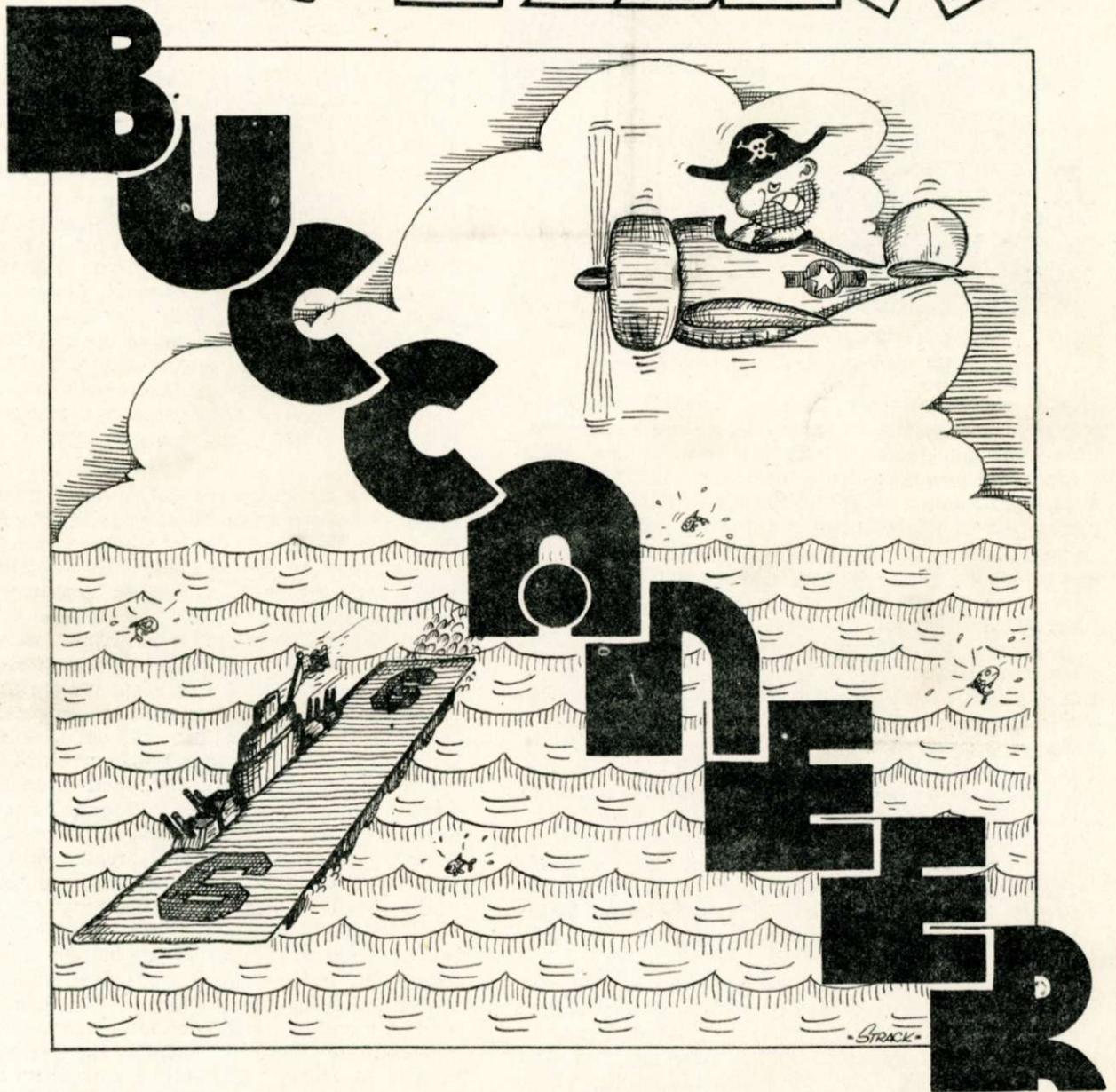


Largest Circulation on the Ship

The ESSEX



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OUR SKIPPER



By Mr. Morris Markey

Correspondent Liberty Magazine on Board during January

When you go calling on Captain R.A. Ofstie and he invites you to have a seat, you sit on the bunk because there is only one chair in the little sea cabin where he lives when the ESSEX is sailing blue water. Your conversation will not be interrupted. At frequent intervals an officer will appear at the door leading to the pilot house to report some item relating to the routine of life on our own ship, or the exact status of the other ships moving across the sea with us.

But in between these interruptions you make the acquaintance of a quiet, blue-eyed gentleman whose native earnestness, the heritage of a long line of Norwegian sailor men, is broken at the most unexpected moments by a flash of very real humor. It is customary for writers, on occasions such as this, to seek what we call background material—something about hobbies or sports or shore-going adventures. But Captain Ofstie confesses, a little ruefully, that he is a poor subject for that sort of thing. It slowly emerges from the talk that he has, in the most specific sense, devoted his whole life to the United States Navy. It is just about the only interest he has on earth.

He never had time to get married. He was born in Wisconsin, from which state he went East to the Naval Academy where he was graduated tenth among the 109 members of the class of 1919. The members of that class were actually commissioned in 1918, in time for Ensign Ofstie to see a little of the first World War from a destroyer. But he was interested in the air, and by 1921 he was at Pensacola for flight training, from which he was graduated to Fighting One, the first regular combat squadron in the Navy.

Between 1924 and 1927, while attached to the Bureau of Aeronautics, he was also a White House aide to President Coolidge, but he did not confine himself to gold braid and pink teas. Quite the contrary, he flew in the International Schneider Cup race with Doolittle and Cuddihy against the British and

Italians, he made a transcontinental tour with the first Navy large air-cooled fighter job, and he carried out widely varied experimental flying. For example, he undertook to discover the causes of the flat spin, at that time a grievous peril to flying men and his tests were of great value. Also, he conducted long experiments in the feasibility of mail pick-up from ocean liners.

Thereafter, his career moved in steady progression toward the command of our ship today. He sailed to Europe in the Cruiser Detroit in a seaplane outfit, and was technical observer to another Schneider Cup Race in Italy. For three years he was officer in charge of the Flight Test Section at Anacostia, during which time he was Naval observer at still another Schneider Cup affair, in England this time. Then, in succession, he was assigned to the staff of Admiral Yarnell (ComAirPac), commanded Fighting Squadron SIX on the SARATOGA for two years, and, in prophetic preparation for his task today, served three years as Naval Attache for Air in the American Embassy at Tokyo.

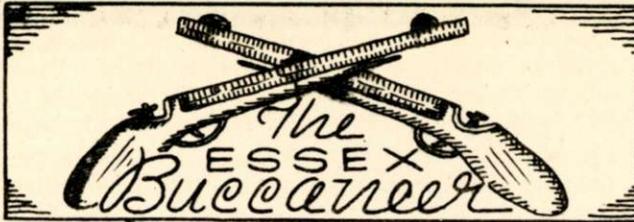
1938-39: USS ENTERPRISE (commissioning and Navigator) 1939-41: Staff (ComCarDiv ONE and ComAirPac) as Operations Officer; 1941-42: Naval Air Attache, American Embassy, London; 1942-43 Fleet Aviation Officer, Staff, CinCPac; and 5 November 1943; assumed command of the ESSEX.

So there is little wonder that Captain Ofstie's spare time for the frivolities has been somewhat limited. Nowadays, on his rare leaves ashore, he goes to see his Mother in her home at Everett, Washington.

But do not get the notion that Captain Ofstie is the remote, inaccessible, enigmatic figure so often written as the master of a ship of war. No Captain Hornblower, he. We need only his talk to our ship's company over the speaker system to convince us to the contrary.

When I mentioned that subject, as something new in my experience, he bristled a little. "Why", he said, "men shouldn't be required to fight for their existence without knowing what is going on! The men below decks are a vital part of battles and actions which they cannot possibly see because of their jobs. We've simply got to tell them what is happening and explain our actions so they will understand how things are going. We'll tell them, regularly, what we are doing---as far as we are physically able to do it." (And I still think that is an admirable point of view which should be universal in the service.)

Captain Ofstie felt very strongly on the subject of Naval Reserves. "Let's have it clear," he said, "that in time of war our forces do not consist of Regular Navy plus Reserves. The moment a man puts on a uniform and takes his place on a ship he ceases to be a reserve, and any suggestion of a distinction is absurd. Our military establishment has been organized that way since the very beginnings of the country-----a small group of professionals to keep abreast of developments and techniques, plus a great body of reserves when war comes. It is a splendid thing to see how quickly our reserve men come out of civilian life and grasp the nature of their duties. They handle themselves well, and contribute enormously to our store of knowledge and experience. I cannot say too emphatically that there is no distinction whatever between regular Navy men and those who have joined active service to share in the hard and dangerous fighting."



VOL. 1 April 25, 1944 No. 2
COMMANDING OFFICER...CAPTAIN R.A.OFSTIE,U.S.N.
EXECUTIVE OFFICER...COMMANDER FITZHUGH LEE,U.S.N.
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THE WORD

By Chaplain Barron

God has been exceptionally liberal in His gifts to man. This immediately becomes apparent when we reflect upon the precious endowments possessed by man, gifts and talents which not only distinguish him as a member of the most dignified society on earth but heir of an eternal kingdom. Among these talents undoubtedly the one most used and abused is the gift of speech. Speech is the radio broadcaster of our mind disseminating our desires and detestations, thoughts and opinions; speech reveals the moral standard of our ideals and natural propensities. Our speech bears judgment of what type and manner of man we are. The well-bred man, the gentleman **irrespective** of educational accomplishments, guards his speech that it may never bring to him dishonor or **disrespect**. He expresses his feelings in polite words, using forceful, caustic language with appropriate terms when necessary. He never finds it obligatory to employ cursing, blasphemy, or obscene, salacious language.

Unfortunately, we find the present generation inclined to profanity of a nature scandalous and shocking. This is due, apparently, to three causes: either the parents condoned the use of profanity and salacious speech by their children (not impossible but likely improbable), or the present day man considers it smart and necessary to be a real fellow (what a woe-ful illusion), or his vocabulary is lamentably meagre. Personally, I am inclined to believe the use of profane and salacious speech is due to the lack of a sufficient vocabulary. This can be easily remedied. A wholesome book with the help of a dictionary will increase our vocabulary giving us command of words sufficient to express our feelings effectively without loss of honor or respect. Proper speech reflects clean thinking, clean living, clean morals. Let us not abuse this precious gift God gave us. If our speech is not what it should be let us send it to the laundry for a cleaning.

Here is what George Washington has to say on the subject of profanity; "The General is sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice hitherto little known in our American Army, is growing into a fashion. He hopes that the officers will, by example as well as influence endeavor to check it and that both they and the men will reflect that we can little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our Army if we insult it by our impiety and folly. Added to this it is a vice so mean and low without any temptation that every man of sense and character detests and despises it." Signed George Washington.

Aloha, Sailor

Commander Fitzhugh Lee Debarks From Essex

This is not intended to be a swan song for our Executive Officer, but it is impossible for us to imagine the ESSEX going on without part of the personality that is Commander Fitzhugh Lee, Naval Aviator USN. He leaves with the ship much that cannot be put into mere words. Commander Lee was Air Officer as the ship was being fitted out, he organized the Air Department and moved to the Executive Officer's cabin before the ESSEX saw her first action and has been the guiding hand in making the ESSEX the fine fighting ship she is.

For the benefit of the officers and men who are interested, here are a few of the highlights from the adventurous thirty-nine years of Commander Lee's life. He was born at Batangas, Phillipine Islands in 1905. His background is a long line of Army officers dating back to the American Revolution. The commander says he joined the Navy to get the family out of the "rut". He graduated from the Naval Academy in the class of 1926 and was assigned to duty aboard the battleship OKLAHOMA. Leaving the OKLAHOMA in 1927 he was aboard for the commissioning of the USS LEXINGTON in Boston in 1927, which ship he served in the Gunnery and Engineering Departments.

In 1929 Commander Lee entered flight training at Pensacola returning to the LEXINGTON with Fighting Squadron FIVE upon completion of his training. During this time he was temporarily attached to both the SARATOGA and the LANGLEY. From 1933 to 1936 he was in the Asiatic Fleet being aboard the USS HERON as Executive Officer and Commander of the Aircraft Utility Unit. He then spent eighteen months aboard the USS AUGUSTA, flagship of the Asiatic Fleet.

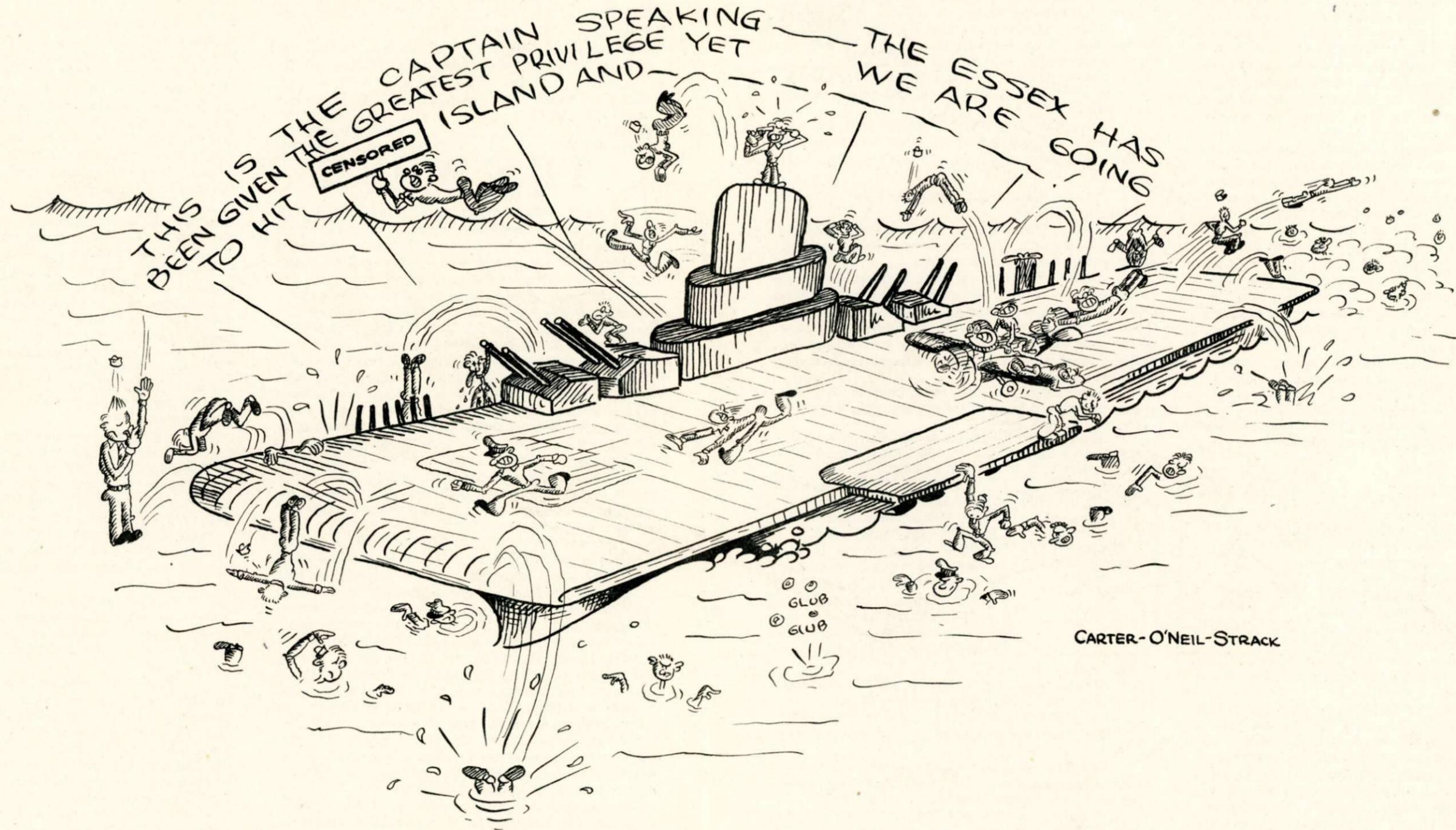
Commander Lee had the unique assignment of inspecting the civilian and military air installations in the Japanese Empire on two different occasions each of three months duration for the Office of Naval Intelligence.

While the world was watching the war in Europe develop during the years of 1936, 37, and 38 our Executive Officer was teaching future fighters and instrument flying for the Naval Air Arm at Pensacola. He then became Flight Officer of Fighting SIX aboard the USS ENTERPRISE when that ship was placed in commission, moving again in 1939 to the USS YORKTOWN as Executive Officer of Scouting Squadron FIVE. During the period of 1940 to 42 we find our Executive Officer was in a diplomatic post as Naval Attache and Naval Attache for Air in Venezuela and the Netherland West Indies.

In 1942 he was ordered to the staff of Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet from which post he came to the ESSEX.

He brought to the ESSEX untiring energy, enthusiasm, a background of organization ability which was needed on a new ship and an inspiration for those who were to work with him.

The BUCCANEER takes this occasion to say for the officers and men of the ESSEX, "Good luck and good hunting to you, Commander Lee, the lessons you taught us will be long remembered and used."



My Momma Don' tol' Me !!



They are still counting

the returns but it seems that La France Y2c, and Eddie Zgut, S1c are neck and neck in the big Wave contest. Some departments have their big butter and egg men but the Air Department is electing a "Big Wave" man. These two had an endless supply in the

last port -- maybe a chit for recruiting duty will be coming through soon for one or the other of them. They drew Waves faster than Commander McAfee could send liberty parties ashore.

Chief Metalsmith McGonicle reported back aboard with darn good vision in one eye. He wants to get back into a good quiet war to rest up from the severe case of sea-sickness he caught on the train.

The blind leading the blind: Simon, S1c, showing a visitor around the ship.

It seemed that Lt. Tope, the depth charge king, was just like an old hen with a brood of young ducks as he led the first special on the big jump across the states. However, the railroad company reports that materiel casualties were exceedingly light in comparison to other liquidated cargoes they had handled recently.

Proving that the Navy never makes a mistake. (especially in placing a man on a job) Lieut. Arthur Farwell, Ship's Intelligence Officer, spent a 15 day leave in the states recently, traveled a cross country and spent only two of his fifteen days on trains. We offer this as a record for conserving holiday time.

During the last few weeks, the Hull Department has lost the services of twenty rated men (many of them "plank owners") due to transfers. One in particular, Morton, E.A., SF1c, who received a letter of commendation for his work aboard the old YORK-TOWN during the battle of Midway has been transferred to an advanced welder's school. We wish them all luck in their new assignments and hope to see them again. We'll surely miss them.

Transfers have taken their toll among officer personnel as well. Commander Willcox and Bos'n Billingsley have left for other ships, Lt. Holian has resigned to become a real fire chief in New York, and Lt. Slater has switched to the Gunnery Department. Lt. Glasmann is under orders to be detached. Commander Wright is now Damage Control Officer, and First Lieutenant; Lt. Teague has taken over his old spot, and Lt. Saunders has replaced Lt. Slater as R-2 Division Officer. New faces in the department are Ensign J.G. Hollis, and Ensign W.P. Cloyes.

Although a bit premature, Baker, B.D., S2c is about to become a father for the second time. He is taking it rather well, with no visible signs of any weakening.

"Mickey Mouse" Shumate and his new trash burner seem to be the talk of the Hull Department lately. It seems that his chit for its installation finally went thru. More power to him!

Our congratulations to Bevelacqua, S., CBM, and also to Blair, C.R., Ptr3c, for taking the final step and saying "I do". Hope they're as happy a year from now.



THE GUNNERY

The Gunnery Department

ment bids a reluctant adieu to Commander Putman and welcomes the services of already-popular Lieutenant Commander Folsom as Gunnery Officer.

Lt. Bittenbender has left the ship and left the Fifth Division to Lt. Montgomery, "Who." he was heard to remark, "is just the man for the job 'cause he loves to play around with those gadgets and things down there."

Dave Davidson, RM3rd, thought of it, but a little too late. Operations were to start a certain night ---that night found us saying our last greetings to a gate.

Lt. Joe Warren has bequeathed his "jg" to former Ensign Kendall.

Gunner "Sinatra" Brophy has been thrilling indoctrinaires with his microphone presentations of safety precautions a la Navy Regs.

Latest reports from those little white churches all over the country show that ninety-nine and forty four one hundredths of the men in gunnery have tied the knot. Seems those West Coast women have scored the most hits. Rumor has it that one seaman second was found who "hasn't even thought about it yet" He'll get the word.

Speaking of hitchings, what chief in the fifth is now receiving allotments from his wife, a wave, seaman second class?

We're wondering what urgent female appeal brought about that official looking letter from the fleet chaplain to C.E. Sakris, FCM3c.



The S-1, S-2, and S-3 Divisions which comprise the Supply Department are so full of good men of many talents, it becomes a terrific job to start a newspaper column about these men of the Supply Department, without devoting a hundred words or so to each of the two hundred and fifty some odd illustrious(?) hard fighting, Jap hating Blue

jackets that fill its ranks.

When the time comes as it so often does that you want a part to keep that plane in the air, some item to help the ship do a better job or bit of chow to fill that pit circumnavigated by your belt, just call on the S-1 Division.

In the event some strange stroke of fate places some obstacle in your way, just call on Marshall SK1c, the Department Trouble Shooter.

In event you ever think you would like to listen to a good Harlem Quartet, have a game with one of the hottest soft ball teams in the fleet, or watch some rare action by a 20 MM Battery, you have only to ask Kelly the Ring Leader of the S-2 Division.

There always comes a time in one's life when his hair is too long, his shirts are dirty, his blues need pressing, his shoes are in bad shape, or he just wants some ice cream. The S-3 Division will handle any of these problems for you at little or no cost. The gent that keeps things going with this lot of lads is Green, Potential CSSML.

The Supply Department had quite a time handling our last cargo. The trouble was they were so hungry so much of the time. Maybe what we hear about food shortages in the states is true. (Ed.'s Note)



As soon as conditions permit, the crew of the ESSEX will have the privilege of witnessing a wrestling match that may prove as bloody as "The Battle of Tarawa." We have on board two graduates of the famous "Cauliflower" rank who seem quite anxious to match a few grunts and groans.



At present the "Bone Crusher" is a little overweight but expects to weigh in around 270 lbs. This will give him a slight weight advantage. The "Mutilator" expects to offset this by tearing off a leg from his opponent's torso in the early stage of the match.

Due to the lack of armor and deck supports this bout will have to be held ashore and the date will be announced later. The "Bone Crusher" is known to his shipmates as the "Baby Blimp" and the "Mutilator" is sometimes called "Itchy Witchy." Both contestants are from "A" Division, one, Mach. Steele, formerly known as the "Deleware Mutilator" and the other, R.A. Johnson, the former "Minnesota Bone Crusher".

There's a buzz going around in "B" Division to the effect that number three fireroom has the best softball team on the ship. While buzzing, the firebugs forgot to mention the fact that they lost 14 out of 16 games played against the yeomen's team!

The fastest marriage and annulment on any record: Ammons, "M" Division gets engaged, married separated, and an annulment within the course of 48 hours!

L. F. Vey is also bewilderingly hitched now.



Since the recent leave period there has been a lot of changes in the Communication Department some of which are quite humorous.

Six of our boys marched bravely from the ranks of single men to take the final vow. Johnnie Mullins married some beautiful New York night club

singer. Deposited diamonds on "third finger, left hand": Marsh, RM3c, Ewing, RM2c, Vargas, RM 3c, Drinkard, S2c, O'Neill, RM3c. Although the scuttlebutt is very strongly circulating that 18 year old, little "Henry" Boyd, the cream of the radio division, has become engaged, "Henry" vigorously denies any such actions on his part.

Chief Yeoman Ard took his leave and came back a day and a half early. Does he love the ship! However he does get a feather in his cap for having the honor of filling the position of Ship's Writer in relieving the distinguished Ensign Carpenter who is now Signal Officer.

"Little Grimm," (who received his nickname from J. H. Hagen, BM1c, gone but not forgotten,) just can't seem to make up his mind what state he is true to. Ohio was leading for awhile but now California is in the lead by a nose. Darn cute little nose, too!

While heading on leave, Rheinhardt, Y2c enjoyed one night in a striped suit in the Chicago Brig. Quote Rheinhardt, "There is nothing like it, thank the Lord!" end of quote.

Ship's Clerk Wendell, new aboard, in the Executive Officer's Office now has his herd under his wing. Almost!



Total figures from the Chart House show that the old ESSEX has steamed well over 90,000 miles since commissioning. To apply a landlubber's measuring scale, that amounts to slightly over 100,000 miles. We are all wondering now where the next few thousand miles will take us.

Within the next few days it is expected that Commander Emrick, who was formerly the Air Officer will relieve Commander Corbin as the Navigator. While, in turn, Commander Corbin will relieve Commander Lee of his duties as Executive Officer. These changes may have taken place before the Buccaneer is out.

We, in the Navigation Department, sincerely hope that Commander Corbin will enjoy his duties as our Executive Officer equally as well as he seemed to have enjoyed them as Navigator.

Many changes have taken place in the Navigation Department since commissioning. In fact, there has been almost a complete turnover altogether. The departure of Commander Corbin will leave only one "plank owner" on board - the writer - no less, and from all indications he will remain there quite a while yet.

Oh, what some of the Chiefs wouldn't give to have the life of Chief Bugler Williams. He is a man of few words about his job. Don't know just how he does it but he never seems to have any trouble with his strikers. If you ever want him -- no pain, no strain. Just look in the Chief's Quarters and you'll find him either sitting or lying down with something to eat in his hand.

The "H" Division Reporter takes this occasion to do a little fancy "ear banging" and welcome to the ship's Air Conditioned Hospital the new ESSEX Flight Surgeon and Senior Medical Officer Commander J.L. Holland, (MC), USN and his new staff consisting of Lt. Comdr. C.W. McLaughlin, (MC) USNR; Lt. R.V. Backman, USNR; Lt.(jg) R.F. Wagner, (MC) USNR; and two new members of the dental corps, Lt. B.E. Benson, (DC), USNR; and Lt. G.P. Glauner, (DC), USNR. Also Pharmacist E.S. White, USN has reported since the last issue of the Buccaneer.

New enlisted personnel in the "H" Division includes Chief Pharmacist Mate W.H. Johnston, USN, two third class mates and seven HA2c's.

Quarters for muster for the "H" Division in our last port was the 110 Eddy Club. Maybe the reason for this was the two good bartenders by the name of Charlie and Jack, respectively. While the reporter was indulging and over indulging he inquired if I was in the medical corp, on my affirmative answer he hung the ironical rejoinder -- well, I thought from the way you tilt that glass you had come out of desert maneuvers with the tank corps.

There is only one Wolfe in our division but 30 PhM's tried to live up to that name in the last port!!

Maybe I had an extra one that night I saw the three PhM's and the Tattooed Lady going in the hotel.

Freddy Houk, the pride of Bush River which is near Edgerton, Ohio, claims he won three mumble-de-peg contest during a recent leave. Personally, we had more interesting things to do on our leave!



Diary of a "Boot" Airdale

The 14th: Haven't written much lately because, since reporting in to the receiving ship from boot camp. I have been out looking over the town. But the fun is over I guess. I've been assigned a ship. It's just as well too, as I don't have the price of a bus fare to Chinatown.

This morning an officer shows up at muster and announces that everyone from Laatz to Pillsbury were to report at the office for orders.

A half hour later we were on our way motor-ing to our first assignment via government transportation---in an air conditioned trailer truck. 75 of us comfortably crushed against each other like sardines our ruddy young faces carressed by the tender Zephyrs of a forty knot gale and glowing at the touch of a California dew storm.

When they told me I was going to an aircraft carrier, I just naturally assumed it would be a Jeep carrier, figuring that only the cream of the crop got to serve on a big one. Well, brother, I got a big one and believe me she's BIG. And if that means I've got to be big too to be on her, that's OK with me. Only I'm not----Not in size anyway.

As you know I'm just a little squirt. When I was in high school, they even considered me for the part of Tiny Tim in the school play. Well, when I looked up at the steep gangway that ran up to the side entrance of the ship, I wished I was back in Toledo. I didn't see any bellhops around and I just knew I couldn't carry my donut roll up there.

Somehow I made it. But as I staggered onto the ship and took my place in line, I was breathing in long desperate pants and each breath rasped roughly in my throat. I lowered my roll gently to the deck with a crash.

The officer of the deck mustered us after taking our orders. As he called out our last names, we were supposed to answer up with our first. When he came to me, I just raised my hand. I couldn't talk. "First name," he barked. "What's your first name?" "A-A-A-*†%‡\$#*†\$†", I said, doing my best to catch my breath. "What?" he roared. "UNH-UNH-hwhew", was all I could say. He passed on. I was aboard my first ship, but I couldn't tell anyone my name short as it is. It's MAC. Unusual in the NAVY, too!

The 19th: My ship is the ESSEX, but even though I've been aboard her four days I don't know much more about her than when I came. She's twice as big as the flat iron building where Pop's office is and trying to find your way around her labyrinth of passageways is like trying to unscramble the Kentucky caverns or trying to find the head in the Brown Derby.

I missed lunch the first day I was aboard, because I couldn't find the mess hall I was supposed to eat in, but since then I've made out all right by walking up and down the mess lines until I see somebody I know and then I drag on him. I know that's the right chow line.

I've been assigned to the Air Department and am in plane handling crew number 5. My job later on will be to help push planes around the flight deck, I guess, but so far about all I've done is chip paint. The 21st: Last night I stood my first watch. I was a sentry and my job was to guard the planes in my area. The officer who gave me my instructions took me on a tour of my part of the flight deck showing me with a flashlight where the fire equipment was in case

I should have to use it. He showed me how thoroughly the planes were lashed down and instructed me to keep an alert watch over them, as their safety was in my hands. I was impressed with my importance. He departed. It was so dark, I couldn't see my hand in front of my face. I pulled one hand out of my pocket and put it in front of my face. Still I couldn't see it.

I felt all around and couldn't touch nothing. I took one step and banged my head on a propeller. Recoiling I knocked my funnybone against a rudder.

When I had rubbed the numbness out of my arm I turned on my flashlight to see where I was and a voice boomed out of the blackness, "Turn off that *†/‡\$%†=+ light!"

Deflated and helpless I stood out the rest of my watch right where I was, the wind whining through the tie-down lines and cockpit covers flapping made such a bedlam that I was sure every plane near me was falling apart.

When I was relieved by the next sentry, I slumped to the deck and slept on the spot.

The 23rd: Had my picture taken today on my first liberty in a strange port. It was with a pretty girl in a grass skirt and we were under a palm tree---only the tree was indoors and so was the girl, a lot of bright lights and a hundred other guys waiting in line to be next after me. Click. One dollar, please, and I had my picture.

How I got the dollar was like this. I found out this morning that I had liberty today and not having any money, I tried to borrow some from Philpott. He's another boot in my division. At least I guess he's a boot. He's just about my size.

Well, Philpott says he can't spare any because he's got a date (I know he's bragging), and he's only got just enough dough, so why don't I put in a chit for special money? So I did.

All I had to do was see Lt. Torrey, then draw a special request chit, then make it out, then see Mr. Perry, Mr. Torey and Mr. Gulick to get them to sign it, then take it to the office again for the Air Officer's signature, then stand around about three hours and finally get it back, then take it to the Pay Office. It was easy. I only had to explain why I needed the money about 15 times.

It would have been a cinch to get it, if I had known all the people I had to see but I didn't know any of them.

The hardest one to find was Lt. Gulick. When I finally found out who and where he was, I went to his room and knocked on the door. He was in his sack, but he got up to see who it was. I guess he must have thought it was Commander Marshall.

Anyway, when he saw it was only me he hollers "What do you want?" I told him. Then he says, "Take that slip and put it in my basket in the office, I will sign it there. And don't follow me around the ship. Five hundred and thirty-eight people chasing me around scares me!"

I'll see you next issue. MAIL CALL just sounded!

