



From No. P.A. 2705 Name A.B. Spood T.D.
Unit or Group H.M.A.S. Glenelg G.P.O.
Date 17/9/45
(Use Official Address only)

Dear Folks,

Since I wrote last we have been on two "mercy" trips picking up P.O.W and internees. You may have read about the first one in the paper where we went to Ambonia to pick up Australian Prisoners. We only came back from the other yesterday so that hasn't come & too through yet. We were having a stolen holiday at Rao, an island near Morotai, swimming and looking over the native village (I got myself a couple of "coolie-type" hats) when a recall came through very urgent. We returned to Morotai where loaded with stretchers, medical supplies and sailed immediately as flagship of a four corvette flotilla. On the morning of the 15th we rendezvoused with a Jap barge flying a black surrender flag where all the Jap crews - Dats boarded to pilot us in the harbour.

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(21)

Date.....

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Our shipper ran put them in their place by refusing to allow them on his bridge and pointedly ignoring their proffered hands. Australia & the town, is right at the end of a narrowing inlet about 10 miles deep, with towering hills right down to the sea. With our glasses we could pick out the Jap gun emplacements high up the cliffs dominating the gulf. The natives had had no idea that we were coming, and as we steamed in, dozens of canoes pulled off from the shore, waving and yelling to us. There was no doubt whatsoever that the welcome was spontaneous, and after we had heard some of the treatment the Japs had given them we could quite understand their attitude. As we came alongside the wharf, the Aussies charged through the gateway cheering us alongside we yelled back. It was unforgettable scene.

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(3)

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We dished out Aussie smokes and the cooks dashed out with a fresh batch of buns, the first bread they tasted for 3½ years. Then we started loading, from the warehouse on the wharf came all the stretcher cases. They were in pitifable condition, having beris beris, malaria dysentery and malnutrition. Of the original 500 odd only 130 were still alive the rest were starved, beaten to death, ~~de~~ beheaded or died of lack of medical attention. The tales they told were terrible, how any survived is a wonder. On their stories we arrested a Gaf as a War Criminal and brought him back with us. ~~He~~ He was responsible for many deaths. After we were loaded we shelled out, the messdeck was full of stretchers. Luckily the weather was good or else they would have had a ~~egg~~ bad trip. At Morotai a band was waiting on the wharf, also Blamey & his brassbands and

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(4)

a fleet of ambulances, I got some photos of the whole business. (but they are yet to be printed. Some day) they loaded us up with more medical stores and we left for Medano Belebes to pick up P.O.W. & internees. We arrived the next day, the Japs had nothing ready at all, so an armed guard and party went ashore to make arrangements as the Spitfires & Beaufighters (50 in all) roared overhead.

The next morning I got ashore to the wharf where they were loading the Dutch etc. (regular League of Nations they were.) I commandeered a Jap bike and went for a ride around the town. As in Ambon the town was flattened by the Air Force so there was little to see but ruins. But what struck me most was the attitude of the natives. They just stood in sullen groups and stared at us, no smiles, and no

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actual hostility. I expect the Jap
propaganda, coupled with the
bombing was responsible as the
natives who came alongside the ship
soon thawed out and were very
friendly. We were getting bananas
for a couple of cigarettes a bunch,
I also had much fun trying to speak
to them in Malay. The P.O.W.
wrote us out some Malay words before
they left us. There was a good
number of women & children amongst
the internees but our skipper was
shrewd and palmed them all off onto
the other ships. A good idea as
things are very hard with women
on a small ship also we struck some
rough weather and men were able
to hough it better. We had awnings
all over the place to protect them
from the weather and arrived in
Mardai yesterday to disembark
than. There was only one Aust.
amongst them, a wife of the Dutch

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(6).

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Banks manager manager The P.O.W., we had expected to find an had all been be-headed and we brought back the gap responsible.

Well, here we are waiting for orders. The general rumor is that we leave at the end of the week for Ambonia again to occupy the place, will act as Port Director there for about 6 weeks and then SOUTH we go to pay off the ship. What happens then is in the lap of the gods, but I will be getting leave sometime about Christmas if this goes through as rumoured, and then probably discharged on the points system. I hope to get to Torrens Depot for a while after we pay off. John is still ashore I think, I will go off tomorrow to try and see him. Last time I went he was working where nobody knew, so I had to go back on board.

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He was still waiting patiently when I saw him last.

Any news of George yet? After seeing the condition of those blokes we brought out, I hope you aren't expecting him to be in a very good shape unless he is one of the lucky ones. But some ~~that~~ those blokes are on board as I write and even after a week are looking a lot better. I reckon good food will soon put them right.

We got paid today and I am enclosing \$5 for back board seeing I am drawing almost a full pay. I banked £20 today making \$56 in my other a/c. so you need have no fear about it being squandered. It is hardly worth making out the allotment now as we have been paid a month in advance and I will need my pay down south. I still have \$10 now too for emergencies so am in the money.

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Got a notice from the Trustees
for £22/15/- which I expect is in
the a/c by now.

Tom is still at Balikpapan but
doesn't look like us going there so
I will have to wait till he goes
south to see him. He expects to
be sent as garrison to the Sunda
Islands.

Well I guess that's all for now.
This end of the censorship ~~is~~
certainly make letter writing easier.

Love

Jan.

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Wednesday 5 September 2007

Australian War Memorial
Canberra ACT

Dear Sirs - I enclose a letter I wrote to my mother and family on 17 Sept 1945 when ~~an~~ ASDIC alle-seaman on corvette HMAS Glenglynn. You already have copies of some of my photographs of this time (mentioned on page (4) but I only found this letter last week when I was preparing ^{ing} to go to Western Australia (leaving Hobart on 15 Sept next) to attend the "Naming Ceremony" of HMAS Glenglynn (Mark II) - a mines patrol boat being built by AUSTRAL Shipyards in Henderson WA - on 6 October next. Page (4) incidentally says 'MEDANO' - this is meant to be MENADO in the CELEBES.

JOHN on page (6) is my brother JOHN GEMMEL SPROD, (now deceased), RAAF eldest brother GEORGE NAPIER

GEORGE (P.T) is my SPROD (also deceased)

You have signals cartoons (as prisoners of war)

FRANK WHITTENBURY who lives in Blackwood SA, and was in the ARMY. Hope this letter is of interest. The way it is carefully written (for me) suggests that I knew I was recording important history when I wrote it!

FROM:

Mr Dan Sprod
686 Sandy Bay Road
Sandy Bay Tas 7005

He was the cartoonist and of some of his CHANGI VERN on p(2) is VERNON

Sincerely

Dan Sprod
[THOMAS DANIEL SPROD]
PA 2705
Rc HMAS GLENGLYNN RAN



