

AWM78
**Reports of Proceedings,
HMA Ships and Establishments**

HMAS AUSTRALIA

Item number: 44/1

Title: August 1939 - December 1941.
Refers to contents as a war diary



AWM78-44/1

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ORIGINAL.

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL

AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES
ACCESS STATUS

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NAVAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

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AUTHORITY: DIGIN ADMIN 8/3

REVIEWER: *R. L. Smith* *LEORAN*
(for DSSI (Navy)).

Date: *29 March 90*

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Reviewer: LCDR R. L. Smith (RANEM)

Signature: *R. L. Smith* Date: *NOV 90*

Subject :

H.M.A.S. "Australia"

War Diary of

WAR DIARY
SEPT 1939 - DEC 1942

~~SEPT. 1939 - JULY 1941~~

589/204775

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CONFIDENTIAL

"Australia"

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE

NAVAL BOARD

Subject War Drang

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Commonwealth of Australia

Department of Defence

DEFENCE
CONFIDENTIAL

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Royal Australian Navy. *MS 765 DNI 13/2/40*

From The Commanding Officer, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".

Date 5th. March, 1940 Reference No. S.C.127/2/9

To The Rear-Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron.

Subject War Diary, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".

With reference to Navy Office Letter No. 589/201/765, of 10th. February, 1940, herewith are forwarded Monthly War diaries covering the period 28th August, 1939, to 29th. February, 1940.



Rear Admiral

CAPTAIN.

II.

A.F. 70/16.
The Secretary, Naval Board.

Forwarded for the information of the Naval Board.

"CANBERRA". c/o G.P.O.
8th March, 1940.

Grace
REAR ADMIRAL COMMANDING,
H.M. AUSTRALIAN SQUADRON.

a.c. n.s. 26/3

on 30/3

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st March, 1940.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 28th AUGUST, 1939, TO
30th SEPTEMBER, 1939.

1939.

1. 28th August. H.M.A.S. "Australia" commissioned at Sydney.
2. 3rd September. War declared by Great Britain against Germany.
3. 29th September. Placed under the administration of the
Commodore Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron.

Sailed for Port Phillip. On passage carried out Trade Defence Operation (OY1) off the South-East coast of Australia in conjunction with the Royal Australian Air Force and those ships of the Squadron disposed in New South Wales and Victoria.



CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
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(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st March, 1940.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st OCTOBER, 1939, TO

31st OCTOBER, 1939.

- 1939.
1. 2nd October. Entered Port Phillip.
 2. 11th October. (Zone -10) Proceeded to rendezvous with H.M.A.S. "Canberra" off the coast of New South Wales passing Port Phillip Heads at 1130.
When in position 20 miles South of Cape Schank a message was received from Naval Board that a suspicious vessel, probably a warship, had been sighted that morning at 0500 off Gabo Island and that aircraft were investigating the report and searching the area. Notice for steam was advanced to full speed at half an hour's notice and speed was increased so as to be in a favourable position for making contact and covering the trade routes.

Operation Orders for "Canberra" and "Australia" were subsequently received by signal from the Flag Officer Commanding Australian Squadron, but at 2043 information was received from Naval Board that air search had disproved the presence of any suspicious vessel and that investigation could be discontinued.
 3. 12th October. Joined "Canberra" and carried out exercises in company.
 4. 13th October. Entered Port Jackson.
 5. 20th October. Proceeded to sea and exercised off Port Jackson with "Canberra" and "Adelaide" returning to Sydney on completion.
 6. 24th October. Proceeded to sea with "Adelaide" in company and carried out Trade Protection Patrol between Newcastle and Twofold Bay, and exercises.
 7. 26th October. Proceeded into Port Jackson.

Rear Admiral

CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
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H.M. Australian Squadron.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
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SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st NOVEMBER, 1939, TO
30th NOVEMBER, 1939.

- 1939.
1. 1st November. Rear-Admiral J.G. Crace, R.N. assumed command of H.M. Australian Squadron.
 2. 2nd November. (Zone -10) Proceeded to sea at 1315 and carried out exercises with "Canberra" and "Adelaide".
 3. 3rd November. Returned to Port Jackson.
 4. 7th November. (Zone -10) At 1822, slipped and proceeded to carry out night encounter exercise with H.M.S. "Moreton Bay".
 5. 8th November. (Zone -10) Joined "Canberra" off Port Jackson for exercises.
1438 parted company and proceeded to patrol off Gabo.
 6. 9th November. Continued patrol off Gabo until 1800 then shaped course for Sydney.
 7. 10th November. Arrived Port Jackson.
 8. 14th November. Proceeded in company with "Canberra" for exercises and patrol to the Southward.
 9. 15th November. (Zone -10) Ships anchored in Jervis Bay.
Information having been received that unidentified ships had been reported off Archer Point and Double Island at 0400 on 13th November and that air searches were being carried out, ships weighed and proceeded at 1345, "Canberra" to the Northward and "Australia" to the Southward to patrol off Gabo.
 10. 16th November. Patrol was maintained until information was received that air search was completed, when course was set to rejoin the Flag.
 11. 17th November. Carried out exercises with "Canberra" and entered Port Jackson at 1200.
 12. 20th November. Proceeded to sea for exercises with "Canberra" and "Adelaide". On completion "Canberra" and "Australia" proceeded to Melbourne.
 13. 22nd November. Secured alongside at Port Melbourne at 1100.
 14. 25th November. At 1430 sailed for Albany in company with "Canberra". After leaving Port Phillip speed was increased to 20 knots, it being the intention to be on the West Australian trade routes by the "furthest-on" date of the arrival of a German raider known to be operating in the Indian Ocean.

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H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
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II.
(WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st NOVEMBER, 1939, TO
30th NOVEMBER, 1939.)

SECRET

15. 28th November. Ships anchored in King George Sound at 1053
(Zone -8) and fuelled from R.A.F.A. "Kurumba".
- 1938 proceeded independently to take up datum positions for patrol, i.e. approximately 110 miles South-West from Rottnest Island.
16. 29th November. Patrolled in the vicinity of Datum Position
(Zone -8) from 1200. "Canberra" and "Sydney" were acting similarly, their Datum Positions being 69 and 137 miles respectively to the Northward. Patrol was carried out across the trade routes during daylight and parallel to them during dark hours.
17. 30th November. Patrol was continued until 1145 when, in
(Zone -8) accordance with orders to escort S.S. "Katoomba" from a position 50 miles South-West of Rottnest Island until abreast Cape Leeuwin, course was set to rendezvous with her. S.S. "Katoomba" was carrying troops from Western Australia to the Eastern States. The escort of "Katoomba" was taken over from "Canberra" at 1630.

Rm. Mount

CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

II.
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(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st March, 1940.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st DECEMBER, 1939, TO
31st DECEMBER, 1939.

- 1939.
1. 1st December.
(Zone -8) Escort of S.S. "Katoomba" continued until off Cape Leeuwin at 0200, when "Australia" parted company with "Katoomba" and returned to the datum position and resumed patrol.
 2. 2nd December.
(Zone -8) Proceeded to rendezvous with "Sydney" and "Canberra" in the vicinity of the latter ship's datum position at 0600. Carried out exercises in company until 1100 when "Sydney" parted company and "Canberra" and "Australia" proceeded to King George Sound.
 3. 3rd December.
(Zone -8) Anchored in King George Sound and fuelled from R.A.F.A. "Kurumba".

"Canberra" proceeded at 1400 and "Australia" at 1528.
 4. 4th December.
(Zone -8) Rejoined "Canberra" at 0800 and proceeded to Port Melbourne carrying out exercises in company on passage.
 5. 6th December.
(Zone -10) Arrived Williamstown at 1545 and fuelled.
 6. 7th December. Sailed for Sydney.
 7. 8th December.
(Zone -10) Arrived Sydney 1700.
 8. 21st December.
(Zone -10) Ordered to raise steam with all despatch on receipt of message that Royal Australian Air Force aircraft had sighted a suspicious vessel off Montague Island. "Australia" slipped at 1258 and proceeded with despatch ahead of "Canberra" to an interception position 90 miles South-East of Sydney, arriving there at 1645. Course was then altered to the N.N.E., the intention being to keep approximately abreast the suspicious vessel's furthest-on position, whilst keeping to seaward of the trade routes, and to be within reasonable distance of the focal area of the approaches to Port Jackson and Newcastle. Shortly after steadying on the new course information was received that the vessel had been identified.
 9. 22nd December. Proceeded to rendezvous with "Canberra" and, after carrying out exercises in company, returned to Port Jackson arriving there at 2200.
 10. 29th December. Ship's Company proceeded on long leave and the ship was placed at 48 hours notice for steam.

Rear Admiral

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

CAPTAIN.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st March, 1940.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st DECEMBER, 1939, TO
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CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st JANUARY, 1940, TO
31st JANUARY, 1940.

- 1940.
1. 5th January. Ship was docked by two tugs.
 2. 8th January. Ship's Company returned from leave. The ship undocked P.M. under own power and reverted to four hours notice for steam.
 3. 9th January. Proceeded to sea for exercises and returned to Sydney on completion.
 4. 10th January. 0819 slipped and with "Empress of Canada" in
(Zone -10) company proceeded to rendezvous with the New Zealand contingent of Convoy U.S.1. The convoy was joined at 1150, and was composed of "Orion", "Dunera", "Strathaird", "Sobieski", "Rangitata" and "Empress of Canada". The escort on joining being H.M.S. "Leander" wearing the Broad Pendant of the Commodore Commanding New Zealand Squadron ("Canberra" and "Ramillies" having proceeded into Sydney during the forenoon and morning respectively).
- "Sydney" joined the escort at about noon.
- At 1600 "Otranto", "Orford", "Orcades" and "Strathnaver" joined the convoy from Sydney. "Canberra" and "Ramillies" joined the escort at this time. "Leander" then parted company and proceeded into Sydney.
5. The convoy was then formed as follows:-

"Otranto"	"Orion" (Commodore)	"Orcades"
"Strathaird"	"Empress of Canada"	"Rangitata"
"Sobieski"	"Strathnaver"	"Dunera" (Vice-Commodore)
"Orford"		
- Whilst the escorting ships were:-
- "Canberra" (The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.)
"Ramillies"
"Australia"
"Sydney"
6. 11th January. "Sydney" parted company.
 7. 12th January. "Empress of Japan" joined the convoy off Port Phillip shortly after noon and took station astern of "Strathnaver".
 8. 18th January. During the forenoon, the convoy formed into three columns for entering the swept channel. "Australia" led into Gage Roads "Orion", "Orcades" and "Otranto". On arrival, the ships of the convoy

anchored in...../

SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st JANUARY, 1940, TO

31st JANUARY, 1940.

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"Sobieski"	"Strathnaver"	"Dunera"
"Orford"		(Vice-Commodore)

Whilst the escorting ships were:-

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II.

(WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st JANUARY, 1940, TO
31st DECEMBER, 1940).

SECRET

(Continued)
8.

anchored in Gage Roads or proceeded into Fremantle, while ships of the escort anchored in Gage Roads.

H.M.S. "Kent" and the French Cruiser "Suffren" were at anchor when "Australia" arrived.

9. 20th January.
(zone - 2)

"Ramillies" took over as senior officer of the escort with "Kent" and "Suffren" escorting ships.

Proceeded to sea for exercises in company with the Rear-Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron in "Canberra".

At 1730, "Canberra" and "Australia" steamed through the lines of the convoy cheering ship as each ship drew abreast of each transport.

10. 21st January.

Proceeded into Fremantle and secured to North Wharf.

11. 30th January.

"Canberra" proceeded to Port Melbourne and "Australia" assumed the duties of Senior Officer Force "ZZ".

While alongside, carried out Training Classes.

Rm. [Signature]

CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

II.

SECRET (WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st JANUARY, 1940, TO 31st DECEMBER, 1940).

(Continued)
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(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st March, 1940.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st FEBRUARY, 1940, TO

29th FEBRUARY, 1940.

- 1940.
1. 5th February.
(Zone -8) Proceeded and anchored in Gage Roads. Carried out drills at anchor.

1500 weighed and exercised under way, subsequently patrolling to the Northward.
 2. 6th February.
(Zone -8) Carried out dummy bombardment of Rottnest Island at request of Military between 0600 and 0800.

0800 proceeded to Sydney passing the longitude of Albany A.M. Wednesday, 7th February, (as ordered by R.A.C.A.S.)
 3. 7th February. "Sydney" took over duties of Senior Officer Force "ZZ".
 4. 12th February. Arrived Port Jackson.
 5. 22nd February.
(Zone -10) Proceeded to sea and carried out exercises in company with "Canberra" and "Adelaide".

2132 parted company and proceeded to take up initial position for Trade Protection Operation (OY. 6.). The ships taking part in this operation were "Canberra", "Australia", "Adelaide" and "Westralia" with R.A.A.F. aircraft co-operating.
 6. 23rd February.
(Zone -10) "Australia" arrived at datum position 45 miles 075° from Sugarloaf Point and in accordance with previous orders, commenced patrolling the trade route to the Northward.

The operation ceased at 1200 and course was then set for Brisbane.
 7. 24th February.
(Zone -10) 1200 arrived Brisbane and secured alongside Mercantile Wharf.
 8. 28th February.
(Zone -10) 0945 slipped and proceeded, anchoring in Moreton Bay for Harbour Drills and exercised picking up aircraft under way.

1630 proceeded to rendezvous with "Canberra" in position 155° Stevens Point 40 miles at 0300 1st March, 1940.

Rear Admiral

CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st March, 1940.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1st FEBRUARY, 1940, TO

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1630 proceeded to rendezvous with "Canberra" in position 155° Stevens Point 10 miles at 0300 1st March, 1940.

(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.

SECRET

No. SC. 188/2/9.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st April, 1940.

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1ST. TO 31ST. MARCH, 1940.

1. 1st March (Zone -10) - Joined "CANBERRA" and exercised off the coast of New South Wales, proceeding into Sydney at 1730.
2. 2nd-4th March - At Sydney.
3. 5th March (Zone -10) - 1500 slipped and proceeded to sea for exercises with "CANBERRA" and "ADELAIDE". On completion "CANBERRA" proceeded to Westernport and the remaining Ships returned to Sydney.
4. 6th-11th March - At Sydney.
5. 12th March - 0858 proceeded to sea for exercises with "CANBERRA", "ADELAIDE" and "SWAN".
6. 13th March - Returned to Sydney, securing at 1147.
7. 14th-18th March - At Sydney.
8. 15th March - H.M.S. "RAMILLIES" arrived at Sydney and commenced short refit.
9. 19th March - Slipped and proceeded at 1519 for exercises. Returned to harbour and secured at 2039.
10. 20th-31st March At Sydney.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office,
MELBOURNE.
(Copy to The Rear-Admiral Commanding,
H.M. Australian Squadron).

CAPTAIN.

a.c.m.s. 1.5/6

Don J. pa 1/12

C.L.O.

SECRET

No. SC. 188/2/9.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st April, 1940.

WAR DIARY - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1ST. TO 31ST. MARCH, 1940.

1. 1st March
(Zone -10) - Joined "CANBERRA" and exercised off the coast of New South Wales, proceeding into Sydney at 1730.
2. 2nd-4th March - At Sydney.
3. 5th March
(Zone -10) - 1500 slipped and proceeded to sea for exercises with "CANBERRA" and "ADELAIDE". On completion "CANBERRA" proceeded to Westernport and the remaining ships returned to Sydney.
4. 6th-11th March - At Sydney.
5. 12th March - 0858 proceeded to sea for exercises with "CANBERRA", "ADELAIDE" and "SWAN".
6. 13th March - Returned to Sydney, securing at 1147.
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(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office,
MELBOURNE.

(Copy to The Rear-Admiral Commanding,
H.M. Australian Squadron).

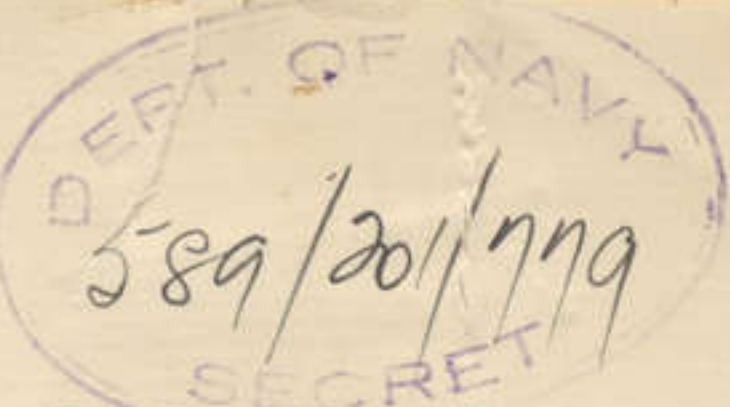
SECRET

No. SC.2/9.

ACK. BY A.S. 1239Y

14 MAY P.M.

W.M.



H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
3rd May, 1940.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY - 1ST TO 30TH APRIL, 1940.

All times are Zone -10.

1. 1st April. Squadron March through Sydney.
2. 1st-2nd April. At Sydney.
3. 3rd April Proceeded to sea at 0901 and carried out gunnery practices with "CANBERRA".
1103 Parted company with Flagship and proceeded to Port Melbourne. On the way anchored for a few hours in Jervis Bay to embark Pattern VI Target.
4. 5th April 0947 Berthed at Williamstown and completed with oil fuel. Disembarked Pattern VI Target.
1412 Shifted berth to Prince's Pier, Port Melbourne, securing at 1508.
5. 5th-8th April At Port Melbourne.
6. 9th April 0829 Slipped and exercised in Port Phillip.
1628 Anchored off Quarantine Station (Portsea).
7. 10th April 0640 Weighed and proceeded to Westernport, anchoring off Han's Inlet at 0956.
1743 Proceeded to Sydney.
8. 11th April. 1400 spoke "RAMILLIES" and "ADELAIDE" who were on passage Sydney to Melbourne.
9. 12th April. Carried out exercises off Port Jackson and on completion entered Sydney Harbour, securing to Oil Wharf, Garden Island at 1602.
10. 13th-24th April. At Sydney.
11. 18th April. 0900 proceeded to Cockatoo Island where Ship was docked.
12. 21st April. 1230 Undocked and secured to Birt's Buoy, Neutral Bay.
During the period 18th to 23rd April, 48 hours leave was given to the Ship's Company.
13. 24th April. Proceeded at 0920 with "CANBERRA" and exercised off Port Jackson. On completion "CANBERRA" proceeded to New Zealand and "AUSTRALIA" returned to Sydney securing to No.1 Buoy at 1347.
Assumed duties of Senior Officer Force "YY".

14...../-

A.C. N.S.B.

D.U.I.

SECRET

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY - 1ST TO 30TH APRIL, 1940, PAGE 2.

14. 24th-27th April. At Sydney.

15. 28th April. 0929 Slipped and proceeded for Wellington,
New Zealand.
"PERTH" assumed duties of Senior Officer,
Force "YY".

Rm Suirant

CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
MELBOURNE.

Copy to:-

The Rear-Admiral Commanding,
H.M. Australian Squadron.

SECRET

No. SG. 2/9.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
3rd May, 1940.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY - 1ST TO 30TH APRIL, 1940.

All times are Zone -10.

1. 1st April. Squadron March through Sydney.
2. 1st-2nd April. At Sydney.
3. 3rd April Proceeded to sea at 0901 and carried out gunnery practices with "CANBERRA". 1103 Parted company with Flagship and proceeded to Port Melbourne. On the way anchored for a few hours in Jervis Bay to embark Pattern VI Target.
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13. 24th April. Proceeded at 0920 with "CANBERRA" and exercised off Port Jackson. On completion "CANBERRA" proceeded to New Zealand and "AUSTRALIA" returned to Sydney securing to No. 1 Buoy at 1347. Assumed duties of Senior Officer Force "YY".

14...../-

SECRET

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY - 1ST TO 30TH APRIL, 1940. PAGE 2.

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New Zealand.
"PERTH" assumed duties of Senior Officer,
Force "YY".

(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
MELBOURNE.

Copy to:-

The Rear-Admiral Commanding,
H.M. Australian Squadron.

DEPT. OF NAVY
589/201/779
SECRET

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
4th June, 1940.

SECRET

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940.

1. 1st May - Having left Sydney on 28th April, H.M.A.S. "Australia" arrived at Wellington and secured to Aotea Wharf at 1053(-11½). The following ships were present:- H.M.S. "Leander", H.M. Transports "Aquitania", "Empress of Britain" and "Empress of Japan".
2. 2nd May - Slipped at 1114(-11½) and proceeded out of harbour followed by "AQUITANIA", "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN", "EMPRESS OF JAPAN" and "LEANDER" in that order. Ships followed a searched channel to rendezvous at 1430(-11½) in Cook Strait with "CANBERRA" and "ANDES" who had left Lyttleton the previous night. The Convoy, known as N.Z.3 for the Tasman passage, was then formed in the following order:-

"EMPRESS OF BRITAIN"
(Commodore)

"AQUITANIA"
(Vice-Commodore)

"ANDES"

"EMPRESS OF JAPAN".

Passage was made at speeds between 17½ and 19 knots.

Ships of the Escort were "CANBERRA", "AUSTRALIA" and "LEANDER".

3. 3rd May - Carried out Range and Inclination exercise with "CANBERRA".
4. 4th May - "LEANDER" parted company during the night and proceeded into Sydney and during the forenoon "QUEEN MARY" escorted by H.M.A.S. "Perth" joined the Convoy. "CANBERRA" parted company shortly afterwards to collect correspondence at Sydney.
5. The Convoy was manoeuvred by the Commodore in order to arrive at the rendezvous off Sydney at 1600(-10) when "MAURETANIA" escorted by "CANBERRA" and "LEANDER" joined. The Convoy, known now as U.S.3, formed up as follows and proceeded to Fremantle:-

"EMPRESS OF BRITAIN"
(Commodore)

"QUEEN MARY"
(Vice-Commodore)

"MAURETANIA"

"AQUITANIA"

"ANDES"

"EMPRESS OF JAPAN"

6. "PERTH" parted company at 2045(-10).
7. 6th May - "CANBERRA" and "AUSTRALIA" proceeded ahead of the Convoy at daylight and stopped to transfer mails.
8. During the afternoon the Convoy passed Wilson's Promontory and "AUSTRALIA" closed the Port War Signal Station to pass by V/S a cypher message from the Rear-Admiral Commanding, H.M. Australian Squadron.
9. H.M. Transport "Empress of Canada" from Melbourne joined the Convoy at 1600(-10) and took station astern of "EMPRESS OF JAPAN".

10/.....

SECRET

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940 - PAGE 2.

10. 7th May - "CANBERRA" and "AUSTRALIA" carried out Range and Inclination exercise with "LEANDER".
11. 8th May - Cruisers carried out tactical exercises.
12. 10th May - At 0630(-8) when 70 miles from Rottness Island, "LEANDER" proceeded ahead into Fremantle and the Convoy formed into two columns. The first, led by "CANBERRA", consisted of "QUEEN MARY", "AQUITANIA", "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" and "MAURETANIA". The second, led by "AUSTRALIA", consisted of "ANDES", "EMPRESS OF JAPAN" and "EMPRESS OF CANADA". Having met the Convoy at 0800(-8) H.M.A.S. "Adelaide" took station between the columns.
Columns about 15 miles apart proceeded into the searched channel and entered Gage Roads.
13. Transports proceeded alongside Fremantle Harbour to fuel and water in accordance with a prearranged berthing plan except "QUEEN MARY" and "AQUITANIA" who anchored in Gage Roads.
All ships of the escort were berthed alongside except "ADELAIDE" who acted as Guard Ship in the Roads.
14. Security patrols were carried out within the harbour during dark hours.
15. 12th May - It had been the intention for the Convoy to sail at 1400(-8), but the sailing was expedited and the Convoy got away at 1200(-8) when "LEANDER" weighed and led through the searched channel.
16. When clear of the Fairway Buoy the Convoy formed up in it's previous order and proceeded for Colombo at 19 knots.
17. 14th May - During the first Dog Watch "EMPRESS OF JAPAN" lost a man overboard. Both she and "EMPRESS OF CANADA" searched the position, assisted by "CANBERRA" and "LEANDER", unfortunately without result.
18. 15th May - "CANBERRA" carried out sub-calibre "short" shoot on "AUSTRALIA".
19. Again in the first Dog Watch "LEANDER" this time hoisted the signal "Man overboard". The man on this occasion was fortunately picked up by "LEANDER".
20. At 2214(-7) the course of the Convoy was altered towards the Cape of Good Hope. Ships in company were informed the following forenoon by the Rear-Admiral Commanding, H.M.A. Squadron that the time of arrival at the Cape was expected to be Saturday, 25th or Sunday, 26th May. During the night "LEANDER" parted company and continued her voyage to Colombo.
21. 18th May - At about noon "AUSTRALIA" closed "CANBERRA" and transferred Surgeon Commander C.H.R. James, R.A.N.R. to that ship to perform a surgical operation. Surgeon Lieutenant Robertson, R.A.N. was lent "AUSTRALIA" in case weather conditions did not permit of the subsequent exchange of these Officers prior to the Ships parting company.

22/.....

SECRET

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940 - PAGE 3.

22. 20th May - Medical Officers were returned to their own ships during the forenoon. Mails and correspondence were sent over at the same time.
23. H.M.S. "Shropshire" was sighted at 1529(-4) and took up a screening position ahead of the Convoy, when "CANBERRA" parted company and returned to Australia, "SHROPSHIRE" assuming command of the escort.
24. As the weather was unsuitable for boatwork, "AUSTRALIA" closed "SHROPSHIRE" and passed by V/S the relevant convoy orders.
25. 21st May - "SHROPSHIRE" passed her policy signal which was as follows:-
'My intentions in the event of meeting enemy opposition are as follows, either equal or inferior enemy vessels escort is to engage, consort is to remain with Convoy and direct movements as situation develops. Superior enemy, escort sighting is to endeavour to lead enemy away from Convoy but avoid close action until joined by consort, concentration of fire will not be carried out, ships are to manoeuvre to take up positions where they can assist each other by flank marking, initial movements of Convoy will be directed by Senior Officer of escort. At night or in low visibility escort sighting is to attack and direct initial movements of Convoy, consort will follow movements of Convoy and cover their retirement.'
26. "SHROPSHIRE" signalled her intention of arriving off Capetown searched channel at 0600Z 26th May and at 1820(-4) speed was reduced accordingly.
27. 24th May - At 0820(-2) "AUSTRALIA" left her screening station to identify a merchant ship which was sighted on the Starboard bow. The ship having been identified as the "CITY OF LILLE" station was resumed.
At 2045(-2) a ship was observed ahead of the Convoy which appeared likely to pass unduly close. "AUSTRALIA" increased speed and directed her by flashing signal to alter course to Port. This ship, which was identified as S.S. "MANDASOR", complied with commendable promptness.
28. 25th May - Convoy and escort zig-zagged during daylight hours and at dusk reformed into the following order:-
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| "AQUITANIA" | "MAURETANIA" |
| "QUEEN MARY" | "EMPRESS OF JAPAN" |
| "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" | "EMPRESS OF CANADA" |
| "ANDES". | |
29. 26th May - At dawn the Convoy formed into single line, "SHROPSHIRE" taking station ahead and "AUSTRALIA" astern to pass down the searched channel to Capetown.
30. "SHROPSHIRE" after leading the ships of the Convoy into Table Bay parted company at 0743(-2) and proceeded to Simonstown.

31/.....

SECRET

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940 - PAGE 4.

31. "QUEEN MARY" and "AQUITANIA" anchored in Table Bay and the remaining transports proceeded to berth alongside.
32. Having received orders from the Senior Naval Officer, Simonstown to act as Guard Ship (with H.M.S. "Cumberland") in Table Bay, "AUSTRALIA" anchored in the berth allotted. Steam was kept at immediate notice with the armament at a state of readiness.
33. At 1350(-2) "CUMBERLAND" arrived from Simonstown and anchored close by. As conditions were then possible for boatwork the Commanding Officer came on board and details were arranged for the defence of the Convoy at Capetown.
34. 27th May - At dawn "AUSTRALIA's" aircraft was catapulted to carry out a close A/S patrol of the anchorage. This patrol was continued daily when weather conditions permitted until the Convoy sailed and except for a short period was maintained by "AUSTRALIA's" aircraft unaided. The aircraft worked from Wingfield aerodrome.
35. An intermittent outer A/S patrol was carried out by the South African Air Force.
36. At 1836(-2) the following message was received:-
TO:- "CUMBERLAND" (R) "AUSTRALIA". FROM:- S.N.O.
SIMONSTOWN.
"Master of "QUEEN MARY" reports trouble with troops and requests armed guard to remove 100 men. Before removing them you are to arrange for guard to be sent on board and the matter investigated. If necessary they are to be removed to one or more of H.M. Ships. Tug is being sent".
It subsequently transpired that it was the crew and not the soldiers who were causing trouble.
37. 28th May - "CUMBERLAND" could not comply with S.N.O's signal as the weather was too bad for the tug to go alongside. "CUMBERLAND" was therefore ordered to proceed at 0300(-2) and escort "QUEEN MARY" and "AQUITANIA" to False Bay.
38. During the forenoon "AUSTRALIA" closed the harbour and anchored under the lee of the breakwater for a few hours to embark fresh provisions and to receive correspondence from shore. Berth in Table Bay was then resumed.
39. During the first watch the ship in her light condition (less than 950 tons of fuel remaining) yawed and rolled particularly violently. Cable was veered and a second anchor let go underfoot.
40. 29th May - 1030(-2) "MAURETANIA" slipped and anchored in Table Bay.
41. 30th May - "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" slipped and "MAURETANIA" weighed. The latter proceeded alongside and the former anchored in Table Bay.

42/.....

SECRET

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940 - PAGE 5.

42. 31st May - "AUSTRALIA" weighed at 0716(-2) and shifted berth $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to seaward to leave room for the Transports to anchor inshore of her.
The ships of the Convoy commenced slipping at 0830(-2) in the order "EMPRESS OF CANADA", "MAURETANIA", "ANDES" and anchored in Table Bay.
43. Convoy and "AUSTRALIA" weighed at 1020(-2) and, led by "AUSTRALIA", proceeded to rendezvous at 1200 off the searched channel with "SHROPSHIRE" AND "CUMBERLAND" who were escorting "QUEEN MARY" and "AQUITANIA" from Simonstown.
44. At the rendezvous "AUSTRALIA" parted company and proceeded to Simonstown, securing at the East Breakwater inside the basin at 1600(-2).
45. The Ship reverted to four hours notice for steam and fuelling and embarking fresh provisions. ^{Commenced} /

R. M. Stewart

CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office, MELBOURNE.

Copy to:

The Rear Admiral Commanding,
H.M. Australian Squadron.

SECRET

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
4th June, 1940.

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940.

1. 1st May - Having left Sydney on 28th April, H.M.A.S. "Australia" arrived at Wellington and secured to Aotea Wharf at 1053(-11½). The following ships were present:-
H.M.S. "Leander", H.M. Transports "Aquitania", "Empress of Britain" and "Empress of Japan".
2. 2nd May - Slipped at 1114(-11½) and proceeded out of harbour followed by "AQUITANIA", "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN", "EMPRESS OF JAPAN" and "LEANDER" in that order.
Ships followed a searched channel to rendezvous at 1430(-11½) in Cook Strait with "CANBERRA" and "ANDES" who had left Lyttleton the previous night.
The Convoy, known as N.Z.3 for the Tasman passage, was then formed in the following order:-

"EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" (Commodore)	"AQUITANIA" (Vice-Commodore)
"ANDES"	"EMPRESS OF JAPAN".

Passage was made at speeds between 17½ and 19 knots.
Ships of the Escort were "CANBERRA", "AUSTRALIA" and "LEANDER".
3. 3rd May - Carried out Range and Inclination exercise with "CANBERRA".
4. 4th May - "LEANDER" parted company during the night and proceeded into Sydney and during the forenoon "QUEEN MARY" escorted by H.M.A.S. "Perth" joined the Convoy. "CANBERRA" parted company shortly afterwards to collect correspondence at Sydney.
5. The Convoy was manoeuvred by the Commodore in order to arrive at the rendezvous off Sydney at 1600(-10) when "MAURETANIA" escorted by "CANBERRA" and "LEANDER" joined. The Convoy, known now as U.S.3, formed up as follows and proceeded to Fremantle:-

"EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" (Commodore)	"QUEEN MARY" (Vice-Commodore)
"MAURETANIA"	"AQUITANIA"
"ANDES"	"EMPRESS OF JAPAN"
6. "PERTH" parted company at 2045(-10).
7. 6th May - "CANBERRA" and "AUSTRALIA" proceeded ahead of the Convoy at daylight and stopped to transfer mails.
8. During the afternoon the Convoy passed Wilson's Promontory and "AUSTRALIA" closed the Port War Signal Station to pass by V/S a cypher message from the Rear-Admiral Commanding, H.M. Australian Squadron.
9. H.M. Transport "Empress of Canada" from Melbourne joined the Convoy at 1600(-10) and took station astern of "EMPRESS OF JAPAN".

10/.....

SECRET

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940 - PAGE 2.

10. 7th May - "CANBERRA" and "AUSTRALIA" carried out Range and Inclination exercise with "LEANDER".
11. 8th May - Cruisers carried out tactical exercises.
12. 10th May - At 0630(-8) when 70 miles from Rottness Island, "LEANDER" proceeded ahead into Fremantle and the Convoy formed into two columns. The first, led by "CANBERRA", consisted of "QUEEN MARY", "AQUITANIA", "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" and "MAURETANIA". The second, led by "AUSTRALIA", consisted of "ANDES", "EMPRESS OF JAPAN" and "EMPRESS OF CANADA". Having met the Convoy at 0800(-8) H.M.A.S. "Adelaide" took station between the columns. Columns about 15 miles apart proceeded into the searched channel and entered Gage Roads.
13. Transports proceeded alongside Fremantle Harbour to fuel and water in accordance with a prearranged berthing plan except "QUEEN MARY" and "AQUITANIA" who anchored in Gage Roads. All ships of the escort were berthed alongside except "ADELAIDE" who acted as Guard Ship in the Roads.
14. Security patrols were carried out within the harbour during dark hours.
15. 12th May - It had been the intention for the Convoy to sail at 1400(-8), but the sailing was expedited and the Convoy got away at 1200(-8) when "LEANDER" weighed and led through the searched channel.
16. When clear of the Fairway Buoy the Convoy formed up in it's previous order and proceeded for Colombo at 19 knots.
17. 14th May - During the first Dog Watch "EMPRESS OF JAPAN" lost a man overboard. Both she and "EMPRESS OF CANADA" searched the position, assisted by "CANBERRA" and "LEANDER", unfortunately without result.
18. 15th May - "CANBERRA" carried out sub-calibre "short" shoot on "AUSTRALIA".
19. Again in the first Dog Watch "LEANDER" this time hoisted the signal "Man overboard". The man on this occasion was fortunately picked up by "LEANDER".
20. At 2214(-7) the course of the Convoy was altered towards the Cape of Good Hope. Ships in company were informed the following forenoon by the Rear-Admiral Commanding, H.M.A. Squadron that the time of arrival at the Cape was expected to be Saturday, 25th or Sunday, 26th May. During the night "LEANDER" parted company and continued her voyage to Colombo.
21. 18th May - At about noon "AUSTRALIA" closed "CANBERRA" and transferred Surgeon Commander C.H.R. James, R.A.N.R. to that ship to perform a surgical operation. Surgeon Lieutenant Robertson, R.A.N. was lent "AUSTRALIA" in case weather conditions did not permit of the subsequent exchange of these Officers prior to the Ships parting company.

22/.....

SECRET

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940 - PAGE 3.

22. 20th May - Medical Officers were returned to their own ships during the forenoon. Mails and correspondence were sent over at the same time.

23. H.M.S. "Shropshire" was sighted at 1529(-4) and took up a screening position ahead of the Convoy, when "CANBERRA" parted company and returned to Australia, "SHROPSHIRE" assuming command of the escort.

24. As the weather was unsuitable for boatwork, "AUSTRALIA" closed "SHROPSHIRE" and passed by V/S the relevant convoy orders.

25. 21st May - "SHROPSHIRE" passed her policy signal which was as follows:-

'My intentions in the event of meeting enemy opposition are as follows, either equal or inferior enemy vessels escort is to engage, consort is to remain with Convoy and direct movements as situation develops. Superior enemy, escort sighting is to endeavour to lead enemy away from Convoy but avoid close action until joined by consort, concentration of fire will not be carried out, ships are to manoeuvre to take up positions where they can assist each other by flank marking, initial movements of Convoy will be directed by Senior Officer of escort. At night or in low visibility escort sighting is to attack and direct initial movements of Convoy, consort will follow movements of Convoy and cover their retirement.'

26. "SHROPSHIRE" signalled her intention of arriving off Capetown searched channel at 0600Z 26th May and at 1820(-4) speed was reduced accordingly.

27. 24th May - At 0820(-2) "AUSTRALIA" left her screening station to identify a merchant ship which was sighted on the Starboard bow. The ship having been identified as the "CITY OF LILLE" station was resumed. At 2045(-2) a ship was observed ahead of the Convoy which appeared likely to pass unduly close. "AUSTRALIA" increased speed and directed her by flashing signal to alter course to Port. This ship, which was identified as S.S. "MANDASOR", complied with commendable promptness.

28. 25th May - Convoy and escort zig-zagged during daylight hours and at dusk reformed into the following order:-

"AQUITANIA"

"MAURETANIA"

"QUEEN MARY"

"EMPRESS OF JAPAN"

"EMPRESS OF BRITAIN"

"EMPRESS OF CANADA"

"ANDES".

29. 26th May - At dawn the Convoy formed into single line, "SHROPSHIRE" taking station ahead and "AUSTRALIA" astern to pass down the searched channel to Capetown.

30. "SHROPSHIRE" after leading the ships of the Convoy into Table Bay parted company at 0743(-2) and proceeded to Simonstown.

31/.....

SECRET

31. "QUEEN MARY" and "AQUITTANIA" anchored in Table Bay and the remaining transports proceeded to berth alongside.
32. Having received orders from the Senior Naval Officer, Simonstown to act as Guard Ship (with H.M.S. "Cumberland") in Table Bay, "AUSTRALIA" anchored in the berth allotted. Steam was kept at immediate notice with the armament at a state of readiness.
33. At 1350(-2) "CUMBERLAND" arrived from Simonstown and anchored close by. As conditions were then possible for boatwork the Commanding Officer came on board and details were arranged for the defence of the Convoy at Capetown.
34. 27th May - At dawn "AUSTRALIA's" aircraft was catapulted to carry out a close A/S patrol of the anchorage. This patrol was continued daily when weather conditions permitted until the Convoy sailed and except for a short period was maintained by "AUSTRALIA's" aircraft unaided. The aircraft worked from Wingfield aerodrome.
35. An intermittent outer A/S patrol was carried out by the South African Air Force.
36. At 1836(-2) the following message was received:-
TO:- "Cumberland (R) "Australia. FROM S.N.O. Simonstown.
"Master of "QUEEN MARY" reports trouble with troops and requests armed guard to remove 100 men. Before removing them you are arrange for guard to be sent on board and the matter investigated. If necessary they are to be removed to one or more of H.M. Ships. Tug is being sent."
It subsequently transpired that it was the crew and not the Soldiers who were causing trouble.
37. 28th May - "CUMBERLAND" could not comply with S.N.O's signal as the weather was too bad for the tug to go alongside. "CUMBERLAND" was therefore ordered to proceed at 0300(-2) and escort "QUEEN MARY" and "AQUITTANIA" to False Bay.
38. During the forenoon "AUSTRALIA" closed the harbour and anchored under the lee of the breakwater for a few hours to embark fresh provisions and to receive correspondence from shore. Berth in Table Bay was then resumed.
39. During the first watch the ship in her light condition (less than 950 tons of fuel remaining) yawed and rolled particularly violently. Cable was veered and a second anchor let go underfoot.
40. 29th May - 1030(-2) "MAURETANIA" slipped and anchored in Table Bay.
41. 30th May - "EMPRESS OF BRITAIN" slipped and "MAURETANIA" weighed. The latter proceeded alongside and the former anchored in Table Bay.

SECRET

WAR DIARY. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" 1ST TO 31ST MAY, 1940 - PAGE 5.

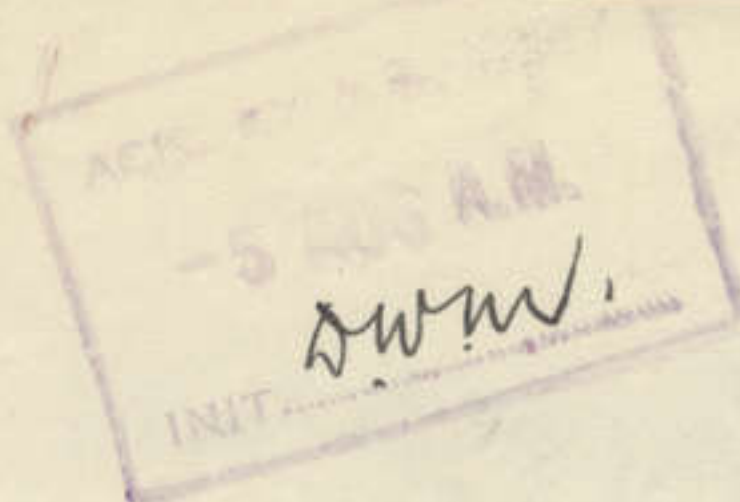
42. 31st May - "AUSTRALIA" weighed at 0716(-2) and shifted berth $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to seaward to leave room for the Transports to anchor inshore of her.
The ships of the Convoy commenced slipping at 0830(-2) in the order "EMPRESS OF CANADA", "MAURETANIA", "ANDES" and anchored in Table Bay.
43. Convoy and "AUSTRALIA" weighed at 1020(-2) and, led by "AUSTRALIA", proceeded to rendezvous at 1200 off the searched channel with "SHROPSHIRE" AND "CUMBERLAND" who were escorting "QUEEN MARY" and "AQUITANIA" from Simonstown.
44. At the rendezvous "AUSTRALIA" parted company and proceeded to Simonstown, securing at the East Breakwater inside the basin at 1600(-2).
45. The Ship reverted to four hours notice for steam and fuelling and embarking fresh provisions. Commenced 6

(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office, MELBOURNE.

Copy to:
The Rear Admiral Commanding,
H.M. Australian Squadron.

SECRET



589/201/119
H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
1st July, 1940.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA". WAR DIARY 1ST TO 30TH JUNE, 1940.

1. 1st June - At Simonstown. Fuelling completed at 0530. Aircraft rejoined from Wingfield aerodrome.
2. 2nd - 6th June - Boiler cleaning, cleaning ship and training classes.
3. 7th June - Arrangements had been made to carry out High Angle practices in False Bay, sleeve aircraft being supplied by the South African Air Force, own aircraft marking. Practice was postponed owing to weather.
4. 10th June - Unbasined in readiness to carry out High Angle practices, which were again cancelled owing to weather. Remained at anchor at short notice in readiness for interception of Italian shipping.
5. 11th June - 0201 Hostilities were commenced against Italy. 0805 weighed and proceeded into basin to fuel.
6. 12th June - Senior Naval Officer, Simonstown's orders having been received to "cover" passage of S.S. "ULYSSES", carrying bullion, from Cape Town to Durban, ship unbasined at 0900 and proceeded to rendezvous with "ULYSSES". After refuelling at Durban, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was to proceed to a rendezvous with S.S. "STRATHEDEN" and escort her to Cape Town. "STRATHEDEN" was on passage from Fremantle via Colombo with Australian Troops.
7. 1215 closed "ULYSSES" and informed her that H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" would be near her during passage to Durban, sighting her from time to time.
8. 13th June - Having intercepted a broadcast signal from the Senior Naval Officer, Simonstown that a floating mine had been reported 17 miles off East London, and this being on the direct route of "ULYSSES", closed her during the first watch and directed her to keep 30 miles to seaward of her present route.
9. 14th June - Information was received from the Senior Naval Officer, Simonstown that Italian submarines were reported to have left Italian East Africa for the Cape. No date of departure was given.
10. 15th June - At 0700 entered Durban swept channel and embarked pilot. "ULYSSES" entered harbour ahead of "AUSTRALIA". Secured at Island View Wharf to complete with fuel.
11. H.M.S. "RANCHI" was in harbour. H.M.S. "DRAGON" arrived at 1145.
12. 1249 shifted berth to Heydon Wharf and gave leave until midnight.

13...../-

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H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA", WAR DIARY 1ST TO 30TH JUNE, 1940 - PAGE 2.

13. - In view of the possibility of Italian submarines operating off the Cape obtained approval of the Senior Naval Officer, Simonstown to amend time of arrival of "AUSTRALIA" and "STRATHEDEN" at Cape Town to enable "AUSTRALIA" subsequently to approach Simonstown during the dark.
14. 16th June - Proceeded to rendezvous with "STRATHEDEN".
1623 - Identified Dutch Tanker "ONORA".
2040 - Challenged darkened ship and illuminated by searchlight. Identified ship as tanker.
15. 17th June - 1120 rendezvous in position 35°:00' South, 39°:30' East with "STRATHEDEN" and passed her instructions for passage to Cape Town.
16. 20th June - Outer end of Cape Town searched channel was passed at 0400 and "STRATHEDEN" sent into Table Bay, "AUSTRALIA" parting company at 0417 for Simonstown.
17. "AUSTRALIA" secured in the basin at 0856 reverted to four hours notice for steam and completed with fuel. Dockyard commenced work fitting temporary De-Gaussing coils. Work was continuous until completion on Tuesday, 25th June.
H.M.S. "BRIDGEWATER" arrived in the basing at 1715.
18. Normal training, leave etc. were continued until 25th June.
19. 23rd June - H.M.S. "CORNWALL" arrived in the basin at 1020.
20. 24th June - "CORNWALL" proceeded at 0740 to escort the slow portion of Convoy BG to Freetown.
21. 24th June - H.M.S. "ALGANTARA" undocked to Basin Berth at 0910.
22. 25th June - "ALGANTARA" proceeded to Simon's Bay anchorage.
23. - Drafts were embarked from various ships for outward passage to Freetown and United Kingdom. Unbasined and at 1900 proceeded from Simon's Bay to rendezvous with H.M.S. "DRAGON" and ships of the fast portion of Convoy BG at outer end of Cape Town searched channel at 2200.
("DRAGON" had escorted H.M. Transports "REINA DEL PACIFICO" and "ORION" from Durban to Table Bay where they received onward convoy orders and picked up "STRATHEDEN").
Contact was made with "DRAGON" and Convoy at 2221, they having been delayed proceeding from Table Bay. "DRAGON" parted company at 2300 after assisting in closing up ships of the Convoy. Single line was maintained during the night.
24. Course of Convoy was altered at 2330 to conform to the route for Freetown and speed was increased to 18 knots.

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H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA". WAR DIARY - 1ST TO 30TH JUNE, 1940 - PAGE 3.

25. 26th June - At daylight the Convoy Cruising Order was assumed.
The order was:-

"ORION"

"REINA DEL PACIFICO"
(Comodoro)

"STRATHEDEN".

Zig-zagging was exercised during the day.

26. 27th, 28th,
29th, 30th June - At sea on passage to Freetown.

(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Commander-in-Chief,
South Atlantic Station.
(Copy to: Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office, MELBOURNE).

SECRET

ACK. BY A.S. 1390Y

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Sum.

WAR DIARY - 1st-31st JULY, 1940.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".

31st AUGUST, 1940.

589/201/779

1. On 1st July, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was approaching Freetown with Convoy B.C.F. under escort.
2. 3rd July. Shortly after daylight, the convoy was formed into single line in the order of passing Freetown Boom, and manoeuvred to enter the swept channel at 0800.
3. H.M. Ships in harbour. H.M.S. "Edinburgh Castle" flying the flag of Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic (Vice-Admiral G.H. D'Oyley Lyons), H.M.S. "Hermes" (Captain R.F.J. Onslow, M.V.O., D.S.C.), H.M.S. "Albatross", H.M.S. "Maloja".
4. H.M.S. "CORNWALL" with Convoy B.C.S. was expected to arrive from Takoradi P.M. Friday 5th July. Preliminary arrangements were made for a conference of Masters of the united convoy B.C. to take place on Saturday 6th July prior to the sailing of the united convoy for the United Kingdom under the escort of "CORNWALL" and "AUSTRALIA".
5. At 2300 "HERMES" weighed and proceeded out of harbour.
6. At 2305, orders were received from Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic to raise steam with all despatch, and written orders were received to the effect that "AUSTRALIA" was to proceed as requisite to rendezvous with "DORSETSHIRE" and "HERMES" at 0600 G.M.T. on Friday 5th July in position 270° Cape MANUEL Light. 15 miles. This position is off Dakar where "DORSETSHIRE" had been watching the movements of the French Battleship "RICHELIEU".
7. 4th July. Weighed at 0032 and proceeded in accordance with orders. After daylight, "HERMES" was sighted ahead and closed. "AUSTRALIA" and "HERMES" proceeded as a unit to join "DORSETSHIRE".
8. During the day, a message was received from Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic passing on information from Admiralty that French Submarines had been given orders to attack British Forces off Dakar. The Commander-in-Chief directed that French Submarines and aircraft off Dakar were to be attacked and destroyed on sight.
9. At 1600, a message from "DORSETSHIRE" was intercepted, reporting that she had sighted two French Submarines and that she had sunk or damaged one of them.
10. 5th July. 0510 joined "DORSETSHIRE" (Captain B.C.S. Martin, R.N.), who became Senior Officer, at rendezvous. Force patrolled during the day about 15 miles East and West of a point approximately 55 miles N.N.W. of Dakar, "HERMES" maintaining an air patrol over that harbour. The operations were to take steps to prevent French warships in Dakar from falling into German hands in an effective state. Information was received from Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic, that H.M.S. "MILFORD" was proceeding from Freetown to join the Dakar Force and carry out A/S patrols as ordered by "DORSETSHIRE". Ships parted company, and during the night, carried out east and west patrols 12 miles long in positions along the parallel of 14° 58' N - "AUSTRALIA" the centre ship, being approximately 35 miles N.W. of Dakar.

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II.

SECRET

(War Diary - 1st-31st July, 1940.).

11. 6th July. Ships concentrated after daylight and returned to the day patrol area.
At 1715, ships parted company, and during the night carried out East and West night patrols similar to the previous night.
12. 7th July. During the early hours of the morning, a long signal was received from Admiralty directing the Commanding Officer, "HERMES" (Captain R.F.J. Onslow, R.V.O., D.S.C.) to take charge of the operations at Dakar on account of his recent local and air knowledge. Captain Onslow was appointed Acting Rear-Admiral and directed to take command of "DORSETSHIRE", "AUSTRALIA" and "MILFORD". This signal contained a message to be communicated to the French Naval Authorities at Dakar offering them a choice of three alternatives with a request for a decision within four hours after being received. 0551 concentrated with "HERMES" flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Commanding Dakar Force. Day patrol continued about 45 miles E.W. of Dakar. "DORSETSHIRE" joined at 0637.
13. "MILFORD" joined from Freetown shortly before noon, and was despatched to Dakar with the message referred to in paragraph 12. The remaining ships patrolled during the afternoon about a position 30 miles S.W. of Dakar.
14. "MILFORD" reported by S/T however, that the French refused to allow him to enter the harbour, and rejoined the Flag shortly before sunset. The message was then sent in French in plain language through the Dakar S/T Station at 1800, but the time limit for compliance was reduced to two hours.
15. 1919 parted company and proceeded to patrol at 20 knots 6 miles E.W. and S.E. of a position 10 miles S.W. of Dakar. "DORSETSHIRE" 15 miles E.W., "HERMES" 10 miles S.W. and "MILFORD" 10 miles S.E. of Dakar.
16. 8th July. "MILFORD" towed one of "HERMES"' (high speed) motor boats towards Dakar after dark, and the latter subsequently negotiated the booms, and at 0245 dropped depth charges under the stern of "RICHELIEU". It then managed successfully to evade pursuit and escape to the southward, being subsequently recovered by "HERMES".
17. Six "HERMES" aircraft delivered torpedo bomber attacks on "RICHELIEU" at 0500.
18. Ships concentrated at 0600 30 miles E.W. of Dakar and swept in company towards the port. "HERMES" motor boat was recovered at noon in position 12 miles south of Dakar. "RICHELIEU" and destroyers were observed in and off Dakar.
19. A single heavy bombing aircraft passed over the squadron and dropped a stick of bombs (photograph attached). These fell about four miles north of "AUSTRALIA". The aircraft was engaged by the A/A armament.
20. During the remainder of daylight hours the force continued patrolling off Dakar. Single French aircraft were sighted on one or two occasions.
21. At 1935 parted company, ships proceeding to night patrol line, "DORSETSHIRE" 30 miles E.W., "HERMES" 35 miles W., and "AUSTRALIA" 25 miles S.S.W. of Dakar. Information had been received from Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic that two French submarines had been sent from Casablanca to attack British warships as a result of the operations.

22...../

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III.

(War Diary - 1st-31st July, 1940.).

- 22.9th July. 0620 parted company with "HERMES" and "DORSETSHIRE" and proceeded to overtake Convoy B.C.
23. At 1600 a message was intercepted from S.S. "MEMNON" that she was being attacked by a submarine. Her position 40 miles N.N.E. St. Vincent, Azores, was 320 miles W.N.W. of "AUSTRALIA". As no acknowledgement was made by any shore station, W/T silence was broken by "AUSTRALIA" and Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic informed.
- 24.11th July. Joined convoy B.C. at 1430 at the same time as H.M.T. "ASKA" who had proceeded independently from Freetown on account of her fuel limitations. Took station astern of "CORNWALL" (Captain C.F. Hammill, R.N., Senior Officer). Escort orders were veered astern on a grass line. On completion, took up cruising stations on convoy.
25. The convoy was formed in three columns:-
- | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| "STRATHEDEN" | "REINA DEL PACIFICO"
(Commodore) | "ORION" |
| "KENYA" | "KARANJA" | "ASKA" |
- 26.12th,13th,
14th July. In company with convoy.
- 27.15th July. Captain (D) 9th Destroyer Flotilla in H.M.S. "HAVELOCK", H.M.S. "HARVESTER", H.M.S. "WESTCOTT" and H.M.S. "WALKER" joined at 1600 G.M.T. in position 54° 08'N. 15° 00'W. as A/S escort of convoy to Liverpool.
- 28.16th July. "CORNWALL" parted company 0835, and "AUSTRALIA" became Senior Officer of escort.
29. At 1248 and 1338 destroyers of the screen dropped depth charges on presumed "contacts". In neither case however, was any result observed, and the destroyers concerned regained station almost immediately.
30. At 1744, being then off Mull of Kintyre, "AUSTRALIA" parted company with the convoy and proceeded to the Clyde, anchoring at 2152.
- 31.17th July. Proceeded over the D/G range. During the course of the runs, an air raid warning was broadcast, but the 'all clear' was promulgated $\frac{3}{4}$ hours later.
- 32.19th July. Having completed with fuel, provisions, ammunition, charts, and as many stores, Home Fleet Orders etc. as could be obtained, weighed at 2158 and proceeded for Scapa Flow to join First Cruiser Squadron in accordance with orders from the Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet.
- 33.20th July. 1823 anchored in Fleet Anchorage, Scapa Flow. 1928 signal from Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, to Battle Cruisers, Cruisers and Destroyers to raise steam with all despatch. (Ships affected:- H.M.S. "RENOWN" (Vice-Admiral, Battle Cruiser Squadron), H.M.S. "REPULSE", H.M.S. "SUSSEX", H.M.S. "YORK", H.M.S. "AURORA", H.M.S. "SHEFFIELD", H.M.S. "COVENTRY", 4th and 6th Destroyer Flotillas.)
- 34.21st July. Hostile aircraft warnings at 0017 and 0116.
- 35.22nd July. 0946 reverted to normal four hours notice for steam.
- 36.23rd July. P.M. H.A. Firings at Sleeve Target in Pentland Firth.

37...../

IV.

SECRET

(War Diary - 1st-31st July, 1940.).

37. 2145 Signal from Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, to cruisers to raise steam with all despatch.
38. 24th July. Cruisers reverted to four hours notice for steam. The Vice-Admiral, First Cruiser Squadron, in H.M.S. "Devonshire" arrived.
- P.M. "AUSTRALIA" carried out 8" Full Calibre Firing at Battle Practice Target in Pentland Firth.
39. 25th July. A.M. 1st Cruiser Squadron Sub-Calibre Firings in Scapa Flow. P.M. "AUSTRALIA" H.A. Firings in Pentland Firth.
40. 26th July. The Vice-Admiral Commanding First Cruiser Squadron (Vice-Admiral J.H.D. Cunningham, C.B., M.V.O.) visited the ship.
41. 27th July. A.M. First Cruiser Squadron Concentration Firings in Scapa Flow.
1627. signal from Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, to Battle Cruisers, Cruisers, and Destroyer Screens to raise steam with all despatch. Ships affected:- "RENOWN" (B.C.1, Vice-Admiral W.J. Whitworth, C.B., D.S.O.), "REPULSE", "DEVONSHIRE" (C.S.1.) "AUSTRALIA", "YORK", "SHEFFIELD", 4th and 6th Destroyer Flotillas.
1849. Cruisers weighed and proceeded followed by Battle Cruisers and screening destroyers. Force proceeded towards a position approximately 240 miles W.N.W. of SKAGERRAK, Vice-Admiral Commanding First Cruiser Squadron in command. Object to intercept "GNEISENAU" reported to have left TRONDHEIM.
43. 28th July. Force patrolling off Norwegian coast. Offensive patrol of 2 Blenheim aircraft in company throughout this day. Vice-Admiral Commanding First Cruiser Squadron in "DEVONSHIRE" parted company P.M. and Vice-Admiral Commanding Battle Cruiser Force in "RENOWN" took over command.
44. 29th July. 0650 anchored in Fleet Anchorage, Scapa Flow. Ships reverted to four hours notice for steam.
45. 31st July. A.M. D/G check ranging over Flow Range. P.M. H.A. Firings in Pentland Firth.

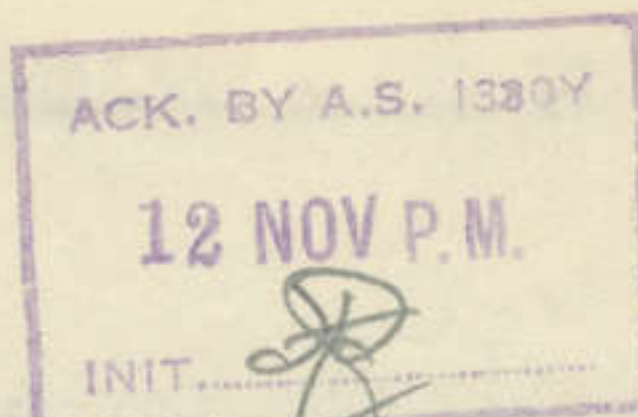
CAPTAIN.

The Commander-in-Chief,
HOME FLEET.

Copy to:-

The Secretary,
Naval Board,
Navy Office,
MELBOURNE.

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DEPT. OF NAVY
589/201/779
H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA"
6th September, 1940.

WAR DIARY - AUGUST, 1940.

1. On 1st August, 1940, H.M.A.S. "Australia" was at Scapa Flow.
Ships in Company:-
H.M.S. "Nelson" (Flag of Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet, Admiral of The Fleet Sir Charles M. Forbes, G.C.B., D.S.O.)
H.M.S. "Rodney",
H.M.S. "Barham".
H.M.S. "Renown" (Flag of Vice-Admiral Commanding First Battle Cruiser Squadron, Vice-Admiral W.J. Whitworth, C.B., D.S.O.).
H.M.S. "Repulse".
H.M.S. "Furious".
H.M.S. "Naiad" (Flag of Rear-Admiral Commanding Fifteenth Cruiser Squadron, Rear-Admiral E.L.S. King, C.B., M.V.O.)
H.M.S. "Bonaventure".
H.M.S. "York".
H.M.S. "Ajax".
2. 2nd August - P.M. H.M.S. "Devonshire" (Vice-Admiral Commanding First Cruiser Squadron, Vice-Admiral J.H.D. Cunningham, C.B., M.V.O.) and H.M.S. "Norfolk" arrived.
2340 Hostile aircraft warning.
3. 3rd August - P.M. Full calibre firing in Pentland Firth.
4. 4th August - Sunday. The Commander-in-Chief visited the Ship and walked round the Ship's Company at Divisions.
1100. "AUSTRALIA" weighed and proceeded to anchor in Kirkwall Bay for D/F Calibration. H.M. Yacht "Maria Jaoa" transmitting ship co-operated.
5. 5th August - 2100 completed calibration.
6. 6th August - 0637. "AUSTRALIA" weighed and returned to Scapa.
7. 7th August - Scapa Flow.
8. 8th August - A.M. Sub calibre firing with "NORFOLK" in Scapa Flow.
P.M. High Angle firings with "NORFOLK" in Pentland Firth.
9. 9th August - A.M. Full calibre 8 inch throw off firing with "NORFOLK" West of the Orkneys.
10. 10th August - Scapa Flow.
P.M. Westerley gale.

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11. 11th August - Information having been received from Admiralty that a German meteorological aircraft operating between Iceland and Norway had reported that no enemy warships had been sighted, and that the inference was that a German vessel might be expected to make a passage between the Atlantic and the North Sea, Commander-in-Chief directed "NORFOLK" and "AUSTRALIA" to institute a patrol North of the Faeroes.
12. 2213. Weighed and proceeded in company with "NORFOLK" (Captain A.J.L. Phillips, Senior Officer) accordingly.
13. 12th August - 1100. Arrived in datum position 45 miles North-North-East of the Faeroe Islands and instituted line ahead patrol on a line extending 100 miles North-North-West from the datum position.
14. 12th-16th August - On patrol at visibility distance apart. A Sunderland Flying Boat co-operated.
15. 16th August - 0800. Left patrol for Scapa.
"NAIAD" (Vice-Admiral Commanding 15th Cruisers Squadron) and "BONAVENTURE" took over patrol.
2135. Anchored in Scapa Flow.
16. 17th-21st August - Scapa Flow.
0112 20th August. Hostile Aircraft warning.
Magnetic Mines were suspected to have been dropped in the Flow.
17. 22nd August - P.M. Sub calibre with "NORFOLK" in the Flow.
18. It having been decided to carry out an operation off Bear Island and the North coast of Norway with the object of capturing German trawlers operating in these waters, "NORFOLK" and "AUSTRALIA" received operation orders from the Commander in Chief to this end.
19. Prize crews were lent to each ship and a Norwegian Officer was attached in addition, Commander Bjerklund to "NORFOLK" and Lieutenant Bjerkwas to "AUSTRALIA".
20. 23rd August - At 1522, "NORFOLK" and "AUSTRALIA" weighed and proceeded for the operation.
21. A route to the Northward was kept not less than 400 miles from Trondheim to evade enemy air attention.
22. 24th-25th August - A severe Northerly gale was experienced on passage North.
23. 26th August - 0600. Arrived off Bear Island but found no vessels of any description.
24. 0850. Proceeded towards the North coast of Norway.
25. At 1600, when approximately 60 miles from the coast, "NORFOLK" catapulted her aircraft for reconnaissance of the fishing grounds. Meanwhile the ships closed the coast.

The aircraft reported on return at 2000 that she had reconnoitred for a distance of 240 miles along the coast in excellent visibility and had only observed one small ditcher.

26...../-

SECRET

26. As previously arranged, on receipt of this negative information "AUSTRALIA" catapulted her aircraft, primarily for a reconnaissance of Tromso and secondarily for bombing attacks on military objectives in that harbour. Unfortunately the clouds over the coastal range prevented the aircraft penetrating more than four miles up Tromso Fjord, and the aircraft returned at 2200 after jettisoning it's 250 lb. bomb in the sea.
27. After hoisting in the aircraft, the operation was considered completed and Cruisers set course to the West-North-West.
28. 27th August - 0500, when approximately 230 miles North West of Tromso, course was altered to the Southwestward.
29. At 1355, the Finnish Ship "Ericus" was encountered in position 350 miles west of Tromso. She was boarded by "NORFOLK" and ordered to proceed to Kirkwall.
30. 28th August - On passage to Scapa. Carried out 8 inch throw off firings and High Angle practices at smoke bursts fired by consort.
31. 29th August - 0730. Arrived Scapa, using the swept channel in the Flow owing to the suspected presence of Magnetic mines.
2200. Anchorage Defence Stations owing to the suspected presence of an enemy submarine.
32. 30th August - At Scapa.
33. 31st August - 2014. Weighed and proceeded to Greenock.

(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet,
H.M.S. "Nelson".

Copy to:-

The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office,
Melbourne.

2025/7/289

NAVY OFFICE,

SECRET.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

MELBOURNE, S.C.I.

12 FEB 1941

06701 - 06711

LETTERS OF PROCEEDINGS.

I am directed by the Naval Board to forward herewith for information, the following letters of Proceedings and War Diary.

War Diary.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" September, 1940.

Letters of Proceedings.

H.M.A.S. "SYDNEY"	November, 1940
* H.M.A.S. "STUART"	20th September to 31st October, 1940.
* H.M.A.S. "VENDETTA"	October, 1940.
* H.M.A.S. "WESTRALIA"	25th September - 17th November, 1940.
H.M.A.S. "YARRA"	October, 1940.
H.M.A.S. "SYDNEY"	October, 1940.
H.M.A.S. "SYDNEY"	Narrative. Attack on Enemy Convoy.

* Not to R.A.C.A.S

James H. H. H.

Secretary.

To:-

R.A.C.A.S.
C.C.S.
C.S.T.

Commanding Officer	H.M.A.S. "ADELAIDE"
"	" H.M.A.S. "CANBERRA"
"	" H.M.A.S. "MANCORA"
"	" H.M.A.S. "MORESEY"
"	" H.M.A.S. "JARREGO"
"	" H.M.A.S. "SWAN"
"	" H.M.A.S. "ORARA"
"	" H.M.A.S. "DOOMBA"

D.N.I.



06701

SECRET

ACK. BY A.S. 1380Y

17 DEC P.M.

INIT.

DEPT. OF NAVY
589/201/779
CONFIDENTIAL

H. M. A. S. "AUSTRALIA",
8th October, 1940.

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - SEPTEMBER, 1940.

1. 1st September - "AUSTRALIA" arrived at the Clyde from Scapa Flow for duties in connection with the defence of the United Kingdom, anchoring off Greenock at 1450.
2. A torpedoed Dutch Ship "VOLENDAM" was passed entering the Irish Sea. She was down by the bows, steaming astern, and being towed to the Clyde.
3. It was observed that a balloon barrage had been established at the Clyde.
4. Ships present: H.M.S. "CAIRO" (Flag of Rear Admiral Commanding Anti Aircraft Ships, Rear Admiral J.G.P. Vivian), H.M.S. "ALYNBANK", H.M.S. "WOLFE" and a large number of merchantmen.
5. 2nd September - 1002 and 2219 hostile aircraft warnings.
6. 3rd September - Arrivals H.M.S. "BRECONSHIRE" and H.M.S. "FIJI". The latter had been torpedoed on 1st September when 80 miles West North West of St. Kilda.
7. 4th September - "CAIRO" sailed and H.M.S. "REVENGE" arrived with an Atlantic convoy.
8. 5th September - Orders had been received to take part in operation "Menace" in place of "FIJI". The operation was designed to instal General de Gaulle and the Free French Forces in Dakar, at present under German influence. Seven Free French Air Force Officers, with two aircraft and attendant personnel, and one Royal Marine Officer were embarked for passage to Freetown.
9. 6th September - 0849 weighed and proceeded. One large outward bound convoy was passed off Islay.
10. Strong westerly weather experienced in the Western Approaches until P.M. 7th September.
11. 9th September - 1158. A distress signal was intercepted from the Tanker "AURIS" that she was being shelled in a position 300 miles South South East of "AUSTRALIA". "AUSTRALIA" was then 180 miles North East of San Miguel, Azores, and speed was increased to close. At 1217 original course and speed were resumed as a rebroadcast of the message revealed that it was a submarine that was shelling. A Portuguese destroyer next day rescued the crew of "AURIS".
12. Course was diverted to the South South Westward after dark to avoid the submarine's area.
13. 13th September - A.M. Free French Convoy en route to Freetown for operation "Menace" was passed when 460 miles from Freetown.

for action re circulation

See 2026 1-1220

14.../-

SECRET

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - SEPTEMBER, 1940.

14. 14th September - 0210. When 140 miles short of Freetown orders were received to close "DEVONSHIRE" (Flag of Vice-Admiral Commanding First Cruiser Squadron and Flag Officer Commanding Force "M" - in naval charge of operation "Menace").
- 0340 joined F.O. (M) and ships proceeded towards Dakar. "CUMBERLAND", en route Freetown to United Kingdom, was also diverted to join F.O. (M).
15. The object of this new operation was to intercept three (Vichy) French cruisers of the "LA GALISSONNIERE" class who had left Casablanca, and prevent them from entering Dakar.
- 1940 "CUMBERLAND" joined.
- 2320 instituted patrol 75 miles North by West from Dakar.
16. 15th September - Early A.M. "ARK ROYAL" arrived in position 20 miles to westward of cruisers.
- Dawn aerial reconnaissances of Dakar and to 100 miles North North East of cruisers were carried out.
- Photographs taken during subsequent forenoon reconnaissance of Dakar disclosed that the French cruisers were in that harbour.
- 1130 force proceeded towards a position 55 miles North of Dakar where "INGLEFIELD" (Captain D.3), "ESCAPADE", "ECHO", "FURY" and "FORTUNE" were intercepted. They were en route to a rendezvous with F.O. (M). "ARK ROYAL" also joined company, whilst "CUMBERLAND" was detached to patrol South of Dakar.
17. 1513 force, less "CUMBERLAND", proceeded to Freetown after stopping for transfer of correspondence.
18. 17th September - 0656 anchored off Freetown.
19. Disembarked all passengers and gear to their respective ships.
20. Ships present: "BARHAM", "RESOLUTION", "ARGUS", "ALBATROSS", "VINDICTIVE", "MILFORD", "BRIDGEWATER", "FAULKNER" (Captain D.8), "FORESIGHT", "FORESTER", "ECLIPSE", "GREYHOUND", three French sloops and seven transports of Force "M", "KENYA", "KARANJA", "BELGRAVIA", "WESTERNLAND", "PENNLAND", "SOBIESKI" and "ETTERICK".
21. 18th September - Ordered to relieve "CUMBERLAND" on patrol, to locate, report and shadow French cruisers if proceeding to the Southward.
- 1940 weighed and proceeded accordingly.
22. 19th September - 0815 passed "CUMBERLAND" when 240 miles from Freetown.
23. 0910. When 260 miles from Freetown three French cruisers were sighted ahead and proceeding South. They were reported and shadowed from seaward.
- "CUMBERLAND", recalled, joined at 1045.

24..../-

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H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" . WAR DIARY - SEPTEMBER, 1940.

24. 1737. French cruisers altered back to the northward. Shadowing was continued. All ships increased speed, but touch was lost after dark.
25. At 2010, when 310 miles from Dakar, the French cruiser "GLOIRE" was sighted proceeding on an opposite course. She was reported and shadowed. "CUMBERLAND" continued to follow the remaining two northwards.
26. 2253 and 2311, "INGLEFIELD" and "GREYHOUND" encountered. They joined in the shadowing of "GLOIRE" who had by this time practically stopped owing to engine trouble.
27. 20th September - 0100 "DEVONSHIRE" (F.O. (M)) joined/
28. 0135 commenced escorting "GLOIRE" towards Casablanca, "DEVONSHIRE" and destroyers parting company for Freetown.
- "GLOIRE'S" speed was low until midday, by which time engine repairs were sufficiently advanced to allow her to increase.
29. 21st September - 0700 discontinued escort of "GLOIRE", he having undertaken to continue to Casablanca, and proceeded to patrol 155 miles South of Dakar.
30. 0900 closed cargo vessel "OGMORE" and directed her to cancel her distress message reporting "AUSTRALIA" as a suspicious vessel.
- 2130 proceeded to rendezvous with F.O. (M) in "BARHAM".
31. 22nd September - 0700 passed Group II of transports of Force "M" steering towards Dakar in position 245 miles South of Dakar, escorted by "DEVONSHIRE", three French Sloops, "MILFORD", "FAULKNER", "FORESTER" and "FURY".
- 0900 joined Group III of Force "M", also proceeding northwards, consisting of "BARHAM" (F.O. (M)), "RESOLUTION", "ARK ROYAL", "CUMBERLAND", "DRAGON" screened by "INGLEFIELD", "FORESIGHT", "FORTUNE", "GREYHOUND", "ECHO" and "ESCAPADE".
32. 23rd September - 0245 "ARK ROYAL" and screen parted company to westward of Dakar.
- From dawn forces patrolled in lines 10-20 miles South of Dakar, whilst Free French envoys endeavoured to win over the local French. They were unsuccessful.
33. At 0950 the Fleet were South of Cape Manuel steering 090° at 15 knots. "BARHAM" and "RESOLUTION" in single line ahead, "AUSTRALIA" 30° ½ mile on port quarter of "RESOLUTION", "CUMBERLAND" 30° ½ mile on the starboard quarter, "DRAGON" ahead of "BARHAM". Destroyers on A/S screen.

34...../-

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WAR DIARY, H. M. A. S. "AUSTRALIA" - SEPTEMBER, 1940.

34. 23rd September, 1000 course was altered together to 000°. At
A.M. 1004 "AUSTRALIA" reported land in sight bearing 355°. At the same time course was altered to 090°. Weather conditions - Wind, North -West, Visibility poor, being two to three miles.
35. At 1007 shots from shore batteries were observed to fall in the vicinity of the fleet.
36. At 1016 "AUSTRALIA" sighted a ship bearing 000°. This was reported to F.O.(M) as a sloop. At 1018 "AUSTRALIA" was ordered to challenge and identify. At 1020 "AUSTRALIA" altered course to 305° and increased speed to 25 knots, at 1024 altered course to 297°. At 1025 two ships were identified steering to the westward.
37. At 1027 course was altered to 235°, speed 12 knots. The French ships were ordered by flags and S.P. to return to harbour. At the same time a warning round of 4" was fired across the bows of the leading ship.
38. Since 1027 the shore batteries had been firing intermittently and inaccurately at "AUSTRALIA" from small calibre guns, probably 3".
39. At about 1032 speed was increased to 25 knots and the ship turned to starboard to cut off the destroyers and see that they complied. They were seen to alter course to the eastward. "AUSTRALIA" the resumed station on the Battle Fleet who now came in sight steering to the westward.
40. At 1050 course of the Fleet was reversed to 090° and subsequently manoeuvred to close Cape Manuel. At 1059 "AUSTRALIA" and "CUMBERLAND" prolonged the line astern. At about this time "FORESIGHT", screening on the port side, was observed to be hit by a shore battery.
41. At 1108 a French submarine on the surface was observed to receive a hit. At 1115 "CUMBERLAND" was observed to be hit.
42. At 1125 course of the Fleet was altered to 270°. At 1147 "AUSTRALIA" and "CUMBERLAND" were ordered to take station two miles on the port beam. The necessary manoeuvring signals were made, but at 1155 "CUMBERLAND" reported she had only got starboard engine, and that her steering and port engine were temporarily out of action. "AUSTRALIA" therefore ordered her to act independently and reported the fact to F.O. (M).
43. 23rd September, At 1600 the Fleet were to the south-eastward of
P.M. Goree Island steering 000° at 16 knots.
44. At 1608 a signal was received addressed "AUSTRALIA", "FURY", "GREYHOUND" from F.O. (M) to attack a "FANTASQUE" destroyer reported two miles east of Goree, and to keep out of sight of the batteries.

45...../-

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WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - SEPTEMBER, 1940.

45. 23rd September, - At 1612 "AUSTRALIA" with the two destroyers in company altered course to 330° at 26 knots to close the enemy. At 1622 altered course to 274° and reduced to 20 knots. At 1624 an indistinct ship was sighted bearing Green 10° and at the same time land became visible. "Alarm Starboard" was ordered and course altered to 250°. Enemy was identified at 1626. Speed was increased to 25 knots and course altered to 205°. Fire was opened at 1627 when "A" arcs were opened. Course was altered to 177° at 1629. At 1630, after firing eight salvos, fire was checked as enemy was on fire fore and aft. 1639 ordered to rejoin Battleships.
46. 24th September - At 0910 Fleet informed that F.O. (M) intended to attack with Group III at 1000. Battle ships target Goree Fort, cruisers and destroyers warships north east of Goree Fort.
47. Cruisers ("DEVONSHIRE" and "AUSTRALIA") with destroyers "INGLEFIELD", "FORESIGHT" and "FORESTER" were detached to attack their objectives, proceeding cruisers in open order on a line of bearing 230° on a course 350°, speed 18 knots. Wind North-West, light, misty with moderate visibility.
48. At 0924 course was altered together to 050° and at 0932 course was altered together to 020°. At 0935 forts were observed to open fire on the battleships who replied. At 0936 course was altered together to 350°.
49. At 0940 flashes of gunfire were observed from the direction of the merchant shipping inside the anchorage and green splashes appeared about 1000 yards short. At 0941 course was altered together to 050° when one cruiser could be barely distinguished bearing 285°.
50. At 0944 "AUSTRALIA" was directed by "DEVONSHIRE" to engage the cruiser on the port side. "AUSTRALIA" opened fire forty seconds later. At the same time "DEVONSHIRE" opened fire on a damaged ship near Rufisque.
- At 0947 a signal was received from "DEVONSHIRE" to alter course in succession to 230°, speed 20 knots. From 0945 the enemy gunfire had improved but "AUSTRALIA" had only been able to fire three salvos at the estimated mean range of 12,000 yards owing to the poor target and low visibility towards the land. Point of aim gun flashes.
51. At 0950 course was shaped to form astern of "DEVONSHIRE" on a course of 270°. At 0951 destroyers were observed to open fire on a second destroyer in the vicinity of the one that had been engaged by "DEVONSHIRE". Then at 0957 cruisers altered course together to 320° to close then enemy. At this time "AUSTRALIA" was not being fired at.

52...../-

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WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - SEPTEMBER, 1940.

52.

At 1001 enemy gun flashes were again observed and "AUSTRALIA" re-opened fire. Green splashes were observed ahead. At 1003 course was altered by Blue Pendant to 050° and the enemy engaged on the port side. The same gun range (12,000 yards) was used as previously although the range had been closed as the previous shots had been observed to fall short. The enemy cruisers were apparently under weigh, amongst the merchant ships inside the boom and making smoke.

53.

At 1010 cruisers altered course together round to 230° and continued engaging on the starboard side. Between 1002 and 1007, eleven salvos had been fired and fall of shot were either short or unobserved. The enemy fire during this period was fairly constant but inaccurate and for the first time purple splashes joined in. Between 1014, when steadied on a course of 230°, and 1019 "AUSTRALIA" fired four salvos but this time at a target, probably a destroyer which was laying a smoke screen. Three salvos were unobserved, one short. Mean range 12,5000 yards.

54.

At 1019 cruisers altered course away together by "F" Flag to a course 120°, and at 1024 cruisers and destroyers were ordered to withdraw to the southward unless doing well. At 1028, whilst withdrawing, cruisers were attacked with high level bombing. Avoiding action was taken and fire opened with 4" H.A. guns.

55.

Cruisers and destroyers rejoined F.O.(M) at 1134. A further high level bombing attack took place on Group III at 1217.

56.

At 1245 F.O.(M) informed ships in company that he intended to approach Goree on a bearing 306° turning together to 240° to fire at about 1315.

Targets:- "BARHAM" - "RICHELIEU"
"RESOLUTION" - B F(Goree)
"DEVONSHIRE" - A M(Manuel)
"AUSTRALIA" - Enemy cruisers
inside boom.

57.

At 1250 Group III were on a course 020° speed 18 knots and cruisers had been ordered to take station on the bearing 105° two miles, but before arriving at the correct station, cruisers were negatived taking up station. At this time battleships were hotly engaged with the forts and "RICHELIEU" and at 1300 altered course to the westward, whilst destroyers were ordered to make a smoke screen.

58.

Cruisers conformed to the movements of battleships two miles on the disengaged side. Action was broken off at about 1325.

59...../-

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WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - SEPTEMBER, 1940.

59. 25th September -At 0840 cruisers ("DEVONSHIRE" and "AUSTRALIA") who were stationed 090° 3 miles from "BARHAM" were moving in on a course 320° at 17 knots to bombard targets previously arranged.

Targets were:-

"BARHAM"	-	B X	("RICHELIEU")
"RESOLUTION"	-	B F	(Goree)
"DEVONSHIRE"	-	A M	(Manuel)
"AUSTRALIA"	-	Enemy cruisers in anchorage.	

Cruisers 7 cables apart on a line of bearing 025° had catapulted spotting aircraft at about 0828. Visibility was extreme with a light northerly wind.

60. At 0841 course was altered together to 000°. "AUSTRALIA" was then leading. At 0845 "RICHELIEU" was sighted bearing 327° and smoke bearing 340°. At 0845 the two French cruisers were sighted bearing 327½°, inclination 90° left; the left hand cruiser making smoke. A range plot was started on the enemy cruisers at 0850, giving a mean range of 30,000 yards.

61. At 0851 "AUSTRALIA" and "DEVONSHIRE" altered course together to 340°, bringing the enemy fine on the port bow. At 0856 an enemy destroyer crossed the target making smoke (destroyer continued doing this throughout the action). At 0900 the range was about 28,000 yards and enemy cruisers were seen to be under way.

62. At 0902 the enemy opened fire through the smoke screen, their first salvo (purple) falling 1,000 yards short in line. One minute after the course of "AUSTRALIA" and "DEVONSHIRE" was altered together to 050° and fire was ordered to be opened when the target became visible. At 0904 yellow splashes were seen 300 yards ahead.

63. At 0904 a sufficiently good point of aim having been obtained fire was opened with a deflection triple salvo at a range of 26,000 yards. Our second salvo was observed short and an up ladder was commenced. This was cancelled when the first aircraft report (third salvo) - straddle - was received. The target now became a difficult aiming mark. Four salvos were fired between 0906 and 0909, only one aircraft report, a straddle, being received on the fourth of these.

64. During this period (yellow) cruiser was doing good shooting, whilst (purple) cruiser had stopped shooting for an interval and when he resumed his firing was very ragged. Avoiding action against yellow fall of shot was taken by altering course towards the last splashes. One white splash was observed, presumably from Fort Belair.

65. Three independent witnesses reported seeing a pillar of flame and black smoke shoot up during this first period. This would probably account for (purple) cruiser's shooting falling off.

66...../-

SECRET

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WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - SEPTEMBER, 1940.

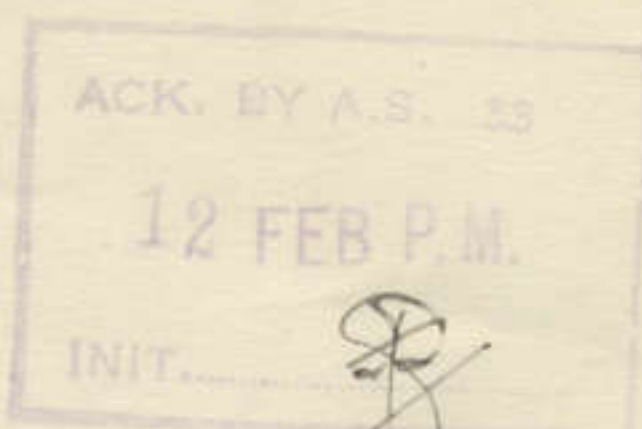
66. Between 0910 and 0911 three more salvos were fired, aircraft reports of straddle left and straddle being received on the second and third. These were the last aircraft reports received. (Yellow) cruiser firing was still good, but (purple) cruiser and (white) fort who were still firing were now out of the picture.
67. At 0912 "AUSTRALIA" and "DEVONSHIRE" altered course together by signal to 190°, speed 25 knots. At about the time the wheel was put over "AUSTRALIA" was hit aft twice. At 0916 the signal "Cruisers withdraw" was received from "DEVONSHIRE".
68. During the period 0912 to 0917 five salvos only were fired owing to the difficulty of seeing a point of aim and the alterations of course with the fine bearing aft of the target.
69. At 0917 a Walrus aircraft was observed to have been shot down astern of "BARHAM". Two of the crew were seen to bail out. It was subsequently confirmed that this was "AUSTRALIA'S" spotting aircraft.
70. At 0920 "AUSTRALIA" formed astern of "DEVONSHIRE" on a course of 190°.
71. All groups withdrew on a southerly course. During the withdrawal a high level bombing attack was made on Force "M". "RESOLUTION" was observed to have a heavy list to port. Cruisers and destroyers were disposed for the protection of "RESOLUTION".
72. 26th September - "BARHAM" took "RESOLUTION" in tow. Cruisers remained in close support during the day, opening out on the northern quarters during the night.
73. 28th September - At 0800 when the force was 110 miles from Freetown, "AUSTRALIA" and "ARK ROYAL" were detached with a screen of "ECHO" and "FORTUNE" and arrived at the swept channel at 1135. A French aircraft having been sighted overhead, "ARK ROYAL" then turned back for a short period to supply fighter protection for "BARHAM" and "RESOLUTION" if required. At 1307 "AUSTRALIA" anchored off Freetown.
74. 29th September - 0630 remainder of Force "M" arrived. 0915 "DORSETSHIRE" arrived.
75. 30th September - 0549 proceeded in company with "ARK ROYAL" (Senior Officer) for the United Kingdom, screened by "FORTUNE", "FORESTER" and "GREYHOUND".

(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Commander in Chief, Home Fleet,
H.M.S. "NELSON".

Copy to:-
The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office,
MELBOURNE.

SECRET.
No. SC. 2/9.



DEPT OF NAVY
589/201/779
CONFIDENTIAL
H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
15th November, 1940.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY - OCTOBER, 1940.

1. 1st October - "AUSTRALIA" was on passage from Freetown to the Clyde, in company with H.M.S. "ARK ROYAL" (Senior Officer, Captain C.S. Holland, R.N.) after the operations off Dakar referred to in the War Diary for September, 1940.
2. Ships were screened by H.M. Ships "FORTUNE", "FORESTER" and "GREYHOUND".
3. 1900, Destroyers parted company to return to Freetown.
4. 2nd, 3rd October - "ARK ROYAL" carried out air search of sector ahead to 150 miles at dawn and dusk, and maintained a constant A/S patrol during daylight.
5. 4th October - 1525 aircraft from "ARK ROYAL" took off for an air search on the line Azores - Finisterre. Search had been ordered by Admiralty with the object of identifying shipping approaching the Azores.
6. 2135. In position 120 miles East of San Miguel. Having obtained the result of the above reconnaissance, which was negative, parted company, and in accordance with Admiralty orders proceeded to institute a patrol of the Azores.
7. 5th-7th October - Maintained patrol Northeastward of the Azores between lines 020° from Arnel Point, San Miguel and Comprida Point, Fayal, to a depth of 55 miles. Nothing was sighted.
8. The object of the patrol was to prevent any military attempt to capture the Azores from Bay of Biscay ports.
9. 8th October - 0001 proceeded to Gibraltar in view of fuel requirements, in accordance with Admiralty orders. Route adjusted to approximately 90 miles South from the direct one, to avoid a most probable area of submarine activity.
10. 9th October - 1700, boarded Spanish S.S. "SOUDADES" in position 175 miles Southwest of Cape St. Vincent. Ship which held Consul General's certificate of clearance was allowed to proceed.
11. 10th October - 0746, secured alongside Detached Mole, Gibraltar.
12. Ships present:- H.M. Ships "RENOWN" (wearing the Flag Of Senior Officer Force "H", Vice-Admiral Sir James F. Somerville, K C.B., D.S.O.), "GRIFFIN" and "GALLANT".
13. Joined Force "H" for operational and administrative purposes.

[Handwritten: 14th Nov 1940]
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[Handwritten: 020]
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WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - OCTOBER, 1940.

14. 11th October - 2340, slipped and proceeded towards Las Palmas at 25 knots in accordance with Admiralty orders with the object of intercepting the French cruiser "PRIMAUGUET", which was reported to be escorting from Casablanca to Dakar a ship loaded with ammunition for French warships at Dakar. "RENOWN" was to sail to the Westward at 0500 the following morning. "BARHAM", who was escorting a Troop Convoy from Freetown to Gibraltar, was, with three of her destroyer screen, to close the African coast South of the Canary Islands.
15. 12th October - 2200. When in position 45 miles Northeast of Allegranza, Canary Islands, altered course to East-South-East to search towards the African coast and subsequently to rendezvous with "BARHAM", who was searching to the northward.
16. 13th October - 0300 altered course to South-Westward.
17. 0643, joined "BARHAM" (Senior Officer, Captain G.C. Cook, R.N.), "ECHO", "ESCAPADE" and "FORTUNE" in position 70 miles North-North-East of Cape Juby.
18. Ships swept to the North-North-Eastward along the direct route to Casablanca at V/S visibility distance apart.
19. 1900, ships proceeded for Gibraltar in accordance with Admiralty orders, "PRIMAUGUET" not having been sighted.
20. 15th October - 0842, berthed alongside Detached Mole, Gibraltar.
21. Commenced cleaning boilers at four hours notice for steam.
22. Ships present:- "RENOWN", "SHEFFIELD", "GALLANT", "WISHART", "ENCOUNTER", "FIREDRAKE", "GREYHOUND", "VIDETTE", "GRIFFIN", Troopships "ETTRICK" and "KARANJA".
23. 16th October - 1614, brought to two hours notice by Senior Officer Force "H" and at 2230 to one hours notice. Force "H" being held in readiness against a possible attempt of French surface ships to pass Westward through the Straits of Gibraltar.
24. 17th October - Embarked Officers and ratings for passage to United Kingdom.
25. 1849, proceeded to escort troopships "ETTRICK" and "KARANJA" to the Clyde screened by "ECHO" and "GRIFFIN".
26. 2035. In position off Tarifa, ships returned to Gibraltar by order of the Admiralty. 2332, secured in previous berth remaining at one hours notice for steam.
27. 18th October - 2210, proceeded again for the Clyde, convoy now being screened by "ESCAPADE" and "ECHO".

28...../-

"AUSTRALIA'S" WAR DIARY - OCTOBER, 1940.

28. 22nd October - 0711, speed of convoy reduced by engine defect in "ETTRICK", the slowest ship.
29. 24th October - 1211, Polish Destroyers "BLYSKAWICA" and "BURZA" joined screen from Plymouth. Position 500 miles West of Scillies.
30. 25th October - 1253, proceeded independently for the Clyde.
31. 26th October - 0859, anchored off Greenock.
32. Ships present:- H.M. Ships "CAIRO", "CARDIFF", "BEAGLE", "ACHATES", "ACTIVE", H.M.C.S. "SAGUENAY" and A.M.C.'s "CHITRAL" and "PRETORIA CASTLE".
33. Having completed with fuel ship reverted to four hours notice for steam and gave night leave.
34. 28th October - Information was received that a possible enemy raider had been sighted by S.S. "MAHOUT" in position 600 miles Westward of the Hebrides at 1826 on 27th October. The Home Fleet were ordered to raise steam, and the Flag Officer Commanding First Battle Cruiser Squadron was to proceed with available forces at Scapa to the North of the Faeroes and thence Westward, whilst "AUSTRALIA" was to proceed along the meridian of 9°:30' West until Latitude 60° North, when she was to steer towards the reported position of the raider.
35. At 1528, "AUSTRALIA" weighed and proceeded in accordance with the above orders. At midnight information was received that the suspected raider was a merchant ship and that forces were to return to their bases if nothing was sighted by dark on 29th October. The Battle Cruiser Force was subsequently ordered to remain on patrol for a further period.
35. 29th October - At 0700 information was received that a Sunderland Flying Boat had forced landed about sixty miles to the Northward, and at 0810 "AUSTRALIA" was ordered to render assistance. Course was altered accordingly and the search was commenced with second class D/F bearings. The strength continued to increase, but first class bearings were not obtained until 1415 when the aircraft changed to a lower frequency. The Flying Boat was sighted at 1435, but capsized before reaching it, and only nine of the crew of thirteen were rescued. The wind at the time was force 10, sea very high.
36. At 1725 search for the remaining members of the crew was abandoned and course was set for the Clyde in accordance with orders from the Commander in Chief, Home Fleet.
37. 31st October - 0911, anchored off Greenock. Ships present:- H.M. Ships "CARDIFF", "CAIRO", "ARGUS", "GLASGOW", "ARKROYAL", A.M.C.'s "SALOPIAN", "GLENGYLE" and "MARSDALE" and 15 Destroyers and Sloops.



The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office,
MELBOURNE.

CAPTAIN.

SECRET.
No. SC.2/9.

589/201/779
H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
15th November, 1940.

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13. Joined Force "H" for operational and administrative purposes.

14...../-

D.N./ 20

WAR DIARY, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - OCTOBER, 1940.

14. 11th October - 2340, slipped and proceeded towards Las Palmas at 25 knots in accordance with Admiralty orders with the object of intercepting the French cruiser "PRIMAUGUET", which was reported to be escorting from Casablanca to Dakar a ship loaded with ammunition for French warships at Dakar. "RENOWN" was to sail to the Westward at 0500 the following morning. "BARHAM", who was escorting a Troop Convoy from Freetown to Gibraltar, was, with three of her destroyer screen, to close the African coast South of the Canary Islands.
15. 12th October - 2200. When in position 45 miles Northeast of Allegranza, Canary Islands, altered course to East-South-East to search towards the African coast and subsequently to rendezvous with "BARHAM", who was searching to the northward.
16. 13th October - 0300 altered course to South-Westward.
17. 0643, joined "BARHAM" (Senior Officer, Captain G.C. Cook, R.N.), "ECHO", "ESCAPADE" and "FORTUNE" in position 70 miles North-North-East of Cape Juby.
18. Ships swept to the North-North-Eastward along the direct route to Casablanca at V/S visibility distance apart.
19. 1900, ships proceeded for Gibraltar in accordance with Admiralty orders, "PRIMAUGUET" not having been sighted.
20. 15th October - 0842, berthed alongside Detached Mole, Gibraltar.
21. Commenced cleaning boilers at four hours notice for steam.
22. Ships present:- "RENOWN", "SHEFFIELD", "GALLANT", "WISHART", "ENCOUNTER", "FIREDRAKE", "GREYHOUND", "VIDETTE", "GRIFFIN", Troopships "ETTRICK" and "KARANJA".
23. 16th October - 1614, brought to two hours notice by Senior Officer Force "H" and at 2230 to one hours notice. Force "H" being held in readiness against a possible attempt of French surface ships to pass Westward through the Straits of Gibraltar.
24. 17th October - Embarked Officers and ratings for passage to United Kingdom.
25. 1849, proceeded to escort troopships "ETTRICK" and "KARANJA" to the Clyde screened by "ECHO" and "GRIFFIN".
26. 2035. In position off Tarifa, ships returned to Gibraltar by order of the Admiralty. 2332, secured in previous berth remaining at one hours notice for steam.
27. 18th October - 2210, proceeded again for the Clyde, convoy now being screened by "ESCAPADE" and "ECHO".

28...../-

"AUSTRALIA'S" WAR DIARY - OCTOBER, 1940.

28. 22nd October - 0711, speed of convoy reduced by engine defect in "ETTRICK", the slowest ship.
29. 24th October - 1211, Polish Destroyers "BLYSKAWICA" and "BURZA" joined screen from Plymouth. Position 500 miles West of Scillies.
30. 25th October - 1253, proceeded independently for the Clyde.
31. 26th October - 0859, anchored off Greenock.
32. Ships present:- H.M. Ships "CAIRO", "CARDIFF", "BEAGLE", "ACHATES", "ACTIVE", H.M.C.S. "SAGUENAY" and A.M.C.'s "CHITRAL" and "PRETORIA CASTLE".
33. Having completed with fuell ship reverted to four hours notice for steam and gave night leave.
34. 28th October - Information was received that a possible enemy raider had been sighted by S.S. "MAHOUT" in position 600 miles Westward of the Hebrides at 1826 on 27th October. The Home Fleet were ordered to raise steam, and the Flag Officer Commanding First Battle Cruiser Squadron was to proceed with available forces at Scapa to the North of the Faeroes and thence Westward, whilst "AUSTRALIA" was to proceed along the meridian of 9°:30' West until Latitude 60° North, when she was to steer towards the reported position of the raider.
35. At 1528, "AUSTRALIA" weighed and proceeded in accordance with the above orders. At midnight information was received that the suspected raider was a merchant ship and that forces were to return to their bases if nothing was sighted by dark on 29th October. The Battle Cruiser Force was subsequently ordered to remain on patrol for a further period.
35. 29th October - At 0700 information was received that a Sunderland Flying Boat had forced landed about sixty miles to the Northward, and at 0810 "AUSTRALIA" was ordered to render assistance. Course was altered accordingly and the search was commenced with second class D/F bearings. The strength continued to increase, but first class bearings were not obtained until 1415 when the aircraft changed to a lower frequency. The Flying Boat was sighted at 1435, but capsized before reaching it, and only nine of the crew of thirteen were rescued. The wind at the time was force 10, sea very high.
36. At 1725 search for the remaining members of the crew was abandoned and course was set for the Clyde in accordance with orders from the Commander in Chief, Home Fleet.
37. 31st October - 0911, anchored off Greenock.
Ships present:- H.M. Ships "CARDIFF", "CAIRO", "ARGUS", "GLASGOW", "ARKROYAL", A.M.C.'s "SALOPIAN", "GLENGYLE" and "MARSDALE" and 15 Destroyers and Sloops.

(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.
CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office,
MELBOURNE.

SECRET.
No. SC. 2/9.



DEPT. OF NAVY
589/201/779.
H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
12th November, 1940.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" WAR DIARY - NOVEMBER, 1940.

1. 1st November - "AUSTRALIA" at Greenock. Ships present "CARDIFF", "CAIRO", "ARGUS" and "CORNWALL". "CAIRO" sailed 1530.
2. 2nd November - "CORNWALL" sailed.
3. 3rd November - H.M.S. "DESPATCH" arrived wearing the Broad Pendant of Commodore Commanding South American Division.
4. 5th November - "KENYA" and "CAIRO" arrived.
5. Information received that a convoy from Halifax had been attacked by "ADMIRAL SCHEER" in the Atlantic (position 52°:50' North, 32°:15' West) and that the Battle Cruiser Force was proceeding southward to cover the approaches to Brest and Lorient. "AUSTRALIA" was ordered to join this Force but a machinery defect developed which prevented her taking part in the operation.
6. 8th November - At 2016 "AUSTRALIA" proceeded to provide cover for Convoys H.G.48 and S.L.53 which were proceeding from Gibraltar and Sierra Leone respectively and were covered by H.M.S. "RENOWN" until dark on 10th November.
7. 10th-13th November - Covered Convoys to the North and North-Westward by night, remaining in company by day.
8. 13th November - At 2000 parted company and proceeded for the Clyde.
9. 15th November - At 0315 opened fire with close range armament on a bomber aircraft which approached the ship under suspicious circumstances.
10. 1209, arrived Greenock.
11. Ships present "DIDO", "CARDIFF", "EDINBURGH", "PHOEBE".
12. 17th November - Proceeded to Liverpool.
13. 18th November - 1445, secured in Huskisson Dock, Liverpool and commenced disembarking 50% oil fuel, petrol and eight inch cordite.
14. 21st November - Docked in Brocklebank Graving Dock. Refit commenced.
15. 22nd November - One third Ship's Company proceeded on leave.

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CAPTAIN.
C.O. 8/17/3

The Secretary, Naval Board,
NAVY OFFICE.

SECRET.
No. SC.2/9.



589/201/779
H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
4th January, 1941.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY, DECEMBER, 1940.

1. 1st December - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was refitting in Brocklebank Graving Dock, Liverpool.
2. 3rd December - Second Watch proceeded on leave.
3. 14th December - Third Watch proceeded on leave.
4. 19th December - Work on outside of the hull below the waterline having been completed, the dock was flooded to approximately three feet under the floating draught as a protection against bombs.
5. 20th, 21st, 22nd- Air raids took place after dark, several fires December occurring in the vicinity of the ship.
6. 20th December - A bomb fell in the water in the dock and appeared to explode. It was subsequently ascertained that this was a large bomb in the nature of an aerial torpedo of about 3,500 pounds, the tail charge of which only had exploded. No damage was done to the ship.
7. 21st December - Completed to 50% full stowage of oil fuel.
8. A bomb about 500 pounds fell on the port quarter; debris damaged catapult wires and broke square port windows in Captain's cabin.
9. 26th December - Third Watch returned from leave.
10. 27th December - Undocked from Graving Dock and secured in Brocklebank Dock.
Carried out basin trials of main engines.
11. 28th December - Embarked 8" cordite.
12. 29th December - Completed embarkation of 8" cordite and warheads.
13. 30th December - 0933 - slipped and proceeded through Canada, Huskisson and Sandon Docks to the Mersey and thence proceeded to the Clyde.
The Port Forward Propeller struck debris on the dock wall when passing from Brocklebank to Canada Dock.
14. 31st December - 0005 passed the boom and secured to Flagship Buoy, Greenock.
Ships present:- H.M. Ships "MAURITIUS", "WOLFE", "CILICIA", "GUARDIAN", and H.M.A.S. "NIZAM".
15. A.M. divers inspected port propeller which was found to be damaged. Completed with oil fuel. Carried out M/F D/F calibration.
P.M. embarked aircraft. Completed with aviation spirit. Carried out D/G test run.
16. On completion, reported programme completed to the Commander in Chief, Home Fleet.
(On 1st January ship returned to Liverpool to shift propellers).

R. M. Stewart

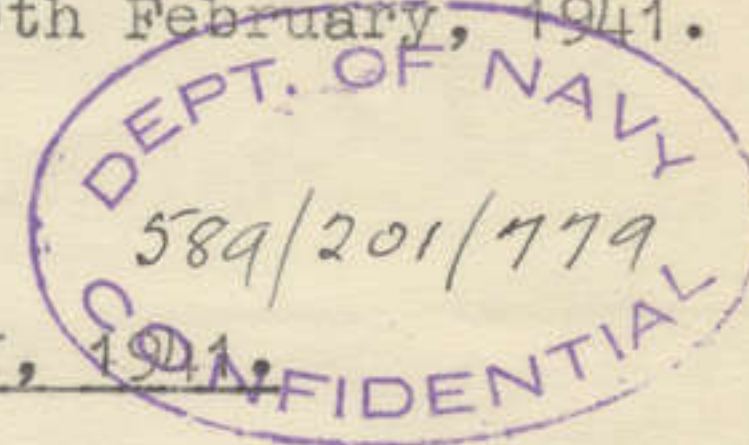
CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office, MELBOURNE.

SECRET.
No.SC.2/16.



H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
10th February, 1941.



H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY, JANUARY, 1941.

1. 1st January - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" proceeded from Greenock to Liverpool, to change port propeller, and on arrival secured alongside Prince's Stage, River Mersey. An enemy air-raid took place during the night, a few bombs being dropped.
2. 2nd January - P.M. Docked in Canada Graving Dock.
3. 3rd-5th January - Dock bottom flooded nightly as an air-raid precaution.
New propeller was in place P.M. Sunday, 5th January.
4. 6th January - Ten Fleet Air Arm Officers and seven ratings embarked for passage to Freetown. Mr. Evans, Superintendent Victualling Stores Officer, for passage, and Mr. Turner, Official Newsreel Cameraman, also embarked.
5. P.M. undocked and anchored off in River Mersey.
6. 7th January - Fuelled.
7. P.M. "AUSTRALIA" having been ordered to form part of Ocean Escort for convoy W.S.5.B from United Kingdom to Africa, sailed in company with Liverpool portion, accompanied by H.M.S. "HIGHLANDER" and "HARVESTER" of local escort.
Convoy was composed of following ships carrying troops:-
From Newport: Duchess of Bedford.
From Avonmouth: Highland Princess, Winchester Castle, Monarch of Bermuda.
From Liverpool: Windsor Castle, Britannic, Duchess of Richmond, Athlone Castle, Empress of Australia, Samaria.
From Clyde: Pennland, Cameronia, Franconia, Nea Hellas, Highland Chieftain, Ormonde, Capetown Castle, Durban Castle, Arundel Castle, Empress of Japan.
Clyde portion having been delayed by fog, Liverpool portion was ordered to anchor off Moelfre Island, north east coast of Anglesea.
Shortly before anchoring, warning of a possible air-raid on convoy was received. This did not materialise.
8. 8th January - Convoy sailing delayed a further 24 hours owing to fog in the Clyde.
11. A.M. H.M.S. "NAIAD" (flying flag of Rear-Admiral Edward Leigh Stuart King, C.B., M.V.O., Flag Officer Commanding, 15th Cruiser Squadron), who, with H.M.S. "PHOEBE", had been detailed as anti-aircraft escort to the convoy in North Western Approaches, joined the Liverpool portion off Anglesea as additional anti-aircraft protection.
12. P.M. Fuelled HIGHLANDER and HARVESTER. H.M.S. WITHERINGTON joined the local escort after dark.
13. 9th January - Convoy sailing again postponed 24 hours owing to

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H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY, JANUARY, 1941.

Clyde fog.

14. 10th January - Sailing postponed a further 24 hours.
15. After dark a hostile aircraft warning was received and an air-raid could be seen taking place on Liverpool. Convoy was not attacked but at 2106 convoy and escort weighed by order of Commander in Chief, Western Approaches, and proceeded for Belfast Lough owing to the air menace.
16. 11th January - 0930 Convoy entering Belfast Lough. Escort followed, "AUSTRALIA" anchoring inside boom to north east of convoy in Bangor Bay. Fuelled.
17. Avonmouth portion of convoy was anchored in Belfast Lough having sailed from Avonmouth according to programme.
18. 12th January - After midnight, Escort (now including H.M.S. LINCOLN - Senior Officer, Local Escort - and VANSITTART) and convoy proceeded to rendezvous with Clyde portion off Islay.
19. A.M. Rendezvoused in North Channel with Clyde portion of convoy and "DUCHESS OF YORK" who were escorted by H.M.S. "RAMILLIES", "PHOEBE", and remainder of Local Escort, H.M. Ships "WATCHMAN", "JACKAL", "LEOPARD", "BEAGLE", "BRILLIANT", "FEARLESS", and "LEAMINGTON".
20. 1130. Convoy was clear of North Channel, formed as follows:-

<u>Column 1.</u>	<u>Column 2.</u>	<u>Column 3</u>	
"WINCHESTER CASTLE"	"DUCHESS OF BEDFORD" (Vice Commodore)	"WINDSOR CASTLE"	
"MONARCH OF BERMUDA"	"HIGHLAND PRINCESS"	"DUCHESS OF RICHMOND"	
"HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN"	"NEA HELLAS"	"BRITANNIC"	
<u>Column 4.</u>	<u>Column 5.</u>	<u>Column 6.</u>	<u>Column 7.</u>
"ATHLONE CASTLE" (Commodore)	"PENNLAND"	"ORMONDE" (Rear Commodore)	"DURBAN CASTLE"
"EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA"	"FRANCONIA"	"CAMERONIA"	"CAPETOWN CASTLE"
"SAMARIA"	"EMPRESS OF JAPAN"		"ARUNDEL CASTLE"
Local Escort	-	Anti-Submarine screen.	
Ocean Escort	-	"RAMILLIES", "AUSTRALIA".	
Anti-Aircraft Escort	-	"NAIAD", "PHOEBE".	

21. 14th January - A.M. When in position 53° 00'N, 21° 25'W, air warning received from Admiralty and cruisers took up air attack stations until dusk. Shortly afterwards convoy altered course to southward to avoid a submarine area, subsequently resuming the route.
22. 15th January - 0005 "LINCOLN", "LEAMINGTON", "VANSITTART", "WATCHMAN" parted company in position

- 50° 30'N, 23° 00'W.
0600. "BEAGLE", "BRILLIANT" parted company in position 49° 15'N, 23° 25'W.
23. 1130. H.M.S. "EMERALD" joined Escort from Plymouth and "NAIAD" with "JACKAL" parted company for United Kingdom. "PHOEBE" with "FEARLESS" left for Gibraltar at same time escorting "MONARCH OF BERMUDA" and "CAPETOWN CASTLE" - position 48° 10'N, 24° 10'W.
24. "RAMILLIES" now became Senior Officer of Escort.
25. 16th January - 0400. "HIGHLANDER" and "HARVESTER", the last of the local escort, parted company in position 45° 15'N, 27° 30'W.
26. 17th January - 0330. "RAMILLIES" parted company in position 41° 10'N, 30° 40'W, escorting "DUCHESS OF YORK" to Halifax.
27. "AUSTRALIA" assumed Senior Officer of Escort.
28. 2020. British Tanker "BRITISH UNION" made a Raider Alarm Report in position 26° 34'S, 30° 58'W, (385 miles south of Convoy). A signal was intercepted from H.M.S. "ARAWA", who was approaching the vicinity, proceeding to Freetown independently, that she had sighted searchlights and gun flashes and closed but had found nothing else after arrival in the position. "ARAWA" remained in the vicinity during the night and rescued one boat's crew in the morning. The survivors stated they thought it was an armed merchant raider, and possibly a U-boat in company. "ARAWA" then searched to north east and south for three days by order of the Commander in Chief, South Atlantic Station, before continuing on to Freetown, but found nothing.
29. 21st January - 1130. Freetown Local Escort corvettes "ASPHODEL" and "CALENDULA" joined in position 21° 00'S, 26° 55'W.
30. Message from Admiralty was received containing the information that a U-boat was operating in the vicinity of Convoy W.S.5.B., south of the Cape Verde Islands.
31. 22nd January - H.M.S. "VELOX" joined Local Escort in position 14° 15'N, 25° 20'W.
32. 24th January - H.M.S. "VIDETTE" and "CLEMATIS" joined Local Escort in position 9° 15'N, 17° 10'W.
33. 25th January - A.M. Convoy arrived Freetown, being led into harbour by "AUSTRALIA" and followed by "EMERALD" and the Local Escort.
34. H.M. Ships in harbour:-
"EDINBURGH CASTLE" (flying flag of Vice-Admiral R.H.T. Raikes, C.B. C.V.O..D.S.O., Commander in Chief, South Atlantic).
"ALBATROSS", "VINDICTIVE", and "DUNEDIN".
35. 26th January - A.M. "MONARCH OF BERMUDA" and "CAPETOWN CASTLE" arrived from Gibraltar, escorted by H.M.S. "FAULKNER" (Captain (D), 8th Destroyer Flotilla) and "FORESTER".

36. Disembarked Fleet Air Arm passengers.
P.M. H.M.S. "DUNEDIN" sailed. "ARAWA" arrived.
37. 27th January - P.M. H.M.S. "BULOLO" arrived.
38. 28th January - A.M. H.M.S. "DELHI" arrived.
39. 29th January - H.M.S. "BULOLO" sailed.
40. 0630. Convoy W.S.5.B. commenced to sail, preceded by Local Escort, H.M. Ships "FAULKNER" (Captain (D), 8th Destroyer Flotilla), "FORESTER", "MILFORD", "CYCLAMEN" and "CLEMATIS". "AUSTRALIA" and "EMERALD" followed astern.
1340. Escort took up day screening stations ahead of convoy, who were formed up in the following order on the route for South Africa:-

<u>Column 1.</u>	<u>Column 2.</u>	<u>Column 3.</u>	<u>Column 4.</u>
"DUCHESS OF BEDFORD" (Vice Commodore) "FRANCONIA"	"CAPETOWN CASTLE" "NEA HELLAS" "ARUNDEL CASTLE"	"EMPRESS OF JAPAN" "WINDSOR CASTLE" "MONARCH OF BERMUDA"	"ATHLONE CASTLE" (Commodore) "EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA" "PENNLAND"
<u>Column 5.</u>	<u>Column 6.</u>	<u>Column 7.</u>	
"BRITANNIC" "WINCHESTER CASTLE" "CAMERONIA"	"ORMONDE" (Rear Commodore) "DURBAN CASTLE" "SAMARIA"	"DUCHESS OF RICHMOND" "HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN" "HIGHLAND PRINCESS".	

41. Local Escort remained in company until 1st February, 1941.

R. H. Stewart

CAPTAIN.

SECRET.

No.SC.2/16.

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H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA"
6th March, 1941.

589-201-779

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY, FEBRUARY, 1941.

1. 1st February - H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was on passage from Freetown to Durban, escorting Convoy W.S.5.B. to South Africa. The ocean escort of the Convoy was completed by H.M.S. "EMERALD".
2. P.M. Freetown Local Escort, consisting of H.M. Ships "FAULKNER" (Captain(D) 8th Destroyer Flotilla), "FORRESTER", "MILFORD", "CYCLAMEN" and "CLEMATIS", parted company in position 3° 30' South 2° 35' West.
3. 7th February - "AUSTRALIA" exercised the recovery of aircraft under way.
4. 8th February - Capetown portion consisting of "ATHLONE CASTLE", "ARUNDEL CASTLE", "CAPETOWN CASTLE", "WINCHESTER CASTLE", "DURBAN CASTLE", "EMPRESS OF JAPAN", "EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA", "MONARCH OF BERMUDA" and "DUCHESS OF BEDFORD" parted company and proceeded into Capetown.
5. "EMERALD" temporarily took charge of the Durban portion while "AUSTRALIA" proceeded ahead to carry out a full calibre firing at a Battle Practice Target in False Bay.
6. On completion of the firing "AUSTRALIA" relieved "EMERALD" as escort off Cape Point and "EMERALD" parted company.
7. The Durban portion was formed as follows:-

BRITANNIC.	ORMONDE	DUCHESS OF RICHMOND.
	(Commodore)	
WINDSOR CASTLE.	NEA HELLAS.	HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN.
CAMERONIA.	SAMARIA.	HIGHLAND PRINCESS.
FRANCONIA.	PENNLAND.	
8. 11th February - "AUSTRALIA" and Convoy arrived at Durban and completed with fuel etc..
9. 15th February - P.M. Durban portion of the Convoy escorted by "AUSTRALIA" sailed for the rendezvous in position 29° South 33° 30' East with the Capetown portion who had left Capetown on 12th February. "HIGHLAND CHIEFTAIN" and "HIGHLAND PRINCESS", being required for the transport of frozen meat from the River Plate, had been replaced in the Convoy by "ORBITA" and "NIEUW HOLLAND".
10. 16th February - The two portions of Convoy W.S.5.B. met, and after forming up in the undermentioned order, proceeded for Suez via the Mozambique Channel.

(1)	(2)	(3)	
WINCHESTER CASTLE.	EMPRESS OF JAPAN.	ATHLONE CASTLE	
DURBAN CASTLE.	EMPRESS OF	ARUNDEL CASTLE.	
	AUSTRALIA.	MONARCH OF	
CAPETOWN CASTLE.	DUCHESS OF BEDFORD.	BERMUDA.	
(4).	(5)	(6)	(7)
FRANCONIA.	ORMONDE.	BRITANNIC.	DUCHESS OF RICHMOND.
NEA HELLAS.	WINDSOR	CAMERONIA.	ORBITA.
	CASTLE.	SAMARIA.	NIEUW HOLLAND.
	PENNLAND.		

11...../-

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY, FEBRUARY, 1941.

11. 17th February - A message from H.M.S. "HAWKINS", who was on passage with H.M.S. "HERMES" from Aden to Mombasa, was intercepted, indicating that S.S. "MANDALAY" may have sighted a raider in the vicinity of 2° South 47° East at 1338 G.M.T. on 16th February, but that nothing further was sighted by "HAWKINS" or "HERMES" aircraft on the following day.
12. 21st February - "HAWKINS" joined escort from Mombasa, in position 4° 30' South 43° East, and at the same time "EMERALD" was detached with the eastgoing portion of the Convoy (ORMONDE, WINDSOR CASTLE, EMPRESS OF AUSTRALIA and EMPRESS OF JAPAN). "EMERALD" was to fuel at Mombasa and then proceed as escort to this portion to Bombay.
13. At 1630 G.M.T. a distress message from S.S. "CANADIAN CRUISER" was read, to the effect that she was being chased by a Battle Cruiser at 1610 G.M.T. in position 6° 30' South 47° 20' East (275 miles East South East from the Convoy).
14. The known disposition of H.M. Ships at this time were:-
 (a) "GLASGOW" in approximate vicinity of "CANADIAN CRUISER", proceeding to Durban.
 (b) "ENTERPRISE" approximately 100 miles North West of the Convoy, proceeding to Mombasa.
 (c) "CAPETOWN" and "HERMES" at Mombasa.
 (d) "SHROPSHIRE" off Italian Somaliland.
15. Commander in Chief, East Indies then ordered the following:-
 (a) "GLASGOW" to investigate the distress message.
 (b) "ENTERPRISE" to take station 30 miles to the South East of W.S.5.B.
 (c) W.S.5.B.X. (eastgoing portion) to enter Mombasa.
 (d) "GLASGOW", "EMERALD", "HAVELOCK" and "CAPETOWN" to form Force V, a Searching Force.
16. 22nd February - 0301 G.M.T. "GLASGOW" in position 6° 10' South 49° 50' East reported nothing sighted.
 0515 G.M.T. Dutch Ship "RANTAN PANDJANG" made a distress message in position 8° 24' South 51° 35' East.
17. The Commander in Chief, East Indies then ordered the following dispositions:-
 (a) "SHROPSHIRE" to proceed towards 3° South 58° East on completion of a bombardment of Brava.
 (b) "ENTERPRISE" to fuel at Mombasa.
 (c) "HERMES" and "EMERALD" to proceed towards Agalega Island.
18. 0944 G.M.T. "GLASGOW" reported her aircraft had sighted a Pocket Battleship in position 8° 30' South 51° 35' East at 0818 G.M.T. and that he was chasing to the East South East.
 1427 G.M.T. "GLASGOW" reported that his aircraft had failed to regain contact at 1130 G.M.T. owing to low visibility to the Southward, but the area to the North and East of the line of advance was searched and clear.
19. The Commander in Chief East Indies then disposed Force V as follows:-
 (a) "CANBERRA" to proceed towards 6° South 60° East.
 (b) "SHROPSHIRE" to proceed towards 9° South 54° East.
 (c) Convoy W.S.5.B. to proceed at maximum speed.
20. At 1520 G.M.T. Admiralty informed Commander in Chief East Indies that "AUSTRALIA" could be employed in the search.

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H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY, FEBRUARY, 1941.

21. - Commander in Chief, East Indies then reconstituted Force V as follows, and ordered "AUSTRALIA" to turn the Convoy over to "HAWKINS" and proceed at 27 knots towards 9° South 54° East:-
 "SHROPSHIRE", "GLASGOW",
 "AUSTRALIA", "CANBERRA", "EMERALD", "HERMES" and
 "CAPETOWN".
22. At 1635 G.M.T. "AUSTRALIA" proceeded accordingly from position 0° 17' South 46° 35' East.
23. 23rd February - "DORSETSHIRE", who was escorting a Force Z northwards off the East coast of South Africa, was, with Admiralty approval, despatched by Commander in Chief, East Indies towards 25° South 50° East. She was, however, withdrawn later in the day contact not having been regained, and returned to her escorting duties.
24. Commander in Chief, East Indies further disposed Force V as follows:-
 (a) "GLASGOW" to search area between Madagascar and 55° East, then to the eastward to Carcados Carajos area and to fuel at Mauritius.
 (b) "SHROPSHIRE", "EMERALD" and "HERMES" to concentrate between Madagascar and Farquhar Group.
 (c) "AUSTRALIA" to continue towards 18° South 57° East after passing through 9° South 54° East.
 (d) "CAPETOWN" to patrol North of Seychelles, fuelling there when necessary.
 (e) Convoy W.S.5.B.X. to continue its voyage to Bombay escorted by "ENTERPRISE".
25. 24th February - 1300 G.M.T. As touch with the enemy had not been regained, forces proceeded as follows:-
 (a) "SHROPSHIRE", "EMERALD" and "HERMES" towards 4° South 52° East.
 (b) "CANBERRA" to patrol area between 3° and 7° South and 58° and 61° East.
 (c) "GLASGOW" and "AUSTRALIA" to fuel at Mauritius.
26. Commander in Chief, East Indies ordered the following subsequent movements:-
 (a) "LEANDER", after arrival at 0° 70° East A.M. 25th February, to patrol the area between 0° and 3° North and 67° and 70° East.
 (b) "SHROPSHIRE", "EMERALD" and "HERMES" to fuel at Seychelles.
 (c) "CAPETOWN" to join the escort of W.S.5.B.X.
 (d) "GLASGOW" to join the escort of Force Z passing South of Reunion en route.
 (e) "CANBERRA" to join "SHROPSHIRE" off Seychelles and to fuel there.
27. 25th February - Shortly after dawn "AUSTRALIA" arrived off Port Louis, Mauritius and fuelled from R.F.A. "OLCADES".
28. "GLASGOW" having already completed with fuel, proceeded after personnel and stores for transport to the Near East had been transferred from "AUSTRALIA".
29. As soon as fuelling was completed "AUSTRALIA" proceeded at 27 knots to search an area enclosed between the points 19° 50' South 67° 50' East, 21° 30' South 69° 35' East, 24° 15' South 66° 30' East, 22° 50' South 64° 55' East.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - WAR DIARY, FEBRUARY, 1941.

30. 26th February - Course was shaped so as to search as much as possible of the South East portion of the area before dark. The state of the sea precluded the use of the aircraft.
31. 1430 G.M.T. Nothing having been sighted, "AUSTRALIA" was directed by Commander in Chief, East Indies to proceed towards Colombo at 18 knots, shaping course to pass through 0° 40' South 68° 30' East and the One and a Half Degree Channel in order to provide cover for "EMERALD" and "HERMES" in that area.
31. Further movements of other forces ordered by Commander in Chief East Indies were as follows:-
(a) "EMERALD" and "HERMES" to Colombo.
(b) "SHROPSHIRE" to Durban and Simonstown for refit.
(c) "CANBERRA" and "LEANDER" to rendezvous and then patrol between 1° 30' South 75° East and 5° South 65° East.

R. Stewart

CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Naval Board,
Navy Office, MELBOURNE.

Copy to:-

The Commander in Chief East Indies.

SECRETWAR DIARY - MARCH 1941.

1. 1st March. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was proceeding towards Colombo from Mauritius after having participated in the search for the enemy Pocket Battleship in the Indian Ocean, as described in War Diary for February 1941.
2. Dispositions of H.M. Ships in the vicinity were:-
 - (a) EMERALD and HERMES proceeding in company from Seychelles to Colombo.
 - (b) CANBERRA and LEANDER proceeding to rendezvous preparatory to patrolling between 1°30' S., 75° E. and 5° S., 65° E.
3. Admiralty having promulgated that D/F bearings placed an enemy unit within 150 miles of 9° S., 62° E., the Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, ordered AUSTRALIA, EMERALD, and HERMES to rendezvous at 4° 40' S., 66° E. at 0330 Greenwich Mean Time on 2nd March, with the object of searching the area, but later directed CANBERRA and LEANDER to proceed towards this position instead, and AUSTRALIA to rendezvous with EMERALD and HERMES in 0°, 69° E., and proceed in company to Colombo.
4. 2nd March. At 0300 Greenwich Mean Time, HERMES and EMERALD joined AUSTRALIA as directed, and ships proceeded for Colombo in company.
5. 4th March. P.M. Ships arrived Colombo.
6. 5th March. Fuelled, and commenced storing, provisioning etc. HERMES, escorted by EMERALD, proceeded to Trincomalee.
7. 6th March. The Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, Vice-Admiral Ralph Leatham, C.B., inspected ship's company at divisions.
8. 7th March. A.M. EMERALD returned to Colombo.
P.M. AUSTRALIA proceeded for High Angle and Low Angle 8" firings off Colombo, and then patrolled to seaward of the searched channel during the night.
9. 8th March. The Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, withdrew AUSTRALIA from Force V which he had formed for the search for the Pocket Battleship.
10. Convoy C.F.1 consisting of MAURETANIA and NIEUW AMSTERDAM proceeded for Fremantle, AUSTRALIA commencing escort off the Colombo searched channel.
11. 11th March. 1115 Greenwich Mean Time, HOBART wearing flag of the Rear-Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron, with SYDNEY in company, was met in position 15° 5' S., 91° 55' E.
12. 15th March. Convoy and escort arrived at Fremantle.
13. 16th March. The Rear-Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron, (Rear-Admiral J.G. Crace) inspected ship's company at Divisions, and attended Divine Service on board.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - MARCH 1941.

Page 2.

14. 17th March. Convoy C.F.1 continued its passage to the Eastern States, leaving Fremantle under the same escort.
15. 18th March. 0700. Cruisers parted company from the Convoy, and, on completion of a night encounter exercise, proceeded for the Eastern States, in accordance with Naval Board instructions received during the day, in order to dock HOBART, to give leave to SYDNEY'S retarded leave party, and to give leave to AUSTRALIA.
16. 19th March. A.M. AUSTRALIA when off Albany was detached to anchor in King George's Sound and to land West Australian libertymen.
P.M. AUSTRALIA proceeded as necessary to rendezvous with HOBART and SYDNEY off Port Phillip at 1300 on 23rd March.
17. 23rd March. AUSTRALIA joined HOBART wearing flag of the Rear-Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron, with SYDNEY in company. Cruisers proceeded in company for Sydney.
18. 24th March. P.M. Cruisers arrived Sydney and fuelled etc. AUSTRALIA gave leave to ship's company until 3rd April.
20. As many defects as possible were made good during this period.

Rear Admiral

CAPTAIN.

The Rear-Admiral Commanding
H.M. Australian Squadron.



SECRETWAR DIARY - APRIL, 1941.

1. 1st April. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was at Sydney with the Ship's Company on leave, and under orders to be ready for sea by Friday, 4th April.
2. 3rd April. Ship's Company returned from leave.
3. 4th April. A.M. Orders having been received from Naval Board to escort Troop Convoy U.S.10 from New Zealand to Ceylon, H.M.A.S. "HOBART", flying the flag of the Rear-Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron and H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" proceeded for Wellington.
4. 6th April. 1336. Cruisers catapulted aircraft for flying practice, in position $40^{\circ} 40.6' \text{ S.}$, $174^{\circ} 09.1' \text{ E.}$ A catapult failure caused "AUSTRALIA'S" aircraft to fall into the sea, unfortunately resulting in the death of the pilot, Lieutenant (A) J.J. HOATH, R.N., who was not again seen, and the loss of the aircraft. The Observer and Telegraphist Air Gunner were rescued.
5. 1820. Cruisers secured alongside at Wellington.
6. H.M.S. "ACHILLES" was in harbour.
7. 7th April. P.M. Troopships "MAURETANIA" and "NIEUW AMSTERDAM" proceeded for Sydney escorted by "HOBART", "AUSTRALIA" and "ACHILLES".
8. 10th April. 0430. "ACHILLES" parted company in position $34^{\circ} 15' \text{ S.}$, $152^{\circ} 45' \text{ E.}$, and proceeded to relieve "SYDNEY" who was protecting Troopship "QUEEN MARY" in Jervis Bay. "SYDNEY" then proceeded to Sydney.
9. A.M. "MAURETANIA", "NIEUW AMSTERDAM", "HOBART" and "AUSTRALIA" arrived Sydney. Troopships "QUEEN ELIZABETH" and "ILE DE FRANCE" were in harbour.
10. 11th April. Convoy U.S.10, consisting of "QUEEN ELIZABETH" (commodore), "MAURETANIA", "ILE DE FRANCE" and "NIEUW AMSTERDAM" sailed from Sydney on the A.M. high water, escorted by "AUSTRALIA".
11. 1400. "QUEEN MARY", escorted from Jervis Bay by "ACHILLES", joined convoy in position $35^{\circ} 24' \text{ S.}$, $152^{\circ} 05' \text{ E.}$ "ACHILLES" then proceeded to Sydney and convoy assumed cruising order as follows :-

"MAURETANIA"	"QUEEN ELIZABETH" (Commodore)	"QUEEN MARY"
"NIEUW AMSTERDAM"		"ILE DE FRANCE"
12. "AUSTRALIA" screened from convenient V/S distance ahead.
13. 12th April. "AUSTRALIA" led convoy in single line through the searched channels and route through Bass Strait which had been swept by 20th Minesweeping Flotilla.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - APRIL, 1941.

Page 2.

14. 12th April. P.M. "WARREGO", "SWAN" and "ORARA" of that Flotilla were passed in position $39^{\circ} 20' S.$, $144^{\circ} 00' E.$
15. Previous cruising order was resumed when clear of Bass Strait.
16. 16th April. A.M. Convoy and escort arrived Fremantle, "AUSTRALIA", "NIEUW AMSTERDAM" and "MAURETANIA" berthing alongside, and "QUEEN ELIZABETH", "QUEEN MARY" and "ILE DE FRANCE" anchoring in Gage Roads.
17. 18th April. "MAURETANIA", NIEUW AMSTERDAM" and "AUSTRALIA" proceeded to Gage Roads anchorage.
18. 19th April. A.M. Convoy and escort proceeded for Ceylon, resuming the previous cruising order and screening position when clear of the searched channel.
19. 22nd April. P.M. "DURBAN" was met in position $8^{\circ} 30' S.$, $104^{\circ} 45' E.$, and assumed the escort of "NIEUW AMSTERDAM" who was detached to Singapore.
20. 25th April. P.M. "CANBERRA" was met in position $3^{\circ} 00' N.$, $84^{\circ} 45' E.$ and assumed the escort of "QUEEN ELIZABETH" and "QUEEN MARY" who were detached to Trincomalee.
21. 26th April. P.M. "AUSTRALIA", "ILE DE FRANCE" and "MAURETANIA" arrived Colombo.
22. 27th April. P.M. "AUSTRALIA" proceeded for Singapore in accordance with Naval Board's orders, received through the Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, to convey Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin, K.B.E., C.B., R.N., from Singapore to Australia.
23. 30th April. P.M. Arrived Keppel Harbour, and proceeded for Darwin after Admiral Colvin had embarked.



Rm. Simon

CAPTAIN.

Copy.

SECRET

SUBJECT :

DEPT OF NAVY
SECRET

WAR DIARIES.

MAY, 1941 - JULY, 1941.

2021

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435

FORMER:

Navy Office letter No. 034989 of 8th November, 1940.

ENCLOSURES:

PART 1 - CHRONOLOGICAL DIARY OF EVENTS.

1. R.A.C.A.S - 1st May, 1941 - 31st May, 1941.
2. "HOBART" - June, 1941.
3. "AUSTRALIA" - May, 1941 - June, 1941.
4. "SYDNEY" - May, 1941 - July, 1941.
5. "ADELAIDE" - May, 1941 - July, 1941.
6. "WESTRALIA" - May, 1941 - July, 1941.
7. "MANOCRA" - May, 1941 - July, 1941.
8. "WARRAGO" - May, 1941 - July, 1941.
9. "SWAN" - May, 1941 - July, 1941.
10. "ORARA" - May, 1941 - July, 1941.
11. "DOOMBA" - May, 1941 - July, 1941.

12. PART 11 - BRIEF SURVEY AND APPRECIATION OF EVENTS.

The Secretary,
Naval Board.

Forwarded for the information of the Naval Board.

(Signed) J.G. Brace
REAR-ADMIRAL

Office of the Rear-Admiral
Commanding H.M.A. Squadron.

Head of "N" 4/11

OC/S 4/11

On 9.

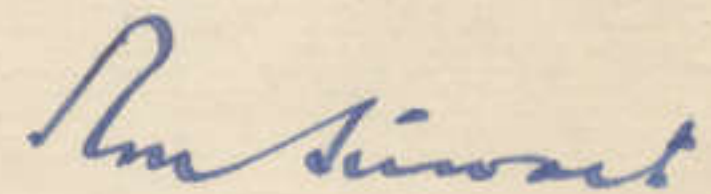
2/16

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
19 June, 1941.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - MAY 1941.

1. 1st. May. H.M.A.S. AUSTRALIA was returning to Eastern Australia after escorting Convoy U.S.10 to Ceylon, and was conveying Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin, K.B.E., C.B., from Singapore to Port Darwin and Sydney.
2. P.M. Passed through Carimata Strait.
3. 2nd. May. P.M. ~~PASSED~~ Passed through Sapudi and Lombok Straits.
4. 5th. May. A.M. Arrived Port Darwin and fuelled.
P.M. Proceeded for Sydney.
5. 8th. May. A.M. Anchored off Archer Point for two hours to pass important messages by V/S.
6. 10th. May. Noon. Arrived Sydney.
Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin disembarked.
7. 13th. May. A.M. Docked for changing Port Propellor, examination of A Brackets etc.
Granted 24 hours leave to Ship's Company in Watches.
8. 15th. May. Examination having revealed defects in A Brackets which would require approximately 10 days to make good, Ship's Company was granted 5 days leave in watches.
9. 24th. May. Further 48 hours leave granted as defects in Turbines would not be made good until 29th. May.
10. 29th. May. Undocked to No.1 Buoy.
11. 30th. May. A.M. Carried out Test Runs over D/G Range.
P.M. Carried out Partial Repair Trial and Exercises off Sydney.



CAPTAIN.



8.3. 2/16

ENCLOSURE No. 3 To AF 991/703/21

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
19 June, 1941.

SECRET

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10. 29th. May. Undocked to No.1 Buoy.
11. 30th. May. A.M. Carried out Test Runs over D/G Range.
P.M. Carried out Partial Repair Trial and Exercises off Sydney.

(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.

CAPTAIN.

S.C. 284/2/16.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA"
15th. July, 1941.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - JUNE 1941

1. 1st. June. H.M.A.S. Australia at Sydney.
2. 4th. June. P.M. Proceeded for Wellington escorting S.S. Largs Bay and Themistocles who had Air Force Personnel on board.
3. 9th. June. A.M. Ships arrived at Wellington.
P.M. "Australia" proceeded for Sydney in order to carry out firings off that Port before escorting Awatea to Auckland.
5. 12th. June. P.M. Arrived at Sydney, carrying out firings before entering harbour.
6. 13th. June. P.M. Proceeded for Auckland escorting Awatea with service personnel on board.
7. 16th. June. A.M. Ships arrived at Auckland. H.M.C. A.M.C.
8. Prince Robert in harbour.
9. 17th. June. A.M. Proceeded for Sydney.
10. 20th. June. P.M. Arrived at Sydney carrying out firings before entering harbour.
11. 22nd. June. Information having been received that an incomplete "S.O.S." had been heard by Shore W/T Stations, on two frequencies, from a Station whose Call Sign commenced with VH, "Australia" and "Adelaide" were ordered to raise steam with despatch.
12. Subsequently "Australia" was ordered to proceed at 25 Knots towards position 38 degrees 10 minutes South, 153 degrees 55 minutes East. The position given was 180 miles to East-South-East of estimated positions of the only two merchant ships whose Call Signs commenced with VH.
13. 23rd. June. 0334K "Australia" proceeded accordingly.
14. 1530K. Air Search having proved "Negative" "Australia" was ordered to return to Sydney.
15. 24th. June. A.M. Arrived at Sydney.
16. 27th. June. A.M. Carried out Test Runs over D/G Range.
17. 29th. June. Proceeded to sea with Transport Queen Mary, thus commencing the escort of Convoy 11A to Fremantle and Trincomalee.
18. 1700K. Transport Queen Elizabeth escorted from Jervis Bay by "Adelaide" was met in position 35 degrees south, 151 degrees 55 minutes east. "Adelaide" then parted company for New Zealand.
19. Convoy formed single line ahead, Commodore being in Queen Elizabeth. "Australia" screened from visibility distance ahead.

S.C. 284/2/16. of 15th. July, 1941.

(2)

20. 30th. June. 1200K. Transport Aquitania escorted from Wellington by "Achilles", joined the Convoy in position 40 degrees 15 minutes south, 150 degrees 40 minutes east, and took station astern of "Queen Mary".
21. "Achilles" then parted company for Wellington, and Convoy continued its passage south-about Tasmania.
22. Convoy was subsequently formed up in the following cruising order:- "Aquitania", "Queen Elizabeth", "Queen Mary" in line abreast to starboard. Ships six cables apart.



Rear Admiral

CAPTAIN.

S.C. 284/2/16.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA"
15th. July, 1941.

SECRET

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S.C. 284/2/16. of 15th. July, 1941.

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(Sgd.) R. R. STEWART.

CAPTAIN.

The Secretary, Australian Commonwealth Naval Board.
(Through The Commander-in-Chief, East Indies Station.)

SECRET

S.C.291/2/16.

II.
E.I.3203/ H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA"
31. 9th. August, 1941.
AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH
NAVAL BOARD.

WAR DIARY - JULY 1941.

1. 1st. July. H.M.A.S. "Australia" was escorting Convoy US11A, consisting of "Queen Elizabeth" (Commodore), "Queen Mary" and "Aquitania" to Fremantle, and Trincomalee, and had passed to Southward of Tasmania during the previous night.
2. Convoy was formed in the order "Aquitania", "Queen Elizabeth" "Queen Mary" in line abreast port to starboard, and "Australia" screened from visibility distance ahead. (7-8 Miles by day, 1-2 Miles by night.)
3. 4th. July. P.M. Ships anchored in Gage Roads.
4. 5th. July. A.M. "Australia" proceeded into Fremantle Harbour.
5. 9th. July. P.M. Convoy and Escort proceeded for Trincomalee, remaining in single line for the night after clearing the Searched Channel.
6. 10th. July. A.M. Convoy formed Line Abreast as before.
7. 16th. July. A.M. Ships arrived at Trincomalee. "Australia" secured alongside the Oil Jetty in China Bay, and "Queen Elizabeth" and "Queen Mary" anchored in the Harbour, and "Aquitania" just outside the Boom.
8. 17th. July. Commodore of Convoy transferred to "Aquitania".
9. P.M. Escort and Convoy proceeded, the final destination of the latter being Suez, "Australia" was to receive further orders whilst on passage.
10. "Australia" led the Convoy in single line during the night whilst rounding Ceylon.
11. 18th. July. A.M. Convoy joined Line Abreast in the order "Queen Elizabeth", "Aquitania", "Queen Mary" from Port to Starboard, and "Australia" resumed her previous screening positions.
12. 22nd. July. P.M. H.M.S. Caledon was met in position 12 degrees North, 45 degrees 05 minutes East, and assumed escort of the Convoy. "Australia" parted company and secured in Aden Harbour before dark.
13. 23rd. July. P.M. H.M.A.S. Perth arrived from the Red Sea, fuelled, and proceeded again.
14. 24th. July. P.M. H.M.S. Ilex arrived.
15. 27th. July. Flag Officer, Red Sea, Rear-Admiral R.H.C. Hallifax, C.B., inspected the Ship's Company at Divisions, and attended Divine Service on board.
16. Free French Sloop Savorgnan De Brazza having reported being attacked by a submarine in the Gulf of Tajina, Anti-Submarine Patrols were put into operation off Aden.
17. 29th. July. "Australia's" aircraft carried out dawn and dusk patrols to seaward of the Searched Channel.

SECRET

S.C. 291/2/16.

(2)

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-------------|--|
| 18. | 29th. July. | <u>A.M.</u> | Greek Destroyer Spetsai arrived. |
| | (cont.) | | |
| 19. | | <u>P.M.</u> | H.M.S. Formidable arrived and fuelled. |
| 20. | 30th. July. | <u>A.M.</u> | H.M.S. Formidable sailed. |

R. H. H. H.

CAPTAIN.

SECRET

Commonwealth of Australia

Department of Defence

DEPT. OF DEFENCE
2026 / 7 / 435
SECRET

Royal Australian Navy.

REFERENCE No...S.C....297/2/16.

Ack'd By Form
A.S. 1000

30 DEC AM

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
7th September, 1941.

The Commander-in-Chief,
East Indies.

Q. 12.8/1

*Seharate File 2026
Dec Rec 7/513*

WAR DIARY AND (REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR AUGUST, 1941.)

With reference to my predecessor's letter S.C. 291/2/16, of 9th August, 1941, the War Diary and Report of Proceedings of H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" for the month of August, 1941, together with a detailed report of operation KEDGEREE are forwarded for information.

2. It is requested that one copy of the above may be forwarded to the Secretary, Australian Commonwealth Naval Board, Navy Office, Melbourne.

*W 31/12
H.N.*

*Dec 31/12
Su GC L.O.
P. 1/1/42
unclassified*

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
23 OCT 1941
EAST INDIES

[Signature]
CAPTAIN.

II.

~~1317/E.I.1287/3203~~

THE SECRETARY TO THE AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH
NAVAL BOARD.

SECRETWAR DIARY - AUGUST, 1941.

1. 1st August. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was at Aden, waiting to escort convoy SW 8 comprising transports DUCHESS OF BEDFORD (Commodore) and ORDUNA from Berbera to Mombasa.
2. P.M. H.M.A.S. "VOYAGER" and H.M.S. "ANSON" arrived.
3. 3rd August. Convoy SW 8 was ordered to assemble at Aden, as ORDUNA required fresh water.
4. A.M. DUCHESS OF BEDFORD arrived.
P.M. H.M.S. "LEANDER" arrived.
5. P.M. Carried out High Angle firings off Aden.
6. 4th August. A.M. H.M.S. "LEANDER" sailed.
7. 5th August. H.M.S. "EXETER" arrived and H.M.S. "ANSON" sailed.
8. 6th August. ORDUNA arrived and H.M.S. "EXETER" sailed.
P.M. Sailed for Mombasa, escorting Convoy SW 8.
9. "AUSTRALIA" screened from visibility distances ahead by day and by night.
10. 7th August. P.M. Passed through Socotra Channel.
11. 13th August. A.M. Passed H.M. Ships "HERMES" and "ENTERPRISE" off Mombasa outward bound.
12. "AUSTRALIA" followed convoy into Mombasa, proceeding to an anchorage in the stream after fuelling alongside.
13. H.M.S. "HAWKINS" arrived.
14. 14th August. H.M.S. "HAWKINS" sailed escorting Convoy SW 8.
15. Captain G.D. Moore, R.A.N., relieved Captain R.R. Stewart, R.N., in command.
16. 15th August. P.M. Proceeded for Durban in accordance with Commander-in-Chief, East Indies' orders.
17. 16th August. Further orders received from Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, for an operation in South Indian Ocean, which were however subsequently superseded.
18. 17th August. Proceeded for Durban at best speed in accordance with Admiralty's instructions.
19. 18th August. P.M. Arrived Durban, and embarked Boarding Parties and Prize Crews.
20. H.M.S. "HAWKINS" arrived.
21. 19th August. Proceeded to endeavour to intercept a Vichy French Convoy en route from Tamatave homewards, being assisted by H.M.S. "HAWKINS", five South African Seaward Defence Force Whalers and South African Air Force Reconnaissance Aircraft.
22. 25th August. Operation abandoned at sunset, interception not having been effected.
Proceeded for Durban.
23. 28th August. Arrived Durban.

CAPTAIN.

SECRET

Commonwealth of Australia

Department of Defence

DEPT. OF NAVAL
2026 / 7 / 435
SECRET

Royal Australian Navy.

REFERENCE No. S.C. 312/2/16

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
6th October, 1941.

ACK'd By Form
A. S. 1020
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Date

The Commander-in-Chief,
EAST INDIES.

RECEIVED
30 DEC A.M.

NAVY - PROCEEDINGS
Scholar's File
1026 / 1 / 514

WAR DIARY AND (REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR SEPTEMBER, 1941.)

The War Diary and Report of Proceedings of H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" for the month of September, 1941, are forwarded for information.

2. It is requested that one copy of the above may be forwarded to the Secretary, Australian Commonwealth Naval Board, Navy Office, Melbourne.

W. J. H. 11/12
Sent 3/12
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COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
6-NOV-1941
EAST INDIES

II
E. I. 3203
CAPTAIN.
SECRETARY TO THE AUSTRALIAN
COMMONWEALTH NAVAL BOARD.

WAR DIARY - SEPTEMBER, 1941.

1. 1st September. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was at Durban, awaiting orders.
2. 2nd September. P.M. Proceeded to rendezvous with H.M.S. "EMERALD" to relieve her of the escort of S.S. "CITY OF CANTERBURY" from Mombasa to Durban.
3. 5th September. 0700. Relieved H.M.S. "EMERALD" in position 15° 55' S, 40° 50' E.
4. Escort of CITY OF CANTERBURY was conducted from convenient V/S distance ahead.
5. 6th September. 1835. Passed H.M.S. "CARTHAGE" in position 21° 35' S, 36° 55' E, who took over the escort.
6. AUSTRALIA proceeded for Durban.
7. 7th September. P.M. Arrived Durban and fuelled.
8. 8th September. P.M. Proceeded to escort Convoy C.M. 18 to the vicinity of Perim. Convoy consisted of MAURETANIA (Commodore) and NIEUW AMSTERDAM, and its final destination was Suez.
9. Escort was conducted from convenient V/S distance ahead.
10. 14th September. P.M. Passed through Socotra Channel.
11. 15th September. 1930. Parted company from convoy abreast Perim, and proceeded for Aden.
12. 16th September. A.M. Arrived Aden.
H.M.S. "NUBIAN" and "ISIS" in harbour.
13. 18th September. H.M.A.S. "LISMORE" was berthed, alongside AUSTRALIA.
14. 19th September. French Sloop SAVORGNAN DECBRAZZA arrived.
15. 20th September. P.M. H.M.S. "NUBIAN" and "ISIS" sailed.
16. 21st September. A.M. H.M.S. "JUPITER" arrived and sailed.
P.M. SAVORGNAN DE BRAZZA sailed.
H.M.S. "CORNWALL" arrived.
17. 22nd September. P.M. H.M.A.S. "LISMORE" sailed.
18. 23rd September. A.M. AUSTRALIA and CORNWALL shifted berth to Outer Harbour.
19. H.M.S. "EXETER" arrived with a convoy, berthing in Inner Harbour.
20. A.M. Carried out sub-calibre firings at pattern VI Target, 4" and close range firings at R.A.F. Drogue.
P.M. Carried out full calibre reduced charge firing at Pattern VI Target.
21. 24th September. A.M. CORNWALL sailed.
22. 1019. Proceeded to escort Convoy S.W.9 to Durban.

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MOST SECRET

S.C. 327/2/16.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA",
8th November, 1941.

most secret

The Commander-in-Chief,
EAST INDIES.

WAR DIARY AND REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR OCTOBER, 1941.

W242
HN
The War Diary and the Report of Proceedings of
H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" for the month of October, 1941, are forwarded
for information.

W242
W242
26.2.42
2. It is requested that one copy of the above may be
forwarded to the Secretary, Australian Commonwealth Naval Board,
Navy Office, Melbourne.



(SGD.) G. D. MOORE
Captain.

II
Nº E.I. 08203.
Australian Commonwealth
Naval Board, Melbourne.

27/2

most secret

WAR DIARY-OCTOBER, 1941.

1. 1st October. A.M. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" escorting convoy SW9 consisting of S.S. "MAURETANIA" and "NEW AMSTERDAM", arrived at Durban from Aden.
2. H.M.S. "REVENGE" was in harbour and docked P.M.
3. 3rd October. H.M.S. "REPULSE" arrived, escorting a convoy.
4. 7th October. H.M.S. "REPULSE" sailed, escorting a convoy.
5. 9th October. P.M. Proceeded for Aden, escorting convoy CM 20, which consisted of "MAURETANIA" only, destination Suez.
6. 11th October. 0210 G.M.T. In position 22° 0' South, 39° 50' East, an incomplete report of being stopped in 17° 30' South, 40° 15' East, by a suspicious vessel was received apparently from S.S. "SILVER BELL", of whose movements nothing was known.
7. 0950. Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, promulgated he was assuming "REPULSE", who was in the vicinity, was concerned.
8. 1403. Nothing having been heard from "REPULSE", aircraft was catapulted in position 19° 15' South, 41° 15' East, to search across the circles of position of the possible raider at speeds from 18 to 12 knots. "REPULSE" report that the ship was S.S. "FISHPOOL" stopped by her in the given position, was read whilst the aircraft was still in the air. Aircraft hoisted in at 1705.
9. 15th October. P.M. Passed through Socotra Channel.
10. 16th October. A.M. H.M.S. "PROBE" was sighted entering Aden ahead of "AUSTRALIA".
11. A.M. Arrived Aden with "MAURETANIA", awaiting instructions for the latter having been received from ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Senior, British Naval Officer, Suez Canal Area.
12. P.M. H.M.I.S. "HETRAVATI" arrived and H.M.S. "PROBE" sailed.
13. 17th October. A.M. Proceeded for Durban.
14. 18th October. A.M. Destination altered by Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, to Colombo.
15. 21st October. P.M. Arrived Colombo. Ships in harbour: "CALEDON", "TARANTULA", "KANIMBLA", and "KERRINDOR".
17. 22nd October. A.M. Proceeded over D/G Range, and calibrated D/F with Port War Signal Station. P.M. Returned to harbour to complete with provisions and stores, and then proceeded for Kerguelen via Mauritius.
18. 23rd October. Passed Addu Atoll, with H.M. Ships "MAURITIUS" and "CORFU" and Auxiliaries at anchor.



2.

19. 26th October. A.M. Anchored off Port Louis and fuelled
from "British Ambassador".

P.M. Proceeded for Kerguelen.



(SGD.) G. D. MOORE

CAPTAIN.

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REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS - 1st October to 31st October, 1941.

The following Report of Proceedings for the period 1st October to 31st October, 1941 is submitted :-

2. Movements.

1st October.	A.M.	Arrived Durban.
9th October.	P.M.	Left Durban.
16th October.	A.M.	Arrived Aden.
17th October.	A.M.	Left Aden.
21st October.	P.M.	Arrived Colombo.
22nd October.	P.M.	Left Colombo.
26th October.	A.M.	Arrived Mauritius.
	P.M.	Left Mauritius.

3. An unusual report this month is the addition to the Sick List of five ratings suffering from Quartan Malaria. Only two of the ports visited were a possible source of infection, and neither is considered a malarial area. In one of these two ports, the Government Pathologist states that he had not seen a case of ~~Quartan~~ Malaria for a number of years. With the exception of one case which was slightly complicated because of a cold, all cases responded rapidly to treatment by Heparcrine and the ratings were returned to full duty within seven days.

4. The general health of the Ship's Company continues to be very good and the conduct remains satisfactory.

5. Details of this period are contained in the War Diary.

(SGD.) G. D. MOORE

Captain.



S.C. 417/2/16.

MOST SECRET

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".
4th December, 1941.

The Commander-in-Chief,
East Indies.

Separate file
WAR DIARY AND REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR NOVEMBER, 1941

Separate file
The War Diary and Report of Proceedings of H.M.A.S.
"AUSTRALIA" for the month of November, 1941 are forwarded for information.

2. It is requested that one copy of the above may be
forwarded to the Secretary, Australian Commonwealth Naval Board,
Navy Office, Melbourne.



II.
Nº E.1. 03203.
A.C. N. B.

(SGD.) G. D. MOORE

Captain.

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Du I A/cp. 22/3.

SECRET

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".
4th December, 1941.

WAR-DIARY, NOVEMBER, 1941.

1. 1st November. A.M. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" arrived at Kerguelen Island from Colombo, via Mauritius, and proceeded with the Most Secret Operation as reported in my letter 322/3/21, dated 10th November, 1941.
2. 4th November. P.M. Proceeded for Crozet Island.
3. 6th November. A.M. Carried out Most Secret Reconnaissance of Crozet Island.
4. 7th November. P.M. Proceeded for Durban.
5. 11th November. A.M. Arrived Durban and fuelled, etc.
6. 14th November. P.M. Proceeded for East London.
7. 15th November. A.M. Arrived East London and commenced Self - Refit.
8. 18th November. Assistance was rendered the Naval Officer-in-Charge in the interrogation of survivors of the Norwegian Steamship "THOREFAGE LUND", which sank off the Natal Coast as the result of an explosion.
9. 26th November. P.M. Proceeded for Simonstown.
10. 27th November. A.M. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" acted as target for a reconnaissance exercise by shore-based aircraft the latter locating and shadowing, and then carrying out dummy bombing runs.
11. 29th November. A.M. Arrived Simonstown, and entered Dry Dock.

(SGD.) G. D. MOORE
Captain.

DEPT. OF NAVY
2026. 7. 435

No. A.F. 951/1141/30.

Date 24th December, 1942.

SUBJECT:

WAR DIARIES - H.M.A. SHIPS.

FORMER:

ENCLOSURES:

1. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" - War Diary for month of December, 1941.
2. H.M.A.S. "SYDNEY" - War Diaries for months of August, September and October, 1941.
3. H.M.A.S. "PERTH" - War Diaries for months of August, September, October, November, December, 1941, and January, 1942.
4. H.M.A.S. "CANBERRA" - War Diaries for months of October, November, December, 1941, and January and February, 1942.
5. H.M.A.S. "ADELAIDE" - War Diaries for months of August, September, October, November, December, 1941, and January, February, March, April and May, 1942.
6. H.M.A.S. "WESTRALIA" - War Diaries for months of August, September, October, November, December, 1941, and January, February, March and April, 1942.
7. H.M.A.S. "MANOORA" - War Diaries for months of August, September, October, November, December, 1941, and January, February, March and April, 1942.
8. H.M.A.S. "WARREGO" - War Diaries for months of August, September, October and November, 1941.
9. H.M.A.S. "SWAN" - War Diaries for months of August, September, October, November and December, 1941.
10. H.M.A.S. "WARRNAMBOOL" War Diary for month of March, 1942.

The Secretary,
Naval Board.

Forwarded for the information of the Naval Board.

2. It is regretted that, owing to an oversight, these documents were not forwarded at an earlier date.

Office of the
Commander, Task Force 44.

REAR-ADMIRAL.

ENCLOSURE No. 1 To A.F. 951/1141/30

Commonwealth of Australia

Department of Defence

SECRET

Royal Australian Navy.

From The Commanding Officer, H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".

Date 9th January, 1942. Reference No.

To The Rear Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron.

Subject WAR DIARY - December, 1941.

The War Diary of H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" in triplicate for the period 1st December, 1941, to 24th December, 1941, and the Report of Proceedings for the same period are forwarded herewith.



Is Samcomb

CAPTAIN.

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".
8th January, 1941.

SECRET

WAR DIARY - DECEMBER, 1941.

- Monday, 1st December. H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" was undergoing periodical dry-docking at Simonstown. Free French Sloop "COMMANDANT DOMINEE" arrived.
- Friday, 5th December. A.M. Dock flooded and ship fuelled when water borne.
P.M. "COMMANDANT DOMINEE" sailed.
H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA" carried out H.A. Firing at drogue target in False Bay, and proceeded towards Fremantle on completion on route ordered by the Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic.
- Sunday, 7th December. Hostilities commenced against Finland, Roumania, Hungary and against Japan.
- Thursday, 11th December. Proceeded for Fremantle direct, in accordance with Australian Commonwealth Naval Board's orders, with all convenient despatch. Fuel did not permit of proceeding "with despatch".
- Wednesday, 17th December. A.M. Arrived Fremantle and fuelled.
P.M. Proceeded for Sydney with all despatch.
- Sunday, 21st December. A.M. Arrived Sydney and refuelled.
P.M. Instructions received from the Rear Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron to await his arrival at Sydney.
- Wednesday, 24th December. A.M. H.M.A.S. "CANBERRA", wearing flag of The Rear Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron, H.M.S. "ACHILLES" and H.M.A.S. "PERTH" arrived.
1130 Flag of the Rear Admiral Commanding H.M. Australian Squadron transferred to H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".



Int. Samson

CAPTAIN.

SECRET

H.M.A.S. "AUSTRALIA".
8th January, 1941.

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(Cgd) H.B. FARNCOMB.

CAPTAIN.