

5/52/2/1

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ORIGINAL

2/2 PORT OPERATING
COMPANY L.H.Q.

Australian War Memorial

Item 5/52/2, 2/2 Port Operating Company LHQ

In September 1997 it was discovered that several folios from diaries 5/52/19 *2 Docks Operating Company* and 5/52/20 *2 Docks Control Detachment* had been incorrectly filed with this diary. Those folios have now been returned to their rightful places.

Kerrie Leech
 Data Processing Consultant
 Official and Private Records Sub-Section
 24 September 1997

M.H.T.
Works Reports
File 2 Books Op Coy
577
WORK REPORT.

30 September, 42

The following is a combined work report on the operations of AIF 2 Docks Op Coy RAE - HQ and "A" GP at Amity Point, Townsville and Port Moresby, and "B" GP at Townsville and Port Moresby.

"A" Group

LOCATION	Amity Point	Period
"	Townsville	1.9.42 to 11.9.42
"	Port Moresby	13.9.42 to 18.9.42
"	Port Moresby	21.9.42 to 30.9.42

577/2
On the 7 September the fore section of the wreck was taken in tow by the tugs St Giles and Garlock to a berth at Pinkenba. It was here that the only cargo remaining in either fore or aft sections (300 tons) was discharged, but not by the soldiers who had taken the risks and worked under the difficult conditions of discharging to lighters in the surf, but by civilian labour, who before AIF 2 Docks Op Coy had been sent for, had refused the work.

The work of stripping the engine room in the aft section was continued.

After the fore section had been berthed at Pinkenba the American authorities took control, and the party in charge of WO II Love joined the draft for Townsville.

A party of 24 in charge of WO II McChrystal was left on the Aft part of the ship to continue the work of stripping the engine room and building bulkheads.

During the period from the 13 Sept to 18 Sept, at Townsville, the group was fully equipt with rifles, webbing, respirators and tropical equipment.

HQ and "A" Group arrived at Port Moresby and disembarked from Troop Ship "Taroon" at 2130 hrs and marched to billets at the vocated Hotel Moresby. On 23 Sept "A" Group joined "B" Group in their work on the wharves.

"B" Group

LOCATION	Townsville	Period
"	Port Moresby	1 Sept to 5 Sept
"	"	9 " " 30 "

A tonnage of 157 tons was discharged at Townsville to 4 Sept at a cost of £52 to the shipping coys.

"B" Group disembarked from Troop Ship "Swartenhondt" at 0115 hrs 9 Sept 42. Work was commenced at 0730 hrs on 10 Sept 42.

On 12 Sept a Detachment of 26 O R's commenced salvage work on "Malaita" which ship had been torpedoed outside the entrance of Port Moresby. On 15 Sept the "Malaita", having been made as seaworthy as possible sailed, accompanied by the tug St Giles, and a detachment of 12 O R's was placed on board to help work the vessel.

The arrival of "A" Group saw the combined Unit at work and cargo is now being discharged at the rate of over 2000 tons per day.

GENERAL. The Unit is now working in 4 complete sections and C and D sections have their own quarters in vocated houses, and are complete with own messing arrangements. This step has been taken because work is planned by sections, and therefore, rest periods are not disturbed by others not on duty. Another feature of this dispersing of personnel is the security angle.

From the date of the arrival of "B" group at Port Moresby (10 Sept) a total tonnage of 35,99 tons was handled. 31,517 tons being discharged from ships to the wharf and 3982 tons to lighters in midstream.

Air raids are seldom and during the 20 days this Unit has been in operation at Port Moresby the man hours lost through ships leaving berths during air raids is only 123 1/2 hours.

Attached is a cutting from the Brisbane "Courier Mail" regarding the salvage of the "Rufus King".

Blooper
.....O/R Sgt

GREAT SALVAGE FEAT SAVES £3M. WAR SUPPLIES

WORKING from barges and lighters constantly pounded by heavy and at times mountainous seas, at the risk of explosion and fire from petrol, an A.I.F. Docks Operating Company has just completed one of the most remarkable salvage feats in Australian maritime history.

The men have recovered all but about £100,000 worth of a war cargo worth nearly £3 million from a large United States freighter recently wrecked on the Australian coast, and the forward half of the vessel has been floated into deep water and taken to port.

The ship, cargo of which included 18 heavy bombers worth \$50,000 each, broke in the middle a day or two after being wrecked, and the two halves were flung hundreds of feet apart by the waves.

Apart from the practical merit of the salvage, the operations were not without moments of heroism.

Once, when an oxy-hydrogen plant was introduced for sealing bulkheads of the wreck some petrol caught alight, and in a matter of seconds the sea was a sheet of flame.

Three men of the A.I.F. were lowered into a gaping hole in the hull, where the fire threatened to spread to more petrol and blow everybody into oblivion, and subdued the flames with sand.

When the ship went ashore seas funnel-high began to sweep over her. Rescuing the crew was difficult and dangerous.

First upon the scene was a naval vessel, but because of the terrific swell she was unable to stand in close. The crew were in difficulties about lowering the lifeboats, but eventually a well-known yacht went alongside and succeeded in getting everybody ashore.

During the rescue operations the ship suddenly broke in two, with a report like a giant gun, and sea and daylight broke through the gap.

Within a few hours the fore

part of the vessel swung like a huge steel gate, hinged by a few plates at the break. The lifeboats were hanging on their falls.

It is to the credit of all concerned that at this critical moment everybody's thoughts were on the freight.

In the first few days the rescuing craft devoted their activities to getting these supplies away before the vessel — as everybody thought it would be — could be smashed to pieces.

Fine Performance

Eventually the A.I.F. Docks Operating Company arrived, and began salvage work, under the direction of Captain J. W. Herd, assisted by Captain G. McDonald, of the Commonwealth Salvage Board.

Captain Herd was one of the officers in charge of the salvaging of the Niagara's gold off the coast of New Zealand in the early days of the war.

Nothing could have surpassed the performance of the men of the A.I.F. who followed Captain Herd's directions.

They were a unit that had been formed in the Middle East, the personnel being drawn from infantry, artillery, engineers, signalers, and Army Service Corps. Some of them had fought in Tobruk. Others were in Greece and Crete.

Few, if any, of them knew anything of steredoring when they were called upon to handle cargoes and supervise loadings and un-loadings before they embarked for Australia. This was something entirely new for them. It was their first man-sized job, and they handled it in masterly fashion.

Sea Pounded Incessantly

When they began operations the two halves of the ship were tilted to angles of 35 degrees and more, and they were pitching and tossing to the incessant pounding of the sea.

When the vessel first asunder, thousands of gallons of oil were swept over her decks. Men slithered and sprawled over the mess as they loaded the slings.

Everything had to be improvised. The ship's winches could be worked only by setting up donkey boilers on the sloping decks. This was a job all of itself.

There was no question of hours and wages. The men worked round the clock when occasion demanded it.

Records show that during one 24-hour period they handled 100 tons with two gangs of 20 men, each working 12 hours, and loading into barges surging up to deck level and falling away 30 feet below with the sweep and surge of the sea.

Adrift 15 Hours

Apart from a few bruised fingers and an odd wrench or two, there were no serious accidents. One lad, in an attempt to recover a drifting lifeboat, fell overboard and when he came up found the drifting boat nearer to him than the Jacob's ladder.

He scrambled on board, and disappeared into the night. He had neither engine nor ears. After 15 hours he was washed up on an island, and was rescued by a landing party of searchers.

During the unloading of petrol a drum burst open and sprayed the hot donkey boilers with inflammable spirit.

Everybody waited, breathless, for the flame that might have set the whole ship alight. By some strange stroke of fortune nothing happened.

When the last vestige of cargo was removed, in one A.I.F. style a flag with the skull and crossbones was flown from one of the masts.

Fore Portion Floated

Then began the task of sealing the torn bulkheads in an endeavour to save the halves of the vessel itself.

Divers, concrete mixers, carpenters, and oxy-welders seemingly sprang from nowhere, and were soon on the job. It took a hundred to one chance against the weather lasting long enough to

enable this delicate part of the work to be done.

At last the forward part of the ship was considered sufficiently seaworthy for the attempt to haul it off.

Pumps were set in motion; all water was pumped out of the ship to regain buoyancy. Sea anchors and a backing anchor were put out, and a line to the ship was fixed to a five-fold block and tackle, thence on to one of the ship's winches.

The fore portion of the vessel was hoisted by hauling on the tackles. When the task proved too heavy for the donkey boilers gangs of men hauled on the hawser, and the lowering bulk slid easily into deep water and subsequently was towed to port.

There still remain some ship's fittings to be salvaged.

The job will be voted as one of the most outstanding salvage feats on record.

EXTRACTS from Log Book "MONTORO" Sydney to Port Moresby.
Completed loading 2000 hrs. 26 Oct 42.
Rebunked 2100 hrs 26 Oct 42 Recvd Manifest 2100 hrs.
Sailed 0700 hrs. 27 Oct 42.
Convoy "Duntroon" "Larchbank" "Clen Mathieson" "Katoomba" "Tulagai"
"Port Pine" "Buran" "Merikur" "Montoro"

27 Oct Commenced extracting particulars from hatch books
Extracted names of Consignors from Manifest. Checkers
books did not disclose some of the Consignors. e.g.
Aust. Comforts Fund, American Red Cross.
No space allotment sheet had been received by me.

A few remarks about the condition of the wharf at the
time the vessel was being loaded. The "Querimba" had recently discharged
at No. 7 Walsh Bay, the cargo did not move freely. The "Montoro"
discharged her cargo at the Northern end of the wharf. At the same
time the "Tulagai" berthed at No. 6 Wharf. The "Tulagai" and "Montoro"
loaded at the same time and each caught the same convey. The congestion
at the wharf was acute. Outbound cargo had to be put on the wharf
where there was room, much of the cargo was loaded direct from the
trucks that brought it to the wharf. In these circumstances the cargo
was dispersed.

28 Oct First summary prepared from the hatch books and I am
endeavouring to reconcile this with the ship's manifest.

29 Oct A very calm trip to date this morning we were off Mt.
Warning and were off Moresby Bay about 1300 hrs. The
"Montoro" and "Tulagai" left the rest of the convoy
about 1400 hrs.

1 Nov. We passed through Whitsunday passage last night and at 0930
hrs. were off Cape Bowling green. Lance Bombdr. Whitall
reported to me this morning that none of the batteries
on the M.T. had been disconnected and that they were
corroded. I obtained some Petroleum Jelly and some con-
densed water from the ship's engineers. Whitall and Gnr.
Sharpe disconnected all batteries on the 3 M.T. the 2 cable
layers and the Compressors including the 2 that were in
No. 2 hatch. The terminals were cleaned and the batteries
which were very dry were filled with condensed water. The
Chief Officer told me that on an occasion a fire had been
caused on the "Macdoni" and the reason for its outbreak
in some way was traced to batteries in the hatch which
had not been disconnected. Anchored in the outer harbour
at Townsville at 1400 hrs. A naval craft came alongside
shortly afterwards. The Captain at my request took a
message asking for my papers for me to be sent out to the
ship.

2 Nov The Purser spoke to me this morning about my duties. He has
asked me to let him have a copy of my cargo lists as he
has very little information as to the whereabouts of the
cargo. He has neither hatch lists nor a stowage plan.
The Purser told me that the pilfering at P.M. was "dis-
graceful" and that the M.P. made little effort to control
it, on the contrary adopting the attitude "well can you
blame them" He batteries there were 11 in all and
84 pints of water were required to fill them. One of the
M.T. has been sent without a spare tyre (64914) another
of them (64911) has not a full kit of tools.

3 Nov Berthed at the wharf in Townsville at 0800 hrs. Lieut. Le
Motte was at the wharf. Maj. Arnott of M.C. came on
board and later handed me copies of H/Ls and stowage plan.
Also received the H/Ls for the cargo being loaded at T.
Docks provided an M.C.O. to check the cargo on. Maj. Arnott
told O.C. Troops that no one was to be given leave. Lt. Col.
Wallace drove me up to town and later provided transport

Warning

for my return to the ship. I gave Lt.Col. Wallace a list of the Deeks personnel who were on the other ships. Returned to the outer harbour about 1700 hrs.

5 Nov

The deck cargo that was loaded at T. gave the ship a list to Port. The Mate got the Military personnel on board to move some of it onto the Stbd. side.

7 Nov

I went into T. with the Captain this morning to see if there was any mail. Whilst there Lt.Col. Wallace told me that he had no objection to my coming ashore so long as I caught the boat. I met Sgt. Breen and Lieut. Le Mottee. Returned to ship at 1300 hrs.

8 Nov

"Tarcoona" "Katoomba" "Duntroon" and "J.R. Lowell" sailed at 0200 hrs.

9 Nov

This morning I noticed whilst the decks were receiving their daily wash down that the coils of cable, particularly those on the bottom rows, were receiving a very good soaking in salt water. It would not take much time or damage to see that any cargo placed similarly on deck were placed on some damage. This would provide for and enable the water to get away quickly and keep the cargo sufficiently off the deck and reduce considerably the probability of damage to it.

10 Nov

Lieut. Philpot and self went to Magnetic Is. today in charge of a boat load of troops.

11 Nov

Berthed at T. at 0700 hrs. to take on water. At 0930 hrs. I went up to T. to do some shopping and to enquire for mail. Returned to wharf at 1130 hrs. when I was informed that Capt. Owens was waiting to see me about some welders. I called at his office. He appeared to be very annoyed at my having gone off the ship, and proceeded to cross examine me. I told him that Lt.Col. Wallace had previously informed me that I could leave the ship. This appeared to annoy him even more. That he had nothing to do with it and he would see about it. He wanted to know if I had 29 welders on board. I told him that there were 2 mobile welding units only. He asked what personnel were on board, that the telegram might refer to me. I asked if he had made enquiries from the other ships anchored outside. He said he had not. Sailed from T. at 1400 hrs.

13 Nov

Completed hatch lists showing what was in each hatch and who was it for. Also lists for services showing what their cargo was and where it was.

14 Nov

Lt/Col. Whittall connected up all batteries other than the two compressors in No. 2 hatch. On the 13 Nov I had the parts of the 25 Pdrs. that were on deck and were showing signs of rust rubbed over with grease. He lorry No. 65020 and 64914. When these were being serviced birds nests were found under the trays in one of them there was an egg. They all showed lack of maintenance prior to loading. Arrived Port Moresby 1130 hrs. 1445 hrs. Lieut. Sheppheard came on board from D.O.C. Lieut. Furlonger from M.C.O. Had been on board previously and told me that all my papers could be handed to the D.O.C. I gave Lieut. Sheppheard copies of my lists together with the storage plan. A start was made on No. 1 and 2 hatches discharging into "Beralba" 1700 hrs. Sgt. Marshall came out to prepare to discharge the deck cargo from the after hatches. The Mate said that he would not accept any responsibility for any cargo landed onto the lighter as the ship's jumbo would only reach to the side of the ship. Marshall and I went ashore to see Lieut. S. who said that it would be safe to proceed. The whole of the cargo on the decks was cleared onto the lighter safely.

15 May

At 0600 No. 1 mupper hold emptied and a star lower hold. A.C.F. rep called to enquire as to the stowage cargo. I advised that I had no exact particula stowage of their cargo but that I thought it was No. 2 lower hold. The A.C.F. are very concerned in their cargo by reason of its pillageable nature. In circumstances it might be advisable if the F.C.O. wa advised in advance of its coming forward so that he can take all necessary steps to know its exact and not its approx. location. He further advised that on occasions the A.C.F. have special cargo which they will send with an Officer. A service might therefore be rendered to the A.C.F. if they were advised when an Officer were making the trip. Re G.L. sets. The Shipor of the above entrusted the keys for them to Cap. Schultz the G.C. Troops asked him to obtain a receipt from the Consignee. This is in my opinion a little irregular. This duty should be performed by the F.C.O. I have made a check through the hatch books as I have some recollection of seeing A.C.F. markings amongst the goods in No. 3 hold. There is no record of it. I later saw Commr. Gibbons and told him that I thought that it would be advisable for his rep. to have a look in No. 3 tween decks from time to time as their cargo might be there and not in No. 2. Canben rep. called and I advised him that their cargo was in No. 2 lower hold. 7000 c/s and 3000 c/s in No. 4 tween decks. Lieut. Sheppard said the hatch plan and lists gave him what he required it would also help is a list could be made out of all lifts of say 1 ton or more and where they were.

17 May

It rained heavily from 1600 hrs. About 1800 hrs. ship moved to the wharf. The D.O.C. and the mate asked me in which hatches there was any cargo that was likely to be damaged by rain. I informed him that some of the Ord. stores in No. 2 and cement in No. 3 tween decks aft were the only cargo that I considered could be damaged by rain. The wet season is now coming on and it will therefore be well for the F.C.O. to acquaint himself with information as to the cargo that might be damaged by rain. The wet season continues until April.

18 May

No. 1 hold completed good progress made with Nos. 2, 3 and 4. The Purser asked me to arrange for an order for my return fare. A.C.F. cargo in No. 3 tween decks. Contacted M.C.O. re my return and they would take the necessary action. The ship moved from the wharf this morning.

19 May

Discharge onto lighters completed at 0500 hrs. this morning. The ships officers comment very favourably on the improved manner in which the ship was handled by comparison with their previous trip. 1400 hrs. left P.M. for Cairns.

21 May

0930 hrs. arrived at Cairns. Reported to Capt. Ralph of M.C.O. handed him Manifest for cargo from P.M. and asked for arrangements to be made for my emplaneing for Townsville as per Movt. Order. He told me that I was to return to Sydney with the A.A. Battery. I told him that I was travelling on duty. He said that does not matter. I said what about the terms of the M.O. He said they have been cancelled and you will travel with the others and there will be no sleepers. I called later in the afternoon and asked him was he sure that the arrangements he had set out were in order as the M.C.O. had given the order at P.M. and I was travelling on duty. He said all other arrangements have been cancelled and you are to travel on the troop train. On arrival at Cairns Capt. Ralph said that he did not expect the "Montoro" until the next day. He was getting the best train he could and we would change into another train at Townsville.

22 Nov

Arrived at T. about 0500. R.T.O. not at the station. The S.M. said he knew nothing about changing into another train, and in any case there was no rolling stock available. I suggested to Maj. Pagan O.C. train that he should ring and report to Movements. This he did. We then entrained and went to Stuart for breakfast. Whilst there Maj. Pagan received a message for the train to return to T. Later R.T.O. came out to Stuart by car and he and Maj. Pagan returned to T. by car and the train returned to T. The troops were then taken off the train. One of the carriages was used but otherwise a fresh train was made up which provided more satisfactory accommodation. The R.T.O. stated that R.T.O. Cairns had not advised him of the train but had left it to the S.M. Cairns to advise the S.M. Townsville. This had been done by the railway officers but the Townsville railway officers had not passed the information on to the R.T.O.

23 Nov

Arrived at Rockhampton. Maj. Pagan received from the R.T.O. a requisition for dinner at Gladstone and for tea at a station to be advised later. On arrival at Gladstone we were told that the troops could not have dinner there that no arrangements had been made. He said we were to have dinner at Bundaberg we would arrive there about 1700 hrs. The troops had had breakfast at 0700. The Ref. Room Manager told the O.C. train that he would ring a station Rosedale and ask them to have a cup of tea ready for the train. On arrival at Roseday at 1500 hrs. a cup of tea and a sandwich was available for purchase by the troops. The train reached Bundaberg at 1700 hrs. and lunch was served. At 2200 hrs. the train arrived at Gympie where tea and sandwiches were served to the troops.

24 Nov

Arrived at Ascot and detrained to the L.T.D. Ascot. Blood tested for malaria.

25 Nov

Advised that blood test positive. Obtained permission from the D.D.M.S. to proceed to the 113 A.G.H. Sydney.

26 Nov

Left Ascot 0740 Train to Sydney left South Brisbane 1105 hrs.

27 Nov

Train arrived Sydney at 0745. Arrived at 113 AGH at 0845.

SUMMARY MATTERS

No Deck cargo. The cargo on the after decks of the "Montoro" was such that it was not possible to proceed along the main deck to the lifeboats at the rear or the rear gun without climbing over the cargo and the ship's winches. My opinion is that in all cases a clear passage should be kept.

Space Allocation. I realise that it is difficult on some occasions for this to be provided before the ship commences to load. It should be of great assistance to the FCO for him to receive this before loading commences.

Servicing of M.T. In all cases it is desirable that M.T. be serviced before they are loaded. This is more necessary when the M.T. are to travel as deck cargo. An inspection should be made to ensure that all M.T. sent forward are fully supplied and equipped, with kit and spares.

Medical inspection. A medical inspection of the troops was made within the first three days of the voyage. One case of Syphilis was detected. No further medical inspection was made other than of those who reported on Sick parade. On the 18th day out one of the Cooks reported sick and was found suffering from Syphilis. During the period in which these diseases can develop more frequent medical examinations might be advisable.

Employment of Military Personnel On both the forward and homewards journey military personnel were employed as cooks butchers bakers & cook's off-siders. One man was also employed to assist in the bar. It occurred to me that there was probably some arrangement whereby the company was charged for these personnel. Is this the case?

RAIL TRIP. I reported the incidents associated with this to Capt. Payton who recommended that Maj. Sherringham of Mvts. Rail should be advised, particularly as Maj. Pagan was putting in a report to Lt. Col. Stubbs. I reported to Maj. Sherringham and he has asked me to furnish him with that part of my report that refers to the rail journey.

Appendix 1

REPORT BY P.C.B. ON "S.S. PORT PINE"

Left Sydney 0800 hrs. Tuesday 27/10/42.

1. During day checked hatch books with ships stowage plan and the five books appeared to be quite accurate. I then drew up separate sheets for the various services concerned showing quantities and exact position in hatches. The Master, Capt. Hudson, stated that he did not receive a message from Capt. Armstrong (Blue Star Line) in reference to me joining the ship earlier and he did not know I was on the ship until he came aboard himself. He also mentioned that the R.A.E. cargo taken to the ship by launch should not have been received as the Blue Star Coy. had already refused to take it.

3. Pilot was picked up at 1730 hrs. Thursday 29/10/42 and ship berthed at No. 1 Hamilton (Brisbane) at 2315 hrs.

4. Loading commenced at 1000 hrs. Friday 30/10/42. Contacted Capt. Hooper at Docks Control, Eagle Street.

5. Guy ropes and safety ropes on winch at No. 2 hatch snapped while loading a 3 ton truck. Truck was not damaged but the ships rail was torn away. Each truck had a certain amount of stores in them and the stevedore then ordered everything to be taken out of trucks and loaded into ship separately. Loading continued all night.

6. On Saturday 31/10/42 another accident occurred at No. 2 hatch, a three ton truck dropped and smashed through the hatch covers over the lower hold.

Winches seemed to be very badly handled as three trays of ammunition were also dropped on the deck at No. 3 hatch and 1 tray with 13 cases of wet batteries was dropped into the water.

Another guy rope was broken while loading a truck onto the hatch covers of No. 3 hatch.

Loading was completed at 1730 hrs, on 31/10/42.

7. Two Officers and 15 O.Rs embarked at 1800 hrs.

Four members of the crew were paid off at Brisbane and 3 R.A.N. stokers and 1 A.B. were taken on in their place.

8. De-berthed at 0630 hrs. Sunday 1/11/42 and anchored four miles down stream to await convoy. Maintenance crew arrived at 1500 hrs. to securely lash the trucks on deck. Sailed at 0700 hrs. Monday 2/11/42 and joined convoy at 1700 hrs. with 2 corvettes as escort.

Made out separate service lists of Brisbane cargo which was all signed to Milne Bay.

9. Arrived at Townsville and anchored in the bay at 1930 hrs. Thursday 5/11/42. There were nineteen ships at anchor in the bay and five berthed. Three more members of the crew were paid off at Townsville owing to illness and their places taken by 3 more naval ratings.

10. Left Townsville 1430 hrs. Wednesday 11/11/42 in convoy of four with 1 destroyer and 1 corvette as escort.

11. Berthed at Milne Bay 1800 hrs. Saturday 14/11/42. I reported to Lieut. Jelley (Docks Control) and handed papers to Capt. Earby (U.S. Army) Port Controller. Unloading commenced at 1900 hrs.

12. 3 D.O.C. supplied 2 gangs with Lieut. Bruce in charge worked Nos. 1 & 2 hatches. U.S. Army Docks Company with three

gangs, Capt. Gordonev in charge, worked Nos. 3, 4 & 5 hatches. Jolley gang take over at midnight.

13. On Sunday 15/11/42 the guy ropes on No. 2 hatch broke while unloading one trailer which crashed onto the wharf. After questioning the ships bosun on the series of accidents he stated that the damage was caused through reckless winch driving and that the drivers were opening the steam valve too far while the winch was in reverse gear. All the drivers were warned by the bosun. Also working with slack guys causing the boom to swing with heavy loads which makes the strain too great for the guys to hold. All guy ropes were new and the runners were all overhauled. He also stated that the Brisbane damage was caused through the starboard winch being used in single gear.

14. On Sunday 15/11/42 about 0500 hrs. approximately 300 boxes of 3" Mortar Smokes and 200 bags of rice and sugar were unloaded in error. The rice and sugar was returned but on advice received by Lieut. Jolley from H.Q. ammunition was left ashore.

15. Capt. Earby returned to the ship at 1400 hrs. and admitted that he had made an error, as it was clearly marked on the paper handed to him by me that no ammunition in No. 5 hatch was for Milne Bay. He said that he noticed there was no ammunition on the paper and he thought it must have been an error on my part but he did not trouble to refer it to me even though I was on duty on the ship throughout the unloading.

At 1800 hrs. unloading was completed except for nine vehicles in No. 4 hatch.

16. The ship then anchored in the bay to make way for the "Larchbank" to berth before dark.

At 2100 hrs. three barges came alongside. One gang from U.S. Docks Company to work on the ship and one gang from 32 Employment Company to work on the barge. Labour was relieved at midnight.

Unloading was completed at 0430 hrs. Monday 16/11/42. Capt. McCloskey (U.S. Army) was in charge.

17. Sailed from Milne Bay 1300 hrs. Monday 16/11/42. Anchored outside Port Moresby 1730 hrs. Tuesday 17/11/42. Moved into moorings in the bay at 1530 hrs. Thursday 19/11/42. Bills of Lading and Manifest handed to Major Lean (Movement Control). Ships plan and hatch lists handed to Capt. Allen (Docks Control) who was in charge of unloading throughout.

18. "S.S. Barrilabar" came alongside at 1800 hrs. and unloading on Nos. 1, 2 & 3 hatches commenced.

Labour is changed every six hours, the gangs working six hours on and twelve hours off.

Unloading continued all night.

19. Two barges came alongside at 0600 hrs. Friday 20/11/42 and unloading of No. 5 hatch commenced on the port side. No. 3 hatch was completed 1800 hrs. Saturday 21/11/42. Owing to a shortage of barges on Sunday 22/11/42 only No. 1 and 5 hatches could be worked. No. 1 hatch completed at 1500 hrs.

"S.S. Merimula" came alongside at 1800 hrs. and worked No. 2 hatch.

On Monday 23/11/42 we had barges for Nos. 2, 4 & 5 hatches. "S.S. Merimula" left at 1400 hrs. No. 5 hatch completed at 1700 hrs. and No. 2 hatch at 2030 hrs.

Two gangs worked on No. 4 hatch with two barges, one on the port and one on the starboard side, using swinging derricks.

Unloading was completed at 0315 hrs. Tuesday 24/11/42.

20. Sailed from Port Moresby 1130 hrs. One corvetts escorted us for twenty miles.

Anchored in the bay at Cairns at 1100 hrs. Thursday 26/11/42, where instructions were received and sailed again at 1200 hrs. for Townsville. Arrived at Townsville Friday 27/11/42 and berthed at 0800 hrs. Saturday 28/11/42. Ship commenced loading sugar for Melbourne.

21. I report to Lt.Col. Wallis of Docks Control who contacted Movement Control and I was ordered to proceed to Sydney by rail.

Train left Townsville 0700 hrs. Sunday 29/11/42 and arrived at Sydney Wednesday 2/12/42.

(Sgd.) G.F. BREEN Sgt.

ARMY LABOUR - PORT OF SYDNEY

DATE	D.A.D.O.S.	A.A.O.C.	A.D.S.T.	N.S.W. M.C.O. GOVT. POOL RAIL ALEX.	E.S.D. HARKES SERVICE	BIRT & COY.	TOTAL	TRANSPORT
SUNDAY 27	---	---	---	---	1 NCO 12 ORs	---	1 N.C.O. 12 O.Rs	---
MONDAY 28	---	2 NCOs 45 ORs	---	6 NCOs 60 ORs	---	---	8 N.C.Os 105 O.Rs	1 x 30 8 x 3 1 Bus
TUESDAY 29	---	3 NCOs 55 ORs	1 NCO 12 ORs	9 NCOs 12 NCOs 100 ORs 120 ORs	1 NCO 1 NCO 20 ORs 10 ORs	---	27 N.C.Os 317 O.Rs	1 x 30 14 x 3 1 Tram 2 Buses
WEDNESDAY 30	2 NCOs 24 ORs	2 NCOs 45 ORs	5 NCOs 58 ORs	1 NCO 17 NCOs 10 ORs 182 ORs	2 NCOs 2 NCOs 35 ORs 30 ORs	---	31 N.C.Os 384 O.Rs	1 x 30 54 x 3 3 Buses
THURSDAY 31	---	3 NCOs 55 ORs	4 NCOs 95 ORs	1 NCO 15 NCOs 10 ORs 152 ORs	2 NCOs 3 NCOs 25 ORs 30 ORs	5 NCOs 50 ORs	33 N.C.Os 427 O.Rs	1 x 30 31 x 3 2 Buses
FRIDAY 1	---	2 NCOs 35 ORs	2 NCOs 40 ORs	1 NCO 15 NCOs 10 ORs 152 ORs	2 NCOs 22 ORs	11 NCOs 100 ORs	33 N.C.Os 359 O.Rs	54 x3 2 Buses
SATURDAY 2	2 NCOs 12 ORs	3 NCOs 50 ORs	3 NCOs 60 ORs	11 NCOs 105 ORs	2 NCOs 2 NCOs 20 ORs 13 ORs	11 NCOs 100 ORs	34 N.C.Os 360 O.Rs	1 x 30 21 x 3 2 Buses
	40	300	280	142 857	144 91	277	167 N.C.Os 1964 O.Rs	

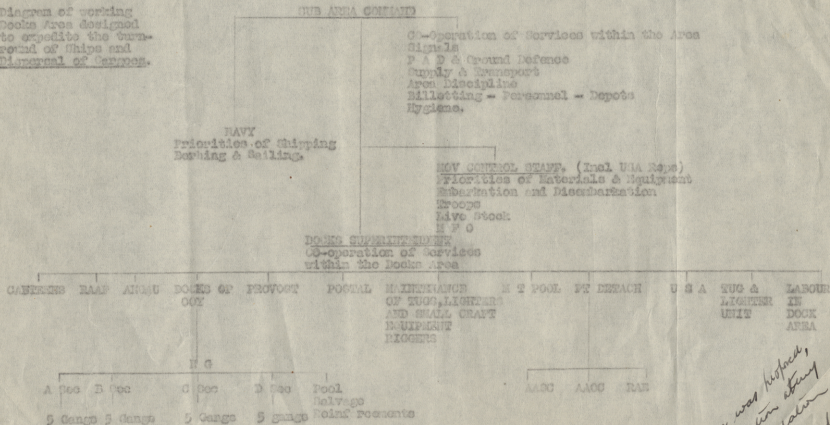
DISTRIBUTION:-

C.O.
D.A.D. Labour
Adjutant.
War Diary (2 copies) ✓
File.

GRAND TOTAL FOR WEEK 27 DEC 42 TO 2 JAN 43 = 2131

PORT OF HAYLE.

Diagram of working
Docks Area designed
to expedite the turn-
round of Ships and
Disposal of Cargo.



*This scheme was proposed,
& put in operation during
communication
Robert Schallenberg*

Q 0092

HQ NEW GUINEA FORCE
16 SEP 42

PORT ORGANISATION

1. As from 17 SEP 42, the following Port Organisation for PORT MORSBY will be adopted:-
2. CHAIN of Command is illustrated in the attached diagram.
3. SUB-AREA COMMANDER: To be appointed.
4. DOCKS SUPERINTENDENT: Major BALLANTYNE, also temporarily to carry out the duties of SUB-AREA COMMANDER.
5. Major EVANS to be TOWN MAJOR and to relinquish the appointment of SUB-AREA COMMANDER.
6. Detachment of TUG & LIGHTER COY to be under the direct control of the DOCKS SUPERINTENDENT.
7. TRANSITS dumps to be established for Australian Military Force stores, U.S. Army stores, and Engineer and Canteen stores, as required. Localities to be fixed in consultation between the SUB-AREA COMMANDER, "Q" HQ NEW GUINEA FORCE, U.S. ARMY and R.A.A.F.
8. DDS & T will implement the transport side within the limits of his available resources, pending the arrival of further organised transport units. Until these units are available, the closest liaison between "Q", SUB-AREA COMMANDER, and DDS & T is essential. As much use as possible will be made of storage space on the waterfront as it becomes available.

Signed J R. Broadbent.

Brigadier,
DA & QMC, NEW GUINEA FORCE.

DISTRIBUTION:-

U S A (5)
H O I C
PORT SUB-AREA CMD (3)
MOV. CONTROL.
D B S T
D A Q (CANTERBURY)
PORTAL
R A A F
A H C A U
PROVOST
TUG & LIGHTER COY
"Q"
"G" (3)

COPY.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Salvage Board,
175-7 Collins Street,
MELBOURNE.

29 Sept 42.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Commonwealth Salvage Board I wish to thank you and the members of the Docks Operating Company concerned, for the invaluable assistance given to the writer of this letter and his associates in the salvage of the motor ship "MALAITA" at Port Moresby.

The ship arrived safely at her destination; she is now undergoing repairs and I am sure your men will feel most gratified that their efforts have brought about the restoration of a most valuable Unit to the Australian Coastal Service.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)

J P WILLIAMS

Chief Salvage Officer

Major R C Ballantyne
Docks Superintendent,
PORT MORESBY.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Salvage Board,
Orient Line Buildings,
Eagle Street,
Brisbane

3 rd Novr 42

Major R C Ballantyne
No 2 Docks Operating Company AIF.,
AUSTRALIA.

Dear Sir,

Now that the work on the salvage of the s s "Rufus King" is completed, I wish to place on record the very excellent work carried out by the above Unit, which you have the honour to command.

Your Officers, N G O's and men of the Unit were called upon at very short notice to undertake a very hazardous task.

The night you and your Unit arrived at Amity, we discussed the position generally. I was very impressed by the manner in which your Officers, N G O's and yourself grasped the situation without having first visited the wreck. During the progress of the work I was agreeably surprised by the efficiency in which the men handled the job throughout, whether in the ship or lighters, building cofferdams in the No 3 Hold or stripping the after section of ship's gear and materials; they carried out their work with every satisfaction to myself.

It is, I think, the only time on record when an Army Unit salvaged half a vessel. When the forward half was being towed to Brisbane the Naval crew of the tug could not maintain sufficient steam for steaming. Six men from the Unit, who were on board the wreck were transferred to the tug at sea, and took over the duty of firing the boilers until both tug and tow were safely inside Moreton Bay, and achievement which is deserving of the highest praise.

During the stripping of ship's gear and material from the after section, the men handled heavy parts of machinery from the engine room, also winches and derricks and portable boilers and safely placed them into lighters. Much of the work had to be carried out by hand. The men assisted the divers, rigged their gear and lifted out the heavy parts of machinery and carried out the work in a very creditable manner, which could not be faulted by expert riggers.

I have nothing but admiration for the Unit and would be pleased to be associated with yourself and the No 2 Docks Operating Company on any job of a similar nature to the one just completed, or other salvage work.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)

Jas W HERND

Salvage Officer

Deputy Chief Salvage Officer, Commonwealth of Australia.

APPRECIATION.

Extract of letter received from Naval Officer in Charge,
Townsville, Commander V C Eddy, R N from the Master of the
S S "BOTH". 29 Sept 42.

....."What they performed stood out as an example
and on the whole did even better than our own
crew".....

THE ADELAIDE STEAMSHIP COMPANY LTD.

TOWNSVILLE

21 Sept 42

The Officer in Charge,
AIF 2 Docks Operating Coy RAE,
TOWNSVILLE.

Dear Sir,

The Master of the s s BOTH has asked us to
express to you his appreciation of your having supplied
members of your Unit to fill vacancies on his vessel to
allow him to proceed to sea, on his last trip.

He has also stated that all these men, whose
names appear below, conducted themselves in an exemplary
manner, and performed their work to his entire satisfaction.

NGO in charge of Party

NX 77716	Cpl Preston, S H
NX 79717	" Marshall, E H
NX 93456	" Randall, T R
NX 56693	" Carter, W V
TX 1490 Spr	Parkin, J G
NX 83061	" Campbell, G C
NX 28118	" Davison, G L
QX 31896	" Foster, C
NX 25099	" Smith, C
VX 21070	" Thomas, L
WX 13177	" Playle, E G H
QX 24193	" Reyer, M H
NX 82161	" Colson, F J
WX 13754	" Walsh, B E

Cpl Marshall, E H

1st Cl Fireman
A B
Cook
1st Class Trimmer
Cook
Fireman
Fireman
Fireman
Fireman
Trimmer
Trimmer
A B
A B
A B

The Adelaide Steamship Coy Ltd
As Agents for ROYAL PACKET NAVIGATION COY LTD (RPM)

(Signed)

M McGill

Branch Manager

COMMENTARY

HOSPITAL.

The figures are made up mainly of recurring illnesses and accidents. During the month 7 men were evacuated to Australia. Dengue fever is now at a minimum, nearly all personnel having had their bout. Daily average of men in Hospital for the month is 18.5.

SICK IN LINES.

This figure at 30 Novr 42 reached 45. a daily average for the month is 33.5 men. The main trouble is tropical sores. Knocks, cuts and abrasions, almost invariably infect and are very stubborn to heal.

HOSPITAL AND SICK IN LINES.

The daily average for the month of November is therefore seen to be (Hospital 18.5 - Sick in Lines 33.5) - a total of 52 men.

REMARKS.

Expressed in Gangs 3½ Gangs
Expressed in Tonnage 505 Tons daily

The preceding paras 1, 2 and 3 give a fair idea of the loss in efficiency through sickness of personnel, as the result of adverse climatic conditions.

In the past repeated representations have been made that the WE be regarded as a basis for Unit strength rather than a hard and fast fixture to be abided by, irrespective of conditions. The figures go to show the necessity, either for a WE specially designed for tropical or island conditions or special provision whereby the Unit output can be maintained by drawing on more personnel from a reserve, as required, as depletion of the ranks through sickness occurs.

Geography and climate have a marked bearing on health, and health a similar bearing on Unit efficiency. A Unit WE must be so flexible that it can be adjusted to meet any set of circumstances and conditions as they arise. If this cannot be done we only hamstring ourselves at the beginning, and then express surprise and indignation when the general achievement falls so much below what was planned or anticipated.

The facts, as revealed by the figures submitted, are sufficiently serious to hope that the incidence of sickness will be taken into consideration by LHQ, and that the latter's support will be forthcoming to future recommendations, based on the circumstances arising out of the facts, as set out herein.

SHIFT HOURS.

The reductions made in shift hours in October are showing results. The general appearance of personnel is better and the men more cheerful and willing - as shown by a comparison of daily tonnages - OCTOBER 2655 Tons NOVEMBER 2952 tons. This despite the decrease of man power due to Sick in Lines and Hospital.

WORK REPORTS.

The following is a brief statement of the operations of AIF 2 Docks Op Coy RAE stationed at Port Moresby for the month of November.

DETACHMENTS

The Winchmen attached to 2/3 Docks Op Coy Det at Fall River are still away. The number has been reduced to 9 - 2 having been evacuated to Australia by sickness - and the other being claimed by a Brother in a Unit of Ng Force.

A Detachment of 16 still remain detached to Rufus King (Commonwealth Salvage Board) and are included in this Unit's strength. No advice can be got from LHQ or Records regarding their disposal.

3 Detachments have at one time been detached for duty in this Area, but the average for this month has been one gang of 17.

Detachments at Korona discharged two vessels for a tonnage of approx 1000 Tons.

TONNAGE

38 Overseas and Coastal vessels were worked during the month. With the exception of 5 only partially completed the Tonnage discharged was 75399 Tons. Tonnage backloaded was 13173 Tons making a total tonnage handled of 88572 Tons.

The average tonnage per day 2952 Tons.

TURN ROUND

The total figure of 33 completed vessels (27 Overseas and 6 Coastal) makes an average turn round of over 1 vessel per day.