

LIVERPOOL NAUTICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY



AN ACCOUNT OF MY WARTIME EXPERIENCES IN 1939-45

by Richard Llewellyn

First published in *The Bulletin* Volume 64 Number 1 (2020)

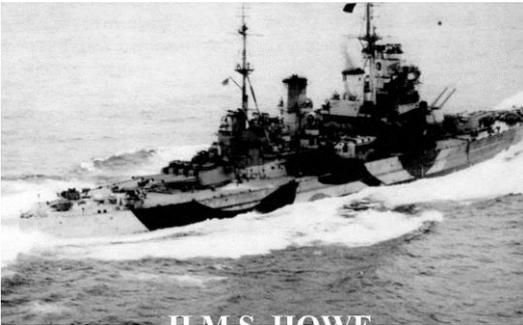
© Liverpool Nautical Research Society 2020

An account of my Wartime experiences in 1939-45.

My sole ambition from the age of about 4 was to go to sea. After Prep School I was entered for Pangbourne Nautical College and became an RNR Cadet there in September 1939 aged just 14. I left school as soon as School Certificate Exams were taken - May 1943. Pangbourne trained pupils for a career at sea so one of my Exam Passes was in Navigation. This meant that on HMS Ajax, a cruiser, I became the Navigating Officers 'dogsbody', called the Navigator's Tanky, which was OK as my Action Station was always on the bridge, which meant that I had a front row view, as well as being privy to where the ship was going to, etc.



A spell, then, at Greenwich Naval College and Chatham Gunnery School learning gunnery and various other skills, as well as being toughened up before being posted as Midshipman on 21st October 1943 to HMS Howe, a battleship which was



lying in Scapa Flow. A long train journey which I seem to remember took the best part of 24 hours including the boat trip to the Orkneys from Scrabster, a small fishing port on the very tip of NE Scotland. Trains were unlit or dimly lit if blinds available, because of the blackout. Leaving London, I remember standing in a crowded, dark, cold corridor on the train next to a girl, about my own age. We stood holding hands in the dark, and I remember she got off the train at Royston in Hertfordshire. I don't know why but it was a sort of magical moment and having been brought up in boy's boarding schools it was probably my first female contact in spite of having two older sisters!

I have few recollections of what my duties were on 'Howe' or what we did. The ship was due to go into dock for a refit having been engaged in various Atlantic operations. I had to keep a Midshipman's Journal so somewhere, in it, the months that I spent on the ship will have been written down in a very boring way! I've found my Journal but all the pages relating to the months on the Howe are missing!! I do remember gunnery practice at sea when we fired all 8 14" guns. Noisy but impressive!

I left Howe on 6th December 1943 and whilst she sailed for a refit in Plymouth, I went home for a week's leave before joining HMS 'Ajax' in Portsmouth. This ship had just returned from the US having had major repairs after a bomb had been dropped alongside the funnel off the coast of N. Africa, killing most of those on duty in the Engine Room. Apparently, a messy business scraping off all the bloody bits and pieces splattered over the bulkheads. As was normal routine in the war, a ship with a new crew had to embark on a 'working up' programme, which involved everybody becoming familiar with their Action Station duties, etc. and practicing all the many exercises which eventually converts any ship into an efficient fighting machine. So it was that I found myself sailing back to Scapa flow where I guess we arrived about Christmas Eve. On December 26th, Battleships and Cruisers of the Fleet returned from engaging and sinking the German Battleship 'Scharnhorst' off the coast of Norway. Scapa Flow in winter is cold, wet, gales and not the best place to do anything! So, our working up programme terminated, on January 18th 1944 and we set sail for Plymouth, where we arrived on 20th. Even in January the contrast between Scapa Flow and the greenery of Plymouth Sound was something to stir the heart. In Plymouth we stored ship and took on ammunition and all the other provisions needed for an extended period away.



On 28th January we sailed for the Mediterranean. The first 24 hours we met severe storms and had solid green water coming over the bridge and causing damage to the structure. The crew were mostly young and on their first sea trip, and I still have memories of the sailor's mess deck awash with vomit, but most sailors recovered after a couple of days at sea. Our first stop was Gibraltar where we arrived on 31st January to gorgeous warm sunshine which I remember so well never having been further away from UK than Brittany in 1939! These were the days when long distance overseas travel was the privilege of the very few and obviously not at all during the war! After the drabness of wartime Britain in winter it was a bit of magic!

But we left the same day heading first for Algiers, then Malta and finally ending up in the Red Sea via Alexandria and the Suez Canal. Because of the weather in Scapa we never really completed our work-up so, in the supposed calm of the Red Sea (which was anything but at times) we spent 10 days completing gunnery, anti-aircraft and torpedo firing exercises, etc. Life at sea, on passage to where ever we were going, was made up of watch keeping, which for me was always on the bridge. Watches were 4 hours long, except the dog watches, which were only two hours each. We were on duty 4 hours on and 4 hours off. My watches were on the bridge, always alert for enemy aircraft, submarine or E-boat attack. We intercepted shipping and checked whether from a neutral country, etc. otherwise life was uneventful.

We stayed in the Mediterranean until May and in the intervening months travelled extensively in the central and eastern Med. Life was fairly routine, and included a bombardment of Rhodes harbour, time in Malta and then Naples where we supported the Allied landings at Anzio a little further north along the coast. We were lucky enough to be in Naples during the eruption of Vesuvius which was spectacular. At night we anchored in the Bay of Naples and in the morning had to hose the ash off the decks. Visited Pompeii, climbed to the top of Vesuvius with the help of the army, and went to a performance of La Boheme at the San Carlo Opera House, looking a little the worse for wear after years of war, but a memorable occasion never the less.

Our time in Italy was interrupted by an urgent dash back to Alexandria to help contain a mutiny on board a number of Greek warships which were lying in the harbour. The crews were threatening to shoot anybody who tried to board them. Eventually after 12 days standoff two of the Greek ships were boarded during the night and the other ships surrendered with comparatively minor casualties. However, there was a heavily armed Greek Cruiser in Port Said where the crew had also mutinied, and we had to go there before the incident was finally over.

On May 10th we sailed for UK and arrived in Gibraltar in the middle of the night for oil and left before it got light. Since most of the cruisers in the Med. were doing the same thing secrecy was important because of the build-up to the invasion of France, but we didn't know that at the time. We returned to Scapa Flow and the next couple of weeks was spent doing more gunnery practice and spending a few days in Greenock where some early radar sets were installed.

DIARY NOTES

I discovered my Diary and my Midshipman's Journal that I had to keep which contains



a far more detailed account of events) after 70 years when I thought I would never see them again! Taking account of where I have lived and what I've been doing over the past 70 years they could not exist now, without some Divine intervention. It was only a very small pocket diary and there were no such things as Biro pens in those days, only pencils. The pencilled writing has

faded over 70 years and in places is not easy to read and, coming from an 18-year-old, they probably don't do justice to such an historic occasion! Anyway, what follows are some of the notes I made, often scribbled under very difficult circumstances, during

those few amazing days around 6th June 1944 - D-Day. The Diary along with my Midshipman's Log Book are in the Imperial War Museum

Saturday June 3rd

“This morning at 1130 we left Greenock in company with the Cruiser Squadron. This includes ‘Belfast’ (C.S. 10 - 10th Cruiser Squadron) ‘Diadem’ ‘Orion’ ‘Emerald’ ‘Argonaut’ and ourselves. (‘Ajax’). Last night left Greenock & what with all the secret conferences etc., which have been going on, we more or less knew we were going to take part in the second front.

Whether we were to go direct or stop at a south coast port we didn't know until the captain spoke over the S.R.E. after leaving Greenock. He said that we were now on our way to open the second front and our job was to get the army ashore & maintain them there. We were liable to do much bombardment & spend long hours at action stations. He said he had great confidence in us & knew Ajax would maintain her fine traditions.

It is now just 1500 hours and I intend to jot all the happenings of the next few days in this diary. Naturally, at present we are all wondering what to expect from the enemy & where we shall be required first. I think that we may be going in the Cherbourg direction but that remains to be seen.

At lunch time today the conversation ran on the lines of who'd be coming out OK. Personally, I think that this is a bad line for a conversation but it was really only jokingly. Somehow, I have a feeling of confidence that we'll all be OK and I hope on leave before long. (Much overdue)!! At present we are just leaving the Firth of Clyde & entering the Irish Channel or North Channel whichever it is. I'm not sure.

I have the ‘first dog’ and, unfortunately, the Middle watch. – however !!

Sunday June 4th

2230. Tonight, but for the one most unfortunate factor, we should now be steaming in towards the French Coast. This morning, however, it was decided the weather was too rough for the invasion to start so the whole thing has been delayed for 24 hours. Much disappointment was felt when this was announced. To-night however the prospects look better. The sun is out & the sea is moderating. At this moment, 2230, we are approximately in the same position as last night. During the day we have steamed around in the Irish Sea.

When I think of it the fact that the whole Invasion of Europe has been delayed, perhaps a matter of 24 hours, it seems incredible. There must have been much misgiving amongst the high officials to-day and great feats of reorganisation must have been performed. I believe it is just as well it didn't start 24 hours before it was first due, as the results might have been disastrous!

Owing to the heavy seas, more men and materials to support the initial landings could not have been put ashore. I only hope the delay won't have any long-term ill effects. I have the First Watch to-night so should get a good night's sleep!

Monday June 5th

1315. After an anxious forenoon during which the sea was really rough, we have rounded Land's End and are now on our way up the Channel. The waves have gone down and the sun is shining. The coast of Cornwall is visible and the sea is a wonderful blue. One might almost say 'perfect invasion weather! The Captain has just broadcast telling us the Second Front is liable to start any hour and we must be prepared for attacks from the enemy, particularly from E-boats, U-boats and the Air. E-Boats seem to be the most probable source of danger at the moment.

22.30. 'The Invasion is on'! At Night Action Stations. The Commander told us what is to happen. I won't go into details as they will soon be news. After N.A Action Stations I visited the Plot and discovered the details from Torps (*Torpedo Officer*). We go to Action Stations at 0400 which suits me nicely as I was to have had the Morning Watch anyway! We should arrive at our Bombardment position at 0445 and when it is light 0515 (approx) commence our shoot at a 6" shore battery.

At 0645 Heavy Bombers come in and at 0725 our troops land.

At 2000 to-night minesweepers started to sweep channels for us and, during to-night, paratroopers are to be landed. At the moment I am just about to turn in and hope no events take place before 0400. Everything is quite normal on the ship, just a slight feeling of excitement and everyone is pleased that we are at last doing what we came back from the Med to do.

Tuesday 6th & Wednesday 7th June

0145 To-day has been a very tiring but very interesting day. Since this morning, or in actual fact yesterday morning as this is being written in the Middle Watch, however, I'll refer to it as to-day still.

We closed up at Action Stations at 0400. We were then passing down the swept channel made by our Minesweepers earlier. The channel was marked by buoys and was only 4 cables wide. It led due South to the Invasion area - between Le Havre and Cherbourg. As we steamed down the channel at 12 knots, we passed convoys of LCTs, invasion craft, and transports which were to come in later. Along the French coast our bombers were busy, fires raging.

0500 reached buoy marking end of swept channel, turned left opposite Gold Beach. Sighted target which opened fire. Started bombardment - target destroyed. Heavy bombardment all along coast - whole area under heavy shelling.

0705 Anchored. Rocket ships in position and opened fire 17 minutes before H-Hour. Smoke and Noise. Assault craft went in at 0725, all ships bombarding.

Noise intense, aircraft bombing shore defences, all ships bombarding, landing craft fitted with rocket launchers blasting off, Amazing scenes of action. Yanks to the right, us to the left. Day wore on, towns beings shelled, saw tankers and LCTs going up in smoke. Americans having difficulties on Omaha beach.

2000 shifted berth in-shore for night. Defence watch. Listened to the news – funny to think we were actually here! Night Action Stations 2130. 2nd Degree. Had Middle Watch so turned in.

2315 woken by explosion. Whole ship rocking, thought we'd been hit. Action Stations - learned how a plane had passed low overhead. Dropped bombs midships, landed 10 yards astern. Ideal night for planes. Moon. Low clouds. JU88 passed low overhead. Opened fire with everything. 'Emerald' hit. Another near miss on 'Ajax' - port bow. Terrific flash. Blinded and doubled up. Terrific explosions due to shallow water. Marvellous Brocks show. Many bombs dropped in water and on shore. Amazing sight. 1135 raid over.

Shifted berth. 'Emerald' OK - don't know where hit. Lots of activity during Middle. Mostly our beachheads. 'Argonaut' opened fire again with 4" guns at unidentified plane. Big fires burning ashore, silhouetting landing craft. Flares, many coloured explosions, etc. Many unidentified planes in the area but till now no more bombs. Troops at Action Stations, Officers not."

This is the end of my diary notes.

Extract from official Report:



Off Gold Beach, Normandy coast for D-day assault. AJAX was the first ship to open fire on D-day and partially destroyed her first target, a battery of 6" guns at Longues sur Mer in 18 minutes - 114 X 6" shells at 6,000 yards, direct hits through two of the 5.9" gun ports of the 4 guns)

It took another 2 hours to completely silence the battery of guns. Site rediscovered in 1986 – and now a tourist attraction and Monument to D-Day.

These photos were in an album containing some pictures of my time in the Navy. It shows HMS Ajax firing a broadside at the gun battery at Longues-Sur-Mer above Gold Beach, in the early hours of D-Day morning.

My Journal tells me that on the morning of 9th June we dashed back to Plymouth as we had fired all ammunition and needed to load more, and we were back in Normandy the same night!! It seems as though there were air raids most nights though none on a large scale, and by June 11th the coast in the area of 'Gold' had been secured by the army and we moved along to 'Sword' area opposite Ouistreham.

The army were having difficulty in taking the town of Caen and we supported them by shelling all and every target from gun batteries to tanks, or even German infantry. We watched as our own bombers carried out raids - some being shot down. The German defence of Caen held up the advance inland and the town was eventually completely destroyed before it was captured.

We left Normandy on the 21st June and docked in Portsmouth where we had a partial refit, new gun barrels fitted, etc. Had 7 days leave and strange to return to the comparative peace of home in the south of London. But it was the time of the V1 pilotless bombs and they were a little disconcerting. Interestingly we had heard them go overhead in Normandy but didn't know what they were - they made a noise like a lawnmower. The engine would cut out, there would be a few seconds of silence before a shattering explosion. It brought back memories of the 'exciting' days of the Blitz in August and September 1940, but that's another story!! After the noise of Normandy, and indeed during the Blitz, stress levels were high, and any unexpected noise made me start!

We left Portsmouth on 10th July and sailed for Gibraltar and ended up in Malta



*From the London Times' and given to me by Joan.
Presumably saved by my Idum!*

via Naples! Large force of warships assembled here which we gather are to support an invasion of the South of France. This duly took place on 15th August and was very tame compared to Normandy! Afterwards we stayed a few days in a magical place in Corsica called the Bay of Propriano. I said at the time that that was where I would go for my honeymoon - but 8 years later never made it!

The rest of August and September were spent on various unexciting duties, as well as the usual exercises. In mid-October we were back in Naples and on the 14th we loaded a whole heap of army equipment on board, as well 24 war correspondents

and set sail for Taranto where we took on oil and many jeeps and 700 soldiers and their equipment. After that we sailed for Athens where we were to support the Greeks in liberating their country and bringing stability to their post-war political situation. Mainly due to the Communists trying to take over the country as it was liberated from the Germans.

As we approached the rendezvous position south off Poros we became part of a major invasion/liberation force with other warships including aircraft carriers, cruisers and escorting destroyers as well as landing craft. Also escorting the fleet was a flotilla of Minesweepers. As we steamed slowly north into the Gulf of Athens the fleet found itself in an uncharted minefield. The sweepers were cutting mines loose and we and other warships were firing at them to explode them as they floated to the surface. One exploded close to us and chunks of the mine were found on board! Luckily none of the soldiers who were watching the activity leaning on the guardrails at the side of the ship were hurt.

Inevitably first one of the minesweepers struck a mine, then a second, then two motor launches as well as an oil tanker which had drifted out of the swept channel hit a mine, caught fire and sank within 5 minutes. One of my memories is of a door frame floating past Ajax, complete with door and with a leg which was jammed in the semi-closed door! The door was wood so must have come from one of the mine sweepers which were built of wood to lessen the risk of exploding magnetic mines. The fleet came to a grinding halt and one BBC reporter who was with us sent a dramatic account of events, which presumably was broadcast on a BBC news.

During all this a JU88 flew down the line of ships but without dropping a bomb or being hit by our AA fire. We learned later that it was attacked by our own planes and shot down with the pilot baling out. Survivors from the tanker were picked up, some badly burnt, and once again the fleet moved forward, continuing to explode floating mines. We eventually dropped anchor outside Athens by which time it was too dark to disembark the troops, etc. Next day various landing craft came alongside, the soldiers, jeeps and other supplies were off loaded. Later in the day we departed for Alexandria.

However, before long we received a signal telling us to sail for a rendezvous with a Caique called 'Santa Claus' at first light off the coast of the German held island of Santorin, north of Crete. The Caique had a Sergeant Major and 3 soldiers on board and had been in touch with the German Commander of the garrison on Santorin who said he was willing to surrender but only to a British warship!!

We stopped just off the island and sent a boat ashore with the Commander, the Pay Commander to find out whether the local population needed any urgent supplies, and a handful of Marines. When the Surrender signal was received, we steamed into the Bay of Santorin with its towering cliffs and its 3 little towns perched on top, and we could hear the church bells ringing in celebration! When the Commander returned to the ship he brought an invitation for 10 of the ship's company to lunch with the Archbishop and other dignitaries!

I was lucky to be the one Midshipman from the Gunroom to draw the short straw and thus become one of the chosen 10! Judging from what I wrote in my Log it was quite an occasion. After being carried up to the town of Thera on the top of the

volcanic crater with much cheering and kissing by the locals on route, not to mention a change of donkey when the current one got tired, we eventually sat down to a meal followed by a service in a jam-packed church.

After arriving back onboard we set sail for Alexandria where we stored ship having given everything to the locals of Santorin. Here my Log ends on October 20th 1944.

And here I was sent to join HMS Easton, an 'expendable' Hunt Class Destroyer - small and a change from the Ajax, with a Commanding Officer in his early 20's who had already made a name for himself having been on submarines, sunk, taken prisoner and escaping from an Italian Prisoner of War Camp. Quite a charismatic individual! I was to become its Navigating Officer! I have no diary of events though our first task after I joined was to go back to Greece and destroy a Communist strong hold near Athens. It was in a house in a town on the side of a hill on a peninsular - can't remember exactly where. Everything was going well with our destroying the target until shells started falling near us! We discovered that they came from another British Destroyer on the other side of the peninsular which was engaged in a similar task to ours! We had no way of communicating so we had to keep our fingers crossed that one of these shells didn't actually hit us. I decided that being killed by the Germans was one thing, but by one of our own, that was quite another matter!!

I recall one trip up to bombard the port of Genoa. We had one or two near



misses as far as navigation was concerned; remember this was in the days before radar and there were NO lights anywhere. One night we got rather close into the shore somewhere off the toe of Italy and another time steaming at full speed for Malta in the dark we switched on a searchlight to see the stone walls of Fort St. Angelo looming up straight ahead. Hard a

starboard and all was well. I remember having to take the ship's whaler into a small harbour in a Greek Island, no memory of where, crew rowing! The harbour was in a poor state and we didn't know whether it was in German or liberated hands. I had to take a lead line and find out the various depths of water within the harbour - all the time wondering whether we would suddenly find ourselves being fired at!

Anyway, we left the Mediterranean and ended up as part of the Destroyer Flotilla based on the East Coast of England protecting convoys on their way to Antwerp from E-Boats and mini-submarines which were out to attack them. After VE Day (the end of the war in Europe, we ended up in Chatham, dockyard doing a refit prior to departure for the war in the Far East against the Japanese. We were on our way there when the Atomic bombs were dropped in August 1945 and the war in the

Far East came to an end. Needless to say we were grateful for this since the invasion of Japan would have been a very hard and bloody encounter.

After leaving Easton I joined HMS Cooke in Hull, one of a Flotilla of clapped out 'Lease Lend' Frigates which had to be returned to the Americans. We sailed in January, not the best month for crossing the Atlantic in a small and very old warship, and the skipper decided we would go via the Azores where we spent a few restful days before continuing to Boston. I returned to UK via Halifax as a passenger on the Mauretania, with many returning German POWs on board, and joined a Tank Landing Ship acting as a ferry service, based in Stranraer and sailing back and forth to Larne in Northern Ireland, returning prisoners of war on their way back to Germany. Our skipper was a Lt Cmdr. RNR by name of Ballard, who had lost one eye and wore a black patch. He had a piratical appearance and had a pet Lemur that he'd brought from a visit to Madagascar. It used to perch in odd places and then jump down and bite the ear of whoever he'd landed on! On completion of this operation we ended up in Glasgow moored alongside in the River Clyde more or less in the middle of the City. Waiting to be demobbed I had a great time there, and we entertained the girl students from the Domestic Science College known as the Doe School! Also ate wonderful fish at Roganos Fish restaurant!

We never drank at sea, but when we finally came into harbour, we would tend to make up for it. Whenever we were in harbour in a place where Brits, or English-speaking locals were around we always had plenty of visitors, including plenty of women on board. A naval ship tended to attract girls like a magnet. In places like Alexandria, where I once went to a party hosted by King Farouk who was in power at the time and I had a gorgeous young Egyptian Princess as my partner, there was no shortage of visitors. Pink Gin was our usual tippie and I remember on one occasion we would offer a tot of Gin, which would actually be water, then we would top the glass up with gin which was supposed to be water! Naughty!!

Although I enjoyed my time in the Navy and felt privileged to have served under the White Ensign and taken part in such an important part of history, if I'm honest the days during the Battle of Britain, and the start of the London Blitz were really the most exciting time of my war. At the age of 14 I was a messenger for the A.R.P. and I found myself cycling around in my tin hat with dog fights going on over my head. Dad, having been wounded in the First World War was a member of the Home Guard and we helped to make Molotov Cocktails in the garage at home! Petrol in glass bottles scored with a glass cutter down the sides and cotton wool jammed in the top. Laughable with hindsight when you think of the Nazi Blitzkrieg

I remember the first bombs dropping at the start of the Blitz and then the nightly raids, initially just bombs and then eventually with the added noise of anti-aircraft guns which had taken up residence nearby! We had a shelter built at the side of the house with 6 bunks in and we spent many a night sleeping there. There was the

night the pub down the road took a direct hit, and another night when we were showered with Incendiary bombs, the house next door was on fire, as well as the house across the road and another one a few more door higher up our little cul-de-sac. The fire engines were too busy to do much about the situation. There was a neat little circular indentation in the concrete parking stand just outside our garage from a very near miss. For years afterwards the sound of the Air raid warning raised the hairs on the back of my neck, and even now when I hear it on TV, it has the power to generate an emotional reaction!!

Over the weeks Bryan and I collected many fragments of bombs, anti-aircraft shells, etc., etc., as well as an unexploded Incendiary bomb which, in trying to get the incendiary powder out of, we accidentally triggered the detonator and set it going! One night I remember Dad and I throwing ourselves flat on the ground in the front garden as a particularly close bomb came whistling down!! And so on and so on - a period of my life I wouldn't have missed for anything!

I started and part competed most of this exercise months if not years ago! As I was doing it, I thought how boring, but then I took most of the information from my Midshipman's Journal. A really heavily bound official Naval Book which Midshipmen on larger ships had to complete daily and which got seen and commented upon by the ship's Commander. What I wrote obviously didn't call for emotional content and judging from my writing I get the impression I was pretty immature! I was just 18 when I joined Ajax and a little over 19 when I was transferred to HMS Easton as Navigator and still a Midshipman! Because it was official none of the narrative includes the stresses of watches which were 4 hours on and 4 hours off day and night for the time we were at sea, which was most of the time. It doesn't talk about the awesome seas which we encountered at times, nor about the fact that all the time at sea we were vulnerable to attack from submarines, in particular, but also attack from aircraft, etc., etc.

In Ajax, Midshipmen slept in hammocks in what was called a 'flat' which was an open space which acted as a very crowded passageway for anybody wishing to get from fore to aft on the ship. All correspondence was censored though I had worked out a code in the spacing of certain letters which gave my Mum and Dad an idea of which part of the world I was in when I wrote, but not necessarily at the time the letter arrived! I remember the little cabin I shared with one other officer on Easton, very small and my bunk was right up against the bare metal hull of the ship maybe ½" in thickness, and I used to have visions of a torpedo coming straight through, not that I'd have known anything about it if it had!!!

Much of the time we spent in the Med with Ajax was preparing the ship's company for the invasion of Europe, though of course we were not aware of this at the time, and hence the fact that we were always practicing one combat drill or another, mostly gunnery whilst still chasing the Germans out of the Mediterranean

area. My Midshipman's Journal and my 'D-Day' Diary were given to the Imperial War Museum since they were interested (and my family weren't) and said they'd like to have them.

As I say this is probably a little boring to plough your way through, but the war lasted nearly 6 years and we just got on with what had to be done to cope with circumstances.

I started this memory trail because one of my sons asked what I did in the war. Having forgotten the war for 65 years it wasn't the easiest of tasks to bring it back into consciousness and it rather dragged on and on over the weeks, months and possibly years!



Richard visiting the disabled battery of Longue-sur-Mer with D-Day Revisited in June