

SHORT HISTORY OF THE LUCKY 'L'



U.S.S. LANSDOWNE DD 486

1942-1945

HONORS AND AWARDS

The USS Lansdowne earned three Battle Stars on the America Area Service Medal, and nine Battle Stars on the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service Medal for participating in the following operations:

(AMERICAN)

- 1 Star/First Anti-submarine Assessment
July 3, 1942
- 1 Star/Second Anti-submarine Assessment
July 12, 1942
- 1 Star/Third Anti-submarine Assessment
July 13, 1942

(PACIFIC)

- 1 Star/Consolidation of Solomon Islands
Consolidation of Northern Solomons
Dec. 27, 1943, Jan. 8 & 13, 1944
- 1 Star/Okinawa Gunto Operation
Assault and occupation of Okinawa Gunto
May 8 - June 16, 1945
- 1 Star/THIRD Fleet operations against Japan
July 10 - August 15, 1945
- 1 Star/Aleutians Operation
Attu Occupation
May 25 - June 2, 1943
- 1 Star/Treasury-Bougainville Operation
Buka-Bonis strike - Nov. 1-2, 1943
Rabaul strike - Nov. 5, 1943
Rabaul strike - Nov. 11, 1943
Occupational and defense of Cape Torokina
Nov. 30, Dec. 5, 1943

(PACIFIC CONTINUED)

- 1 Star/Bismarck Archipelago Operation
Green Islands landing - Feb. 15-19, 1944
Bombardments of Kavieng and Rabaul -
Feb. 18, 1944
Anti shipping sweeps and bombardments of
Kavieng - Feb. 21-25, 1944
- 1 Star/Asiatic-Pacific raids - 1944
Palau, Yap, Ulithi, Woleai raid - March 30 -
April 1, 1944
- 1 Star/Marianas Operation
Capture and occupation of Saipan
June 11-24, 1944
First Bonins raid - June 15-16, 1944
Battle of Philippine Sea - June 19-20, 1944
Capture and Occupation of Guam -
July 12-August 15, 1944
- 1 Star/Tinian Capture and Occupation
July 20-August 10, 1944

She received the Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia, for the period Sept. 2-Oct. 16, 1945.

The DD 486 was placed out of commission in reserve at the Charleston Navy Yard on May 2, 1946. On June 1, 1949, she was turned over to Turkey and stricken from the Navy List in August of the same year.

STATISTICS

Overall Length	348 feet
Beam	36 feet
Speed	37 knots
Displacement	1630 tons
Complement	16 officers and 260 men

DES RON - 12

DES RON 23

Farenholt
Buchanan
Woodworth
Laffey
Arron Ward
Gwin

DES RON 24

Lansdowne
Lardner
McCalla
Grayson
Duncan

June, 1973

Publishing this short history of The Lansdowne has been a longtime wish of the author who had the good fortune of having been assigned to The Lucky L in 1942.

It would not have been possible without the teamwork and achievements of great shipmates and more than a little bit of luck.

The author is indebted to the many shipmates who contributed material, photos and recollections and to Sydney and Auckland newspapers who generously searched their files for photos and offered encouragement when they were unable to provide materials because wartime restrictions had limited their coverage of World War II military events.

I am particularly indebted to the Lansdowne's first skipper, now Vice Admiral, W.R. Smedberg III U.S.N. (Ret.) of Crystal River, Fla., whose wonderful scrapbook was invaluable. Thanks also to Rear Admiral Richard R. Pratt U.S.N. (Ret.) of Virginia Beach, Dr. Thomas S. Walsh, Jr., Albany, N.Y. surgeon, who was our ship's doctor, and to Captain Frank J. Foley U.S.N. (Ret.) currently of Frankfurt/Wiesbaden, Germany.

Special thanks also to the following shipmates for their enthusiasm and their loan of photos and memorabilia: Clifford H. Guion, Gilbert E. Heck; George W. Ballé of New Jersey; James Swank of Pennsylvania; Jim Myers of South Dakota; Clarence H. (Jack) Massey of Petersburg, Alaska; Al Hansen and Alan V. Gordon of California; and to Jake Lexa, ship's cook turned television actor, who died in Huntington Park, California earlier this year.

Thanks to the V.F.W. Magazine and to the Alumni Office at Annapolis for their help in publicizing this project, to Kathleen Collins for editorial advice and to Jeanne Marie Blades (a Navy brat) for artwork.

Thomas F. Wright,
Editor & Publisher
22 Sunset Drive
Croton-on-Hudson, N.Y. 10520



Commissioning

COMMISSIONING DAY CEREMONIES. Top Left: Capt. H.V. McKittrick, USN, Captain of the Yard comes aboard with Lt. Commander W.R. Smedberg III, first commanding officer. Right: Rear Adm. E.J. Marquart, USN, Commandant Third Naval District and Commander Navy Yard, New York, addressing ship's company. Bottom: Lt. Commander Smedberg addresses company of new ship.

HISTORY OF THE USS LANSDOWNE

The U.S.S. Lansdowne was commissioned April 29, 1942, a 1630 ton destroyer of the Bristol Class. The new crew was proud of the way she looked—fast and trim with the knife-edge of her bow tapering back into a long narrow hull, deadly with her four five-inch guns, automatic weapons, depth charges, and torpedo tubes—and they reported aboard with high hopes for action and a will to work. They were to have a plenty of both.

The ship had been named after the Late Lt. Commander Zachary Lansdowne who had been killed in the crash of the navy dirigible Shenandoah in Ohio in 1925. Zachary Lansdowne, Annapolis '11 had been assigned to various duties with Naval Aviation in England and Paris during World War I. After the war, he was a member of the crew of the British Airship R-34 which made the first successful non-stop voyage from England to the U.S., for which he was awarded the Navy Cross for "Distinguished service in the line of his profession."

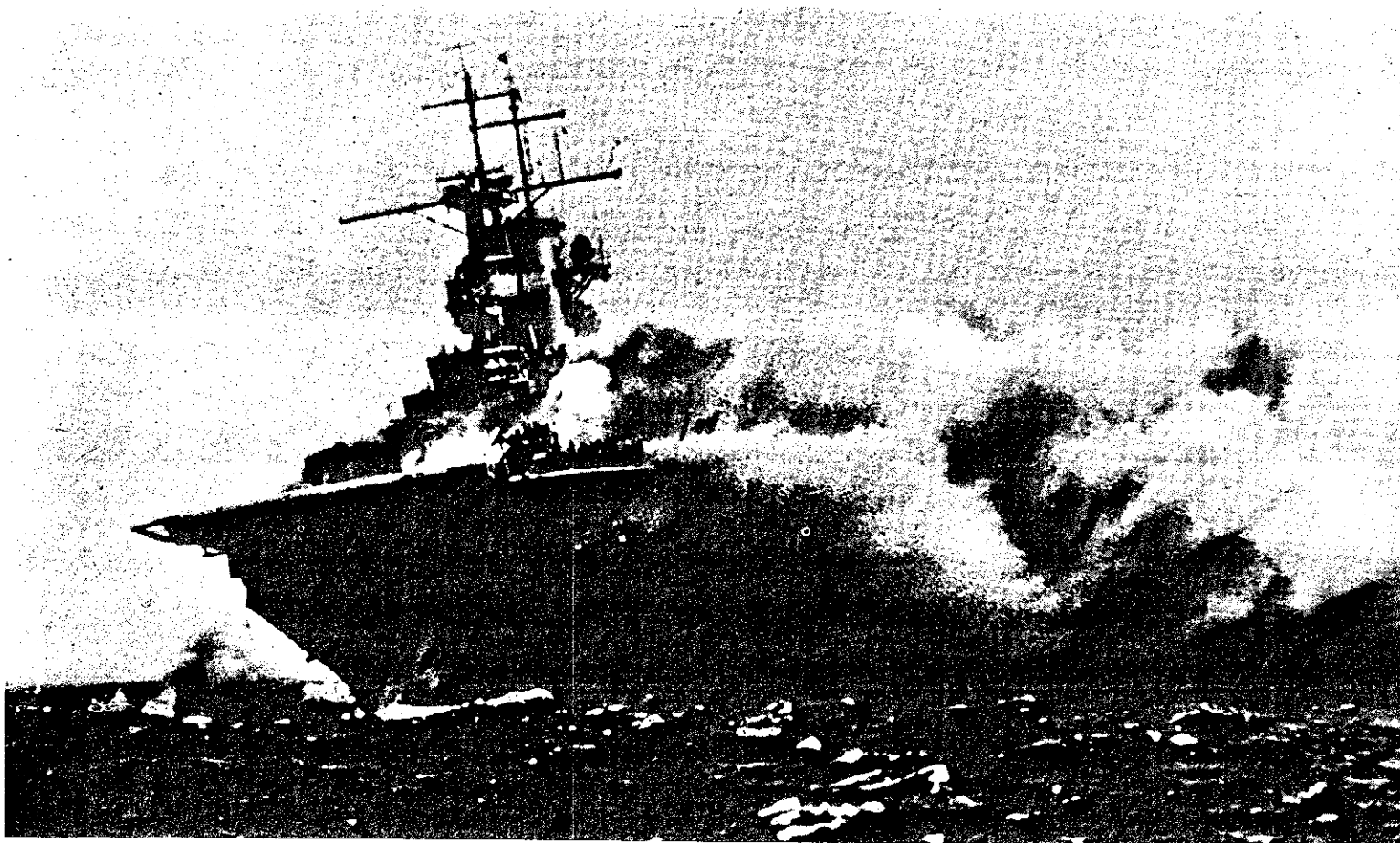
Margaret Lansdowne Hunt, the Lt. Commander's daughter, had christened the ship in Kearney, New Jersey on February 20, 1942 and, on its Commissioning Day, the ship's first skipper, W.R. Smedberg III received Zachary Lansdowne's prized class ring from his widow. The ring had been lost at the time of the fatal crash in 1925. Twelve years later, it had been found, around a mustard stalk by a woman weeding her garden in Caldwell, Ohio.

Writing to Lt. Commander Smedberg, the widow then Mrs. John Caswell, said: "It is with deep pleasure and satisfaction that I present the ring to the ship that bears Commander Lansdowne's name. I am sure that he would have wanted this done and that the two symbols of his beloved navy life—his class ring and a ship named in his memory should thus be united."

From the date of commissioning until July 12, 1942, the ship operated in the Atlantic Scaboard Area engaged in fitting out, shakedown, anti-submarine and rescue work, and escorting. On her first trip from the Brooklyn Navy Yard to Casco Bay, Maine, the brand new ship was to have the first of the narrow escapes which would earn her the nickname, "Lucky L."

The Lansdowne was one of the first ships with radar and when she arrived in Casco Bay, our first skipper and his executive officer, Lt. Comm. Frank Foley, proudly navigated her into Casco Bay in a very dense fog which had kept many ships outside the harbor for several days.

Our skipper had been warned to watch for German subs along the Atlantic during the maiden voyage. He had not been alerted that the Maine harbor had been heavily mined for the benefit of unwelcome German submarines! This experience was to possibly save the Lansdowne, her crew and a priceless cargo many months later when a shore lookout signalled her to enter Espiritu Santo Harbor in the South Pacific. Commander Smedberg—remembering The Maine Experience—steadfastly refused to enter without a pilot. When a pilot finally appeared, it led the Lansdowne around the side of the island safely to shore. The next day, a large ship, which had heeded similar shore signals, hit the mines and sunk in Espiritu Santo Harbor. We were to be lucky again!



Official U. S. Navy Photograph

U.S.S. WASP

Only a few men remain on the once busy forward flight deck of the *Wasp*, mortally wounded by three enemy submarine torpedoes which struck near the "island" on the starboard side on the afternoon of September 15. The 14,700-ton carrier, on escort duty near the Solomon Islands at the time she was attacked, was abandoned and later sunk by a U. S. destroyer.

Cincpac File No.
P15(27)/(05)
Serial 4513

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
FLAGSHIP OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

hlm

DEC 2 1942

From: Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet.
To : Lieutenant Commander W. R. Smedberg, III, U.S. Navy.

Via : Commander Destroyer Division TWENTY-FOUR.

Subject: Commendation.

Enclosure: (A) Citation.

1. The Commander in Chief, United States Pacific Fleet, being informed of your creditable conduct incident to the action of the U. S. Naval forces against the enemy takes pleasure in forwarding to you the enclosed Citation, and commends you for your meritorious and outstanding performance of duty.

2. By copy of this letter the Chief of Naval Personnel is requested to file a copy of this commendation with your official record. Your Commanding Officer is hereby directed to file a copy of this letter and enclosure with your next report of fitness.

C. W. NIMITZ.

L. J. Wiltse
L. J. WILTSE,
By direction.

Copy to: Bupers (2)
Secnav
Comairpac

On the third of July while cruising off Cape Hatteras in a search for survivors of ships sunk in the area, she made her first contact with the enemy—a German submarine. After several depth-charge attacks, oil and debris floated to the surface. After all evidence had been assembled, this attack was evaluated by a special board as “probably” sunk.

On July 13, The Lansdowne was designated flagship of Destroyer Division 24, and sailed for the Canal Zone where she operated under Commander Panama Sea Frontier until August 21. U-boat strikes on the Panama Canal approaches were taking a heavy toll in shipping. To end this murderous onslaught, the Navy mustered at Cristobal every A/S vessel available. But before these measures were completed, the Lansdowne teamed up with a PBY and a PC to wage her own private war.

On July 11, the U-153 attacked the net tender MIMOSA off Almirante. She missed with a spread of five torpedoes, three passing under the ship, and was slow on the getaway. Early the next morning, a PBY picked up the sub by radar, dropped flares and straddled the U-boat with depth charges. Undoubtedly hurt, the sub went deep. A PC was ordered to the scene and dropped six depth charges, followed by more attacks from the PBY.

Meanwhile the Lansdowne had arrived at Cristobal as a convoy escort, and was ordered to join the sub-hunt at top speed. She reached the scene at 1830 in the evening of the 13th, and set to work to get contact on the target. Within a quarter of an hour she picked up a sharp sound contact. The destroyermen ran to battle stations as the ship maneuvered into attack position. A pattern of 11 depth charges was followed by an explosion under the sea. Then a great spreading swell of oil came up that covered the area. There were no survivors. Another “probable” sinking of a German sub was credited to the Lansdowne.

The operations in the Caribbean Sea escorting convoys between Colon, Canal Zone, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba continued until August 10. On August 11, the ship proceeded through the Panama Canal to the Pacific Coast. After a short stay in Balboa, the Lansdowne in Company with the South Dakota, Juneau, Lardner and Duncan made the island of Tongatabu her first port of call in the South Pacific, arriving on September 3rd. Many, however, will remember the day of August 25 from this cruise for that was the day that King Neptune and the Royal Court first boarded the Lansdowne to cleanse the ship of that foul brood known as “Pollywogs” before permitting the ship to cross the Equator and enter the Royal Domain.

RESCUES WASP SURVIVORS

It was during the first month of her operations as a screening unit for various task forces and groups that the ship, one of the first to be sent to the South Pacific, rescued four hundred forty-five survivors of the U.S.S. Wasp. On September 14, 1942, she sailed from Espiritu Santo,

cruising south of Guadalcanal covering the Marines on that island. The next afternoon, lookouts reported: “Smoke on the Carrier!”

At 1420, on September 15—slowing down to launch and recover planes, the Wasp was fatally hit by enemy submarines. The bright flashes of the explosions, as torpedoes hit under the carrier’s island structure, were soon clearly seen by the lookouts and men on watch. As the ship turned to head for the carrier, a torpedo passed directly under the bow of the Lansdowne and almost down her entire length. Life seemed to come to a standstill until the wake was seen on the port quarter, the torpedo still going and headed for open water. The Wasp, in the meanwhile, was burning fiercely amidships, the fire spreading rapidly forward with great clouds of black smoke rising in the air and exploding ammunition and debris flying in all directions.

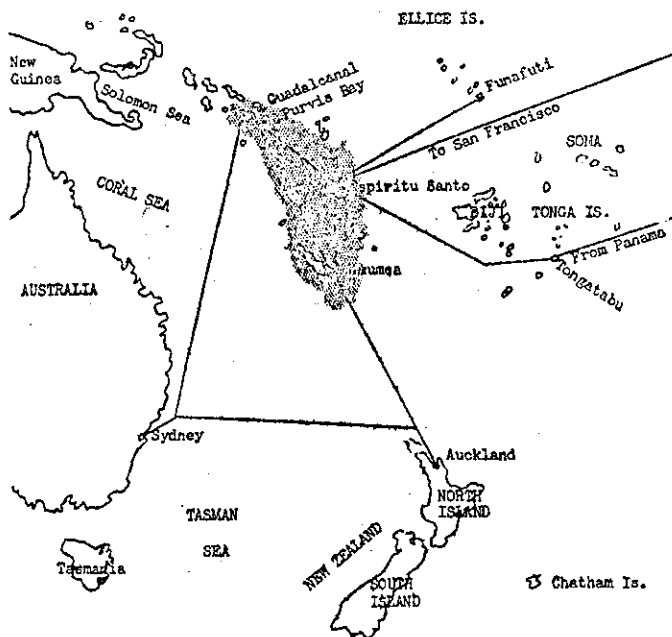
LANSDOWNE BEGINS RESCUE

Lucky again, the men of the Lansdowne put two boats in the water which was now covered with burning oil and gasoline and began rescue operations. On the foc’s’le men threw heaving lines to survivors in life rafts. From the bridge, an officer fired at sharks in the water near swimming survivors who were hauled aboard covered with oil and badly burned. The Lansdowne had rescued 445 survivors!

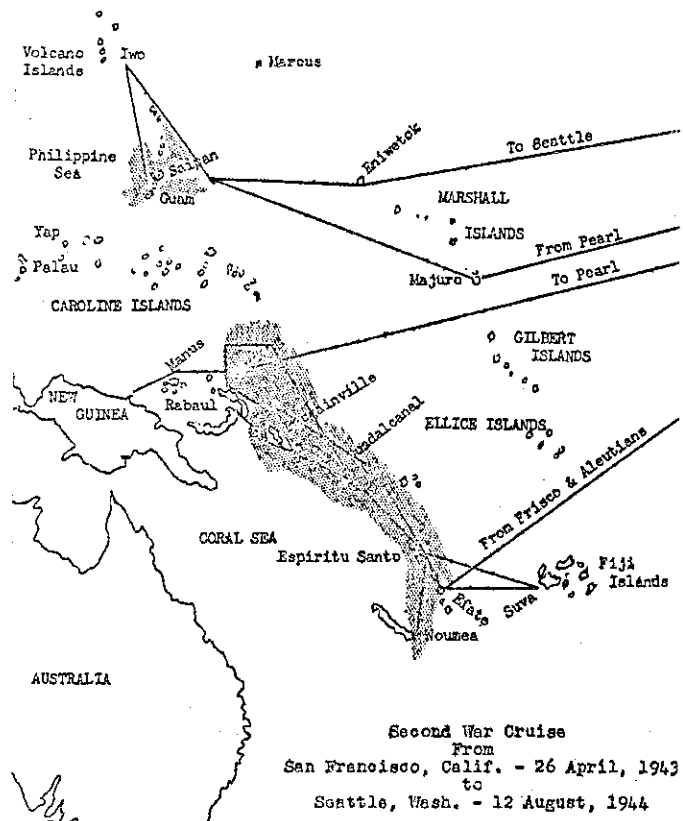
The wardroom was used as a first aid station and the most severely burned and wounded men were taken to the officers’ rooms. Dr. Tom Walsh, two corpsmen from the Lansdowne and others rescued from the Wasp worked incessantly, giving blood plasma, tannic acid treatments and morphine injections to casualties. Their performance was exceptional. Though sixty of the men rescued were hospital cases, having had more than ten per cent of their bodies burned, there were only two deaths. (A more complete account of the treatment of casualties is given in “Sea Duty on a Destroyer” by Dr. Thomas S. Walsh, reprinted elsewhere in this book from the *Alumni Bulletin* of Albany Medical College, December 1943.)

The boat crews later received letters of commendation from the Navy Department for their courage in this work. Navy commendations also went to CPHM Alphonse William Pitner of the Lansdowne and to three of the medical corpsmen rescued from the water: CPh M Raymond David Murden, CPh M Leslie Lee Hall and PhMic. Raymond Francis McElroy, Jr. for their work in tending the wounded.

As the other ships of the force left the area, the Lansdowne stood by the twisted and still burning hulk of the carrier and at 2100—at sunset—fired five torpedoes at the Wasp, rendering the “Coup de Grace.”

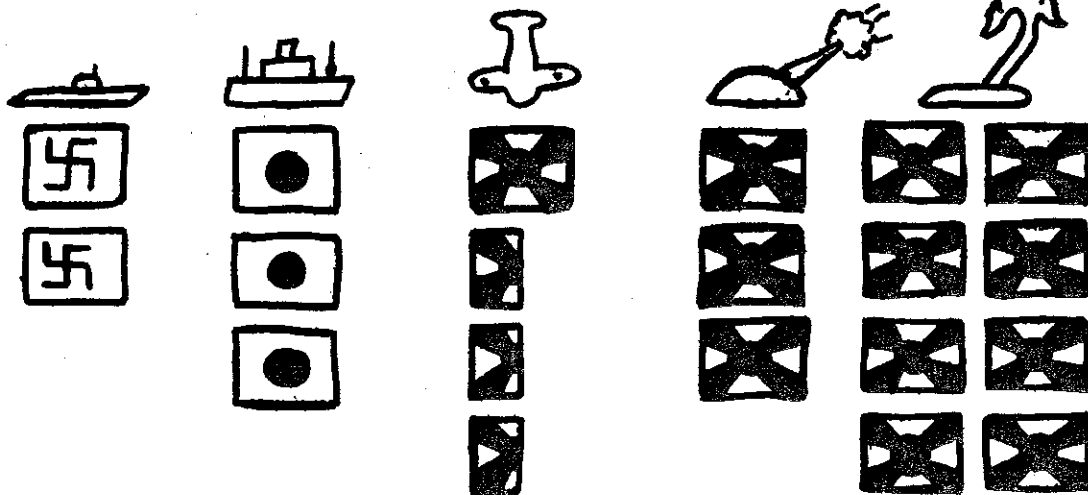


First War Cruise
From
Norfolk, Va. - 6 July, 1942
To
San Francisco, Calif. - 27 March, 1943



Second War Cruise
From
San Francisco, Calif. - 26 April, 1943
to
Seattle, Wash. - 12 August, 1944

SCORE BOARD



COMMANDING OFFICERS

Commander W.R. Smedberg III
Commander Frank J. Foley
Commander W.S. Maddox
Lt. Commander D. Johnston, Jr.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Lt. Commander Frank J. Foley
Lieut. E.B. Henry, Jr.
Lieut. T.H. Taylor
Lieut. R.J. Clare, Jr.

Officers at time of commissioning: Lt. R.R. Pratt; Lt. (jg) W.A. Smith, Jr.; Lt. (jg) G.B. Milner; Lt. (jg) Thomas S. Walsh, Jr.; Ensign R.C. Inghram; Ensign M.H. Beecher; Ensign J.W. Gendron; Ensign J.S. McNally.

Ammunition Expended

Five inch - 10,793 rds
Torpedoes - 8
Depth Charges - 164

District Traveled: 299,113 Nautical Miles

(13.8 trips around the world)

No Personnel Casualties

The transport reached Lunga Roads without further incident and, on September 18, the 7th Marines began landing. On October 3, the Lansdowne participated in the unopposed landing of Marine Units on Funifuti Atoll. The approach was marked by a radical departure from the usual calm, sunny South Pacific weather with a storm that cost the ship two lifecrafts and a number of twisted stanchions on deck.

TO CHESTER'S AID

During the period from October 13 to December 12, the ship operated in the British Solomon Islands area. On October 20, while operating with Task Force 4 in waters north of the New Hebrides group, a bright flash of light was sighted broad on the starboard beam followed by several more unidentified flashes. It was reported by radio that the U.S.S. Chester had suffered a torpedo hit amidships while enroute to Espiritu Santo. The Lansdowne proceeded to investigate and escorted the damaged vessel back to Espiritu Santo.

On October 24, the ship resumed patrol with a task force engaged in a search for enemy forces reported attempting to land troops on Guadalcanal. No contact was made, however.

LUCKY AGAIN IN "TORPEDO JUNCTION"

On October 27, just south of San Cristobal Island, the Lansdowne again very nearly became the victim of a torpedo. Three torpedo wakes were sighted which passed 500 to 800 yards ahead and a fourth which passed near the stern. The Atlanta had to sidestop to allow a torpedo coming up her wake to pass her, and the Washington had one explode a thousand yards on her beam. This was "Torpedo Junction," and the force promptly performed that maneuver fondly remembered as "getting the hell out of there" in a hurry. The Lansdowne was ordered to escort the Washington to Noumea in New Caledonia.

AMMUNITION TO MARINES ON LUNGA POINT

On Guadalcanal the Marines were critically short of mortar ammunition and the Lansdowne was pressed into service as a highspeed transport. She left Noumea, New Caledonia on November 5 with 80 tons of 81 mortar ammunition stowed from one end of the ship to the other.

Before dawn on November 7, the ship was anchored off Lunga Point and all hands including the ship's cooks turned to unloading. Since the Jap Bettys from Rabaul usually bombed about mid-morning, the ship had to be cleared for action by that time.

When the unloading had been partially completed a periscope was sighted near the ship and, a moment later, two torpedo wakes, one heading for the U.S.S. Majaba, and the other passing just astern of the Lansdowne.

The Majaba was hit squarely amidships. There was a flash followed by an explosion that sent debris flying into the sky and throwing men off the ship as she whipped under the blast. A little farther forward or aft and her whole load of thousand pound of bombs would have gone off. She was beached, and most of her cargo and, eventually, the ship was saved.

CHASES SUB

Meanwhile, the Lansdowne was going into action. She slipped her anchor and was underway at general quarters in pursuit of the sub in a minute and a half. The attack continued for two hours during which time 31 depth charges totalling over seven tons, were dropped. An oil slick was seen indicating the sub was damaged but no evidence that she had been fatally hit. Later that afternoon the ship proceeded south of Lunga Point and bombarded enemy positions in that area. Results were good.

At daybreak on November 30, while patrolling south of Savo Island with the Shaw to intercept any subs or ships trying to bring supplies to the besieged Japs in the vicinity of Coughlan Harbor on Guadalcanal, a number of enemy barges were seen between Bahi and Nisale on the northwest coast. It was too good an opportunity to let pass.

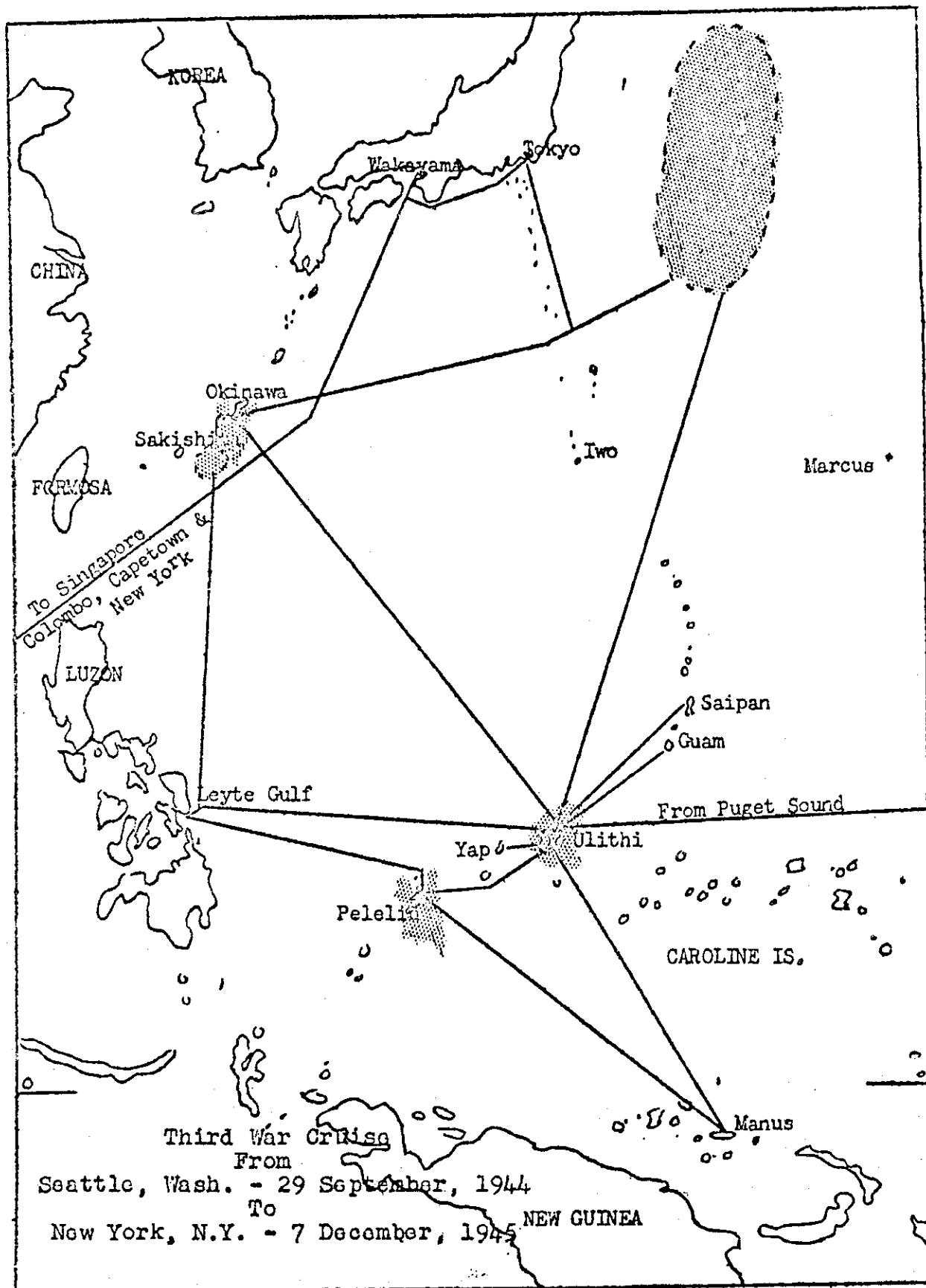
The Lansdowne closed the breach and started to break up the party with 494 rounds from her five-inch guns. Several of the Japanese supply barges were destroyed, and others damaged. Direct hits were scored on a beached enemy ship east of Cape Esperance, setting it ablaze. Another fire started ashore in a supply dump. It had been a very profitable morning!

On November 31, three anti-submarine attacks were conducted against a submerged target west of Koli Point, which brought diesel oil and slabs of cork bubbling to the surface.

During the night of December 1-2, the Lansdowne in company with the Shaw went out beyond Savo Island in the hope of meeting the "Tokyo Express," usually Jap destroyers trying to sneak supplies into Guadalcanal. The night was pitch black, and the ship and her men were ready for the Japs.

A crisis arose about midnight when friendly PT's, also after Japs, picked up the two destroyers and thought we were Japs. The torpedoes they carried made the situation far from humorous. The Lansdowne gave her identification signals but the PT Commander was hard to convince. Finally, he called "Cactus," his base, and got an okay for the Lucky L. The remainder of the night was very dull, but that one incident had made it memorable.

The next week was spent around Guadalcanal and Espiritu Santo, escorting convoys, looking for subs and subject to night air raids. There were hot, sweltering days under the tropical sun and nights that brought no relief. An occasional day at anchor offered an opportunity to get a little sunburn to take off the heat rash that almost everyone



was suffering and to see a movie on the fantail. During the seventh or eighth reel, there was usually a "forced intermission" when the Japs conducted their regular night air raids.

TO AUSTRALIA WITH NEW ORLEANS

On December 12, the Lansdowne and the Shaw left Tulagi for Sydney as escorts to the battered New Orleans. The trip was stormy and uneventful but the New Orleans was a sight that was hard to get used to. The whole bow had been blown off exposing the barbetts of #2 turret, leaving the guns hanging out over the water forward. Some days the weather was so rough that the cruiser had to turn around and steam backwards to take the heavy seas on the undamaged stern.

On Christmas Eve, amid Aussie cheers, the group arrived in Sydney, the city that all South Pacific men dreamed about. Over 100,000 Australians had lined the bridges and docks to welcome us. We had been informed that we were to be leaving immediately to escort the Chester out of Sydney. Christmas good will, however, gave us overnight in Sydney, and it was a night that few of the men will ever forget. The Australians were warm and magnificent hosts and no Lansdowne man could pay for his own drinks that evening. What a Christmas present!

During the trip from Sydney to Noumea, the Lansdowne was relieved as escort and proceeded to Auckland, New Zealand to pick up and escort the West Point to Noumea. Again the ship was granted overnight in port. It, too, was a liberty well remembered by all.

January 1943 was rather uneventful consisting of routine escort details between Noumea, Espiritu and Tulagi. Early February was spent with a carrier, battleship task force covering Guadalcanal.

RUSSELL LANDINGS

On February 16, the ship began operations in "Iron Bottom Bay" between Tulagi and Guadalcanal, protecting the shipping in that area from submarine and air attack. Large cargo ships and landing craft had been gathering for the capture of the Russell Islands.

On the 21st, the Lansdowne and other destroyers escorting the LCT's began the landings in the Russells. Although the Japs had been expected to engage us in fierce defensive battles, there was little opposition. The operation settled down to routine escorting, and the first of 9000 men went ashore unopposed.

The following night while escorting five LCT's, a sub was detected near Savo Island. Two attacks were made. On the first attack two six-hundred-pound depth charges left the racks at the same time, and the resulting double charge going off simultaneously was a memorable one. The fantail went up and the mast whipped, but best of all there was oil on the water.

After a quick second attack, it was necessary to immediately return to the primary job of escorting the landing craft. Passing over the spot the next day, oil was still rising and spreading, a good sign, but not conclusive proof of a sinking.

On the morning of the 26th, just before dawn, the Lansdowne was threading her way between the small islands and shoals of the Russell Group in a heavy storm. There was a jar and the ship listed a little to port. The engines were reversed and the ship came off the sand bar, but her screws and one shaft had been badly damaged. On March 10 the Lansdowne left the South Pacific temporarily, proceeding to Mare Island for emergency repairs.

FRANK FOLEY BECOMES SECOND SKIPPER

Seventeen days were spent in Mare Island Navy Yard, followed by eleven more in the Bay interrupted by a day at sea. After six months in the South Pacific, San Francisco was a delightful interlude and a stopoff long remembered by the crew. During that period, Lt. Commander Smedberg was relieved by Lt. Commander Frank Foley, who had been executive officer.

On April 26, the Lansdowne left San Francisco for Pearl Harbor, escorting two transports, the Henderson and Republic, and arriving in Hawaii on May 3.

After a period of training at Pearl Harbor, the ship left on April 10 for Kuluk Bay, Adak Island. Upon arrival in the Aleutians, the ship participated in the "Occupation of Attu," operating with various fleet units covering the sea approaches to the Aleutians and the bombardment of Kiska on July 6. This period will be remembered for the dull, dreary days that followed one on the other, continuous fog that covered the area and the sun setting after midnight.

On July 20, the Lansdowne returned to Pearl Harbor and after a few necessary repairs left on July 30 for the South Pacific. Neptune again had to cleanse the ship of Pollywogs on August 3.

On August 11, the Lansdowne entered Havannah Harbor, Efato Island. After a short time there, the ship went to Espiritu Santo, Vila Harbor, Efate and finally back to Guadalcanal on September 3.

Purvis Bay, the Florida Island anchorage, had not changed very much. There was now a strip of sandy beach designated as the Des Slot Club where destroyermen could drink their beer, but the same "condition red" prevailed during the movies every night.

From September 11 to October 23, the Lansdowne escorted landing craft to Vella La Vella Island, made several trips up the "Slot" and left for short stops at Noumea, New Caledonia; Suva, Fiji Islands; and Fila, Efate to escort transports to the Guadalcanal area.



Lt. Commander Richard R. Pratt



Lt. (jg) Thomas S. Walsh



Lt. Commander Frank J. Foley



Lt. Commander Johnston.



Lt. Commander Maddox

COVERED BOUGAINVILLE LANDINGS

On October 29, the Lansdowne joined Task Force 38 whose primary job was to patrol the area between Truk and Buka as a covering force for the initial landings on Bougainville. During this time, the force made strikes against Buka and Bunis airfields on November 1-2 and Rabaul on November 5 and 11. These were the highly successful strikes that crippled the Jap Fleet that was forming in Rabaul Harbor for the Japs' last attempt to retake the Southern Solomons.

On November 26, the Lansdowne took aboard 85 Marine casualties from Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville, for transfer to the Base Hospital on Vella La Vella Island.

On the 30th, the ship fired 676 rounds of ammunition at Japanese positions on the eastern perimeter of the Empress Augusta Bay beachhead. Upon completion of this bombardment of Bougainville, 81 Marine casualties were taken aboard for transportation to Tulagi.

November 1943 was the busiest month of the Lansdowne's history. During this month, the ship traveled 12,038 nautical miles. While covering landing operations at Empress Augusta Bay, the ship expended 47 rounds of 5-inch ammunition in repelling an enemy attack.

On December 5, the Lansdowne participated in a destroyer bombardment of enemy installations in Tarekekori Village. Lansdowne later took part in a cruiser, destroyer bombardment at Kieta and Numa Numa, Bougainville Island on December 27.

New Year's Day of 1944 found the Lansdowne, operating with other destroyers of DesRon Twelve, about 40 miles off Empress Augusta Bay protecting the beachhead and approaching LST's from any surface attacks by fast Jap forces. On the night of January 4-5, the Squadron made a fast run up past Buka and Green Island in hopes of finding Jap forces operating from Rabaul, but, in spite of a long night at battle stations with all hands alert, not a Jap was found.

On the eighth of January, the Lansdowne proceeded up the "Slot" with DesRon 12, the Honolulu and St. Louis for a bombardment of the Shortland Islands. Shortly before 2200 the Lansdowne opened fire on enemy positions on Faisi Island in the Shortland Group. Several fires were started and the aroused Japs soon began illuminating the ships with starshells and then sent out a few shells. Their firing was not too accurate and only succeeded in throwing up a few splashes near the ships.

About midnight the Lansdowne and another destroyer left the main force to take a quick run up to the Buka area again. No enemy ships were found and at dawn the Lansdowne entered Blanche Harbor, Treasury Island for fuel and possibly to rest. The same afternoon, however, it was decided to make a sweep of the Buka-Green Island area that night. There was one contact this time but it proved to be a friendly plane!

The ship continued to operate off Bougainville during the day and running up to the Buka area at night but always without satisfaction of catching the enemy. On January 13, after the regular nightly run, the ships went down the northeast coast of Bougainville and at dawn bombarded the Japs in the Siarra Village and Umum River Area.

The Lansdowne and other destroyers of DesRon 12 continued these operations covering the Empress Augusta Bay sea approaches, operating from Hathorn Sound, New Georgia Island. Then the ships returned to Purvis Bay to conduct training exercises with the cruisers. At this time Commander William L. Maddow relieved Commander Foley.

These exercises completed and having had a day at anchor, the Lansdowne in company with a cruiser-destroyer task force left Purvis Bay to cover the Green Island landings. At dusk on February 14, while south of Green Island the force was attacked by six dive bombers. Coming in over the ship, they were taken under fire and damaged. The combined fire of the ships brought down two and possibly three planes. More planes showed up in the area and managed to keep all hands on edge until just before dawn when several groups attacked the formation. The Lansdowne accounted for one which came down and crashed just off the port bow.

The evening of February 17 found the Lansdowne in company with other destroyers of Squadron 12 proceeding up St. George Channel to attack Rabaul. Everyone was keyed up as the ships entered the channel but the night was dark and the Japs sleepy, no shore batteries opened up, no mines went off, no planes snooping around and not another ship in the channel. Unable to find any targets in the channel, the Squadron opened up on the town and harbor area. The surprised Japs, not believing there were actually enemy ships just outside their own stronghold, opened up at the supposed bombers. They soon discovered their error and a few shore batteries opened up. Their aim was not very good and they were quickly silenced by our own guns. Two Jap destroyers started out of the harbor, but after being taken under fire, turned quickly and rushed back to shore. After completing a very successful bombardment and firing of torpedoes in Karavia Bay the ships retired, unchallenged, down the channel.

On the evening of February 23 the ship again in company with DesRon 12 commenced an anti-shipping sweep between Kavieng, New Ireland and Truk. About midnight an unidentified plane made a few runs on the formation and dropped three bombs but was driven off by AA fire.

LUCKY L AND LARDNER SINK SHIP

The next night while cruising in the same area, an enemy cargo ship of about 7,000 tons was picked up and sunk by the Lansdowne and Lardner.

At dawn on February 25, the Squadron stood in toward Kavieng to bombard shipping, shore batteries, air-

October 14, 1942

From: The Division Commander, and Captain, and Officers
of U.S.S. LANSDOWNE.
To: The Captain, Officers, and men of U.S.S. DUNCAN.

Dear Ted:

The contribution of \$575.00 which accompanies this letter, is from our Division Commander and the Officers and men of the U.S.S. LANSDOWNE, who feel a great sense of personal loss. We hope this may come in handy for the small items you will all want right away. It is given from deep in our hearts to our close friends of your ship.

The Friendly rivalry and keen competition between our ships was the finest I have ever seen. Our Officers and men took great pride in your fine ship, praising her qualities to all outsiders; feeling that no one but ourselves had the privilege of making disparaging remarks about our sister ship, alongside of which we were built, whose Officers and men were always ready and eager to lend us a helping hand, and in whose wake we followed many times with complete confidence.

We found your ship setting mark after mark for us to shoot at and very often having just enough of an edge on us to spur us on to additional effort to make you as proud of your sister ship as we were, and always will be, of ours.

And it will ever be a source of pride to us in this Division that you went out as you did; the way a ship should go; aggressively into the enemy with all you had and mortally wounding an enemy ship several times your size.

We had very anxious hours between announcement of your disappearance and the report of the rescue of such a good proportion of your shipmates, but that news gave a lift to everyone of us and we want you and your Officers and men to know how proud we are of you and that your ship will be close to us in whatever action may be ahead. We shall feel her strong support and never-failing cooperation in every crisis.

Every Officer and man joins me in sincerest best wishes to everyone of you.

W. R. SMEDBERG III,
Lieutenant Commander, U.S. Navy,
Commanding.

COMSOPAC FILE

SOUTH PACIFIC FORCE
OF THE UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER

In the name of the President of the United States, the Commander South Pacific Area and South Pacific Force takes pleasure in awarding the SILVER STAR MEDAL to

COMMANDER WILLIAM REEWICK SMEDBERG, III, UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action as Commanding Officer of a destroyer in an engagement with a Japanese midget submarine off Lunga Point, Guadalcanal Island on November 7, 1942. By his coolness, offensive action, skilful shiphandling and the superb functioning of his entire ship's company in the face of a surprise submarine attack, he not only avoided a torpedo and saved his own ship, but also attacked with depth charges four minutes after the submarine was sighted, his ship at time of sighting having been at anchor, unloading ammunition and headed about one hundred and twenty-five degrees away from the submarine. After three depth charge attacks when sound contact was lost, and while continuing to hunt the submarine, he completed unloading his cargo of ammunition by towing the small craft alongside. His conduct throughout was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval Service."

W. F. Halsey
W. F. HALSEY,
Admiral, U. S. Navy.

Temporary Citation.

fields and supply dumps. It was full daylight when the bombardment started to rake the enemy positions. Shore batteries opened up and soon the splashes were coming too close for comfort. The ships were obliged to maneuver sharply and radically to throw the Japs' aim off, and one Division of Destroyers started to search out the Jap guns. A number of shore batteries were silenced in this duel, but not before they had managed to do some damage. The bombardment continued, however, and the Lansdowne turned her guns on the shipping in the harbor. Two ships were sunk, one left blazing, and a few heavy fires started along the docks. The Japanese were still shooting well and, about eight o'clock, it was decided we had done sufficient damage and had pushed our luck far enough. Two destroyers had been hit, two grazed by shrapnel, but the "Lucky L" had come through untouched. Kavieng, however, was in flames and columns of smoke were still rising from explosions as DesRon 12 proceeded to Purvis Bay.

On March 8, the Lansdowne and Lardner took a slow convoy to Green Island, returning to Guadalcanal on March 14.

On March 24, the Lansdowne left Purvis Bay and operated with various supporting units of the Fifth Fleet operating north of New Ireland and Manus Island.

On April 16, the ship again took off from Purvis Bay to join the Seventh Fleet and, until May 7, operated with escort carriers supporting Allied landings in Aitapo-Hollandia-Tanahmerah Area of the northern New Guinea coast.

After a short stop at Pearl Harbor, the ship sailed on May 30, for Majuro Atoli where Task Force 58 was forming for the next step to the west, the capture of Saipan, Tinian and Guam.

SAIPAN, TINIAN AND THE PHILIPPINES SEA

On June 11, the initial strikes were made on Saipan and Tinian. The task group with which the Lansdowne was operating was making the first strikes on Iwo Jima in the Bonins on June 15 when it was learned that strong enemy forces were leaving the Philippines presumably to challenge our forces in the Marianas. This expected attack developed on June 19 and is listed in the history books as the First Battle of the Philippines Sea.

Saipan had been the key to the inner defenses of Japan. Our assault there on June 15, 1944 forced the Japanese to engage our fleet for the first time since the Battle of Midway. When U.S. submarines forced the Japanese Fleet to sea, their progress was reported by others who sank two of their carriers on June 19. Admiral Spruance had wisely decided to cover the Saipan landings rather than search out the Japanese Fleet, and he dispatched Admiral Mitscher's powerful Fast Carrier Force to the west.

Battleships, cruisers and destroyers were deployed on a line 15 miles in advance of the more vulnerable carriers to meet the brunt of the expected air attack with their powerful anti-aircraft batteries. U.S. fighters broke up raids 50 miles ahead of our surface units. Those that broke through were decimated by ship's gunfire. By the day's end, U.S. fighters had destroyed 366 Japanese planes in the air and 17 on the ground. Nineteen more were shot down by ships' gunfire. Our own strike groups sank a carrier and damaged four others plus battleships and cruisers, thus breaking the back of the Japanese Fleet which did not again seriously challenge our fleet until the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

The Lansdowne continued to operate with the carrier task group refueling and provisioning at sea until July 22 when detachment orders were received.

The Lansdowne departed the Marianas Area on July 24, proceeding via Eniwetok and Pearl Harbor, arriving at Puget Sound Navy Yard on August 12 for leave, liberty and overhaul.

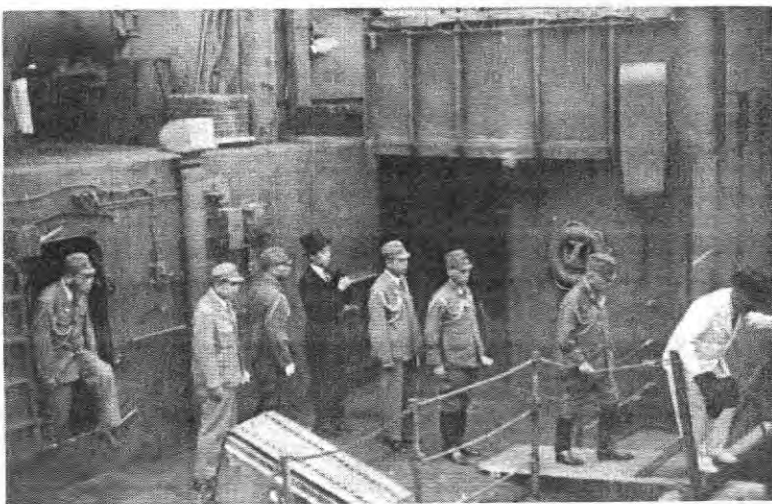
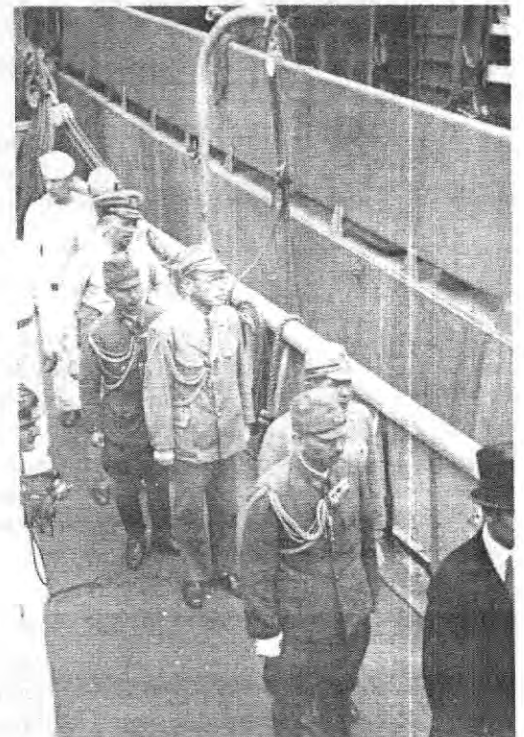
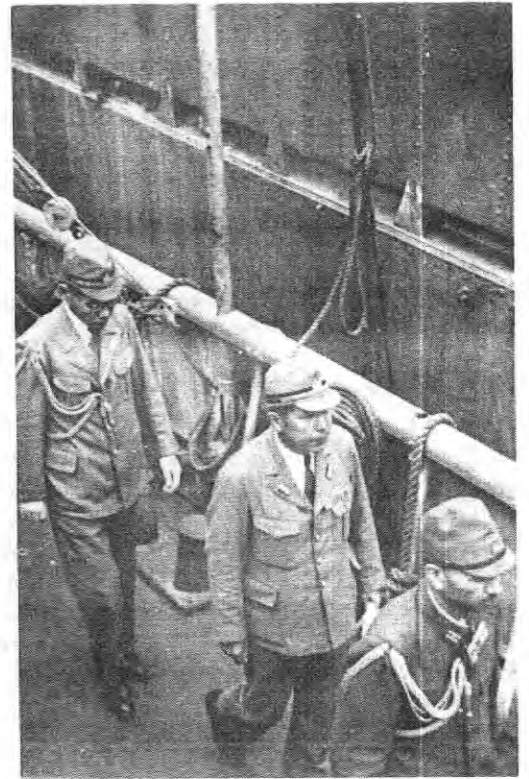
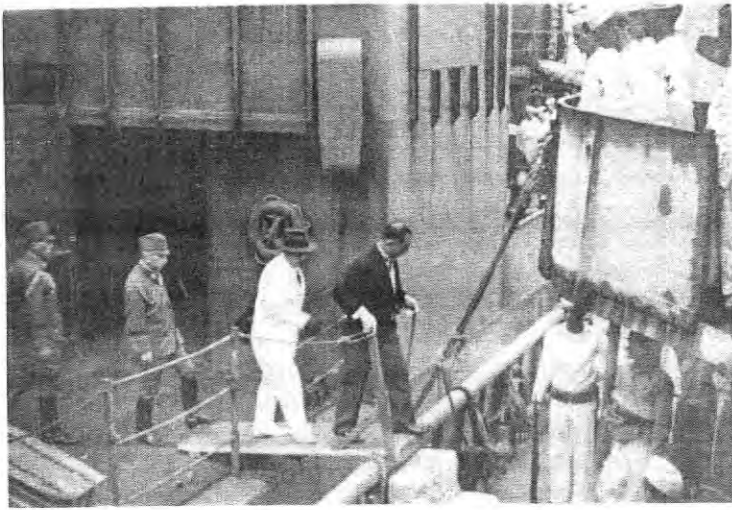
Forty-seven days later, on September 29, the Lansdowne left for Pearl Harbor and a short training period. On October 18, she left Pearl Harbor and during the remainder of the year was engaged in patrol and escort duty in the Western Carolines. The new 2100 and 2200 destroyers that were coming out to the fleet in greater numbers were forcing the older destroyers to take a less active part in the war, but only temporarily. The greater part of this period was spent in the Palau Islands as ComScreen in the Anguar-Pololiu Area.

The Lansdowne became "big brother" to the various YMS's, and SC's stationed there by supplying them with fuel, water, ice cream, and other supplies and even performing emergency repairs occasionally. This period would have been a wonderful vacation except that after a certain length of time even a vacation can get monotonous, and the war was moving far ahead toward the Japanese Home Islands.

BOMBARDING OKINAWA

The Lansdowne finally got off to the war again on May 5, 1945, when she left Ulithi for Okinawa to become familiar with Wreck Bay, the Peter Bogoy Mikes, and the kamikazes. On patrol station south of Kerama Retto general quarters became routine especially at twilight when the Japs flew shuttle service from Sakishima and Formosa up to Okinawa. The Lansdowne was still the "Lucky L," but the destroyers in Wreck Bay attested to the determination of the Kamikazes.

On May 19, the Lansdowne joined the bombardment group off Naha on Okinawa. During the next week the ship bombarded the Japanese positions on the island conducting day and night firings on gun positions, supply dumps and troop areas. The firing went on continually until at night the off-duty gun crews could sleep with the guns going off a few feet away.



Carrying Japanese Plenipotentiaries to The U.S.S. Missouri.

On May 27, the Lansdowne joined the escort carrier group which was conducting strikes on the Sakishima Islands to deny the Japs the use of these bases. This duty continued until June 16 when the group departed for Leyte for rest and routine repairs.

On July 3 the Lansdowne left Ulithi with the Logistic Support Group, consisting of fleet oilers, provision ships and ammunition ships, which was to support the operations of the Third Fleet conducting strikes against the Japanese Empire.

The Lansdowne finally joined Task Force 38 on August 13 and finished the war operating with the first team. The days that followed August 15 were busy preparing for the occupation and the destroyers were kept hustling from ship to ship delivering passengers and mail.

On August 20 the Lansdowne left the task force and proceeded to Buckner Bay, Okinawa, where she joined the old battleships and with them entered Sagami Wan on August 27 and anchored that night with Fujiyama in the background.

At dawn on August 20 the Lansdowne in company of the Buchanan and Lardner escorted the South Dakota through Urago Suido and entered Tokyo Bay at 0945. Here the ship was assigned to the Prisoner of War Rescue Group. For the next three days the ship brought out Allied POW's from Omori and other camps to the hospital ships in the Bay.

CARRIED JAPANESE SURRENDER PARTY

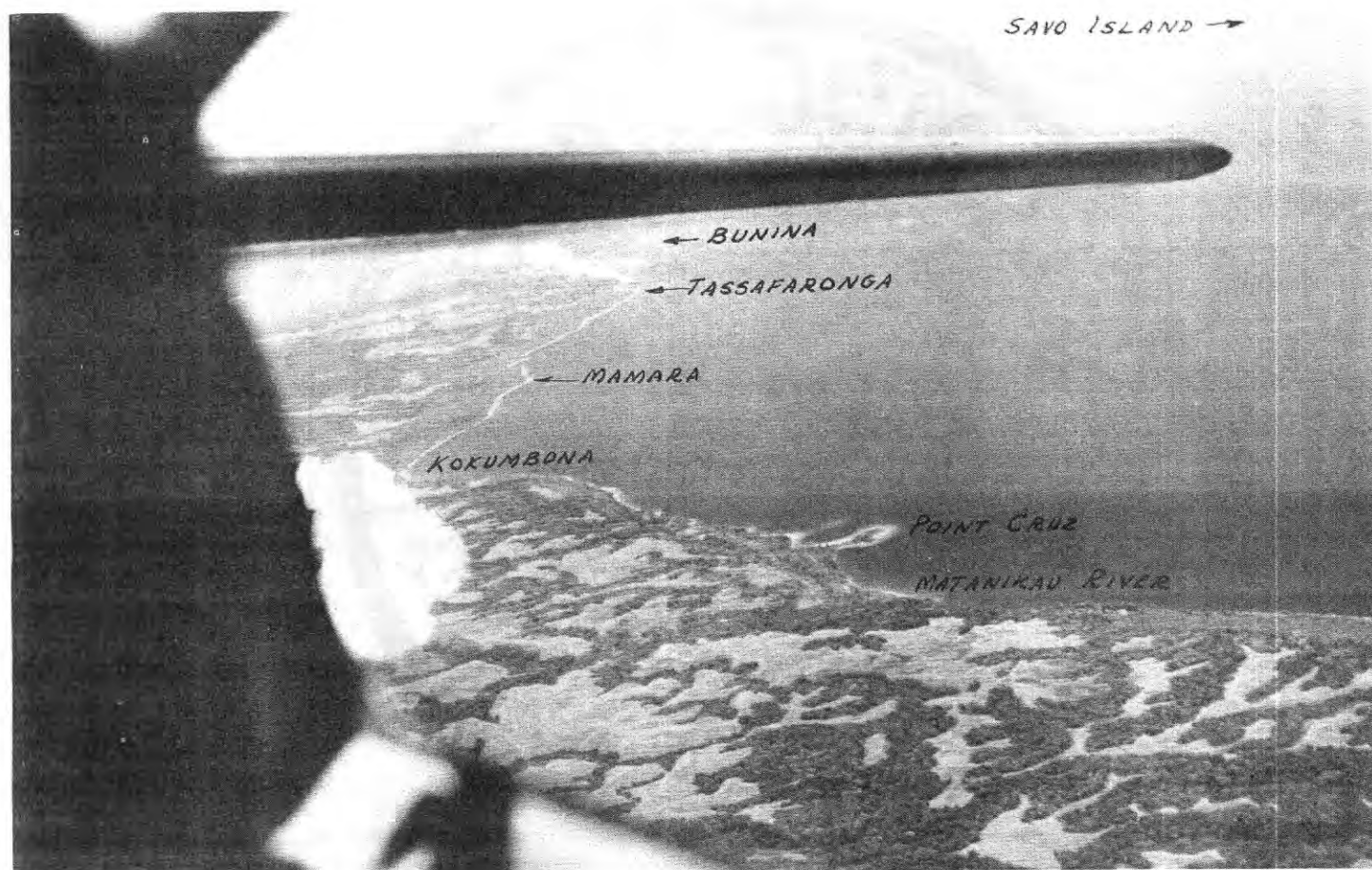
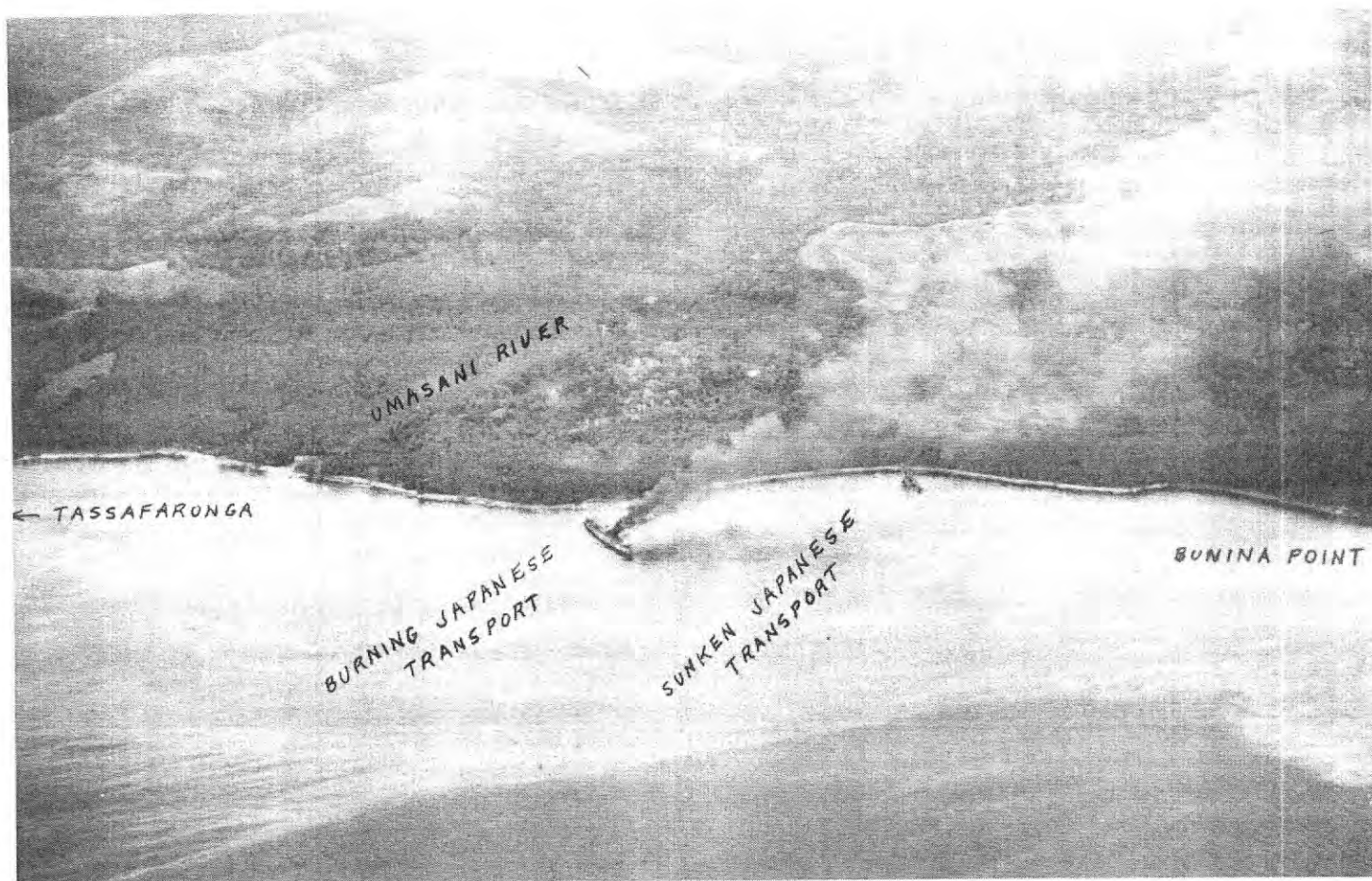
On September 1, the Lansdowne entered Yokahama Harbor and moored overnight. Early the next morning all hands had a good look at the Japanese surrender party as they came aboard for transport to the Missouri for the signing of the formal surrender terms.

On September 3, the Lansdowne left for Hamamatsu to pick up another group of Allied POW's and returned to Tokyo Bay on September 7. The ship then moored in Yokosuka Naval Base remaining there until October 8 when she left for Wakayama, Japan.

On October 15, the Lansdowne in company with the California, Tennessee, Chemung, Stevenson, Stockton, Thorne, Lardner and, later the Nelson, left Japan to return to the U.S. via Singapore, Colombo and Capetown. The Lansdowne thus finished her last cruise in New York, the same port she had started from in June, 1942.

The Lansdowne became known as the "Lucky L" early in the war and lived up to her name throughout. There were many close calls and dangerous moments but despite the best efforts of the enemy neither the ship nor the crew were ever so much as scratched by bomb, shell or torpedo.





From: THE LANSLOWNE NEWS for September 3, 1945

*****HERE IS THE OFFICIAL LIST OF THE SIGNERS OF THE SURRENDER DOCUMENT*****

Tokyo Bay 2nd;

THE FOLLOWING IS THE OFFICIAL LIST OF THE JAPANESE AND ALLIED REPRESENTATIVES WHO SIGNED THE SURRENDER DOCUMENTS ABOARD THE BATTLESHIP MISSOURI IN TOKYO BAY:

FOR JAPAN -- FOREIGN MINISTER MAMORU SHIGEMITSU, IN BEHALF OF THE
EMPEROR HIROHITO AND THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT
GENERAL YOSHIJIRO UMEZU, FOR THE JAPANESE IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
AS THE SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS - GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR
FOR THE UNITED STATES - FLEET ADMIRAL CHESTER W. NIMITZ
FOR CHINA - GENERAL HSU YUNG-CHANG
FOR THE SOVIET - LIEUT. GEN. KUZMA DEREVYANKO
FOR GREAT BRITAIN - ADMIRAL SIR BRUCE FRASER
FOR AUSTRALIA - GENERAL SIR THOMAS BLAMEY
FOR CANADA - COLONEL LAWRENCE MOORE-COSGRAVE
FOR FRANCE - GENERAL JACQUES LE CLERC
FOR THE NETHERLANDS - ADMIRAL CEL HELFRICH
FOR NEW ZEALAND - VICE MARSHAL L.M. ISITT

* * * *

The plenipotentiaries and members of their suite, sent from the Japanese Government for the signature of the instrument of surrender to take place aboard the U.S.S. Missouri on September 2, 1945 are as follows:

Mr. Mamoru Shigemitsu, Minister for Foreign Affairs;
General Tashijiro Umezu, Chief of Staff Suite;
Lt. General Shinchichi Miyazaki, Director of the First Department of the
Army Division of the General Headquarters;
Mr. Katsuo Okazaki, Director General of the Central Liaison Office;
Rear Admiral Sadatoshi Tomioka, Director of the First Department
of the Navy Division of General Headquarters;
Mr. Toshikaze Kase, Director of the Third Department of the Board
of Information;
Major General Yatsuji Nagai, Army Staff Officer of the General
Headquarters;
Rear Admiral Ichiro Yokoyama, Navy Ministry;
Mr. Saburo Ohta, Director of the Third Department of the Central
Liaison Office;
Captain Katsuo Shiba, Navy Staff Officer of the General Headquarters;
Colonel Ichiji Sugita, Army Staff Officer of the General Headquarters.

The above plenipotentiaries were transported to the U.S.S. MISSOURI aboard the U.S.S. LANSLOWNE.

28 August...

LANSLOWNE PRESS NEWS

TUES. MORNING

GUAM 25TH:

POWERFUL FORCES OF THE U.S. PACIFIC FLEET HAVE BEEN ASSEMBLING IN THE WATERS OFF THE COAST OF JAPAN FOR OPERATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE FORTHCOMING OCCUPATION OF JAPAN. THE NAVAL FORCES SCHEDULED TO ENTER THE JAPANESE WATERS IN THE FIRST STAGES OF THE NAVAL OCCUPATION OF THE TOKYO AREA AND OF THE ENEMY HOME ISLANDS ARE UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. HALSEY, USN, THE COMMANDER OF THE U.S. 3RD FLEET, IN HIS FLAGSHIP, THE USS MISSOURI. THESE FORCES AND THOSE IN THE IMMEDIATE SUPPORT INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING SHIPS: -

BATTLESHIPS

IDAHO, MISSISSIPPI, NEW MEXICO, WEST VIRGINIA, COLORADO, MISSOURI, IOWA
SOUTH DAKOTA, WISCONSIN, ALABAMA, INDIANA, NORTH CAROLINA

- AIRCRAFT CARRIERS -

INTREPID, ANTIETAM, BENNINGTON, TICONDEROGA, YORKTOWN, SHANGRI LA, BON HOMME
RICHARD, LEXINGTON, HANCOCK, RANDOLPH WASP, COWPENS, INDEPENDENCE, BELLEAU WOOD,
MONTEREY, BATAAN.

- ESCORT CARRIERS -

GILBERT ISLANDS, MAKIN ISLANDS, THETIS BAY, ROI, MUNDA, HOLLANDIA

- CRUISERS -

QUINCY, CHICAGO, BOSTON, ST. PAUL, VICKSBURG, DETROIT, PASADENA, SPRINGFIELD,
WILKES BARRE, AMSTERDAM, ATLANTA, DAYTON, OKLAHOMA CITY, TOPEKA, DULUTH,
OAKLAND, TUCSON, FLINT, SAN DIEGO, SAN JUAN.

-- DESTROYERS --

TAYLOR, NICHOLAS, O'BANNON, BUCHANAN, LANSLOWNE, LARDNER, STEVENSON, GILLESPIE,
KALK, STOCKTON, TWINING, STOCKHAM, WEDDERBURN, SOUTHERLAND, COGSWELL, CAPERTON,
INGERSOLL, KNAPP, FRANK KNOX, CUSHING, COLOHAN, UHLMANN, BENHAM, NICHOLSON,
WILKES, WOODWORTH, TERRY, BRISTOL, HOPEWELL, ROSS, C.K. BRONSON, COTTEN,
JOHN RODGERS, HARRISON, MC KEE, MURRAY, RINGGOLD, SCHROEDER, DASHIELL, ENGLISH,
C.S. SPERR, AULT, WALDRON, J.S. WEEKS, HANK, GATLING, HEALY, HALSEY, POWELL,
DUNCAN, ROGERS, MYLES C. FOX, HAWKINS, CHEVALIER, PERKINS FRANKS, WAKLEIGH,
BARTON WATKE, O'BRIEN, LOWRY, ALLEN M. SUMMER, WALLACE L. LIND, THORN DORTCH,
INGRAHAM, DE HAVEN, MANSFIELD, HEERMAN, ERBEN, WALKER, HALE, BLACK, BULLARD,
CHAUNCEY, COLLETT, MADDOX, BLUE, BRUSH, TAUSSIG, BENNER, ROWE, SMALLEY,
STODDARD, WATTS, WRENN, TAUSSIG, BENNER, ROWE, SMALLEY, STODDARD, WATTS,
R.K. HUNTINGTON, LYMAN K. SWENSON, SAMUEL N. MOORE, HIGBEE, NORMAN SCOTT.

- DESTROYER ESCORTS -

BANGUST, CROWLEY, DEEDE, DONALDSON, WATERMAN, CABANA, WILLIAM O. MILLER,
MITCHELL, DIONNE, ELGAY WILSON, LAKE, MC CLELLAND, GRISWOLD, LYMAN WEAVER,
REYNOLDS, CANFIELD, WILLMARTH, JOSEPH E. CONNOLLY, HILBERT, KYNE, LAMONS,
ELDEN, CARLSON.

- AUXILIARIES AND AMPHIBIOUS CRAFT -

TANKERS: TALUGA, ASHTABULA, CACAPON, NANTAHALA, CHIPOLA, SAVINE, MERRIMACK,
MASCOMA, CANEY, PATUXENT, CALIENTE, HOUSATONIC, KENNEBAGO, CACHE, PAMANSET,
LACKAWANNA, CHICOPEE, ATASCOSA, KASKASKIA, TAPPAHANNOCK, AUCILLA, EXCALENTE,
NESHANIC, CIMMARRON, ESCAMBIA, MANATEE, SEVEC, NEOSHO, KANKAKEE, MARIAS,
PLATTE, NECHES, CHICKASKIA, SCHUYLKILL, TOMAHAWK, TAMALPAIS.

- DESTROYER TRANSPORTS -

BARR, RUNELS, BEGOR, SIMS, H.G. BASH, W.J. PATTINSON, REEVES, WANTUCK,
PAVLIC, GOSSELIN.

- APA TRANSPORTS -

GARRARD, MELLETTE, MEREWETHER, BRAXTON, LANIER, GRIMES

From: **THE LANSLOWNE NEWS** for September 3, 1945

CONT'D FROM PAGE ONE

-CARGO SHIPS-

ALCYONE, THUBAN, WAUKESHA

-AMMUNITION SHIPS-

ASBEN, VESUVIUS, SHASTA, MAZAMA, MAUNA LOA, FIREDRAKE, WRANGELL, AKUTAN.

-FAST MINESWEEPERS-

HOPKINS, JEFFERS, ELLYSON, MACOMB, HAMBLETON, FITCH, GHERADI.

-SEAPLANE TENDERS-

CUMBERLAND SOUND, HAMLIN, GARDINERS BAY, MACKINAC, SUISUN.

-MINESWEEPERS-

REVENGE, SAGE, TOKEN, REQUISITE, TUMULT, POCHARD.

-HOSPITAL SHIPS-

TRANQUILITY, BENEVOLENCE, RESCUE.

RESCUE SHIPS: MOTOR MINESWEEPERS:

YMS 177, 268, 276, 343, 362, 371, 390, 415, 426, 441, 461, 467.

FLEET TUGS:

CHAWASHA, MOLALA, WENATCHEE, MOCTOCI.

MINELAYERS:

GWIN, FRAZER

AUXILIARY MINELAYER:

PICKET.

DESTROYER TENDER:

PIEDMONT

SUBMARINE TENDER

PROTEUS.

SUBMARINE RESCUE VESSEL:

GREENLET

LANDING SHIPS; VEHICLE:

OZARK, MONITOR

LANDING SHIPS; DOCK: SHADWELL, SAN MARCOS, CATAMOUNT.

REPAIR SHIPS: DELTA

LANDING CRAFT REPAIR SHIP: PATROCLUS.

LANDING SHIPS; TANK: LST 467, 648, 789, 1083, 1139

PROVISION STORESHIP: ALDEBARAN.

MISCELLANEOUS AUXILIARY: ARGONNE

LAND SHIPS, MEDIUM: LSM 13, 15, 17, 101, 208, 252, 284, 290, 362, 368, 371, 419, 488.

LANDING CRAFT, SUPPORT:

LCS 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 89, 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 114, 115, 117, 118, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124

LANDING CRAFT; INFANTRY:

LCP 647, 649, 762, 763, 785, 1024, 1026, 1068, 1069, 1070

LCI 367, 438, 441, 450, 457, 469, 726, 752, 1079, 1080.

THE FOLLOWING SHIPS ARE INCLUDED IN THE UNITS OF THE BRITISH PACIFIC FLEET NOW OPERATING WITH ADMIRAL HALSEY'S FORCES:

BATTLESHIPS: DUKE OF YORK, INDEFATIGABLE.

CRUISERS: NEWFOUNDLAND, (CQ) GAMBIA

DESTROYERS: WAGER, WRANGLER, TERMAGENT, TEAZER, WHELP, WAKEFUL, TENACIOUS, HMAS-NIZAM AND NAPIER, BARFLEUR, TROUBRIDGE, TERPSICHOE.

HOSPITAL SHIP: TJITJALENEKA.

THE COMPOSITION OF THE ABOVE FORCE MAY BE EXPECTED TO VARY FROM DAY TO DAY AS THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE INITIAL PHASES OF THE OCCUPATION DEVELOP.

Don't Ship Me Out

*Give me land, lots of land 'neath the
starry skies above,
Don't ship me out!
Let me bide with my bride in the
country that I love.
Don't ship me out!
Let me stay far away from the ocean breeze.
Don't wanta listen to the rolling seas.
Sign me up forever, but I ask you please
Don't ship me out!
Just turn me loose to skedaddle far from
Battle where there's ships and guns galore.
I'll take abuse, suffer rations, indignations,
If you will keep me out of war.
Just let me stay on the beaches with the
gulfport peaches
At the NTO where the Japs can't reach us.
Even cut the liberty but I beseech you,
Don't ship me out!*

(Tune: "Don't Fence Me In")





SEA DUTY ON A DESTROYER

by

THOMAS S. WALSH, JR., Lt. M.C., U.S.N.R. (A.M.C. '37)

Two weeks after reporting for active duty I got my orders to a new destroyer. For one who has never been to sea it is hard to imagine just what a destroyer is like. The term "Tin Can" describes them very aptly; that is what they are. The sides are made of such thin steel that they cannot even touch the dock they are alongside of, or a hole will be punched clear through. One cannot bounce the ship off the dock the way the paddle-wheel steamers on the Hudson do. There are four principal parts to one of these ships: the engines, boilers, magazines, and guns. In the small spaces where these parts do not approximate too closely, there are the living quarters and messing compartments. The ships are designed for speed and everything else is sacrificed to obtain it, especially comfort. They are designed like a thin sliver of wood and consequently toss and pitch about in all but the mildest sea. For days it is not uncommon for the ship to roll forty degrees. The decks become awash each time the ship tosses over. To eat (when one feels like it under those conditions) really becomes an art. Poles are rigged up in the wardroom about the table. They are just wide enough for a chair to be placed between them and have loops so that the chairs can be lashed to the pole to prevent one from sliding around the deck. Somehow one gets into his chair, wraps his left arm around the pole, grasping the dish with the left hand, then as the ship tosses about balances the dish with each roll of the ship at the same time trying to eat with the right. Sleeping presents the same difficulties. One gets into his bunk, then puts in a guard rail several inches in height, getting his back braced alongside the outer bulkhead, and doubling up so that his feet are against the rail. As the ship moves about he is firmly wedged in this position and can rest quite comfortably.

While these are some of the more disagreeable sides, there are a lot of advantages. There is always hot water for shaving, and everyone gets a hot shower practically every day. Frozen meat is the principal item of food, and there is plenty of butter and whole eggs. Fresh fruit presents a problem, as there is not sufficient room to store it, and consequently it is available only in port, where there is a store or refrigeration ship.

We put to sea on our "shakedown" cruise. This is quite interesting for it is to test the equipment and train the crew. The engines are operated under varying conditions. The guns are tested and practice firing runs made with the doctor in the gun house acting as an observer. Torpedo firings are also included. For one new to the Navy it is quite enlightening, for one learns the functions and operations of the different parts of the ship. Our cruise lasted six weeks, with a short overhaul in the yard to correct obvious errors. The crew got their last leave at this time in the yard, which was also my last time home (June, 1942), and then the ship was ready for combat.

We went down the Atlantic coast and into the Caribbean while the hunting was quite good, and finished off some Nazi submarines. The heat was pretty bad, so everyone was pleased when we left there after six weeks.

We hit the South Pacific the first week in September. Our first stop was at Tongatabu, the capital of the Tongan or Friendly Islands. There were many white wooden clapboard buildings arranged around the village square with its soldiers' monument, the government buildings on one side, the queen's palace on the other, so one thought immediately of a New England village. The natives were all red-skinned Polynesians. The men were, on the average, about six feet tall and

weighed about two hundred pounds, every one a handsome physical specimen. The ship left there in a few days and joined one of the two task forces in the South Pacific guarding the supply routes to Guadalcanal.

One afternoon I was aroused out of my sleep with the ringing of the general alarm and the cry "General quarters, all hands to general quarters, explosion on the carrier." And sure enough, there was the "Wasp," which we were alongside of, blazing from several torpedo hits. One of the "fish" I later learned passed obliquely beneath the entire length of our ship. It became evident that the fire could not be controlled, and pretty soon the crew started to abandon ship. Our whaleboats picked up the survivors out of the water and brought them on board. In two hours over 450 were picked up, about 60 of them later requiring hospitalization. The cases were principally burns and were treated with tannic acid, as that was all I had available at the time.

The cases would be brought into the wardroom and just laid on the deck. It was quite difficult, for they were covered with fuel oil, which had to be cleaned off before anything could be done. There were two pharmacist mates in the ship's crew and about six from among the survivors. Everyone went to work. I was kept busy just moving around seeing the cases as they came in and instructing the corpsmen what to do. When a patient appeared to have a eschar (from the tannic acid and silver nitrate) he was moved out of the mass of humanity lying on the deck and placed in one of the officer's rooms, and when these were completely filled others were taken amidships to part of the crew's quarters. The more serious cases were kept in the wardroom. Morphine was given in half-grain doses as needed, without any time limit, as long as the patient appeared to need it. Two patients died out of the entire group, each one having over fifty per cent of the body surface burned. The remainder were put ashore within twenty-four hours, and when seen two weeks later all were alive and doing well. As the cases were treated, blankets were gradually broken out, as there was no time for such a procedure at first. Later minor cases were tended to. That night when I wanted to turn in there was no bare place on the deck, every part of the ship was covered with someone. Finally I remembered the coding room, which was locked, but as I had the key in my pocket, I slept in there.

After this the ship joined various task groups. One night early in October we started in to intercept some Jap ships sighted heading for Guadalcanal. On board we always wore our lifebelts, which one had to inflate oneself, but this night we all broke out with the big kapok jackets, for they were heavy enough to stop a small shell fragment and would keep one afloat if he were blown overboard and knocked unconscious. Everyone had a big sheath knife in order to cut free the life rafts if necessary. And we all carried fifteen feet of line and a pistol. The former was to tie ourselves to a raft or any floating object, if we were in the water. The pistol was for self-defense in case we landed in enemy-occupied territory.

Well, we steamed along behind one of the new battleships. It was a beautiful moonlight night and numerous phosphorescent particles gleamed in the water. Once a lookout yelled "torpedo"; we all ran to that side, but found only a large fifteen-foot shark playfully pacing the boat. The planes, however, reached the enemy first, hitting the two larger ones, and the Japs turned around. So nothing further happened. The ship continued as before, doing numerous jobs, and later in the month, for diversion, went and covered the landings at Funafuti in the Ellice Islands.

Early in November we were loaded with sixty tons of trench mortar ammunition. As there was no hold or available space to put it in, it was placed on deck lashed to the railing, in the mess halls under the tables, in the passageways of the living spaces, and in any apparent space. The ship was top heavy, and in our journey to Guadalcanal hit some rough weather. She rolled, as usual, to forty degrees, but this time instead of snapping right back she would stay at that angle. Everyone on board thought she was going to roll right over, but she didn't. Our

destination was reached, and while unloading the cargo a midget submarine broke the surface and torpedoed a ship behind us loaded with thousand pound bombs (fortunately the cargo did not explode), and then fired at us, missing, but the torpedo ran up on the beach. The captain slipped the anchor and chain and had the ship under way in about three minutes. It was pretty fast thinking on his part and it saved the ship. He was decorated for doing it. The crew (when the sub was sighted) ran and manned the battle stations before the general alarm could be sounded, closing all of the water-tight doors and all of the valves. It demonstrated the excellent training the crew had and also the morale and fighting spirit of the men themselves. The mission was accomplished and then we left to refuel. On account of our fuel situation we were unable to join the other ships in the fighting in the middle of November. We came right back escorting a convoy into the Solomons and hunting subs nightly between Savo and Esperance, just missing an attack by our own torpedo boats.

There were numerous other jobs, convoying, escorting damaged ships, and many other things. In February we were back again for over five weeks, covering the landings in the Russell Islands.

Next we were on our way to the Aleutians. Some of the landings on Attu were covered. Also we were lucky enough to be included in a task force that went in and shelled Kiska. The orders were that the shore batteries had a range of 12,000 yards, but the destroyers would fire at 6,000. So, in ahead of the line of cruisers went the small ships. It was quite a spectacular sight — there would be a belch of flame obscuring the entire ship from our view, then the smoke appeared later, the vessels would appear to be sailing ahead of the smoke screen. On our own vessel you would be momentarily blinded by a burst of flame fifteen feet long as the forward guns let go. There would be a terrific blast of air against one's face at the same time. The deck seemed to drop about two inches and then suddenly stop. There was a shower of cork particles and gradually the ship went into a roll to the opposite side. The clinking of the empty shell cases could be heard on the deck. The ship would lazily swing back to an upright position as another salvo let go. Most of the cruising was done in fog, so thick you could slice it. The weather was not too bad, for we were there in the summer season. The ship was detached after two months of duty, returning to the South Pacific.

The tropics were not too bad. On board ship there were no tropical diseases. At anchor the distance was too great for the mosquitoes to fly, and then all water used was distilled, so no cases of dysentery occurred. Ashore it was quite different. At one place, where they had a native hospital with a French doctor, the conditions were appalling, by American standards. In that area the natives were dying of tuberculosis and none were to be seen past the age of forty. The only surgery was the incision of abscesses, and the excision of "tropical ulcers." Three nursing nuns tended to all of the patients. The buildings consisted of twenty-foot square buildings, divided in the middle with one side for the natives, the other for the Tonkinese indentured laborers. There were only wooden couches, with no mattresses nor sheets. Our military authorities used natives at first, but then decided not to on account of their being a potential reservoir of malaria.

We returned to the Solomons. The night before I left the ship we were up hunting Jap barges and destroyers off Vella Lavella, Kolombangara, and New Georgia. It then took me a full month of traveling finally to reach home. On the return trip we came on an army transport on which we lived on canned food for the entire trip. Fresh water was limited, and only salt water showers were available. After seventeen and a half months of sea duty, the States looked pretty good.

GUADALCANAL 1942

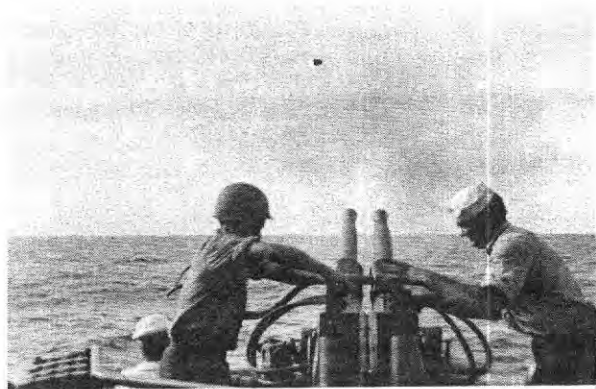
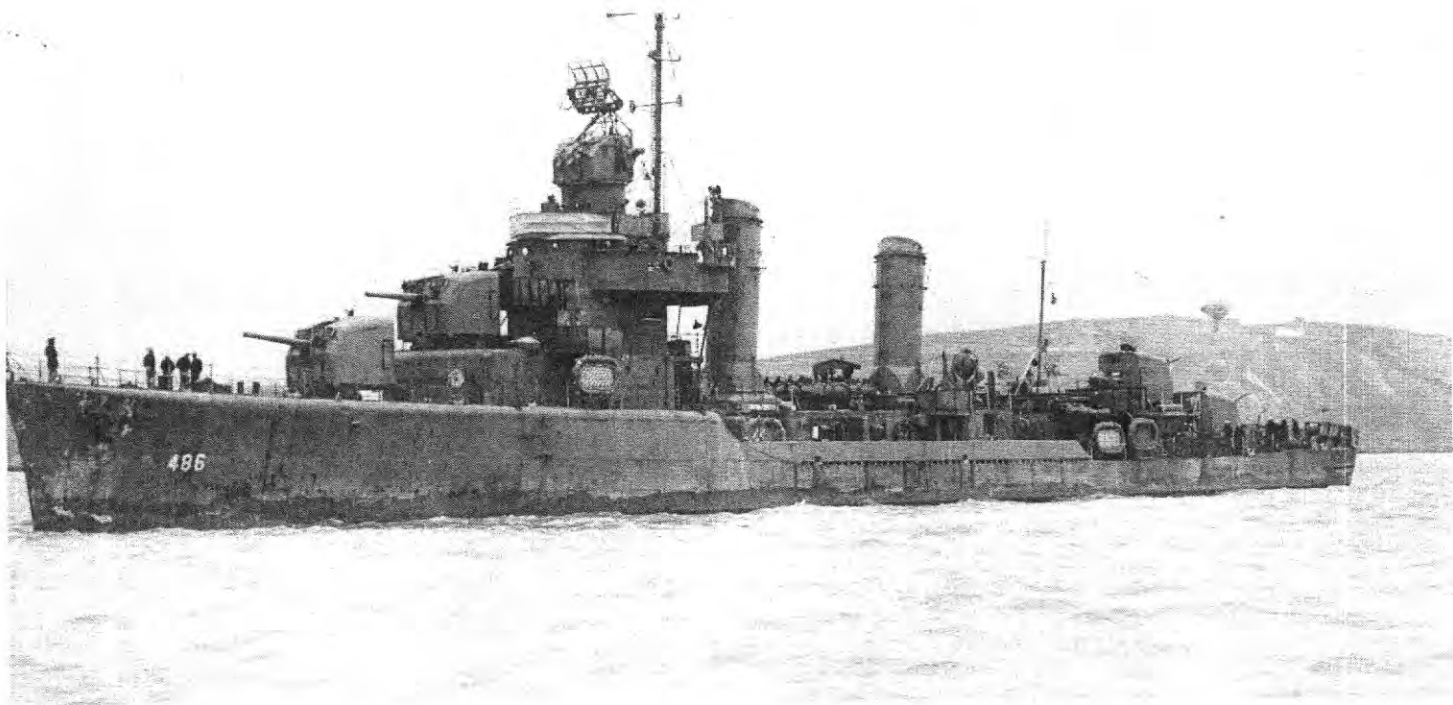
*Guadalcanal where you sweat and stink
Where it's so damn hot you can hardly think
Where a bottle of beer is every man's wish
While shooting down bombers of dodging
tin fish
Where all the natives are as black as
your shoes
And there ain't no women and ain't
no booze.
Where each man dreams of a piece of t---
Of a great big steak and lots of mail.
Where they promise you liberty mighty soon
But the yellow bastards still come
over at noon.
Where in the water is a million sharks
And General Quarters sounds each time
it gets dark.
It's a nice quiet spot. You'll remember
it well.
It's a carbon copy of a place called Hell.*

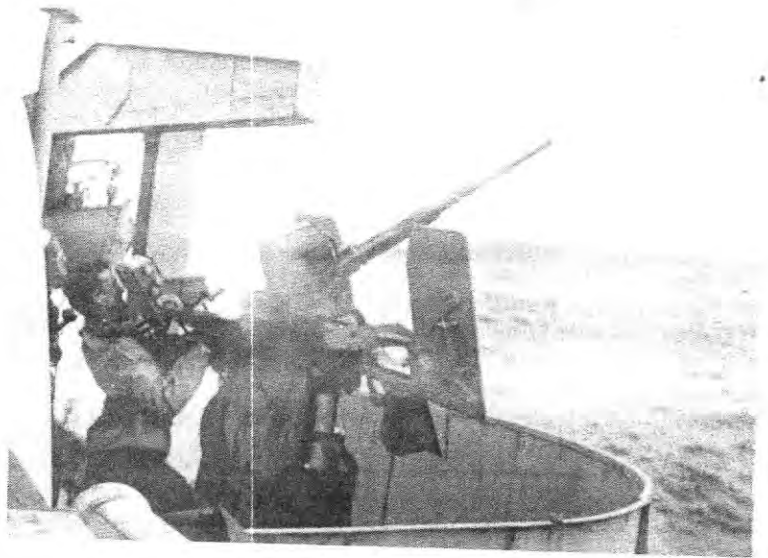
RUSSELL ISLANDS 1943

*Eight hours we spent at General Quarters
But the yellow bastards had other orders.
Finding the islands so easy to take
They gave it the name of a clean slate.
On the second trip it was no fake.
We left a sub sinking in our wake.
The third was much to our grief.
We ran aground on a sandy reef.
With "full astern, and all that's holy,
We'll back her down," said Captain Foley.
At seven knots we screened our barges
And back we went to old Tulagi.
Testing out at 20 knots was a crime
We sure could hear that port shaft grind.
Steaming from Tulagi, much to our shame
In convoy of two four-piper dames.
In drydock one wheel was put on
And orders read "You will carry on."
Now steaming with our old time smartness
We lead the Nassau through the darkness.*

by

S.L. Rines CPhM





*XMAS GREETINGS Nov. 1942
At E.S. New Hebrides*

*To send a card on Christmas
Is the usual thing for me.
But this year things are different.
To that you must agree.*

*Back home our "buck" means everything.
With it some folks break laws.
Out here it doesn't mean a thing.
Why! — Even the Admiral can't buy drawers.*

*I bummed a pen to write this note.
No stamps — Out months ago.
The picture from Redbook "41"
The paper — U.S.O.*

*Am I complainin' — Hell no!
I live just like an earl.
Good ships. Good chow. No work. (not much)
And two letters from my girl.*

*How are we doing? You want to know?
I'll just say, "pretty well".
Altho we're in their own back yard,
We're giving those yellow bee's hell.*

*Almost forgot I started this note
To say hellow to you.
To wish you health, wealth, and happiness
Because they are your due.*

*By
A.J.S.*

*MIDWATCH RHYME
(On the New Year's eve)
1943 — 1944*

*'Tis the virgin hour of forty four
As the Lansdowne patrols off a foreign shore.
With three other ships of Squadron "Douze"
We greet the New Year, without any booze.
We faithfully guard with all skill we can muster
Echelon Fifteen, for Empress Augusta.
For we know the Nip's chances are gonna get leaner
Once these Love, Sugar, Tares get to POINT TEREKINA.
At the moment we're steering on course three one five
Keeping station on "Malta" (Oh Lord how we strive)
We've got two kettles on, and two on short notice
Yet a slow fifteen knots is all that they mote us.
Our gadgets are searching the skies right and left.
A bogey! A bogey! Now he's showing OFF.
The QC is sending out pings down below
While the soundman is dreaming of a girl named Flo.
We're ready for action — Condition II and AFIRM
(After eighteen long months, how those words make me squirm)
The Japs know we're here, Yet they stay in Rabaul
'Cause with Ole Desron 12, they have learned not to fool.*

*This watch has seemed endless! Most mid-watches do
The bogies were missing, the chances were few.
We've turned nine at 3:30 and again about four
So now you might say our behind is before.
Say where's my relief? It's now four fifteen.
Quartermaster! Go get him before I start venting spleen.
Ah! Here he comes now as G.Q. hovers near
And thats how we started our "Happy New Year".*

*By
F.J. FOLEY
Commander U.S.N.*

RUSSELL ISLANDS
(Revised)

*Eight hours we spent at "General quarters,"
But the yellow bastards had other orders.*

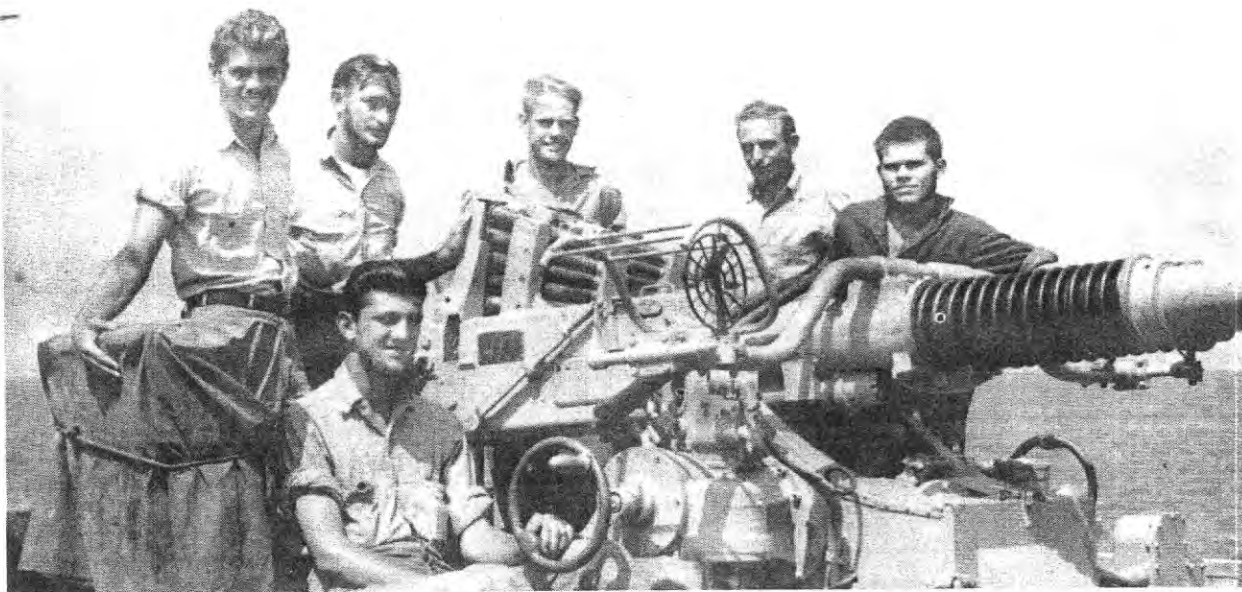
*The Japs had left without a fight
The ground we thought had held his might.
His reason for this sudden move
The Gods of war had yet to prove.
The second trip was more exciting,
It eased our nerves to do some fighting.
A sub off Savo had lain in wait
But we sank him 'fore he took the bait.
The third trip proved to be one of grief
We ran aground on a sandy reef.
With, "Full Astern, and all that's holy,
We'll back her off," said Captain Foley.
The ship shook with each turn of the screw
She bounced on the reef and jarred the crew.
The engines were put to every use
Before we finally did break loose.
That harm had been done, you could not doubt
She acted as though she had the gout.
Each turn of the screws just made her squirm.
Her fan-tail roved like a flapper's stern.*

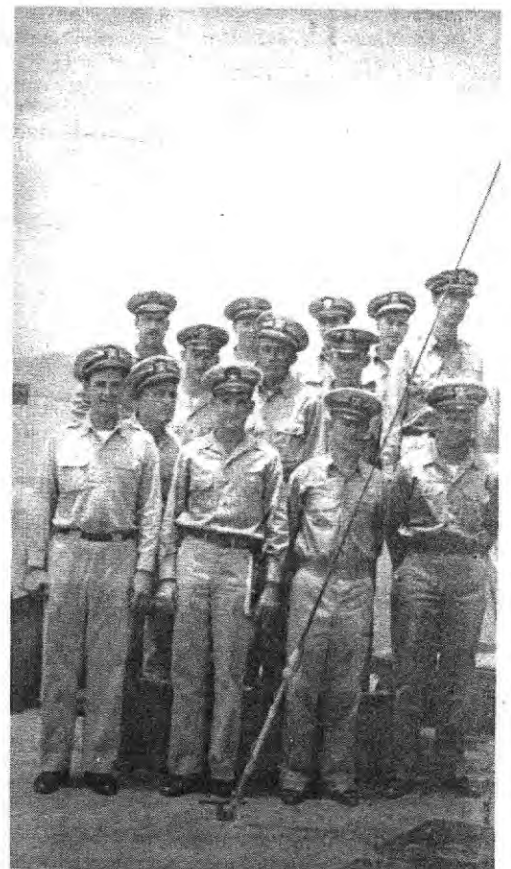
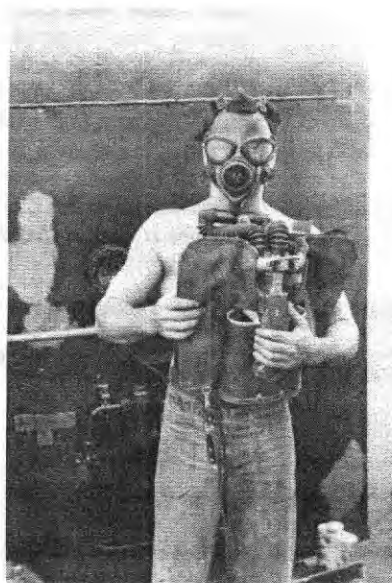
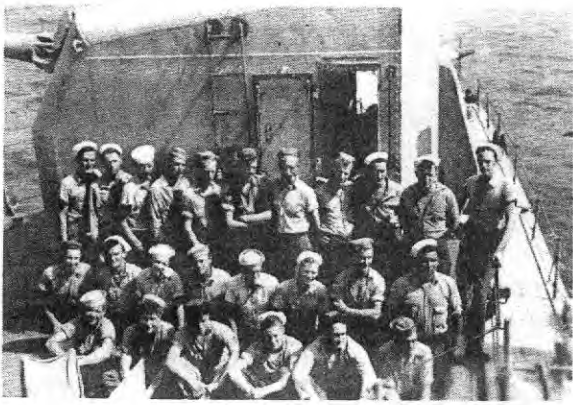
*At seven knots we screened our changes
Consisting of some landing barges.
Back to Tulagi we sadly came
To inspect the hurt that made us lame.
They tested out at twenty knots
Trying to find the bumpy spots.
She shook so bad they slowed her down
And sent us back to "Button" town.
From bad to worse we had to fall.
We had to take the jibes of all.
For on the trip to "Button" town
Two four-pipers took us down.
We went to the floating dry-dock
Where they found a screw in stock.
They sent the others to the beach.*

*Like fossils they laid them there to bleach.
The over-sized screw worked pretty good.
To the states would take us – knock on wood.
One shaft power made a touchy con
But orders read, 'You'll carry on'.*

*Now, almost with our old time smartness
We led the Nassau through the darkness.*

By
A.J. SKIRLICK
March '43





The Crew That Wrote a Letter to Captain of Their Destroyer

They Dodged "Tin Fish" and Took 90 Tons of Shells to Guadalcanal

*By EDWIN F. COLLINS

When you're anchored off Guadalcanal on a destroyer with an overload of ammunition, your decks piled to the bulwarks with shells, and a Jap submarine plugs a torpedo at you—brother, you're on a spot! It takes a top skipper and a crack crew to jump away from that "tin fish," but that's exactly what Commander William R. Smedberg 3d and his officers and men managed to do.

Rear Admiral Robert A. Theobald, U. S. N., commandant of the 1st Naval District, pinned the Navy's coveted Silver Star on Commander Smedberg for his feat, at Boston Navy Yard, the other day, half-way around the world from the scene of the action. Last night, while declining to relate his personal experience, Commander Smedberg told the story of his crew exclusively to the Globe.

★ ★ ★

There had been a hurry call from the marines for ammunition. Commander Smedberg's ship, then about 1000 miles south, was designated to run in to the embattled island a load of 90 tons of howitzer shells.

"We loaded while we retreated," the commander re-

lates. "It took two men to carry each crate, and we stowed them all over the ship and piled the top deck to the bulwarks. We were unanimous that the 1000-mile run from the advance base to Guadalcanal's Lunga Point was the toughest ride we ever had, what with our load slowing us down to 24 knots.

"In the moderate sea, the ship would roll slowly to one side and hang there for a while, then to the other side for a similar hang. We kept most of the men below decks, where their weight would be most effective, rather than on the topside, where another few hundred pounds might have tipped the balance a foot too far.

★ ★ ★

"We approached Guadal-



(U. S. Navy Photo)

COMM. WM. R. SMEDBERG 3d

canal in the pitch dark just before dawn, and we weren't sure which was Lunga Point, because there were two other landjuts, so it was some time before we could be certain. But we finally dropped anchor, 1000 yards offshore, at 5 a. m., and started unloading the ammunition into Higgins boats which Marines from the island quickly brought alongside.

Smedberg

Continued on Page 30

Smedberg

Hero Attended Middlesex School

Continued from the First Page

"The crew worked like Trojans getting the crates of shells into the boats and ashore. It was a beautiful morning, with the temperature about 90. The surface was glassy calm. A periscope would show up in it like a fly in a glass of milk. Below decks the black gang was standing by; the throttle men at their posts. On deck, men stood by ready to cut the lines of the Higgins boats alongside, in case of a surprise attack. The anchor chain was set to be slipped.

"A lookout on the bridge suddenly cried: 'Periscope!' Soon every eye was on it. The submarine, at the level for firing a torpedo, was about 800 yards abaft our beam and coming right at us. Then came the cry, 'Torpedoes!'

"Our chief machinist's mate, who was standing on the after-deck, raced below decks to his battle station. His action was typical of how perfectly each man did his job. The chief machinist's mate went to his battle station in spite of the fact that he knew it would put him right near the spot at which the torpedo was aimed."

So perfectly coordinated was the work of this crew and its officers that at Commander Smedberg's order of "Full speed ahead!" the anchor chain was slipped and the destroyer leaped like a startled deer out of the path of the torpedo.

Once the destroyer was under way the stalking submersible became the prey instead of the hunter and the destroyer quickly made three depth charge attacks before losing sound contact. Then she finished unloading the shells for the Marines.

An inkling of the close ties between skipper and crew which made

such remarkable teamwork possible lies in an occurrence a few nights before the sub incident. Commander Smedberg announced to the crew over the loud speaker system that in two hours the destroyer would be engaged with an enemy force twice the strength of the United States force. Then he received a penciled note; it read:

"Dear Captain: We only want you to know that we are with you 100 percent, every man of us. Our guns are raring to go and even the black gang, to a man, wishes that he could man a gun below deck and fire it as well as his boiler, or whatever special piece of machinery he might be assigned to. We also want you to know that as long as the ———'s keel is off the bottom she'll be banging hell out of those yellow bellies even if we have to throw in some of Scotty's steaks or Stew's spuds in place of our extended ammo.

(Crew's Letter Cont'd)

And should our oil get low in chasing 'em back to Japan, we'll throw in our remaining dungarees and our socks to keep up the steam pressure. We are sure that should you be forced to give us the word to abandon ship, it will be because our guns are useless and our ship ready for her last dive. And we have God on our side, so how can we lose. The Crew."



Freed Allied Prisoners Board the Lansdowne

FROM: LANSDOWNE NEWS for August 30, 1945

*****THE FIRST CONTINGENT OF ALLIED PRISONERS SAFE ON SHIPS*****

ABOARD ADMIRAL BADGER'S FLAGSHIP IN TOKYO BAY:*30th:
500 ALLIED PRISONERS WERE SAFE ABOARD AMERICAN NAVY MERCY SHIPS TODAY AFTER BEING RESCUED FROM "HUNGER, HUMILIATION AND BESTIAL BEATINGS" OF JAPAN'S OMORI PRISON CAMP.

THE 500 WERE THE FIRST CONTINGENT OF AN ESTIMATED 36,000 ALLIED PRISONERS, INCLUDING 8,000 AMERICANS HELD AT CAMPS THAT ARE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT JAPAN.

REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT B. CARNEY, ADMIRAL HALSEY'S CHIEF OF STAFF, DIRECTED THAT EFFORTS BE MADE TO EVACUATE 1500 MORE OF THE PRISONERS TO NAVY TRANSPORTS, REEVES AND COMFORT AND OTHER MERCY SHIPS TONIGHT. FOOD AND OTHER SUPPLIES WERE BEING DROPPED FROM AMERICAN SUPERFORTS TO THOUSANDS THAT ARE STILL CONFINED.

COMMODORE ROGER SIMPSON, LEADER OF THE RESCUE MISSION WHICH RELEASED THE FIRST 500 PRISONERS LAST NIGHT, TOLD UNITED PRESS A PITIABLE TALE OF MALTREATMENT AND NEGLECT AND DESCRIBED OMORI AS THE "BLACKEST HELL HOLE" OF THE WAR. HIS STATEMENTS WERE BORNE OUT BY NAVY DOCTORS WHO FOUND MOST OF THE 500 SUFFERING FROM INJURIOUS CONCUSSION BURNS OR MALNUTRITION.

AS THE SPECIAL NAVY TASK FORCE THREADED ITS WAY UP THE CHANNEL TOWARD OMORI CAMP, SIMPSON SAID, "MEN JUMPED INTO THE WATER BY THE HUNDREDS, SWIMMING TO MEET US. MANY OF THEM WERE STARK NAKED. MEN ON SHORE CRIED AND DANCED WILDLY. ALL WERE HIGHLY "EMOTIONAL."

SIMPSON SAID AN ELDERLY JAPANESE COLONEL IN CHARGE OF THE CAMP AT FIRST REFUSED TO RELEASE THE PRISONERS, SAYING NO OFFICIAL WORD HAD BEEN RECEIVED FROM TOKYO.

"WE TOLD HIM WE CARRIED OFFICIAL ORDERS FROM ADMIRAL HALSEY WHICH WAS EVEN BETTER. 'CUT OUT THAT STUFF,' WE TOLD HIM AND HE DID."

SIMPSON THEN VISITED THE PRISON HOSPITAL THREE MILES AWAY, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS "WORSE THAN A PIG FARM." THE HOSPITAL WAS A SERIES OF UNPAINTED WOODEN BUILDINGS CONNECTED BY DIRT FLOOR PASSAGES. THE BEDS IN THE BARRACKS AND HOSPITAL WERE FLAT BOARDS. SLEEPING MATS WERE SUPPLIED ONLY AFTER THE SURRENDER OFFER.

SIMPSON SAID HE FOUND ABOUT 80% OF THE HOSPITAL PRISONERS WERE SERIOUSLY SUFFERING FROM MALNUTRITION. WHEN THE RESCUERS ARRIVED, THEY FOUND THEY COULD NOT LEAVE THE SICK PRISONERS BEHIND EVEN OVERNIGHT, MISERABLE AS WAS THEIR CONDITION. THE RESCUERS TOOK THE MEN ABOARD NAVY'S FINE NEW AIR CONDITIONED HOSPITAL SHIP, "WHERE THEY WERE CLEANED AND GIVEN FRESH CLOTHES."

He was the only one of his class of 25 who didn't go to Harvard; instead, he was appointed to Annapolis by United States Senator Hiram Johnson of California. His wife was the former Claudia Stuart Barden, whose father, Col. William J. Barden, was on the same West Point football team as Commander Smedberg's father. They have three children, Claudia, 14; Bill 4th, 13, and Teddy, 8.

AMONG THE FIRST 500 RELEASED PRISONERS WERE MARINE ACE GREGORY BOYINGTON, BELIEVED KILLED OVER RABAU 20 MONTHS AGO AND COMMANDER RICHARD H. O'KANE, SKIPPER OF THE FAMED UNITED STATES SUBMARINE, "TANG," PRESUMED LOST LAST FEBRUARY.

Commander Smedberg credits the alertness of all hands with enabling him to save his ship. The Navy honors him, in the citation accompanying the Silver Star: "... for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action ... for skillful shiphandling and the superb functioning of his entire ship's company in the face of a surprise attack ... for conduct throughout that was in keeping with the highest traditions of the naval service."

This same officer-crew combination did heroic work, previous to the above incident, in rescuing 460 tired and wounded officers and men of the airplane carrier Wasp from the flaming waters off Guadalcanal, after the carrier had been sunk. Of the rescue, the commander says:

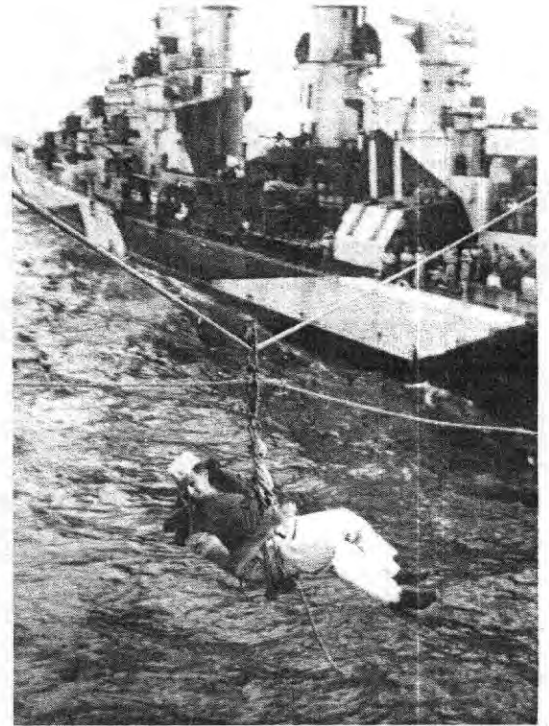
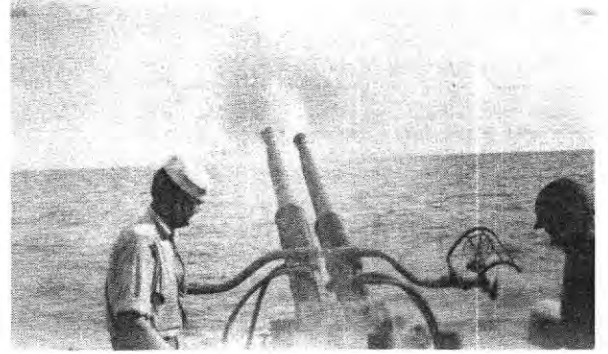
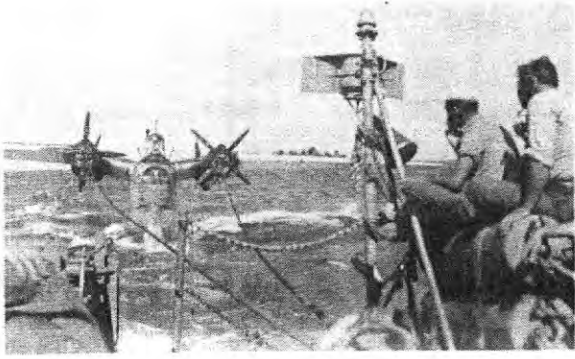
"Our own ship's doctor and four of the Wasp's hospital corps men, who were among the rescued, performed miracles in treating the burned and injured with sulfa drugs and heavy jelly. Not one of those 460 were lost. We carried on the rescue work successfully, although one Jap sub—and I am not certain there weren't two of them—continued to operate beneath the flaming surface flood of gasoline and oil in which the Wasp's men were treading water.

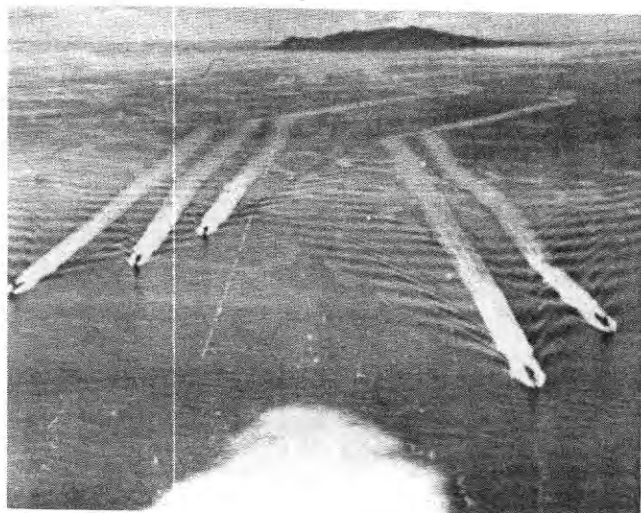
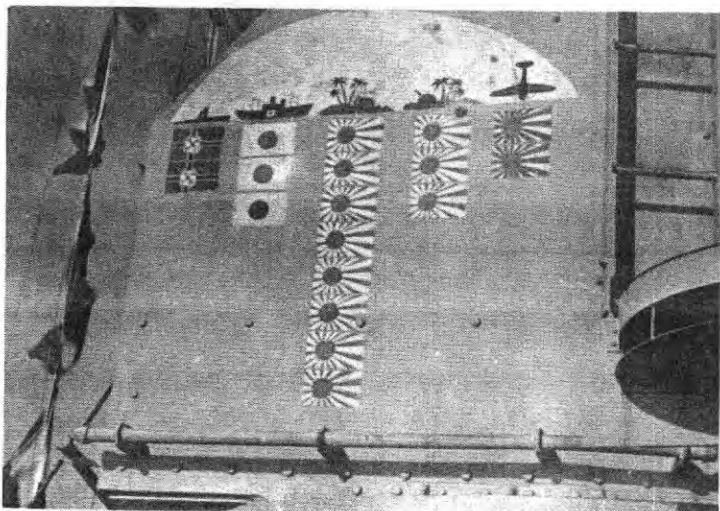
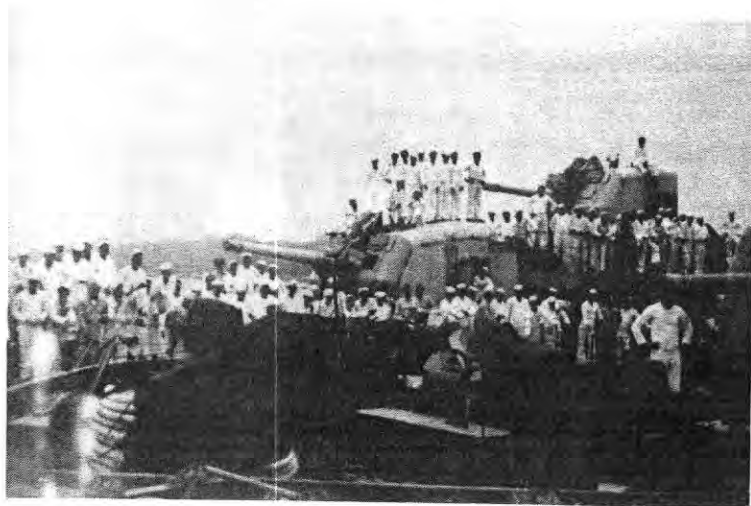
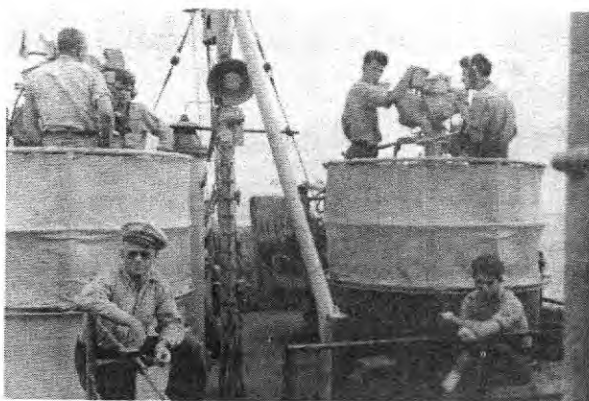
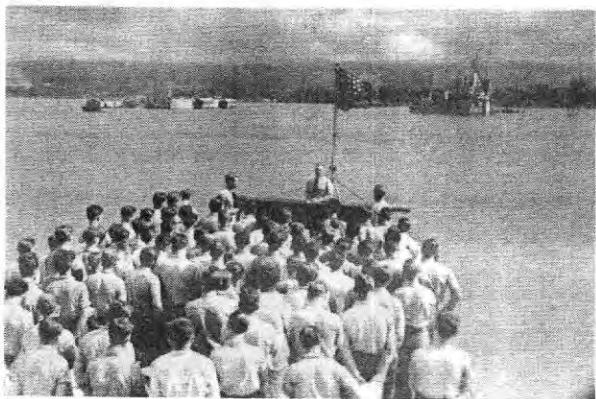
"Many of the carrier's crew were without adequate clothing or shoes when rescued and our own surplus clothing stores were soon distributed. Then our men gave any extra clothing of their own to the rescued men. For five weeks there were 30 men without shoes. It took three months to get our crew completely outfitted again.

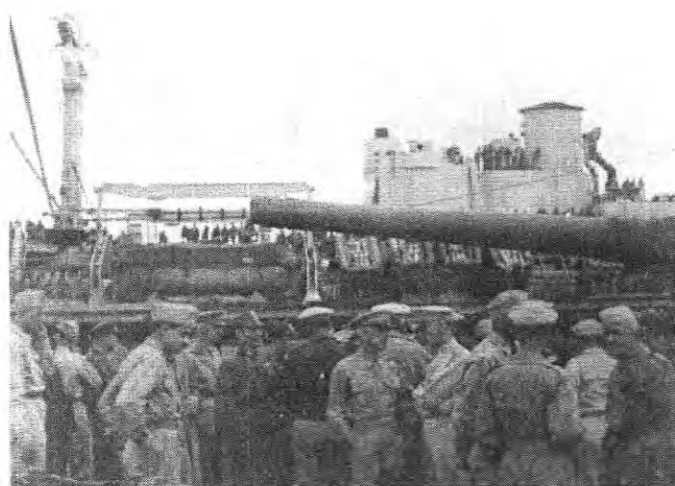
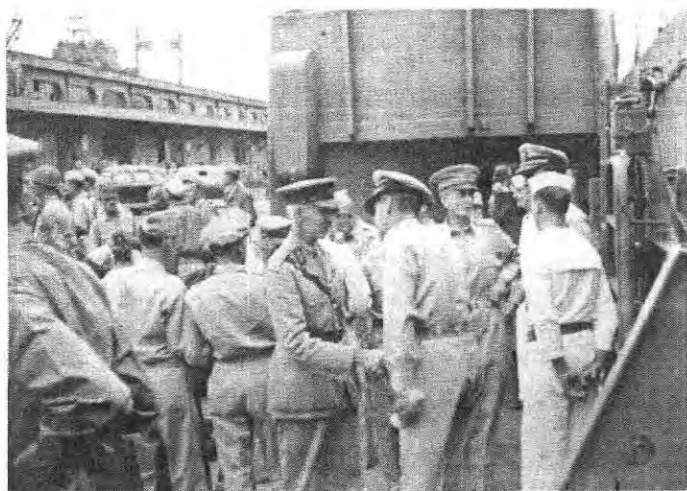
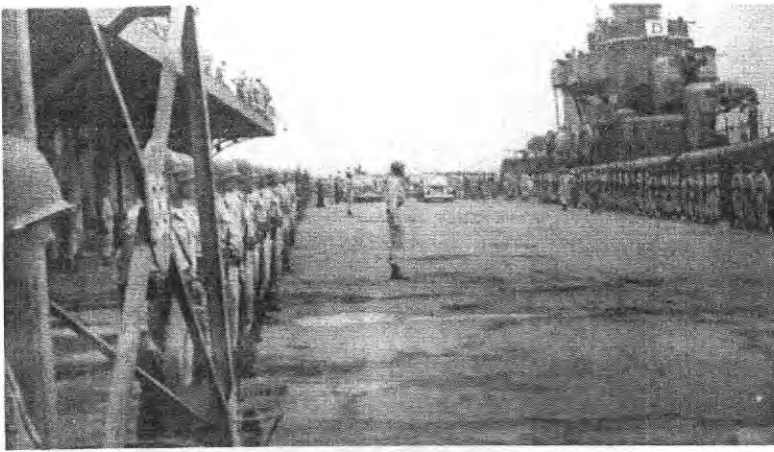
"Our boys performed magnificently in that Pacific assignment. Not one of my men had a single night ashore for eight months. They were confined to the limited deck-space and quarters of the destroyer. But they did a marvelous job in spite of all hardships. And their morale was unbelievable!"

Commander Smedberg was aid to Admiral Harold R. Stark, then Chief of Naval Operations, for three years. He is the third generation of his family to win honor for bravery in action. The first was his grandfather, Lieut. Col. W. R. Smedberg of the Union Army, brevetted for gallantry in action; the second, his own father, Brig. Gen. William Renwick Smedberg, who won the Silver Star for gallantry in action with Col. "Teddy" Roosevelt at San Juan Hill, and again when he led a brigade in the World War.

Commander Smedberg born at Fort Grant, Ariz., attended Middlesex School, at Concord, Mass., with notables who include Senator Lodge, John Lodge, Lieut. Carl Hiller of Marblehead, now first lieutenant of Boston's Receiving Ship Fargo; John Lee Mahin of M-G-M's staff; Maj. Coudert Nast and Vice Pres. George S. Mumford Jr. of the First National Bank of Boston.







U.S. and foreign dignitaries gathering for transport to surrender ceremony on U.S.S. Missouri.

SIMPSON'S SCRAPEROOS

by A.J. Skirlick of the Lansdowne, March 1944

It was a dark and rainy night
Out on the Solomon Sea.
Where Simpson's scrappy squadron
Was told what its task would be

The Grapevine news had gone before
As usually is the case,
Conjuring a job of suicide
And mighty Rabaul was the place.

In a hush of expectation
They listened to the inter-com
Where a voice gave them all the dope
With cool and quiet aplomb.

The Squad Dog's signals cut the air
With a change in the squadron's speed.
On the Order to execute
They went forward to their deed.

To the mouth of the St. George Channel
With each ship doggedly in line,
Steamed the scraperoo squadron
In their rugged race with time.

They swept up the narrow channel
With the Japs on either side,
Expecting the real hot welcome
Which their luck so far decried.

Each man quietly expected
What he thought would surely come.
No ship could stop for survivors
Until her work was done.

The squadron's coming through this place
Was highly unexpected
Because the Japs had gone to sleep
And couldn't have suspected.

Around the Duke of York Island
Sweeping to the Bismarck Sea,
They searched for Nips on the surface,
But the sea of ships was free.

They tarried not but went ahead
And according to the plan
Each ship took station in her place
When the night's next phase began.

The Farenholt, Woodworth and Buchanan
Went in with their guns afire.
They roused the Japs there on the beach
To flee in their mighty attire.

The sleepy Japs then filled the air
With bursts of murderous steel.
Thinking that our planes were back
He went to it with a zeal.

They soon found out their error
By the flash and our cannon's roar,
And turned their guns toward the sea
That was lapping at their door.

The Lucky Lansdowne and Lardner,
Covering the other's flank,
Fired at the batteries winking
Along the enemy bank.

Nip searchlights swept out to the sea
Their long and questing fingers.
Before their carbons could get hot
They doused them with their stingers.

Enemy shells were splashing
In cascade around the ships.
They then sent out a smokescreen
To further fool the Nips.

Like capricious little mermaids
The ships darted here and there,
In and out of the smokescreen
To bathe in the battle's glare.

With guns firing a crescendo
They steamed to Karavia Bay.
There under the guns of the Jap,
The scraperoos squadron held sway.

Against AK's at anchor
They made torpedo runs.
Their fish of death went whirring
To set five rising suns.

Two Jap DD's had started out
Before they found their error.
They turned and ran up on the beach
In stark, unholy terror.

The assignment now accomplished
Back to the channel they steamed,
Blasting away along the coast
The ogre of which they'd dreamed.

They'd done the 'most impossible
And they also shamed the race,
Which pulled that dirty sneak attack,
To admit they'd lost their face.

The exploits of this squadron,
Veterans of the SoPac War,
Are shrouded now in secrecy
But they want for nothing more.

Whenever there is action
And ships in the battle delve,
You'll find the scraperoo squadron
Flying the pennant twelve

NOTES FROM DOPE SHEETS

May 8, 1945

The ship is now in the Okinawa area where the enemy has been fighting an especially violent type of war. Besides the usual air attacks (torpedoes, bombs and strafing) there will be suicide planes, rocket bombs and small highspeed boats carrying explosive charges, swimmers with demolition charges, floating mines and submarines. Alert lookouts are the best protection against surprise and a high rate of fire is best way of stopping an attack. Each man has his job and if everyone works together the "LUCKY L" should tally a few more Japs.

May 19, 1945

Commenced shore bombardment of Okinawa

May 23, 1945

Yesterday the ship destroyed one AA gun and damaged another, unknown damage to a 10" or 8" coast defense gun. The guns obtained 80% or 90% hits in all target areas.

May 25, 1945

Expect to take on over a thousand rounds of ammunition. In order to reduce loading time to a minimum all hands will turn to loading ammunition. Results of yesterday's firing: Two storage caves well covered with hits, knocked a 5" AA gun out of emplacement with direct hit by 2-gun salvo and hits on blockhouse and surrounding trenches.

July 12, 1945

Today Task Force 38 will fuel from the fast oilers. Since we are only 300 miles from Japan there may be air attacks. All hands maintain an especially alert watch. Be ready to man all battle stations on a moment's notice.

August 15, 1945

Today Task Force 38 will conduct sustained air strikes against Japan. The entire Task Force will be alerted during this period against enemy air attacks. The ship will be at Condition 1 - Essy from dawn to dusk.

August 16, 1945

The war is officially over, however the fleet must continue to guard against the possibility of attack. The Japs attacked Pearl Harbor before the war started, they may try another attack now that the war is over. The fleet will be maintained in a full war time condition of readiness for an indefinite period.

August 28, 1945

Personal letters may describe our entry into SAGAMI WAN near TOKYO and the country around here. The ships we are operating with, Task Group organizations and any future plans may not be discussed.

September 2, 1945

Shift to uniform of the day, prepare to receive Japanese Emissaries aboard. Post sentries. Receive Surrender Party aboard for return trip to YOKOHAMA.