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# THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

3<sup>d</sup>  
Weekly



Edited by

**SIR JOHN  
HAMMERTON**

Editor of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED (1914-1920)

Writer of the famous War Film FORGOTTEN MEN

'If they won't come out, we'll blast them out'—Cunningham

## 'Jervis Bay's' Forlorn, Heroic Action

Many soul-stirring stories of the sea have been told of recent months, but surely the epic of the "Jervis Bay" will remain unsurpassed. Here we tell of the noble act of self-sacrifice and supreme bravery by which, though she, her captain and many of her crew were lost, the convoy entrusted to their charge sailed on.

SOMEWHERE in mid-Atlantic the big convoy of 38 merchantmen was proceeding steadily on its way on the afternoon of November 5. Suddenly, at 4.50 p.m., when the sun was still shining brightly in the sky, an enemy ship was reported on the port side. Almost as soon as she was sighted the raider opened fire from a distance of seven or eight miles on the largest ship in the convoy, the P. & O. liner "Rangitiki," which may have been taken for the escort vessel. There the German was mistaken, however. The escort ship was the auxiliary cruiser H.M.S. "Jervis Bay," formerly a liner of the Aberdeen and Commonwealth fleet, and as soon as the first shells screamed across the sea, Captain Fegen steered for the enemy without a moment's hesitation. He knew, none better, that his ship, armed only with 6-in. guns, had not a ghost of a chance against the raider, who was firing salvos from apparently 11-in. guns (thus she may have been the "Deutschland," now renamed the "Luetzow," or the other pocket battleship, the "Admiral Scheer").

Although completely outranged by the much heavier armament of the enemy, H.M.S. "Jervis Bay" continued to steer towards the raider, drawing the enemy fire away from her charges while at the same time she threw out a smoke screen with a view to cloaking their escape.

Very early in the action the "Jervis Bay" was heavily hit, and her steering-gear damaged. "Although partly out of control and seriously on fire," read the Admiralty statement issued on November 13, "she continued to hold the enemy fire while ships of the convoy were making their escape. The 'Jervis Bay' was continually hit by the enemy gunfire for nearly an hour, during which time she was engaged hotly in an attempt to divert the enemy gunfire from the convoy. She subsequently sank about three hours after the enemy was first sighted."

Survivors from the ship said that they realized fully what they were in for when they went out to tackle the Nazi battleship. But, to quote one of them, "I think everybody aboard was proud as our ship turned towards the enemy." Even when she had been holed below the waterline, when she was ablaze, developed a list and began to sink, her gun crews continued to pour shells at the distant enemy. When the flag was shot away a new ensign was nailed to the mast, and there it remained until the "Jervis Bay" took her last plunge. Early in the engagement Captain Fegen had his right arm badly shattered by a shell splinter; but he staggered from the main bridge to the aft bridge in an attempt to control the ship from there, and then re-

turned to his original post. "Nobody saw him after that," said one of his officers; and a member of the crew added: "I can see him standing on the bridge now. He was there when I last saw him after we abandoned ship."

"It was a cosy little scrap while it lasted," said one of the survivors when he got ashore at a Canadian port; "our fellows were splendid. We sure gave Jerry everything we had until we could fight no longer. But," he went on, "it was an unequal fight. I guess we never had a chance; but the 'Jervis Bay' flayed right into the raider."

As the ship sank by the stern she was abandoned; but the gunners, most of whom were formerly members of the Merchant Service who had never been in battle before, kept firing until the decks were awash. All but one of the boats had been destroyed, but the survivors plunged into the sea and made for the rafts. And there they were mercilessly raked by the fire of the enemy.

### 'They Did So Well For Us'

Meanwhile, the convoy was making good its escape. The "Jervis Bay" made the final sacrifice, but 33 out of the 38 ships which had been committed to her charge arrived safely in port. One of the ships, a Swedish freighter, remained near the scene of the action. "They did so well for us," said Captain Olander, "that I didn't like to leave. There she rode like a hero. She was right into the guns of the battleship. She didn't have a chance and we all knew it; but there she stayed to the last to give us in the merchant ships a chance to run for it." When night had fallen he mustered his crew on deck and, putting the matter before them, decided to return to see if he could pick up any survivors of the "Jervis Bay." In spite of a rising sea, Captain Olander managed to reach the spot where the survivors were. He found three men dead in the only lifeboat which had been launched and four rafts on which a number of sur-

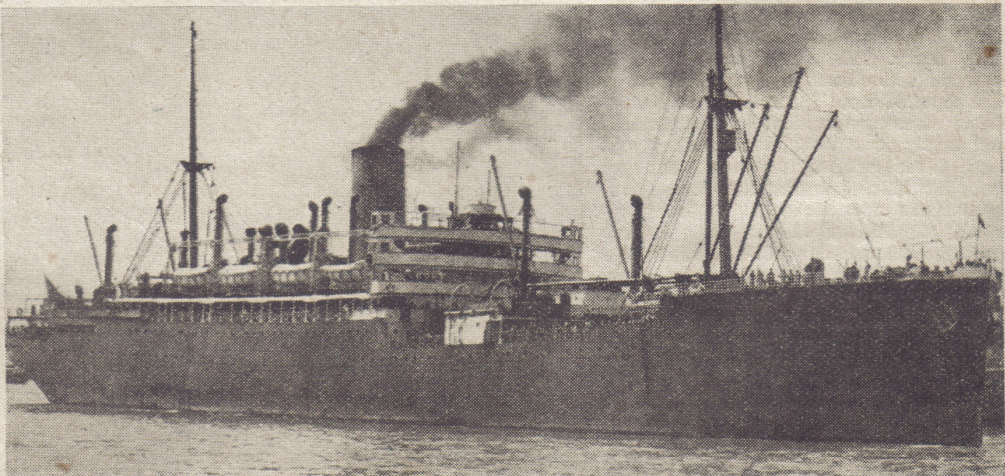


Capt. E. S. Fogarty Fegen, R.N., who went down with his ship, the "Jervis Bay." For his heroic conduct he was awarded on Nov. 16 a posthumous V.C. Photo, Vandyk

vivors were still clinging, and he had the satisfaction of picking up 65 of them.

"It was glorious," said Captain Olander, when he got to Canada. "Never shall I forget the gallantry of the British captain, sailing forward to meet the enemy." And Captain Olander (see page 583), he too deserves a tribute. "He is a great man," said one of the men he rescued; "he didn't have to risk himself and his ship to help us, but here he was right on the spot when we needed help badly. All our fellows are—well, we just can't put it into words. But we have the highest admiration for the Swedish captain and his men."

The Germans claimed at first that their surface naval forces operating against merchant shipping in the Atlantic Ocean had completely destroyed a British convoy, the total shipping sunk amounting to 86,000 tons; and in London, too, it was feared that the losses would be very heavy. Greater far, indeed, would they have been, but for the sublime self-sacrifice of the "Jervis Bay" and her captain, that man cast in heroic mould.



The "Jervis Bay," an auxiliary cruiser of 14,164 tons, was on escort duty on November 5, 1940, in mid-Atlantic, when she was attacked by a Nazi raider. The result was a foregone conclusion, but, as Mr. Churchill said in the House of Commons on November 13, the spirit of the Royal Navy was exemplified in "the forlorn, heroic action fought by the captain, officers and ship's company of H.M.S. 'Jervis Bay' in the Atlantic in giving battle against overwhelming odds to protect a merchant convoy which they were escorting, and thus securing the escape of by far the greater part of that convoy." Photo, Central Press



# I WAS THERE!

Eye Witness Stories of Episodes  
and Adventures in the  
Second Great War

## All Aboard Were Proud of the 'Jervis Bay'

The "forlorn, heroic action of H.M.S. 'Jervis Bay,'" as Mr. Churchill described it, is the subject of a separate article (see page 567), but here several eye-witnesses of this heroic fight in mid-Atlantic tell their stories.

**A**N officer of the "Jervis Bay" who was picked up by the Swedish freighter which Capt. Olander, with conspicuous bravery, took back to the scene of the action, said:

It was a sunny evening when we picked up the battleship on the port side at 4.50 on November 5. She opened fire first and closed to get into range.

We closed, too, leaving the convoy. I think everybody aboard was proud as our ship turned towards the enemy.

Our captain knew just what we were going to get, but it did not matter.

We got between the enemy ship and the convoy and dropped smoke floats to screen the merchant ships from the raider. The enemy was firing salvos.

Soon the "Jervis Bay" was hit. Her steering gear was put out of action, though her guns continued to fire, and she kept fighting it out.

Holed below the waterline and ablaze, the "Jervis Bay" began to list and sink. But all the time the gun crews continued to pour shells at the distant enemy.

The flag was shot away. A man ran up the rigging with a new ensign, which remained waving until the merchant cruiser took her last plunge.

Struck several times, and with the steering gear damaged, the "Jervis Bay" could steam only in a straight line.

She could not get her guns to bear on the German ship because she was heading for her and the forward guns were out of action.

As the ship went down by the stern she was abandoned. The Germans mercilessly fired at the seamen as they took to the boats.

The officer went on:

One man on the forecabin deck did not hear

my order to leave. He stood there alone with earphones over his head calmly continuing his duties while shells fell all around. When someone brought the order to his attention he laid the earphones down carefully and made his way to the boats without a trace of haste.

All the lifeboats - but one were burned when we abandoned ship, but we threw four rafts over. The raider ceased firing at the "Jervis Bay" five minutes after we left, concentrating on the convoy. She fired on the other ships until well into the night, throwing up star shells for illumination.

The officer said that the "Jervis Bay's" crew fought like veterans. He remarked:

It was astonishing. Two-thirds of them were formerly members of the Merchant Service who had never been in battle before.

Captain Fogarty Fegen died a hero's death and went down with his blazing ship. One of his arms was almost shot away, but he remained in command until the end.

The three survivors of the crew of the immortal fight of the "Jervis Bay," below, were wounded in the action and are here seen in a Canadian hospital. They are, left to right, J. Eggleston of Hull, Dan Bain of Wick, and Sam. Patience of Inverness.

Sub-Lieutenant J. G. Sergeant, another survivor of the "Jervis Bay," summed up the action in the words:

It was the Navy's job, and it was done.

Sub-Lieutenant Sergeant, who went to the fire control station immediately "action stations" was sounded, said:

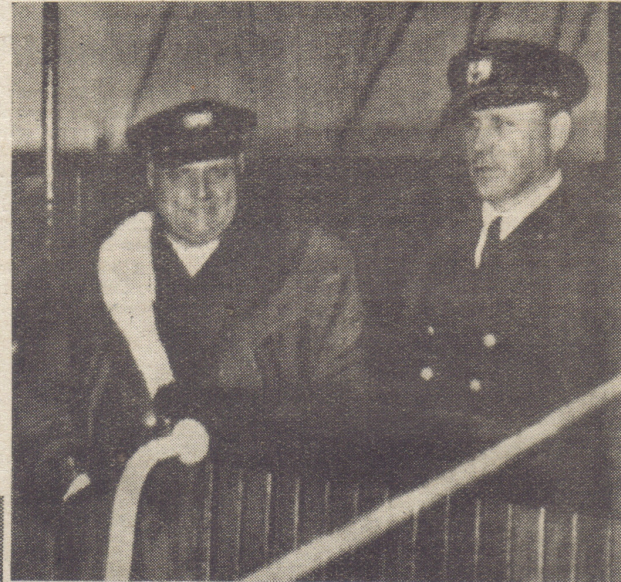
We challenged the ship with a Verey light signal, and she answered by firing. We fired simultaneously with the raider.

Captain Fegen gave "full steam ahead," turning to port to bring us between the enemy and the convoy. Then we laid a smoke screen.

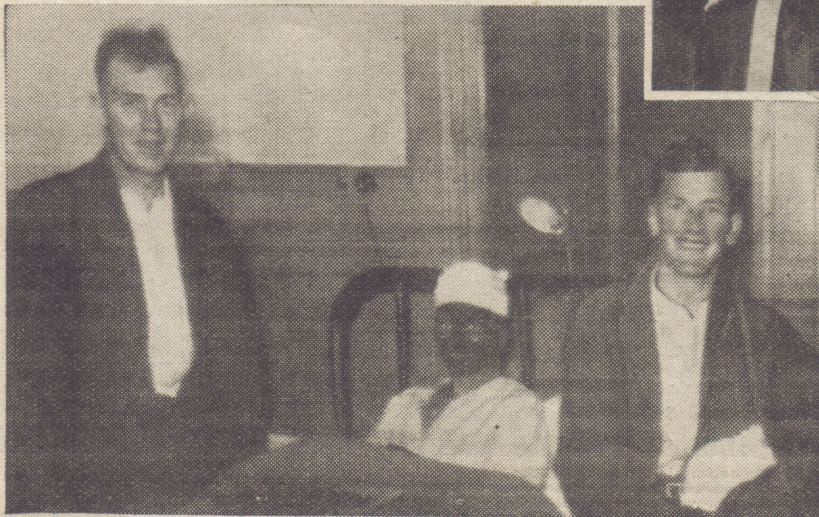
The enemy opened fire at extreme range. Captain Fegen had previously promised that if he ever sighted the enemy he would get as close as possible. He headed for the enemy and tried to reduce the range.

The raider fired two salvos, missing us. A third salvo hit us forward and carried away one gun.

At the same time I went below, but I was told that the bridge was blown away. Then the ship was handled from the aft control.



Captain Olander, above left, of the Swedish freighter which rescued sixty-five members of the crew of the "Jervis Bay." Right is his chief officer. Photos, Wide World



When we first sighted the enemy it was about 5 p.m. I should say that within 15 minutes we were disabled, unable to bring our guns to bear. For the next half hour we were being hit. The engine-room was hit, then the enemy concentrated on the controls.

One of the skippers of the convoy on landing in Britain said:

The raider was first sighted on the port beam, and almost immediately began firing.

Her attention was evidently focused on the big liner "Rangitiki," the largest ship in the convoy. The German must have mistaken the "Rangitiki" for an escort vessel, and was obviously attempting to get rid of her first of all. The gunfire was accurate and very heavy.

## I WAS THERE!

At times we got as many as five shells in one burst.

The raider was about seven or eight miles distant, and my impression is that some of the salvos were from 11-in. guns. That makes me think she was of the Deutschland or Admiral Scheer class.

Everything was in favour of the attacking warship. The sea was calm and there was a clear atmosphere. The only handicap that the warship suffered from was that dusk was gathering.

We made our escape as quickly as we could, but we owe that escape mainly to the gallantry of our escort ship, the "Jervis Bay."

She went right out to meet the German challenge, although everyone knew what her fate would be. Her crew were facing almost certain death, but despite that they maintained the highest tradition of British seamen.

The "Jervis Bay," offering a perfect target, immediately came under fire of the German raider. The encounter was of short duration. A few sharp salvos caught the "Jervis Bay" and she went on fire. All the time she kept replying with her guns, but these were no match for the powerfully armed battleship.

Soon all was over. The "Jervis Bay" was ablaze and her guns ceased firing.

We do not know what happened to her crew or what the ultimate fate of the vessel was, but when we last saw her blazing we could only form one opinion.

## We Flew Low Over Munich's Streets

"The bomb-aimer's dream of the perfect night" was how R.A.F. men regarded their surprise visit to Munich on November 8, when they bombed the hall where Hitler had been celebrating the anniversary of his 1923 Putsch. A Flight Lieutenant from New Zealand gave the following broadcast account of his part in the raid.

**D**ESCRIBING the raid on the Munich railway yards, the Flight Lieutenant said:

This was our first trip to Munich. Our target was the railway locomotive and

marshalling yards, almost in the centre of the city and only a short distance away from the famous Brown House of the Nazi Party.

Just before we took off the Senior Intelligence Officer came rushing over and said he

The "Jervis Bay's" action, however, gave us a chance to scurry to safety, and we did not need a second telling. As we steamed away in the gathering darkness we could still see the flash of guns on the far horizon.

Obviously after disposing of the "Jervis Bay" the raider turned her attention to the convoy. It was not until we were near port that we sighted other ships of the convoy like us, lucky to have escaped."—*Associated Press, British United Press, the "Daily Telegraph."*

thought that we might be interested to know that Hitler and some of the Nazi "Old Guard" were to be in Munich that night to celebrate the anniversary of the Beer Hall Putsch of 1923.

Everybody was flat out to get there. They had included in my bomb load one of the heaviest calibre bombs that we have so far carried. I talked things over with the observer, and we decided before we left that, as the Station Commander had been kind enough to entrust us with the delivery of this heavy-calibre bomb, we should go in as low as possible to make sure of getting the target.

It was a beautiful starlight night and there was almost a half-moon. We were checking up our course by the stars as we went out. Round Munich itself there was not a cloud in the sky.

We passed an enemy aerodrome—all lit up for night flying—but on the way out we weren't wasting any bombs on that. We saw one of our fellows flying about five miles in front of us, getting a packet of stuff thrown up at him over Mannheim. He flew straight through it, but we turned away to the left and avoided the town.



Here are some of the R.A.F. men seen at their base on their return from Munich, listening to a fellow pilot relating some of his experiences. They have all taken part in the memorable raid on the German city, of which an account is given in this page. *Photo, Associated Press*



These R.A.F. pilots were determined to disturb Hitler's celebrations in the Munich Beer House, which marked the anniversary of the Nazi Putsch of 1923. Railway stations, electric installations, and goods yards were bombed throughout the favourite city of Hitler's "Old Guard." The Nazis will long remember this surprise British raid on November 8, for the broadcast of the Fuehrer's speech was postponed, and Marshal Goering, no doubt, had to seek fresh excuses for the presence of the R.A.F. bombers in order to reassure the German people. *Photo, Keystone*

### Some of the Hundreds of Thrilling Narratives

- The Clock Ticks at the Admiralty  
by Rt. Hon. WINSTON CHURCHILL, P.C., M.P.
- I Fired the First Shot!  
by Sergeant E. THOMAS, M.M.
- The Day the War Was Nearly Lost  
by Private H. J. POLLEY
- My Four Years in a Frenchwoman's Cupboard  
by Trooper PATRICK FOWLER
- Terrier's First Blood in Sudden Fields  
by WILLIAM LINTON ANDREWS
- At the Crack of Dawn—Air-Raiding Before Breakfast  
by Flight-Lieut. HAROLD ROSHER, R.N.A.S.
- A Poet Encounters Tragedy  
by Lieut.-Col. JOHN McCRAE, M.D. (Author of "In Flanders Fields")
- I Saw the Agony of the First Gas Attack  
by ANTHONY R. HOSSACK
- I Went Down with the Lusitania  
by VISCOUNTESS RHONDA
- Gallipoli: Snipers' Paradise and Soldiers' Hell  
by A. P. HERBERT
- Outwitted by the British Secret Service: The Story of a Master Spy  
by Captain VON RINTELENY
- I Was in London's First Air Raid  
by SYLVIA PANKHURST
- Prelude to Loos Tragedy: From Café to Ditch of Death  
by Sir PHILIP GIBBS
- How I Won my V.C. on Hill 70  
by Trooper F. W. O. POTTS, V.C.
- My Mystery Ship Lured U.68 to its Doom  
by Vice-Admiral GORDON CAMPBELL, V.C., D.S.O.
- Through Death Valley With the Anzacs  
by Private FRED FOX
- Hell's Angels: When 30 out of 67 Planes Were Shot Down  
by A. G. J. WHITEHOUSE
- The Tunnelers of Holzminden  
by HUGH DURNFORD
- Our Victorious Return from Zeebrugge  
by Admiral Sir ROGER KEYES, G.C.B.
- When Ten Men Were the Front Line!  
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# I WAS THERE!

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### A LINK WITH THE PRESENT WAR

A remarkable coincidence is that this publication was completed the day before this War started. The fact that we are now at war again, adds a further significance to this stupendous work.