

# John's Story - Part 3 - Life in the Middle East - Egypt - 1944



In early 1944 John was in the Middle East - in Port Said, Egypt.

He sent this airgraph to Sylvia (*Rum*) his sweetheart on 10 Jan 1944 (*as can be seen from the post mark on the envelope*) but it is not known which ship John was on at this time although it may have been the Empire Copperfield.

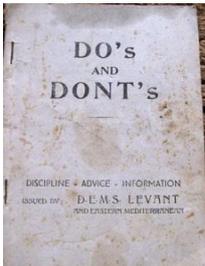


**Empire Copperfield** was a 5,998 GRT cargo ship which was built by William Pickersgill & Sons Ltd, Sunderland. Launched on 16 July 1943 and completed in September 1943.<sup>i</sup>



This photo of John by the Palms was taken in Port Said, Egypt on **13 February 1944**.

The booklet '**Do's and Dont's**' pictured here gives very important advice to the young sailors entering the Levant Ports of Port Said, Alexandria, Cairo and other ports in the Middle East - and proves very interesting reading!



The advice covers a wide range of subjects including strict instructions of what to wear - the various currency rates and - advice on Brothels and 'out of bounds' areas.

It states: *Before you enter any cafe, bar or other establishment see that it displays an "IN*



*BOUNDS" sign. Otherwise it is out of bounds. It even*

gives advice on sunbathing saying: *Do sunbathe - it's good for you and makes you feel handsome. But DO take it easy at first.*



The above photo of John and **Harry Hughes** taken in **April 1944** in **Port Said** shows them both looking resplendent in their Naval uniforms.

This photo of **John, Harry** and **Bill** with a very young Shoe Shine boy was taken in a Park in Port Said, May 1944. The boy only looks very young - about 7 - but obviously having to work to get money for his family.



photo relaxing by the sea after a swim on shore leave.

John and his mate seems to have taken this advice about swimming very literally and they certainly look very 'handsome' in this



This photo (*right*) - also taken in **April 1944** in Port Said, Egypt – shows John with **Morris** and **Harry Hughes** wearing their 'white' uniform and looking equally handsome!

In **May 1944** John was pictured in two photos taken outside the **DKD Building, Royal Navy Barracks at Port Said** with his ship mates.

The names of those in this photo are thought to have been: **Johnston, Aston, John, G French, Lumley, Ambler** and **Maria (the dog)** - shown with what looks like a basket of fruit in the foreground.



In the 2nd photo John is pictured with his pals - again with the dog outside the **Royal Naval Barracks in Port Said**.



**John & Tom** are pictured on the RN Barracks at Port Said with and without hats!



*John Gardiner's Story – 1942 – 1946 – Part Three - 1944*

Many photos were taken in Port Said - during May 1944 and the beginning of June 1944 as can be seen from the following pages.

It's good to see that there were some good times for them in the Navy when away from the ship or when they were off duty enjoying each other's company with everyone looking very tanned and happy - and no doubt pleased to be alive!

Photo of Tom and John in their white shorts!



This photo of John was taken on the top of the **D.K.D. Building Port Said, Egypt May 1944**

This is a photo of the Cathedral in Port Said taken by John in May 1944.



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The photo right was also taken in **Port Said** in **May 1944**. In the photo are: **Roberts, Aston, Bruce, John, Ambler and French.**



Those taken in this photo are: **Roberts, Lumley, French, John, Bruce, Ambler and Aston.**

