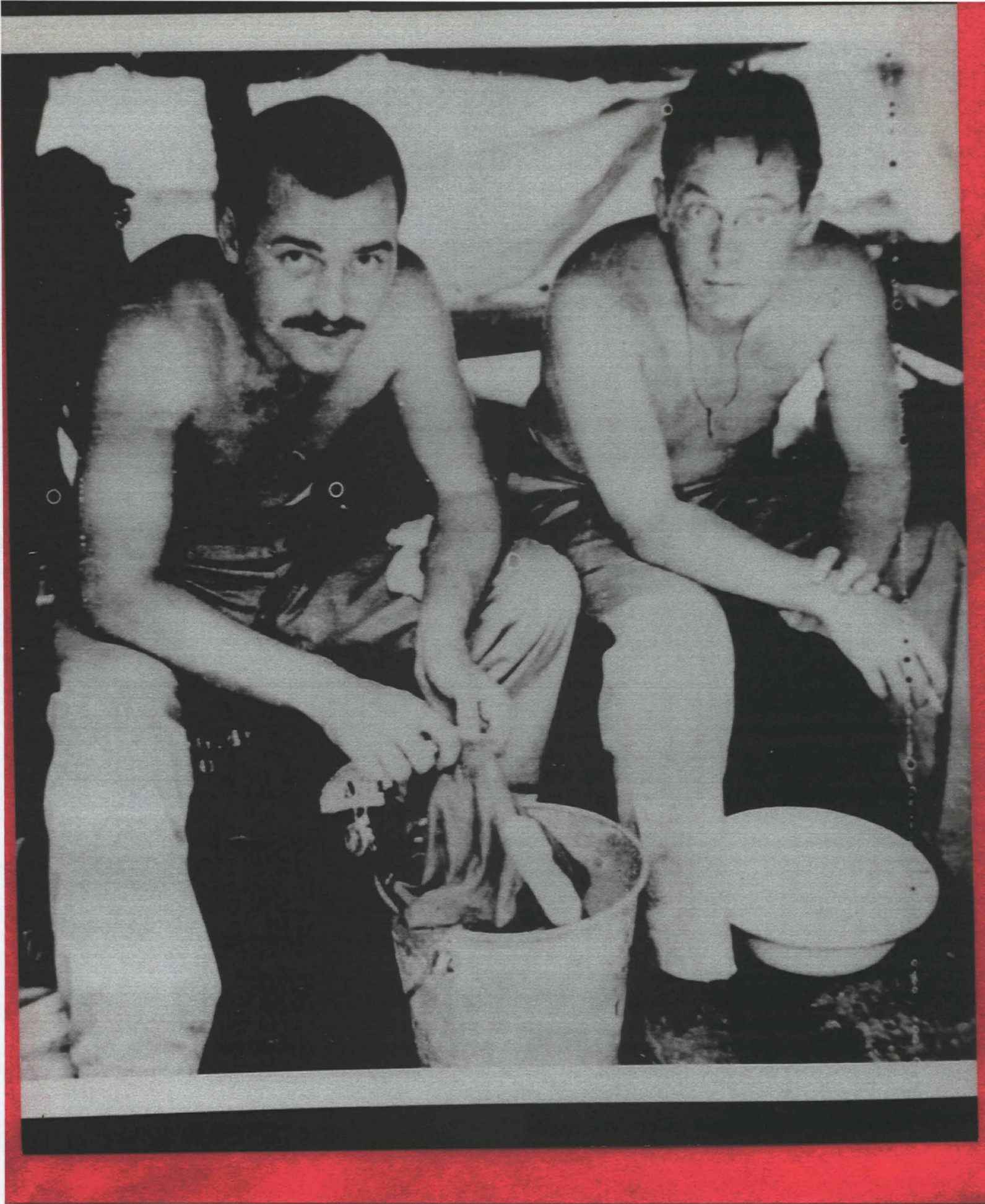


Lt. Walter E. Brown, M.D.





professor emeritus of obstetrics and gynecology at the New York University College of Medicine; specialist certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Inc.; member and past president of the American Gynecological Society; member of the American Society for the Control of Cancer; fellow of the American College of Surgeons; obstetrician and gynecologist, French Hospital; consulting gynecologist, Harlem Hospital and the Bronx Maternity and Woman's Hospital; director of gynecology, Jersey City Medical Center, Jersey City, N. J.; consulting obstetrician, Methodist Hospital, Brooklyn, Mount Vernon Hospital, Mount Vernon, N. Y., and the Margaret Hague Maternity Hospital, Jersey City, N. J.; consulting obstetrician and gynecologist at the Bellevue Hospital, where he had been director of the gynecologic service for many years; in 1941 received the doctorate of public health from New York University; died in Prouts Neck, Maine, August 27, aged 75, of acute pulmonary edema.

Eben Homer Bennett * Lubec, Maine; Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia, 1875; an Affiliate Fellow of and in 1912-1913 delegate to the American Medical Association; past president of the Maine Medical Association and the Washington County Medical Society; acting assistant surgeon in the U. S. Public Health Service; school superintendent for fifty years; in 1894 one of the first public high schools to be established in Maine was opened in Lubec largely through his interest in public education; for many years physician to the Roosevelt family when it summered in Campobello, officiating at the birth of Franklin Jr. in 1914 and assisting with Franklin Sr. when he first became ill with poliomyelitis; in 1935, at the suggestion of Mrs. Roosevelt, awarded the golden emblem of the Beacon Circle of Honor, an honor paid by the Beacon School, Boston, to an individual "who is an outstanding example for youth"; in 1937 received the annual award of the Maine Medical Association for "outstanding service as a doctor"; died August 31, aged 96, of cerebral thrombosis.

Edwin Manson Neher * Laguna Beach, Calif.; Rush Medical College, Chicago, 1906; member of the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association in 1922, 1924,

Surgeons; specialist certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology; formerly ophthalmologist on the staff of St. Mark's Hospital, Salt Lake City, where he was also ophthalmologist for the Utah Fuel Company; died July 8, aged 69, of cerebral hemorrhage.

Thomas Harris Cherry * New York; Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, 1904; specialist certified by the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Inc., clinical professor of gynecology at the New York Post-Graduate Medical School, Columbia University; fellow of the American College of Surgeons and the New York Academy of Medicine; attending gynecologist at the New York Post-Graduate Hospital; consulting gynecologist, Suffolk County Sanatorium, Holtsville, Flushing Hospital and Dispensary, Flushing, and the All Souls Hospital, Morristown, N. J.; author of "Surgical and Medical Gynecologic Technic";

died in the Manhattan General Hospital August 30, aged 64, of coronary thrombosis.

Katherine Pritchard Hoyt, Wenham, Mass.; Woman's Medical College of the New York Infirmary for Women and Children, New York, 1887; died June 1, aged 79, of coronary thrombosis.

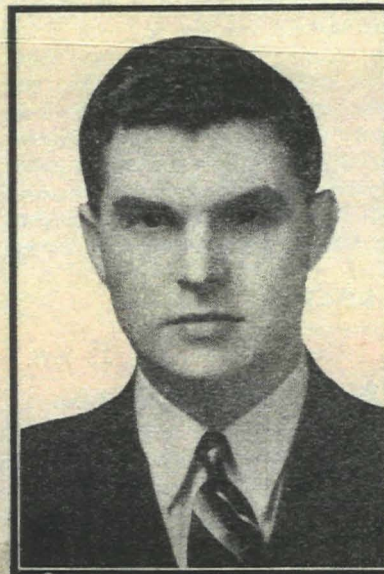
Charles Calvin Hubbard, Farmer, N. C.; Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia, 1888; honorary member of the Medical Society of the State of North Carolina; member of the Randolph County Board of Health; died July 20, aged 76, of angina pectoris.

William Merritt Jones, Greensboro, N. C.; University of Maryland School of Medicine, Baltimore, 1903; honorary member of the Medical Society of the State of North Carolina; formerly a member of the state board of medical examiners; served as health officer of Guilford County; examining physician for the county draft board during World War I and II; medical director of the Jefferson Standard Life Insurance Company; died July 29, aged 63, of carcinoma of the lung.

Benjamin Baker Kelly, Purdy, Mo.; University of Tennessee Medical Department, Nashville, 1890; served during World War I; served as president of the school board; died



LIEUT. WALTER E. BROWN
(MC), U.S.N., 1913-1943



LIEUT. GILBERT C. CAMPBELL
(MC), U.S.N., 1914-1943

KILLED IN ACTION

Walter Earl Brown * Lieutenant (MC), U. S. Navy, Wilson, N. C.; Duke University School of Medicine, Durham, 1938; served an internship at the Park View Hospital, Rocky Mount, and the Baker Sanatorium in Lumberton; commissioned a lieutenant (jg) in the medical corps of the United States Navy on Oct. 2, 1940 and later promoted to lieutenant; aged 30; was killed in action in the Pacific area; the presumptive date of death was Nov. 14, 1943, according to the Navy Department.

Gilbert Carmon Campbell * Lieutenant (MC), U. S. Navy, McCracken, Kan.; Creighton University School of Medicine, Omaha, 1940; served an internship at the Creighton Memorial St. Joseph's Hospital, Omaha; commissioned a lieutenant (jg) in the medical corps of the U. S. Naval Reserve on July 7, 1941; became a lieutenant (jg) in the medical corps of the regular U. S. Navy on March 26, 1942; promoted to lieutenant on June 15, 1942; aged 29; killed in action in the Pacific area; presumptive date of death Nov. 16, 1943, according to the Navy Department.

In reply address not the signer of this letter, but Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.
Refer to No.

Pers-2224b-njh
87410

NAVY DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
WASHINGTON, D. C.

January 19, 1943

My dear Senator Reynolds:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter dated January 14, 1943, requesting information concerning Lieutenant Walter E. Brown, Medical Corps, United States Navy.

The records show that Lieutenant Brown was a passenger in a plane that crashed at sea during an engagement with the enemy in the Battle of the Solomon Islands, and was reported missing on November 13, 1942.

It is regretted that this meager information is all that is available at this time, but you may rest assured the family of Lieutenant Brown will be notified immediately upon receipt of any additional details.

Note has been made of your interest, and you will be informed also. The letter from Mr. Luke Lamb, forwarded with your correspondence, is returned.

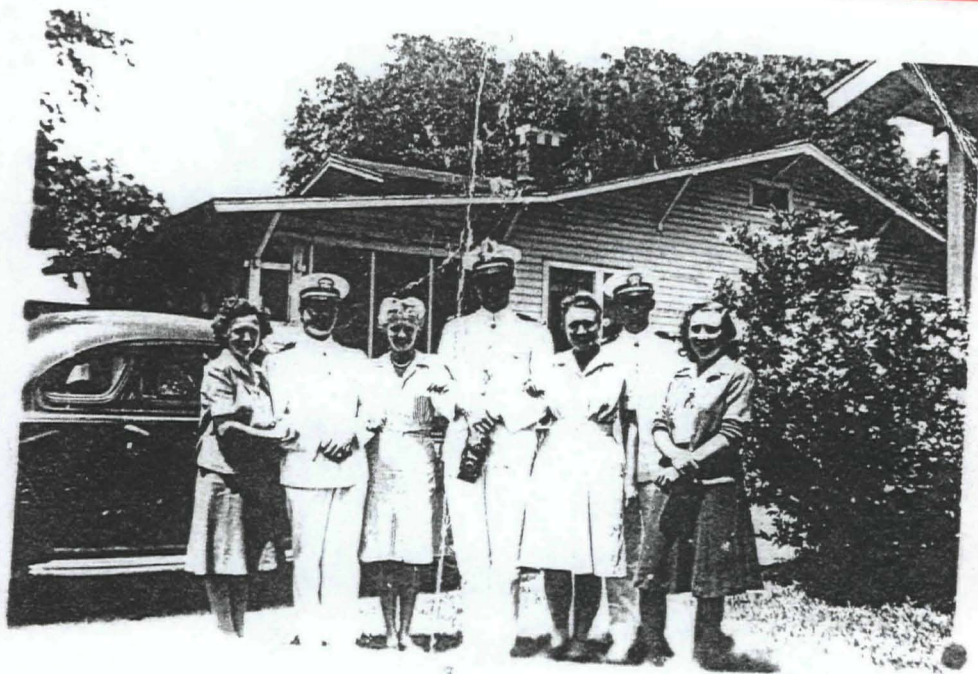
Sincerely yours,



R. A. KOCH
Capt. USN (Ret.)
Special Assistant
To Chief of Bureau

Enclosure No. 193441

Hon. Robert R. Reynolds
United States Senate



DISABLED



VETERANS

BIRMINGHAM CHAPTER NO. 4
CHAPTER HOME: 238 SECOND AVENUE NORTH
MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 610343
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35261-0343
8 December 1992

Ms. Marg-Margaret Rand
1700 Wilshire Blvd.
Wilson, N.C. 27893

Dear Ms. Rand,

I was shocked to see your inquiry in the Guadalcanal Echoes in this last edition about your father Dr. Walter E. Brown, I am going to send you quite a bit of information that I have received in the past couple of years about your father and others that were with him. The main person you need to contact is Dr. D.A. Mills (a copy of his letter to me is enclosed). As you can tell from the correspondence between Ted Blahnik, Echoes Editor, Dr. Mills, and myself I worked a long time to solve the puzzle about my friend and your father's friend, Dr. Felix Long. To my knowledge there were six doctors that were assigned to the Cub 13 unit in the beginning, that were sent to our unit Cub I temporarily until being assigned to the MAG Unit. Of course this has been fifty years ago and some things are difficult to be exact.

Since Dr. Long was a friend of mine from home I met the other Doctors including your father but did not know him enough to say we became close friends, but out there all people were your friends where you knew them well or not. We all shared desperate times to attempt to survive and the Doctor's and Corpmen were all hands best friends. When you ask a service man in combat who your best friend is, you hear the answer immediately. The Medic!.

My suggestion is to contact Dr. Mills if he did not read your article and respond. In my opinion he is the best person I know of to answer your questions. I hope I have assisted in some small way. I am sending you a clipping and picture that was in the same Echoes for your information. I do not know your feelings over the years, I only lost my dad when I was 60 years old, and my mother a year later. I also lost my little partner of 42 years $3\frac{1}{2}$ years ago. I would like to say the men in the Pacific at that time were outstanding men. Your father was helping fly out wounded men from the canal to where they could be treated and saved. We owe him and others like him a great debt of gratitude because due to men like him many young men returned home to their families. The real heroes of any war are the ones that do not return, because they gave the supreme sacrifice. We that returned are only survivors. God Bless you and comfort you.

Yours in patriotism,

Gershon Smith
Gershon Smith, Past Dept, Cmdr. MOPH

*233 East Hulen Rd
B'ham, AL 35245
1-706-853-3800*

distance from the fighter field, none of us participated in rescue efforts. However, I cannot believe there were any survivors. I know these medical evacuation flights also included attending medical personnel. It therefore seems reasonable to assume your father may have been an attending doctor. Somewhere, US Navy or USMC records might be available to verify my account of such accident although war conditions at the time were not conducive for keeping accurate records.

In any case, it was no picnic with exploding shells, bombs, dysentery, malaria, dengue fever, etc. I am so sorry your father did not live through the war and I offer you my truly heartfelt condolences.

Lt Col Emil Novak
311 Tract Rd.
Fairfield, PA 17320



Most sincerely
Emil Novak

- no direct hits. at that time, the U.S. forces were almost out of bombs and flyable aircraft. I remember that day as clear and sunny over the "canal" and scattered cumulous clouds over water. I don't believe there was any other combat action in the area for the rest of the daylight hours.

Returning to the purpose of my letter - late the evening of November 13th I watched a C-47 transport on a night takeoff from Henderson Field which I assumed was a flight evacuating sick and wounded to either New Hebrides or New Caledonia islands. These night flights were a normal and regular occurrence making them less likely for an enemy intercept. As I watched this takeoff - at about 100 feet altitude, the aircraft suddenly exploded in a ball of flame and crashed. Since this occurred off Henderson Field some

Dear Mrs. Rand:

Re your letter in the Jan '93 issue of Guadalcanal Echoes paper. My letter to you being "out-of-the-blue" so to speak, let me introduce myself. I am retired Air Force Lt. Col. Emil Novak, a former fighter pilot with the 67th Army Air Corps Fighter Squadron on Guadalcanal during the period 7 Nov through 7 Dec 1942.

I did not know your father but occasionally was a member of a flight providing cover for USMC dive bombers. My personal flight log for 13 November 1942 reflects two patrol flights, anticipating enemy aircraft coming to protect their surface vessels damaged as a result of the previous evening battle with US Navy warships. The enemy vessels I saw were a battleship (dead in the water), a cruiser, and four destroyers. During one of my flights, I observed a small force of marine dive bombers attack with apparent poor results.

★★★
★ Emil Novak
311 Tract Rd.
Fairfield, PA
17320-9120



Mrs. M. M. Rand
1700 Wilshire Blvd.
Wilson, N.C. 27893

233 East Haven Drive
Birmingham, AL 35215
21 January 1991

Ted Blahnik
Editor-Director
Guadalcanal Campaign Veterans
P.O. Box 181
Coloma, MI 49038-0181

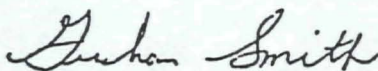
Dear Ted:

Thank you very much for your assistance in my question concerning an old friend Dr. Felix Long so long ago. I am sending you a copy of Dr. Mills letter to me and my return to him for your information. You can tell from my letter what I did with the information. It could be of assistance to members of his family.

Also, thank you for pointing out 'Yardbirds' pictures to me because I had missed it. You probably have already heard of it but for any member in VP-12, 34, 54 and other Black Cat Squadrons, who have not, there is an excellent book, 'Black Cat Raiders of World War II', by Capt. Richard Knott, USN (Ret). I believe it is published by the Nautical and Aviation Publishing Company of Annapolis, MD 21401, or the Naval Academy Press. This book covered several of the "Cat" squadrons and to me was highly interesting.

Ted, the speed and efficiency that you and Dr. Mills displayed in assisting me solve a long time mystery was exemplary and most graciously appreciated. (By the way I also remember The Mighty-Old Five-0).

Yours in patriotism,



Gershon Smith

02 December 1992

Mrs. Margaret Rand
1700 Wilshire Blvd.,
Wilson, NC 27893

Dear Mrs. Rand,

This is an attempt to give you some of the information you asked for in your letter to GUADALCANAL ECHOES. I believe I can give you some reasonably accurate information, but I beg your forgiveness if on any item I remember incorrectly. After fifty years it is difficult to be completely certain of everything that transpired.

CUB 13 sailed from California on 07 August 1942, the same day that the Marines landed on Guadalcanal, on a contract passenger ship, the MV Japara. The trip to New Caledonia, with a stop in American Samoa, was essentially uneventful. A rather large medical component was aboard, and it included six Navy Flight Surgeons. Arriving at New Caledonia, camp was setup just outside of Noumea.

Some little while later (I cannot recall the exact interval) the flight surgeons were detached from CUB 13 and ordered to the First Marine Air Wing. They reported to an Advanced Echelon on Guadalcanal (code name CACTUS) We arrived there some time in the first half of October 1942, just one day after the big October shelling.

The tasks for these doctors were to fly with the R4D's (DC3) of MAG 25 in evacuating the sick and wounded Marines back to either Efate or Espiritu for hospital care. The planes then returned to CACTUS with freight consisting mainly of 55 gallon drums of aviation gasoline, necessary to keep the fighters flying.

I recall the day the plane carrying Dr. Brown went down. A second one of our doctors, Dr. Felix Long, was aboard the same plane. I never talked to anyone who saw the plane go down. It occurred off shore in open water.

While we were on Guadalcanal, there were five of us who 'tented' together:

Walter E. Brown	Felix B. Long	Raymond D. Little
William P. Downey	& Dawson A. Mills	

However, it was rare to find all five there at any one time. Usually one or more were out flying. By early December 1942, the remainder of us were scattered. I ended up at the 'Aviatorium' in Noumea for a stretch.

I trust this serves to fill in your knowledge of the happenings to some extent. Should you have questions, I'd be glad to hear from you and to attempt to answer them.

Sincerely,

Dr. D. A. Mills, M.D.
2012 Merrymount Drive,
Fredericksburg, VA 22407

Dawson A. Mills M.D.

DR. D. A. MILLS
2012 MERRYMOUNT DRIVE
FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA 22401

08 January 1991

Dear Mr. Smith,

This is in reply to your letter of 27 December, addressed to Ted Blahnik. Yes, it was Felix Long who was lost that night in mid-November 1942, along with Dr. Walter Brown. The plane (a Mariñe R4D) was returning after a trip with evacuees to Espiritu or Efate. It made contact with the tower but never made it to the field. As I recall there was no enemy night-aviation action.

On return trips to the Canal, it was necessary for the unarmed transports to fly the last few miles very low over the water before popping up over the palms to make the landing. I have no recollection of just what the official report stated. However, those of us who were there felt that the pilot allowed the plane to descend too far over the water, ultimately crashing. I never did hear of anyone who claimed to have seen the accident.

I knew both Dr. Long and his wife quite well, but never heard from any of the family subsequently. There was another doctor in the area who was from Coffeeville MS. Could you have known him? I have no knowledge of what ever became of him. - Dr Criss

Hope this answers your inquiry.

Sincerely

D. A. Mills
USNavy (retired)

V. S. FALK, M.D.
2164 Colladay Pt. Drive
Stoughton, WI 53589

December 10, 1992

Mary Margaret Rand
1700 Wilshire Blvd
Wilson, N.C. 27893

Dear Mrs. Rand:

In response to your note in "Guadalcanal Echoes" I am sending several items which might be of interest to you.

On the back page of the "Gosport" is a picture of our class at Pensacola. Your father is in the first row and I am in the back. Please return the magazine. We were at Pensacola from January to May 1942. I returned to duty with the Marines at San Diego and left for the South Pacific on September 1st.

All of the other stuff you may keep. There are copies of two articles I wrote about VMSB-141. The picture of your father and me was taken in our tent at Guadalcanal in November 1942. (I was doing my laundry.) The other picture was of our squadron sick bay (2/3 of a Quonset hut) which was located just across a path from our tent. I was the squadron flight surgeon. We never did learn for certainty why the DC-3 with your father and Felix Long aboard was lost as it was approaching, but it was quite possible it was shot down.

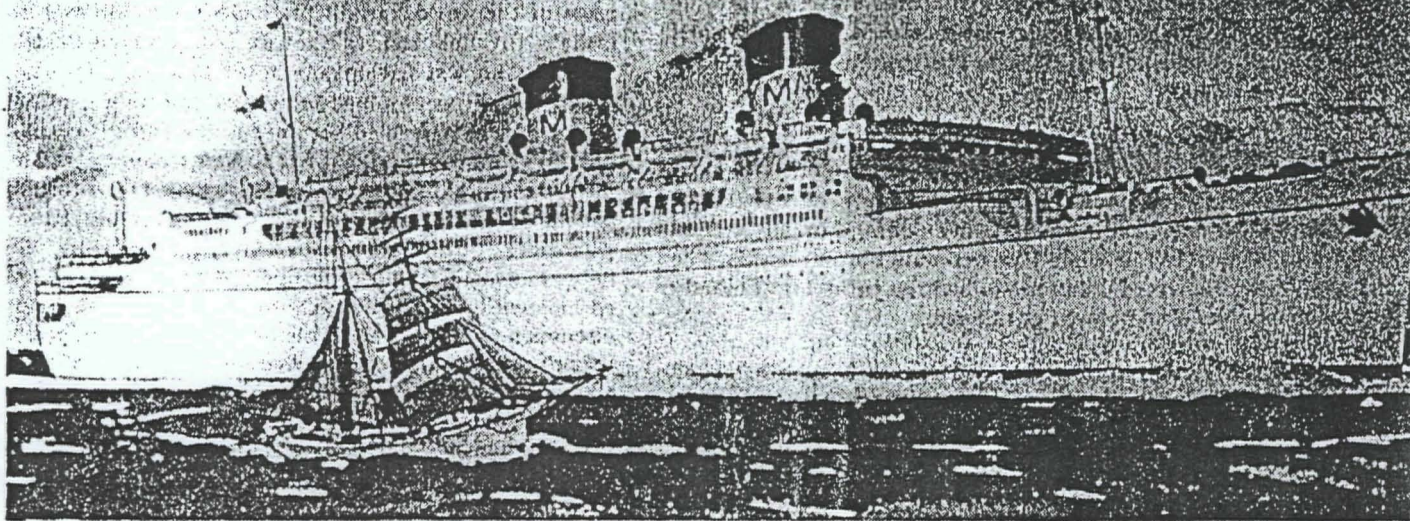
I have also enclosed an article which has been submitted but not yet published. It pertains particularly to Dr. Ringness, but lists all of the flight surgeons with our Air Group.

If you ever get to Madison to visit your friend, please give us a call as we are just 15 miles away. If I can be of any further help to you, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

V.S. Falk
V.S. Falk, M.D.

Random Reminiscences, Guadalcanal 1942



By Dr. Victor S. Falk, M.D.

VMSB-141 boarded the SS Lurline on 30 August 1942 at the Embarcadero in San Diego. The ship had ~~been~~ been painted wartime grey. The civilian stewards and waiters provided peacetime service and three times a day we were presented with menus the size of a newspaper. Eight of us were quartered in a lanai suite on the top deck, originally meant for two occupants. Within a few weeks four of the eight had been killed at Guadalcanal and a fifth (McDuffie) was evacuated with a fractured leg after a single night there. Those killed were Major Gordon Bell, Captains Ed Miller and Bob Abbott and Lieutenant Worthan Starr Ashcroft. Captain Basil McDuffie, our intelligence officer, had been one of "Major Geiger's boys in World War I" and had come back as a so called retread. Chuck Dobson was the Group transportation officer who went on to flight training after the war. He was killed in a mountain crash in the western U.S. in January 1968.

At Pago Pago, Samoa we transferred to the Matsonia, a sister ship of the Lurline, and continued on to Noumea. Since many of the young pilots had only a few hours in flying SBDs, it was anticipated that there would be a period of training in New Caledonia. However, because of the dire situation at Guadalcanal, the pilots were flown there in increments over several days. One of the pilots was lost when he was catapulted off the U.S.S. Copahoe in the harbor of Noumea.

A few days later, Captain McDuffie and I, along with 80 key enlisted personnel, embarked on the U.S.S. Zeilin, a WW I transport that had also been recommissioned. We disembarked at Guadalcanal on October 13th, a memorable date for all those who were there that night as two Japanese battleships were off shore and threw 900 14 inch shells directed at Henderson Field. Many of the shells fell short and exploded in a coconut grove where the aviation personnel were living in

tents. That night Major Bell, Capt. Miller, Capt. Abbott, Lieutenant Chaney, the squadron adjutant Lieutenant Hale and Capt. Rex Heap from MAG-14 headquarters squadron were all killed by the naval shelling. One of the flight surgeons was also mortally wounded.

Rations and Quarters

After we were blown out of the coconut grove we moved to a valley south of Henderson Field where we felt more secure even though it was near Bloody Ridge. Although some of the senior NCO's dug bunkers into the side of the hill for the accommodations, most the rest of us were crowded into the usual pyramidal tents. Our valley was fine until the rains came. Also in the valley was our sick bay which was two-thirds of Quonset hut erected by the Sea Bees. It held twenty cots which were always filled, mainly with patients having diarrhea or malaria. The more serious casualties were promptly evacuated by air. A fox hole had been dug along the length of the sick bay for use by the patients during the nightly air raids by Washing Machine Charlie. That elongated fox hole was particularly miserable after the rains came. And if any one didn't have malaria prior to spending the nights in that environment, the anopheles mosquitos certainly found him there.

The other one third of the Quonset hut was the mess hall. The rations seemed to consist of the basic trimuvirate of Spam (luncheon meat), Vienna sausage and corned beef. The powdered eggs and dehydrated potatoes didn't add much to the menu. At one time we were presented with 500 cases of lamb tongue from Australia, apparently a sort of reverse lend-lease gesture. Unfortunately no matter how they were prepared they always came out looking like lamb's tongues and were quite inedible. The carrier pilots who were temporarily based ashore, couldn't believe the rations.

Communications

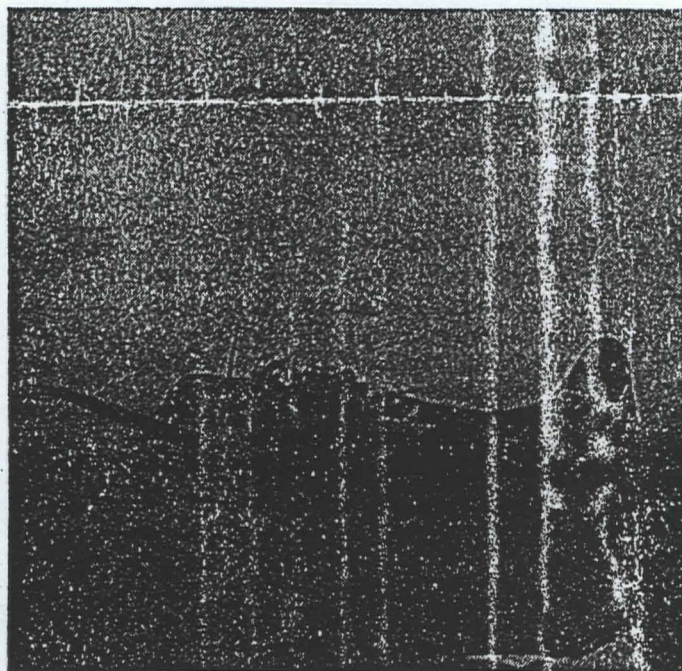
The Communications Center at Guadalcanal took a direct hit during a shelling. This explained a breakdown in communications that puzzled me. I had accompanied a plane load of casualties to the New Hebrides and was about to return to Guadalcanal as the sole passenger along with a cargo of aviation gasoline, bombs and oxygen all of which were in short supply. Just prior to takeoff we were told that no one had been able to communicate with Guadalcanal and they were not quite sure who held the Henderson Field at that point, but we would certainly find out as we attempt to land. Fortunately it was still ours.

About a week later two other flight surgeons were returning on a similar flight and their plane crashed in the channel between Guadalcanal and Tulagi. The cause of the crash was never determined.

Flight Surgeons

One reason that flight surgeons were sometimes popular was that they were custodians of a supply of two ounce bottles of brandy. Unfortunately, my quota of brandy arrived at Guadalcanal by air while I was coming up on the ship. The pilots had discovered it and prescribed the entire lot of brandy for themselves even before I got there.

Another picture is one that will never be photographed again. It shows an SBD on a mission out of Guadalcanal. In the rear cockpit is a flight surgeon. If that pilot had known of my marksmanship and my record in gunnery, I am sure we would have never left Henderson ~~Field~~ *Field*.



Boyle's Law

According to Boyle's law, gas expands with a decrease in pressure. This can be particularly distressing when the gas is in the intestinal tract and the atmospheric pressure is decreased when one is airborne. The misery is compounded when the sufferer also has diarrhea. This happened to one of our pilots when he was on a mission. In order to relieve himself he asked his radio gunner to handle the controls in the rear cockpit while he slipped out of his parachute and hung his butt over

edge of the cockpit. Unfortunately the canopy was open over the rear cockpit and the radio gunner suddenly found himself blinded by a face full of liquid feces. He abruptly leaned forward, which maneuver put the plane into quite a steep dive. This left the pilot clutching the edge of the cockpit with his fingernails until the plane finally leveled off again. Diarrhea was extremely prevalent all through the tropics, and I am sure it was the height of everyone's ambition to have a formed stool again someday.

Fox Hole Call

Although I have made house calls and hut calls in many parts of the world, on this particular occasion I was asked to make a fox hole call. In the fox hole I found a Lieutenant Colonel who was having an earthshaking chill. He was a very husky, usually determined individual, but he was in such dire straits that he agreed to accompany me and I was able to get him on an evacuation flight to the New Hebrides. At the hospital there it was found that he had dengue rather than malaria, and he recovered rapidly. He later told me he had no recall whatsoever of my morning call or of his departure. However, he was adamant about returning to Guadalcanal and terminated his own hospitalization abruptly. Several weeks later I was discussing with him the status of our surviving pilots, who by that time were thoroughly exhausted. He said that he was not able to ground them but I could. This was immediately accomplished and I was able to get the pilots flown out on evacuation planes, usually two or three each day.

Chain of Command

Upon leaving the states, Sergeant Major Bishop addressed the squadron and pointed out that there were two Majors in the outfit. He was one, Major Bell was the other, and he seemed to rate himself in the higher priority. However, he never got beyond New Caledonia as he apparently decided he was a little old for the combat area.

As pointed out in the list of casualties, the three senior officers in the squadron were all lost simultaneously. W.S. Ashcroft had been promoted to First Lieutenant after our arrival at Guadalcanal. He became the squadron commander until he was lost. He was followed by Bob Patterson, another recent First Lieutenant, who was in command for three days. He in turn was followed by Walt Bartosh who was in command for five days. Finally in the summer of 1943 John Lepke who had taken over as squadron adjutant, assumed command and took the ground echelon back to the states. (John later completed flight training.)

Also in the summer of 1943 a new flight echelon was designated VMSB-141 and returned to Guadalcanal with Major Claude Carlson as CO and Major Gene Bell as executive officer. Included in the squadron were a half dozen Captains who had been in the battle at Midway and all had been awarded Navy Crosses for their action there. After that battle, someone had told them that they were due to return to the states. They were not exactly a happy lot to find themselves at Guadalcanal instead. I accompanied this flight echelon, the only member from the original VMSB-141 to return there. However, it was an entirely different world than it had been less than a year before.

How times change and fame fades. Recently, at a medical meeting dinner, Guadalcanal was mentioned. A young physician piped up and said, "Oh, that's the canal in Central America that was just given away." What a letdown!

A Marine Dive Bomber Squadron at Guadalcanal, 1942

BY VICTOR S. FALK, JR., M.D., F.A.C.S.

Edgerton, Wisconsin

IN AVIATION medicine the present is an era of the human centrifuge, high velocity flying, acceleration and deceleration, ejectable cockpits, sonic radiation and "space." The future will see completely automatic interceptors and guided missiles, with human fighter pilots obsolete supplanted by electronic mechanisms. Despite the great advances made in aviation since the end of World War II, a lesson might still be learned by looking, in retrospect, a single decade to a costly experience, to a time of unpreparedness, to a shoestring heroic operation. The following is the actual report of Marine Scout Bombing Squadron 141 at Guadalcanal in 1942. This routine report was submitted by the writer following a six weeks' tour in combat as the squadron flight surgeon. It is not abridged, except that the parenthetical comments are afterthoughts, ten years later.

VMSB-141, one of the two tactical squadrons in Marine Air Group 14, left San Diego with forty-one pilots and 300 men on the first of September, 1942, and arrived in Noumea, New Caledonia, on September 22, 1942. The following morning six pilots left by air for Guadalcanal. (A period of training was anticipated in a rear area prior to entering combat.) Six more went several days later, and the remainder followed in small groups up to mid-October. (This piece-meal pro-

cedure prevented integration of the squadron.) One pilot drowned in the harbor at Noumea when his plane was catapulted from the USS Copahue. Another pilot developed sinusitis in Noumea and was sent back to the States. (This boy developed his war neurosis more than 1,000 miles from combat.) Three enlisted men were killed near Tontuta in a DC-3 crash en route to Guadalcanal early in October.

At Guadalcanal the pilots were immediately put on heavy flight schedules, flying SBD-3's with Navy pilots from sunken carriers and relieving dive bomber pilots from Marine Air Group 23. Their missions were long searches, anti-submarine patrols and attacks. Pilot losses began in early October, in many instances the circumstances being unknown. One pilot failed to return on October 2, and two more on October 8. Undoubtedly these three encountered enemy planes while flying alone. Also on October 8, a third pilot was seriously wounded by anti-aircraft but flew his plane about 150 miles back to Henderson Field. He was immediately evacuated to a Base Hospital.

The night of October 13-14 was a disastrous one as the squadron was subjected to heavy naval shelling and bombing. (It was subsequently learned that the battleships Kongo and Haruna threw in 900 fourteen-inch shells. This

MARINE DIVE BOMBER SQUADRON—FALK

was called "The Bombardment" by Guadalcanal veterans for the remainder of the war.) Four pilots and one ground officer were killed by the shelling. The fatalities included the Squadron Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, and Flight Officer. This was a serious blow to the squadron as it was left without any experienced leaders. One pilot sustained severe facial lacerations when he made a forced water landing on the 14th. He was taken to Tulagi and then evacuated to a base hospital. On October 15, three more pilots were lost. Two of these failed to return from an attack on enemy transport ships, and the third was chased into the ground by Zeros. (Three Japanese transports were gutted and beached that day—all total losses.) Encounters with enemy ships and planes continued through the 16th, and two more pilots were lost. It was reported that one of the pilots was strafed in the water by enemy planes.

All of this proved too much for an enlisted pilot who developed a severe anxiety state and had to be evacuated on October 17. He was later sent to the States. Because of the acute pilot shortage, two pilots from other organizations joined the squadron. One of them crashed on take-off on October 22, and the other spun in from 700 feet on October 26. On October 24, another pilot ran out of gas at night, made a water landing and fractured his arm, necessitating his evacuation.

A pilot who received a "concussion syndrome" from a bomb blast was evacuated on October 24. Another ruptured a tympanic membrane in a dive bombing run and had to be evacuated on the 30th. Malaria hit two

of the pilots, both severe cases which were immediately sent to a base hospital; one on November 1, the other on November 6. (Ultimately 75 per cent of the squadron developed malaria.)

By this time fatigue began to enter the picture. Because the number of pilots was small, those left had to fly longer hours. To ground a pilot for fatigue put an extra burden on his overworked colleagues, and there were no replacements available at that time. On November 7, one of the pilots was lost soon after leaving the field on a night mission. The following morning another was lost in bad weather. On November 19, a pilot fractured his jaw when his motor failed, and he made a water landing. He was sent to a base hospital. November 13 concluded the flying for the squadron when two more pilots were lost. They were last seen entering a front at 9,000 feet. The long-awaited relief had arrived, and the remaining pilots, whom I then grounded, were sent to the aviatorium (a pilot rest home) at Noumea during the week of November 12 to 19. Of these thirteen, one was found to have malaria on routine blood smears.

A number of pertinent factors arise in considering the heavy losses among these pilots. Many of them had joined the squadron just before it left the States, and they had had less than ten hours in dive bombers. While they were at Guadalcanal, the frequent enemy night bombing raids interfered with their much-needed rest. (Single engine float planes, universally referred to as "Washing Machine Charlie," flew harassing missions for many hours every night, dropping only occasional

MARINE DIVE BOMBER SQUADRON—FALK

bombs, but necessitating long uncomfortable fox hole hours.) The food situation was generally poor. It was necessary to eat whenever a galley was in operation. Since the firing of ranges before dawn was not permitted, it was impossible to have hot chow preceding early morning hops. Facilities for meals at the ready tent were inadequate because of the paucity of ranges and the difficulty of transporting prepared food from distant galleys. Operations from Henderson Field were further complicated by the heavy field artillery, known as Pistol Pete. These guns, located beyond the Matanikau River, had the runway boresighted. The loss of the senior officers and the consequent lack of leadership made the pilots feel as if there were no one looking out for them. As the command passed from one second lieutenant to the next senior survivor, the squadron had at least ten commanding officers in six weeks. Most of the surviving pilots flew about 100 hours in combat.

This squadron was undoubtedly subjected to more of a beating and operated under greater difficulties than any before or after it in the same area. Seven DFC's and one Silver Star were awarded to pilots in the squadron. (This was long before DFC's were awarded solely for completing a specific number of missions.)

Eleven of the pilots were sent to Australia for a one-week period of health and recreation. Before the remainder could go there, sixteen of the original pilots were sent to Samoa. One was later sent back to the combat zone. (He refused to fly there and

was put on duty in ~~the~~ control tower at Henderson Field.)

Recapitulation:

Total Pilots	43
Returned to States	1
Drowned	1
Total in Combat	41
Missing in Action	11
Killed in Action	7
Evacuated	9
Injuries	4
Malaria	2
Concussion Syndrome	1
Anxiety State	1
Ruptured Ear Drum	1

The only enlisted casualties were among the radio-gunners—seven killed and twelve missing in action. In addition one ground officer was killed and another evacuated due to a fractured leg. (It is noteworthy that the flight surgeons attached to this air group fared no better than the pilots. Three of the seven were lost in a month. One was mortally injured in the naval shelling of October 13 and 14, and two others were lost when a DC-3 crashed in the channel between Guadalcanal and Tulagi. The latter two were returning from a flight of air evacuation of casualties. The early program for air evacuation was quite informal. No one knew until the planes arrived at Guadalcanal just how many would be available for patients. The planes would be rapidly filled from the First Marine Division Hospital, the worst casualties usually being assigned to the plane carrying a flight surgeon. Hospital corpsmen accompanied each of the other planes with the less severe casualties. The flight surgeons with the Air Group rotated on the trips. The usual flight was from Guadalcanal to the New Hebrides, to New Caledonia and return—a round trip of over 2,000 miles. Fre-

(Continued on Page 248)

MARINE DIVE BOMBER SQUADRON—FALK

(Continued from Page 239)

quently on the return trip the flight surgeon would be the sole passenger wedged in with a cargo of aviation gasoline, oxygen cylinders and bombs.)

The purpose of presenting this reminiscent report ten years later is to point out the tragic loss of a large number of inadequately trained pilots and to express a hope that there will not be a repetition. The pilots were pushed beyond human endurance un-

der the most unfavorable circumstances, confronted with the almost daily losses of their friends, yet performed a remarkable task in their share in holding Guadalcanal during a time when the outcome was often in doubt. Many valuable lessons, not taught at the school of aviation medicine, were learned during those early months of the war in the Pacific, a single decade ago.

The Navy Cross and The U.S.S. Ringness

The U.S.S. Ringness, DE-590, was named in honor of Lieutenant Henry R. Ringness, (MC), USN, who was also awarded the Navy Cross posthumously. His citation stated:

"For extraordinary heroism as Flight Surgeon of a Marine Aircraft Group during action against enemy Japanese forces on Guadalcanal on the night of October 13-14, 1942. When a hostile task force moved in off our beachhead and commenced a vigorous bombardment of the island airfield, Lieutenant Ringness, trapped in a fox-hole in the camp area by the sporadic bursting of shells, was mortally wounded by a near miss which killed four of his companions and wounded four others. Although completely paralyzed in the lower half of his body and suffering great pain because of his immobility, he persisted in administering morphine and blood plasma to wounded personnel until he was finally evacuated to a base hospital. Even then, with unselfish devotion to his fellow men, he tried to minimize his own critical condition in order that others might be given preference in medical treatment. Three days later, as a result of his injuries, he gallantly gave up his life in performance of duty in service to his country."

October 13, 1942 has been vividly described in every book written about the Guadalcanal battles and the date is often referred to "Black Tuesday" or "That Night" (of the shelling). Just a few days prior to the 13th, the three of us flight surgeons attached to the Marine Air Group 14 argued heatedly about which of us would be the first to fly to Guadalcanal. Dr. Ringness was with Hq.Sq. 14, Dr. Rodney Peterson with VMF-121 and myself with VMSB-141 - all Lt., MC, USN. Since I was single, I felt that I should go, but Dr. Ringness asserted that he was senior and that he would go. (Several months later my seniority was corrected and it

turned out that I had been senior.) Consequently I went ashore at Guadalcanal on the morning of October 13th from the U.S.S. Zeillin (APA 3) along with the Army 164th Infantry regiment. My commanding officer (Major Gordon Bell, USMC) greeted me with the statement that "this is what we've been waiting for. We can fly out of here in any direction and find Jap ships." Ironically his career ended that night as a result of shelling from one of those ships. That noon there was the usual Japanese bombing run with its fighter escort. Just an hour or two later there was another similar strike hitting the airfield and gasoline dump. This was followed by intermittent artillery fire from the hills beyond Henderson Field where the gunners were all referred to as "Pistol Pete".

Typical of the tropics, night fell abruptly over our bivouac area between the beach and Henderson Field. I had turned in along with the senior officers from my squadron (VMSB-141) and Dr. Ringness. When I was just nicely settled, a messenger informed me that I was to move closer to Henderson Field as I would be leaving at dawn with a load of casualties. Despite my protest that I had scarcely seen my pilots, there was no alternative. The artillery fire continued and the next event on the program was the dropping of brilliant green flares from a Japanese plane. Everyone was accustomed to the nightly harassment of "Washing Machine Charlie" and his nocturnal bombing runs but this was something different. The flares were followed by shelling from the battleships Haruna and Kongo and 900 14 inch shells were aimed at Henderson Field. Many of the shells fell a bit short, exploding in the coconut trees in our bivouac area. This resulted in the deaths of the three senior officers in my squadron (Major Bell, Capt. Ed Miller, and Capt. Robert Abbott) plus three other officers and the mortal wounding of Dr. Ringness. In addition to the casualties, tremendous damage resulted

from the shelling. Most of the planes were rendered inoperable. The precious aviation gasoline went up in great fiery pyres and the ammunition dumps exploded like mammoth fire works. The ground about the foxholes vibrated like a continuous earth quake.


Despite the continued naval and artillery shelling as well as sporadic bombing, in some way a messenger got to our foxhole with an urgent request for help in the area that I had vacated earlier. One of the casualties that I picked up that night was Dr. Ringness. He very coolly described the level of his spinal cord injury but fortunately he was not aware that one buttock had been sheared off by a shell fragment. During the bombardment one tall 2nd Lt. stood up in his foxhole to relieve his cramped position during what he thought was a lull. He fell back into the foxhole decapitated. Another casualty was our squadron intelligence officer, Capt. Basil McDuffie, USMCR. He was a W W I Marine aviator, (a retread) who had also arrived on the Zeillin. He sustained a fractured leg in the scramble for a fox-hole - and had been on Guadalcanal less than 24 hours when he was evacuated. These and others were transported to the First Marine Division Hospital. This was a crude wooden structure that had been built by the Japanese and had been taken over along with the electrical and ice plants. Because the attack continued, the casualties were moved into an underground shelter adjacent to the hospital. It is now 50 years later and I can still distinctly recall the sights and smells of that dank shelter. An episode occurred at the Division Hospital that I shall never forget. I was on my knees on the deck attempting to start plasma on our squadron adjutant whom I had brought in. Someone came up behind me and demanded to know who I was and what I was doing. I identified myself and indicated what I was trying to do. He responded that he was Commander So and So of the U.S. Navy and ordered me to stop. I was shocked, the officer died and later the

Chief Pharmacist Mate apologized for his commanding officer's outburst - which apparently was quite common. It was dismaying to learn that the C.O. was subsequently promoted to Commodore. I have never forgiven him.

At dawn, there was one transport plane (DC-3 or R4D) available to evacuate casualties. Henderson Field was badly pockmarked with shell holes and the plane itself had been holed a few times so that the wings flapped a bit on takeoff. We had a full load of casualties but at the end of the runway we picked up several bedraggled war correspondents hoping to hitchhike out of Guadalcanal. The superb pilot, Capt. "Doc" Whitaker, USMCR, had been halfway through medical school when he was called to active duty as a Marine Transport pilot. The flight was from Guadalcanal (Cactus) to Vila, Efate, New Hebrides (Roses) where the casualties were transferred to a Naval Base Hospital, and then on to New Caledonia (White Poppy). The next day the return flight was by way of Espiritu Santo (Buttons). As we were about to depart for Guadalcanal we were told that there was total lack of communication, that the issue was in doubt, and we would find out who was in control of Henderson Field when we attempted to land there. The cargo on the return trip consisted of 10 55 gallon drums of aviation gasoline, bombs, oxygen cylinders and me as the sole passenger - wedged in between the two pliable cabin tanks of gasoline installed for the long over water flight. A week later two of the three additional flight surgeons (Lts. Walter Brown, and Felix Long, MC, USN) who had been assigned to the group to facilitate the evacuation of casualties were aboard a similar plane returning to Guadalcanal when the plane was lost as it was approaching the island. It was never determined whether it was a result of enemy action or other cause. The third additional flight surgeon was Lt. Dawson Mills. Frequently on the over water flights, the planes flew so low that a prop-wash wake was visible on the waves below.

The evacuation of large numbers of casualties by air was pioneered at Guadalcanal with a Flight Surgeon or a Hospital Corpsman and later a Flight Nurse aboard each plane.

(Dr. Ringness was in the eleventh class of Flight Surgeons; Drs. Peterson, Brown, Long, Mills and Falk were in the twelfth class at the School of Aviation Medicine, NAS, Pensacola in early 1942.)


DR VICTOR S FALK
2164 COLLADAY PT
STOUGHTON, HI 53589



REGULAR MEDICAL OFFICERS

FIRST ROW—Left to Right: Lieut. (jg) W. E. Brown, Lieut. (jg) D. C. Turnipseed, Lieut.-Comdr. J. Love, Comdr. J. L. Shipley, Lieut. (jg) E. C. Olson, Lieut. (jg) P. Deranian, Lieut. (jg) J. L. Fuelling.

SECOND ROW—Left to Right: Lieut. A. D. Berry, Lieut. (jg) R. F. Higgins, Lieut. (jg) H. A. Lyons, Lieut. (jg) J. P. Bell, Lieut. (jg) M. J. Mackby, Lieut. (jg) C. L. Rickerd, Lieut. (jg) D. A. Mills, Lieut. (jg) W. P. Downey.

THIRD ROW—Left to Right: Lieut. J. H. Sutor, Lieut. (jg) M. M. Driskell, Lieut. (jg) A. J. Vandergrind, Lieut. (jg) P. L. Stuck, Lieut. (jg) H. B. Jones, Lieut. (jg) N. L. V. Yood, Lieut. (jg) J. W. Weaver, Lieut. (jg) C. H. Carter, Lieut. (jg) W. H. Walker.

FOURTH ROW—Left to Right: Lieut. (jg) E. M. Spaulding, Lieut. (jg) J. B. McGregor, Lieut. (jg) R. Z. Collings, Jr., Lieut. (jg) F. B. Long, Lieut. (jg) H. B. Eisberg, Lieut. (jg) R. A. Standard, Lieut. (jg) J. Coudon, Lieut. (jg) R. D. Little, Lieut. (jg) W. H. Gullledge.

FIFTH ROW—Left to right: Lieut. (jg) C. C. Clement, Lieut. (jg) V. S. Falk, Lieut. (jg) F. G. Johnson.

RESERVE MEDICAL OFFICERS

FIRST ROW—Left to Right: Lieut.-Comdr. P. T. Southgate, Lieut.-Comdr. C. P. Hungate, Lieut.-Commander J. A. Lund, Lieut.-Comdr. G. T. Gwathmey, Lieut.-Comdr. G. C. Wilson, Lieut.-Comdr. C. R. Pentz, Lieut.-Comdr. R. K. Miller.

SECOND ROW—Left to Right: Lieut. J. J. Pressman, Lieut. S. D. Murray, Lieut. W. M. Davidson, Lieut. C. W. Hartsough, Jr., Lieut. J. S. Webb, Lieut. M. N. Hosmer, Lieut. S. A. Keim, Lieut. Jno. L. Rosasco.

THIRD ROW—Left to Right: Lieut. F. S. Hosking, Lieut. (jg) W. E. Wiesinger, Lieut. E. A. Hynes, Lieut. (jg) F. B. Voris, Lieut. (jg) R. H. Leeds, Lieut. (jg) L. C. George, Lieut. (jg) R. N. Westfall, Lieut. D. F. Sullivan.



Dear Folks -

Wednesday - March 19

Well, here I am - Since I've been out here I think they've tried to see how well we can take it because we've been at sea almost continually since the first of the month. We are now - And it isn't as if we were going anywhere. Well - we are so far in practice with the fleet - within one or two hundred miles of Hawaii - We are supposed to go into Pearl Harbor tomorrow night and come back out Friday night. This is our usual routine is to be out a week and in a week. It doesn't particularly matter to me though except I don't get any mail and I can't mail any letters. And that's the one thing that's important out here. The good thing about being out here is that you can't spend any money.

The few days we were in port I didn't go over to Henderson because there were other things to do. The few afternoons I had I played golf and tennis. They have an officers club real close to the boat landing - golf course - tennis courts - etc. I jumped right in and played a good set of tennis without any warm-up or anything. When we do get in again I'm going to buy a racket and start playing. Every afternoon I can.

The address was one day too late - I mean, Mr. Swain. It reached me alright aboard ship but we were in San Pedro just before leaving for here. And by the way, we had a terrible storm on the way out - couldn't even set the table - had to eat sandwiches! Three or four days of that and I was plenty sore from being knocked around. I'd wake up - when I slept any - holding on to the railing of my bunk for dear life. I didn't get the least bit sick, although over half the ship did! The waves would just about go over the entire ship - these being little ships anyway. It was a thrilling experience at least that's what it was.

frightening -

I didn't know so many warships could ever be together at one time as there are out here now - I've tried to count them but they are everywhere - battleships, aircraft carriers, cruisers and destroyers - with submarines and airplanes beneath and overhead! They have a bunch of exercises and a lot of training out on these fleet maneuvers.

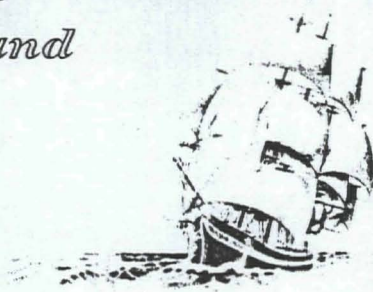
Of course, I haven't been around much to know whether I like the place or not but I certainly am homesome for North Carolina. So tell me you'll see me some day. I've never seen any place better than my home any place other than North

Carolina - Margaret, don't you laugh and call me a stick in the mud! It's the truth. I guess I'll always be a country boy - no matter how much schooling I've had or the places I've seen. There are a bunch of boys among the crew who are from North Carolina.

I wish when you write me that you'd tell me all about the tobacco crop - how the farms are doing - what's happening around Wilson - how Mother's asthma is - how Daddy's prostate trouble is doing - whether Margaret enjoyed her trip - and just everything. It seems so damn far away - it is far, for a fact - just 5,000 miles from home - Mary Margaret having the flu - Mary going to have another baby - dog-gone it! I feel so helpless out here when I want to be there so I can help a little anyway. Just think, I won't even see my baby before everybody else does - He or she will be grown before I get a peek.

Do you know that was one of the hardest things to do, I've ever done? Leaving Mary at home to have the operation and all? It's the best thing I know but it sure does make me worry like the devil. I'd rather she were out here where I could look after her but Lord only knows whether I'd be at sea, in China, or Pinitops when the time came. For heaven's sake please keep me well informed around the first of June. I'll go crazy. I'm worried enough now - just thinking that Cesarean section. Of course I haven't told or intimated Mary that I was worried because I'm afraid she'll get

The
Eastland



The
Congress
Square

Portland, Me.

Dear Mother.

Wednesday -

Mary arrived safe and sound Sunday night, although I scared her to death when I couldn't meet her train. It seems like I'm not in the Navy and separated from everything I know when she is with me. I'm going to try and keep her with me just as long as I can. We have no information as to how long we'll be here, but everyone thinks it won't be more than through this coming week-end, but it may be a few days longer. Then, we might possibly go to Boston for a week's over-haul. If we do - and if we can arrange it, I'd like Mary to stay over. After that there are a lot of rumors about what we'll do. Anything may happen. We might go anywhere.

Both Mary and I appreciate your taking care of Mary Margaret and Walter, Jr. and we both feel perfectly satisfied about that. We both know that if anything should go wrong you'd get in touch with us as well as see ^{about} ~~what~~ their care. Aren't they a fine pair of children? I'm so proud of them I don't know what to do. Maybe sometime I'll be closer to

home so that it won't be such a long and tiresome trip - or, so that I can come home. The reason I couldn't come home this time is that we're on a 4 hours sailing notice - and although we think it'll be longer we never know.

I didn't even get a glimpse of the President on his trip, although our division formed the escort. I can't tell you where the meeting between Churchill and Roosevelt took place but I can tell you it was pretty cold where we were. It was really a momentous voyage, wasn't it?

Did you enjoy your visit to Baltimore? I don't know if you've written me or not because we haven't received any mail for 3-4 weeks.

Margaret, how is everything doing since I saw you last? You should be up here now. I'm staying ashore arranging a dance for about 700 people from our ships - I'm doing everything - arranging dates for the men and officers, dance auditorium, orchestra, refreshments. I've had to see the Mayor, and all the city officials. It's going to be a big dance for 5 destroyers. I need you to help me. The YWCA is going to furnish about 200 girls for me - It's a big order, isn't it?

Tell Daddy to take care of himself. Tell M.M. to behave herself -

Love to all -

Walter

IN REPLY REFER TO

NO.

U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

OCT. 28, 1941

Dear Folks -

We arrived here last week in excellent shape after our trip down. We didn't have a bit of trouble with the car. The only thing was that on the last stretch the children - as well as Mary and myself got pretty tired. We stopped at a real nice motor lodge in Pensacola until we could find a house. Mary sent you a card so you know all that though. We find a real nice furnished house with two bedrooms - electric stove and refrigerator - lawn, porch - and all. We were mighty lucky. It's close to the Air Station in a section of many people - close to the country club and only a short distance from the Bay. I think we'll like it here very much.

When I went to apply for a tag for my car - in order to get in the Navy just they asked for the Registration Card - Mary doesn't know anything about it. I'll have to have it. And they told me I'd have to have the title as well. so that I'll be the responsible party in case anything should happen in a wreck or anything. Could you fix that up and send it as soon as possible? I'll pay you as soon as I can.

That stuff hasn't arrived yet. Did you send it? We slept one night right on the mattresses - then just bought enough towels and sheets to make out - expecting our other stuff

any day. It gets pretty chilly down here at night, and I understand it actually freeze once or twice during the winter!

After all my hurry to carry out my orders I arrived two weeks too late to enter the class! So, what they'll do is keep me over a couple of months longer to enter the next class. And am I glad I was late! That means we'll be down here almost 6 months. Isn't that fine? While I'm waiting I'm assigned to the Naval Dispensary - and at present I'm "working" at a new field they've just built - Ellson Field - about 20 miles from the Naval Air Station. There's nothing to do but sit around - but if there's a crash anywhere near this station I'm supposed to go along with the ambulance. I took my first airplane ride yesterday morning from the Air Station to Ellson Field - and then last night - or rather at 3:00 PM - rode back to the Air Station. It wasn't bad at all - just a little funny feeling to look down from an open cock-pit a couple of thousand feet up in the air. It won't be so bad - if others can do it I can too. We always wear parachutes anyway - I might even like to fly if I could get a chance to learn. So, to be on the safe side - I'd advise you to keep my insurance up. I'm going to try and send Clarence mine as soon as possible. Ask him how much it is for me - exactly - or, I don't know if Mary even has my policy down here - I could look at that. There really isn't much danger - not as much as being on a destroyer with submarines all around anyway. Wasn't that something about the Kearny? She was hit right where we'd been. And I'd rather be in the air hanging by a

IN REPLY REFER TO
NO. _____

U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

parachute than in the cold water with a life jacket on with no ships around to pick you up.

Did you send our sheets, towels, etc? How did you send it down? We've been around to both the Express and the freight offices and we haven't heard hide nor hair of it. I'd like to get it as soon as possible.

We bought the baby a crib yesterday - W., the day before - and it was a relief. As you know that he can almost crawl over the bed? In just a few days he has learned to roll over and work his legs and body so that he can go from one end of the bed to the other. Isn't that something?

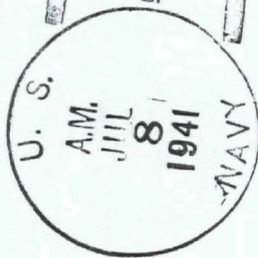
I forgot to pick my watch up on the way down. I guess it's ruined now. When salt water - or spray - gets in a watch it ruins it unless you can have it cleaned immediately - and mine has gone too long I'm sure. Would you take it down and have it looked at? If it can be fixed would you send me the bill? I really need a watch down here - we even had to buy ourselves a real cheap alarm clock. I've been having to get up at 5:30 - 6:00 AM. every morning, so you see we actually needed one.

Is Clarence up and about? I know he is without asking though. Write and tell me all the news -

Love to all -

P.S. Address: We get our mail at
The Naval Air Station - Our home is
300 - 2nd St. Warrenton, Fla. (no mail delivered)

Walter



Walter E. Brown
Walter E. Brown
Walter E. Brown

ASSESSED BY CENSOR-SPECIAL
U.S. NAVY

12 Nov. 1941

Dear Folks.

I received Margaret's two blasts day before yesterday. You don't realize the situation here or you all wouldn't raise so much devil with me. You see, they've got me stationed about 20 miles from where we live, and the hours are such that everything is closed up when I leave home in the morning and everything closes up about an hour after I get off work - not counting the drive back home. We don't have mail delivered here - we have to go out and look for it - either out to the Naval Dispensary which is on the Main Station or to the postoffice in Warrington. We've got a package at the Naval Base now that's been there for 2 weeks and I can't get a chance to get it - they close at 3:00 P.M. and I can't get off. I need the car - Mary hasn't received her pass into the Naval Station. So you see how difficult it is to get anything done.

We received the trunk, grip - etc. and everything was alright. We haven't even been able to really get settled yet - no pictures, no map, and a lot of little things - we just had the man get our heater up before it got cold - not soon enough really, because

all four of us had a cold. The children recovered in a hurry though, so everything was alright.

The baby looks like a fat pig - I'll swear! I believe he almost weighs as much as Mary Margaret. And she's getting to be "a big girl." She really is filling out her arms, legs, and she's got the roundest face. We've started Walter, Jr. on spinach - He's been getting Patience - and I almost believe we're going to have to get him a pen so he can start pulling soup. He's too fat to crawl! But he doesn't have any teeth yet. He's getting a little hair but not much. Mary has gained too - She weighed 108 pounds yesterday and we're going to try and shove that up to 115 - at least 110. She's looking real well - especially since we got some one to help her.

If I could ever get over to the Main Station I could collect some money, but I can't get any time off when they're open. Just as soon as I can I'll send a check for my insurance - Tell Clarence my policy doesn't cover flying at all - in any shape - except to say it won't pay. Ask him to look it up for me and if possible switch policies some how so that I'll be covered in aircraft - in Naval planes as a passenger - That is - if I can switch policies and what the rates will be. It isn't bad flying at all - I imagine it's safer than being on a destroyer around Iceland now, don't you? Isn't that terrible about that one being sunk?

Dear Margaret,

And how are you? Honestly all of us are getting so fat I don't know what to think about it.

I surely do appreciate you exchanging my sweater. I'm so glad I didn't take back my fall clothes for that's all that people wear down here. It's already been 32° and the air is so damp it seems colder than that. Today is real pretty though. You certainly can't rely on Pensacola weather.

How is Mrs. Brown? I certainly do hope she is well by now. Let us know about it.

The children are fine. Walter, Jr. is so fat and big that he's a sight! He's getting spoiled but is so cute. You'll have to come to see us to see how the Brown family have blossomed out.

Thank you for sending our trunk
etc.. Believe me we were in a jux
until we got them.

I just heard an advertisement of Lida
E. Pinkham's Compound. Can you guess who
I thought of?

Give my love to Mr. & Mrs. Brown
and write soon -

Love,

Mary

scared. And I'm not any more worried than I would have been the first time if I'd known that was going to be an operation. But since I know she's going to be operated on - think about it - worry about it - then, think some more. It's hell.

All the families of the other officers are in their way and here. Three of the officers on the Morris are expecting new additions around June - and they're all coming. It'll be the first baby for two of them. If it weren't for that Occocean section I'd have many on the way right now. But I feel I'd understand her & the Center - than anyone I know of. He certainly has been good to us.

It got so crowded on the Morris I had to move off. I'm on the Roe now but expect to go over to the train right about the first of the month. They are all in my division. We're getting a lot of reserve officers - ensigns - in all the way. They are the ones who have received about 3-4 months course and put right on a ship for further training - they haven't gone through Annapolis at all. There's a bunch of them coming in steadily to train - with a larger Navy they can train them at Annapolis fast enough. Most of them are bright as they can be.

The way everything is now it looks as if I'll be out here for about 2 years - Or, at least until the war and all the trouble is over. We heard President Roosevelt's speech over the radio - he sounded pretty belgiant, didn't he? If we aren't at war in 6 months I think the danger will be past for us. What I'm interested in right now is Japan's foreign minister's conference with Hitler. If Japan moves southward I'm afraid we'll be in it. Hitler wants to get his hands somewhere else so we can't give Britain so much aid. But if we do get in war we'll stay here - our destroyer division is the only one who has Honolulu as a home port. And I think our tactics would be more defensive than offensive.

The reason all my words are so messed up is that we

rolling pretty bad and I just can keep my chair under me - at
best part of the time.

Give my regards to everyone -

Always -
Walter

P.S. You received my address -

1.1.1. Mainwright. Decid. 17

4. Fleet Post Office

Naval Harbor. F.H.

Saturday Night - Mar. 29

Dear Margaret -

We're leaving tomorrow afternoon for a few days - before we come for upkeep. That is, we'll be alongside a bigger ship where they can do what repair work has to be done - and we'll be in port for 3 weeks then. I'll be glad when this next 'week' is over. We've been to sea so much with so little time in port - we've averaged 7 out of 8 nights since we left Norfolk at sea.

It's so much trouble to get to Honolulu from here unless you have your own car & haven't been over yet. But you can see most of the place from the sea - when I do go over I'm going to be most disappointed. One of the boys from the ship said that he was never so disappointed as when he saw Waikiki Beach - I was mighty disappointed when I saw San Diego, Cal. too. But from what I've read in the papers since the weather there then was really unusual - maybe it is prettier than when I saw it.

Isn't this war business a mess? Kind of funny how things are going to happen. Nobody knows. I don't think we're going to win but they don't think so either. I don't think you or I. That's just their opinion. It's as good as another. Personally, I think it's a great danger - if we don't go to war within the next 6 months I feel that we won't. The next 6 months will be the critical time. God, I hope we don't get in any trouble. I'm very anxious about this conference of Japan's foreign Minister - Matsuoka. There's no telling what will happen.

The climate out here is very pleasant and Hawaii is considered to be very healthy - there are a number of diseases here but they're well controlled - no epidemics - only

a few mosquitoes. They have a lot of ants. But everyone says it is very healthy here. Every person in the Navy - dependents - has to be vaccinated against smallpox and typhoid fever before the Government will pay their way out here. And they have excellent water facilities - swimming - tennis - golf - out here. It's a pretty nice place I guess. I'm so homesick for every body at home though I don't know what to do. It's something else - this sea duty - it's pretty tough.

I was looking over a supply list of drugs today and I saw the item "Whiskey - Scotch - 1/2-gallon - \$0.05" I thought how you would like to have some of it at that price for your priests! Gracious alms! But of course, that was only for medicinal purposes. I didn't even order any. It must have been the supply of illegal whiskey the Government had.

They had an Admiral's inspection yesterday. There certainly was a high standard about that. My lord, everything was absolutely spotless. On these ships there is none of that slop of musty uniforms with passenger lines. Everything is scrubbed. The ship is almost always looking like a new ship. They're only about

you will tell me all the news - It gets real home and I want to hear about North Carolina. Write me often as you can -

Love -
Walter

My address now is:
Attn: Mr. Wright
of Fleet Post Office
Naval Harbor, T. H.

June 2, 1942

Dear Folks -

I imagine you all think I'm dead or something, but it has picked up here considerably within the past week. We've received the vegetables, the bill of lading for the furniture, and also, Mayant's letter about the money. So, it looks as if we've received all the mail and written nothing.

Mary and the children arrived safe and sound but very tired Saturday night and we're doing very well - Our furniture arrived today. In fact, I haven't even seen it yet, but Mary called and said that the furniture company crated it in very flimsy stuff - that all of it was scarred - that nails were driven into chairs and other stuff. And how much did they charge for such work as that? How about calling them up and cussing them out for me? When I go home and see it - I guess I'll have to wait and see.

The vegetables Mayant sent down kept very well and the Williams said they were marvelous. They really were. How much did it cost to send them? I gave a check for \$20.00 for the rugs but we haven't had time to go and get them yet. And it'll probably turn out that they'll give us

some different rugs than the ones Margaret saw and asked them to keep. But that's the way it is.

About that devious car - when do I send in \$500.00? I've lost that letter - I'll send you all the first check or should I send all of them? I know it's a little less than \$500, dog-gone it! It's mighty expensive moving - But I'm going to send you the title to the car as soon as possible.

There's no telling just what we'll have to buy in the way of furniture - I know it isn't going to be much - not yet - anyway. Good job! Our routine - financial routine has gone all to the devil - and so quickly too! It'll do that though, won't it?

Write us as often as possible - Our address at home is 4744 Boxwood Road, Jacksonville, Fla. Have you seen Elmer lately. If so, how is he getting along? You can give him our address if you like. Is Jean and Ed coming to Jacksonville or will they be in Rhode Island?

Love
Lester

IN REPLY
REFER TO _____

Address
Commanding Officer
Naval Air Station

UNITED STATES NAVAL AIR STATION
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

July 11, 1942

Dear Folks,

It's hot as the devil down here. When I walk into the house it almost feels like a hot oven. We are really having some hot weather. The children are taking it pretty well even with the whooping cough. Mary Margaret is almost over her, and Walter, Jr. is just about in the middle of his. They haven't been especially sick with it - they seem to feel alright during the day - play in the house - laugh - eat - although M.M. did vomit quite a bit when she'd have spasms of coughing with the typical whoop. But they really do have the whooping cough. There won't be anything left for them to have when they start to school except chicken pox and German measles. I'll be glad when all the illnesses are over and done with.

There isn't any news from down here except we're still in Jacksonville - although there's no telling how long. I imagine just about the time we get everything going smoothly it'll be time to leave.

I've paid off that finance company in Atlanta for the car - \$500.00 - I've paid my insurance for the last quarter - and it's due again - I've paid - and paid - wlog - you see it! I'm sending Margaret a check for \$489.00 - I think that's about the amount due on that

loan - I won't have the money in the bank, but it'll
be there by the 16th or 17th - so, I wouldn't advise
sending it through until then. I'll mail the check on the
15th. And maybe by the 1st of August we'll have a
little in the bank - Isn't this problem of money here?
I wish I'd get Flight Orders and that would mean
\$6000 a month more. If I'd go to see I'd get \$2000 a
month more. But I'd just as soon lose the
\$2000 and stay whole! It'll be as broad as
it is long in the end anyway. It'll always be
something - so why worry about it? Especially
since there are so many other things one can worry
about.

Jean invited us to dinner last night - real nice -
I don't think they're going to move where we live.
Jean is worried because she thinks I'd might go to
sea - what the hell! It's the same thing - Some body
has to go - why worry until it's time to worry -
and even then - we need to worry - it doesn't
do any good. Mary and I have worried very
little and we've stopped that now -

Write and let us know how everyone and
every thing is

Love -

Walter -

P.S. Address now -

4602 Riverside Road -

Jacksonville -

I might even get further promotion within the next
year! There are 200 doctors - Lt - Lt he promoted before it gets to me -
the next is Lt. commander (major)

LT. Walter Earl Brown, M.D.
Part II

Pers-318-JLM

5271

JUL 18 1942

From: The Chief of Naval Personnel.
To: Lieutenant
Walter E. Brown,
Medical Corps, U.S.N.,
Naval Air Station,
Jacksonville, Fla.

Via: Commandant.

Subject: Change of duty.

1. When directed by the Commandant, Naval Air Station, in July, 1942, you will regard yourself detached from duty at the Naval Air Station, Jacksonville, Fla., and from such other duty as may have been assigned you; will proceed to Moffett Field, Calif., and report to the Commanding Officer, Cub 13, at the Naval Air Station, for duty in connection with the establishment of Cub 13, and for duty with the Base Section, Cub 13, when established, and for duty outside the continental limits of the United States.

2. Report also by letter to the Commandant, Twelfth Naval District, for this duty.

3. You are hereby authorized to delay until July 31, 1942, in reporting in obedience to these orders.

4. Keep the Bureau of Naval Personnel and your new station advised of your address.

5. This delay will count as leave. Upon the commencement of the leave you will immediately inform this bureau of the exact date and upon the expiration thereof, you will return the attached form, giving the dates of commencement and expiration.

Copy to:

Bu. M&S.

C.O., Naval Air Station,
Moffett Field, Calif.

Cdt., 12th Nav. Dist.

Cdt., 6th Nav. Dist.

Cdt., Nav. Air Sta.,
Jacksonville, Fla.

RANDALL JACOBS

Tuesday - Aug. 11, 1942

Dear Folks -

Well, it looks as if you all will have to kind of look after my family again while I'm gone. And my own opinion is that it will be longer than the last time. I + sort of looks as if I'm following along in Uncle Charlie Mizelle's shoes in getting into our country's troubles, doesn't it? He held the same rank I hold now when he died - so, who knows, we might have an admiral! I hope not - poor fellows - everyone looks upon them with such awe. I wonder if they're as happy as I am? I doubt it.

Mary will have to look after all our financial arrangements at home, but for heaven's sake! Don't let her pay off debts and not have enough to live on herself. And that's what she'll probably do.

I certainly hope Walter Jr. is well by now. I hate to leave not knowing that he is completely well, but when you have to go there's no other way. He'll be a big boy when I see him again. He won't even know his Daddy. Mary will probably be back about the first of September and she will stay with her folks for 2 months and if she is happy there - and I doubt

...she would like to live
...her mother's house.
...same quite a lot
...out. That will
...feels about it. It
...hope she'll stay and
...look after the children.
...her me. I try to say
...about what you all
...possibly say enough.
...I left Mary Power.
...me), my will, all
...and whatever else
...you won't hear
...time - All I really
...and the children to
...happy. We're always

been a fussing family - and I
taken things to heart more than I should
have - But I do love Mary and want
her to be happy. So be good to her.

Give my love to everyone at home.
and it will be good to go for a while now.

With love -

Walter

P.S. My address:

U.S. Navy. S.S.A.
of Postmaster
San Francisco,
Cal.

W. S. Brown, Lt (MC) USN
FROM
U.S. Navy - S.S.A.
H. Postmaster
San Francisco
Cal.

U. S.
FREE
7
10
15
NAVY

FREE
A ARINES

CANTEEN SERVICE



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA

RECEIVED BY NAVAL CENSOR
g.t.c.

Mrs. Walter C. Brown
Fremont,
N.C.
U.S.A.



Thursday - Aug. 20th

Dear Folks -

Well, here I am. God only knows where we are - where we're going - or when we'll get there. But I'm at sea again for an indefinite length of time. We didn't stay in California long, did we? You never can tell about these things. One never knows.

There isn't anything to write about. We are in no danger, sailing along steadily, nothing to do but eat, sleep, and read. Of course, most of our time is taken up with speculation as to where we're going, when we're going to get there, and such as that. We've never been so completely in the dark before. I'm really wondering if they'll tell us where we are when we land. It would be a devil of a note to live some where and not even know where we were living, wouldn't it?

I imagine this will be quite an experience - But isn't it going to be embarrassing when my grandchildren ask me how many Germans I killed



in the war? Mary Margaret was Thrilled & death when I left - wanted to know where my gun was, how many Germans I was going to kill - She had to put my tin helmet on - and she was as wide-eyed as she could be.

I'm not going to take any chances on sending money through the mail, so Mary will have to look after all the debts we made upon leaving Jacksonville. But for Heaven's sakes, don't let her pay debts and not have enough to live on herself.

How about writing me and telling me all the news - about what everyone is doing - about what everyone thinks about drafting men under 45 with dependents - and all the dope? I can't tell you all anything because I don't know anything. I do know it's lots warmer where we are than in California - and that I've never been this far away from home before. It's a pretty lonesome feeling - but everything is alright so far -

Write often -

P.S. I imagine Mary will have taken Walter off your hands by now. I wish I could see him.

Always -
Walter

CANTEEN SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES

118

Friday. ~~_____~~

My darling Sweetheart -

There still isn't much to say except to stay patient and wait for me to come home. We still don't know where we're going or when we'll get there. We're still up in the air about the whole business.

We have had an uneventful trip so far - and at present are in a port, the name of which I can't tell you. It kind of looks as if my wish will come true - about being some place where there is something going on - some fighting activity. It looks as if we've missed the active fighting this time, but I don't imagine it'll be very long now. Gosh, isn't this exciting, honey?

We went visiting today and I ran up with some doctors who knew Dr. Callaway at Seattle and Dr. Dewitt Brown at Jacksonville. In fact, the doctor who knew Dr. Dewitt said he had just heard from them the other day. Isn't that strange?

CANTEEN SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES

118

You always run up on some one in matter if one is 7000 miles from home. And the boy who went over with me knew quite a few in common with the other doctors. We had lunch over there and had a very enjoyable day.

But Mary, I really have started to miss you. Say-gue it! I sure do love you, honey - and more than I did 6 years ago. Too! I hope I don't worry too much about you and the children. But I can't help it. I keep remembering the night you knocked the milk bottle over on the porch and the subsequent event. You will humor me when I ask you not to at all, won't you? If I were sure of that I wouldn't worry at all. You won't, will you? I'm going to consider that you have promised me because I can see you right now looking at me and telling me you won't. And it's very real - I can picture you and I know you won't.

I wish I could hear from you, but I know it will be several months yet before we get any mail. That will be a glorious letter, too, Mary. You're almost

CANTEEN SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES



getting ready to leave California now - In a couple of days now you'll be on your way home, you be careful now, honey. I wish I could see you and look after you.

Be sure and let me know about that allotment - I haven't spent a cent so far - not even for board - That's on the house. Isn't that fine? And I'll have a months pay coming in a few more days - I'll be able to pay off that "dead-horse" pretty quick if I stay in the ship much longer!

Honey, give my regards to everyone - Tell them I'm fighting the war and when it's over I'll be home.

Be sweet and good - look after the children and kiss them for me. Don't let them forget me. I love you, doodle-bug -

Always yours -
Walter

W. Brown Lt. (MC)
U.S. Navy. S.S.A.
4. Postmaster.
San Francisco. Cal.
U.S.A.



Mrs. Walter E. Brown
Fresmont.
N.C.
U.S.A.

AIR MAIL



Friday - Sept. 18th

My darling Mary,

We have gotten off the ship now. although we still don't know where we will ultimately go. So far, it's been pretty nice at the camp. It isn't like home by any means - but we all have a lot of fun.

I'm so stiff and sore I don't know what to do. The site of the camp is on a hill and we have quite a bit of walking to do - shower, water, eating, and toilet facilities being separate and quite a little distance between - and all this walking in those heavy shoes I bought, especially in hilly country makes it pretty hard. We are living in a tent which we've fixed up pretty well. We put a wooden floor in, made small tables by our cots, made one big table and chair, and made a clothes rack. We have a fam. sized mirror which we confiscated. I'm in a tent with two others - both nice boys. Jim and Felix were assigned the same tent - with two others - Altogether it's

W. E. Brown, LT (MC) USN
U. S. NAVY - S. S. A.
V. Postmaster - San Francisco, Cal.



Felix just came in the Room - which is occupied by 4 others, by the way - and asked me to say "hello" for him. It's pretty monotonous aboard - eat, sleep, read, play cards and other games. The Captain is one of my room-mates and I don't believe he approves of my poker playing, but he is a real nice fellow. We have had a game every night, almost, which has been very enjoyable - although it is kind of wearing off now.

Was Walter Jr. well when you reached home? Was your trip enjoyable? You will write and tell me everything, won't you? Don't do like you usually do when you write a letter - sit down and finish it in 2-3 minutes. I want you to think over the whole thing - keep me posted on everything, even stuff you think I wouldn't want to hear about - everything. That is going to make life much more enjoyable where we're going if I receive long letters from you. You will do that, won't you? You'd better, or you know what will happen to you when I get home!

Is Mary Margaret behaving herself? You can



tell her this part of the letter is for her -
and read to her whatever you think best -
if she's been looking after you alright and
behaving well you can tell her Daddy was
real glad. But you know what if she has
been a naughty little girl. And I feel
sure that's what she's been. Has she?

Did you know that when a ship crosses
the Equator they have a special service - and
initiation of all those who haven't been
across before? They are classified as "Polly wags"
before crossing and after the initiation they
are "shell backs". They hold a regular Neptune's
Court - with King Neptune presiding. I understand
they have another service for crossing the
International Date Line, but I don't know
for sure. There were quite a few "polly wags"
aboard.

There hasn't been any excitement yet -
The weather has been swell - not too hot -
not too cool - but exceptionally delightful -
after the cold weather around Palo Alto
and San Francisco. You know, I almost froze
to death. Didn't you find it that way?
My cold hasn't cleared up yet, but I
think it'll only last a few more days.

CANTEEN SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS
OF THE UNITED STATES

conscious - ~~stretched~~ one becomes. The chaplain
has had two christenings so far and has
had one man request to be married by
proxy - that is to carry on the wedding
ceremony with his bride - ~~to be~~ away away
in land - New York - and ~~to remain on~~
board ship. The Chaplain wasn't very
enthusiastic - Boy-gone! How would you
have liked that 5 1/2 years ago?
Harry. Take good care of yourself
and the children - don't forget what I
told you before I left - and be a real
nice little girl. I love you, Mary -

Always -
Walter

Friday - Sept. 18

Dear Folks -

After so long a time one eventually gets into the army. Right after we got off our ship we were put in tents - they are real nice though - room for 4 in each tent although we only have 3 in ours. We had quite a job fixing it up. I had to return to carpentering. Remember our building in New Jersey? Well, we had to put in a floor and since our tent was on quite a hill we had to do some blocking and yet we didn't get it even. We had scrap to work with and such sawing and splicing you've never seen! But we got a floor! Then, each made a bed with table, one big table and chair, and a clothes rack. We have quite a place now - wish you could come to see us.

And again the army. We have a very persistent bugler who tries his best to wake us up at 5:45 A.M. One eventually gets up or does without breakfast. We take our bucket up a hill for water and then we're all set for the day. One thing is one place - another about 4 miles away. For the past morning or two I've been kind of stiff

W. B. Brown, LT (MC) USN

U.S. NAVY - S.S.A.

Postmaster, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

from the unaccustomed exercise. I'll wear off
I'm sure. We're fixed up pretty well.
However - It really isn't bad. Tell Clarence
this would really take his fallen chest
and put it back where it belongs.

I have a room-mate who looks
and acts more like Uncle Charlie Mizell
than anyone I've ever seen - same build
and weighs about 225. That's kind of
interesting, I thought - He is from
Mississippi -

There is still no idea about where we're
heading - This is apparently only a temporary
stopping place - We might see some action.
I'd like to get with an active flying
squadron - That would really be
exciting. I wonder if our people will
forget this as easily as they did the
last war? It's hard to see how they
could. I won't.

It's kind of hard to write anything.
Because there's nothing to say. We
don't even receive any newspapers, and
the only news we get is usually later
than anyone else receives -

Write often -

Always
Walter -

W. E. Brown, Lt (MC) USN
U.S. Navy - S.S.A.
1st Postmaster
San Francisco
Cal.

Tuesday Night -

Sept. 22, 1942

My darling Sweetheart,

I've heard a little news about mail. We haven't received any yet, but the Army boys are receiving air mail in about 10-14 days from the time they're mailed. I'd like for you to send most of my letters air-mail so that we can keep in a little closer touch. Gee whizz, it's almost been 2 months since we left the States and we haven't heard a thing! And I'm sure you've heard from me by this time - We're expecting mail every day, but it's never here.

The people are fairly nice here - They are Irish and negroes - and kind of mixed including Indo-Chinese, Javanese, etc. It's a real pretty island with the peaks reaching as high as 5-6,000 feet about which one can see the clouds. I had no idea the place was as pretty and colorful until the other day I climbed up on a hill close by, and the view was beautiful. You could see the sea all around - various small bays - and inland, the mountains rising sharply with the clouds just above the peaks. They have some very modern homes scattered around - very much like some of the nicer California homes. And some of the gardens are very well kept. If you were here with me and we were here under different

William LT (MC) USN

U.S. Navy S.S.A.

Postmaster San Francisco, Cal.

circumstances. I think we'd enjoy it very much.

We still don't know when we're leaving or where we'll go, so we're just waiting. We have very little to do except fix up our own quarters and ours is fairly well fixed up by now. All we can do is read, sleep, go into town for a Scotch & soda, swim, play bridge, etc. There's no gambling allowed in camp.

Do you remember Dan Murphy who rode on the train with us to Mountain View? He is stationed with us, but at another camp. I saw him the other day and he asked to be remembered to you. Jim said if Misses Althea's cooking. He was wishing some of her hot biscuits tonight. Oh, give it! I don't blame him a bit! Did she get home alright or have you heard?

I wish I would hear some news from you. I'm worried about how you and the children are getting along. In fact, that's the only thing I am worried about. I'm going to write him and a note tonight and ask him to make sure you get along alright. I know he will say yes, but I think I'll drop him a note. It won't do you a bit of good to mind either. He's already done, and by the time you read this he will have heard from me.

When you write me I imagine I'll receive your letter from Fremont sent by air mail before I'll receive that from

W. Brown, Lt (MC) USN

US Navy - S.S.A.

Postmaster

San Francisco, Cal.

California. That is, if you write me from California. Hey - gone it!
You'd better behave yourself and get busy and write
me some letter.

Honey, this separation is worse than it was before.
I feel the same way - only worse, about leaving you
and the children. We don't have any prospect to look
forward to - not for some time. But only two months
gone so far. It is bad, isn't it? And everyone here is in
the same fix. In such a situation we can only think
of immediate things about us - No one can afford
to worry about home - or think too much about
his family - Worry can only make things worse, no
matter how impossible that may seem - and no one,
no matter how stoic, can afford to think too
much of home. I want to explain that so you'll understand
the apparent lightness and lack of feeling in my
letter. It's better this way. You know I love you
and always will. You know you won't have
to worry about me. I think we know one another
pretty well to have been married only six years,
don't you?

You know, I always keep coming back to mail like
are thinking a lot about that these days. When
you do write me I want you to tell me all about the
war in the South Pacific area, so I'll know what's
going on. Then, too, that'll be an incentive for you to
keep up with the developments in this area - you do that.

W. B. Brown, Jr. (MC) USN

U.S. Navy S.S.A.

Postmaster

San Francisco, Cal

now, will you?

Mary, you'd better ask Dr. Rand to start vaccinations on Walter. Sr. and give Mary Margaret her cough. It's about time for your typhoid vaccine too, isn't it? That wouldn't hurt Mary Margaret either if she has gained back her weight after the whooping cough. I wonder how Walter. Sr. is. I sure would like to see you all, honey. I miss you more than I can let you know.

Felix and Jim are doing alright - Jim tells me joke after the other - The only trouble is he's gotten to the point of repeating jokes over and over - I think Jim enjoys the same joke more each time.

Write me often, Mary - I love you more and more -
Always -
Walter

Mr. F. Brown, Lt (MC) USN
U.S. Navy, S.S.A.,
Postmaster
San Francisco,
Cal.

Tuesday Night
Sept. 22, 1942

Dear Edith and Leonard,

This is just to say "hey". That's about all I can say to! The outfit I'm with is just stopping here - and where is that? - until we get orders where and when to build our hospital. So, there has been very little for us to do so far.

You know, they tell us this: we're to be a favorite stopping place for tourists in the South Seas, and it is pretty, but I'll take those tobacco-covered flat fields of North Carolina for mine. I declare! I sure do hate to be away from Mary, Mary Margaret, and Walter. In fact, that's the worse part of the whole thing. It would be alright except for that. I don't mind anything else.

We haven't received any mail from home yet - and it's been a long time. Of course, it seems longer than it really has been. Every day, we go down to our make-shift post office and ask for mail - but no mail. I think some of us will be shocked speechless one of these days when we receive some letters - which time I hope will be soon.

Leonard, I'm in the Army. We've really had some time. Here I thought I was safe from tents and all that goes with tents, and I'll swear! I'm living in one! Isn't that something? We have our camp

W.E. Brown, LT (MC) USN

U.S. NAVY, S.S.A.

Postmaster

San Francisco, Cal.

right on the side of a big hill. We had a devil of a time putting in a wood floor in our tent - It's a little bit down hill - only a little - about 45° angle! There are three of us in the one tent. We have things very comfortable, however - The only trouble is that we have a very annoying bird in camp who blows a damn bugle every morning at 5:45 A.M. - very persistent fellow too. He ought to be court-martialed, but no one seems to do anything about it. And you can't shoot him off like you can do an alarm clock either! We carry our own water, wash our clothes, but we sleep more than anything else.

When we move I imagine we'll get a little closer to the fighting. As it is now, we haven't seen so much of that, but I don't think it'll be so long now. One never knows.

This place where we are is fairly thickly populated with French, Indo-Chinese, Javanese, and some native negroes. It has several towns the largest of which is about 10,000 and several thousand of those are whites. It is very pretty scenically with plenty of beach, mountains, flowers, and all that. They have enormous numbers of deer on the island, and in some places have to almost run over them to get them out of the road! They have mountains up to around 5,000 feet. It's a pretty nice place - I wouldn't mind living here, but as is the case with this general area white people don't seem to take to the sanitation.

W. B. Brown, LT (MC) USN

U.S. Navy. S.S.A.

Postmaster

San Francisco, Cal.

I imagine it'll get hot as the devil in the summer. This is
just the beginning of Spring here.

My gosh! the lights almost went out. We have our
own generator and see that. It can be set up very
quickly and easily.

How is Betty Bowman? You know, I've only had one
opportunity to see her - really. The other time she was
asleep. It seems almost as long ago since I've seen
Mary - two months gone by of an estimated two years. It's
going to be pretty bad I expect before I get home.
Look after Mary for me -

Always -
Walter

W. Brown, Lt (MC) USN
U.S. Navy S.S.A.
Postmaster
San Francisco, Cal.



VIA AIR MAIL

MR. & MRS. Leonard Hooks
Fremont,
N.C.
U.S.A.

W. Brown, Lt (MC) USN
U.S. Navy S.S.A.
Postmaster
San Francisco,
Cal.

Monday Morning
Sept. 28, 1942

My darling Sweetheart,

The week-end - or what passed for a week-end here - is over. Saturday Eighmy and I played a little football - just throwing and kicking - and I was sure sore and stiff. Saturday night the Army had some boxing bouts - about eight or nine in all - and they were real good. In fact, we enjoyed them as much as we would have any big professional fights. They also had a concert before the fights by a real good orchestra - Army orchestra - which is supposed to be composed almost entirely of the Southern Methodist University orchestra. They played "hot" music and all the boys went crazy over it. They asked for more and more. They played "Down in the Heart of Texas" - and sang. It reminded me of the Saturday night dances at Jacksonville with Carl King singing all those songs. Commander Walcott has a voice similar to Carl's, and he is from Texas, so it was almost the same.

After the fights Eighmy and I decided to go to Town. We got a ride in, but as it was 9:30 P.M. everything was closed up tighter than a drum. We had to walk home - so we thought we'd take a short-cut, and I'll swear, we almost walked our legs off! It was 12:30 when we got back! And we didn't even get a drop of wine! The short-cut was almost twice the regular distance of 3 1/2 miles! We didn't know where in the devil we were for a

W.B. Brown Lt (MC) USN

U.S. Navy - S.S.A.

Postmaster

San Francisco.

Cal.

long time. Gosh, I believe I'll stay in camp hereafter.

Today is wash day for me. And as usual I've left everything to the last minute. This washing business is something, especially the khaki shirts and trousers. We could get them done in town, but it's so darn much trouble and expensive I'd just as soon do them myself.

Sweetheart, I'm going to increase your allowance this month, but I imagine before you'll get it in the bank it'll be after Xmas! I'm going to keep \$45⁰⁰ and send you \$40⁰⁰ more a month. I would like for you to buy a \$50⁰⁰ bond every month if you can with it. They cost \$37⁰⁰ I think. Do you think you'll be able to? You know, you shouldn't need so very much to live on in Fremont. Yes, doodle, I know we have a lot of debts to pay. But I want you to have more than you did last time we were separated. Let's see how well you can do.

There hasn't been any more mail received yet - we're all waiting anxiously for another ship to come in. We've had a taste of mail and it's only whetted our appetite. Gosh, I do want to hear about your trip home from California. And I bet you won't even say much about it!

Eighmy and I have been giving exams to the conscripts for advancement. I don't know how many there are but we've quizzed for two days and don't have half yet. It's amazing how varied the boys are - some with 1-3 years college - others not even through the 5th grade! But a few are real

W. E. Brown W (H) USN
U.S. NAVY. S.S.A.

Postmaster

San Francisco,

Cal.

smart.

Darling, we still are uncertain as to when we'll end up. No one knows. It really doesn't make very much difference to me - I'll be away from home in any event. And that is the hard part. I love you, Mary - and it isn't a bit of fun being separated. Be sweet - Kiss the children for me.

Always my love -
Edwin

L. O. Brown, Lt (MC) USN
U.S. Navy - S.S.A.

Ordinance

San Francisco,
Cal

Sunday Morning

Oct. 4, 1942

Dear Folks -

Nothing has happened since we've been here. Everything is the same as when I wrote you all last. The only thing that really troubles us is the lack of mail service. We've received mail one time since we left the first part of August - and none from you all at all. I received some letters from Mary. It's a long time between mail.

We don't know yet where our permanent base will be - where we'll build our hospital - It might be here - It probably won't be though. No one knows at present how certain things turn out - what conditions will be, so we just have to wait and see.

The life here has not changed any. It's a wonderful climate - warm during the day - cool at night, and the mosquitoes aren't so bad this time of the year. We'll need our nets before many more weeks though. We still have trouble with that person who insists on blowing the bugle in the morning, but it's gotten so most of us pay no attention to him. There's nothing to do at night except sleep, and we get plenty of that. There's a beach alone by where we can swim - we can play ball, cards, chess, and all the games when we desire. There's no active fighting

W. Brown, Lt (MC) USN

U.S. Navy, S. S. A.

Postmaster

San Francisco,
Cal.

in our immediate vicinity, so there's no trouble along these lines. We get good food - and well cooked. The only trouble is when it rains and then, we have the honest-to-goodness Army mud.

Every Saturday night we have scheduled boxing matches which are really very good. In addition we have an orchestra which plays before and between the fights. We all enjoy that as much, if not more, than the best New York show. We have a pretty good time considering the conditions.

Everything is alright here - There's no need to worry - and there's absolutely no news -

Always,
Walter

W. B. Brown, LT(MC) USN
U.S. NAVY, S.S.A.
Postmaster
San Francisco,
Cal.

Monday Afternoon

Oct. 12, 1942

My darling Sweetheart,

I've had two busy days! Wonder of wonders! The very first activity since leaving the States. And this was just hard labor. Yesterday - Sunday - we made four frames for tents - enough to take care of 40 patients in our hospital. We started out in a field - just like in one of your fields - build a frame or base - put in wooden floors - then, put the tent over that - one of these great big tents which can hold about 75-100 people sitting at a long table. I was really tired last night.

Then, today I've been riding these devilish trucks. They sure do bounce! I've heard over and over that all of us are going to be assigned to a Marine Aviation Unit - I hope we will be, but we won't know until it happens.

Oh yes, Saturday night I had a good time. Eighy and I went to the Army's entertainment. We listened to a jazz orchestra which was really good. They had one fellow who could really play the clarinet. After that we had a movie - the first one since Bala Ate. I enjoyed it immensely. They had a few novelty numbers with male chorus girls all made up. The place almost went wild! One

Love Brown, LT (MC) USN

Navy, S.S. 1

Postmaster

San Francisco, Cal.

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W. E. Brown, LT (MC) USN

Navy, S. S. A.

Postmaster

San Francisco, Cal.

big, but you did a pounds - always have which everyone
thought looks very funny. It wouldn't be so bad
if you had more evening like that - tomorrow
night I'm invited out with all boys - I dance
in town at a place that's pretty good. They serve
wine and sodas - and it's almost the only place
in town. You can get a drink - they've been few
and far between since I left. You know they have
if I haven't dream any day since I left. Am I
you? I haven't been paid a cent yet - but I'm
getting a little less - it's still got almost 2 dollars!
2 1/2 months, too!

Henry, please be true to me while I'm away. I
know you will be, but it's so long when you're
not a few drinks. I don't want you to drink any
either - You promised me you wouldn't, and I know
you'll keep your promise. That really worries me, May.
Is there you for me and miss as what I ask. Please
do that. Get a few more letters. It's didn't worry
about my family - my - or our family - I wouldn't
have anything to worry about. But I do love you,
Henry, and I don't want anything to come
between us. It won't, will it? We'll be so happy
when this is all over -

Write me often. Love, St. Mary's Sunday School

Always Yours -
Lester

W.S. Beaumont (H.C.) W.S.N.

U.S. Navy. S.S.A.

Postmaster

San Francisco,

Cal.

P.S. Honey, I didn't have time to write about our new
orders. Five of us - Flight Surgeons - have been assigned
temporary additional duty with a Marine aviation group - and
two are going up when it's a little warmer - in fact - pretty
hot - We drew cards to see who would go. Felix and
Dorothy were the lucky ones! Jim is well - four more of our
medical unit are going up also. Things might happen now.
I'll write more later on -

W

Friday - Nov. 6, 1942

Dear Folks,

You'll have to excuse my not writing - I honestly don't get much chance. I've even neglected Mary - but I'm writing two letters this morning. It seems so long since I've been here I can't even remember if I've written you since I got moved up. Anyway, I can tell you I'm at Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. I've been here for three weeks now and it's supposed to be the hottest spot in the Pacific. It's not so hot though. I do know what it feels like to hear bombs falling from the sky, to be strafed by an enemy plane - rather, planes, and to hear shells flying - or whizzing overhead - and not always your shells either. We all joke about our narrow shaves but it scares you for awhile. I'm a hardened veteran now of three weeks, so it doesn't bother me so very much now.

My primary job is to fly with the wounded and sick to hospitals further South - about 15 hour round trip in the air - about 48 hours counting stop-overs and so forth. I'm temporarily attached to a Marine Dive Bombing group here on the island. It may be that if I'm here a few months my chances of getting back home soon will be much better. We don't know what will happen.

One thing I do want to say. We hear news casts by shortwave radio here all about what the Army is doing here. My God! They've only got one soldier up here or 10 Marines - and the Marines have to look after him! The Marines and the Navy are doing the fighting - and trying like hell to look after the Army on the side. Yet we hear how the Army repulsed attack after attack. Our camp was only about 250 yards from the front.

lines at one time and I know who did what. The Japs would capture Army equipment and the Marines would have to take it away from the Japs and give it back to the Army! It's a subject of disgust to everyone here to hear how well the Army is doing when there are so few and when the Marines are doing the fighting.

This has been quite an experience - along with close shaves and so forth. My tin hat and .45 go everywhere I go. I've even learned to take my pistol apart and clean it! It affords a little comfort especially at night. Oh yes, I've seen quite a lot of Jap planes shot down. It's remarkable how many have been shot down - the Japs have really taken a beating here - lost untold numbers of planes, ships, men and equipment, yet, they keep coming. Our losses have been fairly book-like - very few in proportion - and I can't understand how they do it. I carry the wounded out and I know how many have been killed. It's so few in comparison - I'll never understand how it's done. The Japs are afraid of the Marine who has been as ruthless here as the Japs have been - they understand that kind of language, because we don't take prisoners. Boy, these Marines are really fighting fools. The situation here is under control - they'll never retake Guadalcanal.

Life here is very rugged and rough. We live in the jungle - water all has to be trucked in - 5 officers to a tent and sometimes 10 enlisted men. Our living conditions are ideal now, because aviation personnel are well taken care of. But, oh Lord, I hope I'm not here when it starts to rain in Dec., Jan., and Feb. It rains continuously then. The beach is pretty with coco-nut groves running right down to the sand. Of course, that's the ideal place to live but it's also the most dangerous. We have parrots, monkeys, and

We had one of the instructors of this squadron killed
over the week-end. Not in an airplane crash though, but
an automobile accident. I've been with this squadron almost
a month now - with around a hundred planes flying from
this field every day, and we haven't had even a "near-
over" - We've had to stand by with the ambulance a
couple of times but everything has been alright.

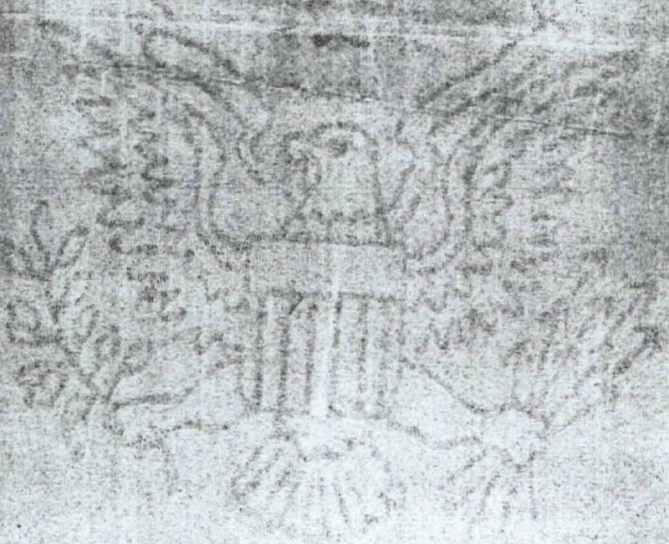
That prescription Mama was writing about - I don't know
anything about it - and I've tried to look it up, but
there's nothing I can find & faintly resemble it. How is
Mama getting along? Write and tell me all about it -
in a little more detail -

Love & all -

Walter

P.S. Our phone number is
Pensacola 7031 if you should
ever need it.

W.



plenty of mosquitoes here. I haven't been sick one single day yet. I've lost a little weight, but I sure can move faster without it, and that's what counts! And strange as it may seem I've only been scared once or twice - once when a bomb kinda shot me up when it hit 25 yards away - 'course I was in a hole well covered, but my sick bay tent burned up. It really is lots of fun!

I'm not worried a bit - not sick - eating regularly - not nervous - So, everything is alright. I guess I'll spend the rest of my life talking about being "under fire" in Guadalcanal! It's been one of the most interesting experiences in my life. I don't get it do much medicine because only first-aid is given here - can be given because of existing conditions - and then the patients are flown out to hospitals - with the flight surgeon with the more serious cases. No group of men in combat areas has ever gotten better medical service. They are in a well-equipped hospital outside the combat area within 24 hours. That helps the morale of everyone when he knows he will be taken care of in a safe place when he is wounded.

I've received one letter from Margaret written about the 10th of October. I'm relieved that everything is going fairly smoothly at home - We'll be able to pay what debts we owe - especially if my flight orders come through which will mean extra money. I'm tickled to death at the tobacco prices - as I know you all are too. Be careful - because from what I hear of Taxes it's going to take everything.

Give my regards to everyone -

Always -
(Dad)

was really rough. It's fairly peaceful around here now. Sweetheart, I think I'll take back what I said so naively when I left about returning with a medal - I think I'll just return!

Say, doodle-bug, I heard yesterday that our flight orders had arrived. Gosh, I hope so, don't you? I received a bunch of bills yesterday - telephone, White & White, Frank Thomas, etc. Honey, I think the reason we owe Margaret so much is that she covered those checks we wrote in Jacksonville as we were leaving. I figured the \$165.00 we would get in August would cover those outside of the payments on the car. And it just about does, doesn't it? Then, we owe her for the cook, Ethel - Then, we owe for the car. When you returned Sept. there should have been \$165.00 in the bank from August 1st check which should have almost paid Margaret - Then, there should have been \$250.00 from Sept. 1st check. Was that the way it was? Oh yes, I also received a very cutting letter from Weils. Have you taken care of the telephone bill in Jacksonville and White & White in Pensacola? I'll get all the debts in Jacksonville and Pensacola off my mind - pay a little along to Weils and Frank Thomas. When I get my first check pay I'll send it and you can pay off Weils entirely first - Then, start on Frank Thomas. After we get him paid off we can start on the car payments and try to get them off ahead of time. It won't take many months if we

can put my flight pay on debts - That means \$110⁰⁰
a month and it leaves you about \$200⁰⁰ a month
to live on. Oh, in Jan. you'll be getting \$400⁰⁰ more
which leaves you \$240⁰⁰ after you've paid on the car.
Mary, I don't see why we can't save some in
a few months, do you?

You haven't told me about your house - or
I haven't received your letter yet. What is
it - how large - how much - how heated -
how much lawn - furnished or unfurnished?
And oh yes, give me the dope on your financial
condition - and what you've been able to pay
on our debts - I already paid off that "dead horse"
a long time ago - and in a few weeks I'll
be able to send some money home and still
have ample for myself. I'm exceedingly anxious
to get all our debts paid off completely - I just
don't like to worry about owing people money,
do you?

I imagine I'll make another trip out tomorrow
with patients - It's about my time. I haven't
heard anything yet about permanent orders - one
way or the other. I've even stopped thinking
about it. Maybe I'll have something to tell you
shortly.

Good, honey, I miss you terribly. I'll be one
happy person when I'm on my way home. I
even have ideas about flying home from here
when time does come for me to go out. Wouldn't
that be wonderful? It only takes a few days
actual flying time but we'd have to stop

along the way. of course, I don't have a dog's
chance to fly home, but it's nice to think about,
isn't it? I'll be happy to get home any way
I can. Mary, I'll be so glad to see you. It's been
three months now - three whole months - and
another Xmas will almost be here when you
read this - Oh, will it? How long does it take
for you to receive my letters?

I love you, darling - Be good and wait for
me to come home. How is Mary, Margaret and
Walter Jr? I sure would like to see them
running around - Is he cute? Has M. M. been much
trouble since you've gotten home? Give her my love,
honey - Give my regards to everyone -

Always Yours -
Walter

CLASS OF SERVICE

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WESTERN UNION

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

NEWCOMB CARLTON
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J. C. WILSON
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT

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CFA732 74 GOVT=NR ARLINGTON VIR 8 513P

MRS MARY DICKINSON BROWN=

113 ROUNDTREE ST WILSON NCAR=

THE NAVY DEPARTMENT DEEPLY REGRETS T
YOUR HUSBAND LIEUTENANT WALTER EARL
UNITED STATES NAVY IS MISSING FOLLOW
PERFORMANCE OF HIS DUTY AND IN THE
THE DEPARTMENT APPRECIATES YOUR C
NOT NOW AVAILABLE AND DELAY IN R
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PLEASE DO NOT DIVULGE

JACOBS

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87410

NAVY DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



4 December 1943

Mr. and Mrs. Walter A. Brown
113 Rountree Street
Wilson, North Carolina

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Brown:

After a full review of all available information, the Secretary of the Navy is reluctantly forced to the conclusion that your son, Lieutenant Walter Earl Brown, Medical Corps, United States Navy, is deceased, having been reported missing in action on 13 November 1942, when the plane he was aboard crashed into the water off Guadalcanal.

In accordance with Section 5 of Public Law 490, 77th Congress, as amended, your son's death is presumed to have occurred on 14 November 1943, which is the day following the expiration of an absence of twelve months.

Sincere sympathy is extended to you in your great loss and it is hoped that you may find comfort in the knowledge that he was performing his duties in the service of his country.

By direction of the Chief of Naval Personnel.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "A. C. Jacobs".

A. C. Jacobs
Commander, U. S. N. R.
Head of the Casualties
and Allotments Section

March 3, 1943
Port Director's Office
Advanced Naval Base
Noumea, New Caledonia,
%Fleet P M San Francisco

Dear Ed and Jean:

I have just returned from CUB 13 where I formerly lived with Dr. Manchester and Dr. Eighmy and a young Lieutenant from the class of 1939. We had many visitors because both Dr. Eighmy and Dr. Manchester came over from Moffett Field with the first groups to be located on the Island. Both Dr. Manchester and Dr. Eighmy were awaiting assignment and were quite impatient. Dr. Brown was one of the more fortunate officers and did receive a splendid assignment. In fact his assignment caused all the other officers to be most envious of him. And when he flew down with casualties his friends all crowded around for the latest word from the front. I knew about Dr. Brown and I heard something of his interpretation of what was going on from Dr. Manchester and Dr. Eighmy. The last afternoon he was here was spent with Dr. Manchester in our tent. When I came home from work he was still there and I had an opportunity to simply greet him before he had to leave.

As far as I am able to find out he was returning on a routine flight for additional casualties. At that time our planes had to fly over Jap held territory in making the approach to Henderson Field. The pilot made the first approach, but it was not as he desired and he circled again for a landing. The second time he overshot the field and started around again. I am not sure whether he made another poor approach or not,--but it seems that he went out over the bay into deep water. There is of course the possibility that he might have been sighted by an enemy plane or surface craft and taken prisoner but the possibility is remote.

I am very sorry that I can't write something that would offer greater hope. The Navy has been reporting officers and men as missing when their bodies were not recovered. Early in the war we received word, as you may remember, that five men had been lost on the Oklahoma. Their parents were so advised. They had been previously transferred to Jacksonville and we were able to so advise the Bureau of Personnel. We never had an answer to our letter!

We could use anyone with the French language out here to good advantage. I am terribly sorry about Marchand,--he could have fitted into the picture in a splendid way. Even now, I wouldn't be afraid to give him a break if that was possible, but of course it is not. I am not progressing very fast with the language because I have no contact with the French and very little time to study. However, I am making progress.

You cannot imagine how greatly I miss all the wonderful friends at the Service Schools. It is a bit hard to settle into a new job,--especially when the job is different from anything previously done.

Very sincerely,

Paul Leavens.

Naval Dispensary
U.S. Advanced Naval Base
Noumea, New Caledonia
c/o Fleet Postoffice
San Francisco California
March 4, 1943

Dear Edward,

Mr. Leavens showed me your letter the other day in regard to Walter Brown and asked me to write a note to you of what I knew about his death. Brownie and I came to New Caledonia on the same ship. We lived in nearby tents in our camp on this island until he was ordered to the ambulance plane ferry service flying out of Guadalcanal. He stopped in at camp frequently when he was here from Guadalcanal and in fact spent the afternoon with us before joining the ill fated flight back to Guadal.

My information in regard to his last flight came from Dr. Downey another of our Cub 13 group, who was on the ferry service along with Brownie. The transport in which Brownie was flying came into Henderson Field around dusk. For some reason I do not know, it did not land on the first approach. The plane circled the field again without attempting to land. It started circling for the third time and nothing further has been heard of it or its passengers. The general belief is that the plane fell in the water. No trace I know of has ever been found. The islands in that area even then were controlled by our forces although as you know much of Guadal was still held by the Japanese. It is always possible of course they came down in the Jap held part of the island and may have been taken prisoner. The basis for the belief the plane fell in the water is the report of one man who stated he thought he saw a plane crash in deep water at about the time Brownie's plane would have crashed.

One hates to destroy hope if there is any reason for hope to persist. In addition false hopes lead only to prolonged anxiety. I can not give you the final answer but I believe, and I know Dr. Downey and others in the ferry service share the same view, Brownie along with all the others in the plane were killed. The belief is that the plane crashed in deep water. Nothing as far as I know has been recovered to confirm this but night had fallen before any search could be made. I have given you the background of information we have to draw our conclusions from. I fear one is safe in the conclusion Brownie has been killed. Those of us who knew him have given up all hope of his still living.

Sincerely

Robert C. Manchester

Pers-5352a-HC
87410

NAVY DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



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