

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., Editor

**The U.S.S. *McFarland* (DD-237/AVD-14) in World War II:
Documents, Recollections and Photographs**

Needham, Massachusetts
Privately published by the editor
First Edition 1994
Revised 2001



Scanned and electronically published by
Destroyer History Foundation
Bolton Landing, New York
2006

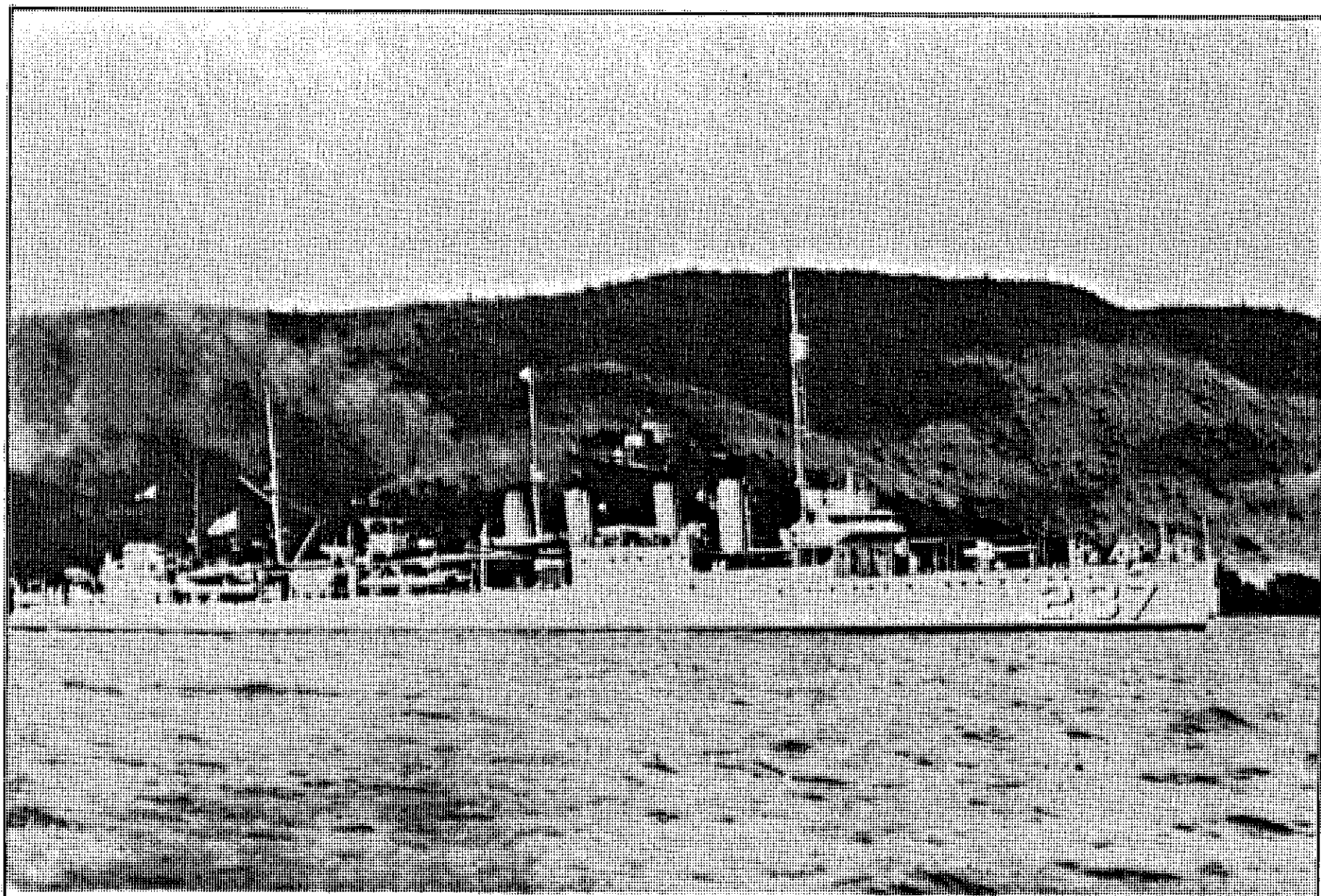
CONTAINS MATERIAL REPRODUCED WITH THE KIND PERMISSION OF THE U.S. NAVAL INSTITUTE.
LITERARY RIGHTS TO SPECIFIC DOCUMENTS ARE RETAINED BY THE AUTHORS OR THEIR
DESCENDANTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH UNITED STATES COPYRIGHT LAW.

The U.S.S. McFarland (DD-237/AVD-14) in World War II
List of Pages

<u>Sheets</u>	<u>Sides</u>	
1	1	List of Pages
1	1	Quote - President John F. Kennedy, 1963
1	1	Photo - Starboard beam, 1930's
3	5	History, by Ships' Histories Section
1	1	List of commanding officers
1	1	Obituary, RAdm. John C. Alderman (1906-1976)
1	1	Message, Adm. Chester W. Nimitz to C.O. <u>McFarland</u>
1	1	Citation, Lt. Cdr. John C. Alderman, USN (Navy Cross)
1	1	Photo - Stbd. beam, at pier, Pearl Harbor, 5/17/42
1	1	Photo - Port quarter view, Pearl Harbor, 5/17/42
1	1	Photo - USS <u>Williamson</u> (AVD-2), sister ship, stbd. beam
1	1	Photo - USS <u>Ballard</u> (AVD-10), sister ship, fwd. half
1	1	Photo - USS <u>Ballard</u> , stern section
7	11	Action report, 7/24/42 (ASW attack on 7/15/42)
1	1	Photo - Survivors from Dutch freighter, 7/26/42
1	1	Photos (2) - Personnel inspection, 8/1/42
1	1	Map - Southwest Pacific, showing Guadalcanal
1	1	Photo - PBY Catalina refueling astern of tender
1	1	Photo - PBY taking off
1	2	Deck Log for 10/16/42, typed from handwritten log sheet
11	17	Action report, 12/15/42 (Bombing attack on 10/16/42)
1	1	Photo - Damaged after deckhouse
1	1	List of Officers, October 1942
3	3	Muster Roll of the Crew, 10/16/42, showing casualties
4	7	Article, "The McFarland Comes Home" (3/13/43)
1	1	Photo - C.O. Alderman & X.O. Gardner, Pearl H., 12/42
1	1	Photo - Forward 3-in./50 mount (Mount 1), camouflaged
1	1	Photos (2) - Ship moored to bank, camouflaged
1	1	Photo - "Doc" McCafferty, Medical Officer
1	2	Letter, narrative by Ward Zimmerman, 2/2/95
1	1	Photo - USS <u>Jamestown</u> (PG-55), port beam
1	1	Photo - Damaged stern, Pearl Harbor, 12/42
1	2	Articles, <u>N.Y. Times</u> & <u>Honolulu Star</u> , 12/31/42
1	1	Article (poem) - <u>Honolulu Advertiser</u> , 1/5/43
1	2	Presidential Citation recommendation
1	1	Presidential Citation
1	1	Newspaper picture, LCdr. Earle G. Gardner, 6/43
1	1	Newspaper picture, citation ceremony, 6/13/43
1	2	Presidential Citation news release
1	2	Articles regarding survivors (1943)
1	1	Photo - Repaired stern, Pearl Harbor, 3/43
1	1	Photo - <u>McFarland</u> reconfigured as a destroyer, 4/1/43
3	4	Action report, ASW action on 11/16/44
1	1	Photo - Refueling under way, 4/14/44
4	7	Recollection, Cdr. Frederick S. Dean, USN (Ret.), 1987
1	1	Photo - PBY-5 refueling astern of <u>Williamson</u> (AVD-2)
2	4	Letter - Paul C. Helmke, FTCM, USN (Ret.), 5/14/95
1	1	Photo - <u>McFarland</u> monument
1	1	Quote - Adm. Chester W. Nimitz, 1945
1	1	Photo - Monument, Purvis Bay, Florida Island, 1944
1	2	News release, dedication of Purvis Bay Monument, 1944
1	1	Photo - Plaque on Purvis Bay Monument
1	1	Photo - Purvis Bay Monument in August, 1993
4	5	Photo/panels, 50th Anniversary Monument, Guadalcanal
5	9	<u>McFarland's War Diary</u> , 10/14/42 to 11/30/42
1	1	Photo - USS <u>Seminole</u> (AT-65), starboard beam, u/way
1	1	Photograph Credits
1	1	Bibliography
<u>94</u>	<u>127</u>	TOTALS

Any man who may be asked what he did to make his life worthwhile can respond with a good deal of pride and satisfaction, "I served in the United States Navy."

- President John F. Kennedy, 1963



The U.S.S. McFarland (DD-237), a Clemson-class "flush decker" destroyer commissioned in September, 1920, shows here the way she looked until her refit as a seaplane tender in 1940. Standard Displacement 1,190 tons; Length Overall 314'4"; Beam 30'8"; Armament: four 4-in./50 single-purpose guns and twelve 21" torpedo tubes in four triple-tube mounts; Rated Speed 35 knots. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)

Office of Naval Records and History
Ships' Histories Section
Navy Department

HISTORY OF USS MC FARLAND (DD 237)

The day Admiral David Farragut said, "Damn the torpedoes! Full speed ahead!" and took his steam sloop HARTFORD through the narrows between Forts Gaines and Morgan into Mobile Bay, a young man named John McFarland was at the wheel. Lurking beyond the narrows, the big, new Confederate iron-clad TENNESSEE was defeated by being rammed by each of Farragut's ships in turn. Admiral Farragut did not forget the man who had guided his flagship through the storm of shot and shell. Quartermaster McFarland was given a recommendation for the intestinal fortitude he had displayed that day, when, protected by nothing more than a canvas dodger and his own good luck, he had remained at the wheel of the flagship.

The U. S. Navy also remembered John McFarland, for, when destroyer 237 was built, it was he whose name the sleek new four-stacker bore. Built by the New York Ship Building Corporation at Camden, New Jersey, USS MC FARLAND was launched on 30 March 1920. Miss Lopisa Hughes, daughter of the Commandant of the Philadelphia Navy Yard served as sponsor.

USS MC FARLAND was one of the 156 destroyers of the 1,190 ton class of 1917-18. Most of these destroyers were still on the building ways when the Armistice of 1918 brought World War I to a close.

Commissioned on 30 September 1920, MC FARLAND joined the Pacific Fleet and went into the Philippines and the China Station where she remained for the next five years. Returning to the U. S. A. in the summer of 1925, she was one of 30 destroyers of both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets assembled at New York in July that year to receive thousands of interested visitors. The destroyers of MC FARLAND's type remained the last word in destroyer construction until the 1930's.

By the time World War II broke out, destroyer design had been radically changed and the old four-piper flushdeckers, the ones that remained, were rapidly being converted into minesweepers, fast transports or other auxiliary craft. Fourteen of them were made over in 1939-1940 into seaplane tenders. Among them was USS MC FARLAND.

Her masts were cut down, her stacks shortened, her twelve, triple-banked torpedo tubes were removed and even a few of her 4-inch guns taken off, to make room for the gas tanks, the big crane, the repair shop, and the other paraphernalia necessary to make her what she was destined to be; a mobile, floating seaplane base, able to service and maintain the patrol bombers on their long-range fighting and scouting missions.

On 7 December 1941, MC FARLAND was headed south when the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was received. Every gun afloat was needed in the South Pacific and MC FARLAND, instead of serving as a seaplane tender, was assigned to anti-submarine patrol. While on this duty, forces were being gathered to stop the Japanese drive south. The French possession of New Caledonia, which had never acknowledged the Vichy traitors, became the United States' main base. Japanese submarines were present in numbers to patrol around the fine harbor of Noumea.

MC FARLAND drew her first blood from those watchful undersea eyes when in July 1942 she sank the I-123, one of the big mine-laying subs which the Japs were reported to have built according to German design. With her 5.5-inch guns and her four torpedo tubes, the I-123 was a formidable adversary for the little ex-destroyer, but the "Galloping Mac's" superior speed served her well and her depth charges did their work.

Jap submarines were thick around New Caledonia in those days and only a few days after sending the I-123 to Davey Jones' locker, MC FARLAND rescued the 88 man crew of a Dutch freighter which had been torpedoed by the Japanese.

On 2 August 1942, MC FARLAND received her Catalina flying boats, all six of them. She was immediately ordered to the Solomons and actually kept the sea lanes open for transports which brought the initial Marine force some five days later. The "MAC" came out unscathed from her Guadalcanal venture though her Catalinas did not fair so well. One was shot down by the Japs though the crew was saved. Pulling themselves on top of a bare rock where they remained for five days, MC FARLAND herself rescued the PBM survivors while leaving Guadalcanal.

The latter part of August found MC FARLAND and her brood of Catalinas pacing the Marines in their forward push to take Henderson Field. She also returned twice in September and not until the air field was in friendly hands did she revert to her normal duties. She began bringing in gas, bombs and aerial torpedoes without which the Henderson Field-based fliers could not vie in the battle for aerial supremacy over the Solomons.

In spite of losing control of the air, the Japs still held control of the sea over Sealark Channel and the rest of "The Slot." Therefore, all MC FARLAND's resupply voyages had to be made by stealth and at dark. Her engines throttled down, she had to feel her way inch by inch through the inky darkness of the enemy-infested waters. With her lethal cargo, discovery would have meant instantaneous death for ship and crew; nor was the danger past when she anchored to unload.

It was during one of these missions that MC FARLAND almost met her end. On 16 October she had once again made one of her

mad dashes up the Channel and discharged most of her cargo to take aboard 150 wounded men who could still walk. One last lighter remained alongside to receive her aviation gas when suddenly there was a general alarm. Sound gear had picked up a Jap submarine. Before her deck crew could throw off the lines to the lighter, MC FARLAND was underway. The current jammed the lighter against her side while the ship tried to avoid the first danger. At this point, another even more imminent threat materialized from above. Nine enemy planes suddenly peeled out of a cloud bank. Each of them carried two 300-pound demolition bombs slung under their wings. The first 2 missed altogether, though one bomb from the second plane dropped close enough to throw water and splinters as high as the bridge. The third plane was shot down less than a 100 yards away, by a direct hit from MC FARLAND's 3-inch guns. Meanwhile, a flight of Army P-38's, homeward bound to Henderson Field, had become aware of the "MAC's" plight. With their last drops of gas they turned to the fight.

The Army squadron was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Bauer. He himself shot down 3 more of the enemy planes before his gas tank ran bone-dry and he was forced down into the dark sea, never to be seen again. Bauer's fighter splashed 3 more of the enemy's planes. But three more were still boring in. Two of these planes were stopped dead by the "MAC's" 20 millimeter guns. The lone remaining Jap plane kept boring in from astern and, as his first bomb hit far astern, the second made a direct hit, right on the ship's tapering fantail where her depth charges were stacked.

The result of the combined explosion of the Jap's bomb and the ship's depth charges sounded like an ammunition dump blowing up. The entire ship took to the air, almost clearing the water and every man aboard was thrown off his feet. Upon examining the ship it was found that the deck from the amidship structure aft was missing.

The gasoline barge, still hovering nearby, caught fire and most of her cargo went skywards in one great blast. The weird illumination from the flaming barge gave the Captain, Lieutenant Commander John C. Alderman, and his executive officer, Lieutenant Earle G. Gardner, their first chance to estimate the damage in the darkness for there were no lights aboard.

With her rudder gone, the steering engine gone and the room that had housed the steering gear now a cavernous opening, MC FARLAND began to take a dangerous list. In all the destruction there was only one consoling fact: the engines were still running!

Commander Alderman, determined to save his ship, set course across Sealark Channel to Tulagi, 20 miles away, steering with his engines. There he ran her into a creek that was later named MC FARLAND in honor of the ship's visit there, and grounded her in a mudbank. Covering her with heavy foliage the able bodied began giving the wounded first aid.

The camouflage wilted rapidly and had to be renewed every day as her crew worked like Trojans to make her seaworthy for the voyage out of there. The Japs did their best to find the little ship that had been a stinging thorn in their side. In the first ten days at the jungle "repair yard" the ship's company had to knock off work and rush to battle stations no less than 30 times. Somehow, probably through the struggle and will to live of her crew, the Japs failed to look through the painstakingly prepared camouflage of foliage.

When at low tide they had their first chance to look at the under-water battle damage, her men had reason to bless the unknown designers of the sturdy little four-stack destroyers of 1917-18 vintage. Her struts were big and strong enough to hold a cruiser together, and it was that solid construction that had held the ship afloat while her plates were peeling off her sides on the run from Lunga Point to Tulagi.

With torch and trip-hammer the crew set to work and patched up the bottom and sides. Then her engineer officer got into a huddle with his Chief Machinists' Mates and they came up with a jury rudder the likes of which the Navy had never seen before.

A big rusty steel plate, discarded from some other part of the ship served as the rudder. It was lashed to a V-like structure of tree trunks and the entire apparatus was towed astern, with lines running from the logs to winches inboard. Right and left rudder was a laborious affair of hauling in one side while slackening up on the other. But "the thing" worked in some mysterious manner. Thus equipped, MC FARLAND steamed from her hiding place on Thanksgiving Day 1942 and set course once more for Noumea. The spirit of thankfulness on the part of the crew was liberally mixed with anxiety until they were safely into the open sea where they at last could make a run for it.

At Noumea the shipwright patched up the ship some more and in addition gave her what was fondly hoped to be a better rudder than the jungle-conceived contraption constructed by the crew of MC FARLAND. Lieutenant Chalmers, the ship's engineering officer was highly critical of the new rudder and swore vociferously that his own invention would have taken them to Pearl Harbor just as well. He may have been right, for on the way to Pearl Harbor, MC FARLAND ran into a gale and the new rudder became jammed athwartships and refused to budge. The ship steered the rest of the way with her engines.

To balance her sideway drag, she trailed forty fathoms of anchor chain from the starboard hawse. In this manner MC FARLAND literally dragged herself comically and heroically, into Pearl Harbor.

At Pearl Harbor, MC FARLAND was repaired and sent on to the Navy Yard at San Francisco, where her stern was partially rebuilt. Converted back to a destroyer again, MC FARLAND was pronounced as ready for duty once again. However, her role in World War II had been reduced to that of operating off the California coast with carriers during training exercises and plane qualification landings. There MC FARLAND spent the remainder of the war until the inspectors decided she was too far gone for a general overhaul.

Before the cutting torches ripped open her sides, the gallant, the tenacious, the faithful MC FARLAND listed crazily in a mudbank at Bordertown, New Jersey. The casual passersby blandly looking at a heap of scrap metal ingloriously rusting in a salvage yard never suspected the great symbol of American spirit behind the story of USS MC FARLAND from the bud banks of Tulagi to a mudbank in New Jersey. There was no Oliver Wendell Holmes to stay the cutter's torch as in the case of "Old Ironsides" and USS MC FARLAND was decommissioned on 8 November 1945 and sold for scrap in October 1946.

USS MC FARLAND (AVD 14) earned the Presidential Unit Citation for service set forth in the following text:

"For outstanding performance during action against enemy Japanese forces in the Southwest Pacific Area, June 20 to October 16, 1942. Serving in turn as a seaplane tender, escort vessel, patrol boat, and cargo and troop carrier the MCFARLAND, under constant threat of hostile attack, delivered urgently needed supplies to American troops on Guadalcanal until eventually disabled by Japanese dive bombers and towed to port for repair. Her restoration to combatant status, at a time when she might easily have been given up for lost, is a distinctive tribute to the courageous tenacity of her officers and men."

USS MC FARLAND also earned two Battle Stars on the Asiatic-Pacific Area Service Medal for participating in the following operations:

1 Star/Pearl Harbor-Midway -- 7 December 1941

1 Star/Capture and Defense of Guadalcanal - 16 October 1942

* * * * *

STATISTICS

LENGTH	314 feet	BEAM	31 feet
DISPLACEMENT	1,190 tons	SPEED	35 knots

* * * * *

Compiled: August 1952

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
24 June 1994

U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14 and DD-237)

Commanding Officers in World War II:

	<u>USNA</u> <u>Class</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Ret.</u> <u>Rank</u>
LCdr. Joseph L. Kane, USN	'23	10/40- 8/42	RAdm.
LCdr. John C. Alderman, USN	'28	8/42- 1/43	RAdm.
LCdr. Earle G. Gardner, USN	'35	1/43- 4/44	Capt.
(?) H. S. Calvin (not USNA)	-	4/44-11/45	(?)

* * * * *

Key Historical Dates:

31 JUL 1918 Laid down; N.Y. Shipbuilding Corp., Camden, N.J.
30 MAR 1920 Launched. Sponsor: Miss Louisa Hughes.
30 SEP 1920 Commissioned as DD-237, Philadelphia Navy Yard
2 AUG 1940 Redesignated AVD-14 (seaplane tender - destroyer).
5 OCT 1940 Recommissioned at Mare Island, Calif.
16 OCT 1942 Damaged at Guadalcanal by a Jap dive-bomber.
29 DEC 1942 Returned to Pearl Harbor for repairs.
1 DEC 1943 Redesignated a destroyer (DD-237).
8 NOV 1945 Decommissioned at Philadelphia Navy Yard.
19 DEC 1945 Struck from the Navy list.
29 OCT 1946 Sold for scrap.

Obituary for Rear Admiral John Clement Alderman, USN (Ret.)
1906 - 1976*

*Commanding Officer, U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14)
August, 1942 - January, 1943*

JOHN CLEMENT ALDERMAN '28

RAdm. John Clement Alderman USN (Ret.) died on 17 November 1976 in Laguna Beach, California. Memorial services were held on 21 November at the Unitarian-Universalist Fellowship Church in Laguna Beach with interment in the Wilamette National Cemetery in Portland, Oregon.

A native of Oregon, Admiral Alderman was graduated with the Class of 1928 and went to sea on board COLORADO. He later took aviation training and received his wings in 1930. His first command was the World War I minesweeper PELICAN, converted to a seaplane tender. During the early part of World War II the vessel was converted into a "mystery" ship which was designed to search out Japanese submarines, but before accomplishing any missions he was ordered to command MCFARLAND and in this ship he participated in the initial landing at Guadalcanal. The ship was later hit by Japanese aircraft and had to sail to Pearl Harbor for repairs. He was awarded the Navy Cross and the ship received the Presidential Unit Citation for this service. His next duty was at NAS, Brunswick, Maine, and he was awarded an honorary degree by Bowdoin College while at this station. At the end of the war he was commanding ANTIETAM, then became commander of the Naval Auxiliary Air Station at Monterey, California. He later was Chief of Staff, Commander Fleet Air in Guam and also had duty to establish Fleet Air Wing One for which he received the Commendation Medal. During the Korean War he commanded BADOENG STRAIT and was awarded the Legion of Merit for carrying out successful attacks against troop concentrations in Korea. He later directed the shore establishment division of the Bureau of Aeronautics, then commanded PRINCETON. His final assignment prior to retirement was as Commanding Officer of the Naval Air Station at the missile testing center, Point Mugu, California. He later joined a real estate firm in California.

He is survived by his widow, Abigail, 2760 Park Avenue, Laguna Beach CA 92651, his mother, a sister, four sons and four grandsons.

* Shipmate magazine; January-February, 1977

Message Sent by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief,
U.S. Pacific Fleet, to the Commanding Officer of the U.S.S.
McFarland (AVD-14), LCDR John C. Alderman, USN, on 17 OCT 1942:

1206—H/M Base, P.H.—5-29-42—2300.

U. S. S. McFARLAND

Heading: NPM 505

162239

R E S T R I C T E D

FROM THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF PACIFIC FLEET QUOTE I LIKE YOUR
GUTS UNQUOTE X

WU/

Date 17 Oct. '42	Tor. Tod	Opr.	Sys.	Freq.	Use of Orig. Priority					
From: CINCPAC	To: MCFARLAND	Information to: COMAIRSOPAC COMSOPAC			Routine					
					Deferred					
					Radio					
					Visual					
					Release					
Sqd. Comdr.	CO	XO	OOD	ENG	GUN	Fst. Lt.	Comm	Stores	Cmssy	A. Eng.

Editor's Note: This message, sent the day after the McFarland was hit by a bomb while unloading gasoline and munitions for the Marines on Guadalcanal, was in recognition of LCDR Alderman's decision to complete the delivery of his very badly needed cargo in spite of an order to retire from the area due to the danger of an air attack.

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 NAVY CROSS to

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER JOHN C. ALDERMAN, UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following

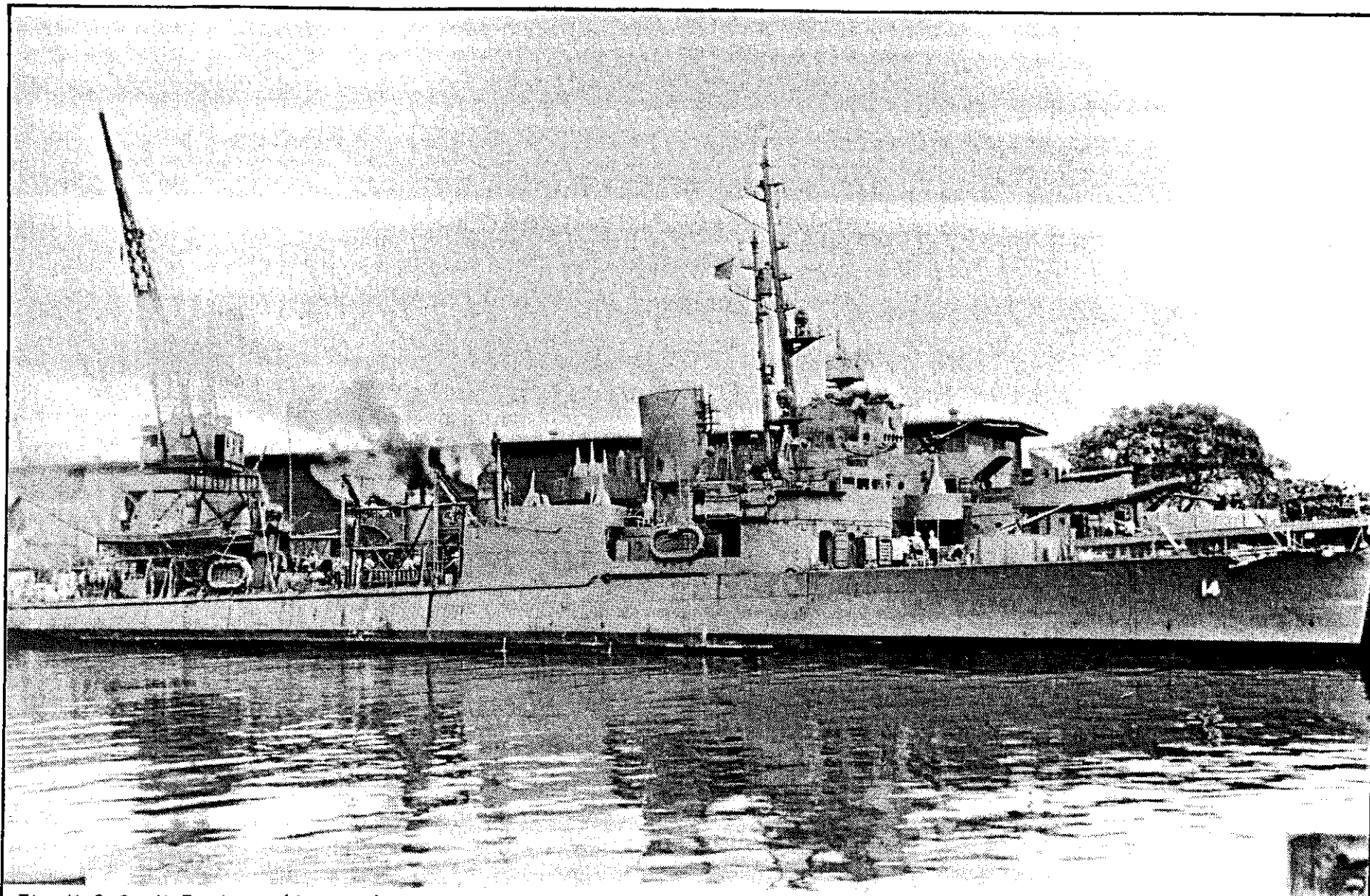
CITATION:

"For extraordinary heroism and distinguished service in the line of his profession as Commanding Officer of the U.S.S. MCFARLAND while on special missions in the Solomon Islands area during the period August 8, 1942 to October 16, 1942. On repeated occasions, Lieutenant Commander ALDERMAN courageously entered the Solomon waters to assist in the task of protecting the valuable supply lanes to Guadalcanal, in support of our land and sea defenses of that island. With utter disregard for his own safety, he exposed himself to the ever-present danger of hostile air attacks. On one occasion, his ship was so severely damaged that it was thought to be of very little value for further combat duty. By his perseverance, determination and technical ability, he made the necessary repairs to his ship, under the most adverse conditions, so that she was able to continue in the service of her country. His heroic conduct was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval Service."

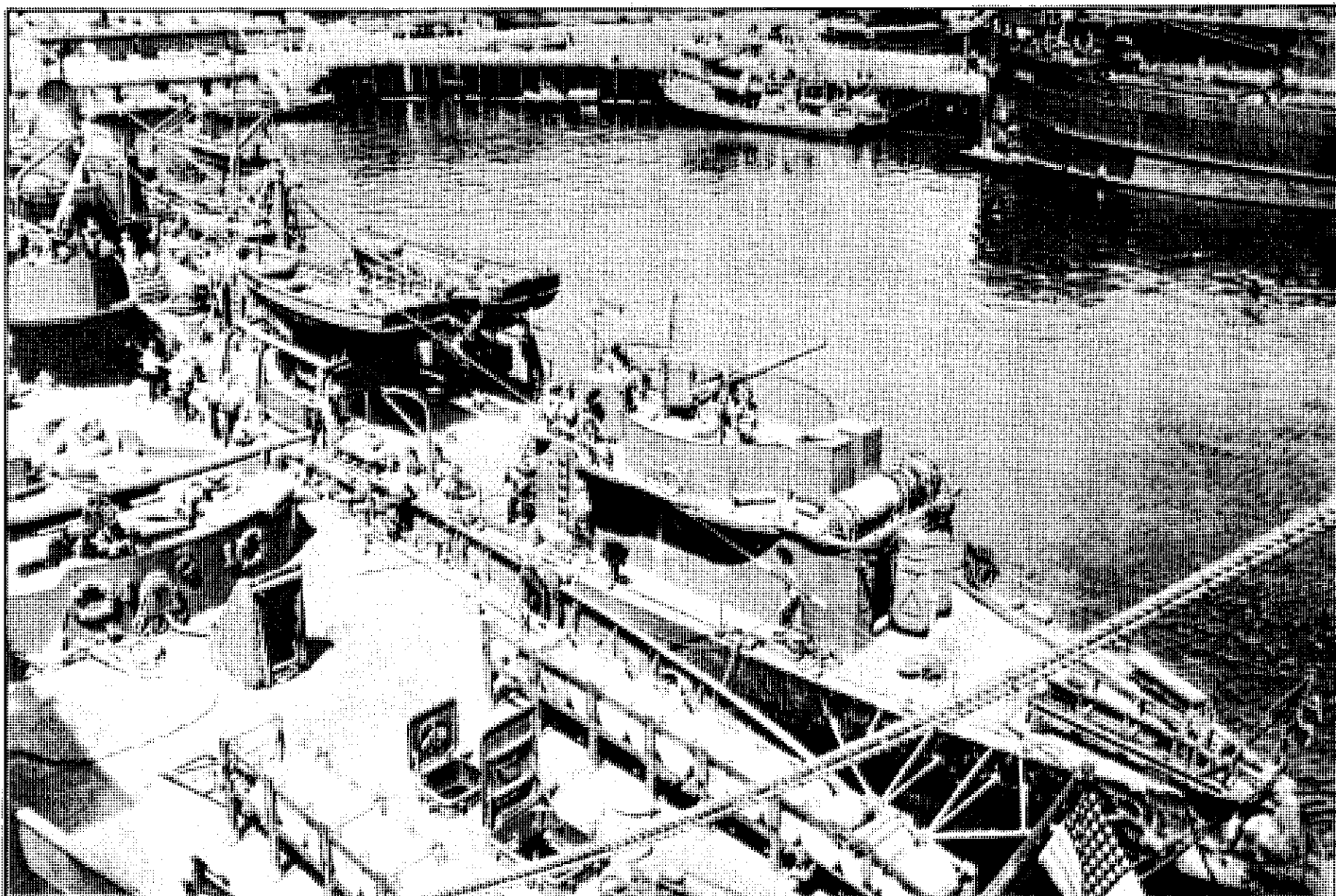
W. F. Halsey

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

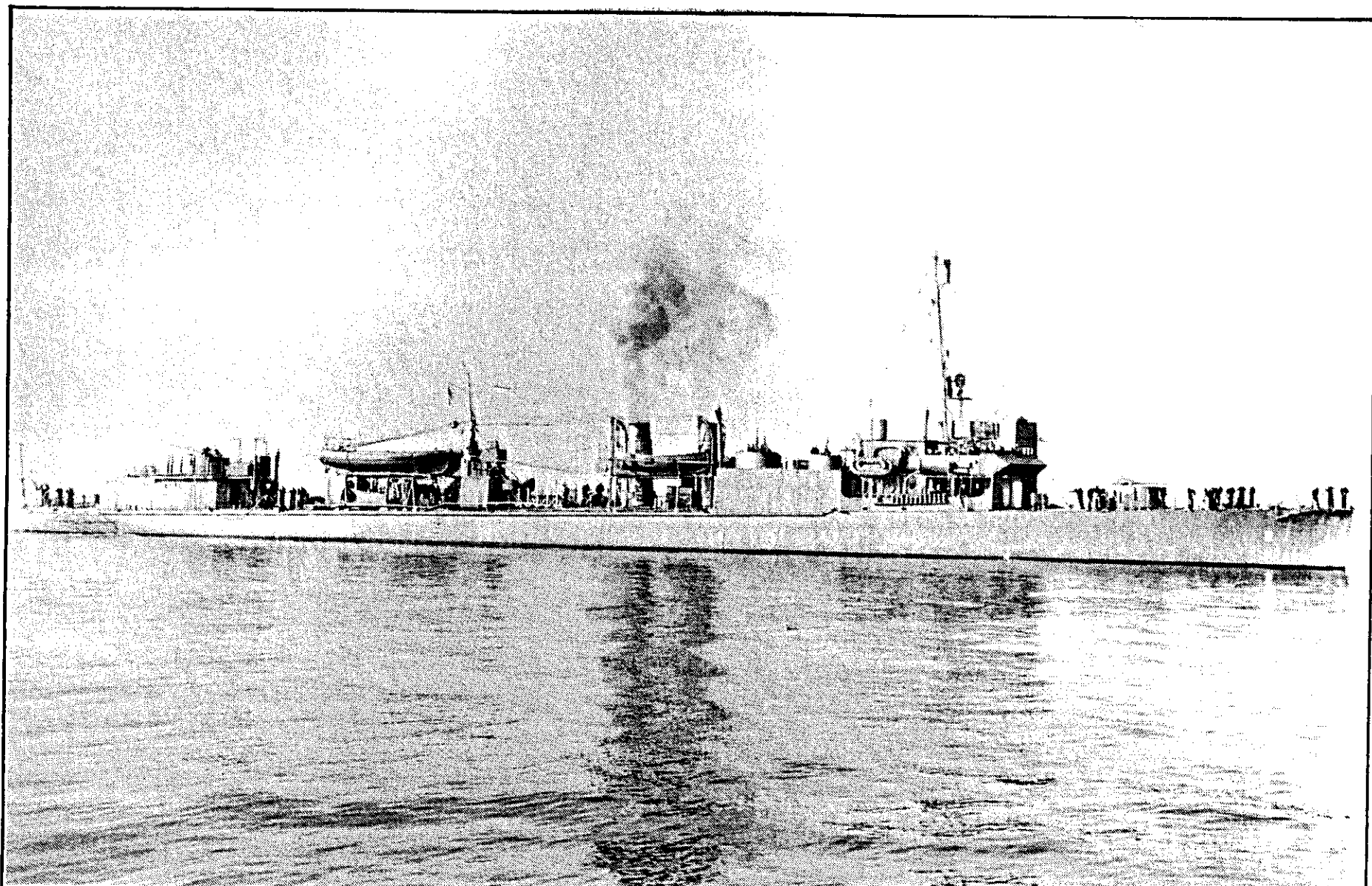
Temporary Citation



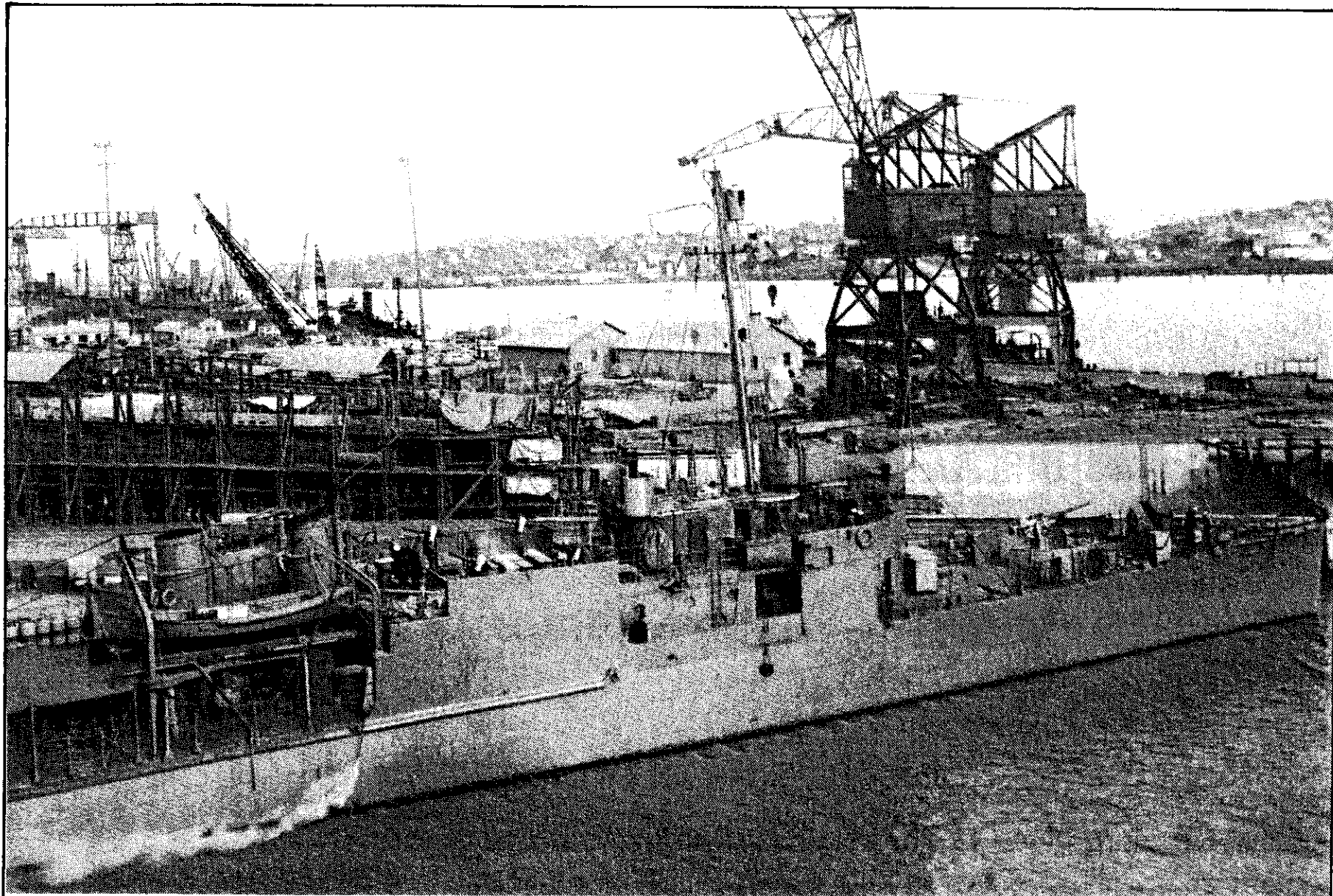
The U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14) on 17 May 1942, during an overhaul at the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard. (The large stack and the taller of the two masts belong to the inboard ship.) When the McFarland was converted from a World War I flush-decker destroyer to a seaplane tender in 1940, her two forward boilers were replaced by a tank for 30,000 gallons of avgas. Her twelve torpedo tubes were removed, and her four 4-in./50 single-purpose guns were replaced with two 3-in./50 dual-purpose guns on the bow and stern. The gas line running aft along the side from the tank area midships was located externally to reduce the fire hazard. U.S.N. photo.



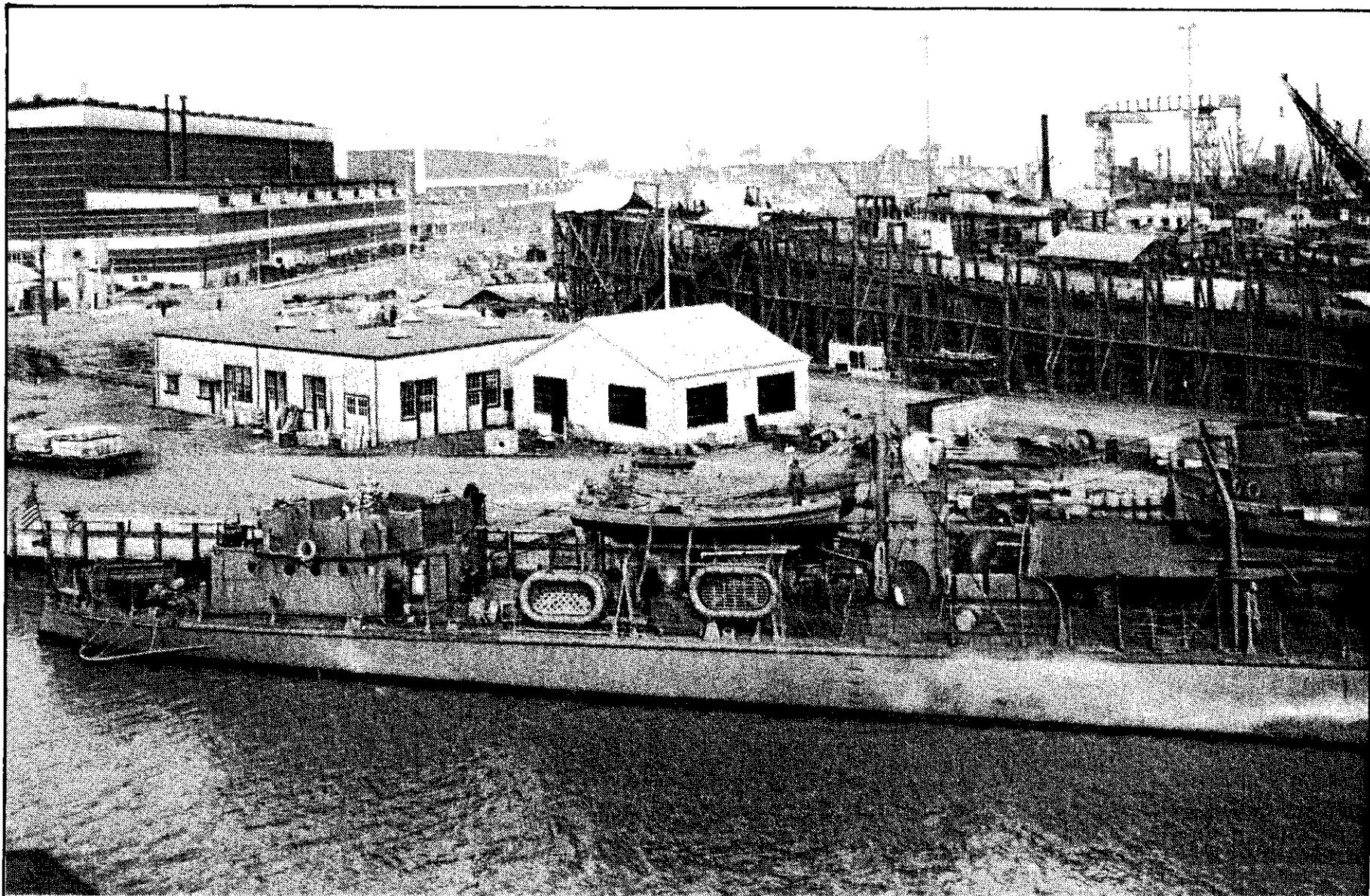
As shown by this view of the McFarland's stern (the outboard ship) at Pearl Harbor in May, 1942, AVD's were provided with very limited antiaircraft weapons. The single depth-charge rack astern held only eight 300-lb. charges and there was only one depth charge projector ("K"-gun) on each side, located between the after deckhouse and the aircraft-servicing boats, by the curved loading davits. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)



This broadside view of another flush-decker destroyer converted to a seaplane tender, the U.S.S. Williamson (AVD-2), shows how the U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14) looked when she saw action in the Southwest Pacific during 1942: two 3-inch/50 dual-purpose guns (on the bow and after deckhouse), four 20-mm. machine cannons forward of the two shortened stacks, a crane amidships for lifting out PBY engines, two aircraft-servicing boats in davits and a single depth-charge rack astern. The "Mac" was also armed with two .50-caliber air-cooled machine guns on the after deckhouse and two depth-charge projectors ("K"-guns). (Official U.S. Navy photo.)



This 1941 or 1942 view of the McFarland's sister ship, the U.S.S. Ballard (AVD-10), shows the layout of these flush-decker destroyers converted to seaplane tenders prior to World War II. Here, the four .50-cal. water-cooled machine guns just forward of the stacks have not yet been replaced by 20-mm. Oerlikon machine cannons, and in the stern view (next page), the Ballard has a depth-charge rack but has not yet received any depth-charge projectors ("K"-guns). (U.S. Navy photograph.)



Along with the McFarland, the U.S.S. Ballard (AVD-10) acted as a cargo and troop carrier in late 1942, ferrying munitions and gasoline from the Advance Base at Espiritu Santo to the Marines on Guadalcanal. She, also, had Japanese torpedoes pass under her without exploding while transiting "Torpedo Junction" and Indispensable Strait. A crew member remembers that they were reported sunk three times by the female Japanese radio propagandist "Tokoyo Rose." The Ballard was not damaged at Guadalcanal, and later, she participated in the invasion of Saipan as a patrol vessel. (U.S. Navy photograph.)

DECLASSIFIED

ACTION REPORT

USS MC FARLAND

AVD-14

SERIAL 043

24 JULY 1942

REPORT ON SUBMARINE ATTACK ON JULY 15, 1942 OFF
BULARI PASSAGE, NEW CALEDONIA.

FORWARDING OF REPORT OF ACTION INSIDE
BULARI PASSAGE, NEW CALEDONIA AT 1102,
WHILE ON ASW PATROL. ATTACKS MADE ON
SOUND AND SIGHT CONTACTS BY MC FARLAND
AND B-26 BOMBERS WHEN BOW MOMENTARILY
ROSE TO SURFACE.

DECLASSIFIED

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

1. McFARLAND was on intermittent escort duty and anti-submarine listening watch just inside Bulari Passage, New Caledonia. Six Army B-26's came overhead and signalled for torpedo run training outside the entrance. Ship got underway and proceeded out of harbor on base course 230°, speed 15 knots. Ship was in "Condition I" both for protection going out of harbor and to train AA personnel while acting as target for the Army planes.

2. When about 3 miles outside the entrance a doubtful submarine contact was obtained bearing about 190 degrees distance about 1300 yards. Ship was swung to this heading and speed reduced to 10 knots for careful tracking. Sound operators reported contact still doubtful as the range decreased but that echoes were getting sharper. The final opinion was "good contact". Target width was reported as about 10 to 15 degrees, no propeller noises were heard. Water noises were high. Commanding Officer decided to attack if run continued normal down to dropping point. It was decided to use a medium depth pattern as a submarine would probably have seen the six B-26's milling around the area, and possibly the McFARLAND standing out.

3. The following data were recorded by the Commanding Officer as he conned the ship for the attack:

Sub. Bearing	Distance	
180	1050	
175	950	
175	850	
- -	700	
168	650	
163	650	
161	600	
160	550	
155	500	
150	450	20 degree left lead angle taken speed increased to 15 knots.
- -	400	
150	375	
- -	350	
- -	300	
150	260	
145	200	
145	190	
- -	160	Contact lost (No evasive tactics were noted although the Commanding Officer had an impression that the sub might be turning left.)

contacts were depth-charged at 1442 and 1449 but were considered "no sub". These were in close to reef. Planes, both Army and Navy, also aided in the search. McFARLAND's sound gear was not operating too satisfactorily so assistance was requested from the HMTZS GALE. Surface ship search was maintained until 1700 by McFARLAND and 1700 to dark by the GALE. At dark orders were received from Commander Aircraft South Pacific Force to clear area of surface ships for plane radar search. McFARLAND effected repairs on sound gear by 0500 the next morning and made a retiring search to 18 miles from the entrance the next day. No contacts were made. The reefs for ten miles on each side of the entrance were searched by four picket boats. These also made daily trips for five days to the sinking area to search for debris.

8. The following day detailed descriptions of the sub were obtained from numerous people. The main characteristics seen were: (a) Bow high out of water angle estimated 20 to 65°. Turn of the keel at the bow was seen. Some people reported seeing 4 or 5 feet of the keel.

(b) Top to vertical center of conning tower seen some time after bow appeared and of a size about 1/4 to 1/5 of the amount of bow showing.

(c) Conning tower fairly close to bow.

(d) One periscope.

(e) Conning tower and periscope angled aft 20 to 30 degrees from surface of water.

(f) Sub listed to starboard about 10 degrees.

(g) Nothing seen of stern or anything aft of conning tower except bubbling water (very agitated),

(h) Bow painted black and appeared freshly painted (no red lead etc.). This might indicate sub was just out of overhaul or new.

(i) Periscope appeared to be painted a light blue-gray or dull white.

(j) No gun was seen - (Probably never emerged judging by the angle at which the sub surfaced.) One man stated he saw the gun but since over 50 people saw the sub without seeing a gun this man's statement can not be confirmed.

(k) No net cutter was installed.

(b) Against (a) above are:

1. Presence of oil was not definitely determinable. About three fourths of the numerous observers including officers, stated they believed the slicks seen contained oil in addition to depth-charge residue. It so happened that this submarine appeared in the original depth charge residue so that if oil were present it would have had to be mixed with the residue. It is definite that one or two charges in the first attack and at least one in the second and one in the third were very black compared with the lighter brown of the sister charges. One warrant machinist (from a main deck view) stated he saw oil streaks in the residue that gave off bright reflecting colors, quantity apparently not large.

2. Although submarine did not begin to sink after emerging with bow up, until it had been hit once or twice by three-inch shells, its crew may have been working to regain control as the conning tower then appeared in sight and the angle of inclination of bow was less, perhaps about 20 degrees. Several competent observers stated that the stern sank again after it rose to the above angle. The sub did sink stern first with bow up at least 20 degrees, a starboard list of 7 to 10 degrees and with no headway. It should be remembered also that sub may have received a bomb hit just as it was disappearing and was depth-charged twice again after it disappeared in the above awkward manner.

3. In the afternoon depth-charging, barrages of two and one depth-charges were dropped. Both were on objects believed not to be moving. The first consisted of two depth charges set at 50 feet (water 90 feet) and only 750 yards from where swells were breaking on the reef. Nothing came of this that was out of the ordinary. As the ship was swinging to starboard away from this barrage a second contact was made about 800 yards to seaward from the above contact. These doubtful contacts were in towards the reef, 3.5 miles bearing about 350 degrees from original contact. They were depth-charged mainly as it was not known how a sub echo would sound with a reef back-ground (sub on bottom). Two charges were ordered dropped on the latter contact but only one went off as the rack jammed - depth of water not determined.

quickly and acted with great despatch. They came down to 30 feet above the sub while the ship was still shelling it and thereby accepted grave danger to themselves in an effort to exterminate the enemy. Their efforts may well have been responsible for a needed finishing touch to disable permanently the Japanese submarine.

11. Summary of search operations after original attack:

- (a) 1131 to 1700 1st day - McFARLAND.
- (b) 1700 to dark " " GALE.
- (c) Dark to dawn " night - Radar plane (Ordered by COMAIRSOPAC)
- (d) Dawn to 1700 2nd day - McFARLAND.
- (e) 1700 to dark " " GALE.
- (f) Dark to dawn " night - Radar plane.
- (g) Numerous Navy and Army planes both days.
- (h) GALE from just inside Amedee for next six days.
- (i) Picket boats from Noumea (Port Director) 5 days.
- (j) Plane search during sixth day by Commanding Officer, McFARLAND.
- (k) Commanding Officer CURTISS reported radar planes covered possible speeds of sub during the night searches.

12. The Commanding Officer realizes that the question will naturally arise: "Why weren't the waste and the paper debris recovered?" The only answer available is that the ship was still trying to sink the submarine when the debris was seen, not trying to prove it. He is also under no illusions as to the effectiveness of a depth-charge barrage from an AVD. These vessels have 300 pound charges, a single 8-charge rack astern, and one single depth-charge projector on each side. Most destroyers have two racks astern, 2 or 3 single projectors on each side and 600 pound charges are used in the racks. In order to make a "kill" an AVD must lay its barrage more accurately, and should expect a damaged enemy submarine on a single attack rather than a "kill", much more frequently than an average destroyer. For these reasons it is felt that prompt relentless search immediately after an attack is more essential for desired results than to expend part of the limited time available to recover debris which may be available later.

Commander Aircraft, Scouting Force's Confidential letter A16-3(0288) of March 5, 1942, in paragraph 31, after discussing air bubbles and oil states: "If she does not re-appear soon on the surface it may mean that she is going down "not under control" and if in ocean depths she will finally collapse and be a total loss without any further evidence appearing on the sur-

ADDENDA.

Since in the subject attack the question of diesel oil on the surface was much debated, the Commanding Officer (leading the opposition) was invited to witness a test of how diesel oil looks when mixed with sea-water.

A ten-gallon can containing 8 gallons of diesel oil was lowered over the side while the ship was anchored in 8 fathoms of water. Some free oil was dumped out of the punctured can before it sank (weighted).

Results of test:

1. Free oil on the surface in heavy quantities is a light fresh brown (sunlight) about the same color as the light brown of the depth-charge residue. Bubbles and sheet oil rapidly break up and disappear leaving light oil streaks on the water. (Sea condition intermittent white-capped waves; wind about 10 knots). Oil streaks do not last long. An intermittent slick is formed from which bright reflecting colors can be seen from a few certain angles in relation to the sun. Large parts of the slick even then do not reflect but appear dull. Slick seemed to drift with wind (and current) very rapidly. The oil was put over amidships and was clear of the ship in a few minutes. When an 100 yards astern it looked like an ordinary intermittent wind slick and took that shape. It was less evident from the bridge than from the main deck.

2. The Machinist who stated he had seen the oil in the subject submarine attack stated the reflecting streaks seen on the test were similar to what he saw during the attack. In the latter he came up on the bridge to report the oil reflections.

3. Conclusions: The Commanding Officer was extremely surprised at how difficult it was to see a diesel oil slick during average sea conditions. The appearance bears practically no relation to what the heavy fuel oil in Pearl Harbor looks like; and very little to what a volatile oil or gasoline looks like in calm water. It would be beneficial for interested parties to conduct a similar test. Normally eight gallons of diesel oil is considered a fairly large quantity, but the slick it made was negligible, as was the amount of reflecting surface seen. How much absorption takes place at lower depths than 8 fathoms is not known but probably considerably more than occurred in the subject test.

4. The Commanding Officer had to be shown in the subject case and it is supposed others must also. The test is simple, quick and inexpensive if the right weather conditions obtain. Since the Commanding Officer was the main champion against "no oil evidence" in the subject attack, it is freely admitted that previous convictions have been considerably shaken.

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

Serial No. 043
CONFIDENTIAL

July 24, 1942.

From: The Commanding Officer.
To: The Commander South Pacific Force.
Via: The Commander Aircraft South Pacific Force.
Subject: Report on Submarine Attack on July 15, 1942 off
Bulari Passage, New Caledonia.

1. There is forwarded herewith an account of the action taken against an enemy submarine on July 15, 1942 by this ship.


JOSEPH L. KANE

Copies to: COMINCH
CINCPAC
COMAIRSOPAC
COMPATWINGSPAC
COMDESPAC
COMPATWING TWO
COMGEN. N.C.
WAR DIARY
FILE.

FIRST ENDORSEMENT to UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AVD14/A16 AIRCRAFT SOUTH PACIFIC FORCE
Serial 043 or 24 July, 1942.

26 JUL 1942

From: Commander Aircraft, South Pacific Force.
To: Commander South Pacific Force.

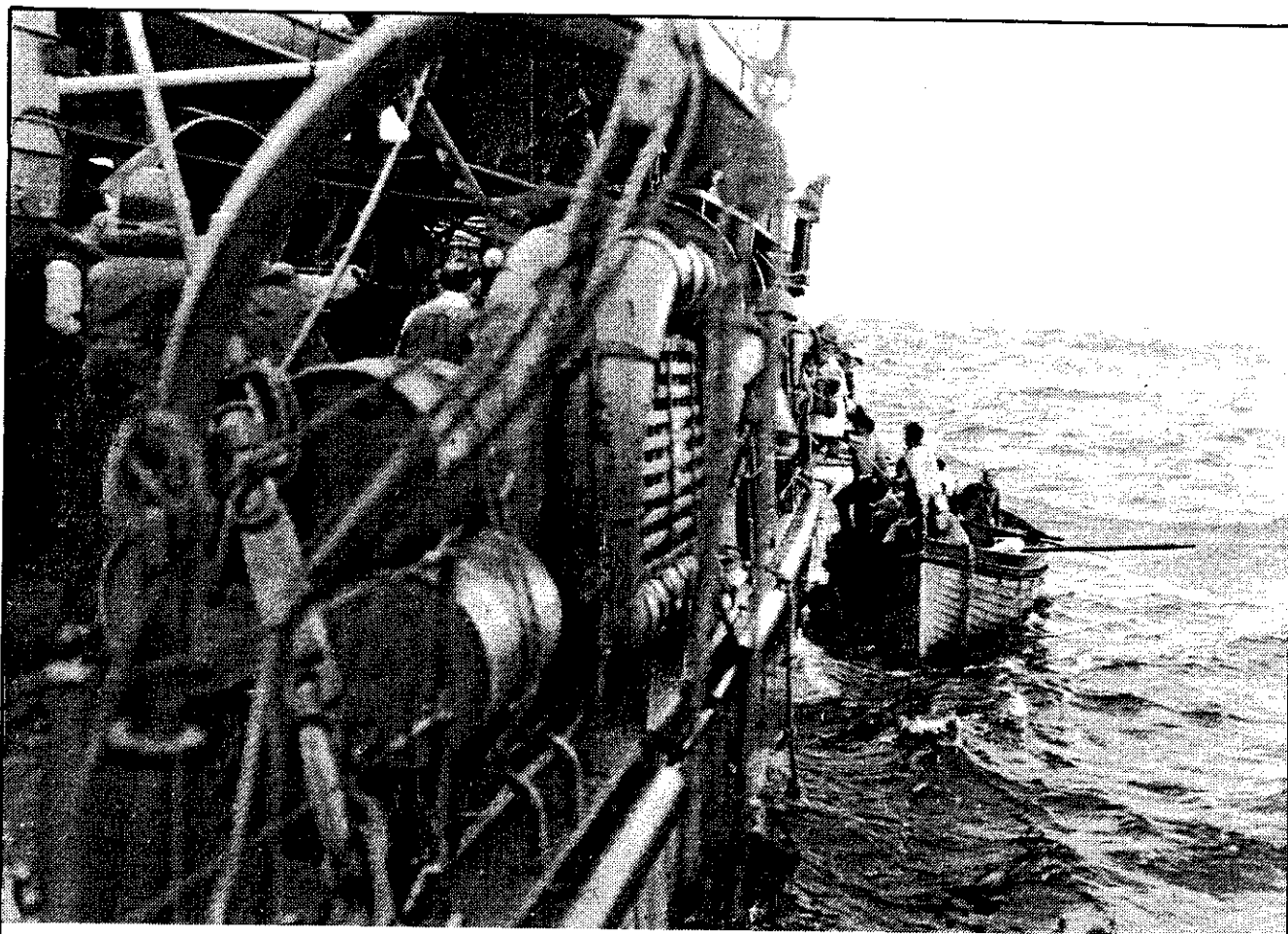
Forwarded.

2. While there may be some doubt as to the ~~sinking of the enemy submarine, there is none as to the~~ prompt and sound action by McFARLAND in the A/S attack described or as to the ready and intelligent cooperation of the Army aircraft involved. Such action was commendable and will, sooner or later, result in enemy sinkings.


J. S. McCain.

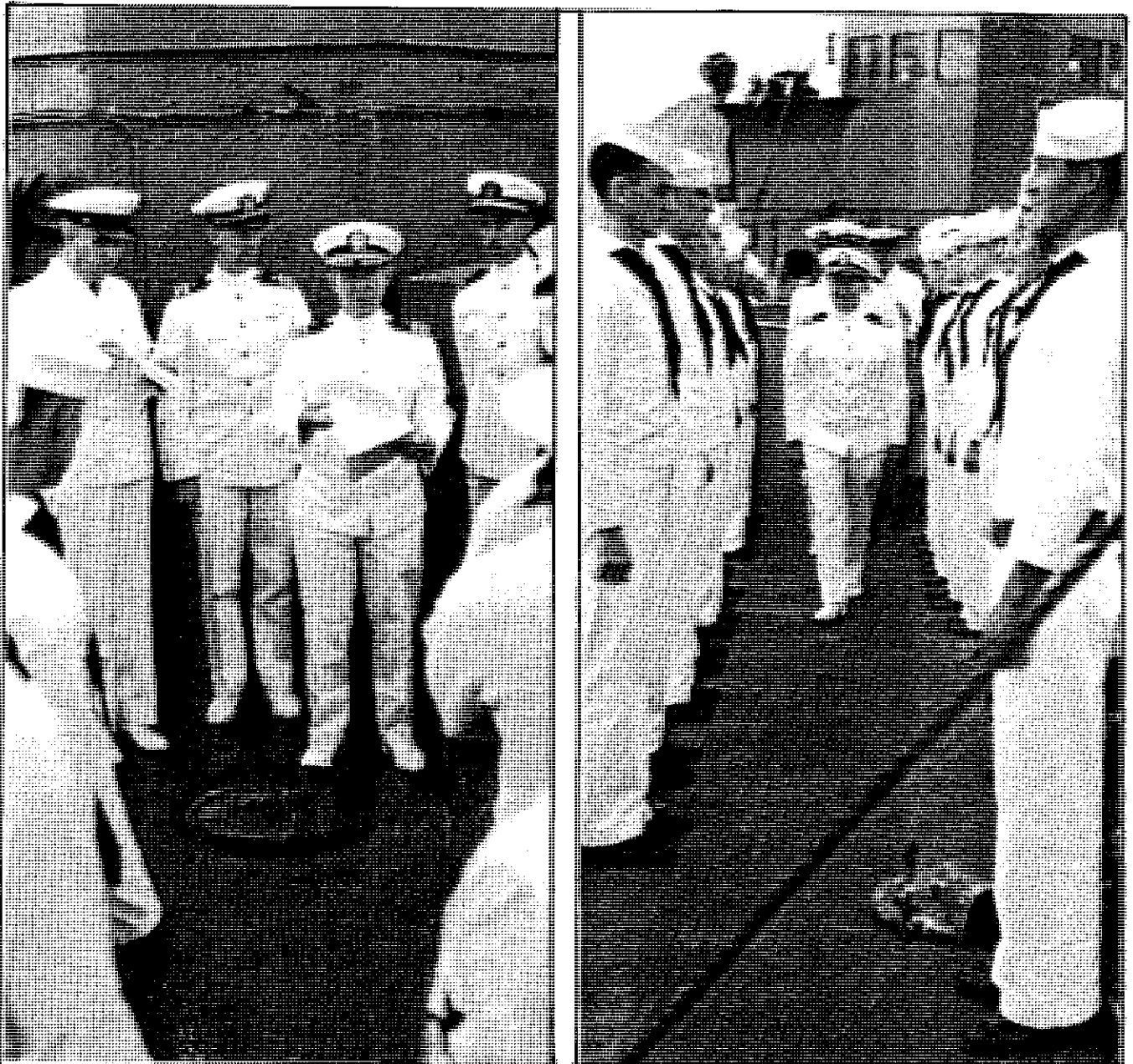
Copy to:
CO McFARLAND.
CO US Army Air Forces, New Caledonia.

U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14)



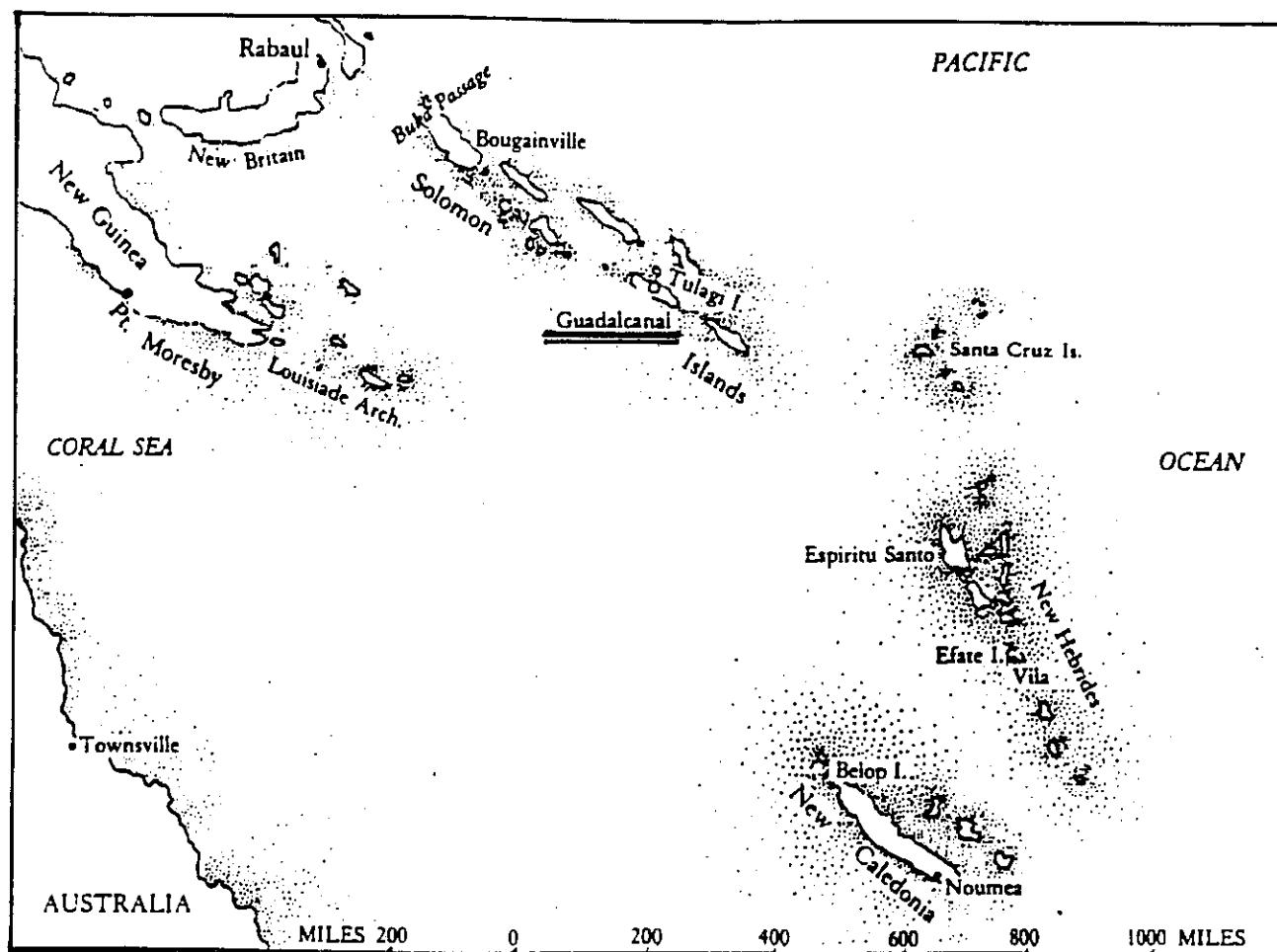
On 26 July 1942 the McFarland rescued survivors of the torpedoed Dutch freighter S.S. Tjinegara from three lifeboats and took them to Noumea, New Caledonia. Seventy-four survivors were transferred there to boats from the U.S.S. Curtiss (AV-4) and the U.S. Army. This photo, courtesy of LT Carl C. Ellis, shows survivors being helped aboard the "Mac".

U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14)



The change of command ceremony and personnel inspection held aboard the U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14) on 1 August 1942, while the ship was moored off Noumea, New Caledonia. The departing C.O., Cdr. Joseph L. Kane, USN, is shown reading his orders. The new C.O., LCDr. John C. Alderman, USN, is at his right and Lt. E. G. Gardner, USN, Executive Officer, is at his left. At the far left is Guy M. Strickley, Chief Yeoman, USN. Cdr. Kane's orders sent him to Seattle, Washington with the Northwestern Sea Frontier. (Photos courtesy of Carl C. Ellis)

Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands in World War II



Noumea to Rabaul. (Courtesy Australian War Memorial)

In the summer of 1942 the Solomon Islands, streaming 600 miles southeast from New Britain (upper left), assumed a great strategic importance. For the Japanese, their seaplane base at Tulagi (center) and the airfield they were completing on Guadalcanal formed part of a defensive perimeter for their principal base at Rabaul. For the United States, these bases in the lower Solomons threatened both her supply lines to Australia and her advance bases in the New Hebrides and on New Caledonia.

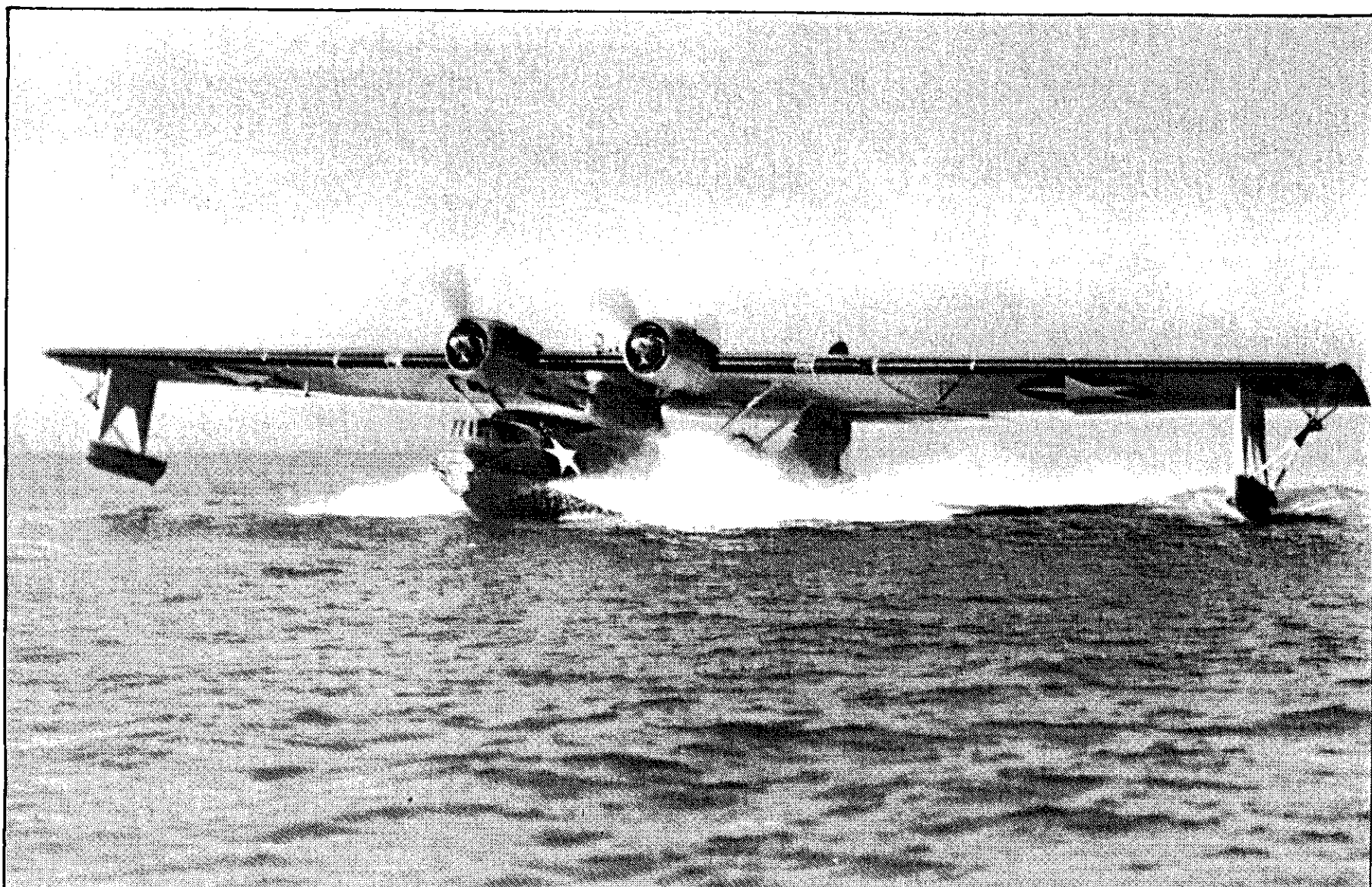
The decisive Guadalcanal Campaign began on August 7, 1942, when the U.S. Marines seized both Tulagi and the airfield across the bay. It ended six months later when the Japanese evacuated their remaining troops.

The victory was truly a turning point in the Pacific War. A captured Japanese document read, "Success or failure in recapturing Guadalcanal . . . is the fork in the road which leads to victory for them or for us." After the island was secured the Japanese offensive was over, and the Allies began their long island-hopping march to Tokyo Bay.

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
February, 1996



PBY-5 Catalina flying boats being refueled by a small seaplane tender, probably a 1,766-ton Barnegat-class "AVP", in the Aleutians during World War II. Similarly, the McFarland refueled five Catalinas on August 5, 1942, at Ndeni in the Santa Cruz Islands before they commenced their sector searches to detect any Japanese forces which might oppose the August 7th landings on Gavutu, Tulagi and Guadalcanal. (Photograph from the USNI collection.)



As a mother ship for six of these Catalina flying boats (PBY's) the McFarland provided gasoline, ammunition, spare parts, repair materials and a place for their nine-man crews to relax between missions. PBY-5 Catalinas were powered by two 1,200-h.p. Pratt & Whitney radial engines giving them a maximum speed of 195 mph and a range of 4000 miles. A 104-ft. fabric-covered wing provided great lift and carried their entire fuel load of 1,750 gallons. The wingtip floats were retractable to reduce drag. Their armament consisted of four machine guns (two .30-cal. in the bow and two .50-cal. in the beam blisters) and either two tons of bombs, two torpedoes or eight depth charges. (Photograph from the U.S. Naval Institute collection.)

UNITED STATES SHIP McFarland (AVD-14)

Friday 16 October 1942

(Day)

(Date)

(Month)

ADDITIONAL REMARKS

00-04: Steaming singly enroute Espiritu Santo Island to Lunga Point, Guadalcanal Island, on course 345 T & PGC, 339 PSC, at standard speed 16.7 knots, 200 R.P.M.. Boilers nos. 1 and 2 in use for steaming purposes. Ship darkened, in condition of readiness three. 0122: Changed course to 041 T & PGC, 036 PSC. 0306: 0306: Changed course to 319 T & PGC, 311 PSC. Average steam 250, average R.P.M. 200.

R. W. Evans
Lt.(jg), USNR

04-08: Steaming as before. 0445: General Quarters. 0530: Changed course left to 270 T & PGC. 0535: Changed course left to 090 T & PGC. 0540: Changed speed to one third. 0541: Changed course left to 270 T & PGC. 0544: Changed to standard speed. 0552: Lighted ship. 0555: Changed course to 090 T & PGC. 0610: Changed course to 280 T & PGC. 0615: Changed course to 300 T & PGC. 0630: Changed course left to 280 T & PGC. 0636: Changed course left to 250 T & PGC. 0650: Changed speed to full. 0651: Changed course to 270 T & PGC. 0655: Changed course to 090 T & PGC; changed speed to standard. 0659: Changed course to 120 T & PGC; changed speed to two thirds. 0707: Changed speed to standard. 0710: Changed speed to full. Average steam 250; average R.P.M., 206.

G. Gemmill
Lt.(jg), USNR

08-12: Steaming as before. 0810: Changed course to 180 T & PGC, 176 PSC. 0830: Changed course to 170 T & PGC, 167 PSC. 0855: Changed to standard speed. Changed course to 090 T & PGC. 0925: Changed course to 000 T & PGC, 350 PSC. 0940: Changed speed to full. Changed course to 315 T & PGC. 0942: Changed course to 305 T & PGC. 1050: Changed course to 288 T & PGC, 278 PSC. 1140: Changed course to 270 T & PGC, 260 PSC. Made daily inspection of magazines and smokeless powder samples; conditions normal.

G. Gemmill
Lt.(jg), USNR

12-16: Steaming as before. 1247: Commenced steaming at various speeds on various courses approaching anchorage. 1324: Anchored in 20 fathoms of water with 45 fathoms of chain to the port anchor, 4,000 yards east of Lunga Point, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. 1325: Commenced unloading deck cargo to landing barges alongside. 1410: General Quarters for air raid alert. Slipped anchor. Under way on various courses at various speeds; standard speed 15 knots, 177 rpm. 1415: Secured from General Quarters; maneuvering to pick up anchor buoy. 1444: Picked up anchor buoy and reshackled anchor chain. Average steam 250; average rpm 24.2.

F. S. Dean, Jr.
Lieut., USNR

16-20: Anchored as before. 1715: Under way on various courses at various speeds with landing barges in tow alongside, maneuvering clear of submarine reported west of Lunga Point. Standard speed 15 knots, 177 rpm. 1750: Attacked by nine Aichi-type 99 dive bombers. Each plane dropped two medium size bombs. First seven planes made no hits. Last two planes hit gasoline barge in tow alongside starboard quarter. Barge was cast loose and left aflame. Approximately twenty men were on barge. At least one bomb from last plane hit stern of ship near depth charge track, blowing stern, rudder and steering engine off. Casualties to own ship's force estimated at eleven missing, fourteen wounded. Casualties to walking-wounded Marine passengers, unknown. One dive bomber shot down by 20-mm battery; one damaged by same. 1829: Maneuvering ship towards Tulagi Harbor using engines to steer. 1930: Secured main steam stop to port engine. 1950: Tank lighters and PT boat took ship in tow off entrance to Tulagi Harbor. Darkened ship.

F. S. Dean, Jr.
Lieut., USNR

20-24: In tow as before. 2050: Fire in after crews compartment. Flooded after magazine. 2054: Fire extinguished. 2100: YP boat from Tulagi took ship in tow. 2340: Anchored in Tulagi Harbor, Solomon Islands, in 10 fathoms of water with 45 fathoms of chain to the port anchor. Commenced survey of damage to ship and transfer of dead and wounded to Tulagi Island.

F. S. Dean, Jr.
Lieut., USNR

~~SECRET~~

ACTION REPORT

~~SECRET~~

U.S.S. MCFARLAND

AVD 14

ACTION, REPORT OF [JAPANESE BOMBING ATTACK OF OCTOBER 16,
1942, LUNGA POINT, GUADALCANAL]

SERIAL 052
DECEMBER 15, 1942

44808

OFFICE OF NAVAL RECORDS AND LIBRARY

~~SECRET~~

December 15, 1942.



To: The Commanding Officer.
 Via: (1) The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.
 (2) The Commander Aircraft, South Pacific Force.
 (2) The Commander South Pacific Force.

Subject: Action, report of.

Reference: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, Arts. 712 and 874(6).
 (b) U.S.S. McFARLAND Mailgram 262230 October, 1942, to SECNAV. (Report of casualties).

Enclosure: (A) Pertinent extracts from Ship's War Diary.
 (E) Photographs.
 (C) Executive Officer's Report.

1. This letter together with its enclosures is submitted as the report required by reference (a).

2. The ship was in the Tulagi - Guadalcanal area for a period of about a month and a half. Because of rather unusual and possibly interesting occurrences during this period the report of the actual engagement with the enemy has been extended. The narrative of events is told by pertinent extracts from the War Diary, which was elaborated as necessary to give the details required by a report of this nature. The photographs, enclosure (E), are included to indicate the damage to the ship and how she was camouflaged.

3. No citation for any particular officer or man has been proposed as a result of this action, nor has any recommendation been submitted for meritorious advancement in rating. This is because it is considered that all hands acted together as a team. Like a good team it had no outstanding members. All were stars, and in order to commend one it is necessary to praise them all.

4. In support of this the following are offered as some samples of accomplishment among the many which came to the notice of the Commanding Officer.

(a) The Navigator (Executive Officer) "hit the nail on the head" in making landfall at Mura Island at dawn on October 16th after encountering varying winds and currents during the night. No radar aboard.

Subject: Action, report of.

ation at RINGBOLT when the Commanding Officer was assigned to command that base. This meant a big job to do, and the Commanding Officer explained this to the ship's officers. The next day all the officers who could be spared from the ship asked, without prompting, to be put to work. It was the Communication officer who first set up Radio Tulagi, the Air Officer who supervised the construction of the Naval Air Station at Malavo, the engineering officer who laid the foundation for an adequate boat repair shop, and the Executive Officer who started the base along the lines of proper organization.

The men too, volunteered to help, and became the key men in their departments in the subsequent development and operation of the base.

4. The casualties in the action were reported by reference (b). The Commanding Officer considers that all men listed as "missing" are dead beyond a reasonable doubt. Under similar future circumstances it would seem desirable if these men could be declared dead without positive identification for the benefit of dependents at home.

5. The experience gained in carrying cargo to CACTUS and in commanding the naval base at RINGBOLT has led to the conviction that additional solutions should be sought to the problem of supplying an advanced base against enemy opposition. The following suggestions are offered as being of possible application:-

(a) Designate the naval activities at an important advanced base as a task force. Make the task force commander responsible for all naval operations within the advanced base area.

(b) Make suitable weight handling and moving equipment part of the deck load of the first ships to be unloaded at an advanced base. In particular provide plenty of cranes.

(c) In the initial load of equipment provide torpedo nets with handling facilities, and have at least one position in which a ship can unload without fear of submarines.

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

Serial No. 052 SECRET

December 15, 1942.

Subject: Action, report of.

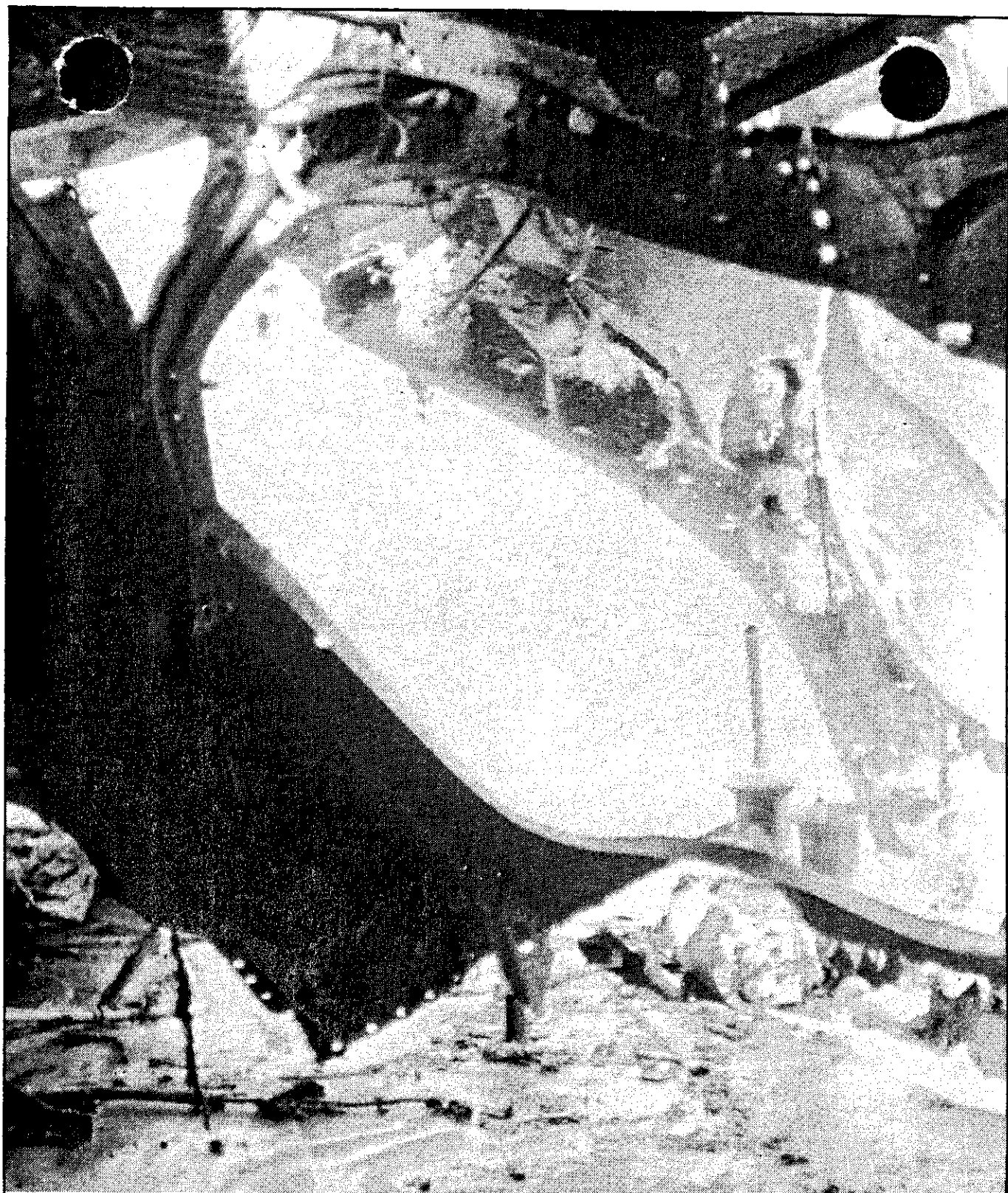
(e) Turn 90% of aircraft spare parts carried over
to the nearest large seaplane tender or aircraft base,
and habitually carry only small items of known utility.



J.C. ALDERMAN

Distribution:

1 advance copy to COMINCH.
1 Copy to COMAIRPAC



The twisted remains of the McFarland's after deckhouse after she was hit by an enemy dive-bomber off Guadalcanal on 16 October 1942, looking aft towards the bitts on the port deck-edge. The main deck aft of these bitts was totally destroyed, along with the rudder and steering engine. The ship could maneuver using her engines, but with considerable flooding, there was a real danger that she would sink or beach in enemy territory. (Photo from the U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14) action report of 15 DEC 1942.)

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

Serial No. _____

~~December 8, 1942~~

From: The Executive Officer.
To: The Commanding Officer.
Subject: Japanese Bombing Attack of October 16, 1942 -
Report of.
Reference: (a) Article 948 U.S. Navy Regulations, 1920.

1. The following report of the subject action is submitted in accordance with reference (a).

2. The McFARLAND was pumping bulk aviation gasoline into drums on a large sectional barge and one tank lighter secured alongside, on the afternoon of October 16, 1942. The ship was anchored about 500 yards east of Lunga Point, Guadalcanal Island, B.S.I.P. approximately 300 yards from the beach. The cargo of 37 MM ammunition, aircraft flares, 12 torpedoes, 188 drums of avgas and 20 drums of avlube had already been unloaded. The barge was secured alongside to starboard, abreast of the galley deckhouse. The tank lighter was alongside to port.

3. Throughout the unloading of the cargo the boats proceeding to the ship to be loaded brought many passengers and 60 walking hospital patients for evacuation to BUTON. A list of the ambulatory patients was furnished but no list of the other evacuees was received. One group brought the word that the last group to board the ship would bring a complete list. Among the ambulatory patients were many diagnosed as "war neurotics".

4. At 1710 we received word from the shore station that a submarine periscope had been sighted rounding Lunga Point. Special sea details were stationed, the anchor was weighed, and at 1715 ship got underway and stood out on an easterly course with the barge and tank lighter alongside. The pumping of gasoline was continued. The McFARLAND men assisting on the barge were recalled to the ship in case it became necessary to cast off. It was believed that by maintaining 1/3 speed the ship could keep ahead of the submerged submarine and at the same time be able to discharge the remainder of the bulk gasoline. The barge had motive power of its own and would have been able to make its way back to the beach with its load after being cast off.

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

5. At 1700 the shore station was asked if the condition was Red (enemy aircraft overhead); a negative answer was received at 1705. At 1710 many fighters were observed taking off from the airport. At 1710 the following message was sent to the shore station: "ARE FIGHTERS TAKING OFF TO REPEL RAID". The following answer was received at 1715: "FIGHTERS ARE PRACTICING NEW TACTICS." In view of these replies to our enquiries the special sea details were kept at their stations instead of sending the crew to general quarters. At 1725 the shore station was notified of the ship's plans by the message: "ALL STANDING DOWN CHANNEL TOWING BARGES UNTIL ALL FILLED."

6. While proceeding at 1/3 speed to the eastward the ship at 1750 was attacked by Japanese dive bombers. The number and type of the attacking planes was reported as nine, Aichi 99 Dive Bombers. The attack was made from the starboard side. I did not observe the attack as I was engaged in clearing a jam in the Browning Automatic Rifle which I use at general quarters. The two starboard 20 MM guns opened fire and maintained a curtain during the entire attack. The two air cooled aviation 50 caliber machine guns on the after deckhouse maintained their fire until put out of action by a bomb hit. Number one 3" gun expended one round. One plane was shot down in flames by #3 20 MM gun manned by ZACHAR, Louis, GM3c, U.S.N.; another plane was damaged by #4 20 MM gun manned by COLLINS, Gustave E., BM2c, U.S.N. It was observed wobbling and later jettisoning its bombs after having passed over the ship.

7. Each plane reportedly dropped two bombs (About 100 lb.). Several near misses were felt on the port side of the ship. At least one of the misses was amidships and very close aboard as PROBY, W.W., SM1c, U.S.N., was blown off of the port bridge bulwarks and Ens. S.J. ROBINSON, U.S.N., and MAZOWAY, L.A., CM1(PA), U.S.N. were blown into the pilot house from the port wing of the bridge. The next morning several pieces of shrapnel were found inside of the pilot house. It is not believed that the near misses caused any personnel or material casualties on the ship.

8. During the attack the gasoline barge was cast adrift by RAIDLINE, L.E., CBM(AA), U.S.N. The tank lighter was cast loose from the opposite side. Several men observed the rear seat occupant of the planes throwing out small black objects. It is possible that these were incendiaries and that one of them hit the barge, as the gasoline exploded and flames shot several

hundred feet into the air. It is believed that the twelve marine and sailor members of the barge crew perished in the flames.

9. The last plane to attack the ship scored one or possibly two hits on or in the immediate vicinity of the depth charge rack on the port side of the fantail. A tremendous explosion occurred. Steering control was lost and all attempts to communicate by phone and voice tube with the steering engine room and after steering station failed. CALLISON, V.E., QMLc, U.S.N. went aft to determine the cause of the loss of steering control. At this time it was not definitely known that a direct hit had occurred. The ship meanwhile was being steered by the engines in the general direction of Tulagi. CALLISON returned very shortly in an excited state and informed me that I had better get back aft. I left the bridge and ran aft where I found the entire stern of the ship blown off from the after bulkhead of the washroom - aft. The head and washroom spaces were filled with many mangled bodies of dead and dying marines and sailors. The water was rising rapidly in the after living spaces. I sent LIVINGSTON, E.S., SOM3c, U.S.N.R. forward to report conditions to the Commanding Officer. Lieutenant (jg) GEMILL arrived soon afterwards and assisted in carrying several wounded from the head and washroom as it appeared at that time that the stern would very shortly be submerged. I sent several of the crew, who began to appear on the scene, after the Doctor. Several marines standing nearby were asked to assist in carrying other wounded from head and washroom. They were evidently in a highly nervous state as they made no move but stared vacantly ahead. After administering morphine to several wounded I went to the bridge and reported the extent of the damage to the Commanding Officer. By this time the ship was settling rapidly by the stern with a port list. Orders were given to flood the forward peak tanks, pump oil from the "D" group of oil tanks to the fore-castle group, and to shift all able personnel to the starboard side. When I returned aft the chief pharmacist's mate was administering morphine, and stretcher bearers were carrying the wounded forward to the sick bay where the Medical Officer was treating them.

10. The vessel maintained a course, by maneuvering the engines, in the general direction of Tulagi. The flooded peak tanks, shifting of oil and personnel brought the ship on an even keel. She stopped settling and it became apparent that she would probably keep afloat. However, the life boat was lowered to the rail ready to receive badly wounded patients, the gripes

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

were cast off of the other boat and all aircraft were made ready to drop in case the ship should sink. About 2050 a fire was reported in the after crew's compartment. The after magazine sprinkling system was opened. The after compartments were filled with dense smoke. COSGROVE, R.L., CCM(PA), U.S.F.R. assisted by HARP, G.L., CGM(AA), U.S.N. located and extinguished a burning mattress in the after compartment.

11. At 1925 communications were established with the signal station on Gavutu Island. The services of a YP boat and Higgins boats were requested for towing and transfer of the wounded. At 1950 PT boats and tank lighters arrived from Tulagi. At 1950 a PT boat attempted to take the ship in tow but was not successful. While awaiting the arrival of the YP boat the passengers and wounded were transferred to the tank lighters. At 2055 the YP-239 appeared and took the ship in tow at 2103. At 2340 the anchor was dropped in Tulagi Harbor just off "D" Medical Company Hospital. At 0100 the process of identifying and transferring the dead for burial was begun.

12. During the attack many marines, probably the war neurotics, went into a highly excited state and congregated in the passageways thereby greatly hindering the passage of the crew to their general quarters stations, the passing out of arms and ammunition from the armory, restricting the movements of the damage control party, and hampering the stretcher bearers. It is possible that by their action and shouts they had some effect on the nervous state of members of the ship's company, thereby reducing their efficiency. It is not believed that small ships should be asked to evacuate mental patients under any circumstances.

13. The following is a list of men killed, wounded or missing as a result of the bombing:

PASSENGERS KILLED IN ACTION

LAYTON, Newell E.	Fdck, USMC (Died Oct.17, 1942)
EDMONDS, P.C.	AC1lc, USN

PASSENGERS WOUNDED IN ACTION

LIPETRI, Sylvester N.	PLSgt	USMC
BEST, William E.	Pvt	USMC
GAGNON, Howard J.	Pvt	USMC
TRUSCOTT, David P.	Pvt	USMC

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

Serial No. _____

ELLIOTT, John G.	PFC	USMC
SNELL, James C.	Sgt.	USA
NIEME, Leo	?	USN
HELZEL, Edgar F.	AMM3c	USN
MAGEE, William M.	AMM3c	USN
WISEY, Herman B.	AMM2c	USN
MALONE, Ray F.	ACOM	USN
STEINBERG, Duruin C.	AOM2c	USN
FARROW, David D.	Sur.	USCG
BOUCHEY, Robert O.	Sealc	USNR
PHILLIPS, C.C.	?	USMC
OWEN, M.E.	?	USMC
ROOSE, W.R.	?	USMC

PASSENGERS MISSING IN ACTION

BERGE, R.W.	AOM2c	USN
BAGWELL, C.A.	AMM3c	"
CORNELIUS, - -	AMM2c	"
PARKER, H.A.	AOM3c	"
WRIGHT, W. Jr.	AMM3c	"
DOERR, H.J.	?	USMC
MOERSHALL, R.H.	?	"
SWIFT, Wayne L.	?	"
BROWN, John E.	?	"
BROWN, Newell J.	?	"
CONNOLLY, James E.	?	"
COULTEL, Earl A.	?	"
McKEE, David H. Jr.	?	"

SHIP'S COMPANY KILLED IN ACTION

DIGIACOMO, James V.	SK3c	USN
LUBNER, Robert V.	SOM3c	USNR
QUINN, Rudolph W.	F2c	USN
ZELUSKY, Michael A.	GM3c	"

SHIP'S COMPANY DIED AS RESULT OF WOUNDS RECEIVED IN ACTION

GRANAH, Gerald O.	GM1c	USN (on Oct. 16th)
SWAPP, Warren D.	F2c	USN (on Oct. 21st)

SHIP'S COMPANY WOUNDED IN ACTION.

PETERS, Harvey J.	F2c	USN
ELDRIDGE, Robert G.	IL11c	USN

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

SHIP'S COMPANY WOUNDED IN ACTION (Continued)

GOOLSEY, Robert	SF3c	USN
DELACRUZ, Pedro	OC3c	USNR
HANCOCK, Forest	Matt2c	USN
LIVINGSTON, Edwin S.	SOM3c	USNR
MESERVE, Edward A.	BM1c	USN
ROBERTS, Allen	MM2c	USN
THOMAS, Dairrel V.	F2c	USN
VERGONA, Thomas C.	Sea2c	USN
VIGIL, Paul F.	Sealc	USN

SHIP'S COMPANY MISSING IN ACTION

POTTER, Sheldon A.	SM3c	USN
TRAHEY, Robert T.	MM2c	"
TURNER, Charles E.	F3c	"
WEEKLY, Robert A.	GM3c	"
STAPLETON, William L.	GM3c	"
MARTIN, James A.	Sealc	"

TOTAL PASSENGERS KILLED	2
TOTAL PASSENGERS WOUNDED	17
TOTAL PASSENGERS MISSING	13
TOTAL SHIP'S COMPANY KILLED	7
TOTAL SHIP'S COMPANY WOUNDED	11
TOTAL SHIP'S COMPANY MISSING	5

GRAND TOTAL KILLED	9
GRAND TOTAL WOUNDED	28
GRAND TOTAL MISSING	18
GRAND TOTAL CASUALTIES	<u>55</u>

There were eight (8) unidentified bodies found in the head and washroom. Observers witnessed at least two (2) men blown over the side.

TOTAL PASSENGERS ON BOARD	160
TOTAL OFFICERS AND MEN OF CREW	<u>136</u>
GRAND TOTAL PERSONNEL ON BOARD	296

PERCENTAGE OF CASUALTIES	18.6%
--------------------------	-------

14. General Comments and Observations:

(a) It is believed that a number of small, fast, armed freight and personnel carriers about the size

of the new destroyers should be designed and built to service advanced outposts. In the present amphibious war it is not believed that the Allies have sufficient ships capable of slipping in to advanced positions at high speed, unloading troops and cargo and retiring before the enemy has time to strike. Similarly small fast tankers fitted with high capacity pumps could be very gainfully employed. These types of vessels should be equipped with sound gear, radar, depth charges, and excellent AA protection. They would be capable of traveling singly or in groups. Convoy protection would be unnecessary.

(b) As previously stated it is not believed that small vessels should be hampered by the evacuation of mental patients.

(c) It is believed that all personnel, soldiers, sailors and marines should be issued some small type of lifejacket or belt, as his personal equipment so that when and if he is transferred for transportation to a small ship there will not be a shortage of life-jackets.

(d) It is recommended that the sounding tubes to magazines, storage spaces etc., and all distant operating valve rods on vessels of this class be extended to the main deck. In case of flooding of the lower deck compartments this arrangement permits the operation of these fixtures.

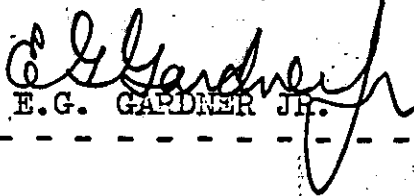
(e) It is believed that the designation of vessels of this class should be changed from AVD to some other designation indicating a combatant status. In connection with this it is further believed that the 3" guns should be replaced by 5" dual purpose guns, and that the present battery of automatic AA weapons should be at least doubled.

(f) It is believed that the four boats at present carried should be replaced by Higgins personnel boats to allow the rapid handling of personnel and cargo.

15. It is believed that every member of the crew conducted himself during the action in a thoroughly exemplary manner. It is not believed that any single man should be singled out for

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

praise. No one committed any acts requiring censure. It is believed that the wholehearted teamwork and spirit of the entire ship's company pulled the McFARLAND out of "a tight spot" and enabled her to return to base after successfully completing her mission.


E.G. GARDNER JR.

FIRST ENDORSEMENT to
C.O. McFARLAND ltr.
Al6-3 Serial 052 of
15 December 1942.

23 December 1942.

From: Commander Aircraft, South Pacific Force.
To : The Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.
Via : The Commander South Pacific Force.

Subject: Action, report of.

Reference: (a) ComAirSoPac ltr. Pl5 Serial #415 of December 1, 1942.
(b) ComAir SoPac despatch 180627 of October 1942.

1. Forwarded. The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. McFARLAND, is to be congratulated on the excellence of the subject report.

2. The Commander Aircraft, South Pacific considers that the officers and men of the U.S.S. McFARLAND have been outstanding, and in recognition of this has, by reference (a), recommended the U.S.S. McFARLAND for the "Unit Citation" authorized by ALNAV 238 and by reference (b) recommended the Commanding Officer for promotion to the grade of commander and award of the Navy Cross.

3. Commander Aircraft, South Pacific concurs in the recommendation contained in paragraph 5 and 6 of the basic letter and notes that some of the recommendations have since been submitted by other commands.

/s/ AUBREY W. FITCH.

C O P Y

Al6-3/(11)
Serial

00177
S-E-C-R-E-T

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

SECRET

2nd Endorsement on
C.O., U.S.S. McFARLAND
Secret Letter Al6-3
Serial 052 dated
December 15, 1942.

JAN 14 1943

From: The Commander South Pacific Area and South
Pacific Force.
To : The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.
Subject: Action, report of.

1. Forwarded.

2. That McFARLAND survived and is now at Pearl Harbor preparing for further action against the enemy is due largely to the resourcefulness and tenacity of purpose shown by her officers and crew.

3. Concur in recommendations contained in paragraph 5 (b), (c) and (d) and paragraph 6 of basic letter.

4. Concur heartily in the recommendation of paragraph 2 of first endorsement regarding the award of the "Unit Citation" to the U.S.S. McFARLAND and in the recommendation that Lieutenant Commander Alderman be promoted to the grade of Commander. On 31 December, 1942, Lieutenant Commander Alderman was awarded the Navy Cross, and on 1 January, 1943, the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, presented the Navy Cross to this fine young officer.

W. P. WALSEY

Copy to:
ComAirSoPac
CO USS McFARLAND

Serial 00544

SECRET
SECRET

From: Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.
To: Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet.
Subject: Report of Action, U.S.S. McFARLAND.
References: (a) McFARLAND AVM-11/Al6-3/(052) dated December 15, 1942.
(b) Opanav despatch 301910 of December 1942.
Enclosures: (A) Comairsofac 1st End. to ref. (a) Al6-3/(00110) dated December 23, 1942.
(B) Comsofac 2nd End. to ref. (a) Al6-3/(11)/(00177) dated January 14, 1943.

1. While unloading aviation gasoline off Lunga Point, Guadalcanal, on 16 October 1942, U.S.S. McFARLAND was attacked by 9 dive bombers, suffering 1 hit that blew off the stern and destroyed steering control.

2. The ship was towed into Tulagi and remained there camouflaged until 25 November, during which time the Commanding Officer was Commander of the Naval Base established there. He and his crew were largely responsible for the establishment of the first base facilities at Tulagi.

3. The officers and men of the McFARLAND have distinguished themselves by their conduct in action with the enemy and in saving their ship. The Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet, is pleased with their excellent performance.

4. The McFARLAND is now being converted to an aircraft escort vessel in accordance with reference (b). All specific recommendations contained in paragraph 6 of the basic letter are being incorporated during the conversion except the mounting of 5"/25 caliber guns, which stability considerations will not permit, and increase in gasoline capacity which is impracticable.

5. Transmission of this letter by registered air mail within the United States is authorized.

Copy to:

Comsofac
Comairsofac
USS McFARLAND

R. A. SPRUANCE
Chief of Staff

LIST OF OFFICERS

Attached to and on board of the U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14, commanded
by J. C. ALDERMAN, U. S. N., during the period covered by this Log Book, with date of
reporting for duty, detachment, transfer, or death, from October 1, 1942, to October 31, 1942

NAME	RANK	DATE OF REPORT- ING FOR DUTY	DETACHED	DUTIES
			Date	
ALDERMAN, J. C.	Lieut. Commander	July 30, 1942		Commanding.
GARDNER, E. G., Jr.	Lieutenant	Mar. 11, 1942		Navigator Executive Officer
ELLIS, C. C.	Lieutenant, D-V(S) U.S.N.R.	Oct. 24, 1940		Gunnery.
CHALMERS, N. E.	Lieut. (jg) E-M U.S.N.R.	Apr. 7, 1942		Engineer.
EVANS, R. W.	Lieut. (jg), D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	Apr. 20, 1941		Commissary. Asst. Gunnery.
GEMMILL, G.	Lieut. (jg), D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	July 25, 1941		D.C.O. - Stores Asst. Nav.-1st Lt.
DEAN, F. S., Jr.	Lieutenant, D-V(G) U.S.N.R.	July 2, 1941		Communications.
CLARKSON, C. F.	Lieut. (jg), E-V(G) U.S.N.R.	Oct. 27, 1941		Asst. Engineer. Junior "B" Div.
GOODBODY, C. S.	Ensign, E-V(G) U.S.N.R.	Sept 24, 1942		Officer under in- structions.
ROBINSON, S. J.	Ensign	June 23, 1942		Asst. Engineer. Asst. Navigator
*McCAFFERTY, E. L.	Lieutenant (MD) U.S.N.R.	Aug. 4, 1942		Medical Officer.
* On board for temporary duty.				

Examined and found to be correct.

J. C. ALDERMAN,
Lt. Comdr., U.S. Navy,
Commanding.

E. G. GARDNER, JR.
Lieutenant, U.S.N.

Navigator.

U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14)

Muster Roll of the Crew, 10/16/42¹

ALSTON, Cicero (n)	261 82 39	OffStd3c
AMMANN, Harold Francis	337 24 25	GM2c
BACHAN, Luke George, Jr.	662 15 53	Sea2c
BAKER, Lester Joseph	305 13 95	SC1c
*BENTLY, Melvin Montree	265 86 32	MAtt1c
BOYD, Leo "H"	376 29 12	F1c
BOYKIN, Albert Barnett	356 49 74	Sea2c
BRALESKI, Lloyd John	283 36 31	Cox.
CALLISON, Vivian Edward	393 21 94	QM1c
CAMPOS, Nicolas Estipa	662 92 56	MAtt2c
CARDENAS, Andrew Joseph	376 35 37	RM3c
CHAPMAN, Harvey Edward	328 54 45	SK2c
COLVIN, George Winfield	279 70 33	Yeo2c
COLLINS, Gustave Edward	243 73 26	BM2c
COMBE, Frank David	368 05 27	CPhM
CONRAD, Clarence (n)	250 56 49	Cox.
COOPER, Wesley Burdette	311 33 59	SF1c
COSGROVE, Ralph LaVern	122 73 70	CCM
DE LA CRUZ, Pedro (n)	420 54 86	OC3c
DE LONG, Ralph Wilber	279 70 21	SC3c
DE LOYD, Thomas Joseph, III	382 41 73	EM2c
**DIGIACOMO, James Vincent	283 36 42	SK3c
DUMLAO, Alex Graganta	633 10 20	MAtt1c
EDISON, Jim Frank	267 33 67	MM2c
*ELDRIDGE, Robert George	360 00 11	MM1c
ESSIG, Jack Samuel	283 36 35	GM3c
ERCANBRACK, Cecil Ardell	356 61 82	EM3c
FENDER, John Samuel	380 61 40	CMM
FINCH, Charles Edward	380 87 28	MM1c
*GOOLSBY, Robert Leeroy	360 43 98	SF3c
**GRAHAM, Gerald Otis	267 97 58	GM1c
GREAR, Rufus "R"	295 26 16	OC1c
HALL, Benjamin Franklin	632 43 12	SC1c
*HANCOCK, Forest (n)	356 75 82	MAtt2c
HARP, Gail Lawrence	393 05 93	CGM
HARRIS, James Hartwell	342 56 55	Sea2c
HECK, Joshua Holland, Jr.	258 26 14	MM2c
HELMKE, Paul Conrad	376 35 40	Sea1c
HETRICK, Elmer Lloyd	316 00 77	MM1c
HOLLAND, John Richard	381 22 70	MSmth1c
HOLLOWAY, Dallas Ted	356 39 60	Cox.
HOPKINS, Herbert Walter	173 62 12	CRM
HUFFORD, Stephen Daniel	320 91 69	WT1c
JACKSON, Donald Stewart	412 19 47	RM2c
JACKSON, Harold (n)	382 28 93	F1c

*JONES, Milton Risner	342 44 50	SM2c
JORDAN, Roderick Stell	510 00 63	RM1 c
KELLY, Clayton Monroe	360 42 59	SK3c
LANGLEY, Kenneth Waller	368 34 63	MM2c
LARGE, Gale Franklin	337 76 11	SM3c
LINDSEY, Tucker Eugene	662 12 39	SOM3c
LINES, Gerald William	660 06 88	SM3c
*LIVINGSTON, Edwin Stuart	680 01 13	SOM3c
**LUBKER, Robert Van	632 10 05	SOM3c
MALAPIRA, Vidal (n)	497 54 92	OGS
MARTELL, Philip James	654 10 41	SM3c
**MARTIN, James Anderson	360 43 00	Sea1c
MAY, Walter Howard	300 23 27	AerM3c
MAZOWAY, Louis Alexander	238 36 42	CQM
MEIER, Melvin Albert	385 84 38	MM2c
MENDEL, Daniel Lawrence, Jr.	644 09 96	SM3c
*MESERVE, Edward Alvin	368 16 05	BM1 c
METCALF, Richard Allen	337 26 04	MM1 c
MEYER, Louis Marcel	214 92 06	EM1 c
MOORE, George Everette	295 55 03	MM2c
MORAN, Henry Irving	268 41 22	MM2c
NIELSEN, Kay Reher	660 06 83	Sea1c
O'LOUGHLIN, Joseph Roland	300 29 86	SC3c
O'NEIL, James Arman	662 14 33	SOM3c
PATTERSON, Howard Wilson	382 48 25	Sea2c
PATTON, Kent (n)	272 26 53	MM2c
*PETERS, Harvey Joe	321 55 72	F2c
**POTTER, Sheldon Anthony	382 42 65	SM3c
POULOS, Nicholas Marine	660 06 61	Yeo3c
POWELL, Raymond Clifford	413 56 70	SM2c
PROBY, William Wayne	295 24 53	SM1 c
PUGH, Frederick Victor	321 54 93	Sea1c
PUND, Marinus Joseph	291 42 57	MM1 c
**QUINN, Rudolph Walter	223 92 94	F2c
RAIDLINE, Lester Elvin	243 23 19	CBM
RISH, Thomas Legare	262 47 16	MM2c
RITTER, Vivian (n)	355 63 13	CWT
*ROBERTS, Allen Harville	381 13 26	MM2c
SCHLIGHT, Orin (n)	337 38 77	RM2c
SHINN, Garland Harris	341 95 96	SC1 c
SMITH, Fred Clevenger	632 10 20	SOM3c
SOFFES, Mike (n)	360 45 99	F2c
STALLIVIERE, Norman Joseph	368 69 01	F2c
STANFIELD, Edward Harry	321 06 35	CM2c
**STAPLETON, William Lee	624 02 62	GM3c

STARK, James (n)	660	00	12	MM2c
STEWART, Lionel Francis	325	02	74	CMM
STOCK, Roy Frank, Jr.	382	53	90	F2c
STRICKLEY, Guy Harold	194	64	03	CY
STURTEVANT, Walter (n)	337	26	16	MM2c
*SWANSON, Robert Lewis	664	01	74	F2c
**SWAPP, Warren David	382	54	08	F2c
TETRAULT, Joseph Peter	411	40	87	Sea2c
*THOMAS, Dairrell Vorris	393	62	82	F2c
TOUGHTONE, Walter Milton	624	14	22	Sea1c
**TRAHEY, Robert Thomas	223	81	35	MM2c
TRIM, Nick Bartley	274	64	60	RM3c
**TURNER, Charles Emmett	360	42	70	F3c
TURNER, Earl Newson	360	51	66	CM3c
TURNER, Kebbie Joe	356	62	39	F1c
ULMER, James Wilton	380	38	19	CMM
VAN HOUTEN, Leonard Joseph	223	55	49	MM2c
*VERGONA, Thomas Charles	632	02	54	Sea2c
*VIGIL, Paul Fidel	372	35	84	Sea1c
VOGELSANG, Edward William	646	01	22	RM3c
WAUGHTEL, Wayne Houston	382	67	99	F2c
WEBB, "A" "V"	630	02	80	F2c
**WEEKLY, Robert Adair	393	22	69	GM3c
WETTENGEL, Lester Leeman	632	04	59	F1c
WHATLEY, Bruce Milton	624	04	66	Sea1c
WHEELER, Thomas Howard	393	62	88	Sea2c
WHITFORD, Harold Lincoln, Jr.	375	32	77	CEM
WICKLUND, Roger Dean	328	82	82	F1c
WILLIAMS, Carl Evans	356	43	62	Sea1c
WILSON, Howard Kenneth	360	45	57	SF3c
WINEGAR, Robert Hall	238	66	98	QM3c
WYANT, Clifton Milton	360	41	47	Sea1c
YOHE, Sterling Price	380	83	55	WT2c
ZAKHAR, Louls (n)	207	27	65	Sea1c
**ZELUSKY, Michael Anthony	243	73	15	GM3c

* * * * *

1 Source: The muster roll for 9/30/42 updated by a Report Of Changes sheet dated 10/14/42 on microfilm at the National Archives.

* Wounded (** Killed) by an enemy bomb on 10/16/42 according to Report Of Changes sheets dated 10/31/42 on microfilm at the National Archives.

Summary of Casualties:

	<u>Killed</u>	<u>Wounded</u>	<u>Not Wounded</u>	<u>Complement on 10/16/42</u>
Officer	0	0	11	11
Enlisted	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>125</u>
TOTALS	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>111</u>	<u>136</u>

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
February, 2001

The McFarland Comes Home

By CHARLES RAWLINGS

The Post's Pacific correspondent tells the strange story of a brave little destroyer that holed up forty-two days right under the enemy's nose while her crew improvised a new rudder out of Jap steel and telephone poles.

PEARL HARBOR.

SEAGOING CINDERELLAS, that's what the American flush-deck, four-pipe destroyers are. They languished amid the cinders and the soot, unwanted and unloved, as scullery lasses until warty old Mars, their good fairy, came along. Since then, with new paint and powder and new superstructure hairdos, they've been waltzing joyfully and fearlessly at the ball.

Listen, then, to the strange and exciting story of one of them, the McFarland, the ex-four-piper 237, now AVD 14, which, translated out of Navy symbolism, means—heaven save the mark—Auxiliary Aviation Tender 14.

She was begun, along with some 300-odd sisters, sometime between 1916 and 1918. The class was to be the final answer to Germany's *Unterseeboot* campaign in the last war. That the campaign was already doomed had not been evident then, and contracts for some 400 of the little ships, with A-1 priorities and prayers to hurry, were scattered among all the great shipbuilders in the land.

The ships were to be one design: a straight-sheered, knife-bowed, small-fantailed, 1200-ton hull. They were to sport four towering stacks, like pottery-town chimneys, smoking with the wrath of the toughest, most beloved, good-natured, steam-turbine engines ever to go to sea and keep trying for a mythical thirty-five knots.

Then, right before the world's eyes, not only the *Unterseeboot* campaign but all Germany collapsed. There was no more need for any fighting ships, to say nothing of 400 saucy, little, brand-new 1200-ton destroyers. But the contracts were out, steel was in the yards, many of the hulls were already in keel and in partial plates. Only a quarter of the list was cancelable. The remaining 300-odd were finished and launched and commissioned into a war-weary Navy at peace. Then they were coated with red lead and moored, rail to rail, in pathetic ruddy rows in Back Channel, Philadelphia, and in the marshes of San Diego Bay.

The little McFarland was a lowly Cinderella even in that company. She, with about ten others, was taken from Red Lead Row on the West Coast and housed in the mud near Mare Island Navy Yard. The years passed over her. One or two at a time, the ships were given innocuous spells of peacetime duty—rum-running days were happy times for some of them. It was the Mac's luck not even to be favored with any of that. When the others were getting ready for a short sea turn and something—a toilet-bowl seat or a set of turbine blades—was needed, the fitting-out detail would

tiptoe over to the McFarland and steal it. She was pilfered from so badly that she developed a list. The rats left her, because they could find snugger spots.

Then the new war came close and the McFarland, no more than a hull and three quarters of an engine and half a deck and no toilet-bowl seats at all, became, on paper, the AVD 14.

The paper gave her staterooms below for PBY—Catalina flying boat—crews and a big crane amidships for lifting out PBY engines and ack-ack guns here and there, and a stern rack for depth charges and a 3-inch, 50-caliber gun fore and aft. Two of her four stacks came out, and the remaining two were whittled down by Navy designers working for lowered visibility. She lost a whole fireroom, which was no hardship, for it had been stolen anyway, and in its stead she shipped big tanks to carry avgas for her planes and an enlarged galley and refrigerators to cater to the fancy appetites of air-fighting men. All that the paper said came true, and with a new coat of paint she put out into the vast Pacific Ocean.

She was in that sea with the island of Oahu just below the horizon astern on December 7, 1941. Flights of Japanese planes passed overhead in midmorning, southbound out of Pearl Harbor. They were blood-sated and tired, and they ignored her.

The rest of the United States Navy shook its battered head, gathered its strength and licked its wounds. Then it moved south and westward with ensigns taut with vengeance and war. The McFarland moved south along with it. There was harbor guard for her out there, and sub hunting and escort duty, while she waited for her planes to be manufactured and crewed. She had a whole series of vicarious adventures in the interval. In July she killed a Japanese submarine off New Caledonia. In that same month she rescued eighty-eight survivors of a Dutch freighter. Then, on August second, she had her flying boats. With them, she was ordered to scout to the northward in and around a small group of volcanic islands nobody had ever heard of, called the Solomons. Alone, the small force—six flying boats and the little tender—ventured into those shoal and island-dotted seas that were destined, a few days later, to turn pink with Japanese and American blood and echo to the gigantic thunder of navies. One of the PBY's was lost, but its crew was rescued by the McFarland after five days hard on a rock named, patly enough, Indispensable Reef.

Five days later, the marines went ashore on Lunga Point, Guadalcanal, and the Mac helped cover their dash against that soft sand shore. Under the cover of darkness, she clucked her flying boats to her and moored them and cared for their sweaty, bone-weary crews. She went out again on reconnaissance toward the end of August and twice more in September.

By that time Guadalcanal was more than a beach-head. Faster and more limber planes than PBY's were in the air off Henderson Field, and supplies for the Solomons were the constant and desperate need. Using her big avgas tanks and her deck, the little ship turned to cargo toting between the quiet bases to the south and Lunga Point. Slipping up the Sealark Channel, she would quickly unload torpedoes and

bombs into Higgins boats and pump her gas into scows crowded with empty fifty-gallon drums.

The early afternoon of October fifteenth saw her making landfall on Lunga Point, Guadalcanal, a gray wraith of headland in the heat haze. There was a tension in the sea and air. Her sound gear, feeling out the sea, said nothing. There was a drone of motors in the hot, leaden sky, but it was a rise and fall of friendly exhausts. A reinforcing flight of P-38's—Lockheed Lightnings—was due into Henderson, and some of the Guadalcanal planes were going out to meet them.

Sparks came to the bridge. He had a message in his hand. It said that both air and sea were hotter than they seemed. Intense enemy activity was, the message said, expected at the Solomons, and the McFarland, with all other ships in the area, was to go to a latitude and longitude to the south.

Lt. Comdr. John Clement Alderman, aged thirty-six, of Portland, Oregon, the McFarland's skipper, read the message and looked, squinting, ahead at Lunga Point. He is a thin, quick, long-necked, red-tanned, West Coast man. He is a Navy flier, Pensacola-trained, taken off a carrier to command this small mother ship of fliers, because he was worthy of command and because he knew the flying breed. He turned and handed the flimsy rectangle of paper to his executive. He is another lean, long-necked flier named Earle G. Gardner. He is twenty-nine years old and hails from Aliceville, Alabama. Gardner read it and they both looked ahead at the heat waves dancing on the leaden southern water.

"They need this stuff on the beach," Alderman said quietly.

"They need it, God knows," agreed Gardner.

"Hell," said Alderman, "what's the use of running away and then having to come back again? I'm going in. Say —" He waited until Gardner had his executive pencil out of his blouse. "Say 'Am now in Lengo Channel. Will proceed and unload unless otherwise directed.' Say that."

The radio petty officer took the penciled note and turned to hurry to his shack.

"Now," said Alderman, "get me that signal on Lunga."

The bridge binoculars searched the haze to find the signal. On Guadalcanal there are but two sorts of air-condition signals: "All clear," and "Enemy planes overhead." A pair of sharp eyes on flying bridge lookout picked up the news.

"We're goin' in," said Alderman, "and deliver this gas."

The lump of Lunga Point changed from muddy blue in the haze to the deep Brewster green of tropical vine and tree. The roadstead off the American beach opened out. Close to the spot where the McFarland had anchored before—a sheltered spot in the bight of a crescent of coral reef—something was ashore and, at regular intervals, something flashed in the sun. The flashes were identified through the binoculars as shell splashes. A small ship was ashore on the reef and it was being shelled from the hills. The small ship was a Yippy boat.

There had been four Yippy boats at Guadalcanal in the American beginning, and now there was only one. They were California tuna fishermen—fifty-ton, beamy wooden crates yanked into the Navy quick-fast and given the nomenclature, YP, and a number. They had sailed over to the Solomons with their fishing crews and, still wearing their California fishing licenses tacked to the cabin bulkhead, had been so essential to the marines that the Japs had not rested until they had killed three of them. But they had not been able to get this last one, commanded by a chief bos'n named Banyon, an old retired Navy deck gorilla. Banyon stood on his afterdeck wigwagging signal flags.

"Shotgun thinks he's got me," he said. "Stand off."

Up in the hills just within range of the southern end of the American beach was a single Jap gun crew with a rusty 4-inch fieldpiece. It was masked in a cave and the marines could not find it. When the sky overhead was clear, the Japs would roll it out and lob shells into the roadstead. When a plane appeared, they would hustle it back into the cave. "Shotgun Charlie," the marines had nicknamed the gun.

Alderman grinned and waved, hoping Banyon could see. If the moment had been less tense for the McFarland, he would have been tempted to go close and talk to Banyon. There was little danger. Shotgun Charlie never seemed to hit anything. And Banyon's rage at escaping all the real strafing and then being caught hard aground where one rusty Jap gun could kid him would be something to hear, word of mouth. But the situation being as it was, Alderman hurried on. Astern, Banyon wagged his flags again. "Float her off high tide," he promised. "Getting out now."

At that, Banyon and his crew loaded into their round-bottom dinghy, rowed diaconsolately in to the beach and sat down in the shade of the overhanging jungle to wait.

The McFarland moved gingerly down the roadstead, stopped her engines and put over her light hook. That was the signal for the waiting Higgins boats to speed out from cover to lighten her. They came bobbing out jubilantly. Henderson Field was really desperate for gasoline this time.

The Mac's hoses, with shut off nozzles like gas-station gear, squirted into the empty drums alongside. Her deck crane picked up the torpedoes off her deck and lowered them into the waiting boats. The loaded craft cast off and roared away to the sand beach. Empty ones waiting slid in alongside. Those returning brought out an export cargo from Guadalcanal. It was standing packed tightly into the spaces between the empty gas drums. It was 150 walking wounded for the McFarland to carry back south for convalescent hospitalization. There were some mental cases—shocked men who could not take the yaws and the dysentery and the bombs and the mud and the flies and the fear—good men who did not have quite enough of that rare kind of guts, foxhole ability. It is an esoteric courage not given to all otherwise very brave men, not even to all marines.

The afternoon was almost gone. The Mac had unloaded all but one last lighterload of gasoline. A flat scow with a solid stand of rusty drums was lashed alongside, fore and aft and spring line. The evening seemed to be coming peacefully. Overhead, there was an increasing roar of planes. The incoming flight of P-38's was arriving nicely. Shotgun Charlie was lobbing over the last of his day's stint, hurrying a bit against the oncoming darkness. Ashore, the cook fires were beginning to glow yellow and red against the jungle.

A message came out from the beach. "Periscope sighted in Sealark Channel," it said.

The McFarland, used to such reports, slipped her anchor cable and left it buoyed astern and slowly churned her screws, holding on to the barge.

Then, without warning, peeling off from within a cloud layer that masked the P-38's, the first of nine Aichi, Type 99, Japanese dive bombers dropped like a crazy bat. It was carrying two 300-pound demolition bombs, but it missed the McFarland with both of them.

The thudding detonations of the bombs were the call to general quarters. There was little chance to maneuver, for the barge was alongside, and its mooring lines, held taut by the McFarland's way and the rush of tide, were hard on the bitts, not easy to cast off.

The second Aichi came in and missed again to starboard. Both bombs were

close this time, and they showered the bridge with shrapnel and knocked two men there off their feet. By this time the 20 mm. guns were manned and weaving aloft, drawing their beads. The trainers and pointers on the 3-inch-50's gripped the stubby brass handles of their fast little aiming wheels. The third Jap peeled off and came down. One of the 3-inchers met him nose on at 100 yards and he collapsed like something made of feathers and bone with its heart shot out. He fell dead as a buzzard into the sea astern. The 20-mm. fire, three converging streams of it sparking tracers, killed the fourth plane.

By this time the mooring lines on the barge were partially cast off, but it still swung helplessly, a drag that could not be jerked about or rushed forward. The McFarland had to stay at five knots straight ahead. Jammed into her sheltered places on deck were the 150 sick men. Some of the crazy ones tried to dig a foxhole in the steel deck.

The fifth and sixth planes came down and missed. Aloft, the P-38's had discovered the bold attack. There was a sound of machine-gun fire up in the rapidly falling dusk. The Aichis who lived to climb out of their dives were being met and killed. But the last three, after the Japanese fashion, did not falter. They peeled off as they had been commanded. The McFarland stopped the seventh and the eighth with 20-mm. fire and sent them veering off, smoking, low over the sea.

The Last Jap

The last Jap dropped out of the last of the daylight. His first bomb was too soon and fell astern. His last one found the McFarland's small fantail, that tiny, feminine, tapered fantail of the flush-deckers. The bomb struck fair on her one stern depth-charge rack, mounted on the fantail just off amidships to starboard. Racked there were depth charges, each one loaded with several hundred pounds of TNT. The bomb and that terrible explosive went off together.

There are no words to depict the wrath of that explosion. No one who heard it can remember how it sounded or how it looked. They can remember, not very satisfactorily, how it felt. The ship, they agree, suddenly leaped out from under them in a great heaving lift as if she were a flying fish taking off from a wave. Everyone in the forward half of the hull was snapped off his feet and brought up against whatever was aft of him. Amidships, all hands were snapped off their stance, too, and ended up in a pile of fragmentation and shrapnel and flash-

burn casualties. Everyone aft of the after deckhouse was blown into small pieces and vanished off into space, or his flesh and bone were driven down into the torn and tortured metal of the ship. The scent of dead flesh still clings about that rusted metal, even after three months of sea and sun and wind.

The barge, cast free at last at the instant of the hit, caught fire. She floated off with her fire. It shot fifty feet into the air as drums, split in the explosion, fired. In the light of that tall flame the marines still alive aboard could be seen tossing the drums not blazing into the sea, trying to save the precious gasoline they held for Henderson. The drums floated and tide carried them inshore, and next morning they were salvaged.

The Toll of Battle

The McFarland's engineer lieutenant, Norman Chalmers—who lives now in Waterbury, Connecticut, but who is a Buffalo boy, born on fresh water—had just made his engine deck when the hit occurred. His lights went. He leaped for the throttles, waiting for the opening howl of his turbines that would tell him his propellers were gone.

There was no howl. Something had happened to the port throttle, and it was reversing its engine while still in-

dicating "ahead," but there was a grip on both shafts. Some miracle had saved both screws and, what was more miraculous, both stern shaft bearings.

His second engineer, Charles Clarkson, of Normandy, Missouri, together with one or more of the ship's old, seasoned chief machinist's mates and the chief electrician,

had restored the lights. The concussion had blown every fuse.

Forward of the engine room in his sick bay, the ship's doctor, a young, quiet-voiced, sandy medico from Mt. Vernon, Alabama, named Emmet McCafferty, was busy with his morphine needles and his blood-plasma rig and his hemorrhage gear.

"Tell them back on the mainland," he begged me, "what a wonderful weapon they have given us with plasma. I got my lights and the wounded were just coming in, and we met them with plasma. We saved lives, one after the other, with it in that hot sick bay that night."

On deck, Alderman slid in the grease and blood, looking at the dark hole that had been his ship's stern. Thirty feet of it was gone. The rudder was gone, the steering-engine room with every vestige of its engine was gone. The side plating was petaled out like the open petals of a flower.

But, listening, he could hear the even pulsations of his engines, feel the miraculous slow turning of his ship's screws. While Norman Chalmers, the engineer, was standing in wonder below, Alderman and Gardner, the executive, were marveling at the strange miracle topside. Something had saved the screws and thereby given them a chance to save the ship.

She was sinking by the stern; Alderman could see that. She was developing a list from the water she was taking. He hurried back to his bridge. A damage-control party under Lt. Frederick Dean, of Springfield, Massachusetts, was already stopping the worst of the leaks. Topside, everyone who could walk or crawl was ordered forward to take weight off the sinking stern. In the fire and engine rooms, pumps were hurrying fuel oil into the forward tanks for the same reason, and the bilge pumps were howling as they were cut in, one by one, sucking at the water within and gushing it back into the sea. The list slowly disappeared, the stern lifted.

Within thirty minutes Alderman knew that, barring something unforeseen, like a quick change in weather or another attack, his tough little gamin of a ship, even without a stern, would float him into the morning. He debated about shooting rockets. What was left of the passenger list of walking wounded was on his mind. His own casualties too.

"How are things aft, doc?" he asked over the battle phone. "I want to try for Tulagi. We're halfway there now. But would quick help, if I could get it with rockets, keep any of those men from dying?"

"No," the doctor said, "I don't think so. Everything they could do back in Guad. we can do right heah, suh. If you could lay alongside in Tulagi by mornin', that would be fine."

Alderman gave the engine room "slow ahead." Yawing like a drunken water bug, the McFarland started for Tulagi, steering with her screws. The port throttle was still crazy. It could not be made to jet its steam all "ahead" into the port turbine. Part of the steam insisted on going in "reverse," but by jangling telegraph bells like a carillon: "Ahead starboard engine!" "Reverse starboard engine!" "Stop starboard engine!"—by curses and prayers—the gritty little ship with thirty feet of her stern gone, tacked and skidded and churned toward Tulagi, which lay eighteen miles due north.

Out of the darkness loomed a shape and a great roaring hail, "Stand by for a line!" There was little chance to mistake the chunky hull or the bull-like roar, but the next roar made it sure. "Nope! Shotgun didn't get me!"

It was Chief Bos'n Banyon and his Yippy. He bad, as he promised, floated her off the shoal. He was in the act when the attack fell and, knowing there was nothing else big enough to tow 1200 tons of crippled destroyer, he had hurried out.

Jungle Shipyard

"Tulagi-bound, I guess," he said, "but God'mighty couldn't be sure, from watchin' that course you're steerin'. . . . That hawser made fast, cox'n? O.K. Here we go."

They made Tulagi shortly after midnight, and by dawn all the wounded were ashore and safe in the hospital. Sparks came into the wardroom with a message. It was a granting of the request to go into Guadalcanal and discharge gasoline.

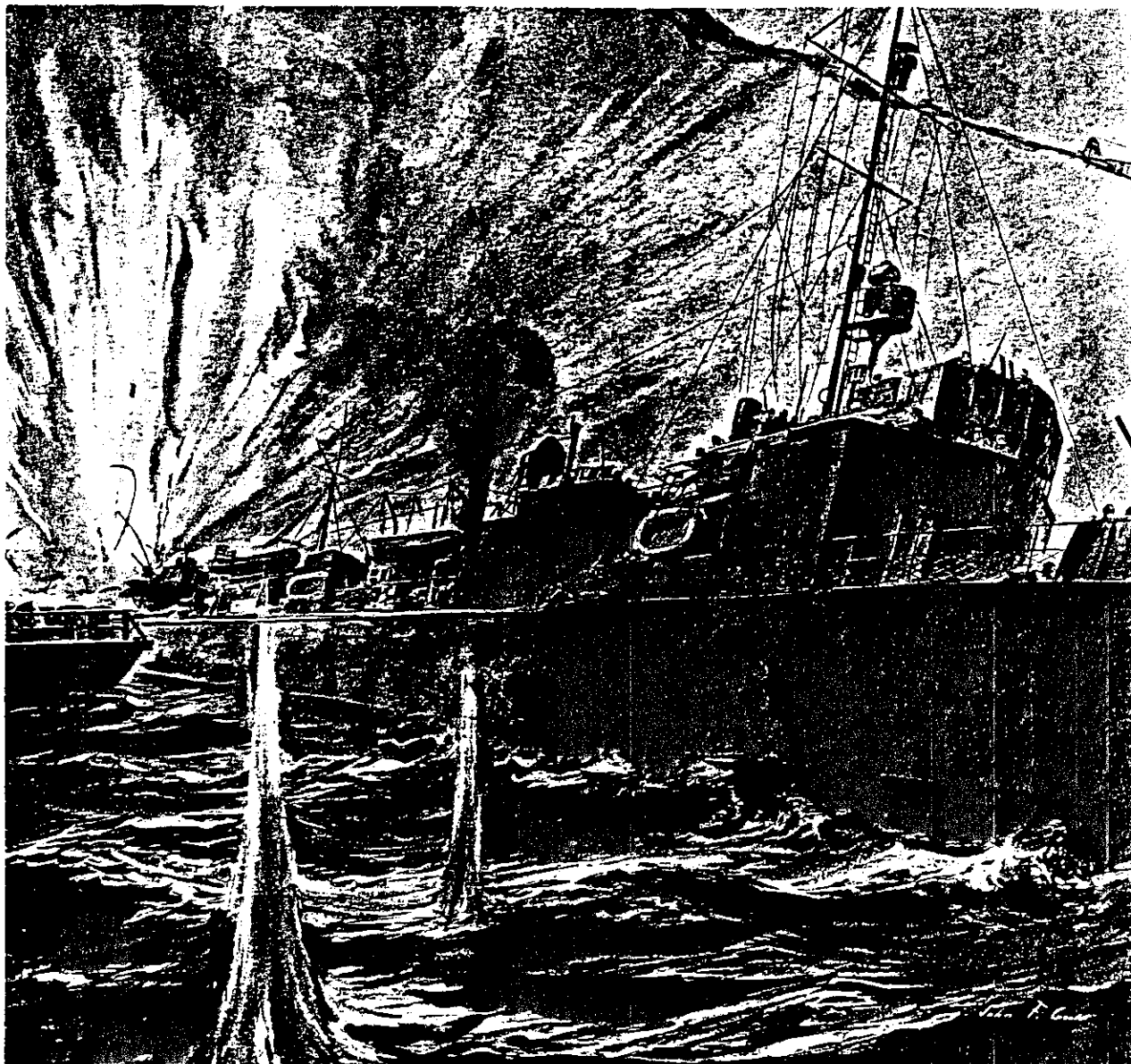
"Well," mused Alderman, "that makes it legal, anyway."

They made their plan in the McFarland's wardroom that night. A destroyer with a shot-away stern, helpless against a wharf, with a Japanese air attack scheduled for dawn, needs a plan.

A few miles from Tulagi there was a creek. It had no name, but it had a deep, wide mouth and the deep water carried tight up against the eastern bank. Dense mangroves fifty feet high covered each bank. They would tow the McFarland over there, moor her tight against the bank and cover her with mangrove branches. Then, somehow, somehow, they would build a jury rudder. Out of what, who could say—out of something.

Dawn found them in the nameless creek, and the Yippy tucked them tight up against the bank. Under the second ensign, Goodbody, a tall, yellow-haired kid from Perrysburg, Ohio, the brush-cutting detail, armed with butcher knives, a pair of machetes and fire axes, swarmed ashore and went into the jungle and started cutting the camouflage. They hurried, lest the Japs come too soon. The Japs came, but not too soon. The Japs came, one way or another, for forty-two days, never quite soon enough.

I heard about those forty-two days under brush camouflage in the McFarland's chief petty officers' quarters one memorable night. Still minus any vestige of a stern, she was just in from the south after a fortnight under way with a jury rudder. The quarters were small and crowded and smoke-filled. At each bunk hung a broad sweat-blackened Navy belt with a .45 holster and a knife sheath. Native bows stood in one corner and a pair of Jap snipers' rifles in the other. Outside was soft Hawaiian night and security, and within was solid comfort and the salt taste upon the tongue of adventure, thrilling to recall, but dangerous no longer. The next day, Alderman, their good commander, was to stand before the admiral and get his Navy Cross for what he and the ship and all of them had done. As they had come up-channel into the base, the jetties had been crowded with people cheering. It is a very beautiful experience to hear a ship cheered, even if you are only a spectator. To be part of her and be bringing her home at last to hear those cheers is an experience that will not be denied ecstatic hot tears.



There are no words to depict the wrath of that explosion. The ship suddenly leaped out from under them in a great heaving lift as if she were a flying fish taking off from a wave.

The small bright room was a happy place. Men who had been eight months without a liberty, two years without a leave, were halfway home. They had money that had turned bright yellow in the jungle from heat and sweat and mold, and they could begin to spend it. There were babies more than a year old that they had fathered and never seen, and they could see them soon. Patient women, CPO's women, trained in loneliness, were waiting to show them their strange new children.

Realization of happiness was in and out of the place. Men stripped down to skivvies would suddenly stir in a bunk where they had been listening, and, unable to stand the sudden glow of realization that swept over them, would get up and slam into a chair at the table and join the talk, as if too much joy was a pain and they were trying to escape it. Others would leave and withdraw into the shadows. They were glad to tell me about the jungle. I could trade commonplaces about New York and Chicago and San Francisco.

The rudder was the big thing. A detail nicknamed the "Big Six" had made it under Chalmers, the engineer lieutenant. They were all gigantic men, taken from the mechanical departments. Ulmer, a big chief machinist's mate from Centralia, Washington, was one of them, and Cosgrove, the chief carpenter, was another. Cosgrove, who hailed from Deadwood, South Dakota, had a freckled arm as big as a ham. There were two machinist's mates, first class; Metcalf, an Illinois man, and Patton who came from Alabama. Cooper, from Michigan, was a steam fitter, first, and Stark, a youngster as big as Jess Willard, was a machinist, second.

With the Aid of Nippon

The Japs had started a submarine base on a small near-by island called by the natives Tanambogo. The invasion of Guadalcanal had caused them to leave it. Storage tanks for Diesel oil had been set up by the enemy there. The tanks were supported by I beams set in concrete bases. The Big Six loaded into the McFarland's motor sailer and, tipping over the tanks, hack-sawed and blasted out the steel beams and brought them back to the creek. Already it had been named McFarland's Creek. Someone reported seeing Japanese telephone poles in the jungle, and the Big Six found them—good, stocky poles waiting for American axes. Cosgrove cut into one of them.

"That's pine," he said. "Can't fool me on pine. Look at her! Creosote dipped, good as the telephone company set up in Dakota. Them Japs was counting on staying here a long time."

They cut down three of the poles and came back to the ship, towing them on a long painter astern.

The steel was the hardest part of the rudder job. They were short on oxygen for welding and cutting, and they had to preheat first with gasoline blowtorches

and then just give the last white-hot lick with the oxygen. The I beams made two outrigger struts on the McFarland's quarters. They were to hold the blocks that would give the tiller ropes leverage. The rudder was twenty-five feet long and made of four lengths of the telephone pole cut flat on one side, so they would butt up tight together. At each end the poles were capped in a steel box bolted through with special bolts turned on the little lathe in the Mac's machine locker in the engine room.

For gudgeons and pintles they fashioned eyes and links made of one-and-three-eighth-inch steel and swung from the biggest piece of I beam they had welded like a crazy sternpost to the McFarland's torn after end. The rudder was swung by steel-cable tiller ropes fastened to pad eyes on its outboard end. The rigging of the running gear was turned over to Raidline, the chief bos'n, from Los Angeles, and he led it through fair leads and pad eyes forward to the midship winch, a double-spoiled old clanker that never failed.

When they were welding the I-beam sternpost they had to get the McFarland's stern out of water by shifting all ballast forward, and it was then that they could see how miraculous had been the fate that spared them their screws. About six feet of the keel had been saved. Attached to that stump were the garboard plates that held the shaft struts. The flush-deckers were given great cast struts big enough for a light cruiser, and their strength, paradoxically, was enough to hold the plating that was so necessary to hold them.

The brush-cutting detail worked steadily. It required a lot of branches and boughs to cover 1200 tons of long lean destroyer, and the stuff wilted in the hot sun after a day. On deck the ship looked like a leafy grove, they said, and it was pleasant there in the cool shade.

Twenty miles away, Guadalcanal was fighting for its life. The radio staff found they could help in communications, and they unshipped their equipment and, loading it in the motor sailer, carried it to Tulagi and set up an intermediary communications station there atop the highest hill. The signal staff was detailed to help too.

In the first nine days of their hiding, the McFarland counted twenty-nine separate air raids. After that, everyone lost count. The raids were filled with drama, especially after it was discovered that the radio set in the CPO's quarters could be tuned in to the battle wave length and the talk between planes of both sides could be heard. They would turn it up loud, so it could be heard on the foredeck, and then go out and, peering from their leafy grove, watch the show and hear the commands and the threats and the boasts and the cries.

A squadron leader known in the air only as "Montana" was their favorite. His taunts at the Japs and their squealing hatred of him and their promises to kill him that he always turned into grim



The McFarland's forward 3-inch/50 gun showing how well the ship was camouflaged during the forty-two days she was beached at Tulagi while repairing the bomb damage to her stern. Japanese pilots never spotted the McFarland during this period, because a brush-cutting detail replaced the branches every day as they wilted. (Photo from USS McFarland (AVD-14) action report, 15 DEC 1942)

jokes by killing them made him a legendary warrior.

Powell came into the room where I was talking with the men. He is a dark-haired, blue-eyed, good-looking kid from San Francisco, a signalman, second class, on the McFarland. He had been ashore looking for a girl he used to know, and was still in his whites.

Duel in Paradise

With nine marines, he had been stationed on a tiny mud and coral and mangrove island in the inside end of the Sealark Channel on the night of November twelfth-thirteenth for a special mission. Suddenly out of the darkness, coming in to close with the Japanese fleet, loomed a solemn procession of United States heavy cruisers, led by the San Francisco. The ten men on the tiny island stood frozen with mouths agape. They did not know such a fleet was about, and in the darkness it was hard to tell whether it was friend or foe. It was a jet-black night with no wind and a sea like glass.

Strong on the air they all smelled that strange scent of flowers that the men who did not die on the San Francisco remember so vividly. It was heavy and sweet on the hot night air, a smell, they say, like the perfume of many lilacs. November is the time of the ginger bloom on Guadalcanal, and it was probably ginger flower.

A marine gripped Powell's arm and whispered hoarsely, "That's one of our cans, bud. Yeah! They look like they're goin' somewhere, don't they? Jeppers!"

The silent, darkened fleet moved by and the stealthy wash of its passing lapped the mangrove roots at their feet, and then for a time there was only the soft, scented, breathless night. Then, like thunder crashing, came the San Francisco's opening broadside. The heliotrope light of her guns flickered on the polished mangrove leaves and they trembled. The little island shook as the Japanese, with battleship and cruiser, answered, and the whole American line, in by now, started firing. For eight minutes the terrific broadsides thundered, and then, lighting the whole world so brightly that the frozen men on the speck of island ducked for cover and stared into one another's white faces, a Japanese cruiser exploded. Silence came into the pink sky for a moment as the fleets used the light to orient themselves. Then the firing resumed.

Home is the Sailor —

The next morning, skivvy shirts that the ten men had left soaking in the water were yellow with oil, and on the next island something had washed up on the beach. They rowed over, and it was two dead American seamen. They

buried them as well as they could and wrapped their tags in handkerchiefs reverently and brought them back, so their relatives could know where and when.

All that morning they saw planes attacking something just out of sight to the westward. They were planes out of Henderson, sinking a crippled Japanese battleship, the one the San Francisco crippled over her starboard shoulder.

Ten days later, on Thanksgiving Day, the McFarland was ready to sail. There was a sea like glass and, just to prove that hard times were over, there was turkey in the oven. A shipment of holiday food had reached Guadalcanal and the Mac was given a cut of it. The clanking winch steered them out of McFarland's Creek and down the Sealark to Torpedo Junction, the southern end of the Sealark. They passed through that tense gate into the open sea. It was like polished glass too. The wake behind the blown-off stern was like something a butter churn would make, but the big black and red-rusted rudder trailed out through it into solid water and steered them true.

They took four lucky days into the nearest base where cutting torches and sheet steel could be found. There they were argued out of their telephone-pole rig and a steel one was put on instead and they started eastward. For a time they went well, but the heavy jury rudder gave them trouble in a gale and twisted askew. For the last 1000 miles they had to come on with rudder half over and a single screw turning and the starboard anchor trailing forty fathoms of chain. With that arrangement she held a course after a fashion. To pass the time they made up a song. Part of it goes:

*The admiral stands alone by the pier,
Down each cheek trickles a slow and sad
tear.*

*The medals are rusty, his head is all
gray,
He keeps on saying "Is the Mac in
today?"*

*The war is over, the Axis is beat,
They hold Victory Parade down on
Market Street.*

*The reserves have come, the reserves have
went,
And the people have chosen a new Presi-
dent.*

*Tokyo has fallen, Berlin, it has, too,
The Mac, she's still comin' on only one
screw.*

"But," said little Red Harp, her chief gunner, "here we be. And, mister, you tell 'em it feels right good."



Lt. Commander John C. Alderman, USN, (left) commanding officer of the aircraft tender U.S.S. McFarland (AKD-14) and his executive officer, Lt. Eric G. Gardner, USN, by all that remains of the ship's after deckhouse after their severely damaged ship proudly returned to Pearl Harbor on 20 December 1942, with a makeshift stern but under her own steam and unescorted. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)

The U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14), well camouflaged and moored port side to the east bank of a river on the back channel of Tulagi. (Photos are enlargements of snapshots included in LCdr. John C. Alderman's Action Report on the bombing dtd. 15 December 1942.)

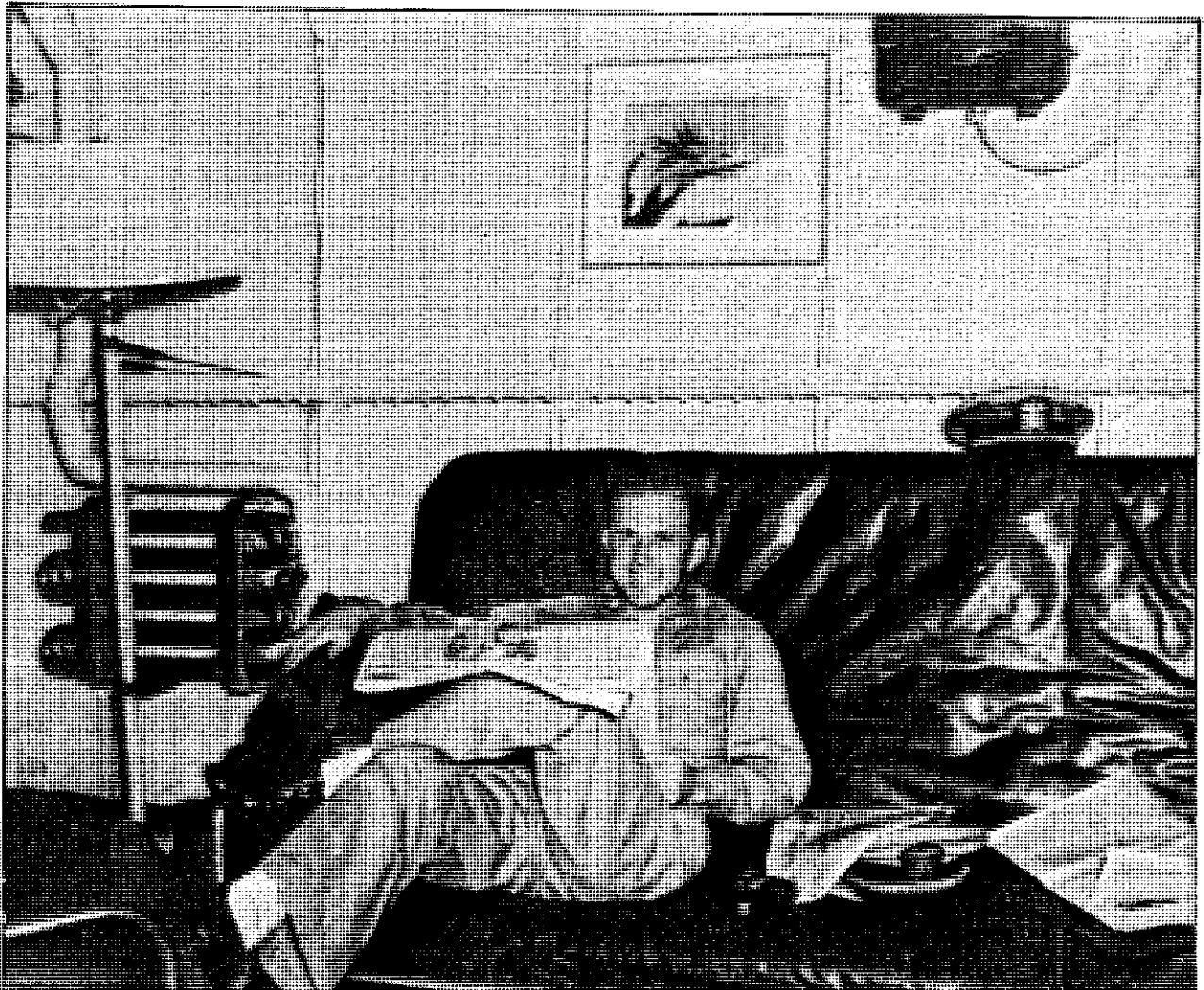


A distant view of the ship (center) looking southeast; taken from the starboard quarter. The USS Jamestown (AGP-3), a torpedo boat tender, was also moored in this waterway to escape detection.



This close up view, looking to the northeast, was taken from forward of the starboard beam. The bow is at the far right, and escaping steam marks the location of the stacks.

U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14)



The McFarland's doctor, Lieut. (MC) Emil L. McCafferty, USN, relaxing in the wardroom. "Doc" was a busy man when the ship was in the Guadalcanal-Tulagi area. Tropical diseases such as malaria and dengue fever were prevalent, and on several occasions the McFarland transported a large number of medical evacuees away from Guadalcanal for treatment. When the McFarland was bombed on 16 October 1942, twenty-eight passengers and crew were wounded, so it was fortunate that he was aboard. Lieut. McCafferty made Lieut. Comdr. before he left the Service after the war. He died in 1992. (Photo courtesy of Carl C. Ellis)

Editor's Note: Happily, I was able to locate Doc McCafferty's son, Emil L. McCafferty, III, a lawyer in Mobile, Alabama, and provide him a copy of this booklet. He has written me that his daughter has enjoyed reading about her grandfather's ship!

*E. A. Wilde, Jr.
May, 1995*

Feb 2, 1995

E.A. Wilde

I am writing in response to your "seeking" note in the Jan./Feb. 1995 Guadalcanal Echos. The McFarland was one of those successful events in my 2 1/2 years in the South Pacific that bring back fond memories.

On August 6, 1942 I was a boat coxswain on the USS Heywood and was told to pack my blankets and a change of dungarees and skivvies as I was going to be left with my boat, with the Marines when we hit the beach the next day. Sometime in early September the USS fuller brought in a Navy standard 40' motor launch equipped to establish a "fuel stop only" seaplane base, primarily for the PBY squadron operating from the USS Curtis in Esperito Santo. Circumstances gave me the job and with two other fellows we set out the mooring buoys for the planes, and the three of us set up camp on Tanambogo island at the Southeast end of Tulagi Harbor.

Our camp was on the Florida side of Tanambogo and we witnessed frequent air raids over on Guadalcanal 20 miles away. However we didn't notice the McFarland come into Tulagi Harbor. My first contact was in the middle of the night of the 16 th, when we received a message to go out to the McFarland as they needed our 2" Bowser pump. As we came alongside we could see that she was down by the stern and as we made our presence known they put our suction hose down the after companionway into the crews compartment, and we started pumping. After some hours dawn was breaking and someone on the ship said "you know you are only pumping against the South Pacific" as the after compartment bulkhead was missing, so we shut down the pumping operation. Our regular duty was to service transient seaplanes and the only notice we ever received that our services were needed was a plane circling or landing and we could just as well stay alongside the McFarland.

Later that morning we were invited to breakfast aboard the ship, a day that I will never forget. We had survived 27 days with 3 days rations after the landing and ended up with one meal of plain Japanese rice at 10 AM. Supplies had arrived since that time but camp cooking left a great deal to be desired. When the cook on the McFarland asked how I wanted my eggs done and then apologized because he only had fresh baked biscuits for breakfast and not toast, it was like Thanksgiving and Christmas all rolled into one. I think that I had at least 8 sunny side up eggs and I know countless biscuits with butter, and real live coffee. We stayed alongside for some time but it was apparent that there was little we could do so it was back to our station on Tanambogo.

The next day (?), we were told to go up to the head of the bay and again assist the McFarland. She had been pulled up into an inlet as far as possible and against the bank, and as we arrived the crew was stringing camouflage netting over the ship to make it blend into the jungle. There was a possibility that the ammo magazine under the after crews quarters was watertight although it was flooded. The plan was to sandbag the 3 foot square ammo hatch and start pumping. After the sandbags were in place and the hatch opened, we started our pump but without much success. However the crew, working waist

deep in water around the sandbags could feel water flowing through the barrier and proceeded to start plugging the holes using mostly clothing that was floating around in the compartment. Soon the water was going down which meant that the magazine was tight, and the spirits of those involved really soared. As we pumped out the magazine the ship began to rise and soon the after crews compartment was 2 feet above the water line.

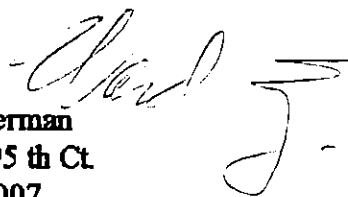
With this much success, the spirit of "Yankee ingenuity" came into full bloom. The days of the McFarland were not over yet. All she needed was a rudder and steering power which had been lost in the original attack. The big winch amidships was OK so the problem was what to use for a rudder. I knew of a pile of creosoted logs each about 8 inches by 10 feet on Gavutu as well as a stock of round iron rod and some angle in an apparent island machine shop that was left over from the days of British occupation of the islands. I can remember the McFarlands motor whaleboat coming in to the dock at Tanambogo and directing them over the causeway to Gavutu and to the area to be scrounged, but that is about the last of my contact with the McFarland. The remainder of the story was well written in an issue of Our Navy which I thoroughly enjoyed.

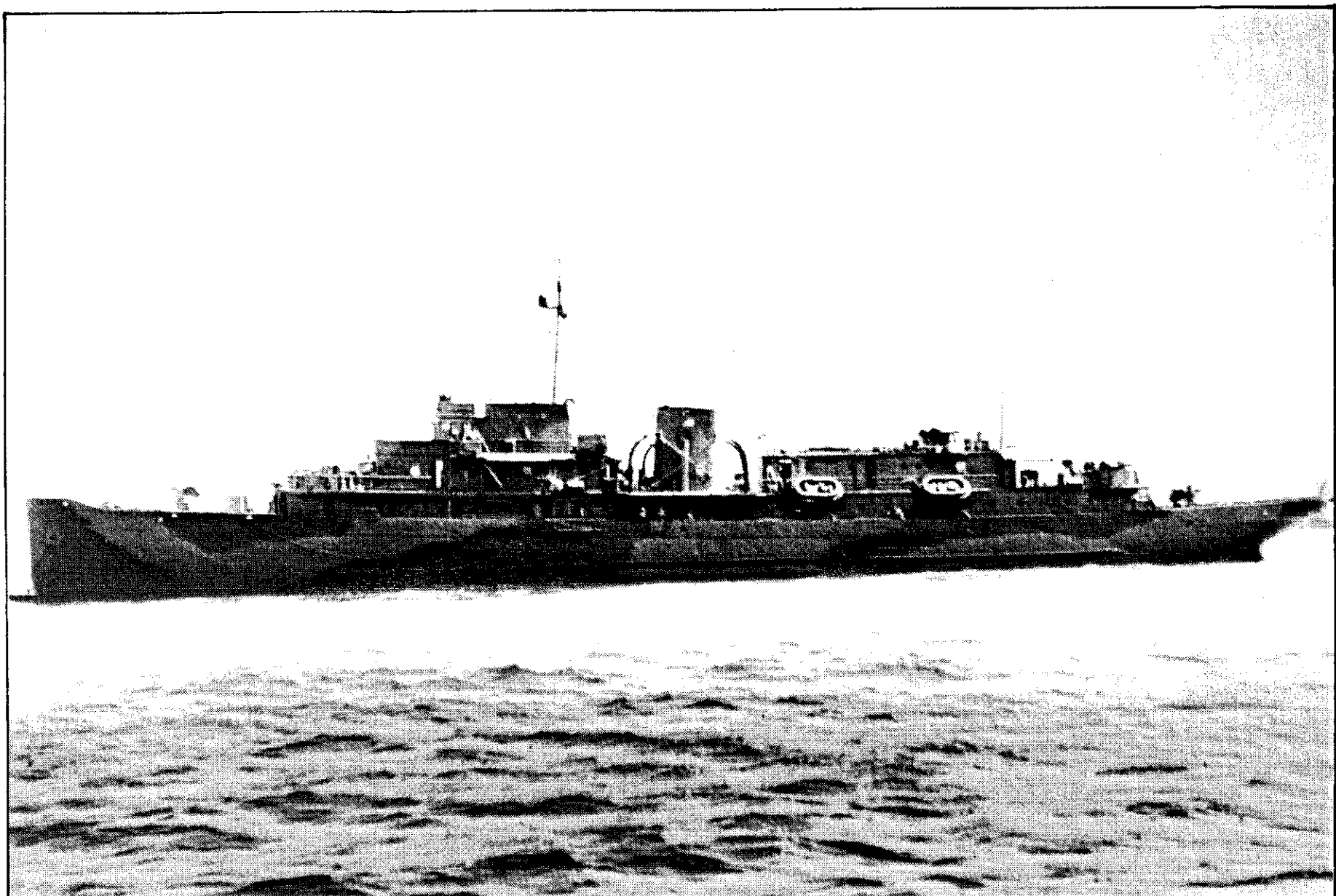
I would appreciate a copy of your McFarland book when it is available.

E. A. Wilde
1210 Greendale Ave.
Needham, Ma. 02192-4622
(617) 449-0392

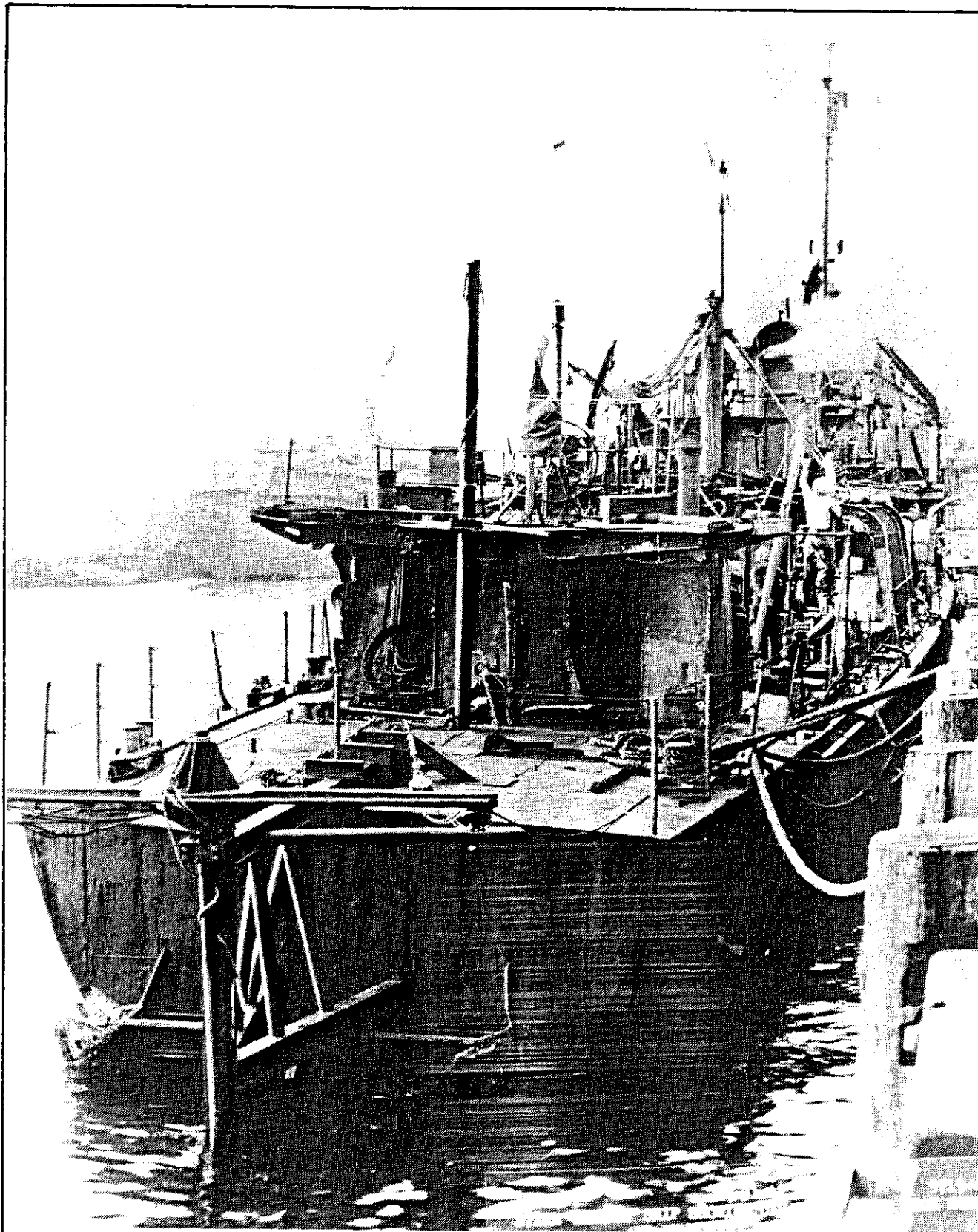
God Bless

Ward A Zimmerman
4115 S.W. 195 th Ct
Aloha, OR. 97007
(503) 642-9866





The torpedo-boat tender U.S.S. Jamestown (PG-55; later, AGP-3) was moored near the McFarland in Tulagi's back channel while she serviced the PT boats of Squadron 3. This 294-foot vessel, a millionaire's yacht before 1941, survived the war and was finally scrapped in 1946. (Photograph from the USNI collection.)



A close-up of the jury rudder that brought the U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14) from Guadalcanal back to Pearl Harbor in December, 1942, after a bomb hit her fantail destroying both her rudder and her steering engine. A total of twenty-seven men were killed: fifteen of the 160 walking-wounded medical evacuees on board and twelve ship's company. Twenty-eight were wounded: seventeen of the passengers and eleven ship's company. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)

The New York Times

December 31, 1942

Destroyer With Makeshift Stern Reaches Hawaii From Solomons

By ROBERT TRUMBULL

By Telephone to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

PEARL HARBOR, Dec. 30—

With a temporary stern put on in the Solomons to replace the one that was completely blown away near Tulagi Oct. 16, the U. S. S. McFarland, a 1,200-ton destroyer of 1920 vintage, which had been converted into a seaplane tender, came proudly back to Pearl Harbor under her own steam, it was revealed here today by her commander, Lieut. Comdr. John Clement Alderman, 36, of Portland, Ore.

Commander Alderman and his executive officer, Lieutenant Earle G. Gardner, 29, of Aliceville, Ala., told how the McFarland was attacked by nine Japanese torpedo planes in the channel between Guadalcanal and Tulagi. She was hampered by tugs secured to her sides for the discharge of her gasoline load, so she could not follow the usual evasion tactics in defense.

The McFarland was not altogether helpless, however; she downed four of the enemy planes.

Although the personnel casualties aboard the McFarland were heavy, since she was carrying a large number of "walking wounded" from Guadalcanal, much of her gasoline cargo was saved for the planes in the Solomons.

"There isn't a great deal to tell about this, but if you can find a story in it, all right," Commander Alderman said in a press interview here.

When he had finished his story, he was summoned to the office of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, and received warm praise for his "courage and tenacity."

"We were loaded to capacity with gasoline, including a deck load," Commander Alderman said. "We also had a number of aircraft torpedoes on deck, and below a large number of aircraft bombs and miscellaneous ammunition."

"We left from an advanced base in the South Pacific area on Oct. 14, going to Guadalcanal unescorted. On the way up we saw a Japanese carrier plane, an Aichi-99 [the type of dive-bomber included in the party that raided Pearl Harbor]. She watched us, ducking in and out of the clouds and coming as close as 2,000 yards off our starboard beam, but she evidently decided we weren't worth the torpedo she carried, so after ten or fifteen minutes, she left toward the northeast. We reported her course of retirement, for it might indicate the whereabouts of her carrier."

"This was the morning of Oct. 15. That same day we saw the black puffs of anti-aircraft fire on the northern horizon. This, we learned, was coming from the new destroyer Meredith, which was then being sunk by the Japs."

"We left that area as fast as we could. Promptly at daylight the next day, Oct. 16, we made landfall in the vicinity of Guadalcanal, according to plan. As we started in, we received orders to retire southward because of heavy enemy air and surface activity."

"Well, here we were next door to our objective. We saw no percentage in going all the way back south and having this to do over again when we could get in, deliver our load, and get out, provided there were no ships off Guadalcanal."

"So we hung around in the rain-squalls and asked permission to go on in and unload. We got it. Everybody else on a similar mission had already withdrawn from the area."

TENDER NOW AT PEARL HARBOR

By JAMES F. LOWERY

PEARL HARBOR, Dec. 30.—American ingenuity and resourcefulness has saved the seaplane tender McFarland—known as the Good Samaritan of the navy—from total loss. The ship is now here.

Lt. Cmdr. John Clement Alderman, 36, Portland, Ore., skipper of the tender, today told the amazing story of how the ship was practically rebuilt in a small creek on Florida Island in the Solomons after a large section of her stern was completely blown off during an attack by Japanese dive bombers while she was unloading supplies a few miles off Guadalcanal.

Warned Of Danger

Although warned of danger ahead, the McFarland loaded to capacity with aviation gas, aircraft torpedoes and bombs plus ammunition, obtained permission to proceed to Guadalcanal the morning of October 16 and unload her cargo.

"Here we were," Cmdr. Alderman said, "right next door to Guadalcanal."

"We could see no reason to retire south as directed and have the thing to do all over again. I thought we could get in, unload and get out."

Pointing out that other ships in the area on similar missions withdrew, the skipper said:

"After we received permission we went in at high speed toward Lunga point.

Cargo Unloaded

"We intended to travel the usual route but found a small boat on the beach being shelled by Japanese artillery.

"We turned around and headed east, where we met barges piloted by marines and began unloading our cargo.

"We had about one third of the cargo yet to dispose of, when we got a signal from shore that a submarine periscope was standing astern."

"We started to discharge the cargo but had gotten up the anchor and started steaming slowly with the barges alongside to get away from the sub.

"While doing this we were attacked by enemy planes—nine dive bombers.

"Each plane dropped two medium sized bombs but only the last plane scored a direct hit.

"If it had been five feet farther to the stern it never would have hit us. ~~Good point. Alderman.~~

The bomb struck the depth charge track, setting off the depth charges we had aboard."

During the air attack the McFarland was credited with shooting down four planes despite the fact she was busy unloading cargo.

Cmdr. Alderman explained that every man aboard the ship was thrown off his feet by the concussion of the explosion.

"I was lucky. I lit on top of the pile," he said explaining that he landed on top of two other men.

He said by now one of the barges alongside loaded with gas was ablaze and flames were shooting 200 feet into the air.

Stern Damaged

"Although I did not know it at the time a large section of our stern had been blown away along with the rudder and steering control.

"Our casualties were heavy as several passengers aboard and evacuees from Guadalcanal were in the heads and wash room located there."

The commander pointed out that he had taken aboard several walking wounded from Guadalcanal from the barges and was intent on returning them to another base.

Close to Enemy

"We were getting close to enemy territory and there was some question if we would run aground," he said.

However, that was avoided by maneuvering the ship's engine, one was full speed ahead and another was running back. Through this method the McFarland was set on a course to Tulagi, about 23 miles away.

"About this time we had a fire break out. We thought it was in the aft magazine, but found out later it was only mattresses in the crew's quarters.

"It was dark when we got in the

vicinity of Tulagi and we sent a signal to them requesting help. They sent out various types of craft and got us under tow."

The next day, Cmdr. Alderman said, he looked for some place safe from air attack. He found a creek on a nearby island and the ship was pushed there and repaired while under camouflage so that it could return to an advance base.

Used Phone Pole

He said a jury rudder was made out of telephone poles. That enabled the ship to reach the other forward base, where a jury stern was installed enabling the McFarland to return to Pearl Harbor.

The McFarland is well known in the navy, especially for one adventure when she was credited with sinking a sub.

After the interview Cmdr. Alderman and his executive officer, Lt. Earle G. Gardner, 29, Aliceville, Ala., were greeted personally by Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, commander of the Pacific fleet, who praised the men for their courage in carrying out their mission.

Gallant Ship Comes Home

The Once Over By H. I. Phillips

THE EPIC OF THE McFARLAND

"The U. S. S. destroyer McFarland is back in Pearl Harbor under her own steam, with her stern blown off in the Tulagi battle. She was carrying oil as a seaplane tender and was unable to dodge the bombs because she was hampered by tugs secured to her sides. With her stern gone, fires raging, and leaking badly, she made temporary repairs and got home with heavy crew losses"—News item.

I

When you think you're in a tough spot
And you feel you're in a jam—
And the odds are all against you
As Dame Prudence whispers, "Scram!"
When the menaces are many
And your whole world seems to crack,
Give a thought to the McFarland
And her trip to hell and back!

II

I have heard of ships in trouble
But, say, "trouble" ain't the word
In discussing all the hazards
That this fighting ship incurred;
Gasoline her deadly cargo,
Barges slowing down her speed,
Bombers giving her the business . . .
"Trouble," would you say? Indeed!

III

When the Charlies called a recess
Blasted off was her rear end—
(A most inconvenient mishap—
Need I further words expend?)
Well, there's such a thing as pride, sir,
And embarrassment is keen
With a ship, as with a person,
When a plight like this is seen.

IV

The McFarland is a lady
Known for poise in any fray—
But you should have seen her when she

Looked and saw herself that way!
She became a fighting fury
As she took the fiercest belts,
And quite soon the Japs were wishing
They had hit her somewhere else!

V

There was fire in her innards,
She had leaks both fore and aft;
Hell broke loose on what was left, but
She was still a fighting craft;
She had little she could fight with
In this most heroic test,
But with what was left she battled
Like she still had all the rest.

VI

Well, you know the stirring epic . . .
"Mac" is back on her own steam,
With a vital part still missing
But her spirit still agleam;
Bigger ships have stood less pounding;
Here's the moral clean and fair—
When you ups and hits a lady
You had best be careful where.

P15
(415)

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIRCRAFT SOUTH PACIFIC FORCE

1 DEC 1942

From: Commander Aircraft, South Pacific Force.
To: The Secretary of the Navy.
Via: (1) Commander South Pacific Force.
(2) Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet.
Subject: U.S.S. MC FARLAND - Recommendation for Citation.
Reference: (a) ALNAV 238 of November 3, 1942.

1. The U.S.S. MC FARLAND reported to this command in June 1942, and has, since that time, served with outstanding distinction as a seaplane tender, escort vessel, patrol boat, cargo and troop carrier and as a station ship.
2. As a seaplane tender, the MC FARLAND has, on three occasions, August 5 - 10, August 27 - September 5 and September 11 - 14, successfully operated PBV aircraft from the advanced base at APRICOT, thereby increasing materially the search area of this command and providing early and accurate information on the movements of the enemy.
3. As an escort vessel the MC FARLAND has insured the safe delivery of valuable and urgently required equipment and personnel to almost all of the advanced bases in the South Pacific area.
4. In the role of a patrol boat the MC FARLAND has maintained anti-submarine patrols off the harbor entrances of both WHITE POFFY and BUTTON and has made numerous attacks on submarine sound contacts and has, on at least one occasion (July 15 at WHITE POFFY) severely damaged and probably sunk an enemy submarine.
5. Acting as a cargo and troop carrier the MC FARLAND, prior to October 15, made 3 separate trips from BUTTON-ROSES to CACTUS, delivered personnel and badly needed supplies of avgas, bombs and torpedoes. On October 15, the MC FARLAND was again on her way to CACTUS carrying two hundred drums of avgas, bombs and torpedoes. In the face of the known presence of vastly superior

P15
(415)

UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET
AIRCRAFT SOUTH PACIFIC FORCE

1 DEC 1942

Subject: U.S.S. MC FARLAND - Recommendation for Citation.

enemy surface and air forces and after all other allied ships bound on the same mission had turned back, the MC FARLAND continued on her course, arriving off CACTUS at dawn October 16, and succeeded in unloading her entire cargo before she was attacked by enemy dive bombers and severely damaged, although her anti-aircraft battery had accounted for four of the attacking planes. After the attack the MC FARLAND was towed to RINGBOLT where she was securely camouflaged against enemy air attacks and where she served as a station ship, giving valuable assistance to naval forces operating at that base, until sufficient repairs had been effected to permit her to proceed under escort to BUTON.

6. For the reasons described above it is strongly recommended that the U.S.S. MC FARLAND receive the Unit Award outlined in reference (a). The following citation is suggested:

"For distinguished service during the period June 20 to October 16, 1942, against the common enemy, and for extraordinary achievement on October 16 when the courage and determination of the officers and men of the U.S.S. MC FARLAND enabled her to deliver, under the constant threat of attack by vastly superior surface and air forces, urgently needed supplies to our troops on Guadalcanal and thereby contributing greatly to the subsequent successful defense of that island. The cool courage, determination to successfully accomplish their mission and utter disregard of their personal safety on the part of the officers and men of the U.S.S. MC FARLAND was in accordance with the highest traditions of the naval service."

/s/ AUERLY W. FITCH

Copy to:

C.O. USS MC FARLAND.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION to the

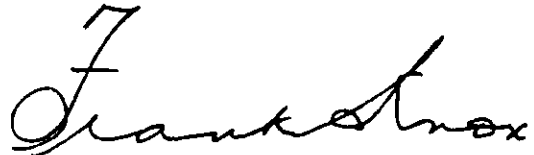
UNITED STATES SHIP McFARLAND

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For outstanding performance during action against enemy Japanese forces in the Southwest Pacific Area, June 20 to October 16, 1942. Serving in turn as a seaplane tender, escort vessel, patrol boat, and cargo and troop carrier, the McFARLAND, under constant threat of hostile attack, delivered urgently needed supplies to American troops on Guadalcanal until eventually disabled by Japanese dive bombers and towed to port for repair. Her restoration to combatant status, at a time when she might easily have been given up for lost, is a distinctive tribute to the courageous tenacity of her officers and men."

For the President,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Frank Knox". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "F".

Secretary of the Navy.

U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14)

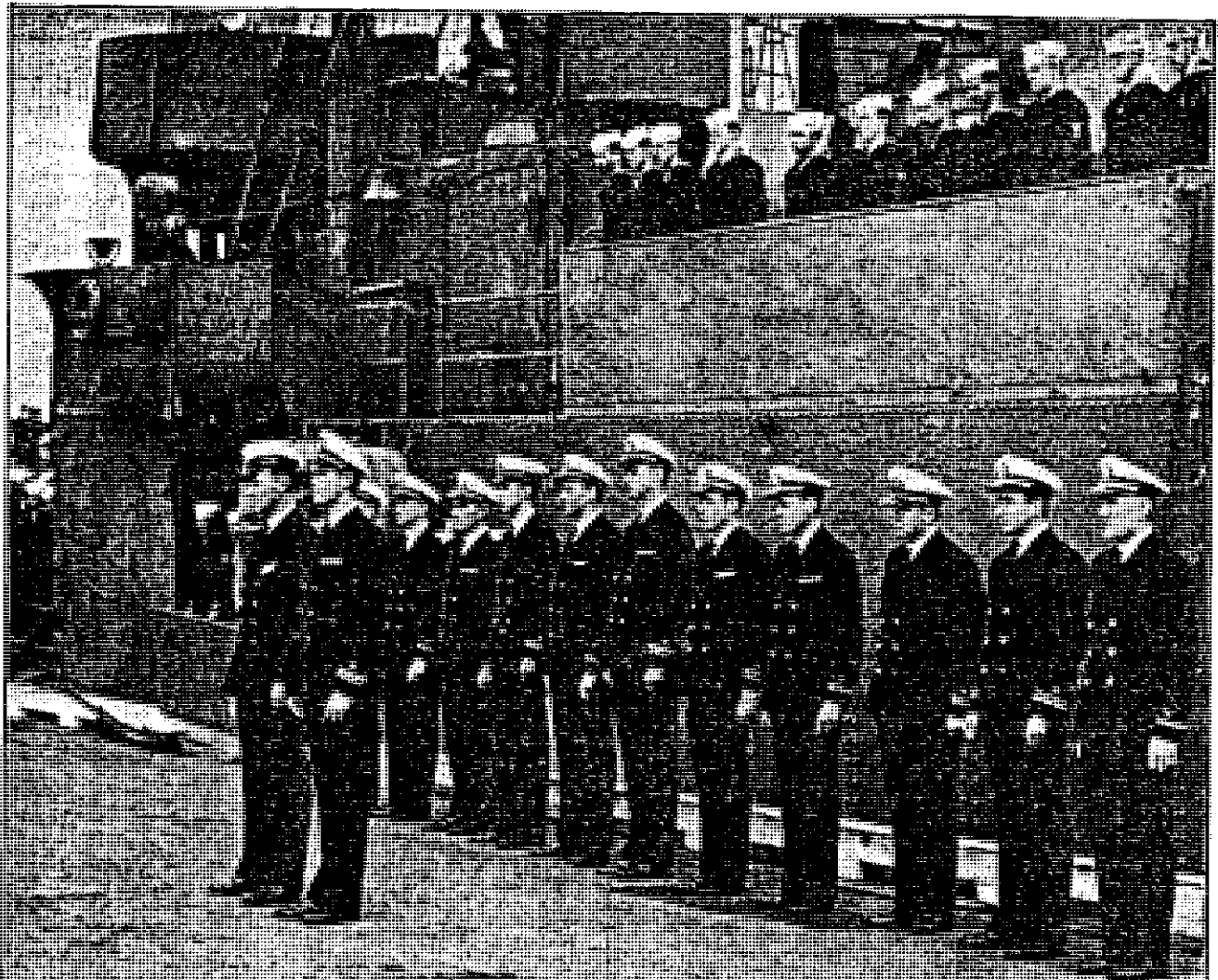
Newspaper Coverage - June, 1943.

Ship Has Victory Proofs



Lieut. Commander E. G. Gardner, Jr., USN, commanding officer of the U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14), is shown on the bridge of the seaplane tender which was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for action in the South Pacific. Above him are Jap flags representing the four Jap bombers downed by the ship's gunners and the Jap submarine sunk by depth charge attacks. (International News photo from U.S. Navy.)

World War I Ship Gets Presidential Award for Outstanding Service
San Diego Newspaper - 13 June 1943



Drawn up in formation at the rail of the ship and on the pier, officers and crew of the destroyer airplane tender U.S.S. *McFarland* form the background for ceremonies at which the ship received the Presidential Unit Citation for "outstanding action" in the Southwest Pacific. The ship was seriously damaged by a Japanese dive-bomber, and only through the efforts of her gallant crew in making emergency repairs was she able to return home to Pearl Harbor. (U.S. Navy photo.)

From
ELEVENTH NAVAL DISTRICT
Public Relations Office
(San Diego)

SERIAL 3D(a)-922(43)

NOTE TO EDITORS AND PRESS SERVICES:

Please do not publish under
date line

A "four stacker" destroyer of World War I design which was refitted and cast in a new role as a patrol plane tender, the U.S.S. McFarland today is one of the few ships displaying the Presidential Unit Citation for "outstanding performance in action and distinguished service to the United States."

Relating in restrained official language the heroic deeds of the gallant ship and her crew, the citation is engraved on a bronze plaque, which was presented by Vice Adm. John H. Towers, U.S.N., Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet, on behalf of the President and the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet.

It was accepted by Lt. Comdr. E. G. Gardner, Jr., U.S.N., of Aliceville, Ala., who was executive officer under Lt. Comdr. John C. Alderman, U.S.N., of Portland, Ore., at the time of the action. Gardner later succeeded Alderman as commanding officer.

Drawn up in parade formation along the rails of the ship and on the dock, enlisted men and officers witnessed the impressive ceremony. Many of them served through the stirring action briefly mentioned on the plaque and had helped to save the ship after she was virtually given up for lost.

The McFarland already has five souvenirs of her days in action--five Jap flags painted on the bridge to represent the four enemy dive bombers she brought down and the Nip submarine she sent to the bottom. Another bomber, however, nearly managed to avenge the underseas boat.

According to the citation signed by Adm. C. W. Nimitz, U.S.N., the McFarland aided in guarding vital supply lines to Guadalcanal during the early days of that Southwest Pacific engagement. She remained at her post despite repeated and powerful efforts of hostile planes to drive her away or sink her.

They came so close to accomplishing the latter goal, the citation related, that the McFarland was "thought to be of very little value for further combat." Those who held that belief, however, did not reckon with the undefeatable spirit of her crew.

The nearly fatal blow was delivered by the last of a flight of nine Jap planes. Four were downed by the McFarland's guns, others missed, but one dropped its bomb on the former destroyer's slim fantail. The explosion also set off some of the ship's depth charges.

Only the superhuman efforts of the crew kept her afloat long enough to reach a harbor where she could be patched up temporarily.

That's what the citation referred to when it said: "Under the most adverse conditions, the officers and men of the McFarland made the necessary temporary repairs so that the ship was able to proceed to port where she was made ready to continue in the service of her country."

"The determination and devotion to duty of the officers and men of the McFarland throughout these actions was in keeping with the highest traditions of the Naval service," it concluded.

The plaque will be installed on the ship so that it will serve as a constant reminder of her glorious past deeds and provide inspiration during future actions.

--wba--

Naval Hero Humbly Applies For Gasoline

Lieut. Chalmers'
Attitude In Contrast
To Others In Line

An English woman residing in Waterbury and Naval hero back from a setto with Jap dive bombers at Guadalcanal produced the "uncommon" reaction to rationing at the local board last week, members report.

The Naval hero, Lieut. Norman Chalmers, whose wife is the former Frances Jamele of Waterbury, brought to Pearl Harbor a destroyer which had most of her stern blown away by enemy dive bombers. As engineering officer aboard the four stacker McFarland, he directed repairs which enabled this battlewagon to come home proudly through 4,000 miles of treacherous waters.

Then he was given leave and went to the gasoline ration board "to see if I could have a few gallons of gas to visit my parents." Just a few gallons, for which he stood quietly in line and for which he quietly, almost humbly, asked. He was unrecognized, until the very last. He gave his name as Lieut. Norman Chalmers, and was recognized as the engineering officer aboard the good ship McFarland, fresh from the war front.

But ration board members can tell you about some other applicants. The ones that filibuster and fume for an extra ration, to which they are not entitled. Those who stampede and elbow their way through waiting consumers to gain ends.

One of these, described by a ration board volunteer as "young defense worker," caused some commotion by pushing his way to the counter through his fellowmen, demanding his rights. He wanted some gas and he couldn't wait because he had to get back to work.

A small-statured woman, with a Cockney dialect, spoke up to the young defense worker.

"You shouldn't be impatient," she said quietly. "You ought to get down on this stone floor and thank God you can get what you want after you're through waiting."

It seems she had relatives in England who wrote and related of the waits they had to put in for rationed commodities. There were times, she had been informed, when, after the long waits, there was nothing to be had.

Lake View, Iowa, Newspaper
January 28, 1943

Harvey Peters Comes Through Jap Bombing With Shrapnel Wounds

Having six Jap dive bombers attack his ship and come out with shrapnel wounds and a broken nose was an experience of fireman 2nd class Harvey Peters, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joe Peters, spending a part of his 30 day furlough visiting relatives and friends here.

Harvey's ship, the McFarlane, had finished unloading supplies for the Marines last October 15th at the Solomons and were ready to leave for another port when the bombers attacked. Harvey was at a gun station on the stern of the ship when the attack came. The first bomb dropped hit the water near the boat. As it hit the water it exploded causing Harvey's wounds. He was hit on the nose, the left elbow and in the back and chest.

After being struck by the shrapnel, he went to the aft deck house for emergency treatment. While he was there another bomb made a direct hit which tore away the stern killing 7 of the crew.

Harvey was taken ashore where he remained for 36 hours receiving treatment. Then he was flown with other wounded crewmen to the New Hebrides group. He was there for 20 days then went to New Zealand and from there was transferred to this country by boat. After arriving on the west coast he was at the Mare Island hospital for 21 days then he started his 30 days furlough.

While at the Solomons, the ship had taken on several Marines to be transferred to other islands. The bomb hits killed 17 of these men. Gunners on the McFarlane brought down 4 of the six bombers and fighter planes from the island accounted for others in the group.

Part of the shrapnel has been removed from Harvey's back and el-

bow but x-rays show there is still some remaining in his chest which cannot be taken out.

Harvey enlisted in the Navy the forepart of January 1941. He went to Great Lakes and this is the first furlough he has had since a short leave after he finished his boot training.

He was at Pearl Harbor December 7th but did not happen to be in the immediate vicinity of the bombing attack and he and his ship came through unharmless.

Last June 2nd he left Pearl Harbor on his ship, a seaplane tender. They have supplied seaplanes in various ports in the south Pacific and during that time he stated they had had at least 12 torpedoes fired at them by Jap subs but each one missed.

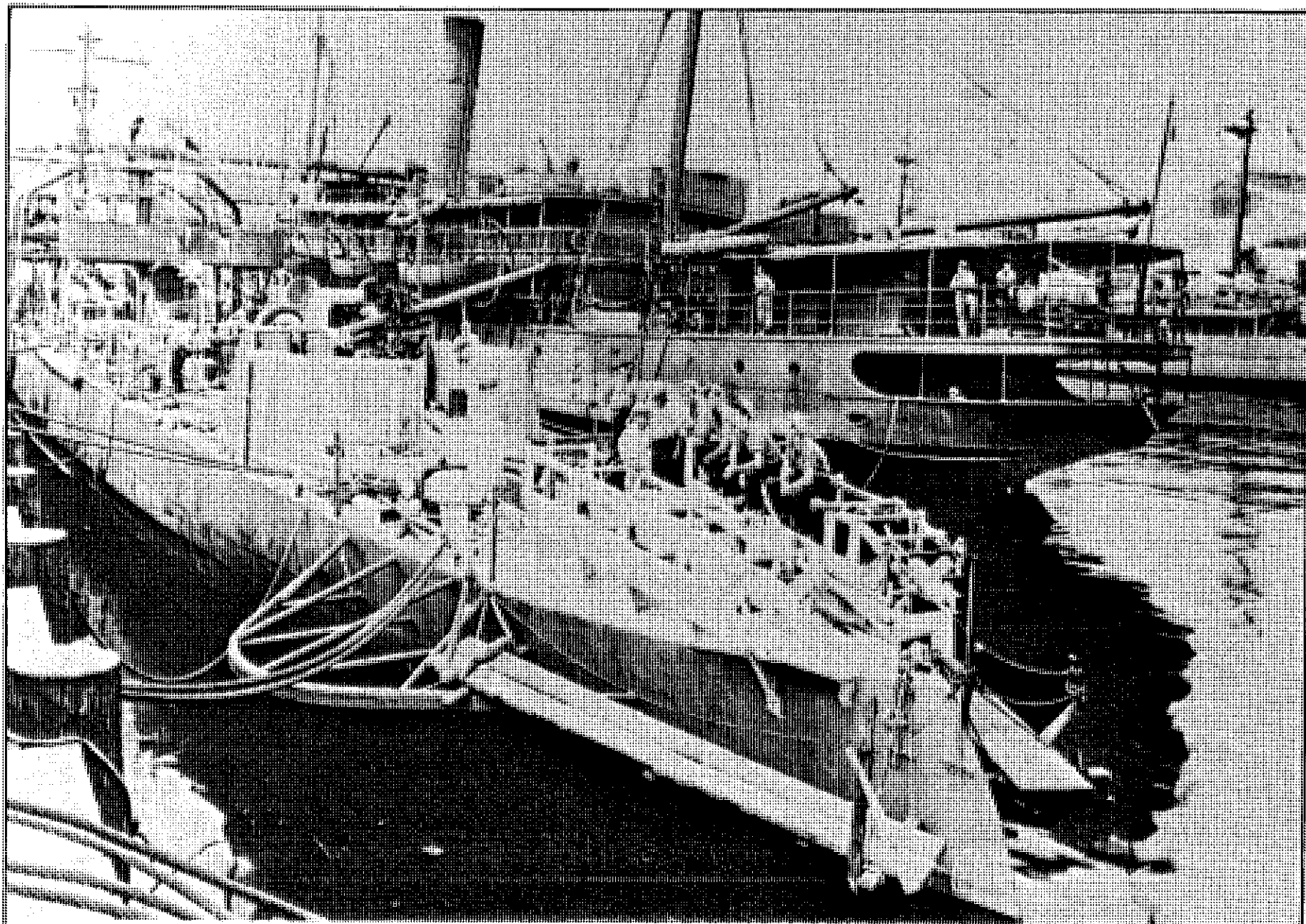
With depth charges he said they had sunk six Jap submarines that they know of and maybe more. One dark night they came within 2000 yards of a Jap cruiser but they passed unnoticed and no shots were fired.

The McFarlane is the ship which was recently publicised as having rigged up its own stern and making port after having the original stern blown away by bombs.

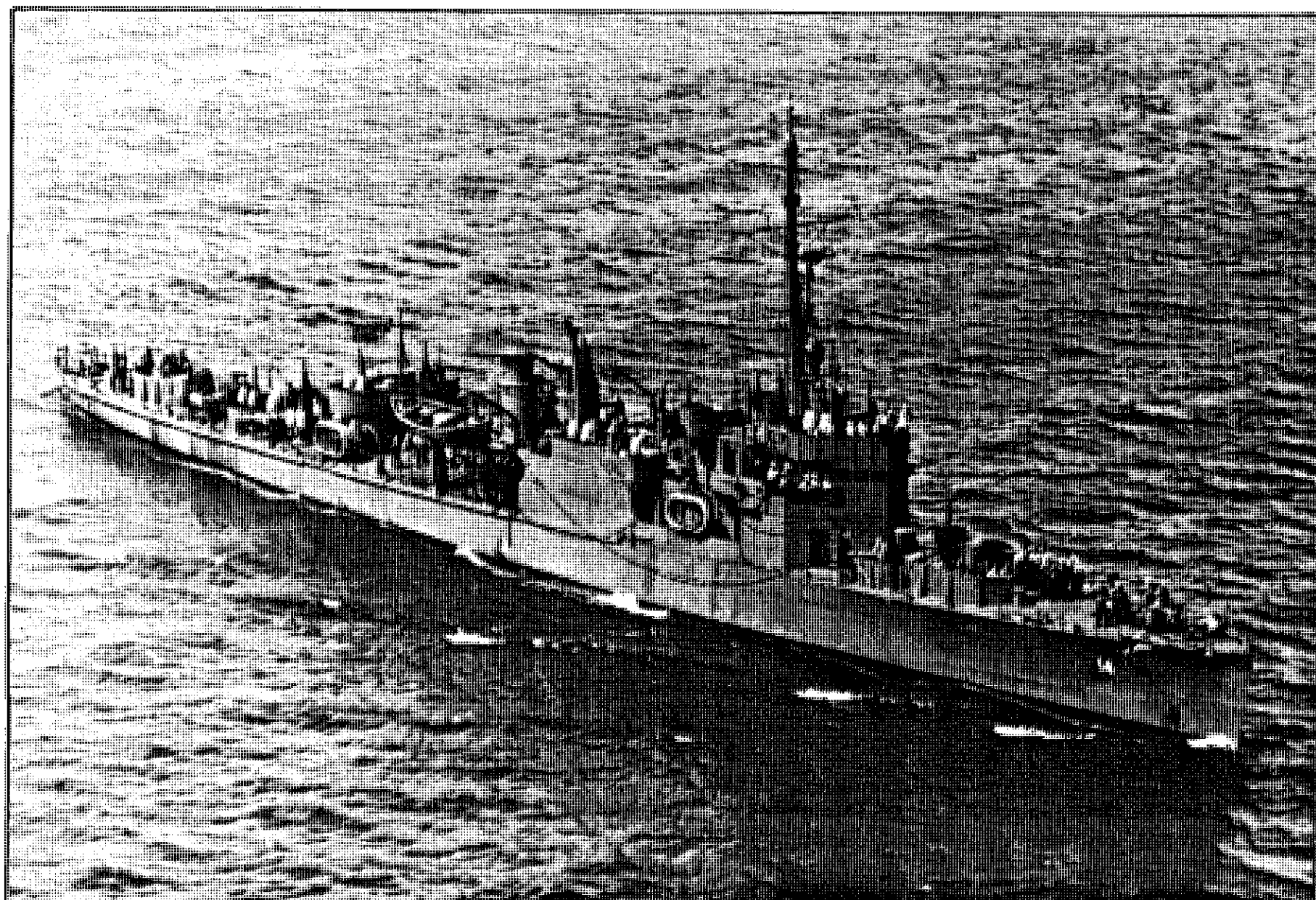
Harvey is very enthusiastic about Navy life and is ready to report for duty the 20th of this month when his furlough will be terminated.

He went to Tooele, Utah where his parents and brother and sister-in-law reside. He accompanied them here last Thursday for a visit. They plan to return the latter part of this week or the first of next week.

Harvey has seen Red Monroe and Lloyd Swieter a few times but that is all the information he could give about them.



The U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14) at Pearl Harbor in March, 1943, with a new stern. Note that her antiaircraft armament has been doubled. She now has two stern depth-charge racks, and there are four "K"-gun loading davits visible. (Editor's note: This photograph raises an important question, because it shows that the after deckhouse with the crew's head and washroom has been replaced by a gun mount!) (Official U.S. Navy photo.)



The U.S.S. McFarland (AVD-14) in April, 1943, looking more like a destroyer than a seaplane tender after her bomb damage (at Guadalcanal) on 16 October 1942) was repaired. She has no aircraft hoisting derrick and no servicing boats aft; instead, she has fourteen 20-mm. guns. On 1 December 1943, she was redesignated as a destroyer (DD-237) and spent the rest of the war escorting carriers on training exercises. (U.S. Navy photo.)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

ACTION REPORT

ORIGINAL

USS MC FARLAND

DD 237

SERIAL 024

16 NOVEMBER 1944

ANTI-SUBMARINE ACTION BY SURFACE SHIP, REPORT OF.

REPORT COVERS ACTION OF 16 NOVEMBER
1944 WHILE OPERATING AS ESCORT TO
USS RANGER IN LAT. 32.37 N, LONG. 120.08 W.
(C.O. H. S. CALVIN)

DECLASSIFIED

NOV 20 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

16 November 1944/COMMANDER FLEET AIR
WEST COAST

From: The Commanding Officer.
To : The Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet.
Via : (1) The Commanding Officer, U.S.S. RANGER.
(2) The Commander Fleet Air, West Coast.
(3) The Commander Air Force, Pacific Fleet.
(4) The Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet.

Subject: Action Report, U.S.S. McFARLAND DD-237, 16 November 1944.

Reference: (a) Pacific Fleet Confidential Notice 26 CN-44.
(b) Pacific Fleet Confidential Letter 2 CL-44.

Enclosure: ~~(A)~~ Anti-Submarine Action By Surface Ship.
~~(B)~~ Maneuvering board diagram of action.

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b) the following narrative, in conjunction with the standard report form for Anti-Submarine Action by Surface Ship, is submitted as an Action Report for 16 November 1944 against a possible enemy submarine. Enclosures (A) and (B) are forwarded herewith.

2. U.S.S. McFARLAND was in assigned operating area on course 330° T, speed 15 knots steaming as escort in screening position 2000 yards ahead of U.S.S. RANGER. Ship darkened and in condition of readiness three. At 2140, (zone plus 7), sound operator reported a possible submarine contact, bearing 000° T, range 1000 yards. Ship was called to general quarters and attack started. RANGER immediately changed course 90 degrees to the left to clear area. Commanding Officer elected to open range and achieve better attack position. McFARLAND circled supposed submarine to starboard, obtaining no doppler echoes with beam traces, changing to down doppler and apparently stern traces, then beam traces with no doppler. Contact was lost at 1300 yards as range opened and then regained at 1300 yards bearing 305° T as McFARLAND closed. Medium shallow depth charge pattern was ordered. Slight bearing drift was apparent to right and range rate about 18 knots. Reverberations were very troublesome. Course 305 degrees was held anticipating a sudden turn. Traces were very broad and estimated as bow type. Range rate approached 20 knots with up doppler. Between 700 and 800 yards marked bearing drift left was obtained. Target was apparently in a turn to his right. McFARLAND came left with full rudder at 700 yards and steadied on attack course of 240° T. Left cut at 700 yards was 275° T.

3. Sound gear lost contact at 400 yards. Charges were fired on recorder at 2152 in latitude 32° - 37'; Longitude 120° - 08', using slope of traces at 400 yards. It is estimated that McFARLAND crossed about 100 yards ahead of target and dropped charges on targets estimated course.

4. The shock of concussion of the first depth charge tripped out the circuit breakers of the generators. Sound gear, radar, lights and all radio were temporarily out of commission. At 2154 McFARLAND commenced turn

CONFIDENTIAL

Subject: Action Report, U.S.S. McFARLAND DD-237. 16 November 1944.

to right to avoid RANGER and attempt to regain contact. Difficulties in starting generators were experienced but at 2156 they were started. Ship steadied up on 150 degrees. At 2158 turned north; at 2205 turned west; at 2211 turned south; at 2217 turned east. OTC then ordered McFARLAND to continue search for 15 minutes longer, and if results were negative, to rejoin her. At 2226 turned north. By 2232 no further contact had been made, so McFARLAND set course to the northwest to rejoin RANGER, then proceeding on 330° T.

5. Ship's track has been traced out around attack area and it is felt that the search was carried out as well as possible under the circumstances in which a crippling electrical casualty occurred and search time was limited to one circuit of the area. It was so dark it was impossible to see any small objects on the surface. No radar contact was made at anytime near the attack.

6. Meteorological data at 2200 this night is as follows: Light swell from N.N.W.; Sea temperature (surface) 64° F.; Wind from 345° T at 8 knots; Clouds - negligible; no moon; Visibility - about 5000 yards for a large object such as the RANGER.

7. The depth charge pattern laid consisted of five charges with settings from 75 ft. to 200 ft. One of the charges dropped with setting 200 ft. failed to fire.

8. This vessel is extremely handicapped in anti-submarine work by lack of a D.R.T., mechanical log, and adequate plotting facilities. Recorder is located in pilot house and sound stack is inside chart house. Chart house is very small and has to serve for radar, sound, plot, and navigation. It is felt that the target attacked was very possibly an enemy submarine. If so it was probably making about 5 knots most of the time. No screw noises were heard but there were very severe reverberations and the CCJ sound gear is notoriously insensitive to screw noises. It is unfortunate that it was impracticable to leave the RANGER unescorted and to conduct a more thorough search or make a better evaluation.

9. The recent sinking of a merchant ship by an enemy submarine in this area, and the value of the carrier RANGER as target lends increased credence to the possibility of an enemy submarine.


H. S. CALVIN.

Advance copies to: CinC, USFleet Via Airmail.
CinCpac, Via Airmail.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~ANTI-SUBMARINE ACTION BY SURFACE SHIP~~

~~ENCLOSURE (A7)~~

U.S.S. McFARLAND DD-237 - 16 November 1944 - Time 1st Contact - 2140(Plus 7 Zone)
Lat. 32° 37' Long. 120° 08' - Course 330° T - Speed 15 knots.

1. Circumstances at time of Contact

<u>Employment of Ship</u>	<u>Weather and Light</u>	<u>Sea</u>	<u>Wind</u>
Escort of carrier	Clear Night	Smooth	Force 8 kts. 345° T 015° Rel.

Steaming 2000 yards ahead of U.S.S. RANGER, patrolling fifteen degrees on her bows.

Estimated sound range of the day - 1300 yards.
Sound gear in use - Echo-ranging with QCJ-2.

2. Nature of Contact - Sound, echo-ranging at 100 yards. Sub first reported by attacking ship.

Sound gear operator making contact by echo ranging: CHAPMAN, Harvey Edward, 328/54 45, SKlc, U.S. Navy.

3. Barrage Plan - See attached sheet for pattern.

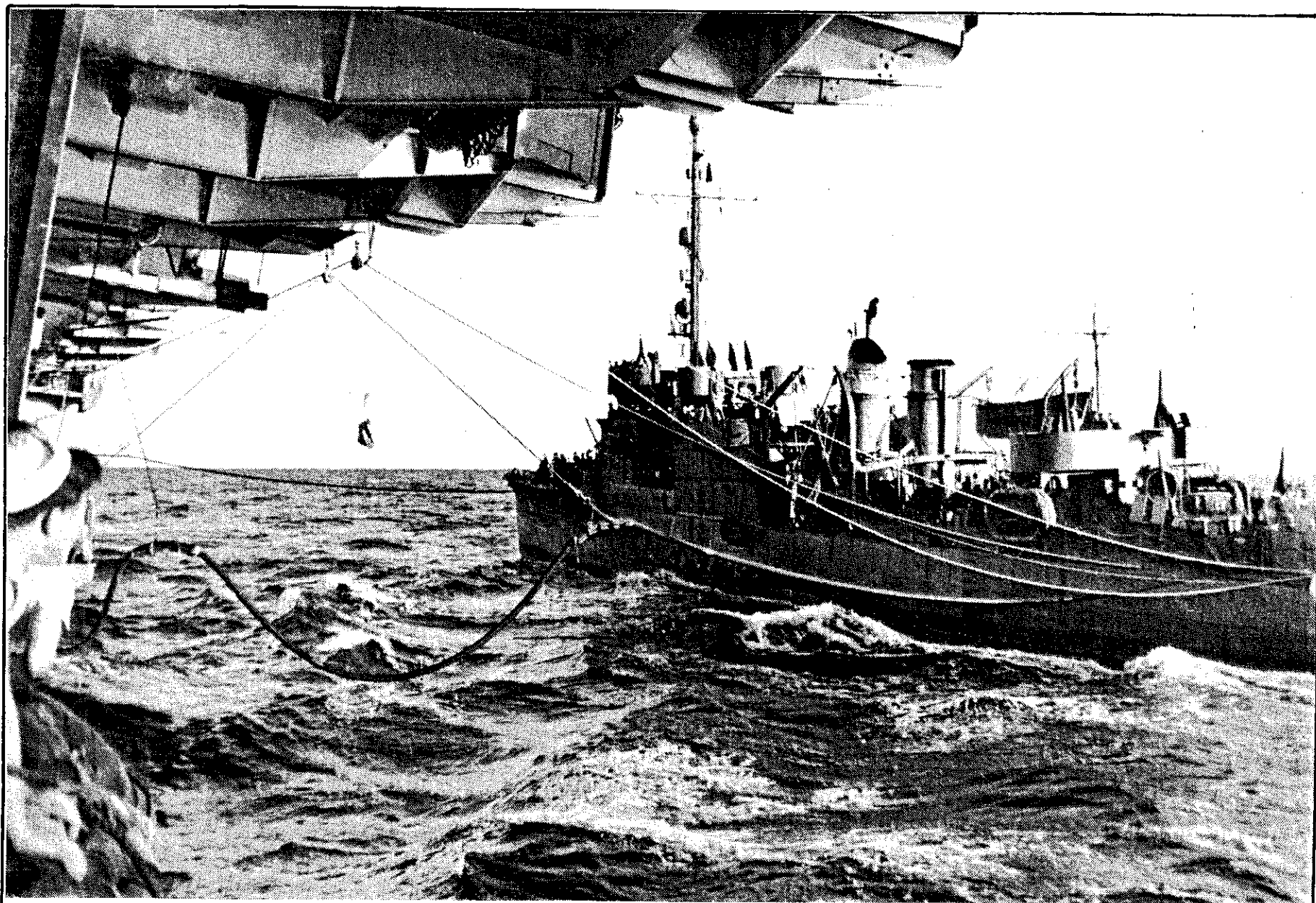
<u>Charge Number</u>	: 1	: 2	: 3	: 4	: 5	:
<u>Time of drop</u>	:	:	:	:	:	:
<u>from 1st charge</u>	:	: 0	: 5s	: 10s	: 15s	:
<u>Depth Setting</u>	: 75	: 150	: 200	: 150	: 200	:

Weight - Mk. 9 charges

Own course, first charge 240° T, speed 15 kts.
Sub course 210° T, speed 5 kts.
Estimated sub depth - shallow

4. Time between first contact and this attack - 12 min.

- (a) Time between last attack and abandonment of search - 38 Min. Reason search abandoned - Orders from OTC.
(b) Number of charges remaining - 25.



The U.S.S. McFarland, redesignated a destroyer (DD-237), is shown refueling and reprovioning from the escort carrier U.S.S. Gambier Bay (CVE-73) on 14 April 1944. Refitted as an aircraft carrier escort, a raised platform with two 20-mm antiaircraft machine cannons has replaced the crane and aircraft-servicing boats previously carried amidships when she was a seaplane tender. (Official U.S. Navy photograph)

Excerpts from: **GOING BACK TO TULAGI**
by Cdr. Frederick S. Dean, USN (Ret.) in 1987¹
(Deceased, December 17, 1990)

BACK TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Our tour director didn't like to hear plans for changing his plans, but he agreed to help me go back to Tulagi. His first question was "What's so special about Tulagi?" My uncertain reply was "Well - there's a gravestone there with the names of some old shipmates on it, and I want to take a picture of it." It was hard for me to say exactly why I did want to "Go Back."

When I started to write this Tale of a Trip, I ran right into a mental roadblock over the gravestone mission as being the only reason for the trip. There were lots of other reasons. A friendly critic got rid of my roadblock for me by explaining that the gravestone was never supposed to be the solo feature of my story. The planning and execution of my backward trip through time and space had been the real story.

On the Way Back to Tulagi

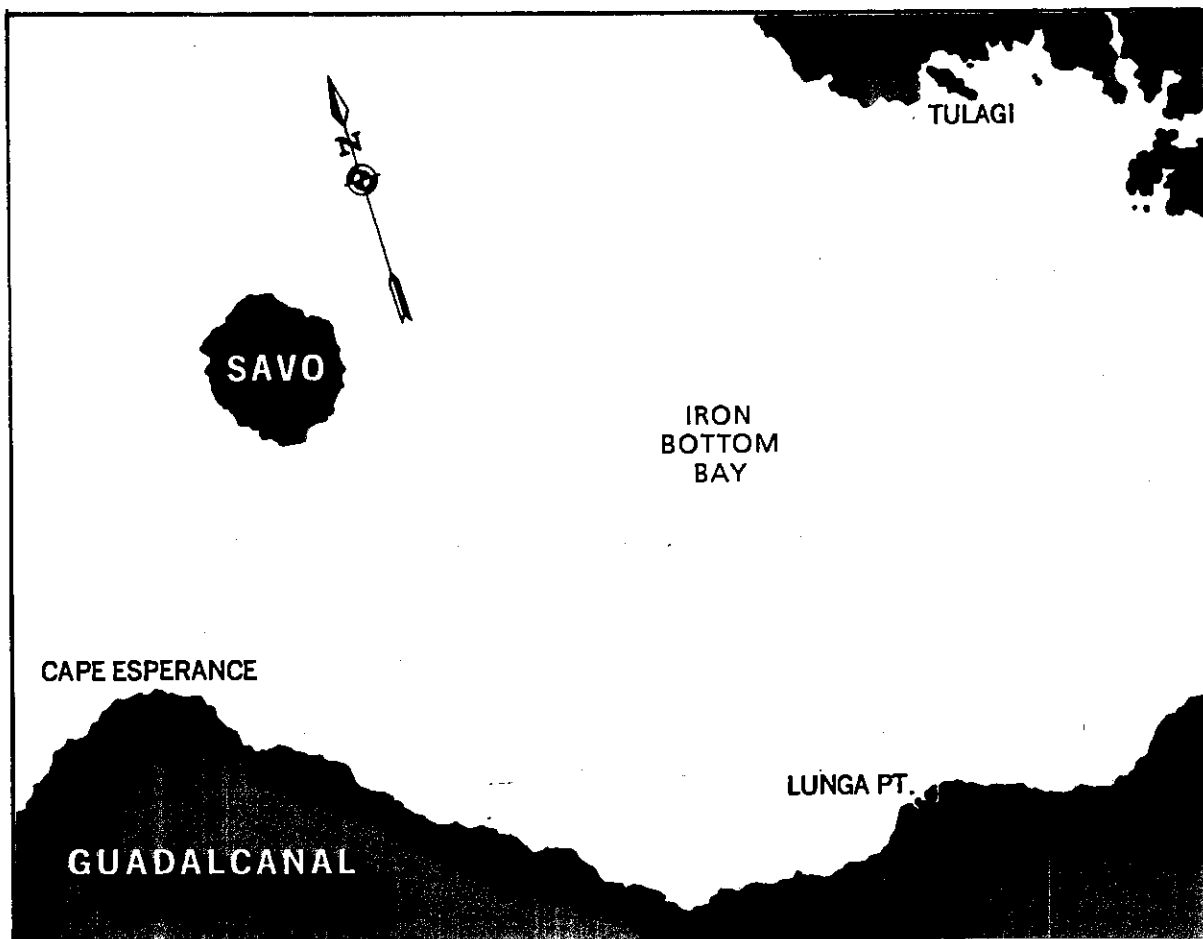
When we stepped out of the jet, we stepped into another world. This was the place where Japanese engineers had started to build an airstrip to support Japan's steady drive towards New Caledonia and Australia. This was also the place where American Marines had come ashore in 1942 and stopped that drive permanently. This was the airfield that American Seabees had completed in time for Marion Carl, Joe Foss, and John Smith to use in their daily scrambles toward enemy bombers and fighters and fame as Aces of the "Cactus Air Force." Memorial plaques in and around today's Honiara air terminal attest to the many battles fought for control of this airstrip.

Henderson Field's coral and Marston Matting surfaces of 1942 are now covered with concrete and the runway stretches out to 8,00 feet. The grass shack pagoda and spindly control tower structures have been replaced by a few modest warehouse-like buildings, without air conditioning and with super-radiant heat from the metal roofing. The combination of heat and humidity is unknown in California except, possibly, in the saunas of the health parlors.

* * * * *

¹Fritz Dean was not able to locate the *McFarland* monument when he returned to Tulagi for a few hours on January 23, 1987. Fortunately, he wrote an eighteen-page narrative about his trip with extended flashbacks telling about his wartime experiences there in 1942. Thanks to his wife Yvonne, who accompanied him, and who has graciously sent me a copy of this narrative, I'm able to include Fritz's recollections in this booklet. I've added a few maps and a picture of the monument they sought.

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
September 26, 1994



Iron Bottom Bay

In the southeastern part of the Solomons, the Gods of War created a large triangular body of water that is most perfectly suited for Battle. The waters are deep enough to accommodate submarines, spacious enough to allow for the skirmish and maneuver of battling surface fleets, and covered by a vast dome of atmosphere within which hundreds of airborne warriors can kill each other. Unlike a conventional golf course with its well-known traps and hazards, Iron Bottom Bay has many uncharted traps and hazards. Reefs and tiny islets are scattered about the northern and eastern reaches of the Bay. Broken-field runners such as PT boats and crippled ships of shallow draft can use these hazards to good advantage.

Best of all, Iron Bottom Bay is surrounded by islands with gently sloping hillsides from which spectators can watch all the action - day and night.

The north shore of Guadalcanal, about 90 miles long, is the longest side of the triangle. An imaginary line, about 20 miles long, from the western tip of Guadalcanal to the western tip of the Florida Island group is the shortest side of the triangle. The line is divided at mid-point by the volcano of Savo Island. Combatants have the option of entrance and exit through deep water on either side of Savo.

The third side of the triangle is the one that I knew best. Most of it is formed by the unscarred jungle islands of the Florida Group. The mid-point of this side is 20 miles due north of Henderson Field on Guadalcanal. This is the islet of Tulagi and its sheltered deep water harbor. For 6 weeks in 1942, Tulagi had been my home and place of work. The topmost rock on Tulagi had been my 50-yard-line seat as a spectator during the sporting events of the day - and night.

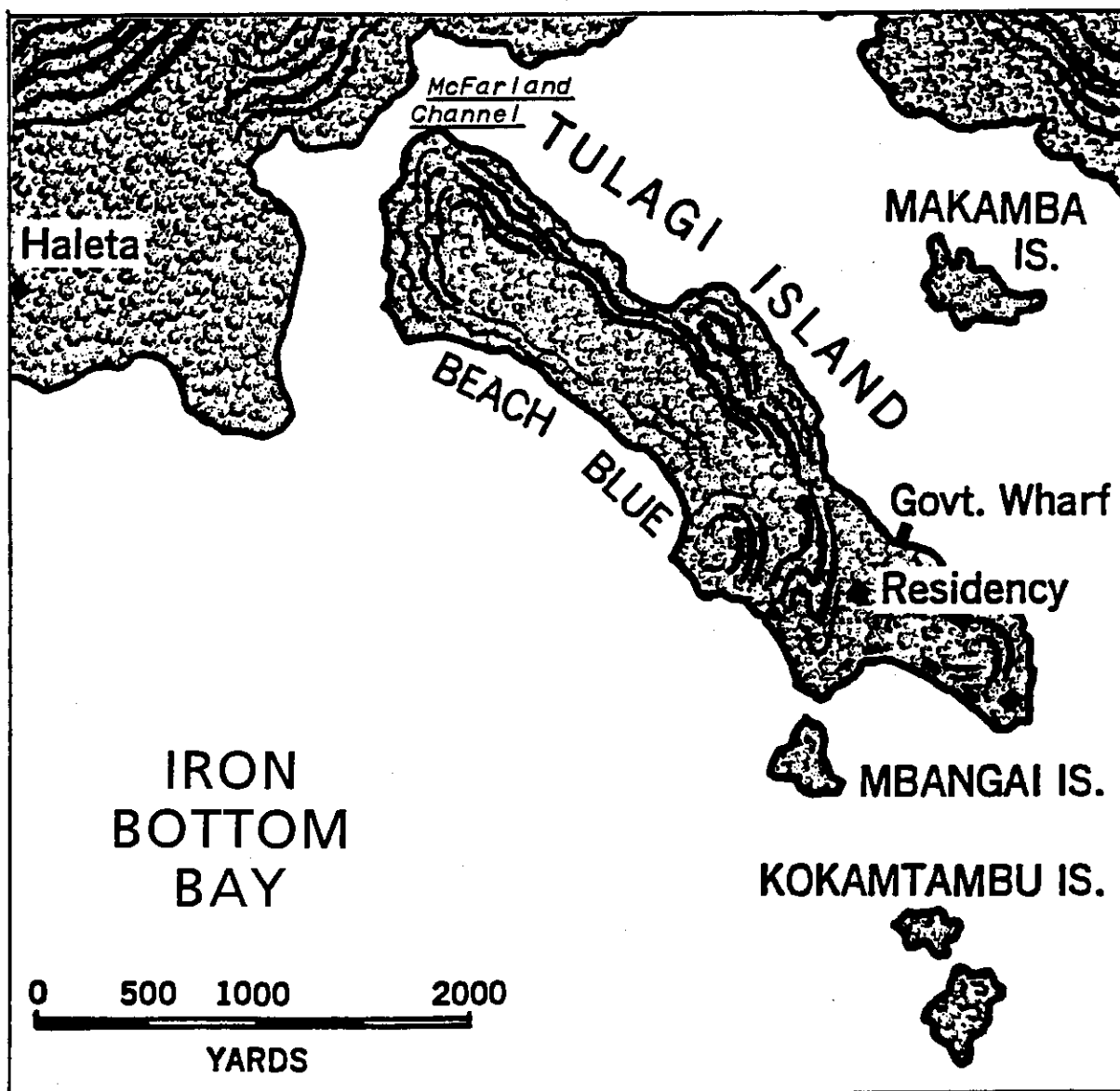
Now, in 1987, as we crossed the bright green and blue waters of Iron Bottom Bay, the pilot dropped down to 1,000 feet and circled Tulagi slowly so that I could take pictures. Then, he straightened out to the north, crossed the Floridas, and dropped down almost to tree-top level over a small green square of an islet. I didn't see any airstrip, but there was a clear area with no trees on one corner of this jungle patch and that was it. The pilot "Grassed it in," stopped in a couple of hundred feet, and we had arrived at Anuha Island International Airport.

* * * * *

The Battle

"HERE THEY COME!" A chorus of lookouts shouted! I was OOD on the port wing of the bridge and looked up to see a long, long single file of nine loosely-spaced Japanese Val dive bombers pouring down from no more than 5,000 feet above our port quarter. We had been expecting some kind of intercepting attack from the very beginning of our mission, but now that our job seemed to be done, the attack came as a total surprise!

On October 16, 1942, USS *McFarland* had entered Iron Bottom Bay from the east, slipping through Sealark Channel. *McFarland's* special cargo was not only a deckload of drums of aviation gasoline, but also the priceless contents of her 25,000 gallon reservoir designed for refueling seaplanes far from home base. *McFarland* had been unloading gasoline all day, and now, just before sunset had loaded nearly 150 walking wounded Marines from nearby Red Beach on Guadalcanal. And then her luck had run out.



The Battle (Continued)

Each of the Vals carried two 300-pound bombs. The first pair separated from the first Val's wings as he came straight on down and pulled out at masthead height. The two bombs hung in the air like two punted footballs, but growing bigger very fast. I knew that I could catch one of them easily, but they both fell at least a hundred yards out in the water to port.

I watched geysers of water exploding on the portside just long enough to be startled by more explosions on the starboard side. Gasoline drums on the barge alongside to starboard went up in flames, and our 20-mms started to bang away. The last pair of bombs hit us on the depth charge rack on the fantail, and the whole ship seemed to jump up into the air. When the ship came down again it was minus forty feet of its stern, the steering engine room and the ship's rudder.

At the very beginning of the attack, the Captain had ordered flank speed ahead, and now, in the approaching twilight of Iron Bottom Bay, *McFarland* was rushing around in a wide circle at nearly 30 knots. Fifteen of *McFarland's* crew and an unknown number of Marine passengers were killed outright; many more were badly wounded; all able-bodied survivors spent the next few hours struggling to save the ship - and themselves.

Even without a rudder, *McFarland* was able to steer like a drunk driver, put out the electrical fires where the stern had been ripped off, and stumble through the night across 20 miles of Iron Bottom Bay into Tulagi Harbor. The remainder of the night was passed in caring for the wounded and accounting for all casualties - the exact number of missing passengers will never be known.

At first daylight, we buried our dead in a makeshift grave near the old cricket field on Tulagi and moved most of the wounded over to the Marines' field hospital. As communications officer, I was moved ashore with all radio equipment and ship's radiomen to set up "Radio Ringbolt," a supplement to Guadalcanal's "Cactus Control." The rest of the crew pulled *McFarland* deep into the back waters of Tulagi Harbor and close enough to the shore for overhanging jungle growth to be pulled aboard for camouflage.

I spent six weeks in my dockside radio station on Tulagi. Frequently we sat in on the chatter between Marine fighter pilots, Marion Carl, Joe Foss, John Smith and others during their lunch-hour melees above Iron Bottom Bay. At night the conversation dropped to sea level where our "Small Boys" (PT Boats) often chased enemy landing barges and also got in the way of the "Big Boys" during the "Savo Island" contests.

Those six weeks in October and November were long and grueling. The Guadalcanal campaign was not a smashing success; it could even have been a failure if the enemy had known how weak the American position was. We all knew that damaged American ships had been abandoned in the Philippines. We, too, might be left to rust. That was a very real possibility. Without a doubt the great fear of reassignment to shore duty in the miserable Solomon Islands inspired the *McFarland's* engineers to design and build a jury rudder good enough to get us safely back south into the New Hebrides.

The Battle (Continued)

And so, in a tense atmosphere of contemplating death, capture, or life on a jungle island, the crew worked day and night to make a jury rudder out of Japanese telephone poles. The missing steering engine room was replaced by a double-headed winch amidships that normally hoisted motor boats and other heavy things.

A strange form of recreation emerged in this suspenseful atmosphere and soon became quite popular; even I tried it out for kicks - once. At least four PT Boats left Tulagi each night just to patrol Iron Bottom Bay. Their crews were always tired and often depleted by malaria or dengue fever. Our crew discovered that riding around in a speed boat with a probability of getting to shoot at something was great fun. Many exchanges of duty for night watches became commonplace.

The best part of a PT patrol came just before dawn. Morning twilight found PTs approaching Tulagi Harbor at the same time that off-duty Marines were approaching their customized latrines erected on pierlets over the calm harbor water. When high tide and dawn coincided, a PT Boat could kick up a bow wave that would really wash down an unsuspecting squatter.

* * * * *

The "Mac" Goes Home

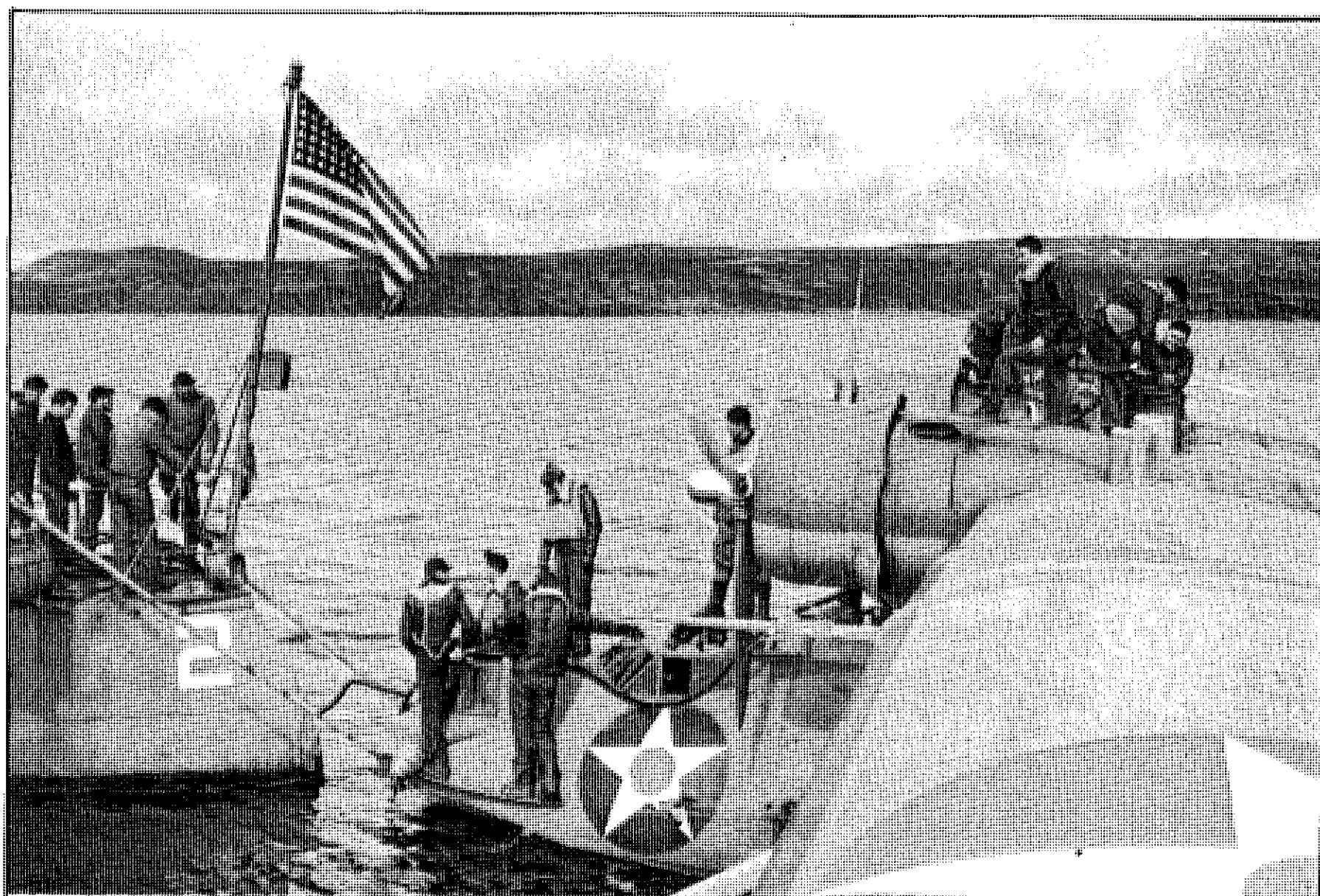
On Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 1942, *McFarland* was nudged out of her hiding place by the same tuna clipper YP Boat that had put her in there so long ago. From the harbor's back waters, we moved out and slowly made our way to the small wooden dock where my radio shack stood. Marine General Rupertus and his staff came down to the dock for a quick farewell ceremony, and we cast off all lines. Well before the lunch-hour air raid over Guadalcanal, the Captain ordered "All Engines Ahead One Third" and we moved away from the dock.

As *McFarland* moved ahead, the starboard side rubbed gently along the dockside and, as the ship gathered speed, the rudder cable on the starboard side snagged on the dock - and broke.

McFarland left Tulagi as she had arrived - RUDDERLESS!

There could be no stopping at this point. At least we were watertight, and so, we pressed on. With continual shifting of engine speeds we were able to make nearly five knots of actual travel. That's how it went for several days and nights until we reached Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides.

After a week of more repair in Espiritu Santo, we set out northward for Hawaii. Again, near Samoa, the rudder broke, and again we began to steer with engines only. At this late date our Chief Quartermaster suggested that steering could be improved and speed could be increased if we just . . . dropped the port anchor. His prescription was based on having the anchor streamed out on 40 fathoms of chain as a stabilizer in a sea that was more than a mile deep. It was the wisdom of an "Old Salt" and it worked.



A PT Catalina patrol bomber refuels from a sister ship of the McFarland, the U.S.S. Willbrough (AVD-2), in Alaska waters during World War II. The McFarland refueled her Catalinas in this manner on three occasions in August and September, 1942, during the Guadalcanal Campaign. She also saw duty as escort vessel, patrol boat, cargo and troop carrier, and finally, as a station ship at Tulagi. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)

The "Mac" Goes Home (Continued)

The last 1,000 miles into Pearl were relatively steady and were made at 10 knots instead of five. QMC Mazoway said that he would have suggested the anchor's use much sooner but that none of the Annapolis boys had cared to listen to him. On December 30, 1942, long after the sun had set, *McFarland* entered Pearl Harbor and circled around Hickam to dock in the Navy Yard. From the blacked-out shoreline there was a mile-long chorus of "Hip, Hip, Hooray!" A day later, the entire crew stood at attention on Hickam's slab while Admiral Chester Nimitz hung the Navy Cross on LCDR "Dopey" Alderman and then read his copy of the Presidential Unit Citation to all hands of USS *McFarland*.

* * * * *

And Away We Go

Even as we were wading ashore, the SOLAIR twin turbo was coming in on final approach. Five minutes later, we were airborne and heading back toward Guadalcanal at 2,000 feet above Tulagi and Iron Bottom Bay. As we approached Henderson from the north, I looked down at a large Japanese fishing boat leaving a long, shining wake and I felt a sudden sensation of "Reverse Deja Vu." It was at this very spot 45 years ago that each one of nine Japanese dive bomber pilots had looked down at a small American seaplane tender leaving a long shining wake. Maybe it was really "Deja Vu" that I had dreamed of when I first felt the compulsion to "Go Back to Tulagi."

* * * * *

Farewell Tulagi

Our SOLAIR pilot delayed his turn on final approach to Henderson long enough to let the turbulence of a 737 twin jet dissipate after it passed right in front of us and landed at 7:00 A.M. That 737 was to be our transport back to civilization. Again, I looked down and this time, for just a moment, I thought I saw a solitary little ship heading slowly eastward through Sealark Channel; it was towing what looked like a bundle of telephone poles. It vanished as quickly as it had appeared, and we dropped down onto Henderson Field. Good Bye and Good Luck, *McFarland*! See you again? and, Farewell, Tulagi! For the last time!

Paul C. Helmke
FTCM, USN (Ret)
4404 Colfax St.
Kensington, MD 20895
14 May, 1995

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
CMDR. USNR (Ret)
1210 Greendale Ave., #339
Needham, MA 02192-4622

Dear Commander,

I received your package on McFARLAND (AVD-14) yesterday and want to thank you. You have done a terrific job of research and put together a wonderful book! It really brings back a lot of memories, both good and bad. I was especially glad to see the list of crew members you have located. I will send a copy of this letter to each of them and maybe we can work up a reunion later on.

I enlisted at 17, and reported to boot camp in San Diego on 26 June 1941, six days after high school graduation. After recruit training a group of us boarded USS SARATOGA at North Island for transport to Pearl Harbor. We were delivered by motor launch to the gangway and had to carry our gear clear up to the flight deck, then down through many passageways and ladders to the hanger deck. At that time your gear consisted of two pieces, your seabag triced up in your hammock with mattress, blanket, pillow and mattress covers; and then a small ditty bag for personal effects. The seabag had to be packed in regulation style, with all clothes folded just so and tied off with clothes stops, or they just didn't fit! It really was a load to carry up and down all those ladders. In SARATOGA, we couldn't even swing a hammock and had to sleep on the steel deck all the way to Hawaii with just that inch thick mattress for padding. I'd hate to do it now!

Needless to say, flight ops on the world's largest ship at that time, were very impressive to a 17 year old. By odd coincidence, though I was a die-hard "Tin Can" sailor all my Navy career, my first taste of sea duty and my last sea-duty billet were in "Bird Farms", the last being RANGER.

When we moored at Ford Island, six of my good boot camp buddies were sent to ARIZONA and another six to OKLAHOMA. I was put in a motor launch and hauled around to the back side of Ford Island to McFARLAND, moored off Pearl City landing. I thought it was just a little bigger boat that would take me to my Ship-WRONG! I soon found out that was my home away from home. My jealousy while visiting my buddies on liberty and comparing their big beautiful "battlegagons" with my little rustbucket McFARLAND ended on 7 December. I later learned that 10 of the 12 died that day.

Sometime before the war we steamed to Palmyra with supplies for the small Navy base there. The fishing was just unbelievable in the lagoon and we loaded our freezers with Red Snapper, much of which we traded to other ships back in Pearl. We also steamed a little farther south in order to cross the equator and initiate all us "Pollywogs". Later, very shortly before the war, we evacuated a group of civilian contract workers from Johnson Island. They had all been paid off in cash as they left the island, a good share of which wound up in the dungarees of "Gunner" Gerald Graham as a result of a continuous crap game in the crew's head all the way back to Pearl.

On the evening of 6 December 1941 McFARLAND steamed out of Pearl Harbor to rendezvous with two submarines in Lahaina Roads and escort them back to Pearl. I had the mid-watch that night and remember seeing and reporting flares off the starboard bow. They could not be identified and were reported to the shore command. With news of the attack that morning it was believed the flares were from Jap subs.

Sunday morning was a frantic time at GQ and stripping ship for action. Awnings came down, flammable items jettisoned and live ammunition broken out. We met our subs late that night and then headed down to Hilo, challenging every ferry and fishing boat we encountered. In Hilo we moored to a pier behind a warehouse, out of sight from the harbor entrance. A Jap sub lobbed a few rounds into the harbor one night while we were there but hit only water.

When we were finally allowed back to Pearl there was still a heavy black oil slick for miles out to sea and the harbor was still a rotten mess. We went into the Navy Yard where we got sonar gear, 20mm guns to replace the water cooled 50 caliber machine guns on the galley deckhouse, and 3"/50 dual purpose guns to replace the old 4"/50 surface guns fore and aft. We also got a depth charge rack and two "K"- guns We had sockets welded to the tops of lifeline stanchions along the main deck to receive the swivel mounts of the spare aviation 30 caliber machine guns stowed in deck lockers aft of the galley. Radar apparently was too new and scarce to be installed in McFARLAND.

After outfitting, we steamed south in company with USS CURTIS (AV-4). Enroute, we dropped depth charges one night on the mid-watch which exploded just as the general alarm sounded, waking everyone with the immediate thought that we had been torpedoed. An overnight stop in Pago Pago, American Samoa found a huge reception committee on the pier as we tied up. The skipper, sure it was meant for him, walked proudly down the gangway, only to be totally ignored. The turnout was for Gerald Graham GM-1c who had been stationed there for several years and was wed to the local chief's daughter.

We arrived in Noumea, New Caledonia well before the large number of ships that eventually used this excellent harbor. Our first liberty there was great, everything so cheap and all the natives so friendly, a far cry from later after main units of the fleet moved in.

When we set up an advance base at Ndeni to service our patrol wing of PBY's, we were the only ship to hit there in over a year. A small French trading schooner would normally visit just once a year. Ndeni consisted of two main islands. The smaller was led by a chief who had been to missionary school in the Solomon Islands and could speak a little english. I was a boat coxswain so was able to visit their village with the ship's doctor and exec. That group didn't get along with the natives on the larger island and they had a couple of little wars that we watched from the ship. Only about two hundred yards of waist deep water separated the two islands and the theft of a pig or some other offense would bring a large group from each side down to the beach brandishing clubs, spears and rocks. They always quit fighting as soon as the first minor injury occurred. Too bad the rest of the world isn't that smart! The natives from the larger island came paddling out to near our ship when we first anchored, their dugout outrigger canoes loaded with coconuts, fruit and things to trade. A small piece of rag, scrap of rope or bit of soap would buy a whole canoe full of goods. Many of the men had teeth filed down to points and all were black from chewing betelnut. One of our old chiefs had false teeth and as the first canoes approached, he pulled them out and clacked them at the natives. They back paddled so quick one fell overboard and then as they again cautiously came closer several were seen trying to pull their own teeth out.

A perfect cone-shaped volcano could be seen past the harbor entrance. At night the overhanging clouds reflected a red glow from the active crater.

While in Ndeni, a foreign freighter delivered a cargo of aviation gas in drums. We built a log boom that they would drop the drums into and we would tow them to shore and roll them up into the jungle. One day while we were half way to the beach, McFARLAND got under way and steamed out of the harbor, leaving us not knowing if an attack were coming or what. We had no way of communicating with the ship and for a while thought we might be spending the rest of the war living with the natives. It turned out that was when they rescued the PBY crew from Indispensable Reef. You can imagine how glad we were to see her return a couple of days later.

Just before our final run to Guadalcanal, we were in Noumea and scheduled to go to Australia for some maintenance and R&R. Everyone was breaking out their blue uniforms to get them ready for some good liberty. Several of the old Asia hands who were first or second class petty officers still had seaman stripes on their blues. One seaman dug deep into his foot locker and found all his blues nothing but a moldy mess from a jug of raisin jack that someone had hidden, capped so tight it had exploded.

The desperate need for supplying the Marines caused a change in plans and we were called on to make another run up the slot. The rest is history. After we were hit and snubbed in against the mangroves, as a boat coxswain I spent every day cutting brush along the shore for camouflage. Every time Jap planes were sighted in the area we would run the boats full speed into the mangroves as far as they would go to avoid being seen. We usually had to chop our way out and hope we hadn't done too much damage. The First Lieutenant later wondered why all the boat compasses were getting rusty. I wonder if he ever figured out that is was because of the salt water that replaced the alcohol which went so good with wild pineapple juice.

It was fascinating to watch archer fish shoot bugs out of the brush with a stream of water from as much as six feet away. They just didn't get enough of them however, because I soon came down with a raging case of Dengue Fever. In a matter of days I dropped from 165 lbs to 110 lbs. I was just getting back on my feet on Thanksgiving day when we got underway for Espirito Santo.

When we finally returned to Pearl Harbor, we found that a complete new stern section had been built at Mare Island and shipped to Pearl. It looked as if they would simply weld on the new section and the MAC would head back to the war zone. The crew was offered a choice of 30 days stateside leave and return for duty or wait until those returned and transfer to new construction with 30 days leave. I chose the latter, was rated GM 3c, and eventually was assigned, with several others, as nucleus crew for USS BRADFORD (DD-545). While awaiting the return of the first leave party, we were invited to spend a week of R&R in the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, which the Navy had taken over for returning submarine crews. It was many years before I could ever again afford that kind of luxury.

I finished out the war in BRADFORD with lots of action but no casualties and was discharged two weeks after VJ day. After five years of logging and farming in Oregon, I reenlisted, retiring in September 1966 as Master Chief Fire Control Technician.

I would love to hear from any of you surviving McFARLAND sailors. Let me know if we can muster up enough people to hold a reunion. Anywhere in the country would be fine with me. I will be in San Diego for a BRADFORD reunion in September. Thanks again to Comm. Wilde, I think he rates an honorary membership in our crew.

Paul C. Helinke



ERECTED BY THE OFFICERS AND
MEN OF THE USS McFARLAND IN
HONORED MEMORY OF THEIR SHIP-
MATES LOST IN ACTION OFF LINCOLN
FRONT GUADALCANAL, B.S.P.
OCTOBER 16, 1942

JAMES VINCENT DECATUR SR. M.I.
GERALD OTIS GRAHAM CM. USN
ROBERT VAN LUBBER SON M.I.
JAMES ANDERSON MARTIN SEAWARD
SHEDDEN ANTHONY POTTER SM. USN
RUDOLPH WALTER QUINN F. USN
WILLIAM LEE STAPLETON CM. USN
WARREN DAVID SWAFF F. USN
ROBERT THOMAS TRAHEY MM. USN
CHARLES EMMETT TURNER F. USN
ROBERT ADAM WEEKLY CM. USN
MICHAEL ANTHONY ZILSKY CM. USN

The monument commissioned by the officers and men of the McFarland after they returned to Hawaii in late December, 1942, and then shipped back to the graveyard on Tulagi in 1943. This photograph, courtesy of Alice and Charlie Clarkson, may have been taken in Hawaii prior to shipment.

"They fought together as brothers in arms; they died together and now they sleep side by side. To them we have a solemn obligation - the obligation to insure that their sacrifice will help make this a better and safer world in which to live."

- Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN, at The Surrender on board the U.S.S. Missouri (BB-63) in Tokyo Bay, 2 September 1945.



The monument overlooking Purvis Bay, an inlet in Florida Island, about twenty miles northeast of Henderson Field on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. Dedicated on April 30, 1944, this bronze plaque reads: "In memory of the officers and men of the United States Navy and Allied Navies who gave their lives - - Iron Bottom Bay - - 1942-43 - - Dedicated by Members of the Iron Bottom Bay Club - - Port Purvis, Solomons Islands - - 20 March 1944." U.S. Navy ships lost in the vicinity include seven cruisers and fifteen destroyers. (Official U.S. Navy photograph taken in 1945.)

NAVY DEPARTMENT

HOLD FOR RELEASE
MORNING NEWSPAPERS
JUNE 5, 1944

PLAQUE DEDICATED TO OFFICERS AND MEN LOST IN "IRON BOTTOM BAY"

A bronze plaque, the first and only battle memorial so far erected in the Solomons Islands, was dedicated April 30, 1944, to the officers and men of the United States and Allied Navies who died in the fierce battles in "Iron Bottom Bay."

The plaque was unveiled on a small palm-studded hill overlooking Purvis Bay, inlet in Florida Island, British Solomons Islands. On the hill now stands the Iron Bottom Bay Club, an officers' recreation center built by the Seabees. In the bay below, approximately a half million tons of ships of the U.S. Navy, and of the enemy lie on the bottom. It was there that such noble men of war as the cruisers ASTORIA, VINCENNES and CHICAGO were sunk in battle. About 270,000 tons of Jap ships sank there.

The Reverend James Edwards, representing the Anglican Bishop of Melanesia, unveiled the memorial before a gathering of Naval officers and enlisted men on the hill, site of the original episcopal residence of the Bishop of Melanesia, which was dismantled by the Japs. The land is owned by the Church of England. A Protestant and a Catholic chaplain of the fleet gave the invocation and benediction.

Rear Admiral Robert W. Hayler, U.S.N., of 800 East Washington Street, Muncie, Indiana, who participated in the last sea action fought in Iron Bottom Bay -- the Battle of Tassafaronga, November 30, 1942 -- spoke briefly. He paid tribute to "all those members of the Allied land, air and sea forces who in the beginning fought against such fearful odds and in every case accomplished what they set out to do."

"Our enemy overran Tulagi early in April, 1942" Rear Admiral Hayler began. "On May 4, just two years ago, one of our carrier task forces struck Tulagi and sent to the bottom some four ships -- thus starting a series of actions which resulted literally in paving the bottom of the sea in this vicinity with ships.

"On July fourth of the same year, the Japanese landed in considerable strength on Guadalcanal and a little more than a month later, on August 7th, our troops landed here and at Guadalcanal. It was many months thereafter before we had forces and equipment really adequate for the tasks assigned us.

"It is altogether fitting," Rear Admiral Hayler continued, "that this tablet be erected in the Purvis Bay Area, because it was on this side where our troops first landed and where we suffered our greatest losses."

Addressing Reverend Mr. Edwards, Rear Admiral Hayler said:

"You and your associates will have no difficulty in remembering those early days. And since your work will continue long after ours is done, we give this memorial into your keeping. In so doing we know that it will remain a lasting tribute to those for whom it is dedicated, and a source of inspiration and courage for those who come hereafter."

Reverend Mr. Edwards said in reply that he was proud to accept in the name of his Bishop the "sacred duty of caring for the shrine. It will be cared for with respect love and dignity. God grant that we may always be inspired by their deeds."

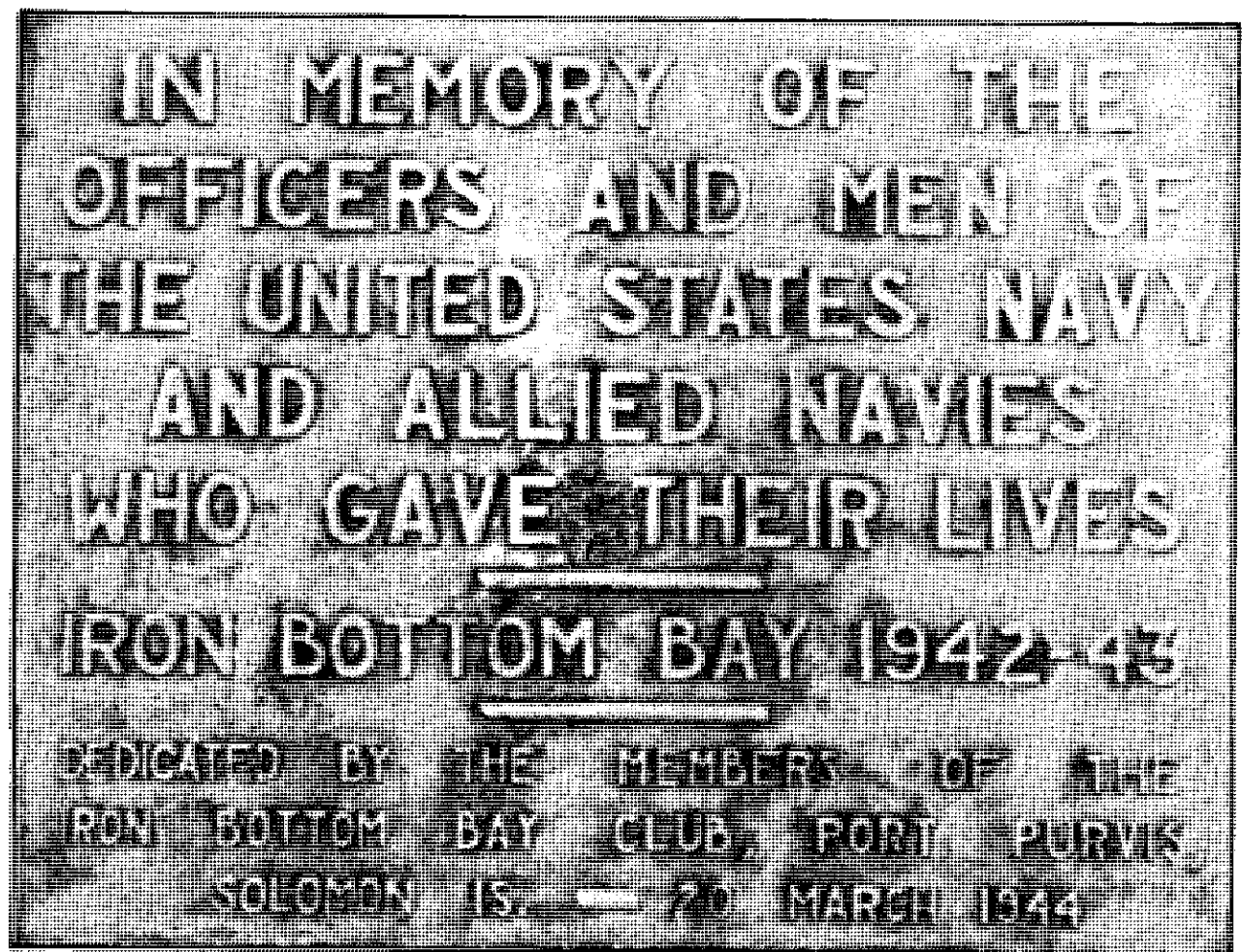
The plaque carries this inscription: "In memory of the officers and men of the United States Navy and Allied Navies who gave their lives -- Iron Bottom Bay -- 1942-43 -- Dedicated by Members of the Iron Bottom Bay Club -- Port Purvis, Solomons Islands -- 20 March 1944".

United States ships that went down in the Iron Bottom Bay and vicinity were: ASTORIA, QUINCY, VINCENNES, ATLANTA, JUNEAU, NORTHAMPTON and CHICAGO, cruisers; JARVIS, USS BLUE, DUNCAN, BARTON, CUSHING, LAFFEY, MONSSEN, PRESTON, WALKE, BENHAM, DEHAVEN, and AARON WARD, all destroyers; the destroyer transports COLHOUN, GREGORY, LITTLE, the tanker KANAWHA; the transport JOHN PENN; fleet tug SEMINOLE; two cargo ships and four PT boats. The Australian cruiser CANBERRA also was lost there.

Japanese ships sunk in the area include two battleships, three cruisers, eleven destroyers, eight transports and seven other auxiliaries.

Captain Andrew G. Shepard, U.S.N., 235 Cobbs Hill Drive, Rochester, New York, first president of the Club, composed the words on the plaque. Frank Czaikowski, Quartermaster, Second Class, USNR, of 20 Milton Avenue, Amsterdam, New York, designed the lettering. A fleet tender made the plaque.

The Club was an outgrowth of several small and inadequate officers' recreation centers-- the Club Des Slot, the APD Beach and the PT base recreation center -- to which officers came between battles of the Solomons. Rear Admiral A. Staunton Merrill, U.S.N., of Natchez, Mississippi, formerly a Task Force Commander in the South Pacific, is credited with the initiative in the movement to build the club. He since has been ordered to Washington as Director of the Navy's Office of Public Relations. Captain Grayson B. Carter, U.S.N., El Cordova Hotel, Coronado, California, is currently president of the Club, and was present at the unveiling.

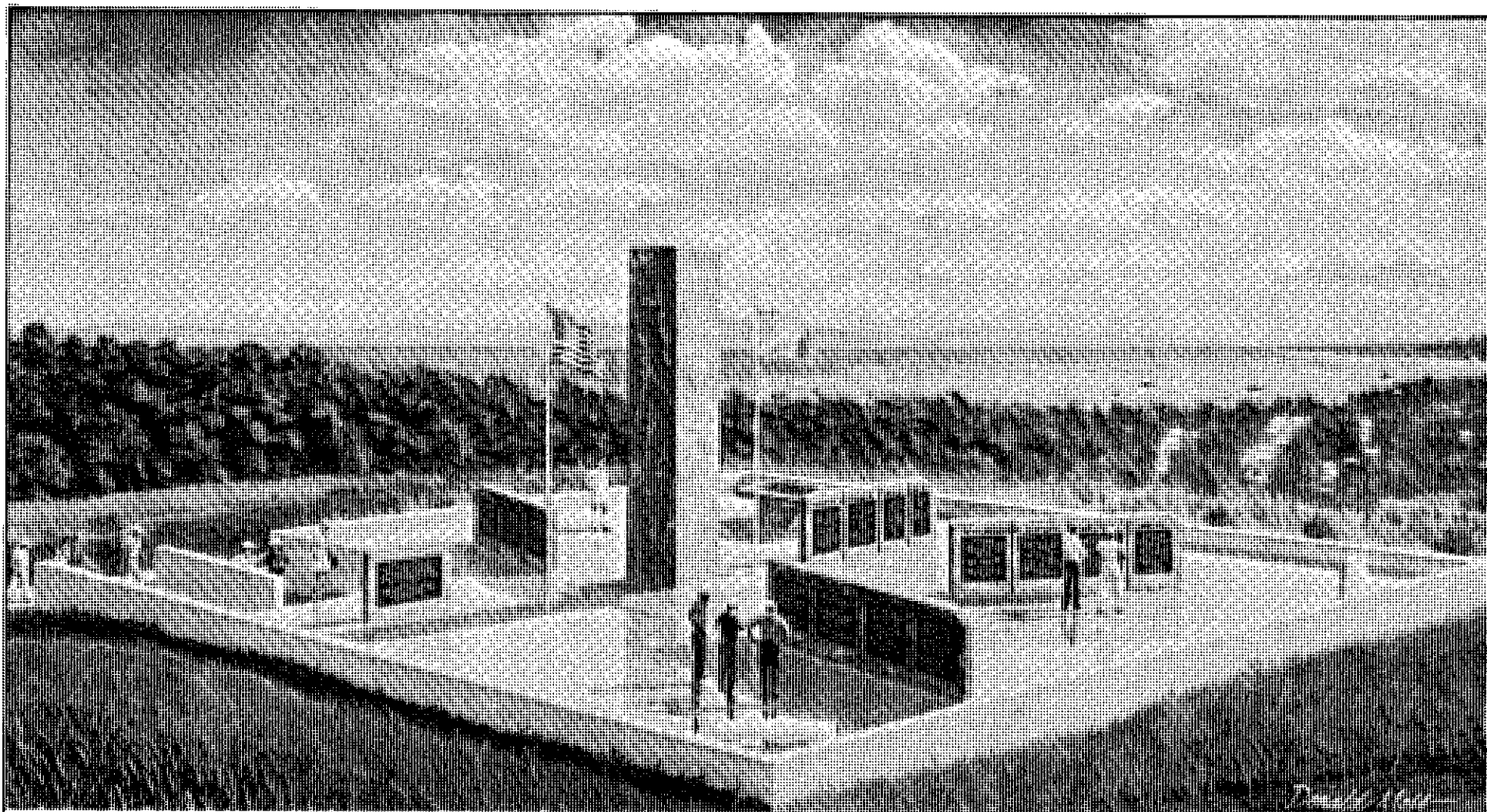


"For us who were there, or whose friends were there, Guadalcanal is not a name but an emotion, recalling desperate fights in the air, furious night naval battles, frantic work at supply or construction, savage fighting in the sodden jungle, nights broken by screaming bombs and deafening explosions of naval shells."

- Commander James C. Shaw, the major contributor to Volume V of Samuel Eliot Morison's History of United States Naval Operations in World War II: The Struggle for Guadalcanal (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1949). Rear Admiral Shaw, USN (Ret.) died on December 4, 1988.

Editor's Note: Rear Admiral Shaw's widow, Elizabeth R. P. Shaw, has graciously shared with me the letters her first husband, Commander Van O. Perkins, USN, wrote in 1944 relating how he arranged the dedication ceremony for this monument at Purvis Bay, Florida Island. The intent was "to make this a permanent part of America," in recognition of the hard fighting and great personal sacrifices which characterized the Guadalcanal Campaign. Commander Perkins was killed in action aboard the U.S.S. Birmingham (CL-62) on October 24, 1944, during the invasion of the Philippines.

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
March, 1995



The American WWII Memorial overlooking Point Cruz and Iron Bottom Sound, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, was dedicated on August 7, 1992, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the landings there by the U.S. Marines in World War II. About 20,000 people attended the ceremony, including many service personnel and over 500 foreign visitors. Many of the local residents walked for days in order to witness the dedication. Panels list the U.S. and Allied ships lost or damaged in the campaign and describe the seven naval battles fought in nearby waters. The polished red granite used in the walls with the panels and in the 24-foot high pylon were delivered to the site by the Royal Australian Navy. The Guadalcanal-Solomon Islands War Memorial Foundation raised \$500,000 and the U.S. Government authorized \$750,000 to cover construction costs. (Picture and panel inscriptions courtesy of Joseph G. Nicks, the Foundation's Treasurer and Project Manager.)

WALL: 2 - TITLE: VESSELS SUNK OR DAMAGED I
04/25/1991 PANEL 106 - TYPE D - FACE L

U.S. AND ALLIED NAVAL VESSELS
SUNK DURING THE GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN
7 AUGUST 1942 - 9 FEBRUARY 1943

AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

HORNET, WASP

HEAVY CRUISERS

ASTORIA, CHICAGO, NORTHAMPTON, QUINCY,
VINCENNES, CANBERRA (ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY)

LIGHT CRUISERS

ATLANTA, JUNEAU

DESTROYERS

BARTON, BENHAM, BLUE, CUSHING,
DE HAVEN, DUNCAN, JARVIS, LAFFEY,
MEREDITH, MONSSEN, O'BRIEN,
PORTER, PRESTON, WALKE

MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS

PT-37, PT-43, PT-44, PT-111,
PT-112, PT-123

TRANSPORTS

COLHOUN, GEORGE F. ELLIOTT,
GREGORY, LITTLE

FLEET TUG SEMINOLE

U.S. AND ALLIED NAVAL VESSELS
DAMAGED DURING THE GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN
7 AUGUST 1942 - 9 FEBRUARY 1943

BATTLESHIPS

NORTH CAROLINA
SOUTH DAKOTA

AIRCRAFT CARRIERS

ENTERPRISE, SARATOGA

HEAVY CRUISERS

CHESTER, MINNEAPOLIS, NEW ORLEANS,
PENSACOLA, PORTLAND,
SALT LAKE CITY, SAN FRANCISCO

LIGHT CRUISERS

BOISE, HELENA, SAN JUAN,
ACHILLES (ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY)

DESTROYERS

AARON WARD, BUCHANAN, FARENHOLT,
GWIN, HUGHES, LA VALETTE, MAHAN,
MUGFORD, O'BANNON, PATTERSON,
RALPH TALBOT, SMITH, STERETT

DESTROYER MINESWEEPER ZANE

CORVETTE

KIWI (ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY)

MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT PT-59

TRANSPORTS

BARNETT, ZEILIN

CARGO SHIPS

ALCHIBA, ALHENA

SEAPLANE TENDER MC FARLAND

WALL: 1 - TITLE - THE NAVAL CAMPAIGN
04/25/1991 PANEL 104 - TYPE C - FACE R

THE NAVAL CAMPAIGN

FROM THE INITIAL LANDINGS ON 7 AUGUST 1942 TO THE JAPANESE EVACUATION OF GUADALCANAL IN FEBRUARY 1943, THE U.S. AND THE JAPANESE NAVIES WERE ENGAGED IN SEVEN SPECIFIC NAVAL BATTLES. IN ADDITION, THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN, NUMEROUS SMALLER NAVAL ACTIONS TOOK PLACE INVOLVING CRUISERS, DESTROYERS, NAVAL AIRCRAFT, MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS AND SUBMARINES IN WHICH PLANES AND SHIPS OF BOTH SIDES WERE DAMAGED OR SUNK. SO MANY JAPANESE AND AMERICAN SHIPS OF ALL CLASSES WERE SUNK, INCLUDING TRANSPORTS AND CARGO SHIPS, THAT THE WATER AREA BETWEEN GUADALCANAL AND FLORIDA ISLAND BECAME KNOWN AS "IRONBOTTOM SOUND."

THE FIRST SIX ENGAGEMENTS WERE MAJOR NAVAL BATTLES: FOUR OF THESE WERE NIGHT GUNFIRE ACTIONS AND TWO WERE CARRIER-AIR BATTLES. THE SEVENTH (RENNELL ISLAND) WAS A TYPICAL SEA-AIR BATTLE SIMILAR TO MANY OTHERS FOUGHT DURING THE GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN, BUT THE ONLY ONE OF SUFFICIENT MAGNITUDE TO BE RECORDED IN AMERICAN NAVAL HISTORY WITH A NAME OF ITS OWN.

1. SAVO ISLAND, 9 AUGUST 1942
2. THE EASTERN SOLOMONS, 24-25 AUGUST
3. CAPE ESPERANCE, 11-12 OCTOBER
4. THE SANTA CRUZ ISLANDS, 26-27 OCTOBER
5. NAVAL BATTLE OF GUADALCANAL, 12-15 NOVEMBER
6. TASSAFARONGA, 30 NOVEMBER
7. RENNEL ISLAND, 29-30 JANUARY 1943

WALL: 2 - TITLE: VESSELS SUNK OR DAMAGED III
04/25/1991 PANEL 108 - TYPE C - FACE L

**JAPANESE NAVAL VESSELS
SUNK OR DAMAGED DURING THE
GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN**

<u>SHIP</u>	<u>SUNK</u>	<u>DAMAGED</u>
BATTLESHIPS	2	
AIRCRAFT CARRIERS		1
LIGHT CARRIERS	1	1
HEAVY CRUISERS	3	5
LIGHT CRUISERS	1	2
DESTROYERS	11	20
SUBMARINES	6	
TRANSPORTS	13	
CARGO SHIPS	5	

Serial No. _____

EXCERPTS FROM WAR DIARY.

Enclosure (A)

- October 14 Moored alongside CURTISS. Completed partial tender overhaul.
 0930 - Underway to moor alongside S.S. IRVIN McDOWELL.
 0940 - Moored alongside McDOWELL. Commenced taking aboard deck cargo of avgas and avlube.
 1505 - Underway enroute Espiritu Santo to Guadalcanal in accordance with COMAIRSOPAC Secret despatch 140336:
 "MCFARLAND LOAD 12 TORPEDOES AND 200 DRUMS AVGAS DEPART BUTTON WHEN READY ABOUT 1300 LOVE OCT 14 PROCEED VIA ROUTE NORTH ESPIRITU SANTO AND SOUTH AND WEST OF SAN CRISTOBAL ISLAND SPEED OF ADVANCE 17 KNOTS TO ARRIVE LUNGA ROADS VIA LENGU CHANNEL ABOUT 1930 LOVE OCT 16 X UNLOAD TORPEDOES CACTUS X IF TASK GROUP 62.4.5 HAS COMMENCED DELIVERING AVGAS TO CACTUS DELIVER YOUR DRUMMED AVGAS TO CACTUS AS EMERGENCY SUPPLY X UPON COMPLETION UNLOADING UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED PROCEED VANIKORO RELIEVE BALLARD COMMAND TASK GROUP 63.9 MY OPORDER 100459 XX"
- October 15 Steaming as before.
 0830 - Manned all battle stations.
 0849 - Held test firing of all AA guns.
 0900 - Secured from test firing.
 1108 - Observed AA fire above horizon to northeast. Believed to be from U.S.S. MEREDITH, understood to have been sunk by enemy carrier based planes that day.
 1559 - Sighted plane maneuvering close aboard to starboard and reported same to COMAIRSOPAC as follows: 150355:
 "PLANE WITH TORPEDO SIMILAR TO MITSUBISHI-97 11-52 SOUTH, 162-50 EAST AT 1600 LOVE X RETIRED ON COURSE 065."
 Speed reduced and courses steered during the night so as to make landfall at Nura Island in Indispensable Strait.
- October 16 Steaming as before.
 0445 - Manned all battle stations, entering CACTUS-RING-BOLT area.
 0500 - Received following message from COMAIRSOPAC: 150723:
 "COMAIRSOPAC SENDS X AT 2400 LOVE TODAY THURSDAY WHEN IN VICINITY POSITION LAT. 10-40 LONG. 161-15 RETIRE TO VICINITY OF A POINT LAT. 13-30 LONG. 161-15 THENCE PROCEED TO ARRIVE LUNGA ROADS ABOUT 0900 LOVE 17th."
 0530 - Replied to above message as follows: 151830:
 "YOUR ORDERS RETIRE RECEIVED FIVE HOURS LATE X ALREADY IN LENGU CHANNEL AND CAN ARRIVE LUNGA ROADS BEFORE 0800 LOVE X IF CACTUS CLEAR PROPOSE PROCEED IN UNLOAD FORTY THOUSAND GALLONS AVGAS AND TORPEDOES X BOTH ADDRESSEES ADVISE."
 (Message also addressed to CACTUS.)

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

October 16 (Continued)

0620 - Sighted ship dead ahead in rain squall and reported same to CACTUS as follows: 151921:

"UNIDENTIFIED DESTROYER VICINITY RUA SURA ISLAND REQUEST YOU INVESTIGATE AND PROVIDE AIR COVER THIS VESSEL."

0740 - Received following from COMAIRSOPAC: 152037:

"YOUR 151830 AFFIRMATIVE X SUBJECT ADVICE FROM CACTUS UNLOAD AVGAS TORPEDOES BOMBS AS POSSIBLE TO RETIRE PRIOR DARKNESS TONIGHT FRIDAY."

0940 - Received CACTUS' 152231 as follows:

"CACTUS AREA CLEAR APPROACH BEACH EASTWARD LUNGA POINT."

Set course for Lunga Point.

0950 - Sighted two ships off port bow and reported same to CACTUS as follows: 152255:

"REQUEST PLANE INVESTIGATE TWO SHIPS VICINITY EASTERN END LUNGO CHANNEL IMMEDIATELY."

Friendly fighter (Lt-Cdr. Simpler) approached and indicated area ahead all clear.

1300 - Approached Lunga Point. YP-239 observed aground and under fire from enemy gun in vicinity Kokombona. YP flying Emerg Hypo, but considered own cargo too valuable to risk in rendering assistance so stood toward Lunga Lagoon out of range of Jap gun. YP was later floated, having suffered only superficial damage, and returned to RINGBOLT.

1320 - Anchored off Lunga Lagoon and commenced discharging cargo.

1410 - Interrupted by condition Red signal from shore. Slipped anchor and got underway. Condition shortly changed to Green; returned, picked up anchor and continued with unloading.

Boats returning to the ship brought a total of 60 walking wounded and 100 passengers aboard. Among the latter was Lt.Cdr. Simpler, Commander VF-5.

Unloading proceeded rapidly; deck cargo soon unloaded, but discharge of gasoline from ship's tank continued.

1700 - Friendly fighters seen patrolling overhead. Lt. Cdr. Simpler explained that this usually meant enemy planes expected. Accordingly exchanged following signals with shore station:

To CACTUS: "ARE YOU NOW IN CONDITION RED?"

From CACTUS: "NEGATIVE."

To CACTUS: "ARE FIGHTERS TAKING OFF TO REPEL RAID?"

From CACTUS: "FIGHTERS ARE PRACTICING NEW TACTICS."

October 16 (Continued)

1710 - Received signal from shore station that submarine periscope seen moving toward Lung Point from West. At this time had discharged about 20,000 gallons of gasoline from ship's tank. Large pontoon barge with 400 drums along starboard side, tank lighters on port side.

1715 - Underway, course east, speed 5 knots. Continuing to pump gasoline into vessels alongside.

1750 - Ship still underway and pumping gasoline. Shore station in condition Green. Ship attacked by nine AICHI type 99 dive bombers apparently carrier based. Each plane carried two bombs, estimated about 300 lbs., on racks outboard of fixed landing gear. Planes dived at about 60 degree angle and released bombs at about 300 feet.

With first dive all hands manned battle stations and full ahead rung up on engines. Ship could not maneuver due to vessels alongside, although fortunately these were cast off and clear of the ship about the time the last bomb hit. During the attack the Commanding Officer was concerned with conning the ship. The following facts, however, were established by reliable eye-witnesses:

1 - At least one bomb hit close aboard the port side of the ship. This apparently did no damage.

2 - Most of the bombs dropped astern due to the acceleration of the ship.

3 - The rear-seat men in the planes appeared to be throwing something at the ship; possibly hand-grenades.

4 - One bomb dropped by the last plane hit on the very stern of the ship. This set off at least one depth charge, for the explosion that followed was very much greater than the other bomb explosions and threw all hands on the ship off their feet.

This explosion ignited the gasoline barge which was by this time off the starboard quarter. The flames from this barge were at least a hundred feet high, and it was presumed that the barge, all men on it and the gasoline aboard was destroyed. It was later learned, however, that the barge was not badly damaged, and that even some of the gasoline was later recovered. The fate of the men on this barge was never determined.

5.- A number of passengers congregated in the various passageways and seriously hampered the crew in manning battle stations. Some of these men apparently became panic-stricken and attempted to seize weapons and life jackets being carried by crew members. - Report Action form attached.

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

October 16 (Continued)

1800 - Right after the attack the engines were found to work, but the rudder did not. At first it seemed doubtful that the ship could be maneuvered at all, and there seemed to be danger of beaching in the vicinity of Taivu Point in enemy territory. The port engine throttle had been wrecked by the explosion and steam equivalent to about 1/3 speed was flowing into the ahead turbine at all times. In addition the wreckage aft caused the ship to veer violently to starboard. The engineroom crew found, however, that by admitting more steam to the astern turbine the port engine could be backed about 2/3. This, together with full ahead on the starboard engine would allow the ship to make a course within 90 degrees.

A course for Tulagi was set, and after a certain amount of experimentation, it was found that the ship although yawing violently could make about five knots good.

Meanwhile the dead and wounded were being removed from the wreckage aft, wounded being cared for and fuel and water being shifted forward to take care of the settling of the stern. When about halfway to Tulagi it seemed as if the ship might sink, and the boats and life rafts were made ready for the wounded. All able-bodied hands, however, were put on the forecastle and the pumps began to slow the flooding aft.

1925 - Established visual communications with the signal station on Gavutu Island and requested tow. A similar request was sent to Tulagi via Radio CACTUS.

1930 $\frac{1}{2}$ - Ship dead in the water about five miles southwest of Tulagi; secured main steam stop to port engine.

1950 - Boats from Tulagi alongside. Commenced transfer of passengers and wounded. PT boat attempted to tow ship. Tow not successful.

2050 - Fire in after crew's quarters. Flooded after magazine. Burning mattress extinguished.

2100 - YP-239 alongside and taking ship in tow.

2340 - Anchored Tulagi Harbor. Events and damage to ship reported to all activities South Pacific Area in McFARLAND 161345 as follows:

"CANCEL MY 160600 X SHIP UNDERWAY WITH BARGES ALONGSIDE AVOIDING SUBMARINE WHEN ATTACKED BY NINE DIVE BOMBERS X SHOT DOWN ONE AND DAMAGED ONE X STERN BLOWN COMPLETELY OFF AFT OF AFTER DECK HOUSE X SIX ENLISTED MEN MISSING AND FIVE DEAD MANY WOUNDED X SAME BOB BLEW UP BARGE WITH TWENTY THOUSAND GALLONS GASOLINE X SHIP NOW ANCHORED TULAGI HARBOR X ENGINES OPERATIVE BUT NO RUDDER X PUMPS KEEPING WATER DOWN IN AFTER FLOODED COMPARTMENTS X MORE COMPLETE REPORT OF DAMAGE TOGETHER WITH RECOMMENDATIONS DISPOSITION OF SHIP TOMORROW."

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

October 16 (Continued)

Reference in above message which was cancelled was departure report given by hand to boat messenger to be sent from CACTUS upon ship's completion of unloading.

October 17 Anchored off Government Wharf, Tulagi Harbor. Transferring dead and wounded personnel to beach.
1225 - Condition Red.
1420 - Condition Green.
1440 - YP-239 came alongside to tow ship into back channel.
1800 - Moored port side to the beach in "McFARLAND CHANNEL". Sent following message to COMAIRSOPAC: 170645:
"THIS IS SENT BY MCFARLAND TO COMAIRSOPAC INFO TO COMSOPAC
XX BOMB APPARENTLY EXPLODED ONE OR MORE DEPTH CHARGES X
ALL COMPARTMENTS AFT OF AFTER FUEL TANKS FRAME 137 FLOODED X
AFTER CREWS COMPARTMENT AWASH, PUMPS HOLDING THEIR OWN BUT CANNOT DO SO INDEFINITELY X ENTIRE SHIP MISSING
AFT OF FRAME 164 X PROPELLORS PRACTICALLY UNDAMAGED BUT
STRUTS SHAKY X PARA X CONSIDER THAT SHIP CAN BE REPAIRED
BY SALVAGE TUG IN ABOUT ONE WEEK SO THAT SHE CAN PROCEED
UNDER OWN POWER WITH JURY RUDDER X PARA X SHIP NOW SECURED
ALONGSIDE BANK IN BACK CHANNEL TULAGI HARBOR AND IS SECURELY
CAMOUFLAGED AGAINST AIR ATTACK X PLACE CONSIDERED IDEAL
FOR SALVAGE OPERATIONS XXXX"

October 18 Moored as before. Commencing repairs to wrecked stern. Camouflaging ship.
1225 - Condition Red.
1325 - Condition Green.
Survey of damage to ship was made by Lt. Cdr. Painter, (CEC) USNR, and the following report submitted to COMAIRSOPAC; 182359:
"TO COMAIRSOPAC INFO COMSOPAC X BY HAND TO COMGENS CACTUS AND RINGBOLT X PAINTER SENDING X DAMAGE TO MCFARLAND MAIN DECK AFT GONE TO FRAME 164, FIRST PLATFORM TRANSVERSE BULKHEAD FRAME 161 DAMAGED BY IN PLACE X BULKHEAD AT FRAME 152 DOORS MISSING BUT IN FAIR SHAPE X HOLD TRANSVERSE BULKHEAD FRAME 146 INTACT X BELIEVE BULKHEAD AT FRAME 152 ALSO INTACT X HULL OF SHIP AFT IN PLACE TO AND INCLUDING SHAFT STRUTS AT FRAME 166 X RUDDER GONE X PARA X SHIP NOT IN DANGER X ENGINES OPERATIVE BUT CANNOT PROCEED UNDER OWN POWER UNTIL AFTER COMPARTMENTS PUMPED OUT, SHAFT STRUTS STIFFENED AND JURY RUDDER RIGGED X MINOR REPAIRS UNDERWAY TO INSURE GREATER SAFETY X PARA X THE FOREGOING SUGGESTS THE FOLLOWING: A - SHIP CAN BE TAKEN IN TOW WITHIN 24 HOURS X B - SHIP CAN POSSIBLY PROCEED UNDER OWN POWER BY LIGHTENING AND TRIMMING BY BOW TO EFFECT REPAIRS AFT X

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

October 18 (Continued)

PARA X BELIEVE CAN GET UNDERWAY IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS AFTER SALVAGE EQUIPMENT MADE AVAILABLE X NEED ONE HUNDRED POUNDS WELDING ROD TWENTY FEET ONE EIGHTH INCH OR ONE FOURTH INCH STEEL PIPE TEN BOTTLES OXYGEN X SALVAGE OFFICER TO SUPERVISE X REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS X"

October 20 Same as before.

0830 - SEMINOLE came alongside to starboard; removed after 3" AA gun; assisting in ship's salvage.

1110 - Condition Red.

1125 - Condition Green.

1200 - Condition Red.

1210 - Condition Green.

Following message from COMAIRSOPAC to COMSOPAC info to MCFARLAND received: 200112:

"PRELIMINARY REPORTS INDICATE EXTENSIVE DAMAGE TO MCFARLAND WHICH REQUIRES NAVY YARD REPAIR X IN VIEW HER AGE AND HER POTENTIAL USEFULNESS AS STATION TENDER RINGBOLT DOUBT ARISES AS TO ECONOMY AND ADVISABILITY HER REMOVAL AT PRESENT X AM AWAITING LT CDR PAINTER'S REPORT BEFORE MAKING FINAL RECOMMENDATION X FOR PRESENT RECOMMEND SEE REMAIN RINGBOLT X SEMINOLE ASSISTING IN SUCH REPAIR AS WILL CLEAR HER OF WATER AND KEEP HER AFLOAT X"

Also received from COMSOPAC seven hours after above message was the follows; 200822:

"ORDERS FOR MOVEMENT MCFARLAND TO BUTON IN TOW OF SEMINOLE WILL BE ISSUED SOON AS ANTISUBMARINE ESCORT AVAILABLE X AWAIT ORDERS X MCFARLAND INFORM COMGEN RINGBOLT."

Lt-Cdr. Painter's daily report; 200930:

"PAINTER SENDING X MY PRELIMINARY REPORT ON MCFARLAND SENT VIA CACTUS RADIO YESTERDAY X WORK OUTLINED PROGRESSING FAVORABLY BY USE OF SALVAGE GEAR FROM SEMINOLE X BULKHEAD AT FRAME 162 NOW WATERTIGHT TO HOLD X AFTER GUN AND DECKHOUSE BEING REMOVED X WILL PROCEED ON PLAN AS OUTLINED TO MAKE SHIP SEAWORTH X CAPABLE SALVAGE OFFICER ABOARD SEMINOLE X WILL RETURN BUTON VIA CACTUS."

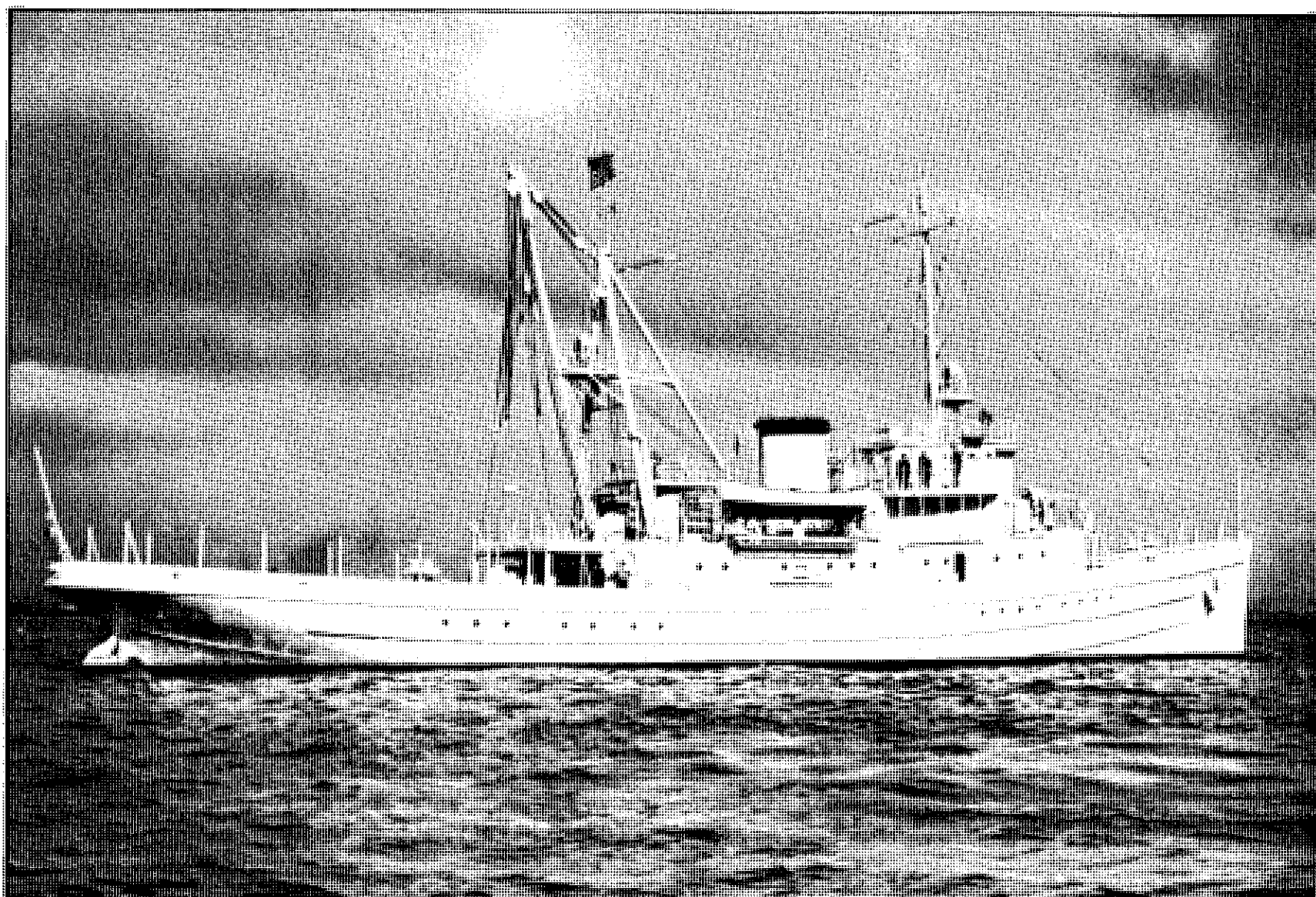
October 23 Same as before.

1100 - Condition Red.

1215 - Condition Green.

Following message from COMSOPAC to COMTASFOR 62 received by MCFARLAND for info; 230242:

"REQUEST YOU ISSUE NECESSARY ORDERS FOR MCFARLAND IN TOW OF SEMINOLE ESCORTED BY TREVER ZANE RINGBOLT TO BUTON UPON COMPLETION UNLOADING LAST TWO SHIPS MENTIONED ABOUT 25 OCTOBER AND PROVIDED SITUATION JUSTIFIES."



Salvage experts from the Fleet tug U.S.S. Seminole (AT-55) helped to keep the McFarland afloat and to make her seaworthy for the long voyage home. Unfortunately, the Seminole was sunk by gunfire from two Japanese destroyers on October 23, 1942, while ferrying ammunition, gasoline and troops to Guadalcanal, but miraculously, only one of her 85-man complement was killed. (Official U.S. Navy photograph.)

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

- October 24 Same as before.
Tactical situation of RINGBOLT - CACTUS area very uncertain due to constant presence of enemy ships in vicinity. following message received from COMSOPAC; 240152:
"MODIFY ORIGINATOR COMSOPAC'S 230242 X MCFARLAND TO REMAIN RINGBOLT AREA AS FLOATING STORAGE X SEMINOLE DEPART WITH TREVER ZANE X COMTASKFOR 62 HAS BY HAND."
- October 25 Same as before.
Tactical situation unchanged. SEMINOLE carrying avgas to CACTUS attacked and sunk by three enemy destroyers. YP-347 also sunk by same ships and TREVER ZANE engaged in running battle with same, during forenoon.
Received following message from COMSOPAC; 242334:
"ACTION MCFARLAND FROM COMSOPAC X DESTROY ECM AND ASSOCIATED PUBLICATIONS X DESTROY ALL OTHER UNNECESSARY PUBLICATIONS RETAIN CHANNEL 104, 106, 135, 136, CSP 1270, 1286, 1312 THROUGH FOX X REPORT DESTRUCTION DIRECT TO ME."
- October 26 Same as before.
1207 - Condition Red.
1330 - Condition Green.
Acknowledged orders to destroy publications; to COMSOPAC, 251115: "HAVE COMPLIED YOUR 242334 X DO NOT REPEAT NOT HOLD PUBLICATIONS CHANNEL 106."
With the exception of the few cryptographic aids named by COMSOPAC to be retained, all other secret and confidential publications, correspondence, files and charts were destroyed by burning in the ship's boilers.
- October 27 Same as before.
1740 - Condition Red.
1750 - Condition Green.
By COMSOPAC'S 270012 quoted below McFARLAND was detached from duties as task group 63.4 and assigned to duty in task force 62. "MCFARLAND IS ASSIGNED TO TASK FORCE 62 AS A UNIT OF LOCAL DEFENSE FORCES RINGBOLT CACTUS."
- October 28 Same as before.
COMSOPAC ordered McFARLAND Communication Officer to report to COMADNAVRASE RINGBOLT for temporary additional duty.
- October 29 Same as before.
0403 - Condition Red.
0420 - Condition Green.

U. S. S. MCFARLAND AVD-14

October 29 (Continued)

The office of COMADNAVBASE RINGBOLT was set up and provisions of COMSOPAC orders 290453 relayed by CACTUS were complied with:

"PASS MCFARLAND FOR ACTION X COMGEN RINGBOLT AND SENOFF ALL NAVAL UNITS RINGBOLT FOR INFO X COMMANDING OFFICER MCFARLAND, LT CDR J.C. ALDERMAN, USN, DIRECTED REPORT COMGEN RINGBOLT UNDER PRINCIPLE UNITY OF COMMAND FOR ADDITIONAL DUTY AS COMNAVBASE RINGBOLT AS OF 28 OCTOBER."

October 31 Same as before.

Naval organization at RINGBOLT prior to the establishment of Naval Base RINGBOLT had been scarcely adequate to the assigned task of handling and unloading ships. Lack of personnel and essential material was the main reason for this unsatisfactory condition. More than half the officers and crew of MCFARLAND were accordingly transferred to "shore duty" and the limited facilities of the ship placed at the disposal of the base. In setting up Radio Tulagi, all the radio personnel and equipment of the ship were placed ashore; signalmen added to the station's force. Small boats were the backbone of all naval undertaking and a badly needed boat repair shop was accordingly set up by the ship's engineering force. Additional effort was directed toward the construction of a seaplane base, improvement of operational facilities for the PT boats, and establishment of navigational aids within the area.

November 1 Moored port side to the beach in "MCFARLAND CHANNEL", Tulagi Harbor. Effecting repairs to damaged stern. Rendering services as station ship and floating storage to Naval Base RINGBOLT.

November 14 Same as before.
0750 - AARON WARD moored to beach astern of the ship in MCFARLAND Channel. PORTLAND anchored in harbor off Sasapi.

November 18 Same as before.
1500 - BALLARD moored alongside to starboard.
1600 - AARON WARD stood out of Tulagi Harbor.

November 19 Same as before.
0520 - BALLARD stood out of Tulagi.
1620 - Underway from MCFARLAND Channel to test jury rudder in Tulagi.
1950 - Moored alongside starboard side of PORTLAND to fuel from same.

U. S. S. McFARLAND AVD-14

November 25th 1600 - Received orders from GTR 62 to join ALBA, McALLA and TREVER in Task Unit 62.4.5 to proceed at 1800 November 26 from CACTUS to BUTTON.

- November 26 Same as before.
0655 - Underway in tow of YP-239.
0815 - Moored starboard side to Government Wharf.
1617 - Underway in tow of YP-239 enroute Tulagi to join task unit 62.4.5 in Lengo Channel. Rudder cable caught in screw and parted. Cleared harbor; YP cast off tow; proceeding under own power, steering with engines to rendezvous with Task Unit 62.4.5.
1900 - Joined TREVER, proceeding eastward through Lengo Channel.
- November 27 Steaming as before.
0700 - Stopped and repaired rudder cable.
0745 - Rejoined Task Unit 62.4.5.
- November 29 Steaming as before.
0720 - ROSEWOOD alongside as tow through mine field into BUTTON.
1020 - Moored to port side of PERKINS alongside RIGEL.
2320 - PERKINS underway from between McFARLAND and RIGEL.
- November 30 Moored starboard side to port side of RIGEL. Undergoing emergency overhaul from same. Rigging new jury rudder; making ship seaworthy for trip to Navy Yard.

The U.S.S. McFarland (DD-237/AVD-14) in World War II

Photograph Credits

<u>Description</u>	<u>Source Code/Ident. Number</u>
Stbd. beam, anchored, 1930's	NI Order with photocopy
S. beam, at pier, Pearl H., 5/17/42	RWP N-21574
Stern view, Pearl Harbor, 5/17/42	RWP N-21575A
USS <u>Williamson</u> (AVD-2), stbd. beam	RWP N-3891
USS <u>Ballard</u> (AVD-10), fwd. half	NA 19-N-26639
USS <u>Ballard</u> , after half, 1941-42	NA 19-N-26638
PBY-5 refueling from small tender	NI Order with photocopy
PBY-5 taking off, bow view	NI Order with photocopy
Damaged after deckhouse, 12/42	NA Note #1
C.O. Alderman & X.O. Gardner, 12/42	NA 80-G-36083
Mount 1, camouflaged, 11/42	NA Note #1
Ship camouflaged, moored to bank (2)	NA Note #1
USS <u>Jamestown</u> (PG-55), port beam	NI Order with photocopy
Damaged stern, Pearl H., 12/42	RWP N-2157A
New stern, Pearl H., March 1943	RWP N-21576
Aerial, stbd. bow, u/way, 4/43	NI Order with photocopy
Refueling from <u>Gambier Bay</u> , 4/14/44	RWP N-3859
PBY refueling from tender	NA 80-G-20627
Monument, Purvis Bay, Fla. Is., 1944	NA 80-G-275700
Monument plaque (on above)	NA 80-G-240318
USS <u>Seminole</u> (AT-65) u/way, s. beam	NA 19-N-22658

* * * * *

Key to Sources:

NI U.S. Naval Institute Photo Service
Beach Hall
291 Wood Road, Annapolis, MD 21402-5034
(410) 268-6110; FAX: (410) 269-7940
RWP Real War Photos, P.O. Box 728, Hammond, IN 46325
NA National Archives II, 8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, MD 20740-6001
Still Picture ref.: (301) 713-6625, Ext. 234
(Request addresses/price lists of private vendors)

Notes:

1 Negative at National Archives II filed with the McFarland's action report of 12/15/42, Ser. 052, Encl. (B).

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
February, 2001

The U.S.S. McFarland (DD-237/AVD-14) in World War II

Bibliography

Books:

- Alden, Cdr. John D., USN, Flush Decks and Four Pipes. Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1965
- Fahey, James, The Ships and Aircraft of the U.S. Fleet, Victory Edition. New York: Ships and Aircraft, 1945.
- Friedman, Norman, U.S. Destroyers: An Illustrated Design History. Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1982.
- Morison, RAdm. Samuel Eliot, USNR, Coral Sea, Midway and Submarine Actions, Vol. IV, and, The Struggle for Guadalcanal, Vol. V of History of U.S. Naval Operations in World War II. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1949.
- Wagner, Ray, American Combat Planes. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1982.
- Whitley, M. J., Destroyers of World War II. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1988.

Conversations:

- Mrs. Abigail Alderman, widow of RAdm. John C. Alderman, USN (Ret.), Commanding Officer, 8/42 - 1/43.
- Capt. Norman E. Chalmers, USN (Ret.), Chief Engineer in 1942.
- Carl C. Ellis, Lt., USNR, and Gunnery Officer in 1942.
- Mrs. Gemmill, widow of Gordon Gemmill, Lt.(jg), USNR, and First Lieutenant in 1942.
- Mrs. Yvonne Dean Hentges, widow of Cdr. Frederick S. Dean, USN (Ret.), Communications Officer in 1942.
- Emit L. McCafferty, III, son of the ship's doctor (Lt., USNR, in 1942).
- Harvey J. Peters, crewmember and Fireman 2nd Class in 1942.

Miscellaneous:

- Action reports, McFarland: 7/24/42, 12/15/42, 11/16/44.
- Article: Rawlings, Charles, "The McFarland Comes Home," The Saturday Evening Post, March 13, 1943.
- Deck logs, McFarland (Rough copy at the National Archives)
- Personnel diary (muster rolls/Report Of Changes sheets) on microfilm at the National Archives.
- Ships' Histories Branch file at the Naval Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard.
- War Diary, McFarland, 10/14 - 11/30/42.

* * * * *

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
February, 2001

2006 ADDENDUM

Dedication in 1944 of the Monument at Purvis Bay, Florida Island, British Solomon Islands, to honor ". . . the officers and men of the United States and Allied Navies who died in the fierce Battles in 'Iron Bottom Bay'" during the Guadalcanal Campaign, August 7, 1942 to February 9, 1943.

Editor's Note:

Around 1995 Elizabeth ('Bettsy') R. Perkins Shaw sent me copies of several handwritten letters she had received early in 1944 from her first husband, Commander Van Ostrand Perkins, USN (K.I.A.). In 2002 most of his letters were included in Bettsy Shaw's memoir, Beside Me Still, published by the Naval Institute Press shortly after she died. However, his letters regarding the dedication ceremony were edited out by the publisher.

This addendum consists of typed excerpts from these letters plus a remarkable photograph of the dedication ceremony which I discovered only a few years ago (National Archives II: 127-GW1008, #80929).

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
June, 2006

Florida Island Monument on Purvis Bay
(Dedicated on April 30, 1944)

Excerpts from letters written to Mrs. Elizabeth R. P. Shaw by her first husband, Cdr. Van Ostrand Perkins, USN (KIA '44) in 1944:

Today was one of those days - in fact, it was the first busy one I've had in a long time. I was away from the ship all day and couldn't write more on this letter this morning and afternoon, as I expected to, and get it in the mail. It will go tomorrow.

Well, my busy day was about the memorial ceremony we plan to have. I went with a Captain Carter on what I thought would be an hour's visit with the Admiral to iron out the details. The Admiral set the date for this Sunday and indicated what he would like to have and who he wanted to have invited, etc.. Well, I am the "glad hand boy", so I got the list of guests typed up and arranged and started the dust flying on some of the details. Like getting the chaplains lined up and telling them what we want, getting the band arranged for and so forth. Then this afternoon Captain Carter gave me one of his fast boats and I went five miles or so up the line to another part of the naval settlement extending tidings and invitations to certain U.S. naval and New Zealand-Australian naval people. I didn't get back to the ship until after five. It was an interesting boat ride I had though, because I'd never been up to that part of the area before. There are no roads as I've said, and it's all jungle between here and there - so all communication has to be by boat and not by cars.

Tomorrow I have to go over to _____, about 20 miles across the bay, and call on more dignitaries and invite them, get a Vice Admiral to agree to make a speech and arrange for photographers and publicity from a Photographic Squadron. That will be another full day's job I fear.

I enjoy doing this, however, for many reasons, not the least of which is the fact that I get off the ship all the time and am getting a regular Cook's tour of this area, seeing it at close hand. Much of it is well known and famous which I've seen from the distance but have never really been close to. Of course it is all so built up now by us that it would be unrecognizable almost to those who first landed.

It is amazing what kind of people Americans are. We land in the middle of the jungle and in no time have a little area cleared, through which we build roads, put up piers, storehouses, shops, etc. - and where there are roads you must watch to see that you aren't run over by jeeps, giant trucks and everything on wheels. There is nothing permanent here, and I doubt if much money has been wasted, but we certainly do move in on a place with our machinery. I'll bet we have more trucks, steam shovels, tractors, etc. in a small area like this than all the contractors in the Philippine Islands had together, and if the Japs judged us by our efforts in the Philippines, how wrong they were.

There must be much consternation in Tokyo these days, because

in the Pacific the war is humming along at a great rate; probably even better than most of us realize.

* * * * *

We had a meeting of the Board of Governors of the Club, and I find that on the Board are a Captain, four Commanders, four Lieut. Comdrs. and two Lieuts.. I am glad I have the job, because this being in such a history-making area, they have plans to make it a sort of permanent part of America by erecting a suitable plaque and having the little monument dedicated with a large ceremony and so forth. So I, having a very personal interest in any dedication, volunteered to serve on the committee for the arrangements of this ceremony. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to know that they are going to do something to commemorate and make a permanent record of the achievements that resulted from the hard fighting and unimaginable hardships and work that has taken place in this area. You probably have to have fought over it and come back to get the feeling that I have. People who arrive today can't ever imagine what it was like "in the old days."

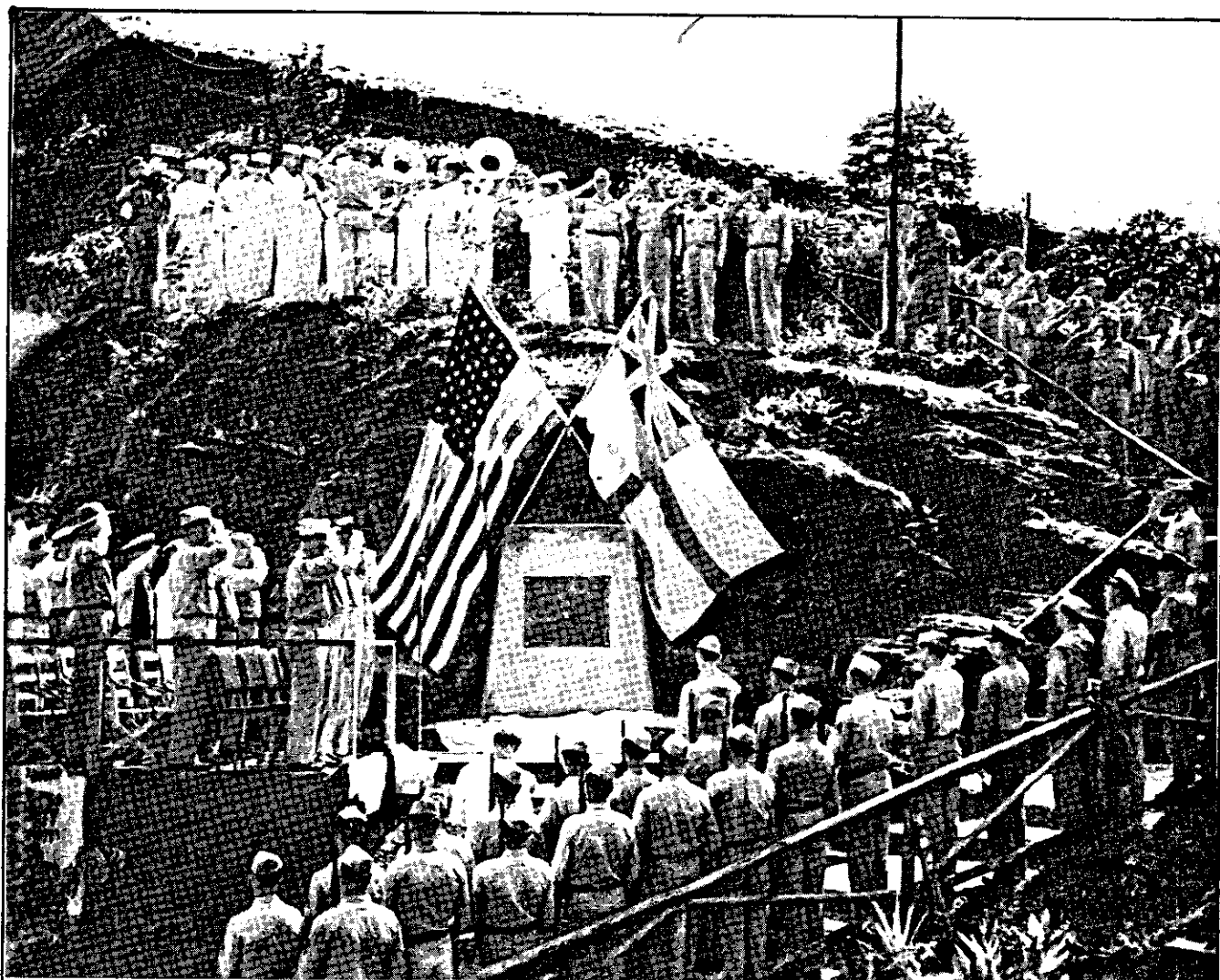
* * * * *

I've enclosed the little program for our ceremony which took place this morning. It went off very well and very smoothly I thought, and I had a front row place to stand - right where the activities were. There were numerous cameramen taking pictures, and I expect that they will send me a set in as much as I asked for it, organized them and gave them all some beer afterwards.

Friday I flew over to _____ in one of our planes to line up and invite the "big wigs" stationed there and the press. It certainly was a delightful trip. It was a beautiful day, and it was nice to fly and to see some of the country from the air, as scenically - and from a distance - it is very grand looking.

After we landed I got a jeep and driver from one of the officers, and in driving around inviting the guests I had a good chance to look things over and was duly impressed by the activity, accomplishments and mud.

I saw Ronnie Rankin this morning at the ceremony and expect to have a few beers with him later this afternoon. I also bumped into two people you don't know. One was the ex-Chief Boatswain's Mate of the Atlanta - he is now an officer - and the other, a lad who was on one of the destroyers that got sunk that unforgettable night. We were together in the hospital in New Zealand. It certainly was nice to see those two again. I always like to see old friends, and particularly when we have something great in common.



A bronze plaque, dedicated "In memory of the officers and men of the United States and Allied Navies who gave their lives at Iron Bottom Bay, 1942-43," was unveiled on April 30, 1944. The plaque overlooks Purvis Bay, an inlet in Florida Island, British Solomon Islands Protectorate, about twenty miles northeast of Henderson Field on Guadalcanal. U.S. Navy vessels sunk by the enemy in the Bay and near vicinity included seven cruisers, twelve destroyers and three destroyer transports.

(Archives II, College Park, MD)

About The Editor

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., Commander, USNR (Ret.), received his commission through the NROTC Program at Dartmouth College in 1950. Following graduation he saw action off Korea aboard the USS Douglas H. Fox (DD-779) when this destroyer dueled with numerous North Korean shore batteries in the Sea of Japan. Many of the photographs he took during this period have been donated to the Naval Historical Foundation, and two of them appeared in the coffee-table book, The Navy, published by the Foundation in 2000. After completing three years of active duty he began a civilian career in public accounting and later in management positions at Raytheon Company in Waltham, Massachusetts.

In 1993 he developed a strong interest in naval history and began editing a series of illustrated ships' histories primarily of U.S. destroyers sunk in World War II. Primary source documents such as action reports, ships' war diaries, medal citations and muster rolls are included in these histories as well as many firsthand accounts. His booklets are not for sale, but he sends complimentary copies to the survivors and to the families of crewmembers killed on these vessels.

Commander Wilde is a life member of the Naval Historical Foundation and the U.S. Naval Institute.

Historical Compilations by the Editor:

(Destroyer/Destroyer Escort Hulls in World War II)

<u>United States Ship</u>	<u>Date Sunk/ (Damaged)</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Killed/ Wounded¹</u>
<u>Aaron Ward</u> (DD-483)	04/07/43	Guadalcanal	42/139*
<u>Barton</u> (DD-599)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	164/32
<u>Borie</u> (DD-215)	11/01/43	North Atlantic	27/00
<u>Colhoun</u> (APD-2)	08/30/42	Tulagi	51/18
<u>Corry</u> (DD-463)	06/06/44	Normandy	24/55
<u>Cushing</u> (DD-376)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	72/67
<u>DeHaven</u> (DD-469)	02/01/43	Guadalcanal	168/40
<u>Douglas H. Fox</u> (DD-779)	(05/17/45)	Okinawa	10/36
<u>Drexler</u> (DD-741)	05/28/45	Okinawa	158/54
<u>Duncan</u> (DD-485)	10/12/42	Guadalcanal	48/35
<u>Emmons</u> (DMS-22)	04/06/45	Okinawa	60/78
<u>Fiske</u> (DE-143)	08/02/44	North Atlantic	33/65
<u>Glennon</u> (DD-620)	06/10/44	Normandy	25/49*
<u>Halligan</u> (DD-584)	03/26/45	Okinawa	160/43
<u>Hammann</u> (DD-412)	06/06/42	Midway	84/63
<u>Laffey</u> (DD-459)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	59/114
<u>Lansdale</u> (DD-426)	04/20/44	Mediterranean	49/76
<u>McFarland</u> (AVD-14)	(10/16/42)	Guadalcanal	12/13
<u>Meredith</u> (DD-726)	06/09/44	Normandy	35/28
<u>Monssen</u> (DD-436)	11/13/42	Guadalcanal	145/37
<u>Perry</u> (DMS-17)	09/13/44	Angaur/Peleliu	8/17
<u>Preston</u> (DD-379)	11/15/42	Guadalcanal	117/26
<u>Spence</u> (DD-512)	12/18/44	Luzon, P.I.	315/24
<u>Strong</u> (DD-467)	07/05/43	Cent. Solomons	45/61
<u>Walke</u> (DD-416)	11/15/42	Guadalcanal	82/48

* * * * *

Notes:

* Total for two engagements with the enemy

¹ Including those presumed dead more than a year subsequent to the date they were reported missing either due to enemy action or by drowning.

E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
Commander, USNR (Ret.)
June, 2005

Locations Where Historical Compilations by the Editor
Are Available For Researchers

¹ Air Zoo, Guadalcanal Campaign Collection, Potage, Michigan
ECU Manuscript Collection, Joyner Library, Greenville, NC
Louisiana Naval War Memorial Library, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

² Maine Maritime Museum Library, Bath, Maine
Mariners' Museum Research Library, Newport News, Virginia
Mystic Seaport's G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic, Connecticut

National Archives II Library, College Park, Maryland
³ National D-Day Museum Library Collection, New Orleans, LA
National Museum of Pacific War, War Studies, Fredericksburg, TX

Naval Historical Center, Navy Dept. Library, Washington Navy Yard
_____, Operational Archives Branch, Washington Navy Yard
_____, Ships' Histories Branch, Washington Navy Yard

Naval War College, Naval Historical Collection, Newport, RI
N.Y. Public Library, 42nd & 5th Ave., Room 315, New York, N.Y.
² Portland Public Library, Portland Room, Portland, Maine

⁴ Tin Can Sailors, Inc., Research Library, Somerset, Massachusetts
US Naval Academy, Nimitz Library Special Collections, Annapolis
U.S. Naval Institute, History Division, Beach Hall, Annapolis, MD

U.S. Navy Memorial's Research Library, Washington, D.C.
USS Slater (DE-766) Library, Albany, New York

* * * * *

Notes:


¹ Only ships which participated in the Guadalcanal Campaign:
Aaron Ward, Barton, Colhoun, Cushing, DeHaven, Duncan, Laffey,
McFarland, Monssen, Preston, Walke.

² Only Bath-built ships: DeHaven, Drexler, Emmons, Meredith,
Spence, Strong

³ Only ships sunk off the Normandy Beachhead: Corry, Glennon,
Meredith

⁴ By appointment only: (508) 677-0515

E. A. Wilde, Jr.
June, 2006



The New York Public Library
CATNYP: The Research Libraries Online Catalog

HELP | ABOUT CATNYP | CLASSES | ACCESS CARD | FINDING AIDS | LEO

Start Over | Save Records | Return to List | Another Search | (Search History)

AUTHOR | wilde e | Entire Collection | Search

Record 17 of 25
Record: [Prev](#) [Next](#)

Call # JFF 05-2269
Author Wilde, E. Andrew.
Title **The U.S.S. McFarland (DD-237/AVD-14) in World War II : documents, recollections and photographs / E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., editor.**
Imprint Needham, Mass. : The Editor, 2001.

LOCATION	CALL NO.	STATUS
<u>Humanities- General Research- Rm315</u>	<u>JFF 05-2269</u>	AVAILABLE

Location Humanities- General Research- Rm315
Edition Rev.
Descript 1 v. (127 p.) : ill., map, ports. ; 29 cm.
Note Cover title.
Includes bibliography.
Subject McFarland (Seaplane tender (destroyer) : AVD-14)
Guadalcanal, Battle of, Solomon Islands, 1942-1943.
World War, 1939-1945 -- Naval operations, American.
World War, 1939-1945 -- Personal narratives, American.
Alt title USS McFarland (DD-237/AVD-14) in World War Two

Record 17 of 25
Record: [Prev](#) [Next](#)

Start Over | Save Records | Return to List | Another Search | (Search History)

Copyright © 1995-2005 by The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.



May 14, 1996

Special Collections
Joyner Library

919-328-6671
919-328-4834 Fax

East Carolina
Manuscript Collection
328-6671

Hoover Collection on
International Communism
328-6780

North Carolina Collection
328-6601

Rare Book Collection
328-6780

University Archives
328-6679

Cdr. E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., USNR(Ret)
1210 Greendale Avenue, #339
Needham, Massachusetts 02192

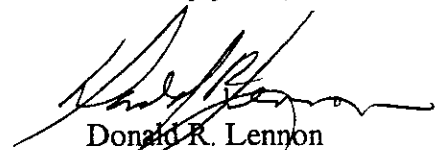
Dear Commander Wilde:

The package arrived containing your booklets concerning the United States Ships BARTON (DD-599) MONSSEN (DD-436), McFARLAND (AVD-14) and LAFHEY (DD-459). Without question these are certainly worthwhile compilations which should be of considerable assistance to faculty, students, and visiting scholars studying the U.S. Navy during World War II. We are very pleased to establish the E. Andrew Wilde, Jr., Papers within the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation Collection here. These and all other booklets and materials that you wish to donate will become a part of your files. We also would be interested in including the photographs that you mention in your letter. We regularly have researchers inquire for images of particular ships and we have been attempting to build as comprehensive a collection of Navy ship prints as possible.

Again we thank you for your willingness to donate your ship books and photographs for preservation at East Carolina University. We look forward to receiving the remaining booklets and prints.

With very best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours,



Donald R. Lennon
Coordinator
Special Collections

/sm

1210 Greendale Ave., #339
Needham, MA 02192
January 18, 1997

Eugene L. Keller, Sr., Curator
Guadalcanal Memorial Museum
7178 Oakbrook Circle
Portage, Michigan 49002

Dear Gene,

I'm sending you (in this and in an additional mailing) copies of my historical booklets on the:

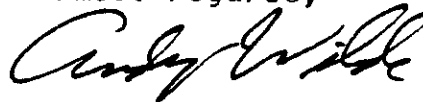
Aaron Ward (DD-483)
Colhoun (APD-2)
Cushing (DD-376)
DeHaven (DD-469)
Duncan (DD-485)
Laffey (DD-459)
Seminole (AT-65)
Walke (DD-416)

Previously I sent you booklets on the:

Barton (DD-599)
McFarland (AVD-14)
Monssen (DD-436)

I hope you appreciate the work which went into these booklets and safeguard them, so that they will be available for serious historians.

Warmest regards,



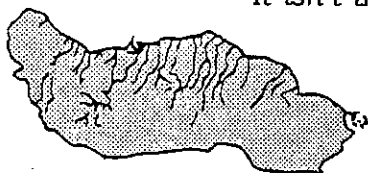
E. Andrew Wilde, Jr.
Commander, USNR (Ret.)

cc (w/o encl.): Ted Blahnik



Guadalcanal Campaign Veterans

It isn't the cost of belonging — it's the price you paid to be eligible.



E.L. Keller Sr.
Past President, G.C.V.
Curator Guadalcanal Memorial Museum
7178 Oakbrook Circle
Portage, Michigan 49002
(616) 324-3484

January 24, 1997

Hello Commander:

I can't begin to tell you how much I appreciate your donation of these very fine historical booklets to our Guadalcanal Memorial Museum. What a great additions to our library. You must of put in many hours of work to get so much information on those ships. Some student of the 2nd W.W. who comes into our museum, looking for facts regarding lost ships and sea battles will get more than he expected. I thank you with all my heart and I am going to talk to the President of the GCV to see if we can send you a healthy donation. You must of spent a fortune on these. I can't believe you are not charging anything for them.

Please except my thanks as well as the thanks of the 4000 members of the Guadalcanal Campaign Veterans for your kind donation.

You will be receiving a letter, (form) sent out by the Kalamazoo Aviation Museum, acknowledging your donation.

Again, thank you so very much and God bless you and yours.

Yours in comradeship,

E.L. Keller Sr.

FIRST TO RECEIVE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

Hi:

The USS McFARLAND AVD-14 had its first reunion since 1942 and our honored guest was CMDR.E.Andrew Wilde USN (Ret.). The commander has compiled a book about the McFARLAND and did much searching to find our present locations so that we could get together. Robert Swanson and thomas Rish organized the reunion which was held in Reno,NV.

We all had the opportunity of telling our sea stories and, later, Capt.Norman E. Chalmers USN (Ret.) told us an interesting incident that occurred in the wardroom on or about the 15th of October 1942. At that time we were in a convoy heading to Guadalcanal when we were ordered to return to the New Hebrides because a large Jap fleet was heading south. Our captain, Lt.Cmdr. J.C.Alderman USN had called a meeting and informed the officers about the command to return but added that the Marines on the Canal needed our gas-oil and supplies. Incidentally he had an Annapolis classmate and good friend who was in one of the squadrons on the canal. He further stated that he was going to send a message stating that we were

going to carry out our original orders (which were to go to Lunga Point).

We were lucky and got to Lunga Point and unloaded most of our supplies when we were attacked by nine bombers and one of their bombs hit us in the depth charge rack and we lost 30 feet of our stern. We headed for Tulagi with some difficulty. The next day we recieved a message from Admiral Nimitz stating "I like your guts".

A wooden rudder was designed and built by the crew headed by Captain N.E.Chalmers USN (Ret.) and assisted by members of the crew including James Stark and myself. He and I are the only ones left of the "BIG SIX" (all over 230 lbs. at that time.

Chalmers speech was very inspiring and enlightening!

We hope to have another reunion next year (1996) which will be headed by Kebbie J. Turner and you may get in touch with him at 11152 Windjammer Drive-Frisco, TX 75034 or phone (214)370-2410.

Captain Chalmers told us we were the first ship to recieve the Presidential Unit Citation.

Aloha-Wes Cooper-312 River Isle-Bradenton, FL 34208

USS McFARLAND HOLDS REUNION

Charles Finch of the AVD-14 wrote to let us know that they had their first ever reunion in Reno, Nevada last September. It was put together by Bob Swanson and Tom Rish who did a great job! The reunion really got off the ground through the efforts of Cmdr.E.Andrew Wilde USNR (Ret.) who researched the McFarland and found some of the members who, in turn, found other members.

All hands had a great time visiting and enjoying their boat trip on Lake Tahoe and trip to Virginia City.



William Ewing is 39, a Mississippian who transferred to Hawaii from New York in 1932. He was working then for the Associated Press. In 1936 he went back to New York but stayed only a couple of weeks, returning to Honolulu to join The Star-Bulletin. He began his radio news commentary over KGMB in November, 1940, under Star-Bulletin sponsorship. The day the war began he reported for active duty at Pearl Harbor. In June, 1942, he was released by the Navy in order to permit resumption of his broadcasts as a war correspondent. He is accredited to both the War Department and the U. S. Pacific Fleet. His program is heard six evenings weekly at 6:15 over KGMB; on Saturdays he shortwaves a 15-minute commentary on the Pacific war over the Mutual network, heard at 6:15 p.m., eastern war time.

FOREWORD

This little book comprises a selected few of the broadcasts from a program which is presented six evenings a week over Station KGMB, Honolulu, under the sponsorship of The Honolulu Star-Bulletin. The reader will have to bear with me by recognizing that any oral presentation tends to seem wordy when put down in writing, and any writing which deals with day to day developments is bound to seem stale when later reviewed. Some of these articles have been lightly edited in an effort to remove this dated flavor, but on the whole they are printed here in their original form. Some of them represent what is commonly referred to as "analysis" of the news, but which, so far as I am concerned, is simply a business of taking a lot of loose ends and trying to fit them together into an understandable whole. A few others deal with exploits of our fighting men. I hope this book, if it serves no other purpose, will bring home to more people the courage and efficiency of these young Americans who out here in the Pacific have been at grips with the enemy since the first day of the war. Trained for peace, they have reacted to war magnificently. Take the case of Ensign Neal Scott, whose story is told on page 32. Scott was the son of a Presbyterian minister. Born in Montgomery, Alabama, where his father was serving a church, he went to high school and junior college at Valdosta, Georgia, and later to Davidson College, in North Carolina. He chose business administration as a career. He was a typical small town American boy, reared in the wholesome atmosphere of a small town American home, and embarked on the sort of life which is peculiarly American. Yet on the afternoon of October 26, 1942, under the hot sun of the far South Pacific, young Scott proved himself to be the same sort of fighting man who has won his country's battles for 167 years. Nothing could have been further from the sort of life he had planned for himself than the action on the deck of his ship that afternoon. Yet Scott was as much at home as he would have been on his father's front porch in Goldsboro, North Carolina. He fought the enemy fiercely and efficiently until he was mortally wounded, and his last words to his mates were to keep up the fight.

The spirit of Neal Scott is typical of thousands of other American boys who have died in the Pacific war, but it is not their spirit so much I am talking about. They also know how to fight effectively, in many instances after very little training. They are fighting an aggressive and implacable enemy, and they would be the last to belittle the ability of this enemy in the business of making war. America already owes a great debt to these men who have met the enemy who first struck at us, and who have held the line in the Pacific while preparations were made at home to strike the enemy in Europe.

WILLIAM EWING.

*Honolulu, Hawaii,
March 15, 1943.*

*To the Mc Farland, a great ship.
William Ewing*

THE VOYAGE OF THE MCFARLAND

Broadcast
Dec. 30, 1942

THIS IS THE STORY OF A VOYAGE, which, though it covered only a few hundred miles, is similar in its salient feature to the greatest voyage of them all, the one that discovered America, 450 years earlier to the month. The greatness of the voyage of Columbus, and the greatness of the one I am about to relate, lay in the greatness of decision, by the leader, not to turn back. Columbus may have been less clever than he later described himself to be, in subduing the fears of his men by falsifying his log, so they would not know how far they had come from home. But Columbus knew where he wanted to go, and he had the courage to keep on going when he might easily have justified himself in turning back.

The hero of our voyage in 1942 also had ample reason for turning back when within sight of his goal—he was, in fact, ordered to turn back, because of the dangers that lay ahead. But he, like Columbus, also knew where he wanted to go, and why. Instead of accepting his orders and hiding himself and his ship to a safer place, he chose to ask his superior officer for authority to complete his mission. Such permission was granted, and though he nearly lost his ship, he delivered the goods where they were supposed to go and where they were needed.

The hero of this tale, and our modern Columbus, is Lieutenant Commander John C. Alderman, of Portland, Oregon, who on October 14 of this year was commanding officer of the *U.S.S. McFarland*. October 14 was the historic day in our story, because that was the day the voyage started. The *McFarland* was an aircraft tender. "Aircraft tender" is a rather flossy term for the *McFarland*, because although that was her present purpose, actually she was an old twelve hundred ton four-stacker destroyer, converted for service to the fleet air arm. She had already had a brush with the enemy, an encounter with a Japanese submarine, and to the best of the knowledge available, the sub will sail no more, but lies on the bottom of the Pacific Ocean. That was in July, and since July the *McFarland* had been in the South Pacific, feeding the hungry engines of the planes that pored over the seascape in search of enemy craft.

On October 14 the *McFarland* was loaded with all she could carry, in the way of ammunition and fuel, and Commander Alderman was ordered to take her into Guadalcanal, where our land and air forces were then fighting grimly to beat back the great Japanese mid-October offensive, which was intended to regain



—Official U. S. Navy Photo

LIEUT.-COMDR. ALDERMAN OF THE MCFARLAND.
*Like Columbus, he knew where he wanted to go,
and why.*

the island. The assumption is that these forces were in need of what the *McFarland* had loaded for them, and it seems evident from what followed that Captain Alderman intended, when he set out from his base, to see they were delivered.

The ship was loaded with just about the most volatile cargo that could be assembled. She had aviation gasoline for the planes on Guadalcanal, including a deck-load in drums. She had a large number of aircraft torpedoes lashed to the deck, each one holding enough TNT to blow up a ship. She had aircraft bombs in nooks and crannies about the deck, filling up the available space, and besides all this an assortment of miscellaneous ammunition. She was, in fact, a floating bomb herself, with a fusecap of gasoline, and enough explosive to blow half a fleet to Kingdom Come if it all went off together. And between her and her destination lay some hundreds of miles of ocean where Japanese submarines lurked and where

there was as good a chance as not that Japanese planes would be patrolling.

About sundown of October 14 the *McFarland* set out. She carried no lights, and she depended on the navigating ability of her executive officer, Lieutenant Earle G. Gardner, to take her where she was going. She was alone. If she ran into trouble she would have to take care of herself, or else.

The night passed quietly, with the *McFarland* plunging ahead in the darkness, bearing her load of dynamite and gasoline through a smooth sea with little wind. No alarm upset the morning hours either, and this was beginning to look as though whatever trouble awaited was piling up near the end of the trip. Then, off the starboard bow, a Japanese plane was sighted. It was too near, when it emerged from a cloud, to be mistaken for anything but what it was, and when those aboard the *McFarland* looked closer, they had a second shock. The plane had slung to its belly a great fat torpedo, and everybody who saw it knew what would happen if it ever made contact with the *McFarland* and her load of dynamite.

Captain Alderman passed an order along: No firing unless the Japanese plane attacked. He was feeling anything but belligerent that morning and was willing to leave old scores to be settled later. A Japanese plane was only a plane, but his ship carried fuel and ammunition for many men to fight with.

For a long time the enemy pilot seemed to have trouble making up his mind. He would fly to within about a thousand yards of the ship, pull away and duck into a cloud, then come back for another look. He wanted to go, and he wanted to stay. But finally he flew away, no doubt to look for bigger game. Had he known what was aboard the *McFarland*, and where it was going, he might not so easily have dissuaded himself from attacking. Those on the ship breathed more easily, and Captain Alderman dutifully sent a message ashore noting the presence of aircraft which indicated an enemy carrier nearby.

Later the same day the *McFarland* sighted anti-aircraft fire off the northern horizon, hanging in little black balls of smoke just above the level of the sea. They learned later the destroyer *Mercedith* had been sunk that day by enemy aircraft, and apparently the *McFarland* was just near enough to witness the far-off evidence of the battle she put up. The *Mercedith* made a great fight, but she was no match for the swarms of planes that plastered her with bombs and torpedoes.

This was the afternoon of the 15th, and the ship was getting closer to Guadalcanal. Lieutenant Gardner, the navigator, had figured the landfall on an island in the channel north of Guadalcanal at day-break next morning, and he was right on the nose.

Just at daylight the island was dead ahead, and the ship was ready to start her run for Lunga Point, which is the point of land jutting out from Henderson Field where supplies for the field are unloaded. Everything had gone well on the dangerous passage, and now the *McFarland* was in sight of her goal, and soon the job would be done. Then came the order from shore, by radio. Turn back. Too much enemy activity. Turn back, run down south, and wait for a better chance.

That was when Skipper Alderman showed the stuff that won him a message of praise from Admiral Nimitz that he probably will always prize. He knew things must be pretty hot in there around Henderson Field, or they wouldn't be ordering him out. And if things were that hot, it was no place for a ship loaded down with aviation gasoline and TNT. It was a time for a man who valued his own hide to start thinking about it. A lesser man would have sighed with relief and accepted his orders without question. But Alderman, like Columbus, didn't like the idea of turning back when he started out to do something. He sent a message back, which went something like this: Request permission to proceed to destination. Then he cruised about, ducking in some rain squalls that had blown up, hiding from anything hostile that might be in the neighborhood, and waited for an answer. Before long it came, granting him the desired authority, and telling him to go on in and unload.

With that, the *McFarland's* nose was pointed toward Henderson Field, and she went in at high speed, arriving off Lunga Point at 1:15 in the afternoon. On earlier visits she had discharged her cargo on the west side of the point, and she started in there now, only to discover that the usual unloading area was under Japanese artillery fire. Batteries which the Japs had set up in the jungle west of Henderson Field were tearing at a small craft which had run aground there. So the *McFarland* turned back, rounded the point and entered on the east side.

Unloading crews were waiting for her, and they leaped aboard and began moving her cargo, like farmers hurrying with the hay when a storm is about to break. The deck load of explosives was taken off first and then the gasoline. When the whole job was about two-thirds complete, an alarm was sounded that a periscope had been sighted standing to the eastward, and presumably belonging to an enemy submarine. Since a ship dead in the water is a perfect target for a sub, even at extreme range, the *McFarland* immediately got under way, dragging her unloading barge along with her.

But the submarine wasn't all she had to worry about. It was now about 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and within another hour or so the ship would be safe,

sheltered by darkness, with her inflammable remaining cargo unloaded. It wasn't to turn out that way. Nine Japanese dive bombers, of the type known as Aichi 99's, came down from the sky in screaming dives, one after the other, and each one releasing two medium bombs as it pulled out of the dive. The *McFarland's* gunners were ready for them, and every muzzle blazed as the bombers came within range.

Meanwhile the barge, into which the *McFarland* had been unloading gasoline, had been cut away, and the ship maneuvered as quickly as she could to dodge the falling bombs. They came too fast to dodge them all, although every one missed but the last one of the eighteen that were dropped. It wasn't the *McFarland's* lucky day, and the single bomb that scored a direct hit, struck her in exactly the worst place it could have been laid.

Tenders, like destroyers, carry depth charges on a rack at the stern, and each depth charge contains enough TNT to wreck a submarine if it even comes near it under water. The *McFarland* had several depth charges hung on the rack, and that was where the single bomb which struck her hit. The bomb went off, and with it the depth charges. Captain Alderman was on the bridge, and he and the other officers there were mowed down by the blast like shocks of wheat. Every man on the ship was knocked off his feet.

When the captain regained his footing and looked back at the stern it wasn't there any more. A huge chunk of it had disappeared, simply blown off by the explosion. The captain gave an order to the steersman. He turned the wheel, but nothing happened. The rudder and the steering apparatus were gone.

The ship was beginning to settle by the stern and was taking on a list. The toll in dead and wounded was heavy. A tragic note was the loss of passengers who had come aboard while the ship was being unloaded off Guadalcanal, and who were being evacuated. They had been in the washroom near the stern when the bomb hit, and several had been killed. The ship, without a rudder, was unmanageable.

The explosion had broken the throttle on the port engine and it was impossible to shut off steam in that turbine. The *McFarland* was beginning to run away,

and worse still, she was swinging to starboard, which meant she was moving in toward the shore. She had passed the strip of American territory, and was trying to head in toward land held by the enemy.

The engineer proved equal to the occasion. He backed the port engine down, and shoved the starboard engine full ahead. By so doing the *McFarland* was steered away from the shore, and as Captain Alderman put it, could be steered within about 50 degrees of a course. Some members of the crew moved the injured men forward. Others got pumps going, and the ship's settling was halted, although she was pretty far down in the water already.

By now it was getting dark, and the skipper decided to try to get his ship into Tulagi Harbor, which lay about 25 miles across the channel. Nothing more had been heard of the submarine which had set off the alarm while the *McFarland* was unloading. Maybe the sub's commander had decided the *McFarland*, in her crippled condition, wasn't worth a torpedo. Four Japanese planes had been shot down in the dive bombing attack. The ship moved painstakingly across the channel, steering by her engines, and sent a signal to Tulagi asking for a tow. It came in a hurry, the *McFarland* was pulled inside, and the dead and wounded were taken off.

That's about all there is to the story of the voyage to Guadalcanal, which carried supplies to a base under fire, because the skipper, like Columbus, wouldn't turn back. It has a sequel, though. The *McFarland* was towed into an inlet, and a blanket of tree branches was built overhead to camouflage her from the sky. Captain Alderman was made temporary commander of the Tulagi station, and he and his crew went to work on the ship. They patched over the hole where the stern used to be, and rigged up a rudder with wooden poles, which they worked from the deck with a winch. And the other day the *McFarland* poked her bow into Pearl Harbor. She thumbed her nose at the pilot tugs and came right on up the channel, under her own power and using her makeshift rudder, and before long she'll be out there again, good as new, carrying fuel and ammunition to the places that need them most.

