

C-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L

WAR DIARY

U.S.S. HELPS

From: Commanding Officer. To: The Chief of Naval Operations.

Sept. 1, 1942 - Sept. 30, 1942

Original to Chief of Naval Operations (Office of Naval Records
and Library).

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REPORT FOR U.S.S. PHELPS

TASK ORGANIZATION:

- 11 Vice Admiral Fletcher (Task Force Commander) - SARATOGA.
- 11.2 Rear Admiral Wright - MINNEAPOLIS, NEW ORLEANS, ATLANTA.
- 11.4 Captain S.B. Brewer - Desron ONE less MONAGHAN, AYLWIN, DALE, HULL, plus GRAYSON and MONSSEN.

Changes:

On 1 September LAFFEY and NAVAJO joined.

On 2 September MONSSEN and GRAYSON detached.

On 6 September WILSON and CUMMINGS joined this Task Force. LAFFEY and NAVAJO detached.

On 10 September MINNEAPOLIS, MACDONOUGH, FARRAGUT, MONSSEN and GRAYSON detached and organized as Task Force 64.

On 12 September ATLANTA detached.

On September 22 DEWEY, WORDEN, PHELPS detached Task Force 11, reported ComTaskForce ONE for duty. Commander Destroyer Squadron ONE in PHELPS.

On September 24 PHELPS (Comdesron ONE), DEWEY, WORDEN further reported to ComBatDiv TWO, reorganized as follows:

TASK ORGANIZATION:

- 1.1.2 Rear Admiral T.S. Wilkinson - IDAHO (Combatdiv 2).
Task Unit Commander - PENNSYLVANIA, PHELPS (Comdesron 1
Captain S.B. Brewer), DEWEY, WORDEN.

1 SEPTEMBER, 1942

<u>GCT</u>	<u>LCT</u>	
		In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA, Cruising Disposition #1.
2000	0800	Posit - Lat. 12-49.8 S., Long. 167-19.2 E.
0000	1200	Posit - Lat. 13-12 S., Long. 167-53 E. Course and speed made good - 125 True, 13.2 knots.
0305	1505	MONSSEN, who had been ordered to remain in area on 31 August and keep Japanese submarine down, rejoined formation.

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1 SEPTEMBER, 1942(Cont'd)

<u>GCT</u>	<u>LCT</u>	
0339	1539	Received following message from MONSSEN: "MADE FOUR ATTACKS ON GOOD CONTACTS BETWEEN 0947 AND 1020 X SUB BELIEVED SUNK ON FOURTH ATTACK X ABOUT ONE MINUTE AFTER CHARGES EXPLOSIONS SUBSIDED OBSERVED TWO DISTINCT LARGE AIR BUBBLES WHICH PERSISTED FOR ALMOST A MINUTE AT PLOTTED POSITION OF SUB X NO OIL OR DEBRIS X SEARCHED AREA RADIUS EIGHT MILES UNTIL 1930 LOCAL X NO CONTACTS AFTER ATTACK AT 1120 X 26 CHARGES ON BOARD".
0645	1845	LAFHEY and NAVAJO joined formation.
0800	2000	Posit - Lat. 14-18 S., Long. 168-27.3 E.

2 SEPTEMBER, 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA,
Cruising Disposition #1.

2000	0800	Posit - Lat. 16-04 S., Long. 169-17 E.
2330	1130	GUADALUPE escorted by DALE joined formation.
0000	1200	Posit - Lat. 16-34.5 S., Long. 169-42 E. Course and speed made good - 141 True, 11.6 knots.
0003	1203	Commenced fueling Task Force 11.
0555	1755	MONSSEN and GRAYSON left formation on detached duty.

3 SEPTEMBER, 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA,
Cruising Disposition #1.

1300	0100	Changed clocks to (minus 12 $\frac{1}{2}$) LZT.
1930	0800	Posit - Lat. 18-25 S., Long. 172-06 E.
2330	1200	Posit - Lat. 18-44.2 S., Long. 172-43.4 E. Course and speed made good - 127 True, 10.8 knots.
2334	1204	Task Force 11 completed fueling operations.
0005	1235	GUADALUPE and DALE detached.
0305	1535	NORDEN obtained supersonic contact and dropped depth charges. Contact apparently non-submarine.
0730	2000	Posit - Lat. 19-27.3 S., Long. 173-42 E.

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4 September 1942

<u>GCT</u>	<u>LCT</u>	
1930	0800	In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA Cruising Disposition #1. Posit. Lat. 20-31 S., Long. 175-52.5 E.
2330	1200	Posit. Lat. 20-35.5 S., Long. 176-39 E. Course and speed made good: 117 true, 12.8 knots.
0730	2000	Posit. Lat. 21-10 S., Long. 178-32 E.

5 SEPTEMBER 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA Cruising Disposition #1.

1930	0800	Posit. Lat. 21-25.5 S., Long. 179-08 W.
2330	1200	Posit. Lat. 21-25.6 S., Long. 178-09.2 W. Course and speed made good: 100 true, 13.7 knots.
0730	2000	Posit. Lat. 21-39 S., Long. 176-50 W.

6 September 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA, Cruising Disposition #1.

1230	0100	Set clocks to (minus 13) LZT
1804	1704	Sighted Tongatabu, bearing 315 true. Prepared to enter harbor.
1940	0840	Set clocks to (minus 12 hours 19 minutes) LZT
0027	1246	Task Force moored Nukualofa, Tongatabu. Fueling and replenishing. WILSON and CUMMINGS joined Task Force. LAFFEY and NAVAJO detached.
2341	1400	MONSSEN and GRAYSON entered harbor and moored.

7 - 9 September 1942

Moored Tongatabu.

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10 SEPTEMBER, 1942

GCT LCT Moored Tongatabu.

1841 0700 MINNEAPOLIS, MACDONOUGH, FARRAGUT, MONSSEN, GRAYSON
got underway and stood out to sea. This force
detached from Task Force 11 and organized as Task
Force 64 under command of Rear Admiral Wright.

11 SEPTEMBER, 1942

Moored Tongatabu.

12 SEPTEMBER, 1942

1841 0700 Underway in company with Task Force 11 for Pearl
Harbor, screening SARATOGA and SOUTH DAKOTA.
ATLANTA remained in harbor awaiting orders.

1941 0800 Posit - Lat. 20-51.6 S., Long. 175-11 W.

2341 1200 Posit - Lat. 21-03 S., Long. 175-43.8 W. Course and
speed made good - 280 True, 14.7 knots.

0741 2000 Posit - Lat. 21-24.3 S., Long. 174-18.4 W.

12 SEPTEMBER, 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA
and SOUTH DAKOTA, in Cruising Disposition #1.

1141 0000 Set clocks to (plus 10½) LZT.

1830 0800 Posit - Lat. 19-33.5 S., Long. 172-26 E.

2230 1200 Posit - Lat. 18-58.3 S., Long. 171-45 W. Course
and speed made good - 061 True, 15.7 knots.

0630 2000 Posit - Lat. 17-57.8 S., Long. 170-14.4 W.

13 SEPTEMBER, 1942 In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA
and SOUTH DAKOTA in Cruising Disposition #1.

1130 0100 Set clocks to (plus 10) LZT.

1800 0800 Posit - Lat. 16-02.3 S., Long. 168-08.5 W.

2200 1200 Posit - Lat. 15-26.2 S., Long. 167-27 W. Course
and speed made good - 049 True, 15.1 knots.

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14 September 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA, and SOUTH DAKOTA, in Cruising Disposition #1.

1800 0800 Posit. Lat. 12-11 S., Long. 164-43 W.

2200 1200 Posit. Lat. 11-23 S., Long. 164-27.2 W. Course and speed made good: 036 true, 15.0 knots.

0600 2000 Posit. Lat. 10-11.9 S., Long. 164-42.8 W.

15 September 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA and SOUTH DAKOTA, in Cruising Disposition #1.

1100 0100 Set clocks to (plus 9½) LZT

1730 0800 Posit. Lat. 08-02 S., Long. 162-37 W.

2130 1200 Posit. Lat. 07-13 S., Long. 162-11 W. Course and speed made good: 028 true, 13.4 knots.

0530 2000 Posit. Lat. 05-58.2 S., Long. 161-16.4 W.

16 September 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA and SOUTH DAKOTA, in Cruising Disposition #1.

1730 0800 Posit. Lat. 03-20 S., Long. 160-30 W.

2130 1200 Posit. Lat. 02-33.5 S., Long. 160-11 W. Course and speed made good: 023 true, 14.6 knots.

0530 2000 Posit. Lat. 01-07 S., Long. 159-43 W.

17 September 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA and SOUTH DAKOTA, in Cruising Disposition #1.

1730 0800 Posit. Lat. 01-33.8 N., Long. 159-17.5 W.

2130 1200 Posit. Lat. 02-22 N., Long. 158-57 W., Course and speed made good: 014 true, 15.0 knots.

18 September 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA and SOUTH DAKOTA, in Cruising Disposition #1

1730 0800 Posit. Lat. 06-44.3 N., Long. 158-28.2 W.

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18 SEPTEMBER, 1942 (Cont'd)

<u>GCT</u>	<u>LCT</u>	
2130	1200	Posit - Lat. 07-39.9 N., Long. 158-20.8 W. Course and speed made good - 005 True, 15.5 knots.
0530	2000	Posit - Lat. 09-31.2 N., Long. 158-10.8 W.

19 SEPTEMBER, 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA and SOUTH DAKOTA, in Cruising Disposition #1.

1730	0800	Posit - Lat. 12-13.5 N., Long. 158-10.5 W.
2130	1200	Posit - Lat. 13-03 N., Long. 158-09 W. Course and speed made good - 003 True, 14.6 knots.
0530	2000	Posit - Lat. 14-42.2 N., Long. 158-05.5 W.

20 SEPTEMBER, 1942

In company with Task Force 11, screening SARATOGA and SOUTH DAKOTA, in Cruising Disposition #1.

1730	0800	Posit - Lat. 17-16 N., Long. 158-01 W.
2130	1200	Posit - Lat. 17-50.8 N., Long. 157-44 W. Course and speed made good - 005 True, 14.0 knots.

21 SEPTEMBER, 1942

1730	0800	Preparing to enter Pearl Harbor.
2000	1030	Entered Pearl Harbor with Task Force 11.
2200	1230	Moored Pearl Harbor replenishing and voyage repairs.

22 SEPTEMBER, 1942

Moored Pearl Harbor. PHELPS, WORDEN, DEWEY detached Task Force 11, and reported duty ComTaskFor ONE in accordance with CINCPAC Secret despatch 211251.

23 SEPTEMBER, 1942

Moored Pearl Harbor.

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24 September 1942

Moored Pearl Harbor. PHELPS, DEWEY, WORDEN, (Comdesron ONE in PHELPS) reported to Commander Battleship Division 2, and organized as Task Unit 1.1.2 for duty in accordance CINCPAC secret despatch 232246

Task Organization

Task Unit 1.1.2 Rear Admiral T.S. Wilkinson - IDAHO (Combatdiv 2). Task Unit Commander - PENNSYLVANIA, PHELPS (Comdesron 1 - Captain S.B. Brewer), DEWEY, WORDEN.

25 September 1942

Moored Pearl Harbor

26 September 1942

Moored Pearl Harbor

27 September 1942

Moored Pearl Harbor

28 September 1942

1900	0930	Underway from Pearl Harbor in company with Task Unit 1.1.2 in accordance with Commander Battleship Division 2 secret operation order 7-42 of September 25, 1942
2130	1200	Posit. Lat. 21-10.2 N., Long. 157-37.8 W
0530	2000	Posit. Lat. 25-19 N., Long. 150-24 W.

29 September 1942


In company with Task Unit 1.1.2, screening battle-ships.

1100	0200	Set clocks to (plus 9) LZT
1700	0800	Posit. Lat. 23-39 N., Long. 153-11 W.
2100	1200	Posit. Lat. 24-12 N., Long. 152-19 W. Course and speed made good: 058 true, 16.2 knots.
0500	2000	Posit. Lat. 25-17 N., Long. 150-24 W.

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30 SEPTEMBER, 1942

<u>GCT</u>	<u>LCT</u>	
		In company with Task Unit 1.1.2, screening battle-ships.
1030	0200	Set clocks to (plus 8½) LZT.
1630	0800	Posit - Lat. 26-29.4 N., Long. 147-28 W.
2030	1200	Posit - Lat. 26-57 N., Long. 146-27 W. Course and speed made good - 062 True, 16.1 knots.
0259	1829	Seaplane from PENNSYLVANIA crashed during recovery operations. Personnel recovered by WORDEN. Plane sunk by gunfire.
0430	2000	Posit - Lat. 27-33 N., Long. 144-34 W.


E. L. BECK,
Lieut-Comdr., U. S. Navy,
Commanding.