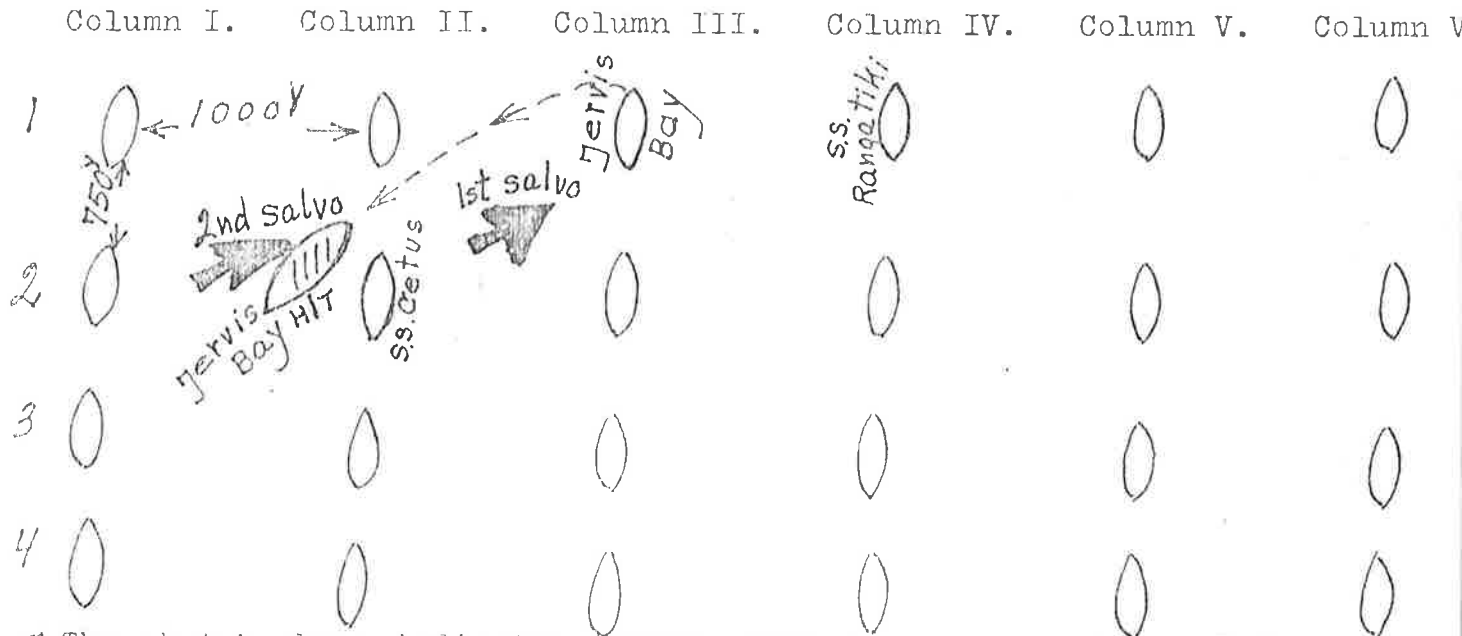


On November 5th, 1940, approx. 1600 hours, on board S.S. "CETUS" of Bergen we fired approx. 27 rounds on our 5 inch gun - a "relic" pre WW I. It was the old firing type. We first loaded the shell, then the powder bag; then the cartridge was inserted into the gun bridge, and the bridge was closed, and the gun was ready to fire. The elevation was done by one man. The lateral movement plus telephone one man (my station); shell loader one man; powder bag one man; cartridge loader and gun bridge closer one man; ammunition carriers three men; water hose and gun cleaning rod one man. We were a total of nine men operating this 5" x 10.000 yards range gun. We were all - except for one (Royal Norwegian Navy Gunner) - "sailors" on board S.S. "CETUS" with gunnery training from England.

At the time indicated - eastbound in Convoy HX-84, speed 7,5 knots, from Halifax, N.S. to the Clydes - we were approx. 850 miles ENE from Halifax. When the opening salvo landed from the German (POCKET) battleship, "ADMIRAL SCHEER", speed of 30 knots, it fell on the starboard bow of S.S. "CETUS" and behind the Aux. Cruiser "JERVIS BAY", creating a heavy roll. The "JERVIS BAY" hoisted her black battle flag, turned the operation of the convoy over to the Deputy Commodore S.S. "RANGATIKI" (P.O. Liner 4" gun) and came hard left. Swinging between our column leader and S.S. "CETUS", she was hit by salvo No. 2 when abreast of S.S. "CETUS".

Convoy Direction, speed 7,5 Knots



5 The sketch above indicates approx. formation and position of the ships in Convoy HX-84. While the heroic action of captain E.S.F. Fegen of the auxiliary cruiser "JERVIS BAY" is a fact, and a classic show of courage, which earned him the Victory Cross posthumously, the gunnery crew of the S.S. "CETUS" showed no less courage. In order to keep on firing, we cooled the gun with a fire hose. The danger with this type of gun was that the powder bag could explode in the hot gun barrel before the bridge was closed. (The explosion on board the battleship USS "IOWA" in 1989, had the same type of gun loading procedure).

June 6, 1990.
(written)

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trajectory of shells at the beginning of the battle.