

JOURNEY TO VALSURA 1942 - 1946



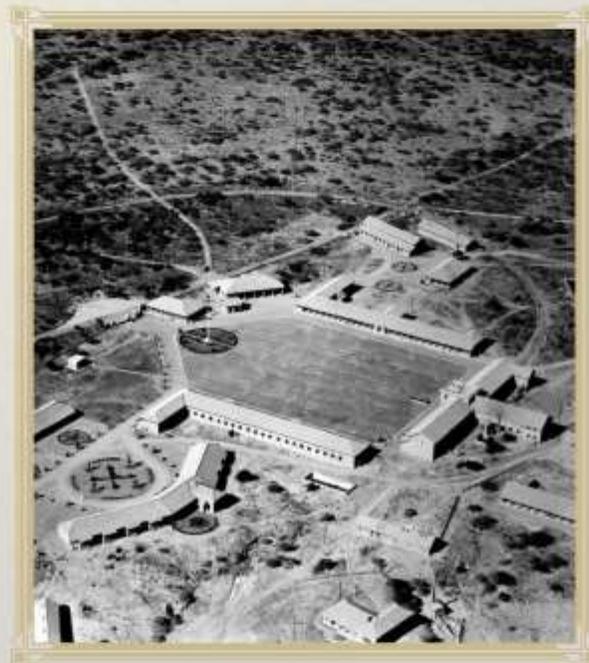
Extracts from the diary of the late
Commander MFB Ward Royal Navy (1901 - 1978)
The First Commanding Officer of I.N.S. VALSURA 1942 - 1946

Edited by his son, Colonel Robert Ward
to mark the occasion of his visit to I.N.S. VALSURA
on 25th October 2012



*The front and back covers are a facsimile of the diary used by Commander MFB Ward from 1942 - 1943.
The photographs have been taken from his photo album collection of the time he spent at Valsura.*

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FOREWORD

My father often talked about India warmly, particularly his time as the First Commanding Officer of I.N.S. VALSURA from his arrival in March 1942 until 1946. He had narrowly avoided death on 14th September 1939 when H.M.S. ROYAL OAK was sunk in Scapa Flow just after the start of World War II. This was the Royal Navy's biggest ever loss of life from a single ship. He suffered from smoke and oil inhalation to his lungs and via his stomach and took some time to recover.

In the Spring of 1942, he was sent to India to find, build and set up the Royal Naval Indian Torpedo School somewhere on the North West Coast of India. Initially, working out of Mumbai (then called Bombay) with frequent visits to Delhi to secure the necessary permissions. The story starts in March 1942 with his 3 week journey to India via South Africa, Cairo and Baghdad.

The next step was to found a temporary school in Mumbai before approval was forthcoming for the move to the present site in Nawanagar (now known as Jamnagar). This was achieved with much help from, amongst others, His Highness, the then Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar who personally took a great deal of interest in the building and subsequent development of the school. In the process Jam Sahib gave much of his own real estate including some of his excellent shooting grounds.



The move to the present site in Jamnagar was achieved with much help, amongst others, from His Highness, the then Maharaja Jam Sahib of Nawanagar.

My father was very proud of his achievements in establishing I.N.S VALSURA and setting standards for his trainees who rose to the occasion magnificently and I am sure that these same standards, in the finest traditions of the Indian Navy, continue to be upheld to this day.

My father was a frequent diarist and it is from one of his diaries that I have been able to extract and edit this booklet. He was also an avid reader and his observations on the current books he was reading are of considerable interest. In the course of his time in India, he rubbed shoulders with many prominent people both military and civilian; again there are many shrewd comments on how the war was going from time to time. He was keen on sport and there are episodes of tennis, golf and shooting with Jam Sahib, riding and generally enjoying the countryside. His only regret was that my mother never managed to join him.

I have tried to stay truthful to his written word but here and there I have had to make a few minor changes to make better sense. I also may have inadvertently made some spelling mistakes of place names for which I apologise in advance but deciphering my father's writing was sometimes a matter of my judgement! I do hope, even though in places his comments are somewhat personal, that his story will be of interest to many readers as an accurate chronicle of his life in India during World War II.

I am totally indebted to my PA, Valentina Hall who worked tirelessly in her own time to type up the diaries and also to Martin Lewis of Lewis Design who did all the artwork, design, setting out and getting this publication printed. Without them I could not have managed this project. Finally, I am grateful to Lizzie, my wife for her forbearance when I was constantly proof reading and editing. The end result is in my view, well worth the time and effort.

Robert Ward
October 2012



The route went from Poole, via Foynes, Lisbon, Bathurst, Lagos, Douala, Bangui, Liberge, Bumba, Stanleyville, Juba, Khartoum, Wadi-Halfa, Cairo, Haifa, Habbaniyeh (Bagdad), Basrah, Bahrain, Jivani, Ahmedabad, Karachi to Bombay.

A total distance of 12,500 miles - made up as follows: Foynes 340, Lisbon 900, Bathurst 1800, Lagos 2000, Duala 405, Bangul (then called Bathurst) 640, Liberge 70, Stanleyville 640, Malakal 840, Khartoum 450, Cairo 1200, Tiberias 300, Habbaniyeh 580 Basrah 340, Bahrain 400, Karachi 1000 and Bombay 550.

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THE JOURNEY



Thursday March 12th 1942

Wednesday 11th March 1942

My last day in England for I wonder how long? (Editor's Note: My father had married 2 years previously having been sunk on H.M.S. Royal Oak in Scapa Flow on 14th October 1939. He was one of only 414 survivors from a crew of 1247; it was the biggest Royal Navy loss of all time.)

Thursday 12th March 1942

Left England at 1515 in the Empire flying boat "Cordelia" and landed at Foynes at 1745; distance 340 miles. Nothing much to the journey. I drank my first cup of tea in an aeroplane. It was very steady when once above the clouds. Low clouds and rain below, blue skies and sun above.

Friday 13th March 1942

Am lodged in Limerick "Jewel of the Shannon Valley". I had an enormous dinner last night and two eggs with my bacon this morning. There is an abundance of every sort of food and drink here including oranges and lemons. Unfortunately nothing much can be sent home. I expected to be tremendously thrilled by the lighted city and no blackout but was very disappointed. The streets are ugly by day and little better by night. There is something very Irish about Ireland, whereas England is much more Devon, or Hampshire or Sussex or whatever county it may be. Probably an Irishman would not agree but that's how it appears to me this morning.



St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick

I went and looked at St Mary's Cathedral, built 1172, and was most impressed. King John's castle however with its ten foot thick walls is a fine picture of a medieval fortress. Built in 1210 it has seen a few wars and still bears the marks of General Ginkel's artillery fire 1691. Near it appropriately enough is the "Treaty Stone" on which it is said that the Treaty of Limerick was signed. Colonel Patrick Sarsfield must indeed have been a

gallant man, a fine leader and an inspired fighter. Why did he become Earl of Lucan? How long do bells usually last before they need recasting? Those in St Mary's went about 150 years.

Saturday 14th March 1942

We were to have moved on tonight. Orders were to be ready after dinner. However, at 2130 it was cancelled on account of the weather. Sent off a greetings telegram to Trishy (my father's wife) which I hope will arrive there on Monday. Also, three postcards for the children.

Remembering our bookcase I looked at a house building on the outskirts of the town. The living room was 14' x 12'6" x 8'9" high. It was rather smaller and not as nice as Clovelly Road and cost considerably more. The maid's room was in the attic and was quite nice, very cleverly done as the trap door held the stairway on its upper side, so it simply slid into place as the trap door was opened.

Sunday 15th March 1942

I went to Matins in the Cathedral and enjoyed it very, very much. I'm beginning to like the building better. The service was slow and dignified, the singing excellent, the sermon by the Bishop good, the lessons were as well read as I've ever heard them. The 2nd Lesson was that incomparable story the Prodigal Son We sang Hymn 346 which is "St Patrick's Breastplate and Garton" – "I bind unto myself today...." and so very appropriate to us. Also, I heard the Horatius Bonar Hymn, "I heard the voice of Jesus say" to the English time, which I liked very, very much. The service fitted my mood and I came away glowing with joy.

Tuesday 17th March 1942

St Patrick's Day. A beautiful day with blue sky and billowing white clouds. Everyone in holiday mood. I was given a bit of Shamrock and I am wearing it – after all, my name's Michael!

The Limerick races were amusing. There were six races with about a dozen starters in each. Half were flat, the others over hurdles. There was not much else to it. Some of the horses were good and well ridden and some were most definitely neither. The fences were small and on the whole the distances were too great. Bigger fences and a shorter course would I think given better sport.

We are to go at last. Everyone is delighted; but the hotel make a fond farewell and we shake hands all round and promise to come back again. At 2215 we are in the bus and driving behind those brilliant headlamps; we cover the 24 miles to Foynes in 45 minutes.

Wednesday 18th March 1942

Airborne at 0140 and en route for Lisbon about 900 miles away. We are all now in the huge, luxurious and magnificent ex Pan American Airways clipper now on lend/lease lent to the British Overseas Airways Corporation and re-named "Bristol". This really is a giant of a thing, capable of lifting a total load of 74 passengers by day and 36 by night. It

has not been “stripped” and so preserves its peace time luxury. We got in by the doorway under the tail plane and step into the saloon. Fourteen people can sit here at one time. Forward is one passenger cabin, the galley, officer’s cabins, crew space control room and various other such rooms where well mannered passengers don’t go. Aft of the saloon are the cabins, arranged in five compartments, each of which will seat 10 or sleep 6 people. There is a crew of eleven. Aft of the cabins is the wash place with two basins with hot and cold running water, dressing tables with mirrors and stools. There are little papier mache cups for tooth washing and paper towels, Ladies and Men’s WCs and a vestiary for coats and hats. Finally, here is the “Churchill Suite” where I am writing this as we shoot along at 130 knots 4000 feet above the sea. It is not easy to give an idea of the luxury of this aircraft. The “walls” are covered with a silky stuff sewn over with a lighted colour to make small maps of the world; a most effective motif. The colour is light blue and fawn in alternate compartments. In each compartment there is a small plaque coloured to match and this holds three knobs, one for extra ventilation, another for a personal reading light, and the third for a stewards’ bell.



The huge, luxurious and magnificent ex Pan American Airways clipper

We landed at Lisbon at 0900 and took off again at 1440. The pilot is in a hurry to get on. Taking away the time needed by the customs and immigration people and buy lunch, which was excellent, there was literally no time to see Lisbon.

We are flying over clouds. As far as the eye can see is a level mass of fluffy white cumulus cloud. Later these began to thin out and occasionally I could see the blue sea thousands of feet below them.

By 2000 the sky was clear of cloud to the west the sun was setting, fiery and red. To the east a mist covered the horizon with a pearl grey indistinctness. It was thus that we got our first view of Africa. We were over the desert which just there was plain sand and nothing but sand. No scrub, no bush, no sign of anything but sand. The setting sun soon coloured the eastern horizon with reflected splendour and pale pink which gradually imperceptibly merged into the pearl grey mist and this in its turn faded softly into the

blown desert. It was for all its starkness and solitude a lovely scene constantly changing to new shades of beauty as the sun sank lower and lower. All of a sudden it was night.

An excellent dinner – soup – roast veal, new potatoes, green peas, sweet, cheese and coffee. Betel ware plates and cups; stubby lightweight knives and forks.

To bed. I slept extremely well.

Thursday 19th March 1942

Woke up at 0300 which is the estimated time of arrival at Bathurst (now called Banjul). The machine is bumping a lot and I look out of the window and see we are in a fog or in low cloud. The port wing tip light and the stern light are on and the warning lights are at “remain seated, fasten belts”. I went to sleep.

We circled round for four hours trying to find a hole in the fog but could not. The situation is too dangerous for an attempted landing as it is not possible to see if there is a ship or small boat in the way until it is too late. The fog was only 200 – 300 feet thick and hanging just over the sea. Above and below it was as clear as a bell. (Editors note: At some stage they must have landed at Bathurst but the diary does not confirm this). We spent the day at Bathurst. Nothing much to it.

Friday 20th March 1942

Took off at 0430 for Lagos. About 12 hours away. Flew at about 600 feet above the jungle for most of the day. The forest of tightly packed trees gave way now and then to small clusters of native huts, sometimes a dozen, sometimes a few more. It was all a repetition of much the same sort of scenery, trees, clearings, villages and winding slow moving muddy rivers.

I was shown the control room this morning. It is huge. In front are the two pilots seats with the gyro pilot between. Behind is the chart table where the navigator works his sights out. Because of the sway of the aircraft and the effect on his bubble sextant he may find any individual sight considerably in error, so he takes 3 or 5 each hour on an average. Opposite and abaft the chart table the engineer of the watch, sits facing as many deals, countless coloured knobs, lights and other such things as the pilots have. There is a tunnel in each wing through which the engines can be got at even in flight. Abaft the engine control platforms is the astral dome from which the navigator takes his sun, moon and star sights. Looking out and around from here along the immense backbone and to the distant wing tips, one gets an idea of the vast size of this “double decker” flying boat.

It is getting hot. At 1210 a “Tomahawk” fighter flashed under us from starboard to port and then flew close alongside for a while before finally turning away. We arrived at Lagos at 1530 and there left the Boeing Clipper which has been our home for 36 flying hours, the equivalent of 5400 miles.

Lagos is a good looking large town with plenty of wharfage, an aerodrome and a golf course. The flying boat landing place is five miles from the town and so what with the Customs and one thing and another we did not get ashore till 1800. Once ashore I sent Trishy an air mail card and cable. I walked along the seafront to the Cables and Wireless

Office - pleasant bungalows with nice vivid green gardens with red soil lined the road. This part of the town is certainly most pleasant and well laid out.

We have been very well looked after by the Naval Officer in charge. I got £5 and some cap covers out of him. My first night under a mosquito net for some years. Slept well in spite of the muggy heat. Was woken up at 0900 by the air raid sirens. Went to sleep but was awakened again by the "all clear". I suppose that it was a practice.

Saturday 21st March 1942

Left for the Apapa Airport at 1000. We have now been split up into two parties of nine each. Our second party is to follow on later. The airport is a sort of Nigerian Croydon with aircraft coming and going all the time. I was particularly struck by the number of Pan American Airway's machines and the personnel. There are very many Douglas DC3s about. We left at 1130 in a Junkers 52 belonging to the SABENA airline - Société Anonyme Belgique Exploitation Navigation Aérienne.

We are headed for Douala in the French Cameroons. Over some lovely country including some banana plantations once German. It is fun to be flying in such a notorious plane as the famous German troop carrier. It looks as if it is made of corrugated iron and its wings quiver when it "bumps" and it bumps a lot over this country. Still it has a low speed and a still lower landing speed: so the pilots like them as they are "safe" and easy to handle. Still it shrieks of cheapness and is obviously very mass produced.

There were lots of American airmen in Lagos last night said to be on a mission to Cairo. Things are beginning to move.

We are to leave at 0700 tomorrow and so I had a walk around the town this evening and met and talked with the Editor of the "Eveil du Cameroon", a kindly, well mannered man. The Cameroons are sparsely populated compared with Nigeria, 3 million as opposed to 20 million. Douala is nicely laid out (by the Germans) with broad roads and avenues flanked by big shady deliciously green trees. The buildings are large and pleasant and there are nice squares with green grass about. But the hotel is filthy beyond description and the people reek of garlic and are much gone to seed.

Sunday 22nd March 1942

In our Junkers at 0745 and taxiing off when the left hand tyre went flat. The machine ran over quite gently to the left off the runway and onto the grass. There are few facilities for repair here and the job took over four hours to do. We are therefore not to go on today as there is not enough daylight left.

Whilst they were working on the aircraft three of us, Wilson-Brand, Dunlop and me were "adopted" by a kindly Frenchman Merlin by name, and apparently a gold miner by occupation. He appears to be a keen sportsman, hunting and big game shooting. He speaks English really well and is a good host. His house is well appointed. Local scandal hints at 5th column tendencies but what are you to believe! He was kind to us and amusing. He told us how Douala was "taken" by Colonel Le Clerc with only 13 men

and at a cost of £16.10.4! The Colonel is apparently a man who “does things” and knows how to get what he is out for.

Dunlop who has been in Russia most of his life and who has met Stalin, and interpreted for Mason-Macfarlane was absorbingly interesting. (Editors note: Lieutenant General Sir Noel Mason-Macfarlane was a famous soldier who was in our Military Attaché in Berlin prior to the World War II and famous for proposing the assassination of Hitler which was turned down!) He (Dunlop) considers Stalin to be a first-class military brain and was constantly amazed at his detailed technical knowledge. The Russian Chief of Staff he also thought brilliant. The country he said is behind Stalin in a war to the hilt against Germany. Stalin’s brand of communism is definitely not for export, whereas Lenin’s definitely was. He is most confident about Russia’s chances of victory this year.

I wish I could go to church. Thought wistfully of Trishy going to Holbeton) and wistfully too of Mary-lu (Editors note: my sister) Am most interested in Lionel Elvin’s “Men of America”. The difference and the impact between the policy and philosophy of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson are extremely well brought out. It seems to be as vital and interesting now as it was then in the XVIII century.

Monday 23rd March 1942

I am writing this in the Belgian Congo within a few miles of the equator. It is dark and out of the night comes the coarse cloak of the bullfrog and the incessant stridulation of innumerable grasshoppers.

Though I have been to Africa before it is the eastern side that I know. I had never realised that such prolific vegetation was possible, vegetation as rich in colour as it is prodigious in quantity. It seemed as though the general earth was striving to push up more yet more and then more. Great baobab trees, brilliant flamboyant hibiscus and bougainvillea and hundreds whose names I know not but which with the other brilliant and exotic reds and greens make richness impossible to describe and to imagine.

This little “Rest House” is marvellously well done. It is spotless. Cleaner far than anything I’ve seen since I left England and that included the Avenida Palace Hotel, Lisbon. At dinner the boys wore little “pill box” hats embroidered in gold SABENA, also little white short coats. Each room is large with its private shower, WC and hand basin, everything is absolutely perfectly clean. After all, we’ve seen lately that is a delight beyond description.

A short walk to the River Ubangi – to me a mighty river but here nothing much. Tomorrow we see the colossal Congo. There are 30 white people here of whom 5 are sisters and 5 missionaries, the others cotton planters and government servants. I saw the convent and the mission. The latter is a magnificent set of buildings and teaches 400 boys under the age of 5! After that they go to the Government schools. Liberge is a very pleasant and pretty touch of humanity in the middle of the Equatorial jungle. It is sheer wonder to see that I’m writing this by electric light. I can turn on the tap in my hand basin and shower, and water will come out. Or I can telephone and listen to the “news” coming from the outside world. Yet two miles outside this magic circle is the untamed jungle, truly “darkest Africa”.

I was told last night that it was the Germans who taught the “boys” in the Cameroons “pidgin English” – so that they should not understand German. “Pidgin” seems to be most interesting. I was told:

You dash me = you tip me

Mouff = move (obvious corruption)

Bend for ground = to plant something

(Editors note: more examples given but the above is typical)

Tuesday 24th March 1942

A week ago today I was at the Limerick races. Now I am in the Sudan and in the interval have travelled thousands of miles. Left Liberge at 0600 and got to Stanleyville four hours later – had lunch, fuelled and put our clocks on one hour. Left at 1330 and got to Juba at 1745. The rich vegetation of the Congo has now given way to the sparse scrub and occasional tree of the Sudan. The unpleasant humid heat has now changed to a dry oven like hotness, much more easily bearable.

We flew at 8000 to 9000 feet and it was nice and cool up there and very much less bumpy than yesterday. For most of the day the country was covered by a grey mist rising to about 7000 feet – it was not easy to see through this.

Read “the Taming of the Shrew” – and part of the “English Diaries” – I don’t much like the extracts from Jonathan Swift. The gusty playfulness of the middle-aged Mr Presto is probably out of keeping with my mood. The “Juba Hotel” is excellent with marvellous bathrooms, good bedrooms and a good cuisine. It is owned by Sudan Railways, but the railway has not got there yet and how with the war and air travel becoming rapidly more popular, I doubt if it ever will.

Wednesday 25th March 1942

Left Juba at 0700. It was that sort of day where you know it’s going to be hot and no mistake about it. The country now is just plain desert and very hot. A great pall of heat haze hangs like a dirty brown gauze which rather kindly hides the barren monotony of the sandy waste below us. In contrary spirit read and enjoy “the National History of Selborne”.

Arrive at Khartoum at 1330 having refuelled on the way. At 9000 feet it is cool – down on the sand it is like being in a good baking oven. The heat rises in steady relentless power from the scorching ground. The metal of the aeroplane should not be touched. This is the hot season and the rains are expected. Half the journey we’ve done today would take seven days by river steamer, the only actual alternative to the aircraft. Roads cannot now be used because of the imminence of the rains.



I expected a lot of Khartoum and I have not been disappointed.

I expected a lot of Khartoum and I have not been disappointed. It looked well from the air, it looks even better from the ground. It has an air about it. It is compared with what we've seen so far immaculate, overtopping by far the French colony so full of garlic, talk, disinclination for shaving and general sloppiness. It surpasses even the pleasant and efficient Belgium colony. The comparison may seem a poor compliment to Khartoum and certainly it deserves better than that, but I've heard so much lately – “we are poor colonies old boy – the French and the Belgians do things so much better than we do” – I never did believe it – I believe it less now. Khartoum is not only very English; it dresses its shop window with a lot that is the best of English material.

Have been reading a great deal about Aubrey Beardsley and Oscar Wilde in the “Eighteen Nineties”. Most interesting though I cannot help feeling unreal. Bizarrie and “succès de scandale” are indigestible meat for the ordinary man as events have proved. The most interesting speculation is what will be the effect of their impact on the world? Beardsley's will be lost I suppose but what will Wilde's be at the end of this century?

The Grand Hotel is another Sudan Railways Hotel. My “suite” is an excellently appointed bedroom with every luxury even to the thermos of iced water. My bathroom is a delight. Both taps flow into the centre – logical as the amount can be varied without sitting up.

Thursday 26th March 1942

We were called at 0430 this morning and the plane left at 0600. After only twenty minutes run the pilot turned back as exhaust fumes from the central engine were coming into the cockpit. So back to the hotel and breakfast and a wait to see what is to happen.



The Lockheed "Vega" is uncomfortable but very fast.

At 0900 we were whisked back to the airport and straight into a Lockheed "Vega" with never a chance to say goodbye to our Belgian pilot and his crew. I was sorry about this as he is a particularly good fellow and anyhow hundreds of miles of flying over Africa creates quite a bond.

The Vega is uncomfortable but very fast. We arrived at the Cairo airport at 1615 having fuelled at Wadi Halfa. The General was met by a most efficient staff officer and a large car – which took the Admiral, the General and I straight to Shepherd's Hotel where I am now. Accommodation here is very difficult to get as the place is full to the belfry. I am sharing a room with the Admiral. I think it is one of the best in the hotels in Cairo with a huge balcony over the front entrance. Anyhow judging by balcony alone, it is the best that there is. The room is about 27 x 17 x 20 feet high and the bathroom is 16 x 14 feet. They have special terms here for the services so that my rate works out at about 2 shillings a day. Lucky as I can't get in elsewhere!

Friday 27th March 1942

The shops are full of everything you can't buy in England. It is said that we've imported a lot "to keep the people happy". I now realise far better than before the extent and the ramifications of our war effort. There is a lot in the French Camerons that has been exported from England and they say that there has never been so much money there as there is now.

Really Shepherd's does not compare in pleasantness with the Khartoum Hotel. Of course it is older and more baroque and it is absolutely French; whereas the other is new and absolutely English. It is about seven or eight years since I was in Cairo and I had forgotten how intensely French it is. The cars drive on the right, French is spoken everywhere – the taxis have "Libre" on them, the traffic notices are French style, therefore the "Défense d'officer" – and even the American dentists are styled "chirurgie

dentiste” (dental surgery). The women are most essentially pomaded and perfumed à la Parisienne of the lower class - and their aroma hangs about the filthy streets. I think Cairo has gone back a lot. It has no town council; the streets are never cleaned and so are unbelievably filthy – building is apparently quite uncontrolled. Incidentally, petrol is unrationed.

There is a big gulf between the French philosophy and way of life and our own. It is as well to realise. The "Entente Cordiale" was I often think a convenient temporary expedient but even so I believe that it was born in a flush of false sentiment and in rear of the German menace. Clearly there are good points and points of contact between the two peoples but we cannot hope to go back to the mutual relationship of 1939. We must understand one another better than to attempt to do that.

Sunday 29th March 1942

The Admiral left this morning. I am to go on Wednesday. Very glad that I was able to go to church this morning as I very much wanted to do so. I went to Matins at the Cathedral Church All Saints. An immense and imposing building which has only recently been built where it now stands. In design it is quite unlike an English church so does not seem at all out of place in this eastern city. It was quite full and I should think that it holds well over a thousand people.

We sang amongst others Watt's famous hymn "When I survey the Wondrous Cross" in the English hymnal No. 107 – in verses 4 to 5 the old wording has been altered "globe" has been substituted for "earth" and "present" for "offering". To my mind the whole music and poetry of those two verses has been shattered, ruined and lost. Who is the sound deaf Philistine who has made such havoc?

Monday 30th March 1942

Went to the Zoo and saw antelope, giraffe, elephants, lions, tigers, leopards, gazelle, crocodiles, a sea lion, hippopotamus, snakes of all kinds, vultures, buzzards, eagles, monkeys, baboons, bears brown and even polar, foxes, wolves, hyenas, turtle and all sorts of lovely pheasants. It is curious that some animals are wonderfully beautiful like the gazelle and others incredibly repulsive like the vulture. The zoo is very well arranged and the gardens are most picturesque.

Had tea at the Gezira Club. I met an old Aden acquaintance at dinner. Where last I knew him he was an Adjutant. He is now doing "Intelligence" duties here: a most interesting evening. I hope that I've now learned once and for all how fatal it is to attempt to judge by appearances.

Wednesday 1st April 1942

Left Cairo to my great satisfaction. My hotel bill was a good deal less than I had anticipated. I don't think that Shepherds are very efficient over their accounts. I had the impression that I could quite easily have left without paying my bill. Called at 0430 the cab left at 0600 and the plane at 0705. This time it was the Empire flying boat and it was great fun taking off from the Nile. "Celes" is the name of the aircraft.



Cairo

Soon after taking off we crossed the Suez Canal which looked very small and insignificant from the air. We flew over the corner of the Mediterranean to Haifa and Tel Aviv. Wonderful fertile looking country, hilly in parts. The green coated hills looked most picturesque as they folded into the valleys and out again with their own nicely rounded contours. We landed on the Sea of Galilee by Tiberias where we refuelled. Today Tiberias is a perfectly charming small “plage”, peaceful and quiet, a place where one could quite easily lose oneself for months on end to one’s immeasurable profit. Perhaps it is unfair to call it a “plage” as it gives a false impression of a lido and a cloud. There is no cloud at Tiberias and I’m sure that the word lido would “stick in their nostrils”. Bad writing this, but I’m very tired.

At 1115 we took off. It really is a wonderful sight. The great machine vibrating and quivering as more and more power is unleashed. She gathers speed across the green scummy waters cutting a delicate way through them, which gradually deepens until a clear furrow is made and a beautifully shaped wave, ten feet high, is thrown upon either side of the hull. A lovely wave deep green at the base and of white bubbling foam at the crest. Faster and yet faster and as the boat leaves the water so the wave gets smaller to nothingness, when all that is left is a long white straight scar on the face of the waters. We are airborne; the great machine which itself weights 24 tons clunks upwards and onwards. It is now 1130 local time but only 0800 in England and I think of Trishy being called and lazily waking up.

The country is now becoming more and more deserted and the green gives way to brown-black lava covered hills which in turn gives way to sandy desert. We cross over the famous pipeline carrying the precious oil to Haifa and the sea and then head east for Habbaniyeh, an artificial lake and airport 40 miles from Bagdad. A few years ago this huge lake over 10 miles long was only a depression in the sand. Now it is filled with water from the great Tigris and serves to irrigate an immense area of land. It blows hard hereabouts and they have large seas with up to 6 foot waves. There is also a large variation in temperature from 16°F to well over 100°F.

Amongst the passengers are a mother and her very attractive and well behaved child of I guess about 3 years old. Occasionally one sees a touch of humanity like this amongst the usual run of "Priority A" only passengers. There are also six Americans, most of them Colonels going out to Delhi. I wonder why the American army consists so largely of Colonels. These were all complete with maps, diaries and data. They were quite a lot like schoolboys out on holiday. We landed at Basrah at 1700 having done about eight hours flying some 1200 miles. We stayed at the Shat-el-Arab Hotel which was excellent. There is a tremendous amount of work going on at Basrah – aerodromes and harbour works.



Shat-el-Arab, Basrah

Thursday 2nd April 1942

The plane left at 0230 a very early start but it was great fun roaring up the Shat-el-Arab between the flares burning smokily on their floats. It was practically full moon and the river looked lovely in the moonlight which shone also on the myriad irrigation cuts which produce so much food in this neighbourhood. These cuts are made in systematic patterns, rather like a lot of complete fish bones dug into the ground and filled with water. The natives scoop the water out of these channels and throw it onto their crops. It was pretty to see the silhouette of our aircraft against the sky with the moonlight gleaming on the wings and the blue flames leaping out from the exhaust pipes.

An Air Vice-Marshal has joined us. He has been air attaché at Moscow for three years and is going to Delhi direct from there. A most interesting and charming man. He says that the Russian opinion is to the effect that in the end the struggle will be decided by strength in manpower. The drain in machines is greater relative to "production" than the drain in men. The losses on both sides have been stupendous. The Russians are really keen on the 2nd front idea – their aircraft are good and well operated. He inferred that organisation is still not their best point and there is a very large wastage. Food in Moscow is very short but that in Russia is no new thing or great hardship. For other reasons the Russians consider this the crucial year in which the war must be won.

Breakfast at Bahrain - excellent. Later that day we fly over the tip of the Oman peninsula barren lava mountains a thousand times more bleak to look at than any sandy desert. Refuelled at Jivani and landed at Karachi at 1830 local time. I report by telephone to New Delhi and receive orders to go to Bombay via the Navy Office Karachi. Try to talk to Delhi myself but can't get through. Arrange air passage to Bombay.

Friday 3rd April 1942

Good Friday. Leave Karachi 0630 and arrive Bombay at 1300 via Bhuj and Ahmedabad. A three engined ten seater American Stinson aircraft of the Tata airlines did the trip. So ends my great flight to India. It has taken a day over three weeks of which eleven were spent in "waiting" and eleven in flying. The route was Poole, Foynes, Lisbon, Bathurst, Lagos, Douala, Bangui, Liberge, Bumba, Stanleyville, Juba, Khartoum, Wadi-Halfa, Cairo, Haifa, Habbaniyeh (Bagdad), Basrah, Bahrain, Jivani, Ahmedabad, Karachi and Bombay. A total distance of 12,500 miles made up as follows: Foynes 340, Lisbon 900, Bathurst 1800, Lagos 2000, Duala 405, Bangui 640, Liberge 70, Stanleyville 640, Malakal 840, Khartoum 450, Cairo 1200, Tiberias 300, Habbaniyeh 580 Basrah 340, Bahrain 400, Karachi 1000 and Bombay 550.



Arrive Bombay via Bhuj and Ahmedabad.

I sent a cable to Trishy to tell her that I'd arrived. It only cost 2.4 rupees or 3 shillings and 4 pence and will I hope get there in 2 days' time. It really is wonderful to think of that. There are no letters for me yet and as the quickest of all mail letters take 2 months I've got another five to six weeks to wait.

One of the passengers in the Stinson was an American who had been through the first raid on Wake Island and had seen Pearl Harbour after the attack and had helped clear things up. He emphasises the infinite accuracy and extent of the Japanese's intelligence and the very careful planning and execution. Pearl Harbour was done with three merchant ships, to save aircraft carriers and obsolescent planes. Nothing "new" was risked. It was timed to coincide when the personnel were at breakfast "in the (reputed) biggest mess hall in the world", others were in church. Both buildings were demolished and most of the people in them were killed. Whilst aircraft were bombing these specific

objectives, others were machine gunning anyone who attempted to escape. This gunning was done so intensively that the walls of adjacent buildings were pock marked with bullet holes as by a pepper dredger. One machine full of bombs flew straight into the main hangar through the wide open doors. Another flew straight into the old target ship which had been moored only a few hours since in the aircraft carriers billet. That is why the Japs made such a concentrated attack on this old warship ship and sunk it. The total loss in ships was comparatively small. America should recover practically completely from that blow in three months; in fact she should have restored the status quo by now except that she lost one battleship sunk and another with a further 3 month's of repairs to do. That is the one which capsized and then righted.

FINDING I.N.S. VALSURA



Commander MFB Ward by his Chevrolet Estate

Saturday 4th April 1942

Wednesday 12th August 1942

Saturday 4th April 1942

Saw the Commodore today. At least he saw and recognised me. Everyone is very pleasant. I think that I shall have to do most of the deciding and doing. I am delighted at the prospect.

Monday 6th April 1942

Went to see a possible “site” yesterday and had tea at the Golf Club. To St Thomas’ Cathedral first thing to make my Easter Communion. There is something altogether wonderfully ecstatic about this feast. It is so truly sympathetic with and allied with spring. Today I have seen a large number of people and I have learned a lot.

Wednesday 8th April 1942

I am intrigued by the idea of “Fantasia” but I don’t think that music can conjure up pictures as vivid or in such a continuity of logical sequences. Still it is a clever idea. I could not really listen to the music and enjoy the picture at one and the same time.

The sun at setting today looked like a huge golden yellow balloon bathed in yellow light. It looked larger and nearer than it seems to in England. Even on the most humid days we never get that yellow look there.

Saturday 11th April 1942

Left Bombay for Delhi at 2000 in the “Frontier Mail” I had a berth in the air conditioned coach which was a great boon as it is not only cooler but it is much quieter being insulated from sound as well as from heat. It is also well lit. I had the great good luck to travel with Admiral Ross Turner and his secretary Royston Brown. Lucky for me not only because they are such excellent travelling companions but also because as I have as yet not got a “bearer”, I was made comfortable by theirs.

I had lunch with Arthur Codrington Ball (ACB) who looked very well and with undiminished twinkle in his eye and a small beard. It was delightful to be with someone who knows Trishy ACB is a great admirer. He was also kind enough to congratulate me in most unequivocal terms – as though I almost deserved my very great luck.

Sunday 12th April 1942

I slept quite well in my new bedding roll mattress and sheets. We are rolling through some incredibly depressing country to the very sobering thought that the Cripps mission has failed in its immediate object. I have been lent a most excellent novel “the Connecticut Captain” by Forester.

Tuesday, 14th April 1942

New Delhi is really marvellous – marvellous. Had a telegram from Trishy which was delightful. Met Bill Adams and had dinner with him. Have not seen him since 1935. He left Singapore in January and was in the Colombo raid. He is most outspoken about the shockingly weak way in which the labour force is being mismanaged in the UK. He is the man who built “the last stronghold of London” in Whitehall. He has been practically round the world since September. I am working very hard.

Wednesday 15th April 1942

The sky was very overcast at 1400 today. Later a tropical thunderstorm broke and with a temperature of 110°F there were falling hailstones definitely as big as marbles. I picked some up that fell into the forecourt where I was sheltering. The hail was accompanied by a violent gale which tore small trees out of the ground, smashed windows and signboards and blew the heavy iron top off a lamp standard. The roads were littered with broken branches and the leaves were as thick as a carpet.

I met the Admiral this afternoon; it is now eighteen years since I last saw him. He was full of an infectious gaiety and by no means borne down by the war. He told me that "I had the right ideas".

There are about 30 tents attached to this hotel. I occupy one of them. Things are not too bad and my bearer and the thought that a Post Captain of great merit and presence has another does much to console me. I met Michael Malim (a family friend).

Sunday 19th April 1942

I went to lunch with Sir Maurice Gwyer – Chief Justice of India. There were six other guests including the "Times" correspondent, the head of the A.I.R., the "Christian Science Monitor" correspondent and a charming and very pretty Indian girl. The lunch was very pleasant and being a cool day it was almost like being back in England. The garden was lovely and very green and I could see it through the window smiling at me as I talked. I heard a lot of most interesting opinions on the Cripps' talks. There is a very definite feeling that a mistake was made in promising too much at the start and that Colonel Louis Johnson's efforts were looked on with disfavour by both sides as unasked for stepping in where the boldest angel might well fear to tread. Sir Maurice is most kind and charming and evidently thinks very highly of Charles (my mother's brother). I wrote to Trishy and to Mother.

Friday 24th April 1942

Dined with Sir Maurice. A most pleasant evening. I met Peter Fleming. We sat at a circular table so that this Major Fleming was practically opposite to me and conversation was easy and general. I thought what a good looking, charming fellow he was and what a perfect conversationalist, and said to myself that he must be an ADC. I was quite correct in that surmise, but it was later that I found out that he was Peter Fleming brother of the James Bond author, Ian Fleming. At the time Peter was in charge of military deception operations in Southeast Asia.

Sunday 26th April 1942

Last night whilst shopping I ran into White who took me back to his bungalow for a drink. He has a very charming wife. Wrote to Trishy, Mother, Aunt Lillie, Bobs, Mrs Tarelton and again to Trishy. Am reading and enjoying fairly well AEW Mason's "Francis Drake" and enjoying considerably Arnold Bennett's "Literary Taste". I had now hired a bicycle which is a necessity as no one under rank of Brigadier may use a car unless he is a visitor and I've now ceased to be that. I've also bought a tennis racquet.

Tuesday 29th April 1942

One month ago today I landed in India. Play tennis and enjoyed it.

Saturday 2nd May 1942

Alison invited me to play tennis at the Gymkhana Club. Although it was very hot and muggy and with a temperature of 108°F I very much enjoyed it. It is a very good club rather like a faint shadow of the Garden Club Colombo. There are people who play worse tennis than I do, but not very many. I wondered what Trishy would think of my performance. It varies very considerably and on some days I optimistically think that it is quite good. There are of course some extremely good players here in this country. Whilst we were playing I could hear the “clop” “clop” of the horses being walked back after the races. What a magic sound. If I do eventually go to wherever the naval station will be that I will live under the shadow of the flag of a Maharaja and I do hope that I may possibly have a pony or two.

As I was in a boot shop yesterday buying some white canvas shoes I suddenly saw a pair of butcher boots (for horse riding). “How much to make me a pair of those” I asked. 80 rupees with shoe trees. A good buy but I did not there and then close with it. Much wiser to wait and see how things turn out. However, as I was leaving the owner came out and told me that particular pair was mine for 12 rupees and that they would fit me like a glove – to my amazement they did. So I bought them naturally enough!

I do hope that I will soon get a letter from Trishy; life would be really marvellous (in a selfish way) if she were hereabouts. Delhi is for me full of ups and downs – trivial annoyances like punctures when your bearer can never be found, all magnified in importance by the heat. On the other hand, the good things of life, when had, are very pleasant.

Monday 4th May 1942

A red letter day indeed – my first “news” an airmail postcard from Trishy. Mary-lu’s weight today is 16lbs 13oz. She highly approved of being six months old and when put on the floor rolled over onto her side under her own power. Thanking me for my postcard from Lisbon (posted 18th March) which arrived this am. The airmail postcard from Trishy was written on 27th March and so took five weeks to come.

I played tennis with the marker at the Gymkhana club.

Thursday 7th May 1942

I have been lent “Sea Power” which I find most interesting. I have also taken out of the Library – the England of Charles II – Arthur Bryant, the Princes of India Sir William Barton and “How to live in England on a Pension”. The last is really a very lucky dip indeed and in spite of its funny title is good and as far as I can judge, sound.

My scheme is now before the Defence Department. The excessive dryness here has taken all the stuffing out of the paper so that the ink runs at the slightest provocation. I can find no cure for it.

Friday 8th May 1942

It is interesting to note that Mahan's "Influence of Sea Power" was read with such interest in Germany that the Kaiser determined to build a big fleet. Fear of this new form of German military power drew us closer to France who in 1905 asked that the largest possible British Army should be sent to align itself with and act under the orders of the French Army. Such ideas were of course at that time not only repugnant to us but totally opposed to our traditional strategy. The most amazing part however is the queer series of chances by which the sending of the expeditionary forces became a "fait accompli". The peculiarly stealthy almost underhand methods of Grey & Henry Wilson are quite astounding. How very much do the greatest issues seem to depend on chance or the curious personal leanings of one man and the quiet reserve of another. Both terribly wrong.

Played tennis at the club. Had a letter from Leslie (my mother's second brother) at which I was very pleased. There seems to be little chance of our meeting in the near future though one can never be sure.

My "scheme" is not passed by the Defence Department and must be referred to the Secretary of State for final approval. If that takes a month it will be two months after my arrival here before anything concrete happened.

"England can never be a continental power – in the attempt she must be ruined. Let her stick to the sovereignty of the seas and she may send her ambassadors to the courts of Europe and demand what she pleases". *Napoleon at St Helena*

Wednesday 13th May 1942

Called at 0415 – owing to the really excellent work and efficient organising of my bearer I was on the Willingdon aerodrome at 0545. There were the usual delays and eventually we took off at 0830 and arrived over Jamnagar at 1210. We flew around for a little while and finally landed at 1230 after an exceedingly bumpy last ten minutes. We were met and driven straight to the Palace where we were presented to the Maharaja the famous "Jam Sahib" who though he is at present living at Balachadi a place 17 miles from Jamnagar drove in to meet us. The most senior of our party is a Commander. We were then driven to Balachadi through the most attractive country I've yet seen in India. The Maharaja led in his air conditioned Packard. The first people I met on arrival were the Sinclairs whom I had not seen since Aden. They appeared to be as delighted as I was. Since Aden he had been our representative in Tibet and had some good stories to tell about it.

Afterwards went to Rozi which is the Maharaja's game reserve, I've never seen so many hare, partridges and cheetah. This is where we are thinking of putting my school. A metre gauge railway runs right across Rozi and to a mile long concrete pier which is wide enough for 3 of us to walk abreast on it. The railway is run for the passengers using the Kutch ferry. This runs all year through including the monsoon. The sea was not bad in

spite of a stiff and very pleasant land breeze. The channel will need dredging. The site for school appeals practicable and good. The town of Jamnagar is delightful. I think it has all we can want; three cinemas, football, hockey and cricket. A club with tennis and golf; boat sailing and of course marvellous shooting. The great thing about this place is the atmosphere – it is electric; it takes its tone from its Head (I assume this the Maharaja) and is correspondingly first class. There is a Polish refugee camp for 500 people not far from here. It is half built and has taken a fortnight to do. As the Engineer told me our Head requires us to get on with the work. Everyone is most pleasant and helpful. All the people cheerful, healthy and handsome.

Thursday 14th May 1942

Slept exceedingly well. Today I am to go out to “sea”. Made my sea trip. There is no doubt about it this is a most excellent and suitable place. Today the sea was rather rough but it is as calm as a mill pond all year round except for May, June and July with part of August and December. Even in these months it is calm in the early mornings.

After tea we were taken round Jamnagar town which is certainly even more fascinating on better acquaintance. The Jain temples were particularly splendid, though it does seem quaint that the outside bottom storey should be leased for shops but I am told that this is also done in certain Protestant churches in Montreal. Anyhow, Jamnagar is a very fine town. We then saw His Highness's (HH) private zoo which contains some very fine Indian lions, leopards and panthers amongst other things. From there we went on to the Garage where there are about 70 cars of all kinds, magnificent machines in blue and silver fitted with all sorts of luxuries including air conditioning. There were two very small Lanchesters outwardly replicas of the big cars but electrically driven and for the use of the children. There were state cars and hunting cars, Rolls-Royces, and Austin Twelves. Then in another garage were the lorries, the petrol carriers and all sorts of other vehicles. Next to His Highness's Coach House where we saw state coaches completely covered with silver; the only “baser” parts visible were the tyres. Beautifully worked, beaten silver, hundreds of years old. Next on to the horses – ninety-six of them, fascinating and not least the local Kathiawar breed. The last thing we saw was the club – a really magnificent place – given by HH for the purely nominal sub of 2 rupees a month, there is perfect tennis, far far better than the I.D.G.C., a lovely swimming bath, squash courts, and excellent public rooms. This really is a wonderful place.

Friday 15th May 1942

Called on His Highness to take my leave (as he goes away tomorrow) and to thank him. He is most gracious and kindly. That is the predominant note, his kindness. He is most entertaining; a perfect host and a brilliant talker who having lived a full and eventful life is able to tell many a good yarn of his army days. This he does with gusto and a flair which makes his stories so exceedingly worthwhile listening to. I also had the privilege of my first long conversation with Duleep (the famous cricketer). Once more I was captivated by his charm and kindness. Cricket apart, he is most entertaining and delightful to talk to. He is tremendously sympathetic. CB Fry was his guardian whilst he was in England. I never knew before today that Fry was one of the most brilliant scholars of his year, which included FE Smith and John Simon.

In the evening went to the Jam Bungalow where I saw the best men's tennis four I've ever seen: HH, Geoffrey Clarke the Military Secretary, Franjo Kukuljevic (Croatian tennis player) who was ranked as No 10 in the world in 1939 and Max Ellmer, the Swiss champion. It was marvellous to watch. At about 1900 HH suddenly said "lights" and the court was perfectly floodlit. They played three sets in all. Two straight off then a rest before the last one. I've never seen such hard hitting, thwack, thwack, thwack the ball whizzed straight over hardly dropping an inch. Several balls and one racquet string burst.

After tennis HH talked till 2100. I felt that he might be enjoying it also.

Saturday 16th May 1942

Bidden to lunch at 1330. Man Villas, the Palace we are in, is expressly for guests. HH is living in another about half a mile away. We arrived and were brought in to the room where HH was sitting alone with his brother Duleep. The others remained outside on the veranda. I wondered at this as they included such people as the Home Minister of Jaipur State. However, perhaps we are more "visitors" than they are.

Everything was very informal. HH said sit anywhere and I was lucky enough to sit opposite him. He was most interesting and told story after story of big game hunting and stalking. He does not do much shooting now but his knowledge of and affection for these animals must be amazing. Story after story of lion, tiger and panther shoots, of elephants which ran away (including one from which his Uncle "Ranji" (the famous cricketer and inventor of the leg glance) that got away by sliding down its tail), another story of breaking "the golden rule" (never go after a wounded animal immediately) held us absolutely enthralled. I almost forgot to eat my very excellent curry and was quite amazed to find that it was 1510 when we got up. About thirty guests – one lady.

In the evening we played tennis with the two "pros" – they were most kind to us and served up "easy ones", put the all the balls back fairly and often whenever we hit the ball at all reasonably said "well played sir" in a tremendously encouraging tone of voice.

After HH had played, I had one or two small points to ask him about and also wished to say goodbye (his projected journey has been put off) and to say thank you. He was not only exceedingly kind and gracious but also most interesting. He talked to me for an hour and a half. Told me that we could have what we wanted. I was to write to him personally on any matter on which I needed information. After the "business" was over the talk became general changed over many subjects like the late King, Queen Victoria, Nelson, Stafford, Cripps, training of officers and other things. HH (and I gather family) were educated at Malvern. The Rev Reginald Erksine Foster, known as Tip Foster was their guardian. He did 13 years' service in the Army which included active service in the Great War. In the dining room there are two very interesting pictures of "Ranji", one as a General in the last war and the other with two lions which he shot. He was in the world's best four shoots either with rifle or shotgun. In the latter he used a 20 bore and he was so accurate he could afford to. He also used to let anyone have the first four shoots and then kill the bird himself. HH also told me how with the rifle where someone else had missed Ranji shot a panther at 240 yards! He killed it absolutely.

After my "audience" we were taken onto the lawn to see the new moon for which they'd just fired a gun. That is a local custom. I thought that I should now be dismissed but not

a bit – I was given the most interesting half hour's talk on India which it is possible to conceive. It lasted till 2120 when the party broke up.

Sunday, 17th May 1942

Left Jamnagar at 0930. I have really enjoyed my visit. It has been delightful to get out of the so-called British India into something at once more pleasant and better run. Nawanagar is quite exhilarating and things are done there at a speed which would possibly seem indecent to the I.C.S. As to HH it is a great honour and privilege and above all a lively delight to have known him and his very charming brother Duleep. I hope to get back again soon.

Monday 18th May 1942

Arrived Bombay to find three letters from Trishy awaiting me. The letters included a copy of my excellent flimsy (Officer's report) from Ruck-Keene (CO OF H.M.S. VERNON) "To my entire satisfaction. A very able keen and capable officer who has carried out his very arduous, complicated and difficult duties to my entire satisfaction and has relieved me of much anxiety in doing so. Wrote my thank you letter to HH and others

Sunday, 31st May 1942

"And it taught a child to do one thing thoroughly (and that the trade which he was to follow for the greater part of his days) and to take a joy in doing so. The man who has learned that has not only mastered one of the main secrets of happiness but is educated....."

..... "For one without faith, it is difficult to understand seventeenth century England. For faith was part of the air that the men of that day breathed. We live in an age when the needs of the body are placed before those of the soul; The God of the 17th century was the living God of the Spirit – ever present, ever seeing, wonderful beyond all belief to love and terrible to offend. Men dwelt on the thought of Him as they only dwell today on the thought of an adored mistress – as a mystery beyond human comprehension, to be worshipped in inexpressible ecstasy and to lose the hope of whom was to lose more than life". From "The England of Charles II", by Arthur Bryant.

Dined with Gilbert Laithwaite (GL) who has the enviable reputation of "always gives you a good dinner and someone interesting to talk to". It was certainly lived up to tonight. Lord Hood of the M.O.I. had just flown in from China and was ready to talk about it if need be. He was most interesting to the effect that China had naturally expected great things of us and of America, whereas she was now in fact somewhat worse off than she was before the start of the Japanese- American war. Her faith was now being sorely tried. The Generalissimos appeared to be equal to almost every strain. Petrol and aircraft desperately short. Dr Gregory economic advisor to the Government lectured to me at the Staff College seven years ago. Then Professor Gregory, seemed to be very pleased that I recognised him and remembered his talk. Even then though he was a famous economist. GL put us together at dinner. On my right was an American "lease lend" expert. He told me over the brandy that he had to draft the Lease Lend Act. FDR wanted it in 200 words but he couldn't get it into less than 400. Another American and an interesting policeman and the under secretary completed this excellent stag party. We dined in the Garden

which was floodlit and really looked extremely pleasant. Just as we had finished dinner a big sandstorm came up. The timing was so perfect that I only had one bit of grit between my teeth. The Principal Secretary to the Viceroy's house is as I expected, a very nice one and it is in the back part of the Viceroy's grounds. We talked till about 2300 good and interesting and most enjoyable.

Friday 5th June 1942

An air PC written May 1st and an airmail letter from Trishy. How delightful. There is absolutely nothing that has such a tonic effect of me. Have been getting up at 0545 and riding White's horse, a good one right up on its toes with lovely paces and nice manners. Plenty of spirit and very good condition. Gives that lovely prancy feeling as though you were sitting on a hundred energetic springs. Lovely mouth. Very very kind and trusting of me. Weather very hot and lots of dust storms. Am bathing most days and playing tennis occasionally. Reading Fortescue's "Six British Soldiers". Good but it should have a map – Tyler's Short History of America and "The Temple of Costly Experience" Varé. I have also got "Introduction to Proust" but I have not started it yet.

Monday 22nd June 1942

The last few days have been extremely hot and uncomfortable, particularly at night. This morning the rain came down in a thunderstorm. I went out in it in my bathing costume. It was cold at the time but it soon became hot and very sticky again. I'm getting quite used to seeing my forearms a mass of glistening globules of sweat. Proud came to dinner with me last night. I met him in the club a few days ago and dined with him very pleasantly. He is a Major in the 6th Ghurkhas and in a staff appointment at G.H.Q. I went riding with him yesterday first thing and enjoyed it a great deal.

I now have air PCs up to May 15th from Trishy and received letters 14-15, written April 20th - 26th. These include some really charming snapshots of Mary-lu. She does look a really wonderful baby and the glimpses of "Alston" in the photos gave me some nostalgic twinges and still do for the matter of that.

The news from Libya is definitely extremely depressing. I feel quite sure that our men are full of fight. I wish the BBC was not so appallingly inept.

Am reading "The Man on my Back" Eric Linklater's autobiography. Quite amusing. I enjoyed Proust. The American history is not at all clearly written and so is most exasperating. Fortescue is biased and the book cries out for a map. Must get hold of "Britain against Napoleon" Carola Oman. Trishy speaks very highly of it.

Wednesday 24th June 1942

Up at 0530 and went riding with Proud. He very kindly let me ride his thoroughbred chestnut, a lovely animal to look at and the apple quite obviously of his eye. I am becoming increasingly aware of the innate kindness of Proud. He is a very kind and generous fellow.

I enjoyed the ride immensely and the horse went "like a stag". It was lovely and cool this morning as it was last night. I had a most luxurious sleep – in pyjamas for the first time

for weeks. It has now become sticky and uncomfortable once more: I did not think that the nice cool period could last for days.

My first airmail letter arrived from Trishy today. Though I've seen these before this is the first that has ever been sent to me and I was very thrilled. It was written on May 16th and so has taken 40 days to come, too long as the average is supposed to be 18.

It looks as if we are in for some more hard knocks in Libya. The amazing speed with which Rommel took Tobruk seems to me to indicate that our "armour" must have taken a bad crack and we had practically nothing left to defend it with. I wonder if we are short there of anti-tanks guns? If my theory is correct then we should not have lost so many men in holding Tobruk. The next steps depend on, how strong are the Germans? Pretty strong and fresh to judge by Tobruk. How quickly can we repair our tanks and regroup and how much have we in the way of reinforcements. I don't believe that mere distance from his bases will stop or slow up Rommel much. We must fight him with plenty of machines. I have no doubt whatever of the 8th Army's morale and individual fighting power. The comments in the American press are disgraceful.

Am reading "British Education" by J E Hales. British Life and thought series produced by the British council. Most interesting and well written. Eric Linklater's autobiography "The Man on my Back". Fairly interesting. "Red Letter Days" M J Farrel & "Snuffles" (Collins) really excellent. It brings Ireland to India with the same skill and colourful description as the "Irish R.M." does. I can almost feel the blue of the hills, the persistency of the rain and the charm of it. "There's not a fence on it (point to point) where a man would meet death". I heard one lady observe in disappointed tones to a friend. And the response: "Wait now till you see how they'll crucify one another in the gaps - that'll be the devil's diversion".

I went to Delhi today. What a change from the clean, wide pleasant roads of New Delhi to older, dirty and narrow of the native town. A strange mixture of the old and the modern. Eastern music played from street loud speakers.

Trams, bullock carts, bicycles, road walking leisurely pedestrian and rickshaws so fill the roads that there is little room for a motor car. For fun I went on my bike and felt like a carbolic bath and a good peg when I got back. I still am not used to all the ground floors being a sort of residential shop with no shop windows. It seems incongruous to come out of the squalor of these surroundings to face an old Mogul building of incredible beauty. One thing I feel clearly, the predominantly English architecture is alright (New Delhi) and the predominantly Indian architecture (Jamnagar) is also pleasant: but the mixture of the two much seen in British India is horrid.

Read this morning Mr Amery's Lecture to the Oxford Union "Britain and the Commonwealth" given on March 6th and reprinted in "The XIX Century" (Patricia read something very like it, in fact in parts the same in the British Survey - British Association for International Understanding - called "The Two Revolutions").

I like "The XIX Century" - its editorials are well worth reading and are boldly written. This morning's (April's) sets its face sternly against "obscurantism" so much in vogue now. The "Times" comes in for wholehearted criticism for the way in which a leader had said that British domination Singapore and Hong Kong could never be the same as it was.

The reviewer of course maintains that it wasn't domination. That we must recapture Singapore, that we've done incalculable good to the mud flats that were Hong Kong and Singapore before our courage and energy made them what they are. That the Empire and yes the old Imperialism of Kipling and Curzon, "though not perfect were on the whole good and something to be proud of". Therefore drop all "isms" and fight for the preservation of the British Empire and the British Raj, simply and unashamedly. It seemed good simple straightforward stuff to me.

Sunday 28th June 1942

Dined with Proud at the I.D.G.C. last night and enjoyed it very much. He is very kind indeed so much so that I left him with a feeling of relaxing in the warmth of his simple kindness. I am always impressed by and feel that surely he has a great gift. I have thought about it a great deal. We've had many rides together and he usually insisted (would not take no for an answer) on my riding "Oldgate", the more interesting horse of the two. It has been great fun these last few mornings to go cantering over the rain freshened countryside. The horses also have revelled in the cooler weather.

After dinner, the talk drifted round to Economics on which he was most entertaining. It happens to be one of his interests in life. Outside his soldiering, horses and dogs, hunting and shooting, his only interest in life is birds' nests and birds which he photographs. He was talking about bird migration and put me in mind of Gilbert White. So I mentioned Selborne which was new to him. He reads little, so I lent him my Pelican copy. We said goodbye with regret on my part and it almost appeared on his. He has shown me a lot and I'm very grateful to him.

Tuesday 30th June 1942

Left Delhi on an almost perfect day. Not too hot, with lovely fleecy clouds and everything looking green after the rain. I had an air-conditioned compartment in the "Frontier Mail" with a young soldier for companion. As we got further south we drove deeper and deeper into the monsoon. The rain slight at first grew heavier and yet more heavy, till when near Bombay it grew to one grey opaqueness of slashing water hurling itself at the double windows of the compartment. The countryside dry at first and brown and grey got more damp and wet and greener till near Bombay it was just covered with water as if it was a huge shallow river estuary with the railway running through it. For hundreds of miles before this, hundred of millions of tons of water lay over the paddy fields and in the hollows of the land. Everywhere where the water had receded were fresh green shoots. Every tree had a new greenness. The country has changed from grim to gay in the course of a few weeks.

Bombay was more depressing than usual but Mills has done excellent work in preparing for the temporary Torpedo school. There are many difficulties ahead and probably many more that I cannot see but much good work has been done, the position's better than I had dared to hope. We open tomorrow.

Wednesday 1st July 1942

First day at the new temporary Torpedo school. I feel it's an important venture. We have forty graduates for training. Some look very promising; others naturally are not so

promising. I gave them an “opening address” – and told them how fortunate they are to be the first men in what is a completely new branch – with plenty of room at the top and such excellent openings for able and ambitious men. I then told them about the permanent school which we are building and had brought down the plan of the school for putting up on their notice board, as also the cutting opposite from the “Statesman”.

After this I made a signal to Flag Officer Commanding Royal Indian Navy (FOCRIN) “Torpedo instruction started at 0900 today Wednesday. Forty men under training”.

On the way to my lodgings I looked in at the Army and Navy stores and saw there a ten piece “Nursery Rhyme” set of painted nursery furniture. Ordinary painted furniture and the cost was 2025 rupees over £150 or £15 a piece!!! How amazing that such outlandish prices can be asked and I suppose given.

On the way back I got completely drenched in a deluge. I don’t see how the clothes can be dried.

Friday 3rd July 1942

The school is I think beginning to settle down nicely. There are undoubtedly some good men but I suspect that they are strictly limited in number. It will be most interesting to see how things turn out. At present we are teaching quite successfully in English and I hope as successfully in Urdu.

My savings campaign for the month of June has been a great success. It will total for all expenditure 398 rupees – 2 on the light side. The savings drive and scrupulous daily accounts started on May 4th and the expenditures have been April 635, May 461 and June 398. The basic figure for Delhi is 400 and I doubt if it’s possible to get much below that. For Bombay I think the figure will rise to 500. There is no doubt as to the good effect keeping accounts, and the repressive discipline necessary for keeping within my target figure are having on me.

Thursday 9th July 1942

I have bought Mary-lu's first birthday present, a pink woolly coat with pink “open work” buttons and a small dress, quite the nicest dress I’ve ever seen. I’m sure she’ll look sweet in both or either.

Met Hughes and Tyderman in the street and greatly pleased thereat. First meeting since Jamnagar three months ago. The Jam Sahib is to spend about six months in London on the War Cabinet. His wife is to look after the state in his absence. Geoffrey Clarke is to go with him. We swapped yarns about Jamnagar. It is quite clear that the place has a fascination for us all.

Very thrilled at the possibility of meeting Leslie on 22nd. He has got leave from 18th – 25th. He is a most charming fellow. Wrote to the Jam Sahib to congratulate him.

Tuesday 14th July 1942

Back again in Jamnagar and delighted to be there. Was met by Garniss and Geoffrey Clarke which was delightful of both of them. Went out to the site with Garniss, the CRE and his deputy. Have spent a long and I think most profitable day in “rounding off” the project. If it succeeds in translating itself into actuality as well as it is promising, then I shall be delighted.

I dined at the Yacht Club on Saturday and met with Lloyd who I last saw in Basrah five years ago when I was in “Norfolk”. He is a most entertaining fellow and talked about Curzon, Montague, Chelmsford, Cripps and India. Jasper Tudor Henry and Katherine, Edward VII and Baldwin with a facility and vehemence and knowledge of the byways of history that was really amazing and at the same time fascinating. Obviously he reads history and floats away on the tide of a stream of historical narrative with the vigour of a duck. He is Welsh and a judge, so his talking is extremely pleasant and flowing.

HH returned today from Bombay and Delhi. The CRE and I were summoned at about 0930 and he again told me to take what land I liked for the Torpedo School and not to worry about the shooting. I feel however most strongly that we must “worry” about it.

HH is in great form although he has obviously been very busy. He was called in (as a jewel expert) to help HRH of Gloucester pick two sapphires and some other jewellery for his wife. The stuff was laid out on a table and HRH was choosing from 1350 till 1630. HRH also asked HH whether it was true that SC (Editor’s note: no mention of who SC was) asked for an audience not “went to see”, Ghandi, took off his shoes, and sat on the floor with him. It was true, and I’m happy to think that H.M. will know about it. Apparently HH works in his air conditioned office till 1700 then plays a good game of tennis. He cannot however take lobs.

Sunday 19th July 1942

It is very difficult to decide on the best site for the Torpedo school. Twenty one acres is a large area and it should not be plumped down anywhere on what is said to be “the finest partridge” shoot in India. Where the terrain is not very good from the shooting point of view it is very much indented and so difficult to build a school on that has any pretensions to be a good layout. However, after two days’ hard work it appears as though an area in the south eastern corner will give me what I want without unduly affecting the shooting. There are difficulties ahead in water supply and in electrification and it looks as if it will take three months from the date of starting to build before we can open. Will it be in time for the Admiral to open it? It would be nice if HH were to lay the foundation stone.

I am reading “Classic Myth and Legend” (Hope Moncrieff published Gresham 34 Southampton Street, Strand).

I walked about Jamnagar yesterday and noticed that Ranji’s statue had been designed by Lutyens. Later I was told that he had planned the whole layout of the town even to allow for future expansions. That was forty years ago.

My station wagon has arrived, it is a Chevrolet. It is very nice with enormous tyres which will be extremely useful for this part of the world.

Monday 20th July 1942

Dined with His Highness, a stag party of ten. An excellent dinner with the famous Jamnagar curry. Another point of interest was the heating of the brandy glasses with water. The talk as usual was most interesting. Ghandi and the fighting in Egypt were thoroughly discussed. HH considered that the attempt to capture or rather to kill Rommel in the Commando raid was ethically wrong. An interesting viewpoint. On the lighter side, he told a story of the Prince of Wales when pig sticking and not experienced at it, being taken out by an experienced pig sticking ADC whose English was not very good. The ADC's plan was to keep the Prince in the background until the pig was tired, but he got too thrilled and crashed on ahead – "Come back Prince, that pig damn fool, he not know you are Prince".

The Prince came back.

There are about a dozen "action paintings" of Ranji playing cricket in the Palace billiard room, they show the famous leg glance, two are early, one late, a magnificent one, running out to drive, cuts early and late. There are also many pictures of Ranji, shooting, and fishing,

HH withdrew at about midnight. A very pleasant evening.

Tuesday 28th July 1942

I have been exceptionally busy lately. Have been investigating the possibilities of Bedi as a base for torpedo firing craft. This has involved many ground days in the open, so I've got very brown and knowledgeable about such things as mud level diagrams, benchmarks, datums and the like. I've now completed a ten page report with 5 diagrams. The position is most satisfactory.

Colonel Whishaw, the DCE North Western command, has arrived. He seems to be most definitely a man of vision and ideas. He has torn up the sort of slum planning, ten in a row stuff that the "in the rut" hack MES officer puts out and has told me that even with hutted scales something with some semblance of soul can be produced. Naturally, I leaped at the idea, and am now planning how I can get my electric clock to go into my clock tower (which is really a water tower). This morning we have been playing round with the new layout. The impact of the "Whishaw idea" of course means that we go back almost to the beginning of the designing stage. I have also been studying the many drawings of the various buildings that Whishaw has brought down with him.

We were all asked to see the "movies" at the Palace the other evening. An excellent Walt Disney, Donald Duck & Co and "Ninotchka" a sophisticated and amusing film led by Greta Garbo.

On Sunday evening, I dined at the Palace and met the Resident, Sir Edmund Gibson, an extremely kindly and interesting man. Incidentally, we talked about Ghandi (pretty

natural at the moment). Sir Edmund has seen a good deal of the fellow and quite definitely considers him to be self-seeking, insincere and a poseur. In fact, the direct opposite of the deeply religious earnest lover of India that so many of the ILP think him to be. Most people here seem to think him senile or détraqué, no worse.

I have been playing golf with Bennett, a jovial retired consulting Engineer, who is investigating for HH the possibilities of improving the state and harbour resources. Bennett has a daughter of whom he is immensely proud; she is apparently a most accomplished singer. He is clearly not nearly so enthusiastic about his son. Rather interesting. It's clearly the daughter that twiddles Daddy's heart about.

Yesterday three charming letters arrived from Trishy. They were written on May 6th, 17th and 20th and were full of happy news of Mary-lu. How trying to crawl when put onto her tummy and grunting with the effort. Or lying, kicking and waving her arms incessantly to and fro to a constant stream of talk from 11 till 8. What a bouncing baby.

Trishy writes the most marvellous letters, but of course she is a most marvellous person.

I went round the Lancer Lines with Geoffrey Clarke the other morning before breakfast. It was most interesting. They are mostly good horsemen and I saw some fine horses.

Thursday 30th July 1942

Went to Kathiawar to see the "works" there. HH honoured us, so we went in the State motor rail coach. The countryside looked wonderfully green, really quite like English fields and hedges. Everyone says there is still far too little rain and the country needs it badly. I was interesting and we saw some wonderful American "bulldozers" and other mammoth machines. The men were really happy and healthy.

In the evening, HH and Healing played Bennett and myself and beat us 5 - 4. I had the honour of playing with Ranji's clubs. We were taken the Patrap Villas afterwards and I said "Goodbye" to HH and wished him bon-voyage. The most memorable thing of the day was HH's remark that his father advised him as a boy of 12 going to England, to avoid looking for a reward in the good he did and to seek for no motive behind the good that others did to him.

Friday 31st July 1942

Left Jamnagar at 1600 for Delhi.

Sunday 2nd August 1942

Arrived Delhi to plunge once more into the whirl of the GHQ.

Sunday 9th August 1942

A week of hard work. The Admiral was pleased with my suggestion that the Jam Sahib should lay the foundation stone of the Torpedo School, so HH has been asked and I gather is delighted. The provisional date is 15th August and the Admiral and I hope to fly down for the ceremony. The stone is being engraved with:

“Royal Indian Navy – Torpedo School.” This foundation stone was laid by Colonel His Highness Maharaja Jam Shri Sir Digvijaysinhji Sahib Bahadur, GCIE, KCSI, ADC, Maharaja of Nawanagar on 15th August 1942.

The Admiral asked me to a drink party which I much enjoyed. He naturally is a good entertainer (I got him to talk about amateur theatricals). She is naturally charming, very very charming. There is no question about it; the R.I.N. is very fond of “Fitz”. The RIN itself (at least that part of it I’m seeing) is made up of a charming lot of fellows, very likeable and helpful.

Proud rang me up on Tuesday and asked me to dine on the following Friday. His wife is down from Shimla and he made up a small party which was most enjoyable.

I have six air graphs and six airmail letters from Trishy to answer. Four were here awaiting me; the remainder have arrived en masse during the week. They are all full of delightful news of Mary-lu. She has now been promoted from her frilly teeny cot to a bigger one with rails. She is also making huge efforts to crawl but seems to progress better when lying on her back than when on her front.

I must read “The Lost Peace” by Harold Butler. I went to eight o’clock communion this morning.

Ghandi and the congress leaders have been arrested.

Monday 10th August 1942

Slight rioting but the police seem to have things well in hand. Sent off Mary-lu’s second parcel by hand of Jefford. Received a letter card from Trishy written on 20th March and which arrived in Bombay on 17th April.

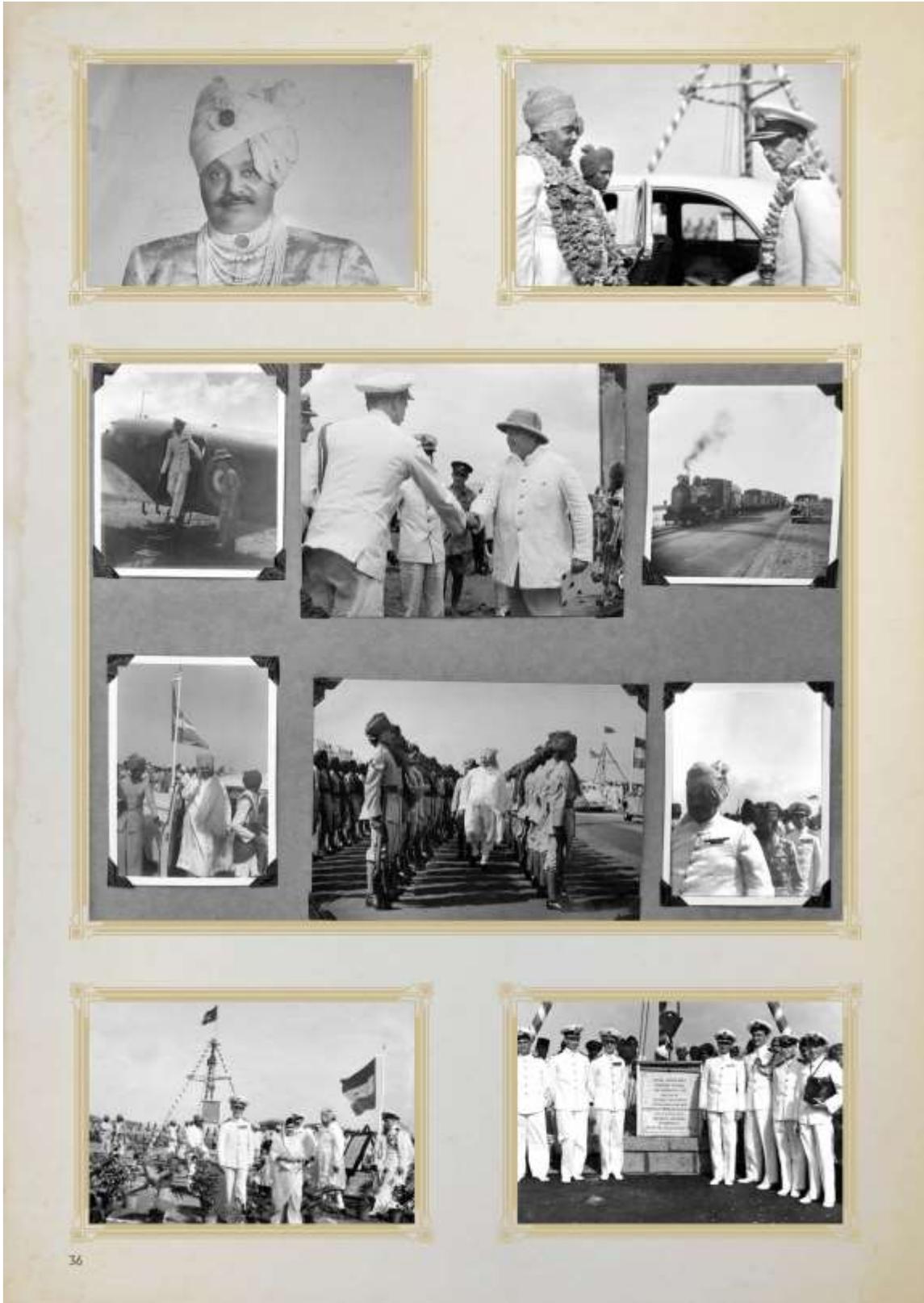
Wednesday 12th August 1942

There has been some shooting and it has not been at grouse! The police have been marvellous. The Delhi Town Hall has been burned down and a lorry and motor cycle have also been burned. Some officers have had to take refuge in a shop in Connaught Circus to avoid being assaulted. In Bombay, people have had to give up their ties and their hats which were then put onto a bonfire.

The headlines in the paper this morning give a rather colourful view of the situation – “Death penalty for rioters – whipping act to be applied in Bombay – Town Hall set on fire by Delhi mob – Troops called out after police firing, etc”.

Actually, the impression I get is that the government have the situation very well in hand. It is a pity that people are being killed and I hope that sometimes the agitators and not the gullible mob will get it in the neck. The police really are first class and full of restraint and absolutely rigidly disciplined. Any casualties they have are really tragic, as they are so often due to tremendous forbearance.

We are to have the AOC's aircraft. The Jam Sahib has written a very charming letter to the Admiral saying that he feels that the ceremony will be incomplete unless Admiral and Lady Fitzherbert are present. Unfortunately he cannot bring her this time but hopes to be successful at the opening ceremony.



LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE



Saturday 15th August 1942

Saturday 15th August 1942

The Admiral, Michael Malim and I left Delhi at 0800 in the Lockheed 12. Lady Fitzherbert came to see the Admiral off. After an extremely bumpy passage we arrived hot and rather shaken up at 1400.



The Jam Sahib was there in person to meet us, and the Admiral stepped out of the plane to meet a battery of press cameras and a posse of pressmen, for in a very small way, it is quite an historic occasion. We have come down for the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone of the Torpedo School.

Bows and handshakes over, we were quickly whisked away to the Patrap Palace for an excellent lunch, and feeling very, very much better for it we were soon on our way to Rozi Island for the ceremony.

The whole thing was done on a most lavish scale and was perfectly organised. It all went off with a swing with never the suspicion of a hitch.

The "school" was "all laid out" on the site with the main roads cut in the virgin grass and gravelled. The main entrance was marked with two lancer pennons on 30 foot poles, each tended by a sentry. The various buildings to be were all marked out on the ground and tabbed as plants in a garden. We however are only concerned with the central part and that is the immediate vicinity of the Quarterdeck. The marquee is a magnificent affair about 150' long by 140' wide.



The Guard of Honour look very smart in their red puttees which match the red ceremonial carpet. The stone is slung by a chain from a sturdy tripod decorated with white and red bunting wound round the legs. The red is a sort of plum colour and is an auspicious colour which will bring good fortune. Everywhere is the ceremonial red carpet. Our feet will not be allowed to tread on mother earth. The face of the foundation stone is covered with a silk roller blind of this same auspicious colour. We arrive with the Admiral and again there is a focussing of cameras and whirring of cinema machines.

Her Highness arrives and then HH in his yellow air-conditioned Packard. As he steps out the “salute” is played. He is wearing a lovely silk pugaree striped in white and plum red. A white silk coat knee length and white silk trousers rather like Jodhpurs in shape and black court shoes. A most becoming and dignified costume which suits him admirably. He advances, ceremonial sword in hand, and inspects the guard. We then walk on the red carpet and into the marquee and down the centre of it. At the end there are three lovely silver chairs.

Their Highnesses and the Admiral sit in these and we sit on either side on nearby chairs. Further down the central aisle the rest of the people are seated. The Admiral then asks HH formally to lay the stone and we all go out once more to see it done. The mortar is spread, the stone lowered into place and unveiled and “truly laid”, HH accepts the golden trowel and the pressmen take myriads of photos: still and movie.



Jam Sahib with Vice Admiral Sir Herbert Fitzherbert

HH is then garlanded with a lovely necklace of rose petals about two feet long. To do this the garlander makes three circles with his right hand over the head of the recipient. This means “may your troubles descend from your head and alight on mine”. The garland is then put on, and some coins are dropped at HH’s feet. After this the Admiral and his staff and myself are “done” (garlanded). The roses smell delightfully.

We then go back to the marquee where HH and the Admiral make excellent speeches. The gist of which is given in the press cuttings. I felt most honoured when HH referred to me as “my friend Commander Ward”.

I felt most vividly that the school has been launched very well: that we have a good start and that we will live up to the high standard set us.

That evening HH gave an official dinner which I enjoyed as I do all his parties. The first time I’ve drunk champagne since our wedding. I met (sat next to) a Mr Stileman, a consulting engineer sent over here by the Admiralty to look round and report. He is quite decidedly one of the “old school”, in fact he is almost an “old buck”. He knows all sorts of people – is rather or perhaps very slightly a snob (but a most likeable one). Obviously he has known Ranji and the Sinjhi family for years and the badinage which goes on is most amusing: “of course you used to be a devil of a fellow with women Your Highness”.

“Well, one has to be at least passably good looking for that old boy”, etc. He is a great authority on cricket and racing and I suppose many other subjects, but these are two on

which I've heard him talk. One can easily see that women find him as charming as men do interesting.



BUILDING I.N.S. VALSURA



Sunday, August 16th 1942

Tuesday 1st December 1942

Sunday 16th August 1942

Went for a long walk in the evening. There has been 6 inches of rain since I was last here and the country is looking very green and charming. The crops are "fair shooting up" and I saw the farmers harrowing between the drills.

A primitive form of barrow drawn by oxen which were guided between the rows of millet by prods with a small stick. Some were extraordinarily skilful at directing and their teams went dead straight between the green shoots. One offered me a native cigarillo which was I thought extraordinarily kind and friendly of him. Quite typical of these people.

Monday 17th August 1942

Looked at the plans in the office today, and later went to the site to see lorries puffing up with steam belching from their radiators, men digging away at the foundations, women carting away rubbish and generally excitement and activity which I found absolutely thrilling. We made minor alterations in the arrangement of some buildings.

In the evening I played golf with Manning "V" Bennett and Mrs Healing. We played a greensome for a golf ball and ended up "all square". A most enjoyable round.

Tuesday 18th August 1942

Rode at 0630 this morning. Delightful.

Thursday 20th August 1942

Rode with Geoffrey Clarke this morning. It really was delightful. He was out on one of his inspection "rounds". We were mounted on Australian "walers" with the red ceremonial martingale. Mine was an excellent animal, "silky" elastic on springs, and an interesting and exhilarating ride. We inspected the cadet corps, soldiers in the making. Mostly sons of local landowners, they pay what they can towards the training and if they are unable to do anything then the State shoulders the cost. They looked a very likely lot of boys. Their quarters were absolutely spotless.

We then rode out to the Regiments' own gardens which are said to be the finest of their sort anywhere. They supply the Regiment with a good bit over which is then sold. Certainly we saw heaps of pomegranates, melons, fruit trees, lime, sweet lime, lemons (all numbered and ticketed), mangoes, etc.

We were escorted by two very smart well mounted cavalrymen. Altogether a delightful and instinctive morning.

The school station wagon is now in commission and I went out to Rozi in it this afternoon to look at the re-siting of the Mess and of my bungalow and the arrangement of the guard room and main entrance. Manning has done me extraordinarily well with a driver Gagon Kauji who has driven for HH and twice accompanied him to England and Ireland.

Saturday 22nd August 1942

The “school” is progressing and it’s the greatest thrill for me to go there and see all the activity there, the foundations being dug, the lorries arriving with stones and plaster.

Played the return greensome Manning and self “v” Bennett and Mrs Healing.
We won 6 & 4.

Dined at the Palace.

Sunday 23rd August 1942

HH organised a huge picnic to the Sihan dam, a drive of about 35 miles cross-country. It was quite an eye opener to me and I realised why Willy Root was so quickly convinced that his Hillman Humber cars were quite good in this wild wadi filled country. We returned in time for the hockey match Jamnagar “v” Rajkot – a good game which Jamnagar won 2-1.

Wednesday 26th August 1942

HH held a Durbar this morning and we were told if we would like to see his jewels that we could do so. He was wearing a magnificent necklace of uncut emeralds and a huge emerald ring as well as carrying a much jewelled sword.

When he had gone Her Highness took us up to her room and showed us her jewels. “Now you are in the Zenana” she said “this ought to create a terrific scandal”. A big jewel box was brought in and we were shown a magnificent lot of jewellery, most of which had been given her by HH and most of which came from Cartier. It is apparent that she is quite definitely not passionately fond of jewels as such.

“Now there’s something to be said for the aristocrat and also for the artisan. They lead the way jointly in political progress and in social reform. Them idle class, too, render service of the utmost value to the world. Out of the solid ranks of our Bourgeoisie come all the arts which are supposed to shock them – poetry, literature, painting, music, acting and so on. In fact, most great artists come from the middle class, preferably the lower middle. But from the gentlemen that is to say the “fine fleur” of the capitalist classes and from his political party what is it that we get but corruption, the exploiting of the pool, and organised opposition to every movement ever started by idealists for the good of humanity? The only things he can offer in extenuation of his crimes are a few trifling social amenities – delightful in their place – and that hollowest of mockeries the public school code. It isn’t enough it won’t do.”

From “The Fortune” by Douglas Goldring ... being the spiritual adventures of the average intellectual in the first years of the (1914) war.

Friday 28th August 1942

I go to Bombay today. Yesterday was really a wonderful day. Their Highnesses left at 1130 by air for Karachi. I'm afraid that there is no doubt about it, they will feel the strain of the separation greatly. She has never flown before but went with him for the little extra time. There is absolutely no doubt about their popularity. The aerodrome – four miles out – was absolutely thronged and all along the road there were streams of all kinds of vehicles, pushbikes, cars, etc. Every garland in Jamnagar had been bought up.

In the afternoon, I took a lot of photographs with Bennett's camera, bullock carts along the causeway and the torpedo school, work going on in the school (it's getting on extremely well), men and women building and carting.

In the evening, I played golf with Bennett. We both played well and it was absolutely grand and life felt good; incidentally it was a perfectly lovely evening.

Bennett is an exceedingly kind fellow and has given me letters of introduction to heaps of people.

Saturday 29th August 1942

Arrived Bombay and went to the "Taj". After breakfast to the Torpedo School where all is going extremely well. The men appear to have been extremely well taught but the actual proof remains to be seen from the examination. Everyone is keen and the atmosphere is good. I met Leslie in the evening. He has not changed much and seems to have come unscathed through the active service he has seen. He is as much a boy as ever, just as charming as ever and just a little fatter in the face than he used to be. We had a very jolly evening and talked away like wildfire.

Monday 31st August 1942

Leslie left by the 0540 train today. It has been the greatest fun seeing him and I have enjoyed it all, far far more than I have yet realised. Yesterday after a quiet morning we went to Breach Candy where we had a very pleasant bathe and a gossip. After that I took him to the Yacht Club which was most pleasant and finally we dined and talked till almost midnight.

Today I took him to lunch at the Yacht Club. It was an excellent lunch and I did enjoy it very, very much. I was very very loathe to say goodbye as apart from a natural liking I have for his charming personality, his talk has brought Trishy, "Alston" and Devon so much nearer that I dreamed of them all last night.

Tuesday 1st September 1942

Hard at work again and there is plenty to do. It is annoying that Bayliss still doesn't arrive. The first class of Senior Torpedo men is soon to pass out and I have to decide the "yardstick" by which they are to be measured. A most interesting decision.

Thursday 3rd September 1942

Dined with Roy Brown. He is now Secretary to D of SR and enjoying life greatly. I have inspected the Torpedo candidates and they are definitely well turned out and most promising. Mr Down, the Warrant Electrician has arrived.

My bachelor night at the Yacht Club. I had thought of sending the menu to Trishy but decided that really it would be most unfair to do so.

Monday 14th September 1942

Have been working very hard recently, there is a tremendous amount to attend to in organising a school for 300 men, and that is only a part of my concern. The Admiral is inspecting the various establishments in Bombay and seemed extremely well pleased with the Torpedo School.

Wednesday 16th September 1942

Michael Malim asked me to dine with him. I enjoyed it immensely. He is an excellent talker and interested me the whole time. He's also an excellent host and it was altogether a most pleasant evening.

Sunday 20th September 1942

"Your daughter is most engaging and belongs I'm sure to the sect of "Holy Rollers", her capacity in that direction is amazing and she covers a large amount of ground. She takes a great deal of exercise and is excellent at physical jerks of her own kind. She quite approves of her great aunt and we have long conversations. Her mother too is most flourishing and looking very pretty....." CJS (my mother's brother Charles) 6th August 1942.

Back at Jamnagar and in the midst of the "Torpedo" school proper once more. It has grown greatly during my three weeks' absence and most of the buildings are up to the top of the door level. I think that it is going to look really good.

Monday 21st September 1942.

HH's birthday (even though he is not here to celebrate it). Her Highness's birthday is on 1st October and the period between is marked by a sort of state Olympiad. There is a race course with mile, half mile courses and all the minor distances marked out with flags, hurdles, long and high jumps and all the "fun of the fair". Each day there are also hockey, lacrosse and volleyball matches. I went riding this morning and very much enjoyed it.

In the forenoon went to Rozi to fix the question of the surround wall with Healing. The building is getting on excellently well. The Guard House has both gable ends up and several other buildings are not far behind. They look exceedingly well. The main fireplace is in my bungalow.

Played golf with the Healings. After it they played Tchaikovsky's 1812 Symphony. I enjoyed this immensely. I have just been reading a life of Napoleon by Herbert Fisher and could with no trouble feel the fierceness of the fight, the cold stark horror of the lulls,

the snow, the bells of Moscow pealing in triumph over the terrible carnage and the arrest of one man's awful ambition. How futile it all seems. God what fools these mortals be.

Friday 25th September 1942

There is a marvellous moon full as an English harvest moon that floods the nights with liquid silver, making soft and mellow all the eye sees. Even in the mornings when I take my ride she is still there broad and pale, welcoming in the day.

The days are not unlike an English summer, though possibly more, they are not unpleasant. I play golf most evenings, but very badly. Am re-reading Quentin Durward and the Pilgrims' Progress. Went to lunch in "Pathfinder" who is doing a survey here for my torpedo firing range. I saw an interesting bit of chart making and enjoyed myself generally.

Sunday 18th October 1942

Today is the Dusshera festival. I got one air graph (9th September) and a surface letter form Trishy. The latter with a lovely photo of Mary-lu in the hay field (16th July). She is sitting up, slightly supported by Nanny, and roaring with laughter.

Had an audience with Her Highness at which I delivered the Indian rug, she likes it. In the evening I went to the State Forces sports; fifteen events, running, jumping, putting the shot, tug of war, etc. Excellently run and good sport. In the evening, I dined with the Sinclairs.

Monday 19th October 1942

There is a man called Clarke, once Works Manager of the GIP staying here, a friend of his was recently captured in Libya and escaped and had some very interesting yarns. When British officers were captured, those senior to Major were segregated and the junior officers were soon visited by Rommel in person and in very fine uniform. They were complimented on their fine fighting qualities, asked if they were really comfortable and then a subtle suggestion was thrown in that their Generals were perhaps not quite as good as they ought to be... all very cleverly done.

Clarke is full of interest. The training of a rail engineer appears to be extremely thorough and most interesting. Played Mahdav Sing and beat him 6 & 5. George much better. Bill now ill – malaria. This morning I went round the railway workshops.

Tuesday 20th October 1942

Last night Clarke talked about steel and its cooling, hardening and handling. "Troostite", Austrite, Sorbite, etc. He was most interesting and took me back to the days of my Long Course when we learned a very little about these things.

I rode this morning. A short ride as it was misty and also because it was my first time for almost a month. On my return Mrs Bennett told me that George had a temperature of 105° so I got the Doctor. Sinclair also has fever.

I went out to see the “graders” at work levelling the Quarterdeck and the hockey ground.

Thursday 22nd October 1942

Rode in the morning, my horse seemed like so many people now, decidedly “off colour”, moody, lazy and shying at everything. Healing and Bennett and Sinclair are all still in bed; so is my bearer. In the evening I dined with Mrs Alibhai Jakeri. She is English and his second wife. He is said to be a great expert on jewellery, and especially pearls. He is a most interesting man, though "I find him extremely difficult to understand as his English is not good". Apparently he left home at 14 as his parents suddenly became very poor, with no previous training he soon became a well known jeweller, presumably by sheer gift. He has travelled considerably, principally at the instance of the late Jam Sahib. She and the eldest daughter dress in saris and very well they look particularly the daughter. The younger daughter wears ordinary English dress. An extremely good dinner and a very well appointed house.

Monday 26th October 1942

Went to Balachadi and played golf. It is really a marvellous course, rather like an English seaside one, springy and with the sea running alongside it. After golf we bathed. It was a full moon and heaps of fun. A marvellous supper, soup, pie and salad (with spring onions), afterwards we sat outside in the silver moonlight and listened to the BBC concert “Hands Across the Sea” a programme specially devised for troops abroad. Diana Wynyard, Ronald Fraukan, Scott and Whaley, and Francis Day (she sang amongst other things “Won’t some kind gentleman see me home?” which she always does so well). Got letter No. 35 from Trish. This has been delayed somewhat as it was written 1st July (surface).

Wrote out the “Fire Orders” for the school. My bearer is sick and I’ve had him moved to hospital.

Friday 30th October 1942

Sir Edmund Gibson, Resident for the West Indian States, retires tomorrow. I think he will be much missed as he is popular and has taken a lively interest in many things, particularly the games. Her Highness gave a dinner party for him, one of the nicest I’ve been to since I’ve been in India. As the second senior guest I set on HH’s left before at and after dinner. I really think that she is more charming than ever. Sir Edmund left at 2200 and she stayed on till 2300 which is late (so I’m told) for her. She is a very keen shot, both with a rifle and with a shotgun and on my mentioning that I rather liked it myself she asked me to come and shoot with her the day after tomorrow. We will go after snipe and duck. There are lots of duck on the lake, teal, mallard and shoveller”. We talked away with great enjoyment (on my part) and no difficulty for the whole evening.

I have received letters, 42 (written 28/7) and 51 (written 27/8), both airmail and the former included some lovely snaps of Mary-lu taken when she was nine months old. They really are excellent.

The roofs are on or going onto all the buildings except three. Drainage and main water supply will require watching; but it certainly does look nice and Sir Edmund was quite

amazed at the speed with which we had progressed. He said quite ruefully "I am trying to build for months a little shack at Dehradun and here in ten weeks you build a whole town". Certainly it grows fast.

Monday 2nd November 1942

Her Highness gave us an excellent shoot today. We left the Palace at 0900 for Bayid where there is a large lake. There were a number of number of butts built on the foreshore. HH was in the centre, self next to her, Prince Duleep on the left, Bennett next to me and the two ADCs in the second row (being the best shots) HH shot very well indeed. We were after coonge or coolan (demoiselle crane). Big enormous things like a cross between a capercaillie and a goose so we were loaded with fours. We started by having nothing but sand grouse over us which I could get nowhere near. The gun I had was a beautiful thing, a 28" barrel Purdey, light as a feather and perfect to handle. We had a grand day with a bag of 20 head; 21/2 brace of grouse and 71/2 brace of coonje to which I contributed 11/2 brace only but it was fun. Afterwards we had a little beer and biscuits under a nearby tree. All great fun. She certainly is a wonderful little personage, her bag was 31/2 brace.

Catherine Storrs has sent me "A Leaf in the Storm", a novel of windswept China by Lin Yutang. I imagine it is a Christmas or birthday present though it just says "With best wishes from Catherine Storrs" (my mother's aunt). How very nice of her.

Friday 20th November 1942

HMIS Badrahvati arrived Bedi today with my Executive Officer, two others of my staff and 750 cases of stores and machinery. This has come to fulfilment, one of my brighter ideas. We unload tomorrow on the tide.

I have discovered to my intense delight Aldous Huxley. I wonder why I never read him before? Whilst staying with the Sinclairs I picked up an Everyman "Stories Essays and Poems" and read "The Gioconda's Smile" and "The Substitutes for Religion": so naturally when buying my month's books I included this Everyman. It is delightful. I read a travel essay then an essay then a story with equal delight. I "allowed" myself 6 books this month as I thought I might be away from Bombay for some time. They are: Stories, Essays and Poems by Aldous Huxley, Westward Ho by Charles Kingsley, Northanger Abbey by Jane Austen, The True Christian Religion by Emmanuel Swedenborg and Peter Simple by Frederick Marryat. I am still reading with delight "Our Own Times".

Sunday 22nd November 1942

Dined at the Palace last night. The dinner was for the new Resident: Colonel Gaisford. HH was as charming as ever in a light blue sari. She told me that, "we all thought of you at our last shoot and were so sorry you had to go away (to Delhi)". She laughed and talked away like mad. I met really properly for the first time Mrs Duleepsinji. There is no doubt about it, she really is charming, charming Mrs Gaisford is also. I sat next to her at dinner. I think they will be really popular. Went for my ride in the evening. It is the right time of day to do it at this time of year and with the daylight "saving" on. I enjoyed it.

Saturday 28th November 1942

I spend a good deal of time now with the CRE at Rozi, putting as much in the final spurt as we can get the "team" (i.e. the State Engineers and Contractors) to take. For weeks it has been problematical as to whether we should get the water supply and the drainage there in time now it sees to be reasonably likely that we will. The generating plant is going in and we will have a dynamo working by 10th or so, but CRE tells me that he thinks it improbable that we will have electric light by then because the stores for the out transmission have failed. The Ships' Company is woefully short and in fact life is fraught with those difficulties which make it so truly interesting.

I have completed my outline of the opening ceremony. I think that it will be really good; it almost certainly will if the buglers are good at their job. My bungalow is looking really good.

Monday 30th November 1942

I've just been listening to a recording of the Prime Minister's broadcast: one of the best I've ever heard. How wonderful "... The German soldiers on whom the jaws of the Russian winter are again closing will be able to reflect that they have been led where they now are not by the German General staff but by Corporal Hitler....". What ringing scorn in those last two words.

This morning they started putting the graded metal (tarmac) onto the Quarterdeck and rolling it. I think that it will look really well when finished. We also laid out the road to the Wardroom to my bungalow. The concrete roof for the Tower will be started in a day or so and the concrete beds for two of the dynamos are in position. We have now received nearly a thousand packages of stores.

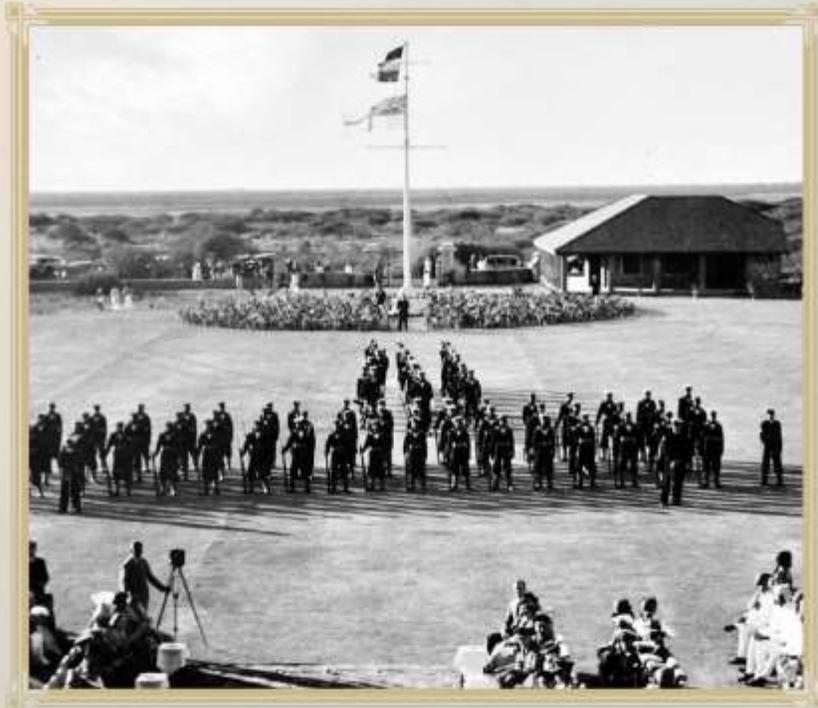
In the evening played Healing at golf and lost. Afterwards I enjoyed the 1812 symphony.

Tuesday 1st December 1942

I beat George Bennett at golf today. This really for me is a tremendous feat as he was playing quite well. Naturally I was miles above my best form but it is symptomatic of the steady improvement I've been making, through, 1/2 a stroke a hole, "Sunningdale", consistent and heavy beating to a clear cut victory even if it was by the odd hole only!



THE OPENING CEREMONY BECKONS



Saturday 5th December 1942

Tuesday 22nd December 1942

Saturday 5th December 1942

In blues for the first time. It is now really cold in the mornings though hot enough that midday. The rolling of the Quarterdeck goes on apace. It is equivalent to 3/4 mile of a 25 foot wide road and really looks extremely well. They are now working the roller for 20 hours a day. A lot of the furniture has arrived. Some is very good, some not very good.

The flagstaff base plate has not arrived. All the other parts have but this has either been left out or is somewhere en route. As I'm told that the concrete will take ten days to set and the mast must be erected (temporarily) without a base plate.

General Auchinleck and the Resident are coming to the opening ceremony: we will be a party indeed! Her Highness gave me an audience tonight and told me she had been unwell, temperature and general unfit feeling. That is why she has been in so much. Also, "Baisel" has a bad throat. I'm afraid that my opening ceremony without a shamiana (tent) is very un-Indian and really I must modify it. After HH took me to Rozi and I showed her the school afterwards we motored round the island, saw some chital, partridge several kind of quail and one other bird whose name I forget. Her memory of birds is really amazing.

Sunday 13th December 1942

Two days before the opening. It has been a most interesting week. One Friday the CRE told me that he considered it very unlikely that the school would be ready for occupation in time. This obviously made things very difficult. Was I to stop the men coming from Bombay or not? If so I had to act almost at once. Was I to tell the Admiral or not? Should I stick to the original opening date? I decided "Yes" to the last question and we "found a formula" which I hope will prove successful for the other two.

We erected the flagstaff yesterday and are busy rigging it today. We really should paint it first thing tomorrow so that it will be dry for the day.

I have now completed by reorganisation for the opening ceremony and I think that it should look really good: if all goes well as it ought to do; anyhow we hope to run off two rehearsals tomorrow.

Monday 14th December 1942

Rehearsing all day. The Bahadurs' Guard, Band and Buglers are good; especially the Buglers. In the afternoon Gladys Garniss took the part of HH and did it extremely well. Went to bed really well satisfied.

Tuesday 15th December 1942

The great day. A final look round in the morning and then back to Man Villas by noon where I changed into No 5 uniform. The Admiral arrived at 1220 as did also General and Lady Auchinleck. Naturally enough the General was the chief figure of interest for me as I had never seen him before. He is a tall and massive Scot, extremely young looking with an extremely alive and alert bearing and a keen interest in everything. He is most

unusually human for anyone of his eminence and seems to welcome contact with other people on the simplest possible terms. He is extremely natural and at the same time it's easy to see the force and power of command lying latent in him. Lady A has spent most of her early life in America and so has assimilated their manner and charm.



I told the Admiral what the results of the rehearsals were (in effect slight modifications to the programme he had) and after a short quick run through the show we left for lunch.

The whole ceremony was a great success. Briefly it was: Part 1, Guard Bands and Buglers march to positions. (Buglers are top of the central tower). The Admiral's arrival, where he was saluted with a general salute on the buglers and a "present arms". Followed by Part 2, "the arrival of HH" – Royal Salute – present arms – State Anthem and the State Flag broken at the masthead, the party (HH, Admiral and myself) then ascend the dais where are seated General and Lady Auchinleck, Lady Fitzherbert, Brigadier Jackson, HH's two brothers-in-law, the Flag Lieutenant. The broadcaster then announced "The Admiral will now ask HH to open the Torpedo School". We then walked to the main door, HH with the silver key in her hand and so started Part 3 with the actual opening of the door. HH then went up to the control room and announced over the broadcaster that the school was formally opened – then followed the "Alert" on the bugles – the "Reveille" – the General Salute and the National Anthem from the Band – as the letter was played the White Ensign was slowly hoisted at the gaff.



Part 4 – speeches, garlanding and photographs – three cheers for and then the departure of HH. Then everyone walked around the school. The Admiral was most pleased with the speed and the quality of the construction. Lady F said, "Well Fitz never needed to tell you to press on".



The Buglers were (as I intended and hoped) a feature of the show. There were twelve of them and their position on top of the tower was excellent both pictorially and

acoustically. The Guard and Bands were very good and the setting picturesque. The two flags looked extremely well against the blue sky. After taking the Admiral and Lady F round I returned to Man Villas at 1900.

Dinner at the Palace. The General most interesting on Libya; said that the air strength of the Allies was as great when he was there as it is now or practically so.

Wednesday 16th December 1942

Her Highness had arranged a shoot for the Admiral. There were ten guns, most of whom (myself included shot badly) we were in butts shooting sand grouse. I was in the next butt to HH who looked charming in a brown sari and nice heavy brown English brogue shoes. I thought I saw her get a right and left but the second bird was not gathered. I shot my first bird overhead and stone dead in rather a spectacular way and had the pleasure of hearing someone say "Good shot" and the honour of being very prettily congratulated by HH afterwards. I hoped after this good start that I would go on well but I didn't. Marvellous beer after the shoot. In the evening, I dined at the Palace and sat between Lady Fitzherbert and Cathy Clarke.

The hockey match arranged with the Motor House for Bahadurs' boys was a great success. The Jamnagar side won 2-0 after a very good, keen, sporting game. After the match the State gave them a supper at the Torpedo School. This I'm told they much enjoyed (I only saw the beginning part) and they gave me three cheers off their own bat.

Tuesday 17th December 1942

Lady Fitzherbert inspected the Polish refugee camp. The Admiral went with her. We were all invited to Balachadi by Her Highness. In the morning, Michael Malim and I played Kitty Healing and George Bennett at golf and halved the match. A glorious course though the standard of golf was not high. An excellent lunch after which HH showed her (or rather some of her) jewellery. It arrived in an ordinary suitcase! And I gathered that there was there about £250,000 worth. One pearl necklace alone was worth £42,000 and a pigeons' blood ruby ring £20,000. Nearly all of it was set by Cartier needless to say most beautifully done. Diamond roses in platinum. Enormous emeralds, bracelets with the most intricate and delicate expanding arrangements and of the most marvellous workmanship. It really was a most wonderful display.

Tuesday 22nd December 1942

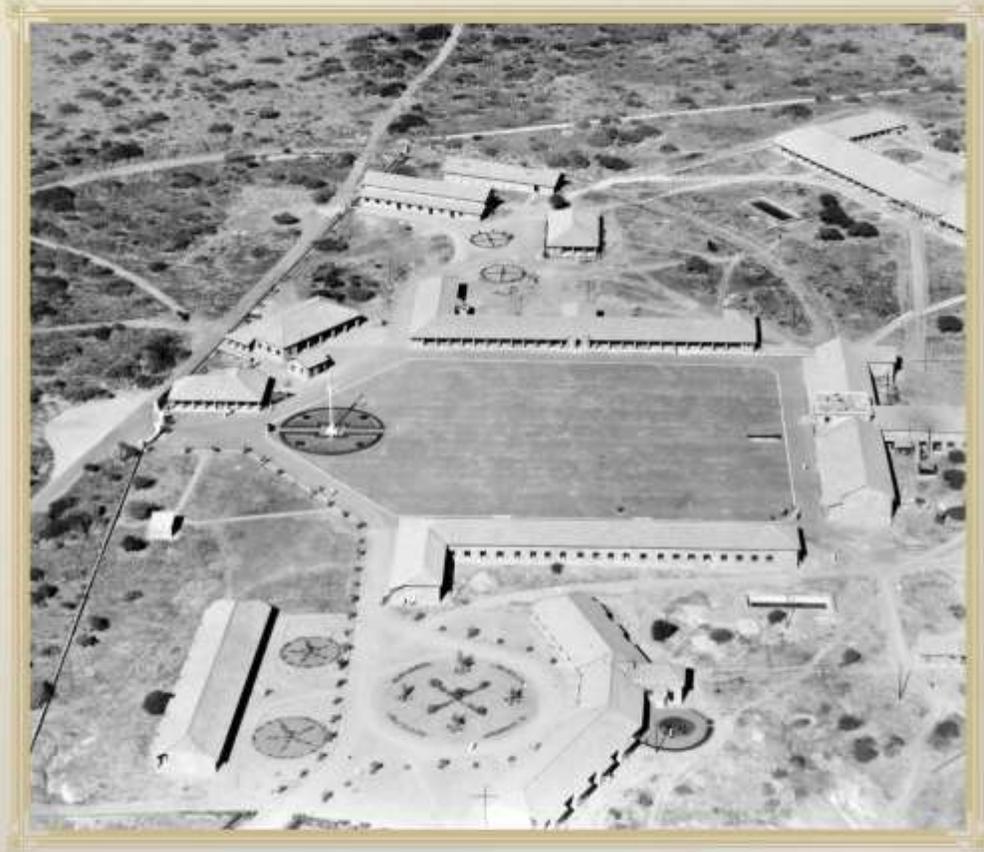
I met the Rai Sahib outside his house when walking past it. He stopped and congratulated me on the efficiency of the arrangements for the opening ceremony – "The best run ceremonial that I've ever seen in Jamnagar.

Everyone knew what to do and when to do it. It was perfectly organised...."

This coming from one of the most efficient and able men in the State is a compliment worth having. I said of course the real credit must go to the Guard, Band and Buglers.

"No no, they only did what you told them to do".

I.N.S VALSURA GROWS ASPACE



Friday 25th December 1942 - Christmas Day,

Thursday 16th September 1943

Friday 25th December 1942
Christmas Day

I am surprised that this is such a Christmassy Christmas. An extra special breakfast with sardines and bacon and eggs. I took all the games we have been given to the school; ping pong, chess, monopoly, volleyball, baseball, hockey, draughts, darts, dominoes, quoits etc.

This evening, I am to present my officers before a dinner at the Palace.

Saturday 26th December 1942
Boxing Day

An excellent "party" at the Palace. Fifty or sixty people were there. Everyone enjoyed themselves immensely and it was clear that HH intended (and succeeded) in making it as like an English Christmas as possible. Got to bed at 0430, the latest for a year or more.

Sunday 27th December 1942

Went to the Palace yesterday evening to the "Pictures". Saw "King Kong". Thought it poor. Today HH gave a shoot – sand grouse – great fun. There were five guns, HH (who looked particularly nice in a brownish sari – she had also a very nice tweed overcoat – it was jolly cold driving out to the spot). The Resident, Moto Bhai, Sursinhji and myself; total bag fifty four. I got eight and should have had more. HH topped the bill most appropriately with a nicely rounded twenty including a right and left. I am I know a bad shot but she always conveys surprise at the smallness of my bag with a "I'm sure you must have had more, I saw you hitting them" – so convincingly that I might think more of my prowess were the evidence to the contrary not so conclusive. We had an excellent lunch in the open. We were all ravenous and there was amongst other things an excellent curry.

After lunch we got into cars and went after buzzard. The cars went straight across country over rocks, stones and here there and everywhere. It was amazing. We got no buzzard but flushed two and I saw one more. On the way home we were taken all round the Ranjit Sagal, the new dam which is now Jamnagar's water supply.

The Resident was most amusing at lunch. A good conversationalist, he got going well on his contacts with the Navy in Mesopotamia in the last war. He was a soldier there and apparently had more than one trip on HM Ships: apparently also he was very well looked after. A spiritedly told and amusing series of reminiscences. Altogether a very very enjoyable day.

Monday 25th January 1943

The Jam Sahib returned today. He is looking very well. Had a word for everyone. Stepped out of the aeroplane and talked here and there and everywhere. He said: "The war would be over this year, he had showed the photographs of the opening ceremony to the Cabinet, he had paid 42 shillings for a simple pigskin photo wallet". All this when he must have been aching to see his wife. I felt the impact of this personality. He is really a tremendously strong character and a most attractive person.

Monday 22nd February 1943

Going to “Colours” today I was delighted to see a bugler there. Was the man we’ve been training so hard a success already? I thought that he was going to turn out a failure? The Officer of the Day (OOD) gave the order “Sound Of” and first the “Alert” and then the “General Salute” were beautifully played and finally the “Carry On”. I felt as one who had assisted at a miracle, this magnificent metamorphosis amazed me beyond thought or hope of analysis. The explanation however is simple, the bugler was not our trainee but a new man who arrived with a draft last night. He has been a bugler for two years and a Bandmaster bugler for one. All morning, I’ve been going about with my head in the clouds listening to “Stand Easy”, “Out Pipes”, “Defaulters”, “Officers”, “Call”, “Secure” and “Cooks” being sounded off. This man will train up our other fellows. I did not realise till now how keen I was for this. This orderly shipshape way of doing things, though for the last 20 years my life has been delineated by the silvery notes of the bugle. It is true that I have schemed very hard to build up my bugling strength; in fact rarely have I had to “scheme” so diligently, consequently now the thing has been given me as it were on a plate, it’s difficult to set a limit to my delight.

Tuesday 23rd February 1943

Dined at Pratap Palace. General and Lady Auchinleck and the A.O.C Sir Richard Pierse are staying with their Highnesses. The General shot a 7 foot 4 inch panther in the afternoon.

I am very pleased with my “Listeners” and “New Statesman’s”, they fill in a very real gap. It is surprising how living out here tends to cut one off from the doings and thoughts at home. Important as the home problems, the home ways of thought are those on which we were brought up and moulded and if one does not think of Beveridge and Malvern one ceases to think much on sociological problems. I missed Malvern. I wonder what happened there? All I know about it is from correspondence in the “New Statesman” – alternative to Christianity involving Professor Joad who has apparently urged the Church to cease to teach the creeds and to abandon the ritual of the Holy Eucharist in order to draw people back to the Church.

“First painters painted things as they saw them emotionally, then as they intellectually saw them, ... then according to rules derived from the work of more intelligent painters. This stage was called “Academicism ... Appeared. Impressionism – as a way of painting things as one saw them at first glance without attention to detail.... followed by post impressionism ... to paint things with a conscious disregard of how one knew them to be. In 1908 cubism designs based on the prism as the special source of colour appearance. Futurism represented the painters’ dynamic private emotions as affected by vision. Then came Expressionism.... Had its origin in Bergsonian psychology.... a yielding to “violent storms of emotion beating up from the unconscious mind”. Dadaism Surrealism.... express anti-conventional fancies with realistic ardour to produce a frisson or shudder, candles rising like sand worms from the shore”. From “The Long Weekend” a social history of Great Britain 1918 -39 by Robert Graves and Alan Hodge.

Wednesday 24th February 1943

Rode at 0815. Very nice. "The complete memoirs of George Shelston" and "Queen Elizabeth" have arrived. I've already re-read the "Foxhunting Man"

- Delightful though wistful.

Saturday 27th February 1943

My first dinner party. A very simple affair as it must be with war time economy knives, forks and crockery. Still it was fun and the staff and I enjoyed it as I hope my guests did, these were Anne Lunaas, and Cathy and Geoffrey. Anne was dressed in Norwegian national costume, while silk blouse with high neck and little button-like silk decorations and short frilly sleeves. Green skirt, red embroidered sort of waistcoat round which a green embroidered scarf. A white carnation in her hair. We all talked and laughed a lot and it was fun. The staff produced with the fish a wonderful potato "duck" red beak, wings of onion and general shape excellent. I ate a wing (so did Anne). I heard afterwards that the cook fell down in my compound.

55 officers and men arrived last night from Bombay. Out total strength is now 163.

Sunday 28th February 1943

Granny Sayers' birthday. I hope she got my cable. Sent a cable to Prue telling her how delighted I am to hear that Frank is alive. (Editors note: This refers to Admiral Sir Frank Twiss who became 2nd Sea Lord, he had been captured by the Japanese in March 1942 when HMS Exeter was crippled and held as a POW)
Played golf with George.

"Recognising the futility of war as much as ever, I dimly recognise the human weakness that makes it possible. For I spend my time with people who are for the most part too indolent-minded to think for themselves". Sherston's Progress.

Monday 1st March 1943

Rode before breakfast. A thick fog but nonetheless enjoyable. Read a most interesting article on the report of the Scott Committee, on methods of using and preserving the land. It must be farmed to keep the beauty it has naturally acquired, the loveliness of the English village, as opposed to the blatant horror of ribbon building. The article showed photos of Widdicombe (spelled Widcombe) and opposite to it "Ribbon development encroaching on agricultural land at New Eltham Kent"!!! The village craftsman is to be looked after and there is to be a revival or creation of guilds of craftsmen. No one is to be allowed to build in the open country without showing very good reason for it. It all seems to breathe hope and sanity and a return from the beastliness of over industrialisation.

Received an air graph dated 22nd March 1943 from Trishy.

Tuesday 2nd March 1943

Divisions this morning for the first time, hitherto and numbers have been insufficient. Went off quite well; but I am longing to get the loudspeaker equipment going, it will make a very great difference.

I went to the Solarium today to have some heat treatment for my foot. There I heard the Hindu legend of the sun in a chariot with only one wheel, going at either the speed of light or the fact that one disc can contain the colours of the spectrum and be spun up to appear white. With seven horses giving the seven bands of the spectrum, the horses are controlled by reins in the form of serpents introducing the idea of wave notion. The Charioteer has no lower limbs and the chariot is supported by nothingness corresponding to the all pervading ether across which the sun's rays come.

The Solarium is wonderfully well equipped. The apparatus is all French.

Mills showed me a scorpion in a glass and I hear that a snake has been seen in Dixon's compound.

I am reading "Quest by Infeld, a Pole, a Jew and a physicist. It is interesting because it shows how miserable was the lot of Jew in Poland before the war. He was only happy when at Cambridge (England) and Princeton (USA). We must not be blind to the fact that our present allies however gallant do not really subscribe to the principles of democracy as we know them. It is quite unthinkable that a Jew could on leaving England reflect that he now felt free from the oppressive beastliness of hate, deep seated virulent hate. Infeld works with Einstein and has where needed for the story expounded a little on the differences between the physics of matter and the physics of the field. I see an object, I may say it is made up of minute particles, electrons held together by certain forces, or I may say that field is all pervading but at one point it is denser, there is a concentration of energy there which makes my mind conscious of the object. All mildly interesting.

Thursday 4th March 1943

Rode this morning. An article in the New Statesman of 16th September to the effect that the entry of Russia into the war made an Allied Victory a possibility. Without this it might have been stalemate with Britain a lone island on the fringe of a Nazi Europe and with us going on and on in a never ending struggle so exhausting that there would be nothing left of us at the end. The article maintained that after the collapse of France and before the entry of Russia our only hope of avoiding this stalemate would have been to ferment a rising in Europe and to back it. Now that we had this heaven sent chance given by the Russian resistance, we should go ahead with the 2nd front in Europe before it was too late. It was admitted to be a gamble but less than the gamble of waiting and doing nothing. The views though extreme were moderately expressed.

We are to lose our best Petty Officer Ghulane Haider. A very good influence and a good hockey player. A great pity.

Friday 5th March 1943

The Ships' Company marched past in column. This is normal Friday routine though it is the first time we've done it. Quite good.

I found that someone had poured disinfectant into the effluent. Annoying as it will stop the oxidising action. Dealt with the Medical Officer. Small error in the punishment book. Three request men, one for a badge, one for rating as AB, one to transfer from the Cook Branch to Engine Room. It appears that he was wrongly enrolled as a cook. Anyhow, I think cooks get a curious deal as it takes

6 solid years to become a Leading Cook and the pay is no different from other branches, whereas as a Leading Steward only takes 3 1/2 years. I have written up about it.

It is my day for signing books. Apart from the punishment book referred to above, I found from the "Admission and discharge book" that an EA broke his wrist a few days ago due to fooling about in the back of a lorry. Just the sort of thing I should have been told about. There have been some fatal accidents in Portsmouth due to this sort of thing and the orders there are very strict on the subject. However, this book signing is an invaluable check. Saw the Taugye running for the first time today. It is certainly a very sweet running machine.

Thursday 11th March 1943

Sent Trishy a cable yesterday to arrive for 16th March, the third anniversary of our wedding. Mary-lu is now 18 months old. Rode before breakfast and saw the tent pegging at the Lancers. Good fun to watch. Geoffrey Clarke did it most successfully. A marvellous eye he has.

Anne told me that HH hoped to see when she drove past the school the other day. I feel very flattered that she should think of me by my Christian name. We now have 188 men here.

I was in my office where there was a loud "woof" – our first demolition practical had gone up in a quite nice explosion – 1 1/2 lbs of TNT.

An interesting article in the New Statesman called "Salvage for the Soil", it maintains that the soil everywhere except in China is becoming more and more unfruitful, because in this age of tractors fewer animals work on the land and artificial manures are not putting in as much enrichment as the plants take out. If however man was to contribute his share the balance would be redressed. This is done in China and in England at Leatherhead and at Maidenhead by composting sewage with any refuse. Sir John Russell valued the excreta of the UK at 7 shillings and 9 pence per head a year with 45.2 millions therefore at £17,500,000. All pathogenic bacteria is disposed of as the sewage is composted at 160°F. "You could literally handle it without the slightest distaste". I found this article particularly interesting as we have water borne sewage with septic tanks here. The system has given some trouble and so with the Doctor I've had to learn something about it. Also, it so happened that I'd just been reading a novel called "Sugar in the Air", a romance hinging on synthetic sugar production.

Friday 12th March 1943

A year ago today I was in Poole with Trishy waiting to take off for India. She certainly is a wonderful woman and although this year has been closely packed with incident I can remember 12th March 1942 very clearly. Dear girl.

The march past today (2nd time we've done it) was really a great improvement on our maiden effort. The guard is really good. The Jam Sahib returns today and I'm hoping that we'll be able to put up a smart guard when and if he visits us.

I'm also plotting to ask him to dine in the Mess and the Maharani to pay us an afternoon visit.

Saw Baloo this morning about the new hockey ground. It will be well surfaced. I never realised how delighted he is that I told Her Highness that he had done a really good job on the Quarterdeck. Apparently, he has been sent for and thanked and has never forgotten it. My stock with him therefore is very high.

Tuesday 23rd March 1943

Yesterday played our 1st game on the new hockey pitch. It really is excellent. Today played our 1st game on the new soccer pitch, which also is first class.

A keenly contested inter part match Jervis (EA) v Hawkins & Drake (Senior Torpedo men). The latter just won and as they scored the winning goal they leaped in the air with excitement.

Have finished the 1st volume of "The Seven Pillars of Wisdom". In a letter to Trishy I wondered if Lawrence had ever been studied as a military strategist by the soldier brains of the country. I thought the parts where he was lying ill with dysentery and boils in his tent, and where he conceived the plan which resulted in the capture of Akaba (Ch: 33) particularly good as were also Ch: 58 and 59. His line of thought was very like that which is accepted today. During my staff course we "did" Tamenberg & Allenby's campaign. Lawrence was perhaps rather too unusual for the formal pre-war soldier.

Sunday 28th March 1943

Went to the Club to see the final of the tennis doubles. After this there was some exhibition play by Max Ellmer, Geoffrey, Sursinji (uncertain of the spelling but believed to a friend of the Jam Sahib's family known as S later in the diary) and HH The Maharaja of Burruwanni. This was really good.

When presenting the tennis cup (which was a really imposing thing at least 2' high) HH said that he was glad to see so many of the Services here and although he's heard that sailors couldn't swim, yet there we were - "Ducks" to be challenged at all games. The reference to the swimming arose from a note which I had that morning written to the PA asking if HH and the Club Members would have any objection to our hiring the swimming back for a day a week for swimming instruction. My letter started off "It is a regrettable fact that a large number of sailors cannot swim". HH was most amused and we will have our concession at whatever figure I like to fix. After the tennis he asked me to come along to the Palace and sent his car for me. He was certainly in great form and I seemed more than usually popular as when the Maharani arrived he said "Look darling, Commander Ward is here" before she had had much chance to say anything.

We were sitting out on the lawn and it was getting dark. After a while he said "Come over and sit by me Ward and talk to me". I shamelessly asked him questions to which he

very kindly replied and was (as usual) extraordinarily interesting about Churchill and I told him frankly where I disagreed with him. About America, American soldiers, and above all about possible American economic policy. About the Princes, Ghandi, Congress, his projected visit to America and its object. Our post war PM and our post war policy. India and the half-fed man and the totally unfed man. The merchants and the future. I left at 2200 when the party broke up and was so interested in cogitating on what he's said that I had little appetite for dinner. Before I left I asked HH the Maharani to come and have a look round the school.

This is the first largish party I'd been to since I'd given up drinks for Lent. My willpower was sorely tried but won through alright with no question of failure.

Monday 29th March 1943

Their Highnesses arrived at about 2000 with apologies. I had only expected the Maharani. As it was rather late I took them for a quick drive round the Quarterdeck showing canteen, PO's quarters and searchlight room on the way. Then to my quarters. HH sat in my usual chair and the Maharani on the sofa and I next to her. In the course of conversation I said that Lawrence (TEL) must have been tough as he had stated: a scorpion had stung his arm several times in a night, they had been forced to drink from a well which the Turks had polluted with dead camels, at another time they had had to drink water covered with green scum and finally he had covered 1500 miles on a camel in one month which seemed to me to be a really tremendous performance.

HH disposed of all these whilst apologising for doing so since TEL could not rebut him. HH said he knew and admired Lawrence greatly but he was prone to exaggeration. Taking them in turn: a scorpion stings once like a bee, no Arab would ever pollute a well even in war, water covered green is often quite good and 1500 miles is not much.

After ? of an hour hour I took them over to the Ward Room, where they delighted the Officers and ended by the Maharani's asking them all to dinner on Wednesday next – the whole establishment of officers. A very jolly evening.

Wednesday 31st March 1943

CPO Cook, our last instructor to arrive from the UK and an excellent footballer, told me that he was in the 21st Flotilla with CTM Pizey (now a Captain "D" and DSO) in the attack on the Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prinz Eugen. They got two torpedo hits. He told me also that they were bombed by a "Hampden" and had two torpedoes let off at them by a "Beaufort" fighter. I was rather surprised that this affair was mentioned in "Bomber Command Continues", though some people certainly have thick hides.

Dixon has completed the exponential loud speaker horn and we tried it out on top of the Tower, it really is excellent for sound but I'm not at all sure that I like it for looks, it certainly does cut up the simple straight lines of the Tower.

Thursday 1st April 1943

Last night the Officers of "Valsura" and their wives were dined by their Highnesses at the Jam Bungalow on the lawn. It was a most successful and happy party and I think everyone enjoyed themselves immensely. I know did. Besides ourselves (and we were 12) Bill and Mrs, KuKu and Mrs, Max, Frank Tarrant, Anne, "Auntie", Geoffrey & Mrs, Colonel Gosnell (down on a tour), Sursinji (S) and the two sons of HH of Cutch, 28 all told. The party however was in our honour. Anne told me that the Maharani had told her to put a nice frock on as "my friend Michael Ward is coming to dinner".

HH was in great form as Colonel G was from HH's his old regiment and known to be a good fellow. I sat next to the Maharani who wore a power grey and deep blue sari, one of the nicest I've seen but as she has 1000 of these it's difficult to feel adequately about what is after all but 1/1000 of the sum total. I agree that this is quite illogical.

We stayed talking in the garden till past midnight and then Her Highness suddenly remembered it was April 1st and there was some "to do" with ADC. I think the Jam Sahib became aware that there was something on. However, Col G presented HH with a small parcel as a present. He tumbled to it immediately and refused to open it. Their HH's then retired and after a little talk to the party broke up.

Mrs Kuku then got into her car and gave a scream and jumped out. There was a frog in it; the frog had previously been in HH's parcel. As she screamed, the lights in the window behind the car came on and there were the Jam Sahib and Sahiba leaning on the window sill laughing. It was extremely well done.

Today the Doctor "pulled our legs" very well. He sent the First Lieutenant (No.1 in naval parlance) a chit saying that there was cholera in Jamnagar and could he please inoculate the officers at 0930 and the men at 1430. No 1 arranged it all and showed me the chit. We drank it in.

The weather is now "hotting up".

I was told today that Frank Tarrant was under the impression that I am an Admiral. Whilst flattering to my austere and awful presence, I did not know I looked as old as that. However, it has its very humorous side, seeing where and when the remark was made.

Saturday 3rd April 1943

An Instructional Meeting this morning which I hope will bring forth good fruit. This afternoon a railway engine came into our private siding for the coal trucks, six of them. The curves are new and I gather rather sharp and the engine came squeaking round the bends, the rails making quite a loud "bang" as the engine passed over the joints. In a childish way it was all very thrilling to one who never before had a private siding.

At tea I read the Reader's Digest condensation of "Our hearts were young and gay", Cornelia Otis Skinner and Emily Kinbrough. Very. very amusing in a skittish way.

In general, the Readers' Digest is nothing like as good as it used to be. It has, I think becoming more sensational and less authentic. It is a great pity but I am now becoming so sceptical that I will probably not renew my subscription.

Played our first football match versus Motor House. We were lucky to win by a penalty goal.

Monday 5th April 1943

Got the following telegram from Leslie: "Hope to arrive Bombay Sunday. Staying Taj coming Jamnagar. Signed Sayers. It is possible he may arrive by this evening's train so will send the car for him.

Thursday 8th April 1943

No Leslie on Monday or Tuesday; on the latter day I sent him a telegram to the Taj. "Delighted to see you". On Wednesday he arrived. I'd sent the lorry down on each day on the off chance. He looks very well and fit and is the same exuberant Leslie as ever. He has a fortnights' leave.

Saturday 10th April 1943

We were asked to dine at the Palace last night. Leslie was most impressed with HH who was in great form. Duleep had just returned from Bombay with his wife. I sat next to Her Highness and Mrs Duleep. They had got off the train and come straight along to dinner. They both looked very charming. The Maharani asked me how the second "Jamnagar Flag March" had turned out. She is always most kind and interested. HH talked about Rommel. We wondered if he would be ordered to get away himself and leave his men and if he would do so if told to. As an "old soldier" HH holds very definite views on such things. He was also most interesting on his personal contacts with Marshall and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, and Lord Nuffield, Churchill, Amery & Stafford Cripps. He certainly says what he thinks.

Her Highness told me that it was rather an occasion as Nawamagar has taken over another "taluka". She is to take up her golf again. I imagine she could be good as she tells me an amusing lot of stories of the Jam Sahib teaching her.

Colonel Tanes and the DPS came to see the establishment today. Leslie bathed with Max Elmer and saw the Kukus (short for Kukuljevics). He is certainly meeting people. "Rounds" today good. Anne and "Auntie" came to dinner.

Sunday 11th April 1943

Our guests were in really tremendous form Anne particularly was full and overflowing with laughter and bubbling with talk. She certainly is spontaneity itself. It was a very good party.

I asked DPS to come to "Divisions" today. He saw the men in their Sunday best and then they marched past – quite well. We discussed a number of outstanding points. Mr Down is to get his RN pay and allowances and 270 rupees a month: and I am to be paid RIN rates retrospectively. These are up before the SofS now. DPS appeared to be most impressed with the place and said that it was "first class" – just as he left. I really am proud of it.

Friday 16th April 1943

Leslie has just left. He is even now about a quarter of a mile away speeding towards the station, Bombay and the East. Good luck to him. It has been a most successful visit and I've enjoyed every minute of it. He is a most charming and delightful person.

Yesterday Anne arranged a rather nice thing for Leslie – she got up a small bathing picnic and we left here at 1630 (I gave them tea) and motored to Sihan where we bathed. It was great fun with a canoe and a boat. The cottage and gardens have expanded enormously. We went and looked at the immense aerodrome of Khambhalia and then motored back by moonlight. We all really enjoyed it. Arrived here at 2200 and dined, dirty but deliciously tired but with the sad feeling that Leslie must be off tomorrow and we both wondered when we would meet again. It was nice of him to come all this way – 6 days' journey, three here and three back.

We talked like wildfire until the lights went out at 2330 and after undressing we just finished off our talk by lantern.

It certainly has spoiled me this week of charming and civilised company and I miss him already a lot. It's when I come back to the bungalow for lunch and tea and the thought of dinner alone. However, I must re-accustom myself to things as I did before. I suppose it is because he is Trishy's brother and because he brought her so near that I find it rather hard to re-accustom myself and re-adjust to the old "single" way of life.

Monday 19th April 1943

Rode at 0715. It should have been lovely but unfortunately was foggy. The first "early" ride this year. Geoffrey and Major Narainsingh came to see me and the school at noon and Malcolm Sinclair at tea time. New palms for the garden arrived.

Wednesday 21st April 1943

The front part of the school, that opposite to the Offices, Ward Room and my bungalow is now beginning to look really nice as day by day the garden grows.

This afternoon the "Officers and Instructors" played the Ships Company at hockey and won 3-2. It was a very good game, keen rivalry but played in excellent spirit throughout. Six officers and five instructors made our side. The officers formed the defence – Smith in goal. Doctor and myself backs, Mills, Anandkel and Down halves and Schoolie centre forwards. I should have said seven officers and four instructors. Schoolie played an excellent game and the rest of us were not at all bad. Combined well. Glad to say I did not by any means disgrace myself. Have had a wonderfully good bath and am now feeling grand.

Friday 23rd April 1943

The story of the first Good Friday must be one of the grandest, yet simplest in the world. The tremendous drama is told with an austere simplicity and a beauty of description wholly worthy of the theme. The Last Supper and the inauguration of the Sacrament of

Remembrance – the knowledge that He was so soon to be betrayed by one of his friends – denied by another. The quietness of the Garden and the awful intensity of His prayer. The arrival of the mob – and the dignity of His response “.. Come ye out as against a thief with swords and staves” – Peter warming himself by the fire before the denial, no words could be added to the climax of that scene “and he went out and swept bitterly”. Weak Herod, weaker Pilate, priests and rabble and the contrasts of that terrible night stand out in black and white, “not this man but Barabbas” – imprisoned for sedition and murder”. “I find no fault in him” – “Crucify him” – “I will let him go” and the “voices of these and the chief priests prevailed”.

To cavalry – “weep not for me, but weep for yourselves” “to the mountains fall on us and to the hills cover us”. Those three crosses on the skyline two malefactors, one, the Son of Man “Truly this was a righteous man”.

I wonder if in all history the dignity and simplicity, the terrible and the grand can anywhere be found to equal this story.

Saturday 24th April 1943

Anniversary of HH’s accession. Rode first thing. I had sent a note of wishes and congratulations yesterday: to which I got a very nice reply. Dined at the Palace. It was quite a large party, about 50 people. A Deanna Durbin film followed.

Sunday April 25th 1943 ***Easter Sunday***

Had a hard forenoon looking round and making out a last list of things to be done à la Allan Peachey. A wonderful mail today – 8 letters, five from Trishy, one from Derby (my father's father), one Bobs (my father's sister) and one Leslie.

Tuesday 27th April 1943

The Admiral came to see our hockey match which was quite the best I’ve seen in Jamnagar even though we lost 2-1. We’ve never played a more sporting nor the Jamnagarees a more scientific and sound game. We were two down for most of the time but never lost our “punch and go”. It was a very well attended match we must have had over 200 spectators, most of them “Valsuras” who shouted themselves hoarse for the ship and were really tremendously enthusiastic.

I dined at the Palace. The Admiral and the Polish Consul General were the only other guests. HH heard Duleep (sitting opposite) talking to me about amateurs in cricket. I’d said something about Ian Peebles or someone and HH said “Now Frank” you tell Ward the story of Plum Warner, Kotze - the South African whirlwind bowler and yourself”. It is a really magnificent story and has been told more than once I should guess. He does it wonderfully well with actions so good that you can almost hear the ball whizzing in the air. Tarrant was hit twice by the ball which in the first over of the game had bowled two men out and with the next two had knocked Tarrant out. He was revived with brandy.

“Plum – his face was white as your coat Commander, his knees shaking together”.... This led to other reminiscences and after a while we were quite sore with laughter.

Duleep gave a very neat contribution. Sussex playing Hampshire, Duleep fielding 1st ship, caught Lord Tennyson. "How's that?" – "Not out".

An over or two later Tennyson started for a run but Duleep fielded the ball and threw it at the wicket – it missed but hit his Lordship's big behind and was considered not to be an accident. He looked very sour and fed up until one of the Sussex professionals said "May I rub it very hard?". He then saw the joke and laughed. It was a very good evening with Tarrant in a torrent of fascinating reminiscence, the Jam Sahib in great form and Her Highness more charming than ever.

The Admiral arrived punctually at 1000, inspected the Guard and the Ship's Company at Divisions, presented the Inter-Divisional Trophy – took the salute at the match past – then walked round the Establishment. It really looked well. The men were well turned out and the place clean. Particularly good:- buglers and guard, the fire buckets and the "details". In the Wardroom afterwards he talked away interestingly. Signed the visitors' book. As he went he said "Well Ward you've got a good show here". He also asked if I'd mind having my term extended beyond the year I anticipate. I said no. I really do love this place and am fascinated with the job. I really was extremely pleased with the appearance of "Valsura" the bearing of the men – the bearing of the men and in particular with their enthusiasm over the hockey. I really feel that they are getting a very healthy spirit. It is a most exhilarating thought.

Thursday 6th May 1943

Rode before breakfast. Yesterday and today we held our 1st sports meeting. The men are very keen. I'm told that it is an Indian characteristic to be keener on individual events than on the team shows. It was naturally a simple enough meeting and nothing was very spectacular but it was a team show and enthusiasm was great. We had 100, 200, 400 yards races, two relays, one mile, cricket ball, long and high jumps, tug or war (in which I pulled) and putting the weight. The "trophy" was won by ST trainees "Drake & Hawkins" with 77 points as against "Jervis" with 46 – times and distances were sound but not spectacular. I gave away the trophy. A nice little meeting.

Today sanction for the use of the club swimming bath has come through, also for the telephone and the static water tanks. I hear that the Admiral was much impressed with "Valsura" on his visit.

Friday 7th May 1943

We are all very pleased and greatly encouraged by the Admiral's very general tribute. Have finished "The Seven Pillars". Over the whole a disappointing book. "HM Corvette" (Nicholas Montserrat) on the contrary is a surprisingly good book. A simple every day wartime story with heroic patches all extremely well handled and very very true to life. The touches of the Mess deck wit, and the descriptions of men swimming (or trying to) in an oil fuel covered sea were particularly good. I have just read also with great enjoyment Carola Omans' "Britain against Napoleon". A good book which treats a well known period from quite a new angle. The "gossipy bits" of course add a spice and an authenticity to the story and I feel that this is a book that could only have been written by a woman. I shut it with a sigh as the curtain fell on the finale of a most noble period. The atmosphere

of the book was so realistic that I felt sad – sad that these great figures which had so mightily filled the stage were not gone and finished with. Pitt was dead and so was Charles James Fox, Nelson and George III and now Bonaparte himself. It was all over the close of a titanic struggle and the end of a great epoch. The veterans of the Peninsula were disbanded and Nelson's "band of brothers" was fast dying out. Soon the stories of a rabble mob were to rattle ungratefully on the iron shutters of Apsley House.

Monday 10th May 1943

Instruction is settling down better each day. I went round the classes this afternoon. They were mostly at practical instruction and it certainly did my heart good to see the amount of practical work going on.

In Trishy's letters which arrived yesterday was a particularly interesting report of a lecture by General Sir William Dobbie on the Defence of Malta. He attributed the success of that magnificent defence to answered prayer, the hand of God was over the island helping the defenders and hindering and frustrating the attack. Such sublime faith is as wonderful as it is rare. How marvellous to have it! How sadly we most of us need even a tithe of it. What peace, what strength, what direction, what purpose and what sustaining courage it must give. The most elusive and yet the most desirable thing in the world.

Reading "A Leaf in the Storm", Lin Yutang. A novel of war swept China. I never realised so clearly before the hideous excesses of the Japanese soldiers. It will do me good to read p: 208-210 again and again. It is really tremendous this conception of the Buddha, awful in his serenity and his infinite wisdom..." the basis of enlightenment was to see life clearly -. But to see it clearly one had to get rid of the foolish destruction between self and others, between you and me. This enlightenment makes possible and emancipation from all sorrows and evil passions. For we are living in a world of phenomena which is created by the senses and our finite intelligence. Only in this world does the distinction between individuality and generality exist". Here is a line from the Laukavatia prayer:

"As those reviewed the world with thy perfect intelligence and compassion it must seem to thee like a dream of which it cannot be said: It is permanent or it is indestructible for being and non being do not apply to it".

"Kill hatred and thou shalt have no more sorrow. It is hatred that devour your goodness.... How foul is thy dead body; how putrid is a dead corpse! But thou, O fool clingest to it as does a maggot to extremity." (From the Song of English Enlightenment and the Dhyana for Beginners)

I had previously always considered that a religion should be so simple that it can be readily understood by all sorts and conditions of men. I suppose that this is true but it must be graduated so that though its simpler aspects satisfy the simpler mind it still has enough depth to convince the more enquiring and sceptical persons.

Monday 17th May 1943

I heard yesterday from Trishy that Cawse (my grandmother's butler) died suddenly of a tumour on the brain. How very sad. He has been 20 years at "Alston" and was really a

part of the place. He will be greatly missed. I can hear his soft Devon burr in my ears as I write. I can see his grin.

I have been asked to play for the Officers and Perry Officers at hockey. This is real promotion and I hope on merit. The match is a league one, the 2nd of the second round.

Have been busy all day on an inquiry into the loss of some clothing stores. A nuisance. Rode this morning, very pleasant. Am reading and enjoying Neale's, "Queen Elizabeth".

Friday 21st May 1943

A day's holiday today. We played a special hockey match versus Motor House which we won 2-1 – our first win – a good and very exciting match. I think our minds will be more in time on the Thanksgiving Day on Sunday. It is hard to realise that we are indeed celebrating one of the greatest victories ever won.

Saturday 29th May 1943

It certainly has been almost unbearably hot and I have wondered why it was so much worse than last year. We have been sweating and getting covered in prickly heat, enduring dust storms and longing for the monsoon to break.

It rained in Bombay on 21st May so possibly we may get it here on or about 7th June. Yesterday we had a few drops, perhaps five minutes of rain, and there was a lot of lightning last night but no rain to speak of. This afternoon it is blowing great gusts, the wind whistling and whirling, buffeting the house and slowing huge clouds of dust before it, so great that everything is quite obscured for a few minutes in these huge dust clouds. It becomes dark. The wind is one moment hot, the next cold. Great dark grey clouds cover most of the sky (where it can be seen), thunder rumbles away overhead but it does not rain – the wind drops and all is quiet and one thinks that at last the rain is about to come but it does not. As I write the wind is whirling the sand and the dust past my window like the aeroplane does on a dusty aerodrome.

There is to be a baseball match if it can be played between the officers on the short course. We have had eight of them here for a week. I asked them to produce a criticism of the place – the five best and the five worst points. These turned out as: the general efficiency of the routines, the helpfulness of the instructors, the games organisation, the availability of the limited transport, the keenness of the divisional officers. The worst things were no warning about the journey (water and food should be brought), lack of fans in classrooms, lack of variety in food menus, bad milk, that they had to carry out the duties of the OOD – and lack of stewards – not our fault. Food and milk really are a difficulty. The milk gets adulterated and I now have it tested and measured weekly on irregular days in the Sick Bay. Action has been taken about the food before they came; whether it will be successful in the end I can't say.

Saturday 12th June 1943

The present Short Course Officers have commented as follows: General bearing and discipline of the ratings is exceptionally high, compared with other RIN establishments, conditions under which officers take the course are conducive to private study, smaller

matters such as price control of tradesmen (shoemaker) are appreciated and attended to, fairly large % of ex-RN on teaching staff and in ships' company allowed to control and discipline ratings according to the rules and methods tried over a long period of years in the older Navy and general helpfulness and friendliness of all the teaching and regulating staff. Criticisms were as follows: Officers to step off first to lead the way at the match post, Scottish pipe and drum marches asked for, all loudspeakers except one to be switched off for marching and no electric fans which we have not got.

We played the Indian Air Force at hockey. We played a mixed XI as they are new and haven't got together well yet. They have some very good undivided players and will make a good side. We won 7-0. I asked the Bennetts and Healings to come in for a "drink". We all seemed to enjoy it.

Whit Sunday

"Special" hymns for this mornings service were 207 "Our blessed Redeemer ere he breathed" and 281 "Lead us Heavenly Father lead us". The latter one of my favourite hymns. I had a "sermon" also – taken from "my current Listener" (28th January) it was the Bishop of Southampton's broadcast to prisoners of war. Text; "Casting all your care upon him". Theme St Paul's real joy during his imprisonment though in poor health, continually shackled, expecting to die(see the epistles to the Ephesians and the Philippians). This happiness came from trust in Him and belief that we can make our wants known to Him by prayer with thanksgiving.

The monsoon broke last night in a really tremendous thunderstorm which lighted the place up as if it were day and flooded the face of the earth. The thunder rolled so loudly that it seemed almost to knock the breath out of one. The damage done is surprisingly small. As few roofs, roads and paths and a little piece of the Quarterdeck washed away. Hundreds of bright red little insects are about. Also white ants which have flown onto the Quarterdeck and now find themselves unable to burrow down and make their nests.

Friday 18th June 1943

HH honoured us by dining in the Mess last night. With him were Moto Bbai, Prince Duleep, Kuku, Max Ellmer and Geoffrey Clarke. HH was in great form and was most interesting. He told me a lot about the fighting in Africa and the standard of some of the new recruits in the Indian Army. I asked him whether the invasion was to be and he replied "as a matter of fact I know so I can't say". He told me we favoured de Gaulle and the American General hence the impasse (Editor's note: I assume this is about dates for the invasion). HH told three excellent stories of his old regiment who must have suffered very heavy losses. We played the National Anthem for the toast of the King and Emperor and the Nawangar State Anthem for HH. I made a short speech to which he replied. After dinner we played "cricket" and although they all took their coats off we won – after that "Tombola" I really think HH enjoyed himself hugely. He left at 0145 and I hear on all sides to day that it was most successful party.

Thursday 24th June 1943

We had an excellent cross country run of about 4 miles – "round the island". There were over 80 starters which is excellent. On Sunday a really dreadful thing took place. Our

liberty men were grossly and brutally assaulted apparently by the Police and as far as I can see without any real provocation. It really does look as if it was an organised affair. Nine of our men were hurt and the number of wounds and their type was appalling. One man was nearly killed. In fact, he lay in a critical condition for 24 hours, with a knife or axe wound in his back which penetrated to the left lung. Luckily he is a man of splendid physique and has made steady and good progress since then. It appears that one of our men for no reason whatsoever was butted on the head entirely without warning by a policeman. He was felled and another policeman blew his whistle and quickly a large number of police appeared armed with loaded sticks, lathis and axes. Another sailor seeing his comrade attacked came to the rescue but was soon beaten down. Eight other liberty men, hearing of the trouble, arrived on the scene to find our two men on the ground surrounded by 10 or 12 police and being beaten. The crowd were some distance away. In spite of being quite unarmed these men succeeded in getting their comrades away and to a hotel, but they were besieged there and the police broke in. Eventually we got all our men to the hospital and the others back to the ship. HH has promised a full investigation and I have had a busy and trying four days. I have stopped all leave and taken various other lines of action. The men have been excellent and we have organised a good deal of entertainment games (of which the cross country above is a sample), cinema, tombola and wireless.

I receive various anonymous letters.

Friday 25th June 1943

I took over the duties of NOIC Kathiawar Coast from Garniss at 1600 today. I now have the Assistant Deputy Judge Advocate here to help me, he seems a nice little fellow. No doubt about it the affair can be one of extraordinary delicacy and complexity. It all depends on how people behave and react.

Our serious case continues to improve. High winds and still no rain.

I had one surface and two airmail cards from Trishy this afternoon. The delightful event of the week in my private life is the receipt of my Christmas present from Granny Lucile – two books – one “The Unrelenting Struggle”, the second volume of Winston Churchill’s war speeches and as James Agate says “a book for all time” and “The Twilight of France” by Alexander Werth, which also looks very good indeed. I’ve re-read some of the speeches – others I’d not read before. The book contains some real gems like “The attack at Taranto”, “Give us the Tools..” and “Westward look the land is bright”. I am delighted with this very clever choice.

My world book this month is “Pied Piper”. The simply told story of a very charming old English gentleman who brought six children across France at the time of the Armistice. His infinite patience and kindness during a most trying period are really wonderful, and a lesson to everyone.

Saturday 26th June 1943

Major Cox came over in the absence of the Resident to discuss this affair (the incident with the police and liberty men). It seems that our line of action is acceptable. We should hold the two courts concurrently with representatives of both sides on each court.

Cox told me also how much importance the Political Department attach to the personal relations in this matter and he said I can say without flattery that HH has a very high regard for you. Good.

In the afternoon I went to see the Garnisses off to Delhi in the evening to see HH. We had a very long session in which it became clear that the view he takes is no less liberal than I anticipated. I think also that the story he has been told is a very different "version" than the one I've heard. I was interested also in the antecedents of the excavating company. He told me that our relations would not suffer and also he acceded to my request that he would tell the Jamnagarees what we sailors really are. That will be first class. For the first time, I refused an invitation (given on the spot) to dinner asking to be excused on account of the concert.

The concert was good, far far better than I anticipated. Someone once said "that a ship without a concert party is like a dog without a tail". We certainly have got something worth wagging. One man really is an excellent mimic and natural and at home on the stage. Actions, movements and expressions first class. We all enjoyed it.

We have a new shipwright PO, who gave one of the best turns, is I'm told a class hockey player, ran very well in our cross country and is obviously a bit of "a character". About 30 I should say and in spite of a small imperial and whiskers is most absurdly like Charles (my father's brother-in-law).

Tuesday 29th June 1943

Max Ellmer came to say "Goodbye". He is off to Patiala for about 6 months. In Delhi he will stay with the A.O.C. There are most certainly "points" about his life. He got in the last eight at Wimbledon 1939. It was nice of him to come.

Our new wireless is just giving news from London – what fun.

I have just been witness of a grand act of moral and physical courage, a risk run for the sake of truth by a slip of a girl – how exhilarating.

Tuesday 13th July 1943

Last night I dined at the Palace. The Resident was down on a flying special visit to talk over this affair. We saw a Shirley Temple film first so dinner did not start till 2220 I had never dined in the Jam Bungalow before so I saw for the first time some of the rather special things there are there. The snuff box which is a secret recess holds one of the four miniatures of some lovely Indian enamel work, the secret for which has since died out. I should say that although he did many a painting, he only did four miniatures. A wonderful jewelled box. Millais "Her First Sermon", a Meissonier and other things.

After dinner we talked things over. HH, the resident and myself. There was not a great deal to say but we did decide to give leave as from tomorrow. The findings of HH's court are not through yet so we must wait till then to decide.

Wednesday 18th August 1943

Left Bombay by the "Kathiawar Mail Train". In my carriage was Brigadier Jackson. He had come to say "Goodbye" – he is retired and is leaving India and somewhat naturally is very sad about it. He had heard that I was in Bombay and ringing the Navy Office learned that I was leaving by this train and so he came the three miles to say goodbye. It was sad and I was quite overwhelmed by it.

It was a busy week. On the way through Rajkot I spent the night at the Residency and talked our "business" over. It was interesting. At dinner I met HH of Porbandar who really is an outstandingly charming person. This is not merely my opinion or rather impression; it is the quite unanimous view of everyone I meet. He very kindly asked me to stay with him in September.

I did a lot of business in Bombay, including meeting the Admiral again and talking over our "business" – that is stage two. I also saw Captain Bell and heaps of others.

Am dentally fit once more and I did a lot of shopping.

The new Director of Training is a Commodore French who promises to be a very live wire and just what is needed.

Friday 20th August 1943

Delighted to be back. French has been here all day and is I think suitably impressed. Certainly the Guard and Buglers as we left on our way to lunch with HH were really good. I could quite easily see that he liked it, and I certainly felt a glow of pride myself. HH was in really tremendous form, and even more entertaining than ever if that is possible. He was most interesting before we left when standing before a picture of their Majesties he talked. French was very enthralled and obviously impressed. I've now noticed the impression he makes on many people. It is quite profound. She also was in a most happy mood.

French himself is interesting. He believes in "the old school tie" or rather he deplores the systematic attempt that has been made to decry it. He talked of heredity and environment and the part they play in building leadership. He has a horror of hypocrisy, especially the sort that makes one pretend to be something they are not. He spoke heatedly of Lytton Strachey debunking the bastions of Victorian virtue. He overflowed and he enjoyed it and interested me greatly. On leaving he said "you can certainly be very proud of your Command". More the way he said it than the actual words which I found so pleasing.

Wednesday 8th September 1943

I was reading in bed at 2335 when Down came over with the really wonderful news that Italy has surrendered unconditionally. How absolutely wonderful. We broadcast it immediately, first in English then in Urdu, and after the second broadcast the operator gave three spontaneous hurrahs.

I've been reading with delight Herbert Agar's "A Time for Greatness". I agree with Leslie, it is very sound. At first, I felt that it merely pointed to the difficulties which we are all well aware of, but now I'm beginning to believe it goes farther than that. In the beginning he said that we had put economic expediency before ethically sound planning: and instanced the adoption of Free Trade. I did and do disagree here because surely it is only now after 100 years, that we are beginning to see what only Disraeli saw, the basic wrongness of the Benthamite argument. I do believe that the Free Traders were not really evil men, they merely could not see that " they were selling our birthright for a mess of pottage". Still it's a very sound book and besides being full of good stuff is well set out.

We are training hard for the annual sports "week" which takes place between Their Highnesses' birthdays. Football, hockey, volleyball, swimming, running, jumping, cycle races, etc. This morning a draft left and as they were leaving I came out of my house to go to Divisions and they gave three cheers for the Captain of "Valsura".

Had the pleasure of telling Down how very well satisfied I am with his work and with the way he fits in with and associates himself with all the activities of the establishment.

Listened for a few minutes to the Moscow radio last night. There was absolutely no mention of any help the Allies were giving, no word of anything they were doing, but Russia this, Russia that, etc. I could not but contrast it with our almost too fulsome admission of all the world owes to Russia. I could not but reflect with sorrow (being fresh from a "Time for Greatness") on the smallness of this nationalistic attitude and view with apprehension the future.

Saturday 11th September 1943

HH's birthday and the opening day of the Great Jamnagar sports' week. The new Ground has been exceedingly well laid out and will become the Stadium. All the competitors were lined up in the centre of the ground, there were schoolboys, the Cadets, State Infantry, Jam Bungalow team, IAF, Bodyguard and two outside teams and Valsura, all in their different coloured sportswear. They then marched past HH. There were two bands and they played very well. After the march past we had the first match, a football match "Valsura" v Jam Bungalow – the crack team of Jamnagar. It was a sporting game with plenty of "go" in it and played in exceedingly good spirit. We won by a penalty goal to nil. A pity we all felt to win that way but on the whole we were the better side. After the match we all went to the Jam Bungalow to have a drink with HH. A very good party. No dinner parties now owing to the good situation in Bengal.

Tuesday 14th September 1943

Played the final of the football competition which we won after a really first class game from the point of view of "go" and "fight back". We were two goals down but managed late in the second half to equalise. We then played our extra ten minutes each way in which we managed to score the extra goal. "Valsuras" turned up to the match in fine style, got together in a compact bunch about 120 strong and cheered incessantly; best of all when we were two down. By way of contrast our opponents, the IAF, were mute except when winning. Lots of people said it was the best game they'd seen in India. It was certainly keenly played though not very skilful. We won because: Down's training has been so very sound; Because we realised that a game is never lost till it's won; The

cheer party was so good and Training, guts and go. HH asked us to drinks after the match.

Wednesday 15th September 1943

The IAF reversed the football decision at volleyball today. They won handsomely, no doubt that they are the better side. I'm glad we got to the finals of the volleyball as well as the football.

After the game HH had arranged a display of Indian folk dancing. This was really fascinating. Done to the slapping of a drum and to Indian music, the dancers have sticks just like a side drum stick, these they clap together in time with the movements which are exceedingly graceful and pleasant to see. Time, movement, crash of the stick, all together all as one. At times the speed increases and the movement rises towards a frenzy, yet it is always pleasing, the rapid movements thrilling the more and made me think of an ancient people warming up for battle. The dances were done by schoolboys and then later by farmers. It was wonderfully interesting.

Thursday 16th September 1943

We were beaten by the farmers' team in the semi-final of the tug of war. They deserved to win. A correspondent of the "Daily Express" is here, a Violet Cressy-Marks (Mrs Fisher), author of "Up the Amazon and over the Andes" and "Journey into China". One of those people, I find it incredibly difficult to like. She "knows everything" including strategy. However, HH took her to see the technical school and asked me to come too. It is very good, hand weaving, carpentry, dyeing and painting.

HH asked me to drive and to bring two officers connected with the sports. They drew lots and Down and Bashir Ahmed came. Small party, enjoyed it. HH thinks that the war in the west will end in 1943. He is interesting on what I call "the American slant" and Winston Churchill's cleverness. Cunningham and Tedder are in supreme command in their own spheres as the PM saw to it that the Americans themselves accepted them. Eisenhower was a little mollified by making Alexander the CinC in the field. Mountbatten was accepted by the Americans as they dote on Royalty. He talked about Gandhi and Jinnah, then Wavell – who got so idolised that it early became impossible to drop him altogether. Will he be a success as Viceroy - wait three months – much for and much against. Mussolini's chin is not as big as all that – his eyes though are fine except when he becomes "inspired" and declaims – then he looks like a madman, he is a madman. We all enjoyed ourselves greatly.

Editor's note:

At this point the diary stops and restarts in a new notebook. However, the story is more concerned with his additional duties as the Regional Naval Officer-in Charge than it is to do with Valsura. During the period from September 1943 until his return to the UK in July 1944 he made extensive tours within the Gujarat Region. Places visited included Porbandar, Kileshwar, Madhavpur, Navibandar, Mangrol, Veraval, Junagadh and Diu. The purpose of these visits was to check on all the war watching stations in the region and port familiarisation.

Between visits, he returned to Valsura which continued to grow apace with more and more courses running and further building to accommodate its rapid expansion. Judging from comments in the diary Valsura quickly established its reputation as a leading R.I.N. establishment. When Vice Admiral Godfrey visited in March 1944, he said it was the best and cleanest establishment in the R.I.N. After his formal visit the Admiral and Mrs Godfrey accompanied by my father to Sasan to see lions and other game and they were lucky enough to witness a lion kill at the first hand. My father wrote: "Not many people have seen a lion except behind bars and fewer still have seen a lion kill. It is an event I will never forget – the magnificent barbarity of it all against the beauty of the forest".

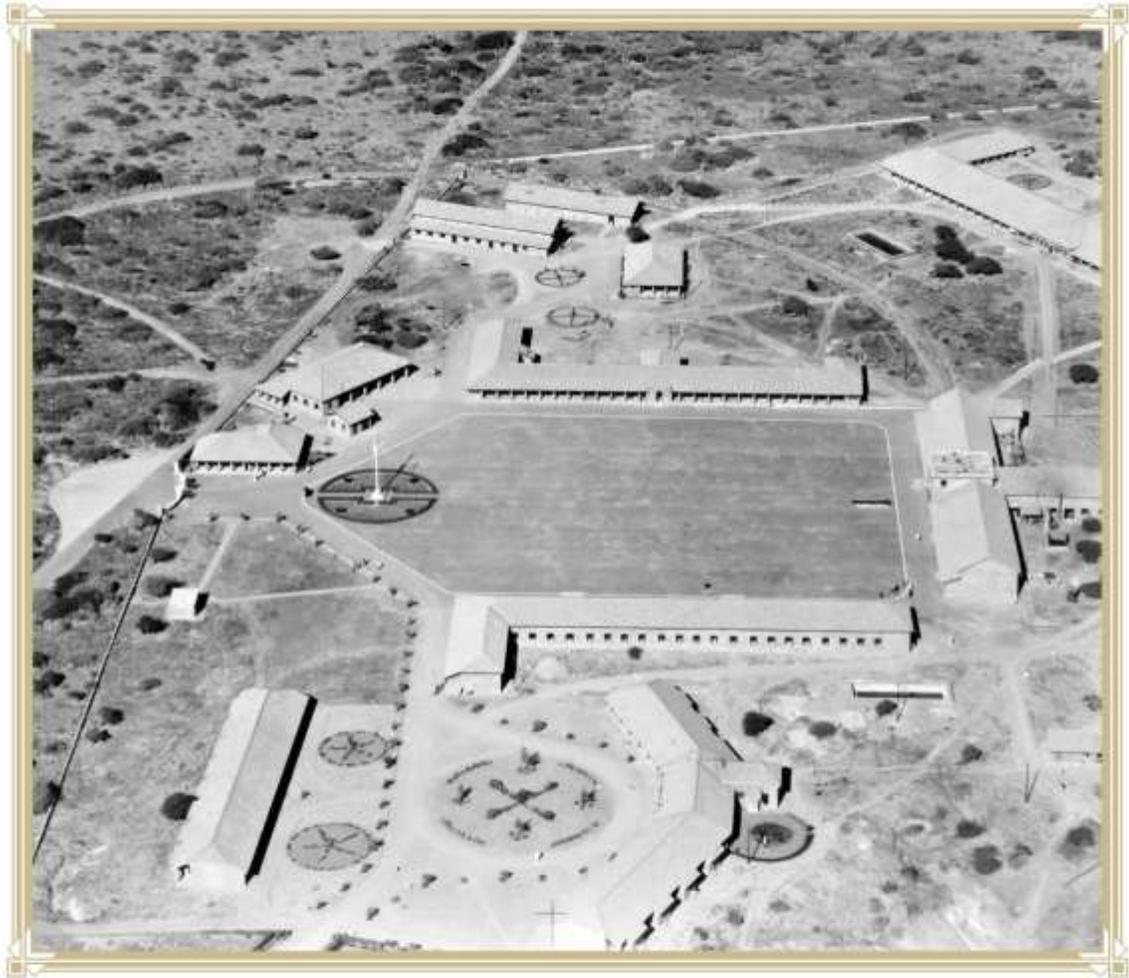
Back at Valsura there was always clearly much to do in a growing establishment punctuated by keenly contested sport matches, particularly hockey, both on and off the base. My father continued to play golf and made several bathing trips to Balachadi. He would call on the Jam Sahib frequently who was a staunch supporter of Valsura throughout his lifetime. Indeed the Jam Sahib made it possible in the first place.

It is clear from my father's notes that he did suffer from both malaria and dysentery at some stage during this period and when he returned to UK (Return to UK now only took 6 days or so as the Mediterranean was now in Allied hands) in July 1944 he received hospital treatment before returning to Valsura in late 1944 where he stayed until early 1946. Unfortunately his diary of his final two years at Valsura has been mislaid.

As an aside I was born on 15th June 1945 and I found a letter from the Jam Sahib congratulating him on the birth of his son and heir!

It has given me great pleasure to edit my father's diaries and I do hope those who read them will enjoy them and reflect favourably on the considerable achievement of founding and getting Valsura "underway".

Robert Ward
October 2012



JOURNEY TO VALSURA 1942 - 1946

