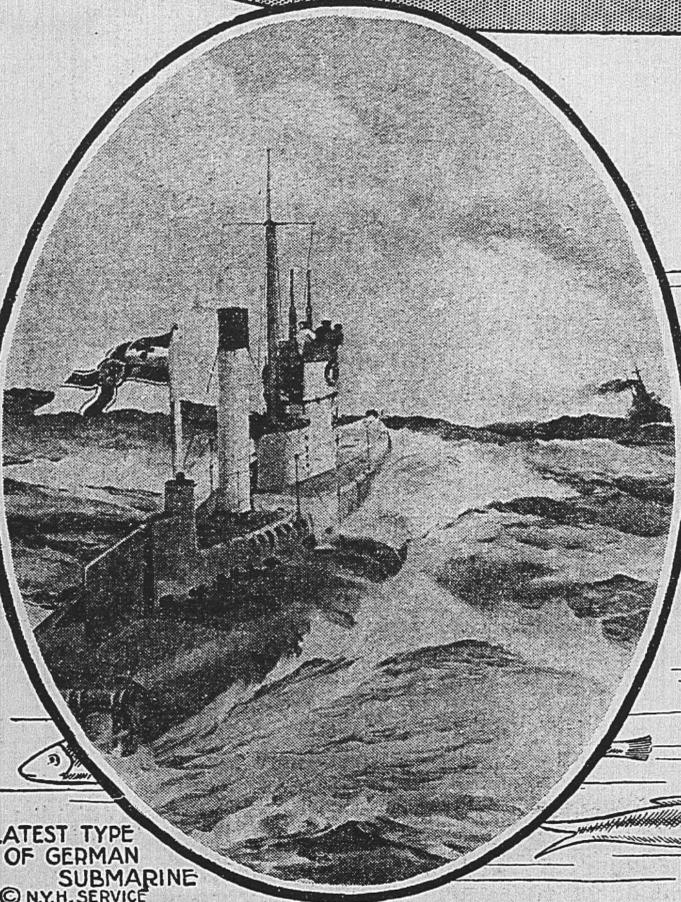


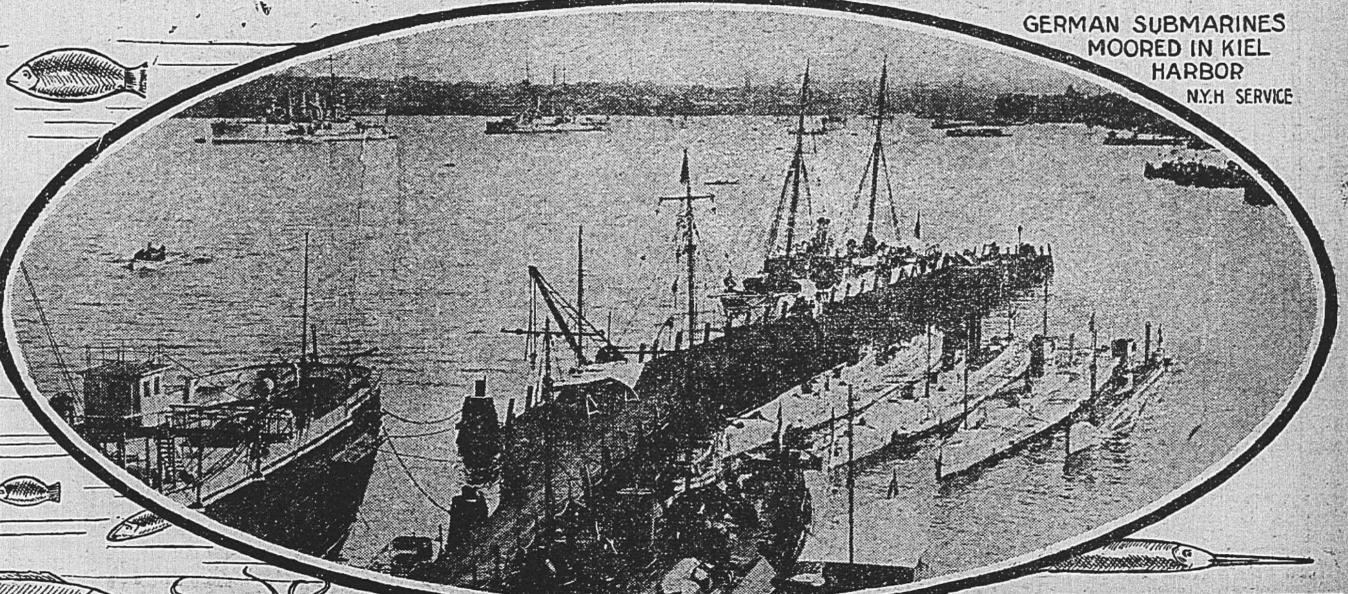
# Magazine Feature Section

## SAILOR TELLS PERILS OF "FIGHTING IN THE DARK" IN A SUBMARINE

### German Under-Sea Fighter Gives Graphic Description of Life Aboard Submerged Craft And Defends Charge That They Should Be Classed As Pirates



LATEST TYPE OF GERMAN SUBMARINE © N.Y.H. SERVICE



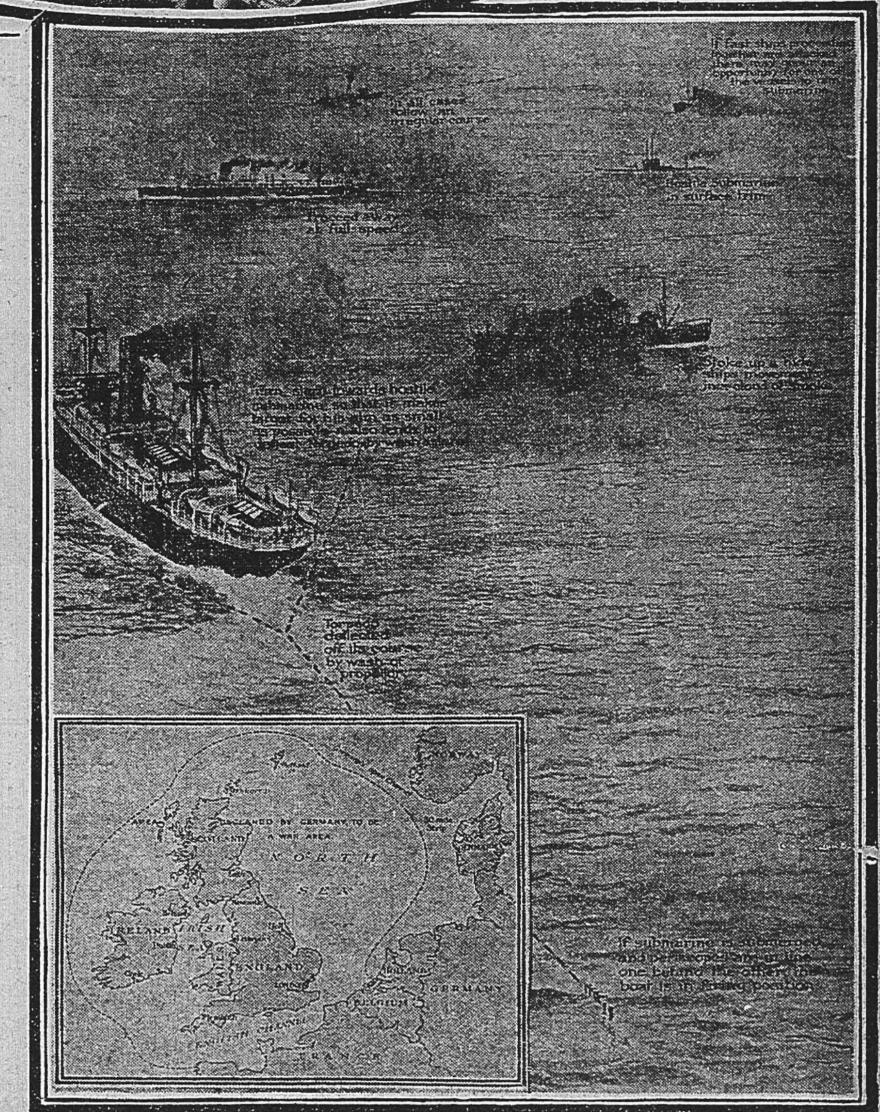
GERMAN SUBMARINES MOORED IN KIEL HARBOR N.Y.H. SERVICE

Is there any excuse for the present under-the-sea warfare being carried on by submarines? Is there any humane principle in support of these daring craftsmen who fight their battles under sea and without being observed send many merchant ships to the bottom and their crews to watery graves in the enforcement of the embargo on vessels bound to the British Isles? Britannia claims that the raids of the submarine warships are unwarranted, that the crews of such vessels are pirates and will be executed as such when they are captured. Yet a more humane view of the question is presented by the men who fight these battles. From the standpoint of ethics and International law they can point to not only a precedent to the legitimacy of such warfare, but even to its humanitarianism. The protestations of warring nations who object to the ravages of the submarines have been premature but never has there been any letter of justification for the submarine. A state official recently has received from a German submarine sailor his reasons for the attacks and they present his peculiar code of ethics. Here is his story in brief: He was assigned to his most hazardous and almost detestable berth on a submarine boat by his command—and accepted it as one of his duties. He didn't reason that submarines are objectionable implements of warfare and that they ever have been protested by the British. Or been taken as pirates by England and executed as pirates. With them it was but the order of the German navy and they complied with it just as readily as if they were assigned by the admiralty of a great battleship. To the German sailor his assignment means nothing. Whatever duty he may be required to perform, whatever duty he may be asked to accomplish, he always is a German sailor. To most sailors the position on a submarine is objectionable in that the vessel runs away after striking its decisive blow. German sailors say they don't want to run away, and if possible they don't want to be in the submarine service. However, there are German sailors who enjoy this particular branch of the naval work. A SAILOR'S VIEWS. One of this number recently has written: "We have destroyed more than 20 marine vessels in the last two weeks from the time of our sailing from— (this was deleted from his letter by the German news censor). It has not been pleasant work, but neither has war been something on which either our navy or that of others could boast about. "We did not desire to kill. No human being who might come in our path in ordinary life, were he English or French, would meet with the slightest act of aggressiveness on our part. In submarine warfare we

would not send hundreds of the people of the nation opposing us to the bottom of the sea if we could avoid it. In fighting blindly against an unseen foe we may have sent many men to their death but we were but carrying on the rules of ordinary warfare, we were following the instructions of our commander and we were but doing our duty. "I am not personally bitter against my antagonists and I do not believe that anyone of our submarine service feels that way. In the trenches it may be different. A few hundred yards away is an adversary. It is just a game of his killing you or you being killed. You and your foe are in sight and the battle is a fair one. But in submarine warfare it is different. Whether the bomb you send out or the torpedo that is shot strikes and damages the vessel at which it is aimed is not known to us until we reach shore and read the newspapers. "We undergo the utmost hardships while under sea. I was a naval recruit and was assigned to a submarine against my wishes. I entered a ship in a great seaport the name of which I am not allowed to reveal and was with the rest of the crew instructed by my commander to prepare for actual duty roaming beneath the seas searching for vessels that would come within the ban of the orders of our government. PLUNGING TO THE BOTTOM. "When our air-chambers opened admitting the water and we sank almost to the bottom of the sea, I was fully determined that the orders of our captain were to be carried out, even if they resulted in our death. "As this steel vessel plunged to the bottom of the sea I had no remorse as to what we were to do. We were sailing under the sealed orders of the naval department. I felt and we knew that these orders were indirectly from the Kaiser and in favor of the Fatherland. We were determined to die happily in the enforcement of the orders. "As the little vessel with 12 of us aboard sank in the sea with its chambers wide open, we cheerily welcomed our risk and silently offered our lives to the great cause of our nation. "In the turret sat our captain with his eye to the periscope. Beneath, our gasoline engines roared while we sat about on bunks in an atmosphere of oxygen and compressed air that almost stifled us. The compressed air was necessary to preserve the inside pressure and keep the plates from buckling—in as we dived toward the bottom. Though the glass on one side of the vessel as we sank. The very helplessness of our position, our inability to escape should we meet with accident and our reminiscence of the statement of friends that death by drowning is painless, encouraged us in this great risk. "Our descent into the depth of the sea gave us a certain encourage-

ment. We sailors sat about hardly speaking, for it was our first plunge to the bottom of the sea. We were true sailors and willing to sacrifice our lives, but there in that great, dark abyss of the Atlantic ocean, we concealed the signs of fear that must come to anyone who makes his first descent in the submarine. "We had been used to perils on the sea; most of us had been seamen aboard German battleships, but in that thrilling dive beneath the water we all stood cowed, just as I imagine a man would if he were seated in the electric chair. "Several hours after our descent our commander called us to attention and from his position in the periscope tower said that within few minutes we might be ready to strike at a real battleship. A torpedo was in place and we waited nervously at its side while the engineer slowly made his way ahead and the commander proceeded cautiously with his eyes to the periscope. SHOOTING A TORPEDO. "Fire," came the sudden command. Without looking to see where our missile of destruction was to go we pulled the lever that released a giant torpedo. There we stood in almost darkness waiting to see if our shot reached its mark. There was a sudden explosion in the distance. To our men beneath the sea it seemed as if the earth had crashed in and for several minutes many of us lost our hearing. I saw the commander grinning in the turret and felt that we were rushing from the scene as fast as possible. "It was not until a week later that I learned that one of the greatest ships in the merchant marine of Great Britain had been destroyed by our missile. It was said a number of sailors on the vessel were attacked and perished, and we were sorry to learn that. "It seems to me that it is the duty of the convoys to rescue the crews of such vessels. In our short experience in which time together with other submarines of the U. S. fleet, the German fleet, we have destroyed a total of one hundred and forty merchantmen and battleships on the high seas. "We have heard that a number of men were drowned and we regret their death. All in all we never see them and to hear they come to their death through our torpedoes is distressing to the 'under-the-sea' sailors. In one regard it is not like facing a foe face to face and shooting at him. Yet how does it differ from warfare in the trenches. Men with long-range rifles are shooting at other men in the trenches they even use periscopes, such as used on submarines. Men are shooting at men they never see. It seems that the same warfare being waged in the trenches is being fought under the sea, as far as seeing the foe is concerned. SIGHTING THE ENEMY. "Several days after our encounter with the merchantman, we arose to

the surface to empty our ballast tanks and get fresh air. We were up but half an hour when the commander sighted a column of smoke to our left in the open sea off the coast of France and ordered our descent. The ballast tanks again slowly filled and we descended until our periscope barely showed. "As I said, our periscope was visible. It was broad day light and someone in the crew's nest of the on-coming vessel spied it. Before we could descend and while we were about a quarter of a mile of our supposed prey, a shot rang out and our periscope was shattered. Our commander ordered our immediate descent. We opened all our tanks and went to the bottom of the sea. A few minutes later a great bulk passed over us and we recognized the form of this great terrier of the sea that we had intended sinking. "It passed above us as a cloud passes over the sun and we lay in the weeds and mire on the bottom of the sea as if we were but a barnacle that might attach itself to this great ship. For many hours it cruised about for its orders were to sink any submarine that might be sighted and the sinking of a submarine was considered a great achievement. "In the small space of the living room of this submarine we sat about anxiously awaiting to ascend. Already the air was becoming exhausted of its oxygen from our long stay beneath the surface. The gasoline motors also had taken away a supply of air, our oxygen auxiliary tubes were almost exhausted and the first signs of the stupor and exhaustion that comes from lack of air. "Many of us started bleeding from the mouth and nostrils. Others groaned and layed back. Yet we were German sailors and not one uttered a word. Our commander sat grimly at the base of the shattered periscope. He could but dimly see the outlines of the threatening vessel above him and with the rest of us thought we were doomed to death under water. DEATH UNDER THE SEA. "Then came our most grim realization: Death in the submarine was not by drowning, but by that slow and painful asphyxiation in which a dozen men in a small room clamber for air and cannot get it. In which the blood bursts forth from their ears, eyes and nose and they have no relief until the vapor that proceeds death. We were not even to receive the ordinary natural relief that visits sailors above the sea when they go to their deaths under the waves. They might have a chance to be rescued, but we were caged rats. "Finally most of us fell in a stupor only to be aroused a half-hour later by the commander and the engineer jerking us to our feet and commanding us to wake up. The gallant commander had kept to his post, had fought off the lethargy that overcame us and had succeeded. At the time we were falling off



HOW SUBMARINES CAN BE AVOIDED © N.Y.H. SERVICE

into unconsciousness I saw him approach the engineer and whisper: "For God's sake, man, keep your courage and keep your engine ahead for we may get out of this. "We later learned that by keeping the engine ahead, and by clever maneuvering the commander had in the darkness escaped the threaten-

ing battleship and when we were awakened we were at our naval base ready to undergo repairs. "So submarine warfare is not entirely wanton as far as the men are concerned. We are just sailors, assigned to a special task and we intend to do our duty. For every ten that perish in the destruction of a

battleship, a hundred of us lose our lives. Farewell. H. J. KLAUMEISTER. The above letter recently was received by an official of the United States government as a contradiction to the statement that submarines are waging a heartless warfare.