

We joined H.M.S Begum at Belfast a carrier of about 15,000 tons in the hangar was 20 hellcats, on the flight deck was 24 Baracudas.

The sea was ruff, when we got into the med it was terribly ruff the paravens were out for part of the way we passed Portugal, just see a faint out line of it, Gibraltar.

The most interesting piece was when we came up the Suez. Near and there were bright little sort of villages with palm trees, it looked almost like heaven, the camels were walking along the side of the canal with loads of oranges women in gay coloured clothing with pitchers on their heads, The colours are just imposible to describe, it was just like one huge oil painting.

The natives working are almost slaves, they stand over them with whips, just the same as in

the old days.

There were a few natives aboard selling walets and what nots I bought ones

We dropped anchor just in the bay of Port Saïdic, We were here ~~four~~ four days, only 15 were allowed a shore a time from our ship owing to the Plague, which only left one or two streets in bounds even if we did go. It is very difficult to get used to the money they use, we could twist them with our money but when we used theirs I think that they got there own back, up too now we have done ~~1200 miles~~ too the 19th

(157
March)

Nothing much happend today the weather is very hot, the ship moved a little further into port. We can see Suez quite clear

now, but still are not allowed to go ashore there

22/3/44

Nothing much happened today 100 ratings went ashore instead of 175. The ship is now under sailing orders, so where we shall go from here I don't know, the weather is still very hot. I had a nice box of Turkish delights today.

23/3/44

We have ~~putted~~ started off again today we are now in the Red sea the weather is very hot, and there are mountains on both sides of us.

24/3/44

Not much change today, land seems further off and the weather is practically unbearable the smell of the sun scorching on the flight deck, and the steel decks are almost red

at times. Tropical clothing is being worn now. No one can explain what the heat and conditions are like.

25/3/44 | Still getting warmer in fact most of the fellows are taking their beds and sleeping on the flight deck in the open. Today the Indian navy came along side with a destroyer and sent a message to our ship by means of a rope and bottle. The sea has hardly a ripple on it, there is a heavy heat here all the way over it, with the sun blazing on it you have a job to look at it with your naked eye. They try to give us cooling food here we had tomatoes corned beef lettuce for supper, all served with ice, but still it was warm

26/3/44. It is still getting warmer today I had to go to the sick bay with discentary, I get medicine 3 times a day I feel rotten.

This morning we could see land on the port side of the ship

27/3/44

We arrived at port noon a pretty place but not quite so picturesque as the others we had seen, none of us went ashore the ship refueled with oil and drinking water, we managed to get hold of some water melons and bananas, the ship was no more than an hundred yards from the shores, we could see the camels in the streets, there was ~~no~~ black out there and all the coloured lights at night made it look like a circus, we could see garden parties going on with lights strung from tree to tree, the weather here is still very hot

(6)

28/3/44. Today everyone one seemed to be in a flat spin, we have had a submarine warning, we left Avon at about 12 NOON today we are out of the red sea now, its a bit ruff sailing now.

29/3/44 Today the weather is very hot the ship is rolling and pitching quite a bit the sea is rather unsettled, we had action str. at quarter to five this morning, we had a cold dinner, tomato lettuce and beat root, onion salad.

For sweet we had bananas.

30/3/44 Today the sea is calm weather just as hot clear sailing today, There are several cases of the sick bay with sun burn. I have just finished attending the sick bay myself. We got chocolate today from the canteen because it wont keep in the hot weather its kept in the refrigerator

19

We came into the Indian Ocean
on the 29th.

31/3/44

Today the sea was very calm and the weather very hot we haven't done much all day only lie around in the sun there are several fellow attending sick bay with sun burn blisters. We should reach our destination on Tuesday today is ~~Friday~~

1/4/44

Today the weather was very hot but the sea was calm. The clocks were put on an hour

2/4/44

Today the weather just as hot the pitch on the flight deck is all running, the clocks have been put on another half an hour today.

3/4/44

Today at about 7 o'clock in the morning we reached below, we are

in the house ^{is} not very far
from Culumbo, we can see it quite
clear the weather is very hot. We went
~~14/4/44~~ ashore in the afternoon and
had a good time we got pineapple
bananas & coconuts, But the heat on
the streets made every thing have
such horrid smells hear and there
14/4/44

Today we did nothing much
only roams about on the flight
deck in the sun, it is very hot, we
are still in the harbour of Colon.

14/4/44
Today I went ashore again
and had a most lovely time. We
went right into the native quarters
today only the two of us. We went
into the Area that we are barred
against, We were going into the
Temple a magnificent building, but
we thought some one would swipe
our boots when we took them off to
go in, We ~~we~~ have all been warned
about eating in native restaurants

and eating peald fruit, for our own
safety, I bought two black elephants
6/4/44

We couldn't go out today, so
I done some washing, the weather
is still very hot but the sky
looks very uncertain.

7/4/44

We went ashore today but
now one could have all night
leave. I bought a pair of elephants
and native necklace. we had a
8/4/44 } nice bowl of ice cream

The usual daily routine
nothing much unusual hapend
only that it poured with rain

9/4/44, at 8 o'clock we
started on our way again it
is just pouring with rain,
one minute it stops and dries
up in no time.

10/4/44

Today we had another

storm but it certainly makes
every thing smell so sweet and
nice

11/4/44

This morning we entered the
harbour of Madras, it looks a
beautiful place we are getting off
hear, but the squadron is going
in land quite a bit, I expect I
shall go ashore tomorrow the orders
are yards of them, by reacting them
it sounds as if it is hell of a
place, there is no alright leave to
anyone, it also says that all
cases of theft and thieves are to be
reported ashore. So until tomorrow?

12/4/44

I went ashore today and
had a marvellous time, there were
three of us together, its very nice to
visit these places, but too hell with
living in them permanent. We had a
little clerk boy to show us around
naturally he took us right into the
native parst, market, houseing, and
so on

when it gets dusk they just
crash their sweed down any
where in the streets or the pavement
anywhere. The oxen is treated as an
holy animal, they are roaming
about ~~any~~ everywhere. Out side the
temple there were natives beating
drums and playing all kinds of
Indian instruments, while the others
prayed. but the beggars about is
something wicked deformed, they
should be destroyed for there own
hapiness, its terrible to look at
them. ?

13/4/44.

Today we down nothings
muck, stayed on the ship, the
weather is very hot.

14/4/44.

Today they had a lot of
K.T.S girls aboard too show them
over the carriers, also the Indian
army. They went up and
down in the aircraft elevators
just like little kids, holding

on to one another

We left the ship tonight
at 9 o'clock and travelled all
night until we reached our
destination which was about
630 in the morning, we passed
no end of dense forest, jungle
and huge swamps.

15.14/44

We just got into the
camp this morning, our huts
are made of bamboo, they are
not half as bad as they
were made out to be, in
fact I like them, 'The natives
will hang about round
you though, on the other hand
they will do anything for
you. The vilage near this
camp we are barred from
owing to certain complaints
and diseases.