

Wednesday, 30th April.

52. At 0430 I left for Alexandria in a flying boat. On this night, destroyers were again sent to the Kalamata area, approximately 130 officers and men being recovered. Two destroyers were also sent to Milos, and succeeded in evacuating 650 troops, of whom approximately 400 were Palestinians. These had reached Milos in a Greek vessel which had been bombed some days previously.

(Signed) H. T. BAILLIE-GROHMAN,

*Rear Admiral.
Flag Officer Attached
Middle East.*

ENCLOSURE 2.

*Office of Vice Admiral,
Light Forces,
Mediterranean,
H.M.S. ORION,
5th May, 1941.*

*The Commander-in-Chief,
Mediterranean.*

I have the honour to report that I sailed from Alexandria in H.M.S. ORION with H.M. Ships DECOY, HAVOCK and HASTY in company at 1915 on 24th April, in accordance with your signal 1620/24th April.* H.M.S. DEFENDER joined my flag at 1000 on 25th April.

2. The situation at midnight 24th/25th April was as follows:—

Nauplia

H.M.S. PHOEBE
H.M.A.S. STUART (Captain
(D), 10th Des-
troyer Flotilla)
H.M.A.S. VOYAGER
H.M.S. ULSTER PRINCE
H.M.S. GLENEARN
H.M.S. HYACINTH

Embarking
troops.

Raphitis

H.M.S. CALCUTTA
H.M.A.S. PERTH
H.M.S. GLENGYLE

Embarking
troops.

On Passage

H.M.S. GRIMSBY
H.M.A.S. VENDETTA
H.M.A.S. WATERHEN
S.S. THEMONI
S.S. ZEALAND
S.S. KIRKLAND
S.S. ARAYBANK
S.S. RUNO

A.N. 29 arriv-
ing Aegean
on 25th April.

On Passage

H.M.S. COVENTRY
H.M.S. WRYNECK
H.M.S. DIAMOND
H.M.S. GRIFFIN
S.S. PENNLAND
S.S. THURLAND CASTLE

A.N.F. 29 ar-
riving Aegean
on 25th April.

Admiralty footnote:—

* The Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean's signal 1620/24th April included the following instructions:—

"The object is to embark men, if possible, with arms, but no material must be allowed to take precedence to men. Troop ships with men embarked to sail direct to Alexandria, except Glen ships which must unload at Suda Bay (Crete) and do a second embarkation. Destroyers take their troops to Crete where they will be transferred later."

On Passage

H.M.S. ORION (V.A.L.F.)
H.M.S. DECOY
H.M.S. HASTY
H.M.S. HAVOCK
H.M.S. DEFENDER

Arriving Suda
Bay at 1800
on 25th April.

On Passage

H.M.S. ISIS
H.M.S. HERO
H.M.S. HOTSPUR
H.M.S. HEReward
R.F.A. BRAMBLELEAF*

Arriving Suda
Bay at a.m.
26th April.

On Passage

H.M.S. NUBIAN

Arriving Suda
Bay at 0400
on 26th April.

On Passage

H.M.S. CARLISLE
H.M.S. KANDAHAR
H.M.S. KINGSTON
S.S. COSTA RICA
S.S. CITY OF LONDON
S.S. DILWARA
S.S. SALWEEN
S.S. SLAMAT
S.S. KHEDIVE ISMAIL

A.G. 14 ar-
riving Aegean
at 0700 on
26th April.

On Passage

H.M.S. FLAMINGO

Arriving at
1700 on 26th
April.

On Passage

H.M.S. KIMBERLEY
H.M.A.S. VAMPIRE
H.M.S. AUCKLAND
S.S. IONIA
S.S. CORINTHIA
S.S. ITRIA
S.S. BELRAY
S.S. ELONORA MAERSK
S.S. COMLIEBANK

A.G. 15 ar-
riving at 1300
on 27th April.

3. *General Considerations.*—Because of the presence in Greece of strong enemy air forces and the rapidly diminishing fighter support, it was necessary to carry out all evacuation at night and withdraw all ships to the southward during the day. The whole programme was based on this consideration. It will be noticed that nearly all losses from aircraft were sustained in the region of the parallel of 37 degrees North, which was approximately the limit of the range of the enemy dive bombers. It was my policy to insist on all ships leaving the places of embarkation in time to be south of 37 degrees North by daylight and it will be noted that the failure of the SLAMAT to leave Nauplia at the time ordered resulted in her being within range of the dive bombers well after dawn.

Another factor to be borne in mind was the possibility of interference by surface craft from the westward.

Throughout there was no fighter support for ships at sea north of 37 degrees North. The R.A.F. in Crete did what they could for convoys south of this latitude, but the protection was slender, by reason of the small number of aircraft available.

Admiralty footnote:—

* R.F.A. BRAMBLELEAF—A Naval oil tanker.