

EAST AFR. PROT.
GERMAN E. AFRICA

50271

REC'D
RFU: 1 NOV 15

Adm'y Secy

1915

30 Oct.

Last previous Paper

W.O.
50200/15

German East Africa;

reports that Adm'y are satisfied that the destruction of the cargo of the ship sunk in Miansa Bay last April was not complete; that part of it was salvaged; they have no info as to a second supply ship arriving at Tanga; and it may be assumed that the munitions reported to have reached G.E.A. have been salvaged from the original ship.

Dr. G. Fiddes

This is unfortunate

In view of last para:

Put by?

A. J. R.

1/21/15

Pr. 1. 11

Aboncel

1/21/15

Next subsequent Paper.

Adm'y 50702

50271

In any further communications
on this subject please quote
M. 08031.
and address letter to
The Secretary,
Admiralty, Whitehall,
London S.W.

Admiralty.

30th October 1918

SECRET.

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 18th instant, No. 46067, I am commanded by My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to request that you will inform the Secretary of State for the Colonies that they are now satisfied that the destruction of the cargo of the Ship sunk in Mansa Bay last April was not complete, and that part of it was salvaged, notwithstanding the Commander in Chief's belief that this was an impossibility.

2. There is no information in this Department as to a second supply Ship having arrived in Tanga Harbour, and unless actual evidence is forthcoming on this point it may be assumed that the munitions which are reported to have reached German East Africa have, in fact, been salvaged from the original Ship.

3. A copy of this letter has been sent to the War Office, as the Army Council are doubtless even more interested than the Secretary of State in this matter.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. Murray

Under Secretary of State,

COLONIAL OFFICE.

S.W.

2-208

(ated)

Private.



13th August, 1915.

Dear Steel-Maitland,

You wrote to me yesterday about the supply of guns, rifles, and ammunition, which the enemy in East Africa are reported to have received by means of salvage from a sunken blockade runner. Major General Tighe, in the telegram which you enclosed, expresses the view that these munitions may have been salvaged from the ship which tried to run the blockade in April last and which was sunk by H.M.S. "Hyacinth". I can only assure you that the ship in question received such a bombardment from the "Hyacinth" that the Admiral on the spot was satisfied that in her sunken and battered condition nothing of value could be salvaged from her, except possibly any heavy guns which may have been in her. After a preliminary bombardment which caused the crew to abandon the ship in boats, the Admiral sent a party on board to investigate, but as the ship was burning fiercely and had been scuttled, the party had to withdraw after making such a search as was possible in those conditions. In order to make assurance doubly sure, the "Hyacinth" again bombarded the wreck, which after a

short time was ablaze. Three big explosions at separate intervals followed, which would certainly seem to indicate that if there was ammunition on board it must have been destroyed.

This is all we have, but it seems ^{ed} conclusive.

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has the same of importance

J -
A.P.W

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J -
 A.P.W.

(Dictated.)

Private.

24th September, 1915.

Dear Arthur,

I have shown to Mr Balfour the extracts from the war diary which you sent me and which I now return.

The Admiralty have received only recently ^(7th Sept) a letter which Admiral King Hall wrote on the 28th of July, containing a report of his proceedings. This letter contains a paragraph on the subject of the sunken collier in Mansa Bay, which is as follows :-

Paragraph No.15.-

"Reported salvage from wreck in Mansa Bay.- Owing to the repeated reports received from the G.O.C. that arms were being salvaged from the ship destroyed last April in Mansa Bay, and the Mine Sweepers being now available, I proceeded there on the 20th instant in the "Challenger" with two Sweepers in attendance, arriving off the entrance on the morning of the 21st.

The results of my visit are reported to Their Lordships in my telegram No.445 of the 22nd instant.

I am of opinion that the rumoured reports of salvage originated from enemy sources with a view to enticing one of H.M. Ships on to the mines which were found to be laid in the entrance. There were no signs that any salvage had taken place, neither do I believe under the circumstances with the available appliances that any is feasible."

The telegram to which Admiral King Hall refers,

namely,

namely, No.445 of the 22nd July, was as follows :-

"Visited Mansa Bay yesterday with mine sweepers. Entrance was found mined, two being brought to surface. There were no indications that any salvage had taken place in the store ship; no derricks of any kind were rigged; hull is almost totally submerged and only twisted mass of metal is visible; one mast is gone. Wreck was closely examined."

In view of this evidence, it is exceedingly difficult to believe that the enemy could have succeeded in salvaging any ammunition; and in the absence of direct evidence to the contrary, Mr Balfour thinks that the Admiral must be considered to have accomplished effectively his work of rendering the collier useless.

As the telegram which I have quoted is in one of our cyphers and has not been paraphrased, may I ask that it shall be treated as strictly secret, for fear of compromising the cypher?

Yours ever

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EXTRACTS FROM WAR DIARY.July 25th.

The G.O.C. wires that he has seen H.R. the Naval Commander-in-Chief. The sunken "collier" at Mansa Bay is awash and not in deep water. It is almost certain that considerable salvaging has and is taking place. Mansa Bay is reported to be mined.

Before the arrival of the "collier" at Mansa Bay, the limit to the armed forces in German East Africa was some 14,000 rifles. Now this number will be capable of a large increase. Consequently the general situation has changed greatly to the advantage of the Germans.

July 27th.

A movement of German troops down the Tanga Railway line is reported, and hostile movements in the Umba Valley. This is probably with the object of protecting the "collier" in Mansa Bay.

It is reported that 5,000,000 rounds of small arm ammunition, some guns and shells, and 800 rifles have already been salvaged from Mansa Bay. Another source reports 6 guns and 8 machine guns. Salvage operations are probably still in progress.

July 28th.

All quiet. It is reported that the Admiral has sent war ships into Mansa Bay to deal with the sunken "collier".

July 30th.

More 1915 German ammunition has been found. It is noted that such specimens are discoloured, perhaps by water.

August 2nd.

It has been ascertained that salvage operations are not at present being carried out at Mansa Bay, but there can be little doubt that much material has been salvaged.

August 3rd.

It is reported that the enemy have tested salvaged rifle ammunition and find it uninjured by the sea water.

August 6th.

Further confirmation is received of the salvage of small arm ammunition from Mansa Bay.