

46. I went into Oran for an unofficial look at the port, which was now in charge of Rear-Admiral Bennett, U.S. Navy. The Americans had already cleared a passage through the blocked entrance sufficient to admit a freighter of average size, and a part of the follow-up convoy, which had been sent round under escort from Arzeu, was already in harbour or waiting off the entrance to berth.

47. A number of personnel ships and supply ships of the original convoy which had completed unloading at Arzeu were sailed escorted for Gibraltar in the evening. AURORA also sailed.

*Friday, 13th November.*

48. Further ships of the follow-up convoy went round to Oran and JAMAICA sailed for Gibraltar. S.S. BROWNING was sunk on her way to Oran, presumably by torpedo, though no track was seen and the escorts gained no contact. The ship was laden with T.N.T. and motor transport and it is not impossible that the explosion was internal. Witnesses saw no column of water usually associated with an

external explosion. The ship was sunk well outside the 100 fathom line.

*Saturday, 14th November.*

49. All ships, save one which had a broken derrick, having now completed unloading at Arzeu, I collected them into three convoys and picking up the ships off X and Y Beaches and escorted by all available craft, sailed for Gibraltar, where they arrived safely the next and following days.

The ZEBULON B. VANCE with the broken derrick was sent round with the four last remaining ships of the follow-up convoy to Oran to unload.

50. Thus the forty-seven ships which had taken the resources of a number of British ports and three weeks to load were unloaded for the most part over beaches inside a week. Under the weather conditions prevailing, I much doubt whether the work could have been greatly bettered.

51. On Monday, the Centre Naval Task Force ceased to exist. At sunset I struck my broad pendant in LARGS.