

Harvey - Hang on to this for it would not be
so lost if it got around. ~~lost~~ ¹

7

From: Ensign U. Delano, U.S.N.
To: Commanding Officer
Via: Gunnery Officer
Subject: account of events, December 7, 1941

1. at about 0755, thru the overhead hatch in the Junior Officers' ^{mess} I heard the words, "sound general quarters". "Japanese Air-raid" I immediately proceeded toward my battle-station, the plotting room. When opposite my room, Room #1, Marine Sergeant Willoughby came down the ladder from the main deck shouting, "Japanese Air-Raid". I then ran toward the plotting room along the second deck, down to the third deck thru the forward, inboard armored hatch in A-5115. After crossing the third deck and starting down the hatch to plot, "Fire and Rescue Call" was sounded. Men started to come up the ladder but I proceeded to Plot and awoke all hands sleeping there. Then I went to the Torpedo Tracking Room and ordered Peterson, H.L., FC $\frac{3}{4}$ to cut in the anti-aircraft switchboard immediately, shortly after one heavy explosion to port.

(2)

outboard of the plotting room. Peterson and
and Schneider, FC², attempted to cut in the
AA switchboard but all power to the board
was apparently gone. In the meantime
three more heavy explosions to port
had occurred followed by a steadily
increasing list to port. I then went
into the IC room to investigate and
found smoke pouring down from the
third deck thru the armored hatch to
the third deck. In the IC room, circuit
breakers were popping and oil and water
was coming thru the bulkheads. I
returned to plot and found ~~at~~ the
Tracking Board, Plotting Board, tables, chairs
cots, and moveable equipment jammed
along the port bulkhead because of the
heavy list. In plot, Ens. Holmes was
attempting to keep conditions normal.
Water soon started to come thru
the exhaust trunks of the ventilation
system and the acid smoke fumes
that were pouring in made conditions
severe. I then ordered Plot to be

(3)

abandoned to Central Station. No. water was as high as ^{the} that hatch ^{to Central}, so the ^{water-tight} security was not destroyed. When all hands from plot had reached Central Station thru the starboard forward watertight door, I called back into the Plotting Room group to see if anyone, injured or trapped, remained. Several men, covered with fuel oil, managed to get thru from the IC room. Mr. Duval was so thoroughly oiled up that he was unable to negotiate the steep list and it was necessary to assist him to crawl up the deck using the Main Battery Switchboard as a ladder. The deck was so thoroughly covered with oil that even dry shoes were unable to make any headway.

In Central Station, Zed was set but both WT doors, ^{one} to port and ^{one} to starboard commenced to flood despite the jamming of dogs. The men and officers from the plotting ^{room}

(4)

were unfamiliar with Central Station and together with most of the personnel of Central Station were ordered to abandon thru the conning tower tube. As I reached the conning tower, the bridge was clear except for one or two officers ^{and} ~~several~~ signalmen. Communications with other parts of the ship at all bridge stations had been lost. The captain was lying in the dock from the signal bridge to the starboard side of the platform, around the conning tower, severely wounded. He was in severe pain but no morphine injections were available. Lt. Ricketts then appeared on the bridge and took charge. He directed removal of the Captain to a sheltered position and attempted to ~~effect~~ ^{direct} his removal from the bridge. Wood then reached the bridge that ^{and all able hands were told to reach the TENNESSEE and from} the ship was to be abandoned. Two hands were assigned to machine guns #1 and #2 where there was a good ammunition supply and the guns in working condition but without water

ammunition train.

(5)

supply. The personnel on the bridge, except the machine gunners, then took cover in the conning tower during subsequent bombing raids. During one of these periods, the heavy bomb hits on the NEVADA were observed, throwing a column of debris and smoke well above the mastsheads.

A fire on the port side of the forecath~~le~~ then increased and it was impossible to move in the dense black smoke. I then jumped to the top of Turret II, slid to Turret I and on to the deck. I then removed my clothes, and jumped into the water and swam to shore around the bow of the TENNESSEE.

2. The following observations were ~~particularly noticed~~ ^{made} in the Plotting room during the action:

(a) With oil on the deck^{or on slves} there is no traction on linoleum covered deck plates.

Several
(b) Light switches for below

(6)

Deck battle stations should be placed within arm reach of each entrance to that battle station and each officer and man should be provided with a flashlight.

(c) The men in every battle station should be completely familiar with equipment, fittings and communication facilities in all adjoining battle stations.

(d) All hands in the Plotting Room must be able to cut in all fire control switchboards quickly.

Xelano.

On Sunday morning, December 7, I woke up shortly after seven o'clock. I got dressed, wearing my best white service uniform and best gold, since I had been wearing that outfit the day before while assisting at the Admiral's inspection of the U. S. S. MARYLAND.

Upon getting dressed, I went into the junior officers' mess room and had breakfast, which consisted of pineapple juice and waffles. The mess attendant on duty then was a very large, two hundred pound negro of the blackest variety, named Doris Miller.

At the time there was only one other officer in the mess room having breakfast with me. He did not sit at the same table with me, but I remember that we had conversation as we both came into the mess room. He was Ensign McClellan, who was subsequently one of the two officers lost aboard the WEST VIRGINIA.

After finishing breakfast, arising from the table and starting to read the New Yorker magazine, I heard the words through the overhead hatch in the junior officers' mess, "Japanese air raid. Sound general quarters." At the time I could hardly believe it, but I heard confused scuffling about the deck above, which convinced me that something was certainly wrong.

I immediately left the junior officers' mess and started toward

my room to get my cap, with the idea of proceeding to my battle station from there. My room was directly in the route of travel to my battle station, so there was not delay involved. However, just as I reached my room I saw a marine sergeant, Sergt. Willoughby, come racing down the hatch from the deck above, which was right outside my own room, shouting very excitedly, "Japanese airplanes! The Japanese have attacked!"

Upon hearing this, I hesitated no further with any idea of getting my cap and ran, bareheaded, forward on the starboard side of the second deck, into the B Division compartment. I went down to the third deck through an armored hatch in that compartment, and crossed the third deck at the foot of the ladder, through the armored hatch leading from the third deck to the I. C. room. The I. C. room is directly outboard and to port of the plotting room, through that route. While passing along the second deck, I noticed that no general word had been passed concerning an air raid, and the men in these spaces still continued to loll around, since they had just completed their breakfast at 7:30.

As I crossed the third deck and attempted to go below the third deck to the plotting room, I heard the word being passed, "All hands to fire and rescue quarters." This cause me considerable trouble, because men were trying to go up ladders which I was trying to get down. At one point it became necessary to physically force my way down a ladder and I tried to convince all of these men that I encountered that

this was an air raid and not fire and rescue. They had heard the words, however, over the general announcing system, and were firmly convinced that fire and rescue quarters had been sounded. I did not hear them, but the strength of numbers almost convinced me that they were correct.

I continued, however, to plot, and commenced to awaken all hands who were sleeping there. This was Sunday morning, and the enlisted men assigned to the plotting room for sleeping purposes were taking this opportunity to get a long sleep. I had great difficulty waking these people up, but once awakened they moved into action without question and without delay.

The first explosion occurred before I had awakened all the men and while the plotting room was in a semi-darkened condition. Instantly the idlers were up, lights were on, and the men were on their feet, ready to assume their normal battle duties. The explosion had been severe and was accompanied by a heavy shaking of the ship.

I explained the situation to the men as quickly as possible, while crossing the plotting room. The first man I managed to wake was a young fire control-man named Stice, who had just been transferred into our division. He immediately went about his assigned tasks, calmly but in great haste. The next man I remember seeing was a young seaman, a new arrival in the division named Hunter, a tall, heavy young man who remained remarkably calm and eager to perform any necessary jobs throughout

the action. Still another that I remember was a short seaman named Mathison, who the spring before had tried to enter the Naval Academy. I remember catching a glimpse of him running out of the plotting room toward his battle station aloft. He was the only enlisted man lost in my division throughout the action.

I crossed the plotting room and entered the torpedo tracking room, which contained the secondary and anti-aircraft battery switchboards. I saw two fire control-men in there, Peterson and Schneider, and ordered Peterson to cut in the anti-aircraft battery switchboard, which would supply electric power to the guns and to the directors, for firing and operation. Peterson, though looking extremely pale, probably more from the effects of the previous night's events than the morning's excitement, cut in the switchboard with great alacrity.

I then left the tracking room and was crossing the plotting room when the word reached me that there was no power on the anti-aircraft battery. Apparently the after distribution room, which I believed was supplying power to the ship at that time, must have been hit. At this instant another explosion occurred. Both of these first two explosions, as well as the next two, which were the only four separate, distinct explosions that I can remember, apparently occurred when torpedoes hit outboard and slightly above the level of the plotting room. This was confirmed later when I received a report of the damage and the flooded condition of the deck above. At the time I thought the explosions, though severe and intense, were bomb hits, because the deck above

appeared to buckle slightly at each explosion.

I then left the plotting room momentarily, and encountered Lieut. Comdr. Harper, who was the ship's damage control officer, attempting to get into central station in the face of a water-tight door which had been tightly dogged. I assisted him in getting to his battle station and then returned to my own. Through the overhead hatch I could see that the third deck was commencing to flood and heavy yellowish smoke had started to pour down the hatch.

I returned to plot, passing through the I. C. room, where I noticed several leaks along the outboard bulkhead, and also noticed several circuit breakers sparking, and other electrical appliances definitely running wild. I knew then that the main electrical power of the ship must be almost entirely thrown awry. Lights, however, were still on and these lights got their power from the ship's normal lighting circuit, which was therefore still intact.

When I returned to the plotting room, the ship had received enough damage to be listing to port several degrees more than I had ever felt her list before. In the plotting room the first thing I remember seeing was Ensign Holmes, another junior officer assigned there, who was maintaining order. I next noticed that the extreme list which made footing practically impossible, had caused the tracking board, plotting board, tables, chairs, cots, and other movable equipment to slide across the plotting room and jumble themselves along the port outboard bulkhead. It was even necessary for me to climb over some of this gear in order to get

into the plotting room.

There was no work for the plotting room to do, except to attempt to establish communications with other battle stations. Of the other officers assigned to the plotting room, Lieut. (J.G.) Hasler was ashore, Ensign Brooks was the officer of the deck, Ensign Williams, who had been in the bathroom when the raid had started, had been caught up there and therefore unable to reach the plotting room. We remained in plot for some time. Then oily water began to come through the exhaust trunks of the ventilation system, and the heavy yellow smoke fumes which I had encountered before commenced to pour in through the same trunks and to make conditions severe. Obviously, nothing further could be done, so I ordered plot to be abandoned to central station.

The central station was just forward of the plotting room, and we passed from plot to central through trunk and hatch, which seldom if ever had been used before. This trunk is on the forward starboard side of the plotting room, and was considerably above the water level. As we attempted to undog the water-tight door into central station, I remember that the men in central station would close the dogs as soon as we got them open. After slight difficulty we forced the dogs simultaneously and entered central station.

Throughout this time, while the ship was listing and shaking from explosions, the enlisted men conducted themselves more than creditably. They were calm throughout this exciting period, and not once did panic or confusion touch them in the slightest. The heavy list of the ship must

have made them think, as it did me, that there was more than a possibility that the ship would capsize. This, together with the water that was rising in the plotting room, might easily have caused untrained men to falter, but these men never once lost their equilibrium.

I was the last to leave the plotting room, and just before leaving called into the torpedo tracking room to see that no one was trapped. Just as I was about to leave the plotting room, half a dozen electrician mates staggered into the plotting room, crossed the deck and were assisted into central station. They were all uninjured but badly shaken and thoroughly covered with oil. I learned from them that they had been on the third deck in the lighting shop when a fuel tank had blown in on them and apparently had blown them through the hatch to the deck below.

When they were all in central station, I called into the plotting room to make another final check. This time I heard the voice of warrant electrician Duvall, saying that he was still coming, and to please wait. I thought he might be in trouble, and stepped back into plot with the idea of possibly giving him a hand. I had scarcely leaned around the corner when the oil which I had collected while assisting the electricians caused me to slip and slide down the plotting room deck. Mr. Duvall at the time was himself thoroughly covered with oil, and thus was having extreme difficulty getting across the steeply tilted, linoleum covered deck. When I fell, I slid across the deck, sailed into Mr. Duvall, who by that time had painstakingly gotten half way up the deck, and knocked him all the way back again, and when we both reached the far port bulkhead, we were both

completely tangled in each other and the loose tables and chairs. By then I was thoroughly disgusted and not feeling so helpful toward Mr. Duvall as I had a few moments before. However, I assisted him as best I could and we managed to crawl up the deck, but when we had previously become tangled up we got oil all over our hands and feet and could then hold onto nothing on the deck which would assist us in crossing plot. By then I was convinced that the plotting room was my new home. However, we did manage to slightly wipe our hands and grab hold of the switch knobs on the main battery switchboard. This switchboard is along the forward bulkhead of the plotting room and runs all the way across plot. We pulled ourselves along this switchboard, using our hands, hand over hand along the knobs. Again, unintentionally this time perhaps, I was the last man out of the plotting room.

In central station, we closed and dogged the two water-tight doors, one to port and one to starboard. In central station at that time were approximately thirty enlisted men from nearby stations which had been abandoned, Lieut. Comdr. J. S. Harper, Ensign A. P. Kelley, who was my roommate aboard the WEST VIRGINIA, Ensign Holmes, and myself. Mr. Harper was attempting to establish communication with various damage control and repair parties, but apparently the communications had been cut. Ably assisted by Ensign Kelley, he tried by various means to control the damage we had suffered. The battle telephones were useless, there were no voice tubes, and Ensign Kelley passed the word over the general announcing system, he had passed the word, "Set condition zed", which, if it had been done, would

have placed the ship in the most complete state of water-tight integrity.

In central station the lights began to dim and finally went out. Auxiliary power, however, took over the loan and again we had lights, though not so bright as before. Throughout this period the damage control officer attempted to establish telephone communication with the commanding officer, but it became apparent that the Captain's battle station had been either damaged or was not manned.

Outside of the port water-tight door, the water began to rise, and we were able to hear the very distressing pleas and cries of men who were trapped there. To have opened the door to save them would surely have flooded central station and probably would have drowned half of the men there. As I listened to these men outside of central station who were drowning, I was deeply impressed by the fact that, much as everyone wanted to help them, only one person could decide. The situation that confronted the First Lieutenant was grave. He was making every effort to keep the ship from sinking. The pleas of those trapped men will always haunt me.

Throughout this time we were unable to sense vertical motion. In other words, we did not know definitely that the ship was settling, but could feel a steep list which was convincing proof enough of the heavy damage. I can remember looking at the list indicator in central station and seeing that the pendulum had swing beyond the limit of the scale to port. I believe the list must have reached 25 to 35 degrees. The water by that time had commenced to enter central station through cracks around the edges of both watertight doors, to port and to starboard. Through the port door water was

coming in with all the force of a hose, through an inch-and-a-half air test opening.

Inasmuch as neither my men nor I had anything to do except stand around and await orders, I suggested to the ^{Damage control officer} First Lieutenant, Mr. Harper, that all personnel not attached to the central station be sent on deck where they could be of assistance in fire control and in manning guns. Mr. Harper did not have time to answer, so I did not bother him with it again. All this time, the enlisted men maintained the high degree of composure which had characterized their behavior from the beginning.

Finally, after what seemed to be a very long wait, the damage control officer directed that all unnecessary enlisted men abandon central station. This was done up a ladder within an armored steel tube approximately four feet in diameter and about a hundred feet long, terminating at one end in central station and at the other end in the conning tower, which was the Captain's battle station. I started the flow of men up the tube, and one by one they commenced the long climb up the ladder. There was no jostling, not one man pushed in ahead of another and there were repeated cases of Gaston and Alphonse acts. Without delay they climbed the tube. Finally, when the only remaining people were Lieut. Comdr. Harper, Ensign Kelley, myself, and a yeoman, I was told to go up the tube. I had never been assigned to central station before and was not too familiar with it. Lights by then were out, and I did not know my way around too well. Before, at sea, it had been necessary for me to use the tube, the darkness and great length of which did not make it an extremely pleasant place in which to be. That morning, however, nothing could have been more welcome. I closed the distance

between the foot of the ladder and the conning tower with great speed. Throughout the long climb, concussion from what I believed to have been the firing of guns of the ship alongside beat down upon me and it became difficult to keep a tight enough grasp on the small rungs of the ladder. While climbing and thinking of the situation below, decks, I could not help wondering what the situation was on topside.

There was no delaying on the ladder, and I soon reached the conning tower. In the conning tower I noticed that all the men who had come up the tube with me were jammed in and not getting out of the tower, as they had been directed. This made me believe that possibly the armored door to the conning tower had been jammed shut by an explosion and, if so, I thought we would be locked in the conning tower. However, I soon learned it was just delay in getting out, and I encouraged the men to step more lively and to get clear of the door. I then called back down to central station through the tube and told Ensign Kelley that I was shutting the light covering hatch over the tube so that no one in the conning tower would inadvertently fall through the opening.

As I stepped out of the conning tower I saw Ensign Vale and Lieut. (J.G.) White rush past me, and one of them paused long enough to tell me that the Captain was severely wounded and to see what I could do. I found the Captain instantly, lying across the sill of the door from the signal bridge to the starboard side of the machine gun platform around the conning tower. The top of his stomach had been torn off and, although severely wounded, he was still conscious. I remember what a shock this was to me,

for he had been such a good captain to us all that to see him lying nearly dead upon the deck was much more than saddening.

Someone mentioned a morphine injection to me, to relieve his pain which was severe, and I opened a nearby first aid kit to get one. I rummaged through it but could find no morphine. I could tell by then that his pain was severe and I did not believe he would last long. I found a can of ether and attempted to administer ether to render him unconscious. I sat beside him and held his head in one hand while giving ether with the other hand. Meanwhile abandon ship had been ordered, but I stayed with the captain for some time and moved his legs, over which he had no control, to more comfortable positions, as he requested. The ether made him drowsy but he never lost consciousness. He asked repeatedly how the battle was progressing, what his ship was doing, and what damage had been done to the ship and to the men. I tried to keep him informed as much as possible, and to encourage him with reports of progress that our ship was making against fire and damage. I told him that our guns were firing, which they had been doing; but at that time they had stopped because of damage and other casualties.

Lieut. Ricketts soon appeared on the scene and took charge of the Captain. He attempted to have the Captain removed from the bridge and the ship, but the Captain refused each time this was suggested. Since Capt. Bennion was a heavy man, I had not attempted to move him from the position in which I found him. Mr. Ricketts, however, with strong

assistants, moved the Captain under shelter and into a more comfortable position. He went so far as to make all preparations, including the construction of a makeshift stretcher and the setting up of the necessary lowering gear, to have the Captain lowered from the bridge to a boat, but the Captain remained firm in his insistence that he remain aboard.

Mr. Ricketts' arrival provided my first lull in the engagement. I took a walk around the bridge, looked at the damage on the bridge, looked at the damage on the ship, and made a survey of the harbor. The bridge, previously the flag bridge of the admiral in command of the battleships, had once been a picture of neatness. Nothing was ever adrift, and there were never any Irish pennants. That morning, however, the bridge was littered with glass and other debris, signal flags had been thrown about by concussion, and on the port side of the bridge was a hole approximately three feet in diameter, through which a bomb had passed. In fact, it would suffice to say that the bridge was a mess.

Aft, there was a fire in the quarterdeck which apparently our men had under control. Our guns were not firing, the port battery had been wiped out, and the starboard battery, though less seriously damaged, had suffered from fire and flying splinters. On the starboard side of the forecastle considerable men who were still aboard, and they were considerable in number, had collected to assist in the removal of the wounded. Just before this, machine gun fire or shrapnel had hit practically every man on the forecastle, but the men who remained on their feet started the

work of assisting the wounded and removing the dead with great speed, and at the same time exposing themselves to further machine gun and bombing attacks. All these men were later removed by boats from the ship and taken to safety.

On the port side of the forecastle our boats, and the boats that had come to assist us were forcing their bows through the debris in the water, and in some cases through the burning oil, right up to the ship's sides to receive their passengers.

An air raid was reported, and personnel then on the signal bridge took shelter in the conning tower. I looked through the slits and could see what damage had been done to other ships. Ahead, I could see the OKLAHOMA completely turned over, with large numbers of men swimming in the water. Inboard of her was the MARYLAND, firing steadily with her anti-aircraft guns, but listed very slightly to port and well down by her nose. At the time, she looked in much more severe condition than, as I found later, she actually was. Still farther ahead was the CALIFORNIA, low in the water and listing heavily to port. Although her topside appearance was much better than ours, her list was so steep that I recall hoping that her commanding officer, Capt. Bunkley, ^{a good friend of mine,} was not aboard, for I feared that she would roll over. In the dry dock I could see the PENNSYLVANIA, apparently uninjured and doing great execution with every available type of anti-aircraft gun.

I can't remember whether the ARIZONA had been hit or not, but

I definitely remember seeing the VESTAL being pulled away from the side of the ARIZONA. I have never been able to determine when the ARIZONA blew up, but I can remember very distinctly seeing the VESTAL moved away from her to a place of greater safety.

Then I saw the NEVADA, under way and passing us to port. At this point, considering the damage I had seen, I was very much encouraged by the sight the NEVADA presented as she steamed past us, for I thought that in the waters outside of Pearl Harbor was where the battleships would find safety. I followed her with my eyes as she passed down the channel and suddenly, as she passed between Ford Island and the main shore line, a furious Japanese attack assaulted her. She answered with her guns, but the Japanese dove with fury and determination and did heavy damage. I remember seeing several near misses which threw columns of water high into the air. Despite the heavy pall of smoke above her, I saw for the first time Japanese planes as they attacked her, and suddenly a tremendous explosion occurred within her on her port side amidships, which blew flames and debris well above the height of the masts. It was then that I saw something that I had never expected to see. The entire ship proceeded to shake violently in the water from the effects of that explosion. She continued on her way, however, slowly with a heavy fire raging, and finally backed upon the beach.

About that time the destroyer SHAW was hit and a tremendous explosion blew up her magazine. Again the Japanese came for us and all hands took shelter. By this time I had lost my coat, for I had donated it in central station as a means of plugging up a hole---which failed, however;

but I had gained a tin helmet which, strangely, was the first one I have ever found that fitted.

Finally I decided to investigate two machine guns mounted forward of the conning tower. I found that these guns were without cooling water but could be fired. One was slightly out of adjustment, but I readily repaired it and they were ready to be shot. I went to the conning tower, found an enlisted man, Lieut. (J.G.) White, and Miller, the mess boy, who in some inexplicable way had reached the bridge. Taking the three of them to the machine guns, I instructed them in their operation and then assigned the Lieutenant to one gun, the enlisted man to the other gun, and Miller to keep the ammunition coming. As Miller was flying around in this capacity, after having one opportunity to fire the guns in which he became of more menace to us than to the enemy, he appeared happier than I had ever seen him before in his life. I had only seen him smile once before when, as the heavyweight boxing representative of the WEST VIRGINIA, he knocked out a much smaller white boy.

After I had gotten the machine guns into action I returned to the signal bridge and there I saw the USS PHOENIX back out of the slip at full speed, with guns blazing, and race out the same channel which the NEVADA failed to get out. This was a notable achievement, and of great encouragement to all who watched her. I spotted the yardarm of the MARYLAND at about this instant, and saw that the signal to commence fire had been hoisted, as well as the signal indicating that submarines

were present. At the time, this was one of the most startling things I saw, but I later learned that there were actually two enemy submarines within the harbor.

On the bridge of the WEST VIRGINIA another move was then afoot to have the Captain moved off, and I attempted to get a line and a pulley from below up to the bridge to enable his lowering. We set up the line and I discussed the operation of the gear with Ensign Parlett, who was waiting below and rather anxious to get out, because he was surrounded by fire. He waited, however, until the last possible moment, and then moved to another place which, although less advantageous for the purpose, was still a good spot to lower the Captain to. The Captain was still refusing to be moved, so nothing was accomplished. The chief pharmacist mate of the ship had, in the meantime, arrived and was relieving the Captain.

I then walked around the machine guns to see whether they were still functioning. They were ready but there were no targets. While standing there, I saw two American flying fortresses in the distance, which later I learned were being ferried in from California and had been surprised in the raid and forced to fly out to sea.

Suddenly the MARYLAND commenced firing with her 1.1 machine guns and, being unfamiliar with the sound, I thought it was heavy cannon fire or light bombs from Japanese aircraft. I soon learned what it was, in time to watch the MARYLAND utterly destroy three, and later a fourth Japanese plane.

Every man that I found available on the bridge with nothing to do I sent to the TENNESSEE to assist her in firing her guns. She was putting up a good fire and the noise from her guns at first was very irritating, since I had no cotton for my ears; but soon I became accustomed to their heavy blast, which was practically at our very ears.

As I looked about the harbor, it was possible to see the smoke of heavy oil fires and a thick curtain of smoke, probably best described as "smoke of battle," settling over the harbor, to add another touch to the strange picture. Strangely, right up to that moment I could still taste my waffles, and it took some time for my nose to forget the sharp fumes we had encountered in the plotting room, mixed with the odor of burning oil and burning powder. I stood for many moments watching the gun cracks of the TENNESSEE as they smoothly unloaded their guns, round after round.

While going to investigate the machine guns again, I was suddenly cut off from the rest of the bridge by a sudden fire which had developed from ignition of paintwork. The flames were high and the smoke was extremely black. The only way of escape was out on the searchlight platform where I lowered myself as far as possible and then dropped to the top of Turret No. 2, the forward high turret. Black smoke and flames poured across the turret, blinding me, and I was forced to feel my way along the room of the turret, (Hoping that I knew

where I was going), until I came to the face plate. I reached down to the 16-inch gun, slid down the face as far as possible, and then jumped across the Turret No. 1. By then I could see slightly and went to the side of Turret 1, where I slid off and jumped to the deck. I went to the starboard side of the forecastle, being chased by flames all the way, and proceeded to remove my clothes, except my socks and shorts and undershirt, and, accompanied by Ensigns Laminan and Parlett, I jumped into the water.

As I jumped into the water I thought my troubles were over. But as soon as I landed, the oil on the water commenced to burn, and I commenced high speed swimming. I thought at first of swimming to the MARYLAND, and started in that direction, but just at that time the oil flashed in front of me, between me and the MARYLAND, and my mind was changed. I then headed for the TENNESSEE, with the idea of swimming around a patch of oil and on to Ford Island.

Although I was tired, I was swimming as fast as I could, when I heard a voice behind me crying in a very desperate tone, "Help! Help! I can't swim any farther." I recognised the voice as that of an old chief petty officer, fully fifty years old, whom I knew was definitely not a good swimmer. I was much too tired and weak to do any towing, so I decided to call back some encouraging words to him. As I turned my head, his form came hurtling through the water past me, arms and legs flying, still yelling, "Help, help! I can't swim any farther!" He reached land fully five minutes before I did.

I pulled myself into an old battered boat, climbed across it to

the TENNESSEE, and pushed the boat back to some other swimmers who needed it. I then climbed on the concrete quay to which the bow of the TENNESSEE was moored, and crossed it, after a brief rest at one edge, and then dove into the water and swam to Ford Island.

On Ford Island I was helped out of the water, thoroughly covered with oil, soot and dirt, by Comdr. Hillenkoeter, our executive officer. I told him what I knew of what had taken place on the bridge and then borrowed a raincoat from a nearby house, to keep warm. On the edge of Ford Island where we swam ashore, the people in the nearby houses had kindly furnished cigarettes and coca-colas to all the refugees.

I stayed there for a few moments, when I was told that I could get my oil taken off at the bachelor officers' quarters. I was given a lift down there and found it was a mistake, and was told to go on to the admiral's quarters. The admiral's quarters were deserted, but nearby was a bomb shelter, and in the bomb shelter I found Ensign Williams in charge of all the women on the Island, as well as men off the ARIZONA and other ships, to which they were unable to return. I organized the men into groups by ships, to be ready for anything that might come up, and then went in to see the women. Although excited, they were far from panicky; but I was afraid that, thinking of being helpful, they might rush out to render assistance and then not only might get in the way, but be seriously injured. I told them briefly what had taken place up until then, placed one of their number in charge, and returned to the main part of the shelter to try to remove the oil. Scrub as I could, no towel would last long enough to get it all off.

Finally I gave up and stayed oily.

I then walked back to my original landing place to see of what assistance I could be, but found there was nothing to do at that spot. There was no water on the Island, so fire hose could not be led from the hydrants, and there were not enough pumps to use sea water. Wandering around in my bare feet, I had begun to encounter difficulty on the rough ground. So in desperation I wrapped my feet in ti leaves as a measure of protection.

There was nothing further that I could do in connection with the WEST VIRGINIA, so I walked toward the CALIFORNIA to see how she had fared. I never arrived there, because another raid started and I immediately flattened myself on the ground. By the time that raid had passed I decided I did not want to go to the CALIFORNIA anyhow, so I walked back to my original landing place. Arriving there I was told that all officers and men from the WEST VIRGINIA were being mustered across the Island in the new officers' quarters. I arrived there and found many officers and men whom I had not expected to see again. This provided our first opportunity to get a slight rest. So we all lay on the lawn outside the club for a few moments. At that time I was wearing a pair of shorts, a torn bath towel, ti leaves on my feet, and oil over the rest of me. My watch was still running, and did not stop until 2:30 that afternoon.

After spending a short while at the bachelor officers' quarters, I started back to the ship. I had to crawl along a pipe line to the

quay upon which I had rested once before, in order to get to the TENNESSEE and then over to the WEST VIRGINIA. As I climbed up the TENNESSEE's side, they thought another raid was coming and commenced to shoot again. I crossed the TENNESSEE and returned to my own ship, to find her enveloped in smoke and burning fully half her length.

Back on the quarterdeck, I saw Ensign Kelley again, whom I did not know had gotten out of central station. We made various and repeated efforts to stop the fire, but the fire was not getting worse and we were unable to stop it, so all we could do was wait until it burned out. We continued, however, to try to stop it, without success.

About 2:00 that afternoon the TENNESSEE sent over a box of sliced ham, and I immediately devoured a good-sized piece, which was all I could get my hands on, in one bite. The coffee, which arrived simultaneously, did not last long enough for me to even see it.

The quarterdeck was thoroughly covered with debris, three heavily damaged airplanes, the effects of fire, of a bomb that hit a turret and failed to explode, and was far from the shipshape quarterdeck for which the WEST VIRGINIA had long been famous.

At about five that afternoon I put on a gas mask and with a hose stood in the doorway leading into the crew's reception room on the main deck, around the up-take of No. 2 Stack. While I was standing there directing the hose, I could feel the deck quiver from time to time. Suddenly with a tremendous roar, accompanied by black smoke and flames, the whole deck appeared to blow open and I went sailing up into the air.

I lost the mask and, in trying to get away from the hose practically beat myself to death with it half a dozen times, and was blown over the No. 3 three-inch gun mount.

I was out on my feet. I have since been told that when people would call to me to come out of the fire I would look at them and then walk in little circles. Finally one of them came in and led me out. Being rather dazed, they put me in a boat and sent me, together with the enlisted man who was working with me and had been knocked completely out, over to the submarine base hospital.

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