

Hello Shipmates,

I was interested to see the U.S. Navy's reaction to constant Russian/Chinese boasts of their 'hypersonic missiles' - so called 'carrier busters' - Three futuristic destroyers *Zumwalt Class*, already built and commissioned into the U.S. Navy, were to be armed with E. M. A. L. S., electric rail guns, under intense development. A crash cancellation of that system must have taken many by surprise, all to be ripped out making room for newly developed 'U.S. hypersonic agile missiles'. It must have been heartening for the U.S. to see Russian Super Cruiser *Moskva* become prey to Ukraine's unsophisticated Neptune rocket; defence systems must be easy to fix it, being supposedly fool proof.



The 105mm deck gun of U-89, which was involved in naval warfare and took part in the First Battle of the Atlantic

During the Falklands war, 40 years ago, *Coventry* was hit by a missile because control system was momentarily distracted by a false aircraft report. Russian cruiser is 40 years old as built, one does not know how many upgrades, 'mods', were made in that time. It is possible another two cruisers of that *Moskva Class* are also highly vulnerable to

unsophisticated rocket attack, not the pillars of modern invention we were led to believe.

I have always been surprised at how many W.W.1 U-boat wrecks surround the U.K. and Northern Ireland. Two, whose exact locations were sought for many years, are now pin-pointed. So near home in Germany simply because development could be considered in its infancy. Boats able to reach western limits of the Atlantic, able to roam with large fuel reserves, were yet to be built; no room for torpedo reloads either.

I learn the long time mystery of a smashed and marine growth encrusted wreck was always a riddle as to its proper identification. We did not twig the thoughtful Kraut inscribed boat name or number clearly on all propeller bosses. It evidently took searchers many years to learn that; another example we have all met at sometime where 'the obvious never dawns on you until it one day gives you a good kick in the butt'.

I've never been of the opinion that meritocracy carried a lot of weight in the R.N. That opinion suffered a serious dent on learning the service of Derek 'Jake' Wright R. N. V. R. Commander, D.S.C + 2 bars; one of only 44 officers to be so decorated.

He went into the tea trade straight from school at sixteen years old with Brooke Bond, joining the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve a year later. He completed his training as Adolph marched into Poland, called up from nearby *King Arthur* officer training course, one of the first reservists so called.

He was rushed straight off to Dunkirk with a string of dinghies picking up stragglers when *Operation Dynamo* was running out of steam, an abrupt introduction to modern war when pushed in at the deep end.

He had entered *Pembroke* as an Able Seaman on the outbreak of war, demobbed at war's end; Commander highly decorated. He went back into the tea industry for Brooke Bond in Ceylon and India organising a vast and rapid expansion.

Back in the U.K. he became the firm's Chairman in 1971, an indication of the man's abilities in commerce. At war's start he volunteered for Motor Torpedo Boats at *H.M.S. Beehive*. From spare man he became spare officer then to 1st. Lieutenant then Captain of his own boat to flotilla leader of D-boats, the final model of M.T.B at war's end. These had a 6 pounder gun of the fo'c'sle, (a version of the army's 6 lb. anti- tank gun), twin 20mm mounts each side of the bridge and often a single Bofor 40mm on the engine room roof; a really well armed swift vessel.

A QUICK SKIRT ROUND BROOKE BOND'S MILITARY INTEREST: in 1910 they signed up as suppliers to the largest maritime force in the world - the R. N., later doing same for the British Army.

At the start of W.W.1 the Civil Service stated that tea was an unnecessary import and tea control was imposed. This was soon overruled when tea was declared a 'major national morale booster' and bureaucratic denunciation quashed, regular tea imports being pursued with vigour.

Brooke Bond employed a van boy who later became a Ganges boy 2nd class in *H.M.S Chester* when war was declared. At the Battle of Jutland in 1916 mortally wounded, despite all his gun crew being killed around him, he kept repeating his order, 'gun on site, awaiting orders'. He died of his wounds three days later. On 15th September the *London Gazette* announced he had been awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for fearless bravery in the face of his enemy.

That was boy second class John Travers Cornwall. Given back to his family he is buried in the parish cemetery in Chester.

My hand arm now feels fit to drop off, so I will call it a day

Best regards shipmates, keep taking the pills.