

16. It was considered that the submarine menace did not warrant the risk of LORRAINE taking part in Operation "Jupiter," and DUQUESNE and the destroyers only took part. DUQUESNE had previously embarked at Casablanca a full outfit of ammunition for herself and replenishments for the destroyers, and the assault on the Ile d'Oleron was carried out on 30th April with the French ships bombarding gun batteries and other targets throughout the day. Twenty-four L.C.V. (P) were used as lift for assaulting troops and by nightfall all the southern portion of the island was in French hands, and only one of the L.C.V. (P) was lost.

17. The subsequent clearance of the Gironde and Garonne Rivers was carried out by French naval units, assisted by the 31st Minesweeping Flotilla and the 4th Minesweeping M.L. Flotilla, all the naval units continuing under the command of Commander Task Force 122.

Relief of the Channel Islands.

18. Plans for the occupation of the Channel Islands after a German surrender, had been started in June, 1944, under the code-name "Nestegg," the operation being mounted from Plymouth. Early in May, 1945, it seemed that the capitulation of the German garrison in the Channel Islands was imminent and on the 2nd May the Supreme Commander asked for a British warship to be at 24 hours' notice to carry his representatives to accept the German surrender. H.M.S. BULLDOG, escorted by H.M.S. BEAGLE, escorted the Supreme Commander's representatives, headed by Brigadier Snow, to St. Peterport on the 8th May and in the early hours of the 9th May the surrender negotiations were completed on the Quarterdeck of H.M.S. BULLDOG.

19. On 8th May, the "Nestegg" convoy, consisting of 3 L.S.T., 10 L.C.T.*, minesweepers and suitable escort sailed from Plymouth bringing occupational troops and food. Half the convoy went to Jersey and half to Guernsey and a detachment was later sent to Alderney.

20. During the next few days some 22,000 prisoners were evacuated from the Channel Islands in the same ships and craft and on the 16th May naval responsibility for the Islands passed from A.N.C.X.F. to the Admiralty.

The Relief of Holland.

21. The introduction of food supplies to Holland, where by March, 1945, lack of essential food-stuffs was causing both actual starvation and an acute political problem, had long been planned under the code-name "Placket". The Commander-in-Chief, The Nore, and Flag Officer, Holland, under A.N.C.X.F., were mainly responsible for the execution of this project which had to be planned for a variety of circumstances. From the naval aspect, these included the ferrying of food in minor landing craft through the inland waterways, the opening of a route from the Scheldt to Dordrecht by which schuyts and barges could pass, the opening of the main Dutch ports from seaward and the landing of supplies over selected beaches if the enemy concentrated his resistance in

"fortresses" commanding the ports. It was always an essential condition that enemy resistance must have ceased before civil relief could begin, but once this condition was fulfilled, the problem became one of providing food and coal with the least possible delay as the people of West Holland had no reserve whatsoever to fall back on. It was therefore necessary to have a considerable number of minesweeping and landing craft at short notice, and to make provision for the latter to be augmented should it be necessary to land over the beaches, which would also have entailed the use of beach clearance and beach parties. A Port Repair Party for Rotterdam under Captain C. D. Maud, D.S.O., R.N., had been held in readiness in Belgium since the previous autumn, and plans were made to introduce this party with the minimum delay.

22. With the realisation that their defeat was imminent, the Germans showed their willingness towards the end of April to come to some agreement whereby food and other necessary supplies could be introduced into Holland under flag of truce. By the 1st May details of the scheme had been agreed with the Germans, and Allied Air Forces commenced dropping emergency food-stuffs to the Dutch population in ten selected areas. Royal Air Force and United States heavy bombers continued to drop some 1,500 tons of food a day until 8th May, when the first Allied coasters arrived in Dutch waters and were given safe conduct and access to the port of Rotterdam.

Occupation of North German Ports.

23. For several months preparations for the despatch of Naval Parties required for the occupation of North German Ports had been in hand under my Chief of Staff (P.H.)*, Rear-Admiral W. E. Parry, C.B., at his Headquarters in London.

24. As it was not possible to form these Naval Parties in time to enable them to be ready on the Continent to move into their ports when required, extemporised arrangements had to be made for naval representation and advice to be at the disposal of the British and Canadian Army Commanders who would make the advance into the ports.

25. This was done by sending the Naval Officer-in-Charge (designate) to join the Army Formation concerned. Rear-Admiral G. C. Muirhead-Gould, D.S.C. (Flag Officer, Wilhelmshaven (designate)), was appointed temporarily to the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, 21st Army Group. At the same time officers of captain's rank were sent to the Headquarters of the First Canadian and Second British Armies. The officers at these three Headquarters were later relieved by officers appointed specifically as Naval Liaison Officers, Rear-Admiral Muirhead-Gould being relieved on 3rd May by Captain R. S. Warne, C.B.E., R.N.

26. The "Eclipse"† Naval Parties moved across the Channel as soon as they were formed and with little or no training. The stores, which it was essential should arrive in the ports at the same time as the Parties, had been sent

* Admiralty footnote: L.S.T.—landing ship for tanks.

L.C.T.—landing craft for tanks.

* Admiralty footnote: P.H.—"Post Hostilities" Staff.

† Admiralty footnote: Operation "Eclipse"—the occupation of the North German Ports.