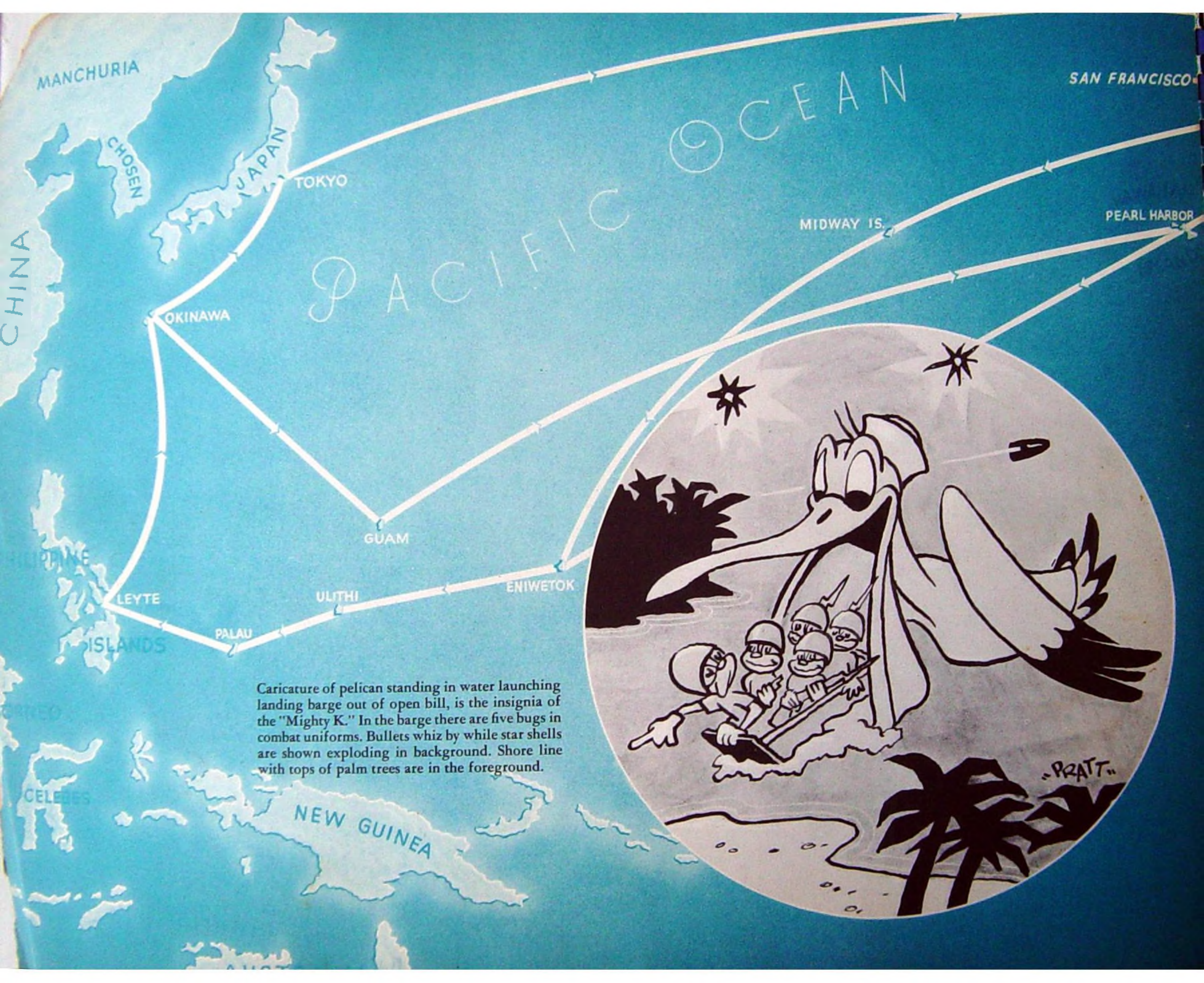


A black and white photograph of the USS Kenton (K-10), a submarine tender. The ship is shown from a low angle, looking up at its massive hull. The deck is crowded with crew members, and several gun turrets are visible. The ship's name "KENTON" is partially visible on the hull. The overall scene is one of a busy, active vessel.

The
MIGHTY
"K"

PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE U. S. S. KENTON AND ITS PERSONNEL



Caricature of pelican standing in water launching landing barge out of open bill, is the insignia of the "Mighty K." In the barge there are five bugs in combat uniforms. Bullets whiz by while star shells are shown exploding in background. Shore line with tops of palm trees are in the foreground.

DEDICATION



To the Officers and Men of the U. S. S. Kenton, whose early understanding of the nobility of the phrase, "to serve" was so greatly instrumental in fashioning our ship into one of the Navy's proudest transports, this book is respectfully and gratefully dedicated.



HISTORY OF THE MIGHTY "K"

This is the story of a happy ship and a good ship called the USS Kenton in honor of a thriving agricultural county in the julep state of Kentucky, which was so named in order to perpetuate the memory of one of our nation's pioneers.

He was General Simon Kenton, who as a boy of 16 left the comfort and security of home to serve with General George Washington in the struggle to free the American colonies from tyranny.

One of the highlights of Kenton's service was the piloting of a boat down the broad Ohio River, carrying gunpowder and other badly needed supplies to a beleaguered Kentucky regiment. His was one of the first amphibious operations in the nation's history and it is uniquely fitting that an amphibious attack transport serving in the mighty navy of the nation he humbly helped found, should bear his name.

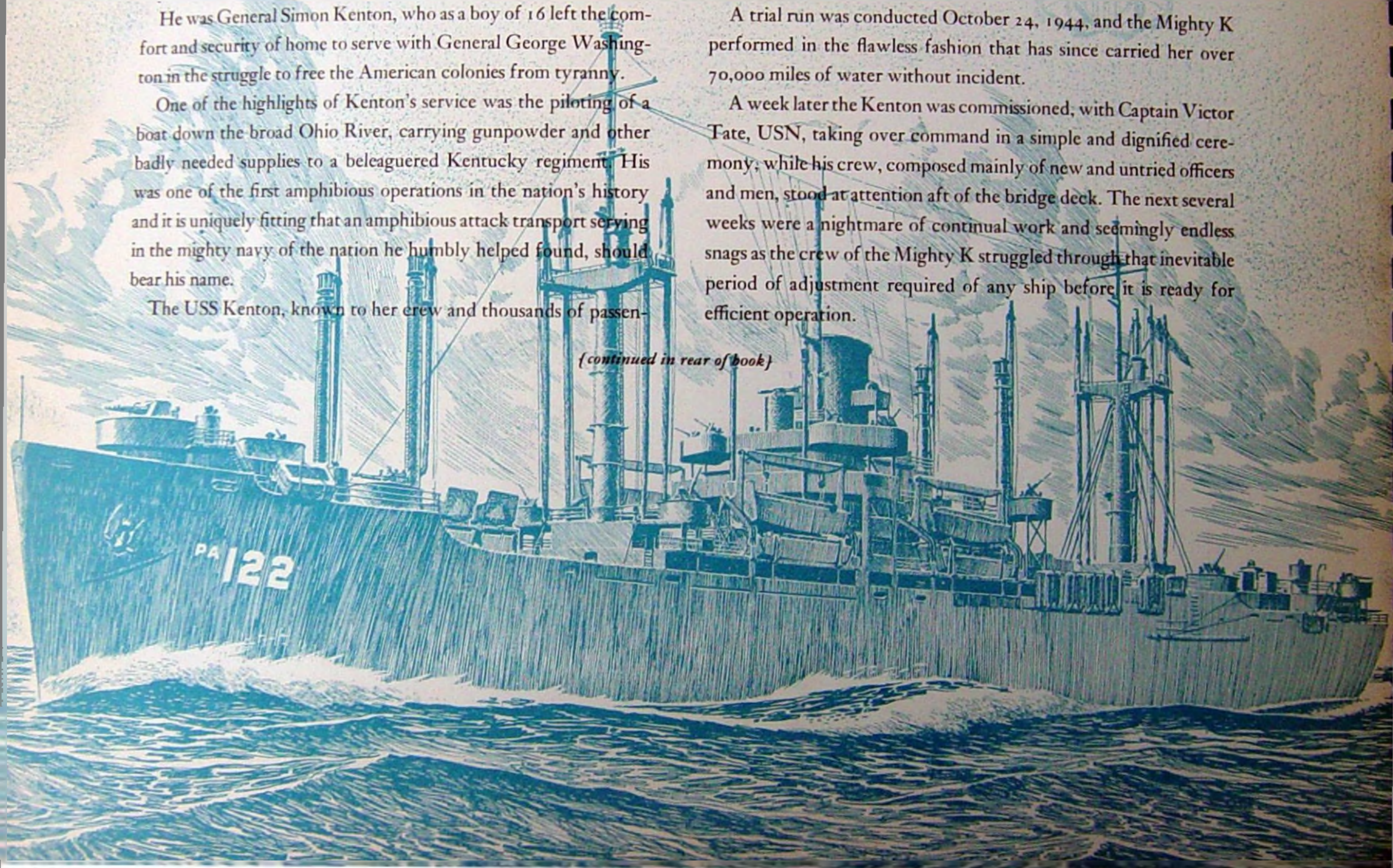
The USS Kenton, known to her crew and thousands of passen-

gers she has transported as the "Mighty K," was built in the yards of the California Shipping Corporation in Terminal Island, California. Her keel was laid on June 13, 1944, and the following August she was launched.

A trial run was conducted October 24, 1944, and the Mighty K performed in the flawless fashion that has since carried her over 70,000 miles of water without incident.

A week later the Kenton was commissioned, with Captain Victor Tate, USN, taking over command in a simple and dignified ceremony, while his crew, composed mainly of new and untried officers and men, stood at attention aft of the bridge deck. The next several weeks were a nightmare of continual work and seemingly endless snags as the crew of the Mighty K struggled through that inevitable period of adjustment required of any ship before it is ready for efficient operation.

(continued in rear of book)



OUR SKIPPER

On June 27, 1945, Commander Gerald B. Ogle, USN, took over as commanding officer. The first talk he made before the crew contained the promise that under his guidance the Kenton would be a happy ship and a taut ship.

He made good that promise. Combining humor and tolerance with an amazing fund of sea lore, this stocky, square-jawed sailor's sailor quickly captured the affection and confidence of the crew. And as his stay aboard has lengthened, so have that confidence and affection increased.

A graduate of the 1924 class at Annapolis, Commander Ogle, a native Texan, has seen service on all types of ships and all over the world.

An engineering specialist, he served in that capacity aboard the great battleship New Jersey, and later was elevated to Executive Officer, the post he held prior to assuming command of the Kenton.

Unfailing affability and readiness to overlook errors of inexperience, coupled with a fairness in meting out punishments when merited, are inherent in his makeup.

The skipper rates 100 per cent with his men because he has shown himself 100 per cent for them.

He's 4.0.



THE COMMISSIONING

This ship we call home and know affectionately as the "Mighty K" was commissioned November 1, 1944, at San Pedro, Calif., in a simple but colorful ceremony.

With flags flying and band blaring, the officers and men of the USS Kenton gathered at attention in dress blue on the aft end of the ship, while relatives and guests congregated about the bridge and navigation decks.

Orders placing the ship in commission were read by the Navy Yard Commandant, following which the Union Jack and commission pennant were hoisted to the strains of the Star Spangled Banner.

Captain Victor B. Tate, USN, our first skipper, then saluted the Commandant, and with the words, "I relieve you, sir," assumed command of the ship.

His first orders were to set the watch, and boatswain's mate Fred J. Line called the Third Section into action.

First officer of the deck was Lieut. Harris J. Koberle, navigator, while Johnnie Lockwood was first quartermaster, and Pat Jordan, first signalman. Engineering officers of the watch were Lieut. Gibson, Lieut. (j.g.) Handrich and Chief Mach. Barbee.

A brief speech was made to the crew by Capt. Tate and Chaplain Thompson delivered the invocation. Refreshments were then served in the ward-room and crew's messing compartment, and from there on in the Mighty K was on its way.



CHANGE OF COMMAND



After guiding the destinies of the USS Kenton for almost eight months, Capt. Victor B. Tate, USN, turned over the responsibility of command to Comdr. Gerald B. Ogle, USN, on June 27, 1945. On the left is Capt. Tate, shown welcoming the new skipper aboard. The picture above shows Comdr. Ogle accepting command, and assuring the crew the Kenton would be a happy ship under his control—a promise most assuredly fulfilled.

ROSTER OF OFFICERS

U.S.S. KENTON (APA-122)

Commanding - Commander Gerald B. Ogle, USN

Executive Officer and Navigator - Lt. Comdr. Harris J. Koberle, (D), USNR

Chaplain - Lt. Comdr. Frederic P. Gehring, ChC, USNR

DEPARTMENTS

CONSTRUCTION & REPAIR

First Lieutenant - Lieutenant (j.g.) Stanley P. Stendahl, (D)M, USNR

Ass't First Lieutenant - Lieutenant (j.g.) William J. Butler, USN

First Division - Lieutenant (j.g.) Francis B. McGrath, (D)L, USNR

Ensign Joseph H. Hatcher, (D), USNR

Second Division - Lieutenant William S. O'Donnell, (D)L, USNR

Ensign Kenneth V. Clewett, (D), USNR

Third Division - Lieutenant Meyer W. Feingold, (D), USNR

Lieutenant (j.g.) Emile E. Fanfelle, (D), USNR

Lieutenant (j.g.) William L. Davidson, (D), USNR

Lieutenant (j.g.) William W. Raup, (D)L, USNR

Ensign Herbert M. Geary, (D), USNR

"R" Division - Chief Carpenter Ernest J. Parrish, USN

MEDICAL

Senior Medical Officer - Commander Lucian G. Culver, (MC), USNR

Ass't Medical Officer and

"H" Division Officer - Lieutenant Commander Paul E. Campbell, (MC), USNR

Dental Officer - Lieutenant Julius M. Schwartz, (DC), USNR

Hospital Corps Administration Officer - Chief Pharmacist Edgar M. Dodd, USN

SUPPLY

Supply Officer - Lieutenant William P. Jennings, (SC), USNR

Disbursing Officer and

"S" Division Officer - Lieutenant (j.g.) Odie B. Strickland, (SC), USNR

Ass't to Supply Officer - Chief Pay Clerk William H. Conely, USN

Commissary and Ship's Store Officer - Acting Pay Clerk James F. Young, USN

ENGINEERING

Engineering Officer - Lieutenant Commander Arthur R. Gibson, Jr., (E), USNR

Engineering Watch Officers - Lieutenant (j.g.) Philip E. Handrich, (E), USNR

Lieutenant (j.g.) George L. Spencer, (E), USNR

Lieutenant (j.g.) Douglas M. Phillips, USN

Chief Machinist Troy W. Barbee, USN

Electrical Officer - Chief Electrician Carleton H. Irving, USN

COMMUNICATIONS & NAVIGATION

Communications Officer

and Head of Department - Lieutenant John T. Braxtan, (C), USNR

Radio Material Officer - Lieutenant John C. Burt, (E)L-T, USNR

Combat Information Officer - Lieutenant (j.g.) Selwyn F. Husted, (D)L-R, USNR

Acting Navigator and

"C&N" Division Officer - Ensign Howard L. Madden, (D), USNR

Ship's Secretary and

Aide to Executive Officer - Ensign Oliver C. Berry, USN

Ass't Communications Officer - Ensign Maurice F. Treacy, (D), USNR

Signal Officer - Ensign William O. Winkopp, (D)M, USNR

Communications Watch Officers - Ensign Andrew R. Eickhoff, (D), USNR

Ensign Arthur Burla, (D), USNR

Ensign John D. Wayman, (D)L, USNR

GUNNERY

Gunnery Officer - Lieutenant William E. Lawrence, USN

Ass't Gunnery Officer - Ensign Norman R. Babcock, (D), USNR

"O" Division Officer - Ensign Rex R. Fox, (D), USNR

TRANSPORT QUARTERMASTER - First Lieutenant Stanley R. Evans, USMCR

BOAT GROUP

Boat Group Commander - Lieutenant Meyer W. Feingold, (D), USNR

Wave Commanders

Lieutenant (j.g.) Emile E. Fanfelle, (D), USNR

Ensign Joseph H. Hatcher, (D), USNR

Ensign Andrew R. Eickhoff, (D), USNR

Lieutenant (j.g.) William L. Davidson, (D), USNR

Ensign Rex R. Fox, (D), USNR

Ensign Arthur Burla, (D), USNR

Lieutenant (j.g.) William W. Raup, (D)L, USNR

Ensign Kenneth V. Clewett, (D), USNR

Ensign Herbert M. Geary, (D), USNR

BEACH PLATOON

Beachmaster - Lieutenant William S. O'Donnell, (D)L, USNR

Ass't Beachmaster - Lieutenant (j.g.) Francis B. McGrath, (D)L, USNR

OFFICERS DETACHED SINCE COMMISSIONING

Captain V. B. Tate

Lieutenant Commander B. G. Beamer

Lieutenant Commander G. W. Thompson

Lieutenant Commander N. S. Bigelow

Lieutenant Commander H. N. G. Kline

Lieutenant C. W. Nickel

Lieutenant C. W. Frazee

Lieutenant R. Perkins

Lieutenant W. F. Smith

Lieutenant (j.g.) W. J. Drost

Lieutenant (j.g.) R. F. O'brock

Lieutenant (j.g.) E. B. Curran

Lieutenant (j.g.) A. E. Judd

Ensign F. W. Nolan

Ensign C. C. Matlock

Ensign F. C. Doctor, Jr.

Boatswain E. R. Kempe

Lieutenant D. H. Tolin

DEPARTMENT HEADS



Comdr. L. G. Culver, (MC), USNR Lt. Comdr. F. P. Gehring, ChC, USNR

Lt. (j.g.) S. J. Stendahl, (D)M, USNR Lt. Comdr. H. J. Koberle, (D), USNR Lt. W. E. Lawrence, USN

Lt. Comdr. A. R. Gibson, Jr., (E), USNR Lt. J. T. Braxton, (C), USNR Lt. W. P. Jennings, (SC), USNR First Lt. S. R. Evans, USMCR

FIRST DIVISION

The story of the Mighty K's First Division closely parallels the history of our Navy in this war.

It was green, untried and not certain of its eventual capabilities, but composed of officers and men with the spirit and determination to make the most of what they had.

And just as our Navy rose from its shaky beginning to attain its present powerful status, so too has the First Division developed to a peak where it needs doff its hat to no similar unit in the amphibious fleet.

It was fortunate in drawing in Mr. Stendahl and Mr. McGrath, capable, understanding and tolerant division leaders, and such efficient assistants as Ensigns Hatcher, Tracy and Doctor. But it was even more fortunate in being assigned men of vigor, spirit and gaiety, and the division's present high stature is a monument to their capabilities.

With Chief Line and Petty Officers Workman and Jenkins in control, the First Division was soon molded into a sharp anchor-handling, hatch-loading, boat-working aggregation. It is a division of many functions and its personnel can say truthfully it does all of them well.

The never-failing shipshape appearance of the forward third of the Kenton is a tribute to the division's present nautical lore and will to work. There isn't a man in the division not deserving of a "well done" from Uncle Sam on completion of his Navy tenure.





SECOND DIVISION



The after end of the Mighty K, with its numerous boats to be loaded and unloaded, its giant boom to operate and its two hatches, one of them the ship's largest, to work, is maintained by the Second Division.

Efficient maintenance of such a section is a large order, and it is to the everlasting credit of the "men back aft" that they have filled that order in 4.0 fashion.

Like all other units of the Kenton, the Second Division started from scratch, with most of its personnel fresh from boot camp. And like the others, it had its share of headaches and periods of discouragement.

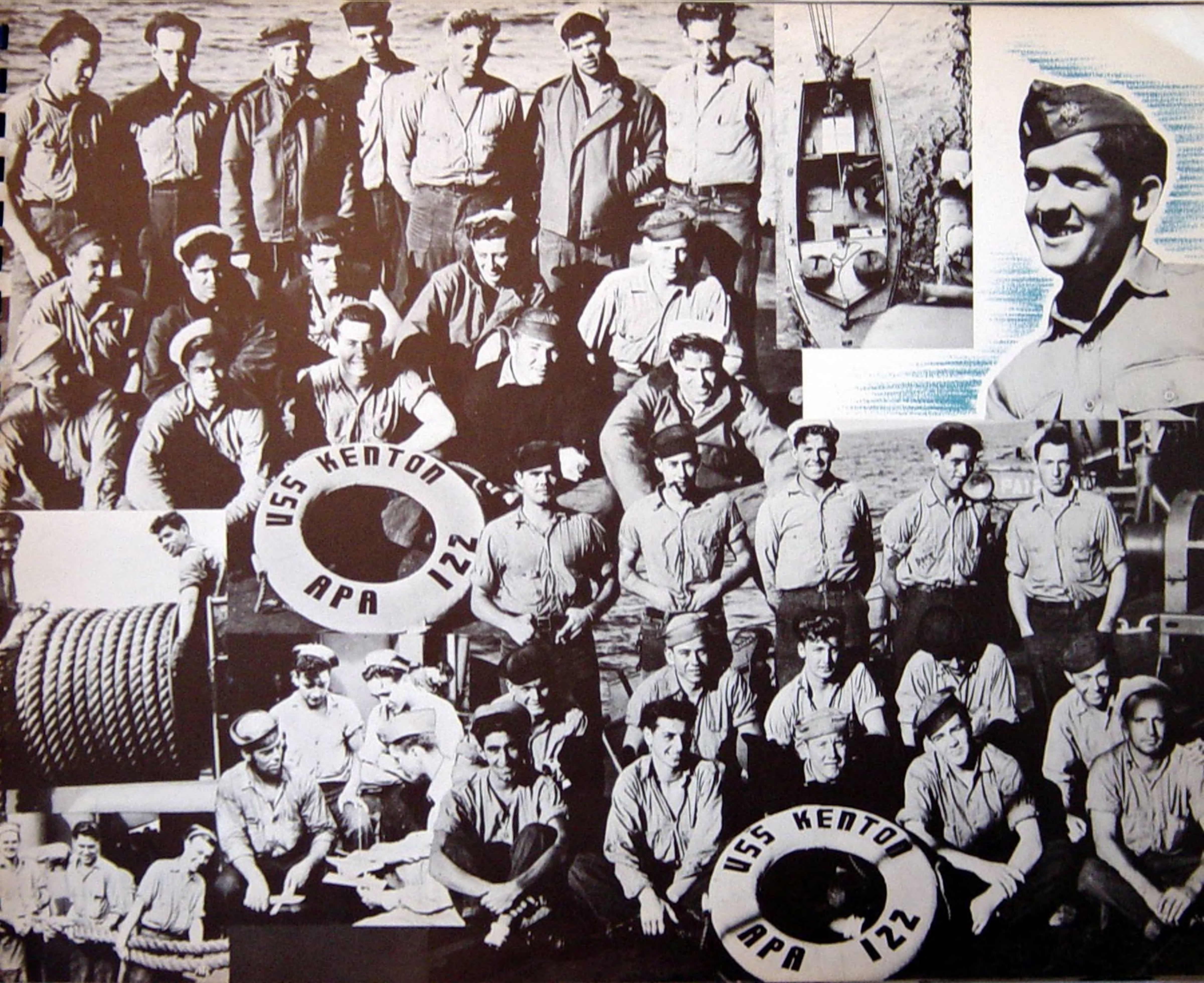
A less spirited group would have cried quits, but the Second Division's men profited by mistakes, laughed at adversity and emerged triumphantly as a keen, capable, happy division. It is a division proud of its officers, and doubly proud of its men.

Its men have helped man the Mighty K's guns, stand her watches, unload her cargo and keep her a trim, sharp transport. A trip through the division leaves no doubt but that they do all those things in admirable fashion.

In Lieut. O'Donnell, Lt. (j.g.) Butler and Ensign Babcock they have had three division leaders since commissioning of definite capability and all have aided in the unit's progress. And in their popular Ensign Clewett they have had an assistant division officer who never let them down.

The men of the Second Division are justly proud of the part they have played in making the Kenton a happy and efficient ship, and the rest of the ship is, in turn, proud of the Second Division.





USS KENTON
APA
122

USS KENTON
APA
122



THIRD DIVISION



Back in September 1944 at ATB, Coronado, Calif., 132 men and 12 officers were formed into a Boat Group Unit which in November of the same year reported aboard the Mighty K and became known as the Third Division. No other group aboard had such a wide diversification of enlisted personnel, as this division was equipped not only to man all 26 boats but also to keep all of the boats in first-class operating order. This large, many-skilled group soon proved to be too ponderous for a deck division and as a result the specialists in the different fields were soon transferred into other divisions which had use for their particular skills. Through this absorption process the Third Division rapidly dwindled in size until in time it had shrunk to 96 men and five officers. Through this shifting of men a valuable objective was obtained in that the Boat Group Unit lost much of its identity as such and became an integral part of the ship's company.





The Third Division in its final form is comprised of the boat crews and the davit operators. They must not only man and maintain the cleanliness of their boats but are also responsible for the cleanliness and maintenance of a large mid-ship section of the ship. After a difficult and sometimes discouraging start aboard the ship due to their lack of experience, as better than 90 per cent of the men were fresh from boot camp, the Third Division has every reason to be proud of its record of achievements. Seasoned well during the past year, this division boasts the following ratings, all earned during the year: two BM1c, one BM2c, 17 Cox., 1 MoMM2c and 21 MoMM3c. This high percentage of ratings mirrors truly the strides the men have made in so short a time in earning for themselves a real place aboard the USS Kenton, and therefore in the U. S. Navy.



"C" and "R" DIVISION



The "C&R" Division without a doubt has an essential part in the maintenance and upkeep of the Mighty K. Besides our daily routine of construction and repair, the division has always striven to manufacture jigs and fixtures that have proven to have added many conveniences for "all hands." Composing the division are men from various states spread from coast to coast, including Broadway sharpies from New York and hillbillies from the beautiful hills of West Virginia. We can also boast of having the tallest man aboard in Carpenter Dornhecter, and the shortest in Shipfitter Wood.

Ages range from 18 for the "babies" all the way up to 39 for our so-called "old man." Approximately half the men are married and have families, with boys being their outstanding contribution. The Navy's point system has already released some of our married for discharge, with many more soon to follow. Heading the division have been such officers as Mr. Feingold, Mr. Butler and Mr. Parrish. All of our men, being handy and skilled with tools, hope they can soon help DE-commission the "K" so they and other members of the crew can return to their homes and families.





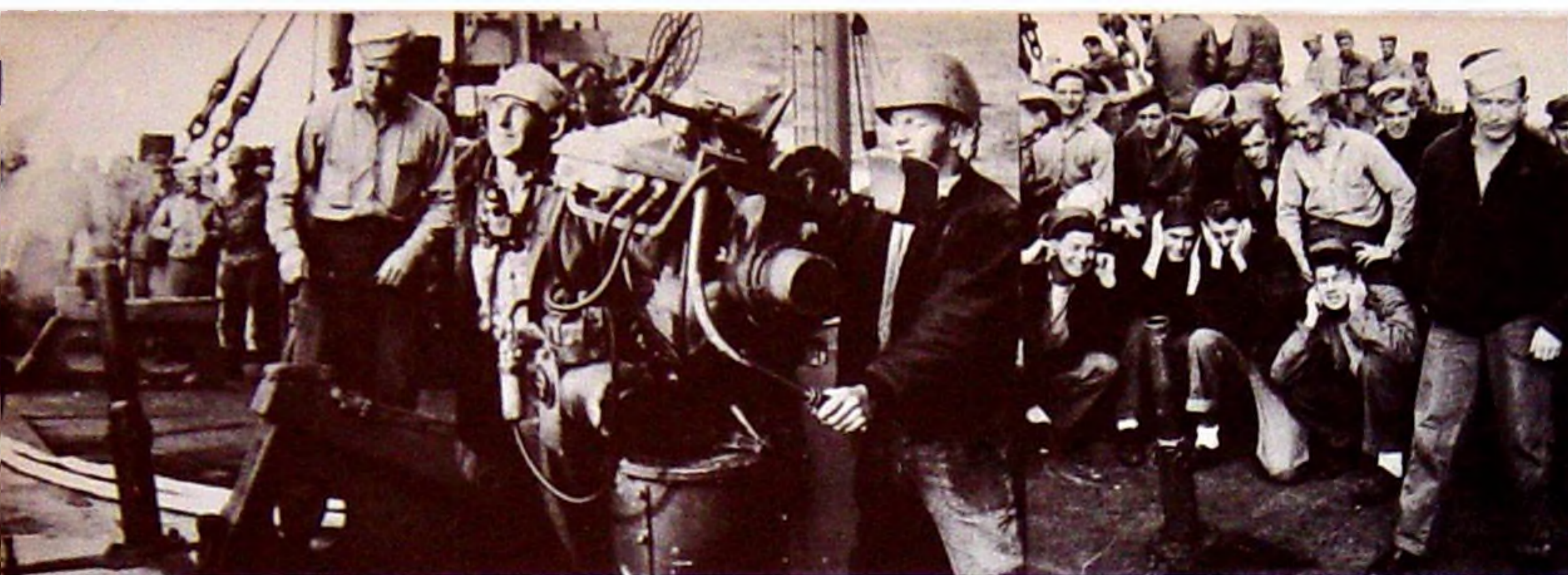


"O" DIVISION

The true worth of any Navy ship when "the chips are down" is its ability to fight. That's the job the "O" Division started out to do from the day of commissioning—to see that the Mighty K could pour out enough fire, fast enough and efficiently enough, to accomplish any mission called upon to perform.

That the Kenton took care of herself "in the clinches" is in no small part due to these gunners, the smallest but perhaps the mightiest division aboard.





In Lieut. Lawrence, an old fire control specialist from way back, as Gunnery Officer, and in Ens. Babcock and Ens. Fox as his hard-plugging assistants, the "O" Division found able, conscientious leadership, and in the men of the division, from which much was expected, much as had.

Constant drilling and smooth upkeep of the armament aboard made it possible for the Kenton to stand out as the sharpest shootin'-est outfit in competition with other APAs in the long gruelling training periods at San Diego, at Maui, and at Leyte. At Okinawa neither the gang nor the equipment faltered for a moment and some Jap pilots know now that it's bad medicine to fool around with the Kenton.



INDOCTRINATION

"C" and "N" DIVISION

The ability of the sailors of Uncle Sam's Navy to emerge as a smooth-functioning unit from a rocky beginning is typified by C&N Division.

Lacking much in the way of experience and organization, but little in the way of determination to make good, the C&N gang was taken in hand on arrival by department head and navigator Lt. Comdr. Koberle and division officer Lt. Braxtan.

They were fortunate in drawing such other capable leaders as Lt. Burt, head of the radio department; Lt. (j.g.) Husted, in charge of radar, and Ensign Madden and Chief McCoy in control of the signalmen.

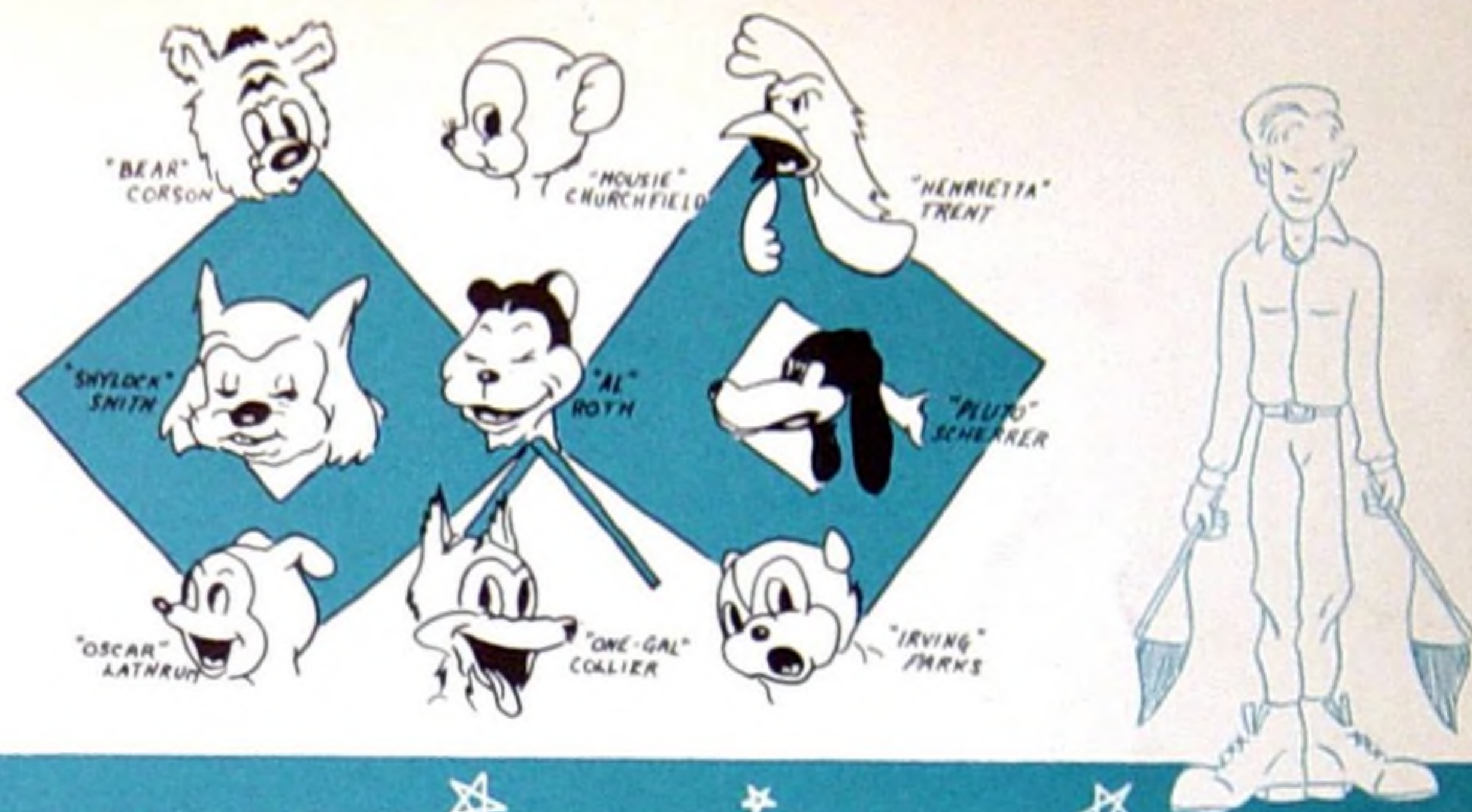
Under the guidance of these officers and because of the will to make good of the men, C&N soon rounded into a smart and capable division. It is a unit with spirit, humor and close comradeship.

Daily instructions and competitions have kept the men of C&N on their toes, and as a result there are few among them who have not earned raises in rating while aboard.

Other than handling the work of Communications and Navigation, the division contributes to the welfare of the ship a chaplain's assistant, several yeomen and two mailmen.

It is the only division aboard with a paper of its own, and their Kronicle, edited by Signalmen Jordan, is a weekly reading must throughout the ship.





There have been many recent changes of officers and men of the division since the war's end. Mr. Koberle was elevated to the post of Executive Officer and Mr. Braxtan took over as department head. Chief McCoy and such other favorites as Johnny Lockwood and Fatty Gamble left us, and Ensign Wynkopp took over the signal gang when Mr. Madden was assigned to navigation, assisting Mr. Koberle.

These changes have been only in personnel, however, and not in spirit, and C&N is still a closely woven, slick-functioning division. It is a hard-working, hard-playing unit of the Mighty K and can be justly proud of the major part it has played in molding this top Navy transport.









"E" DIVISION

With but a few experienced men, and they with experience on different type engines, E Division was no better off than any other when the Kenton was commissioned. A great deal of work and study was required before we could attempt to get under way.

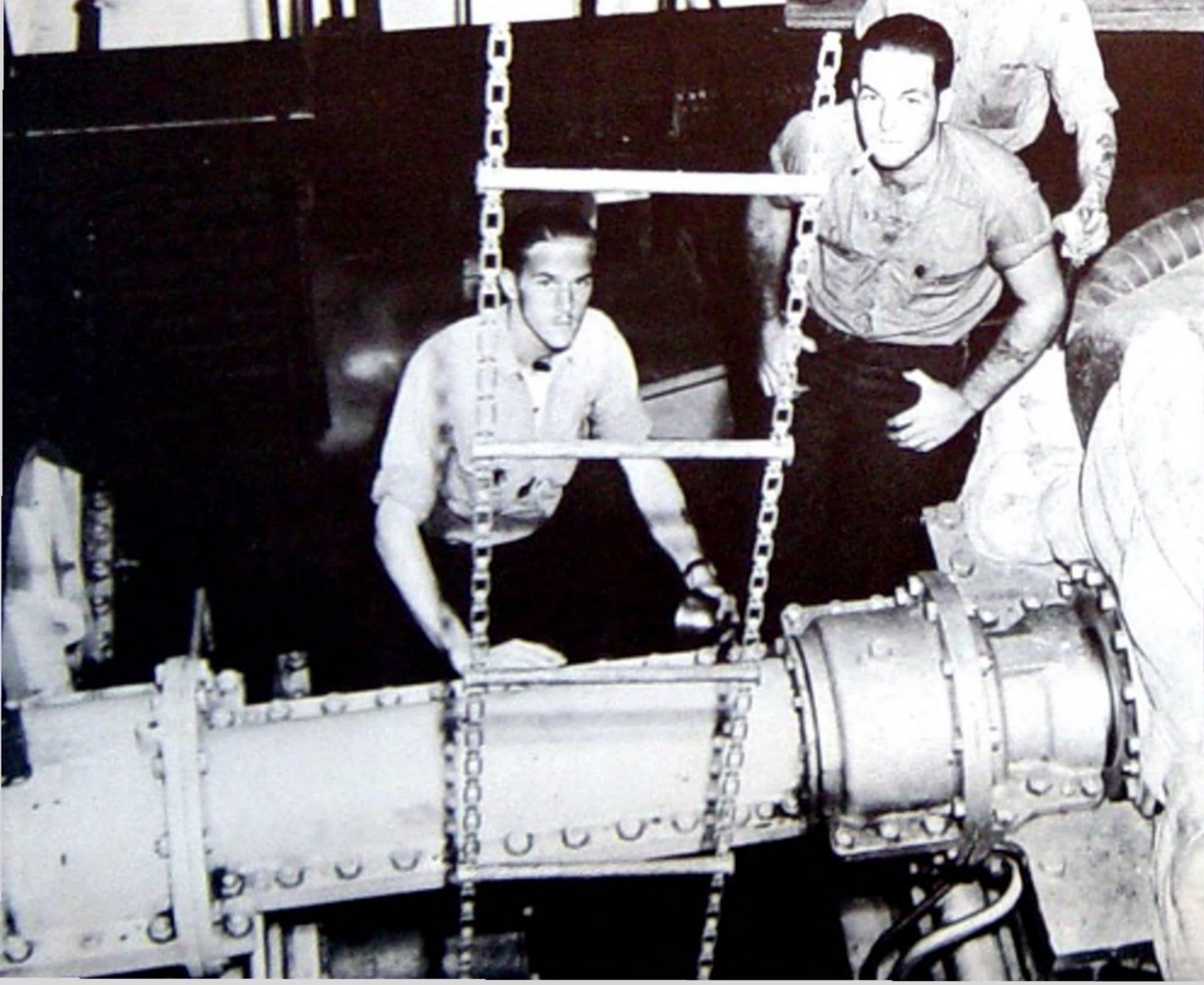
On the surface, the running of the mechanical end of a ship seems quite simple. However, before even the old hands could attempt to light off the main engines they had to trace out the lubricating oil system, the condensate system, the auxiliary steam and main steam lines, and learn the uses of lines running through bilges and bulkheads and of hundreds of valves.



The boiler gang, the electricians and the auxiliary gang had to go through similar processes, and all these activities had to be coordinated before an attempt could be made to "answer all bells." But the "boots" and the "old salts" displayed the true engineering spirit by giving up all liberty during the entire period of shake-down to ascertain their end would be squared away for the ensuing service. Their efforts were rewarded by a splendid record which shows only two minor breakdowns at sea in over fifty thousand miles of travel.



"E" DIVISION



"S" DIVISION

One of the larger divisions of the Kenton's crew, the "S" Division, or Supply Department, has had its ups and downs just as any of the other divisions, emerging victoriously as a hard-hitting and smoothly functioning machine.

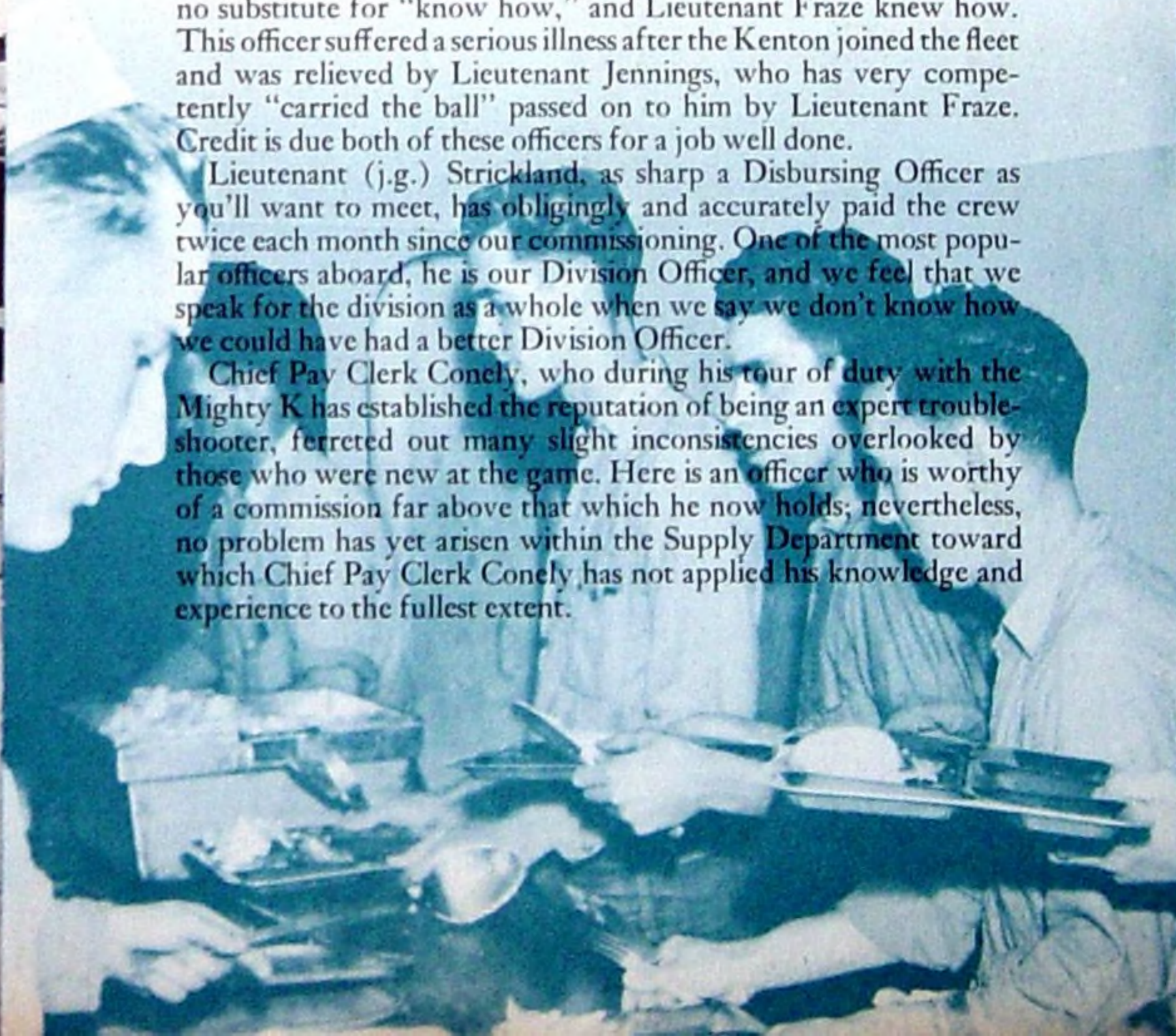
However, in another sense the "S" Division is far more than a machine. It is composed of four Supply Corps officers and 53 men of various ratings: the ship's cooks, who prepare the food for the crew; the storekeepers, who maintain records and issue supplies to all departments of the ship; the barbers, tailor and cobbler, who render their services to the ship's company in 4.0 fashion; the officers' cooks and stewards, and stewards' mates, who prepare and serve the food to the Captain and to the ship's officers. All of these men have their respective duties to perform, and all work together to achieve the maximum in efficiency.

Much of the activity surrounding the fitting out of the Mighty K rested with the Supply Department.

Lieutenant Frazee, our original Supply Officer, capably "engineered" the Supply Department's part of the fitting out. There is no substitute for "know how," and Lieutenant Frazee knew how. This officer suffered a serious illness after the Kenton joined the fleet and was relieved by Lieutenant Jennings, who has very competently "carried the ball" passed on to him by Lieutenant Frazee. Credit is due both of these officers for a job well done.

Lieutenant (j.g.) Strickland, as sharp a Disbursing Officer as you'll want to meet, has obligingly and accurately paid the crew twice each month since our commissioning. One of the most popular officers aboard, he is our Division Officer, and we feel that we speak for the division as a whole when we say we don't know how we could have had a better Division Officer.

Chief Pay Clerk Conely, who during his tour of duty with the Mighty K has established the reputation of being an expert troubleshooter, ferreted out many slight inconsistencies overlooked by those who were new at the game. Here is an officer who is worthy of a commission far above that which he now holds; nevertheless, no problem has yet arisen within the Supply Department toward which Chief Pay Clerk Conely has not applied his knowledge and experience to the fullest extent.



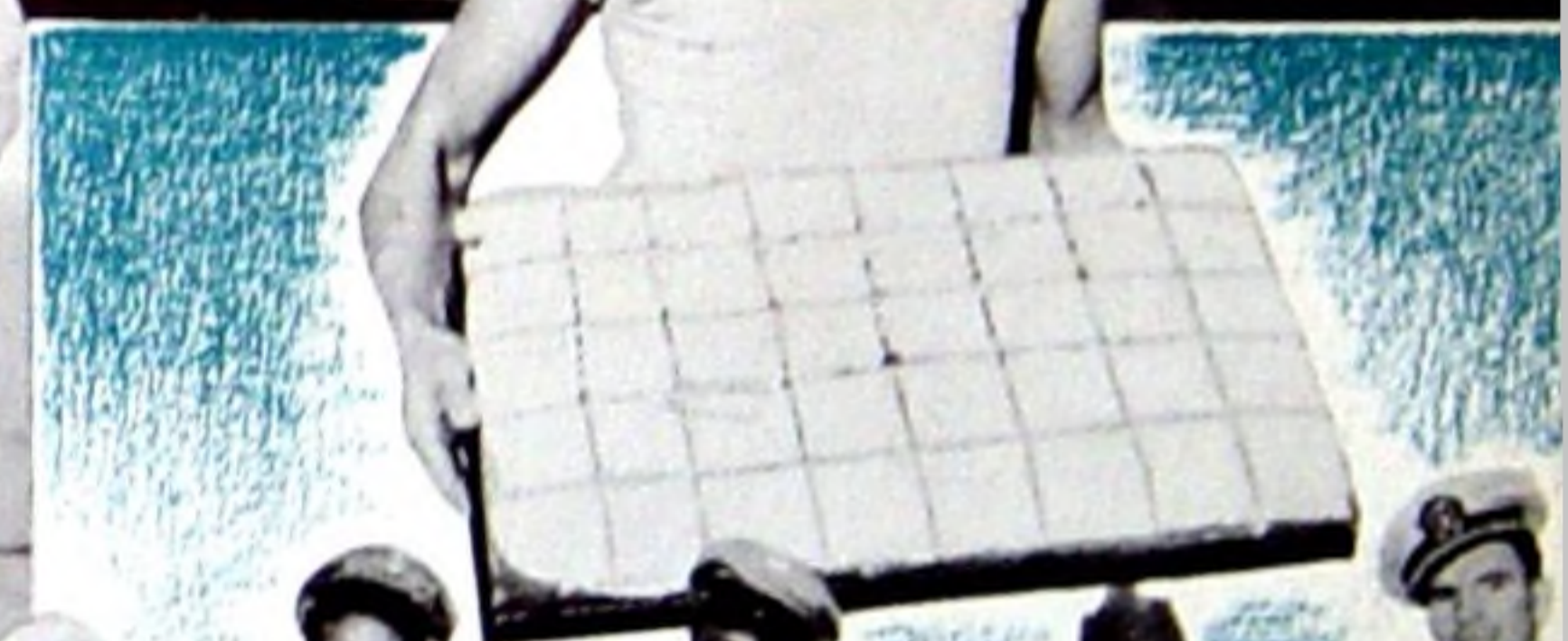


"S" DIVISION

Acting Pay Clerk Young, our commissary officer, is perhaps more "salty" than any other officer of the Supply Department, since he has spent a great deal of time in the uniform of the Navy. It is no easy task to supervise the operation of a commissary which has served as many as six thousand meals in a day. In addition to his duties as commissary officer, which have been very effectively performed, Acting Pay Clerk Young has served as photographic officer for the ship, and is also in charge of the Ship's Store.

We would like to say more about individuals who make up the Supply Department. Since that is impossible, we would like to give special mention to Chief Storekeeper Wynn, without whose outstanding performance of duty the Mighty K might not have gained so challenging a reputation of getting there "firstest with the mostest."

Last but not least, we would like to pay tribute to the man we think has done more "singly" for the Supply Department than any other aboard. Ernie Guthrie, Storekeeper First Class, has really been the Supply Department's man "Friday," in every sense of the word. As nice a fellow as you would want to meet, Ernie has faithfully and diligently performed all duties asked of him.





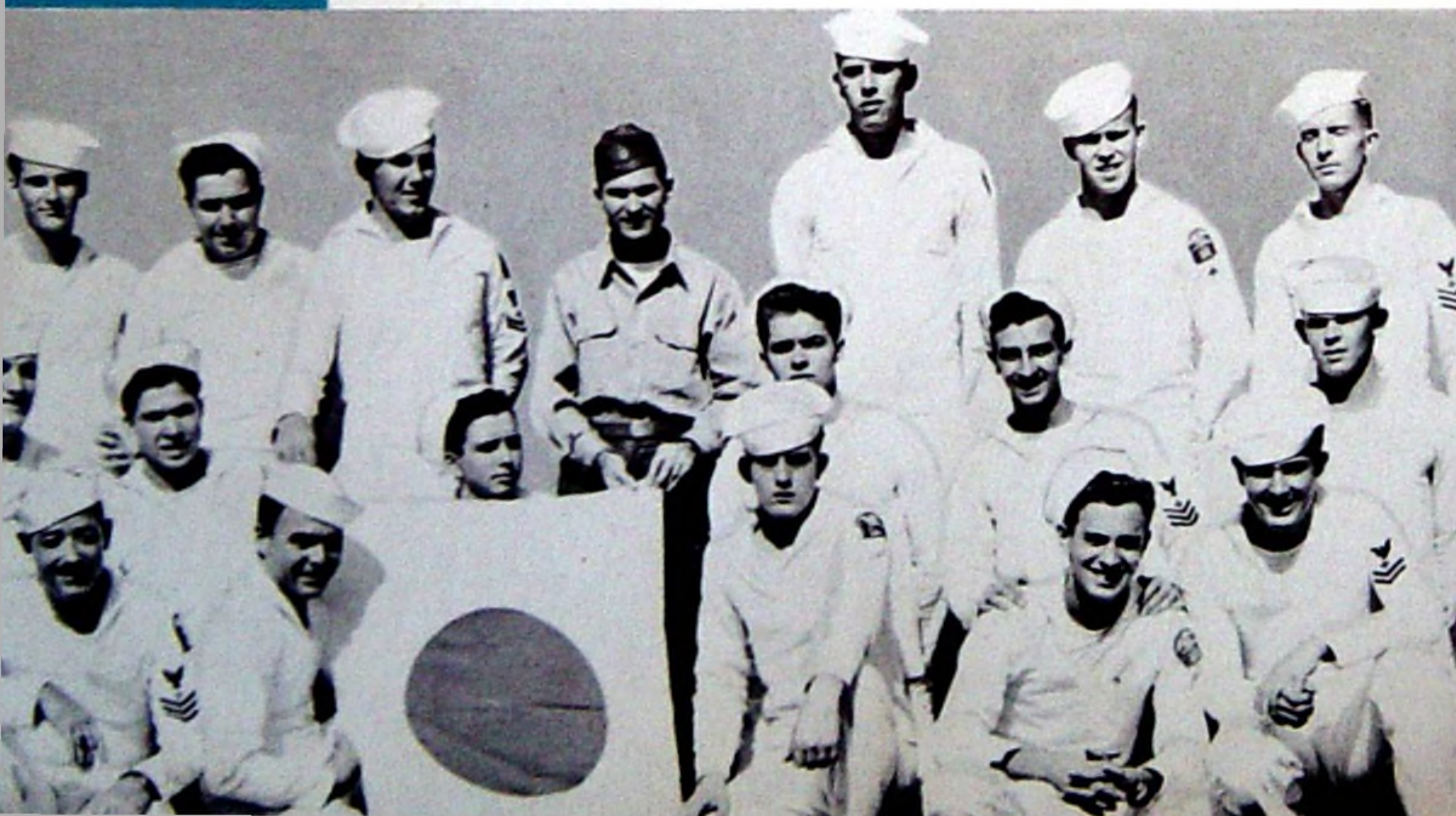
"H" DIVISION

The Medical Department of the USS Kenton began with the ship's commissioning on November 1, 1944, at which time the allowed complement of 12 hospital corpsmen and four officers came aboard. Two days later this complement was increased by eight more corpsmen and one beach doctor especially trained in amphibious warfare at Oceanside, California. This comprises the normal complement of an APA of this type, but for the purposes of invasion an additional number of trained specialists were added.

The usual problems of training ensued, all leading up to a well-trained staff for the handling of casualties evacuated from a beachhead.

After the debarkation of troops onto a beach under assault, casualties were received aboard on LCVP's which were lifted to the rail on the starboard side by means of the Wellin davit. Patients were received in the officers' ward room, which was converted into a sorting and plasma station. Those patients ready for operation were taken to the sick bay, where two operating rooms were run continuously. Four operating room technicians and two other hospital corpsmen kept the operating room equipment in action at all times for the doctors to function. The troop officers' quarters and the sick bay ward were used for the litter cases and more seriously injured, while minor and ambulatory cases were lodged in the troop compartments of the main deck.

The Kenton evacuated 486 casualties from Guam to San Francisco in May 1945, many of whom were very recently evacuated by air from Okinawa.



The Medical Department has served the army in several crossings of the Pacific in the capacity of a troop transport, bringing back from Yokohama in October 1945 a large contingent of the 43rd Division, many of whom were afflicted with malaria and other tropical diseases.

With the advent of peace the amphibious feature of the ship has disappeared and the H Division has gradually subsided to a quiet spot trying to keep itself cleaner than all others. Gradually we are beginning to lose some of our older men. It is with regret that we say goodbye to Chief Hubbert, PhM1/c Russell and PhM2/c Cole, who are returning to civilian life at the termination of our first trip from Japan. To these and to those who helped us through this effort, we extend our best wishes and thanks for the job well done.





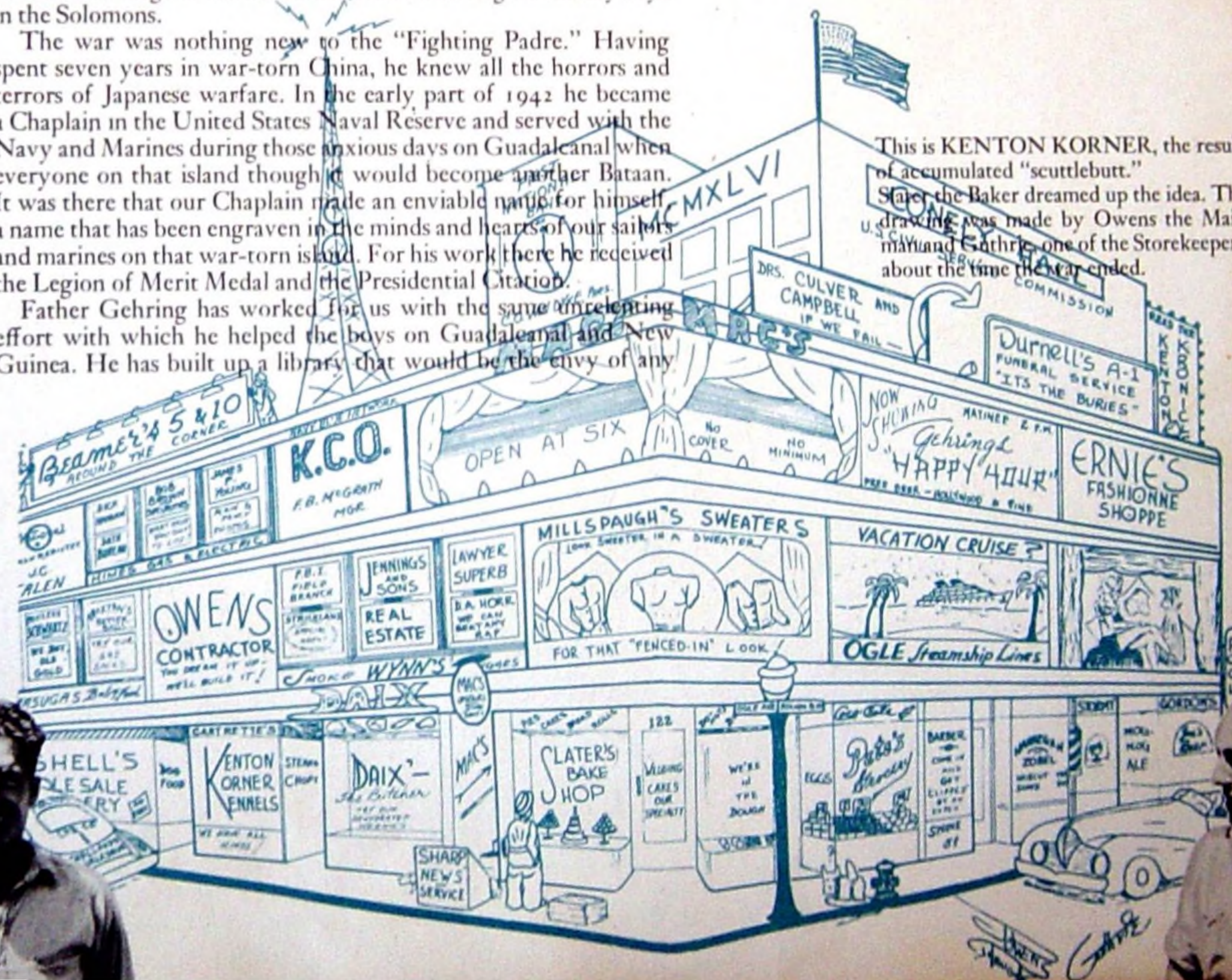
OUR CHAPLAIN

From the day he boarded the Kenton, life aboard ship took on a bright outlook. Rugged and tanned from his many months on the islands, the Padre immediately started to carry on his duty to God and service to his country by ingratiating himself to the officers and men of the Mighty K.

From his altar, in the messing compartment, where he conducted Catholic Mass and held general divine services, he addressed the men. "I want to know every one of you better," he said, "and I want you to come to me if you have any problems." They did come, and have been coming ever since. Some come to him with their problems, others to listen to his adventurous tales of his years in China as a missionary, and especially his first-hand account of the valor and courage of our sailors and marines during those early days in the Solomons.

The war was nothing new to the "Fighting Padre." Having spent seven years in war-torn China, he knew all the horrors and terrors of Japanese warfare. In the early part of 1942 he became a Chaplain in the United States Naval Reserve and served with the Navy and Marines during those anxious days on Guadalcanal when everyone on that island thought it would become another Bataan. It was there that our Chaplain made an enviable name for himself, a name that has been engraven in the minds and hearts of our sailors and marines on that war-torn island. For his work there he received the Legion of Merit Medal and the Presidential Citation.

Father Gehring has worked for us with the same unrelenting effort with which he helped the boys on Guadalcanal and New Guinea. He has built up a library that would be the envy of any



"Happy Hour"



ship in the fleet. He has started an orchestra that has helped while away many of the boring hours at sea, putting his personal touch to these "Happy Hours" by acting as master of ceremonies and playing the violin in the orchestra himself. His two successive assistants, Frank Millspaugh, the ship's aerologist, and Tony Scherrer, think he's tops. All the men of the ship think the same. He is a true man of God, who has put the cares and troubles of America's fighting men far above his own personal ambitions or desires, and he has earned himself a permanent niche in the hearts of the men.



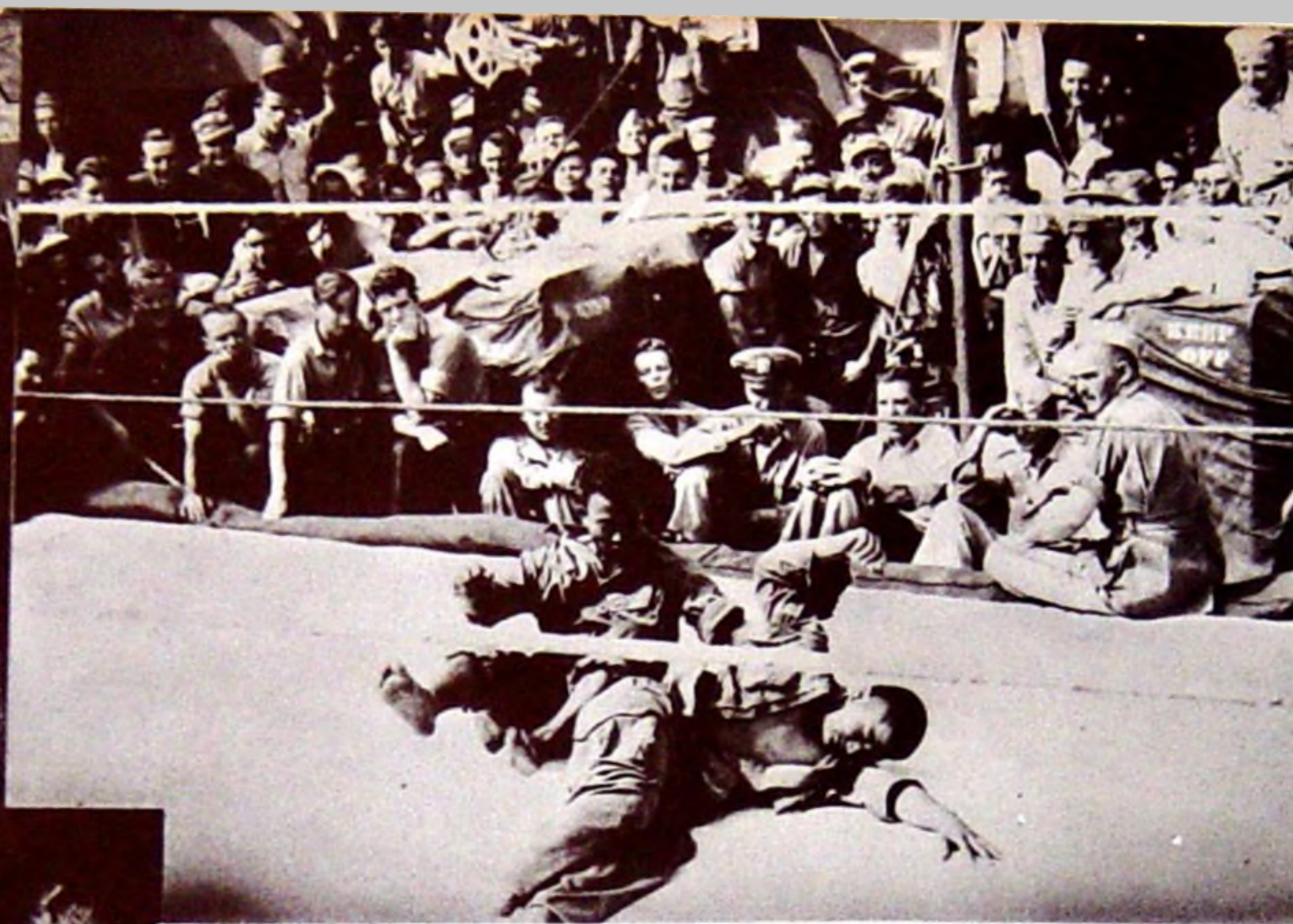
SPORTS AND RECREATION

The crew of the Kenton had but little opportunity to indulge in athletic contests, but it showed on those few occasions the same high capabilities displayed at work.

Boxing was the chief form of recreation and many a doughboy has a healthy respect for the leather-pushing prowess of the K's mitt wielders acquired during bouts aboard ship.

Our top fighter was Pharmacist's Mate Joe Bongo, who on four occasions won slashing victories in feature bouts against the best the Army had to offer.





Other slick scrappers were Henry Armenta, Sam Swain, Laundryman Rogers, Alvarez, Buckley, Moon, Gibson, Shields, Wolfe, Schoeder and Belanger. They provided plenty of action to help break the monotony of long trips.

The Beach Party aboard had a sharp softball team and was undefeated in nearly a score of games played at Oceanside, Calif., and at Waimanalo, Hawaii. The Beach Party boys boasted a top pitcher in Berraras, a fancy fielding first baseman in Dale Trent and a heavy clouter in Radioman Anthony.

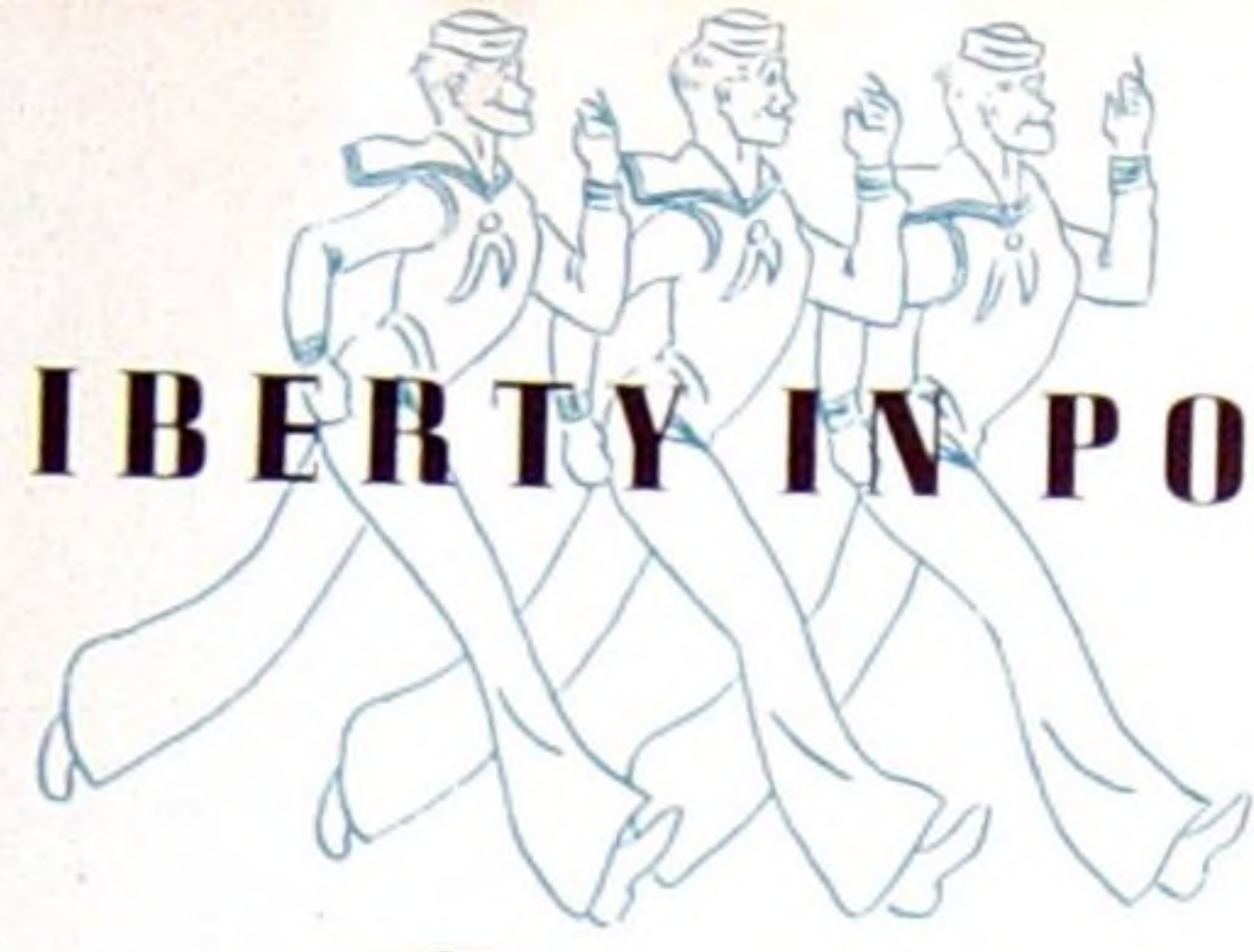
The officers were challenged to a softball game by the Third Division at Pearl Harbor and took a 4 to 1 decision from the boat group, with Lt. (j.g.) Bill Davidson proving too tough a pitcher for the enlisted men.

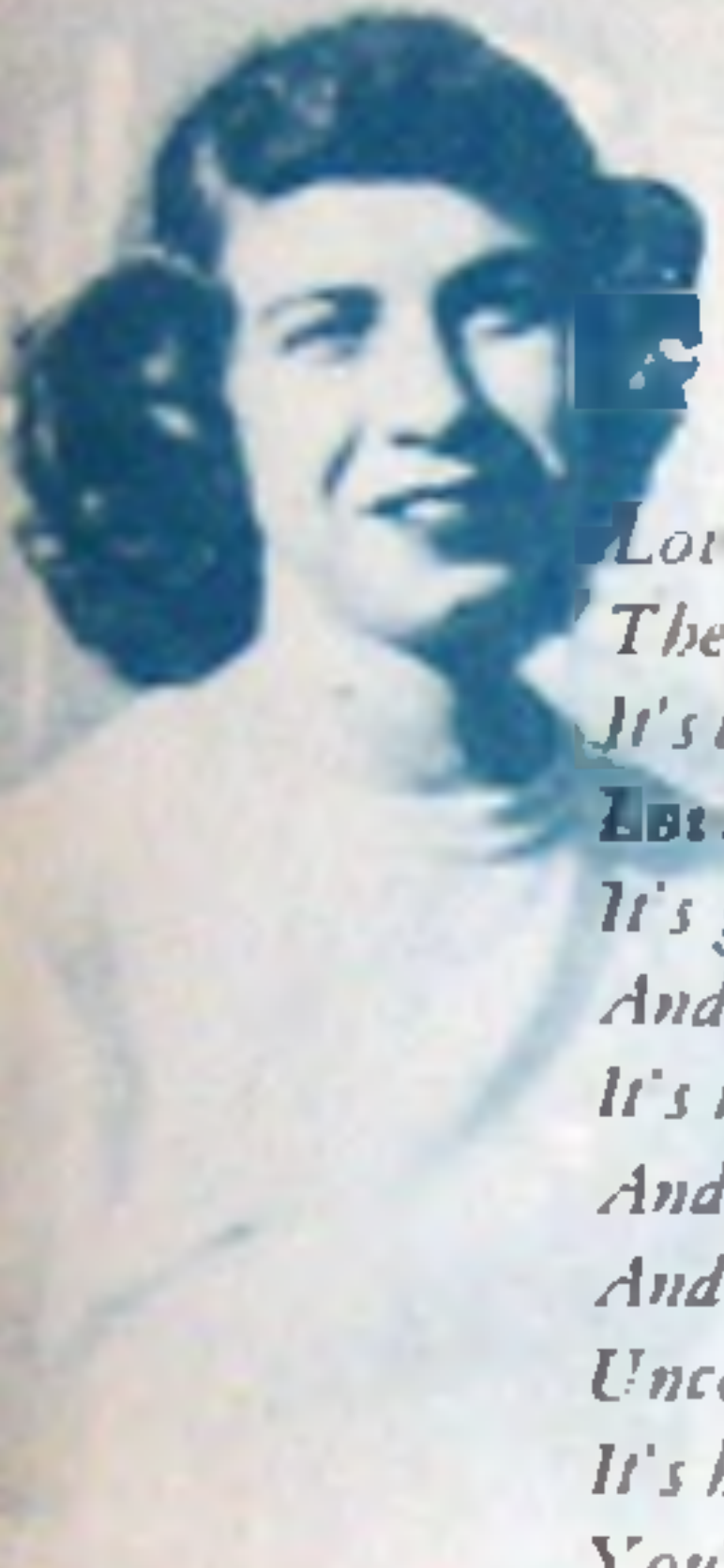
The officers again proved their prowess in basketball by defeating the crew 31-23 at San Francisco. The crew got together a big and speedy team, but the combination of Lt. Fanfelle sinking them in close and Lt. McGrath dropping them in from outside proved too tough. Those two former college stars scored 10 points apiece to ice the game for the officers.

Much credit for making the most of what athletic facilities were available goes to Lt. (j.g.) Fanfelle, ship recreation officer.



LIBERTY IN PORT





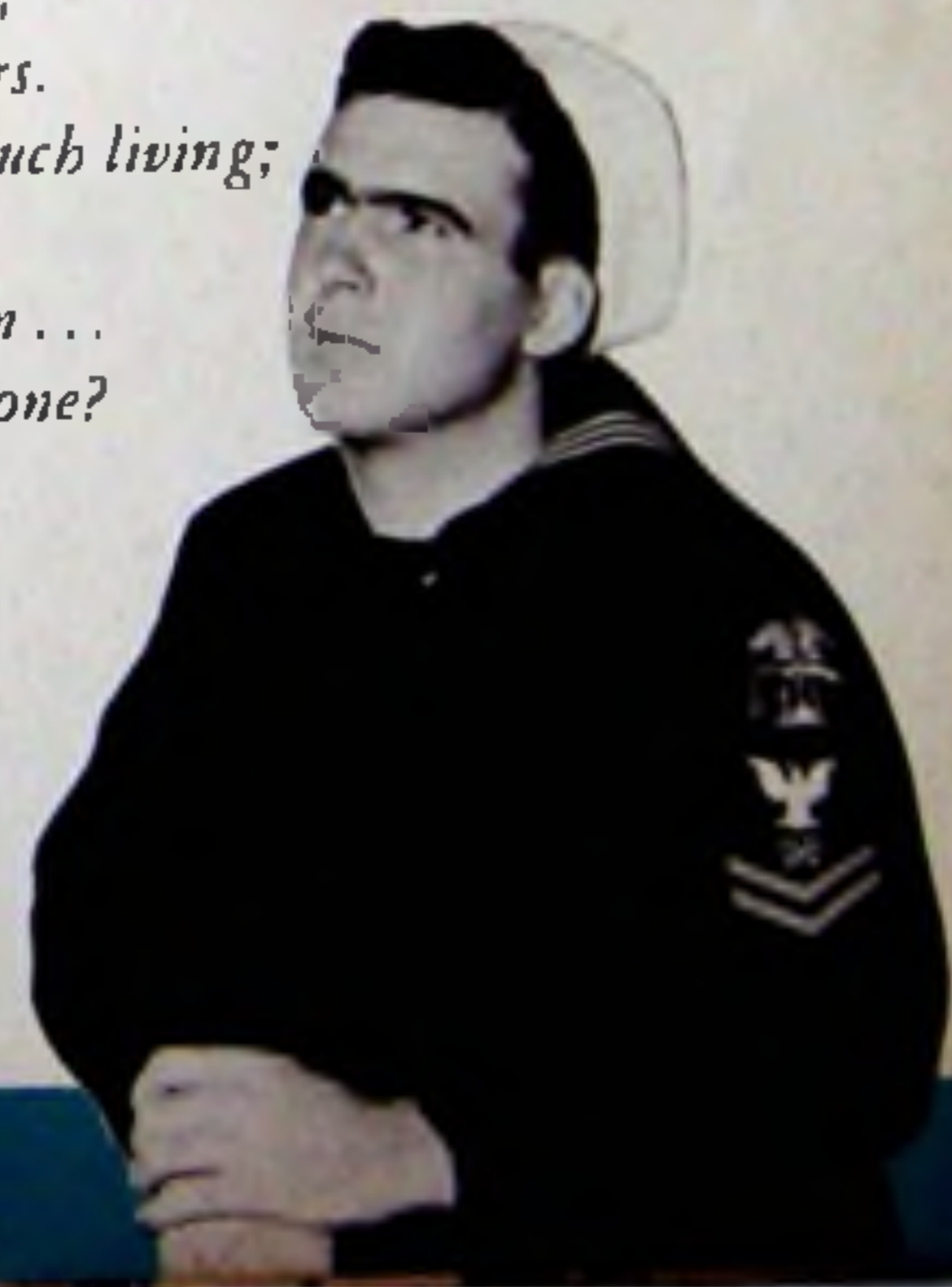
Loving a Sailor

*Loving a sailor is not all play . . .
There's very little of it that's gay.
It's being in love with a misty dream;
Loving a sailor's all milk and no cream.
It's getting a card from a training camp,
And sending letters with an upside-down stamp.
It's hoping for furloughs you know won't come,
And wondering if he'll ever get home.
And when he does come it's laughter together,
Unconscious of people, of time, or of weather.
It's hearing him whisper his love for you,
You're answering whisper that you love him, too.*

*Then there is the ring . . . the promise of love,
The knowing you're watched by the Father above.
Loving a sailor's goodbye at the train,
And wondering if you'll see him again;
Reluctantly, painfully letting him go,
When inside, you're crying or wanting him so.
You wait through a long, no-letter spell,
Watching for word that everything's well.
Your feet are planted on sand, not sod;
Your source of strength is solely from God.
Loving a sailor is living in fears,
Crying until there are no more tears.*

*You're hating the world, yourself and the war,
Hating until you can hate no more.
Giving up, then kneeling down and praying,
And really meaning the prayer you're saying.
With each overdue letter, you babble with joy,
And act like a child with a shiny new toy.
And tho you know he's an ocean away,
You keep on loving him more each day.
You grit your teeth, and you muster a grin;
We're in a war, and you've got to help win!
You're tired and weary, but will do your share
Of helping that sailor to win, "over there."*

*Then comes your birthday . . . a year older today!
But you feel just the same as you did yesterday.
You're not . . . you've changed. You're wiser and stronger.
You can weather this war if it's ten years longer!
You'll work and sweat each hour of the day;
Your job will be hard . . . you'll be earning your pay.
Yes, loving a sailor is bitterness, tears;
It's loneliness, sadness, abhorrent fears.
It's fretting and sweating, and not much living;
It's small in return for a lot of giving.
No . . . loving a sailor is really not fun . . .
But isn't it worth it, when you are the one?*

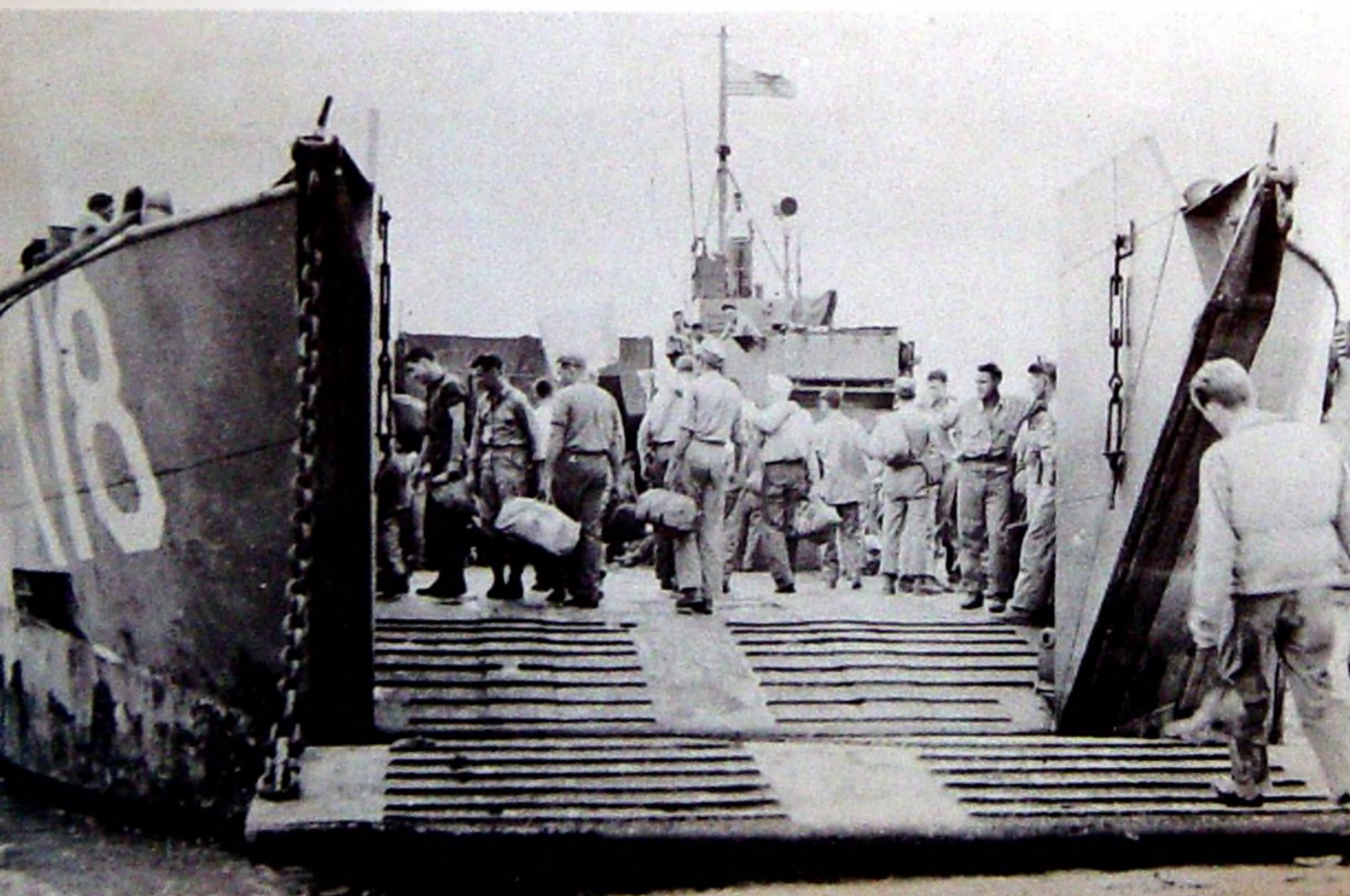


OKINAWA

One of the major highlights in the history of the Kenton was the participation in the invasion of Okinawa. Our first four months duty were spent in training for that historical event and while the part played by the Mighty K was not spectacular she carried through her assignment without a slip and did in 4.0 fashion all that was required.

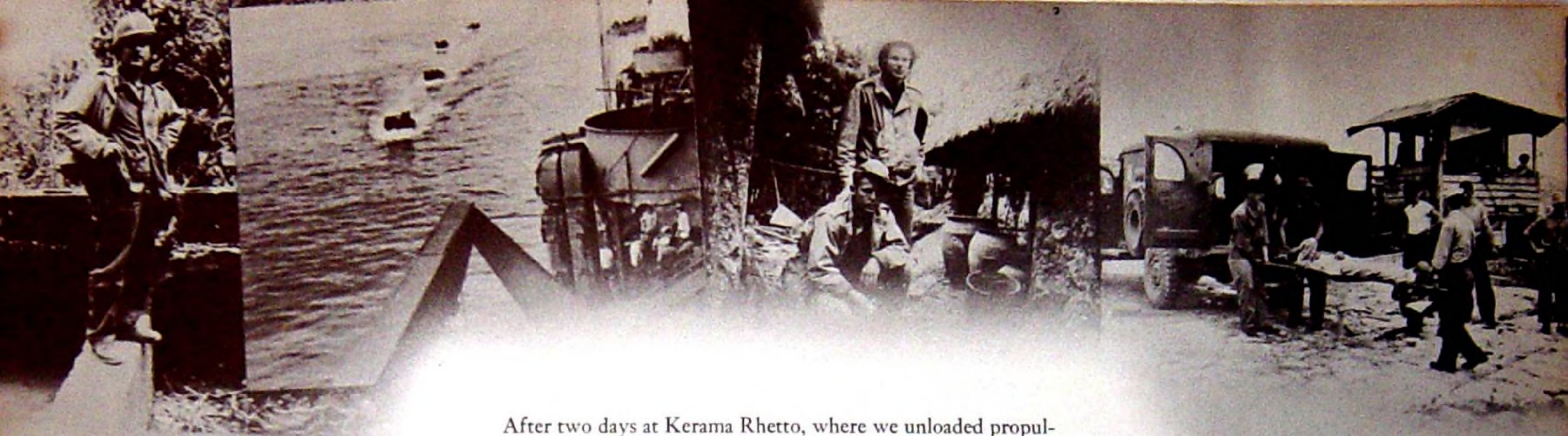
The invasion took place on Easter Sunday, and at dawn that morning the Mighty K broke loose from the transport convoy with which she had steamed up from the Philippines and swung over to Kerama Rhetto, twenty miles east of Okinawa.

Tensed for violent action, Easter Sunday was an anti-climax. It was a beautiful day and as peaceful a one as could have possibly been spent at home.



But the body of a dead Jap floating past, and the yawning hole in the side of a nearby ship gave strong evidence it was a false ship and that it could be shattered with lightning suddenness.

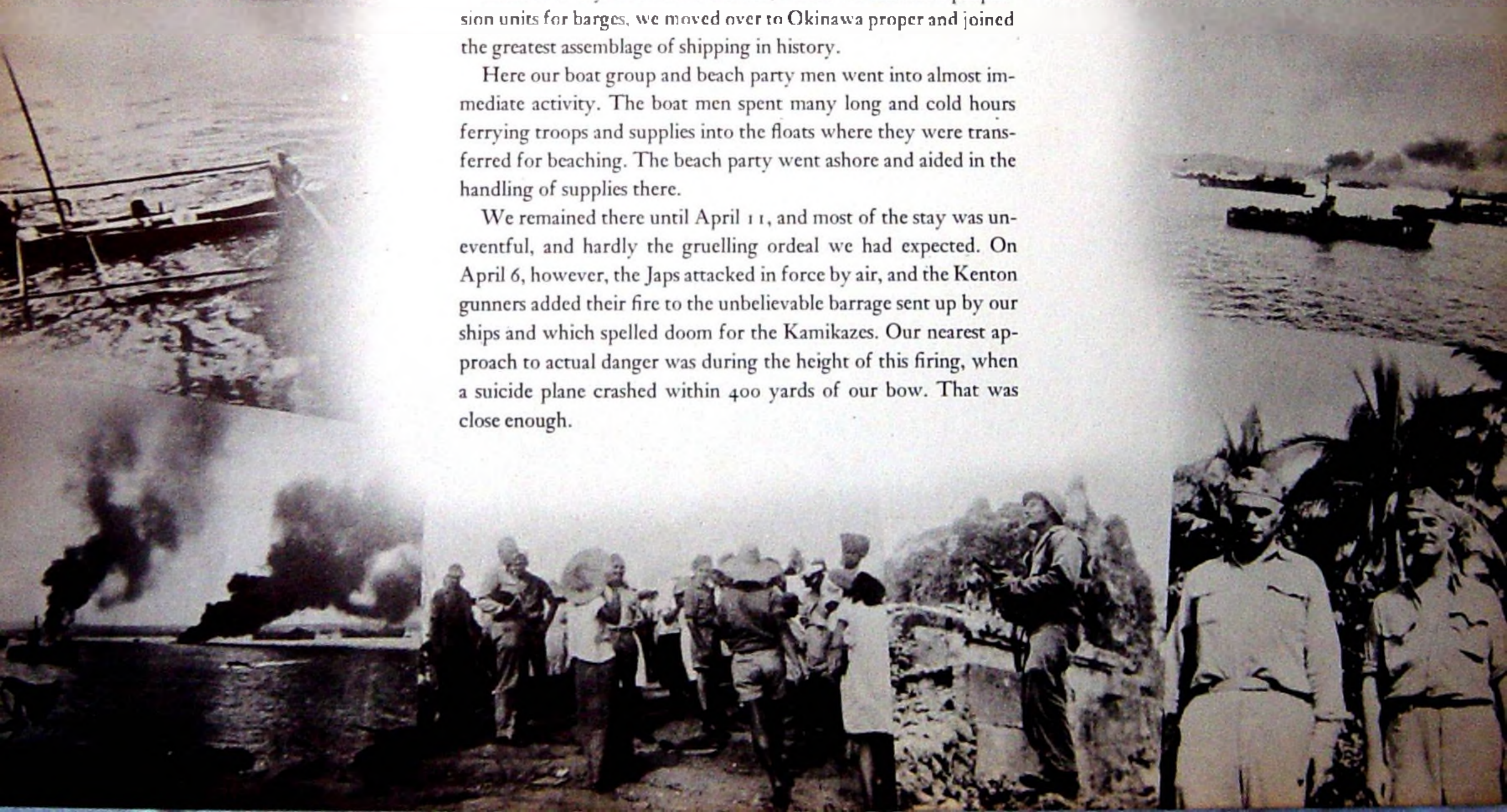
That shattering came shortly after sundown, when all hands raced to their battle stations to find a sky red with tracer bullets. It was a Nip attempt to get through to our anchorage, but the fighting ships guarding the entrance turned back the assault. Four times that night "Flash Red" was sounded, but we escaped unscathed.



After two days at Kerama Rhetto, where we unloaded propulsion units for barges, we moved over to Okinawa proper and joined the greatest assemblage of shipping in history.

Here our boat group and beach party men went into almost immediate activity. The boat men spent many long and cold hours ferrying troops and supplies into the floats where they were transferred for beaching. The beach party went ashore and aided in the handling of supplies there.

We remained there until April 11, and most of the stay was uneventful, and hardly the gruelling ordeal we had expected. On April 6, however, the Japs attacked in force by air, and the Kenton gunners added their fire to the unbelievable barrage sent up by our ships and which spelled doom for the Kamikazes. Our nearest approach to actual danger was during the height of this firing, when a suicide plane crashed within 400 yards of our bow. That was close enough.



JAPAN

The afternoon of September 24, 1945, will long be remembered by the crew of the Kenton, for it was at that time the Mighty K steamed into Yokohama, Japan, and gave us a first glimpse of the country we had been battling for so many long months.

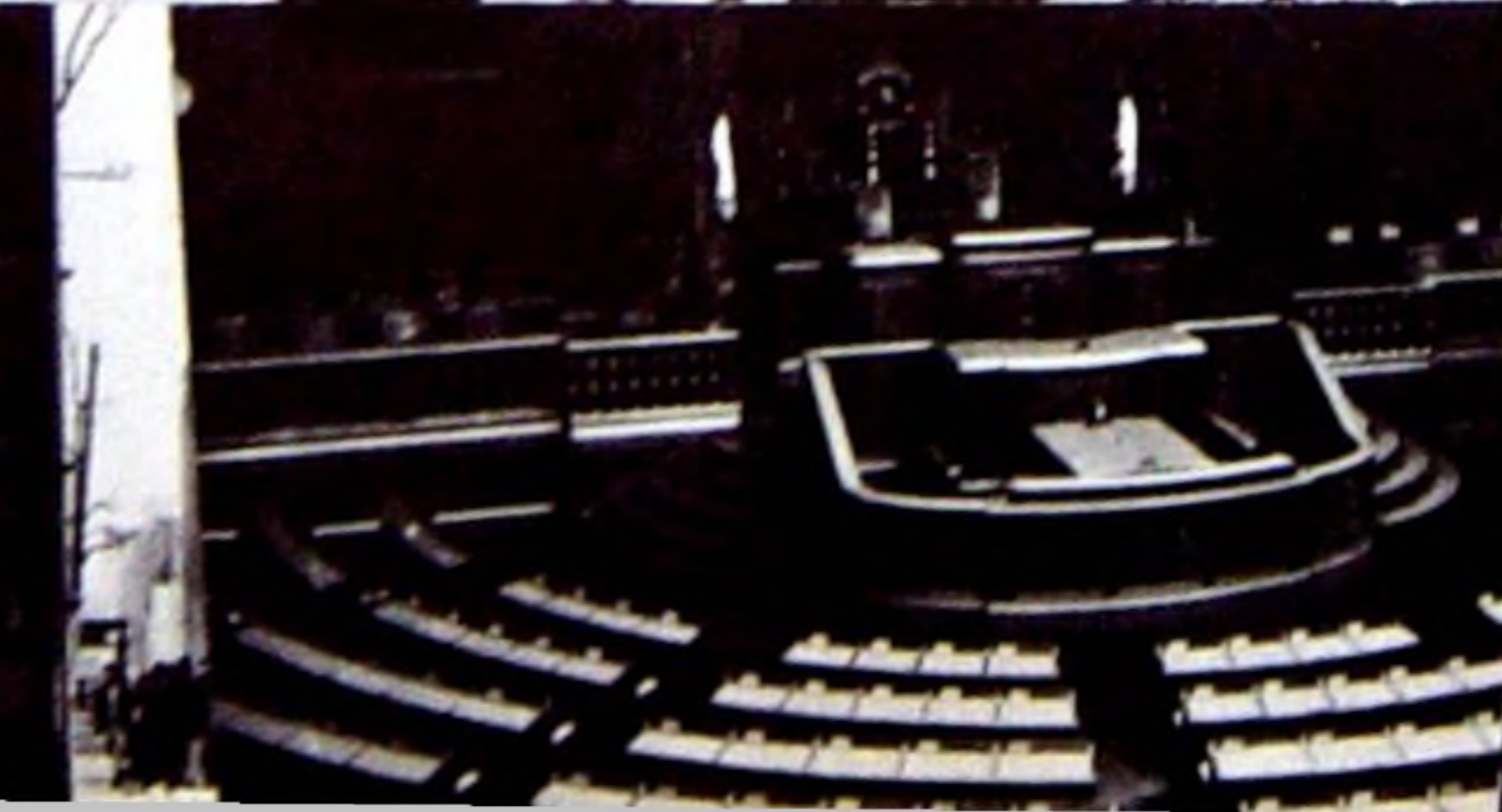
One of the P boat crews celebrated the auspicious occasion by cruising over to a lighthouse in the harbor and painting the name of the Kenton across its side for all future visitors of that land to see.

Five days were spent in the Yokohama-Tokyo area, and during that time all hands had the opportunity of seeing the tremendous damage wrought by the Air Force and Navy of Uncle Sam.

Much time, too, was spent in bargaining with the natives—swapping cigarettes and candy for fans, kimonos and other souvenirs.

It was a notable trip, and during the course of it the Kenton established two firsts. It brought the first European troops into Japan for occupational purposes, and returned home the first unit of Pacific fighters relieved from duty.





"MAIL CALL"

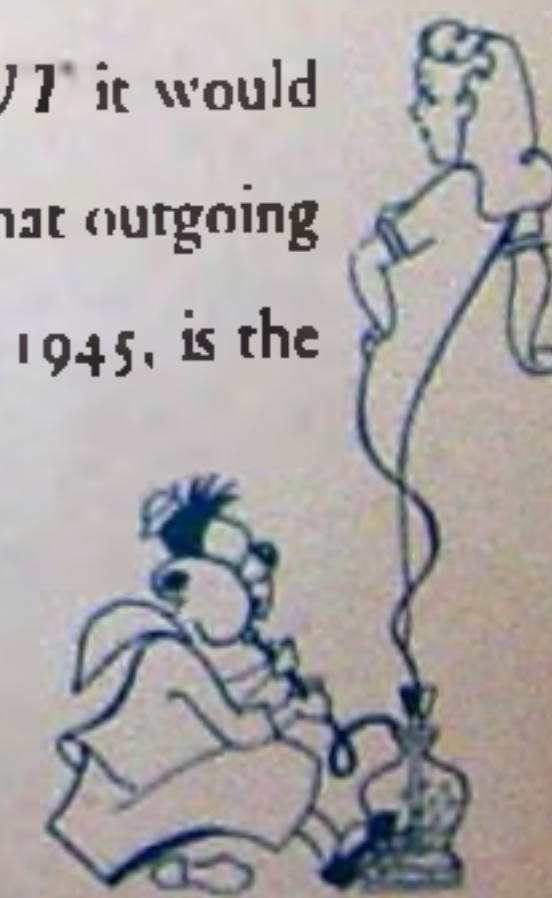
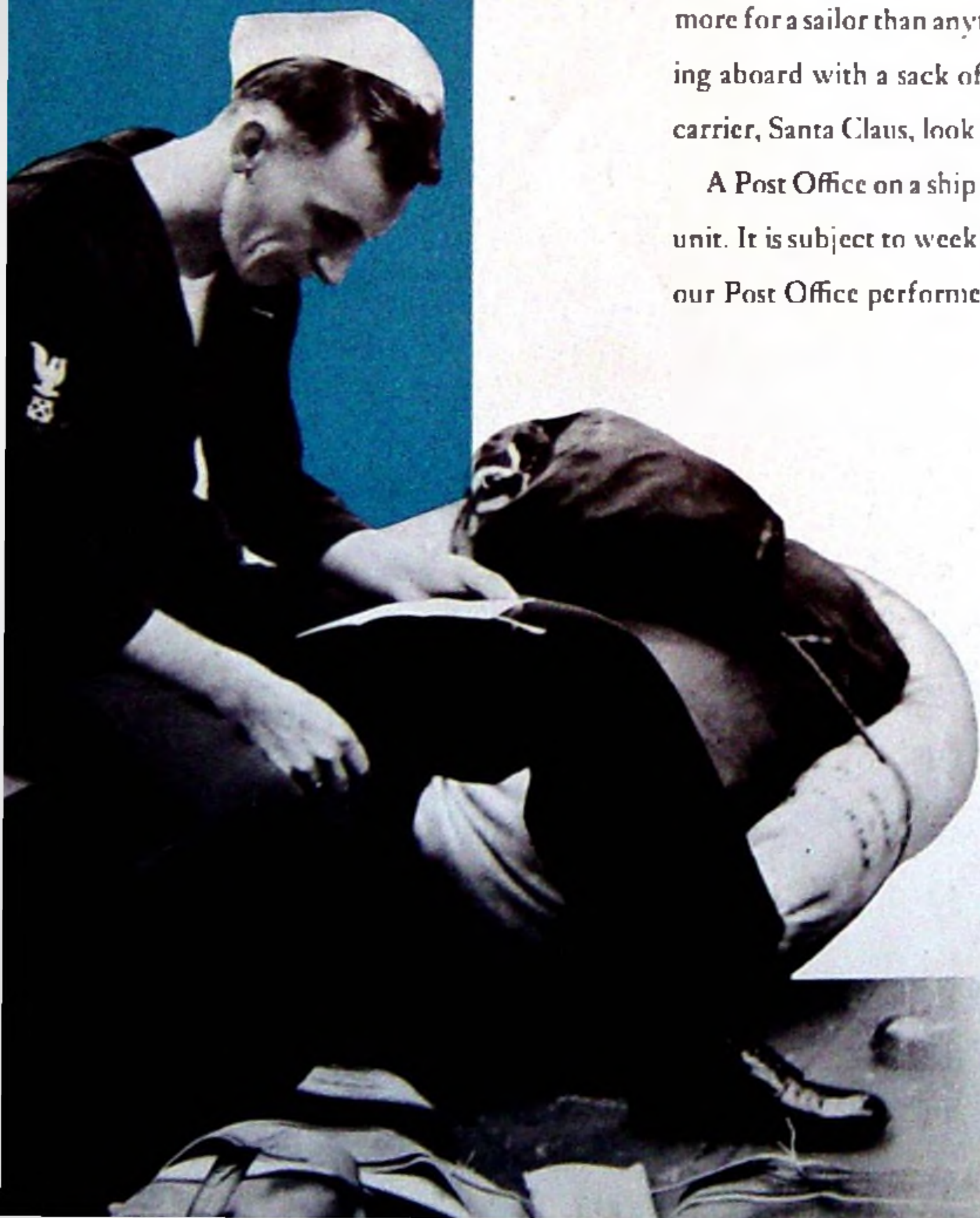
"Lay down to the Post Office, all Division Petty Officers, and dra-a-aw your mail."

Not a happier word piped for the men who spend their time, for the most part, away from their loved ones. News from home can do more for a sailor than anything bestowed, and the mail orderly coming aboard with a sack of mail on his back makes the original sack carrier, Santa Claus, look like a bum.

A Post Office on a ship like the Mighty K is a trim, clean, efficient unit. It is subject to weekly, quarterly and surprise inspections, and our Post Office performed in the standard that is expected, 4.0.

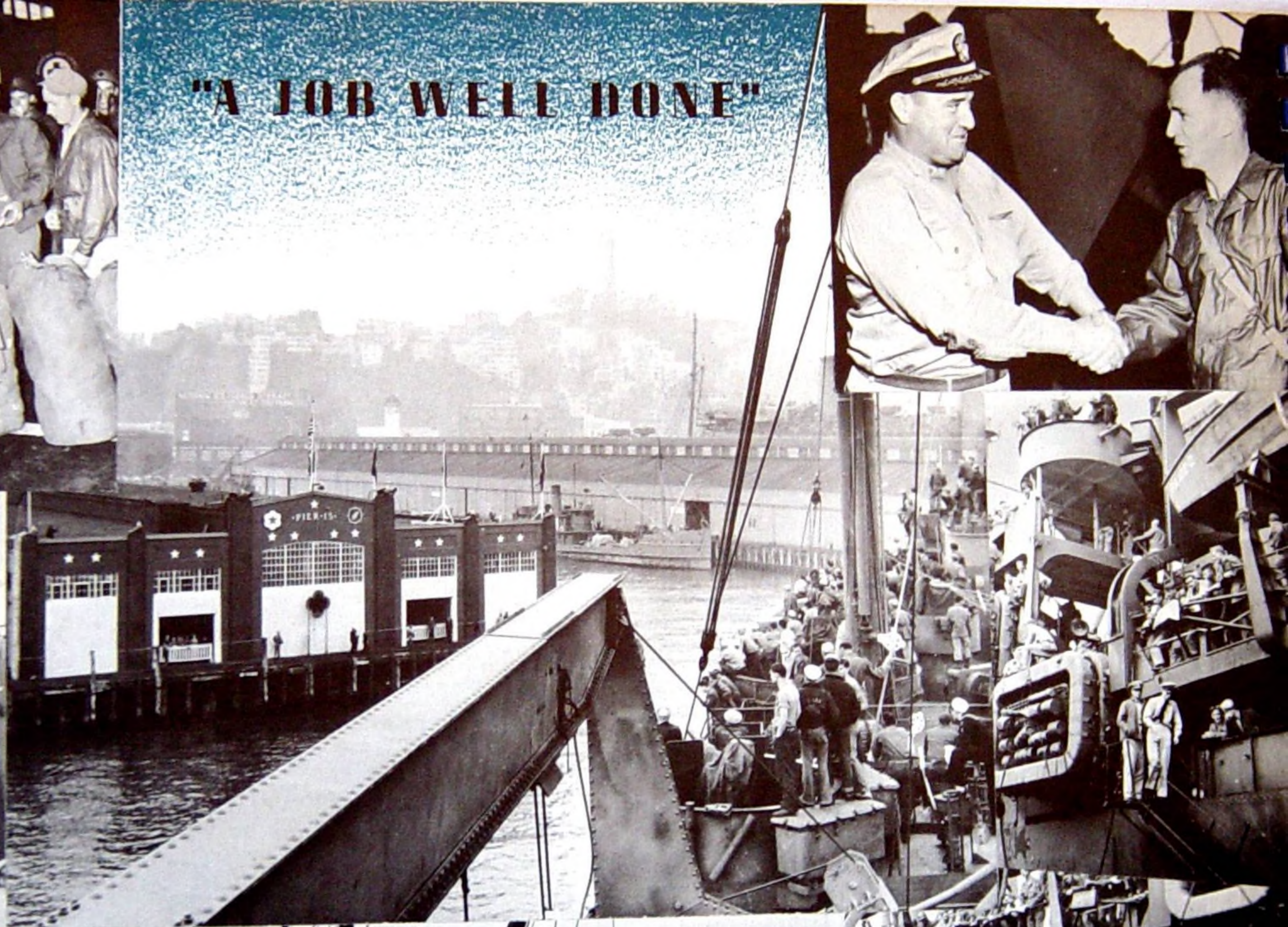
Long stretches sometimes intervene between mail calls, depending on the ship's schedule and adventures. When the mail does come through, it is nice to know that Mary still loves you, that mom's OK, that the gang at the office remembers you, or even that Joe Jr. is spending his time kicking around until daddy comes home to see him for the first time.

The Kenton's men did their part too in making use of the outgoing facilities. And this is neither here nor there, *BUT* it would do a lot of cynics a world of good to censor some of that outgoing mail. You'd find that the American sailor, vintage of 1945, is the tops. You'd know it when you read that mail.





"A JOB WELL DONE"



ACKNOWLEDGMENT



HISTORY OF THE MIGHTY "K"

(continued from page 2)

After fulfilling all the requirements of BuShips, the Kenton was permitted to get under way and she participated in a brief shake-down cruise and training period off the coast of California. On the 18th of December the Mighty K left Long Beach, California, for Seattle, Washington, and her first assignment.

The Christmas holidays were spent in that hospitable North-western port, while the Kenton was being loaded with troops and supplies. On December 27, 1944, the Mighty K's crew members took a parting look at the friendly shores of the United States, a look required to last six months.

Our destination was Pearl Harbor. Meanwhile the Navy, ever busy training its men for future operations, had some units of the Kenton attending fire-fighting school and airplane recognition, and her beach party and boat group spent trying days undergoing specialized operations at Waimanalo. Then came intensive training off Maui and other Hawaiian shores, in company with similar transports. In that period came the awareness that the "growing pains" period was nearly at an end. All hands were eager to reach maximum efficiency, for despite utmost secrecy there was no question that something big was brewing and the Kenton would have a part in it.

The "something big" was the invasion of Okinawa, and on February 18, 1945, with some 1600 members of the 10th Army aboard and laden with invasion equipment, we headed westward from Pearl Harbor in convoy. The Kenton headed for Eniwetok and from there to the Philippines, stopping at Palau en route . . . and on March 27 she headed for the "main event." Easter Sunday was L-day, and early that morning the Kenton broke from her convoy transport group and steamed for Kerana Rhetto, an atoll 20 miles west of Okinawa, having a rendezvous there with two other navy vessels. She returned later to Okinawa, where her boat group went into immediate action hauling troops and supplies ashore.

The Mighty K remained at Okinawa until April 11, doing her share in the work of taking that war-torn island. Her sick bay and

troop officers' quarters were jammed with seriously wounded as the Kenton steamed from Okinawa to Guam, where they were taken to navy hospitals awaiting them. From Guam the Kenton went back to Leyte to deliver some much-needed material and equipment. From there to Ulithi, where she awaited further orders, which came after some delay, urging the Kenton to act as a hospital ship and help evacuate wounded from the hospitals at Guam, bringing them back to the States.

During her stay in San Francisco the Mighty K had a change of command. Captain Victor B. Tate, USN, was replaced by Commander Gerald B. Ogle, USN, who had just finished a tour of duty as Executive Officer of the battleship New Jersey.

Her destination was again the Philippines, and though Manila was scheduled to be her final stop, on arrival at Leyte orders diverted the troops and cargo at that port and the Kenton headed back home. This task of unloading was accomplished in less than 48 hours and the Mighty K won praise as having the most proficient crew ever to unload a ship in Leyte Harbor. On her return to the States the Kenton received the news of Japan's surrender. The war was over, but not so the work of the Mighty K. Now, more than ever before, she was needed to bring the conquering heroes home. So off again to Manila, but once more her course was diverted and she was ordered to bring the 97th Division, veterans of the European conflict, which was being used as an army of occupation, to Japan. The Kenton arrived in Yokohama on September 24, 1945. After five days during which all hands were afforded the opportunity of observing the devastation wrought by our planes and fleet, the Mighty K started back to the U.S.A. with the signal honor of carrying the first troops sent home from Japan for honorable discharge, after years spent fighting for victory. The Kenton will continue to sail on until the last of these men are brought home. Then and then only can she sail into port for her last voyage and her gallant Captain in turning her over to the Merchant Marine will be able to say, "Mission Accomplished."



"WE HAVE MET THE ENEMY AND THEY ARE OURS"

Admiral Oliver Hazard Perry

"Home is the Sailor,

Who Comes from the Sea..."

