

Report on Interrogation of some members of the Crew of U-889, which formally surrendered (to the Chief of Staff to C. in C. C.M.A.) at Shelbourne, N.S. on 13th May, 1945.

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The information which follows was obtained hurriedly from surrendered prisoners-of-war and should not be accepted as factual unless or until confirmed by other information.

TYPE: IXC/40

TONNAGE: 740 tons

FLOTILLA: Had belonged, in this order, to the 4th Training Flotilla, Stettin, the 5th ("Fitting-out for action") Flotilla, Kiel, and to the 31st (? Hamburg) and 33rd (Flensburg and Kiel) Front Flotillas.

C.O.: Kapitaenleutnant Friedrich BRAEUCKER, of the April 1937 entry, who had been serving for 2 years on 740-tonners. Previously he had seen action in the English Channel in command of a torpedo boat and had been decorated with the Iron Cross, 1st Class.

COMPLEMENT: 55 (including a "commander pupil")

BUILT: Deschimag, Bremen. U-889 was the last 740-tonner to leave these yards, which subsequently concentrated on the new prefabricated Type XXI U-boats.

COMMISSIONED: 8th August, 1944, at Bremen by BRAEUCKER. The final overhaul was on 10th December, 1944, at Stettin. The intermediate stages of testing, training and completion took U-889 to Kiel (Acceptance Commission), Stettin (Oder yards), Danzig (Acceptance Commission), Pillau (training in harbour procedure, Hela (Agru-Front, i.e. training for active service), Gdynia (refitting), Pillau (Vortaktische, <sup>i.e.</sup> preparation for tactical training), Gdynia (firing practice), Gdynia (repairs), and the Island of Bornholm (tactical training).

ARMAMENT: Guns - 1 - 37 mm. twin mount on C/T  
2 - 20 mm. twin mount on C/T

Torpedoes: 4 bow tubes, 2 stern tubes; the torpedoes carried were 6 T-3 (Lut) and 6 T-5 (gnats, flat-nosed) and they were surrendered intact.

FUEL: Maximum load, 246½ tons.

HYDROPHONES: Stated to be the only U-boat with "Zwiebel" (onion), viz, hydrophones enclosed in bulbous cover at point of bow at upper deck level and for use while schnorcheling in listening on both sides of U-boat over a sector of 60°.

RADAR: Hohentwiel with "Simultan Geract" addendum

G.S.R.: Borkum with Rundipol on bridge  
Tunis (Muecke and Fliege) antennae  
Borkum with Rundipol on Schnorchel

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SCHNORCHEL: Fitted; upper part has rubberlike coating stated to contain iron filings and to be effective against S and X Radar.

RADAR DECOYS: Aphrodite carried.

### 1st and Last Patrol

U-889 had never seen action. When surrendered she was on her first war cruise, having sailed from Christiansand on 5th April with orders not to attack and being ordered subsequently to patrol between New York and Cape Hatteras - an operational area which was never reached.

Her two logs, a rough day-book in pencil ("Log Kladdo") and a more finished summary in ink, show her daily progress, and photostats of both books are attached. As her own plotted chart is not yet available a reconstruction of her course, both by her C.O. and from the log, is also attached. Before leaving Kiel on 26th March, 1945, Korvetten Kapitaen Karl-Heinz MOEHLE of the 5th Flotilla came aboard and gave a "pep" talk. This is the officer, who on similar occasions has conveyed Gross Admiral DOENITZ' verbal orders to the C.O.s that when Allied Ships were sunk there were to be no survivors. But this time he held no such converse. On the same day his office had been handed Reichsmarks 7034, being the private funds of the crew and of U-889's canteen. Other visitors were from the Torpedo Experimental Station and the U-boat Acceptance Commission. Arrived Horten in Oslo Fjord on 30th March, another "pep" orator came aboard in the person of Kapitaen zur See Hans ROESING, Fuehrer der U-boote-West, who in the fall of 1944 had hurriedly shifted his French Headquarters from Angers to Bergen.

Secret "Orders of the day" for 30th and 31st March, 1945, issued at Horten by Kapitaenleutnant (Ing.) ZSCHETZSCHING, of the "Agru-Front", were found aboard. They concerned chiefly six U-boats<sup>2</sup>, which were to be boarded on either day by six engineer-officer instructors and four assistant teachers (Engine Room C.P.O.s.), working in pairs. SCHNEE's U-2511 and FREUSS' U-875, respectively 1600 and 1200 tonners, were exempt from these proceedings. So were two U-boats refitting at Horten, namely Theo PETERSEN's U-874, and U-398.

On 2nd April at 1845 U-889 dived in Horten harbour, because of an air raid warning, surfacing shortly afterwards and proceeding to Christiansand, which was reached on the following morning. After refuelling and taking-on drinking water the U-boat sailed on her first patrol at 2001 on 5th April, escorted for 5 to 6 hours by a submarine chaser, a minesweeper (M.2) the steamer "VESTA" and U-516 (750-tons ?, Kapitaenleutnant PETRAN), U-1226 (500-tons ?, Kapitaenleutnant FETTING) and U-2511 (1600-tons, Type XXI, prefabricated, Korvetten Kapitaen Adalbert SCHNEE<sup>2</sup> with Korvetten Kapitaen (Ing.) Gerd SUHREN<sup>2</sup> as engineer).

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- 1) FEHLER's U-234, the 1600-tonner which afterwards surrendered to the U.S.A., and which, P/W BRAEUCKER believed, was taking some 20 torpedoes to the East Asian bases of the U-Waffe.
- 2) PETRAN's U-516 which the P/W believed to have been bound for St. Nazaire a few days later. Previously PETRAN had been based on Penang. This U-boat has surrendered in the U.K.
- 3) P/W BRAEUCKER's U-889.
- 4) SCHLITT's U-1206, (A 500-tonner which sailed from Christiansand on 6th April and was lost off Aberdeen 14th April, 1945).
- 5) U-1274.
- 6) U-1301



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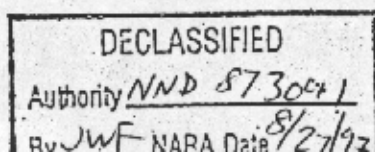
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# These two U-boat "aces" had been appointed to U-2511 with a good deal of ballyhoo and with the intention that she should be the first of the Type XXI's to see action; they were expected to make U-boat history and had been given top priority at all shipbuilding yards so that they could get to sea really quickly. P/W BRAEUCKER alleges that "Addi" SCHNEE, a favourite both of DOENITZ and of HITLER, had deliberately adopted a delaying policy. Moreover on 6th April, 1945, U-2511 parted company with U-889 and limped into Bergen for more repairs.



The U-boat having been picked up - in the North Sea on 7th, 8th and 11th April - alarms were sounded and she dived - usually to 40 metres.

The C.O. made two statements about distances and speeds:

- (a) that he had schnorcheled about 1200 miles, and covered about 800 miles on the surface; and
- (b) that his average speed while schnorchelling was between 5 and 6 knots, and his submerged speed 1 knot.

Examination of entries in the log from 2001B/5th April (time of departure Christiansand) to 1200B/9th May (day of last detailed entry) shows his first statement to have been incorrect, but provides the following figures:

|                    |           |              |                               |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Surfaced:</u>   | 93 hours  | 605 miles    | = average speed of 6.5 knots. |
| <u>Schnorchel:</u> | 196 hours | ) 1594 miles | = 1078 miles at 5.5 knots     |
| <u>Submerged:</u>  | 515 hours |              |                               |

The average miles per day covered varied greatly for successive legs of the course:

|                                  |                        |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Christiansand to approx. 001° W. | -- 80 miles per day    |
| 001° W. to approx. 016° W.       | -- 63.5 miles per day  |
| 016° W. to approx. 024° W.       | -- 51.2 miles per day  |
| 024° W. to approx. 038° W.       | -- 82.25 miles per day |
| 038° W. to approx. 046° W.       | -- 55.2 miles per day  |

U-889's passage report was presumably wirelessly from about the 15th April onwards, albeit not logged. The C.O. stated that about December 1944 a standing order had been issued according to which only three reports were to be transmitted by W/T during a patrol to Western Atlantic waters. These were to be as follows:

- (a) a passage report, to be signalled as soon as possible after passage through the Rosengarten.
- (b) a general report on the patrol, to be transmitted on the return journey from the area East of the Newfoundland Banks, and
- (c) an E.T.A. at base in Norway.

In the case of U-889 only the passage report was sent. The C.O. stated that he transmitted this message eight times in all over a period of about a week before receiving acknowledgement from control. After transmitting he proceeded submerged, in order to counter the possible consequences of Allied D/F, which he believed to be excellent.

On 4th May at 0510 the U-boat dived, having been radiolocated, and she stayed under for 18 hours. Apparently her search-receivers had broken down. A similar alarm occurred on the following day when U-889 submerged for 21 hours. At 2312' on 7th May she dived for half an hour because of aircraft. During these days news of the unconditional surrender and DOENITZ's Order - recalling all U-boats to Norwegian bases - were received, so that on 8th May P/W BRAEUCKER dumped overboard his secret papers. These included his W/T Day Book ("Funk Kladder"), his War Diary ("Kriegs Tagebuch") and his



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Diving Register ("Tauch Tagebuch"). However he overlooked the documents already cited in this report, as well as certain loose W/T messages and the Standing Orders for the U-Waffe ("Staeendige Kriegsbefehle B.d.U.") issued originally in 1943, but carefully kept up-to-date. These are bound in a crimson cover having a yellow diagonal stripe and the Directorate of Operational Research at Naval Service Headquarters will be issuing a separate report on them.

During May reception of German naval W/T traffic was very poor aboard U-889, signal strengths varying from 0-1 (German scale). However, almost all control messages were eventually obtained from control repetitions. The recovered W/T messages were as follows:

- (i) 0400/3 May (time of receipt not recorded):  
 "To all U-boats:  
 By the acceptance of unconditional surrender all German vessels of war are to discontinue unconditionally sinkings of ships and destruction of military and non-military installations and plants in the whole operational area of the German Navy. Violations mean a serious offence against the express will of the Grand Admiral and will bring serious consequences on the German people."  
 Directorate of Naval Operations
- (ii) 1614/4 May, To be deciphered by officer only (time of receipt not recorded):  
 "Following order of the Grand Admiral has been issued. To all U-boats, including East Asian and FEHLER: Suspend forthwith offensive action. Begin return journey unseen. Observe absolute security. Order may not be divulged for the present."  
 Urgent addendum by F.d.U. West:  
 "On return avoid any possibility of attack by hunt groups, etc. Enter Norwegian U-boat base."
- (iii) 2046/7 May (time of receipt 0341/8 May).  
 "11th and 15th Flotillas, U-boat base Stavanger, Agrufont Horten, Agrufont Stavanger, from F.d.U. West:  
 1) No U-boat to leave base. Also no transfers between bases.  
 2) Grand Admiral has ordered: Neither sink nor destroy U-boats. Only through them can hundreds of thousands of German lives be saved.  
 3) On the other hand destroy all code books, W/T day logs belonging to U-boats and bases with the exception of coding material for future use, enigma machine, also navigational aids, equipment and weapons are to be spared."
- (iv) 2116/9 (time of receipt 0505/10)  
 "To all U-boats:  
 VLF station Kremplermoor 'sends continuously from 2200 until 0500 W/T traffic of U-boat series on 20.4 kc/s'."
- (v) 1130/9 (Time of receipt 0519/10)  
 Deciphered W/T message.
- (vi) to) In addition Allied surrender messages were received via B.d.U's  
 (viii) 2034/0/8, 2048/0/8, 1055/0/9, all on 10th May.
- (ix) Further, the Grand Admiral's personal P/L message to all U-boats on surrender had been received, at 2343/10th May.:  
 "To all U-boats and members of the U-Waffe. After an incomparably

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(ix) Further, the Grand Admiral's personal P/L message to all U-boats on surrender had been received, at 2343/10th May.:

"To all U-boats and members of the U-Waffe. After an incomparably heroic struggle you have laid down your arms. You have accomp-

<sup>2</sup> This argument is not at all clear, unless the BOENITZ group were postulating that the returned U-boats would be put into service by the Western Allies against Russia!



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(ix) Continued -

lished unheard-of deeds. You still have to offer to your Fatherland the greatest sacrifice of all by executing unconditionally the following instructions. Thereby you will not be staining your honour, but by so doing, you will dispel very serious penalties for your homeland. The order sent from the coast to return to Norway (F 88 g 13 f34 l b d and by special cypher 294, 314, 316, 319) is withdrawn.  
(sgd.) Your Gross Admiral.

Miscellaneous:

There follows, by way of appendix, a report of talks between U-889's C.O. and the Anti-Submarine Research Officer of the Directorate of Warfare and Training. This account of the exploits (Christmas 1944 and New Year 1945) in Halifax harbour of Kapitän zur See DOERATZ receives independent confirmation in a Top Secret order of 21st March, 1945, found aboard U-889:

Wireless message No. 231a (21st March, 1945) for U-889, in the "Experiences" series:

"In operating close to enemy coasts it is important for the C.O. to have a clear picture of the position. DOERATZ has acted off Halifax in the following manner: he ascertained that the contours of the coast are, in the main, almost the same as in Kiel Bay, when operating between the Kiel fireship and Kiel Anton. He has drawn the proper conclusion from the similarity of the position that there could be no mines in this area, and that the attention of the escorts would still be very limited so close to harbour, in short, he felt himself secure in a known position, instead of insecure in an unknown one, or, in a word, "at home". This method of comparison is a good substitute for actual knowledge and will be applicable in many cases in coastal operations.