

79. The Rear Admiral, Dover, arrived back from the coast in a M.T.B. and during the forenoon a joint Naval and Military conference was held to devise a plan for the forthcoming night's evacuation. The fact that evacuation traffic was suspended in daylight hours enabled all transport resources to accumulate during the day and to be held available for a massed descent upon Dunkirk Harbour during the night. By making provision for increased pier and berthing parties and traffic controlled by motor boat in the harbour channels, it was hoped to berth all craft that were available between the hours of 2100/2 and 0300/3.

The times of sailing of all vessels were adjusted so as to space them out over the evacuation period at Dunkirk, and allowance was made for a proportion failing to make the passage.

The French agreed to make their own arrangements for embarkation from the Dunkirk East Beach and the West Pier on the new outer harbour.

At 1530 two R.A.F. Motor Boats, 243 and 270, left in company for Dunkirk carrying Commander J. C. Clouston and an augmented pier party. When off Gravelines attacks were made on the boats by eight Junkers 87 with machine guns and small bombs. No. 243 had a near miss which damaged her. For ten minutes No. 270 carried on trying to avoid attacks. She then returned to No. 243 but Commander Clouston who was in the water instructed 270 to proceed. Destroyers were instructed to look for survivors. Two were picked up only. One stated that he saw Commander Clouston dead in the water.

80. At 1030 an urgent request transmitted "en clair" was received from Dunkirk for Hospital Ships as follows:—

"Wounded situation acute and Hospital Ships should enter during day. Geneva Convention will be honourably observed it is felt and that the enemy will refrain from attacking."

As this appeared to be the only way of evacuating the wounded, observing that the whole facilities of the port during the night evacuation hours would be required for fighting troops, it was decided to send two Hospital Ships. The WORTHING sailed at 1300 and the PARIS at 1700. At 1440, the A/S patrol was overheard on R/T reporting that the WORTHING was being bombed at a point about two-thirds of the way across the Channel. She returned to United Kingdom reporting that she had been attacked by 12 Junkers. The attack caused no casualties, but plates were started and there was some superficial damage. She had to return to harbour to refuel before commencing another trip to Dunkirk.

At 1915 PARIS reported that she was bombed and badly damaged with engines useless, at the point where the WORTHING had been attacked, and at 1947 she sent out an S.O.S. Tugs were sent to her assistance.

Thus the last attempt to evacuate the wounded by Hospital Carrier from Dunkirk was brought to nought.

The PARIS subsequently sank shortly after midnight at W. Buoy 10 miles off the French coast.

81. At 1700 movement towards Dunkirk commenced. The Armada consisted of 13 personnel vessels, 2 large store carriers, 11 destroyers, 5 paddle minesweepers 9 fleet sweepers 1 special service vessel 9 drifters 6 skoots, 2 armed yachts, 1 gunboat, a large number of tugs, lifeboats, etc. formed either in organised tows or free lance. The composition of the French contingent was unknown, it was thought to consist of 6 small destroyers, 4 avisos and about 120 fishing craft.

82. At 1538 the S.N.O. Dunkirk made the following situation report:—

"French still maintain front line except for area east of Bergues where the Germans have penetrated two miles on a two-mile front. Counter attack being made at 1500. In port no movement. Present situation hopeful."

83. At 2145 it was learned that the ROYAL DAFFODIL, the first of the personnel vessels, had been bombed near the North Goodwin Light Vessel on the outward passage whence she returned to Ramsgate. At 2200 it was learned that loaded vessels were leaving Dunkirk.

84. At 2330 S.N.O. Dunkirk reported "B.E.F. evacuated."

*Monday, 3rd June.*

85. The hopes that a large number of French troops would be lifted following the completion of B.E.F. embarkation, was shaken when at 0030 Rear Admiral, Dover, reported from Dunkirk that four ships were now alongside, that there were no French troops. Reported again at 0115, "Plenty of ships cannot get troops."

At 0312, Dunkirk reported that all ships were leaving and that the block ships had entered.

When the ships returned to United Kingdom, it was learnt that the flow of French troops had dwindled away shortly after midnight. One ship waited 2½ hours to embark her load instead of the normal half hour. A possible explanation was thought to be that a French counter attack, which had been arranged for the afternoon of the 2nd, had had to be postponed to the evening, no doubt deranging despatch of troops to the rear for evacuation. The result was that between midnight and 0300/3 a lifting capacity of about 10,000 was left empty.

86. The night's embarkation at Dunkirk had been carried out without disturbance by enemy action. During the forenoon a conference was held at Dover to improve the arrangements for the night 3/6-4/6 as a result of experience gained. The general plan remained unaltered except that provision was made for the use by British ships of the west pier in the New Outer Port, since it appeared that the French had insufficient ships at their disposal to make full use of this valuable berth. Similarly a number of power boats which had been working off the Malo Beach were, on this occasion, to be sent in to Quay Felix Faure. No assurance could be obtained that this coming night would terminate the operation and considerable anxiety was felt regarding the effect of the gradual exhaustion of officers and men of the ships taking part in the "Dynamo." This exhaustion was particularly marked in the Destroyer force the remnants of which had been