



Fleet Air Arm Telegraphist/Air Gunner Derek Foster

From the age of sixteen in 1940, Derek Foster took the first step towards playing his part in the war by joining the Air Training Corps. Until his enlistment in the Fleet Air Arm Derek had a job as a young reporter on the evening paper at York. As part of his duties he had the difficult task of interviewing bereaved relatives of servicemen killed in action, to find information for the newspaper. After his training as a Telegraphist Air Gunner Derek's first posting was to the North Atlantic, serving with 825 Squadron aboard *HMS Vindex* flying in Swordfish aircraft equipped with radar detection. This British-built escort carrier was part of Captain Walker's D Group of Destroyers searching for German submarines.



By November 1944 Derek was on a troopship heading for service in the Far East. He re-trained on the Grumman Avenger aircraft, using new radio equipment and firing the .5mm Browning. *HMS Victorious*, as part of Taskforce 57, carried fourteen Avenger crews and also Corsair fighter squadrons. Derek's aircraft carried four 500lb bombs for dropping on enemy runways and buildings. The *Victorious* suffered damage from Kamikaze aircraft while Derek was airborne on a bombing mission.

After three months attacking Japanese islands, Derek's second tour, as part of Taskforce 37, involved going further north to attack the Japanese mainland and Okinawa. His service in the Pacific continued until 10 August 1945 and on the return voyage he heard that the atom bomb had been dropped.



Card with instructions in Chinese of what to do if the bearer is found injured



"The boss (Lord Louis Mountbatten, 2nd right) looks round at Trincomalee"



TRANSCRIPT OF INSTRUCTIONS CARD

- The man holding this paper is a member of the Allied Forces.
- He has become separated from the rest of the Allied Forces. Will you look after him so that he can rejoin them?
- He is not able to ask in Chinese for everything he needs, so you should anticipate his wants.
- Bring him drinking water.
- Give him food, such as fowls, vegetables, rice and other suitable foods.
- Hide this man and keep his presence a secret. The Japanese must not learn of his whereabouts.
- If he is unable to walk, make a stretcher and carry him.
- Let one man take the British Government's letter to the village chief.
- He will sign and give you a paper, and later the British Government will give you a good reward.

In March 2000 Derek Foster visited the Centre to be tape-recorded by [Peter Liddle](#) and to deposit a wonderful collection of Second World War material. We are proud to preserve this collection which includes Derek's flying log-book, two photograph albums and a book with instructions in Chinese telling the finder what to do if the carrier is found injured.



"Aircrews man the aircraft"



The caption from Derek's album simply reads:
"It just came off in me 'and!'"



Inventory of the Donation

- Tape-recorded
- Book for Chinese communication and a card with instructions in Chinese of what to do if the carrier is found injured
- Flying log book
- 2 photo albums and some loose photographs
- Souvenir of Sydney
- Photocopied articles
- Bulletin announcing the surrender of Japan
- Novelty certificate (King Neptune Proclamation)
- Chinese/Japanese leaflet



News Bulletin on H.M.S. Victorious
announcing the unconditional surrender of
Japan

TRANSCRIPT OF NEWS BULLETIN

NEWS SUMMARY

H.M.S. VICTORIOUS

15th AUGUST 1945

VICTORY

The unconditional surrender of Japan to the Allies was announced simultaneously today in Washington, London, Chungking and Moscow. Japan has accepted the terms of the Potsdam Declaration "without qualification".

President Truman, on behalf of the Allies, has sent the following instructions to the Japanese:

Cease all hostilities immediately and notify the Supreme Allied Commanders when this order is fully complied with.

Send emissaries at once to the Supreme Allied Commander.

General Douglas MacArthur has been named Supreme Allied Commander and he will notify the Japanese emissaries of the time and place of the formal surrender.

VJ Day will not be announced until Japanese signatures are on the surrender document. The President, in announcing the victory, called this day the 'Day of the Democracies'.

In England the King will address the opening session of the New Parliament tomorrow. Mr. Winston Churchill will take the floor as leader of the opposition.

Admiral Nimitz has issued a cease fire order to all warships in the Pacific and Gen. MacArthur announces that troops for the occupation of Japan are ready.



The Second World War Experience Centre
Reproduction of an article from the Centre's website
<http://www.war-experience.org/collections/sea/alliedbrit/foster/default.asp>

Breaking all tradition, Emperor Hirohito spoke directly to the Japanese people by Radio at noon today. He told them that he had resorted to this "extraordinary measure" (surrender) and warned them to: "Beware of outbursts of emotion and internal strife". People are reported to be gathered outside the Emperor's palace, "weeping because of their unworthiness".

General Anami, the Japanese war minister, committed suicide last night.

Tokyo radio does not use the word surrender in its broadcasts to the Japanese, but refers to the "Imperial Decision". The people were told today that they should now concentrate on culture and industry.

China and Russia have signed a Treaty of friendship in Moscow.



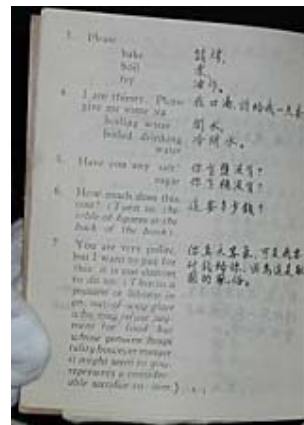
Book for Chinese communication



"The ship. H.M.S. Victorious at Leyte, Philippine Islands, May 1945, with the aircraft, Corsairs and Avengers, on deck"



Instructions on use of the Book for Chinese communication



From the Book for Chinese communication



Audio Clip

Unable to drop his armed bombs due to a leaking hydraulic tank, Derek had to effect repairs with improvised materials in order to make the aircraft safe for landing.

Transcript of Audio Clip

" It still would hold hydraulic if you filled it up again. So, I remember there's a tap on it, a screw-type tap, and the instruction always was to the flight mechanics to leave this finger-tight, well my fingers wouldn't open it so I was stuck with this thing tightly sealed. The only thing to do was to get the jungle knife that we carried, make a hole in it near the top, get the fluid into there and then of course it wasn't easy to get the fluid in with the aircraft swinging about so I remember there was a funnel for the urine tube, if you've a bladder weakness so I used that for my funnel and got the fluid in and took it out but this big hole meant that it wasn't airtight, it wouldn't operate, so I also carried a pack of chewing gum which I hated, I didn't like chewing gum. Anyway I chewed off a large piece of this chewing gum, managed to seal this hole and the hydraulics started working again to the extent he could get the flaps down so we landed on OK, but we landed on with the bombs still in the bomb bay and although I'd armed them ready for being dropped and I'd gone back and turned it to disarm, I'd never done this before so I didn't know if this worked or not y'know! So we landed down OK the flight deck was clear on that occasion there was generally a few goofers hanging around if an aircraft came back damaged and I scuttled out of the back of that Avenger I remember very rapidly and things passed off OK, except for the fact that my pilot had to speak up for me quite a bit when the stores officer, or the supplies officer, got very annoyed that I'd damaged this hydraulic tank and he hadn't got a spare one so the aircraft was not able to be used until they could get one and they laid a charge on me before the commanding officer for damaging an aircraft, but my pilot spoke up for me and I wasn't punished for doing that!"