

A fragmented jigsaw of memories

Impressions of a father.

Lavington Henry Agar, eldest of six children, born 1901 in Tasmania.

Began his Naval career as a stoker, progressing through to Chief Mechanician.

Known as Jack, to all but his mum, who called him Lav.

Married to a Port Melbourne girl, Rita (Thelma), who he met when the ships docked at Station Pier.

Building a home together in Crib Point, Westernport, to be in close proximity to Cerberus Naval Base.

Two daughters, Joan and Margaret.

Recollections of steam train trips from Cerberus to Melbourne to meet the ship when it returned home.

Margaret, aged 5, remembers a man in a dark uniform with gold buttons and a hat.

Joan, aged 10, recalls a man who was strict regarding table manners, liked his veggie garden, enjoyed drawing and did copper works such as house name plates when at sea.

Always the longing of a child hoping that dad would be amongst the returning servicemen, and praying it was all a mistake.

Photograph 1 – HMAS Sydney II going under Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Photograph 2 – L.H Agar in Uniform

Photograph 3 – Jack and Rita (Thelma) Agar

Photograph 4 – Daughters, Joan and Margaret Agar

Photograph 5 – Wife Rita, with daughters Joan and Margaret, approx 1940-41

Photograph 6 – Jack Agar at beginning of service, age 25

Photograph 7 – Jack Agar – Posted in England

Photograph 8 – Jack Agar – Chief Mechanician

Letter 1 – Written to eldest daughter Joan, June 1941

Letter 2 – Written to Mother – 8 weeks before Sydney was lost

16-6-41.

My dear Joan.

Well hows Dads girl today I hope you are well and not feeling the cold and rainy days that you are having over there now.

I hope you received my letter which I sent you awhile ago, and that you understood what I said to you dear now Joan Dad maybe home or have very soon now and if you can till the time by yourself by that time I will buy you a nice little watch all for yourself I will not wait for your birthday so you had better hurry up and learn the time before I come home or have.

How are you getting on with your music I hope that you practice everyday and when your examination comes along you will be able to pass and play all kinds of things.

I hope you and Mary are being good girls and not

playing up because I would not
like to hear that you are.

When are you going to
write me another letter now dont
forget dear because I am always
pleased to hear from my girls and
it cheers Dad up, so sit down and
send me a nice big letter as soon
as you can.

I expect you are growing
a big girl now Joan and will soon
be as big as Mother now I hope
you help your Mother in the house
and dont forget to learn to cook
then you can cook me a big
dinner when I come home or have

I will say good night
now Joan and am sending
you a big kiss from your
Dad

Best love to you,
Margaret & Mother
love

XXXXXX

Dad
XXX

September 30th
1941 At Sea.

Dear Mother,

I received your very welcome letter a couple of days ago and was very pleased to hear from you again, the reason why you have not heard from me for so long is that after you left your last place and came over to Melbourne I did not have your address and did not know what had become of you, so you see I was quite surprised when I received this letter from you a while ago.

I have only seen Rita and the girls a since we came from aboard and they are quite well and the girls are growing up and are getting quite big, Rita was telling me that you had come over to Melbourne and had gone back again to Bunnie and have changed your house, if you had of been in Melbourne when I was home the last time I would have been very pleased to have seen you but I will have to come over

and see you both the first chance I have
but cannot promise you when I have
been thinking that perhaps you would
like to come over and stay down with
us for a fortnight or so sometime near
Christmas, I will give you a return fare
if you would like to come over and I
think the change would do you good
you will be very welcome both of you
so please let me know later on I may
get a few days leave at the end of the
year and then it would be a good chance
for you both

I am quite well and still
going strong I cannot tell you where I
am at present but I am many thousands
of miles away from Bummie and the
weather is very hot so you can perhaps
have an idea whereabouts I am I would
very much like to see the Old twin again
and perhaps may have some luck one
of these days if you see Wally Crawford
about give him my best and tell him
that I have an old pal of his in the
mess here with me the three of us were
all in China together years ago

tell him I hope he is doing alright in the business and to keep out of the war if he can do no good and things are different to the last one

Yes Reg has shure got an house full but I expect that's his business the name will shure live a long time with that crowd all alive, I expect hes looking old but I am getting that way myself this day I am over 40 now and they say I do not look it but this life sure tells on one after the time that I have done in it well I hope you receive this letter alright and hoping to hear from you again very shortly I will say goodnight for the present best love to you and dad

from your loving
son

Lao

Address

Chief Mechanician

H. H. Agar,

warship "Sydney"

G.P.O.

XXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXX

Tell Wally the chap's name on here is Ch. St. L. Challenger, tell W.C. to write us

On. Act know

H.M.A.
SHIPS

Mrs. J. Agar
19 Queen Street.
Burnie.

Australia

Tasmania















