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VICKERS LIMITED.

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Vickers House,
Broadway, Westminster,
London, S.W.1.

Enclosures .....

26th February, 1954.

G.E.Miller, Esq.,
Assistant News Editor,
British Paramount News,
Laboratories,
School Road,
LONDON, N.W.10.

Dear Mr. Miller,

Following receipt of your letter of the 24th inst., regarding the launch of H.M. Submarine "Explorer", I made contact with our Barrow Shipyard, and they have replied that they will be pleased to grant facilities for your Representative on Friday next March 5th.

The launch is at 10.40.a.m. and the present arrangements are, that your Representative should call in good time at the Shipyard and ask for Mr. Lawson (Secretarial). If he is not available, he should ask for Mr. L. Redshaw (Shipyard Director). They will pass your Camera man through and give all details.

The local Admiralty Overseer has confirmed that they have clearance through C.N.I.

Should any further information come along during next week I will let you know.

Yours sincerely,

Wg Barrington

CD.

One man sufficient.

High underwater Speed
+ used Peroxide hydrogen

Submarine Building at Vickers-Armstrongs

Barrow Shipyard.

Submarines, although generally regarded as modern types of warships, have been built at Vickers-Armstrongs' Barrow Shipyard for almost seventy years. A "Nordenfeldt" type submarine of 200 tons, the first to be made at Barrow, was launched in 1886 when the Yard was known as the Barrow Shipbuilding Company.

With the turn of the century the Barrow Yard began a busy period that was distinguished chiefly by the building of heavy naval warships for British and foreign governments and concentration in submarine construction.

With World War 1 there was an increasing emphasis on naval construction. Many submarines were built during the war, particularly of the "H" class. The five-hundredth order on the Yard's Order Book, reached in 1918, was a submarine of this class.

The outbreak of World War II found the Barrow Works in an advanced state of preparedness. Over a long period of years an extensive programme of re-equipment and modernisation had been pursued. After the fall of France the Admiralty were faced with a tremendous programme of repair work to ships' hulls, propelling machinery and gun mountings. The Barrow Yard played an important part in this struggle to keep our ships at sea, at the same time building a vast amount of new tonnage. More submarines were built than any other type of warship during the war years - a total of 89. In addition Barrow built 18 midget submarines. Among the other warships built were 4 aircraft carriers. 2 cruisers and 12 destroyers.

It must also be remembered that the Barrow Works are unique in this country in that they can produce from their

own establishment not only the hulls but also the propelling machinery and gun mountings of warships. They had also the surplus capacity to construct the propelling machinery for most of the warships built at the Naval Yard and, in conjunction with the Elswick Works of the Company, they produced the armament for many warships constructed by other builders.

The war records of Barrow built ships were followed closely by the men who made them. Among the many submarines launched there "Upholder" and "Turbulent" became widely known as both their captains Lieut. Cdr. Wanklyn and Commander Linton received the Victoria Cross for their exploits. Both later lost their lives in the Service. Four Victoria Crosses were won in midget submarines that came from Barrow, by Lieutenants Place, Fraser, Cameron and Leading Seaman Magennis. Other well-known warships were H.M.S. Ajax, which took part in the "Graf Spee" action, H.M.S. "Illustrious" which suffered greatly in protecting convoys to Malta, and the armed merchant cruiser Jervis Bay. The latter captained by Captain E.S. Fogarty Fegen V.C., R.N., fought one of the most gallant actions of the War when defending a convoy from the pocket battleship Admiral Scheer.

Although since the war the emphasis has shifted at Barrow to building passenger liners, tankers, and cargo ships, other submarines have been launched. A notable achievement by one of the ten "A" Class ocean-going submarines built at Barrow - H.M.S. Andrew - was the first underwater crossing of the Atlantic, in June last year. Captained by Lieut. Cdr. David Scott the 1385 ton Andrew covered the 2,500 miles from Bermuda to the English Channel in 15 days using a "Snort" breathing device.

H.M.S. Explorer, one of the most modern submarines in the world today, has a performance far in advance of her predecessors, but details of speed, range and equipment are secret.

NEWS RELEASE No.44/54

LAUNCH OF H.M. SUBMARINE EXPLORER

H.M. Submarine EXPLORER is to be launched at the Barrow-in-Furness Yard of Messrs. Vickers-Armstrongs Ltd. on Friday, 5th March.

The naming ceremony is to be performed by Lady Reid Young, wife of the Chairman of Vickers-Armstrongs Ltd.

Of 225 ft. 6 ins. in extreme length (178 ft. between perpendiculars), the EXPLORER, has a beam of 15 ft. 8 ins.

The EXPLORER is being fitted with the latest submarine escape arrangements, including the one-man escape chamber, and is being supplied with the most recent submarine escape breathing apparatus for use by the company in the event of an emergency.

This is the first submarine to be launched for the Royal Navy since the completion of the "A" class submarines in 1948.

Admiralty, S.W.1.
1st March, 1954.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION, BROADCAST OR USE ON CLUB TAPES UNTIL 0030
FRIDAY, MARCH 5th, 1954

NEWS RELEASE No.49/54

NOVEL METHOD OF PROPULSION FOR NEW NAVAL SUBMARINE

H.M. Submarine EXPLORER is to be launched at Barrow-in-Furness to-day, Friday, 5th March. She is of a new streamlined type designed to operate at high underwater speeds. Her propulsive machinery, supplied by Vickers Armstrongs Ltd., is of novel design employing Hydrogen Peroxide.

Admiralty, S.W.1.
5th March, 1954.

THE NAVY'S NEW SUBMARINE

HYDROGEN PEROXIDE FUEL

BY OUR NAVAL CORRESPONDENT

The Admiralty announced yesterday that the submarine Explorer, which is to be launched to-day at the Barrow-in-Furness yard of Vickers-Armstrongs Ltd., will be propelled by engines of a new type, using hydrogen peroxide fuel. These engines, also manufactured by Vickers-Armstrongs, are expected to give the Explorer a maximum underwater speed of more than 20 knots.

The launch of this, the first British submarine of post-war design, is the beginning of an important phase in submarine development and is the result of research which has aroused much interest in naval circles during the past decade.

Before the end of the Second World War German naval scientists, led by Dr. Walther, had produced a fast submarine which, had it gone into flotilla service in 1944, would probably have had a profound effect on the course of the war. One experimental German boat, powered by a hydrogen peroxide engine, fell into British hands and, renamed H.M.S. Meteorite, underwent a series of evaluation trials. As a result the Admiralty decided to hasten the development of closed-cycle, high-test peroxide propulsion, but until the technique was perfected, to rely for operational purposes on improved submarines of conventional type. For security reasons little can be said about future British submarine production, but it has been disclosed that in addition to the Explorer an interim class of submarine, with a better performance than any predecessor, is also being built.

NEW CONNING TOWER

Since 1945 the submarines of the Royal Navy have undergone extensive modernization. All operational boats have been fitted with the "Snort" air intake, and a number of "T" class boats have been lengthened, fitted with higher capacity batteries, and have been streamlined. This streamlining has led to the introduction of a new conning tower resembling a tall dorsal fin.

There are more than 50 submarines, all of them completed between 1942 and 1948, in service with the Royal Navy, and of these only two are in reserve.

The Explorer is expected to be ready for sea early next year.

Mr. Slagg

Times

5/3/54