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NAVAL STAFF MONOGRAPHS
(HISTORICAL)

FLEET ISSUE.

VOLUME VII.

Monograph 19.—TENTH CRUISER SQUADRON I.

” 25.—THE BALTIC 1914.

SEPTEMBER, 1922.

CONFIDENTIAL.

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NAVAL STAFF,
TRAINING AND STAFF DUTIES DIVISION,
September, 1922.

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during the
COMMAND OF ADMIRAL DE CHAIR.
1914-1916.

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THE TENTH CRUISER SQUADRON
during the
COMMAND OF ADMIRAL DE CHAIR.

INTRODUCTION.

This monograph is intended to give an idea of the personal side of the work of the Northern Patrol. The technical, statistical, and legal aspects of the operations of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron are dealt with elsewhere. The actual blockade of Germany was the result of the efforts of almost every branch of the public service. In this volume will be found only a description of the operations of the officers and men of the Northern Patrol. Mr. Carless Davis, late of the Foreign Office, has in preparation a confidential History of the Blockade, which will show the part played by that Office in the reduction of Germany's resistance. Lieutenant Arnold-Forster, late R.N.V.R., has written a monograph, "The Economic Blockade," issued as C.B. 1554, which gives in short form most of the results of the measures taken.

As the Admiralty Records have not yet been arranged beyond 1916, it was necessary to find some point at which to conclude the present monograph; and a convenient full stop appeared to be the moment when Admiral de Chair left the Squadron to take up the newly-created appointment of Naval Adviser to the Minister of Blockade. With his departure the present monograph comes to an end. The last years of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron will form the subject of another paper at some later date when the material is more readily available.

NOTE ON SOURCES.

H.S. 185 and 259 give the Reports of Proceedings of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron to the end of 1916. They have been the chief source of information, and are the authorities for all statements where no footnote reference is given. They form a continuous diary, except that there is generally a gap when the flagship was in harbour.

H.S. 50-82 contain Home Waters telegrams for 1914 arranged in chronological order. They have been the chief sources for the accounts of events in the first three chapters.

G.F.S.P. The Grand Fleet Secret Packs. These are the records of the Commander-in-Chief's Office, which deal principally with operations. They have been bound by the Historical Section of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and are temporarily in the custody of that Section.

G.F.N. Grand Fleet Narrative. This is a daily diary of the operations of the Grand Fleet sent in by the Commander-in-Chief.

Large numbers of unbound Admiralty papers have been examined. They deal mostly with particular episodes or suggestions, and when used have been quoted by their Record Office title or Registry number.

I.D. Historical Section papers. In the account of the *Alcantara-Greif* action reference is made to this collection, which consists of the war records of the Intelligence Division of the Naval Staff.

The German Official History. *Der Krieg zur See. Nordsee, Band I.*—This covers the North Sea up to the end of August, 1914. *Band II* covers the period to the Gorleston Raid, November 3, 1914. The two volumes are referred to in this monograph as G.O.H. I and G.O.H. II respectively.

Gayer : *Die deutschen U-Boote* gives a brief and apparently truthful account of the operations of German submarines.

THE TENTH CRUISER SQUADRON.

CHAPTER I.

THE WORK OF THE "EDGARS."

1. In the distribution of the Fleet for the initial stages of the war with Germany, as laid down by the Admiralty, the Northern exit of the North Sea was to be watched by a Squadron designated "Cruiser Force B," or the "Northern Patrol Force." The function of this force was to intercept German merchant vessels, to stop neutrals proceeding to German ports with contraband,¹ to take or destroy any men-of-war or armed merchant vessels passing in or out of the North Sea, and to deny the anchorage in the Shetlands to the enemy. A subsidiary function was the gaining of intelligence from passing vessels. The principal coaling base for the squadron was to be Scapa Flow, to which place captured vessels were to be sent. Between the Northern Patrol and the enemy bases would be the Grand Fleet, which was to operate normally from Rosyth²; the Commander-in-Chief, in cases of over-riding necessity, might call on Cruiser Force B for certain particular services, but as soon as these were performed the force was to return to its stations. In general it was to work independently of the Commander-in-Chief.

The area in which the Northern Patrol was to operate was not strictly defined by latitude and longitude, but it was to be between the Shetlands and Norway to the East and between the Shetlands and the coast of Scotland to the Southward. The passage between the Shetlands and Orkneys is some 40 miles wide, while from the Shetlands to the nearest point of Norway in latitude 61° N. is about 150 miles. The coast of Norway is so fringed with islands that vessels seeking to avoid capture can utilise territorial waters for several hundreds of miles. In latitude 62° N., however, vessels making their way either North or South along the Norwegian shore must emerge from territorial waters; and the Admiral Commanding, Cruiser Force B, was specially

¹ "The possibility that our enemy would . . . make use of Scandinavian ports had not been fully considered. We had expected that the expense of sending goods to Germany by this circuitous route, and the inadequacy of the transport services between Scandinavia and Germany, would confine the traffic within narrow limits." Carless Davis, *History of the Blockade*, p. 4.

² See Monograph 6, *Passage of the British Expeditionary Force, August, 1914*. C.B. 1585, pp. 1-2.

warned that this position was a fruitful one to patrol. On the outbreak of war the Force was to proceed to sea in two divisions, one of which was to cruise from the Orkneys to the North of the Shetlands, while the other was to go straight across to Norway and patrol near the shore between $61\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N. and $62\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N.

2. The ships detailed for the Northern Patrol were the *Edgars*, the oldest cruisers in our list. These eight vessels, built in 1893-94 under the Naval Defence Act of 1889, had all undergone an extensive refit and rearmament, except the *Royal Arthur*. The eight ships—*Edgar*, *Royal Arthur*, *Hawke*, *Endymion*, *Grafton*, *Crescent*, *Gibraltar*, and *Theseus*—were of 7,350 to 7,000 tons, carried either two 9·2-in. and ten 6-in. or one 9·2-in. and twelve 6-in., and could get a speed at sea of 17 knots. To the squadron was attached the *Dryad*, a first-class gunboat. The *Edgars* were on a Third Fleet basis, but as they were employed as a boys' training squadron they carried full nucleus crews and extra hands for the special training duties; they could not, however, be fully manned for war service until after the order to mobilize Naval Reserves had gone out. Thus they could not be expected to arrive on their stations till some days after the issue of the warning telegram.

3. As soon as war appeared to be inevitable, anxiety was felt lest the enemy should effect a landing in the Shetlands, and as early as July 28 four destroyers of the Eighth Flotilla with a light cruiser were ordered there.¹ The Army Council were particularly anxious that the military authorities in the Shetlands should organise combined defence arrangements in conjunction with the Navy, and on August 3 the *Forward* and four destroyers left Scapa for the islands. To add to the anxiety, intelligence was received on August 3 that three German transports full of troops had passed out of the Baltic two days previously. On learning this the Admiralty ordered the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleets, to take steps to frustrate any attempt on the Shetlands, and he accordingly sent off a squadron (*Antrim*, *Argyll*, *Devonshire*, *Cochrane*, and *Achilles*) under the R.A. Third Cruiser Squadron at full speed to the islands, supported by the battle cruisers stationed South of Fair Island; and, although war had not yet been declared, the *Forward* was authorised to use force to prevent any landing in the Shetlands.²

4. In addition to the possible despatch of German transports there was reason to suppose that Germany would send out armed merchant cruisers to break out into the Atlantic, and in view of this menace the Admiralty, early on August 4, ordered the Commander-in-Chief to sail with the First Fleet to sweep as far as 100 miles from Norway. Accordingly, the whole Grand Fleet left Scapa between 8 and 8.30 a.m. on August 4 to execute a broad sweep towards Norway, returning to Scapa on the 7th. Intelligence from Christiania received on August 5 reported a

¹ H.S. 50, p. 139. ² H.S. 51, pp. 351, 497, 534, 586, 596, 659 and 690.

German base somewhere North of 62° N. This needed investigation; and with the Admiralty's permission the Commander-in-Chief withdrew the cruisers at the Shetlands and sent them across the North Sea to search the Norwegian coast between 60° and 62½°, to be followed by destroyers if they failed to discover the base. In the course of this sweep the cruisers approached within 20 miles of the coast near the Stavanger Fjord, but saw nothing of the supposed base. Throughout the opening weeks of the war our agents in Norway furnished a succession of reports concerning this supposed base, placing it sometimes in the Lofoten Islands, and sometimes to the southward; they also provided an imaginary submarine base in Stavanger Fjord, to find which the Third Cruiser Squadron and a destroyer flotilla carried out a search on the 11th. Naturally, these operations so close to their coasts offended the Norwegian Government, and the Commander-in-Chief suggested we should apologise to them and not repeat the searches, unless we had definite information of the presence of enemy ships. The rumours of the base at the Lofotens and of the submarines in Stavanger Fjord were both denied by Norwegian officers; and further stories emanating from the Russian Admiralty that five German cruisers were near the White Sea received no credence.¹

5. Meanwhile, quite unreported, a German merchant cruiser had succeeded in getting out and had started operations against commerce. The *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, a North German Lloyd liner of about 14,000 tons, had been armed and commissioned in the Elbe, and on August 4 at 7.30 p.m. received orders to proceed at once with the mission of raiding commerce in the Atlantic. Her course took her within sight of the Norwegian coast. When her captain considered he had cleared the line of British patrols he headed for Iceland, and passing round the Northern shores of the island at 7 p.m. on August 7 fell in with and captured the British steam trawler *Tubal Cain* about 50 miles off the Western promontory.²

Had the Northern Patrol Force been in position from August 5 onwards there is reason to suppose they might have met the *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, though the German Staff appear to have formed the opinion that our blockading squadrons would be on the Peterhead-Ekersund line, and the raider at 6 p.m. on the 5th altered course for Iceland when in 61° N., 3° E.,³ before reaching the station of our patrol off Norway in 62° N. However, the circumstances of the case had precluded any possibility of the Squadron being in place when the *Kaiser Wilhelm* passed.⁴

¹ H.S. 51, pp. 665, 866; H.S. 52, pp. 350, 361, 388, 562, 622, 656, 671, 752, 806, 849; H.S. 53, pp. 437, 453, 490, 593, 664, 702, 724, 828, 859, 862.

² German Official History *Der Krieg zur See. Nordsee*, Vol. I., p. 65; also *Kreuzerjagd im Ocean*, translated in I.D. 1170.

³ *Der Krieg zur See, Karte 32.*

⁴ The *Kaiser Wilhelm Der Grosse* was sunk by the *Highflyer* on August 26, in the Rio de Oro, Spanish West Africa.

6. The eight *Edgars* detailed for the Northern Patrol were at the time of mobilisation in various ports; the *Crescent*, *Edgar*, and *Grafton* were at Portsmouth; the *Endymion*, *Theseus*, and *Gibraltar* at Devonport; the *Royal Arthur* at Chatham; and the *Hawke* at Queenstown refitting. Rear-Admiral Dudley de Chair, who had been selected to command the patrol, was at the Admiralty, when at 2 p.m. on August 1 he received the order to mobilise. He proceeded at once to Portsmouth and hoisted his flag on board the *Crescent* as Rear-Admiral Commanding Tenth Cruiser Squadron. The next day the Naval Reserves were mobilised, and Admiral de Chair received his orders, under which his squadron became Cruiser Force B, and the *Dryad*¹ also came under his orders. As the result of extraordinary efforts, the *Crescent*, *Grafton*, and *Edgar* were ready by August 3, and Admiral de Chair proceeded at once, hoping to be joined at sea by the three ships from Devonport. In this he was disappointed, and he continued with the three Portsmouth ships up the Irish Channel. Off the Mull of Cantire they made their first capture, a small German steamer, *Wilhelm Behrens*, and continuing arrived at Scapa at 8.30 a.m., August 6. In the course of the afternoon the *Endymion* and *Theseus* came in; they had been diverted for a time to Falmouth to watch a German vessel there. The *Gibraltar* arrived at 6.30 p.m., having been delayed by capturing a German steamer, the *Marie Glaeser*, off the Isle of Man. As soon as the ships were coaled they proceeded by orders of the Commander-in-Chief to patrol between the Orkneys and Shetlands, and it was not till noon on August 8 that the *Edgar*, *Theseus*, and *Gibraltar* left that area to patrol off the Norwegian coast between $61\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ and $62\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ N. Thus, apart from the cruiser sweep in search of the reported German base, the Norwegian coast was free to German vessels running for home till about August 9, five days after the declaration of war.

Strangely enough, it seems that few, if any, prizes were missed. The German policy towards their own merchant marine was the opposite of ours; as early as July 31 German ships at sea were recalled to neutral ports, and in the early days of August vessels in the North Sea hurriedly put in to Norwegian harbours and lay up there. An analysis of the arrivals given in Lloyd's "Enemy Vessels in Neutral Ports" shows that no vessels passed that part of the Norwegian coast in 62° N. which had been specially indicated to Admiral de Chair; ships already north of the parallel ran for Trömso, Narvik, and Trondhjem, while those to the south of it put in to Bergen, Christiansand, and Sarpsburg. Most of these vessels were small steamers, but at Bergen was one of the largest of the North German Lloyd liners, the *Prinz Friedrich Wilhelm* of 17,000 tons and $17\frac{1}{2}$ knots; she was on our list of vessels convertible into cruisers, and her presence there, combined with the usual crop of rumours with regard to her arming, drew a good deal of attention to Bergen.

¹ A gunboat which was used as Squadron Messenger.

7. It must not be supposed that the enemy had not foreseen our blockade measures. After a good deal of discussion, the German Staff had come to the conclusion that we should use our blockading squadron to maintain a line across the North Sea and Skagerrak, and that we should station our main force between it and the German Bight. The only point on which they were uncertain was the exact position of the blockade line; the conclusion they reached was that it would stretch between Peterhead and Ekersund. To make sure of this, they decided to make a complete sweep with ten submarines seven miles apart in line abreast as far as the Scapa-Bergen line; from there they were to turn back to the Scapa-Stavanger line. The flotilla started before dawn on August 6, and on the voyage out the submarines sighted nothing. On arrival at the northern limit the Senior Officer, Lieut.-Commander Spindler, decided, as he still had time, to send one boat further on as far as the Shetlands-Norway line. U.18 (von Henning) was selected, and during the night of August 8-9 got as far as 60° N., but she saw nothing, and having no time to wait had to return at once. It was not till dawn of August 9, when the flotilla was about midway between Scapa and Stavanger that they saw any British men-of-war, and here they came across the cruisers and destroyers of the Grand Fleet then at sea during the passage of the Expeditionary Force. The course of the German submarines seems to have taken them to the Eastward of the Grand Fleet, which was then cruising in 59° N. between 1° W. and 1° E.¹ They failed to do us any damage, and lost two boats—U.15 rammed by the *Birmingham*, and U.13, of whose fate nothing was then known. The result of the cruise did not give the enemy much information as to our methods of patrol; on the contrary, it confused them. Their fixed idea was that we should be permanently occupying a definite line of patrol; and as the only vessels which they could reasonably consider as fulfilling this function were the destroyers and light cruisers they had found in 58° N., they were led to the false conclusion that this must be the blockade line.²

The *Hawke* and *Royal Arthur* joined Admiral de Chair on August 10, and he thereupon organised his force into two divisions:—

First Division.

Crescent (Flag).
Grafton.
Endymion.
Theseus.

Second Division.

Edgar (Senior Officer).
Royal Arthur.
Gibraltar.
Hawke.

In general, the First Division took the Southern, or Shetland, end of the patrol, while the Second Division patrolled off Norway.

¹ Monograph 6, para. 26.

² This paragraph is based on the German Official History. *Der Krieg zur See. Nordsee I.*, pp. 72-78 and *Karte 9*.

8. By August 9 the Faeroe Islands became suspected as a German base, and on the 11th the *Drake* (Rear-Admiral W. L. Grant, Commanding Sixth Cruiser Squadron) was ordered there to investigate, the *Endymion* and *Gibraltar* being attached to him temporarily by the Commander-in-Chief. Nothing suspicious was found in the Faeroes; indeed, no German vessel other than trawlers had been to the islands for over two years, but the three cruisers patrolled between the Faeroes and Iceland for a time.¹ The Commander-in-Chief in removing the two cruisers from their war station had been influenced by the fact that there did not appear to be much work for the Northern Patrol Force to do. The outbreak of war had for the time completely paralysed the shipping trade all over the world, and it was some weeks before vessels of any nationality put to sea at all in any numbers²; in the North Sea no traffic seemed to be passing. In his next sweep into the North Sea, therefore, he called upon the Squadron to join him, and from August 15 to 17 the *Crescent*, *Grafton*, *Theseus*, and *Edgar* watched on the Eastern flank of the Fleet in case any enemy ships should come from the Skagerrak. The *Royal Arthur* and *Hawke* were at the time on the Norwegian patrol. At the conclusion of the sweep, which had been a very heavy strain on the engines of the Squadron, the division with Admiral de Chair went in to Lerwick to coal.³

9. Once again, a sweep by the Grand Fleet had synchronised with a German effort to find the blockade line. The German Admiralty had given up the idea of a search by submarines in line abreast on a northerly course; it required too many boats, and few could stand the long voyage. Accordingly, the scheme of operations was changed. Only two of the best boats—U.20 (Lieut.-Commander Droscher) and U.21 (Lieutenant Hersing)—were selected; they were to go straight up to Ekersund, and from there sweep across to Peterhead, and get as much information as they could. Besides her own Commanding Officer, U.20 had on board Lieut.-Commander Albert Gayer, Senior Officer of the half-flotilla. Off the Norwegian coast she sighted a cruiser and a destroyer at 3 a.m. on August 16, and again another destroyer at midday. She had to submerge, and did not reach the Ekersund-Peterhead line till 7.30 a.m. on August 17. There she sighted four black buoys, which she presumed to be navigation marks for our patrol vessels. At this point her engines and compass began to give trouble. At 10 a.m. she sighted another destroyer. Altogether, it seemed unlikely that she could manage the prescribed voyage, and Gayer decided to return to Heligoland; the presence of destroyers made him think we were carrying out systematic destroyer sweeps which would make long voyages difficult for submarines. Next morning, however, as the engines

¹ H.S. 53, pp. 177, 267, 292, 517, 807; H.S. 54, pp. 170, 201, 203, 283, 456a, 687.

² See Fayle: *Seaborne Trade*.

³ G.F.N., August, 1914.

were running well he tried once more to carry on with the operation, but was continually forced to dive, and finally abandoned it. U.21, on the other hand, was able to carry out the whole operation unmolested, though she sighted no men-of-war till off Kinnaird Head, where she arrived at 6 a.m., August 18. From there she made her way homeward. The reports from these two submarines led the German authorities to the conclusion that the blockade line did not, as had been presumed, run from Ekersund to Peterhead; but they threw little light on its real position. The failure of the submarines to gain positive information on this and other points, such as the base of the Grand Fleet, and the consequent assumption that objects worthy of attack were beyond reach brought about a definite decision to abandon submarine operations against the Grand Fleet for the time.¹

10. The submarine operation just concluded happened to be carried out at the very time when our blockading cruisers were absent from their station taking part in a Grand Fleet sweep. This diversion of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron from its position in the War Plan appeared undesirable to the Admiralty, who telegraphed:—

To Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleets.

500. It is considered important to continuously maintain the Northern Patrol to prevent ships getting in or out of the North Sea. Four armed merchant ships are being sent up as soon as ready to assist in making the Patrol more effective. The Patrol can spread in any direction you propose.

(Sent 0050, 18.8.14.)

In accordance with this, the Norwegian and Shetlands patrols were re-instituted. In the Norwegian patrol the eastern-most ship was to steam N. 33° E. (mag.) from the position in 61° 30' N., 4° 8' E., the other ships to be spread five miles apart on a line of bearing West (mag.) from the eastern ship. During darkness ships were to turn 16 points together at prearranged times so as to preserve the line of bearing. This appears to be the first time a patrol on a line of bearing was tried by the Tenth Cruiser Squadron.² The ships of the Shetlands patrol, however, steamed in line ahead between Muckle Flugga and 61° 30' N., 3° E., where they met at intervals the vessels of the Norwegian section.

The first of the armed merchant cruisers, the *Alsatian*, joined the Squadron on August 18, and worked on the Shetlands Patrol for a week, after which she was temporarily attached to the *Drake* to maintain a patrol off Jaederens Point, Norway. Another armed merchant cruiser, the *Mantua*, arrived on the 24th, and patrolled along the sixtieth parallel. The third merchant cruiser, the *Oceanic*, joined on August 27.³

¹ *German Official History*, pp. 92 to 98.

² H.S. 185, p. 24. The best formation for a patrol against contraband has been the subject of much experiment; in the Northern Patrol, this line of bearing, or line-abreast, system was frequently used.

³ *Oceanic* was taken up from her owners on August 2, *Alsatian* and *Mantua* on August 4 (M.01267/14).

CHAPTER II.

THE "EDGARS" AS GRAND FLEET CRUISERS.

11. So far, the Tenth Cruiser Squadron had sighted no German ships on the Northern Patrol. From this the Commander-in-Chief judged that either German vessels passed them at night, or went up inside the fjords, or were not moving.¹ He felt that in the present position the force was not being fully utilised, and telegraphed on August 25 :—

202. A more effective use could be made of the cruisers if the Tenth Cruiser Squadron came South to cover an area to Southward and Eastward of Kinnaird Head where they would not require support, freeing more powerful cruisers for offensive work further east and south. The watch off Kinnaird Head is necessary for covering movements of vessels to and from and in Scapa Flow and Cromarty Firth, and at present is performed by valuable cruisers. Armed merchant cruisers will be kept off Shetland Isles. Tenth Cruiser Squadron would join any large operation southward.

From this time onwards for several weeks the Tenth Cruiser Squadron became practically part of the Grand Fleet. On August 26 the Commander-in-Chief issued a new allocation of cruiser squadrons to areas and patrols ; previously there had been five areas of patrol, of which area V. had extended between 120 and 200 miles from Rattray Head. This was now prolonged eastward to within ten miles of the Norwegian coast, and the Second and Third Cruiser Squadrons were told off to patrol it daily. In addition, a new area VI. was instituted ; its base line ran from 20 to 130 miles N. 50° E. (true) of Buchan Ness, the area to extend 50 miles S. 40° E. (true) from the base. In this area the Tenth and Sixth Cruiser Squadrons were to work under R.A. Sixth Cruiser Squadron, who was to arrange that there should be always eight ships patrolling. The Norwegian part of the original Northern Patrol was abandoned ; but the Shetlands end was to be taken by the armed merchant cruisers, and the Islands themselves were to be patrolled as before by the *Forward* and the four destroyers.² A further reason which weighed with the Commander-in-Chief was the desirability of preventing the enemy from mining the exits from the Grand Fleet base. The new patrol was instituted to " cover the area through which the minelayers proceeding to mine the vicinity of the Pentlands would pass a few hours before dark and after daylight," a necessity which immediately became apparent when, in the evening of August 26, minefields were discovered off the Tyne and Humber. Cruisers occupying the area were directed to be on the outer limit at 4 a.m. steaming towards Scapa Flow, and on the inner limit at 6 p.m. steaming to seaward, at other times cruising as necessary.³

¹ They were not moving. See Fayle : *Seaborne Trade*.

² H.F. 0022/5 of 26.8.14 in G.F.N.

³ Cruiser Force B. Report of Proceedings, 31.8.14, H.S. 185.

The *Edgars* worked in Area VI. till October, and during this period used Cromarty as base. Their duty was to intercept, board, and examine all trade; to protect Fleet bases against minelayers and submarines; to examine areas where floating mines or other suspicious objects had been reported; and to give notice of the approach of and to engage any enemy cruisers encountered. At the end of August the *Theseus* was detailed with a convoy of merchant ships bound for Archangel with coal and guns for Russia. The Russians from the first had been nervous about their trade to that port, and on August 26 had suggested that two cruisers should be detailed to protect the trade route between England and Archangel. We could not spare vessels for this purpose, but arranged for this one trip for political reasons, and as some sort of recognition of the work the Russian Baltic Fleet was doing in holding part of the German Fleet.¹

On September 19 the *Sappho*, a light cruiser attached to the Grand Fleet, joined the patrol in Area VI. After September 24 the vessels on patrol worked in the eastward portion of the area during the day so that they might be clear of the track of submarines making for Cromarty and the Pentlands.² A further alteration was made in their beat two days later, and they took Area I., between Rattray Head and Area V., cruising to the southward during daylight hours. They returned to Area VI on September 30.³

12. The armed merchant cruisers at first patrolled the Shetlands half of the original area of the Northern Patrol; on September 1 the *Oceanic* was detached to the Faeroes, and on return to the Shetlands went ashore on Foula Island on September 8 and became a total wreck. From September 17 to 21 the *Alsatian* and *Mantua* took the Norway Patrol under the *Drake*. The fourth armed merchant cruiser, the *Teutonic*, joined them on September 20.⁴ At this period there was a plentiful crop of intelligence reports that the *Prinz Friedrich Wilhelm* intended to escape from Bergen; and another German merchant vessel, the *Brandenburg* from America, having arrived at Trondhjem ~~early in September,~~ on Aug. 31. kept our patrols busy watching that port lest she should escape. By September 28, however, we were satisfied with the action taken by the Norwegian authorities,⁵ and the armed merchant cruisers returned to the Northern Patrol, except the *Teutonic*, which remained off Bergen to intercept the *Prinz Friedrich Wilhelm*, till that ship was definitely reported on October 3 as laid up for the winter. Spitzbergen also was reported to have a German W/T Station, and the *Gibraltar* was told off

¹ Papers titled *Foreign Office*, 26.8.14 (M.01697/14, etc.).

² G.F.N. 23, 24.9.14.

³ G.F.N. 25, 30.9.14.

⁴ *Teutonic* was taken up on September 3, and was intended for the Atlantic trade routes. She was, however, sent up to the Grand Fleet but was assigned to C.-in-C., H.F., not definitely to the Tenth C.S. (M.01750/14.)

⁵ H.S. 52., p. 149. We had an understanding with Norway that we would support her in case Germany seized a base in her territorial waters.

to destroy it. In this matter, again, we were reassured by the Norwegian Government, and the *Gibraltar* was recalled.¹

22.

The loss of the *Cressys* on September 20 drew attention to the danger of ships being stopped while at sea, and on September 30 the Commander-in-Chief issued a memorandum containing instructions with regard to ships stopping to examine merchant vessels. West of longitude 3° W. and north of the line Sumburgh Head-Karmo, except in the close vicinity of the Shetlands, could be regarded as places where the submarine menace was slight; and in these areas cruisers and the older battleships might stop to lower boarding boats when no smaller vessels were available, but should keep on the move while the boarding boat was away. Where submarines could be expected, the examination of merchant vessels was to be done only by the boats of smaller vessels.²

Early in October the first Canadian Contingent crossed the Atlantic, and the Grand Fleet took up dispositions to cover its passage against attack by the German Fleet. In these dispositions the station of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron was at first in Area V., with the Second and Third Cruiser Squadrons; after October 9 they took Area VI. again. The merchant cruisers and *Sappho* patrolled to northward of Muckle Flugga, in conjunction with the *Invincible* and *Inflexible*, while various other squadrons of the Grand Fleet occupied the space between the Orkneys and Norway.³

13. It was while occupying Area VI. that the Tenth Cruiser Squadron suffered its first loss. On October 15 the Squadron was cruising in the order—*Endymion*, *Hawke*, *Theseus*, *Edgar*, *Grafton*, at intervals of ten miles. After 9.30 a.m. the *Hawke* stopped to get mails from the *Endymion*, which afterwards went on to take mails to the other ships. As soon as she had got her mails the *Hawke* resumed her course at 12 to 13 knots. At 1.12 p.m. the *Theseus*, then in 57° 50' N., 0° 33' E., observed a torpedo approaching from five points abaft the starboard beam; it passed 200 yards astern, and warning the Squadron she made off N.N.W.⁴ The Senior Officer in the *Edgar* ordered a course of N.W., first at 14 knots and then at utmost speed. When he heard of the presence of the submarine, the Commander-in-Chief at 2.30 p.m. ordered the *Edgar* to collect her ships in the northern corner of Area VI.; it was the order which revealed disaster, for the *Edgar*, receiving replies to her signals from all except the *Hawke*, judged from her silence that something was wrong.⁵ Reporting this to the Commander-in-Chief, he gave her 11 a.m.

¹ H.S. 63, pp. 767, 837; H.S. 64, pp. 139, 182, 185, 186, 280, 582, 672, 892; H.S. 65, pp. 109, 147, 241; H.S. 66, pp. 184, 710, 756; H.S. 67, pp. 165, 215, 286; H.S. 68, pp. 354, 383, 405, 427.

² Memo. H.F. 0019 of September 30, 1914.

³ The disposition of the Fleet on October 15 is shown in Plan 9 of Corbett's *Naval Operations*, Vol. I.

⁴ Log of *Theseus*.

⁵ H.S. 68, pp. 574, 581, 594, 608.

position as 57° 47' N., 0° 12' E., to which position the Commander-in-Chief, after unsuccessful attempts to get into touch with her, despatched the *Swift* and a division of destroyers.¹

After a search all night the *Swift* at 9 a.m. sighted a raft, from which she rescued Lieut.-Commander Rosoman and six ratings. While searching for more she sighted a submarine at 10.53 a.m., and a torpedo passed astern of her. Nevertheless, she continued the search till next morning, when she shaped course for Scapa; again the submarine was sighted, but was forced by gunfire to dive.² Altogether she brought back one officer and 20 men. The gunner and 49 men who had got away in one of the boats that floated were picked up about five hours later by the Norwegian S.S. *Modesta*, which then steamed back to the place where the *Hawke* had sunk. A submarine was sighted, and at midnight the Norwegian, which had been unsuccessful in saving any more men, steered for Peterhead. Before reaching that port she transferred the survivors to the trawler *Ben Rinnes*, who brought them in to Aberdeen.³ From Lieut.-Commander Rosoman, the senior surviving officer, it was learned that very soon after resuming her course with the mails brought by the *Endymion*, the *Hawke* was struck by a torpedo at 10.30 a.m. abreast of the foremost funnel on the starboard side. She took an increasing list to starboard, and in a few minutes turned bottom upwards and went down bows first. None of her consorts was in sight, and she made no signal for help, and it was only by such boats and rafts as floated that any survivors could save themselves. There was no steam on the boat hoist, but both sea boats were lowered; one drifted away with some men in her, and was later met by the Norwegian steamer; the other was crushed by the ship. Four rafts floated, and by them the remaining survivors were saved.⁴

The Germans were making another attempt to discover the position of the Grand Fleet, and two submarines, U.9 (Weddigen) and U.17 (Hanser), had left Heligoland on the 13th with general orders to search first east and then west of the Orkneys to find it.⁵ Just before the fall of darkness on October 14, Weddigen, who was keeping about 60 miles out from the Scottish coast, sighted a warship exchanging signals with a number of merchant ships whose movements she appeared to be controlling. The warship's speed and rapid alterations of course rendered any attack useless, and he attempted none. About mid-day of the 15th, however, he saw two cruisers apparently on a rendezvous with a third. Before he could reach them they separated, and one of them came

¹ G.F.N., October 16.

² Log of *Swift*.

³ X.3441/1914. The Admiralty rewarded all the members of the crew of the *Modesta*.

⁴ Rosoman's Report, M. 02832/14.

⁵ This paragraph is from the German Official History. *Nordsee II.* pp. 176-181.

towards him, zigzagging at high speed westward on a course which would enable him to get within torpedo range. Just as he was about to make his attack from the southward, she altered course eight points towards him, and, turning, he discharged his torpedo at close range.¹ In eight minutes the ship had sunk in the position 57·40 N., 0·13 W. As the *Hawke* was the westernmost of the squadron, the remaining ships were in danger of attack by Hanser in U.17, who had been delayed on the spot by compass trouble, and was further out to sea than U.9. Indeed, it was he who, two hours later, fired a torpedo at the *Theseus*. She luckily turned while the torpedo was running; it passed harmlessly astern, and, making off northward, she escaped further attack. U.9 went on towards the Orkneys, but U.17 remained near the spot, where, next day, she tried to attack the *Swift*, though the speed of the destroyer frustrated the attempt.

Even so the loss was sufficiently serious. Otto von Weddigen had already torpedoed the *Hogue*, *Aboukir* and *Cressy*. By this fourth victim he added 500 to the 1,400 officers and men he had drowned in those three ships.

CHAPTER III.

THE "EDGARS" PAID OFF.

14. After the loss of the *Hawke* the Commander-in-Chief withdrew the whole Fleet from the North Sea. The Tenth Cruiser Squadron joined the older battleships of the Third Battle Squadron in patrolling N.N.W. of the Shetlands with the Third Cruiser Squadron to westward of them. The *Alsatian* worked with Admiral de Chair, while the *Mantua* was detached from October 11 to 28 with the *Drake* to fetch gold from Archangel. The battleships of the Third Battle Squadron left for Lough Swilly on October 17, leaving the Tenth and Third Cruiser Squadrons under Admiral de Chair to continue the patrol N.N.W. of the Shetlands.

On October 22 the arrangements for stopping German trade and the passage of contraband in neutral bottoms were as follows² :—

- (1) A cruiser force working North of the Shetlands, occasionally visiting the Norwegian coast.
- (2) One or two armed merchantmen to the Southward of the Faeroes.
- (3) A group of battleships in the area midway between the Faeroes and the Orkneys to act as a second line that must be passed, and also a force to act in the North Sea or elsewhere to intercept enemy armed vessels.

¹ Given as 150 metres in the text and 350 metres in the accompanying sketch. The time given is 10.53 a.m., G.M.T.

² Papers titled X. 3895/1914.

- (4) A squadron off the North-West end of the Hebrides to intercept trade passing the Flannan Islands.
- (5) Some ships stationed South of the Hebrides to intercept trade passing North through the Minch.
- (6) Two or three minesweepers to intercept trade passing between Sule Skerry and the Orkneys.

It will be seen from this that the interception of ships was not delegated entirely to the Tenth Cruiser Squadron ; in fact, that Squadron occupied only a portion of a scheme in which the lighter forces of the Grand Fleet were employed.¹

15. In the absence of our patrols from the Norwegian coast occurred the first loss of a merchant vessel by submarine action. On October 20 the British steamship *Glitra*, bound for Stavanger, was sunk by U.17 about 14 miles from Skudesnaes, and intelligence reports of submarine activity on the Norwegian coast began to multiply. Our Minister at Christiania proposed the use of disguised merchant vessels as a trap for the submarine reported to be operating off Bergen ; this was an echo of a rumour that Germany intended to send out a fleet of such vessels.² But the attention of the Admiralty and Commander-in-Chief was attracted rather to the passage North of the Faeroes, where a large traffic in contraband was reported to be passing. The patrol there was taken by the armed merchant cruisers ; there were only three of them, and the Commander-in-Chief asked for at least two more.³ The Admiralty, in compliance with his request, took up the *Otway* and *Cedric* as additional vessels, and the *Virginian* to replace the wrecked *Oceanic*.⁴

16. On October 28 the loss of the *Audacious* revealed the fact that a minefield had been laid off the North Irish coast, and the Commander-in-Chief ordered the Third and Tenth Cruiser Squadrons to spread in order to intercept the vessel which had laid the mines ; accordingly Admiral de Chair ordered his Squadron, consisting of the *Edgar*, *Endymion*, *Theseus*, *Gibraltar*, and *Royal Arthur*, to take up positions on a base line N.E. true from Muckle Flugga, the inner ship to be seven miles from the point, the remainder to be ten miles apart ; they were to cross the base line, steering S.E. true at midnight, and alter course 16 points every two hours. The Third Cruiser Squadron was to prolong the line to N.E.⁵ The *Crescent* was coaling at Swarbacks Minn, and when, on the 29th, Admiral de Chair arrived on patrol, he found that the base had been altered to one running N. true from Muckle Flugga, the southern ship to be 30 miles from shore, the remainder ten miles apart. At half-past four a suspicious steamer was sighted

¹ The interception of trade was one of the continual pre-occupations of the Grand Fleet ; this monograph deals only with that part in it played by the Tenth Cruiser Squadron, and the subject as a whole will be considered in the series of monographs dealing with the Grand Fleet which is in course of preparation.

² H.S. 68, p. 1036 ; H.S. 71, p. 230.

³ H.S. 69, pp. 1060a, 1191 ; H.S. 70, pp. 14, 140 ; H.S. 73, pp. 268, 332.

⁴ Papers titled *Admiralty 7.11.14*, M. 03425/14, etc.

⁵ H.S. 185, p. 60.

and followed ; she out-paced the old *Edgars*, whose engines were becoming increasingly unreliable, and though the Admiral ordered "General Chase," even by 7 p.m. the steamer was only just in sight. At 10.45 p.m. the Commander-in-Chief ordered the First Light Cruiser Squadron to assist if required, and Admiral de Chair ordered them to the Norwegian coast to intercept the quarry ; but at 12.27 a.m. on the 30th the *Endymion*, which had been chasing at full speed all the time, overtook her and boarded her in 60° 28' N., 3° 22' E. She proved to be the Norwegian liner *Bergensfjord* on her usual voyage from New York to Bergen, and had on board the German Consul-General from Korea.¹ The Commander-in-Chief ordered her in to Kirkwall for examination, and she was escorted there by the *Endymion*, in spite of an energetic protest from a high official of the Norwegian Parliament, who also was a passenger. Nothing was seen of the minelayer, and after the episode of the *Bergensfjord* the Tenth Cruiser Squadron returned to its normal beat N.N.W. (true) from Muckle Flugga, where they patrolled in line ahead 20 miles apart. A German armed merchant ship named *Berlin* arrived at Trondhjem on November 16, and after some diplomatic correspondence decided next day to disarm and be interned by the Norwegian Government.² From the tales of her crew it was learnt that she had laid the mines which the *Audacious* struck.

17. During the chase of the *Bergensfjord* several of the ships had broken down, and it was clear by this time that the old *Edgars* could no longer carry on without refitting. Moreover, a gale on November 11 drew attention to their lack of seaworthiness and their unsuitability for the hard work of the Northern Patrol during the winter months. Heavy seas had wrecked the *Crescent's* fore-bridge, swept overboard the Admiral's sea cabin, and carried away the ventilating cowl of the foremost stokehold, a considerable amount of water getting down below and putting the fires out ; the woodwork of the deck failed to hold the hawser reels and other fittings, some of which were swept overboard. Accordingly, the Commander-in-Chief called Admiral de Chair to Scapa and informed him that it had been decided to refit half the Tenth Cruiser Squadron at a time in Clyde Yards. The three chosen were the *Crescent*, *Royal Arthur*, and *Grafton*, and they were ordered to leave the patrol for the Clyde. The *Endymion* was already making good defects at Scapa ; the *Theseus*, *Edgar*, and *Gibraltar* were sheltering from the weather at Busta Voe, and making good defects. The only portion of the Northern Patrol at sea consisted of two merchant cruisers between Iceland and the Faeroes ; although there were three of these, the distance of Liverpool, their coaling base, from their patrol area necessitated an absence from station of about 11 days, so that one ship was always away. They were joined by the *Drake* on the 16th ;

¹ It was known that he was on board and orders had been sent on October 16 that he was not to be molested. (H.S. 68, p. 861.)

² H.S. 75, pp. 55, 63, 101, 313, 398.

no ships were sighted and probably nothing was passing. On November 16 the three *Edgars* at Busta Voe proceeded for a new patrol station W.N.W. of the Hebrides.

18. The Commander-in-Chief was beginning to doubt the utility of the patrol. Of the ships boarded since the beginning of October, 25 had been sent in to Kirkwall, besides others into other Northern ports, and of them all only one had been permanently detained, while one other had had to land part of her cargo. The remainder had all been released, though they were bound for Baltic and Dutch ports with such cargoes as copper, grain, petroleum, sulphur, and coal, some of which were openly stated to be going to Germany. The Squadron, he felt, could be better employed than in the risky and destructive work of boarding ships which, after all, were only released; and he suggested that the practice of boarding should be entirely discontinued. The Admiralty in reply pointed out that there were great legal difficulties in dealing with neutral ships trading between neutral ports; satisfactory guarantees had been obtained that most of the cargoes were for neutral consumption and would not be re-exported. Such guarantees could not have been obtained except by bringing in the ships; and the arrest of these vessels had already produced valuable results in restraining shipowners from embarking contraband and underwriters from insuring it. Many neutral States were prohibiting the export of objectionable articles. All this pressure on German trade was a direct consequence of the delay, anxiety, and extreme inconvenience caused to neutrals by the Fleet's interference.¹

19. So important did the Admiralty feel the Northern Patrol to be that when they learned the real condition of the *Edgars* they determined to replace them by a large squadron of more suitable vessels. They telegraphed to the Commander-in-Chief:—

321. The following arrangements are in hand and will be completed with the utmost despatch in order to put the Northern Patrol on a more satisfactory footing.

The Patrol will consist of 24 Armed Liners constituted as follows:
3 already on patrol,

4 now commissioning with full crew and armament,

17 further vessels which are now being taken up. Their speed will be 14 to 17 knots; tonnage 4,000 to 6,000 tons; a somewhat reduced armament. These vessels will be manned by the crews of the *Edgars*, supplemented where possible by R.N.R. Firemen.

The *Edgars* will be paid off as the liners become available.

These 24 vessels will be under the command of Rear-Admiral de Chair, and will be employed exclusively for patrol duty.

(Sent 8.35 p.m., 18.11.14.)

The seventeen vessels had been taken up on November 17², and soon the Clyde, Liverpool, Avonmouth, London, Hull, and the Tyne were busy fitting them out.

On November 20 the Admiralty ordered the *Edgars* to return to their home ports and pay off, only sufficient work being done

¹ H.S. 74, pp. 381, 700, 701.

² M. 03752/14.

to enable them to make the voyage safely. In accordance with this the Commander-in-Chief recalled the four on patrol. Two days later the Admiralty ordered the three in the Clyde to be paid off there and laid up with care and maintenance parties. Admiral de Chair hauled down his flag in the *Crescent* at Clydebank in the evening of December 3, and the work of the *Edgars* on the Northern Patrol came to an end.

Up to this period the Tenth Cruiser Squadron and the armed merchant cruisers had boarded at least 309 ships, and many others had been examined without boarding on the numerous occasions when the weather was too bad for a boat to be lowered.¹ The work carried out by the Squadron in face of difficulties of every kind was so valued by the Commander-in-Chief that on November 12 he sent to Admiral de Chair a letter of appreciation, in which he said—

“The work of intercepting and examining neutral vessels has been most successfully carried out and the ships have kept the sea in spite of their age and the difficulty which I know has existed in keeping the machinery efficient. I desire that you will make known to the Captains, Officers and Men my keen appreciation of their efforts, and congratulate them on the success which has attended them.”²

20. During the period through which the *Edgars* had been carrying out the Northern Patrol the nature of contraband had been considerably modified. At the outbreak of war all ships were furnished with a Naval Prize Manual, dated January, 1914, which was in general accord with the provisions of the Declaration of London of 1909. It defined as absolute contraband articles of an exclusively military character; and as conditional contraband foodstuffs and articles capable of being used by the civil population, as well as by the armed forces of the enemy country. Conditional contraband could be seized only when destined for the use of fleets, armies, or Government Departments of the enemy State. A ship carrying absolute contraband was to be detained when she was to touch at an enemy port, was out of her course as shown by her papers, or in other suspicious circumstances. A ship carrying conditional contraband was not to be detained unless she intended to call at an enemy port or meet the enemy fleet; in addition, she could be detained, although she herself might not be proceeding to the hostile country, if the goods were consigned to the enemy Government or to a fortified base in hostile territory; or, again, if she were out of her course. A great many articles were excluded from either contraband list.

By an Order in Council of August 20 these regulations were modified, and conditional contraband became liable to seizure, even though consigned to a neutral port, if the consignee of the goods was an agent of the enemy State or a person under the control of that State. This extended the principle of “continuous voyage” to conditional contraband.

¹ X. 3262/14.

² X. 3920/14.

It was reported the same day that the German Government had taken control of all foodstuffs, thus constituting them contraband if consigned to places in Germany through neutral ports.¹ In September, by the Order in Council of September 21, copper, rubber, and iron ore were transferred from the free to the conditional list, and ships carrying them were to be sent in unless it was certain the goods were not for the use of the enemy Government. A later Order in Council of October 29, promulgated as a concession to the United States, the principal dealer in contraband, made further modifications; it added copper, rubber, lead, and other metals to the absolute list, and permitted neutral ports, if abused, to be treated as enemy bases; but its wording allowed any consignee in neutral territory to receive contraband, although he might be a known enemy agent. In effect, conditional contraband could be seized in a vessel bound for a neutral port only if the goods were consigned "to order," if the ship's papers did not show who was the consignee, or if he were in enemy territory.

In actual fact, the German Government had not taken control of foodstuffs at that time. Consequently, food ships sent in had to be released; in addition, the Order of October 29 set free many other vessels detained in good faith; and it was through the operation of these Orders that the arduous work of the Northern Patrol had so little result in preventing the arrival of goods into Germany.²

CHAPTER IV.

FORMATION OF THE ARMED MERCHANT CRUISER SQUADRON.

21. One of the principal reasons for increasing the efficiency of the Northern Patrol was that the Admiralty had made an important decision. There could be no doubt that a minelayer had got out from Germany, and laid the minefield on which the *Audacious* was lost on October 27. The Admiralty at the time concluded that these mines, and also those off the Tyne and Humber must have been laid by merchant vessels flying a neutral flag; and, in order to prevent the possibility that more ships of the kind could pass undetected, they now decided to declare the North Sea a military area, through which trading vessels should not pass except in strict accordance with Admiralty directions. The intention was that no ship should escape some sort of examination. To secure this, on November 2³ they announced that from November 5 onwards all ships passing a line drawn from the Northern point of the Hebrides through

¹ H.S. 56, p. 18.

² C.B. 1554, *The Economic Blockade* deals fully with this question. See also Fayle: *Seaborne Trade*, Vol. I., Chapter IV.

³ This was before the *Berlin* had arrived at Trondhjem.

the Faeroes to Iceland did so at their own peril ; and they advised vessels trading with Scandinavian countries to use the Straits of Dover, whence a route, safe so far as we were concerned, would be given them.¹ No sooner had the announcement been made than the shipping companies which were in the habit of using the northabout route began to send in applications for special permission to continue to pass the prohibited line. In many cases² this was granted, subject only to the condition that the favoured ships called at Kirkwall for examination on each voyage. Vessels eastbound were to keep North of the 60th parallel till they reached 3° W., whence they were to proceed direct to Kirkwall ; while those from Europe were to make 60° N., 3° W., and then keep North of the 60th parallel until they were well clear of the British Isles. Sailing ships were to keep 50 miles North of the Shetlands, and any neutral vessels which had not received permission to use the northabout route were advised to call at Kirkwall.³

This limitation on the number and routes of vessels using the northabout passage should lighten the work falling to the new Squadron. The object of the force was now to deter neutral vessels from using the northabout route, or, if they felt compelled to come that way, to force them to call voluntarily at Kirkwall. The ships of the companies which had received permits need not be examined, boarded, or escorted in, as they would presumably call at Kirkwall. Nor need other neutrals be examined ; the fact that they had no permit rendered them suspect, and they were to be sent in under an armed guard without examination. The resulting inconvenience should be enough to deter any but the most persistent of innocent vessels from continuing to come that way.³

22. It was obviously desirable to have the blockading squadron in place as soon as possible, if only in order that passing vessels might report it to be at work. To be suitable for the Northern Patrol it was considered a vessel should have fair speed with moderate size. As the need for the 17 new cruisers was urgent only ships actually in port or soon due could be taken up ; all likely ships were carefully considered, and the following were selected : *Patia*, *Patuca*, *Bayano*, *Motagua*, *Changuinola*, belonging to Elders & Fyffes ; *Ambrose*, *Hilary*, *Hildebrand*, of the Booth Line ; *Caribbean* and *Orotava*, of the R.M.S.P. Co. ; *Eskimo* and *Calypso*⁴, owner T. Wilson & Co. ; *Oropesa*, of the P.S.N. Line ; *Digby*, belonging to Furness, Withy ; *Columbia*,⁵ Anchor Line ;

¹ The text of the declaration is in X. 3768/1914.

² Danish United Shipping Company ; Danish East Asiatic Company ; Norwegian-American Line ; Norwegian-Mexican Gulf Line ; Swedish-South American and Australian Lines (also called Swedish Transatlantic Company) ; Swedish-American-Mexico Line ; Johnson Line ; Swedish-East Asiatic Line.

³ Admiral de Chair's Memo. 038/7 of 17.12.14 in *Grand Fleet Secret Packs*, Vol. XXXI, and X. 3768/14.

⁴ Renamed *Calyx*.

⁵ Renamed *Columbella*.

The Viking,¹ which cruised with tourists to Norway; and the *Clan McNaughton*, belonging to the Clan Line. The Elders steamers were the newest, *The Viking* the oldest; speeds ranged from the *Eskimo* with 17 knots to the *Clan Macnaughton* with 11; the largest was the *Hildebrand* of 7,000 gross tons, and the smallest the two Wilson liners, which were of 3,326 and 2,876 respectively.² These were all officially requisitioned on November 23, and the work of preparing them as cruisers was hurried on. At the suggestion of the Commander-in-Chief, the new Squadron was given the name of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron.

Admiral de Chair hoisted his flag on board the *Alsatian* at Liverpool on December 4. Apart from the *Teutonic* and *Mantua*, patrolling to the West of the Hebrides, all his armed merchant cruisers were fitting out at various ports; even the *Alsatian* was being rearmed with 6-in. guns. As it was hoped they would all be ready by the end of the month, the Admiral organised a base office at Liverpool under Rear-Admiral Stileman,³ from which orders and communications could be distributed to the 17 ships which it had been decided should use that port for coaling and repairs.

23. The new Squadron was not to occupy the area originally assigned to the Northern Patrol Force. The station of the armed merchant cruiser squadron was now to be North and West of the Shetlands, and the base lines of the patrols were to be—

- (A) Between the Faeroes and Iceland, the Eastern base to be the meridian of 5° 30' W
- (B) North of the Shetlands on the meridian of 1° W.
- (C) South of the Faeroes, the Eastern base to be the line joining Sydero and Sule Skerry.
- (D) West of the Hebrides, the Eastern base to run N.½ W. from St. Kilda.

The base lines would be constantly moved in order that the actual position of the patrols should not become known to the enemy; and it was the Commander-in-Chief's intention after a time to shift the whole of the patrol areas considerably, to minimise the chance of a successful cruiser raid on the armed liners. The Admiralty had expected the trawler patrol in the Fair Island passage and the cruiser squadrons of the Grand Fleet to work in association with the new Tenth Cruiser Squadron. This could not at the time be carried out, since the trawlers were mostly concentrated round Scapa to protect the battle fleet from submarine attack, and the cruiser squadrons of the Grand Fleet were insufficient to allow of a regular blockade patrol. The Commander-in-Chief, however, intended to keep one squadron generally in the vicinity of 60° N., 5° W., to support the liners. Traffic through the Pentlands was dealt with chiefly by the armed boarding steamers

¹ Renamed *Viknor*. ² Papers titled X. 2857/1915 and H.S. 185, p. 107.

³ Then S.N.O., Liverpool.

based on Scapa. It was hoped that by the summer complete control of shipping would be established.¹

24. In the interval between the departure of the *Edgars* and the arrival of the armed merchant cruisers, the watch on the Northern approaches had to be abandoned, except for occasional movements carried out by the Grand Fleet. From November 17 to 20 the Second Battle Squadron cruised South of the Faeroes, while the battle cruisers watched North of the Shetlands; these movements were in view of possible enemy activity on the 18th. On the 20th a submarine attack on the Shetlands was expected,² and the Commander-in-Chief ordered the base at Swarbacks Minn to be evacuated; this had been used by the *Edgars*, and the Commander-in-Chief had asked that a submarine obstruction should be put up there, but so far nothing had been done.³ He sent a division of destroyers to the Shetlands to hunt the submarine, but they saw nothing, and were recalled next day.⁴ At the end of November the only vessel definitely looking out to intercept shipping was the *Teutonic*, cruising to West and North-West of the Hebrides. She was joined there on December 3 by the *Otway*. The entrance to the North Sea was thus entirely destitute of patrol when a German collier, the *Rio Negro*, passed into it on her way homewards, with an important cargo—no less than the survivors of the German cruiser *Karlsruhe*, which had been operating in the Atlantic near the Equator. The *Karlsruhe* had blown up, and all that remained of her crew had embarked in the *Rio Negro*, which, after making a wide detour, put in to Aalesund (Norway, latitude $62\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) on November 29. A few days later she arrived at Kiel.

Another incident on the Norwegian coast occurred a week or two later. On December 8 two German vessels, the *Alma* and the *Marie*, put in to Thamshavn, near Trondhjem, and began to load copper ore for Hamburg. This information was wired to the Commander-in-Chief, but the name of the place was read as Thorshavn, in the Faeroes. The *Teutonic* was sent to watch that port; she was alone, as the *Otway* had had to return to Liverpool for fuel. When at last it was discovered in the Fleet that Thamshavn was meant, the Commander-in-Chief thought it was too late to take action. Meanwhile, the two German ships were loading, but it was not till the 13th that the *Alma* left, the *Marie* following on the 18th.⁵ In point of fact, armed merchant cruisers could have been sent in time, but they were occupied in endeavouring to intercept a Danish steamer bound from Iceland for Copenhagen with ponies. The *Teutonic* was joined by the *Mantua* and *Cedric* on December 13, and the three patrolled the meridians of 6, 7, and 8 W. from $62^{\circ} 30'$ to $100'$ North of it for this purpose.⁶

¹ M. 084/15.

² H.S. 75, p. 873.

³ H.S. 78, p. 1102.

⁴ G.F.N., November, 1914.

⁵ H.S. 79, pp. 191, 200, 297, 361, 487, 562, 568, 680, 761, 1070, 1089, 1099; H.S. 81, p. 161.

⁶ G.F.N., December 14, 1914.

25. The area to the North-West of the Hebrides, which the Commander-in-Chief considered the best place in which to intercept trade, was occupied after December 7 by the *Sappho* and some armed boarding steamers, based on Loch Ewe. A fortnight later they were relieved by the *Hildebrand*, *Oropesa*, *Hilary*, and *Ambrose*, and moved to Scapa, whence they patrolled to guard the Fleet base.¹

The merchant cruisers as they became ready² proceeded to one or other of the patrol lines, and when, on December 26, the flagship *Alsatian* arrived with Admiral de Chair on the Faeroes patrol, the disposition of the Squadron was:—

| <i>A Patrol.</i> | <i>C Patrol.</i> | <i>D Patrol.</i> |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| North of Faeroes. | South of Sydero. | West of Hebrides. |
| <i>Teutonic.</i> | <i>Otway.</i> | <i>Hildebrand.</i> |
| <i>Cedric.</i> | <i>Oropesa.</i> | <i>Patuca.</i> |
| <i>Columbella.</i> | <i>Hilary.</i> | <i>Calyx.</i> |
| <i>Mantua.</i> | | <i>Ambrose.</i> |
| <i>Virginian.</i> | | |

There were no vessels on the B Patrol line North of the Shetlands. Very few vessels had been intercepted North of the Faeroes, in spite of the report that contraband in large quantities was coming that way, and on account of the long winter darkness it was difficult to tell whether much traffic was passing. The *Teutonic* was due for coaling, and went off to Liverpool, and Admiral de Chair sent the *Cedric* to take B Patrol line as far as 62° N. with the *Caribbean*, which was on passage up from Liverpool to join. The *Clan Macnaughton* arrived on December 26 and was attached to D Patrol. At the end of the year 11 ships were on the various patrols; five were away coaling; the *Bayano* and *Viknor* were on the way up to join the Squadron; and four were still being got ready, having been delayed by labour disputes.

Severe weather prevails almost continuously in northern latitudes during the winter months, and the period of the formation of the Northern Patrol by the armed merchant cruisers proved no exception. A gale blowing from the S.W., with driving snow and hail, caused many of the ships to ease down or lie to between December 27 and 28. The *Clan Macnaughton*, off the Hebrides, rolled 45° and lost her aerial, but did not leave her patrol.³ Two days later almost similar weather conditions necessitated the taking of several intercepted neutral vessels to a position under the lee of the land before armed guards could be put on board with orders to proceed to Kirkwall.

The question of a base for the Squadron was not easily solved. The Admiralty's intention was that Swarbacks Minn should be used for coaling, and an official was on his way to report on the method of defence of that harbour. The Commander-in-Chief,

¹ G.F.N.

² For dates of commissioning and Captains' names see Appendix C.

³ M. 0282/15.

however, considered Swarbacks Minn unsuitable for armed merchant cruisers, and on his representation, made on December 28, it was decided that the proposed submarine obstruction there should not be proceeded with, and instead, that Loch Ewe should be provided with a boom.¹ This could not be ready for some time, and meanwhile the Squadron had to use Liverpool, although that port was 600 miles from the Shetlands, and the voyage there and back occupied four days. The distance of their base from the area of operations had the result that half the ships of the Squadron were generally away from their patrol duties.²

Among the difficulties with which the Squadron had to deal were the presumed danger from submarines if they escorted vessels in to Kirkwall,³ and the short-handed condition arising when any considerable number of suspected vessels were sent in with armed guards. The recovery of these had to be effected by sending one of the cruisers in to Kirkwall; she picked up all the armed guards, and then distributed them to their own ships as she met them. The boarding of vessels in these latitudes during the winter months was a trying and dangerous proceeding, the difficulties of which were increased by the unsuitability of the lifeboats of some of the merchant cruisers; these proved to be leaky, heavy, and unmanageable; they would return to their ships full of water to the thwarts.⁴ Communications between the widely separated patrols also proved a difficulty owing to the short range and small power of the Marconi wireless apparatus with which the vessels had been fitted.⁵

By January 10, 1915, all the new vessels⁶ had joined, except the *Motagua*, still fitting out at Avonmouth. A special effort was to be made to intercept the *Bergensfjord*, which once more was suspected of unneutral service, in that she had been reported to be carrying German reservists with neutral passports. Accordingly the Squadron was disposed as follows:—

B Patrol, North of the Shetlands—*Cedric*, *Patia*, *Teutonic*,
Viknor, *Orotava*, with the *Alsatian* to the eastward
on the Bergen track.

¹ H.S. 82, pp. 542 and 732.

² Jellicoe: *The Grand Fleet*, p. 74.

³ Six submarines at least came near the Orkneys and Shetlands during the first six months of the war. U.16 visited Lerwick, U.22 twice searched the Scottish coast as far round as the Minches, and U.18 succeeded in getting in to Scapa Flow, ran aground and was captured. U.20 and U.28 circumnavigated the British Isles westabout from S. to N., returning to Germany by the Fair Is. passage, and U.9 and U.18 (on an earlier cruise) operated off the Orkneys and Shetlands respectively. None of these boats saw any men-of-war, except destroyers, and their reports helped little to enlighten the enemy's ignorance of our movements. G.O.H. II and Gayer: *Die deutschen U-Boote*, I. p. 16.

⁴ Grand Fleet Secret Packs, XXXI, p. 122.

⁵ H.S. 185, p. 95.

⁶ The *Dryad* was no longer part of the squadron; she had been found unsuitable and on December 30 was ordered to Portsmouth to pay off without relief, X. 2980/14.

C Patrol, South of Sydero—*Otway*, *Bayano*, *Oropesa*, *Hilary*, *Digby*.

D Patrol, West of the Hebrides—*Hildebrand*, *Patuca*, *Clan Macnaughton*.

Coaling at Liverpool were the *Columbella*, *Virginian*, *Mantua*, *Calyx*, and *Caribbean*; while the *Ambrose* and *Changuinola* were on their way to join.

The Grand Fleet was also at sea, having left Scapa that morning for gunnery and tactical exercises to the westward of the Orkneys and Shetlands. At the same time, a watch was to be kept for the *Mjolnir*, a Danish steamer from Christiansund to the west of Ireland, suspected of ill-intent. The Commander-in-Chief ordered the *Drake* and *Donegal* to cruise N.E. of Sule Skerry, while four gunboats watched the track from Cape Wrath to the Butt of Lewis.¹

The *Bergensfjord* was faintly heard at 6.30 a.m., January 10, communicating with Bergen. Nothing more was heard of her till 8.30 a.m., January 11, when the *Viknor* reported she had intercepted the Norwegian ship in 62° 10' N., 2° 24' W., some 90 miles N.N.W. of the Shetlands. There was still the *Mjolnir* to be found, and Admiral de Chair ordered *D Patrol* to steam in line ahead on a line 334° from St. Kilda and *B Patrol* in line ahead on a line 340° from 61° N., 1° 20' W., with ships 30 miles apart. Having arranged this, he proceeded in the *Alsatian* for the *Bergensfjord* with the *Patia* and *Teutonic*, and found that the boarding party from the *Viknor* had discovered in the *Bergensfjord* a Baron von Wedel travelling with a neutral passport in the name of Spero. He, six stowaways, and one passenger, aged 60, thought to be a reservist, were transferred to the *Viknor*. The *Bergensfjord* had passed North of the Faeroes by night, apparently with the direct object of avoiding our patrols, and with no intention of calling at Kirkwall, although she was one of the vessels permitted to use the northabout route. Admiral de Chair, therefore, ordered the *Viknor* to put an armed guard on board her and escort her to Kirkwall, afterwards proceeding herself to Liverpool to land the prisoners and complete with coal. In spite of the protests of the Norwegian Captain who claimed that as he was carrying International mails he could not be sent into harbour, the armed guard took charge, and brought the *Bergensfjord* into Kirkwall escorted as far as Fair Island Channel by the *Viknor* who there turned her over to the destroyer *Garry* and parted company for Liverpool.

27. This was the last time the *Viknor* was seen. The last message from her was made at 4 p.m., January 13, when she reported her position as 56° 18' N., 9° W., course S.21° W., 10½ knots.² From there her route was to be West of 9° W. till she

¹ G.F.N., January, 1915. The *Mjolnir* was brought in to Lerwick by the Shetlands patrol on January 27. The arrangements for intercepting her are fully given in G.F.S.P. XXXVI, pp. 206-221.

² Grand Fleet IN Telegram intercepted, January 15.

reached the latitude of Tory Island ; she was to pass south of that island and Inishtrahull, and proceed from there to Liverpool.¹ This was the usual route for vessels proceeding to Liverpool to coal, and it had been used so far without accident.

Nothing more is known of her ; wreckage and bodies drifted ashore at Portrush, and ultimately she was presumed lost either by foundering or by striking a mine from the field laid at the end of October off Tory Island. Her career had been brief ; she had joined the Squadron only on January 1, and this was the first time she had been detached from patrol for coaling. The *Otway* took the same route next day and arrived safely at Liverpool. They were the last vessels to come that way ; for the Admiralty, although at the time they knew nothing of the loss of the *Viknor*, on January 14 issued an order that men-of-war passing North of Ireland in daylight were to use the Oversay-Skerryvore route, and not to go near the Irish coast.²

Another attack on the Northern Patrol was expected on January 18, and to meet it the Commander-in-Chief altered the patrols to run :—

- A. 80 miles 360° from 62° 20' N., 10° W.
- B. 80 „ 360° „ 61° 10' N., 1° 15' E.
- C. 80 „ 360° „ 59° 40' N., 9° W.
- D. Eastern line to be 80 miles 335° from St. Kilda.

All ships were to maintain 13 knots and to zigzag constantly.³ No submarines were sighted at that period by the patrol. The ships north of the Shetlands were sent by the Commander-in-Chief across to Norway on January 19 with a view to intercepting the *Brandenburg*, which was expected to leave Thamshavn. They kept out of sight of land by day, but at night or in thick weather went in to about five miles from shore on the parallels of 62° N., 62° 10' N., and 62° 20' N. A submarine was reported off Skudesnaes on the 19th, but was not seen by our ships. This watch was abandoned two days later, and the Shetlands patrol was reinstated on the new base line on the meridian of 1° 15' E. between 61° 10' N. and 62° 30' N.

In spite of the feeble light and the other disadvantages of their station, the armed merchant cruiser squadron intercepted 122 ships between December 24 and January 24, in no case missing a ship which the Admiralty wished brought in. The weather had been permanently bad, and in view of the exceptionally arduous nature of the work the Admiralty, at the Commander-in-Chief's suggestion, sent the Squadron a letter of appreciation.⁴

¹ Grand Fleet Secret Packs, XXXIX, Loss of *Viknor*.

² Telegram 134 to C.-in-C., H.F. sent 6.22 p.m., 14.1.15.

³ G.F.N.

⁴ M. 01648/15.

CHAPTER V.

THE GERMAN SUBMARINE ZONE.

28. At the end of January a new peril made itself felt. The *Alsatian*, *Caribbean*, *Bayano*, *Oropesa*, *Orotava*, and *Calyx* were all at Liverpool when, on January 30, a submarine sank three merchant ships off Liverpool Bar. The six merchant cruisers were kept back for a whole week by the Admiralty, who would not let them sail till the moon, then full, waned; the other merchant cruisers due for coaling were sent to Loch Ewe or the Clyde. Coaling facilities at Loch Ewe proved to be unsatisfactory, but from this time onwards the Clyde became a base for the Squadron in addition to Liverpool, where the congestion of shipping was becoming serious. The cruisers in Liverpool left after dark on February 6, and when proceeding to rejoin their patrols gave the Isle of Man a wide berth to avoid two German submarines reported waiting there. On the way north floating mines were sighted by both the *Alsatian* and the *Bayano* near Skerryvore; a report was current at the time that a Norwegian steamer had laid a minefield on February 3 between Barra Head and Coll Island.¹ As a result of this further danger the centre line of B Patrol was shifted to longitude 3° W.

Another report from Norway, this time that the *Alma* was about to leave Trondhjem, had caused the Commander-in-Chief on February 1 to send the *Otway* and *Hilary* from this patrol across to the Norwegian coast for three days.² During the month Grand Fleet cruiser squadrons made occasional sweeps across to Norway.³

29. The dangers to which the Squadron as a whole was exposed were emphasised by another loss following soon after that of the *Viknor*. On February 2, in one of the worst gales experienced by the Tenth Cruiser Squadron, the *Clan Macnaughton*, then on patrol in 58° 47' N., 9° 27' W., Westward of the Hebrides, failed to reply to signals and disappeared. The *Hildebrand*, *Patuca*, and *Digby* searched the vicinity for a week, but found no trace of the missing vessel, beyond a certain amount of wreckage. There seemed no reason to doubt her stability as she had been accustomed to trade to the East⁴; moreover, drifting mines had been reported off the Hebrides; but the loss in quick succession of two vessels of the Squadron raised the whole question whether the severe conditions under which they were employed had been fully realized by the Admiralty when deciding on the type of vessel to be taken up; and when, a few weeks later, Admiral de Chair reported the

¹ H.S. 185, pp. 121, 122.

² G.F.N.

³ Jellicoe: *The Grand Fleet*, p. 203.

⁴ M. 01232/15 in Papers titled X. 2857/1915.

Columbella, *Caribbean*, *Orotava*, *Calyx*, and *Eskimo* as unsuitable for various reasons, the vessels eventually taken up to relieve them were all larger than the 17 requisitioned in November after our closing of the North Sea.¹

The arrangements with the Scandinavian Shipping Lines were not in every case carried out by them. The Norwegian-American Line, to which the *Bergensfjord* belonged, had already broken its agreement that its vessels should voluntarily call at Kirkwall; the *Frederick VIII.*, of the Danish United Shipping Company, was caught after a chase on February 11, and gave as her reason for evading the patrol that she was unaware of the necessity of calling at Kirkwall when westward bound. On the 13th another of the Norwegian-American Line endeavoured to avoid the patrols by passing North of the Faeroes, and she also was sent in with an armed guard. Next day the *Oskar II.*, of the Danish United Shipping Co., from New York, was stopped after a four hours' chase and was sent in; her Captain made a written protest, although, as Admiral de Chair remarks, she belonged to one of the steamship lines which were allowed to use the northabout route on the understanding that their vessels called at Kirkwall, which, however, they appeared not to have the slightest intention of doing. Many more vessels than those authorised were using the northabout route, and he considered few, if any, of them were likely to call at Kirkwall unless sent there in charge of armed guards.²

30. A large increase in the number of vessels using the northabout route seemed probable as a result of an announcement made by the German Naval Staff. Our policy in declaring the North Sea a closed area was not to pass unchallenged; on February 4 appeared the German answer. Over the signature of Von Pohl, Chief of the Admiral Staff, was issued the following statement:—

. . . Just as England has designated the area between Scotland and Norway as an area of war, so Germany now declares all the waters surrounding Great Britain and Ireland, including the entire English Channel, as an area of war, thus proceeding against the shipping of the enemy. For this purpose, beginning from February 18, 1915, it will endeavour to destroy every enemy merchant ship that is found in this area of war . . . Neutrals are, therefore, warned . . . that it is advisable for their ships to avoid entering this area. . . . At the same time, it is especially noted that shipping North of the Shetland Islands, in the Eastern area of the North Sea, and in a strip of at least 30 sea miles in width along the Norwegian coasts, is not in peril. . . .

Our announcement had declared the passage north of the Shetlands as particularly dangerous; the Germans stated the northabout route to be the only safe one. Neutral vessels had thus no choice but to disregard the warning of one or other of the

¹ X. 9317/15.

² Admiral de Chair's Letter of Proceedings, H.S. 185, pp. 127, 136.

belligerents. The German Staff, three days before, had stated that all military means at Germany's disposal were about to be used against our transports to France ; and as this was calculated to induce neutrals to accept the recommendation of a route round Scotland in preference to taking the risks of a passage through the English Channel, it was only to be anticipated that the work of the Northern Patrol would increase as a result of this declaration.

To meet the situation the patrols were rearranged so that they ran¹ :—

- A. North of the Faeroes. Eastern base 5° 30' W.
- B. North of the Shetlands. Eastern base 1° W.
- C. South of the Faeroes. Eastern Base, the line Sydero-Sule Skerry.
- D. West of the Hebrides. Eastern base N. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. from St. Kilda.

The ships patrolled 20 miles apart, zigzagging at 13 knots on a mean course about at right angles to the base ; this they crossed, steering westerly, at 7 a.m. ; at 6 p.m. they turned 16 points. The southern ship of Patrol A was 20 miles north of the Faeroes, of Patrol B 15 miles from Muckle Flugga, of Patrol C 45 miles from Sule Skerry, and of Patrol D 15 miles from St. Kilda.²

From the middle of February onwards it became the practice for one of the Scapa boarding steamers to bring out the armed guards who had taken ships into Kirkwall. The necessity for some such arrangement had long been felt, for sometimes as many as 18 armed guards were away at one time.³

The *Eskimo* operated with the Tenth Cruiser Squadron for the first time on February 12, when she joined D Patrol ; amongst the duties she had been performing was that of escorting the cable ship *Colonia* to Alexandrovsk.

31. A submarine again appeared off Liverpool on February 20, sinking two ships. By this time the Admiralty had decided to obstruct the North Channel, between Ireland and the Mull of Cantire, by a net similar to that in the Dover Strait, and a few days later five miles of the North Channel were blocked by indicator nets towed by drifters.⁴ The Commander-in-Chief, in addition, sent four destroyers, the *Garry*, *Thorn*, *Dee*, and *Dove*, to operate from Liverpool against submarines. He also proposed an anti-submarine boom in the Clyde in connection with its use as a base for the Tenth Cruiser Squadron.⁵

On February 18 a report was received that 30 German trawlers, loaded with mines, had passed the Skaw westward the day before. To give a better chance of intercepting these, the Commander-in-Chief recalled the First Cruiser Squadron, which had been

¹ G.F.N., February.

² H.S. 185, pp. 124, 125.

³ H.S. 185, p. 125.

⁴ M. 01729/15.

⁵ M. 01698/15.

cruising between 1° E. and the Norwegian coast, and stationed them on a line running 360° from Muckle Flugga as far as the 100-fathom line; from there the B Patrol of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron prolonged the line northward, sweeping as far as 2° E. during the day. The ships on C Patrol worked on the southwest side of the line joining Sydero and 60° N., 5° W., altering course 16 points at midnight and every two hours. The weather had been bad for a week and boarding was impossible. A small boarding steamer, bringing back 13 armed guards from Scapa, did indeed arrive at the proper rendezvous, but the sea was so bad that she had to return with the armed guards still on board her. Nothing was seen of the reported minelaying trawlers, and on the 21st the normal patrols were resumed.¹

The base lines of the various patrols were continually being shifted, either because intelligence reports led the Commander-in-Chief to expect submarine attack on the merchant cruisers, or for the purpose of intercepting some vessel suspected of attempting to evade the patrol. The presence of drifting mines also brought about changes in the positions of the base lines. On the average, however, they remained as before throughout February and March. At the end of February the Commander-in-Chief gave orders that west-bound ships should be sent in only if suspected of laying mines or acting as submarine tenders; this was to prevent the more westerly patrols from sending ships back long distances when clearly on their way to America.

A new development had arisen with regard to vessels from the United States. Two German oil-tankers, the *Kiowa* and *Prometheus*, changed their names and registry to *Pioneer* and *Cushing*, of New York, and came across under American colours with petrol for Sweden and Copenhagen. They were both stopped and sent in; but the transfer of flag, though subsequent to the outbreak of war, was recognised on the grounds that the former owners—the Deutsche Amerikanische Petroleum Gesellschaft—was a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company. Consequently both vessels were released. Another case which created some stir was that of the *Dacia*, a Hamburg–Amerika Liner, whose transfer we had not recognised. She left the States with a cargo of cotton for Rotterdam as a test case. There was some idea that she might try to evade the blockade, and on February 27 dispositions were made to meet this. The patrol north of the Faeroes formed a line ahead patrol 300° from Myggenoes Light; the Shetlands line was shifted to 350° from $60^{\circ} 35'$ N., 3° W., steering to make good 240° . The *Dacia*, however, made no secret of her movements, and was duly arrested by the French in the mouth of the Channel and condemned by the French Prize Court. In the course of our movements in the north the *Patuca*, on patrol off the Hebrides, carried out an operation which gives some idea of the normal work of the squadron. At 2.25 a.m. on February 27 she

¹ H.S. 185, pp. 130 to 132 and *Grand Fleet Narrative*.

sighted the American s.s. *Navahoe* from Bremen for Norfolk, Virginia, steaming West, a course which she immediately changed to East on sighting the *Patuca*. When overhauled she stopped, but it was too rough for boarding, and when told to follow our cruiser under the lee of the land she replied that her condenser had broken down and would require three hours' repair. At the conclusion of this time, her Captain signalled: "Condenser ready; no contraband; refuse to follow you." The *Patuca*, however, remained in touch, and in a few hours the Captain reconsidered his decision, and was taken to St. Kilda. In a very heavy squall the boarding boat was swamped alongside, and had to be cut adrift; but the officers and crew managed to get on board the *Navahoe*. The gale was too bad for the hatches to be lifted for examination, and as, in addition, the master reported that he was short of water, Admiral de Chair ordered the *Patuca* to take her in to Stornoway for examination. This was done; nothing suspicious was found and the ship was released.

32. During this operation the *Patuca* had necessarily spent a good deal of time stopped or at slow speed. This might have been dangerous for her had the *Navahoe* incident occurred a few days later, for U.27, under Lieut.-Commander Wegener, left the Ems on February 25 with orders to proceed northabout and operate on the West coast of Scotland and in the Irish Sea north of the Isle of Man.¹ She appears to have been the first submarine to try the northabout passage since the announcement of the German blockade. Wegener was at work by March 11. At 5 a.m. off Corsewall Point he torpedoed and sank the *Bayano*, then outward bound from the Clyde to rejoin her patrol²; the *Ambrose* (Commander Bruton), on the way to Liverpool, was three times attacked by a submarine off Oversay Island between 1.20 and 2.20 p.m. Although a slow ship, the *Ambrose* was skilfully handled by Commander Bruton, and avoided the torpedoes fired in the first two attacks. In the third attack a conning tower was seen and fired at, and a hit was claimed.³ Two other ships of the Squadron—the *Caribbean* and *Columbella*—had passed over the same waters going North two hours previously, but saw nothing of the submarine.⁴

As a result the other ships—*Digby*, *Hildebrand*, *Changuinola*, *Patia*—in the Clyde were detained till March 15, and even then the *Digby* was chased by a submarine 25 miles South of Skerryvore, and took refuge in Tobermory Harbour till a destroyer escort from Larne could arrive to screen her out.⁵

The Squadron had now lost three ships—*Viknor*, *Clan Macnaughton*, and *Bayano*; the *Calyx* and *Eskimo* were ordered

¹ Gayer, II, 14.

² There were so few survivors from the *Bayano* that no Court of Enquiry was held; according to the midshipman of the watch she was going 8½ knots. M. 02018/15.

³ M. 02086/15.

⁴ G.F.N.

⁵ M. 02258/15.

to be paid off on March 12 and 18; and only 18 ships were left. Moreover, the increasing number of vessels sent in with armed guards led to a serious shortage in the ships' companies; the Admiral asked for an increase in all ratings, and for six more ships to bring his Squadron up to the 24 originally laid down. This was all the more necessary in view of a new order concerning contraband issued by us on March 11, which would presumably have the effect of largely increasing the work of interception to be done by the Squadron.

CHAPTER VI.

STOPPAGE OF GERMAN TRADE.

33. The Order in Council of March 11, 1915, declared that no vessel would be allowed to proceed to any German port; vessels which sailed from German ports must hand over to the Allies all goods embarked in those ports; goods with an enemy destination, or which were enemy property, must be discharged in a British or Allied port; and that vessels which proceeded to an enemy port after being allowed to pass ostensibly for neutral destinations would be liable to condemnation if captured on a subsequent voyage. This order aimed at the complete isolation of Germany in so far as that was possible through the operation of a naval blockade; its effectiveness was contingent on the action of the blockading squadrons, and though it removed some of the complications arising from previous orders, it could only increase the amount of work—at least until traders with Germany should find the game unprofitable.

All ships intercepted at sea were now searched. In the case of Allied merchant vessels which could readily be identified, an interchange of signals was considered all that was necessary. But neutral vessels were all boarded, their papers examined and a summary of them and of any suspicious circumstances reported to the Senior Officer of the patrol. In a large majority of cases it was then decided to send the ship in to an examination harbour with an armed guard. There the Customs officials examined manifests, bills of lading, and other documents and made a complete analysis of the cargo. This information was telegraphed to London and dealt with by one of two committees. Eastbound ships came before the Contraband Committee; westbound ships were considered by the Enemy Exports Committee.

The Contraband Committee had originally consisted of two members from the Trade Division of the Admiralty and one from the Foreign Office. After October, 1914, it increased to five members—two from the Foreign Office, one from the

Admiralty, one from the Board of Trade, and one legal member from the Office of the Treasury Solicitor. With this Committee rested the decision whether a ship should be released or not and whether the whole or part of its cargo should be put in the Prize Court. The evidence on which its decisions were based was prepared in the Trade Division. In January, 1915, a special department called the War Trade Intelligence Department had been set up which sifted and arranged every scrap of intelligence concerning enemy trade activities, and by means of a colossal card index was able to supply complete up-to-date information about every firm mentioned in the ship's papers. An extremely valuable source of information was found in intercepted correspondence, which often, though of an apparently disarming and domestic nature, proved when decoded to contain important intelligence of contraband shipments.

The Order of March 11 made German exports contraband, and it was to deal with these that the Enemy Exports Committee was formed. "A few severe examples were enough to convince neutral shipowners that they would incur grave inconvenience by carrying goods which were of German origin; and by July there was hardly one neutral line which would knowingly accept German cargo."¹

34. The squadron continued to operate on the four patrol lines till April 11, when, to meet the altered conditions due to the approaching summer, with its short nights and a free passage round the North of Iceland, the Commander-in-Chief rearranged the patrol areas. The patrols north of the Shetlands and west of the Hebrides were withdrawn, and the new lines ran as follows:—

"A" Patrol.—North of Faeroe Islands. Cross base line 360° from lat. $62^{\circ} 55' N.$, long. $5^{\circ} W.$, at 8 a.m. daily, steering to make good 225° , ships 25 miles apart from south to north—*Otway, Columbella, Mantua, Teutonic, Alsatian*. To be increased to six ships when available.

"B" Patrol.—North of the Shetlands withdrawn.

"C" Patrol.—South of Faeroe Islands. Cross centre line 13° from lat. $58^{\circ} 30' N.$, long. $8^{\circ} W.$, at noon daily, steering to make good 240° , ships 25 miles apart from south to north—*Ambrose, Patuca, Hilary, Patia, Virginian, Orotava, Oropesa*.

"D" Patrol.—West of the Hebrides withdrawn.

"E" Patrol.—North of Iceland. Six ships when available.

"F" Patrol.—South of Iceland. Four ships when available.

¹ Carless Davis: *History of Blockade*, p. 11.

“ G ” Patrol.—Coast of Norway. On Meridian 3° E. between lats. 62° and 63½° N. Three ships when available and one cruiser from the Grand Fleet. *Caribbean* working temporarily on this patrol.

This re-arrangement required 27 armed merchant cruisers. At the time only 18 were available; but six more vessels were in course of preparation for work with the squadron. These had been taken up in response to Admiral de Chair's representations that six of his vessels were unsuitable,¹ and were all larger ships than the 17 requisitioned when the armed merchant cruiser squadron was instituted in December. They were the *Ebro*, 8,464 tons; *India*, 7,940 tons; *Alcantara*, 15,831 tons; *Orcoma*, 11,546 tons; *Andes*, 15,620 tons; *Arlanza*, 15,044 tons. Their speed was 15 to 16 knots and they could go 30 days at 13 knots without coaling except the *India*, whose endurance at that speed was 24 days.

35. About this time (April 15) the Commander-in-Chief forwarded information to Admiral de Chair from which it appeared that a Reserve Officer and 16 other Germans of military age had succeeded by the use of false Norwegian passports in reaching Christiania in the Norwegian steamer *Bergensfjord*, although she had been boarded by the *Otway* on March 29 and sent into Kirkwall with a prize crew. These facts came as a great surprise to Admiral de Chair, as he was under the impression that the sending of a ship into port with an armed guard ensured not only a thorough examination of her cargo, but also of her passengers as well.² The *Bergensfjord* had twice previously been sent into Kirkwall, and each time attempted to evade the patrols. But this incident was not to be the last in connection with un-neutral service on the part of the *Bergensfjord*. On her very next trip from New York to Bergen she was intercepted in 61° 49' N. 12° 50' W., on June 20 by the *Motagua* and sent into harbour. On this occasion she had on board 473 passengers, including two German naval officers, seven German women, and a notorious propagandist, Dr. Dernburg. Her cargo was general, and mostly of a suspicious nature.

While at Liverpool about a fortnight later Admiral de Chair learned what had happened in the case of the *Greenbrier*, an American steamer, which had been sent into Kirkwall by the *Cedric* during January and subsequently released. She had then proceeded to Bremen, where 14 Germans left the ship and the Chief Engineer, of British nationality, was interned. The American papers at first expressed indignation at the capture; but later, when they realised that she was full of contraband cargo and had Germans on board, they marvelled at the fact

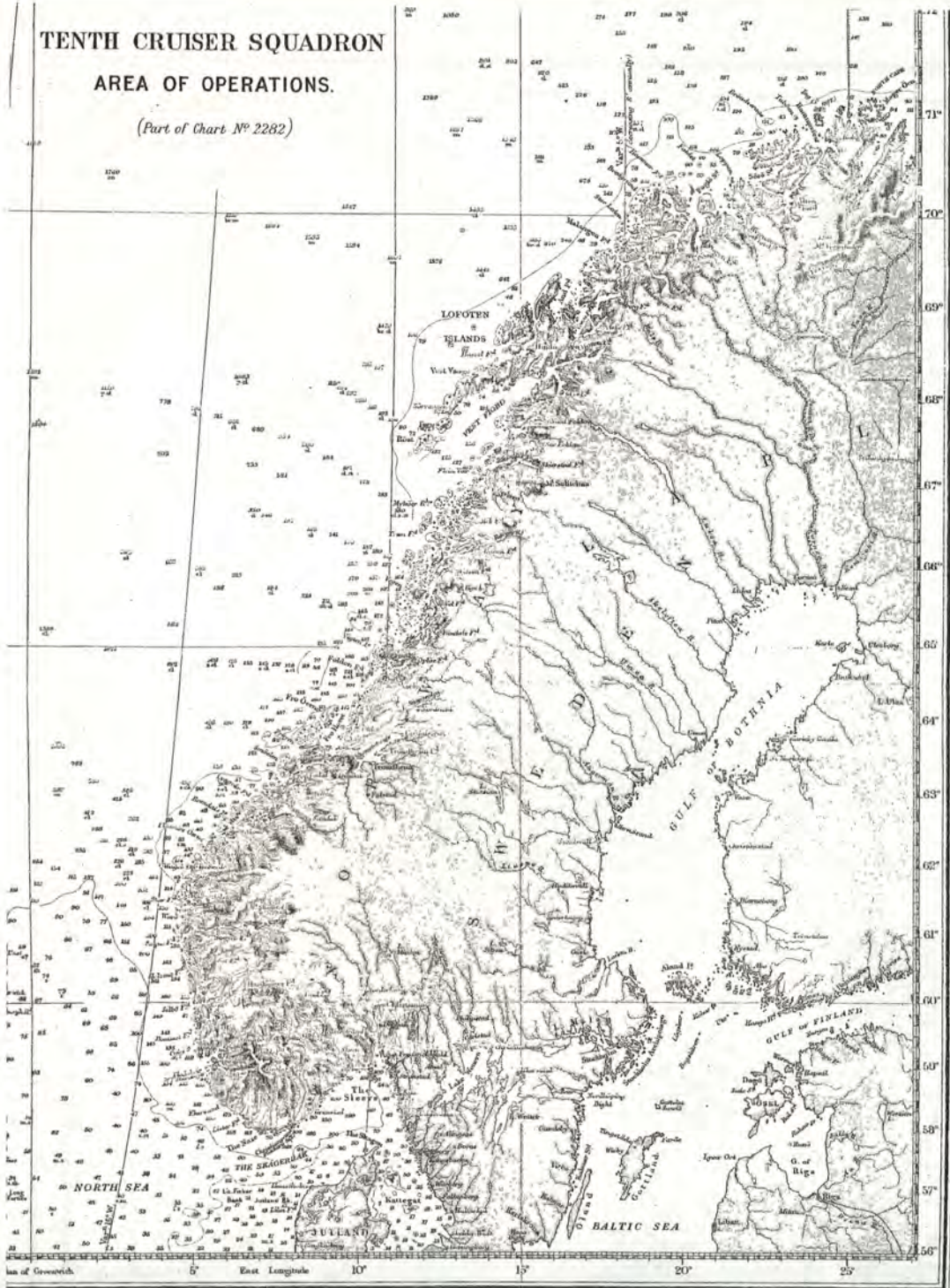
¹ X. 9317/15.

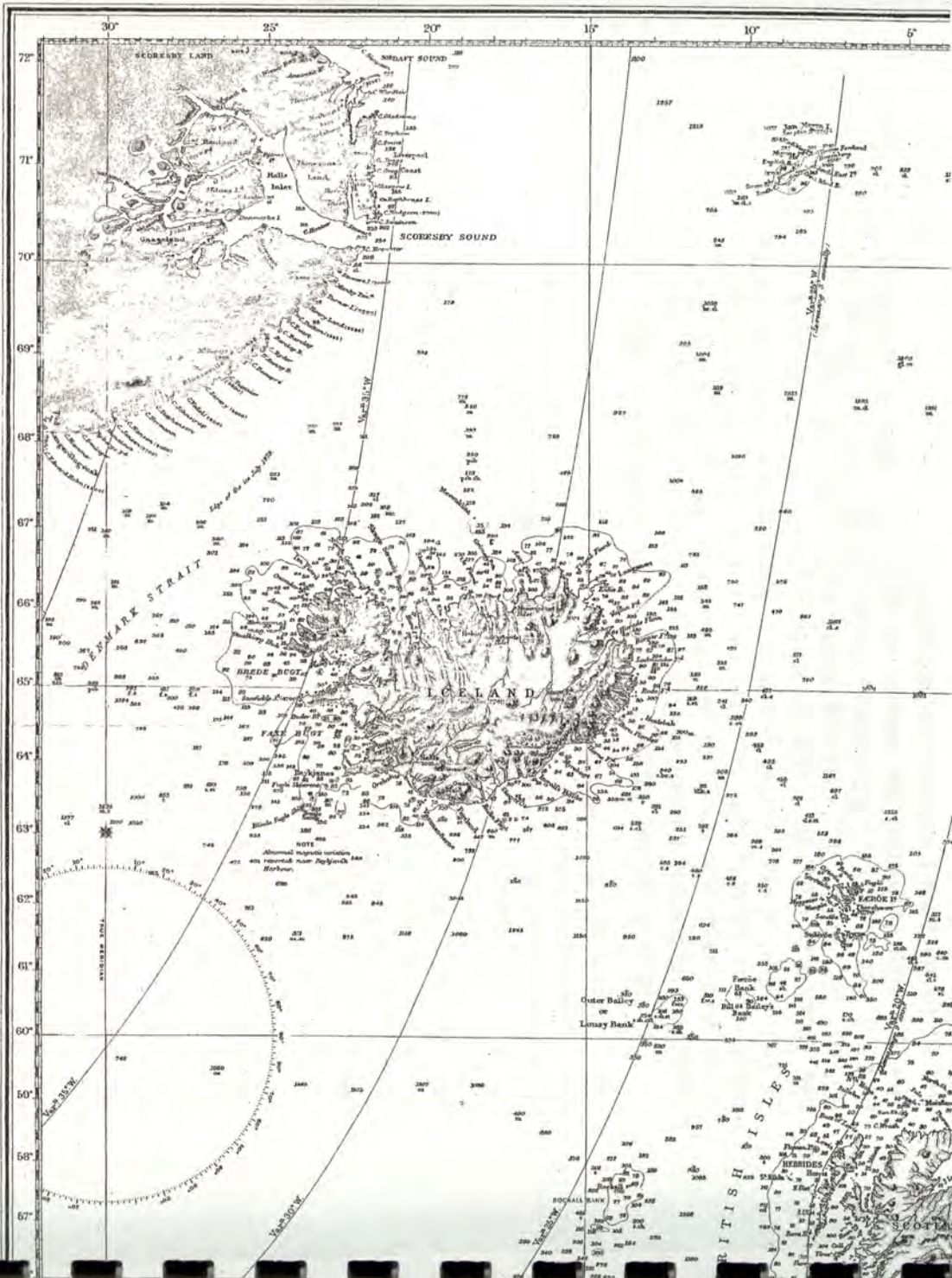
² The examining staff at Kirkwall consisted only of three officers.

TENTH CRUISER SQUADRON

AREA OF OPERATIONS.

(Part of Chart No 2282)





that she had been released and allowed to proceed. One informant remarked in a manner not too complimentary, "The case of the *Greenbrier* became the laughing-stock of the Southern States." On the other hand, the greatest care had to be exercised to avoid offence to neutral susceptibilities.

36. In accordance with directions from the Admiralty, Admiral de Chair proceeded in the *Alsation* on April 5 to West Loch Roag, in the Island of Lewis, Hebrides, with a view to reporting on the suitability of the anchorage as a coaling base for the Tenth Cruiser Squadron. After examining the harbour he came to the conclusion, and the Commander-in-Chief concurred in his views, that Busta Voe and Olna Firth in Swarbacks Minn were better protected as well as more land-locked and altogether more suitable for a coaling base than West Loch Roag. The harbour of the former was very much easier of entrance and exit; while the berthing of ships would not require tugs as at Loch Roag. The supply of water at Swarbacks Minn was infinitely better and more abundant. The Commander-in-Chief informed the Admiralty that failing Swarbacks Minn he considered Loch Ewe would be a better base than Loch Roag.¹

For another reason the Hebrides was likely to prove a dangerous site for a base. Early in April, U.32, on the way to her cruising ground in the western approaches to the Channel, became entangled in the nets at Dover; she managed to free herself but decided to come home northabout. After this, all High Sea Fleet "U" boats were ordered to avoid the Dover Straits and to make for their areas in the west by the northern route.² The increased submarine traffic soon became apparent, and on May 2 the Commander-in-Chief directed Admiral de Chair to move "C" Patrol 40 miles to the westward.

The Rear-Admiral himself went in to Swarbacks Minn to observe for himself its suitability as a northern base; he found there was room for seven of his cruisers to lie at single anchor. While there he was able to carry out a practical demonstration of the value of its central position. He received a report that the United States oil tank steamer *Petrolite* had been seen in 60° 30' N., 4° 20' W., steering north-east; she had apparently evaded the patrols. Hastening from Busta Voe at 18 knots the *Alsation* captured the tanker at 3.30 p.m., May 6, and sent her in to Kirkwall with an armed guard.

It was possible that vessels wishing to avoid examination might be passing North of Iceland, and to clear up this point the *Alsation* and *Alcantara*, in the middle of May, investigated Denmark Strait between Iceland and Labrador. They found it still full of ice and were informed by the captain of a sealer that no vessels were passing. After some further examination of the

¹ Report on West Loch Roag, M. 02797/15.

² Gayer, II, 21.

ice the Admiral sent the *Alcantara* over to the Norwegian coast where she relieved the *India*, which had recently been stationed there for intercepting the iron ore traffic between Narvik and Rotterdam.

37. The winter was now practically over. The work of the patrol had been very arduous and trying. In the smaller vessels, officers and men had not only had to keep their watches and look-outs in blizzards of snow and hail, but they often found it impossible to obtain sleep or rest when off watch. In each ship the captain was on the active list, and the executive officer or gunner was on the active or retired list; but the other officers and all the men were from the Royal Naval Reserve, the Royal Fleet Reserve, the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, or were specially entered mercantile ratings. Admiral de Chair in a letter to the Admiralty¹ expressed his high appreciation of the excellent spirit, devotion to duty and good discipline shown by all ranks. "The officers and men under my orders," he says, "would, I know, far rather serve in men-of-war designed to fight those of the enemy; yet they have without exception cheerfully carried out their duties." That these duties had their dangers was shown by the fact that 80 officers and 1,185 men of the squadron had been lost, "all of whom died in the performance of their duty."

From December 24 to May 5 the armed merchant cruisers had boarded and examined 926 vessels and had sent in 258 of these with armed guards. Between March 7 and April 19 (44 days) they had intercepted 364 vessels, including fishing craft. The total number of merchant ships which passed through from one neutral port to another without being intercepted was 20 eastbound and 26 westbound; and of these only three were vessels whose arrest was particularly desired.²

38. The number of vessels intercepted by the squadron was, however, falling off, and in Admiral de Chair's opinion the reason was that in the new dispositions there was only one patrol south of the Faeroes; on his suggestion "B" Patrol North of the Shetlands was re-instituted and on May 14 the *Teutonic* and *Patuca* were detailed to form it. This patrol would also have a chance of intercepting vessels which had evaded our cruisers watching north of the Faeroes, a passage which we learned from a Norwegian steamer had been followed by certain Scandinavian vessels homeward bound.³

39. Reports of the presence of submarines on the North and West Coasts of Scotland continued to increase. The long-distance German boats were using the northabout passage for the journeys to and from their areas of operations in the Western approaches, and in addition, U.21 which had been ordered to

¹ See H.S. 185, pp. 455-499. ² H.S. 185, p. 174. ³ M. 03093/15.

the Mediterranean took the Fair Island passage.¹ The lines of the patrols and the routes of cruisers to Liverpool were frequently changed in accordance with the submarine reports. Instances also occurred of submarines boarding and examining neutral vessels within the area patrolled by the Tenth Cruiser Squadron.² From the West of Scotland there were many authentic reports of submarine activity, and the masters of ships stopped outside the declared German blockade zone frequently protested against being sent in to it for examination at Kirkwall. On June 14 three vessels of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron encountered submarines. The *Motagua*, off the Flannan Islands, sighted a steamer in a sinking condition with a submarine near; she drove off the U-boat but failed to save the merchant vessel. That night the *India*, on the way to the Clyde, saw a periscope and was missed by a torpedo some 40 miles north of the Butt of Lewis. Next day the *Orotava* rescued a Danish steamer by driving off a submarine in much the same vicinity. In view of the presence of this submarine the patrols up to 60° N. were shifted to north and west for a time.

These incidents on the West Coast of Scotland emphasised the desirability of a base in the north. The Admiral went to Swarbacks Minn on June 19 for a conference with Rear-Admiral Fawckner who had been appointed S.N.O., Swarbacks Minn, on May 14. Representatives of the Works and Store Departments were also met and arrangements were made for coaling and watering 24 ships. The squadron consumed, on the average, 1,600 tons of coal a day. In the six months since December 25, 1914, the *Alsatian* had steamed 35,758 miles and had been under weigh 138 days; she had consumed 20,796 tons of coal and 13,322 tons of water. These figures Admiral de Chair considered typical of the work performed by his squadron as a whole.³

40. So far, the Northern Patrol had been worked by armed merchant cruisers only, but an incident on the Norwegian coast led to the addition of other classes of vessel. The *Teutonic*, then off-shore in 64° 30' N., sighted a German steamer, the *Konsul Schultze*, and gave chase. The steamer naturally made for territorial waters and reached Trondhjem in safety; but Admiral de Chair had little doubt that a submarine in place of the *Teutonic* would have captured or sunk the *Konsul Schultze*. The Commander-in-Chief agreed and arranged with the Admiralty for an E-class boat to be sent. The boat selected was E.13. She left Yarmouth at 2.30 a.m., June 25, with orders to cruise off Stadlandet in lat. 62° 10' N. for seven days. She reached her station in the morning of the 27th. The weather was bad; during the next three days it showed no signs of improving, and as, moreover, the external exhaust pipe which

¹ Gayer, I. 23.

² H.S. 185, p. 194.

³ H.S. 185, pp. 209, 214.

had broken adrift was hammering hard on the hull, E.13, which had sighted nothing but one Norwegian and one Danish steamer, decided to return to Harwich.¹ This was the only attempt at a submarine patrol in 62° N. during the year 1915.

Though the submarine had not achieved any result, an armed trawler, the *Tenby Castle*, sent at the same time by the Commander-in-Chief to work with the Norway Patrol had better success. The patrol now consisted of two armed merchant cruisers, one being from "C" Patrol, where her place was taken by the armed boarding steamer *Royal Scot*. The senior officer of the patrol was Commander F. H. Walter, R.N., in the *Victorian*, an armed merchant cruiser originally working with Cruiser Force I in the neighbourhood of the Canary Islands. She had been found too slow for that area, and after being paid off was armed with six 6-in. guns and recommissioned on June 9, mostly with the crew of the *Caribbean* whose place in the Tenth Cruiser Squadron she took.² This was her first turn of patrol duty. The *Tenby Castle* (Lieut. J. S. Randell, R.N.R.), soon made a capture. On June 30 she sighted the German steamer *Pallas* just outside territorial waters off Kya Island; she refused to stop till a shot was fired across her bow and even then headed for the shore. Finally, Lieut. Randell put two men on board as armed guard. Meanwhile, the *Pallas* was drawing nearer the shore, and when the *Victorian*, to whom the *Tenby Castle* had signalled, came up, the prize was within 2½ miles of land.³ She was now in territorial waters; moreover, the incident had been witnessed by several other vessels, including the Norwegian patrol boat, and when the Norwegian Captain requested Commander Walter to release the *Pallas* he had no alternative but to comply.

41. One of the vessels the Admiralty wished brought in was the Swedish steamer *Oscar II*, 2,637 tons, from Buenos Aires for Christiania with a general cargo. She was intercepted by the *Patuca* about 100 miles north-west of the Flannan Islands soon after 2 a.m. July 1. In the process of examination the two ships collided, and considerable damage was caused to both vessels; that to the *Oscar II* being the more serious. Water entered her engine and boiler rooms, putting the fires out, and the crew abandoned the ship and boarded the *Patuca*. The *Columbella* and *Digby* were ordered to the assistance of the *Patuca*, and at 10.40 a.m. the *Royal Scot*, which had been detached for the purpose, commenced to tow the *Oscar II*, escorted by the *Digby*, the *Patuca* having meanwhile gone to the Clyde for repair; but the progress throughout the day was slow on account of the tow parting and the vessel being so low in the water. Throughout the night and the following morning (July 2) the difficulty was

¹ Report by Capt. (S.), H.S. 294, p. 139.

² X. 3669/1915; Capt. W. 178/1915.

³ M. 05715/15.

accentuated by a rising wind and sea, and at 11.30 a.m. all hands had to leave the *Oscar II*; but she remained in tow completely waterlogged until 9 a.m. July 3, when the last tow parted in a heavy sea. Attempts to pick up the tow were unsuccessful, and at 7 p.m. the *Oscar II* sank in lat. $59^{\circ} 11' N$, long. $7^{\circ} 37' W$. The owners preferred a claim against the Admiralty for the vessel, and in February, 1921, it was decided that her loss should be a charge on the Naval Prize Fund.

42. It was not long before the trawler *Tenby Castle* achieved a further success. On July 8 she sighted the German steamer *Friedrich Arp* off the Huso and Haran Islands on the Norwegian coast, and firing a shot across her bows, ordered her to steer south-west by west. The German captain ignored this order and steered towards the land; whereupon the trawler fired a shot into the steamer's stern. She stopped then, but still refused to steer as directed, although warned that she would be sunk unless she obeyed orders. In a short time she again made for the shore. The *Tenby Castle* fired 16 rounds into her starboard quarter and she sank in $67^{\circ} 47' N.$, $14^{\circ} 15' E.$ The crew and pilot were rescued and transferred to the *India*. The *Friedrich Arp* was bound to Stettin from Narvik with a cargo of magnetic ore. This success led to the establishment of a regular trawler patrol off the Norwegian coast, and on July 25 the Commander-in-Chief issued the necessary orders.¹ Six trawlers were placed under the orders of the Admiral Commanding, Orkneys and Shetlands; they were based on Lerwick, and it was expected that at least two, and possibly three, would be maintained on patrol. They were to operate in certain areas—T.1 off Stadlandet; T.2 north-west of the position $64^{\circ} 38' N.$, $10^{\circ} 40' E.$; and T.3 off Husobarren in $67^{\circ} 42' N.$, $14^{\circ} E.$ Their duty was to intercept German and neutral ships carrying iron ore and bound south from Narvik. The merchant cruisers, of which two or three should always be on patrol, had four stations—the areas round G.1 in $63^{\circ} 5' N.$, $6^{\circ} 40' E.$; G.2 off Lundo in $64^{\circ} 10' N.$, $9^{\circ} 30' E.$; G.3 on the parallel of $66^{\circ} 30' N.$; and G.4 on the parallel of $67^{\circ} 15' N.$, between $11^{\circ} 30' E.$ and $13^{\circ} 30' E.$ Thus one ship of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron should always be within 100 miles of the trawlers to support them. The crews of the trawlers were to cultivate friendly relations with the local fishermen and endeavour to keep their own movements and positions hidden from the enemy.

43. The fact that we were attempting to interfere with the iron ore traffic did not long escape the attention of the Germans. They became aware, through the report of an agent, that one of our armed merchant cruisers was operating in the Vestfjord in $67^{\circ} N.$, and U.22 (Lieut.-Commander Hoppe) left Borkum on August 3 for that destination. After arrival on August 8 he had not long to wait. The *India* was seen approaching, and as

¹ M. 05834/15.

soon as she came near enough Hoppe torpedoed her.¹ She sank in five minutes in the position 67° 24' N., 13° 44' E. Most of the boats were swamped. Of the 189 survivors, 157 had either dived or went down with the ship. Two boatloads pulled ashore, while the remainder were picked up by the armed trawler *Saxon* and a Swedish steamer *Gotaland*.

Commander W. G. A. Kennedy, in his report,² places on record his "admiration at the magnificent behaviour of the officers and men, as notwithstanding the appalling swiftness of the catastrophe, the most perfect discipline prevailed until the end." The *Gotaland*, with the men she had saved, proceeded for Narvik; she was followed by Commander Kennedy in the *Saxon*, who anticipated that, if he steered southward for the *Virginian*, the submarine would follow and torpedo her too. The Norwegian authorities were quite willing to let the *Saxon* go to sea again with all she had saved; but as there was no food or accommodation and everyone was worn out, reluctantly, Commander Kennedy decided upon internment. The internment camp was finally fixed at Jorstadmoen, Fuaborg, near Lillehammer.

We now know that the submarine which sank the *India* had been sent so far north for that special purpose; but intelligence received at the time led us to suspect a submarine base within reasonable distance of the White Sea. To search for this the *Columbella* was ordered to go with a sloop and two trawlers and search Bear Island (74° N., 19° E.), Spitzbergen, and the coast between the North Cape and the White Sea.³ Accordingly the trawlers *Arley* and *Mafeking* left Scapa on July 27, followed by the *Columbella* and *Acacia*. The *Columbella* was back at Scapa by August 26, and her report of the cruise, which had produced no positive evidence, tended rather to discredit the idea that a submarine had ever really been in the White Sea.⁴

CHAPTER VII.

THE AUTUMN OF 1915.

44. In the home areas of the Northern Patrol enemy submarines were more and more frequently reported. Not only did the merchant cruisers expect attack, but the armed guards sent in with suspected ships ran a similar danger. The officers and men forming these guards were in an unpleasant

¹ Gayer II, 42, 43. He remarks that this is one of the rare instances where information received from spies turned out to be accurate.

² Report on Loss of *India*, H.S. 185, pp. 330-340.

³ Orders for Operation M., H.F. 0016/6, G.F.S. P. XXX.

⁴ G.F.S. P. XXX.

position. Their duty was to compel the master of the neutral ship in which they were embarked to conduct his vessel into port for examination. As these examination ports were all within the zone declared dangerous by the Germans, there was a possibility that the guards might encounter a submarine; and to guide their conduct in such a case the Commander-in-Chief issued on March 28 the following rules:—

- (a) The officer in charge must endeavour to arrange for the neutral ship to escape.
- (b) The officer must not use the neutral ship as a weapon for attacking the submarine unless actually attacked by her.
- (c) The prize crew¹ must not fight on the deck of the neutral ship unless the submarine has committed a hostile act against the neutral ship. In the latter event the prize crew are justified in fighting to the last.

He referred these rules for confirmation to the Admiralty where they gave rise to a lengthy discussion in which the Foreign Office and the Law Officers of the Crown were included. Before a decision had been reached it was discovered that the German Naval Attaché in Sweden had announced that the Germans considered they had a full right to torpedo every neutral vessel with a prize crew on board. In view of this, the Commander-in-Chief asked that the prize crews should be supplied with lance bombs and directed to attack any submarine which might come alongside, without waiting for action on her part.² It was recognised at the Admiralty that the position of an armed guard on board a ship flying a neutral flag was one of great difficulty. Should the Germans board the ship and the guard not resist they would be carried into a German port as prisoners; if, on the other hand, they did resist, in order to do so successfully they must initiate a hostile act such as throwing a lance bomb from the deck of the neutral ship. In effect this would be to commit an act of war under the neutral flag,³ an action that was without precedent and would undoubtedly raise serious complications with neutral States. There was even the suggestion made to discontinue the practice of placing an armed guard on board a ship sent in for examination and to substitute a system whereby a bond should be taken for the ship proceeding as ordered.⁴ The opinion of the Law Officers, however, was that a guard placed on board a ship to compel the master to bring a neutral vessel into port had the same right of resistance as a prize crew which was in possession of a ship seized as prize.

¹ These rules are in X. 9400/15. They are written as for officers in charge of prize crews but presumably applied to armed guards as well.

² Telegram 43 from C.-in-C., H.F., 21.5.15.

³ By Admiralty Weekly Order 89 of 22.1.15, the neutral flag was not to be lowered in vessels sent in for examination.

⁴ X. 9400/15.

Accordingly, the Admiralty informed the Commander-in-Chief that "an attempt by the enemy at hostile action towards the neutral ship proceeding for examination, such as the flying by the enemy submarine of a signal 'abandon ship' . . . justifies the neutral ship in taking immediate steps in self-defence to attack the submarine instantly, whether by ramming or by the use of bombs from the neutral's deck."

This letter¹ was not written till August 27 and meanwhile the armed guards had been having experiences. On July 6 a large submarine accosted the Danish sailing vessel *Maren* on passage to Kirkwall with an armed guard from the *Columbella*, but did not molest either the ship or the guard.

On July 28 the Norwegian steamer *Trondhjemsfjord* was in 61° 30' N., 3° 42' W., proceeding towards Kirkwall with an armed guard from the *Hildebrand* on board when a submarine opened fire on her, the shot passing over her bows. The master altered course to bring the submarine astern and proceeded at full speed. After a chase of half an hour the submarine fired a second shot and the steamer, which was being rapidly overhauled, stopped. The submarine then ordered the master on board with the ship's papers. Before leaving his ship, he arranged for the disguise of the armed guard, while his wife provided the officer in charge with some of her husband's clothes in place of his own which she put with her own effects for removal. The rifles and gear of the guard were concealed in the fore peak. Soon after the master had got aboard the submarine, the German officer in command made the signal to the steamer to abandon ship immediately, and as soon as the boats were clear fired a torpedo into her amidships from a distance of about 130 yards. A large quantity of sulphuric acid amongst the cargo burst with a loud explosion and flew high into the air. The ship sank shortly afterwards. The submarine then towed the boats for a distance of about four miles until she met the Norwegian barque *Glance*, which she ordered to embark the boats' complements. The captain of the submarine showed every courtesy and explained that his chief reason for sinking the vessel was the fact that she had been British-owned and purchased by the Norwegian company since the outbreak of hostilities. While on board the submarine the master denied that he had an armed guard on board or that he had even been boarded. The armed guard eventually reached Thurso after transfer to a trawler.

Comparable with this experience was that of an armed guard from the *Motagua* aboard the Norwegian steamer *Fimreite* on July 23 in 60° 17' N., 8° 43' W. About 4 a.m. a submarine, afterwards identified as U.36, was sighted on the port bow making for the vessel at full speed. The *Fimreite* stopped, and the master went alongside the submarine. Meanwhile, the officer in charge of the

¹ N.L. 31521/15 in X. 9400/15.

guard ordered his men to take off their uniforms and assist in turning the boats out. On return to the *Fimreite* the master stated he had given Hull *via* Kirkwall as his destination, and had replied to a question as to whether he had an armed guard on board: "Yes, one officer and four soldiers." The submarine captain then told him that he would sink his vessel for trading with the English, and with regard to the armed guard shouted: "Don't let them go into the boats. Let them sink." However, when the master returned he found all his crew as well as the guard in the boats.¹ The officer of the guard had ordered his men to remove everything in the way of uniform clothing before getting into the boats and to disguise themselves as much as possible, taking only their revolvers in their pockets. After sinking the vessel the submarine at once left the vicinity. During the afternoon of the same day the Norwegian barque *Springbank* picked up the crew and armed guard and transferred them later to the *Caliban* on passage to Stornoway.²

Still another case was that of the armed guard put aboard the *Pass of Balmaha*. This vessel, an American full-rigged ship, was stopped on July 21 by the *Victorian*, than on "C" Patrol; and an armed guard consisting of a sub-lieutenant, R.N.R., one petty officer and four men, was put on board with instructions to take her to Lerwick or Kirkwall as the wind should suit. Two days later in about 60° 18' N., 7° 5' W., they sighted a large submarine sinking several vessels; next morning this submarine, U.36, came alongside the *Pass of Balmaha*, which was flying American colours, and demanded her papers. By this time the armed guard had changed into borrowed clothing and had stowed themselves in the fore peak, relying on the chance that the submarine would release the ship. But instead, she ordered the vessel to Cuxhaven, put a warrant officer on board and remained alongside till relieved by another submarine, which kept in touch all the way to Heligoland. The guard remained below the whole time, hoping a British patrol would turn up; but no British man-of-war was sighted, and on arrival at Cuxhaven on August 1 the officer in charge of the guard gave himself up and was made a prisoner of war.³

45. The Northern Patrol now extended from the Lofoten Islands to the North of Iceland, and the value of Swarbacks Minn as a coaling base is easily appreciated. The work there was proceeding well. A loch above Olna Firth was found to yield a fair supply of drinking water. Boiler water to the extent of 150 tons per day for the ships' boilers would be required and this amount could be led through a conduit pipe to the shore

¹ N.I.D., 9602/15.

² Rules of conduct for boarding officers and officers in charge of armed guards are contained in "Instructions for Boarding Officers and Prize Officers in War-Time."

³ M. 06829/15.

whence lighters could convey it to the ships. These arrangements necessitated the provision of four 100-ton steam hoys fitted with the requisite hoses.

With reference to coal, it was considered that with the large consumption of the squadron (1,600 tons a day) four colliers should always be available at any moment, and that a moored coal hulk should be provided for supplying yachts, drifters and harbour craft. The *Gibraltar*, already at this time in process of being fitted out as a depôt and repair ship, arrived on August 3, and moored in a position that enabled her guns to command the boom which had been finished on July 20.¹ Look-out stations connected by telephone were erected and a pair of minesweeping trawlers provided to keep the channel open in the event of enemy minelaying. On July 28 Admiral de Chair again anchored in Swarbacks Minn for a conference and found the work in hand well on its way towards completion. The boom defence between Papa Little Island and Muckle Roe Island was in place with the gate in operation. A portion of the outer net defence had been supplied though it was not yet in place. Five colliers with a total of 14,942 tons of coal lay in the harbour together with the salvage vessel *Zepher* for mooring net defences. The coaling of the *Patuca* in the first days of August showed the great advantage gained by the new organisation at the base. Arriving at 5 a.m. August 4 she took in 1,000 tons of coal, filled up with water, received fresh provisions, swept boiler tubes, and left on August 7. The actual coaling which was carried out with the assistance of 100 R.N.R. stokers from the *Gibraltar*, an augmentation in complement specially made for this purpose, occupied 50 hours. Thus the use of this base necessitated a period of four days for coaling, provisioning, etc., in comparison with the eight to ten days required by a visit to the Clyde or Liverpool. And further, the ships did not leave their sphere of operations. Swarbacks Minn could not, however, entirely take the place of the former bases; and ships still continued to visit Liverpool or the Clyde every three months or so.

46. Iceland was acquiring importance as a possible source of supply for Germany, and information reached the Admiralty of various forms of enemy activity in the island. The *Digby* visited Reykjavik early in August and found that vessels were boasting of having evaded the British blockade. It was understood by our Consul that wool and hides exported from there were intended for Germany *via* Denmark.² A new Danish line had been inaugurated apparently to deal with this traffic, and on August 30 the *Orcoma* intercepted and sent to Kirkwall with an armed guard the *Gullfoss* of the new line from Reykjavik to

¹ This was only a temporary measure. The position was inconvenient for a depôt ship and later she moored elsewhere, the defence of the entrance being taken over by auxiliary patrol vessels. G.F.S. P. XXX.

² X. 8933/15.

Copenhagen with ponies, wool, fish, cod-oil and 25 passengers. Her master said he was proceeding *viâ* Kirkwall, and then protested against being sent in on account of the danger of submarines—a line of conduct somewhat inconsistent. The Foreign Office brought pressure upon the Icelandic authorities, and upon the owners of the vessels trading with Iceland, to induce them to arrange that all vessels should call at a port in the United Kingdom for examination. As a result of their efforts, the United, Thor, and Iceland Shipping Companies, all of Denmark, and trading regularly to Iceland, agreed to the suggestion; and Admiral de Chair was informed that he need not, as a general rule, send in the vessels of these companies. But, nevertheless, occasions arose when it was considered advisable to do so. The *Orcoma*, for instance, some time later intercepted the *Island* of the United Shipping Company bound from Reykjavik to Leith and Copenhagen with meat, fish, sheepskins and 15 passengers, one of whom was German. In view of the suspicious character of the passengers it was thought desirable to make sure of a thorough examination being carried out and an armed guard proceeded in the vessel to Lerwick.

Part of the trade of Iceland consists of herrings carried in small sailing vessels, and these when met were frequently sent in with armed guards. The discomforts suffered by these during the winter were varied and unpleasant; frequently the food ran out before port was reached, and they had to subsist on salt herrings out of the cargo. In bad weather, which was almost continuous, they manned the pumps and trimmed the sails as necessary; they were constantly wet through and frequently had to sleep in their saturated clothes—a chilly experience so near the Arctic Circle. In particular, the armed guards in the intercepted sailing vessels *Valand* and *Haugar* received Their Lordships' commendation.¹

47. On September 11 at night, in a dense fog, the *Patia* and *Oropesa* collided in 58° N., 11° W., west of the Hebrides. The *Oropesa* got off lightly; but the *Patia's* bows were so badly damaged that her captain preferred to steam stern first, though her speed that way was only three knots.

The Admiral ordered her to the Clyde with the *Ebro* as escort, and later, when the *Oropesa* was found to be leaking, he despatched her there also. By 3 p.m. on the 12th the *Patia* had made so little progress that the Commander-in-Chief sent out tugs from Stornoway to tow her in to East Loch Roag for temporary repairs. At 2.40 a.m. on the 13th, by which time the damaged ship had reached only as far as 10° W., she sighted a submarine. The *Ebro* attempted to ram but failed to hit the enemy. The *Patia* turned round and went ahead at 13 knots, and finding that this was safe, the Commander-in-Chief ordered her direct to the Clyde

¹ H.S. 185, pp. 361-371.

instead of East Loch Roag. Shortly after midnight on the 14th she reported another submarine attack, but the torpedo failed to hit her and she arrived safely in the Clyde at 11 p.m.

48. Submarines off the west of Scotland had so far made that area specially dangerous for the Tenth Cruiser Squadron; but that peril was shortly to be removed. On September 20 an order from the Kaiser forbade further U-boat warfare on the West Coast and in the Channel,¹ and consequently the only submarines likely to be found there would be those on passage to the Mediterranean. The bases at Liverpool and the Clyde should henceforth be safe.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WINTER OF 1915-1916.

49. The approach of winter necessitated a change in the arrangement of the patrols, and on November 1 this came into force. In view of the increased hours of darkness the line abreast patrol system was substituted for that of line ahead. The new positions and arrangements generally were as follows:—

“ A ” Patrol.—North of the Faeroes. Centre line 315° from lat. $62^\circ 30' N.$, long. $5^\circ W.$ Ships 40 miles apart, crossing centre line at noon daily, steering to make good 280° , turning in time to cross again at midnight, steering 100° until time to turn again.

“ C ” Patrol.—North from St. Kilda. Centre line meridian of $11^\circ W.$, southern ship being in lat. $58^\circ 6' N.$ Ships 25 miles apart, crossing centre line at 11 a.m., steering to make good 280° , turning in time to cross again at 1 a.m., steering 100° until time to turn again. The southern ships were ordered not to approach St. Kilda or the Flannan Islands within 40 miles.

“ F ” Patrol.—In the vicinity of Hvalsbak, Iceland. Lat. $64^\circ 36' N.$, long. $13^\circ 15' W.$, keeping outside 100-fathom line in thick weather.

¹ Gayer, II, 55. *Am 20 September, 1915, ging beim Führer der U-Boote der Nordsee und bei der U-Flotille Flandern der Allerhöchste Befehl ein, jede Art U-Bootskrieg an der Westküste Grossbritanniens und im Kanal einzustellen.*

The establishment of Lerwick as an examination port had by now been completed and a large percentage of vessels intercepted were sent in there. Between October 13 and November 2, of the ships sent to Lerwick, five were placed in the Prize Court, four were awaiting decision and eight were cleared.

The disposition of the squadron on November 7 was as follows:—

“ A ” Patrol.—*Motagua, Ebro, Oropesa, Alsatian.*

“ C ” Patrol.—*Otway, Victorian, Hildebrand, Hilary, Almanzora, Teutonic.*

“ F ” Patrol.—*Andes.*

“ G ” Patrol.—*Alcantara, Orcoma,* and an armed trawler.

The *Changuinola* and *Columbella* were coaling at Swarbacks Minn, and the *Cedric* was on her way there. The *Virginian* was coaling at Liverpool; and the *Mantua, Patuca, Digby,* and *Patia* were coaling in the Clyde. The *Arlanza* had gone to Archangel with General Wolfe Murray and other officers; on the return journey she struck a mine on October 22, but was towed into Kola Inlet, where she was safely moored and left for the winter.¹ The *Orotava* was on the way to the White Sea to get in touch with her.

50. The *Digby* and *Oropesa* were soon to leave the squadron. In order to make clear to the United States and to other neutral countries that our policy with regard to trade was also that of the Allied Powers, it was felt that, if possible, the French should take part in the blockade operations. When asked, they proposed at first to send their auxiliary cruiser *Atmah*; but she was only of 1,664 tons gross and obviously unsuitable for such work as the Northern Patrol had to perform. They were prepared to provide only a small complement, and ultimately it was decided to turn over to them the *Digby*, as the smallest vessel on the patrol. She left the station, and on November 23 reached Brest, where she was commissioned with a French crew and renamed *Artois*. The French then asked for a second ship of her type; the nearest was the *Oropesa*, which left the Northern Patrol and reached Brest on November 29. She was there commissioned with a French crew and renamed *Champagne*; she did not rejoin the Tenth Cruiser Squadron, but was used as a regular monthly packet between France and Archangel.²

51. The Norwegian-American Line continued to give trouble. Another of their vessels, the *Kristianiafjord*, was sent into Kirkwall in the middle of November. She had been intercepted at night and as she was steaming at high speed with all lights out it was fortunate she was not sunk by gunfire in mistake for a hostile minelayer. The Admiral suggesting that strong measures were

¹ Full details of the occurrence are in G.F.S. P. XXX.

² Papers titled X. 9261/15, X. 9416/15.

necessary in dealing with this line, urged that the vessel should be seized; but in point of fact we had recently concluded an agreement with that Company whereby the *Kristianiafjord* and *Bergensfjord* would not be required to call at a British port for examination provided they followed a fixed course in order that they could be intercepted and brought in if necessary.¹ On the other hand, the Company agreed to abide by the "Conditions of Supply of Bunker Coal," which enabled us to exert a good deal of control over the operations of neutral shipowners. The effect of these "conditions" was marked, and they served to lighten considerably the work of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron. The numbers of neutral vessels calling voluntarily for inspection increased from 32 per cent. in October to 53 per cent. in December; the percentage evading the patrols decreased from 20 per cent. to 11 per cent. in the same period.²

52. The end of the year provided an occasion for analysing the work performed by the Squadron. During 1915 the armed merchant cruisers patrolled without intermission an area of 220,000 square miles in all weathers, and in circumstances rendered especially difficult by the presence of enemy submarines. During this time 3,098 ships had been intercepted and carefully examined; 743 of the number found with contraband or other suspicious cargo were sent in to a British port for further examination and confiscation if considered desirable by the authorities. Though during the last five months of 1915 Norway and Denmark received 77 cargoes, of which our authorities had no particulars,³ out of an aggregate of 3,800 vessels passing through the patrol area, only eight whose interception was considered important evaded the patrol.⁴

Two of the merchant cruisers were lost by submarine attack (*Bayano* and *India*) and one (*Clan Macnaughton*) foundered in heavy weather; the *Arlanza* had been mined and was awaiting repair in Russia; the *Viknor* had been lost with all hands. The casualties among the personnel of the squadron for the year amounted to 63 officers and 800 men. This was out of an estimated total complement of 9,000.⁵ Of the 365 days of 1915, the *Alsatian* had been 262 days at sea. She had steamed 71,500 miles and had burned 40,287 tons of coal; and this record the Admiral considered to be typical of the whole squadron.

Of the armed guards, one was taken prisoner, one carried to Norway (where their prize, the American barque *Andrew Welch*, was retained, while they were allowed to proceed to England), and two had their prizes sunk under them by submarines. The

¹ C.I.O. 100/1916.

² See C.B. 1554: *The Economic Blockade*, Chapter XXVIII and Appendix II.

³ Carless Davis: *History of the Blockade*, p. 208.

⁴ For Analysis of Vessels intercepted see Appendix B.

⁵ H.S. 185, pp. 415, 517.

Admiralty had issued new orders as to the conduct of armed guards. It was now thought that an attempt on their part to attack a submarine was not likely to be effective, and was not, in fact, advisable for political reasons. The Admiralty, therefore, on December 17 asked the Commander-in-Chief to issue orders that resistance should not be offered by armed guards to submarines or other vessels.¹ Admiral de Chair in reporting the work of his squadron drew attention to the "cheerful willingness of these young officers and men who take this constant risk without the satisfaction of being allowed to strike a blow in defence of their own safety." The Commander-in-Chief endorsed his remarks and added that he considered "the work of officers and men merits the very highest commendation. They deserve all that their country can do for them."²

The advent of 1916 was accompanied by a series of north-westerly gales; during the worst of these, on January 15, the boom gate vessel at Swarbacks Minn dragged her anchors and blocked the entrance. The shore end of the boom net defence, which was secured round a large rock, also carried away, due to the rock splitting under the strain.³

During these westerly gales several sailing ships sent in with armed guards had been unable to make either Kirkwall or Lerwick and had been driven over to the Norwegian coast. Permission was now given for such vessels to make any British port except fleet bases.⁴ It should be noted that the armed guards were not detained by the Norwegian Authorities.

The winter weather was proving too much for the trawlers on the Norwegian coast, and at the end of 1915 they were transferred to the Fair Island Channel, where submarines were continually reported.

53. At sea the crews of the Northern Patrol force were continuously engaged in arduous and dangerous work, but ashore, especially at Liverpool, labour troubles frequently delayed the sailing of ships to relieve their hardworked consorts; and it was with some indignation that the Admiral heard on December 28 that his vessels in the Clyde could not sail on account of the workmen's Christmas holidays. The Commander-in-Chief wrote specially to the Admiralty drawing attention to this matter, but it seems that nothing could be done.⁵

54. Among the vessels that got away from Liverpool after the Christmas holidays was the *Artois* (late *Digby*); she left on January 14 to join the patrol, and from that time onwards acted with the Tenth Cruiser Squadron. She put in to Swarbacks Minn to coal on the 20th, and an officer was lent to her for ten days to advise as to the routine and work to be done. On completion she proceeded to "C" Patrol. There, on February 2,

¹ M. 08686/15 in X. 9400/15.

³ H.S. 298, p. 16.

² H.S. 185, pp. 416, 437.

⁴ H.S. 268, p. 77.

⁵ H.S. 298, pp. 32, 33. The holidays were considered necessary as the men had been working overtime and on Sundays.

she intercepted the Danish sailing vessel *Vigilant*. This vessel had lost her foremast and was in such a bad state that the master asked for his crew to be taken aboard. The transfer was effected with difficulty on account of the weather, and attempts were made to tow the derelict. Nothing could be done till the 4th, when the weather slightly improved; the *Artois* had been standing by all this time and then took her in tow and proceeded for Stornoway. She arrived on the 6th, having sighted a submarine; the wind had by that time risen to a full gale. This was the French crew's initial experience of the routine of the Northern Patrol in the winter.

CHAPTER IX.

THE "ALCANTARA"—"GREIF" ACTION, FEBRUARY 29, 1916.

55. So far the Tenth Cruiser Squadron had been exposed to three chief dangers. The weather had claimed at least one victim; enemy mines had destroyed two more; submarines had sunk three vessels. The squadron had not yet encountered any surface craft, though this form of attack had been met by ships of the Grand Fleet. On August 8, 1915, the *Ramsay*, one of the Grand Fleet boarding steamers, was in the act of lowering a boat to board a vessel flying Russian colours, when the latter opened fire from concealed guns and sank the *Ramsay* with a torpedo. The enemy had looked perfectly innocent and no sign of guns had been visible even at 80 yards distance; the surprise was complete. The incident was the first of its kind, but the Commander-in-Chief considered it certain to be repeated and issued special orders dated August 24, 1915, to deal with such a contingency. In these orders the chief interest for the Tenth Cruiser Squadron lay in the following paragraph:—

"Care is required when closing vessels for boarding or examination, and the gun and torpedo armament instantly ready. Bearings from which torpedoes can be fired should be avoided; a good position from which to approach is on the quarter, as the rudder and screw can be watched and early indications of the suspect's intentions will be obtained; if the ship has been acting suspiciously, is thought to be armed, or manœuvres for position, she should be stopped with a warning gun, an offing kept, and the master ordered to bring his papers aboard. If the weather is too bad for boat work, the ship is to be ordered to steer for a sheltered position, a vessel of the patrol escorting her. Fire should be opened in case of non-compliance with orders.

"Where suspicion exists, another patrol vessel should be informed and, if considered necessary, called to support."¹

¹ G.F.S.P. 0042/2.

These orders were still in force when on February 28, 1916, at 11.38 a.m., the Admiralty warned the Commander-in-Chief that a German decoy ship had been off the Skaw at 7 that morning proceeding westward at about 10 knots. On receipt of this he ordered two light cruisers and four destroyers from Rosyth to patrol the area covering the Skaw—Farn Island and Naze—May Island trade routes, one light cruiser with two destroyers to operate on each route. From her proceedings in the Baltic it was thought the enemy might have a submarine with her, and this patrol was warned that great precautions were essential when boarding steamers, in view of possible attack from the decoy ship or submarine. They were to go as far as the meridian of 5° E. during daylight, patrolling west of the meridian of Greenwich after dark to prevent minelaying. The vessels sent from the Forth were the *Inconstant*, *Cordelia*, and four destroyers. In addition, the Commander-in-Chief sent the light cruisers *Calliope*, *Comus*, and *Blanche* from Scapa, each with a destroyer, to search during daylight between $57^{\circ} 20'$ N. and 60° N. and the meridian of 2° E. and 4° E.; at night they were to patrol the meridian of Greenwich.¹

Shortly after midnight directional bearings of a German wireless signal placed the transmitting ship in $58^{\circ} 17'$ N., $5^{\circ} 47'$ E., near Ekersund at 8.20 p.m., and the Commander-in-Chief accordingly signalled to the three Scapa light cruisers that they should be on the circle with radius 200 miles long from that point at 10 a.m. The *Comus* was to search 40 miles in the direction 50° from 61° N., $1^{\circ} 10'$ E.; the *Calliope* 40 miles in the direction 230° from the same point, while the *Blanche* was to make for $61^{\circ} 30'$ N., 0° E., at 18 knots, sending back her destroyer in view of the weather.

The *Columbella* on "G" Patrol was about to return to Swarbacks Minn to coal,² but the Commander-in-Chief ordered her and the *Patia*, which was on her way out to that area, to patrol for 60 miles 50° from $61^{\circ} 30'$ N., 0° E. between 3 p.m. and dark on the 29th. They were to be 30 miles apart in line ahead.³

Two other ships of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron were in the same neighbourhood; the *Andes* (Captain G. B. W. Young, R.N.), which had just arrived, and the *Alcantara* (Captain T. E. Wardle, R.N.), which was to proceed in the afternoon of the 29th for Liverpool.⁴

Before leaving his station Captain Wardle arranged a rendezvous with the *Andes* for 9 a.m. on the 29th in $61^{\circ} 45'$ N., $0^{\circ} 58'$ E. in order to transfer secret papers. He was near this spot when

¹ For the detailed orders see H.F.S. O. 33 in X. 9473/16.

² *Teutonic* W/T Signal Logs (Deptford Nos. 24840/24841) No. 722.

³ *Teutonic* Signal Log No. 768.

⁴ *Teutonic* Signal Log 744.

soon after 8 a.m. he received from the Senior Officer of his Squadron by wireless :—

Alcantara not to leave patrol pending further orders. Armed disguised enemy merchant auxiliary from the southward may pass patrol line to-day.¹

Accordingly, Captain Wardle shifted his men into clean under-clothing and took precautions to see that, as far as possible, his guns were ready for instant action.²

56. At 8.45 a.m., when heading about N.N.E., he sighted smoke on his port beam and shortly afterwards received from the *Andes*, which was to the northward of him but not yet visible, "Enemy in sight steering N.E. 15 knots," followed by a further signal understood in the *Alcantara* as stating the enemy had two funnels.³ Captain Wardle at once increased to full speed and turned to N.W. which took him between the *Andes* and the smoke of the stranger ; by this time he had made her out to be a steamer with one funnel, flying Norwegian colours, which were also painted on her sides. In a few minutes he sighted the *Andes* on his starboard bow, apparently steaming away fast in a north-easterly direction ; his duty, he considered, was that he should investigate the steamer before proceeding to help the *Andes* with the enemy.⁴ After he had fired two rounds of blank the steamer stopped and hoisted her number, M G V I ; this, however, could not be identified and Captain Wardle called his ship's company to action stations and kept his guns trained on her. By this time, 9.20 a.m., he had received from the *Andes* "Enemy has altered course to S.E."⁵ and he saw that the *Andes* had also altered course to S.E. As he could not see anything that the *Andes* might be chasing, he signalled to her by searchlight, "Am intercepting suspicious vessel. Is enemy still in sight ?"⁶ No immediate reply being received and the outward appearance and answers of the stranger agreeing with the name *Rena* painted on her stern, of which ship the particulars and voyage were known, he determined to put an armed guard on board and then go off to help his consort. Accordingly, at 10.14 he signalled, "Is enemy still in sight ? This ship is *Rena*. Armed guard on board." The *Andes* made the unexpected reply, "This is the suspicious ship."⁷

¹ This is entered in *Andes* Signal Log (Deptford No. 21494) as received 8.18 a.m.

² Capt. Wardle's Second Report, dated March 21, 1916, in X. 9473/16.

³ There is no mention of funnels in *Andes* Signal Log till 9.30—"Vessel steering North when sighted then altered to North-East. Painted black, black funnel, two masts, speed about 15 knots, 0910." The times given in Capt. Wardle's report appear to be about 20 minutes less than those in *Andes* Signal Log.

⁴ Capt. Wardle's Second Report.

⁵ *Andes* Signal Log has : "9.39, *Andes* to *Alcantara*. Vessel apparently altered to East."

⁶ Logged in *Andes* Signal Log as received 9.45.

⁷ In making his first signal Capt. Young intended to use the phrase "suspicious ship," and it was not till afterwards that he found the word "enemy" had been made. Court Martial Proceedings, p. 164.

57. The warning came too late. The *Alcantara* had closed the stranger's stern to about 1,000 yards. Just as the boarding boat was about to be lowered from the port side with its armed guard on board, the *Rena's* ensign staff dropped over her stern; her steering box on the poop opened to disclose a gun; flaps in her sides dropped down, revealing guns in position; and she opened fire on the *Alcantara* from all guns which would bear. With her first few shells she wrecked the boarding boat and cut all the electrical communications and the pipes for the telemotor steering gear. From the bridge of the *Alcantara*, which was being peppered with machine gun fire, Captain Wardle sent his messenger to order the after steering gear to be connected up; but the messenger was killed and it was some ten minutes before the ship was under control. During this interval she continued to close the enemy, who by this time was going ahead again.

The *Alcantara* had opened fire immediately and was doing great execution in spite of the fact that the training gear of some of her guns was so bad that they had to be pushed round.¹ After about a quarter of an hour boats were seen to be leaving the enemy, which was enveloped in a cloud of smoke and had stopped firing. Captain Wardle also ceased firing. His own ship was in no better condition than the German; the *Alcantara* was listing to port and by 10.45 a.m. was undoubtedly sinking. He, therefore, decided to abandon her and gave the orders for boat stations. A quarter of an hour later she had listed to 90°, and in this position she sank with her keel horizontal.

58. Meanwhile, Captain Young in the *Andes* had been firing whenever he had not been screened by the *Alcantara*. When the enemy commenced action he had been 7,500 yards off, and throughout the engagement he had maintained 6,000 yards in order to keep out of torpedo range.² Just as the enemy and the *Alcantara* ceased fire the *Comus* (Captain Alan Hotham) and her destroyer, the *Munster*, came in sight. Captain Hotham, having taken in the *Andes'* signal announcing the enemy in sight had steered towards her, gradually working up to 27 knots; but he was not on the spot till the *Alcantara* sank, and it was the *Munster* who rescued Captain Wardle and his crew.

The *Andes* had turned away. Her lookout had reported a submarine between her and the *Alcantara*, and Captain Young was compelled to stand off at the moment when his consort sank. The submarine was duly reported astern³ and Captain Young, learning from Captain Hotham that the *Munster* would rescue the men in the water, joined the *Comus* in deliberate firing on the *Rena*, which was still afloat with the German ensign flying. It was not till 1 p.m. that the raider sank. Captain Young then proceeded to pick up the British and German survivors. While

¹ Court Martial Proceedings, pp. 78, 85.

² In this part of the action *Andes* fired 98 rounds of 6-in. Court Martial Proceedings, pp. 166, 168.

³ The evidence of the German survivors implies that no submarine was present.

so engaged another submarine was reported to him. He went full speed for a few minutes and the *Comus* opened fire; but the supposed submarine turned out to be wreckage and the work of rescue was resumed. The *Calliope* and her attendant destroyer, the *Magic*, had by that time come up, but learning that they could be of no assistance they returned to their patrol line.

59. The German survivors stated that the enemy had not come from the Baltic at all. But this was already known. The Admiralty at 11.35 a.m., just after the *Alcantara* sank, had informed the Commander-in-Chief that the vessel at the Skaw had gone back to the Sound. There remains the vessel near Ekersund to be accounted for. This could not have been the raider just sunk since she could not have travelled the 240 miles from Ekersund in the time. It is possible that this vessel was the earlier raider *Möwe* which, slipping through the patrol line at the end of 1915, had been operating in the Atlantic and just at this period was on her way home again.¹

From the prisoners it was learned that the sunken vessel was named *Greif*. She had been built in 1914 as an ordinary trader named *Guben* for the German-Australian Line, but early in 1916 had been fitted out very secretly at Hamburg with four 15 cm. guns and two torpedo tubes, and commissioned as the *Greif* with a crew of about 360. She had left Germany on February 27; she was to proceed round the North of Iceland to raid commerce in the Atlantic, and then, if she could not get back, to make for German East Africa.²

60. The sinking of the *Alcantara* after so short an action was attributed to a torpedo. The evidence on this, as on other points, is conflicting; but from the German prisoners it was ascertained that the *Greif* got rid of two torpedoes, and certain survivors from the *Alcantara* consider they felt the shock of one exploding. Two officers and 67 men were missing. Captain Wardle reported that his crew fought with great gallantry and coolness and that perfect discipline was kept throughout. As an example of this, at the time of abandoning ship the men making their way up to the deck stood aside and helped carry up the wounded, most of whom got away dry in the boats.³

No attempt is here made to give a detailed account of the action. The only evidence available is that of Captains Wardle and Young, which differs in almost every respect, such as bearings, ranges and courses. The plans of the action sent in by these two officers are attached; from them the divergence of evidence can be estimated.

¹ *The Two Cruises of the Möwe*. I.D. 1171. The Germans were so pleased at her safe arrival that they struck a medal, dedicated to Admiral de Chair, showing a seagull (*möwe*) with a fish in its mouth flying over a chain guarded by two sleeping sea-lions. Beneath this picture is printed "Wie die Möwe der Seelöwen spottet." One of these medals is now in possession of Admiral de Chair.

² I.D. Historical Section, Vol. 508.

³ Court Martial Proceedings, p. 106.

CAPT. WARDLES PLAN

ALCANTARA-GREIF ACTION.

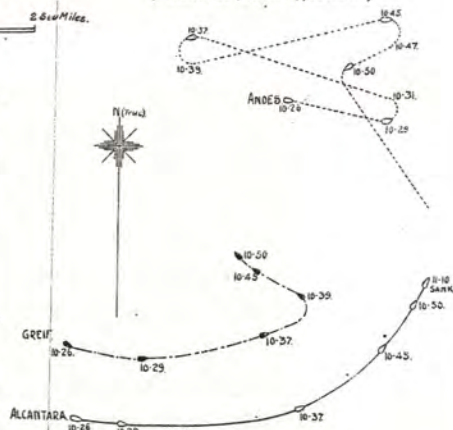
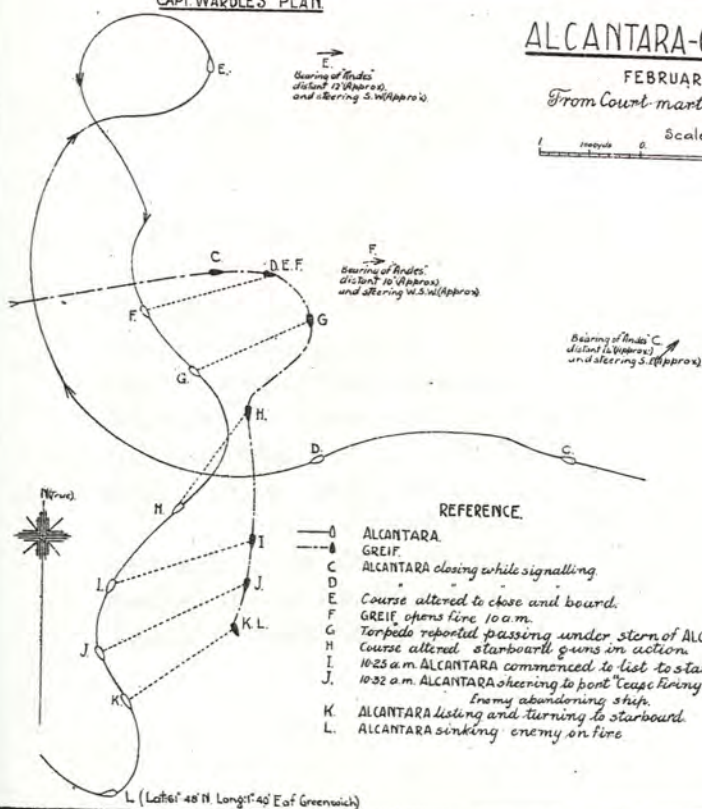
FEBRUARY 29TH 1916.

From Court-martial Proceedings.

Scale. 1 2 3 4 Miles.

CAPT. YOUNG'S PLAN

(ALCANTARA'S positions approximate).



A Court Martial held to enquire into the loss of the *Alcantara* came to the following conclusion :—

The Court finds that His Majesty's Ship *Alcantara* was sunk in action by an enemy vessel which was subsequently ascertained to be a German armed raider.

Fire was opened by the enemy vessel over Norwegian colours which were painted on her bows and quarter. The evidence is conflicting as to when the German Naval ensign was hoisted, but it is clear that it was flying shortly after the action commenced.

The Court is of opinion that the Officers and Men of His Majesty's Ship *Alcantara* showed promptitude and resource under the circumstances, and fought their ship in a creditable manner until forced to abandon her by their ship lying on her beam ends.

The enemy vessel was put out of action and abandoned by her crew through being engaged at close range by His Majesty's Ship *Alcantara* with His Majesty's Ship *Andes* in support. She was afterwards sunk by the combined fire of His Majesty's Ships *Comus* and *Andes*.

The Court wish to record their opinion that His Majesty's Ship *Andes* supported her consort in a proper manner.

The Court finds that no blame is attributable to Captain Thomas Erskine Wardle, Royal Navy, and the officers and crew of His Majesty's Ship *Alcantara* for the loss of their ship and acquits them accordingly.

61. While this action was in progress Admiral de Chair in the *Alsatian* was on his way to Liverpool. It was to be his last voyage in her. On February 24 the Government had asked that the newly-appointed Minister of Blockade should have the expert advice and assistance of a Naval Adviser of flag rank. Admiral de Chair was clearly indicated as the best selection for this important post ; and neither he nor the Commander-in-Chief could raise any objections. Vice-Admiral Reginald Tupper, C.V.O., Senior Naval Officer, Stornoway, was appointed as his successor ; on March 6, on arrival at Liverpool, Admiral de Chair hauled down his flag and severed his direct connection with the Tenth Cruiser Squadron.

APPENDIX B.

ANALYSIS OF VESSELS INTERCEPTED AND SENT IN BY
TENTH CRUISER SQUADRON DURING THE YEAR 1915.

| Nationality. | | | | | | Intercepted | Sent in. |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|-------------|----------|
| <i>American.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 55 | 47 |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 35 | 7 |
| <i>Other Neutrals.</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>Norwegian.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 469 | 271 |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 380 | 25 |
| Direction unknown | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 8 | — |
| <i>Swedish.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 183 | 131 |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 117 | 35 |
| <i>Danish.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 345 | 191 |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 259 | 20 |
| Direction unknown | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 2 | 1 |
| <i>Dutch.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5 | 3 |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 3 | — |
| <i>Spanish.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1 | — |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | — | — |
| <i>Argentine.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 1 | — |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | — | — |
| <i>British and Allied.</i> | | | | | | | |
| <i>British.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 135 | — |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 124 | — |
| Direction unknown | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 5 | — |
| <i>French.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 7 | — |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 10 | — |
| <i>Russian.</i> | | | | | | | |
| Eastbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 78 | — |
| Westbound | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 44 | — |
| Direction unknown | .. | .. | .. | .. | .. | 2 | — |
| TOTALS CARRIED FORWARD .. | | | | | | 2,268 | 731 |

| Nationality. | Intercepted | Sent in. |
|---------------------------------|-------------|----------|
| TOTALS BROUGHT FORWARD .. | 2,268 | 731 |
| <i>British and Allied—cont.</i> | | |
| <i>Belgian.</i> | | |
| Eastbound | 2 | — |
| Westbound | — | — |
| <i>Italian.</i> | | |
| Eastbound | — | — |
| Westbound | — | — |
| Direction unknown | 1 | — |
| <i>Nationality Unknown.</i> | | |
| Eastbound | 1 | 1 |
| Westbound | 5 | — |
| Direction unknown | 1 | — |
| <i>Fishing Craft.</i> | | |
| Norwegian | 81 | 2 |
| Swedish | 6 | 3 |
| Danish | 90 | 5 |
| Dutch | 29 | — |
| British | 603 | 1 |
| French | 5 | — |
| Russian | 3 | — |
| <i>Enemy Vessels.</i> | | |
| <i>German.</i> | | |
| Westbound | 3 | — |
| TOTALS | 3,098 | 743* |

* 38 without Armed Guards.

"*Alsatian.*"

February 10, 1916.

Enclosure to Tenth Cruiser Squadron Letter No. 421/35 of 31.12.15.

APPENDIX C.

VESSELS OF THE TENTH CRUISER SQUADRON IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER.

- Alcantara.*—Commissioned April 16, 1915. Commander T. E. Wardle.
Sunk February 29, 1916, by German Raider.
- Alsatian.*—Commissioned August 11, 1914. Captain V. E. B. Phillimore,
D.S.O.; succeeded January, 1915, by Captain G. Trewby.
- Ambrose.*—Commissioned December, 1914. Commander C. W. Bruton;
succeeded May, 1915, by Commander V. L. Bowring. Paid off
October 20, 1915.
- Andes.*—Commissioned April 22, 1915. Commander C. W. Trousdale;
succeeded January, 1916, by Captain G. B. W. Young.
- Arlanza.*—Commissioned April 24, 1915. Captain D. T. Norris. Wrecked
by mine October 22, 1915.

- Bayano*.—Commissioned December, 1914. Commander H. C. Carr. *Sunk by submarine March 11, 1915.*
- Calyx*.—Commissioned December 4, 1914. Commander T. E. Wardle. *Paid off March 27, 1915.*
- Caribbean*.—Commissioned December 12, 1914. Commander F. H. Walter. *Paid off June 9, 1915.*
- Cedric*.—Commissioned December 7, 1914. Captain R. E. R. Benson. *Paid off January 20, 1916.*
- Changuinola*.—Commissioned December 24, 1914. Commander H. C. R. Brocklebank.
- Clan Macnaughton*.—Commissioned December, 1914. Commander R. Jeffreys. *Lost with all hands, February 2, 1915.*
- Columbella*.—Commissioned November 30, 1914. Captain H. L. P. Heard; succeeded July, 1915, by Captain A. Bromley.
- Crescent*.—Captain G. Trewby. *Paid off December 4, 1914.*
- Digby*.—Commissioned December, 1914. Commander R. F. H. H. Mahon; succeeded October, 1915, by Commander A. G. Warren. *Handed over to the French, December, 1915, and re-commissioned as Artois.*
- Dryad*.—Lieutenant B. E. Prichard. *Left squadron January, 1915.*
- Ebro*.—Commissioned April 12, 1915. Commander E. V. F. R. Dugmore.
- Edgar*.—Captain C. F. Thorp. *Paid off December 5, 1914.*
- Endymion*.—Captain H. L. P. Heard. *Paid off November 28, 1914.*
- Eskimo*.—Commissioned December 9, 1914. Commander C. W. Trousdale. *Paid off March 31, 1915.*
- Gibraltar*.—Captain R. A. Hopwood. *Paid off November 28, 1914.*
- Gloucestershire*.—Commissioned February 8, 1916. Captain N. L. Stanley.
- Grafton*.—Commander C. E. W. Pyddocke. *Paid off December 9, 1914.*
- Hawke*.—Captain H. P. E. T. Williams. *Sunk by submarine October 15, 1914.*
- Hilary*.—Commissioned December 6, 1914. Commander R. H. Bather.
- Hildebrand*.—Commissioned December 5, 1914. Captain H. Edwards; succeeded December, 1915, by Captain J. F. Grant-Dalton.
- India*.—Commissioned April 12, 1915. Commander W. G. A. Kennedy. *Sunk by submarine August 2, 1915.*
- Mantua*.—Commissioned. Captain C. Tibbetts, M.V.O.
- Moldavia*.—Commissioned February 1, 1916. Commander A. H. Smyth.
- Motagua*.—Commissioned December 31, 1914. Captain V. E. B. Phillimore, D.S.O.; succeeded February, 1915, by Captain J. A. Webster.
- Oceanic*.—Commissioned August, 1914. Captain W. F. Slater. *Wrecked September 8, 1914.*
- Orcoma*.—Commissioned April 20, 1915. Commander C. W. Bruton.
- Oropesa*.—Commissioned December 8, 1914. Commander N. L. Stanley. *Handed over to the French December 2, 1915.*
- Orotava*.—Commissioned December 17, 1914. Commander G. E. Corbett.
- Otway*.—Commissioned November 23, 1914. Captain E. L. Booty, M.V.O.
- Patia*.—Commissioned December 22, 1914. Captain G. W. Vivian; succeeded November, 1915, by Commander V. L. Bowring.
- Patuca*.—Commissioned December, 1914. Commander C. H. France-Hayhurst; succeeded May, 1915, by Commander P. G. Brown; succeeded September, 1915, by Commander T. Dannreuther.
- Royal Arthur*.—Captain A. H. Williamson, M.V.O. *Paid off December 6, 1914.*
- Teutonic*.—Commissioned September 12, 1914. Captain H. Chatterton; succeeded February, 1915, by Captain G. C. Ross; succeeded October, 1915, by Commander A. H. Smyth; re-commissioned January 21, 1916, Commodore R. E. R. Benson.
- Theseus*.—Captain H. Edwards. *Paid off November 27, 1914.*
- Victorian*.—Commissioned June 9, 1915. Commander F. H. Walter.
- Viknor*.—Commissioned December, 1914. Commander E. O. Ballantyne. *Lost with all hands February 13, 1915.*
- Virginian*.—Commissioned December 10, 1914. Commander H. H. Smith

January

THE BALTIC, 1914.

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APPENDIX I. Baltic in 1914

PLAN I. Baltic in 1914

THE BALTIC, 1914.

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THE BALTIC, 1914.

INTRODUCTION.

The question of carrying out operations in the Baltic by the British naval forces was discussed on September 17, 1914, at a conference held at Loch Ewe between the First Lord of the Admiralty and the War Staff and the principal officers of the fleet. The general opinion, based largely on the danger from minefields, was that it was not at this time advisable to risk any reduction in our naval forces by eccentric movements such as an attack on Kiel by light cruisers and destroyers, though the question of the policy to be adopted when it should become possible to form two strong fleets, one in the North Sea and one in the Baltic, was to be thoroughly investigated. The despatch of submarines, however, to operate off Kiel and to attack the High Sea Fleet, portions of which were heard of constantly in the Baltic at this date, was on a different footing.¹

Six weeks later Admiral Fisher went to the Admiralty as First Sea Lord, and he at once initiated an extensive building programme of vessels designed to assist a landing operation in the Baltic by British troops.² Early in 1915, however, it was decided to come to the aid of Russia at the Dardanelles, and the Baltic project was abandoned and the vessels were employed in other areas.

Meanwhile, British submarines had been despatched to the Baltic in the autumn of 1914; and it is with the operations of these submarines up to the cessation of their activities on the incidence of winter 1914-15 that this monograph deals.

¹ G.F. Secret Pack 0022 (H.S., Vol. LIX).

² Lord Fisher, "Memories," pp. 55, 65, etc. The building programme as sanctioned comprised: 5 battle cruisers of light draught and 33 knots speed, 2 light cruisers, 5 flotilla leaders, 56 destroyers, 64 submarines, 37 monitors, 24 river light gunboats, 19 whaling steamers, 24 submarine destroyers, 50 sea-going patrol boats, 200 oil motor barges, 90 smaller barges, 36 sloops of 1,200 tons each. The project apparently included preliminary operations to clear the North Sea and to prevent the emergence of the German Fleet into that area, and the landings and feint landings were to be carried out with some 50,000 men on the coast of Pomerania. However, no details are forthcoming as to the project, and it is probable that little was committed to paper on the subject.

NOTE ON SOURCES.

Vol. H.S. 271, "Baltic Sea," contains the reports of the British submarine commanders in the Baltic and the Admiralty papers bearing on the subject. Vol. H.S. 225, "Eighth Submarine Flotilla Memoranda and Reports," contains the orders issued to the submarines for the operation of penetrating into the Baltic. The logs of the submarines, if any were kept, are not forthcoming.

On the German side there is the official history, "Der Krieg zur See, 1914-1918, Ostsee, Bd. I," Berlin, E. S. Mittler & Sohn, 1921, referred to in this monograph as G.O.H. It deals only with the period up to the early spring of 1915, and since it is the sole authority on the German side this monograph has been concluded at the point where the British submarines ceased operations temporarily in the winter of 1914-15.

There is little information from Russian sources as to the Russian operations, which consisted mainly of minelaying, other than a single report from the British Naval Attaché in Petrograd. The Russian official communiqués are contained in the monthly publication *Morskoi Sbornik*; this was issued to the public and contains little information of value.

Officers' Chart Atlas Folio (General Folio), Charts No. 2842A, Baltic Sea, Western sheet, and 2842B, Baltic Sea, Eastern sheet, will be found useful.

All times are G.M.T.

The spelling of Russian ships' names is in accordance with "War Vessels and Aircraft," August, 1914. Place-names are spelt as in *Baltic Pilot* (Part I, 5th edition, Part II, 5th edition, Part III, 1st edition), with the exception that such words as *renden*, *rev*, *sund*, etc., have usually been given their English equivalent: *channel*, *reef*, *sound*, etc.

THE BALTIC, 1914.

CHAPTER I.

NAVAL FORCES OF THE BELLIGERENTS AND SITUATION IN THE BALTIC UP TO THE END OF SEPTEMBER, 1914.

1. **German War Plans in the Baltic.**—In framing the war plans for a naval war against Russia, there were two extraneous factors with which the German Naval Staff had to reckon: the first, the probability that France would take part with Russia in any war against Germany, and the second, the intervention of Great Britain, either as arbitrator or belligerent. Inevitably, therefore, the Baltic Sea became relegated to the position of a subsidiary theatre of war. The naval strength of Germany, as compared with that of her possible adversaries, did not permit of the formation of a Baltic squadron of sufficient strength to ensure the destruction of the Russian Baltic Fleet, which might have to be dearly bought. More important to Germany than the destruction of the Russian naval forces was the possession herself of an undamaged fleet, for by this means alone could she hope to avert the intervention of Great Britain. Consequently, it was decided by the naval staff that in case of a war in which France was involved the German naval policy in the Baltic would merely be directed towards rendering the Russian fleet harmless.

2. **German and Russian Naval Forces.**¹—In pursuance of this policy the Germans relegated to the defence of the Baltic only such old ships and formations of little fighting value as could be spared from the war in the North Sea. The only modern vessels allotted were the light cruisers *Magdeburg* and *Augsburg* and three destroyers. The extent, if any, to which the German forces might expect to be reinforced after mobilisation depended upon the development of the situation in the North Sea.

The Russian Baltic Fleet was organised as (a) the Active Fleet, consisting of four pre-dreadnought battleships and five cruisers, with two destroyer flotillas, (b) First Reserve, consisting of a squadron of four cruisers, and (c) an Instructional Division (Second Reserve), comprising two coast defence battleships and a few gunboats and T.B.s. Of the four battleships with the Active Fleet, two only, the *Andrei Pervozvanni* and *Imperator*

¹ Appendices A and B.

Pavel I, possessed any fighting value.¹ The Fleet Flagship *Ryurik* was a powerful armoured cruiser of the *Blücher* type. The two big armoured cruisers *Gromoboi* and *Rossiya* were poorly protected,² and the value of the smaller cruisers was impaired by their low speeds. With the sole exception of the *Novik* all the Russian destroyers were far too slow for modern requirements.³

Four dreadnought battleships⁴ had been building at St. Petersburg for the past seven years, and two or three of them were expected to join the fleet by the end of the year.⁵ Although they mounted twelve 12 in. guns each as primary armament their efficiency was impaired by various defects such as weakly constructed hulls and bad lines.⁶ Two light cruisers, the *Muravev-Amurski* and *Admiral Nevelskoi*, had been building for Russia at the Schichau Works at Danzig and were due to be completed in July and September, 1914, respectively. Neither of them were delivered by Germany, but instead they were taken into her own service as the *Pillau* and *Elbing* respectively. Forty-five large modern destroyers were building by Russia at the outbreak of war for the Baltic Fleet. The completion of a few of them was due in the autumn and winter of 1914, but unfortunately the more advanced of them were being built to German design and much of the material and most of the machinery was being made in Germany, so that for some time after the outbreak of war their progress was almost stopped.⁷ For similar reasons the completion of the submarines under construction was delayed owing to non-delivery of their motors.

The vessels of which Germany and Russia could dispose in the Baltic in August, 1914, stood at the following figures:—

| | | <i>Germany.</i> | | |
|----------------|---------|-----------------|----|------------|
| Light cruisers | | .. | .. | 7 (5 old). |
| Destroyers | | .. | .. | 9 (6 old). |
| Submarines | | .. | .. | 3 |

The majority of the vessels were out of commission and would require several days after the order to commission before they could be ready for sea.

| | | <i>Russia.</i> | | |
|--------------------|---------|----------------|----|---------------------------------|
| Battleships | | .. | .. | 4 (pre-dreadnought). |
| Armoured cruisers | | .. | .. | 5 |
| Protected cruisers | | .. | .. | 4 (of little fighting value). |
| Destroyers | | .. | .. | 63 (includes 8 T.B.s). |
| Submarines | | .. | .. | 12 (includes 4 training boats). |

¹ G.O.H., p. 8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³ M. 04129/14, Report of Naval Attaché.

⁴ *Gangut, Poltava, Petropavlovsk, Sevastopol.*

⁵ The *Poltava* and *Sevastopol* joined the Fleet on December 14, 1914.

⁶ G.O.H., p. 8.

⁷ M. 04129/14, Report of Naval Attaché.

Against this preponderance of strength, however, the Germans by means of the Kiel Canal could bring against Russia the overwhelming strength of their High Sea Fleet.

3. **Russian Naval Bases.**—Since the Russo-Japanese War the Russians had practically abandoned Libau, which was too close to the German frontier for its communications to be secure, and had demolished its defences, retaining it merely as a destroyer base. For a similar reason the development of the military establishments in the Gulf of Riga was given up; and from 1909 onwards the Russians concentrated upon the development of their favourably situated positions in the Gulf of Finland, at the head of which Petrograd lies. The geographical formation of this Gulf renders it particularly suitable for defence. The channel from Kronstadt to the mouth of the Gulf is 210 miles long, and its average width is only 30 miles. Since the Russian Government claimed 12 miles as the limit of their territorial waters, most of the Gulf lay within Russian territorial limits. The numerous small islands and the nature of the north coast, which is indented with many bays and narrow inlets, afforded excellent positions from which destroyers and light craft might attack an invader. The depths of water both permitted the approach of submarines quite close to the coast and were also suitable for the employment of anti-submarine nets and mines.

Riga, the second largest commercial port, was capable of protection by the forces in the Gulf of Finland, with which latter communication was obtained through the Moon Sound behind the islands of Dagö and Ösel, both of which were undefended when war broke out. Moon Sound was, however, only navigable for ships up to 15 ft. draught and could not be used by heavy ships. The Gulf of Bothnia to the northward, where the trade with Sweden was covered by the Åland Islands,¹ was capable of similar protection by the forces in the Gulf of Finland. Thus the naval bases in the Gulf served to protect the main trade routes and the principal commercial ports.

The centre of the system of defences of the Gulf of Finland was Kronstadt, an immensely strong position. Revel was still in course of development when war broke out, being destined ultimately to serve as the main base of the Baltic Fleet. The defences were incomplete and it could only be used as a destroyer and submarine base. Helsingfors (Sveaborg), a spacious harbour on the north shore of the Gulf opposite Revel, was a second-class defended naval base and constituted the main destroyer base. In normal years Revel was free from ice during the months of January, February and March, except for about three weeks, having thus an advantage over Kronstadt, which was closed to navigation during some four or five months in the year.

¹ By the Paris Treaty of 1856 Russia agreed not to fortify the Åland Islands.

Helsingfors was not usually open between the end of January and the middle of April.¹

The Russians intended in the event of war to establish an outer line of defences at the entrance to the Gulf of Finland between Hangö and Cape Takhkona (Dagö Island). Up to July, 1914, no land fortifications had been constructed at the ends of the line, but preparations had been made for the defence of the intervening water by minefields.

The importance of the Gulf of Riga for offensive operations by the Russians was greatly impaired by the remoteness of the one large harbour, Riga, and its advanced base Dünamund, from the entrance to the Gulf. In offensive operations by the enemy against the Gulf of Finland it would be valuable as lying on the flank and threatening his communications. The entrance to the Gulf of Riga is usually closed by ice for a few weeks during January to March, though in some years it remains open during the entire winter. Libau, however, which occupies a similar position on the flank and in rear of an enemy attacking the Gulf of Finland, can with its approaches be kept free of ice throughout the winter by means of ice-breakers. Ships of 26 ft. draught and over could not enter Libau at the outbreak of war.

4. **German Naval Bases.**—Kiel, the strongest German naval base in the Baltic, and the only one where modern battleships of the deepest draught could enter and be secure from submarine attack, was distant 770 miles from Kronstadt, and was consequently too remote for use as a strategic base in offensive operations. Its very remoteness, however, gave security against attack. Swinemünde, backed by Stettin, provided a useful base for light forces. It was a flourishing commercial harbour, and German economic and commercial interests demanded its protection in war time. It was adequately protected against bombardment. Sassnitz, in the Island of Rügen, was an undefended harbour.

Danzig-Neufahrwasser was, from its situation, the most suitable German base for an attack on the Russian coast, but the harbour suffered from the serious drawback of shallowness, being navigable only for ships up to 23 ft. draught. Thus it was closed to battleships and armoured cruisers, particularly if their draught should have been increased by underwater damage. The fortifications of Neufahrwasser gave adequate protection against bombardment from the sea; but the remainder of the harbour defences would have offered insufficient resistance to a well equipped enemy. In August, 1914, there were no booms or nets to protect ships in the roads from torpedo attack. Prior to the war, the Imperial dockyard at Danzig had been used

¹ These dates are taken from Baltic Pilot, and are not in complete agreement with the German Official History.

only for the construction of submarines.¹ It was not equipped to meet the requirements of larger vessels, and offered no facilities for repairing and fitting out either large ships or destroyers. At the Schichau works, on the river below the Imperial dockyard, warships up to 13,000 tons and Atlantic liners up to 520 ft. in length had been built. In Pillau, on the eastern side of Danzig Bay, the Germans possessed another advanced base, suitable for ships up to 19 ft. draught. The defences were adequate to protect Königsberg from attack by sea.

Generally speaking, at the outbreak of war with Russia, the military value of the German bases in the Baltic was slight. Owing to their distance from the enemy's coast and their inadequate facilities for fitting out ships, they were of little value for an offensive against the Russian positions in the Gulf of Finland or for a prolonged blockade of the Gulf. For defensive operations, Danzig and Pillau were somewhat weakly protected; but the narrow part of the Baltic to the west of Bornholm offered more favourable conditions for the conduct of a defensive naval war; particularly was this the case with Swinemünde and the waters around Rügen.

5. German War Orders for the Baltic.—In July, 1914, the command of the German Baltic forces was in the hands of Vice-Admiral Bachmann. At the last moment, however, the distribution of commands in the Baltic provided for in the mobilisation plans was changed by the appointment on July 30 of Admiral of the Fleet Prince Henry of Prussia, Inspector-General of the Navy, to the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Forces. The Baltic Coast Defence Forces were directly under his command, as also would be any portions of the High Sea Fleet which might be sent to operate in the Baltic, though later, during the first months of the war, it was arranged that if the situation necessitated the Commander-in-Chief of the High Sea Fleet appearing in the Baltic with some of his ships he should take supreme command in those waters for the time being. Vice-Admiral Bachmann, Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Naval Station, remained in charge of the local defences, including the local protection of Kiel and its approaches, being independent of the new Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic Forces.² The latter took equal rank with the Commander-in-Chief of the High Sea Fleet; consequently, the possibility was opened up of operations in the Baltic being separately regarded

¹ G.O.H., p. 26. But N.I.D. Report, No. 812, states that the light cruiser *Freya* (5,628 tons) and coast defence battleship *Odin* (3,530 tons) were built there, though this was nearly 20 years before the war.

² By mutual agreement a clear line of demarcation was fixed between the duties of Prince Henry and Admiral Bachmann with regard to the defence of Kiel further out in the Belts, which was now carried out by the Baltic Coast Defence Forces under Prince Henry.

and conducted, instead of being restricted to coast defence or to dependence on the conduct of war in the North Sea.

The War Orders for the Baltic area were issued to Prince Henry on July 31, and were to the following effect :—

- (1) The principal objective in the conduct of the war is to interrupt as far as possible any offensive operations which may be undertaken by the Russians. In addition, Kiel Bay is to be secured against British and Russian forces, and enemy commerce in the Baltic is to be damaged.
- (2) Mining operations against the Russian coast are to be instituted as soon as possible after the outbreak of war.
- (3) The temporary despatch of portions of the High Sea Forces to deliver a blow at the Russian fleet will depend on the course of events.
- (4) The war against commerce is to be conducted in accordance with the Prize Law.¹

6. The Russian Command.—In the summer of 1914 the Russian Baltic Fleet was under the command of Admiral N. O. von Essen,² who had been some six years in this command. This officer had distinguished himself during the Russo-Japanese war, and it was expected by the Germans that a spirit of enterprise would characterise his conduct of the present war. The qualities of leadership of the commander of the Battleship Squadron, Vice-Admiral Baron V. N. Ferzen,³ were not rated very high by the German Naval Staff. Like the Commander-in-Chief of the Black Sea Forces, Admiral von Essen was subordinate to the Minister of Marine, Admiral Grigorovitch, "Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet and of the Navy"

In the view of the supreme Russian authorities the fleet was to be regarded primarily as an immediate defence force for the capital, and in other relations as solely an extension of the right wing of the main armies.⁴ This view was so pronounced that Admiral von Essen was directly subordinated to General von der Fleet, commanding the 6th Army, which was distributed in Finland and in the littoral provinces on the south of the Gulf ; while the Grand Duke Nicolai Nikolaevitch was Commander-in-Chief of all Russia's forces by sea as well as on land. Even the purely naval dispositions of Admiral von Essen, when carrying out some already approved action, were occasionally interfered with by the military. In face of the overwhelming strength

¹ The German Naval Prize Regulations have been translated and printed by the Admiralty as N.L. 01918/14.

² G.O.H. gives his rank as Vice-Admiral, but "War Vessels and Aircraft," Part I, August, 1914, gives his seniority as Admiral, April 27, 1913.

³ G.O.H. gives his rank as Rear-Admiral.

⁴ M. 04129/14, Report of Naval Attaché.

which Germany could bring against Russia from the North Sea all naval enterprise was discouraged, and indeed forbidden, to Admiral von Essen by the military authorities.

The German Naval Staff appears to have been unable to forecast the probable naval action which Russia would take in the Baltic in the event of war. One decision at which they had arrived, however, was that a Russian landing on the Pomeranian coast, which was a favourite thesis of professional writers, was out of the question until Germany had suffered a crushing defeat at sea. This latter, however, the German naval command had no intention of risking, nor was it considered a likely possibility. The difficulties of effective combination between the British and Russian fleets were considered to be insuperable. In addition, a Russian victory on land was a necessary prelude to an attempted landing on the Pomeranian coast.

7. German Defence System in Western Baltic.—One of the principal preoccupations of the Germans in the Western Baltic—indeed the factor upon which the whole of their naval operations in these waters were conducted—was the protection of their great fitting out base and practising ground at Kiel from the attacks of British forces which they believed would attempt to penetrate into the Baltic, an attempt by destroyers and submarines being particularly feared.¹

The Kattegat communicates with the Baltic by three distinct channels, viz. :—the Great Belt in the centre, the Little Belt on the western side, and the Sound on the eastern side. The Great and Little Belts, the channels on either side of the island of Fyen, unite southward of that island and then communicate with the Baltic Sea through the Fehmarn Belt and Cadet Channel. The Sound, passing between the Danish island of Zealand and the Swedish coast, is the shortest and most direct route, but was too shallow at its southern end for ships of the deepest draught. At its southern end the Sound is divided by the island of Saltholm (55° 39' N., 12° 45' E.) into two navigable passages, known as the Flint and Drogden Channels (*ränn*en).

It was necessary, in order that Kiel might be rendered impregnable from the north and British forces prevented from appearing suddenly in the southern exits from the Belts and Sound, that permanent outpost lines should be maintained in the Kattegat and Skagerrak, or that all the channels in the Belts and Sound should be blocked. As some of these channels lay within Danish and Swedish territorial waters, it was not, however, possible to make full use of them for military purposes. The southern entrance to the Little Belt was within German territorial waters and could be closed at once ; but in the Great

¹ G.O.H., p. 41. Such an attempt on the part of the British on the night of August 2 was apprehended by the German Naval Staff, and measures were hastily taken to meet it.

Belt, which was navigable by large ships and was therefore of primary importance, the Germans were only able to take measures of defence at the entrance from the Southern Baltic ; and this was the case also as regards the Sound.

The entire defence system of the Western Baltic was transferred by the Commander-in-Chief on August 2 to Rear-Admiral Mischke, commanding the Baltic Coast Defence Division. On the afternoon of August 2, Prince Henry was warned by the Naval Staff that British forces might attempt a surprise attack that night. The Commander-in-Chief had up to date provided chiefly against attack from the east,¹ and the forces available for the defence of the Western Baltic were now re-distributed. Admiral Mischke was ordered to push the outposts in the Belts as far north as possible, and he accordingly stationed two destroyers on the line Hjelm-Sjælland Reef² and one in the Korsör Passage in the Great Belt, north of Sprogö Island. The Sound was watched by vessels as far east as the line Möen-Trelleborg,³ and the gunboat *Panther* guarded the Fehmarn Belt. The Commander-in-Chief retained the four auxiliary mining vessels and the two submarines⁴ under his own orders, and he reserved to himself all decisions regarding the use of minefields. The forces at Rear-Admiral Mischke's disposal were barely sufficient even for outpost and reporting duties, and some of the destroyers were not fitted with W/T, which rendered the transmission of reports from the outposts a laborious proceeding.

Air reconnaissance of the Belts was carried out by seaplanes from Holtenau, on the fiord below Kiel, which had just been made the headquarters of the Naval Air Detachment, in lieu of Putzig. At this date Germany had about ten more or less serviceable seaplanes in the North Sea and Baltic,⁵ but their radius of action was small and they were unprovided with W/T, which delayed the receipt of their reports. Pending the completion of the flying bases at Haderslev (Hadersleben) and Flensburg the seaplanes were unable to reach the Kattegat, Samsö, at the entrance to the Belts, being the limit of their radius.

8. Mining of the Belts.—Two of the minelayers, the converted merchantmen *Prinz Waldemar* and *Prinz Adalbert*, carrying together 243 mines, were ready for service on August 3, and a third, the *Deutschland*, with 200 mines, on the afternoon of the following day. Their minelaying gear was clumsy ; and the

¹ The defence system comprised outpost lines off Gjedser (southern point of Falster Island) and the southern entrance to the Great Belt, while the gunboat *Panther* guarded the Fehmarn Belt.

² Between the Kattegat and the Belts.

³ Fifteen miles south of Malmö.

⁴ Apparently "U.A." had not yet been taken over from the Norwegian Government.

⁵ N.I.D. 169/22.

small number of mines available necessitated laying them in positions where their use in small numbers would be comparatively effective. The forces at the disposal of the Commander-in-Chief were insufficient to provide an adequate guard for the minefields. The latter would thus merely delay but not prevent any attempt by an enemy to break through, and it was therefore essential that they should be laid as far north in the Belts as possible, in order to give time for reinforcements from the High Sea Fleet to pass through the Kiel Canal from the North Sea to the Baltic.

About 6.30 p.m. on August 4, Prince Henry at Kiel, where he made his headquarters, was notified that a state of war existed with Great Britain¹ and at 6.45 p.m. he issued orders for the mining of the Belts.

In the absence of direct orders from the Higher Command, the Prince decided to disregard Danish territorial waters and to lay a minefield in the Great Belt, without awaiting the reply to a note which had been despatched to Denmark enquiring whether she intended to close the channel. The orders were acted upon by Admiral Mischke on the afternoon and evening of the following day, when a minefield of 243 mines was laid between Kjelsnor and Albuen lighthouse, in the Great Belt, and one of 12 mines at the southern entrance to the Little Belt on the line Assens Chimney–Aarö North Beacon.² The presence of the former minefield was known to the British Admiralty next day. The Assens–Aarö minefield was entirely within German waters,³ and it was guarded by S.127, which laid the minefield. This completed the closing of the Belts. The principal Danish channels in the Sound had already been mined by the Danes on August 3, the only one remaining open being the Flint Channel,⁴ part of which lay within Swedish territorial waters. The latter could only be used by vessels up to 23 ft. draught, and was forbidden to foreign ships at night. Moreover, the southern exit was at least 100 miles from Kiel, so that the necessity for closing it was not so urgent.⁵ On the afternoon of

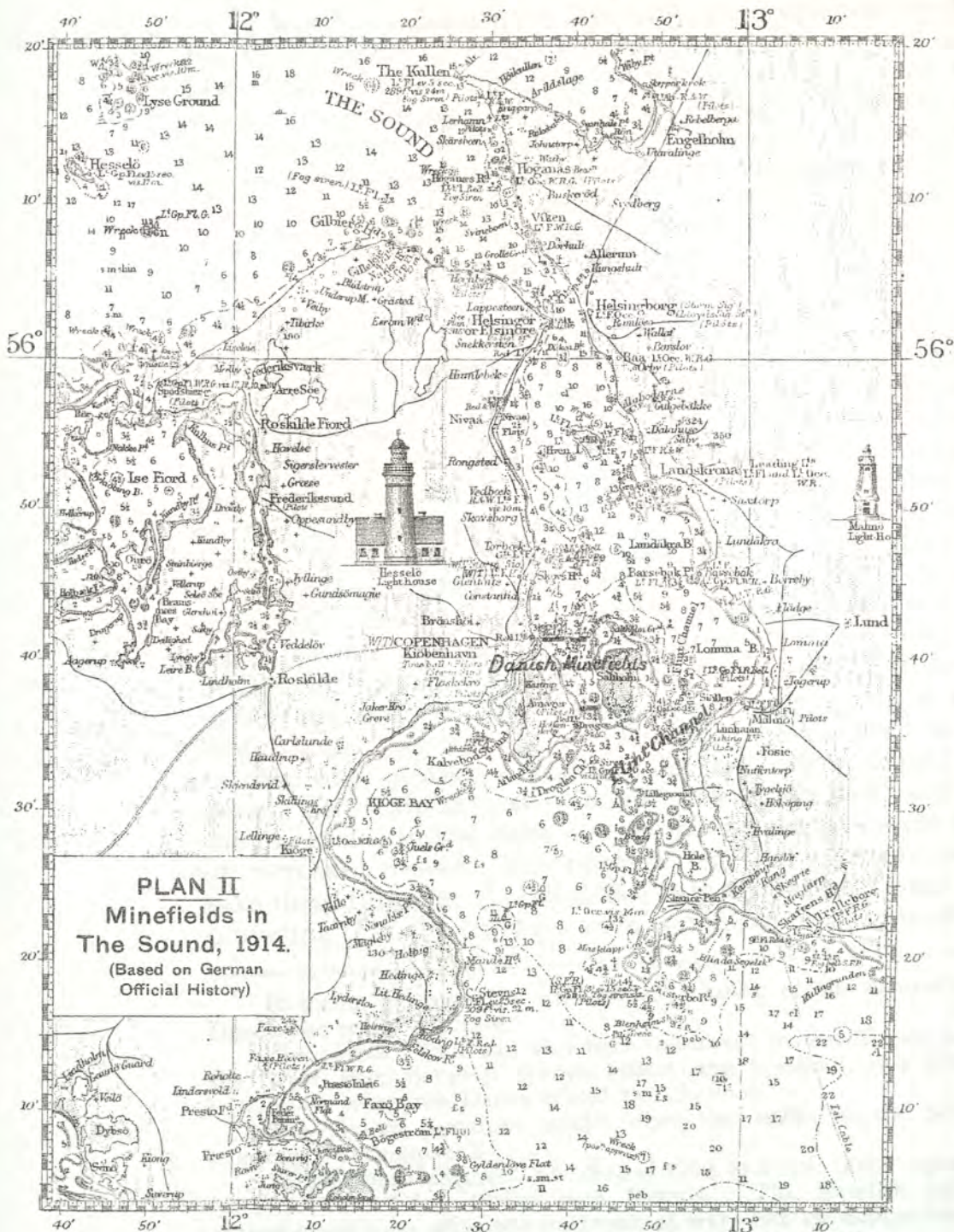
¹ G.O.H., p. 47.

² See Plan I. The Aarö Sound in the Little Belt, between Aarö Island and the Schleswig coast, which was navigable for vessels up to 27 ft., apparently remained open. It was guarded by a battery of four 5.9 guns, and at the end of August 4 blockships were held in readiness to block the channel within 20 minutes. The lights were extinguished in the middle of September, and on November 3 a boom was placed in position.

³ G.O.H., p. 50. But it would not appear to be so from the Plan.

⁴ The eastern channel, between Malmö Island and Sandholm (see Plan II).

⁵ G.O.H., p. 46. It is stated (*ibid.*, p. 166) that the Germans were concerned at this date with closing the Belts and Sound to enemy heavy ships, and that it was not until later that the importance of closing the shallower Flint Channel to submarines was recognised. On p. 41, however, it is expressly stated that on August 2 an attempt to penetrate by British destroyers and submarines was feared. The depth of the Flint Channel (23½ ft.) is given as 6 and 7 metres in two different places in G.O.H.



August 5 the German Ambassador at Copenhagen telegraphed to the Foreign Office that in addition to closing the Danish part of the Sound, Denmark would at once undertake the effective closing of the Great and Little Belts.¹

It was the intention of Denmark, as notified to Berlin by her Government on 6th, to maintain strict neutrality and to keep Danish waters free from warlike operations, even to the extent of employing force of arms. This was a matter of the first importance to Germany, and orders were consequently issued by the German Naval Staff that Danish neutrality was to be respected by all warships; and the destroyer patrol which had been instituted on the line Hjelm-Sjælland Riff, at the southern entrance of the Kattegat, was now withdrawn.²

Sweden, however, which like Denmark proclaimed strict neutrality on the outbreak of war, regarded her international obligations in a different light and refused to close the Flint Channel, both on the grounds of the rights of nations and the lack of necessary material. She agreed, however, to extinguish all lights and remove navigation marks from the Kullen,³ at the northern entrance to the Sound, to Falsterbo in the south, on the threatened appearance of belligerent warships in those waters, though she would not undertake to resort to force of arms should warships penetrate into the Sound with warlike intentions. Entry to her principal harbours and fiords was regulated by the laying of mines and obstructions; and belligerent war vessels were forbidden to enter certain areas in her territorial waters.⁴ With this Germany had to be content, though she notified Sweden that she reserved the right to take any measures necessary for her safety should enemy vessels penetrate into the Sound.⁵ Channels had been left in the minefields in the Belts and Sound to permit of the passage of merchant vessels, and pilotage services were instituted to take them through, in accordance with the international treaties providing that the passages were to remain open to traffic.

¹ It seems questionable whether the closing of the channels by the Danes was really effective.

² The patrol which had also been instituted in the Korsör passage of the Great Belt, between Sprogö Island and Sjælland, was presumably withdrawn when the Danes mined the channel.

³ The Kullen remained alight when the lights in the Sound were eventually extinguished.

⁴ See Notice to Mariners, No. 1518 of 1914, and H.F. 004, August 1, 1914, in H.S. Vol. "G.F. Orders and Memos." The Swedish lights were extinguished soon after the outbreak of war, but by September 12 they were, with few exceptions, again exhibited.

⁵ G.O.H., pp. 165, 166. It is stated (*ibid.*, p. 51) that the Fyr Renden (German Feuer Rinne) to the west of Baago Island, in the Little Belt, remained open, and was available for the passage of large vessels. According to the Baltic Pilot, Part I, the depths in the channel are from 4-6 fathoms only. The southern entrance to the channel was closed by a German minefield.

9. **German Operations to secure Command of the Eastern Baltic.**¹—A measure of security to Kiel having been ensured by the closing of the Belts, the Commander-in-Chief, Baltic, was free to take such action as was possible with the small forces at his disposal to secure the command of the Eastern Baltic, or at least to observe and keep touch with the Russian naval forces and so counter any attack by them on Kiel, for the success of which the element of surprise was essential. War was declared on Russia on August 1, and in the early morning of the following day the Commander-in-Chief, Baltic, was ordered to commence hostilities.

Operations were commenced immediately with the bombardment and mining of Libau, which the Germans were unaware that the Russians had hastily evacuated, and they continued throughout August and September. They were of the nature of reconnaissances and raids mainly carried out by the two faster vessels of the light forces; and the orders issued by Prince Henry on August 8 to Admiral Mischke may be taken as representative²:—

- (1) To damage the enemy, with the reservation that, for the present, the cruisers are not to accept action with superior forces.
- (2) To observe and keep in touch with the enemy if he takes the offensive (see clause 1).
- (3) To mine enemy waters.
- (4) To molest the enemy's coast and his trade.
- (5) To encourage the impression that we hold the Eastern Baltic.

At first, the various operations were unsupported by any forces in the background, though the Russians seem to have been successfully deceived. The German ships did not escape scathless, however, for on the night of August 25-26 the *Magdeburg*, one of the only two good light cruisers in the Baltic, went ashore off Odenholm, an island off the southern entrance to the Gulf of Finland, and had to be destroyed in face of the enemy. Coincident with the invasion of East Prussia during the latter half of August, the Russian Baltic Fleet showed some disposition to advance, and the weakness of the German forces in those waters, together with the importance of keeping open the Eastern Baltic, caused the Higher Command to detach part of the High Sea Fleet for service under Prince Henry for periods of a few days at a time.

The patrol line in the east, maintained by the old light cruisers, was Sweden-Gotland-Kurland. Admiral von Essen,

¹ For detailed description of these operations, see N.I.D. translation of G.O.H. (M.I.R., Nos. 31 *et seq.*).

² G.O.H., p. 55.

however, repressed by the military authorities, found it impossible to evince the enterprise with which the German Naval Staff had credited him, and by the end of September the Russians had made no attempt to contest with Germany the command of the Baltic. On October 11 the Russian cruiser *Pallada* was torpedoed and sunk with all hands by submarine U.26 in the Gulf of Finland.

CHAPTER II.

BRITISH SUBMARINES ENTER THE BALTIC.

10. **Decision to Despatch Submarines to the Baltic.**—At the end of September the Germans received constant reports of the presence of British ships, particularly submarines, in the Kattegat and Skagerrak, which seemed to them to presage an attempt by our submarines to penetrate through the Sound into the Baltic.¹

The possibility of sending submarines into the Baltic to operate off Kiel and to attack the High Sea Fleet was one of the questions discussed on September 17 at the conference at Loch Ewe.² Enquiries and reconnaissances were initiated to discover whether the operation was feasible, and as the upshot of them it was decided that the attempt should be made. On October 11, Commodore (S)³ received orders to carry out the operation.

11. **German Precautions against Entry of Submarines.**—The Germans themselves were only too well aware that the Baltic was not hermetically closed to British submarines. The Belts were sealed; for during the night of September 24–25, on the news that British forces, including submarines, were in the Kattegat, and, indeed, that the Grand Fleet had actually penetrated the Great Belt,⁴ a second minefield was laid off Langeland on the line Kjelsnor Lighthouse–Kappel Church, while measures had already been taken at the end of August to close the Aarö Sound instantly if need arose.⁵ The danger point was the Swedish Flint Channel, through which the Germans believed that our submarines intended to penetrate; but the only precautions which they were free to take were to increase the stringency of the watch on the southern entrance to the

¹ G.O.H., p. 203. Like ourselves, the Germans suffered from rumours of enemy submarines off their harbours.

² See Introduction to this monograph.

³ Captain Roger J. B. Keyes, C.B., M.V.O., Ad C.

⁴ The submarines were *E.1* and *E.5*, which were making a reconnaissance preliminary to the despatch of submarines to the Baltic (see Memo. No. 0012 by Commodore (S), H.S. 225, p. 27). The report of the presence of the Grand Fleet in the Great Belt originated with a Swedish soldier, and became exaggerated by the time it was heard by a German agent.

⁵ See footnote, p. 80.

Sound and to arrange to lay a minefield in the Fehmarn Belt at half an hour's notice.¹

The patrolling forces were under the command of the Chief of the Training Cruiser Division, who had at his disposal the 2nd T.B.D. Flotilla² and the 19th Half-Flotilla. The former comprised twelve 30 knot destroyers, S.138–S.149, of the years 1907–8, armed with one 15 pdr. and three 4 pdrs., whilst the 19th Half-Flotilla had been formed during the first half of September, when the force of destroyers under Prince Henry's command in the Baltic had been increased by the substitution of S.120, S.123 and S.125³ for the old boats T.91, T.93 and T.94, and the allotting to the Baltic of the six boats G.132–G.136⁴ in place of V.186 and V.26, which were detached to the North Sea. Four of the larger destroyers, namely, G.132, G.133, G.135, and G.136, were formed into the 20th Half-Flotilla and allocated to Admiral Behring, who was placed in command of a detached force at Danzig on August 21 for operations in the Eastern Baltic. The remainder of the Baltic destroyers, viz., V.25, G.134, S.120, S.123, S.125, T.97, T.102, and T.127, were formed into the 19th Half-Flotilla under the command of Kapitän-Leutnant Graf von der Recke-Volmerstein, and allocated to the Coast Defence Division for patrol duties in the Western Baltic.

The normal positions of the patrols were as follows:—By day the available ships of the Training Cruiser Division⁵ and the 19th Half-Flotilla patrolled east of Möen, one of them being pushed forward at night to the meridian of Gyldelöves Flat, patrolling between the parallels of 12° 30' and 13° E. The boats of the 2nd Flotilla patrolled off the southern exit of the Sound, the northern boat being about six to seven miles from the south end of the Flint Channel, where a submarine must pass on the surface. By night the destroyers formed two patrol lines off the southern point of the Skanör Peninsula and Falsterbo Reef Lightship respectively. These craft were based on Warnemünde and Sassnitz for coaling, etc., a half-flotilla being on patrol for 48 hours at a time.

The presence of the German patrol off the southern entrance to the Sound was known to the Admiralty, and it was also reported on October 10 that a patrol of cruisers and torpedo craft was established between Rügen Island and the mainland which stopped and examined all merchant vessels.⁶ This patrol was established by the Germans about October 7 on

¹ G.O.H., p. 183.

² Korv.-Kap. Schurr.

³ 465 tons, 27–28 knots (1904–5), three 4-pdrs., three torpedo tubes.

⁴ 480 tons, 27–(?)29 knots (1906–7), four 4-pdrs. (G.135: one 15-pdr., two 4-pdrs.), three torpedo tubes.

⁵ Apparently *Hertha*, *Hansa*, *Victoria Louise*, *Vineta*, and *Thetis*.

⁶ H.S. 225, p. 41.

account of their belief that British submarines entering the Baltic must be supported by supply ships.¹ It was also reported that German torpedo craft patrolled the Kattegat, particularly on the Danish side.²

12. "**E.1**" enters the Baltic, October 17.—On October 13 orders were issued to *E.1* (Lieutenant-Commander Noel F. Laurence), *E.9* (Lieutenant-Commander Max K. Horton) and *E.11*³ (Lieutenant-Commander Martin E. Nasmith) to leave Gorleston on the following day and endeavour to enter the Baltic and attack the German fleet, which was said to be carrying out gunnery practices and exercises.⁴ The passage of the Sound was safe by keeping to Swedish waters, and they were instructed to pass through, all three boats during the same night, if possible, at two-hour intervals, in order to avoid being sighted by the German patrols off the southern entrance and between Rügen and the mainland.⁵ When their fuel should be exhausted the submarines were to proceed to Libau. The fact that at the end of July and beginning of August the Russians had abandoned and completely dismantled Libau does not seem to have been known to the Admiralty.⁶ The Russians had set fire to the stocks of coal and ammunition and blocked the entrance by sunken ships; and the Germans had completed the sealing of the port on August 2 by laying a minefield off the coast. The intention of the British Admiralty to despatch three submarines to the Baltic was not notified to Admiral von Essen in time, nor was he informed under whose orders they would be placed. The Russian Admiral was about to conduct a minelaying operation near Danzig when he heard of the arrival of the submarines; he had no information of their intended movements, and was consequently compelled to cancel his operation.⁷

The departure of the three submarines was delayed a day on account of defects in *E.11*, and they left on October 15. The first of the boats to pass through the Sound was *E.1*, which accomplished the passage safely by 11.30 p.m. on 17th. The sighting of a submarine in the Skagerrak had been reported to one of the boats of the 19th Half-Flotilla by the captain of a

¹ G.O.H., p. 204.

² H.S. 225, p. 42.

³ *E* class: 791–805 tons; surface speed, 15 knots; submerged speed, 10½ knots; 5 torpedo tubes (*E.1*, four tubes); *E.11*, one 6-pdr.

⁴ Commodore (S)'s orders gave no more definite locality for the German Fleet than "the Baltic," but it seems probable that the British submarine Commanders were told they might expect to find the enemy off Bornholm (cf. C-in-C., Home Fleets, to Admiralty, 623, October 10, 1914).

⁵ H.S. 225, p. 40, and 271, p. 469.

⁶ Our Ambassador at St. Petersburg reported on August 3 that the Libau forts were rumoured to have been destroyed by the Russians, but enquiry does not seem to have been made on the point. Norddeich Press telegram, 9 p.m., August 2, reported (correctly) that German forces were bombarding Libau and had laid mines off the port.

⁷ M. 04129/14, Report of Naval Attaché.

merchant vessel on the afternoon of 17th, and the patrols had been warned to be specially vigilant in anticipation of an attempt to break through into the Baltic. The German suspicions were enhanced by the report of loud enemy W/T signalling in the neighbourhood between 10 p.m. and midnight on 17th. About 9 a.m. on 18th, between Falsterbo Reef and Möen, *E.1* sighted a German cruiser, which was taken to be the *Fürst Bismarck*, but was actually the *Victoria Louise*, and dived to attack. An hour later, having reached a position 500 yards on the enemy's beam, Lieutenant-Commander Laurence fired two torpedoes at intervals of one minute. The first passed 50 yards astern,¹ and the *Victoria Louise* was able to avoid the second by the use of helm. After submerging for an interval *E.1* came to the surface and sighted another of the patrolling cruisers, which she unsuccessfully attacked for six hours. October 19 was spent south of Bornholm without sight of the enemy, for Admiral Behring's force had just returned to harbour after an operation off the Gulf of Finland from October 10-14, in the course of which *U.26* sank the Russian armoured cruiser *Pallada* off Hangö. On 20th, *E.1* dived into the Gulf of Danzig as far as the entrance to Neufahrwasser. Three cruisers (part of Admiral Behring's force) were sighted in the basin, but the submarine could not get near them. On the afternoon of October 21 Lieutenant-Commander Laurence arrived at Libau and learned that the dockyard had been dismantled, and that, unknowingly, he had come right through the German minefield.

13. Germans increase Stringency of their Patrols.—The report of the sighting and attack of the *Victoria Louise* by an enemy submarine reached the Commander-in-Chief at 10.30 a.m. on 18th. The conclusions were immediately reached that the submarine was British, since no Russian boat was likely to be found in that position; that she was the forerunner of others; and that their objective was the exercise ground of Kiel Bay. Permission was at once requested of the Higher Command to lay a minefield off the southern entrance to the Sound. This was forbidden, both as being ineffectual in preventing the passage of a submarine, and on account of the necessity of refraining from interference with merchant shipping. There was no objection, however, to pushing the patrols forward to the three mile limit of Swedish and Danish territorial waters, and this was accordingly communicated to the patrols. The following orders were issued by the Commander-in-Chief for the safeguarding of the Western Baltic² :—

1. Rear-Admiral Jasper with the *Hansa*, *Hertha*, *Victoria Louise*, *Thetis*, 4th³ and 19th Half-Flotillas to assume command

¹ G.O.H., p. 206. Report of *E.1* says it passed under the ship.

² G.O.H., pp. 207-8.

³ S.144-148.

of the Sound patrol. The patrol of the southern exit is to be strengthened, in order to prevent enemy submarines from breaking through from the north. The remaining forces to search the area between Möen-Dornbusch¹ and Arkona²-Smygehuk³ for submarines, including by night in order to capture or hinder them whilst charging batteries. Searchlights to be burned, outpost line to be kept by two cruisers.⁴

2. 17th Half-Flotilla⁵ and four training boats of 1st Torpedo Division to form an outpost line in the Fehmarn Belt under the direction of the chief of the 17th Half-Flotilla.⁶ From 6 p.m. onwards during the night Lübeck and Mecklenburg Bays and the south coast of Laaland are to be searched for submarines. At daybreak the Fehmarn Belt line is to be resumed.

3. The *Gazelle* is to assume the watch of the Langeland Belt.

4. Rear-Admiral Mischke in the *Undine* will assume the command of the forces watching the Aarö Sound.

5. *P.L.19*⁷ to scout as far as the line Hjedser-Darsser Ort.⁸ Aircraft to scout as far as possible towards the southern exit of the Sound.

6. Auxiliary Minelayers *Odin*, *Deutschland* and *Rügen* to be held in readiness.

All heavy ships were withdrawn into harbour from Kiel Bay.⁹ At this date the Germans possessed no depth charges,¹⁰ explosive sweeps, nets, etc., and it was considered that the most effectual method of destroying enemy submarines was to force them to remain submerged until their batteries were exhausted. For this purpose small fast craft, such as torpedo boats, were necessary; of these, however, the Commander-in-Chief was very short. The 2nd T.B. Flotilla¹¹ from the North Sea Forces had been placed at his disposal, but half of the boats were at the moment engaged in boiler cleaning, and the Commander-in-Chief was therefore obliged to fall back upon the 17th Half-Flotilla, which were commissioning and preparing for service at Kiel, and four training boats of the 1st T.B. Division, whilst Admiral von Ingenohl, the Commander-in-Chief, High

¹ North point of Hiddensee Island (Rügen).

² North of Rügen.

³ Six miles east of Trelleborg.

⁴ Later the cruisers were ordered to be withdrawn eastward out of the Sound entrance during the night.

⁵ *V.25*, *V.26*, *V.27*, *S.31*, *S.32*.

⁶ Korvetten-Kap. Jacobi.

⁷ Airship.

⁸ East entrance to Mecklenburg Bucht.

⁹ These comprised the 3rd and 4th Squadrons of the High Sea Fleet, which were exercising, and the newly completed *Derfflinger*, which was doing trials and working up to join the Fleet.

¹⁰ "Wasserbomben."

¹¹ *S.138*-*S.142* and *S.144*-*S.148*.

Sea Fleet, placed at his disposal the 8th T.B. Flotilla¹ until the 2nd Flotilla should be ready for sea. During the night of 18th–19th all lights were extinguished in Kiel Bay.

The cruisers of the Sound patrol were ordered to search Hanö bugt and the coast of Bornholm and Rügen during the morning of 19th for submarine supply ships; and they were warned not to stop and hold up strange merchant vessels, lest enemy submarines should be following in their wake and seize the opportunity to attack. For the support of the destroyers watching the Sound the Auxiliary Mineseeking Division in Swinemünde was sent to Falsterbo Reef Lightship.

14. “**E.9**” enters the Baltic, October 18.—*E.9* did not reach the Kullen until 11.30 p.m. on 17th. Lieutenant-Commander Horton considered there was not sufficient time to clear the Sound before daybreak, and also that neither of the other submarines would be able to pass through that night.² The importance of all three boats making the passage on the same night had been emphasised, and accordingly *E.9* remained on the bottom until 5.20 p.m. on 18th, when she rose and proceeded on the surface through the Sound. In spite of the increased alertness of the patrols Lieutenant-Commander Horton found no difficulty in making the passage, which was safely accomplished by 11.30 p.m. A few minutes later one of the patrolling destroyers was sighted 150 yards off, $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles south-west of Drogden Light Vessel.

E.9 seems to have spent October 19 between Falsterbo and Möen,³ destroyers being sighted each time she rose to the surface, but she was not discovered. On 20th Lieutenant-Commander Horton worked south towards Cape Arkona and then eastward, with the intention, apparently, of making a sweep into Danzig Bay, from which, however, he was deterred by a defect in his main motor, and he proceeded towards Libau, which was reached at 8 a.m. on 22nd.⁴

¹ *G.174* (Korvetten-Kap. Adolf Pfeiffer), *G.175*, *S.176*, *S.177*, *S.179*, *V.180*, *V.183*, *S.131*, *S.139*. The Flotilla arrived at Kiel p.m. October 19.

² *E.1* had been delayed off Smith's Knoll by a defect, and had ordered *E.9* to proceed independently. *E.11* did not leave Gorleston until 3 p.m. on 15th, ten hours after the other two boats.

³ Her log, if any was kept, is not forthcoming.

⁴ In view of the false alarms of enemy submarines in Scapa Flow during 1914, the following account in the German Official History, p. 210, of two enemy submarines in Kiel Bay on October 19 is of interest. Neither *E.1* nor *E.9* was within 100 miles at the time, and it is practically certain that no Russian submarine had come as far west as Kiel Bay:—

“At 6.10 a.m. [on October 19] the 17th T.B. Half-Flotilla steamed in line abreast, boats 2 miles apart, on a zigzag course of 17 miles from Fehmarn Belt Lightship to Schleimünde [on west coast of Kiel Bay]. At 11.15 a.m. *V.27* sighted the conning tower of an enemy submarine steering south, some 5,000 metres astern of her. Her position was about 7 miles S.E. of Schleimünde. *V.27* opened fire with her after gun, and the

15. "E.11" attempts to Enter the Baltic.—*E.11* left Gorleston at 3 p.m. on October 15, and arrived off the entrance to the Sound on the afternoon of 18th. Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith considered that with the large number of merchant vessels passing through the Sound an easier passage would be obtained with navigation lights switched on, particularly as the shore lights would undoubtedly silhouette an unlighted craft. Four suspicious merchant steamers were observed steaming in line abreast, and were avoided by Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith, who was of opinion that they were sweeping or else intended to run her down when she reached narrow shallow waters. Several destroyers were observed in the Sound, apparently working in conjunction with one another, and were avoided. "Although in neutral waters," stated Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith, "these vessels were undoubtedly hostile destroyers, who, although refraining from firing, attempted to sink us by ramming."¹

Failing to make the passage by night, Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith decided to retire, and after charging his batteries to attempt to get through by day. A submarine, identified to his satisfaction as *U.3*, was observed on the surface outside territorial waters, and Lieutenant-Commander Nasmith, as he dived out of the Sound on 19th, unsuccessfully attacked her, firing two torpedoes, both of which missed.² Some hours later, while charging her batteries, *E.11* was herself attacked, a torpedo being fired at her at long range, which missed. The torpedo was apparently fired from an enemy submarine disguised by

conning tower disappeared at once; the periscope was not seen. Meanwhile, *S.31*, which had been called up by *V.27*, appeared and took up the search. While so engaged, she suddenly sighted for a half minute the periscope of a second submarine, and at once opened fire and chased. The submarine fired a torpedo, the track of which *S.31* was able to avoid. Two attempts to ram met with no apparent success, for the submarine, whose hull was clearly visible from the torpedo boat's searchlight platform, dived too quickly. There was no further opportunity to fire, nor was *S.31* provided with depth charges. The search was taken up by seven boats of the 17th Half-Flotilla from 11.30 into the afternoon, but without success. At 3.24 p.m. the signal station at Bülk [north of entrance to Kiel Fjord] reported a submarine on the surface, 200 yards off. From Schleimünde, later in the afternoon, it was reported that about noon a Danish fisherman had sighted a submarine on the surface steering east between Aarö and Schleimünde. All these reports led to the certain conclusion that on October 18 and 19 two enemy submarines were in the Western Baltic."

¹ Report of *E.11*, October 24, 1914, H.S. 271, p. 468.

² The Danish Government reported that on October 19 a submarine, nationality unknown, fired two torpedoes at the Danish submarine *Havmanden*, flying the Danish flag, near the entrance to the Sound. It was established eventually that the submarine attacked by *E.11* was the *Havmanden*, which had changed her appearance unknown to the British Admiralty, and now closely resembled *U.3*. The incident closed with an expression of regret for the occurrence on the part of H.M. Government (see papers in H.S. 271).

sails. October 20 was spent by *E.11* in the attempt to charge her batteries, but she was apparently located and reported by a seaplane,¹ and she was hunted by destroyers whenever she rose during the night.² On 21st she was again driven under by a destroyer, and on 22nd, being unable further to prolong her absence from her base, she decided to return to Harwich.

16. Netting of the Fehmarn Belt, October 23-27.—Measures were now taken by the Commander-in-Chief, Baltic, to prevent the British submarines from leaving the Baltic. It was decided to close the Fehmarn Belt with herring nets, for no other nets were available, and up to date the Germans had no experience of the use of nets against submarines. The work was entrusted to the Coast Defence Division and was carried out between October 23 and 27 by fishing boats, under the direction of Korvetten-Kapitän von Rosenberg. Seines³ 30 metres long and 15 to 16 metres deep were laid in lines of 1,200 metres between Marienleuchte and Hyllekrog in the Fehmarn Belt. The force of the current drew them into the shape of a bow facing west, and two rows 30 metres apart were laid chequerwise across the openings of the first line, 36 kilometres being laid in all. It was hoped that the nets would foul the propeller of a submarine and compel it to come to the surface, where it could be despatched by the armed trawlers which watched the nets. Experience in the North Sea had shown that destroyers were unsuitable for hunting submarines by reason of their unhandiness, and better results were to be obtained by employing a deep formation of trawlers in line abreast,⁴ to search a suspected locality. On the evening of October 19 the 8th T.B. Flotilla arrived at Kiel from the North Sea. Nine boats were sent to the Sound to reinforce the Chief of the 2nd Flotilla, and two to assist the *Undine* in Aarö Sound. The 17th Half-Flotilla and the four training boats were sent back to Kiel.

17. Destroyers withdrawn from Kiel Bay, October 21. Patrol by Submarines.—German submarines had been regularly stationed in the Heligoland Bight for some days on account of the constant presence of British submarines, and on the afternoon of October 19 one of them succeeded in sinking *E.3*, which was patrolling off the entrance to the Western Ems. Anti-submarine warfare was still in its infancy, and experiments were being made with various methods in order to discover the most effectual measure with which to combat these craft. The isolated success obtained against *E.3* gave rise to the hope that at last an effective counter had been discovered, and Prince

¹ The German seaplanes were not provided with bombs at this date.

² There is no mention of these incidents in G.O.H. This description is based on Report of *E.11* and Commander (S)'s covering letter. M. (no number); *titled* For. Off., October 21, 1914.

³ "Hochseestellnetze."

⁴ "In mehreren Reihen hintereinander."

Henry decided to withdraw all the destroyers from Kiel Bay and to leave its protection entirely to submarines. Six weeks earlier the British Admiralty had adopted somewhat similar measures to protect the northern Scottish bases.

Five boats were available, namely, *U.A*, *U.1*, *U.3*, *U.4* and *U.32*.¹ The procedure they were ordered to adopt was to spend the night on the bottom or in charging their batteries, and by day to cruise submerged in their respective areas, coming up at intervals to scout through their periscopes for enemy submarines. On October 21 every surface war vessel was withdrawn from Kiel Bay. Reconnaissance by aircraft and airships remained uninterrupted. The patrols east of the Fehmarn Belt were warned not to come west of the line Marienleuchte-Hyllekrog, and those in the Little Belt and Aarö Sound were ordered to keep north of the meridian of 54° 55' N. On October 25 the Naval Staff received the information, from a reliable source, that *E.1* and *E.9* had entered Libau at midday on October 21, and on 27th the patrolling submarines were withdrawn from Kiel Bay.

CHAPTER III.

GERMAN ANTI-SUBMARINE MEASURES AND THE WORK OF THE BRITISH BOATS, 1914.

18. **Lights Extinguished in Sound, October 19-20, 1914.**—The passage of the Sound by British submarines greatly increased the anxieties of the Germans for the security of their valuable exercise and training grounds in Kiel Bay and the Western Baltic, and for the safety of the Swedish iron ore trade in the Gulf of Bothnia, which was indispensable for the conduct of the war. Effective anti-submarine measures had not yet been developed in the Baltic, and there was a shortage of the only craft available to meet the menace, namely, torpedo boats, trawlers, and aircraft, since practically everything had been taken for the North Sea.

Directly the entry of the British submarines was reported a request was once more made by Germany to Denmark and Sweden to close their territorial waters to these craft as far as could be done. Sweden was asked to extinguish the lights and remove navigation marks in the Sound, and this was carried into effect by her on the night of October 19-20, the only lights remaining inextinguished being Helsingborg and Malmö Lights

¹ A new boat, completed since outbreak of war; one 22-pdr., four torpedo tubes (19·7 in.).

and those in the Trelleborg Channel. Even now, however, the Germans felt far from safe, for they considered that there must probably be in England pilots acquainted with those waters, who could take submarines through without recourse to lights or navigation marks. Denmark increased the stringency of her watch in the Belts and Danish ports of the Sound, and was convinced to her own satisfaction that no submarine could enter the Baltic by any of the channels over which she had control.

19. Reorganisation of German Patrol in West Baltic, November, 1914.—On October 29 the 2nd and 8th T.B. Flotillas, which had been lent to the Baltic temporarily from the North Sea, were required again by the Commander-in-Chief of the High Sea Fleet, and in their place the 2nd Mineseeking Division, consisting of 14 torpedo boats,¹ was sent to the Baltic for patrol purposes. The 4th T.B. Flotilla had been constituted a week previously from the 19th Half-Flotilla, and S.120 to S.131, less S.125, whilst G.134 had been added to the 20th Half-Flotilla under the "detached Admiral." With the *Sleipner* and *Carmen* the Commander-in-Chief now had 19 T.B.D.s available for work in the Western Baltic.

By the end of October the barrage of fishing nets in the Fehmarn Belt had proved to be impracticable. On 29th an easterly gale drifted many of the nets into Kiel Bay, where they obstructed the shipping. Application was made by Prince Henry for permission to close the Fehmarn Belt by mines, a course which he held to be essential in order to ensure the security of Kiel Bay. But the application met with a refusal by the Higher Command, not only because the necessary mines were not available, but further because a type of minefield effective in stopping submarines remained still to be evolved.

At the beginning of November the patrol service in the Western Baltic was reorganised in accordance with the experience gained up to date, the command being given to the Chief of the Coast Defence Division. In the Aarö Sound and at the southern exit of the Great Belt the measures in force remained as before, with the addition that on November 3 the exit from the Aarö Sound was blocked by a boom. Prince Henry wished to close the Fyr render by mining and netting Thorö Riff and the area between the Riff and the German minefield, but this was disallowed by the Higher Command on account of Danish neutrality. The patrol at the exit of the Sound was maintained as before by torpedo boats, but the outpost guarding the Fehmarn Belt was withdrawn from the Möen-Dornbusch line and placed in the narrowest part of the Gjedser Channel, near Gjedser. The Sound section was normally to be guarded by the 4th T.B. Flotilla and the Gjedser section by the 2nd Mineseeking

¹ D.6 (leader), T.28, T.30, T.39, T.46, T.47, T.49, T.50-57.

Division, both being under Korvetten-Kapitän Wieting, of the 4th Flotilla. The cruisers were ordered not to remain permanently at sea, but to make occasional visits to the Sound and to show themselves off the Danish and Swedish coasts for the benefit of enemy agents.

20. "E.1" and "E.9" leave for Lapvik, October 25.—On October 21 the Higher Command telegraphed to Admiral Behring that an advance of the Russian naval forces was not unlikely in connection with the entry of the British submarines into the Baltic. The detached admiral was to make preparations to counter any such advance with his submarines.

The Germans rightly surmised that *E.1* and *E.9* would shortly leave for the Gulf of Finland to join Admiral von Essen. Lieutenant-Commander Laurence received orders from the British Ambassador on October 24 to proceed to Lapvik; and on the following day, as *E.11* had not arrived, *E.1* and *E.9* left Libau for the north, intending, on the way, to try for the German cruisers in Danzig. The latter had recently been reinforced in consequence of the expectation of Russian naval activity in the near future. On October 19 the armoured cruiser *Friedrich Carl*¹ was sent to Neufahrwasser from Kiel as flagship for Admiral Behring, the channel from Neufahrwasser to Danzig being dredged to a depth of 8·5 metres for her benefit. Two days later a further reinforcement arrived in the training cruisers *Hertha*, *Hansa*, *Victoria Louise*, *Vineta* and *Thetis*, under Rear-Admiral Jasper. The patrol line in the bay was from Hela to Pasewark Beacon.

Unfortunately for the chances of the British submarines, Admiral Behring's force left Danzig on October 24 and 25 for an operation off Windau and the Gulf of Riga, in the hope of enticing the Russian fleet to sea and drawing it on to the submarines which were waiting off the Gulf of Finland.

On October 26 *E.1* dived into the entrance to Neufahrwasser, but it was too thick to see whether there were any German ships inside. She was sighted at 1.30 p.m., three miles north of Weichselmünde. Not until 28th was the weather suitable for her to enter Neufahrwasser, when she fired a torpedo at a destroyer at 500 yards, but missed. In consequence of the presence of the British submarines in the bay, the training cruisers were withdrawn to Swinemünde.

On October 29 *E.1* decided to turn north for Lapvik, proceeding by the west coast of Gotland, the route which the German cruisers were reported to make use of when proceeding north or south in the Baltic. At 7.30 a.m. that day Admiral Behring had commenced his homeward movement, taking the course down the west coast of Gotland. *E.1* and *E.9* must

¹ Freg.-Kap. Loesch, 8,856 tons, 21 knots, four 8·2 in., ten 5·9 in., twelve 15-pdrs.

have passed the German forces during the night of 29th–30th, for at 6 a.m. on 30th Admiral Behring was off the south point of Gotland, while *E.1* met *E.9* an hour later off Bogskär Light-house in the approach to the Gulf of Bothnia. But neither force sighted the other, and Admiral Behring withdrew in safety to Danzig, while the British submarines went in to Lapvik, which was to be their base. Everything possible was done by the Russians for the comfort of the British crews. The old cruiser *Ruinda* was specially arranged as a parent ship exclusively for them, warm clothing was supplied, arrangements were made to heat the boats, and the men were victualled as nearly as possible in the manner to which they were accustomed.¹

21. **German Operations off Libau, November, 1914.**—In the belief that *E.1* and *E.9* would continue to use Libau as their base, the Germans determined to render the use of the port as precarious as possible. On October 28, whilst at sea engaged on the operations off the Gulf of Riga, Admiral Behring decided to institute a secret blockade of Libau with his submarines. The three submarines *U.23*, *U.25*, and *U.26* had been allotted to the Baltic during the autumn²; they were assembled and the blockade was instituted, *U.A* being sent to reinforce them on November 6. The blockade was not maintained without difficulty. The position of the minefield laid off Libau by the *Augsburg* in August, through which *E.1* had inadvertently passed, was not exactly fixed; and there were difficulties in W/T communication between the submarines and the detached Admiral. The installation at Danzig W/T Station could not be used, for technical reasons, for communication with submarines, and all the cruisers except the *Thetis* were being refitted in Danzig until November 9. The latter, after a short stay at Memel at the end of October owing to the German apprehensions that the Russians in their forthcoming offensive in East Prussia would seize the port for use as a submarine base, was employed as W/T repeating ship for the submarines.

Although the British submarines had been reported—wrongly—lying in Helsingfors on November 4, the Germans had no certain knowledge that Libau had been abandoned as their base. The entrances to the harbour were not completely sealed by the vessels which the Russians had sunk there, and the Germans now decided to complete the blocking of the harbour themselves by sinking further ships, and, if necessary, by laying more mines; to bombard the port effectually; and to

¹ M. 04129/14, Report of Naval Attaché.

² Prince Henry had asked for two modern submarines, but the request was refused. Three older boats were, however, sent, mainly in order to avoid the disturbance of the High Sea Fleet's plans which occurred through despatching submarines to the Baltic. *U.23*, *U.25* and *U.26* were chosen, as they were unsuitable for long distance work in the North Sea owing to defective design of their circulating water plant.

render it completely useless. Aircraft were to be employed to scout, and the operation was combined with an advance by the submarines into the Gulf of Finland in the hopes of causing damage to the Russian fleet.

The operation began on the night of November 9-10, but was abandoned on 10th owing to a westerly gale. On 17th the 20th Half-Flotilla, supported by the *Lübeck* and *Amazone*, carried out a bombardment of Libau and sank four blockships in the entrances. At 1.46 a.m. that day the *Friedrich Carl*, flagship of Admiral Behring, ran on a Russian minefield off Memel and sank, with the loss of eight men. The operations by *U.25* and *U.23* in the Gulf of Finland were without result.

22. "E.1" and "E.9" in Western Baltic, November 15-22.—*E.1* and *E.9* proceeded to Revel for repairs shortly after arriving at Lapvik, though this did not prevent them being reported by German merchantmen and fishermen off the coast of East Prussia on November 5 and night of 5th-6th. On November 13 they returned to Helsingfors and Lieutenant-Commander Laurence received orders from Admiral von Essen for their future operations.

"At the end of the refit of *E.1* and *E.9* you are to proceed with submarines for offensive actions against the German fleet in the Baltic, near Bornholm Island, and to the west of it.

"A list of the Russian minefields and probable German minefields is attached.¹

(Signed) ADMIRAL VON ESSEN,
Commander-in-Chief, Baltic Fleet."

On November 14 it blew a gale, but on the following day, the weather having moderated, the submarines left Helsingfors. It was unfortunate that they were not ready for sea a few days earlier, for on November 11 and 12 the 2nd Squadron of the High Sea Fleet was carrying out exercises in the Eastern and Western Baltic, and returned to Kiel on the night of 13th-14th.²

¹ This is not forthcoming. On October 17 the Russian Government made the following announcement: "The Imperial Government announces that in view of the presence of German submarines at the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, and the placing by the enemy of booms and torpedoes near the Russian coast, the Russian naval authorities are compelled in their turn to have recourse largely to similar steps. Consequently, navigation in the northern zone bounded by the Russian coast by parallel 58° 50' North latitude and by the meridian 21° East longitude is to be regarded as dangerous, as is the entrance to the Gulf of Riga and the coast waters of the Åland Archipelago. In order that persons not taking part in the hostilities may not run the risks of war, the entrances and exits of the Gulf of Finland and Riga are to be regarded as closed from the moment of the announcement." The Gulf of Finland, however, had been closed to navigation early in September, and all Russian lights in the Baltic had been extinguished. (See Notices to Mariners, No. 1496, September 10, 1914.)

² I.D.H.S. 3,000, p. 6.

E.1 went first to the Cadet Channel, but finding no enemy ships¹ she turned north and made for the Stevns Klint-Falsterbo line, thence east to the north end of Bornholm-Sandhammer, still without sighting even an enemy patrol. At 5 p.m. on 20th she shaped course again for Lapvik.

E.9 was off Cape Arcona on November 17 and attacked a two-funnelled cruiser, doubtless one of the Training Division on patrol, firing two torpedoes at 500 yards, both of which missed, due perhaps to the motion of the boat in the choppy sea. The cruiser then turned towards *E.9*, who dived.² Lieutenant-Commander Horton patrolled off Dornbusch on 18th and 19th, and off Bornholm on 20th, without sight of the enemy, and on 22nd he followed *E.1* to Lapvik, being sighted off Bengskär by *U.23*,³ which, with *U.25*, was still engaged on the operations in the Gulf of Finland.

23. Cruise of "E.1" and "E.9," December 11-17.—On December 10 Admiral von Essen issued orders to the British submarines for a combined operation with the Russian fleet.⁴ *E.1* and *E.9* were to be to the westward of Bornholm at daylight on 13th and were to attack any enemy vessels that might be seen during the day. On December 14, if no attack had been made, they were to show themselves to the coast look-out stations, so that the enemy should know of their presence. They were ordered not to go north of the line Stevns Klint-Falsterbo, nor west of Gjedser Odde-Darsser Ort.

E.1 arrived at her position off Stevns Klint at 7 a.m. on 13th. No sign was seen of the German patrol on the Stevns Klint-Falsterbo line, and *E.1* then proceeded off Möens Klint, where a German light cruiser was reported to patrol. At 1.35 p.m., between Möens Klint and Dornbusch, an enemy destroyer was sighted making large alterations of course. *E.1* dived to attack and fired a torpedo at 600 yards, "more with a view to letting him know of the submarine's presence than with any hope of hitting," wrote Lieutenant-Commander Laurence. The torpedo missed, and although the destroyer remained in the vicinity for half an hour, steaming at high speed, no opportunity presented itself for a second shot. Whilst charging her battery during the night *E.1* fractured her port intermediate shaft, and as she was 400 miles from the nearest available Russian port and she had accomplished her purpose in letting the enemy

¹ It is not known what patrols were maintained by the Germans in the Cadet Channel. G.O.H., p. 215, states that the patrol guarding the Fehmarn Belt was situated in the narrowest part of the Gjedser Channel, near Gjedser, but the Cadet Channel is not mentioned.

² Lieut.-Commander Horton considered the cruiser had observed the tracks of the torpedoes, but no mention is made of the incident in G.O.H.

³ Or possibly the submarine sighted by *U.23* was *E.1*.

⁴ It is not known what operation the Russian Fleet intended to carry out.

know of her presence, Lieutenant-Commander Laurence decided to proceed to Lapvik. At 11.21 a.m. on 16th, three miles south-west of Benskär Lighthouse, a German submarine attacked him, firing two torpedoes, both of which were avoided by the use of helm. The submarine was *U.25*, which was engaged on the watch at the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, which the Germans had recently instituted. The normal position of the submarine on watch was Benskär, where in September the Germans had destroyed the Russian signal station; but she was allowed to go east into the Gulf of Finland at her discretion. From the observations of our submarine commanders it appears that the German submarines were supported by a sailing vessel.

E.9 proceeded into Tromper and Prorer Bays, in the Island of Rügen, soon after 8 a.m. on 13th, where it was reported that two German armoured cruisers had been seen at anchor; but she sighted nothing, except a destroyer some distance off. Whilst charging her battery that evening the port propeller blade carried away, and this decided her to return to her base, working up the west of Gotland, where the Germans maintained a patrol.

E.9 arrived at Lapvik at 11 a.m. on December 17.¹ During the afternoon there were continuous wireless reports of German cruisers in the Gulf. These reports referred to Admiral Behring's force, which was making a reconnaissance of the Åland Islands to discover whether the Russians had a base there; and at 7.45 p.m. *E.9* received permission to proceed to sea for 48 hours. It was, however, too late, for Admiral Behring had just commenced his return homeward, and *E.9* returned to Lapvik on 19th without having sighted the enemy.

24. Trade in the Baltic.—Trade with Sweden in the Baltic was a highly important factor in the war to all the three belligerents principally concerned in those waters. For Germany, the iron ore trade with the ports in the Norrbotten, the northern portion of the Gulf of Bothnia, was vital to the maintenance of her supply of steel and the continuance of the war. Up to the winter of 1914 no attempt was made by our submarines to disturb this trade, but instead, Admiral von Essen employed the two boats exclusively upon operations against the enemy's naval forces.

At the end of November the Higher Command pointed out to the German Naval Staff that Russia was being supplied from Sweden with war material and rolling stock, transport taking

¹ The *Lübeck*, engaged on the operations described *infra*, sighted a submarine at 8.50 a.m. (G.M.T.), December 17, off Utö. Utö is 60 miles from Lapvik. The submarine may possibly have been *E.9*. The island possessed a safe harbour for small ships, and was now believed by the Germans to be an enemy submarine base. An operation was projected by Admiral Behring to destroy it on January 6–9, 1915, but was unsuccessful owing to bad weather.

place across the Gulf of Bothnia to the Finnish ports Björneborg and Raumo. The Germans were faced with the fact that the longer the war continued the greater would become the transit traffic of material and stores across Sweden to Russia as the usual trade routes of the latter became closed to her one by one. It was decided by the Higher Command that measures must be taken to put an end to the traffic.

The destruction of the traffic in the Gulf of Bothnia was no easy task for the Germans. If they could have seized the Åland Islands the difficulty would have been more than half overcome; but this course would have outraged Sweden, and was therefore not to be thought of. Most of the contraband traffic to Finnish ports was carried out by Swedish ships, and the necessity of refraining from any action likely to drive the Swedes into the enemy's arms had evoked orders that that country was to be very tenderly treated. A mining operation against the Finnish ports, which was the only measure that could be taken, might bring about a deplorable situation with Sweden; but it was finally decided to undertake it, and directly the minefields had been laid to issue a timely warning to Sweden.

The operation was undertaken by the auxiliary minelayer *Deutschland*. Leaving Kiel at 2.30 p.m. on December 3, she reached the Gulf of Bothnia, after encountering some bad weather, which for a while placed her in a position of some danger. Considerable difficulty was experienced in fixing her exact position in the Gulf, but between 3.50 a.m. and 6.45 a.m. on 6th she successfully laid a field of 120 mines off Björneborg and 80 mines off Raumo, returning to Kiel, as she believed, undiscovered.

The outcome was not long to await. Scarcely had the *Deutschland* quitted Björneborg than two Swedish steamers ran on the minefield and sank, with loss of several lives. All Swedish traffic with Finland was stopped at once, and feeling in Sweden ran very high.¹ The possibility of an unfortunate occurrence of this description had been foreseen by the Germans when the operation was planned, and it was decided that the risk should be taken. The early discovery in this manner of the minefield off Björneborg naturally rendered it useless, for the Russians promptly swept it up; and the discomfiture of the Germans was completed when it was learnt that the Swedes had watched the *Deutschland* laying the second minefield, off Raumo, and had reported the fact. By the middle of December traffic was resumed between Sweden and the Finnish ports, and the lesson was brought home to Germany that it was

¹ Although the Swedish Government and the upper classes were pro-German, they did not accurately represent the feelings of the mass of the people.

fruitless to lay mines directly off an enemy's port where they could be swept up unmolested.¹

Of scarcely less importance in German eyes than the Swedish contraband trade in the Gulf of Bothnia was the Russo-Finnish and Swedish timber trade with Great Britain. The German Government had information that Great Britain was so short of pit props that some of the coal mines might have to cease working, and it was consequently of the greatest moment to prevent or restrict this trade. The control of mercantile traffic in the Sound, through which the traffic in question passed, was under the Chief of the 4th T.B.D. Flotilla, whose task, owing to the annoyance which the supervision caused to the Swedes, became daily more difficult. During the last half of October a number of Swedish vessels loaded with timber were taken into Swinemünde, which caused great annoyance in Sweden. So strongly did the latter protest at the interference with their trade, that for fear of a breach the German Government were forced to issue to the naval authorities in the Baltic restrictive orders, which completely prevented any effective control of the Swedish timber trade.²

25. German Operations in the Middle Baltic, December, 1914—January, 1915.—Since September no forces had been detached from the High Sea Fleet for operations in the Baltic. On December 24, however, four ships of the 5th Squadron were placed at Prince Henry's disposal for a few days, and he decided to employ them on a cruise to Gotland, in order to deceive the Russians as to the strength of the naval forces in reserve in the Baltic. The cruise was carried out between December 26 and 30, Admiral Behring's light forces being placed under the command of the Chief of the 5th Squadron as a screen. Unfortunately, just at this time both the British submarines were undergoing repairs at Revel, and the 5th Squadron withdrew unmolested.

On January 22, 1915, however, the Germans were again active in the Eastern Baltic. On that day Admiral Behring left harbour with his force for a reconnaissance in the southern entrance of the Åland Sea. On the way, as conditions were suitable, he decided to bombard Libau with the *Prinz Adalbert*, a sister ship to the *Friedrich Carl*, which had been sent to Swinemünde on December 7 to replace the latter. In the early morning hours of January 24 the *Prinz Adalbert* went ashore off Steinort. She got off again two hours later, little damaged; but meanwhile, *E.9*, who had completed her repairs by January 15 and had just left for a cruise in the area west of Bornholm, was ordered to attack her.³ *E.9* arrived off Steinort

¹ G.O.H., p. 259.

² G.O.H., p. 216.

³ By inference. The reports of *E.1* and *E.9* are not clear on the point.

on the afternoon of 25th,¹ by which time, however, Admiral Behring's force was off Bornholm, returning to harbour. The force did not escape unscathed, however, for during the night of January 24-25 the *Augsburg* ran on a Russian minefield 20 miles east of Bornholm, but though seriously damaged she was towed to Swinemünde in safety. At 1.39 p.m. on 25th a similar fate met the *Gazelle* 9 miles N.N.W. of Arkona. It was thought on board that the ship had been torpedoed, and fire was opened at the periscopes of two imaginary submarines; and it was not until she was examined in dock at Swinemünde, whither the 20th Half-Flotilla towed her, that it was established that she had struck a mine.

26. Winter Work of the Submarines under Difficulties.—*E.9* meanwhile, finding no signs of the *Prinz Adalbert* off Steinort, continued her cruise westward. At 3.21 p.m. on January 29 she sighted a German destroyer steaming southward off Möens Klint and proceeded to attack her. There was a heavy swell, which rendered depth keeping very difficult, but a position was reached seven points on the enemy's bow and a torpedo was fired. Before the result could be seen *E.9* dived to avoid detection; but the detonation of the torpedo was heard at the correct interval, and when *E.9* rose to the surface four minutes later the destroyer had disappeared, though a boat supposed by Commander Horton to be a second one was seen approaching. It was generally assumed by the British and Russian Admiralties that the first destroyer had been sunk, but this was incorrect, for actually the torpedo had hit the bottom and exploded. The German destroyer, which was the leader of the 7th Half-Flotilla, failed to sight *E.9*.² However, the suspicion that an enemy submarine was in the vicinity had an unfortunate result for *E.9*'s further chances; for the exercises which the 3rd Squadron of the High Sea Fleet was on the point of carrying out in the Western Baltic were now cancelled.³

The conditions under which *E.9* was working were exceedingly trying. A very cold north wind was blowing, with a rising sea. The spray froze as it struck, and the bridge became a mass of ice. Considerable difficulty was experienced in keeping the conning-tower hatch free of ice, a man being continuously employed on this work. The bridge screen was immovable, the ice on it being 6 in. thick, and the telegraphs were frozen. In order to free the boat of ice, Commander Horton⁴ went to the bottom for the night.

¹ Commander Horton's report gives time 2.30; presumably p.m. is meant.

² I.D., H.S. 3000. The incident is not mentioned in G.O.H.

³ I.D., H.S. 3000. The exercises had been postponed once already, when it was believed that the accident to the *Gazelle* was caused by an enemy submarine. They were resumed on February 1 or 2.

⁴ Lieut.-Commanders Laurence and Horton were promoted to Commander December 31, 1914.

For the next three months no operations were carried out by the submarines, though on February 8 *E.1* left for a cruise, and after being delayed for 48 hours by a strong south-westerly wind, which covered the ship with ice, she put to sea and reached a position 50 miles east of Bornholm on 11th, where she broke down and returned to Revel for repairs.

Apart from the severe cold of the Baltic winter, which was particularly trying to submarine crews on account of the absence of exercise, various other conditions militated against success. The whole Baltic was so full of mines that the area of operations of the submarines was practically confined to the waters west of Bornholm, in which, however, there were seldom any German forces other than the patrols.¹ The Russians seem to have held an exaggerated belief in the German anti-submarine defences in the Western Baltic; the passage to Kiel Bay was considered to be impregnable for submarines, and the latter were forbidden to attempt it.² Every time the boats proceeded to sea they had to steam over 1,000 miles; this caused great wear to their machinery, and there were continual breakdowns. It was unfortunate that the dates and areas of the submarine cruises seldom coincided with those of the German forces, whilst several misses with torpedoes had been made by the submarines. "The enemy in these waters, except for the destroyer patrol in the shallow water of the southern end of the Sound, appears to be just as scarce as in the North Sea," wrote Commander Laurence.³ "Before the winter set in, an occasional light cruiser came to the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, but remained only an hour or two. The enemy's heavy ships, as far as we know, have not been in the Baltic since they knew of our presence in these waters. The only ships we have seen since our first day have been the *Gazelle* and an occasional destroyer." Nevertheless, Admiral von Essen was satisfied, and stated that the submarines had been of the greatest assistance to him in his operations.⁴

¹ A chart of the mined areas in the Baltic at a date somewhat subsequent to this (M. 010072/15) shows practically the entire southern and eastern shores of the Baltic east of Bornholm, the Gulf of Finland, and the approaches to the eastern entrance of the Gulf of Bothnia to be dangerous from mines. There was also a Russian minefield north of Rügen, extending as far as 55° N.

² The Russians seem to have become possessed of a plan of the defences of the Kiel approaches, possibly through an agent, and, from its description, no doubt quite apocryphal. The plan has not been seen. It was examined by the British submarine Commanders, who were perfectly willing to make the attempt to penetrate the defences had this been permitted.

³ M. 02282/15. Private letter to Commodore (S).

⁴ *Ibid.* The Russian operations in 1914 consisted principally of minelaying.

APPENDIX A.

WAR ORGANISATION OF GERMAN BALTIC FORCES.¹

August 2, 1914.

Commander-in-Chief, Admiral-of-the-Fleet Prince Henry of Prussia.

I.—BALTIC COAST DEFENCE DIVISION.

*Light Cruisers.**Amazone* (flag of Rear-Admiral Mischke), 1900, 10—4·1 in., 21·5 knots.*Augsburg*, 1909, 12—4·1 in., 27 knots.*Magdeburg*, 1911, 12—4·1 in., 27·6 knots.*Lübeck*, 1904, 10—4·1 in., 23·5 knots.*Undine*, 1902, 10—4·1 in., 21·5 knots.*Thetis*, 1900, 10—4·1 in., 21·8 knots.*Gazelle*, 1898, 10—4·1 in., 19·5 knots.

(All 2 torpedo tubes.)

Freya (schoolship), 1897, 2—8·2 in., 6—5·9 in., 3 T., 19 knots.*Panther* (gunboat), 1901, 2—4·1 in., 14 knots.*T.B.D.s.**T.91, 93, 94, 97* (Sleipner), 102, 127, 1898—1900, 400 tons, 3—4 pdr., 3 double T., 26 knots.*V.25, 26, 186, 1910—1914*, 650 tons, 2—15 pdr., 4 double T., 32·5 knots.*Carmen*, 1896, 226 tons, 3—4 pdr., 1 S.T., 2 T.*Submarines.**D.10* (flotilla leader), 1898, 349 tons, 5—4 pdr., 2 T.*U.3, U.4, U.A²*, 1—4 pdr., 4 T (*U.A.*, 3 T).*Mining Vessels.*Auxiliary minelayers *Prinz Waldemar, Prinz Sigismund, Prinz Adalbert, Deutschland* (4—15 pdr., 2—4 pdr.).

Auxiliary Mineseeking Division at Neufahrwasser and Swinemünde.

Auxiliaries.

12 outpost vessels.

Blockships *London, Rhein, Elli, Viandra*.

3 barrage breakers.

1 hospital ship.

Supply Ships.

3 colliers.

Kaiserin Augusta (Gunnery Schoolship), 1892, 6,000 tons, 12—5·9 in., 8—15 pdr., 21 knots.Submarine School, Kiel: *Vulkan* (salvage vessel), *T.27, U.1*.

II.—KIEL HARBOUR DEFENCE FLOTILLA.

(Under Vice-Admiral Bachmann.)

Delphin (Gunnery Tender), 1906, 450 tons, 4—15 pdr., 12 knots.*T.58, 60, 63, 65*.³

Auxiliary Mineseeking Division.

Primus (Auxiliary mining vessel).¹ From G.O.H., Table 3.² *U.3* and *U.4* were old boats (1909); *U.A* was built for the Norwegian Navy, but taken over by Germany before delivery on outbreak of war.³ Probably T.B.D.s, 1st class.

APPENDIX B.

WAR ORGANISATION OF RUSSIAN BALTIC FLEET.¹

August 2, 1914.

(Commander-in-Chief, Admiral N. O. von Essen.)

Active Fleet.

Battleship Squadron :—

Tzesarevich (flag of Vice-Admiral Baron V. N. Ferzen), 4—12 in., 12—6 in., 16—11 pdr., 17·3 knots.*Imperator Pavel I*, 4—12 in., 14—8 in., 12—4·7 in., 16·7 knots.*Andrei Pervozvanni*,² 4—12 in., 14—8 in., 12—4·7 in., 16·7 knots.*Slava*, 4—12 in., 12—6 in., 20—11 pdr., 16·5 knots.*Ryurik* (Cruiser) (flag of Commander-in-Chief), 15,190 tons, 4—10 in., 8—8 in., 20—4·7 in., 21 knots.

Cruiser Squadron :—

Gromoboi (flag of Rear-Admiral N. N. Kolomeitsov), 13,220 tons, 4—8 in., 22—6 in., 19—11 pdr., 19·6 knots.*Bayan*, 7,775 tons, 2—8 in., 8—6 in., 22—11 pdr., 19·3 knots.*Pallada*, as *Bayan*.*Admiral Makarov*, 7,775 tons, 2—8 in., 8—6 in., 20—11 pdr., 19·3 knots.*Novik* (Destroyer), 1,200 tons, 4—4 in., 4 double T., 36·3 knots.

1st Destroyer Flotilla (Rear-Admiral I. A. Shtorre) :—

1st Division : 9 boats, 1904—7, 570 tons, 2—4 in., 3 T., 25 knots.

2nd Division : 9 boats, 1904—5, 500 tons, 2—4 in., 2—3 T., 25 knots.

3rd Division : 9 boats, 1905—6, 350 tons, 2—11 pdr., 2—3 T., 27—28 knots.

4th Division : 10 boats, 1905, 330 tons, 2—11 pdr., 2 T., 27 knots.

2nd Destroyer Flotilla (Rear-Admiral A. P. Kurosh) :—

5th Division : 9 boats, 1905—6, 350 tons, 2—11 pdr., 2 T., 27 knots.

6th Division³ : 9 boats, 1895—1901, 220 tons, 2—11 pdr., 2 T. (15 in.), 27 knots.7th Division,³ 8 T.B.s

Submarine Flotilla (Rear-Admiral Levitzki) :—

1st Division : 4 boats.

2nd Division : 4 boats.

Minelaying Division (Rear-Admiral V. A. Kanin) :—

Minelayers—

*Amur.**Ladoga.**Enisei.**Onega.**Volga.**Narova.**First Reserve.*

Cruiser Squadron (Commodore P. N. Lyeskov) :—

Rossiya, 12,195 tons, 4—8 in., 22—6 in., 15—11 pdr., 19·2 knots.*Oleg*, 6,675 tons, 12—6 in., 8—11 pdr., 19·9 knots.*Bogatuir* (fitted as minelayer), 6,650 tons, 12—6 in., 12—11 pdr., 19·9 knots.*Avrora*, 6,730 tons, 10—6 in., 20—11 pdr., 18·3 knots.*Instructional Division.*

(Second Reserve.)

Imp. Aleksandr II (pendant of Captain E. N. Odintzov) (Battleship, 2nd class).*Petr Veliki* (Battleship, 3rd class).

Some gunboats, T.B.s, etc.

¹ From "War Vessels and Aircraft," August, 1914, and G.O.H., Table 4.² Repairs at Kronstadt six weeks from August 1, 1914, after grounding off Hangö.³ Belong to 1st Reserve (leader of 6th Division excepted), and temporarily attached to Active Fleet.

**LIST OF NAVAL STAFF MONOGRAPHS (HISTORICAL)
ISSUED TO THE FLEET.**

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|------------|----|-----------|--|
| C.B. 917 (octavo) | .. | Vol. I | .. | Monograph | 1. Coronel. |
| | | | | " | 2. German Cruiser Squadron in Pacific. |
| | | | | " | 3. Falklands. |
| | | | | " | 4. <i>Goeben</i> and <i>Breslau</i> . |
| C.B. 917(A) (octavo) | .. | Vol. II | .. | " | 5. Cameroons, 1914. |
| | | | | " | 10. East Africa, to July, 1915. |
| C.B. 1585 (foolscap) | .. | Vol. III | .. | " | 6. Passage of B.E.F., August, 1914. |
| | | | | " | 7. Patrol Flotillas at com- mencement of war. |
| | | | | " | 8. Raid on N.E. Coast, December 16, 1914. |
| | | | | " | 11. Heligoland Bight, August 28, 1914. |
| | | | | " | 12. Dogger Bank, January 24, 1915. |
| C.B. 917(B) (octavo) | .. | Vol. IV | .. | " | 15. Mesopotamia. |
| C.B. 917(C) (octavo) | .. | Vol. V | .. | " | 14. First Australian Convoy, 1914. |
| | | | | " | 16. China Squadron, 1914 (in- cluding <i>Emden</i> Hunt). |
| | | | | " | 17. East Indies Squadron, 1914. |
| | | | | " | 20. Cape of Good Hope Squadron, 1914. |
| C.B. 917(D) (octavo) | .. | Vol. VI | .. | " | 18. Dover Command. I. |
| C.B. 971(E) | .. | Vol. VII.. | .. | " | 19. Tenth Cruiser Squadron I. |
| | | | | " | 25. The Baltic, 1914. |

