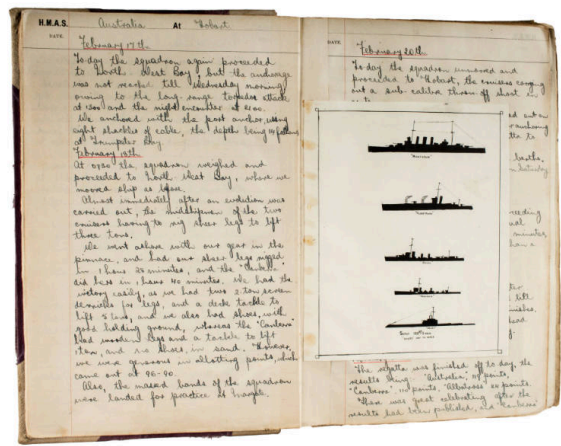


Basic Detail Report



00033940

Title
Journal of Midshipman George Knox, RAN (part 1)

Date
8 February 1931- 31 December 1931

Primary Maker
George Frederick Edmund Knox

Medium
Card, linen, paper, ink. Red, open spine journal is bound

with linen

Dimensions

Overall: 320 x 223 x 57 mm, 1.9 kg

Name

Journal

History

These two journals (00033940 and 00033941) by Midshipman George Knox provide detailed information about naval training, education and daily life on British and Australian naval ships in the period from 1927-1932. Upon its formation in 1911, the Royal Australian Navy replicated the entire ranking structure used in the Royal Navy. The British midshipman was originally a petty officer under the command of the boatswain. They were placed in charge of a ships boats, keep watch at sea and in harbour under the eye of a senior officer, and generally play a part, under supervision in all the ships activities. They also attended lectures and participated in exercises designed to familiarise them with all aspects of life on a naval ship. At the end of their midshipman's time they took an examination in seamanship for promotion to sub-lieutenant. The rules for use of the Journal were outlined for the midshipman on the introductory page of the journal. The midshipman was required to enter information (in their own language) of their own observations about matters of interest and importance, with a focus on work that is carried out on their stations, in their fleet or in their ship. A midshipman was also expected to include descriptions of places visited and of people he came into contact with. These were supported by sketches and maps and notes on weather conditions and currents. Knox's journals also include technical drawings of early diving equipment and weapons. The journal was checked and initialled by a senior officer at least once a month and also by the Captain. The main object of keeping the journal was to train midshipmen in a) the power of observation, b) the power of expression and c) the habit of orderliness. The journal was presented at the examination in seamanship for the rank of Lieutenant and a maximum of fifty points could be awarded to a midshipman. Midshipman Knox includes hand drawn maps and charts of places visited during his time

aboard the different vessels. These include depictions of Fremantle Harbour, the Derwent River, Coral Sea, Great Barrier Reefs, Jervis Bay and the Adriatic Sea. He also includes leisure time and personal reflections. His entry of January 20 1931 is an example of his writing style; 'This day representing one of the most momentous of my career, I was naturally slightly apprehensive when I arrived at Man O War steps in Sydney to join my first ship. The other cadets of my "year" who were joining on that day arrived soon after myself.' Knox also describes training exercises at sea in detail eg Journal Entry 19 January 1933: 'The submarines left harbour at varying times during the day and our object was to locate them and report them to the hunting subdivisions Several submarines were located by us, but one, passing under us, we could not pick up again and she must have got through.'