



Airman at the Helm (Paperback)

By Eric Blackman

Arima Publishing, United Kingdom, 2006. Paperback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****. Bombing up a Catalina flying boat. I was promoted to deck hand on bomb scow 34. During bad weather aircraft were towed into the shelter of the harbour mouth and moored to replenish depth charges. On one such occasion scow 34 was completing delivery of four charges under the instruction of two bomb armourers. As the charge was winched and secured to its rack under the aircraft's wing, the fusing device was connected. This looked like a large wire paper clip. When the charge was released, a plunger in the shape of a car piston and piston rod was left hanging under the wing on the end of the paper clip, the charge falling seaward fully armed. Moments before the last charge was secured in the rack it slipped off the winch wire onto the chest of an attendant armourer. The crew watched charge and armourer disappear over the side with a splash and became aware of the piston rattling loose overhead. They cringed for a few seconds awaiting the expected explosion beneath their feet.

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