

## THE SINKING OF THE H.M.H.S. "LLANDOVERY CASTLE"

### NO SURPRISE THAT IT WAS A HOSPITAL SHIP.

"Come alongside," was the order given in English, and emphasized by a revolver shot across the bows.

The second officer shouted, "We are picking up men from the water."

"Come alongside at once," repeated the voice from the submarine, and when the lifeboat held on its way another revolver shot was fired at it, coupled with the threat that next the big gun would be brought into operation.

The captain's boat thereupon left the drowning men and pulled alongside the submarine. The latter's commander seemingly expressed no surprise when the captain stated it was the hospital ship *Llandoverly Castle* that had been sunk. The accusation was then made that the ship was carrying eight American flying officers.

On hearing there was a C.A.M.C. officer in the boat, the submarine commander ordered him to be brought on board. The order was executed very roughly, and with such plain intention to cause an injury that a small bone in Major Lyon's leg was broken.

Major Lyon was accused of being an American flying officer. He denied the charge, and gave his rank and corps. He was then taken to the conning tower, the accusation of being a flying officer repeated, and asked how much ammunition the ship was carrying.

"I replied," states Major Lyon, "that it was purely a hospital ship, and that we had never carried ammunition at any time.

"I was then ordered back to the lifeboat, and we pushed off. We had gone only about fifty yards when they headed for us again and asked for me. They then took on board the second and fourth officers, questioned them, and placed them back in the lifeboat.

"Then we got the sail up and made some way. Suddenly we saw the submarine coming at us at full speed. There was no doubt of their intention to ram us. She missed us by less than two feet.

"Had we been stationary we certainly would have been submerged.

"We continued on our way and were distant probably half a mile when we heard shell fire. I can recall at least twelve shots presumably in the area where the lifeboats and survivors were supposed to be. One shell came very close to our own boat.

"After thirty-six hours afloat we were rescued by a torpedo-boat destroyer about forty-one miles from the Irish coast, and taken to Queenstown, coming on to Plymouth on Sunday, June 30.

### MAJOR LYON'S STATEMENT.

"I can emphatically state," concluded Major Lyon, "that the submarine made no attempt to rescue any one, but on the contrary did everything in its power to destroy every trace of the ship and its personnel and crew.

"All I can say on behalf of the submarine crew is that they were coolly polite in their questions to us."

Another survivor, Pte. G. R. Hickman, left the sinking ship in No. 7 lifeboat, which was sighted by the submarine about one and a half hours after the *Llandoverly Castle* disappeared. This boat was brought alongside and Pte. Hickman taken on board the enemy vessel.

He was asked in English to give the name of the ship, and was taken below to write the name in a book. When he had done so the German officer checked the name in a book which he produced from a desk.

Pte. Hickman was asked if there had been any American flying officers on board. He replied "No," and gave particulars of its being a hospital ship with only the medical personnel on board. Later Pte. Hickman was put off the submarine into the captain's life-boat when the latter came alongside.