

There follows a copy of the brief diary kept by Corporal William Oscar Adams on his return to the United Kingdom from Italy, 27th June – 11th July 1945.

Below is a transcript of his diary.

Record Pending Release and Return to Blighty
Mediterranean and Atlantic Cruise

27th June. Wed

Farewell and free wining at the canteen. Jolly good sing-song etc.

28th June. Thurs

Departed for assembly centre @ 1-0pm. Arrived Cervinara @ 4.0pm. Lousy spot heart of orchard and country, a few small villages around. Could only buy Vino. Pocco Pocco.

29th June. Fri

Routine release duties.

Terrible queues for food lousy. 4 small bottles of beer and cigs from Canteen. (Smaching).

30th Jun. Sat

Waiting movement order. Food and waiting still lousy. Handed in Lira for Sterling.

Sun July 1st

F.F.I & allocated Sterling. Disappointed did not move to Port.

Mon Jul 2nd.

10.30am Parade prior to moving off to Docks. Waiting transport convoy. Departed 1.30pm arrived docks 4.0pm. Board ship by 5.30pm. M/S Batoy, good looking Polish Ship. 7.0pm weighed anchor and off to sea. Soon heavy sea. 2hrs at sea, then 2/3 of passengers violently sea sick, my stomach was heaving but fortunately did not vomit. Decent sleeping accommodation, my position good ventilation. (lucky)

Tues July 3rd.

Rather good nights rest. Ship riding very cam. Lovely sunny morning. Breakfast first sitting, boat drill (or inner stations) then sun bathing. Shocking queue canteen.

Wed July 4th.

Practically same as 3rd (Sweated line 2½ hrs for cigs). Community singing 8.0pm

Thurs 5th July

Grand sunny morning 6.30am. Medi a rich blue colour. Coming up to the Straits. Passed through the Straits of Gibraltar, approx. 8.15am. Rock a lovely view in the bright sun light. Turned into the (half way in 1000) Atlantic Sea, commences to change colour to a greenish blue and a little heavier as well. Sun till bright later. Ancore Sing Song and little Concert Party. Amusing.

Fri 6th July.

Awake later because not light, half light sky overcast and very chilly warmer clothes req'd', cold till M.Day sun warm gain, little S.Bathing. Riding through the Bay of Biscay (approx. 22hrs crossing). Sighed convoy. Quiet day. 10.45pm. Chilly pacing deck no dark. Ship riding peacefully, rather cold now.

Sat 7th July.

Morning 7.0am still dark and cold. Big changes in temps on deck. Ship riding OK. Sea calm (later) keeps cold until approx. 10.30am sun breaks through heavy cloud, able to remove BD Blouse. Enjoyed M.D. meal and 1½ hrs nap. Choc issue 2.0pm nice and sunny on deck. Pleasant to see. Sea gulls settle on ship. Passed a

large shoal of porpoises. Concert 8.0pm and community singing. 11.0pm turning in disappointed no land in sight. Ship riding OK.

Sun 8th July.

8.0am land sighted either side. ~~Supposed to be England and Ireland?~~ Pleased to be nearing Blighty. Plenty Sea Gulls hovering and squaking over Ship. Met Bdr from old 30th Regt. Chatted a deal about old times. Bound for Guildford same as I. 6.0pm still jogging along. Land on starboard side (R.H.) 7.0pm passing Holyhead and Ireland. 10.30pm Sing Song in lovely sun set ship riding over very slowly.

Mon 8th July. (sic) 9th July

Expect to dock early hours of morning Nr Glasgow.

Anchored approx. 4.0am mid Clyde. Gourock Scotland 6.0am. Very heavy and overcast 7.0am breakfast after viewing the landscapes from Promenade deck. Brightening up, nice to see GREEN hills and fields.

Loudspeakers blaring out embarkation orders. No piers here alight by tenders only. 1-40th Party Customs Officers check. Heavy cloud and raining. Sent telegram. 9th / 13th now waiting to disembark is 1.0pm. Good fun feeding and watching sea gull movements.

Boarded small passenger steamer for (a 2.0pm) pier disembarked 5.30pm (hellish carrying full kit). Best mug of tea since leaving Blighty. Terrible confusion in arrangements for leaving steamer for train. On Station NAAFI gave a present (whoopie) A nice big paper bag. A cake. Bar choc. 10 cigs. Tea. Boarded a very nice and comfortable corridor train. Departed 6.10pm. All civvies waving and cheering frantically from all windows and doorways all along line. Raining like the Dickens. Train travelling very fast across Paisley, Carstairs Junction, Gretna Green 9.45pm, Carlisle 10.0pm, Depart 10.30, Preston 12.45am, (cup tea 6 bis) Wigan, Crewe 2.0am, Bletchingly 6.00am (**TUES 10th**). Arrived Oxford Stn at 7.30am very good organisation here, transport very soon to Slade Embarkation Camp. A.1. V.G. Meal. Smashing meals and very comfortable.

Wed 11th July

Left Slade Camp 9.00am. Train Reading 10.0am.