

BECKINSALE, STEPHEN

RANK: MARINE

DECORATIONS:

YEAR OF SERVICE: 1943 – 1950 ?

SHIPS: HMS MAURITIUS

OPERATIONAL SERVICE: NORTHERN EUROPE late 1944, PALESTINE 1946, COFU INCIDENT 1948

UNITS: 30 BATTALION ROYAL MARINES

Born Lancashire, left school at 14, various jobs e.g., coal mine (surface work), cotton mill.

Called up November 1943, training at Lympstone. Weapon training incl use of flame thrower. Commando training North Wales in 22 Training Commando, Towyn, prior to the Achnacarry course. Changed to landing craft training at Barmouth. LCA Coxswain. Burnham on Crouch, Westcliff (*Southend*). Did not take part in D Day.

September 1944, Portsmouth, part of 30 Battalion Royal Marines. Into Europe, Holland crossing River Maas. Displaced Persons (*DPs*) almost as much of a threat as Germans. Hamburg, disarming ships' crews after surrender. General chaos and confusion in Europe. Back to Plymouth, Freedom of City march. Then to Eastney for RN gunnery training – complete contrast of RN life.

HMS Mauritius, cruiser. In Mediterranean, attempting to prevent ships carrying European Jews entering Palestine. Injured in one incident. Off Albania he was on deck, witnessed following ship mined. (*Saumarez. Also, Volage. Corfu channel incident 22 October 1948*). Back to Malta, helped take casualties ashore. Demobilization in UK. Various jobs – e.g., painter/decorator, married 54 years, lived most of time near Poole.