



THIRD SUPPLEMENT

TO

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THURSDAY, 6 JULY, 1916.

Admiralty, 6th July, 1916.

The following Despatch has been received from Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, G.C.B., G.C.V.O., Commander-in-Chief, Grand Fleet, reporting the action in the North Sea on 31st May, 1916:—*

“Iron Duke,”

24th June, 1916.

SIR,—Be pleased to inform the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that the German High Sea Fleet was brought to action on 31st May, 1916, to the westward of the Jutland Bank, off the coast of Denmark.

The ships of the Grand Fleet, in pursuance of the general policy of periodical sweeps through the North Sea, had left its bases on the previous day, in accordance with instructions issued by me.

In the early afternoon of Wednesday, 31 May, the 1st and 2nd Battle-cruiser Squadrons, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Light-cruiser Squadrons and destroyers from the 1st, 9th, 10th and 13th Flotillas, supported by the 5th Battle Squadron, were, in accordance with my direc-

tions, scouting to the southward of the Battle Fleet, which was accompanied by the 3rd Battle-cruiser Squadron, 1st and 2nd Cruiser Squadrons, 4th Light-cruiser Squadron, 4th, 11th and 12th Flotillas.

The junction of the Battle Fleet with the scouting force after the enemy had been sighted was delayed owing to the southerly course steered by our advanced force during the first hour after commencing their action with the enemy battle-cruisers. This was, of course, unavoidable, as had our battle-cruisers not followed the enemy to the southward the main fleets would never have been in contact.

The Battle-cruiser Fleet, gallantly led by Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty, K.C.B., M.V.O., D.S.O., and admirably supported by the ships of the Fifth Battle Squadron under Rear-Admiral Hugh Evan-Thomas, M.V.O., fought an action under, at times, disadvantageous conditions, especially in regard to light, in a manner that was in keeping with the best traditions of the service.

The following extracts from the report of Sir David Beatty give the course of events before the Battle Fleet came upon the scene:—

* All times given in this report are Greenwich mean time.

“At 2.20 p.m. reports were received from ‘Galatea’ (Commodore Edwyn S. Alexander-