

MARCH 19, 1945: (continued)

Two more were shot down in our group awhile ago. This ship getting one. One of our fighters shot down near us, too. A beautiful flamer. Two more came over high, but couldn't reach them with ack ack. The Franklin didn't sink but was heavily damaged. The Enterprise got a 600 pound bomb hit today and the Intrepid also was damaged by a Jap plane when it was damaged by AA fire. The plane dove on the carrier. About 150 Jap planes have been destroyed in the air so far and about 300 destroyed on the ground. No word on this afternoon's strikes as yet.

MARCH 20, 1945:

Have been under intermittent attack from planes all day, but are now heading south towards Parece Vela to refuel. The carrier Enterprise was hit by a 1,000 pounder instead of a 600 pounder yesterday. That makes five large carriers of ours damaged this time with the Franklin most seriously. She is being towed by the cruiser Pittsburg. The Yorktown, Franklin, Hornet, Intrepid, and Enterprise have been the victims. Also, a can was hit and minor damage done to a few other ships. This trip was a little costly. It is now about midnight and we are about 340 miles south of Kobe, but the Jap snoopers are still around. About two hours ago one came over and dropped flares and lit us up like day, but dropped no bombs. He was shot down in flames a few minutes later by one of the carriers off to starboard. A beautiful flamer. It is clear out tonight with a half moon, so we make good targets.

MARCH 21, 1945:

Planes shot down about 50 bombers that were after us today. None got inside the fighter screen although we were in good condition for one all day. We are now heading south again for more fuel.

MARCH 22, 1945:

Today we refueled at about 22 N and 134 E. The sea was very rough and made refueling difficult. This evening we are headed for Okinawa for a carrier strike in the morning. The following morning we will go in to the initial bombardment for the invasion of the island on April 1. We will be with the new, fast battle wagons. This is supposed to be a heavily fortified island and will be hard to take. This operation will last about three months and will be the toughest yet. Final report on Iwo Jima. 4,160 dead, 20,240 wounded. More tomorrow.

MARCH 23, 1945:

Carrier planes are pounding Okinawa this morning. No enemy planes have interfered yet. A little while ago a mile off Iwo Jima, a depth charged a Jap submarine

MARCH 23, 1945: (continued)

to port, one of our destroyers depth charged a Jap submarine and brought it to the surface, then rammed and sunk it. Minor damage was done to the can. Pretty quiet today.

MARCH 24, 1945:

We are now about 30 miles off Naha heading to bombard for the first time. We are the only cruiser along on this initial bombardment. We are with eight new fast wagons. Tomorrow, the old heavies will be in. This place is supposed to be heavily fortified, so lead may be flying in another hour or so.

MARCH 25, 1945:

Bombarded from about 12 miles out today, so we couldn't notice the results. Otherwise not much happened.

MARCH 26, 1945:

Covered landings this morning on a little island just south of Okinawa. Opposition was light. This little place is to be used for refueling and supplying ships during the invasion of Okinawa a little later. Two Jap suiciders attacked this morning. One was shot down, but the other broke through and crashed on a destroyer. Haven't heard how many casualties there were. From now on, the going will be tough, for we are only 300 miles from the Nip homeland this time.

MARCH 27, 1945:

After this morning we are all thankful to be alive on the Indy. This is one morning we'll never forget. I am a little shakey yet from the thought of it. Just at daylight this morning we were attacked by enemy suicide planes and one headed straight for us. It seemed to ride right down on our fire pointed right at us. Although hit quite a little ways from the ship he still kept coming. About three hundred yards off he was hit again and crashed only about 150 yards from us, exploded with a terrific roar and burned. Another came in at the same time on our destroyer escort, crash dived at it but our fire brought it down just a few yards off his bow. He hit so close to the escort that one man had his leg broken from the concussion of the explosion. Six planes were shot down within a two mile radius of us this morning. We got two. This makes three planes shot down and two probables this trip so far. An LST was hit by a plane early this morning too, and destroyers have been picking up survivors. I guess it will be this way for a long while now. Will continue our bombarding on the west side of Okinawa in the East China Sea. Attacked by Jap planes again this evening. One destroyer was sunk and one damaged.

MARCH 28, 1945:

Jap planes over again this morning. Two planes were shot down in our group, but we didn't score any today. One was a suicider and tried to crash dive a destroyer, but missed and hit the sea. Have been bombarding the main island of Okinawa all day today. Many fires are burning this afternoon.

MARCH 29, 1945:

Jap planes attacked again this morning and six were shot down in our group. Have been bombarding all day today and it is now 1600. Many fires are burning and many gun emplacements have been knocked out. Okinawa is a pretty island with many nice homes and terraced landscapes. Similar to the homeland I guess. It is about 65 miles long with a civilian population of 500,000. The city of Naha is very modern also.

MARCH 30, 1945:

Planes attacked again this morning, and a suicide plane hit the Nevada. Did some damage. Haven't heard the word on casualties yet. Bombarded all day on the western side of Okinawa.

MARCH 31, 1945:

Well, today the thing we have dreaded, happened, and we are all lucky to be alive. A suicide plane dove on us about 6 PM this morning and went right through our main deck aft and on down into the compartments. Pieces of the plane and pilot were scattered all over the fantail. The engine tore through the side of the ship and several compartments are still flooded. Four men were blown over the side but were picked up by a destroyer and a battlegon. So far, the count is eight dead and fifteen wounded. We have limped into the little anchorage of Kerama Rheeto that we took early this week and divers are down to determine the extent of the damage. Two compartments are still flooded with oil and water and seven men are trapped below--dead. One man is a flag yeoman, and three were good friends of ours who are quarter masters on the bridge. Two of our three observation planes were wrecked and gasoline was strewn all over the ship along with oil. It's just a miracle that we didn't catch fire or there would have been many more casualties than there was. We may be transferred to another ship any time this week. Divers were down and we have one screw shaft broken and two large holes in the hull where a delayed action bomb exploded. They are trying to put a temporary patch on now. We still do not know when we will be transferred. Funeral services were held for one man this evening at sunset--during an air raid. The others are still below the flooded compartments, but will probably be brought up tomorrow.

APRIL 1, 1945:

Scuttlebut has it that the landings have been postponed for a few days. Still no word as to whether we'll move to another ship

APRIL 1, 1945: (continued)

or not. Divers are still working on the hull. Planes and suicide boats attacked last night again but were finally driven off. The suicide boats are one man affairs made out of plywood about 18 feet long and have two depth charges on the rear. They explode on contact with their target. The destroyer Adams was sunk by a suicider this morning. Today is Easter. One year ago we were in the Marshalls. Funeral services were held today for 7 men. The total is nine dead now, as one more man was found in the compartment when it was pumped out. It is now 4 AM and Jap planes have been over us all night. No sleep again. Everyone is pretty jittery after what happened. Guess it will be that way from now on. The landings went off as scheduled today and opposition has been light so far. We have both airfields already. Repairs on the ship are coming along. We have no fresh water as the evaporators have been destroyed, but we get water to drink every four hours. We also have salt water showers to bathe in. The laundry is flooded too, and the clean clothes we have on our backs.

APRIL 2, 1945:

Planes attacked all night long and this morning, but were driven off by ack ack. One suicider came in and attempted to crash an LST but missed and splashed. Though he was coming in on us again but he overshot. Guess we will transfer to the New Mexico in a couple days.

APRIL 3, 1945:

Planes have been over off and on all day long, but have been driven off by our fire and by our planes. We are still a sitting duck in this anchorage. Last night they screened us with a smoke screen and the same is going on tonight. It's alright for protection but it's hard on the throat and eyes. A suicider hit the battlegon West Virginia this AM and one hit a can taking off her whole bridge. Two others hit LST's. It's getting so we fear the nights and mornings now because they come so regularly. They even try to swim out with hand grenades to the ships anchored in here at night. It isn't safe to be anywhere here. Guess we will move to the New Mexico day after tomorrow. The Indy will head back to get repairs. Had funeral services for the remaining dead today.

APRIL 4, 1945:

Last night was the night that really topped things off. A Jap swam out to the ship and got aboard during the smoke screen and slashed a marines wrist. All hands looked for him all night but couldn't find him. Guess he made a quick getaway. Everybody is really nervous now, when something like that happens. I'll be glad when we get out of this harbor. We move to the New Mexico at 0700 in the morning.

APRIL 5, 1945:

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