



SECOND SUPPLEMENT

TO

The London Gazette

Of TUESDAY, the 11th of JANUARY, 1916

Published by Authority.

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WEDNESDAY 12 JANUARY, 1916

Admiralty, 12th January 1916

The following Despatch has been received from Vice Admiral Reginald H S Bacon, K C B C V O, D S O, commanding the Dover Patrol, reporting the operations off the Belgian coast between 22nd August and 19th November 1915 —

Office of Vice Admiral,
Dover,
3rd December 1915

SIR —

In the summer and autumn of this year circumstances enabled offensive operations to be undertaken from the sea at certain points on the Belgian Coast. It is unnecessary to enter into the reasons for the various operations or the exact objectives attacked, since these are well known to Their Lordships.

In all cases great care has been taken to confine the fire of the guns to objectives of military or naval importance, so as to inflict the minimum of loss of life and distress on the civil population, the larger number of whom are our

allies. In order to carry this principle into effect, it has at times been necessary to modify and even postpone projected attacks. The results therefore have been effective rather than sensational!

On the evening of the 22nd August I sailed with H M. Ships Sir John Moore (Commander S R Miller R N), Lord Clive (Commander N H Carter R N), Prince Rupert (Commander H O Reinold, R N), and 76 other vessels and auxiliaries and on the following morning attacked the harbour and defences of Zeebrugge. The results were markedly successful, all the objectives selected were damaged or destroyed.

It was satisfactory that extreme accuracy was obtained with the gun fire at the long ranges necessary for the best attack of such defences. This accuracy fully justifies the novel methods used and the careful training in attention to details to which the vessels are subjected. A similar organisation was employed in subsequent attacks.

On the 6th September I attacked Ostende with five monitors including General Craufurd (Commander E Altham R N) and