

U. S. S. SERPENS  
AK-97

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2, 1943

I recall typing this  
prior to our  
shake down trials.  
in San Diego Calif.  
following the conversion  
at the Submarine Base  
from the Serpens  
was commissioned as  
a navy cargo vessel  
manned by coast  
guard personnel.  
(see attached  
Anecdote)

THE INTERVENING PERIOD BETWEEN LAST FRIDAY AND TODAY WAS TAKEN UP WITH LAST MINUTE TOUCHES TO OUR ALMOST CONVERTED SHIP. AMMUNITION WAS TAKEN ABOARD, FUEL TANKS TOPPED OFF, AND THROUGHOUT ALL OF THIS, OFFICERS IN CHARGE OF THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS HURRYING ABOUT TO ATTEMPT TO GET THEIR OWN ASSIGNMENTS SQUARED AWAY. LT. (JG) SCHWEIGART, THE MEDICAL OFFICER, BEMOANING THE FATE OF HIS "AUTOCLAVE", THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE ARRIVED A WEEK AGO, AND HERE WE ARE READY TO SAIL ON A SHAKE DOWN, AND AS YET IT HASN'T ARRIVED. ENSIGN GLINES, THE 1ST LIEUTENANT, ALL ABOUT THE DECK, WITH HIS KAIKI JACKET, AND FORTY-FIVE IN HIS HIP POCKET, GETTING THINGS REPLACED AND IN SHIP SHAPE POSITION. ALL OF US FOR A MATTER OF FACT WERE QUITE PRETTY DARN BUSY TODAY. TIME WENT TO FAST TO SUIT US, AND ALL THE MINOR WORK WHICH WE THOUGHT WE WOULD PUT OFF UNTIL LATER WAS SUDDENLY TOSSED AT US FROM ALL DIRECTIONS. HOWEVER WE SURVIVED IT ALL, AND EVERYONE IS IN PRETTY GOOD SPIRITS NOW AS WE MOVE OVER THE SILENT WATERS OFF THE CALIFORNIA COAST. NATURALLY WE ARE OBSERVING THE STRICTEST BLACKOUT CONDITION ABOARD SHIP, FOR ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO REPORTS OF ENEMY ACTION OR THE PRESENCE OF THE ENEMY NEAR THIS COAST, THE POSSIBILITY OF ENEMY UNDERWATER CRAFT BEING AROUND IS A POSSIBILITY. ONCE IN A WHILE THE UNTRAINED MEMBERS OF THE CREW FORGET, A LITTLE LIGHT SHOWS FROM A PASSAGEWAY OR A HATCH, AND THEN ABOVE THE STILLNESS WHICH ABOUNDS THE OUTSIDE OF THE SHIP COMES "DOUSE THE LIGHT" OR MAYBE SOME OTHER FORM OF SPEECH MORE VIRULENT IS FORTHCOMING FROM THE SECURITY WATCH. THIS SITUATION HAS OCCURED AT LEAST TWICE TONIGHT. FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL OF US, WE HOPE IT BECOMES CLEARED UP BEFORE WE SAIL FOR PARTS WHICH AT PRESENT ARE UNKNOWN TO ALL OF US. TOMORROW WE RENDEZVOUS WITH OTHER SHIPS AT 1300. WE EXPECT TO TEST FIRE ALL OF OUR GUNS, AND TO INITIATE THE CREW, WHO ARE FOR THE MOST PART VERY "GREEN", IN THE VARIOUS DRILLS WHICH UNDER ACTUAL CONDITIONS MAY MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "COMING HOME" OR BECOMING A MEMORY TO THE FOLKS BACK HOME.

IT'S NOW 2200 AND HAVING TO STAND A "FOUR TO EIGHT"  
LETS " HIT THE SACK" . WONDER WHAT TOMORROW HAS IN STORE?

TIME IS LATE.