

B4 1975



FROM : Officer-in-charge, A/S Fixed Defences, DOVER.
DATE : 22nd May 1940.
TO : Vice Admiral, DOVER.

Submitted,

The following is a report on the evacuation of the Loop Station at Sangatte :

On instructions from Dover, the dismantling of the Station was commenced on May 21st at 0730 approx. and a lorry load of instruments and stores was sent in to Calais together with most of the ratings, under the charge of Lieut. Newsom, to await the arrival of H.M.S. VENOMOUS. Lieut. Benbow and three ratings remained at the Station at Sangatte to clear up and prepare for the loading of such stores as had been left from the first load.

2. I, with Lieut. Commander Burgess, proceeded to Calais in the VENOMOUS and on arrival there about 1300 both left almost immediately by lorry for Sangatte, leaving Lieut. Newsom in charge of the party embarking the stores. Lieut. Commander Burgess had left the Station on the 20th May and was to have been relieved by me yesterday, the 21st May, after having taken over the charge of the Station in Dover Castle, but in the special circumstances it was suggested and approved that both Officers should cross in the VENOMOUS to attend to the embarkation of the stores and personnel, and also to proceed to Sangatte to ensure that everything possible had been done to dismantle the place thoroughly.

3. At Sangatte the Station was found to have been cleared of all important and secret matter but on returning to Calais a quantity of bedding, chairs, R/T ~~set~~ parts and, in fact, everything of any value for which there was room, was taken.

4. Lieut. Benbow had previously severed the tails of the loops some yards down the beach and the ends were unshipped from the sea-wall to which they had been stapled, and on being disconnected, were placed in the grounds of the telegraph cable house next door, mixed up with a quantity of

of spare cable already lying there and covered with rubbish as far as possible. Every trace of there having been cables led into the house was removed. A considerable quantity of petrol and paraffin, which had previously been offered to an A.A. Battery in the village, not having been collected, was run into the ground.

5. All the loop instruments, with the exception of the pillars which were embedded in concrete, were removed and are safe. A secret chart and the safe, containing C.B's. and about 3000 francs in cash - the balance in hand of the Contingency Fund - were safely brought over, as were the R/T set, switch board and mast. The pillars have been left standing owing to the difficulty in unshipping them and also as they can be of little interest to the enemy if the village should fall into their hands.

6. It is not possible at this juncture to say accurately what has been brought over and what has been left, but it can be stated that nothing of any value remains in France, with the exception of the larger furniture and corticene etc. for which there was no room in the lorry and little time to get it out of the house. During the embarkation of the stores, particularly that in the third and last lorry load, several attacks by enemy aircraft were made and during the general scramble a box containing some of the batteries for the R/T set was lost over the side between the ship and the dock wall. It is believed that this is the only item lost which was taken from the house.

7. The telephones were left on the wall of the office, but the switchboard operator at Sangatte was informed of our departure, and Boulogne No. 4 Sub-Area Exchange has also been informed that the extension number (144) is not now being worked.

8. The lorry and a quantity of petrol were turned over to S.T.O. Calais as it was impossible to bring it back to Dover in the VENOMOUS, and may be of use in Calais, and

and I have his receipt for the first mentioned.

9. Before Lieut. Commander Burgess left on the 20th May he issued the most explicit instructions as to what was to be done in case of evacuation being considered necessary and it appears so far that his orders were most efficient and were faithfully carried out. His were most influence appears to have helped considerably in keeping up the good spirits of the Officers and men, who had all been somewhat harassed during the previous few days by continuous bombing round about and the rumour that they were cut off except by sea from a "back door", and also by the fact that the lorry had necessarily been borrowed by Dankerque. The ratings, too, who were very popular in the village on account of their consistently good behaviour, did very well, one in particular - the lorry driver - who had had several days of driving with little sleep or food.

Alan H. Buis

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Officer-in-Charge,
A/S Fixed Defences, Dover.



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No. B5/796/40
SECRETARY OF THE ADMIRALTY.

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Forwarded for the information of Their Lordships.

B. H. Jamieson
VICE ADMIRAL.

Dover.
23rd May, 1940

