

**The South American Cruise of
HMS AMAZON and HMS AMBUSCADE
10th April to 15th August 1928**

Allowance was made in the Government Estimates of 1924 for two experimental destroyers to be built. Shipbuilders Denny, Hawthorn Leslie, Thornycroft, White and Yarrow all submitted designs for a ship to replace the V's and the W's which had been in service since the latter end of World War 1. Thornycroft's and Yarrow's were chosen to build the two ships which were to incorporate the latest weapons and equipment as guided from lessons learned during the war.

D38, *HMS Ambuscade*, the ninth ship to carry the name, was launched on the 15th January 1926 at Yarrow's yard at Scotstoun on the River Clyde. D39, *HMS Amazon*, similarly the ninth ship to carry the name, was launched twelve days later on the 27th January at Thornycroft's yard at Woolston near Southampton.

Fitting out and maker's trials obviously had to take place before the ships were handed over to the Royal Navy to commission. No details are available for this initial period, but what is known is that *Amazon* was based at Port Edgar on the Firth of Forth opposite the Rosyth Dockyard.

Amazon's base was changed to Portsmouth on 1st April 1928. It is assumed that *Ambuscade* operated in company with *Amazon* during this initial stage. On the 10th April 1928 the two ships left Portsmouth for a four month cruise to South America. In command of *Amazon* was Commander F Howard, RN and in command of *Ambuscade* was Commander ATN Abbey, RN. X

Ernest Attwood joined *Amazon* as the Captain's Steward on the 9th May 1927, and it is from his personal diary that these details of the ships' deployment have been taken :

Apr 10th. Tuesday. 10.00. Left SW Wall Portsmouth. Proceeded to Spithead to swing compasses. Blowing hard. Sea rough. It looks like a rough passage to start with. Actual time of starting cruise was noon.

Apr 11th. Wednesday. Westerly swell, wind southerly till about 2pm when it shifted to NW and blew hard. Sea rose in the evening and wind shifted to SW. Heavy rain squalls.

April 12th. Thursday. Rolled heavily during early part of middle watch. Fire in Captain's cabin (radiator collapsed). Chief Stoker fell down hatchway cut his leg badly. Stitched up by doctor. Fine night.

April 13th. Friday. Weather warmer and improving. Sea and wind started to rise again about 4pm. Also rain. Put clocks back half hour at 5.0pm and half hour at 6.30pm. Big sea running during middle watch.

April 14th. Saturday. Westerly swell still continues, rained in afternoon, cleared about 5.0pm. Weather getting warmer but muggy. Passed Danish schooner bound east at about 4.0pm.

April 15th. Sunday. Sighted Porto Santo (Madeiras) at 10.30am. Passed Madeira at 2.0pm. Coasted round Funchal Bay, night dark but clear. Officers and PO's rifle shoot on Foc'sle won by the officers.

April 16th. Monday. Sighted Teneriffe about 8.0am. Officers wear white suits. Captain gets very sunburnt. Rigged canvas bath, very popular. Started to paint ship and get ready for Pernambuco.

April 17th. Tuesday. Fine day. Slight NW gale. Blew rather fresh, slightly colder. Bathed in the evening. Good fun.

April 18th. Wednesday. Nothing special happened. Passed German ship "Feodosia" bound Antwerp to Rio. Put clocks back one hour in the Dog watches.

April 19th. Thursday. Passed German sailing Training Ship bound for Valparaiso. Weather very hot. Bath very welcome.

April 20th. Friday. Very hot. Started to practice with Concert Party. Good progress made.

April 21st. Saturday. Nothing exciting happened. Captain caught a flying fish for his breakfast the size of a small sprat.

April 22nd. Sunday. League football medals presented to team. King Neptune received on board with all due ceremony and respect at 8.30pm.

April 23rd. Monday. Neptune held his court on board. I passed through the initiation ceremony. Rain squalls started at 11.45am, continued all day. Concert abandoned until a finer night.

April 24th. Tuesday. At about 0540 passed fishing raft which we took for shipwrecked people till daylight came and showed us our mistake. Quaint looking craft. Sighted land at 0700. Heavy rain squalls continue.

April 25th. Wednesday. Passed Rocos rocks about noon. Barrier coral reef. Very dangerous. Unwatched light. Three palms. Refuge hut and beacon. Fine day.

April 26th. Thursday. Fine day. Captain spoke to ship's company about smart appearance and naval prestige. Gave our concert in the evening. Great success.

April 27th. Friday. Arrived Pernambuco. Very busy with officials calling on board. Went ashore I evening with Facer. Did not get a very good impression.

April 28th. Saturday. Stayed on board. Lots of callers. Could not do any writing.

April 29th. Sunday. Went to see Rugby match at Country Club with Bob and Limers. Met Jim and George also Mr Ambler. Out to dinner with Jim and George. Then for motor drive out into the country. Bob and I drank coconut milk and saved the shells. George and George brought us down to the ship in the car. A very enjoyable day. Opinion of place gets brighter.

April 30th. Monday. Very wet day. Stayed on board. Wrote to Ciss.

May 1st. Tuesday. Out to Olinda with Bob and Limers by tram car. A most interesting ride through swamps and native villages. Had tea and dinner with Mr Ambler.

May 2nd. Wednesday. "At Home" on board in the afternoon. Jim and George came down. Took me out in the car. Had dinner with them, then on to smoking concert at Country Club. I got a good reception. Back on board at 1.0am. Jim drives me down.

May 3rd. Thursday. Very sore throat. Captain out all day, but I did not go ashore. I wrote to Ciss and looked out for Eddie so that he could go ashore after dinner.

May 4th. Friday. Fine day. Plenty of visitors on board all day. Jim came down but was too late to get on board. Sailed at 4.0pm for Rio de Janeiro. Had a great send off from the British colony.

May 5th. Saturday. At sea, very calm, no special events.

May 6th. Sunday. Sunday, at sea, still fine and very hot, lazy day.

May 8th. Tuesday. Sighted Pao de Azuca at 0630. Entered harbour at 0800. Kept waiting a long time for local MO. Finally secured to buoy at 0945. Arrival of first mail from England. Four letters from Ciss, one from Aylesbury. Stayed on board and wrote letters.

May 9th. Wednesday. Went alongside wall at 1.30. Bob and I went to Zoo in the afternoon. Met Jack and Doreen. I came back on board at 6.0 for Captain's dinner party.

May 10th. Thursday. Jack and Doreen came on board, had tea. I met them in the evening and went to the Sugar Loaf but was too late to go up. I went back with them to the hotel for supper.

May 11th. Friday. Jack and Doreen took Bob and I round the city in the afternoon, then night out to Copocabana Beach. Back by tram to see the lights on Pearly Beach. Then on to Smoking Concert.

May 12th. Saturday. Very busy day, crowds of visitors on board. Sailed at 5.0pm for Santos. Jack and Doreen down to see us off.

May 13th. Sunday. Arrived at Santos at 11.0 am. Very rough passage from Rio. Spent a quiet day on board.

May 14th. Monday. Went to Sao Paulo with the party by train, a most marvellous sight and engineering. Quite an educative day. Back to Santos by 8.30 then on to Seaman's Mission for supper. A really fine day.

May 15th. Tuesday. Lunch party on board, Captain out to dinner. I went to Mission at 7.30 to see the boxing and concert. On board at 11.0.

May 16th. Wednesday. Up to Sao Paulo with Captain. Had special observation coach. Breakfast on train. On to Col. Johnstone's house by car. Had lunch there. Col. Johnstone took me round the town in his car, then on to meet the Captain. Back to Santos by car, a most remarkable drive, 2,800 feet drop down the mountain side. Funny signposts. Had a small accident in which my head was slightly cut. Sailed at 5.15.

May 17th. Thursday. At sea, a fine day. Captain taken sick. Busy day.

May 18th. Friday. At sea, weather still fine, passed RMS Alamanzoca homeward bound. The Captain improving.

May 19th. Saturday. Arrived at Monte Video at 4.0pm, pouring with rain. Went to English Theatre to concert. The play was called "The Unfair Sex".

May 20th. Sunday. Went to service at the cathedral at 10., back on board by 11.15. Captain out to lunch but back to supper. Kept me very busy, very late night.

May 21st. Monday. Bob and I were invited out to tea by Mr Clarke but as the Captain stayed on board I could not go. But I went to the dance in the evening and had a really enjoyable time.

May 22nd. Tuesday. Concert at the Church Memorial hall. I gave a couple of turns and had my name taken by the editor of the Monte Video Sun. Also personally congratulated by Mr Meyer, the leading actor in "The Unfair Sex". Back on board at 12.30 but did not go to bed as Captain had a bacon and egg party which lasted till 4.30am.

May 23rd. Wednesday. Left Monte Video at 5.30am with USA minister on board, blowing a gale and very cold. Minister went down with sea-sickness within half-an-hour. I went to bed at 9.0am till noon. Arrived at Buenos Aires at 4.0pm. Taken round the city in motor coaches and on to concert at Seaman's Mission. Back on board by midnight feeling very tired.

May 24th. Thursday. Empire Day. Great ceremonies all day. Went to Mission in the evening, had a good time. On board RMMV Asturios at midnight for Captain to change into 'undress' uniform.

May 25th. Friday. Argentine Independence Day. My birthday. Naval guard landed. Four girls from Mission on board to tea. Went to Mission in the evening to see the boxing.

May 26th. Saturday. Busy all the morning with visitors. Packed the bags in the afternoon. Met Mr Ryan, Mr Maller, Captain, Lt Cdr James, Lt Cdr Nicholl, Lt Anstice and Surg Lt Fox at BAP station. Left in train at 9.30pm. Turned in, in my cabin at 11.15. Special dining and sleeping compartments put at our disposal. The coaches used were the same as were used by the Prince of Wales when he toured the Argentine. The Captain's sleeping compartment which was used by HRH was a most elaborate affair. The bathroom, which adjoined, was tiled, and carried a tank on the top which held six tons of water.

May 27th. Sunday. Got up at 5.0am and prepared the guns. Had breakfast. Train arrived at Castiliano at 6.15am. The distance was 396 miles from BA. Our compartments shunted on to banking. Taken further down the line by motor trolley car. Started shooting at 7.15. Bag of 49 ducks to two guns by lunchtime. Back to train for lunch. Out again at 2.0. Sport not so fast in the afternoon. Slight accident to Lt Anstice. Dinner on my own at 8.0. Then to bed by 10.30, feeling very tired.

May 28th. Monday. Arrived at BA at 9.30am. President and Ambassador visited ship in forenoon. Lunch party on board. Went to Catholic Seaman's Mission in the evening then on to boxing. After, went to the Pao-La-Clan.

May 29th. Tuesday. Charabanc ride for two hours round BA organised by the Apostleship of the Sea. Then on to concert at the Mission. (See report)

A report on the concert was printed in the Buenos Aires Herald on Wednesday 30th May. The concert was reported as one of the best ever seen and Steward Attwood was given an excellent review.

May 30th. Wednesday. English Ambassador inspected ship during forenoon. "At Home" on board during the afternoon. Captain dined out but too late for me to go ashore. Wrote to Ciss.

May 31st. Thursday. Sailed from Buenos Aires at 0800 for Port Stanley, Falkland Islands. Uneventful day.

June 1st. Friday. At sea, weather much colder. I fell down the Wardroom hatchway, dislocating the toes on my left foot. Put on sick list and had to turn in my hammock.

June 2nd. Saturday. At sea, still in my hammock, foot swollen. Not allowed to turn out.

June 3rd. Sunday. At sea. Foot a little better. Allowed to get up, but had to sit with foot resting on a chair. Weather fine but very cold.

June 4th. Monday. Arrived at Port Stanley, Falkland Islands at 8.30am. Packed bags and took them to Government House. Football match against Stanley, we won 6 - 2. Assisted at dinner party at Government House. On to pantomime after.

June 5th. Tuesday. Off to ship at 10.0am. Cocktail party on board. Lunch at Government House, also dinner. On to dance after. I could not dance as foot was still bad.

June 6th. Wednesday. Shooting party. Com Abbay, Lts Woodhale and Anstice, Com Howard and self. X
Not much sport but a good healthy day out. Dinner at House then on to concert.

June 7th. Thursday. Returned to ship. Girl Guide Guard of Honour at Government House Pier. Lunch party on board. Sailed at 3.45pm.

June 8th. Friday. At sea. Blowing hard, but not too much sea running. Nothing of special interest.

June 9th. Saturday. Entered Magellan Straits at 6.30am. Sea calm, still very cold. A very tricky passage. Anchored at 4.10pm in Snug Bay, the southern most point of our cruise.

June 10th. Sunday. Weighed anchor at 0630. Proceeded through the Straits, raining and cold. A very dismal day. Put clocks back one hour in the morning watch. Many mountains all capped with snow. No signs of habitation, very dreary. Anchored on Otter bank at 4.10pm. A boat came alongside with two men, two women and a child in it. Very primitive looking people. They exchanged two seal skins for old coats.

June 11th. Monday. Weighed anchor at 0700. Left Magellan Straits and entered Smythe Channel. Weather is very cold and wet. Passed the largest glacier in the world. It was far too dull to take any photos. Anchored in Molyneux Bay at 4.15.

June 12th. Tuesday. Weighed anchor at 0700. Passed through Smythe Channel. Passed through the narrowest part at 12.20. The Channel at this point is less than 100 yards wide. Took some photos. Entered the open sea at 4.15pm through the Gulf of Penus. Very rough and blowing hard.

June 13th. Wednesday. Still blowing hard and very rough, Captain had to have his meals on the bridge. Not feeling very well myself.

June 14th. Thursday. Between Midnight and 1.30am the sea rose to a great height. A huge gale of wind came toward us like a huge black bat with wings outstretched. We caught the tail end of it. The sea eased down after this and we had quite a comfortable day.

June 15th. Friday. Arrived at Talcahuano at 10.0, anchored. Captain went ashore to pay official calls, came back, changed and went out to dinner. Too late for me to go ashore. Captain came back at midnight and brought the Vice Consul, Mr Cooper, to sleep on board.

June 16th. Saturday. Had a lunch party on board for eight, then an "At Home". Had a very busy time. Weighed anchor at 4.30 and proceeded to Valparaiso. Captain turned in and had his dinner in bed in the sea cabin. Was very pleased to go to bed myself.

June 17th. Sunday. Arrived at Valparaiso at 1300. Secured alongside Ambuscade about 4.0pm. Had three letters from Ciss which bucked me up no end. Went ashore after supper, visited Seamens Mission and Chilean Sailors Club. ✗

June 18th. Monday. Had a busy day with Captain making his official calls. Went ashore to Concert at 7.30. Had a grand time. Great reception. Back on board at 2400 then packed bags ready for Captain to go away in the morning. Captain came aboard at 2.0 and kept me up till 4.0am.

June 19th. Tuesday. Saw Captain off to Santago at 0800. Came back on board, wrote a long letter to Ciss, Frank and Cissie's mother. Made up Captain's diary. Went to football match in the afternoon then on to Amazon's dance at Seamens Mission. Splendid time, back on board at 2400.

June 20th. Wednesday. Pouring with rain all the forenoon. Met Captain at station at 11.15. Went for splendid motor drive to Concon with CGM of Ambuscade and Percy. Back to Mission by 5.30, had tea and long talk with Mr Clarke. Dance and social till 1.0am, back on board feeling very tired. ✗

June 21st. Thursday. Lunch party on board. Mrs Ingham came down to say goodbye, she was very upset. Sailed for Coquimbo at 4.0pm. Had an early night.

June 22nd. Friday. Arrived at Coquimbo at 10.00. Great reception from Chilean Fleet. Old English battle cruiser "Canada" now flagship of Chilean Fleet renamed "Latorre". Went ashore with Bob, Will and Harry, very poor place. Streets inches deep in sand from tidal wave of 1926.

The *Almirante Latorre* (to give the ship its correct name) was in fact built for Chile. Launched in 1914 she was purchased by the Royal Navy for the duration of the war and renamed *Canada*. On 1st August 1920 the ship was returned under her original name and served with the Chilean Navy until 1958. The Chilean Navy has always had a strong connection with Britain and as recently as the beginning of the 21st century ex Royal Navy ships were still being transferred.

June 23rd. Saturday. Bought Joey the canary for 25 pesos (12/6d). Captain taken ill with lumbago. Dinner party for eight, Captain could not attend.

June 24th. Sunday. Cissie's birthday. Fine day, large lunch party in WR. Captain still in bed. Sailed at 4.30pm for Callao.

June 25th. Monday. At sea, fine day. Captain up but on sick list and special diet. Joey quite at home and singing strongly. Hope I can keep him alive till I get home.

June 26th. Tuesday. At sea. Weather still fine, sea calm, much warmer. Nothing special happened.

June 27th. Wednesday. At sea, weather still fine and much warmer. Captain still feeling queer and kept on low diet.

June 28th. Thursday. Arrived at Callao at 1100, anchored well out in the harbour. Perfect day. Went ashore in the evening to Seamens Mission to make arrangements for dance and concert.

June 29th. Friday. Captain went for walk in the afternoon and came back feeling ill, put straight to bed on low diet. I went ashore in the evening to the dance. Quite good for such a small English colony.

June 30th. Saturday. Captain went to hospital at Lima for X-ray, back to bed on arrival at ship, feeling a little better. I slept in his cabin.

July 1st. Sunday. Had a small lunch party on board, then sat in cabin for the rest of the day, reading and writing letters. Weather still continues fine. A sea-lion played around the ship for quite a long time, throwing fish in the air and catching them again. Just like being at a circus.

July 2nd. Monday. Captain still in his bed. Navigator and Doctor gave a lunch party in the Captain's cabin in honour of the two youngest Spanish bullfighters. I took two photos of them. Four of our officers were taken up in Peruvian sea-planes this morning and went over the sea submarine spotting. Sailed at 3.0pm for Guyaquil, Ecuador.

July 3rd. Tuesday. Captain feeling better but his temperature does not go below 100. At sea, beautiful weather, getting hotter.

July 4th. Wednesday. At sea. Doctor decides that it would be best for us to go straight on to Jamaica as Fever is so rife at Guyaquil it might affect the Captain - approved by Admiralty at noon. Crossed the equator at 8.0pm.

July 5th. Thursday. At sea, now on our own. Increased speed so as to reach Balboa tomorrow evening. Captain feeling better and is allowed up for two hours during the afternoon. Is still not allowed to eat any solid food except toast. I see very little of my messmates now as I have to be all day and all night with the Captain. We started to wear white suits and helmets today.

July 6th. Friday. Arrived at Balboa at 5.15pm. Went into Panama City at 7.30 for the Captain. A very expensive place. Back on board at 11.0

July 7th. Saturday. Went to Panama with Tom Evans at 3.30pm. Visited Catholic Church of St Jose, 250 years old. This church contains the Golden Altar, saved from the great fire, it is about 350 years old. Had tea at the Southern Cross Hotel, then to the pictures, then on to cabaret show in the evening.

July 8th. Sunday. Left Balboa at 8.0am, entered Panama Canal at 8.30. A splendid trip full of interest. A few facts can be seen on the opposite page. Passed Colon, Atlantic end of Canal, at 4.0pm. Very heavy swell.

July 9th. Monday. At sea. Very rough, a strong but warm wind blowing, shipping seas all day, fear of a hurricane so increased speed to reach Jamaica earlier. Scorching hot day. Evans gets severely sun burnt on legs and face, looks very queer.

July 10th. Tuesday. Arrived Kingston, Jamaica at 10.00. Scorching sun. Anchored, local coloured women rush the gangway to get the ship's company's washing, great scene. Stayed aboard, wrote to Ciss.

July 11th. Wednesday. Captain went to Newcastle to recuperate, ship secured alongside RMSP Jetty. Went ashore with Eddie, called at Local Forces Headquarters then went on to Argyle and Sutherlands camp, met the two Jacks and had a jolly time. Back on board by 11.00.

July 12th. Thursday. Jack came on board to tea, then we went to the pictures and after we had a great game of billiards. Had a very nice time.

July 13th. Friday. Jack came down in the afternoon. Showed me round the town. Then up to the camp for a dance. Back into town for supper. Met Eddie then came aboard.

July 14th. Saturday. Went to Ward Theatre in the morning for Concert rehearsal, slept in the afternoon. Captain came back, had a dinner party for 7. Late night.

July 15th. Sunday. Jack, Nat, Mrs Cooper, Nellie and Hazel came on board to tea and look round the ship, had a nice time. Captain came back at about 9.15 and had a supper party.

July 16th. Monday. Nothing much doing all day. I went to see the boxing at the Ward Theatre. Hoffman (England) v Yberra (Mexico). Hoffman won in the fourth round, a very poor show of boxing.

July 17th. Tuesday. Played cricket at Port Royal, had a nasty accident in which both my hands were badly mauled. Came back on board and had an anti-tetanus injection. Layed on upper deck all night feeling very queer.

July 18th. Wednesday. Concert practice in the morning, not feeling any too well. Gave concert in the evening, a very good show. See reports on opposite page. Went to supper with Jack, Nat and Bob. Back on board about 1.30am.

July 19th. Thursday. Went to visit Robeiro, had dinner and spent a very enjoyable evening. Hearing many interesting points about the history of Jamaica.

July 20th. Friday. Bob, Jack, Nat and self spent the evening with Mr and Mrs Cooper and family, had a good time. Got back on board at 2.0am. Captain had an egg and bacon party, got to bed at 5.20am.

July 21st. Saturday. Slipped at 8.0am, anchored in the stream. Got under weigh at 11.0 for Bermuda. Wind high but sea not too rough.

Both ships were now in company. Ambuscade had arrived at Kingston, Jamaica some time after Amazon. She had carried out the visit to Guyaquil on her own. ~~X~~

July 22nd. Sunday. Weather fine, wind and sea dropped to a flat calm in the evening, sun is extremely hot.

July 23rd. Monday. Received wireless signal from HMS Despatch ordering us to make a torpedo attack on her tomorrow. This was found to be impracticable on account of air compressors in both ships failing to act properly.

July 24th. Tuesday. Carried out dummy attack on HMS Despatch at 25 knots. Dropped three smoke floats. Carried on at 12.45.

July 25th. Wednesday. Arrived at Bermuda at 11.00. Tea party in the afternoon. Facer and I went with Captain and other officers from both ships on a bathing picnic party. Back on board at 23.45.

July 26th. Thursday. Busy all day with callers, large dinner party in the evening. Captain got back on board at 1.30am. Facer and myself busy until 3.20am.

July 27th. Friday. Military officers called in the forenoon. Went to Boze Island in afternoon. Stayed the night, a very good party. English mail arrived but none for us.

July 28th. Saturday. Back on board at 9.30. Cleared up the cabins. Back to Boze Island at 3.0. Went out in the motor boat to collect fish pot. Only one fish caught. Had a long bathe on our return. Spent a very enjoyable evening.

July 29th. Sunday. Back to ship at 9.30. Lunch party for six on the gun platform. Out to Boze Island at 3.0. Very busy in the evening with supper party. The punt was capsized when going over to Island Island. Three officers had to swim for it, also Gould. Punt was afterwards beached.

July 30th. Monday. Small lunch party on board. Out to Boze Island at 2.30. Went to collect fish pot, four fish caught. Came back to Magazine House. Facer, Gould, Miss Rosemary and self, taken by motor boat to Island Island to salvage punt. Punt floated again, eventually got back

to Boze Island. Had a very nice walk in the evening. Had moonlight bathe at 10.15. In bed by 11.30.

July 31st. Tuesday. Up at 6.30, had a good bathe, packed all our gear, breakfast, left Boze Island at 8.30. Small farewell party on board. Sailed at 11.00 for Fayal, Azores. Sea calm, very light winds. Had a good rest in the afternoon. Very acceptable.

August 1st. Wednesday. At sea. Weather still fine and hot, sea calm. A most beautiful moonlight night. A light breeze sprang up in the evening. Weather getting cooler.

August 2nd. Thursday. At sea. Weather still keeps fine and warm, sea calm.

August 3rd. Friday. At sea, fine and warm. Made up Captain's Book all the afternoon. Came over cloudy at night. Fear of a storm.

August 4th. Saturday. At sea, weather still calm and warm. Nothing of great interest. This part of the trip is getting monotonous.

August 5th. Sunday. At sea. Captain mustered Ship's Company by the Open List. Wind got up in the afternoon. Heavy rain.

August 6th. Monday. At sea. Blowing and raining hard, very heavy following sea. A most uncomfortable day.

August 7th. Tuesday. Arrived at Fayal, Azores at 8.15am in a tropical downpour. Went ashore shopping with Bob. Brought a nice medal. Had a grand walk then went on to Sports Club, met a nice crowd of Western Union Telegraph fellows who invited Bob and I to tennis on Thursday, I hope I can get away. Native girls are very stand-offish. When Bob asked them for a dance they turned their back on him. Caught boat back to ship at 10.15.

August 8th. Wednesday. Fine day but overcast. Nothing special happened. Did not go ashore.

August 9th. Thursday. Landed with Bob and Perry at 2.15, went on to the Western Union's Quarters, met Acker and Don. Changed into tennis rig and played five good sets. Had a bath and cocktail, dinner in the mess. Liqueurs and coffee after in the Salon. At 9.0 the car took us all to the Sports Club where Mr and Mrs Kew met us. We finished up a very enjoyable day with darning till 10.15. They were all very jolly people who made it their duty to see that us three fellows from the Amazon had a really good time.

August 10th. Friday. The day we have all been waiting for. Sailed for Portsmouth at 0600. Weather fine, but heavy westerly swell running.

August 11th. Saturday. At sea. Weather fine but colder.

August 12th. Sunday. At sea. Captain held Divine Service, then spoke to Ship's Company about paying off, seemed very upset as he is very fond of his crew and they of him.

August 13th. Monday. At sea. Weather still fine. The ship is rolling very heavily at times. Makes thing uncomfortable, especially at meals.

August 14th. Tuesday. At sea. Parted company with Ambuscade at 8.0pm. Signals of good luck passed and we cheered her as we passed. They returned the cheers. It has been a wonderful cruise but we shall all be pleased to see our homes and dear ones tomorrow.

August 15th 1928. Wednesday. At sea. Passed Portland at 0745, anchored in Sandown Bay, Isle of Wight at noon to clean up ship's side. Proceeded to Outer Spit Buoy at 2.15. Secured alongside North Corner Jetty, Portsmouth Dockyard at 3.15pm. Everybody very pleased to get home again. I arrived home at 5.30pm. Had quite a cheery tea party with Ciss, Jessie and Arthur.

The diary of the South American cruise is concluded by a summary :

Looking back over this cruise I realise how fortunate I have been to have been able to see the different states of South America.

One thing that will always live in my memory was the hospitality shown to all ranks and ratings of both ships by the English communities in each place we visited. It was no doubt, to them, the people who are looking after British interests in far off lands, a breath of the Home Country, and to us it seemed as though we were ideal messengers.

It is pleasing to note that except for the slight indisposition of Commander Howard, no serious illness overtook anyone in either ship.

Also as these boats were only 1300 tons and the first destroyers to be fitted with cold storage plant, they maintained fresh provisions for the whole trip from Portsmouth to Permnambuco which took seventeen days.

The engines did not stop once during this time, which shows the cruising powers of these high speed destroyers.

Great praise is due to both officers and crew for their fine spirit of camaraderie.

I might also add here that beside an excellent Dance Band and Concert party, HMS Amazon also won the King's Football Cup and the Flotilla Shield in the same season. This is a record, as no ship has won both trophies having been in commission less than twelve months.

The Falkland Islands is another place worthy of mention, as the people living there are English, living under the English flag, and yet many of them have never seen and never will see England. A most happy Colony which can boast, I think I am correct in saying, the smallest police force in the world. The "Force" has a complement of six, one of which is the Superintendent, and one sergeant. Two of the others act as male staff to the Governor. The chief industries are sheep farming and fishing, a whole sheep being obtained for about 2/6d. Postage from the Islands to England is 1d.

I sincerely hope that this diary will be as interesting to those that read it as it was to me who wrote it.

E Attwood
Captain's Steward
HMS Amazon, August 1928

The diary contains many postcards, photographs, mementoes and press cuttings. The press cuttings give coverage of the performances of the Amazon's Concert Party in which the writer played a prominent part.

Both Amazon and Ambuscade survived the Second World War. Amazon's list of battle honours include "Atlantic 1939 – 43", "Norway 1940", "Arctic 1942", "Malta Convoys 1942" and "North Africa 1942 – 43". Ambuscade's list of battle honours include "Atlantic 1940 – 44" and "Arctic 1942".

On 7th/8th May 1941 Amazon was part of the 3rd Escort Group escorting Convoys SC29 and OB 318, and it was 3EG which went on to capture the German submarine U110 and salvage an Enigma coding machine.

On 30th April 1942 Amazon was damaged by German destroyers whilst escorting Convoy QP11 homeward bound from Russia.

By 1943 both ships were over 15 years old and new ships were coming into operation with more modern equipment and armament. Both Amazon and Ambuscade were relieved of front line operational duties and were employed in the training role.

Both ships went to the same breakers yard at Troon, Scotland soon after the war had finished – Ambuscade in March 1947, followed by Amazon in April 1949.

As prototypes the Amazon and Ambuscade were followed by a further eight "A" class ships plus a Flotilla Leader for the Royal Navy. The Dutch Navy took delivery of a squadron of eight of the Yarrow design, and Portugal ordered seven for its navy. Chile ordered six ships of a slightly smaller version of the Thornycroft design.

In 1969 the first ship of the new "A" class of eight ships was laid down by Vosper Thornycroft – the name of that ship was HMS Amazon. The second to be laid down by Yarrows in 1971 was HMS Ambuscade.