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**Name: Eric Conway**  
**Regiment: The Royal Navy**

**Date transcript: 5<sup>th</sup> September 2014**  
**Transcribe by: David Davies**

Time code	What is said
01:00:00	Start of Film 1
01:00:01	<p>My name is Eric Conway or Eric Vincent Conway and I came out of the Navy as a Leading Telegraphist but, at the beginning of course of my career I started on September which, was the day that war was declared and my brothers had gone to war and my father had been recalled back to war and there was just my mother and my sister that was eight years old and I thought well this is it for me and at that time I was sixteen. So I said to mother 'I'm joining up tomorrow' and she said 'well you better contact your father' who was then in Chatham barracks and so I did the next day I went down there and contacted my father but, on the way down I called into the recruiting office next to the town hall and said 'I want to join the navy and they said... there was a chief there and he said 'are you sure lad?' he said 'you better go and see your father' I said 'well he's in Chatham Barracks he is here' he said 'well take this form and get it signed and you can join the Navy' so down I went and saw my father straight into the barracks in civilian clothes obviously and told dad I wanted to join he said 'well' he said 'if you want to join the Navy' and it was obvious he intended me to go into the Navy he said 'there will be certain rules' if you like 'on what branch you go in' he said 'because you're certainly not going in as a scrubber' and that's of course what an AB does cleaning decks and all the hard work.</p>
	<p>So he said you've got an option it is either going in the sick bay branch which father was he was a ward master in the sick bay branch he said alternatively go into the wireless branch so I said 'alright' so down I went and I joined but, it was three months later before I actually went there was obviously a waiting list and they intended to send me to Shotley which is a training... a boys training school that holds two thousand boys and there you can either become a signalman or a wireless telegraphist or alternatively a common seaman but, I had no intention of being a seaman. So he said 'there would be an exam if you want to be a telegraphist' so I took the exam and qualified for that anyway so I did very little of it and I started the course it was an eighteen month course. This continued at Shotley until just a few months... I think it was about six months I think it was and we was starting to get bombed and the intention was that it was the only place we had to getting active service people into the Navy and so they moved us. I first went to HMS Impregnable which is at Devonport which is a boys training ship and there I stayed for a little while but, not very long. It was the days of Dunkirk and I was there when Dunkirk happened and destroyers and troops and everything was coming in we had a very comfortable barracks and the beds were very comfortable with clean sheets unfortunately</p>

Time code	What is said
	<p>that didn't last very long because there was hundreds and hundreds of course coming back from Dunkirk and they were in a state. We all gave up our bunks and beds and got out the hammocks and slept in the drill hall and we stayed in the drill hall it was cold and dirty and what have you for another month or two and I was looking for my brother as well because he was at Dunkirk but, he didn't come that way he came in at Ramsgate I went to submarines because one I was a Shotley boy that means that your highly skilled in the discipline area it's the toughest place in the Royal Navy it's gone now and it was tough I mean my son went there, my eldest boy he went to Shotley... he cried his eyes out every bloody day, he wanted to come home. You can't once you go in and that's it but, eventually he did he got made a man and he went and bought himself out he never liked it but, I loved it I absolutely loved it Shotley to me it was all discipline, opportunities right left and center a first class education and the schoolmasters they were the cream of the country brilliant.</p>
<b>01:05:12</b>	<p><b><i>You were a Chatham Rating how was it going to Devonport was there any rivalry?</i></b></p>
	<p>I was a Chatham Rating and you got to go somewhere there was no boys service in Chatham Barracks so you've got to go somewhere although there are three depots Chatham, Portsmouth and Devonport while invariably they give you the one that is nearest to your home town and indeed it was and so I purely and simply went to Shotley or HMS Ganges because there was nowhere else for boys to go to... there was no wireless school only a very tiny one in Chatham Barracks to you can't do any training there but, I did go... you go in there every time you draft or move you go via Chatham Barracks but, the reason it was Chatham Barracks of course because I also lived in Chatham at the time I was born in Rochester and I lived on top of Chatham Hill. That of course was because of my father. My father of course was ward master and where was he based of course the Royal Naval Hospital and he stayed there always... when he came into Chatham he was in the Royal Naval Hospital.</p>
<b>01:06:30</b>	<p><b><i>So knowing that you were a Chatham based sailor you went to Devonport to Ganges and all these places was there a sort of rivalry between the different port divisions do you remember that?</i></b></p>
	<p>Well I mean they shifted out as many as they could from Devonport people because of the bombing you see because it wasn't normal to be in the barracks at Chatham, Devonport or Plymouth they were all bombed well of course what the Navy wanted was a lot of sailors so they were spread I was transferred ultimately to the Isle of Man that's where I finished my training when he was home</p>
	<p><b>Start of Film 2</b></p>

Time code	What is said
01:07:09	<b><i>So you just talked about the fact that you had all been spread about as boys, you'd done your eighteen months?</i></b>
	As a boy... I carried on I was seventeen and a half when I came out of boy service at the Isle of Man I came straight to Chatham Barracks because you always go there when you were changing your drafts. We arrived in Chatham Barracks at seventeen and a half and because I was seventeen and a half I had to go up to the WRNS quarters because I was still a boy and you can't... boys and men cannot mix in Chatham Barracks or anywhere so you're segregated I was also when I was moved around when I had to go through London for example I had to go to the WRNS quarters to sleep if I wasn't going straight home and it was just to keep you away from sailors anyway. I arrived one day at Chatham Barracks my father then was in charge of a place called K Basement and it's where you all did your medicals arriving in and you also did your x-rays. Every time you went into Chatham Barracks or left Chatham Barracks you had an x-ray... chest x-ray everyone did... father was in charge of it. And there I see him now sitting on his little stool with a torch and the sailors had to put their arms up trousers down and inspections, then x-rays and dad would pass them.
	So I did my x-ray with him and that day and the same day I was piped for report to the drafting office I'd only been in there 24hrs. So up the drafting office I trotted and reported to the little window and there was a Wren there she said... I was then a Boy Tel... she said 'you're going to be promoted to an Ordinary Tel because I passed the advice promotion at seventeen and a half which meant that I became a man at seventeen and a half she said anyway you're now a man seventeen and a half and you've got a draft to submarines. So I went straight back to dad because I had to have another x-ray another examination full over I said 'I got a draft chit dad submarines' 'oh Jesus' I can remember his words now 'Jesus Christ' he said 'when I go and tell your mother she'll kill me' this was father we lived on the top of Chatham Hill then. Automatically on a draft you get seven days leave or you did then. Home I went that night at seventeen and a half and told mother. She said 'you're not going!' So dad did say to me before I went home he said 'I could fail you if you like?' I said 'no you always taught me to take what comes in the Navy' and I did never volunteered but, take what comes.
	So I told mother and dad came home that night and did she go she didn't want me to go in submarines what have you but, anyway I said 'I've got to take what comes and I intend to!' well a week later I went to Fort Blockhouse at Gosport which is the main depot for submariners and there you start training again and that training lasted three months from Fort Blockhouse doing daily trips school and daily trips on submarines I think it was the Tribune we did it on and just going out around about diving, surfacing what have you... learning about submarines both theory and practical.

Time code	What is said
01:11:12	<i>Was it enjoyable... was it interesting?</i>
	Well it was both as you start to learn as the training progressed so you were committed more. Having finished my training there I went to Dunoon in Scotland which was HMS Forth a depot ship, quite a new depot ship and a comfortable one as well more training more training more training and the training was done from the Oberon a 1912 submarine and the Otway and again a 1912 submarine they were pretty ancient they'd spent most of their time in China. The Otway specifically always been in trouble they had a lot of electrical faults on there, it wasn't a good boat and I did my training on there and all around the island in Scotland all the submariners did their training at sea and in the Irish Sea as well and it was pretty tough going especially the schooling because I mean they had to drum... in the schooling you had to know every part of the submarine, you could dive the submarine yourself, you could surface it yourself. First boy or first person in the control room if the claxon went you dived it always the one that was nearest to it... you were trained for it.
	So I did some training time there then off back to Portsmouth, Gosport waiting draft that was a very comfortable barracks HMS Dolphin, a very comfortable barracks and we had hammocks obviously but, there were some bunks but, it was comfortable and then I got my first draft ship to a brand new submarine a U class submarine being built at Barrow in Furness a Vicars Armstrong and they're still building all submarines... are built at Vicars Armstrong they done it right through the war and they very rapidly turned them out. So I assumed when I got a draft ship there I would be there to stand by perhaps for six months or so. When I arrived there I was presented with a lot of code books and also to study the submarine that was being built but it was virtually complete in that short time. They were very very rapid. Now I stood by for six weeks that was all there. A U-Class submarine it was no names it just had a number P45 as indeed every submarine during the war when they were commissioned they were given numbers and it was P45.
	It's the smallest submarine other than the midget submarines that we had in the Navy they were starting to build these just before the war manly as target ships, target submarines all they had in was an odd gun well one good and that was a great war gun a 3 inch gun and we then sailed and did our sailing... more sailing before we went to running up trials working up or whatever you call it and we did this off Barrow in Furness I've got a picture up there if you care to see it doing our trials and it was very very minor
	<b>Start of Film 3</b>

Time code	What is said
01:15:11	<p>We only had twenty nine people on board that submarine it was so small four officers were those so it meant we had twenty four ratings, four torpedoes were in the tubes forehead and four spares. The four spares filled up the four ends where the men slept completely. So you had a gap of around about five feet between two torpedoes one side port side and two torpedoes starboard side. And we slept twenty four men a third of those would be on watch and the remainder of course would be asleep. And of course there was no room for hammocks there were five though that were allowed to take hammocks and we shared them. If you had a hammock then you were very comfortable now but, you slept between the two torpedoes starboard and two torpedoes port. So whether you were rolling or on the surface you were rolling against them and a torpedo is a massive thing if I remember rightly it's about 24 feet long it does 42 knots through the water you can set it at more or less any depth you want... it carries all the explosive in the first three feet at the front of the torpedo and of course it is blown out when it is in the tube it is then blown out with compressed air but, as it's going out a switch starts the motor up which again is compressed air and what happens is it uses the air in the boat to blow it out as you fire a torpedo the air in the boat reduces in the submarine itself so where ever you are in the boat it doesn't matter you feel your ears suck as the torpedo leaves.</p>
	<p>Well invariable when you attack you fire two so that makes quite a big suck anyway back we're sleeping in there and eating in there to fill it up a bit more we've got a table the length of a torpedo and that is in the centre between the four torpedoes with two benches now four people could sleep on those benches they were only nine inches wide but, four people could sleep on them, they could sleep on the table and there'd be a few in the hammocks as well. Now I personally had a comfortable birth because when you enter the four ends of the submarine down in what we call the torpedo space that's not open at sea at all but, when you go down there there is a rack and that's where we store the bread but, that bread only lasts for three days, it goes green so you cut it about a bit until you've got a bit of white and that be it. Now the rest of it was of course tinned food to go with it now the bread run out we couldn't cook it we hadn't any facilities for cooking bread and so when that ran out after three days that ration was stopped we were invariably at sea anything from ten days... maximum about three weeks but, it was invariably ten days or so but, it depends where you were sent.</p>



Time code	What is said
	<p>But, when the atmosphere itself shall we say... a submarine a u-class submarine could stay down about eighteen hours that's all and then the air then got pretty filthy now if you were trapped on the bottom and I was never once but, I mean we certainly stayed on the bottom quiet often the longer you stayed down the more sleepy you got because your gradually reducing the atmosphere of oxygen and there is no means of topping that up. So you could become very very sleepy so you had to surface to charge your batteries you also surfaced purely and simply to pull in some air now this... you weren't allowed to smoke at all not like American submarines. We were never allowed to smoke in submarines so when we would surface but, there was always a panic the only hatch that would open when you surfaced would be the conning tower hatch and so the very second you surfaced the captain would shout down the first words were 'start main engines' they started you felt the air suck down straight away so everyone wanted to get under the conning tower the reason you were allowed to smoke. You'd been down eighteen hours or so might be less to have a smoke and of course we got half a pound of tobacco a month and... I did I rolled my own I did smoke I didn't take my tot there was another point everyone else did they'd have a tot neat.. Submariners were allowed to have neat rum no one else is allowed that at all it has to be watered but, submariners do.</p>
	<p>Now very few people drunk it I didn't I didn't like that damn stuff at all but, so people did have it and I had it purely and simply to buy things with you could get another matlow how about doing my washing for a day for a tot and you'd give him a tot and he'd do your washing for a day or you could bargain with it. It was a powerful weapon a tot far more powerful than money because you couldn't spend money anyway.</p>
	<p><b>Start of Film 4</b></p>
<p><b>01:21:32</b></p>	<p><b><i>I just want to know a bit more about firstly how about washing, toilets?</i></b></p>

Time code	What is said
	<p>You don't I'll come back to that now then shall I... everything you go to sea with has to last I mean the most important factor in any submarine is battery power you can't waste it so... right let's get back to speed because it all incorporates everything. A submarine dived it's maximum speed those u-class submarines was nine knots maximum but, it would only last half an hour and then you'd be useless. You did do more normally when you were cruising one and a half knots which is hardly moving now the batteries would then last at one and a half knots they were god you didn't waste it at all you couldn't wash because it used water and it used power water was for drinking not washing although we all washed and shaved just before you went ashore somewhere because you've got to attract the birds in some way now there was another problem that is very interesting if you don't wash of course you get all sorts of diseases and they are very seldom spoke about in peacetime I'll give you for example that I was never free of scabies until you get back in harbour and then you scrubbed off with benzene and 24hrs of scrubbing off with benzene cured it scabies. You never ever got rid of crabs until you shaved it off in your privates under your arms everywhere.</p>
	<p>I had another disease that I never did get rid of right through the war when I was serving and that was impetigo and it was an absolute pig round ring soars and the admiralty gave you stuff to put on it, it was a blue dye and you painted it and it didn't come off very easily so you imagine when you got in harbour and you go ashore my face was painted and I wasn't a very attractive sight where in blazes do you ever meet a girlfriend or anything like that when you look like that and you smell something on it you can never disguise the smell diesel oil, arm pits it was there. We had two toilets on the submarine one was for the officers four men... right the other one was for the remainder and so you invariably you had about twenty odd anyway. Now there is a saying in submarines they won't know it today but, in war time 'getting your own back' you see when you sit on it you sit on it like a normal toilet and you firstly shut the valves so you're doing it in a blocked up toilet and you do your job you flush it right... and a new comer to the submarine we would never teach him how to work it. And so he would sit on it do his job, he's opened this valve and instead of blowing it downwards it would blow it upwards and to get at it he had to bend over the toilet that's what they call getting your own back. Well all of them were christened that way but, so we had one and there was always a cue for it.</p>
	<p>Now funny enough though I was always constipated in submarines I still am my wife will tell you it's been the bane of my life I don't know what caused it or what have you but, I've always have to take ??? but, I did in submarines you go and see the coxswain because there is no medical people in submarines but, the coxswain was the first aid man so I was always in there Swain he's the coxswain and he was like a chief of the submarine lower deck and I say 'can I have something for my constipation' 'yeah' he wouldn't give me a bottle of them but one of them number 9s.</p>



Time code	What is said
<b>01:26:34</b>	<b><i>Another thing I was going to ask you talked about the torpedoes and they are huge things how do you get a torpedo on a submarine?</i></b>
	Well with rope and tackle...
<b>01:26:46</b>	<b><i>So it comes in through the conning tower?</i></b>
	Comes in through the forehead hatch, it comes in off the depot ship they have a crane on a depot ship and he lowers it down as far as the forehead hatchway and that's angled that hatchway and it also got two runners on so once the depot ship has dropped it down onto the runners the submarine matlows take it over and we then pull it in on these runners and they have got rollers on as well so either you're going to put one straight up the spout and run it straight into the torpedo tube or you're going to put it in store on the side.
<b>01:27:31</b>	<b><i>You would do this out at sea when you've fired your torpedoes off?</i></b>
	Oh yes when you put the others in there it doesn't take that long we could put a... if you've fired torpedoes you obviously want to do it quickly to replace them and one in about half hour I suppose.
<b>01:27:49</b>	<b><i>Just explain your office how you work, what you are operating the sort of codes you were dealing with?</i></b>
	Bearing in mind when I first went to the submarine I was an ordinary rating so I was radio but, all I would do is the menial tasks of the radio because if there was anything serious to do it was invariably we had a petty officer telegraphist as well. Now the wireless office was situated next to the engine room and I suppose looking back on it now I've got some measurements but, it's around about five feet by two feet you'll sit in something like that you've got a transmitter and we've got receiving gear. Now you can't transmit at sea if you've dived you've got to surface and you've got to put up an aerial.
	<b>Start of Film 5</b>

Time code	What is said
01:29:00	<p>Now on a submarine and you can see it on a picture in a moment it has a jumping wire that goes on the bows and it's about two inches thick cable steel that goes from the bows over the conning tower right aft. It's called a jumping wire and it's used mainly to ram through nets when you're dived if you want to break into a harbour very sharp bowsers' a submarines got it can cut the wires and then the jumping wire it's the colour and shape of the submarine so nothing catches up so nothing catches up when you're trying to go through cables or trying to go through a net now we use that as well to put our aerial on. Now if you are transmitting you've got to point to the receiving station or you've got to broadcast one or the two. Now if you were called into Rugby and that was the main service station for radio you would swing your bowser around point it to Rugby you could receive and transmit but, of course you would very seldom transmit anyway in wartime because you would give your position away but, every hour we had to swing the boat around to point to receive. Now Rugby would broadcast so we would come up to thirty feet below the water and we could point... we could actually receive Rugby at thirty feet down and they would broadcast and Ruby would broadcast always in code and that was also one of my jobs to decode it before it went to the old man.</p>
	<p>If it was a dead secret thing it would say most immediate or something like that... that would be the first code in the signal and that would mean to say that I couldn't decode it I've got to give it to the captain in the raw state and he would decode it and obviously something serious but, if it was so serious that immediate action would be taken and also there was no fear that the enemy could do anything about it if they did get it right receives the signal from Rugby because of they obviously did receive all the signals and they tried to decode them and they did decode a lot but, anyway if it was that sort of signal and it meant it didn't mean anything to the enemy they would broadcast in plain language and I happen to be on watch that day reading Rugby and it came out that it was July the 4<sup>th</sup> 1942 PQQPQQ from GBR which is Rugby no it wasn't most immediate it was important that meant it was in plane language... the signal went 'convoy PQ17' that in plain language the next part was in plain language 'convoy is to scatter' I remember saying 'Jesus Christ' and I expect everyone else well in fact they did I mean I've got a book here that's the complete history of PQ17 by Commander Broom he was the commodore of the convoy.</p>

Time code	What is said
	<p>Now we weren't in the convoy we were at sea and I'm explaining this part of it and I am jumping ahead so you know what I did and the signal came through and course I rushed it out to the old man and we were then I don't know must have been about four or five miles from the convoy south of it because we had a duty and the duty was to keep south of the convoy to protect it from U-boats be a screen if you like south of the convoy and the convoy would be as close to the Arctic and as close to the ice flows as it could possibly go and that way it could only be attacked from one side and anyway we sailed. Our orders were then to sail north into they gave us a position it was just north of Murmansk to stop the U-boats which they were all going to the same point because the convoy was going into Murmansk and the U-boats were all getting up there as fast as they could to attack them and there were those that were trying to get in there and they would with no escorts at all with it. We had battleships, cruiser they were at the back of the convoy they turned around and came home.</p>
	<p>Anyway so we were up there initially to be outside of ??? as indeed there was fourteen other submarines some Russians and some British waiting for them to come out anyway she did come out with all the other escorts and everything else too we never saw it a Russian submarine got in close fired a torpedo they reckoned they got a hit but, it made no difference another fired at it missed we aimed to go as close as we could to it we didn't even see it... it was so fast they do about thirty two thirty three knots and it was covered with aircraft of course and we could see some of them and it carried on for a while and then the convoy scattered that's when we were diverted to the north of Murmansk to wait for the attack from U-boats. It's almost difficult to explain how you felt, you were scared I knew and indeed everyone on the ship knew submarine knew what was coming out the size of it and it was the Tirpitz, the Hipper, the ???? six destroyers and dozens of aircraft. Well we wouldn't stand a hope in hell I don't know it was the greatest fear I ever had in the war we weren't attacked but, we could have been I can see the captain now looking through the periscope searching all the time swinging around up periscope down periscope. During that the petty officer telegraphist came on watch he took over from me because there was so many signals flying about sinking's and what have you we lost thirty four ships that was in that convoy and eleven got there.</p>
<b>01:37:04</b>	<b><i>And could you hear signals from ships in distress and stuff?</i></b>
	<p>SOS flying around you couldn't do nothing about them I mean you reported to the skipper but, we were too far away we were also on our way to this new position what the admiralty had told us to get to and so we were all out there something like fourteen submarines.</p>
	<b>Start of Film 6</b>

Time code	What is said
<b>01:37:32</b>	<b><i>If you're five hundred miles out must have taken a long time?</i></b>
	Four hundred miles yeah it did we surfaced and 9 knots that's all but, we got there.
<b>01:37:45</b>	<b><i>So just to clarify for travelling distance long distance you'd travel on the surface?</i></b>
	Absolutely yeah oh yes there were occasions when the risk from the enemy I mean you don't dive then you do for protection that's to say you never dive you do if you know you are in the vicinity of a couple of U-Boats you dive pretty quick because they were better than we were they were faster, they could go deeper, more armament, they could stay at sea longer the U-Class that I was on was an imitation of U-class but, it was only a small imitation it was nothing like the German U-Boats they were masters at it. They were the enemy but, I'm not denying they were brilliant. They were brilliant seaman as well they were the cream of the German navy now I feel for them we lost seventy four submarines during the war the Germans lost over a thousand and every one of those Germans averaged fifty people on board so you imagine the Atlantic and all the areas just full of them a lot of submarines that is... a lot it was virtually immediate death for them when they went to sea in fact Donitz the German Commander of the German submarines lost his son on one as a captain.
	We got a position and I could receive wires and signals and I mean where you go as a boy in the navy with radio you are trained to the best possible speeds... I was trained at twenty two words a minute but, I got up to twenty eight words a minute now that is fast. So you're the cream if you like of the branch and there is another reason I was in submarines which I never knew until after the war when you do... you can take exams in the navy it's always open to you. Well I thought my brother got commissioned, he got commissioned because he married a captains daughter RN and that was an automatic... anyway I studied and studied I was qualified as an officer, I had ET1 Educational Test One ET2 Educational Test 2 and HET the Higher Educational Test I had all them I was then qualified to become an officer but, of course you have to go through all the interviews and everything else too I didn't get a hope in hell. My dad was only a ward master that didn't help me none to get a commission.

Time code	What is said
	<p>Anyway back to the submarine itself it wasn't only wireless I was trained in when I went to submarines ASDICS which is sonar had just come into service about the second year of the war that had to have operators who do they make do it the wireless people as a sideline so you could be doing sonar one day it wouldn't of been an accurate system not then and then you'd be in charge of... well ASDICS was different than sonar you could detect other ships you could also transmit to other ships using ASDICS if it was a friendly one you could actually make Morse underwater with ASDICS and talk to them that again was my job. Now my action station well there was several but, the one that I will tell you about now I was also in the gunnery team. Now I didn't fire the gun, we only had one gun but, we did have some machine guns. My gun action team I was in charge of when I was in was passing ammunition to the top of the conning tower and other ratings would bring it up there and you'd put it down the chute to the guns... a gunnery team gunnery chap actually on the gun 3inch gun and it almost... when they fired it the submarine kicked when you fired it.</p>
<b>01:42:58</b>	<b><i>Was it fired from inside?</i></b>
	<p>No no no you've got to be on the surface and you've got to be... I was at the top of the conning tower I wouldn't say top top ladder of the conning tower picking up shells as they were handed up to me 3inch shells quite big and I'm telling you thing one because it's quite funny laughable. They were passing these up as they were firing, I don't know what we were attacking at the time... oh yes it was a supply ship up the Norwegian Coast and we were firing at this thing the gun and I was handing these over and this particular shell the chap below me handed it to me and the shell... I picked it up by the shell and the firing mechanism, the firing part of it came out the shell and it fell straight down to the conning tower it wasn't fused or anything but, it come straight down and it hit the bottom right by the first lieutenant. He didn't get hurt or anything at all it didn't hit him but, it was quite something it hadn't been fitted tightly... and I've heard of it happening several times and that was just a funny incident.</p>
	<p>The diving station I had was at the helm, diving station... now at the helm you've got a wheel in front of you and orders would come down a course it might say 090 group up now what that means you've got to put the batteries in series or parallel if you don't know about batteries you won't understand that but, you could change the speed if you put the batteries in series it means that they can go quite fast. Put them in parallel they are at least consuming energy. So he would shout down group up or group down and then give you the position he wants to go the course and so you would repeat all the orders and you'd put the course on that was always my diving station always when we were in action.</p>
<b>01:45:18</b>	<b><i>And what do you do?</i></b>

Time code	What is said
	Steering the submarine... if you're on the surface he's shouting down through the voice pipe to call port starboard whatever he is telling you to do and you put the wheel accordingly and the compass in front of you so you are steering the submarine.
<b>01:45:37</b>	<b><i>When he says group up or down how do you switch from parallel to series?</i></b>
	You don't I'm just passing the order. The one who is responsible to group up group down the artificer, the actual artificer who's responsible for all the batteries a hundred of them and they weigh five hundred weight each they are massive things but, they're right next to the engine room the wireless office and everything. What happened to me deaf and I'm still bloody deaf
	Start of Film 7
<b>01:46:09</b>	<b><i>What's it like underwater is it a colder environment?</i></b>
	In the arctic its cold well it's the temperature of the water it's cold and you can't have heat at all purely and simply wrap up. We had good clothing, very good clothing we had on our normal oil skins but, we also had sheep skin clothing that was good you could wear that but, the biggest problem wasn't the cold it was condensation the whole submarine was saturated always up north and it was drip drip drip drip drip now the only protection you had from that was they used to put cork all over the boat inside they used to put it on so it stuck on cork ??? of course but, if you got attacked or if you were firing a gun the damn thing would all pour down these particles so it made it more uncomfortable because they used to absorb water and then it all comes out now in the med of course again it's sweltering. I preferred the arctic from a hygiene point of view.
	Do you know that's one of the saddest things when you're leaving the depot ship and you're sailing you don't know where you are going well you get an idea because if you got winter clothing you're going north if you've got southern climate you know you've got whites. That's the only clue you got and I spent most of my time going north there was a lot of grass and mountains in Scotland In Dunoon but, as you're leaving it your heart sinks because you're not sure whether you're going to come back it's so frequent and every week ????? well I knew in being in radio you knew exactly what went on and you heard admiralty we didn't do it calling submarines and they kept on calling 'report your position, report your position' nothing caput gone well you never know that's going to happen when you're looking around this glorious countryside of ours and are you going to see it again but, it's the same thing when you come back seeing all the green grass and everything it's a fantastic feeling, it really is I've never forgotten it never.
<b>01:48:54</b>	<b><i>Did you get into Murmansk, did you get ashore there?</i></b>



Time code	What is said
	Polyarny a place called Polyarny yes we went in there and not long they didn't treat us very well the Russians at all. They didn't think we were helping them enough but, the Russian seaman you know who suffered a lot more than what we did and we had a lot of Russian ships in the convoy to and no they didn't like us but, I think it originated probably from Starlin more than anything else.
<b>01:49:42</b>	<b><i>What was Polyarny like did you get ashore?</i></b>
	Oh yes...
<b>01:49:47</b>	<b><i>What was it like?</i></b>
	Oh it's bites from mosquitos, smells even the water terrible I know that if you went ashore you bath in a blackish water no it wasn't nice but, you could get a scrub up that was about all. No I can't say I've got any pleasurable things there we didn't stop there long enough our job was to always be at sea waiting, looking so we didn't do a lot. I mean we had one go at a U-boat and that was south of the convoy. The convoy had been scattered and we sighted a U-boat and he wasn't heading north he was heading west he was on the surface, we surfaced to... to get near him and the skipper was talking to us I was in the control room obviously. This thing was going west it was going to the Atlantic what they were after is sinking ships. So we chased it for a while but, we couldn't keep up with it so we fired one torpedo at it missed, we went to gun action and missed. He didn't bother with us at all he just kept on the surface and off. They treated us with contempt I think a dear little thing like what we've got you know but, anyway...
<b>01:51:47</b>	<b><i>Were you not rammed in Scapa Flow what was that like?</i></b>

Time code	What is said
	<p>Yes it wasn't intentional but, when we came back off the PQ17 when she'd gone in we normally only came back to Lerwick refuelled and you go back again. This time we was ordered to go to Scapa no reason at all when we... you can't get in Scapa of a night time because they've got destroyers going to and fro and it's very difficult. Well we got in and we pulled up... firstly before we got in the King George V was in there the battleship and we had to go past it and another one of my harbour stations was on a telegraph if you were on the surface I was on a telegraph harbour stations this was on top of the conning tower. And as we went in there I mean obviously there was our skipper lined our boys up forehead and we was going to salute well we started to tie up to it because the Captain said tie up alongside her and we went in alongside her and you might not understand this but, there was blokes forehead ready to tie up and I was on a port telegraph I think and the... you all stand to attention when the coxswain blows his whistle and the bugler on the King George V blows his because you're saluting the flag you see and as they did that the first lieutenant that was on the bridge shouted forehead to the men tied up the aft to breast is taught... well the breast is the one that crosses it's a wire rope. He said 'the aft breast is taught' and I thought he said half a stern port and we started pulling away from and they had to let the breast go. Well you can imagine I mean it's a simple thing but, you imagine it was a lot of who ha but, anyway...</p>
	<p>We went alongside then a boat called the Breda... HMS Breda it was lord???? yacht it got recalled into the Navy and we were tied up alongside of that, it was dark and then all of a sudden this bloody destroyer comes belting at us stern first and I was asleep in the forehead end of the submarine the remainder of the crew... a lot of the crew were sleeping on the Breda if they've got a hammock and that and this boat I can't remember the name of it now... hit us and it pushed a plate one of the plate big boat right in the torpedo compartment and we had torpedoes in there as well so it shifted one of them but, nothing happened we didn't break water or anything at but, of course we then rushed into the dry dock up in Scapa and they checked it all over and they put a big plate over it not cut the old one out put it over the old one and then we went down to... we had to go to Ardrossan we could only make two knots it was so bloody slow going down there but, when we arrived at Ardrossan they got a complete new bow made and we just backed in there and they fitted it all up. We went back up to sea again up to Lerwick.</p>
	<p><b>Start of Film 8</b></p>

Time code	What is said
01:55:56	<p>And when you go to Lerwick there is an interesting point we had no means of pumping fuel onboard we had to go alongside an old lighter and four ratings would get on it and with the great big hand pumps pumping fuel up and that's how we all had to refuel up there. Wireless people telegraphists on submarine or anywhere in the navy do not use rifles because you carry portable transmitters you carry a revolver so I had to go ashore in Lerwick and do my training on firing a .45 what a waste of time you could be nowhere near the gun. I mean you see these cowboys there is no way you can hit anything at five yards let alone you know because they just kick, they're terrible things they are it's a .45 bullet you know it's such a violent kick. Anyway I did my training there.</p>
01:57:11	<p><b><i>What were these things that you carry as a telegraphist the personnel transmitter?</i></b></p>
	<p>Portable yes you do all the communication when you go ashore and we did a lot of training on that another interesting little point we did training beach landing on the island in Scotland you know and it was at midnight we did this training on a beach and I had to get my guns and everything else... when we did these we used squaddies... squaddies used to come aboard... squaddies you know pongos or whatever you want to call them soldiers and they were trained in boat fair this sort of thing you know, paddles and what have you well we used to have to take one of those in the four ends you'd bring in the four ends and we used to fill up the four ends where we used to sleep and where the torpedoes are and you had this thing in there and so all the while you were carrying these squaddies with their ???? or whatever you call them which filled it up they were a damn nuisance we would usually drop them somewhere and then we'd have to wait outside to pick them up. We used to sometimes prey they don't come back because if they come back it means we've got to take them all home again you know we were more uncomfortable but, we did get on well with them but we used to land them frequently land them on the Norwegian Coast.</p>
01:58:54	<p><b><i>These are Commandos are they?</i></b></p>
	<p>Yeah...</p>
01:58:56	<p><b><i>How do people like Commandos adapt to life onboard a sub?</i></b></p>
	<p>They don't it's their first training mostly bit of training but, I mean they were tough guys but, they tried to show it too much they were bravado. We didn't respect that sort of thing.</p>
01:59:23	<p><b><i>Tell me this story about one of the incidents when you were training?</i></b></p>

Time code	What is said
	<p>I was training on the Otway and this chum of mine a great chum he was training on the H31 and that's rather interesting we were building 1912 on the Otway and his old boat was built before then it was old and I mean old so short of submarines they obviously sent us round to Brest and we went into Falmouth first went ashore at Falmouth and so I did with Ben he was on the H31 fantastic... I'll tell you a bit about him because Ben was he had a girlfriend he was engaged to and he was a real honest chap they planned to get married there was no sex ever involved with him and I really appreciated him he was a bit bolshie but, anyway he was a smashing bloke.</p>
	<p>We weren't there long and we sailed, we didn't particularly know where we were until we actually sailed that we were going of Brest and as I say we were waiting outside of Brest about thirty miles outside dived night time Christmas eve 1941 and we heard this enormous explosion and we knew it couldn't of been torpedoes not at that time of night it could have been something hit a mine, it was all mined along comes admiralty 'give us your position? Give us your position H31?' not in plain English in code nothing nothing so we knew that is what it was. It wasn't reported I got special permission from the captain of the Otway to go and see his parents and his girlfriend to tell them... because they didn't tell them during the war until anything up to three, five months after it had happened but, it was bloody wrong but, anyway I got permission and he lived at Bradford and she did to the girl but, I didn't see her I went and saw his parents they were old they were Ben was thirty thirty five something like that. He was called up as an hostility man and I told his parents... I don't think they appreciated it or understood it I don't know but, I did miss him and that's where war really came home to me, it really did...</p>
<b>02:02:36</b>	<b><i>So your training you did was very much real war training?</i></b>
	<p>To use old boats like that the admiralty was wrong I mean it leaked like a sieve so did ours. I mean this was in 1941 with submarines that were built before 1912 well god they were only invented at the turn of the century 1900 there was none before that except trial things. There was so many boobs made that went home to me.</p>
<b>02:03:17</b>	<b><i>When you said to me you could hear this explosion is that because you was on the radio or did the submarine hear it?</i></b>
	<p>Oh no we heard it... and the explosion like that you could hear thirty miles away between twenty five and thirty miles. You can hear ships propellers you know a merchant ship ten miles away. It's an enormous noise when they actually go over the top of you... you know.</p>
<b>02:03:50</b>	<b><i>What about depth charges?</i></b>

Time code	What is said
	Yeah once trial depth charges and lots of them you have to do this go through it... it shudders the submarine but, you've got a submarine those that we had if the depth charge got within twenty five yards you'd had it but, if they got underneath so they set the depth charge to deep and it got underneath it would lift the submarine straight up out of the water and that's how we lost a lot of submarines to but, when we were depth charge it must have been ten miles away I would of thought. They were after all the submarines out there Jerry was using anything he'd got.
	Start of Film 9
02:04:48	<b><i>You say you went crackers but, I mean how do you... how does this thing happen to you? what's going on? When did you notice it, or not notice it, or do other people notice it and what happens to you?</i></b>
	Some of it I can't even remember but, I had a black out... I had a black out aboard the P45 it's very vague and I suppose the blackout has blacked it out but, it was fear I mean they called it anxiety and neurosis that is what they defined it and on my medical history sheet it just says below standard that's all it ever does say but, I came home and that's pretty vague because I went firstly back to the depot ship that's coming back and then I went to Kingseat Hospital and I was in there quite a while because I can't remember a lot of it but, I can remember parts of it. In the ward that I was in it had quite a few submariners and it had quite a few RAF pilots, gunners and we was doing a course to keep you partly asleep, not totally it flashes but, the cure for it apparently it was an American system what they were doing was to shut everything off and it did and eventually I got transferred back to Chatham out of submarines and they made me what is known as category C which means you can only go to a ship or a shore station that's got a doctor. Now you've got to remember in this Kingseat I was under psychiatrists all the time all of us, some of them were bloody bashy they might of thought I was but, some of them actually went to Knowle in Portsmouth which was an asylum, mostly pilots.

Time code	What is said
	<p>But, anyway I come back from that and they made me Category C and I got a draft to Iceland which had everything a place called ???? which is in the Arctic on the tip of the Arctic and the ice flows used to be about three miles yeah and that's something else that comes back.. I went to a shore station just two of us were up there and we were coast watching and also a radio beacon and I had to look after that and we saw a little small about a thirty forty footer fishing boat and he was stuck in the ice and he was flashing to us because we had a little tiny Nissan hut shore station so I went down to the village I remember and there was an Icelandic bloke down there and he spoke English I??? his name was and I said to him... well they had troubles... I said 'shall we have a go then to help them?' so we did on this ice flow perfect walking out but, the last fifty or sixty feet it had all crushed up into little balls and he said 'no worries' this Icelandic bloke 'just get on it and run' and we did and we didn't know what they were if they were Germans or Norwegians that was... but, the intention was they had a lot of money Icelandic money, English money so we took them off eventually but, they were very reluctant to get on this ice but, they had broken the rudder, the ice had.</p>
	<p>Anyway we got them off and got down and we were on phone call to ???? and I told them what had happened and what we got and everything and after a while they sent a destroyer around to pick them up took them away never heard no more at all. The other thing was we were after their girls beautiful girls they had up there all bonds all blue eyes but, they went for the Yanks. They had to put a stop to it because Yanks were marrying them right left and centre and taking them back, they were lovely girls. I met one I'm trying to think of her name...</p>
<b>02:10:55</b>	<p><b><i>What do you think when you think back to your time as a submariner in the war what's your memory, what's your feeling about it?</i></b></p>
	<p>It's getting less... it's getting more vague now but, I can't really understand how I lasted that long and I can't understand either that all my mates in that submarine I know I must have been sick but, they were all... none of them were frightened none of them seemed that way but, they were all much older than me... I was much younger than all of those as you can see in the pictures.</p>
<b>02:11:39</b>	<p><b><i>Are you proud to of served?</i></b></p>
	<p>Well I wouldn't call it proud... no I'm probably glad I went through it but, it can easily be brought back. I don't know if you ever seen the film 'Das Boot' that brings it all back to me that film... it's probably the most brilliant film I've ever seen that's accurate dead accurate I suppose this part I shouldn't say but, I've prayed to die, I'd had enough you think let this bugger blow us to bits, you thought that. I don't know perhaps I was more... it didn't do me much good but, I put it down a lot to age, I was too young... your not a man enough.</p>



Time code	What is said
02:13:00	End of Films