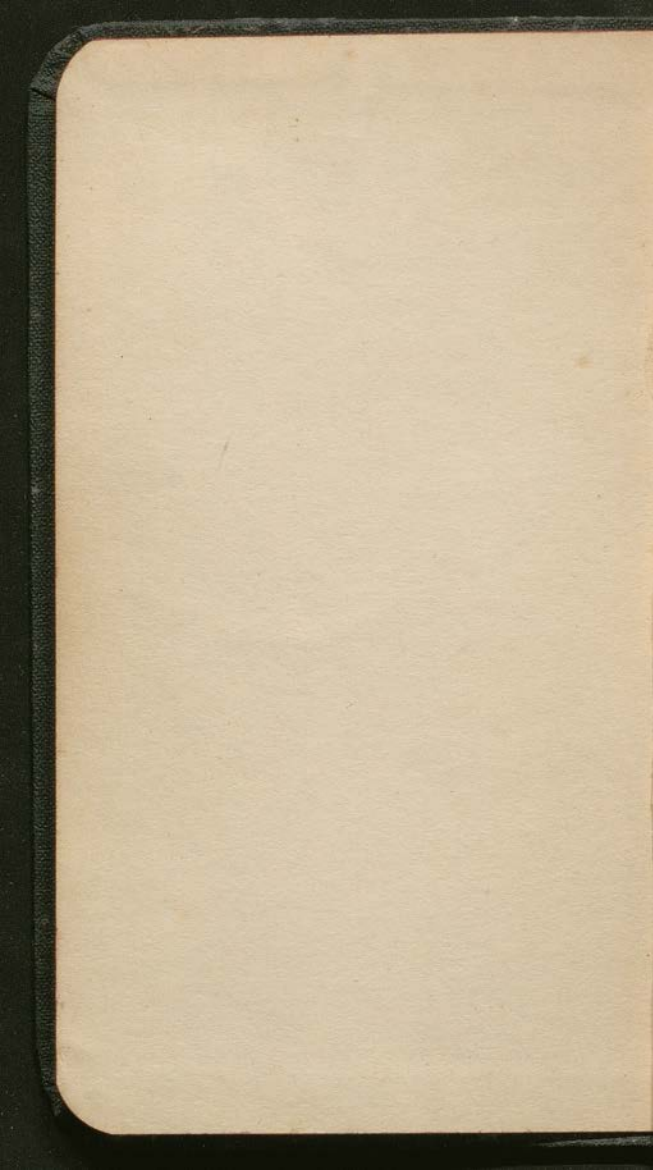




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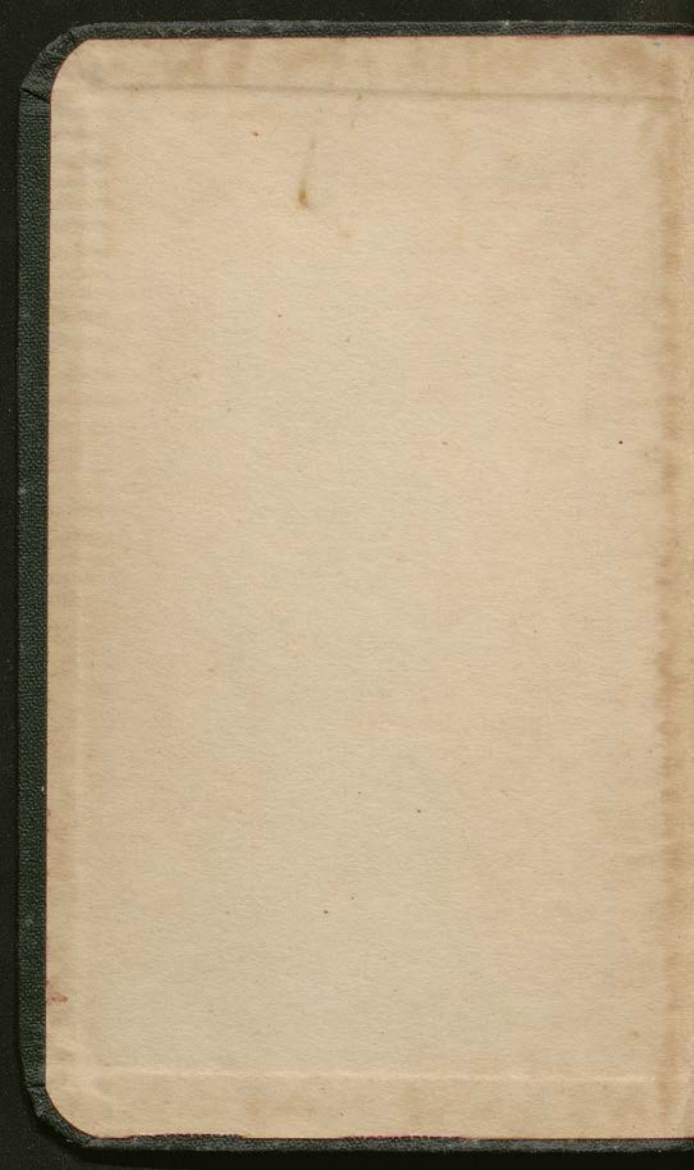
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Manufactured by  
U. S. Government Printing Office



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23 November 1943.

Departed Continental  
Scimitar of the U.S. this  
morning upon leaving  
New Orleans through the  
widening Mississippi to the  
Gulf. The entrance is  
rough! What a departure!  
Several new seasicks.

26 November 43

Key West — in and out!

27 November 43

Sudden call to G.O. at  
night. Ship astern mysteriously  
afire! However, all secure  
in a hurry. Mystery!

29 November 43

So this is Cuba!

1 Dec. 43

Departed Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, 1700, lead ships in left column (4 columns) 13 ships in convoy.

2 Dec. 43

1 ship left convoy at approximately 0500 to put in at Kingston, Jamaica. North-east trade winds delightful; otherwise days would be unbearably hot. Sharks following us. Several men <sup>sea-</sup>sick.

3 Dec. 43

Course changed to more direct South. This puts us more in trough of waves & we roll worse than ever.



4 Dec. 43

The generator stopped functioning for about 2 minutes today nearly frightening the officer on the Conn out of his wits. He had 2 anchor balls and a distress flag up pronto, but the lights came back on and the engines began to chug once more.

5 Dec. 43

PC boat ahead of us dropped 5 depth charges because of clear indication of submarine in radar set at about 1115. Reached Coco Solo, Christobal Harbor at 1400. Went ashore to Christobal and Colon.

Swimming. Went to a night club ("Casablanca"); poor drinks, interminable singing.

6 Dec, 43

Passed through Panama Canal.  
Evening liberty in Balboa & Panama.  
Flagrant Red Light district, etc. Interesting  
but terrible, too; dirty.

7 Dec 43 ("Remember Pearl Harbor")

This crew is 6 months old  
today. 150 troops came aboard  
at 1600. Underway at 1700.  
Suddenly called to Gen. Qtes.  
when 40mm tracer bullets were  
seen in the darks not  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away.  
Turned out to be scheduled  
practice for a patrol vessel. Sea  
smooth in Panama Bay.

10 Dec. 43

Radio message received today saying an American merchant vessel was torpedoed about 150 miles from Panama Canal in the Caribbean - about 40 miles from a spot we crossed in our journey from Cuba ("Torpedo Junction") Opposite Honduras, with north-west wind and a sea growing rougher. A noddy settled on the port yard-arm for the night.

11 Dec. 43

Saw 2 or 3 volcanoes aglow during the night - Guatemala. Saw my first Frigate bird.

12 Dec. 43

Hit the Bay of Tehuantepec at about 1930. Very rough.

Port Hueneme, Cal. - 16 Dec.

San Pedro, Cal. - 21 Dec.

San Diego, Cal. - 23 Dec. -

1 Jan. 44

Jan. 1-3

~~Jan. 1-3~~

Maneuvers with 5 cruisers, 3 battleships, 10 or 15 destroyers, subchasers, two L.S.D.'s (one of them the "Epping Forest", Wayne's ship), about 16 LST's, etc. - about 60 ships in all, plus crash boats, amphib. tanks, etc. "Assaulted" San Clemente Is.

Jan. 4 Wayne's ship came out as we went in San Diego Harbor. Curses!

Jan. 6

1600 left San Diego. Stuck for  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. in closed part of channel (C.O. was on wrong side of lighted buoy!). Very bright moon. Rendezvous



with 10 LST's, 2 sub-chasers,  
1 destroyer, 9 LCI's.

Jan. 7 Proceeding SW to  
Navilliwilli, I.H. Smooth sea.

Jan. 11 - Gen. Qts at 2215 to  
secure <sup>700</sup> gasoline barrels  
on for'd main deck which  
had broken loose in the  
roughening sea. Left  
convoy to get a calm  
heading to accomplish it.  
Fell about 8 miles astern.  
Other ships leaving convoy,  
perhaps for similar reasons.

Jan. 12 Rough sea running.  
Some men afraid ship may  
break in two! Waves very



choppy & of varying heights up to 30 feet. The destroyer came alongside and gave us location of flagships. Sighted flagships and four others in mid afternoon. Caught up with convoy at 2030.

Jan. 17. Put in to Port Allen, Kauai Island, T. H. Very beautiful. At anchor.

Jan. 20. Underway for rendezvous at 0800. Six LST's, 2 sub-chasers, one destroyer, heading for the Marshall Islands and the enemy!

Jan. 25 One ship reported a formation of 15 airplanes approaching rapidly. They turned out to be a flock of frigate birds. The days and nights inside the ships are hot because of closed hatches.

Jan. 26 Crossed International Date line but did not "ship a day" because of orders. The attack is planned, and time changes might create misunderstandings.

Jan. 27 A floating mine suddenly appeared about 75 feet off starboard bow. Refueled two SC's.

Jan. 30

Several friendly planes dashed around all day. In afternoon heavy bombardment could be heard.

Jan. 31

"Der Tag" - "D" Day.

Approached Roi Island of the Kwajalein Atoll. How the ships gathered! 14 BB's, two dozen or more cruisers, 18 aircraft carriers, destroyers, LST's, two LSD's (one Wayne's ship, The "Epping Forest"), etc, etc. The shelling was terrific - battleships pasting the islands from only a few thousand yards.

Feb. 1

"D plus One Day"

General Quarters at 0300.  
Cruising some 20 miles out.  
Our lead ship could not  
maintain ordered speed, so  
we cannily moved up from  
6<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> in column and  
closed the intervening gap.  
Rendezvous at daybreak, and  
then the ships started through  
Ivan Pass into the lagoon.  
Anchored, let off our small  
boats (LC(s)) and tanks in  
excellent time. Air filled  
with dive bombers, etc.,  
some carrying "block busters".  
Big ships still shelling  
unmercifully. "William"  
Hour (1100) = first dash for



beach by tanks and small  
boats — hundreds of them.  
Secured from General  
Quarters at 1150. First  
contingent of marines  
returned around five  
(1700). One or two minor  
injuries in our group.  
Casualties for entire  
operation very low. Some  
resistance still going on,  
but about 8000 Japs will  
have been wiped out. In  
another day (after planes  
finish flattening the islands  
tomorrow) the Marshall Islands  
will be ours.

9 p.m. Anchored in ~~harbor~~ <sup>lagoon</sup>, Wayne's  
ship about 1200 feet to Starboard



Feb. 2

Horrible details of events ashore return to us. Jap snipers accounted for our few lost ( $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1%); but no prisoners were taken — no Japs were allowed to surrender. One Jap hiding in a culvert snatched a marine's gun and bayonet when he pried into the dug-out. The marine tossed in a grenade. "The smell of the dead is awful". "One Jap was a pea-green in color — I wonder what happened to him." "Our marines were like madmen. They didn't drive as they did for patriotism or because they hated Japs. They wanted souvenirs!" One Marine was killed in a foolish way — with pistol in hand he offered to

fight a Jap with a knife. The Jap stabbed him 4 times in as many seconds. They are too quick to mess with! Someone shot the Jap of course, but too late.

A fire is burning on Roi ("Burlesque" in Navy Code. The next island east was "Camouflage"; <sup>(Warner)</sup> then follows Abraham, etc.). It is a submerged oil reservoir. There is still some resistance, but everybody is pretty well covered. A few interesting souvenirs aboard.

Feb. 3.

Nothing much doing this morning. About 2 p.m. (1400) Wayne sent a blinker message from LSD 4: "Regards. Okay. Good luck".

Captain gave me permission to reply. "Thanks. Okay here. Letters in mail".

February 4

In early afternoon Ensigns Hoffmann and Chapman took small boat to go to supply ship. I was given permission (ostensibly to find some 9X forms) to go to the LSD 4 (Epping Forest), Wayne's ship. We had nearly two hours together, talking over not old times so much as what we shall do in the future. Each time I see and talk to my buddy I come away marvelling at what a swell guy he is.

→ Rated y/c as of Feb. 1.  
This day was a wonderful one.

February 5

Our three junior officers were transferred to other duty today leaving us with only our original seven. This puts "Barrel Ass" Carrell back on Conn duty; God help us!

February 6

Wayne's ship departed at 0815. I watched it go thro' binoculars from the bridge.

February 7

Made a trip in To  
"Camouflage" island <sup>(Wampus)</sup> with mail.  
Dead japs all removed, but the unforgettable stench of the dead remained. The ground had been pulverized into powder by



the heavy shelling and rose in gray swirls with each footstep. The place is alive with marines. Many in swimming, naked. Jeeps hurrying about. Holes 4 to 5 feet deep have been dug & lined with sandbags. Papers, cardboard, etc., are flung on the bottoms, and old tin sheeting, planks, etc. are used for roofs. Men sleep in these. Vast quantities of supplies on the beach. Former buildings (concrete) a shambles; a concrete water tank & a 3 story hospital building hardly recognizable as ever such. Post Office made of several orange crates and a tent, but doing "business as usual".

Had an "alert" at about



2200. Dashed to General Quarters. Sopa ordered "smoke", so we fired up the fog machine and sent out two small boats to lay a smoke barrage. Interesting but no need for it.

Feb. 8, 9, 10, 11

Feb. 12

At about 0200 this morning we were called to general quarters by an air alert. We generated fog and the shore establishment brought four giant search lights into play. There was ~~an~~ little gunfire, and then the first bomb fell! The japs had glided in evidently and found their target. A "lucky hit on gasoline drums

sent up high flames. Most of the bombs appeared directed toward the new air<sup>plane</sup> runway. Our resistance appeared futile. Personally, we (LST 126) were about 2 miles off shore and merely observed the excitement. Secured from general quarters at 0425. Fires still bright on shore. Reports later in day indicate some 30 killed, 300 injured; no damage to airplane runways. ~~and~~ Maybe 20 more bombs dropped. We have suffered a grievous loss. Two of our men were drowned while on special small boat duty at the USS Maryland. They were lost in the fog generated by the ships and jumped overboard when a "smoke

pot" exploding, knocking a  
third man unconscious.

Feb. 13

Aircraft carrier, "Saratoga",  
arrived and departed. Word was  
passed that we need expect no  
more enemy attacks, so some  
action must have taken place  
after the raid last night.

Feb. 15

Underway for Pearl Harbor.  
6 LST's, 3 mine sweepers, 1 LCI,  
and 1 destroyer in tow by a  
liberty ship. 167 marines aboard.

Feb. 16

Making poor time -  $6\frac{1}{2}$  knots

Feb. 17

The destroyer broke its tow just at sunset. Sea is rather rough, so we'll be delayed longer until it can be hooked on again.

Feb. 18

Shipfitter had epileptic seizure at dinner; restrained with morphine and "restraints". Came out okay, but will be hospitalized. Ship bounds like a bronco.

Feb. 19

Man knocked unconscious in small boat when smoke bombs exploded on Feb. 12 died today of smoke congested.



lungs and pneumonia.

Feb. 20

Funeral to bury man at sea at 1600. All men off watch assembled on fantail in dress blues. Captain presided and read scriptures and prayer after a few personal remarks. Taps was played and 6 gunners fired 3 volleys. Sad but effective ceremony. Men very quiet tonight - thinking, I guess.

Feb. 21 - 29

Just dragging along. Every now and then there is an "alert" because of an "unidentified American plane" (our own sarcasm).



March 1

Reached Pearl Harbor.  
Stood off until about 1030 and  
then entered the channel.  
Ships of every kind on hand:  
battleships, cruisers, carriers,  
subs, destroyers, sub-tenders,  
net-tenders, etc., etc., etc.  
Only one LSD — not Wayne's.  
We will be here some while  
before leaving again.

and so

April 10

Spent  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hrs trying to turn

around in a little corner when we could have backed out or been dragged out. Captain was going to do it without tugs or bust, and we nearly busted! At last underway out of Pearl Harbor for maneuvers off Maui.

April 11

Spent the day of picturesque Maui loading, unloading, and reloading LVT's and DUKW's. Cloud bank sitting on the side of the mountain just like Humpty-Dumpty's belt.

April 12-13-14-15-16

Ditto.

April 17

Some more tinkering  
around with DUKW's plus  
173 marines aboard.

April 18

Up at 0400 for an "attack"  
on "Red Beach 3". Lots of G.Q.  
Got underway at 1600 to return  
~~back~~ to Pearl Harbor, but, of  
all things, as the anchor  
came up we found we had  
hooked a trans-oceanic  
cable! We twisted around  
for most of an hour, raising  
and dropping anchor, etc.  
until we finally got rid  
of it. Underway all night.

April 19

Reached Pearl Harbor at Sunrise but could not enter until 0900 because of outbound traffic. Moored alongside LST 274 at Taxe Seven (mosquito junction)

Captain Baker relieved of Command!

April 20

Capt. H. C. Krueger, Lieut., assumed command. Older & more settled and wiser than Capt. Baker. Everyone quite pleased. Things will be more "navy" but that is as it should be.



April 21-26

Off Maui again for  
more maneuvers

nothing exciting or unusual.  
1 LVT damaged in rough  
water, but otherwise every-  
thing normal.

April 27

Arrived off Koko-Head  
around 0600 — disembarked  
marines with LVT's.  
Entered Pearl Harbor around  
0830.



May 9

Someone stole one of our small boats last night, line and all! Saboteurs? Probably.

May 10

Departed 1500 for Maalaa Bay, Maui (where the water is always rough) for maneuvers.

May 11

Anchored.

May 12

Anchored

May 13

Anchored

May 14

Mother's Day

May 15

All sorts of nonsense

Maneuvers, bah! Lead ship  
went a couple of miles  
beyond line of departure  
to ball everything up by  
pulling ships out of  
position. LCVP's sent out  
for "attack" on beach, Back  
late afternoon, one disabled.  
At General Quarters for 7  
hours (1000-1800).

One LCT on another  
ship reported having broken  
from chains & welds during  
night of May 10, killing  
several men and damaging  
ship as it fell over the  
side. Someone will  
catch hell!

May 16, 17, 18

Maneuvers off Maalaea,  
Maui.

May 19

D Day. Dive  
bombing, heavy shelling,  
etc. Quite a show.

May 20

Back to Pearl.

May 21, 1944

In mid-afternoon  
a terrible thing happened,  
cause as yet unknown.  
Gas drums on an LST  
caught fire and blew up.  
5 were moored side by

side and they were caught  
afire. Magazines exploded.  
Entire superstructures  
blew into the air. Schrapnel  
flew all about. Our ships  
moored about 500 yards  
away alongside 5 others  
got underway, with hoses  
wetting down everything.  
Caught a few pieces  
of schrapnel, but nothing  
more. Many men drowned,  
shot, killed...

May 22

Six LST's & 3 tugs  
were lost yesterday  
sunk or burnt to mere  
hulks. Loss of life  
unmentioned, but no  
doubt several hundred,



plus many injuries.

May 23 - 24

Taking on fuel, water,  
supplies.

May 25

Underway at 1100  
standing out of Pearl  
at G.O. Capt. assembled  
officers and leading PO's  
and announced our  
destination to be Eniwetok  
(Marshall Is.) after which  
we would invade Saipan,  
and then Tennian, in the  
Mariannas.

May 28

G.O. at 0440. A passing  
ship or two acknowledged  
our convoy.



May 29 - June 5

No particular excitement.  
Crossed International Date  
Line at 1719 May 31,  $13^{\circ} 53' N.$

June 6

G.O. for about an hour  
for unidentified surface  
target. Destroyer Bailey  
went to investigate, fired  
warning shot. Target  
promptly identified herself  
as "friendly".

June 7

Arrived Eniwetok Atoll  
lagoon about 0700. (13 days out)  
Took on water. Tanker  
riding high & rough crashed  
against our jib and

actually knocked over  
#2 40mm gun turret!  
No casualties. A bright moon.

June 8

Received mail. Visited  
beach. Eniwetok a pleasant  
and flourishing camp -  
mostly <sup>metal</sup> ~~quarant~~ huts &  
tents half wood with canvas  
roof, the rest screen wire.  
Nearly every officer had a jeep.

June 9

G.O. at 1145 for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours  
due to Jap reconnaissance  
plane at high altitude.  
Tokyo Rose said last night  
the attack on Saipan is

doomed to defeat and all  
marine personnel trying  
to land will be annihilated  
At least the Japs know we  
are coming!

Underway at 1400 for  
Saipan. Six days to "D" Day.

June 10

Uneventful save that "Doc"  
Redick and Mr. Cassell had  
words over ventilation holes Doc  
had cut high in Sike Bay bulk-  
heads about two months ago  
and which C had just now found.  
Doc complained to Capt. because  
C used uncomplimentary terms  
("hound-dog") and threatened to  
"kick him right over the rail."

June 11

G.O. for an hour due to a radar contact with an unidentified aircraft.

June 12

Retired to my bunk with kidney ailment.

June 13

Right kidney quite painful. Radio reports indicate bombing and shelling of Saipan progressing well.

June 14

About 90 miles of Saipan at noon. Radio reports little interference; 5 inch batteries in



Hills keeping silent. Could see flares and occasional flashes during night.

June 15 - D Day

Early breakfast. G.O. 2 hours before sunrise, closing in on island. Light of dawn revealed large number of ships moving in - 49 LST's, 49 transports, etc. Five BB's and 11 Cruisers shelling beach; city riddled. No aerial opposition. One of our planes shot down in flames over Tennian (3 miles from Saipan). LVT's and small boats moving in waves, the first scheduled to hit beach at 0830; due.

to return aboard at 1600.

In spite of report of demolition squadron that beaches appeared safe, heavy firing from enemy installations resulted in loss of 6 or 8 small craft, a number of tractors and tanks, and a good many casualties. Japs had 5 inch guns, mortars, etc.

Two Jap ships off to East near end of Saipan, one listing heavily. Reports list nearly 30 Jap ships sunk or badly damaged during last 3 days.

14 LVT's returned to ship for night, 3 belonging to another ship; thus six

of our 17 unaccounted for.  
6 casualties, the worst  
with severe lacerations  
around his head, schrapnel  
in arm and leg; one hole  
in leg an inch deep, two  
wide and three long. Reports  
of assault on island are grim.

Saipan shelled and bombed  
most of night. At G.Q. from  
about 1815 to 2300. Every-  
one dead-tired.

June 16

G.Q. at 0410 for 15 min.  
Ships far astern shot at  
plane for about 5 minutes.  
Radio reports activities  
ashore are progressing  
advantageously, even

though casualties have been fairly high. Cruisers and destroyers shelling continuously, CVE's on other side of island are shelling harbor, and planes bombing the heights. We now have two beachheads established, one midway and the other at the low end nearest the airfield.

Radio reports a bombing raid on "Japan" (probably from the north).

Ramp damaged in rough sea so that one door will not operate. Tied alongside LSD 1 but it bobbed around so much we couldn't hope to tie up to her for repairs.



Tracer bullets from big guns on cruisers and destroyers flying in to island look like aircraft recognition lights at night. Fascinating fireworks!

June 17

A destroyer came alongside and we passed it 400 rounds of 5" ammo. A rainy day — the Dolbrenn season is beginning.

Launched our HCT (968) in a misty rain at 1830. It went off very well, although prematurely (I think the trigger arrangement had not been adequately checked). The HCT cat stayed

aboard (forgotten?) and probably lost 3 or 4 lives in the jolt of the sliding-off.

"Flash Red" called us to G. Q. around 1945. The sky was too overcast for good vision, and the enemy planes rode too high, but someone thought he saw one and soon the sky was full of tracer bullets. It was a gigantic affair—thousands of shells in the air. We dimly saw two planes hit by. Finally one tried to strafe the beach 1800 yards away. Again all ships opened fire. Small boats with .50 cal's were themselves guilty of

strafing in an effort to get the plane. The plane was shot down all right, but no one could tell who did it.

Had a swallow of Saki. Gull describes it as "just like alcohol with too much wine in it."

June 18

Unloading ammunition into small boats for transportation into the beach. A Jap convoy of 4 or 5 battleships, 5 or 6 aircraft carriers, several cruisers and destroyers, reported moving toward Guam from Philippine Area. We have forces to intercept!

1640 G.O. on report of

3 groups enemy planes heading  
toward Saipan. Must have  
been turned back! 1745  
another G.A. This time a  
few dog fights over island!  
Each side lost one plane,  
pilots bailing out. Several  
enemy planes landed on  
Tinian.

Report that our authorities  
captured a copy of Japanese  
operations orders a few days  
ago. Their plan called for  
primary attack on our  
transports, secondary on  
our carriers. Thus, our  
transports moved out to  
safer area two days, soon  
should be able to return.



June 19

We are supplying water to dozens of small boats, and food to several score men each day (until their ships return). Some army men found their long lost duck wandering around half-dazed on the beach, and brought it back to this ship. It is very dirty and looks as if it might lay an egg any minute.

June 20

Underway to ride around and around and around — always within 50 miles or closer to Saipan. Radio reports air and sea battle

near R~~h~~oda (50 miles away)  
in which we shot down 300  
enemy planes. Our losses  
were not told. The duck is gone.

June 21

Still riding around. SCR  
report one or more enemy  
submarine bottled up in Saipan  
Harbor and under heavy fire.  
Japanese fleet reported "miles"  
west of Saipan! 600 Japanese  
aircraft shot down in battle  
near Guam! No appreciable  
damage to any of our ships;  
our air losses not cited.  
Fighting bitter on Saipan, but  
we now hold the airfield.

June 22 - 23 - 24

On our way back to  
Eniwetok — probably to be  
out of the way of the impending  
battle of the fleets.

June 25

A rope-yarn Sunday.  
Learned to eye-splice,  
short splice, bend on a  
clove hitch with one  
hand, and bend on a  
stopper.

June 26

Made changes in ship's  
office — cabinets moved out,  
appertanances reappointed, etc.  
Result: a little more working  
space.

June 27

Arrived Eniwetok at about 0700 but could not enter lagoon until mid-afternoon because of traffic. The entire Southern Task Force was arriving all day long - battle wagons, carriers, cruisers, destroyers, tankers, cargo ships, LST's, etc., etc.

June 28

Lots of scuttlebutt, but no one knows what we will do next. Received very welcome mail. Unloaded all troop gear still aboard (some 350 sea-bags, etc.)

June 29-30

Very busy with monthly, quarterly, & semi-annual reports



July 1

Transferred from Flot. 13 to LST Flotilla 5, the oldest in this area. Captain Carter, Flot. Commander. Group 14 (LST 354) - Captain Lafrenesse.

July 2

Mr. Harrison transferred to LST 273. Mr. Hoffmann to serve as Executive Officer here.

July 3

Underway for Makin. 9 LST's and 3 sub-chasers. All LST's crippled save one (plus ourselves who are in good shape except for a damaged ramp.) Travelling at 6 knots.

July 4

Independence Day. A safe and sane (?) Fourth.

July 5

Orders changed. We are to proceed to Tarawa (in the Gilberts, about 80 miles above the equator). Should reach there by 1000 July 9.

July 6

LST 121 dropped out to proceed to Makin alone. A beautiful moonlight night.

July 7

Making excellent time for a crippled convoy. Will reach Tarawa tomorrow.

Crossed time belt 11:30  
that we have a second —

July 7 (July 8)

Arrived Tarawa at about  
1100. This atoll just like  
all the rest. Busy getting  
work requests lined up.  
Departed 1630 from Tarawa  
lagoon for Makin.

Time moved back to July 8!  
(To avoid confusion in battle plans)

July 8

Arrived Makin at daybreak.  
Beach party in afternoon —  
took mail ashore. Very hot.

July 10

Reached the ship for  
loading. Spent 4 hours  
ashore, beachcombing, etc.

July 11

Cargo of crated guns, several dogs trained to smell japs, several dozen trucks, jeeps, etc. aboard as cargo. Retracted at high tide. The heat is exhausting!

July 12

Departed 1630 for Tarawa. Received news: Saipan secured.

July 13

Arrived Tarawa at sunrise, the little islands of the atoll finally rising from the clouds of the horizon. A stifling day. Mr. Hoffmann functioning splendidly as Executive Officer.



July 14

Departed Tarawa for Pearl Harbor (estimated 13 day trip). Crossed International Date line to +12 Zone. And so tomorrow will be July 14 also.

July 14

Captain's inspection.

July 15

Rain

July 16

Almost had a collision during the night! I awoke when engines were stopped & knew something was wrong when they started all back full. Mr. Woods, the O.O.D.,

must have fallen asleep, for we ended up on port side of convoy. One ship cut across our stern, and another across our bow so close we could almost have stepped from ship to ship.

July 17-24

Stuffy weather; occasional squalls, but no let-up from the depressing heat. Rough sea.

July 25-28

Arrived Pearl Harbor.

July 29

President Roosevelt,  
Admiral King, Admiral

Nimitz, etc., all here!

August 2

In Dry Dock for repairs to ramp and a paint job.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of crew sent to Rest Camp for 3 days. Other 3 sections will then have their turns.

August 5

Left for Camp Andrews, in charge of Section II.

August 8

Returned to ship.

August 9 -

Several transfers; several non-rated men

received in exchange.

Pontoons have been put on either side of us. They stick out about four feet and make a fine ledge (life-line high) to sit on.

Aug. 21-24

Moved to Kewalo Basin right beside Waikiki Beach. The rollers come in constantly in long even bolsters and a gentle swish. Scene magnificent and peaceful. Lulled to sleep by the murmur of the water and the creak of rope hawser.



Aug. 25

Loaded with gasoline  
and ammunition. Back  
to Pearl.

Aug. 27

Off on maneuvers —  
to Maui again until  
Sept. 3. Lots of chugging  
around, spitting out of  
tanks, target practice, etc.

~~Aug.~~ Sept. 3

Back to Pearl. Next  
invasion imminent!

Sept 8

Around to Wainae,  
Oahu, to get 10 army tanks  
& personnel & then back to Pearl.

A little trouble with Ensign  
Silligan who thinks post  
office should be open to  
officers whenever they need  
a stamp & that I should  
mail packages etc., for  
them at any time, advancing  
stamps in case the officer  
isn't on hand right then to  
pay for them. Post Office hours  
have been 1600-1900 daily &  
will continue so, cash  
on the line!

Men found a "sea-bat."  
Shut up in a box with a  
peep-hole, it peaked every-  
one's curiosity. As they  
bent over to look in, a  
couple well-aimed brooms  
went "wham!" Great fun!

Sept. 11

Mustered at 0605 on Boat Deck. The reason: just to get everybody up, of all the goddam things! Turn-to is at 0800 and quite a few men prefer to sleep rather than eat breakfast.

Standing out of Pearl at 1000 on our way to attack Yap. First stop Eniwetok, 12 days hence.

Gunnery drill - Uncle and George reins.

Sept. 12

Steering apparatus of a nearby WST failed and it came towards us in the night.





Sept 18

Crossed International Date Line about midnight, so today is tomorrow (Sept. 19)

Sept. 19

Crossed  $180^{\circ}$   $\lambda$  at 0045; latitude  $14^{\circ} 06'$  North.

Sept. 20

A man on one of the other ships in the convey fell overboard at about 0510 this morning. An LC1 fell out to look for him but he couldn't be located.

Sept. 23

Three planes from Kwajalein came over!

pulling sleeves for us  
to fire out for gunnery  
drill. They made  
uncle runs for 2 hours  
and all ships expended  
ammunition allowed  
because it was getting  
too late for exercises  
to continue. At the  
last minute before  
resuming cruising  
formation, the silly  
planes started making  
George runs. The targets  
were lovely, ~~but~~ but not  
one ship fired a shot!

Sept. 24

Everyday hotter than yester-  
day!

Sept. 25

Reached Eniwetok.  
Provisioning. Scheduled  
to leave here for the  
assault on Yap in two  
days (William Day = 5 Oct.)

Sept. 26

Orders changed! The  
Yap invasion called off  
as not necessary. Fleet  
air attacks in Philippines  
reduced navy opposition  
to almost nothing in that  
area according to Admiral  
Nimitz's communique. We  
have control of air. Thus,  
attack on the Philippines  
themselves is probably  
moved up by 2 to 4 months!

Underway at 1400 for  
Admiralty Islands. Convoy  
totals 105 ships, mostly  
LST's & LCT's. Voyage  
expected to take about 6  
days. A heavy rain  
and a running sea.

Sept. 30

Considerable excitement  
aboard concerning the  
coming Shellback initiation.  
Only six Shellbacks are  
aboard (excluding 2 officers)  
and a "secret" band of  
Polywoogs are playing kid  
games in a pre-Equator-  
crossing day. Plan of Day  
lists time of crossing in  
early morning of Oct. 12,



but distance and speed  
indicate, <sup>late</sup> tomorrow afternoon.  
The Captain (a Shell back)  
must be trying to fool us!

An alert at 2200  
sent us to G.O. for 2 hours —  
a plane and a surface  
craft — both escaped  
unmolested; we merely  
sailed right on in formation,  
but with guns bustling!

October 1, 1944

Initiated as a  
Trusty Shell back.  
Crossed the Equator at  
2115 this night,  $53^{\circ}56'$   
East longitude. Davy Jones,  
Neptunus Rex, and the  
court were aboard all day.

October 4, 1944

Arrived at Manus,  
Admiralty Islands, and  
anchored in the bay formed  
by the arch of Los Negros  
at the corner of Manus.

Can see coconut and  
banana trees in profusion.  
Cannot go ashore because  
of malaria in interior  
and extremes of island.  
Cleared area contains  
a huge advanced base.  
Very hot

October 11, 1944

Departed Manus for  
an assault on Leyte,  
Philippine Islands.  
"A" Day to be October 20.

Oct. 12, 1944

A few rain squalls.  
At least 100 ships in sight.

Oct. 14, 1944

Rain. A pitch-black  
night. Radar failure.

As hard as it was to  
keep the column in order during  
the night, SOPA called for an  
emergency turn to port.  
Gad! What a mess!

Oct. 15, 1944

Very calm sea. Church  
services as usual on fo'c'sle.  
About 60 men present, sitting  
around on the gasoline  
barrels & singing in a  
subdued way some of the

old familiar hymns.

Oct. 16, 1944

A hospital ship, brilliantly lighted, passed by on the horizon last night.

Some paper caught between the ship and the pontoons suspended along sides caught fire from the exhaust and blew up, igniting a couple of mattresses on deck. Men on watch put it out.

A large shark followed us for awhile today, and a petrel showed up. We haven't seen any birds for



quite awhile.

Passed within 45 miles of Palau today. About 650 miles to Leyte.

Oct. 18 - "A minus two"

Bombing of Leyte began. Radio reception of airplane reports, etc., indicate some armored materiel.

Oct. 19 - "A minus one"

Entered channel approach to Leyte at about 2300. Very quiet. Sea smooth.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mile wide channel swept clear of mines. Shell flashes show like lightning in distance.

October 20 - "A Day"

Approaching "Yellow Beach" area just north of Dalag (Leyte). Cruisers, battlewagons, and destroyers shelling. One Jap plane suddenly swooped down just at sunrise and ran the gauntlet of 20 m/m and 40 m/m fire before falling to the shells of a destroyer. It passed just over our starboard side in a beautiful, swift "Uncle" run. We did not fire because of danger to ships so near us. About 50 wildcats and torpedo bombers came out, and later on a long firing squad of LCI's lined up facing the beach. The

rocketing was a continuous roar for a half-hour with bombs punctuating it heavily. The village of about 30 square blocks was destroyed, trees riddled, etc. JIG hour was 1000. Our two small boats were in the first waves leading the army LVP's in to take the beachhead.

Rumor had it that Japs 2-man subs had entered the anchorage areas and that one cruiser was damaged by a torpedo. It still has its equilibrium anyway!

Launched our pontoons which were delivered to a

freighter to be stacked with supplies and pulled to beach by small boats.

Beached at 1630 in a heavy rain. Squalls came and went all afternoon and night. At G.O. for a half hour after supper on an air alert, but saw nothing. A few ships in the distance sent up a little anti-aircraft fire, but the clouds were too low and heavy to make it seem probable that they saw anything.

SCR message reported 300 Jap soldiers on beach 5 miles south with white surrender flags.

Army advanced 1 to 4 miles inland, aided by



continued shelling from capital ships. Artillery not ready for use until tomorrow when tanks, DUKW's, etc., will also be pressed into service. Enemy mortar fire heavy, some falling on beach positions. Captain of an LST beached nearby reported killed on his own force by mortar fire. Several casualties brought aboard here for treatment.

Beachhead secure, however, and cargo being quickly unloaded.

One can smell fresh grass and foliage - like Spring. A firefly flickered across the cove.

Oct. 21

Five "flash red" G.O. alerts today for "enemy aircraft in immediate vicinity". No sooner would we get to battle stations than the old monsoon would whip up a big black cloud and drench us.

During the night Jap counterattacks drove within 200 yards of the beach!

One LST (#269) about a mile up the beach was hit on the foible by Jap mortar fire. Some damage, but fire quickly brought under control.

Cargo being unloaded. A Colonel Somebody, acting as director, seems to have everything balled up. He

has failed entirely to co-ordinate with the beach-master. Thus, one outfit came to our ship for gasoline and was refused it by an army officer representing the Colonel. Our Captain overruled him. "We've got to get this unloaded," he said, "he has a truck, and you won't send any. He needs gas to fight the war. I'm giving him a whole damned truck load." And he did.

The lack of organization by the army coordinators has resulted in idle trucks and cargo that has not moved. Yesterday we moved about 45% of our cargo (most of that under its own power); today

we scarcely moved 15%. Our ship is just one of dozens. When they need something suddenly they'll probably yell that the Navy was slow!

40 colored men came aboard as a working party. They did fairly well yesterday, but today when we had a flash red and they thought planes were coming, they hit for the beach to dig deep fox holes, and we haven't seen them since.

Gen. Sherman tanks, etc. brought into service today and drove the Japs back quite well. Behind and north of Dulag, before it



disappeared into rubble!)  
is a quagmire swamp.  
Movement of personnel is  
difficult and Jap sniper  
activity is profitable. Air  
strip has been secured, but  
enemy still near-by. Two  
chunks of shrapnel fell on  
deck this morning.

Wildcats, etc. constantly  
patrol the hills in the  
distance. Natives are  
beginning to pour into the  
beach encampment - a  
few injured, but all happy  
saluting, saying "go'  
mornin'", and wanting  
cigarettes and gum. A  
few evidently searched  
the ruins of their houses

for bags of rice which constitute their fortune. Japs had instituted a paper currency based on centavos and pesos. The bills look much like the cheap paper money found in Monopoly games.

The "flash red" tonight was followed by "flash yellow" — "fire at will on any air target." There was some shooting out at sea, but it was sporadic, and we never saw anything. Radio Tokyo claims we are under constant air attack, but we have seen only two enemy planes: the one yesterday, and one today which dived into a fog bank.

Oct. 22

Two flash red alerts before breakfast, but no planes!

During night some Jap mortar fire fell across ship, one chunk of shrapnel striking a stern 40 m/m.

About 1000 this morning a group of Jap snipers broke through our lines undetected (probably through the swamps) to within 200 feet of the ship. Troops on beach popped into fox holes. We fired several rounds from sentry's rifle at the ramp. Quite a skirmish for 20 minutes or so until Japs were traced and grenades. Gen. MacArthur walked by and 2 colonels of his staff

came aboard for dinner  
(roast chicken, mashed sweet  
potatoes, ripe olives, fruit  
salad desert, etc.)

G.O. again at supper-  
time, but no planes. 15  
HST's left for "soirée". Where?

Oct. 23

Retracted from beach  
and found our way alongside  
AKA 19 to receive 700 drums  
of gasoline to take to the  
beach. Loading completed  
late afternoon.

Supper time G.O. again  
but "fog" was too thick  
to see anything. Couldn't  
see half-way to Joe's!  
Some ack-ack nearby, but  
I doubt if they saw  
anything either!



Oct. 24

Beached at about 1500 after spending a couple of hours hauling a stuck LST off the beach. Every 15 seconds I received and relayed reports on the towing cable to the captain. "Cable tending aft slightly to starboard medium strain;" "slacking off;" "directly aft, slight strain" "in the water", etc. Very tiring - 2 hours of it!

A bunch of native kids swarmed some of the fellows on the ramps asking for skivvies, hats, pants, etc. They all had handfuls of Jap-Philippine paper.

currency to hand out in payment.

Flash Yellow!  
And the Japs came back!

Right at suppertime we got the warning and went to G.Q. Not long after 3 Jap "Tony's" were spotted in the south. Another group of 4 swung out to sea and disappeared. Suddenly the Tony's wheeled and started in. It appeared that they intended to strafe, but the barrage from the 15 HST's lined up kept them too high. They were carrying 100 lb. bombs.

even though they are fighters, but only one bomb was let go. It hit inshore about 100 yards, allegedly killing 2 army men. How the planes got through the ack-ack I don't know! Later, in the dusk, another flying low near a destroyer was shot down, exploded, and sank in the water.

Many men were under fire for first time and some reactions were very bad. One man froze on his post, rendering a gun useless. The gunnery officer failed

to order guns to be loaded  
and failed to order fire  
until the 2<sup>nd</sup> plane was  
already directly overhead.  
Another man left his  
below deck station in order  
to "see" what was going on;  
being a talker we lost  
contact with his entire  
repair party. Stupidity!!!

Two cans of beer per  
man were passed out  
this evening.

Oct. 25

Long G. Q. this morning.  
Nine Jap planes in sight - a  
few of them dive bombers. At  
least 3 were shot down, one  
in flames not far from ship.



At almost constant G.A.  
all day. We were secured  
at about sunset.

At 2018 hell broke loose!  
It felt as if the ship had  
been struck on the fo'c'sle  
for it gave quite a jump.  
A Jap bomber had dived  
and hit the ammunition  
stores about 200 feet in.  
Several fellows on ramp  
were knocked down by  
the concussion, the  
cargo hatch was cracked  
and most of the doors were  
bulged. A few shrapnel wounds.  
Damage ashore  
considerable in loss of  
ammunition and gasoline.  
Ship obviously had to move,

so we retracted from beach amidst ricocheting bullets. Later in night we had to move again to hid our silhouette better. Pulled a soldier out of the water; he had been "chased into the water by jap snipers" and had been swimming quite awhile. Several soldier stowaways found aboard!

Several American planes were shot down, the score being about the same for both sides.

A long, difficult, shocking day, what with long G's, lots of firing, and the near-miss of the jap bomb which hit the ammo dump.

October 26

I've seen enough fireworks. The Fourth of July celebrations will never be very appealing any more!

Early A.A. land planes came by all day. Five Japs shot down in morning. We definitely lay claim to a Val.

Just after supper the real fight occurred. A dive bomber attacked a destroyer off our bow; the bombs fell short and the plane fled. Several more attacked a convoy moving out of Leyte Bay. One was shot down in flames.

Several more were shot down, the typical red fire of the exploding gas motors showing up vividly.

At about 2000 — too dark to see very far — someone reported hearing planes approaching. Suddenly they were there, not more than 50 feet from our starboard beam running broadside — two Betty's (large 2-engine bombers). We opened fire as they brushed our bows — no more than 10 feet from our bow 40 m/m. One burst into flames about a hundred yards further on, while the second



passed 2 ships before  
exploding. Both planes  
were flying scarcely 50  
feet above the water and  
we were momentarily afraid  
that they were attempting  
suicide dives. We claim <sup>at least</sup>  
one Betty! Japs lost at least  
12 planes in this little area today.

October 27

The first dependable  
reports on the big navy battle  
are beginning to creep in.  
What is left of the Jap force  
is limping away, evidently.

Underway at 0630  
for Tacloban, capitol of  
Cebu, and center of the  
Northern Attack Area.

A few rain squalls.

Further news indicates considerable naval losses on our side, particularly in CVE's, etc.

Jap bombers overhead. Shot down two.

Air raid alarms intermittently all night long.

October 28

Little sleep last night because of C. Q.'s. Last one lasted from 0350 to 0640. Manufactured fog.

We are receiving survivors aboard from the naval battle. Most of ours are well, but a few are shock patients. Most of them were in the

water (on rafts, etc.) for 40 to 45 hours. Luckily the water here is warm and the current brought them towards land. They have been brought in by PC's and LCI's. 4 LST's are taking 175 each, and an APA about 300.

Scuttlebutt has it that natives are digging up treasures they buried when the Japs invaded the Philippines. Several bushels of silver coins, a small pot of 1820 Spanish gold coins, and trunks of fine clothing have been unearthed (literally). Nevertheless, many natives are

in rags, and 40 or 50 outrigger canoes were trafficking between the ships this morning begging for clothing, etc.

Two air alarms, but nothing to be seen except for a distant dog fight between a Zero and a P-38. The latter zoomed merrily all around the zero and a little later really made it naught.

Underway at about 1830 in a roughening sea for Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea.

October 29.

A violent storm brewing.



A strong gale. Some men seasick.

At about 2100 we were called to fire stations! Smoke floats in starboard small boat had ignited through effect of air & water. Burnt a two-foot hole in the boat, mildly gassed 2 or 3 fellows.

October 30

Sea calmer, but far from smooth.

A convoy passed us up: 3 battlewagons, 5 cruisers, 10 flattops, 25 destroyers, 1 communication ship.  
Actual eye-witness

accounts of the sea-battle  
are coming out of the  
survivors now. Japs had  
2 battle wagons & 3 cruisers  
against about 8 CVE's and  
2 fleet carriers (CE's) and  
3 or 4 destroyers. Odds  
were terrific but destroyers  
dove in to hide carriers  
in smoke. They sank  
a battleship and a cruiser  
before going down. About  
4 CVE's were lost, the  
rest saved. About half  
of destroyer crews killed;  
the rest took to life rafts.  
There was relatively no  
shooting at the men in  
the water. Some men  
on rafts went crazy and

were lost; some drank sea-water and became very sick; rescued after 40-odd hours adrift. One raft got within 500 yards of Samar only to have the tide carry it out again. Large air squadrons came out a few hours after the big battle and probably got the other Jap battleship and cruisers.

November 4

Arrived Hollandia, Dutch New Guinea. Anchored in Humboldt Bay at about 0830. Ship to be here about 5 days. Next destination unknown.

Ensign ✓

November 5

Took physical exam  
from Group Medico. Apparently  
OK. Received Captain's  
letter appointing me  
Ensign, DO(S), USNR (406545)  
Accepted appointment by  
letter to BUPERS.

November 6

Transferred! Went  
to Hollandia Receiving  
Station. Told there would  
be no ship transportation  
for several weeks! And  
what a hot, dusty hole  
this is. Water very  
scarce. Everyone  
advised to take ataphrine  
tablets against malaria.



Securried around and got  
air transportation author-  
ization. Hitch-hiked to  
air field — 30 miles by  
truck over a crowded,  
rough, dusty road.

November 7

Travelled (1 of 16)  
in large Navy transport  
to Manua, <sup>(landed on ~~Is. Negros~~)</sup> making trip  
in 3 hrs. 10 minutes.  
Established in BOQ.

November 8

A torrential rain —  
at least 2 inches in 2  
hours!

November 9

Transferred to APA  
27 ("George Craymer").

Fine quarters (4 bunk  
compartment with bath),  
excellent food. Ship to  
proceed in round about  
way (via Tulagi, Pearl,  
etc.) to San Francisco.

46 officers & over 500  
personnel being returned  
to states for relief.

November 10

At about 0810 a  
tremendous explosion  
rocked the ship! GG  
sounded, etc. A ship  
off starboard had blown up.  
It was loaded with ammo-

1000 pound bombs mainly.  
All hands save those ashore  
for mail, etc. were lost.  
60% casualties on nearby  
ship. Shrapnel struck  
here, but no casualties.  
Ship was to have left at  
1000 this morning, but we  
will remain here 2 more  
days probably now.

Compartment mates  
are Lt. R. E. Clark, Jr., Lt.  
Boisseau (Boy-so), Lt(j-g)  
Sweet — all fine fellows —  
Mustangs like myself, but  
with longer service (Boisseau  
a former CWT has 25 yrs in,  
& Sweet a CMM has about 20.  
Clark was a pay clerk — about 9 yrs  
service to date.)

November 11

Underway at 0530 for  
Medura.

The "Mt. Hood" was the  
ship lost yesterday. 1 officer  
and 9 men were ashore; all  
other hands were lost. It was  
fortunate for other ships  
nearby (including us) that  
Mt. Hood was almost empty.  
A greater explosion would  
have taken us too.

The "George Cymer" is  
flag for convoy — 2 troop  
transports, 1 corvette, and  
1 ~~APC~~.

November 13

Had "big" watch for 4  
hours. Squalls.



November 14

Sighted two whales about a mile off our port beam. Each blew 4 or 5 times before submerging.

November 16

A meteorite flashed by tonight, glowing as large as a wash-tub before it burnt out.

November 17

Strong winds and a high sea running. Spray flying over the masthead of the APD so we slowed down from 15 to about 8 knots.

November 18

Crossed International  
Date-Line, and so  
tomorrow is Nov. 18, too.

November 19

Chilly. Quite rough!

November 25

Reached Pearl Harbor  
at 0930. Thanksgiving  
Day.

November 26

Departed ~~Pearl~~<sup>9</sup> Pearl. Convoy  
made up of 7 cargo vessels  
(one, a Dutchman) and 2  
destroyers. 8 to 9 days  
to Frisco at 12 knots.

November 28

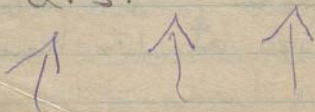
Long, slow swells,  
causing quite a roll.  
Getting <sup>too</sup> chilly for rolled-up  
shirt sleeves.

December 3, 1944.

Passed under Golden  
Gate Bridge at 1330.  
Moored in San Francisco  
Bay.

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So ends one year  
and ten days of sea  
duty, beyond the  
continental limits of  
the U.S.



During the remainder  
of my period of service  
in the U.S. Navy Reserve,  
I spent two months in  
Lieut Officers School in  
Hollywood, Florida, a  
full semester at Harvard  
University in Classified  
Publications, and  
nine months in the  
Registered Publications  
Issuing Office at  
Pearl Harbor. ~~Most~~

~~of my work was in a  
"Secret" Division, as~~

Goodnight.

~~Stop with.~~

Sock

L. E. Wiley