

Blue Network
Herbert M. Clark
Coca Cola

London
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Donald Fisher - Radio Man 2nd Class

This is Blue Network war correspondent, Herbert M. Clark, at the coke stand mike in London...I think you all know pretty much what the Army and the Air Force have been doing to chase Hitler back into Germany - and out of Germany...It's been a ground operation - a show for infantry and artillery and tanks...with plenty of scope for planes, from fighters to Fortresses....The American Navy has had a job of work, too, however - one that's been more or less pushed into the background except for incidental mentions - sometimes purely by inference - that forces or supplies were landed from boats...Well, the Navy is doing other things...and here's a lad to tell us about them....Donald Fisher, radio man second class....Don, what are you over here for?

FISHER: Well, I'm in PT boats, Herb - that breaks down, you know, to patrol torpedo boats. And we're over here for anything that comes up.

CLARK: Maybe it would be easier if we tackled that from another angle. How long have you been over here, and what have you been doing since you got here?



FISHER: We've been here just over six months now, and - well, for what we've been doing, let's take it one thing at a time.

CLARK: That suits me. When did you start operations, then, and what was it?

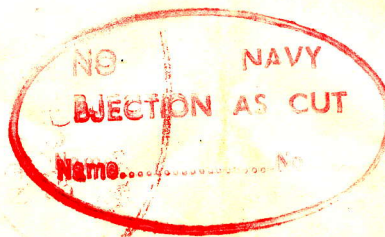
FISHER: We got here in April, and went operational on the night of June fifth - the night before dee day. Our job then was to ~~the~~ screen the minesweepers which were clearing a path for the invasion fleet - protecting them against possible attacks by German E boats.

CLARK: You said "possible" attacks. Meaning there were none, I take it.

FISHER: That's right - we didn't see a thing. Didn't have much trouble - one boat from our squadron - ~~that's MFB squadron~~ thirty-four - hit a mine, but she was beached and patched up and is still around. We were under fire from German shore batteries, and they split one minesweeper right alongside us, but we weren't hit.

CLARK: That's a lucky start. Did you keep on patrolling after the initial landings?

FISHER: Yes, we spent a month and a half on patrol - most of the time off shore beyond the extreme right flank of the invasion, about halfway up the Cherbourg Peninsula, to take care of any threat against the unloading operations.



CLARK: And were there any?

FISHER: Well, the biggest one was one we ~~xxx~~ wouldn't do anything about....The storm that cracked down on us just after the landings. We spent nineteen days tossing around in it, eating K rations and losing more gear every time the waves tipped us on our ears. ~~But we did some work between times.~~

~~CLARK: Such as?~~

~~FISHER: Well, we picked up about three hundred survivors from ships that foundered, and chased away one E boat that came in, and had some night target practice shooting down the parachute flares the Germans dropped when they tried to bomb the beaches.~~

CRAFT

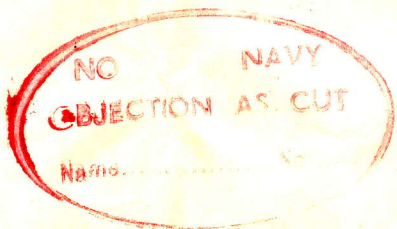
CLARK: You make it sound pretty dull.

FISHER: Well, it was duller than the next job.

CLARK: And what was that?

FISHER: After Cherbourg fell we went on patrol off the Channel Islands, and we picked a tough scrap soon after we got there - a five day battle in which we sunk four German trawlers, chased another up on the beach, and damaged three more for the loss of one PT.

CLARK: That's a good score. Tell me about it.



FISHER: It started about two thirty one morning. We picked up five targets off Jersey Island. They turned out to be M Class minesweepers, carrying four point nine inch guns. Six of us - six PTs, that is - went in and made a torpedo attack, but there was a lot of fog and we missed. Then three of the boats closed in for a gun attack, and that's where we lost our boat.

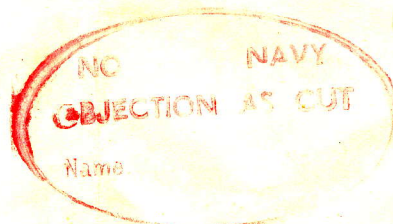
CLARK: How did it happen?

FISHER: The Germans were in a crescent formation. Two of ours realized that, but the third went in too close and got caught in a cross fire and was sunk ~~with all hands.~~

CLARK: That's bad, Don.

FISHER: We got even, though. Just after dawn my boat and another one went in close. There was still a foggy haze, and we closed to a hundred and fifty feet - those Germans looked like battleships from there - and opened up with all our guns. You couldn't miss - we poured everything into the hull of our target, and she blew up. There were two others behind her, and we damaged both of those before we turned and raced away.

CLARK: They were firing at you all this time, too, weren't they?



was a funeral

FISHER: They sure were, and with more guns. ~~We lost two men~~
Casualties
~~killed and nine others wounded out of a crew of sixteen -~~

I got some shrapnel in my head....But we were pretty lucky at that, I guess, to get away that easy and with no real damage to the boat, although we were out of action for the rest of the scrap.

CLARK: How did that go?

FISHER: Well, it ~~lasted~~ lasted five days, and we had everything under control when it ended.

CLARK: Good deal. What happened next to the squadron?

FISHER: It's been routine patrol ever since - getting steadily rougher, but only because the channel's rougher. And everything's still under control.

CLARK: And I know you'll keep it that way, Don. Thanks for coming up tonight to get the navy into the picture. That was radio man second class Donald Fisher, of the United States Navy's Motor torpedo boat squadron thirtyfour... and this is Blue network war correspondent, Herbert M. Clark, in London, returning you now to the Victory Parade of Spotlight Bands in the United States.

