

21. On 12th August Task Force 37 split into two groups, "Achilles" joining Task Group 37.3 under command of Vice-Admiral Sir Philip Vian, K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O., which detached and shaped course for Manus to await instructions.

22. After fuelling, "Achilles" cleared Seeadler Harbour outwards for Sydney, where she arrived on 26th August, proceeding the next day with 22 officers and 145 ratings as passengers and stores for Auckland, where she remained in dock until 18th September.

23. "Achilles" sailed for Manus on 22nd September, and after refuelling there proceeded to Guam, Tokyo Bay, and Yokohama. On the departure of H.M. ships "Shropshire" and "Swiftsure" on 12th October, the Commanding Officer, H.M.N.Z.S. "Achilles," became senior British naval officer afloat at Yokohama.

24. On 19th November "Achilles" sailed for Nagasaki, where arrangements were made with the Port Director for parties—in all, some 700 officers and men—to be driven through the area devastated by the atomic bomb.

25. After visiting Sasebo, where some leave was given, "Achilles" sailed for Kagoshima, where recreation parties visited Hiroshima and Minami Dake, and then returned to Tokyo Bay, berthing off Yokohama on 5th December, where she was inspected by Vice-Admiral E. J. P. Brind, C.B., C.B.E., prior to his departure in H.M.S. "Swiftsure."

26. After a short cruise to Nagoya, "Achilles" departed from Tokyo Bay on 19th January for Hong Kong.

27. "Achilles" departed from Hong Kong on 15th February for Subic Bay. On 19th she was diverted to Menado; before arrival, however, a message was received stating that no British warship was to proceed to Menado. "Achilles" accordingly hauled off to seaward and subsequently proceeded to Morotai and later to Manus and Sydney, where she berthed on 8th March.

28. On 17th March "Achilles" arrived in New Zealand, where she is at present undergoing a refit.

SECTION III.—H.M.N.Z. ANTI-SUBMARINE AND MINESWEEPING VESSELS

25TH A/S M/S FLOTILLA

With the closing of the operational period of the war, the 25th A/S M/S Flotilla from the beginning of April, 1945, to the end of March, 1946, has had a varied programme.

2. H.M.N.Z.S. "Arbutus," on completion of repairs and exercises at Auckland, was scheduled to join the 25th A/S M/S Flotilla in the forward area at the end of May, 1945, but the Commander, South Pacific, did not require her services and it was decided by the New Zealand Government to offer her for service with the British Pacific Fleet. This offer was welcomed by the Commander-in-Chief, British Pacific Fleet, and on 29th April, 1945, "Arbutus" sailed for Sydney, thence to the forward area, as a radio and radar maintenance vessel with the Fleet Train. Apart from this work, other duties—escorting and transferring of stores—were carried out proficiently often under difficult conditions, for which she received Commander-in-Chief's grateful appreciation.

3. After this period of service, "Arbutus" reverted to the control of the Royal New Zealand Navy, and arrived in Auckland on 6th October, 1945. From that date until 28th November she remained in Auckland, with the exception of one week commencing 18th November in which she carried out trials and practises in Hauraki Gulf. On 28th November "Arbutus" was placed at the disposal of a research party under the directorship of the Auckland Museum to work off the north-east coast of Auckland and in the vicinity of the Three Kings Islands until 9th December, when she returned to Auckland. From January, 1946, when she was converted to a minesweeper, to the present date, "Arbutus" has been operating in the Auckland area together with H.M.N.Z.S. "Tui" and "Kiwi" in the clearance of mines.