

97.

Bombay.

15.11.45.

Dearest,

I suppose you want to know the latest about despatching, etc? Well, we've progressed a little further along the line - George leaves for Braganza next Tuesday & will probably sail on the Queen of Bermuda the following Friday - that ship is taking a whole crowd of R.N. ratings & will most likely clear out the barracks of men awaiting draft. That's where I, with the next few groups, step in, & I'm hoping that within two - three weeks Jim, Bob, myself & the rest of us up to 36, (not many in this base), will be notified of impending draft.

Geo's crowd had the buzz that they were off tomorrow & all day long there's been the most frightful panic to get gear packed. What with rabbits & foodstuff kitbags & suitcases are filled to capacity, & beyond. The most fantastic containers have been brought into commission, & the Chippy's shop has been crowded with ratings on draft knocking boxes together. The average R.N. has a kitbag, steaming bag, suitcases (2), tool box, (so-called but usually containing grub in tins), & hammock - it must be merry hell on the quayside in U.K. when that lot is dumped & sorted out prior to going through Customs! I shall be able to manage with my

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normal parks because the seat-carpets and such-like
home & certainly wouldn't carry any more with me.

I had a dummy run tonight & found that I can
get parked quite comfortably, altho' I imagine that
I shall be well loaded coming up the line on the way
home - Halbiel, it's wuff it.

Having had time to sort myself out after the
body blow delivered t'other day I can now say that
the lasting effect of such news is one of great
contentment. I can also say, with perfect truth,
that this anticipation of near-demobbing has made
me a thousand times happier than any of the V Days!
- there's a record in that somewhere. Strangely enough

When thinking of my liberty I ~~felt~~ ^{felt} little
scared of the prospect of civilian life, & I wondered
just how it would feel to be out of the clutches
of the Navy - it was at tho' I contemplated escaping
from prison after 20 years ~~and~~ was weighing the
consequences of a life ^{to be} spent in ~~living~~ dodging
wops & erasing the mark of a nasty experience. And
strangely too, altho' I'm not out of it yet that
caustrophobic feeling I've always had in this
outfit has now floated away & I now feel that I
would walk ~~out~~ out of the gate tomorrow & snap my
fingers at the lot of 'em if I wanted to. All
very contradictory, eh sweet?

I have great sorrow in reporting that the mail is worse than it has ever been - only one delivery a week now & that's not complete. I had your 118 today, but no 116 or 117. Thank you for the good wishes, dearest, and the £2. I'm afraid it can't be spent on rounds of beer - no beer. But in any case we don't buy beer just like that - all on coupons of course. Still I can find very good use for them these P.O.s & you're a thoughtful darling. Of course the delay in mail has put me behind with the news, but I gather that Blesington is gradually coming into complete being & you've got to the deck scrubbing stage. Does that mean that you'll move in shortly, Honey? What is a "temporary" cooker? - an old one I suppose. Anything'll do for a start, just so long as it works. I'm hoping that when I reach U.K. I'll be a little ahead of my time & they'll send me on a spot of indefinite leave until my papers are ready. That'll give me time to do a few chores around the joint without utilising the 3 months - altho' I guess there's always something to be done. You're not one of those gals who wants the furniture shifted every day, are you ~~Bob~~ Baby? Pity poor hubby & make it every other day will ya, Hon.

Doris hasn't yet sent me any money for that 3rd. carpet you wanted. Of course it might

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be in the post - still, and, incidentally, I'm assuming that the cash for Mother's is also in the post. ~~£~~
When you next see Doris will you please explain that to date I haven't received it & confirm whether or not she's sent it - there's absolutely no hurry about it, darling, as far as she's concerned, otherwise I'd write to her - just casually mention it & say that time marches on. I wish I had about £300 to spare, I'd buy the loveliest Persian rug you ever saw; but I ain't going to draw out to buy such a luxury. The blokes in one of the carpet shops in Bombay work a racket whereby if you're in England & you want a rug you just send instructions & the cash & they send you one back. The wangle is in the signing of the Export Permit which should be signed by the purchaser in India - they do a spot of forgery. It's quite safe - they're honest folk & send hundreds back to the U.K. this way.

Signing off now Sweetheart. When thinking of a satisfactory ending to this letter it occurred to me that as I'm the husband of a gal in a million, one of the world's treasures & lovely to boot, I must have something the other blokes haven't got, & so, with love & kisses I sign myself

Mullie Secundus.

En Active Service

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MARITIME
Keston
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Welling

Kent.

England.

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