

On 7th June 1941. I was at Puckapunyal when orders came to pack up and move to Sydney with the advance party.

No information was available except that the train left at 6.40 pm. ^{on 11th June.} I was well there, and with all knobs sparking brightly, believe me.

We had a nice quiet run over, ^{to Sydney.} and were met at the Station and taken down to ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{steps} in busses.

So far we had come in absolute blankness. Our escort from the Station "didn't know" what boat we were going on or anything. Yet, while we waited for the ferry, two little sailors lassies told us all that we wanted to know.

We were to travel on the "Queen Mary," then anchored in the Harbour off Belfour Gardens; that we would leave next day for Tasmania; we would return on the 28th to pick up our troops; and would leave on 29th for ~~Middle East~~ ^{Middle East}. And it was even so. We did all those

things on the days mentioned. Nor was there any secrecy about the departure. I think that half of Sydney was down ^{at} or on the water to see us off.

However, ~~to get back to the wait for~~ our ferry turned up at last and we were taken out to that great luxury liner and, once on board, went off on a long route march to find ^{the Purser and our quarters.} ~~our quarters.~~

No ^{shore} leave was available, but as a special favour, I was allowed ashore "to attend to my will."

Next day, after breakfast and before our departure I started off on a tour of our palace. — and was she, the goods. I went upstairs till I could go no further and had a good look around. Over the next few days I carried out my "look-see." I learned quite a lot about the old dear.

From the top down the decks are known as.

Sun Deck. or Sports Deck.

Boat Deck

Promenade

Main

A. B. C. D. E. F. G. Decks.

H. J. K. Sections.

Queen Mary's normal line of business was between New York & I'm not sure whether it was Southampton (England) or Cherbourg (France). but in August 1938 she won the "Blue Ribbon" for the Atlantic Crossing doing the run New York to Cherbourg at an average speed of 31.72 knots per hour. (equivalent to 36.04 miles per hour). - a feat that has not since been equalled. Her normal run is 4 1/2 days port to port.

Queen Mary's general dimensions are as follows.

Tonnage 81,235 tons.

(A dimensional ton represents 100 cubic feet displacement not 2240 lbs)

Length 1080 feet. (360 yards).

Beam 118 feet.

Recreation Space 3 acres.

Passages 3 miles

Promenade Deck 750 feet long & 20 feet wide both sides of the ~~the~~ boat. (This is equal to the overall length of the "Mauretania".)

Height. Keel to Sports Deck 135 feet.

" " Top of first funnel 180 feet.

" " Mast-head 235 feet.

Waterline to Bridge 85 feet.

Engines develop 50,000 horsepower.

Lighting & Electric power supplied by 7 turbo.

generators, develop 10,000 kilo.watts per hour

(sufficient to supply a town of 150,000 people).

To give some idea of what this means, Queen Mary could tie up to Sydney's electric light supply & provide the electric current required for the City.

She has 4 propellers with a diameter of 19 feet each, shaft of 380 feet ^{length} and at a speed of 27 knots. (her normal cruising speed), the initial engine revolutions are ~~broken~~ geared down from 700 to 180 per minute.

Steam is provided ^{by 42 oil fired boilers} ~~from a number of boilers~~. There are ~~40 of these~~ but it is very rarely that more than 30 are in use at one time. During 1942 I think she used them all when she ran through a pack of 25 submarines who all wanted a bit of her hide, ~~but~~ She was too active, & ^{the subs} ~~they all~~ missed a good meal. For all her size she steers like a yacht, and can roll almost as well as one.

However, more of her details as we ~~was to~~ do the grand tour. Her sister ship - the "Queen Elizabeth" was also to keep her company so we looked all around for her, ~~but as~~ ^{Lizzie} ~~she~~ is larger by approximately 4000 tons, ^{therefore} you don't see the two in Harbour at the same time. There simply isn't room for them. ~~so~~ One goes elsewhere while the other comes in for a refuel, re-stock. That's why we went to Hobart for 14 days. We passed ~~the~~ "Lizzie" just outside Sydney Heads as we were on the way to Hobart. She looked good but I'll tell you of her later.

We slipped out more or less quietly at high tide next day. This was about 11 in the morning. I thought from what I had seen with ships of 26,000 tons that we would need about 12 tugs to push her about, but one only hung around as a safeguard and by the use of her four propellers, working forward and reverse, ^{they} ~~she~~ swung around under her own power, churning up all the mud imagineable I'll admit, but we turned completely around in ~~less~~ less than a quarter mile and we had started.

~~It would have~~ I had been through the heads before on ships of ~~7000 & 12000~~ 9000 & 12000 tons. I was quite surprised at the amount of movement on this large ship. During the trip outward when we got our convoy together I used to feel sorry for the troops on the Queen Elizabeth (84,000 tons) & the "Aquatania", a little ship of 24,000 tons, for the way they pitched

but when we met those hoops later, it appeared they ⁴
didn't notice the movement on their own boat but that
the "Queen Mary" appeared to be making heavy going of
it. So that's that.

Before we had been gone 4 hours we had our first
casualty. One of our officers became ^{sea} sick & remained so
for the first two days after each stop.

Having passed the "heads" and as the coastline was not
new to me I decided to continue my exploration of the
ship.

I had naturally gone to the top of the tree to watch the
departure so after lunch I returned there to start my tour
and spent the next ^{during the trip to} two days to Stobart ~~in~~ looking over
everything.

In peace time, as I have said, the normal run was
from New York to England, ^{via France} across the North Atlantic.
~~as this is normally a cold trip, the ship was~~
The time required per trip was 4 1/2 days, and the fares
ran from £39 to almost any price. A steward told
me the best price he had known was £1,000, although
I think the normal 1st class passage without trimmings
ran to about £250. It all depended on the extras required
and - of course - if you wished to "swank it" - you
naturally paid for it.

Well off we go on our travels.

The Sports Deck ~~was~~ ^{is} of course devoted to "sport". Dick James
Quoits. Golf Driving Course - carefully caged off so that
the ball would not be lost. pens for exercising the dogs
and any other games you felt like having a go at.
These pens were up amongst the three funnels. The
funnels by the way were large enough to drive 4 railway
trains through, and the playing areas were on top of the
central structure, ~~cabins~~ etc.

Down a flight of steps one came to the Boat Deck, where
the great life boats hung on their davits. There were all
^{swung up & down}
~~moved~~ by electric motors for lowering & raising & were

filled with motors. Total capacity per boat 125 passengers, but at a pinch - 136. and around the thwart on the outside were rope loops that allowed of another 30 or 40 in the water being supported while they could hold on. These boats were built of steel. Two other life boats were made of wood, and were filled with "man-power" motors. ^(Fleming Boats) A shaft & propellor was used as in the big life boats but the power was provided by a series of handles worked back & forth ^{on a ratchet} by the passengers. These handles worked a worm gear, and once the team got properly into ^{co-ordinated} action a speed of 4 knots could be maintained fairly comfortably. The general idea was that this would take the boat out of danger if the ship were sinking, then the larger boats could hitch on & tow the remainder of the way - or at least till the petrol ran out. I believe they had a range of about 200 miles. Sails were also provided.

Rafts & life boats made up a safety zone for 3,500 people sufficient of course for peace time, but on our trip we carried 5,600 troops and a total of 1300 extras, so that we only had a 60% margin. Personal lifebelts ~~would~~ ~~have to do for the balance~~, plus wreckage that floated up when the ship sank would have to do for the balance.

However, we didn't have to try it out.

Along this area of deck, 20 feet wide but ~~crossed~~ much interrupted with boat davits & motors for movement of the life boats, ^{space space} was ~~also~~ utilized for more deck games, deck quoits, & croquet, being the prime favourites, and ~~with all~~ the obstructions formed a natural deck golf course.

The ball ~~on these occasions~~ for this game is a wooden disc. At the bow is a 6 foot promenade on which one can easily have his head ~~of~~ blown off, and at the stern rather a handy space for an open air dance, but, as there was a war on, the space was occupied by a 3 inch anti aircraft gun. Several pens on the sports deck were carefully sand bagged & fitted with mounting, for various types of machine gun for air defence. In fact we bristled.

with means of defence mainly against air attack. In times of attack we also ran up kites with steel wire attachments. These wires were a definite nuisance when caught & wound up by the flying propellers, and unless the wire broke quickly, was sufficient to throw the plane out of control.

At the stern of the main Deck was the 47 inch quick-fires for anti-submarine attack.

At Suez we picked up a couple of rocket guns, nasty weapons for a plane to argue with. We also picked up some Bofors Anti Aircraft guns. These guns work at two speeds, Fast & medium. Fast is at the rate of 200 rounds per minute. Until the planes are really good targets, the slower rate is used. The gun action then sounds, as a warning, "Got to get you" "Got to get you" then when the range is right, they change to full fire and the guns begin to bark. "Got you! Got you! Got you!"

By this time about 30 machine guns ~~are~~ ^{would} also ^{be} blazing away. Our gun teams were given practice with balloons, released from the mast-head. We got a wonderful range of results from a balloon for every few rounds to nothing at all. And our best shot was one of our great scallywags - usually on the mat for something or another. - but could he handle a machine gun? He was the goods. The submarine guns were given as a target, a smoke bomb fired from the ship, & fire opened at a range of 1500 yds to 3,000 yds. The shooting wasn't bad. It ~~was~~ ^{was good enough to} have made a sub do a "crash dive".

Outside of the two guns "bary" relied on her speed & manoeuvrability to keep out of mischief. So far as I can ~~found~~ find out - up to 1943 she was not hit at any time.

Certain sections of the Spout Deck were set aside for the Ships Officers whose quarters were up in that vicinity. These areas ~~were~~ out of bounds to all troops. The centre section of the Boat Deck was mostly devoted to Ships Officers, but we had about 20 cabins for our own troop officers ^{here}. I had one on the starboard side just screened by the first boat. It spoiled my view!

In normal times it was a single cabin but on this trip (7) we had two beds in it. Each bed had two mattresses. They are topped with porous rubber and are about 12 inches thick. They are comfortable but when the boat is dipping and she drops about 30 feet - it gives the feeling that the bed has dropped from you and you're trying to catch up with it, & then on the return trip, you feel that you are sinking into it until you catch up again, and at the top, you go on soaring while the bed goes down from you.

To keep up with the times, an electric clock is installed. At midnight the days variation is made either by stopping the clock, ^{electrically} or rocking the hands ^{forward}. You see, as you travel east, each degree of longitude means a variation of 4 minutes. At the equator a degree of longitude is 69 plus miles. As our normal days run was between 600 & 700 miles you can see it usually meant "advance your clocks 30 minutes" each day. Coming back clocks were retarded in the same way.

I explained earlier that "Queen Mary" was designed for the North Atlantic Crossing - usually a cold run - so all the cabins were fitted with electric fans, for warm weather and hot air fans for cold weather, together with fresh air blowers into the cabins. These could be used hot or cold. The cabin was fitted with a large built-in wardrobe, dressing table with wing mirrors. Lights were arranged, at the head of the bed, at the dressing table, & also over a drop writing table. Then the main lights in the centre and two wall lights. Space was left under the port-holes (mine was about 24" by 15") for stowing the spare luggage. Then came the individual bathroom, fitted with a lavatory, a bath 6 feet long, complete with hot & cold fresh & salt water. During war time, & the large number of troops carried, the fresh water was disconnected from the baths. A well fitted hand wash basin & shower screen completed the bathroom. Hot water ~~is~~ sea water was unlimited, as the water was pumped in from the ocean & used to cool the steam condensers. Fresh water was always a problem.

Originally a very well equipped gymnasium was installed in this area. In our time it was used as a Medical Aid Post.

The decorations on the wall were cartoons of past masters of all sports. Very well done as you can well imagine. I do not know what uses several other large rooms up in that area were used for. A number of nurses were installed on this deck.

Then in the forward section were Senior Ships Staff Officers from the Commodore to the Chiefs of the Engine Room Staff.

The wireless room was above and the instrument room was on this deck. The Wireless telephony was available to all parts of the world at a price. and in peace time, in mid-Atlantic, a passenger sitting in his stateroom could be linked up to his home or office almost anywhere in the world. Fittings were there for 14 different aeriols. In war time, the transmitter was silent except in extreme necessity. On one occasion "Mary" broke this "Wireless Silence" unnecessarily, and was well smacked for her trouble. What she took to be a surface raider was a harmless merchantman. Still, one must be careful.

In convoy, messages are passed by flag or "aldis" lamp, a signalling lamp using the morse code and like a young searchlight.

~~Will I think that completes the Sun • Boat Decks~~
Coming down stairs again we land on the Promenade Deck. This is enclosed across the bow end, & both sides, with a small promenade deck at the bow, and openings on to a larger open deck.

The final section of this centre superstructure on this Boat Deck was originally known as the "Sun Grill" and was intended to provide late suppers for the passengers. This consisted of two long counters & stools, and tables set out cafe fashion. Just outside the double doors ^{a large} promenade was convenient either for an open dance, or just for a promenade. During our time a sand-bagged machine Gun position acted as a stern anti-aircraft position. And in the Grill-room itself were installed the Unit Headquarters of Groups 1 to 9. Each Group had an office staff of at least 5 ~~or~~ from 5 to 9, and two runners ~~from each Group~~. This made a fair crowd. Add to this the fact that

In peace time again the outer walls of the Sun Grill were panels of plate glass, from which one could watch away to the rear. These windows were screened by a sliding steel plate. The roof was, of course, part of the sun deck, on which the sun beat all day. At night all windows were closed by the steel shutters, & the doors also. No matter how hard the fans worked this room could not be kept cool and during the warmer sections of the trip, I was working in shorts & shirt only, with a piece of blotting paper under my arm and a handkerchief under my chin to absorb the perspiration, ^{and thanking the Gods no women were likely to enter.} My watch strap was so soaked with perspiration that before I got home the leather cracked & broke.

The decoration for this Grill room was the arena of a great circus and two columns at the sides of the room was painted to represent two boxes, occupied with well dressed onlookers. All the decorations in this boat are by the best known painters available. To overcome the loss of body salts through excessive perspiration during the tropical period, the troops were advised to take up to a spoonful of table salt during the day.

I mentioned the fact that "Queen Mary" could roll when the time came. She can, she does, & she did. On one occasion we had to tie the typewriter to the table to save it sliding off.

Now I think we can go down to the next deck. This was the Promenade Deck. 750 feet long & 20 feet wide at both sides. The deck was enclosed and the portholes were about 2 feet by 3 feet high. War time, all the windows were blackened, and by sunset had all been closed for the night. Around the bow was a 6 foot walk, opening out on to an outside platform. The floor was marked out again for sports for when the weather did not allow of outside games. ~~Provision is provided made for much speculation.~~

~~speculation.~~ During ^{during} Apparently, a night when he could not sleep, some soldier has carved his own & someone else's initials with the year 1942. The letters are cut 1/2 inch deep so they will last along time. From this deck was made entrance to the pleasure rooms in peace time. Lounge - Music Room, The Dansant - Card Room. Smoke Rooms - Private Dining Rooms, and so on. These rooms are of course now put to other uses, and most of those pleasure rooms now form the Ships Hospital. With the large number.

of hoops carried, there must be ~~one~~ plenty of accomodation for the sick - Sore - Sorey. Famous pictures that once covered the walls have either been removed or covered over safely for duration.

The same applies also to the silver cutlery & choice crockery etc. It would be too great a risk to leave them lying around. Seeing that we can't get into those rooms now except as a col. case we will enter the main hall. Believe me it is a hall. The dome is about 30 feet up. One enters through great double

doors of plate glass ~~and~~ into a great hall. Turning to the bow we find a series of shops. These are supplied from the best shops of London - New York. In the centre of the hall is a great floral piece, built up of palms & flowers of the season, & even to a fountain.

On right, left are two small lounges, ~~near~~ Ladies rest rooms. On Sundays, the ~~far~~ ^{end} walls fold back & provide altars for Roman Catholic & Church of England services. On the right, & next again, is the children's play ground. This includes slides, rocking horses, & everything that children like. ^{and trained play ground attendants.} Can you imagine a big fat brigadier doing a graceful slide down this and enjoying it? Well it did happen. & he did enjoy it.

Next was a museum, but there was nothing there of interest now.

On the other side were a series of lecture rooms. Across the bow was a beautifully designed cock-tail bar. Two of the peace-time ~~stewards~~ ^{stewards} were still on the job, and ~~some~~ ^{some} of the ~~best~~ ^{good} drinks were still available. The decoration over the bar ~~was~~ ^{was} a two year-revel in which every ^{class} was included. Linker Sailor Soldier Sailor and a charming dancer had sent her shoe into the air.

In the ladies lounge was a gorgeous white enamelled grand piano. In the centre section also is a series of Banking hours working ^{with} the various Banks of London - New York. ~~4~~ lifts are provided to run from the Sun Deck down to F Deck.

Headed to the stern again we pass through two groups of writing tables, each with individual electric lights. On one side is a giant map of the world and with a meridian line that shows where sun-rise & sunset is for the day, also where the boat is at any given hour. The movements are synchronised with the "time" apparatus in the Bridge quarters.

Then we come into the Main Lounge. There is a fortune within four walls. Like all the decorations, the best artists in the Empire have been called in and only the best offering has been selected. I

The floor is covered with best Donegal Pile carpet, worth £3 per foot and as the lounge is 78 feet wide by about 100 long ^{about some inches thick}

you can easily imagine where a little of the \$6,000,000
went to. The two side walls ^{each} contain 4 large plate
glass windows, about 15 ft ^{square} ~~about the same high~~
These are covered with two layers of net, a fine cream
and then a heavier gold one. These in turn are
covered with draw curtains of crushed satin.
I do not know the value of the net curtains, but the
satin ones are valued at \$50 apiece. (Another \$800 gone
west. Tables, chairs, etc of the quality that one finds at
the elite furnishing houses, and to own just
about 4 and one of those tables, one would think
that the gods had been kind. So complete, about
30 lounges & arm chairs were spread about. I should
say that they would be worth \$40 to \$50 each. Nothing
cheap any where. To help support the roof were
stream-lined columns. These would be in line
about 15 feet ~~is~~ from the outer walls. The dome shot up
from this line to a height of about 45 feet & supported
one gorgeous chandelier. The general lighting was
indirect and while showing the room off to advantage
it was not quite comfortable for reading.

Two great pink vases about 7 feet tall, of some ~~has~~ stone
similar to alabaster, but ~~resembled~~ ^{dark veined} like the so called
pink marble. These were lit up from inside. As a
great concession we were allowed a view of full lighting
effect for about 10 minutes one night. I'd like to see ^{Queen Mary}
in her full war paint in place. She would be a gorgeous
right.

In the four corners, were pieces of statuary, three of
mythologic interest, and the fourth, as a contrast, strictly
modern. This latter was a cowboy riding a lively
bronc. Boy, was he getting a rough ride. You just
couldn't help waiting for the bump when the horse landed
Great piece of work.

Next was a beautiful girl riding a bullock.
~~which~~ It was known as "Europa & the Bull".

The next was that of two pygmies riding on the
back of ~~a~~ a big ram. It was a wonderful study &
half scared, ~~definitely~~ thrilled faces of these age-old small
people, desperately hanging on to the wool of their mount
& pleased as well as scared at their experiences.
The fourth was that of a young girl leading a bull. ~~I don't~~
~~I cannot remember the fourth~~ ~~not do I know the~~
~~know the story of either of these two~~ This was a parody put up
symbolism of the pieces, by a French artist as a skew on the
Lady Godiva story.

In the old Greek mythology Europa was abducted by Jupiter, who had assumed the
shape of a bull.

At the bottom end was a perfectly designed stage, complete ^{12.} in every particular. Concerts, picture programs, theatricals could be indulged in. We had pictures twice a week. In the centre of the remaining three walls was a very elaborate fire place, and complete with electric fires. They look wonderfully natural coal fires, and by means of a special globe, even produce the flicker of a flame. I took an early opportunity to get acquainted with this fire but was disappointed at the poor heat thrown from it. Till on a very close inspection, I found it a dummy, and what heat was thrown out came from an ordinary electric ~~heater coil~~ ^{radiator} in the upper section of the fire place. It amused me after that to see the newcomers crowding around but will back, to enjoy the warmth, and on one occasion won a bet. by trying to light a 10/- note at the fire.

The mantel piece supported a most beautiful clock, the face of which was gold letters on plate glass. There were no "works" as the hands were electrically controlled. Two doors led out alongside the stage, past the small bar or pantry on to the rooms previously described. Mirrors ^{now used as hospital wards.} decorated with modern designs occupied the remainder of the space over the mantelpieces.

On one occasion it was decided that a portion of the floor covering would be lifted to allow of a tea-dance. Unfortunately, the idea was not broadcast in time and the time was wasted. It took 8 men, two hours, to get the floor cleared, and it was not ~~repeated~~ repeated.

A great air-conditioning plant has been installed and, going through the tropics, the lounge was cooled down so much that it felt like going from a cool chamber into a ^{brick} kiln. ~~reverse~~ ^{when you left the lounge.}

The first class dining room, ^{is} ~~now~~ in use as a ^{hoops} dining room, ^{three seatings} ~~was~~ ^{at meal times and between seatings the room,} just cooled down & freshened. When the meals were all disposed of ~~the mess room~~ ^{freshened.} the plant was then switched on to the lounge. For a period of 1 hour before meals, drinks could be obtained in the lounge. Beer cost 6/- per pint. Whiskey was 6/- a nip. Cigarettes 1/4 for 50 - most of the good brands - & tobacco was 1/3 per 2oz packet. Matches still cost 1/- per box. So when we left the boat, most of us were well stocked with smokes at half price. I know of 2 officers who

landed with 10,000 cigarettes I was satisfied with 13
two lbs of tobacco and about 500 cigarettes.

There is nothing cheap anywhere in the decorations for this luxury
lines. Invitations were sent out to all corners of the
Empire for decorative timbers to be used and a list
of those selected is published as a finish.

The same ideas were carried out for the paintings &
decorations of the various rooms. Quite a number of
artists wished to withdraw their pictures because
they were not satisfied with the way placing. However,
the selection of positions depended on the Ships
Committee & not the artists ideas. Now, of course,
these pictures are in storage, or if not able to be
removed, are covered safely.

On our trip the Commodore said that he and the
Ships officers generally had been most satisfied with
the respect shown ^{by the troops} to the ship's furnishings which it
had been found necessary to leave exposed, ~~by the~~
~~troops~~ generally. On our trip we had nearly 6,000
troops but the damage done was assessed at only
£200. - rather a record, - considering.

Now, we return from the Lounge into the main hall.
I prepare to go on down to the Main Deck.

From the hall of entry we go down by the Grand
Staircase. This is about 15 feet wide and at the
landing, splits down each side. Over this landing
is the Queen Mary Standard, presented by Her Majesty
at the time of the launching. This is surmounted by
a ~~flag~~ plaque of the Queen done in a light wood.

Two sentries were posted on this flag at all times
day & night. ^{Soon after launching her maiden voyage, the}
Standard was ^{raised} ~~convenient~~ but such a disturbance was
that it came back ^{through the port.} ~~the~~

On the Main Deck are the more elaborate suites de luxe
in the "shopping centre" the same quality of goods is
shown as in the Main Hall. Here we find also the
Post Office, & Purser's Office, Beauty Parlours, Handluggage
and all those necessities for the 1st Class travellers.

The ~~bed rooms~~ cabins were usually done out in beautiful
brocades, but at present the beds are taken out and
berths built up so that these once two-berth cabins now
accommodate 8 to 12 berths. It doesn't leave much space to
move about, but as the men live upstairs all day, and

you can easily visualise the value of the floor covering alone. The centre is well filled with small tables and most beautiful chairs. I counted 30 complete lounge suites, and at modern prices I would say worth about £40 apiece. 84 tables, & more available if required. One table and its chairs, & a lounge would feel quite well furnished. The sides contained 4 large plate glass windows each. The covering for these windows was first a fine net. This in turn was covered by a gold net & over this again were drawn curtains of crash satin. I do not know the total value of the curtains but the heavy satin curtains cost £50 apiece. So you start with £800 for those curtains only. These windows would be about 15 feet high and about 45 feet to the dome. A magnificent chandeliers with two minor glories occupied the ceiling. The columns were made elliptic to fit in with the general stream-lined effect. The bottom of the lounge carried a most elaborate stage complete in every way. In each of the four corners of the four corners was a gorgeous group of statuary "Europa & the Bull. The Pygmies (mounted on a Ram.) & Western scene - a cowboy riding a wild & woolly bronch. Talk about action! I cannot remember the fourth. At the top end & in the centre of the two sides, carried a most gorgeous fire place.

so bad after all. The beautiful built in ward robes & well lighted dressing tables are now just a back-ground. The baths are very popular still, for either hot or cold water according to the area.

At sunset the port holes are closed and till sunrise the troops just had to take it & sweat. Stifus of the main suits remained "as was" but they were used only by O.C. Troops & the Senior Officers.

Towards the bow the troops had a wet & dry canteen. The beer was cheap - and - according to the Victorians - and nasty. However, while some swore off beer for the trip, others got through many casks per night. The NCO's mess was very close to the Sun Grill. Actually it was on the Main Deck, and was once the 2nd Class Smoke Room. On Sundays, this same room became the a' chapel, for two one-hour periods.

A B & C Decks in lesser glory.

On C Deck amidships, what had originally been the 1st Class Dining Room was now the Troops dining room that being the greatest floor space available. This great room had as a main wall decoration a map of the North Atlantic, and in peace time, a model of the Mary moved across the wide space of water, giving the ships position at all times. The room was air conditioned & was washed over after each meal. Three sittings catered for the men's meals.

I did hear the Chief Steward run off the quantities of food prepared each day but I did not make a note of it at the time, but I do remember one item.

Eggs, - 10,000 were cooked for breakfast. Preparations for breakfast commenced at 4 am.

The kitchens were another masterpiece of organisation and gave the Chief Steward quite a job to see that everything was done in time. There were no breakdowns on our run. Heat was provided by oil burning stoves & electric ovens. Sections of the kitchens dealt with the various items on the menu, & the stewards moved on from one section to another like a giant cafeteria.

The meals varied in the three sections. Troops NCO's & Officers. Here is a sample of the menu for Officers. The value of meals was Troops 1/4 NCO's 2/6 Officers 3/6 per day. It is only of course by the quantity that the price actually

paid, did cover the cost.

This is a sample of a lunch.

Cold Consomme

Poached Cod, Sauce Peril.

Macaroni Bolognese

Roast Fresh Pork, Savoury & Apple Sauce

Brussels Sprouts, Mashed Turnips

Baked Jacket & French Fried Potatoes.

To order from the Grill

Sirloin Steak, Smothered Onions.

Cold Buffet

Roast Beef, Leicester Brawn, Boiled Ham.

Roast Lamb.

Salads

Lettuce, Tomato, Waldorf.

French Dressing

Peach Conde

Ice cream & Wafers.

Biscuits, Cheese, Coffee

Not too bad for a lunch. I wish I could reproduce one of the regular dinners. You can imagine from the Luncheon Menu what the Dinner was like. On the return trip we carried prisoners. They were fed at a cost of 10 per day and grew fat on it. It was pitiful to go through their belongings as they came on board & saw the way they had hoarded their crusts in case the next meal did not materialise. From E deck down was water line & below it, & of course the port holes were never open. Special ventilation was arranged for here and in the hoppers. It was cooler, fresher down here than almost anywhere in the ship. Certainly A B & C decks were hot & ~~stagnant~~ stuffy. The main deck accommodated hundreds every night. Sleeping out on the Sports deck was forbidden & all smoking on the open decks. The glow of a cigarette can be seen at one mile and a lighted match at three miles. Smoking in the cabins was forbidden on account of the possibility of fires. A great deal of smoking of course did go on & several fires did start up through men going to sleep & dropping cigarettes from their mouths.

However no serious damage was done.

For the purpose of loading and unloading troops doors open on D Deck in four positions. On F deck & below all ^{sleeping} accommodation for troops was hammocks. These are most comfortable to sleep in once you acquire the art of getting into them. The hammocks were rolled each day and stacked thus allowing a complete freshening of the air in these quarters. In normal times, these spaces were used as cargo storage.

Two beautiful swimming pools were provided, each about 20 ft by 50 feet & 10 feet deep. Complete with diving board.

We had one casualty in the pool. A sentry was found missing from his post at the pool & was found later in the bottom of the pool. Appearance of the soldier seemed to indicate that he had fallen from the spring board & had landed on the side of the pool instead of in the water.

The Hospital area catered for about 200 cot cases at a time and Medical Aid Posts were established fore & aft on each deck. The regular ship's hospital ward was fitted with a complete operating theatre.

One day we obtained permission to visit the Engine Room. I am not an engineer so the description must be very sketchy.

The Queen Mary is run ^{by two twin} ~~by steam~~ sets of Turbines developing 50,000 horse power. Power is provided by 42 oil burner boilers. Steam is super heated before arriving at the Turbines. ~~Here they are geared~~ The Turbines in turn are geared down from 700 revolutions per minute to about 180 for normal running at about 23 knots. I think a "knot" is not that thing tied in a piece of string but a "sea mile" - the equivalent of 2000 yards on land. A "steam turbine" is composed of a circular steel chamber in which a smaller steel cylinder is ~~able to~~ of a slightly smaller diameter. Jets of steam are turned on to the outer shell of the inner cylinder, the surface of which is covered by small blades, running transversely across the surface. The steam beating against these blades causes the inner cylinder to revolve. Up to a point the speed of the revolutions increases with the

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pressure but after that point is reached the speed causes
a vacuum and the ratio is not preserved. The same is
caused by the maximum working of the propeller blades.
After this maximum speed is reached, the blades spin
in a frothy air space and no thrust is delivered for the
power supplied. Therefore in designing a propeller to suit
an engine ~~this point~~ the engine revolutions are
utilised as one of the main factors.

Like most marine engines, water is the big problem.
So the steam having completed its job in the turbine's
passes through condenser coils where the heat is utilised
to heat the water for the hot water systems, and gradually
the steam returns to the water it started from & is run
back into the spare tanks, to start on its cycle again.
As you may well imagine enormous amounts of water
are used for all purposes every day, and the problem
of carrying sufficient for the trip is a serious one.

I mentioned that we carried nearly 6,000 troops. At the time
the Italians & Germans were successful in N. Africa & drove us
back to Elamein, the two Queens & the Aquetania took
20,000 troops between them around the Cape to Port Said
in almost record time. Queen Mary on that occasion
took over 8,000 troops, & Queen Elizabeth about 9,000.
How to get back to our trip over the Engine room.

We left our turbines running nicely, & geared down to 180
revolutions ~~per~~ per minute. These revolutions were in turn passed
along 380 feet of propeller shaft to 4 propellers, each
of 19 feet diameter, & each weighing 20 tons. Yet so
nicely balanced were these tremendous pieces of work that
they could be turned over by hand. The propeller shafts
were about 30 inches in diameter, and the whole shaft
was in 8 sections. ^{At} The point at ^{where} the shaft passed
through the outer hull ~~was~~ protected by the shaft ran
through a port made of lignum wood. I believe this is
the most resistant to wear of all timbers. However, the
collar, built in sections like a barrel staves, was using the
original wood with which she was launched. There was a
very slight leak considering the hundreds of thousands of

it had then been in use. In December 1941 she ¹⁸ was left at Pineconalee and all her ships (army) personnel transferred to the Elizabeth while she went to Singapore for attention to her propeller shaft. Owing to Japan's entry into the War she did not go to Singapore but I believe she went back to New York and had the work done there. However or wherever it was done, it was not made a present with the great dock at Singapore, to the Japanese.

One of my great surprises when entering the "stoke-hold", was seeing the Officer of the Watch, standing in "whites" in front of his desk, manicuring his finger nails. Fact, you see the boilers being fired by oil burning jets was like ~~be~~ a gas jet being lit with a taper. and the finest work done on the job is the correct adjustment of air & oil to the burner.

Just above the jets are glass windows so that the state of the flame can be watched at all times. This is very seldom all boilers are in use at the same time but at the same time it does not take much time to generate steam. When tied up just sufficient steam is kept up for general purposes, such as the generation of electric power etc.

This is done by another set of 7 turbo-generators and the full power generated is 10,000 kilo-watts per hour.

In the stoke hole the air pressure is greater than normal so that air locks have to be provided to allow of acclimatization. Normally the pressure is ~~not~~ adjusted in a couple of minutes so you open the door at the other side & walk into the higher or lower pressure.

High on the wall is an indicator, ^{needle} showing the ^{lateral} tilt one way or the other of the ship as a whole. On account of her ^{height} ~~size~~ above water she makes a great wind obstacle and with the ~~wind in one direction for a long period~~ and a strong wind on the side rolls her over nicely.

~~puts the ship well over on her side.~~ You see, while she is 45 feet in the water she is say 180 feet above the water. This "tilt" is indicated by an arrow head moving over an arc of a circle. This tilt is then corrected by pumping fuel oil or ballast from one set of side tanks to the other. till the "tilt" or "list" is corrected.

~~High~~ On the wall is a needle hanging like a "pendulum bob". This shows the lateral tilt or "list" of the ~~boat~~ ship. While the buoy is 43 feet in the water she is also 185 feet above the water. This offers a great resistance to a side wind and if the wind is strong, a corresponding heavy list is developed. This list is indicated by the arrow head on the wall as it swings over, shows the angle of list.

This list is corrected by pumping oil fuel from the tanks on one side of the ship to the tanks on the other side, thus helping to stabilise the thrust of the wind, & keep the ship on ^{a more} an even keel.

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We did not ~~see~~ see the interior of the refrigerators but whereas the normal household job has a capacity of $4\frac{1}{2}$ cubic feet that of the store was 53,000 cubic feet. The space between the outer & inner walls of the hull were utilised for fuel & fresh water tanks, and at port of call, great barges were run out, loaded down to about 1 foot above water level, with oil & water & 6 inch pipe lines connected to the ships tanks. The pumps were then started & when one barge was emptied, another took its place. These barge-tanks carried 100,000 gallons of water at a time.

On all floors, were water tight bulk-heads built across the passage ways and at a signal from the bridge, alarm bells started to ring and then the doors were automatically closed. It is dangerous to get caught during the closure as the body would be crushed & no way of being released till the gear was reversed. In the case of a failure of the automatic gear, the doors could be closed by hand at each bulk-head.

By day only one generator would be in use. This they referred to as the Hotel Circuit. At meal times in pieces, if a grill was ordered, it would be half done in the galley and then an electric grill would be plugged in alongside the diner who could turn off the power at the state of the cooking he desired. We were not treated to these luxuries.

And so we jogged away from Sydney Harbour passing the Queen Elizabeth on our way and off we went getting colder all the time, till we turned up at Hobart, with snow on top of Mt. Wellington, and myself warned for duty as Duty Officer for the first 24 hours. It was late on Saturday afternoon when we got in and as soon as we tied up a number of the crew were granted shore leave and away they went. Next day a regular ferry service was organised and from 10 am till midnight the all except the duty staff were free to go ashore. On completion of my tour of duty on Sunday at 5 pm. I went ashore and roamed the town till 11.15, the only boat I could get back on. At about 8 pm

I picked up the Medical Officer, two others and we 20.
walked all directions in the dark. and found a boat in
with a fresh load of "scallops". I watched them & heard
quite a lot about their normal life. how they were caught.
and what a demand there was for them. but I did
not care for them much. They have a shell like a
Stewart Island Oyster but taste more like mussels. in
shape like a very large Stewart Island Oyster except they
are pinky coloured.

A party of our officers on going ashore, and after a
visit to the Post Office were picked up by the local
Commandant of the Garrison Troops, & were taken for a
run to the top of Mt. Wellington for a run. Here they
enjoyed a snow fight. And then back to afternoon
Tea, thence a visit to a couple of Clubs where they were
put up for Honorary Memberships during their stay.
On Monday I was able to join in the party. We were
Honorary Members of all the Clubs in Hobart.

Tuesday was being celebrated as King's Birthday so we
were invited to the local Race Club. Here we were met by all
the Members of the Committee, and were their guests for the
day. They gave us many good tips but unfortunately
the prices were short. That evening we went out to a big
night club. ^{The "Rest House" at Wrestlers Point.} Being King's Birthday we made it an Official
"Miss Night" and drank "the King". Later we met the Premier
of Tasmania & his party. Mr. Premier is a damned good dancer.
The party closed at 11 pm & we just caught the last boat home.
It had been a good day. I would have been better if I
hadn't made a mistake on the last race.

At the Totalisator, one window was dealing with the
Mainland races, and all other windows on the local.
As time was short when I got the tip I hurried over to
look out a 10/- ticket for luck. All windows seemed to
have a big queue bar one so I made for that. Later when
I went to collect. I found I had put my money on a hairy
goal on the mainland while the local of the same number
~~at the local~~ came in at 7 to 1. My bad luck ^{cost} me a
loss of 30/- on the day.

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On Wednesday afternoon we went out to see a new Pontoon Bridge over the Derwent River. This trip was on a great launch provided by the Premier. Afternoon tea was provided on board.

The bridge was about a quarter mile long and was supported on great concrete boats or pontoons, each 18 feet deep. Each about 30 by 60 feet top measurement. There were great arguments as to the possibility of this type of bridge. If I remember rightly the cost of the normal span bridge was too great for the little State. The builder was quite a young man and to prove his case, went across & watched the progress of a similar type of bridge being built in Canada. This was improved by an invention of his own on the connecting links between the pontoons. The river runs very fast in the snow-thaw season and there appeared to be some doubt as to how the bridge will stand up to the strain. It was to be completed by December 1943 but manpower troubles have delayed its completion. It turned out showery on our trip so we had to spend quite a lot of our trip down in the cabin & missed the general scenery. We ended our evening at the Rest Club.

Thursday we paid a visit to Tattersalls, were shown the routine of a draw of the famous "sweep". During the following week our C.O. Troops drew the winning number but it did not go to the Queen Mary crowd.

From then till we left we spent all our time on our own interests. We returned the hospitality we had shared on one night, & on another night the Ships Officers & ourselves threw a big night to return the compliment to the hospitable people of Hobart. It went very well, but a late boat had to be run to bring the last of the Officers back to the ship. It was a great disappointment that we could not entertain the guests on the ship. Of course the Premier & Official party were so treated, but that was only a small section of what we would have liked.

The hotels were open till 10pm. and the Lounges were open till 11pm. but one saw little drunkenness even with the greater strength of the beer - good Cascade Beer - and the greater time to do it in.

The wharves at Hobart are right at the foot of the town and the ~~water~~ depth is 60 feet at the edge of the wharf. deep enough to take the Queen's Quay but the wharf was not long enough so we remained out in the stream. The Railway gauge is only 3 feet 6 inches and the passenger train for Launceston, the long trip, has an engine designed like the ~~cat~~ Spirit of Progress. Out for a walk one night I heard a terribly noisy train coming down the track, whistling every minute or so. I started to hurry to see this express dashing through. I stopped and laughed when I saw the great fuss this little train was kicking up to do its 15 miles per hour. Just like the miniature train at Luna Park.

On another occasion I went out to the Military Camp at Brighton. when signals were installed & struck a guest night. The weather had been reasonably good. and though there was snow on the Mount. the days were reasonably warm.

I went out & had a look at the Smelting Works, & the Cascade Brewery but was not able to have a look over either of them. An old prison building is now used as a Convent. I didn't get down to Pi Arthur, the old convict settlement as it was outside the tourist season & would have cost about £2 a head to hire a car for the trip. May see it if we ever go that way again.

We were made honorary members of all the Clubs in Hobart. I did not make much use of any of them.

On the following Wednesday as it was getting to the end of the trip. we made a collection & purchased a rather nice silver salver, had our names engraved on it, and made a present to Major Layton who had looked after us so well.

Then on Friday morning we turned around and headed back north once more & arrived Saturday morning, around lunch time. Queen Elizabeth passed out of the heads fully loaded as we came up to it. She moved down the Coast & waited.

At about 2:30pm the first ferry load of troops arrived. ^{23.}
my own crowd arrived at 4:30am on Sunday morning.
about every 3/4 hours another ferry load arrived. They
came in all states of sobriety, trainers. • otherwise. A few
came under escort, others were carried on. but one or
all wondered where they were getting to when they found
themselves travelling about 2 a mile of passages to get to
their quarters, & then again to get "on top" to see "what the
boat was like". My own troops started to arrive at
4:30. and at that, although "rveille" would be at
6:30. most of them wanted to do a little exploration
Going down to breakfast at 8 am. I met chap. who
had lost their way & had been since their arrival
trying to see all there was to see, & were then lost. They
had had no breakfast. & no sleep.

It took a couple of days to settle down & then what training
could be done was commenced. Boat drills were to be
held every day. & troops got used to the alarm bells. - to
go up if for boat drill. - to go down if an air attack or
surface raider. In the case of having to take to the
boats; the troops were formed on the promenade deck and
moved up in parties of 30's till the boats were filled & away.
Some of the ship's crews would go with each boat. and we
"Voyage" Officers. were responsible that no stampedes took place
took charge of the stairways to the boat deck. & - had the
pleasure of knowing that we would be left ^{till} when the
last of the troops had been cleared. & would have had the
pleasure of relying on our life belts. seeing that the boats were
not sufficient to take all the troops. not even including all
rafts.

For alarms against surface raiders or air attack the
anti-aircraft stations were manned and all troops were
herded below, leaving the passage ways clear. Then it
would be assumed that the ship had been damaged &
it was necessary to take to the boats. Then all troops would
have to be moved up again.

~~to~~ However to go back to our embarkation. By 6:30am
we had the last of the troops on board and finished our
filling up with fresh water & fuel. With the approach of full tide

the screws began to turn two ahead on one side & ²⁴
two astern on the other. This had the result of
swinging the stern around till we were facing away to
the heads & the open water. While this was being done
the HM AS Australia slipped out to take post ahead as
escort. Then up came the anchor and to the cheers of the
thousands lining the shores & in the small boats &
launches the Queen Mary really started to throob as she
picked up her way & we were away. It was a great moment
for the thousands on board, lined up everywhere they could
hang on to get a final look at Sydney Harbour.
For the whole time we had been tied up, & particularly
during the loading of the troops ~~the~~ a patrol was kept
up by the auxiliary naval launches. This had the double
purpose of preventing any outsiders getting to the ship;
abscenders from the ship; and to pick up any "bottle letters" &
letters posted in tins & thrown ~~ab~~ overboard.
As soon as the Queen Mary began to dip her head
to the rollers of the open the cooler weather & the first
qualms of sickness began to sift the troops down on to the
decks & below again. So my knowledge we had our first
man sick half an hour after we actually started to move
~~one man was sick~~ - probably the after effects of too much
beer on the train - but he got sick as soon as the movement
started. At about 4.30 pm we picked up the Elizabeth
and the next afternoon we were joined by the Aquetania.
The order of march varied from day to day, but usually
the Aquetania remained between her two big sisters with
the Australia about 10 miles ahead. with her big
guns cocked away in the air to get extreme range. So we
toddled away down to cold regions & then on Friday we
found ourselves approaching land again & of. This was
Fremantle. No troops were allowed ashore, but a number of
troops added to our family. We spent five days here
as all our convoy had to fill up with fuel, water &
green vegetables. This was a large order as between up we
carried about 17,000 or 18,000 troops. They take some
feeding and greens do not keep well unless they are put
straight into coolers.

We left Fremantle again and very soon after the weather began to warm. Before & after Fremantle I saw my first whales. I suspected at first that dolphins ^{porpoises} were tickling me but there was no mistaking the "spout" when they "blew". They were not very close.

We soon got used to seeing flying fish at all times of the day & gradually sharks began to appear & a craze for sun-baking. This is a ~~thing~~ pastime that should be indulged gradually. The speed we travelled out produced a cool to cold breeze except when it was with us, and one doesn't notice the burn of the sun and wind combined till the damage is done, & then there is a good possibility of a very painful period of cramp, & the possibility of illness.

How did we fill in the time?

Here is the daily program. For meals, we had 3 sittings half an hour apart, so meal times meant 1 1/2 hours for the whole issue. The first sitting were at drill, by the time the third were doing their breakfast.

Reveille	0630.
Cabin Inspection	0645.
Mess Orderlies	0645.
Sick Parade.	0645.
Breakfast	0700. 0745. 0830.
Training	0800 - 1230.
Lectures }	
C.O. Orderly Rm	1200.
Ships Inspection	1030.
Mess Orderlies	1100.
Lunch	1130 - 1300.
Outdoor Training }	1245. - 1600.
- Lectures }	
Duty Mounting	1615.
Mess Orderlies	1630
Mess Parade	1645 - 1815.
First Post.	2130
Last Post.	2145.
Lights Out.	2200.

Between Reveille & first parade beds were stripped & made, gear stacked, bathrooms cleaned up, mirrors cleaned, all clothing out of sight. ~~Hold~~ I mentioned that we occupied fully equipped cabins with mirrors, dressing tables, fans, & private bathrooms to each cabin with built in ward-robies. They all had to be kept clean & comfortable ^{tidy}.

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Group COs inspected the cabins at 0930 and the Ship's Staff, with CO troops, a whole retinue of Officers, made a grand tour at 1000 hrs.

Cabin doors were always left open so that in case of an accident, the ship's frame buckling the doors would not jam & lock the occupants in. Doors could be left "on the hook" to save banging as the ship rolled, but in the warmer climes doors were kept wide open to gain all the air possible.

Around 11 am (1100 hrs) we had an "alarm" either air attack or submarine, in which case we took to the boats. For "raider" or air attack, all troops retired to the cabins and remained there till further orders. All portholes were closed to prevent pieces of shrapnel, or incendiary shell, or, if the boat was sinking, to prevent water rushing in. Occasionally all "bulk-heads" were closed. This had the effect of dividing the ship into a number of watertight compartments on all floors, & kept her that much more buoyant. For that reason, the troops were taught to find all ladders, staircases which led up-wards. Then again, if damage occurred in the engine room, it is possible that all lights might fail, although there was a supplementary battery circuit for night lights at all escape ladders. One enterprising young officer ordered his troops to find their way up blindfold. It was all good training.

Boat drill always included wearing & testing of fitting of life belts. This was most important, as the correct thing is to jump into the water, not dive. If one was not careful about tying the belt down, when the water was hit, the portion of the belt on the chest was liable to fly up under the chin and either deliver a knockout blow on the point of the chin, or even to break the neck. Therefore, when you jump, use both hands to keep the front piece down on the chest.

However, here are the orders for both alarms.

Emergency Boat Stations
Signal: 7 short, 1 long blast on whistle. Continuous ringing of bells. 27.
All guns, surface & anti aircraft to be manned.

Troops with life belt, respirator, steel helmet parade on promenade deck.

Hospital staff to standby in Hospital & prepare to evacuate sick.

In real emergency, prisoners will be released in custody.

Ships boats would then be lowered by ship staff only to level of boat deck. and the troops marched up from the promenade deck in batches of 50. till the boats were filled. They would then be lowered.

The Fleming boats - not being so strongly built, would be lowered to the water, and the troops then go down the rope ladders.

Once the ~~boat~~ boats were clear of the ship, the rafts would then be lowered to the water. These are intended to support men in the water only, and not to carry troops on them. 32 men can be supported in this way. When these were all away, the remainder of the troops would have to rely on their life belts for support.

These are good for 36 hours.

Emergency Action Stations

Signals Intermittent Signals on the alarm gongs, to be taken up by the Officers & NCO's on whistles.

All troops without awaiting further orders will obtain life belts & steel helmets, & proceed below. Main Deck

All gun & anti-aircraft positions will be manned.

Passageways must be kept clear.

This was usually followed if for time allowed by Emergency Boat Stations, on which the troops moved quickly up to their positions on the Promenade deck.

One or other of these drills were carried out each day to make the troops efficient.

There was always the danger of fire below decks so the troops were forbidden to smoke in their cabins. And of course they were not permitted to smoke on the open deck after dark. There was always some smoking of course but we only had two small fires with our lot.

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A very efficient sprinkler system was established all over the ship and a case is quoted of a lady - in peace time - accidentally breaking the valve while taking out a dress to change into. Owing to her continued delay one of her friends went up to see what was wrong, found the lady with her finger on the sprinkler trying to stop the flow, & unable to call her stewards. She did not return to the dining room that night, & had to get her other things dried out before she could turn out next day.

Efficient fire patrol, hoses, & chemical extinguishers looked after the rest of the show, and there was plenty of salt water available.

All alarm bells could be rung from the bridge, and a 600 line switchboard attended to all other requirements.

Watertight doors could be operated as a whole from the bridge, or individually on the spot.

At "All Clear", normal duties were resumed by all troops.

Good swimming baths were situated on F. deck but when the ship had a good roll on, the baths were emptied. The water was changed three times a day to keep it clean.

At meal times, the troops fell in on their own parade grounds & were marched down. They then returned as soon as they had fed. fed. An air conditioning system kept the big dining room fresh all the time, and at night, when all had been cleared below this was switched to the lounge.

~~On arrival at Fremantle~~

The trip from Fremantle to ~~Suncoast~~ Suncoast took 8 days, and at least once each day the convoy did some "ship's drill". This consisted of co-ordinated movement between the ships themselves as would be required if they found themselves under fire from either other ships or from the air. For all their size, these ships answered their helm very smartly.

Trincomalee is north east of Colombo on the island of Ceylon, and has one of the deepest and safest harbours in the world. It is the only harbour in Ceylon where these great liners can rest in safety. The whole East Indies fleet could moor here. Trinco, as the natives call it, is a lovely place, particularly in the winter season. Population is about 30,000, and beyond the hills protecting the anchorage are rich tobacco and rice plantations.

A jungle road, 120 miles long, 12 feet wide, and bitumen all the way, takes one to Kandy, the ancient capital 6000 feet up. Here is the centre of Buddhism - the celebrated Temple of the Tooth. This relic of Gautama Buddha receives world wide reverence from its devotees, who come from all over the globe to see the annual procession when the Relic is taken in state through the streets of this gorgeously pretty town. Here and there along the jungle road to Kandy lie the tea & rubber plantations. The rubber trees are planted in rows 10 feet apart and grow to about 50 feet high, with a diameter of 18 inches. The white latex or sap runs from a cut made in spiral form into a little cup fixed to receive it. The natives empty these into buckets and in the processing sheds may be seen the finished article drying in sheets like huge ribbons of tape. This is the crude rubber, cleaned and ready for the manufacturers.

Further on are the paddy fields (rice), the mud of which is churned up by buffaloes dragging a primitive harrow, with a native youngster urging them on as his forefathers had done hundreds of years before.

The jungle growths run right down to the harbour, except where it had been cleared for the naval buildings and aerodrome.

I did not see the approach on our first run. We were in and anchored when I awoke. The approach was up a long winding & fairly wide harbour estuary, with good hills on both sides, well guarded. At the anchorage a strong wire net boom is held across the entrance, just leaving a very narrow gap for small craft to pass through. Two launches hold the ends of the boom & move ~~id~~ back the ends when larger boats have to use the opening. There is a large naval establishment on the shore at the end of the boom, and away at the head of one of the branches, is an up-to-date aerodrome.

On this trip the Australia, Aquetania, & Queen 30.
Moary all parked inside the boom and Queen
Elizabeth moored outside. On my second
trip, when we only had the Cruisers & the two
Queens, we all parked inside. We were not allowed
ashore on the outward trip. Great barges brought out
our fuel & water and also a load of green vegetables.
I don't know where they got them as I didn't see any
being grown, when I did get ashore.

The natives are a small race, small boned & generally
~~slim~~ ^{slim built} coal black & with straight hair. Not bad
looking, & seem to take to sailing & marine engines very
well. They sail a narrow, boat with an outrigger,
and a great triangular sail. The hull is cut out of a
log, not built up as we build a boat. They also use
a canoe of the same type with the paddles about 6 feet
long with a flat board nailed on the end. I saw a
party going home apparently after a market day, using
16 of these paddles. The local transport consisted of
motor cars, trucks, charabancs, bicycles, rickshaws,
and bullock waggons. These were covered type waggons
on two wheels. The shafts were long and across the front
end was a bar like the top of a yoke. This bar rested
just in front of the hump of the bullock. No belly band
was used, the weight of the shafts being sufficient to hold
it down. These animals are only about 3 ft high. It usually
had a number of small brass bells decorating his
harness, & a larger one hanging at his throat.

Rickshaw runners will go all day at a trot & walk
and earn about 2 rupees. Australian equivalent at
present is 2/- to 1 rupee though normally it is worth
about 1/4 English. The village was really quite a
decent ~~small~~ ^{small} town. I called at two of the hotels. They
do not have a bar but several tables cafe type and your
drinks are brought to you. We had bacon & eggs, the only
thing they had apparently. - cost 3/- & a bottle of local
"English" beer cost 2/6. The shops were mostly open to the
street & shattered to close them. Some of the better shops had
windows. Only a few could speak English. As visitors
we were haunted by children, asking for pennies, and
older people just following to see what we were going to
buy. I know I caused a great deal of interest in trying to

buy some silk materiel or good dress materiel 31
& some nighties. All they could produce were very
gaudy & poor quality pyjamas. which I didn't buy.
Later I found a good shop with all sort of souveners
and - main thing - a man who spoke good english.
Also - English style - he had fixed prices and would not
sell at less. I bought several things at this shop.
on both my visits. I believe a little further on there
was a good shop where silk goods could be bought.
The proprietor was also a good sport. One of the
officers considered that the price of a silk shirt at
16/- was excessive. so the proprietor offered to toss for
20/- or ~~nothing~~ a gift. The officer lost the toss & had to
pay 20/- for his shirt. I picked up a good kimono
and I don't think I paid too much. I also picked
up some Indian silver & brass goods. A bit of
dress materiel has already seen two years wear & is still
doing well. My boy then took me for a trip around
the town and eventually hinted that he was thirsty
& would I like a drink of cocoanut milk. He left
me at the end of a lane while he went down to a
native saloon & brought back a drink in a
palm leaf. I didn't care much for it. but he
finished it off in quick time. He also offered to climb
a tree & bring me down some cocoanuts. He then took
me around to a Mission school. This was a Roman
Catholic School & Church. Around the walls were
graves of past residents. Some of the inscriptions were
now faded out but I noted two of 1870 & 1813. I don't
know when the mission was first set up. The next time
I was there I was offered snake skins & even a couple of
monkeys & tortoises. One tortoise was brought on board
& landed home alright but had disappeared after two
days in the garden.

During the period 1914-18 this port was ^{developed} established for
naval repairs but in the depression years the Naval
Establishment was closed down & left in the care of a
caretaker only. Somewhere about 1933 he was very
surprised one morning to find a japanese warship in
the fairway and apparently soundings being taken. This went
on for a few days with the crew swarming all around.

Apparently official notice was taken of the incident so not long after the area was again occupied and new armament installed. In December 1941 Japan came into the war and against us instead of with us. In 1942 a Jap air raid was carried out against Trines but he got a nasty shock when he found the place heavily armed & his planes were reduced by two thirds of the raiding force.

There is a permanent smell about Trincomalee - just like the scent of burning leaves. We spent two or three days here & then started off again for the final stretch. This was when I found out what tropical rain was. Without any warning we just got drenched for about 15 minutes and just as suddenly the rain stopped and the sun came out again for the most gorgeous sunset we had for the trip. It was too beautiful to try to describe. I didn't have much time to enjoy it as we were all chased indoors as it was sunset. So I had a bath & went down for my usual pre-dinner pot.

Very wisely no formal dress was demanded for meals, the nearest being collar, tie ^{and} ~~coat~~ ^{and} drill jacket for dinner. Shorts were permitted. This was a definite blessing. We took approximately 7 days on the run to Aden & then slipped into the Red Sea. After that long run we were sorry to see our escort leave us approaching Aden. We did not get going, but the "Australia" left us and an hour later we were joined by a destroyer for the rest of the trip. This took us two days. The Queen Mary put on a bit of a sprint & we did that part of the run at a good speed while the others slowed down. Owing to almost daily air raids, it was not healthy to remain over night at the head of the gulf (Port Tewfik or Suez) - nor to have the three large boats there at the same time. So towards sunset, the anchor was lifted again and the ship retired for a "walk-about" down the Red Sea, returning at dawn next day to carry on. ~~The Red Sea is a narrow~~ For the last four or five days the troops wore boots again for a few hours while on deck. Rubber shoes had been issued for the trip. & were still worn below but on deck the boots were again worn to break the feet in once more.

• Before entering the Red Sea from the South the ship passes through the Gulf of Aden and then through the ~~Gulf of Aden~~ narrow straits of Bab-el-Mandeb which connects the Gulf

with the Red Sea - The translation is "Gate of Tears" which gives one an indication of its unpleasantness. The Red Sea is a narrow inland sea about 1200 miles long and varies from 120 to 250 miles in width. It separates the coast of Arabia from those of Abyssinia, Sudan, & Egypt. The name originates from the red colour of its desert shores and its landlocked situation is the cause of intense heat. Structurally it is part of a great rift valley system which is one of the most marked features of the earth's crust.

Its barren desert coasts provide few good harbours, but the principal ones in the south are Massawa and Kalmaran. Massawa is in Italian Eritrea but is now in British hands. To the north of Massawa and about half way up the Red Sea is ~~the~~ Port Sudan, developed by the British in recent years. The town is connected by railway with the interior of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and thence with Egypt. To the extreme north the Red Sea tapers off into two narrow inlets - the gulfs of Atkaba & Suez.

At the head of the Gulf of Suez is the town of Port Tewfik and 8 miles distant the town of Suez itself. Port Tewfik is a well planned, clean, pleasant town in strong contrast to most of the native towns in Egypt. It was built mainly to provide residences for Suez Canal pilots and officials, and its neat, clean, tree-lined streets and fine homes are a pleasant first sight of Egypt.

On the last night of the run, we were having an impromptu concert & dance on the ~~main~~^{promenade} deck, and at about 9.30 pm we started on that Maori Song - "Now is the Hour". It was sung twice and then, just as though the reality had just hit them, that happy crowd just faded out. I always remember that when I hear that song. Of course, another point was that there was to be a 4 am reveille, and the ship to be cleaned up for departure at 8 am, and a general parade at 6 am. We were all packed & ready, all lined up on the boat deck & Promenade, at 6 o'clock but the disembarkation staff did not arrive till 9 am, and then the senior officer - a putty little major complete with a silky little toothbrush moustache, and a fly whisk of horsehair mounted on a nice wavy hand handle, and with a nice soft ladylike voice, told us as the first item of the landing news. "You voyage only officers will not be allowed to land. You will return by the

same boat? Ye Gods + Little Whales. I did not take any further interest in the landing arrangements. My trunk was all set to go off with the troops + I had the devil's own job to get it out again + back to my cabin.

We were not allowed off with the troops, and even they did not go as a complete group but were broken up into separate sections with only their own section Officers in control. The first sections got away from the boat at about 10 am. We were anchored about 8 miles out in the drink, and a regular ferry system was landing the troops as soon as they could be got on board. Those troops landed till about 2 pm all went straight on by train to the next staging camp ^{at Khairata, half way} ~~later than that~~ along the Canal. From there the rail goes on across the canal through the desert on the other side away to Gaza & thereabouts. - the home of the ~~1st~~ 2nd A.I.F. when it was at home. The later arrivals were marched about 6 miles off to a camp away from the town. The Camp Commandant there was said to have an exceptional flow of language & people had forgotten how often he had resigned his post. At about 6 pm, he would receive a call to say that approximately 800 troops would be arriving at his camp in about two hours. & would require tea. As all had been cleared away by then that meant cooks to be roused out & meals prepared. As likely as not he would then receive 1200 troops in half an hour or 200 in 4 hours. Having said his say to the "powers that be", he would then stir things so well that a meal of sorts turned up for the troops - who were just as tired + fed up as he was.

However as there was nothing we could do about things any further we just had to sit about + wait till our own turn came to move. Our troops moved at different times from 11 am to 3.30 pm. I was glad to see the last of them off at the end. All this time, we had been taking on oil, water, + other necessary items. The colours ashore varied with the hour of the day from the hard red of iron oxide to all the most beautiful pastel shades of pink + blue towards evening. Sticking out of the water were the upper works of ships gone to rest after a bomb's visit

One of the largest was the "Georgic" White Star Lines 28,000 tons busily engaged taking on refugees. The usual thing is for these ships to leave their anchorage before sunset and go for a walkabout all night, returning next morning to carry on the good work. For some reason, the Georgic on this night did not go out but remained there. That night the bombers came over, swept out over the anchorage, dropped flares to light up the harbour, caught side of the Georgic and then 36 of them dived on her. They set her on fire, and the crew managed to get her beached, & then flooded her. This saved quite a lot of her. This had happened a fortnight before we arrived. On our next trip - end of November 1941, the ship had been re-floated, and had moved around the Harbour under her own steam. She was to be taken back to England for a refit.

We didn't take that risk. We went for a "walk about" and ~~came~~ came back next day. At dawn recommenced our fuelling etc. Early in the morning the mine anti-mine patrol came swishing down the Canal & out over the anchorage. This was an aeroplane with as big a circular electromagnet as the wings would carry. The plane flew fairly low over the water and acted as though a steel ship had passed along. This would explode any magnetic mines laid overnight. This action was repeated probably 3 or 4 times to make sure of the sweeping. The system of exploding mines was varied as one was found out & countered, and the latest was the "acoustic". The action of the propellers set up sound waves through the water, & when the strength of the sound waves became strong enough, the mine was exploded. This was countered by sending out sound waves by electrical action well in advance of the ship, so the mines were exploded before the ship got to them. This was only one of the methods use for protection.

A balloon barrage was anchored right along the Canal. and if a plane hit one of those steel ropes, it would most likely have a wing stripped off, if nothing worse. Quite a number of ships had balloons attached fore & aft while at anchor. & Queen Mary also had kites to be flown, if sufficient wind was available. Loose wires hung from the steel cord, to tangle in the propeller blades.

Next morning we were back at the same posse and found out we were going to take home a crowd of prisoners. Italian & German. We only had about 200 or 1,000 mixed. The troops were easy enough but some of the German Officers were still a bit sou. & arrogant. They did not start to come on till about 2pm. At about 11am the C.O. Ship. decided we would be allowed ashore for a few hours, subject to return of course, by 4pm. We agreed readily enough and at noon we got away on a launch. We decided first to try to change some money into piastres but by the time we found the local troops paymaster we found he had gone for the week-end so I at any rate fell back on the local "money-changers" Australian currency was not so valuable as English by 25% - exchange value - and exchange rates varied from the Army 98 piastres to the pound £1 - Australian right down to one bank's offer of 48. However, I got 92 and was satisfied. ~~At~~ a small group who went straight into Suez, accepted 70 from the Taxi Driver & most of them got 80's at the local hotel. and that was after paying 6/- for a bottle of beer & some sandwiches.

The East is the home of the magician, the beggar, & the art of bargaining. The opening price to the tourist is usually about 500% more than the article is worth, & if there is not much trade about, the tourist may be lucky enough to bring it down to 50% over its normal price. I didn't I know. One example will suffice. A travelling salesman wanted to sell me a beautifully damascened pendant. flat metal - black enamel & brass. - but good to look at. Opening price 80 piastres, then 70. 60. 50. and with me hanging out for 20. There was no sale. I asked a Red Cross representative after what was its actual local value. & was told that if I had given more than 5. I was being severely robbed. So there you are.

He also produced beautiful silver feet work armlets & hair decorations. I didn't bite except into my sandwiches. Then came the juggler. He started off with the three balls & so on to 6 balls & they in turn disappeared back to three & no one saw them go. Then he produced an egg. - waved his hand over it, & there was a live chicken. again & there were

two chickens, again and there were three, again & there were none. All this time we were sitting on a balcony outside ~~the~~ a hotel, sharing an expensive bottle of beer. What may have come next I don't know as the proprietor came out & chased him away. From there I went round to the Cable Coy Office & then had a prowl around looking for souvenirs. I found one little tourist shop & got a couple of articles but could not argue for long as I had no time to waste. Just got back in time to share a taxi back to Port Tewfik again. The Gypos are noisy bargainers & one would think there was an enormous row in progress to hear them at it. The local policeman seems to have enormous power & uses his riding whip very freely. Everything else appears to be free & easy. A native feels sleepy so he lays on the pavement or on the grass border & just drops off to sleep. No bother, everyone walks around him, or tups over him, kicks him awake, & then he moves out of the way. The houses appear to be made of mud brick straight sides & front flat roof and the shops are all open to the street. I only saw a few of the main streets, well made, but europeanised. I believe the native quarters proper are not so good.

Cairo was 98 miles away but I didn't get there. There is a railway alongside the canal. Port Said is at the Mediterranean end of the Canal & Suez at the Red Sea End and Port Tewfik acts as the Port for Suez. The canal enters the Red Sea at Suez. During the last war the Aussies had a habit of engaging the boys with their boxes of sweets for sale like the "ice cream & chocolates" boys at our picture shows. Having engaged their attention, the ~~knew~~ knee would be lifted smartly against the box, scattering the contents. The boys got wise later & put a wire netting guard over their goods. This system is followed in most of the shop windows but not now on account of those awful Australians.

Boiled eggs were still "2 for a half" & oranges were still "Very Nice. Very sweet. Very Clean". I passed the lemonade man with his counter & drinks on the back of a small donkey. I was tempted to try the drink but decided against it. I am afraid that had I not been so well logged up, I certainly would have had some experience

There was a very nice mohammedan temple close to where we changed our money & I would have liked to have inspected it but there was no time. One has to remove ones boots on entering these temples, but I believe there is also a compromise by which a felt bag is put on over the boots. However, we got back to the end of the canal again & waited for the rest of the gang. Here again we met the salesman, with all sorts of souvenirs, mostly cigarette and card cases this time - worked leather. The prices were too good, so there were no sales.

The arrangement had been that we were to find our own means of transport back & be back by 4 pm.

We tried to get one of the tugs first but there was nothing doing so we had to compromise on a native launch for the 8 mile trip. There were 30 of us packed into a launch whose normal capacity would be about 12, and it cost us 2/6 a head. Some one had not paid up & he refused to make a start. What with ~~the~~ military policemen on the wharf ordering the boatman off, and our ordering him to start, & his refusing, things were pretty fair for a row, and he was threatened with a dip in the briny if he didn't start. He nearly got it too & would have been left there. He jumped out on to the wharf but when someone started to try the motor, he soon jumped on again. However, when he found it not worth trying further, he actually made a start. I didn't like that trip at all. We were too overcrowded for comfort, & the distance was too great for a swim, when you couldn't swim. We only had 6 inches free board and when anyone changed position the boat rocked too easily. However we got there safely and were only about half an hour late. Our prisoners were nearly all on board and were massed on the promenade deck. They all had to be searched for weapons and anything that they should not have - either in their packs or on their person. Of course some of them had come through up to 8 person camps & a search at each one. It seemed ridiculous having to take away well rounded table knives etc. but orders

given that such was to be done. Against that safety razors were allowed. Some of the poor devils were hoarding dry scraps of bread and put up an argument when they were deprived of them. They got a surprise Treckon when they eventually found their way to the dining room & found a 4oz loaf of fresh white bread & a large bowl of soup & meat awaiting them. They filled out well on that trip home.

There were a number of artists amongst the crowd & one "Iti" had a carving of the crucifixion he was doing. His only tool was a horse-shoe nail. The work was being done in a soft limestone, I think from Palestine. I have a small pair of boots carved from the same lime stone.

The search went on till all had been inspected. No arms ammunition or knives, & no machine guns were found. so the prisoners were marched down to their quarters. They were very comfortably placed. but you should have seen the conglomeration of gear & belongings they brought. Very few had regular packs, so that most of their gear had to be wrapped in a blanket. It was easy enough to spill it on the deck, but it was a different job for the poor crows to repack it & make way for the next to be searched.

One of the great jokes was that they were being ~~good~~ guarded by troops using Italian rifle & bayonets.

They were brought up each morning from 7.30 to 11.30 and again from 2 to 4. Guards were posted at all gangways. while they were free. and outside the barriers when they were closed down. They were very well disciplined & kept well in hand by their own NCOs. & they gave us a good lesson in drill - much better than our own troops put up. They didnt obey their guards as they did their own NCOs. They had quite an orgy of hot baths till they caught up with them again. The "Iti" & "Iti" (as the Italians were called, were well behaved. but a cabin of Germans were so certain that they were to be picked up en-route that they used to open their porthole at night so that the light could shine out & give the boats position away. The most obstructive was moved to the "clink" and the others moved to an inner cabin with no outward portholes.

Their guard was composed of troops who were being sent home on compassionate grounds etc. They prisoners took great interest in their first view of their new prison country when they saw Fremantle but couldn't quite understand why it would be another week before they would be disembarked. I came across one prisoner drawing a map of Australia so I showed him Fremantle & Sydney, and told him the time required to do the trip. They were very interested in following such portions of the coast as they saw from time to time. & I think were glad to get to Sydney & to know that they were now out of the possibility of being sunk on the way.

On the way down we travelled alone, and called at the same ports, but as we were now more or less free, we were allowed to land at Trincomallee & Fremantle.

I know my main interest at Fremantle was a first class meat dinner & a bottle of Australian Beer - and it was Sunday. In 1919 when I was coming through Fremantle & Perth, I had just sent a wire from the G.P.O. and outside

I was picked up by a car & taken for a wonderful run around & up through King's Park - just being built.

This time, I found from a passing soldier, where I could get my good dinner & my good beer. Having had both, I paused outside the hotel to find my way to King's Park once more. Once again my luck was in and I had a car run up to the Park & then out into the country for a 50 mile run, & then back to the hotel for tea before returning to the ship. It was good believe me.

The return trip from Sydney to Melbourne didn't take long and my little souvenirs were well received.

So ended my little luxury trip on the Queen Mary.