

SECRET

C.S.

1941.

No.

5/17/41.

O.C. Troops.

SUBJECT.

19 41.

24th October.

REPORT ON VISIT OF COLONEL C. D. ALLDERIDGE,  
OFFICER COMMANDING TROOPS, TO SOUTH GEORGIA.

Previous Paper.

MINUTES.

1-6 Report from Col. Alderidge of 24/10/41.

W.C.S.  
Reas 1-6 submitted.

C.D. fords  
31/10/41.

H.O. 1/2 for his information & remarks. The MP has letter to be secret.

W.C.S. 1/11/41

W.C.S.  
Referred to you.

C.D. fords  
31/11/41.

W.C.S. a most interesting report. Concern into para VI Red(1).  
The Rear Admiral Commanding South American Div in would  
be appreciate a copy - please.

Subsequent Paper.

W.C.S. 3.11.41

W.C.S.

Y.B.

Noir's remarks submitted for information.  
I will have copy of report sent to Noir ~~from~~ for  
RA; S.A.B.

J.J.  
C. J. J.  
5/11/41

Yes - pl.

I should like to see C.C. Troops without delay with  
this file.

AD 5/21/41

C.C. Troops

Refer to you.

J.J.  
C. J. J.  
6/11/41

C.C. Troops

P.L. go ahead with 8 (vi).

AD 6/21/41

M.E.

Meet with in M.P. 5/15/41

C. J. J. Col  
6/21/41

Noir,

Copy of Report in quintuplicate herewith.

C. J. J.  
for C.  
7/11/41

H.S.

W.M.T

R.S.M.  
7.11.41

(6)  
Port Stanley.  
24th October, 1941.

A REPORT ON THE VISIT TO SOUTH GEORGIA OF COLONEL

C. D. ALLDERIDGE, OFFICER COMMANDING TROOPS, FALKLAND ISLANDS.

I left Stanley on Tuesday, October the 7th, 1941, in the S.S. "Fitzroy" and arrived at Grytviken, South Georgia in the early hours of Saturday, October the 11th.

The objects of the visit were :-

- (1) To inspect the Coastal Defences.
- (2) To acquaint myself with conditions in which the Norwegian Artillery Detachment at Grytviken would live.
- (3) To clarify the situation of liason as between the Leith Command and the Grytviken Command.
- (4) To enquire into the circumstances appertaining to Doctor Helmuth Krauss at Grytviken.
- (5) To present the Empire Medal to Private J. Mercer, Wireless Operator at Grytviken.
- (6) To report on matters generally.

This report henceforth will refer to items 1 - 6 seriatim.

1. COASTAL DEFENCES. These comprise one four inch gun at Grytviken and one of equal calibre at Leith. They are both badly placed and are, in their present positions, deprived of 90 per cent of their efficiency as neither gun covers the mouth of the harbour. In each case a raider could be right inside the harbours, do all the damage necessary, and be away before the element of surprise could be realised and effectively countered.

It is not advisable to move the guns at the present moment, that is during the whaling season, but I advise that preparations be made for their removal to new and better sites so that the guns themselves can be moved in winter and during the non-whaling season. The proper position for the Leith gun is at Hansen Point on the South side of Leith Harbour and the Grytviken gun should be moved to a position at Heflefletten on the South side of King Edward Cove. From both these positions the guns could command the entrances to the respective harbours and still not

be/

be so far from the Station as to create difficulties in maintenance and control.

At Leith there is a permanent Artillery Defence Officer - 2nd Lieut. T. Laurenson, (a Shetland Islander) and a trained gunner D.E.M.S. (Defence Equipment Merchant Ships) named George Watts. These are both full time Defence personnel and are paid and maintained by the Salvesen Company. The remainder of the gun detachment is within immediate call in the factory and can be at the gun within five minutes of the alarm being given. A constant look out is kept at the gun.

The Grytviken gun is also maintained by personnel from Leith all of whom are of British Nationality. This is being done only by the good will of Salvesen and no members of Grytviken station are actively interested. Herr R. Hansen, the Manager of the Salvesen Company, has promised to do all he can and will probably be able to maintain the Grytviken gun crew until the arrival of the Norwegian Detachment. A constant look out is being kept here also.

There are no gun's crew quarters at the Leith gun but at Grytviken there is a comfortable hut capable of housing 8 men at the gun. This can easily be enlarged to accommodate the 4 N.C.O's in a separate section. The officer can live at the station and be within a few moments call.

There is no difficulty at either place so far as lighting, feeding and clothing are concerned.

Ammunition, etc., for the guns and personnel is in good order and plentiful, VIZ :-

Details.

Projectiles, 4" heavy H.E.	
Mk. VIII. Lyddite ... ..	299
Cartridges, 4" Cordite, S.C. 103 .	299
Tubes, .5" V/S Percussion ..	299
.303 S.A.A. ... ..	32,700
Steel, Helmets ..	90
Arm Bands ... ..	180
Rifles, S.M.L.E. Mk. III ...	62
Lewis Guns, Mod. 1914 Patt .	4

There/

There is no lack of enthusiasm at either Leith or Grytviken but I would suggest the issue of proper uniforms. At the moment only arm bands, coloured blue and gold are available.

It would be comparatively easy by a determined attack, to take any or all of the harbours on the North Coast of South Georgia, and they are ideal hiding places with perfect anchorages; but it would be an almost impossible task to dislodge an enemy once they had set up a strong Coastal Defence system. This could be done quickly and effectively as the formation of the Island lends itself to such. Furthermore, concentrated bombing by aircraft of properly selected Defence points would be almost impossible owing to the fact that the high surrounding mountains would hamper safe flying at any height under 4,000 feet.

2. NORWEGIAN ARTILLERY DETACHMENTS AT GRYTVIKEN.

There is accommodation for eight men with cooking facilities in the comfortable hut used by the present detachment at the gun position. The four N.C.O's will have to be provided with adjacent accommodation and the O i/c. Mr. Rumbolds, has promised to provide this accommodation without delay.

The gun is within four or five minutes walk of the Station buildings and the Norwegian officer will be housed in one of them. There are no difficulties regarding feeding, clothing or stores.

2nd Lieut. Laurenson will ensure the training of the detachment if not already trained, and Warrant Officer O'Sullivan who has had considerable experience on the gun at Grytviken will give all the assistance he can. I understand that all matters of pay have been settled.

3. LIASON BETWEEN LEITH AND GRYTVIKEN COMMANDS.

At the moment the gun Detachments at Leith and Grytviken are supplied by Salvesen and are consequently under the command

of/

of 2nd Lieut. Laurensen. This is quite satisfactory. The only Station personnel who have taken an interest in the Grytviken gun were the late Lieut. Barlas and W.O. O'Sullivan. The latter will continue to do what he can if and as required by the Norwegian Detachment.

The question of liason between the Salvesen and Norwegian Detachments is likely to be a little difficult at first in view of the position defined by the Secretary of State for the Colonies but I asked that all possible assistance and understanding should be extended and matters will sort themselves out. Not knowing <sup>the</sup> seniority of the Norwegian officer it has not been possible to give more than general instructions to 2nd Lieut. Laurensen.

Unfortunately there is no one at Grytviken to act as Liason Officer except W.O. O'Sullivan.

I issued a written order to Private W.C. Rumbolds seconding him temporarily for Civilian Duties and releasing him from active membership of the Defence Force.. He still remains on the Roll. 2nd Lieut. T. Laurensen was ordered in writing to assume command in South Georgia pending the arrival of the Norwegian Detachment.

4. DR. HELMUTH KRAUSS. This matter has already been reported upon. See M.P. No. 176/39.

5. PRESENTATION OF THE EMPIRE MEDAL TO PRIVATE J. MERCER. This is referred to in M.P. No. P/97.

6. MATTERS GENERALLY.

(i) There was no reason to believe that there was any fifth column work in the capture of the factory ship and catchers last year. They were Salvesen's ships and there is no authentic description of what actually took place though I understand that several of the captured Norwegians are back in Norway and the facts will probably become known later.

(ii) There is a distinct difference in the atmosphere of

friendliness/

friendliness between Leith and Grytviken. At Leith it is definitely pro-British, but at Grytviken it is perhaps more reserved than non-existent.

(iii) Mr. R. Hansen, the Manager of the Salvesen Company, is eager to render every assistance that is possible. Messrs. J. Mercer, i/c W/T, and F. O'Sullivan, <sup>assail</sup> Acting Customs Officer, are trusted by all and are completely reliable. P.C. Browell appears to be a thoroughly competent and understanding officer and is thought much of by all. He rendered me a great deal of assistance and I would like to place this on record.

(iv) Dr. Togneri of Leith employed by Salvesen is of Italian parentage but born in Scotland, holds a Scottish University Degree and the M.B.E. His conduct is above reproach and his outlook is 100 per cent British. He is trusted and respected by all both as a Medico and a man. His father was drowned in the "Andora Star".

(v) Both Leith and Grytviken stores are well stocked and in both cases the Managers have promised that in the event of their respective companies deciding not to continue whaling next season, a circumstance at present undetermined, they will be prepared to make arrangements with the Government to hand over stocks of food and clothing at valuation price.

(vi) I discussed with Mr. J. Mercer in charge of the W/T Station at Grytviken and Mr. T. Johnson wireless manager for Salvesen the question of auxiliary wireless communication between Leith, Grytviken and Stanley.

There is ample first class apparatus for this purpose at Leith and Salvesen's will loan it for the purpose without charge.

A hidden station near the Leith gun position for communicating with Grytviken in case of damage to the Company's station is already installed.

A similar hidden station at Grytviken could warn Leith in the event of destruction of the Government W/T Station.

(1)

A third station in the Falklands say at Mount Lowe would ensure separate and independent means of warning between Falklands and South Georgia in case of emergency.

The stations would only be operated in the event of urgent necessity. I have shown Mr. Mercer's letter to the Naval Officer-in-Charge and discussed the matter with him. He sees no objection to the scheme which he considers to be a very good one which may render very valuable service. Vide M.P.

(vii) There are no Germans on board S.S. "Tajuca" which is scheduled to stay at Grytviken to the end of the season. Captain Larsen, in command, appears to be distinctly pro-British.

(viii) The Whaling Stations communicate all their messages sent out from South Georgia through the usual and correct channels, i.e. the Government W/T Station except such as appertain purely to working messages between stations and catchers and these are by wireless telephone.

(ix) SHORT DIRECTORY.

R. Hansen	...	...	...	Manager for Salvesen at Leith.
Dr. Togneri, M.B.E.	..	...	...	Medical Officer at Leith (Born in Scotland of Italian Parents)
2nd Lieut. Laurenson		...	...	Officer Commanding the Leith gun detachment.
T. Johnson	...	...	...	Wireless Manager for Salvesen.
Herr Running	..	...	...	Chemist to Salvesen and very much pro-British.
Captain Carlson	...	...	...	Commands "Ernesto Tornquest", store ship for Salvesen. (8,000 tons).
Herr O. Gudjohnson	..	...	...	Winter Manager of Comp. Arg. de Pesca.
Herr T. Troim	.	...	...	Chemist to above firm.
S.S. "Harpon"	.	...	...	Store ship to above firm.
Captain O. Larsen	...	...	...	Commands Sailing Ship (Auxiliary engine) "Tajuca" - store ship of Comp. Arg. de Pesca.

*C. W. ...*

Colonel,  
Officer Commanding Troops.