



SECOND SUPPLEMENT

TO

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WEDNESDAY, 19 FEBRUARY, 1919.

Admiralty, 19th February, 1919.

DESPATCHES FROM THE VICE-ADMIRAL, DOVER PATROL, ON ZEEBRUGGE AND OSTEND OPERATIONS, 22ND-23RD APRIL, 1918, AND OSTEND OPERATIONS, 10TH MAY, 1918.

REPORT OF VICE-ADMIRAL, DOVER PATROL, ON OPERATIONS, 22ND-23RD APRIL, 1918.

Fleet House, Dover,

**9th May, 1918.*

(No. 1806/001.)

SIR,

Be pleased to submit for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the following Report on the Operations on the Belgian Coast on the night of the 22nd-23rd April, 1918.

I.—GENERAL SUMMARY.

2. To make the report clear, the different sections of the operations have been separated as much as possible. Fuller details than appear in this despatch will be found in the complete set of orders and reports forwarded herewith.

(NOTE.—These orders and reports are not published with this despatch.)

3. The main objects of the enterprise were (1) to block the Bruges ship-canal at its entrance into the harbour at Zeebrugge; (2) to block the entrance to Ostend harbour from the sea; and (3) to inflict as much damage as possible upon the ports of Zeebrugge and Ostend.

4. Zeebrugge harbour is connected by a ship-canal with the inland docks at Bruges, which communicate again by means of a system of smaller canals with Ostend harbour. The whole forms a triangle with two sea entrances. The eastern side, which is 8 miles long, is the ship-canal from Zeebrugge to Bruges; the southern side, which is 11 miles long, consists of smaller canals from Bruges to Ostend; the base, facing north-west, is the 12 miles of heavily fortified coast line between Ostend and Zeebrugge. This fortified line is prolonged 8½ miles to the westward, extending to the right flank of the German Army, facing Nieupoort, and 7 miles to the eastward as far as the Dutch frontier. The defences include a number of batteries mounting over 225 guns, 136 of which are from 6-in. to 15-in. calibre, the latter ranging up to 42,000 yards.

5. This formidable system has been installed since the German occupation in 1914, and Bruges has recently provided a base for at least

* NOTE.—Some amendments to this despatch of 9th May, 1918, have been made by the Vice-Admiral, Dover Patrol, in the light of information received between that date and 22nd January, 1919.