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OPERATIONS IN CENTRAL NORWAY, 1940.

PREFACE BY THE WAR OFFICE.

Of the two expeditions which the United Kingdom and France sent to Norway in April, 1940, one to Northern Norway and one to Central Norway, the following despatch covers the latter from the beginning of operations.

In Central Norway two main landings were made, one in the Namsos area by a force under the command of Major-General A. Carton de Wiart, V.C., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., and one in the Åndalsnes area by a force under the command, first of Brigadier H. de R. Morgan, D.S.O., and later of Major-General B. C. T. Paget, D.S.O., M.C. On 19th April, 1940, Lieutenant-General H. R. S. Massy, D.S.O., M.C., was instructed to assume the appointment of Commander-in-Chief of the forces operating in Central Norway. He exercised this command from his Headquarters in the United Kingdom as the course of events did not permit the opening of a Headquarters in Norway.

When the decision to withdraw from Central Norway was taken on 27th April, 1940, it was agreed to press on with operations against Narvik, and the force in Northern Norway comprising British, French and Polish troops succeeded in capturing the town of Narvik before it, in turn, had to be withdrawn at the beginning of June, 1940.

The following despatch was submitted to the Secretary of State for War on 13th May, 1940 by Lieutenant-General H. R. S. MASSY, D.S.O., M.C., Commander-in-Chief, North Western Expeditionary Force.

I have the honour to submit my report on the operations in Central Norway, up to and

including 3rd May. This report is divided into four Parts as under:—

- PART I.—General Summary of Events.
- PART II.—Operations in the Namsos area.
- PART III.—Operations in the Åndalsnes area.
- PART IV.—Conclusions and lessons.

I am indebted for Part II of this report to Major-General Carton de Wiart and for Part III to Major-General B. C. T. Paget and Brigadier H. de R. Morgan, who have provided me with the necessary material for them.

PART I.

GENERAL SUMMARY OF EVENTS.

1. When the original plan for operations in Southern Norway was made, the landings at Åndalsnes and Namsos were intended as diversions to a main attack to be made on Trondheim. When the landings at Åndalsnes and Namsos were effected without loss, and our troops advanced inland from these bases, it was decided that Trondheim might be captured by a converging movement instead of by a hazardous direct attack from seaward.

It was hoped too that sufficient troops could be put into Åndalsnes to stiffen Norwegian resistance in the South, and thus put a limit to the German advance from Oslo.

It was against this background that I was instructed on 19th April to assume the appointment of Commander of the North-Western Expeditionary Force and to form my Headquarters with a view to taking command as soon as possible of the operations in progress North and South of Trondheim.