

COMMUNIQUE NO. 8

9 June 1944

American troops are across the CARENTAN-VOLOGNES road in several places and have cut the broad gauge railway to CHERBOURG. Further gains have been made west and southwest of BAYEUX.

Fighting is severe in the area of CAEN where the enemy is making a determined effort to stem the advance. The weight of armor on both sides is increasing and heavy fighting continues in all areas. The enemy strong points previously bypassed have now been eliminated. The weather has deteriorated but our beachheads are being steadily developed.

Poor visibility and stormy weather reduced Allied air activity to a minimum over the battle area today.

Before dawn this morning HMS Tartar (Commaner B. Jones, DSO, DSC, RN), with HMS Ashanti (Lieutenant-Commander J. R. Barnes, RN), HM Canadian ships Haida (Commander H. G. de Wolf, RCN) and Huron (Lieutenant-Commander H. S. Rayner, DSC, RCN), O.R.P. Blyskawica, HMS Eskimo (Lieutenant-Commander E. N. Sinclair, RN), O.R.P. Pioron and HMS Javelin (Lieutenant-Commander P.B. N. Lewis, DSC, RN) in company, intercepted a force of German destroyers which had previously been reported off Ushant by coastal aircraft.

The enemy were sighted and our ships turned towards them, avoiding their torpedoes. In the course of the action, at times conducted at point-blank range, HMS Tartar passed through the enemy's line. One enemy destroyer was torpedoed and blew up. A second was driven ashore in flames. Two others escaped after receiving damage by gunfire.

HMS Tartar sustained some damage and a few casualties, but continued in action and has returned safely to harbor.

Unsuccessful attempts were again made after dawn by E-boats to enter the assault area both from the east and west. They were intercepted and driven off by light coastal forces. Off the Pointe de Barfleur in a short gun action hits were observed on two of the enemy before they ~~escaped~~ escaped.

During the night destroyers under the command of Rear-Admiral Don Pardee Moon, USN, intercepted a force of heavily armed enemy craft between the mainland and the Isles de San Marcouf, and drove them off.

During the 24 hours to 0800 this morning, 46 targets were engaged by Allied warships. Spotting for these shoots was carried out both by aircraft and military Forward Observer Officers, who had been landed with the assault troops.

HMS Belfast (Captain F. R. Parham, DSO, RN) wearing the flag of Rear-Admiral F. H. G. Dalrymple-Hamilton, C.B., and HMS Frobisher (Captain J. F. W. Mudford, RN) have done considerable execution on enemy concentrations. This morning HMS Frobisher neutralized two enemy batteries and destroyed an ammunition dump.