

Reg. No. NONE
R.S. No. 12-JUNE-1944

DD360/A12
Serial (078)

U.S.S. PHELPS

(hw)

20 May 1944.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet.
Subject: War Diary of this vessel covering period 7
December 1941 to 31 March 1942.
Reference: (a) Cominch File FF1/A12-1, serial 1589 of
2 March 1944.
Enclosure: (A) Subject War Diary (reconstructed).

1. In accordance with reference (a), effort has been made to compile and reconstruct the subject War Diary. It should be noted that enclosure (A) is based entirely upon entries obtained from the quartermaster notebooks and Commander Destroyer Squadron ONE's rough war diary. No copies of the ship's log during that period are available, as they were landed at Pearl Harbor in 1942 in accordance with strip ship procedure being followed at that time.

2. Since the receipt of reference (a), a thorough search has been made at Pearl Harbor for these ship's logs; but there appears to be neither knowledge nor trace of them.

3. The commanding officer realizes that enclosure (A) leaves much to be desired. But due to the lack of any record other than the quartermaster notebook, and Commander Destroyer Squadron ONE's war diary, he feels that he cannot supplement this meager information without possible distortion of any accuracy it may now possess.

D. L. Martineau
D. L. MARTINEAU.

DECLASSIFIED - DOD DIR. 5200.9
of 27 SEP 58
BY DR-02891C DATE 1 APR 60

74463

FILMED

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

December 7, 1941.

USS Phelps DD 360

0758 Ships at Pearl Harbor attacked by Japanese planes in a surprise attack. Phelps was alongside Dobbin at berth X-2 undergoing tender overhaul. Fires were out and machinery was in a dismantled condition. 0803 Phelps opened fire with 1.1 gun mounts the first ship in nest to fire. 0900 A determined dive bombing attack was beaten off by heavy gun fire. Bombs fell just astern of nests sinking and killing the crew of a Dobbin motor launch. 0926 Phelps slipped anchor and got underway with approximately 170 men aboard. About 1030 joined force consisting of Detroit, St. Louis, Phoenix, Benham, Blue, Monaghan and Enterprise. This force proceeded toward Nauakuli where nothing was found but five friendly planes bombing an abandoned sampan. Force then proceeded in north easterly direction to search for reported enemy carriers and continued search throughout the night.

December 8, 1941.

Enterprise, Phoenix, Helena, Blue and Destroyer Squadron One less Dewey proceeded toward Pearl Harbor. Entered port about 1712, mooring alongside Worden in X-15. Received additional personnel and refueled. Took ammunition and provisions aboard during the night.

December 9, 1941.

Sortied about 1100 with Destroyer Squadron One less Aylwin and Dale to patrol outside entrance to harbor.

December 10, 1941.

Patrolling as before. 1700 Joined Neosho in formation 4-B with Destroyer Squadron One less Aylwin and Dale to proceed with her to rendezvous with task force 12.

December 11, 1941.

Proceeding on south westerly course to join task force 12 about 0632. Task Force consisting of Lexington, Indianapolis, Chicago, Portland, and five ships of Destroyer Squadron Five, cruising disposition 12-L.

December 12, 1941.

At sea with Task Force 12 as before. Formed fueling disposition 12F. CA's fueled from Neosho.

December 13, 1941.

At sea with Task Force 12 in cruising disposition 12G. Rough sea prevented CV from fueling.

December 14, 1941.

Entered Pearl Harbor, mooring alongside Aylwin, berth X-12. 1837
Changed berths to Ten Ten docks to fuel.

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

December 15, 1941.

Underway about 1150 to join Lexington and her escort rendezvousing about 1730. Formed cruising disposition 11-L.
1700 Set clocks back $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 time.

December 16, 1941.

Steaming as before. Enemy CV reported in vicinity but proved to be barge.

December 17, 1941.

Steaming as before.

December 18, 1941.

Steaming as before. Fleet units fueling destroyers from CA. CA and CV fueled from Neosho. Rough sea.

December 19, 1941.

Steaming as before. Completed fueling. Phelps fueling from Chicago.

December 20, 1941.

Steaming as before. 1900 Set clocks back 1 hour to zone plus 12 time.

December 21, 1941.

Steaming as before. Received word that orders had been cancelled. Changed course toward Wake Island.

December 22, 1941.

Steaming as before.

December 23, 1941.

Steaming as before.

December 24, 1941.

Steaming as before. 0230 Set clocks ahead $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ time.

December 25, 1941.

Steaming as before. 0230 Set clocks ahead $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 time.

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

December 26, 1941.

Steaming as before. 0230 Set clocks ahead $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus $10\frac{1}{2}$ time.

December 27, 1941.

Entered Pearl Harbor 0900 with Task Force 11 for fuel and repairs. Mooring alongside Whitney in berth X-12.

December 28, 1941.

Moored as before. 0900 Fueled ship.

December 29, 1941.

Moored as before.

December 30, 1941.

Moored as before.

December 31, 1941.

Moored as before.

January 1, 1942.

Moored alongside Whitney in berth X-12. 0628 Sortied with Task Group 15.8 composed of Portland, Farragut, and Phelps proceeding in a north easterly course.

January 2, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0840 Set clocks ahead $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 10 time.

January 3, 1942.

Steaming as before. Joined convoy composed of merchant ships, Etolen, Johnson and Mani Taylor. Phelps to escort them to Pearl Harbor.

January 4, 1942.

Steaming as before.

January 5, 1942.

Steaming as before.

January 6, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1215 Set clocks back to zone plus $10\frac{1}{2}$ time.

FILMED

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

January 7, 1942.

Steaming as before. Entered Pearl Harbor mooring at Merry Point, berth N-2 about 1213. Fueled and got underway to join Task Force 11.

January 8, 1942.

Joined Task Force 11 consisting of Lexington, Chicago, Indianapolis, Destroyer Squadron One less Aylwin and Farragut. 1720 Set clocks back $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 time.

January 9, 1942.

Steaming as before.

January 10, 1942.

Steaming as before. Left formation in afternoon to search for submarine.

January 11, 1942.

Rejoined Task Force in morning using formation 11-S. 0715 Set clocks back $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ time. 1654 Formed cruising disposition 11-L. 1730 Set clocks back $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 12 time.

January 12, 1942.

Formed fueling disposition. Destroyers fueled from cruisers. Phelps fueling from Indianapolis in morning. 1622 Formed cruising disposition 11-L.

January 13, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0618 Formed cruising disposition 11-S.

January 14, 1942.

Steaming as before. Fired on target.

January 15, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0230 Set Clocks ahead 1 hour to zone plus 11 time.

January 16, 1942.

Steaming as before. Preparing to enter Pearl Harbor. Moored at Merry Point, berth M-4 about 1103 and fueled.

January 17, 1942.

Moored as before. Changed berths to K-12 alongside Whitney. Took on ammunition.

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

January 18, 1942.

Moored as before.

January 19, 1942.

Moored as before. 1000 got underway with Task Force 11 consisting of Lexington, Chicago, Astoria, Minneapolis, Destroyer Squadron One less Aylwin, Farragut, Dewey plus Mugford, Jarvis and Bagley in cruising disposition 11-SV.

January 20, 1942.

Steaming as before.

January 21, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0830 Fired 5" and short range weapons at burst target. 1600 Mugford, Bagley, Jarvis and Chicago left formation.

January 22, 1942.

Steaming as before.

January 23, 1942.

Steaming as before. Neches reported torpedoed. Task Force ordered to return to Pearl Harbor.

January 24, 1942.

Steaming as before.

January 25, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1012 Preparing to enter Pearl Harbor, formed disposition 11E. Moored 1210 at Merry Point, berth M-2. Fueled and changed berth to K-11.

January 26, 1942.

Moored as before. Provisioned.

January 27, 1942.

Moored as before.

January 28, 1942.

Moored as before.

January 29, 1942.

Moored as before.

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

January 30, 1942.

Moored as before.

January 31, 1942.

Moored as before. 0800 Underway with Task Force 11 consisting of Lexington, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Destroyer Squadron One less Farragut and Monaghan and Neosho, in cruising disposition 11-S-2.

February 1, 1942.

Steaming as before in company with Task Force 11 consisting of Lexington, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Destroyer Squadron One less Farragut and Monaghan, and Neosho.

February 2, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1310 Jordan left formation to return to Pearl Harbor for special duty.

February 3, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0830 Fired 5" and short range weapons at burst target.

February 4, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 5, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 6, 1942.

0630 Task Force began fueling from Neosho. 1825 Crossed equator.

February 7, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Task Force continued fueling completing about 1800.

February 8, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 9, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 10, 1942.

FILMED

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

February 10, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1210 San Francisco, Clark, and Drayton joined formation. 1730 Set clocks back $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 12 time. February 11 east long., date.

February 11, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 12, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 13, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 14, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Task Force fueled from Neosho.

February 15, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Resumed fueling, Phelps fueled from Neosho, formed disposition 11-S at 1402. 1756 Neosho and Drayton left formation.

February 16, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1105 Anzac squadron joined formation consisting of HMS Australia, Chicago, Lamson, Perkins, HMS Achilles and Leander. 1400 Anzac squadron departed. 1730 Set clocks back $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ time.

February 17, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1150 Pensacola, Magley and Patterson joined formation.

February 18, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 19, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1730 Set clocks back $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 time.

February 20, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1144 Enemy four motored flying boat reported shot down by our fighters. 1220 Sighted smoke on horizon. 1227 Another enemy four motored flying boat reported shot down by our fighters.

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

February 20, 1942, Cont'd.

1630 Radar contact reported enemy planes bearing 286°T 39 miles. 1639 Sighted formation of 9 planes approaching from 325°T distant 10 miles. 1645 Ships of Task Force opened fire on remaining planes four had been shot down by our fighters. 1647 Bombs fell outside of formation about 2000 yards on Phelps starboard beam. 1647 Remaining bombers attempted crash landing on Lexington, shot down. 1700 Radar contact reported enemy planes approaching from 100°T 9 miles. 1705 Sighted 8 enemy planes approaching from 80°T. 1707 Ships of task force opened fire on bombers 1710 Enemy bomber attempted crash landing on Lexington, shot down. Bombs fell about 300 yards from Lexington. 1711 Four remaining bombers observed returning in direction 280°T, one of these shot down by our bombers. 16 planes were shot down by fighters and AA fire. 1740 Patterson picked up one of our fighter pilots.

February 21, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 22, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0846 Dale left formation due to steering casualty. 1530 Anzac squadron joined formation consisting of Australia, Leander, Achilles, Chicago, Perkins, Lamson, Platte.

February 23, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Task Force commenced fueling. About 1100 fueled from Platte. 1845 Formed disposition 11-SV.

February 24, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Resumed fueling.

February 25, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Resumed fueling. 1530 Completed fueling. 1552 Platte and Aylwin left Task Force on independent duty. 1600 Anzac squadron left formation.

February 26, 1942.

Steaming as before. Destroyers provisioned from cruisers. Phelps received stores from Pensacola.

February 27, 1942.

Steaming as before.

February 28, 1942.

Steaming as before.

CONFIDENTIAL

March 1, 1942.

Steaming in company with task force 11 consisting of Lexington, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Destroyer Squadron One less Farragut, Monaghan and Aylwin, cruising disposition 11-SV. Severe storm predicted.

March 2, 1942.

Steaming as before. Heavy seas and overcast.

March 3, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1800 Anzac Squadron consisting of Australia, Chicago, Perkins, Lamson plus Kaskaskia joined formation. Heavy seas and raining.

March 4, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Task Force commenced fueling from Kaskaskia. Sea rough.

March 5, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Resumed fueling. Sea rough. 0954 Phelps fueled.

March 6, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Resumed fueling and topping off destroyers from heavy cruiser. Sea moderate. 1324 Task Force 17 joined consisting of Yorktown, Louisville, Astoria, Walke, Anderson, Russel, Hughes, Simms, Hammon. Kaskaskia with Perkins and Lamson left formation on independent duty. 1750 Formed cruising disposition 11-SV.

March 7, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Resumed fueling and topping off destroyers. 1300 Completed fueling.

March 8, 1942.

Steaming as before.

March 9, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1015 Attack group consisting of Australia, Chicago, Indianapolis, Astoria, Anderson, Hughes, Simms and Hammon left formation in accordance with secret orders.

March 10, 1942.

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PAC 10

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

March 10, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Sighted coast of New Guinea and prepared to launch air attack on enemy forces at Salamaua and ~~Lae~~ from position off Port Moresby. 0714 Lexington and Yorktown commenced launching planes for attack. 0835 Launching completed, 108 planes launched. 1204 All planes launched for attack recovered. 1235 San Francisco plane crashed. 1747 Radar contact, aircraft bearing 089°T, 10 miles.

March 11, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0720 Radar contact bearing 015°T.

March 12, 1942.

Steaming as before. Provisioned from Lexington.

March 13, 1942.

Steaming as before.

March 14, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0100 Set clocks ahead $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 time. 0605 Attack force joined formation consisting of Australia, Chicago, Indianapolis, Astoria, Hughes, Hamman, Anderson and Simms. 1105 Portland, Lamson, Patterson and Neosho plus Kaskaskia joined formation on independent duty.

March 15, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0630 Resumed fueling. 0846 Fueled from Kaskaskia. 1800 Completed fueling, formed cruising disposition 11-SV.

March 16, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0900 San Francisco and Bagley left formation on independent duty. 1300 Dale and Kaskaskia left formation on independent duty. 1500 Task Force 17 departed plus Astoria minus Louisville. Louisville and Neosho joined Task Force 11.

March 17, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0230 Set clocks ahead $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 12 time.

March 18, 1942.

Steaming as before.

March 19, 1942.

Steaming as before. Set clocks ahead to 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ zone time. March 18, W Long. date. March 19, 1942. Steaming as before. ||

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

March 20, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0230 Set clocks ahead $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 11 time.

March 21, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0548 Formed fueling disposition. 0804 Fueled from Neosho. 1549 Formed cruising disposition 11SV.

March 22, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0430 Set clocks ahead $\frac{1}{2}$ hour to zone plus 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ time. 1600 Formed cruising disposition 11S.

March 23, 1942.

Steaming as before. 1400 Carrier planes simulated large scale attack on formation.

March 24, 1942.

Steaming as before. 2100 Sighted San Francisco and Bagley bearing 140°T, 8 miles.

March 25, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0634 San Francisco and Bagley joined formation.

March 26, 1942.

Steaming as before. 0500 Indianapolis, Minneapolis, Phelps and Hull left formation to conduct target practice on high speed target. 1200 Entered Pearl Harbor, mooring alongside Dewey in Westlock, ammunition was removed prior to going alongside dock.

March 27, 1942.

Moored as before. 1045 Entered drydock #2.

March 28, 1942.

Drydocked as before.

March 29, 1942.

Drydocked as before.

March 30, 1942.

1820 Railroad crane fell into drydock and damaged port side in vicinity of #1 fireroom, cutting auxiliary steam line and tearing a five foot hole in side.

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

March 31, 1942.

Drydocked as before.