



FOURTH SUPPLEMENT
TO
The London Gazette

Of TUESDAY, the 29th of DECEMBER, 1914.

Published by Authority.

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FRIDAY, 1 JANUARY, 1915.

*Admiralty,
1st January, 1915.*

The following despatch has been received from Captain John C. T. Glossop, reporting the capture of the German Cruiser "Emden" by H.M.A.S. "Sydney."

A memorandum is also appended by the Director of the Air Department, Admiralty, containing a report on the aerial attack on the airship sheds and factory at Friedrichshafen.

Despatch from Captain Glossop.

H.M.A.S. "Sydney" at Colombo,
15th November, 1914.

Sir,

I have the honour to report that whilst on escort duty with the Convoy under the charge of Captain Silver, H.M.A.S. "Melbourne," at 6.20 a.m., on Monday, 9th November, a wireless message from Cocos was heard reporting that a foreign warship was off the entrance. I was ordered to raise steam for full speed at 7.0 a.m. and proceeded thither. I worked up to 20 knots, and at 9.15 a.m. sighted land ahead and almost immediately the smoke of a ship, which proved to be H.I.G.M.S. "Emden" coming out towards me at a great

rate. At 9.40 a.m. fire was opened, she firing the first shot. I kept my distance as much as possible to obtain the advantage of my guns. Her fire was very accurate and rapid to begin with, but seemed to slacken very quickly, all casualties occurring in this ship almost immediately. First the foremost funnel of her went, secondly the foremast, and she was badly on fire aft, then the second funnel went, and lastly the third funnel, and I saw she was making for the beach on North Keeling Island, where she grounded at 11.20 a.m. I gave her two more broadsides and left her to pursue a merchant ship which had come up during the action.

2. Although I had guns on this merchant ship at odd times during the action I had not fired, and as she was making off fast I pursued and overtook her at 12.10, firing a gun across her bows, and hoisting International Code Signal to stop, which she did. I sent an armed boat and found her to be the S.S. "Buresk," a captured British collier, with 18 Chinese crew, 1 English Steward, 1 Norwegian Cook, and a German Prize Crew of 3 Officers, 1 Warrant Officer and 12 men. The ship unfortunately was sinking, the Kingston knocked out and damaged to prevent repairing, so I took all on board, fired 4 shells into her and returned to "Emden," passing men swimming in the

water, for whom I left 2 boats I was towing from "Buresk."

3. On arriving again off "Emden" she still had her colours up at mainmast head. I enquired by signal, International Code, "Will you surrender?" and received a reply in Morse "What signal? No signal books." I then made in Morse "Do you surrender?" and subsequently "Have you received my signal?" to neither of which did I get an answer. The German Officers on board gave me to understand that the Captain would never surrender, and therefore, though very reluctantly, I again fired at her at 4.30 p.m., ceasing at 4.35, as she showed white flags and hauled down her ensign by sending a man aloft.

4. I then left "Emden" and returned and picked up the "Buresk's" two boats, rescuing 2 sailors (5.0 p.m.), who had been in the water all day. I returned and sent in one boat to "Emden," manned by her own prize crew from "Buresk," and 1 Officer, and stating I would return to their assistance next morning. This I had to do, as I was desirous to find out the condition of cables and Wireless Station at Direction Island. On the passage over I was again delayed by rescuing another sailor (6.30 p.m.), and by the time I was again ready and approaching Direction Island it was too late for the night.

5. I lay on and off all night and communicated with Direction Island at 8.0 a.m., 10th November, to find that the "Emden's" party consisting of 3 officers and 40 men, 1 launch and 2 cutters had seized and provisioned a 70 tons schooner (the "Ayesha"), having 4 Maxims, with 2 belts to each. They left the previous night at six o'clock. The Wireless Station was entirely destroyed, 1 cable cut, 1 damaged, and 1 intact. I borrowed a Doctor and 2 Assistants, and proceeded as fast as possible to "Emden's" assistance.

6. I sent an Officer on board to see the Captain, and in view of the large number of prisoners and wounded and lack of accommodation, &c., in this ship, and the absolute impossibility of leaving them where they were, he agreed that if I received his Officers and men and all wounded, "then as for such time as they remained in 'Sydney' they would cause no interference with ship or fittings, and would be amenable to the ship's discipline." I therefore set to work at once to tranship them—a most difficult operation, the ship being on weather side of Island and the send alongside very heavy. The conditions in the "Emden" were indescribable. I received the last from her at 5.0 p.m., then had to go round to the lee side to pick up 20 more men who had managed to get ashore from the ship.

7. Darkness came on before this could be accomplished, and the ship again stood off and on all night, resuming operations at 5.0 a.m. on 11th November, a cutter's crew having to land with stretchers to bring wounded round to embarking point. A German Officer, a Doctor, died ashore the previous day. The ship in the meantime ran over to Direction

Island to return their Doctor and Assistants, send cables, and was back again at 10.0 a.m., embarked the remainder of wounded, and proceeded for Colombo by 10.35 a.m. Wednesday, 11th November.

8. Total casualties in "Sydney": Killed 3, severely wounded (since dead) 1, severely wounded 4, wounded 4, slightly wounded 4. In the "Emden" I can only approximately state the killed at 7 Officers and 108 men from Captain's statement. I had on board 11 Officers, 9 Warrant Officers, and 191 men, of whom 3 Officers and 53 men were wounded, and of this number 1 Officer and 3 men have since died of wounds.

9. The damage to "Sydney's" hull and fittings was surprisingly small; in all about 10 hits seem to have been made. The engine and boiler rooms and funnels escaped entirely.

13. I have great pleasure in stating that the behaviour of the ship's company was excellent in every way, and with such a large proportion of young hands and people under training it is all the more gratifying. The engines worked magnificently, and higher results than trials were obtained, and I cannot speak too highly of the Medical Staff and arrangements on subsequent trip, the ship being nothing but a hospital of a most painful description.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN C. T. GLOSSOP,

Captain.

The Secretary of the Admiralty.

Memorandum by the Director of the Air Department.

Admiralty,

17th December, 1914.

On 21st November, 1914, Squadron Commander E. F. Briggs, Flight Commander J. T. Babington, and Flight Lieutenant S. V. Sippe, Royal Navy, carried out an aerial attack on the Zeppelin airship sheds and factory at Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance.

Leaving French Territory shortly before 10 a.m., they arrived over their objective at about noon, and, although under a very heavy rifle, machine-gun and shrapnel fire from the moment they were sighted, they all three dived steeply to within a few hundred feet of the sheds, when they released their bombs—in all eleven.

Squadron Commander Briggs was wounded, brought down, and made a prisoner, but the other two officers regained their starting-point after a flight of more than four hours across hostile country under very bad weather conditions.

It is believed that the damage caused by this attack includes the destruction of one airship and serious damage to the larger shed, and also demolition of the hydrogen-producing plant, which had only lately been completed. Later reports stated that flames of considerable magnitude were seen issuing from the factory immediately after the raid.