**Petty Officer Reginald William Cottle D/JX 137349**

Reginald William Cottle was born in West Pennard, Somerset on 18th October 1916 and, after a spell at TS Mercury on the River Hamble near Southampton, joined the Royal Navy as a Boy Seaman 2nd Class on 5th July 1932. He served on board HM ships Malaya (1933-34), Diamond (1934), Whitehall (1934-36) and Royal Oak (1937-38) before joining HMS Repulse as a Leading Seaman (Torpedoman) on 3rd January 1939 and advancing to Petty Officer on 7th March 1940.

He survived the sinking of the Repulse and was eventually taken prisoner by the Japanese on 15th February 1942 when HMS Mata Hari, on which he was now serving, was captured off Muntok, Banka Island. Although he never talked about his experiences as a PoW, the five postcards that he was able to send home to his parents indicate that he spent the whole of his 3½ year internment in the Palembang area of Sumatra.

He was liberated on 2nd September 1945 and finally returned home in January 1946; I have been unable to find out why it took so long for him to be repatriated.

He was promoted to Chief Petty Officer in May 1946 and left the RN in December of that year. He then went to work in the family butchery business with his father and sister in Somerton, Somerset. He married Phyllis Mary Glass in September 1950 and they had three children. He passed away on 5th March 1975 aged 59.