

36 THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND BANK

estimated position of the Battle Fleet was N. 16 W., so we gradually hauled to the north-eastward, keeping the range of the enemy at 14,000 yards. He was gradually hauling to the eastward, receiving severe punishment at the head of his line, and probably acting on information received from his light-cruisers which had sighted and were engaged with the Third Battle-cruiser Squadron.¹ Possibly Zeppelins were present also.

[*The Battle Fleet in sight*]

' At 5.50 p.m. British cruisers were sighted on the port bow, and at 5.56 p.m. the leading battleships of the Battle Fleet, bearing north 5 miles.² I thereupon altered course to east, and proceeded at utmost speed. This brought the range of the enemy down to 12,000 yards. I made a report to you that the enemy battle-cruisers bore south-east. At this time only three of the enemy battle-cruisers were visible, closely followed by battleships of the *Koenig* class.³

¹ The advanced squadron of the Battle Fleet, under Hood.

² i. e. five miles distant to the north.

³ The semi-official 'explanation' in the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt* gives the following version of the situation described by Admiral Beatty, with an explanatory diagram:

' The five [*sic*] big ships of the *Queen Elizabeth* class have attached themselves to the enemy cruisers. The whole combined German fleet (1) is now steering northwards, and in face of its attack the enemy (2) immediately turns away to the north, and attempts at the highest speed to escape from our extremely effective fire, and at the same time, with an easterly course, and employing its speed, which is superior to that of our fleet as a whole, to pass (3) the head of our line, while the German Battleship Squadron in the rear of the line cannot