

Transcript of Audio Clip with Arthur Gardner

When we finished our training in Dover we were transferred to Chatham and we was at Chatham till January 1944 and then I was given my first ship which was the Westcott and that was in Scotland so we had to go up to Scotland and find our first ship. It was in for a refit so when we got to the ship it was cold and snowing and horrible day it was and going off the ship it was all wires and pipes and things. It was all docked up. The mate who was on there, mending doing things to it, you know. So the first trip we'd done was four days to Iceland cos during the war the Americans had taken over Iceland. We had to take it, escort this troopship, up to Iceland and four days – days like that, you know, where it's a bit naughty and for four days I didn't know where I was. I was so sick and bad they could have chucked me over the side, I wouldn't have cared. But it's not an excuse in the navy to miss your duties and the rest of the boat it was on the gun deck. I was on the gun deck at that time, they used to carry me up to the gun deck and during the time at the gun deck you had – everybody had to an hour look out on the bridge and so some mate's done my lookout. I couldn't get out of there, I didn't know where I was and didn't know what I was doing and four days it was murder. You can't think of being sick for four days, shouldn't you? I ate nothing. They did give me dry bread, they said that will take down me and they did give me dry bread or something like that and in that four days we got into Reykjavik and I was pleased that the ship stopped moving. But then we were coming home the next day. I was frightened out of me life in case I was sick again. What I'm saying is – but from that time on that ship could roll, boll, pitch or toss or do what it liked never affected me again.