



1. NOW BEING 86 YEARS OLD, I HAVE DECIDED TO
RELATE THE EVENTS, AFTER BEING EMBARKED
ON THE D33 DESTROYER VIMY FROM BOULOGNE.
IN MY LETTER TO PET MARSHAL
WHICH ~~WAS~~ DUE TO NON-DELIVERY, HAD BEEN
RETURNED TO ME, I HAD TOLD OF THE BRITISH
FORCES PLIGHT, ~~AFTER~~ THE ALLIED FRENCH FORCES
HAD BEEN SURROUNDED & TAKEN PRISONERS.
ORDERS WERE POSTED UP & ALSO
BY WORD OF MOUTH, WE WERE ADVISED EVERY
MAN FOR HIMSELF, TO MAKE OUR WAY AS
QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO ANY OF THE CHANNEL
PORTS. THESE INJUNCTIONS WERE
ESPECIALLY FOR THE DETACHMENT OF DRIVERS
BASED AT ARRAS, & SERVING IN THE FI. NORTHERN
AREA TRANSPORT UNIT OF THE R.A.S.C.
ROYAL ARMY SERVICE CORPS. BELONGING
TO THAT DETACHMENT AS DRIVER H. COLLINS,
I WAS OVER THE FRENCH BORDER AT 94693
OUDENARD IN BELGIUM, DELIVERING PROVISIONS
TO THE AREA, WHEN AN ARMY MOTOR CYCLIST,
ADVISED ME TO CEASE DELIVERIES, & MAKE FOR
THE COAST, AS WORD HAD COME THROUGH
THAT "JERRY" HAD ALREADY INVADED HOLLAND
& NORTH BELGIUM. I WILL NOT REPEAT
MY HAZARDS IN EVENTUALLY STEERING MY
6 TON BEDFORD TO THE NEARBY BOULOGNE
HARBOUR DOCKYARDS. IN MY LETTER TO
PET, I TOLD HER OF THE PLIGHT OF AN
ARMY, THAT AFTER THE FRENCH FORCES
DISASTER, WERE FACING, WITH THEIR SMALL
FORCES, INEFFICIENTLY EQUIPPED, & POWERFULL
GERMAN FORCES, UNDER ORDERS FROM HITLER,
TO NOT EVEN SPARE THE CIVILIANS. AND SO,
ALONE IN MY LORRY & WANDERING & SHELTERING
IN VILLAGES & WOODS, I WITNESSED THE ENEMY'S
PLANES, DIVEBOMBING, & EVEN MACHINE GUNNING
WOMEN & CHILDREN, LAYING FOR SHELTER IN THE
DITCHES.



2 ON ARRIVAL AT DOVER, THE SERVICES
RECEPTION AUTHORITIES & WOMEN AUXILIARIES,
& Y.M.C.A, & RED CROSS & NAAFI TOOK CHARGE;
& ALTHOUGH WE MOSTLY DESIRED SLEEP
OFFERED US REFRESHMENTS & COMFORT, WHILST
WE ^{WERE} AWAITING TO BE MARSHALLED TO THE TRAINS.

AT WATERLOO STATION WE
WERE AWAKENED & WHAT A SORRY PLIGHT
WE WERE IN. OUR UNIFORMS WERE DIRTY
& TORN. WE WERE UNWASHED & HAD BEEN SO
FOR MANY DAYS, & ALTHOUGH STARVED OF FOOD,
WERE ONLY INTERESTED IN RESTING & SLEEPING.

I REMEMBER THE CIVILIANS
ON THE PLATFORMS SYMPATHETICALLY
ADDRESSING US, & WONDERINGLY PLYING A
QUESTION OR TWO; BUT AS THE R.T.O. STAFF
HAD MUSTERED US INTO CORNERS, WHERE
AWAITING TRANSPORT, PILES OF FORMS & FOLDING
CHAIRS HAD BEEN PROVIDED FOR US, WE WERE
RELEIVED TO BE LEFT ALONE. AGAIN LIGHT
SNACKS WERE OFFERED, BUT MANY OF US,
LIKE MYSELF, WERE NOT TEMPTED; TEA BEING
THE ONLY ITEM THAT SEEMED ACCEPTABLE.

WE WERE NOT EVEN INTERESTED
IN OUR DESTINATIONS. I WAS HELPED
INTO A TRAIN & I DO REMEMBER DURING
MY SPASMS OF SLEEPING, QUITE A LOT OF
SHUNTING & EVENTUALLY WHEN I FINALLY
AWOKE, & WAITED, I WAS AT A PLATFORM &
THE SIGNPOST ON THE STATION READ
TRAWSFYNIDD. AND THE PORTER, WITH A
VERY STRONG ACCENT, TOLD US WE WERE IN
NORTH WALES. MOUNTAINS WERE ON ALL
SIDES, & PACKED INTO ARMY LORRIES WE
WERE TAKEN, SAY ABOUT 1½ MILES AWAY
FROM THE VILLAGE, TO A CANVAS CAMP,
SPECIALLY SELECTED ON A CLEARING ALONGSIDE
A BEAUTIFUL SMALL SHALLOW RIVER, WHICH
I ASCERTAINED WAS THE COED-Y-BREVIN.



§ WE WERE CONVALESCING & I BELIEVE WE ONLY
HAD THE SENIOR ~~SEAR~~ SEARGENT AS C.O.
NO ORDERS OR PARADES, & THE SEARGENT
JUST TOLD US TO BEHAVE WHEN WE VISITED
TRAWSFYNIDD. I BELIEVE WE WERE 20 TO 30,
ALL FROM DIFFERENT UNITS & AS A SMALL
NAAFI & MANAGER ARRIVED & DARTBOARD & CARDS
& GAMES, & BOOKS, THOSE WHO STILL WERE
SATISFIED TO REST IN THE CAMP, INDULGED IN
SWIMMING IN SOME OF THE RIVERS ROCKLESS
POOLS. ARMY TRANSPORT TO THE VILLAGE
HAD BEEN ARRANGED & WE HAD TO RETURN
TO CAMP BY 10 P.M. AS I CARED TO CHANGE
FROM ARMY RATIONS, I ATE AT THE ONLY HOTEL
& BECAME VERY FRIENDLY WITH THE TWO PROPRIETORS
WHO COOKED THEMSELVES PLEASING MEALS ^{FOR} ~~THE CUSTOMERS.~~
AND AT THE HOTEL, IN THE CORNER
RESERVED FOR THE PUB, I WAS INTRODUCED TO
THE STATIONMASTER & OTHERS, & DURING MY
PERIOD IN TRAWSFYNIDD, I WAS TREATED TO
HOSPITALITY THAT STILL LIVES IN MY MEMORY.
ALL THE VILLAGE INHABITANTS
WERE MAINLY NAMED JONES, & TO DESIGNATE
THEM, WERE ALLUDED TO AS "JONES THE CHEMIST"
"JONES THE BUTCHER" "JONES THE STATIONMASTER"
& SCHOOLMASTER & SO ON. BUT WHAT FOLK;
NICELY RELIGIOUS IN THEIR TINY QUAIN CHAPELS
& HAPPY & CONTENTED & HOSPITABLE & VERY
PROUD OF A SON OF THE VILLAGE, WHOSE
MONUMENT IN THE VILLAGE TESTIFIED TO THE
FACT THAT HE HAD WON ~~THE~~ ON A CERTAIN
YEAR, THE "FISTEDFOOD", AN ANNUAL EVENT,
WHICH TAKES PLACE IN CARDIFF & IS
WORLD WIDE RENOWNED. I WAS EVEN ADMITTED
INTO THEIR LOVELY LITTLE MASONIC CHAPEL &
EXPERIENCED PARTICIPATING IN A VERY QUAIN AND
DIFFERENT INTERPRETATION OF THE MASONIC RITES.
IN FACT, ABOUT TEN YEARS AFTER THE
"DUNKIRK" DEBACLE. I SEATED MY WIFE & PACKED
OUR LUGGAGE & HOLIDAYED IN THE VILLAGE, & AT THE HOTEL
THE TWO SISTERS HUGGED MY LITTLE FRENCH WIFE AND
KISSED HER & SAID "BACH", A CELTIC ENDERMENT RESERVED ONLY FOR
TRUE FRIENDS.



4 EVIDENTLY; OUR CAMP BEING SITUATED
ALONGSIDE A RIVER, HAD ATTRACTED THE
ATTENTION OF THE ENEMY, AND HE MUST HAVE
BEEN ATTACKED BY OUR SPITFIRES, AS ~~THE~~^{ONE} MORNING
AFTER A BOMBARDMENT, WE DISCOVERED A GROUND
MESSERSHMITT IN THE FOREST THAT SURROUNDED
OUR CAMP. LATER A DETACHMENT OF ROYAL
ENGINEERS ERECTED ALONG THE FEW ROADS
~~AND~~ SERVING THE VILLAGE, TANK BARRICADES,
TO DETER JERRY FROM ATTEMPTING A LANDING.

NOW BEING FULLY RESTORED IN
HEALTH, WE WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE GREAT
NATIONAL STEEPCHASE RACECOURSE IN LIVERPOOL
WHERE THE VARIOUS REMNANTS OF TROOPS WERE
~~AND~~ BEING SORTED OUT AND RETURNED TO
DIFFERENT REGIMENTS. I WAS DRAFTED
WITH OTHER DRIVERS, TO A ~~THE~~ R.A.S.C. DEPOT
IN THE KENNINGTON ROAD AREA, NEAR
THE IMPORTANT JUNCTION OF ELEPHANT & CASTLE,
AND WE DELIVERED ALL ROUND THE SOUTHERN
COUNTIES, PROVISIONS TO THE CAMPS & NAAFIES
THAT HAD BEEN ^{CREATED} ~~FORMED~~ AFTER THE DUNKIRK
DEBACLE. QUITE AN AGREEABLE ARMY
JOB, AS I WAS ONCE AGAIN A FREE LANCE,
WITH PLENTY OF LATE PASSES & PERMITS TO
TAKE B+B ^{AT} ANY HOSTEL OR CAMPS, WHEREVER
I DELIVERED IN THE SOUTHERN AREA.

DAYLIGHT AIR RAIDS WERE, INTERMITTENT,
BUT AS WINTER TOOK OVER WITH ITS LONG
FOGGY NIGHTS, JERRY, JUST PICKING OUT
THE GLISTENING THAMES, ~~JUST~~ SHOVELED
OUT HIS INCENDIARY BOMBS, INDISCRIMINATELY,
KNOWING THAT IN THE VAST AREA OF
LONDON, HE WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN
CREATING HAVOC. AND NIGHTLY HE
SHOOK LONDON TO ITS FOUNDATIONS.



5 HOWEVER THE WAR OFFICE QUICKLY
PRODUCING 'SPITFIRES', ORGANISED THEIR
QUICK DEPLACEMENTS & THEY WITH THE
AID OF RADAR, SUBJECTED SEVERE LOSSES
OF PLANES & CREW OF THE VISITING
BOMBERS. HOWEVER JERRIES INCENDIARY
BOMBS ^{NIGHTLY} WRECKED HAVOC AND THE DOCK AREAS
OF THE EAST END WERE SOON IN A SHAMBLES.
MANY WERE THE TIMES THAT I COULD
NOT APPROACH THE DOCKS, SEEKING WITH
MY ALBION COLONIAL PROVISIONS FOR THE
FORCES. I MUST DIGRESS FROM RELATING
THE OCCUPATIONS OF THE FORCES: "PLANES
ANTI-AIRCRAFT STATIONS & EVEN THE AIR-
WARDENS ETC; TO PRAISE THE LONDONER,
AND I WILL SINGLE OUT THE COCKNEY
AS BY HIS STOLID & CHEERFULL DISPOSITION
ACCEPTED, AFTER HIS WORK IN THE MUNITION
FACTORIES, JOBS TO AID THE WAR EFFORT.
AND LATE AT NIGHT, WHEN
HE DESCENDED INTO THE TUBE STATIONS;
THERE TO SLEEP ON THE PLATFORMS
IN HIS ALLOTTED, & NUMBERED BUNK; HE
MINGLED WITH HIS FAMILY & FRIENDS WHO
IGNORING COMPLETELY THE DESTRUCTION TAKING
PLACE OVERHEAD; WERE OCCUPATIONALLY OCCUPIED
PLAYING CARDS, WHISTLING & SINGING THEIR
COCKNEY TUNES, ACCOMPANIED BY GUITARS
& MOUTH ORGANS. I WAS AWARE OF ALL
THIS, AS I HAD BEEN SELECTED TO DELIVER;
AS THEY CAME OFF THE ASSEMBLY LINES,
TRUCKS, COACHES & OFFICERS CARS, UP NORTH
TO THE VARIOUS CAMPS. THAT DUTY OBLIGED,
ME AFTER EACH DELIVERY, TO RETURN
TO LONDON ^{BY TRAIN} USING DIFFERENT TUBE STATIONS
TO REGAIN MY BILLET.



6 I WAS ELATED TO WITNESS PRACTICALLY THE WHOLE OF LONDON'S CIVVY POPULATION NIGHTLY UNDERGROUND, EATING, DRINKING AND BREAST FEEDING THEIR INFANTS & LAUGHING & JOKING, & EVEN OCCUPIED IN BARBERING & FRIZZING THEIR HAIR.

I WAS DISCHARGED IN 1942 AFTER TWO YEARS & 215 DAYS, WITH A B.64 DISCHARGE PAPERS MENTIONING "GOOD CONDUCT."

DUE TO MY AGE (43) & NERVOUS CONDITION, DUE TO THE "DUNKIRK" SHAKE UP. ONCE AGAIN I FOUND MYSELF IN CIVVIES, ALL CLOTHES BEING PROVIDED ON DISCHARGE BY THE WAR OFFICE. NOTICING IN MY PAPERS, A CLAUSE INDICATING THAT FREE ~~WAS~~ TRANSPORT PASSES WERE GIVEN, TO RETURN TO ONES ABOARD; AND AS MY HOME WAS HERE IN MELBOURNE, I PAID A VISIT TO THE WHITEHALL WAR OFFICES.

THERE A SENIOR OFFICER WARNED ME THAT AS JERRIES SUBMARINES WERE PLAYING HAVOC BY SINKING IN ABUNDANCE OUR SHIPS, ~~WHEREVER~~ IN ALL OCEANS; THAT I WAS VIRTUALLY ATTEMPTING SUICIDE BY HOPING TO REGAIN MELBOURNE. I THEN VISITED THE ADMIRALTY OFFICES AND AFTER A WEEK OR SO RECEIVED ORDERS TO PROCEED TO THE ADELPHI HOTEL, IN LIVERPOOL.

IN PEACE TIME, THIS LUXURIOUS HOTEL, SITUATED IN THE AREA OF POSSIBLY THE MOST IMPORTANT PORT IN THE WORLD, WAS AT THE TIME OF MY VISIT, REDUCED TO ~~BE~~ OPERATING JUST A CORNER OF THE BUILDING, AND ONLY SERVICE OFFICERS SEEM TO BE THE CLIENTS.

THE MEALS WERE ALSO REDUCED, AS I WAS SERVED FOR BREAKFAST WITH 2 SLICES OF TOAST ONLY. NAPOLEON DID REMARK THAT "AN ARMY MARCHES ON ITS STOMACH". OF COURSE CIVILIANS HAD TO CEDE TO THE SERVICES ALL AVAILABLE FOODS. IN THE CAMPS WE DID WELL CONSIDERING THE MILLIONS OF TONS OF FOOD THAT



Y JERRY HAD SUNK TO THE OCEAN BEDS.
I EVENTUALLY RECEIVED A
TELEGRAM DIRECTING ME TO REPORT TO THE
BIRKENHEAD R.T.O. DOCKS OFFICER. THEIR
WITH A LOT OF HUSH-HUSH, I WAS ESCORTED,
BY WALKING IN A BACKWATER, ACROSS NUMEROUS
PARKED SUBMARINES. AND I BOARDED A
"PORT LINE" STEAMER, WHICH I NOTICED HAD ON
ITS PORT & STARBOARD SIDES AND ALSO STERN
& AFT, DEPTH CHARGES STRAPPED ON TO
THE DECK, EASILY FREED BY A SPRING CATCH.
WE STEERED TO & ANCHORED IN
THE MERSEY ESTUARY, & AS WE AWAITED FOR
DURING TWO DAYS FOR THE ARRIVAL OF
OTHER SHIPS TO COMPLETE OUR CONVOY,
I HAD TIME TO EXPLORE MY "HOME".

BESIDES MYSELF THERE WERE SIX NAVAL
OFFICERS WHO, AS THE ~~NAVAL~~ NAVAL CAPTAIN
EXPLAINED WERE "EN ROUTE" ON A NAVAL
MISSION. THIS CAPTAIN DID ENLIGHTEN
ME TO THE FACT THAT ALL SHIPS, CARGO
OR OTHERWISE, HAD BEEN COMMANDEERED
BY THE ADMIRALTY & ALL WERE SIMILARLY
EQUIPPED WITH DEPTH CHARGES & SOME SHIPS
WITH CANNONS & AMMO. ALL ASSEMBLED
& WITH NUMEROUS LIGHT DESTROYERS
ENCIRCLING THE FLEET OF 40 SHIPS, WE
SAILED ON A VOYAGE, WHICH DUE TO A
COLLISION AND TRANSHIPMENT, WAS TO KEEP
ME AWAY 4 MONTHS FROM MY DEAR MELBOURNE.
FOR 6 OR 4 WEEKS OUR VOYAGE
WAS UNEVENTFUL AND I SPENT THE DAYS
WATCHING THE CONVOY'S WAKE, AS WE WERE
ZIGZAGGING AND FOR THAT PERIOD, ~~AS~~ AS
I LOVE SEA TRIPS, I RELAXED AND PLAYED
DARTS & CARDS. THE BLACKED OUT NIGHTS.
WHEN EVEN SMOKING WAS PROHIBITED, WERE FAR
FROM CHEERFUL, BUT AS THE SAILORS HAD A
PROVISION OF BOOKS, AND I DO LIKE READING,
THE TIME ~~SWIFTLY~~ SLIPPED BY.

8/ EVENTUALLY ONE EVENING WHEN IT WAS RAINING & THE WORLD WAS DARK & MENACING, A SEVERE JOLT, CAUSED BY A COLLISION, GAVE US AN IMMEDIATE LIST TO PORT SIDE.

WITH DIFFICULTY WE ALL MOVED ABOUT AND I ASCERTAINED THAT ANOTHER CARGO SHIP, IN THE DARKNESS, HAD COLLIDED WITH US AFT, & THAT THE CREW WERE BUSY AT THE PUMPS & STAVING CANVAS SHEETING & PLANKS INTO POSITION. BOATS WERE LOWERED AND WITH A VERY SMALL BAG I AND THE SIX NAVAL OFFICERS CLAMBERED DOWN THE ROPE LADDER ON TO THE DECK OF A CRUISER, WHICH NEXT EVENING DOCKED IN FALMOUTH BAY. EVIDENTLY ZIGZAGGING HAD IMMENSELY DELAYED OUR COURSE, AS WHEN THE COLLISION OCCURRED WE WERE STILL IN THE VICINITY OF U.K.

^{HUSH} NOBODY ENQUIRED, DUE TO HUSH AS TO WHAT TRANSPIRED WITH OUR BOAT, AND AS ONCE AGAIN I WAS LODGED ON THE BAY SHORE, I JUST RELAXED AND WONDERED WHAT DESTINY HAD IN STORE. I ALSO WANDERED DAILY IN A FAIRLY WINTRY BUT TEMPERATE CLIMATE ALONG THE BAY SHORE, & NOTICED THAT ANOTHER CONVOY WAS BEING ASSEMBLED. HOTEL RATIONS DOWN IN SOUTH ENGLAND, WERE VERY SATISFACTORY, THE MILES OF COVERED PILES OF POTATOES ON THE MAIN ROADS TESTIFIED TO ENGLAND'S SHORTAGE OF MANY FOODS. ONCE AGAIN I BOARDED ANOTHER CARGO BOAT OF THE PORT LINE, & AGAIN ZIGZAGGING, WITH ABOARD, THE USUAL ROUTINE. AN IMPORTANT HAPPENING TOOK PLACE A COUPLE OF WEEKS AFTER LEAVING FALMOUTH.



9. KAWANAB.

EIGHT SHIPS ACCOMPANIED BY A CRUISER LEFT OUR CONVOY, & DISSAPEARED OVER THE HORIZON IN A SOUTH WESTERLY DIRECTION, GOING ^{TO USA.} WE WERE TOLD TO SEEK WAR MATERIAL FOR AUSSIE.. ALAS, THE

FOLLOWING DAY THE CRUISER ACCOMPANIED BY TWO OF THE SHIPS, REJOINED OUR CONVOY.

THE ENEMY HAD WON THROUGH AND REVIEWING THAT PERIOD, I BELIEVE THAT JERRY CONCENTRATED ON SINKING OUR CARGO SHIPS, TRUSTING MAYBE THAT HE COULD STARVE US INTO SUBMISSION. OUR NAVAL FORCES ~~WAS~~ WERE IN 1942 UNTIL SAY 1944, ALSO SUFFERING BIG LOSSES. ONE OF THE CADET OFFICERS ABOARD, CONFIDED TO ME THAT HE HAD ARRIVED AT A NERVOUS STATE, AS HE HAD BEEN TORPEDOED TWICE,

AND THE MOMENT SO ARDENTLY PRAYED FOR, ARRIVED. WE ENTERED MELBOURNE BAY HEADS & DROPPED ANCHOR SAY 10 MILES OUT FROM THE SOUTH MELBOURNE—ST KILDA BEACHES.

OUR ULTIMATE DESTINATION WAS SYDNEY, THERE TO UNLOAD MUNITIONS & FOR THE RETURN TO U.K, LOAD PROVISIONS THAT WERE SO BADLY NEEDED.

THE ADMIRALTY'S ORDERS WERE THAT NOBODY, EITHER SERVICEMAN OR CIVILIANS WERE TO DISEMBARK AT MELBOURNE.

GERMAN SPIES WERE EVERYWHERE AND NO CHANCES WERE TO BE TAKEN, A POSSIBILITY BEING THAT A CHANCE REMARK MAY ALERT THE ENEMY TO THE FACT THAT A



10: CONVOY WOULD SHORTLY BE LEAVING
MELBOURNE FOR SYDNEY.

AND IN ANSWER TO MY PLEA,
THE NAVAL COMMANDER, JUSTLY POINTED OUT
THAT IN A PUB; WHERE WITH MY FAMILY I
WOULD BE CELEBRATING MY ESCAPES & RETURN,
~~AND~~ THERE WERE SPIES. ~~EVEN IN PUBS.~~

AS HE HAD TO GO ASHORE FOR
ORDERS, HE KINDLY WORDED A TELEGRAM
FROM ME TO MY FAVORITE SISTER ROSE,
INTIMATING THAT I WOULD PHONE HER FROM
SYDNEY.

AS I WAS PRESUMED DEAD,
NOT HAVING ~~NOT~~ HAD ANY NEWS FROM ME,
SINCE THE TRAGIC DUNKIRK RETREAT, I
HAD LITERALLY RETURNED FROM THE DEAD.

AT SYDNEY CENTRAL THE
R.T.O. UNDER INSTRUCTIONS, ATTENDED TO
MY RAIL PASS AND THE NEXT DAY I WAS
AT MY PARENTS HOME FOR A CELEBRATION.

DURING THE TRAIN JOURNEY,
MY HANDICAPPED HEARING WAS LESS
TROUBLESOME. THE DRUMS HAD BEEN
BADLY BASHED AT BOULOGNE BY THE
INFERNAL NOISE DURING THE EVACUATION.

AS TIME PASSED THE RIGHT
EAR CEDED TO COMPLETE DEAFNESS AND
I WAS AWARDED A 40% DISABILITY
WAR PENSION.