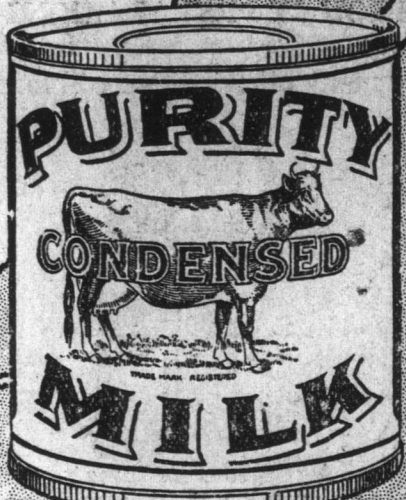


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Raising the German Fleet

Work has begun on the ambitious scheme to raise the German fleet, scuttled June 21, 1919, at Scapa Flow. If it proves successful, the raised vessels are to be broken up and sold as "scrap." Clair Price, writing from London to the New York Times, says that even the task of lifting their armor-plate will be a labor, for it can be used in the making of parquet flooring. Operations, Mr. Price tells us, are still in an experimental stage. The British Admiralty has sold two of the scuttled battle cruisers, the Hindenburg and the Seydlitz, each of 27,000 tons, and twenty-four destroyers, presumably of 1,000 tons each, to the London Iron and Steel firm of Cox & Danks. The vessels have been sold as they lie, on the bottom at Scapa, and the only proviso which the admiralty has imposed is that, if raised, they are to be broken up in the United Kingdom. We read on:

"The purchasers expect to know before the year ends whether or not it is possible to raise the vessels they have bought. That they believe it is possible is shown by the fact that

they have already spent the equivalent of \$150,000 on preparations to raise them. If it does prove possible, the rest of the scuttled ships are to be raised. How long this will take is problematical. It may easily run to eight or nine years.

"The Hindenburg and Seydlitz have been chosen because of the positions in which they lie. If it proves impossible to raise the Hindenburg, the project of raising any of the big ships will have to be abandoned. The Hindenburg lies on an even keel in sixty-six feet of water, its turrets, guns and funnels above water, its main deck awash at low tide. The Seydlitz presents a more difficult salvage job. It lies on its side, about a third of it is in sight above the water.

"Ever since they were scuttled, five years ago, these German ships have figured intermittently in the proceedings of the Reparation Commission and the Supreme Council. The Council agreed in principle that they should be raised and broken up, the proceeds to be divided among the Allies. The proportion which each Ally was to receive, however, has never been decided upon, and the Admiralty's present action has been taken upon its own initiative, the proceeds

going to the Admiralty itself.

"The contract under which the purchasers have begun work involving the raising of more than 60,000 tons, one of the biggest salvage jobs ever undertaken, and one of the most difficult.

"Two divers began an examination of the Hindenburg in June. They found it still intact, even to the bunks in the officers' rooms and the champagne bottles in the ward-room. Five years of submersion, however, had made the big battle cruiser a jungle of seaweed, barnacles and mussels. Seaweed was found trailing to fifteen foot lengths throughout the ship. Sand and mud had drifted through the portholes in huge heaps. The ship was known to be in very bad shape when it was surrendered in 1918, and it was approaching the scrap stage before it was scuttled.

"The first operations in the process of its raising is to be the closing of all its sea-inlets with wooden plugs and concrete and metal patches. This will not be an easy task, for the purchasing firm has no plans of the ship, and the divers will have to burrow down into the shingle under its engine-room to locate its sea-cocks.

"When all inlets have been plugged up, a steel tube six feet in diameter is to be sunk to the main deck, and bolted down. A hole is then to be cut through the deck with electric torches, and similar holes are to be cut through the lower decks until the bottom of the big cruiser is reached. When each deck has been cut through electric pumps, capable of lifting 5,000 tons of water an hour are to be lowered into the vessel, and the work of pumping out will begin.

"Whether the divers have succeeded in finding every sea inlet will then be ascertainable. If the pumps are found to make no impression on the water in the ship the hull will have to be searched again for inlets. The task has considerable danger, for barnacles and mussels are sharp, and loose wreckage when disturbed sometimes rises violently.

"Once the cruiser begins to lift of its own buoyancy its weight will be thrown upon its 'watertight' bulkheads. And it remains to be seen whether the Germans succeeded in damaging these before they scuttled the ship. If the bulkheads hold, the ship is to be carried toward shallow water on each side until it is in a convenient position to be floated normally. The chief difficulty in this process is that the heavy top weight of the guns and turrets may make it impossible to keep the ship on an even keel. As soon as it can be settled in shallow water all the heavy top hamper is to be taken off."

E. F. Cox, managing director of Cox & Danks, is reported by Mr.

Price as saying that the Hindenburg will be the biggest and finest pontoon they could want to raise the other big ships. In his opinion the Hindenburg is the crux of the problem. If it can be raised, he believes the problem of raising the other big ships at Scapa Flow will virtually be solved. To quote further:

"The twenty-four destroyers are expected to prove a much simpler undertaking. Some time ago Cox & Danks bought from the Admiralty the big floating submarine dock that the Germans surrendered at Harwich. This 400 foot dock was towed to Scapa Flow and cut into two pontoons, each of them 200 feet long and each equipped with its own machine shop. The plan was to range these two pontoons, one on each side of a scuttled destroyer, to fasten steel cables beneath the destroyer's hull and heavy lifting hooks in its portholes, and to haul it bodily to the surface with the winch gear. With an even break in the luck, it was hoped that a couple of days would suffice to bring up a destroyer in this fashion, but thus far luck has broken badly.

"The destroyer V-70 was chosen for a start. Its funnels and masts were taken out, its bow and stern were lifted alternately, and heavy tackle was passed round its hull. The winch-gear had begun to lift it bodily from the bottom when a cable snapped under the tremendous dead weight. Three more cables parted immediately and later the last two cables gave way, their broken links raking the decks of the pontoons like shrapnel and sending the workmen rushing for cover. Mr. Cox said afterwards he had succeeded in lifting the destroyed seven feet off the bottom and he hopes to make another attempt in a fortnight's time.

"Work is beginning also on another destroyer. Here the process will be different. Concrete barges have been placed on both sides of the sunken vessel, the two barges connected by heavy steel girders to which the lifting tackle is attached. It is planned to haul it taut at low water, allowing the tide to lift barges, tackle and submerged destroyer so that the whole works can be towed toward shallow water.

"About 70 workmen are now engaged at Scapa Flow. Before winter interrupts work it is planned to have 100 men on the job."—Literary Digest.

Massing of the Birds

PREPARING FOR WINTER QUARTERS—FLIGHTS OF 5,000 MILES.
The autumn migration of birds, both to and from the British Isles, will soon be in full flow. People already are noticing the gathering of swallows and martins on barn roofs and telegraph wires, which is evidence of the unrest that precedes the journey. The swift and the cuckoo have long gone south—to Africa. The warblers are going now, and many have departed. They come down overland from the northern counties and Scotland to the south coast, and, with a favouring wind, set out overseas.

There are certain jumping-off points on the Dorset and Devon coasts especially, where the journey from England is begun by immense numbers of birds. Start Bay, in South Devon, is one of them.

While the birds which travel to Asia and Africa for the winter are leaving us, others, fleeing the rigours of winter in the north, are coming to us, and the coast of East Anglia, particularly Norfolk, is the chief arrival point. Fieldfares and redwings, larks, starlings, woodcock, plovers, rooks, crows, various northern ducks and many others winter here. A north wind will bring them in hosts.

It was not known that starlings from Northern Europe migrated to England in the autumn until captured birds were ringed on the leg and liberated.

The swallows now gathering will go to South Africa. Ringing in their case has established the fact of great migrant flights, such as from Berkshire and Lancashire to Cape Province, Yorkshire to East Griqualand, Staffordshire to Natal.

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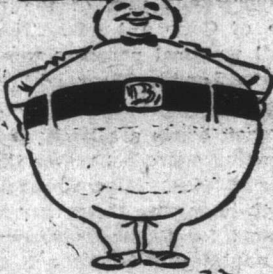


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