

Wartime Diary of

Stoker 1c Lawrence Brown, RCNVR

Transcribed by / Courtesy of Celeste Musseau

To be given to my wife in case I die, also in case said book survives. This diary deals with places and travels in a sailor's life. Personally, I hate the navy, makes bums out of the best of men but due to greed and jealousy we small men have to fight the big shots wars-Amen.

Sept 13th, 1944 - Muriel and myself parted in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. A very heart breaking moment for no two lovers ever care to part. Then the long journey across a part of Canada I had never seen, certainly very vast and empty, prairie, forest, rock, then finally eastern Canada. Montreal wide for anything you care for, booze, cathouses, I settled for a quiet show. Burlesque wasn't very good. Bought some souvenirs for my lovely wife, then departed for Halifax, there was a very tough crowd on the train, men and women all very {sisthy} Arrived on Halifax the 18th of September. Trucked out to Stad. One, slept on a mattressless and blanketless bed, kind of uncomfortable sleeping. Stad. Ancona good beds but poor grub. Got job in baggage working on truck. Lots of hard work also lots of make and mends. Ran into brother in air force first time in 3 ½ years. Introduced to his in laws, very nice people. Spent a few enjoyable weekends with them. Drafted to Peregrine for disposal. Pardon my change but the point is awful. (he changed from printing to handwriting). Men walking all over coming and going all over the old air force barracks. Put in for leave. Got emergency pool. Shit rats. Started to train for the Maritimes Boxing Championships. New 750,000\$ gym open. Getting in fair shape. Draft coming.

Canada's first cruiser ships up from Charleston USA and I'm drafted aboard, what a jolt, spent my last with the Richards.

October 26th, 1944 - Thursday night left off Uganda. Impression of ship was poor, crowded, grub rotten, quite a pig sty. Americans had wanted to clean up men's decks, bunks, seats, but our seal said no, seats were plentiful. Three days in Canada, sailed into the North Atlantic, lovely morning after a very poor weekend. I was in forward engine room, five days of fair sailing. We arrived in British home, Fleet base Scapa. Flew to sign in. Here is where the Royal sub got it, sub must have been clever to skip all the boom {partitions}. Arrived in Scapa.

Nov. 4th Pat's birthday. Nov 5th my birthday and we sailed for Newcastle on Tyne. Deammunitioned ship at North Shields. Turned up the muddy Tyne to Haburn and a dry dock. Tyne famous for ship building since early times. First turbine was built, also the first dreadnought and battle wagon. Newcastle weather kind of trying, if you can stand it you can stand any. Lots on Newcastle blasted by V3 rocket bombs after we had left for Middle East. Stayed at Red {Shiloh} club, very nice. Saw all the historical places and bomb damage, rocket bombs still coming over, never hear them until they explode. Hard on the nerves. Reef with shore patrol stoppage of leave. When arrived back to ship, didn't like the cocky way they spoke. Nearly broke my right hand. Oiled up and ammunitioned up and left.

Dec 10th and Dec 11th - Arrived in Edinburgh up fourth and fifth river, threw a coin from big bridge for luck, quite a place, one street with larney and yorkey places for sleep. Very cold. Steamed 1100 miles. Fished off coast of Norway.

Dec 12th- Went back to Scapa Flow. Flew through work ups.....suppose to bombard Norway coast and head for Russia on convoy. Gurney trail hit instead of target, look out when the Canucks open up.

Christmas of '44 - At anchor in Scapa. Two bottles of beer for men not counting rum everyone had saved up. Dinner served and not bad, whole crew pretty drunk.

Someone broke into the officer's liquor locker and stole numerous bottles of whisky! Also some gold, so ended our day. Also took a frightful scare at Scapa, nearly froze to death, picked some {unreadable} for my wife, nothing but sheep in this part of Scotland.

Left Scapa Dec 31st, New Years Eve, and arrived in Greenwich, Scotland Jan 1st, 1945 on Clyde River. No shore leave even for men with wives ashore, a lousy trick. Picked up supplies and things for passage to Gibraltar. Left Greenwich 1st of January. Fished, sea was rough no one felt so good. Off coast of France, the Bay of Biscay, then off coast of Portugal good very fine sailing. Arrived in Gibraltar Jan 5th. Oiled ship, very icy day, quite a place. Spaniards come over every day to work in factories. Left Gibraltar for Malta. Mediterranean was very rough, ship rocked and rolled. Arrived Malta Jan 7th. Shore leave four hours, jumped ship and went ashore. One of the most bombed spots on earth. Gerry did a good job here. Quite a bit of night life, everyone out for our money. Passage to shore by canoe {unreadable} prices. The evening, everything's quiet except church bells, reminds you of a graveyard. Prices weren't terrific so we stole some of the stuff, merchant nearly went around the bend said we were one of them Germans.

Left Malta Jan 8th for Alexandria. Passed Forbach where Aussies held out for so long. Arrived in Alexandria, Egypt, Jan 10th 17:30. Man made harbor lots of sunk ships about, only masts out of water. Prince Henry also in and many ships of the Royal Navy. Dangerous place ashore, got a knife in the back over nothing, over 30 soldiers murdered on Christmas. Eat and sleep at Fleet Club, only place you can trust, town full of swinery and dealers, whore houses abound in bombed out areas, syphilis and clap {gonorrhoea} all over. Took a motorcycle through Nile Valley. Everyone riding camels, it is very pretty, palm trees and green grass. We are washing up every day gunnery trails. Land on beaches off El Aleman. I should say about covered with wrecks and whatnot. Use Italian destroyers for chasing. Very fast and nice lines. Trip to Cairo to see sphinx, camels and what not. Few on train with warrant. Recreation mostly boxing, some soft ball, and foot ball.

On 15th Jan 1945 had completed 3 ½ years in Navy, year in the army, have had my fill want my wife and a nice small farm.

Feb 8th - Still in Alexandria. Expect to sail on 12th. Likely Australia. Hope its Panama and home.

Left Alexandria on Feb 13th at 1800, was a nice morning slight wind blowing, not bad. Arrived and started through Suez Canal at a little after four o'clock on the morning of the 14th of February- Canal very nice, colder than the med! Lots of swamp on either side but in places picturistic little towns very nice. Railroad and car road on right hand side of canal, ninety miles long, about eleven hrs to get there, lots of camels on the road, really a pretty place.

Entered the Red Sea Feb. 14th at 1800, getting hotter than hell, had a swim in the Suez and nearly froze. Entered Gulf of Aden and Port of Aden at 0628 Feb 17th –Left Aden 1840 Feb 14th. Headed into Arabian Sea, very hot, sweat all the time. Close to Hades I'd say. Aden very old part, kind of bleak, noted for canoe building, look like pea pods. Three big troopships in harbor as well bound for East.

Feb 20th - In the Indian Ocean, very calm quite windy, hot as well, enemy sighted by aircraft seventy five miles from star-board.

Arrived on Colombo in Island of Ceylon, 0730 Feb 22nd. Lovely morning kind of cool, was sleeping on Pom Pom decks at the time. Ceylon quite a place, invaded three times since first. Bombed on Easter Sunday 1942 by the Japs, from carriers. Lone Canadian man in flying bolt sighted Jap Fleet and gave the warning, he was never heard of again. At time....was passing through, made such a good job of Japs they never came back. Here the white man is the boss, runs the tea plantations and the rubber plantations, also took wood. Elephants are classed as a native, water buffalo works in the rice fields. Rice once failed so they tried growing wheat which was most successful. Here native coolies pull rickshaws about and wear combs in the hair and sarongs like Dorothy Lamour. Also chew beetle nut and spit red, usually on our whites which make a fine

target. Fine swimming pool ashore and sports field. Here again people seem indevidled to venereal diseases so beware of them. The money used here is rubber. The harbor is filled with shipping warships, freighters, troop ships landing, barges, and hospital ships.

Left Colombo, Ceylon 1030 Feb 24th - Nice day, cool breeze, heading for equator. On 23rd of Feb met a boyhood chum Bill Fields off the Canadian Freighter Banff Park. We went ashore in Colombo and walked for miles in blistering heat. Talked over all old times on our way to the zoo but coolies cost us, knocked them out and wrecked their carts. Had supper in Fleet club. Went back to the ships, funny how one can run into old chums.

Gunnery practice against aircraft, what a racket. Crossed the equator at 1500 Feb 25th. 45, fairly hot with a nice cool breeze. The usual ceremony took place. Captain was first into the tanks on to Forecastle, weighed off by judge and jury, tested by a doctor and cast into the pool. All the ships company followed in order, a police force rounded up any one who didn't wish to go, all very silly.

Arrived Cocos Islands 0750 Feb 28th. Left 1530 Feb 28th. People here of Malay descent. Very clean, no venereal disease, some tuberculosis. The special island for virgin maids where no white man is allowed. Here also where the Aussie Cruisers Sidney sunk German Cruiser Emden. She was driven ashore . The natives use steel from her for knives. Lots of sea shells, and coconuts. This place a secret to the Japs who bombed it a month ago. Very pretty with lovely beaches but sharks abound so swimming impossible. Very clean, see right to the bottom. We have been cruising along Jap held somatic, lucky they are scared of warships or goodbye Uganda.

Arrived at Freemantle Australia, Western Australia, March 4th – 1600 at north of Swan River. Nice to see white people again. Population twenty five thousand. Clean harbor, lots of subs. Nice sunny day out as this is the ending of the Australian summer. Home of kangaroo, anteater, and what not. City of Perth not many miles away, population of one hundred thousand.

Left Freemantle at 1230 Mar. 5th- Very lovely city, friendly people lots to eat quite a country this, loved day when we sailed nice and sunny. Bound for Sidney about a three thousand mile run. Passed through Bass Strait 0900 Thursday Mar. 8th. Arrived Sidney, Australia 0900 Mar. 10th, one of the finest harbors in the world. Population of city 1 1/2 million, very lovely lots of parks and lots to eat, we anchored off Duke Gloucester dock yard very pretty too. Jap midget subs had entered the harbor all ready this year. We are first large body of Canadians and the first Canadian sailors in Australia. The Aussies like us and treat us well, of course a few guys get out of control but are quickly taken care of. First night ashore went to a boxing match. Ron Richards former Aussie champ was making a comeback. He did not appeal to me at all. Weather here is lovely, fall is just coming. Spring in Canada. Coal mines three thousand feet under the harbor, very rich part of Australia. Much like Vancouver, people very clean and respectable. Start 48 hours leave on Mar. 12th boy will I ever sleep as I am really beat.

Left Sidney at 1300 March 24th. Farewell to civilization for a long while we are ocean ponied by the aircraft carrier Indomitable and the destroyer Urchin. Indomitable very big, capable of putting up 80 aircraft so we feel very safe, one type of aircraft they have is the avenger. Weather very nice with a glassy sea. On the 26th of March heading for Admiralty Islands, a seven day journey. Some of the highlights of Sidney, lots to eat, ice cream and steaks, milkshakes, lovely women if you wanted them, also finest beer in the world by name of {Coots}. Many fine beaches, some of the nicest, very good for surf riding, wonderful sand on beaches. Luna Park - ghost house, big shipper, and other rides. The zoos one of the world's finest had everything, giraffe, dangerous sharks, snakes, and even deer that spit. Canadians represented in the Aussies third victory, got a very big hand. Here come the Canucks, the people really liked us and we them. Had numerous fights with the Larneys and Yanks in the British Canteen. We always win, commander told us to lay off. Too big for them. Like in Sidney, the cruiser Australia came in, she had been hit by five Jap suicide planes killing over two hundred men. They dug one Zero engine out of one of the ships stacks. We also had a visit from J.E. Doris High Commissioner of

Canada to Australia, also an inspection by Bruce Fraser, C. and C. of the Pacific fleet. Lots of reporters on board and lots of pictures taken. One of the boys named McDonald married on a 48. First Canadian soldier married in Australia. One quicker Canadian soldier married in 12 hours before ship raid. And see here we are miles at sea and very hot below us as we near the equator. What a lousy life. We all hate it.

Arrived in the Admiralty Islands on March 29th at 0915 in a harbor on the island of Manus. In course of our journey from Sidney passed New Guinea where Japs and Aussies are battling it out, also now Britain a big fight on at Raleigh. Later on passed the Solomon Islands and guarded canals where Yanks started their comeback against the Japs, destroyer Urchin was fired at but not hit. The sea surprisingly calm especially the Bismarck Sea , days mostly clear with showers at night, sun very hot and we are only two points off the equator , down below in mess and engine room heat almost unbearable we are little better off than the slaves. Officers have cool drinks, nice cabins and good food, ours is rotten. No place to sleep and no fans, we are rapidly getting fed up, mutiny is in the air. Harbor here is quite big, all American run, very lovely sunset tonight, good swimming here as well, on starboard side is a big airfield and we are taking oil before our next journey to the Philippines. In ration station we get one cup of soup and two sandwiches, unbearable to eat, well that is all for today.

Left Admiralty Islands 1600 March 31st bound for Leyte in Philippines. Sky overcast with a bit of rain, nice calm sea getting close to the front lines hot as hell as usual.

April 2nd, 1550 - Stoker Philipp's died of a mysterious paralysis, was buried with full naval honor, was 21 years of age and first Canadian to die in the Pacific. We figure the spinal killed him.

Arrived British Pacific. Fleet lost at Leyte in the Philippines April 4th at 1630. Huge harbor taken by Yanks a month ago, scores of freighters and tanks. Oil tanks that gave us oil had two Japs to her credit. Left Leyte to meet Pacific Fleet on 6th April at 1344. Accompanied by sister ship Cambray and two destroyers, water very calm, clear.

Several practice shots at towed gurney poor. First slighted Fleet at 0600 off the port side 8th of April. We have a rendezvous for oil and go on five day mission. Fleet small. Typical. Weather fairly rough and cooler thank God. We have battleships and carriers also cruisers and destroyers, most action expected from air and subs and M.T B.S. Our fund for Philipps amounts to nearly 2000 dollars.

April 10th - Awaiting zero hour for attack on Formosa, last few days spent sailing at sea, and passing aeroplane tanks to carrier. Our fleet composed of two battleships Howe and George V, six aircraft carriers four big ones two small ones. Illustrious, Formidable, don't know other, four cruisers, ten destroyers some frigates and a mine sweeper. Our object to destroy and if possible set up an airforce base of our own in Formosa. So now the fun begins. Weather is nice and sunny, the water is calm.

April 11th - Somewhere off Formosa weather rough and visibility poor so air raid called off.

April 12th - Action stations at five thirty, planes away at sunrise, very nice one too. At 0700 H.M.C.S Uganda sighted {Humli}. First all Jap territory we have been in this war. Our only time on airfield on tip of Formosa. Raid was successful, for the day twelve Jap planes. { Dione} fell twenty thousand feet into the sea. Out on nine planes only one crashed through fleet, some of pilots floating about on rafts over subs looking for them.

April 13th - In on Formosa again. Destroyed two Jap planes then back for oil supposed to be Black Friday. Sea calm, sky overcast. Grub poor all the boys got the runs.

April 14th and 15th - Oiled up and began return journey on Jap held Formosa and islands. Three finished miles from Jap mainland. Sunny with quite strong wind.

April 11th - 17th - Bombed Jap held islands three hundred miles from the homeland, name too long to write in. K.G. 5 shot one of our own aircraft down it was armed. To clear the sky, another one crashed on the Indefatigable deck, the pilot going

over the side rescued by a destroyer. We destroyed several airfields some of which the Japs repaired others were untouched. Grub as usual is rotten, all concentrated foods. Meat rotten so used in stews so men won't know it.

April 18th - At our oiling place on way back to Leyte Harbour, weather is nice and sunny, sea is calm.

April 20th - Raided islands again three airports bombed. Two Jap aircraft destroyed.

April 23rd 0900 - Arrived back in Leyte. Christmas parcels come aboard. Weather cloudy and hot. We destroyed two Jap aircraft and bombed three airfields on islands. Japs fired a couple rocket bombs but they fell 12 miles short, are they ever short sighted. While away from Leyte Jap suicide men had blown up several ships by attaching explosive charges, swimming away, and then detonating them.

April 24th - We all had a swim, water very warm and salty with plenty of oil on it. Very hot once again, moonlit night - town only 40 miles distance. Big boxing card on in the Seahorse Arena. General buzz is we may head for the Aleutian Islands. I sure hope so as this hear is sure hell. The grub as usual is rotten although a Canadian merchant ship supplied the Fleet as would the Lineys try to starve us the rotten bastards. Streams in Philippines dangerous, deadly bug in the water, once in blood stream you are a goner too, one bug and you die. Destroyed Queenborough. We have the only Dentist shop in the Fleet. Larneys believe in let them rot then pull them out.

Left Leyte harbour 0700 May 1st bound to Borneo or Singapore. Weather very hot, heavy shelling today.

May 4th - Carried out attacks on Jap air - sub, also navy bombardment. Cambray and Swiftsure closed within seven miles of land and opened fire. To our starboard side was the Black Prince and even further the King George and the Howe. We had to withdraw when Formidable reported under attack and hit with bombs, but still doing 18

knots. The damage however was slight, word for the day 12 Japs shot down and two of ours one by our own pilots.

May 5th - More air attacks against airfield, our damage still unrepaired from 4th's raid. One of our planes crashed in flames on Victorious deck.

May 6th - Back in fuelling area, water rougher, air much cooler and refreshing.

May 7th - Uganda's election, whether you want to fight here or not, solution unknown as yet. I didn't volunteer as I have seven years to complete, old man called us four flubs and quitters not fit to be. Damn rotten of him I'd say. We go back to Canada on oil tankers, freighters, and troop ships. We the relief system. Our 600 refused to volunteer, the old man is right mad.

May 8th- I was called back to Senior office and told I'd be off in three days. Captains issued new statement, on May 9th no one leaves ship for a couple of months yet the boys are near mutiny with Pache trying to calm them down. The Admiral tried to tell our Government what to do, how we hate their guts. Also May 9th we move in for another strike at Jap airfield, all are serviceable again. Bad weather hampers our operations. The Formidable received bomb hits wounding 47 and killing eight. Jap suicide bomber got there, speed now only 18 knots, may go to Frisco for a refit. May 8th surrender of the Germans which leaves us the only Canadians now fighting, 900 of us, also a new airforce in Burma.

May 9th - Attacked by 5 Jap suicide planes, three hit and two missed. One dived at us but driven off by intense ack ack so veered around stern and bounced off Formidable's flight deck. Flames enveloped ship from stern to stern but quickly brought under control, the other two hit Victorious but she regained quickly. The Howe hit one Jap plane and the pilot bailed out, we left him in the water. Hope someone blew his brains out with a rifle or Pom Poms. Tomorrow we expect more lively action. Jap parachutist pilot killed by one of ours after Oerlikon gun crew. Good riddance. We received blame for letting suicide plane hit Formidable's deck.

May 12th- Back in the action area, put a couple of airfields out of commission. No apparitions yet from Jap aircraft, weather windy and sunny, water a bit choppy.

May 15th- More strikes on Jap airfields, we are trying out a new technique on suicide planes, we and the Swiftsure move in close to land as bait but so far they haven't tried to eat us.

May 16th and 17th- Back at the Japs once again, very busy for our aircraft bombing airfields. This morning we are seven miles from Okinawa yet no news of results of our strikes today. As yet we have suffered no attacks from Jap craft of any type on this operation. Even the Japs claim we were sunk and the Fleet destroyed. Water very calm today and the weather nice. Our pilots report the Japs filling in bomb waters with different colored earth to make it appear still damaged.

May 18th- In oiling area in forward unit.

May 20th- Sunday morning back in on Goskiama, weather sunny and then foggy, usual tasties. We and the destroyer are the bait for Jap aircraft.

May 21st- Morning we picked up one enemy aircraft at fifty miles. Then at twenty-two miles, our freighter took off and shot it down, our previous bombings on airfield still unfilled in.

May 23rd- Cruiser Achilles joined the Fleet, a very trim one. Was in on the Graf Spee Action.

May 24th- Action stations at 1015, postponed earlier on account of bad weather. Still kind of cloudy but clear enough for bombing on Gaguchuma. Clear evening, one of our lifeguard subs noticed light ashore so surfaced and gave the place a posting.

May 25th- At action stations again some planes bombed again. Back to oiling area.

May 26th, 1615 – Left oiling area and islands for Momus in Admiralty islands, been on here 7 months now. Lovely moonlight evenings, weather very good.

May 29th, 1930 – Left main body of the Fleet in company with Achilles and Swiftsure. Arrived in Manus at 0800. Fairly hot and somewhat cloudy. No shore leave yet, have been at sea 67 days. Uganda fired 570 shots at Japanese, mostly close range stuff.

June 4th – The Indefatigable largest carrier in action so far pulled in. Has two flight decks and carries 167 planes and one bigger is the Midway. Carries only 19 more but she is not in action yet. Also first time ashore since March 24th. On our island we have ball games and swimming, also one quart of ice, cold beer if you want it. Lots of coconuts and sea shells. Natives dark and short, hair topped of a reddish blond. They use former dug out with outrigger, one even had a camp cot on it, likely stolen off some ship. Junks been here 38 months, also food. Several shots from stray Japs.

June 6th, 0244- Just finished a letter to my darling Moo.

June 7th- At sea with ammunition ship Robert Muznel, a Norweigan, practicing hoisting ammunition aboard.

June 10th- Lon, Kenny, and I went ashore on the Recreation Island, Ken got pretty drunk and sick, spewed all over the landing barge and my boots.

June 10th – Kid Lars birthday, mere kid of twenty.

June 12th, 1300 – Left port on exercises with the carrier Indefatigable, four destroyers and three cruisers, spent afternoon on rapid fire target practice. This new carrier has a crew of 300, eight stow holds and four engine rooms. Can store 89 planes below decks. 22 inch enormous plating. Took nine years to build. Purpose of our present operation, we are moving in on Jap held Truk in the Carolines. Expect to attack on Thursday morning. Only the Idefat going to bomb, she is also rigged up for night fighting. To bombard Truk we would have to sail up a 27 mile inlet, both sides armed by 16 inch guns, so our purpose is to protect against enemy suicide planes and ships. Today was our sixth time across the equator. We get back paid on Pacific Campaign from Jan 1st of this year. Bit of sad news last time in Manus, one of Swiftsure's men lost to a barracuda, only blood and guts came to the surface.

June 13th - Nine months since I have seen Moo. The day is cool and cloudy with spots of rain.

June 14th, 0530 - Indefatigable's air craft attack Turks Islands of Dublon and Moen. On 15th of June we attack oil installations and a sea plane base. We are assisted by the Achilles and a destroyer. The Swiftsure and Newfie cover the 4.1 and 81 shore battering. We pass between two of these. Japs may use spare ships and place as suicide craft so we should be in for a real time of it. We are to fire 270 rounds, 30 from each gun.

*June 15th - Admiral came on board at 0630. Transferred his flag over to direct operations. Moved in on Dubbon at 1030, commenced firing. Port broadsides 31 in number with no reply from Japs, direct hit on oil tanks as flame and **block snare** went adrift. Nice clear day, somewhat choppy. Island stood clear on horizon as we closed in over range. Guess Japs didn't fire because our aircraft would spot and blast them. We are now on our way back to Manus and we hope soon to Canada. Battle of Okinawa is nearly over as well. Heavy losses on both sides. We lost 666 ships and 30 thousand men. Japs lost close to 1000 aircraft and numerous men.*

June 15th - 17th - Bombed all night and early morning of the 16th. Ships kept most head lights on. June 17th arrived back in Manus at 1030. Japs have come up with a new airplane, very fast and manoeuvrable, likely on German jet metal.

*June 18th – **Rocloor** softball team beat Stokers 9 to 8. Quite a bit of money on the game. Our boys couldn't take it so they got mad and started fights on the landing barge. About 100 Canadians wanted to fill in three Juicers. Pretty rotten and low of our fellows I think.*

June 21st - Battle of Okinawa over, congratulations from Admiral. Mutiny to all the American forces and the B. P. F. Left Manus June 25th at 1130, had gunnery practice on sleeve in the afternoon. Shooting by us and Achilles very poor. New fleet carrier in our fleet named Pioneer. 21 of our fellows came off here. At present don't know where we are going.

June 26th - P.O. Durmont collapsed and dies on port. 4" guns buried at sunset over side.

June 29th - Two sea fires, had head on collision, both fell burning into sea.

June 30th - Rejoined Fleet twenty miles off Brisbane, our relief Argonaut with the carriers should only be a matter of time till we head for Canada. July 1st, Dominion Day for Canada, we are on our way back to Manus, nice sunny day with quite a swell on, gradually getting hotter again after we enjoyed a spot of the Aussie winter. Some of the boys caught a cold.

Arrived back in Manus at 1130 July 4th. Very hot once again. Left Manus 0615 July 6th for the last time I hope this year. Heading for Leyte with a much larger Fleet of destroyers and a few more cruisers. Very hot today, but a lovely sunset this evening, water very calm and of vast expanse. Durmont fund netted over two thousand bucks. Nine quid collected from the guys shooting crap.

July 6th, 1830 - Crossed the equator for the sixth time, very hot down below, quite cool on the top deck, with quite a few showers.

July 7th - We and the Pacific Fleet are heading for a rendezvous with the Armenian Fleet somewhere off the main Japanese island of Honshu. We expect to meet them on the fifteenth. Our place in the attack will place us eighty-five miles north of Tokyo. Should have over two hundred warships and carriers backed by land based B-29 on Iwo Jima and Okinawa. The U.S. marine General says Japan is ripe for invasion. Our attack will likely be a first to see what the Japs have left in war equipment for frontline use.

July 8th - Still steaming northward, lots of rain with water becoming a bit choppier.

July 9th - We have steamed over fifty thousand miles since commissioning.

July 11th - Stoker Rosion celebrated his 19th birthday, got drunk and sometime during the night went over the side, believe to have caught in the Cambray's screws.

July 12th – Getting close to Japan. Water dropped from 83 to 77, cloudy out but ocean is calm. Admiral Nimitz broadcast to Japs off carrier Lexington to come and fight with their navy and airforce. So far, no apparitions encountered. I have the flu and feel awful. Stoker Rorison lost at sea, he apparently had been left in the starboard torpedo waste, and when getting up to spew or have a pee, went over the side of the outside propeller. Didn't get him, the poor kid likely sobered up enough to see the Fleet passing away on the horizon. In the morning his mick was found slung and empty with his shoes underneath. He had six years of his time left to serve. Frier brothers celebrating their 21st birthdays died of alcohol poisoning on one of H.M. ships. Three pints of grog apiece, once again showing the deadliness of liquor.

Friday 13th of July – Ten months since I last saw darling Muriel. Hope I live to see her again. Black Prince blew one of her guns killing several ratings. The damage was welded at night. Early morning 14th of July arrived in oiling area, 33rd parallel. Had some bad luck with our oil hoses. Broke two of them.

July 15th – Finished oiling ship, now on way to meet American navy. We are to attack Tokyo in four task forces of which we are the last one. Today have served four years of my seven year sentence in the navy. So far Yank Fleet has met little opposition in their bombardment but we are all fairly certain the Japs will launch a huge counter offensive, likely suicide subs and bombers. Weather to-day has been fairly cloudy, with a chilly wind. Ocean is quite calm. Met U.S. Third Fleet at 0900 July 16th. Two of our Admirals went aboard, Admiral Nimitz, battle wagon the Missouri for conference, other battle giants are Iowa and Massachusets. Water down to 63°, very cold out. We as usual are to be picket ship, forty miles ahead of the main Fleet to pickup aircraft as we have the best radar and gurney in the Fleet.

This morning, July 16th was first meeting in this war of worlds. Two greatest navies. Indiana and Frank Knox, two of U.S. ships

July 17th – Greatest task force in Naval history began attack on Jap homeland, we lost two planes sighted by ack-ack fire. Our position is roughly ninety miles off Japan

coastline and 110 miles from Tokyo or half an hour flying time. So far we have had no attacks, however planes meeting heavy flack over Tokyo. Weather is a bit dull, ocean rolling somewhat, that's about all for to-day. Evening of July 17th, eight battle ships including the K.G. 5 closed within 3 miles of Jap shoreline, dumping 1500 tons of high explosives, flames were visible for miles around.

July 18th – Biggest task force every assembled went into action. 1500 carrier planes over Tokyo and districts, Admiral Nimitz says this is the pre-invasion. We have over 100 war ships in our Fleet. Evening of July 18th cruisers of U.S third Fleet close and shell Tokyo Bay. July 19th, on our way back to the oiling area 700 miles from Tokyo. We arrived early morning the 20th of July. No fresh water for two days as our pumps have broken down. The waves have gone down and there is a bit of sun to-day. Finished oiling ship three hours on the 20th from American tanker using two hoses and communicating with telephone. Limeys usually take about 9 hours and breaking no less than one hose doing it. For communication they use the old horn.

July 21st – Sixteen months ago I married the sweetest and loveliest girl there ever was or every will be, a real little darling. Also, the Captain received a message stating the Argonaut would relieve us on the 26th or 27th of July in the oiling area. Four hours later.....again, smash the mens high hopes, he delivers a speech saying Black Prince in bad shape, could we stay until the 10th of August and end of present operations. The old man replies, delighted we would be honoured. And the fellows went near around the bend.

July 22nd – Patrolling in fuelling area. Weather hot, very hot below. Another message have to send to Bruce Fraser, C. in C. Down in Sidney to see about our staying. At 1830 we started for Japan with five Fleets, our objective this time the remnants of the Jap navy at the Southern End of Honshu.

*July 23rd – Heavy blow on, sea is quite high. The destroyers submerged half of the time, sub contact and **averges** the charges.*

July 24th – At 0630 first wave of bombers. Offly nice sunny morning with a brisk breeze. Later turned very cloudy. Our strikes are **mutiny** with great success. We caught a big Jap carrier 15 miles off the coast, sharing two direct hits and a couple misses. Also helping today are 500 Super Warbirds and Thunderbolts from Okinawa and the Orions. Up to the last count, we had six aircraft. The place of our attack is a big inlet, open at both ends we are converging on both sides of it. If we have great success in these operations we aren't a long way to beating Japan, so far opposition has been very light. Inplacable's Fireflies destroyed 2000 tonne freighter, two 7000 tonne damaged, and one 2000 tonne freighter damaged.

July 25th, 0630 – Planes again off on Hobe, we bomb oil refineries and keep Jap airforce on the ground. Yanky's get the smacks at all the Jap navy. Giving them the biggest **insat** of war. About 2030 Jap Boogies strike back, our sup fires, eleven to one at 30,000 feet and one at 20,000 feet. Both crash in flames. Two Jap pilots are picked up by our destroyers, both are dead. Bollan comes over with a leaf on it, full of either explosives or some plague. About 1030 we head back to oiling area, where our relief is. The Argonaut is waiting. Arrive in oiling area afternoon, of July 26th. Nice, warm day but a strong wind.

July 27th, 1400 – Start oiling ship as usual breaks, one oil hose flooding decks of Pom Pom. This is our last oil before heading home via the Mariana and Hawaiian islands. Score for July 23rd was at least three Jap battlewagons hit, several cruisers and a couple carriers. Numerous freighters were sunk. Damaged 20 warships and over 70 freighters destroyed. 79 aircraft and damaged 129. At 2030 left oiling area for Marshall Islands on our way home.

July 28, 0900 – Passed Iwo Jima on port side, the mountain was where U.S standard ruined after fighting one of wars worst battles. Weather, clear sea, calm speed, about 23 Revs. On Iwo Jima, Marines lost, 4000 killed and 16,000 wounded. Japs lost 21,000. Killed over an area of 10 square miles, some of it still burning. The mountains on the end are really rugged looking.

July 29th – Our total of Jap equipment since start of the present offensive is 750 Jap ships sunk and 1078 planes destroyed. The Jap hasn't enough ships left to convoy his peace envoy to America. Also, Japs refused our ultimatum for peace or destruction, the destruction now well underway. Last night, very nice red sunset.

July 30th – Changed over to cruisers and lowered speed to 172 Revs. Very, very hot, almost unbearable, seems to pound into ones very head. Ten more days and we arrive at Esquimalt. Sea very calm and sun very hot. No air cooling on here like on Yank ships and the grub very poor, everyone in a harsh, quick temper of mood.

July 31st – Arrived in Marshall Island base of Eniwetok, pronounced Any-way-talk, at 1000 alongside Yank oiler. Weather as usual very hot with odd cloud in the sky. Ships here are as numerous as flies, hundreds of freighters, oil tankers, and landing barges, no doubt one of the concentration places for our forces on their invasion of Japan in the near future. The other day left out a bit about the cliff on Iwo Jima, here is where the Jap families falling themselves over in mass suicide to drown or die in the rocks below. We may try and go straight to Esquimalt from here and next will oil again at Pearl Harbor on about Sunday. In July, this zone we have 32 days, something to do with the International time zone which we have not passed yet. Left Marshalls at 1531 ½. On way out, passed big sea plane. On star board side, big B27 motion flying boats, also grim relic of war, an old forlorn, rusty and deserted ten thousand tonne freighter, lying on the break. Also some landing barges. Big rain storm on at present. Some more on Eniwetok: just like any other south sea island, some sand, a few coconut and palm trees, and lovely clear water, but deadly to swim in, for instance here you have a poisonous jellyfish in the water. Leave ashore is like Coney Island's sand spits, comfortable buildings and a small . Our oil tankers name is Sea Form, a 76,000 . Been here for two months. To-day, July 32nd, believe it or not. At midnight it's about half. Time went from minus twelve to plus twelve so we have one day that isn't a day as we crossed the international time zone at midnight. We also picked up some sugar from the Yanks being down to only two sacks and consuming 900 lbs a day. We are now steaming NE at 190 Revs for Pearl Harbour where we expect to arrive at 1600 Saturday afternoon. Dark out at present, lots of stars but no

moon. Water calm as usual. Big ocean, this Pacific large as all the world's land mass with the African continent thrown in. Only life we see is our old friend the flying fish, about 9 inches long.

Aug 1st, 1945 – Crossed International date line at 1930. This evening has been very hot, day bringing out the beefy red face, still hitting 190 Revs and bucking a strong breeze. Heading for Pearl Harbour, water has dropped to 83. This is our 141st day at sea.

Aug 2nd – Over 58,000 miles to our credit, 142 days at Sea. We are holding a pinup contest for babies, so far we have over 70 pictures. Sent in Moo and I have no baby so can't put one in. At 2330 clocks were advanced one hour making it Aug 3rd. Weather cooler with strong wind. Lots of the fellows suffering from advanced malnutrition. We have had no fresh food for over four months. This is our 143rd day at sea. Weather getting cooler, cloudy out, patches of rain and sun meaning Hawaii can hear their music steady now.

Aug 4th – Sighted Hawaiian Islands about 0700, arrived at Pearl Harbor at 1241, quite a reef around outside with fair sized mountains, green fields with sugar cane or something. A brewery by appearances on one hill, all very pretty. Two big hospital ships, both of U.S.N. in. One was Repose, forget the other. Harbor full of ships of all kinds and a great  of traffic and rush ashore. We tied up alongside a commando barge carrying mother ship. Yanks treat us very nice, giving us much needed fruit and vegetables and other necessities. We started oiling at 1545, finished and ready for sea now. At 1900 bound on the last lap for Canada. Pearl Harbor is very pretty and a powerful base. Weather nice, warm, and sunny. Honolulu and Hawaiian music on the radio. This Pearl Harbor is quite a place, like going up the Tyne River, only this is very pretty. Lots of airstrips and hundreds of planes, main city lies on the Port side. On way out, as we slipped past boom it was a lovely sunset about 2000, like the ones you read about. Lovely blue and red tinted sky with blue turquoise water, very nice. As we head on our last lap of 2300 miles home. This is our 144th day at sea on cruiser, now doing 176 Revs, getting

cool. Had ice cream and oranges today. Also a chicken and roast spuds. On watch tonight.

Aug 5th – 145 days at sea. 1886 miles from Esquimalt, cut down to 170 Revs. in boilers in very bad shape, will make it and that is all. Sea water temp now 78 and air getting cooler. Nearing good old B.C.

Aug 6th – 146 days at sea. Lovely morning, nice and calm. Now only 1400 miles from Esquimalt. Baby contest was won by E.R.A. Atkins, come on board in Manus. Had a news reel of P.T tonight at 1815 after training for weeks. Was on watch so I missed out on it. Pictures of ships company taken this morning. Everyone turning in loaned coting and having a medical. Water we have made from Sidney to Pearl Harbor. Over or near 1 ½ million gallons, or enough to build a pool 1200 feet long, thirty feet wide, and 6 feet deep. Allies have come up with a new atomic bomb, Was tried out on a Jap city when we were on operations. Two days later, city still in flame and smoke so no pictures could be taken. 2000 times as powerful as I.N.T. Well, the Japs had a chance to quit, why didn't they. Evening now calm and cool out can nearly smell those Rocky Mountains. Oh yes, the atomic bomb contents come almost solely from Canada. Soon, I'll be seeing my darling Muriel. Sure hope she still loves me and has had nothing to do with foul mankind.

Aug 7th – 147 days at Sea, now only 1000 miles from Esquimalt. Has been a calm cloudy day with a bit of rain and fog, not much doing, just steaming along at 146 Revs. Sea water temp now 74, so is the wind.

Aug 8th – 148 days at Sea. Biggest event of day- Russia declared war on Japan. Japs attacked Russia in 1905 at Port Arthur. Weather cool to-day, sea calm. More results of atomic bombs. Destroyed 60% of the Jap city size of Seattle or Denver, nothing able to grow in explosion area for around 75 years. At 1130 this morning we sighted a Jap balloon at 12,000 ft up making reports. True that such things were landing in North America. Only 700 miles to go this evening.

Aug 9th – 149 days at Sea, now very close to Canada, also very cold and rainy out, must be winter here. Sea water down to 61.

August 10th - ,,,,,,, alongside at 0420 with medical officer and intelligence officer. Will be in Esquimalt by 0800. Also got paid this morning. Arrived in Esquimalt at 0900 having completed over 63,000 miles of steaming. Are now tied up, de-ammunitioning ship, so ends the old journey on the fighting U.
