

BOOK 2

STARTED 8th NOVEMBER 1942.

FINISHED 16th MARCH 1943

Book 1/	9640
Darwin to Wessels + return	800
Darwin to Wessels + return	800
Darwin to Timor + return (first)	1000
Darwin to Cape Horn + return	160
Darwin to Wessels + return	800
Darwin to Wessels + return	800
Darwin to T.I.	750
T.I. to Milwaukee + return	400
T.I. to Moreby + return	800
T.I. to Darwin + return	750
Darwin to T.I. + return	1500
Darwin to T.I. + return	1500
Darwin to T.I. + return	1500
Darwin to Wyndham	280
Wyndham to Drysdale River M.	90
Drysdale to Port Keats	200

~~2070~~
 2172

Port Keats to Darwin L.	60
Darwin L. to Darwin	60
2	21890

8th November "Lolking" still at 13.5 Knots.
 Calmed down about midday. President
 wife and daughter about + doing well.
 Two swabbies going to sinking station
 with us. (2/40th) If dits are true, Gaps
 appears to be treating prisoners O.K.
 but apart from that they are of low
 morality as regards other matters.
 One ~~Admiral~~ - old. (WRONG)

9th In Monday morning -
 passengers happy be in Aussie (appears
 President refused leave Timor before
 but forced to now because such a
 high price on his head). Alongside +
 oiled. Zoo, Horanwell + I on Neptune,
 getting 2 big shackles. Tied up at
 buoy in evening.

10th Started boiler clean. In area
 Zoo, Aggie, Pop, Donk Davies, Gus +
 I on watch again. Low tide so

8th November

“Bolting” still at 13.5 knots. Calmed down about midday. President wife and daughter about and doing well. Two swotties going to sinking stations with us (2 / 40th). If dits are true Japs appear to be treating prisoners OK (wrong), but apart from that they are of low morality as regards other matters. One Alert (ours).

9th

In Monday morning – passengers happy be in Aussie (appears President refused leave Timor before but forced to now because such a high price on his head). Alongside and oiled. Foo, Crosswell and I on Neptune, getting too big shackles. Tied up at buoy in evening

10th

Started boiler clean. In arvo Foo, Aggie, Pop, Bonk Davies, Guns and I on rec again. Low tide so

got right down into No. 1 hold. Lowered me into cabins thru portholes. Everything ruined by mud. Got few good inkstands a desk lamp & insulators. Good American army boots but stitching rotted. Couple of the boys re-stitched some. Ashore at pictures. Not bad.

11th Very warm. Went alongside Otah. Toiled around with batteries & hauling equipment all day.

12th Day-day. More dollars to send home to Mary to save - good egg. Ashore in a.m. - and played TENNIS at the "Y" hut. Very hot day but good playing something for a change.

Must have lost pounds sweating.

13th Ashore after "Lewie" at 2 o'clock.

Played tennis again with Dave. All singles so very strenuous. Met Jack Fairweather - he is at H.Q.

with Bob Pascoe. Tells me "Sport" Wills is married - also himself. "Lewie" is on Mildura.

14th Worked on mess in morning. Had a sleep on foial in afternoon. Eyes bit sore so didn't go ashore to pictures at night. Wish we were at sea again.

15th Wish must have been heard. Went out about 9 am with one ship to take halfway to Thursday Island.

Sewed up and patched shorts & found among boiler room rags - just a wigard with a needle, thank me!

Got settled to sleep on foial and it started to rain. Marvellous how quick the boys moved below decks. Sea a bit choppy.

16th Good morning - sea still choppy. Ken the cook sick.

got right down in to No 1 hold. Lowered me into cabins through portholes. Everything ruined by mud. Got few good instruments, a desk lamp and insulators. Good American army boots but stitching rotted. Couple of the boys restitched some. Ashore at pictures. Not bad.

11th

Very warm. Went alongside plats. Fooled around with batteries and trailing equipment all day.

12th

Pay-day. More dollars to send home to Marg to save – good egg. Ashore in arvo – and played TENNIS at the “Y” hut. Very hot day but good playing something for a change. Must have lost pounds sweating.

13th

Ashore after “Secure” at 2 oclock. Played tennis again with Dave. All singles so very strenuous. Met Jack Fairweather – he is at HQ

with Bob Pascoe. Tells me “sport wills” is married – also himself. PeeWee is on the Mildura.

14th

worked on mess in morning. Had a sleep on foc’sl in afternoon. Eyes bit sore so didn’t go ashore at night. Wish we were at sea again.

15th

Wish must have been heard. Went out about 9am with one ship to take half way to Thursday Island. Sewed up and patched shorts I found among boiler room rags. Just a wizard with a needle, that’s me. Got settled to sleep on foc’sl and it started to rain. Marvellous how quick the boys moved below decks. Sea a bit choppy.

16th

Cool morning – sea still choppy. Ken the cook sick.

N
Been married 6 months today. Half
a year gone already. Wish I were home
with my wife as I should be if things
were normal. Glad I'm married anyway
There is nobody like my Margo.

Tried up a bit this day.

17th Turned back at 4 am. Sharp sea.
Ship got nice little roll up. Good
day again.

18th Back in Larain about 8 pm.
Aboard Mail aboard. 2 letters from Margo.
One from Mum. Mum's letter very short
- hope she is alright. Cold night.

19th Oiled alongside. Painted in mess
all day. Loaded packed full number
One kit & few extras to send home.
At least have one sent safe if any
accidents happen here. Packed train
in evening but cleared up about
10.30 pm. Slept for a dry & was
able sleep there OK. Les & I nattered

N
till quite late on the many advantages
of married life. Two old married men.
6 months and 3 months. Good god.
20th Painted fittings in mess. Ashore
in error and played tennis. Beat
Dave & Horace in American. Soxie &
Horace beat Dave & I 6-5. Back aboard
at 6.30 pm. No mail - and we are
going out. - just our luck to dip
out on the mail. My bad luck too,
having the middle & even tho' we are
not sailing till 3.30 am, I've gotta
set watch at 1.30 am. Ah me.

21st Wilkesie and Horace ashore
before we left. Going for a round for
V.S. 2 & V.S. 3. Melbourne Cup Day.

Skipper advised that mess deck
minders not to be used at sea but
got the race on our receiver. Had my
usual luck in the sweeps.

Been married 6 months today. Half a year gone already. Wish I were home with my wife as it should be if things were normal. Glad I'm married anyway. There's nobody like my Marg. Fined up a bit thru the day

17th

Turned back at 4am stern sea. Ship got nice little roll up. Cool day again.

18th

Back in Darwin about 8pm. Mail aboard. Two letters from Marg. One from Mum. Mum's letter very short – hope she's alright. Cold night.

19th

Oiled alongside. Painted in mess all day. Packed full number one kit plus few extras to send home. At least have one suit safe if any accidents happen here. Poured rain in evening, but cleared up about 1030 pm. Swept focsl dry and was able to sleep there OK. Les and I nattered

till quite late on the many advantages of married life. Two old married men – 6 months and 3 months. Good god.

20th

Painted fittings in mess. Ashore in arvo and played tennis. Beat Dave and Horace in American. Boxie and Horace beat Dave and I 6-5. Back aboard at 630pm. No mail and we are going out – just our luck to dip out on the mail. My bad luck too, having the middle watch and even tho we are not sailing we are not sailing to 3.30am, I've gotta set watch at 1.30am. Ah me.

21st

Wilkesie and Horace ashore before we left. Going for a course for V.S2 and V.S.3. Melbourne Cup Day. Skipper advised that mess deck wireless not to be used at sea but got the race on our receiver. Had my usual luck in the sweeps.

N

Fine day. One ship in tow
 22nd Sunday. The day I would
 like to be home most of all. Sunday
 somehow seems to indicate home.
 Went to sleep under the gun, woke
 up in sun and got dose of burn.
 Bob & I picked up the plant part of
 a church service from Bristol. It
 sounded great. I'll always be too much
 a rirvy to become a real sailor.
 I made some Home Brew. (sugar,
 yeast, ginger, methylated spirits, currant
 & raisins etc) Boy-o-boy. It was a
 beaut. Something like the one Thacker
 & I made at Lockhart Lock. ~~Not for sale~~
 23rd Dropped our ship about 5 am &
 turned back. About midday pulled
 off shore of Wessel Islands. Boys
 fished for 1/2 hour or so. About 1/2 dozen
 small sharks swimming all round.

N

Shiner Wright caught one about 3 to 4
 feet long. When cut open 4 small sharks
 fell out of its inside, and funny
 enough, swimming away. Very hot day.
 Picked up Darwin about 6 pm. Saw
 green Pigeon light about 8 pm but couldn't
 see what it was. Circled round our
 ship for a while. Full Moon - wonder
 if Darwin boys copied it tonight.

24th Fine morning - but was
 just like good old Melbourne weather -
 changed suddenly & rained heavily.
 25th Armidale joined us. Picked
 up "Red" air raid warning from
 Darwin on then boonawarra at
 10-20 am - we took other passage
 in & got out of narrow channel
 for safety. "Green" came over at
 noon. We got in about 2
 o'clock, oiled. Then tied up at

Fine day. One ship in tow.

22nd Sunday

The day I would like to home be most of all. Sunday seems to indicate Home. Went to sleep under the gun, woke up in sun and got dose of burn. Bob and I picked up the last part of a church service form Bristol. It sounded great. I'll always be too much of civvie to become a real sailor. Foo made some Home Brew (sugar, yeast, ginger, methylated spirits, currants and raisins etc) Boy -o-boy. It was a beaut. Kicked something like the one Horace and I made at Cockatoo Dock. ~~Not for mine.~~

23rd

Dropped our ship about 5am and turned back. About midday pulled off shore off of Wessels Islands. Boys fished for half hour or so. About half dozen small sharks swimming all round.

Shiner Wright caught one about 3 to 4 feet long. When cut open, four small sharks fall out of its inside and funnily enough swam away. Very hot day. Picked up Darval about 6pm. Saw green Vereys light about 8pm but couldn't see what it was. Circled round our ship for a while. Full moon. Wonder if Darwin boys copped it tonight

24th

Fine morning but was just like good old Melbne weather – changed suddenly and rained heavily.

25th

Armidale joined us. Picked up Red air raid warning from Darwin and then Coonawarra at 10.20am – we took other passage in and got out of narrow channel for safety. "Green" came over at noon. We got in about 2 oclock, oiled. Then tied up at

N
our busy. Good old mail arrived
aboard - letters from Marg - thank
goodness. Late missing letters from
my wife. Jack Wood came aboard
- told us 1 bomber with 9 Japs
in it shot down night before last.
... - Bloomin' Japs over at 4 am
till 5 am. 2 planes visible but
too high for the ack ack barrage
to reach. Could see flashes where
bombs landed ashore. Bripes Tojo
is inconsiderate the time he comes
over at. ~~Welp our bomb buster another~~
~~26th along - landed about 1/2 hour~~
~~before 5 am.~~

26th Topped up batteries. Alarm
just after punch - nothing seen.
Pay day, got \$3.10. Ashore at 3 pm
to see about pay. Alarm sounded
just as we reached jitty so we

N
went along to tunnels. Holson in
white w^h had to go in. Devil of a
lot of blokes in tunnel all the time.
We sat on edge of gutter + watched
all the time. Saw Orion plane first
then 4 bombers. Ack ack after them
+ later our planes but evidently ~~they~~
Tojo too high for them. Started
to walk up town after about an hour
Planes flew over again then short
while later "All clear" sounded.
Fixed up my pay. Over fuses's
about \$2. All set now.
Good old Tojo over about 5 am
again for an hour. On watch +
got a blast from gunnery Jack re
voice tube. Only in bed 1/2 hour
when Tojo back again for about
1/2 hour. Back to bed about
6:30 am - Wotta life for a
young married man

our buoy. Good old mail arrived aboard – letters from Marg – thank goodness. Hate missing letters from my wife. Jack Wood came aboard – told us 1 bomber with 9 Japs in it shot down night before last. – Bloomin’ Japs over at 4am to 5am. 2 planes visible but too high for the ack-ack barrage to reach. Could see flashes where bombs landed before. Cripes Tojo is inconsiderate at the time he comes over at.

26th

Topped up batteries. Alarm just after lunch Nothing seen. Pay day, got 3 pounds 10. Ashore at 3pm to see about pay. Alarm sounded just as we reached jetty so we

went along to tunnels. Hobson in white so he had to go in. Devil of a lot of blokes in tunnel all the time. We sat on edge of gutter and watched all the time. Saw “recon” plane first, then 4 bombers. Ack-ack after them and later our planes. But evidently Tojo too high for them. Started to walk up town after about an hour. Planes flew over again then short while later “all clear” sounded. Fixed up my pay. Owes pussa’s about 2 pounds. All set now. Good ol Tojo over again about 5am for an hour. On watch and got a blast from Gunnery Jack re voice tube. Only in bed half hour when Toj back again for about half hour Back to bed about 630am – Wotta life for a young married man.

N
29th Topped up other batteries. Dave + I helped Lotie lighten arials. Hadn't finished when "Red" shown. Scuttled about near boom. Loaded about 1/2 hour or so. The Clats were got under way - raising cheers + gasps from the multitudes.

28th All ^{full night sleep} night in last night. Cleaned up office with Hob. Laid off in afternoon. Heard some sally dit to after supper from Charlie (Kipper S.I.) about Canberra sinking.

29th Off out at 11 am with Armidale. "Ship is proceeding to Timor to pick up women + children + wounded." She ha ha my number one suit gone home to Mary, not frightened of losing it now. Kurr left at 10 pm last night. Artie Linworth still aboard her. Just outside

N
boom when Yellow sounded + ack ack burst seen over Darwin. Couldn't see planes. Green after 1/2 hour. Sea bit lumpy. Sky dark like rain in evening. Very pretty sunset, impossible to describe the coloring properly. (Listened to church service from England. More religious than when I am home).

30th ^{Yaps} Started on us about 9 am this morning. Armidale copped 4 bombs at her at first, but by God we made up for it the rest of the day. What a blooming day. We got our 1st taste of action + then some. Over practically all day until about 10 o'clock. Spike decided to keep going - good for him - he is as game as they make 'em. We all praying (not back of him)

27th

Topped up other batteries. Dave and I helped Boxie tighten aerals. Hadn't finished when "Red" shown. Sculled about near boom. Lasted about half hour or so. The Plats even got underway - rousing cheers and gasps from the multitudes.

28th

All night (full nights sleep) in last night. Cleaned up office with Bob. Laid off in afternoon. Heard some salty dits after supper from Charlie (Kipper S.T.) about Canberra sinking.

29th

Off out at 11am with Armidale. "Ship is proceeding to Timor to pick up women and children and wounded." Ha ha ha. My number one suit gone home to Marg. Not frightened of loosing it now. Kuru left at 10pm last night. Arti Ainsworth still aboard her. Just outside

boom when YELLOW sounded and ack-ack bursts seen over Darwin. Couldn't see planes. Green after half hour. Sea bit lumpy. Sky dark like rain in evening. Very pretty sunset, impossible to describe the colouring properly (Listened to church service from England. More religious than when I am home).

30th

Japs started on us about 9am this morning. Armidale copped 4 bombs at her at first but by God we made up for it the rest of the day. What a bloomin' day. We got our 1st taste of action and then some. Over practically all day until about 7 or 8 oclock. Spike decided to keep going – good for him. He is as game as they make 'em. We all praying (lost track of time)...

1-3-5-7-9-11-13-15-17-19-21-23-25-27-29-31-33-35-37-39-41-43-45-47-49-51-53-55-57-59-61-63-65-67-69-71-73-75-77-79-81-83-85-87-89-91-93-95-97-99-101-103-105-107-109-111-113-115-117-119-121-123-125-127-129-131-133-135-137-139-141-143-145-147-149-151-153-155-157-159-161-163-165-167-169-171-173-175-177-179-181-183-185-187-189-191-193-195-197-199-201-203-205-207-209-211-213-215-217-219-221-223-225-227-229-231-233-235-237-239-241-243-245-247-249-251-253-255-257-259-261-263-265-267-269-271-273-275-277-279-281-283-285-287-289-291-293-295-297-299-301-303-305-307-309-311-313-315-317-319-321-323-325-327-329-331-333-335-337-339-341-343-345-347-349-351-353-355-357-359-361-363-365-367-369-371-373-375-377-379-381-383-385-387-389-391-393-395-397-399-401-403-405-407-409-411-413-415-417-419-421-423-425-427-429-431-433-435-437-439-441-443-445-447-449-451-453-455-457-459-461-463-465-467-469-471-473-475-477-479-481-483-485-487-489-491-493-495-497-499-501-503-505-507-509-511-513-515-517-519-521-523-525-527-529-531-533-535-537-539-541-543-545-547-549-551-553-555-557-559-561-563-565-567-569-571-573-575-577-579-581-583-585-587-589-591-593-595-597-599-601-603-605-607-609-611-613-615-617-619-621-623-625-627-629-631-633-635-637-639-641-643-645-647-649-651-653-655-657-659-661-663-665-667-669-671-673-675-677-679-681-683-685-687-689-691-693-695-697-699-701-703-705-707-709-711-713-715-717-719-721-723-725-727-729-731-733-735-737-739-741-743-745-747-749-751-753-755-757-759-761-763-765-767-769-771-773-775-777-779-781-783-785-787-789-791-793-795-797-799-801-803-805-807-809-811-813-815-817-819-821-823-825-827-829-831-833-835-837-839-841-843-845-847-849-851-853-855-857-859-861-863-865-867-869-871-873-875-877-879-881-883-885-887-889-891-893-895-897-899-901-903-905-907-909-911-913-915-917-919-921-923-925-927-929-931-933-935-937-939-941-943-945-947-949-951-953-955-957-959-961-963-965-967-969-971-973-975-977-979-981-983-985-987-989-991-993-995-997-999-1001-1003-1005-1007-1009-1011-1013-1015-1017-1019-1021-1023-1025-1027-1029-1031-1033-1035-1037-1039-1041-1043-1045-1047-1049-1051-1053-1055-1057-1059-1061-1063-1065-1067-1069-1071-1073-1075-1077-1079-1081-1083-1085-1087-1089-1091-1093-1095-1097-1099-1101-1103-1105-1107-1109-1111-1113-1115-1117-1119-1121-1123-1125-1127-1129-1131-1133-1135-1137-1139-1141-1143-1145-1147-1149-1151-1153-1155-1157-1159-1161-1163-1165-1167-1169-1171-1173-1175-1177-1179-1181-1183-1185-1187-1189-1191-1193-1195-1197-1199-1201-1203-1205-1207-1209-1211-1213-1215-1217-1219-1221-1223-1225-1227-1229-1231-1233-1235-1237-1239-1241-1243-1245-1247-1249-1251-1253-1255-1257-1259-1261-1263-1265-1267-1269-1271-1273-1275-1277-1279-1281-1283-1285-1287-1289-1291-1293-1295-1297-1299-1301-1303-1305-1307-1309-1311-1313-1315-1317-1319-1321-1323-1325-1327-1329-1331-1333-1335-1337-1339-1341-1343-1345-1347-1349-1351-1353-1355-1357-1359-1361-1363-1365-1367-1369-1371-1373-1375-1377-1379-1381-1383-1385-1387-1389-1391-1393-1395-1397-1399-1401-1403-1405-1407-1409-1411-1413-1415-1417-1419-1421-1423-1425-1427-1429-1431-1433-1435-1437-1439-1441-1443-1445-1447-1449-1451-1453-1455-1457-1459-1461-1463-1465-1467-1469-1471-1473-1475-1477-1479-1481-1483-1485-1487-1489-1491-1493-1495-1497-1499-1501-1503-1505-1507-1509-1511-1513-1515-1517-1519-1521-1523-1525-1527-1529-1531-1533-1535-1537-1539-1541-1543-1545-1547-1549-1551-1553-1555-1557-1559-1561-1563-1565-1567-1569-1571-1573-1575-1577-1579-1581-1583-1585-1587-1589-1591-1593-1595-1597-1599-1601-1603-1605-1607-1609-1611-1613-1615-1617-1619-1621-1623-1625-1627-1629-1631-1633-1635-1637-1639-1641-1643-1645-1647-1649-1651-1653-1655-1657-1659-1661-1663-1665-1667-1669-1671-1673-1675-1677-1679-1681-1683-1685-1687-1689-1691-1693-1695-1697-1699-1701-1703-1705-1707-1709-1711-1713-1715-1717-1719-1721-1723-1725-1727-1729-1731-1733-1735-1737-1739-1741-1743-1745-1747-1749-1751-1753-1755-1757-1759-1761-1763-1765-1767-1769-1771-1773-1775-1777-1779-1781-1783-1785-1787-1789-1791-1793-1795-1797-1799-1801-1803-1805-1807-1809-1811-1813-1815-1817-1819-1821-1823-1825-1827-1829-1831-1833-1835-1837-1839-1841-1843-1845-1847-1849-1851-1853-1855-1857-1

1st Dec. Aired up Kuen about 7.30am
Took 74 refugees off - 2 wounded ^{Smithies}
couple of men, rest women & children.
Left Amudala & Kuen about 9 am. Archie
tells me they've had no trouble
yesterday. Just away when heavy bombs
& fighters had a go at us. Bombs
dropped astern - then black clouds
came over & it poured rain. Poured
until afternoon, so we safe under
clouds. Report from Amudala & Kuen
the same 9 bombers plus 4 fighters
(Smithies are soldiers)

attacking. Poor old artie. Darwin says
risks must be accepted. Bloody well
alright for them - but what about
Armidale. Air force again too late +
leave too early. 2 planes sent.
God, signal received tonight that 2
enemy cruisers just between us +
Armidale. Everything cancelled, all
heading home. Hope Armidale + Kurr
can stop fast in tonight. Big
cruisers entering 100° - that towards
our position - Whacker might be more fun
2nd L about 11 am - unloaded
at Boom jitty - got rid of the
mole - wonder what the poor devil
are going to do. Air raid alarm
in afternoon - saw nothing. Surely
we are gonna get a spell from
them in here. Filled + watered
them alongside that. No news
(Just got some scrubbing out mistakes)

Bombs dropped in this order

Kuru 44 23

Ourselves 1 3 1 3 5 1 9 (about 23 planes
about 45-50 or 60 bombs)

that Darwin sends us a strong fighter escort
tomorrow or we will be in a bad way. Not like
the useless force they sent us this afternoon. Got
Marg's photo with me – my lucky charm, can't
go wrong. Into Timor about 2am but could see
nothing after 2 hours.

1st December

Picked up Kuru about 730 am took 74 refugees
off, 2 wounded swotties, couple of men, rest
women and children. Left Armidale and Kuru
about 9am. Arti tells me they've had no trouble
yesterday. Just away when heavy bomber/
fighter had a go at us. Bombs dropped astern
then black clouds came over and it poured rain.
Poured until afternoon, so we safe under clouds.
Report from Armidale and Kuru the same 9
bombers + 4 fighters (swotties are soldiers)

attacking. Poor old Artie. Darwin says risks must
be accepted. Bloody well alright for them but
what about Armidale. Airforce again too late
and leave too early. 2 planes sent (underlined
three times). God, signal received tonight that 2
enemy cruisers just between us and Armidale.
Everything cancelled. All heading home. Hope
Armidale and Kuru can slip past 'em tonight.
Cripes cruisers steering 100 degrees – that's
towards our position. Whacko might be more
fun.

2nd

In about 11am – unloaded at Boom jetty – got
rid of the mob – wonder what the poor devils
are going to do. Air raid alarm in afternoon. Saw
nothing. Surely we are going to get a spell from
them in here. Oiled and watered then alongside
plats. No news. ..(First job was scrubbing out
mess decks)

from Armidale or Kure - "Luzzy" says
Kure slightly damaged has to limp
in at 5 knots - minor casualties.
Hope Artie is O.K. What ships to
send on a run like that - damn
'em anyway we won't squib it.

3rd Alarm at about 10 am. One
Geo, probably recon. - hope he
doesn't bring his oppos back at
4 am. - rather he left it till we
have had a good sleep. Worked
all day on starting equipment.

HOORAY - 6 pm - Kure just coming
in. Good on her. Every one of our
boys topside watching her. Must
try & see how Artie is after

Artie alongside us about 9 pm.
He certainly had more tales to
tell than us. They had a much
worse spin. Great bloke Artie.
Armidale not in yet.

4th Ave on Vig + Kure this morning
muttering & looking up couple of
code groups. Roy, Art + I had a good
yarn. Planned to go out at 11 am
but cancelled till 4 am tomorrow.

Just my luck - I've got the Morning ^{watch}.
Went ashore & went for a swim
with Jack Fairweather. Dined with
rain most of afternoon. Armidale
not in port yet but thinks she
is O.K. I hope so anyway - poor com

Alarm bell sounded after supper -
everybody scattered like lightning
but joke on us because our new
Sig (who replaced Arthur, now in hospital
- nerves gone) thought he saw the
Yellow signal but it wasn't.

5th Ave watch at 4 am - bang it.
Taking Tulegi out past Cape Horn,
- doing 10 to 12 knots. First day.

from Armidale or Kuru “Buzz” says Kuru slightly damaged has to limp in at 5 knots. Minor casualties. Hope Arti is OK. What ships to send on a run like that. Damn ‘em anyway we wont squib it.

3rd

Alarm at about 10am. One Zero, probably “recon” – hope he doesn’t bring his oppos back at 4am – rather he left it till we have had a good sleep. Worked all day on Hailing equipment. HOORAY – 6pm – Kuru just coming in – Good on her. Every one of our boys topside watching her. Must try and see how Arti is after. Arti alongside us about 9pm. He certainly had more tales to tell than us. They had a much worse spin. Great bloke Arti. Armidale not in yet.

4th

Over on Vig and Kuru this morning nattering and looking up a couple of code groups. Roy, Art and I had a good yarn. Sposed to go out at 11am but cancelled till 4am tomorrow. Just my luck – I’ve got the Morning Watch. Went ashore and went for a swim with Jack Fairweather. Poured with rain most of afternoon. Armidale not in even yet but think she is OK. I hope so anyway – poor cows. Alarm bell sounded after supper – everybody scattered like lightening but joke on us because our new Sig (who replaced Arthur, now in hospital – nerves gone) thought we saw the yellow signal but it wasn’t.

5th

On watch at 4am –hang it. Taking Tulagi out past Cape Don – doing 10-12 knots. Quiet day.

Turned about during the Tint.
6th Sunday. Ship's company at prayers
at 0930. Prayers said for "our
deliverance from destruction at enemy
hands" also for "late arrival of
our companion ship, Amidale". No definite
news of her yet. Lots of buzz's. Best
to wait and see whether she is OK.
or gone. - Just about in when
Aurora got something on a loop.
Patrolled for subs - but no signs.
Ordered out to support Kigoolie, evidently
spotted Amidale's boat.

Turned back. Keeping watch in
harbour. Kigoolie evidently now
picked up one boat load of survivors.
That should have been out ferke.
11th Kigoolie on her way in.
Wonder how many she found.
Bloody fool Pope should have had
us looking for four days ago.

We anchored just inside Room all day
doing 11/5 watch. Kuru outside - looks
more like "jankers". Kigoolie in at
1 pm - we cheered ship. Amidale's
motor boat picked up 22 in it, 2 died
in boat, so was ditched. 17 sailors, 3
swabbies out of 210 men. Quite a lot
more got off on rafts but Gaps killed
most by insistent machine gunning,
sharks got rest. (That night a bomb
came thru forward hatch putting wff
out of commission, reducing speed to
5 knots. Then rigged rafts all night.
Next day she was hit from forward
aft by 2 bombs then 2 "fish" hit
her & she split in two. God what
a time they must have had - and
it could quite easily have been us.
(And yet all the time squits back
how we "wining" about wartime etc
when blokes like Amidale boys go
thru it like that.)

Turned about during the First.

6th Sunday

Ships company at prayers at 0930. Prayer said for our destruction at enemies hands. Also for "late arrival of our companion ship Armidale". No definite news of her yet. Lots of buzz's. Best to wait to see if she is OK or gone. Just about in when Darwin got something on a loop. Patrolled for sub- but no sign. Ordered out to support K'goorlie, evidently spotted Armidale boat. Turned back. Keeping watch in harbor. K'goorlie evidently now picked up one boatload of survivors. That should have been our perks.

7th

K'goorlie on her way in. Wonder how many she found. Bloody Phil Pope should have had us looking for poor cows days ago.

we anchored just inside Boom all day – during A/S watch. Kuru outside – looks more like "Jankers". K'goorlie in at 1pm – we cheered ship. Armidale's motor boat picked up 22 in it, 2 died in boat so were ditched. 17 sailors, 3 swotties out of 210 men. Quite a lot more got off on rafts but Japs killed most by insistent machine gunning, sharks got rest. (First night a bomb came thru fw'd hatch putting W/T out of commission, reducing speed to five knots. Men rigged rafts all night. Next day she was hit from funnel aft by bombs then 2 "fish" hit her and she split in two)?. God what a time they must have had – and it could quite easily have been us. (And yet all the time squibs back home are "winging" about overtime etc. When blokes like Armidale boys go thru a time like that).

8th

Left with Alagna at 2 AM, Thursday
Island-ward bound. Sea choppy +
ship, moving about during morning watch.
Only doing 6 knots. Rained most
of day. Sighted floated mine about
about 4:30 pm. just off our starboard bow.
Shot at it with rifles, machine guns
+ outboard until it sunk. Wouldn't
like to run into one out here.

Defeat destroyer being attacked by
planes southward from Darwin. Thinks
it's Komparel. Vigilant out looking
for more survivors from Amidale -
think aircraft may have sighted
some rafts.

9th Dull day. Motion almost sends
me to sleep like this.

3 pm just received a signal advising that
"several Japanese submarines operating in
Arafura Sea". Whacker. maybe
more from. No peace for the
wrecked.

Heard that 29 more Amidale blokes
picked up in a boat. Vigilant out
after 17 more sighted on a raft by
planes. Hope they get the poor devils.
It's a week since they went down.

10th Japs float-plane bomber over
about 2 pm. Threw rounds + had a
good look at us but dropped no
eggs. Fired 1 round at him with
the 4 inch. Seaforth bomber over
40 minutes later - slow in identifying
himself so fired 2 shells at him
which woke him up quickly. Says
he can't find the 2 ships we are
waiting for since the Alagna left.
Wonder where that seaplane came
from. We are just in Gulf of Carp,
so seems too far for him to
come from an airfield. Maybe from
a sub mother-ship. Soon find
out if he brings his oppo back.

8th

Left with Alagna at 2am, Thursday Island-ward bound. Seas choppy and ship tossing about during Morning Watch. Only doing 6 knots. Rained most of day. Sighted floated mine about 4.30pm. Just off our starb'd bow. Shot at it with rifles, machine guns, and oerlikenes until it sunk. Wouldn't like to run into one out here. Report destroyer being attacked by planes southward from Darwin. Thinks its Nonpareil. Vigilant out looking for more survivors from Armidale. Think aircraft might have sighted some rafts.

9th

Dull day. Motion almost sends me to sleep like this.
3pm Just received a signal advising that "several Japanese submarines operating in Arafura Sea". Whacko. Maybe more fun. "No peace for the wicked"

Heard that 29 more Armidale blokes picked up in a boat. Vigilant out after 17 more sighted on a raft by planes. Hope they get the poor devils. It's a week since they went down.

10th

Jap float-plane bomber over about 2pm. Flew round and had a good look at us but dropped no eggs. Fired one round at him with the 4 inch. Beaufort bomber over 40 minutes later. Slow in identifying himself so fired two shells at him which woke him up. Says he can't find the two ships we are waiting for since the Alagna left. Wonder where that sea plane came from. We are just in Gulf of Carp, so seems too far for him to come from an airfield. Maybe from a sub mother-ship. Soon find out if he brings his oppos' back.

Nonpareil evidently struck trouble last night. Darwin reports she is sending planes to her assistance. These fops are starting to play the game "too fair drinkum" for my liking - it's getting fast a joke these days. Must remember to pray for rain for tomorrow. Called out for Action Stations at 1:30 am - lookout sighted a green plane. Scramed at 20 fast 2. York I'm tired tonight. Just my luck to have to go on watch at 4 am. "Damn Action Stations" at 6 am till 7 am but nothing sighted. Jimmy give you the creeps with his parakey talk.

11th Nothing sighted but several schools of fish. Worked on foveal nearly all day. Reports say Dutch + British destroyers near Darwin.

(Buggy wrong - only Dutchman there)

Goodoh - except where there's destroyers there's usually dangerous work.

12th Sub reported supposedly in straits near Cape Dor. We stopped + did an Ardec sweep all day, but no sign of sub. Action stations rounded twice but planes friendly - my heart stopped 1st time, I thought it was a sub on the surface. Got into Darwin about 7 pm - storm on. Mail came aboard so everybody happy. 2 letters from Marg. She's a great girl, my wife. Oiled + watered than waited at buoy. Tjerk-Hiddes, Tibat + 2 class destroyers in harbour. Manned by Dutch. She is the one we thought was Nonpareil.

She already made one Timor trip, took her 36 hours + she brought back 300 swabbies + refugees. What a difference to when corvettes go. Kalgoonlie bow in ~~on~~^{the} 26 minutes black +

(Nonpareil (now Tjerk-Hiddes) evidently struck trouble last night. Darwin reports they are sending planes to her assistance). These Japs are starting to play the game “too fair dinkum” for my liking. It’s getting past a joke these days. Must remember to pray for rain for tomorrow. Called out for Action Stations at 130am – look out sighted a green flare. Secured at twenty past 2 – gosh I’m tired tonight. Just my luck to go on watch at 4am. “Darn Action Stations” at 6am to 7am but nothing sighted. Jimmy gives you the creeps with his panicky talk.

11th

Nothing sighted but several schools of fish. Crashed on foc’sl nearly all day. Reports say Dutch and British destroyer near Darwin. (Buzz wrong only Dutchman there)

Goodoh – except where there’s destroyers there’s usually dangerous work

12th

Sub reported supposedly in straights near Cape Don. We stopped and did a ASDEC sweep all day, but no sign of sub. Action Stations sounded twice but planes friendly. My heart stopped first time, I thought it was a sub on the surface. Got into Darwin about 7pm. Storm on. Mail came aboard so everybody happy. 2 letters from Marg. She’s a great girly, my wife. Oiled and watered then waited at buoy to Tjerk-Hiddes, Tribal or Z class destroyer in harbor. Manned by Dutch. She is the one we thought was Nonpareil. She already made one Timor trip took her 36 hours and she bought back 300 swotties and refugees. What a difference to when corvettes go. K’goolie bought in the 26 Armidale blokes and

Arrived too late again for pictures. D

hope to get 10 others on a raft.

13th. Out again at 11 am with the Islander. Are to pick up Terka during Last Log. Warm day.

- Picked up Terka and she can only do 5 knots. Doubt we will never get to Wessel Islands at this speed. Lightning almost continuous after dark and brought a rain + wind storm about 1:30 am. Had to get off boat. Ted Morning Watch + couldn't hear a note for the rain on aerials.

News today that when those 5 bombers over us on 30th November there were 5 jets above clouds protecting them. They followed one of our Seafighters + forced him into the sea!

14th. Left Terka behind - she couldn't keep up. Dull day - raining most of the time.

D

(4 knot convoy)

15th. Left Islander + picked up Period and James books about midday at Wessel Isles. Some Jap float plane over about 2 o'clock dive bombed Period. First 2 just missed + next hit her on port side fore'd, killing 5 + injuring 6. We opened up but unable to reach her with 4 inch, so Japs able to fly low + make a sure hit. Our escort - Hudson light bomber, turned tail and flew away without attempting to stop the Japs. We went along Period and took off wounded (5 of them) from blighters. They are very badly burnt + knocked about. My most vivid impression was the blood running down the messdeck when wounds were being dressed. Japs over again twice but dropped no more eggs.

hope to get 2 others on a raft. Arrived too late again for pictures.

13th

Out again at 11am with the Islander. Are to pick up Terka during Last Dog. Warm day. Picked up Terka and she can only do 5 knots. Strewth we will never get to Wessels Islands at this speed. Lightening almost continuous after dark and brought a rain and wind storm about 130am. Had to get off foc'sl. Had Morning Watch and couldn't hear a note for rain on aerals. (Heard today that when those 5 bombers over us on 30th November there were 5 zeros above clouds protecting them. They followed one of our Beaufighters and forced him into the sea.).

14th

Left Terka behind – she couldn't keep up. Dull day, raining most of the time

15th

Left Islander (7 knot convoy) and picked up Period and James Cook, about midday at Wessel Isles. Some Jap float plane over about 2 oclock. Dived-bombed Period. First 2 just missed and next hit her on port-side forr'd. killing 5 and injuring 6. We opened up but unable to reach her with 4 inch so Jap able to fly low and make a sure hit. Our escort, a Hudson light bomber turned tail and flew away without attempting to stop the Jap. We went alongside Period and took off wounded (5 of them – 3 dead). Poor blighters. They are very badly burned and knocked about. My most vivid impression was the blood running down the mess deck when wounds were being dressed. Jap over again twice but dropped no more eggs.

Popular theory is that float plane is being fuelled from a sub which is rumoured near here.

16th Lowy Action Station but nothing seen. ^(None for float plane) Merv started again about 10:30 am on no. One overhauled put him off aim this time + eggs dropped just away from Ceriod. The spray splashed over her decks but no damage done. Hovered around till about noon. Kitties supposed to be coming out to suit us.

2 pm Pouring rain - boy does it look beautiful.

Timed up but Merv apparently finished with us for today.

14th Lowy Action Station for nothing (Signal said that sub is supposed to have shadowed us) Action station couple of times but plane friendly.

Changed course + kept closer to various islands. Thank goodness Merv not about because it's a beautiful clear sunny day. The James took having trouble with her engine after we passed Cape Joy but she managed to struggle on. (Passed by Ceriod near her bomb hole - it's a beaut - right in crew bathrooms. Bloke who was bathing was cut in half from blighters. It must have been instantaneous death fortunately).

Midnight - Working Middle - going thru' boom about 0030.

15th Cleaned up ship - ashore in avro + went swimming with Bob Pascoe. Raid alarm about 9 pm lasted approx 2 1/2 hours.

19th Woken at 6 am told to be ready to go to Adelaide

Popular theory is that float plane is being fuelled from a sub which is rumoured near here.

16th

Dawn Action Stations but nothing seen. Merv (name for float plane) started again about 1030 am on us. Our oerlikans put him off aim this time and eggs dropped just away from Period. The spray splashed over her decks but no damage done. Hovered around till about noon. Kitties supposed to be coming out to aid us.

2pm

Pouring rain. Boy does it look beautiful. Fined up but Merv apparently finished with us today.

17th

Dawn Action Stations for nothing. (Signal said that sub is supposed to have shadowed us) actions stations couple of times but plane friendly

Changed course and kept close to various islands. Thank goodness Merv not about because it's a beautiful clear sunny day. The James Cook having trouble with her engines after we passed Cape Don but she managed to struggle on. (Passed by Period near her bomb hole - it's a beaut - right in crews bathrooms. Bloke who was bathing was cut in half poor blighter. It must have been instantaneous death fortunately).

Midnight

Working Middle - going thru' Boom about 0030.

18th

Cleaned up ship. Ashore in arvo and went swimming with Bob Pascoe. Raid alarm about 9pm lasted approx. half hour.

19th

Woken at 6am told to be ready to go to Adelaide

River at 7.30am. 20 of us going -
rained nearly all the way so
as we were in open truck we got
wet. Arrived about 11am. Out in
hut - concrete deck - no palisades.
Didn't expect us so screw scratchy.
Went looking for place to swim
and ran foul of a bolshoi -
thrust spikes sailors - 5 of us ~~practically~~
practically told him where to go -
he didn't know who he was. Great
"blue" over it. We found place to
swim & M.P. chared us out. Saw
mosses - quite a sight. Also saw
numerous wallabies & flying foxes.
In evening walked 1/2 mile to
a picture show & it poured rain.
Never got so wet in all my life
walking back. Then feathered with
mosquitoes

20th Slept in till 8am - got sort
of breakfast. Brushed till lunch
time - about 4pm we walked round
to a swotter's camp. Had swim in
a big tank of water there. After
tea we started off to walk to
pictures but was none on when
we got there. Mosquitoes very bad
again - and it rained again.
21st Up at 8am - cleared up
hut & left about 11am. 20 more
of our blokes arrived just as we
left. Back at ship at 2pm.
Air mail held up so mail
arriving when overland got in.
(I'd go to Adelaide River again
later, but most of blokes haven't
stopped moaning. Trouble was
no organisation for entertainment
- not even light in hut.)

River at 7.30 am. 20 of us going – rained nearly all the way so as we were in open truck we got wet. Arrived around 11am. Put in hut, concrete deck- no paliasses. Didn't expect us so scran scratchy. Went looking for place to swim and ran foul of a Colonel. Trust Spikes sailors – five of us practically told him where to go – we didn't know who he was. Great blue over it. We found place to swim and MPs chased us out. Saw nurses – quite a sight. Also saw numerous wallabies and flying foxes. In evening walked 1 1/2 miles to a picture show and it poured rain. Never got so wet in all my life, walking back. Then pestered with mosquitoes.

20th

Slept in till 8am – got sort of breakfast. Crashed till lunchtime – about 4pm we walked round to a swotties camp and had swim in a big tank of water there. After tea we started off to walk to pictures but was none on when we got there. Mosquitoes very bad again and it rained again.

21st

Up at 8am – cleaned up hut and left about 11am. 20 more of our blokes arrived just as we left. Back at shop at 2pm. Airmail held up so mail arriving when overland gets in. (I'd go to Adelaide River again later but most of blokes haven't stopped moaning. Trouble was, no organisation for entertainment not even light in hut)

22nd Topped up batteries in morning -
Pictures in evening. Saw Bob Cascoe
Jack Woods, George Hale there. Buzz
is that we are going to Middle Arm
to spend Xmas Day. Sounds alright
at first. Rained heavily after picture.

23rd Talking to Artie or there in
morning. Helped him fix his charging
board. His radio alarm for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour.
Middle Arm buzz no good 'cos we
out about 20 pm on way to T.E. with
James back. Xmas at sea now.

24th Rained most of day. Anchored
last night from 9 pm till 6 am so
that we will pass Wessels Islands
in dark hours on Xmas Day in case
we find the float plane is about.

Decided to have our Xmas beans
on Sunday - should be in the clear
then.

A.C.F. parcel

25th XMAS DAY - Raining in morning
cool in afternoon - poured during night
& drizzled at night - great weather.
Officers "shouted" each man a drink
each which was the only Xmas-y touch
except Lee's brew too ~~but not~~.
Passed Wessels after dark. Aircraft
sighted yesterday but too far away
to be identified. Sea very rough
and choppy. Ship got a huge
roll on.

26th Ship rolling still. Raining
most of day. Two "panics" but
both planes ours. Heard signal that
Golac being attacked - she is near
Puma and is only corvette besides
Armidale & ourselves to be directly
attacked. Passed Kalgortie + 2 ships
27th Kalgortie met up with our
friend the float plane. Said,

22nd

Topped up batteries in morning – pictures in evening. Saw Bob Pascoe, Jack Woods, Ginger Male there. Buzz is that we are going to Middle Arm to spend Xmas day. Sounds alright if true. Rained heavily after going to pictures.

23rd

Talking to Artie on Kuru in morning, helped him fit his charging board. Air raid alarm for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour. Middle Arm buzz no good 'cos we are about 2pm on way to T.I with James Cook. Xmas at sea now.

24th

Rained most of day. Anchored last night from 9pm til 6am so that we will pass Wessels Islands in dark hours on Xmas day in case our friend the float plane is about. Decided to have our Xmas beano on Sunday – should be in the clear then. A.C.F Parcel

25th XMAS DAY – Raining in morning, cool in afternoon – poured during Dogs and drizzled at night – great weather. Officers shouted each man a drink each which was the only Xmas-y touch. Cracked Les's brew too. Past Wessels after dark. Aircraft sighted yesterday but too far away to be identified. Sea very rough and choppy. Ship got a huge roll on.

26th

Ship rolling still. Raining most of the day. 2 “panics” but both planes ours. Heard signal that Colac being attacked. She is near Buna and is only corvette besides Armidale and ourselves to be directly attacked. Past K'goorlie and two ships.

27th

K'goorlie met up with our friend the float plane. Said

plane attacking convoy but 4 mins
later she sent "Attack ceased", so
she didn't get much attention.
Arrived in about 11:30pm at T.I.
High wooded hills + islands quite
a pleasant sight from barren Larrua.
Decorated our mess-deck with
flags + had our Xmas dinner at
7pm. Cakes, chocolates etc on
table. Had real good feed - my
Xmas stuff - wonderful success. ^{Note + I made} ~~at it.~~
None of our mess went ashore but
had real pleasant night aboard.
Late supper of coffee + cake to
finish off. Opened my Xmas
parcels. Told of surprises + pleasant
ones. Dear old Marge - she's a
wonderful wife - she does all she
possibly can to make things easy
for me. Traid I'm a pretty bad
case of love fever.

28th Bowed rain - + I mean poured
all morning. Louie, Dave + I put
up new receiver serial. It was a
job and a half working on the
copper yards ^{on} in that rain. Finished
up by getting into bogs (swimming)
+ saw-breaker. At one time Dave
had nothing at all on the bridge
ashore in Larua + walked over hill
to cemetery + saw Jap graves, also
Europeans + Islanders. Couple of diver
graves had divers boots beside the
headstone. Some Jap graves had dishes
with remains of what had once been
food on top of them. Walked
around to the old fort + inspected
the battlements + old guns. From
there we nearly dragged ourselves
to the opposite end of the island
to Jap town and looked at

plane attacking convoy but 4 minutes later she sent 'attack Ceased' so she didn't get much attention. Arrived in about 430pm at T.I. High wooded hills and islands quite a pleasant sight from barren Darwin. Decorated our mess deck with flags and had our Xmas dinner at 7pm. Cakes, chocolates etc on table. Had real good feed – our plum duff wonderful success. Mole and I made it. None of our mess went ashore but had real pleasant night aboard. Late supper of coffee and cake to finish off. Opened my Xmas parcels. Full of surprises and welcome ones. Dear old Margie – she's a wonderful wife - she does all she possible can to make things easy for me. 'Fraid I'm a pretty bad case of love fever.

28th

Poured rain – and I mean poured all morning. Boxie, Davie and I put up new receiver aerial. It was a job and a half working on the upper yard arm in that rain. Finished up by getting in to togs (swimming) and sou'wester. At one time Dave had nothing at all on the bridge. Ashore in arvo and walked over hill to cemetery and saw Jap graves, also Europeans and Islanders. Couple of divers graves had divers boots beside the headstone. Some Japs graves had dishes with what had once been food on top of them. Walked around to the old Fort and inspected the battlements and old guns. From there we wearily dragged ourselves to the opposite end of the Island Jap-Town and looked at

the dwellings, boat sheds + sunken
gas, luggage. Boongs now living
thereabouts. Fine, big, happy blokes.
Recall to ship, about 5 hrs.
Under weigh at 6:30pm to
"intercept" Van Kermaskink which
is leaving Merakke (Dutch New
Guinea) about 7am tomorrow, and
bring her to Thursday Island.
Must expect trouble or something
otherwise they wouldn't send us as
we are short of fuel & can't get
any here. Sea lumpy & ship
pitching. Not too bad yet tho'.
29th Rough trip last night +
this morning. Ticked up Kermaskink
about midday. Seen hit by bomb
low gas, float plane, on trial.
Torpedoes & fore-mast damaged
slightly. She has her decks crammed

with supplies.

Received signal that we are to take
her to Moresby. Fuel is trouble. We
go low now & should refill from
Islander. Signals all in place.

30th Arrived in T.I. about 8am -
waited about 1/2 hour then on way
to Moresby. Islander not in when
we left. Set watch on Belconnen
& reception terrible - belts your ear
off trying to hear. Passed quite
a few islands early in day - calm-
ish day.

31st Fine day. Sun quite warm.
Headaches over us all day. Had
my head down practically all day
so am ball of muscle tonight.
Saw piped "The Ship's Bell is not
to be utilized to ring in the New
Year". No fans there for the poor
sailors.

the dwellings, boatsheds and sunken Jap luggers. Boongs now living thereabouts. Fine, big, happy blokes. Recalled to ship about 5pm. Under weigh at 6.30pm to intercept Van Heemkirk which is leaving Mersuke (Dutch New Guinea) about 7am tomorrow and bring her to Thursday Island'. Must expect trouble or something otherwise they wouldn't send us as we are short of fuel and can't get any here. Sea bumpy and ship pitching Not too badly yet tho'.

29th

Rough trip last night and this morning. Picked up Heemskirk about midday. Been hit by bomb by Jap float plane – on foc'sl. Forr'd hold and fore-mast damaged slightly. She has her decks crammed

with swotties. Received signal that we are to take her to Moresby. Fuel is trouble. We are low now and should refill from Islander. Signals all over place.

30th

Arrived in T.I about 8am waited about ½ hour then on way to Moresby. Islander not in when we left. Set watch on Belconnen and reception terrible – belts your ears off trying to hear. Passed quite a few islands early in day – calm-ish day.

31st

Fine day. Sun quite warm - Beauforts over us all day. Had my head down practically all day so am ball of muscle tonight. Ben piped "The Ships Bell is not to be utilized to ring in the New Year". No fun then for the poor sailors.

1943

January 1st Starting well - I'm making
the Middle, so beginning New Year
on watch. Ah, Hyers at his post
doing his duty (worse luck)

In at Moreby about noon.
Real change to see mountains
stretching inland in contrast to Darwin.
Gosh they've got some planes here.
They are coming + going all day.
Terrible Yank troops ashore in
heavy drenching rain. Troops been
5 months on Morankley. Still look
like college boys. Liberty in arms -
Booze + B went off seconds boat.

Moreby small place consists of
postoffice, couple of hotels, pictures +
rest mainly houses etc. Picked up
a ride on one of the dozens of
Army trucks around to a native
village and had a look at

their dwellings. - all of them built
on poles above water so sure
that natives cannot be attacked from
all sides at once. Natives are fine
intelligent-looking fellows. (+ shrewd
too) Bought a grass skirt + beads
but couldn't get a batamarang at
the moment. Natives are shrewd old
hands at bargaining. Saw couple of
native women in grass skirts but
rest either gone bush or stay inside.
Moreby is hive of activity. Hundreds
of trucks + jeeps ashore. Always crowds
of swallows on wharves working
day + night. Lights never out on
wharf at night. Town been cleaned
up since we were here last. Compared
to Darwin it is unscarred. Met
couple of 6th Div lads + heard Les
Patterson still in Egypt in 9th +

1943

January 1st

Starting well – I'm working the Middle so beginning New Year on watch. Aha. Dyker at his post doing his duty (worse luck). In at Moresby about noon. Real change to see mountains stretching inland in contrast to Darwin. Gosh they've got some planes here they are coming and going all day. Ferried Yank troops ashore in heavy drenching rain. Troops been five months on Merankee. Still look like college boys. Liberty (leave) in afternoon. Boxie and I went off second boat. Moresby small place consists of Post Office, couple of hotels, pictures and rest mainly houses etc. Picked up a ride on one of the dozens of army trucks around to a native village and had a look at

their dwellings – all of them built on poles above water to ensure that natives cannot be attacked on all sides at once. Natives are fine, intelligent-looking fellows (and shrewd too). Bought a grass skirt and beads but couldn't get a Catamarang at the moment. Natives are shrewd old hands at bargaining. Saw couple of native women in grass skirts but rest either gone bush or stay inside. Moresby is hive of activity. Hundreds of trucks and Jeeps ashore Always crowds of swotties on wharves working day and night. Lights never out on wharf at night. Town been cleaned up since we were here last. Compared to Darwin it is unscarred. Met couple of 6th Div Sigs and heard Les Paterson still in Egypt in 9th and

Jack Kathan now a colonel at Vic Barracks. Fuelled in arvo + stayed alongside all night.

2nd Leaving at noon - just pulling out when "after" spring caught round screws. Ivettie helped pull us back. Juns, engine, + Wake went over the side on raft + cleared mine and this time we got away OK. No damage to screws.

On way to Thursday Island.

Morning Watch - rough outside + damned sight rougher inside.

Pitching rather solidly. Roll on Larvina so we can get some mail.

3rd Steered off course last night + went just about up Fly River. Lem had sting in it today but cool winds + rain spoiled it. Passed many islands in afternoon. Could see

native village on a couple of them. Came up but choppy during Dogs.

Anchored at 9pm between 2 reefs in 1st channel. Too late to get into other channel.

4th In T.I. in forenoon. Islander not in. Liberty in arvo. Went off had a swim with Kennie Wilke + got copped by colonel for swimming in the nude. My, My.

Went to pictures in evening + saw "Indian Day". Wilcannia in.

5th Still waiting for Islander.

Aranta in during Dogs. Say she's a classy job. With all her running about since we've been up here, she hasn't fired a hostile shot, so our record still pretty good for corvette. Liberty in evening again to pictures and Aranta.

Jack Hattem now a Colonel at Vic Barracks.
Fuelled in arvo and stayed alongside all night.

2nd

Leaving at noon. Just pulling out when 'after spring' caught around screws. Swotties helped pull us back. Guns, Engines, Ware went over the side on raft and cleared wire and this time we got away OK. No damage to screws. On way to Thursday Island

Morning Watch – rough outside and darn sight rougher inside Pitching rather solidly. Roll on Darwin so we can get some mail

3rd

Steered off course last night and went just about up Fly River. Sun had sting in it today but cool wind and rain spoiled it. Passed many islands in afternoon. Could see

native villages on a couple of them. Came up a bit choppy during Dogs. Anchored again at 9am between reefs in first channel. Too late to get into other channel.

4th

In T.I. in forenoon. Islander not in. Liberty in arvo. Went off had a swim with Kennie Wilkes and got copped but Colonel for swimming in the nude, My My. Went o pictures in evening and saw 'Hudson Bay'. Wilcannia in

5th

Still waiting for Islander. Arunta in during Dogs. Boy she's a classy job. With all her running about since we've been up here she hasn't fired a hostile shot, so our records still pretty good for corvette. Liberty in evening again. To pictures and Arunta.

17

6th Left T.I. about 6 AM. Passed Kalgoorlie with Alab + Curish in tow convoy. Good old Alab. Our ship found hard steaming against 1/2 knot current until we got outside. Dull day. Quite a few big logs in water & look like boats in distance. Four inch guns were closed up for one until it was verified as a log.

7th Sea roughish, ships rolling. Rain most of day. Judged it to pass vessels during dark hours - passed islands about 1900.

8th Islander doing full ten knots - that's how we like 'em. Quiet day.

9th Passed Arunta on our way in. She's en route to Timor. Day she looks great. We got in about 1900. Mail came aboard 14 bags. I held record with 40 letters.

18

Great time reading letters. Good on you Mang. You never let us down now does she.

10th Quiet thru the day - Sunday. Arunta arrived back in about 7.30 pm loaded with swaths & Porto's. Had a few tales to tell. She came back in 12 hours, whacks. Didn't see an enemy plane and our planes Beaufighters + Kittyhawks escorted her all the way. That's the final for Timor Special picture session for Arunta & Castlemaine. Mean we'll probably be out by Tuesday again. Drizzle rain right thru' show, but set it out - not bad.

11th Worked hard on battery upboard in morning. Ashore in area around Larnakeyah barracks got 1000 issues of Daily Army News as souvenirs. Very heavy rain shower for about 1/2 hr.

6th

Left T.I about 6am. Passed K'goorlie with Plats and Period in convoy. Good old Plats. Our ship found hard steaming against 7 knot current until we got outside. Dull day. Quite a few big logs in water. Look like boats in distance. 4 inch guns crew closed up for one until it was verified as a log.

7th

Sea roughish. Ship rolling. Rain most of day. Judged it to pass Wessels during dark hours – passed islands about 1900.

8th

Islander doing full ten knots – that's how we like 'em. Quiet day.

9th

Passed Arunta on our way in. She's on route to Timor. Boy she looks great. We got in about 1900. Mail came aboard, 14 bags. I hold record with 40 letters.

Great time reading letters. Good on you Marg. You never let me down. Nor does Mum.

10th

Quiet though the day – Sunday. Arunta arrived back in about 7.30 pm loaded with swotties and Porto's. Had a few tales to tell. She came back in 12 hours, whacko. Didn't see an enemy plane and our planes Beaufighters and Kitties escorted her all the way. That's the finish for Timor. Special picture session for Arunta and Castlemaine. Means we'll probably be out by Tuesday again. Drizzled rain right thru show but sat it out. Not bad

11th

Worked hard on battery cupboard in morning. Ashore in arvo around Larrakeyah Barracks. Got Xmas issue of Daily Army News as souvenir. Very heavy rain shower for about ¼ hour.

J.

Whacks, going out at 6 am. Setting
watch at 5 am, and my luck to
have morning watch.

12th Fine day. Passed Willemstad &
convoy near Cape Horn then short
time later passed Warrego & Inverell
with Liberty ship full of Wallaby
swathies. Inverell got H.M. fourth lucky dog.

13th Another fine day. Sun very
warm. most of boys took opportunity
to get color up again.

14th Either its a break in the weather
or the net season is about finished.

No rain for 3 days - sea very flat.
Islander flew some kites & had
gunnery practice. Incidentally she
is carrying quite a number of
Portuguese from Timor that the
Arundo recently bought back.
Thank heavens we don't have to
carry them.

F.

15th In T.I. during Tint Log.
Kalgoolie outside - been in there
9 days. She's a beauty at harbor time
all painted & daddled up.

16th Hands painting ship. Paint
everywhere. Dave & I went ashore in
sweat for swim for couple of hours.
Beautiful day. Picture party ashore
at night! I stayed study!

14th Fine day. Swimming in
afternoon. Party on at board room
last night, & this morning is the force
officer in kilted pants put on a show
for spike, flying low over ship & diving
at us. Saw natives diving for
pearls. Boongs were once pearl divers &
can stay under water long periods.
They dive down out of sight &
then come up with a pearl on the
end of their eight foot spear.

Whacko, going out at 6am. Setting watch at 5am and my luck to have Morning Watch.

12th

Fine day. Passed Wilcannia and convoy near Cape Don then short time later passed Warrego and Inverell with Liberty ship full of Wallaby swotties. Inverell got HA forr'd lucky dogs.

13th

Another fine day. Sun very warm – most of boys took opportunity to get colour up again

14th

Either it's a break in the weather or the wet season is about finished. No rain for three days – sea very flat. Islander flew kites and had gunnery practice. Incidentally she is carrying quite a number of Portugese from Timor that the Arunta recently bought back. Thank heavens we don't have to carry them.

15th

In T.I. during First Dog. Kalgoorlie outside – been in here 9 days. She's a beaut at harbour time. All painted and tidied up.

16th

Hands painting ship. Paint everywhere. Dave and I went ashore in arvo for swim for couple of hours. Beautiful day. Picture party ashore at night. I stayed duty.

17th

Fine day. Swimming in afternoon. Party on at ward room last night and this morning 4 of the Air Force officers in Kitty Hawkes put on a show for Spike, flying low over ship and diving at us. Saw natives diving for fish. Boongs were once pearl divers and can stay under water long periods. They dive down out of sight and then come up with a fish on the end of their eight foot spear

18th <sup>(J. F. WING
Sewing)</sup> Did sewing in arvo - patched 2
pair shorts. Took up sleeves of shirt.
What a life for a man! Ashore
to pictures in evening. Old show but
very enjoyable.

19th Did engine X cleaned
& checked motor in engine room. Trust
my luck to have to ship & fall
down in the bilge. Swimming party
in afternoon. Beautiful clear night.

20th. Cleaned motor in mess deck -
in bad shape so took me nearly
all day. Rained heavily in evening.
Took ~~at~~ water off Witcannia -
water salty, no good for drinking.
We now have to draw all our
water from the after trimming tank.
Taps taken off in bathrooms.

21st Big Dutch ship came in
during forenoon. Warrego & Inverell

F.

in early during morning watch.
Dutchman crammed with Air Force
blokes from Sydney - Ah me.
Inverell pulled from her then we
followed. Lot of trouble getting along.
Stayed alongside until morning.
Local Air Force in Kittyhawk gave bit
of display - rifles this squadron are
reckless. (70 squadrons)

22nd Out at 8 am - did L.H. sweep
in morning. Anchored for dinner
then did a shoot with the 4
inch gun. In again about 4 pm.
There was both a swimming party
& a picture party but I stayed
aboard. I had on a jagged toe
this morning & cut my toe pretty
deep & it's fit me to go ashore
in boots. I'll face a boat on
tomorrow night if we are in.

18th

Did jewing (sewing) in arvo – patched 2 pair shorts. Took up sleeves of shirt. What a life for a man! Ashore for pictures in evening. Old show but very enjoyable.

19th

Cleaned and checked motor in engine room. Just my luck to have to slip and fall down in the bilge. Swimming party in afternoon. Beautiful clear night.

20th

Cleaned motor in mess deck – in bad shape and took me nearly all day. Rained heavily in evening. Took water off Wilcannia – water salty, no good for drinking. We now have to draw all our water from the after trimming tank. Taps taken off in bathrooms.

21st

Big Dutch ship came in during forenoon. Warrego and Inverell

in early during Morning Watch. Dutchman crammed with Air Force blokes fresh from Sydney. Ah me. Inverell fuelled from her then we followed. Lot of trouble getting alongside. Stayed alongside until morning. Local Air Force in Kittyhawks gave bit of display – cripes this squadron (70 squadron) are reckless.

22nd

Out at 8am. Did LL sweep in morning. Anchored for dinner then did a shoot with the 4 inch gun. In again about 4 pm. There was both a swimming party and a pictures party but I stayed aboard. I trod on a jagged tin this morning and cut my toe pretty deep and so bit sore to go ashore in boots. I'll force a boot on tomorrow night if we are in.

23rd Out for Auliken shoot + smoke float, then practice with six of our lunatic Air Force friends. Bipes they fly close to our bows + sides. Then they had a shoot at a kite + cock that we dragged. I believe the dit. that this squadron fought in the Solomons for months + are mostly bout happy. They are kept in a cage + let out once a day then they proceed to go recklessly mad. They are drink oppos of Spike ^(in Coffin) so put on quite a show for us.

Liberty at 3 o'clock for swimming. After swim Ted + I went to pictures equipped with tinned fruit, bottle of drink, tin opener + spoons + books. We got there at 4.30pm, pictures at 8.15pm. It saved us rushing

back, changing out of sweaty clothes, rushing + rushing off again - + we saved seats for the boys. Great Flynn in "Perfect Specimen" - not bad. 24th Divisions in forenoon. Spike gave us a map up for condition of ship. She looks pretty good. Spike said our spell probably due to new commodore in Darwin. Ashore in eve - played Army team cricket, won by 20 runs. I scored 16 (3rd highest) + hit the only 6 of the match. Bipes it was a burning hot sun to play in. After match we had a swim then when we got back it rained + we had a rain shower. Cold but refreshing + saves water which we are short of. Going out again tomorrow forenoon

23rd

Out for Oerliken shoot and to smoke float, then practice with six of our lunatic Air Force friends. Cripes they fly close to our bows and sides. Then they had a shoot at a kite and sock that we dragged. I believe the dit that this squadron fought in the Solomons for months and are mostly bomb happy. They are kept in a cage and let out once a day then they proceed to go recklessly mad. They are drink oppos of Spike (our Captain) so put on a show for us.

Liberty at 3 oclock for swimming. After swim Ted and I went for pictures equipped with tinned fruit, bottle of drink + spoons + books. We got there at 430pm, pictures at 8.15pm. It saved us rushing

back, changing out of sweaty clothes, rushing scrow and rushing off again – and we saved seats for the other boys. Errol Flynn in “Perfect Specimen” – not bad.

24th

Divisions in forenoon. Spike gave us a mop up for condition of ship. She looks extra good. Spike said our spell probably due to new Commodore in Darwin. Ashore in arvo – played Army team cricket, won by 20 runs. I scored 16 (3rd highest) and hit the only 6 of the match. Cripes it was a burning hot sun to play in. After match we had a swim then when we got back it rained and we had a rain shower. Cold but refreshing and saves water which we are short of. Going out again tomorrow forenoon.

Saw Air Force launch, Hudson + couple of Kitties just hurried out. Possibly that 3 engine Dutch Hornier which was flying about has had to land at sea for some reason.

25th Out at 9 am - taking Lurwah which is a sister ship of Chiold - the one that got smacked by Freddie the float-plane. Beautiful day, calm sea, very clear night.

26th Uneventful - extra hot day. Sat under hose on forecast cooling off. Passing vessels about 4 am. That only about 30 mile past at daybreak. Still, think float plane Freddie is on his annual holiday because he hasn't been seen lately. Our boys would like the honour of getting him.

27th Hudson, relieved by Seafighters as escort today till about 3 pm. One bloke came so low we thought he was going to foul our mainmast. Very hot day, but cool + raining in evening.

28th Hot day - escort of Valti-Fengancia. Passed Cape Horn late. Lurwah not doing full speed. Had to anchor in narrow in evening.

29th Lur Darwin just after midday. Mail came aboard - good old MAIL. Just what the Doc ordered for good health - plenty of mail. Darwin looks as dead as ever if not dead. Couple of Spittfires skimming over harbour landing the Doc. Boy those planes are certainly hot stuff. Seen those Mitchells too. They're solid things.

Saw Air Force launch, Hudson and couple of Kitties just hurried out. Possibly that 3 engined Dutch Dormier which was flying about has had to land at sea for some reason.

25th

Out at 9am – taking Burwah which is a sister ship of Period, the one that got smacked by Freddie the Float Plane. Beautiful day, calm sea, very clear night.

26th

Uneventful – extra hot day. Sat under hose on foc'sl cooling off. Passing Wessels about 4am. That's only about 30 miles past at daybreak. Still, think Float Plane Freddie is on his annual holidays because he hasn't been seen lately. Our boys would like the honour of getting him.

27th

Hudson, relieved by Beaufighters as escort today till about 3pm. One bloke came so low we thought he was going to foul our mainmast. Very hot day, but cool and raining in evening.

28th

Hot day – escort of Vulti Vengeance's. Passed Cape Don late. Burbah not doing full speed. Had to anchor in narrows in evening.

29th

In Darwin just after midday. MAIL came aboard – good old MAIL. Just what the Doc ordered for good health – plenty of mail. Darwin looks as dead as ever if not deader. Couple of Spitfires stunting over harbour during the Dogs. Boy those planes are certainly hot stuff. Seen those Mitchells too, they're solid things.

30th Waked in office in morning.
Large day. Ashore after supper the
pictures. Saw Roy Kengell Jack Woods
Jack Fairweather & also Jack Geo. He
told me Scottie woke up recently in
hospital with a tattoo on each arm
after a hectic night. Real rainstorm
while at pictures. Couldn't hear talk
for thunder, and at times couldn't see
screen for lightning. Brunched under
a tree & then sat it out
till it finally stopped.

31st Very hot day - couldn't be
bothered going ashore for a swim.
Baths here are too far away.
Went to church in evening at
Red Shield Hut. Informal meeting
but very interesting. Our new Naval
Chaplain gave an address. He seems
a fine chap - only young too

F.
1st February Another month nearer
HOME. Got dressed to go ashore &
get photo taken at Room depot but
no leave because of invasion practice
bribe they are a fatality lot in
Larwin compared to Mosby &
J.G. Tony making no stay aboard
because they are playing games ashore
biggest blow was that I had
pressed my khakis. I never do
that & now it wasted.

2nd February Ashore in evening to
pictures preceded by a swim.
"Libelled Lady" with Jean Harlow, so
wasn't exactly new show.

Talking to Bert Stephens who has just
been brought in by Kurur. He was on
the Patricia beam when sunk off Wrecks
by our friend Freddie the float-plane.
His landed plane near raft in water

30th

Worked in office in morning. Lazy day. Ashore after supper to pictures. Saw Roy Henzell, Jack Wood, Jack Fairweather and also Jack Jess. He told me Scottie woke up recently in Sydney with a tattoo on each arm after a hectic night. Real rainstorm at pictures. Couldn't hear talkies for thunder, and at times couldn't see screen for lightening. Crouched under oilskins and tin hats and sat it out until it finally stopped.

31st

Very hot day – couldn't be bothered going ashore for a swim. Baths here are too far away. Went to church in evening at Red Shield Hut. Informal meeting but very interesting. Our new Naval Chaplain gave an address. He seems a fine chap – only young too.

1st February

Another month nearer HOME. Got dressed to go ashore and get photo taken at Boom depot but no leave because of invasion practice. Cripes they are a panicky lot in Darwin compared to Moresby and T.I. Fancy making us stay aboard because they are playing games ashore. Biggest blow was that I had pressed my khakis'. I never do that + now it is wasted.

2nd February

Ashore in evening for pictures preceded by a swim. "Libelled Lady" with Jean Harlow, so wasn't exactly new show. Talking to Bert Stephens who has just been brought in by Kuru. He was on the Patricia Cam when sunk off Wessels, by our friend Freddie the Float Plane. Jap landed plane near raft in water

F

and carried away one man. Happened to be the missionary. Only one man lost when Pat beam sank, but 4 sailors + 3 natives killed by bomb + machine gunning while in water. Survivors got to island, 7 miles away after 14 hours in water. Were on island for 6 days before being picked up by Kura. Left wasn't hurt but has lost all his kit etc + shows strain of ordeal. He will get 14 days survivors leave.

Shows ridiculousness of ideas ashore when they send a thing like Pat beam mounted with a couple of machineguns to Wessels in daylight. It's asking for trouble.

13th My luck - set watch at 2 am. Out at 4 am with Burwah + Kooliga for I.I. Dull day with showers continuously. Vuthi - Revenge escort.

F.

1st Gripes a man could swim as fast as we are going. It's painful at this speed. Should have fracked Wessels tonight, but lost that much time the sorvoy is anchoring tonight to kill 8 hours. This means we won't pass Wessels till tomorrow night. Wonder if Freddie will locate us before hand + whether he's game to have a go at us. Be quite a honour to get him. Still we're having Hudson followed by Bealights escort which should deter him. Another dull day with showers. Wish we were on our way home.

5th Heavy rain nearly all day, so didn't see much of our escort. Quite a sea - ship rolling some. Both well past Wessels. No fun this trip for us. Passed Willemstad on her way back to Paravis with couple of ships. Ship still rolling.

and carried away one man. Happened to be the missionary. Only one man lost when Pat Cam sank, but 4 sailors and 3 natives killed by bomb and machine gunning while in water. Survivors got to island, 7 miles away after 14 hours in water. Were on island 6 days before being picked up by Kuru. Bert wasn't hurt but has lost all his kit etc and shows strain of ordeal. He will get 14 days survivors leave.

Shows ridiculousness of ideas ashore when they send a thing like Pam Cam mounted with a couple of machine guns to Wessels in daylight. It's asking for trouble.

3rd

My luck – set watch at 2am. Out at 4am with Burwah and Kooligo for T.I. Dull day with showers continuously. Vulti –Vengeance escort.

4th

Cripes a man could swim as fast as we are going. It's painful at this speed. Should have passed Wessels tonight but lost that much time that convoy is anchoring tonight to kill 8 hours. This means we won't pass Wessels till tomorrow night. Wonder if Freddie will locate us before hand and whether he's game to have a go at us. Be quite an honour to get him. Still we are having Hudson followed by Beaufighter escort which should deter him. Another dull day with showers. Wish we were on our way home.

5th

Heavy rain nearly all day, so we didn't see much of our escort. Quite a sea – ship rolling some

6th

Well past Wessels. No fun this trip for me. Passed Wilcannia on her way back to Darwin with couple of ships. Ship still rolling.

F.
7th Fine warm day from noon onwards.
Before that it poured rain, couldn't
see my yards out for it. Sighted
Booby Island about 3 pm. In A.I. about
6 o'clock. Our two ships gone on south -
wish we were taking them. One ship
in harbour but not ours. Keeping
sailing orders so keeping watches.

8th Did morning watch. Alongside
wharf in forenoon. Beautiful clear day.
Liberty from 2 pm till 6 pm. Went off to
see Bill Wilson + Ralph Tate. They
are just over from Wednesday Island.
Oat McNally here also but was on watch.
Had good yarn with Bill - he's a pretty
decent stick. Back aboard at 4 pm to
do First Log. Went ashore in evening
to pictures + saw "Tom's Daughters". The
picture, not four real daughters. I'm
a married man so it wouldn't

F.
interest me anyway. (would it Mang?)
Back aboard at 10:30 pm. I had the
Middle go wasn't worth going to
bed. Let Boocie go to bed + I
worked from 10:30 till 4 am. The Navy
will pay me for overtime I'm sure.
That's what I like about them. G.W.R.
9th ~~Rained~~ all day. Party in afternoon
+ during First. Ted + no went off
for a dip about 8 pm. Wrestled on
a raft for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour then came back
covered with cuts + scratches. Sailing
orders for the morning. Set up till 2 am.
10th Orders cancelled. Rained all day.
Ted + no went across for swim in
the rain. More wrestling on raft +
more scratches. Early night to bed.
11th Rained all day again.
Kalgoolie came in this evening.
F.R.A.³ mounted + stand down aft

7th

Fine warm day from noon onwards. Before that it poured rain, couldn't see ten yards out for it. Sighted Booby Island about 3pm. In T.I. about 6 oclock. Our two ships gone on south – wish we were taking 'em. One ship in harbor but not ours. Expecting sailing orders so keeping watches.

8th

Mid Morning Watch. Alongside wharf in forenoon. Beautiful clear day. Liberty from 2pm till 6pm. Went off saw Bill Wilson + Ralph Tate. They are just over from Wednesday Island. Pat McNulty here also but was on watch. Had good yarn with Bill – he's a pretty decent stick. Back aboard at 4pm to do First Dog. Went ashore in evening to pictures and saw "Four Daughters". The picture, not four real daughters. I'm a married man so it wouldn't

interest me anyway (would it Marg?). Back aboard at 10.30pm. I had the Middle so wasn't worth going to bed. Let Boxie go to bed + I worked from 10.30 to 4am. The Navy will pay me for the overtime, I'm sure. That's what I like about them G.W.R

9th

Duty in afternoon and during First. Few of us went off for a dip about 8pm. Wrestled on a raft for $\frac{3}{4}$ hour then came back covered with cuts and scratches. Sailing orders for the morning. Sat up till 2am G

10th

Orders cancelled. Rained all day. Five of us went across for swim in the rain. More wrestling on raft and more scratches. Early night in bed.

11th

Rained all day again. Kalgoorlie came in this evening. ERAs mounted + stand down aft

F.

for the twin .5 Browning ^(guns) we got
 given us. All the more the merrier.
 Off to pictures at night - rained
 throughout heavily. Got soaping wet
 but we all stayed till the finish.
 "Annie & the Paper" was the show.
 12th Out at 7 am to oil from Karamba
 Tundetta with her. Heavy sea which
 snapped our wires & ropes trying to
 stay alongside. After trying all forenoon
 decided go closer inshore where calm
 and then oil. Tundetta also oiled there.
 Late finishing, so anchored there for
 night. Kalgoolie on her way out
 with Malians, but received signal &
 turned back in again. Very rough sea.
 13th Very rough sea. Breaking waves
 over bows. Had forenoon watch &
 with stuffy office & fumes from the
 galley, my breakfast of eggs didn't

F.

last very long. Had full dinner &
 supper and still got them (touch wood)
 Bob, Dave, Ted & Tonnie had no dinner
 or supper. I washed on upper deck
 in awe with overalls on to protect
 me from "greenies" & went to sleep.
 Not sick rest of day, but devil of a
 lot of others were. Even Lockall wasn't
 too good. La ha. I'd gladly be sick
 to see him sick. Tundetta & Karamba
 got a fair dip on, so we must look
 like a cork to them.
 14th Still the same. Slightly easier
 for awhile during the Dogs but
 worse than ever from 8 o'clock onwards.
 Performing some marvellous acrobats
 during the Middle. At times we must
 be sunk up to the bridge in water
 by the feel of things. My days
 seem still intact (at time of writing!!)

for the twin .5 Brownings (guns) we got given us. All the more the merrier. Off to pictures at night – rained throughout heavily. Got sopping wet but we all stayed to the finish. “Annie and the Pauper” was the show

12th

Out at 7am to oil from Karumba. Vendetta with her. Heavy sea which snapped new wires and ropes trying to stay alongside. After trying all forenoon decided to go closer inshore where calm and then oil. Vendetta also oiled there. Late finishing, so anchored there for night. Kalgoorlie on her way out with Muliamo but received signal + turned back in again. Very rough sea.

13th

Very rough sea. Breaking waves over bows. Had forenoon watch + with stuffy office + fumes from galley, my breakfast of eggs didn't

last very long. Had full dinner and supper and still got them (touch wood). Bob, Dave, Ted + Horace had no dinner or supper. I crashed on upper deck in arvo with overalls on to protect me from 'greenies' and went to sleep. Not sick rest of day but devil of a lot of others were. Even Boxhall wasn't too good. Ha ha. I'd gladly be sick to see him sick. Vendetta. + Karumba got a fair dip on, so must look like a cork to them.

14th

Still the same. Slightly easier for awhile during the Dogs but more than ever from 8oclock onwards. Performing some marvellous acrobatics during the Middle. At times we must be sunk up to the bridge in water by the feel of things. My day's scram still intact (at time of writing!!)

15th Rough in morning but calmed
down during ~~evening~~ afternoon a bit.
Very warm below decks today. Just
found out that the tanker with us
in Bishopdale not Karumba. She has
been riding the seas like a rock,
only being affected by the bigger waves.
The Vendetta has been copping a few
too, but she doesn't feel 'em half as
much as we do.

16th Passed Lon during Johnson,
fair swell all day. In Darwin
about 9 pm. Not sure at first
whether we were to do Arctic patrol
round tanker, but decided to
lie up to buoy, "as an air raid
is expected to take place during night."
4 Spitfires patrolling around harbor.
Boy, those babies can sure move,
+ are their engines sweet sounding?
I'll say.

F.

Mail aboard - letters from Margie
Mum so all well with my now.
Also a heart little wallet from Lis.
Put 2 fingers out of joint during
forenoon sparring - they're pretty sore
now.

17th Hung around buoy, then
went in for oil + water to Main
jetty. Stayed alongside for night.
Raining nearly all day.

18th Holed alongside as early this
morning - went over and had a
look at Jackie Woods gear. He's a
nice kid, Jack, but he takes life
too seriously. Maybe that's why he
always looks me up - cripes I must
be getting old + serious.
Out to buoy in arvo. Liberty for
2 hours, so went ashore to see
Warrant. Let about conditions for

15th

Rough in morning but calmed down during afternoon a bit. Very warm below decks today. Just found out that the tanker with us is Bishopdale not Karumba. She has been riding the seas like a rock, only being effected by the bigger waves. The Vendetta has been copping a few too, but she doesn't feel 'em half as much as we do.

16th

Passed Don during Forenoon, fair swell all day. In Darwin about 9 pm. Not sure at first whether we were to do ASDIC patrol around tanker, but decided to tie up to buoy as our air raid is expected to take place during night. 4 spitfires patrolling around harbor. Boy, those babies can sure move and are their engines sweet sounding! I'll say

Mail aboard – letters from Marg and Mum so alls well with me now. Also a beaut little wallet from Sis. Put 2 fingers out of joint during forenoon sparring – they're pretty sore now.

17th

Hung around buoy, then went in for oil + water to Main Jetty. Stayed alongside for night. Raining all day.

18th

Koala alongside us early this morning – went over and had a look at Jackie Woods gear. He's a nice kid, Jack, but he takes life too seriously. Maybe that's why he always looks me up – cripes I must be getting old + serious. Out to buoy in arvo. Liberty for 2 hours so went ashore to see Warrant Tel about conditions for

advancement for V.R. Leds. Then got
"one photo book" - heard & all.
Pay day aboard.

99th Whoo-hoo - another pay. I wonder
if Rockefeller wants a loan of a
few hundred? Artie Ainsworth along
us to get gear fixed by Sonie.
We nattered over the fence - sorry -
over the rail. Bert shows has
gone south on 28 days leave. Good on
him. Artie spun me some tales
about when they picked Bert up at
Wesels. Official - Kalgoolie going
south to Maryborough when Emmett
gets back, for relief. That makes us
next - hell on our relief.

Artie back alongside us for couple of
hours again - more nattering.
Went alongside & topped up with
oil and water about 6pm - stayed

F.

alongside till morning. Yndetta came
back in about 4 o'clock. She had been
within 80 mile of Timor to pick up crew
of Mitchell bomber that was shot down.
Four of crew of six were picked up.
Shows the old 'Dets' has got life in
her yet.

20th My luck again - out at 8 am & I
had to set watch at 6 am. Out with
Dets and Kirhopdale headed once more
for T.I. Passed Kalgoolie on her way
thru the narrows. Probably he his last
time in Darwin - lucky dints.

Alas, alas, today this 20th February is
my Black Day. 5 pm - Off goes my
bee-oo-tiful beard. Just wasted -
Gee, the things we now do for our
wives! Went to mirror looked in it
and said "because we Robert Taylor while
I have a look in the mirror". Then

advancement for V.R Tels Then got “me photie took” – beard and all. Pay day aboard.

19th

Whoohoo – another pay. I wonder if Rockfeller wants a loan of a few hundred? Artie Ainsworth alongside us to get gun fixed by Boxie. We nattered over the fence – sorry – over the rail. Bert Stephens has gone south on 28 days leave. Good on him. Artie spun me some tales about when they picked Bert up at Wessels. Official – Kalgoorlie going south for Maryborough when Inverell gets back, for refit. That makes us next – roll on our relief. Artie Back alongside us for a couple of hours again – more nattering. Went alongside and topped up with oil and water about 6pm – stayed

alongside till morning. Vendetta came back in about 4 oclock. She had been within 80 miles of Timor to pick up crew of Mitchell bomber that was shot down. Four of crew of six were picked up. Shows that old Dets’ has got life in her yet.

20th

My luck again – out at 8am and I had to set watch at 6am. Out with Dets and Bishopdale headed once more for T.I. Passed Kalgoorlie on her way thru the narrows. Probably be her last time in Darwin – lucky devils
Alas, alas , this 20th February is my BLACK DAY.

5pm Off goes my bee-oo-tiful beard. Just wasted. Gee, the things we do for our wives! Went to the mirror, looking in it and said “Excuse me Robert Taylor while I have a look in the mirror”. Then

I realized it was my own image.
(Readers throw mud at this stage).
Horace also shaved off. Bob wearing his
set home + Dave might also. It was
good while it lasted - must grow a set
when I retire.

Cool day, rain, sea choppy till we
past the 'Dow' then now we have it
low over beam.

21st One thing I forgot mention on
19th. Japs seem over for awhile - didn't
make a real nuisance of himself. Warm
afternoon - cool + wet at night. Keeping
up to 10 + 11 knots. Air ebbs again this time.
~~Dark~~ Japs zig-zagged to lose way in
order to pass vessels about midnight.

22nd Cool day, rained almost continually.
Had to stay below in mess decks.

Reception pretty bad at times while
rain was on. Ah me, all in a
good cause I suppose.

F. Vendetta + tanker met on south.

23rd In during forenoon. Swimming party
before dinner. Spike + Jimmy came in
for swim too. Went alongside Wamahi
for oil, then tied up alongside Koonpartoo
with Kookaburra alongside us at wharf.
Koonpartoo is old converted ferry which was
ahead of us at Circular Quay. Kangaroo +
she on way to boom duty at Larnie.
Pictures at night, saw "God Earth".

24th Anchored out during afternoon.
Koonpartoo + Kangaroo left about 5 pm.

We left at 7 pm with Lurwah + Wamahi.
Choppy sea outside. Looks like another
roughish trip.

25th Passed two "K's" during forenoon.
Raining most of day. Unpleasant motion.

Too sick, but not too bad. Pitching
a bit harder than the night.

26th Bopping some beams all day today.
Had to take up Oeder done.

I realized it was my own image. (Readers throw mud at this stage). Horace also shaved off. Bob wearing his set home + Dave might also. It was good while it lasted – must grow a set when I retire.

Cool day, rain, sea choppy till we past the Don, now we have it on our beam

21st

One thing I forgot to mention on 19th – Jap reco over for awhile – didn't make a real nuisance of himself. Warm afternoon – cool + wet at night. Keeping up to 10 or 11 knots. Air escort again this time. Zigzagged to lose way in order to pass Wessels almost midnight.

22nd

Cool day, rained almost continuously. Had to stay below in mess decks. Reception pretty bad at times while rain was on. Ah me, all in a good cause I 'spose.

Vendetta + tanker went on south

23rd

In during forenoon. Swimming party before dinner. Spike and Jimmy came in for swim too. Went alongside Wanakie for oil. Then tied up alongside Kornpartoo with Kookaburra alongside her at the wharf. Kornpartoo is old, converted ferry which was ahead of us at Circular Quay. Kangaroo + she on way to boom duty at Darwin. Pictures at night saw "Good Earth"

24th

Anchored out during afternoon. Kornpartoo + Kanga left about 5pm. We left at 7pm with Burwah + Wanakie . Choppy sea outside. Looks like another rough trip.

25th

Passed two "K"s during forenoon. Raining most of day. Uneven motion. Sick but its not too bad. Pitching a bit hard thru the night.

26th

Copping some beauts all day today. Had to take up asdic drone.

F
Sea got deep rough swell. Ship taking
some harder hits than she has
ever taken. Raining + cold most of
day. Passed Halgaitic on her way
south. That makes no rest but
when? Six months since we left Sydney
27th 28th Still raining most of day.
Sea rougher still - changed course +
developed sort of rolling pitch. Not
sick but could read a copy of MARR
+ not even raise a smile.
28th Same thing today, only has not
rained as much. Sun out for awhile.
Still copping greenies over the focal.
Once more the Air Force failed to
turn up. Hardly seen 'em this trip.
Funny, because the Wamaka is one of
their own store ships. 4 Spitfires spotted
come out today. Hope to pass safe
low during middle.

M
1st March Heavy swell but in
harbour about 6 pm - + then MATH.
Goodish. Air raid warning today
but nothing materialised.
2nd March Ciled + watered. One
yellow then red for half hour.
Another red. Then another red
which lasted for an hour.
16 Spitfires up at one time. Say
are they some planes? All we
saw was the back arch bursting
flaps over the airframe. Six out
of fifteen shot down by Spitfires.
Went into floating dock. All
hands over side on rafts etc
scraping ships side and bottom.
Waves pretty strong and had
lot of trouble till water out.
Had some fun but rifles me
worked. Supper at 9 pm then

Sea got deep rough swell. Ship taking some harder belts than she has ever taken. Raining and cold most of day. Passed Kalgoorlie on her way south. That makes us next but when? Six months since we left Sydney

27th

Still raining most of day. Sea rougher still – changed course + developed sort of rolling pitch. Not sick but could read a copy of MAN and not even raise a smile.

28th

Same thing today, only has not rained as much. Sun out for a while. Sill copping greenies over the foc'sl. Once more the Air Force failed to turn up. Hardly seen 'em this trip. Funny, because the Wanaka is one of their own store ships. 4 Spitfires sposed come out today. Hope to pass Cape Don during Middle.

1st March

Heavy swell but in harbor about 6pm – and then MAIL. Goodoh. Air raid warning today but nothing materialized.

2nd March

Oiled and watered. One yellow then raid for half hour. Another red. Then another red which lasted for an hour. 16 Spitfires up at one time. Boy are they some planes? All we saw was the ack ack bursting. Japs over airdrome. Six out of fifteen shot down by Spitfires. Went into floating dock. All hands over side on rafts etc scraping ships side and bottom. We are pretty strong and had a lot of trouble till water out. Had some fun but cripes we worked. Supper at 9pm then

straight to bed.
3rd Turned to at 7.30 am.
Loaded dock, then gave ships stop
side and bottom two coats of
paint & believe me its more than
it sounds. Great quantities of paint
splashed over each other. More large
but good job done. Finished &
had lunch at 1 pm. They had
a prim white dock was filling.
Beer issue - put in refig by
box very thoughtfully - very Nelson
kth. Worked in mess all morning
dashing round madly after
cockroaches most of time. Japs
sawo plane overhead after lunch
Ack-ack bursts above us but
no red alarm. Spitties out after
him. Wonder if they got him?
Buzzy going about that we are going

on a dangerous job down Wyndham
way for a fortnight. Probably hoody
but we ^{spaced} called & watered at 7 pm.
Tomorrow will tell. 8 pm briefs the
ship we are taking is being loaded
with blommie bombs over yonder.
Whoo-hoo, handle carefully.
5th Hung around off shore till
7 pm. then went alongside, oiled, watered
& took on stores for Air Force blokes.
Dull day.
6th Took on 70 odd Air Force men,
about 1 am, & left with ^{afunga} Larkimab. Just
stop Wyndham. Practically a flat calm.
Calmer we have had for days - but
90% of Air Force blokes feeling sick.
They will be O.K. tomorrow & this is
first trip for majority. reckon they
wouldn't take our life for an extra
£1 a day. Humorous because even our own
sea-sickness not feeling sick. That how
calm it is. Chetty doesn't bloke.

straight to bed

3rd

Turned to a 730am. Hosed deck ,then gave ships side and bottom two coats of paint and believe me its more than it sounds. Great quantities of paint splashed over each other. More laughs but good job done. Finished and had lunch at 4pm. Then had a swim while dock was filling. Beer issue – put in refrig by Cox'n very thoughtfully – very welcome.

4th

Worked in mess all morning, dashing around madly after cockroaches most of time. Jap reco plane overhead after lunch. Ack-ack bursts above us but no red alarm. Spitfires out after him. Wonder if they got him? Buzz going about that we are going

on a dangerous job down Wyndham way for a fortnight. Probably hooey but we sposed oiled and watered at 7 pm. Tomorrow will tell. 8pm Cripes the ship we are taking is being loaded with bloomin bombs over yonder. Whoo-hoo, handle carefully.

5th

Hung around off shore till 7pm then went alongside, oiled watered and took on shores for Air Force blokes. Dull day

6th

Took on 70 odd Air Force men about 7am & left with Bulimba (Babinda). First stop Wyndham. Practically a flat calm. Calmest we have had for ages – but 90% of Air Force blokes falling sick. They will be O.K tomorrow and this is first trip for majority . Reckon they wouldn't take our life for an extra 1 pound a day. Humorous because even our own sea-sickers not feeling sick. That's how calm it is. Pretty decent blokes.

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17
7th Very hot day - no rain. From 8 am
till we anchored at 5 pm, there was
land on either side of us. Larren,
table top country, with high ranges
here & there. Cambridge Gulf drier
than Yarra. Tide on way out leaving
sand bars etc exposed. Water thick
brown muddy colour. Ancho & ~~Labinde~~
picked our passage thru winding
channels & narrows. Anchored off
shore at Wyndham at 5 pm. Got ~~first~~
foraken hole. Big modern meat
works bigger than rest of town.
Remainder looks to consist of hotels
& few other gash wooden & tin
buildings. Three big table tops at
back of town make it look like
a typical Western "Dry Gulch".
Next Aulnaham getting picked badly,
especially at little drain we saw.

17
8th Air force blokes unloaded rest of
stuff by lunch time. Off again with
Labinde. Tide going out so trips much
quicker and easier. Raining heavily at
times which made navigation difficult.
Paris stations once but was friendly place.
Out of Gulf about 5 pm. Pitch black
night. Bit of a swell on.

9th Air Force chappies not too happy
last night altho' it wasn't to be called
even slightly rough. Must be crook to
them though. Learned thru day so
all well. ~~But~~ Lost our ship last night
in dark, didn't pick it up till late
this morning. Off shore at what is
marked on chart as Fryedale River str.
All we can see is bush, in the
midst of which are about 3 buildings
where the mission was before it
shifted 16 miles inland. What a place

7th

Very hot day – no rain. From 8am till we anchored at 5pm, there was land on either side of us. Barren, table-top country, with high ranges here and there. Cambridge Gulf dirtier than Yarra. Tide on way out leaving sand bars etc exposed. Water thick brown muddy colour. Ourselves and Babinda picked own passage thru winding channels and narrows. Anchored off shore at Wyndham at 5pm. Godforsaken hole. Big modern meat works bigger than rest of town. Remainder looks to consist of hotel and few other gash wooden + tin buildings. Three big table tops at back of town make it look like a typical Western “Dry Gulch”. West Australians getting picked badly, especially abt little rain we saw

8th

Air force blokes unloaded rest of stuff by lunch time. Off again with Babinba. Tide going out so trip much quicker and easier. Raining heavily at time which made navigation difficult. Panic stations once but was friendly plane. Out of Gulf about 5pm. Pitch black night. Bit of a swell on.

9th

Air Force chappies not too happy last night altho’ it wasn’t to be called even slightly rough. Must be crook to them though. Calmed though day so all well. Lost our ship last night in dark, didn’t pick it up until late this morning. Off shore at what is marked on chart as Drysdale River station. All we can see is bush, in the midst of which are about 3 buildings where the mission as before it shifted 16 miles inland. What a place

11

to isolate blocks. A couple of dozen
also appeared when they found we
werent japs, and helped unload stores
etc. Disembarked all the Gasfers except
about ten. Our seamen working in
barges and motor boat unloading from
here + the ^{slings} ~~helicopter~~. Hard job because
boats have to be anchored and stores
carried thru water to beach. Wouldnt
mind having a look ashore but dont
spare I'll get a chance off watch.

There is a truck to come off other
ship tomorrow. That will be a big
job. Hope its rain.

10th Very hot calm day. Seamen
did great job getting stores ashore.
Truck landed O.K. Missionary, a
Spaniard, appeared to see what was
going on. He thought we were Dutch.
Jap recon plane over this spot two

11

days ago, so good lookout being kept.
Chafe ashore had to cart the
bombs etc to the old mission house
about a mile or so away. But it
was hot work. Sparks keeping watch
so had stay aboard. Finished here
and under weigh about 5 pm, bound
for Port Keats. This water bad here.
11th Dull day - arrived at entrance to
river 4 pm. Very strong fast tide.
Couldnt get across sand bar into
inner channel. Took soundings in boats
+ finally managed to get in a couple
of mile and anchor. Boat ashore
to Drysdale which is practically all
table top mountains - this place is
flat for miles and miles. Mangroves
growing along water edge. Little channels
+ some leading off. Big waterway in
mangroved passages look very picturesque.

to isolate blokes. A couple of dozen abo's appeared when they found we weren't Japs and helped unload store etc. Disembarked all the RAAFs except about 10. Our seaman work in barges and motor boats unloading from here and the Babinda. Hard job because boats have to be anchored and stores carried through water to beach, Wouldn't mind having a look ashore but don't spose I'll get a chance off watch. There is a truck to come off other ship tomorrow That will be a big job. Hope it's calm.

10th

Very hot calm day. Seaman did great job getting stores ashore. Truck loaded OK. Missionary, a Spaniard, appeared to see what was going on. He thought we were Dutch. Jap recco plane over this spot two

days ago so good look out being kept. Chaps ashore had to cart the bombs etc to the old mission house about a mile or so away. Bet it was hot work. Sparkers keeping watch so had stay aboard. Finished here and under weigh about 5pm, bound for Port Keats. Flies extra bad here.

11th

Dull day – arrived at entrance to river 4pm. Very strong fast tide. Couldn't get across sand bar into inner channel. Took soundings in boats and finally managed to get in a couple of mile and anchor. Contrast ashore to Drysdale which is practically all table-top mountains – this place is flat for miles and miles. Mangroves growing along waters edge. Little channels and arms leading off big waterway in mangroved passages look very picturesque.

M
Mosquitoes at us as soon as we arrived -
millions of 'em about
12th Very hot day. Seamen had to
row skiffs about 4 or 5 mile to boats
to the mission. Only able to do two trips
all day. Went to Action Stations
3 times thru day but plane friendly,
thanks goodness. What a place to get
trapped by a jip plane! No room
to manoeuvre and waters full of ^{crocodiles} crocs.
Saw a boat about 12 or 14 feet during
Dogs. Blokes shot at it. Towards dark
saw snouts rising way thru water
in a dozen or more places. Barges there
is a lot about.

13th Another scorching hot plain day?
Joe Orford & I got permission to go
down river about 10 a.m. Loaded
tractor & petrol drums on assault
barges & 4 of them towed by K.H. &

M
boat. Travelled about 4 mile up river
between mangrove channels. Mission was
about 4 or 5 km but couple setbacks.
Abos worked unloading barges. Very
thinly built but very hot. Good
workers. From smallest firecracker to
oldest man they do anything for a
smoke. Looks funny to see blades
of about 3 smoking like a man.
Mission is run by a Father and
one Brother. Father been there 15 years.
He made a visit to Darwin 8 years ago.
Both fine men & very interesting
to listen to. Went up to mission
& had look at kids that was
there. Different tribes continually coming
to going according to Brother.
Lubras with small kiddies & male
blacks just as read about in books.
Talking to one fellow who talked

Mosquitoes at us as soon as we arrived – millions of ‘em about.

12th

Very hot day. Seamen had to tow stores about 4 or 5 mile on boats to the mission. Only able do two trips all day. Went to Action Stations three times through day but plane friendly, thank goodness. What a place to get trapped by a Jap plane! No room to manoeuvre and water full of crocodiles. Saw a beaut about 12 or 14 feet during Dogs. Blokes shot at it. Towards dark saw snouts nosing way through water in a dozen or more places. Cripes there is a lot about.

13th

Another scorching hot day? Joe Orford and I got permission to go down river about 10am. Loaded tractor and petrol drums on assault barges and four of them towed by K.H.Ms

boat. Travelled about 4 miles up river between mangrove channels. Mission was about 4 or 5 tin huts, couple shacks. Abos worked unloading barges. Very thinly built but wiry lot. Good workers. From smallest piccaninny to oldest man they do anything for a smoke. Looks funny to see kiddy of about 3 smoking like a man. Mission is run by a Father and one Brother. Father been there 15 years. He made a visit to Darwin 8 years ago. Both fine men and very interesting to listen to. Went up to mission and had look at tribe that was there. Different tribes continually coming and going according to Brother. Lubras with small kiddies and male blacks just as read about in books. Talking to one fellow who talked

very good English & who was quite willing to show us spears etc. The Brother told us he was Wagin, one of best known Blacks in N.T. He was known to have eaten lubras kidney fat & on one occasion had been caught at it at mission but permitted & lubra saved. He is black who killed 3 Gaps when they took lubras. Also got for other convictions. Blacks blame all deaths on to Wagin. One of them showed us how they start a fire by rubbing two sticks. Radio set at mission, works schedule with Darwin reporting planes etc. At one time missionaries went back when Gap flying boat landed nearby then reported it after Gaps left, resulting in loss of Gap plane. Very proud of themselves. They are doing a grand job all round. (Football match)

after unloading barges returned to ship. Ship shifted couple miles to outside bar. We had 1½ to 2 hours trip in barges in scorching sun. Left at 4 pm en route to Curron Island, 60 mile away.

14th Arrived Curron about midday. Couple of long islands - look very bare. Curron has sort of a beach and a hill at one end - rest is mangrove swamps. Five mile long. Loaded remainder of Air Force stores. Wouldn't be so bad ashore here for few months. Few natives ashore but not too sociable. Started unloading stores. Wirrang over. 15th Another hot day. Had blue from Darwin yesterday & today. Saw planes distance away, then Spitfires after them firing. Didn't

very good English and who was quite willing to show us spears etc. The Brother told us he was Wagin, one of the best known blacks in NT. He was known to have eaten lubras kidney fat and on one occasion had been caught at it on mission but prevented and lubra saved. He is black who killed three japs when they took lubras. Also got few other convictions. Blacks blame all deaths onto Wagin. One of them showed us how they start a fire by rubbing two sticks. Radio set at mission, works schedule with Darwin reporting planes etc. At one time missionaries went bush when jap flying boat landed nearby then reported it after japs left, resulting in loss of jap plane. Very proud of themselves. They are doing a grand job all round, (football match).

after unloading barges, returned to ship. Ship shifted couple miles to outside bar. We had 1 ½ - 2 hours trip in barges in scorching sun. Left at 4pm en route to Perrin Island, 60 mile away.

14th

Arrived Perrin about midday. Couple of long islands, look very bare. Perrin has sort of a beach and a hill at one end, rest is most mangrove swamps. 9 mile long. Landed remainder of Air Force blokes. Wouldn't be so bad ashore here for few months. Few natives ashore but not too sociable Started unloading stores Wirraway over.

15th

Another hot day. Had Blue from Darwin yesterday and today. Saw planes distance way, then Spitfires after them firing. Didn't

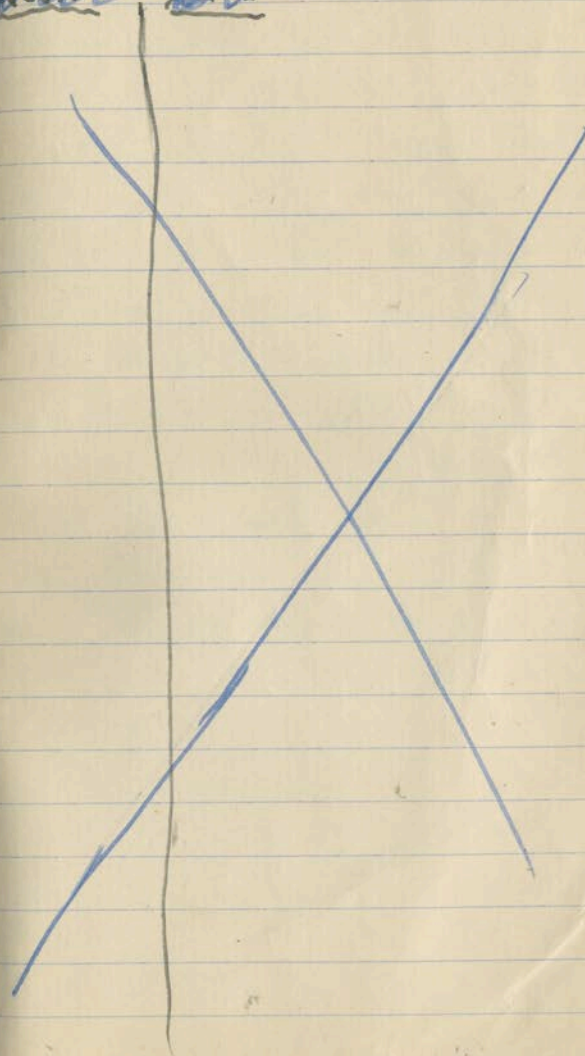
have a go at us. Not far (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile) to swim. Beach here but by god there are a lot of sharks about. Boys catching quite a lot. Went after a tortoise in the motor boat today with a 12 foot spear - caught him but finally spear broke & the boys lost tortoise & also spear. Quite funny watching it. Beautiful summer night. Off back to Darwin at 12 pm. Display of searchlights practising in evening. Looked well from far miles out. 20 or 30 of them for about 11 pm.

16th Boat aboard about midday.

Good old Harg & Mum meet on the spot. Went aboard to pictures at evening. Quite a bit of damage done before. Oil tanks, railway shed & Yank Hq's, other places knocked about badly (over 1 page)

LETTERS WRITTEN

PERSON DATE



have a go at us. Not far (about 1 ½ mile) to swim ashore here but by gee there are a lot of sharks about. Boys catching quite a lot. Went after a tortoise in the motor boat today with a 12 foot spear. Caught him but finally spear broke and the boys lost tortoise and also spear. Quite funny watching it. Beautiful summer night. Off back to Darwin at 4pm. Display of search lights practicing in evening. Looked well from few miles out 20 or 30 of them. In about 11pm.

16th

Mail aboard about midday. Good old Marg and Mum ever on the spot. Went aboard to pictures at evening. Quite a bit of damage done ashore. Oil tanks, railway shed and Yank HQs other places knocked about badly (over 1 page)

craters about in various places. Not
much serious damage done. Saw George
Male - just back from fortnight
leave down south. Got all local
house town news from him. Crowd
of old Warrack soldiers just got back
from Middle East. Boy how I'd
like to be there & celebrate with
them. George picked up his shipping
rate at last.

Pictures not bad show. We were
to have boiler clean here. We are
overdue but it's wiped off so must
be going out again.

Craters about in various places. Not much serious damage done. Saw George Male, just back from fortnights leaves down south. Got all local home town news from him. Crowd of all Warwick cobbers just got back from middle east. Boy how I'd like to be there and celebrate with them. George picked up his Chippies rate at last

Pictures not bad show. We were to have boiler clean here. We are overdue but it's wiped off so must be going out again.