

From.....The Commanding Officer H.M.S. "VENOMOUS".

Date.....6th. June 1940.

Ref.No. ..1747/144.

To.....The Captain (D) 16th. Destroyer Flotilla.

Submitted:-

The following report is forwarded in accordance with V.A.Dover's signal 2001/4/6/40.

2. H.M.S. "WHITEHALL" and H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" left DOVER Harbour at 0035/31, and arrived off BRAY at 0350. During the passage, searchlights were observed burning from the shore seawards near CALAIS. H.M.S. "VENOMOUS", after waiting off the beach for one hour, proceeded, on the receipt of orders from R.A.D., to berth alongside DUNKIRK Eastern Breakwater. Having remained alongside for thirty minutes, H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" left harbour with 1200 troops on board, entering DOVER Harbour at 0800.

3. At 0940 31st. May 1940 H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" left harbour with orders to proceed to BRAY or LAPANNE beaches to embark troops. The ship arrived off BRAY at 1530, and finding no small craft available, I lowered my motor boat and whaler to embark troops. The motor boat broke down and was towed back to the ship. H.M. Motor Boat "BALQUHAIN" ( a Sub-Lieutenant was in command) used the whaler and ferried some 200 troops from the shore to the ship. During this period, repeated high level bombing attacks were carried out on the beach and ships lying off. Barrage fire was opened as opportunity presented. At 1700 H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" was ordered by R.A.D. to proceed alongside to embark troops. While waiting for a berth, aircraft appeared and dropped bombs. Since the H.A. ammunition in H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" was nearly exhausted, H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" requested permission to return to harbour to replenish ammunition. At 1900 the ship was ordered to proceed alongside by S.N.O. DUNKIRK. The ship proceeded alongside but no troops arrived. 60 German aircraft were observed approaching from the S.E. Fire was opened with all guns. The gun recoil parted all my wires and as no berthing party was available on the jetty, I proceeded out of harbour so as to retain mobility of the ship during the air attack. All H.A. ammunition was now expended and on receipt of orders from V.A.D. H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" returned to DOVER to replenish ammunition, arriving at 2220.

4. The ensuing twelve hours were spent in refuelling, repairing damage to the D.G. equipment and ammunitioning ship.

5. At 1245 1st. June 1940 H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" left harbour with orders to proceed to DUNKIRK. At 1430 all Destroyers were recalled by V.A.D. and accordingly I returned to DOVER at 1545.

6. At 2050 1st. June 1940 H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" embarked a beach party, consisting of ten Officers and ninety men, with orders to proceed to a position off ST.MALO-LES-BAINS and embark troops. At 0030 2nd. June 1940 the ship arrived but no boats appeared from the shore. Number One landing section (Lt. Cdr. CRAIG R.N.) pulled ashore in ship's whaler to investigate. Nothing further was seen of this party. At 0200 R.A.D. ordered the ship to berth alongside and embark troops. He stated that he would order one of the M.S. to take over the whaler and berthing party. After half an hour alongside 1100 troops had been embarked and H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" returned to DOVER at 28 knots, arriving at 0515.

7. H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" was ordered to arrive alongside DUNKIRK Breakwater at 2150 3rd. June 1940 to embark troops. The ship left DOVER at 1910 and arrived alongside at the ordered time. During the passage an enemy seaplane was sighted and reported in position 090 2 miles North of the Goodwin Light Vessel. Owing to the prevailing wind and tide, great difficulty was experienced in getting alongside. Eventually, with the assistance of an M.A/S B., the ship was berthed. After half an hour, having embarked 1500 troops, the ship returned to DOVER, arriving at 0125. During the return passage, an enemy seaplane, evidently returning from a minelaying expedition, machine gunned the ship but was driven off by barrage and close range fire.

8. H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" left harbour at 2030 3rd. June 1940 with instructions to arrive at DUNKIRK for the embarkation of troops at 2245. On arrival, I entered harbour but owing to the very congested state inside, I was ordered to wait off the harbour mouth. At 0130, on receipt of orders from R.A.D., I entered harbour and proceeded alongside. Having embarked 1100 French troops, H.M.S. "VENOMOUS" returned to DOVER. (e. Thick fog was encountered and the ship anchored off the North Goodwin Light Vessel at 0430. After half an hour the fog lifted and I weighed and arrived at DOVER at 0610.

9. During these operations it was impossible to observe whether the gunfire of the ship inflicted any casualties on enemy aircraft, but it is considered probable that one aircraft that crashed on the beach, to the west of DUNKIRK on the 31st. May 1940 was brought down by the guns of the ship.

10. Recommendations will be forwarded under separate cover.



*W. J. Featt.*

Lieutenant Commander  
In Command.

II.

No. 191.  
The Vice Admiral,  
Dover.

Forwarded.

*This is the third occasion on which Venomous have done well & in active service. 1st time*

*great credit is due to her*

*Commanding Officer - 16th Destroyer Flotilla.*

"MALCOLM",  
12th June, 1940.

CAPTAIN (D),  
16th Destroyer Flotilla.



CONFIDENTIAL.

*Dynam. 290*

*B14/O/145  
1300*

Subject. Operations off DUNKIRK - Recommendations.

From.....The Commanding Officer H.M.S. "VENOMOUS"

Date.....7th June 1940

Ref No *1460/44*

To.....The Captain (D) 16th Destroyer Flotilla.

Submitted:-

With reference to Vice-Admiral Dover's Memorandum NO. B14/O/1101/40 dated 4th June 1940 and to my letter No. 442/144 dated 6th June 1940. All my Officers and Ship's Company carried out their duties in an extremely praiseworthy and efficient manner and it is difficult for me to note the names of any particularly outstanding individuals.

2. I should, however, like to emphasize the outstanding efficiency and devotion to duty of my executive officer Lieutenant Angus Alexander Mackenzie Royal Naval Reserve. On every occasion his seamanship and appreciation of the situation was exceptional, and I consider that he is deserving of recognition by their Lordships.

3. Although he did not belong to my ship, I should like to bring to your notice the valuable work performed by the Sublieutenant Royal Navy in command of the motor launch "BALQUHAIN" off La Panne and Bray Beaches. This motor boat went round to many other larger launches and gave them precisely orders, at a time when they were urgently needed for disembarkation, and when there appeared to be a "wait until ordered" attitude among many of them. I regret that I do not know the name of this officer but I consider that his work on this occasion was extremely praiseworthy and the example he set during the bombing raids and under difficult conditions was largely instrumental in keeping the embarkation going.



*In Beach*

Lieutenant Commander

In Command.

II.

The Vice Admiral, Dover.

*Forwarded commanding.*

*Shelley, Capt.*

31st May	0035	Sailed from Dover, the dr. <u>Whitchall</u> in company.
	0350	<u>Arrived off Bray.</u> Waited off the beach for 1 hour.
	0450ca	Ordered by R.A. Dover to berth alongside Dunkirk east pier.
	0520ca	Remained alongside for 30 minutes and then left harbour with 1,200 troops.
	0800	<u>Arrived Dover. Disembarked 670 troops. (1)</u>
	0940	Sailed for the beaches.
	1530	<u>Arrived off Bray.</u> No small craft available so lowered the ship's M/B and whaler to embark troops. The M/B broke down and was towed back to the ship. The M/B <u>Balquhain</u> used the whaler and ferried some 200 troops from the shore to the trip, during repeated high level bombing attacks on the beach and off-lying ships.
	1700	Ordered by R.A. Dover to proceed alongside and embark troops. While waiting for a berth, aircraft appeared and dropped bombs.
	-	<u>Venomous</u> requested permission to return to harbour to replenish ammunition, as her H.A. ammunition was nearly exhausted.
	1900	<u>Venomous</u> ordered to proceed alongside by S.R.O. Dunkirk. The ship proceeded alongside but no troops arrived. 60 German aircraft were observed approaching from the S.E. Fire was opened with all guns. The gun recoil parted all the hawsers and as there was no berthing party available on the jetty, the <u>Venomous</u> proceeded out of harbour, so as to retain mobility during the air attack. All H.A. ammunition was now expended, and on receipt of orders from V.A. Dover, the <u>Venomous</u> sailed for Dover.
	2220	<u>Arrived Dover. Disembarked 408 troops.</u>
1st June	1245	Sailed for Dunkirk.
	1430	All destroyers recalled by V.A. Dover.
	1545	Arrived Dover.
	2050	Embarked a beach party of 10 officers and 90 men and sailed for a given position off Malo-les-bains.
2nd June	0030	<u>Arrived off Malo,</u> but no boats came off from the shore. No.1 Landing Section (Lt. Cdr. Craig, R.N.) pulled ashore in the ship's whaler to investigate. Nothing further was seen of this party.
	0200	R.A. Dover ordered the ship to berth alongside and embark troops. He stated that he would order one of the M/S to take over the whaler and berthing party.

VENOMOUS - Continued.

2nd June (contd.)	0230ca	Proceeded to Dover at 28 knots, with 1,100 troops.
	0515	Arrived Dover. Disembarked 632 troops. (1)
	1910	Sailed for Dunkirk, with orders to be alongside by 2150.
	2150	Arrived alongside Dunkirk breakwater, being assisted to berth by a M.A/S.B. [M.A/S.B.10] on account of the prevailing wind and tide.
May Gen. Messenger, May Gen. G... ✓		Embarked 1,500 troops in 30 minutes and proceeded to Dover.
3rd June	0125	Arrived Dover. Disembarked 1500 troops. (2)
	2030	Sailed for Dunkirk.
	2245	Entered Dunkirk harbour. Harbour very congested, ordered to wait outside.
4th June	0130	By order of R.A. Dover, proceeded alongside Dunkirk pier. Embarked 1100 French troops and proceeded to Dover.
	0430	Anchored off the N. Goodwin L.V. in thick fog.
	0500	Proceeded.
	0610	Arrived Dover. Disembarked 1,200 troops. (3)

Total 5367 (3)

Authority - R.O.I., p-145.

The following awards were made:

Mention in Despatches  
Lt. Cdr. J.E.H. McBeath, R.N.

(1) D.R.  
(2) D.R. states that Venomous made a second disembarkation on  
3rd June of 957 troops.  
(3) D.R. Venomous states that she transported 5308 troops.