

SECRET.

THE FLAG OFFICER IN CHARGE, MILFORD HAVEN.

H.M. NAVAL OFFICE, MILFORD HAVEN.

30th December, 1940.

NO. 0102/3105/MH.

THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF, WESTERN APPROACHES.

LOSS OF H.M.S. "MERCURY".

The attached report of a Court of Inquiry to investigate the sinking of H.M.S. "MERCURY" is submitted.

2. I concur with the findings of the Court, but although a certain element of blame is attached to the Commanding Officer, taking all the circumstances into consideration it is not proposed to order a Court Martial.

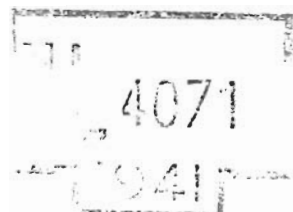
P. E. Hillier

REAR ADMIRAL.



LOSS OF H.M.S. "MERCURY".
(Flag Officer-in-Charge, Milford Haven's No. 0102/3105/MH
of 30th December, 1940).

II.



No. M.591/35.

FLAG OFFICER-IN-CHARGE, MILFORD HAVEN.

The Commanding Officer, H.M.S. "Mercury" failed to carry out the regulations, and was thereby responsible for the loss of his ship. He is to be tried by Court Martial.

2. It is not considered that the Board of Inquiry investigated the matter with sufficient thoroughness. The following points arise:-

- (a) Paragraph 5 (a) of Finding - the Commanding Officer was not asked why these instructions were not adhered to.
- (b) Paragraph 6 of Finding - the Commanding Officer was not asked why he did not give orders to cut the sweep wire.
- (c) The ship was afloat for nearly 5 hours and arrangements should have been made to save all the C.B.s and important stores.
- (d) The Senior Officer of the Flotilla, Commander L.C. Windsor, R.N., was not asked by the Board whether the correct drill was carried out, and what in his opinion was the cause of the explosion and damage to the ship. As a corollary to this, he should have been asked whether the Commanding Officer of the "Mercury" carried out his instructions and regulations.

3. The Members of the Board of Inquiry are to be informed in the sense of paragraph 2 above.

FLAG OFFICER IN CHARGE

No. 0102/3105 MH

16 JAN 1941

MILFORD HAVEN.

ADMIRAL
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

Plymouth.
14th January, 1941.