



LEFT SYDNEY 28th NOV 1943.
28th JUNE 1944

Mileage since commissioning of ship
17/6/42 until
31/3/44 - 62,598 miles 7118 hours of way
At End of 2 years 17/6/44. 7829 " 8
Total Mileage 69,451 miles

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Sydney to Townsville
 Townsville to Mike Bay
 Sydney
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 Mike Bay
 Cairns
 Moreby
 Koroa Bay
 Buna
 Longmanah (Tischke)
 Cape Gloucester
 Admiralty Islands
 Madang

NOVEMBER.

SUNDAY 28th. Goodness knows how this
 system down here works, but we are 2nd
 last ship to come from up north, and
 the first to leave. Buggy is that it's
 only temporary, but I don't fancy letting
 'em get their claws into us up north.
 Ah well Sydney, you were good to us while
 we had you, especially while my Margie was
 here. Under weigh at 7 AM - had last
 look at now familiar bridge - wonder when
 we will see it again. Cheerio Sydney, we'll
 be back as soon as we can.

Heavy swell on, rolling heavily. That's
 a bad start, let's hope it means a good
 finish. Saw ships in our last southern
 convoy.

Sydney
Townsville
Milne Bay
Cairnes
Moresby
Khaehoe Bay
Buna
Langewak (Finschafen)
Cape Gloucester
Admiralty Islands
Madang

NOVEMBER

Sunday 28th

Goodness knows how this system down here works, but we are 2nd last ship to come from up north, and the first to leave. Buzz is that its only temporary, but I don't fancy letting 'em get their claws into us up north. Ah well Sydney, you were goodoh while we had you, especially while my Margie was here. Under weigh at 7AM – had last look at now familiar bridge – wonder when we will see it again. Cheerio Sydney, we'll be back as soon as we can.

Heavy swell on, rolling heavily. That's a bad start, lets hope it means a good finish. Seven ships in our last southern convoy.

NOVEMBER

Monday 29th Still heavy swell, but uncomfortable for sleeping. Few hands sort of looking forward to seeing up north - rest of us know what it's like and aren't at all enthusiastic. Issued today with khaki battle dress - long khaki pants + shirt. It's for wearing ashore in places where mosquitoes etc. congregate, on landing parties. The latest ridiculous idea of our wet officers is that the Engineer Officer is talking about forming a choir. He said in the last war his ship had a choir who sang "Onward Christian Soldiers" + "Maori's Farewell" when leaving harbour + there wasn't a dry eye aboard. Blimey how would we be singing like that leaving harbour? They'd send us south for going "hoppo". At that it mightn't be a bad idea. Must mention that point.

Wed 1st December On our way to another Xmas and another New Year. Wonder what this one will bring. Hope it's the end. Got to Baloundra during forenoon, back to Sydney goes Wilcannia + Ballarat. We picked up another convoy at 4 PM with Jelong and on our northward way we go. Beautiful sunny today - quite warm below decks already. Decided to grow another beard to spell from shoring. Thurs. 2nd Dec Late tonight said Goodbye to another convoy. Off they go to Gladstone + on north to Townsville we go. Alarm rang last night for surface craft 500 yards ahead by R.D.F. It turned out to be a YANK but by gee the boys moved when that alarm bell went. They show good form.

Monday 29th

Still heavy swell, bit uncomfortable for sleeping. New hands sort of looking forward to seeing up north – rest of us know what its like and aren't at all enthusiastic. Issued today with khaki battledress – long khaki pants + shirt. It's for wearing ashore in places where mosquitoes etc congregate, + on landing parties. The latest ridiculous idea of our wet officers is that the Engineer Officer is talking about forming a choir. He said in the last war his ship had a choir who sang "Onward Christian Soldiers" + "Maori's Farewell" when leaving harbour + there wasn't a dry eye aboard. Blimey how would we be singing like that leaving harbour? They'd send us south for going "troppo". At that it mightn't be a bad idea. Must mention that point.

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On our way to another Xmas and another New Year. Wonder what this one will bring. Hope it's the end. Got to Caloundra during forenoon, back to Sydney goes Wilcannia + Ballarat. We picked up another convoy at 4PM with Geelong and on our northward way we go. Beautiful sunny today – quite warm below decks already. Decided to grow another beard to spell from shaving.

Thurs. 2nd Dec.

Late tonight said goodbye to another convoy. Off they go to Gladstone + on north to Townsville we go. Alarm rang last night for surface craft 500 yards ahead by RDF. It turned out to be a YANK but by gee the boys moved when that alarm bell went. They show good form.

Friday 3rd Dec. Close into coast. Very pretty. Quite a number of islands hereabouts. Breaks the monotony of open sea. Passed thru' Whitsunday Passage during Middle so missed that sight unfortunately.

Saturday 4th Dec. Arrived Townsville.

Now approx 1670 miles from Mang + that's about 1670 miles too far in my opinion. Beautiful day - + from distance town + hills look picturesque, but I still would rather see Gorge Road bridge. Late in afternoon walked thru' the town + went for a swim. Water lovely.

Sunday 5th Dec. Hooyay, got some mail for Mang. Have been looking forward to it very much. Went for another swim as it was roasting hot. Met Artie

Ainsworth, Bruce Williams, both on their way south for leave. Also met Kennie Wilkes. He is going overland via Mt Isa to Darwin. What a prospect. Stayed off for pictures in evening + saw a rotten show. This Townsville is still as bad as ever - full of Yanks + practically nothing else.

Monday 6th Dec. Had tooth temporarily filled in forenoon. Under weigh about 300. That calm sea - but windy at night.

Tuesday 7th Dec. Close into coast up to Cairns. Picked up 2 more corvettes, 3 Yanks - now 11 merchant ships in convoy. Going towards Mosby, Katoomba + Ballarat. Taking some

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Monday 6th Dec.

Had tooth temporarily filled in forenoon. Under weigh about 3PM. Flat calm sea - but windy at night.

Tuesday 7th Dec.

Close into coast up to Cairns. Picked up 2 more corvettes, 3 Yanks - now 11 merchant ships in convoy. Going towards Moresby, Katoomba + Ballarat taking some

to Moreely. We are taking the rest
to Milne Bay. Out thru Barrier
Reef during Tint Watch

Dec 9th Thursday. Left Moreely portion of
convoy + with Yankee Patrol craft headed
for Milne Bay. Seeing plenty of flying
fish in these waters. Sunny day but
have had a shower every night so far.

Friday 10th Dec. Went thru China Straits
about 8 AM. The islands are really
beautiful. Altho' of a different type
than Whitunday Passage, they are
equally as pretty. Many of the islands
are big with high hills on them
very densely covered with trees +
undergrowth. Along the fore shores are
thick coconut palms. We saw a

few native villages set in among the
palms. Also many white mans houses.
Its amazing the number of dwellings that
are scattered about in the Straits.

Stacks of money was made from copra,
tortoise-shell, coconuts, pearling + fishing
hereabouts before the war. Milne Bay
itself is a very big open bay, while
the country is mountainous, rugged +
densely timbered. The spot where the
Japs landed near the entrance was
just thick undergrowth. Our life is
sure earn their dollars. I've never
seen such a collection of
ships as there was there. All
sorts from cruisers to landing
barges. The boys counted about 50

to Moresby. We are taking the rest to Milne Bay. Out thru' Barrier Reef during First Watch.

Dec 9th Thursday.

Left Moresby portion of convoy + with Yankee Patrol craft headed for Milne Bay. Seeing plenty of flying fish in these waters. Sunny days but have had a shower every night so far.

Friday 10th Dec.

Went thru' China Straits about 8AM. The islands are really beautiful. Altho' of a different type than Whitsunday Passage, they are equally as pretty. Many of the islands are big with high hills on them very densely covered with trees + undergrowth. Along the foreshores are thick coconut palms. We saw a

few native villages set in among the palms. Also many white mans houses. Its amazing the number of dwellings that are scattered about in the Straits. Stacks of money was made from Copra, tortoise-shell, coconuts, pearling + fishing hereabouts before the war. Milne Bay itself is a very big open bay, while the country is mountainous, rugged + densely timbered. The spot where the Japs landed near the entrance was just thick undergrowth. Our A.I.F. sure earn their dollars. I've never seen such a collection of ships as there was there. All sorts from cruisers to landing barges. The boys counted about 50.

Even with that many it would be difficult to hit them from the air in a bay like this. Left for Townville in afternoon with Katoombo, doing 12 knots.

Sunday 12th Dec. Destination changed to Cairns. Arrived there during Day. Went up river to fuel - disturbed a crocodile near the bank too. Very pretty mountainous country hereabouts, altho Cairns itself is flat for miles. Went alongside Elab - of course Horace soon aboard. He's leading Dig now but still some Horace. (sorry - see now) Pearl's gonna have baby so is getting her discharge from Army. No letters.

Monday 13th Dec. Went ashore to

have a look at the place. Town is bigger than Townville but not as well set out. Looks quite nice, would be good place in peace time if free from Yanks etc. Dave + I hitch hiked 9 miles to a fresh water swimming hole. Had an extra good swim then got a ride back into town, had a screw of ADCS + went to pictures to "Fletch Jr".

Got mail tonight. This is what I needed. 6 letters from my Margie and two from Mom. I'm happy now (or as happy as is possible this far from Home). Couple of pair of shorts from Dad - boy I'll be some swell now.

Tuesday 14th Dec. At sea again, with Ararat + a Yankee S.C. taking convey

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have a look at the place. Town is bigger than Townsville but not as well set out. Looks quite nice, would be good place in peace time if free from Yanks etc. Dave + I hitch hiked 9 miles to a fresh water swimming hole. Had an extra good swim then got a ride back into town, had a scam at ADCS + went to pictures to "Fleets In".

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Tuesday 14th Dec.

At sea again, with Ararat + a Yankee S.c. taking convoy

to Mike Bay. Pretty rough outside.
Wednesday 15th Dec. Last night was one
of those rotten nights when you haven't
got a chance of getting more than a
couple of hours sleep because of the
knocks you take. Rolling badly too -
eight plates broken in morning, plus
knives + forks, cups, tea + numerous other
things shot all over the deck. Ken
Leach sick all day. Seems to be
flattening out during Middle a little.
Jining firm rushed with business this
morn. At least 10 pair of shorts to
be fixed besides few other jobs. Have
to do 3 pair for Skipper + a couple
for the Jimmy. (Don't ask for a
share of my earnings. Princess because I
work too hard for it, by gee)

Thursday 16th Dec Sea flattened out,
thanks goodness. Went thru Behnia
Straits during beautiful tropical
afternoon. Saw the full stretch of
islands. They are really beautiful.
The evenly laid out coconut plantations
contrast strongly with the thickly
timbered slopes of the high mountain-
ous islands. Mike Bay - the bay is
26 miles long. It's quite understandable
that our ships slipped past Jap
ships into here last year. It really
hugs. There were 50 or 60 ships in
+ yet the bay looked empty. Cruisers
destroyers, tankers, merchantmen, landing
barges + all. After dark there were
lights everywhere along the shore.

to Milne Bay. Pretty rough outside.

Wednesday 15th Dec.

Last night was one of those rotten nights when you haven't got a chance of getting more than a couple of hours sleep because of the knocks you take. Rolling badly too – eight plates broken in morning, plus knives + forks, cups, tea + numerous other things shot all over the deck. Ken Leosh sick all day. Seems to be flattening out during Middle a little. Jewing firm rushed with business this trip. At least 10 pair of shorts to be fixed besides few other jobs. Have to do 3 pair for Skipper + a couple for the Jimmy. (Don't ask for a share of my earnings Princess because I work too hard for it, by gee)

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The trucks unloading ships looked like a huge caterpillar winding its way from the wharves over the mounds. Left at 6 AM in morning.

Tuesday 14th Dec Beautiful calm day. Received report that suspicious wake been sighted four times by merchant ship near the Reef. We ordered to steam to intercept it as it was reported as a sub. Had a practice Action Stations - fired a shell from the gun, dropped a depth charge, fired star shells + rockets. Guns crew to sleep beside gun, so we should do something even if it only lose some sleep. Should reach position about 3 AM. No luck.

Tell folks, as was expected everyone went to Action Stations just before daybreak, but the sub had decided not to wait.

Sat. 15th Dec Did radar patrol all day - hoping sub wouldn't reappear. Heading back for base about dark. Midnight briefing we are joined this trip. I come on for the Middle Watch + there is signals everywhere. Appears that the Gladstone + at least 2 merchant ships are on a reef 60 odd miles north of here + we are being sent to arrest. Will arrive there about 5-30 AM, so I get to bed at 4 AM + get up at 5-30 AM. All well anything for a quiet life

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Well folk, as was expected everyone went to Action Stations just before daybreak, but the sub had decided not to wait.

Sat 18th Dec.

Did Asdec patrol all day – hoping sub wouldn't reappear. Heading back for Cairns about dark.

Midnight.

Cripes we are jinxed this trip. I come on for the Middle Watch + there is signals everywhere. Appears that the Gladstone + at least 2 merchant ships are on a reef 60 odd miles north of here + we are being sent to assist. Will arrive there about 5.30AM so I get to bed at 4AM + get up at 5.30AM. Ah well anything for a quiet life

Sunday 19th Dec. Six out of nine ships run on to reef last night. One got off last night - Gladstone got off this morning. Other four stuck fast. Lithgow, Maxwell, Gladstone, Gympie & ourselves corvettes there, also 2 dorys M.T.B's. Lithgow and us went almost onto reef alongside ship & took troops (Yanks) off to other ships. Lithgow & Gladstone left with ship each during forenoon for Cairns. We worked like slaves all day & finally freed 2 of the 3 ships. Mike did a great job - the other corvettes just stood back & watched. Once we nearly drifted onto the reef. It would have been goodnight to us then, but we

got free with only feet to spare. The other two corvettes left with the other two ships & left us to watch the one on the reef. Lifes we must be easy. It's not our convey yet we wait with the ship till morning. Then the Warrego & a lug are coming out to help us. We can't anchor as the bottom can't be fathomed here, so we just cruise about all night. Sunday at sea - when I think of what I could be doing at home with Marg. - or when I think of that mail at Cairns I should be reading now - well maybe it would be better if I didn't think of 'em. Not even the various shades of the water over the reef makes my want to see farther than Melbourne. Reef very pretty tho'.

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Six out of nine ships run on to reef last night. One got off last night + Gladstone got off this morning. Other four stuck fast. Lithgow, Stawell, Gladstone, Gympie + ourselves corvettes there, also ½ dozen M.T.B's. Lithgow and us went almost onto reef alongside ship + took troops (Yanks) off to other ships. Lithgow + Gladstone left with ship each during forenoon for Cairns. We worked like slaves all day + finally freed 2 of the 3 ships. Spike did a great job – the other corvettes just stood back + watched. Once we nearly drifted onto the reef. It would have been goodnight to us then, but we

got free with only feet to spare. The other two corvettes left with the other two ships + left us to watch the one on the reef. Cripes we must be easy. Its not our convoy yet we wait with the ship till morning. Then the Warrego + a tug are coming out to help us. We can't anchor as the bottom can't be fathomed here, so we just cruise about all night. Sunday, at sea – when I think of what I could be doing at home with Marg. – or when I think of that mail at Cairns I should be reading now – well maybe it would be better if I didn't think of 'em. Not even the various shades of the water over the reef makes me want to see further than Melbourne. Reef very pretty tho'.

Monday 20th Dec Warrego arrived here during the night & so she had a go at the Van de Vinder very early. She couldn't manoeuvre like us so she had to give it up as a bad job. Spike chopped in again & did some very clever risky work & succeeded in getting the ship off on the second attempt, amid cheers from everybody. So off back to Cairns. - Spike will get a big recommend after the work he did. In Cairns about 8pm, oiled - Spike requested boiler clean & permission granted. Proceeding to Townsville for boiler clean at 3AM. Just my luck to have the morning watch. Mail says about 20 so I'm happy - good old Margie & Shun.

Tuesday 21st Dec. Arrived Townsville about 4pm. Hang on if we didn't get stuck in the mud ourselves, but got off after a bit of mucking about.

Wednesday 22nd Started boiler clean along jetty near Depot. Started rigging arials all day. Went to pictures at open air theatre at night.

Thursday Had a pain in side so reported to Sick Bay. Doc said I am to go ashore for few days for observation. Packed kit & waited for ambulance but it didn't turn up.

Friday 24th Ambulance called at 9 A.M. Waited at Sick Bay until

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Mail came aboard so I'm happy – good old Margie + Mum.

Tuesday 21st Dec

Arrived T'ville about 6pm. Hang me if we didn't get stuck in the mud ourselves, but got off after a bit of mucking about.

Wednesday 22nd

Started boiler clean along jetty near Depot. Started rigging aerals all day. Went to pictures at open air theatre at night.

Thursday

Had a pain in side so reported to Sick Bay. Doc said I am to go ashore for few days for observation. Packed kit + waited for ambulance but it didn't turn up.

Friday 24th

Ambulance called at 9AM. Waited at Sick Bay until

5pm then informed that there were no vacant beds. Taken out to Army hospital about 9 mile out.

25th Xmas Day. Opened parcels. My wife is a darling. Treated her to give me something to make things seem more like Xmas. Thanks Marg. Good Xmas dinner of ham turkey, spuds, peas, plum duff with brandy sauce topped off by a bottle of beer that the Padre got us. At tea time we had fruit salad with ice cream on. Blondie & Dave arrived here to see me this eve with a cake from Mimi & a parcel from his also letters from Margie and Mom. They are real oppos.

They hitch hiked all this way to say Merry Xmas, even bringing money because I haven't been paid. So in all it was a pretty fair Xmas. I've been thinking of home though. Let's hope I don't have to spend many more away 26th Sunday. Doc comes & has a look at us once a day then we don't see him till next day. I'm still under observation they say. Leon is OK & no one to worry us so it will do me. Extra good concert party called the Waratahs on in the evening. It is the best concert party I have seen up to date.

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26th Sunday

Doc comes + has a look at us once a day then we don't see him till next day. I'm still under observation they say. Scran is OK + no one to worry us so it will do me. Extra good concert party called the Waratahs on in the evening. It is the best concert party I have seen up to date.

1944

January 1st - The start of a New Year. What will it bring?

That seems fairly easy to predict - another year of firing war - with victories, but victories that bring as much sorrow to folks as defeat. Let us pray that the end of this New Year shows us where the end of this war will be and when.

Started the New Year off in a hospital - but don't count that as a misfortune.

January 6th Quite a few of us cleared out from Townsville & sent to hospital at Brisbane. Travelled down by hospital

train. It's definitely the best way I've ever travelled. Bunks in the train all the way and at two stops V.A.D's & RED Cross women came thru the train distributing fresh milk, fruit, ice cream and cigarettes. The RED Cross do a wonderful job in places like these that you notice it.

Sunday January 8th In hospital at Brisbane. Not too bad. Not much to do, but get a good rest & that's the main thing. Food pretty good - When I get out of here I'll be an expert at table tennis, bobs & quarts by the number of games I've played.

1944

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The start of a New Year. What will it bring? That seems fairly easy to predict – another year of tiring war – with victories, but victories that bring as much sorrow to folks as defeats. Let us pray that the end of this New Year shows us where the end of this war will be and when.

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Tuesday January 18th

Discharged from hospital
to Naval depot HMAS MORETON (BRISBANE)
Got to take things easy for awhile
so Doc says, and I'll certainly
do that till I come quite
good again.

At MORETON till January 28th.

Depot not too bad - good scran,
and good leave. All night in bed
every night suited me. Also rec'g
mail quickly & regularly from my
Mam. Visited Horace's mother
& met Horace & Carl there. Horace
was on last day of his leave.
Carl very nice - also Mrs Nelson
and Horace's sisters great sports.

(food)

Tell I'd known them for ages. Was
to go out for scran on 28th but
went on draft that day. Also
visited Jackie Woods folk & had tea
with them. They were quieter but
very nice & made me very welcome.
Neil Murray was in depot awaiting
an operation for asthma. If it was
successful he may get his 'ticket'.

Friday January 28th On draft back
to the old ship HMAS CASTLEMAINE -
thought maybe I might have got
a change, but as the Yanks say
'No soap'. So I go to Milne Bay
to pick her up. Visions of
travelling in luxury were shattered
when I saw I was travelling

Tuesday January 18th

Discharged from hospital to Naval depot H.M.A.S. MORETON (BRISBANE). Got to take things easy for awhile so Doc says, and I'll certainly do that till I come quite good again.

At MORETON till January 28th.

Depot not too bad – good scran, and good leave. All night in bed every night suited me. Also rec'vg mail quickly & regularly from my Marg. Visited Horace's mother + met Horace + Pearl there. Horace was on last day of his leave. Pearl very nice – also Mrs. Nelson and Horace's sisters great sports.

Felt I'd known them for ages. Was to go out for scran (food) on 28th but went on draft that day. Also visited Jackie Woods folk – and had tea with them. They were quieter but very nice + made me very welcome. Neil Murray was in depot awaiting an operation for asthma. If its un-successful he may get his 'ticket'.

Friday January 25th

On draft back to the old ship HMAS CASTLEMAINE – thought maybe I might have got a change, but as the Yanks say "No soap". So I go to Milne Bay to pick her up. Visions of travelling in luxury were shattered when I saw I was travelling

up on a Landing craft manned
by Yanks. First day and a half
it rained and quite a few were
sick, but the fish didn't get any
of my meals. The meals are too
good to waste. These Yanks sure
eat well. The cook was a
professional cook in civies, so that
makes things even more perfect.
As a matter of fact there is more
room on these things than there
looks. Bunks to sleep in - goodish.
Sunday Weather now typical
tropical summery days, calm seas.
Hope it keeps this way.
Monday Jan 31st A cyclone reported
heading this way, so our nine

L.C.I.^s pulled into shelter outside
the breakwater at Townsville.
Beautiful day - Yank stood by with
rifle while we went swimming over
the side. Cyclone didn't touch us
+ we left about 6 P.M.
February 1st + 2nd

Weather turned nasty +
L.C.I.^s certainly leaping about. Quite
a lot sick. Mick + I were only
two at breakfast out of the
Aussies on the 2nd. A number of
the crew sick too. My luck
held all the way.

February 3rd Passed thru' Lhina
straits early but rain spoiled
the view for those who hadn't

up on a Landing Craft manned by YANKS. First day and a half it rained and quite a few were sick, but the fish didn't get any of my meals. The meals are too good to waste. These Yanks sure eat well. The cook was a professional cook in civvies, so that makes things even more perfect. As a matter of fact there is more room on these things than there looks. Bunks to sleep in – goodoh.

Sunday

Weather now typical tropical summery days + calm seas. Hope it keeps thisaway.

Monday Jan 31st

A cyclone reported heading this way, so our nine

L.C.I.'s pulled into shelter outside the breakwater at Townsville. Beautiful day – Yank stood by with rifle while we went swimming over the side. Cyclone didn't touch us + we left about 6PM.

February 1st + 2nd

Weather turned nasty + L C I's certainly leaping about. Quite a lot sick. Mick + I were only two at breakfast out of the Aussies on the 2nd. A number of the crew sick too. My luck held all the way.

February 3rd

Passed thru' China Straits early but rain spoilt the view for those who hadn't

seen it before. Got into Milne Bay
in afternoon & stood by ready
to go off till 9pm, then got
fed up & went to bed. Got
of ships in but not last remaining
can't say I'm sorry yet.

February 12th Friday

Landing barge took us
ashore about lunch time. Not
sorry to leave Yanks - they
aren't a patch on our Marines,
but boy I'd like to keep
eating their meals.

Milne Bay ashore is big.
Seems to be thousands of Yanks
here and loads upon loads of
equipment. We draw mosquito nets

^{Soldier}
and bedding, donned our long
trousers & long sleeved shirts &
swallowed in the mud like a
real swabbie.

Worked with Sparkers - did
a bit of watchkeeping, a bit
of day work and finished up
working on, building a hut
with Alan Hatter, another Sparkers.
Milne Bay pretty good place
to be ashore at - at least it seemed
that way to me in my 3 weeks
there. Mud bad when it rained,
mosquitoes bad at night, & even
not the best, but there was
the chance to get plenty of sport
and exercise. Yanks held

seen it before. Got into Milne Bay in afternoon + stood by ready to go off till 9PM, then got fed up + went to bed. Lot of ships in but not Castlemaine. Can't say I'm sorry yet.

February 4th Friday

Landing barge took us ashore about lunch time. Not sorry to leave Yanks – they aren't a patch on our Aussies, but boy I'd like to keep eating their meals.

Milne Bay ashore is big. Seems to be thousands of Yanks here and loads upon loads of equipment. We drew mosquito nets

and bedding, donned our long strides + long sleeved shirts + wallowed in the mud like a real swottie (soldier).

Worked with Sparkers – did a bit of watchkeeping, a bit of day work and finished up working on building a hut with Alan Mutter, another Sparker. Milne Bay pretty good place to be ashore at – at least it seemed that way to be in my 3 weeks there. Mud bad when it rained, mosquitos bad at night + scam not the best, but there was the chance to get plenty of sport and exercise. Yanks held

(extra)

pictures every night, besides a few goat shows at surrounding camps. Quite a lot of tuzze tuzzie about. Great little workers. They were building huts for the Navy, and make a very tidy job of them.

Mountainous, wild, country very beautiful. It tips up this way in peace time would be grand, but now, with its hand to appreciate it fully. Went down to where Japs landed last year but not many signs of war remaining.

Incredible number of ships in bay at times. Establishment ashore growing rapidly and almost all

Regiment was my mail. Good old Margie, Gork, & great getting her letters + letters from them again.

of at Yank. again.
Met Adelaide today there - Joe Evans. Doug Scott is on father at Goodenough Island.

Barthelmain after being in and around Cairns all this time arrived on 25th Feb, so I went back aboard her after 2 months away. Boys thought it was funny when I arrived in Yank blue dungarees, boots + gaiters. Quite a change to get about in nothing but shorts and sandals again.

A good few changes on the old ship. Ross Davies, George Jurard, Dolly Grey + Bob Hayes are ashore doing sketches of

pictures every night, besides a few gash (extra) shows at surrounding camps. Quite a lot of Fuzzie Wuzzies about. Great little workers. They were building huts for the Navy, and make a very tiddly job of them.

Mountainous, wild, country very beautiful. A trip up this way in peace time would be grand, but now, well its hard to appreciate it fully. Went down to where Japs landed last year but not many signs of war remaining.

Incredible number of ships in Bay at times.
Establishment ashore growing rapidly and almost all

of it Yank.

Met Adelaide teleg. there – Joe Evans. Doug Scott is on further at Goodenough Island.

Bigger Event is my mail. Good old Margie. Gosh its great getting her letters + letters from Mum again.

Castlemaine after being in and around Cairns all this time arrived on 25th Feb, so I went back aboard her after 2 months away. Boys thought it was funny when I arrived in Yank blue dungarees, boots + gaiters. Quite a change to get about in nothing but shorts and sandals again.

A good few changes on the old ship. Bonc Davies, George Gerrard, Dolly Grey + Bob Hayes are ashore doing stretches of

90 and 60 days for stealing
grog from the warehouse. I had
luck, especially for Bone as he
has a wife and 2 kids. If
he is discharged, he will lose the
£400 odd that he is shortly due
for. Williams our Jimmy has
gone to be Skipper of a corvette
the STRAHAN. Poor crew. A new
Sparky in Ken Leach's place - Bill
Ross - seems quite a decent bloke.

Feb 24th SUNDAY Arrived Cairns after
a roughish breaking in trip.
Feb 25th MONDAY Out again Milne Bay
bound. Got rough as soon as we
got outside the reef. Terrible
rolling day after day drives

a man near mad. Things fall from
everywhere. We broke cups, plates,
bottles of pickles & sauce & goodness
knows what. Believe me, its no
fun mopping up a couple of
bottles of stinking Worcestershire
Sauce from the deck when your
stomach is not in the mood.
As soon as we arrived at Milne
Bay we repelled and headed
back. Sea catching us worse.
cyclone moving in 2 directions and
we caught outskirts of one leg.
Shipped water all the way.
Roll extra bad - the machine on
the bridge registered our biggest
roll as 43° considering that

90 and 60 days for stealing grog from the wardroom. Bad luck, especially for Bonc as he has a wife and 2 kids. If he is discharged, he will lose the 400 pound odd that he is shortly due for. Williams our Jimmy has gone to be Skipper of a corvette the STRAHAN. Poor crew. A new Sparker in Ken Leach's place – Bill Ross – seems quite a decent bloke.

Feb 27th SUNDAY

Arrived Cairns after a roughish breaking-in trip.

Feb 28th MONDAY

Out again Milne Bay bound. Got rough as soon as we got outside the reef. Ceaseless rolling day after day drives

a man near mad. Things fall from everywhere. We broke cups, plates, bottles of pickles + sauce + goodness knows what. Believe me, its no fun mopping up a couple of bottles of stinking Worcestershire Sauce from the deck when your stomach is not in the mood. As soon as we arrived at Milne Bay we refuelled and headed back. Sea catching us worse. Cyclone moving in 2 directions and we caught outskirts of one leg. Shipped water all the way. Roll extra bad – the “machine” on the bridge registered our biggest roll as 43 degrees. Considering that

<sup>originally thought
it was 42° but
as I doubt</sup>
these ships were only tested at 48°
when built, then 43 degrees is just
about 42° too much for me. That's
the biggest roll I've heard of in
these ships. A roll like that
trip makes a man quite tired
and we were very glad to get
into Cairns.

5th MARCH Arrived Cairns late
at night - not too late to read
mail though.

6th MARCH MONDAY Fairmile reported no
contact inside reef & we proceeded
there about 6 AM with Commander D
and his full staff aboard. Slept
all day. We set watch on R/T +
W/F and handled messages all

day continuously between Cairns and
Com. D. Ended up with 6 corvettes
and 3 Fairmiles searching. We went
back in with D. Late at night.

TUESDAY MARCH 7th Begun a boiler
clean alongside wharf at Cairns.

WED MARCH 8th Went out to Freshwater
with Bondie, Dave & George Davis.
Had a good swim - How Davis
"borrowed" enough sugar cane to feed
us for day.

THUR. MARCH 9th Party of 30 of us
detailed to go to Army camps for
48 hour break. Spored to leave
at noon, but as is expected the
trucks didn't leave till 7 PM. Had
to drive about 80 mile, + go

these ships were only tested at 48 degrees when built, then 43 degrees is just about 42 degrees too much for me. That's the biggest roll I've heard of in these ships. Originally thought it was 47 degrees but seems doubtful. A roll like that trip makes a man quite tired and we were very glad to get into Cairns.

5th MARCH

Arrived Cairns late at night – not too late to read mail though.

6th MARCH MONDAY

Fairmile reported sub contact inside reef + we proceeded there about 6AM with Commander D and his full staff aboard. Swept all day. We set watch on R/T + W/T and handled messages all

day continuously between Cairns and COM(D). Ended up with 6 corvettes and 3 Fairmiles searching. We went back in with (D) late at night.

TUESDAY MARCH 7TH

Begun a boiler clean alongside wharf at Cairns.

WED MARCH 8TH

Went out to Freshwater with Blondie, Dave & George Davies. Had a good swim – then Davies borrowed enough sugar cane to feed us for days.

THUR. MARCH 9TH

Party of 30 of us detailed to go to Army camps for 48 hour break. S'posed to leave at noon, but as is expected the trucks didn't leave till 7PM. Had to drive about 80 mile + go

across the mountains. Beautiful view
across the plains, from the mountain
road. The ~~themselves~~ very heavily
timbered + with dense undergrowth
and ferns. Unfortunately it got
dark early so had to content
ourselves with singing our way
along the road. Went thru 3
or 4 little towns, among them Mareeba
+ Atherton. Arrived at 16th, 17th + 19th
Bgs ^{Brigade} about 11 PM. Split up into
parties of 5 + distributed among
various battalions. Dave, Bill, Blondie,
a seaman + I went to 2/2nd Battalion
- they are part of the 15th Brigade
which was first not formed when
war started + were first not to

leave Australia. They made us very
welcome. A major took us to our
huts, then we spent a couple of
hours nattering. Blokes had blankets
+ all laid out for us.

FRIDAY MARCH 10th. A Sgt Bungeyne from
"A" company was allotted to take us
around all day. Very decent bloke too.
We started off by watching their
Battalion parade - they put on a
smart show + look extra good. The
old slouch hat gives just the right
touch to the RIF personality. Then
there we attended an RIF grillers school
for officers, for 1 1/2 hours. It developed
into discussions on Navy procedure
+ reb - the instructor was asking

across the mountains. Beautiful view across the plains, from the mountain road. Mts themselves very heavily timbered + with dense undergrowth and ferns. Unfortunately it got dark early so had to content ourselves with singing our way along the road. Went thru 3 or 4 little towns, among them Mareeba + Atherton. Arrived at 16th, 17th + 19th Bges (Brigades) about 11PM. Split up into parties of 5 + distributed among various battalions. Dave, Bill, Blondie + seaman + I went to 2/2nd Battalion – they are part of the 16th Brigade which was first mob formed when war started + were first mob to

leave Australia. They made us very welcome. A major took us to our tents, then we spent a couple of hours nattering. Blokes had blankets + all laid out for us.

FRIDAY MARCH 10TH

A Sgt. Burgoyne from “A” company was allotted to take us around all day. Very decent bloke too. We started off by watching their Battalion parade – they put on a smart show + look extra good. The old slouch hat gives just the right touch to the AIF personality. From there we attended an R/T wireless school for officers, for 1-1/2 hours it developed into discussions on Navy procedure + sets – the instructor was asking

us questions most of the time. These Army officers are men. They beat you like a man too. Quite the opposite to the Navy where class distinction is carried out above all else. Another difference is that Army fighting officers know their jobs because their lives depend on knowing it. But on our ship the only man who really knows his job is Spike. The others are practically useless - & I mean that quite without prejudice.

The Army officers persuaded the cook to bring them some tea & a few sandwiches, which they made us share. They let us use the paninikins first as there wasn't enough to go round.

A Naval officer wouldn't drink out of a paninikin, let alone use it after a rating. We collected a bunch mortar, smoke bombs, signal flares, H.E, rifle grenades & goodness knows what, then went across to the range where we fired the lot off, & learnt about the various weapons the infantryman uses. This job is a tough one. This Sgt was one of the few originals of the 2/2nd & had had some almost unbelievable hits to spin. After lunch we were taken to a Bren gun carrier camp, where we had a ride in them. Boy they did everything but turn somersaults & that wasn't them!

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want of trying, by gee. We pushed
down these jumped ditches &
climbed up & down creek banks.
The captain wanted us to stay longer,
but as we had a program to
follow we were whisked back to
camp. Back there the lgt got
us 2 Bren Guns & 3 Lewis Guns &
equipped with plenty of ammunition
we went to the range & proceeded
to blast at everything within sight.
Those Brens are wonderful guns.
That evening we decided to go
into a small nearby town for pictures.
We missed the truck so a team
saw us specially there. The same
thing happened to Dave & to who

arrived just after us. Then another
swotchie whom we didn't even know
took our money and bought our
tickets for us. On arriving back at
camp our beds had been made
for us. The blokes all said that
we needed to be with them for
at least a week, and we certainly
agreed. These A.I.F. of ours are the
world's best - fancy trying to compare
YANKS with this mob. Makes a
man proud of being an Aussie.
SAT MARCH 11th Left at 7:30 AM -
very sorry to go because we had
a good time. Met up with rest
of our boys & they all had much
the same experience - all voted it good.

want of trying, by gee. We pushed down trees, jumped ditches + climbed up + down creek banks. The Captain wanted us to stay longer, but as we had a programme to follow we were whisked back to camp. Back there the Sgt got us 2 Bren Guns + 3 Owen Guns + equipped with plenty of ammunition we went to the range + proceeded to blast at everything within sight. Those Brens are wonderful guns. That evening we decided to go into a small nearby town for pictures. We missed the truck, so a driver run us specially there. The same thing happened to Dave + Co who

arrived just after us. Then another swottie whom we didn't even know took our money and bought our tickets for us. On arriving back at camp our beds had been made for us. The blokes all said that we needed to be with them for at least a week, and we certainly agreed. These A.I.F. of ours are the world's best – fancy trying to compare YANKS with this mob. Makes a man proud of being an Aussie.

SAT MARCH 11th

Left at 7.30AM – very sorry to go because we had a good time. Met up with rest of our boys and they had much the same experiences – all voted it goodoh.

Drove back to Cairns via different route. At one place went down road called Gillies Highway. Only one way traffic. Stretch is 12 mile long + has 146 turns in. Beautiful views from various places on way down. Wish Marg had been there to enjoy it with me - then replace my uniform with grey slacks + shirt and I wouldn't even envy the King. Got back to the ship about 1 o'clock. Saw more letters waiting - Goodoh.

Sunday March 12th Blondie + I were watch ashore so decided to take the train trip up to Barron Falls. Train left at 2:15 pm + took 3

hours to climb mountain back. Passed thru 15 tunnels in the 20 mile journey. Passed Stony Creek falls about 15 mile out. These falls very reminiscent of Sutherland^(?) Falls at Gairloch. Way down in the gorge we could see the broad Barron River. View from top of falls across sugar cone fields, over the distant town and out to sea would have made a wonderful photo. Falls are the best I've seen. The water falls in 2 wide streams + about 3 small ones. Height at top of falls is 1,071 feet above sea level, while the falls "spread their broad white apron" over a drop of 800 feet. (out of a book)

Drove back to Cairns via different route. At one place went down road called Gillies Highway. Only one way traffic. Stretch is 1/2 mile long + has 146 turns in. Beautiful views from various places on way down. Wish Marg had been there to enjoy it with me – then replace my uniform with grey slacks + shirt and I wouldn't even envy the King. Got back to the ship about 1 o'clock. Few more letters waiting – goodoh.

SUNDAY MARCH 12TH

Blondie + I were watch ashore so decided to take the train trip up to Barron Falls. Train left at 2.15pm + took 3

hours to climb mountain track. Passed thru' 15 tunnels in the 20 mile journey. Passed Stony Creek falls about 15 mile out. Those falls very reminiscent of Silverstream (?) Falls at Grampians. Way down in the ravine we could see the broad Barron River. View from top of falls, across sugar cane fields, over the distant town and out to sea would have made a wonderful photo. Falls are the best I've seen. The water falls in 2 wide streams + about 3 small ones. Height at top of falls is 1,071 feet above sea level, while the falls "spread their broad white apron" (out of a book) over a drop of 800 feet.

There were 400 steps down to the bottom of the falls so I climbed down. But there seemed like a thousand coming up. Trip back took only an hour as it was down hill. The trip was well worth taking.

Monday March 13th. Out to sea about 6 AM. Milne Bay bound once more. For a change we had a quick trip & arrived back early on the 18th.
Sunday March 19th George Davis, Blondie & I hatched out to Larnow Water 12 mile out, for a swim. Usually the water is so clear that the bottoms can be seen but the river was in flood & the water was a bit dirty. Great place for swimming &

we had quite a bit of fun on the bank & in the water. George is naturally funny. A young river & his wife gave us a lift back to town "in repayment for the entertainment we provided on the river bank".

Didn't think our adagio dance was that good. Broken out again.

Spike left us & went south today. Very sorry to lose him - he has done a good job aboard & got us a good name wherever we have worked. He is an expert seaman & has pulled off some work where guts as well as seamanship was needed. Boys cleared lower deck & chered ship as Spike passed & he was very moved.

There were 400 steps down to the bottom of the falls so I climbed down. But there seemed like a thousand coming up. Trip back took only an hour as it was down hill. The trip was well worth taking.

MONDAY MARCH 13th

Out to sea about 6AM Milne Bay bound once more. For a change we had a quiet trip + arrived back early on the 18th.

SUNDAY MARCH 19TH

George Davies, Blondie + I hitch-hiked out to Barrow Waters 12 mile out, for a swim. Usually the water is so clear that the bottom can be seen, but the river was in flood + the water was a bit dirty. Great place for swimming +

we had quite a bit of fun on the bank + in the water. George is naturally funny. A young civvy + his wife gave us a lift back to town "in repayment for the entertainment we provided on the river bank". Didn't think our adagio dance was that good. Passed out again.

Spike left us + went south today. Very sorry to lose him – he has done a good job aboard + got us a good name everywhere we have worked. He is an expert seaman + has pulled off some work where guts as well as seamanship was needed. Boys cleared lower deck + cheered ship as Spike passed + he was very moved.

He has been sick for a good while now & will probably get his ticket. He told us which part in Sydney he would be at if we came back there. The Engineer Officer also went on draft. He was well-meaning, but was too much of an obstinate old woman. Bobbie the Radio Officer has also got a draft. He is going to England - they'll make him up over there. He has to wait till his relief arrives. Our present Skipper, Paul de Cambres. Lomerville is a real fig & is trying to run this corvette like a charmer. Very unpopular already.

MONDAY MARCH 30th But Mike Ray bound this time to be attached to

Mike Ray. May get to Cairns for water clean. Hope we get right up the top - this run has been monotonous & makes us feel sort of discontented.

23rd Mike Ray, pulled their report received that aircraft sighted three lifeboats & big patches of oil on surface, about 60 miles from Howley. Mildura is going out from Howley - Wagga and ourselves going from here. Started off at 15 knots so that we could get outside the Shait before dark. Some speed for us. Heavy swell outside. Passed Jarroyn when she was only doing about 8 knots

He has been sick in Sydney for a good while now + will probably get his ticket. He told us which pub he would be at if we came back there. The Engineer Officer also went on draft. He was well-meaning, but was too much of an obstinate old woman. Robbie the Asdec officer has also got a draft. He is going to England - they'll wake him up over there. He has to wait till his relief arrives. Our present Skipper, Paul ex Canberra + Townsville is a real pig + is trying to run this corvette like a cruiser. Very unpopular already.

MONDAY MARCH 20TH

Out Milne Bay bound this time to be attached to

Milne Bay. May get to Cairns for boiler clean. Hope we get right up the top – this run has been monotonous + makes us feel sort of discontented.

23rd

Arrived Milne Bay, fuelled then report received that aircraft sighted three lifeboats + big patches of oil on surface, about 60 mile from Moresby. Mildura is going out from Moresby, Wagga and ourselves going from here. Started off at 18 knots so that we could get outside the Straits before dark. Some speed for us. Heavy swell outside. Passed Gascoyne when she was only doing about 8 knots

and her skipper asked us "Where ~~was~~
is the fire?" ~~Answer~~

24th Hunted approximate position
about 2 o'clock, but after searching
all day all we sighted was 3
at dusk which was apparently the
supposed life boat. Had report
that Kanorua from Mike Bay to
Moresby is overdone. Almost back
to Mike Bay during Morning Watch
when we were ordered to turn back.
Aircraft sighted ship similar to
Kanorua in sheltered bay between
here + Moresby.

25th Steamed close in to coast +
arrived at Keakoro Bay about 6 PM.
Ship is the Kanorua. She has

only 2 ton of coal left + had
to shelter here. She has no wireless
so couldn't transmit message. Our
skipper suggests that we tow her
to Moresby about 90 mile away.
Union Station ashore here, and
when we anchored quite a lot of
Garry Stiggins sailed out in this
catamaran to sell bananas, coconuts
shell beads, shirts and other
small trinkets. Our boys either
bought them or exchanged biscuits
+ tinned fruit for the goods.
George Davies put over a funny act.
He gave a boong 3/- for some
beads, then later he came out
with some biscuits. The native

and her Skipper asked us “where is the fire?”

24th

Arrived approximate position about 2 oclock, but after searching all day all we sighted was 3 oil drums which was apparently the supposed life boats. Had report that Canonbar from Milne Bay to Moresby is overdue. Almost back to Milne Bay during Morning Watch when we were ordered to turn back. Aircraft sighted ship similar to Canonbar in sheltered bay between here + Moresby.

25th

Steamed close in to coast + arrived at Khaehoe Bay about 6PM. Ship is the Canonbar. She has

only 3 ton of coal left + had to shelter here. She has no wireless so couldn't transmit message. Our Skipper suggests that we tow her to Moresby about 90 mile away. Mission station ashore here, and when we anchored quite a lot of Fuzzie Wuzzies sailed out in their catamarans to sell bananas, coconuts, shell beads, skirts and other small trinkets. Our boys either bought them or exchanged biscuits + tinned fruit for the goods. George Davies put over a funny act. He gave a boong 3/- for some beads, then later he came out with some biscuits. The native

indicated that he wanted the biscuits, so Jago calmly said, "3/-" took his money back & walked off. Our mess bought a big bunch of sugar bananas. These bananas are small, but make good banana custard. One Gungie had perfect white teeth, which is unusual for natives as they are usually continually chewing betel-nut which puts a horrible stain on their teeth. This native was buying toothpaste off us. He also spoke faultless English so was evidently a mission boy.

SUNDAY 26th MARCH Orders came to tow kambar to Moresby. Paul disgusted the boys with the

way he messed about trying to get a line to the ship. He finally dragged it across by motor boat. When Spike dragged those ships off the reef, he used to steam up close so that the boys could throw a heaving line. Later on when the tow line broke, Paul messed about again at sea getting a new one across. He sent a fraction of the seamen Spike was. Luckily the sea was calm so we might have encountered trouble towing the ship.

MONDAY 27th MARCH Arrived Moresby about 8 AM. First time I've been at since New Years Day 1943. There

indicated that he wanted the biscuits, so George calmly said "3/-" took his money back + walked off. Our mess bought a big bunch of sugar bananas. These bananas are small, but make good banana custard. One Fuzzie had perfect white teeth, which is unusual for natives, as they are usually continually chewing betel-nut which puts a horrible stain on their teeth. This native was buying toothpaste off us. He also spoke faultless English so was evidently a mission boy.

SUNDAY 26TH MARCH

Orders came to tow Canonbar to Moresby. Paul disgusted the boys with the

way he messed about trying to get a line to the ship. He finally dragged it across by motor boat. When Spike dragged those ships off the reef, he used to steam up close so that the boys could throw a heaving line. Later on when the tow line broke, Paul mucked about again at sea getting a new one across. He isn't a fraction of the seaman Spike was. Luckily the sea was calm or we might have encountered trouble towing the ship.

MONDAY 27TH MARCH

Arrived Moresby about 8AM. First time I've seen it since New Years Day 1943. There

is a vast difference in the orderliness
of the place + the number of buildings.
Went alongside the jolly. Reception
on W/Fs frightful, due to local
noise + our position. Ships allowed
to leave W/F watch here but Paul
refused us permission, consequently we
missed about 20 messages. The fat
bellied old so-and-so.
Leave granted at 1:15 PM. I didn't
go on watch till 4 PM, so Reg,
Joe + I went for a swim at
the beach over the hill. Quite a
few women about here these days,
even a civvie woman at the
Yank Red cross. Haven't seen one
attractive one.

Shoals of fish continually about ship
whilst laid up, and the boys were
fishing all day. Fish were small
but nice. The boys caught 300 to
400 - enough to supply the ship's
company with 2 fish each for 2
meals - + then to give the Townsville
a bucket full. The fish were good.
Picture party went ashore in the
evening but I was on watch.

Beautiful tropical evening.

TUESDAY MARCH 28th Left in
afternoon for Mike Bay. Mike
Bay means mail is regularly
safe. Got on the quiet I wouldn't
mind if this war was over +
was home with Mary instead of

is a vast difference in the orderliness of the place + the number of buildings. Went alongside the jetty. Reception on W/T frightful, due to local noise + our position, Ships allowed to cease W/T watch here but Paul refused us permission, consequently we missed about 20 messages. The fat bellied old so-and-so.

Leave granted at 1.15PM. I didn't go on watch till 4PM, so Reg, Joe + I went for a swim at the beach over the hill. Quite a few women about here these days, even a civvies woman at the Yank Red Cross. Haven't seen one attractive one.

Shoals of fish continually about ship whilst tied up, and the boys were fishing all day. Fish were small but nice. The boys caught 300 to 400 – enough to supply the ships company with 3 fish each for 2 meals - + then, to give the Townsville a bucket full. The fish were goodoh. Picture party went ashore in the evening, but I was on watch.

Beautiful tropical evening.

TUESDAY MARCH 28TH

Left in afternoon for Milne Bay. Mile Bay means mail we sincerely hope. Just on the quiet I wouldn't mind if this war was over + was home with Marg instead of

APRIL

having to rely on letters to keep
in touch with all back home.

Friday MARCH 30th Arrived M.B. went
alongside Yank tanker to oil. Yank
new out here + wanted Aussie

money, so some of our seamen bought
cigarettes and exchanged money with
them. Value slightly our way.

~~Severely~~ Mail aboard - goods - that's
what we wanted. Only letters from
Marg + Mum but yank what others
do I really need when I've got these?

NONE really. Altho' I like a lot.

SATURDAY APRIL 1st Went along with West
tanker for water. She is Yank packet
named mostly by Aussies signed
on with the Yanks. One of the

engineers named McFarlane came
from Stowell Street Burnley so I
went over + had a matter to him.
He told me he got £200 - yes
£200 a month. He never bought
any clothes or accessories because
they got everything they wanted from
their cargo. They also get a bonus
for going into dangerous areas. Mike
has used to get them 100 dollar
bonus. The merchant Spaxton aboard
informed me he saved £1650 last
year. He showed me his w/t gear
it looks like the out of date
gear that used to be on the
Examination steamer at Queenscliff.
Boy would I like one of those

APRIL

having to rely on letters to keep in touch with all back home.

MARCH 30TH

Arrived M.B. went alongside Yank tanker to oil. Yanks now out here + wanted Aussie money so some of our seamen bought cigarettes and exchanged money with them. Value slightly our way.

Mail aboard – goodoh – that’s what we wanted. Only letters from Marg + Mum but gosh what others do I really need when I’ve got these? NONE really. Altho’ I like a lot.

SATURDAY APRIL 1st

Went alongside West Cactus for water. She is a Yank packet manned mostly by Aussies signed on with the Yanks. One of the

Engineers named McFarlane came from Stawell Street Burnley so went over + had a natter to him. He told me he got 200 pounds – yes 200 pounds a month. He never bought any clothes or accessories because they got everything they wanted from their cargo. They also get a bonus for going into dangerous areas. Milne Bay used to get them 100 dollar bonus. The merchant Sparker aboard informed me he saved 1650 pounds last year. He showed me his W/T gear + it looks like the out of date gear that used to be on the Examination steamer at Queenscliff. Boy would I like one of those

job. I wouldn't be too proud to
work for Yanks at that price.
Wonder would Mary say still that
the Merchant Service is worse off than
us? A bonus for dangerous waters
- raises our blokes go in the
dangerous waters before these ships
even know about them.

Leave given for couple of
hours in afternoon, so went ashore
and saw couple of blokes I knew.
Then went round and saw Hook
Lester who showed us over the
low khung(?) the is fully raised
now & they'll have her ready
for sea in a matter of weeks.
They have done a good salvage

job. Ship itself isn't in too bad
a condition. Decks clean & unbroken.
Rather surprised us, as we expected
to see the wooden decks rotted etc.
Hook says his next job may be
on wreck at Wyndham. Wouldn't
like his job there, as there is a
30 foot rise & fall of tide, an
8 knot current flowing, and the
water is like thick mud. Quite a
contrast to the perfect conditions here.
We've seen the wreck at Wyndham so
know what sort of a job it would be.
Sunday APRIL 2nd Stayed aboard
until evening then Blondie, Lail
& I went off with a picture party.
Saw flight for freedom - quite good.

jobs. I wouldn't be too proud to work for the Yanks at that price. Wonder would Marg say still that the Merchant Service is worse off than us? A bonus for dangerous waters – cripes our blokes go in the dangerous waters before these ships even know about them.

Leave given for couple of hours in afternoon, so went ashore and saw couple of blokes I knew. Then went round and saw Noel Testro who showed us over the An Chung (?). She is fully raised now + they'll have her ready for sea in a matter of weeks. They have done a good salvage

job. Ship itself isn't in too bad a condition Decks clean + unbroken. Rather surprised us, as we expected to see the wooden decks rotted etc. Noel says his next job may be on wreck at Wyndham. Wouldn't like his job there, as there is a 30 foot rise + fall of tide, an 8 knot current flowing, and the water is like thick mud. Quite a contrast to the perfect conditions here. We've seen the wreck at Wyndham so know what sort of a job it would be.

SUNDAY APRIL 2ND

Stayed aboard until evening then Blondie, Bill + I went off with a picture party. Saw Flight for Freedom – quite good.

On way to Langemak (Tinschafen)
Monday with 2 others. Dugg is that
we get no mail at all while up
there which may be 6 weeks. Even
back here we are supposed to be
14th in priority for mail. Yanks
being first. Still will see. Certainly
hope we can post mail even if
we can't get any or folks back
home will be getting worried.
Monday April 3rd Under weigh at
10 AM. First stop is Buna to
drop passengers. Jack Woods is
on one of the ships we are
relieving. Hope I see him.
Dugg now says that committee
from ~~the~~ Langemak do ~~not~~ run

to Saidor, like Goucaru, from
Admiralty Islands, which sounds
anything but monotonous. Might be
a chance of seeing Holbrooke at
Tinschafen.

Beautiful weather for a change
anyway. calm seas - clear day.

TUESDAY APRIL 4th

Arrived at Buna about 1 AM.

Lot of small shacks on foreshore -
also remains of Japs & landing
barges strewn along waterfront.

Trees with tops shot off, near shore.
Took aboard 10 crates for transport.
Buna anchorage very huge.
Hoped to get ashore to see
something, but no rec. leave given.

On way to Langemak (Finschafen) Monday with 2 others. Buzz is that we get no mail at all while up there which may be 6 weeks. Even back here we are supposed to be 14th in priority for mail. Yanks being first. Still we'll see. Certainly hope we can post mail even if we can't get any or folk back home will be getting worried.

MONDAY APRIL 3RD

Under weigh at 10AM. First stop is Buna to drop passengers. Jack Woods is on one of the ships we are relieving. Hope I see him. Buzz ashore says that corvettes from Langewak do runs

to Saidor, Cape Gloucester, Arawe + Admiralty Islands, which sounds anything but monotonous. Might be a chance of seeing Holbrooks at Finschafen.

Beautiful weather for a change anyway. Calm seas – clear day.

TUESDAY APRIL 4TH

Arrived at Buna about 7AM. Lot of small shacks on foreshore – also remains of jap landing barges strewn along waterfront. Trees with tops shot off, near shore. Took aboard 10 ratings for transport. Buna anchorage very huge.

Hoped to get ashore to see cemetery, but no rec. leave given.

Left about 1800 with ship for LAE.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 5th Passed LAE about 6 AM. Boys said it was well lighted up + appeared to be quite a lot of works there. Weather still clear, + sea calm. Passed Hasing Island - seems all Yanks - boy they've got the gear. Arrived LANGEAK about 1000 - gonna give you a lot so I'll miss Jackie Woods. It's unbelievable the stuff they've got ashore here, the buildings they've put up + the busy lines of trucks moving everywhere. Got to hand it to the Yanks - they mightn't be fighting men, but they have the organization

and equipment to build these places up. Our Amies do a great job but they can't get the stuff to do a job like the Yanks.

LANGEAK very busy looking - but everywhere - pretty country too. Invited to a concert party on the Lumbury (corvette). Concert party were Yanks and they put on a shot but good turn. Really nice - concert party on after supper deck, audience seated everywhere on quarter deck. The night was cloudless + starry with bright moonlight - the ship had a slight slow roll - made it hard to believe that not so many

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and equipment to build these places up. Our Aussies do a great job but they can’t get the stuff to do a job like the Yanks.

LANGEMAK very busy looking – huts everywhere - pretty country too. Invited to a concert party on the Bunbury (corvette). Concert party were Yanks and they put on a short but good turn. Really nice – concert party on after oerliken deck, audience seated everywhere on quarter deck. The night was cloudless + starry with bright moonlight – the ship had a slight slow roll - made it hard to believe that not so very many

miles from here in 3 directions there
is heavy fighting going on.

Lambury says said they have been
to Admiralty Islands & the other
places on altho' they have heard the
gunfire they haven't been troubled by
planes which is nice to hear. While
at Tinschafen, the natives took them
for a run up to Sattelberg & showed
them around. With our ~~equipment~~
Shipper would let us go if he had
the chance but doubt it.

THURS. APRIL 6th ~~Bo~~ came up to
Tinschafen to get water at about 6:00.
It's only about $3\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Langerach.
Quite a bit of stuff ashore here too.
Can see tops hopped off trees in fighting.

Leave granted for $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours & I
went ashore. It's impossible to
describe the stuff the Yanks have
ashore. It makes Milne Bay look
like a little native village. The
Yanks have an almost perfect
organization. It was the biggest
exp. opener I've ever had, seeing
the wonderful roads & huge
buildings etc. Went and had a
look at the Tinschafen War cemetery.
Both Japsies & Yanks there. The place
will look very nice when the
coconut palms & the lawns grow
properly. Graves too are well kept
by natives working under Japsies.
We got picked up in a jeep.

miles from here in 3 directions there is heavy fighting going on.

Bunbury boys said they have been to Admiralty Islands + the other places + altho' they have heard the gunfire they haven't been troubled by planes, which is nice to hear. While at Finschafen, the swotties took them for a run up to Sattelberg + showed them around. Wish our Skipper would let us go if we had the chance, but doubt it.

THURS. APRIL 6TH

Came up to Finschafen to get water at about 0600. Its only about 3½ mile from Langemak. Quite a bit of stuff ashore here too. Can see tops lopped off trees in fighting.

Leave granted for 2½ hours + I went ashore. Its impossible to describe the stuff the Yanks have ashore. It makes Milne Bay look like a little native village. The Yanks have an almost perfect organisation. It was the biggest eye-opener I've ever had, seeing the wonderful roads + huge buildings etc. Went and had a look at the Finschafen War cemetery. Both Aussies + Yanks there. The place will look very nice when the coconut palms + the lawns grow properly. Graves too are well kept by natives working under Aussies. We got picked up in a jeep

by a Yank Intelligence officer who decided to show us all around. He drove us right up to Sattelberg and Scarlet Beach, explaining where the fighting had taken place, & other various things of interest. Remains of Jap barge barge, etc. were pointed out. Along the road on signboards is a complete history of the fighting and the parts played by various units. The Loot-said our Hussies were wonderful fighters, but we had to hand it to him for the way the Yanks had built the place up. Fancy a road as good as our suburban roads leading right up Sattelberg.

The Yank showed & told us many things which he struck as an Intelligence officer, and we had a real good hours trip.

That same night there was a concert party of Yanks putting on a show on the L-Wharf. I'm two days behind myself there.

We steamed back to Hangchow and a swimming party was held over the ship's side. It was goodoh in the water. The water here is perfectly clear for fathoms almost. Unfortunately an accident occurred when Peter Cooper was hanging onto the motor boat & got his foot in the way of

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the screws. It made a mess of his ankle & foot, & Pete had to be taken ashore. Seemed about half a dozen or more deep cuts across his foot. Friday APRIL 7th It anchor all day. Lanning party in afternoon again but I have a colder cold and so got my head down all afternoon. The raid kept during Log. Log saw spiral of black smoke come down - think it was a plane.

Under weigh about 1830 headed for Cape Gloucester. Sure getting a long way away from you now Margie. Wish it was only the distance between the C.T.O. to

Burnley every day. (Got over 100 miles here) SATURDAY. APRIL 8th Arrived Gloucester about 9am. Can see here too the effects of the bombardment given it by the "Thropie", "Hurrie", "Warramunga" & the Yanks. Yanks appear to have loads of stuff ashore here too. Volcano in background giving out puffs of smoke occasionally. We were to take convoy back to Langueak, but now we have the job of escorting another one to the Admiralty Islands. We sure are seeing places this trip. Joe Evans ashore here. Quite a lot of ships in the bay. (Rogan Bay)

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Friday APRIL 7TH

At anchor all day. Swimming party in afternoon again but I have a corker cold and so got my head down all afternoon. Air raid Red during Dogs. Boys saw spiral of black smoke come down – think it was a plane.

Under weigh about 1830 headed for Cape Gloucester. Sure getting a long way away from you now Margie. I wish it was only the distance between the C.T.O +

Burnley every day (Bit over 100 mile here).

SATURDAY APRIL 8TH

Arrived Gloucester about 9AM. Can see here too the effects of the bombardment given it by the “Shrofie” “Aussie”, Warramunga + the Yanks. Yanks appear to have loads of stuff ashore here too. Volcano in background giving out puffs of smoke occasionally.

We were to take convoy back to Langemak, but now we have the job of escorting another one to the Admiralty islands. We sure are seeing places this trip.

Joe Evans ashore here. Quite a lot of ships in the bay (Borgen Bay)

SUNDAY APRIL 9th Party of 30
went ashore to have a look around
where fighting took place when Marines
first landed here. Object was to
visit Hill 660 where Japs attempted
to retake hill after Japs had
chased them off. We walked about
3 mile along the beach & saw
the effects of the bombardment from
sea. - Jap barges were sunk
in close to shore where they
were evidently at anchor. Then we
waded thru swamps with mud
in places covering our boots. Then
the hill 660. It was muddy from
the previous night's rain, & the
was bit a climb. Anyway out

of the majority of us who went
round there, only 5 reached the
top. It took us over an hour
to climb up. I was carrying a
pack up all the way. Stupid
the weight of my perspiration was
weighing me down (at least it felt
like it). Anyway we saw quite
a few things of interest at the
top, such as the foxholes, benches
and gear of all sorts lying
about. Numerous decomposed Jap
bodies lying about unburied. Only
the bones & clothing left. Thought
of taking a skull as a souvenir
but maybe they wouldn't let me
keep in on the mantelpiece at home.

SUNDAY APRIL 9TH

Party of 30 went ashore to have a look around where fighting took place, when Marines first landed here. Object was to visit Hill 660 where Japs attempted to retake hill after Yanks had chased them off. We walked about 3 mile along the beach + saw the effects of the bombardment from sea, - Jap barges been sunk in close to shore where they were evidently at anchor. Then we waded thru' swamps with mud in places covering our boots. Then the hill 660. It was muddy from the previous night's rain + boy was it a climb. Anyway out

of the majority of us who went round there, only 5 reached the top. It took us over an hour to climb up. Fancy carrying a pack up all the way - cripes the weight of my perspiration was weighing me down (at least I felt like it). Anyway we saw quite a few things of interest at the top, such as the foxholes, trenches and gear, of all sorts lying about. Numerous decomposed Jap bodies lying about unburied. Only the bones + clothing left. Thought of taking a skull as a souvenir but maybe they wouldn't let me keep it on the mantelpiece at home.

Think his ^{Val} would be about the
only one who would appreciate it.
Japs must have rushed straight up
the steep opposite side of the hill
& been mown down by the Yanks
hunched in at the top. All the
equipment lying about was bullet
ridden - water bottles, helmets,
ammunition pouches. In one place about
a couple of yards square we counted
8 Japs who must have rushed
together. Saw those ~~two~~ rubber shoes
the Japs used for tree climbing.
They have the big toe separate
from the main sole. Wouldn't have
minded a pair but they all
seemed to have feet in them.

collected a Jap helmet & a few shells.
Naturally the Yanks & their Intelligence
had cleared any real good souvenirs
out long ago. Still, the what we
saw was very interesting, & we
could build a reconstruction of exactly
what happened. Some of the Japs
stormed to within a couple of
yards of where the Yanks were.
Coming down the hill we
took another back & it was a
work of art stopping ourselves from
falling. I couldn't have had the
back because I felt a heart-
breaking my garters I was taking
back, & cutting my wrist. Gave
put a stitch in it when I

Think Sis & Val would be about the only ones who would appreciate it. Japs must have rushed straight up the steep opposite side of the hill + been mown down by the Yanks trenched in at the top. All the equipment lying about was bullet ridden – water bottles, helmets, ammunition pouches. In one place about a couple of yards square we counted 8 Japs who must have rushed together. Saw those rubber shoes the Japs used for tree climbing. They have the big toe separate from the main sole. Wouldn't have minded a pair but they all seemed to have feet in them.

Collected a Jap helmet + a few shells. Naturally the Yanks + their Intelligence had cleared any real good souvenirs out long ago. Still, what we saw was very interesting, + we could build a reconstruction of exactly what happened. Some of the Japs stormed to within a couple of yards of where the Yanks were.

Coming down the hill we took another track + it was a work of art stopping ourselves from falling. I couldn't have had the nack because I fell a beaut, losing my gaiters I was taking back, + cutting my wrist. Doc put a stitch in it when I

got aboard. As it so happened, we 5 were the only ones out of the 30 to really see anything worth while. The rest just walked about the porch etc. We were glad that we stuck to the climb, but I'm damned if I'd do it again.

I can see Marg looking disgusted when I tell her I had to have a stitch in my wrist. Now should be able to tell Marg that nothing goes on that I don't get some sort of a cut or bruise from.

Our Admiralty trip has been cancelled, & so buzzies are ripe as to where we'll go now. They range from us going to

New Ireland, Madagascar & landing buzzies up near Rabaul. I think I'll wait & see before I listen to any more buzzes.

Monday April 10th Another beautiful day but no sign of our leaving. Swimming party went over to a small island nearby, where there was a good sandy beach & plenty of palm trees. There are no palms on the Gloucester area, because of the one time active volcanoes from which the lava flow came.

This particular area is all country formed from the lava plains.

Type of country is scrubby or bush, not jungle like New

got aboard. As it so happened, we 5 were the only ones out of the 30 to really see anything worth while. The rest just walked about the foreshore etc. We were glad that we stuck to the climb, but I'm darned if I'd do it again.

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This particular area is all country formed on the lava plains. Type of country is scrubby + bush, not jungle like New

Guinea.

Still at anchor all day.

TUESDAY APRIL 11th Spent to go out today, but ship not ready so sailing orders again cancelled.

WEDNESDAY APRIL 12th

On our way at 11 am headed for the Admiralty Islands with a ship. Should arrive tomorrow as it's 270² miles. Crew had rifle practice at a target in afternoon. Admiralties aren't yet considered at all safe. Our orders are full & strict. No naval party is allowed ashore unless on important duty. Anyone caught souvenirizing, or seen on high ground after sunset will

be shot. We will probably have to keep our portholes closed as the Japs have been known to float about, hanging on to logs & throw hand grenades thru ship's scuttles. Sailing orders also say that bodies of Allied soldiers seen floating are to be picked up, identified & buried at sea, but Jap bodies aren't to be touched. A special party has been detailed as "rebel boarder's party" & every man on the upper decks has a pistol, Tommy gun, rifle, or cutlass assigned. The coders are in it, but Stokers, Sparkers & bloke on essential jobs aren't included.

Guinea.

Still at anchor all day.

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Anyone caught souveniring, or seen on high ground after sunset will

be shot. We will probably have to keep our portholes closed as the Japs have been known to float about, hanging on to logs + throw hand grenades thru' a ships scuttles. Sailing orders also say that bodies of Allied soldiers seen floating are to be picked up, identified + buried at sea, but Jap bodies aren't to be touched.

A special party has been detailed as "repel boarder's party" + every man on the upper deck has a pistol, tommy gun, rifle or cutlass assigned. The coders are in it, but Stokers, Sparkers + bloke on essential jobs aren't included.

Just as well I'm not superstitious
to a great degree as tomorrow
is (was all day) (was all day)
Sounds grim in the orders. They are
said to end with Keep Alert or
Keep Alive. Probably find that it
will be another uneventful trip tho!

Mirror-like sea - beautiful
clear night with moon reflected in
sea - Would be marvellous here
on a peace time trip.

THURSDAY APRIL 13th Passed between
islands early in morning. Steamed
past Los Negros about 10 AM. Boys
said they could see Marauders bombing
but as I didn't see it, I doubt
it. Many fires on islands about - don't
know what they are. Saw wonderful
coconut plantations here in places.
Tied up alongside York tanker

and oiled as soon as we got in.
Name of bay is SEEBLER BAY.
Then worked out on chart that we
are 8 miles as the crow flies from
where the hoops are still fighting.
Could hear gunfire at times thru
day, & at night see gunflashes.
Lot of Liberator planes about, or
he go all the time.

Closest to equator I've been so
far, about 100 mile South of it.
About 3100 sea miles from home -
that's 3100 too many for me.
At anchor overnight.

FRIDAY APRIL 14th Took a bloke from
the ~~Denalla~~ Denalla aboard for passage
back to Langmak. He has

Just as well I'm not superstitious to a great degree as tomorrow is 13th.

Sounds grim (was all hooey) in the orders. They are said to end with Keep Alert + Keep Alive. Probably find that it will be another uneventful trip tho'.

Mirror-like sea – beautiful clear night with moon reflected in sea – would be marvellous here on a peace time trip.

THURSDAY APRIL 13TH

Passed between islands early in morning. Steamed past Los Negros about 10AM. Boys said they could see Marauders bombing but as I didn't see it, I doubt it. Many fires on islands about – don't know what they are. Been wonderful coconut plantations here in peacetime. Tied up alongside Yank tanker

and oiled as soon as we got in. Name of bay is SEEADLER BAY. Len worked out on chart that we are 8 mile as the crow flies from where the troops are still fighting. Could hear gunfire at times thru' day, + at night see gunflashes. Lot of Liberator planes about, on the go all the time.

Nearest to equator I've been so far, 100 mile South of it. About 3100 sea miles from home – that's 3100 too many for me.

At anchor overnight.

FRIDAY APRIL 14TH

Took a bloke from the Benalla aboard for passage back to Langemak. He has

got malaria. Under way for
Langanak about 6 AM. Distance
is about 325 miles. Saw a
flight of Spitties over Manus Island.
Now expected to see Spitties up
in these parts. Sea choppy for
a start, but we turned & got
the sea astern of us & after that
it was alright.

SATURDAY APRIL 15th New Guinea in
sight during forenoon. General
type of country when we got
in close. Very high rugged
mountains, heavily timbered inland,
but on the seashore the slopes
were grass but almost bare,
except for strips of trees

running from the top to the
coast edge. Looked like the
streams running down the mountain
side after a heavy rain.
Red alarm as we were going
into Langanak. Japs fighter seen
on recon over Tinschafen. Bit of
ack-ack thrown at him & he
soon scooted for home. Best of
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aboard. Gosh it was good as we
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no letter from home tho' - maybe
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before we go out again!
Swimming over the side from

got malaria. Under way for Langemak about 6 AM. Distance is about 325 miles. Saw a flight of Spitfires over Manus Island. Never expected to see Spitties up in these parts. Sea choppy for start, but we turned + got the sea astern of us + after that it was alright.

SATURDAY APRIL 15TH

New Guinea in sight during forenoon. Peculiar type of country when we got in close. Very high rugged mountains, heavily timbered inland, but on the seawardside the slopes were grey but almost bare, except for strips of trees

running from the top to the coast edge. Looked like the streams running down the mountain side after a heavy rain.

Red alarm as we were going into Langemak. Jap fighter seen on recco over Finschafer. Bit of ack-ack thrown at him + he soon scooted for home. Best of all was the mail that came aboard. Gosh it was good as we thought we wouldn't get any up here. Good old Margie wife – no letter from home tho' – maybe it missed the mail. May come before we go out again.

Swimming over the side from

4 p.m. till 6 p.m. Got the water polo ball & had some fun.

Sunday April 16th Went to Tinschapel to water ship.

Monday & Tuesday - expecting to go out, but all good shipping sent in harbor, as big landing is to take place up coast within next few days. Probably Wewak or Hollandia. Every sort of ship from aircraft carriers, battles, cruisers, destroyers & all sorts of landing craft going past in continuous convoys. Must be going to be a big show. We hoping very strongly that we could get into it, but

not much chance. We couldn't help in a bombardment. Hope we can get up there soon tho'. We haven't had any real excitement this time away - yet. Swimming over side each day during 1st day. Wednesday April 19th Went ashore with Dave & Blondie. Picked up a ride in a jeep with an Aussie who took us 25 miles inland to Wareo. MP's let us go because we were Wallaby hunters. We got a good spin ashore from the troops. Wonderful scenery along the route to Wareo - we could look over Sabelburg - and see the big convoys way out at sea.

4PM till 6PM. Got the water polo ball + had some fun.

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Monday + Tuesday - expecting to go out, but all gash shipping sent in harbour, as big landing is to take place up coast within next few days. Probably Wewak or Hollandia. Every sort of ship from aircraft carriers, battlers, cruisers, destroyers + all sorts of landing craft going past in continuous convoys. Must be going to be a big show. We hoping very strongly that we could get into it, but

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Wednesday April 19th

Went ashore with Dave + Blondie. Picked up a ride in a jeep with an Aussie who took us 25 mile inland to Wareo. MP's let us go because we were Wallaby sailors. We got a good spin ashore from the troops. Wonderful scenery along the route to Wareo – we could look over Satelberg – and see the big convoys way out at sea

On the way back we stopped
and had a look over some
Matilda tanks. They look a
sturdy job. On arriving back
at Scarlet beach we got a lift
from one of the Anga (native
administration unit) mob. He spun
us quite a few dits about the
natives & said we would have
been very badly off if it hadn't
have been for the Tuggies help.
We had an hour of liberty
left so got a ride about
10 mile down the coast where
the Yanks are. Altogether we
~~hitchhiked~~ hitchhiked over 70 mile
looking about. I copped a green

swoosh suit. Blondie got a pair
of blue dungarees & we got some
junk gear that a Yank didn't
want, and were able to sell
most of it. Quite a good day.

20th Went to sea with Lower
recording 2 ships bound for
Admiralty Islands.

Tuesday 21st April Arrived & fuelled
then awaiting orders.

Saturday 23rd April Liberty given to
Los Negros. Bill didn't want to
go ashore so we went again.
Got a ride out to the air
strip & had a look at the
liberators, Kittyhawks, Spitfires & Lightnings.
There's certainly some aircraft there.

On the way back we stopped and had a look over some Mathilda tanks. They look a sturdy job. On arriving back at Scarlet beach we got a lift from one of the Angu (native administration unit) mob. He spun us quite a few dits about the natives + said we would have been very badly off if it hadn't been for the Fuzzies help. We had an hour of liberty left so got a ride about 10 mile down the coast where the Yanks are. Altogether we hitchhiked over 70 mile looking about. I copped a green

swotties suit, Blondie got a pair of blue dungarees + we got some gash gear that a Yank didn't want, and were able to sell most of it.
Quite a good day.

20th

Went to sea with Bowen, escorting 2 ships bound for Admiralty Islands.

Friday 21st April

Arrived + fuelled then awaiting orders.

Saturday 23rd April

Liberty given to Los Negros. Bill didn't want to go ashore so we went again. Got a ride out to the air strip + had a look at the Liberators, Kittyhawks, Spitfires + Lightning. There's certainly some aircraft there.

Two squadrons of Aussie there 16+4
They man all the fighters. Majority
of them arrived while fighting was
still on Los Negros. They showed
us about 4 spots as the det.
Quite a few Japs still scuffling
about in the bush. Nobody is
allowed in except patrol, as a
number of men have been killed
by land mines which the Japs have
set everywhere. Still a bit of
fighting going on on Manus Island.
Los Negros has the airstrip so
is the more important. Had a look
at some of the Jap light guns
that were captured, also a couple
of 6 inch naval guns. Guns only

contain essentials, but to my
inexperienced eye they look like
good guns.

Surge when we got back was
that Brown + ourselves were taking
the helms to Green Island, which
is on the east side of New Ireland.
Route was to be over the top
of New Ireland. But it was
decided to just send the Brown
so we missed out again. It was
back to Langwahn for us.
26th APRIL Arrived Langwahn -
but NO MAIL. What sort of
a Navy is this? Trouble is
that they are expecting to go to
Milne Bay for a boiler clean

Two squadrons of Aussies there, 76 + 79. They man all the fighters. Majority of them arrived while fighting was still on Los Negros. They showed us about + spun us the dits. Quite a few Japs still sculling about in the bush. Nobody is allowed in except patrols, as a number of men have been killed by land mines which the Japs have set everywhere. Still a bit of fighting going on on Manus Island. Los Negros has the airstrip so is the more important. Had a look at some of the Jap light guns that were captured, also a couple of 6 inch navel guns. Guns only

contain essentials but to my inexperienced eye they look like good guns.

Buzz when we got back was that Bowen + ourselves were taking the Celano to Green Island, which is on the east side of New Ireland. Route was to be over the top of New Ireland. But it was decided to just send the Bowen so we missed out again. It was back to Langemak for us.

24th APRIL

Arrived Langenmak – but NO MAIL. What sort of a Navy is this? Trouble is that we are expecting to go to Milne Bay for a boiler clean

so our mail is probably waiting
there. To wait here!

Tuesday 25th APRIL. ANZAC Day -
wait till I'm in it - That'll
be the day.

Jackie Wood on the Coura. He
rowed across in their whaler but
couldn't stop to talk. Will get
together first opportunity.

Got ashore with letters as
postman + hitchhiked out 9 miles
so that I could get postal
notes + send telegram for Margi
birthday. They'll arrive late but
I'm kidding myself for finally
finding how to get them. I have
worried enough people.

Swimming over side during fog.
We rigged goals for water polo +
also a diving board down aft.

Water here is very very deep
30 fathoms, + we often have to
rush to get under weigh as our
anchor drags + we drift close
to the shore.

Boys went to a good concert
ashore last night. An Aussie show
+ nearly all professionals. Horrie Dargie
was in the party. Dave + Bill
went, + said it was the best
show they have seen. I worked
Louis watch, as he was dressed
when we were told to set watch.
It just filled in my time till
the mess cleared up!

so our mail is probably waiting there. No mail here!

Tuesday 25th APRIL ANZAC DAY –

Wait till I'm in it – that'll be the day.

Jackie Wood on the Cowra. He rowed across in their whaler but couldn't stop to talk. Will get together first opportunity.

Got ashore with letters as postman + hitchhiked out 9 mile so that I could get postal notes + send telegrams for Marg's birthday. They'll arrive late, but I'm kidding myself for finally finding how to get them. I sure worried enough people.

Swimming over side during Dogs. We rigged goals for water polo + also a diving board down aft.

Water here is very very deep 30 fathoms, + we often have to rush to get under weigh as our anchor drags + we drift close to the shore.

Boys went to a good concert ashore last night. An Aussie show + nearly all professionals. Horrie Dargie was in the party. Dave + Bill went, + said it was the best show they have seen. I worked Dave's watch, as he was dressed when we were told to set watch. It just filled in my time till the mess cleared up.

Wednesday 26th APRIL. Went round
to Sinschafen to water. Ship that
we took water from is on her
way to Sydney. I would have stowed
away but the Navy owes me a
month's pay & I can't sacrifice that.
Rowan came in today. She took
that ship from Admiralty Islands.
It appears that the Rowan ran
onto a reef and ripped her
A-deck down off as well as
damaging the A-deck compartment.
She is going to Sydney for repairs.
And to think it might have
been us.

Thursday 27th April. Many happy
returns Marg. Wish I were

home for this day.

Things about waiting to go all
day. Finally left at about 5 PM.
Great trouble too as the Rowan
was tied up alongside of us &
our anchor cables got tangled. It
was close at times that we
both kept from drifting ashore.
We bumped the Rowan about 4
times and badly damaged the
stanchion in her starboard waist.
He had our anchor chain
caught over his flukes. Bendigo
held Rowan from drifting while
we broke free. Rowan's skipper
will take a "can" for that
exhibition when we get in.

Wednesday 26th APRIL

Went round to Finschafen to water. Ship that we took water from is on her way to Sydney. I would have stowed away but the Navy owes me a month's pay + I can't sacrifice that.

Bowen came in today. She took that ship from Admiralty Islands. It appears that the Bowen ran onto a reef and ripped her Asdec dome off as well as damaging the Asdec compartment. She is going to Sydney for repairs. And to think it might have been us.

Thursday 27th April

Many happy returns Marg. Wish I were

home for this day.

Hung about waiting to go all day. Finally left at about 5PM. Great trouble too as the Bowen was tied up alongside of us + our anchor cables got tangled. It was close at times that we both kept from drifting ashore. We bumped the Bowen about 4 times and badly damaged the stanchion in her starb'd waist. He had our anchor chain caught over his flutes. Bendigo held Bowen from drifting while we broke free. Bowen's skipper will take a "can" for that exhibition when we get in.

Mr. Robinson our Asdic officer, & the last original officer left us today. Not one of our original officers are left now. This shipper is reputed to be leaving us at Milne Bay. Heading for Milne Bay for border clean.

Friday 28th April Beautiful day. Almost unbelievable the number of ships we passed between Langerue and Buna. Destroyers, Assault ships, Liberties & innumerable small craft. Called in at Buna for an hour or so. Saw a Fletcher class destroyer under full weigh today. They look solid jobs, but I prefer our Tribals.

Somebody got a paper cutting about our first Midshipman - Truscott. He has been appointed 3rd Secretary to the Russian diplomatic delegation in America. It says "Truscott saw action on the warship HMS Castlemain in the Trafalgar Sea". What a laugh. He was only at sea a blooming Dog Watch or so.

Saturday 29th April. Five calendar months away from Sydney. Roll on, roll on. When we were bumping with Bowen & other day we sprung a rivet & have developed a fair leak. That'll have to be fixed this time in. We may go into dock.

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Saturday 29th April

Five calendar months away from Sydney. Roll on, roll on. When we were bumping with Bowen t’other day we sprung a rivet + have developed a leak. That’ll have to be fixed this time in. We may go into dock.

Raining heavily. Appears there has been floods ashore. There has been 30 inches of rain. Saw lot of mail ~~at~~ came aboard - the rest is at the Post Office which is at present cut off by road. Can just imagine what the mud is like. I'm content to sit aboard or pass over my mail.

~~Sunday 30th April~~
~~Monday 1st May~~

Raining all day. Got one pay - and have another to collect. Money for our T.I.P.
~~Monday 1st May~~ Bill that another month over. Makes our total 5 months now - already the buzzards have started about us

going south. Majority seem convinced that it will be only 6 weeks or 2 months. I'll wait. Bill & I worked on arials all today.

~~Thursday May 2nd~~
~~Friday May 3rd~~

Bill and I went off as store party at 8 AM with Big Gunner & Little Gunner. After much muckling about we got over to Jamatodo about 10 AM. Then after fixing forms & whatnot we couldn't get a truck till 1/30 PM. So we went and had scraw with the Yankos then got our heads down. Of course when we got the truck we really worked clumping everything from trails to sides of beef.

Raining heavily. Appears there has been floods ashore. There has been 30 inches of rain. Fair bit of mail came aboard – the rest is at the Post Office which is at present cut off by road.

Can just imagine what the mud is like. I'm content to sit aboard + pore over my mail.

Sunday 30th April

Raining all day. Got one pay – and have another to collect. More for our T.T.F.

Monday 1st May

Well that's another month over. Makes our total 5 months now – already the buzzes have started about us

going south. Majority seem convinced that it will be only 6 weeks or 2 months, I'll wait. Bill + I worked on aerals all today

Tuesday May 2nd

Bill and I went off as store party at 8AM with Big Pusser + Little Pusser. After much mucking about we got over to Gamadodo about 10AM. Then after fixing forms + whatnot we couldn't get a truck till 1/30PM. So we went and had scan with the Yanks then got our heads down. Of course when we got the truck we really worked lumping everything from nails to sides of beef.

We managed to have some fun tho. To get back an old launch towed our lighter. Boy did we have some trouble, keeping her secure. We got back aboard finally after 7 o'clock, luckily our screen had been saved.

Wednesday May 3rd collected another pay - with my joining money I have £13 now. Quite a lot to me. Worked on aerials up the mast all day with Bill. We are both about the same doing a job so we argued all the time up there as to whose turn it was to lean out to the end of the yardarm.

Thursday & Friday 4th & 5th Finished work on aerials + worked on R/T portable set.

Saturday May 6th Got trapped to play football in afternoon. We played the Bundaberg - + won by 3 goals. The ground we played on was some ground. In 3 or 4 patches there was sticky black mud, ankle deep, that couldn't be avoided; while the other parts of the ground were like cement. Luckily we were both out of condition + so were fairly even. Very stiff after it, but didn't mind that - the sun will do us the world of good.

We managed to have some fun tho'. To get back an old launch towed our lighter. Boy did we have some trouble, keeping her secure. We got back aboard finally after 7 oclock, luckily our scam had been saved.

Wednesday May 3rd

Collected another pay – with my jewing money I have 13 pounds now. Quite a lot to me. Worked on aerals up the mast all day with Bill. We are both about the same doing a job so we argued all the time up there as to whose turn it was to lean out to the end of the yardarm.

Thursday + Friday 4th + 5th

Finished work on aerals + worked on R/T portable sets.

Saturday May 6th

Got trapped to play football in afternoon. We played the Bundaberg - + won by 3 goals. The ground we played on was some ground. In 3 or 4 patches there was sticky black mud, ankle deep, that couldn't be avoided; while the other parts of the ground were like cement. Luckily we were both out of condition and so were fairly even. Very stiff after it, but didn't mind that – the run will do us the world of good.

Sunday May 7th A detailed "volunteer" church party went ashore in forenoon. Bill represented the Sparkers, the heathen.

Yesterday's footballers limping about everywhere, so as could be expected a quiet day was had by all today.

Monday May 8th Out to sea doing exercises all day, arriving in about 6 PM.

Tuesday May 9th Rundaberg, York and us out again at 6 AM for anti-sub exercises. Dropped grenades as depth charges + on the whole we put up a good show + would have got the sub.

Two detailed to escort 2 York patrol subs on the surface. As Mr. took over one of them while we escorted the other then the China Strait + 20 mile out to sea.

Subs looked nice job on surface. We did 14 knots + they kept up without any trouble, cutting thru' the water like the bows of a destroyer. It's alright Marg. Got back in after 10 PM.

That means that this border clean there has been no shore leave except for the football party. Seen picture parties at night tho'.

Wednesday May 10th Out early again. This time for manoeuvres +

Sunday May 7th

A detailed "volunteer" church party went ashore in forenoon. Bill represented the Sparkers, the heathen.

Yesterday's footballers limping about everywhere, so as could be expected a quiet day was had by all today.

Monday May 8th

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Tuesday May 9th

Bundaberg. Yank and us out again at 6AM for anti-sub exercises. Dropped grenades as depth charges + on the

whole we put up a good show + would have got the sub.

Were detailed to escort 2 Yank patrol subs on the surface. An ML. took over one of them while we escorted the other thru' the China Straits + 20 mile out to sea. Subs looked nice job on surface. We did 14 knots + they kept up without any trouble, cutting thru' the water like the bows of a destroyer. Its alright Marg.

Got back in after 10PM. That means that this boiler clean there has been no shore leave except for the football party. Been picture parties at night tho'.

Wednesday May 10th

Out early again. This time for manoeuvres +

gunnery shoot. Alone towed a
sleeve for us to shoot at.

This completes our trials + tomorrow
we are bound for Langamah. Quite
a few aboard have an idea we
are going south & will be disappointed
when we go north. Buzzes have
been ripe during this week -
strongest being that will be
gone by six weeks. Goodness knows
where the boys get their buzzes.

In addition to the *Bowen*,
the *Geelong* also broke her down &
had to go south for a new one.
The *Behna* has just come from a
refit at Melbourne + her condenser
pump failed so she has gone

back to Brisbane. The trouble with this
ship is that nothing goes wrong.

Tuesday May 11th Loaded a lot of
gear including a jeep aboard + set
out for Langamah. Two passengers
on board. One is Roy Hirston
Official Photographer from the Australian
Alleges. He took quite a few
shots aboard + they'll probably
appear in the paper one of these
days.

Friday May 12th Arrived Langamah
23 hours after leaving Mitha Bay.
It took us 37 when we went down.
On the side swimming quarter of
our haul after arriving. Goodish it was
too. Couple of others waiting

Gunnery shoot. Plane towed a sleeve for us to shoot at. This completes our trials + tomorrow we are bound for Langemak. Quite a few aboard have an idea we are going south + will be disap-td when we go north. Buzzes have been rife during this week – strongest being that we'll be gone by six weeks. Goodness knows where the boys get these buzzes.

In addition to the Bowen, the Geelong also broke her dome + had to go south for a new one. The Echuca has just come from a refit at Melbourne + her condenser tubes failed so she has gone

back to Brisbane. The trouble with this ship is that nothing goes wrong.

Thursday May 11th

Loaded a lot of gear including a Jeep aboard + set out for Langemak. Few passengers on board. One is Roy Dunstan Official Photographer for the Australasian + Argus. He took quite a few photos aboard + they'll probably appear in the paper one of these days.

Friday May 12th

Arrived Langemak 23 hours after leaving Milne Bay. It took us 37 when we went down. Over the side swimming quarter of an hour after arriving. Goodoh it was too. Couple of letters waiting

- a corker wallet from Hango +
an anniversary letter. My wife
is a sport by gee. Richons Sid
is at Scarlet Beach - wish I'd
known that before, I could have
looked him up weeks ago.

SATURDAY MAY 13th. Loaded bags +
bags of mail, and odd gear,
took one sorry swathie passengers
in afternoon. In evening we went
alongside a Yank ship and
unloaded 15 bungs onto our
point to take up to the
Moresby at Madang. There was a
picture show on the Yank + we
were all clustered down aft
looking at it. The darn thing

was just getting good when we
got under weigh.

SUNDAY MAY 14th. Arrived Madang early
in forenoon - this has been quite
a decent little place in peace
time. Burns Chiff had nice building
here. Of course everything is battered
badly now. Surrounding very pretty -
it seems that the further up
a river goes the prettier it is.

Went alongside an old jolly
+ all hands unloaded the mail
etc. Mail would be very welcome
to the swathies. Made some inquiries
about Sid's mob + was informed
that they are all up here now.
They are in a bay a few miles

- a corker wallet from Margo + an anniversary letter. My wife is a sport by gee. Reckons Sid is at Scarlet Beach – wish I'd known that before, I could have looked him up weeks ago.

SATURDAY MAY 13TH

Loaded bags + bags of mail, and odd gear, took one some swottie passengers in afternoon. In evening we went alongside a Yank ship and unloaded 15 buoys onto our foc'sl to take up to the Moresby at Madang. There was a picture show on the Yank + we were all clustered down aft looking at it. The darn thing

was just getting good when we got under weigh.

SUNDAY MAY 14th

Arrived Madang early in forenoon - this has been quite a decent little place in peace time. Burns Philp had nice building here. Of course everything is battered badly now. Surrounding very pretty it seems that the further up a man goes the prettier it is.

Went alongside an old jetty + all hands unloaded the mail etc. Mail would be very welcome to the swotties. Made some enquiries about Sid's mob + was informed that they are all up here now. They are in a bay a few mile

from this jetty. If I get the chance
I may be able to go up by barge
to see one day. Thanks for the
h.c. barge - apart from them it
is all hurried. Wandered round
near ship & found Japs cloth cap,
button buttons & ended up by
diving for a Jap gas mask.
We went out & tied up alongside
Moresby & unloaded buoys. Sun up
here is very very strong. Seems
much stronger than Langerak -
this is 160 miles north of L'mak.

Took a couple of snatching
passengers aboard & left for Langerak
about 6 P.M. As we were coming
past the islands have bullets

started whizzing out the other way
towards the Kapunda. Boys said the
Kapunda fired back with her 4 inch.
There are Japs on the islands &
the corvettes up here do patrols each
night to prevent subs coming in
or barges to get them away. Buzz
is that there is still a 5 inch gun
in commission on the island. A few
of the corvettes have bombarded the
place. This sort of thing is fast
a joke. Somebody might get hurt
using real ammunition.

Monday May 15th. Arrived off Langerak
about 7 A.M., went down to Mussing
Island 3 or 4 mile down, to pick
up a Japs tanker. Look on

from this jetty. If I get the chance I may be able to go up by barge to see one day. Yanks run the L.C's barges - apart from them it is all Aussies. Wandered round near ship + found Jap cloth cap, tunic buttons + ended up by diving for a Jap gas mask. We went out + tied up alongside Moresby + unloaded buoys. Sun up here is very very strong. Seems much stronger than Langemak - this is 160 miles north of L'wak.

Took a couple of swottie passengers aboard + left for Langemak about 6PM. As we were coming past the islands tracer bullets

started whizzing out the other way towards the Kapunda. Boys said the Kapunda fired back with her 4 inch. There are Japs on the islands + the corvettes up here do patrols each night to prevent subs coming in or barges to get them away. Buzz is that there is still a 5 inch gun in commission on the island. A few of the corvettes have bombarded the place. This sort of thing is past a joke. Somebody might get hurt using real ammunition.

Monday May 15th

Arrived off Langemak about 7AM, went down to Nussing Island 3 or 4 mile down, to fuel of a Yank tanker. Took on

water, collected a colonel & a few officers & left for Madang again. Passed close in to Sidor about 6 AM, but not much to see there.

Tuesday May 14th Anchored close in. During the forenoon CB's scrubbed the sails for the whaler to take it sailing in the afternoon. We are supposed to be here for a few days & do a bombardment with the Arago on the islands where she arrives. Got an immediate signal about 2 PM recalling us to Hongkong. So we didn't leave till 6 AM leave was given till 5 PM. Made enquiries about barge to where Syd is but had missed

by 1/2 hour. Am gonna try to get fumiro to get ashore early next time we look like staying in, so that I can visit "my cousin whom I haven't seen for four years"

Lave & I wandered around all over the place & had a look at where the smotheries were burning all sort of gear. Then looked thru where the Japs had had their hospital but + messes. Quite a lot of old stuff laying about. cigarettes, postcards gear & various other stuff. Got a Jap hamachi & some cards. Bump fire seemed well set out. At places here there were Geisha girls or nurses also.

water, collected a colonel + a few officers + left for Madang again. Passed close in to Saidor about 6AM, but not much to see there.

Tuesday May 17th

Anchored close in. During the forenoon CB's scrubbed the sails for the whaler to take it sailing in the afternoon. We are supposed to be here for a few days + do a bombardment with the Warrego on the islands when she arrives. Got an immediate signal about 2PM recalling us to Langemak. As we didn't leave till 6PM leave was given till 5PM. Made enquiries about barge to where Syd is but had missed

by ½ hour. Am gonna try to get permission to get ashore early next time we look like staying in so that I can visit "my cousin whom I haven't seen for four years".

Dave + I wandered around all over the place + had a look at where the swotties were burning all sorts of gear. Then looked thru' where the Japs had had their hospital huts + messes. Quite a lot of old stuff laying about, cigarettes, postcards gear + various other stuff. Got a Jap haversack + some cards. Camp place seemed well set out. At places here there were Geisha girls or nurses also.

Saw 3 neat Jap groves near jitty.
Would like to get ashore here
for four of five hours again.
That time we are in a swothie
is gonna give us some invasion
money. Had a cup (or condensed
milk tin) full of tea at Joca
tent, then back aboard. Took
on a dozen or so swothies with
various illnesses. Two on speckles.
Wednesday 1st May Arrived L'mah
about 8 AM. Dressed at Hugging
then watered. Lay at anchor all
day. Swimming over the side from
2 PM till 6 PM - make a ward.
Shipper organized race round the
ship each day. First prize is

little of beer, second a lot of rum.
Each day the winner drops out - which
means that different bloke must win
each day. After about a dozen have
won it will be close to my turn.
That say this for this Shipper - he
gives us as much leave as he possibly
can - & allows us swimming everywhere
possible. If he want such a real
fig in his dealing with the blokes,
he would be quite good. But he beats
officers & all like dirt. Boop our
brilliant⁽³⁾ Gunner Officer has been
stunned of all duties because he nearly
ran us on a reef a while back. The
biddy keeps all boop's watches &
makes a much better job. This

Saw 3 neat Jap graves near jetty. Would like to get ashore here for four or five hours again. Next time we are in a swottie is gonna give us some invasion money.

Had a cup (or condensed milk tin) full of tea at YMCA tent, then back aboard. Took on a dozen or so swotties with various illnesses. Two on stretchers.

Wednesday 17th May

Arrived L'mak about 8AM. Fuelled at Nussing then watered. Lay at anchor all day. Swimming over the side from 2PM till 6PM – make + mend.

Skipper organised race round the ship each day.
First prize is

bottle of beer, second a tot of rum. Each day the winner drops out – which means that different bloke must win each day. After about a dozen have won it will be close to my turn. Must say this for this Skipper – he gives us as much leave as he possibly can - + allows us swimming everywhere possible. If he wasn't such a real pig in his dealings with the blokes he would be quite good. But he treats officers + all like dirt. Coop our brilliant (?) Gunnery Officer has been relieved of all duties because he nearly run us on a reef a while back. The Middy keeps all Coop's watches + makes a much better job. This

young Middy is a decent chap +
a good hand too.

Thursday May 18th Heavy till 5/30 PM
in a row.

Blondie + I went ashore
together. I found that Sid has
really gone from Scarlet Beach.
Blondie's cotter also left. So we
hitch hiked about nothing to Bloken
until time to go back. Got back
in time for swim before going on
watch.

Friday May 19th Under weigh during
forenoon, headed for Hollandia,
probably calling at Abaipe. It's a
500 odd mile trip, and as it's only
a slow convey we won't get
there until Monday. Sicked up

Libraries + the Co Yang, plus 8 L.S.T.
escort of 2 York destroyers, a PC, +
mines. Heard quite a few tales of
trouble at Hollandia Area, so maybe
our eventless run will break. We'll see.
Law to keep well out from coast
- route. Possibility that we will
be first corvette there, unless Benalla
is surveying up that way. We will
be outside Australian Mandated Territory
as we get there. Arrived Abandon
Saturday Mass ship stations, then
Action stations. I'm in the whaler
at abandon ship which is better than
on a bloomin' raft. Probably go
to Action stations before sunset each
night now for few days.

young Middy is a decent chap + is a good hand too.

Thursday May 18th

Leave till 5/30PM in arvo. Blondie + I went ashore together. I found that Sid has really gone from Scarlet Beach. Blondies cobber also left. So we hitch hiked about nattering to blokes, until time to go back. Got back in time for swim before going on watch.

Friday May 19th

Under weigh during forenoon, headed for Hollandia, probably calling at Ataipe. It's a 500 odd mile trip, and as it is only a slow convoy we won't get there until Monday. Picked up

2 Liberties + the Po Yang, plus 8 L.S.T.'s. Escort of 2 Yank destroyers, a PC + ourselves. Heard quite a few tales of trouble at Hollandia Area, so maybe our eventless run will break. We'll see. Have to keep well out from coast en route. Possibility that we will be first corvette there, unless Benalla is surveying up that way. We will be outside Australian Mandated Territory when we get there. Practised Abandon Ship stations, then Action stations. I'm in the whaler at abandon ship which is better than on a bloomin raft. Probably go to Action stations before sunset each night now for few days

Saturday May 20th Picked up 4
more LST + a destroyer, making
now 12 LST, 3 merchant ships +
a few gas barges. Escorted by 3
Yank destroyers, A.P.C. and ourselves.

Sunday May 21st

A couple of planes flew over
but identified as our own. There is
buzz that another plane flew over
convey then flew off. But only a
few are supposed to have seen it.
Weather very warm. Seems to be
an epidemic of flu on board -
big blokes turned in.

Monday May 22nd Go into this
place like Brisbane. We go up
the coast past Hollandia then

turn back in close. Can see signs
of bombardment ashore. Town itself
is reported to have a pub, a school
football field, gas + other places.
It is quite a place in peacetime.
Incidentally we are in a foreign
port - this belongs to the Dutch +
we are outside Aussie Mandated Territory.
Our motor boat now flies the White
Ensign afloat.

Lot of L.C.I.'s in here, also the
backforce. Renalla in, but we are
not corvette in to Hollandia.

To order here for us so we will
have to wait till they come

Shippers let a mob go across to
an island swimming. Looked good.

Saturday May 20th

Picked up more L S T + a destroyer, making now 12 LST'S, 3 merchant ships + a few gash barges. Escorted by 3 Yank destroyers, a P.C and ourselves.

Sunday May 21st

Couple of planes flew over but identified as our own. There is buzz that another plane flew over convoy then flew off. But only a few are supposed to have seen it. Weather very warm. Seems to be an epidemic of flu on board – two blokes turned in.

Monday May 22nd

Go into this place like Brisbane. We go up the coast past Hollandia then

turn back in close. Can see signs of bombardment ashore. Town itself is reported to have a pub, a school football field, gaol + other places. Was quite a place in peace time. Incidentally we are in a foreign port – this belongs to the Dutch + we are outside Aussie Mandated Territory. Our motor boat now flies the White Ensign afloat.

Lot of L.C.I.'s in here, also the Taskforce. Benalla in, but we are first corvette in to Hollandia. No orders here for us so we will have to wait till they come. Skipper let a mob go across to an island swimming. Looked goodoh.

Stew Nyedale got coral poisoning
on the foot. Had to bring him
back aboard, as he was in extreme
pain. Doc lanced the swelling &
let the blood drive the poison out.
Boys have to wear footwear off now.
Tuesday May 23rd Lot of ack ack
fire about 449. reckon it was a
raid, but our mob slept thru it
so we don't know.

Another swimming party went ashore
- again I was on watch. Beautiful weather.
Wednesday May 24th Chief Tiffie &
few others went ashore to see if they
could get any good machinery.
A large number of new aircraft engines,
wireless bombs etc, & other stuff.

at all ruined by fire. The big petrol
tank there was evidently set alight
by incendiaries. They brought back a
complete japs lathe & hope to get
it working. The lathe should be
with a couple of hundred quick new
dooray just got signal that
we are to go in Port Adelaide
on the 20th June. Whacker. Look
at Hargo there I come. We are
about 3½ thousand miles from
Adelaide but we'll get there.
Just cheers aboard.

Left Hollandia during afternoon.
a force of 5 cruisers & 18 destroyers
forming up when we left. They
are going to do some place over.

Stew Drysdale got coral poisoning on the foot. Had to bring him back aboard, as he was in extreme pain. Doc lanced the swelling + let the blood drive the poison out. Boys have to wear footwear off now.

Tuesday May 23rd

Lot of ack ack fire about 4AM. Reckon it was a raid, but our mob slept thru' it so we don't know.

Another swimming party went ashore – again I was on watch. Beautiful weather.

Wednesday May 24th

Chief Tiffie + few others went ashore to see if they could get any good machinery. A large number of new aircraft engines, wireless bomber sets, + other stuff

but all ruined by fire. The big petrol drum there was evidently set alight by incendiaries. They brought back a complete Jap lathe + hope to get it working. The lathe would be worth a couple of hundred quid new.

Hooray just got signal that we are to be in Port Adelaide on the 20th June. Whacko. Look out Margo here I come. We are almost 3½ thousand miles from Adelaide but we'll get there. Great cheers aboard.

Left Hollandia during afternoon. Task force of 5 cruisers + 18 destroyers forming up when we left. They are going to do some place over

Thursday May 25th Blues being aried
& white being dholged everywhere.
Blondie + I began pressing firm for
blues now, as bhahi stuff will
be just about finished.

Mary owes us a month's pay
today, which will probably collect
at Mulu Bay on our way home.
Friday May 26th Beautiful warm day -
bit of a sing song on fire in
evening. Doc had his ~~shells~~ wheels.
Will be sorry to leave this weather
in exchange for what it will be
like down south in June + July.
But if it snowed all my life,
I'd still go, just to get
home.

Saturday May 27th Arrived Langamah.
Hear that Langamah has had no
signal about our going south. A
signal sent from here requesting
news looks as tho we will stop
at this trip, unfortunately.

Sunday Hung round at anchor
Monday } waiting to see what is to
Tuesday } happen. Many buzzards flying
and a few bats watched.
Monday a cheer from brother-in-law
(L. Adford, West, Labor Reynolds, Albie Lunt
- myself) had a challenge sailing
with Brown and Skell, and
was lucky enough to win for
which a fringe of one bottle of
beer each was given.

Thursday May 25th

Blues being aired + whites being dhoby'd everywhere. Blondie + I began pressing firm for blues now, as khaki stuff will be just about finished.

Navy owes us a month's pay today which we'll probably collect at Milne Bay on our way home.

Friday May 26th

Beautiful warm day - bit of a sing song on foc'sl in evening. Doc had his ukelele. Will be sorry to leave this weather in exchange for what it will be like down south in June + July. But if it snowed all my leave, I'd still go, just to get home.

Saturday May 27th

Arrived Langemak. Appears that Langemak has had no signal about our going south. A signal sent from here requesting orders. Looks as tho' we will cop another trip, unfortunately.

Sunday) Hung round at anchor waiting to see

Monday) what is to happen. Many buzzes

Tuesday) flying round, and a few bets wagered.

Monday a crew from Castlemaine (Len Ashford, Wert, Snow Reynolds, Allie Twist + myself) had a challenge sailing race with Bowen and Stawell, and were lucky enough to win, for which a prize of one bottle of beer each was given.

Lower challenged us to a swimming race & just won. Our blokes got 2nd + 3rd places.

Waked at Timorhafen & fuelled at Hurring on Wednesday. Thursday so will know tomorrow what doing. Wednesday May 31st Under weigh about 6:30 AM headed for Admiral's. Two corvettes escorting one ship. Proceeding at about 11 knots, but having to do this last convey is a nuisance. By the time we get back we won't have too much spare time to get to Adelaide by 20th June. Thursday June 1st Arrived at SEEDAKER Bay early in forenoon. Skipper soon off after rabbits. He bought

case of gear aboard. The officers too bought spirits for gear, rifles & binoculars.

Went sailing for four hours - not much wind but had pleasant afternoon. Friday June 2nd Left Admiral's at 10 AM. This bay is a popular one with the Skipper. 3 escorts + 3 ships.

Saturday June 3rd Arrived Langerak during afternoon. Mail came aboard sufficiently. We thought it would be all held at Milne Bay. I got 15 letters, which was about the most. I'm a Personality Kid. It's great to get a heap of mail tho, & to know folk haven't forgotten you.

Bowen challenged us to a swimming race + just won.
Our blokes got 2nd + 3rd places.

Watered at Finschafen + fuelled at Nussing on Tuesday
so will know tomorrow what's doing.

Wednesday May 31st

Under weigh about 6.30AM headed for Admiralties.
Two corvettes escorting one ship. Proceeding at about
11 knots, but having to do this last convoy is a
nuisance. By the time we get back we won't have too
much spare time to get to Adelaide by 20th June.

Thursday June 1st

Arrived SEEADLER Bay early in forenoon. Skipper
soon off after rabbits. He bought

cases of gear aboard. The officers too swopped spirits
for gear, rifles + tommyguns.

Went sailing for few hours – not much wind but had
pleasant afternoon.

Friday June 2nd

Left Admiralties at 6AM. This 6AM is a popular time
with this Skipper. 3 escorts + 3 ships.

Saturday June 3rd

Arrived Langemak during afternoon. Mail came aboard
surprisingly. We thought it would be all held at Milne
Bay. I got 18 letters, which was about the most. I'm a
Personality Kid. It's great to get a heap of mail tho, + to
know folk haven't forgotten you.

Swimming during Tint Dog. It will be
our last, so we made the most of
it. Tancy swimming down south on lean
- back.

SUNDAY JUNE 4th Today I join the
ranks of the ancients. 24 years old
& never been kissed. What about
volunteers? ~~Also~~ looked for grey hair
but can see no sign yet.

Left for Milne Bay at 6 AM

MONDAY JUNE 5th Arrived in Milne

Bay about 11 AM & were greeted with
surprising news that we are to
do a boiler clean here. Seems
silly especially as we have to do
one again when we go into dock.
I suppose it is to fill in the extra

collected another 10 letters - which

day Tancy having to spend the
night in the hole. It has been raining
here now for 3 weeks. Melbourne couldn't
be and worse as regards weather.

TUESDAY JUNE 6th Collected 4 fays and one
and paid up until 22nd June. Will
probably collect leave & ~~return~~ virtually
stay in Adelaide.

Worked round ship. Went
on shore one forenoon to try to
get over to Gamadodo for slops,
but missed boat & got only a
drenching.

WEDNESDAY Got over to Gamadodo
about 9 AM. Walked thru mud
and deep, got drenched with rain,
but got 30 worth of Yankee dungarees.

Swimming during First Dog. It will be our last, so we made the most of it. Fancy swimming down south on leave - bah.

SUNDAY JUNE 4TH

Today I join the ranks of the ancients. 24 years old + never been kissed. What about volunteers? Looked for grey hairs but can see no sign yet. Left for Milne Bay at 6AM.

MONDAY JUNE 5TH

Arrived in Milne Bay about 11AM + were greeted with surprising news that we are to do a boiler clean here. Seems silly especially as we have to do one again when we go into dock. S'pose it is to fill in the extra

8 days. Collected another 10 letters – whacko. Fancy having to spend the time in this hole. It's been raining here for 3 weeks now. Melbourne couldn't be much worse as regards weather.

TUESDAY JUNE 6TH

Collected 4 pays and are now paid up until 22nd June. We'll probably collect leave + victualling pay in Adelaide.

8th + 9th. Worked round ship. Went ashore one forenoon to try to get over to Gama-dodo for slops, but missed boat + got only a drenching.

10th SATURDAY

Got over to Gamadodo about 9AM. Walked thru' mud ankle deep, got drenched with rain, but got 30 pounds worth of Yank dungarees.

single + independent for us + stokers.
Arrived at store boat at 1115 +
had to wait there patiently(?)
until Stawell + Lambury got their
stores there which took them until
1630. Got back aboard about 1800.
Going to sea at 6 AM. About
22 passengers going south on
leave. Air Force Group Captain, Army
Captain, about 4 Naval Officers +
16 ratings. They'll be sorry if
it gets rough (that if it is ~~too~~
superfluous there. It will be rough)
SUNDAY JUNE 11th On our way to
Hobart. Going straight across
outside the Reef so it will be
tough going. Today has disproved

the dit about Sunday being a
day of rest. Boy this is sure breaking
it in. Started early and is getting
even rougher tonight. What a ship
this will be. Safe to say that
80% of crew been sick, and all
but 2 of passengers are really out
of commission. The Army captain is
as bad as I've ever seen anybody. They
were afraid he would go over the
side. The reckons he'd rather spend
2 months in the jungle than travel
on another corvette. RAAF officer almost
the same. As a matter of fact the
passenger Naval officers are doing
all the work as our Jimmy + the
Gunnery Officer + Middy are all sick.

singlets + underpants for us + stokers. Arrived at store boat at 1115 + had to wait there patiently(?) until Stawell + Bundbury got their stores there, which took them until 1630. Got back aboard about 1800. Going to sea at 6AM. About 22 passengers going south on leave. Air Force Group Captain, Army Captain, about 4 Naval Officers + 16 ratings. They'll be sorry if it gets rough (that if is superfluous here. It will be rough)

SUNDAY JUNE 11TH

On our way to Brisbane. Going straight across outside the Reef so it will be tough going. Today has disproved

the dit about Sunday being a "day of rest". Boy this is sure breaking us in. Started early and is getting even rougher tonight. What a trip this will be. Safe to say that 80% of crew been sick; and all but 2 of passengers are really out of commission. The Army captain is as bad as I've ever seen anybody. They were afraid he would go over the side. He reckons he'd rather spend 12 months in the jungle than travel on another corvette. RAAF officer almost the same. As a matter of fact the passenger Naval officers are doing all the work as our Jimmy, + the Gunnery Officer + Middy are all sick.

Blondie & I have qualified for "Lily Water Club", but I have lasted today out in one piece. Don't feel too hopeful about next few days tho. Can't understand why the Old Man didn't go inside the reef for a bit of shelter. He gets shook himself. As well, we are headed home so let 'em come. They'll probably be few times worse (if possible) in Bass Straits.

MONDAY JUNE 12th Quite a breaking in day. night. Must be among the roughest we have ever struck. And that's not because we aren't used to it. Yaw little sleep last night. Even after coming off the

Middle Watch I couldn't sleep. Decks covered with water. And for first time since ship was commissioned there was three or four inches of water in the mess decks. It came through the air vents. The vent to the W/P cabin also flooded & the wireless cabin had a couple of inches of water on the deck. The batteries were soaked in salt water & the fumes were vile. Salt water on battery acid gives off chlorine gas, enough of which will prove deadly. The cable locker & two forridy stores had to be pumped out. In the light of day the mess looked really what it is named - a mess.

Blondie + Dave qualified for 'Bilge Water Club", but I have lasted today out in one piece. Don't feel too hopeful about next few days tho'. Can't understand why the Old Man didn't go inside the reef for a bit of shelter. He gets crook himself. Ah well, we are headed home, so let 'em come. They'll probably be ten times worse (if possible) in Bass Straits.

MONDAY JUNE 12TH

Quite a breaking in night. Must be among the roughest we have ever struck. And that's not because we aren't used to it. Very little sleep last night. Even after coming off the

Middle Watch I couldn't sleep. Decks covered with water. And for first time since ship was commissioned there was three or four inches of water in the mess decks. It came through the air vents. The vent to the W/T cabins also flooded + the wireless cabin had a couple of inches of water on the deck. The batteries were soaked in salt water + the fumes were vile. Salt water on battery acid gives off chlorine gas, enough of which will prove deadly. The cable locker + two forr'd stores had to be pumped out. In the light of day the mess looked really what it is named – a mess.

Kept rough all day - all our passengers
praying they get off in Brisbane.

Tuesday + Wednesday 13th + 14th

Still rough, but flattened out
a bit. Still a helluva lot of chops
not too happy. My luck still
holding extra good. Getting colder
as we go south. Incidentally our bittens
is striking the rough weather like
a seasoned old salt. Off Norton
Light balowdra about 8 PM and
steamed up to anchor at Gile Light.

Thursday June 15th Tied up alongside
Kewarra wharf at 7:30 AM. Same plea
as we tied up on our way home
last time. Brisbane natives sent
off on leave here. For the first
(Last lap of 1080 miles towards home)

Two we donned sweaters + socks this
morning. Blues is shore rig.

Went ashore for a stroll after six thirty
but only went to a ~~new~~ ^{newer} show.

That with cars, trams + people running
everywhere its too dangerous for a
lark like me. I prefer the peace +
quiet safety of the ship.

Friday June 16th Left at 6 AM bound
for Sydney. Doing 205 revs plus 2
lost tide. Sea just light flat
topped swell. All the recently
sick sailors quite happy now. E.T.A. ^{AM} 6 PM

Saturday June 17th Breeze pretty fresh,
but sea still moderate. Women
pushing her along. Doing 205 on
the bridge + 230 below. Got her

Kept rough all day – all our passengers praying they get off in Brisbane.

Tuesday & Wednesday 13th + 14th

Still rough, but flattened out a bit. Still a helluva lot of chaps not too happy. My luck still holding extra good. Getting colder as we go south. Incidentally our kitten is sticking the rough weather like a seasoned old salt. Off Moreton Light Caloundra about 8PM and steamed up to anchor at Pile Light.

Thursday June 15th

Tied up alongside Newstead wharf at 7.30AM. Same place as we tied up on our way home last time. Brisbane natives sent off on leave here. For the first (First lap of 1080- miles towards home)

time we donned sweaters + socks this morning. Blues is shore rig. Went ashore for a stroll after six thirty but only went to a newsreel show. What with cars, trams + people running everywhere its too dangerous for a lad like me. I prefer the peace + quiet safety of the ship.

Friday June 16th

Left at 6AM bound for Sydney. Doing 205 revs plus 2 knot tide. Sea just light flat topped swells. All the recently sick sailors quite happy now. E.T.A. 6AM.

Saturday June 17th

Breeze pretty fresh, but sea still moderate. Stokers pushing her along. Doing 205 on the bridge + 230 below. Got her

up to 244 rev which is our record
up to date. Should be in about
6-30 PM. That's 12 hours ahead of
our time. Good effort. Hope it's
the same from Sydney onwards.
Ship is 2 years old today & she
can still beat the best of 'em.
69,451 miles up at noon today.

Sydney at 6 o'clock. Nearly
furious with first sight. Goodish.
Tied up at Thruvale out wharf.
Went ashore for weekend.

Monday. Went round to Symant
to have the sweep cable, then
tied up at No 2 buoy at home Cove.
In till Friday, doing nothing else
but run round all the time

(21 Sydney - she went off on leave)

getting stocked up with stores. We
have put some stuff aboard in those
two days. Headed for Adelaide at 2 PM/23.
Saturday June 24th Quite a surprise. Sea
very calm - only a long swell. But
by its sure cold.

Sunday June 25th Bit rougher but still
not bad. Yesterday was hot compared
to today. If I looked out on deck
I'll bet I'd see ice, but I'm hanged
& I'm going out to look over. I'll
see if it's like this in Melbourne. Buy
a big one hot water bottles Margo.
Passed into South Australian waters
about 3 AM. Another state to my list.
Passed Cape Otway when Dad is about
2 PM but too far out from land.

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Went round to Pymont to leave LL sweep cable, then tied up at No. 2 buoy at Lane Cove. In till Friday, doing nothing else but run round all the time.

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Quite a surprise. Sea very calm – only a long swell. But boy its sure cold.

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Bit rougher but still not bad. Yesterday was hot compared to today. If I looked out on deck I'll bet I'd see ice, but I'm hanged if I'm going out to look even. I'll die if its like this in Melbourne. Buy up big on hot water bottles Margo. Passed into South Australian waters about 3AM. Another state to my list. Passed Cape Otway where Dad is about 2PM but too far out from land.