

How Naval Party Blew Up Port Before Evacuating

How Naval Party Blew Up Port Before Evacuating

A YOUNG British naval officer supervised the destruction of St. Malo harbour, standing coolly alone, without cover, while explosions rocked the ground around him.

Said Mr. Le Marquand, owner of an auxiliary yacht when it arrived at a British port: "I saw the total destruction of the harbour after all the British troops had been safely evacuated.

"The Germans were then reported to be fast approaching, but the British naval officer in charge of the demolition party was amazingly cool.

"He would not allow his men to take any risks—he stood alone in the open to watch the destruction.

"Once, when four charges were ignited, it was doubtful whether all

had exploded. The men were definite that three had, but some of them wanted to venture into the danger zone to see what had happened to the fourth. The officer refused to allow them to leave cover.

STOOD ALONE

"A few seconds later a deafening explosion from the fourth charge hurled portions of dock gates into the air. Amid all this, the officer still took no cover, but stood alone while all the debris was flying about and dropping all around him. He seemed to have a charmed life.

"When my ship left, the harbour was a mass of flames. British lorries were smashed beyond repair and, after being made unusable, were dumped into the water. St. Malo airfield was reduced to a mass of ruins."



A member of a Naval demolition party smiles when he reaches England and is given a drink and a sandwich.