

APPENDIX No. 1

GERMAN DIARIES FOUND AT RABAU.

Soon after the Australian occupation of Rabaul the diaries of two German officials were discovered. One—compiled by a Government secretary, by name Kerler—consisted mainly of pencilled notes and copies of notices issued by Government officials at Rabaul. The more important are given hereunder:—

The declaration of war arrived here on 5/8/14, 10.15 p.m. at the post-office. . . .

Midnight. Conference lasting two or three hours. Government and Treasury removed to Toma.

6/8/14, 10.30 a.m.—

CALL TO ARMS!

All soldiers at present on furlough are ordered to report at the Government Offices at 4 p.m., to the senior officer for the time being, First-Lieutenant Berghausen.

Rabaul, the 6th of August, 1914.

The Imperial Governor,

By authority,

SCHLETTWEIN.

2-3 p.m.—Sharpening my sword.

4 p.m.—Parade. A single troop formed of 29-30 men. Articles of war read. . . .

NOTICE.

.
Public telephone communication will be suspended as from 4.30 p.m on the 6th August until further notice in Rabaul and Herbertshöhe, and also at the auxiliary station at Bitapaka. Private messages will not be transmitted from this time onwards by the Rabaul-Herbertshöhe-Bitapaka system.

Rabaul, the 6th of August, 1914.

Imperial Post Office,

WELLER.

NOTICE.

.
Until further notice postal matter of every sort will only be accepted at risk of the sender. No compensation will be payable for any losses that may occur.

Rabaul, the 6th of August, 1914.

Imperial Post Office,

WELLER.

NOTICE.

English, French, and Russians at present in the Rabaul district are forbidden to leave their dwellings or the town limits respectively until further orders. In urgent cases, the permission of the District Officer must be obtained.

Rabaul, the 6th of August, 1914.

The Imperial District Officer,

TÖLKE.

7/8/14.—

At 7 a.m. the troop falls in, and is given leave till 3 p.m. (Berghausen didn't turn up). The European troops must ration themselves for eight days. Rifles to be brought where possible.

3 p.m.—The troop falls in. 3.15.—A ship reported. 3.30.—Alarm shots fired.

Englishmen to the north coast—Vlavolo—(Jolley, 2 Whitemans, Louri, and Miller).

NOTICE.

All Chinese, Malays and natives are hereby forbidden to carry arms. Whoever is found in possession of any weapon will be punished according to military law.

All arms are to be delivered, against receipt, to the District Office, before to-morrow noon, Saturday, the 8th instant.

Rabaul, the 7th of August, 1914.

The Imperial District Officer,

TÖLKE.

9/8/14.—

The five Englishmen set free again.

Notice is again given that, upon the approach of the enemy or upon the landing of any enemy force, no opposition is to be made. . . .

Rabaul, the 9th of August, 1914.

The Imperial District Officer,

TÖLKE.

12/8/14.—

At 6.45 a.m. three destroyers (Australian) entered. The *Warrego* tied up to the jetty. "Where is Mr. Whiteman? Where is the wireless station?" . . . At 2 p.m. the *Warrego* came back and destroyed the post-office. Besides the two destroyers there were apparently two battleships (*Australia* and *New Zealand*¹) and one other large ship there.

12-13th.—On night ride to Toma.

16/8/14.—

Rumoured that Australia will send troops.

¹ This was H.M.A.S. *Sydney*.

The other diary—that of an official in the post-office at Rabaul—is more comprehensive:—

28 July, 1914.—Rumours spreading that Austria has sent an ultimatum to Serbia, and that Germany has addressed a demand to Russia that warlike preparations on the Austrian frontier shall be stopped.

29 July.—At the wireless station at Bitapaka, now in building, emergency antennæ have been fitted to the 45-metre tower, and the station is getting ready to receive wireless messages. All-night duty established at the telegraph stations at Rabaul and Herbertshöhe.

31 July.—The district superintendent gone to Herbertshöhe to give instructions to the Postmaster there. Further alarming reports.

1 August.—S.M.S. *Planet* is off to Yap. The Bitapaka wireless station on duty every night from 10 to 12. War between Serbia and Austria.

10 p.m.—Discussion with the Government. Decided to withhold as yet the notice that, on account of war or common danger, mail matter will be received only at sender's risk.

4 August.—No news. Bitapaka intercepted nothing.

5 August.—Bitapaka caught an official telegram for Angaur to the effect that Kiaochao will take no more cypher telegrams; deferred messages are no longer permitted, and telegrams should be routed *via* Guam. . . . Posts are established on Matupi, the North and South Daughters, and the Mother, as well as in Herbertshöhe. An expeditionary force is to occupy the wireless station now in building at Bitapaka.

At 10.15 p.m.—Telegram to the Governor, Rabaul, Nauru. War with England, France, and Russia confirmed.

Telegraph Receiving Office, Central.

6 August—Cessation of all public telephone services and of the reception of telegrams. Notice given of the withdrawal of compensation for the loss of any type of mail matter. The government is transferred to Toma.

At 4 p.m. mobilisation of all persons liable for service, and formation of a defence force of 40 persons.

7 August.—Establishment of a field-post for the militia and the expeditionary force. False alarm at 3.15 p.m. A vessel enters St. George's Channel. All Englishmen arrested and kept in custody—not known where. The defence force encamps at Malagunan. . . . All mail to or from foreigners seized.

10 August, 10 p.m.—To Rabaul at midday came information that a strange vessel was approaching, which was signalled to as a phosphate steamer from Nauru. The steamer cruised for a long time in St. George's Channel, and then disappeared again.

11 August.— . . . The wireless station at Bebra can now operate (25 horse-power motor got from Komine).

12 August.—A telephone message from the planters at Put-put says that several ships have been seen cruising in St. George's Channel

and off the east² coast of southern New Mecklenburg. At 5.30 a.m. Herbertshöhe sends news that an English fleet (one battleship, two large cruisers, and one small one, and three torpedo-boats) have appeared in the roadstead off Herbertshöhe. At 7 o'clock three torpedo-boats appear. . . . Again at 9 o'clock a boat comes to shore. . . . At 10 o'clock Herbertshöhe informs us that a torpedo-boat is landing men. At 10.30 line broken. . . .

At 2 p.m. the torpedo-boat *Warrego* again lands three officers, six men, and two mechanics. The post-office is occupied . . . lines utterly destroyed, and the installation cable cut. Half-an-hour later the English leave again. . . . The situation is serious. In a letter to the Governor, . . . a demand is made that the wireless station should cease working immediately, . . . All the Englishmen are under guard at Namanula.³

13 August.—The English-Australian fleet has disappeared. In Herbertshöhe the attempt was made, by threats of severe treatment, to get some news about the wireless station. . . . The post-office as well as the telegraph-instrument room was thoroughly ransacked . . . No news from the seat of war (*Yap* apparently destroyed).

14 August.— . . . The *Siar* and *Komet* returned. After taking in coal, both left again to get into safety. . . .

16 August.— . . . Line interrupted at 2 o'clock, wire being broken by fall of a tree at 8k. Line in working order again on the 17th. All the English have been sent to Batze in the Baining, except Lieutenant-General Wylde, who is in custody in St. Paul. . . .

Telegraph lines have been laid to Papatava and Tobera, and direct communication established between Tobera and Bitapaka and Herbertshöhe and Bitapaka (New Guinea Co.).

18 August.— . . . Yap ceased transmitting. Nauru and Apia still working. . . .

The field station was dismantled at 4 o'clock and temporarily withdrawn to the post-office.

19 August.— . . . The installation of a new district telephone net is in hand.

20 August.—A new telephone exchange is being got ready in the Works office building.

21 August.—Line to Herbertshöhe interrupted 8 a.m. . . . ; line restored about 2 o'clock.

23 August.—Alarm given that a warship is cruising off the Mother (6 a.m.). Turns out to be the little steamer *Gabriel* belonging to the Catholic Mission. Six table-sets arrived from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen.

24 August.—Telephone net Rabaul re-opens with eight lines.

27 August.—The *Madang* arrived from Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, and the *Samoa* from Samoa. . . . The *Siar* is probably going to the Dutch Indies.

30 August.—The *Siar* left at 8.30, apparently for Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, Humboldt Bay (Dutch Indies), and Makassar.

2 Sept.—Rumour spread that Tsingtau has fallen. . . . Probably a line is to be built from Toma far into the interior of Baining. Apia has sent no messages for two days. Intense wireless

² Undoubtedly meant for "west"

³ On the hill near Government House.

activity—Japanese, American, and English ships. In case we get no more answers from Nauru, the Government will be moved from Toma and a new wireless tower built of wood.

3 September.—The Government has again taken 300,000 marks to Toma. . . .

4 September.—Consultation with Councillor Schlettwein about arrangements for sending mails *via* the Dutch Indies. The reason why the *Siar* had not been compelled to carry mails could not yet be determined.

5 September.—Steamer *Madang* arrives with important news from S.M.S. Administrator Ehemann informs me that he intends going in the *Kalili* to the Dutch Indies, and will take mails.

6 September.—Long press telegram. . . . Yap destroyed on 12th August by the English cruisers *Minotaur* and *Newcastle*.⁴

8 September.—Mails for Dutch Indies and Germany per *Kalili* closed.

10 September.—Have arranged with Government-Councillor Lederer that L. A. Kleppek shall take over the construction of the line inland from Toma.

11 September.—At 3 o'clock in the morning two destroyers run into the harbour. They leave Rabaul again. At 7 o'clock a boat cruises around (the *Yarra*) not far from the jetty, and lands sailors who break into the N.D.L. shed and *steal* a great deal. At their commander's instigation, however, they have to give back the booty.

Kleppek receives instructions to break in on the line to Herbertshöhe in the neighbourhood of the Hospital. At 10 o'clock the destruction of the district telephone net is completed. (The line to Herbertshöhe was interrupted at 7.15 a.m. Last news was that an English-Australian squadron of many vessels was approaching.) Raluana breaks up its telegraphic station at 7.30. At 1 p.m. the destroyer is relieved by a bigger one. All cutters are collected in the inner harbour behind the N.D.L. jetty. There is a rumour that the N.D.L. boat *Sumatra* has been caught. At 6 p.m. a small cruiser (old type), a submarine, and the *Sumatra* arrive. Searchlights on the harbour till 9 p.m. Books and registered letters, &c, brought into safety.

12 September.—At 10 a.m. a large cruiser with four funnels enters, apparently the *Melbourne* or *Sydney*. At 1 appear the battleship *Australia*, two submarines, a collier, an oil tank steamer, and three transports. A large cruiser with three funnels is still lying off Vulcan Island.

The rumour is that Rabaul will be permanently occupied by the English-Australian fleet and used as a naval base. Nothing new from Herbertshöhe. It seems that troops have been landed there, and are marching inland *via* Ralum. . . .

At 3 o'clock the rest of the Australian fleet appears—a large cruiser and two transports. An officer from the *Australia* at 2 o'clock measured the N.D.L. jetty and took soundings. Apparently only 2 torpedo boats are now left in Herbertshöhe.

The weather is very hot. A little rain on the 11th.

⁴ This is not correct, the wireless station at Yap was put out of action by H M S *Hampshire*