

16. In the meantime LEGION, ESKIMO and PRINCESS BEATRIX had reached position E at 0540. Landing craft were lowered and led inshore to Ports A and B by LEGION and ESKIMO respectively. Disembarkation proceeded in accordance with the timetable and landings were made at 0645.

17. At 0610, shortly before the arrival of BEDOUIN and QUEEN EMMA at position F, SOMALI parted company to proceed to Ports A and B to see if the landings were being effected satisfactorily there. On passage, an armed trawler, later found to be the KREBS, was sighted steering away from Port X. Fire was opened at a range of 3,000 yards at 0620 and the enemy very quickly hit. Our fire was returned by three rounds fired from a small gun in the bows of the trawler, but no hits were obtained on SOMALI. Immediately afterwards three shells were observed to be effective, one apparently exploding the ready-use ammunition, another bursting in the wheelhouse and the third in the boiler room. A considerable volume of smoke was seen to be coming from the trawler which was clearly out of control. Fire was accordingly checked. Five survivors were then seen to be swimming in the water; they were picked up by 0655.

18. At this time gunfire could be heard at Port X. As W/T communication with the landing places had not yet been established and the Brigadier was anxious to find out if any landings had been opposed, SOMALI left the now helpless trawler, which had run aground on a small island, and proceeded to ascertain the state of affairs at Ports X, B and A.

19. At 0710 SOMALI made the negative W/T silence sign and from then on, throughout the operation, satisfactory W/T communications were maintained with all landing places. V/S* communication was also established at each landing place.

20. At each port, operations were proceeding according to plan and by 0735 reports had been received that at all four ports landings had been effected successfully without opposition and that relations with the Norwegian population were most cordial. From this time onwards, reports came in from all military landing parties that allotted tasks were being carried out successfully and the Brigadier, from his position on SOMALI'S bridge, was kept in continual touch with the progress of operations.

21. By now the local Norwegian fishing fleet had put to sea; there were literally hundreds of little fishing smacks and small puffers beginning to fish in the adjacent waters. It quickly became clear to them that our operations were directed against the Germans and that they were not to be molested. They showed their friendliness and enthusiasm by cheering and waving and hoisting Norwegian flags.

22. From Port A SOMALI then proceeded back to Port X. During the passage the trawler KREBS, still burning, was seen to have re-floated and to be drifting towards the centre of the fjord. As SOMALI closed, a white flag was seen being waved and at 0910 a boarding party was sent over in a Norwegian fishing boat who volunteered their services. The survivors consisted of five ratings, all of whom were

wounded by gunfire, two seriously. The balance of the crew, consisting of the captain and thirteen ratings, had been killed in the action.

23. The boarding officers, Major A. R. Aslett, Lieutenant Sir Marshall G. C. Warmington, Bart, R.N., the Signal Officer on my staff, and 2nd Lieutenant L. M. Harper-Gow, searched the ship so far as was possible.

24. The wheelhouse was found to have received a direct hit and nothing could be recovered from there, other than a number of charts. The captain and one rating were found dead by the wheel; one or two bodies which could not be identified were also in the wheelhouse.

25. The ship was still on fire below and no entry could be made into the fore-peak or the engine room.

26. The search of the KREBS occupied three quarters of an hour and while SOMALI was stopped numbers of fishing craft took the opportunity to come alongside and throw their fish on board as gifts to the ship's company. The fishing boat which took the boarding party was rewarded with gifts of food and cigarettes.

27. At 1015 the KREBS was sunk by gunfire after an unsuccessful attempt had been made to destroy her by depth charge fired from the port thrower. She finally disappeared at 1030. Her armament consisted of a 3 or 6-pdr. gun forward, a 2-cm Madsen machine-gun aft and eight depth charges in two chutes.

28. A summary of the happenings at the various ports is given in the ensuing paragraphs.

29. At Port X an important success was the destruction of the HAMBURG by gunfire from TARTAR. This was a ship of 9780 tons which had been specially converted into a fish-refrigerating and factory ship. From the report of the officer in charge of the naval demolition party at Port X it appears that a plan was made to take possession of this ship and to steam her as a prize to England and that this plan was frustrated by TARTAR opening fire and destroying her. I consider that the Commanding Officer, H.M.S. TARTAR, was justified in the action he took, having regard to the general instructions for the conduct of the operation and to the fact that no information of the plan to seize the ship had been communicated to him. Nor was I, myself, aware of it.

30. In addition, TARTAR sunk the PASAJES, 1996 tons, and completed the destruction of the FELIX HEUMANN, 2468 tons, which was still floating after partial destruction by the naval demolition party. The latter, from H.M.S. NELSON, under the command of Lieutenant D. D. Bone, R.N., sank the EILLENAU, 1404 tons, the trawler RISSEN and, as stated above, commenced the destruction of the FELIX HEUMANN. The work performed by this party was most creditable. It is believed that the large majority of the crews of all these ships were made prisoners by the military landing parties and brought back in QUEEN EMMA.

31. At 1035 the Norwegian trawler MYRLAND, whose crew wished to proceed to England and asked for instructions, was directed by TARTAR to proceed independently to Skaalefjord in the Faroes. This was reported in my signal timed 1444 of 6th March, 1941. She arrived safely today, 8th March.

Admiralty footnote —
* V/S—visual signal.