

December 1, 1944

Still on patrol at Hell's Gate. At about 1800 we got orders to change our patrol so we started there. Half way there orders came to go to Leyte Gulf as the army had spotted a sub and our task force was in there. Went to 20 knots and in the middle of Hell's Gate, ran into the task force running out of Leyte Gulf. Man what a time. We got all mixed up in the task force and almost got rammed. When we got to Leyte, orders said the sub turned out to be an army barge that had broke loose. So we were ordered to go out on our patrol and we did, right into the middle of the task force, returning to Leyte.

December 2, 1944

On our new patrol north of our old one and only four miles long between two points of land. Nothing new to report.

December 3, 1944

On same patrol. At 2600 received order to go back to San Pedro Bay. We were almost in when orders came to join the Sandusky and Machias. It seems Machias saw a sub periscope at dusk so we are together to hunt down the sub. Hope the next time we start back they don't send us out before we even get in. Had a radio report that the Japs were attacking one of our hospital ships about 80 miles off the Philippines. The Japs really are dirty bastards. Nice weather today (Sunday)

(Amazing Wreckord - December 3, 1944

NEWS AND GOSSIP IN THE WARDROOM

Congratulations are in order for Mr. Duvall. Yes, he made the grade of Machinist. Good Work, Sir!

Captain: "I say, and I say again".

Guess Who: "You haven't lived till you've seen the watersheds of the Olympus."

Pearly: "It's an Itchy Bitchy 88"

Ace: "Jeeminy"

Mr. Bell doesn't know when his son was born. Mr. Emery doesn't know if it's a boy or girl. Mr. Beall doesn't know when it will be. Loner is worrying about his marriage status. (Dock Eslick admits he forgot to send in Rigger's health certificates)

Dr. Eslick recommends swimming with ones clothes on for a good workout! No one can say our doctor isn't salty now.

DECK FORCE DOPE

Baldy Torquinio and McCallister have the entertainment cornered in 205-P. Sounds good fellers.

Crumpler has been looking goggle eyed at Joe Altomere's shorts. Don't get mad Joe, but they are cute.

Seaman 2/c Moseley seems to be running around pulling his rank.

"C" CHATTER

Hull and Haggstrom at it hot and heavy.

Edwards pinning his heart away for Kansas City.

Campbell coming off watch half dopey and putting Corn Flakes in his orange juice. He says it wasn't bad but doesn't recommend it.

Verhaar using two seats from the whaleboat to make a pair of shower shoes.

Or News:

US Army troops repel strong Jap counter attacks 13 miles south of Ormoc. Jap attacks are suicidal against the 7th Division.

December 4, 1944

Returned to San Pedro Bay, Leyte, P.I. about 0700 and immediately went alongside a tanker and refueled, taking on only enough for our next trip. At 1500 we got underway, taking a convoy back to Hallandia. This is the convoy make-up:

USS Caldwell - DD605	Code name	Hob Nob	Group - Epic 4
USS Coghlan - DD 606	"	Stogie	"
USS Long - DD 299	"	Clockwork	"
USS Allentown - PF 52	"	Samovar	Sawbuck 3
USS Machias - PF	"	"	"
USS Sandusky - PF	"	"	"
USS Charlottesville - PF	"	"	"
USS Revenge - AM110	"	Actor Zero	"
LCI 560	"	60	
LCI 558	"	58	
LCI 559	"	59	
LCI 1056	"	56	
LCI 1057	"	57	
LCI 1058	"	58	
LCI 1059	"	59	
757	"	Poster 57	
422	"	Reservation 22	

Also 15 merchant ships. The convoy consists of eight escorts, and 24 ships being escorted. It's a slow convoy doing only about nine knots. The

destroyers are leaving at Palau, then we take charge. We can only be in Hollandia 48 hours as our orders state we are to return to Leyte at once on arriving Hollandia.

December 5, 1944

Enroute Hollandia, N.G. with convoy. We passed a convoy going to Leyte about 30 miles or less astern of us when they were attacked by Jap torpedo planes. We picked the message up on radar, radio and TBS. We could hear them telling about planes coming in low and about the big black ship, the last in line, getting a tin fish in its side and orders for one of the escorts to pick up the men. The Japs were flying all around us but didn't come in close. They were after the full convoy going to Leyte, not ours which is empty. Guess we were lucky because radio heard them wireless to Leyte for air help and that three ships were hit. We were at GQ about two hours from 1300 to 1500 wishing we would get some action. Made ice cream after the GQ. Rumors again of a return to the states.

December 6, 1944

The destroyers Caldwell and Coghlan left us this morning. We are now in charge of the convoy. Heard over the radio that the PFO range was under air attack and the hospital ship Hope was being bombed off Leyte. Should reach Hollandia Sunday night if everything goes well.

December 7, 1944

Still bound for Hollandia with convoy. Today is the day three years ago that the dirty Japs attacked Pearl Harbor. We have been at war three years today.

December 8, 1944

Enroute Hollandia in convoy. Four LCI's left us last night to go to Woendi. We now have 20 ships..

(Amazing Wreckord - Dec. 8, 1944)

Birthday today - N. P. Boyd CMM

War News

Pearl Harbor Day, 3 years later - thirteen enemy vessels including transports with 4000 men aboard were sunk when they tried to break up our landings on Urmoc. Revenge! In Europe, our army has advanced eight miles into Germany.

Scuttlebutt:

It looked like Hug had a new striker at C&R headquarters, but it was only Mr. Dugan working on his Hubby Lubby shoes.

A mixup in the galley had the man serving the soup get mixed up and Chief Shelton got his filled with dishwater. He enjoyed it so much he had seconds.

Note the gleam in Old Timers Doyle and White's eyes when Pierce walks by with that old fashioned soup strainer.

"Risky Duty" Carty has to decide next month on whether to continue his Coast Guard career or settle down to packing tomatos at Cape May.

"Lord Finger" Williams says he will positively comb his hair for the first liberty in the states.

Joe Micklas says he won't put anyone in his black book for oversleeping on Christmas.

Leo "The Lion" Horner used to be known in the St. Louis district office as "The guy all SPARS like to go out with".

Chief Hogan claims he keeps his hour glass figure (lower half) by keeping pace with the inspection party.

It is hoped that Messrs. Beall and Emery will be more agreeable as soon as they hear whether their good wives have presented them with heirs or problems.

December 9, 1944

Crossed the equator again today at about 1130. Still doing 9 knots. Should arrive Hollandia tomorrow. Are we glad!

December 10, 1944

Arrived Hollandia at prox 0630. Convoy went in first then we lead in the escorts. We fueled soon as we arrived. Tied up to the DD Lang and she has 4 Jap destroyers, one plane, and an Italian sub to her credit. Had movie on board at night. This will be a little rest for us even though it's only for 48 hours.

December 11, 1944

A lazy day - washed down, did a 12 to 4 watch, wrote letters home. About 2400, two divisions of DER came in, the 67th and 76th. As luck would have it, the 76th division is the one to relieve us so we can go back to the U.S. But there's a catch, they have to relieve us in Leyte. We are going back to Leyte tomorrow. I figure it will be about a month before we start back to the good old USA. Hollandia is the same old place, full of ships of all types and sizes. The second and first section had a beer party. There really are a large number of DE's here now. They are just starting to arrive from the Atlantic. Some of the PF's have been relieved and are now on their way back to the states. We had a movie last night with Buck Jones and Tim McCoy. Still sleeping topside in a hammock.

December 12, 1944

Left Hollandia at 1630 bound for Leyte where we hope to be relieved soon. The Machias, Sandusky and Charlottesville are with us. We took on mail for Leyte from a landing barge full of mail sacks, so did the other ships. We do not have a convoy so it should be a fast trip. Five navy ensigns came aboard

for the trip, they are just out of OCS and are a dumb looking lot. We are also carrying about 30 navy men to Leyte. God only knows where the hell they are going to sleep.

December 13, 1944

Enroute Leyte. A little rough and our passengers are sick. We had some firming practice and dropped some depth charges. We dropped five and only three went off. We believe the heat has ruined them. Now checking the rest. Crossed equator for the eighth time.

December 14, 1944

(Russ Meyers)

Just got in my hammock when they rang GQ and announced over the MC that the ship was on fire in the starboard passageway. I figured it was only a small fire but in the morning I found out differently. It seems a can of movie film exploded from the heat and spread fire all over the passageway. Four men passed out from the smoke that got into the engine room. Four others were sick trying to put out the fire. The fire was so hot it ruined all the wiring in the passageway and our starboard 40 gun was put out of action. It will take a navy yard to repair all the damage. The walks are black as coal aft. The Machias stood by in case the fire reached our ready ammo before we could remove it. I slept through the whole thing.

(Amazing Wreckord - Danny Shae)

THREE INJURED IN \$20,000 FIRE

The early morning quietness was shattered Thursday by a loud hiss, similar in sound to a steam pipe bursting, and the roar of flame. Lt. J. G. Bell in the D.A.Q. room saw the blaze and set a new track record from that place to the radio room, the nearest available place from which to report the fire. Simultaneously, Johnson GM1c of Gun Crew 41 heard the explosion, saw the flame through the open hatch, and spread the alarm above decks. Carty BM2c ran to the after alarm switch and rang the General alarm at 0125.

The first extinguishing operations were begun by T. L. Brennan FC2c, the first person notified by Mr. Bell, but he was soon joined by the repair parties. Brennan has estimated the damage at more than \$20,000 including the cables that must be replaced. The fire was extinguished and the crew was dismissed from General Quarters, just 14 minutes after the alarm was given, at 0139. This was accomplished only by the early and fine work of the repair parties. the cause of the fire has been attributed to spontaneous combustion, a movie film providing the source, in the Transformer Room on the Starboard side in the After passage.

Although only 14 minutes expired from the time of the alarm to the dismissal of the crew, cleanup work went on for more than an hour afterwards by the repair parties, to make the area as safe as possible from reoccurrence or electrical trouble due to high voltages in exposed cables.

The three persons injured were: Shea CM1c, who suffered severe burns on the left shoulder and elbows; James RT2c, burned on the left hand and wrist and

Micklas CMAA, who was injured when a heavy pipe fell on his foot. Twenty-five men were treated for eye burns from the toxic fumes, and one man, Homestead PhM3c, was trapped in the Port Passage and was nearly overcome by fumes before he could escape.

THE WHOLE AREA IS STILL DANGEROUS DUE TO POSSIBLE HIGH VOLTAGES ON EXPOSED CABLES. ALL HANDS ARE CAUTIONED TO EXERCISE GREAT CARE WHEN PASSING THROUGH THIS AREA. ALL HORSEPLAY IN THIS VICINITY IS STRICTLY DANGEROUS.

December 15, 1944

Rough trip, taking seas over the bow, most of the passengers are sick. The wind is so strong it's hardly possible to walk against it. Expect to arrive Leyte in the am. Hope we have mail waiting. The fire is estimated to have caused \$20,000 damage.

(Leon Shea) Having had one ship go down under me, I was interested in getting back in one piece. On the "A", the only time I was doubtful was the fire in the amphidine room under the 40 MM. I know how close the ammo magazine was and could see us going up. Thirty-one years in the Coast Guard makes me a bit confused on some people and stories.

December 16, 1944

Arrived Leyte Gulf about 0700. Task Force has left probably on the invasion of Mindoro which is N.W. of Leyte. Dropped anchor at 2200 in San Pedro Bay after a rough trip from Hollandia. Had all mail and passengers taken off. We received 15 sacks of mail this pm. I received 25 letters and three packages which were in rough shape.

(George Kouba) One morning I decided to get up early to beat the crowd to the saltwater showers on the aft deck. After soaping down with the salt water soap, guess what? The general alarm sounded and there I was at my gun with nothing more than my life jacket and helmet. After standing there for two hours and the hot sun beating down, the soap turned into plaster which I had to chisel off after we secured from GQ. I remember Captain Cardwell looking down from the bridge and laughing hysterically. After that incident I decided not to get up early anymore for showers, but instead, to stand in line like everyone else.

December 17, 1944

(Meyers) Went on the USS Mount McKinley to church. She's a big ship. It's raining as usual. We have 26 men on board from an LST (738) that was sunk in the invasion of Mindoro by a Jap suicide plane. We also have 10 men from Leyte on board as we are leaving for Hollandia tomorrow. Also 200 sacks of mail to go. We got mail today.

(Amazing Wreckord - December 17, 1944

What's going on -

Mr. Garlington was heard to say, "It is kind providence that has caused both fires on the morning preceding "C" Division's paper and enabled us to glorify in the scoop - Next time we will start it in the DAW room".

Hug: "Why is it important not to lose your head in an attack?"

Hogan: "Because it leaves no place to put your helmet."

Chief McCarten: "Don't you think our daughter gets her intelligence from me?"

Mrs. McCarten: "She must have, I've still got mine."

Divine services will be held on various ships in the harbor at various times today. See Mr. Emery for full details on when and where your service will be held. The Captain has promised to do all in his power to enable anyone so desiring to attend these services. There are Protestant, Catholic and Jewish scheduled.

Torquinio has requisitioned a comb. He says this life out here is causing his hair to come back.

Joe McManus really covered quite a bit of territory cleaning up the black paint that spilled yesterday when the ship lurched.

Congrats to Al Stampone, now RT1/c

December 18, 1944

Departed Leyte at 1300. We are taking a convoy of crippled ships back to Hollandia from the Mindoro invasion. It is a slow convoy of 6 knots. There are 13 ships in the convoy: The DD563 USS Ross which is being towed by a cargo ship, six Liberty ships, one transport, one LST going on one engine, hit by a suicide plane, one LSM also hit by a suicide plane, two cargo ships and one tanker. The Ross broke loose from the cargo ship at about 2300 and is now being towed by the Charlottesville. We had some job getting out of Hell's Gate until this convoy as it was darker than the ace of spades. Our escort group included the Allentown, Charlottesville, Machias, and Sandusky, with Commodore Ryssy in command aboard our ship.

December 19, 1944

Enroute to Hollandia from Leyte. We are now making 7 knots because the Charlottesville is towing DD Ross. Painting the ship. Expect to have five days in Hollandia, then we will probably go to Finschhaven and then back to the good old USA.

December 20, 1944

Still painting the ship. Sure is a slow convoy. Just an ordinary day at sea. Had two GQ's because of unidentified aircraft, but all turned out friendly.

December 21, 1944

Still painting the ship. Have 8 to 12 watch. Sleeping topside in the hammock. Had four GQ's today but only friendly aircraft. Sure would like to be home for Christmas. We have been out of fresh meat about a week and all we get is canned beef just like the army.

December 22, 1944

Painting the ship. The convoy split up at 1500; the two DE's taking all the Liberty ships and transports went ahead at 12 knots. We are now out of the aircraft danger zone. The DD Ross is being pulled by Cape Gaspe and doing 6 knots. We also have the crippled LST, the tanker and LSM.

(Amazing Wreckord)

This on the spot news story is passed on to us by Lt. Cyrus J. Williams USN, Executive office of the ship in this narrative. These are his own words -- "Our ship was participating in the invasion of Mindoro when a flight of between 12 and 15 Japanese planes appeared over the mountains on our starboard quarter. All ships present opened fire as soon as the planes came within range. The anti-aircraft firing was excellent, and to the best of my knowledge, not a single plane escaped. I saw three planes crash about five hundred yards astern of us before one came in low on our starboard beam and crashed us amidship. Fire broke out immediately on both the main deck and the tank deck, and it soon became necessary to order all Army personnel overboard to avoid further injury by exploding ammunition and gasoline. After about forty minutes of unsuccessful striving to control the blaze, it became necessary to pass the word to abandon ship. The process was a very orderly one, and there was no panic. Many a man paused in the water to help a shipmate who was in a tight spot.

Most of the men spent about half an hour in the water before being picked up by PT boats and a destroyer, which rushed to the scene.

Of course, the whole matter of the sinking IS CONFIDENTIAL AT PRESENT, AND MUST REMAIN SO UNTIL FULL DETAILS ARE OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED BY THE NAVY DEPARTMENT. Your cooperation in preserving this security is essential.

We have been well received on all ships that have carried us thus far, but we wish to especially thank the officers and men of the Allentown for the generous manner in which they have quartered, fed and clothed us."

We of the "C" Division wish to express the thanks of the officers and men of the Allentown for this fine article. It is indeed a pleasure to have you on board.

December 23, 1944

Painting the ship. Received two radio messages today stating that we are not going back to the states as we figured. We have to wait for two more divisions of DE's to come from the Atlantic. Boy, are we disappointed. We have knocked off painting for Sunday and Christmas. Hope to write letters the next two days.

(Amazing Wreckord)

(Leo Bienfang) It is reminded that all share holders in Bienfang's Better Bargain Basement draw enough money to pay off their canteen bills so that the books may be balanced at the first of the year.

Dedication: To Mr. and Mrs. Alan C. Emery, Jr., "It's a Boy!

As this will be the last opportunity before the Holidays, we would like to extend to each and every man aboard A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

Ed "Dependable Ed" Stoker	Bob "Crash O'Kelly	Jim "Legs" Godlesky
Homer "Red Nichols"	Jacob "Junior" Barton	Stan "Eagle Eye" Young
Hans "Moaner" Kroncko	John V. Greenway	Houston "Tex" White
	John "Sweet Lips" DeMarco	

Smitty GM1/c was home on leave and was sitting with his cat before the fire. His wife had to go visit some relatives and warned him to mind the fire. She went out and he fell asleep. Two hours passed. The fire died and his wife returned. She took one look at her Smitty snoring before the dead fire and screamed "Fire". Smitty leaped to attention, tore open the oven door, rammed in the cat and cried, "Number 41 Gun manned and ready sir".

BIRTHDAYS

Omar Mountain SOM3/C - Dec. 22
Bill Ryder, Jr. RDM3/c - Dec. 25
L. Stichter S2/c - Dec. 25
Earl Chadwick - Dec. 22
Berg - Dec. 24

December 24, 1944

Well, here it is the day before Christmas and it's one of the hottest days we have seen. Been out of fresh meat since leaving Leyte, and it's really bad now. Canned meat for dinner and supper for the past two weeks. We did manage to get a few chickens from the Cutter Spencer for Christmas and we have some canned turkey, so I guess we will get a fair meal. Wrote several letters and rested.

December 25, 1944

Well, another Christmas spent away from loved ones, this year being spent at

sea enroute from Leyte, P.I. to Hollandia, N.G. with a convoy of ships hit in the Mindoro invasion. Today was a lazy one on the Allentown. The ship was swept down before breakfast, then work was knocked off for the day. The cooks really put out a swell meal, even better than Thanksgiving and we didn't have fresh turkey, only canned. After dinner a group of fellows put on a great show for the crew and members of the LST that are with us. In all, a very enjoyable Christmas. Also, crossed the equator for the 9th time at 1600, Make port tomorrow.

December 26, 1944

Just made Hollandia by the skin of our teeth. Arrived at 1800 and just had time to get the convoy into port before dark because no ships are allowed to enter after dark. Had a movie and good nights sleep. Got 18 sacks of mail.

(Amazing Wreckord)

Here's to Chief Millslagle. We wish to call the attention of all hands to the fact that we have Chief Millslagle to thank for the ice cream on Christmas. It was deemed impossible by all concerned to make ice cream for all hands at the same time. But through the insistence of Millslagle, that it could be and would be done, it was accomplished. He saved ice for over a week and took two nights to freeze the ice cream, there being only three 2-1/2 gallon freezers on board. This in addition to the hard work and supervision entailed in getting out the splendid dinner on Christmas. We are indeed fortunate to have a Chief Commissary Steward of this calibre on board. So instead of the silly "Millslagle joke in this paper, we give the chief three rousing cheers to show that after all, the jokes were in fun and that we really think that he is tops.

Here's to the galley crew:

Ernest J. Millslagle, CCS
Melvin D. Mabry, SC1c
Fred F. McCabe, SC2c
Theodore Mangus, SC3c
Clayton H. Russell, SC3c
Robert E. McGrath, Slc
Samuel C. Westland, S2c
Julian H. Ellington, St2c
James J. Curtis, StM2c

We wish to thank the above men, one and all, for the splendid Christmas dinner prepared by them yesterday. The long tedious hours spent by them will not be forgotten. Their magnificent effort to make this the kind of a dinner we would have had at home, has our heartfelt appreciation.

Congratulations to Fred F. McCabe and Theodore Mangus on their recent promotions to SC2c and SC3c, respectively.

Everyone who was present at the happy hour yesterday, and most everybody was,