

## Gordon Lumley's Diary Relating his Experience Aboard HMS Barham in 1936

January 1936

- 9 Thur. At Port Said. Purchased this diary: hope to keep true account of my daily doings. Duty baker today - so usual routine. Climate; quite warm.
- 10 Fri. At Port Said. Arose at 0130. Strenuous duty - rather tired so shall stay on board tonight; writing letters, perhaps play Tombola. Climate; quite warm, lovely moon tonight
- 11 Sat. At Port Said. A day of glorious sunshine - duty again - made three doughs - 1200 lbs. Played Tombola, out of luck. Climate, hot, chilly now (1030 P.M.)
- 12 Sun. Just arrived back from shore, quiet run - pictures - cafe for tea - now 1120 PM turn in. Climate; hot
- 13 Mon. Duty again. Usual routine. Climate; rather dull
- 14 Tues. Up at 0130 - usual routine. Ashore tonight. Scotch bar, with Clair. Nice kid. Climate; Sultry
- 15 Wed. Duty baker. Usual routine. Tombola - no luck. Climate; very hot.
- 16 Thur. Early morning routine. Ashore tonight - La Ciga - cabaret. Wrote letters on return. Climate; hot, chilly tonight.
- 17 Fri. Duty baker. Wrote letters. Tombola - no luck. Climate; hot
- 18 Sat. Been ashore. Had exciting time narrowly missed been hit on the head with electric globe - Xursal cinema
- 19 Sun. Duty baker. Usual routine. Visitors on board. Climate; dull.
- 20 Mon. Spent day on board. Went to pictures on fxl. "Lost Patrol" Victor McLaglen. Very good film.
- 21 Tues. Received news of the death of our King at 4:30 AM. Fired salute of 70 guns. Duty baker. Usual routine.
- 22 Wed. Up at 1.30 AM. Mail distribution noon. Letters from home, Gladys & Lewis.
- 23 Thur. Left harbour for sea manouvers at 0730. Duty baker. Usual 15", 6", & sub calibre firing. Lovely night, calm seas
- 24 Fri. Torpedo firing; another ideal day. Returned to harbour at 1600. Ashore with the boys visiting ARAB TOWN; went to see Clair.
- 25 Sat. Duty baker. Quiet day, had my head down all afternoon. Turned in at 1145PM
- 26 Sun. Up at 0130. Usual routine. Stay on board tonight writing letters. Turned in early 2030.
- 27 Mon. Spent day quietly reading, writing. Turned in about 0930. Lovely weather, quite hot night, slept on upper
- 28 Tues. Kings funeral; fired salute of 70 guns 0930. Attended service on Q deck; ashore at 0300 Scotch bar, pictures Anna Sten in "Resurrection"
- 29 Wed. Duty baker. Mail arrived from England. Letters from mum, Gladys, etc. Turned in at 2230.
- 30 Thur. Stayed on board writing letters. Also went to pictures on boat deck - Carol Lombard in "Lady by Chance" - good film.
- 31 Fri. Duty baker. Usual routine. Played Tombola but no luck. Turned in at 2230

February 1936

- 1 Sat. Commenced work in the galley. Ashore at 0100 – Scotch bar – welcome pictures – “Dantes Inferno”. Also visited photographers & Arab Town.
- 2 Sun. Duty cook. Finished about 1930. Much better than bakery. Raining; quite a change.
- 3 Mon. Arose at 0630. Started work at 0730. Usual galley routine; ashore at 1400; collected photos; back on board & turned in by 2300.
- 4 Tues. Nothing of interest to relate today – usual routine.
- 5 Wed. Mail arrived today. Letters from home, Gladys, etc. ashore, spent afternoon at Tina’s flat.
- 6 Thur. Duty cook. Usual routine. Turned in about 2130.
- 7 Fri. at sea doing maneuvers. Nice trip. Returned to harbour at 1600.
- 8 Sat. Heard today that we are sailing for Malta; hope this is correct. Writing letters tonight.
- 9 Sun. Everything very quiet today; may possibly go ashore tonight. Pictures “Accent on Youth” Herbert Marshall.
- 10 Mon. Duty cook. Usual routine.
- 11 Tues. left harbour at 0130 for gunnery at sea – all day. Returned P/S at 1930.
- 12 Wed. Duty cook. Played Tombola – no luck. Turned in 2300.
- 13 Thur. Ashore at 1800. Went to Kursal to see “Casino de Paree”. Back on board by 2300.
- 14 Fri. Duty cook. Usual routine.
- 15 Sat. May go ashore tonight; up at 0300, went ashore at 1600 to see Shirley Temple in “Curley Tops”
- 16 Sun. Duty again. Spent the evening on the upper deck – lovely moon, quite romantic
- 17 Mon. Left P/S en route to Malta; had great send off by Jim Irish band. Rather rough tonight gale blowing.
- 18 Tues. Arrived at Alexandra at 0630, met by rest of fleet, firing at Queen Bee; out at sea all night. Sea calm but high wind blowing.
- 19 wed. Entered Alex harbour at 1700; loading ammunition all evening. Quite a change to be in fresh surroundings.
- 20 Thur. Left Alex for Malta at 1700. Economic speeding about 10 knots. Sea rather rough.
- 21 Sat. Lowered our speed to about 8 knots, about 150 miles from Alex; gale sprung up – heavy sea running.
- 22 Sat. Lovely day – brilliant sunshine. Sea like millpond. Duty cook today. Sat on the upper until 2300 then turned in.
- 23 Sun. Up at 0300. Sea still calm. Nearing Malta. Arrived early in the morning; nice trip.
- 24 Mon. Ran into very rough sea at 0630 this morning; entered Grand Harbour at 0900. Went straight into dry dock. Changed over from ships galley to dock galley. Terrible working conditions.
- 25 Tues. Ashore all day. Had my photograph taken. Went to the Regent & saw “Werewolf of London”. Also visited Silver Eagle. Stayed ashore all night.
- 26 Wed. duty cook today. Finished work at 0930. What a day, glad it’s over.
- 27 Thur. Ashore at 1100. Paid a visit to the ‘gut’(sp ?) at 2300. Went to a dance at the Orion. Turned in at the Star Hotel about 2 AM Friday morning.
- 28 Fri. Back on board by 0700. Ashore again at 1800, went again to the Regent & saw Bing Crosby in “We’re not Dressing”. Came off at 2330; tired out.

- 29 Sat Duty cook today. Back once more in our own galley. Writing letters until 0130 Sunday morning.
- March 1936
- 1 Sun. Everything very quiet today. Stayed on board writing letters & sewing my gear. Leave Malta tomorrow for Port Said.
- 2 Mon Left harbour for Port Said at 0130. 1800 smooth running sea, glorious night – moon and stars out.
- 3 Tues. At sea. Another day over, at 1600 were 150 miles from Malta. Glorious night, spent evening at cinema.
- 4 Wed. Everything very quiet today. Now about 500 miles off Alexandria. Played Tombola – no luck.
- 5 Thur. 0730 – nearing Alex. Can see land in distance. Just passed a flotilla of destroyers at exercise. Went up harbour at 0200. Shore leave tonight but staying on board.
- 6 Fri. The remainder of our trip appears to be washed out – look like staying here for a while. Spent evening promenading upper deck.
- 7 Sat. Tonight my chum and I are going to see a boxing tournament on the Glorious. 2300 Just arrived back on board from ‘Glorious’, witnessed several thrilling bouts.
- 8 Sun. Duty cook today. Nothing exciting to relate. Wrote several letters.
- 9 Mon. Out at sea doing gunnery; action stations – first aid party not required; anchored outside harbour.
- 10 Tues. Continued exercises at 0830 with Renoun and Q. E. Entered harbour about 1630. Staying on board.
- 11 Wed. English mail arrived at 2100; visited cinema on board – “Jew Suss”, did not think much of it.
- 12 Thur. Duty today. Spent the evening writing a job I really enjoy for it seems to bring me in closer contact with home.
- 13 Fri. Nothing exciting to relate today. Spent all evening writing & reading.
- 14 Sat. Usual routine. Listened to Saïdo (??) news bulletin. Turned in at 2200.
- 15 Sun. Early turn, had plenty of breakfast to cook. Divisions at 0930; rehearsed march past.
- 16 Mon. Going out to sea this afternoon; fatal accident on board; boy Keld crushed to death – terrible injuries. Watched shiprights make Kelds coffin.
- 17 Tues. Boy Kelk buried ashore at 1030; Spent evening writing & reading.
- 18 Wed. Going out for big shoot today; have 100 guests on board. Returned to harbour at 1630. Mail from UK arrived
- 19 Thur. Spent evening at cinema on fxle.
- 20 Fri. Hoisted flag of Sir Dudley Pound at 0800. Q.E. left for home.
- 21 Sat. Nothing to relate today. Spent evening listening to wireless.
- 22 Sun. Duty today. Ships company marched past CiC at 0930.
- 23 Mon. Usual routine. Pictures on boat deck tonight – “Whom the Gods Destroy”
- 24 Tues. Duty cook. Found work harder as Ginger is off work sick. Tired out, stood rounds and turned in about 2230.
- 25 Wed. Make & mend this afternoon, slept on the upper deck. Expect mail tonight.
- 26 Thur. Mail issued at 0700. Letters from home, Mary, Gladys, etc. Answering mail all evening.

- 27 Fri. It is exactly three weeks since I was last ashore. Do not intend going ashore whilst at Alex. Wish I were at Malta or P/S. Exceptionally hot today.
- 28 Sat. Duty cook today. Listened to news bulletin and records all evening.
- 29 Sun. Very quiet as usual today. Spent evening writing & reading.
- 30 Mon. Glorious weather today, are out at sea doing exercises. Grenadier Guards on board with us. All night action stations.
- 31 Tues. Were back in harbour before breakfast. Spent evening on upper.
- April 1936
- 1 Wed. Another month nearer home. Went to cinema on boat deck. Met some boys I knew in barracks.
- 2 Thur. Received mail, letters from home, Lewis, etc. Answered most of them this evening.
- 3 Fri. Duty today. Everything very quiet on board. Turned in by 2100.
- 4 Sat. Went ashore for the first time in a month, good to feel terra firma once more. Back on board by 2300.
- 5 Sun. Duty today. Plenty of roast meat to put through ovens for supper.
- 6 Mon. Ashore again at 1600. Went to Rio and saw "Thanks a Million". Also paid a visit to skating rink – found floor hard.
- 7 Tues. Very quiet again, nothing exciting to relate. Spent evening at cinema on boat deck; "Ten Minute Alibi" – terrible.
- 8 Wed. went ashore at 1630. Visited several historic places, had an amusing time with street peddlers. Finished the day at the Concordia cinema, saw Jackie Coogan in "Home on the Range".
- 9 Thur. Duty today. After supper sat & answered my mail. Turned in at 2130.
- 10 Fri. Glorious day, plenty of sunshine again. Ashore on the 1630 boat; went straight to the Rio to see "Under a Pampas Moon" & "Coming Out Party"; very good show.
- 11 Sat. Duty again. Nothing exciting to relate. Done nothing but sweat. Cold shower I had at 1900 came very welcome.
- 12 Sun. Another glorious day of sunshine, decided to go ashore at 1600 but changed my mind. Shall write letters instead.
- 13 Mon. Commenced wearing whites; looks strange to see men in whites again; much more comfortable in this climate.
- 14 Tues. Went to the cinema on the boat deck at 1900. saw "Roberta" for the fourth time. From today are to go into 3 watches.
- 15 Wed. Pipe down this afternoon, so slept on the fxle, when I awoke my face was scorched with the sun; shall not go up there in a hurry again.
- 16 Thur. Received my mail at 2300 last night, now I'm looking forward to the next one. Duty tonight & did I sweat; I'll say.
- 17 Fri. Spent the afternoon writing; in the evening went ashore to see Irene Dunn in "Magnificent Obsession" – magnificent film too.
- 18 Sat. Duty again. Usual routine.
- 19 Sun. Spent the whole of the day writing & sleeping – more of the latter.
- 20 Mon. Nothing of interest to relate; expect to go to sea tomorrow on maneuvers; am looking forward to it.
- 21 Tues. Left harbour at 0830. commenced maneuvers at 1030; very rough seas; it was great sport on the upper, dodging the waves.

- 22 Wed. Anchored outside harbour last night but returned to sea at 0900 this morning. On completion of firing entered harbour at 1330.
- 23 Thur. Gee what a time we had yesterday afternoon. Sandstorm sprang up, it was terrible; sand everywhere; duty cook too.
- 24 Fri. Another glorious, quite a change to yesterday, may go ashore, want to see "Vanessa" starring Helen Hayes & Robert Montgomery.
- 25 Sat. Heard this morning we are to go on cruise to Palestine. Am looking forward to this trip.
- 26 Sun. Another quiet day, Sunday on a warship is very dull; but tomorrow will soon be here, then back to sea.
- 27 Mon. Talk about rotten luck, we were supposed to have sailed to Palestine this morning, but owing to the sudden illness of King Fuad, it has been postponed; what luck.
- 28 Tues. Fuad very ill not expected to live many more hours. News came through he passed away.
- 29 Wed. Things ever so quiet both on board and ashore owing to Fuad's death.
- 30 Thur. King Fuad buried this afternoon; our C in C Sir Dudley Pound traveled to Cairo to represent the fleet.
- May 1936
- 1 Fri. The dawn of another month, what changes will this bring us.
- 2 Sat. Went ashore at 1300, we took the camera; snapped one another – wonder what they will look like? Stayed at the Albion cabaret until 3 AM.
- 3 Sun. Ashore again at 1300, had a good walk around the city. Spent the entire evening at the Albion leaving at 3 A.M.
- 4 Mon. Feeling terribly tired – two late nights, or should I say mornings? Duty today too, what a day, head like a brick.
- 5 Tues. Ashore at 1640. Went to the Concordia saw Paul Muni in "Black Fury". Very good indeed. Lads went to see Charlie Chaplin in "Modern Times" – terrible.
- 6 Wed. Ashore again at 1430; pictures again. Went to the Rio & saw "Shipmates Forever". Very good. King Faisal arrived this afternoon on the Viceroy of India.
- 7 Thur. Duty cook. Spent the evening answering my mail
- 8 Fri. Ashore at 1630. Went to the Concordia & saw "Call of the Wild". Spent the remainder of the evening at the Albion.
- 9 Sat. Saw the finest picture I have seen in ages. Claudet Colbert in "Bride Comes Home". Spent the evening at ? 9 Rue Malte. Arrived back on board at 0730 A.M.
- 10 Sun. Duty again. Sunday routine very pleasant; never much to do. Wrote letters.
- 11 Mon. Up at 0630. Aired our bedding on the saluting gun deck. Staying on board tonight to cinema. Film being shown is Leslie Henson in "Oh, Daddy"
- 12 Tues. Nothing exciting to relate, visited cinema again this evening.
- 13 Wed. Duty cook. Mail did not arrive on board until 2300. Too late to be sorted out; so will get it tomorrow.
- 14 Thur. Received my mail at 0730. Answered 3 of them, spent the whole evening writing.
- 15 Fri. Went ashore alone at 1630; went to the Rio & saw Rudy Vallee in "Sweet Music" also Bette Davis in "Front Page Woman". Good programme.
- 16 Sat. Duty cook. Not a great deal to do. Finished at 7.30 A.M. A death occurred today – boy seaman

- 17 Sun. Boy buried in cemetery ashore at 1400. I spent the whole evening writing & reading. Turned in at 22.00.
- 18 Mon. Stayed on board tonight. Shall do some letter writing. Just been up top, lovely evening, nice breeze blowing; quite a change.
- 19 Tues. Are out at sea today. Gunnery exercise, have Grenadier Guards on board. Night action stations this evening. Anchored outside harbour at 2130.
- 20 Wed. Returned to sea to complete exercise at 0900; entered harbour at 1230. Received my mail at 2100 – great to hear from all at home.
- 21 Thur. Nothing to relate today, except my visit to the ship's cinema this evening. Saw "Maria Galante" featuring Spencer Tracy, good film.
- 22 Fri. Duty cook today. Same old routine – sweat, sweat, sweat!
- 23 Sat. Slept on the boat deck this afternoon; got my face & chest burned up with the sun. Busy writing letters this afternoon.
- 24 Sun. (Empire Day)  
Dress ship today for the above. Barham dead as usual. Shall continue my writing later this evening.
- 25 Mon. At last, we are really at sea for one whole week. At present making our way to Cyprus; lovely calm seas running.
- 25 Tues. Anchored off Flamagusta (Cyprus)- at 0700, after lovely trip. Flamagusta is the loveliest place I have ever seen, nestling between two mountains, surrounded by green fields, a treat for sore eyes. Left for Haifa at 1900.
- 27 Wed. After a very rough trip arrived here (Haifa) at 0730. Rioting & strikes between Arabs & Jews ashore. Dispatch's band playing to us this evening.
- 28 Thur. Duty cook again. Leaving here for Port Said tonight. Longing to be back there once more.
- 29 Fri. Arrived here (Port Said) at 0930 after lovely trip; great reception. Met by Jim Irish's band. Ashore at 1300, saw Clara & Nina, great to see them again. Spent the evening at cinema.
- 30 Sat. Decided not to go ashore today, as only 6 hrs leave given. Leave here at 11.30 P.M. Tugs came along side at 10.10P.M. but too tired to wait & see our departure – turning in now.
- 31 Sun. 0700, still 50 miles off Alex, expecting to enter harbour about 1100. Anchored on port side of Valiant at 11.15. Duty cook today.

June 1936

- 1 Mon. Have made a resolution to stay on board the whole of this month; can I do it? We will see. This evening went to talkies in fxle, saw a good film – "Brown on resolution"
- 2 Tues. Nothing fresh to relate today. This evening played Tombola, no luck, but lots of hard luck.
- 3 Wed. Just finished another duty, plenty of work & plenty of sweat. Mail from U.K. arrived on board tonight.
- 4 Thur. Received nine letters last night, so have been reading & answering them all afternoon.
- 5 Fri. Played cricket over at Ras-el-Tin (?). Had a great game – won by 18 runs. Cinema again tonight for "Brown on Resolution" once more.

- 6 Sat. Feel stiff as a poker; ran PT this morning too but failed to work it off. Played Tombola.
- 7 Sun. Supposed to turn out at 3 A.M., but was 4 A.M. when I started work. C of G forgot to shake me. Panic stations.
- 8 Mon. Slept on the M.G deck, paying the penalty now, arms and chest blistered by sun. Pictures tonight on boat deck "King of the Ritz"
- 9 Tues. Duty cook today. Nothing much to relate. Gee! I forgot we are out at sea, left harbour at 8 A.M. this morning, sea very smooth, ship not even given slightest sign of roll.
- 10 Wed. Had a 6" shoot at 8:45, had to go to action stations. Returned to harbour at 10.40 A.M. Just waiting for mail to arrive. 1/3 of month gone & not been ashore yet, except to play cricket
- 11 Thur. Everything very quiet today. This sun certainly knows how to shine, it's scorching especially below decks.
- 12 Fri. Spent the evening writing & reading. At 2100 went to the upper deck & listened to the canteen boy play the piano – he's good.
- 13 Sat. Duty cook today, just the usual routine. After rounds went to the boat deck to listen to radiogram
- 14 Sun. The ship has been overrun by young women all afternoon, members of the YWCA; what a nuisance these visitors can be.
- 15 Mon. Went to the cinema but did not like the film one iota. It was called "Heat Wave", a British film so what else could one expect.
- 16 Tues. We had some great fun this afternoon in the preparing room. Len got his piano accordion out & we all had a good sing song.
- 17 Wed. Mail from the U.K. arrived on board at 7.30, earlier than usual, plenty of letters but I only find interest in the ones from home & my people.
- 18 Thur. Had a busy time answering letters, wrote four before supper. Talkies again on the upper but I could not stick seeing that film again.
- 19 Fri. From 1230 – 1.30 A.M. we had our band playing selections of light music on the upper. It was very good.
- 20 Sat. Early duty this morning, nothing much to do. Slept all afternoon. Spent the evening listening to radiogram
- 21 Sun. Another day of peace & quietness. Duty cook so it helped to relieve the monotony. Turned in by 2130.
- 22 Mon. We have a great film on board tonight called "Naughty Marietta". Saw it at P/S about 9 months ago but shall go again, you bet.
- 23 Tues. How time seems to fly. It only seems like five minutes ago since I wrote my last entry in this diary but actually 24 hrs have elapsed. Every day off the calendar means a day nearer home.
- 24 Wed. Mail day again. Letters from mum & Lillian & my ????. Shall be reading my D. ST (Darlington & Stockton Times news paper???) all evening. Good to see the local news.
- 25 Thur. Layed on the upper this afternoon but found the sun far too hot so went down below decks & slept on the mess table

- 26 Fri. Duty today. Usual routine. Finished by 1930. Had a yarn with the chief cook & can he spin them. He's a 'lovely liar'.
- 27 Sat. Had a party of boy scouts on board. Asking all sorts of silly questions as usual. It was 2130 when CV (?) retired, left our letters to the last minute as usual.
- 28 Sun. I forgot to mention in my last entry that the Q.E. arrived here from the U.K. at 09.30 yesterday morning. She takes our flag back next week.
- 29 Mon. Nothing of interest to relate – usual routine. Talkies tonight, Robert Donat in "The 39 Steps". Did not think much of it.
- 30 Tues. Pay day, what a welcome relief. Have not been ashore once this month & feel proud of myself.

#### July 1936

- 1 Wed. I cannot promise myself to stay on board the whole of this month as we are expecting to go to Malta. Mail arrived at 2130 P.M. It's good to hear from home.
- 2 Thur. Nothing exciting to relate today. Some of the Admirals returning to Q.E. P.M. Turned in at 2130.
- 3 Fri. We are no longer flagship of the Med Fleet. Q.E. hoisted our flag at 0630. Busy answering letters all evening.
- 4 Sat. Rather busy this morning preparing for rounds. After rounds just lazed about. Went for a swim over at Ras-el-Tin.
- 5 Sun. Ship absolutely dead. No amusement what ever. Shall have to carry on writing my letters.
- 6 Mon. Been instructed to report with deep sea test. Class over at Ras-el-Tin tomorrow. Got a terrible headache. Don't feel like passing any sort of test.
- 7 Tues. went over to Ras-el-Tin to pass deep sea test. Failed by 20 seconds. Cut my foot so came out much to the exasperation of our instructor. Had a lot of pain in my foot tonight.
- 8 Wed. Foot aching like the very devil. Shall have to pay a visit to the sick bay. Mail arrived at 0730. Heard from my Phyl. It was great to hear from her again.
- 9 Thur. Was inoculated, had heart & lung & eyesight test. Blind as a bat in my left eye; 6/8 my left, 6/6 my right. Spent the whole of the evening answering letters.
- 10 Fri. Battleship Squadron regatta. We won two races. Is to be continued tomorrow. Again spending the evening writing & reading.
- 11 Sat. During to the regatta we are not having Saturday's routine, so no rounds thank goodness. Promenading the upper deck all evening.
- 12 Sun. Nothing exciting today. Quiet as usual. We are leaving for Malta on Saturday. Turned in at 2200.
- 13 Mon. Spent afternoon reading letters received during past 6 mths. Very interesting. Went to the talkies on the fxle. Good film, Shirley Temple in "Bright Eyes". Turning in after making this entry: 2230.
- 14 Tues. Australia & Sydney left this morning for 'Down Under'. I hear we leave on the 18<sup>th</sup>: Cheers!
- 15 Wed. Received my usual mail this afternoon. Everyone at home O.K..
- 16 Thur. Went across to Ras-el-Tin for a swim. Had a great time. Busy writing letters after tea.

- 17 Fri. Well it's true – we are leaving for Malta tomorrow. Q.E., London, Devonshire & Coventry, Barham. 5<sup>th</sup> Flotilla of destroyers accompanying us.
- 18 Sat. Left harbour at 0700. Fleet gave King Farouk a view of exercises as farewell greeting. Q.E. returned to harbour to disembark Farouk. We proceeded to Malta 4 P.M.
- 19 Sun. Lovely weather, calm seas running, in every way a sailors' dream come true. At 8 P.M. 250 miles from Alexandria.
- 20 Mon. What a lovely trip we are having. Not a ripple on the surface of the water. Carried out a few exercises this afternoon.
- 21 Tues. Sighted Malta at 1130A.M. ran into shoal of porpoises. How interesting they are to watch. London and Devon proceeding at full speed for Spain. Civil war broke out there it seems. Barham entered floating dock at 3 P.M.
- 22 Wed. Bathing over at Reiga Bay. Much hotter here than at Alex. Ashore in the evening. Paid a visit to Silver Eagle, met Elaine.
- 23 Thur. Duty today. Got a date with Elaine tomorrow afternoon.
- 24 Fri. Met Elaine at 1.30P.M.. went swimming over at St Rocco. Nice girl, very beautiful. Comes from Naples.
- 25 Sat. Bathing over at Rocco all afternoon. Silver Eagle at 8P.M. With Elaine 11 P.M. went for supper. Afterwards strolled along breakwater. Left her at 2.30A.M.
- 26 Sun. Swimming practically all day. Met Elaine as usual.
- 27 Mon. Over at St Rocco with Elaine this afternoon. Escorted her to Silver Eagle at 5.30P.M. Returned to Valletta for tea. Left E at 3.30A.M.
- 28 Tues. Feeling rather tired. These early hours are getting me down. Duty today too.
- 29 Wed. Swimming, cricket & Elaine my daily routine nowadays. E went to have her picture taken this afternoon.
- 30 Thur. Granted 48 hours leave. Oh boy am I going to sleep! Left S.E. with Elaine at 11.15A.M., supper & usual walk, arriving back at her hotel about 2A.M.
- 31 Fri. Didn't arise until 11.50. Intended going for a early morning swim too. Bed pulled too much. With Elaine as usual.

#### August 1936

- 1 Sat. Up at 1050A.M. returned to ship at 11.30. End of happy leave. Duty tonight, worse luck.
- 2 Sun. Elaine and I went down to St Rocco again. She did more sunbathing than swimming.
- 3 Mon – 22 Sat No entries
- 23 Sun. 20 days have elapsed since making my last entry in here – too much shore. Been over at Reiga all afternoon. It was great, the water ever so warm.
- 24 Mon. Left Grand Harbour at 11.45 for Gibraltar. Duty cook tonight. After work shall promenade on the fxe, catch the sea breeze.
- 25 Tues. Passed the Isle of Sardinia at noon. Now proceeding along coast of Africa. At 2130, 350 miles from Malta
- 26 Wed. At 9.30P.M. approx 78 miles off Gib; in war zone; special lookouts for mines which are said to be floating South. Lovely night, stars, moon & placid sea.
- 27 Thur. Sighted Rock of Gibraltar at approx 1.30P.M. Came alongside ??? wharf at 32.30P.M. Everything seems quiet over the Spanish border.

- 28 Fri. On the upper all afternoon scanning the Spanish coast. No sign of life at all. Quite disappointed. Watching the boys fish all evening. Two American destroyers arrived P.M.
- 29 Sat. Another quiet day. Spent afternoon fishing. Went baiting along breakwater in evening; what monsters.
- 30 Sun. At last a glimpse of action. At 1530 rebel destroyer came and fired at land battery about 13 miles off. Return fire proved too hot for rebel boat. She made off at high speed.
- 31 Mon. Out patrolling the Straits. Passed two Spanish destroyers at noon. Anchored outside Gib harbour at 1500. Cinema this evening. Lorretta Young in "White Parade" – very good indeed.
- Sept 1936
- 1 Tues. Out on patrol again. At noon cruised by coast of Portugal. Passed close to Lisbon – grand view. Anchored in Tangiers harbour at 1800. German, Italian, French, Portugese & two British warships here.
- 2 Wed. Remained in harbour today. Would very much like to go ashore here but unfortunately on duty.
- 3 Thur. Returned to Gibraltar at 1330. Acted as chucking up party when Admiral Forbes left for England in P & G liner. Anchored outside harbour. Went ashore – oh boy! What a rough trip.
- 4 Fri. Had another quiet run ashore. Went to see a film called "Laughing Boy" & oh boy was it crude.
- 5 Sat. Duty cook. Spent the evening writing letters.
- 6 Sun. This afternoon went to see Barham play Italian team at football. We lost 4-2. Later played cricket semi-final of tournament. Beat T & G by 25 runs.
- 7 Mon. This afternoon played boys in final of interpact (?) cricket competition. Won by 15 runs. Very exciting game.
- 8 Tues. Stayed on board to see film "Mills of the Gods". Very good indeed. American destroyer came in about tea time.
- 9 Wed. On patrol work again; up and down Straits. This evening a rebel troop plane carrier past astern of us. Was shot at from shore but not hit. Calm sea running.
- 10 Thur. Still patrolling at noon off the most westerly point of Spanish Morroco. Sea rather rough tonight.
- 11 Fri. Came in view of Gib at 0800 but did not anchor. Cruised back along Spanish coast. Anchored in Catalan Bay at 1800.
- 12 Sat. Did not continue patrol work until 1000owing to fog. Anchored outside Gib harbour at 1400. Mail arrived on board at 1600.
- 13 Sun Remaining out in the bay today. Very quiet as usual today. Spent evening writing.
- 14 Mon. Entered harbour at 0600. Fishing competition started P.M. Finishes A.M Wednesday. Cinema tonight, "Dantes Inferno".
- 15 Tues. Everyone fishing mad. No big fish caught yet. One of our staff caught a water snake. Weighed 2 ¼ lb, entered it in competition.
- 16 Wed. A repetition of yesterday. Practically all ships company fishing along breakwater. Cook Leach won competition with his 2 ¼ lb snake.

- 17 Thur. Nothing very exciting to relate. This evening paid a visit to the 'Dispatch'. Saw film "Naughty Marietta" for about the 6<sup>th</sup> time.
- 18 Fri. Nothing of interest to relate. Stayed on board reading & writing.
- 19 Sat. Another quiet day. Gee! I am getting bored stiff. Wish we could go places. Wrote to G & sent her 30/0, my share of the watch she bought me.
- 20 Sun. Duty cook. As usual quiet. Shall write home tonight.
- 21 Mon. Went to cinema on fxlx at 1930. Saw Roy Fox in "On the Air". Turned in at 2210.
- 22 Tues. The sun has certainly thrown some heat out this afternoon. Nice & cool tonight. May go to pictures again.
- 23 Wed. Duty tonight. Had a very pleasant duty. After rounds, prepared for my coming exam.
- 24 Thur. Sailed for Tangiers at 7.30A.M.. Travelled at full speed as rioting has broken out ashore. Arrived at 10A.M., but everything seems quiet now.
- 25 Fri. Captain granted our request to go through for leading rate. Continuing my sweating. Mail arrived from U.K. this evening.
- 26 Sat. Went through my practical bakery exam this morning. Expect to do oral any day soon. Duty cook tonight.
- 27 Sun. Turned out at 3A.M. so naturally slept like a log for the rest of the day.
- 28 Mon. Went to cinema this evening on fxlx to see Jack Hulbert in "Bulldog Jack". Not bad.
- 29 Tues. Saw a terrific battle between government destroyers & rebel cruiser. One destroyer sank, only 20 survivors picked up by French liner. A great scrap.
- 30 Wed. Left Tangiers at noon for Gib arriving there at 3.30P.M. American cruiser in harbour. Looks like a big scrap heap to me.
- October 1936
- 1 Thur. Nothing very exciting to relate, just usual routine; writing letters practically all evening. Hope to hear from Phyll tomorrow. Gee! How I love that girl.
- 2 Fri. Duty cook. Received a letter from Phyllis. Shall answer it after rounds.
- 3 Sat. Very quiet on board. Spent the whole evening reading my cookery manual. Turned in at 2130.
- 4 Sun. Usual Sunday routine. Radiogram was playing all evening. Have a lot of new records. Great.
- 5 Mon. Duty again. Finished by 1900 so went to pictures on dockside. Film was "Student Tour"; very good indeed.
- 6 Tues. Wrote Phyllis & Lewis today. Have not heard from Edward for ages, wish he would write. Saw "Students Tour" again.
- 7 Wed. Spent the afternoon on the breakwater watching the boys fish. Lovely weather, very hot. Shall write letters after making this entry.
- 8 Thur. Duty chef; not a great amount to do, but plenty. Shall answer mail after rounds has passed.
- 9 Fri. Left for Tangiers at 7.30A.M. Anchored outside harbour at 11.30A.M. but continued patrol work until 1530P.M. Went ashore at 1830. Wore my new suit for first time, fits great.
- 10 Sat. Very busy this morning preparing for rounds. Slept all afternoon. Shall not go ashore tonight. Slung in a clean hammock instead.

- 11 Sun. Duty cook today, usual routine. Climate exceptionally mild. Glad when we arrive back in Malta.
- 12 Mon. Went to cinema on fyle this evening. Broke down so was called off.
- 13 Tues. Rained very hard this morning. Makes one wish for the East again. Writing letters all evening.
- 14 Wed. Duty chef, usual routine. Rained hard again all day.
- 15 Thur. Left for Gib at 0830. HMS Hood arrived from England. Monday to take over duties of flagship B.C. Squadron.
- 16 Fri. Had a lot of my old roommates off the Hood on board. Payed a visit to the Hood. Prefer the Barham anytime.
- 17 Sat. Went ashore & bought a gramophone & 7 records. Wrote home this evening.
- 18 Sun. Sunday quiet as usual. Had Ck Crickett on board for supper.
- 19 Mon. Left again at 0730 for Tangiers; but hope to be back by the 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- 20 Tues. Went to cinema on fyle. Saw "Morals of Marcus" starring Lupe Valez, was great film.
- 21 Wed. Had the time of my life today; went to an at home at the El Minzah hotel. Oh boy! Whata thrilling trip off, sea rough, boat practically capsized, never forget it.
- 22 Thur. Went to school tonight & sat for an English exam. Found it easy. Writing letters.
- 23 Fri. Duty cook. Left Tangiers at 1030. Arrived Gib 1:45. Hood left for Malta so took her billet.
- 24 Sat. Saturday usual routine; preparing for rounds. Writing letters all evening.
- 25 Sun. Dull dismal Sunday rolls round again. Think I'll sleep all day.
- 26 Mon. Work, sleep and answering letters that has been my routine so far. May go to cinema on fyle tonight.
- 27 Tues. Went to cinema last night, very good film "Werewolf of London". Slept all afternoon but shall continue my letter wring after supper.
- 28 Wed. Our seaplane crashed this morning, no one hurt except machine. Left for Malta at 2.30P.M.. Beautiful night, lovely sea & moon. Holding speed trials 10P.M. Ran into heavy fog.
- 29 Thur. Oh boy! What a change. Woke up to find ship pitching & tossing, heavy swell running. Gee! Never seen so many people sea sick before; didn't feel too good myself but haven't been sick yet.
- 30 Fri. Gigantic waves breaking over us; flooded out below decks. What a difference to our trip to Gib in Sept.
- 31 Sat. Had a full shoot before entering harbour at 10.30. Ashore at 4.30P.M.. Could not find Elaine. Guess she's gone back to Naples; miss her terribly.

#### November 1936

- 1 Sun. Duty chef today, usual routine. May write a few more letters if not too tired.
- 2 Mon. Managed to get Lillian a card today; guess she wont get it until after the 5<sup>th</sup>. Came back on board at 11.30 P.M.
- 3 Tues. Ashore again tonight, just come off (1045P.M.) went to see Irene Dunne in "Show Boat" of 1936, a topping film. Paul Robeson was great.
- 4 Wed. Duty again. Received a letter from Cathie, she is a swell pal.
- 5 Thur. "Many happy Returns of the day Lillian". Wish I could convey that greeting with my own lips. Staying on board.

- 6 Fri. Stayed on board again tonight, swotting, reading & writing. Not much ashore without Elaine.
- 7 Sat. Duty cook. Spent evening answering my mail.
- 8 Sun. Very quiet as usual. Turned out at 3A.M. so I'm just going to sleep all afternoon.
- 9 Mon. Went ashore at 1600 & stayed in Valletta all evening. Visited several cabaret shows. Turned in at Yorkies (?) at 0130.
- 10 Tues. Arrived back on board at 7.15. Quick change into whites & started work at 7.30. Duty chef.
- 11 Wed. Ashore again at 1930. Visited the Regent cinema. Remained in the 'gut' until 2300. Staying ashore.
- 12 Thur. Ashore with Ginger & boy off Repulse. Had a great time, visited all the 'dives' we could think of. Finished up in the 'Morning Life'.
- 13 Fri. Back in the floating dock again. Undergoing a self refit. Men busy painting. Duty tonight.
- 14 Sat. May go ashore again tonight if it keeps fine; been raining hard all morning.
- 15 Sun. The dreaded day rolls round again. Good job there is plenty of amusement ashore. Landed at 1600.
- 16 Mon. Cold dinners today so spent morning cleaning my range – looks quite tiddly now. Shall write home tonight.
- 17 Tues. I went to the Manoel (?) at 1900 & saw the "Informer"; it was great. Stayed ashore at the Blue Anchor, quite a change.
- 18 Wed. Left dock & moved into stream astern of Q.E.; not so far to go ashore. Wring in answer to mail received this morning.
- 19 Thur. Preparing for arrival of Turkish fleet. Very quiet ashore now (I guess the boys are broke).
- 20 Fri. Turkish fleet arrived this morning, four submarines tied up along side us. Sailors look a dirty greasy crowd – smell of garlic.
- 21 Sat. Busy entertaining Turks. The football match between the Turks & Barham was cancelled, so went to see St Georges play Angelo – geed game.
- 22 Sun. Duty chef. I like being duty on Sundays as it certainly relieves the monotony.
- 23 Mon. Saw Shirley Temple in "Little Colonel", a fine film with a fine little actress as the star. Aboard by 2000.
- 24 Tues. Ashore again at 1730, went over to the Sliema, quite a change to my usual haunts. Came back on board at 2300.
- 25 Wed. Received no mail this past three days – expected to hear from The Lodge but was disappointed. Maybe tomorrow. Duty chef.
- 26 Thur. No mail again, where is everyone? Maybe tomorrow. Stayed on board & saw "The Thin Man". Very, very good. By the way, the Turks left today.
- 27 Fri. Received two letters this morning – what a relief. Staying on board tonight answering my mail.
- 28 Sat. Duty chef. Usual routine, nothing exciting to relate.
- 29 Sun. Here we are again. Spending the day on board. What a dismal outlook. Turned in at 2130.
- 30 Mon. This is the day of days – pay day. Surely the best day of the whole month. Probably go over to Sliema tonight.

December 1936

- 1 Tues. Just 30 more days & we're in 1937 – a few more months ??? - then home. Went over to Sliema but found it ever so quiet. Returned to Valletta & visited several shows.
- 2 Wed. Duty chef today, usual routine. Received letters from The Lodge & Lewis. I enjoyed reading Lewis' letter.
- 3 Thur. Had a tooth filled this afternoon. Went ashore at 1700, over at Sliema, then to Regent. Saw "one Way Ticket", very good indeed. Stayed ashore all night.
- 4 Fri. Nothing very exciting today. Intending going ashore but changed my mind. Shall prepare Christmas cards instead. Received nice letter from The Lodge.
- 5 Sat, Stand by watch, so most probably will not go ashore tonight. 2130. Stayed on board writing & reading.
- 6 Sun. Quiet as usual. Duty today so will help to break monotony. Received four letters, too tired to answer them tonight – tomorrow maybe.
- 7 Mon. Played football this afternoon, first time for ages. Drew with sapmen 4-3. Yours truly scored first goal, miracles will never cease
- 8 Tues. Staying on board again. May write letters this evening, feeling very stiff & tired – effects of yesterday's soccer match.
- 9 Wed Excitement is tense on board, rumoured that our king wishes to marry Mrs. Simpson. Staying on board tonight.
- 10 Thur. According to the papers, it looks as if our king will abdicate. He is expected to make a statement in the next 24 hrs. Heard from Ger??? Cross (??) . Staying on board.
- 11 Fri. King Edward abdicated. Listened to his speech on the wireless at 11P.M., the most pathetic & moving speech I have ever heard. Stayed on board as usual.
- 12 Sat. Duke of York proclaimed King George the VI. Fired royal salute this evening. I wonder how many more kings we are to have before this commission ends; this is one third. Valiant returned to U.K.
- 13 Sun. Started 3 watches today, bakery reopened. Usual dull & gloomy Sunday, staying on board answering my mail.
- 14 Mon. Duty chef, usual routine. Our new replacement seaplane arrived at 1100. No cinema owing to rain.
- 15 Tues. Ashore tonight. My first trip since the 4<sup>th</sup>. Saw Harry Richman in " The Music Goes Round". Very good indeed. Back on board by 9.45P.M.
- 16 Wed. Received letters fro home also card from Norah & gold cufflinks from Breckenham. Saw " Lady in Danger" on board. Very amusing if nothing else.
- 17 Thur. Duty chef. May probably answer my mail after rounds has passed by. 9.30P.M. Feeling too tired to write, turning in.
- 18 Fri. Started work at 3A.M.; slept from 12.30P.M. to 5.15P.M. Busy preparing kit for musher bag next Wednesday.
- 19 Sat. Left harbour en route for Palma at 0930. returned to Malta to repair slight defect but finally sailed at 4P.M. Lovely up top tonight, stars glorious moon & placid sea.
- 20 Sun. 7.30A.M. found us speeding along the Tunis coast. Heavy swell running tonight, but Barham behaving splendidly, rolling a little. Duty chef.

- 21 Mon. Entered Palma harbour as dawn was breaking. Had my first glimpse of the place at 11.30A.M. Looks nice. Saw film "Tomorrow Heaven" , very good indeed.
- 22 Tues. Nothing very exciting to relate. Stayed on board as usual. Saw fil through again tonight.
- 23 Wed. Duty chef. May write few letters after rounds.
- 24 Thur. Had my first run ashore at 4.30P.M.. First impression on landing not very favourable. Place looks barren & desolate but in peace time I bet it would be beautiful. Crowds of people watched us land. Got 50 pesetas for pound.
- 25 Fri. Our second Christmas out here. Wonder if will see a third! Had a rollicking time. Spent evening on quarter deck with officers, what fun we had singing, dancing & acting the fool.
- 26 Sat. Duty chef today. Finished early so went on the boat deck to the cinema. Saw Ralph Lynn in "Dirty Work". Very amusing. Writing until midnight.
- 27 Sun. Went to divisions for a change. Captain gave us all a hope that we may attend coronation review. Writing as usual tonight. Shall not go ashore again until new year has passed.
- 28 Mon. Very hot today. This place looks beautiful with sun gleaming off the white buildings. Went to cinema on fxle. Very good film, "Triumph of Sherlock Holmes".
- 29 Tues. Duty cook so feeling pretty tired. Shall turn in early.
- 30 Wed. Up at 5A.M. Slept from 1230P.M. – 4.30P.M. Feeling pretty good now. Expect mail tomorrow, first in a week, so you bet it's going to be welcome.
- 31 Thur. Mail arrived this afternoon. What a relief. Ashore at 1830. Conchita was certainly pleased to see me. Walked with me to taxi.
- January 1937.
- 1 Fri. Duty chef. First duty of year. Wonder when my last duty on Barham will be.
- 2 Sat. Ashore at 1300 with Conchita. She was ill in bed so swapped talking & looking at snaps until 8.0P.M.. Hopes to accompany me to a bull fight tomorrow.
- 3 Sun. Ashore at 0100. Took Conchita to a bull fight. The cruel sights were revolting but she enjoyed it. Stayed with Conchita until 9.30P.M

The End of Diary