

Tues 8th December 1942

CORVETTE OUT-FIGHTS 10 JAPANESE PLANES

From N. L. OTTAWAY, a Herald War Correspondent.

SOMEWHERE IN AUSTRALIA. — The ability of a gallant Australian corvette to "turn on a sixpence" saved it from destruction when it was attacked by 10 Japanese planes off the coast of New Guinea last week.

For an hour the corvette, accompanied by a sister ship, carried on a running duel, and before daylight terminated the fight. It had shot down two enemy machines without having sustained material damage — or suffered a single casualty.

Then the corvette made for home, and today in an Australian port her captain told the story.

Seven of the Japanese planes came over about 8.40 p.m., he said. "As soon as they had located us they scattered in all directions to make individual attacks.

EVERYONE DRENCHED

The huge columns of green water thrown up by the second explosion seemed to be suspended in the air, then the great mass of water descended with a thud on the deck, drenching everyone to the skin.

Three times the planes dropped delayed action bombs, which lifted the vessel out of the water and dropped her back again. They fell so close that the pressure generated by the explosions deformed the funnel and caused black flashes in the boiler.

OUT-MANOEUVRED

Our turn came when a twin-engine plane tried to come in on us at 600 feet. He was too slow to evade us when we swung round, bringing him right across.

But not by the main engine. One of the dive-bombers had preceded him, and had fired a salvo, but to complete aim. He passed right over the engine, and then a third engine began to spurt from the tail. He did not drop any bombs.

He managed to get back to the airfield, I'm a Dutchman." Either about 16 bombs were dropped on us. Suddenly there was a roar of applause from the ship and a dive-bomber at the end of the target area.

Us up
towards
Dutch
Koror

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Pm 1948 TEL. B. DYKER
H.M.A.S. SWAN.

BOOK NR 1.

LEFT BRISBANE 6th SEPTEMBER 1945
8th October 1945

PM/V98 TEL. B. DYKER
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LEFT BRISBANE 6th SEPTEMBER 1942
8TH OCTOBER 1945

September 6th 1945 Thursday

Well after about three months down south, during which time the war with Japan finished, we are once again headed north. We left Brisbane at 11 AM, and altho' Brisbane is not the best place in Australia & for one am sorry to be leaving. Actually it is the thought that we are headed far away from our homes that is most of all. We have had a good spell of knowing what civilization is and I can't blame our useless boring months away. Now that the war is over it is impossible to have interest in this racket. Still maybe it won't be too long then we will be out on our little street and can act a normal life after all these years.

Stayed outside Milton Bay

September 6th 1945 Thursday

Well after about two months down south, during which time the war with Japan finished, we are once again headed north. We left Brisbane at 11am and altho' Brisbane is not the best place in Australia, I for one am sorry to be leaving. Actually it is the thought that we are headed far away from our homes that is worst of all. We have had a good spell of knowing what civilization is and aren't keen on the useless boring months away. Now that the war is over it is impossible to raise interest in this racket. Still maybe it won't be too long then we will be out on Civvie street and can act a normal life after all these years.

Stayed outside Moreton Bay

all afternoon doing RADAR trials then
at 1600 we got under way &
headed straight out on our course
to Jacquinot Bay first stop.

September 7th had salinity but
just as mindboggling. Have settled
down into the same dull old
routine of watch-keeping, drowsing,
sleeping and writing letters.
Had practice at Action Stations &
the rest of those things but
nobody very enthusiastic. We have
about 3 junior officers and already
the new Jimmy is throwing
his weight about. He is one of
these young merchant-men who
was probably a cabin boy when
the war started. He said he
is going to give us a bit of
more time routine. Probably he
has studied it from behind a
desk at Navy House. A lot of

these officers are sorry the war
has ended. They'll be out outside
at their old jobs of licking stamps
or making the tea for others.
Maybe I'm just cynical.

September 8th Saturday

Another day further away from
the good things of life. Making
good speed then last night. A
bear been well behaved. A bit of
a roll but that just lets us
know we are at sea. Emerged into
short and sandals today & got
my first dose of sun again.
The Navy today said that Mansoor
was in Jacquinot Bay to transport
troops to Rabaul. Kaituma is
a day behind us going up there
too. So maybe we'll get a couple
of jobs. Seems quite possible that
I'll be able to see Syd again
this time.

all afternoon doing RADAR trials, then at 6pm we got underway and headed straight out on our course to Jacquinot Bay first stop.

September 7th

Sea calmish but just as uninteresting. Have settled down into the same dull old routine of watch-keeping, dhobying(Laundry), sleeping and writing letters. Had practice at Action Stations and the rest of those things, but nobody very enthusiastic. We have about 3 new officers and already the new Jimmy is throwing his weight about. He is one of the young merchant-men who was probably a cabin boy when the war started. He said he is going to give us a bit of war-time routine. Probably he has studied it from behind a desk at Navy Board. A lot of

these officers are sorry the war has ended. They'll be lost outside at their old jobs of licking stamps or making the tea for men.

Maybe I'm just cynical.

September 8th Saturday

Another day further away from the good things of life. Making good speed thru' last night. Sea has been well behaved - a bit of a roll but that just lets us know we are at sea. Emerged into shorts and sandals today - got my first dose of sun again. News today said that Manoora was in Jacquinot Bay to transport troops to Rabaul. Kanimbla is a day behind us going up there too. So maybe we'll get a couple of jobs. Seems quite possible that I'll be able to see Syd again this time.

September 9th + 10th

Another two days over
Not so nice days either. The old girl
has been rolling about a bit
and the strain makes one seat
tired. However it has been a
reasonably good trip so far.
Very squally at night.

September 11th Tuesday Arrived at
Jacquinet Bay in forenoon. Place
looks deserted. Seems to be
very quiet. Manoa taken by
note left to Rabaul yesterday.
We fuelled, took on some gear
and then headed for Rabaul with
a tanker (Eleodora).

A little bit of excitement at
about 0330. Ourselfs + tanker
heard bells and when we
investigated with our searchlight
it was 2 Japs in a dinghy
calling out. Took a while

to find them as it was raining
very heavily. Finally threw the
Japs a line but when they dived
for it, they capsized the dinghy
which sank. However, managed
to haul them aboard, where they
bowed + saluted. They looked
pretty scared - probably expecting
to be shot or something. The
Jap who spoke sprayed them with
Dettol + they bowed to him.

They are rather a poor looking
type of Jap. It would be no
use telling them - they wouldn't
know what they were getting it
for. They looked as if they don't
know what is going on.

September 12th Wednesday
Arrived Rabaul during forenoon
bombed minesweeping fast
Manoa in. The ranges here
are mainly extinct volcanoes

September 9th and 10th

Another two days over. Not so nice days either. The old girl has been rolling about a bit and the strain makes one real tired. However it has been a reasonably good trip so far. Very squally at night.

September 11th Tuesday

Arrived at Jacquinot Bay in forenoon. Place looks deserted. Seems to be very quiet. Manoora taken Syd's mob up to Rabaul yesterday. We fuelled, took on some gear, and then headed for Rabaul with a tanker. (Cleodora)

A little bit of excitement at about 0330. Ourselves and tanker heard yells, and when we investigated with our searchlights it was 2 Japs in a dinghy calling out. Took a while

to find them as it was raining very heavily. Finally threw the Japs a line, but when they dived for it, they capsized the dinghy which sank. However, managed to haul them aboard, where they bowed and saluted. They looked pretty scared - probably expecting to be shot or something. The sick bay bloke sprayed them with Dettol and they bowed to him. They are rather a poor looking type of Jap. It would be no use belting them - they wouldn't know what they were getting it for. They look as if they don't know what is going on.

September 12th Wednesday

Arrived Rabaul during forenoon Corvettes mine sweeping parts - Manoora in. The ranges here are mainly extinct volcanos

some of which are huge. The first thing that struck us was the vegetable gardens on the sides of the hills. Vegetable patches were everywhere. Next thing was the canoes in the hills. We could see them plainly from the sea. There are probably hundreds of them - well made & in good positions.

In the harbour itself on the right is that volcano which erupted back in 1930 and caused the loss of so many lives. The sides are still bare of growths and are black in contrast to the green-sided older volcano. The huge crater is the biggest I've seen & looks as tho' it would hold 3 or 4 of these ships.

Around the forebay of the harbour are huge ships run aground than ever I have seen

Roughly we can see about 30 odd medium sized ships, not counting barges, patrol boats & even a couple of midge submarines. There are a great number of ships sunk here too. The Japs must have run as many ships as they could aground in order to save the cargo.

To leave Jim as Manover blokes got ashore to some storage caves & ramrashed them. Then they got to a good 200 which was to be flown back to Aurie, and they ruined it.

Our Japs still aboard - nobody wants them. We had various suggestions from other ships, such as cutting their throats, throwing them back into the sea, etc. but so far all they are doing is a huge -

some of which are huge. The first thing that struck me was the vegetable gardens on the sides of the hills. Vegetable patches were everywhere. Next thing was the caves in the hills. We could see them plainly from the sea. There are probably hundreds of them - well made and in good positions.

In the harbour itself on the right, is that volcano which erupted back in 1930? and caused the loss of so many lives. Its sides are still bare of growths and are black, in contrast to the greensided older volcanos. The huge crater is the biggest I've seen and looks as tho' it would hold 3 or 4 of these ships.

Around the foreshore of the harbour are more ships run aground than ever I have seen.

Roughly we can see about 30 odd medium sized ships, not counting barges, patrol boats and even a couple of midget submarines. There are a great number of ships sunk here too. The Japs must have run as many ships as they could aground in order to save the cargos.

No leave given, as Manoora blokes got ashore to some storage caves and ransacked them. Then they got to a good zero which was to be flown back to Aussie and they ruined it.

Our Japs still aboard - nobody wants them. We had various suggestions from other ships, such as cutting their throats, throwing them back into the sea etc but so far all they are doing is a huge -

and I mean huge - pile of the
officers dhobyung. They are still
blowing holes they get anything.
The cook gets himself in when
they blow at screen time.

September 13th Thursday. Skipper
obtained permission for parties
to go ashore sight-seeing in
groups of 10 men in charge of
an officer. Looking was barred
and anybody caught with gear
would be dealt with as well
as no more leave being granted.

Got ashore and got a ride
in a truck straight out to
where Syd was. Found him
straight away. We had a good
old natter but being in an
organised party I couldn't stay
long. Still I know where
he is for next time I come
off. Glad to see him &

was able to tell him about his
son. Syd not were having beans
and other fresh vegetables for tea or
thought it was good. The Japs
have vegetables growing everywhere.

On the way back we went
from some caves in Sunset Hill.
It is honeycombed with caves
every 10 yards or so. They are
well boarded inside and some
are even cemented. Many were
storage caves and contain lots
of gear, others were like living
quarters. This is only one big
hill - the whole Harbour of
Rangoon is flanked with such hills.

It would have been impossible
to get the Japs out of here without
a huge invasion fleet and a
very large loss of life. The
Japs are all in good condition,
they are well armed, have the

and I mean huge - pile of the officers dhobyng. They are still bowing after they get anything. The cook gets himself in when they bow at scam time.

September 13th Thursday.

Skipper obtained permission for parties to go ashore sight-seeing in groups of 10 men in charge of an officer. Looting was barred and anybody caught with gear would be dealt with as well as no more leave being granted.

Got ashore and got a ride in a truck straight out to where Syd was. Found him straight away. We had a good old natter, but being in an organised party I couldn't stay long. Still I know where he is for next time I come off. Glad to see him and

was able to tell him about his son. Syd's mob were having beans and other fresh vegetables for tea and thought it was goodoh. The Japs have vegetables growing everywhere.

On the way back we went thru' some caves in Tunnel Hill. It is honeycombed with caves every 10 yards or so. They are well boarded inside and some even cemented. Many were storage caves and contain lots of gear - others were like living quarters. This is only one big hill - the whole harbour of Rabaul is flanked with such hills.

It would have impossible to get the Japs out of here without a huge invasion fleet and a very large loss of life. The Japs are all in good condition, they are well armed, have the

best of gear and were in a good position. People who deplore the use of the atomic bomb should see places like this and understand how many Aussie lives it would have cost but for the atomic bomb.

Along the roads there are Jap officers galore driving about in sedans cars, presumably helping in the murdering of prisoners. They have almost hundreds of trucks + sedans here. Our blokes are using all Jap trucks. The sedans are chrome plated fittings + flash seats. The majority are American make. It seems strange to see the Japs driving about or working at their gardens after fighting them for so long.

One Jap we saw was just by the side of the road doing up his legging. We asked him

what the - was he doing there, but he calmly ignored us. After fixing his legging he picked up his water bottle + stick + strolled off down the road as if it was the perfectly normal thing. It seemed so strange to us seeing him just wandering along on his own in the main road. He walked on as if it was the usual thing to see Australian sailors about.

Quite a few passed us taking vegetables to their camp, and quite a few saluted us. They are well fed, and some look intelligent.

While we were waiting to go back to the ship, Buckley Richards was unloading a pistol and he shot himself thru the hand.

When we got aboard our "wasabi" were ironing the shoying

best of gear and were in a good position. People who deplore the use of the atomic bomb should see places like this and understand how many Aussie lives it would have cost but for the atomic bomb.

Along the roads there are Jap officers galore driving about in sedan cars, presumably helping in the mustering of prisoners. They have almost hundreds of trucks and sedans here. Our blokes are using all Jap trucks. The sedans are chrome plated fittings and flush seats. The majority are American make.

It seems strange to see the Japs driving about or working at their gardens, after fighting them for so long.

One Nip we saw was just by the side of the road doing up his legging. We asked him

what the ~ was he doing there, but he calmly ignored us. After fixing his legging he picked up his water bottle and dish and strolled off down the road as if it was the perfectly normal thing. It seemed so strange to us seeing him just wandering along on his own in the main road. He walked on as if it was the usual thing to see Australian sailors about.

Quite a few passed us taking vegetables to their camp, and quite a few saluted us. They are well fed and some look intelligent.

While we were waiting to go back to the ship Curly Richards was unloading a pistol and he shot himself thru' the hand.

When we got aboard our "wasoohs" were ironing the dhoby

they done yesterday & today.
September 14th Friday. Saw a Jap
barge full of officers and men
come in this morning, probably
from one of the islands. They
were flying a big white flag.

Our men has once again
started practicing in the signal
~~and~~ in case of ship's races. I
am coxswain - quite a good job
sitting there steering and alone
driving.

The new Spanker arrived here
today but we don't yet know
whether he is extra or whether
someone is on draft. If there is,
it is probably Lytle.

(Appears now that Frank is
a good hand - good)

Saturday Sept 15th Lytle arrived
out today equipped with a
fine looking rifle & ammo.

Burgundy

He stayed on till about 5 o'clock
and then opened the "celebration"
I had been saying. The jolting
around in my locker had
stirred it up a bit & the
bang was like a six inch gun.
Sept and I had a good notion
- he is a decent bloke.

Went for a row in the
whaler and had the boys about
exhausted when we arrived back.
Sept 16th Sunday

After divisions I got permission
to go ashore to see Mr. Took
"with news of his wife and
new-born son". At least that
is what was on the pass I
had to get. Lytle still living
in open but expect to get
settled in a day or so.
Must say he put on a good
brew of tea - made over

they done yesterday and today.

September 14th Friday

Saw a Jap barge full of officers and men come in this morning, probably from one of the islands. They were flying a big white flag.

Our mess has once again started practicing in the whaler in case of ship's races.. I am cox'n - quite a good job sitting there steering and slave driving.

A new Spanker arrived here today but we don't yet know if he is extra or whether someone is on draft. If there is, it is probably Cyril.

(Appears now that Frank is a gash hand - good)

Saturday Sept 15th

Syd arrived out today equipped with a fearful looking rifle and ammo.

He stayed on till about 5 O'clock and we opened the "celebration" I had been saving(Burgundy). The jolting around in my locker had stirred it up a bit and the bang was like a six inch gun. Syd and I had a good natter - he is a decent bloke.

Went for a row in the whaler and had the boys about exhausted when we arrived back.

Sept 16th Sunday

After divisions I got permission to go ashore to see Pte Foote "with news of his wife and new born son". At least that is what was on the pass I had to get. Syd still living in open but expect to get settled in a day or so.

Must say he puts on a good brew of teas - made over

a fire.

On the way up, Lee to
Lydia & had a bit of a scare
when 3 trucks of Japs swarmed
near me on a deserted stretch
of road. I don't mind admitting
I jumped clear. If only a
man had a pistol!

A ^{jeep} driver told me that
his ^{jeep} driver had been brought in
from a mission today - 20 of
them were men. They had
not been touched by the Japs
but had had a bad time.

When I got back Frank
Donigan had turned into sick
bay. His feet had all
swollen up after his ~~run~~ run
ashore the other day.

Sept 14th Monday

Had a party of 50
Japs out here working today.

Some were scraping and scrubbing
the decks and some were working
in the boilers. They were all
Naval personnel and are a better
looking type than the Jap army
rat. They were all in good
physical condition and a few
showed surface signs of intelligence.
They had a young interpreter
with them. He was born in
California and lived there until
he was 18. According to his
story he was then forced to
go to Japan to teach English.
The officer in charge of the
party was a ruthless looking
type and he certainly had
the Japs scared. When he barked
at them they jumped to it.
They worked on board all
day, having dinner on our

a fire.

On the way up here to Syd's I had a bit of a scare when 3 trucks of Japs swerved near me on a deserted stretch of road. I don't mind admitting I jumped clear. If only a man had a pistol!

A jeep driver told us that 40 women had been brought in from a mission today -20 of them were nuns. They had not been touched by the Japs but had had a bad time.

When I got back Frank Donigan had turned into sick bay. His feet had all swollen up after his run ashore t'other day.

Sept 17th Monday

Had a party of 50 Japs out here working today.

Some were scraping and scrubbing the deck and some were working in the boilers. They were all Naval personnel and are a little better looking type than the Jap army rat. They were all in good physical condition and a few showed surface signs of intelligence. They had a young interpreter with them. He was born in California and lived there until he was 18. According to his story he was then forced to go to Japan to teach English. The officer in charge of the party was a ruthless looking type and he certainly had the Japs scared. When he barked at them they jumped to it.

They worked on board all day, having dinner on our

quarter deck, but altho' they seemed to 'do a lot of work' it was no more than our blokes could have done.

Shore leave has been stopped as looting has been taking place from the camp. The buzz is that shore leave will be granted when party is accompanied by an officer.

Thursday 18th Sept

G.O.C. 11th Division,
Lt Gen Eather and couple of other Army officers came aboard and we left for New Ireland to take the formal surrender of all Jap forces there.

(Our "warriors" were put ashore - they should have been dumped at sea)

The interpreter was an Aussie Army captain



Wednesday 19th Sept

A beautiful morning - clear blue sky, calm sea & bright sunshine. We arrived at NATAMAWAI at about 1 AM. There was a Jap barge flying two white flags on the beach. A Jap signified that they were having trouble with their motor and may be later than 0730.

In the meantime we were getting set up ready aboard. The Japs had formed a square on the quarter deck armed with rifles & bayonets & also others

quarter deck, but altho' they seemed to do a lot of work it was no more than our blokes could have done.
Shore leave has been stopped as looting has been taking place from the caves. The buzz is that shore leave will be granted when party is accompanied by an officer.

Tuesday Sept 18th

G.O.C. 11th Division, Lt Gen Eather and a couple of other army officers came aboard and we left for New Ireland to take the formal surrender of all Jap forces there.
(Our "mascots" were put ashore ~ they should have been dumped at sea)

The interpreter was an Aussie Army captain.
(map inserted)

Wednesday 19th Sept

A beautiful morning - clear blue sky, calm seas and bright sunshine. We arrived at NATAMANAI at about 7AM.
There was a Jap barge flying 2 white flags on the beach. A Jap semaphored that they were having trouble with their motor and may be later than 0730. In the meantime we were getting set up ready aboard. The seamen had formed a square on the quarter deck armed with rifles and bayonets and also others

armed with Tommy guns were in
vantage points. The Jap barge
came alongside as and we could
see 5 officers a row of six and
one white man dressed in a
linen suit.

The Jap officers climbed aboard
and fell in on the quarter deck
facing Lt Gen Bathurst. Lt Gen Ho
the Jap General then handed
over his sword. Bathurst read
out the terms of the surrender
and these were translated to
Japoneses by the interpreter.

Ho nodded that he understood
but wanted a few things talked
over. Bathurst briefly remarked
"Give him five minutes and in
the barge not on 'here'".
So the Japs had to climb
into the barge while the

interpreter explained the few points.
Before leaving the remaining 4
officers surrendered their swords also.

They were dressed in clean
gear for the occasion and on
their tunics they had their
campaign ribbons. Ho had 4 rows,
one ribbon of which looked like
one of our last war ribbons. But
they showed no emotion in their
faces. Just cruel + ruthless. It was
a humiliation not to have the
overlook on them. After a final
salute the barge pulled away
and so ended the surrender
formality of the Jap Army +
his forces in New Ireland.

We then headed for Tangalooma
just south of Karing to take
the surrender of old Naval
personnel from Rear Admiral Tanaka

armed with tommy guns were in vantage points. The jap barge came alongside us and we could see 5 officers, a crew of six and one white man dressed in a linen suit.

The Jap officers climbed aboard and fell in on the quarter deck facing Lt Gen Eather. Lt Gen Ito, the Jap General then handed over his sword. Eather read out the terms of the surrender and these were translated to Japanese by the interpreter.

Ito nodded that he understood but wanted a few things talked over. Eather tersely remarked "give him 5 minutes, and in the barge not on here".

So the Japs had to climb into the barge while the

interpreter explained the few points. Before leaving, the remaining 4 officers surrendered their swords also.

They were dressed in clean gear for the occasion and on their tunics they had their campaign ribbons. Ito had 4 rows, one ribbon of which looked like one of our last war ribbons. But they showed no emotion in their faces. Just cruel and ruthless. It was a temptation not to train the oerlikens on them. After a final salute the barge pulled away and so ended the surrender formality of the Jap Army and Air Force in New Ireland.

We then headed for Fangelawa just south of Kavieng to take the surrender of old Naval personnel from Rear Admiral Tamura.

The white man whom the Japs brought aboard was a trader named DIERKE. He was of German nationality but had lived in New Ireland all his life. The fact that he was German may have saved his life, because he was the only survivor of the men who had been taken with him. He was very thin and had been tortured by the Japs. Such things as being suspended by the thumbs with the hands behind the back was common.

When we arrived at ~~ELABE~~ FANGELATA our party had to go ashore to take the surrender. Lt Gunther didn't bother going ashore. He sent a Lt Colonel and motor boat and whaler went off carrying a full armed guard.

(I ~~was~~ ^{was} our wireless communication rating ^{with the shore party})
Rear Admiral Tanuma formally surrendered ashore. This time the bag was 4 swords.

But this time, the whaler brought back 5 Japs and a priest. The Japs were all dressed in their black and blue gowns and were very happily smiling as they came alongside. But they were pitifully thin. The boys who helped them aboard said their upper arms were like our wrists. The priest had berri-berri and was carried aboard on a stretcher.

It was pathetic to see their few meagre belongings which they had treasured thru the years - a couple of faded umbrellas, tin, and battered cases tied with rope. The Japs had not harmed

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It was pathetic to see their few meagre belongings which they had treasured thru' the years ~ a couple of faded umbrellas, tins and battered cases tied with rope.

The Japs had not harmed

them but had made them support themselves entirely. They had to do all their own work & it must have been hard because none of the 5 were young. The priest said he thought the rest of the white people on the island had been killed.

Our officers cooks made them a couple of good light meals with soup and roast vegetables & meat followed by cold mustard for over 3 years they had lived on fruit, beans & a wild berry. This was the first meat they had had for 3 years. When they first came aboard they had beer and cheese. They were Germans so that beginners pleased them. But priest had no

kit, and as the red tape of the Navy doesn't cater for clothes being supplied without payment, our帆布 committee advanced the money to buy clothes soap and such-like that gave them to him. They were deeply grateful. Thursday 20th Sept.

Arrived in Rabaul during forenoon and signalled for further orders. Best of all mail was waiting for us. That is the tonic so badly needed this time up here. Friday 21st Sept. Shipper cleared lower decks this forenoon and told us he didn't know what we were to do. He reckons there is no work here for us. He also gave us a bit of a talk about the systems

them, but had made them support themselves entirely. They had to do all their own work and it must have been hard because none of the 5 were young. The Priest said he thought the rest of the white people on the island had been killed.

Our officers cook made them a couple of good light meals with soup and roast vegetables and meat followed by cold custard. For over 3 years they had lived on fruit, beans and a wild berry. This was the first meat they had had for 3 years. When they first came aboard they had beer and cheese. They were Germans so that beginner pleased them.

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kit and as the red tape of the Navy doesn't cater for clothes being supplied without payment, our canteen committee advanced the money to buy clothes, soaps and such-like, then gave them to him. He was deeply grateful.

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of that discharge, but nothing
concrete has yet been brought
out as to exactly when babies
will get out. The proposed plan
is to release 10,000 from the
Navy by next February. That
is more with 185 points and
over. I have 149, so will be
in the next lot, but there is
the little "smag" clause which
says "Key men will take longer
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None of the boys have any
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Sunday 23rd Sept.

After breakfast I went off on
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harbour here. We swam off
an old wreck near the shore &
had a good break. There were
a few Jap patrol boats tied
up to the wreck but all the
good gear had been taken from
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Monday 24th Sept

Our committee meeting today
lasted a couple of hours. We
discussed new shanagans mainly.

of discharges, but nothing concrete has yet been bought out as to exactly when blokes will get out. The proposed plan is to release 10,000 from the Navy by next February. That is men with 185 points and over. I have 179, so will be in the next lot. But there is the little "snag" clause which says "Key men will take longer to be released". So by applying those 2 words, the Navy can keep anyone. Ah well, I s'pose they'll let us out eventually. None of the boys have any interest in the Navy these days. The Skipper said that the percentage of reserve men changed over to the permanent service was 1%. That is one in every hundred. Personally I think it

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Monday 24th Sept

Canteen meeting today lasted a couple of hours. We discussed new managers mainly.

It was decided to once again attempt to hold a party when we get south. The idea is to hold a dance one night, then later a bucking party.

Tuesday 25th Sept

Managed to get off and see Syd. He is up with half a dozen offos as guard over some cases of gear. There is all sorts of gear in the cases, bars, benches, also parts rubber floats of all types. Syd gave me a couple of pairs of Jap water wings to take home for Christine and Colin.

Wednesday 26th Sept. Showed a picture show in the evening, but "due to a technical fault over which we have no control" it only lasted half a show. However it still brought over 2/6 fee.

Very important signal arrived saying that we were to go to Brisbane to become Senior Officers of the to-be-formed 20th Minesweeping Flotilla. Our Skipper will lose his command on here but is getting the Baco which is pretty good for him. He will be sorry to lose Dovers - he has given us a helluva good go.

A mine-sweeping job won't be so good, but it will do me because it will be down south. I've "had" this being away.

Thursday 27th Sept Went ashore with the P.O. Ted and got a few "rabbits" from a cave full of wireless gear.

In the evening we put the show on again and it went without a break. Perhaps more to our surprise than the watchers.

Had a pep talk thru the day about taking our station tablets!

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There was another case of malaria aboard. That's about 5 since leaving Brisbane.

Friday 28th Sept Off to sea heading for Koring, New Ireland. We are taking some New Zealand Air Force chaps over there. They are going to go thru the island looking for news of some of their chaps who were lost there during the war. Needs a bit of nerve to go there as they will be the only white people there.

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Saturday 29th Sept Just before arrival at Koring we got a signal not to go in as the minefields were not charted. So a Jap barge came out to take off our parrels. As the barge was coming alongside the Jap bow-man made a slip, and the officer rushed up and hit him a beauty with a stick.

Heard over the air that the STRAHAN had hit a mine in Hong Kong. Hope she is O.K. Doesn't make us look forward to our coming mine-sweeping job.

Sunday 30th Sept Back in Rabaul, and the aboard came the mail. It appears that I am now the proud father of a "booth".

Monday 1st October A very hot day, and out came the blues to be abolished. Blues strung out all over the ship means SOUTH.

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Tuesday 2nd Sept Off to sea Syd
- to drink his good cups of
billy-tea brew. We find quite a
few things of common interest,
especially up here. In pain again!
Wednesday 3rd Sept Shelled off again
to see Syd and the mob he
is with. Had a good old natter.
Got a small Jap wooden case from
Syd. Upon arrival back aboard
there was quite a commotion. Appears
that some of the boys had
brought back Jap machine-guns and
ammunition. So that looks like
the end of our wandering about
ashore. When I got back aboard
we were lined up to see if we
had any Jap gear. The officer who
went with us assured the Jimmy
that we had none, so imagine
his look when he turned around
and saw me with a Jap

case alongside me. However it blew
over. (Poor old Hope-Johnson)
Thursday 4th Sept A letter but
nought else.
Friday 5th Sept Went ashore on an
organized sight seeing tour. We
went in an Army truck for a
tour thru' the Jap occupied territory.
It was quite an experience. There
were thousands of filthy Japs about.
First we passed thru' the camps
of the Indians and the Chinese,
who had been brought there by
the Japs to work during the war.
Some of them had had a bad
time, poor devils. We drove down
25 miles into the territory. We
saw stacks and stacks of arms
of all descriptions, and rows upon
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The Japs are guarding them themselves
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than those of our Russies.

We stopped and exchanged words
with a few Japs - and made sure
that they saluted us. Quite a
good show.

Went alongside the Dabba to fuel.
She was alongside the Jap tug that
has been lying at anchor here.
The Dabba is to tow her back to
Russia. She is the tug that was
supposed to have a lift aboard
her. I had a look at her, and

On Tuesday ship all day -
organised for sea - worked all
day then on Middle Watch
for on way to Brisbane

5th News that ship had got
8 decorations - Skipper DCO I think
+ various other heads of Department
got DSM's, including one P.O. Telegraphist
which is an honour.

Mainly for our service around
Newark & Waipae, so at least
the 12-18 hour days work
during the hectic periods were
recognized, but I wonder what
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I could have later. But it looks
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a bit of minesweeping, and if
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6th.

Fueled ship all day ~
Organised for sea - worked all day on the Middle Watch

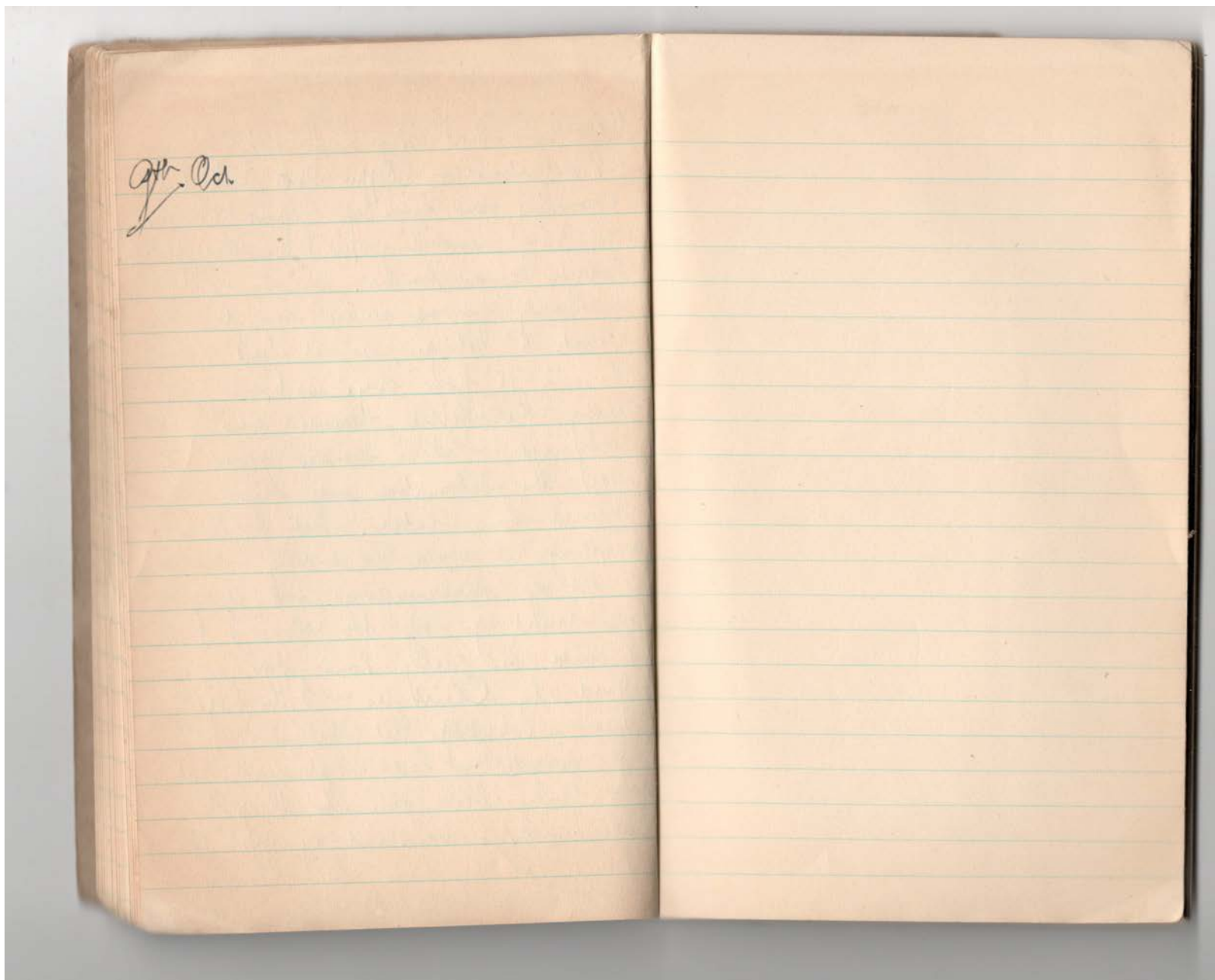
7th

On way to Brisbane

8th

News that the ship had got ~ 8 decorations ~ Skipper DSO I think and various other heads of Department got DSM's, including our P.O. Telegraphist which is an honour.

Mainly for our service around Wewak and Haipen(?), so at least the 12-18 hour days work during the hectic periods were recognised, but I wonder what effect the exhaustion and strain could have later. But it looks as though it could be ending - a bit of minesweeping, and if one doesn't go off too close, then I could really be home for good by Christmas - I do hope so - perhaps I'll put on the weight I've lost and get quite fat - and fancy being able to sleep all night - instead of just 4 hours as we have been doing for some long time.



9th Oct

Looking back in retrospect
and re-reading these diaries,
it would almost seem that life
then consisted of swimming & general
sport, mixed with bouts of sea time.
However, the reality was different -
sport was encouraged in leisure time
to occupy the mind. Many who
didn't participate in sport became
depressed and had to be
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There were the long hours of
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cramped conditions with most
of the time ~~being~~ ^{just being} uninteresting, or
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1980

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There were long hours of repetitive boredom at sea in cramped conditions with most of the time food being uninteresting or tinned. Working in watches sometimes meant 4 hours on duty 4-6 hours off, but when off duty there were other required duties to perform. During action or alarms, or even practices,

one could be off duty but
required for action station duty for
hours, night & day. Then when action
was over ~~we~~ go back on
watch keeping duties in the radio
~~room~~ cabin (about the size of a
bathroom). So work was ~~often~~ ^{mostly}
12-16 hours a day & in some
cases I can remember never
laying down for more than an
hour at a time for days.

During alert "Red Signals"
although an air raid or gun
attack might not touch the
ship, there was the fear of not
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friends on other ships or ashore
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During landings, or convoys,
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a body belt with my

money, my $\frac{1}{2}$ a penny, photos of
the family etc always around
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References to going ashore
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The physical effort of escorting
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During alert "Red Signals" although an air raid or gun attack might not touch the ship, there was the fear of not knowing - or the fear that friends on other ships or ashore might be killed.

During landings, or convoys, or shoots, where there was a danger of attack I carried a body belt with my

money, my ½ a penny, photos of the family etc always around my waist, because the possibility of ship being hit and sinking was always with us.

References to going ashore didn't mean a pleasant ride to a jetty always. Skippers of ships realised that a break from the confinement of a ships wasdecks? was good for morale. So in most cases we found our own way ashore, sometimes even swimming and floating our clothes on a raft. Each crew member then had something to talk about on his return.

The physical effort of escorting slow supply ships at such slow speeds in rough weather could easily jade the nerves and cause tensions among the

crew which could lead to trouble in such cramped conditions.

Night after night & day after day of holding on to everything while you walked or ate was physically and mentally draining. On some days there were at least 100 men living in areas no larger than a couple of lounge rooms.

It therefore became necessary to work together to build up a common pride of the ship and its achievements. In this way we became like a family each interested in the achievements of others.

Overriding what appears perhaps casual, and at times even pleasant, was the separation from home & family & the constant doubt whether

we might never see them again.

I have sat for hours in a small (~~unventilated~~^{not} air conditioned in those days) hot humid wireless office with headphones on, and static caused by bad reception conditions nearly deafening me, while we have been engaged in some sort of dangerous situation, and have not known what was happening outside - whether we were in danger or safe. It wasn't always that way, of course - but it must be remembered that we were all in our early 20s - at an impressionable age.

In my case this spread over 4 years. On our return to normal life we ~~found~~ ^{felt} that we felt that people didn't understand what had happened - things in normal

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1980

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These diaries don't always show the fear, the bravado, the loneliness, the intensive hatred,

the concentration necessary to live just day by day, or even the intense physical effort required to keep up with the long hours and hard work, or the discipline necessary to cope mentally day after day.

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BD

1980