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The Panther strikes, a history of the U.S.S. San Juan CL54

Eugene G. Hines USNR

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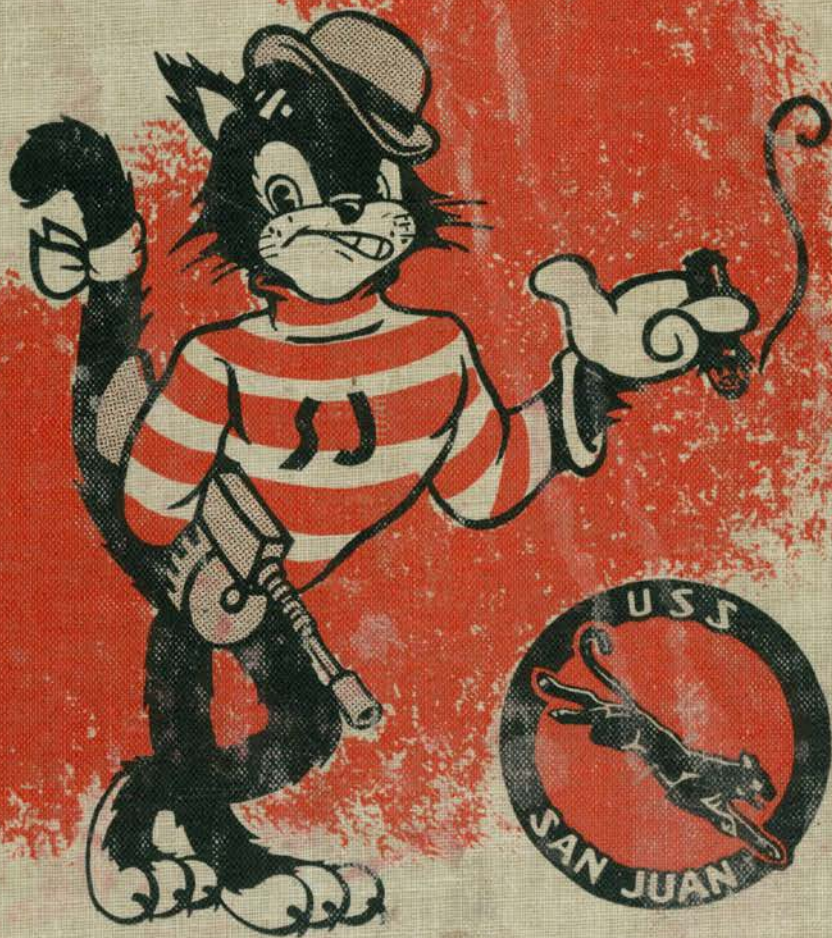
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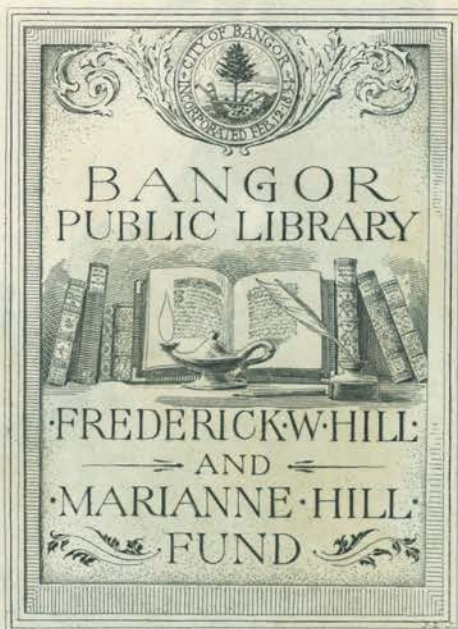
THE PANTHER

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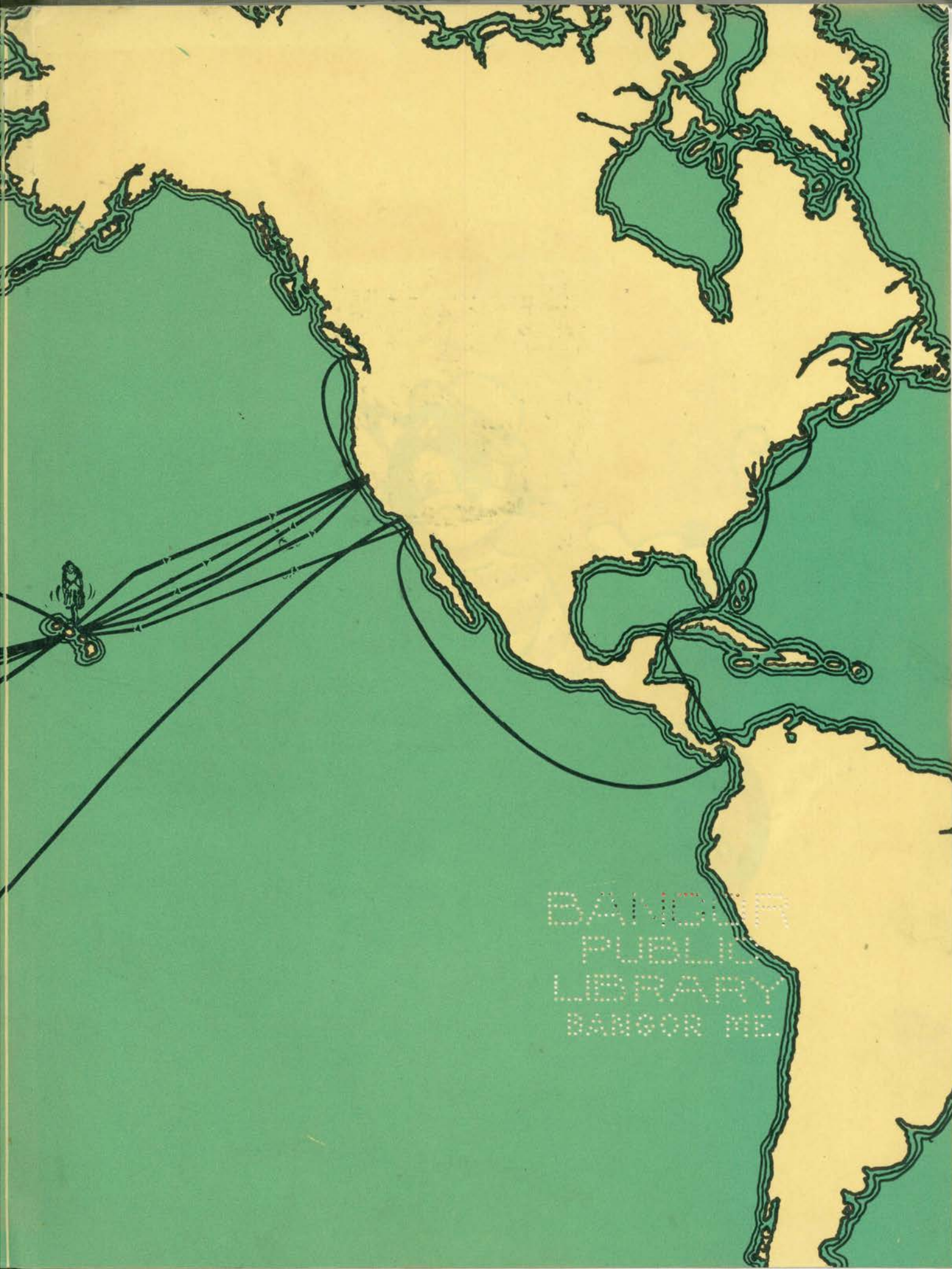
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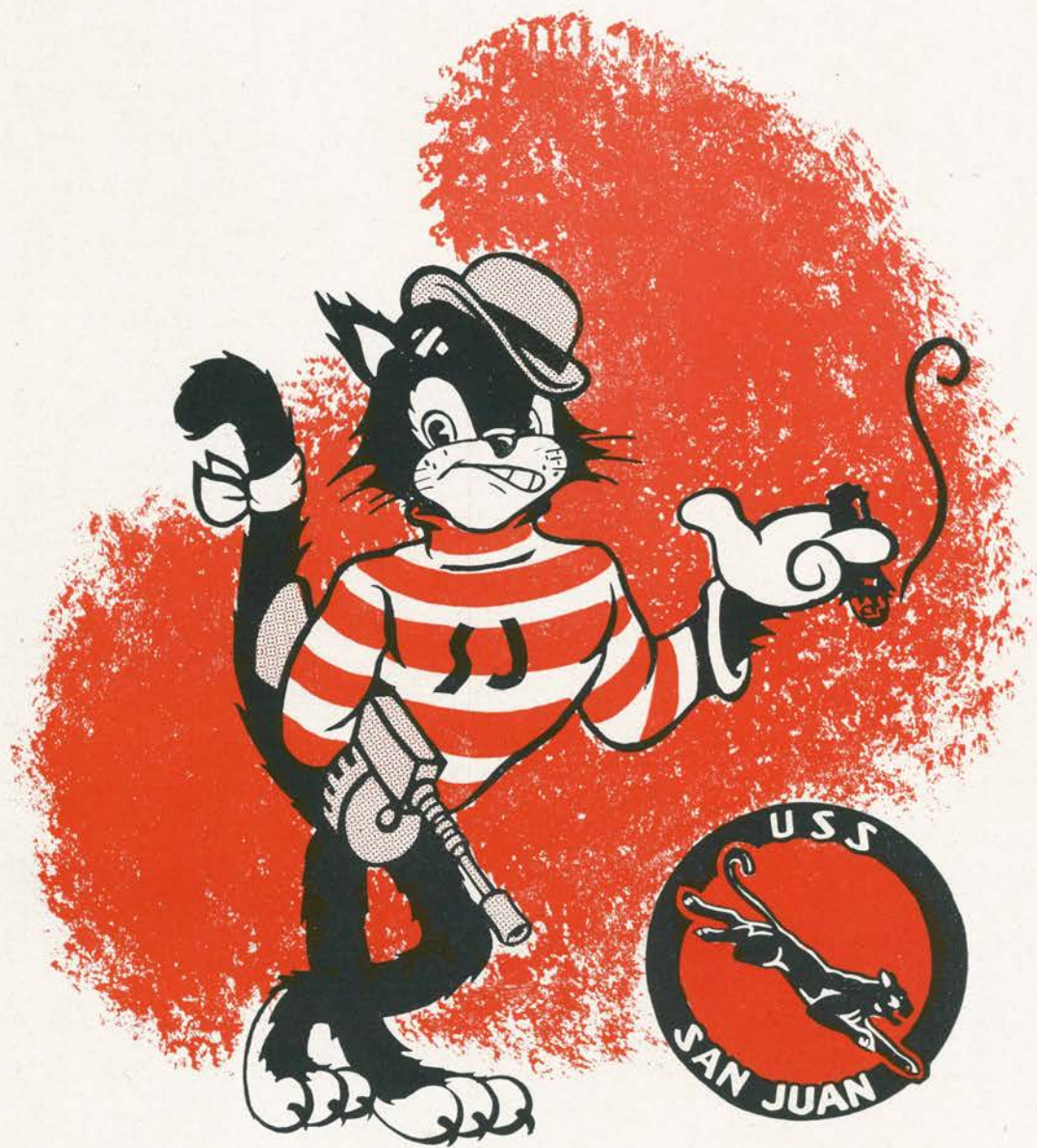
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U.S.S. SAN JUAN

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FOREWORD

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When, during many tomorrows, you, the Officers and Enlisted Men of her wartime complement, re-read this War Record of the San Juan, you will recall with distinct feelings of nostalgia, your thoughts and your hopes, your disappointments and your desires during the eventful days summarized in the following pages.

You will remember the thrills of splashing JAP planes; the powerful winds and mountainous seas of the typhoon; rescuing downed birdmen; sighting and sinking derelict enemy mines; the long night watches with the Fast Carrier Task Forces in the far stretches of the Pacific; hot soup and coffee at midnight; recreation on Mog Mog; the daily newscasts and Inquiring Reporter; happy hours and movies on the fantail; your Sunday Morning Panther . . . tops among ships' papers; Sagami Wan and Fujiyama on August 27; the active days following surrender when our ship played a titular role in evacuating repatriates; the mixed thoughts and feelings of homesickness which beset you as you watched some of the ships of our Third Fleet sortie from Tokyo Bay and head for home, not knowing when San Juan would follow in their wake.

But most of all you veterans of the war against Japan will remember with affection San Juan, the ship veteran of the Pacific War. You will boast with justifiable pride of her enviable record and of the role which you played in building up that record, for without your efforts this record could never have been realized. And I prophesy that as you review these pages, aloud perhaps to your sons and daughters, and someday to their sons and daughters, you will write finis with the postscript: "Wouldn't it be great to relive those days all over again?"

To those of you who are about to sever your connections with the Naval Service; to those who "go out and come back in"; to those who ship over for a career in the finest Navy afloat, I, as Captain, say WELL DONE! It is my sincere wish that all of us will be shipmates again and I know that if our fortunes so dictate, we could hope to serve in no finer ship than the SAN JUAN.

GEORGE H. BAHM
Captain, U. S. Navy
Commanding U.S.S. San Juan

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Captain G. W. Bahm, U.S.N.



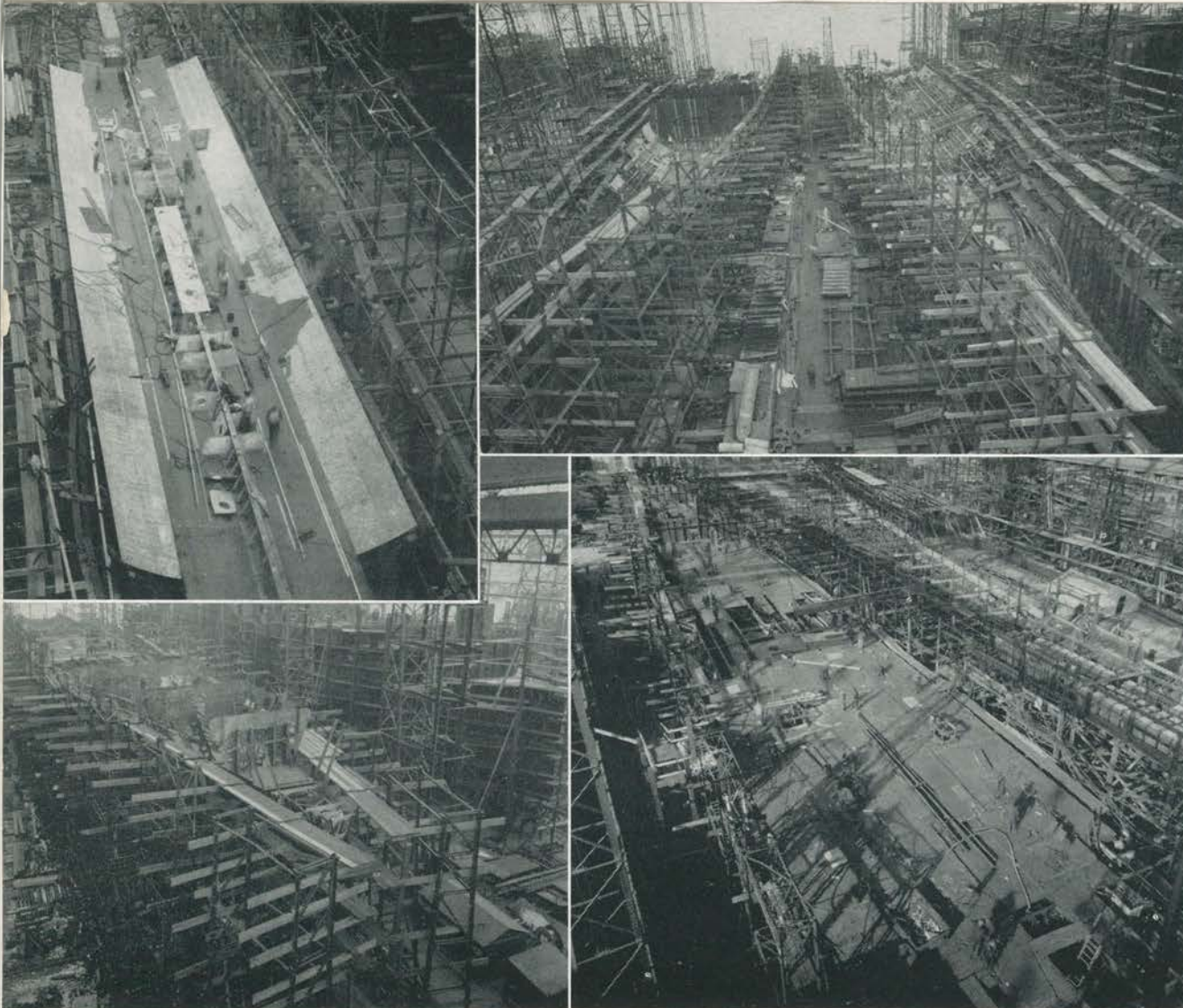
Captain G. W. Clark, U.S.N.



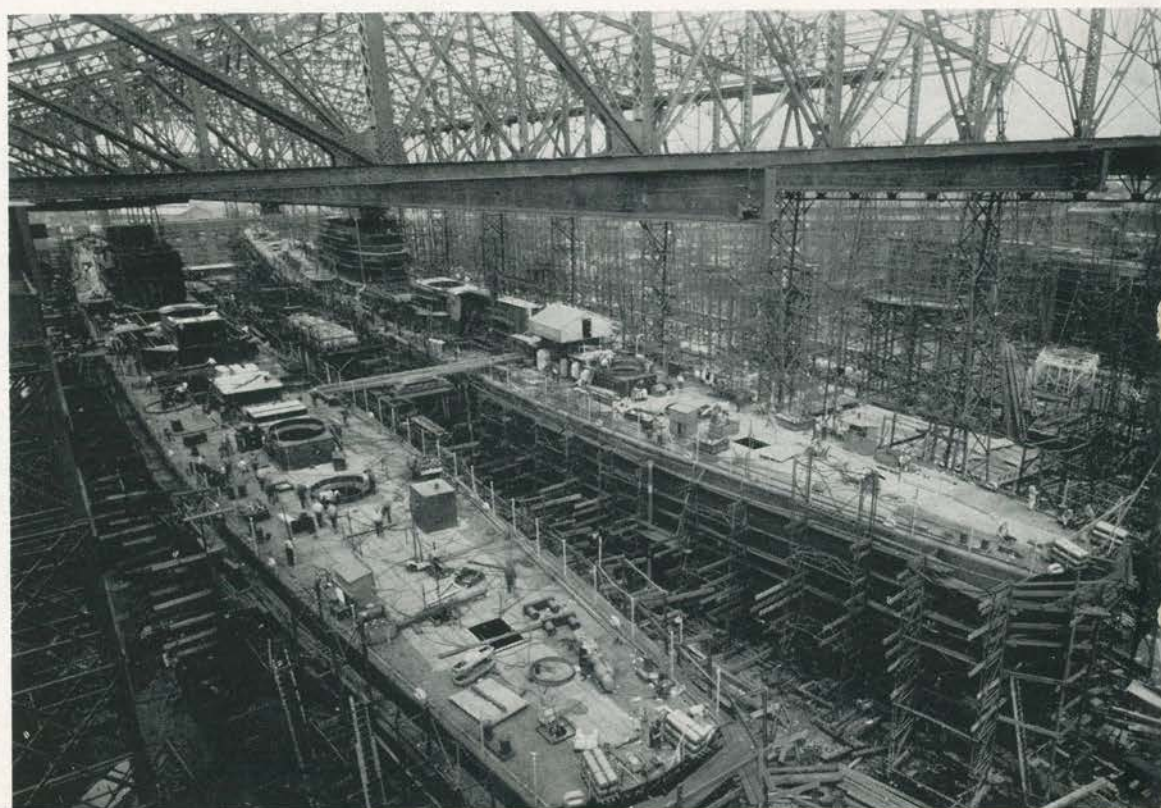
Captain J. F. Donovan, U.S.N.

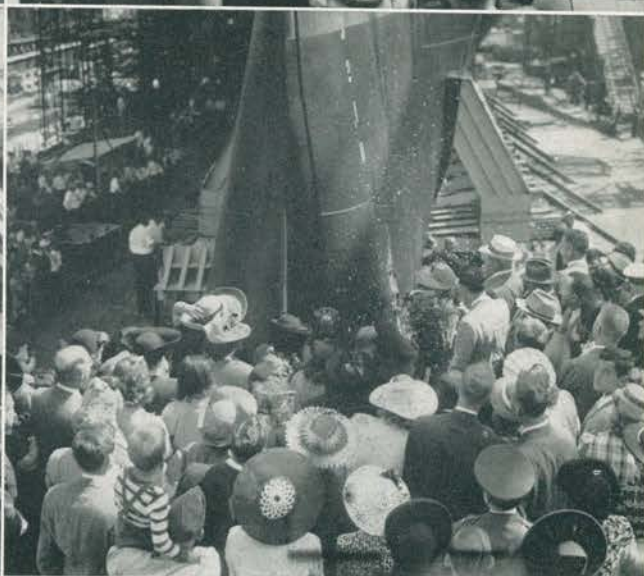


Captain C. W. Rhodes, U.S.N.R.

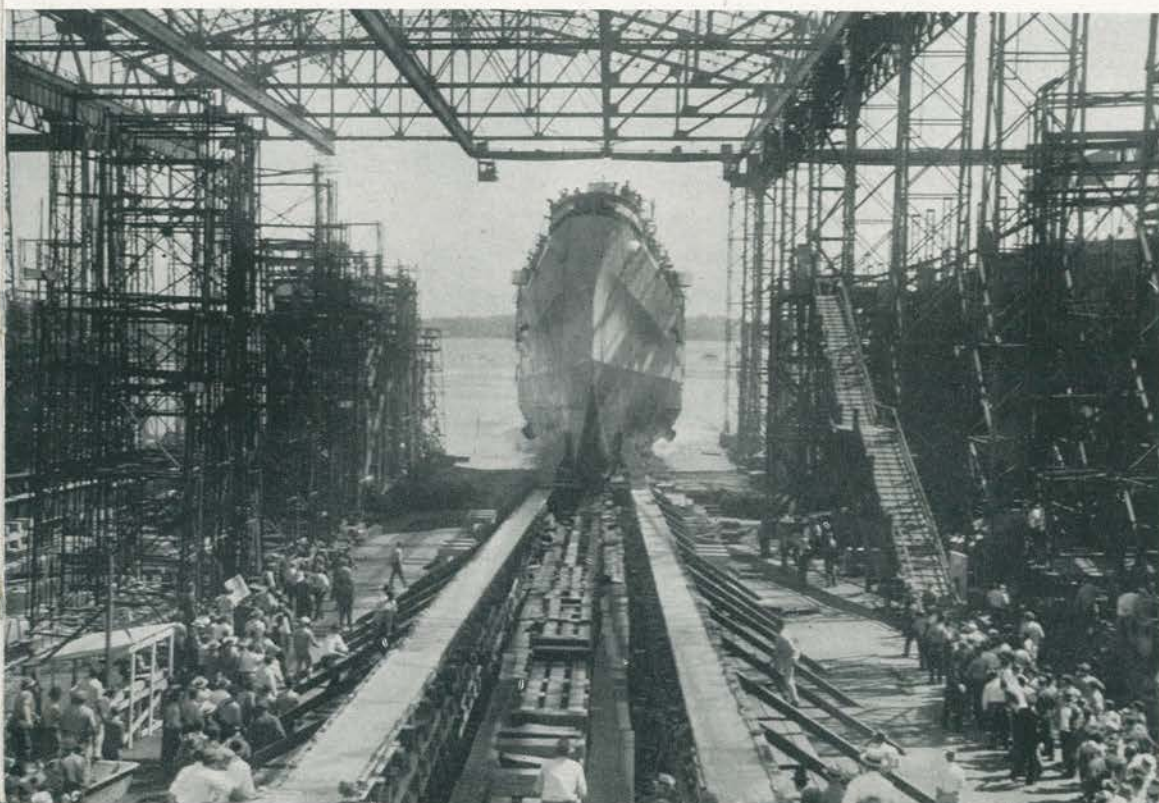


FROM LAYING OF KEEL





TO LAUNCHING . . .



Panther Strikes . . .

A History of the U.S.S. San Juan CL54

By E. G. HINES, U.S.N.R.



Captain J. E. Maher, U.S.N.

The story of the United States cruiser SAN JUAN is, in reality, the chronicle of a relatively small group of men, and of ships, bound together in allegiance to a common flag—the colors of a free nation whose peacetime borders boast no fortifications, save the guns of a salt water fleet. It is the story of a Navy which arose from staggering defeat to “bring the fleets of two aggressor nations to their knees, receiving their surrender within four months of each other.”

It is the saga of a sleek anti-aircraft cruiser whose graceful lines and latent power won for it the affectionate nickname “Panther”

. . . a nickname which matured, as the SAN JUAN itself matured, through fifteen major engagements against an enemy victorious in every war since 1596. The sobriquet gained material being by way of a signalman’s sewing cunning and under Captain J. E. Maher, U.S.N., the SAN JUAN’s first commanding officer, the “Panther Flag” gained recognition as a battle flag and from that time on flew from the foretruck during the “Panther’s” strikes against Japan.

The SAN JUAN is the fourth of the ATLANTA class cruisers designed in 1937 in recognition of the rising new threat of air power. Their origin is due to the terms of the Washington Arms Conference of 1922 which caused the United States to scrap several new battleships and to convert two battle cruisers, then under construction, to aircraft carriers. Thus the LEXINGTON and SARATOGA, backbone of the fleet during the early days of 1942, initiated a new naval task force and necessitated the building of a defensive weapon against any potential enemy who might seek to use identical tactics. Although the Arms Conference failed miserably in its primary purpose, the limiting of aggressor nations’ navies, it unwillingly provided the United States with two first line carriers of far greater value than two battle cruisers, judging from Britain’s ill-fated REPULSE and HOOD.

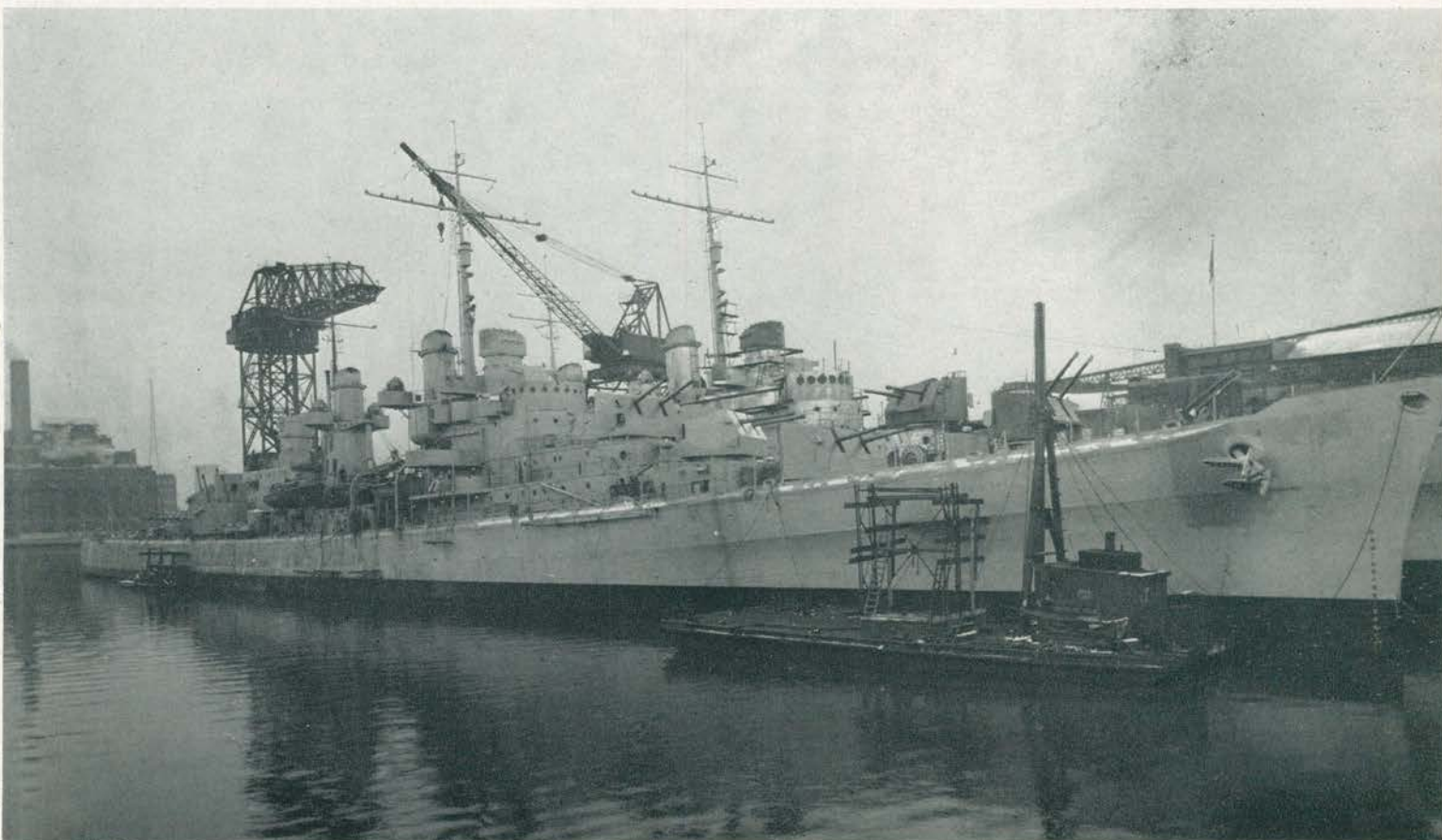
During the lean budget years of the early “thirties” the Navy initiated extensive annual fleet maneuvers to develop new techniques of defense and attack with the aging ships of World War I vintage. Finally in 1934 Congress

authorized a Navy of Treaty strength. Unfortunately, the United States, recovering from the worst depression in her history and still hopeful of maintaining peace, did not appropriate the necessary funds for construction.

In 1937 designs of the NORTH CAROLINA class battleships and ATLANTA class cruisers were completed and by 1938 the Japanese

SOUTH DAKOTA and IOWA class battleships. New carriers, cruisers and destroyers were added to give a balanced fleet.

Germany began her march on September 3, 1939, and five days later President Roosevelt declared a limited state of National Emergency. Within two months the Neutrality Act had been passed and the United States had



Outfitting . . . Quincy, Mass.

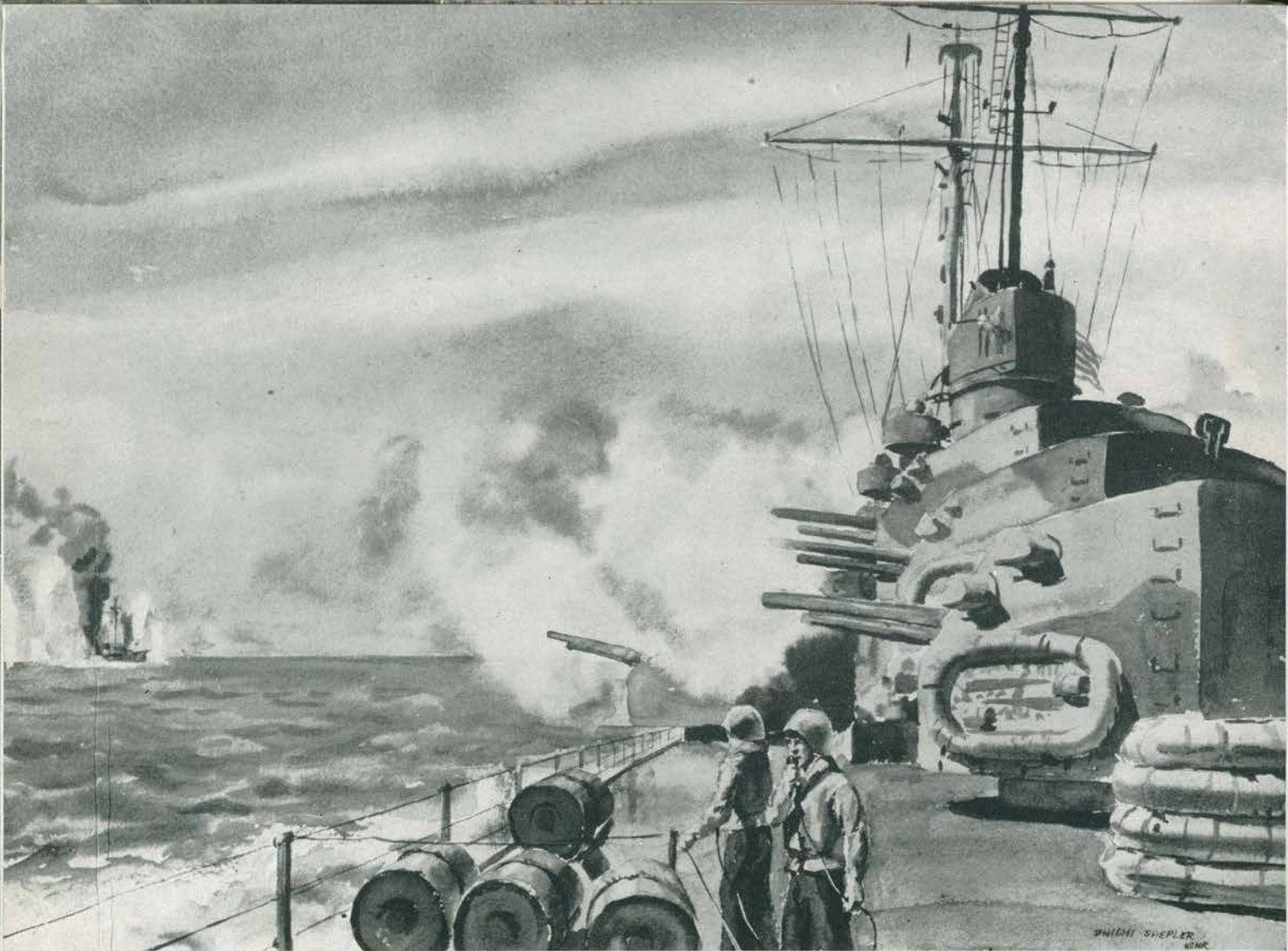
invasion of China and her belligerent fortification of mandated islands left little doubt as to her future policy. Two years after Japan had renounced the Washington Arms Treaty, Congress appropriated funds for a 20 per cent increase in the United States Navy.

Munich emphasized the need of adequate naval forces and naval engineers answered the demand with designs for the new, fast

taken strong steps to reiterate and enforce the century-old Monroe Doctrine. Between September, 1939, and the spring of 1941 the Navy ordered up to active duty all retired and inactive Naval Reserves to man the expanding "Two-Ocean Navy."

On July 7, 1941, U. S. Marines landed in Iceland.

Nineteen days later pretty, dark-eyed Senora



"Panther's" First Kill . . . a Jap Patrol Boat in the Gilberts

Margarita Coll de Santori, daughter of Senor Cayetano Coll y Cuchi, President of Commissioners, San Juan, Puerto Rico, sponsored the SAN JUAN at her launching at the Fore River Shipyard of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation.

Within a fortnight, aboard another cruiser somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean, Prime Minister Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt met to determine our future policy. From that meeting aboard the U.S.S. AUGUSTA came the Atlantic Charter.

Meanwhile, from Receiving Ships, ships at sea and civilian ranks came the new crew of the SAN JUAN. The task of outfitting went for-

ward with her sister ship, the SAN DIEGO, moored alongside, providing a friendly rivalry that was to follow these twin ships through four years of wartime steaming.

On September 4, 1941, the U.S.S. GREER, a World War I destroyer, was attacked by submarine but made port with injury. The U. S. Navy received orders to shoot on sight any vessel interfering with American forces but the U.S.S. KEARNY was torpedoed in the same area on October 15, killing 11 of her crew and damaging her so badly she was barely able to make port under her own power.

Aboard the SAN JUAN, sheetmetal workers, electricians, welders and a Navy pre-commis-



sioning detail combined their efforts to get this new cruiser to the Fleet. To people on the Eastern seaboard the war was a daily topic with torpedoed ships coming in to port for repairs. On October 30, 1941, the U.S.S. SALINAS, new Navy tanker, was torpedoed. One day later the old four-stack destroyer REUBEN JAMES drew a fatal, back-breaking blow from a German submarine, losing over 100 lives including the commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander H. L. Edwards. (In accordance with the U. S. Navy's tradition of honoring its fallen heroes, the U.S.S. H. L. EDWARDS (DD663), later known as Task Force 663, was commissioned January 26, 1944).

On December 7, 1941, "hostilities commenced Pearl Harbor" with the Japanese adopting

First Prisoners



American carrier tactics to sink two old battleships and damaging six others so badly they were out of action for months. Nineteen ships were damaged in all and over 3,000 Navy and Marine Corps personnel were killed or listed as missing. The United States battle line was reduced to two first-rate battleships and about three serviceable units of 1922 vintage. Within a few hours the Japanese struck at the Philippines but Admiral Hart's small Asiatic Fleet had been sent south to Borneo as Japan's march along the Indo-China coast seemed to threaten that sector. On December 10, 1941, over 200,000 tons of Allied shipping cleared the harbor for a run through the Sulu Sea and Makassar Strait to safety. Covered by units of Hart's fleet, the entire group escaped with the loss of only one ship.

The Asiatic Fleet was a fleet in name only, consisting of one heavy cruiser, the U.S.S. HOUSTON, the U.S.S. BOISE, a light cruiser which had just completed an escort mission to the Philippines and was available along with the old four-stack cruiser, the U.S.S. MARBLEHEAD, 13 over-age destroyers, 29 submarines and two squadrons of Catalina flying boats. Against an enemy utilizing far superior air power, this fleet could ill afford an offensive.

Shortly after midnight on January 24th, four old "cans" crept along the eastern coast of Borneo in search of a Japanese troop convoy poised for an attack on the refineries at Balikpapan. With the crew at General Quarters, Commander P. H. Talbot, U.S.N., Div. Com., ordered all ships to have "four boilers on the line" as the blowers' steady drone increased to an ear-filling roar. The bow waves crept higher and higher as the tin-cans climbed to flank speed under the driving force of 27,000 horsepower. On the darkened bridge of the lead ship every pair of eyes strained to pick up the fat-hulled enemy targets. Pulses quickened

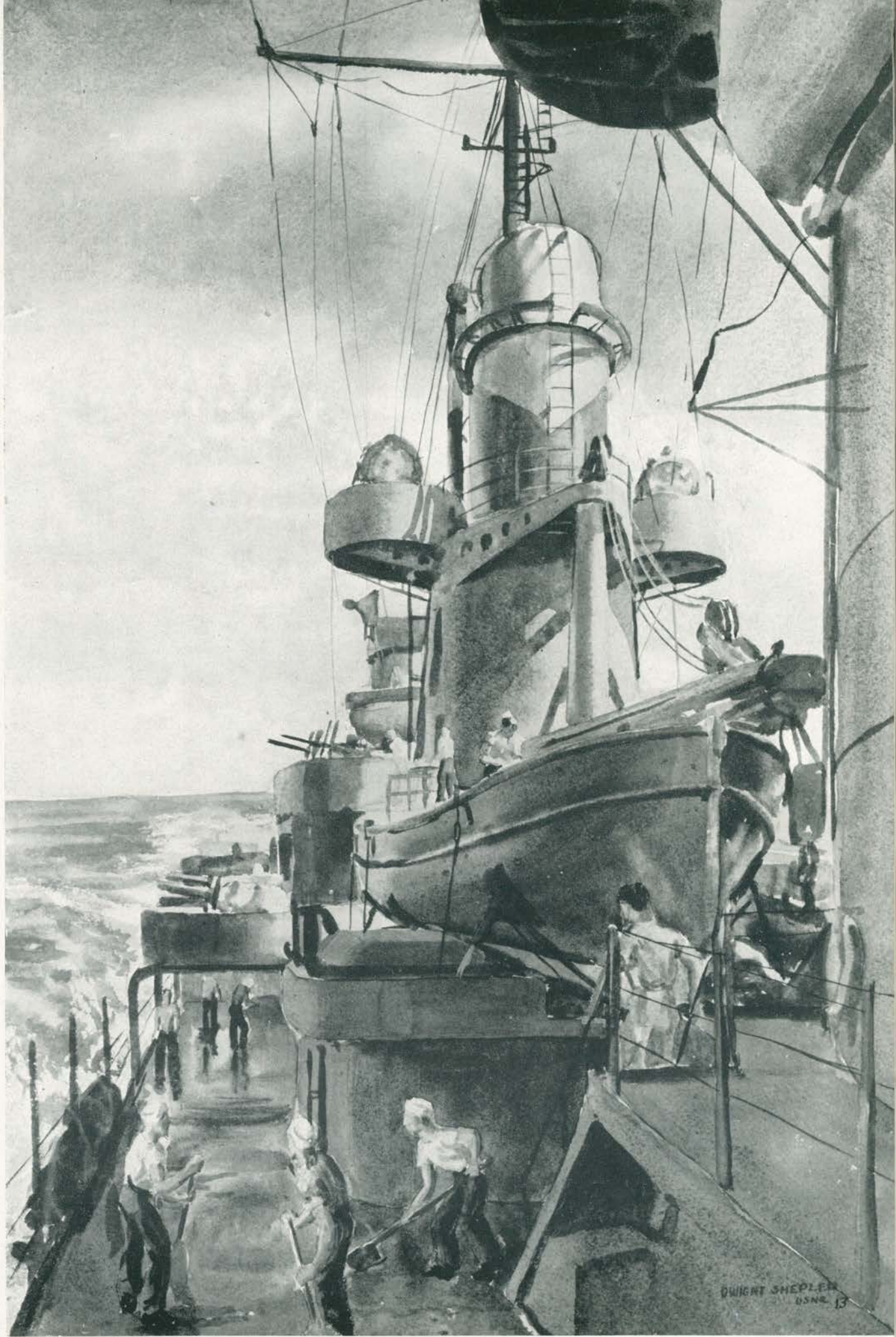
as a lookout spotted the unsuspecting convoy wallowing along in columns ideally spread for a night attack.

At flank speed the American force raced down the silent ranks as torpedomen crouched over their torpedo tubes, awaiting the signal to loose their charges. As the last destroyer drew within firing position the entire division fired spreads of torpedoes into the looming black hulls. Circling at the end of the column the destroyers again ran the gauntlet between two flaming lines of Jap merchantmen, firing the remaining torpedoes before a final run with the four-inch batteries and even the 50-caliber machine guns. As the tin cans retreated at high speed into the darkness, waiting Dutch submarines fell upon the confused enemy ships which were firing at each other in a holocaust of burning, sinking ships.

This brilliant night action served to delay the landing at Balikpapan but the defense of the Philippines, Borneo and Java was dealt another severe blow when these same destroyers joined their sister ships, plus the HOUSTON, the MARBLEHEAD and a Dutch force under command of Admiral Doorman of The Netherlands Navy for a second attack on an enemy convoy at Balikpapan. Unfortunately the force came under air attack while running narrow Madoera Strait, damaging the HOUSTON and MARBLEHEAD and the force retiring having lost the element of surprise. Without air cover or sufficient anti-aircraft defense the small force could not cope with the Japanese, for as each island fell to the invader, planes were flown in to seek out the scattered ships of the small Allied force. Our own reinforcements, a load of Army P-40's, were lost when the LANGLEY went down under enemy bombs.

On February 27, 1942, Admiral Doorman's Dutch and American force consisting of the

By the Dawn's Early Light . . .



DWIGHT SHEPLEY
USNR 13



The Wounded Return . . . Marines Escorted From States by "Panther"

HOUSTON, PERTH, EXETER, DERUYTER, JAVA and nine destroyers engaged a Japanese force of approximately 10 cruisers with destroyer escort. Badly outnumbered, and with the HOUSTON'S number three turret still out of action from a bomb hit, the force broke off the action during the night after the loss of three cruisers. On the 28th the EXETER, POPE and ENCOUNTER sortied Soenda Strait, followed the next night by the HOUSTON and PERTH. On entering the Strait they were taken under fire by a large force of enemy warships which lay in wait for them. Worn by fatigue and battle the gallant men fought their ships until the main decks were awash, taking their toll on the enemy even as waters closed over them. A bare handful of men managed to swim to the nearby shore of Java. The MARBLEHEAD, damaged severely, with the

Pacific over-run by the Japanese Fleet, laid a course for the East Coast of the United States, 12,000 miles away, via the Cape of Good Hope.

Halfway around the world, February 28, 1942, found Boston Harbor host to a new cruiser steaming proudly into port on her maiden voyage. Under command of a civilian pilot and manned by employees of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, the SAN JUAN carried as passengers about twelve officers and men of her Navy crew on the run to the South Boston Naval Drydocks. Two hours after the trim, new cruiser moored she was accepted by the Commandant of the First Naval District in a traditional ceremony as the commission pennant was hoisted to the main truck while Captain James E. Maher, U.S.N., first

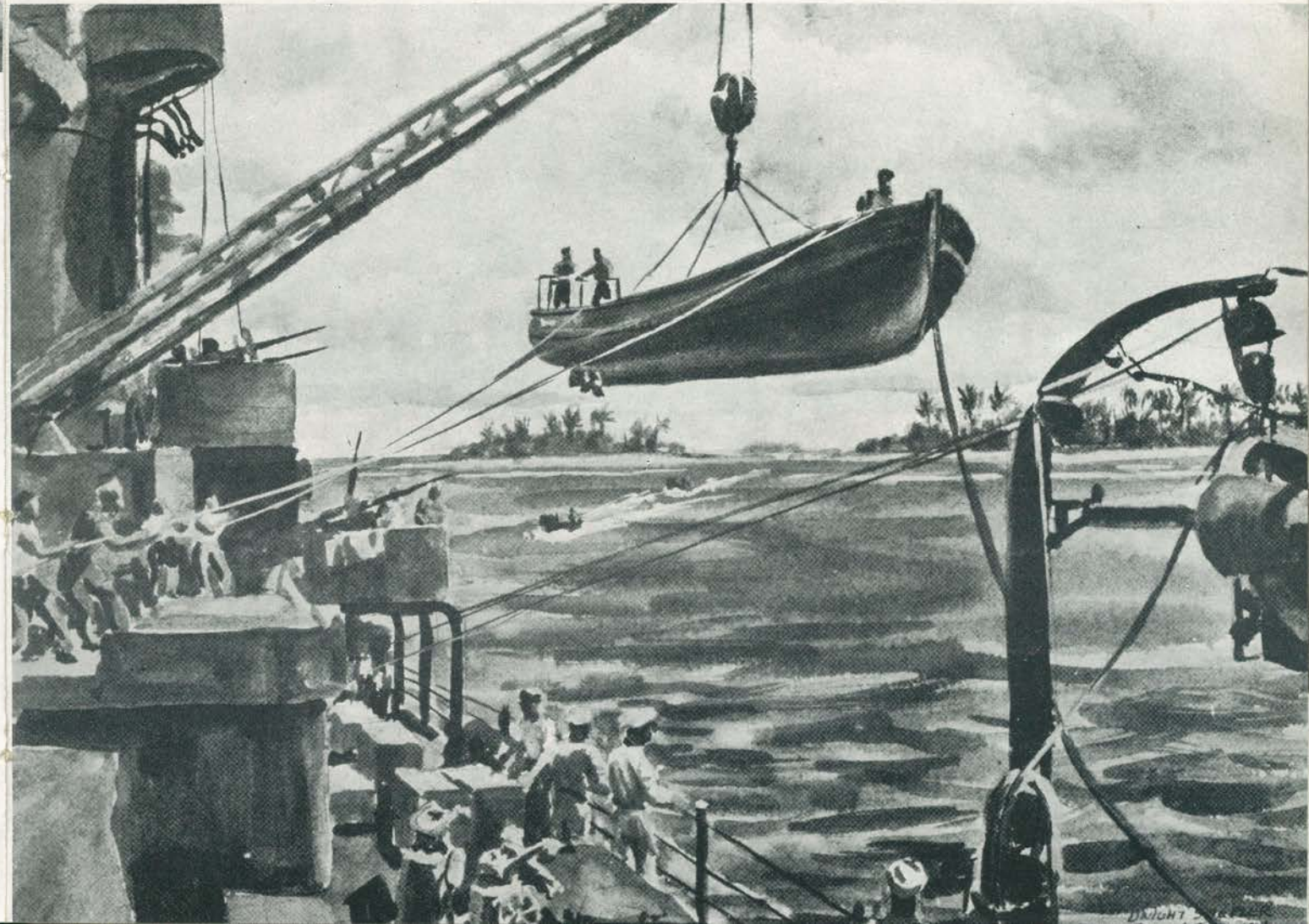
commanding officer, ordered the watch set on the UNITED STATES SHIP SAN JUAN, CL(AA)54.

For six weeks the SAN JUAN lay alongside her sister ship, the SAN DIEGO, as the two ships completed their fitting out periods, meanwhile receiving new seamen and officers each day to bring the personnel up to full complement. Experienced "regulars" joined with "wheat reaper" reserves to form the crew of these new ships. Salty or fresh from the plains, the men had a new ship with smooth, racy hull lines blending into a conning-tower-like superstructure, her eight symmetrical gun mounts adding to her rakish silhouette. It was a ship of a type yet untested in battle, a craft

from the boards of Gibbs & Cox, peacetime designers of America's fine racing sloops and yachts. Well into April welders' sparks showered through the day and lighted the skies by night while "fire watches" stood by with extinguishers.

The sun was close to the vernal equinox before the SAN JUAN stood out of South Boston on her shakedown through Cape Cod Canal and into Hampton Roads for training exercises in the area, interspersed with a visit to the Naval Academy at Annapolis for an inspection by visiting Congressmen. The SAN JUAN proceeded to Casco Bay, Maine, in the latter weeks of May for operational training with a submarine. Returning to Boston for a

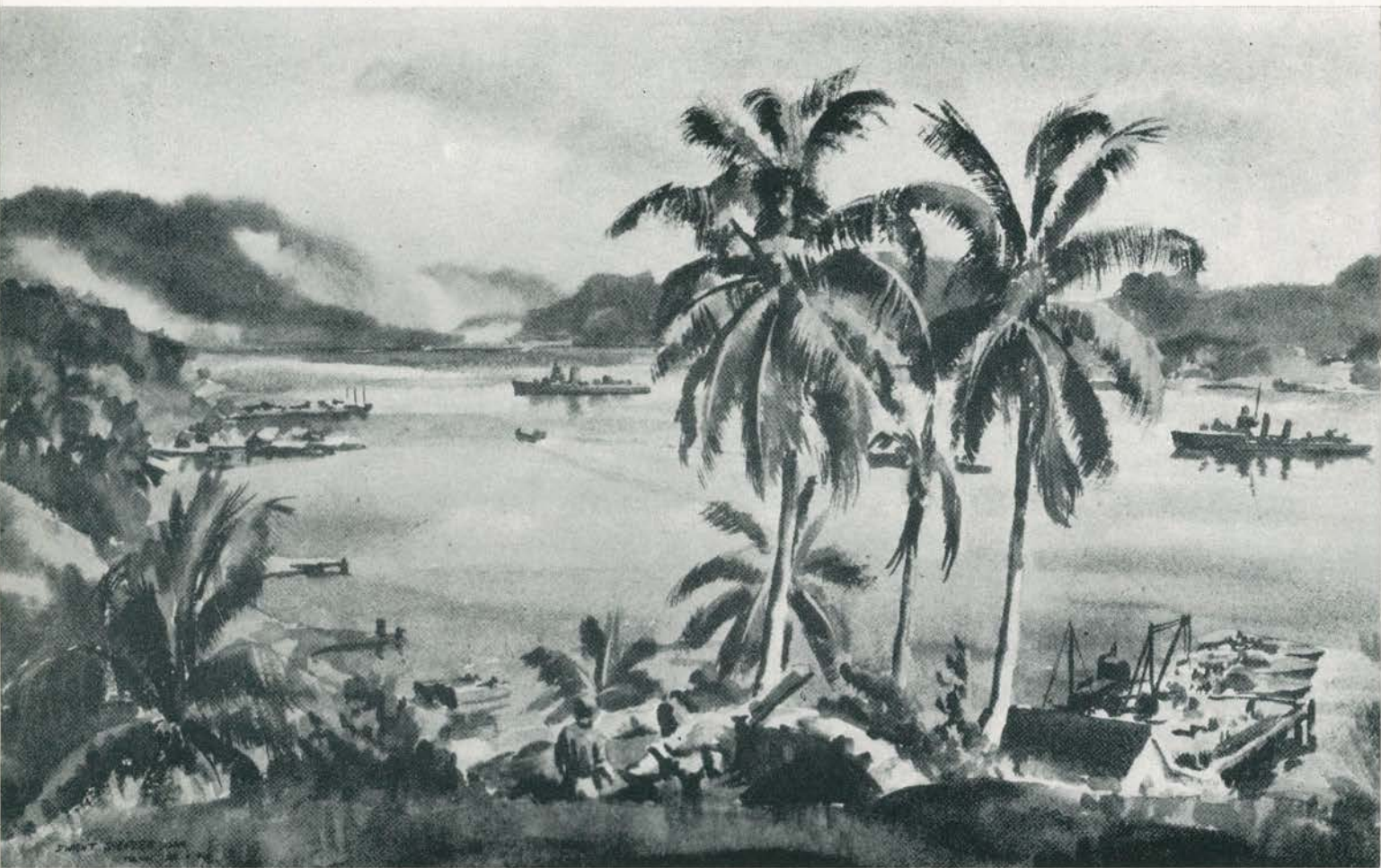
Supplies for Marines at Funafuti



two-week fitting out and check-up period the SAN JUAN bid good-bye to New England and rendezvoused with the WASP and NORTH CAROLINA at Hampton Roads.

As scuttlebutt on the ship was strong for South Atlantic duty orders to proceed to the

Cut. The lush, broad-leafed vegetation of Panama presented a strange contrast to the rocky, New England shoreline with wind-swept pines. Sunbathers spent idle time between working hours and emergency drills topside. From Balboa on the Pacific side (believe it or not, it is east of the Atlantic side)



Tulagi Harbor Under the Stars and Stripes . . .

Destroyers, Cruisers and PT's in Tulagi After Our Marines Had Eliminated the Japs

Pacific waters were a real surprise. Underway to Panama the Task Force conducted daily exercises while the WASP'S planes maintained anti-submarine patrol. The SAN JUAN was initiated into the Fleet.

All hands were topside to witness the trip through Gatun, Miraflores Locks and Gaillard

the Task Force proceeded up the coast of Central America and Lower California to San Diego.

In San Diego Rear Admiral Norman Scott, U.S.N., hoisted his flag as Commander Cruisers, Task Force 18. On June 30, 1942, Task Force 18, augmented by the QUINCY, de-

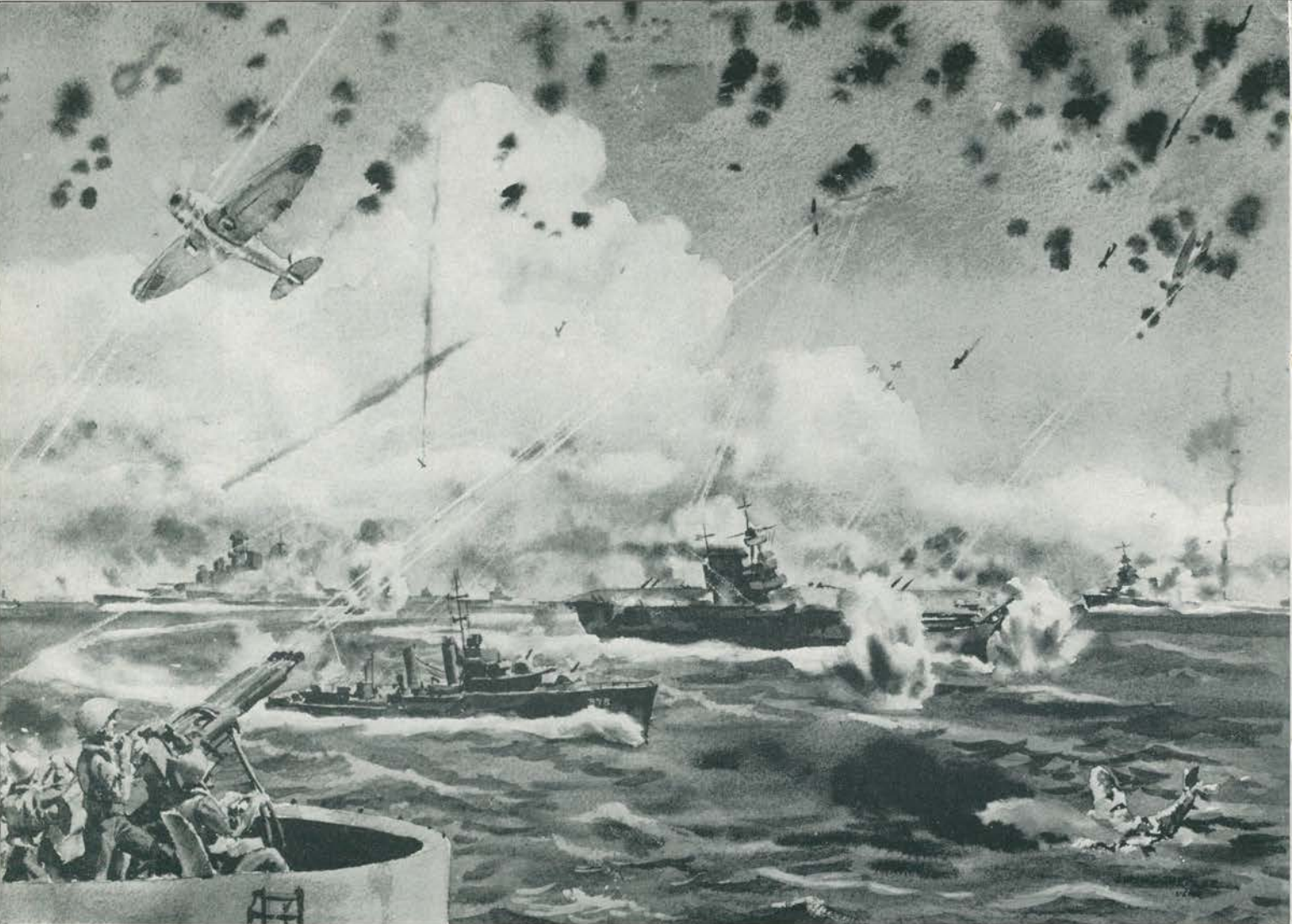


parted for the South Pacific with a large troop convoy. The Marines carried aboard the troop transports were the now famous First Marine Division and the First Marine Raider and Parachute Battalions. The long trip to Tonga Island in the Friendly Island group was marred by the loss of two men swept overboard by a freak wave which struck next to the port torpedo tubes. The assembled Task Forces conducted a dress rehearsal on the Fiji Islands and headed for Tulagi in the Solomons.

Raids by carrier-based aircraft and bombardment by cruisers had been initiated earlier in the war when Admiral William F. Halsey, U.S.N., led a force of two carriers, six cruisers and 10 destroyers against the Marshall and Gilbert Islands. Fast carriers continued strikes against widely separated island bases through February, March and April, highlighted by the take-off of General Doolittle's small force of B-25's from the HORNET on April

Supplies From the Portland





Battle of Santa Cruz Islands . . . October 26, 1942

18th in a surprise raid on Tokyo, Japan. Early May found the Japanese effecting landings on Florida Islands in the Solomons.

As soon as Japanese activity commenced in this area, Admiral Frank J. Fletcher, U.S.N., at sea with the YORKTOWN, moved north through the Coral Sea to intercede. The YORKTOWN'S planes caused considerable damage among Japanese shipping in Tulagi Harbor in two raids on May 4th. On the morning of the 7th planes from the LEXINGTON and YORKTOWN located and sank the carrier SHOHO, a part of the enemy covering force. On the 8th enemy planes found our force, even as our own planes attacked the Japanese force. The YORKTOWN and LEX-

INGTON were hit during the repeated air attacks, but were able to land their planes. Unfortunately the LEX, her crew worn from battling enemy planes, fighting fires and repairing battle damage, suffered a series of explosions from highly volatile aviation gasoline and had to be abandoned as night set in. The gallant old carrier slid beneath the waters of the Coral Sea. Almost all the crew was saved by escorting warships as torpedoes from our own destroyers were used to send her to the bottom.

From the Coral Sea battle the YORKTOWN proceeded at best possible speed to Pearl Harbor for emergency repairs. The Navy spread in scouting and patrol lines between Hawaii



U.S.S. Enterprise Under Air Attack at Santa Cruz



Enterprise Takes Evasive Action . . .

San Juan Covers





Joining Up After the Battle

and Midway, anticipating the Japs' next move. Midway received Marine Corps planes and the United States Army lent Flying Fortresses.

Though our surface forces failed to close with the Japanese, our air power smashed the Japanese Fleet so thoroughly in one blow that we were able to wrest the offensive from a numerically superior fleet and sally forth in comparative equality while our new ships rolled off the ways to bring the war to the Empire's front door.

On the morning of August 7th the transports landed Marines on Guadalcanal and Tulagi under cover of shore bombardment by covering destroyers and cruisers. Preceded only by destroyer screen the SAN JUAN led the transports in to Tulagi Island with her eight twin mounts firing almost three thousand rounds of five-inch ammunition. At the height of action the forward mount was put out of action when the left barrel overheated, causing a premature shell explosion. When the smoke had cleared away five men had answered their last muster and twelve more were carried below to sick bay. The Japanese retaliated with an air attack on August 8th in which the SAN JUAN proved her designers' faith well founded. Captain Maher opposed the display of "flags" until official confirmation had been received so the "Panther's" flanks remained unbranded.

Secure



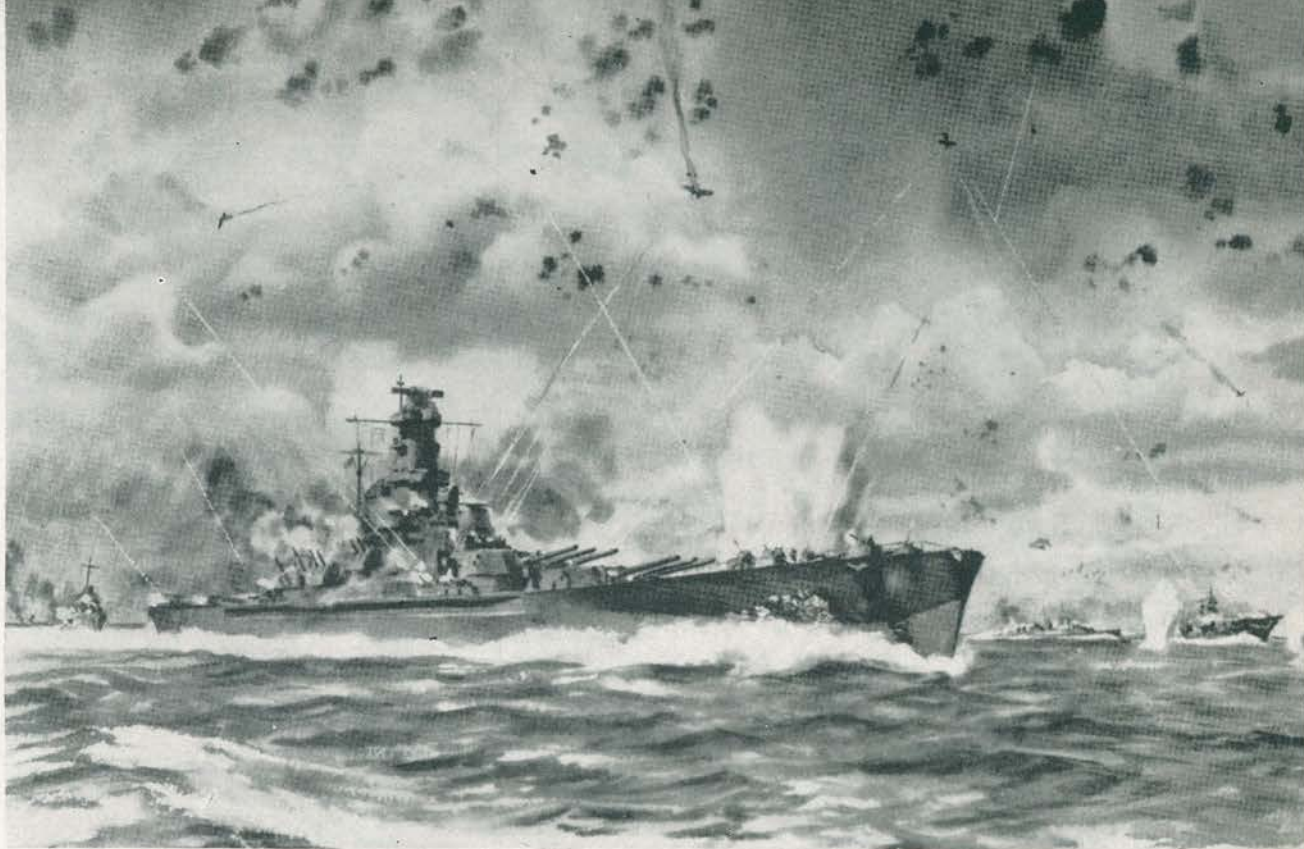


U.S.S. Smith, Afire But on Station . . . Santa Cruz

In the early morning hours of August 9th, a strong Japanese force steamed within a mile of the picket destroyer RALPH TALBOT without being detected and at 0145 opened fire on the unsuspecting cruiser screen. Rear Admiral Crutchley, R.N., and Rear Admiral Turner, U.S.N., screen commanders, were aware the Japanese Force was abroad but did not anticipate attack before dawn. In a few short minutes the QUINCY, ASTORIA, VINCENNES and the Australian CANBERRA were afire and sinking, while the CHICAGO and two destroyers were damaged. To the SAN JUAN, guarding the eastern approach to the landing area, the sound of battle and flashes of gunfire were visible over the horizon, but the action terminated when the Japanese steamed around Savo Island to the northeast, leaving the defense-shorn transports unharmed.

Late the same day the SAN JUAN escorted the empty transports out of Tulagi under the cover of darkness. Upon arrival in Great Roads

Harbor, Noumea, New Caledonia, the "Panther" joined up with the WASP, operating to the south and east of Guadalcanal. Rendezvousing with the ENTERPRISE and SARATOGA, screened by the NORTH CAROLINA and several cruisers, including the ATLANTA, the Task Force operated in the area for several weeks before the SAN JUAN retired with a part of the Task Force to refuel. It was during this period that the enemy chose to move in his reinforcements for Guadalcanal. Search planes picked up the enemy transports a full day's trip from the islands and our Task Force immediately cut in burners for a high speed interception during the night. Planes from the SARATOGA picked up the covering force the following afternoon, damaging a carrier, a cruiser and a destroyer. Meanwhile, a large force of enemy carrier planes found the big "E" and, penetrating the heavy "ack-ack" of the new NORTH CAROLINA and her escorts, managed to get in several hits on the big carrier. On the 25th of August Marine and Army fliers from newly-won Henderson Field found



"Battleship X" at Santa Cruz

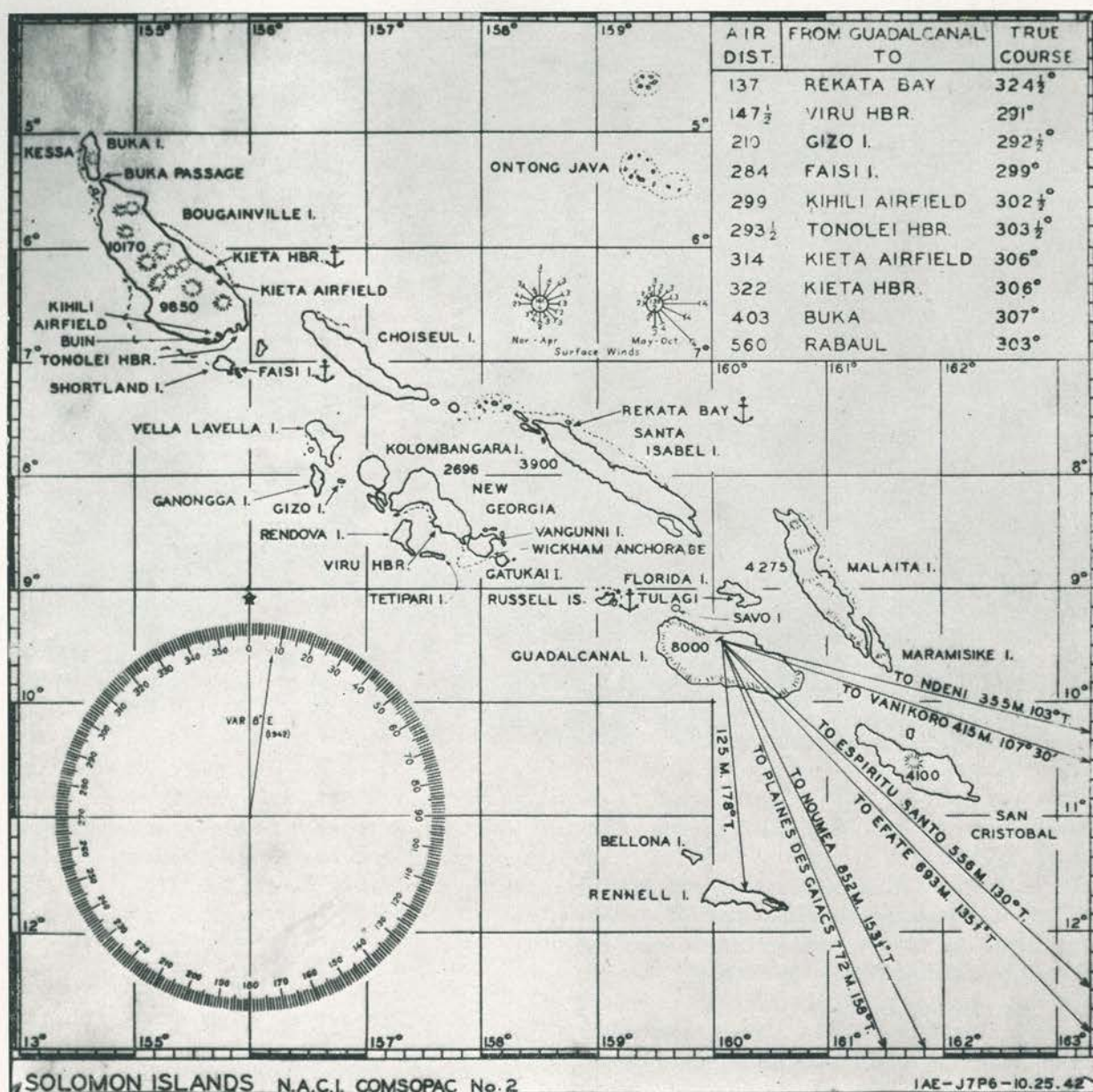
and attacked the transport group with moderate success. The big "E" was forced to retire to Pearl for repairs, picking up the "Panther" (which had transferred Admiral Scott to the SAN FRANCISCO before leaving for Suva) at Tonga. Though it was not known at the time, our planes had dealt the Japanese a very serious blow, sinking all three carriers, severely damaging two battleships and their escorts. The Japanese were forced to reinforce Guadalcanal by night, using warships as troop carriers.

During the four-week stay in Pearl Harbor the "Panther" crew managed a few trips to the famed Waikiki Beach of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel for surf board riding, etc. Throughout the rest period Mount I served as a grim reminder that war is not a frolic of "liberties" in strange places and travel of the cruise ship variety. War had come to mean long hours of sky-searching eye strain where four hours of uninterrupted sleep was a rare occurrence; where green vegetables came only in cans and a salad was just a lovely dream that floated out of range while you napped on a hard steel deck; where potatoes

were served just one way. You can't bake, boil or fry dehydrates. Even bread might move when you watched it and milk was something you hoped would be served in barrels the next time you ordered.

While the "Panther" lay in Pearl Harbor their old running mate, the WASP, caught three of a four-torpedo salvo fired by the I-19, one of four Jap subs which had moved into the Coral Sea to prey on our Task Force. Caught while refueling, the gallant WASP had little chance to combat the tremendous fires. The game little destroyer O'BRIEN saved the HORNET from a similar blow by taking a torpedo intended for the carrier. Meanwhile, the third submarine got in a blow at the NORTH CAROLINA. Even though the losses were severe the covering force accomplished its purpose, for reinforcements arrived with much-needed gasoline, food and troops. Guadalcanal was ours.

Leaving Pearl the "Panther" delivered a deck load of 20 millimeter guns and two motor launches to the newly-arrived Marines at Funa Futi, Ellice Islands Group. On a lone-wolf raid



through the South Gilberts the "Panther" inspected Nonati and Beru Islands but found no Japs until the trip south where two Japanese patrol boats were knocked over and sixteen prisoners captured.

Joining up with the PORTLAND the "Panther" stopped in Espiritu Santo long enough to consign the Japanese prisoners to the Marines and headed east for the rejuvenated ENTERPRISE and a glimpse of the new SOUTH DAKOTA. For some of the finest combat art of the Pacific War the SAN JUAN and the Navy

is indebted to Lieutenant (j.g.) Dwight Shepler, U.S.N.R., who was attached to the "Panther" for temporary duty during the Battle of Santa Cruz which commenced early in the morning, October 26th.

Following up patrol plane reports of three enemy forces the ENTERPRISE, screened by the SAN JUAN, launched the first attack wave, followed by two attack waves from the HORNET, in the second carrier group. Both HORNET groups reached the enemy surface forces without being tabbed by fighter planes

but the ENTERPRISE group was not so fortunate, having to penetrate a fighter group before dropping bombs on the enemy battle line.

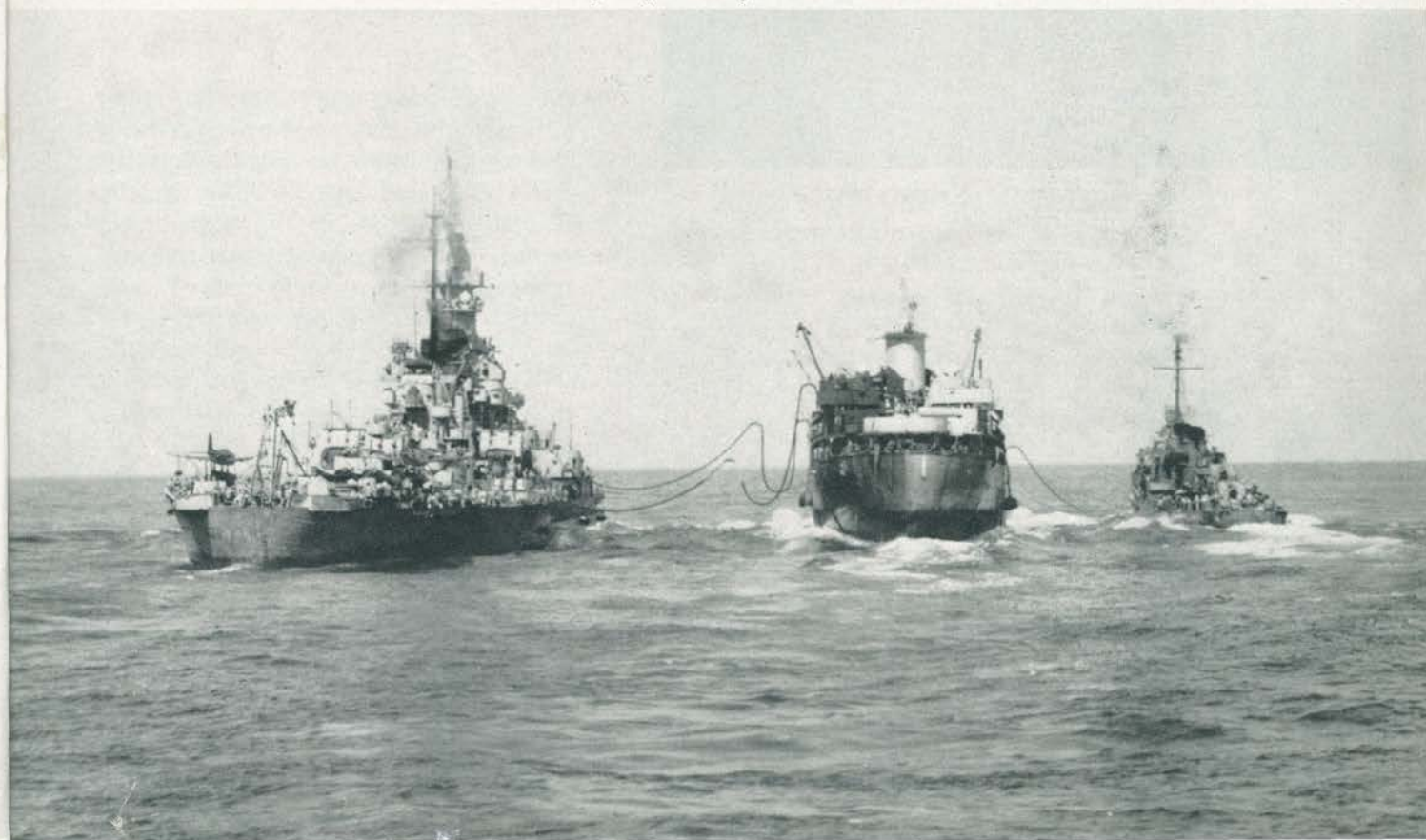
Meanwhile Japanese planes commenced attacks on both carrier groups and while 20 out of 27 were shot down by anti-aircraft, the HORNET was hit by a dive bomber which suicided into the island structure, diverting attention from a low-level torpedo plane attack. Within a few minutes two torpedoes reached home to leave the gallant ship dead in the water. Taken in tow by the cruiser NORTHAMPTON the fires were extinguished while hasty repairs corrected the list. On the verge of proceeding again under her own power the HORNET was stung by torpedo planes and dive bombers, forestalling all hopes of saving her.

Screening the ENTERPRISE, the "Panther" called upon her 75,000 horsepower to keep pace with the racing, wheeling SOUTH DAKOTA and the "Big E" as enemy planes broke through the Combat Air Patrol to concentrate on the flattop. Artist Sheplar has deftly

caught the action-packed drama that ripped the waters off Santa Cruz Islands that October day . . . the SOUTH DAKOTA with her anti-aircraft batteries knocking down seven confirmed "skalookies", the SAN JUAN's 12 five-inch guns blasting the invader planes while the 20's and 40's lend their staccato overtones. The sounds of battle penetrated the thin hull to perspiring men tending boilers in the depths of the SAN JUAN, to men laboring midst fast-diminishing ammunition in the magazines, to corpsmen and doctors in sick-bay and to damage-control parties scattered strategically through the ship.

Topside, battle waged against the ENTERPRISE as 24 dive bombers attacked her, getting in three hits in spite of the terrific "cover" laid down by "Battleship X" and the SAN JUAN. The Navy added many names to a long list of heroes that day but courage and heroism were epitomized in the action of the destroyer SMITH. The SMITH was covering the 'Big E' in the thick of battle when an enemy torpedo plane crashed into the forward bridge bulkhead in an explosion which covered the bridge with flaming gasoline. Despite

Seagoing Filling Station





Mines—Unwelcome Neighbors

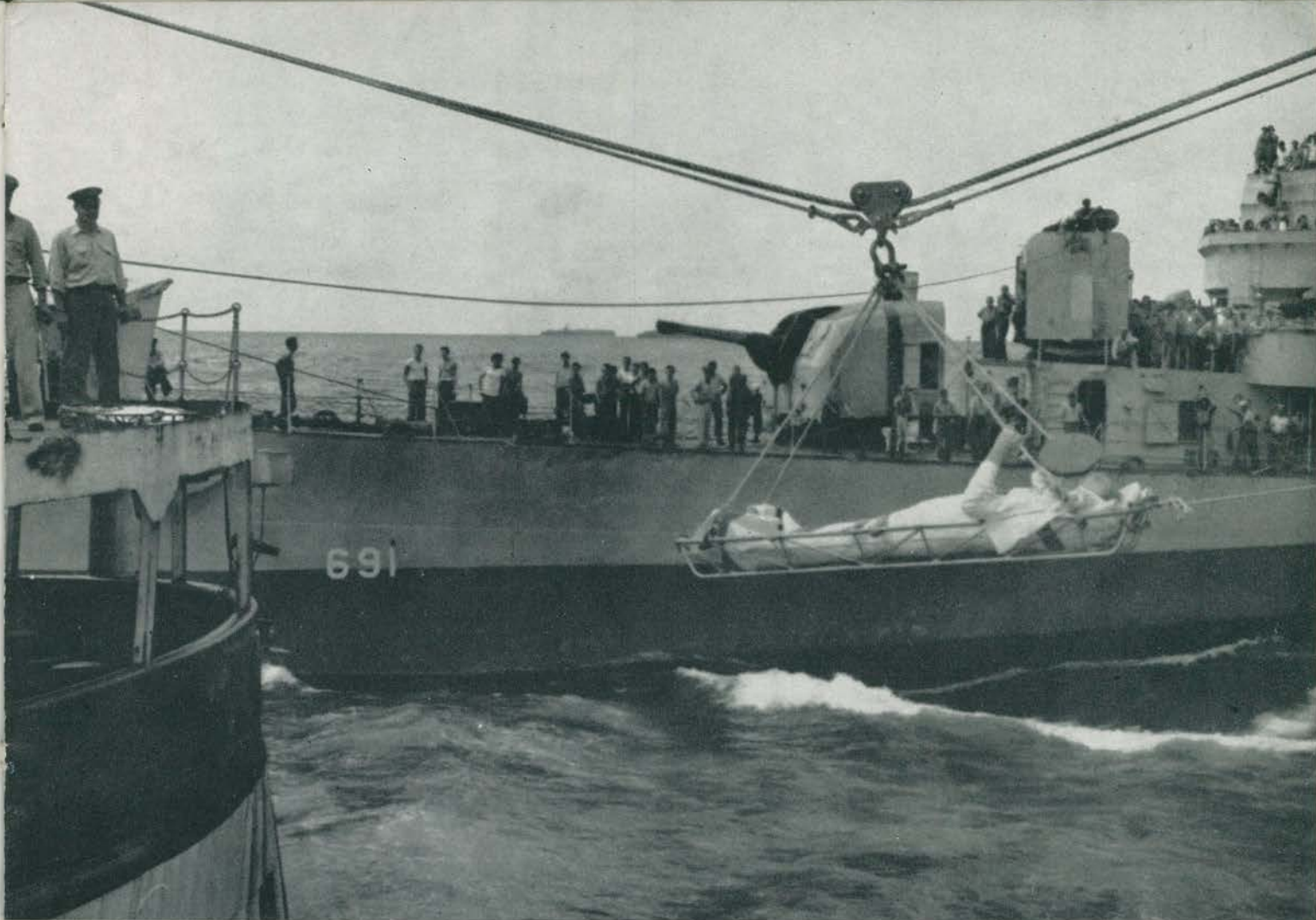
fire and damage the SMITH maintained its station in formation, its gunfire uninterrupted even though at times the SMITH was lost to sight in the dense smoke.

During the last attack the SAN JUAN was hit by a bomb which penetrated the thin hull plating on the starboard quarter, passing through CPO quarters, two storerooms and on through the bottom of the ship before exploding. Except for minor damage to the rudder and loss of the ship's supply of cigarettes in the flooded com-

partments, the SAN JUAN continued unhampered. Her first major engagement had been surmounted with no loss of life and only minor materiel damage. Our Navy had lost the HORNET and destroyer PORTER plus 74 aircraft while the enemy lost the use of two badly needed carriers and four air groups. Of approximately 180 enemy planes which attacked our forces over 50 of them had been shot down by our fighters before reaching their target while 56 confirmed "bogeys" had been splashed by our anti-aircraft batteries. The battle of air vs. sea power had not yet been fully decided. In the Battle of Santa Cruz our forces were comprised of only a few ships designed for efficient aircraft defense, yet our losses were moderate enough to enable us to maintain our cover on Guadalcanal and to prevent the enemy from landing reinforcements in any appreciable number.

The SAN JUAN proceeded from Santa Cruz to Noumea for temporary repairs from the tender ARGONNE. From there the SAN JUAN was ordered to Sidney, Australia, where repairs were completed and her crew enjoyed ten days of liberty "down under."

Leaving Sidney, the SAN JUAN returned to Noumea, operating with the SARATOGA while her sister ships, the ATLANTA and JUNEAU headed for Guadalcanal where on the night of November 12th a force of American cruisers tangled with a strong force of enemy cruisers and battleships escorted by destroyers. The ATLANTA succeeded in sinking a destroyer before being hit by a torpedo. Circling, with her rudder jammed, the ATLANTA took a light cruiser under fire, scoring several hits before a Jap heavy cruiser found the range and smashed her bridge, killing Admiral Scott and many of her crew. It was during this same action that the SAN FRANCISCO took on a Japanese battleship while the destroyer LAFFEY, having expended her torpedoes, pounded



Sick and Wounded Transferred at Sea

away at the battleship with her five-inch guns at such short range that for a time the enemy was unable to bring her guns to bear, but the LAFLEY suffered a mortal torpedo hit and was put out of action. Both the ATLANTA and JUNEAU, badly hit after slugging it out with Jap heavyweights, survived the night, but the JUNEAU caught a submarine torpedo the following afternoon, sinking with severe loss of life, and the ATLANTA had to be abandoned.

Following the Battle of Guadalcanal the SAN JUAN operated with the SARATOGA in a series of sorties from Noumea. It was during the stay in Noumea that the SARATOGA and SAN JUAN developed Sarajuan Beach for beer parties and ball games. The SARATOGA also provided a rare spectacle by launching

planes while riding at anchor in Great Roads, Noumea.

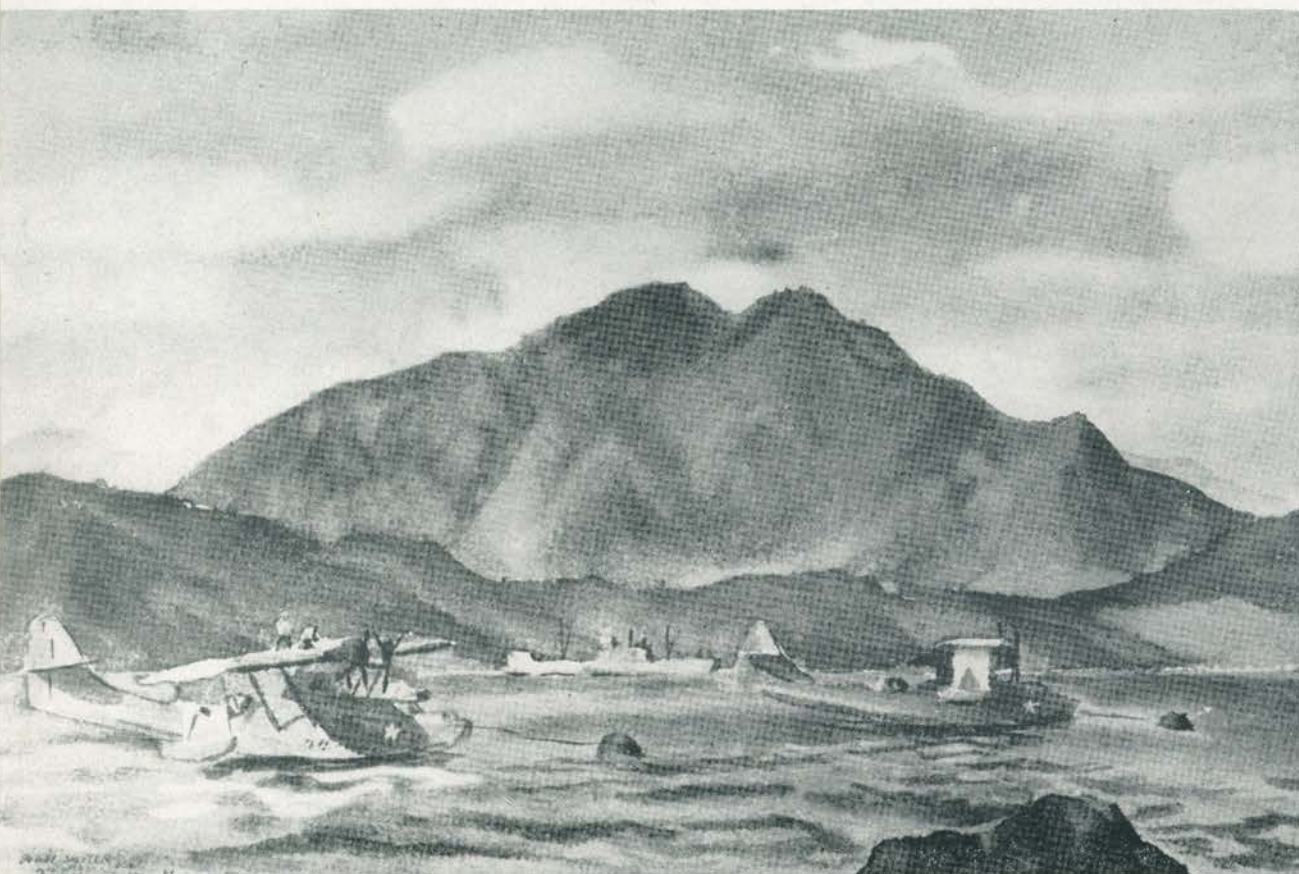
On January 17, 1943, Captain James E. Maher, U.S.N., received the Navy Cross for "extraordinary heroism and distinguished service in the line of his profession as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. SAN JUAN during Battle of Santa Cruz." The award was presented by Admiral W. F. Halsey, U.S.N., Commander South Pacific Area and South Pacific Force.

Enemy activity from January to July of 1943 was confined to the air and an occasional sortie by small units of the Imperial Navy. In May, Captain Guy W. Clark, U.S.N., relieved Captain Maher. On June 1, 1943, the SAN JUAN was attached to Task Force Four-



Espiritu Santo

Catalinas at Noumea



teen, with the SARATOGA, H.M.S. VICTORIOUS, Destroyer Squadron Six and our long-absent sister, SAN DIEGO.

Task Force Fourteen operated for twenty-six days around a small area in the Coral Sea (thereafter known to Pantherites as the "Battle of Point Dog") without sighting a single enemy plane, ship or submarine. Meanwhile our forces made landings on Woodlark and Trobriand Islands and several points on New Guinea, followed up on July 2nd and 3rd by the major landings at New Georgia.

Moving up the Solomons the Allies continued landings as the Japanese evacuated island after island, withdrawing into their inner defense ring. The SAN JUAN, now attached to Task Force 38, moved up to Havannah Harbor, Efate Island, for more training operations before going to Espiritu Santo for the final rehearsals before the attack on Bougainville.

Attacking Buka airfield and Rabaul repeatedly the SARATOGA, escorted by the SAN JUAN, maintained air cover for the landings and occupations of Bougainville on the 26th and 27th of October.

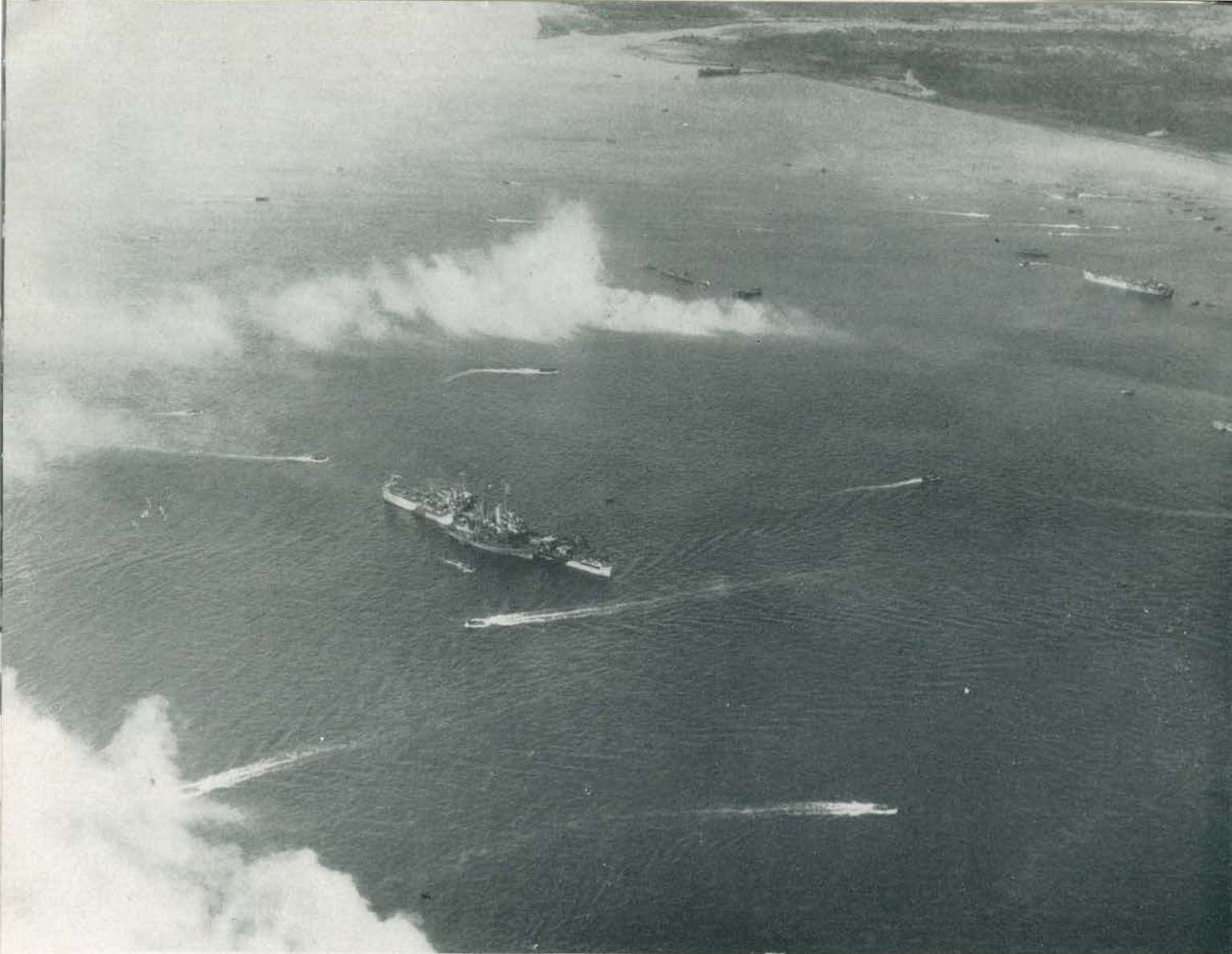
On November 27th, the SAN JUAN was relieved of duties in Task Force 38 and



South Pacific Raider

War Paint





Torpedoed U.S.S. Honolulu Gets First Aid at Leyte

ordered to report to Task Group 50.3 under Admiral A. E. Montgomery, U.S.N. En route the SAN JUAN crossed the Equator at the 180th Meridian, entering the Realm of the Golden Dragon and Neptunus Rex simultaneously.

On December 1, 1943, the SAN JUAN, in company with the ESSEX, ENTERPRISE, BELLAU WOOD, CRUDIV 13 and 11, attacked Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands. After several days of screening the carriers against air, surface and submarine attack, the SAN JUAN withdrew to fuel from the KASKASKIA and received orders to proceed to Pearl Harbor. Upon arrival in Pearl on De-

cember 9th, orders were changed to proceed to Mare Island for Navy Yard overhaul.

Stateside for Christmas! With an average of seven days leave per man the crew of the SAN JUAN made the most of the twenty days with many men acquiring wives and the ship losing 181 men, principally petty officers.

Underway again on January 4, 1944, the SAN JUAN and her sister ship, SAN DIEGO, arrived in Pearl to join Task Group 58.4 with the SARATOGA, LANGLEY, PRINCETON, BOSTON, BALTIMORE and several destroyers. On January 29th, D-2 Day, the carriers



Near Miss on Essex-Class Carrier . . . June 10, 1944

launched air attacks against Wotje and Taroa in the Marshalls. On February 2nd our forces landed at Kwajalein, Roi and Namur Islands in the face of fierce opposition.

By February 8th resistance on Kwajalein had been overcome and the SAN JUAN anchored within the ring of coral atolls as the last Japanese joined his ancestors. Underway again on February 9th, the SAN JUAN operated off Eniwetok with the SARATOGA making daily strikes against the besieged Japanese. In addition to launching three or more strikes daily the SARATOGA maintained anti-submarine patrols until February 20th, when all resistance had been quelled and the Marshall

Islands had been wrested from Japanese occupation. Task completed, the SAN JUAN proceeded to Majuro in the Marshalls for upkeep.

From Majuro to Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides, the SAN JUAN found time to initiate new crew members into the Noble Order of Shellbacks. Arriving in Espiritu Santo the "Panther" became a part of Task Group 58.4 under command of Rear Admiral Ginder, U.S.N., aboard the YORKTOWN.

Hitting the Japanese again at Palau, Yap and Woleai the Task Force was subjected to repeated air attacks and the new Scout Bomber SB2C's were initiated under battle conditions.



Destroyer Tender With Her Brood

Admiral Spruance, flying his flag from the NEW JERSEY, joined up with one YORK-TOWN group on April 1st after operating with another task group during the earlier strikes.

Early April found the SAN JUAN underway for Hollandia, New Guinea, with the new HORNET, BELLEAU WOOD, COWPENS and BATAAN in the carrier group escorted by the SANTA FE, MOBILE, BILOXI and accompanying destroyers.

On April 21, 1944, D-1 Day, the carriers carried out air strikes while covering cruisers as they concentrated their main batteries on shore installations. Enemy planes, seeking to strike at the carriers while they were without cruiser protection, were repulsed by a vigilant Combat Air Patrol (CAP) which downed several bombers before they could get within range.

Landings completed on New Guinea, the Task Force proceeded to the vicinity of Truk for

operations against Ponape, Satawan and Truk. Carrier strikes commenced April 29th against the enemy stronghold at Truk while our heavy cruisers bombarded supporting islands. Falling back to Kwajalein after the strikes against Truk, the Task Force fueled and proceeded to Majuro for repairs and general upkeep, awaiting the next strike against the Empire.

Vice Admiral Lee brought the IOWA and WASHINGTON to join the assembled carriers in operations against Guam and Rota. Carriers launched fighter sweeps over Guam and Rota on June 11th, continuing operations until June 14th when the force laid a course for Iwo Jima in the Bonin Islands. During these operations the group was under observation and attack daily but few planes penetrated the CAP and no damage resulted.

The first strike over Iwo Jima was completed late in the afternoon of June 15th while mounting seas rolled the carriers heavily and hampered landings of the returning planes.



Liberty . . . Mog-Mog Style



Crossing the Line . . .



Crossing the Line . . .



Crossing the Line . . .



Crossing the Line . . .

One plane crashed on the flight deck of the BELLEAU WOOD, causing a fire which was quickly extinguished.

A Japanese Task Force was sighted to the southwest of Guam on June 18th. Our planes covering Guam and Rota reported carrier-based planes were landing on airfields there. From this the Japanese strategy was obvious: our forces were believed running low on fuel and ammunition after the repeated strikes against Guam, Rota and Iwo Jima and would be caught unawares by sudden attack.

According to plan the Japanese launched strikes against Task Force 58 on the morning of June 19th. Simultaneously our planes attacked and neutralized airfields on Guam and Rota. As the Japanese planes continued to arrive in swarms our own planes were recalled to be re-gassed and ready for use as air cover. Recovering the fighters and relaunching them before the arrival of the Japanese planes was accomplished in record time and though the attacks continued throughout the day our losses were held to a minimum.

After the planes were all in and tabulations made Task Force 58 found that its planes and anti-aircraft batteries had accounted for over 350 enemy planes and lost only 33.

Following up the "Marianas Turkey Shoot", as it became known, Task Force 58 steamed west at high speed to cut off the retreating Jap Fleet. On June 20th search planes reported the Japanese Force retiring to the east at 20 knots. Launching strikes in the afternoon the carrier force continued at high speed to gain a few miles for the planes would be low on fuel and very probably would have to make night landings.

Over the target the planes retaliated for the previous day's attacks by sinking one carrier, damaging two others and severely crippling several cruisers and escorts. In addition to shipping sunk, over 22 planes were downed.

Planes returning after dark found the Task Force easily, for a ship in each group kept a searchlight burning for the plucky fliers. Having exhausted their supply of gasoline many planes landed in the water to be picked up by cruisers and destroyers. Aided by patrol planes and DesDiv 92 which remained behind to pick up survivors our losses were held to 38 airmen.

On June 23rd carriers launched attacks on Pagan Island in the Marianas, followed by another strike at Iwo Jima. On June 24th Japanese planes were repulsed with the loss of about 116 bombers and fighters. Captain Jerome Donovan, U.S.N., relieved Captain Clark on June 25th while en route to Eniwetok for replenishment.

Under way with Task Force 58.2 in July the SAN JUAN screened the WASP, FRANKLIN, MONTEREY and CABOT during various phases of further strikes against Iwo Jima. Relieved from duties with Task Force 58 the SAN JUAN proceeded to San Francisco via Pearl.





Invasion Armada

Overhaul continued throughout September, and October found the SAN JUAN operating off San Clemente conducting shore bombardment exercises.

After returning to the war zone, the SAN JUAN was assigned to Task Group 38.2 for operations against the Japanese Luzon Air Force. Typhoons cut short the December operations and the force returned to Ulithi.

During January the Task Force sortied Ulithi for attacks against the enemy stronghold at Formosa. Completing the diversionary attacks on Formosa the group returned to carry out strikes against the Japanese on Luzon in sup-

port of amphibious landings. Underway again for Formosa the carriers knocked out air support which was gathering in Formosa for Philippines reinforcement.

In a surprise sweep into the South China Sea the carriers HANCOCK, LEXINGTON, TICONDEROGA and INDEPENDENCE, Task Force 38, disrupted shipping and conducted the most successful sweep of the war, catching the Japanese completely off guard.

Carriers hit French Indo-China at Saigon and Cape St. Jaques, catching a Jap cruiser sliding along the coast in an attempt to escape American Task Forces to the north.



"Big Boy" . . . an Iowa Class Battleship

During this sweep the SAN JUAN was approximately 12,000 water miles from home. Returning to Formosa the group hit Hong Kong, Swatow, Canton and Amoy along the way to cap a brilliant sally.

Japan came in for its share of strikes when Task Force 38 hit Tokyo Bay on January 25th in support of amphibious operations in Iwo Jima. Because of unfavorable weather the Task Force moved to a point suitable for strikes on Kobe, Osaka and Nagoya but heavy weather prevented efficient operations so the Task Force set a course for Ulithi.

In March, Captain George Bahm, U.S.N., relieved Captain Donovan as Commanding Officer. While anchored in Ulithi the crew of the "Panther" made daily trips to Mog Mog, recreation area, for beer parties and ball games.

It was during that same period the Japanese fraternity of Kamikaze brothers initiated a member aboard the RANDOLPH anchored in Ulithi Anchorage. At the same time another Jap plane mistook Mog Mog for a carrier and bounced noisily off the coral reef without damage to the island.

Operating off Okinawa in April word was received of a large portion of the Japanese fleet steaming along the coast of Kyushu. Air strikes were sent out to intercept and destroy this force. As a result of this strike the Imperial Navy was reduced by one battleship, two light cruisers and three destroyers in addition to those damaged. Our losses were seven aircraft.

Our own force was under constant attack by suicide bombers and other enemy planes. During one day's operation off Okinawa 391 planes were shot down by aircraft and ships of Task Force 58.

On the 21st the SAN JUAN bombarded the shores of Minami Daito Jima, setting numerous fires and inflicting considerable damage. She was assisted in this bombardment by eight destroyers. Returning from the bombardment the "Panther" fueled from the TOMAHAWK and returned to the carrier screen. Returning to Ulithi in the latter part of April for upkeep the rest period proved a very brief relief.

In May the "Panther" headed for the shores of Kyushu where the carriers launched renewed air strikes against the Japanese homeland.

Admiral J. S. McCain, Jr., relieved Admiral Marc A. Mitscher on May 28th and the Task Force designation was changed to Task Force 38.

June typhoons handicapped operations against Okinawa and the PITTSBURGH lost her bow in one of the more severe blows. The "Panther" received some damage herself but continued with the action while other ships were relieved to go to advance bases for repairs.

During July the "Panther" operated with the LEXINGTON and HANCOCK while daily conducting carrier strikes against the homeland.

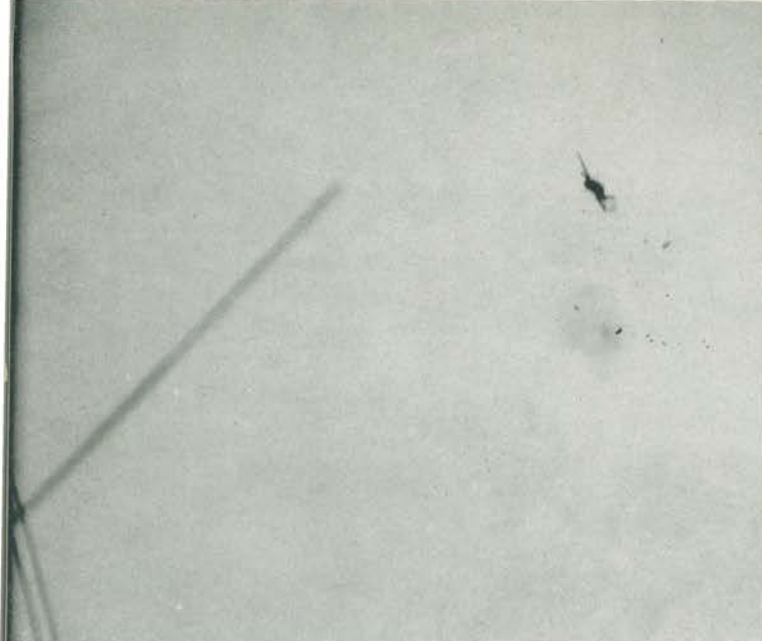
On the 10th of August, 1945, the SAN JUAN was in latitude 38-26N, longitude 148-13E with several carriers and cruisers. In spite of the Japanese surrender proposal the Task Force continued to launch air strikes against shipping and the Tokyo Bay area. August 15th marked the day the last air strike was launched against the Japanese Empire. At 1500 the Commander Third Fleet announced the cessation of hostilities.

During the day 12 planes were shot down around the formation.

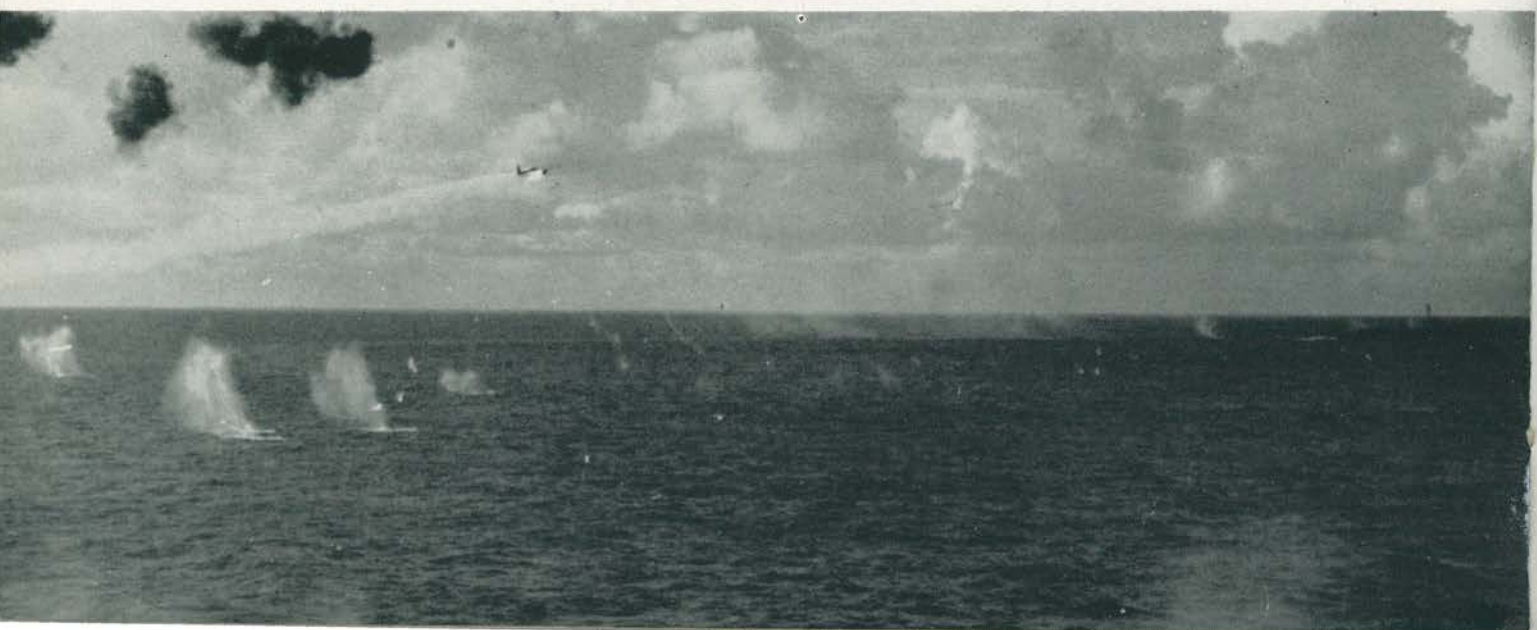
On board the SAN JUAN preparations were made to send a Landing Force ashore when

Murderer's Row . . . Ulithi





Meet Mr. Kamikaze



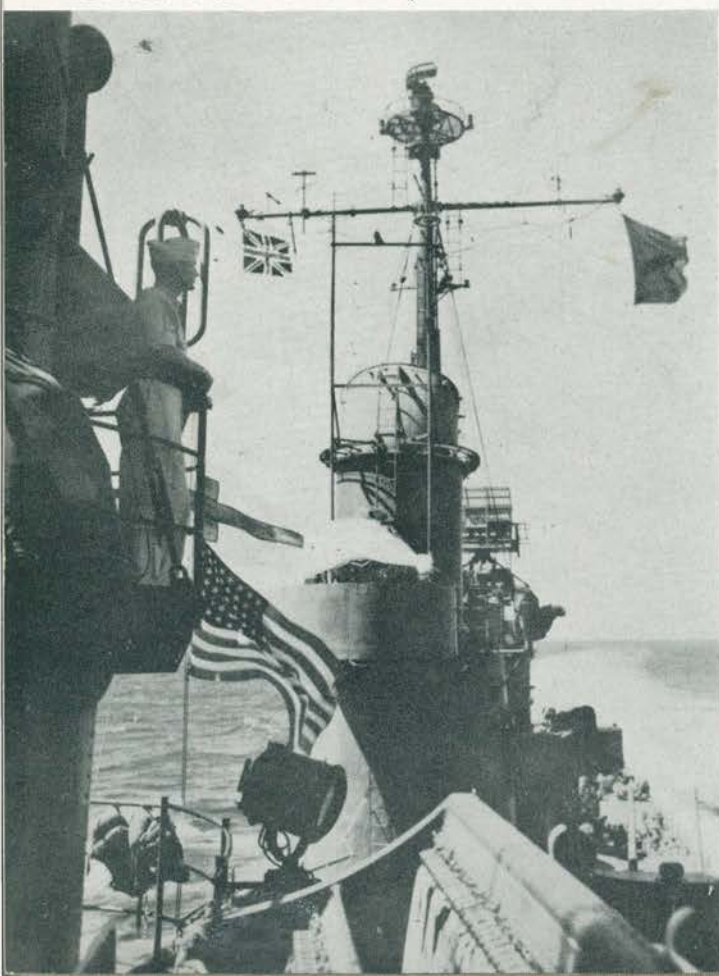


Philippines Liberated



Transports Follow Up With Fresh Troops and Supplies

British Union Jack Shares the Yardarm With the "Panther Flag" as the San Juan Carries 70 British P.O.W.'s to Tokyo



they entered Tokyo Bay. Exercises and drills were carried out under the direction of several officers and chiefs.

Commander H. E. Stassen, U.S.N.R., came aboard for conference with ComTaskFlot 6, in connection with the evacuation of Prisoners of War. On August 27th the SAN JUAN moored in Sagami Wan, Honshu, Japan, and received aboard the first Prisoners of War, many of them swimming out to the ship in their joy of liberation. From Sagami Wan to Tokyo Bay the "Panther" carried out her P.O.W. liberation, bringing food, clothing and medical attention to thousands of American, British and Australian prisoners. Few will forget the joyful greetings received from the ill-fed, ill-clad patriots of freedom.

The streets of Japan presented a startling contrast to America's clean cities. The old mingled with the new, with decay and filth unchecked. The Japanese were fearful at first, crossing the street to give American



Carrier U.S.S. Independence at G.Q.

soldiers and sailors plenty of berth, bowing and scraping to the bewilderment of our amused service men. The Yokosuka Naval Base, battered by our planes, presented a strange opposite to our neat and trim Navy Yards. The breakwater in the outer harbor bore the weight of beached Jap ships while the blackened hulk of the battleship Nagato lay rusting in the bay off Yokosuka.

The ceremonies of the final surrender were held about 15 miles from the SAN JUAN and the air show was clearly visible as planes filled the air over the MISSOURI on that historic occasion.

From Tokyo Bay the "Panther" continued on its rescue mission, stopping in Sendai and Kamaishi, Japan, to free prisoners in areas not yet visited by Allied ships. The crew of the SAN JUAN was afforded an opportunity to visit out-of-the-way places missed by the rest of the surface Navy. They had an opportunity to see how thoroughly our bombing

had wrecked Japanese industry. Before shoving off for "Magic Carpet" duty and the return of many crew members to the United States each member of the crew received a Japanese rifle to add to the many souvenirs picked up in the month-long visit to Japan.

Completing her duties on the "Magic Carpet" the SAN JUAN proceeded to San Pedro, California, and thence to Seattle, Washington, in January of 1946.

At 1106 on February 19, 1946, the last underway watch was secured as the U.S.S. SAN JUAN moored, port side to Pier B, Everett Pacific Shipyards, Everett, Washington.

From February until June the remaining crew members of the "Panther" set to work preserving the SAN JUAN with new and fancy paints and other contrivances designed to minimize rust and corrosion to such an extent that five officers and 50 men can keep the ship in condition to have her ready for sea within 10 days, should the need ever arise.

During this period the SAN JUAN was towed to the Harbor Island yard of Todd-Pacific Shipyards, Inc., where a complete overhaul of the main engines and engineering plant was effected. Returned to Everett by way of tug the SAN JUAN crew completed the preservation commenced in February.

On June 8, 1946, the U.S.S. SAN JUAN and her sister ship, the U.S.S. SAN DIEGO, were inactivated in formal ceremonies at Everett, Washington.

Smart and glowing in her new gray coat she stands ready to sail again in the defense of the principles for which she fought so long and gallantly.

Japanese Pilot on the Bridge as San Juan Enters Japanese Home Waters



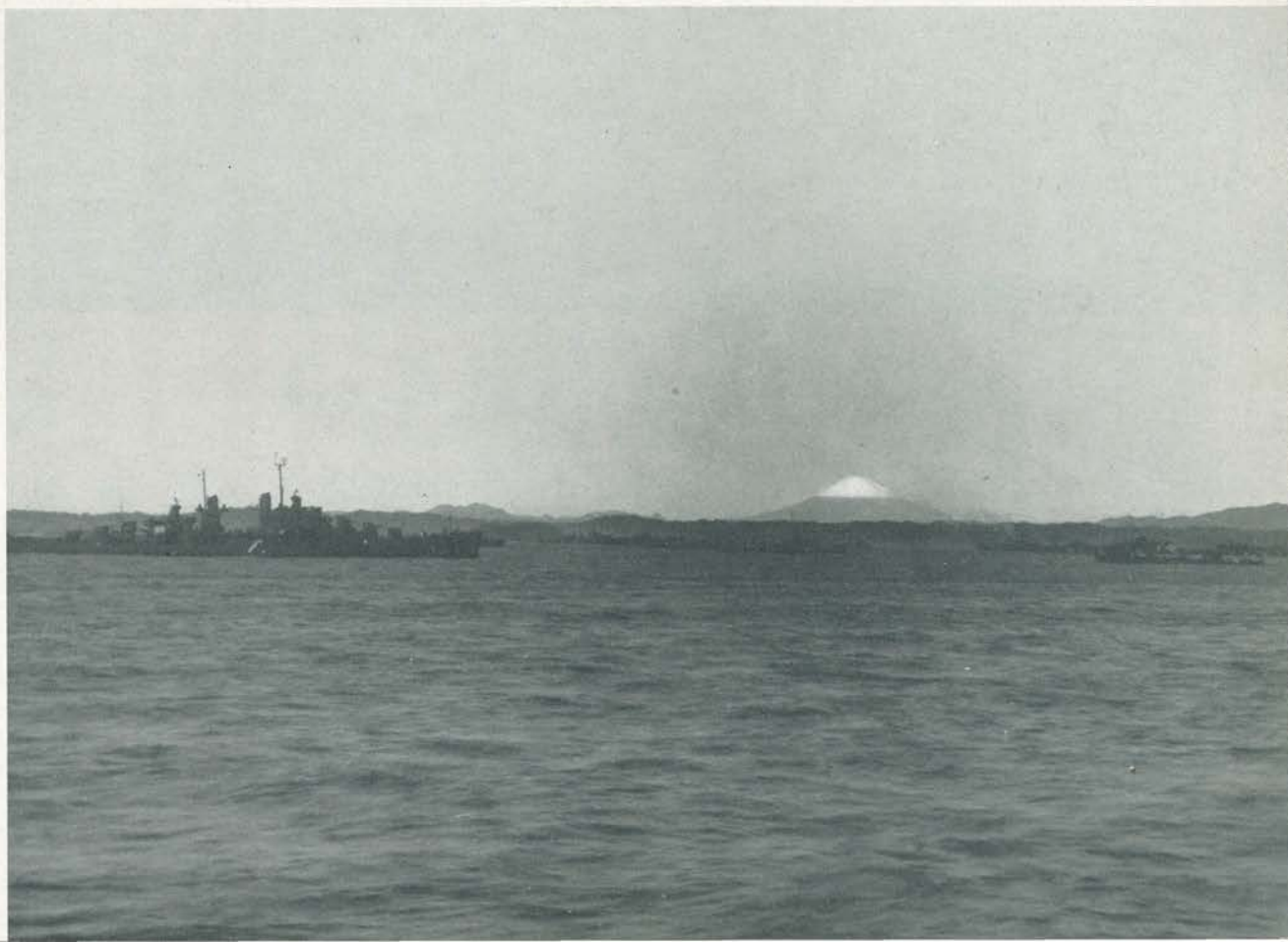
"Panther Landing Force"





V-J Day Air Show

Mount Fujiyama From Tokyo Bay Anchorage





Beachhead Bound

Logistics

CAMPAIGNS AND ENGAGEMENTS OF WORLD WAR II

Attached to First, Third and Fifth Fleets from
June, 1942, to September, 1945.

Guadalcanal-Tulagi Landings (7-9 August
1942).

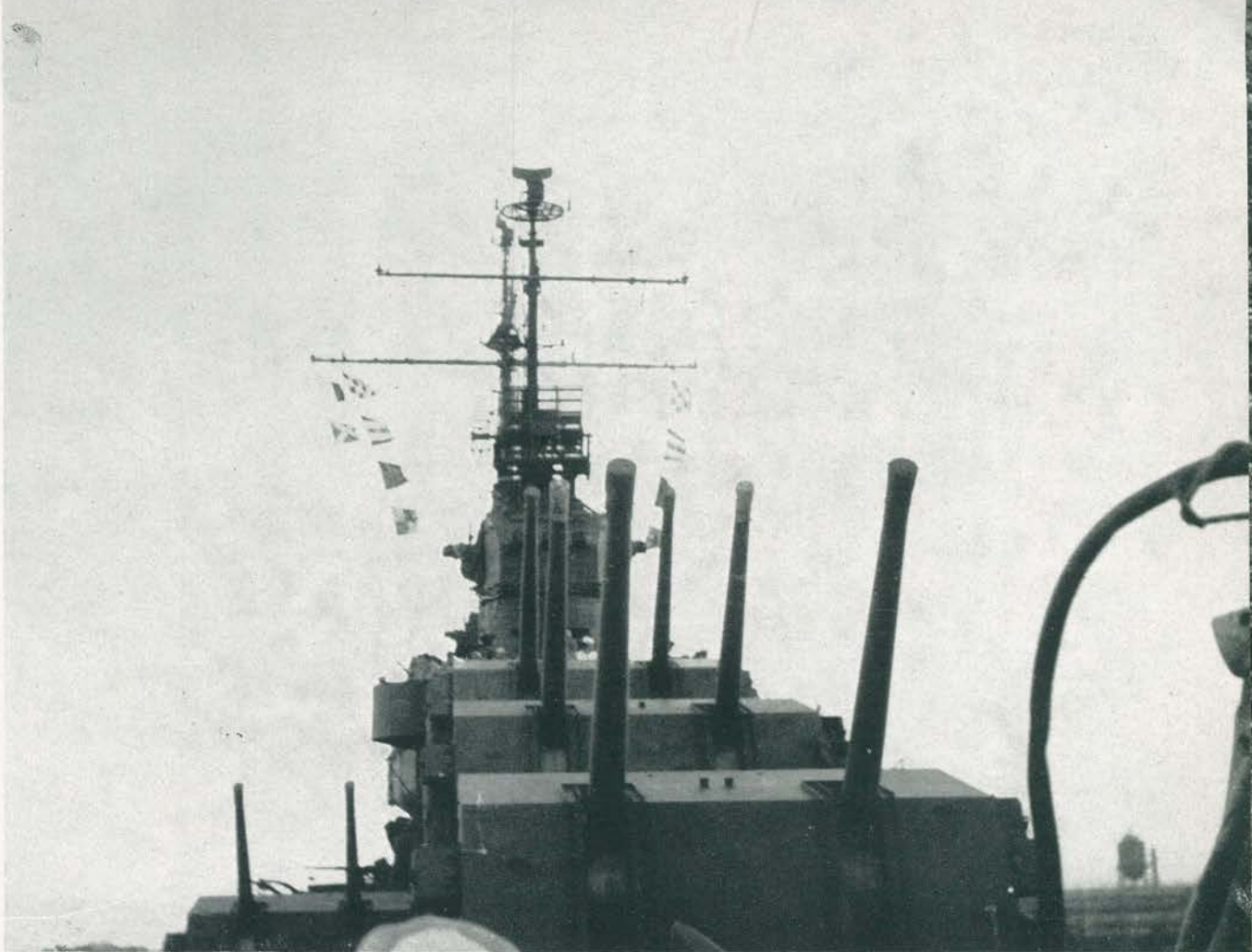
Defense of Guadalcanal-Tulagi (10 August
to 26 October, 1942).

Santa Cruz Islands (26 October 1942).

New Georgia Operation (20 June to 16 October,
1943).

Treasury-Bougainville Operation (27 October
to 15 December 1943).

Gilbert Islands Operation (13 November to
18 December 1943).



Voice of the San Juan

Marshall Islands Operation (26 November 1943 to 2 December 1944).

Asiatic-Pacific Raids (1944).

Western New Guinea Operation (21 April to 15 November 1944).

Marianas Operations (10 June to 27 August 1944).

Leyte Operation (Third Fleet Support, 14 to 16 December 1944).

Luzon Operation (Third Fleet Support, 6 to 22 January 1945).

Iwo Jima Operation (15 February to 1 March 1945).

Okinawa Operation (March to June 1945).

Third Fleet Strikes on Japan (10 July to 15 August 1945).

Philippine Liberation (January to June 1945).

DAMAGE INFLICTED ON ENEMY

Two Japanese patrol boats sunk.
Twenty Japanese planes shot down.

Citations

Commanding Officers

Captain J. E. Maher—Navy Cross.
Captain G. W. Clark—Legion of Merit.
Captain J. F. Donovan, Jr.—Bronze Star.
Captain G. H. Bahm—Silver Star.



Panther Flag

FLAG AND FORCE COMMANDERS CARRIED

Rear Admiral Norman Scott, Commander
Cruisers, Task Force 18.

Commodore R. W. Simpson, Commander Task
Flot Six.

INACTIVATED

On June 8, 1946, at Everett, Washington.

MILES STEAMED

306,728.7

Almost 12 trips around the earth.

FUEL OIL (CONSUMED)

22,351,000 gallons

The amount carried by a fleet of seven
sea-going tankers.

Enough, if transformed into gasoline, to
last 800 autoists a lifetime.

HOURS UNDERWAY

16,443 hours

(Excludes eliminated performance.)

HOURS NOT UNDERWAY

10,371 hours

(Excludes eliminated performance.)

A man standing regular watches during
whole time has stood about 4,050 watches.

GALLONS WATER DISTILLED

33,150,000 gallons

Enough to fill a tank 570 feet high and
100 feet in diameter. Enough to furnish
drinking water to the entire United States
for a whole day.

KWHR OF ELECTRIC POWER PRODUCED

9,881,000 KWHR

Enough power to drive a fast passenger
train at top speed for almost four months.



Air View—U.S.S. San Juan



FUELED SHIP

192 times

ICE CREAM PRODUCED (AND CONSUMED)

76,500 gallons

Enough for 288 miles of ice cream cones, end to end. (Would reach from Chicago to St. Louis).

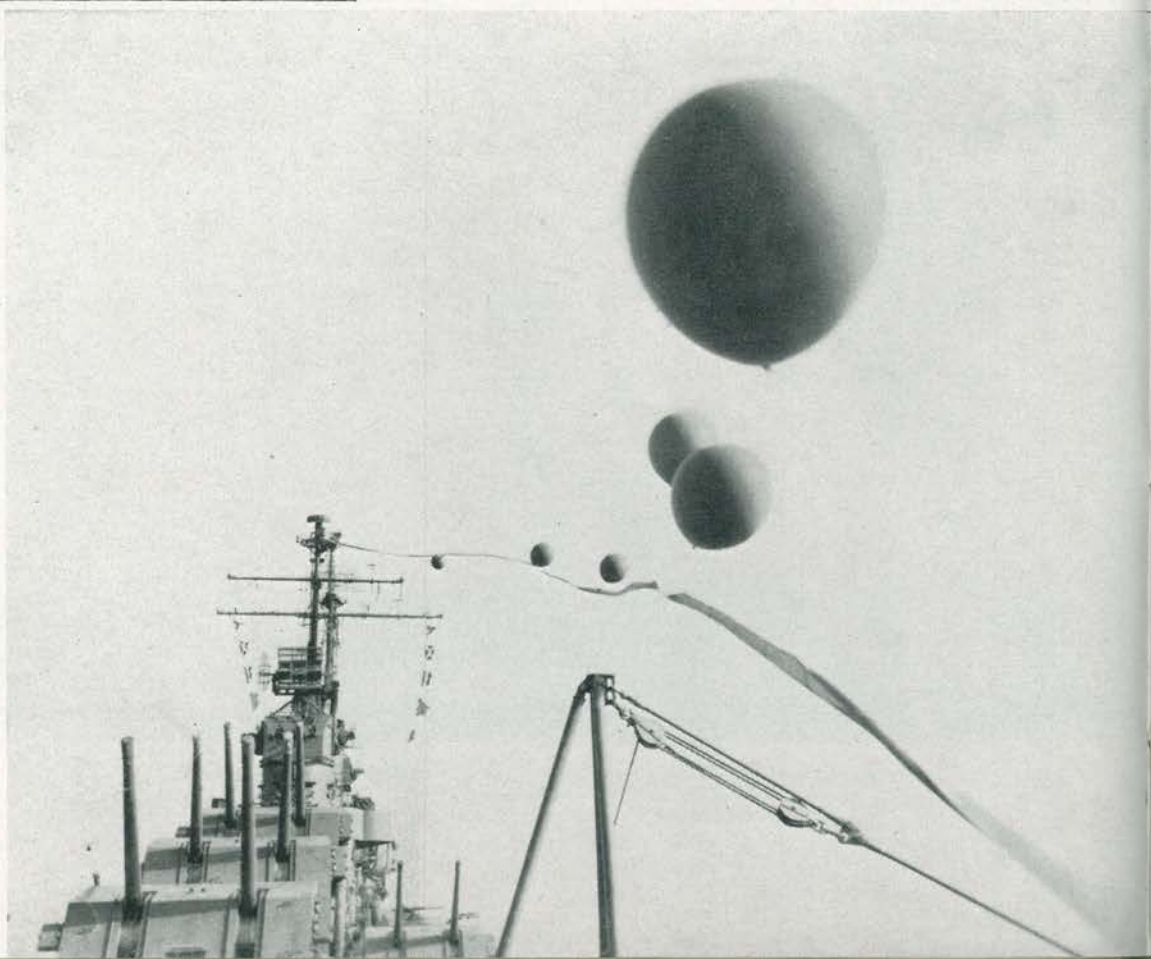
On only five occasions have all boilers been idle at the same time since SAN JUAN was commissioned.

And last, but not least, a conservative estimate reveals the amazing total of one and one-half MILLION socks washed by the long-suffering laundrymen for their shipmates of the SAN JUAN.

AMMUNITION EXPENDED

- (a) Mk. VI Depth Charges.....28 chgs.
- (b) 5"/38 Projectiles25,095 rds.
- (c) 1"10/75 Projectiles.....56,614 rds.
- (d) 40MM Projectiles86,282 rds.
- (e) 20MM Projectiles225,328 rds.
- (f) % of 5" Ammo fired at the Japs....25%
- % of MG Ammo fired at the Japs.... 4%

Homeward-Bound Pennant





Sunset at Sea

To Commanding Officer U.S.S. San Juan:

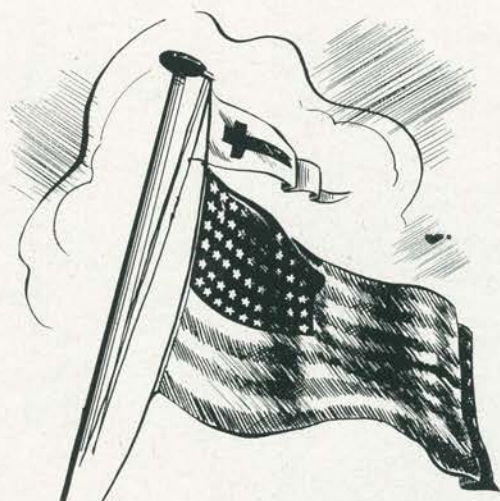
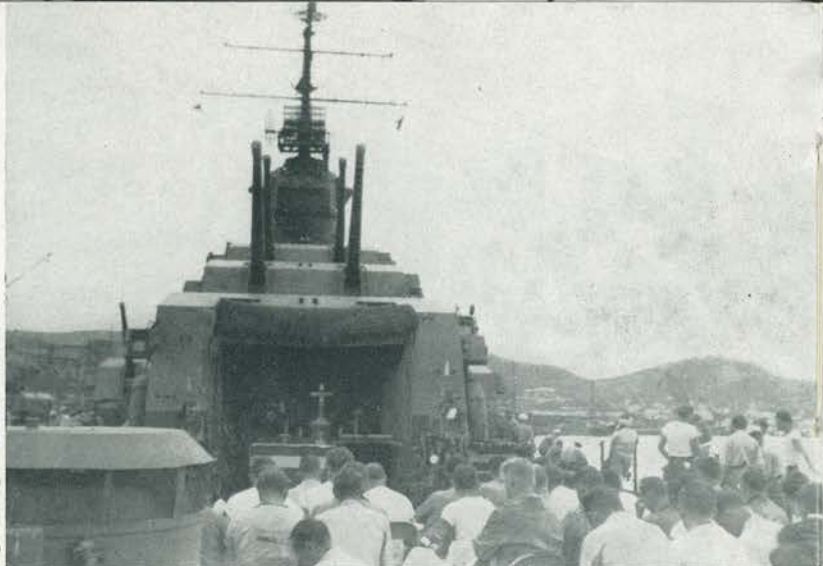
42. Station Street
Middlesbrough
Yorkshire, England

Sir:

I would just like to tell you that the seventy British P.O.W.'s which you picked up at Hari, and took to Tokyo, have all arrived safely in England.

I would once again like to thank you and the crew of the SAN JUAN for the kindness which was shown to us during our short stay on the cruiser. The greatest gesture was the flying of our British flag. Thank you.

Sir,
I am,
R.Q.M.S. REDFEALN



DIVINE SERVICES





After 40-MM Mount

Pilothouse





Gangway Watch

Starboard Torpedo Mount



Jaw Bos'n



*Tonsorial
Expert*



This Won't Hurt



Gedunk Stand

*Sound Gear . . .
Submarines Take Heed*



*Navy
Fire-Fighters*



Wardroom Mess

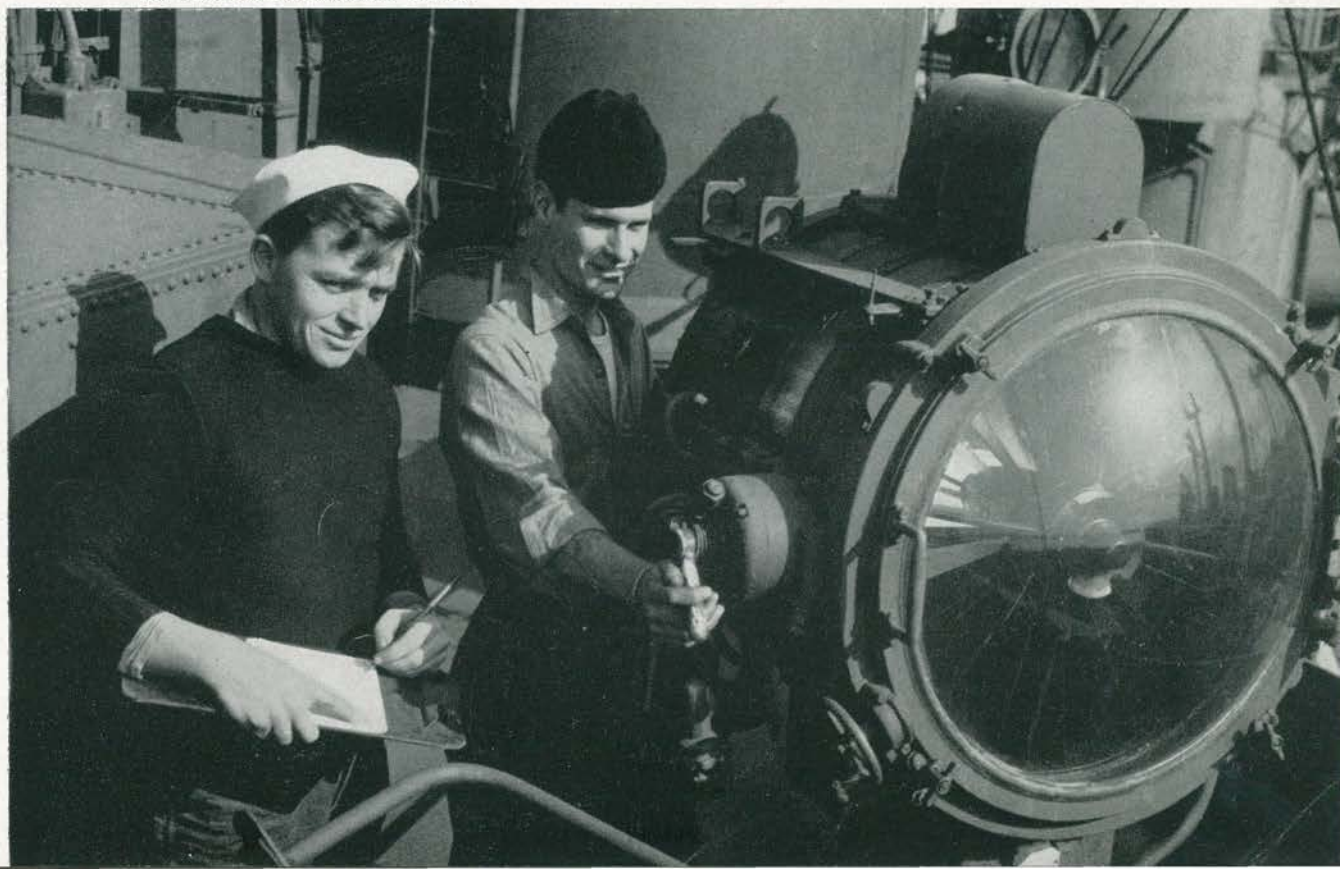
Charthouse





Flaghoist and Semaphore Signals

24-inch Searchlight Crew





Nineteenth Fleet Sunlines



Inactivation



First Division Scrapers

Liberty Will Commence . . .





*Crew's Quarters
"The Deep Six"*



The Scoreboard

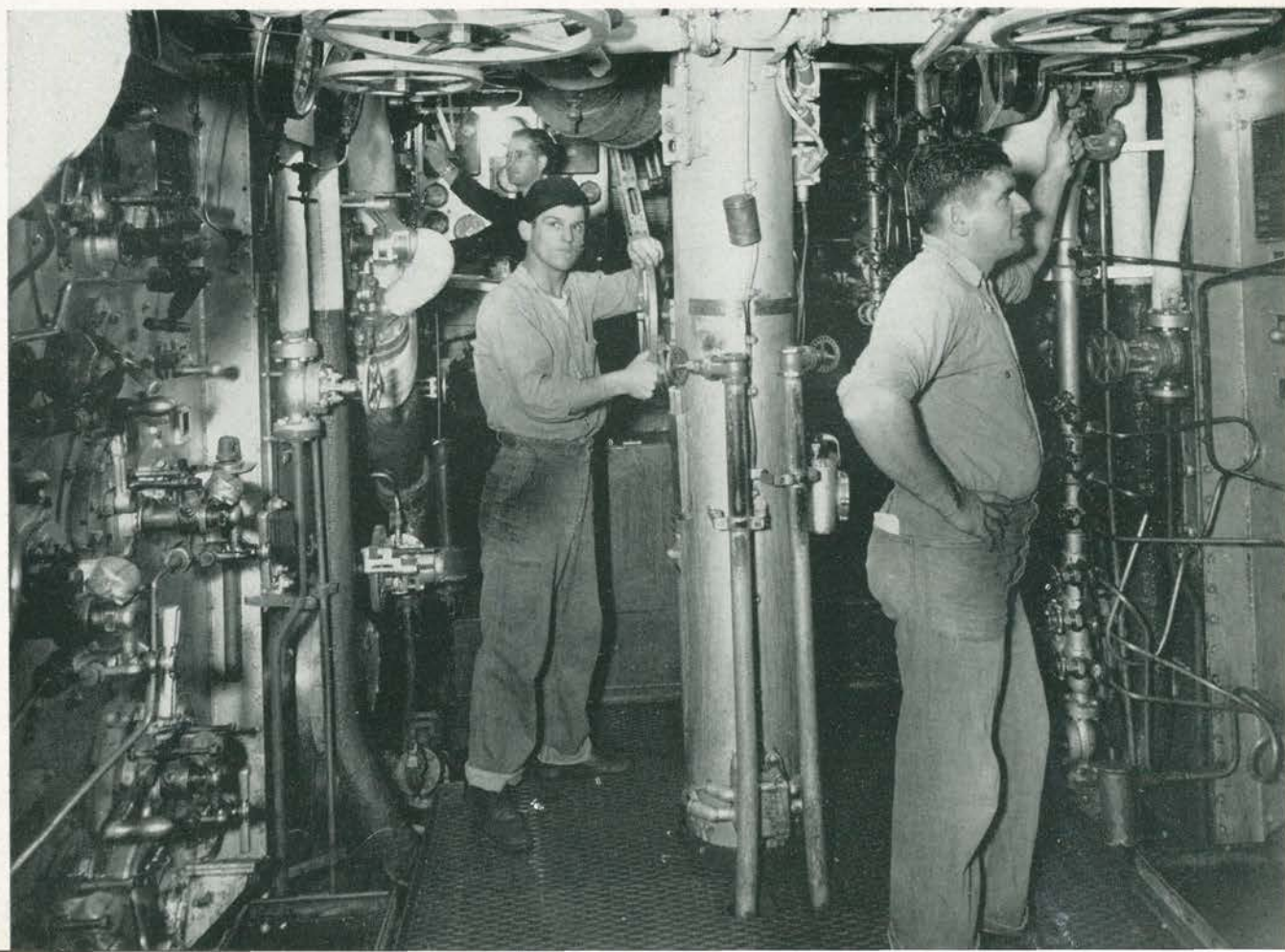


Souvenirs



"Barnacle Bill"

Fireroom





Machine Shop



Main Engine Room

FROM: CTG 30.6 BY: COMMANDER STASSEN 29 AUG 1945
TO: COM THIRD FLT

THERE NEVER HAS BEEN A BLACKER HELL HOLE THAN PRISONER OF WAR HOSPITAL WE ARE EVACUATING HALF MILE NORTH OF AMORI. APPROXIMATELY 500 HAVE BEEN PROCESSED THROUGH BENEVOLENCE INCLUDING FRACTURES, OPEN WOUNDS, CONCUSSIONS, BURNS, AND IN GENERAL THE WORST MALNUTRITION IMAGINABLE. BESTIAL BEATINGS WERE COMMON ESPECIALLY AT AVUNO, THE INQUISITORIAL DEN OF BARBARISM. THE CHEERS OF THE POW'S AS OUR BOATS HOVE IN SIGHT BROUGHT TEARS TO OUR EYES. OPERATION PROCEEDING ACCORDING TO PLAN. THE BATH, MEDICAL CARE, CHOW, INTERVIEW, CLEAN BED ROUTINE ON THE BENEVOLENCE IS A MERCIFUL MACHINE OF EFFICIENCY

FLEET ADM. C. W. NIMITZ TRANSMITS TO THE PACIFIC FLEET AND PACIFIC OCEAN AREA WITH THE GREATEST SATISFACTION AND PRIDE THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY: "MY WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS ON THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A GREAT TASK. PLEASE SEND TO THE COMMANDERS OF THE FLEETS AND FORCES THROUGHOUT THE PACIFIC AND ALL HANDS IN THEIR COMMANDS MY PERSONAL CONGRATULATIONS AND THE DEEP PRIDE WHICH AMERICA HAS IN THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENT. LET US KEEP IN REVERENT RECOLLECTION THE MEMORIES OF THOSE OF OUR COMRADES WHOSE SACRIFICE HAS GIVEN US OUR FREEDOM."

2 MARCH 1945: FROM COM TG 58.4

WE ARE ABOUT TO COMPLETE AN OPERATION WHICH WILL BE HISTORICALLY IMPORTANT, THE FIRST DIRECT ATTACK BY THE NAVY ON TOKYO. IT IS THE VERY DEFINITE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR THE JAPANESE AND THEY KNOW IT. IT GAVE ME A DEEP FEELING OF PERSONAL SATISFACTION TO TAKE PART IN THIS STRIKE AND A GREAT FEELING OF PRIDE TO HAVE THE HONOR TO COMMAND SUCH A SPLENDID GROUP. WELL DONE.

19 AUG 1945

FROM COM CRUPAC TO: CRUPAC

YOU OFFICERS AND MEN WHO MAN THE CRUISERS, DESTROYERS, DESTROYER ESCORTS, DESTROYER TENDERS, AND PATROL FRIGATES OF THE PACIFIC CAN REVIEW YOUR WAR RECORD AND ACHIEVEMENTS WITH A FULL MEASURE OF PRIDE AND SATISFACTION. YOU HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESS OF EVERY SEABORNE OPERATION AND SUPPORTED EVERY OTHER ARM WITH FULL COMPETENCE WHILST MAKING GLORIOUS HISTORY IN YOUR PRIVATE VENTURES IN SEEKING OUT AND DESTROYING THE ENEMY. WE DO NOT FORGET OUR COMRADES WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES. THE SLOT IN THE BATTLE OFF SAMAR AND IN SURIGAO STRAITS AND THE PICKET LINE AT OKINAWA ARE CITED AS THE ULTIMATE IN HIGH COURAGE AND BATTLE EFFICIENCY. WELL DONE.

30 APRIL 1945

FROM: CTG 58.1

ON THIS CRUISE 528 ENEMY PLANES WERE SHOT DOWN BY OUR AIRCRAFT AND 48 BY SHIPS' GUNFIRE; 154 OF THEM IN ONE DAY. OUR PLANES DESTROYED 238 ENEMY PLANES ON THE GROUND. THE NUMBER OF ENEMY PLANES DAMAGED IN THE AIR AND ON THE GROUND, AND PROBABLY DESTROYED OR DAMAGED IN THE AIR BRINGS THE SUM OF ENEMY AIRCRAFT RENDERED NON-OPERATIONAL TO A TOTAL OF 1037. HEAVY DAMAGE WAS DELIVERED TO ENEMY SHIPS, INCLUDING DESTRUCTION OF AN ENTIRE EIGHT SHIP CONVOY. WE HIT THE YAMOTO FIRST, HEAVILY DAMAGING IT AND A CRUISER. WE ALSO SANK TWO DESTROYERS IN THAT FORAY. AT KOBE WE HIT THE JAP FLEET AND DAMAGED TWO CV, ONE CVL, ONE CV-BB, ONE BB, ONE CL, ONE SUBMARINE. ON BADGER HUNT OF 28 MARCH WE SANK A DE. THE COLLETT SANK AN ENEMY SUBMARINE. HEAVY DAMAGE WAS INFLICTED ON SHORE INSTALLATIONS BY OUR SURFACE BOMBARDMENT. 56 ENEMY MINES WERE EXPLODED OR SUNK. CRUISER AND BATTLESHIP SEA-PLANES RESCUED EIGHT PILOTS AND DESTROYERS UPWARDS OF 20. PERHAPS THE HIGHLIGHT WAS OUR PROGRESS IN GUNNERY WHICH NOT ONLY PAID HANDSOMELY IN ENEMY PLANES SHOT DOWN BUT IN ADDITION WAS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING OUR OWN LOSSES TO A MINIMUM. THE CREDIT FOR THIS RECORD BELONGS TO ALL HANDS. IT IS A RECORD FOR WHICH ALL OF YOU CAN RIGHTFULLY BE PROUD. MY HIGHEST ADMIRATION AND A HEARTY, "WELL DONE!"

SIGNED,

BULLDURHAM ALIAS ROMEO

28 JULY: FROM CINCPAC

"THE EXPEDITIOUS AND SKILLFUL MANNER WITH WHICH OUR COMBATANT SHIPS RECEIVE AT SEA GREAT QUANTITIES OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, AMMUNITIONS, STORES, AND PROVISIONS AS WELL AS AIRCRAFT AND PERSONNEL HAS REQUIRED SEAMANSHIP OF THE HIGHEST ORDER. IT HAS ALSO REQUIRED CAREFUL DETAILED PLANNING AND MUCH HARD WORK. TO ALL HANDS—WELL DONE—NIMITZ."

19 AUGUST 1945:

FROM CINCPAC TO COM THIRD FLEET

THE DAMAGING BLOWS BY THE FORCES OF YOUR COMMAND FROM 28 MAY TO 15 AUGUST WERE IMPORTANT FACTORS IN CAUSING THE ENEMY TO QUIT. NEARLY 3000 PLANES WERE DESTROYED OR DAMAGED. THE REMAINS OF HIS MERCHANT SHIPS OF ALL SIZES WERE SUNK. NO PART OF THE EMPIRE WAS SAFE FROM YOUR ATTACK. HIGHLY EFFECTIVE STRIKES AGAINST HIS INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENTS SERIOUSLY WEAKENED HIS PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY. AIRCRAFT AND SURFACE SHIPS DID MUCH TO DISRUPT HIS COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES. THEY ATTACKED HIS PORTS, HIS RAILROADS, HIS HARBORS, AND HIS FACTORIES WITH GUNS AND BOMBS. IT WAS A JOB SUPERBLY WELL DONE BY AIRMEN AND SEAMEN—FIGHTING MEN AND ALL. WELL DONE. NIMITZ.

MARCH 22, 1945

U. S. S. SAN JUAN
INCOMING

Heading: ☐ Radio ☒ Visual

From: -P- ONL -A- OF5 212355 KB KB -W- 2F2 GR 1PB BT

Action To: OCU FIFTH FLEET

TF 58 CTF 58

Info To: CINCPAC

MARCH 22 145
PRIORITY JB

THE MANNER IN WHICH TASK FORCE 58 HAS FOUGHT AND MANEUVERED DURING THE PAST 4 DAYS HAS SURPASSED ITS OWN STANDARD. GREAT DAMAGE HAS BEEN INFLICTED ON BOTH THE MATERIAL AND THE MORALE OF THE ENEMY. OUR SHIPS DAMAGED IN ACTION CONTINUED TO FIGHT. PROTECTION UNDER THE ENEMY'S REGRE. OUR FIGHTER AND ARTILLERY PROTECTION WERE SUPERB. OUR OFFENSIVE AIRCRAFT WERE BOTH PHM-4 RAD CRAPLE WAS REPAIRED AND BROUGHT AWAY TO SAFETY. THE OPERATIONS THAT LIE AHEAD OF US. I AM VERY PROUD TO HAVE BEEN WITH YOU AGAIN. SPRUANCE BT

44 MAR 22 11/4

MSG 212355

44 MAR 22 11/4

MARCH 22, 1945

U. S. S. SAN JUAN
INCOMING

Heading: ☐ Radio ☒ Visual

From: -A- 097 212952 C54 GR 18 BT

Info To:

MSG CAPTAIN BAHM. GLAD TO WELCOME YOU IN THE DIVISION. HOW IS EVERYTHING. CAPTAIN ILL.

MSG 097 100

44 MAR 22 11/4

MSG 097 100

44 MAR 22 11/4

MARCH 29, 1945

U. S. S. SAN JUAN
INCOMING

Heading: ☐ Radio ☒ Visual

From: TBS

Action To: C.T.G. 58.1

Info To: T.G. 58.1

--290709--

IN SO FAR AS POSSIBLE TOMORROW IS DECLARED AS A DAY OF REST FOR T.G. 58.1. BY SPECIAL REQUEST OF COM SCREEN THE ATTENTION OF ALL HANDS IS REFERRED TO THE NEW TESTAMENT HEBREW CHAPTER 13-8. NO IRREVERENCE MEANT.

REF; HEBREW CHAPTER 13-8 - "JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY AND FOREVER"

TOR;CIC-TBS-OHARA

44 MAR 29 11/4

MARCH 29, 1945

U. S. S. SAN JUAN
INCOMING

Heading: ☐ Radio ☒ Visual

From: TBS

Action To: C.T.G. 58.1

Info To: T.G. 58.1

--290709--

IN SO FAR AS POSSIBLE TOMORROW IS DECLARED AS A DAY OF REST FOR T.G. 58.1. BY SPECIAL REQUEST OF COM SCREEN THE ATTENTION OF ALL HANDS IS REFERRED TO THE NEW TESTAMENT HEBREW CHAPTER 13-8. NO IRREVERENCE MEANT.

REF; HEBREW CHAPTER 13-8 - "JESUS CHRIST, THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TODAY AND FOREVER"

TOR;CIC-TBS-OHARA

44 MAR 29 11/4

MARCH 28, 1945

U. S. S. SAN JUAN
INCOMING

Heading: ☐ Radio ☒ Visual

From: J5126 -D-A- JXCT 262255 3QBN -W- KRON -A- SNOW 260630 L6B

Action To: CINCPAC/POA

Info To: SECNAV

ORIG: CINCPAC/POA ADVHED

FIFTHFLT

PLEASE CONVEY TO THE COMMANDER OF THE FIFTH FLEET MY CONGRATULATIONS ON THE RECENT SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS OF THE FORCES UNDER HIS COMMAND PARTICULARLY THE STRIKE AGAINST ENEMY SHIPS IN THE INLAND SEA. THE REPORTS OF THE LATTER THRILLED THE NATION.

44 MAR 28 11/4

MARCH 28, 1945

U. S. S. SAN JUAN
INCOMING

Heading: ☐ Radio ☒ Visual

From: -A- 064 220510 C54 GR 16 BT

Action To: VINCENNES

Info To: SAN JUAN

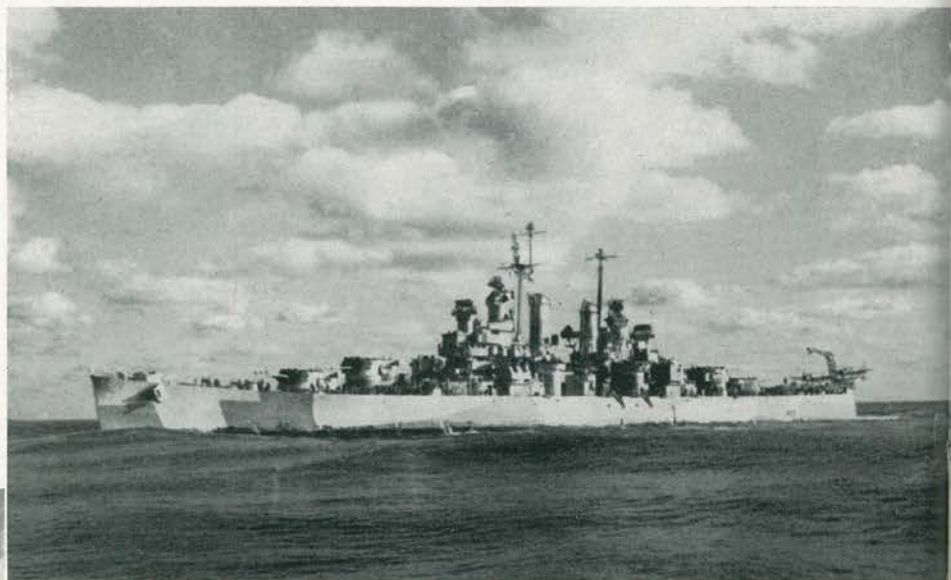
MSG. CAPTAIN BAHM. JUST LIKE WASHINGTON, GEORGE. WELCOMETO THE BLUE TEAM. LALOR.

MSG 064 220510

44 MAR 28 11/4



Running Mates of the San Juan







Tacloban
Manicani
Tacloban



Travels of the San Juan

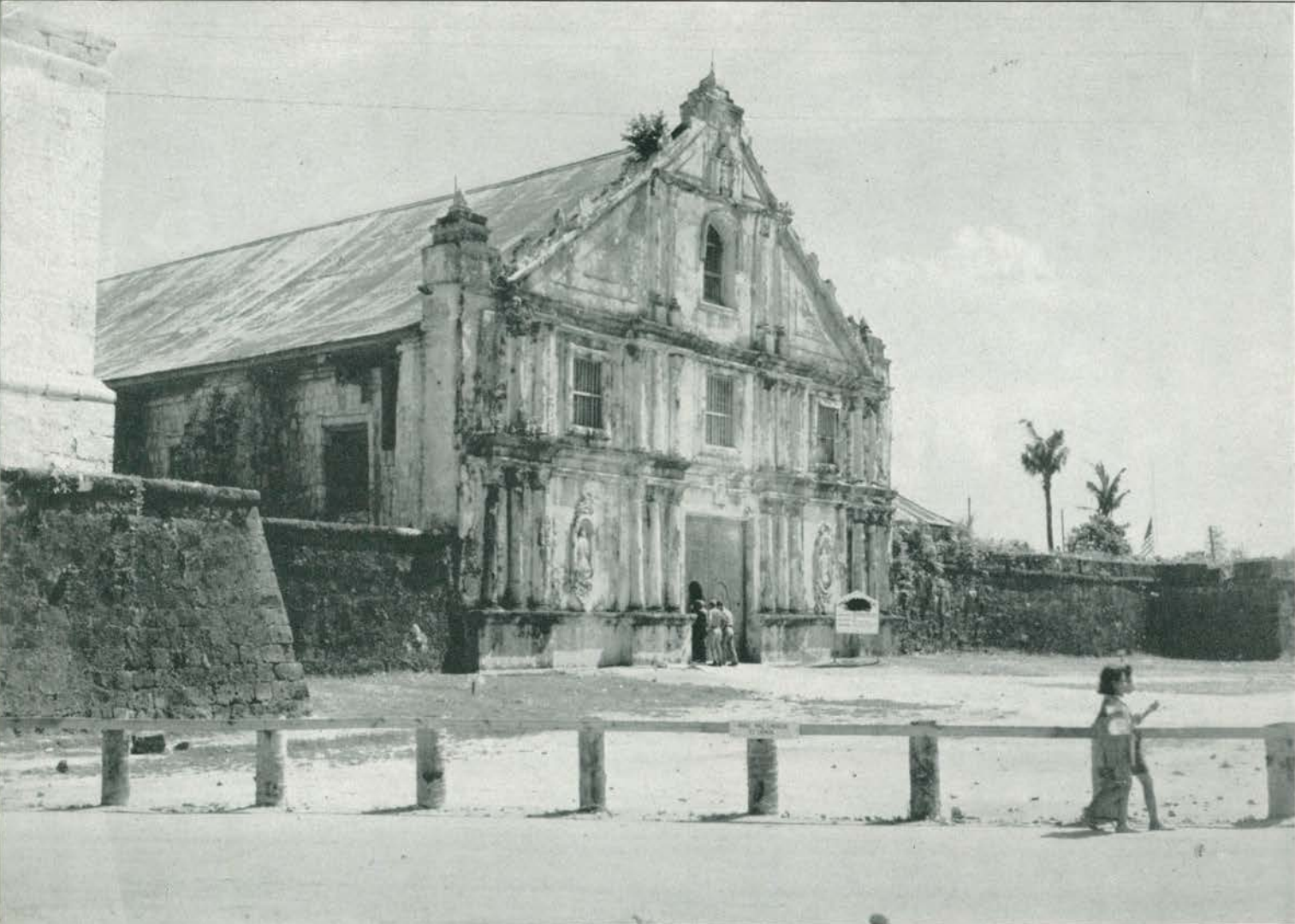


Bumboat



Leyte





Guion

First Repatriates at Sagami Wan





Tacloban





Kamaishi, Japan

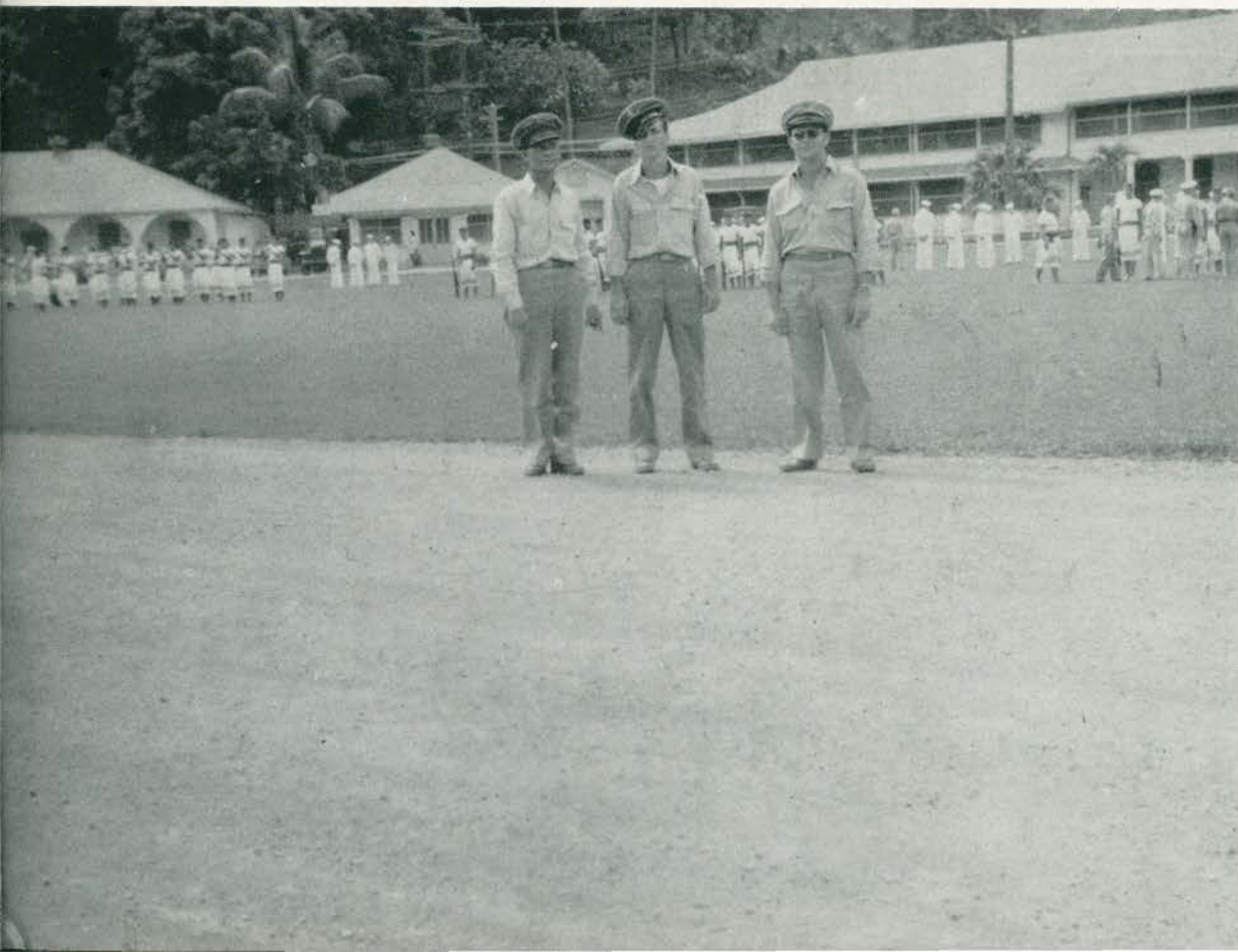


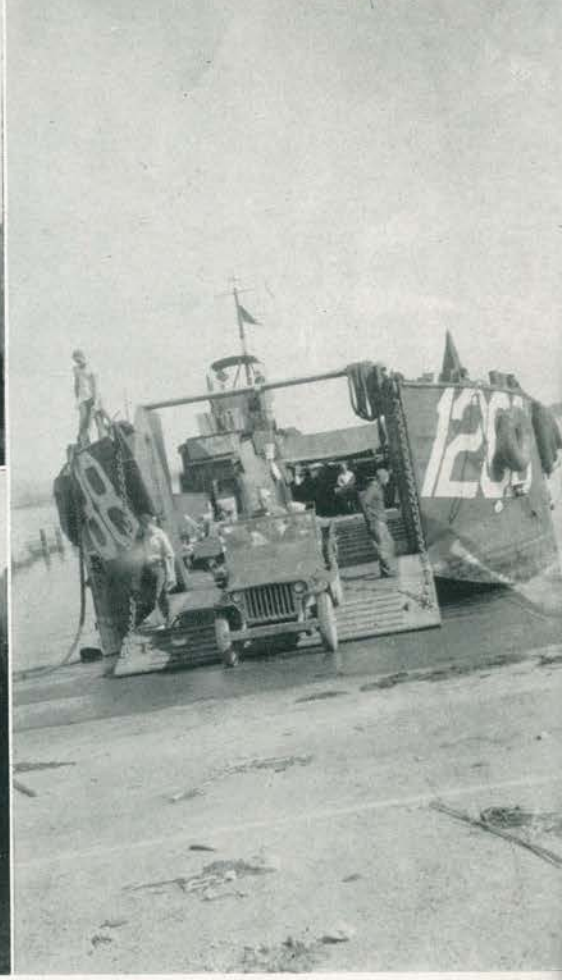
Waikiki Beach



Capital of Leyte

Feta-Feta Guard at Pago-Pago





Evacuating Repatriated Yanks Sendai, Japan



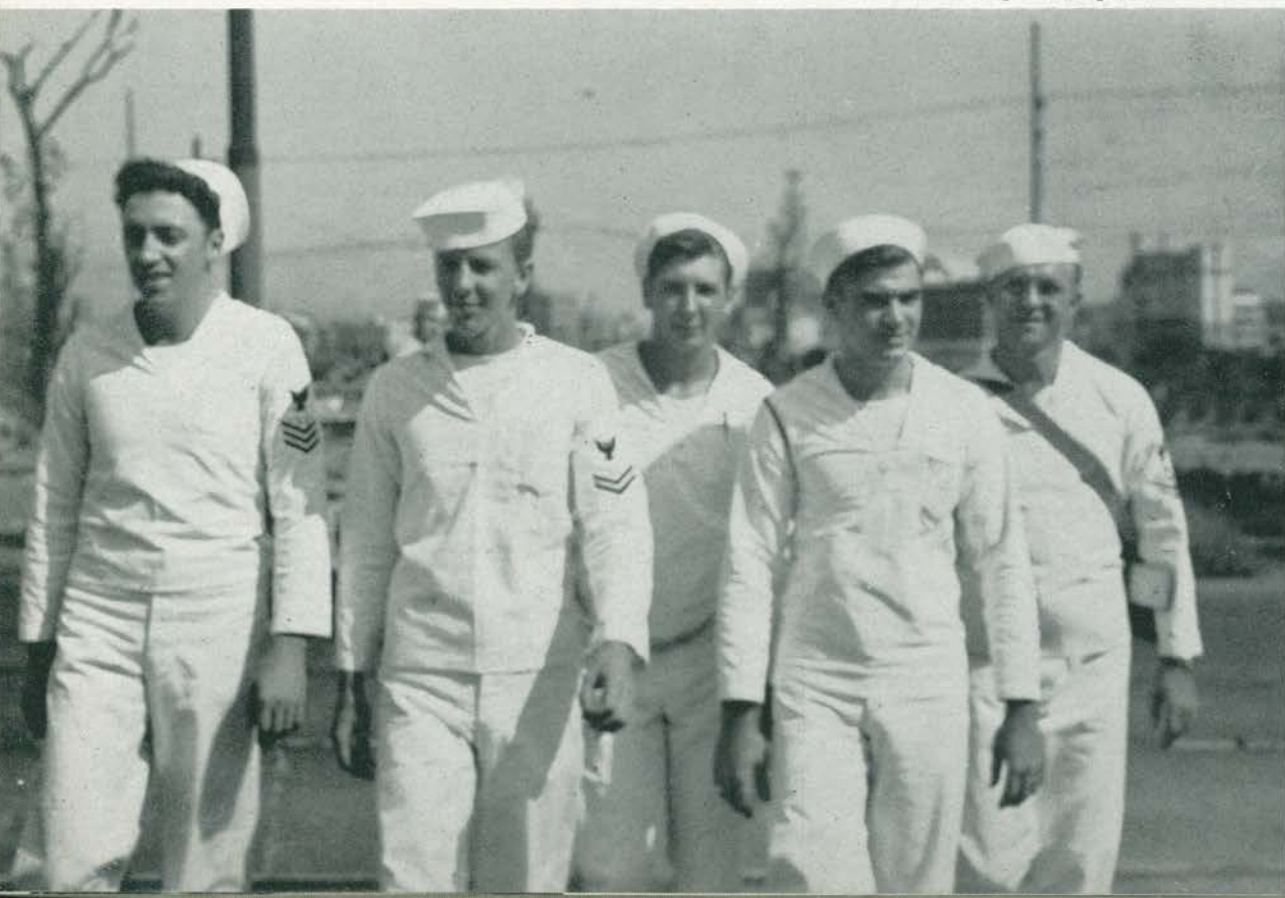


Mount Fujiyama



Japanese Imperial Police

Liberty in Japan





The Temples

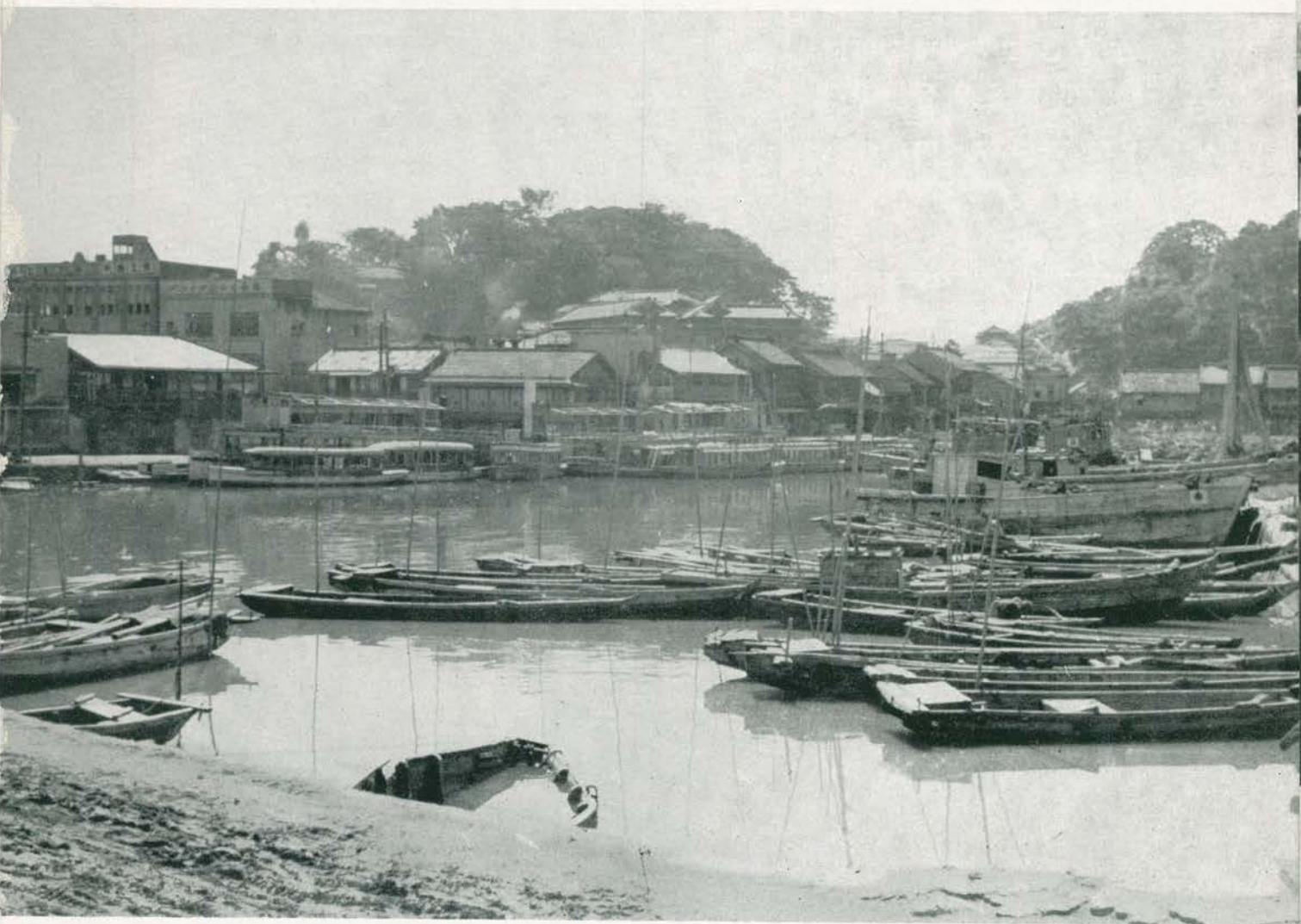




*Buddha . . .
Kama Kura,
Japan*



*Interior
of
Buddha*



Sandai, Japan





People of Japan . . .





Kama Kura Temple Procession



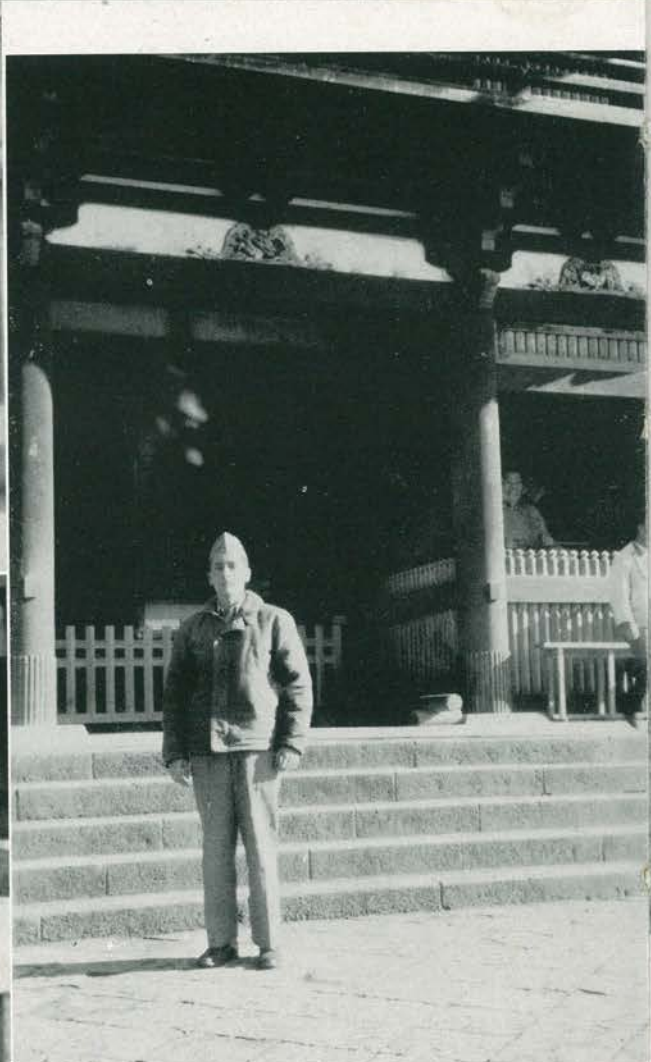
Japanese Fishermen



A Sailor's Liberty

Japanese Ricksha

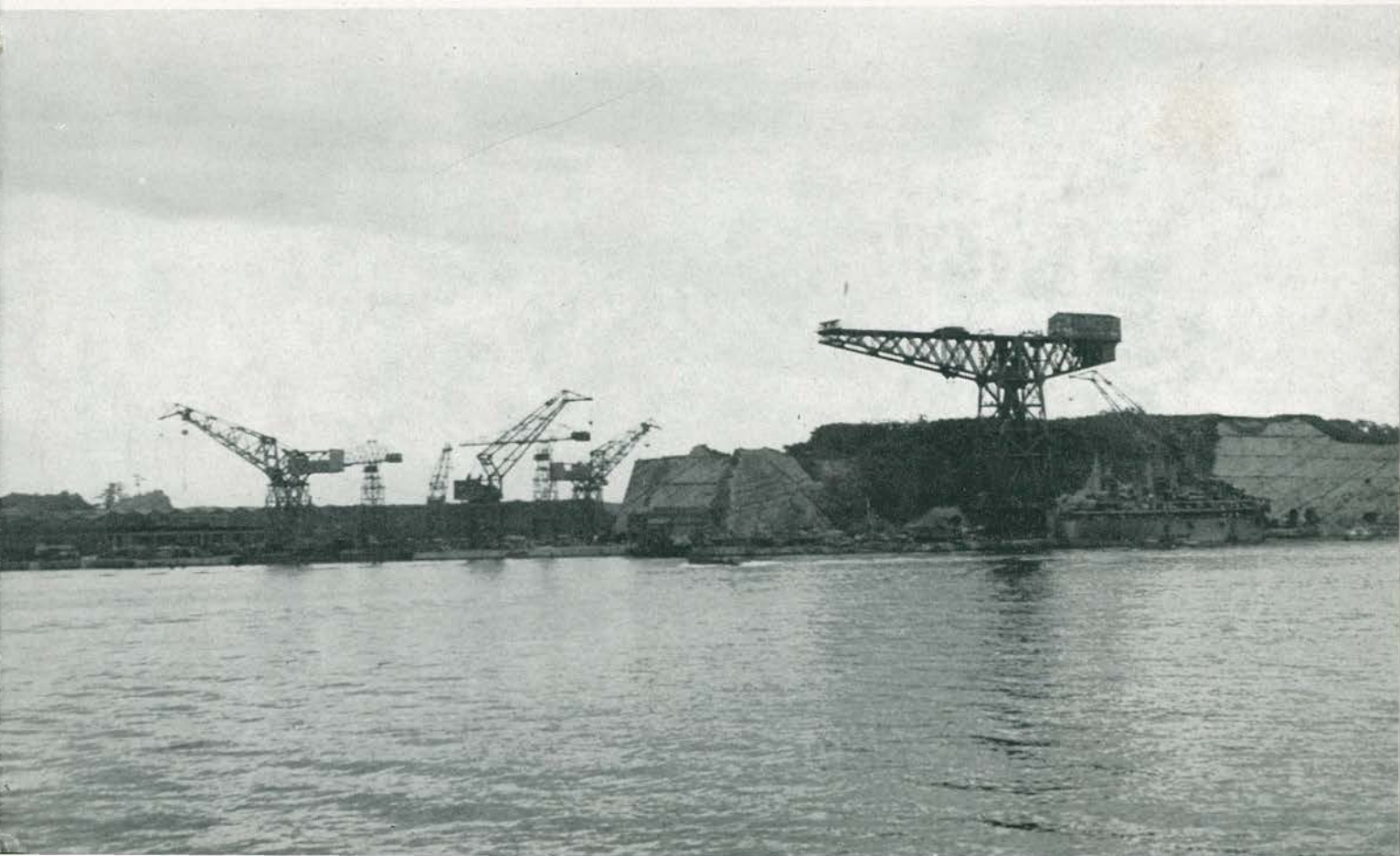




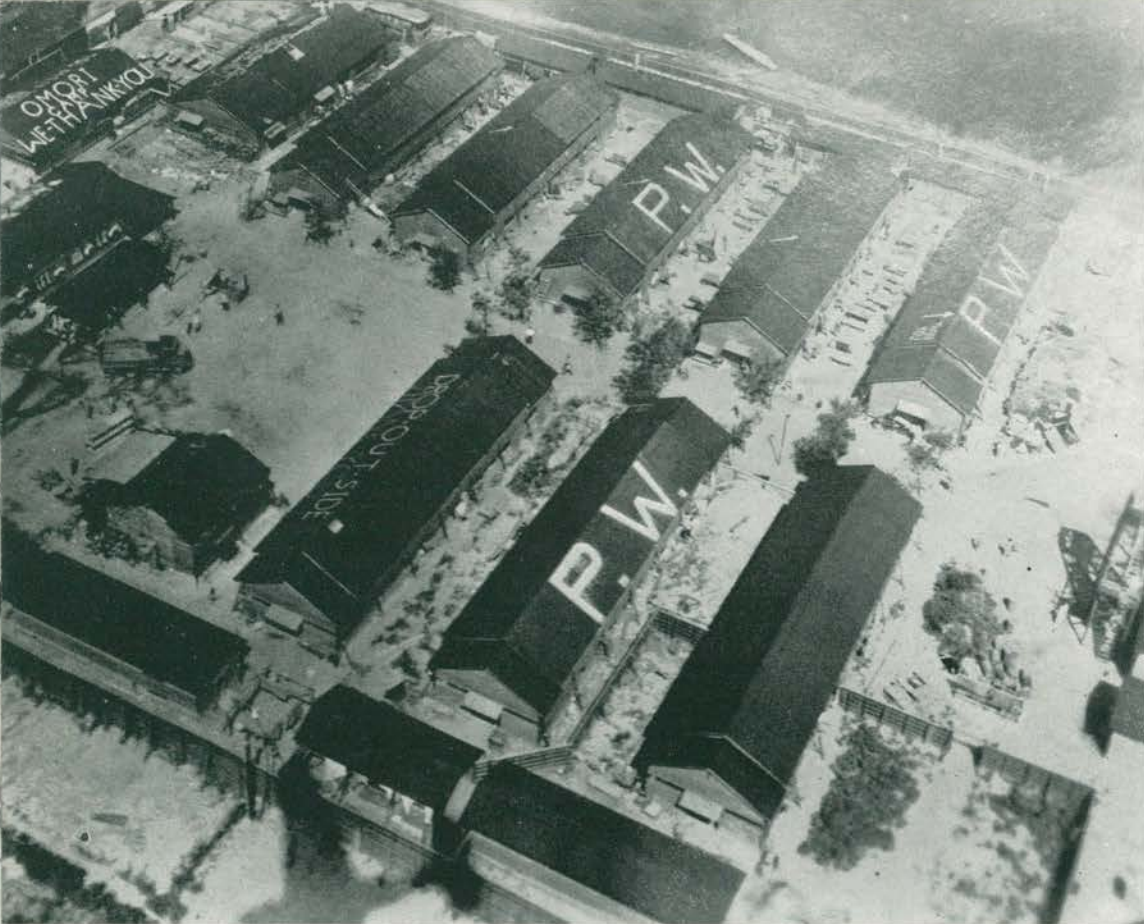
Navy Tourists . . .



Last Japanese Battleship . . . Nagato



Yokosuka Naval Base



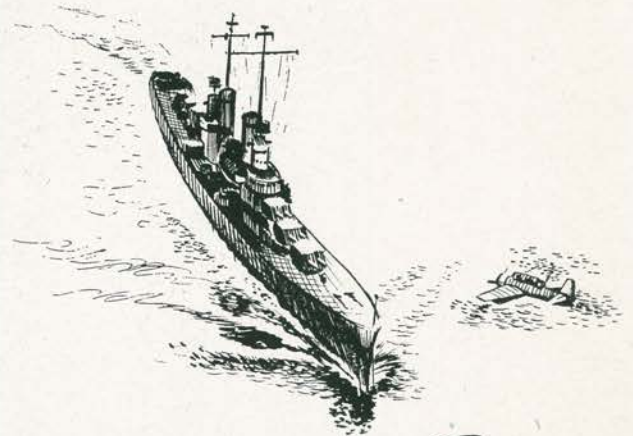
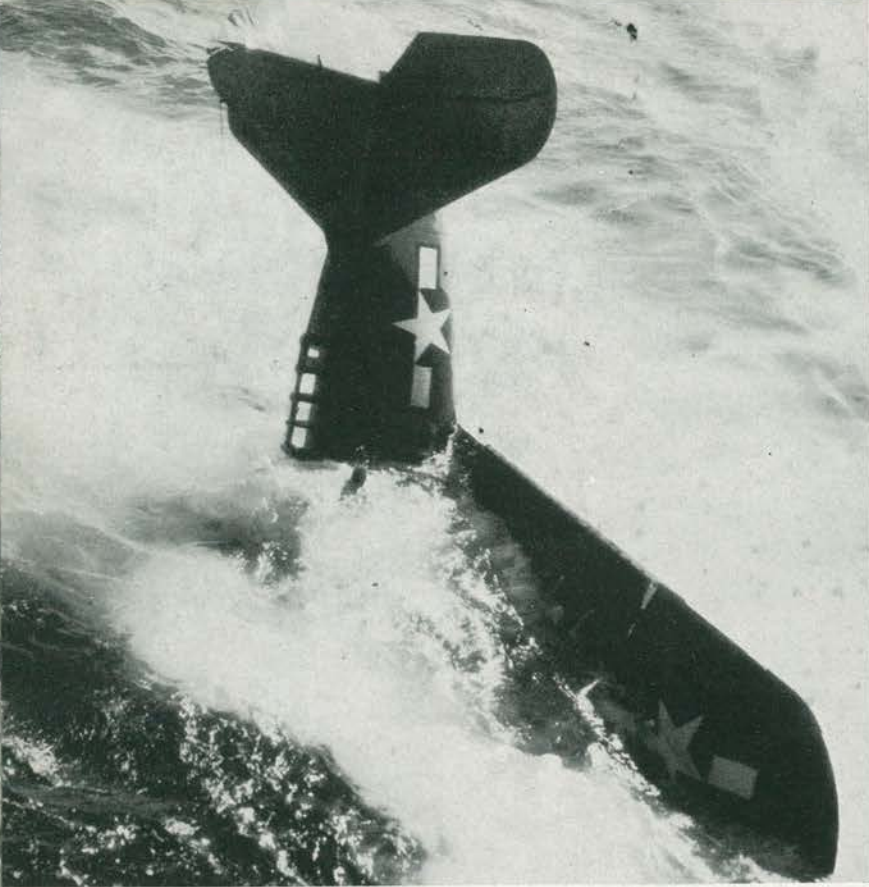
P. O. W. Camp at Yokohama

Japanese Streetcars

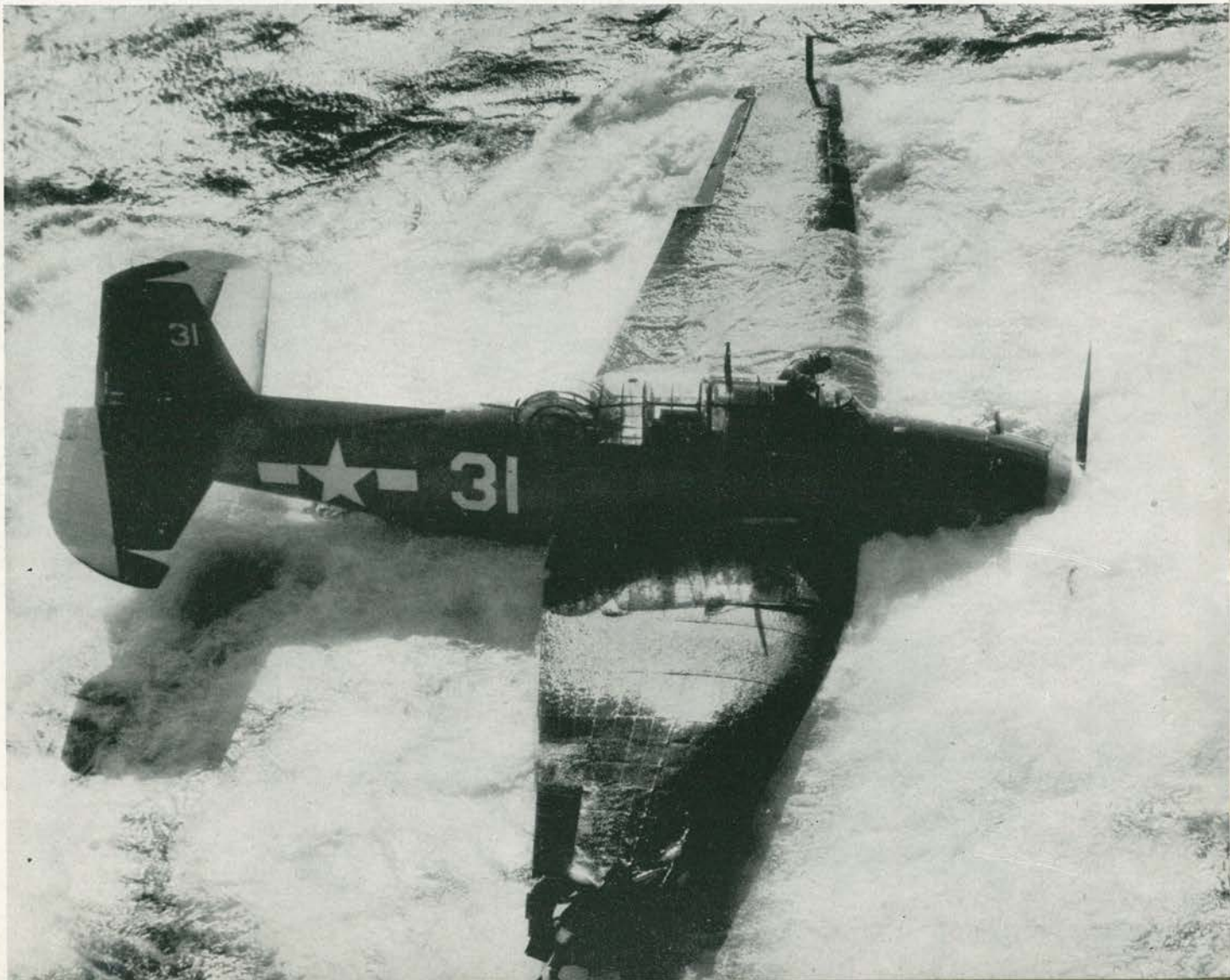




Jap Street Scenes . . .



**PLANE
GUARD**

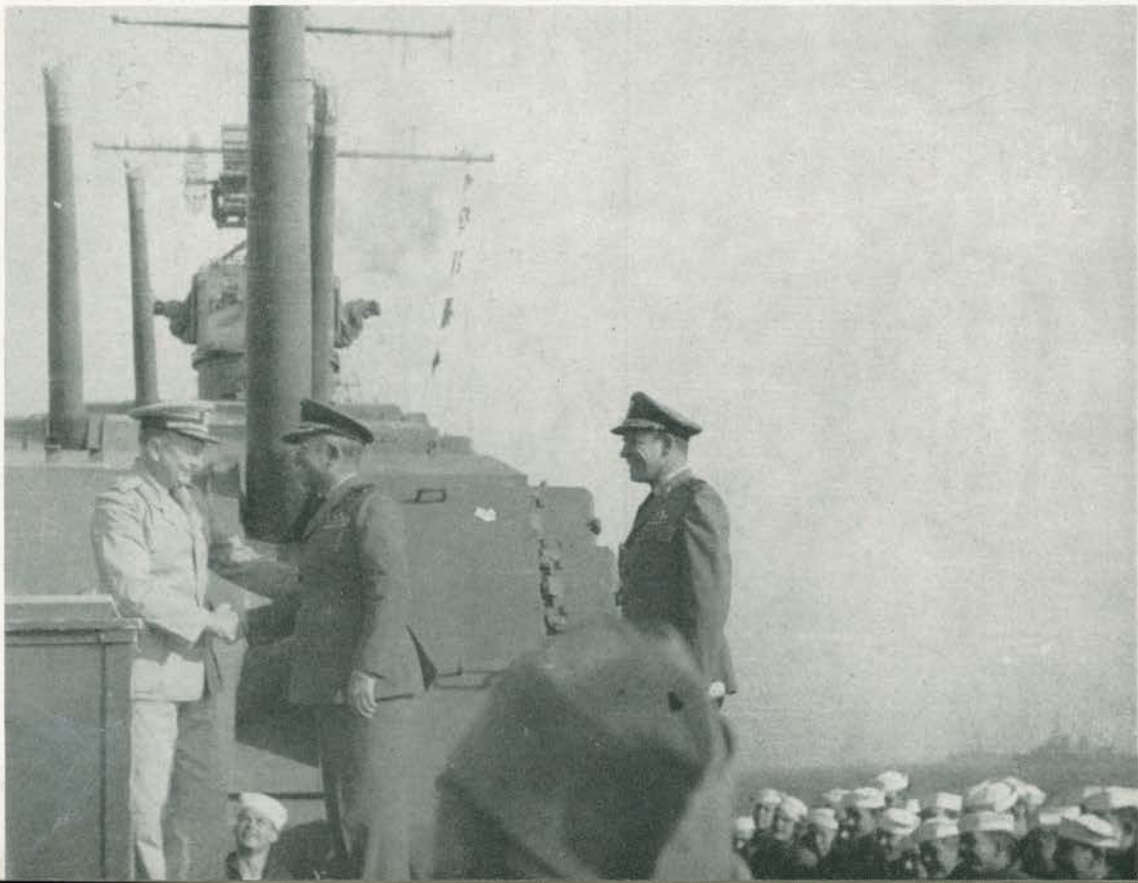






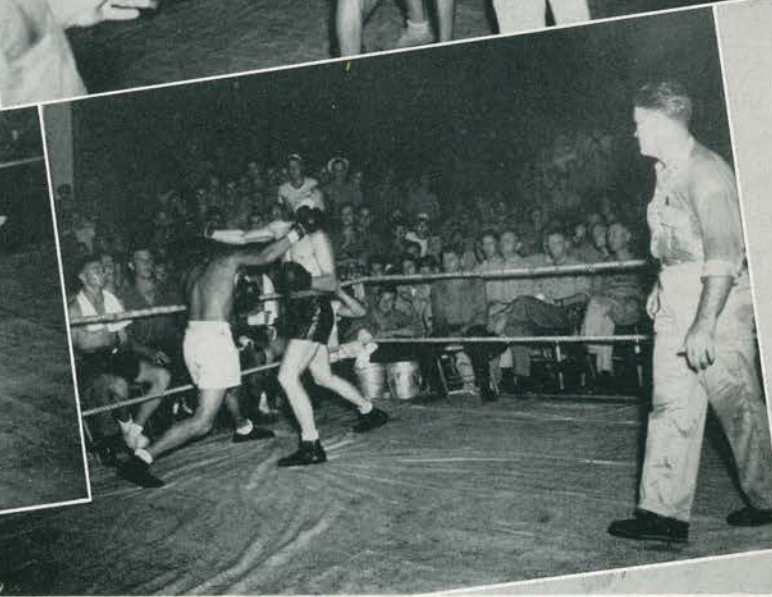
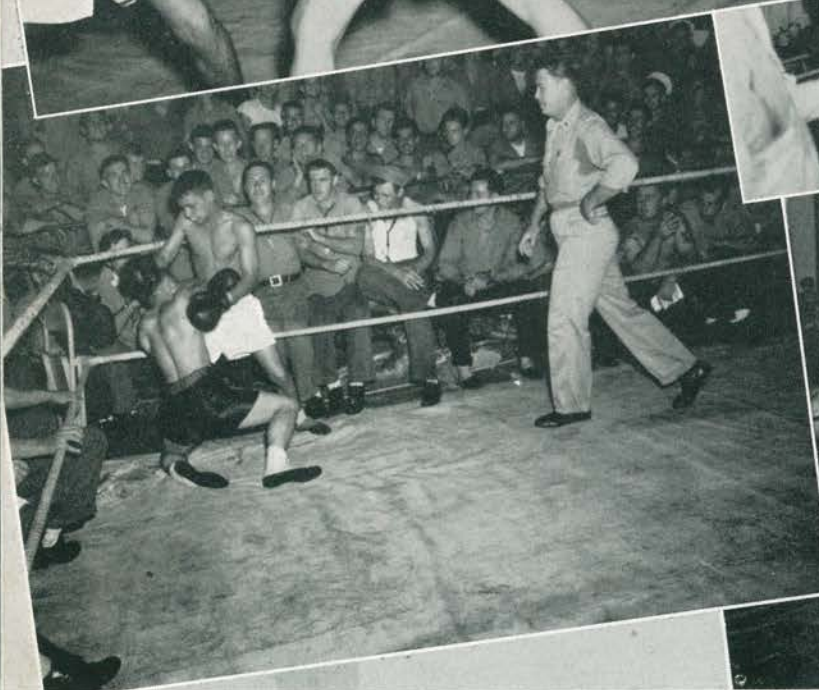
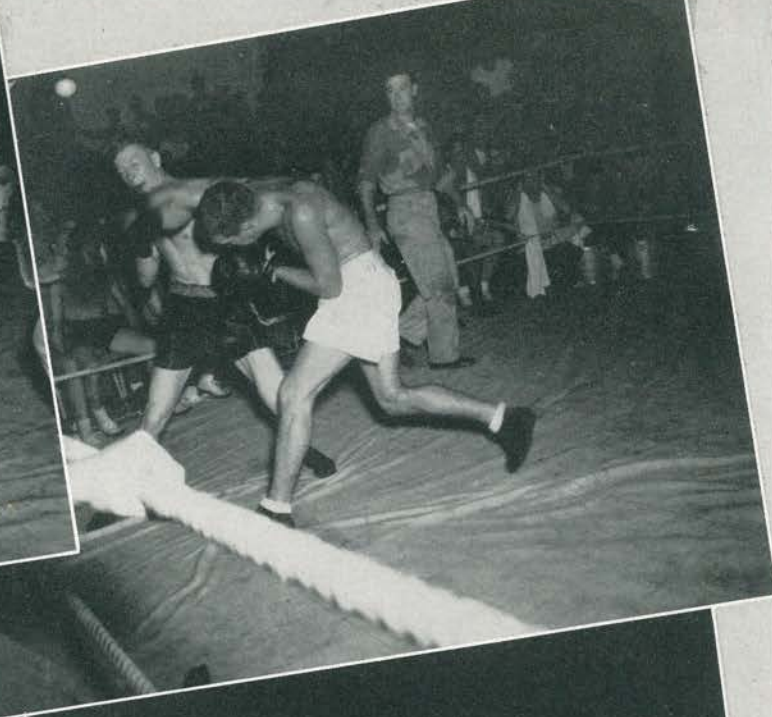


Commendations



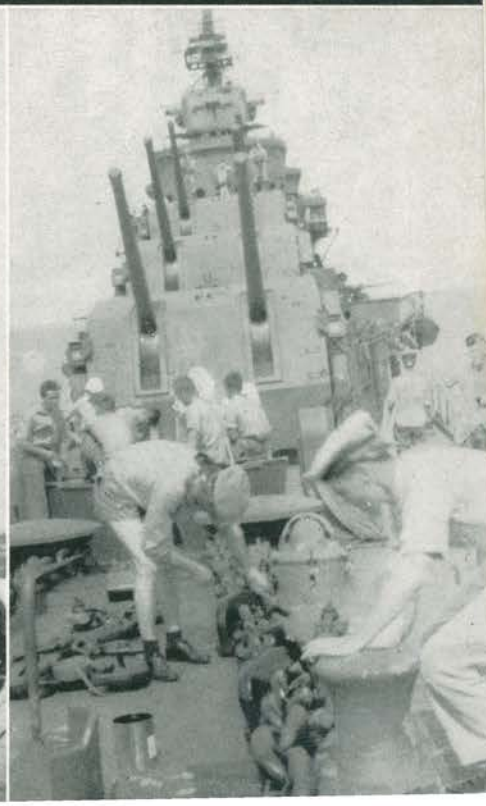
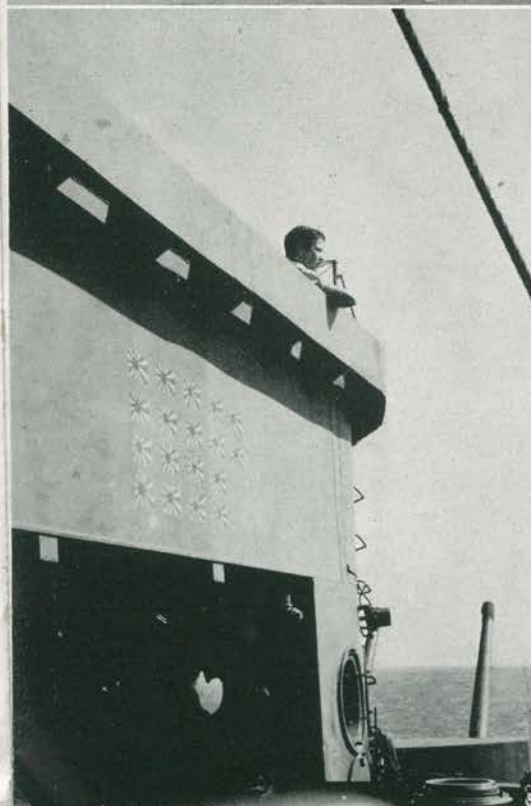
and Awards





*Smoker . . .
U.S.S. Biloxii vs. U.S.S. San Juan*

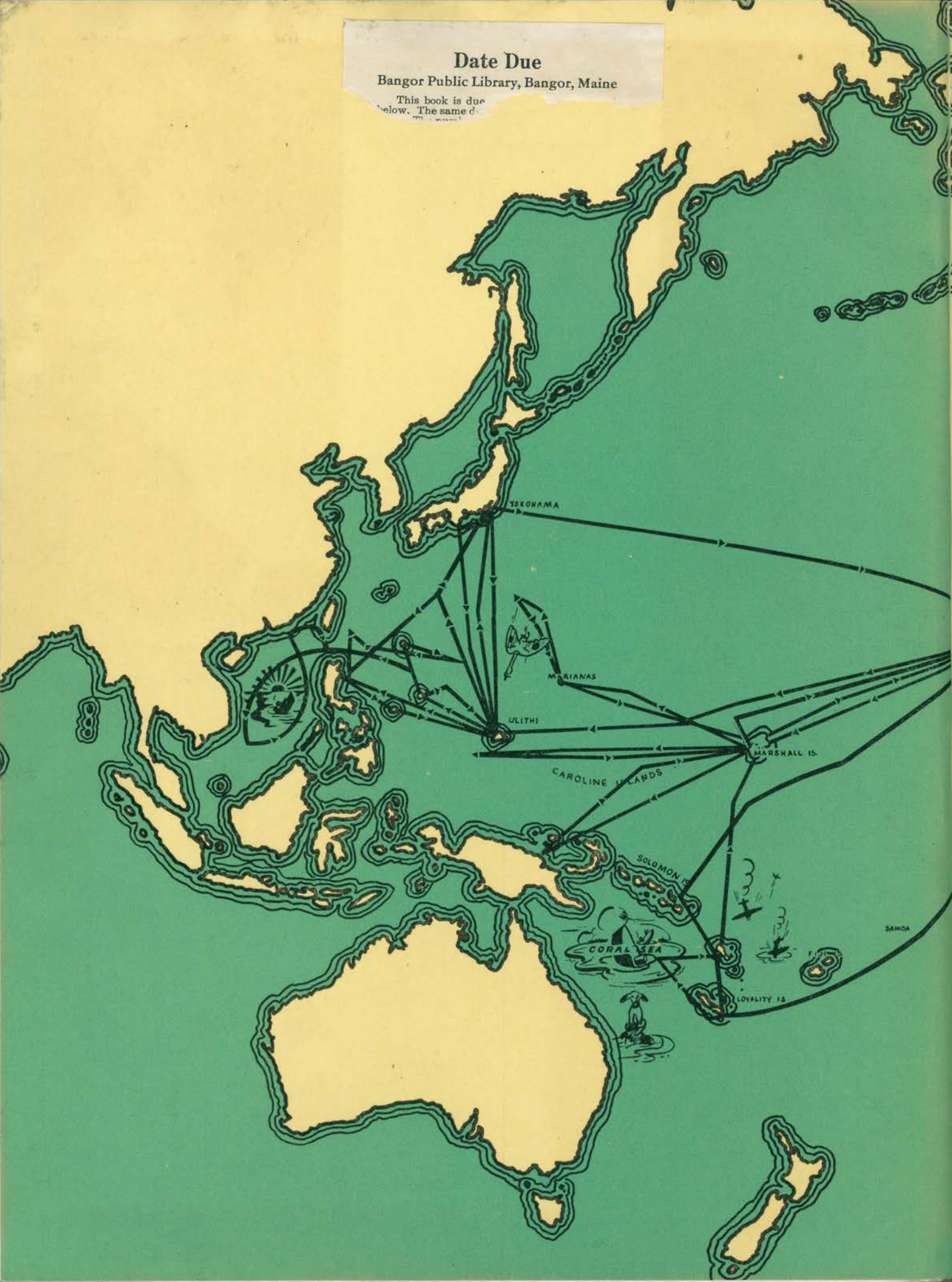
RANDOM SHOTS



U.S. Navy
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