



Memories.

By Hotspur.

Robbie looked over the side of the ship and thought of home He had been at sea for two days, part of an escort to 150 German Officers captured in the desert and being taken from Alexandria to Algeria to be handed over to the American Army.

The ship's previous load had been coal so it was in a very poor state when the parties went on board However, the Germans were highly disciplined even in captivity and in return for being allowed up on the starboard deck during daylight hours they had hosed down the entire ship until it was as clean as a new pin.

It was about 1600 hrs on the second day at sea when a colleague joined Robbie to check that all was in order on that quarter of the deck, and after a few minutes discussion he moved on. It was then that a young German Officer who had been standing a few feet away approached Robbie, saluted and asked "Excuse me did that soldier call you Robbie?" Puzzled, Robbie nodded. "Is your name Robson?", the German asked, and Robbie, now very alert and interested, again nodded. "Do you come from Altringham near Manchester", had Robbie holding on to the side rail. "Yes, I do" he answered quickly but the German had not finished. " Arkwright Street" he asked in a confident tone, adding "57?". Before Robbie could recover the young German Officer held out his hand. "I am Helmut-your Pen Pal in Germany since 1937 ."

They were still talking an hour later when I went on duty.

(This true incident took place in May 1943).