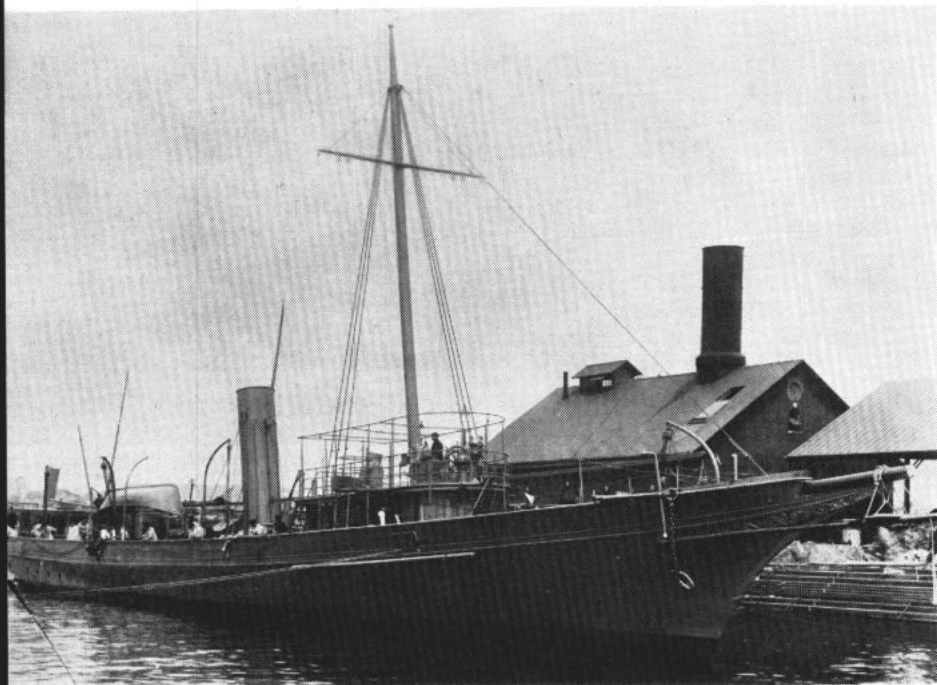


SLOOPS—Hornet No. 1, left, saw action during the Revolution. No. 2 was engaged in the Tripolitan War.



SEVENTH Hornet (CV 8) was lost in Battle of Santa Cruz. Above: No. 6, Spanish American War veteran.

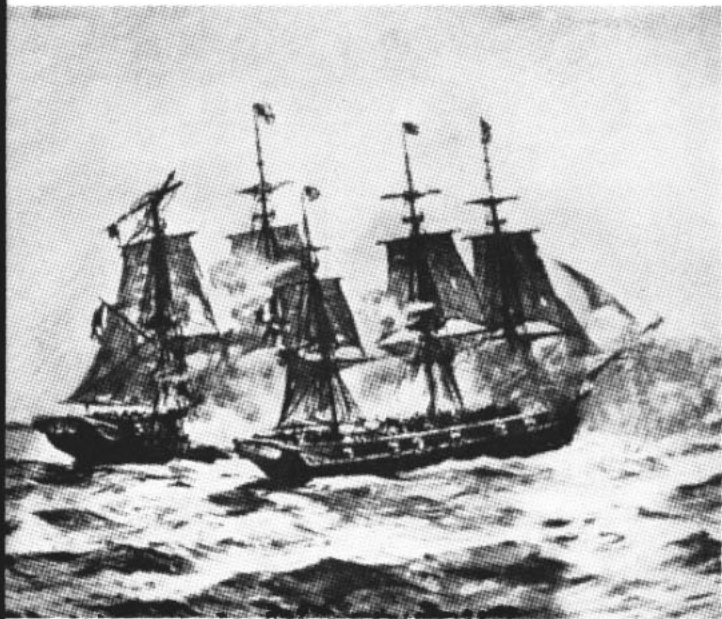
## A Nest

**H**ORNETS HAVE BEEN BUZZING around our enemies' ears ever since 1775. In all, eight ships of every description, from sloops to the latest carriers have borne the name.

The first of the *Hornets* was a small 10-gun sloop commissioned in Baltimore in 1775. After several engagements in the War for Independence, she was overpowered by a British blockade below Philadelphia and her skipper, CAPT John Nicholson, scuttled his ship so that it wouldn't fall into the hands of the enemy.

The second *Hornet*, also a 10-gun sloop, participated in the attack on the Port of Derna on the Libyan coast during the Tripolitan War. Together with two other men-o'-war, she helped silence the Turkish shore





No. 3 HORNET vs PEACOCK Rt: Hornet after conversion.



# of Hornets

batteries enabling General Eaton's land forces to capture the city, which later proved to be the deciding action of the war. Hornet No. 2 was sold in 1806.

While her predecessor was engaged in the Mediterranean, the third *Hornet* was being built in the birthplace of the first of the hive, Baltimore. She was a 20-gun brig modeled after French warships. At one point during the War of 1812, *Hornet* No. 3 sailed in company with the famous *Constitution* on a cruise in South American waters. During this cruise, but after leaving *Constitution*, she captured several prizes, the greatest of which was the brig *Resolution* with \$25,000 in specie

aboard. Later, while on the same voyage, she encountered another British brig, *Peacock*. The two ships exchanged broadsides for more than two hours leaving the British ship foundering. The skipper of *Hornet* sent some of his men aboard *Peacock* in a vain attempt to keep her afloat. She sank carrying with her nine of her own crew and three crewmen of *Hornet*. Before the end of the war, *Hornet* was in several more engagements. Following the war, she saw action against African slavers and Cuban pirates between the years 1815 and 1829. She took her last cruise in 1829. In that year, she was driven from her moorings during a storm and when all was clear

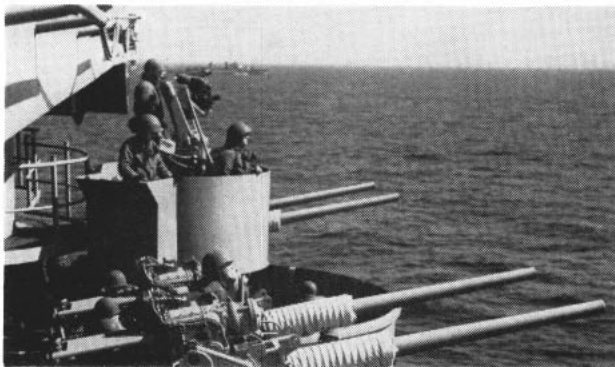
was never heard from again.

The career of *Hornet* No. 4 was perhaps the least colorful of the lot. She was a small five-gun schooner built for a mere \$2200, and was used primarily for inshore patrol work and as a dispatch vessel.

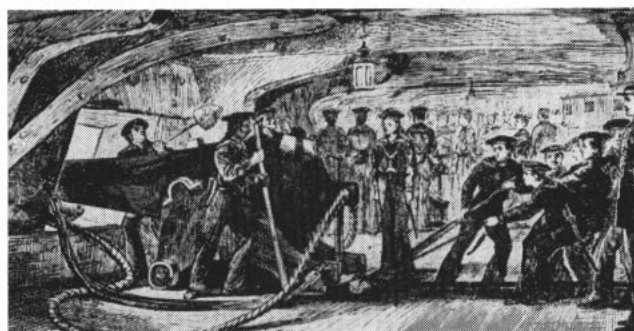
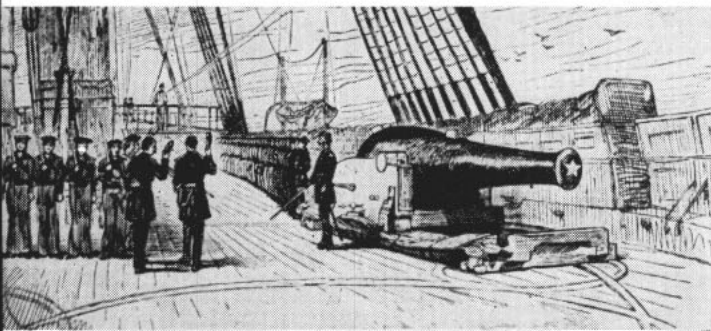
The fifth *Hornet* was rather special in two ways. An iron side-wheeler, she was the first *Hornet* to be steam-propelled and she was captured from the Confederates in 1864. Together with *Rhode Island* she received the surrender of the Confederate ram *Stonewall*.

The sixth ship to be named *Hornet* was a converted yacht. Although she was armed with only three six-pounders, two one-pounders and

DEFENSIVE batteries of today's carriers have little in common with offensive weapons of Civil War period.







INSPECTIONS AND General Quarters evolutions have not changed much from iron men and wooden ships days.

four machine guns, she distinguished herself during the Spanish-American War. In company with two other converted yachts, she encountered a Spanish squadron of nine ships including one cruiser, four gunboats, one torpedo boat and three smaller vessels. In a matter of three and a half hours, *Hornet* and Co. managed to sink or disable the whole squadron. In this action, *Hornet* fired almost 700 rounds and suffered no casualties.

Probably the best remembered of the *Hornets* was the first aircraft carrier (CV 8) to bear the name. Her squadrons left a trail of destruction in the early stages of WW II but her most memorable moment took place when she served as the springboard for LTGEN (then BRIGEN) Jimmy Doolittle's famous raid on the Japanese mainland in 1942. In October of that year, *Hornet* carried on a tradition of her forebears. No *Hornet* had ever been sunk or captured by an enemy. Badly damaged after being under attack for 10 hours in the Battle of Santa Cruz, *Hornet* No. 7 was torpedoed by our own destroyers to prevent her from falling into enemy hands.

Not a year elapsed before another *Hornet* (CV, later CVA 12)

appeared on the ships' register.

When her keel was laid, she was to have been named *uss Kearsarge* but when the news of *Hornet* No. 7 was received, it was decided to give her the famous old name so that there would again be a *Hornet* in the Navy.

A curtailed shakedown cruise was necessary to rush the ship into service with the Pacific Fleet. A two weeks' cruise to Bermuda, and back, enabled her crew to conduct exercises in gunnery, fueling, various calibration tests, test firing of her numerous batteries in addition to flight operations.

Early in her career, a few months after she joined the Pacific Fleet, *Hornet* had the chance to avenge the sinking of her immediate predecessor. Late in the afternoon of 20 Jun 1944, in the vicinity of the Marianas, the Japanese Fleet was engaged by the Task Force of which *Hornet* was a part.

It was during this fighting, later to be known as the First Battle of the Philippine Sea, that *Hornet's* squadrons bagged one of the enemy's largest carriers and scored torpedo and bomb hits on a cruiser and a carrier. Although many planes were damaged, all but one bomber crew were recovered or rescued.

Later that summer, *Hornet* made what was believed to have been the closest approach by a surface ship to the Japanese mainland up to that point in the war, when she sent search planes to within 175 miles of Honshu and cruised within 400 miles of the same coast.

CV 12 and her squadrons figured in almost every major campaign in the Pacific Theater. *Hornet* built up a proud record in planes destroyed, both in the air and on the ground, in naval and cargo ships sunk, in softening up such targets as Truk, Eniwetok, Iwo Jima, Luzon, and Okinawa and in assisting in the invasions of Leyte, Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

During "Operation Magic Carpet" after the war, *Hornet* was used as a troop transport to bring veterans back to the West Coast.

She was decommissioned in 1946 only to be recalled in 1953. After more than three years of operations in the Pacific, *Hornet* entered Puget Sound Naval Shipyard for a seven months' streamlining period which fitted her out with an angled flight deck, hurricane bow, deck edge elevator, and other improvements. She returned to the Fleet in August '56, modernized and ready to carry on a proud name. — Robert S. Marx.

JET READIED for catapult take-off. Rt: *Hornetmen* handle delicate job of loading ammunition with speed.

