

COPY.

H.M.S. KEREN,

No. 864/8.

at Diego Suarez,

MADAGASCAR

TO ... The Commanding Officer, Officers, & Ship's Company of  
H.M.S. Freesia.

(1) I very much regret that, owing to my leaving to assume command of H.M.S. Keren at extremely short notice, I did not have time to say goodbye to the ship's company nor did I have time to clear lower decks to you all how pleased I was with bearing and general behaviour and keenness shown by Freesia's during operation Ironclad, I have recommended two Officers and six ratings for decoration.

(2) Freesia had the honour to lead in Force "F" to courier bay through mined and narrow waters which were commanded by hostile battery of guns. Complete surprise was achieved and the gunners were captured all asleep in the battery by our commando troops. Subsequently it transpired that the guns were not manned at night because it was thought impossible for a force to enter Courier Bay by night. In other places the French offered a very stiff resistance to our troops.

(3) I believe it is necessary to go back in history as far as General Wolfe and Quebec to find a case of complete surprise in a combined operation.

(4) I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you all upon the successful way in which Freesia carried through her hazardous task in this Operation, I was very proud of you.

(5) As a souvenir of the exploit I am enclosing a copy of the Prime minister's message to Admiral Syfret and General Sturges for every Officer and man.

(6) I feel sure that Hungerford who have adopted "Freesia" will be very proud of you all. I only hope that we may all meet there one day for a celebration and between then and now "Freesia" will have distinguished herself again.

(7) I wish you the very best of luck, a safe return and good hunting.

Signed..... P.G.Crick,

Commander R.N.