



Previously unseen Royal letters held by Imperial War Museums are to go on display at the National Museum of the Royal Navy

Two letters from Imperial War Museums' collections, written in June 1916 by HM King Edward VIII, then HRH The Prince of Wales, and HM King George VI, then Prince Albert, to Captain Faussett (Equerry to their father, HM King George V), are to go on display for the first time.

The letters revealing the two young Princes' reflections on the Battle of Jutland, will feature in the National Museum of the Royal Navy's major exhibition – *36 Hours: Jutland 1916, The Battle That Won The War* – opening on 12 May 2016, to mark the centenary of the Battle of Jutland.

HRH The Prince of Wales, later HM King Edward VIII describes his pride in the naval victory – *'it does make one feel proud of the service when one hears how those ships met their end, with their guns firing as they went down'*. He reveals his reaction to the news of the death of Lord Kitchener, saying it was *'a national calamity'* and also details his *'dull and monotonous'* life at the Western Front in France.

HM King George VI, then Prince Albert, was serving on *HMS Collingwood* during the Battle and his letter describes in detail his experience.

'It was a great experience to have gone through and one not easily forgotten. How and why we were not hit or damaged beats me, as we were being fired at a good part of the time. The ship ahead of us was hit but it did not do any damage. We had torpedoes fired at us which we got out of the way of luckily.'

Imperial War Museums (IWM) are working in collaboration with the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN) and are loaning over 80 items including never before seen letters, diaries and objects that will tell the story of the men and the ships that fought at Jutland.

Along with the Royal letters, other IWM items going on display at NMRN in Portsmouth are

- A Jan Gordon painting *'HMS Castor'* which shows the wounded being treated after the Battle of Jutland
- The Bible from *HMS Warspite* – which was hit by a German shell that penetrated the ship's deck outside the chapel, killing several.
- The ship's bell from *HMS Warspite*
- A battle damaged lamp from *HMS Chester*

Diane Lees, Director General of IWM said: 'IWM's First World War Collections are some of the richest in the world, and are made up of thousands of personal reflections and objects that tell the story of this life changing conflict.'

To mark the centenary of the Battle of Jutland, many institutions across the country are working together in collaboration to put on some incredible and poignant exhibitions to tell these stories, and I'm delighted that we can share ours with our colleagues at National Museum of the Royal Navy and its many visitors.

36 Hours: Jutland 1916, The Battle That Won The War is set to be one of the landmark exhibitions of the year, and will help to tell the stories of the more than 6,000 men who lost their lives at sea during the First World War.'

Nick Hewitt, Head of Heritage Development at NMRN said: 'The Battle of Jutland is the Royal Navy's defining moment in the First World War, and this exhibition is the NMRN's opportunity to put the naval

story at the heart of the centenary. We are thrilled that our colleagues at IWM are collaborating with the NMRN in this venture, putting their expertise and extraordinary collections at our disposal. Genuine peer-to-peer collaborations between national museums are regrettably rare, but quite simply, we tell stronger, better stories if we tell them together.'

Other items in the exhibition include the personal effects of the men and women involved in the Battle of Jutland. The diaries of Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service Nurse Mary Clarke tell of her experiences as a naval sister in the Grand Fleet hospital ship *Plassy* during the Battle. The lifebelt belonging to William Loftus Jones VC, commander of *HMS Shark*, which was recovered from his body after being washed ashore following the battle is also to be displayed.

The exhibition opens at the NMRN on 12 May 2016 and is the largest ever exhibition on the Battle of Jutland in the UK with items from 21 public lenders and five public organisations. Tickets can be purchased on arrival and cost £10 for adults and £5 for children. For further information visit: <http://jutland.org.uk/>

Ends

Notes to Editors

For further information, interview or filming requests please contact Faye Jackson in the IWM press office on fjackson@iwm.org.uk or 020 7416 5420

Filming: Filming slots will be available at IWM London. The Royal letters and other items going on display will be available to film along with historians from IWM and NMRN. To book a time slot please contact the IWM press office.

Photographs: Images are available from the IWM press office on request.

Interview Requests: Please direct all interview requests to Faye Jackson in the IWM press office (fjackson@iwm.org.uk / 020 7416 5420)

The Letters:

Letter written by HRH The Prince of Wales, later HM King Edward VIII, then The Prince of Wales, in France June 1916

H.Q. 14th Corps

B. E. F.

June 14th 1916

My dear Captain Faussett,

Thanks ever so much for your long and v. (sic) interesting letter as well as for kindly making a copy of Bertie's letter, which Papa sent me; it must have given you a lot of bother. I only wish I had been in London to hear all the accounts of the great fleet action from some of those who went through it and to have seen Dannreuther who had a most marvellous escape evidently!! Tait wrote me a long account from "Collingwood" and I got a letter from "Lion" last night, so that I have both points of view!! Of course the battle cruisers saw much more than the battleships, but the Grand Fleet's shooting must have been d-d (sic) good and there can be no doubt that the High Sea Fleet suffered more than we did despite all the Hun lies!! Of course our losses in ships and personel (sic) were v. heavy but one can't expect anything else

in a modern fleet action, particularly such a ferocious one as that was!! **It does make one feel proud of the service when one hears how those ships met their end, with their guns firing as they went down.** Beatty's dash and ability have again been brought out; he is a marvel though of course the responsibility of the main issues of the battle rested upon the C. in C. (sic) which makes his job so much harder really!!

We all but wiped the Huns out; of course they had the devil's own luck as they always seem to have both on land and sea!! The "Warspite" was jolly lucky to get in safely and "Marlborough" too. I'm so glad old Bertie was in the fight, as it will buck him up a lot; and it seems to have cured him of the slight return of his old complaint which was a d-d (sic) bore as I really hoped he was cured once and for all!! He was so fit when he returned as you told me and was doing so well as mate of U. D. (sic). But he seems to be quite fine again now thank goodness!!

Yes for Ld. K's sudden and unexpected death was indeed a national calamity. I fear Papa feels it v. (sic) much. As you say now is the moment for him to visit the Grand Fleet instead of going to Aldershot, for example!! But it is so hard to get him to break away from routine!! Because he has been in the habit of going to Aldershot about now for the last few years, then me must (sic) go again; it's such a pity! **What wouldn't I give to get up to the Forth and Scapa and see them all!!**

Life out here is pretty dull and monotonous for us all up in the Ypres area, and v. depressive on account of the wet and cold weather we've had the last 10 days; deluges of rain and as cold as Jan. This salient is the v. worst section of the British front, and the troops in the line get a fearful bad time of it with these bloody Huns as active as ever, shelling mining and strafing in every conceivable way!! But the Russian news cheers one up doesn't it; who wld (sic) ever have thought them capable of such a successful offensive? Over 100,000 prisoners in one week isn't so bad!!

All your other naval news was most welcome and interesting and this letter is but a poor apology for one!!

My best thanks to you and Mrs F for your kind congratulations; no, I can't say I feel I have earned the M.C. at all, but that's nothing to do with me! My best wishes to you and Mrs Faussett and with my renewed thanks for your splendid letter.

I remain, ever yours sincerely,

Edward

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Letter written by HM King George VI, then The Duke of York, describing the Battle of Jutland June 1916

H. M. S. "Collingwood"

4th Battle Squadron

C/O G.P.O

June 11th 1916

Dear Mrs Faussett,

Very many thanks for your letter. It was very kind of you to have written to me. **I am quite all right and feel very different now that I have seen a German ship filled with Germans and have seen it fired at with our guns. It was a great experience to have gone through and one not easily forgotten. How and why we were not hit or damaged beats me, as we were being fired at a good part of the time. The ship ahead of us was hit but it did not do any damage. We had torpedoes fired at us which we got out of the way of luckily. It seems to have resulted in a victory for us,** often all the news which is coming from Germany. **The Germans must have suffered very severely as our ships were hitting very nearly all the time.**

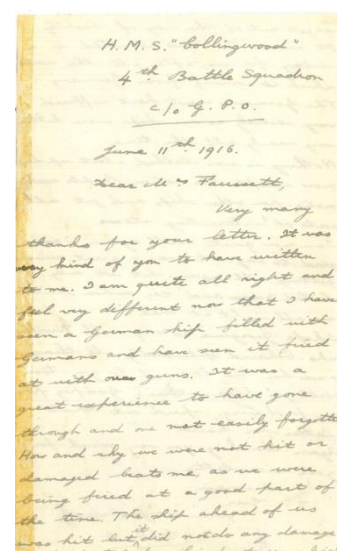
Nothing is ever talked about up here now except the action. People exchange notes from other ships and get all sorts of interesting items.

I am quite well again I am glad to say. It was a great nuisance getting ill again but it only lasted 3 days and the action put me all right at once.

Hope "Georgina" is very well. "Neville" who behaved splendidly all through sends his love and to you too. Will you please thank Godfrey from me for having copied out that letter for David.

Again thanking you very much for your nice letter.

Remain ever yours very sincerely Albert



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