

German Naval Officer Denies That the Kaiser's Fleet Fled Before the British

ASSERTS JELlicoe DID NOT CHASE FOE

German Officer Thinks His Men
Were So Shaken by Losses
That They Desisted.

ENGLISH SHIPS THE FASTER

Enemy Predicts British Building of
Merchant Craft Will Be Tied
Up by Repair Work.

BERLIN, June 10, (From an Associated Press Staff Correspondent, by Wireless, via Sayville, N. Y.)—A graphic story of the naval battle off the Jutland coast, replete with tributes to the bravery of England's sailors and to the coolness and devotion of the German bluejackets in the memorable engagement, has been given by a high sea officer of the German Admiralty staff.

This officer, although not present at the battle, had access to all the reports and now has returned to Berlin after two days spent among the officers of the high sea fleet. His tactical description of the engagement, given at considerable length, has already been covered to some extent by the official German and British accounts. His description is most interesting, however, where it touches on the points on which the German and British recitals differ sharply—as regards the respective losses of the two fleets and the British contention of a "German flight" from the field.

To the question: "What are the facts about the Warspite?" (the big British battleship whose loss the Germans affirm and the British deny,) the officer replied:

Told of a Warspite's Loss.

"The Warspite certainly was lost. We have on this point not only the known observations but, what is more important, the testimony of British sailors. The first confirmation came

when a destroyer of our third flotilla fished out of the water a sailor from the British destroyer Turbulent, who said that he himself had observed the sinking of the Warspite. Later two other sailors gave the same account, although none of the three were together after the rescue and each was questioned separately. This should be conclusive."

The correspondent asked how the individual ships were destroyed.

"It is difficult to give definite details in all cases," the officer responded, "owing to the ranges, the thick weather and the fact that few officers on board a ship in action have the time or the opportunity to observe such details. Here, however, is the story of the destruction of one of the British battle cruisers, probably the Queen Mary or the Indefatigable, as told to me by an officer who witnessed it:

"It was during an early stage of the action of the battle cruisers that my friend saw the warship struck squarely in quick succession by three full salvos of heavy shells. The gray silhouette, low on the water line, quivered from the shock as the first two salvos hit. At the third the cruiser seemed literally to crumble up and bend amidships. The bow and the stern rose, and then the whole ship was lifted bodily out of the water. A terrific explosion had blotted her out and she sank, leaving no trace behind.

Shells Hit Magazines.

"The destruction of several other cruisers occurred similarly. A shell would apparently reach the magazines; then would come a mighty puff of smoke and flame, and the brief death agony of the warcraft would be over almost before one began to notice it.

"One of the most thrilling episodes was the destruction of a big four-funneled armored cruiser, which ran squarely under the guns of our battleships during the night, and was annihilated within four minutes by our dreadnoughts steaming in column.

"In pitchy darkness, with lights out, the cruiser approached at right angles under full speed, evidently utterly unaware of the presence of the squadron. She was sighted at a distance of 1,500 yards, and received a full broadside from the leading German ship, the Westfalen, she ran on another 500 yards, and then turned like a wounded hare, but instead of making away, steered a course parallel to the column 1,000 yards distant, receiving the broadsides of three successive ships. The cruiser, literally covered with shells and unable to fire a single shot in reply, blew up opposite the fourth ship.

"The British claim that the surviving units of their battle fleet were not materially damaged, and were ready to take to sea again after coaling is absurd. The greater part of the daylight action was fought with the ships running along parallel lines, and where so many ships were destroyed it is obvious that the

others did not escape unscathed, for our fire was not concentrated on any particular ship, as it was necessary to keep all the ships 'covered,' so as to interfere with deliberation in aim. We are perfectly sure that the grand fleet cannot, as the British assert, go to sea virtually unimpaired in strength for a long time. It has been hard hit in its material and suffered colossal losses in its personnel. We estimate conservatively that the British lost 7,000 men, drowned or killed by shell fire are losses of the most difficult sort to replace.

"A British Admiralty representative declared to your London correspondent, and Winston Churchill repeats the declaration, that the British were successful because they broke up our undertaking. What undertaking? Is a question I would like to ask. Does he imagine that we went out with our entire available force of battleships, battle cruisers, &c., to shoot sparrows, or that if we were planning a new cruiser raid upon the English coast we went clear up to the Norwegian coast as a starting point? No, we went north to find the enemy which we knew was there. We found him, met the bulk of the British Grand Fleet in a square stand-up fight, inflicted the heavy loss of one of his most modern super-dreadnoughts, three battle cruisers, a small navy of armored cruisers, scouts and destroyers and paid a comparatively low price for our victory.

British Excuse "Childish."

"And then the childish excuse that the British main fleet was not engaged and that we ran to avoid meeting it. The facts speak for themselves. Germany has only seventeen dreadnoughts, including four of the Posen class, which are only half dreadnoughts, with eleven-inch armament. All of these, except one battleship which was undergoing boiler repairs, were present and engaged. The British had at the outset of the war twenty-five dreadnoughts, to which have been added five of the Queen Elizabeth class and five of the Resolution class launched and completed during the war, a total of thirty-five dreadnoughts.

"Twenty-five of these, including five of the Queen Elizabeth class, were engaged in the battle. The presence with the German fleet of a squadron of the Pommern class, slow eighteen-knot ships, demolishes completely the contention that the British were unable to bring on a general action had they desired to do so. Admiral Jellicoe, with his swifter dreadnoughts, all at least two knots faster and a number capable of making twenty-five knots, could, if he wished, have overtaken our fleet, compelled to accommodate its pace to the slowest squadron, on that day or at least the next morning, for our fleet returned to its base only during the course of the next forenoon.

"Our officers believed the fact that he did not do so was because the British were so shaken (not demoralized, for the British are brave, good sailors) by their losses and damage, and particular-

ly by the incessant torpedo attacks during the night that they were unwilling to continue the action. In this connection several British destroyers on Friday night hailed a vessel off the Swedish coast and asked where they were. "An incidental but important effect of our victory is that it will interrupt the building of British commercial shipping for months, as the British yards will be for a long time completely occupied in making repairs to warships. Summing up, one of the aims of naval strategy is to inflict the heaviest loss possible and keep one's own loss to a minimum. We were successful in this, despite the British attempts to magnify our losses. The German report of our losses is complete. I, myself, saw all the battleships of the Kaiser class, of which the British pretend to have destroyed two, safe in harbor."