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Diary of member of Kure S.S.P. covering  
period of Midway Battle.  
Captured document No 55. - October 1942.

KFB/KHP

SECRET.

## ALLIED TRANSLATOR &amp; INTERPRETER SECTION

ATIS-12

October 9, 1942.

CAPTURED DOCUMENT NO. 55.

Attached hereto is a translation of Diary of a member of the Special Service Unit of the KURE NO. 5 S.L.P. which together with the JOGOSUKA NO. 5 S.L.P. comprised the NO. 2 Combined Special Landing Party. The NO. 2 Combined S.L.P. set out to occupy MIDWAY but turned back and the diary concludes with the writer's vessel nearing PEARL.

Part of the matter contained in this diary is also covered by another diary which has been translated and distributed as Captured Document NO. 20.

Document Captured at Milne Bay.

Forwarded for information.

Karl F. Baldwin  
KARL F. BALDWIN,  
Colonel, G. S. C.,  
Coordinator.

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5th. February

Scheduled to leave port at 2:00 PM., but this vessel herself leaves at 1:30 and from near the 3rd. Sea embarkment pilots the SHIBAZONO MARU (about 1800 tons). Having passed through the port entrance we drop the SHIBAZONO MARU (near UKIJIMA) and join our unit for searchlight practice., in formation. We continue through the night and as I have not been at sea for some little time I feel not to well. I am on duty from 11:00 to 1:00 and from 5:00 to 7:00 and the minesweeper feels strange to me so that manoeuvring the vessel is not easy.

6th. February

Entered port (HACHIJOFJIMA) at 7:50 AM., Before entering the port went once around the island to select a suitable anchorage and although it was very rough the anchorage itself in the shadow of the mountain was unexpectedly quiet. No announcement of the time of departure comes from the KASAGI. All we see is the KASAGI'S pinnace make three trips to the shore. Warrant officers and higher ranks can go ashore, but if I want to go ashore I must first notify each vessel which is not very satisfactory. When I look through the 12 centimetre(glasses?) I see motor cars and electric lights and am a little surprised. The clothes also are not a bit different from at home. It is only when I see the canoes that I realise I have come south.

At about 3:50 we received a signal to say that we should sail at 4:30. After clearing the port we practice searchlight drill in formation. On duty from 9:00 till 11:00

7th. February

During my watch from 3:00 to 5:00 the sea is very calm and peaceful. If it was always like this navigation would be very pleasant. Enter URAGA at 7:30.

8th. February

We remained at URAGA all today.

11th. February

I thought that today at least we would not sail but at 7:30 we suddenly received the order "Prepare to leave port immediately". According to the Captain, when he returned from TORIGASAKI, an enemy submarine appeared at SUSAKI 180° 17' and was bombed by aircraft whilst submerging. What happened afterwards is not clear. Although the Chief Engineer had not returned we left port at 8:10 and set out for minesweeping. The 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, Destroyer (trans. note--Flotilla-) have also received orders and it seems that a state of emergency exists.

12th. February

Continued from last night minesweeping from north to south and from east to west. Swept all day but no signs of the enemy.

14th. February

Continued sweeping the same as yesterday. The Commander says that if there are no signs of the enemy by 0600 hrs on the 15th. we should return to a certain base.

15th. February

On duty for the 1:00 to 3:00 watch wondering aimlessly about and about to ask whether there was no work to do when there was the mishap to the 22nd, Destroyer (trans. note--Flotilla-) (G-11)

CAPTURED DOCUMENT NO. 55 (cont.)

Special news session at 10:30 PM., when we heard of the unconditional surrender of Singapore.

17th. February

Left URAGA as escort to 4 merchant vessels at 1530 hrs. Stopped convoying at 2230 hrs. at a point OSHIMA 270°.

18th. February

Entered URAGA at 1:00 AM.

21st. February

Received an order at 1100 hrs., to convoy the South Sea bound HOKUSHO MARU. Went out of port at 1330 hrs., but the HOKUSHO MARU did not appear until about 1500 hrs. About to start convoying but had to drop anchor for half an hour through engine trouble. Stopped convoying at 2330 off the southern point of OSHIMA Island.

22nd. February

Reached URAGA 0200 hrs.

24th. February

Left port at 0800 hrs., for provisional inspection of Soviet Vessel. Soon after we left received the order to return. Left again at 1300 hrs. Also met the "LYON" MARU and the AKAGI MARU.

27th. February

In the afternoon engaged in minelaying with the IRAKO MARU.

1st. March

Received a report that the MANJU MARU had received a torpedo attack from an enemy submarine. Taking on water and provisions we were sent to investigate, at 1720 hrs., we reached the neighborhood of ARAJIMA and patrolled about but saw no indication of the enemy.

3rd. March

Entered NAGAURO port at 0730 hrs.

4th. March

At 7:20 PM., a state of emergency was proclaimed over the radio ( from YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE and the Command of the Home Defences ). When I got back to the vessel about 10:30 I was told that according to preliminary reports aircraft attacked MINAMITORISHIMA at about 4:00 AM., this morning. It seems that aircraft carrier(s) and destroyer(s) were utilized and that our radio station was completely destroyed by fire. Three dead and some wounded. Further details not clear.

It seems that we may go to GUAM tomorrow.

5th. March

At 0800 hrs., the air raid siren suddenly sounded. When news came through we heard that a large formation of enemy aircraft had appeared about 60 sea miles off IJUBOZAKI. This is just about the neighborhood where our superintendence vessel is located so I suppose we probably suffered some damage. The all clear sounded at 0910 hrs.

9th. March

At about 2240 heard over the radio that the Governor General of the



CAPTURED DOCUMENT NO. 55 (cont.)

N.E.I. had surrendered unconditionally. Have the enemy countries no fighting spirit?

25th. March

At about 2000 hrs., received a report that the OKINAKI (trans. note---destroyer---) had been attacked by an enemy submarine on the 23rd. Details not clear.

15th. May

The 15th. day since the Landing Party was organized and loading has at last been finished. At a meeting at the School Grounds at 0900 hrs., the Chief Officer of the KURE Naval Base gave up an encouraging talk after which we received his instructions. At 0945 hrs., the Artillery School personnel gave us a send off and we start for KOUKI. I think to myself we are really off and feel slightly uncomfortable. At KOUKI we find the tug waiting and straight away we embark on the BRAZIL MARU. At 12:00 we sail and at last I am separated from home. Outside the port we join up with No. 1 and No. 2 Patrol vessels, and with the AKITSUSHU, and head for SAIPAN.

Sea calm and weather good. The meals on this ship are not bad but I was a little surprised at being given barley. The day passes in investigation of the men's personal history.

No attacks by enemy submarines and the voyage is very peaceful.

16th. May

Got up at 5:00. At 0815 hrs., received Unit Commander's instruction. After breakfast put on No. 3 equipment; have had it since before the YAMAGUCHI KIAN and so it is not so good.

In the afternoon heard from the Unit Commander details of the coming operations. It is to be a big show and even I am surprised that we can do it and that we have sufficient men.

In the evening received a comfort box from TOKYO. The present comfort boxes are not as good as those in the past owing to the necessity to economise in commodities.

Today we received a telegram saying that an enemy aircraft carrier had been sighted. Judging from the position given I think it must have been our own AKITSUSHU which is going on ahead of us. I don't know what the observation vessel could have seen but at any rate it must have created quite a stir at YOKOSUKA. If it was a mistake it was a very bad one.

17th. May

Passed the OGASAWARA Islands at 0800 hrs. Little by little details of the coming operations are becoming known. Today also we had a talk from the Unit Commander regarding these operations. We are going to SAIPAN and having coordinated our strength (one regiment is coming from ASAHIGAWA) the occupation of MIDWAY will be the main objective. The main strength of the naval force will after the occupation, head straight for America. At the same time the MAIZURU 3rd. S.L.P. will undertake an operation in the North (round about KISKA). We are all seized at the spirit of Japan. I expect next month the radios will be proclaiming it with justification.

18th. May

In the afternoon we undertake the preliminary arrangement of the Special Duty Unit. The mine-sweeper commander who will arrange transport and the vessel for our KURE No. 5 S.L.P. (under the command of HAYASHI) is W.O. KADOKURA.

CAPTURED DOCUMENT NO. 55 (cont.)

Enter port tomorrow at 1200 Hrs.

Spent the afternoon preparing the equipment to be given to the ARGENTINA MARU and the KIYOSUMI MARU.

19th. May

Entered SAIPAN at 1200 as scheduled. A telegram came saying there might enemy submarines in this neighborhood.

From 1400 hrs., worked on lowering the landing craft but it took a long time. Just as we had lowered the eighth craft, ordered to leave port immediately. We started loading the barges at 4:30 but it was about 5:50 by the time they were all loaded.

I hear that the ITSUKUSHIMA (trans. note--Minelayar-) received two torpedoes in an attack and sank (while anchored at SAIPAN).

Left SAIPAN at 1900 and proceed, apparently for about 4 hours.

20th. May

This talk of a 4 hour trip by Engineer Special Lieutenant KITAMURA is all rot, we didn't reach GUAM until 1130 hrs.

As soon as the KURE unit enter port tomorrow they will transfer ships and the disposition of men will be undertaken. During the night a patrol will be undertaken in the landing barges.

21st. May

The KURE unit arrived at last during the morning. Finished transshipping at 1900 hrs..

At about 1130 hrs., the ARGENTINA MARU and the KIYOSUMI MARU entered port together with No 34 Patrol Vessel.

From 1300 hrs., preliminary meeting of all ranks of Commanders.

At 1745 hours tranship to ARGENTINA MARU. It has been decided to load the minesweeping equipment tomorrow. The members of the landing craft will be decided and communicated to the commander of each craft.

Tomorrow from 0900 hrs., minesweeping practice.

23rd. May

Left GUAM at 1200 hrs., according to schedule and headed for SAIPAN.

We are the 3rd. vessel and the KIYOSUMI MARU the 2nd. vessel.

Reached SAIPAN 2400 hrs. and practiced landing operations in which the YASUDA unit and the HAYASHI unit took part. One landing craft got stuck on a reef and had to be floated off at high tide.

27th. May

At 1000 hrs., all ranks above W.O. gathered in the dining room of the BRAZIL MARU. All together there were 200 people consisting of Army, Navy and Merchant service personnel. The occasion was to Honour the Commander of the 2nd. Combined S.L.P. on his setting out for a glorious journey. A toast was drunk. Afterwards a photograph was taken. The Adjutant of the HAYASHI Unit (Lieutenant SAKURAI) was present.

We leave tomorrow at 1700 hrs.

28th. May

At 1730 hours we leave SAIPAN behind and head straight for the actual place. The convoy consists of 13 vessels with an escort of over 10 vessels. After leaving SAIPAN we head West (this is for camouflage) and later take our true course.

29th. May

The CHITOSE (trans. note--Seaplane tender--) and the KAMIKAWA MARU were weighing anchor at the time we left port and when I was exercising on the deck this morning I saw them proceeding alongside the convoy on the port side.

It is a little uncomfortable as we don't know when we're going to get a hot meal or when water will be available. Today again I could not wash my face.

30th. May

The 2nd. Destroyer Flotilla are taking it in turn to repel at sea from the AKEBONO MARU. As there is a slight it is an interesting operation to watch.

1st. June

We received an instruction that as from tomorrow we enter into the zone of danger from enemy aircraft. In the afternoon received a report from one of our aircraft that two enemy submarines and a flying boat had been sighted on the surface at a point about 600 sea miles west of NIHAZUKI Island. I don't know whether they were there through lack of fuel or according to Plan.

Today we didn't see the 7th. SENTAI (squadron) at all.

2nd. June

at 1940 hrs., our aircraft report no enemy activity. One of the boilers of the vessel on which are the Pioneers has broken down so the vessel has put back to WAKE Island which is now called OTORIJIMA.

A telegram was received to the effect that a type 56 fighter from the 24th. MOSEN (carrier Division) had been shot down with one dead.

We have entered the zone of danger from enemy aircraft but have had no attack today.

3rd. June

Received a report from our aircraft that at MIDWAY there are 3 enemy fighters 9 flying boats and one patrol vessel as well as other ships.

4th. June

At 0700 hrs., went the bridge. The convoy had been spotted by enemy aircraft and we received many attacks during the afternoon. At last this is war. I don't want to die before we reach our destination.

During the 3rd. stand to at anti aircraft stations 9 enemy aircraft (in 3 formations of 3) appeared on the port side. Straight away one SHOTAI (trans. note--Flight--) broke away and made for our stern. A barrage of A.A. fire was immediately put up by ourselves and minesweeping vessels but not a single hit was recorded. When just about over the stern of our vessel they dropped their bombs, six of which fell a short distance from the side of the KIYOSUMI MARU. About 10 small sized bombs dropped some 100 metres on our port side and it was seen that one of the aircraft from which they were dropped was trailing white smoke. After a time it ceased, perhaps the tank had been hit. Just a short time later it lost control

CAPTURED DOCUMENT NO 55 (cont.)

and turned on its back. At about 0210 hrs., the attack broke up. If no submarines come during the night it will be fine, I thought to myself nervously, but at about 2200 hrs., a single enemy flying boat appeared and the KIYOSUMI MARU was attacked with torpedoes and machine gun fire. Four men lightly wounded, no other damage.

5th. June

At 0130 hours the KIYOSUMI MARU put up a fierce barrage and we ourselves joined in a few seconds later. On closer inspection it turned out to be one of our own planes and the steep banks which it was doing made us hold our breath. We heard afterwards that it was an aircraft from the 2nd. Fleet which was sent out as a result of yesterday's attack. It was very lucky we didn't hit it.

At 0500 hrs., one whole unit reported an enemy concentration of 1 aircraft carrier, 5 cruisers and 5 destroyers 50 sea miles North of HAWAII. The JINTSU (2nd. Class Cruiser--Trans. Note--) and the 18th. and 19th. Destroyer (trans. note--Divisions?--) disappeared at full speed towards the East. I suppose they have gone as reinforcements.

The convoy was told to take evading action for a time so at 0930 hrs., we turned N.W.

6th. June

No report today from the CP (trans. note--Combined Fleet--) which is today still engaged in battle but do doubt fierce fighting is taking place. According to rumor one of our aircraft carriers (HIRYUT) has been sunk. Some sacrifice is unavoidable but nevertheless the loss of an aircraft carrier is regrettable. The convoy is on a course West or North West. According to programme today is the day for landing at M but the operation has been stopped.

No further news of the Northern Unit. Perhaps they have carried things through according to schedule.

7th. June

Went on the bridge this morning and found that our position was to the North of MAKE and course 270°.

One member of the HAYASHI Unit which is on the KAMIKAWA MARU died of fever.

Among the HAYASHI Unit talk has started to the effect that we are bound for KURE. I wonder if there is any basis for this talk. Returning home without going through even one landing operation is not to my taste. Perhaps it is all imagination but the fact that the course of the convoy is now West gives food for thought.

At about 1430 hrs., there was a report that the convoy was being followed by an enemy aircraft carrier about 300 miles to the East. The convoy put on full speed and retreated. At dusk there was no sign of the convoy in the vicinity. Just one vessel and the KIYOSUMI MARU. I suppose the rest of the convoy have fallen behind. The course continues to be West and I wonder if it can be true that we are bound for KURE.

8th. June

Went on the bridge in the morning and heard that the Northern Force had made a successful surprise landing. The MAIZUSU No. 3 S.L.P. have made themselves great by their labours but our unit, directly the enemy made an appearance in force, called off the landing operations and presented the pitiful figure of retreating at full speed.

The KAMIKAWA MARU has been included in the organization of the Northern Force and left us last night.

CAPTURED DOCUMENT NO. 55 (cont.)

At about 1130 hrs., the course was changed to 120°. Can't tell where we are going except that it might quite well be YOKOSUKA or KURE, or again it might be GUAM or SAIPAN.

About 0930 hrs., the vessel went astern so hurried on the bridge in some surprise. When I looked at the signals I found it was because the 2nd. SURTAI (trans. note--Division?--) had joined us.

In the afternoon there was a rumor that submarine I68 had sunk an enemy aircraft carrier.

The position in regard to the main SURTAI (trans. note--Battleship or Cruiser, Division of Squadron--) is not yet clear. It's about time they published some news.

4th. August

At 1000 AM., the HAMOZAKI MARU entered port. Everybody engaged in loading weapons and auxiliary supplies. Five of the eight landing craft have been taken by the HAYASHI Unit so we had only three to load.

5th. August

Went to the ship in the last landing craft. The inside of the ship presents a very ancient appearance and it cannot be compared to the BRITIL MARU. She was built many years ago and at that time was the pride of the London run. Her maximum speed is only 10.5 knots.

6th. August.

I think to myself that this may be my last night on OJIIYA Island (trans. note--GUAM--) and cannot sleep.

7th. August.

Go to the breakwater at 0700 hrs. The Commander, YASUDA, and the men of the YOKOSUKI 5th. S. L. P. who are remaining behind came to see us off. We board the launch and make straight for the HAMOZAKI MARU.

At 1000 with a single blast of the ship's siren I leave behind OJIIYA Island (trans. note--GUAM--) where I have stayed for over a month and head for RABAU. At 1000 hrs., anti aircraft stations, 2000-2200 hrs., on watch.

8th. August.

On watch 0400-0600, 1400-1600, 2200-2400.

10th. August

There is news that the ship on which the balance of the SASEBO NO. 5 S. L. P. left port last night about 10:00 O'clock was sunk by an enemy submarine 50 sea miles off RABAU. Two ships left port carrying the SASEBO NO. 5 S. L. P., the KURE NO. 3 S. L. P. and one platoon (MITSUUMI Unit.) of the KURE NO. 5 S. L. P. Only about 100 men of the SASEBO NO. 5 S. L. P., under a W.O. stayed behind in RABAU so that this S. L. P., now consists of only three men plus one Company and a Special Service Unit.

The Commander of NO. 5 S. L. P., suddenly issued lifeboat instructions and rubber lifebelts causing great excitement. Our Special Service Unit did the same.