

to 5,000 to 6,000 yards, and this added considerably to the anxieties and responsibilities of the Commanding Officers of Submarines, who handled their vessels with coolness and judgment in an area which was necessarily occupied by friends as well as foes.

Low visibility and calm sea are the most unfavourable conditions under which Submarines can operate, and no opportunity occurred of closing with the Enemy's Cruisers to within torpedo range.

Lieutenant-Commander Ernest W. Leir, Commanding Submarine "E.4," witnessed the sinking of the German Torpedo Boat Destroyer "V.187" through his periscope, and, observing a Cruiser of the "Stettin" class close, and open fire on the British Destroyers which had lowered their boats to pick up the survivors, he proceeded to attack the Cruiser, but she altered course before he could get within range. After covering the retirement of our Destroyers, which had had to abandon their boats, he returned to the latter, and embarked a Lieutenant and nine men of "Defender," who had been left behind. The boats also contained two Officers and eight men of "V.187," who were unwounded, and eighteen men who were badly wounded. As he could not embark the latter, Lieutenant-Commander Leir left one of the Officers and six unwounded men to navigate the British boats to Heligoland. Before leaving he saw that they were provided with water, biscuit, and a compass. One German Officer and two men were made prisoners of war.

Lieutenant-Commander Leir's action in remaining on the surface in the vicinity of the enemy and in a visibility which would have placed his vessel within easy gun range of an enemy appearing out of the mist, was altogether admirable.

This enterprising and gallant Officer took part in the reconnaissance which supplied the information on which these operations were based, and I beg to submit his name, and that of Lieutenant-Commander Talbot, the Commanding Officer of "E.6," who exercised patience, judgment and skill in a dangerous position, for the favourable consideration of Their Lordships.

On the 13th September, "E.9" (Lieutenant-Commander Max K. Horton), torpedoed and sank the German Light Cruiser "Hela" six miles South of Heligoland.

A number of Destroyers were evidently called to the scene after "E.9" had delivered her attack, and these hunted her for several hours.

On the 14th September, in accordance with his orders, Lieutenant-Commander Horton examined the outer anchorage of Heligoland, a service attended by considerable risk.

On the 25th September, Submarine "E.6" (Lieutenant-Commander C. P. Talbot), while diving, fouled the moorings of a mine laid by the enemy. On rising to the surface she weighed the mine and sinker; the former was securely fixed between the hydroplane and its guard; fortunately, however, the horns of the mine were pointed outboard. The weight of the sinker made it a difficult and dangerous matter to lift the mine clear without exploding it. After half an hour's patient work this was effected by Lieutenant Frederick A. P. Williams-Freeman and Able Seaman Ernest Randall Cremer, Official Number 214235, and the released mine descended to its original depth.

On the 6th October, "E.9" (Lieutenant-Commander Max K. Horton), when patrolling off the Ems, torpedoed and sank the enemy's destroyer, "S.126."

The enemy's Torpedo Craft pursue tactics, which, in connection with their shallow draft, make them exceedingly difficult to attack with torpedo, and Lieutenant-Commander Horton's success was the result of much patient and skilful zeal. He is a most enterprising submarine officer, and I beg to submit his name for favourable consideration.

Lieutenant Charles M. S. Chapman, the Second in Command of "E.9," is also deserving of credit.

Against an enemy whose capital vessels have never, and Light Cruisers have seldom, emerged from their fortified harbours, opportunities of delivering Submarine attacks have necessarily been few, and on one occasion only, prior to the 13th September, has one of our Submarines been within torpedo range of a Cruiser during daylight hours.

During the exceptionally heavy westerly gales which prevailed between the 14th and 21st September, the position of the Submarines on a lee shore, within a few miles of the Enemy's coast, was an unpleasant one.

The short steep seas which accompany westerly gales in the Heligoland Bight made it difficult to keep the conning tower hatches open. There was no rest to be obtained, and even when cruising at a depth of 60 feet, the Submarines were rolling considerably, and pumping—i.e., vertically moving about twenty feet.

I submit that it was creditable to the Commanding Officers that they should have maintained their stations under such conditions.

Service in the Heligoland Bight is keenly sought after by the Commanding Officers of the Eighth Submarine Flotilla, and they have all shown daring and enterprise in the execution of their duties. These Officers have unanimously expressed to me their admiration of the cool and gallant behaviour of the Officers and men under their command. They are, however, of the opinion that it is impossible to single out individuals when all have performed their duties so admirably, and in this I concur.

The following Submarines have been in contact with the enemy during these operations:—

"D.1" (Lieutenant-Commander Archibald D. Cochrane).

"D.2" (Lieutenant-Commander Arthur G. Jameson).

"D.3" (Lieutenant-Commander Edward C. Boyle).

"D.5" (Lieutenant-Commander Godfrey Herbert).

"E.4" (Lieutenant-Commander Ernest W. Leir).

"E.5" (Lieutenant-Commander Charles S. Benning).

"E.6" (Lieutenant-Commander Cecil P. Talbot).

"E.7" (Lieutenant-Commander Ferdinand E. B. Feilmann).

"E.9" (Lieutenant-Commander Max K. Horton).

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) ROGER KEYES,

Commodore (S).