

(xx) A smaller canning factory and herring oil factory were set on fire, and the plant damaged by explosives (not yet confirmed).

Naval and Air Operations—0900-1445

50. During this period PRINCE CHARLES, PRINCE LEOPOLD and CHIDDINGFOLD had moved across to Slaaken Bay on the south side of the fiord to obtain cover in accordance with the pre-arranged plan.

51. The first sortie of Blenheims arrived shortly before 0930 while ORIBI and ONSLOW were taking up position to enter Ulvesund but it was not possible to establish reliable R/T* communication with them. (Maaloy Island was now in our hands but the smoke was still too thick for the destroyers to pass through Maaloysund.)

52. Two minutes later, at 0932, Rugsundo Battery re-opened fire on KENYA who hotly engaged with "A" and "B" turrets and again silenced the guns which did not re-open fire until 1308.

53. By 0930 the smoke screen across the Rugsundo line of fire was thinning and CHIDDINGFOLD was ordered to reinforce with smoke floats and funnel smoke, while moving fast. She did this well and also engaged the battery with a few salvos.

54. At 0945 Maaloysund was sufficiently clear for the destroyers to proceed. ORIBI followed by ONSLOW entered Ulvesund.

55. The first enemy aircraft appeared at 1005, when two ME.109s came in and immediately engaged two of our Blenheims one of which was shot down two minutes later. This Blenheim would possibly not have been lost, and the mortality among German aircraft, later in the day, would probably have been higher, if efficient R/T communication between ship and aircraft could have been established and maintained.

56. Quite apart from the need for efficient communication it was apparent that two R.A.F. officers should be carried in the Headquarters Ship with the sole duties of concentrating on the air situation and directing the fighters. The ideal would be to have officers personally known to the fighter pilots and for these officers to have carried out rehearsals from the Headquarters Ship.

57. KENYA fired occasional salvos at Rugsundo Battery, to check gun range and to discourage any attempt to get their guns functioning again.

58. The second sortie (Beaufighters) arrived at 1015 and about 25 minutes later was in pursuit of the first two enemy bombers—two JU.88s—to put in an appearance. These two aircraft never got within range of KENYA's guns. Only intermittent R/T communication could be established with the Beaufighters.

59. At 1100 KENYA opened fire, at long range, on two ME.109s who quickly turned away and disappeared to the south.

60. During this period the position regarding merchant shipping in Ulvesund had not been clarified so it was decided to send in KENYA's

motor dinghy, with Lieutenant J. N. Kempton, R.N., in charge, to investigate and report. After entering Maaloysund this boat was heavily fired upon, caught fire and burnt out. The crew were rescued by a Support Landing Craft.

61. About noon, a small number of enemy bombers were sighted to the northwards but no attack developed at this stage.

62. During the period since the bombardment of Maaloy Island had been completed. OFFA had been protecting the Force from the west, and shortly after noon reported a merchant ship and Armed Trawler escort proceeding to Vaagsfiord from the north. She was ordered to capture if possible and CHIDDINGFOLD ordered to support her. Unfortunately, in spite of all efforts, the merchant ship—s.s. ANHALT—beached herself and the escort vessel endeavoured to escape.

63. OFFA proceeded to chase and engage the Armed Trawler DONNER, securing several hits. The crew abandoned ship but the vessel continued to steam out to sea at 10 knots. OFFA proceeded alongside the trawler and, finding that she had insufficient fuel for the return passage to the U.K. under a prize crew, destroyed her and then picked up survivors from her crew.

64. During this period CHIDDINGFOLD had closed the merchant ship ANHALT and, using loud hailer, ordered the crew, in German, to bring their boats alongside. They were told that if the order was disobeyed they would be fired on. The boats disregarded the warning and pulled for the shore, only a few yards distant. CHIDDINGFOLD immediately opened fire and sank one boat. The other, although hit, succeeded in escaping inshore while CHIDDINGFOLD was engaged with enemy aircraft.

65. It was at this time, 1236, that all ships became engaged with enemy bombers. Several formations, generally consisting of two or three Heinkels, were driven off and their bombs dropped wide. One H.E.111 was destroyed.

66. These raids continued until about 1300 and shortly afterwards Rugsundo Battery re-opened fire. KENYA immediately replied from "X" and "Y" turrets and with 4-inch. KENYA was hit by one round on the armour belt and a few minutes later a near miss abreast the port torpedo tubes slightly wounded one rating. At 1317 KENYA received a hit which burst and holed her about ten feet above the water line abreast the bridge. Rugsundo Battery was then finally silenced.

ONSLOW and ORIBI in Ulvesund

67. Having received the signal that Maaloy Island was in our hands and Maaloysund clear, the destroyers passed through the narrows and entered Ulvesund at 0941. A good deal of light fire was directed at the ships and ORIBI sustained three minor casualties.

68. When clear of the smoke, the German s.s. REGMAR EDZARD FRITZEN, s.s. NORMAR, and Armed Trawler FOHN were observed proceeding so as to beach themselves in the small bay immediately to the north of Brandhaunnes Point. Shots were fired across their bows and their upper decks were swept with Oerlikon fire but they had gained sufficient time to succeed in their project.

Admiralty footnote —

* R/T = radio telephone