EXAMINER 3,183

RECEIVED FROM
H.M.SHIPS

Mrs. C. N. Stevens
Holmwood
Kingston Hill
Surrey.

On board.
Tuesday eve

No 1
A.P.O 1915

My dears.

So far so good, all my kit safely aboard. Had a marvellous meal here tonight, fish mutton suet and oranges. I have a most comfortable cabin, 4 berths they supply sheets etc themselves

am writing this sitting
on my most comfortable
bed. I feel grand the
sea air is very refreshing
and am thoroughly
going to enjoy this
trip. I shall have
to try a seawater
bath tomorrow night
I understand it is
good for the figure
I share this room
with Sinkler and
Wignall. So pleased
to hear about Henry!

Re engagement.

Do not worry
everything grand
all my love
my dear

Edwin

EXAMINER 6443

PAID

Mrs. C. N. Stevens.

Holmwood.

Kingston Hill

Surrey

Censored

C. N. Stevens

Lt - RA

107219

51-400. L.B. (A-u-L) Ltd.

P.C. 90

OPENED BY

Aboard -

N° 2

[redacted]

My dears.

As the days go by so we become more and more settled. To-day we had our first rehearsal of boat-drill. I never knew there were so many men until they all came out on deck. Food getting better Supper tonight

Soup
Halibut
Chicken R. Potatoes Spinach

and jelly and coffe.

I have already met [redacted]ps I know [redacted]der Parsons from St Andrews and a man White from Rosehill.

I still feel grand the sea air is very ~~[illegible]~~ beneficial. We are wear gym shoes aboard I think to prevent sliding on the decks. Drink and cigarettes very cheap here

Whisky is 2½ a glass but you need not worry I am still drinking cider. Phil Sinker is definitly my type, a gentlemen and nice and quiet. Do not forget to let me know all about the films and thous you see if any. How are my peaches, plenty aboard here oranges apples as well. I have got rid of all my money

to tell father, he need not worry anymore about it This ship is very well prepared against anything.

Well Sniggles, no more news to-day love and kisses to all

Edwin

EXAMINER 7943 P.C.90.

EXAMINER 7943 P.C.90.

EXAMINER 7943 P.C.90.

EX

MRS. C. N. Stevens
Holmwood.
Kingston Hill
Surrey

C. M. Stevens. R.A.

PAID

My dear,

The only excitement today has been the officers canteen where you can buy anything from a needle and cotton to as much chocolate as you like to carry away with you. Boat drill is improving as the nco's and officers start to know their way about the ship If only I was allowed to send your parcel I could keep you all going in cigarettes wines and chocolates at half price for the duration from this ship We are all joining in for P.T this afternoon, it is very necessary one gets so much food aboard. My packing was I discovered just as I required it and of course it is the finest kit aboard this ship. The reason why the writing in this letter fades is because

some has been written in bed some in our mess and the rest in odd spots!

Our mess room is very comfortable big easy chairs, tables surrounded by marble pillars. This will be the last letter you get from me for a bit I expect you will receive 1,23 all together.

I hope you like the envelope I have used it is a dual purpose envelope can be used for all sorts of things.

Well my dear no more news to-day. I still feel glad and am feeling better everyday. I feel much happier than now than when I was at Watford I no longer have that uncertain feeling. Your photograph adorns my cabin and my thoughts are always around you whether you are watering the cucumbers or washing

clothes.
love to all
and especially
Snizzles.

Edwin

DO NOT WORRY
IT CAN DO NO
GOOD.

No H.
part 1.
19 July 42

LONDON
GT. BRITAIN

OFFICIAL
PAID
No.
5801

Mrs. E. N. Stevens

Holmwood.

Kingston Hill

Surrey.

M. E. N. Stevens. R.A. England

Afloat
R.F.A.X.W.
A.P.O. 1915

No 4.
Sunday. July. 19.
From Lt. E. M. Stevens
117219

My dear

As we steam away from dear old blighty, my heart sometimes grows rather sad when I think of the happy happy times I have had in the past; but as I tell myself, now is the time to look forward to future happy Times, and it is this future for you and all of us that is well worth fighting for, so as every turn of the propellar carries me further away, so I feel it is carrying me nearer the time, when we shall all be able to reunite. and I attend you bet what it may wangle as much as I may have too, one thing is certain and that is that I shall be one of the first HOME.

I want to thank

you two dear people
for having bothered for so
many years to try and
fit me for the world, and
for having made such a
good job of it. I have always
had everything I could
have ever desired never having
to ask for anything, and I know
that there is only one
thing you want and that
is to get me back and that
you surely will! Speech over
now for the gossip.
I had my first
sea-water bath today. I
procured some sea-water soap
from the ships canteen so
I shall be able still to have
a bath a day.
We put our clocks
back 1 hour to-day it seems
strange to hear the 11 o'clock
news from London at Twelve.
It was quite chilly
today about 65° Fahren and men
were sick I felt grand did

not even need any of those special pills. The daily P.T. is making me fitter each day and I am eating like a horse. Most men and officers are wearing gym shoes, but not me I am wearing my walking shoes it keeps feet hard otherwise they will get to soft in gym shoes.

We had rather a good recorded variety programme yesterday. Joe Loss and his Band Flanagan and Allen. etc; very enjoyable

I went to Church Parade to-day I imagined you all at Holmwood watering the cucumbers while the service was going on. I never knew there was so much tea in the world and so little on it

Cheers up - cheerio until next letter XXX Edwin

No 4
Part 2
20 July 42

LONDON
G.P.O.

OFFICIAL
PAID

Mrs C. N. Stevens.
Holmwood.
Kingston Hill
Surrey.

PASSED BY CENSOR
NO.
5569

Exhibition RA England.

No 4 continued
Monday 20th
H.S.M. Stirling
117219.

My dears

Time marches on and I am still well and as cheerful as can be expected. The journey so far has been entirely uneventful. just plain sailing. It is getting gradually warmer and warmer I expect we shall start to wear our drill suits very soon. Here is a rough idea what I do each day.

Rise and wash and shave in cold water 07.30
Quick stroll around deck 07.50
Breakfast 08.00
Porridge
Fish
Omelette
Bread + Butter
Marmalade
Coffee

2

08.30 until 9.15 Stroll around deck.
9.30 Offical Conference.
10.0 Boat drill
10 - 12 Break and lectures
12.30 Lunch. Soup
Hot Meat or Ham
Sweet
2.0 till 3.30 Snooze
3.30 P.T.
4.0 Tea.
4.30 - 5.0 Lectures on deck
5.0 Draw Chocolates etc from Canteen
5.30 Water turned on wash and shave plus seawater bath

6.30 Supper Soup
Fish Lemon Sole
Chops or Duck
Jelly or Pudding
Oranges.
Coffee.

7 until 10 Read books write letters stroll and think of

you all doing - thinking back at Holmwood keeping the flag flying. So as you can see I am occupied all day long and a good thing too but I have as usual managed to get out of all the work.

How are my garden peaches doing, do try and prevent those wretched squirrels from destroying the lot.

Tuesday.

Local gossip has it ~~to-day~~ that we were being followed by a sub to-day however we were not attacked in any way. They are showing "Next of Kin" to the officers tonight I shall not be seeing it, too hot and I have seen it before I would rather go up on deck and watch the sun setting and the beautiful clouds.

Love to all especially Snizzles

Edwin XXX

No 4
Part 3.
Freetown
24 July

LONDON
G.T. BRITAIN

OFFICIAL PAID

Mrs. C. N. Stevens.
Holmwood.
Kingston Hill
Surrey.
England.

PASSED BY CENSOR
No.
5569

Pte Stevens. Lt. R.A.

No 4 continued

July 24

Lt. E.M. Stevens. RA
117219

My dears

I am still very fit and of course getting browner every day. The weather has so far been marvellous and the sea pratically calm all the way. I make a point everyday of having a rest so that at the end of this voyage I shall be able to do anything of which I am asked. I saw a few flying fish to-day, they looked green about a foot long rather like a mackerel!!!

By the time you get this I shall be sleeping out on deck our 4 berthed cabin gets rather clamy at night and I hate clamy cabins. We hear the news still, so lets be thankful for small mercies Between you and I, this voyage might just as well have been a pleasure cruise for me. I have got rid of all responsibility all I do all day is to lounge about sunbathing eating and the 9 oclock news (Jack Hallert)

We are wearing drill to-day for the first time mine fits very well, and I am very glad I had it made at Hawkes

as most officer have spent the last two days cutting stitching and ironing their issue drill. As I write this letter a chap is strumming on a piano at my side it reminds me of that very happy evening I spent in our drawing room one Saturday night with old Ray Grumbar and you all.

I am still the same person who used to come home every weekend from Watford ie I am not drinking here anymore than I did back in England.

I do 1½ hours of gunnery a day as I am determined to arrive knowing my stuff.

The sea is becoming very "CAPRI" in colour and the sky very blue and clear. As I said before Keep the old flag flying. I am happy because I know that you are not worrying and that you will be waiting for Ray and I to come home. I am afraid this all sounds both I think this strumming is affecting my mind

The clocolate I am managing to consume is disgusting on average about ½ lb a day, plus Stewed Peaches for breakfast, salad for lunch and oranges and gooseberries for supper.

There are about six guards officers aboard this ship they are the most pansy, blasé stupid fools, you could ever imagine one could ever meet in ones lifetime I hope they all get killed off quickly because no one will ever ~~know~~ miss them!!

My present batman was a C.O servant for 2½ years, he knows his job backwards and forward (joke over).

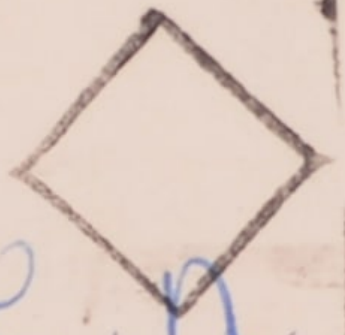
As I write this page I am lying on my bunk in my pants with the fan cooling me down, or me warming the fan!

Keep Smiling, my dear

Edwin XXX

LT E.M STEVENS
R.F.A Base Depot
M.E.F.

Glad to receive Cable Safe arrival
Raymonds address. Baragwanath
Military Hospital Johannesburg. He
is very well. Wish you all luck in
new posting all our love
Dears.



No

PASSED BY CENSOR
No. 5569

RECEIVED FROM
H.M. SHIPS

Mrs. C. N. Stevens
Holmwood.
Kingston Hill.
Surrey.
England.

August Monday

No 5

My dears.

I am still fighting fit and thoroughly enjoying this trip, the food is as usual first class and I am managing to keep myself thoroughly occupied. In two weeks from this date it will be my birthday, as far as I can see I shall be able to have a party ashore; and I know that you will all be thinking of me and wishing me the usual happy returns of the day. God bless you all and thank you. As you imagine it has been pretty warm lately, we have all been wearing all our tropical kit and topees in fact wearing our thinnest of everything. My underwear has been gazed upon very enviously by my cabin mates.

When you get this we shall touched land twice. I certainly picked the right time of year to make this trip I can just imagine how very unbearable this trip could be in really hot weather, although at times the heat we had to put up with

was quite enough for me.

We had an extremely amusing afternoon in our last port, all the troops spent the time chucking pennies and cigarettes into the native boats or into the water. This all caused a considerable amount of amusement especially as for most it was the first time they had seen niggers.

Well I nearly collapsed this morning because I saw a dirty old tug manned completely by filthy niggers coming along side and it looked rather familiar to I looked for name, low and behold it was called "VADNE" and underneath was also written the words "Portsmouth" poor old boat what a decline!

There is an extremely extraordinary climate here when it rains the rain is warm and during the day everything is moist and clammy ideal weather for pops cucumbers, but a vile climate to live in.

Just as I was writing this letter sitting in a deck chair, topee on, wearing shorts and sun glasses, we had our second scare, but we are still OK and it may only have been a shark!

It is completely taboo to talk about home, one's family or England aboard this ship and a very good thing too, it keeps us all alot more cheerful.

You can be quite sure at every port we dock I shall make enquiries about wounded officers from Lybia so that there will not be any chance of missing Raymond!

Tuesday

As I write this letter I am sitting on a reel of rope watching a boxing competition. Surroundings very different outside the ring to what I have been used to at Watford and other places. Everyone sitting on life belts wearing sunglasses, shorts, shirts topee, looking very brown and very fit. Blue sky above us, blue sea all around us. Infact I never knew there was so much sea.

Wednesday

Most officers are washing their own laundry, as they find that batmen usually ruin it, but even "officers" washing is far worse than any Hennyl ever done. At once I have arranged

to have my beautiful underwear laundred by the Crews ships laundry. "Oh what a wangle!" "Oh what underwear".

You remember how you always used to think of old Ray during "Big Ben" striking nine clock and how we agreed to think of each other whenever possible. well I always combine my evening prayers with my 9 o'clock thoughts as 9 o'clock at London is 11 o'clock here and usually I am in bed then fast asleep! (Southern hemisphere)

You will have to excuse all this most extraordinary writing but most of it is done cramped up on my bed.

They have just finished marking out a deck tennis court, with my background and past experience of this game I ought to prove fairly good.

I watched the finals of the boxing to-day, some of fighters were very messy, alot of unnecessary blood flying about!

Well I am still doing alittle gunnery each day

And ought to arrive knowing everything necessary. I am alot fatter and still eating like a horse. Last night we had for supper. Soup.
Duck and green peas
Pineapple
Savoury.
Very tasty!
Most of the food we are eating at present was brought aboard this ship months ago and has been chilled ever since it is amazing the fish tastes as though it had come straight out of the sea yet most likely it has been lying on ice for at least six months.
Well my darlings I can just imagine what the cucumbers must be looking like and the garden how are my hens would you like me to dig the run over tomorrow, every day is one day nearer the time when I shall be able to do that again so chins up: look after yourselves: Edwin Special love to Snizzles

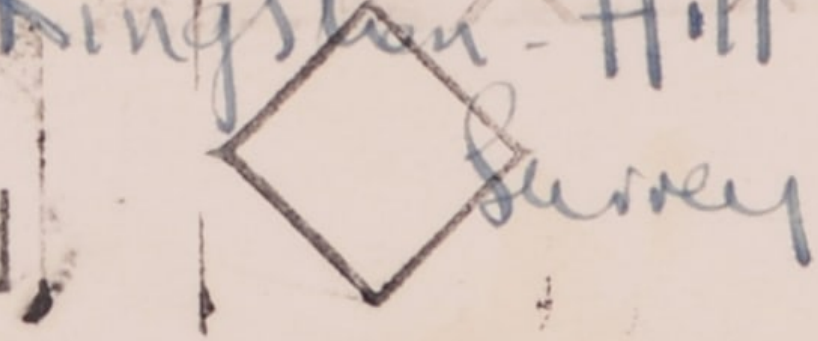
N 6

Aug 1942
Capetown

MRS C. N. Stevens
Holmwood.
Kingston-Hill
Surrey

England





PASSED BY CENSOR
No. 5569

RECEIVED FROM
H.M. SHIP

N° 6

RFAXW APO 1915

My darlings,

I dreamt last night I was in Piccadilly having a usual Sunday nighter a flick and then supper at the Martinez, perhaps the good old Troc adero. Thank goodness we have had those happy happy times that we can look back and forward too There are very few things and few places we have not done and been to, soon we shall all be together again and until that time we must all preserve ourselves, so that when this war does finish, we shall all be fit to enjoy what we are fighting and working for!

By the time you get this letter we shall have visited a port, my next letter will give you more information as to how I spent my time ashore.

Amazing luck but as far as I can see I shall be able to have a birthday party ashore however you will hear all about this in future letters.

What do you think of the snap, well I think

Cont. 2.

I look as though I had just walked out from Hawks. I am still feeling grand and alot more sunburnt alot fitter, and really enjoying this cruise and friends I have made on the trip.

We have had so far an extremely quiet voyage. "Well done the Navy" the only real excitement being the appearance of porpoises long range sea gulls, jelly fishes flying fishes and a possible whale!

Reference the photographs the third chap sitting on left and Philip Sinker are with me. the rest all very decent junior officers and another lot.

David Chalmers extreme right is a very decent chap, rather - the same type as Hugh Walker: As you can see by the snap my watch is still OK and clothing of course 100%.

Cheerio for now
my dears. Keep smiling
Edwin

No 7



RECEIVED FROM
H.M. SHIPS

MRS. C. N. Stevens
Holmwood.
Kingston Hill.
Surrey.
England

Sapica
1942
Aug

August

No 7

My darlings

How do you like the colour of my new notepaper! my turkish-delight paper. I am still feeling grand naturally alot better owing to the cooler weather. It is a most extraordinary affair, firstly cool British winter weather gradually getting warmer, stuffier and until longer nights, until it really gets unbearable then after a certain time it commences to get cooler, shorter darker nights, until at the present moment we have praticallly got back to wearing coats again by day, little sun but just as I like it.

I think the most remarkable thing happened to-day, an infantry officer whom I was very friendly, continually called me Raymond, until this afternoon I could stand it no longer and asked him the reason why he was always calling me Raymond.

He said that he had known another Stewart in Ireland and was customarily mixing up our names

Well, the long and the short

of it is that his name is
Bill Hood and his home village is
Newton Stewart his home was the
biggest house at Newton Stewart. His
mother was always entertaining
Raymond and Peter Foster Raymond Dodd
Jimmy Greenwood at her house, tennis
baths and drinks.

It was Mrs Hood who
met Muriel Ewart at Newton Stewart
Station and put her up in her house
and entertained her during her unfortunate
stay for a week. Although during that
week old Ray only saw Muriel for
1 hour eventually Peter Foster and Bill
Hood drove Muriel back to Dublin in
a small army truck on her last day
so that she would not miss her boat.
There is alot more I could say, but
this brother has got a certain amount of
honour so I shall say no more.
Bill Hood met Ray during his ten days
leave Mrs Hood of course knows alot
about Ray and thinks she knows alot about
Muriel but there she has got the wrong
end of the stick.

To finish this gossip. Bill

confirms the reports we had about Ray in his old Regiment you know about being very popular and knowing more about his job than any other officer in the Division He seemed to have played alot of tennis also done a certain amount of horse riding and had become very friendly with all the Hood family Bill Hood never expected to ever meet another Stewart especially on this ship. However these strange things are always happening at the most unexpected times.

One of our escorting ships paid farewell to us Today by steaming past us their band playing "Life on the Ocean Wave" I am afraid I had become rather attached to it. It had done a good job of work, and looked a very trim smart vessel.

Well my dear keep the Holmwood flag flying while Ray and I keep our flags flying

Cheerio

Edwin XXX

Love to Mollie, Annette & Cucumber

August

Miss H. Stevens - 1942

Holmwood.

Kingston Hill

Surrey

England

PASSED BY CENSOR
No. 5569

E. M. Stevens Lt-RN

August
Continuation of 7

My dear Henny and Podge

Just a line to tell you that you are both continually in my thoughts. I often review the last happy two months I had at Holmwood with you all.

My word you could have wasted time aboard this ship with all the boys. There is only one female and she a hard bitten old matron you would be amazed how pretty we all thought she was after having not seen any females for five weeks.

However once we see normal girls again she will revert to old role of the old hard bitten matron.

Some of the officers gave a show to the men the other night two of them dressed up as girls the effect was staggering the show I gather was a tremendous success!

If I am allowed I shall be despatching some silk

stockings from the next port so that when you and Phil when you go dancing at the Lansdowne (the dump) can still be the smartest on the floor.

Incidentally the last night in England Daddy told me that you had joined forces with Phil again I was pleased to hear that everything had settled down again You would be amazed how unimportant engagements seem once you are out here, anyway Henny dear you are not quite such a snake as old Podge who goes around with engaged offsiers from Watford Well now having picked holes in both of you I will tell you something about myself.

When we arrive at this port I intend to have a jolly good time. Meet some girls bit of dancing a little sightseeing and some FISHING I hope

Well I will tell you all about this in my next letter

love to you all

e Snizzles

Edwin XXX