
THE
BATTLES OF CORONEL
AND THE
FALKLANDS 1914
GEOFFREY BENNETT

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Pen & Sword
MILITARY

This edition published in 2014 by
Pen & Sword Military
an imprint of
Pen & Sword Books Ltd
47 Church Street
Barnsley
South Yorkshire
S70 2AS

First published in 1962 *by B. T. Batsford Ltd*
and re-printed by Birlinn Limited in 2000

ISBN: 978-1-78346-279-7

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound in the UK by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CRO 4YY

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PREFACE

Within three months of the outbreak of the First World War the incomparable reputation which the Royal Navy had earned in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries suffered a blow that was the more bitter because it was wholly unexpected; one of Britain's cruiser squadrons was decisively defeated by a superior force from the new-born German Navy. The scene of the action was off the coast of Chile, half the world away from Plymouth, Portsmouth and the Nore, but the Admiralty reacted with such vigour that within six weeks the disaster was avenged; reinforcements sailed from Scapa Flow to the Falkland Islands, nearly 10,000 miles, and sent the victorious German force to the bottom of the South Atlantic. This dramatic reversal of the fortunes of war explains why more books, many with the interest inherent in participants' accounts, have been published about the Battles of Coronel and Falklands than about any other naval action, those between major fleets excepted.

In this new account, however, I have attempted the first comprehensive study to be written since the British and German official histories were compiled nearly forty years ago by authors who could not tap all the sources now open to the historian. In the words of Gilbert White: 'These observations are, I trust, true on the whole, though I do not pretend to show that they are perfectly void of mistake, or that a more nice observer might not make many additions since subjects of this kind are inexhaustible.' Nor can I 'pretend' that 'these observations' are wholly objective; that is more than can be expected of a writer who belongs to one of the participating nations; inevitably I have been conditioned by the British viewpoint; moreover I have been able to consult a larger number of British sources. Nonetheless, I have done my best to fulfil the historian's duty of being fair to both sides, withholding from neither such admiration and criticism

as each seems to warrant. For history cannot be written without criticism, any more than an omelette can be made without breaking eggs. But this is no excuse for the denigration of British and German leaders of the First World War which is now the fashion; they had their merits or they would not have attained high rank. 'Nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice': I have highlighted achievements as well as pointed mistakes; remembering, for example, that, whilst Churchill's denial of responsibility for the British defeat at Coronel was unjust to Cradock, he also displayed the qualities of genius which were to earn for him a unique place in history 30 years later; that, despite Fisher's shabby treatment of Sturdee after his victory at the Falklands, he did more than any other man to prepare the Royal Navy for the First World War; and that, though von Spee's dilatory progress after Coronel and his decision to attack the Falklands combined to bring about the destruction of the German East Asiatic Squadron, its voyage across the Pacific which culminated in Cradock's defeat is as much to the German admiral's credit as the gallant way he fought and died.

London, 1962 GEOFFREY BENNETT

PREFACE TO THE PEN AND SWORD EDITION – 2013

The Great War, the First World War, the War to End Wars, those horrendous four years have a number of names, so the centenary of its outbreak brings with it the inevitable look backwards. It is then appropriate for further issue of what I believe was my late father's definitive account of the two naval actions, disaster then triumph, which opened that conflict at sea. When he wrote, about half a century ago now, the Falkland Islands were a little known or thought-about far-away and insignificant British outpost. That it has figured significantly since should not lead to any confusion; these events have no connection with any attempt to capture those islands.

I have given this edition an Addendum with additional material mostly based on his papers now held by the Caird Library in the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. These include the usual correspondence from readers which follow any such publication as well as comments from reviewers. In this reproduction of the original it has not been possible to include these directly in the text.

It should not be forgotten that these events took place after more than a century during which the Royal Navy had had no significant engagements – not since Trafalgar. In that period the warship had morphed from wind-driven sailing galleys armed with short-range muzzle loading cannons to steam-powered steel-hulled leviathans with massive breech-loading armament reaching beyond the horizon. Yet much of this technology was in its infancy; my father explains the limitations of radio communication in his Appendix. The regular need to re-coal was a particularly strong restraint on even the most determined commander.

A word about my father (1908-1983). He was a rare naval historian who had actually commanded a warship at sea. Born into naval family he entered Dartmouth as a cadet at fourteen where he first developed his strong interest in naval history. He made the usual career path, qualifying as a Signals specialist which meant he held several Flag-Lieutenants post to various Admirals in the 1930s. His war years started with a short visit to Norway and a substantial period as Signals Officer in West Africa at Freetown, a base for many of the vital Atlantic convoys. After a spell teaching at *H.M.S. Mercury*, the Signals School, back home he became Signals Officer in the Mediterranean under the formidable Admiral Sir Charles Willis who recommended him for a DSC; the citation reads: '...for leadership and skill while serving as signals officer on the Staff of Flag Officer Force H since April 1943 in operations which finally lead to the surrender of the Italian Fleet.' I had the privilege of seeing him receive this at Buckingham Palace from King Gorge VI.

His post-war career included a spell in command of *H.M.S St Brides Bay* in the Mediterranean and then at the Admiralty in Bath. While there he was promoted Capitan and, shortly after the death of Stalin in 1953, he was sent to Moscow for two years as Naval Attaché where he is credited with alerting the Admiralty to the growing strength of the Soviet navy. He was also able to use this time to further his

interest in the theatre and music, often seeing the Bolshoi Ballet before it had ever visited Britain; on his return home he gave two lengthy talks on the BBC's Third Programme (the predecessor to Radio 3) on this.

Shortly afterwards the Royal Navy was going through one of its periodic periods of peacetime retrenchment and when offered a post in the Mansion House he retired and joined the Lord Mayor of London's Household, a job which required riding a horse at the head to the Mayor's Annual Parade. After two years here he spent fifteen years as Secretary to the Lord Mayor of Westminster and also of the London Mayors' Association where he became an authority on civic protocol. He retired in 1975 to the Shropshire town of Ludlow, living opposite a hotel where Nelson had once stayed, where he died in 1983.

He had always written; essays had earned him the gold medal of the Royal United Services Institution on three occasions. Away at sea he often found time on his hands so as the war ended he completed a novel, a naval adventure *Phantom Fleet*, which was quickly published and turned into a BBC radio serial. As he was still a serving officer he could not use his own name he adopted the pseudonym 'Sea Lion' and under this over the next two decades published many more such yarns as well as radio plays for the BBC; the latter included serials for Children's Hour about the adventures of two young Midshipmen, 'Tiger' Ransom and 'Snort' Kenton.

On retirement he had more time and opportunity for naval history and could now use his own name. These included accounts of the main naval engagements in both World Wars as well as a *Nelson* and a *Trafalgar* and a biography of Admiral Lord Charles Beresford, *Charlie B*. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and an active member of the Society of Authors.

Most of these histories continue to attract interest and have been republished in this century. Some have also been translated; his *Jutland* appeared in German, as *Kattegat* which is how it is known there, where, apparently, literature on the event was limited. His account of the 1919 Baltic action, originally called *Cowan's War* but recently re-issued as *Freeing the Baltic*, has also now become available in both Estonian and Latvian in nations where the successful efforts of the Royal Navy to help the Baltic states to freedom in 1919 are fondly recalled; memorial plaques to some 110 British servicemen killed can now be seen in Estonia and Latvia's capital cities, Tallinn and Riga, as well as Portsmouth Cathedral.

Finally I would like to mention my Father's cousin, Mary Rundle C.B.E., herself an Admiral's daughter, who indexed this book and my father's other histories. She had a distinguished wartime career in the WRNS, rising to the rank of Superintendent and then playing an important part in establishing the service as a continuing part of the peacetime Royal Navy. She survived until 2010, dieing in her retirement in the Lake District at 103.

As Geoffrey's son, I had two years National Service in the Royal Navy, I have taken it upon myself to add to his work with some trepidation. I trust he would have accepted this as fully justified in a field where new information is often emerging.

Rodney M Bennett
Richmond, Surrey 2013

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THIS book is based chiefly on the British and German Admiralty records, including the *original* reports of the admirals and captains concerned (as first published these suffered some degree of censorship), and the British and German official histories, supplemented by the other published works and unpublished sources listed in the Bibliography.

My foremost debt is to two officers: Rear-Admiral S. P. Start has enabled me to reveal for the first time the truth about the *Canopus*'s speed and the reliability of her machinery, concerning which her captain's official reports contain so many contradictory statements that it is not surprising that the Official Historian was led into error; and Commander W. D. M. Stavely has kindly allowed me access to the collection of papers left by his grandfather, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Doveton Sturdee, whence I have been able to throw new light on, in particular, the manner in which he was relieved of his appointment as Chief of Staff at the Admiralty after Coronel, and his spiteful treatment by Lord Fisher following the Falklands victory.

For personal recollections and for the loan of letters, diaries and journals (whose keeping by officers serving afloat was not forbidden for security reasons until 1915), which have enabled me to add flesh to the bare bones of the official records, I have to thank the following, many of whom played some part in these stirring events: Admirals of the Fleet Earl Mountbatten of Burma and Sir Henry Oliver, Admirals H. E. Dannreuther, Sir David Luce and H. A. B. Wollaston, Vice-Admirals J. W. Carrington and R. D. Oliver, Rear-Admirals M. G. Bennett, B. L. G. Sebastian and Sir Lionel Sturdee, Captains T. H. Back, J. S. Bethell, G. D. Campbell, A. D. Duckworth, H. E. M. Spencer-Cooper, R. C. Steele and R. R. Stewart, Commanders H. H-G. Begbie, Lloyd Hirst, L. I. G. Leveson, R. H. Mandley, P. J. M. Penney, R. C. T. Rowe, M. G. Saunders, D. A. Stride and R. T. Young, and Mr. Richard Middlemas. For other help I have to thank Lieutenant-Commander P. K. Kemp and the staff of the Admiralty Library, the staffs of the Imperial War Museum, National Maritime Museum, Public Record Office, Royal United Service Institution and Westminster Central Reference Libraries, and of the Federal German Armed Forces Historical Research Office, the Captain of H.M.S. *Excellent*, the Dean of York Minster and the Vicar of Catherington Church, near Portsmouth.

Grateful acknowledgements are due to the authors and publishers of the many works from which I have quoted, especially to The Controller, H.M. Stationery Office (*Naval Staff Monographs, OU.5413 and OU.5413C*, which are crown copyright), Commander Lloyd Hirst (*Coronel and After*), Sir Winston Churchill, Messrs Macmillan and Charles Scribner's Sons (*The World Crisis*, 1911–1918), Professor Arthur Marder and Messrs Cape (*Fear God and Dread Nought*, and *Portrait of an Admiral*) and Messrs W. L. Wylie and M. F. Wren and Messrs Cassell (*Sea Fights of the Great War*).

Finally, but not for the first time, I have to record my thanks to Miss Adrienne Edye and Miss Margaret Dyson for typing and retyping my manuscript, and to both my father and my wife for reading and checking it. Without so much assistance this book could not have been produced; responsibility for the result is, nonetheless, wholly mine.

The Author and Publishers wish to thank the following for permission to reproduce the illustrations.

Captain A. D. Duckworth, R.N., for fig. 32

The Imperial War Museum for figs. 4, 5, 7, 9–11, 14, 15, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30, 33 and 34

The Director and Trustees of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, for figs. 8, 23 and 29

The National Portrait Gallery for fig. 18

Odhams Press Ltd for fig. 22 (from Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis*)

Radio Times Hulton Picture Library for figs. 16 and 17

Süddeutscher Verlag, Munich, for figs. 3, 13, 19–21, 31 and 35

Part one

CORONEL

1 *Map of South America*

I

1st November 1914

'As we stepped aboard [H.M.S. *Monmouth*] I heard a Marine say: "Here's some more poor little chaps being sent to be killed." If I had only known that we were the only ones that were to be saved from that ill-fated ship. . . .'

*From the Diary of Naval Cadet Mandley**

'A HEAVING unsettled sea, and away over to the western horizon an angry yellow sun is setting clearly below a forbidding bank of the blackest of wind-charged clouds. In the centre of the picture lies an immense solitary cruiser with a flag . . . at her masthead blowing out broad and clear from the first rude kiss given by the fast rising breeze. Then, away from half the points of the compass, are seen the swift ships of a cruiser squadron all drawing in to join their flagship. Some are close, others far distant and hull down, with nothing but their fitful smoke against the fast fading lighted sky to mark their whereabouts; but like wild ducks at evening flighting home to some well-known spot, so are they, with one desire, hurrying back at the behest of their mother-ship to gather round her for the night.' The quotation, with its poetic feeling for words, comes from Rear-Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock's *Whispers from the Fleet*, written when he was a captain in command of H.M. Ships *Leviathan* and *Swiftsure* in the first days of the dreadnought era. But such a description might well have been included in his dispatch reporting the events of 1st November, 1914, if he had survived the disaster which overwhelmed his squadron that Sunday evening off Coronel.

Today there may be little of practical value in *Whispers from the Fleet*: Cradock was concerned with reciprocating engines and coal-fired

* Mandley with nine other 15-year-old Dartmouth cadets joined the *Monmouth* for passage to St Vincent, where, fortunately, they transferred to H.M.S. *Carnarvon*.

boilers, magnetic compasses and guns with nothing but the most elementary fire control; turbines and oil fuel were recent innovations, gyro compasses and director firing were yet to come, radar and guided missiles undreamed of. But to the student of history this book mirrors its author; and Cradock's personality is important to an understanding of the circumstances attending his defeat by Vice-Admiral Graf von Spee:

> A dash into a basin at twenty knots, even in the strongest of winds and cross tides, is unnecessary. Should it come off, there is only a matey or two to see; and if it does not, there is a stone wall and a court of enquiry ahead. . . .
>
> When a hammock is being used as a shroud, the last stitch of the sailmaker's needle is neatly popped through the tip of the nose, and then there *can* be no mistake. . . .

Cradock, whose photograph shows handsome features with the hint of a smile in the wide-set eyes, was a man of wit and wisdom, of sense and sensibility. Admiral of the Fleet Lord Cunningham remembers him 'as always being immaculately dressed, with a pointed, neatly trimmed dark beard, which reminded one of Sir Francis Drake'. The Elizabethan parallel fits his gay, debonair personality. He was a good mixer who enjoyed company; a bachelor who was far from being a misogynist. An officer who was with him in the *Good Hope* almost to the last recalls how he liked to leave the loneliness of his admiral's quarters and join the ship's officers in the wardroom for a drink before dinner. And the A.D.C. to the Governor of the Falkland Islands noted that Cradock and his dog 'would come wandering up to Government House every day for a yarn and a meal or else the Governor would go off to the *Good Hope*. . . . He was a dear old bloke and as keen as a terrier.'

Born in 1862, he had joined the old *Britannia*, in which he was later to serve as a commander, at the age of 13. As a lieutenant he saw more than sea service: he was with the naval brigade garrisoning Upper Egypt in 1884, and later with the Eastern Sudan field force at the occupation of Affatit and the battle of Toker, for which he received the first of the decorations that, by 1914, were a testimonial to a remarkable career. Time in the Royal Yacht brought him promotion; in 1900 he commanded the *Alacrity*, the admiral's yacht in China where the polo which he and his friends David Beatty (later Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty) and Roger Keyes (later Admiral of the Fleet Lord Keyes) enjoyed in Hong Kong was interrupted by the Boxer Rebellion in which all three

officers distinguished themselves. Cradock served with the British naval brigade which led the Allied force at the storming of the Taku forts, of which he wrote in *Whispers from the Fleet*:

> Let me call to mind the goodly sight of those two destroyers *Fame* [commanded by Lieutenant Roger Keyes] and *Whiting* slipping through the black rushing waters of the Peiho at the opening of that furious and distracting midnight bombardment of the Taku forts, bound to attack and capture the Chinese destroyers and arsenal, knowing naught of what was ahead of them, and caring less.

Of Cradock's own courage, an officer who was with the British naval detachment recalled that

> at one point it was necessary for the [Allied] force to pass along a narrow bend in single file. A few Chinese snipers had discovered this, so that the spot was rather a 'windy corner'. The Germans . . . were holding us up and reluctant to go on. Cradock and Beatty arrived, both mounted, and were furious at the delay. Failing to goad the Germans into activity, they dismounted and led their horses up an incline, passing through the Germans. On reaching the top, they mounted again under a shower of whistling bullets and walked their horses down the other side. This was too much for us, and we became braver and scrambled over the Germans, carrying some of them with us.

As a captain in a series of sea commands, Cradock (to quote the *Dictionary of National Biography*) 'filled every appointment with credit to himself, and brought to his duties not only abounding energy but the sporting instinct. . . . [For him] the strength of the Navy consisted in the complete loyalty and good comradeship between officers and men and "the sacred laws of naval discipline". To him the Navy was not a collection of ships, but a community of men with high purpose.' Since the First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fisher, considered him 'one of our very best officers' it is not surprising that he achieved the rank of rear-admiral in 1910.

A year later Cradock had a chance to show both his courage and his seaman's skill. He had initial charge of the rescue operations when the P. & O. liner *Delhi*, whose passengers included the Duke of Fife and the Princess Royal and their family, was wrecked on the coast of Morocco. His C.-in-C., Jellicoe (later Admiral of the Fleet Earl Jellicoe), wrote that 'at about noon Admiral Cradock got the Royal party and a few others into one . . . of our cutters. . . . They swamped close to the shore but the party were all got safely on the beach though wet through and only half clad.' For this Cradock was made a K.C.V.O. His last

appointment followed; at the age of 51 he went to command the North America and West Indies Station, where for 18 months he enjoyed himself acting as an ambassador for Britain on the best of all the Royal Navy's stations in time of peace. But then came war, and circumstances to be related later took him down round Cape Horn to the coast of Chile. 'We hear', wrote an officer in the *Glasgow*, 'Admiral Cradock is coming south to our station. . . . He has always been in any naval fighting during the past thirty years, so he may run the show well.'

Cradock was, in sum, a gallant gentleman, a most likeable leader of men who had made his own particular niche in a Service for whose spirit and traditions he had a strong affection, and a skilled seaman who had had his baptism of fire and proved his courage, yet possessed the sensitivity, the special temperament of the artist. And these characteristics account for his defeat at Coronel, for all the short-comings of the Admiralty in London which led him to disaster.

The 'immense solitary cruiser with [Cradock's] flag at her masthead blowing out broad and clear' over the storm-swept scene with which this chapter opened was H.M.S. *Good Hope*. Completed in 1902 with a designed speed of 23 knots, she was a well protected vessel displacing 14,100 tons, albeit undergunned for the great size of her hull: she was armed with two 9·2-inch and sixteen 6-inch guns. On paper she might be only half-way through her useful life; in fact she was as obsolete as a pre-dreadnought battleship. Her big guns might be mounted in centre-line turrets, but her 6-inch were arranged in broadside batteries. Fisher realised this weakness: 'Guns . . . on the main deck . . . are practically useless. We know this from experience. Half the time they cannot see the object for want of view . . . and the other half they are flooded out by the sea.' So, with other armoured cruisers of her era, she had been reduced to Third Fleet status before 'Armageddon'.

'To merely hustle a complement of the required ratings into a ship is not to make her a really efficient fighting machine. The key stone of our preparedness for war has . . . to be inserted, namely the provision of efficient nucleus [active service] crews.' But Fisher's dictum only applied to the Second Fleet: on mobilisation Captain Francklin had to commission the *Good Hope* with a crew including more than 90 per cent Reservists who could not immediately turn her into 'a really efficient fighting machine'. Yet this was assumed, as with many another vessel: the *Good Hope* was given no opportunity to train her officers and men in their duties in action. She steamed out of Portsmouth harbour on Sunday, 2nd August, as the Salvation Army band on Gosport Hard

played *Nearer My God to Thee*; and she went straight across to Halifax. There Cradock transferred his flag to her, and she was employed continuously in the western Atlantic, down to the Pernambuco area and later to the Falkland Islands, protecting British shipping against marauding German cruisers. By 1st November, 1914, her company might be inspired by a spirit of death or glory, but in the three months since the outbreak of war they had carried out only one full-calibre firing. 'It certainly is the limit', wrote the *Glasgow*'s gunnery officer, 'taking a ship like that off the dockyard wall, giving her four rounds of practice [shell] a gun and then putting her up against a ship like [the *Scharnhorst*].'

The 'ships of [Cradock's] squadron all drawing in to join their flagship' numbered four, of whom only one merited the adjective 'swift'. The largest was the *Monmouth* of 9,800 tons, an armoured cruiser completed a year later than the *Good Hope* with whom she shared more than one deficiency.

> I was snotty of the watch going rounds. It was a roughish night but nothing very bad with the wind on the starboard bow. When I got to A2 starboard forward main deck gun [the crew] asked if they could shut the gun ports, open for night defence stations, as they were being washed out. I conveyed the request to the bridge where the information was received with considerable surprise.

In a seaway the *Monmouth*'s effective broadside was only nine 6-inch guns; for unlike the *Good Hope*'s these were not supported by heavier weapons: 'Sir William White designed the "County" class but forgot the guns' was Fisher's acid criticism. 'She was practically condemned as unfit for further service', wrote one of the *Carnarvon*'s midshipmen, 'but was hauled off the dockyard wall [and] commissioned with a scratch crew' under Captain Brandt and sent to patrol Britain's trade routes, with no opportunity to train her company to fight their ship against a determined foe.

The 'swift' ship was the *Glasgow*, of 25 knots. Completed as recently as 1911, she had been in commission under the command of Captain Luce for more than two years before the war, Britain's only warship in South American waters, so that she was an efficient fighting unit. But she was only a light cruiser, without armour, of 4,800 tons, with two 6-inch and ten 4-inch guns—Fisher's concept of a vessel whose purpose was to scout for the battlefleet, to fight the enemy's light forces to obtain it, but to seek safety in flight from more powerful units. Whilst

the *Otranto*, Captain Edwards, was no more than a 12,000-ton liner equipped for war with eight 4·7-inch guns, one of many auxiliaries which the Navy needed to protect British shipping against attacks by similar vessels, not to fight enemy warships.

The fifth of Cradock's vessels was the battleship *Canopus*. Her pre-dreadnought vintage was of small importance in waters where there was no other battleship, no enemy vessel with 12-inch guns to match the four she mounted, together with twelve 6-inch, on an armoured hull that displaced 12,950 tons. But she had aged since completion in 1899: when paid off into the Third Fleet in 1912 she could only raise four-fifths of her designed horse-power. Intended for scrapping in 1915, she had been hurriedly commissioned in August, 1914, with a crew of reservists under the command of Captain Heathcote Grant, and, after a few weeks escorting the Expeditionary Force across the Channel, ordered to the Falklands. And since she had carried out no practice full-calibre firings, her gunnery (though the enemy could not know this) must have been of a very low standard.

These five vessels, of which only one was fit to fight a well-trained foe, were the only British ships off the west coast of South America on 1st November, 1914; and they were not concentrated. The *Monmouth* and *Glasgow* were with the flagship, but the fourth ship in company with the *Good Hope* was the *Otranto*, not the *Canopus*. When temporarily commissioned for the Spithead Review in July, 1914, a three-hours, full-power trial had proved the old battleship's maximum speed to be 17 knots. But when she reached the Falklands in the latter part of October, her engineer commander reported that her condensers were so faulty that she could not do more than 12 knots. Grant, who had no reason to doubt his principal technical adviser, told Cradock this when the *Canopus* and *Good Hope* were in company for a few hours on 22nd October. And the admiral had no alternative to believing this limitation, any more than Whitehall when he informed them of it. She was, it seemed,

> *A fortress yet: but island more than ship*
> *Whose niggardly twelve knots retard the rest.*

The British admiral knew the strength of the German force off the west coast of South America. On 5th October the Admiralty had signalled him: 'It appears that *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* are working across [the Pacific] to South America. You must be prepared to meet them in company, possibly with a *Dresden* scouting for them'; to which

Cradock replied on the 8th: 'Indications show possibility of *Dresden, Leipzig, Nürnberg* joining *Gneisenau* and *Scharnhorst*.' The two ships Cradock might 'meet in company' were sister cruisers completed five years later than the *Good Hope*, with armour similar to hers, though their speed was limited to 20 knots, so that their tonnage had been kept down to 11,600. But each mounted eight 8·2-inch and six 5·9-inch guns, so arranged that even in bad weather they could fight a broadside of six 8·2-inch plus three 5·9-inch. Moreover, their crews were highly trained: both the *Scharnhorst*, Captain Schultz, and the *Gneisenau*, Captain Maerker, had been long in commission as the principal units of Germany's East Asiatic Squadron, based before the war on Tsingtau where they had achieved distinction for their gunnery efficiency: indeed, the *Scharnhorst* had won the Kaiser's prize two years running. So, except for their speed, these two ships were measurably superior to the *Good Hope* and *Monmouth*. The *Dresden*, Captain Lüdecke, the *Leipzig*, Captain Haun, and the *Nürnberg*, Captain von Schönberg, were light cruisers of 3,250–3,600 tons, completed 1906–09. They, too, had been commissioned before the war and could be compared with the *Glasgow* except for their armament: they mounted ten 4·1-inch guns apiece, five to a broadside, whereas the British vessel could bring two 6-inch as well as five 4-inch to bear on the beam. And each, of course, was more than a match for the *Otranto*, not least by virtue of a margin of 6 knots speed.*

Unless, therefore, Cradock had the *Canopus* with his squadron, he ran the risk of meeting a German force superior to his own. But he believed his purpose to be the location and destruction of the enemy, and there was small chance of the enemy accepting action with a battleship; having greater speed they could always avoid her. Moreover Cradock might locate one or more enemy ships weaker than his own three cruisers, when he should be able to bring them to action and sink them before they could be reinforced. As important, if he was to find the enemy at all in an area so vast, with so many uninhabited bays and islands, he needed both speed and ships. And the *Otranto* only reduced the British squadron to 18 knots, whilst Fisher had written: 'Large mercantile vessels are the best scouts', in which capacity they had proved their worth in the Russo-Japanese war. Cradock had put the matter succinctly in a signal to the Admiralty as recently as 27th October: 'With reference to [Admiralty orders] to search for enemy and our great desire for early success, consider it impracticable on

* For a concise summary of the details of the British and German ships, see Appendix I.