports from India Burma Straits Ceylon Java under Unified Control would help. Smuggling by dhows from west coast profitable and not difficult. Whole question most complicated. Failing contraband Control strongly recommend strong and experienced M.E.W. Officers in Gulf and India to investigate and collaborate. So far as possible have verified memorandum from censorship records which appear careful and detailed. Mails transmitting Bombay to and from Japan Iraq are comparatively small but there are alternative routes namely. (1) Air (2) Surface Quetta and Calcutta (3) Siberian Railway (4) Direct Boat. Three and four would evade all censorship. Three is in use. F.O.C.R.I.N. concurs in views expressed in foregoing telegram. (Ends).
(F.O.C.R.I.N. 0559Z/24 to Adty).



WAR DIARY.

24.12.40.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

737

East Indies. (Contd.)

SHROPSHIRE.

SHROPSHIRE is to leave (? Aden) a.m./27 and proceed to Mombasa adjusting speed to arrive a.m./31.
(C.in C. E.I. 0806Z/24).

QUEEN MARY.
QUEEN
ELIZABETH.

Adty. 1927/18 para.3. It is understood that QUEEN MARY will visit Trincomalee again in February and both QUEEN MARY and QUEEN ELIZABETH in April. In these circumstances it is considered preferable that tug SIR GUTHRIE RUSSEL should remain at Trincomalee after January transhipment rather than return to Vizagapatam against monsoon and be obliged to make passage again a month later. Can this be arranged?
(C.in C. E.I. 1210Z/24 to D. of S.T.)

Ship
Recognition.

My 1412/18/11. Request early reply. The number of suggestions I am receiving from H.M. Ships and merchant ships confirms my opinion of the urgent need for a satisfactory system of recognition between them by day and night A.M.1220/21, further emphasises it.
(C.in C. E.I. 1350/24 to Adty).

SHILLONG.
Message.

My 1856/16. * No confirmation of SHILLONG'S report yet received. Request Masters who were in the vicinity may be questioned.
(C.in C. E.I. 1416Z/23 to A.C.N.B. etc.)
* (Re Q distress signal received by SHILLONG).

Aden
Air Report.
Heis
Bombed.

Summary No. 195 and Operational Summary for 24 hours ending 1500 24/12. Following Sorties of 8 Sqdn. attacked Heis 10° 53'N, 46° 54'E. At 1145 low pattern bombing by 3 Blenheims apparently considerably damaged sheds. At 1150, low dive bombing by 3 Blenheims further damaged target. No opposition. 1 Blenheim 203 Squadron proceeded Kamaran for convoy duties. 3 Gladiators 94 Squadron patrolled over Aden 1030 to 1105. Kamaran reports single aircraft flew over Kamaran and Northern Approaches at great height 1130 22/12.
(A.H.Q. Aden, 1815/24).



WAR DIARY.

24.12.40.

Tuesday.

738

FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

W.S.4.B.

Arrival 1300Z/24 SOUTHAMPTON. Departure 1900Z/24 KANDAHAR for W.S.4.B. (N.O.I.C. Aden, 1903Z/24).

China.

N.E.I. Navy Representatives.

Chiefs of Staff No.37 to C.in C. Far East and C.in C. China. Action authorised or being implemented on report of staff conversations with N.E.I. representatives. (1st S.L. to C.in C. China 2132/24). See Operations Volume.

Aerodromes, Malaya.

My 0931/23. Latest information concerning R.A.F. developments in Malaya is given in H.Q. F.East's message A.O.A.195 of 23/12 to Air Ministry. (C.in C. China 0929Z/24 to Adty).

America and West Indies.

COMORIN.

Arrived Halifax December 24 from B.X.H.97. (S.O.(I) Halifax 0843/24).

RAJPUTANA, LACONIA.

Halifax arrival 23/12 RAJPUTANA from H.X.94. Departure LACONIA ocean escort H.X.98. 22/12. (S.O.(I) Halifax 0930/24).

DESPATCH.

To leave Jamaica 28/12 and proceed to Nassau arriving 30/12. Probable duration of visit three days. Governor Bahamas informed. (C.in C. A.M.I. 1132/24 to S.O. W.I.F.)

A/S Yachts.

~~Two~~ Three A/S/M fitted Yachts, VISON HUSKY and ELK loaned by N.S.H. Ottawa for winter have arrived at Bermuda. VISON and HUSKY are being sent immediately to Trinidad and ELK is being retained at Bermuda for the present. These are only A/S/M fitted vessels available to me until stores to complete type 123A fitted and being fitted at Bermuda in other vessels are sent. I am concerned about state of A/S defence particularly at Trinidad where Force K. may be temporarily based at any time, and request shipment of outstanding store may now be treated as most urgent. My 1642/20/11 and my 1223/7/12 refer. (C.in C. A.W.I. 1222/24 to Adty).



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

24.12.40.
Tuesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

739

America and West Indies. (Contd.)

Canadian Destroyers for Western Approaches.

Your 2156/22/12. Request for any ships you can send us for escorts. ASSINIBOINE RESTIGOUCHE ST. FRANCIS COLUMBIA will be sailed for Western Approaches via St. John N.F. about 15/1/41, or earlier if this date can be improved upon. Halifax destroyer force will then be put to a clinch with one only seaworthy TOWN class speed presently limited 24 knots. (C.N.S. Canada, 1257/24 to Adty).

SIBONEY.

Following from M.E.W. 1130/19 from N.A. Madrid to S.O.(I) Bermuda. American ship SIBONEY sailed Lisbon for Bermuda 20/12. Careful search should be made for these documents which should be photostated and returned to LESTO. Photostat copies should be sent to M.E.W. first available opportunity. (D.E.W.D. 1844/24 to C.in C. A.W.I.)

Australia.

Raider Survivors.

*x W
* Also for Raider (B. Komat)*

My 0704Z/24. (Survivors from captured ships). District officer Kaveing now reports Hopkins, Chief Officer RANGITANE, and survivors were landed Etmiau P.M./21. Ships from which landed were - KULMERLAND (German) MARVIK (Norwegian) MANYO MARU* (Japanese) latter two 22½ knots, eight 8 guns, two torpedo tubes, multiple pom pom A.A. guns, 3 bomber seaplanes. Four persons who have reached Kaveing state survivors include persons from RANGITANE, THRAKINA, RINGWOOD, NOTOU, HOLMWOOD, TRIONA, VINNI, TRIASTER, KOMATA, TRIADIC, (Ends). 1835Z/24.

PORT BRISBANE. raider attack. lessons.

Raider attack on PORT BRISBANE, lessons learnt. Part one. Ships in vicinity of an attack must not assume (a) Darkness in itself gives protection (b) Lapse of time modifies danger. They should at night (a) Ensure proper darkening (b) Post a look-out destroyer beam (c) Be prepared to fight shortest warning (d) Make radical alteration of course after dark. Part Two. Efficient night sights are desirable but not essential at night range. Part Three. Use of siren at night for action station is undesirable as it may draw fire before station can be assumed. (A.C.N.O. 1910Z/24 to Adty).

MOST SECRET.

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.



War Diary.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

740

HEINRICH ARP.

German merchant ship HEINRICH ARP arrived Bilbao 22/12. (D.D.I.C. 1056/24 to F.O.C.N.A.)

My 2111/21 ship arrived Bilbao December 22nd. (V.A.S. 1202/24).

LA PLATA,
HEINRICH ARP.

Departure December 23rd LA PLATA German ship HEINRICH ARP. Destination unknown. (Bilbao 1248/24).

LA PLATA and German ship HEINRICH HIB left here 2215/23. (Bilbao 1545/24).

KULMERLAND

Landing of captives from. (See FOREIGN STATIONS, Australia).

ATLAS

Arrived 24/12. (Valencia, 0014/24).

24.12.1940.
Tuesday.



War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

741

Ships Attacked.

ARACATACA.
(torpedoed 29/11).

In continuation of my 2140/23 Chief Officer reports ARACATACA torpedoed at 2130/29/11 in 056° 30' N. 020° 13' W. believed to be by submarine, but enemy not seen. (N.C.S.O. Buenos Aires, 1751/24).

Your 2140/23, stating POTARO arrived Buenos Aires 23/12 with survivors of ARACATACA.

Request full details of sinking of ARACATACA. Nothing known in Admiralty. (D.D.I.C. 1933/24 to N.C.S.O. Buenos Aires).

MANGEN
(torpedoed 21/12).

Swedish Steamer MANGEN 1,253 tons, sunk by torpedo at 2118/21 in 40.45 North 16.50 West. (N.A. Lisbon, 1753/24 to Admty.)

Submarines Reported.

1251.

Italian U Boat in approx. position 044° North 003° to 004° West at 1251/24. Probably inward bound for Bordeaux. (V.A.S. 1419/24 to S/M's on patrol, Area B).

C.in C. Rosyth 1644 (see S/M's attacked). Arrange search by destroyers for submarine on assumption she is passing north of Muckle Flugga homeward bound. (C.in C. H.F., 1851/24 to R.A. D.A.F.)

C.in C. Home Fleet's 1851/24. Three Destroyers leave Scapa 2020/24 and should arrive vicinity of Muckle Flugga about 0200. Request air co-operation if possible. (A.C.O.S. 2011/24 to C.in C. Rosyth).

C.in C. Rosyth's 1644/24. D/F on 4796 Kcs. at 2011/24 indicates U/Boat to the N. Westward of Shetlands. (D.D.I.C. 2051/24).

A.C.O.S. 2011/24 Sunderland aircraft takes off from Sollum Voe at 0915/25 and proceeds to position 000 degs. Muckle Flugga 20 miles, then 125, carries out a creeping line ahead search on a 20 mile front on a course of 120 degs. for 100 miles unless contact is obtained with you or until Homed on to you by W/T. Beaufort aircraft carrying out patrol Viking consisting two circuits of cross over 059 degs. 30' north 000 degs. 42' east 061 degs. 00' north 001 degs. 18' east 061 degs. 00' north 000 degs. 42' east 059 degs. 30' north 001 degs. 18' east during daylight hours tomorrow. (C.in C. Rosyth 2252/24 to Capt. D.5).

24.12.1940.

Tuesday.



War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

742

Submarines Reported.

2134.

Following has been read.

SUBMARINE ATTACK.

56° 12' N., 7° 25' W., submarine in vicinity GLOUCESTER CITY 2034 G.M.T. (Plymouth W/T, T.O.R. 2137/24).

Signals of D/F Fixes.

Admiralty's 1826/21. Considered that there are strong reasons for broadcasting "~~an~~" all D/F fixes of U Boats in areas frequented by shipping. (reasons). (C.in C. W.A. 1810/24, to Admty.)

Estimated U/B dispositions.

Italian.

1 may have left Madeira area probably for Bordeaux

1 in area Canaries - Cape Juby

1 patrolling Azores area

2 bound for Gironde are N.W. and S.W. of Finisterre respectively about 10° W.

1 bound for Gironde about 47° N., 15° W.

4 more probably moving south from 54° N. or 55° N. keeping west of 18° W.

1 moving north in about 51° 30' N. keeping east of 18° W., others probably following.

German.

1 was about 60° N. 15° W. at 0733/23.

1 may be northbound somewhere about 39° N. 15° W.

1 somewhere about 50° N., to 51° N., 16° W. to 17° W. bound for Lorient.

1 about 57° N. 17° W. at 1208/24.

3 in area 57° N. to 60° N., 18° W. to 21° W.

1 N.E. of Muckle Flugga bound for Bergen or Germany.

(D.D.I.C. 1255/24).

Transport of U/B's to Italy.

Susak has been informed by local sympathisers, reliability unassessable, that submarines in sections are arriving in Trieste from Germany for assembly at Monfalcone Yards. Hull arriving in three sections each section on one large railway truck. (S.O.I. Alexandria, 1136/24).

N.I.D. Note Reports have been received since August of submarine sections being sent from Germany to Trieste for assembly at Monfalcone. Lately these reports have increased in number and one speaks of such a submarine of 250 tons having been launched at Monfalcone, where her trials were not a success.

Little credence is attached to the reports because:-

(a) The source is graded low

(b) When Bordeaux was being prepared as a base similar reports of Italian submarines being sent through France were received and proved to be false, and

(c) It would be much easier for U boats to be passed through the Straits of Gibraltar.

24.12.1940.

Tuesday.

War Diary.



U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

743

Submarines Attacked.

Form Orange
~~FORM ORANGE~~

1214.
by a/c.

- (A) DYCE DYC/04/24/12.
- (B) A/C Y/48 sighted periscope 58.31 N., 05.48 W. - Low level attack - 1 bomb - no result observed. Drs. called from CV 3 miles west. Time of incident 1214.
- (C) Anson Y/48 1st escort to LETITIA, CALIFORNIA, and CHITRAL contacted 50.15 N., 05.48 W. at 1005 hours. Landed Stornoway 1250. (Pitreavie 1420/24 to Admty.)

Aircraft reports having attacked submarine sighted at periscope depth in position 058° 31' North 005° 48' West at 1215. No result was observed. Aircraft reported by V/S to DOUGLAS and KEPPEL, another aircraft being sent to search until dark. (C.in C. Rosyth 1450/24).

1530.

Aircraft reports attacking submarine in position 060° 25' north 002° 34' west at 1530. Pilot first saw air bubbles and oil and when over position the outline of a submerged submarine. After attack bubbles ceased and although aircraft remained in vicinity for 15 minutes nothing further seen. Interrogated pilot who was definite he saw the submarine. (C.in C. Rosyth, 1644/24).

RHODODENDRON.

Their Lordships consider that your attack on a U-Boat on 21/11/1940, probably achieved its destruction. They congratulate you and your ships company on this success which was all the more creditable in the rough weather conditions in which the attack was carried out. (D. A/S.W. 1340/24 to RHODODENDRON).

MOST SECRET.

25.12.1940.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

744

Home Commands.

Air photographs show some increased railway activity at Trondheim, Calais, Boulogne, and Nantes; but, except at Trondheim, there appears to be no increase of rolling stock and there are no signs of loading at any of the quays which are visible.

British Air Activity.

Some Routine Patrols were flown today, and Air Escort for 17 convoys was provided. In view of the Air attack on the Convoy Anchorage at Oban on the 23rd, A/C are being instructed to keep clear of that Anchorage unless engaged in operations and to avoid flying in the Kyles of Loch Alsh unless this is necessary for operations. A/C of 804 Squadron Fleet Air Arm shot down at 1412 today a Junker 88 near Skeabrae in the Orkneys.

Enemy Air Activity.

All the usual Zenit Flights were carried out today; and Enemy R/C Aircraft operated in the Channel, Bristol Channel, Thames Estuary, N.E. Coast of Scotland, and the Orkneys. One A/C dropped bombs near Convoy E.N. 46 off the Firth of Tay at 1650 this afternoon, and Convoy ARENA was shadowed by one A/C off Clacton at 0855.

Mining.

A Mine was detonated this morning 4 miles S.W. of Rame Head, Plymouth, by M.G.B. 50 which returned to Fowey.

25.12.1940.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

745

FOREIGN STATIONS.BERWICK, Action With Enemy Cruiser. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

(P. 138) / 0715

At 0642/25, BERWICK, in position 44°N. 25° W. escorting Convoy W.S.5A, (Troop convoy of 19 ships) which left U.K. on 18/12, reported a capital ship of the DEUTSCHLAND class bearing 290° 12 miles from her. At 0915, she reported the enemy as an 8-in. cruiser, and an hour later that he had disappeared in thick weather to westward on course 290°. BERWICK thought the enemy had not sighted the convoy. The position of convoy was then some 660 miles West of C. Finisterre. Enemy was last seen at 0956Z in 43° 36' N. 25° 12' W.

At 0930, CLEMATIS (corvette, one of the convoy escort) reported she had engaged an unknown raider in 43.47 N., 24° W., (about 660 miles W. of Cape Finisterre) that BONAVENTURE (cruiser, 6 6-inch) and DUNEDIN (cruiser, 6 6-inch) were pursuing, and that EMPIRE TROOPER (transport, ex-German CAP NORTE, 13,615 tons) had been damaged. Convoy had then been scattered by Commodore's orders. No British forces other than those with W.S.5A were within 200 miles of the position.

At 1019, Force H at Gibraltar was ordered to raise steam with all despatch, and at 1038 was ordered to sea. It left at 1400, consisting of RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD, and destroyers FAULKNER, FOXHOUND, FIREDRAKE, FORTUNE, DUNCAN, WISHART, HERO and HEReward.

At 1046 415th Cruiser Squadron (NAIAD and BONAVENTURE), which had formed part of the convoy escort, but were then, on the way back, (in about 50° 40' N. 18° 35' W. some 460 miles to the northward) were ordered to close the enemy, but at 1733, NAIAD was ordered to return to Scapa.

BERWICK fought a short action with the enemy. She was seen to open fire by FURIOUS at 0842 G.M.T., in position given by dead reckoning of FURIOUS and ARGUS as 43.20 N., 24.20 W. Visibility was poor (later estimated at half a mile). BERWICK claimed one hit certain on the enemy abaft the funnel, possibly more. Her own damage included "X" turret out of action, a hit below the water line on starboard side, a shell through forward boiler room, one 4-in gun out of action, and the midship funnel holed. Four marines were killed and one dangerously wounded.

BONAVENTURE reported at 1120 that touch had been lost with the enemy, who was last seen at 0956Z in 43.36 N., 25.12 W., steering 290°.

There were indications during the morning of several U-boats on the convoy route to eastward of the Azores.

At 1224/25

MOST SECRET.

25.12.1940.
Wednesday.

War Diary.



SITUATION REPORT.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

746

BERWICK, Action With Enemy Cruiser. (Contd.) (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

At 1224/25, FURIOUS, in 43.19 N., 25.11 W., with ARGUS in company, reported she was flying off reconnaissance aircraft and intended to continue the hunt, but at 1345 the weather obliged her to abandon flying and to rejoin the convoy.

At 1308, C.in C. Home Fleet ordered REPULSE and NIGERIA, screened by 4 destroyers, to sea from Scapa to give protection to Convoys H.X.97 and S.C.16, then in position about 53° N.

At 1324, Convoy W.S.5A and escorts were ordered by the Admiralty to steer for Gibraltar. Meantime, Force H proceeded at high speed towards 37° N., 16° W., intending to join the convoy.

At 1531 N., DUNEDIN (one of the convoy escort) reported that when proceeding to rejoin convoy she had met CITY OF CANTERBURY and was taking her to 41° N., 19° W. (some 200 miles to south east). Her position was then 42.30 N. 23.25 W.

The situation about this time viz. 3 p.m. was that the cruisers BONAVENTURE, DUNEDIN, and aircraft carriers, ARGUS and FURIOUS were in the vicinity of BERWICK. The convoy (some 250 miles North of Azores) had scattered.

The Admiralty had ordered convoy and escorts to steer for Gibraltar.

Rear Vice-Admiral C.S.15 in NAIAD was a long way off to the Northward 50.50 N., 18.40 W., steaming at 20 kts. on 220°.

Force K (FORMIDABLE aircraft carrier and NORFOLK cruiser) was to S.W. of the Azores, steering to meet the convoy.

Force H had left Gibraltar and was proceeding West at high speed to 37° N. 16° W.

CACHALOT (submarine, from Azores Patrol) was in about 40° N., 19° W., (some 220 miles away) on her way to UK., and TRIDENT, which had relieved her, was in the vicinity of the Azores. DERBYSHIRE (A.M.C., South Atlantic Station) was patrolling off the Azores within 100 miles of 39.20 N., 21.40 W.

CATHAY (A.M.C.) The Sierra Leone convoy S.L.59 homeward bound were in about 35.20 N., 20.30 W. some 450 miles to the southward.

KENYA was later ordered by C.in C., W. Approaches to R.V. and escort this convoy.

/ At 1654.

25.12.1940.
Wednesday.

War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

747

FOREIGN STATIONS.

BERWICK, Action With Enemy Cruiser. (ADMIRAL HIPPER.) cont:

At 1654. Force K was ordered to join BERWICK and Convoy W.S.5A. Force H was ordered to R.V. with BERWICK and escort the Convoy until Force K joined, after which Force K was to escort it to Freetown.

Force H, with BONAVENTURE, DUNEDIN and ARGUS were then to escort merchant ships for "Excess", and Operation "Excess" was to be postponed 24 hours by S.O. Force H if necessary.

At 1920 the Admiralty ordered DORSETSHIRE (cruiser South Atlantic Station at Freetown) to join Force K. (She was reported next day by C.in C. S.A. as ready to leave Freetown on the morning of the 27th).


The transport EMPIRE TROOPER had been hit by the raider and from 1500 G.M.T. distress messages began to come in from her. The CYCLAMEN, corvette (with her W/T out of action), had met her and was standing by her at 1648 G.M.T. At 1930 BONAVENTURE was proceeding to her assistance.

At midnight, BERWICK was attempting to collect the convoy, scattered after the attack. They had been given at 1540/24, a rendezvous in 39.08 N., 21.38 W. at noon/26 (about 300 miles to southeast of position where they scattered) by the Commodore of the Convoy for which BERWICK was making.

At 2344 the Admiralty ordered S.O. Force H to take charge at the moment he considered appropriate, warning him and BERWICK that convoy position "~~BERWICK~~" (43.40 N., 23.50 W) had probably been compromised.

MOST SECRET.

25.12.1940.
Wednesday.


War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

748

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

Replying to Admiralty 1849/24, ordering Operation "Ration" to be carried out as opportunity offered on 26, 27 and 28/12, F.O.C.N.A. reported that Force H was at sea and there were no forces available.

Mediterranean.

C.in C. Mediterranean is most concerned at the Admiralty decision to retain N-class destroyers in home waters, having hoped for them to alleviate a situation which may shortly become critical. It has not been possible to spare a destroyer to refit since August 11.

R.A.F. Middle East, reports having bombed Valona yesterday and machine gunned heavily a cruiser in the harbour.

East Indies.

CARLISLE, SOUTHAMPTON and KIMBERLEY left Aden this morning to join Convoy W.S.4B (10 transports with troops for Middle East). SAGITTA (armed boarding vessel) completed a reconnaissance of the Somali Coast from Bandar Kassim to Heis. At Heis, dhows were found and some stores on the beach. A few rounds were fired at the stores and a house close by. There were 2 naval casualties, not serious, from machine gun fire at 1500 yards.

German Merchant Ships.

The LA PLATA and HEINRICH ARP left Bilbao for an unknown destination about noon yesterday.



25. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K.

"Deluge".
~~DELUGE.~~

At 2330/25. (D.C. 2350/25.)

Movements.

OTTAWA.
ST. LAURENT.
BATH.
COLOMBIA.
PENNLAND.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0015/25.)

→ KASHMIR.
→ PUNJABI.
→ JERSEY.

Arrived at Plymouth 1050/24.
(C. in C. W.A. 0024/25.)

Nore Command.

Ships of Command out of Action.
(C. in C. Nore 0754/25.)

ACTIVE.
ANTELOPE.

Repairs completed 24/12. Sailed for
Greenock (F.O.I.C. Glasgow 0952/25.)

G.13 and G.15.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1000/25.)

MANCHESTER CITY.

Will be ready to sail PM/27 if firemen
or stokers can be found. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow
1006/25.)

→ KENYA.
→ KASHMIR.
→ PUNJABI.
→ JERSEY.

Raise steam for full speed with all
despatch. (C. in C.W.A. 1040/25.)
KENYA sailed 2052/25. (C. in C.W.A. 0008/26.)

SCARBOROUGH.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1210/25.)

VENOMOUS.

Sail to meet H.X.96 at 1000/27. B.S.T. in
60° 12' N. 15° W. (C. in C. W.A. 1232/25.
to F.O.I.C. Belfast.)

VULCAN.

Sailed Southend for Portsmouth.
E.T.A. Dover 1930. (N.C.S.O. Thames
1313/25 to C. in C. Nore.)

SHEARWATER.

Arrived 1312/25. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1319/25.)



25. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Movements Contd.

REPULSE,
NIGERIA,
SOMALI,
MATABELE,
MASHONA,
ESKIMO.

Sailed Scapa 1500/25. (A.C.O.S.1515/25.)

Northern
Patrol.

Trawler Lines tonight. 4 Trawlers.
(A.C.O.S. 1536/25.)

SHELDRAKE.

Arrived 1613/25.(F.O.I.C.Harwich 1634/25.

BRIGHTON.

My 1121/24. Expect will sail AM/27 for
Portland.(C. in C.W.A.1703/25.)

ICARUS.

Arrived Scapa from Humber. (A.C.O.S.
1940/25.)

AURORA.

May be sailed to Scapa at your discretion.
(V.C.N.S. 2157/25 to C. in C. H.F.)
Return to Scapa with moderate despatch.
(C. in C. H.F. 2356/25 to AURORA.)

WOLSEY.
VERDUN.

Arrived with F.N.66. (C. in C. Rosyth
2315/25.)

VERSATILE,
VALOROUS.

Sailed with FS.70.(C. in C. Rosyth
2315/25.)

KENYA.

Sailed from Plymouth 2052/25.(C. in C.
W.A. 1014/26.)

Operations.

M.T.B's between
Ostend and Hook.

Arrived M.T.B's 31 and 32 at 0943.
(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1044/25.)

M.T.B.'s between,
Dieppe and Boulogne.

Intend M.T.B's 69 and 70 to operate
tonight, leaving Dover at midnight and
returning 0800/26.(V.A. Dover 1230/25.)

Submarines.

L. 23.

Will be in Scapa Flow tomorrow.
(A.C.O.S. 0946/25.)

MINERVE.

My 1554/22. Intend sailing 1630/26.
(C. in C. W.A. 1444/25.)



War Diary.

25. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Submarines.

H. 31.

Arrived Rothesay (S.7. 1536/25.)

Greenock Area.

Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1730/25.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/26.
(V.A.S.1737/25.)

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

2 Blenheims leave Dyce 0845 for Flamborough and return (C. in C. Rosyth 0800/25.) Patrol S.9. being flown today. (C. in C. Rosyth 0812/25.)

Oban Area.
Flying
Restrictions.

My 1911/24. Request all R.A.F. Authorities concerned may be informed.

(a) That there is an important convoy assembly anchorage off South West side of Lismore Island Near Oban. Aircraft should keep clear of this area unless approach is necessary for operations.

(b) That Aircraft should avoid flying in the vicinity of the Kyles of Loch Alsh unless this is necessary for operations. (D. of L.D. 2145/25 to Air Ministry.)

R/C. of Oban.
A/A Defences.

Your 1911/24. Fighter Command organising reconnaissance as requested. (Air Ministry 1720/25 to Adty.)

Enemy Air Activity.

Convoy "Arona".

Being shadowed by one A/C in 51° 41' N. 1° 19' E. (VANITY 0855/25.)

Orkneys.

One Enemy A/C, believed Junker 88, shot down near Skeabrae, Orkneys, by A/C of 804 Sqdn. at 1412. No details of survivors so far. (A.C.O.S. 1438/25.)

The Naze.

Coast Guard Naze reports at 1630 two bursts of M.G. fire heard E.N.E. of Naze Lookout at distance. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1635/25.)



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25. 12. 40.
Wednesday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity.

TUVA.

(Beached at Oban after Air-Raid 23/12.)
Floated and re-beached at 1500/25 near
Lochnell Bay. (N.C.S.O. Oban 2220/25.)
Unexploded Bomb discovered in Ship's side.
(N.O.I.C. Oban 2250/26.)

Firth of Tay.

One A/C dropped 2 Bombs near Convoy EN.46,
at 1650 today. (D.S.478.)

Mining.

Zuydcote Pass.

Your 1626/21. Request you arrange for
laying in Zuydcote Pass at first
opportunity. Decision as to other areas
will be communicated. (V.C.N.S. 1155/25.
to C. in C. Nore.)

Plymouth.

R.N.O. Fowey's 1040/25. M.G.B.50 struck
a Mine 4 miles S.W. of Rame Head and is
returning to Fowey. E.T.A. 1400.
(C. in C. W.A. 1256/25.)

Liverpool.

S.S. VICTORIA exploded 3 mines at 1400/23
inward bound. Exploded a further 4 mines
at 2330/23 outward bound. Speed on both
occasions 20 knots. No mine exploded
nearer than 50 yards from vessel. All
mines exploded between position 3 miles
west of Bar L.V. and Q.1. black.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1301/25.)

INTREPID.

Arrived Scapa 1025 from Humber. (A.C.O.S.
1305/25.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Norwegian,
Coastal
Shipping.

My 1145/18. (One) It is reported from
North Norway that 14 vessels have left
Kirkenes with iron ore for Germany since
early November. Further stated some of
those were sunk, in consequence crews
have been declining to sail in ?
certain ships from Kirkenes. 6 3.

2. Today's press states war insurance
rates north of Trondjhem have been
doubled. (N.A. Stockholm 1250/24 to D.N.I.)

MOST SECRET.

25. 12. 40

Wednesday



War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Intelligence.Contd.

M/V. in
Western
Channel.

Aircraft report a 3000-5000 Ton M/V in
49° 31' N. 4° 20' W. at 1712/25 steering
345° at 10 knots. (C. in C. W.A. 2140/25
to KENYA.)

25. 12. 40.
Wednesday.



War Diary.

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CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

LE TRIOMPHANT.

Your 1524/23. Unable to sail owing to defect. (Capt. D. Greenock 1207/25. to C. in C. W.A.)

ODYSSEUS.

N.C.S.O. Clyde 1945/24. Ashore at Kames by Rothesay since leaving Greenock. (N.C.S.O. Clyde 1445/25.)



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.1940.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

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Shipping.

Convoys.

Situation at 0900/25 (D.T.D.
1145/25 to C. in C. H.F.)

H.X. 98.

Date and route. Escort LACONIA returns
Halifax (D.T.D. 1219/25).

O.B.O. 264.

Sailed 0600/25. Escort LADY MADELINE.
8 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1235/25).

S.C. 18.

Route and date. (D.T.D. 1317/25).

W.N. 59.

0700/25. 10 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban
1438/25).

O.B. 267.

Route. To remain in company to 25⁰W.
(D.T.D. 1504/25).

H.X. 97.

Sailing telegram as amended by Admty.
(D.T.D. 1623/25).

S.L. 58.

Splitting 0300/26. Escorting for Oban.
SARDONYX for Clyde, ANEMONE for
Liverpool, HELIOTROPE detached to
escort PETER CAREY, LA MALOUINE not
in company (BROKE, 2125/25).

H.X. 96.

Meet (C. in C. W.A. 2158/25 to
ROCHESTER, WILD SWAN, FLEUR DE LYS,
GARDENIA, VENOMOUS). *See also p 757*

S.L. 59.

KENYA to R. V. and escort (C. in C. W.A.
1922/25) See Convoy and Raider Action.

O.B.C. 264.

Sailed 0005. Escorts ACTIVE, PICOTEE,
HEATHER, ANTELOPE.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde 0020/25).
Sailed ANTELOPE to overtake.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0630/25).

O.B. 264.

To keep clear of H.X. 95. Amended
route for O.B. 264 from 270⁰ Oversay
6 miles through 055⁰ 50'N, 008⁰ 00'W
then route previously ordered.
(C. in C. W.A. 1104/25).

H.G. 48.

MACBRAE H.G. 48 arrived Barry Roads.
Escort ROSEMARY left for Milford Haven
(N.O.I.C. Barry 0735/25).

W.N. 59.

0700/25, 10 ships, routed through
Firth of Lorne.
(N.C.S.O. Oban 1031/25).

/H.X. 95.....



MOST SECRET.

War Diary.

25.12.40.
Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

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Shipping.

Convoys (contd).

H.X. 95.

Am proceeding to intercept.
(WOLVERINE 1100/25).
In view of favourable weather forecast
and present speed 9 knots (proceed ? to)
concur Stornaway can be reached without
Tug. (WOLVERINE 2150/25).

F.S. 68.

Reported at East Oaze 12 ships
for London (N.C.S.O. Thames 115/25).

E.N. 47.

Sailed ~~at~~ 1830/26, 22 ships (13 overseas).
Escorts PAYNTER, ARTIC EXPLORER,
WOLFHOUD. Buchan Ness 1200/27.
Duncansby Head 1100/28. (N.C.S.O.
Methil 1145/25). *See also next page.*

E.N. 46.
F.N. 67.
F.S. 70.
F.S. 71.

25/26. E.N. 46 Kinnaird Head 1500/25.
Inchcolm to Moray Firth F.N. 67
20C buoy 2200/25 F.S. 70 C buoy
0300/26 F.S. 71 leave Methil 2300/25
(C. in C. Rosyth 1600/25).

S.L. 58.

HIGHLANDER and HARVESTER sailed for
S.L. 58.
(N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1650/25).

S.L. 59.

Request sail KENYA to R/V with and
afford ocean escort to S.L. 59
(D.D.O.D. 1652/25 to C. in G. W.A.).

O.B. 266.

Request arrange CRISPIN to sail with
Clyde portion of O.B. 266 if practices
completed. (C. in C. W.A. 2022/25 to
F.O.C.N.P.). *See previous page.*

W.N. (? 175)

Intend S/M H. 34 be included sailing
Clyde 30/12. Request she may be
sailed in first F.S. Convoy for
Southend after Methil and onward
escort arranged from Southen to
Sheerness. (Capt (S) 7th 1540/25 to
N.O.I.C. Greenock).

KENT.

My 1846/21. Report your position at
approximately 0500/22 and what W/T
watch was being kept at the time.
(C. in C. W.A. 1146/25 to KENT).
KENT reporting position 0500
12 miles from Orlock Hill at 1621.
(F.O.I.C. Belfast 1651/25);

M.V's

My 1208/25 add 1 M.V. Dartmouth,
Plymouth 0200 1000 1 M.V. Falmouth
westward 1559 blank.
(C. in C. W.A. 1808/25).

/H.X. 97.....



MOST SECRET.

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Wednesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

Convoys (contd).

H.X. 97.)
S.C. 16.)

Position. REPULSE and NIGERIA to support (See Convoy and Raider under FOREIGN STATIONS-.)

F.S. 69.

Sailed (F.O.I.C. Tyne 0201/25).

W.N. 58.

Rattray Head 0115 (CAPE ARGONA 0130/25).

E.N. 47.
W.N. 60.

Sail at 0900/26. For exercises and Methil. Act subsequently as additional A/A escort to E.N. 47 sailing at 1830/26. On meeting transfer to W.N. 60 due Cape Wrath 0100/28 and Duncansby 1100/28.
(C. in C. Rosyth 1129/25 to WOLFHOUND).

H.X. 96.

Meet H.X. 96 30 ships unescorted 1000 27/12 101° 60' 12"N. 15° 00' W 101° 8 knots then through 60° 00'N 13° 00'W. 58° 00'N 09° 30'W split in 56° 30'N 08° 40'W. Route K keeping North of QZX 229 (D) 56° 05'N 06° 38'W 56° 16'N 05° 48'W 56° 22'N 05° 39'W thence to anchorage in Lynn of Lorne North of Black Island.
(C. in C. W.A. 1758/25 to VENOMOUS, ROCHESTER, WILD SWAN, FLEUR DE LYS, GARDENIA).

Troop Convoys.

T.C. 8.

Arrived Clyde PASTEUR, COLOMBIA and PENNLAND, H.M.S. OTTAWA, ST. LAURENT and BATH. MONTGOMERY proceeding Londonderry.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 0015/25).

W.S. 5(B).

Following ships sailing in W.S. 5(B) are required to load personnel at ports shown, and will be ready to clear their present berths on dates indicated. C. in C. W.A. is requested to arrange sailing accordingly:-
DUCHESS OF BEDFORD Liverpool to Newport ready Dec. 29th.
HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN Liverpool to Clyde ready Dec. 27th.
WINDSOR CASTLE Liverpool to Avonmouth ready Dec. 27th.
WINCHESTER CASTLE Liverpool to Avonmouth ready Dec. 27th.
EMPRESS OF JAPAN Belfast to Clyde ready December 28th.
(D.O.D(H). 1539/25 to C. in C. W.A.).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

BERWICK, Action with Raider 25.12.40 758

* ADMIRAL HIPPER *

H.M.S. BERWICK escorting Troop Convoy W.S.5(a) slow, came into action with a German 8-in. gun cruiser, (at first reported as a pocket battleship of DEUTSCHLAND class) on December 25 about 0930 B.S.T.

(Note) W.S.5A consisting of 19 troopships and 6 munition ships sailed from Clyde, Liverpool and Belfast on December 18. See W.D. 18-19/12/40. See D.O.R. 19/12/40 for list of vessels.

For Brief Report of Action, by S.O. Force H, 1352/2/1, see Diary 2/1/41.

Enemy Report.

Following has been read.

EMERGENCY. 1 Capital ship (DEUTSCHLAND class) bearing 290 degs. 12 miles approx. course unknown my position 288 LARK 60 (BERWICK, 0642/25) (43° 40' N. 23° 50' W. see 1026/25).

Course.

My 0642. Enemy's course 290 degs. (BERWICK, 0655/25).

8-inch Cruiser.

My 0642 Enemy is 8-inch cruiser. (BERWICK, 0715/25).

Enemy disappeared in thick weather to westward on course 290°. Probability is that he has not sighted convoy.

Am rejoining convoy. Enemy ship was one eight-inch cruiser. (BERWICK, 0825/25).

CLEMATIS.
in action.
Convoy scattered.

Engaged unknown raider in position 043° 47' 024° (corrupt group) BONAVENTURE, DUNEDIN pursuing. EMPIRE TROOPER damaged believed slightly. Convoy scattered by order of Commodore. Proceeding along track arriving destination dawn 27th visibility one mile. T.O.O. B.S.T. (CLEMATIS, 0930/25).

FURIOUS.

My position course speed 043° 15' North 024° 12' West 280° 21 knots. Will fly off 2 Skuas for search and will land Swordfish from ARGUS to arm with. Visibility 2 miles, low clouds. Wind 150° 35 knots. Request position of other British forces in area. (FURIOUS 0931/25 to Admty.)

Your 0931/25. No other British Forces other than those with W.S.5A are within 200 miles of your position. (D.O.D.(F) 1350/25 to FURIOUS)

BERWICK position.

BERWICK, BONAVENTURE, position course and speed 043° 27' N. 025° 30' West, 133 degrees, 20 knots. (BERWICK, 0945/25 to FURIOUS).

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

BERWICK, Action with Raider 25.12.40.

Force H.

Force H. Raise steam with all despatch.
(D.C., 1019/25 to S.O. Force H).

Position
"Lark".

BERWICK's 0642. Position ^{"LARK"}~~"LARK"~~ is
43.40 N. 23.50 W.
(D.C. 1026/25 to S. and A. Areas A and B.)

C.S.15.)
Force K.)

My 1026/25. Close enemy.
(V.C.N.S. 1046/25 to C.S.15, S.O. Force K)

My 1046 NAIAD return to Scapa.
(D.O.D.(H) 1733/25 to NAIAD).

Enemy
sight
convoy

My 0825. BONAVENTURE report enemy
cruiser sighted convoy.
(BERWICK, 1036/25, to Admty, and Force H).
(Note. Sent to V.A.S. also passed to
Ships and Authorities A & B, Submarines
on patrol, North Atlantic Station,
C.in C. South Atlantic for S.A. Station,
C.in C. America & West Indies, and
C.in C. Mediterranean).

Force H
ordered to sea.

My 1026/25 and BERWICK's 0642/25.
Proceed to sea.
(V.C.N.S. 1038/25 to S.O. Force H).

BERWICK,
casualties
and damage.

Regret to report following casualties
(list, 4 marines killed, 1 dangerously
wounded). (BERWICK, 1100/25).
Following damage sustained by BERWICK.
X turret out of action. Hit below water
line 72 to 81 stations starboard side and
starboard side of after engine room
bulging and wing compartment 193 to 207
flooded. Shell through forward boiler
room from above upper deck. S one 4 inch
gun out of action. Mid-ship funnel up-
take holed. (BERWICK, 1120N/25).

Your 1120/25. Did you damage enemy?
(D.O.D.(F) 1653/25 to BERWICK).

Enemy hit.

Your 1653. One hit certain abaft funnel.
Possibly more. (BERWICK, 1506/25, to
Admty.)

Force H.

RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD and
8 Destroyers ready by 1345. (S.O.
Force H, 1109/25 to Admty.)

/ Force H.

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Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)BERWICK, Action with Raider 25.12.40.
(Contd.)Force H.

Force H. proceeding high speed towards position 037° North 016° West. Eight destroyers will be retained in company or follow according to weather. (S.O. Force H, 1401/25 to Admty.)

Gibraltar Departure 1400/25 S.O. Force H in RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, SHEFFIELD, FAULKNER, FOXHOUND, FIREDRAKE, FORTUNE, DUNCAN, WISHART, HERO, HEReward, in accordance with Admiralty's 1038/25. (S.O.(I), Gib., 1448/25 to Admty., etc.)

Position of Convoy.

Are you in company with convoys. If so pass Admiralty's 1324 and 1403/25 to Cdre. of convoy and report position course and speed. (BERWICK, 1504/25, to FURIOUS, DUNEDIN).

Your 1324/25 and my 1401/25. Intend joining convoy. (S.O. Force H., 1514/25, to Admty.)

DUNEDIN, CITY OF CANTERBURY.

When rejoining convoy met CITY OF CANTERBURY who was proceeding to convoy rendezvous noon/26th 160 degs. "~~BERWICK~~" 290 miles. Convoy has scattered. Am taking her to position 041° N. 019° W. My position course and speed are 042° $30'$ N. 023 degs. $25'$ W., 113° nine knots. (DUNEDIN, 1531N/25).

FURIOUS to rejoin convoy.

Discontinue hunt. Rejoin convoy. (1 S.L. 1607/25, to FURIOUS)

Disposition of British Forces.

BERWICK's 0642/25. British Forces in this area at noon B.S.T./25 are as follows:-
 (A) In company with BERWICK, BONAVENTURE, DUNEDIN, ARGUS, FURIOUS, and convoy W.S.5A.
 (B) C.S.15 in NAIAD 50° $50'$ N. 18° $40'$ W. course 220 degs., 20 knts.
 (C) Force K to South Westward of Azores closing enemy.
 (D) CACHALOT approximate 40° N. 19° W. for U.K.
 (E) TRIDENT patrolling in vicinity of Azores.
 (F) DERBYSHIRE patrolling within 100 miles of 39° $20'$ N. 21° $40'$ W.
 (G) Force H left Gibraltar at 1345.
 (H) CATHAY and S.L.59 approximate 35° $20'$ N. 20° $30'$ W. course 354° 9 kts. (D.O.D. (F) 1619/25 to S. and A. in Areas A and B.)

Force K.

My 1046/25. Join BERWICK with Convoy W.S.5A. (D.O.D.(F) 1654/25 to F.O. Force K).

/ Force H.

MOST SECRET.

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Convoy W.S.5A. and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

BERWICK, Action with Raider 25.12.1940.
(Contd.)

Force H,
Force K,
"Excess"
W.S.5A.
Route.

My 1654/25 to F.O. Force K.
1. Force H is to rendezvous with BERWICK and escort W.S.5A until Force K joins the convoy.
2. Force K is then to escort W.S.5A to Freetown.
3. Force H with BONAVENTURE, DUNEDIN and ARGUS are then to escort "EXCESS" to Gibraltar.
4. Operation "EXCESS" is to be postponed 24 hours by S.O. Force H if necessary.
5. BERWICK if fit for the passage, is then to return to U.K., if not she is to proceed to Gibraltar.
6. Route for W.S.5A after passing 37° N. 16° W. is through a position 31° N. 21° W. and thence through position 12° 45' N. 19° 30' W. and as routed in 0218/17. (D.O.D.(F) 1810/25 to F.O's Forces H and K)

Signals,
Force K

Cancel my 1837/24. As from 0001 G.M.T./26 messages for S.O. Force K, Force K, FORMIDABLE NORFOLK, BONAVENTURE, FURIOUS, ARGUS, DUNEDIN, BERWICK, C.S.15. and NAIAD are to be routed in normal manner, ships maintaining normal W/T watch according to station in which they actually are. Reserve Block Delivery Groups are no longer to be used for these ships and/or authorities. (D.S.D.1830/25 to C.-in-C's and F.O's)

DORSETSHIRE
to join Force K.

My 1810/25.
BERWICK reports X turret out of action during engagement with German 8" cruiser today 25/12.
My 2159/22, para. 2 is cancelled.
Request you will sail DORSETSHIRE as soon as practicable to join Force K.
(D.O.D.(F) 1920/25 to C.in C. S.A.).

KENYA.
S.L.59.

KENYA is to rendezvous with and escort S.L.59, which consists of 27 ships at present escorted by CATHAY.
S.L.59 and S.L.S. 59 due in position 053° 40' N. 015° 00' W. at 0900 G.M.T. 1st and 3rd Jan. 1941 routed through 036° 00' N. 020° 20' W. 050° 00', 022° 30', 052° 00' 020° 30', speed 8 and 7 knots.

Azores S/M.

TRIDENT left vicinity of Lands End 0200/19/12 to relieve CACHALOT on patrol near Azores.
Route for TRIDENT latitudes north and longitudes west 049° 50' 010° 00', 048° 45', 011° 30', 039° 45', 016° 50', 037° 20', 022° 25', thence to patrol.

/ CACHALOT to



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MOST SECRET.

25.12.1940.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

BERWICK, Action with Raider 25.12.1940.
(Contd.)

CACHALOT
to support
W.S.5A.

Route for CACHALOT north and west of St. Miguel thence through following positions latitude north and longitude west 038° 25' 023° 25' 040° 20', 018° 00', 049° 10', 012° 55', diving by day north of 049° CACHALOT has orders to leave patrol by 24/12 and has orders to support convoy W.S.5A.

Information enemy 8-inch cruiser and W.S.5A was sent to you before sailing. (C.in C. W.A. 1922/25 to F.O. 10 C.S.)

See also p 764

EMPIRE TROOPER,
distress messages.

Following received via Landsend Radio in M.N.C.R. Any British Man of War from Z S E L (no trace in W.R.)

Any British Merchant Vessel 44° north 24° 32' west, require assistance as soon as possible to stand by me immediately. 1500 G.M.T.

Admiral Plymouth from Z S E L EMPIRE TROOPER send assistance to ? at once 43° 58' N. 20° 35' W "LARK" bearing 117 degs. 37 miles. 1715 G.M.T.

Any British Man of War from Z S E L Any British M.V.

CYCLAMEN standing by, his wireless transmitter out of action. 1648 G.M.T.

Admiral Plymouth from Z S E L EMPIRE TROOPER amend longitude to read 24° 15' W. my 1715 G.M.T. T.O.R. 1851. (C.in C. W.A. 2142/25 to Admty.)

BONAVENTURE

My position 041° 57' N. 023° 16' W. Proceeding to assistance of EMPIRE TROOPER. (BONAVENTURE, 1930/25).

Ship believed to be EMPIRE TROOPER requiring immediate assistance position at 1751 G.M.T. 43° 58' N. 24° 15' W. She reported CYCLAMEN with W/T out of action standing by at 1648 G.M.T. (C.in C. W.A., 2155/25 to BERWICK, BONAVENTURE, FURIOUS, ARGUS, DUNEDIN, GERANIUM, JONQUIL.

BERWICK,
position.

Admiralty 1810 (not to BONAVENTURE) My position noon 26/12 will be 039° 08' N. 021° 38' W. Am attempting to collect convoy who scattered on attack and were given this rendezvous by Commodore of convoy at 1540/24 since when it is improbable that the majority have received other orders. (BERWICK, 2245Z/25 to S.O's Force H and K, F.O.C.N.A.)

/ VELOX,
VIDETTE

25.12.1940.

Wednesday.

War Diary.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5A and Raider.

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BERWICK, Action with Raider 25.12.40.

(ADMIRAL HIPPER)

VELOX,
VIDETTE.

Admty. 1810/25. VELOX and VIDETTE sail as in (corrupt group) 1640/25. If not required request you will order them to return to Gibraltar and inform me. (F.O.C.N.A. 2342/25 to S.O. Force H).

Situation of
Convoy.

Information now available in Admiralty indicates that convoy has scattered. Part of the convoy may be making for position 41° N. 19 W. ordered in my 1403/25. Another portion probably the larger may be making for position 160 dgs. "~~XXXX~~" 290 miles, which is the convoy rendezvous ordered by Commodore for noon 26/12.

2. M.T. Ships for "~~XXXX~~" ^{"Excess"} may be proceeding direct to Gibraltar.
3. S.O. Force H is to take charge at the moment he considers appropriate.

4. Secret positions given to ships in convoy are:

43° 40' N. 23° 50' W. ~~BARK~~ "Lark".

34° 30' N. 26° 00' W. ~~PANSY~~ "Pansy".

34° 30' N. 14° 30' W. ~~ROBIN~~ "Robin".

5. Position "~~XXXX~~" has probably been compromised. (V.C.N.S. 2344/25 to S.O. Force H, BERWICK)

Summary of
Escorts.

At about 0930 B.S.T. 25/12 BERWICK, BONAVENTURE & DUNEDIN escorting military convoy W.S.5A fought a short action with enemy 8" cruiser in position 43° 20' N. 24° 20' W.

BERWICK & BONAVENTURE engaged and drove off enemy to Westward. Enemy was hit once for certain abaft funnel and probably more. BERWICK had 'X' turret put out of action.

Enemy also caused some damage to EMPIRE TROOPER who is now in company with CYCLAMEN and BONAVENTURE.

(D.D.O.D.(H) 0130/26 to Ships and Authorities.)

BONAVENTURE,
lost touch.

BERWICK's 0642. Have lost touch with enemy. Last seen at 0956Z in position 43.36 N., 25.12. W., steering 290°. Visibility poor. Am rejoining convoy. (BONAVENTURE, 1120/25 to Admty.)

W.S.5A
position.

Position course and speed of W.S.5A, 0642/25, 044° 05' N. 025° 05' W. 163 deg., 11 knots.

(F.O.C.N.A., 1130/25, to FORMIDABLE NORFOLK).

BERWICK's
position.

BERWICK's 0642. Mean of D.R. of FURIOUS and ARGUS made position of BERWICK 043° 20' N. 024° 20' W. at 0842 G.M.T. at which time she was seen to open fire.
/ My position



FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

BERWICK, Action with Raider 25.12.1940.
(Contd.)

BERWICK's position.
(contd.)

My position course and speed are 043° 20' N. 024° 50' W. 280° 18, ARGUS only now in company. Visibility half a mile. (FURIOUS, 1130Z/25, to Admty., etc.)

S/M CACHALOT to support convoy.

BERWICK, escorting convoy W.S.5A Southbound, sighted hostile 8" cruiser 0700/25 in position 44° N. 25° W. Steer to support convoy having regard to state of fuel. Enemy U Boats probably in vicinity of convoy. (V.A.S. 1138/25 to CACHALOT).

See p 762

NAIAD position.

Your 1046/25. NAIAD's position at 1200 B.S.T. 050° 50' North 018° 40' W. 220 degrees, 20 knots. Fuel remaining for 1500 miles at 20 knots. (F.O. 15 C.S. 1205/25 to Admty.)

There are indications of further U/B's on convoy route to eastward of Azores. (D.D.I.C. 1208/25 to BERWICK, BONAVENTURE, DUNEDIN, FURIOUS, ARGUS).

FURIOUS, ARGUS, position.

My position course and speed are 043° 19' 30" N., 025° 11' W. 290° 18. Am flying off reconnaissance now. ARGUS only in company. Intend to continue hunt. (FURIOUS, 1224/25, to BERWICK, BONAVENTURE, Force K, and Admty.)

Enemy Transmission.

Enemy unit transmitting on 19780 k/cs at 1214 B.S.T. probably unit reported in your 0642/25. (D.D.I.C. 1300/25 to BERWICK).

REPULSE and NIGERIA to support H.X.97 S.C.16.

BERWICK's 0642/25, 0650/25, and 0715/25 and Admiralty's 1026/25. Convoy H.X.97 and S.C.16 position course and speed at 0900/25 were 053° 40' North 037° 50' West 044 degrees, 8 knots, and 053° 00' North 02° 00' West, 070 degrees, 6½ knots respectively. REPULSE with NIGERIA screened by four destroyers is to proceed to give protection to both convoys. Destroyers are to part company in 025° West and return to Scapa. (C.in C. H.F., 1308/25 to REPULSE, R.A. (D) H.F.).

/ Convoy to steer for Gibraltar.

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Wednesday.



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Convoy W.S.5A and Raider.

BERWICK, Action with Raider 25.12.

Convoy to
steer for
Gibraltar.

Convoy and escorts steer for Gibraltar.
Further signal follows.
(D.O.D.(F) 1324/25 to BERWICK).

My 1324/25. Adjust route of W.S.5A to
pass through position $41^{\circ}\text{N.}, 19^{\circ}\text{W.}$
and position $37^{\circ}\text{N. } 16^{\circ}\text{W.}$
(V.C.N.S. 1403/25 to BERWICK).

FURIOUS,
Flying
abandoned.

Your 1350. Have had to abandon flying
operations owing to weather. Have
2 Swordfish from ARGUS on board.
My course and speed are $043^{\circ} 10' 025^{\circ}$
 $11', 115$ degs, 17, to rejoin convoy.
(FURIOUS, 1345/25 to Admty.)



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

Operation
"Ration".

Your 1849/24 (corrupt group) Force 'H' is at sea. No forces available. (F.O.C.N.A. 1346/25 to Admty).

Foreign
Legion
Movement

N.C.S.O. Duala 1616/24. I am remaining anchored off Base myself with CAP DES PALMES in company. TOUAREG expected p.m. 26/12 when convoy will sail. Intend (route). I understand engine defect will place CAPO OLMO out of action about a month. (DELHI, 1841/25 to C. in C. S.A.)

North Atlantic.

VINDICTIVE.
ISIS.
NORFOLK.
FORMIDABLE.
NORFOLK.

Departure 1000/25 VINDICTIVE, ISIS, ENCOUNTER to rendezvous with FORMIDABLE and NORFOLK in position 015° 00'N. 027° 00'W at 0900 zone + 1 30/12 thence to Freetown. Route. (F.O.C.N.A. 1000/25 to C. in C. S.A.)
RN cancelled 26/12. See p. 800

W.S.5A.

My 1330/24 HERO, HEReward, FIREDRAKE will be detached by S.O. Force H. and VELOX, VIDVETTE will be sailed from Gibraltar to make rendezvous. FIREDRAKE to be detached and ordered to Gibraltar immediately after passing Europa Point. Pass through position 036° 00'N 010° 00'W on passage to Gibraltar. (F.O.C.N.A. 1642/25 to ARGUS).

Daily Summary
operations.

1 routine Patrol. 1 presumably friendly French aircraft approached Rock in poor visibility at low altitude. Was shot at until approaches to aerodrome to land. For violation of Spanish territory was shot down into sea by Spanish. No trace. (200 Group, 1700/25 to Air Min).

A/C Shot Down.

Situation Report. At 1500 hours 25/12 Potez or Bloch type aircraft flying over Gibraltar without previous notice was shot at by our own and Spanish A.A. Guns and crashed into sea approx. quarter mile east of neutral ground. A boat was sent out but no sign of survivors. (Governor Gib. 2050/25 to W.O.).

/TRIUMPH.....



MOST SECRET.

25.12.40.
Wednesday.

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War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic (continued).

TRIUMPH.

Your 1720/24 (concerning TRIUMPH's proceeding to Malta) Yes.
1858/25 D.O.D. (F).

KINGSTON JACINTH
KINGSTON TURQUOISE
KINGSTON TOPAZ
SCOTTISH.

Intend sailing KINGSTON JACINTH KINGSTON TURQUOISE to U.K. in H.G. 49 29/12 and KINGSTON TOPAZ either to overtake H.G. 49 or in H.G. 50 11/1/41. Intend that Commander Brooks of KINGSTON JACINTH should exchange appointment with Lieutenant Commander Ayre of SCOTTISH in view of former's particular experience. (F.O.C.N.A. 1902/25 to F.O.C.N.P.).

South Atlantic.

QUEEN ADELAIDE.

Overdue shipping my 0945/21 QUEEN ADELAIDE arrived Capetown. (S.O.(I) Capetown 1035/25).

LLANDAFF.
HOPECROWN.
JCAYBANK.

? SPEYBANK

Overdue shipping LLANDAFF, HOPECROWN, due Capetown 20/12*JCAYBANK due Capetown 21/12 from U.K. not arrived. (S.O.(I) Capetown 1105/25).

* ? SPEYBANK

CORNWALL.
DEVONSHIRE.

CORNWALL to complete with fuel at Durban then proceed Simonstown. DEVONSHIRE after arrival Simonstown remain there until further orders. (C. in C. S.A. 1345n/25 to CORNWALL DEVONSHIRE).

CHARLES PRATT.

Overdue shipping. Panamanian CHARLES PRATT Aruba departure 6/12 due Freetown 21/12 has not arrived. (S.O.I. Freetown 1804/25) (Cancelled see 1747/26 U-Boat Campaign).

SAMNANGER.

Overdue shipping. SAMNANGER Oban departure 27/11 due 21/12. (1806/25)

DORSETSHIRE.
NEPTUNE.

DORSETSHIRE to return to Freetown with all despatch to arrive 0600/27. NEPTUNE return Freetown as convenient. (2253N/25)



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

N. Class
Destroyers.

I am most concerned at decision communicated in Admty. 1528/23 (see under Policy Home Commands). I am well aware of difficulties of situation in home waters in respect to destroyers and I have hitherto refrained from representing situation in Mediterranean in knowledge that reinforcements would reach me early in New Year and I hoped they would alleviate a situation which may shortly become critical. It does not seem to be realized destroyers commitments in Mediterranean have multiplied since entry of Greece into war. The troops in Libya necessitate a division being allocated to nothing else but maintenance and defence line supply. This commitment is likely to increase. Mounting machinery defects, and they spend too little time in harbour for these to be made good or even routine maintenance to be undertaken. The fact that apart from destroyers out of action due to machinery breakdown on (corrupt groups), it has not been possible to spare a destroyer to undergo refit since 11/8/40, speaks for itself. In light of these facts I earnestly hope decision communicated in Admty. 1538/23 may be reconsidered. (C. in C. Med 1105z/25 to Admty).

Air Report.

Tobruk.

Sollum.

Valona.

Cruiser attacked.

Operational Summary No. 198 up to 1200 hrs. 25/12. Egypt. Night 23/24 Dec. Reconnaissances of Bardia and Tobruk by Hurricane and Lysander reported no movements. 20 S.79's escorted by 4 CR.42's bombed Sollum hitting jetty and one lighter. Total of 40 army personnel killed and injured. No change in military situation Bardia. Greece. Day 24/12. 7 Blenheims attacked Valona aerodrome from 1800 feet Bombs burst among dispersed aircraft and aerodrome buildings causing clouds of black smoke from latter. After dropping bombs Blenheims machine gunned aerodrome and a cruiser in the harbour latter particularly heavily. All aircraft returned safely. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1143/25 to Air Min).

/W.S.5A.....



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Mediterranean. (contd).

W.S. 5A.

Your 1343/23. (a) Personnel for Malta. (details) CLAN MACDONALD, CLAN CUMMING, EMPIRE SONG, NORTHERN PRINCE. (b) Confirmed, except for Naval personnel referred to in Admiralty 2125/21. (c) Confirmed. (d) Confirmed. NORTHERN PRINCE also has 10 tons of ammunition for Suda Bay. (e) With the exception of deck cargo of cased aircraft all four ships are loaded for first discharge in Greece. (D.O.D.(F) 1315/25 to C. in C. Med).

From Admiral Sakellariou (Christmas Greetings).
(N.A. Athens 1332/25 to Admty).

Malta
Air
Report.

Combined services report Malta up to 1700 hours 25/12. All times G.M.T. No air operations undertaken. Clouds 10/10 1,500 feet and rain. No enemy activity over Malta today. No naval or military items.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Med. 1700/25 to Air Min).

REGENT
R. of P.

REGENT preliminary report. Nothing sighted in area G. 21 to 23/12. Sighted four convoys escorted by T.B.D. in area between 014 degs. East and 015 degs. East south of 033 degs. North. All ships empty. Keeping 15 to 20 miles north of coast and steering west. Indications are that RORQUAL's minefields are being avoided. Three unsuccessful long range attacks. Anti-submarine measures taken after last attack.
(V.A. Malta 1917/25 to C. in C. Med).

East Indies.

MOONSTONE.

Bombay arrival 0430Z/25 Trawler MOONSTONE.
(S.O. (I) Bombay 0431/25).

Small craft
Kenya.

Your 2037/26/9 paragraph 3 (i) 3 motor boats taken up for Kenya Coastal Patrol. Fourth is available for South Africa for purchase at 2500 pounds which is considered fair and reasonable. Intend to complete purchase and base this boat on Dar-es-Salaam. Governor Tanganyika concurs in principle and can probably provide crew. (ii. My 1834/13/9. Can decision now be given whether maintenance cost of this patrol is an Imperial or Colonial Government liability. (C. in C. E.I. 0604Z/25 to Adty).



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies (continued).

W.S. 4B.

Departure 25/12 0700z CARLISLE and KIMBERLEY 0745z SOUTHAMPTON all to join W.S. 4B.
(N.O.I.C. Aden 0746/25).

Kisimayu.

My 1006/23. Air photographs show there are indications that one ship has been considerably damaged between funnel and bridge on starboard side above water line but with no signs of listing. As description of damaged ship does not appear to correspond with YAMAYURI MARU it is not certain which the ship is. There has been considerable movement within anchorage since 6/12. Small lighters are shown astern several ships.
(C. in C. E.I. 1000Z/25 to Admty).

KANIMBLA.

N.O.1/c Mauritius 0728/23 On completion of fuelling KANIMBLA to proceed Durban, adjusting speed to arrive p.m. 31/12. (C. in C. E.I. 1004Z/25).

Kenya
Air
Report.

Operational Summary No. 198 to 1200 hours 25/12. Para 4 Kenya. Day 24/12. S.A.A.F. reconnoitred Furroly and Gorai. Bombs dropped at Gorai on fort and camouflaged area believed petrol dump.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1146/25 to Air Min).

B.N.11

Convoy B.N. 11 arrived Suez 25/12 less Panamanian ship URANIA and GREY COUNTY (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal 1032/25) (See Page 804.)
26.12.40.

B.S. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$

Sailing telegram 1500 gG.M.T. /25. Escort KINGSTON. Ships ORION, BATORY, SUFFOLK, STRATHEDEN, STRATHMORE, (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal 16072/25).

Air Report
Sudan.

A. 886 25/12 Ops Summary No. 198 up to 1200 hours 25/12. Para 3. Sudan. Reconnaissance of Dahlak Archipelago by 2 Blenheims reported 2 merchantships moored off north point Dahlak Island and landing ground on south point Naheleg Island. Small enemy supply ship between Naheleg and Norah Island unsuccessful bombed. All aircraft returned safely from operations 24/12.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1147/25 to Air Min.).

/Somali.....



MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (continued).

Somali Coast
Recco.

A.B.V. SAGITTA has completed a reconnaissance of Somali Coast from Bandar Kassim to Heis, in connection with Military Mission G (R). At Heis dhows were found also some stores on beach. A few rounds were fired at stores and house close by. Two naval casualties from machine gun fired at 1500 yards not serious.
(C. in C. E.I. 1440/25 to Admty).

Air Report
Aden.

Daily Intelligence Summary Number 196 and Operational Summary for 24 hours ending 1500 G.M.T. 25/12. 4 Blenheims 203 Squadron provided Fighter Escorts 3 for convoy BS 11 and 1 for convoy WS4B. 2 Blenheims 203 Squadron proceeded Kamaran for convoy duties. 5 Gladiators standing fighter patrol over Aden 0350 to 0750 G.M.T. No casualties.
(A.H.Q. Aden 1607/25 to Air Min).

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

Reference 1927/18A. Following are replies to para's indicated.
(C. in C. E.I. 0958Z/25 to Admty).

America & West Indies.

H.X. Convoy
and SEVERN.

Admty 1752/20. Intend SEVERN shall be lent SEABORNE for period she is based on Halifax as from date of arrival. She will have full outfit of torpedoes and will carry as much ~~spare~~ spare gear as practicable. Not intended to send any further spare personnel, torpedoes or gear for the present.
(V.A.S. 0014/25 to F.O.C. 35d B.S.).

BAYANO.

My 1445/20 Sailing delayed on account of fruit loading difficulties. BAYANO sailed 23/12.
(N.O.I.C. Kingston, 1101/25).

/COLUMBIA.....



MOST SECRET.

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25.12.1940.
Wednesday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America & West Indies. (contd).

COLUMBIA.
ST. FRANCIS.

Halifax arrival 25/12 COLUMBIA, ST. FRANCIS.
(1215/25.)

(S.O.I.) Halifax

VOLTAIRE.

If junction has not been made B.H.X. 98 is to conform to movements of H.X. 98 which has been ordered to turn round and may be directed to proceed to wait at Halifax or Concepcion Bay Newfoundland.

(C. in C. A. & W.I. 1632/25 to VOLTAIRE).

Canadian
Destroyers.

Your 1257/24. Am deeply grateful.
A. Most acceptable Xmas gift.
(1st Sea Lord 2225/25 to C.N.S. Canada).

Australia & New Zealand.

Nauru,
raider attack.
by Raider B (KOMET)

My 1835Z/24 Hopkins considers ~~HAURU~~ Nauru in imminent danger of attack and ~~HAURU~~ W/T operator disloyal. Raiders used big lagoon Marshall Island for transferring fuel, guesses base in Ellice Islands. Reasons for these assumptions by Hopkins are being ascertained. Three raiders in close company spread to maximum visibility in day time and close in at night.
(A.C.N.B. 1241/25 to Admty).

Raider
Nauru,
Publicity.

My 1835Z/24 propose publicity release of rescue story on following lines.
(d)(Text of proposed statement).
(A.C.N.B. 1243Z/25 to Admty).

"Ship from Australia has rescued 500 persons from a small Pacific Island who they had been landed on Dec 21st from enemy raiding force" include 70 women & 7 children

Your 1835/24. Details of raiders and their cruises are urgently required. Request arrangements may be made for early interrogation of survivors by a naval officer.
(D.D.I.C. 1822/25 to A.C.N.B.).



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MOST SECRET. 773

25.12.1940.
Wednesday.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

LA PLATA,
HEINRICH ARP.

German ships LA PLATA and HEINRICH ARP
left Bilbao for unknown destination
at approximately noon 24/12.
(D.D.I.C. 0821/25 to F.O.C.N.A).
(V.A.S. 1223/25).

25.12.1940.

Wednesday.

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War Diary.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.EVERLEIGH.

(British 5222 tons) 58° 36' N., 21° 58' W.
 gunned by S/M course N. 1212/25
 (Valentia Radio 1214/25).
 SSSS 58° 47' N. 21° 08' W. chased by S/M.
 (Portishead Radio 1305/25).
 58° 27' N. 21° 00' W. still chased and
 gunned by S/M 1430/25.
 (Valentia Radio 1435/25).
 Following read SSSS 59° 20' N, 21° 20' W.
 Still chased by S/M (Wick Radio 1550/25).
 Following read SSSS 59° 36' N., 21° 58' W.
 gunned by S/M 1212/25 (Plymouth W/T
 recd. 1319/25).
 Your 1118/25, your 1908/21 received
 and (corrupt group) has left convoy
 returning to Halifax through
 possible position of EVERLEIGH.
 (RANPURA 1620/25 to C.in C. W.A.)

ARACATARA
 (torpedoed 29/11).

Following from St. John New Brunswick
 (begins) s.s. French DJURDJURA arrived
 with 15 survivors British ARACATARA
 torpedoed 29/11 in 057° 08' N. 020° 50' W.
 Reported lost and survivors have not had
 an opportunity of informing relative
 until now. Capt's boat was only one
 saved. (N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1359/25 to
 Admty.)

Submarines Reported.Enemy Unit.

By D/F on 7920 k/cs at 1027 B.S.T.
 German U-Boat in vicinity of convoy
 W.S.5A. (D.D.I.C. 1116/25)

My 1116/25. This was possibly a surface
 unit. (D.D.I.C. 1841/25).

1027.

D/F. German U-boat near W.S.5A.
 (C.in C. W.A. 1116/25).

1240.

AQUAMARINE reported S/M in 062° 27' N,
 015° 21' W. (A.C.O.S. 1407/25).

1208.

Indications of further U/B's on convoy
 route to eastward of Azores (D.D.I.C.
 1208/25) (See also Convoy and Raider).

Estimated U-Boat
dispositions.

Italian.

1 in Madeira area
 1 in Canaries area.
 2 near or to eastward of the Azores.
 1 arriving Gironde this afternoon from
 south-southwesterly direction.
 1 about 45° 20' N. 5° - 6° W. bound for
 Gironde.
 4 between southern part of N.W. Approaches
 and Bordeaux.

/ German.



War Diary.

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U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarines Reported.

Estimated U Boat
dispositions.

(Contd.)

German.

1 to south westward of Freetown.

1 in vicinity of 43°N. 25° W.

1 about 48° N., 8° W. bound for Lorient.

1 between 57° N. and 59° N. 17° W. and
20° W.

3 in area 57° N. to 60° N. near 20° W.

1 N.E. of Muckle Flugga homeward bound.

(D.D.I.C. 1325/25).

1. The arrangement of the War Diary is as follows:-

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| HOME COMMANDS | - Policy |
| (Classification | - Defence of United Kingdom |
| by subjects) | - Movements |
| | - Operations |
| | - Allied Air Activity |
| | - Enemy Air Activity |
| | - Mining |
| | - Enemy Intelligence |
| | - U-Boats |
| | - Navigational |
| | - Technical |
| | - Casualties and Defects |
| | - Shipping and Convoys |
| FOREIGN STATIONS | - North Atlantic |
| (Classification | - South Atlantic |
| by stations) | - Mediterranean |
| | - East Indies |
| | - America and West Indies |
| | - Australia and New Zealand |
| | - U-Boat Campaign |

Additional subject headings are sometimes employed temporarily, e.g. when an important operation is in progress.

2. The following volumes should be used to supplement the War Diary: the dates given in brackets are those on which the series held by War Diary commences:-

- (a) Movements of H.M. Ships (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (23 February 1940).
- (b) Western Approaches (daily) Situation Reports (1 September 1943).
- (c) Dispositions and Movements (Foreign Stations) (1 September 1943).
- (d) Convoy Returns (Positions of convoys and composition of escorts, positions of independent ships and H.M. ships: from Combined Plot) (1 March 1941).
- (e) Daily Convoy Summary (Report made by Admiralty to Connav, giving arrivals and departures, with composition of convoy) (21 June 1943).
- (f) Air Staff Operational Summary (prepared by Air Ministry War Room) (1 July 1941, No.222)
- (g) Daily Operations Report for First Lord (prepared by Operations Division, Naval Staff) (13 September 1939).
- (h) List of abbreviations.
- (i) List of Convoy letters.

WAR DIARY.26.12.40.
Thursday.SITUATION REPORT.Home Commands.

In case the Raiding Cruiser now in the Atlantic should try to return to Germany by way of Denmark Strait, C.S.18 in MANCHESTER has been ordered to proceed with NIGERIA to support LETITIA and CHITRAL in the Strait.

British Air Activity.

Special Air Patrols were flown early this morning to the Eastward and Westward of the Faroe Islands; an Air Patrol is now to be flown daily before noon to search the area North of the Shetlands; and the usual Routine Patrols were all flown today. Air escort was provided during today for 16 Convoys.

Enemy Air Activity.

A long-range F.W. Aircraft flew due west today from Bordeaux to as far as 20° W, which is believed to be the most westerly position yet reached by enemy A/C from that port. Enemy A/C made only coastal flights off our South and S.W. coasts.

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.26.12.40.
Thursday.SITUATION REPORT.FOREIGN STATIONS.Raider and Convoy W.S.5.A. (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

During 26/12 units of the escort of Convoy W.S.5.A. searched for the troopships, which had scattered on the appearance of the 8-inch gun cruiser attacked by the BERWICK on 25/12. Force H and Force K were making for the Convoy. Senior Officer Force K in FORMIDABLE with NORFOLK reported his position at 0800 N as 40.05N 23.05W and that he intended trying to collect the convoy at the Commodore's noon, 26th R/V (viz. 39° 8'N., 21° 38'W) and escort to 37° N., 16° W. The visibility was poor, (3 miles).

DERBYSHIRE (A.M.C. South Atlantic) was ordered by S.O.Force H at 0801 to proceed to the assistance of EMPIRE TROOPER, believed damaged in 43.28'N., 24.15W., at 1751Z/25. CYCLAMEN with W/T out of action had been reported standing by her at 1648Z/25. At 1046/26, BONAVENTURE then in 41.57 N., 23.16W., reported she also was proceeding to assist EMPIRE TROOPER.

At 1130/26. S.O.Force K reported that his position at 1200 N., was 39.16 N., 22.14 W. Visibility had improved to one mile. None of the Convoy had then been met, and flying was impracticable.

At 1143/26. KENYA which had left Plymouth at 2050/25 to meet and escort Convoy S.L.59 reported an aircraft, which became corrupted into a ship of the DEUTSCHLAND class in 47° N., 11° W. As it seemed probable that the Convoy was proceeding to a French port, Admiralty requested C.in C. Western Approaches to arrange a destroyer night attack, but this was subsequently cancelled.

At 1342, Admiralty in response to a request from S.O.Force H, instructed ships of W.S.5.A. by broadcast to steer for position 334 degrees "~~R-111~~" 166 miles. (This is the Convoy R/V in 39° 8'N., 21° 38'W.)

At 1245Z/26, BONAVENTURE intercepted the German S.S. BADEN (which left Teneriffe on the night of 15/16/12) in 44 N., 25.07 W., (about 60 miles N.W. of position where BERWICK met the raider). BADEN was set on fire and abandoned by her crew, and BONAVENTURE finished her off with a torpedo.

/At

MOST SECRET.26.12.40.
Thursday.WAR DIARY.SITUATION REPORT.Foreign Stations.Raider and Convoy W.S.5.A. (Contd.) (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

At 1721, S.O. Force H ordered the force searching to report at 2200 the number of merchant ships in company, and received the following replies:-

FURIOUS and ARGUS, 40.07N., 18.16W.

No Merchant Ships.

BERWICK. No merchant ships.

Force K NORTHERN PRINCE.

CLAN MACDONALD.

EMPIRE SONG.

BONAVENTURE. 43.20N., 22.38W.)

No merchant ships, making with EMPIRE TROOPER, a total of 4 ships reported.

BERWICK reported at 2302Z/26 that she considered it necessary to proceed to Gibraltar to make good underwater damage and refuel, having lost 300 tons due to punctured tank.

Vichy French.

MARON (ocean boarding vessel) intercepted the trawler JOSEPH DUHAMEL in 34.30N., 15.22W, from Port Saint Pierre for Casablanca, with a cargo of fish and sent her into Gibraltar under armed guard.

South Atlantic.

It has been approved to carry out repairs to CARNARVON CASTLE at Simonstown. The Free French Foreign Legion left Cameroons River this evening, in CAP DES PALMES and TOUAREG, escorted by DELHI.

WAR DIARY.

26.12.40.

Thursday.SITUATION REPORT.Foreign Stations.Mediterranean.

Temporary repairs to the COVENTRY (torpedoed 13/12) have been completed at Alexandria and it is intended she shall proceed to Malta at the end of the month for permanent repairs.

China.

Permission will probably be given in the next few days (C.in C. China reports) to resume sailing between Indo-China and Hong Kong and Singapore.

Australia.

The raider ^{supply ship} TEIYO MARU (ex KULMERLAND) is reported short of fuel and is thought to be proceeding to Japan to replenish. She is said to have Japanese markings and to carry a seaplane. (K 810)

It is reported from Emisau Island (Bismarck Archipelago) that survivors landed there are from 10 ships sunk or captured by enemy raiders, three of which are known to have been operating.

At 1940Z/26. Nauru Island 00.15S., 167.00 E., off which shipping was attacked on 8/12, was heavily shelled by an enemy raider. Much damage was done to the jetties and oil storage tanks, but the W/T station and power station are intact. Private houses were not fired on. It was at first reported that the raider had Japanese markings, but a later report from the Commonwealth Naval Board stated that she flew the Nazi star at the gaff.



War Diary.

26. 12. 40.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

M. A/S. B's.
Proposed
allotment.

Admiralty 1753/8. M A/S BS 60 and 52 will be ready for service in one week. Intend allotting both boats to Fowey as operational base. Remainder of 4th M A/S B Flotilla completes hull strengthening end January. Four more boats will then be allotted to Fowey and three to Portland with senior officer of Flotilla at Portland. M A/S BS 60 and 52 can then be taken in hand for Hull strengthening. (R.A.C.F. 1013/26 to Adty.)

"Deluge".
BRIDGE.

Defence of U.K.

At 1130/26 (D.C.1130/26.) At 2330/26 (D.C. 0002/27.)

Movements.

AURORA.

E.T.A. Scapa 1900/26. (N.O.I.C. Oban 0600/26) Arrived Scapa 1956/26.(A.C.O.S. 2045/26.)

KELLY.

Arrived Scapa 0727. (A.C.O.S. 0820/26.)

KELVIN.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 0908/26.) Sailed to rejoin KENT. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1352/26.)

WITCH.

My 1359/25. Sailed. E.T.A. Liverpool 1900 (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1103/26.)

VENOMOUS.

Your 0852/26. Sailed. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1110/26.)

LEAMINGTON)
CHURCHILL)

Ordered to R/V with WOLFE and CILICIA at 0900/28 for inward Escort to Minches. Thence to Scapa. (F.O.C.N.P. 1118/26 to WOLFE.)

BIRMINGHAM.

Sailed. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1120/26.)

4 M/V's.

Intend sail 4 M/V's escorted by A/S Trawlers LORD ESSENDEN and RUBY from Needles at 1715/26. E.T.A. Dartmouth 0815/27. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1227/26.)



War Diary.

26. 12. 40.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements.

- COTSWOLD Arrived 1256. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1302/26.)
- VANSITTART. Sailed 1000 E.T.A. 0930/27. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1347/26 and 1556/26.) Arrive Rame Head at 1030/27. (C. in C. W.A. 1754/26 to VANSITTART.)
- LETITIA. Arrived and sailed for Patrol 1630 G.M.T. (F.O. Iceland 1425/26.)
- CILICIA. Arrived 1300 G.M.T. (F.O. Iceland 1425/26.)
- HONNINGSVAAG. Returned to Reykjavik. (F.O. Iceland 1425/26)
- Northern Patrol. Trawler Lines today. 4 Trawlers. (A.C.O.S. 1536/26.)
- KENT. }
KIPLING } Proceed to Milford Haven forthwith.
KELVIN. } KIPLING to proceed with all despatch and complete with fuel. (C. in C. W.A. 1554/26 to KENT, KIPLING, KELVIN.)
Cover 11/2 - See p. 791.
- ROXBOROUGH. }
RIPLEY. } Sailed. E.T.A. Rame Head 1630/27. (F.O.I.C. Belfast 1600/26.)
- QUORN. }
HOLDERNESS. } Sailed 1657. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1707/26.)
- DOUGLAS.
KEPPEL. Arrived Scapa 1644. (A.C.O.S. 1740/26.)
- MAURITIUS. Your 1205/26. E.T.A. Duncansby Head 0930/28. (MAURITIUS 1948/26 to R.A.D.H.F.)
- VERSATILE. Your 2053. Lights arranged. Do not arrive Nore Light Vessel before 1430. (C. in C. Nore 2205/26 to VERSATILE.)
- NIGERIA. R/V with MANCHESTER at 1200/28 in 63° 50' N. 24° 40' W. If not met by 1300 proceed to Reykjavik and fuel. (F.O.C. 18th.C.S. 2256/26 to NIGERIA.)
- MANCHESTER. Sailed from Scapa (A.C.O.S. 2336/26.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26. 12. 40.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Operation "Rubble"
RUBBLE.Operations.
Particulars. (A.C.N.S. H. 1056/26). See
Operations Volume.Ostend to
Hook.Weather permitting M.T.B's to operate
tonight as in my 1128/24. (C. in C.
Nore 1126/26.)Operation
P.V.1.To be carried out tonight between 2200 and
0200 by one A/C carrying Flares only.
Patrol 0 to keep to Northward of No. 5
Buoy during this period. (C. in C. Nore
1234/26.) My 1234. Three M.Ls will leave
Yarmouth at 1600 to-day arriving 5 miles
East of No. 5. buoy at 1800. M.Ls. will
patrol 5 miles East of Q.Z.S. 30 between
latitudes of Aldeburgh Light Float and
No. 5. buoy and will show minor war vessels
recognition signals if in touch with
enemy in vicinity of friendly warships or
convoy. (C. in C. Nore 1440/26 to F.O.I.C.
Harwich.)Operation N.C.M.T.B's 69 and 70 with Trawlers ALEXANDRITE
and BOTANIC will operate from 2100/26 till
0045/27 between No. 1 Buoy and (?) Buoy
on anti-minelaying Operation NC.
(V.A. Dover 1730/26 to Adty.)Raider
Patrol
in
Denmark
Strait.Admiralty 0130/26. Enemy Cruiser may
attempt to return to Germany. Movements
of enemy A/C indicate that passage may be
made through Denmark Strait.2. Patrol Lines in Denmark Strait are
occupied as follows:-

N.P. 41. LETITIA. N.P. 42 CHITRAL.

3. Ø.S.18 in MANCHESTER and NIGERIA are
to proceed to R/V as ordered by C.S.18 and
then to operate in support of LETITIA and
CHITRAL with the object of intercepting
the enemy should he attempt the passage
of the Denmark Strait.4. Fuel is available from the Oiler
ROSEWOOD at Reykjavik.5. My 1203/25 and Admiralty 1533/25 have
been passed to C.S.18. (C. in C. H.F.
2017/26. to C.S. 18.)

War Diary.

26. 12. 40.

Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Patrols.

Patrol ~~XXXX~~ will not be flown today as area is covered by SA.1A. (C. in C. Rosyth 1128/26.)

Following Patrol ~~XXXX~~ ^{"Unst"} will be flown daily before Noon by Walrus A/C from Sullom Voe: 60° 50' N. 1° 17' W., 62° 3' N. 1° 49' W., 61° 58' N. 2° 9' W 60° 54' N. 0° 46' W. (C. in C. Rosyth 1756/26.)

Search for
Unidentified
Ship.

Sunderlands on Patrol ~~XXXX~~ ^{"Thaggy"} and on Shetlands to 64° 35' N. Patrols are being diverted to position of Ship reported in NORTHERN GIFT 0740/26. (C. in C. Rosyth 1218/26 to F.O. 1st. B.C.S.) 2 Sunderlands leave Sullom Voc. about 0930/27 to carry out parallel Track, Search of area between 65° 40' N, 64° N., 3° W., and 4° E to search for Ship. (C. in C. Rosyth 1826/26.)

Bordeaux

217 Sqn., to attack tonight S/M's in No. 1. Basin at Bordeaux. Alternative Target, Power Station and Dockyard at Brest. (H.Q.C.C. 1245/26 to 15 Group, St. Eval.)

Lorient.

53 and 59 Sqdns., to attack tonight S/M's and Naval Dockyards at Lorient (H.Q.C.C. 1246/26 to 16 Group, Thorney Island.)

Enemy Air Activity.Faroe Islands.

Enemy A/C flew low across Stroms. AM/24 and fired on willagers at Hoyvik with cannon. One civilian slightly wounded. (O.C. Troops, Faroe Islands 1340/26 to War Office.)

Mining.

Operation.
G.Q.2.

My 1348/4 and 1836/23. Operation will be carried out on night of 29/12. (C. in C. W.A. 1134/26 to ADVENTURE.)

Liverpool.

Precautions for Ships arriving. (C. in C. W.A. 1236/26.) (C. in C. W.A. 1701/26, to KENT.)



War Diary.

26. 12. 40.Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Clearance of Minefield.

Approximately three quarters of the minefield south of Coninbeg light vessel has now been cleared. 30 mines cut and 11 exploded to date. Anticipated 15 hours sweeping should complete clearance and subsequent high percentage searches. (M/S. 11. 1420/26 to Adty.)

MERCURY.

(Paddle Minesweeper) Sunk by own Mine at 2115/25.
See Casualties.

Aberdeen Area.
War Channel,
searches.

Weather permitting:-
Intend sailing 12th M/S Group. Search War Channel W. Side to Scurdy Ness $090^{\circ} 10'$, E.T.A. 2359/26, then return searching ahead of E N 47 as far as Buchan Ness $090^{\circ} 6'$. E.T.A. 0800/27. 19th M/S Group R/V Buchan Ness $090^{\circ} 6'$ 0700/27. Search ahead of E N 47 as far as Kinnaird Head $000^{\circ} 6'$ thence $000^{\circ} 8'$ to lat. $57^{\circ} 55' N$. E.T.A. 1400/27/12, then return searching ahead of W N 59 as far as Buchan Ness $090^{\circ} 6'$ E.T.A. 2200/27/12.
(N.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1533/26 to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Plymouth.

Since my 1951/24. One Mine detonated at 1130/25 in 225° Rame Head 4 miles, close to M.A/S.B. 50. (C. in C. W.A. 1641/26.)

M.A.C.5.
(M/S Attendant
Craft.)

Was ordered to proceed at 0900/26 via Swept channels speed 15 knots with the Admiralty Salvage Officer on board to the wreck of s.s STADT MAASTRICHT. She was last seen by M/S trawler STELLA RIGEL proceeding from the Rough buoy to South Shipwash buoy. One heavy under water explosion was reported by two A/P vessels at 1000 in the vicinity of the N E Gunfleet. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1659/26 to C. in C. Nore.) Regret considered lost with all hands. 2 Officers including Salvage Officer and 7 Ratings lost. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1126/27 to C. in C. Nore.)

YSTROOM.

(Dutch, 400 Tons.) Sunk by Mine at about 1530/25 in about $53^{\circ} 57' N$. $3^{\circ} 25' W$. No casualties. Mine probably acoustic. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1709/26.)

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26. 12. 40.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Mining.Operation N.C.

See Operations.

Londonderry Area.

Operation completed. (5th M/S Flotilla 1901/26 to Adty.)

LADY CONNAUGHT.

(British, 2234 Tons) Explosion 10 miles N.W. of Bar. Requires immediate help. (Seaforth Radio 2349/26.) Damaged by Mine at 0048/27 in 53° 37' 12" N. 3° 43' 12" W. No casualties. Ship being docked AM/28. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1505/27)

Unknown Ship.Enemy Intelligence.

In 62° 30' N. 16° 19' W. steering 050° at 18 knots. (NORTHERN GIFT 0740/26 to S.O. Trawlers N.P.)

"Maggie"

 G.204 on ~~Maggie~~ Patrol diverted to search at 1300 hours in 63° 28' N. 13° 40' W, reports nothing seen except one vessel carrying all lights at 1735 in 60° 30' N. 5° 36' W. steering South at 10 knots (Pitreavie 2010/26 to Adty.)
Enemy Unit.

Position of probable Surface Craft at 1246/26 was 52° N. 3° E. D/F unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 1333/26 to C. in C. Nore.) At 1640/26 position was 51° 50' N. 2° 20' E. D/F unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 1713/26 to C. in C. Nore.)

E. Boats.

There are sure indications of E-Boat activity in Southern North Sea tonight. (C. in C. Nore 2051/26.)

War Diary.26. 12. 40.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Casualties & Defects.TENACITY.

(Rescue Tug) Disabled by defect in steering-gear. Repairs in hand here. (M.O.R.T. Campbeltown 1801/26.)

MERCURY.

(Paddle Minesweeper) S.O. 11th.M/S. Flotilla reports MERCURY sunk at 2115 after damage by own Mine. No casualties (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 0905/26 to Adty.) Board of Inquiry being held; but appears MERCURY damaged by Mine in sweep at 1730, was taken in tow, and sank later.. (F.O.I.C. Milford Haven 1502/26 to C.in C. W.A.)

VESPER..

My 1514/23. Delayed by defects. Probably sailing 28/12. (C. in C. W.A. 1450/26 to C. in C. Nore.)

PELICAN.

Collided with Trawler CAPE PORTLAND at 0024/26 near Newarp Light Vessel. Stem turned and fore-peak flooded, but consider can continue present Convoy duties. (PELICAN 1826/26 to Adty.)

TRUE ACCORD.

(H.M.Drifter.) Lost in collision with H.M. Trawler SARONTO. All crew safe. (F.O.I.C. Yarmouth. Recd. 0991/26.)

MOST SECRET.26.12.1940.
Thursday.
War Diary.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping.

- Convoys. Positions (D.T.D. 1312/26 to C. in C. H.F.).
- S.L. 58. Not met. E.T.A. Lough Foyle 1130. (LA MALOUINE, 0650/26 to N.O.I.C. Londonderry) Arrived less 3 ships (names) (N.C.S.O. Oban 1731/26).
- O.B.M. 266. 1640/27. ROSEMARY. 5. (N.C.S.O. Milford H. 0915/26).
- H.X. 95 B. Anchoring Moelfre Bay today, entering harbour 0900/27. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0940/26).
- F.S. 70. 11 ships, 2 additional from Middlesbrough (F.O.I.C. Tyne 0943/26).
- F.N. 66. All Tyne ships arrived except STAAD MAASTRICHT (F.O.I.C. Tyne 0944/26).
- O.G. 48. 1230 on 29/12. Route (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1025/26).
- W.N. 60. 0920/26. BLACKFLY and BERKSHIRE. 4 ships (N.C.S.O. Greenock 1053/26, 1055/26).
- F.N. 68. Postponed 24 hours, fog. VANITY and WESTMINSTER return to Sheerness if visibility permits (C. in C. Ncre 1058/26).
- H.X. 98. Proceed with H.X. 98 to Sydney C.B. and await further orders.
- S.C. 17. Keep well clear of S.C. 17 which sailed Halifax 1100 A.S.T/23 (route). (D.T.D. 1129/26 to LACONIA).
- S.C. 16. Route from R.V. (D.T.D. 1215/26 to C. in C. W.A.).
- O.B. 264. Sailed 1300 approx. /24. 2 ships, 10 knots. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1301/26 1302/26).
- F.N. 67. Arrived (N.C.S.O. Methil 1313/26).
- E.N. 68. My 1217/20. **F.N.** 68 postponed 24 hours. F.N. 69 cancelled. Escort for E.N. 68 PELICAN and FOWEY. (C. in C. Rosyth 1313/28). *See also p. 792*

/O.B. 267:.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26.12.1940.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping.Convoys. (contd).O.B. 267.

1300 on 30/12. Route (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1359/26 to Admty).

S.C. 17.

Your 1256/26. My 1403/23. R.V. date is 5/1 (C.O.A.C. Halifax to Admty 1451/26).

C.E. 20.

Sailed 1500 6 M.V's and French ship CONGRE. Request you arrange for air protection from daylight 27/12 and bombing of gun positions tonight. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1553/26 to C. in C. Nore).

W.N. 61.

Code "Rusty" 2100/28. Trawlers RUMBA, SALTERELLO 16 ships. (N.C.S.O. Greenock 1701/26).

E.N. 47.

1830/26 PAYNTER, ARCTIC EXPLORER, additional escort WOLFHOUND 31 ships 1 ship for Clyde (N.C.S.O. Methil 2014/26, 2016/26).

O.B. 264.

Sailed HEATHER to overtake O.B. 264. (F. O.I.C. Greenock 0545/26).

H.X. 96.*See also p. 791*My 1750/25 H.X. 96. 24 hours early. Join by 1300/26 convoy has been instructed to steer through 60° 00' N 15° 00' W if not met at R/V. (C. in C. W.A. 0852/26 to ROCHESTER, WILD SWAN, VENOMOUS, FLEUR DE LYS, GARDENIA).
Commdre H.X. 96 did not receive my 1758/25. Now has been ordered to pass through 58° 00' N, 9° 30' W and 56° 30' W 8° 40' W estimate convoy will pass through first position 1300/27. (C. in C. W.A. 1911/26 to ROCHESTER).
Not met. My position course and speed 060° 33' W 281° 12 knots (ROCHESTER 1601/25 to C. in C. W.A.).O.B.O. 265.

0400/27 escort VISCOUNT, 13 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1548/26).

F.N. 68. F.S. 72.
F.N. 70. F.S. 73.)

Additional escort for F.N. 68, F.S. 72 GUILLEMOT, F.N. 70 F.S. 73 SNAPDRAGON (F.O.I.C. Harwich, 1550/26 to GUILLEMOT).

O.B. 266.

My 1626/22. For O.B. 268 read O.B. 266 (C. in C. W.A. 1730/26).

/O.B. 265.....

MOST SECRET.
War Diary.26.12.40.
Thursday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping.Convoys (contd).O.B. 265.

Sailed VANQUISHER, WHITEHALL, RHODODENDRON escort for O.B. 265 (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1830/26). Sailed GENTIAM to overtake O.B. 265. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2048/26).

C.E. 20.

Portsmouth to Southend (N.C.S.O. Portsmouth 1637/26).

E.N. 47.

My 1604/26 BEN-MY-CHREE, VIMY e.t.a. Aberdeen 0900/27. 12th M/S Group sailed. Aberdeen 1730/26 then to Scurdy Ness E.t.a. midnight then ahead E.N. 47 to Buchanness where 19th M/S Group relieves. (C. in C. Rosyth 1638/26).

Troop Convoys.W.S.5B.

Request you will sail ships in accordance with Admiralty's 1539/25 arranging air cover and reporting expected time of arrival at destinations. (C. in C. W.A. 1244/26 to F.O.I.C. Liverpool, Belfast.)

OTTAWA.
EUMAEUS.
ABCSSO.
SALOPIAN.
GARLAND.

Admiralty's 2147/25 OTTAWA is to escort EUMAEUS and ABOSSO from Liverpool. GARLAND is to escort SALOPIAN from Clyde. F.O.I.C. Liverpool is to sail and route convoy and arrange R/V with Clyde section. F.O.C.N.P. is requested to arrange R/V for inward escort of A.M.C.'s by OTTAWA, GARLAND if convenient. (C. in C. W.A. 1630/26).

W.S.5B.

(Arrangements for docking and loading) (D. of S.T. 2104/26 to D.S.T.O. Liverpool).

4.M.V's

My 1227/26. Sailed 1800/26 (C. in C. Portsmouth 1812/26).

5 M.V's

Intend sailing 1730/27 for Needles Channel. E.t.a. Needles 0830/28. Request escort. (N.C.S.O. Portsmouth 2337/26).

H.X. 100

Your 1256/24 Date of sailing and R.V. (N.C.S.O. Bermuda 1109/26 to Admty). (C.O.A.C. Halifax to Admty 1114/26).

H.X. 99.

Sailing telegram (list of ships) (S.C.N.O. Halifax, 1425/26).

/Sailing.....



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

26.12.1940.

Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping.

H.X. 99.
(contd).

Sailing telegram 1300 A.S.T. 26/12
Escorts, ALAUNIA/PORPOISE, H. H X 99,
AURANIA
(C.O.A.C. Halifax 1420/26).

S.C. 16.

Meet S.C. 16 15 ships unescorted
1000/28 068 54° 05'N. 17° 00'W. 068°
6½ knots then through 54° 30'N.
15° 15'W. 56° 10'N. 15° 30'W. 55° 50'N.
09° 00'W. Convoy form two columns
for passing through North Channel after
passing 08° 00'W.
(C. in C. W.A. 1428/26 to ACTIVE).

To avoid U-Boat to southward of track
alter course at daylight to regain
56° 00'N then steer 270° to 18° West
thence to 54°N. 25° 00'W. Inform
ROYAL CROWN destination changed to
New York.

(C. in C. W.A. 2126/26 to ACTIVE).

S.L. 58.

Adjust speed to arrive Bar not earlier
than 0930/27 Ships are not to anchor
at Bar Light Vessel.
(N.O.I.C. Liverpool 1430/26 to
ANEMONE for Commodore).

PACIFIC GROVE.

Have S.S. PACIFIC GROVE ex H.X. 95
for Liverpool. Request Oban escort of
next E.N. convoy be detailed to R/V
in proximity of Lismore Lighthouse and
that time of R/V be signalled to Oban
to avoid delay.
(N.C.S.O. Oban 1605/26).

KENT.
KELVIN.
KIPLING.

Cancel my 1554 re proceeding to Milford
Haven. Proceed to Plymouth in
accordance with previous orders.
(C. in C. W.A. 1658/26).

H.X. 96.

See p 789

After passing through 60 degs. 00 mins
N. 13 degs 00 W. steer to pass through
58 degs. 00 mins N. 09 degs. 30 mins W.
thence to 56 degs. 30 mins N. 08 degs.
40 Mins W. Escorts are informed that
I estimate you will be in first
position about 1300/27.
(C. in C. W.A. 1908/26 to Commodore,
NORWEGIAN).

/E F.N. 68.....

MOST SECRET.

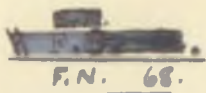


War Diary.

26.12.1940.
Thursday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (contd).



* *Cmdre Lieut. Com. Lundy R.N.R.*
in EMPIRE CONFIDENCE.
(Confirmed from Convoy Pack)

Your 1801. Remain with anchored ships until F.N. 68 passes you then order them to weigh and enter proceeding with F.N. 68 yourselves. Convoy F.N. 68 Cmdre Lieut. Com. Lundy in s.s. EMPIRE PIGEON. Weigh 0900/27 Ships to date 31. Corvette escort GUILLEMOT.
(C. in C. Nore 2220/26 to FOWEY).

Your 1348. Do not allow any ships to anchor West of the Nore Light Vessel. Inform Commodore he is not to weigh tomorrow until ordered. Speed is to be 9 knots between East Cant and Garrison Point.
(C. in C. Nore 1431/26 to PELICAN, FOWEY).

Your 1435 to PELICAN. If visibility allows, anchor ships in swept channel between B 3 and East Spile. Otherwise in swept channel as necessary. Report when ships are anchored.
(C. in C. Nore 1535/26 to FOWEY).

Routes.

From South Atlantic - (See FOREIGN STATIONS, S. Atlantic).

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26.12.1940.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Convoy W.S. 5A and Raider.(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40).Home Fleet Dispositions.

Movements ordered in case raider may attempt to return to Germany via Denmark Strait.
(C. in C. H.F. 2017/26 - see HOME COMMANDS, Operations).

VELOX.
VIDETTE.

Sailed 0300/26 VELOX and VIDETTE in accordance with my 1642/25.
(S.O.(I) Gib. 0310/26 to S.O. Force H. etc).

Force K.

Indicate position course and speed and intentions.
(S.O. Force H. 0512A/26 to S.O. Force K).

WISHART.

Have been detached by S.O. Force H to join convoy during daylight of 27th. My position course and speed are 36° 24' N. 10° 20' W. 277° 12.5 knots altering course to 330° at about 0600/27. Oil remaining 287 tons. Shifting to 107 kilocycles per second.
(WISHART 0600/26 to F.O.C.N.A.).

My position 0800N. 040° 05' N. 023° 05' W. Intend trying to collect convoy at Commodore's noon rendezvous and escort to 037° N. 016° W. Visibility 3 miles.
(S.O. Force K. 0837/26 to Admty S.O. Force H. and BERWICK).

Hasten reply to my 0512A/26.
(S.O. Force H. 0845A/26 to S.O. Force K).

DERBYSHIRE
to assist
EMPIRE TROOPER

Proceed to assistance of EMPIRE (?TROOPER or DISCOVERER) believed damaged in position 043° 58' N. 024° 15' W. at 1751Z/25. CYCLAMEN with W/T out of action was reported standing by at 1648Z.
(S.O. Force H. 0801/26 to DERBYSHIRE).

If in touch with EMPIRE TROOPER report position course and speed to Admiralty using her W/T if yours is out of action.
(S.O. Force H. 0807/26 to CYCLAMEN).

/Your.....



War Diary.

26.12.1940.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S. 5A and Raider.

(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40.).

DERBYSHIRE
to assist
EMPIRE TROOPER
(contd).

Your 0801/26. Following has been received from BONAVENTURE (begins). My position $41^{\circ} 57'N. 23^{\circ} 16'W.$ Proceeding to assistance of EMPIRE TROOPER. 1930/25 (Ends). (D;O.D. (F) 1046/26 to F.O. Force H).

Instructions to W.S.5A.

Request you will instruct ships of W.S. 5A. by broadcast from Rugby and on 500 kc/s who are passing through either 309 "Robin" 442 or 331 "Robin" 436 or who are already to the south and east of above positions to steer position 334 "Robin" 166. (S.O. Force H. 1105/26 to Admty).

Force K.
Position.

My position course and speed are at $1200 N 039^{\circ} 16'N 022^{\circ} 14'W 175$ degs 14. Visibility 1 mile improved. Your 0512 not received. None of Convoy met. Intend to maintain present course and speed. Flying impracticable at present. (S.O. Force K. 1130/26 to S.O. Force H).

For - CLAN CUMMING, CLAN MACDONALD, ESSEX, EMPIRE SONG, NORTHERN PRINCE, BHUTAN, MENELAUS, SETTLER, DELANE, CITY OF DERBY, STENTOR, ARABISTAN, EMPIRE TROOPER, ANSELM, CITY OF LONDON, TAMAROA, CITY OF CANTERBURY, NEURALIA, RANGITIKI, COSTA RICA, ELISABETHVILLE, ORBITA.

Steer for position 334° ^{"Robin"} ~~ROBIN~~ 166 miles repetition 334° ~~ROBIN~~ 166 miles. (Admty 1342/26 to all ships area 1. G.B.M.S. Ships and Authorities, Rosyth).

All merchant ships of convoy W. S. 5A (including merchant ships for operation "~~XXXX~~") have been ordered by broadcast method to steer for position 334° ^{"Robin"} ~~ROBIN~~ 166 miles. (D.O.D. (F) 1546/26 to F.O.'s Force H. and K. BERWICK, FURIOUS, etc).

/KENYA.....



War Diary.

26.12.1940.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S. 5A and Raider.

(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40).

KENYA
Report
(false).

One Deutschland Class, bearing 022° 5 miles, course unknown my position 045 GXLE 11 point 12, (FXLE - see 1629/26 - 47°N, 11°W).

Message B.N. 242 appear to be a corrupt retransmission of KENYA's 1145 which reported one aircraft. (C.S.10 1540/26 to Admty).

KENYA's 1145/26 was apparently mutilated in transit and in fact referred only to one aircraft and not one pocket battleship. (D.C. 1759/26 to Areas A and B. North Atlantic & C.C.).

KENYA's 1145. It seems probable the enemy is proceeding to a French port. Request you will arrange destroyer night attack if possible. (D.O.D. (H) 1604/26 to C. in C. W.A.).

What was time of receipt and frequency used? (D.S.O. 1605/26 to Ship: using Naval General Call sign AC who relayed KENYA's 1145/26).

KENYA's 1145 position was obviously F X L E. (47°N, 11°W) (D.C. 1629/26 to Area A and B, etc).

No battleship or other surface craft has been sighted by KENYA. (C.S. 10 1650/26 to Admty).

Cancel my 1604/26 (Requesting destroyer night attack on raider). (D.C. 1724/26 to C. in C. W.A.).

Pocket Battleship reported position 250° Ushant 240 miles at 1145/26. May be making for Bay of Biscay Port. TUNA patrol off Gironde. (V.A.S. 1636/26 to S/M's Area B).

Cancel my 1636 information was false. (V.A.S. 1709/26).

/BADEN.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26.12.1940.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Convoy W.S. 5A and Raider.(After BERWICK's Action with
Raider on 25/12/40).BADEN
intercepted.German s.s. BADEN intercepted
1245Z/26 by BONAVENTURE in 44°N.,
25° 07'W. (See German Merchant Ships).Force K.My 1130 and your 1105. Have altered
course to 110° at 1300N.
(S.O. Force K. 1324N/26 to S.O. Force H).Force H,
position.My position, course and speed at 2000/26
will be 039° 06'N 017° 36'W 14.5°
16 knots turning to 305° at 0800 and
then 037°N 016°W.Force K.
position.S.L. Force K continue search for
ships passing through 039° 08'N. 021°
38'W. and keeping me informed of
situation.FURIOUS.FURIOUS to arrive 037°N. 016°W. at
1400/27 searching as far as possible
to North and East for ships
proceeding direct to Gibraltar.BERWICK.BERWICK to search to North and West
of 037°N. 016°W. during forenoon of
27th rendezvousing with S.O. Force H.
in above position at 1400 27th.WISHART.WISHART to patrol in vicinity of
037° N. 016° W. from dawn 27th keeping
clear of Force H. during the night.DUNEDIN.

DUNEDIN rendezvous as for BERWICK.

Ships addressed are to report at
2200/26 and 1200/27, number of
Merchant ships in company. All times
Zone-One.

(S.O. Force H. 1721/26).

FURIOUS.
ARGUS.Your 1721/26. ARGUS only in company,
no Merchant ships. My position, course
and speed at 2200 Zone-One is 040°
07'N. 018° 16'W. 13.3° 14 Knots.
Intend to fly off reconnaissance to
maximum depth to North and East at
Dawn. (FURIOUS, 2010/26).BERWICK.Your 1721 (number of merchant ships
in company) (BERWICK 2101Z/26).

/Ships.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26.12.1940.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Convoy W.S. 5A and Raider.(After BERWICK's Action with
Raider on 25/12/40)Ships with
Force K.
NORFOLK.

Your 1721/26. NORTHERN PRINCE, CLAN MACDONALD British ship EMPIRE SONG in company are being detached to reach your rendezvous 1400/27 In view of NORFOLK's fuel intend to leave area $039^{\circ}\text{N. } 021^{\circ}\text{W.}$ at noon so as to reach 334° " " 166 by 0800/28. NORFOLK will then be limited to 12 knots except for emergency reserve. All times in subject matter zone minus one. (S.O. Force K. 2140/26 to S.O. Force H).

DORSETSHIRE.
(to join Force K).

Your 1920/25. DORSETSHIRE ready to leave Freetown a.m./27 December. Request information for R/V with Force K and W S. 5A as soon as available. (C. in C. S.A. 1341N/28 to Admty amended 1549/26)

DORSETSHIRE.

Admiralty's 1920/25 DORSETSHIRE sails Freetown 0630/27 at speed of advance 20 knots through position $011^{\circ} 30' \text{N. } 020^{\circ} 00' \text{W. } 020^{\circ} 00' \text{N. } 020^{\circ} 00' \text{W.}$ then to rendezvous with Force K and W.S.5A estimated to be in position $037^{\circ}\text{N. } 016^{\circ}\text{W.}$ at 1400/27. and proceeding thence by route given in Admiralty's 0218/17 and 1810/25. (C. in C. S.A. 2147/26, to S.O. Force H. and Force K).

Your 1341/26. DORSETSHIRE should be sailed with moderate despatch through positions $12^{\circ} 40' \text{N. } 19^{\circ} 30' \text{W. } 31^{\circ}\text{N. } 21^{\circ}\text{W.}$

Rendezvous will be signalled later. Following Secret Positions have been established for W.S. 5A.

34 degs. 30'N. 26 degs 00'W. ~~PANSY~~ "Pansy".
34 degs. 30'N. 14 degs. 30'W. ~~ROBIN~~ "Robin".
27 degs. 00'N. 26. degs 00'W. ~~COW~~ "Cow".
20 degs. 00'N. 24 degs 00'W. ~~DAISY~~ "Daisy".
14 degs. 00'N. 20 degs 00'W. ~~ROSE~~ "Rose".

(D.O.D.(F). 2148/26 to C. in C.S.A.)

Proceed in accordance with previous orders and Admiralty 2148/26.

(C. in C. S. A. 2337/26 to DORSETSHIRE).

/BERWICK.....

MOST SECRET.War Diary.26.12.1940.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Convoy W.S. 5A and Raider.(After BERWICK's Action with
Raider on 25/12/40).BERWICK.
defects.

Your 1810/25 para. (v) It is considered necessary for BERWICK to proceed to Gibraltar.

- (a) To investigate and make good underwater damage.
 - (b) To attempt to free X turret and make it serviceable with one gun.
 - (c) To refuel, 300 tons of fuel having been lost due to punctured tank.
-
- (a) Probably can be done by listing ship. Dockyard assistance (?had been) required for work on Ship's side.
 - (b) Dockyard assistance required.

Request ship may be berthed starboard side to wall.

(BERWICK 2302Z/26 to Admty).

BONAVENTURE.

My position course and speed at 2200 B.S.T. 043° 20' 022° 38'W. 125° 20 knots. No one in company. (BONAVENTURE 2345/26).



WAR DIARY.

26.12.40.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

JOSEPH DUHAMEL
intercepted.

Sending in Trawler JOSEPH DUHAMEL. Intercepted at 1142 G.M.T. 034° 30'N., 015° 22'W., steering 110° at 0900 G.M.T. From Port Saint Pierre shipped in for Casablanca. Cargo 500 tons of fish. Armed Guard on board expected time of arrival 2200/28. (MARON 1800/26 to F.O.C.N.P.)

RHONE
and
Submarine,
SFAX
reported
torpedoed.

1222/20 from S.O.(I) Gibraltar and 1736/23, Movements of French ships, from N.A.Washington. Confirmation is requested that no British submarine was responsible. (Head of M. 1955/26 to F.O.C.N.A.)

MENDOZA.

Navifrance have applied in Montevideo for 750 tons oil fuel for French ship MENDOZA which is at present at Buenos Aires. Hoped to be able to prevent supply here. (S.O.(I) Montevideo 2015/26 to Adty).

North Atlantic.

TUSCALOOSA,
American
Ambassador
for
France.

U.S.S. 8" Cruiser TUSCALOOSA with American Ambassador for France is due to arrive at Lisbon from United States A.M. 30/12. Route is not yet known but her presence in North Atlantic must be taken into account. (D.D.I.C. 1547/26).

My 1547/26. Position of TUSCALOOSA at 1100/26 G.M.T. 39° 13'N., 47° 41'W. (D.D.I.C. 2024/26).

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.26.12.40.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. (Contd.)KINGSTON.
CHRYSOLITE.

Your 1052/23 A/S Trawler KINGSTON CHRY SOLITE should be sailed with H.G.49 for refit at Liverpool. Intention to use your A/S Trawlers visiting U.K. for refits as additional escorts for H.G. and O.G. Con-voys.
(D.A/S.W. 1640/26 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Daily
Summary
Operations.

2 routine A/S patrols.
(20⁰ Group 1710/26 to Air Min).

South Atlantic.CORNWALL.

Arrival December 26/12 CORNWALL.
(N.O.I.C. Durban 0800Z/26).

HOPECROWN
SPEYBANK.

Overdue shipping my 1105/25 HOPECROWN ~~SPEYBANK~~ arrived Capetown.
(S.O.(I) Capetown, 0945B/26).

DEVONSHIRE.

Simonstown arrival 26/12.
(N.O.I.C. Simonstown 1220Z/26).

EMPIRE VOICE
HYDROUSSA.

My 1838/23 (1838/24 intended ?). overdue shipping, British EMPIRE VOICE and HYDROUSSA arrived 26/12.

VINDICTIVE.

F.O.C.N.A.'s 1000/25. Cancel R/V with FORMIDABLE and NORFOLK. From position 022⁰ 30'N., 020⁰ 00'W., proceed at best possible speed to Freetown by following route: (a) 013⁰ 40'N., 020⁰ 00'W., (b) 009⁰ 00'N., 016⁰ 00'W., thence to Freetown.
(C.in C. S.A. 1247N/26 to VINDICTIVE).

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.26.12.40.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (Contd.)CARNARVON
CASTLE.

Your 1205/16 and S.N.O. Simonstown 1543B/21. Approved to carry out repairs at Capetown in accordance with paragraph 2A. Requested that an immediate report be made as to what spare parts are required. It is appreciated that no elaborate alterations and additions can be carried out.
(D.O.D.(F) 1635/26 to C.in C. S.A.)

NEPTUNE.
DORSETSHIRE.

Arrival 1315/26. Senior Officer Force M in NEPTUNE with DORSETSHIRE.
(S.O.(I) Freetown 1705N/26 to R.A.S.A.D. 1645N/26 to Adty).

Internees.
Accommodation.

Your 93577 (M.O.4.) of 19/12. (a) Presence of internees in West Africa is an embarrassment to security and provision of guards is an additional commitment for which my resources sanction inadequate. (b) Provision of suitable accommodation in West Africa for Europeans is always a most difficult problem and in Sierra Leone as I have repeatedly emphasized there is none without building. Particularly wish to avoid diverting materials and labour to construction of internment camps before my military needs are completed. Most strongly urge therefore that internees not retained in West Africa.
(G.O.C. W.Africa 1705/26 to W.O.)

Fuelling
Corvettes.
Convoy
W.S.5.A.

In view of submarine activity off Freetown suggest Corvettes should if possible be detached in time to fuel at Ponta Delgada and rejoin convoy W.S.5.A. in vicinity of Cape Verde Is.
(C.in C. S.A. 1841N/26 to S.O.Force K.)

DELHI
Movement of
Foreign
Legion.

Left Cameroons River 1930 Zone minus One. Present maximum speed available: CAP DES PALMES about 14 knots, TOMREG about 7 knots.
(DELHI 1954/26 to C.in C. S.A.)


 WAR DIARY.
26.12.40.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.South Atlantic. (Contd.)

Independent
Shipping
Intelligence
Sailings.

Cancel my 0908/11 and my 1737/8/12.
 All merchant vessels, too slow for convoy
 and of 13 knots and over, are to be sailed
 independently.

(Amended, see 5/1/40)

(2) All merchant vessels sailed
 independently from South Atlantic ports
 to U.K. direct are to be routed eastward
 of a line (a) joining position:

- | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|-------|----|-------|-----|-----------------|--------|
| 1. | 11 | degs. | 20 | mins. | N., | 21 ⁰ | 10'W., |
| 2. | 16 | | 30 | | | 21 | 20 |
| 3. | 25 | | 00 | | | 24 | 10 |
| 4. | 40 | | 00 | | | 33 | 00 |

and westward of a line (b) joining position:

- | | | | | | | |
|----|----|-------|-------|----|-------|----------|
| 1. | 11 | degs. | 20'N, | 20 | degs. | 00'West. |
| 2. | 40 | | 00 | | 19 | 00 |
| 3. | 50 | | 00 | | 25 | 00 |
| 4. | 56 | | 00 | | 25 | 00 |

Ships are to cross meridian 25 degrees
 west between 56 degs. and 59 degs. 30'N.,
 and may pass either North or South Rookall
 outside 70 miles distance. Great care
 must be taken not to establish any focal
 point, particularly in the vicinity of
 56 degs. North 25 degs. West.

Swansea Bay (see 5/1)

3. Alternative routes to Oban Clyde
 Liverpool Milford Haven and Barry Roads
 are to be given to all ships.

4. Ships bound for East coast ports are to
 be routed to Oban unless they require
 Diesel or fuel oil or repairs to enable
 them to complete their voyage in which
 case they are to be sent to Clyde instead.

5. Attention is called to my 1220/30/10
 and 1521/10/11 regarding air escort.

6. Shipping from Para and St. Vincent
 need not pass Eastward of positions 1, 2, 3
 E of line A but is otherwise to conform.

7. Shipping bound for Gibraltar is to
 conform to instructions in para. 2. until
 latitude 33 degs. North is reached.

8. Southbound ships will keep to westward
 of line joining positions A1 A2 A3, and
 eastward of Cape Verde Island. Masters
 should be warned that southbound shipping
 may be met northward of position A3 and
 southward of position A1.

(C. in C. S.A. 2231/26 to S.O. (I)s Capetown
 and Freetown for N.C.S.O's).



WAR DIARY.

26.12.40.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

COVENTRY
damage.

My 1939/14. Damage sustained by COVENTRY. (details) Temporary repairs completed. Intend ship proceeds Malta at end of month for permanent repairs. (C.in C. Med. 1045/26 to Adty).

Air
Report
Alexandria
Raid.

Operational Summary No.199 up to 1200 hours 26/12.

1 Egypt. Night 23/24th December. Further to para. 1 of my A.886 25/12. 5 Blenheims bombed Gazala North landing ground. Bombs fell in target area but results unobserved. One enemy aircraft dropped 4 bombs in sea off Alexandria. No damage or casualties. Day. 25/12. No bombing. Reconnaissances of Bardia and Tobruk areas reported no movements. No change in military situation Bardia.

2. Greece. Day 25/12. No bombing operations. One Sunderland searched South Eastern Ionian Sea for enemy shipping.

4. Kenya. Day 25/12. No bombing operations. JU86's made 2 patrols Mombasa. 3 troopships escorted. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1127/26).

Submarines.

My 2015/24 para.1. For 014° 31' East read 014° 13' East. Para.2 of the same signal and para 1. of my 1321/26 to OSIRIS only, for 033° 38' N., read 035° 38' N. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 1145/26).

My 2015/24 para.2. TRUANT and TETRARCH leave Malta 1715/28 through 033° 38' N., 014° 07' E thence former on course 205° and latter through positions; 034° 40' N., 013° 50' E., 034° 40' N., 014° 30' E., 035° 20' N., 015° 20' E. Anticipate TETRARCH's position at 0001/29 will be 034° 43' N., 013° 51' E. Times. Zone (minus) One. (V.A.Malta 1321/26 to OSIRIS).

In your 2015/24 OTUS and OSIRIS are routed from position D through 035° 31' 014° 31'. Request this may be confirmed in view of QBB 95. (Capt: S.l. 1907/26 to V.A.Malta.)



WAR DIARY.

26.12.40.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

URANIA.

Admty. 1857/7. Panamanian ship URANIA arrived Suez 25/12 and is detained with an armed guard on board. Ship has mixed cargo for Suez and 500 tons of coffee for transshipment to Greece. Request early instructions observing that Embassy foresees political difficulties. (S.B.N.O. Suez 1254/26 to Adty).

Operation
"Excess".

2 available

The 5 M.T. Ships in operation ^{'Excess'} ~~"Excess"~~ are each fitted with 2-2pounder Mark VIII star single equipments for passage through Mediterranean. These guns belong to T.L.C's now on passage via Cape in W.S.5.A. on arrival of M.T. Ships at Alexandria guns and ammunition are to be removed and may be put to any local service pending arrival of T.L.C's provided they are suitable for latter when required. Crews for these guns are also in the M.T. ships and are to go with their guns on disembarkation from M.T. ships. If ESSEX does not go beyond Malta V.A. Malta is requested to arrange for onward passage of her guns and crews to Alexandria. Four additional guns and crews to bring total at Alexandria up to 14 for T.L.C's will be sent through Mediterranean at next opportunity. (D.T.S.D. 1624/26 to C.in C. Med.)

Malta
Report.

Brindisi.

Combined services report Malta up to 1700/26. All times G.M.T. 0720 to 12.57 Glenn Martin 431 flight photographic reconnaissance Brindisi, Taranto for enemy naval units. 09.08, sighted 1 tanker and small escort vessel speed 8 knots position 8 miles N.E. of Cape Otranto course, 310 degrees, Brindisi. Outer harbour 2 M/V's 8,000 to 10,000 tons and vessel resembling troopship 10,000 to 12,000 tons leaving harbour steering east. Inner harbour 4 cruisers 6 destroyers 5 submarines few small M/V's and approximately 30 seplanes. These units were disposed as follows. 1 cruiser anchored at base of Y shaped entrance to inner harbour. 2 cruise s and M/V's in southern fork of Y. Destroyers and submarines alongside of town Mole 1 moored cruiser and sundry merchant shipping. Clouds prevented photographs being taken.

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.26.12.40.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (Contd.)Taranto.

Taranto inner harbour. 3 cruisers 6 small destroyers alongside pens. Outer harbour cruiser in fairway of entrance to inner harbour and 3 destroyers alongside Y shaped jetty. 8 Fleet Auxiliaries scattered around. 1 Battleship on right side before entrance to inner harbour. Photographs taken reveal LITTORIO battleship in new dock inner harbour Taranto.
(H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1700/26).

Enemy Intelligence.

Yugoslav General Staff have information showing: (a) Garrison at Zara amounted to 6579 having been reduced by 2741 since November 10th. (b) Supplying of Dodecanese by Italy is being carried out exclusively by air and this with increased use of aircraft for maintaining communications with North Africa has led to interruption of whole civil aircraft communication inside Italy. (c) Italian S.S. OLIMPIA 6040 tons torpedoed daybreak 6/12 some forty miles S.W. Durazzo. (N.I.D. Note. OLIMPIA sent out an S.C.S. at 0341/6 from somewhere in the Adriatic or Eastern Mediterranean). (NOTE: Number of men employed agrees with information in L.D.) (d) New Dydoro plane Fiat S.R. 42 metal construction middle wing is in production. 2 Fiat A.74 S.R. 38 engines each 870 H.P. gives maximum speed 450 Kilometres per hour. Length of wing 19.5 metres, wing area 50 square metres. Crew 2-3 carried. (e) 1800 men present working in Torpedo factory Fiume, output 45 torpedoes per mensem. (f) N.A.'s Rome estimate Italy has lost 30 submarines up to 16/11. Since average 20% of total submarines strength believed to be constantly under repairs they consider Italy now 80 submarines in service.
(A.N.A. Belgrade, 1722/26 to D.N.I.)

U/Boat
Losses.

Greece.

To Admiral Sakellariou from 1st Sea Lord.
(message of thanks for Xmas greetings).
(1st Sea Lord 1821/26 to A.N.A. Athens).

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.26.12.40.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Mediterranean. (Contd.)HYPERION.
(Sunk
22/12).

The evidence in your 1035/23 does not entirely exclude the possibility of HYPERION being sunk by a U/Boat. Is there any evidence that HYPERION's contact was confirmed by other vessels?
(D.M.S. 1942/26 to C.in C. Med.)

East Indies.WILLEM
VANDER
ZAAAN.

Durban arrival Netherlands Minelayer
WILLEM VAN DER ZAAAN.
(N.O.I.C. Durban 0455/26).

Netherlands M.L. WILLEM VAN DER ZAAAN
sailed 1000Z/26 E.T.A. Port Louis
Mauritius p.m. 31/12 or a.m. 1/1/41,
according to weather conditions.
(N.O.I.C. Durban 1000Z/26 to Adty).

Red Sea
Convoys.

My 1606/9/8 para. 3 regarding ships being sailed independently to Aden to join B.N. Convoy. Ships having no fuel or other requirements at Aden are to be sailed so as to arrive there within 3 days of convoy sailing date. Ships which have requirements at Aden are to be sailed (if possible) earlier than above, their being spaced out over the whole 15 day period. Next B.N. Convoy sailing date from Aden will be 2/1/41.
(C.in C. E.I. 0708/26 to A.N.C.B.)

ANTENOR.

My 1130/25. ANTENOR to leave patrol area West of Achin Head a.m. 27/12 and proceed direct to Colombo adjusting speed to arrive 0230Z/30.
(C.in C. E.I. and 0811Z/26 to ANTENOR).

Troop
Movement.

N.O.I.C. Mauritius 1341/25 and S.S.T.O. India (Bombay's) 0600/25. In order to suit escort arrangement it is desired that troops should sail from Mauritius (date) S.S.T.O. India (Bombay) is requested to sail (TALAMBA) from Bombay so as to arrive Mauritius not later than (date). N.O.I.C. Mauritius thought troops will be ready to sail if TALAMBA arrives (dates) Whether TALAMBA will sail via Durban or to

MOST SECRET.26.12.40.
Thursday.WAR DIARY.FOREIGN STATIONS.East Indies. (Contd.)

Suez direct will be decided as soon as possible. S.S.T.C. India (Bombay) is requested to confirm that TALAMBA can proceed (a) from Mauritius to Suez or (b) Durban to Suez without fuelling or water at Aden. (v) If troops cannot sail the movement will probably have to be postponed for at least a week. (C.in C. E.I. 1152Z/26 to N.O.I.C. Mauritius).

Your 1152/26 Troops will be ready. (N.O.I.C. Mauritius 1729/Z/26).

R.I.N.A/S.
in
Persian
Gulf.

Your 1242Z/24. Re employing of R.I.N.A/S in Persian Gulf. Confirmed that there is no objections. (D.A.S.W. ~~to~~ ... (1240/26 to C.in C. E.I.)

→ KANIMBLA.

KANIMBLA with NIEUWZEELAND, JOHAN DE WITT arrived here. (N.O.I.C. Mauritius 1301/26).

Shipping.

Departure 26/12 PORT WYNDHAM, DELIUS, POINT CLEAR (Greek) and BENALDER for Suez. Route. (N.O.I.C. Port Sudan, 1635Z/26).

Convoy.

A.N.11. Sailing telegram. 1500 B/26. Escort HYACINTH from Port Said, PEDNY and SALVIA from Alexandria. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal 1624/26).

→ KANIMELA sailed in accordance with 1004/25 from C.in C. E.I. (N.O.I.C. Mauritius 1803Z/26).

Aden
Air
Report.

Summary No.197 and Operational Summary for 24 hours ending 1500 hours G.M.T. 26/12. 6 Blenheims 203 Squadron provided fighter escort 3 for convoy B.S.11. 3 for W.S.4.B. 5 Blenheims sorties 203 Sqdn. made 3 sweeps covering latter convoy. 3 Gladiators 94 Squadron fighter patrol Aden 1000 to 1010 G.M.T. (Air H.Q. Aden 1730/26 to Air Min).

26.12.40.

Thursday.WAR DIARY.FOREIGN STATIONS.China.Indo-
China
Trade.

It is probable that in next few days permission to resume sailing between Indo China and Hong Kong and Singapore will be given on following basis British and Allied ships combined to be limited to two ships from Hong Kong and one from Singapore per month together with one Dutch tanker. Any port in Indo China may be used except Haiph. French to be allowed to send two ships to Hong Kong and one ship to Singapore per month. It is necessary to be as unobtrusive as possible and to spread ships over month. Hong Kong should therefore send ships about first and 20th of month and Singapore about 10th. Preparation may be to bring this into force as soon as further signal is sent. (C.in C. China, 0823Z/26 to N.O.I.C. Hong Kong).

Far East
Intelligence.

F.E.W.10. No major change. (a) Japanese Military Mission under Lieutenant General Yamashita has followed Naval Mission to Germany. (b) U.S.A. U.S. cruiser CINCINNATI arrived (corrupt group). (c) Indo China and Thai-Land. Initial conversation towards peaceful settlement reported. Meanwhile bombing and frontier incidents continue on small scale. Japan has announced her neutrality but now supplied munitions to Thai-Land only. (d) Raider situation. 500 (? survivors) information landed Emirau Island ~~BISMARCK~~ corrupt group. (Capt: O.S. Singapore 1011Z/26 to A.C.N.B. N.Z.N.B. etc.)

TALLEYRAND.

Your 0737Z/23. If possible ascertain date TALLEYRAND was captured. Ship left Fremantle on 25/7. (D.D.I.C. 1630/26 to S.O.(I) Shanghai).

Your 0213/21. Foreign Office suggest you repeat this signal to Ambassador Shanghai, Governor Hong Kong and Consul General Manila if these authorities not already informed. (Adty. 1817/26 to C.in C. China).



WAR DIARY.

26.12.40.
Thursday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

DIOMEDE.

Leave Trinidad after receipt of mail in LADY HAWKINS and proceed patrol square F.30 D to cover routes of outward bound shipping still proceeding direct to Sombrere and Mona passage. Fuel as necessary from Oiler BISHOPDALE who is ordered to await you at Tortola.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 1001/26 to DIOMEDE).

Intelligence Security.

A.L.NID 0395/40 of Oct.20th para.20, suggests comprehensive study of security in whole intelligence area and will involve much extra work, while to accomplish it satisfactorily, additional reporting agents appear necessary. Request information whether any agents who could furnish additional reports to S.O.(I) Kingston Jamaica. Question of collation and distribution of security of intelligence has been referred to in my 1511/11/12, to Admiralty only. S.O.(I) Kingston's present staff even with increase approved by my 1242/26/12 is insufficient to cope with collation and distribution of more intelligence than the three at present being received but if proposals in my 1511/11/12 are approved, it is considered requirements would be satisfactorily met.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 1252/26 to Adty).

BADGER U.S.N.

Your 1034/10. (Propose not to claim salvage, regarding grounding of U.S. Destroyer BADGER). Approved but reconsideration may be desirable later and present arrangements should be regarded as without prejudice to possible future decisions.
(Hd. of M. 1331/26 to C.in C. A.W.I.)

STUREHOLM.
(in H.X.84)
Suspicious.

Your 1356/24 not to F.O.C. 3rd B.S. STUREHOLM (Swedish) was in H.X.84 and in vicinity of sinking of JERVIS BAY: Galveston previously reported crew and Officers pro German. If ship is located suggest she be carefully watched in future.
(N.S.H.Q. Ottawa 1517/26 to Adty).

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.26.12.40.
Thursday.CYRUS FIELD.FOREIGN STATIONS.America and West Indies. (Contd.)Halifax departure 1744/26, Cable ship
CYRUS FIELD.

(C.O.A.C. Halifax 1745/26).

Movements.Arrival 26/12 REVENGE (from T.C.8.)
ASSINIBOINE, RESTIGOUCHE. Departure,
COLUMBIA, local escort ALAUNIA, PCRPOISE
Ocean Escort. (H.S. 99)
(S.O.(I) Halifax 1835/26 to Adty etc.)Australia.Raider attack.A.C.N.B. 1243/25 (Release of communique re
raider attack off New Zealand).
New Zealand Government agree in general
with proposals but would prefer to mention
TURAKINA, HOLMWOOD, KOMATA, and (quote)
overseas vessel recently lost off East
Coast of New Zealand.
(N.Z.N.B. 0002/26 to Adty A.C.N.B.)Your 1243Z/25 concur generally. Ref. para.
D, suggest enemy commerce raiders be
substituted for enemy raider force. You
will be informed by signal as soon as next
of kin procedure has been carried out here.
(D.P.D. 1658/26 to A.C.N.B.)Raider
Survivors
C.B's
Compromised.My 1835Z/24 re survivors from captured
ships. NARVIK prisoners are not included
among survivors landed at Emirau. Captain
stated they would be landed elsewhere 29/12.
Raiders stated to have accurate knowledge
shipping movements. S.P. 02272 Merchant
Navy Code recoding Table. (8) and S.P.
02272 (9) believed to be in enemy hands.
(A.C.N.B. 0631Z/26 to Adty etc.)TEIYO
MARU
Raider
(ex
KULMERLAND)My 1835Z/24 Hopkins reports KULMERLAND
(now renamed TEIYO MARU) is short of
fuel and stores and considers she is
probably now proceeding to Japan to
replenish. Vessel is lightly armed has
funnel with Osaka Shosen Caisha markings.
Japanese colours each bow amidships and
stern. Carries a seaplane.
(A.C.N.B. Melbourne 0334Z/26 to Adty etc.)

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.26.12.40.
Thursday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Australia.

10
M/V's
Sunk.
Description
of NANYO
MARU.

My 1835Z/24. Naval Intelligence Officers at Emirau report. (Begins). All ten vessels sunk. European survivors of TURAKINA, NOTOU, RINGWOOD still aboard NARVIK. HOLMWOOD November 25th 27 miles W. by S. of Durham Point, Chatham Isle, RANGITANE, November 27th 037 degrees South 176 degrees West. TRIONA, December 6th, VINNI December 7th TRIASTER KOMATA and TRIANIC December 8th near Nauru. This raider is NANYO MARU, Captain Essen, 5000 tons, probably 10-8inch guns and 5 pairs twin torpedo tubes generally like Hanssr line, one Japanese Officer thought to be on board. Vigilant W/T Watch. D/F. Possible clue to raiders base nearby circular, narrow flat Atoll enclosing lagoon about $\frac{3}{4}$ miles diameter and entrance about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile wide. Method of attack one raider closes in astern and one on each beam 0930Z/26 (Ends).
(A.C.N.B. 1900Z/26 to Adty etc.)

WARREGO.
SWAN.
ORARA.

WARREGO, SWAN and ORARA arrived Port Phillip Bay 0158Z/26.
(A.C.N.B. 1135Z/26).



WAR DIARY.

26.12.40.
Thursday.

GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

BADEN
intercepted.

Have intercepted German S.S. BADEN. Crew abandoned ship and set fire. Weather unsuitable for boarding. Ship appears to be floating normally and might be salvaged later. Embarked 39 survivors. My position is 044° N., 025° 07' W. Have not made contact with EMPIRE TROOPER. (BONAVENTURE 1245Z/26 to Adty recd. 1503/26)

German S.S. BADEN has reported being stopped by a British warship at 1200 in position 43° 00' N., 27° 45' W. BADEN sailed from Tenerife on 15/12. From information available in Admiralty no British warship is in this position. (D.C. for D.D.I.C. 1402/26).

Cancel last sentence of my 1402/26. BADEN was intercepted by BONAVENTURE in position 44° N., 25° 07' W. (D.S.O. 1806/26).

OSSAG.

Cartagena reports German Tanker OSSAG disguised as Spanish arrived 19/12 from Trieste with 3000 tons petroleum consigned to order. Reported she had narrow escape from our ships. Future movements unknown. (N.A. Madrid 1636/26 to Adty).

Italian Merchant Ships.

OLIMPIA.

Torpedoed 6/12. 40 miles S.W. Durazzo (A.N.A. Belgrada 1722/26) See Mediterranean.

TORCELLO.

Arrived Batoum with 5,000 tons gas oil. (Varna 1245/26).

MOST SECRET.26.12.40.
Thursday.WAR DIARY.U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked.CHARLES
PRATT.
(torpedoed
21/12.)

U.65

(Panamanian, 8982 tons) Boat with 20 men
ex CHARLES PRATT rescued position 008° N.,
014° 15' W., at 1500/25. Another boat with
20 men adrift within radius of 20 miles.
PICT is to search.
(C.in C. S.A. 0216/26 to F.O. Force M.,
DORSETSHIRE, BULOLO).

CHARLES PRATT torpedoed by U/Boat 1455/21
in position 008° 26' N., 016° 50' W. Ship
possibly same still afloat and on fire
006° 40' N., 014° (°16') W 24th/12.
(°21')
(°26')

(C.in C. S.A. 1129N/26 to Adty).

The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey
announces (says a Reuter message from New
York) that its tanker CHARLES PRATT has
been "sunk" with the loss of 22 American
lives. Twenty of the crew were saved.
The tanker was flying the flag of the
Panama Transport Company, which is a
subsidiary of the Standard Oil. No
details of the sinking are given. The
CHARLES PRATT was a twin-crew ship
of 8,982 tons built in 1916 at Newport
News. (The Times, 28/12/40).

Cancel my 1804/25. (overdue shipping)
(? 1806 intended). Panamanian ship
CHARLES PRATT sunk by U/Boat in position
8° 26' North 16° 50' West at 1455/12/21.
(S.O.(I) Freetown 1747/26).

ARACATACA
(torpedoed
29/11).

Your 1933/24 ARACATACA was hit with 2
torpedoes at 2130/29/11. Ship abandoned
immediately but known to be still afloat at
2400. Although visibility good nothing
further seen by survivors except quantity
of cork slabs next morning believed to come
from ship's insulation.

W/T distress messages were sent in
accordance with regulations. Believed
all passengers and crew left ship in 4
boats. Confidential books were not
destroyed. Survivors were picked up
70 miles E.N.E. of positions ship torpedoed
(N.C.S.O. Buenos Aires 1815/26 to Adty).

MOST SECRET.

26.12.1940.

Thursday.War Diary.U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships Attacked. (Contd.)WAIOTIRA

(British, 12823 tons). Following has been read. SSSS 58 12 N., 17 35 W. WAIOTIRA torpedoed. (Lyness, T.O.R. 1905/26).

→ Proceed to position 058° 12' N., 017° 25' W. WAIOTIRA torpedoed at 1907. (C.in C. W.A., 1916/26 to VENOMOUS).

Request you will sail tug SEAMAN with all despatch to assistance of s.s. WAIOTIRA in position 58° 12' N. 17° 25' W. at 1907 today. Tug SUPERMAN is also being sent from Stornoway. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1927/26, to N.O.I.C. Oban).

Request you will sail tug SUPERMAN with all despatch to assistance of WAIOTIRA in position 58° 12' N., 17° 25' W. at 1907 today. Tug SEAMAN is also being sent from Oban. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1928/26 to N.O.I.C. Stornoway).

Detach one destroyer to assistance of WAIOTIRA torpedoed in position 58° 12' N. 17° 25' W. at 1905/26. (C.in C. H.F., 2141/26 to REPULSE).

Am standing by GBJB (Signal letters undecypherable, Presumably WAIOTIRA referred to in C.in C. Home Fleet's 2141/26). () in position 058° 05' N. 017° 10' W. as requested by REPULSE. Ship was hit by torpedo. Propellor out of action. Salvage by ? a tug possible. Sent out life boat missing. Remainder on board. (MASHONA, 2222/26 to Admty.)

→ Cancel my 1916/26. (WAIOTIRA torpedoed - position). Proceed in execution of previous orders. (C.in C. W.A. 2230/26 to VENOMOUS).



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

26.12.1940.

Thursday.

815

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Submarines Reported.

1223.

D.F., probable U/B 59.30 N., 15.17 W., unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 1310/26).

Gironde.

My 1024/18. TUNA may adjust her position to intercept U Boats reported to be making Gironde but when not so engaged is to remain near the patrol line ordered. (V.A.S., 1456/26 to S.2.)

My 2324/18. Position may be adjusted to intercept U-Boats reported to be making Gironde but when not so engaged you are to course near patrol line ordered. (Capt. S.2. 1817/26 to TUNA).

1930/26.

CLAN MATHESON reports sighting periscope S/M at 1830 G.M.T./26 in position $000^{\circ} 10'$ South $008^{\circ} 30'$ West. (C.in C. S.A. 2317/26, to DELHI).

Estimated U/B dispositions.

Italian.

1 possibly in Madeira area.
2 near or to eastward of Azores.
1 arriving Gironde p.m. today.
1 about $45^{\circ} - 46^{\circ}$ N. $5^{\circ} - 6^{\circ}$ W. bound for Gironde
4 more probably following.
2 in N.W. Approaches possibly between 53° N. and 55° N. 16° W. and 18° W.

German.

1 off Freetown.
1 estimated 25th near 43° N. 25° W. is doubted.
1 between 57° N. and 59° N. 17° W. and 20° W.
1 attacked EVERLEIGH 1400/25 near 59° N. 21° W.
2 between 57° N. and 59° N. near 20° W. one of which may have left for home.
1 may arrive in Norwegian waters today. (D.D.I.C. 1252/26).

Submarines Attacked.

SARASTONE,
1550/22.

Master of SARASTONE reports he was in action with Submarine of unknown nationality 1550/22 $041^{\circ} 18'$ N. $015^{\circ} 14'$ W. Hit submarine twice in about same position abaft conning tower under after gun, when last seen 1700 submarine stopped with smoke pouring from stern and up by bow. As SARASTONE could only steam at 5 knots owing to boiler trouble and had only seven shells left she broke off action and proceeded to Lisbon for boiler repairs. She was not hit. Full report follows. (Lisbon, 2001/26, to Admty.).

27.12.1940.

Friday.

816

War Diary.



SITUATION REPORT.

Home Commands.

Between 0310 and 0641 this morning while passing between Dungeness and the South Foreland Convoy C.E.20 was shelled by Enemy Coastal Batteries which fired 200 to 250 rounds. All, however, fell in the sea and only the M/S Trawlers BLACKTHORN and DEODAR received some slight damage. 3 M/L's and one A/C carrying Flares were patrolling last night to the Eastward of Q.Z.S. 30 from the latitude of Aldeburgh, and this operation is to be repeated tonight from 2000 until 2230 with one A/C carrying Flares and a second carrying Bombs. A Destroyer Patrol off Ushant is also to be carried out tonight with the object of destroying any Enemy Vessels returning to Brest from the Westward.

British Air Activity.

Several additional Patrols were flown this morning; and the Iceland Faroes Passage is to be patrolled daily by A/C from tomorrow until the 31st inclusive 4 Skuas from Hatston attacked M/V's and Warehouses in a surprise attack on Jaugesund and Rovoer Island this morning, certainly hitting one M/V and possibly another and doing other damage. Enemy S/M's at Bordeaux and Lorient were also again attacked during last night.

Enemy Air Activity.

At 1010 this morning Convoy ^{"Arenu"} ~~ARENA~~ was attacked off Clacton by one A/C. 3 heavy H.E. Bombs were dropped and an Oiler in the Convoy was straddled; but no damage was done. At 2000 this evening a Bomb fell in the Victualling Yard at Deptford, wrecking the front of the Chocolate Store and doing other damage. Hostile Patrols were maintained during today in the Straits of Dover, and R/C Flights were plotted to the Thames Estuary and off the Isle of Wight.

Mining.

At Liverpool the Isle of Man Steamer VICTORIA was mined at 1540 this afternoon while 8 miles S.W. of the Bar Light Vessel, but was towed back to harbour; and in the newly-changed position of the Thames Gateway at a spot which over 40 Ships had crossed during the forenoon the s.s. ARABY in Convoy was mined at 1445.



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

27.12.1940.

Friday.

SITUATION REPORT.

817

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy
~~CONVOY~~ W.S.5A and Raider
~~RAIDER~~ (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

North Atlantic.

The RENOWN and ARK ROYAL (Force H) were on the way to meet EMPIRE TROOPER.

S.L. 59 (Sierra Leone Convoy, homeward) at 0115 was in $42^{\circ} 44' N. 21^{\circ} 29' W.$ (Some 120 miles E. of position where BERWICK met raider on 25/0930)

The SHEFFIELD and 7 destroyers (Force H) were continuing to $37^{\circ} N. 16^{\circ} W.$ (300 miles W. of Capt St. Vincent) to join Force K (0203).

The JONQUIL, CLEMATIS, GERANIUM (convoy escort) were ordered by S.O. Force K to Ponta Delgada (San Miguel, Azores) to fuel. They arrived at 11.30.


At 8 a.m. the CYCLAMEN with EMPIRE TROOPER was reported in $41^{\circ} N. 22^{\circ} 9' W.$ (some 270 miles from Ponta Delgada.)

S.O. Force H reported that ~~operation~~ ^{Operation "Excess"} "Excess" must be postponed for a day.

At 1150 Force H was in $40^{\circ} 12' N. 17^{\circ} 40' W.$ that is, on route of convoy to their rendez vous.

At 1411 the BERWICK was in $37^{\circ} 7' N. 15^{\circ} 40' W.$ near Convoy rendezvous searching to North and North West. The three ships of Gibraltar convoy (CLAN MACDONALD, EMPIRE SONG and NORTHERN PRINCE), were proceeding to Gibraltar, escorted by ARGUS and 6 destroyers. (p. 83u)
The EMPIRE TROOPER was making her way slowly eastbound at about 6 knots. The visibility was poor (1 to 3 miles) and S.O. Force K (FORMIDABLE) had sighted nothing. At 1849 he signalled that convoy, if not at rendezvous by 0800/28, had probably acted in accordance with general instructions (i.e. to disperse and proceed to destination). He asked for convoy to be ordered by broadcast to be at $23^{\circ} 20' N. 20^{\circ} 10' W.$ at noon/30. The EMPIRE TROOPER was ordered to proceed to Ponta Delgada.
The CYCLAMEN was with her and BONAVENTURE and DERBYSHIRE was on their way to join her, but the former had to proceed to Gibraltar to fuel.

/ By 7.30 p.m.

27.12.1940. 818
Friday.
War Diary.SITUATION REPORT.FOREIGN STATIONS.Convoy W.S.5A and Raider (ADMIRAL HIPPER)North Atlantic. (Contd.)

By 7.30 p.m. the SHEFFIELD had picked up two more ships (CITY OF CANTERBURY and ESSEX)

At midnight the EMPIRE TROOPER was some 240 miles from Ponta Delgada; five other ships had been collected.

The RENOWN and ARK ROYAL were searching for the remainder to North West of rendezvous.

The FORMIDABLE and NORFOLK were proceeding to the rendezvous to search to southwest.

FURIOUS and 2 destroyers were on way to Gibraltar to fuel. ARGUS, DUNEDIN, 6 destroyers with 3 transports for Gibraltar were on way to Gibraltar.

The SHEFFIELD with two transports were waiting at the rendezvous.

BONAVENTURE with prisoners from German S.S. BADEN was on way to Gibraltar. The visibility was poor. The sea was calm.

Note. Procedure of ships in convoy after scattering from surface raider attack is dealt with in Admiralty. 1907/4/1/1941.



War Diary.

27. 12. 40.
Friday.

820

HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

M/V to be
examined
at Skopen
Fiord.

Swedish REMMAREN should be boarded and examined at Skopen Fiord but allowed to proceed if nothing suspicious discovered. (D.O.D.H. 1223/27.)

Defence of U.K.

Langstone Harbour
Burning of Oil
as Invasion Defence.

A.L. M/LD01497/40 of 18/11/40 and Portsmouth 6442/O115C(8/11) dated 7th December 1940. Dockyard work on Langstone Harbour Experimental Installation was completed on 17/12, but commencement of experiments was then delayed by carrying away of buoying and securing arrangement for underwater pipe lines. Experiments commenced on 23/12. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1057/27 to Adty.)

"Deluge".
At 1130/27.

(D.C.1155/27).
At 2330/27. (D.C.2331/27).

Dover.
Withdrawal of
Guns.

To equip an A.M.C. with long range guns, it has become necessary immediately to withdraw six of the twelve 5.5" guns temporarily mounted in the Dover Area. A corresponding number of 6" Mark VII guns on P.III mountings could be made available for Army use. It is estimated that delivery of these could start in about 14 days.

Request your concurrence and remarks. (D. of L.D. 1828/27 to War Office.) Your 1828/27. Concur. Will release 4 Folkestone 2 St. Margarets. Intend to replace with 6 inch Mark 7. (Hofors 2245/27 to Adty.)

Dungeness
M.N.B.D.O.
Battery.

My 1538/24, 1212/11, and your 1615/13. M.N.B.D.O. Dungeness Battery complete with all equipment as laid down in War Equipment Tables is to be turned over temporarily to Home Forces until relief by R.M. Personnel of M.N.B.D.O. (2). 2. Request you will report number of Fire Control personnel from M.N.B.D.O. (2) who could be made available for this battery. (D. of L.D. 1403/27 to O.C.R.M. Group, M.N.B.D.O.)

Movements.

CILICIA.

Sailed 0520/27. G.M.T. (N.O.I.C. Iceland 0330/27.)

/WHITSHED.....



War Diary.

27. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. Contd.

<u>WHITSHED.</u>	My 1836/22. Sailing postponed 24 hours. (C. in C. Nore 0924/27.) My 0924/27. Sailing postponed further 24 hours. (C. in C. Nore 2044/27.)
<u>WOLVERINE.</u>) <u>WITCH.</u>)	Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 0927/27.)
<u>QUORN,</u> <u>HOLDERNESS.</u>	Arrived 0920 (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0937/27.)
<u>ST. MARYS.</u>	Arrived. (N.O.I.C. Newport 1000/27.)
<u>WITHERINGTON.</u>	Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1054/27.)
<u>BIRMINGHAM.</u>	Arrived Scapa 1120 (A.C.O.S. 1144/27.)
<u>BATH.</u>	Sailed for Port Z.A. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1243/27.)
<u>KENT,</u> <u>KIPLING,</u> <u>KELVIN.</u>	Arrived 1114. (C. in C. W.A. 1446/27.)
<u>Northern Patrol.</u>	Trawler Lines tonight. 4 Trawlers. (A.C.O.S. 1539/27.)
<u>NAIAD.</u>	Arrived with F.O.C.S. 15 at Scapa. (A.C.O.S. 1552/27.)
<u>ROXBOROUGH,</u> <u>RIPLEY.</u>	Arrived Plymouth 1636. (C in C. W.A. 1710/27.)
<u>BRIGHTON.</u>	Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Portland 1715/27.)
<u>VETERAN.</u>	Arrived. (Capt. D. Londonderry 1835/27.)
<u>VANQUISHER,</u> <u>WHITEHALL.</u>	Arrived, fuelled, sailed. (Capt. D. Londonderry 1835/27.)
<u>VESPER.</u>	Sailed for Rosyth. (Capt. D. Londonderry 1835/27.)
<u>CALIFORNIA.</u>	Take Areas E.2. and F.2. (F.O.C.N.P. 2210/27 to Western Patrol.)

/CURACOA.....



War Diary

27.12.1940
Friday

HOME COMMANDS

Movements-Contd.

CURACOA

Arrived Scapa 2303/27 (A.C.O.S. 2305/27)

→ KASHMIR
JERSEY
JUPITER

Sailed Plymouth 1750 (C. in C., W.A., 0016/28)

Operations

Convoy C.E. 20
Shelled

From 0310 to 0641 Enemy Batteries fired between 200 and 250 rounds at C.E. 20 between Dungeness and South Foreland. All falling in the sea. Convoy passed Dover at about 0600. No damage or casualties reported. (V.A.Dover 1019/27)

BLACKTHORN
DEODAR
Damaged

BLACKTHORN and DEODAR (M/S Trawlers) damaged by shellfire during passage of C.E. 20. (C. in C., Nore 1650/28 to C. in C., Portsmouth)

Operation
P.V. 1.

Carry out tonight between 2000 and 2130. One A/C with flares and one with bombs. (C. in C., Nore, 1210/27)
My 1210. Operation P.V.1. will continue till 2230. (C. in C., Nore, 1941/27)

Western Channel.
Interception
of M/V's

Four small steamers observed South of Ushant at 1530 may proceed up Channel tonight.
2. Proceed towards 49° 10' N., 03° 20' W and thence sweep to Westward to intercept steamers.
3. If no contact by longitude of Ushant return towards Plymouth arriving 1030/28. (C. in C., W.A., 1714/27 to KASHMIR)

Proceed with despatch towards 48° 30' N., 5° 45' W., (C. in C., W.A., 1911/27 to KASHMIR)

My 1911. There are indications of enemy activity which may mean the return of ships to Brest from Westward.

(2) Object is interception and destruction of ships returning to Brest.

(3) Patrol between A. 48° 30' N., 05° 45' W and B 48° 00' N., 05° 45' W.

(4) Discontinue patrol in time to arrive in 180° Lizard 20 by 0830/28 thence to Plymouth. Fighter protection will be arranged from 0830/28. (C. in C., W.A., 1940/27 to KASHMIR)

Iceland Faroes
Passage

My 1214/23. Intend to proceed in NELSON tomorrow to patrol to Eastward of Iceland Faroes Passage. (C. in C., H.F. 1936/27 to Admty.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

823

27. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Iceland Faroes Passage.

Operations. Contd.

- (1) Intend to proceed in H.M.S. NELSON with four destroyers at 1300 tomorrow.
- (2) Force will pass through $059^{\circ} 05' 003^{\circ} 55' W$ speed of advance 16 knots and thence along meridian $003^{\circ} 55' W$ to patrol to eastward of Iceland Faroes passage.
- (3) C. in C. Rosyth is requested to arrange A/S air escort during daylight 28th, and air arm co-operation during patrol. Code word LABEL.
- (4) Force will return to Scapa P.M./31.
- (5) Admiralty pass to HQCC.
(C. in C. H.F. 2301/27 to A.C.O.S.)

Submarines.

SUNFISH.

Leaves Blyth 1100, unescorted to Gap A, thence to Patrol. (C. in C. Rosyth 0828/27, (S.6.1100/27) Sailed (S.6.1101/27).
~~(S.6.1101/27.)~~)

L. 26.

Exercising with Escort Vessels from 1130 to 1500 about 5 miles East of May Island. (C. in C. Rosyth 0828/27.)

TAKU.

Arrived Troon. (N.O.I.C. Ardrossan 1050/27.)

O.23.
SEALION.

There are indications that enemy force may move south along Norwegian Coast. Netherlands submarine O.23 patrol in the vicinity of $060^{\circ} 10' N. 004^{\circ} 10' E.$ SEALION if not at present operating in Fro Hayet proceed to vicinity of $062^{\circ} N. 004^{\circ} 28' E.$ (V.A.S. 1456/27.)

Greenock Area.

Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1610/27.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/28. (V.A.S. 1614/27.)

L.23.

Exercising in Scapa Flow tomorrow. (A.C.O.S. 1648/27.)



War Diary.

27. 12. 40.
Friday.HOME COMMANDS.British Air Activity.Patrols.

Additional Patrol ordered today: ^{"Bert"} ~~ASST~~, ~~ASST~~, ~~ASST~~. (C. in C. Rosyth 0732/27.)
2 Blenheims leave Dyce 0900 to patrol to Flamborough Head and return. (C. in C. Rosyth 0746/27.) My 1744/24. Patrol ~~ASST~~ is not being flown today. (C. in C. Rosyth 0810/27.)

My 1851/19. Intend sailing 5 Skuas at 1030 today. (Hatston 0945/27 to A.C.O.S.)

Additional Patrol S.A.2. being flown today in modified form tracks E to K. Also 2 Blenheims will patrol Fair Isle Channel between 1045 and 1145. (C. in C. Rosyth 1006/27.)

My 1744/24. Patrol MUGGY will not be flown tomorrow following cross over by Sunderland A/C being substituted throughout daylight. $62^{\circ} 30' N 6^{\circ} 24' W$, $62^{\circ} 30' 7^{\circ} 00' W$, $64^{\circ} 00' N$, $6^{\circ} 24' W$, $64^{\circ} 00' N 7^{\circ} 00' W$. (C. in C. Rosyth 1540/27 to C. in C. H.F.)

One Sunderland will carry out a Line Patrol daily from 28/12 till 31/12 inclusive between $62^{\circ} 7' N$, $7^{\circ} 40' W$. and $64^{\circ} 14' N$, $14^{\circ} 58' W$. (C. in C. Rosyth 1700/27 to C. in C. H.F.)

Patrols described in my 1540/27 and my 1700/27 will not be flown tomorrow Saturday but the following search will be substituted. Sunderland leaves Sullom Voe at 0800/28 for Videro ($62^{\circ} 22' N$, $06^{\circ} 50' W$). Then on a course 011° to $67^{\circ} N$, thence to Sullom Voe direct. (C. in C. Rosyth 2240/27 to C. in C. H.F.)

Lorient.

53 and 59 Sqdns., will attack tonight S/M's and Naval Dockyard at Lorient. (H.Q.C.C.1247/27 to 16 Group, Thorney Island.)

Bordeaux.

217 Sqn. will attack tonight S/M's in No. 1 Basin at Bordeaux. Alternative Target, Brest. (H.Q.C.C.1248/27 to 15 Group, St. Eval.)

Fort William.

Suggest Light on Corran Point be extinguished as affording a mark for enemy A/C. (R.A.C.F. 1331/27 to Adty.)

Norwegian Coast M/V's and Jetties attacked.

My 0945/27. One Skua returned early with defect. Three Skuas attacked M.V. of 4,000 tons in basin on Risoy Island Haugesund. One certain hit with 40 lbs.



War Diary.

27. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Norwegian
Coast M/V's
and Jetties
attacked.

British Air Activity. Contd.
H.E. Bomb. Possible one hit with 250 lbs. G.P. bomb and certain damage from near mission jetty. Ship set on fire and direct hits scored on two adjacent warehouses. Fourth Skua attacked 1500 ton MV at Garpeskjeer Jetty. Bombs hit warehouse on jetty alongside. Surprise was achieved but more heavy and light A A was encountered than formerly. One Pom Pom silenced by M.G. fire. New construction on Rovoer Island also machine gunned thought to be possible RD/F Station. No other shipping seen All aircraft returned safely. (Hatston 1723/27 to A.C.O.S.)

Convoy "Arana".
Arana.

Enemy Air Activity.
Enemy bombing Convoy in 51° 45' N. 1° 28' E. (VALOROUS 1010/27.) Single A/C attack. Dropped 3 heavy Bombs, straddling an Oiler. (VERSATILE 1015/27). One Dornier 17. 2 delayed-action Bombs. No damage. (VALOROUS 1019/27.) One A/C attacking Convoy in 51° 42' N. 1° 22' E. (VALOROUS 1028/27.) Fighters being sent (Nore W/T. 1030/27.)

Oban.

My 1935/24. A/S Trawler SOUTHERN STAR reports she was attacked by A/C at 1730/23 while on Firth of Lorn Patrol, and that 5 A/C took part in subsequent attack on Oban. (N.O.I.C. Oban 1140/27 to Adty.)

GLEN AVON.

Paddle Minesweeper. Being attacked by A/C in 55° 7' N. 0° 45' W. (GLEN AVON 1350/27 to Wick Radio.) No damage (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1224/28.)

Convoy "Agent".
Agent.

Being shadowed by one A/C in 52° N. 1° 45' E. (GUILLEMOT 1724/27.)

Deptford.

A large H.E. Bomb fell at about 2000/27 outside front of Chocolate Store. Front of Store wrecked and some other damage. (Supt. R.V.Y. Deptford 1015/28.)

Mining.

Q.Z.S.105
and 190.

Swept from A Buoy to Sandhead Buoy 75% from 0800/26 to 0800/27. One sweep cut by Explosive Cutter. No Mines. (V.A. Dover 1020/27.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

826

27. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Mining.

Thames Gate.
Change of Position.

My 1918/26. Removal of Thames Gate to new position completed. New position as follows. Sweeping of this area completed with negative result. (Cdre. Sheerness 1256/27.)

ARABY.

(British, 4936 Tons) Mined at 1445/27, in the Southern Thames, Gateway, Nore. 6 or 7 ships had passed over same spot immediately ahead of ARABY, and about 35 ships of which 7 were Motor-Vessels had passed over it during this forenoon. The spot had been swept several times during the forenoon by LL and S.A. Sweepers. (N.C.S.O. Thames 1844/27.)

VICTORIA.

(Isle of Man Steam Packet, 1641 Tons) Mined at 1540/27 in 290° Bar Light Vessel 8 miles. Passengers and Mail being landed. Ship in tow back to harbour. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1812/27.)

Firth of Forth.

At 1258/27 a Mine was detonated by M/S Trawler in 56° 1' 12" N. 3° 5' W. (C. in C. Rosyth 1611/27.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Norwegian Coast.

W/T Traffic suggests a movement to the Southward along the Norwegian Coast in the near future. (D.D.I.C. 1244/27.)

E-Boat.

Possible E.Boat reported near Position Z, steering N.E., at 1830 (C. in C. Nore 1859/27 and 1929/27.)



War Diary.

27. 12. 40.
Friday.

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

M.T.B.29.

Sank at 2330/26 after fouling Boom. No casualties. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0127/27.)

WOENSDRECHT.

(Dutch, 4668 Tons) Leaking badly in engine-room in 51° 40' N. 1° 18' E. One Tug from Harwich and one from Sheerness to proceed immediately and tow to Southend. (C. in C. Nore 1151/27.) Ship proceeding to Convoy. Will probably get in without help. (VERSATILE 1156/27 to C. in C. Nore.) Tug not required. (VERSATILE 1318/27 to N.O.I.C. Harwich.)

PROFICIENT.
(H.M. Drifter.)

(Stranded 20/12 on Whitby Sands) Salvage Contractor reports that, owing to very heavy seas, Ship is a Total Loss. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1833/27.)

VANSITTART.

Delayed at Plymouth with engine defects. (C. in C. W.A. 1923/27.)



War Diary.

27. 12. 1940.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.Convoys.

H X 99.

C.E.20.

E. N. 47.S.C.17.S.C.18.O.B.O. 265.S.L.61.

S.L.58.)
H.K.95)

H.G.49.F.N.68.F.S.72.H.X.97.O.B.268.O.B.264.O.B.M.266.E.N.46.Shipping.

My 1425/26. PENRITH CASTLE carrying munitions. (C.O.A.C. Halifax 0926/27.)

Shelled by enemy batteries 0310 to 0641, all falling in sea. (V.A. Dover, 1019/27.) Arrived Southend. (N.C.S.O. Thames 1501/27.)

My 2014/26. Amend to read 27 ships, none for Clyde. (N.C.S.O. Methil 1028/27.)

Date and route. MALOJA returns to Halifax. (D. & D., 1126/27.)

Your 1317/25. Date and route. (C.O.A.C. Halifax to Admty 1150/27.)

Sailed 0400/27. Escort VISCOUNT, 10 ships (N.C.S.O. Oban 1235/27. to Admty. Estimate will be passing 6 miles to southward of H.X.96 (position about 2345 tonight. (C. in C.W.A. 1512/27, to WHITEHALL, etc.)

Your 1757/24. R.V. and date. (N.C.S.O. Freetown to Admty. 12 x 3/27.)

Your 1914/16. Arrivals. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1405/27 1835/27 to Admty.)

My 1332/25. Additions to list. (A.C. North Atlantic, 1414/27.)

4 ships and 17 trawlers joining (N.C.S.O. Humber, 1706/27.) Harwich to Blyth, s.s. LIGHTFOOT D/G. (N.C.S.O. Harwich, 1506/27.)

Sailed 1400/27. 11 ships. (N.C.S.O. Methil, 1515/27). ∅ 1 ship and 3 H.M.T's from Humber joining (N.C.S.O. Humber, 1708/27) List 1629/27.) ∅

Route from R.V. (D.T.D. 1545/27 to C. in C. W.A.

Route. (D. T. D. 1558/27. to N.C.S.O's.)

Disperse in 22° W. (C. in C. W.A, 1712/27 to Cdre, MATADIAN.)

1704/27. ROSEMARY. One. (N.C.S.O. Milford Haven, 1715/27.)

All 16 ships arrived. (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1838/27.)



War Diary.

27. 12. 40.
Friday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Convoys. Contd.

Shipping.

S.L. 59.

Extract from sailing telegram as amended by Admty. (D.T.D, 1850/27.)

S.C. 16.

Meet. (C. in C.W.A, 2020/27, to ACTIVE, ANTELOPE, GEORGETOWN, HEATHER, PICOTEE.)

F.S. 70.

Arrived. (N.C.S.O. Thames. 2302/27.)

F.S. 69.

Arrived all ships. (N.C.S.O. Thames 2312/27.)

F.S. 73.

Sailed 2300/17. 11 ships. (N.C.S.O. Methil, 2358/27.)

O.B.C. 265.

2343/26/12/40 sailed O B C 265 8½ knots Escort WINCHELSEA. (List.) N.C.S.O. Clyde 0010/27.

S.L. 58.

Your 0005/27. ANEMONE reports Liverpool Section of S.L. 58 will be in position 053° 32' N 004° 46' W. at 0900/27. (C. in C.W.A. 0211/27 to LEEDS UNITED.)

H.X 95 B.M.

LOCH DEE, (BRAGANZA), MANGKALIHAT, H X 95 B M arrived Barry Roads. Escort HUDDERSFIELD TOWN sailed in execution of previous orders. (N.C.I.C. Barry, 0935/27.)

F.N. and
F.S.

Forecast of convoy sailings 31/12 to 5/1/41 and escorts. (C. in C. Rosyth, 1017/27.)

E.N. 48.

Sailed at 0830/28 for exercises and act subsequently as additional A/A escort to E.N. 48 sailing at 2250/28. After passing Dunnet head proceed to Scapa A.C.O.S. is requested to sail JASON to join W.N. 61 due Duncansby Head 1350/31. code word for E.N. 48 "Paddle" and for W.N. 61 "Rusty". (C. in C. Rosyth, 1031/27 to JASON.)

W.N. 59.

W.N. 59 expected time of arrival Kinnaird Head 2100/27. (Commodore W.N. 59 1050/27 to C. in C. Rosyth.)

H.X. 97.

F.O.C. Northern Patrol's 1250/14. After passing 23 deg. West leave H X 97 (route to Clyde.) (C. in C.W.A., 1120/27, to WORCESTERSHIRE.)

War Diary.27. 12. 40.Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping. Contd.S.L.S. 61.

Your 1659/24, and your 0316/25.
S L S 61. rendezvous in position Y
053° 40' 016° 30' W, 0845 G.M.T.
21/1/41, joining H.G.50 at X 038°
N. 020° W, 0900 G.M.T. on 13/1/41.
(N.C.S.O. Freetown, 1219/27 to Admty.)

H. G. 50.

Part company with convoy H X97 at dusk
29/12 and return to Scapa.
(C. in C. H.F. 2254/27, to REPULSE.)

O.G.48.

Sail TIERCEL to Gibraltar in convoy
O G 48. Rendezvous 270° Oversay 6
miles at 1540/30.
(C. in C. W.A. 1128/27 to WESTERN ISLES.)

O.G.48.

Ref. 1128/27. From C. in C. W. TIERCEL
arriving Greenock 1000/28 require to
rerange. 80 tons Scotch coal. Request
Admiralty be asked to instruct Lieut.
Hartnell to join TIERCEL at Greenock
29/12 or another officer be appointed
to sail in TIERCEL. (WESTERN ISLES, 1750/
See also next page 27.)

5.M.V.'s.

N.C.S.O. Dartmouth's 2337/26.
(Proposed sailing of 5 M/Vs and request
for escort) C. in C. W.A. 1208/27 to
N.O.I.C. Dartmouth.) (No escort available.)

My 2326/26 and your 1202/27, sailed
unescorted. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth 1707/27.)
and 1739/27.)

C. W. 21.

Intend to sail C.W. 21 from Southend
at 1130/30. (Timetable at 7 knots.)
Care is to be taken to keep convoy well
closed up between Sand Head buoy and
position 'C' M.L's detailed are to
be towed between Sheerness and North
Goodwin and whilst in tow engines and
dynamos are not to be used. (C. in C. Nore,
1228/27.)

Not met. A.M.C. MARSDALE also searching.
Panamanian ship TURUL was sighted hove
to at 1600/26 in position 051° 34' N.
021° 30' W. My estimated position 053°
35' north 016° 32' West.
(WELLINGTON 1300/27 to C. in C. W.A.)

War Diary.27. 12. 40.Friday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping.E.N. 47.

Buchan Ness 1325/27 B.S.T. Speed made good 6 knots. (PAYNTER 1340/27.)

O.G. 48.

Two Sloops are to sail with O.G.48, one is to leave convoy in time to arrive Gibraltar and bring back H.G.50 sailing January 11th. The other is to proceed to Gibraltar with Convoy and bring back H.G.51 sailing January 21st. (C. in C. W.A. 1440/27. to F.O.I.C. Liverpool.)

W.N. 60.

CURACOA proceed as necessary 28/12 to meet in Pentland Firth convoy W N 60, code word "Chitty" BERKSHIRE A/A.escort WOLFHOUND, expected Duncansby Head 1100/28 but probably early. Part company after dark and return to Scapa. (R.A.D. A.F., 1532/27 to CURACOA etc.)

3 M.V's.

Sailed at 1630/27 for Clyde for D/G repairs, PACIFIC GROVE, for Ayr for repairs, SPERO (Nor.), For Ardrossan for repair FLYNDERBERG (Br.). Escort GAVOTTE. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1720/27.)

TIERCEL.

Sailed Tobermory 27/12. TIERCEL Greenock 0900/28. (WESTERN ISLES, 1910/27.)

See previous page

Troop Convoys.W. S. 5.B.

FORESIGHT and FEARLESS will be required to sail as part of A/S escort for W.35 B They should accompany the convoy as far as endurance permits, afterwards proceeding to Gibraltar to rejoin Force H. After completion of defects they should remain under the command of C. in C. Western Approaches until sailed. (1613/27. to C. in C. W.A. H.F. etc.) (D.O.D.(H).)



War Diary.

27.12.1940.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40)

RENOWN
ARK ROYAL.

Your 2358/26. Am proceeding with RENOWN and ARK ROYAL unscreened to locate EMPIRE TROOPER.
(S.O. Force H., 0203/27, to Admty.)

Am proceeding with RENOWN and ARK ROYAL to search for EMPIRE TROOPER. SHEFFIELD proceeding with 7 destroyers as in paragraph one of my 1721/26. Take charge of operation. (S.O. Force H., 0258/27 to S.O. Force K).

Corvettes

Your 0830/25. (No trace in War Registry) Can you give any further information regarding condition of EMPIRE TROOPER. Where are Corvettes?
(S.O. Force H, 0256/27, to CLEMATIS).

EMPIRE TROOPER,
condition.

EMPIRE TROOPER reports being hit in number 1 hold. Seen through mist 1 hour later steaming 13 knots believe damage not serious. Unable to locate her or Corvettes owing to bad visibility. Shells fired at CLEMATIS were 6-inch or less. Arrive at intermediate port 0800 today.
(CLEMATIS 0530/27, to S.O. Force H).

Corvettes to
Ponta Delgada.

Proceed to Ponta Delgada and fuel with despatch then at maximum speed to overtake convoy and report position on 29/12.
(S.O. Force K, 0745/27, to JONQUIL, CLEMATIS, GERANIUM).

EMPIRE TROOPER
position.

Request you ask EMPIRE TROOPER to report her position from "~~ROBIN~~" to Admiralty.
(S.O. Force H, 0805/27 to Admty.)

Report your position relative to "~~ROBIN~~"^{"Robin"}
(D.O.D.(F) 1014/27, to EMPIRE TROOPER).

DORSETSHIRE

Departure 0630/27/12 DORSETSHIRE in accordance with C. in C. S.A's 2337/26/12 (Refers to Admiralty 2148/26).
(S.O.I. Freetown 0915N/27.)

Convoy
"Excess".

Admty. 1810/25 para. 4. As it may be difficult for S.O. Force H to forecast ~~movements~~^{his} at present suggest convoy "~~Excess~~" be ordered into Gibraltar until such time as S.O. Force H is prepared to break W/T silence to appoint convenient date for D one day.

I have no objections to postponement but early decision is essential for movements in Eastern Mediterranean already commenced to be adjusted. (C.in C. Med., 0957/27 to Admty.)

/ Assuming that

War Diary.

27.12.1940.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40).
(Contd.)

Assuming that you can break W/T silence request you will reply to C.in C. Med.'s 0957/27.
(D.O.D.(F) 1331/27 to S.O. Force H).

Your 0957/27 not to DUNEDIN, BONAVENTURE, ARGUS, SHEFFIELD. Operation "~~BERWICK~~" must be postponed one day. Possibly (? more) depending on situation.
(S.O. Force H, 1532/27 to C.in C. Med.)

→ DERBYSHIRE

My position course and speed at 1000 were 043° 14' N. 024° 00' W. 348° 14 knots. Position by dead reckoning. Visibility ½ mile. (DERBYSHIRE 1005/27 to S.O. Force H).

EMPIRE TROOPER situation

Standing by EMPIRE TROOPER, holed numbers one and four hatches, situation serious depending on number two bulkhead. 0800/27. 041° 00' 022° 09' 138° four. A/S gear and assembly transmitter out of action.
(CYCLAMEN, 1015/27 to Admty.)

Corvettes, Ponta Delgada.

Request immediate report of arrival of corvettes CYCLAMEN, CLEMATIS, JONQUIL, GERANIUM if they put in to Ponta Delgada.
(D.O.D. (F) 1035/27 to N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada).

CLEMATIS and JONQUIL arrived Ponta Delgada 1000 G.M.T. 27/12 GERANIUM arrived 1130 G.M.T. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, 1120/27).

→ DUNEDIN.

My 2101 Z/26 not to S.O. Force K and S.O. Force H. 1721/26. No change.
(DUNEDIN, 1059Z/27, to S.O. Force K).

FURIOUS
ARGUS
→ DUNEDIN
BERWICK
SHEFFIELD

Detach FURIOUS, ARGUS, DUNEDIN and five M.T. ships when collected to Gibraltar with the necessary destroyers. BERWICK, SHEFFIELD and the other destroyers remain at rendezvous till Force K arrives.
(S.O. Force K 1228/27 to BERWICK).

→ DERBYSHIRE
RENOWN
ARK ROYAL

In view of CLEMATIS's 0530/27 propose "~~LARK~~" DERBYSHIRE remain in the vicinity of "~~LARK~~" until whereabouts of EMPIRE TROOPER established. RENOWN, ARK ROYAL return to Gibraltar covering convoy. "~~LARK~~" reported unsuitable for air reconnaissance. My position 040° 12' N. 017° 40' W.
(S.O. Force H, 1150A/27 to Admty.)

Your 1150. RENOWN and ARK ROYAL should remain in area until situation regarding EMPIRE TROOPER is cleared up or as long as endurance of screen allows.
(V.C.N.S. 1402/27 to S.O. Force H).

/ I am assuming

MOST SECRET.

27.12.1940.
Friday.



War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40)
(Contd.)

I am assuming your 1402/27 directs RENOWN and ARK ROYAL to rejoin Destroyer screen in the vicinity 037° N. 016° W. and continue round up and remainder convoy. Am proceeding accordingly. (S.O. Force H 1555/27 to Admty.)

→ FURIOUS,
no transport
in company.

S.O. Force H's 1721/26 (Report of merchant ships in company) nil. (FURIOUS, 1200/27, to S.O. Force K).

→ BERWICK,
FURIOUS,
ARGUS,
SHEFFIELD.

My position is 037° 07' N. 015° 40' W. FURIOUS Capt. (D) 8 and two destroyers proceeding to Gibraltar at best possible speed to refuel and rejoin convoy. ARGUS, three ships of Gibraltar convoy, Capt.(D) 13, and six destroyers proceeding to Gibraltar at ten knots. All destroyers have to return to oil. SHEFFIELD remaining in this vicinity to pick up stragglers. BERWICK searching to North and North-West returning 0700 zone plus one tomorrow Saturday. (BERWICK, 1411/27 to S.O. Force H).

BONAVENTURE
S.L.59.

BONAVENTURE reported S.L.59 in position 42° 44' N. 21° 29' W. at 0115 B.S.T. today Friday. (C.in C. W.A. 1438/27 to KENYA).

→ FURIOUS

Expect to arrive boom entrance 1430/28 FAULKNER and FIREDRAKE in company. Require 2800 tons fuel. Request escort to enable FURIOUS to rejoin W.S.5A immediately on completion. (FURIOUS, 1455/27 to F.O.C.N.A.).

EMPIRE TROOPER.

My Bearing 321° from "Robin" 520 miles. Holed by raider number one hold full of water, bulkhead holding water, trouble when steaming mean speed of 5 knots M.L.A. 142 degrees. Suggest send assistance to disembark men if necessary weather calm at present. (EMPIRE TROOPER, 1520/27 to Admty.)

→ FURIOUS.

Your 1126. SHEFFIELD detached. FURIOUS screened by FAULKNER. FIREDRAKE and FOXHOUND to Gibraltar for emergency fuelling with a view to rejoining W.S.5A as soon as possible for passage to Freetown. Have sent FOXHOUND back. Shall I (a) rejoin M.T. ships now or (b) proceed Gibraltar and then rejoin as soon as possible. My position course and speed are at 1600 Zone minus one - 036° 54' N. 015° 26' W. 098° 23. (FURIOUS, 1624/27 to S.O. Force K).

/ Your 1624. ...

War Diary.

27.12.1940.

Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40).

(Contd.)

Your 1624. Proceed to Gibraltar.
(S.O. Force K 1626Z/27 to FURIOUS).

EMPIRE TROOPER

Proceed to EMPIRE TROOPER in position
040° 40' N. 021° 14' W. course 138° 5 knots.
(S.O. Force H, 1730A/27, BONAVENTURE,
DERBYSHIRE.)

Send two destroyers with (?best) endurance
at 16 knots to assistance of EMPIRE TROOPER
in position 040° 40' N. 021° 14' W. at
1800A, course 142° speed five knots.
(S.O. Force H, 1805A/27, to SHEFFIELD).

Proceeding in accordance with your 1730
A/27 at economical speed 15 knots ~~with~~ which
allows for no reserve of fuel. My position
is 039° 47' N. 015° 41' West.
(BONAVENTURE, 1830A/27 to S.O. Force H).

My 1805/27 and 1730/27 not to SHEFFIELD.
RENOWN and ARK ROYAL also to carry out
air search dawn 28th to locate EMPIRE
TROOPER. (S.O. Force H, 1835A/27, to Admty.)

Force K,
situation
of convoy.

My 2140/26. Visibility during daylight
27th one to 3 miles. No ship sighted by air
search.

If convoy is not at 037° N. 016° W. by
0800/28 consider ships have acted in
accordance with article 174 (F) of B R 136 (1).
Propose following action daily to avoid
further W/T signalling.

(a) DORSETSHIRE to be on convoy route
latitude 022° 30' N. by 06 (? Group omitted)
/30, zigzagging across route collecting
ships and meet Force K in latitude (?024°)
15' N. at 1800/30 turning South at this
time if contact has not been made.

(b) Convoy to be ordered by broadcast to
rendezvous in 023° 30' N. 020° 10' W.
at noon/30.

From North corvettes to rendezvous at noon/30
as in (b) or follow at best speed.

(d) Force K will leave 037° N. 016° W.
0800/28 and follow convoy route at 15 knots.

(e) Request Admiralty issue instructions for
FURIOUS rejoin convoy.

All times zone plus 1(one)
(S.O. Force K, 1849/27, to Admty. etc.)

(Reply: See Admty. 1116/28).

/ EMPIRE TROOPER

War Diary.

27.12.1940.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40).
(Contd.)

EMPIRE
TROOPER
to make
Ponta Delgada.

Pass following to EMPIRE TROOPER.
Steer for Ponta Delgada in San Miguel
Island as soon as weather permits.
Escort joining you.
Acknowledge.
(1 S.L. 1916/27 to CYCLAMEN)

Your 1916 received and passed.
(CYCLAMEN, 2000/27, to Admty.)

DUNEDIN,
CITY OF
CANTERBURY,
ESSEX.

Have intercepted DUNEDIN and sent her to
join ARGUS convoy. Have CITY OF CANTERBURY
ESSEX in company. Rendezvousing with
BERWICK position C at 0700 N/28.
(SHEFFIELD, 1933A/27, to S.O.'s Force H,
Force K, BERWICK).

KENYA

KENYA is to join EMPIRE TROOPER. Her
position at 1800/27 (correction 2253/27)
040° 40' N. 021° 14' W. course 142° speed
5 knots. EMPIRE TROOPER has been ordered
to steer for Ponta Delgada as soon as
weather permits. (1 S.L. 1955/27 to
C.S.10).

Situation.

EMPIRE TROOPER was in position 41° 20' 21°
30' W. at 1520/27, steering 142° 5 knots.
She has been ordered to Ponta Delgada as
soon as weather permits.
2. CYCLAMEN is in company with EMPIRE
TROOPER and BONAVENTURE and DERBYSHIRE are
joining her.
3. KENYA, BERWICK, CYCLAMEN, CLEMATIS,
JONQUIL, GERANIUM are to join EMPIRE TROOPER
and escort her to Ponta Delgada.
4. If BERWICK can remain with EMPIRE TROOPER,
BONAVENTURE can be released for "~~EXCESS~~" ~~EXCESS~~
as soon as BERWICK relieves her, otherwise
BONAVENTURE is to remain with EMPIRE TROOPER.
5. If for safety reasons it is necessary to
remove passengers from EMPIRE TROOPER this
should be done, but not otherwise.
6. CYCLAMEN cannot transmit by W/T except
through EMPIRE TROOPER. (1 S.L. 2021/27,
to S.O. Force H, S.O. Force K, C.S.10,
BERWICK, CYCLAMEN, CLEMATIS, JONQUIL,
GERANIUM.)

BERWICK.

Your 2021/27, not to SHEFFIELD. My position
course and speed are 039° 08" N. 015° 43" W.
272° eighteen knots, to join and remain with
EMPIRE TROOPER at best speed with fuel
available. Expect to meet her 1700Z/28.
(BERWICK, 2300/27 to Admiralty, S.O. Force H
S.O. Force K, CYCLAMEN.)

/ BONAVENTURE

War Diary.27.12.1940.
Friday.FOREIGN STATIONS.Convoy W.S.5A and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/12/40).BONAVENTURE.

Reference 2021/27 from Admiralty.
Since your lack of fuel will not enable
you to reach EMPIRE TROOPER before
BERWICK, you are to proceed to Gibraltar.
(S.O. Force H 2331A/27, to BONAVENTURE).

Corvettes.

Sailed from Ponta Delgada at 2130 G.M.T.
27/12 CLEMATIS (corrupt group) JONQUIL
and GERANIUM. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada
2202/27).

EMPIRE TROOPER

EMPIRE TROOPER 2000, 040° 12' 021° 13'
(? 232 degs. or ?254 degs.) 6.
(CYCLAMEN 2350/27 to BERWICK, DERBYSHIRE.).



War Diary.

27.12.1940.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

Foreign
Legion
Movement.

French Legion sails in NEURALIA in W.S. five A. M.T. in FORT LAMY speed nine knots sailed independently due Capetown 8/1/41 for onward routeing. 1431/27.

MILFORD.
DELHI.
ASPHODEL.
CALENDULA.

My 1129/26 CHARLES PRATT torpedoed by U-boat. If nothing is seen of derelict by 1700/27 proceed at that time to rendezvous with DELHI escorting TOUAREG and CAP DES PALMES and act as A/S escort. Estimated position of DELHI (? at noon on) 30/12. 003° 45'N. 000° 40'W. routed as follows (i) 003° 50'N. 007° 42'W. (ii) 004° 28'N. 009° 22'W., speed of advance 7 knots. ASPHODEL and CALENDULA sail from Freetown a.m. 29/12. to rendezvous p.m. 6/1/41 and act as additional escort. (C. in C. S.A. 1329N/27 to MILFORD-

Operation
"Ration".

Gibraltar 1445/27 French armed trawler L'AJACCIENE Passed W. to E. escorting French ship LT. ST. LOUBERT BIE, COMPIEGNE, EDEA, VENDOME. No force available for interception see my 1346/25. (F.O.C.N.A. 1548/27 to Admty).

RHONE
and S/M
SFAX
reported
torpedoed.

Your 1935/26. Confirmed. No British submarine has proceeded into Atlantic from Gibraltar. Naval Attache Madrid already informed on 20/12 and 26/12 that no British submarine was in this Area. (F.O.C.N.A. 1608/27 to Admty).

Free French
Movement,
W. Africa.

My telegram M.12 of 23rd. French Liaison Missions established as follows:- (List of appointments). (20 M.M. Brazzaville 0820/27 to W.O.).

PRIMAUGUET.
LAMOTTE PICQUET.

Your 0202/27 not to Admiralty. Fr. Cruiser PRIMAUGUET not at Saigon nor in Eastern waters. Rumour may be connected with sister ship Fr. Cruiser LAMOTTE PICQUET now in Saigon but there are no indications projected attack on Noumea which is considered unlikely in view of recent improvement our relations with Indo-China. Request Admiralty report position of Fr. Cruiser PRIMAUGUET. (Capt. O.S. Singapore 0951Z/27 to ACNB).



MOST SECRET.

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War Diary.

27.12.1940.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

Submarine
attack on
Panama Ship.

Submarine attack Panamanian steamship, name not yet ascertained, off harbour at 0800 G.M.T./27. Torpedo missed and exploded on shore. Submarine was sighted by me one mile S. Eastward end of breakwater 0815 and at 0830 two miles south of breakwater still on the surface steering west. Further particulars forwarded in due course. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 1012/27 to Admty) (H.S. Note:- Submarine was H.M.S. TRIDENT see 28/12).

Unknown submarine attacked Panama steamer near Ponta Delgada Azores a.m./27 with torpedo which exploded on shore (N.A. Lisbon 1747/27 to Admty).

N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada reports submarine attacked Panamanian ship off Harbour 0800 G.M.T. 27/12. (F.O.C.N.A. 1851/27 to S. and A. North Atlantic Stn).

N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada reports submarine attacked Panamanian ship off harbour 0800 G.M.T. 27/12. (F.O.C.N.A. 2040/27 to TRIDENT).

Daily Summary
Operations.

2 routine A.S. patrols.
(200 Group 1711/27 to Air Min).

Convoy
"Excess".

Effort has been made to cover movement of convoy "Excess" through Mediterranean by suggesting to personnel embarked that convoy is proceeding via the Cape. Request you will take similar action in Gibraltar and let it be understood that reason for visit to Gibraltar is dispersal of escort on other duties.
(D.O.D.(F) 2541/27 to F.O.C.N.A).



MOST SECRET.

27.12.40. 840
Friday.

WAR DIARY.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

GUINE.
COLONIAL.

Your 1727/24 and your 1616/19. Assuming steamship GUINE takes approximately 330 passengers on 30/12 following will remain to take passage in steamship COLONIAL. (Numbers). (C.in C. S.A. 0135N/27 to Consul Lisbon for N.C.S.O.)

CARNARVON
CASTLE.

N.O.i/c Simonstown's 1543/21 and Adty's 1635/20 considered very desirable that CARNARVON CASTLE should refit in U.K. and that proposal 2(B) of N.O.i/c Simonstown's 1543/21 be adopted if ship can be made reasonably serviceable and efficient for passage. (Arguments).

(C.in C. S.A. 1121N/27 to Adty).

16th
Auxiliary
A/S Group.

Your 1304/29/11. A/S Whalers KOS 19 KOS 21, KOS 22, KOS 23, and SYVERN are to form the 16th. Auxiliary A/S Group and will operate under C.in C. Med. As soon as practicable after completion they are to be sailed for Alexandria without necessarily waiting for complete group.

(D.D.A/S.W. 1224/27 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown).

BRITISH
PREMIER.

Overdue shipping. BRITISH PREMIER Capetown departure 10/12 due Freetown 25/12 has not arrived.

(S.O.(I) Freetown 1848/27 to Adty).

W.S.5.A.

The following transports left U.K. 18/12 in convoy W.S.5.A. (10 ships).

The following M.T. ships also sailed in W.S.5.A. (7 ships).

ERNEBANK has since returned to U.K. for repairs. The following M.T. ships which left U.K. 19/12 in Convoy O.B.261 are expected to join W.S.5.A. at Freetown (3 ships).

MANSEER, which also sailed in O.B.Convoy to join W.S.5.A. at Freetown, has since returned to U.K. to adjust cargo stowage.

The following transfers of personnel will be effected en route.

Port Sudan is the destination of French troops which embark in NEURALIA at Freetown, and Durban.

(D.O.D.(F) 1744/27 to C.in C. S.A.)



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

27.12.40. ⁸⁴¹
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (Contd.)

W.S.5.A.
(Contd.)

Following is position in regard to availability of accommodation in vessels of W.S.5.(a) on leaving Freetown. (10 ships). Numbers actually on board are as follows. (Details). Personnel in NEURALIA will disembark Freetown but will be replaced by French Foreign Legion.
(D. of S.T. 2354/27 to C.in C. S.A.)

Raiders,
Convoys,
Preferred
to
Hunting.

Your 0830/11/12/40. South Atlantic Station only occupies such a small part of Indian Ocean, and South Atlantic forces are normally only in that part escorting convoys that I do not feel able to offer much help. Shore-based aircraft are of great assistance as a deterrent to raider but it is only in South African waters on the South Atlantic Station that these are available and then only in limited areas. The modified system of convoy suggested would involve more ships for escorting than are normally available on the South Atlantic Station. With necessary forces available the suggestion has attraction but if put into force should I think have more ships in a group and cover a wider area. A system of group sailing somewhat similar though less rigid in form and comprising ships within certain speed limits sailing on the same day has been considered on this station but up to the present has not been tried owing to lack of vessels to provide the relatively close cover required. In general the principle followed has been to provide cover on the trade routes where attack is most likely whenever possible, and I agree with C.in C. East Indies in this respect.
(C.in C. S.A. 2145/N/27 to A.C.N.B.)

Mediterranean.

Submarines.

1706/24 request clarification whether TRIUMPH and three U Class are intended to join 1st S.F. on completion of this patrol.
(C.in C. Med. 1033/27 to Adty).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

27.12.40. 842
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

Italian
ship,
Trieste.

Intercepted air letter dated 5/12 indicates Italian ship was at Trieste on that date. (C.in C. A.W.I. 1203/27 to Adty).

Air Report.

Operational summary No. 200 to 1200 27/12. Egypt. Day 26/12. Enemy bombed shore batteries and ships at Sollum during early morning. In later attack on Sollum by 10 bombers escorted by 30 fighters. TERROR also bombed without damage or casualties.

TERROR
Bombed.

Greece. Day 26/12. 1 Sunderland searched South Eastern Ionian Sea for enemy shipping. Sudan. Day 26/12. Submarine search by two Blenheims in Area 18 degs. 00 mins. N., 40° 07' E., 21° 25' N., 38° 36' E. made no sighting. (H.Q. R.A.F. Middle East 1217/27 to Air Min.)

Italian
Troop
Transports.

Your 0958/27/11. Similar report now received from Turkey stating re-inforcements proceeding from North Adriatic inside Yugoslav Islands to Albania. Can you confirm. (N.I.D.3. 1225/27 to N.A. Belgrade).

Personnel.

A.T. 1618/5 stated that 500 young ratings would be sent to Mediterranean in December request information whether these are en route. (C.in C. Med. 1433/27 to Adty).

7th
C.S.

7th C.S. leaves Alexandria early A.M. 28/12 for Kaso Strait. (Capt: (S) I 1650/27 to PANDORA).

Reserves
of
Aircraft.

Reply to Adty 1324/23. (Air Ministry 1640/27) See Mediterranean Vol.)

Air
Report
Malta.

Secret combined services report Malta to 1700 G.M.T. 27/12 no air activity owing to weather. No Naval or military item. (H.Q. R.A.F. Med. 1700/27 to Air Min).



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

27.12.48⁴³
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

B.N.
Personnel.

Chiefs of Staff ordered despatch of 4 Officer 60 O.R.S. of No.1. special service BN to Malta for employment as required in raids against railways on Italian Coast. Personnel sailed on BONAVENTURE after completing seven days course in use of submarine punts. Party will be at your disposal, please inform G.O.C. Malta. (D.C.O. 1835/27 to C.in C. Med.)

Chartering
of Ships
in Black
Sea.

My 1201/5. Have you any further information regarding the progress of these negotiations? (D.T.D. 1838/27 to N.A. Angora.)

Greek
Submarine,
Capture,
Enemy Routes,
Brindisi,
Valona.

Greek submarine has captured prisoners from small coaster off Valona and found on the captain full instructions for entering Brindisi and Valona also something about Durazzo. With the help of these instructions he claims that he obtained three hits on a convoy off Saseno. Captain is kept solitary to reduce leakage but possibility of this information being incorrect in few days due to changes is realised. Coaster left Brindisi 1700/21 with pilot and when past nets had written orders to steer 036° to point Z then 049° to point Y then 049° to point X one mile to point A. Point Z is 2000 metres Semaphore Station 049 degs. Point Y is 3½ miles Semaphore Station 049 degs. Point X is 11½ miles Semaphore Station 049 degs. Instructions for Valona steer for Point A on courses ? placed between 080 degrees and 100 degs. thence 090 degs. to point B then further particulars "on Cape Linguetta and San Giovanni point and then to anchorage". Point A four point nine miles Saseno ? base 280 degrees. Point B two miles ? barrier light San Nicolo harbour Saseno Island 063°. Prisoners stated coaster steered from temporary point B to Cape Linguetta and then coasted to San Giovanni off (corrupt group) Gate whilst nets extended North East and have large buoys and long cylinders. Prisoners gave some information about Durazzo (corrupt groups) further enquiry. Captain is timid but may be made use of and appears open to bribery. (N.A.Athens 2253/27 to C.in C. Med.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

27.12.40.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

844

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

REGULUS.

A.F.O. 647/40 para. 3 and my 1615/9 (1615/10 intended - H.M.S. REGULUS three days overdue) not to all addresses, recommend date for paying off REGULUS, 12/40. (C.in C. Med. 2335/27 to Adty).

East Indies.

CRICKET
PROTECTOR.

Cochin 26/12 arrival and departure CRICKET, ^{12/40} PROTECTOR for Bombay. (S.O.(I) Bombay 0604Z/27).

CAPETOWN.

CAPETOWN is to leave Colombo at 0400Z/29 and proceed to position 002° North 080° East and then proceed towards position 005° North 092° East. Speed throughout 12 knots. (C.in C. E.I. 0606Z/27).

SYDNEY,
S.W.4.B.

Request may be informed whether SYDNEY will be available to escort S.W.4.B. leaving Suez. (C.in C. E.I. 0608Z/27 to C.in C. Med.)

CERES,
COLOMBO.

CERES to leave Kismayu patrol to arrive Mombasa a.m. 29/12. COLOMBO to leave Mombasa p.m. 28/12 and proceed to patrol off Kismayu. (C.in C. E.I. 0620Z/27 to CERES, COLOMBO.)

Japanese
Ships.
Examination.

Can reply now be given to my 0618/12. F.O.C.R.I.N.'s 0559/24 refers. (0654Z/27).

B.N.12.
Troop
Convoy.

(1) B.N.12. 0800Z/27, escort LEANDER (route). EGRA, TAKLIWA, VARSOVA all for Port Sudan. (N.C.S.O. Bombay 0844Z/27 to Adty).

NETRAVATI,
SHROPSHIRE.

Aden arrivals 27/12 (Corrupt group) NETRAVATI (? from North) 0700Z. Departure 0830Z SHROPSHIRE for Mombasa. (N.O.I.C. Aden 0851Z/27).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

27.12.40.
Friday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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East Indies. (Contd.)

445. Add to my 0851/27 (? route) 013° 051° ,
011° 053° , 003° North 050° , 002° South 299° .
(N.O.I.C. Aden, 1531Z/27).

BARBETTE.
BARNET.

396. My 1032/16/12.* Sailing of BDV BARBETTE
and BDV BARNET has been delayed owing to
machinery defects in installation ship.
(C.in C. E.I. 0852Z/27).
* 1152/16 intended.

Whalers.

Request approval of my 1210/5/11 reference
renaming whalers.
(C.in C. E.I. 0924Z/27 to Adty).

LEANDER.
B.N.12.

Bombay departure 1115Z/27 LEANDER Ocean escort
to B.N.12.
(S.O.(I) Bombay 1116Z/27). *See previous page*

B.S.111.

Convoy sailing telegram B.S.111. 10.00 G.M.T.
27/12 022 30'N., 037 07' E., 020 21'
037 54' W of Sanganeb reef to Port Sudan
arriving 09.00/30. Escort ships:- CITY OF
CHRISTCHURCH, Motor transport and stores.
DUNERA, Personnel ETHIOPIA, Personnel and
CITY OF FLORENCE, Motor transport and stores.
(S.B.N.O. Suez Canal, 1204/27, to Adty).

SHOREHAM.
CALEDON.
INDUS.
AUCKLAND.
EL WAFI.

Aden arrivals 1100Z/27. SHOREHAM, 1300Z/27
CALEDON, INDUS, AUCKLAND. Kamaran arrival
25/12 departure 26/12 on patrol EL WAFI.
(N.O.I.C. Aden, 1335Z/27).

Aden
Air
Report.

Summary 198 and Operational Summary for 24
hours ending 1400 27/12. 4 small vessels
in Assab Harbour in position usually occupied
by A.A. ship. Latter not seen.
(A.H.Q. Aden, 1804/27 to Air Ministry).

Cables.

Cable and Wireless report. Bushire Cable
intercepted. Wireless transmission only to
Iran, Irak and Bahrein.
(Duty Officer T.C.B. 1800/27).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

27.12.40.
Friday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

CORNWALL.

CORNWALL sailed. E.T.A. Simonstown 1000B/28.
(N.O.I.C. Durban, 1920B/27).

China.

Moller
Line,
Japanese
Interference.

Re boarding of CARMEN MOLLER 22/12. JESSIE MOLLER prevented from sailing 25/12, and attitude of Japanese.
(N.L.O. Shanghai to C.in C. China 0859Z/27 and 0901Z/27. Original in lion copy only).
See page 847A.

A/C.

Your 0822/8. Walrus aircraft (? complete) is being shipped uncrated in Oiler PEARLEAF sailing Singapore about 12/1. Remainder of Aircraft wings crated undercarriage and tail plane off, fuselage on cradle together with spare engines are being shipped in ORNA sailing Singapore about 5/1/41. Your 0600/26 spares available under consideration.
(Commodore, Malaya, 0817Z/27 to C.in C. E.I).

Indo-
China
Trade.

Your 0823/26. Request report whether this development is due to agreement between yourself and Captain Jouan. You will have seen from Foreign Office telegram Nos. 42 and 43 to Consul General Haiphong (Nos. 53 and 54 to C.O.I.C. Singapore for C.in C. China) the general line of policy desired to be adopted towards negotiations with Indo-China. Further instructions will follow but meanwhile it is requested you will not enter into any binding arrangement in view of the broader issues involved.
(D.T.D. 1846/27 to C.in C. China).

Malaya
offer of
Australian
Troops.

Ref. offer of reinforcements and certain munitions made by Australia. Australian Defence Minister and Chief of Gen. Staff have spent four days here en route to visit Australians in Middle East. After having seen telegraph appreciation G.H.Q.F.E/40 of 5 Dec. and your 94149 (M.O.2) of 23rd they sent on their own initiative cables to Australia recommending despatch of Bridge group and munitions already offered. Following is gist of cable from Sturdee to Northcott. (begins) Impressed by appreciation of C.in C., Far East despatched

/Chiefs



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

27.12.40.
Friday.

847

FOREIGN STATIONS.

China. (Contd.)

Malaya,
offer of
Australian
Troops.
(Contd.)

Chiefs of Staff early in December. Best method preventing war spreading to Far East is firm strong attitude here at earliest date. Retention Malaya vital continued effective maintenance Middle East via Cape. Consider brigade group and ancillary troops should be despatched earliest date shipping can be arranged. We are considering question eventual despatch whole eighth division to Malaya but this depends on date despatch India division shipping and accommodation. Unquestionably deterrent effect whole Australian Division in Malaya at early date of greatest importance and greater value to Empire than if left in Australia despite training difficulties. Essential send initially best brigade commander. If sufficient shipping not available at once essential proportion maintenance and medical troops accompany initial convoy. Confer C. in C., Far East re details not clear. (Ends).

Following is gist of cable from Spender to Army Melbourne, (Begins) Despatch stores and equipment to Singapore earliest possible date. Early despatch three inch Mortars most desirable. Other stores not to be held up if difficulty in shipping three point seven guns which understand from War Office cable to be diverted to Malaya. As Australian Minister of War is urging Australian Government to send reinforcements forthwith it appears only a matter of days before Australia agrees. Please inform me as soon as agreement is given so that direct contact can be started. In the mean time the necessary plans etc. are under way. (C.in C. Far East 1028/27 to W.O.)

FOREIGN STATIONS

China.

2
0859/27. December.

Lian
copy
only.

SECRET.

MESSAGE.

IN.

Date. 28.12.40.

Rec'd. 1125.

847A

From M.L.O. Shanghai.

Interdepartmental Cypher (8) by CABLE.

addressed. C. in C. China. Repeated. Cdre. I/C Hong Kong.
C.O.I.B. Far East Singapore. Admiralty, S.O. (I)
Shanghai, British Ambassador, Shanghai. British
Ambassador Tokyo, Consul Gen. Shanghai.

On December 22nd C.M.M. MOLLER and LIGHTER
chartered to Chinese and having customs clearance for Haikow
were boarded by Japanese Gendarmerie one hour before due to
sail. Charterers were informed ship could not sail with cargo
of cotton and tobacco prohibited by Military (not by Customs)
and second compradore removed for questioning. Japanese
Military Launch remained alongside and armed sentry placed on
LIGHTER until 1200, December 23rd.

2. I made verbal representations to Japanese Naval
Authorities and on December 24th. had interview with Gendarmerie
Lieutenant concerned. Lieutenant made following statements:
(a) only cargo was being detained and action was not directed
against ship. As soon as cargo objected was unloaded vessels
were free to sail. (b) action taken was against Chinese and
with no object of harming British interests which could
sustain no financial loss. (c) action justified by facts
Shanghai was Military occupied Area, necessity to enforce
blockade and Chinese charter of ship. (d) British ships not
under charter but with prohibited cargo on board would similarly
be prevented from sailing until such cargo discharged.

I replied that in effect a British ship was being
illegally detained at Shanghai and had been boarded etc.,
whereas British Authorities alone were competent to take such
action. Lieut. replied that he was acting under orders and
repeated his standpoint.

3. On December 25th MBZF (JESSIE MOLLER) was
prevented from sailing on similar grounds. Mollers stated that
Japanese action solely designed to obtain (corrupt group) either
for permission for ships to sail with cargo on board or even
before permitting prohibited cargo to be disembarked (see
para. 2 (a) above.) Charterers of all vessels are now
negotiating with Gendarmerie and I understand intend to
disembark cargo concerned.

4. Although incident appears to be local endeavour
to extort (corrupt group) from Chinese and action is taken
against Chinese owned cargo and not against British ships as
such, consider principle at stake most important as success may
tempt Japanese to interfere with cargo on British Coasters or
ocean going shipping. Similar interference by Japanese Naval
Port authorities over Lead cargo in MMZS (KATHLEEN MOLLER)
occurred October 19th Lead was removed but ship permitted to
sail with cotton goods to which objections had also been raised
by Gendarmerie. H.M. Consul Gen. recorded vigorous protest but
no further action was taken in hope further incident would not
occur. Current negotiations transferred to Japanese Consulate
General and H.M. Consulate Gen. is lodging protest but submits
representation to Higher Japanese Authorities elsewhere might
prove effective in view of pecuniary inducements to local
Japanese. My 0901 December 27th refers.

2
0859/27.

1st. Lord.

1st. S.L.

V.C.N.S.

A.C.N.S. (H)

A.C.N.S. (F)

A.C.N.S. (T)

Nav. Sec.

C.S.O. to 1st. S.L.O.I.C. (2)

P.A.S. (S)

D.N.I. (4)

O.D. (5)

Ops. (4)

M. (2)

D. of P. (3)

O.I.C. (2)

D.S.D. 9.

I.P. (3)

W.D.

M. (30)

Admiral Bollaers (2)

E.P.S.

D.T.D. (3)

D.T.D. (H)

D. of S.T.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

Nauru
Shelled,
by Raider B
(KOMET)

No.273, 27th/12.
Following telegram has been received from Acting Resident Commissioner, Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. (Begins).
27th December Unnumbered. Nauru heavily shelled this morning. Residents of danger areas on Ocean Island being evacuated and preparation made for destruction of secret documents. (Ends). Wellington and Melbourne informed.
(High Commissioner, Western Pacific No. T.O.O./27, to Colonial Office).

At 1940Z/26 Nauru heavily shelled by one enemy raider. Great material damage. Oil fuel destroyed, no casualties. Raider had Japanese name and markings. (A.C.N.B. 0441/27 to Admty. etc.)

My 0441/27. Prime Minister Australia today issued statement world publication following points:-

- A. Shelled defenceless land people
 - B. Used Neutral colours
 - C. Nauru not fortified under terms Mandate known to enemy.
 - D. World will view attack with contemptuous disgust.
- (A.C.N.B., 0449/27)

also for
KOMET

My 0441/27 and my 0546/27 to last addressee only. Following received from Admiralty. Reporting Officer, Nauru. Raider named MANYO MARU arrived off Island before daylight and using morse lamp at 0550 local time signalled Nauru (repeated several times) do not use your wireless or I will shoot the mast down. I am going to shoot the phosphate loading jettys. This signal was complied with to save destruction human life and property. Raider opened fire at 0640 local time and shelled at close range cantilever loading jetty, all oil storage tanks cantilever shore storage bin mooring gear store and other phosphate buildings. Using pom-poms destroyed mooring buoys. Various portions shells found indicate 5.9 inch used. Oil fuel still burning. W/T Stn. intact. Power station intact. Private houses not fired on. Raider had mark on side of hull and flew Nazi star at gaff and not as stated in my first message ends. (A.C.N.B., 2040Z/27).

/ Survivors from
Raider Sinkings.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand. (Contd.)

Survivors
from Raider
Sinkings.

My 1243Z/25 (survivors of ships sunk by enemy raiders picked up from island in Pacific waters). Propose including names of ships concerned. In view of approaching arrival of survivors in Australia would be glad of early reply. (A.C.N.B. 0635/27, to Admty.)

Your 0635/27. Concur.
(D.T.D. 2052/27).

My 1900Z/26. From interrogation at Port Moresby of six responsible survivors.

TOKYO MARU

(1) TOKYO MARU is KULMERLAND (description) No armament except seaplane.

MANYO MARU

(2) MANYO MARU cargo passenger accommodation twenty. (description) Estimated speed 21 knots.

NARVIK

*(alias for Raider B,
KOMET)
No. 1 alias Raider
A (ORION)
Rubb.*

(3) Nicknamed NARVIK, 6000 tons (description) Each raider carries at least one seaplane. Raiders moved in company from position of RANGITANE 200 miles east then to Kermadec thence to 025° south 177° east thence between New Hebrides and Loyal Island thence near San Cristobal thence Nauru thence to anchorage in Marshall Is. thence near Nauru thence Emirau. Third raider prisoners not landed at Emirau. Captain proposed to land prisoners Nauru condition being destruction of everything essential to life. Captain Upton RANGITANE considered shell fragment larger than six inches. (A.C.N.B., 0700Z/27).

MONOWAI

Arrival Auckland 0545Z/27.
(S.O.(I) Wellington 0602Z/27)

EMPRESS OF
RUSSIA.

EMPRESS OF RUSSIA will be escorted well clear of Fiji. Request you will arrange transfer of bullion. (N.Z. Naval Board 0915/27 to Govr. Suva).

27.12.1940.

Friday.

850

War Diary.



GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

ACHILLES.

German Ship ACHILLES sailed from Vigo 2345/26. (Consul Vigo, 0758/27 to Admty.)

ACHILLES of 1000 tons left Vigo 2345/26. (D.D.I.C. 1156/27 to F.O.C.N.A.)

ACHILLES sailed from Vigo 2345/26. (V.A.S. 1201/27).

ELSA ESSBERGER.

Returned to Kobe 25/12. (Capt-on-Staff, Singapore, 0947Z/27 to Admty.)

OSSAG.

My 1636/26.
OSSAG left Roumania 29/8/39 for Egypt. Put into Trieste where she was arrested by Shell Company. Arrest refused by Italian courts. Cargo presumably still Shell Company's. If so might be able to ship (? in) Spain. Please inform M.E.W. (Asst. N.A. Madrid, 2033/27 to D.N.I.)

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

DANDOLO.

Italian S.S. DANDOLO sailing from Algiers for Sfax to load phosphates for Italy. (Madrid, 0900/27 to Admty.)

MAYA.

Departure. MAYA in ballast Batoum. (Varna, 1615/27).



U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

WAIOTIRA
(Torpedoed 26/12)

Your 2222/26. Two tugs have sailed
(C.in C. W.A. 0318/27 to MASHONA)

My 2222/26. Ship sank 0605 after internal
explosion. All saved. 1 dead. E.t.a.
Clyde 0830/28.

(MASHONA 0705/27 to Admty.)

Reported in position 058° 05' N., 017° 10' W.
2222/26.

Propeller out of action. MASHONA standing
by reports salvage possible. (F.O.I.C.
Greenock 0822/27 to SUPERMAN and SEAMAN).

ARDANBHAN

(British 4940 tons). Following read
59° 16' N., 20° 27' W. ARDANBHAN
torpedoed (Lyness 1802/27).

Detach one destroyer to proceed to
ARDANBHAN torpedoed 59° 16' N., 20° 27' W.

at 1902/27.^x (C.in C. W.A. 1932/27 to ACTIVE)
^x? 1802/27 intended

My 1932/27. Destroyer detached to report
name position course and speed (C.in C. W.A.
0818/28).

Your 0818/28 ANTELOPE detailed position
course and speed 059° 01' N., 020° 08' W.
332° 20 knots.

(ANTELOPE, 0900/28 to C.in C. W.A.).

Submarines Reported.

1714.

D/F, probable U-Boat in area 25 miles radius
from 53° N., 13° 20' W. (D.D.I.C. 1804/27).

2214.

D/F, Italian U-boat within 30 miles of line
joining 41° N., 14° W. and 38° N., 16° W.
(D.D.I.C. 2252/27).

Position of
enemy S/M.

Ref. Admty. A.F. position 59° 16' N.,
20° 27' at 1802/27 (D.D.I.C. 1951/27).

There are 3 U-boat between 53° 30' N. and
56° N. 15° W. and 16° W. (D.D.I.C. 1455/27)
Italian.

Estimated U/B
dispositions.

1 possibly between Madeira and Gibraltar.
2 to eastward of Azores.
2 possibly in Bay of Biscay bound for
Gironde.

1 between 55° N. and 53° 30' N. 15° W. and
17° W. 1712/26.

1 between 54° N. and 55° N. 15° W. and 18° W.
1929/26.

1 in 53° 41' N. 16° 08' W. 1025/27.

1 more in N.W. Approaches similar area.

German

1 in Freetown area.

1 about 300 miles N.E. of Azores.

1 in 58° 12' N. 17° 25' W. 1906/26.

1 about 59° 30' N. 15° W - 17° W. 1223/26.

1 between 57° 30' N. and 58° 30' N. west of
20° W. 1221/27.

1 may be homeward bound north about position
unknown. (D.D.I.C. 1354/27.).

27.12.1940.

Friday.



War Diary.

U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

852

Submarines Attacked.

A/C attack
1045.

Am over enemy S/M in 53° 41' N., 16° 3' W.
S/M sighted on surface and observed to
submerge. (A/C ? duty B 1025/27 to Oban)
From Duty B. Have attacked S/M with
bombs? level Dive ? not known S/M course
145° still searching (A/C ? duty B
1045/27 to Oban).

A/C report U-boat on surface 053° 41' N.,
016° 08' W. at 1025. (C.in C. W.A.
1114/27 to HIGHLANDER)

My 1130/27 am searching for U-boat
reported by A/C. (HIGHLANDER 1145/27
to C.in C. W.A.)

1240
A/C attack

A/C reports ? estimate attacked suspect
U-boat 055° 51' N., 008° 35' W. at 1240/27
(C.in C. W.A. 1550/27).

One S/M submerged bearing 270° distance
3 miles course 180 position 56° 20' N.,
7° 00' E. at 1235 (Duty Y ?? 1304/27 to
18 Reconnaissance Group H.Q.)

Enemy S/M previously reported has dived.
Have attacked with bombs dive, no
release 1240.

(Duty Y ?? 1314/27 to 18 Reconnaissance
Group H.Q.)

Enemy S/M previously reported was sighted
on surface and observed to submerge.

When first sighted was on course 180°
speed 10 knots. Have lost touch with
enemy S/M last seen in position 56° 20' N.
7° 00' E. at 1245. (Duty Y, 1321/27 to
18 Rec. Group H.Q.'s).

28.12.1940.

Saturday.

War Diary.



SITUATION REPORT.

853

Home Commands.

C.in C. H.F. sailed from Scapa at 1425 today in NELSON with 4 Destroyers to patrol to the Eastward of the Iceland Faroes Passage where EDINBURGH has been ordered to R/V with him at Noon tomorrow. An A/S Patrol on a line N.E.-ly from Muckle Flugga will be maintained from this evening until the morning of the 2nd. January by 2 A/S Trawlers which left Kirkwall at 1430 today; and F.O. Iceland reports that 6 Battle A/C are available at short notice from there at any time after daylight tomorrow. It is intended at present that NELSON and Destroyers should return to Scapa P.M./31. It is reported today from Stockholm that the Kiel Canal was re-opened yesterday to vessels of moderate beam.

British Air Activity.

2 special Air Patrols between Sullom Voe and the Norwegian Coast have been ordered to be flown daily from tomorrow until the 31st inclusive; and the additional Patrols ~~XXXX~~ and ~~XXXX~~ were flown today.

Enemy Air Activity.

The Convoy ^{'Booby'} ~~XXXX~~ was attacked off Clacton at 1045 today by one A/C which dropped 4 bombs but did no damage; 7 H.E. and many Incendiary Bombs were dropped on Plymouth between 1900 and 2000 this evening without any damage to Naval Establishments except one small fire; and at Southampton, where 6 H.E. Bombs were dropped by a single A/C at 1520 today, the ~~XXXX~~ Destroyer NORSEMAN and Tug CANUTE were very seriously damaged.

Two Enemy A/C flew over Liverpool at 1225 today apparently on a R/C flight. The conditions were ideal for this; and F.O. Liverpool suggests that in clear weather in future Patrols should be maintained on the outskirts of the Gun Defended Zone to intercept such flights.



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

28.12.1940.
Saturday.

SITUATION REPORT.

854

Mining.

In consequence of suspected A/C minelaying the Eastern Entrance to Portsmouth was closed this morning except through the Looe Channel; and precautions have been ordered to be observed by Ships entering the Thames Gate. 2 Mines believed to be acoustic were exploded this evening, one about 1 mile from the Bar Light Vessel at Liverpool and one in Mounts Bay.

28.12.1940.

Saturday.

War Diary.SITUATION REPORT.FOREIGN STATIONS.

855

Convoy W.S.5A. & Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

The destroyers DUNCAN and HERD (Force H) were on their way westward to join EMPIRE TROOPER but apparently their fuel was running low. Visibility continued low preventing air search and RENOWN at 0941A reported that edge of starboard bulge was tearing away. This necessitated her return to Gibraltar. GERANIUM was ordered to take charge of KENYA, BERWICK, DERBYSHIRE and corvette to locate EMPIRE TROOPER whose D/F bearing indicated she was 60 miles N.W. of 27/2000 position (40° 12' N. 21° 13' W.) given by CYCLAMEN (2350/27).

At 1000A a signal was made by FORMIDABLE (S.O. Force K) to say that she had picked up 16 vessels of the convoy making a total of 22. (This figure apparently includes the two picked up by SHEFFIELD on 27/12 - viz. CITY OF CANTERBURY and ESSEX ?)

At 1116 the Admiralty ordered FURIOUS to remain at Gibraltar to sail as soon as possible with DUNEDIN for Freetown.

At noon, the Admiralty broadcasted to 16 ships of convoy a rendezvous to the southward for noon/30 (approximately in 23° 45' N. 20° 10' W.)

The BONAVENTURE at 1111/28 expected to arrive Gibraltar at 1730A with German prisoners from the BADEN (8 officers and 31 men).

At noon A, the RENOWN and ARK ROYAL were in 40° 2' N. 19° 56' W. on the way to Gibraltar (about 750 miles).

The FORMIDABLE and NORFOLK had collected 14 ships of the convoy and were proceeding to southward; two others were with the SHEFFIELD. One, two ships the MENELAUS and COSTA RICA were not accounted for. The DORSETSHIRE (from Freetown) was to meet FORMIDABLE in 26° 20' N. 20° 25' W. at 0800/31.

The weather was deteriorating and the BERWICK, which had been repaired temporarily at Gibraltar and was on the way to EMPIRE TROOPER, had to reduce speed to 15 knots (1400/28) and did not expect to meet her before daylight 29th.

Escorting EMPIRE TROOPER were the KENYA (cruiser) the CYCLAMEN (corvette) and DERBYSHIRE (armed merchant cruiser). She was about 120 miles from Ponta Delgada at 6 p.m. It was intended that / she ...

MOST SECRET.

28.12.1940.
Saturday.

War Diary.



SITUATION REPORT.

856

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5A & Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

she should, if possible, transfer her troops to warships under the lee of the island, but KENYA did not think this feasible in view of possible submarine attack.

H.M. Consul at Ponta Delgada was informed of the situation and that in view of the fact of EMPIRE TROOPER being an auxiliary warship, there would be no question of internment, so long as they did not land. He was asked to obtain assurances that military would not be interned and that no hindrance would be placed in way of their transshipment.

C.S.10 (KENYA) was directed that if she had to enter harbour, H.M. ships were not to enter to effect a transfer of troops.

28.12.1940.

Saturday.



War Diary.

SITUATION REPORT.

857

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Vichy French.

A Tangier report (C.3) states that 10,000 French naval ratings arrived at Casablanca yesterday.

North Atlantic.

With reference to the TRIDENT's attack on the Panamanian ship BONITA off Ponta Delgada, Admiralty have informed TRIDENT that she acted quite correctly. It appears that at least 3 torpedoes were fired, but missed, and 1 exploded on shore, damaging a house, another did not explode and has been salvaged by the Portuguese and is being taken to Lisbon in the destroyer DOURO. The incident occurred well within territorial waters.
(See pages 819 + 839. 27. 12. 40.)

Mediterranean.

Convoy.

Convoy W.S.4 B (10 ships with troops for Middle East) escorted by SOUTHAMPTON, KANDAHAR [REDACTED], arrived at Suez this afternoon. See p. 863

Valona.

3 Blenheims bombed Valona Harbour, one bomb bursting 50 yards from a large ship.

China.

Captain on Staff, Singapore, reports there is no evidence to show that raiders operating in the Pacific are other than German or captured ships, but certain facts tend to show the Japanese are aware that German ships in Japan are probably acting as supply ships and raiders.



MOST SECRET

War Diary

28.12.1940
Saturday

858

HOME COMMANDS

Policy

Increasing
Endurance of
Destroyers

Your 2147/20. Suggest consideration be given to provision of convoy A/S escorts of greater endurance by removing one boiler from VIMY and fitting internal fuel tank. VIMY has been running since September on two boilers and is due for complete re-boiling on 1st Jan. before joining C. in C., W.A. Estimate that about 30% increase in endurance could be obtained by fitting tank in forward boiler room to height of lower deck if No 1 boiler is removed. (C. in C., H.F. 1201/28 to Admty.)

Defence of U.K.

"Deluge"
DELUGE

At 1130/28. (D.C. 1155/28) At 2330/28
(D.C. 2347/28)

Movements

MANCHESTER CITY

My 1006/25. Complement of firemen complete. Ship to leave Glasgow a.m./30 to comply with F.O.I.C. Greenock 1230/27. (F.O.I.C. Glasgow, 0942/28.)

BATH

Arrived Port Z.A. 0930. (TRELAWNEY 0952/28)

EGLINTON

Sailed Sheerness 1027. (C. in C., Nore 1140/28) Arrived Harwich 1510 (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1605/28)

MAURITIUS,
VIMY, BULLDOG.

Sailed from Scapa to escort MAURITIUS to Clyde. (A.C.O.S. 1150/28)

Northern Patrol

Trawler Lines tonight. 4 Trawlers (F.O.C.O.S. 1539/28)

VENOMOUS

Arrived Clyde (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2340/28)

KASHMIR
JERSEY
JUPITER

Arrived 1058 (C. in C., W.A., 0008/29)
Sailed JERSEY and JUPITER 1523 (C. in C., W.A., 0008/29)

Operations

Anti-Raider
Patrol in
Iceland Faroes
Passage

Your 2301/27. A/S Air Escort of one Hudson will be provided from 1300 to dark today (C. in C., Rosyth 0306/28 to C. in C., H.F.)

NELSON will pass through 063° 50' N., 003° 558 W., at 1200/29 steering 00° speed of advance 15 knots.

/In absence.....



28. 12. 40.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

859

Operations Contd.

Anti-Raider
in Iceland
Faroes Passage.

In absence of any information regarding enemy EDINBURGH is to R/V with NELSON in above position.

If contact is not made during daylight/29th EDINBURGH is to return to Scapa. (C. in C. H.F. 1149/28 to EDINBURGH.)

Sailed from Scapa C in C. H.F. in NELSON, screened by BEDOUIN, TARTAR, BEAGLE, SIKH at 1425. (A.C.O.S. 1535/28.)

Your 2017/26. 6 Battle A/C are bombed up and available at short notice if weather permits from daylight tomorrow. (F.O. Iceland 1702/28 to C. in C. H.F.) 2 A/S Trawlers leave Kirkwall 1430/28 to maintain an A/S Patrol between Muckle Flugga and 61° 51' N. 0° 54' W., returning to Kirkwall AM/2. (A.C.O.S. 1234/28 to C. in C. H.F.) Expect arrive in HOOD with 4 Destroyers at 0850/29. (F.O.C. 1st. B.C.S. 2119/28 to A.C.O.S.)

Operation.
P. V. 1.

Will be carried out between 2000 and 2230 tonight. One A/C with Flares and one with Bombs. (C. in C. Nore 1059/28.)

Operation
D. Z.

Request you order D.Z to be carried out as convenient when a minimum of 4 Destroyers become available for Force. (C. in C. H.F. 1151/28 to B.C.1.)

Operation.
N.C.

M.T.B's 69 and 70 and Trawlers ALEXANDRITE and BOTANIC will operate from 2130/28 till 0230/29 between No. 1 Buoy and A Buoy on anti-minelaying operation N.C. (V.A. Dover 1732/28 to Adty.)

Submarines.

O. 23.

To leave Patrol 1800/30, remaining North of 57° N. until 0200/1. Route to Gap A. (S.9. 0931/28.)

L. 23.

Exercising in Scapa Flow tomorrow (A.C.O.S 1318/28.)

MINERVE.

Arrived with STELLA POLARIS (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1324/28.)

Greenock Area.

Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1457/28.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

28. 12. 40.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

860

Positions.

Submarines. Contd.
For following 24 hours at 0800/29.
(V.A.S. 1522/28.)

SEVERN.

Propose carry out 4 day A/S Patrol
between 53° N. and 59° N, and between
20° and 24° W. after leaving Plymouth.
(V. A. S. 1847/28. to C. in C. W.A.)

SEAWOLF.

My 1130/21. Intend sail unescorted at
1515/30 to R/V in 110° Start Point 3
miles at 1030/31. (S.5. 1907/28.)

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

Additional Patrols ordered today: ~~0738/28.~~ "stab",
"Sleeve" ~~0738/28.~~ (C. in C. Rosyth 0738/28.)

2 Blenheims leave Dyce 0900 to patrol
to Flamborough Head and return.
(C. in C. Rosyth 0740/28.)

Following Daily air patrols ordered
29th to 31st inclusive:

(A) From Sullom Voe to Videro (62° 22'
N, 06° 30' W, then on a course 011° to
67° N. then to Sullom Voe direct.

(B) From Sullom Voe to 62° 07' N. 07°
40' W, then to 64° 14' N, 14° 58' W, and
return on same track. (C. in C. Rosyth
1708/28 to C. in C. H.F.)

Bordeaux.

217 Sqdn., to attack tonight U-Boats in
No. 1. Basin at Bordeaux. Alternative
Target, Brest. (H.Q.C.C. 1302/28.)

Enemy Air Activity.

Convoy "Becky".
BOOBY.

Being attacked by A/C in 51° 40' N. 1°
18' E. (Lowestoft 1045/28.) 4 Bombs
dropped. No hits (WOOLSTON 1054/28.)

Immingham.

Details of Damage in Air-Raid 15/16.
(O.C.W. Immingham 1140/28.)

Southampton.

NORSEMAN,
CANUTE, and
Destroyer,
Damaged.

OPPORTUNE

Single A/C dropped 6 H.E. Bombs at
1520 today. Thornycroft report
NORSEMAN (Destroyer) cut nearly in two,
OPPORTUNE (Destroyer) minor damage by direct
hit, and Tug CANUTE in sinking condition
by near miss. One man killed in Old Docks.
(F.O.I.C. Southampton 1710/28 to C. in C.
Portsmouth.)

OPPORTUNE



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

28. 12. 40.

Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

861

Enemy Air Activity. Contd.

Plymouth.

During air raid between 1900 and 2000 today 7 H.E. and a large number of incendiary bombs were dropped in civil areas. Small fire in laundry of Naval Hospital but no damage to other naval establishments. (C. in C. W.A. 0107/29 to Adty.)

Mining.

Operation
G. Q. 2.

Your 1134/26. Intend sail from Milford Haven 1045/29. (ADVENTURE 0927/28 to C. in C. W.A.)

Portsmouth.

Eastern entrance closed except through Looe Channel. Suspected A/C mining. (C. in C. Portsmouth 0950/28.)

S.N. 6. and
S.N. 65.

Propose sail 0915/2 to lay S.N. 6. on PM/3 and S.N. 65 on AM/4. Of 6th Division probably only BATH will be available for this. Request I be informed if 3 other Destroyers and Covering Force can be made available (R.A.M.L. 1046/28 to Adty.) See Operations, Volume.

Loch Ewe.

My 1907/5/9 and Adty. 1714/27/12. Consider that thorough Magnetic sweeping will be necessary before extensive use is made of this Port. (A.C.O.S. 1119/28 to Adty.)

Thames Gate.

Precautions for Ships entering. (C. in C. Nore 1451/28 to LOWESTOFT.)

Sheerness.

At 1130/28 M/S Trawler SUNLIGHT detonated one Mine with S.A. Gear in 296° Nore Light Vessel 9.8 cables. (Capt. M/S. Sheerness 1511/28 and 1032/29.)

Falmouth.
RENOVELLE
damaged.

RENOVELLE (Auxiliary Patrol Motor Boat) exploded Mine, presumed acoustic, in 50° 4' 8" N. 5° 30' 38" W. No casualties, but vessel damaged and towed into Newlyn. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1724/28 to Adty.)



War Diary.

28. 12. 40.
Saturday.

HOME COMMANDS.

862

Mining. Contd.

Liverpool.

One Mine, apparently acoustic, damaged Coaster LOCHER about 1 mile N.N.E. of Bar Light Vessel. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1950/28 to Adty.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Unknown Vessel.

My 0300/28. Position probably between 61° and 63° 30' N. and 20° to 25° W. (D.D.I.C. 0922/28.)

Unidentified Vessel.

From Fair Isle. One small slow vessel bearing 144° 15 miles, steering 120°, at 0150/28. Not identified. (A.C.O.S. 1055/28 to Adty.)

1 Tanker and 2 Destroyers.

At 1140 in 61° 35' N. 5° E. steering 315° at 10 knots. (C. in C. Rosyth 1204/28 to SEALION) (V.A.S. 1219/28 to S/M's Area B.

Kiel Canal.

Kiel Canal announced opened from 27th to vessels with beam not exceeding. (? 71) feet. (N.A. Stockholm 1817/28 to D.N.I.)

E. Boat.

Suspected near 54.E. Buoy at 2020, steering N.E. (C. in C. Nore 2137/28 to EGLINTON, EXMOOR.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

28. 12. 40.
Saturday.

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

863

CAPE ARGONA }
(A/S Trawler }
N.A.B. WYKE. }
(M/S. Trawler }

In collision at 0400/28 in Granton Road, Both damaged above waterline. (N.O.I.C. Leith 1104/28.)

CROCUS.

(Corvette) In collision in Mersey with s.s. SALUTA. Badly holed. Will require docking for at least 3 weeks. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1620/28.)

VALOROUS.

Have been in collision with ^{M/S} Trawler LIBYAN in Sheerness Harbour. Side cut open to main deck level at 28 station. (VALOROUS 1710/28 to C. in C. Rosyth.)



HOME COMMANDS.

864

Shipping.

Convoys.

→ S.C.16.

Dispersed, heavy weather. Routed through (positions) (C.in C. W.A. 0036/28 0136/28 to ACTIVE, ANTELOPE, GEORGETOWN, HEATHER, PICOTEE.) *See below next page also p. 867*

F.S.72.

Sailed 0200. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 0205/28 to Admty.) 12 ships, 5 additional from Middlesbrough. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 0951/28)

H.X.97.

Meet H.X.97, 22 ships, escort HEPATICA, 1000/30. Route (C.in C. W.A. 1230/28 to WHITEHALL, WINCHELSEA, VISCOUNT, VANQUISHER, GENTIAN, RHODODENDRON). Cancel my 1545/27. Route from new R/V. (D.T.D. 1236/28 to C.in C. W.A.) *See also next page p. 867*

H.X.100.

List of ships (Senr. Canadian N.O. Halifax, 1246/28 1247/28 1735/28 to Admty.). Cancel Sections (1), (3) and (4) in my 1256/24. Route (D.T.D. 1259/28 to C.O.A.C. Halifax). Route (N.C.S.O. Bermuda, 1604/28).

O.B. 268.

1000/1/1/41. Route. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1248/28 to Admty.)

→ F.N.70 (F))
F.N.71 (S))

My 1217/20, F.N. 70(F) postponed 24 hours. F.N.70(F) and F.N.71(S) will both sail from Thames at 0830/29. (C.in C. Rosyth, 1351/28 to Admty.)

→ S.C.16.

Your 1130/28. Estimated position 2000/28 routed as in my 0136/28. Endeavour to R/V with convoy at daylight. (C.in C. W.A. 1510/28 to ACTIVE). *See above next page*

O.G.M. 48.

13 ships. E.t.a's (N.C.S.O. Milford Haven 1545/28 to Admty).

F.S. 73.

List of ships and destinations (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1556/28 to Admty.)

Pilots for Convoy.

Earlier in war trouble experienced through ships from convoys racing for pilots at the Bar Light Vessel. Overcome by requesting Commodores to form convoys in single line ahead and increase distance apart of ships. Complaints again received - instructions to Commodores etc., from N.C.S.O's at Convoy Assembly Ports abroad. (D.T.D. 1615/28 to F.O.I.C. Liverpool).

* F.N. 70 (fast)
→ F.N. 71 (slow)

Intend sail about 0915/29 or as soon as sweeping completed, escorts VERSATILE and VALOROUS. F.N.71 (slow) escorts LOWESTOFT and WOOLSTON will sail immediately after F.N.70. (C.in C. Nore, 1638/28 to N.C.S.O. Southend)

* *See also next page p. 867*

O.B.O. 266.

0400/29, 16 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1701/28).

/ H.X.101.



HOME COMMANDS.

865

Convoys. (Contd.)

Shipping. (Contd.)

- H.X.101. Positions and route. (D.T.D. 1834/28 to C.O.A.C. Halifax).
- H.X.97. Meet (C.in C. W.A. 1916/28 to WHITEHALL WINCHELSEA, VISCOUNT, VANQUISHER, RHODODENDRON). *See previous page 7p.867*
- F.N.70. My 1217/20 and 1351/28 amend close escort to read VERSATILE, GARTH. (C.in C. Rosyth 2003/28). *See previous page*
- E.N.48. List 10 ships. (N.C.S.O. Methil 2347/28).
- BEAVERDALE Your 1842/27. BEAVERDALE route. Paravanes are not to be used in home waters. (D.T.D. 1704/28 to N.C.S.O. Belfast).
- H.X.96. Arrived complete. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1300/28).
- E.N. 48. Route. (N.C.S.O. Methil 1420/28).
- W.N.62. Code ^{"Mutual"} ~~MUTUAL~~. 1200/30. Escorts KING SOL (S O) SOUTHERN GEM 6 ships. ^{"Mutual"} W.N.O code "Limited" to R V with ~~MUTUAL~~ at 1130/31 in 56° 52' N. 7° 09' W. (N.C.S.O. Greenock, 1029/28).
- W.N.60. Scapa departure CURACOA at 1013 to escort W.N.60. (A.C.O.S. 1052/28 to Admty.)
- S.C.16. Your 0136/28 for passing to LADY MADELINE. My position 1100 will be 054° 33' north 016° 32' west course 238° speed 12 knots visibility 2 miles GEORGETOWN in company. Intend altering 068° at dark and search at daylight. Due to oil fuel must meet convoy by 1000 tomorrow if speed made good on homeward trip only 7 knots. Request instructions. (ACTIVE, 1130/28 to C.in C. W.A.). *See previous page*
- O.B.265. WHITEHALL, VANQUISHER have not joined ^{7p.867} convoy. Request air assistance in making contact. My position is 057° 35' N. 010° 06' W. (WHITEHALL, 1201/28).

Your 1201. Aircraft will assist you. (C.in C. W.A. 1422/28 to WHITEHALL).
- H.G.50.
H.G.51. Your 1440/27 SCARBOROUGH will escort H.G.50 FOLKESTONE H.G.51. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1240/28 to C.in C. W.A.).

28.12.1940.
Saturday.War Diary.

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HOME COMMANDS.Shipping. (Contd.)Convoys. (Contd.)O.G.48.

Intend including TIERCEL in Clyde portion of O.G.48.

Sailing 2230/29 and not to R/V as in C.in C. W.A's 1128/27.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1244/28 to C.in C. W.A.).

Arrived H.M.Y. TIERCEL.

(F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1330/28).

F.S.74.

Act as additional escort to F.S.74 Senior Officer WESTON which sails from Methil at 1400 tomorrow Sunday. Part company at Junction of Q.Z.Y.154 and 7 Q.Z.F. thence proceeding by 7 Q.Z.F. to Harwich. (C.in C. Rosyth 1335/28, to WORCESTER).

Convoy anchoring in vicinity of the Nore Light Vessel until visibility improves. Am anchored 3 cables 090 degs. from the Nore Light Vessel.

(LOWESTOFT 1350/28 to C.in C. Nore).

My 1350, convoy now entering.

(LOWESTOFT 1431/28).

O.B.266.

Pass one full route to steamship E.F. JOHNSON who is to act as Cdre. SALUTA has returned to harbour after collision. (N.O.I.C. Liverpool 1322/28 to CLARKIA).

Arrived and sailed CLARKIA escorting O.B. 266.

(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1420/28).

O.G.M.48.

1525/28. H.M.T. YORK CITY. Thirteen. (N.C.S.O. Milford H., 1530/28).

C.W.21.

My 1228/27. Last paragraph.

Destroyers BERKELEY, CLEVELAND, A/S Trawlers, LE TIGER, COVENTRY CITY, LADY PHILOMENA, M/S Trawlers, ASH, BAY, WALNUT and DEODAR if ready.

M.B.B. Vessels, HASLEMERE, ROEBUCK, SAMBUR, PINTADE, PINGOUIN.

M.L.'s 113. 116. 117. 138. 165.

171 and Chasseur 43.

Number of M/V's in Convoy - 6.

(C.in C. Nore, 1558/28).

/ O.B.265
H.X.97.



HOME COMMANDS.

Shipping. (Contd.)

867

Convoys. (Contd.)

O.B.265.

H.X.97.

Add to my 1532/28. (Estimated positions 2000 tonight).

O.B.265 058° 32' North 011° 39' West 325°.
H.X.97 covered by fleet units 058° 50' North 025° 20' West. (A.C.O.S. 1705/28).

H.X.97.

Your 1133/28. Owing to much bad weather low visibility convoy is widely scattered and I am not now in touch with Commodore. Present weather thick fog. HEPATICA lost touch with convoy on 22/12 and has probably not rejoined. Probably majority of ships being out of touch with Commodore are following route through 056° 44' north 028° 40' west 059° 05' North 016° 32' west and 057° 08' north 010° 00' west which appears to have been given them in case of separation. Estimated that most ships will cross meridian 023° west during forenoon tomorrow 29/12. My position course and speed at 1800 G.M.T./28, 057° 46' north 028° 10' west 062° 9 knots. Admiralty 1905/23 has not yet been passed to Commodore.

(WORCESTERSHIRE, 1745Z/28 to C.in C. W.A.)

See p.p. 864, 865

F.S.75.

Act as additional escort for F.S.75 Senior Officer LONDONDERRY which sails from Methil at 2300 tomorrow Sunday. On arrival at Nore proceed as ordered by C.in C. Nore. (C.in C. Rosyt, 1800/28 to VESPER).

F.N.70.

My 1636 not to D 21 or GARTH. GARTH is to replace VALOROUS as escort with F.N.70. She is to sail as ordered by VERSATILE tomorrow Sunday.

(C.in C. Nore 1810/28, to D.21, GARTH).

See also p.p. 864, 865

W.N.60.

Convoy W.N.60 now passing Rattray Head, speed 8.5 knots. (BLACKFLY, 1830/28).

S.C.16.

Have searched throughout day (ARDANBHAN, torpedoed, see 27/12) in poor visibility no sign of wreckage or boat. 150 tons fuel remaining, expected time of arrival Londonderry daylight 30th to fuel before joining S.C.16. My position course and speed 059 degs. 18' North 020 degs. 11' West 120 degs. 14½ knots.

(ANTELOPE, 1830/28 to C.in C. W.A.).

See also p.p. 864, 865

/ W.N. 61.

28.12.1940.
Saturday.

War Diary.

HOME COMMANDS.

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Convoys (Contd.)Shipping. (Contd.)W.N.61.

Time of sailing 2111/28. H.M. Trawlers RUMBA (S 0) and SALTEREL 10 16 ships. (N.C.S.O. Clyde, 2150/28).

W.N.57.

Your 1757/28/12. VESTRA sailed 0945/23 in company R.F.A. PETROBUS H.M.T. STALBERG to R.V. with W.N. 57 off Duncansby Head at 1500. Convoy was three hours ahead of time. Ships instructed proceed independently destination if fail contact convoy. VESTRA destination Leith. (N.C.S.O. Kirkwall, 2205/28)

F.N.70.

You are to sail tomorrow Sunday 29th to join as additional escort F.N.70 fast due Sunk light vessel approximately 1445. Break off North of Sheringham so as to return to Harwich before dark. (F.O.I.C. Harwich, 2320/28, to WIDGEON).

E.N.48.

2230/28. H.M.T.'s INDIAN STAR, FOXTROT. Additional escort JASON. 11 ships. 1 ship for Clyde. (N.C.S.O. Methil, 2345/28).

Convoy Conferences.

Suggested that Masters of Merchant ships who have been running their ships in convoy since the outbreak of war are growing tired of convoy conferences. These are essential, but the interest of Masters might retained -

- (a) by pointing instructions with reasons and giving examples from recent attacks on convoys,
- (b) by attempting to give some tit-bits of information at each conference with due regard for security,
- (c) by frequently inviting the opinion of masters on current questions of interest.

Admiralty control of Merchant shipping can only run smoothly if the Merchant Navy feels that the control is exercised in a spirit of service and understanding. N.C.S.O's and D.E.M.S. Officers are a natural channel for passing on. Admiralty would welcome constructive suggestions by Masters. (D.T.D. 1853/28 to N.C.S.O's)

War Diary.28.12.1940.
Saturday.HOME COMMANDS.Shipping. (Contd.)

869

Troop Convoys.

ABOSSO
EUMAEUS,
escort
OTTAWA

Intend sailing ABOSSO and EUMAEUS escorted by OTTAWA 1600/29 speed 11 knots to rendezvous with SALOPIAN and GARLAND in position 270 degrees Oversay 6 miles at 0900/30 thence in accordance with Admiralty's 1835/27 not to all addressees, speed 14 knots.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1038/28).

My 1038/28 Secret positions

- (1) 56° 00' N. 10° 00' W. ~~LARK~~ "Lark"
(2) 59° 00' N. 15° 00' W. ~~PANSY~~ "Pansy"
(3) 60° 00' N. 20° 00' W. ~~ROBIN~~ "Robin"
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool, 1245/28).

SALOPIAN escorted by GARLAND leaves Clyde 0015/30 to rendezvous with ABOSSO and EUMAEUS escorted by OTTAWA as ordered in F.O.I.C. Liverpool's 1038/28 (route) SALOPIAN keeps W/T watch as for Western Patrol throughout passage.
(F.O.C.N.P. 1830/28 to SALOPIAN, GARLAND and 1832/28 to Western Patrol).

W.S.5B.

My 1539/25. Movement of WINDSOR CASTLE is cancelled. Ship will now load in Liverpool.
MONARCH OF BERMUDA due Liverpool to-day should be diverted to Avonmouth, from which port she will sail with Convoy W.S. 5B.
(D.O.D.(H) 1832/28, to C.in C. W.A.).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

(After BERWICK's Action with Raider on 25/¹²/~~21~~).

Corvettes.

CLEMATIS with JONQUIL and GERANIUM proceeded at 2330 G.M.T. as instructed in your 2021/27.

(CLEMATIS 0100Z/28 to Adty).

DUNCAN.
HERO.

H.M. Ships DUNCAN, HERO, return Gibraltar. (S.O. Force H, 0855A/28 to Capt: D.13.)

CYCLAMEN's 2350/27. My position, course and speed 038° 35'N., 018° 10'W 262° 13 knots. to intercept EMPIRE TROOPER 0900 A/29. Fuel remaining DUNCAN 206 HERO 193. (Capt: D.13 0901A/28 to S.O. Force H.)

DERBYSHIRE.

Proceed up Meridian 025° 30' W., to latitude 60° N. R/V for inward A/S escort will be signalled later. (F.C.C.N.P. 1010/28 to DERBYSHIRE).

Visibility
no air
search.
RENOWN
defect.

Persistent low visibility prevents air search. Leading edge of Starboard bulge of RENOWN has started to tear away. RENOWN and ARK ROYAL are returning to Gibraltar. F.O. 10th C.S. GERANIUM take charge of KENYA, BERWICK, BERBYSHIRE, and corvette and locate EMPIRE TROOPER. D/F bearing indicates she may be 60 miles to N.W. of position given in CYCLAMEN's 2350/27. (S.O. Force H. 0941A/28 to F.O.C.10 C.S.)

My 0941A/28. Request dock be prepared for RENOWN with all despatch for examination of bulge. Expected time of arrival a.m./30. (S.O. Force H. 1019A/28 to F.O.C.N.A.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider (Contd.) (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

16 M/V's.
with
Force K.

In contact with 16 Merchant Vessels including one of "~~EXCESS~~" EXCESS.
(S.O. Force K. 1000N/28 to Adty, SHEFFIELD, S.O. Force H., F.O.C.N.A. C.in C. S.A.)

EMPIRE TROOPER.

Estimated position of EMPIRE TROOPER at /28 0800/39° 28' N., 22° 30' W course 0232 degrees, 6 knots.
(D.O.D.(F) 1015/28 to C.S.10, KENYA, JONQUIL, CLEMATIS, GERANIUM.)

DUNCAN,
HERO.

Your 0855 A/28. My position course and speed are 038° 22' 018° 10' 103° 22'.
HERO in company. Cancel my 0901 A/28 to S.O. Force H.
(Capt: D.13 1107A/28 to S.O. Force H.)

Cancel my 1010/28 and act in accordance with Admiralty 2021/27.
(V.A.N.P. 1310/28 to DERBYSHIRE).

R/V for
Convoy.

For BHUTAN, MENELAUS, SETTLER, DELANE, ^{ELM} CITY OF DERBY, STENTOR, ARABISTAN, ANSLEM, CITY OF LONDON, TAMAROA, CITY OF CANTERBURY, NEURALIA, RANGITIKI, COSTA RICA, ELIZABETHVILLE, ORBITA. R/V for convoy W.S.5.A. at 1200. (Zone plus 1) 30/12 is 045 degs. "~~EXCESS~~" 300 miles.
(D.O.D.(F) 1201/28 to All ships in Area 1).

BONAVENTURE.

Expect to arrive at Gibraltar 1730A/29. Request immediate supply of 1050 oil fuel, etc. Have following for disposal, four army officers 60 other ranks and two tons of stores. Eight officers and 31 other German prisoners.
(BONAVENTURE, 1111/28 to F.O.C.N.A.)

DORSETSHIRE,
Convoy R/V.,
Corvettes,
FURIOUS,
DUNEDIN.

Your 1849/27 (not to F.O.C.N.A. or DUNEDIN).
1. para (a) Concur, DORSETSHIRE to conform.
2. para (b) - Admty. will broadcast. (R/V for Convoy).
3. para. (c) - Corvettes must remain with EMPIRE TROOPER for the present.
4. para. (e) - FURIOUS is to remain at Gibraltar after fuelling to be sailed as soon as possible in company with DUNEDIN for Freetown. C.in C. S.A. arranging their Time of Arrival. (D.O.D.(F) 1116/28 to Force K, F.O.C.N.A.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

872

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider. (Contd.) (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

D/F
Enemy
Unit.

First Class D/F Bearings from me at 1226Z were Call Sign Z S E L 269 degrees Call Sign M I M N 261 degrees. My position 1226 039° 56' N., 020° 11' W.
(S.O.Force H., 1226A/28 to C.S.10).

Submarines
Destroyers
(Gibraltar)

My 1028/27 not to Admiralty and your 1019/28 not to Captain (S) I, V.A.Malta. Intend to retain submarines at Gibraltar for the present. JAGUAR escorting CIRCASSIA towards P Three sails 1830/28, FAULKNER, FIREDRAKE, HASTY sails 2000/28. Request you signal R/V for these four destroyers to meet you Sunday 29th/12.

(F.O.C.N.A. 1232/28 to S.O.Force H.)

*FAULKNER etc. sails - Sun
CIRCASSIA & JAGUAR sails P 875
Sun P 879*

Force H.

My position course and speed ARK ROYAL in company at 1200 A 040° 02' N., 019° 56' W 120° 18 knots. Expect to pass through position 036° 10' N., 011° 40' W at approx. 1300/29 thence 095°.
Request screen may meet me as early as possible.

(S.O.Force H, 1255A/28 to F.O.C.N.A.)

EMPIRE
TROOPER.
disposal
of
personnel.

Ref: A.T. 2021/27. A. The safety of the personnel in EMPIRE TROOPER is the first consideration. B. Subject to A it is not desired that either EMPIRE TROOPER or the personnel in her should go to the Azores, but it is realised that EMPIRE TROOPER without personnel may have to go to Azores for repairs. C. The best solution of A and B is that personnel from EMPIRE TROOPER should be transferred at sea to cruisers and DERBYSHIRE for passage to Gibraltar. D. If C is not safe or practicable then transfer of personnel must be carried out either under the lee of the Azores or as a last resort in Ponta Delgada anchorage or harbour. E. Report action you decide on in order that Portuguese authorities may if necessary be warned.

(A.C.N.S.(F) 1303/28 to C.S.10).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider. (Contd.) 873
(ADMIRAL HIPPER)

Force K,
Ships in
company,
SHEFFIELD,
DORSETSHIRE.

13. My 1000/28. (a) proceeding with following ships - NORFOLK and CITY OF CANTERBURY, RANGITIKI, CITY OF LONDON, ELIZABETHVILLE, TAMAROA, ANSELM, CITY OF DERBY, ORBITA, BHUTAN, DELANE, NEURALIA, ARABISTAN, STENTOR, ATREUS, SETTLER. (b) SHEFFIELD with ESSEX is being ordered to Gibraltar. (c) My 1349/27 para. (a) and (b) DORSETSHIRE to leave latitude 23.30N in time to meet me at 0800/31 in position 26.25W. (d) My appreciation is that only ships of slow convoy not accounted for are MENELAUS, COSTARICA. All times Zone plus 1. (S.O. Force K, 1326/20 to Adty, S.O. Force H., F.O.C.N.A., C.in C. S.A. SHEFFIELD, DORSETSHIRE, NORFOLK.)

BERWICK,
damage,

Your 2021/27 and your 1303/28. In addition to underwater damage sustained in action BERWICK has 3 frames and 2 longitude frame fractures instarboard cable locker. Temporary repairs by welding were effected at Gibraltar and additional longitude frame fitted. Welding is now breaking away and additional longitude frame fractured. Ship is working badly. In view of deteriorating weather conditions maximum speed is now reduced to 15 knots in which cast it is doubtful whether EMPIRE TROOPER will be met before daylight tomorrow 29/12. (BERWICK 1400Z/28 to Admiralty, S.O. Force H, Force K, C.S.10, F.O.C.N.A.)

CLAN
CUMMING.

Proceed to Gibraltar. After dark report expected time of arrival. (D.O.D.(F) 1459/28 to CLAN CUMMING). ^{"EXCESS"}
(Use Call Sign allocated for operation ~~EXCESS~~)

RENOWN.

RENOWN will pass through position 036° 52' North, 013 08' W., at 1000 A/29 course 120 17½ knots. Join me at that time with HERO. (S.O. Force H, 1541A/28, to Capt: D.13).

FURIOUS.

Gibraltar arrivals 1415 FURIOUS Capt: (D) 8, FAULKNER and FIREBRAKE. (F.O.C.N.A. 1650/28 to Adty).



WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

874

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider. (Contd.)

→ Destroyers.

Your 1255/28 and my 1232/28. FAULKNER
FIREDRAKE, HASTY, JAGUAR ordered to pass
through position 036° 25'N., 012° 20'W at
1100 zero minus one Sunday 29/12 steering
300° .

(F.O.C.N.A. 1704/28 to S.O. Force H.)

Sailed - See next page.

EMPIRE
TROOPER
TRIDENT.

Transport EMPIRE TROOPER damaged in action
accompanied by C.S.10 in KENYA, BERWICK, DER-
BYSHIRE and 4 Corvettes is proceeding to-
wards Ponta Delgada from the Northward.
She may arrive there to-morrow 29/12. If
possible the troops on board will be
transferred to the Warships at sea or under
the lee of the Island. In which case
EMPIRE TROOPER may or may not proceed into
Ponta Delgada for repairs.

(D.O.D.(F) 1725/28 to TRIDENT).

EMPIRE TROOPER, CYCLAMEN and DERBYSHIRE in
Company. My position is 039° 30'N.,
024° 16'W.

(F.O.I.C. 10 C.S. 1804/28 to Adty).

→ FURIOUS
FIREDRAKE
FURY.

Intend to sail FURIOUS escorted by
FIREDRAKE and FURY at 0001 29/12 to
endeavour to R/V with convoy W.S.5.A.
Destroyers will be recalled as requisite.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1730/28 to Adty).

575. Cancel my 1730/28.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1826/28 to Adty).

ARGUS.
DUNEDIN.

My 1500/28. ARGUS, DUNEDIN 6 Destroyers
3 M.T.'s expected time of arrival Gibraltar
0730/29 from West.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1756/28 to CIRCASSIA, FURIOUS,
FURY, FORESTER, JAGUAR, HASTY, FIREDRAKE.)



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider. (Contd.) ⁸⁷⁵
(ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

Destroyers
leave
Gibraltar.

Gibraltar departure 2015/28. FAULKNOR,
FIREDRAKE, HASTY R/V with S.O. Force H in
accordance with my 1704.
(Force A, 2020/28 to Adty etc.)

DUNEDIN.

My position 2200/28 036° 05' N., 007° 47' W.,
Expect to pass boom at 0800/29. Request
immediate supply 950 tons oil fuel,
(and provisions).
(DUNEDIN, 2201/28 to F.O.C.N.A.)

EMPIRE
TROOPER.

Your 1303/28. EMPIRE TROOPER is holed on
water line forward and has slight trim by bow
due to water in foremost hold. Owing to
blown high pressure glands her present
maximum speed is 3 knots. All defects
and damage appear quickly and easily
repairable and troops are at present in no
danger. In view of known presence of enemy
S/M and lack of sufficient A/S vessels
I consider transfer of 2,500 men open or
territorial waters will endanger both
personnel and ships. In view of short
period required for repairs would it not be
possible for troops to remain on board
EMPIRE TROOPER, thence proceeding under
escort to Gibraltar. If not transfer
must be carried out at Ponta Delgada.
Request reply by 1200 tomorrow Sunday at
which time I arrive at Ponta Delgada.
(C.S.10. 2241Z/28 to Adty).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider. (Contd.) 876
(ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

Situation
report
at Ponta
Delgada.

Following is for your personal information and has been despatched to Lisbon as a precautionary measure only. If this permission is definitely asked for from the Portuguese Government you will be informed. If troops enter harbour in EMPIRE TROOPER they are not repeat not to be allowed to land.

2. (Begins) British troopship EMPIRE TROOPER with troops on board was damaged by enemy action in the Atlantic on December 25th. Every effort was made to tranship troops into other vessels at sea but owing to weather conditions and other circumstances this proved impracticable.

3. We have no alternative therefore but to direct her for necessary repairs to Ponta Delgada where she would probably arrive late on December 29th. These repairs may take some time and we propose to effect transhipment of troops as soon as necessary safe arrangements can be made. It may be that this will have to take place either in Portuguese territorial waters or actually in port.

4. In view of fact that the EMPIRE TROOPER should be regarded as an auxiliary warship, there would be no question of internment of the military personnel on board so long as they did not land. Even so, we realise that presence of this personnel on board ship in this particular locality may be embarrassing to the Portuguese authorities and we therefore assume that the transhipment would be agreeable to the Portuguese Government.

5. Please inform Dr. Salazar at once of the foregoing and try to obtain assurances from him (1) that the military personnel will not be interned while in port and (2) that no hindrance will be placed in the way of transhipment.

6. We assume of course that the ship will be given due time to make the necessary repairs. (Ends).

7. Repeat you will be informed if this permission is definitely asked for from Portuguese Government.

(Hd. of M, 2305/28 to Consul, Ponta Delgada).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40. 877
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider. (Contd.)
(ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

My 1303/28. Ambassador, Lisbon, and Consul Ponta Delgada, have been warned of the possibility of EMPIRE TROOPER having to enter Ponta Delgada with the troops on board. They are taking no action with Portuguese authorities until Admiralty inform them that this is necessary. Para.D. If transfer at sea or under the lee outside territorial waters is not practicable and entry of EMPIRE TROOPER into Ponta Delgada with troops on board becomes essential, H.M. ships are not to enter harbour to effect any transfer. A merchant ship will be sent to Ponta Delgada for the Troops.
(Hd. of M. 2332/28 to C.S.10).



WAR DIARY.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

French at Casablanca.

(C.3.) It is reported that 10,000 French Naval Ratings arrived at Casablanca yesterday Telegram No. 2161. (Wagon, Tangier, No T.O.O./28).

French Convoys.

At 1130/28, armed trawler LA TOULONNAISE passed east to west escorting French ships MAURICE DELMAS, 3161 tons and JEAN L.D. 5795 tons. At 1600/28 sloop D'IBERVILLE passed east to west escorting French S/M BEVEZIERS and French ~~1316~~ LINOIS, 7473 tons. (D.O.R. 29/12).

SENATEUR DUHAMEL intercepted.

Reference I.N.P. No.1 Section 9 para.81. (a) SENATEUR DUHAMEL French detained (b) 095° (c) 033° 44'N., 010° 26'W (d) 1600 (e) ordered to Gibraltar arriving 1800/29. (CAMITO 2010/28 to V.A.N.P.)

North Atlantic.

Submarine attack at Ponta Delgada on BONITA.

See P.839 27.12.40.

Your 1012/27. Report immediately with reference to Panamanian ship. (a) Name (b) Where from.(c) Whither bound (d) Cargo carried and to whom consigned (e) Owners and by whom chartered. (f) Any other information. (D.T.D. 1352/28 to Consul, Ponta Delgada).

Your 1352/28.

(a) BONITA (b) Barry (c) Freetown (d) 5991 tons of coal Sierra Leone Coal Company. (e) John T. Hamilton & Co., Ministry of Shipping. (f) put into Ponta Delgada for oil fuel and engine repairs. Also see my 1516/28. (Ponta Delgada 1709/28 to Adty).

Your 1527/27. You acted quite correctly. (V.C.N.S. 1414/28 to TRIDENT).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic. (Contd.)

My 1012/27. Ship attacked was Panamanian Steamship BONINE (? BONITA). At least 3 torpedoes were fired. Missed. 3 exploded on shore damaging house. Third ran ashore did not explode and has been salvaged by Portuguese Authorities. It is being taken to Lisbon on board Portuguese Destroyer DOURO. The whole incident took place well within territorial waters.
(N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 1516/28 to Adty.)

Air Report.

A.339 28/12. Daily Summary Operations.
1 routine A/S patrol. 1 Recco to East.
1 escort for H.M. Ships arriving from West.
1 special A/S patrol to West of Straits.
Area covered 4° W., to 8° W.
(200 Group 1701/28).

UNIQUE.

Your 1101/28 UNIQUE sails for Malta at 1845/28 (route). Request onward route. C.in C. Mediterranean 1627/11. Request also information concerning movements on OLYMPUS be passed to UNIQUE.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1746/28 to V.A.Malta.)

578. Gibraltar departure 1840/28. UNIQUE in accordance with my 1746/28. Q.B.24 BB 117 B.C.167.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1922/28 to Adty, V.A. Malta.)

CIRCASSIA JAGUAR.

CIRCASSIA, JAGUAR sailed 1800 zone minus 1 28/12 speed of advance 13½ knots routed through 035° 00' N., 009° 00' W., to patrol in area bounded by positions 035° 25' 011° 40' 033° 40' 010° 50' 032° 10' 014° 40' 033° 50' 015° 45'. JAGUAR parts company as required to join S.O.Force H. in position 036° 25' W. 012° 20' W. at 1100 zone minus 1/29.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1810/28.)

Gibraltar departure 1800/28 CIRCASSIA for P 3 and Q.3 escorted by JAGUAR in accordance with my 1232/28.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1840/28 to Adty etc.)

See p. 872.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

Suspicious Vessel.

^{?Master}
(Ellerman of S.S. JOHAN reports that at 0300/8 a suspicious vessel anchored in position 11° 21' N., 15° 36' W. after steaming up Kanabak Reach in the dark. No lights shown. Appearance similar to sketch No. 570 in C.A.F.O. 422 but without Samson posts near funnel. Hull and funnel black, masts and superstructure buff, no crows nest, heavy derrick forward, low in water. Lights at Ppelam, Cameleon, barrel were extinguished. On enquiring he was informed that Orongo Channel is no longer used.

(C.in C. S.A. 0717/28 to D.N.I.)

Information considered unreliable, see p. 24, 1-1-1941.

Corvettes,
DELHI.
NEPTUNE.

My 1329/27. MILFORD, ASPHODEL and CALENDULA should make contact:- MILFORD p.m./30 ASPHODEL and CALENDULA a.m./31 NEPTUNE sails from Freetown 1800/28 at 20 knots will provide cover to convoy and keep in touch as required. You will remain as ocean escort in charge of convoy.

(C.in C. S.A. 1045N/28 to DELHI).

CORNWALL.

Simonstown, arrival 28/12 CORNWALL. Propose ship de-ammunition, 30/12 and be taken in hand for refit 31/12.

(N.O.I.C. Simonstown 1130B/28 to C.in C. S.A)

Dispositions.

Weekly statement 28/12.

Freetown ALBATROSS, CANTON and CORFU.

H.M.S. BULOLO sails with S.L.61 1/1.

ASPHODEL and CALENDULA sail 29/12 to meet

DELHI. NEPTUNE sails p.m./28 to cover DELHI and convoy.

Freetown - U.K. ESPERANCE BAY sailed 22/12 with S.L.60.

U.K. - Freetown. Force K and BERWICK escorting W.S.5.A. due 4/1. DORSETSHIRE proceeding to meet W.S.5.A. GERANIUM, JONQUIL, CYCLAMEN and CLEMATIS escorting EMPIRE TROOPER to Ponta Delgada.

Gibraltar - Freetown. VINDICTIVE escorted by ISLS and ENCOUNTER due 31/12.

Freetown area. BRIDGEWATER arrives 29/12 from escort duty.

Gulf of Guinea. DELHI escorting French Legion Duala to Freetown.

St. Helena area. HERMES, DRAGON, PRETORIA CASTLE.

Simonstown - Freetown. HAWKINS arriving Freetown 30/12.

Simonstown. CORNWALL, DEVONSHIRE.

Durban. French Sloop SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA.



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (Contd.)

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Dispositions.
(Contd.)

Capetown. CARNARVON CASTLE.
Plate Area. CUMBERLAND, ENTERPRISE,
NEWCASTLE, ASTURIAS.
Rio de Janeiro Area. QUEEN OF BERMUDA.
U.K. Ports. ARAWA (Sails for Freetown 3/1).
ALCANTARA, DUNNOTTAR CASTLE, MORETON BAY,
MOOLTAN.
(C.in C. S.A. 1829N/28).

Mediterranean.

Operations,
January.

Policy (C.in C. Med. 1011/28 to Adty)
See Med. Volume.

A.S.9.

Convoy A.S.9. arrived less Greek ship
PRODROMOS and KEHREA. (N.O.I.C. Port Said
to Adty, 1753/27 and received 0245/29).

French
Lorries,
suggested
Barter.

Need of lorries both for ourselves and
Greeks so urgent that if French are really
prepared to barter these for produce or
petrol, consider blockade should be relaxed
to permit of this. French are reported to
have offered Greeks 1000 lorries in
exchange for petrol. Recommend that we be
empowered to open negotiations with Syria
for lorries either on behalf Greeks or
ourselves.

Free
French
Movement.

During Mr. Eden's visit here he met General
Catroux and it was agreed that should
policy of bringing Syria over to Free France
prove impossible, desertions should be
encouraged. Catroux thinks chances of
successful coup in Syria now so remote
that he wishes to adopt policy of
encouraging desertion. I am still reluct-
ant to adopt this policy as I think outside
events might even now produce change in
Syria and that it is undesirable to cause
further confusion and weakening of French
in Syria while we are unable to take
advantage of it. Arrival of Free French
Troops may do something to change
situation. I am still discussing
question with General Catroux.
(C.in C. M.E. 0945/28 to W.O.)



WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

882

16th
Auxiliary
A/S
Group.

My 1224/27. These five A/S Whalers are converted commercial now commissioned as H.M. Ships about 320 tons Speed 13 knots oil fuel. Fitted 123 A armed 6 pounder L.A. and 2 Hotchkiss. They should complete early January.
(D.A/S.W. 1305/28 to C.in C. Med.)

Reserve of
A/C
Malta.

Your 1941/21. (Reply from Air Min. 1640/27 follows).
(D.N.A.D. 1237/28 to C.in C. Med.+)

Italian
ship
at
Trieste.

Your 1203/27. Please state name of ship referred to.
(Adty. 1530/28 to C.in C. A.W.I.)

Your 1530/28 REX.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 0923/29 to Adty).

Air
Report
Egypt,
Greece.

Operational Summary No. 201 up to 1200. 28/12.
Greece. Day 27/12. one Sunderland patrolled South Eastern Ionian Sea for enemy shipping.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1516/28 to Air Min).

Malta,
Air
Report,
Recco
Naples.

Combined service report Malta to 1700 28/12 1000 to 1453. Glenn Martin Photographic reconnaissance Naples. In harbour 2 battleships, 2 cruisers, 9 destroyers. 2 M/V's 12,000 to 15,000 tons, 6 M/V's 6,000 tons, 2 M/V's 4,000 tons and 3 fleet auxiliaries. Slight but very inaccurate A.A. 4,000 pamphlets of Prime Minister's speech and 1,000 No.13 pamphlets dropped. Further operations cancelled due to weather conditions. No enemy air activity over Malta. No naval or military items.
(H.Q. Malta, 1700/28 to Air Min).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

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East Indies.

Defence
of
Abadan.

C.in C. E.I. 1330/28 to S.N.O. Persian Gulf and C.in C. E.I. 1332Z/28 to Adty (See Operations Volume).

Policy.

Convoy escorts and protection of trade. Coming commitments. Intentions re LEANDER. Arrival of ENTERPRISE and HERMES in his command would be welcome. (C.in C. E.I. 2016/28/Z to Adty) See Operations Vol.

U.S.8.
CAPETOWN
CANBERRA.

Intended escorts for U.S.8 from Colombo to Gulf of Aden are CAPETOWN and one A.M.C. In addition subject to A.C.N.B. Navy Office, Melbourne concurrence CANBERRA from Colombo to approximately 070° East. (C.in C. E.I. 0822Z/28 to Adty).

KANIMBLA.

Your 1026/26 and my 1004/12. On arrival at Durban KANIMBLA to be at 12 hours' notice for six days for machinery overhaul. (C.in C. E.I. 0826Z/28 to KANIMBLA)

Suspicious
Vessel.

At 0709Z/28 BEACONSTREET when in position 013° 25' N., 048° 26' E., reported sighting a suspicious vessel. Message cancelled at 0725Z/28. Cancellation considered genuine. (C.in C. E.I. 0830Z/28 to E.I. Squadron).

Aden,
Air
Report.

Operational Summary No.199 for 24 hours ending 1500/28. 2 Blenheims, 203 Sqdn., provided Fighterescorts for convoy B.S.11 $\frac{1}{4}$ using advanced base Kamaran. (A.H.Q. Aden, 1643/28 to Air Min.)

SOUTHAMPTON.
KANDAHAR.

Arrivals SOUTHAMPTON, KANDAHAR 28/12 Suez. (S.B.N.O. Suez 1814/28).

W.S.4.B.

Convoy W.S.4.B. arrived Suez p.m./28. (S.B.N.O. Suez Canal 1859/28).



WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

884

China.

Indo-
China.

Agreement with Admiral Decoux for partial resumption of trade. French relations with Japan, and Thailand (Long signal from Govnr. Straits Settlements and C.in C. China to Colonial Office and Admiralty.)
(C.in C. China, 0904Z/28).
Original in Lion Copy Only.

MANYO
MARU.

? KOMET

My 0601/28 not to Admty. D.N.I. Raider now reported to be named MANYO MARU and flew Nazi Flag and not Japanese colour. There is no evidence to show raiders are other than German or captured ships but the following facts tend to show the Japanese are aware that German ships in Japan are probably acting as Supply Ships and Raiders.

TEIYO MARU.
and other
potential
raiders.

(a) KULMERLAND last heard of Mitsubishi Dockyard 29/10 and reported transferred to Tatsuma Kisha Company and renamed TEIYO MARU
(b) E. ESSBURGER returned to Kobe 25/12 after absence of twenty five days.
(c) REGENSBURG departed from Yokohama for unknown destination 20/12 having previously been absent 27/9 to 28/10 (d) Raiders reported using Marshall Islands for refuelling. Crews which were landed OLE JACOB are being cross-examined in Singapore today.
(Capt: O.S. Singapore 1509Z/28 to N.A. Tokyo S.O.I's and Adty).

America and West Indies.

ORDUNA.
threatened
attack.

Reference report regarding contemplated attack on ORDUNA when carrying Lord Willingdon. Request your remarks on possibility of this report having been deliberately put about with object of enticing cruiser patrol to northward. Understand cases have occurred in the past of false reports being found to be of enemy origin.
Callao pass to PRINCE ROBERT.
(C.in C. A.W.I. 1232/28 to S.O.(I) Callao).

AUSONIA
VOLTAIRE
COLUMBIA.

Halifax 28/12 AUSONIA arrived from H.X.95 VOLTAIRE arrived from B.H.X.98. COLUMBIA arrived from H.X.99.
(S.O.(I) Halifax, 1009/28).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies. (Contd.)

885

LEOPOLDVILLE.

Halifax arrival 1445/28 LEOPOLDVILLE escorted by ROYAL SOVEREIGN. (C.O.A.C. Halifax 1450/28 to Adty).

H.J.BULL.

Your 1811/21. (re Whale catcher H.J.BULL) and your 1906/21 and my 1545/28. Probable date of completion of ^{H.}BULL 20/1. depending upon arrival of A/A Guns and ammunition U.S.A. promise first week in January. Date of sailing of M/S. will be reported as soon as it can be forecasted. (C.O.A.C. Halifax, 1547/28 to Adty).

Australia.

A/C
Report.

My 2359Z/17. (report of unidentified seaplane). Aircraft sighted was not an enemy aircraft. (A.C.N.B. 0558Z/28).

MANOORA
MORESBY.

MANOORA escorting S.S. TRIENZA left Cairns 0815Z/26 for Ocean Island. MORESBY arrived York Roads Torres Strait for surveying duties. (A.C.N.B. 0559Z/28).

U.S.8.

CANBERRA escorting H.M. Transports AQUITANIA, QUEEN MARY, AWATEA, and DOMINION MONARCH left Sydney 2205Z/27 for R/V with MAURETANIA Western Bass Strait via South of Tasmania. (A.C.N.B. 0809/28 to Adty).

HOBART.

HOBART arrived Fremantle 0230Z/28. (A.C.N.B. 1135/28).

Troop
Transport.

Australian forces for prospective convoys. (Army, Melbourne, to W.O. 2009/28).



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

28.12.40.
Saturday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia. (Contd.)

886

Troop
Transport
(Prospective)

Your M.C. 347 28/12.

Provision of escorts and shipping has been under consideration and will inform you of decision but appears unlikely able provide additional shipping.

Have instructed C.in C. Far East deal with you direct regarding arrangements and necessary administrative troops.
(W.O. 1940/29 to Army, Melbourne).

ADELAIDE.

Following is a repetition of my 0409Z/27 (received undecypherable) (begins) arrival Suva 2255Z/26 H.M.A.S. ADELAIDE. (S.O.(I) Wellington 0033/28 to A.C.N.B. Admty etc.)

MOST SECRET.WAR DIARY.28.12.40.
Saturday.ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.MAURO
CRCCE.

27/12 arrival Italian Steamer MAURO ~~CRCCE~~,
from Genoa.
(Barcelona 1611/28).

DUCHESSA
D'AOSTA.

Following is repetition of my 1201/18.
(not previously received). Intercepted
telegram dated 14/12 from Steamship
DUCHESSA D'AOSTA, Pirria to Lloyd
Trieste, speaks of disembarkation and
reembarkation of cargo, of work on ship
during the next thirty days, of expenses
and of stock of petrol. French
Authorities suggest it may be intention
to attempt to run the blockade.
(N.C.S.O. Duala, 0943/28 to S.O.(I)
Freetown).

French Merchant Ships.KATIOLA.
MENDOZA.

Secret sources report (source B one)
KATIOLA oiling this morning Saturday.
No cargo engaged at present consequently
date of sailing not settled. MENDOZA,
expected to sail with meat and general
cargo Jan. 5th. Ship has not yet oiled.
(N.A. Buenos Aires, 1231/28).

WAR DIARY.28.12.40.
Saturday.FOREIGN STATIONS.U/BOAT CAMPAIGN.Ships
Attacked.MANGEN
(sunk
21/12.)

Your 1151/27 Swedish ship MANGEN sank in position 040° 45' N., 016° 50' W 21/12 time 2118. Vessel sank in 3 minutes. No confidential books on board. Route orders and Consigs in drawer of chart house went down with ship.
(N.C.S.O.Lisbon. 1119/28 to S.O.(I) Gib).

WAIOTIRA
Survivors.

Arrived MASHONA with 78 officers and crew and 11 passengers survivors from WAIOTIRA.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 0900/28 to Adty).

CHARLES
PRATT
(torpedoed
21/12.)

My 1129/26. Crew saved except two believed lost. Owners informed. Master of CHARLES PRATT identifies U/Boat from silhouette as resembling U.25. After further enquiries consider ship on fire likely to have been second tanker.
(C.in C. S.A. 2251/28 to Adty).

Submarines.
Reported.

If not in contact discontinue hunt and resume search for Convoy which it is presumed will proceed direct to North Channel from R/V position. Aircraft is searching between 55° 35' N., 13° 40' W and 56° 00' N 08° 00' W. It is possible U/Boat reported in position 53° 00' N., 13° 20' W at 1714/27 is moving Northwards.
(C.in C. W.A. 1134/28 to HIGHLANDER).

1730.

Submarine periscope sighted 1730 N/26 000° 10' S., 008° 30' W.
(C.in C. S.A. 1204/28 to DELHI).

2130/26.

Direction-finding bearings indicate U/Boats probably within 200 miles of Cape Blanco at 2130/26.
(C.in C. S.A. 1206/28 to VINDICTIVE, DORSETSHIRE.)

By D/F on 4796 kc/s at 0210 B.S.T. unidentified enemy unit probable U/Boat S.W. of Iceland position inconclusive.
(D.D.I.C. 0300/28).

MOST SECRET.28.12.40.
Saturday.WAR DIARY.FOREIGN STATIONS.U/BOAT CAMPAIGN. (Contd.)Submarines
Reported.

Estimated U/Boat dispositions.

Italian. 1 may be returning to Mediterranean from Madeira.

1 about 39 degs North 15 degrees West.

1 to Eastward of Azores.

2 may arrive Gironde today or tomorrow.

4 in North West Approaches between 53 degs.

30' North and 57 degrees North 15 degrees W. and 17 degrees West.

German. 1 in Freetown area.

1 may be about 45 degs. N., 14 degs. W. bound for Lorient.

1 from South probably between 55 degs. N and 55 degs. 30' N., 12 degs. W. and 13 degs. 30' W.

1 possibly in area off Bloody Foreland.

1 between 57 degs. 30' North and 58 degs.

30' North 16 degs. West and 17 degs West.

1 probably eastbound between 58 degs. North and 59 degs. North about 18 degs. West.

2 between 58 degs. North and 60 degs. North near 20 degs. West.

1 within 100 miles South of Iceland west of 20 degs. West.

(D.D.I.C. 1309/28 (F.O.(S) 1521/28).



War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

SITUATION REPORT

Home Commands

C. in C., Home Fleet has suggested that the endurance of Convoy A/S Escorts might be increased by about 30% if in such Destroyers as VIMY one boiler were removed and replaced by an internal Fuel Tank, and the suggestion is being considered.

Enemy Air Activity

About 25 aircraft, most of which appear to have started from Vannes, attacked Plymouth between 1836 and 1957 last night. About 10 H.E. and many hundreds of Incendiary Bombs were dropped, causing many fires and some civilian casualties; but there were no Naval casualties and the damage to Naval buildings was slight.

An enemy aircraft appeared from the N.W. over the Orkneys at 1458 this afternoon and remained over the Prohibited Area for about one hour. It was engaged both by our fighters and by shore Batteries with U.T.P. and was last plotted on a S.E. course 30 miles East of Wick at 1618.

About 50 miles N.W. of Bloody Foreland Convoy S.L. 58 was attacked at 0935 this morning, the British TREVARRACK of 5270 tons being hit and abandoned in a sinking ^{condition} at 1430; and the Convoy ~~ASSET~~ was bombed off Clacton at 1400 today, no damage being done. At 1510 two H.E. Bombs were also dropped on Ramsgate, causing some damage to houses but no Naval damage or casualty.



War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

SITUATION REPORT

Mining

At Liverpool 3 more mines were detonated this afternoon in QZS 74 about $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles 312° from the Nelson Buoy; and during the 24 hours ending 1800 today 9 mines in all have been exploded, one of which damaged the SS CATRINE of 5218 tons in the Queens Channel at 1345 today. In view of this situation F.O.I.C. Liverpool considers the provision of at least 4 additional Sweepers for the Preston and Barrow Channels an urgent necessity.

2 mines were cut by Fleet Minesweepers in the War Channel off Harwich at 1240 and 1245 today; and the Eastern Entrance to Portsmouth was re-opened to shipping at 1716.

FOREIGN STATIONS

Convoy W.S. 5 A. and Raider (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

The EMPIRE TROOPER (damaged transport) is expected to arrive at Ponta Delgada (San Miguel) in the Azores at noon. It is hoped that she will complete repairs shortly, but if this impracticable another merchant vessel will be sent to transport troops.

Ponta Delgada H.M. Consul was asked for a very early report as to whether ship could be made seaworthy at Ponta Delgada. (1158/29)

The submarine TRIDENT on patrol off Ponta Delgada at 0800/27 fired 3 torpedoes at a Panama ship which refused to answer signals.

Three transports of the convoy arrived at Gibraltar at 7.30 a.m. escorted by the ARGUS, DUNEDIN and 5 Destroyers.

/FURIOUS.....



MOST SECRET

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War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

SITUATION REPORT

Convoy W.S. 5 A. Raider-Contd. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

FURIOUS and DUNEDIN left Gibraltar at 1430 with destroyers. FURIOUS and FURY to rendezvous with convoy at 0900N/3/1. (H.S. Note. Convoy would then be approaching Freetown)

As corvettes had been left behind the escort from there to Freetown would be destroyers ENCOUNTER and ~~████~~./SIS.

At noon/29 Convoy W.S. 5 A escorted by FORMIDABLE (aircraft carrier) and NORFOLK (cruiser) was in 33° 18' N., 19° 10' W., 85 miles west of Madeira. DORSETSHIRE (cruiser) was to meet them at 0800/31 in 26° N., 20° 25' W., (about 450 miles, south)

At 1651/29 the RENOWN and ARK ROYAL were about 180 miles from Gibraltar.

No report had been received of CLAN CUMMING and CALIFORNIA (armed merchant cruiser) was ordered at 1715/29 to proceed and search in approximate position 45° 40' N., 24° 30' W. Ships approaching this area were told to keep a special look out.

Shortly afterwards (1842/29) news came of CLAN CUMMING. At 1200/28 she was about 400 miles West of Gibraltar, making at 12 knots for Gibraltar with defects where she arrived at 2222/29.

This left only the MENELAUS and COSA RICA unaccounted for.

The CYCLAMEN with EMPIRE TROOPER had arrived at Ponta Delgada (Azores) at 1801/29 and the DUCHESS OF YORK was expected there on the 30th.



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SITUATION REPORT

Vichy French

A French floating dock with 3 tugs and trawler was sighted off Cape Tarifa at 1825/29.

Vichy warships are to be allowed to proceed south of Dakar. They should, however, be reported and if circumstances allow their destination checked.

South Atlantic

The flag of F.O., Force M. was struck in NEPTUNE at sunset yesterday, and Vice-Admiral J.H.D. Cunningham sailed today for U.K. in ORONTES.

Force L, after completing with fuel on 31/12, is to proceed to Simonstown.

The tanker BRITISH PREMIER is overdue and feared lost.

Mediterranean

C. in C., Mediterranean, commenting on the delay to Operation "Excess", says that so long as Force H has a double function and has to look westward as well as into the Mediterranean such delays will be unavoidable. The ideal is to have a force free from other commitments which covers convoys from West through to Narrows.

HYPERION (sunk 21/12) is considered to have been the victim of a mine, though the possibility of a U-Boat cannot be altogether excluded.

/Tobruk.....



MOST SECRET

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SITUATION REPORT

Mediterranean-Contd.

Tobruk and Valona were bombed by R.A.F. aircraft yesterday.

R.A.F. Blenheims bombed Valona again today, damaging port buildings. Two cargo boats in harbour were machine gunned. A submarine was observed in harbour.

East Indies

B.S. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ (Red Sea southbound convoy) left Aden at 0200Z/29 escorted by CALEDON, SHOREHAM and AUKLAND.

COLOMBO is to leave patrol off Kismayu, Italian Somaliland, to arrive Mombasa on 1/1/1941.

At 0313 G.M.T./29 BRITISH LOYALTY when in 14.20 N., 51.20 E., (N.E. of Socotra) made a "Q" distress message and broadcast a description of a suspicious vessel pursuing her. A cancellation of the message at 0401 was regarded with suspicion, and it was assumed there was a raider in the Gulf of Aden, but later BRITISH LOYALTY made a message in accordance with Admiralty D.V.

U-Boat Campaign

Submarine TUNA reports that at 0430/18 in 45.28 N., 02.27 W (off Gironde Estuary) she attacked a U-Boat, possibly German, * with torpedo and gun. The U-Boat was hit not vitally, by one shell. 2 escort vessels forced TUNA to dive.

* No. Italian BENEDETTO BRIN
See Search 3110



HOME COMMANDS.

Policy.

Allocation
of M.T.B's
in Home
Waters.

Following allocation has been approved.
(A.C.N.S. H. 1421/29.)

Increasing
Endurance
of
Destroyers.

C. in C., H.F. 1201/28.
Consider that maximum speed of 25 knots is most desirable in destroyers on convoy escort duty. Provided that V, E, E, S can attain this speed on two boilers and that there will be a 50% increase in endurance I am in favour of C. in C., Home Fleet's proposal being adopted in those ships, such as VIMY and WARWICK, which are now out of action for a considerable time.

2. Captains D. Plymouth and Liverpool are being ordered to report whether 25 knots can be obtained on two boilers.

3. Until the number of destroyer escorts available is considerably larger than at present, I am not in favour of ships being taken in hand for any alterations which would put them out of service for long periods. (C. in C. W.A. 1846/29 to Adty.)

Skopen
Fiord
Examination
of M/V's.

Admiralty Messages 1233/27 and 1244/27. The lack of anchorage and facilities at Skopen Fiord makes examination of vessels too superficial to discover anything suspicious or to obtain intelligence. Suggest REMMAREN and any other ship which has passed through German controlled waters or harbours be sent on to Kirkwall using if necessary plea of Contraband in order to obtain intelligence. (F.O.C.N.P. 2212/29 to Adty.)

Defence of U.K.

At 1130/29 (D.C. 1136/29.) at 2330/29.
D.C. 2356/29 and 0500/30.

'Deluge'

Convoy/



HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K. Contd.

Oban A/A.
Defences.

Adty. 1911/24 and 1341/28. At present one A.A. cruiser has been diverted to provide defence for the anchorage. She is urgently required in her legitimate role.

2. It is therefore requested:-

(a) That requirements for A.A. gun defence may be approved in principle without awaiting a meeting of the C.O.S. (A.A.) Sub-Committee,

(b) That arrangements may be made to provide a deterrent defence from existing resources as soon as possible. (D. of L.D. 1317/29.)

Scapa Defences.

Progress Report 29/12. (R.A.Scapa 2015/29.)

Movements.

MASHONA.

Sailed. E.T.A. Scapa 1630/29. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0044/29.) Arrived Scapa 1645. (A.C.O.S. 1746/29.)

WHITSHED.

My 2044/27. Sailing postponed further 24 hours. (C. in C. Nore 0914/29.)

NIGER.
HUSSAR.

Arrived 0910/29. (F.O. Humber 0919/29.)

HARRIER,
GOSSAMER.
SALAMANDER,
FITZROY.
ELGIN.

Arrived 0859. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0943/29.)

EGLINTON.
EXMOOR.

Arrived 0940. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0943/40.)

HOOD.
CURACOA.
COSSACK.
ESCAPADE.
ECHO.
ELECTRA.

Arrived Scapa 0945. (A.C.O.S. 1001/29.)



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HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. Contd.

MAURITIUS.
VIMY,
BULLDOG.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1029/29).
VIMY sailed (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1915/29.)

WIDGEON.

Sailed 1356. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1349/29.)

VENOMOUS.

Sailed. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1355/29.)

Northern
Patrol.

Trawler Lines tonight. 6 Trawlers,
(A.C.O.S. 1536/29.)

LEAMINGTON.
CHURCHILL.
PIORUN.

Arrived Scapa 1246.
(A.C.O.S. 1746/29.)

NORRASKAPP
and (?)

Arrived Reykjavik.
(F.O.I.C. Iceland 1953/29.)

BROKE.

Sailed for Belfast (N.O.I.C. London-
derry 2001/29.)

KASHMIR.

Sailed from Plymouth. 0949/29.
(C. in C. W.A. 0704/30.)

Operations.

Operation.
P.V.I.

Will be carried out between 2000 and
2230 tonight. (C. in C. Nore 1047/29.)

Operation.
N. C.

Will be carried out tonight, Zero hour
2200. (V.A. Dover 1717/29.)

Troop Embarkation.

GLENROY sailed for Lamlash. (F.O.I.C.
Greenock 2145/29.)

O. 23.)
SEALION.)

My 1456/27. To resume normal Patrol
after dark today. (V.A.S. 1018/29.)

UNDAUNTED.

My 1721/27. Sailed for Clyde escorted
by LA CAPRICIEUSE 1130. (N.O.I.C. Barrow
1136/29.)

SEVERN.

V.A.S. 1847/28. Concur with proposed
Patrol. (A.C.N.S. (T.) 1253/29.) Propose
Area be North of 55°N. (C. in C. W.A.
1826/29 to V.A.S.)



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Sunday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Submarines.

O. 21. Passes Bell Rock 1700/29. Route thence to Patrol within 20 miles of 60° 10' N. 4° 10' E. (S.9. 1421/29.)

Greenock Area. Movements (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1625/29.)

Positions. For following 24 hours at 0800/30. (V.A.S. 1652/29.)

L. 23. Exercising tomorrow in Scapa Flow (A.C.O.S. 1711/29.)

British Air Activity.

Liverpool F.O.I.C. Liverpool reports R/C flight by 2 Enemy A/C over Liverpool at 1225 and 1227/28 and suggests Air Patrols be maintained in clear weather in future on outskirts of Gun-defended Zone to intercept such R/C. Fully concur in necessity for maximum possible protection and should be grateful if effect can be given to this proposal. (C. in C. W.A. 0109/29 to Fighter Command.)

Patrols. Ordered for today: SA.1A., SA.1.2., and SA.3. (C. in C. Rosyth 0728/29.) 2 Blenheims leave Dyce 0900 to patrol to Flamborough Head and return. (C. in C. Rosyth 0730/29. Assessments. (C. in C. Rosyth 1744/29.)

Height of Balloons at sea. My 1305/11/12 and Admiralty 1630/19/11. FLEETWOOD now reports as a result of sea experience that it is impracticable to close-haul Balloon to less than 300 feet in strong winds and proposes that when not close-hauled heights up to 2500 feet should be permitted. Request decision as to regulations for flying balloons when (A) with convoys (B) on other occasions at sea. (C. in C. Rosyth 1105/29 to Adty.)

Brest. A/C of 217 Sqn. to attack tonight Naval Dockyard and Shipping at Brest. Alternative Targets, Aerodrome and seaplane Base at Lanveoc Poulmic. (H.Q.C.C. 1250/29.)

Lorient. A/C of 53 and 59 Sqdns., to attack tonight S/M's and Naval Dockyard at Lorient. Alternative Target, following places in Brest. (H.Q.C.C. 1252/29.)



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HOME COMMANDS.

British Air Activity. Contd.

Falmouth.
A/A Balloons.

A945 29/12. Mark VI Balloons for protection. Approach Channel Falmouth now available. Request you will indicate to F.O.I.C. Falmouth and this Headquarters location in which balloons to be flown also whether craft or buoys to be used. (H.Q. Balloon Comd. 1440/29 to Adty.)

Fighter Escort
cancelled.

Fighter Escort cancelled owing to weather. Kites should be flown. (C. in C. Rosyth 1540/29 to JASON, INDIAN STAR, FOXTROT.)

Enemy Air Activity.

TREVARRACK.
(Convoy S.L.58.)

(British, 5270 Tons.) Bombed and on fire in 55° 34' N. 9° 30' W. (BALFE 0935/29.) Needs Tug at once. (BALFE 0942/29.) Proceed to assist. (C. in C. W.A. 1110/29 to HIGHLANDER, HARVESTER) Abandoned in sinking condition. Crew on board NORTH DEVON. Mate and Wireless Operator lost overboard. (WELLINGTON 1430/29 to C. in C. W.A.) Master now on board CORDELIA. States very little chance of salvage. (WELLINGTON 1631/29 to C. in C. W.A.) Took TREVARRACK in tow 0830 in 55° 52' N. 9° W. (SALVONIA 0800/30 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.) Intend proceed Liverpool with HARVESTER 0001/31, leaving SALVONIA in charge. Ship in tow, speed 3½ knots (HIGHLANDER 1245/30.) SALVONIA reports THAMES now assisting tow. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1740/30.) Weather permitting, we will tow ship into Rothesay Bay at daylight 2nd. Ship abandoned. Engines appear in order. SALVONIA standing by (THAMES 1700/1.) Arrived SALVONIA and THAMES with TREVARRACK in tow (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0827/2.)

NICOLAS MICHALDS.

(Greek, 4342 Tons), German A/C attacking and gunning in 55° 37' N. 9° 33' W. (NICOLAOS MICHALOS. Recd. 1030/29.)

Convoy "Acant"
Cancelled.

Enemy A/C bombing in 51° 38' N. 1° 15' E.
{ VERSATILE 1400/29. } Fighters being sent
{ Nore W/T. 1416/29. } 6 Bombs. No damage.
{ VERSATILE 1435/29. }



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HOME COMMANDS.

Enemy Air Activity. Contd.

Ramsgate.

At 1510/29 two H.E. Bombs dropped on Hereson Road. 12 houses damaged, 2 seriously. No Naval casualty or damage. (N.O.I.C. Ramsgate 1515/29 and 1605/29.)

Plymouth.

Attacked between 1836 and 1957/28 by about 25 A/C. About 10 H.E. and many hundreds of Incendiary Bombs dropped. About 150 fires started but all soon under control and most extinguished by daybreak. No naval casualties reported, but of civilians 2 killed, 22 severely and 22 slightly wounded. Slight damage to Naval buildings. (C in C; W.A. 1553/29 to Adty.)

Orkneys.

At 1458 one enemy A/C approached Orkneys from N. West height 20000; remained inside prohibited area for about one hour and was engaged by shore batteries with U.T.P. Fighters from Scaebrae and Castletown endeavoured to intercept but owing to low clouds and variations of heights no sightings obtained. A/C finally left on S.E. course and was last plotted 30 miles East of Wick at 1618. Good R D/F and G/L plots were received. (A.C.O.S. 1830/29 to Adty.)

Harwich.

Mining.
2 German Mines, type unidentified, cut by Fleet Minesweepers in Q.Z.S. One at 1240 in 51° 50' N. 1° 49' E., and one at 1245 in 51° 49' N. 1° 49' 30" E. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1557/29.)

Liverpool.

My 1810/27. ^{N.T.K.W.D.} At 1625/27 ^{MIST} ~~Sea~~ RUNSWICK BAY detonated a small Magnetic Mine 110° Bar Light Vessel 1 1/2 miles. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1612/29.)

CATRINE.
damaged.

CATRINE (British, 5218 Tons) damaged by Mine at 1345 today near Q.1. Black Buoy in Queens Channel. Hoped bring her up harbour tomorrow. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2225/29) While being towed into harbour, parted tow and was blown on to training bank near Burbo Buoy. Position serious but not hopeless. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2055/30) Anchored off Tranmere Beach and discharging cargo. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1547/31.)

Three Mines/



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HOME COMMANDS.

Mining. Contd.

Three mines detonated p.m. today in Q.Z.S.74 in position about 7.5 miles 312 degrees from Nelson Buoy. In view of this and N.O.I.C. Isle of Man's 1135 /29/12 repeated to you and the fact that all available L L and S A Sweepers are fully employed on Liverpool Channels the provision of at least 4 additional sweepers for Preston and Barrow Channels is an urgent necessity.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1844/29 to C. in C.W.A)

Mine report for 24 hours ending 1800/29. Exploded by S A Sweeper 1, by LL2, by S.S. CATRINE 1; self detonated 2 vicinity of Bar Lt. V., 3 in Q.Z.S.74 about 7.5 miles 312 degrees from Nelson Buoy.
(F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2229/29.)

Portsmouth.

Cancel my 0950/28. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1716/29.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Enemy Mines
at
Stadlandet.

My 2054/17 not to C in C Rosyth. Further enquiries have elicited the report that the Germans have not repeat not laid mines at Staadlandet. Graded C2 repeat C2.

2. Information about the lights in the Inner Lead are contradictory but it is believed that some lights have been extinguished in the Bud area including Huso Light. (D.D.I.C. 1915/29 to C. in CHF)



CASUALTIES AND DEFECTS.

- NEWPORT. (Town-Class Destroyer) Only one engine effective. Intend to make Lough Foyle (NEWPORT 1201/29 to Adty.)
- SALISBURY. (Town-Class Destroyer) Parted company at 0500/27 with condenser trouble. (NEWPORT 1201/29 to Adty.)
- SWANSEA CASTLE. (M/S Trawler). My 1908/28. Returned to harbour with defects. Possible delay 24 hours (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1609/29).
- BROCK. My 1200/29. Sailing delayed by Boiler trouble. (F.O.I.C. London 1701/29).
- PELICAN. Report of damage by collision. Vessel is seaworthy for voyage to southern port, but requires docking (A.S. Rosyth 1705/29).
- M.L.171. Unable to sail owing to defective Tank. (Capt. M/L. 1825/29 to C.in C. Nore).
- BARRHEAD. B.D.V. Reports run ashore at 2000 today in 63° 30' N. 18° W. All crew landed. Tug being sent. (F.O. Iceland 1834/29 to Adty.)
- LE TIGER
DEODAR
M.L.165. My 1558/28. Will not sail owing to defects (C.in C. Nore 2050/29).

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Scheme for requisitioning (Ministry of Shipping 1815/29 to S.T.O's) (Original in Lion copy only) (7 pages on) →

Convoys

Positions (D.T.D., 1131/29 to C. in C., H.F.)

F.S. 73

28 ships, 5 additional from Middlesbrough. (F.O.I.C., Tyne 0948/29 N.C.S.O. Humber 1125/29)

W.N. 60

Arrived 0945/29 (N.C.S.O. Methil 0955/29)

F.N. 68

Arrived 1025/29. (N.C.S.O. Methil 1031/29) All Tyne ships arrived (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1621/29) Humber ships arrived except VESTMANROD (N.C.S.O. Humber 1644/29)

S.C. 18

Advance sailing telegram (S.C.N.O. Halifax 1101/29) GEDDINGTON COURT with planes. (C.O.A.C., 1102/29)

F.N. 70

Delay in starting due engine breakdown of Commodore's ship. (N.C.S.O. Thames 1131/29) 1020/29, 18 ships (N.C.S.O. Thames 1303/29, 1729/29) Ships joining from Humber (N.C.S.O. Humber, 1646/29)

E.N. 48

My 2347/28 Delete AMAZONE (N.C.S.O. Methil 1131/29)

O.B. 269

Route (D.T.D., 1152/29)

H.G. 49

Escorted by LEITH and 3 "KINGSTON" trawlers sails from Straits 1500/29. Route. (F.O.C.N.A. 1154/29) Sailed - See p. 915

O.G. 48

Sailed BLUEBELL and FOLKESTONE to escort O.G.O. 48 and O.G.C. 48 respectively. WESTCOTT to escort O.G. 48 also CANDYTUFT to join on completion A/S practice. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1225/29) Sailed 1345/29 3 ships (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1350/29, 1351/29) O.G.O. 48, 0500/30. 7 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1545/29)

F.S. 72

Reported in Barrow Deep, 16 ships for London. (N.C.S.O. Thames 1239/29)

/O.B. 267.....

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O.B. 267 Amended route. (D.T.D. 1247/29) (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1255/29)

O.B.M. 267 1716/29 H.M.T. HUDDERSFIELD TOWN. 5.
(N.C.S.O. Milford Haven 1732 and 1733/29.)

W.N. 61 List (N.C.S.O. Greenock, 1303/29) W.N. 61,0
1300/29, no escort, 20 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1500/29)

F.N. 71 1120/29, 18 ships. (N.C.S.O. Thames 1318/29)
List (1804/29)

H.X. 99 Date and route. ALAUNIA and PORPOISE return
to Halifax. (D.T.D., 1334/29)

F.S. 74 Sailed 1400/29 6 ships (N.C.S.O. Methil 1449,
29, 1451/29) List (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 1618/29)

F.N. and F.S. Additional code words and call signs.
Ocean, Plumb, Prize, Radio. (D.S.D., 1603/29)

SLS 59 Sailing telegram as amended (D.T.D. 1610/29)

S.L. 59 Route for R.V. (D.T.D., 1614/29)

O.B. 270 Route (D.T.D., 1723/29)

S.C. 16 From R.V. steer direct to 55° 50' N., 09°
00' W., (C. in C., W.A., 1914/29)

F.S. 71 All ships arrived (N.C.S.O. Thames 2318/29)

F.S. 75 Sailed 2300/29. 17 ships (N.C.S.O. Methil
2339/29)

O.B.C. 0001/29 sailed O.B.C. Escort CRISPIN.
(N.C.S.O. Clyde, 0016/29 to Admty.)

H.X. 97 If no alterations to route received, steer
for position 125 miles south of last position
on Standard Route thence to destination. (D.
T.D., 0825/29 to G.B.M.S.1.)

W.N. 60 Estimate W.N. 60 will meet E.N. 48 about
0300/29. (C. in C., Rosyth 0020/29 to
JASON, WOLFHOUND, CURACOA, FOXTROT,
BLACKFLY, BERKSHIRE, INDIAN STAR.)

/H.X. 97.....



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HOME COMMANDS

Convoys-Contd.

Shipping

→ H.X. 97
O.B. 267

My 1916/28. H.X. 97 has been scattered by gale and will probably be following route through: 56° 44' N., 28° 40' W., 59° 05' N., 16° 31' W., 57° 08' N., 10° 00' W., not that given in my 1230/28 paragraph A. It is estimated Convoy H.X. 97 will cross meridian of 13° W during forenoon/29. Leave Convoy O.B. 265 at 2359/29 to collect and join H.X. 97. (C. in C., W.A., 0020/29 to WHITEHALL, VANQUISHER, WINCHELSEA, RHODODENDRON, WORCESTERSHIRE, HEPATICA)

→ H.X. 97

On leaving Lough Foyle, proceed towards position 57° 00' N., 16° 32' W., Any ships of H.X. 97 encountered to be collected and escorted back. (C. in C., W.A., 1614/29 to VISCOUNT)

My 0020/29. Proceed to sweep towards position 58° 55' N., 17° 10' W., and thence on a course 251° until dark 30/12. WHITEHALL and VANQUISHER are then to return to base, passing through 57° 00' N., 16° 32' W., and thence south of Rockall. WINCHELSEA, GENTIAN and RHODODENDRON are similarly to return to base, passing through 59° 05' N., 16° 32' W., and 57° 08' N., 10° 00' W. Any ships of H.X. 97 encountered are to be collected and escorted. (C. in C., W.A., 1624/29 to WHITEHALL, WINCHELSEA, VANQUISHER, GENTIAN, RHODODENDRON)

Your 1745/28. Do not now try to pass my 1133/28 to Commodore or repeat for convoy. Escort will be told to try and meet convoy on route given in your 1745/28. (C. in C., W.A. 0022/29 to WORCESTERSHIRE)

Some scattered ships of convoy H.X. 97 are expected to be in approximate position 057° 32' N., 022° 33' W., at noon/29th. Routed 057° 00' N., 016° 30' W., thence to North Channel. If in vicinity follow this route. (C. in C., W.A., 0638/29 to SALISBURY RICHMOND, NEWPORT.)

S.L.S. 58

BALFE's 0935. Request Cmdre. Signals his course and degrees of accuracy of position. My position is 056° 00' N., 008° 00' W., visibility 2 miles. (WELLINGTON, 1100/29 to C. in C., W.A.)

/Commodore.....



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Convoys.

Shipping

S.L.S. 58-Contd

Commodore S.L.S. 58 in BALFE reports his noon position as 55° 37' N., 09° 11' W., (C. in C., W.A., 1302/29 to WELLINGTON)

Convoy met in position 055° 40' N., 108° 45' W., TREVARRACK abandoned in sinking condition, crew on board NORTH DEVON. Mate Mr. R. Brown and Wireless Operator H. Brown lost overboard. (WELLINGTON 1430/29 to C. in C., W.A.)

Your 1152/24. It is observed that inward route from rendezvous was not repeated to Commodore to S.L.S. 58 with the result that when Convoy was not met on 27/12 both escort and aircraft searched for it along a route which the Commodore had not been given. Requested that in future the inward route may always be given to Commodore of an unescorted convoy using the secret position method. (D.T.D. 2313/29 to C. in C., W.A.)

E.N. 49
W.N. 62

Act as additional A/A escort to E.N. 49 sailing at 1830/30. On meeting transfer to W.N. 62 due Cape Wrath 0330/1 and Duncansby 1330/1. Code word for E.N. 49 ~~SECRET~~ and W.N. 62 ~~SECRET~~. (C. in C., Rosyth 1103/29, to FLEETWOOD)

Escort Groups

Cancel my 1545/23. As both H.X. 98 and H.X. 100 are due at R/V on 13/1, order of sailing of escort groups is revised as follows:-

- 3rd O.B. 267 Dec. 30 meet S.L.S. 59
 - 6th O.B. 268 Jan. 1 meet S.C. 17
 - 2nd O.B. 269 Jan. 3 meet H.X. 99
 - 7th O.B. 270 Jan. 5 meet S.L. 60
 - 4th O.G. 49 Jan. 7 meet H.G. 49 and SLS 60
 - 8th O.B. 271 Jan. 9 meet H.X. 98
 - 1st no out escort Jan 11 meet H.X. 100
 - 5th O.B. 272 Jan. 11 meet S.C. 18
 - 3rd O.B. 273 Jan. 13 meet H.X. 101
- (C. in C., W.A., 1126/29)

F.N. 71.

Southend 29/12 Departure with convoy F.N. 71 H.M. M/L 169 for Humber for onward passage to Fort William. War Dept. M/L SWALLOW for Harwich for onward routing to Brightlingsea. Expected time of arrival Harwich before dark. (N.C.S.O. Thames 1211/29)

/W.N. 62.....



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HOME COMMANDS

Convoys-Contd.

Shipping

W.N. 62
F.S. 78

F.O.I.C. Glasgow's 1230/27 and 0942/28 MANCHESTER CITY in W.N. 62 is due Methil a.m. 1/1941 bound for Tyne. As ship is unable to anchor and no escort is immediately available to take her to Tyne intend that she should proceed alongside at Rosyth and sail so as to join F.S. 78 which is due to leave Methil at 1400/3/1. (C. in C., Rosyth, 1221/29)

S.C. 16

If any of S.C. 16 are met instruct them to proceed direct to 55° 50' N., 09° 00' W and not through 56° 10' N., 13° 30' W., as directed in my 1428/26 to avoid U-Boat in 55° 20' N., 13° 10' Q. Estimated to be going northward. (C. in C., W.A., 1224/29) to ACTIVE, HEATHER, GEORGETOWN, PICOTSEE)

GEORGETOWN not met is returning from 054° 08' N., 017° 01' W., Am escorting SCOTTISH STANDARD in 053° 53' N., 017° 20' W visibility 2 miles. S.C. 16 estimated approximately 100 miles astern having been hove to for 2 days and SCOTTISH STANDARD lost touch 25/12. In view of oil fuel shortage propose to remain in company. Your 1224/29 received. (ACTIVE, 1345/29 to C. in C., W.A.)

Proceed with despatch to Lough Foyle to refuel then rejoin S.C. 16. SCOTTISH STANDARD proceed independently. (C. in C., W.A., to ACTIVE.)

S.C. 16 has been ordered to steer from R/V position direct to 55° 50' N., 09° 00' W., estimate convoy should have passed through R/V at 1300/29. (C. in C., W.A., 2002/29 to GEORGETOWN)

If fuel permits endeavour locate S.C. 16. If not proceed with despatch to Lough Foyle re-fuel and re-join convoy. (C. in C., W.A., 2014/29 to GEORGETOWN)

W.N. 61.

Reference N.C.S.O Clyde's 2150/28. Amend number of ships to read 15. CHEMONG has returned Clyde owing to weather. (N.C.S.O.S Clyde, 1434/29 to C. in C., W.A.)

/O.B. 266.....



908

War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

HOME COMMANDS

Convoys-Contd.

Shipping.

O.B. 266

To avoid U-Boat reported between 53° 30' N., and 57° 00' N., 15° W., and 17° W., amended route for O.B. 266. 56° 25' N., 12° 00' W., 55° 00' N., 15° 00' W., 53° 00' N., 25° 00' W. Convoy disperse in 22° W. (C. in C., W.A., 1632/29 to MALLOW)

O.B. 267

Reference my 1359/26 and 1255/29 para. G. new noon rendezvous are:- Noon 1/1/41 56° 02' N., 11° 53' W., Noon 2/1/41 54° 00' N 15° 57' W. (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 1640/29 to Admty.)

F.S. 74

RINGDOVE sailed to join F.S. 74 on passage to Humber. (F.O.I.C. Tyne, 1718/29)

E.N. 48
W.N. 61

My 1031/27. JASON not to proceed to Scapa but to continue with E.N. 48 until W.N. 61 is met. Due Cape Wrath 2330/30. (C. in C. Rosyth 2305/29 to JASON)

3 M.V's

Intend sailing at 1800/30. 3 M/Vs including 1 tanker for St. Helens Roads E.T.A., 0830/31, 1 M/V for Poole, escorted by Portsmouth A/S Trawlers. (N.C.S.O. Dartmouth 1944/29 to C. in C., W.A., amended received 2022/29)

Limit of
40 Ships

In future not more than 40 ships should sail in any one convoy. H.X. 100, any surplus over 40 should transfer to H.X. 98 if time and weather permit, failing which they should be held for later H.X. or S.C. convoy (D.T.D., 1246/29 to C.O.A.C., Halifax)



War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

HOME COMMANDS

Troop Convoys

W.S. 5 B

Shipping

J. 30 will not now arrive Avonmouth.
J. 27 will not leave Liverpool until 31/12.
MONARCH OF BERMUDA will arrive Avonmouth
in next day or two for discharge of cargo and
preparation for further voyage.
Total military personnel to embark
approximately 1000 possibly increasing up
to 1500 but capacity of ship is 2169 all
ranks. Embarkation date will be as for
J. 30. (D. of S.T., 0500/29 to D.S.T.O.
Avonmouth)

PENNLAND arriving Belfast 30/12 from Clyde
for drydocking urgently needs boiler
cleaning and other minor repairs in order
that speed of 15 knots essential for
convoy W.S. 5 (b) may be obtained.
Vessel is required back in Clyde by 5/1.
Request that if possible boiler cleaning
etc., be carried out in Belfast in view of
shortness of time available.
Request early report whether you consider
speed of 15 knots can be maintained after
drydocking, boiler cleaning and repairs
possible in time available have been
carried out. (D. of S.T., 1119/29 to
F.O.I.C. Belfast)

ABOSSO
EUMAEUS

Your 1832/28. It is not considered
desirable that ships should be routed
down one Meridian of Longitude for such
a distance as has been done in this case.
Request you will make some diversion
between 61° 10' N., and 40° N.
(D.O.D. (H) 1141/29 to F.O.C.N.P.)

Sailed OTTAWA escorting ~~ABOSSO~~ and ~~EUMAEUS~~
in accordance with my 1038/28 (F.O.I.C.
Liverpool, 1535/29)

SALOPIAN
ABOSSO
EUMAEUS

My 1832/28 amend route. Inform ABOSSO and
EUMAEUS accordingly. (F.O.C.N.P. 1450/29
to SALOPIAN)

S
Lion

SECRET.

M E S S A G E

1815/29th Dec.

O U T

Addressed: S.T.O. Alexandria. Date: 29.12.40.
 " Mombasa.
 Navytrans Port Said
 " Suez.
 " Malta.
 S.S.T.O. Durban.
 " Capetown.
 S.T.O. Reykjavik.
 Navytrans Haifa.
 Navyseatrans Aden
 " Bombay
 Navycharge Colombo.
 D.S.T.O. Freetown.
 Navytrans Gibraltar.
 Navycharge Hong Kong.
 Navyseatrans Karachi.
 Principal Officer M.M.Dept. Rangoon.
 Navycharge Simonstown.
 " Singapore.
 N.O. i/c Sierra Leone.
 P.S.T.O. Sydney Australia.
 D.S.T.O. Fremantle, W.Australia.

909a

Naval Cypher "C"

From: Ministry of Shipping.

It has been decided that all British Tankers in the deep sea Tanker trades will be requisitioned as follows:-

(a) As from such date immediately following 31st December 1940 as the Tanker has completed discharging her cargo in a United Kingdom Port or Port abroad. If the Tanker discharges her cargo before 31st December, 1940 and is ready for service but has not left Port on that date requisition will take effect as from the 1st January, 1941.

(b) In the case of any Tanker which on 1st January, 1941 was undergoing repairs or awaiting repairs either in the United Kingdom or abroad as from the date of readiness for service.

The following Tankers are excepted:-

- (1) Ships registered in the Dominions, India or Burma.
- (2) Ships already requisitioned or on charter to H.M. Government.
- (3) Whaling Factory Ships.
- (4) Tankers engaged in local distributing or refining trades overseas.

Owners will be instructed to get into touch with the Sea Transport Officer at the Ports concerned regarding on-survey of their Tankers coming within the scheme. The Sea Transport Officers are to make the necessary arrangements for the on-survey and where there is no Sea Transport Technical Staff the Sea Transport officer should arrange for the on-surveys to be carried out by the local Lloyds Surveyor. The completed on-survey forms.

cont'd.....

- 2 -

forms should be forwarded to P.C.O. (Sea Transport). The owners of all requisitioned Tankers will be required to complete Form 507 and the Sea Transport Officers are to obtain this completed form from the Master and after certifying the dates forward it to the Tanker Division Ministry of Shipping. Full details of the scheme will follow.

1815/29.

for M. of S.

4th S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S. (H)
 A.C.N.S. (F)
 A.C.N.S. (T)
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 Ops. (4)
 O.D. (5)
 D.N.I. (4)
 D.T.D. (3)
 D.T.D(M)
 D. of S.T. (2)
 M. (3)
 D. of S.2A.
 I.P. (3)
 W.D.
 File X.

War Diary29.12.1940
SundayFOREIGN STATIONSConvoy W.S. 5 A and Raider (ADMIRAL HIPPER.)→ DUCHESS OF YORK

Proceed to Ponta Delgada (D.S.O. 0416/29 to DUCHESS OF YORK)

Advice to
Ponta Delgada

My 2305/28. Ambassador Lisbon has been asked to inform Portuguese Government of contents of Telegram and to add
(1) That ship will arrive about noon today Sunday with troops on board.
(2) It is hoped that repairs can be effected within a very short period, but if this impracticable another Merchant Vessel will be sent to tranship troops. Request you will take necessary action locally. Corvette CYCLAMEN will also require to enter harbour to fuel. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0420/29 to Consul Ponta Delgada approved by V.C.N.S.)

Your 2241/28 to Admiralty only, approved. A. Admiralty 2332/28. Ambassador Lisbon and Consul Ponta Delgada have been informed (1) that EMPIRE TROOPER will arrive about noon today Sunday with troops on board. (2) It is hoped repairs will be completed within a very short period but if this proves to be impracticable another merchant vessel will be sent to tranship troops.

B. No warship other than CYCLAMEN is to enter territorial waters unless absolutely essential. Consul has been informed that CYCLAMEN will require fuel.

C. H.M. Submarine TRIDENT on patrol off Ponta Delgada at 0800/27 fired three torpedoes at Panamanian ship BONINE who refused to answer signals. Torpedoes missed, two exploded ashore, one has been salvaged and sent to Portugal. No admission as regards this occurrence has yet been made by us.

D. DUCHESS OF YORK has been diverted towards Ponta Delgada.

E. Inform Forces in Company with you that area 20 miles south of Island of San Miguel is a safe sanctuary for our Submarine during dark hours. (A.C.N.S. (F) 0455/29 to C.S. 10 approved V.C.N.S.)

/EMPIRE TROOPER...



War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider-Contd. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

→ EMPIRE TROOPER

Request you will inform EMPIRE TROOPER that it is of the utmost urgency that she should be able to leave Ponta Delgada at the earliest possible moment. Also that no troops are to be allowed out of the ship on any pretext. (V.C.N.S., 1035/29 to C.S. 10)

Gibraltar Arrivals

Gibraltar arrival 0730/29 ARGUS, DUNEDIN, WISHART, VELOX, VIDETTE, FOXHOUND, FORTUNE HEReward escorting NORTHERN PRINCE, CLAN MACDONALD, EMPIRE SONG. (S.O.II, Gib. O 0746/29)

FURIOUS DUNEDIN

Admty. 1116/28. Intend to sail FURIOUS and DUNEDIN escorted by FORESTER and FURY for Freetown 1400/29. Expected time of arrival Freetown 0900 zone plus one Sunday 5/1. Escort will be ordered to part company by signal. Speed of advance 15 knots routed through 028° 50' N., 021° 35' W., 020° 00' N., 021° 00' W., thence direct. (F.O.C.N.A. 1048/29 to C. in C., S.A.)

Sailed - See next page.

W.S. 5 A. Destroyer Escort

Your 1048/29 FURIOUS and DUNEDIN proceed so as to R/V with convoy W.S. 5 A escorted by Force K at 0900N/3/1. Convoy expected to be in position 026° 00' N., 020° 25' W., at 0800 N /3/1 then routed through 012° 45' N., 019° 30' W., 00° 20' N 015° 00' W., estimated speed of advance 10½ knots. As Corvettes have been left behind only A/S Escort available whole convoy from there to Freetown will be ENCOUNTER and ~~LSIS~~ now accompanying VINDICTIVE. Suggest FORESTER and FURY shall remain with FURIOUS till destination if possible. (C. in C., S.A. 1145N/29 to F.O.C.N.A.)

→ EMPIRE TROOPER

Very early report is required after arrival of EMPIRE TROOPER.
1. As to whether she can be made seaworthy at Ponta Delgada.
2. How long this will take. (D.O.D. (F) 1158/29 to Consul, Ponta Delgada)

/CLAN CUMMING.....



War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider-Contd. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

CLAN CUMMING

Report your position relative to "Robin".
(D.O.D. (F) 1159/29 to CLAN CUMMING)

Force K.

FORMIDABLE, NORFOLK escorting Convoy W.S. 5 A position course and speed 1200/29 033° 18' N 019° 10' W., 214° 10½ knots routed through 031° 00' N., 021° 00' W., 012° 45' 019° 30' Rendezvous with DORSETSHIRE in 026° 00' N., 020° 25' W., at 0800/31 zone + One.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1200/29 to CAVINA, MARON, FURIOUS, FORESTER, DUNEDIN, FURY)

DERBYSHIRE
BERWICK
KENYA

A. When EMPIRE TROOPER has entered Ponta Delgada, DERBYSHIRE is to be sent to Gibraltar.
Most undesirable that any of H.M. Ships other than CYCLAMEN should fuel at Ponta Delgada.
Retain BERWICK with you as long as fuel and her damage permits and then send her to Gibraltar.
Admiralty will keep you informed of the repair situation of EMPIRE TROOPER. On completion she is to be escorted to Gibraltar by KENYA and four corvettes.
(D.O.D. (F) 1313/29 to C.S. 10)

DUCHESS OF YORK

Confirm messages your 1336/28 (Proceed to Gibraltar) and your 0416/29 (Proceed to Ponta Delgada)

EMPIRE TROOPER
Repairs to.

965/29 (Reply of Sir R. Campbell to F.O.)
T.O. Despatch 1407/29)

FURIOUS
DUNEDIN

Gibraltar departure 1430/29 FURIOUS, DUNEDIN, FORESTER, FURY in accordance with F.O.C.N.A. 1048/29 (S.O(I) Gibraltar, 1452/29 to Admty.)

RENOWN
ARK ROYAL

H.O. 4. (a) 0830. (b) RENOWN 00
ARK ROYAL 00 25
My position course and speed are at 1900 035° 56' N., 009° (? 56') W. 090° 17½ knots
When will dock be ready.
(S.O. Force H., 1651/29 to F.O.C.N.A.)

/DUCHESS OF YORK.....



War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider-Contd. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

→ DUCHESS OF YORK

Your 1400/29 act in accordance with my 0416/29. Proceed to Ponta Delgada. (D.C. for D.D.O.D. 1707/29 to G.E.M.S. for DUCHESS OF YORK)

CLAN CUMMING

In addition to damage to EMPIRE TROOPER a German communique claims sinking one 6,000 ton ship which may be CLAN CUMMING with whom we have not been in touch since the action at 0700/25. Proceed and search for possible survivors in area of action in approximate position 43° 40' N., 24° 30' W. The water for a radius of 60 miles round position should be covered. (D.O.D. 1715/29 to CALIFORNIA)

→ EMPIRE TROOPER
Repairs to

No 966/29. My 965 (Reply of Sir R. Campbell to F.O.) (T.O.Despatch 1735/29)

→ EMPIRE TROOPER
CYCLAMEN
BERWICK
DERBYSHIRE
KENYA

EMPIRE TROOPER and CYCLAMEN have entered Ponta Delgada. BERWICK and DERBYSHIRE detached to proceed to Gibraltar. KENYA has 531 oil fuel remaining sufficient for 6 days normal steaming. (F.O.C. 10th C.S. 1801/29 to Admty.)

BONAVENTURE

Gibraltar arrival 1800/29. BONAVENTURE. (S.O. (1) Gibraltar, 1802/29 to Admty)

→ DUCHESS OF YORK

My 1725/28. SS DUCHESS OF YORK is expected to arrive Ponta Delgada a.m. 30/12. (D.O.D. 1816/29 to TRIDENT)

Survivors

For GEORGIC, CLAN FORBES, CLAN FRAZER, MARSA, SHAKESPEARE, YORK WOOD, BEN NEVIS, MAHSEER, SOBO. Keep a special look out for possible survivors while passing between latitude 45° N., to 43° N. (D.O.D. 1817/29 to G.B.M.S. Area 1)

→ EMPIRE TROOPER

Your 1158 Ship mentioned will sail 1930 G.M.T 30/12. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 1830/29 to Admty.)

/CYCLAMEN.....



War Diary

29.12.1940
Sunday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider-Contd. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

CYCLAMEN

CYCLAMEN arrived Ponta Delgada 1930 G.M.T. 29/12. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, 1840/29 to Admty.)

→ CLAN CUMMING

Your 1715/29 to CALIFORNIA. Following have been received from CLAN CUMMING. Begins. Defects, proceeding Gibraltar. Position course and speed of advance 018° Robin 100 120° 12 knots. 1200/28. Ends. (F.O.C.N.A. 18 42/29 to Admty.)

Force H.
Position

My 1651 (No trace in War Reg.) para 2 cancel and substitute (1) my position course and speed at 1900 35° 56' N., 009° 56' W., course 86° speed 17½ knots altering to 105° at 0300. Request you inform (?Scottish) (S.O.Force H 2001/29 to F.O.C.N.A.)

MENE LAUS
COSTA RICA

→ ATREUS

F.O.C.N.A. As 1842/29 continue the search ordered in A.T. 1715/29. MENE LAUS, COSTA RICA and ATREUS are not yet accounted for. (D.O.D. (F) 2157/29 to CALIFORNIA)

→ ATREUS

My 2157/29 para. 2. Delete ATREUS. (D.D.O.D. (F) 0134/30 to CALIFORNIA)

→ CLAN CUMMING

Your 1715/29 CLAN CUMMING has arrived Gibraltar. Also passed to S.O.Force K. (F.O.C.N.A. 2222/29 to Admty.)



War Diary.

29.12.1940.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

SENATEUR
DUHAMEL
intercepted.

CAMITO reports French Trawler SENATEUR DUHAMEL intercepted in 33 degs 44 mins North 010 degs 26 mins West steering 095 degs at 1600/28. Sent in to Gibraltar expected time of arrival 1800/29.
(F.O.C.N.P. 1130/29 to Admty).

CUBA
INDOCHINOIS

Your 0135/27 to N.C.S.O. Lisbon. In addition to men from CUBA, presumably crew of INDO-CHINOIS are still at Freetown awaiting repatriation. Request you notify Admiralty and N.C.S.O. Lisbon of number of officers and men involved so that arrangements may be made to take as many as possible on COLONIAL.
(Head of M. 1231/29 to C. in C. S.A).

Vichy Ships
Allowed
S. of Dakar.

Your 2311/28/11. My 2111/15/11 should be adhered to and Vichy Warships allowed to proceed south of Dakar. They should however be reported and if circumstances allow their destination checked.
(Head of M. 1350/29 to C. in C. S.A).

Floating
Dock.

French floating dock with 3 tugs and trawler was in position 180 degs. Cape Tarifa 6 course 280 degs. at 1825/29.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1901/29 to North Atlantic Stn)

North Atlantic

Air Report.

Daily Summary Operations. 1 routine A/S patrol 1 surface reconnaissance East. 1 escort for M.T. ship. 1 escort for convoy. 1 special A/S patrol Area covered 4° West to 8° 10' West.
(200 Group 1700/29).

LEITH.
KINGSTON JACINTH
KINGSTON TURQUOISE
KINGSTON CHRYSOLITE
H.G. 49.

Gibraltar Departure 29/12 1400 LEITH, KINGSTON JACINTH, KINGSTON TURQUOISE, KINGSTON CHRYSOLITE, escorting H.G. 49. (S.O. (I) Gibraltar 1454/29).

Trawlers.

KINGSTON CHRYSOLITE, KINGSTON JACINTH, KINGSTON TURQUOISE, who sailed with H.G. 49 P.M. have been informed their destination is Liverpool.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2240/29 to Admty).



War Diary.

29.12.1940.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic.

→ NEPTUNE.
→ DELHI.
Legion
Movement.

Departure 1800/28 NEPTUNE to rendezvous with DELHI escorting TOUAREG and CAP DE PALMES.
(S.O.(I) Freetown 0051N/29).

LLANDAFF.

Overdue shipping my 1105/25.
LLANDAFF arrived Capetown.
(S.O.(I) Capetown 0945B/29).

→ DELHI.
Corvettes.

Departure 0500/29 ASPHODEL and CALENDULA to rendezvous with DELHI as A/S escort.
(S.O.(I) Freetown 1103N/29).

→ Force M.
NEPTUNE.

Your 2225/26 / . Flag of F.O. Force M. was struck in NEPTUNE at sunset V.A. Cunningham sailed for U.K. in ORONTES leaving Freetown 29/12.
(C. in C. S.A. 1117N/29 to Admty).

VIKINGS.

Departure 0950/29 French Armed Trawler VIKINGS for Duala expected to arrive 4/1/1941.
(S.O.(I) Freetown 1136N/29).

Force L.
PRETORIA
CASTLE.

Your 1200 A/28 and your 1104A/28 (not to Admty). After re stocking with petrol and fuel if necessary on 31/12 Force L is to proceed Simonstown passing through position 022° 00'S. 000° 00'W., 050° 00'S., 010° 00'E. and adjusting speed so as to arrive p.m. 5/1. Boiler cleaning and overhauling of aircraft are to be started and anticipated date of readiness of service reported as soon as possible after arrival. PRETORIA CASTLE part company with Force L. on 31/12 and proceed Freetown so as to arrive p.m./5/1.

CORNWALL.

Your 1150/28. CORNWALL refit must be postponed temporarily. Further signal will be made.
(C. in C. 1505N/29 to N.O.I.C. Simonstown.).

/BRITISH.....



War Diary.

29.12.1940.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd).

BRITISH
PREMIER
feared
lost.

U.65

My 2231/28. Master of HYDRONSSA has been interviewed and reports at 2100 G.M.T. on 24/12 in position 6.20 N. 13.38 W. he passed what appeared to be tanker on fire distant one mile, features indistinguishable. It is feared that this may have been BRITISH PREMIER reported overdue on S.O. (I) Freetown's 1848/27. MILFORD searched this area on 27/12 with no result. (C. in C. S.A. 1911/29 to Admty).

ENTERPRISE.
NEWCASTLE.
CUMBERLAND.
QUEEN OF BERMUDA.

→ ASTURIAS.

Failing further enemy information, intend to detach ENTERPRISE so as to fuel from Oiler ARNDALE and store from BALTAVIA at F.O. on 1/1. When ENTERPRISE rejoins me NEWCASTLE will proceed to fuel and store, and CUMBERLAND will do so when NEWCASTLE returns. During these operations cruiser force will remain in L. 31 with ships fuelling within support distance. QUEEN OF BERMUDA will leave K.33 7/1 calling for water at a Plate port then proceed to Falkland Islands to covering force, probably subsequently (?visiting) (?Deception) Island (s). ASTURIAS fuels at Montevideo 9/1 then proceeds to K. 33. (R.A.S.A.D. 1919Z/29 to C. in C. S.A.).

→ ASTURIAS
Operation.

Operation against French ship permitted. Proceed to rendezvous with BALTAVIA who will be either at sea rendezvous Orange or at Anchorage F.O. until about 6/1. Obtain your rum from her and transfer her personnel stores and mail for R.A.S.A.D., CUMBERLAND, NEWCASTLE, QUEEN OF BERMUDA, and Falkland Isles. On completion return to patrol L. 32. Land ALCANTARA's mail at Montevideo next fuelling - probably 9/1. I will arrange visit. (R.A.S.A.D. 1941Z/29 to ASTURIAS).

/Coast.....



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

918

29.12.1940.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (contd).

Coast Defences.

Your 1927B/18 and 1305B/19. In view of many requirements abroad decision on allocation of these guns is being postponed. In the meantime metal cage holdfasts for mounting these equipments on concrete, are to be constructed on the station. Report proposed sites for 6" guns at Walvis Bay and sites of 12 pounder guns.
(Bq LD 2306/29 & SNO. *London*)

CARNARVON
CASTLE.
Action with
raider,
signal
failure.

Your 1106/18 as to non-reception of enemy reports transmitted by CARNARVON CASTLE. No entirely satisfactory explanation can be given for non-receipt of these signals. Conditions on 500 kcs. were average. CARNARVON CASTLE heard ENTERPRISE transmitting at about 1300. At 1400 CARNARVON CASTLE intercepted a message from a merchant ship distant about 350 miles. ENTERPRISE also intercepted this message but was only about 200 miles from Merchant ship. Between 1000 - 1400 CARNARVON CASTLE was transmitting at intervals on 500 kcs. but she was not heard by ENTERPRISE or QUEEN OF BERMUDA on this frequency. This suggest non-reception on 500 kcs. was due to transmission failure or to altered relay being used subsequent to main aerial being shot away. There is no evidence that CARNARVON CASTLE's transmitter was not working correctly. Conditions on high frequency were not good and may have been cause of non reception. CARNARVON CASTLE's strength signal on 8530 kcs. at 1226 was R 4 - 0 and at 1407 was R 5. In either case times of broadcast of enemy reports on each frequency were not recorded. It is therefore possible CARNARVON CASTLE, between 1018 - 1025 and 1118 - 1125, was not transmitting on (same ?) frequency on which QUEEN OF BERMUDA was keeping watch. No significance is attached to the fact that Falkland Isles W/T did not receive these messages. All times G.M.T.
(R.A.S.A.D. 2528Z/29 to C. in C. S.A).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean.

Operation
"Excess".

"Excess" ~~EXCESS~~?

What is the latest date you can accept for ships passing the narrows in Operation (1 S.L. 1135/29 to C.in C. Med.)

Operation
"Excess".
Functions
of Force "H".

I hope the repercussions of delay to operation "~~EXCESS~~" will be appreciated. It was of course unavoidably extensive, as there is no margin of light craft on which to work. All operations in Mediterranean are inevitably interlocked and in consequence of delay ~~EXCESS~~ convoys are similarly out of phase and it is not possible to give firm date for support by major units of operations in Western Desert. Nor has it been possible to take advantage of the lull for maintenance owing to need of keeping ships at normal notice while date of "~~EXCESS~~" remained in doubt. The fact is that so long as Force "H" has a double function and has to look Westward as well as into Mediterranean such delays will be unavoidable and likely to increase in frequency with running of more convoys. The ideal is to have a force free from other commitments which covers convoys from West through to Narrows. Until this is achieved I fear dislocation of Fleet operations and shipping movements are bound to occur and in its trail will progressively (?group omitted) delay of (Corrupt group) shipping. (C.in C. Med. 2359/29 to Admty.)

HYPERION
(sunk 22/12).

Admiralty 1942/26. Possibility for U-Boat cannot be altogether excluded but the following evidence points to a mine being the cause: (a) Italian U Boats usually fire at least three torpedoes which explode at end of run. No other explosion heard (b) Depth charges from ILEX probably countermined a mine in this area (c) Capt. (D) 14 reported sighting a number of floating mines in the vicinity (d) No claim has been made by Italians (e) HYPERION's contact not confirmed by "J" class destroyer. (C.in C. Med., 1213/29 to Admty.)

10th Corvette
Group.

PEONY, SALVIA, HYACINTH, and GLOXINIA, are to join the 10th Corvette Group and are to use the call signs and delivery groups allocated to 32nd A/SM striking force and Senior Officer. (C.in C. Med., 1251/29 to Med. Stn.)

Boom Defences.

My 1658/19. Subject to your confirming the desirability of shipment the following additional boom defence gear will be loaded in S.S. BURDWAN leaving U.K. (date) Can storage ashore be arranged in order that ship may be released without delay. (D.B.D. 1308/29 to C.in C. Med.)

29.12.1940.
Sunday.

War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

920

Mediterranean. (Contd.)Mellaha
Aerodrome.

Commercial Secretary here finds previous Consul Tripoli reports following regarding Mellaha Aerodrome which is principal Civil Aerodrome in Libya. Already in 1938 it was extensively used for Military purposes and troops were quartered there. Barracks Offices and Stores cover large area West landing ground which lies within and at Western end Tripoli Motor racing-circuit about seven miles east Tripoli and less one mile from sea. Landmarks are race course, grandstand and salt heaps to east of landing ground. (Budapest T.H.I. 1335 Recd. 1500/29 to Admty.)

Air Report
Tobruk

Operational Summary No. 202 up to 1200/29/12/40. (?time) One Wellington bombed Tobruk starting a number of fires.

Sollum.

Day 28/12. No bombing operations. In the course of two raids on Sollum Hurricanes intercepted 8 S.79's escorted by 7 CR 42's shooting down 1 S.79 and 1 CR 42 confirmed with one C.R.42 unconfirmed and damaging 4 S.79's. One Hurricane slight damage from bombing. Reconnaissances reported no movements between Bardia and Tobruk. No change in military situation Bardia.

Valona.

(2) Greece Day 28/12. 3 Blenheims bombed Valona Harbour one bomb bursting 50 yards from a large ship. 3 Sunderlands patrolled south eastern Ionian Sea for enemy surface vessels.

(3) Sudan Day 28/12 No bombing operations. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E., 1414/29).

French Fleet,
Alexandria, pay.

My 1601/24/11. Adml. Godfroy has been informed that pay representing that necessary for one third of his original complement is all that can be advanced in future and that it is considered that the number must be reduced in due course to 30%.
He accepts situation as regards money that will be advanced and appears to intend to reduce to new numbers.
I have authorised payment of 22,000 pounds for November as being retrospective. (C.in C. Med. 1533/29, to Admty.)

Malta Air Report.

Combined services report Malta up to 1700 hours, all times G.M.T. 0928 - 1029, 3 enemy formations probably fighters on reconnaissance flew over Malta at 1700 and 20,000 feet A.A. engaged. Six Hurricanes up no interception. 1415-1600. Ten Glenn Martin 431 flight despatched for photographic reconnaissance Pantellaria as requested by A.M.Signal X.972 26/12, but clouds at 2,000 feet prevented photography. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 1700/29).

/ Troop Transports



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

921

Troop Convoys.

Your 1619/14.

STIRLING CASTLE and HIGHLAND MONARCH ex W.S.4(a) are urgently required in U.K. and cannot therefore be used for movement of Italian prisoners to India but may be used for families to South Africa if desired.

Presume ships of B.N.11 and of "^{Emily}~~EMILY~~" could be utilised.

Ships ex W.S.4(b) are all urgently required in U.K. except that ANDES will probably be required to proceed to Australia from Egypt and could be used. ORCADES and STRATHALLAN could also be used if no other alternatives can meet requirements.

Remainder of W.S.4(b) should return to U.K. direct but presume you will use them for families to South Africa if required. 150 troops disembarked at Durban ex BRITANNIA should be distributed among returning W.S.4(b) ships for onward conveyance to U.K.

(D.S.T. 1717/29 to P.S.T.O. Egypt).

UNIQUE
OSIRIS

F.O.C.N.A's 1746/28 (route instructions for UNIQUE).

Additional positions and instructions (V.A. Malta, 1828/29 to UNIQUE, OSIRIS).

Propaganda for
Italy.

Following No. 32 from Chiefs of Staff to Commanders-in-Chief Middle East. For your information in drafting communique, object of our propaganda against Italy is to increase hatred of Germany and foster spirit of revolt against Mussolini and Fascist Regime giving impression that we distinguish between Italian nation and Fascist Regime. For this reason we are avoiding as much as possible public jeers at the Italian spirit.

Attitude of chivalry which has been shown by three Services to Italian armed forces has had excellent propaganda value in this direction. (1 S.L., 2117/29 to C.in C. Med.).

Greece.

Request for priority in supply from U.S.A. of mountain artillery ammunition.

(Mil. Mission, Athens, to W.O., 2310/29).



29.12.1940.

Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

922

East Indies.

B.N.11½

Departure 0200Z/29. CALEDON, SHOREHAM, AUCKLAND with B.N.11½.
(N.O.I.C. Aden, 0230Z/29 to Admty.)

RANCHI

K.D.2.

Durban arrival 29/12 RANCHI and Convoy K.D.Two.
(N.O.I.C. Durban, 0540Z/29 to Admty.)

Indian

Minesweepers

Your 1554/15 (re building of minesweepers by Government of India)
(1) New construction programme for L.D. of India comprises the following craft. Bangor/Bathurst twelve. A/S-M/S Trawlers, forty-three. Fairmiles, Nineteen. Motor launches, twelve. Motor minesweepers, eight. (2) Before considering your proposal to increase number of motor minesweepers from eight to ten Government of India request confirmation that the number ten is intended and full reasons for proposed increase. (F.O.C.R.I.N. 0601/29, to Admty.)

STAGPOOL.

Your 1223/19 re STAGPOOL. Ship is at present at Colombo earmarked for operation at Trincomalee (date) but if urgently required in Mediterranean she could be sailed to join B.N.13 from Aden. This or similar ship will be required for operation "CANVAS" and any combined operations in Red Sea. (C.in C. E.I., 0602Z/29 to C.in C. Med. amended 1438Z/29).

TALAMBA

Your 1152/26 (TALAMBA to sail for Mauritius to escort troops) TALAMBA can proceed from Durban to Suez without calling at Aden provided water consumption does not exceed 43 tons per day.
(S.S.T.O. India, 0604Z/29, to C.in C. E.I.)

COLOMBO.

COLOMBO is to leave Patrol off Kismayu so as to arrive Mombasa 0300Z/January 1.
(C.in C. E.I., 0806Z/29, to COLOMBO).

A/S Vessels.

Admiralty 1356/23/12 (A/S vessels to take over duties of MOONSTONE & AMBER urgently required in Mediterranean). Although NETRAVATI is not so suitable as AMBER owing to low endurance and large size, intend to sail AMBER in B.N.12 for Suez.
(S.N.O. Red Sea, 1108Z/29 to C.in C. E.I.).

/ "Q" Messages

Suspected Raider



FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

923

"Q" Messages
Suspected Raider.

(1) My 0830/28 ("Q" Report from BEACON-STREET) of GYJB. Efforts to obtain confirmation of cancellation not yet successful.

(2) Following took place at G.M.T. on 29.(a) at 0313 British ship BRITISH LOYALTY when in position 014 degs. 20' North 051 degs. 20' East made a Q distress message reporting being followed by a suspicious vessel. (b) at 0328 a description of vessel and its course West speed 10½ knots was broadcast. (c) At 0401 cancellation of message was made stating vessel appeared friendly. Aden W/T Station reported cancellation appeared to be from a different transmitter.

(d) Effort to establish communication with BRITISH LOYALTY's secret call sign since 0703 have not succeeded.

(3) In absence of more definite information I am assuming there is a raider in Gulf of Aden. (Note paragraph 3 cancelled see 1436Z/29) (C.in C. E.I., 1146Z/29 to East Indies Sqdn. Admty. etc.)

Dispositions

My 1146/29 (i) Following are approximate disposition of ships 29/12:-

(A) KINGSTON sails from Aden to Bombay at 1300Z.

(B) LEANDER in approximate position 015°N. 063° 50' E. at 0630Z escorting Bombay portion of B.N.12 (three ships 12 knots).

(C) SHROPSHIRE in position 003° 50' N. 051° E. at 1130Z proceeding 25 knots towards Socotra.

(D) RATNAGIRI in position 014° 25' N. 052° 30' E. at 0300Z proceeding Aden keeping to Northward side of Gulf.

(ii) Ships in paragraph (i) less RATNAGIRI are to decode signals addressed to Force 'W'. (C.in C. E.I., 1234Z/29 to E. Indies Sqdn.)

426. My 1146/29. para 2 (B) following recd. by Aden W/T (begins) Course West speed ten and half description Ordinary Three Island Cargo Vessel 5500 repeated 5500 tons gross large Sampson Mast on Pool Cabs repeated Pool Cabs Wing bridge foremast shorter than most Ends.

(C.in C. E.I., 1312Z/29 to Admty.)

My 1146/29. Cancel paragraph 3. BRITISH LOYALTY has now made a message in accordance with Admiralty message D.V.

My 1234/29 not to N.O.I.C. Kilindini.

Ship in paragraph (1)(C) is proceeding in execution of previous orders.

(C.in C. E.I., 1436Z/29, to East Indies Sqdn.)



FOREIGN STATIONS.

East Indies. (Contd.)

924

Air Report.

Summary No.200 and Operational Summary for 24 hours ending 1500 G.M.T. 29/12. 0955 G.M.T. three Blenheims 8 Squadron attacked M.T. repair shops Combolcia (Dessie). Two Blenheims 203 Squadron provided fighter escorts for convoy B.N.12. (A.H.Q. Aden, 1726/29).

China.

My 0904Z/28. Following is from Governor Straits Settlements and C.in C. China in continuation.

Indo-China, relations.

Our impression is that combined effects of Allied successes against Italy and Trade restrictions against Indo China have brought Decoux to consider how far he can withdraw from Anti-British policy, born of bitterness of Oran and fostered by pressure of Japan and Armistice commission. Both he and Vichy are inclined to show a little more independence of policy as chance of an early Axis victory recedes, and French Community in Indo-China realizes, though some show of co-operation with Japan and Vichy is necessary for their independent political existence, co-operation with us is equally necessary for their economic existence. An open policy of co-operation with us is hardly to be expected, but they have not yet succumbed to policy of complete subservience to Japan. Our two main needs are trade with Indo China and maintenance of a Regime there with some independence of Japan. Since these are also their own needs there exists a basis of co-operation. If we are too uncompromising there is yet danger they may be forced into arms of Japan. (C.in C. China, 0821Z/29 to Admty.)

America and West Indies.

HOPEPEAK
KOTA AGOENG

My 1041/21. Both ships arrived Panama. (S.O.I., Jamaica, 2219/29).



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

29.12.1940.
Sunday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia.

925

Raiders.

My 0700Z/27. Amendments and additions to raider descriptions and intelligence of movements. (A.C.N.B., 2000Z/29 to Admty., etc.) Original in Lion copy only.

Nauru Raider.

Your telegram No. 257. (regret to learn of attack on Nauru). Acting Resident Commissioner Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony reports no sign of raider yet observed in Ocean Island and that immediate crisis is passed. Precautions however are being maintained. Telegram from Australian Commonwealth Naval Board indicates great material damage done but no casualties, also that raider bore Japanese name and markings. Following telegram subsequently received from Admiralty Reporting Officer, Nauru, through Australian Commonwealth Naval Board (repeats A.C.N.B. 2040Z/27 to Admty. etc.)
(High Commissioner, Western Pacific, No.275, 29/12, to Colonial Office, recd. 0804/29).

HOBART
MANOORA
DOOMBA

HOBART departed Fremantle 28/12 for Sydney.
MANOORA departed Samarai 29/12 for Ocean Is.
DOOMBA departed Sydney 29/12 for Hobart.
(A.C.N.B. 1325Z/29 to Admty. etc.).

U.S.9.

My 0713 18/11 and New Zealand Naval Board 0131/4. U.S.9. Troop commitments Australian 11714 New Zealand 3770 with approximately 320 R.A.N. 220 R.A.A.F. additional and possibly 300 New Zealand Naval ratings. NIEUW AMSTERDAM allotted to New Zealand, QUEEN MARY, AQUITANIA will embark Sydney, MAURETANIA Melbourne. (U.S. 958)
(A.C.N.B. 1331Z/29 to D. of S.T.).

SECRET

MESSAGE 2000Z/29.Dec,

IN

From Australian Commonwealth Naval Board.

Date. 30.12.40.

92 SA

NAVAL CYPHER (C) by cable.

Recd. 1235.

Addressed Admiralty, C. in C. China, C. in C. East Indies, New Zealand
Navy Board, C.O.S. Singapore, Senior Officer, H.M.A. Squadron, 396.
Captain Superintendent, Sydney, Captain Superintendent of
Training, Flinders Naval Depot, All H.M.A. Ships, All District
Naval Officers.

Attack on Narvik 26.12.40

IMPORTANT.

124. My 0700Z/27. Amendments and additions. TOKYO MARU delete reference to funnel Samson posts as TALBOT BOOTH. Name TOKYO MARU and Japanese marking painted out on 12th December at Marshall Islands. Acted as store ship and supplied oil to MANYO MARU 12th December and NARVIK 21st December. MANYO MARU typical German curved bulwarks to short forward well deck where hatch to tween deck only bulwarks fitted to take false decking making silhouette unbroken shelter deck stem to after end bridge structure where rough boarded port and starboard thence step down to main deck to stern. Direction finding loop on bridge. Spread awning from foremost half way stem forward end secured to 3 high derrick crutches though only 2 derricks this well deck hatch also spread awning over after deck house which latter appears to be collapsible 2 lifeboats each side amidships. Tall normal span vertical mast heavy crosstrees no crows nest. One very large hatch between foremast and bridge structure with Japanese flag painted on tarpaulin. After coaming of hatch 8 feet forward of bridge structure. Most striking feature unusual pair straight square section davits on each quarter out board position 45 degrees from vertical accommodating surf type boat. Black hull narrow yellow band line main deck. Japanese flag each side above yellow band abreast foremast funnel main mast name English with Japanese above on each bow each quarter. Port of Registry Tokyo. Yellow funnel black top. Diesel engine no smoke. Narvik raider nicknamed NARVIK looks like a tramp. Great secrecy maintained regarding her only seen at silhouette distance silhouette very bare. Flush deck with raised forecastle. 2 single stumpy Samson posts midship line one at break of forecastle one almost right aft.

Vertical heavy masts. Squat oval funnel amidships immediately abaft narrow bridge which is slightly lower than and about same width as funnel in silhouette long low bare midship deck house with funnel in centre. Two large Fiddley ventilators just abaft funnel are lower than top of bridge. Two boats each side just abaft funnel snugged well down into silhouette and not obvious at distance. Unusual placing of six hatches two before foremast one between foremast and bridge one between after end of midship house and mainmast two abaft mainmast with foremast being well aft and mainmast well forward. Topmasts lean slightly towards each other.

One large gun stated to be 8 inch at number 5 hatch immediately abaft main mast disguised as derrick and covered with canvas. Has wooden apparently collapsible deck housings right aft abaft Samson post. Marked feature is characteristic well over hung German counter stern. Slightly raked Hartlepool bow. All black colour funnel superstructure and hull. No white band. No name or markings.

Raiders movements (a) NARVIK as reported by intelligent Noumea native survivors of NOTOU. 16th August sank NOTOU O (in approximate position 023° 50' South 164° 10' East) no deaths. August date unknown shot down British aircraft 5 survivors (R.A.A.F. Hudson was lost off Moreton Island Queensland 12th August).

/15th.....

- 2 -

15th October (? sank) RINGWOOD (in approximate position 002° 18' North 166° 40' East) no deaths. Total of (? 159) survivors are in MARVIK (4 groups omitted). No mention of ?URAKINA but Germans in MANYO and TOKYO MARU state that there were 23 survivors in MARVIK and that 35 were killed after an action lasting two and a half hours these Germans further informed captives that TOKYO MARU laid mines in Bass Strait, Spencer Gulf, and off Auckland (b) Three raiders in company 0110Z 25th October sank HOLMWOOD (? 27) miles W by S Chatham Island. 4th ship sighted half hull down which raider captain claimed as part of his force.

26th Nov. They sank GEWX (RANGITANE) 0530Z 6th Dec. GMNS (TRIONA) TOKYO MARU made distress signal GMNS (TRIONA) closed TOKYO MARU fired Magnesium flare signal MANYO MARU closed to attack. 0700Z 7th Dec. LJMB (VINNI) 1740Z 7th Dec. TRIADIC 2000 Z 7th December GYGL (TRIASTER) 2150 Z 7th December ZMCY (KATRANGA) arrived Marshall Island 12th December estimated either MALOELAP or WOTJE ATOLLS probably former departed 13th December towards Sumatra. 0200 Z 21st December arrived Emirju and departed 1400 Z 21st December. During whole period 25th November to 21st December the three raiders in company spread to maximum visibility in daytime and closed in at night. The TOKYO MARU was always centre ship.

2000Z/29.

Advance copy 1st Lord, C.S.O. to 1st S.L., Ops., O.D., O.I.C.

1st Lord.
 1st S.L.
 V.C.N.S.
 A.C.N.S.(F).
 A.C.N.S.(T).
 Nav. Sec.
 C.S.O. to 1st S.L.
 Ops.(4).
 O.D.(5).
 D.N.I.(4).
 D.T.D.(2).
 D.T.D.(M).
 O.I.C.(3).
 D. of P.(3).
 D.B.D.9.
 D.A/S.W.
 D.P.(3).
 D. 52 Area S.
 W.D.
 D.P.4.
 Admiral Bellairs.
 D.S.D.(2).
 M.(2).

MOST SECRET.

29.12.1940.
Sunday.



War Diary.

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

926

REX.

Your 1530/20 (Asking name of Italian ship at Trieste).
(C.in C. A.W.I., 0923/29 to Admty.)

LELLO.

Departure 28/12. Italian Ship LELLO for Valencia. (Barcelona, 1259/29).



U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

927

Ships Attacked.

ARACATACA
(torpedoed 29/11)

My 2140/23 all survivors left today Sunday in ANDALUCIA STAR. (N.C.S.O. Buenos Aires 2052/29 to Admty.)

Submarines Reported.

→ 1115/28.

(?U-Boat) was in position (?056 degrees) 20' North 013 degrees 00' West at 1115/28. (MARSDALE, 0914/29, to F.O.C.N.P.)

0446.

D/F bearings at 0446/29 G.M.T. indicate a U-Boat still operating in the Freetown-Cape Verde area. (D.D.I.C. 0941/29).

My 0941/29. Add - Simonstown 317/2 Durban 310/3.

D/F bearings indicates that U-Boat possibly within 50 miles of Monrovia. On way to meet convoy carry out Anti-submarine sweep parallel to coast 20 to 30 miles north from coast. (C.in C. S.A. to ASPHODEL, CALENDULA, 1015 N/29).

Unknown originator Ref. 0914 (Presumably 0914/29 from MARSDALE reporting U-Boat). Request degree of accuracy of position given. Commodore of ship has reported being bombed in position 055 degrees 34' 009 degrees 27'. (WELLINGTON, 1131/29 to C.in C. W.A.).

1712.

My 1234/29. D/F bearings at 1712/29 confirm presence of U/Boat between 58° N. and 59° N. and W. of 20° W. (D.D.I.C. 1742/29).

My 2154/29. Unless you have definite evidence that you are in contact with U-Boat proceed to rejoin convoy at 0600/30. (C.in C. Rosyth 2258/29 to FOXTROT).

Submarines Reported.

2245.

By D/F at 2245/29, position of unknown enemy unit, probable U Boat was about 280 miles S.W. of Lands End. (D.D.I.C. 2340/29).

Estimated
U/B dispositions.

Italian.

1 was in about 39° N. 15° W. on 27th. 1 to eastward of Azores.

1 arriving Gironde to-day.

4 in N.W. Approaches probably between 54° N. and 57° N. 15° W. and 16° 30' W.

/ German. ...



FOREIGN STATIONS.

928

Submarines Reported. (Contd.)

Estimated U/B
dispositions.
(contd.)

German.

- 1 between Freetown and Cape de Verde Islands
 - 1 may be about 46° N. 9° W. bound for Lorient.
 - 1 between 55° 30' N. and 56° 30' N. 12° W. and 14° W.
 - 1 possibly within 60 miles of Bloody Foreland.
 - 1 between 57° 30' N. and 59° N. 15° W. and 17° W.
 - 2 between 58° N. and 60° N. 20° W. and 22° W.
 - 1 south of Iceland.
 - 1 possibly about 60° N. 10° W. homeward bound.
- (D.D.I.C. 1234/29).

Submarines Attacked.

By TUNA.
18/12.

TUNA reports at 0430/18 in position 045° 28' N. 002° 27' W. attacked U.Boat * possibly German with torpedo and gun. U Boat steering North apparently making rendezvous was hit not vitally by one Shell and was chased for 53 minutes. Two Escort vessels then arrived and forced TUNA to dive. At 2314/18 in position 045° 28' N. 001° 38' W. sank by gunfire armed Tug steering 190°.

Intense A/S activity by air, trawlers, and 3 German Minesweepers M. one class on 27/12. Seaplane patrol encountered as far as 75 miles Southwest of Whistle Buoy. (V.A.S., 1019/29, to Admty.).

* No. Italian *BENEDETTO BRIN* - Search 3110
CO. - *Angelo Longanesi Cattani.*



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

30.12.40.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

929

Home Commands.

A further statement in the press is reported today from Stockholm to the effect that the maximum draught for ships using the Kiel Canal is five metres only until the existing obstruction can be cleared.

The S/M TUNA reports today that at 2314 on the 18th she sank by gunfire an enemy Armed Trawler off the Gironde.

British Air Activity.

The Dockyard and Shipping at Brest, and the Dockyard and U/Boats at Lorient were again attacked by our A/C last night; and the Routine patrols in the Rosyth Area were flown during this forenoon.

Enemy Air Activity.

*See page →
890, 899.*

The S.S. TREVARRACK, bombed yesterday in Convoy S.L.58, was taken in tow early this morning and is making for port; ~~and~~ it is reported today that at 2010 last night two H.E. bombs and several incendiary Bombs were dropped at Deptford, causing considerable damage to some Naval buildings but no apparent injury to any Naval stores.

Mining.

See p936

At Liverpool today VENOMOUS, the tanker DORCASIA of 8053 tons, and the Steam Coaster CALCIUM, were all damaged by mine at different points in the approaches to the Port; and VENOMOUS was safely berthed tonight in the Gladstone Dock.



WAR DIARY.

MOST SECRET.

30.12.40.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

930

Convoy W.S.5.A. and Raider. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

Force H. (RENOWN, ARK ROYAL and 6 Destroyers) arrived at Gibraltar at 0900/30. The EMPIRE TROOPER had been holed by a 5.9 inch shell just above water line, flooding the fore hold. The water was being pumped out and a plate welded on. She left Ponta Delgada at 2300/30. The ARABISTAN had also been hit above the water line and was possibly the 6000 ton ship claimed in the German communique. The MENELAUS and COSTA RICA had been sent at 2132/26 in 39°15'N., 21° 47'W and far from R/V. given by Commodore, Convoy, steering South. The Commodore was of opinion they had gone on. At 1800/30 they were reported with DORSETSHIRE in 23° 43 N., 20° 14'W. (about 480 miles north of Cape Verde Is.)

Vichy French.

There is no objection to the French floating dock (sighted off Cape Tarifa yesterday) proceeding to a French Colonial port, but if it appears to be going occupied France it is to be intercepted.

Operation "Ration" is to be put into force tomorrow 31/12 and subsequent days, the fact of the RENOWN being in dock at Gibraltar being accepted. The object of "Ration" is to prevent the French making a hole in our blockade. Five destroyers will carry out this operation.

North Atlantic.

The duties of Force H are defined in Adty. 1152/30. British NALGORA, 6579 tons, made a raider report at 1434 today, but the suspicious ship proved to be H.M.S. DERBYSHIRE.



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

SITUATION REPORT.

30.12.40.

Monday.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

931

South Atlantic.

The American ship ALGIC, 5496 tons, reported a suspicious vessel similar to a tanker in 25.03 S., 1.10 E., at 1952 G.M.T. today.

Mediterranean.

R.A.F. Wellingtons bombed Naples last night and observed several bursts near the customs jetty. Battleships and destroyers there appeared to have steam up.

Malta was raided from 1120 and three bombs dropped on Luqa aerodrome. The raid was followed by 2 other large formations but both turned back 8 miles N.E. and 38 miles N of Grand Harbour, respectively.

East Indies.

As the Italians may be contemplating a raid on Abadan ~~the~~ the Shatt El Ahab area, it is understood that COCKCHAFFER (river gunboat -ex-Yangtse Flotilla) is to be moored in the vicinity of Abadan.

America and West Indies.

Washington reports information from a D/F bearing of a German warship 104° from the coastguard station at Southampton, Long Island, 4 miles E. of Shittbrunneck Light, at 1200Z today. Further particulars have been asked for.



MOST SECRET.

WAR DIARY.

30.12.40.
Monday.

SITUATION REPORT.

932

Australia.

Convoy U.S.8 (QUEEN MARY, AWATEA, AQUITANIA, DOMINION MONARCH, and MAURETANIA) with troops for the Middle East, assembled this morning at a R/V in the Western Bass Straits, escorted by CANBERRA.

The use of a base by enemy raider in the Marshall Islands has been reported by the Chief Officer of RANGITANE, one of their victims.



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

30. 12. 40.
Monday.

HOME COMMANDS.

933

"Storm"
"SECRET"
Messages.

Policy.

It has been agreed with Ministry of Shipping, and War Office have been informed semi officially, that Admiralty will inform all above addressees of circumstances liable to make a considerable change in the importance of any area of Naval interest so that all concerned may make any changes necessary to take special defensive measures.

2. Information will be sent by Most Secret Message in following form:-
Prefix "Storm".

- (a) Place.
 - (b) Cause of change in importance.
 - (c) Commencing date.
 - (d) Ending date.
 - (e) Special requirements if any.
- (D. of L.D. 1952/30 to Air Ministry, War Office, Fighter Command, A/A Command Home Forces.)

Oil-Fuel for Swedish Navy.

Suggesting that occasional rations of Oil-Fuel be allowed to Sweden for her Navy. Reasons. (N.A. Stockholm 1525/30. to Adty.)

"Deluge"
DELUGE.

Defence of U.K.

At 1130/30. (D.C. 1155/30.)
At 2330/30. (D.C. 2339/30.)

Dover.
Withdrawal of Guns.

My 1828/27 and your 2245/27. Details of Transfer. (D. of L.D. 1321/30, to G.H.Q. Home Forces.) Your 1828/27. War Office concur. Please arrange direct with Home Forces and keep informed. (Dacoast Four 1550/30 to Adty.)

SALOPIAN,
GARLAND.

Movements.

Sailed as by F.O.C.N.P. 1830/28 and 1832/28. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0064/30.)

BULLDOG.

Sailed for Liverpool (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0654/30.) Arrived (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1535/30.)

BROKE.

Arrived. (N.O.I.C. Belfast 0945/30.)

WOLFE/



30. 12. 40.
Monday.

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HOME COMMANDS.

Movements. Contd.

WOLFE.
CILICIA.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1000/30.)

REPULSE.
ESKIMO.
SOMALI.
MATABELE.

My position course and speed are at 0800/30 060° 09' North 014° 36' West 110° 17 knots with two destroyers in company. Detached ESKIMO Escort for WORCESTERSHIRE at 1800/29 in position 060° 05' North 021° 50' West course 056° 14 knots, ordered escort her to Minches and then return to Scapa. (REPULSE 1043/30 to A.C.O.S.)

Expect arrive with SOMALI and MATABELE at 0500/31. (REPULSE 1826/30 to A.C.O.S.)

AUSTRALIA.

Sailed. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1318/30 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

Northern
Patrol.

Trawler Lines today. 5 Trawlers. (A. C. O. S. 1536/30.)

WIDGEON.

Arrived 1532. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1537/30.)

FITZROY.

Sailed 1715. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 1743/30.)

ANTELOPE.
WESTCOTT.
VISCOUNT.

Entered, fuelled, and sailed. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1809/30.)

LA CAPRICIEUSE.

Sailed for Barrow to comply with C. in C. W.A. 1214/30. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1835/30.)

KASHMIR.
JUPITER.
JERSEY.

Arrived Plymouth 1729/30. (C. in C. W.A. 0036/31.)

Operations.

Dover.

Enemy Coastal Batteries fired 4 rounds into the sea between 0900 and 0910 today. (V.A. Dover 1734/30.)

Northern Patrol/



HOME COMMANDS.

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Operations Contd.

Northern Patrol.

NIGERIA leave Patrol at 1600/30 and return to Scapa. (C. in C. H.F. 1030/30 to F.O. 18th C.S.)

Submarines.

TUNA.
Armed Tug sunk.

At 2314/18 sank by gunfire an Armed Tug in 45° 28' N. 1° 38' W. (TUNA 0100/30 to Capt. S.2.)

UNDAUNTED.

Arrived with LA CAPRICIEUSE. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0940/30.)

L. 23.

Will be exercising in Scapa Flow tomorrow. (A. C. O. S. 1148/30.)

UNBEATEN.

My 1443/28. Sailed 1215 for Dartmouth, escorted by PHILANTE. (N.O.I.C. Barrow 1235/30.)

Greenock Area.

Movements. (F. O. I. C. Greenock 1450/30.)

H. 44.

Request be sailed for Rothesay with despatch on completion. (Capt. S.7. 1513/30 to Care. Sheerness.)

SEAWOLF.

Sailed. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1537/30.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/31. (V.A.S. 1734/30 and 2301/30.)

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

Patrols ordered today: ~~Scapa~~ at 0930, ~~Brest~~, ~~Scapa~~, ~~Scapa~~ all P.M. C. in C. Rosyth 0730/30.) My 1708/28. Both Patrols cancelled today owing to weather. (C. in C. Rosyth 0740/30. Patrol ~~Scapa~~ has returned to Base owing to weather (C. in C. Rosyth 1114/30.) My 0730. All Patrols cancelled owing to low visibility. (C. in C. Rosyth 1210/30.)

Bordeaux.

217 Sqdn. to attack tonight S/M's and Shipping at Bordeaux. Alternative Target, Brest. (H.Q.C.C. 1300/30 to 15 Group, St. Eval.)

Flushing



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British Air Activity Contd.

Flushing.

53 and 59 Squadrons to attack tonight the two Train-Ferries reported in Verbendings Canal, Flushing. (H.Q.C.C. 1302/30 to 16 Group, Thorney Island.)

Oban A/A
Defence
of Convoy
Anchorage.

Admiralty 1317/29. No action can be taken on two (B) until local reconnaissance now being carried out is complete. Point at para. two (A) of Admiralty signal being included in general review of air defence of West Coast of Scotland. (Air Ministry 1920/30 to Adty.)

Enemy Air Activity.

North Foreland.

Air-attack Automatic Signal heard at 0655, strength 2, bearing 135°. (North Foreland 0704/30.)

Deptford.

About 2010/29 one H.E. Bomb fell in Mast Pond and another next to War Department, and several Incendiary Bombs. Considerable damage, to buildings, no apparent damage to stores. (Supt. RWY. Deptford.) (1445/30 to Adty.)

Mining.

VENOMOUS.

Damaged by Mine at 1120/30 abreast B.2. Buoy entering Queens Channel. No casualties and not leaking. Now in tow. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1314/30.) Berthed in Gladstone Dock. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2055/30.)

DORCASIA.

(British Tanker, 8053 Tons.) Damaged by Mine at 1030/30 about 4 miles 250' from Bar Light Vessel and 1.8 miles South of Swept Channel. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1314/30.)

CALCIUM.

(Steam Coaster) Mined at 0545/30 in 53° 25' N. 5° 45' W. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1314/30.) *Total loss. B.R. 133Y. Page 45.*



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HOME COMMANDS.

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Mining. Contd.

Operation G.Q.2.

Completed. (ADVENTURE. 1456/30.)

Operations

S.N.6.

SN.65.

Your 1046/28.

1. Position for S.N.6 is concurred in.
2. Initial position for S.N.65 should be 61° degrees $12'$ N. 06° $40'$ W. to afford maximum facilities to Faeroese line fishing interests.
3. Proposed date is concurred in subject to the availability of escort and covering force, on which point C. in C.H.F. is requested to remark. (V.C.N.S. 1617/30 to R.A.M.L.)

Aberdeen Area.

Search of
War Channel.

Weather permitting intend sailing 19th M/S Group to R/V 090° Cruden Scaurs $6'$ at 1000/31, thence search war channel east side ahead of E.N.49. to 000° Kinnaird Head $14'$ arriving 1700/31, returning searching West side of war channel ahead of W N 61° to Cruden Scaurs. E.T.A. 0001/1. (N.O.I.C. Aberdeen 1701/30. to C. in C. Rosyth.)

Enemy Intelligence.

Norwegian
Coast.

At 0111/30 position of Enemy Surface Unit, probably Destroyer or larger, was between Haugesund and Egersund. D/F unreliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 0201/0.)

Unidentified
Ship.

One small slow Vessel bearing South 11 miles from Sumburgh and steering about 150° at 0100/30. (A.C.O.S.1209/30.)

Kiel Canal.

Further statement in Press that maximum draft now allowed in Kiel Canal is 5 metres until obstruction can be cleared. (N.A. Stockholm 1915/30.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

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Monday.

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CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

BODNANT.
(British, 5342
Tons.)
CITY OF BEDFORD.
(British, 6402 Tons.)

BODNANT in collision. (Portishead Radio 0829/30.) CITY OF BEDFORD in collision (Plymouth W/T. 0841/20.) Detach 2 ships to assist. Collision in probably 59° 24' N. 21° W. (C.in C.W.A.1006/30 to WHITEHALL) If not required by TREVARRACK and SALVONIA, proceed to assist. (F.O.I.C. Greenock to THAMES) CITY OF BEDFORD reports latitude as 58° 40' N. (C. in C. W.A. 1040/30 to WHITEHALL) Sailing DILIGENT from Campbeltown at 1130 to assist (N.O.I.C.Greenock 1200/30 to C. in C. W.A.) Sailed TENACITY at 1130 from Campbeltown to assist. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1200/30 to C. in C. W.A.) C. in C. W.A.1006/30. WINCHELSEA proceed with despatch to BODNANT and GENTIAN to CITY OF BEDFORD. (WHITEHALL 1204/30.) BODNANT proceeding Reykjavik if possible (BODNANT 1218/30.) Making water fast in No.1 hold. Position 58° 40'N. 21° 38' W. S.O.S. (BODNANT. Recd. 1457/30.)

BODNANT abandoned. Sinking fast. All crew safe on board OPORTO. (Port Patrick Radio 0432/31.) OPORTO arrived Reykjavik 1500 G.M.T. (F.O. Iceland 1402/1 to Adty.)

BARON ARDROSSAN.

(British, 3896 Tons) Your 0737/30 and 0824/30. Tug SUPERMAN sailed to assist. (N.O.I.C. Stornoway 0856/30 to N.O.I.C. Greenock.) Tug SCHELDE sailed Oban 0850 to assist. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1003/30 to C. in C. W.A.) SCHELDE reports at 1715 ship well aground on rocks at Saundray and abandoned. SCHELDE returning Oban. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1820/30.)

H. 31.

(Submarine) Request docking in Clyde Area for 3 or 4 days after 10/1 to repair recent flooding damage to engine-room. (S.7.1229/30 to N.O.I.C. Glasgow.)

WESTON.

D/G defective. Have anchored to repair. (WESTON 1535/30 to C. in C. Rosyth.)

AGATE.
(British, 824 Tons.)

SCHELDE's and SUPERMAN'S 1820/30. Proceed to assistance of S.S. AGATE aground in vicinity of Caul Point 7 miles North of Oversay Light. If no assistance can be given return Campbeltown and report situation. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2300/30 to SCHELDE.)



MOST SECRET

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HOME COMMANDS

Convoys

Shipping

O.G. 48 Sailed at 2315/29. Escort FOLKESTONE from Liverpool (N.C.S.O. Clyde, 0012/30)

H.X. 101 Your 1834/28. Date and route. (C. O.A.C. Halifax 1122/30 to Admty.)

S.C. 16 Estimated position at 1200/30. (C. in C., W.A. to LADY MADELINE 1126/30)

W.N. 61 My 1500/29 Read 23 ships sailed not 20. (N.C.S.O. 1145/30) List (1200/30)

B.H.X. 100 Departure, ocean escort MONTCLARE, returning Bermuda (N.O.I.C. Bermuda, 1133/30)

B.H.X. 101 Draft (List) (Navy Control Bermuda 1201/30)

O.G.O. 48 Sailed 0500/30. Escort BLUEBELL 6 ships (N.C.S.O. Oban 1203/30)

W.N. 62. O. 1300/30, one H.M.T., 5 ships (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1245/30) No escort 5 ships Sound of Mull (N.C.S.O. Oban 1541/30)

O.B.O. 267 0345/31 Escort HEARTSEASE. 13 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1255/30) *See also next page*

E.N. 47 Arrived, 14 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1400/30)

W.N. 62 1200/30. H.M.T. KING SOL 3 ships including H.M.S. MANCHESTER CITY (N.C.S.O. Greenock, 1435/30) *See also next page*

O.B. 267 Sailed 1400/30. 7 ships (N.C.S.O. Liverpool 1506/30)

F.S. 75 Sailed (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1514/30)

W.N. 63 Code "Material" 1900/1. H.M.T. HUGH WALPOLE PENTLAND FIRTH, 10 ships N.C.S.O. Greenock, 1541/30) *See p. 941*

F.S. 72 My 1514/30. LONDON QUEEN and WESTBURN and CHATWOOD now reported arrived. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1611/30)

O.B. 270 1330/5/1. Route (N.C.S.O. Liverpool, 1641/30)

O.B. 269 1130/3/1. Route (N.C.S.O. Mersey, 1642/30)

/F.S. 73.....



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30.12.1940
Monday

HOME COMMANDS

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Convoys-Contd.

Shipping

F.S. 73

All ships arrived (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1644/30)

S.L.S. 58

Arrived 5 ships (N.C.S.O. Oban, 1800/30)

→ S.L. 59

Meet (List) (C. in C., W.A., 1908/30 to MALLOW, NORTHERN PRIDE, ARABIS, NORTHERN DAWN, CLARKIA, ST. ELSTAN, SKATE, MAN O'WAR, SCIMITAR)

→ *E.N. 49

1830/30. H.M.T.'s CAPE MARIATO, BERKSHIRE, (additional escort FLEETWOOD) 24 ships, (N.C.S.O. Methil 1925/30)

H.X. 98

Sailing 1200 G.M.T/2. Route (N.C.S.O. Sydney C.B., 1500/30)

F.N. 70

Humber 30/12 departure O.B.V. CORINTHIAN to join F.N. 70 for Methil and onward routing to Clyde at 0330. (F.O.Humber, 0915/30)

3 M.V's.

* Dutch (n/v 335)*

My 1004/29 to N.O.I.C. Barry only. SS ANTONIA and SS AGATHA and one Greek M/V if she arrives in time, are to be sailed to R/V with RUBY (S.O.) and JASPER in position 300 degs. Trevose Head 5 miles at 1400/31. RUBY and JASPER are then to escort the former two to Brixham and the latter to be detached for Dartmouth. Fighter cover has been requested. Code word "Major" (C. in C., W.A., 1104/30)

O.B. 267

Escort for O.B. 267. HOLLYHOCK from Liverpool AMBUSCADE, AMAZON, MARGUERITE, LADY LILIAN from Clyde and H.M.S. HEARTSEASE from Oban. AMBUSCADE senior officer. (Capt. D. Greenock, 1138/30) *See previous page also next page*

W.N. 62.

Sailed MANCHESTER CITY in convoy W.N. 62 in accordance with my 1230/27. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 1210/30) *See previous page*

→ E.N. 49

Weather permitting intend sailing 12th M/S group R/V Scurdy Ness at 2300/30 search east side War Channel ahead of E.N. 49 to Cruden Scaurs then return to Aberdeen. (N.O.I.C. Aberdeen, 1231/30 to C. in C., Rosyth)

→ S.L. 59

Meet S.L. 59 24 ships unescorted 1000/1/1/41 (Route) (C. in C., W.A., 1252/30 to MALLOW, ARABIS, CLARKIA, SKATE, SCIMITAR, CATHAY for Commodore.)

C. in C., S.A. 1231/14. Leave S.L. 59 in time to pass through 56° 00' N., 18° 00' W at 1900 B.S.T./31 then (route) (C. in C., W.A., 1326/30 to CATHAY)



MOST SECRET

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HOME COMMANDS

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Convoys-Contd.

Shipping

?.....

Your 1104/30. Convoy telegram Commodore in ANTONIA (route) (N.C.S.O. Barry 1603/30 to C. in C., W.A.)

W.N. 61

Your 1300 (N/T in War Reg.) not to A.C.O.S. If necessary proceed to Scapa to await W.N. 61. (C. in C., Rosyth 1631/30 to JASON)

H.G. 49

Gibraltar departure 30/12. 1800 KINGSTON TOPAZ to join H.G. 49 daylight 2/1. (S.O.I. Gib., 1802/30)

S.C. 16

Position 1800 (129° 16' N., 013° 30' W., S.C. 16 not met. Request instructions. (LADY MADELINE, 1835/30 to C. in C., W.A.)

Route
from R.V.

My 1848/30. In order to provide against the possibility of the Commodore of an inward bound convoy failing to receive the signal giving him the onward route from the R/V it is requested that this route as far as the splitting point may always be given to the Commodore before sailing and communicated to me. (C. in C., W.A., 1850/30 to Admty.)

W.N. 63

Sailed A/S Trawlers HUGH WALPOLE, PENTLAND FIRTH for W.N. 63 E.T.A. Clyde Boom 0900/31 (N.O.I.C. Belfast 2028/30) *See p. 939*

Oban
Anchorage

Your 1911/24. My 1530/25 and your further 1341/28. It is intended that main convoy anchorage shall be the Lynn of Lorne, between Eil Dubh and Black Island, which will hold approximately thirty-five ships and that anchorage (B) in my 1530/25 will be used for surplus ships which at present average twenty. (N.O.I.C. Oban 2300/30 to Admty.)

F.S. 76

Convoy message. My 1017/27. Amend escort of F.S. 76 to read PELICAN, VANITY, WESTMINSTER. (C. in C., Rosyth 2316/30)

O.B. 267

Sailed AMBUSCADE, AMAZON, MARGUERITE and LADY LILIAN to R/V with Liverpool portion of O.B. 267. (F.O.I.C. Greenock, 2330/30)

See Medical page

/Convoy conferences.



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HOME COMMANDS

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Shipping-Contd.

Convoy
Conferences

Your 1853/28. Necessity for stimulating interest of masters is fully appreciated, but N.C.S.O's are much handicapped by lack of information about attacks on convoys and current tactics of U-Boats and enemy aircraft. My 1301/8 to Admty. only refers. Suggest up-to-date information on these points be promulgated frequently in MATELS telegrams. (C. in C., A.W.I., 1022/30 to Admty.)

Stragglers
from Convoys

Greater proportion of stragglers being sunk than of independently routed ships, who can be diverted at sea from known dangers because their routes are known. Essential to remove all possible causes of straggling. Independent ships attacked when a long way from route ordered. Points to impress on masters. (D.T.D. 1800/30 to N.C.S.O's)

Troop Convoys

PENNLAND

Your 1119/29. Owing to late arrival PENNLAND cannot dock today. Doubtful whether therefore any boiler cleaning can be done in time available. Further signal will be made after docking of vessel tomorrow. (N.O.I.C. Belfast 1216/30 to D. of S.T.)

W.S. 5 A.

Request you will report the order of Convoy W.S. 5 A. after the fast and slow portions joined up. (D.O.D. (F) 1258/30 to N.C.S.O. Liverpool)



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FOREIGN STATIONS

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Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

SHEFFIELD
ESSEX

Gibraltar arrival 30/12 0715, SHEFFIELD escorting SS ESSEX. (S.O.I. Gib. 0120/30)

Force H.

Gibraltar arrival 0900/30 S.O. Force H in RENOWN, ARK ROYAL, FAULKNER, DUNCAN, FIREDRAKE, JAGUAR, HERO, HASTY. (S.O.I., Gib., 0916/30)

→ EMPIRE TROOPER

My 1313/29 paragraph D. EMPIRE TROOPER will sail 1930/30 (D.O.D.(F) 1000/30 to C.S. 10)

DUCHESS OF YORK

Cancel my 1707/29 to DUCHESS OF YORK only. Continue your voyage to U.K. (D.O.D. (F) 1028/30, to G.B.M.S. 1 for DUCHESS OF YORK)

→ EMPIRE TROOPER
Damage

Your 1158/29.
(a) Chief damage to EMPIRE TROOPER was caused by 5.9" shell hole just above water line on starboard bows, fortunately forward of collision bulkhead. Number one hold and G deck above were flooded with 700 tons (4 groups omitted) zone of bulkhead.
(b) Similar shell hit upper part of hull amidship killing two of crew. Does not affect sea worthiness.
(c) Damage to boats splinters.
As regards (a) Water is being pumped out and a plate welded over hole (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 1137/30 to Admty.)

MENELAUS
COSTA RICA
ARABISTAN

Your 2157/29. MENELAUS+ and COSTA RICA last seen by Commodore at 2132/26 in position 039° 15' N., 021° 47' W., steering 175°. He considers they have gone on. ARABISTAN also hit above water line by raider may be 6000 tons ship claimed. zone + one. (S.O. Force K., 1142/30 to Admty.)

DORSETSHIRE

Your 1142/30. Have got MENELAUS and COSTA RICA. My position course and speed are 023° 43' N., 020° 14' W., (? 249°) 23° 43' N., 020° 14' W., 356° 10 knots. (DORSETSHIRE, 1800N/30 to S.O. Force K.)

CALIFORNIA

Admiralty 1715/29 and 2157/29. Resume your patrol. MENELAUS and COSTA RICA have been located. (D.O.D. (F) 2031/30 to CALIFORNIA)

ARK ROYAL.....



MOST SECRET

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FOREIGN STATIONS

Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider

944
(ADMIRAL HIPPER.)

ARK ROYAL

ARK ROYAL is at eight hours' notice for steam for four days from 1400 today Monday to make good defects. (S.O. Force H., 1437/30 to Admty.)

CYCLAMEN

For Admty. CYCLAMEN left Ponta Delgada 1800 G.M.T. 30/12. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada 1635/30)

Destroyers
Corvettes
Distribution

F.O.C.N.A.'s 1048/30 and C. in C., South Atlantic's 1145N/29.
(a) F.O.C.N.A. is requested to send two Vees to Freetown to arrive as soon as possible and recall FURY and FORESTER to Gibraltar.
(b) It is hoped C. in C., S.A. can adjust movements of CALENDUKA and ASPHODEL to enable them to join ISIS and ENCOUNTER as screen for W.S. 5 A.
(c) ISIS and ENCOUNTER should be used for Operation ~~MONITOR~~, sailing of Force 'K' and W.S. 5 A from Freetown being delayed if necessary to await arrival of Vees.
(d) Two of the Corvettes now with C.S. 10 to be retained temporarily at Gibraltar and Vees to remain at Freetown until further orders. (D.O.D. (F) 1716/30 to F.O.C.N.A. C. in C., S.A.)

My 1830/29. EMPIRE TROOPER sailed 2300 G.M.T. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada, 2115/30, to Admty.)

VELOX
VIDETTE

Your 1716/30. Intend to sail VELOX and VIDETTE a.m./31. Endurance will only allow for speed of 12 knots. Expected time of arrival 7/1/41. (F.O.C.N.A. 2210/30 to Admty)

DERBYSHIRE

Expect to arrive Gibraltar 0800Z/2/1.
(DERBYSHIRE, 2333/30 to F.O.C.N.A.)

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French.

945

INDOCHINOIS

Your 1231/29. I have received no orders for repatriation of crew of INDOCHINOIS, last instructions were that they were to be interned vide Admiralty's 1004/29/10 and they are still interned at Freetown.
(C.in C. S.A., 1017N/30 to Admty.)

French Floating Dock.

Your 1901/29.
No objection to dock proceeding to a French Colonial Port but if it appears to be going to occupied France it should be intercepted.
(V.C.N.S. 1254/30 to F.O.C.N.A.).

SFAX and tanker torpedoed.

French submarine SFAX whilst steaming on surface convoying French tanker was torpedoed about (corrupt group) 15 miles off Cape Juby. Only four of crew saved. Tanker also torpedoed and sunk, number lost not known. Request I may be permitted to inform French that this was not the work of British submarines. (N.C.S.O. Lisbon, 1831/30 to Admty.)

Operation "Ration".

Operation ^{"Ration"}~~"Ration"~~ is to be put into force tomorrow 31/12 and subsequent days. There is no limit on the number of interceptions to be made but the result of each one is to be reported as quickly as possible. The fact that RENOWN will be in dock is accepted. The object of ~~"Ration"~~ is to prevent the French making a hole in our blockade. (A.C.N.S.(F) 1900/30 to F.O.C.N.A.).

Your 1900/30. Five destroyers will carry out this operation supported by one cruiser at short notice in harbour. This leaves no destroyer for Straits Patrol or screen for heavy ships of Force H.
(F.O.C.N.A. 2324/30 to Admty.)

Vichy Ships Allowed S. of Dakar.

Your 1350/29 (Vichy warships south of Dakar to be reported). This is an important change in policy and its practical application should be clear. In future all Vichy French Warships and Merchant ships escorted by them will be allowed to pass to Ivory Coast and Dahomey. The Vichy French policy recently has been to escort Merchant ships to these ports by small warships, destroyers, sloops and possibly trawlers. None have been intercepted up to the present, but if they had been they would have been turned back. French warships until they reach neighbourhood of Cape Palmas may be going to Ivory Coast, Dahomey or to Free French West Africa. Passage to Ivory Coast and Dahomey also allows passage to Gold coast and eventually Nigeria. While there are no indications at present in this area that Vichy French are likely to make any move by sea against

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Operations Against Vichy French. (Contd.)

Vichy Ships
Allowed S.
of Dakar.

Free French West Africa, or against any of our Ports, I should like to know if there is now any Political development or background which makes such moves more unlikely and to ask that I may be informed early of any happening that may cause a change in the situation.

It has to be borne in mind that Libreville, Port Gentil, Takoradi and other Gold Coast and Nigerian Ports except Lagos have no coast defences and there are now Naval Forces in the Free French West African Area.

(C.in C. S.A., 1907/30, to Admt.)

My 125/62 of 15/11 not held by Admiralty. Cancel para. one and substitute; (Begins) Vichy French Warships met at sea south of Dakar are to be reported. If they appear to be proceeding to any port in Free French West Africa they are to be told this cannot be permitted and if necessary force will be used to prevent it; Sen. Officer to be informed at same time that it is hoped this will be avoided. If sufficient force is not available they are to be shadowed and reported only. Ships are to be instructed to proceed to any Vichy French Port north of Ivory Coast, fuelling if necessary at a British Port. If ships agree to proceed as directed they are to be shadowed until further instructions are received. Endeavour is to be made to obtain a definite guarantee from S.O. that he will proceed as directed and if obtained this is to be reported.

If destination of Vichy forces met is not clear, ships are to remain in company until further instructions are received. (Ends).

The effect of this is that Vichy French Warships and Vichy French Warships with escorted Merchant Ships may be allowed to proceed Dahomey and Ivory Coast and any other Vichy territory.

(C.in C. S.A., 2001N/30, to S.A.Station).

North Atlantic.

Force "H",
duties

- A. My 1724/28 June is cancelled.
- B. F.O.C.N.A. is responsible for preventing passage of the Straits of Gibraltar by all enemy vessels and by vessels of other nations as may be ordered by the Admiralty from time to time.
- C. Whilst Force H is based at Gibraltar F.O.C.N.A. is to call upon S.O. Force H for such assistance as may be necessary.

/ Except



FOREIGN STATIONS.

North Atlantic.

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Force "H"
duties.
(contd.)

Except when directed to carry out specific tasks by the Admiralty the S.O. Force H is to comply with such requests so far as he is able but if, owing to conflicting claims, he is unable to do so, the Admiralty should be informed.

D. Force H is available for operations in the Mediterranean as agreed to by Admiralty and as mutually arranged by C.in C. Mediterranean and S.O. Force H. It will be lent temporarily to the Mediterranean Station when thus employed.

E. S.O. Force H. remains responsible for the administration of Force H and for its tactical employment during operations whether acting under the strategical control of Admiralty or C.in C.

Mediterranean, or in compliance with the requests of F.O.C.N.A.
(1 S.L. 1152/30 to Flag Officers, Home and Abroad).

OLYMPUS,
Azores.

V.A.(S) 1121/13. Intend to sail OLYMPUS for Azores Patrol p.m./2 to arrive patrol a.m./7.
(Capt. S.8. 0952/30 to Admty. F.O.C.N.A.)

Trawlers.

There may be doubt about "Kingston" trawlers' endurance being sufficient for whole trip at convoy speed. If this is the case they are to be detached as requisite.
(F.O.C.N.A. 1246/30 to LEITH).

Raider Report.
NALGORA

Following has been read:
37.22 N. 21.50 W. NALGORA (Valentia Radio, 1434/30).

Following has been read.
QQQQ. 37. 22 N., 21.50, followed.
(Valentia Radio, T.O.R. 1449/30).

Following has been read.
37.22 N. 21.50 W., NALGARA still being followed. (Valentia, 1512/30. G.M.T.)

Raider reported at 1434 by NALGORA was H.M.S.DERBYSHIRE.
(DERBYSHIRE, 1511/30, to Admty.)

Following has been read.
R R R R cancel 1430/30 D E M U D J
(Scapa W/T, T.O.R. 1725/30).

Raider reports 1434, 1512 and 1449/30 are now cancelled and referred to DERBYSHIRE. (D.C. 1929/30).

30.12.1940.

Monday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.North Atlantic. (Contd.)

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Air Report.

Daily summary operations. 2 routine A.S. patrols. 1 surface recco east 2 special reccos. to the west in search of French Floating Dock last seen 180 Tarifa 6 at 1730 29/12, steering 270 degrees at 3 to 4 K S. Area covered 8-30 degrees west to 4 degrees west. (200 Group, 1705/30, to Air Min.)

KINGSTON TOPAZE.

KINGSTON TOPAZA sailed 1800/30 (route) until she joins H G 49 which it is estimated she will do during daylight 2/1.
(F.O.C.N.A., 1820/30 amended 1112/31).

South Atlantic.Admiralty
Signals.

Admiralty General Message 642A of 26/12/40. Transmissions of Admiralty General Messages Basegrams at 1100 and 1900 are to be read by ships in Area 9 and when East of Line joining Takoradi and Lobito on South Atlantic Station. W/T silence is not to be broken to ask for repetitions of messages missed at these transmissions.
(D.S.D. 1724/30. Admty. General Message).

Duala.

N.C.S. Officer Duala's 0943/28 has been passed to Admiralty for information. Further enquiries are being made.
(S.O.I. Freetown 1008/30 to Admty.)

Walvis Bay.

Your 2318/15 (Proposal to use Walvis Bay as a bunkering Station). Para.4. Suggest that use of Walvis Bay shall begin as soon as required. Very desirable that ships bunkering at Walvis Bay shall also complete with ice fresh meat butter and vegetables in order to reduce demands on limited supplies at Freetown. N.O.I.C. Simonstown's 1702/24 is passed to you. Request A/S components be sent as early as possible, but consider use of Walvis Bay need not wait for M.T.S's and A/S vessels.
(C.in C. S.A., 1821/30 to Admty.)

Convoy W.S.5A.

My 1744/27. Estimated bunker requirements are as follows:- (list)
(D.S.T., 1954/30 to C.in C's, S.A., E.I., Med., etc.)

"Q" Report, ALGIC.

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South Atlantic. (Contd.)

"Q" Report.
ALGIC.

Received 1952 G.M.T. 8333 kcs de KDDC (s.s. ALGIC) Lat. 25.03 South Long 1.10 East sighted suspicious vessel, large white painted, built similar to tanker, surrounded by four small craft, apparently submarines, heading Southeast direction. Owing to distance from us we are unable to give better description. Master s.s. ALGIC (Ends) KDDC was calling ZSV without success after which message passed to GKT with request to relay.
(Portishead Radio, T.H.I. 2056/30, to Admty.)

From War Registry.
Message received from Portishead radio 2056/30/12 sighting of suspicious vessel by S.S. ALGIC has been passed to C.in C. South Atlantic repeated Force L for information under T.O.O. 2250/30/12.

2040 G.M.T. 12360 kcs. DE KDDC to WSL. Here copy of message I gave to GKT. KDDC then repeats message referring to suspicious vessel reported in my message timed 8.56 P.M.
(Portishead Radio, T.H.I. 2147/30).



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Mediterranean.

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Tobruk.

Our A.894 29/12 (Refers to 1414/29)
Correct paragraph one as follows
after 1940 "One Egypt. Night of 26/27
Sec. One Wellington bombed Tobruk".
(H.Q. RAF. M.E. 0135/30).

Air Report.
Naples attack.

I. 190 30/12. Special Operational
Summary night 29-30/12. 7 Wellingtons
48 Squadron despatched in 2 Echelons
to attack battleships at Naples.
1900, 5 Wellingtons dropped 9000 lbs
S.A.P. from varying heights 5 to
10000 feet. All sticks aimed across
customs and other jetties. Red glow
was seen on west end of customs jetty.
2315. Second attack by 2 Wellingtons
dropping 4500 lbs. S.A.P. from
11000 feet. All bursts near customs
jetty. Detailed results not observed
due to intense A.A. fire from shore
and shipping but mostly inaccurate.
1 A/C received 2 hits from shrapnel
sustaining slight damage. Battleships
and destroyers appeared to have steam
up. Photographic reconnaissance is
now being carried out.
(H.Q. Med., 0730/30 to H.Q. R.A.F. M.E.)

Suda Bay.

Sunday 29/12. GLOUCESTER and YORK
arrived 1445 and sailed 2240 and
2035 respectively. CALCUTTA arrived
1730. PEONY, SALVIA, and HYACINTH
arrived 1815.
(S.B.N.O. Suda Bay 0809/30).

Sollum Cable.

Three Commanders-in-Chief have agreed
Alexandria - Sollum Cable is urgent
requirement. Confirm earliest date
possible for diversion. Ref. our
X./30817 of 18/12 will Cables and
Wireless Ltd. find personnel equipment
etc. or will Marconi, Egypt offer
stand temporarily?
(C. in C. M.E. 0950/30 to W.O).

Submarines
return to
U.K.

A.T. 2237/13/12. Following is
proposed programme of return of O.P.
and R. Class Submarines to U.K.
allowance being made for 2 Submarines
refitting concurrently 1st PROTEUS,

/OSIRIS.....



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Mediterranean. (continued).

Submarines
return to
U.K.

OSIRIS. 2nd PARTHIAN, PANDORA. 3rd REGENT, ROVER. 4th OTUS, OLYMPUS. 5th PERSEUS. ROQUAL has not been included but if required for these modifications would refit with REGENT ROVER with OTUS, and OLYMPUS with PERSEUS. Proposed that OSIRIS should relieve PANDORA in 8th Flotilla and that PROTEUS should return to 1st Flotilla.
(Capt. S.I. 1247/30 to C. in C. Med).

Air Report
Libya.

Operational Summary No. 203 up to 1200 30/12.

1. ~~Earlier~~ day 29/12. Tmimi and Derna landing grounds bombed by six Blenheims each and Gazala Satellite by three. 2 small fires started at Tmimi target straddled at Gazala. Results unobserved at Derna owing to cloud. Standing patrol of 6 Fighters maintained throughout the day over Sollum by Hurricanes and Gladiators. Reccos. reported no movements between Bardia and Tobruk. No change in military situation Bardia.

Valona.

2. ~~Earlier~~ ^{Graves} day 29/12. 6 Blenheims in 2 flights of 3 aircraft dropped 6000 lbs. of bombs on Valona straddling troops and M.T. vehicles on road leading from jetty and starting one fire. Other bombs hit buildings and started one large fire in a warehouse. Two cargo boats in harbour also machine gunned. One Blenheim hit by intense pom pom fire subsequently crashed in sea. ~~Two~~ of crew escaping by parachute. One submarine was observed in harbour. One Sunderland searched South Eastern Ionian Sea for enemy shipping.

/Movements....



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FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (continued). 952

Movements.

Summary no. 179. Eastern Mediterranean Submarine patrol. TRUANT off Tripoli (Libya); OTUS, PARTHIAN, TETRARCH from Malta arriving (? Cape Carthage) Palermo, Calabria and Gulf of Taranto late 31st. PANDORA leaves Alexandria 1700/30 proceed Western Mediterranean to the Narrows night of 7th/8th. 3rd C.S. leaves Piraeus P.M./30 to arrive Alexandria 1700/30 proceed Western Mediterranean to The Narrows night of 7th/8th. 3rd C.S. leaves Piraeus P.M./30 to arrive Alexandria A.M./1. AJAX, PERTH leave Alexandria A.M./31 to arrive Suda Bay A.M./1 Piraeus P.M./1. GALLANT leaves Alexandria P.M./30 arriving Port Said A.M./31 sailing with ULSTER PRINCE P.M./31 to pass through Kaso Straits night 1st/2nd arriving Suda Bay A.M./2. DAINTY and convoy leave Port Said P.M./30 to arrive Alexandria A.M./31. CALCUTTA, three Corvettes left Suda Bay A.M./30 to arrive Alexandria, CALCUTTA A.M./31 Corvettes P.M./31 TERROR from Sollum expected Alexandria A.M./31.
(C. in C. Med, 1307/30).

TRIUMPH 9
"U" class.

Your 1033/27 (re H.M.S. TRIUMPH and 3 U class submarines joining 1 S.F.)
Yes.
(D.O.D.(F) 1715/30 to C. in C. Med)

S/M Patrols.
PARTHIAN.
TETRARCH.

My 1649/25. Object of Patrol as in operation B S. paragraph seven. Enemy shipping is believed to follow coastal route which is generally parallel to and within five miles of coast. Route is approached at various points through definite sectors, known sectors being as follows (i) Between bearing 146° and 156° from 151° Santa Maria Di Leuca six. (ii) Between bearing 077° and 087° from 082° Crotone light seven. (iii) Between bearing 170° and 190° from 180° Capo Dell Arwi light 4. TETRACH is to divide her time between northern and southern end of her area. Submarines will probably leave Patrol TETRACH 10th PARTHIAN 11th January. (Capt S.I. 1355/30 to PARTHIAN, TETRARCH).

/Malta.....



MOST SECRET.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

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Mediterranean. (continued).

Malta
Air
Raid.

Combined Services Report Malta up to 1700 hours 30/12. All times G.M.T. Part I. 1044 to 1120 formation of 3 79's and 4 fighters approached from north at 17,000 feet and bombed Luqa three bombs falling on aerodrome. This raid was followed by two other formations indicated to be large, One of these turned back 8 miles N.E. of Grand Harbour. The other came to 38 miles north and turned back. First formation heavily engaged by A.A. no hits claimed. Second formation engaged at extreme range. Six Hurricanes up but did not engage first formation. They were instructed to position themselves for the second and larger formation. All raiders went out north. Two Wellingtons U/S at the time on ground at Luqa damaged by splinters. A third Wellington slightly damaged now serviceable. No damage to civilian property. Two children slightly injured by falling shrapnel.

Naples.
Recco.

Part II. 0615 to 1155 Glenn Martin photographic reconnaissance Naples for shipping and results of Wellington operations against ships in Naples harbour night 29/30 Dec. reported in my 1.190 30/12. In harbour one Littorio battleship and one Cavour battleship, 3 8-inch cruisers, 1 6-inch cruiser, 5 destroyers, 1 large M/V 14,000 tons with noticeable list. 3 M/V's 7,000 tons and large number smaller M/V's up to 2,000 tons. 1 6-inch cruiser and 1 destroyer entering harbour. Reconnaissance carried out from 15,000 feet. Effects of last night's attack could not be assessed by visual reconnaissance and photos were unsuccessful. 2 flights of Macchi 200's seen patrolling west of Vesuvius. Glenn Martin was higher and out-distanced them. No A.A. on return flight. One unidentified submarine on surface 8 miles N.E. of Cape Farina course N.E. over speed 7 knots. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1730/30).

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

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East Indies.

Trincomalee Resources.

Your 1927/18 para. (ii) and my 0958/24. Consider it is highly advisable to supplement water resources at Trincomalee. (ii) Available at Calcutta large Molasses barges convertible to water fighter capacity about 900 tons pumps capacity about 100 tons per hour agent for owners willing to sell. Cost to build in 1936 rupees 153,000. Intend to charter for one year or failing that to purchase on best terms. Request covering approval. (C.in C. E.I., 0649Z/30).

RANCHI.

To leave Durban p.m./31 and proceed through position 030° S. 033° E. towards position 022° S. 040° E. at 12 knots. (C.in C. E.I., 0702Z/30, to RANCHI).

Raider.

Correct 1312/29 (description of raider in Gulf of Aden) mast on poop calswing bridge. (C.in C. E.I., 1102Z/30).

Abadan, COCKCHAFER

You will have seen from information from sure sources that Italians may be contemplating raid on Abadan and Shat El Arab area. Understand C.in C. East Indies had already arranged with S.N.O.P.G. for COCKCHAFER to be moored in vicinity of Abadan. A.O.C. 'Iraq should warn A.I.O.C. authorities and ensure that air raid precautions are enforced, especially blackout. Two Gladiators from Habbaniya might be sent to Shaibah but do not consider these could be effective without R.D.F. (Air Ministry, 1630/30, to H.Q., R.A.F., M.E.).

Air Report.

Summary No. 201 and Operational Summary for 24 hours ending 1500 30/12. 0515 to 0755 one Blenheim 8 Squadron made armed photographic reconnaissance Somaliland photographic scrutiny awaited. Following noted visually. In Berbera harbour 12 small craft. Several small craft in Zeila^h harbour. At Jibouti 30 to 40 small craft in harbour and one M/V at end of pier. Attacked buildings alongside Zeilah landing ground at 0735. Damage observed from low level stick of 250 pounders and incendiaries. Three Blenheim 203 Squadron provided fighter escort for convoy B.N.12 one using advanced base Kamaran and remaining overnight. All times G.M.T. (A.H.Q. Aden, 1733/30).

/ Indian Minesweepers



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East Indies. (Contd.)

Indian Minesweepers.

Your 0601/29. In view of intention to build the Additional BANGOR/BATHURSTS which it is recommended should be equipped with 'LL' sweep Mark V Star in addition to OROPESA no necessity is seen for increase of number of Motor Minesweepers from 8 to 10.
(D.M.S. 1850/30 to F.O.C. R.I.N.)

Japanese Contraband Traffic, Kismayu.

Following received from Forces Nairobi. (Begins) Statement from prisoner captured El Wak operation confirms Japanese ships have been using Kismayu and possibly occasionally Mogadiscio. Also statement that Japanese ships unload into dhows off Italian Somaliland coast under cover of darkness. Indications are that possibly 3 Japanese ships have entered Kismayu since outbreak of Italian war. General cargoes are petrol lubricating oil, tyres, and M.T. spares. Consider this breaking of blockade is most serious and unlikely to be stopped by periodical bombardment of Kismayu. Insufficient aircraft available to maintain frequent off-shore patrols. Request you pass information to C.in C. East Indies with urgent representations to stop this traffic. One prisoner states 45 British naval officers and 250 men in Mogadiscio. These assumed to be mercantile officers and men. T.O.O. 0915/28. (Ends).
(Mid-east N.L., East Indies, 1935Z/30 to C.in C. E.I.)

China.

TALLEYRAND

Your 1630 26 (re date TALLEYRAND captured) Reporting Officer Kobe reports unable to obtain reliable information re. date from officers ex OLE JACOB and TEDDY.
(S.O.I. Shanghai, 0757Z/30 to Admty.)

AUTOMEDON, capture of currency.

Following capture of AUTOMEDON 11/11 some 60 packages described as small mail bags were seen by Norwegian prisoner being transferred to raider. From statements later by officer of raider that six million dollars in notes had been taken it appears possible that entire contents of strong room were transferred to raider. Local agents have not details of contents but confirm large quantity of un-issued Malayan currency was amongst cargo. (Capt. O.S. Singapore, 1005Z/30, to Admty.)

Indo-China.

Schompre to De Gaulle. Anti-British feeling. Decoux giving in to Japanese. Thailand-Indo China incidents. (C.in C. China, 0613Z/30). Original in Lion copy only.

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FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

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Enemy Unit.

A.1 information received of D/F bearing of German warship 104 degrees from coast-guard station at Southampton Long Island (Four miles east of Shittbrunneck Light) at 1200/29 zone plus five. Frequency unknown. (N.A. Washington, 1731/30 to Admty.)

DIOMEDE.

My 1001/26 (Patrol orders for DIOMEDE). Fuel on 1/1/41 and resume patrol. Leave patrol so as to arrive Bermuda 7/1. Oiler BISHOPDALE is to be sailed for Bermuda on completion of fuelling on 1/1. (C.in C. A.W.I. 1012/30 to DIOMEDE).

HAMILTON stranding.

My 1239/21/12 (re payment for repairs to HAMILTON). Would appreciate confirmation if my assumption is correct. (C.N.S. Canada, 1232/30 to Admty.)

H.X.100.

H.X.100 ocean escort COMORIN subsequently returning to Halifax. (F.O. 3 B.S. 1607/30, to Admty.)

410. Your 1731/30. Can you state reason for suspecting signal was from German warship? Please report all available particulars of signal i.e. call signs, preamble and whether letter or figure code. (C.in C. A.W.I., 2311/30, to N.A. Washington).

Shipping Routes and Raiders.

To avoid raiders area to north eastward of Leeward Isles suggest shipping bound between north America and South Africa should be routed through any passage in Eastern Caribbean Sea between Sombrero and Trinidad and within 300 miles of Cape Change, Brazil. Slight focal area thus formed south east of Caribbean Sea could be afforded some protection by cruiser patrol working from Trinidad. (C.in C. A.W.I. 0912/30 to Admty.)

Australia.

NANYO MARU

127. My 2000Z/29 Part 1. Description NANYO MARU, Additions. (A.C.N.B., 0501Z/30, to Admty. etc.)

/ RANGITANE



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia. (Contd.)

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RANGITANE
HOLMWOOD
KOMATA
VINNI

128. My 2000Z/29, distress messages of raider victims.

RANGITANE Van Diemen main transmitter failed transfer made to emergency transmitter. Latter jammed Van Diemen main transmitter replaced and message transmitted.

HOLMWOOD vessel was 460 miles east of New Zealand at time of attack. Master states W/T apparatus was inefficient and claims (inexcusably) that reception by any shore station was unlikely.

KOMATA jammed from moment of attempting transmission. Wireless apparatus put out of action very early. W/T operator made every possible endeavour to transmit and was last to leave his ship.

VINNI W/T duty undertaken by Chief Officer who was occupied on bridge. Early suspicious regarding intentions of raider allayed through Nauru Shore Signal Station which had raider in view making no signal indicating hostile nature of vessel. No information yet available regarding other vessels.

(A.C.N.B. Melbourne, 0743Z/30, to N.Z.N.B.).

Convoy,
ACHILLES

ACHILLES escorting EMPIRE STAR, PORT CHALMERS EMPRESS OF RUSSIA and MAUNGANUI left Sydney 2145Z/29 for Auckland. (A.C.N.B., 0900Z/30, to Admty. etc.)

Troop Transport.
U.S.9.

Your 94892 30/12. Elbow, 6000. Personnel in U.S.9. for Middle East 12,000. (Army, Melbourne, 0910/31, to Troopers, London).

Raider
Survivors.

My 1243Z/25. Emirau Island survivors due Townsville 2000Z/31. Intend to release to publicity press and to local broadcast (?up to) arrival. Therefore intend "EMIRAU Release" 1000Z/31st December. Released in terms of paragraph D my 1243Z/25 with following alteration: "Enemy Raiding Forces" become "Enemy Commerce raiders" as requested Admiralty 1658/26.

"A number of ships" become "names of ships sunk" as advised in my 0635/27. Intend also using (?name of) EMIRAU ISLAND. As many of next of kin as possible will be advised before publication. But as complete nominal lists are in ship bringing survivors, cannot advise everyone.

(A.C.N.B., 1215Z/30, to Admty. etc.)



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia. (Contd.)

U.S.8.

H.M. transport MAURETANIA left port Phillip Bay 2240/29 for rendezvous in western Bass Straits with U.S.8. (A.C.N.B., 1230Z/30 to Admty. etc.)

U.S.8.

C.B. 04024 paragraph 82.
(1) U.S.8. (2) 0800Z Monday 30/12 from rendezvous 058° 45' S. 142° 20' E. Daylight Friday 3/1 1941 in position 031° 56' 48" South 115° 10' East (4) 20 knots (5) (Route). (6) H.M.A.S. CANBERRA (9) QUEEN MARY, AWATEA, AQUITANIA, DOMINION MONARCH, MAURETANIA. (13) (a) Admiral Goldsmith AQUITANIA Colombo (b) Cdre. Irvin QUEEN MARY Trincomalee. (A.C.N.B. 1235/30 to Admty.)

Marshall Islands, use as raider base.

Your 228 Dec.30 repeated Foreign Office not Navyboard Melbourne. Use of base in Marshall Islands first reported by (? discharged) Chief Officer of British Ship RANGITANE. Six responsible survivors interrogated at Port Moresby stated raiders moved in company after sinking RANGITANE, in position 37° S. 175° W. on Nov.26, 200 miles east then to Kermadec thence 025 S. 177° E. thence between New Hebrides and Loyalty Islands, thence near San Cristobal, thence Nauru, thence to anchorage in Sydney Island, arriving Dec. 12 departing Dec. 13, thence near Nauru, thence Emirau. In view of political importance attached to use of Marshall Islands, Navyboard Melbourne is requested to assess reliability. Ref. your paragraph 2 have no information to remark further. Navyboard Melbourne has been requested to verify whether vessel named NANYO MARU or MANYO MARU. (C. of I.S., Singapore 1540Z/30, to Ambassador, Tokyo).

MOST SECRET.

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GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

NORD ATLANTIC

(B.2) German tankers here reported to have been alongside each other last night transferring cases. NORD ATLANTIC considered likely to sail very soon. (Consul, Vigo, 1450/30, to Admty.).

ACHILLES.

Arrived from Vigo ACHILLES 0010/30. (Bilbao, 1612/30 to Admty.)

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

LEITO

No trace.

December 29th arrival Italian steamer LEITO. (Valencia, 1950/30).

FRENCH MERCHANT SHIPS.

SIKIANG

Departure 30/12 SIKIANG for Reunion. (N.C.S.O. Saigon 0950Z/30.).



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U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarines Reported

Estimated
U-Boat
Dispositions

Italian: 1 about 300 miles east of Azores
1 nearer Azores
1 about 47° 45' N., 09° W., at 1058/30
bound for Gironde.
4 in N.W. Approaches vaguely estimated to
westward of 15° W., between 54° N., and
57° N.

German: 1 between Freetown and Cape de
Verde Islands.
1 about 47° N., 7° 30' W., bound for Lorient
1 about 56° N., 12° W., within 40 miles
radius.
1 within 40 miles radius from each of the
following points.
(a) 57° 30' N., 21° 30' W.
(b) 58° N., 20° 30' W.,
(c) 59° 30' N., 20° W.
1 south of Iceland
1 between Faroos and Shetlands homeward
bound.
(D.D.I.C., 1255/30)

Your 2323/29. Re my 1134/28 which was
repeated to WELLINGTON it will be observed
that HIGHLANDER and HARVESTER were ordered
to search on a line from the R/V position
to North Channel. Your 2313/29 para 2.
this will be done in future. (C. in C., W.A.
1848/30 to Admty.)

Submarines Attacked

By TUNA 18/12

Attacked in position 045° 28' N., 002° 27' W
at 0430/18 German S/M U.32 type with
torpedoes and gunfire. One non-vital shell
hit. U-Boat's course and speed 000° 6
apparently making R/V but turned and ran
towards boom after action. Chased for
53 minutes but on arrival of 2 escort
vessels I was forced to dive. (See also
Operations) Intense A/S activity by air
by trawlers and 3 German M/S M M 1 class
7 miles West of Whistle Buoy on 27/12.
Activity coincides with expected time of
arrival U-Boat. (TUNA, 0100/30 to Capt S. 2.)

Your 0804/3.....



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U-BOAT CAMPAIGN

Submarines Attacked-Contd.

Your 0804/3 (Originated by War Reg. 3/1/41 calling for Nr 287, not previously received in War Reg.) Following is repetition of NR 287 Addressed Admty 287, C. in C., H.F. C. in C., W.A. A.O.C. in C.C.
TUNA reports at 0430/18 in position 045° 28' N., 002° 27' W., attacked U-Boat possible German with torpedo and gun. U-Boat steering north apparently making R/V was hit not vitally by one shell and was chased for 53 minutes. Two escort vessels then arrived and forced TUNA to dive. At 2314/18 in position 045° 28' N., 001° 38' W., sank by gunfire armed tug steering 190° Intense A/S activity by air, Trawlers and three German Minesweepers M one Class on 27/12. Seaplane Patrol encountered as far as 7 miles southwest of Whistle Buoy. (V.A.S. 1019/30 to Admty.)



MOST SECRET

War Diary

31.12.1940
Tuesday

SITUATION REPORT

962

Home Commands

C. in C., H.F. in NELSON with 4 destroyers returned to Scapa at 1220 today from patrol of the Iceland Faroes Passage whence EDINBURGH had also returned to Scapa at 1051. REPULSE and 2 Destroyers also returned to Scapa at 0600 this morning from Convoy Escort duty in the Atlantic.

D/F bearings and W/T traffic at 0228 this morning and a reliable fix at 1151 today suggested movements of Enemy Naval Units between the Bergen and Namsos areas and off the Danish Coast; and a Convoy of 9 camouflaged M/V's moving slowly Northwards was reported about 10 miles S.W. of Ijmuiden at 1515.

British Air Activity

Submarines and Shipping at Bordeaux and two Train Ferries lying in the Verbendings Canal at Flushing were attacked by our A/C last night; but the two special Patrols ordered from Sullom Voe to the Norwegian Coast, as well as patrol ~~XXXX~~, were cancelled owing to the weather and no additional Patrols were flown today in the Rosyth area.

Enemy Air Activity

East Coast

Convoy ^{"Pec 511"} ~~XXXX~~ was shadowed by one aircraft at 1419 today off Clacton, where at 1429 Convoy ~~XXXX~~ (F.N.) was attacked by one aircraft which dropped 3 bombs without any damage. At 1621 two H.E. bombs were dropped on the South Pier at Lowestoft, also without causing any Naval damage or casualty.

Mining

Liverpool

At Liverpool during the 24 hours ending at 1800 today 3 mines were detonated, one spontaneously, one by LL sweeper, and the third by the Swedish BUENOS AIRES some 30 miles N.W. of Birkenhead at about 1740. One Red Mine was detonated at 1145 this morning off the Manacles. See Page 969.

/C. in C. Rosyth..



MOST SECRET

War Diary

31.12.1940
Tuesday

SITUATION REPORT

963

Mining-Contd.

Moray Firth

C. in C., Rosyth considers that, in view of recent indications that U-Boats have been entering the Moray Firth where any interference with Convoys would be a serious matter, the Minefields in that area should be strengthened.

FOREIGN STATIONS

Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

On the assumption that the warship raider reported in the South Atlantic has gone north and was the one which attacked Convoy W.S. 5 A on 25/12, the dispositions ordered in Admiralty 1917/24/11 are terminated. Accordingly-

CORNWALL's refit may be proceeded with (at Simonstown)

ENTERPRISE (last reported in Plate Area) may be sailed to form Force "T"

As DORSETSHIRE has had to replace BERWICK (damaged) in Force "K", DEVONSHIRE must be employed to escort W.S. 5 A on latter part of the voyage to Durban.

Revised arrangements for W.S. 5 A (in substitution for those in A.T. 2219/26/11) are contained in Admiralty 0229/31.

BERWICK arrived at Gibraltar at 1745 today. An unexploded shell is considered to have been an 8 inch projectile.

Shells fired at EMPIRE TROOPER and CLEMATIS appear to have been 5.9 inch.

F.O.C. North Atlantic calls attention to the congestion at Gibraltar, where almost every available berth inside the harbour is now occupied. The harbour is thus at the moment particularly vulnerable to air attack.



MOST SECRET

War Diary

31.12.1940
Tuesday

964

SITUATION REPORT

Vichy French

At 0915 today the French armed trawler ASPIRANT BRUN passed Gibraltar East to West escorting 4 French merchant ships.

At 1500 the French armed trawler LA TOULONNAISE passed West to East escorting another 4 French merchant ships.

A Lisbon report (graded A.1.) states that French warships at Casablanca have now been given orders to keep clear of British men of war and avoid any action that might be considered provocative.

North Atlantic

VELOX and VIDETTE, destroyers, left Gibraltar at 1130 today for Freetown to replace FURY and FORESTER, which arrived at Gibraltar at 1300 today.

South Atlantic

VINDICTIVE and 2 destroyers arrived at Freetown this morning from Gibraltar.

Mediterranean

R.A.F. Headquarters, Malta, report successful attacks yesterday on Taranto, Crotonne, Naples and adjacent naval units, and observed 11 bursts round the target. Naples and Palermo were each bombed by one Wellington.

Valona was bombed again today by 9 Wellingtons



War Diary

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SITUATION REPORT

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East Indies

If C. in C., Mediterranean, can spare EAGLE it is intended to form a hunting group for East Indies Station consisting of EAGLE and EMERALD.

COLOMBO is to leave Mombasa on Jan 2 to patrol off Kismayu.

The next naval bombardment of Kismayu will be known as Operation "Begun"

China

ABERDARE and HARROW, minesweepers, are very unsuitable for a hot climate, and C. in C., China offers them for service elsewhere.



31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

Defence of U.K.

966

At 1130/31. (D.C. 1207/31.)(D.C. 2355/31.)

"Deluge".

Oban.
A/A Defences.

Adty. 1317/29. Understand result of R/C available tomorrow. Request deterrent defence be arranged as soon as possible to release A/A Cruiser now defending Anchorage. (Air Ministry 1600/31 to Fighter Command.)

Movements.

AUSTRALIA.

Arrived. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 0010/31). To be sailed forthwith for Liverpool to dock on 2/1. Will be required sail from Clyde on 7/1. (D.O.D.H. 2147/31 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.)

REPULSE.
SOMALI.
MATABELE.

Arrived Scapa 0600. (A.C.O.S. 0607/31.)

FITZROY.

Arrived 0855. (F.O.I.C. Harwich 0859/31.)

ACTIVE.
GEORGETOWN.

Arrived 30/12. Fuelled and sailed 31/12. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 0927/31.)

WHITSHED.

Sailed Sheerness 1015. (C. in C. Nore 1022/31.)

CURACOA.

Sailed Scapa 0918 to escort W.N.61. (A.C.O.S. 1035/31.) Arrived Scapa 2337 (A.C.O.S. 2340/31.)

LA CAPRICIEUSE.

Arrived. (N.O.I.C. Barrow 1046/31.)

VIMY.

Arrived. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1053/31.)

EDINBURGH.

Arrived Scapa 1051 (A.C.O.S. 1130/31.)

Northern Patrol.

Trawler Lines tonight. 5 Trawlers. (F.O.C.O.S. 1536/31.)

MEYNELL.

Sailed 1445 for Scapa (C. in C. Rosyth 1600/31.)

/BEVERLEY.....



War Diary.

31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

967

Movements Contd.

BEVERLEY.

Sailed for Liverpool. (N.O.I.C. Londonderry 1836/31.)

Operations.

Iceland-Faroes.
Passage.
Anti-Raider.
Patrol.

Arrived Scapa C. in C.H.F. in NELSON, with BEDOUIN, TARTAR, BEAGLE, SIKH. (A.C.O.S. 1220/31.) NELSON's position was probably reported by Enemy A/C at 1236 (D.D.I.C. 1303/31 to C. in C. H.F.)

Operation.
D.Z.

Operation D.Z. para. 4 and B.C.1's 1143/50. Destroyers taking part are BEDOUIN, MATABELE, TARTAR, MASHONA. (C. in C. H.F. 1727/31 to C.S.2.)

ARETHUSA, AURORA, BEDOUIN, MATABELE, TARTAR, MASHONA, and two I-class Destroyers will be operating off the Norwegian Coast near Restad on Night 1/2. (V.A.S. 2206/31.)

Submarines.

STURGEON.

Sails Blyth 1100 routed by War Channel and Gap A, unescorted on surface. (C. in C. Rosyth 1036/31.) Will be at about 57° N. 1° E. at 0800/1, proceeding submerged by day towards 59° 11' N. 2° 30' E. (V.A.S. 1041/31) Sailed for Patrol (S.6. 1101/31.) To patrol between latitudes of Stadlandet and Fro Havet within 20 miles of Coast. (S.6.1128/31.) At your discretion proceed into Fro Havet during your Patrol and attack Shipping believed to pass close westward of Vaagssen latitude 64° North. (V.A.A.1652/31 to STURGEON.) Is not to proceed North of 58° 20' N. until 0800/2. V.A.S. 2206/31.)

Greenock Area.

Movements. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1515/31.)

Positions.

For following 24 hours at 0800/1. (V.A.S. 1631/31.)

MISTRAL.
SEAWOLF.

Arrived (N.O.I.C. Dartmouth 1714/31.)

L. 23.

Will be exercising in Scapa Flow tomorrow. (A.C.O.S. 1719/31.)

/CACHALOT....



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

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Submarines. Contd.

CACHALOT.

Arrived Clyde escorted by SURPRISE.
(F.O.I.C. Greenock 2204/31.)

SEALION.

Is not to proceed South of 59° 30' N.
until 0800/2. (V.A.S. 2206/31.)

British Air Activity.

Patrols.

My 1708/28. Both Patrols cancelled owing
to weather (C. in C. Rosyth 0720/31.)

My 1758/19. Patrol ~~will~~^{will} be flown
daily at dawn, weather permitting. (C. in
C. Rosyth 1018/31) Patrol ~~will~~^{will} cancelled
today owing to weather. No additional
Patrols being flown. (C. in C. Rosyth
1132/31.)

Bordeaux.

AP/716/31/12. Repeat tonight operations
ordered for Night 30/31. (H.Q.C.C.
1300/31 to 15 Group, St. Eval.)

Flushing.

AP/717/31/12. Repeat tonight operations
ordered for Night 30/31. (H.Q.C.C. 1302/31
to 16 Group, Thorney Island.)

Enemy Air Activity.

BREDA.

(Dutch, 6941 Tons.) (Damaged in Air Attack
on Oban 23/12.) Sunk in 56° 29' 12" N.
5° 25' W. (N.O.I.C. Oban 1040/31.)

Convoy "Pawlit"
~~ADAMANT.~~

Being shadowed by one A/C in 51° 29' N. 0°
55' E. (BERKELEY 1419/31.) Fighters have
been sent (Nore 1520/31.)

Convoy "Agent"
~~ADAMANT.~~

One A/C in 51° 37' N. 1° 12' E. 3 Bombs.
No hits. (WOLSEY 1429 and 1431/31.)

Lowestoft.

2 H.E. Bombs dropped on South Pier at
1621. No Naval casualties or damage.
(N.O.I.C. Lowestoft 1650/31.)

Mining.

Zuydecote
Passage.

Your 1155/25. One Unit of M.T.B's now ready.
Particulars of proposed laying. Operation
will take place as soon as weather permits.
(C. in C. Nore 1230/31.)

/Operation D.Z.....



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

969

Operation D.Z.

Mining Contd.
See Operations.

S.N.6. and
S.N.65.

RAML. 1046/28. Additional Destroyers can be made available. HOOD will cover operations and EDINBURGH will provide Ocean Escort. (C. in C. H.F. 1606/31.)

Thames.

My 1940/29. The position of the mine has now been swept over about a dozen times with Skid Sweep with negative results. It is considered always possible for an unignited parachute flare to be mistaken for a parachute mine. Sweeping will be continued till 1700 after which I propose opening the River unless contrary orders are received. (F.O.I.C. London 1550/31 to C. in C. Nore.)

Falmouth.

One Red Mine detonated at 1145/31 in 50° 7' 23" N. 5° 1' 40" W. (F.O.I.C. Falmouth 1646/31.)

Moray Firth.

There are indications that enemy S/ms have been entering Moray Firth. Interference with convoys in this area would be a serious matter since evasive routeing is not possible. It is for consideration that mine fields covering Moray Firth should be Strengthened. (C. in C. Rosyth 1830/31. to Adty.)

BUEENOS AIRES.

(Swedish 3781 tons) Reported by A/S Yacht LADY BLANCHE at 1740 today, mined in 53° 37' N. 5° 44' W. Crew abandoned ship and are being taken to Fleetwood by Trawler BISHOP ROCK. Ship anchored. Bulkheads reported holding. Rescue Tug AMSTERDAM going to assistance daylight tomorrow. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2200/31 to Adty.)

Arrived AMSTERDAM towing BUENOS AIRES (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1810/2.)

Liverpool.

For 24 hours ending 1800/31. One Mine self-detonated, one by LL sweep, and one by BUENOS AIRES. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 2227/31.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

970

Enemy Intelligence.

Norwegian Coast.

D/F bearings suggest Enemy Surface Craft off Norwegian Coast. Signals intercepted at 2354, 0030, and 0046. W.T.I. indicates movements of Naval Units between Bergen and Namsos areas. (D.D.I.C. 0228/31.)

W.T.I. W/T traffic on the Norwegian Coast is Greater in volume than usual. It suggests movements of Naval units off the Coast between Bergen and Namsos areas in an unknown direction. (D.D.I.C. 1253/31 to C. in C.H.F.)

Danish Coast.

At 1117/31 Enemy Unit in 57°50' N. 7°20' E. D/F reliable fix. (D.D.I.C. 1151/31.)

Dutch Coast.

Convoy of 9 camouflaged M/V's moving slowly Northwards reported about 10 Miles S.W. of IJmuiden at 1515/31. (O.I.C. 216.)

Lulea.
reported
closed.

(a) Reported last shipment for season from Lulea sailed about 20th, the port being closed by ice some five days later. A.2.

(b) Following voyages illustrate flexibility of German arrangements for discharging iron ore. (N.A. Stockholm 1957/31. to Adty.)



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

31. 12. 40.

Tuesday.

971

CASUALTIES & DEFECTS.

GOLDEN WEST.

(Steam Drifter) Damaged stem at 1600/30 while going alongside s.s. ANTIOPE in Methil Roads. Not seaworthy. (N.O.I.C. Methil 1241/31.)

Unknown Ship.

Proceed forthwith to assist Unknown Ship on fire in $56^{\circ} 58' N.$ $7^{\circ} 57' W.$ (F.O.I.C. Greenock 1435/31 to SCHELDE.).

CHESAPEAKE.

(British Tanker, 8955 Tons.) Engine disabled in $54^{\circ} 31' N.$ $18^{\circ} 30' W.$ require tug and escort (CHESAPEAKE. Recd. 2145/31.) Detach one ship to assist. DILIGENT being sent. (C. in C. W.A. 2252/31 to MALLOW.) Proceed forthwith to assist (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2258/31 to TENACITY.) Proceed to $54^{\circ} 33' N.$ $18^{\circ} 58' W.$ where ship was reported at 1850 today drifting West. (F.O.I.C. Greenock 2121/1 to TENACITY) Sunderland A/C should reach area about 1500 to search (C. in C. W.A. 0844/2 and 1118/2 to ARABIS.) Detach CANDYTUFT to stand by (WESTCOTT 1005/2 to BLUEBELL) WESTCOTT reports CHESAPEAKE in $54^{\circ} 30' N.$ $18^{\circ} 33' W.$ at 1005/2. (C. in C. W.A. 1234/2 to ARABIS, DILIGENT.) ARABIS now standing by (CHESAPEAKE 1530/2 to Portishead Radio.) Not yet located CHESAPEAKE (TENACITY 1920/2 to F.O.I.C. Greenock.) Latitude now $55^{\circ} 31' N.$ Escort has departed (CHESAPEAKE 0930/3 to Adty.) Not to be left unescorted longer than absolutely necessary. (C. in C. W.A. 1212/3 to ARABIS.)



War Diary.

MOST SHIPPING.

31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

972

Shipping.

Convoys.

O.B.O. 267.

Sailed 0345/31, escort HEARTSEASE, 12 ships. (N.C.S.O. Oban 1135/31.)

S.L.S. 61.

See South Atlantic. (C. in C. S.A., 1201 N/31.)

C.W. 21.

List. (N.C.S.O. Thames, 1504/31.)

H X 95.

On time at R.V. with 18 ships, remainder scattered in gale. All now reported. (D.T.D. 1752/31 to N.S.H.Q. Ottawa.)

H.G. 49.

Date and route. Escort LEITH (D.T.D. 1838/31 to C. in C. W.A.)

F.N. 70.

Arrived 1000/31. (N.C.S.O. Methil, 1029/31)

F.N. 71.

E.T.A. 20 C Buoy 0300. (WALLACE, 1150/31.) Humber ships arrived (N.C.S.O. Humber 1150/31.)

F.N. 70 and 71.

Deletions. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1253/31.)

S.L. 58.S.

Arrived escorted by HIGHLANDER, HARVESTER, WELLINGTON. (F.O.I.C. Liverpool 1345/31.)

S.C. 16.

SPIND and ASHBY arrived. (N.C.S.O. Clyde, 1402/31.)

F.N. 72.

List. (N.C.S.O., Thames 1414/31.)

S.L.S. 59.

Route from R.V. (D.T.D. to C. in C.W.A. 1512/31.)

W.N. 64.

Code "Metric". 1200/3. Escorts SOUTHERN PRIDE, HORNSPIPE. 8 ships (N.C.S.O. Greenock 1576/31.)

W.N. 62.

My 1541/30. Commodore, and alternative daylight R.V. (N.C.S.O. Greenock 1527/31.)



War Diary.

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Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

973

Shipping Contd.

F.S. 76.

List. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1627/31.)

F.N. 71A.

Ships to join. (F.O.I.C. Tyne 1628/31, N.C.S.O. Humber, 1732/31.)

→ E.N. 50.

2200/1. BLACKFLY and ELLESMERE, additional escort FOWEY. 22 ships 13 owners. (N.C.S.O. Methil, 1634/31.)

O.B.M. 268.

List. (N.C.S.O. Milford Haven, 1650/31.)

S.C. 17.

Sailing telegram as amended by Admty. (D.T.D., 1751/31.)

S.C. 16.
HX97.

Your 1835/30. Return to Clyde escorting any ships from S.C 16 or H X 97 met on route. (C. in C. W.A. 0124/31. to LADY MADELINE.)

S.C. 16.

Have searched 20 miles beyond estimated position of convoy and passed five ships widely separated on M.L.A. Am rejoining rear-most ship which was in position 055° 34' N. 009° 44' West at 0330. (ANTELOPE, 0440/31. to ACTIVE)

3. M.V's.

Your 1104/30. Convoy Major; all three ships have sailed for R/V, MADRONO expected time of arrival dark hours 0900/1. ANTONIA and AGATHA expected time of arrival Brixham 0900/1. (N.C.S.O. Barry, 0947/31, to C. in C.W.A.)

W.N. 61.

Scapa departures CURACOA 0918 to escort WN 61. (A.C.O.S. 1035/31.)

Expected time of arrival W.N.61 Kinnaird Head 2130/31. (RUMBA, 1115/31.)

→ E.N. 50.

W.N. 63.

Act as additional A/A escort to E N 50 sailing at 2200/1. After passing Dunnet Head proceed to Scapa. A.C.O.S. is requested to sail FOWEY to join W.N.63 due Duncansby Head 1330/4. Code word for E N 50, "Mission"; and W N 63, "Material." (C. in C. Rosyth, 1133/31)



War Diary.

31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

974

Shipping
Contd.

S.L.61.

BULOLO is to act as ocean escort to S L 61 routed in accordance with Admiralty 1757/24, until 18th January when BULOLO is to leave convoy and return to Freetown route.
(C. in C. S.A., 1159/31. to BULOLO.)

F.N.
F.S.
C.W.21.

Movements to 1200/1/41, VESPER & VORTIGERN with FS75 on passage to Sheerness Convoys:-

FN 71A. due Flamboro' Head 1900/31.
FN 72 due No. 5 buoy 2000/31.
FN 73 sails Southend 0830/1.
FS 74 due Barrow Deep 1600/31.
FS 75 due No. 5 buoy 0200/1.
FS 76 Flamboro' Head 1200/1.
CW 21 due Sand Head Buoy 1800/31.
(C. in C. Nore, 1200/31.)

O.G.48.

To pass through U-boat patrol between 53 N and 57 N. 16 degs. 00' W as quickly as possible OG 48 steer 270 degs, along 56 degs. 20' N, until 17 degs. 30' W. is reached then to 52 degs. 30' N. 21 degs. 00' W, then by route previously ordered local escorts leave convoy daylight 2/1 return to base. 1210/31 to SCARBOROUGH for Commodore, FOLKESTONE, WESTCOTT, BLUE-BELL, CANDYTUFT. (C. in C.W.A. 1210/31.)

C. W. 21.

Southend 31/12 departure with Convoy C.W.21, for Ramsgate H.M.D. STARLIGHT RAY; for Dover H.M.T. KINGSCOURT.
(N.C.S.O. Thames, 1214/31.)

S. L. S.

Convoy S L S due in position 055° 00' north 010° 00' west at 0900 11/1 routed through (j) 011° 40' north 020° 20' west (k) 025° 00' north 022° 30' west (x) 038° 00' north 018° 30' west (l) 050° 00' north 022° 50' west (y) 053° 10' north 016° 50' west speed seven knots. Convoy H.G.49 routed as in F.O.C.N.A's 1154/29, joins S L S 60 in position X at 0800 G.M.T. 3/1. (F.O.C.N.P., 1240/31 to Western Patrol.)

H. G. 49.



War Diary.

31. 12. 40.

Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

975

S. L. 59.

Shipping Contd.

My 1326/30. Proceed through 56° 40' N. 18° 00' W instead of 56° 00' N. 18° 00' W and thence on route ordered (C. in C. W.A. 1300/31. to CATHAY.)

3 M.V.'s.

Your 1944/29. Portsmouth Group arrived. (C. in C. Portsmouth 1424/31 to N. C. S. O. Dartmouth.)

3 M.V.'s.

Your 1807/30, arrived 1437/31. (N.O.I.C. Poole, 1500/31, to N.C.S.O. Dartmouth.)

H.X.97.

Unless in company with any of H X 97 proceed to vicinity of 55° 30' 11° 00' and sweep to North Channel escorting any of S.C.16 encountered.

S.C.16.

(C. in C. W.A. 1610/31. to WHITEHALL, VANQUISHER.)

S.C.16.

Unless escorting any ships proceed to vicinity 055° 30' North 010° West and sweep to North Channel escorting any ship of S C 16 met on route. (C. in C. W.A. 1652/31 to VANQUISHER, WHITEHALL.)

S.C16.

Your 1652 am escorting AGNIA MARINA and HEPATICA who has no armament and only the pattern depth charge. My position course and speed are at 1800 056° 58' N. 014° 55' W 108° 8. (VANQUISHER, 1801/31 to C. in C. W.A.)

S.C.16.B.

Request you will sail HUDDERSFIELD TOWN to meet S.C.16 B. estimated to reach 054° 24' N. 005° 14' W. at 1000 tomorrow. Convoy has been scattered by bad weather. Bristol Channel ships may not be present. (C. in C. W.A. 1646/31 to N.O.I.C. Holyhead.)

F. N. 72.

F. S. 76.

F. N. 73.

Additional escort for F N 72 and F S 76 SHELDRAKE. Additional escort for F.N 73 SHEARWATER breaking off at daylight to return to Harwich before dark on Thursday 2nd.

(F.O.I.C. Harwich 1827/31 to C. in C. Nore.)



War Diary.

31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMAND.

976

Shipping Contd.

O.B.266.

462. If in company or vicinity of portion of convoy O.B.266 escort them on course 270 degrees until reaching 17 degs. W. in order to clear U/B's on patrol. (C. in C. W.A. 1852/31 to SKATE, SCIMITAR.)

C.W.21.

G. W. 21 passed Dover at 2030 without being shelled. (V.A. Dover 2324/31.)

Troop Convoys.
W. S. 5. B.

*a connected to DUCHESS
OF BEDFORD
p 85 p. 1. 1941*

HIGHLAND PRINCESS, WINCHESTER CASTLE, and MONARCH OF BERMUDA at Avonmouth and DUCHESS OF RICHMOND at Newport are to join Convoy W.S.5 (B), which sails from Liverpool 7/1. Convoy conference arrangements named above, The Master of the DUCHESS OF RICHMOND being instructed to proceed to Avonmouth for the purpose. The four ships named are to proceed in company from the Bristol Channel to a R/V with the Liverpool Section. (D.T.D. 1825/31, to to F.O.I.C. Milford, Cardiff, Liverpool.)

Troop Convoys.
W.S.5.B.

1. W S 5 B will leave Liverpool Bar 1700/7/1/41 speed of advance calculated at 13½ knots.

2. Route:-

A.	6 Miles	270°	from	Oversay.
B. One	57° 00'	North	10° 00'	West.
B. Two	58° 20'	North	13° 30'	West.
C.	56° 30'	North	17° 00'	West.
D.	52° 00'	North	25° 00'	West.
E.	39° 30'	North	33° 20'	West.
F.	14° 30'	North	25° 45'	West.
G.	08° 00'	North	15° 00'	West.

3. Choice of route North or South of Rockall will be thence to Freetown.

4. R/V X is established in position 48° 10' North 27° 45' West, promulgated later.

5. Position Y is established in 36° 00' North 13° 00' West.

(D.O.D. (H) 2340/31 to C. in C.W.A.etc.)



War Diary.

31. 12. 40.
Tuesday.

HOME COMMANDS.

977

Shipping Contd.

W.S.5.B.

My 2350/23 and my 2340/31.

1. WINDSOR CASTLE will sail from Liverpool.
2. MONARCH OF BERMUDA will sail in W.S.5B from Avonmouth, with 1000 personnel for Gibraltar. She will leave convoy (date) and proceed to Gibraltar escorted by FEARLESS and FORESIGHT at 18 knots passing through position Y.
3. RAMILLIES will not now be required for ocean escort. Her place will be taken by AUSTRALIA and EMERALD.
4. AUSTRALIA will be required to sail with Clyde portion.
5. EMERALD will be sailed from Plymouth routed south of Ireland so as to join Convoy in position X.
6. A/A Cruiser escort should sail from the Clyde. After EMERALD has joined they should return to U.K. as directed by C. in C. H. F. (D.O.D. (H) 2341/31 to C. in C. W.A, etc.) (See also D.O.D. (F) 2346/31 under Mediterranean)

GEORGIC
WARWICK CASTLE
RAMILLIES.

GEORGIC and WARWICK CASTLE speed 18 knots will be ready to sail from Clyde on 9th January, carrying Government and Military Personnel to Halifax. Ocean escort will be provided by RAMILLIES, C. in C. W. Approaches is requested to sail RAMILLIES from Plymouth on 6/1 to Clyde arranging destroyer escort from 5th D.F. C. in C. W is requested to sail RAMILLIES and convoy providing A/S escort. Admiralty will provide route. 2202/31 to C. in C.W.A. etc.) (D.O.D. (H).



MOST SECRET

War Diary

31.12.1940
Tuesday

FOREIGN STATIONS

Convoy W.S. 5 A. and Raider (ADMIRAL HIPPER.) ⁹⁷⁸

Movements etc., after Action with BERWICK on
25/12/40.

FURIOUS

On completion of Operation "Monsoon" FURIOUS is to be escorted to U.K. by NEPTUNE. (D.O.D. (F) 0215/31 to C. in C., S.A.)

KENYA
ARGUS
BERWICK

Request you will sail KENYA, ARGUS and BERWICK (if ready) in company to U.K. as soon as convenient after arrival of KENYA. JAGUAR may be retained until completion of "Excess". (D.O.D. (F) 0216/31 to F.O.C. N.A.)

Dispositions
Force T
Force K

1. On the assumption that the warship raider reported in the South Atlantic has gone north and was the one which attacked W.S.5 A convoy on 25th/12, it is considered that the dispositions referred to in A.T. 1917/24/11 should now be completed.
2. It is requested therefore that
 - (a) CORNWALL's refit may be proceeded with.
 - (b) ENTERPRISE may be sailed to form Force "T" as soon as practicable.
3. Consequent on the damage to BERWICK and the necessity for DORSETSHIRE to take her place in Force "K" it is regretted that DEVONSHIRE must be employed to escort W.S.5A on the latter part of the voyage to Durban.
4. The following arrangements for W.S.5 A are to be substituted for those given in A.T. 2219/26/11.
 - (a) Freetown to Durban HAWKINS covered by Force "K" until joined by DEVONSHIRE.
 - (b) Durban to Aden. SHROPSHIRE and HAWKINS.
5. It is intended as soon as
 - (a) DEVONSHIRE joins HAWKINS that Force "K" in co-operation with the South American Division should carry out a Raider sweep in the South Atlantic about which a further signal will be made.
 - (b) DEVONSHIRE is relieved by SHROPSHIRE that she should proceed to the United Kingdom.



MOST SECRET

War Diary

31.12.1940
Tuesday

FOREIGN STATIONS

979

Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

Movements etc., after Action with BERWICK on 25/12/40.

Dispositions
Force T
Force K-
Contd.

6. A further signal will be made about subsequent W.S. series convoys and the proposed escort arrangements. It is hoped that SHROPSHIRE will refit as soon as CORNWALL has finished. (D.O.D. (F) 0229/31 (Amended 1217/31) to C. in C's S.A. and E.I., S.O. Force K.)

BERWICK

Expected time of arrival 1745 A today. (BERWICK, 0930A/31 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Gibraltar arrival 31/12 1745, BERWICK. (S.O.I. Gib., 1754/31 to Admty.)

Enemy
5.9" Shells

Shells fired at EMPIRE TROOPER and CLEMATIS appear to have been 5.9 inch. Request you will obtain all available evidence from ships present at Gibraltar and report your views as to type of enemy warship encountered by the convoy. (V.C.N.S. 1051/31 to F.O.C.N.A.)

Your 1051/31. An unexploded shell which hit BERWICK and which is distorted as a result of contact with armour is at least (? seven) point seven inches in diameter. It is considered that this was undoubtedly and eight inch ?.* Further signal will be made when enquiries are completed. (F.O.C.N.A. 2119/31 to Admty.)* Projectile.

Gibraltar
Congestion

My 2324/30. Almost every available berth inside harbour is now occupied. Ships include 3 capital ships, 2 of which are crippled, 2 aircraft carriers and numerous other warships. Also five large M.T. ships understood to contain exceedingly important and valuable cargoes including large number of mines. EMPIRE TROOPER (Probably corrupt. Could be GERANIUM, AURANIA or KENYA) French Light Cruiser MOGADOR and DERBYSHIRE expected shortly. Harbour is thus at moment particularly vulnerable to air attack. (F.O.C.N.A., 1100/31 to Admty.)

/VELOX.....



MOST SECRET

War Diary

30.12.1940
Tuesday

FOREIGN STATIONS

980

Convoy W.S. 5 A and Raider-Contd. (ADMIRAL HIPPER)

Movements etc., after Action with BERWICK on
25/12/40

VELOX
VIDETTE

Gibraltar departures 31/12 1130. VELOX, VIDETTE in accordance with my 2210/30. E.T.A. 1300 z + 1. Tuesday 7/1. (F.O.C.N.A. 1132/31 to Admty.)
Note:- To relieve FURY and FORESTER at Freetown.)

BRIDGEWATER
ASPHODEL
to escort
W.S. 5 A.

BRIDGEWATER is to sail from Freetown and ASPHODEL is to part company with DELHI, MILFORD and CALENDULA so as to R/V with convoy W.S. 5 A at 1700/4. Convoy estimated to be in position 009° 50' N., 016° 30' W at this time is routed through 008° 20' N., 015° 00' W., thence to Freetown speed of advance 10½ knots. ISIS and ENCOUNTER will be in company with convoy with other naval forces. (C. in C., S.A. 1355/31)

ISIS
ENCOUNTER

Your 1716/30 para (B) ISIS and ENCOUNTER sail from Freetown 1800/31 to R/V with W.S. 5 A 0800/2 in position 17° 50' N., 19° 50' W., It is hoped that ASPHODEL and BRIDGEWATER will R/V with W.S. 5 A 0700/4 one day out from Freetown. (C. in C., S.A. 1947N/31 to Admty.)

Press
Report

Press representatives ask to be allowed to report recent attacks on Atlantic Convoys. It is assumed no mention of BONAVENTURE's part may be made but request information whether details of BERWICK's part excluding own damage may be reported. (S.O.Force H., 1434/31 to Admty.)

FORESTER
FURY

Gibraltar arrivals 1300/31. FORESTER and FURY. (S.O.I. Gib., 1442/31)

BONAVENTURE
M.T. Ships

Your 2341/27. BONAVENTURE and M.T. ships are being treated as separate units having no further connection with Force "H". Masters of ships are being instructed prepare statements of provisions fuel etc., required for Cape passage. Military personnel ex BONAVENTURE have been landed and given to believe that they will operate from Gibraltar. (S.O.Force H., 1528/31 to Admty.)



FOREIGN STATIONS.

981

Operations Against Vichy French.

Vichy Ships.

Gibraltar 0915/31 French Armed Trawler ASPIRANT BRUN passed East to West escorting KILISSI, MEDJERDA, P.L.M.12, GUADELOUPE.
(S.O.(I) Gibraltar, 1103/31 to Admty.)

Dakar Reinforce-
ments.

My 0912/15 and my 0939/17. Eli reports (? ship) camouflaged left Casablanca last week for Dakar with 1800 Air Force ratings, 100 tons munitions including 6 inch and 16 inch naval shells.
(2) Naval informants believe that recent heavy shipments and repatriation of Senegalese troops are for the defence of Dakar.
(3) Military informant in Casablanca states that a force consisting of five light columns totalling 12000 men is being organized by General Falvi (see my 0945/18) to protect French Nigeria or attack Lake Chad territory. General F. is at present at Dahomey.
(Acting Consul-Gen., Tangier, 1200/31, to F.O.).

Vichy Warships
Casablanca.

State of ships at Casablanca 28/12 JEAN BART, GLOIRE, PRIMAGUET, EPERVIER, MILAN, BRESTOIS. Ten or eleven submarines, other small craft as before. French warships at Casablanca have now been given orders to keep clear of British men-of-war and to avoid any action that might be considered provocative. Grade A one.
(N.C.S.O. Lisbon 1519/31 to Admty.)

ALSACE.

Your 1832/24 December not known whether French cableship ALSACE is still in Dakar. Enquiries are being made through Governor Gambia.
(C.in C. S.A. 1529N/31 to Admty.)

Gibraltar 31/12 1500. French armed trawler LA TOULONAISE passed from westward to eastward escorting French ships CHANTILLY, SUROIT, SALLY-MAERSK, OCTANE.
(S.O.I., Gib., 1622/31, to Admty.)

Dakar
Intelligence.

Following received from Navy Department from Dakar. Arrivals. French ships ANDRE MOYRAND from Casablanca 21/12, CHAMPOLLION with N.C.O. native troops 28/12. BENTNY from south 30/12. Departures. French ships AISNE for unknown destination, KAKOULIMA for south and FORT DE SOUVILLE for Morocco 28/12.
(N.A. Washington, 1804/31 to Admty.)

INDOCHINOIS.
COLONIAL.
CUBA.

31.12.1940.

Tuesday.



War Diary.

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Operations Against Vichy French. (Contd.)

982

INDOCHINOIS,
COLONIAL,
CUBA.

Your 1017/30. It has been decided that crew of INDO-CHINOIS are to be repatriated when convenient occasion arises, and if there is space in COLONIAL after CUBA personnel have been accommodated, as many as can be taken should be released and put on COLONIAL. CUBA personnel should, however, be given priority and if necessary, a further ship will be provided for INDO-CHINOIS personnel who remain. (Hd. of M. 1928/31 to C.in C. S.A.).
North Atlantic.

Azores
Patrol,
PANDORA,
OLYMPUS,
OTUS,
OSIRIS

(A) PANDORA's Battery unfit for War Patrol but suitable for passage. Propose PANDORA after arrival Gibraltar proceeds to U.K. for new battery. PANDORA then to proceed to Azores.
(C) Azores patrol can be maintained by OLYMPUS and OTUS until 5th Feb. and continued by them from 21st Feb.
(D) Propose that a submarine from Second Flotilla fills gap between 5th Feb. and date PANDORA can be made available again.
(E) OSIRIS has been considered as an alternative but in this event would not arrive U.K. until 27th Feb. since she will not arrive Gibraltar in time to proceed on patrol instead of OTUS. (S. 8, 1720/31, to V.A.S.).

Daily summary
operations.

Two routine A/S Patrols 1 surface recco west in search floating dock which was found off Casablanca. (200 Group, 1721/31 to Air Min.)

Whalers.

H.M. Whalers SKUDD six and POLAR five arrived Ponta Delgada 1100 G.M.T. 31/12. Route to Las Palmas required. (N.C.S.O. Ponta Delgada T.H.I. 1240/31).

IMPERIALIST.

Gibraltar departure 1300/31 IMPERIALIST for T.3. (S.O.(I) Gibraltar, 2346/31).

South Atlantic.

Freetown Arrivals.

Arrival 0800/31 - VINDICTIVE, ISIS, ENCOUNTER. (S.O.(I) Freetown, 0831/31 to Admt.)

ROTHLEY

British ship ROTHLEY due Capetown 27/12, from Port Lincoln not arrived. (S.O.(I) Capetown 0941/31).

KING ARTHUR

Overdue shipping KING ARTHUR due Capetown 27/12 from Mauritius not arrived. (S.O.I. Capetown, 0946B/31).

STIKLESTAD

Overdue shipping STIKLESTAD (Norwegian tanker) due Capetown 27/12 from U.K. not arrived. (Capetown, 1125/31).

/ VIRGINIA S.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

South Atlantic. (Contd.)

983

VIRGINIA S.

Overdue shipping. VIRGINIA S (Greek, 3885 tons) Milford Haven Departure 17/11 due Buenos Aires 20/12 has not arrived. (S.O.I. Freetown 1728/31).

"Q" Report
ALGIC

Admty. (? Portishead Radio T.H.I. 2056/30) Description appears to fit a whale factory ship accompanied by four whale catchers but have been unable to obtain any information from local agents that such vessels are expected in these waters. (S.N.O. Simonstown, 1020B/31 to C.in C. S.A.).

My 1020/31 it has now been ascertained from agents of Whale Factory ship TERJE VIKEN that ship is expected at Capetown sometime soon from either New York or Halifax but confirmation of her departure has not been received. (S.N.O. Simonstown 1208/31 to C.in C. S.A.)

S.L.S.61

ISIS
ENCOUNTER
ASPHODEL
BRIDGEWATER

W.S. 5A

Convoy S.L.S.61 approximately 25 ships sails Freetown 1200 from West first routed through position:- (b) 012° 00' N. 020° 20' W.

(c) 025° 00' N. 021° 50' W. then through 038° 00' N. 020° 00' W. speed of advance 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ knots.

U-Boat probably Italian was in position 012° 30' N. 021° 30' W. 27/12.

ISIS and ENCOUNTER sail from Freetown 1800/31/12 to rendezvous with Force K and convoy in position 017° 50' N. 019 50' W. at 0800/2/1/41.

Hoped ASPHODEL and BRIDGEWATER will meet convoy daylight 4/1/41 as additional escort. (C.in C. S.A. 1201N/31 to S.O. Force K). *See p. 960.*

SAN ANDRES.

inc ^{SAN.} Norwegian S.S. ANDRES badly ashore off ~~Burman~~ ^{Burman}ciere Island, Tutoya, exposed position jettisoning of cargo reported necessary. (S.O.(I) Montevideo, 1933Z/31 S.A.D. A. and W.I. Squadron).

Mediterranean.

Malta Air Report.
Taranto,
Crotona,
Naples,
Palermo
bombed

6 Wellingtons 148 Squadron despatched to attack battleship in dock at Taranto and adjacent naval units. 3 Wellingtons despatched to attack battleships and docks Naples. (Each aircraft carried 2 bombs of 500 lbs and 7 of 250 S.A.P.)

Taranto Eschelon.

/ 5 aircraft



FOREIGN STATIONS.

984

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

Malta Air Report
Taranto,
Crotonne,
Naples,
Palermo
bombed

5 aircraft released all bombs in stick over target. 11 bursts seen round target. 1 Wellington unable to release bombs over Taranto but eventually succeeded in releasing whole load over alternative target, chemical factory at Crotonne. No results seen. Naples Eschelon. 1 Wellington dropped bomb load over Torre Annunziata, no results seen. Second Wellington failed to locate target so attacked alternative target, Palermo Port facilities dropping whole bomb load. 1 burst seen on target but no further results observed due to clouds. Lights seen on south Sicilian coast. Flashing signals seen at sea in position 38.05" north 16.50" east. Cape Rizzuto beacon lit on outward journey but not on return. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta, 0740/31 to A.O.C. in C.)

Air Resources.

A. 232. For Chiefs of Staff from Commanders-in-Chief. Proposals for increase in air squadrons. (H.Q. R.A.F., M.E., 0758/31) See Mediterranean Volume.

Turkish Ports.

Proposal to construct 5 ports on Black Sea Coasts and Southern Turkey. (N.A. Angora to Admt. 1155/31) See Mediterranean Volume.

Submarines.

S.O. 1st Submarine Flotilla's 1247/30 (Return of O, P, & R submarines to U.K.) concur.

Air Report
Tobruk.

Operational Summary No. 204 to 1200 hours 31/12/40.
Egypt. Reconnaissance reported 5 small ships at Tobruk.
Greece. 30/12. 1 Sunderland patrolled the South East Ionian Sea for enemy surface shipping.
Sudan. Day 30/12. 1 Wellesley made an anti-submarine patrol in the Suakin Archipelago. (H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1209/31 to Air Min.)

Malta Air Report.

Combined services report Malta up to 1700 hours 31/12. All times G.M.T. 0650-1115 Glenn Martin reconnaissance Taranto for shipping. If no opposition was to proceed to Brindisi. On arrival Taranto enemy fighter patrols seen over port and also out to sea. Lack of cloud cover and clear weather made it inadvisable to press further. Brindisi not reconnoitred for above reasons. (H.Q. R.A.F. Malta 1725/31 to Air Min.)

/ Leros Air Raid



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

Leros Air Raid.

My 1748/16 full visible report now available; correct paragraph (a) Victualling store burnt, paragraph (b) victualling not ordnance office.

Add: Naval Barracks dormitory hit and destroyed. (Wolffson, Beyoglu 1812/31, to S.O.I., Med.).

Roumania.

Your 1838/27. First intermediary arrested in Roumania for reasons not connected with negotiations. New Intermediary only just chosen and may proceed to Roumania within a week. (N.A. Angora, 1815/31, to Admty.)

OTUS.

Leave patrol off Palermo p.m. on 2/1/41 and proceed direct to carry out offensive patrol in Area 038° 40' N., 008° 50' E. 000° - 25 - 32 during daylight hours of 4/1/41.

You will be ordered to leave that patrol and be routed to Gibraltar by Force H. Anticipated positions and courses submarines at 1800/3 (minus one) will be:-
UNIQUE - 038° 08' N. 008° 54' E. - 090°
OSIRIS - 038° 25' N. 007° 40' E. - 265°
Both have been informed you will probably leave new patrol area p.m. on /4 four for Gibraltar. (N.O.I.C. Malta, 1825/31 to OTUS).

Seamen.

Your 1433/27. (500 young Ratings being sent to Mediterranean) Yes. These left in Convoy W.S.5A on 18th December. (D.P.S. 1917/31 to C.in-C. Med.)

Convoy W.S.5B
EMERALD
EAGLE
AUSTRALIA

My 2219/26/11. Escort for W.S.5B will now be provided by AUSTRALIA and EMERALD.
2. On arrival at Aden, it is intended that EMERALD shall reinforce C.in C. East Indies. If and when C.in C. Mediterranean can spare EAGLE it is intended to form a Hunting Group of EAGLE and EMERALD.

3. AUSTRALIA is to escort convoy to Suez, after which it is intended that she should proceed through the Mediterranean to join the Home Fleet.

4. During her westward passage from Alexandria she would be available to assist in the return of suitable fast empty M.T. ships and transports.

5. (Expected date of arrival of W.S.5B at Suez), it seems likely that passage through the Narrows could be made a favourable moon period.

(D.O.D.(F) 2346/31 to C.in C's S.A., E.I., H.F., Med.)

/ BANDOLERO sunk.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

986

Mediterranean. (Contd.)

BANDOLERO
sunk.

Regret A/S Trawler BANDOLERO was sunk in collision with H.M.A.S. WATERHEN at 2115/30 in Gulf of Sollum. No casualties. WATERHEN returning to Alexandria with bow collapsed as far as collision bulkhead. (C.in C. Med., 2351/31).

East Indies.

→ BARBETTE
BARNET
WARIALDA

My 0852/27 B.D.V. BARBETTE and B.D.V. BARNET sailed Colombo for Bombay 0937Z/30. Programme in my 1152/16 will be approximately four days late. F.O.C.R.I.N. is requested to signal intended date of sailing of these vessels from Bombay and e.t.a. at Khorya Morya Bay and S.N.O. Persian Gulf to sail WARIALDA from Khor Kuwait accordingly. 0534/31.

→ BARBETTE
Boom D.V.

My 1152/16, para. four, amend first sentence to read "on arrival Mediterranean only skipper and guns crew remain in BARBETTE" two engineers have been lent for passage request they may be returned to Bombay or Colombo. 1324Z/31.

CAPECTOWN.

~~444~~. My 0606/27. On arrival at position 005°N. 092° E. proceed to position 005° 30' 094° giving cover to NARKUNDA thence through positions (a) 003° 082°, thence to Trincomalee arriving 0200Z/6/1/41. (C.in C. E.I. 0726Z/31 to CAPECTOWN).

COLOMBO.
Kismayu
Patrol

COLOMBO to leave Mombasa A.M. 2/1/41 and proceed to patrol off Kismayu. (C.in C. E.I., 0728/31 to COLOMBO).

CERES.
M/S Group 142.

CERES is to leave Mombasa 2/1/41 and proceed to Dar-Es-Salaam to arrive 0700Z/3/1/41. CERES to leave Dar-Es-Salaam p.m.3/1 and proceed to Lindi to arrive at 0500Z/4/1. CERES to supply minesweeping group 142 due Lindi A.M. 4/1, with sufficient fuel water and ? escort their passage to Mombasa. After replenishing minesweeping group 142 CERES is to proceed to Mombasa. Minesweeping group 142 is to be sailed for Mombasa as soon as practicable. (C.in C. E.I. 0756Z/31 to CERES).

CANBERRA.

Your 0822Z/28 (Escorts for U.S.8) concur. Request CANBERRA returns to Colombo on completion. Ship has had a prolonged period of hard steaming and it is desired she should remain in harbour if possible. Anticipated date U.S.9 will leave Fremantle. Arrangements for escort will be signalled later. (Naval Board Melbourne, 0850Z/31 to C.in C. E.I.).

31.12.1940.
Tuesday.War Diary.FOREIGN STATIONS.

987

East Indies.Abadan defence.

Air Min. X.357 30/12 have taken action to warn A I O C authorities and R.A.F. Stations in vicinity. Have not passed information to Iraqi or Iranian Authorities - although Shatt-Al-Arab and Basrah port defences are administered by British Officers. Latter are responsible largely to Iraqi Government. Request confirmation if Iraqi Government is to be officially informed as otherwise null precautions at Basrah Port and in Shatt-Al-Arab cannot be put into effect. Similar difficulties exist at Abadan for A I O C vis-a-vis Iranian Government. Propose to keep our only two Gladiators at Qabbansyo.
(A.H.Q. Iraq, 1305/31 to H.Q. R.A.F. M.E.)

Ref. Air Min. X.367 30/12.

No objection to your despatching Gladiators to Shaibah if aircraft available and crews can be spared. Information from sure source suggests interest in black-out conditions. Probable therefore that attack if contemplated intended to be by night when Gladiators would not be of much value without a searchlight organisation.
(H.Q. R.A.F. M.E. 1841/31 to Iraq).

RANCHI.

RANCHI sailed in accordance with C.in C. E.I. 0702Z/30. (N.O.I.C. Durban 1432Z/31 to Admty.)

Operation
"Begun"

The next naval bombardment of Kismayu with air co-operation will be known by the code name of operation "Begun".
(C.in C. E.I. 1316Z/31 to Admty.)

Air Report.

Summary No. 202 and Operational Summary for 24 hours ending 1500 31/12.
0430 1 Blenheim 203 Squadron returning from convoy duties based Kamaran reconnoitred Ansab area. No harbour activities seen.
0810 3 Blenheims 8 Squadron attacked stores and warehouses Assab. Bombs in target area and adjacent waterfront.
0820 to 0845 1 of these aircraft reconnoitred Assab area. No shipping changes since 27/12.
(A.H.Q. Adm. 1830/31).

S.W.4 B.

Your 0700/30 (no trace in W.R.).
Following is composition of S.W. four B STRATHNAVER, VICEROY OF INDIA, DUCHESS OF ATHOLL all empty to U.K. STRATHAIRD OTRANTO each with 350 families for Durban and few service personnel for U.K. EMPRESS OF CANADA with 350 families for Durban will call Aden to land 500 R.A.F. personnel and embark any personnel for U.K.



FOREIGN STATIONS.

988

East Indies. (Contd.)

S.W.4 B. (contd.)

ANDES, STRATHALLAN, ORCADES carrying total 6700 prisoners of war for Bombay. REINA DEL PACIFICO ex Port Sudan empty for U.K. D. of S.T. is requested to send bunkering instructions. (S.S.T.O. Egypt, 1855/31, to C.in C. E.I.)

Kismayu,
Contraband
Traffic.

Your 1935/30 being passed to Admiralty and C.O.I.S. Singapore noted. With the ships at my disposal I am unable to do more than is being done. A.O.C. Nairobi is doing all he possibly can to assist me but I understand he is short of aircraft due to commitments elsewhere. The solution is capture of the port. N.O.I.C. Kilindini inform A.O.C. Nairobi of these signals. (C.in C. E.I., 1930Z/31 to R.A. Alexandria (for N.L. E.I.)

EMERALD,
EAGLE,
hunting
group.

On arrival at Aden with W.S.5B, to reinforce C.in C. East Indies. If C.in C. Mediterranean can spare EAGLE, it is intended to form a hunting group of EAGLE and EMERALD. (D.O.D.(F) 2346/31 - for other details in this signal, see Mediterranean).

China.

Moller Cargoes

My 0859/27 para. three (Subject Action against Chinese owned Cargo) CARMEN MOLLER'S Lighter and JESSIE MOLLER now discharging cargo. (N.L.O. Shanghai, 0849Z/31, to C.in C. China).

ABERDARE,
HARROW

ABERDARE and HARROW are very unsuitable for a hot climate and could shortly be released in view of number of local vessels now available as minesweepers. Request instructions for their disposal. (C.in C. China, 0930/31 to Admty.)

Intelligence.

F.E.W.11. No major change.
(A) Japan. Anti British broadcasts revived.
(B) Indo China and Thailand. French have refused offer of mediation by Japan.
(C) Raider situation. Pacific Raiders were MANYO MARU (Senior Officer, TOKYO MARU (Probably ex KULMERLAND) and NARVIK. (KOMET) 26/12 Raider again shelled Nauru destroyed jetty tank phosphate works and moorings. Warning given, no lives lost. Evidence that tender replenished in Japanese Harbour. (Capt. on Staff, Singapore, 1201Z/31 to A.C.B.N.).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

America and West Indies.

LACONIA,
H.X.98.

LACONIA will leave Halifax A.M. tomorrow Wednesday and rendezvous with H.X.98 off Sydney. Subsequently returning to Halifax. (R.A. 3rd B.S. 1142/31 to Admty.)

DESPATCH.

Leave Nassau 2/1 and proceed to investigate Cay Sal Bank Florida Straits for suitable fuelling anchorage for cruiser operating in this area. Thence carry out following programme. (details).

Governor British Honduras and Commissioner Cayman Island will be informed. (C.in C. A.W.I., 1221/31 to Commodore, West Indies, in DESPATCH).

Free French
Refugees.

Governor of Windward Islands's telegram 30/12 to S. of S. for Colonies. Am of opinion that early action is desirable by Colonial Office to remove these Refugees from St. Lucia and send them to Trinidad or Bermuda for transport in small parties by Tankers or Convoy to Freetown or U.K. where they could join Free French Forces which is their desire. (C.in C. A.W.I. 1304/31 to Admty.)

Enemy Seamen
Prisoners, Jamaica.

Please furnish complete nominal roll of these enemy merchant seamen by first convenient mail. Most convenient course will be to have A.F.W. 3000 completed by each individual adapting the questions to the case of merchant seamen where necessary, for example ship and owner instead of regiment and battalion. It is particularly desired to know whether seamen have close relatives serving in enemy ships overseas and the questions relating to parents and relatives might be extended to cover this. Seamen cannot be obliged to answer this latter question but a suggestion that letters might be more conveniently routed if the answer were known might be an inducement. Forward completed forms to War Office not to P.W.I.B. who are not concerned with merchant seamen. (W.O. to O.C. Troops, Jamaica, 1520/31).

Australia.

NOTOU
RINGWOOD

Now known that French NOTOU, 2489 tons, was sunk by a raider on 16/10 approximately in 23.50 S., 164.10 E., and the Norwegian RINGWOOD, 7203 tons, was sunk on 15/10 in approx. position 02.13 N., 166.40 E. No casualties in either ship, and crews are amongst those landed on Emirau Island. (D.S. 484 amended D.S. 485).



FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand.

990

Raider Survivors.

My 1215Z/30 (Emirau Island survivors)
Following publicity censorship restrictions
Australia. No photographs of raiding
vessels. No reference to existence such
photographs. No mention number detailed
description or mention of sea procedure or
attack or details of armament or route or
possible Island Bases of raider. No name
of Australian Port where survivors landed
or of rescue ship. Am now permitting short
wave broadcasts and communication within
Phonogram censorship bounds.
(A.C.N.B. 0527/31 to Admty.)

Marshall Islands,
MANYO MARU.

*(also for Raider B,
KOMET)*

Your 1540Z/30. Political importance
attached to the use of Marshall Islands
appreciated.
7 survivors consisting of 3 masters,
2 chief officers, 1 chief engineer,
1 boatswain individually and then
collectively examined on the subject.
They differed in the opinion only as to
actual Atoll Wotje or Maldelap. Their
estimates of latitude and longitude of
Atoll all agreed within few miles.
Classification considered to be A.3 and
this because although given run of decks
they had no navigational instruments.
It is confirmed that name MANYO MARU was
painted in English with Japanese
characters above on both bows and at stern.
Port of registry Tokyo was painted under
ship's name on stern. Further, Germans
referred to ship as MANYO MARU.
(A.C.N.B., 0651Z/31 to C.O.I.S., Singapore)

Raider Aircraft

My 2000Z/29. Three raider aircraft seen
closely at Emirau 21/12. Two types of
reconnaissance seaplane. Type one fast
single engine high wing monoplane folding
wings radial engine otherwise similar
D O 22. Type two small slow biplane like
H E 60. Raiders (including TOKYO MARU)
carry at least one aircraft each. Germans
claimed aircraft over Sydney, Australia,
presumably between August and October.
(A.C.N.B. 0800/31 to Admty.)

Conditions in
Raiders.

My 2000 Z/29. Information contained
therein and in signal obtained through
interrogation of selection of survivors
brought to Melbourne by air. W/T
information no R D/F observed in any of the
raiders. In MANYO MARU and TOKYO MARU
constant D/F watch maintained apparatus
consisting of a rotating loop fitted above
bridge. General information, except as
regards quality and quantity of food,
cramped space, conditions and bad
ventilation, treatment of prisoners
appears to have been good.

(A.C.N.B., 1026 Z/31).

/ Dutch patrols.



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

31.12.1940.

Tuesday. 991

FOREIGN STATIONS.

Australia and New Zealand. (Contd.)

Dutch patrols.

My 1639/1/11. Dutch authorities have now requested your permission for Dutch naval tanker and Dutch warship to visit Rabaul middle of January, 1941. Request permission may be given. (Hd. of M. 1040/31 to A.C.N.B.).

Troop Transport.

Your M.C.347 of 28/12. Operation stated in first sentence will be known as "Elbow" for direct communication. C.in C. Far East and G.O.C. Malaya informed. (War Office 1330/31 to Army, Melbourne)

Composition, Brigade Group, (Army, Melbourne, to Troopers, London, 0845/31).

AUSTRALIA,
Convoy duty
and to join
Home Fleet.

I have kept in mind your request that AUSTRALIA should be joined up with one of the principal Fleets. Has not been possible to fit her with mess deck heating, and therefore best to delay her joining Home Fleet for the present. She has, however, taken part in active operations off West Africa. For above reasons I am now sending her to escort a convoy of Middle East reinforcements to Egypt via the Cape, leaving England early in January. On reaching Suez, she will be passed through the Mediterranean so as to arrive in U.K. about the middle of March, and will then join the Home Fleet. (1st S.L. 1723/31 to 1st Naval Member, Navy Board, Melbourne).

MONOWAI
A.P.3.

Departure MONOWAI convoying A.P. three. (N.O.I.C. Auckland, 2145Z/31).



GERMAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

992

ACHILLES

ACHILLES left here 2130/30.
(Bilbao, 1658/31, to Admt., 1703/31 to Fairmiss).

ANNELIESE
ESSBERGER

Left Kobe 29/12. Reported (A.2) to have loaded a large quantity of fuel oil before departure. (D.S. 484) (Capt. O.S., Singapore, 0858Z/31).

NORD ATLANTIC)
ANTARKTIS)

B.2 report dated 30/12 states these tankers alongside one another on night of 29/12 transferring cases, and it is considered likely NORD ATLANTIC may sail soon. (D.S. 483).

FRANKFURT)
PORTLAND)

At Talcahuano, Chile. Reported to be loading mineral concentrates. Agent also requesting delivery of lentils. (D.S. 483). PORTLAND undocked 30/12. Both have embarked mineral concentrates. (D.S. 485).

BRITA)
DAHLIA)
BALTICIA)
EDDA)
INDUS)

Swedish ships, seized during Norwegian campaign, have been confiscated by order of Hamburg Prize Court (D.S. 483).

BRAKE

In an air reconnaissance on 29/12, a tanker was identified at Cherbourg as the BRAKE, 9925 tons, which had left Vigo on 10/12 and arrived at Ferrol on 12/12 (D.S. 485). *Inspected, see 6/3/41*

JANTJE FRITZEN

B.2 report, has recently made 3 successive voyages from Ox Elosund to Hamburg, Bremen and Emden. (D.S. 485.).

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS.

LELLO.

Left Barcelona 28/12 for Valencia (D.S. 483).

STELLA)
XXIV MAGGIO)

At Pernambuco, reported to have sold cargoes of grain which are being transhipped in Brazilian ships to Rio de Janeiro. (D.S. 483).

CERVINO)
PRINCIPESSA MARIA)

Reported slightly damaged in Buenos Aires Harbour through British THISTLEGORM colliding with them. (D.S. 483).

MAURO CROCE

Left for Valencia 30/12. (Barcelona, 1644/31).

/ DUCHESSA
D'AOSTA



War Diary.

MOST SECRET.

31.12.1940.
Tuesday.

ITALIAN MERCHANT SHIPS (Contd.)

993

DUCHESSA
D'AOSTA

Following telegram from DUCHESSA D'AOSTA to Lloyd Trieste intercepted by Bureau Military Intelligence (begins).

We confirm our latest telegram to-day's date. We are sending required papers regarding unloading and are reloading all Genoa wool not counting I H Copper. Work possible in next 30 days.

Estimated expenditure 145,000 pesetas plus extra expenses for crew and petrol consumption. To-day's stock of petrol 596. DUCHESSA D'AOSTA. (Ends).

This telegram was translated from Italian into French by Duala authorities and sense of message has therefore become less clear.

(N.C.S.O. Lagos, 1800/31, to Admty.).

Reply P. 98. 3.1. 41.



U-BOAT CAMPAIGN.

Ships Attacked.

DONAX.

(British, 8036 tons) reports 58° 40' N., 17° 50' W. chased by S/M. (Valentia Radio, 1510/31) Straggler from H.X.97, homeward bound from Curacao (D.S., 484).

RISANGER
(torpedoed 27/12)

U.65

Norwegian, 5455 tons. BELINDA reports rescued entire crew from Norwegian S.S. RISANGER torpedoed 27/12, 12° 30' N., 21° 30' W. S/M believed being Italian very big and grey painted. Master. (Freetown W/T Recd. 2201/31) Position about 270 miles W.S.W. of Dakar. (D.S., 484).

BRITISH ZEAL.

U.65

(British tanker 8532 tons). reports 15° 43' N., 20° 24' W. torpedoed (BRITISH ZEAL via Freetown W/T 2212N/31).

SSSS BRITISH ZEAL reports 15° 43' N., 20° 30' W. torpedoed 2212/31 (Colombo, via Singapore, 2346Z/31). Admty. from (Colombo W/T). Following message incompletely received on 8450 kcs. SSSS DE (not received) R 24 West torpedoed 2211 (group omitted). (Singapore T.O.R. 2351Z/31 to Admty.) Position about 180 miles W.N.W. of Dakar. Was outward bound from Liverpool for Freetown (D.S. 484).

Submarines Reported.

1030.

Training A/C reports periscope about 2 miles off shore off mouth of River Spey course East. (Graded B.3) (C.in C. Rosyth, 1508/31)

1613.

Attack S/M in position 058° 41' N., 017° 50' W. at 1613 reliable fix. (C.in C. W.A. 1638/31 to WINCHELSEA).

Estimated U/B
dispositions.

Italian.

1 or 2 to E. or N.E. of Azores
1 about 45° - 46° N. 5° - 6° W. bound for Gironde
4 between 54° 30' N. and 56° 30' N. 14° 30' W. and 16° W.
2 more may be in same area or moving southwards for Bordeaux.

German.

1 between Freetown and Cape de Verde Islands
1 arriving Lorient today
1 within 60 miles radius of each of the following 5 points.
(a) 56° N. 12° W.
(b) 57° N. 21° 30' W.
(c) 57° 40' N. 21° 30' W.
(d) 58° 30' N. 21° W.
(e) 59° 30' N. 21° W.
1 between Shetlands and Norway bound east or south east.
(D.D.I.C. 1245/31).



S U P P L E M E N T A R Y P A G E S



War Diaries, R. of P. Summaries etc. for December 1940.

- Mediterranean. Operations of 3rd C.S. and 7th C.S. 1/12 to 8/12.
(C. in C. Med., 1015/11, see Diary 11/12/40.)
- Operations in co-operation with Army in attack
on Bardia, 19/12 - 31/12.
(C. in C. Med., 1531/2/1, see Diary 2/1/41.)
- ROTORUA. Report of 2 signal ratings on staff of Commodore in
ROTORUA, that a radio broadcast was made on 10/12 at
his request giving positions and course of convoy.
Destroyer escort had not been met at R/V. No warning
received of presence of S/M, first indication was
ROTORUA being hit by torpedo.
(S.O.I. Liverpool, No. 130/425, dated 16/12/40.)
- CAMBRIA. 3461 tons, Dublin - Holyhead boat, attacked 0955/18,
53.21 N., 5.38 W., by 4 or 5 bombs and machine-
gunned with explosive bullets. Many M.G. hits in
upper structure. Ship replied with 1 strip
Hotchkiss and 3 rounds B.L. 4" L/A. 3rd Officer
killed, lady passenger slightly injured. A/C was
4-engined monoplane.
(I.D. Form A.A.)
- BRITISH PREMIER. British tanker, 5872 tons, torpedoed 1545/24,
presumably about 06.20 N., 13.20 W.
(See South Atlantic, 29/12/40, and U-Boat Campaign,
9/1/41.)
- RISANGER. Norwegian, 5455 tons. Torpedoed and sunk in
12.30 N., 21.30 W. S/M probably Italian.
(See Diary, 11/1/1941.)



List of Docketed Papers
(War Diaries, Reports of Proceedings etc.,)
Dealing with Events of This Month.