



## **Gibraltar: Challenge, Change & Continuity**

The Friends of Gibraltar Oral History Project (1930 to 1970)

### **Elliott, George Michael (Ser 212 /IWM 022131R01)**

British stoker served aboard HMS Barham in GB coastal waters, during Dakar raid and in Mediterranean, 1940-1941 including sinking 11/1941

#### Content description

REEL 1 Background in Portsmouth, 1919-1939: family; education; employment with South West Railway Coy, 1935- 1939. Enlistment and training with Royal Navy in GB, 1939-1940: initial training at Skegness; question of homosexuality in Royal Navy; fire fighting training in Portsmouth area; story of drafting to Combined Operations, 1943. Recollections of operations as stoker aboard HMS Barham in GB coastal waters and Mediterranean, 1940-1941: drafting to ship at Liverpool, 2/1940; condition of ship, 2/1940; duties as stoker; attitude of stokers to his method of cleaning boilers; nickname of ship; reasons why he was not sent to Norway, 1940; security duties on board ship; Italian manned torpedo attack on ship at Gibraltar; towing of HMS Resolution after Dakar raid; hits on ship during Dakar raid. REEL 2 Continues: bombardment of North African coast; ashore in Alexandria including dangers. Aspects of sinking of HMS Barham in Mediterranean, 11/1941: torpedoing of ship; escape from sinking ship; rescue by HMS Hotspur; first aid work amongst survivors; relations amongst his shipmates; reception of survivors in Alexandria; return to GB via Durban. Aspects of operations as stoker aboard HMS Barham off Crete, 5/1941: role of ship; site of German paratroopers being shot at in air; instructions heard over tannoy. Explanation of term 'driscolling'. Memories of shore duties in GB, 1942-1945. Story of encounter with sea mine in Chichester harbour. Memories of railway work from 2/1946. REEL 3 Continues: Membership of Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and HMS Barham Association from 1950.

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