

Diary of My Life in the Service **(Transcribed from Nicholas J. Rodi's book "My Life in the Service")**

May 1, 1942 entered "Boot Camp," U.S. NTS, Newport RI.

Left "Boot Camp" June 29, 1942.

July 1, 1942 - Arrived Key West, Fla. to attend Sound School.

Aug. 1, 1942 - Graduated from So. Sch. & was made SoM 3/c.

I spent a few weeks in Rec. Sta. in Key West awaiting for further transportation to Balboa, C.Z. to board U.S.S. Erie for duty.

August 29, 1942 - Boarded PYc-15 [U.S.S. GARNET] for transportation to Balboa. The trip was my first on the sea. I enjoyed it very much.

Sept. 7, 1942 - Arrived in Balboa. Reported to Comdt. 15th Naval Dist. About 4:00 P.M. - Reported on board the Erie for duty. The ship was in "overhaul" at the time. I was placed in "C" Div. where I met fellows I was to work with. I liked the ship from the very beginning.

Later I made a few liberties in Panama City. I liked the place a lot.

We were given a change of duty. We went on War Patrol on convoy duty between Gtmo. Bay & Trinidad. We convoyed many ships to and from Trinidad.

My first time ashore in Trinidad I didn't like it. Still it was better than Gtmo.

We made a second trip to Trinidad on about the last of Oct. We anchored out and were there about ten days.

Nov 10, 1942. We were escorting a fairly large convoy to Gtmo. Reports of subs were being given all the way. Most of the crew seemed to expect some trouble on the way.

Nov. 12, 1942 - We were passing the island of Curacao. At about 5:30 PM (17:30) we were hit by a torpedo. Ship was in flames. We were hit on stb. quarter in officers' wardroom.

The ship was beached and the crew abandoned ship. Capt. Mack was the last to leave. About 8:30 we were taken to an Army Camp and fed and billeted. Five officers and one enlisted man killed. A few other casualties. The Red Cross helped us immensely.

Stayed in the camp for a couple of days.

Nov. 15, I attended a Catholic church, Mt. Carmel, in Curacao, D.W.I.

Tues. Nov. 17. Left Curacao by plane. In about 3 hrs (11:00) arrived in Gtmo. We were put up in the Marine Barracks there.

Tues 17, We were issued a few small stores, having lost everything on the ship.

Wed. 18, Didn't do much today. Made out claim chits. Also received mail. I rec'd a letter and a birthday card and some presents from Margie. I was so happy because of the mail. Mother & Gabriels also sent me presents. One of the presents Margie sent me is this Diary I am writing in now. It is getting late so I will take a shower & go to bed.

Nov. 19, 1942 – Not much happened today. No mail. Drew our blues and pea coat. Wrote a letter to Margie and one to Mom.

Nov. 20 – Took my blues to the tailor. No mail. Had inspection. Nothing unusual today.

Nov. 21 -