

Admiral Beatty's Orders for Operation ZZ

Orders to the Grand Fleet for the Surrender of
Germany's High Seas Fleet

21st November 1918.

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H.F.0059-0.
MEMORANDUM.

OPERATION ZZ.

1. OBJECT.

To meet and escort to an anchorage in the Firth of Forth the ships of the German High Sea Fleet which are to be handed over for internment to the Grand Fleet.

2. FORCES EMPLOYED

		"Queen Elizabeth"	
		"Oak"	
1st B.S.	"Lion"	1st L.C.S.	"Castor"
2nd B.S.	1st B.C.S.	2nd L.C.S.	"Champion"
4th B.S.	2nd B.C.S.	3rd L.C.S.	3rd Flotilla
5th B.S.	1st C.S.	4th L.C.S.	11th Flotilla
6th B.S.	"Furious"	6th L.C.S.	12th Flotilla
	"Minotaur"	7th L.C.S.	13th Flotilla
		"Fearless"	14th Flotilla
			15th Flotilla
			20th Flotilla
			21st Flotilla

3. INTELLIGENCE

(a) The German Force to be handed over for internment on Thursday, 21 November consists of the following vessels of the German High Sea Fleet:-

Battleships

"Friedrich der Grosse" *flying the flag* of Rear-Admiral von Reuter, who is in command of the whole force: (Call sign IMA).

"Konig Albert"	"Kaiserin"	"Prinzregent Luitpold"
"Kaiser"	"Bayern"	"Grosser Kurfurst"
"Kronprinz Wilhelm"	"Margraf."	

Battle-Cruisers:-

"Seydlitz" *flying the Broad Pennant* of Commodore Tagert: (Call sign NCO).

"Derfflinger"	"Hindenberg"
"Von der Tann"	"Moltke"

Light Cruisers:-

"Karlsruhe," *flying the Broad Pennant* of Commodore Harder: (Call sign WBD).

"Frankfurt"	"Nurnberg"	"Coln"
"Emden"	"Brummer"	"Bremse"

Destroyers

50 of the latest destroyers from the German 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 7th Flotillas.

(b) The force will approach rendezvous 'X,' position Latitude 56° 11' N., Longitude 1°20' W., on a course 270°, speed 10 knots, the leading ship passing the rendezvous about 0800, Thursday 21 November.

(c) The order of the German Force will be as follows:

- i. Heavy Ships in single line ahead, 3 cables apart, with the Battle Cruisers leading.
- ii. Light Cruisers in single line ahead, 3 cables apart, the leading Light Cruiser 3 miles astern of the rear battleship.
- iii. Destroyers in five groups, 3 miles astern of the rear Light Cruiser.

(d) The German vessels will have their guns in the securing position, trained fore and aft.

4. MOVEMENTS.

Leaving Harbour and Meeting the High Sea Fleet.

(a) Squadrons are to pass Black Rock Gate at the times shown in the table in Enclosure 1, and are then to proceed in two lines as follows:-

Squadrons in the **Northern Line** in the order -

1st L.C.S. less "Phaeton,
6th L.C.S. less "Cardiff,"
1st C.S.
"Lion" and 1st B.C.S.,
5th B.S.
6th B.S.
2nd B.S.
"Queen Elizabeth,"
4th L.C.S.

are to pass North of May Island, and are then to proceed along the parallel at 56° 14' N.

4. MOVEMENTS *continued.*

Squadrons in the **Southern Line** in the order:-

3rd L.C.S.,
2nd L.C.S.,
"Furious"
"Minotaur"
2nd B.C.S.
1st B.S.
4th B.S.
7th L.C.S.

are to pass South of May Island, and are then to proceed along the parallel of 56° 8' N.

"Queen Elizabeth" will adjust speed so as to pass May Island at 0800 Thursday, 21 November, and after passing May Island will maintain a speed of 12 knots.

At 0815, 21 November, squadrons are to be in station as shown in Diagram 1, Enclosure 2, "Lion" with 1st B.C.S. proceeding to the rear of the Northern Line, the 2nd B.C.S. to the rear of the Southern Line, the 4th and 7th L.C.S. dropping astern to give room for the 1st and 2nd B.C.S.

(b) "Cardiff" (towing a kite balloon, weather permitting,) "Phaeton" "Castor", "Champion" and flotillas are to proceed in company well ahead of the 1st L.C.S., in time to arrive in position Lat. 56° 11' N., long. 1° 20' W. at 0800, Thursday, 21 November, "Cardiff" and "Phaeton" following the 13th Flotilla out of harbour.

After passing May Island, "Cardiff" and "Phaeton" are to form 3 miles astern of the 13th Flotilla, which is to spread at daylight 21 November as a lookout screen

(c) On sighting the German Force "Cardiff" and "Phaeton" are to take station 3 cables ahead of the leading German heavy ship and light cruiser respectively. "Castor" is to form ahead of the centre line of German destroyers.

Flotilla leaders and flotillas are to form on the German flotillas in accordance with orders issued by the Commodore (F), copies of which are to be supplied to "Cardiff" and "Phaeton."

(d) In the event of the reckoning of the German Fleet being in error, "Cardiff" is to lead the German Fleet for a position 1 mile 180° from May Island. "Cardiff" is to report her position, course and speed by W-T as soon as formed up ahead of the German fleet.

(e) On sighting the German Fleet the Senior Officers of 1st and 3rd L.C.S. are to alter course as necessary to allow the German Fleet to pass midway between the Northern and Southern Lines at the same time making the signal by W-T:- "My course is" Senior Officers of Squadrons are then to alter to this course and preserve their compass bearing from the Senior Officers 1st and 3rd L.C.S. respectively. On the Senior Officers 1st and 3rd L.C.S. resuming the original course, the same procedure is to be carried out, the object being to take up position preparatory to the signal 'WL' being made.

(f) On the signal 'WL' being made by the Commander-in-Chief, leaders of divisions of the battlefleet and leaders of battle-cruiser, cruiser and light cruiser squadrons will turn together 180° outwards, remainder following in succession, the British Fleet then assuming the order shown in Diagram 2, Enclosure 2.

Entering Harbour

(g) The Northern Line, with the exception of the 1st C.S., 1st and 6th L.C.S., is to proceed into harbour, passing North of May Island.

The 1st C.S., 1st and 6th L.C.S. are to proceed into harbour astern of the Southern Line.

(h) "Lion" and 1st B.C.S. are to wait in Largo Bay until the 5th B.S. has passed, allowing sufficient room for the divisions of the Northern Line to invert the line.

(i) Squadrons of the Southern Line, with the exception of the 7th L.C.S. are to turn 180° to port, battleships by divisions, the remainder by squadrons, by signal from the Admiral 2nd in command when the leading ship of the 2nd B.C.S. reaches the meridian of 2° 30' W. They will be turned to the westward again and proceed into harbour astern of the German Flotillas by order of the Admiral 2nd in command, 1st B.S., 2nd B.C.S., 2nd and 3rd L.C.S. anchoring in the berths shown in the anchorage plan (supplied to Flag Officers and Commodores.)

(j) The 7th L.C.S. is to proceed into harbour direct, ahead of the German Fleet, taking station astern of the 4th L.C.S. after passing Fidra Gap.

(k) On passing Fidra Gap each division proceeding to the Fleet Anchorage is to invert the line by signal from its Divisional Commander, ships passing on the starboard hard of the ships ahead, leading ships maintaining the speed of the fleet, the rear ships increasing to 17 knots.

(l) As regards the German Force, from position 1 mile 180° from May Island “Cardiff” is to lead the German Fleet to pass 5 cables 360° from South Buoy (Light Fl. Red) of Fidra Gap, thence for Still Point, Inchkeith, bearing 242°

After passing Fidra Gap “Phaeton” is to alter to Southward till on line ‘D’ (*vide* anchorage plan) steering 242°, and lead the German Light Cruisers to the anchorage as shown on the plan.

After passing Fidra Gap, German ships should be ordered to form up according to the anchorage plan.

“Castor” is to lead the German Flotillas to their anchorage.

5.SPECIAL ORDERS.

(a) One destroyer, detailed by the Commodore (F), is required with “Lion” and each flagship of the 1st and 2nd B.C.S., 1st C.S., 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 6th B.S. These destroyers are to take station 5 cables on the outer beam of their respective flagships when the fleet is in the cruising order shown on the diagram. Commodore (F) is to report the names of these destroyers to the Senior Officers concerned.

“Oak” is to work with the Fleet Flagship.

(b) “Fearless,” “Blonde,” “Blanche,” “Boadicea,” and “King Orry” are to act as repeating ships in the positions shown on Diagram 2, Enclosure 2.

(c) “Minotaur” is to follow “Furious” throughout the operation.

(d) P.V’s are to be towed.

Navigation lights are to be burnt whilst leaving harbour and until sunrise, 21 November.

(e) Balloons are not to be towed except by “Cardiff.”

(f) “Cardiff,” “Phaeton” and “Castor” are each to fly a blue Ensign at the masthead.

“Cardiff” is to direct the movements of the German Main Force and order them to proceed, if possible at a speed of 12 knots.

(g) Aircraft from local stations are to fly over the Fleet in accordance with orders issues by C-in-C., coast of Scotland and A.C.A.

(h) One destroyer is to be detailed by the Commodore (F), for photographic duties, and is to embark photographers in the Penns p.m. Wednesday, 20 November.

(i) Before meeting the German Fleet, and until the signal is made to negative it, ships’ companies are to be at ‘CB’ stations.

Turrets and guns are to be kept in the securing positions, but free. Guns are to be empty with cages up and loaded ready for ramming home.

Directors and armoured towers are to be trained on.

Correct range and deflection are to be kept set continuously on the sights.

(j) Ships are to fly masthead flags from 0800 until sunset, 21 November.

(k) The Red and Blue Burgees will be the distinguishing signals for the Northern and Southern Lines respectively. For the purposes of W-T the Northern Line will be considered as Red Fleet, the Southern Line as blue Fleet.

(l) German Ships will be listening out on 800 metres. Should it be necessary to signal to them plain language is to be used; the name of the officer addressed and ship of origin is to be included in the text.

DAVID BEATTY

Admiral
Commander-in-Chief

The Flag Officers, Commodores and Officers
in Command of H.M. Ships of the
Grand Fleet

Table showing routes for squadrons, and times of passing Black Rock and May Island on leaving harbour, Thursday, 21 November 1918.

Group	Force	Route N-Northern S-Southern	Time of passing BLACK ROCK GATE	Time of passing MAY ISLAND	Approx. time of meeting German Fleet	Speed till MAY ISLAND abeam
A	1st L.C.S. less "Phaeton" 6th L.C.S. less "Cardiff"	N	0240	0435	0910	12 knots
B	3rd L.C.S. 2nd L.C.S.	S	0255	0450		12 "
C	1st L.C.S. "Furious" "Minotaur"	N S S	0315	0510		12 "
D	2nd B.C.S.	S	0335	0530		12 "
	1st B.C.S.	N	0345	0540		12 "
	5th B.S.	N	0405	0600		12 "
	6th B.S.	N	0420	0615		12 "
	1st B.S.	S	0440	0635		12 "
	4th B.S.	S	0455	0650		12 "
	2nd B.S.	N	0515	0710		12 "
	"Queen Elizabeth"	N	0605	0800	0940	12 "
	4th L.C.S.	N	0610	0805		12 "
	7th L.C.S.	S	0620	0815		12 "

NOTES:-

- (i) Groups A, B, C, D, are to proceed at 10 knots after passing May island, reducing to 8 knots if necessary to avoid closing destroyer flotillas.
- (ii) Squadrons are to turn so as to be in the positions shown in Diagram 1, Enclosure 2, by 0815, but no squadron is to turn before 0700.
- (iii) Each unit is to report by W-T time of going ahead to the unit following.
- (iv) Destroyers flotillas will be anchored to East of Inchkeith p.m. Wednesday and will proceed out as ordered by Commodore (F), keeping ahead of 1st L.C.S. "Cardiff" and "Phaeton" will be in company.

Diagram No. 1. Cruising Order when approaching rendezvous with German Ships proceeding to Rosyth for internment.



