

Chapter 1 - U.S.S. MAHAN, D.D. #364

Thursday, December 4, 1941

Tomorrow a task force consisting of Carrier LEXINGTON, Cruiser CHICAGO and D.D.'s MAHAN 364, DRAYTON 366, LAMSON 367, FLUSSER 368 and PORTER will leave for sea duty.

Friday, December 5, 1941

Left port at 0430 this date with task force headed for Guam.

Saturday December 6, 1941

At Sea. This morning we were about 400 miles from Pearl Harbor, "High Speed" .

Sunday, December 7, 1941

At Sea, all hell broke loose this morning. Pearl Harbor was attacked by Japanese Naval Air Force, scuttle butt is really thick, boy I'm scared stiff.

Monday, December 8, 1941

At Sea. From the dope that's traveling around, we were really caught with our pants down.

Tuesday, December 9, 1941

At Sea. Most of the fellows can't seem to think that war is really declared. Damage at Pearl Harbor was great.

Wednesday, December 10, 1941

It was confirmed by Naval Department that loss was great. But did not say how many ships were sunk.

Thursday, December 11, 1941

At Sea. We've been at sea all week long, and at high speeds. It all seems to be a bad dream.

Friday, December 12, 1941

At Sea. At late afternoon, we contacted submarine, and depth bombed it, with unobserved results. When picked up, it was crossing starboard bow headed for the carrier LEXINGTON.

Saturday, December 13, 1941

At Sea. Would like to go in port to see what the hell happened. Reports say Hickam Field was really tore to hell.

Sunday, December 14, 1941

At Sea. Sometime today we're going in port. Pearl Harbor, what a heart-breaking sight. The memory of first sight is imprinted on my brain for as long as I live.

Monday, December 15, 1941

A-t Pearl Harbor. Six battle ships sank. Two cruisers badly damaged. Three destroyers seemed to be a total loss. One mine layer sunk.

Tuesday, December 16, 1941

At Sea. MAHAN left half of the crew on the beach (shore) and went to sea. I finally got aboard the U.S.S. LAMSON #367 at 1700 this evening.

Wednesday, December 17, 1941

At Sea. On board the LAMSON #367 conveying gasoline tanker and troop ship TANGIERS.

Thursday, December 18, 1941

Pearl Harbor. Was I glad to find protection of this harbor. Task force took over convoy and we reported back to port.

Friday, December 19, 1941

Pearl Harbor. Ships are sunk all over hell and the same as what you can see here (hell). They estimate that from three to four thousand men were killed or wounded.

Saturday, December 20, 1941

Pearl Harbor. Went alongside repair ship U.S.S. DOBBINS for repair. Its blacker than the pits of Hades (no lights).

Sunday, December 21, 1941

Pearl Harbor. Standby to get under way on short notice.

Monday, December 22, 1941

Pearl Harbor. No mail from States yet. I live in this Capt's gig 24 hours a day.

Tuesday, December 23, 1941

Pearl Harbor. Today is Mother's birthday. I wonder if she received my letters yet. I'm sure she's worried.

Wednesday, December 24, 1941

At Sea. Today we're escorting our submarine to one day out of port, so our own planes won't sink it.

Thursday, December 25, 1941 - Christmas

Pearl Harbor. Took 103 marines aboard for transportation and had eight 30 Cal. machine guns welded to the deck today. What a lonely Christmas this is, but am thankful to be alive. Almost lost my life today. I'm the coxswain of whale boat on port davits and when lowered into the water at 10 knots (too fast), my bow hook, Luke Hall, threw the sea painter off before I could unhook the rear fails and the whaleboat just swung around toward the ship and we finally had to abandon the boat. There was heavy oil all over the bay and us. R.T. Province was Boat Engineer. Lucky no one was hurt. The ship's screws just sucked it right under and they found it two days later on the bank, full of mud. Captain Roger W. Simpson said, "You should have used that tiller on Luke Hall's head" and I agreed with him.

Friday, December 26, 1941

At Sea. Headed for Johnson Island to reinforce the island. They took my bunk away from me and I'm sleeping in the mess hall; have to let those marines rest before they get there. We're 717 miles to go from Pearl Harbor.

Saturday, December 27, 1941

At Sea. En route to Johnson Island. Expect to arrive Tuesday, December 30.

Sunday, December 28, 1941

At Sea. Contacted submarine and depth bombed. Those marines damn near went crazy.
"Unobserved results"

Monday, December 29, 1941

At Sea. Expect to reach port tomorrow morning at 0800. No trouble this trip.

Tuesday, December 30, 1941

At Sea. We laid off the island and disembarked troops. These civilians have saved their last mess of potatoes for two weeks so they could have them for Christmas dinner. Their food supply was very low and they were shelled three times by submarine. One of their shellings took out the electric generator.

Wednesday, December 31, 1941

At Sea. Took some civilian workers aboard for transportation back. The Executive Officer, Lt. Richter, took one civilian's 30-year diary away from him and destroyed it. I'm telling you that fellow was mad and I don't blame him a bit. Richter could have held it but not destroyed it. And besides, it was New Years Eve, nothing to celebrate right now.

Thursday, January 1, 1942

Had contact and turned out to be a whale. Boy, this business is nerve-wracking!

Friday, January 2, 1942

Had another contact and G.Q. Turned out to be dumb Operator "Fordyce" - took sounding on our own screws, oh well.

Saturday, January 3, 1942

At Sea. Going in port tomorrow and get these 47 civilians off here. They're full of bed-bugs and heaving all over the place and guess who has to clean up?

Sunday, January 4, 1942

Pearl Harbor and no liberty for deck force - work is all these people think of.

Monday, January 5, 1942

Pearl Harbor. "Liberty" No whisky, no beer, all bars are closed up. Hell, might as well stay aboard and work.

Tuesday, January 6, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Work, work, work.

Wednesday, January 7, 1942

Pearl Harbor. "No Liberty" No mail, just work all the time, but the food is good.

Thursday, January 8, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Mai'l finally came today. They got my letters at home and were glad I'm not hurt and am OK.

Friday, January 9, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Follow ship's routine.

Saturday, January 10, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Follow ship's routine.

Sunday, January 11, 1942

At Sea. Picked up convoy - U.S.S. CURTISS and Tanker

Monday, January 12, 1942

At Sea. Expect to enter port tomorrow.

Tuesday, January 13, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Received our Xmas packages from home today. Little late, but better than not at all.

Wednesday, January 14, 1942

At Sea. Picked up Tanker SABINE and headed for Samoa.

Thursday, January 15, 1942

At Sea. Got some old mail today.

Friday, January 16, 1942

At Sea. Convoying SABINE (Tanker), Boy the sea is rougher than hell today.

Saturday, January 17, 1942

At Sea. Still escorting SABINE, expect to cross Equator tomorrow.

Sunday, January 18, 1942

At Sea. Had ceremony. I was a polly-wog and caught holy hell this day. Now, I'm a shell back. Went over the Equator at 0138, 18 Jan 1942.

Monday, January 19, 1942

At Sea. I've got a funny haircut and a sore hind end, but not bad. We stopped a Swedish ship today and sent over one of our crew member with whale boat and officer. The crew man could speak Swedish, everything turned out OK.

Tuesday, January 20, 1942

At Sea. En route to Samoa, get in tomorrow.

Wednesday, January 21, 1942

Samoa. In the port of Pago Pago, on the island of Tutuwilla, Territory of Samoa.

Thursday, January 22, 1942

Pago Pago, Samoa. Held swimming call and then got underway. Made contact and dropped depth charges on a reef that they thought was a sub. And we were lucky as hell, we ran right through our mined harbor and didn't set off anything. Somebody's watching over us!

Friday, January 23, 1942

At Sea. On patrol off the island of Tutuwilla, Samoa.

Saturday, January 24, 1942

At Sea. Met Task force this morning, for raid on Japanese-held island.

Sunday, January 25, 1942

At Sea. Expect to attack Friday about 150 planes are to do the job.

Monday, January 26, 1942

At Sea. MAHAN will not make the attack. Convoy tanker only.

Tuesday, January 27, 1942

At Sea. Tanker will fuel ships tomorrow, when finished fueling, we will start back to Pearl Harbor.

Wednesday, January 28, 1942

At Sea. Started fueling ships today at 0600. Saturday morning is the zero hour. Hit 'em hard, boys.

Thursday, January 29, 1942

At Sea. Left task force today and headed back. Expect to contact them later to fuel again.

Friday, January 30, 1942

At Sea. With tanker SABINE, hope the fellows do a good job and I know they will.

Saturday, January 31, 1942

At Sea. A good job was done, great damage was done to the Island of Joulet, of the Marshall and Gilbert group. The Cruiser CHESTER took a bomb on her quarter deck.

Sunday, February 1, 1942

At Sea. Been 23 days at sea. Expect to enter port 7 Feb.

Monday, February 2, 1942

At Sea. Nichi Nichi said the whole American fleet took part in the raid of Joulet.

Tuesday, February 3, 1942

At Sea. The latest and oldest scuttle butt is "going back to the States." Boy, have I heard that before.

Wednesday, February 4, 1942

At Sea. Just two more days and we'll be back in, this is one time I'll be glad to see Pearl Harbor.

Thursday, February 5, 1942

At Sea. Only four days until I finish this cruise, 4 full years.

Friday, February 6, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Home at last. Never was so glad to get here.

Saturday, February 7, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Much mail today.

Sunday, February 8, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Run the boat all day, even after dark. Got challenged, but couldn't hear over the boat motor, so they took a shot and we stopped in a hurry! Damn dummy! Had been watching us go and come all day.

Monday, February 9, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Enlistment expired today, was examined and found to be physically fit for extension of two more years.

Tuesday, February 10, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Went ashore today, its the custom after enlistment is up.

Wednesday, February 11, 1942

At Sea. 0930 left Pearl Harbor for Christmas, Palmyra and Canton islands. Expect to reach Christmas Island Saturday morning.

Thursday, February 12, 1942

At Sea. Lookouts spotted Dutch P.B.Y. patrolling aircraft this morning.

Friday, February 13, 1942

At Sea. Arrive in port some time tomorrow.

Saturday, February 14, 1942

Palmyra Is. Went alongside Swedish cargo ship "OLLY OLSON" about 1600.

Sunday, February 15, 1942

Palmyra Is. Stood watch and scanned the beaches. Some are real nice.

Monday, February 16, 1942

Palmyra Is. Went ashore today, ate lots of coconuts and drank its milk. I'm running today.

Tuesday, February 17, 1942

Palmyra Is. Went over at night to see base movie.

Wednesday, February 18, 1942

Palmyra Is. Ashore again. Today I'm getting so I like this place. C.O. Johnson and V.G. Jones and a few other shipmates went along. Just looked around and hunted for sea shells.

Thursday, February 19, 1942

At Sea. Left Palmyra, en route to Xmas Island.

Friday, February 20, 1942

At Sea. Expect to reach X-mas island and drop off some mail.

Saturday, February 21, 1942

At Sea. Met convoy of six supply ships and Cruiser NEW ORLEANS. Two aviators crashed and we rescued them and returned them to their own ship.

Sunday, February 22, 1942

At Sea. Crossed the equator again today and went through regular ceremony. I was a shell back this time.

Monday, February 23, 1942

At Sea. Took Dutch motor supply ship and headed for Canton Island.

Tuesday, February 24, 1942

At Sea. Patrolling off Canton Island. Expect to stay here 10 days. The U.S.S. PORTER, DD-356 class was present when we reached here.

Wednesday, February 25, 1942

Off Shore Patrol. Beer party for 1st section to leave ship at 1300.

Thursday, February 26, 1942

Off Shore Patrol. Had my first beer today since the war started. Tasted good.

Friday, February 27, 1942

Off Shore Patrol. Just rolling with the swells.

Saturday, February 28, 1942

Off Shore Patrol. Nothing happening.

Sunday March 1; Monday, March 2; Tuesday, March 3, 1942.

Off Shore Patrol. These three days last beer liberty on the 3rd.

Wednesday, March 4, 1942

Off Shore Patrol. Newsflash - Pearl Harbor was attacked by one plane. dropped three bombs - slight damage.

Thursday, March 5; Friday, March 6; Saturday, March 7. 1942

Off Shore Patrol.

Sunday, March 8, 1942

Off Shore Patrol. The PORTER gave us a dirty deal and her duty also. She took the ship JAPARA and left for Pearl Harbor. Food and fuel getting mighty low.

Monday, March 9, 1942

Off Shore Patrol. Now all we have to do is patrol with that damn PRESIDENT TAYLOR on the beach.

Tuesday, March 10, 1942

Still patrolling off shore. May leave 22nd.

Wednesday, March 11, 1942

PRESIDENT TAYLOR was afloat tonight, but settled back on coral reef. Again, there is no hope of getting her off now.

Thursday, March 12, 1942

Canton Island. We're going to try to Pull her off once more and then start back at six knots.

Friday, March 13, 1942

Black Friday. Couldn't get her off. Made 28 knots, back and forth, but the tugs couldn't pull her off. I guess its curtains for PRESIDENT TAYLOR.

Saturday, March 14, 1942

Canton Island. Patrolling off shore. The USS HOUSTON, 8" cruiser, old four stacker destroyer POPE were sunk off the Java Coast by Japanese naval forces.

Sunday, March 15, 1942

Canton Island. Patrolling. Planes from the LEXINGTON and YORKTOWN sank 6 ships. The battle of Java is in full swing.

Monday, March 16, 1942

Canton Island. Patrolling. Went to GQ tonight. Thought a ship sneaked in on us (it did) but turned out to be the tug SONOMA (ours).

Tuesday, March 17, 1942

Canton Island. Almostt caught 10 ft. shark today, but got away. St Patrick's Day today.

Wednesday, March 18, 1942

Canton Island. Patrolling. Have been away from P.H. 35 days and can't see the end yet.

Thursday, March 19, 1942

Canton Island. Patrolling. Destroyer SELFRIDGE is supposed to relieve us tomorrow.

Friday, March 20, 1942

Canton Island. Well, the SELFRIDGE didn't show so we got no mail. This patrolling is about as dull as an axe handle.

Saturday, March 21, 1942

Canton Island. No relief, no mail, maybe she'll come tomorrow, hope.

Sunday, March 22, 1942

Canton Island. "No."

Monday, March 23, 1942

Canton Island. Took gig to the beach and painted sides. Ho relief.

Tuesday, March 24, 1942

At Sea. Left Canton Island at 0015 this morning. The Army had our orders to Sail 10 days ago. I doubt that but that's the Scuttlebutt. Under way for Pearl Harbor.

Wednesday, March 25, 1942

At Sea. Went around in circles all day looking for tug, crossed equator 5 times.

Thurssday, March 26, 1942

At Sea. Hope to reach port about Monday.

Friday, March '27, 1942

At Sea. En route to P.H.

Saturday, March 28. Sunday, March 29; Monday, March 30, 1942

At Sea. En route to P.H.

Tuesday, March 31, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Fueled ship at Mary's Point. Expect to return to buoy tomorrow.

Wednesday, April 1, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Boat duty today and tonight, sleep in boat.

Thursday, April 2, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Went on liberty and Pearl Harbor still Isn't a good liberty. She's still pretty much tore up. Alongside USS WHITNEY.

Friday, April 3, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Leave alongside Tender WHITNEY .sometime tomorrow.

Friday, April 4, 1942
Pearl Harbor. Expect to leave sometime tomorrow.

Saturday, April 5, 1942
At Sea. Left port with seven ships convoy.

Sunday, April 6, 1942 :
At Sea. With convoy at the speed of 9 knots. Headed for San Pedro, California.

Monday, April 7, 1942 .
At Sea. Expect to arrive about 16th or 17th

Tuesday, April 8, 1942
At Sea. On sane course to San Pedro.

Wednesday, April 9, 1942
At Sea. Had to slow to 5 knots. One ship couldn't hold out.

Thursday, April 10, 1942
At Sea. Cold as hell. Still on sane course as before.

Friday, April 11, 1942
At Sea. Speed of 8i knots.

Saturday, April 12, 1942
At Sea. Holiday routine.

Sunday, April 13, 1942
At Sea. Today I'm 25 years old. Wish I were in San Pedro.

Monday, April 14, 1942
At Sea. Tomorrow we'll be at the point 250 miles off San Pedro. Leave convoy and proceed to San Francisco.

Tuesday, April 15, 1942
At Sea. Had to take them on in to port. Expect to arrive at 1700 tomorrow.

Wednesday, April 16, 1942
At Sea. Have to lay off San Pedro Bay until 0900 tomorrow.

Thursday, April 17, 1942 .
At Sea. En route to Frisco, expect to be there tomorrow.

Friday, April 18, 1942
Mare Island. Arrived this date and have liberty tomorrow. I've got a 48 hour coming up.

From this date until August 1, 1942 was spent in the Navy yard and training, except for June and duty with the SARATOGA carrier reinforcing the Midway Battle.

June 1, 1942 - made Coxswain this date.

From August 1, 1942 This ship operated with old and new battle ships, off Pearl Harbor.

September 9, 1942 - made B.M. 2/C

October 16, 1942

At Sea. With ENTERPRISE Task Force going south looking for trouble.

October 17, 18, & 19, 1942

At Sea. With Task Force.

October 20, 1942

At Sea. Crossed the 180° meridian and lost the 21st day. It is now October 22, 1942.

October 22, 1942

At Sea. About 1320 this date spotted Japanese vessel of about 400 tons off our port bow, opened fire at 13,000 yards, salvo fire, Gun #4 could not bear on last salvo. Fifteen rounds expended and ship sank before we could reach her. No prisoners were taken, sighted four-engine flying boat about 1335 which made us change our course or maybe that was the time to change course. Anyway, it was a lucky change, about 1350, she made final run on Lamson DD #367 and dropped bombs about 2000 yards short. Also made run on MAHAN DD #364, but was beat off. After changing course and holding same course until about 1446, contacted Japanese repair ship, between 7 and 8000 ton. Opened fire 17,500 yards and straddled ship on first two salvos. She also returned fire. Heard two shells go buzzing by - none hit. Twenty-nine minutes of nerve wracking firing, we finally sank her. She was still going ahead when she sank. It took 793 rounds to sink her. Both forward guns, #1 and #2, got so hot that their blooners caught fire and burned off. Boy, it was a very exciting day!

October 23, 1942

At Sea. That evening went alongside the Carrier ENTERPRISE. They gave us great cheers. Felt so good, I'll remember them all my life. Took on ammo also - we needed it.

October 24, & 25, 1942

At Sea. Off Santa Cruz Island.

October 26, 1942

At Sea off Santa Cruz Island. Made contact with Japanese carrier. Task force estimated that there were three carriers. Our striking planes passed each other on the way to targets. Our protecting fighter planes got 26 torpedo planes of theirs

About 0942, anti-aircraft bursts were seen. The sky was full of tiny black specks. A great white cloud of smoke rose and with binoculars could see that the Carrier HORNET was badly hit and later sunk by our own shelling (Fleet). About 1020, a force of at least fifty dive bombers and torpedo planes attacked our force. Four similar attacks were made, about every half hour apart. Estimated that about 195 of their planes were shot down. USS PORTER was hit by torpedo from submarine - she also had to be sunk. Actual length of time under attack was 24 minutes, being longer than any air battle so far.

October 27 & 28, 1942

At Sea. En route to Noumea, New Caledonia.

October 29, 1942

At Sea. Got off watch at 0400 and settled in my bunk in the mess hall starboard side. Next thing I knew I was scooted into the bunk ahead of me. Out like a flash, next thing I knew, I was on my gun 40 MM port side. At first seemed to have been torpedoed, but we rammed the Battleship SOUTH DAKOTA at 20 knots. Rammed our rudder to hard left. I'll say this, Captain Roger W. Simpson took the wheel and turned it hard left. He had been asleep in the small room on the Bridge. He saved many lives that morning as she would have ground us up like hamburger had she hit us.

We were told, if can't clear rudder jam in the next ten minutes, abandon ship, but it was cleared and we proceeded to port under our own power, at about 12 knots. October has been one hell of a month. Hope they're better from here in.

Noumea, New Caledonia. From October 29, 1942 until sometime in November we lay in port and had temporary bow installed and left for Pearl Harbor on November 22 escorting SAN FRANCISCO (Cruiser), STERRETT (Destroyer), and CONYNGHAM (Destroyer) and a few other ships. Upon arrival to Pearl Harbor, the ships were lined with sailors. We were greatly greeted in a grand manner. I felt so humble, but it felt good, but it was centered to the Cruiser SAN FRANCISCO. Any way, I'll never forget it.

December 4, 1942

Pearl Harbor. Arrived early morning to enter Navy Yard for new bow.

December 7, 1942 - one year

Pearl Harbor. From this date until January 9 had new bow installed and some sea trials.

January 9, 1943

At Sea. Left port this date alone

January 10 through January 15, 1943

At Sea, alone.

January 16, 1943

Bora Bora. Fueled ship and went on liberty. This island is the home of the picture "Hurricane".

January 17, 1943

At Sea. To pick up convoy of 6 supply and cargo ships, operated with these ships until 27 Jan.

January 27, 1943

Noumea, New Caledonia. Back Again.

January 28, 1943

-At Sea. Operated with converted carrier until 31st Jan.

January 31, 1943

Nandi Fiji. All the old battleships are present here, "Boola Boola".

February 1, 1943

At Sea. Alone until February 4, en route to Noumea, N.C.

February 4, 1943
Noumea, N.C. Waiting for another trip?

February 4, 1943
At Sea. Sailed today with Tanker and passengers, members of the War Economic Board.

February 6, 1943
Efate, New Heberdes. Dropped passengers and tanker and continued alone.

February 9, 1943
Nandi Fiji. Took tanker and fueled task force, and started back to port. This operation took four days. This is my completion of five years in the Navy. The way it looks right now it's going to be some time yet before its finished.

February 13, 1943
Nandi Fiji. Arrived this date with tanker.

February 21, 1943
At Sea. With 4 old battleships, one tanker and 4 Destroyers.

February 23, 1943
Efate, NN.H. Havannah Harbor with tanker.

February 24 & 25, 1943
At Sea. With tanker.

February 26, 1943
At Sea, alone.

February 28, 1943
Espirito Santos, New Hebrides. Arrived alone, anchored and had beer party. Stayed in port, cleaning, painting.

March 6, 1943
At Sea. Escorting Tanker SABINE.

March 9, 1943
Espirito Santos. In port with the Tanker SABINE.

March 10, 1943
Off shore patrol.

March 11, 1943
Espirito Santos. Just got off patrol this morning. Got under way shortly after. Had G.Q., unidentified ship of about 10,000 tons. Asked for identification and got no answer. Load and fire one star shell per gun. 'The answer came quick. Turned out to be an American tanker. For a few exciting moments there, thought we were about to sink another ship. Hell, where else could you find so much excitement? Boola Boola.

March 13 through 19, 1943
Sound watch off shore patrol.

March 20 through 22, 1943
At Sea. Offshore patrol.

March 23, 1943
Noumea, N.C. Expect to go out soon.

March 24, 1943
At Sea. Target practice.

March 25, 1943
Noumea, New Caledonia, anchored. Lost our Skipper today, Roger W. Simpson. I can say one thing for sure, he sure as hell didn't fear anything, at least he didn't show it. I liked and trusted him. I was his gig coxswain for about one year. Very stern and by the book. We'll miss him until a better one comes along. Exec. James T. Smith took over as Captain, good man!

March 28, 1943
At Sea. Rigged ship for target towing for tanker SABINE to fire on, came in same day, anchored.

March 31, 1943
At Sea. Went on patrol and later picked up converted carrier USS COPAHE.

April 4, 1943
Noumea, N.C. Arrived alone.

April 5, 1943
At Sea. Operating with new battleships INDIANA, WASHINGTON and MASSACHUSETTS.

April 6, 1943
Noumea, N.C. Anchored.

April 7, 1943
At Sea. Left today with three battleships, INDIANA WASHINGTON and MASSACHUSETTS. Seems to be trouble somewhere and it looks like they're taking us there too.

April 13, 1943
It's my birthday again, only hope I see many more. I'm sure I will, too.

April 14, 1943
At Sea. Sailed alone.

April 15, 1943
Noumea, N.C. Anchored.

April 18, 1943
'At Sea. With one supply and one troop ship.

April 22, 1943
Guadalcanal Left at 2000 this date and glad to leave. Some hellish fighting went on here. We had no trouble though.

April 26, 1943
Noumea, N.C. Anchored.

May 5, 1943

At Sea. Operating with new battleships INDIANA, WASHINGTON and MASSACHUSETTS and some submarines.

May 6, 1943

Noumea, N.C. Did not enter main harbor, lay off shore in outer harbor.

May 8, 1943

At Sea. Got orders to proceed to southeast 2 days and pick up convoy and proceed to Australia. We are attached to task force 74.

May 15, 1943

Arrived off shore at Gladstone, Australia. Released convoy and proceeded up the coast.

May 16, 1943

Brisbane, Australia. Went alongside the dock and fueled and stayed four hours and left for sea alone.

May 18, 1943

Sydney, Australia. Liberty was granted to half of crew, the other half had working party. Worked all night on stores, left port next morning escorting HMS AUSTRALIAN CRUISER.

May 21, 1943

Cid Harbor. Arrived here for operation with Australian Naval Forces.

May 24, 1943

At Sea. On tactics with Aussie and American forces.

May 24, 1943

Cid Harbor. Anchored.

May 25, 1943

At Sea. Sailed with three Aussie cruisers and American destroyers.

May 26, 1943

Townsville, Aus. Arrived here with same force. No liberty, it's getting to look hopeless to set foot on soil.

May 26, 1943

At Sea. Escorting Aussie troopship north.

May 28, 1943

Port Morsby. Disembarked troops, stayed overnight.

May 29, 1943

At Sea. On way back escorting troopship.

May 31, 1943

Townsville, Aus. Liberty for C and D sections. Liberty up at 2400, not worth going over. ...There is so many uniforms over there, I wouldn't have a chance of hardly finding a drink. I'll pass on this one.

June 1, 1943
Palm Island. Anchored.

June 4, 1943
At Sea. With DD's firing and operations.

June 9, 1943
Cid Harbor. Anchored.

June 11, 1943
At Sea. With Flusser DD #368.

June 12, 1943
Cid Harbor. Anchored.

June 13, 1943
At Sea With Royal Australian Navy - 3 cruisers, two destroyers and one supply ship.

June 14, 1943
Townsville, Aus. No liberty.

June 15, 1943
At Sea. Escorting six LCI s.

June 18, 1943
Milne Bay, New Guinea

June 20, 1943
At Sea. Had reports that large force was seen and was to make attack on same.

June 20, 1943
Milne Bay. Dummy run.

June 23, 1943
At Sea. Calibrating compass. After exercise entered port and anchored.

June 29, 1943
Milne Bay Made another dummy run. Broke down and had to return to port.

June 30, 1943
At Sea. 371 and 364 escorting six LCI's, Landed troop on Woodlark Island.
No resistance.

July 1, 1943
Milne Bay. Returned here and anchored.

July 3, 1943
At Sea. Five DD's, seven LCI's, one LST landed supplies on Trobrand Island.

July 9, 1943
Milne Bay, N.G. Anchored, Up anchor and headed south with DRAYTON #366.

July 11, 1943

Arrived in Townsville, Aus. with DD #366. Fueled ships, left port this date with troopship HENRY T. ALLEN and 366

July 13, 1943

Brisbane, Aus. Liberty here for C and D sections, arrived with same ships, HENRY T. ALLEN and DD #366.

July 16, 1943

At Sea. With HENRY T. ALLEN and DD #366.

July 20, 1943

Port Moresby, N.G. With HENRY T. ALLEN. Troops landed here.

July 21, 1943

At Sea. With HENRY T. ALLEN, going south again.

July 25, 1943

Mackay, Aus. Went alongside USS DOBBINS, D.D. tender for 9 day repairs.

August 3, 1943

At Sea. Sailed alone. Hated to leave, was just making good connections. Me and Pharm. 1st Class met very nice family here. They went all out for us, invited us to their home and some very nice meals. Had a beautiful daughter, the real reason we accepted.

August 4, 1943

Townsville. Alone, no liberty, sailed same day.

August 4, 1943

Cairnes, Aus. Reached here at 1830. No liberty, stayed here overnight.

August 5, 1943

At Sea. Escorting HENRY T. ALLEN.

August 6, 1943

Milne Bay, N.G. Anchored.

August 8-9, 1943

At Sea. With DD #371 escorting 8 LCI's and 4 PT boats. A plane came in dead ahead, looked to be observation or scouting plane, but would not give recognition, so the 371 fired on it. It took off in a hurry. No damage.

August 9, 1943

Nassau Bay, N.G. Arrived about 2300, disembarked troops and sailed at 0100.

August 10.

August 11, 1943

Milne Bay. Anchored.

August 12, 1943

At Sea. Patrolling and gunnery practice.

August 14, 1943

Milne Bay. Anchored.

August 15, 1943

At Sea. Alone, headed north into trouble. Hope not.

August 17 & 18, 1943

Buna, N.G. Picked up six L.C.T.'s, six LST's and four DD's, 371,377,378, 386.

August 21, 1943

Milne Bay, N.G. All DD's took on 150 rounds of ammo and left for sea.

August 22, 1943

Buna, N.G. All five DD's sailed north this date.

August 23, 1943

At Sea. Bombarded Huon Gulf, fired 92 rounds, believed to hit 5 barges. Had contact with planes and fired radar fire, unobserved results.

August 27 to September 1, 1943

Milne Bay, N.G. Fired almost every day, practicing.

September 1 & 2, 1943

Buna. Waiting for force to form.

September 3, 1943

At Sea. Sailed with 19 L.C.I.'s, 6 LST's, 4 DT's and 9 DD's (364. 367. 368, 369, 371, 377, 378, 389).

September 4, 1943

Arrived at Red Beach, 16 miles north of Lae, N.G. Landed 15,000 troops and supplies. 3 Japanese bombers attacked LCI's killing 3 men and one LCI a total loss. Our air cover shot them down, but too late for some. We left landing force with 6 LST's, 4 DD's. The other force went on ahead made up of 18 LCI's AND 5 DD's.

September 5, 1943

Arrived at secret rendezvous, met 7 LST's, 19 LCI's AND 3 DD's. We took 7 LST's. The other force went on ahead. Destroyer transports landed troops at Saiamau.

September 5, 1943

Red Beach, 16 miles north of Lae, N.G. with 7 LST's. Fired on planes that night. Sailed same date for Buna, N.G.

September 6, 1943

Buna. Anchored for the night 4 DD's, 364, 368, 377, 378.

September 7, 1943

"

At Sea. With same force. Got in Oral Bay and took on ammo and fuel and got under way for Buna.

September 7, 1943

Buna. Rigged movie screen. "Condition Yellow". Unrigged screen and got under way about 1830. Made sweeps through Finchhaven. Was attacked by three planes, two of which will never fly again and was officially credited by Commander of Seventh Fleet for them.

September 8, 1943

Oral Bay. Took on ammo and fuel. Three DD's, 364, 368, 378, sailed for Buna and anchored overnight.

September 9, 1943

At Sea. Sailed with 5 LST's, 3 sub chasers, 1 tug and 4 DD s.

September 10, 1943

Arrived at Red Beach north of Lae, N.G. Left to patrol and proceeded north looking for trouble, but we were lucky, no trouble.

September 11, 1943

Left LST's at Buna and headed south. Eight DD's, a large force of bombers headed our way. They were intercepted about 10 miles away from us. Eight P38 s shot down some, the rest scattered.

September 12, 1943

Underway for Lae, N.G. with 6 LST's and 8 DD's.

September 13, 1943

Red Beach north of Lae. Made security sweep through Finchhaven, Huon Gulf, but didn't find anything. Got underway this night with same force, headed south for Buna, N.G.

September 13, 1943

Sailed from Buna, N.G. with 13 LCI's AND 4 LST's to evacuate troops from Salamau. They had too many troops. Also took some wounded and arrived in Buna 14 Sept.

September 14, 1943

Sailed, 4 DD's 364, 369, 371, 377.

September 15, 1943

Naussa Bay, N.G, south of Salamau. Picked up LCT's and escorted them to Buna, N.G. Then left for Oral Bay to fuel ship, sailed same day for Buna^ Took ammo from DD HENLEY #391, left same night and was attacked by planes. ,Seemed to be many, so we just set up continuous barrage.

September 16, 1943

Buna Sailed with 368, 371, 378 for anti-submarine patrol. The SMITH made contact and got credit for sinking one sub. Returned to Red Beach that night to convoy 8 LST's and 3 SC's, 1 tug and 3 smaller LCT s.

September 17, 1943

Left small craft and proceeded south.

September 18, 1943

Milne Bay. For fuel, ammo and supplies. Also got mail, first since Aug 27th.

September 18, 1943

Buna. Anchored.

September 30, 1943

Sailed from Buna, escorting 4 LST's to Lae. Arrived same date.

September 21, 1943

Off Lae, N.G. About 0330 this morning, planes dropped bombs dead ahead about 200 yards, and again about 0350 dropped bombs astern, landing in our wake about 200 yards short. 40 mm went off accidentally and fired 10 rounds. Pretty scared for awhile. About 1740 this evening, 9 two-motored bombers flew over our patrol force. I expended 140 rounds of 40 mm ammo. The planes were out of 40 mm range, 14,000 feet. But had a good time firing. All planes got away. Had many contacts tonight, about 10 on the 12-4 watch. Landed 5,000 troops on Finchhaven and found no trouble.

September 22, 1943

Went to GQ at 0345 this morning and stayed at GQ until 1600 this date. About 1240 sighted 9 torpedo planes. Two engine jobs. Five made for us, 2 were shot down before they reached the ship. Sure was weird seeing those torpedoes slip into the water and head for us. Don't know how they missed us - must have been set too deep. One more plane fell just after passing ship's stern and another just after passing bow of ship. One of our own ships strafed us with 20 mm and wounded Stallings, T.M. 3/C - was shot in the lower groin and left leg. Don Bertrand, C.G.M. took a 6.5 mm bullet in the calf of his leg, strafing from Japanese torpedo planes. We took all they had and we showed them what we were made of.

Are en route now for Buna to take our wounded to hospital. Hope they come out OK. I'm sure they will, we're tough as hell. Spent 16 hours on my gun today and only fired 10 rounds. Arrived in Buna. Sent Casualties ashore and now for a good movie and relax a little. Hard to believe it could all happen in one day.

The P38's had a dog fight today. The Japs call them "Forked tail devils". We picked up one of the two pilots. Two planes lost. I believe we got credit for four of them.

September 23, 1943

Buna, N.G. Anchored all day and night. May get underway tomorrow. Got credit for 3 of those torpedo planes. Makes 9 planes. I wonder how many stars in the campaign bar?

September 24, 1943

Underway for Porlock Bay to fuel and take on ammo and anchor for the night. Our port throttle is almost burned out. Hope to go somewhere to fix it - Anywhere!

September 25, 1943

Underway for Buna. Hope our orders are there, but no such luck. On our way back to Buna could only make 15 knots on port screw and 25 knots on stbd screw. Hope we go somewhere for repair.

September 26, 1943

Ordered to Milne Bay for repairs. Leave in the morning, pulled into Milne Bay 1545 this date and left at 1615 for Townsville, Australia.

September 27, 1943

Underway to Townsville to pick up USS DOBBINS, repair tender and return.

September 28, 1943

Picked up DOBBINS without seeing Townsville at all. I don't think the DOBBINS will like her new duty either.

September 29, 1943

At Sea. En route to Milne Bay with USS DOBBINS, one tanker and DD MUGFORD. Expect to enter port tomorrow morning.

September 30, 1943

Milne Bay, N.G. Going alongside the DOBBINS for three whole days. Why couldn't they have done this in Townsville? That's dirty.

October 4, 1943

USS HENLEY DD #391 got sunk by submarine torpedo, 27 crewmen missing. Damn. Milne Bay. Left alongside DOBBINS today and went alongside tanker for fuel, stayed overnight.

October 5, 1943

Underway for Buna for duty. Expect to reach port late this date.

October 6, 1943

Buna. Anchored. Had Movies. Got underway for Lae, N.G. with REID and SMITH, 4 LST's, 4 SC's. Arrive sometime tonight, late.

October 7, 1943

Made sweep through Huon Gulf and didn't find anything, returned and picked up LST's and SC and returned to Buna. Arrived at 1800 and anchored.

October 9, 1943

Underway. Made another sweep through Huon Gulf - made no contact.

October 10, 1943

Arrived at Oral Bay or Porlock to fuel ship. Returned to Buna for the night. Anchored.

October 11, 1943

Underway. 364, 367, 389 and 4 LST's, 3 SC's headed for Lae. These fellows must love us. We've protected them for quite some time now.

October 12, 1943

Arrived at Lae about 2000 and left at 0300 this morning. Arrived in Buna at 1530. All crew except 6 men stayed away from the movies. All officers were there.

October 14, 1943

Underway for sound watch off the reef at Buna, sound and surface watch, anchored. Buna was attacked by 6 planes at 0500. Little damage.

October 15, 1943

Buna was attacked tonight at 2300. No damage. Planes came within 3000 yards of us at anchor. This morning Buna was attacked by dive bombers. 10 of them shot down. P38's got 4. We were ordered to pick up Japanese pilot with his head missing. What a hell of a sight that was. Put him in a body sack. Are underway now for somewhere - I don't know. 364, 368, 369, 377, 378, 389.

October 16, 1943

DRAYTON and FLUSSER joined us today. Expecting heavy air raid on Finchhaven, N.G., followed by troop landing. We are here to hold them off. Hope they don't try it. This is expected at 1800.

October 17, 1943

Patrolled as far as New Britain Island, but didn't see anything. Are now at Buna, which was attacked by 38 Jap bombers. Didn't find out what the damage was or how many bombers shot down. Someone said "all of them", but I doubt that, although our pilots are superb.

October 18, 1943

About 0230 this morning, Japanese bombers attacked Buna. Night fighters shot down 6 out of 9. Refueled ship at Oral Bay and returned to Buna, no movies. 13 LCI's and 6 LST's came in today. This means sleepless nights and nervous days and lots of hard work.

October 19, 1943

Arrived at Lae, N.G., but had to go on. Japanese bombed road to Finchhaven. Contacted submarine and depth bombed it. Unobserved results. Boogies on radar screen and a submarine fired torpedo at #366 LAMSON. Sure glad they missed.

October 20, 1943

At Sea. About 0146, GQ. Boogies on screen. We fired on them. Stbd sound gear went out, also radar. Secured from GQ about 0230. At 0250, went to GQ again. Approximately 60 planes coming in for attack. All ships laid down smoke screen from their stacks and saved the night. Except for the USS PERKINS, due to a near bomb miss, one crewman killed and several wounded. Six night fighters bluffed the bombers and they left the area. Our fighters returned to base at about 0600 this morning. Was under attack for two and one half hours. We had a smoke screen of 4 square miles. But was still scared, couldn't tell where their bombs were going to hit in all that smoke.

October 22, 1943

About 0300 this morning, went to GQ. Boogies on the screen. But it turned out ; to be our own planes. This life is hell and I'm getting GQ happy.

October 23, 1943

At Sea. Everything worked pretty smooth until 1100 today and we were attacked by 5 dive bombers. Got through OK. No casualties. This war is making an old man out of me and I'm only 26 years old.

October 25, 1943

CC.B.M. Zublick left the ship today. I took over Chief duties and moved into Chief's quarters, but I'm still 1st class.

October 26, 1943

At Sea. Sailed for Finchhaven. At 1540 with REID, SHAW, PERKINS, SMITH and DRAYTON. Had no trouble for the first time. Our fighters shot down 8 Jap bombers over Finchhaven. They were dropping supplies by parachute. There were 12 bombers and 15 Zero fighters. Got underway for Buna at 1400 the 27th. Expect to arrive about 0300 the 28th.

October 30, 1943

Left Buna this morning for Finchhaven with 3 LST's and 5 subchasers, 6 DD's Expect to arrive in Buna at about 1730 the 31st and Bovies if the weather permits. '

October 31, 1943

To this date, this ship has undergone 11 air attacks since Sept 5 this year on the average of one every 5 days. Hell is pretty bad. but we're pushing pretty hard. It s nerve wracking, but we're still in one piece. Only two casualties, only wish we didn't have them, hope we have no more.

November 1, 1943

Underway for Finchhaven at 1000. 6 DD's, 3 LST's. 5 subchasers, one tug. I'm hoping for the best always.

November 2, 1943

At Sea. Had GQ twice. 2130 and 0600. No trouble, no boogies. They were drills/ Expect to go alongside DOBBINS for 10 days the 5th of this month and nope we never have to come back again (what wishful thinking!). Anchored at Buna about 1800 and movies. This is the only recreation we've had for three months, only been off the ship in all that time. "EXTRA - EXTRA" Troops landed on Bouganville Island, and met no resistance at all and the Air Force met none at Raubal, seems the Japs have had enough (I hope). Anyway, it sure sounds good.

November 4, 1943

Went ashore yesterday, the 3rd, at Porlock Harbor, and there isn't anything wrong with me that some good leave won't cure. This is the second time ashore in three months. Left Buna, headed north. "One more trip. one more trip" is about all we hear, but there's always one more trip.

November 5, 1943

Had no trouble so far. 0730 expect to leave force about 1200 and head for Buna. Pick up mail and passengers and then to Milne Bay for overhaul alongside USS DOBBINS.

November 6, 1943

Alongside DOBBINS for repairs. Hope to stay 10 days. Was surprised when we entered the bay. Two cruisers and 6 DD's were here. Why do they keep us here and let the Australians loaf around? Some men could be on recreation and relaxation leave which they need. Hope we never have to go back north again, but it's a must.

November 15, 1943

Left alongside the DOBBINS. Had 9 day overhaul. Expect to arrive in Buna tomorrow. Had 2 recreations while there. Hope to get some real liberty soon.

November 16, 1943

Arrived in Buna. For how long, we don't know. Could leave tomorrow.

November 18, 1943

Left Buna at 1600 today with with 7 LST's, 3 LCT's, 2 tugs, 4 DD's. Expect to go to Finchhaven and unload.

November 20, 1943

Arrived in Buna 0730, anchored. Went to GQ twice this trip. P38's got 3 bombers and 6 fighters. 13 planes made the raid on Finchhaven.

November 21, 1943

Went out today and did some practice firing. DD 386, 378, 364. Holiday routine all day long. Something brewing and it ain't good for the Japs. Probably New Britain Island. I know if it's going to happen, we'll be there for sure.

November 23, 1943

Left Buna. Operations are over. That's the best news I've heard in a long time. Arrived at Milne Bay about 1600 today and anchored. The LAMSON #367 is alongside. I wonder what we'll do next. Hope some good liberty first.

November 25, 1943

Thanksgiving Day. Had pretty nice dinner today. But spirit was a little low. Been here 2 days now and still no dope on operations.

November 27, 1943

MAHAN with SHAW, FLUSSER and LAMSON. We left Milne Bay at 1500 today and the dang dope is to shell Mallancy.. Well, I was hoping we'd never have to do this, but some things have to be done regardless of safety.

November 28, 1943

Expect to arrive in Buna about 1000 this morning. Information is tonight we make a sweep through Vitiaz Straits looking for submarines and then, on the night of the 29th, we go through the straits to hit the Japanese in Madang, New Guinea.

No ship has ventured that far north since the war started and I'm sure it must be mined. Upon reaching Madang, we're to fire 100 rounds of ammo from the five Destroyers, 364, 367, 368, 373, 377.

November 28, 1943

Well, we're off to Madang. Decoded to make the run tonight instead of tomorrow. One cruiser and four Destroyers were sighted in Madang Harbor today at 1300. God help us if they're still there. This is a risky trip. Far more than all before.

November 29, 1943

Arrived at destination about 0130 - Sio Harbor. Come on firing formation and opened fire on beach at 0215 first target, second target at 0220, third at 0230.

130 rounds expended, unobserved results. Tonight we go 4 miles south of Madang, N.G. Farther north than any American war ship has dared to venture. This target is 50 miles north of Finchhaven, an island off the coast of N.G.

Off again. Arrived in Buna about 1000 this date. Fueled and left about 1300.

Supposed to reach Madang tonight or early tomorrow morning. A cruiser was spotted about 40 miles south of Madang last evening. Hope she's gone. Hope this is a safe trip also.

November 30, 1943

News Bulletin. In the southwest theatre of operations. General Douglas McArthur announced that warships for the first time had gone all the way through the narrow waters between western New Britain and northeastern New Guinea to shell the Japanese shipping bases of Madang and also had poured explosives on the Air Base at Cosmata on the south central coast. These were quickly followed by warships' bold excursion into the narrow Vitiaz Straits to bombard Japanese

positions at Sio and other positions south of Madang on the Huon peninsula. These entrances of Allied warships deep into enemy territory further showed that the Navy is continuing to play a greater part in this theatre of operations.

The success of the warships adventures was made certain by an announcement from McArthur's Headquarters that severe damage was inflicted on installations and troop positions at Sio and the territory just south of Madang, New Guinea. Cosmata is in a plantation area which is vulnerable to invasion.

November 30, 1943

Arrived in Buna at 1200 and anchored. Up anchored and got underway for Milne Bay, orders were changed.

December 1, 1943

Just passed through Raven Straits. Headed for Milne Bay. Expect to arrive at 1000 this morning. Moored alongside LAMSON #367.

December 3, 1943

Underway for Buna. Left at 1530.

December 4, 1943

Arrived in Buna at 1200. Underway again at 1600 with LST's. Headed north, had engine trouble and returned to Buna. Anchored and had movies.

December 5, 1943

Two years ago we left Pearl Harbor, Hawaii for Guam. A lucky day for us that we weren't in Pearl Harbor on the 7th.

December 6, 1943

Left Buna again today for Milne Bay. Expect to arrive tomorrow morning for how long I don't know. Hope to go south for some liberty. It's been over 4 months and haven't had a liberty at all. I wonder how long they think I can stand this kind of duty. It's been a year and a half and only had very few liberties, about 10.

December 7, 1943

Expect to arrive in Milne Bay at 1000 this morning for 2 or 3 weeks dress rehearsal for what I don't know. Just heard some better dope today, we will be relieved of this duty by the middle of Jan 44 and go to some Navy yard for overhaul. Hope it's Mare Island.

BULLETIN - The USS MAHAN, when that vessel as a member of the Task group 76.6, under the command of Admiral D.E. Barbey, US Navy, participated in the bombardment of Sio, New Guinea in support of Allied ground troops during November 29, 1943, Monday, and participated in the bombardment of enemy shore installations at Madang, New Guinea during November 30, 1943, and participated in the bombardment and landing of Allied troops at Arawe.-New Britain Island December 15, 1943.

December 10, 1943

Left port today to practice bombardment. Operations are set up to come oft 15th of this month.

December 13, 1943

Left Milne Bay for Buna with 8 DD's. Troop landings on New Britain island the 15th and this is our phase of the operation. May be the last trip before being relieved, I hope.

December 14, 1943

Left Buna with HMS WESTRALIA, the CARTER HALL and LSD's and 8 DD's. Expect to arrive at Arawe, N.B. about 0530 on 15th.

December 15, 1943

First landings on New Britain Island, Arawe, about 0330. Went to GQ. A float-type plane dropped 3 bombs at the SHAW #373, but missed. Opened fire on the beach at 0615 and ceased firing at 0635. 50 rounds per gun. Something went wrong with the instruments and had to quit. Had little opposition and left vicinity at 0815 for Buna. Japanese bombers bombed beach where our troops landed. Our bombers, about 18, bombed the beach before our troops landed and after we had shelled it.

December 17, 1943

Milne Bay. Expect to be in for two days. Met Joe Stratton on the USS STRINGHAM, four stacker destroyer. Joe is from my hometown and we were good friends before we entered the service. Also met Junior Beverage, who is also on the STRINGHAM. He is also an old friend from my hometown. Junior had the good fortune of winning \$3,000 from the ship's crew shooting dice, luck bun. We had a good bull session about our escapades in our hometown. Couldn't be much cause only about 1500 people live there, but it was good to see old, familiar faces once more.

December 18, 1943

Today, we changed Captains. James T. Smith left the MAHAN, and a good skipper he was too. Our new skipper is Ernest G. Campbell, Lt. Commander, US Navy. Hope and pray he knows his stuff. Can't afford any mistakes now, from what he said when the crew assembled. Seems that he's OK. Time will test him, I'm sure.

Expect to leave for Big Push soon. 26 destroyers, 4 cruisers, and over 400 planes, and we're the fighter director, supposed to have an Admiral and General aboard. Also 5 - 2100 destroyers came in yesterday.

December 21, 1943

Left Milne Bay today, headed for Buna and big operations. Boy this ship is fixed up for big business. Took on 5 more officers today and three more expected. One more officer and 2 Army enlisted men came in later today.

December 22, 1943

Stopped at Oro Bay. Then to Sudest Bay, then to Buna and back to Sudest Bay, to stay for the night, anchored.

X-mas eve, December 24, 1943

When I was a small fellow, this was the night of nights. All the things I wished for, I hoped would be under that X-mas tree the next morning. Here I am away from all those things, to preserve forever the thoughts of all little tots on X-mas morning. Merry X-mas.

X-mas Day, December 25, 1943

We're off. Left Buna at 0730 headed for our big operation.

December 26, 1943

Arrived at Cape Gloucester, N.B. at about 0500 this date. At 0640 started shelling beach. Cruisers, two American and two Australian, shelled their positions and I'm telling you, the steel did fly. Then B-25's came in and bombed the beach at 0730, landed 15,000 Marines. Said they found beach and all positions in complete ruins. All in all, there were 72 ships that took part in operation. At 0900, we were relieved of our position by LAMSON and MUGFORD.

Left and proceeded to Finchhaven for supplies and equipment. At 1400 today, the LAMSON #367, MUGFORD #389 and SHAW #373 were bombed by the Japs and caused damage to 3 ships, and the USS BROWNSON, a 2100 destroyer, was sunk with two direct bomb hits. (Damn!)

.December 27, 1943

Arrived at Cape Gloucester, N.B. at daylight this morning and sent 5 LST's to the beach at 0730 at which time they were bombed by the Japs and had to leave the beach again. At 0900, they went for the beach and landed with supplies and at 1400, they came out. All day long, the Japs have been active in aircraft, attacking our force for two hours the 26th. Three ships were damaged and the HOUCHINSON (2100 destroyer) was heavily attacked. If it hadn't been for the rains, it could have been worse. GQ has been sounded about 15 times the last two days. We are on our way back to Buna, and by the good will of God, we'll make it. The last two days has been a little strained!

December 28, 1943

Arrived in Buna at 1900. Took on fuel. From all I can gather, we have two more trips to Cape Gloucester.

December 30, 1943

Well, only one more day left of this year and then a new one of more hellish days and nights. I'm afraid to dream of a better duty for fear of waking up. Well, I'll hope anyway.

December 31, 1943

New Years Eve. It's quiet as hell aboard tonight and tomorrow we start on another mission. This time we land troops on New Guinea, between Sio Bay and Madang. I could think of better things to do on this New Years, maybe next year!

January 1, 1944

Left Buna at 0400 this morning for another invasion. Eighteen LCI's and 4 DD's arrived at 0500 the 2nd of January. Bombarded beach head, 400 rounds, 5 inch shells. Expect to leave at 1800 this date. The Army reports that 125 planes are at Wewak, N.G. Our coverage includes 13 squadrons of bombers, not including fighters. This place is 58 miles south of Madang, and 225 miles from Wewak.

Also have two or three more trips and the 15th our work is completed up here. At 1800 today, the West Coast celebrated New Year's eve.

January 2, 1944

Updated Pacific War. American amphibious troops landed unopposed on the northern coast of New Guinea, capturing the harbor and airport of Saidor, and trapping Japanese forces between them and Australians advancing up the coast of the Huon Peninsular, General McArthur announced today. Saidor is about 110 airline miles northwest of Finchhaven, the starting point of the Australian march up the coast and is 50 miles southeast of Madang, the nearest Japanese base of any importance.

toward which another column of Australians is driving from the Ramu Valley. The landing made by the mid-western elements of the 32nd Division of the Sixth Army took the Japanese by complete surprise.

A two-hundred ton bombardment by war ships and planes left the Japanese garrison so stunned they offered no resistance as the soldiers poured ashore at three points. They landed behind a smoke screen and after landing,, quickly overcame slight Japanese resistance as they advanced and established firm control over the airfield and harbor.

January 2, 1944

At 0430, went to GQ, and at 0645, bombarded beach. Each destroyer fired 400 rounds, followed by bombers at 0745, the Japs sure caught hell here. Name of place is Helmsholm Point and the town name is Saidor. Landed troops at 0800 and 6 LST's landed at 0900. No opposition was found. Paratroops landed behind the enemy and Aussie troops landed on the beach/ No Jap planes were encountered all day. 28 planes were contacted at 30 miles away and P-38's massacred them. One plane and pilot lost of ours. Left Saidor at 1215 for Buna with LST's at 9 knots.

January 3, 1944

Expect to arrive in Buna this morning. Hope these's no more trips north. Supposed to finish up here and be relieved by the 15th of this month.

January 7, 1944

Off to Saidor with MUGFORD #389, BEAL #369, MAHAN #364 and 9 LST's. This is the last trip (hope). Expect to arrive in Sydney about 15th for 10 days recreation.

January 8, 1944

Arrived at Gali Beach head at 0445 about 45 miles south of Saidor and bombarded beach. Supposed to be Japanese troops concentration center. Fired 212 rounds. USS REID, DD and MAHAN #364 proceeded to Saidor and reached there at 0700. 6 LST's went to beach to land troops at the same time.

January 9, 1944

At Sea. We left Saidor at 1515, January 8th. Headed back to Buna. There we'll pick up passengers for Sydney, Australia and leave same date. expect to arrive in Sydney the 15th for 10 days leave and recreation. The first in 5 months. Arrived in Buna at 1600 this date. Take on stores tomorrow and we sure need them. It's been slum gullion three times a day.

January 11, 1944

Left Milne Bay at 1315, headed for Sydney. Expect to arrive at noon the 14th, I hope. DD's 364, 366, 367, 368, 369, 378, 386, 389.

January 12, 1944

Had to cut down speed to 15 knots - USS MUGFORD had an* appendix operation to perform which came out OK. We lost four hours and again at 0900 slowed down to •15 knots. Too rough. And lost approximately 300 miles which won't put us in port before the 15th.

January 13, 1944

Weather cleared up. Are now doing 25 knots. At 2400, we're supposed to increase speed to 35 knots. If we could do 35 knots, we wouldn't need an overhaul, (bum dope).

January 14, 1944

Enter Sydney at 0630 tomorrow morning for 10 days. Held payday today and drew \$159.00 and borrowed \$100.00. I'm going to buy me some new uniforms (Chiefs'). Bought one set of blues from Chief Yeoman Hensley, just my size. Changed rate to right arm.

January 15, 1944

Bought two suits of gray gabardine, hats and covers. I'm really thrilled pink!
This is the first R & R in 5 months.

January 25, 1944

Left Sydney at 1230 today, after 1- glorious days of good liberty. Are now headed north to Milne Bay, N.G. for some more duty. Expect to arrive about 28th.

January 26, 1944

Expect to have anti-aircraft practice firing this afternoon. We're headed for the Great Barrier Reef to fire and them back out into the open sea.

January 28, 1944

Expect to arrive at Palm Island this evening and anchor for the night. Then to Milne Bay. Three more days to make Chief, I hope.

January 30, 1944

Entered Milne Bay this evening at 1530 and forward commissary store room was almost full of water (approximately 6 feet of water).

January 31, 1944

Left Milne Bay for Buna at 1630 today. Had hell of a time cleaning out forward store room. Today is the last day I'll be wearing the white hat, because tomorrow I make Chief Boatswains Mate.

February 1, 1944

Made Chief today. Feels good. We were all assembled on the fan tail for movies and I'm sitting up there with the Chief and Captain Campbell and officers came down. We all stood up at attention and when the Captain passed me, he looked at me, and said, when did you make Chief? and I said today. Then he looked at Hitchcock, the Executive Officer, and said to Hitch, "I'm going to have to read these papers before I sign them" and then they both laughed. Two good officers, I must say.

February 7, 1944

Off again to Gloucester with 3 LST's and 3 DD's. Get back the 10th and we hope to be relieved the 20th this month. Had GQ twice today.

February 9, 1944

Been in the Navy 6 years today. Left Gloucester at 2000, had GQ at least 6 times. I'll be glad when we leave this territory for good.

February 10, 1944

My time is up and I'm not shipping over. Expect to anchor at Sedest Bay this eve, one more trip is all that's expected of this force, which comes off the 15th, I hope.

February 12, 1944

Left port yesterday eve for last trip. Expect to get back the 17th. Stopped at Finchhaven and picked up three more LST's and proceeded to Saidor.

February 13, 1944

Left Saidor today and headed southeast for Finchhaven. Expect to arrive tomorrow some time to pick up convoy to Cape Gloucester, N.B. and back to Buna. Hope this is our last trip. Gee, I keep writing this (last trip).

February 14, 1944

Arrived at Finchhaven, and picked up 4 LST's are now headed for Cape Gloucester, N.B.

February 15, 1944

Arrived at Cape Gloucester at 0700, left at 1900 for Buna.

February 16, 1944

Left LST's at Finchhaven and proceeded to Buna at 25 knots. Expect to arrive at 1600 today. Arrived at Sedest Bay and fueled. Anchored and movies tonight.

February 19, 1944

Underway at 1900 with three LST's for Cape Gloucester, then back to Cape Verde then back to Gloucester, then back to Buna, and leave the same day for Gloucester. This is supposed to be our last trip with the LST's. Liberty ships will make the run starting first March.

February 21, 1944

Left the Cape at about 1830. Headed south for Buna. Hope this is the last trip, but there's always "one more trip".

February 23, 1944

Left Sedest Bay, Headed north on one of those "one more trips". 5 LST's and 3 DD's to Cape Gloucester.

February 27, 1944

Arrived in Sedest Bay at 0005. Supposed to go on special trip tomorrow 28th north.

February 28, 1944

Left Sedest Bay at 0830, headed north to invade Admiralty Islands. There are 14 destroyers, 4 APD's and 2 cruisers. Expect to get there at early morning. At present time, we have 70 US Army personnel and equipment aboard. Would be swell if it were the last trip north, but so much is happening, I'm sure we're needed here.

February 29, 1944

Arrived at Admiralty Island about 0700. Bombarded beach head with 600 rounds of .5 inch shells. Sent troops ashore, but couldn't make it the first time.

Japanese cross-fire was so fierce between the two points had to withdraw. Many were wounded. At the present time, we have two wounded aboard and three dead. Two soldiers and one sailor. The second wave of troops got through to the beach and went on to capture the airstrip. Left 3 DD's to evacuate if necessary, but hope not. We left said point at about 1600 and are now headed to Buna.

March 4, 1944

Left Buna at 0200 this date with USS REID #369 and 8 LST's. Headed for Saidor, N.G.

March 6, 1944

Left Saidor, N.G. yesterday at 1100 and arrived at Sedest Bay today. This ship is so badly in need of an overhaul, we'll be lucky if nothing happens in an attack.

March 13, 1944

Leave tonight sometime for the last trip north to Admiralties, Los Negros Island with convoy. Our orders came in yesterday to leave here for Pearl Harbor, T.H.

March 22, Something had to happen. All the crew was praying for this.

March 16, 1944

Arrived at Los Negros Island, in the Admiralty group, with 6 DD's, 7 LST's, one liberty Ship. Left Liberty ship and proceeded back to Buna with 7 LST's.

March 17, 1944

Left convoy at 1800 with #366 DRAYTON to Buna to go alongside destroyer TENDER for 36 hours of repair.

March 21, 1944

Left Buna this morning at 0615 for Milne Bay and leave there for the States the 22nd. At last, we're going home after 21 months away. When we left they said you'll be out 21 days Expect to arrive in San Francisco 12th of April.

March 22, 1944

Left Milne Bay at 1700 today for Tulagi Harbor to pick up convoy. Expect to be there 24th and leave sometime that day or the 25th with convoy and head for Pearl Harbor, T.H. Expect to reach P.H. about April 1st.

March 24, 1944

Reached Pervis Harbor at 1100 and left at 1300 today with 6 ship convoy. Headed for Canton Island. Expect to meet Captain Roger W. Simpson's, (our old Skipper) ship tonight. He has fond memories of this ship and we of him. I liked him very much, most of the time.

!

March 26, 1944

At Sea enroute to Canton Island with 6 transport and 2 APD's for the long journey home. Expect to arrive about 31st March.

March 27, 1944

Orders were changed. Proceed to Funifuti Island, Elice group. From there, who knows? We'll never get home, damn!

April 2, 1944

Left Funifuti at 0655. Hope to go straight through P.H., if luck holds out.

April 2, 1944

Crossed 180° meridian today and set us back another day. It's now April 1st and tomorrow is still April 2nd again. Crossed between 1200 and 1300 on the way to Canton Island. Should be there April 3rd.

April 3, 1944

Arrived at Canton Island at 1400. Hard telling how long we'll be here. The ships are unloading while underway.

April 5, 1944

Left Canton Island with USS DRAYTON #366 and 2 supply ships for Pearl Harbor at 1300 today.

April 6, 1944

Crossed equator at 0200 this date, making the grand total of 10 crossings.

April 7, 1944

At Sea en route to P.H. Expect to arrive Monday, the 10th at about 0700.

April 10, 1944

Arrived at last in P.H. Operations are finally over for the time being. Don't know for how long. Three more days and I'll be 27 years old. Feels like I lost some time somewhere. Well, I'm still healthy and alive, thank God for that. Our crew and skipper also.

April 12, 1944

Left P.H. for San Francisco, California. Expect to arrive April 17th.

April 13, 1944

27 today and I'm 4 days out of Frisco.

April 17, 1944

Arrived in Frisco at 0800 this date. OPERATIONS COMPLETED AT LAST.

No further log was kept after this date, but many good things happened to me from this date until the present time now, August 22, 1986.

USS MAHAN lost December 7, 1944 in Leyte Gulf, P.I. 4 months after I left her.
(Served aboard September '38 to August '44)

Paul R. Fuchman
O.B.M.

IMPORTANT ENGAGEMENTS

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Pearl Harbor | December 7, 1941 |
| 2. Marshall and Gilbert Is. | January 31, 1942 |
| 3. Ellice Island | October 22, 1942 |
| 4. Santa Cruz Battle | October 26, 1942 |
| 5. Bombardment of Lae, N.G. | September 4, 1943 |
| 6. Bombardment of Finchhaven | August 23, 1943 |
| 7. Bombardment of Sio Bay | November 29, 1943 |
| 8. Bombardment of Madang | November 30, 1943 |
| 9. Landed Troops Arawe, N.B. | December 14, 1943 |
| 10. Landed Troops Cape Gloucester | December 26, 1943 |
| 11. Landed Troops Helmsholm Point | January 2, 1944 |
| 12. Bombarded Gali Point, N.G. | January 8, 1944 |
| 13. Bombarded and Landed Troops Los Negros | March 16, 1944 |

