

Book Two Feb.  
1945

Book Six 5/2/45 to 26/4/1945

26<sup>th</sup> April 1945.

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H.M.A.S. SWAN  
FEB '45.

Passed for W/T 3 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. '45.

H.M.A.S. SWAN  
FEB '45

Passed for W/T 3 22 Feb. '45.

Miss Wendi to Hollandia  
Hollandia to Madang  
Madang to Torokina.

February 5<sup>th</sup> 1945 Went off on  
recreation party to small island  
nearby. Big sandbank there of  
clean white sand, ideal for  
playing about & having a good  
time. Young Terry endeavored  
to do a back somersault off  
the sand & fell on his face  
cutting his forehead, nose & lip.  
Quite amusing.

Feb 7<sup>th</sup> Went ashore to  
play Howell basketball. Both  
our teams won. The first team  
won 27 to 6. Only played one  
game each so wasn't very  
strenuous.

~~Feb 12<sup>th</sup>~~ Ashore

Feb 9<sup>th</sup> Platypus arrived. She  
looks just as dirty as she

Mios Woendi to Hollandia  
Hollandia to Madang  
Madang to Torokina

February 5th 1945

Went off on recreation party to small island nearby. Big sandbank there of clean white sand, ideal for playing about + having a good time. Young Ferg endeavoured to do a back somersault off the sand + fell on his face, cutting his forehead, nose + lip. Quite amusing.

Feb 7th

Went ashore to play Stawell basketball. Both our teams won. The first team won 27 to 6. Only played one game each so wasn't very strenuous.

Feb 9th

Platypus arrived. She looks just as dirty as she



did in Darwin and Cairns.

Gradually our arguing with Sir  
Pige the Signal Boats, & the  
Chief had some effect because  
apart from the Chief & coders  
there only Blue is going over.  
It is a dirty point to show  
Blue, especially as the Club  
has already got a P.O. & heading  
let us 4. Perhaps. Taking Blue  
will put us in 3 watches too.

Long McNamee the big is also  
leaving, plus all the Gash  
hands. Our CB's now will  
your total 10 instead of 19.  
In all there are about 30 to  
40 Cong 3's now going from  
here. Goodness knows how  
they will get on in the Club.  
The accommodation situation

is extra bad there. The P.O.'s mess  
is said to have room for 15  
P.O.'s & there will be 35 in it.  
It is disgraceful really, but it  
typical of the Navy. Thousands  
of pounds has been spent on  
machinery, but hardly a cent on  
the crew's quarters.

I got quite a surprise to find  
Les Gundwald, our old Leading  
book from the 'battleship' aboard  
here. We had a good old  
rather about various blobs.

Les proudly displayed his photos  
of his little daughter who is  
now six months old. Naturally  
I didn't have to pretend to  
be interested. - I really was.  
The fact Les is going to get  
3 of the photos sent to Jane.

did in Darwin and Cairns. Evidently our arguing with Sir Page, the Signal Bos'n, + the Chief had some effect because apart from the Chief + coder Vale only Blue is going over.

It is a dirty point to show Blue, especially as the Plats has already got a P.O. a heading Tel + 4 Sparkers.

Taking Blue will put us in 3 watches too.

Doug Warne the Sig is also leaving, plus all the Gash hands. Our CB's mess will now total 10 instead of 19.

Goodness knows how they will get on in the Plats.

The accommodation situation

is extra bad there. The P.O.'s mess is said to have room for 15 P.O.s + there will be 35 in it. It is disgraceful really, but is typical of the Navy. Thousands of pounds has been spent on machinery, but hardly a cent on the crew's quarters.

Got quite a surprise to find Les Grunwald, our old Leading Cook from the Castlebluper aboard her. We had a good old natter about various blokes.

Les proudly displayed his photos of his little daughter who is now six months old. Naturally I didn't have to pretend to be interested – I really was. Les is going to get 3 of the photos sent to me.



Feb 10<sup>th</sup> Still alongside Plab, rather depressing being so near to the damned thing. Our new Skipper & officers aboard. New Skipper is a German Lt. & quite a young chap. Most of our staff officers are only young sub lieutenants.

Feb 11<sup>th</sup> Went out to anchor away from Plab. We are just an ordinary ship again awaiting till we are ready to sail to Madang for orders about our bombardment. Hope we work with the Aussie Army. May help. Biddie took a bit.

Feb 12<sup>th</sup> Had a swimming race around the ship. Show a low & high diving comp,

It provided us with quite a laugh. One of the 'lubbies' is Sports Officer & is taking an interest in it. He has a list for Rugby, Aussie Rules, tennis, cricket and basket ball on the board for names to be put down, in case we get the chance to play at any sport. I went around to put my name in, but found that one of my "friends" had put my name down for all except Rugby. So I entered under my name there on principle.

Went to pictures on Plab in evening. Blue got us a good position. He is very disappointed at the thought of us going to sea & leaving him there. God show on at pictures. They show

Feb 10th

Still alongside Plats + rather depressing being so near to the darned thing.

Our new Skipper + officers aboard. New Skipper is a Permanent Lieutenant + quite a young chap. Most of our gash officers are only young sub lieutenants.

Feb 11th

Went out to anchor away from Plats. We are just an ordinary ship again waiting till we are ready to sail to Madang for orders about our bombardment. Hope we work with the Aussie Army.  
May help Siddie Foote a bit.

Feb 12th

Had a swimming race around the ship, then a low + high diving comp.

It provided us with quite a laugh. One of the "Subbies" is Sports Officer + is taking an interest in it. He has a list for Rugby, Aussie Rules, tennis, cricket and basketball on the board for names to be put down, in case we get the chance to play at any sport. I went around to put my name in, but found that one of my "friends" had put my name down for all except Rugby. So I entered my name there on principle.

Went to pictures on Plats in evening. Blue got us a good position. He is very discontented at the thought of us going to sea + leaving him there. Good show on at pictures. They show

advertising slides before the picture.  
Some of them date back to the  
days of bustles & talbans.  
Also recruiting slides to join  
the Strans & Wags. Said  
cheer to Blue & Ted as we  
don't know whether we will be  
back at MIOS WOENDI.

Feb 13<sup>th</sup> Off to sea at last.  
Nice cool weather with cool  
wind. Only snag is that this  
skipper won't allow any footholes  
to be open at sea. It will  
be like an oven in the messes  
on a hot day. The leading  
hands complained & we are now  
allowed to open one in each  
mess. That's not much better.  
However he will probably relax  
later on.

Evenings at sea are good for  
sleeping, there always seems  
to be a breeze.

Feb 14<sup>th</sup> Arrived Hollandia -  
picked up our new P.O. tele here.  
He is a young chap & so  
far seems a quiet decent  
chap. Alongside Tankerbury for  
a while. She had been up  
at Luzon & saw a bit of  
fun. Would like to go up  
for a look at Philippines.  
Left for Madang about 6pm -  
arriving Friday forenoon.

Feb 15<sup>th</sup> Arrived Madang -  
decided to paint out our office,  
as we closed down watch.  
Painted deck head white & bulkheads  
a light sort of "duck egg" blue.  
P.O. tele ripped up the patchy

advertising slides before the picture. Some of them date back to the days of bustles + talkies.

Also recruiting slides to join the Wrens + Waafs. Said cheerio to Blue + Les as we don't know whether we will be back at Mios Woendi.

#### Feb 12th

Off to sea at last. Nice cool weather with cool wind. Only snag is that this Skipper won't allow any portholes to be open at sea. It will be like an oven in the messes on a hot day. The Leading Hands complained + we are now allowed to open one in each mess. That's not much better. However he will probably relax later on

Evening at sea goodoh for sleeping, there always seems to be a breeze.

#### Feb 14th

Arrived Hollandia – picked up our new P.O. Tel here. He is a young chap + so far seems a quiet decent chap. Alongside Hawkesbury for a while. She had been up at Luzon + saw a bit of fun. Would like to go up for a look at Philippines. Left for Madang about 6pm – arrived Friday forenoon.

#### Feb 16th

Arrived Madang – decided to paint out our office, as we closed down watch. Painted deck head white + bulkheads a light sort of “duck egg” blue. P.O. Tel ripped up the patchy



continue from the decks as  
the boards were scrubbed. The  
looksa very ~~tidy~~ tidily  
drop of office now.

In the afternoon we got  
rid of the old 49' transmitter,  
lowering most of it over the  
side from the spool into  
a barge. There must have  
been about 15 cases of the  
gear. It took up about 9  
square feet of room in the  
office. Replaced this new A.W.A.  
transmitter which has 3 times  
more efficiency takes up 3  
square feet.

We thought that we would  
be getting our new to  
ourselves this time, but we  
embarked another crowd of

passengers to take to a P.O.  
at Tokina on Bougainville Island.  
Seven or eight of them are  
in our mess. Got paid  
again today, we are right  
up to date now.

Played Madang water polo  
and our crew team beat  
them 8-1. There was no  
more swimming allowed after  
that, because a shark was  
sighted off the steamer a bit.  
~~Saturday 26th~~ Left Madang  
about 10 AM. Beautiful day  
with a nice cool breeze.  
The country between Madang  
to Tinschafen is peculiar in  
that the rugged wooded  
mountains don't start from the  
water edge. At least, the



cortisene from the Deck + the boards were scrubbed. She looks a veria tiddley drop of office now.

In the afternoon we got rid of the old 49' transmitter, lowering most of it over the side from the foc'sl into a barge. There must have been about 15 cases of the gear. It took up about 9 square feet of room in the office, whereas this new A.W.A transmitter which has 3 times more efficiency takes up 3 square feet.

We thought that we would be getting our mess to ourselves this time, but we embarked another crowd of

passengers to take to a P.D at Torokina on Bougainville Island.

Seven or eight of them are in our mess. Got paid again today, we are right up to date now.

Played Madang water polo and our One team beat them 8 - 1. There was no more swimming allowed after that, because a shark was sighted up the stream a bit.

#### Saturday Feb 17th

Left Madang about 8AM. Beautiful day with a nice cool breeze. The country between Madang + Finschafen is peculiar in that the rugged wooded mountains don't start from the waters edge. At least, the

mountains themselves do, but the dense growth does not start until far back on the ranges. The mountains along the coast line are almost bare of trees. They are probably deep in human grass. But from the sea it is rather an unusual effect. Tracks formed by waterways & other reasons can plainly be seen from top to bottom. In places the horizontal rock formations (I presume it is rock) across the mountains reminds you of a cross sectional drawing in a geography book.

Sunday 18th Feb - Sun very warm and hardly a ripple on the water, yet there is

a breeze on the upper deck. Had a lecture at 1015 by Lieut. Commander ~~Reid~~ <sup>Telford</sup>. He is in charge of the Intelligence section in West Guinea & our Mandated ~~Territories~~ Territories. He left the Navy in 1922 and spent the next 17 years as a Government Administrator all through these parts, so he certainly knows it. He took over control of Intelligence before the Japs came into the war. The work done by these services commissioned into Intelligence is wonderful. The lecture was a real eye opener, and we got an insight into the large part they have played in these areas. Just odd men on their own with

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Tele. radio sets regularly reporting valuable information from behind the Jap lines. Those men really do deserve medals because they are continually in danger.

The lecture was well worth listening to.

The Skipper said spoke over the p.m. today. He is going to have a chat over at every Sunday. He explained as much as he could tell us about the work we would be doing, and said our bombardment jobs would start in about a fortnight time in support of the 16th Division up around WEWAK. (It will be good to help our own Aussie coppers) The Skipper said that

he hoped it wouldn't interfere with our chances of an early refit. By gee he certainly does not hope it any more than we do. Our slogan is "Longer + more refits."

This Skipper is a good bloke, as is the Jimmy. The Skipper isn't trust that young sub-Lieutenant, who is practically hopeless. Consequently, the Skipper spends almost all day + night on the bridge. He had to tell the Subbie who is supposed to be the Navigator, how to hold a sextant properly today. There are A.B.'s on the ship who could buy and sell these Subbies, but are forced to watch them



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The lecture was well worth listening to,

The Skipper spoke over the penetrope today. He is going to have a chat over it every Sunday. He explained as much as he could tell us about the work we would be doing, and said our bombardment jobs would start in about a fortnight's time in support of the 6th Division up around WEWAK. (It will be good to help our own Aussie cobbbers). The Skipper said that

he hoped it wouldn't interfere with our chances of an early refit. By gee he certainly does not hope it any more than we do. Our slogan is "Longer + more refits".

This Skipper is a good bloke, as is the Jimmy. The Skipper can't trust the young Sub Lieutenants who are practically hopeless. Consequently, the Skipper spends almost all day + night on the bridge. He had to tell the Subbie who is supposed to be the Navigator, how to hold a sextant properly today. There are AB's on the ship who could buy and sell these Subbies, but are forced to watch them



show their ignorance. Seems a  
poor system, but in the Navy  
brains aren't an asset for  
officers. At least, brains are but  
common sense isn't. That is  
why we can feel safe with the  
majority of permanent officers. At  
least they nearly all know  
their job.

Monday 19th Feb. Arrived at  
Toukima. Very big volcano  
inland - an active one apparently.  
Great depth of mountains inland,  
but along shore the land  
is very flat & ~~low~~ at  
present very dusty. The dust  
from the roads ashore is  
hanging like a cloud ~~over~~  
over the hub. Wouldn't fancy  
being stuck ashore there, but

probably the Yankee how things  
will be organized. Left for  
Tinchafen to fuel, at 4 pm.  
So that is our glimpse of  
Bougainville. We may be back  
to do bombardments there.

TUESDAY 20th Feb. Almost a gale  
last night. Wind & rain blew  
in driving gusts. Sleepers had  
to get off the upper decks or  
be blown or washed off.  
I crouched under my "tent"  
and was lucky enough to  
keep dry & yet not have  
to shift below decks. It was  
a wild night. Very cool &  
windy all day. These sudden  
changes make this feel tired,  
but a sleep thru' the day  
only makes you feel worse.

show their ignorance. Seems a poor system, but in the Navy brains aren't an asset for officers. At least, brains are but common sense isn't. That is why we can feel safe with the majority of Permanent Officers. At least they nearly all know their job.

Monday 19th Feb.

Arrived at Torokina. Very big volcano inland – an active one apparently. Great depth of mountains inland, but along foreshore the land is very flat + at present very dusty. The dust from the roads ashore is hanging like a cloud over the huts. Wouldn't fancy being stuck ashore there, but

probably the Yanks have things well organised. Left for Finschafen to fuel, at 4pm. So that is our glimpse of Bouganville. We may be back to do bombardments tho'.

TUESDAY 20th FEB.

Almost a gale last night. Wind + rain blew in driving gusts. Sleepers had to get off the upper deck or be blown or washed off.

I crouched under my "tent" and was lucky enough to keep dry + yet not have to shift decks. It was a wild night. Been cool + windy all day. These sudden changes make us feel tired, but a sleep thru' the day only makes you feel worse.

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb

Arrived Madang  
Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb

Ballad in at Tinschafen  
to fuel. Don't sized British English  
escort carrier there. Spent from  
a couple of transports that is  
the first shipper ship we have  
seen up here. Spore they'll do the  
Java end. The Yanks have this  
area well taped off. Left for  
Madang about 5 pm.

Thursday Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>

Arrived Madang about  
7 o'clock. Chief told us that Kobbie,  
Ray + I were to go off for  
exams. We hadn't expected it  
so soon + had only done  
a bit of study. However we  
had to go off. None of us

were keen on whether we passed or  
not. Kobbie going for T.O. is alright,  
but the main reason for Ray  
+ I sitting is that it might  
increase our chances of a course  
at Binders.

The Warrant Tel was the bloke  
we brought down from Miss Weendi,  
and he gave us a good go.  
In the afternoon he came out  
to the ship and asked a few  
more questions about the new  
transmitter. To our surprise we  
were all passed. That makes  
Ray + I W.F.'s and will go  
on a further 4 to eventually become  
Leading Tels. Luckily the list is  
long + they aren't making leading  
Tels very rapidly, so we have  
a chance of getting a course

Wednesday 21st Feb.

Called in at Finschafen to fuel. Decent sized English escort carrier there. Apart from a couple of transports that is the first Skipper ship we have seen up here. S'pose they'll do the Java end. The Yanks have this area well taped off. Left for Madang about 5PM.

Thursday Feb 22nd.

Arrived Madang about 7 oclock. Chief told us that Nobbie, Ray + I were to go off for exams. We hadn't expected it so soon + had only done a bit of study. However we had to go off. None of us

were keen on whether we passed or not. Nobby going for T.O. is alright, but the main reason for Ray + I sitting is that it might increase our chance of a course at Flinders.

The Warrant Tel was the bloke we brought down from Mios Woendi and he gave us a good go. In the afternoon he came out to the ship and asked a few more questions, about the new transmitter. To our surprise, we were all passed. That makes Ray + I, W/T's and we'll go on a roster to eventually become Leading Tels. Luckily the list is long + they aren't making Leading Tels very rapidly, so we have a chance of getting a course



first, if the war lasts long  
enough. At present I know  
very little more about wireless than  
I ever did, but with this minute  
knowledge I may learn something  
from of course if I could get one.

Surprised to see Bob & Vivie  
ashore here at Madang. He has  
been there about a month.

The mill he had almost a year  
in and out of Sydney so can't  
complain. Bob is the father  
about June - kids seem  
to be the order of the day.  
Nearly all the old men who  
are married, have or are having  
kids.

Friday The best part of the  
day this was when a mail  
came aboard. We were half

expecting it to still be going  
to Wendi, but we got  
almost all our mail, so were  
extra pleased. I got 10 letters,  
that put quite a grin on my  
face. - 6 from Frank - one  
from Mum, Sis, Valda & the Wood.  
Friday 23rd Feb.

Took out 230 swallows  
about 5 AM this morning. They  
were everywhere on the upper  
decks. They then left Madang at  
about 5:30 am & brought the  
swallows to Hansa Bay arriving  
about 3 PM. The swallows are  
going to a place on the  
coast near that volcano Marnin.  
Coming in we passed close to  
it & got a better look than  
when we passed on our way  
from Hollandia.



first, if the war lasts long enough. At present I know very little more about wireless than I ever did, but with this minute knowledge I may know something from a course if I would get one.

Surprised to see Bob Vince ashore there at Madang. He has been there about a month. Ah well, he had about a year in and out of Sydney so can't complain. Bob is to be a father about June – kids seems to be the order of the day. Nearly all the old mob who are married, have or are having kiddies.

The best part of the day tho' was when a mail came aboard. We were half

expecting it to still be going to Woendi, but we got almost all our mail, so were extra pleased. I got 10 letters, that put quite a grin on my face – 6 from Marg – one from Mum, Sis, Valda Jean + Mrs. Wood.

Friday 23rd Feb.

Took on 230 swotties about 5AM this morning, They were everywhere on the upper deck. We left Madang at about 5.30AM + brought the swotties to HANSA BAY, arriving about 3PM. The swotties are going to a place on the coast near that volcano Manim. Coming in we passed close to it + got a better look than when we passed on our way from Hollandia.

It is throwing about a little smoke + steam. Down the sides is hard streams that have been lava. The volcano is on island and the peak towers high with clouds resting over it. I could really appreciate the sight if it was on a holiday pleasure liner having annual leave.

Sooties went off at Hanoi Bay - rather flat looking just here. One of the sooties' captains told the big that the trucks + steam rollers and ashore are Japs. At least they were used by the Japs here but some British + American trucks captured at Singapore. Tracks of the ships showing above water here.

Left about 5 PM. Skipper spoke over the S.R.E. and said we are going to Aitape. Our Aving 6th Div are dealing with the Japs about there + we are to support them where they need us. We will do bombardments, getting rid of the 700 shells we can make use of. It will be good to support our own A.I.F. blokes.

SATURDAY 24<sup>th</sup> FEB Arrived Aitape in afternoon. It looks rather well from the sea. It's a sort of combination of Hollandia + the foreshore at Milne Bay to look at. The foreshore has been a flat copra plantation, while in places there are small hills with cones in them. It's good to see barges

It is throwing about a little smoke + steam. Down the sides is hard streams that have been lava. The volcano is an island and the peak towers high with clouds reaching over it. I could really appreciate the sight if I was on a tiddly pleasure liner having annual leave.

Swotties went off at Hansa Bay – rather flat looking just here. One of the swottie Captains told the Sig that the trucks + steam roller used ashore are Jap. At least they were used by the Japs here, but were British + American trucks captured at Singapore. Wrecks of 4 ships showing above water here.

Left about 5PM. Skipper spoke over the S.R.E. and said we are going to Aitape. Our Aussie 6th Div are dealing with the Japs about there + we are to support them when they need us. We will do bombardments, getting rid of the 700 shells we can make use of. It will be good to support our A.I.F. blokes.

SATURDAY 24TH FEB.

Arrived Aitape in afternoon. It looks rather well from the sea. It's a sort of combination of Hollandia + the foreshores of Milne Bay to look at. The foreshore has been a flat copra plantation, while in places there are small hills with caves in them. It's good to see barges

passing with AIF 6<sup>th</sup> Lively Lively  
blokes in them. Another called  
for our blokes in an amphibious  
truck to go ashore to the  
pictures. The boys said trucks  
were waiting for them & seats  
roped off at the pictures. That's  
a change from going to these  
Yank shows. We did alright with  
the Yanks, but you can't beat  
your own robbers.

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> Feb. Disregarding  
the fact that it's the Sabbath we  
went out at the unearthly hour  
of about 5 o'clock. Had a crowd  
of Army officers doing the ship  
with us. We went up down  
towards UEWAK - about 40 miles  
down and at eleven o'clock we  
did a bit of a bombardment.

Only 100 shells from each gun.  
The shoot was very satisfactory  
it is said. Four shells dropped  
in the drink, but the rest were  
in the target area. We could  
not see anything from here -  
we were firing inland a bit,  
but we left quite a lot of  
smoke about after the shoot  
finished.

Skipper spoke over the S.E.  
& told us the dit. We had  
bombarded about 3 or 4 thousand  
yards in front of our advance  
forces. We would know how  
successful the shoot was in a  
day or so when our Russies  
advanced. He said that the  
bombardments may not be always  
huge spectacular successes, but



passing with AIF 6th Divvy blokes in them. Swotties called for our blokes in an amphibious truck to go ashore to the pictures. The boys said trucks were waiting for them + seats roped off at the pictures. That's a change from going to these Yank shows. We did alright with the Yanks, but you can't beat your own coppers.

#### SUNDAY 25TH FEB.

Disregarding the fact that it's the Sabbath we went out at the unearthly hour of about 5 oclock. Had a crowd of Army officers doing the trip with us. We went down towards WEWAK, - about 40 mile down and at eleven oclock we did a bit of a bombardment.

Only 100 shells from each guns. The shoot was very satisfactory it is said. Four shells dropped in the drink, but the rest were in the target area. We could not see anything from here - we were firing inland a bit, but we left quite a lot of smoke about after the shoot finished.

Skipper spoke over the S.R.E + told us the dit. We had bombarded about 3 or 4 thousand yards in front of our advance forces. We would know how successful the shoot was in a day or so when our Aussies advanced. He said that the bombardments may not be always huge spectacular successes, but



the Japs hated ~~being~~ the thought  
of being hit from the sea as  
well as from air + land.  
Evidently he ~~thinks~~ <sup>realises</sup> them that he  
is definitely cut off. The Skipper  
said that our troops get a kick  
from knowing that their Navy  
wants to help them, and they  
feel they aren't all alone. He  
likes working with our own Aussies  
+ hopes he can keep with them.  
He told us about the other  
bombardments we are to do, then  
we are keeping 100 rounds for  
"our own entertainment". The  
strongest buzz is that there  
might be barges about + the  
Old Man hopes to get a  
crack at them. The sure loss  
action if there is a possibility  
of any.

When we came back in we  
had 30 or 40 snotties aboard  
for the night. The cooks put on  
a real good seran + we lashed  
the snotties up to a bottle of  
beer. They had a good look  
round the ship, then after supper  
we all went up on the fo'c's'l  
+ had an impromptu sing-song  
+ concert. Sticks had his cornet  
+ Browning his mouth-organ. Quite  
a few of the blokes sang +  
reel'd + we had a real  
good evening. We met the brew  
blades for the snotties + they  
didn't want to go. In fact  
for the first boat load of  
115, they had to be detailed  
off to go. Only 5 volunteered to  
go first boat. The rest

the Jap hated the thought of being hit from the sea as well as from air + land.

Evidently he realises then that he is definitely cut off. The Skipper said that our troops get a kick from knowing that their Navy wants to help them, and they feel they aren't all alone. He likes working with our own Aussies + hopes he can keep with them. He told us about the other bombardments we are to do, then we are keeping 100 rounds for "our own entertainment". The strongest buzz is that there might be barges about + the Old Man hopes to get a crack at them. He sure loves action if there's a possibility of any.

When we came back in we had 30 or 40 swotties aboard for the night. The cooks put on a real good scran + we lashed the swotties up to a bottle of beer. They had a good look round the ship, then after supper we all went up on the foc's'l + had an impromptu sing-song + concert. Sticks had his cornet + Browning his mouth-organ. Quite a few of the blokes sang + recited + we had a real good evening. We wet the brew later for the swotties + they didn't want to go. In fact for the first boat load of 15, they had to be detailed off to go. Only 5 volunteered to go first boat. The rest

didn't leave until 2330. They reckoned they had a real good night. We hoped they did, because we enjoyed the night ourselves. We have been invited off to see the pictures on Tuesday night before we leave on Wednesday.

I had the Middle Watch & when the swatches left it was 2330, so as I had to get up at quarters to twelve I didn't do any sleeping. I lay down for the 1/2 hour hoping that the corporal of the Gangway would forget to shake me, but to my misfortune he was conscientious.

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> Feb

Went to sea at about 7 PM. Made our way about 50 miles down the coast. Blowed up at

Action Stations at 11 PM & did a bombardment of 200 shells. (Spaced by a Jap H.Q.) After the turn the Shipper patrolled up & down between an island & the main-land to see if he could catch any barges. Then he steamed close into the coast & fired the Artillery. The Jap fired two shots one of which ricocheted over the ship, & the other passed over. The Brigadier aboard said to get away as we couldn't do any good trying to locate it. After that we just steamed out to sea a little & we were able to get our heads down at 3 o'clock.

At seven o'clock in the morning (27<sup>th</sup>) we poured 200 more into a "place" a bit nearer our own troops. Had



didn't leave until 2330. They reckoned they had a real good night. We hoped they did, because we enjoyed the night ourselves. We have been invited off to tea then pictures on Tuesday night before we leave on Wednesday.

I had the Middle Watch + when the swotties left it was 2330, so as I had to get up at quarter to twelve I didn't do any sleeping. I lay down for the ¼ hour hoping that the Corporal of the Gangway would forget to shake me, but to my misfortune he was conscientious.

#### MONDAY 26TH Feb

Went to sea at about 7PM. Made our way about 50 mile down the coast. Closed up at

Action Stations at 4PM + did a bombardment of 200 shells (S'posed to be Jap H.Q.). After the turn the Skipper patrolled up + down between an island + the main-land to see if he could catch any barges. Then he steamed close into the coast + fired the Oerlikens.

The Jap fired two shots one of which richotted over the ship, + the other passed over. The Brigadier aboard said to get away as we couldn't do any good trying to locate it. After that we just steamed out to sea a bit + we were able to get our heads down at 3 oclock.

At seven oclock in the morning (27th) 200 more into a place a bit nearer our own troops. Had

to fire over the trees, but could see that we left a lot of smoke behind when we left.

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> Back in Abaifu during forenoon. Leave gun at 1:15 until after the pictures. Teng and I went ashore + had a good day. We thumbed rides in trucks + went about mulling for smotheries. We went out to the airstrip, which incidentally is a beautiful strip for takeoffs. The Raaf blokes showed us over planes + gear. Some of our chaps got taken for a bombing run over a Jap village. That would be good. After the Raaf, we went for a swim in the surf. The surf is equal to that of any of the beaches down south.

Of course its a disadvantage up here, because at times barges cannot get in to unload. To come ashore you must come in an amphibious truck.

Our Army cook lashed us up to a good sea when he found we hadn't had any. These 6<sup>th</sup> Divvie blokes are good blokes. Our A.I.F. will do me.

The smotheries think a lot of our bombardments and attack more importance to them than they warrant. There was a picture show on for us. It was good to see Australian newscasts instead of Yanks. Albot + bootello "In Society" was the picture + was a good laugh. We got back aboard tired but quite



to fire over the trees, but could see that we left a bit of smoke behind when we left.

### Tuesday 27th

Back in Atoipe during forenoon. Leave given at 1.15 until after the pictures. Ferg and I went ashore + had a good day. We thumbed rides in trucks + went about nattering to swotties. We went out to the airstrip which incidentally is a beautiful strip for takeoffs.

The Raaf blokes showed us over planes + gear. Some of our chaps got taken for a bombing run over a Jap village. That would be good. After the Raaf, we went for a swim in the surf. The surf is equal to that of any of the beaches down south.

Of course it's a disadvantage up here, because at times barges cannot get in to unload. To come ashore you must come in an amphibious truck.

An Army cook lashed us up to a good tea, when he found we hadn't had any. These 6th Divvie blokes are good blokes. Our A.I.F. will do me.

The swotties think a lot of our bombardments, and attach more importance to them than they warrant. There was a picture show on for us. It was good to see Australian newsreels instead of Yanks. Abbot + Costello "In Society" was the picture + was a good laugh. We got aboard tired but quite

content.

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> Feb

A Leave first granted, then cancelled, then again granted. Reason being that surf was very big ashore & they didn't think the ducks could get in. Barges couldn't unload ashore today because of the surf.

Left about 7 PM and proceeded to a target area. (I think it was the island where we were 2 nights ago) We threw our remaining 100 shells into it about 11 PM & then set sail for Madang.

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March Arrived Madang during forenoon. Main event being mail. Letters from Mary, Helen & others. One from Wilkes containing 1 1/2 pages of

abuse, or maybe it is jealousy that I took over him.

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March The P.O. Tel gave us a very good practical go-over the K's. Tel was in wireless outside so he gave us the facts in a way that we could fully understand. In afternoon we got the typewriter and did a few notices for the office, then getting up another day.

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March Worked in the mess in forenoon. Received another pay - we seem to be getting paid regularly now. In the afternoon I went off playing cricket against a local team. We played in long grass where ball was often lost, when ball was lost

content.

#### Wednesday 28th Feb.

Leave first granted, then cancelled, then again granted. Reason being that surf was very big ashore + they didn't think ducks could get in. Barges couldn't unload ashore today because of the surf.

Left about 7PM and proceeded to a target area. (I think it was the island where we were 2 nights ago). We threw our remaining 100 shells into it about 11PM + then set sail for Madang.

#### Thursday 1st March

Arrived Madang during forenoon. Main event being mail. Letters from Marg, Mum + others. One from Wilkes containing 7-1/2 pages of

abuse, or maybe it is jealousy that I tower over him.

#### Friday 2nd March.

The P.O. Tel gave us a very good practical go-over the Rc8. He was in wireless outside so he gave us the facts in a way that we could fully understand. In afternoon we got the typewriter and did a few notices for the office, thus filling up another day.

#### Saturday 3rd March.

Worked in the mess in forenoon. Received another pay – we seem to be getting paid regularly now. In the afternoon I went off playing cricket against a Raaf team. We played in long grass where ball was often lost – when ball was lost

You could run four runs but  
no more. ~~She~~ We beat the  
Raaf easily. Ship was alongside  
when we got back. As  
BUNGAREE I looked up Tommy  
Klein & found that Bob Ware  
and Lobbin from the old ship  
were on it. There is a lot of the  
old mob in these parts.

Loaded ammunition until about  
10 o'clock at night. Our mess  
volunteered to help because we  
weren't keeping watches.

Sunday March 4<sup>th</sup> Ray had a  
misc on Friday saying that his  
wife had had an X-ray of  
the spine & it had turned  
out serious so the Shipper  
arranged compassionate leave for  
him & air passage right

thru to Larrit. Ray has two  
small kiddies and is rather  
worried about them. He will try  
again for his ticket to get on  
the farm. He should get it  
too - he was called up the  
day after the war started - so  
he deserves to get out when he  
has two kiddies and a sick wife.  
He went off shore today &  
as it was his last night here I  
went off with him & we went  
to the pictures. A Bob Hope  
show was on too. It rained  
but we had borrowed papers so  
didn't get too wet. I hope  
Ray strikes all the luck in  
the world.

Monday March 5<sup>th</sup> Ray got away  
on the flying boat. The ligs



you could run four runs but no more. We beat the Raaf easily. Ship was alongside BUNGAREE when we got back. As I waited I looked up Tommy Klein + found that Bob Ware and Dobbin from the old ship were on it. There's a lot of the old mob in these parts.

Carted ammunition until about 10 oclock at night. Our mess volunteerd to help because we weren't keeping watches.

#### Sunday March 4th

Ray had a wire on Friday saying that his wife had had an XRay of her spine + it had turned out serious, so the Skipper arranged compassionate leave for him + air passage right

thru' to Tassie. Ray has two small kiddies and is rather worried about them. He will try again for his ticket to get on the farm. He should get it too – he was called up the day after the war started – so he deserves to get out when he has two kiddies and a sick wife.

He went off shore today + as it was his last night here I went off with them + we went to the pictures. A Bob Hope show was on too. It rained but we had borrowed capes so didn't get too wet. I hope Ray strikes all the luck in the world.

#### Monday March 5th

Ray got away on the flying boat. The Sig

spotted him thru the glasses.  
He'll be in Brisbane on the 6<sup>th</sup>.

Swimming over the side in  
afternoon. Left at about 5 PM  
for Langmah, to oil.

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March Arrived Bay  
near Langmah during forenoon  
and oiled. Saw great panic  
with signals about the shells  
we just took on. Just as we  
arrived they saw no good & so  
all our operations were being  
cancelled by numerous signals,  
so we were only supposed to  
have 86 to fit our gun. Then  
they advised us that shells could  
be used, so operations on.  
Let sail for Jacquinot Bay to  
do bombardments somewhere to  
help the 5<sup>th</sup> Div. That's about

Sid Toole is. Unless I get ashore  
I won't see him, but may  
help him immensely by bombardment.  
Passed a rather fleet today.  
British. It was some sight.  
(Saw results of our 1st  
bombardments after fragment Saturday)  
The maps & summary were  
good - evidently the plan was  
a complete success. The only  
real details at present were that  
in one place our troops captured  
15, 75 milli-meter guns that  
had been just left. There are  
a good gun & would not have  
been left unless they had to be.  
The reason this thing was supposed  
to be our turn. It's good to  
know we could help the  
Australians a bit anyway.

spotted him thru' the glasses. He'll be in Brisbane on the 6th.

Swimming over the side in afternoon. Left at about 5PM.

#### Thursday 6th March

Arrived Bay near Langewak during forenoon and oiled. Been great panic with signals about the shells we just took on. First we were advised they were no good + so all our operations were being cancelled by numerous signals, as we were only supposed to have 86 to fit our guns. Then they advised us that shells could be used, so operations on. Set sail for Jacquinet Bay to do bombardments somewhere to help the 5th Div. That's where

Sid Foote is. Unless I get ashore I won't see him, but may help him inversely by bombardment.

Passed a corker fleet today. British. It was some sight. (Saw results of our Aitope bombardments after payment Sat'day. The maps + Summary were good – evidently the turn was a comfortable success. The only real details at present were that in one place our troops captured 15, 75 milli-meter guns that had been just left. These are a good gun + would not have been left unless they had to be. The reason this time was s'posed to be our turn. It's good to know we could help the Aussies a bit anyway.

14<sup>th</sup> March 45

Lied up alongside a  
jetty at Jacquot Bay. It is 4  
months since we brought the  
first mob over to land here,  
and the difference in the place  
is almost unbelievable. Camps +  
buildings everywhere. They must have  
been getting some stuff shipped in,  
in large quantities to go ahead  
like they have done.

Couple of blokes came down  
to tell me the Sid took was  
asking after me. Found that Sid's  
unit was a few miles around  
the road. Looks as tho I'll  
see Sid at last after all these  
years. I am going off at 4  
o'clock till 5<sup>30</sup> to see if I  
can find him. If so Hobbs is

going to work my first watch  
and I'll do his Middle, so  
that I can have the night with  
Syd.

Well, after about 4 years I  
have seen Syd again. I got a  
ride to his camp, + found  
him straight away. It was good old  
seeing him - we were both  
pretty pleased with ourselves.

Syd came back to the  
ship and had a screw  
then we went off to the pictures  
together. We had a grand old  
night - the main topics being  
Bet + Frank, and the stories of  
being prospective fathers. Syd + I  
have a lot in common - we  
know most of the same places  
in N.G. too. This a good block.



7th March 45

Tied up alongside a jetty at Jacquinot Bay. It is 4 months since we brought the first mob over to land here, and the difference in the place is almost unbelievable. Camps + buildings everywhere. They must have been getting some stuff shipped in in large quantities to go ahead like they have done.

Couple of blokes came down to tell me Pte Sid Foote was asking after me. Found that Sid's unit was a few mile around the road. Looks as tho' I'll see Sid at last after all these years. I am going off at 4 oclock till 5/30 to see if I can find him. If so Nobby is

going to work my First watch and I'll do his Middle, so that I can have the night with Syd.

Well, after about 4 years I have seen Syd again. I got a ride to his camp + found him straight away. It was goodoh seeing him – we were both pretty pleased with ourselves.

Syd came back to the ship and had a scran then we went off to the pictures together. We had a good old natter – the main topics being Bet + Marg, and the worries of being prospective fathers. Syd + I have a lot in common – we know most of the same places in N.G. too. He's a good bloke

The picture was 2,000 ft over  
and was very good. We enjoyed  
it thoroughly. After the shoot  
Syd made back for camp & I  
came back here. He is going  
out on a practice shoot tomorrow  
until Saturday, but at least we  
have seen each other. The girls  
will get a thrill from that too.  
Thursday 8th March

Still alongside jilly  
all day. Shipper goes to look  
over target area. Leave fixed for  
a couple of hours in afternoon but  
as Syd is out, I didn't go off.  
Instead I slept to make up  
for the sleep I have missed by  
having the middle the last 2 nights.  
From 1600 till 1730 we took a  
football & had a kick on the

road near the jilly. The ground  
was rocky, but the exercise was  
alright!

We are to go out early  
tomorrow morning to proceed to  
target area where we will remain  
for 3 or 4 days. The current "bugg"  
is that we try & draw the  
Japs fire so that we can locate  
their guns. That's only a bugg  
- at least I hope so. I am to  
tell the Shipper I'm a prospective  
father & so must be careful  
of my blood-pressure.

It looks as tho indirectly  
I'll be giving old Syd a  
hand if they ever go up there.

Friday 9th March Left for  
Wide Bay about 40 miles north  
at about 1 o'clock, arriving

The picture was 2,000 Women and was very good. We enjoyed it thoroughly. After the show Syd made back for camp + I came back here. He is going out on a practise shoot tomorrow until Saturday, but at least we have seen each other. The girls will get a thrill from that too.

#### Thursday 8th March

Still alongside jetty all day. Skipper gone to look over target area. Leave piped for a couple of hours in afternoon but as Syd is out, I didn't go off. Instead I slept to make up for the sleep I have missed by having the Middle the last 2 nights. From 1600 till 1730 we took a football + had a kick on the

road near the jetty. The ground was rocky, but the exercise was alright.

We are to go out early tomorrow morning to proceed to target area where we will remain for 3 or 4 days. The current "buzz" is that we try + draw the Jap's fire so that we can locate their guns. That's only a buzz - at lest I hope so. Have to tell the Skipper I'm a prospective father + so must be careful of my blood-pressure.

It looks as tho' indirectly I'll be giving old Syd a hand if they ever go up there.

#### Friday 9th March.

Left for Wide Bay about 40 mile north at about 7 oclock, arriving

about 11 o'clock. M.L. 525 with 40.  
Area where we bombarded four  
months ago is now in our  
hands we are anchored about 200  
yards off shore. Saw where our  
bombardment had affected.  
About 4 Jap barges lying around  
foreshore.

Artillery ashore firing with  
25 pounder guns at a hill  
on the other side of the bay  
to us. Japs behind it + along  
top. When we at anchor the  
artillery fire over us. Shells can  
be seen plainly landing on  
the hill.

Left in afternoon with about  
four native infantry boys to  
locate flares outside the  
Bay where Japs are known to

be. Stayed at Action Stations  
for 2 hours but only fired  
50 shells into the thick  
jungle - + a few rounds from  
the 30 millimeter overlanders.

Came back to anchor about  
six o'clock. This place slightly  
different to what we have  
been used to lately. Everything  
is blacked out properly - look  
outs keeping watches here +  
we also have armed guards about.  
Bugs says that plans or sub-  
attack quite possible here.

(Gracious the barges are the  
only thing we live on)  
Midnight Just on watch -  
artillery been firing spasmodically  
all night. Hope it is annoying  
the Japs too. Legit says



about 11oclock. ML825 with us.  
Area where we bombarded four months ago is now in our hands so we anchored about 200 yards off shore. Saw where our bombardment had affected. About 7 Jap barges lying around foreshore.

Artillery ashore firing with 25 pound guns at a hill on the other side of the bay to us. Japs behind it + along top. Where we at anchor the artillery fire over us. Shells can be seen plainly landing on the hills.

Left in afternoon with about four native infantry boys to locate place outside the Bay where Japs are known to

be. Stayed at Action Stations for 2 hours, but only fired 50 shells into the thick jungle - + a few rounds from the 30 millimetre oerlikens.

Came back to anchor about six oclock. This place slightly different to what we have been used to lately. Everything is blacked out properly – look outs keeping watches here + we also have armed guards about. Buzz says that plane or sub attack quite possible here. (Gracious the buzzes are the only thing we live on).

#### Midnight

Just on watch – artillery been firing spasmodically all night. Hope it is annoying the Japs too. Cyril says

we first received a signal that  
M.L. 824 on her way back  
from Jacquinot Bay (she had a  
run down there) was attacked  
by LEKE (ger) and shot in  
down in flames just off Cape  
Aford + a mile from shore.  
Cape Aford is 10 or 20 miles  
south towards Jacquinot Bay. Good  
for the M.L.

Everyone had a large dose  
of dysentery last night + today.  
Probable cause was bad meat  
yesterday lunch hour. 80%  
of the ships company must  
have been up thru the night.  
I got up about 2 AM + was  
pretty sick, crook. Very sick  
today. - + very careful

Saturday March 10th Artillery  
kept up these occasional  
firing thru the night then  
at about 6 AM this morning  
they set up a barrage of  
all guns - made a devil  
of a noise. Could see them  
landing in the one spot on  
the other side of the bay.  
Under bright at 0800 for  
target area. Had the same  
barrage with us. M.L. with  
us. We went up the coast  
into St Georges Channel between  
New Zealand + New Britain.  
Bombardment was at a place  
about 40 miles or less south  
of Rabaul. Two Boomerangs  
came over to spot for us  
as soon as they appeared

we just received a signal that ML 826 on her way back from Jacquinot Bay (she had a run down there) was attackd by LEKE (zero) and shot in down in flames just off Cape Orford + a mile from shore. Cape Orford is 10 or 20 miles south towards Jacquinot Bay. Good for the M.L.

Everyone had a dose of dysentery last night + today. Probable cause was bad meat – yesterdays lunch hour. 80% of the ships company must have been up thru the night. I got up about 2AM + was pretty crook. Very weak today + very careful

#### Saturday March 10th

Artillery kept up there occasional firing thru' the night, then at about 6AM this morning they set up a barrage of all guns + made a devil of a noise. Could see them landing in the one spot on the other side of the bay. Under weigh at 0800 for target area. Had the same boongs with us. ML with us. We went up the coast into St. Georges Channel, between New Incland + New Britain.

Bombardment was at a place about 40 miles or less south of Rabaul. Two Boomerangs came over to spot for us + as soon as they appeared

the Mts opened fire with 4  
shots from her Bofors gun at  
them, but luckily she missed.  
Plane dropped smoke bomb on  
target area and we then  
opened fire on it with about  
80 shells. Plane reported shells  
fell in target area, but  
Japs were behind a hill, so  
that only shots that went  
over did the most damage.

At Action Stations for 2 1/2  
hours. Got our lunch at 2 P.M.

Headed back for Jacquinot  
Bay.

Sunday March 11<sup>th</sup> Tied up alongside  
jelly boat Jacquinot bay last  
night about 8 P.M. and remained  
there until midday today. Left  
would be back from service

now but couldn't get off to  
see him.

Out to sea on our way  
to Tregu Harbor for fuel +  
then to Thachang for further  
orders - + 11 A.M.

Buzz again - this one appeared  
to be from Jacquinot. At last  
place of bombardment the Japs  
were supposed to have barrack  
rooms holding 75 + we  
wiped out 3 of the barrack rooms  
while bombardment was on. One  
block saw an explosion & great  
clouds of smoke.

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March At about  
0930 sighted motor boat with  
2 men in it. We received a  
signal about 4 days ago saying  
that there was an launch



the ML opened fire with 4 shots from here Bofos guns at them, but luckily she missed. Plane dropped smoke bomb on target area and we then opened fire on it with about 80 shells. Plane reported shells fell in target area, but Japs were behind a hill, so that only shots that went over did the most damage. At Action Stations for 2-1/2 hours. Got our lunch at 2PM. Headed back for Jacquinot Bay.

#### Monday March 11th

Tied up alongside jetty at Jacquinot bay last night about 8PM and remained there until midday today. Syd would be back from exercises

now but couldn't get off to see him.

Out to sea on our way to Dreger Harbour for fuel + then to Madang for further orders - + MAIL

Buzz again – this one s'posed to be from Jacquinot. At last place of bombardment, the Japs were supposed to have barrack rooms holding 75 + we wiped out 3 of the barrack rooms. While bombardment was on our blokes saw an explosion + great clouds of smoke.

#### Monday 12th March

At about 0730 sighted motor boat with 2 men in it. We received a signal about 4 days ago saying that there was a launch

missing somewhere. We went up  
alongside it + there were 2  
Yanks in it. They had been  
adrift for 86 hours - the only  
water they had was what it  
rained a day or so ago.

As we came alongside the  
tall Yank said "Thank God -  
Trisco never looked half as  
good as this ship". Appears the  
engine failed + they drifted out.  
We found them about 40 to  
50 miles out to sea. They  
had stood up to it fairly well  
+ after a bath and a shower  
they were just about right.

Arrived Diego Garcia (next  
to Langemak) dropped the Yanks  
+ their boat which we had towed.  
Fuelled them left for Madang at 5 PM.

Received a very welcome signal  
thru' the night to say that  
they won't be able to take  
us for refit until the end of  
May. That's a bit disappointing  
when we were to go in April.  
However even that will not be  
too long a term. We will  
- maybe in a way it will be  
better for Mang & I. But I  
would still go if that made  
it April again.

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> Arrived Madang in  
forenoon. Mail aboard. Letters  
from Mang + Shum. Also papers  
+ sandals from Mango. Shall  
do me. I'm just over of  
the hiddest shops in the area  
with my sandals.

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March Pundetta

missing somewhere. We went up alongside it + there were 2 Yanks in it. They had been adrift for 86 hours – the only water they had was when it rained a day or so ago.

As we came alongside the tall Yank said "Thank God – Frisco never looked half as good as this ship". Appears their engine failed + they drifted out. We found them about 40 to 50 mile out to sea. They had stood up to it fairly well + after a bath and a scrub they were just about right.

Arrived Dreger Harbour (next to Langewak) dropped the Yanks, + their boat which we had towed, fuelled then left for Madang at 5PM

Received a very unwelcome signal thru' the night to say that they won't be able to take us for refit until the end of May. That's a bit disappointing when we were to go in April. However even that will not be too long a term. Ah well – maybe in a way it will be better for Marg + I. But I would still go if that made it April again.

#### Tuesday 13th

Arrived Madang in forenoon. Mail aboard – letters from Marg + Mum. Also papers + sandals from Margo. She'll do me. I'm just one of the tiddliest chaps in the mess with my sandals.

#### Wednesday 14th March.

Vendetta

came in, in the afternoon and she had our movie projector on board. The chief set it up and it works good, so as soon as we can get some films will be right.

Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> March

Dropped about 32 records with the Thudell's. Got some good selections from them too.

In the afternoon a few of us went off for a kick of the football. We had a good run about and then a swim & came back aboard about 3 o'clock.

Off to sea at 5 PM. Received signals about a ship that has run aground near New Britain. and she has split in

half but never got ashore to an island with their lifeboat & a transmitting set. We are going up to do a bombardment at Open Bay which is on the NW coast of New Britain about 100 sea miles from Rabaul, so we will keep a lookout for the survivors on our way across.

Weather very cool & sea roughish. A few blokes were sick, but it was probably because this is the first anything but calm sea that we have had. Received a signal to say that weather bad at Open Bay and may last for few days, so bombardment may be cancelled.

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> March. Skipper gave us a talk today telling us



came in, in the afternoon and she had our movie projector on board. The Chief set it up and it works goodoh, so as soon as we can get some films we'll be right.

#### Thursday 15th March

Swopped about 32 records with the Vendetta. Got some good selections from them too.

In the afternoon a few of us went off for a kick of the football. We had a good run about, and then a swim + came back aboard bout 3 oclock.

Off to sea at 5PM. Received signals about a ship that has run aground near New Britain. She has split in

half but crew got ashore to an island with their lifeboat + a transmitting set. We are going up to do a bombardment at OPEN BAY which, is on the NW coast of New Britain, about 100 sea miles from Rabaul, so we will keep a lookout for the survivors on our way across.

Weather very cool + sea roughish. A few blokes were sick, but it was probably because this is the first anything but calm sea that we have had. Received a signal to say that weather bad at Open Bay and may last for few days so bombardment may be cancelled.

#### Friday 16th March.

Skipper gave us a talk today telling us

To change our gun barrels next time  
in Madang.  
what he could. We will go to  
Apur Bay & see what the weather  
is like. He says that we  
will probably leave up here to  
go south about the middle of  
May. Until then we will  
carry on these bombardment jobs.  
Ammunition is going to be  
arranged for us and by the  
figures he quoted we are  
to be kept busy & are gonna  
become a headache to the  
Japs in these parts.

Dropped three Comb-disposal  
chaps at Garove Island. They  
are to have a look at a  
torpedo there. The island is one  
of the prettiest I have seen.  
Everything is a beautiful green.  
Loads of houses there is also a

small jitty. Like to get ashore because  
of the tropical fruits there. Island  
combines best parts of Sumatra, Jilly  
& Goufions. We are to pick  
the 3 chaps up on our way  
back to Madang.

Cruised about the Viru island  
group but saw no signs of  
survivors from Liberty ship. They  
aren't sure about their position so  
will probably be hard to locate.

Heard another buzz tonight  
that I hadn't heard before. I note  
down these buzzes whether I know  
they are true or unconfirmed -  
they will give me a smile later  
on. When that 4th got the  
plane near Wide Bay, the plane  
was supposed to have dropped  
3 bombs where we were anchored

what he could.

To change our gun barrels next time in Madang.

We will go to Open Bay – and see what the weather is like. He says that we will probably leave up here to go south about the middle of May. Until then we will carry on these bombardment jobs.

Ammunition is going to be arranged for us and by the figures he quoted we are to be kept busy + are gonna become a headache for the Japs in these parts.

Dropped three Bomb-disposal chaps at Garove Island. They are to have a look at a torpedo there. The island is one of the prettiest I have seen. Everything is a beautiful green. Couple of houses there + also a

small jetty. Like to go ashore because of the tropical fruits there. Island combines best parts of Ferntree Gully + Grampians. We are to pick the 3 chaps up on our way back to Madang.

Cruised about the VITU island group but saw no signs of survivors from Liberty ship. They aren't sure about their position so will probably be hard to locate.

Heard another buzz tonight that I hadn't heard before. I note down these buzzes whether I know they are true or unconfirmed – they will give me a smile later on. When that M/L got the plane near Wide Bay, the plane was supposed to have dropped 3 bombs where we were anchored

earlier. The plane itself was  
supposedly after no. 1 that the  
buzzy anyway. They sure got around.

There is to ~~search~~ search again  
tomorrow for survivors - probably  
do it after our bombardment.

17<sup>th</sup> March Saturday

Very overcast,  
but no rain & sea smooth.

Arrived at Ofen Bay about 9 AM.

(For one of the signals last night  
from this little ship crew they  
ended up with "need help pretty  
damned quick". They must be a  
bit fed up with their tropical life)

Found about 60 shells ashore  
- big burst of black smoke  
appeared - then it started  
raining again. Had to leave -  
set off back for Gargare Es.

and thence to Madang. After  
numerous signals the crew of  
the wrecked ship has been sighted  
by plane & a ship is going  
out for them. We have been advised  
that an LCM barge been sighted  
by plane - barge is loaded by  
there is no sign of any crew.  
So we are to search for that  
now. Cyclones about there

areas and we are on the  
edge of them.

18<sup>th</sup> March Sunday Rain, rain &  
more rain. Been raining for 3  
days now & it really does rain  
in these parts. Sea rough  
& we are moving about a  
bit. I reckon this ship is a  
good sea-ship tho'. We'd be taking  
a hiding in a corvette now.



earlier. The plane itself was supposedly after us – that's the buzz anyway. They sure get around.

Have to search again tomorrow for survivors – probably do it after our bombardment.

#### 17th March Saturday

Sky overcast, but no rain + sea smooth.

Arrived at Open By about 9AM.

(In one of the signals last night from this liberty ship crew they ended up with “need help pretty damned quick”. They must be a bit fed up with their tropical isle).

Fired about 60 shells ashore – big burst of black smoke appeared – then it started raining again. Had to leave –

Set off back for Gargove Is.

and thence to Madang. After numerous signals the crew of the wrecked ship has been sighted by plane + a ship is going out for them. We been advised that an LCM barge been sighted by plane - barge is loaded by there is no sign of any crew. So we are to search for that now. Cyclones about these areas and we are on the edge of them.

#### 18th March Sunday

Rain, rain + more rain. Been raining for 3 days now + it really does rain in these parts. Sea rough + we are moving about a bit. I reckon this ship is a good sea-ship tho'. We'd be taking a hiding in a corvette now.

Still sending cyclone warnings.  
Licked up the bomb disposal  
blokes this forenoon. Quite a  
few junk barges sheltering in  
the small bay. The blokes  
brought piles of tropical fruit  
with them - bananas, <sup>lady</sup>  
Ladies' Fingers, custard apples, Mangos  
& Paw Paws. What a feast a man  
would have if he got ashore.  
If Mang chases me away from  
home this is where I'll come.  
'This' certainly is a beautiful  
spot.

20<sup>th</sup> March 45. Arrived  
Madang to get new gun  
barrels fitted and do a  
boiler clean. Mail came  
aboard - Mang informs me  
that young Sykes will

probably be born within a  
fortnight. That letter was  
written on the 15<sup>th</sup>. It  
certainly gave me a shock  
to realize the event was so  
close. I am start worrying  
from now on. Thank God, Mang  
has been fairly well up  
to date.

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> March. Got a game  
of Aussie Rules football against  
H.M.A.S. MADANG. We played at  
a place called Herlandia Oval.  
It is about 7 miles out &  
rather a decent place to play.  
Madang beat us 12 but it was  
a good game and we quite  
enjoyed it. After the match  
we had a dip in a small  
stream nearby. That fished

Still sending cyclone warnings.

Picked up the Bomb disposal blokes this forenoon.  
Quite a few Yank barges sheltering in the small bay.  
The blokes brought piles of tropical fruit with them –  
bananas, Lady's Fingers Custard Apples, Mangos + Paw  
Paws. What a feast a man would have if he got ashore.  
If Marg chases me away from home, this is where I'll  
come.  
This certainly is a beautiful spot.

#### 20th March 45

Arrived Madang to get new gun barrels fitted and do a  
boiler clean. Mail came aboard – Marg informs me that  
young Dyker will

probably be born within a fortnight. That letter was  
written on the 15th. It certainly gave me a shock to  
realise the event was so close. I sure start worrying  
from now on. Thank God, Marg has been fairly well up  
to date.

#### Wednesday 21st March

Got a game of Aussie Rules football against  
H.M.A.S.MADANG. We played at a place called  
Deslandes Oval.

It is about 7 mile out + rather a decent place to play.  
Madang beat us, but it was a good game and we quite  
enjoyed it. After the match we had a dip in a small  
stream nearby. That freshened

up a lot.

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March

showed our picture show at night, but only films of our prize as educational things and Nobby having films so they soon got boring.

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March

Neil Kenneth talked me into going off with him for cricket against an Army team. We got beaten by four runs with only 3 minutes to go. It was quite exciting at the end.

Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March Went off for a track again this afternoon. We have been off nearly every afternoon for a kick of the football to get a bit of exercise.

We had Divisions during the forenoon and the Shipper warned us to take our atehim regularly because there was a case of malaria aboard. A man is a fool not to take them. A yellow skin is better than concerning attacks of malaria. The Army had brought their movie projector and film out to the ship after their show ashore. We saw newsreels and "A Funk in the R.A.F." It was almost 1 AM when we got to bed, but it was worth while.

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March Terry, Robbie and I borrowed a native labatoi and ~~so~~ paddled for miles up back creeks. If a man could paddle



us up a lot.

#### Thursday 22nd March.

Showed our picture show at night, but only films of our size are educational things and Navy training films so they soon get boring.

#### Saturday 24th March

Neil Kennett talked me into going off with him for cricket against an Army team. We got beaten by four runs, with only 3 minutes to go. It was quite exciting at the end.

#### Sunday 25th March

Went off for a kick again this afternoon. We have been off nearly every afternoon for a kick of the football to get a bit of exercise.

We had Divisions during the forenoon, and the Skipper warned us to take our Atebrin regularly because there as a case of malaria aboard. A man is a fool not to take them. A yellow skin is better than concerning attacks of malaria. An Army mob brought their movie projector and film out to the ship after their show ashore. We saw newsreels, and "A Yank in the R.A.F.". It was almost 1AM when we got to bed, and it was worth while.

#### Tuesday 27th March

Ferg, Nobbie and I borrowed a native lakatoi and paddled for miles up back creeks. If a man could paddle

about in places like this down south he would think it was wonderful. In places the streams were not much wider than the lakatosi and the dense undergrowth all but met over our heads. We went ashore in one spot and found two old abandoned Jap camps. There was a lot of old stuff laying about, but nothing really good. We were going to get some paw-paws & bananas, but all we saw were small and green.

At night the Army again brought their projector out and showed a good show. The feature picture was a very old picture that I

can remember seeing with Marg at the family years ago. It was Geronimo - about an Indian. After the show the boys were firing at each other from behind lockers and letting out blood-curdling war whoops. Once again it was one o'clock before we got to bed.

Thursday 29th March Mail in, but ~~nothing~~ news from Margie. She writes quite cheerfully and tells me not to worry. As if I could stop worrying over her. I'll be anxious until I get news. Letter from Mum said Dad has got his discharge from the Army. That certainly is good news! Mum needs Dad at home and

about in places like this down south, he would think it was wonderful. In places the streams were not much wider than the lakatoi and the dense undergrowth all but met over our heads. We went ashore in one spot and found two old abandoned camps.

There was a lot of old stuff laying about, but nothing real good. We were going to get some paw-paws + bananas, but all we saw were small and green.

At night the Army again brought their projector out and showed a good show.

The feature picture was a very old picture that I

can remember seeing with Marg at the Burnley years ago. It was Geronimo – about an Indian. After the show the boys were firing at each other from behind lockers and letting out blood-curdling war whoops. Once again it was one oclock before we got to bed.

#### Thursday 29th March

Mail in, but nothing new from Margie. She writes quite cheerfully and tells me not to worry. As if I could stop worrying over her. I'll be anxious until I get news.

Letter from Mum said Dad has got his discharge from the Raaf. That certainly is good news.

Mum needs Dad at home and

Dad has done his share in the war. It is time that Dad & Mum got some real happiness together again. Got paid so made up my bank account to £26 - it will help on leave.

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March Inter Service Sports started today with the swimming. Our ship entered a few events to gain points for the Navy, and helped bring the score up. We won the water polo matches easily. The scores finished up with Army 48, Navy 45 & RAF 18. The Navy has the smallest group in the area so did well. In the evening we went

off to see the boxing. The Navy had 5 fights and won 3 so that was alright too. The RAF having the largest group had that many in that they were fighting against their own service. That meant they must get points whichever way won. On the night the Navy got second. It was quite a good show to watch.

Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> April After Divisions we had a full meeting of all ~~sports~~ interested in sports. The aim was to elect sub-committees for the various sports and so get things organised. Neil Kenneth thought it was a great joke nominating me for everything. The first



Dad has done his share in the war. It is time that Dad + Mum got some real happiness together again. Got paid so made up my bank account to 26 pound – it will help on leave.

#### Saturday 31st March

Inter Service Easter Sports started today with the swimming. Our ship entered a few events to gain points for the Navy, and helped bring the score up. We won the water polo matches easily. The scores finished up with Army 48, Navy 45 + Raaf 18. The navy has the smallest group in the area so did well.

In the evening we went

off to see the boxing. The Navy had 5 fights and won 3, so that was alright too. The Raaf having the largest group had that many in, that they were fighting against their own service. That meant that they must get points whichever man won.

On the night the Navy got second. It was quite a good show to watch.

#### Sunday 1st April

After Divisions we had a full meeting of all interested in sports. The Aim was to elect select-ion committees for the various sports and so get things organised. Neil Kennett thought it was a great joke nominating me for everything. He just

missed getting me elected as  
captain of the Aussie Rules,  
but I ended up as one of  
the three selectors. Then 5  
blokes were elected as a  
Sports Committee on the ship,  
to arrange gear, entertain  
visiting teams etc, and I  
ended up on that too. The  
ship is all out for sport &  
we have done more this  
time, in than ever before.

In the afternoon we played  
an Army team Aussie Rules  
at Dealander Oval. What a game  
it was. We have been having  
some consistent rain thru'  
the week and so the ground  
was like a mud patch. To  
make sure that we had

enough mud it rained heavily  
thru' the match. The  
woggles were in better condition  
than us, but only just beat us.  
The game was like a mud  
scramble. The woggles were a  
good mob & played a good,  
hard fair game, so we  
had a good afternoon. After  
the match we swam in the  
creek with boots & all on.

Once again the Army brought  
their picture show out &  
we saw two good humorous  
shows. They are a good mob  
these Diggers.

MONDAY - MONDAY 2ND APRIL

Today is the big  
day. When I come back  
aboard tonight, there was

missed getting me elected as Captain of the Aussie Rules, but I ended up as one of the three selectors. Then 5 blokes were elected as a Sports Committee, and I ended up on that too. The ship is all out for sport + we have done more this time in than ever before.

In the afternoon we played an Army team Aussie Rules at Deslandes Oval. What a game it was. We have been having some consistent rain thru' the week and so the ground was like a mud patch. To make sure that we had

enough mud it rained heavily twice thru' the match. The swotties were in better condition than us, but only just beat us. The game was like a mud scramble. The Swotties were a good mob + played a good, hard, fair game, so we had a good afternoon. After the match we swam in the creek with boots + all on.

Once again the Army brought their picture show out + we saw a good humorous shows. They are a good mob these Diggers.

#### MONDAY. MONDAY 2ND APRIL.

Today is the big day. When I came back aboard tonight, there was

the long-awaited signal to say that Christine Margaret Dyke arrived 1st April. Both doing well (those last 3 words are what I wanted to see)

So I am the father of a one day old daughter. I'll bet she is the prettiest baby that has ever been born in that hospital. She should be because she has the prettiest, sweetest mother. I only wish I could be there to show Mary how damned proud of her I am, but by gee, I'll certainly 'do it' when I get home.

I had to sit straight down & write to my wife and daughter. Someone suggested

that young Miss Dyke wouldn't be able to read, but she is a Dyke & is 'a day old' so she will be able to do anything. Lana Turner is definitely out now as my little girl - Christine fears them all except Mary. I hope she is like her mother.

All day today I was off at the Athletic sports. The Swan boys entered quite a few events and got points for seconds and thirds. I entered the broad jump & hop - step and jump, but didn't reach the place yet. I did fairly well but it is too hard competing against chaps who can train every night. The funniest



the long-awaited signal to say that Christine Margaret Dyker arrived 1st April. Both doing well (Those last 3 words are what I wanted to see).

So I am the father of a one day old daughter. I'll bet she is the prettiest baby that has ever been born in that hospital. She should be because she has the prettiest, sweetest mother. I only wish I could be there to show Marg how darned proud of her I am, but by gee, I'll certainly do it when I get home.

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that young Miss Dyker wouldn't be able to read, but she is a Dyker + is a day old, so she will be able to do anything. Lana Turner is definitely out now so my Pin Up Girl – Christine beats them all except Marg. I hope she is like her Mother.

All day today I was off at the Athletic sports. The Swan boys entered quite a few events and got points for seconds and thirds. I entered the broad jump + hop-step and jump, but didn't reach the place getters. I did fairly well but it is too hard competing against chaps who can train every night. The funniest

turn of the day was the mile walking race. One of the Swans was in it & as he had never done any track walking before, he had the crowd in tears laughing at his antics. He was disqualified after sticking it till the 2nd last lap. The judges can must have turned when they heard the remarks and boo-ing that came from almost everyone on the field. The most exciting race was the mile run. A crowd of Swan boys entered to try to gain points. Only about 6 out of 20 finished the race & the Swan got 1st, 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>. It was really exciting

especially at the end when the Army Chap started to sprint, but Hutch dragged himself along faster & won. We were nearly hoarse with cheering. The Army polled the highest score for all the Sports. The Navy got a close second & had some lost. The RAF had Bruce Ryan the Australasian Sprint champion running for them too. He is a sight to watch. The only time he got beaten was when one of our Navy teams won the relay race - we kidded ourselves. The ship had gone to sea to try out her new gun barrels during the afternoon & it was well after 7 PM

turn of the day was the mile walking race. One of the Swan-ites was in it + he had never done any track walking before, he had the crowd in tears laughing at his antics. He was disqualified after sticking it till the 2nd last lap.

The judges ears must have burned when they heard the remarks and boo-ing that came from almost everyone on the field.

The most exciting race was the mile run. A crowd of Swan boys entered to try to gain points. Only about 6 out of 20 finished the race + the Swan got 1st, 3rd + 5th. It was really exciting

especially at the end when the Army chap started to sprint but Butch dragged himself along faster + won. We were nearly hoarse with cheering.

The Army polled the highest score for all the Sports, the Navy got a close second + Raaf came last. The Raaf had Bruce Ryan the Australasian Sprint champion running for them too. He is a sight to watch. The only time he got beaten was when one of our Navy teams won the relay race – we kidded ourselves.

The ship had gone to sea to try out her new gun barrels during the afternoon + it was well after 7PM

when she got back in + we  
could get aboard. Luckily,  
my signal came in the  
middle of hours while she  
was out at sea. The signal  
only took about 7 hours to  
come - that extra good when  
the circuits handle so much  
important operational stuff. They  
must have realized how  
more important my daughter was.

Tuesday 3rd April George Gann  
the last of the ligs who  
left Sydney on here left the  
ship today to go to F.W.D.  
for a course. He has to  
be there by the 19th. Maybe  
I'll get a spouse before the  
war ends. I got another  
recommend for it during the  
month.

Wednesday 4th April

My old heartlander  
shipmate Neil Kennett left the  
ship just before we came to  
sea. He is going to F.W.D.  
for an Officers course. Good luck  
to him - he will make a  
good officer, because he has  
had 3 years among the boys.  
Neil is a fine bloke - somehow  
I feel I'll run into him  
somewhere again in the future.

We took 30 kaff clothes  
aboard. Some are getting off  
at Hollandia and the rest  
at Aitape. We are going to  
Hollandia first to try to  
get fresh food + kanten stores.  
We have been living on  
mainly bully bully beef for



when she got back in + we could get aboard.  
Peculiarly, my signal came in the couple of hours while she was out at sea. The signal only took about 7 hours to come – that's extra good when the circuits handle so much important operational stuff. They must have realised how more important my daughter was.

#### Tuesday 3rd April

George Gavin the last of the Sigs who left Sydney on here, left the ship today to do to F.N.D. for a course. He has to be there by the 19th. Maybe I'll get a course before the war ends. I got another recommend for it during the month.

#### Wednesday 4th April

My old Castlemaine shipmate Neil Kennett left the ship just before we came to sea. He is going to F.N.D. for an Officer's course. Good luck to him – he will make a good officer, because he has had 3 years among the boys. Neil is a fine bloke – somehow I feel I'll run into him somewhere again in the future.

We took 30 Raaf blokes aboard. Some are getting off at Hollandia and the rest at Aitape. We are going to Hollandia first to try to get fresh food + canteen stores. We have been living on mainly bully beef for

a while now.

The weather <sup>is</sup> wet + stormy and the sea is putting on a fair turn. About all the Raaf blokes went out like lights. I don't think they are too fond of the sea. I reckon the Swan is a good sea ship compared to a corvette + hasn't felt the slightest bit like being sick. Some of the crew lost a bit of food. These Raaf blokes are just up from down south - some of them have been there for years without having been away. Somehow, they just don't mix in a crowd like swabbies and sailors. They aren't all the same, but the great

majority don't mix. They sit down at meal time then just get up + leave things. Whenever we have had swabbies aboard, they always offer to help with the dishes. In fact they would do it on their own. I think it is all because of the different treatment the seaboys get down south. The swabbies still do us.

~~Tuesday~~ 5<sup>th</sup> April

Arrived Hollandia about 8 AM. Stores parties went off to get ration stores + fresh food as we are very short of fresh stuff. We were unsuccessful because we received a good quantity of stores among them being a few ~~cans~~ cans of tomatoes. The Shipper

a while now.

The weather is wet + stormy and the sea is putting on a fair turn. About all the Raaf blokes went out like lights. I don't think they are too fond of the sea. I reckon the Swan is a good sea ship compared to a corvette + haven't felt the slightest bit like being sick. Some of the crew lost a bit of food. These Raaf blokes are just up from down south + some of them have been there for years without having been away. Somehow, they just don't mix in a crowd like swotties and sailors. They aren't all the same, but the great

majority don't mix. They sit down at meal time then just get up + leave things. Whenever we have had swotties aboard, they always offer to help with the dishes. In fact they would do it on their own. I think it is all because of the different treatment the services get down south. The swotties will do us.

#### 5th April

Arrived Hollandia about 8PM. Stores parties went off to get canteen stores + fresh food as we are very short of fresh stuff. We were successful because we received a good quantity of stores, among them being a few cases of tomatoes. The Skipper

obtained a fair quantity of fresh  
canned beans also for the ship's  
company. Left Hollandia about  
9 pm for Aitape.

~~Friday 6th April~~ Arrived Aitape  
in forenoon. Heavy surf rolling  
in. One incident happened when  
the amphibians came alongside to  
take the raft blocks off.  
The swollies driver heeled over  
in the "duck" with malaria.  
One of the raft took charge  
of the duck.

We were no sooner in  
than the 6th Div H.Q. invited  
60 ratings ashore to pick up  
milk supplies after it. We got  
on well with these swollies.  
Three Artillery ligs came  
aboard into our area. They

do the w/c communication between  
aircraft + the ship for the short.  
These blokes only just arrived  
for supper and yet they wanted  
to drink up and give us a  
spell. Quite a contrast to those  
raft blokes. There was a couple  
of cans of beer on + we  
paid for the swollies. They thought  
it was good.

~~Saturday 7th April~~ Start out  
about 12.30 pm up the coast  
to near Lagua about 20 miles  
from Wewak. We only fired  
about half a dozen ~~shots~~  
shots + saw no other target  
when it started to pour with  
rain. We waited about for  
a while but it didn't stop.  
so we had to return to



obtained a fair quantity of Yank canned beer also for the ships company. Left Hollandia about 9PM for Aitape.

#### 4th April

Arrived Aitape in forenoon. Heavy surf rolling in. An incident happened when the amphibian came alongside to take the Raaf blokes off.

The swottie driver keeled over in the "duck" with malaria.

One of the Raaf took charge of the duck.

We were no sooner in than the 6th Div HQ. invited 60 ratings ashore to pictures with supper after it. We get on well with these swotties.

Three Artillery Sigs came aboard into our mess. They

do the W/T communication between aircraft + the ship for the shoot.

These blokes only just arrived for supper and yet they wanted to dish up and give us a spell. Quite a contrast to those Raaf blokes. There was a couple of cans of beer on + we paid for the swotties. They thought it was goodoh.

#### 7th April

Went out about 2AM up the coast to near Dagua about 20 mile from Wewak. We only fired about half a dozen shots + were on the target, when it started to pour with rain. We waited about for a while but it didn't stop so we had to return to

Aitape. It is no good shooting  
ashore during rain, because  
the aircraft cannot see whether  
the shots are on the target or  
not.

Sunday April 9th Left about 8 AM  
- fine clear day. When we  
got there we fired about 400  
rounds on 4 targets. The  
aircraft reported that shoot was  
very successful. All shots were  
on target except last couple  
of rounds at first target -  
they fell to the right. At the  
shoot at the village, our shells  
fell right in and around the  
village and when we had  
finished the aircraft reported no  
movement from there. Our  
infantry will be there to

these places in a day or so now  
+ this shoot should clear the  
Japs out a bit.

There 3 smoothies in our mess  
are grand blabbers. It's a pleasure  
to do anything for them, because  
they are so appreciative. As for  
dishing up after meals, they  
insist on ~~dinner~~ <sup>helping</sup> every meal.  
He has looked them up to  
a fair bit of tobacco + cigarettes  
that we had and they couldn't  
do enough for us. Mike gave  
us the Jap invasion money  
he had and took my address  
so that he could send more  
when he got it. Noel reckons  
if he gets back here next  
shoot he will do his  
best to get us a Jap rifle

Aitape. It is no good shooting ashore during the rain, because the aircraft cannot see, whether the shots are on the target or not.

#### April 9th

Left about 8AM – fine clear day. When we got there we fired about 400 rounds on 4 targets. The aircraft reported that shoot was very successful. All shoots were on target except last couple of rounds at first target – they fell to the right. At the shoot at the village, our shells fell right in and around the village and when we had finished the aircraft reported no movement from there. Our infantry will be thru' to

these places in a day or so now + this shoot should clear the Jap out a bit.

These 3 swotties in our mess are grand blokes. It's a pleasure to do anything for them, because they are so appreciative. As for dishing up after meals, they insist on helping every meal.

We have lashed them up to a fair bit of tobacco + cigarettes that we had and they couldn't do enough for us. Mick gave us the Jap invasion money he had and took my address so that he could send more when he got it. Noel reckons if he gets back here next shoot he will do his best to get us a Jap rifle.

or something like that.

After the shoot we headed back to Bat airstrip where our swallows have their rear infantry H.Q. We were afraid to drop the swallows there but they could send no longer but our shipper decided not to ~~send~~ send the swallows right inshore.

So the swallows are to come with us by Thakang or return by air. Naturally they aren't greatly displeased.  
Thursday April 10th Arrived Thakang and stayed overnight. Mail came aboard but it was very disappointing. There was some missing in it was nearly all about a fortnight old.

According to the letter from Hong she shows no sign of going into hospital yet. That's not bad work. No sign of going into hospital + she has a baby 10 days old. Maybe she flushed it from a rose. Had a picture at night - a couple of shots + heart of Kim. I saw heart of Kim in Thursday Island 2 years ago so when it rained I decided to get a full night's sleep instead of seeing the show. Tuesday 11th April. Left Thakang, calling at Languah then on to Kute Bay to get ammunition. We got 10 passengers in our mess again. They are mostly Kodaks going to L'nah + M. Bay to return.



or something like that.

After the shoot we headed back to But airstrip where our swotties have their rear infantry H.Q. We were s'posed to drop the swotties there, but they could send no barge out and our Skipper decided not to send the whaler right inshore.

So the swotties are to come with us to Madang + return by air. Naturally they aren't exactly displeased.

#### Monday April 10th

Arrived Madang and stayed overnight. Mail came aboard but it was very disappointing. There was some missing + it was nearly all about a fortnight old.

According to the letters from Marg she shows no sign of going into hospital yet. That's not bad work. No sign of going into hospital + she has a baby 10 days old. Maybe she plucked it from a rose. Had a picture at night – a couple of shorts + Next of Kin. I saw Next of Kin in Thursday Island 2 years ago, so when it rained I decided to get a full nights sleep instead of seeing the show.

#### Tuesday 11th April.

Left Madang, calling at Langewak then on to Milne Bay to get ammunition. We got 10 passengers in our mess again. They are mostly coders going to L'wah + M.Bay to relieve

chaps who have done their time.  
They are Navy chaps and they  
are even worse than the RAF.  
Blokes we had recently. Maybe  
shore service breeds ill-manners  
& selfishness - anyway these  
blokes have certainly got them.  
Only one out of ten offered to  
help irrespective of the fact that  
there are 10 of them & they have  
nothing to do. Some of  
them are getting off at lunch  
thanks goodness & after that  
it is only about 36 hours  
before we get rid of the rest.  
We hope we have our noses to  
ourselves for a change coming back.  
Thursday April 12<sup>th</sup> After a  
very stormy night today  
has turned out beautiful.

A sunny day, slight breeze &  
calm sea. A. Kobbie Hall and  
other speaker has now got a  
draft to Penguin Pool. He has  
been on here over 2 years. Since  
I came here, Blue Birdshaw has  
gone, Ray Hillington, Dick Chapman  
& George Gavan - now there is  
Kobbie. Cyril is the only old  
hand left here.

We dropped a depth charge  
for practice today. The shipper  
circled round looking for  
fish but we couldn't see any.  
The charge certainly gives the  
ship a kick when she explodes.  
I think the jolt was heavier  
in the wireless cabin  
than when the guns are  
firing.

chaps who have done their time. They are Navy chaps and they are even worse than the Raaf blokes we had recently. Maybe shore service breeds ill-manners and selfishness – anyway these blokes have certain got them.

Only one out of ten offered to help irrespective of the fact that there are 10 of them + they have nothing to do. Four of them are getting off at L'wah thank goodness + after that it is only about 3-1/2 hours before we get rid of the rest.

We hope we have our mess to ourselves for a change coming back.

Thursday April 12<sup>th</sup> After a very stormy night, today has turned out beautiful.

A sunny day, slight breeze + calm sea. Nobbie Hall our other Sparker has now got a draft to Penguin Pool. He has been on here over 2 years. Since I came here, Blue Bradshaw has gone, Ray Millington, Dick Chapman + George Gavan – now there is Nobbie. Cyril is the only old hand left on here.

We dropped a depth charge for practice today. The Skipper circled round looking for fish, but we couldn't see any. The charge certainly gives the ship a kick when she explodes. I think the jolt was heavier in the wireless cabin than when the guns are firing.

Thursday &  
Friday 1/3<sup>rd</sup> April Steamed into  
Fishes Bay during the forenoon.  
This place also "a shadow  
of its former self". We were  
about the only ship in here.

Ruthe arranged a game  
of Aussie Rules for the afternoon  
for the skipper of the Ladawa  
team was Allan Lewis. I had  
been looking everywhere for him  
at Madang. He has been  
here for four months and  
reckons it is goodish - no  
work - good quail, pictures  
every night and a place to  
play football - and a swimming  
bath. As a matter of fact  
that depot itself has tallied  
100% since I was here over

a year ago. It is now very neat  
and comfortable.

Ladawa beat us at football  
but we had a good game  
+ the match was fairly played.

Another surprise was when  
I saw Wilkes. This is the  
last territory I expected to see  
him. It appears that he had  
his 27 days leave after the  
12 months in Darwin sent  
to Balmoral or baked two hours  
like I did. He is waiting  
for the Lo Yang - the thing  
we are waiting for for  
our ammunition. Naturally Wilkes  
+ I did quite a bit of nothing.  
After the match we had a  
smoke. The Ladawa men have  
rigged a shark proof net,



Friday 13th April

Steamed into Milne Bay during the forenoon.

This place also “a shadow of it’s former self”. We were about the only ship in here.

Butch arranged a game of Aussie Rules for the afternoon + the Skipper of the Ladova team was Allan Lewis. I had been looking everywhere for him at Madang. He has been here for four months and reckons it is goodoh – no work – good quarters, pictures every night and a place to play football – and a swimming baths. As a matter of fact that depot itself has altered 100% since I was here over

a year ago. It is now very neat and comfortable.

Ladava beat us at football but we had a good game + the match was fairly played.

Another surprise was when I saw Wilkes. This is the last territory I expected to see him. It appears that he had his 27 days leave after the 12 months in Darwin, went to Balmoral + lasted two hours like I did. He is waiting for the Po Yang – the thing we are waiting for for our ammunition. Naturally Wilkes + I did quite a bit of nattering.

After the match we had a swim. The Ladava mob have rigged a shark proof net,

built a diving board, and even  
has 2 showers laid on there.

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> April Wilkes called  
out & I went back with him  
after lunch to see a Yank  
concert party ashore. The party  
consisted of 3 women & 2 men.  
The show itself wasn't too bad,  
but unless women are good artists  
I rather think they spoil a show  
up here. I think the majority  
of chaps would rather see a  
good show act than see a  
woman just showing herself off.

I was glad to get back  
aboard this because my knee  
was pretty sore. I missed it  
playing football yesterday and  
it is sore this time than  
other times that I have done the

until I say get an elastic knee  
support. I'll give up football up  
here.

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April Division in  
forenoon then spent rest of the  
day lazily moving from the  
mess. This knee is annoying.

Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April Another beautiful  
day! The weather certainly has  
been good here this time. Wilkes  
says it is nice when the weather  
is. There's a cool breeze, out  
of the sun then the day &  
the evenings are cool & starry.  
As a contrast it has been  
known to rain here for 3 weeks  
without a stop.

The Po Yang arrived in  
at 6 PM & we went straight  
alongside her to get on

built a diving board, and even has 2 showers laid on there.

#### Saturday 14th April

Wilkes called out + I went back with him after lunch to see a Yank concert party ashore. The party consisted of 3 women + 2 men.

The show itself wasn't too bad, but unless women are good artists I rather think they spoil a show up here. I think the majority of chaps would rather see a good clever act than see a woman just showing herself off.

I was glad to get back aboard tho' because my knee was pretty sore. I twisted it playing football yesterday and it is sorer this time than other times that I have done that.

Until I can get an elastic knee support, I'll give up football up here.

#### Sunday 15th April

Divisions in forenoon, then spent rest of the day hardly moving from the mess. This knee is annoying.

#### Monday 16th April

Another beautiful day. The weather certainly has been good here this time. Milne Bay is nice when the weather is. There's a cool breeze, out of the sun thru' the day + the evenings are cool + starry.

As a contrast it has been known to rain here for 3 weeks without a stop.

The Po Yang arrived in at 6PM + we went straight alongside her to get our

ammunition. She could only let us have 1600 shells. Whether came aboard here while we were (or just dumped) Chris's head there I went and had a look at his ship. She is a converted merchant ship & very roomy. The wireless office is a beauty & contains a separate ~~cabin~~ cabin with 3 bunks in which the single tel. & the sigs occupy. That's what I'd like to get. A ship where I was the only Sparky, having the office & gear all to myself.

Our sailors worked all night carrying the ammo aboard & had the 1600 in by half past two or three. We went to sea about 5:30 AM.

We are calling at Frege Harbor for fuel then going straight to Pitape. Signal been sent to forward our mail there as we can't wait to call at Madang. Should be a good turn up there this time.

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> April Another beautiful day. Majority of blocks cracked after this long night but night. Skipper had to be careful coming out because of a couple of new reefs. During the afternoon we passed a Yankee liberty ship in the reefs & our skipper said "You don't give a guy much room." The Yankee flared back. "Sorry we didn't know we were passing a battle ship".



ammunition. She could only let us have 1600 shells. Wilkes came aboard here while we wet (or just damped) Chris's head then I went and had a look at his ship. She is a converted merchant ship + very roomy. The wireless office is a beaut + contains a separate cabin with 3 bunks in which the single Tel + the Sigs occupy. That's what I'd like to get. A ship where I was the only Sparker, having the office + gear all to myself.

Our sailors worked all night carrying the ammo aboard + had the 1600 in by half past two or three. We went to sea about 5.30AM

We are calling at Dreger Harbour for fuel then going straight to Aitape. Signal been sent to forward our mail there as we can't wait to call at Madang. Should be a good turn up there this time.

#### Tuesday 17th April

Another beautiful day. Majority of blokes crashed after their long night last night.

Skipper had to be careful coming out because of a couple of new reefs. During the afternoon we passed a Yank liberty ship in the reefs + our Skipper said "You don't give a guy much room" The Yank flashed back "Sorry, we didn't know we were passing a battle-ship"

Just after 8pm we dropped a  
pattern of depth charges - we  
flew to action stations while  
they dropped a couple more  
charges. But it wasn't a sub,  
it was a wrecked ship on  
the sea bottom which gave the  
metallic echo. We had quite  
a stock of shells piled on  
deck as there was no room  
for them below - naturally  
when the pattern of charges  
went off unexpectedly there was  
a little bit of wondering just  
what the explosions were.

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April I called  
at Dregg's harbour but waited  
no time & headed for Aitape.  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> At sea.

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> April Arrived Aitape  
at 0800 this morning.

During the forenoon 20 bags of  
maize came aboard but they  
were all full of papers &  
junk. Letters are what we want.  
I got 2 cakes & some biscuits from  
Hong so morning tea will be  
done in style for a few days.  
The three gunnery, Helicopter, Diller  
& below & 12 Fairies are now (the  
the "Mush" Force" for working (one  
with the 6<sup>th</sup> Div. for Mush. Officer  
shipper sections will be here  
about a month, so that  
ruins our chances of going down  
in the middle of May. So wonder  
when you'll go home.

In the evening we had a  
picture show. It was better

Just after 8PM we dropped a pattern of depth charges – we flew to Action Stations while they dropped a couple more charges. But it wasn't a sub, it was a wrecked ship on the sea bottom which gave the metallic echo. We had quite a stock of shells piled on deck as there was no room for them below – naturally when the pattern of charges went off unexpectedly there was a little bit of wondering just what the explosions were.

#### Wednesday 18th April

Fuelled at Dreger Harbour but wasted no time + headed for Aitape.

#### Thursday 19th

At sea.

#### Friday 20th April

Arrived Aitape at 0100 this morning. During the forenoon 20 bags of mail came aboard but they were all full of papers + packets. Letters are what we want. I got 2 cakes + some biscuits from Marg so morning tea will be done in style for a few days.

The three corvettes, Deloraine, Dubbo + Colac + 4 Fairmiles are now the "Wewak Force" for working with the 6th Div to Wewak. We are Senior Officer.

Skipper reckons we'll be here about a month. So that ruins our chances of going down in the middle of May, so wonder when we'll go now.

In the evening we had a picture show. It was Bette

Quais in Mo<sup>o</sup> Sheffington - good show too.

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> April Off to sea in the afternoon with our fleet to do mine-sweeping. The corvettes swept + we go ahead covering them.

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> April Last night + this morning we did see ~~at~~ Arden patrol up near the island where the Japs used to get stores in, but no signs of anything. Returned to anchor off Rat, leaving there about 9 o'clock reaching Aitape 9 o'clock.

Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April Some of the boys went off surfing today. It is good surf here. In the evening we had

the picture, "To have or have not" starring Humphrey Bogart. That's two good shows we've had aboard.

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> April Bob Tiger caught an ashore so Jerry, Lou + I went ashore together. We got out to the "Regal Theatre" at about 6 PM + the concert didn't start until 7:30 PM. We got two rubbish bins that didn't smell too bad, laid a plank between them + so had a seat. The trouble of the night was that it started raining about 6:30 PM. Believe me, it did rain too. Thunder and lightning or pouring rain continued right thru the show. At times we couldn't hear Bob Tiger because of rain + thunder.



Davis in Mrs. Sheffington – good show too.

#### Sunday 21st April

Off to sea in the afternoon with our fleet to do mine-sweeping. The corvettes swept + we go ahead covering them.

#### Sunday 22nd April

Last night + this morning we did an Asdec patrol up near the island where the Japs used to get stores in, but no sign of anything.

Returned to anchor off But, leaving there about 9 oclock reaching Aitape 2 oclock.

#### Monday 23rd April

Some of the boys went off surfing today. It is good surf here.

In the evening we had

the picture “To have or have not”, starring Humphrey Bogart. That’s two good shows we’ve had aboard.

#### Tuesday 24th April

Bob Dyer concert on ashore so Ferg, Lou + I went ashore together. We got out to the “Regal Theatre” at about 6PM + the concert didn’t start until 7.30PM. We got two rubbish bins that didn’t smell too bad, laid a plank between them + so had a seat. The trouble of the night was that it started raining about 6.30PM. Believe me, it did rain too. Thunder and lightning + pouring rain continued right thru’ the show. At times we couldn’t hear Bob Dyer because of rain + thunder

It says a lot for his show when the majority of the hundreds there said there's it all. I don't remember ever being so wet before. There's the show the thunder ceased a bit & we could hear alright. There was Bob Dyer, an accordionist & 4 women in his show. The women were Russian and naturally were rough & hardly common raised. Like the Yanki concert parties.

The whole show was extra good. After the show we paddled about in water till we got a truck back to the water front. We went out by "dunks" to a barge, thence to the ship. If we had have had any dry spots they certainly

would have got wet on the way back in the heavy driving rain. Well, once back aboard we soon dried ourselves, made a brew & were right again. Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> April Off to sea in the forenoon. Went up fast but to one of the big islands near the mainland. We fished 200 rounds into the places where they are supposed to have guns guarding the channels. Aircraft very pleased with our shoot. Hornets did a shoot, but with their single 2 inch gun (Woodworth's gun - nothing over 2/6) they are ineffective. Beaufort Bombers did the place over after our shoot & between us we left quite a bit of a new target.

It says a lot for his show when the majority of the hundreds there sat thru' it all. I don't remember ever being so wet before. Thru' the show the thunder eased a bit + we could hear alright. There was Bob Dyer, an accordionist + 4 women in his show. The women were Aussies and naturally weren't rough + harshly common voiced like the Yank concert parties. The whole show was extra good.

After the show we paddled about in water till we got a truck back to the water front. We went out by "ducks" to a barge, thence to the ship. If we had have had any dry spots they certainly

would have got wet on the way back in the heavy driving rain. Still, once back aboard we soon dried ourselves, made a brew + were right again.

### Wednesday 25th April

Off to sea in the forenoon. Went up past But to one of the big islands near the mainland. We poked 20 rounds into two places where they are s'posed to have guns guarding the channels. Aircraft very pleased with our shoot. Corvettes did a shoot, but with their single 4 inch gun (Woolworth's gun – nothing over 2/6) they are ineffective.

Beaufort bombers did the place over after our shoot + between us we left quite a bit of a mess ashore.

There's another buzz - in a day  
or so, Fairmiles are going to  
go thru that channel. If they  
pass thru we'll go thru to  
see if they fire. Then if we  
get thru it will probably be  
considered safe to bring our  
swathes thru by barge.

These bombardments are getting  
a bit monotonous now. I had  
the forenoon watch, had half  
an hour for lunch in which I  
had to dirt up the mess.  
Then at my Action Stations which  
is operator - the only Spanker  
left in the office - for it's home  
back on patrol at 6 o'clock to  
do my last log. I was a  
bit rich of being shirked in  
there today. The gun fire

makes things jump about in the  
aft cabin quite a bit.

Left But about 9 PM + arrived  
Lafayette about 1 or 2 AM.

Thursday 26th April turned out  
a beautiful day today. Quite a  
few of the boys went off  
surfing again.

About 1430 there was  
quite a panic. A plane had  
sighted a sub near Stewart  
Island about that big island  
- we all ordered to go look.  
Our Skipper was ashore plus 20  
odd liberty men. The Deloraine  
or Dubbo were soon away. Our  
Skipper came back + with  
him a few of the liberty men.  
We steamed round to where  
the boys were surfing + attacked



There's another buzz – in a day or so Fairmiles are going to go thru' that channel + if they pass them we'll go thru' to see if they fire. Then if we get thru' it will probably be considered safe to bring our swotties thru' by barge.

These bombardments are getting a bit monotonous now. I had the forenoon watch, had half an hour for lunch in which I had to dish up the mess. Then at my Action Stations which is operator – the only Sparker left in the office – for about 4-1/2 hours. Back on watch at 6 oclock to do my Last Dog. I was a bit sick of being stuck in there today. The gun fire

makes things jump about in the W/T cabin quite a bit. Left But about 9PM + arrived Aitape about 1 or 2 AM.

#### Thursday 26th April

Turned out a beautiful day today. Quite a few of the boys went off surfing again.

About 1430 there was quite a panic. A plane had sighted a sub near Wewak round about that big island + we all ordered to go look.

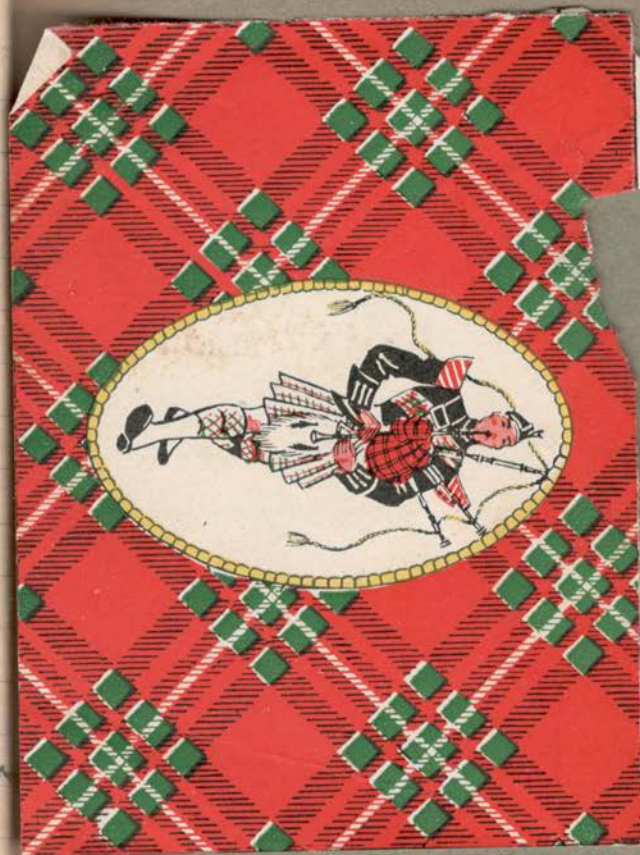
Our Skipper was ashore plus 20 odd liberty men. The Deloraine + Dubbo were soon away. Our Skipper came back + with him a few of the liberty men. We steamed round to where the boys were surfing + attracted

attention. The whales went in OK  
+ got the boys who were surfing.  
There are most to see that  
are still 3 seasons + 3 stokers  
left behind somewhere ashore.

Spore we will patrol outside  
the island and off Hawaii  
all night. Would be a good  
break if we could get the  
sub this time.

(We had pictures arranged  
for tonight + a can of beer  
but we'll miss that now.  
The Po'le asked me would I  
like a go at movie operator  
go they are having 3 operators now  
I said I'd have a go. It  
about the only thing I haven't  
done in the Navy.)

Pay 2/60 per show



attention. The whaler went in OK + got the boys who were surfing. When we went to sea there were still 3 seamen + 3 stokers left behind somewhere ashore.

S'pose we will patrol outside the island and off Wewak all night. Would be a good break if we could get the sub this time.

(We had pictures arranged for tonight + a can of beer but we'll miss that now. The PO Tel asked me would I like a go at movie operator as they are having 3 operators now. I said I'd have a go. Pay 2/6 per show. It's about the only thing I haven't done in the Navy.)