Flight Sergeant Patric Anderson

I am Flight Sergeant P Anderson, Pilot and captain of a Hudson aircraft, of the RAF, operating from Palembang.
 On Friday p.m. 13th of February, a Japanese convoy was reported to be approaching Sumatra. Five Hudson’s were dispatched to attack the convoy, but I do not know with what effect as the machines returned to another airfield.
On Saturday, 14th of February, I was standing by from midnight awaiting orders which were given by Squadron Commander at 0915. I was instructed to take off immediately and fly in number three position of a formation of three machines,
the object being to attack the convoy which was reported to be now (as far as I can remember) between Singkep Island and Pulo Toedjoeh at the north end of Banka Strait. The convoy was said to contain nine merchant vessels.
 We took off at approximately 0930 and shortly after setting course we were joined by two aircraft from a Australian Squadron, now making a formation of five. We flew northwards at approximately 1000 feet, we altered course east wards on crossing the coast and at approximately 1120, sighted the convoy to port.
 The position of convoy was about twenty miles to the south east of a group of islands which I presume were Singkep, there was also another group of islands to the southward, which were smaller and which I presume were Toedjoeh.
Immediately after sighting the convoy, I observed two Japanese fighters to port, they were pulling out of a dive. There was a flash on the sea below them which may have been from an aeroplane which they had shot down.
 Three of our machines then broke formation, turned to starboard and dived. I remained in formation with the leader who climbed straight ahead heading for cloud. While climbing, I daw the leaders side gummers firing and a streak of flame from his port engine, it may have exhaust flame or the result of enemy action.
 Simultaneously, I found my Port engine was unserviceably which made formation flying impossible so I broke formation, jettisoned my bombs and attempted to reach the clouds, on reaching the clouds, I found the cover to insufficient for I was attacked by two fighters. I took evading action and in doing so lost height. During the descent my aircraft was shuddering badly and the trimmer were shot away. Eventually I reached sea level and was still being attacked by fighters which left me no alternative but to land in the sea, which I did successfully. On landing, all crew (myself and three crew) climbed on the wings and from there into the sea. The aircraft sank in forty-five seconds. The rubber dinghy failed to inflate properly and it was therefore inflated by hand. This operation took about an hour.
 The rear gunner had been wounded in the foot before the machine landed in the sea. We were not attacked after the aeroplane landed in the sea.
We drifted in the dinghy and in the evening sighted smoke and masts of a considerable number of vessels on the horizon to the northward. At night we heard the sound of gunfire but saw no flashes.

**15th February**

Little activity during the morning. Saw several four funnelled cruisers, destroyers and aircraft during the afternoon.
 About 1600 sighted a motor launch which passed us at a distance of a mile travelling north-west. A little while later she turned about and repassed us at high speed at a distance of about fifty yards and heading south towards the small island which I assume to be Toedjoeh. She was a fairly big launch, painted a brownish colour, with a gun forward, a bridge and a funnel. From a description later given to me, I should say she was a Fairmile, but at the time I could not make out the nationality as she flew no ensign,
 There were many Khaki-clad figures on her deck, most of whom waved to us. She disappeared towards the islands and a Japanese destroyer came from the north at high speed and proceeded towards the islands also, where she stopped and opened fire with her guns. While firing from the destroyer was taking place, a formation of six seaplanes came over and one broke formation and circled the island. Thd destroyer remained in the vicinity of the islands till about dark, then she steamed towards us, sighted us and reduced speed, passing us at no more than thirty yards, but did not answer our waving, though the cres lined the rails to see us, She disappeared northwards.

**16th February**

Quiet day all day, Towards dusk we sighted a large island to the south-ward which we presumed to be Bangka Island.

**17th February**

Throughout the day we paddled towards the large island we had sighted the previous evening, and made slight progress.
 We sighted a four funnelled cruiser to the westward which was patrolling an a N and S direction throughout the day.
About midnight we reached a sandy beach, having been eighty-four hours in the rubber dinghy, during which time we consumed half the rations and water provided.

**18th February**

Spent the remainder of the night on the beach and was very glad to be able to stretch our limbs in comfort.
 At daybreak explored the land and arrived at a Chinese Kampong called Klapa, where we were given rice, coconuts tea etc. and we were allowed to rest.
During the morning an English-speaking Eurasian ex-policeman passed through the village. He informed us that the Japanese were in possession of the island and their patrols were everywhere, we were about fourteen miles along the coast north of Muntok which was the nearest place we that we could get a doctor to attend to Flight Sergeant Baxters foot. A British Navel Party were hiding up in a house about three miles away. In the afternoon, my observer, Sergeant Tearnan and myself set off to contact the British Naval Party but failed to do so. We returned to the Kampong and remained overnight.

**19th February**

In the morning Sergeant Tearnan and myself set off again and on the way we met an naval officer Sub Lt Partridge MRNVR and a naval rating Lorregan who informed us that the Japanese had been to their hiding place and had captured the remainder of their party, which included Lieut. Cook RNR, captain of their ship the FUH WO.
 We returned to the Kampong and remained the night, Sub Lieut Partridge spoke Malay and this day we paid for our food.

**20th February**

Early in the morning when walking along the beach with Sub Lieut Partridge, we met two naval rating (one European and one Malay), they informed us that their officer, Lt Shaw NZRNVR was further along the beach. We continued along the beach and met Lieut Shaw and returned with all three to our hut.
 Lt Shaw stated that they were the only survivors of their ship which had been sunk by enemy action with two hundred women and children onboard. Lt Shaw and his companions had made the long journey in a small boat without food or water for a long time. Lt Shaw and his companions were week physically and were rather vague in their statements.

**21st February**

At 1600 Sub Lt Partridge and I set out for the house where the naval party had been sheltering, to obtain medical supplies for Baxter, and any other useful articles. We found numerous Chinese and Malay at the house. We collected what we could and we were ordered by the Chinese to leave the gear we had collected. The Chinese attacked us with long sticks and we tried, unsuccessfully to get away, after being beaten very severely we were robbed and tied up to a post with our hands behind us. We suffered intense pain from our beating and bonds during the night.

**22nd February**

About midday AB Lorregan arrived and was detained by the Chines. We were then released from our posts and taken to Muntok where we were handed over to the Japanese.