

# COMMANDOS HELD NAZI BASE 2 DAYS

Headquarters in St. Nazaire  
Taken With Aid of Citizens,  
Says Swedish Report

## FOES DIED IN SHIP BLAST

Tricked by Briton, Who Also  
Lost His Life, Into Boarding  
Vessel Used as Mine

By Telephone to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

STOCKHOLM, Sweden, May 4—British Commando troops, aided by enthusiastic Bretons, captured the German field headquarters in Saint-Nazaire and held it for forty-eight hours before being dislodged by superior numbers, according to a person now in Stockholm who visited the French port after the raid.

Four hundred Germans, many of them officers, were killed in the raid. This figure includes a number of German officers who boarded the former American destroyer used for ramming the dock basin gates. A British officer sacrificed himself by conducting the Germans around the ship until a time-fuse set off explosives that blew up the ship with everybody on board and destroyed the gates.

The heroism of the British officer is still the talk of Saint-Nazaire. When the destroyer rammed the gates the commanding officer was the only one left on board, according to stories told there. He jumped ashore, surrendered to the Germans and offered to conduct them on a tour of the vessel.

The Germans executed 200 hostages among the population as punishment for aiding the landing party, and when the writer's informant left Saint-Nazaire in the middle of April there was talk of executing 200 more as further warning.

The inhabitants of Saint-Nazaire greeted the British landing party with shouts of joy, thinking that the time had come for the "big invasion." Young men and old ran to join the British troops, asking for rifles and ammunition. Together they stormed the German field headquarters and in fierce fighting all the German officers and sentries there were killed.

During the two days that the British Commandos and their Breton helpers held the German headquarters and adjoining houses, there was much street fighting and many hand-to-hand encounters. When the Germans eventually stormed and recaptured the headquarters they took no prisoners among the armed Bretons. These were summarily executed as franc-tireurs.

There is a feeling in Saint-Nazaire today that the British should have found means of letting the inhabitants know that the landing party was an isolated attempt and not linked with general invasion. The mass execution of hostages has added strength to this criticism. On the whole, however, the Saint-Nazaire population is full of admiration for the Commandos and the general verdict is that "it was a good job."