

commenced, two alongside the oiler, one alongside the ore pier and one at anchor. Two of these were hit by torpedoes from HARDY, HUNTER or HAVOCK and sank immediately. The other two were hit by gunfire and set on fire. They never left the harbour. One of the five met outside was driven ashore and two more damaged. The former were seen ashore by HARDY survivors. The number of merchant ships sunk cannot be stated.

(Sgd.) R. E. COURAGE,
Lieutenant-Commander.

The following Despatch by Vice-Admiral W. J. Whitworth, C.B., D.S.O., Vice-Admiral Commanding, Battle Cruiser Squadron, was submitted on the 27th April, 1940, to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty by the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet.

H.M.S. WARSPITE.
25th April, 1940.

SIR,

I have the honour to forward the following report of the attack on the enemy Naval Forces and Shore Defences at Narvik on Saturday, 13th April, 1940.

2. Force "B" which was placed under my orders for this operation, was composed of the following of His Majesty's Ships:—

WARSPITE. — Captain V. A. C. Crutchley, V.C., D.S.C. (Flying the flag of Vice-Admiral Commanding, Battle Cruiser Squadron).

BEDOUIN.—Commander J. A. McCoy.

COSSACK. — Commander R. St.V. Sherbrooke.

ESKIMO. — Commander St.J. A. Micklethwait, D.S.O.

PUNJABI.—Commander J. T. Lean.

HERO.—Commander H. W. Biggs.

ICARUS.—Lieutenant-Commander C. D. Maud.

KIMBERLEY. — Lieutenant-Commander R. G. K. Knowling.

FORESTER. — Lieutenant - Commander E. B. Tancock, D.S.C.

FOXHOUND. — Lieutenant-Commander G. H. Peters.

3. The following instructions for the conduct of the operation were received from you.

"Operation D.W. will take place Saturday 13th April.

(i) Object destruction of German warships, Merchant ships and defences in Narvik area.

(ii) Ships of Force "B" are to rendezvous with WARSPITE flying the flag of the Vice-Admiral Commanding, Battle Cruiser Squadron, in position 67° 44' North 13° 22' East at 0730.

(iii) HOSTILE and HAVOCK to protect Skjel Fiord.

(iv) Remaining destroyers are to rendezvous with Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, in position 68° 00' North 11° 20' East at 1030.

(v) After arrival of other Destroyers, HERO, FOXHOUND and FORESTER will be detached to get out T.S.D.S. Destroyer of the 20th Destroyer Flotilla is to get out

Bow Protection gear* and is to form ahead of leading T.S.D.S.* Destroyer when latter is in station on WARSPITE. The four destroyers working their Asdics as far as practicable. Other destroyers form Anti-submarine screen as ordered by the Vice-Admiral Commanding, Battle Cruiser Squadron. The force will proceed up Vest Fiord in this formation and it is suggested a destroyer should be detailed on each side to throw a depth charge in any likely inlet that could harbour a submarine.

(vi) On reaching Baroy Island which is the suspected Minefield area, the A/S* screen should as far as practicable swing into the swept waters until past the Island.

(vii) The force will proceed into Ofot Fiord engaging shore defences in passing, making full use of short range weapons as well as heavier guns. Non-T.S.D.S. destroyers and WARSPITE covering advance of sweeping destroyers with gunfire. It is specially important that destroyers sighted should be engaged before they can fire torpedoes at WARSPITE.

(viii) T.S.D.S. sweeping is to be continued up to longitude 16° 55' East. Sweeping destroyers are then to haul clear of WARSPITE recover or cut their sweeps and assist the non-T.S.D.S. destroyers. Failing other targets they may drop back and destroy shore defence guns on Baroy Island or elsewhere. WARSPITE will proceed to a position 5 miles from Narvik depending on circumstances and from there cover the advance of the destroyers into the harbour and adjacent waters where enemy ships may be located.

(ix) Destroyers are normally to make smoke if required by Vice-Admiral Commanding, Battle Cruiser Squadron.

(x) The force will withdraw as ordered by the Vice-Admiral Commanding, Battle Cruiser Squadron.

(xi) FURIOUS is to arrange Air Attacks on the following enemy positions. All forces to synchronise with WARSPITE'S approach.

Attack (a) Baroy Island defences about 1215.

(b) Romness Point, longitude 16° 31' East and opposite shore about 1300.

(c) Warships in Ballangen, longitude 17° 00' East, and Narvik harbour and Herjangs and batteries at Narvik about 1345.

Vice-Admiral Commanding, Battle Cruiser Squadron, will signal exact times at which these attacks are to commence.

(xii) FURIOUS is to provide Anti-submarine patrol for WARSPITE from 0830 vide paragraph (ii).

Time of origin 1909/12th April.

4. The following information in regard to the Operation was contained in your signal 1547/12th April:—

(i) Minefield reported 68° 24' North 15° 59' East.

(ii) U-Boat in Vest Fiord area.

* Admiralty footnotes: T.S.D.S.—Two Speed Destroyer Sweep. Bow Protection Gear—Paravanes. A/S—Anti-Submarine.