

Tom Gerety Spends Leave With Parents

Aviation Ordnanceman, 3/c Thomas Gerety, from the naval air station at Miami, Fla., is spending a leave at the home of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. T. M.

Gerety, 120 South Newtown street.

He will report December 8 to San Diego where he will take up duties as aerial gunner on a TBF.

Gerety entered the service in July, 1943, and is a graduate of

Medford high school, class of '43.

It is easy to have breakfast in Japan and dinner in Canada on the same day. Both are small communities in western North Carolina.

BIG SHELLS RIP TINY DESTROYER IN NAVY BATTLE

One-Ship Task Forces Survives Clash With Japanese Fleet Off Philippines.

By Roger A. Johnson
United Press Staff Correspondent

Mare Island Navy Yard, Cal., Nov. 30—(U.P.)—Fourteen-inch shells shrieked through her rigging and Japanese shrapnel splattered her decks, but the tiny destroyer, the U. S. S. "Unmentionable," a one-ship task force, steamed head on into a column of four enemy battleships and four cruisers and lived to fight another day.

The incident, which occurred during the battle of the Philippines October 25, was reported with navy permission today with the arrival of the gallant little, 2,100-ton craft in port for repairs.

Skipper's Story
The saga of this heroic "small boy" of Vice Adm. Thomas C. Kinkaid's 7th fleet and how it helped to save the American beachhead at Leyte was told by the skipper, Cmdr. Amos Hathaway 30 U. S. N., Chevy Chase, Md., and Bakersfield, Cal.

For security reasons, the name of the ship must remain anonymous. She was part of a force of three destroyers and four destroyer-escorts screening six escort carriers in the decisive battle of San Bernardino straits.

Two other destroyers, the Hoel and Johnston, and the destroyer escorts, Samuel B. Roberts and escort carriers St. Lo and Gambler were sunk, but this gallant little task force challenged and perhaps foiled Japan's biggest naval threat to Gen. Douglas MacArthur's invasion of the Philippines.

Japs Open Fire
The "Unmentionable" began her three-hour fight at 6:45 a. m. when the Japanese dreadnaughts and cruisers suddenly opened fire on the baby flattops 60 miles off Samar Island, northeast of Leyte. The enemy was drawing a bead on the slow-moving St. Lo, Gambler Bay, Fanshaw Bay, White Plains, Kitkun Bay and Callin Bay when the screen commander ordered an attack.

"We threaded our way through the formation," Hathaway recalled, "and headed toward the enemy. The Hoel was ahead of us. When we were 15,000 yards away, the four battleships broke out of the enemy battle line. I fired seven of my ten torpedoes at the heavy cruisers at the head of the line, then made for the battleships."

At 8,500 yards, the battleships opened up with 14-inchers, but the gallant little destroyer bored in and fired her tiny five-inchers derisively.

Jap Destroyers Yellow
"The Jap destroyer screen was yellow as hell," Hathaway said. "We thought we were going to have to fight our way through it. But when we got there, the destroyers were gone."

Then Hathaway launched his last three torpedoes, sending one exploding against the side of the lead Kongo-class battleship. She ceased firing momentarily, but her three companion dreadnaughts maintained a steady barrage against the entire task force.

Shrapnel bursts swept the deck of the "Unmentionable," but she kept boring in to within

4,000 yards of the lead battleship before she retired to permit the DEs to make their David-like runs against the Goliaths.

"Do you want us to go in with you?" the senior DE skipper radioed to the screen commander. "Line up your little boys and come in after us," was the reply. DEs were never designed to attack heavy cruisers, but the little ships charged in point blank.

Turning from the battleships, the "Unmentionable" attacked the leader of the cruiser squadron, a heavy cruiser, and in a 20-minute slugging match, set fire to the enemy's superstructure. The other three cruisers opened up on the tiny "Unmentionable," inflicting the greatest damage.

The Japs broke off the fight for some unexplainable reason, but the "Unmentionable," with three of her crewmen killed, repulsed a Japanese air raid, shot down an enemy dive bomber and picked up 80 survivors from the St. Lo. This kept Ship's Surgeon Lt. Edwin C. Bebb, Wichita Falls, Tex., busy for the next two days.

"Contrary to reports," said Hathaway, "the war is not over."

Sidewalk Santas Scarce This Year

New York, Nov. 30—(U.P.)—A wartime shortage of street-corner Santa Clauses was revealed today by the Volunteers of America, which sent out an urgent call for older men—and women—to fill their depleted ranks.

Col. Charles Brandon Booth, national field secretary, said Santa shortages were reported from most of the cities where the organization has posts, including San Francisco, Seattle, and Portland.

KUNG DENIES CHIANG'S PLANNING SEPARATION

Washington, Nov. 30—(U.P.)—Dr. H. H. Kung, vice-premier of China, denied through the Chinese embassy today that Mme. Chiang Kai-shek intends to establish a permanent residence in Miami Beach Fla.

He called a London Daily Mail story asserting that Mme. Chiang was unlikely to return to China "an unmitigated falsehood." She is in the United States for medical treatment.

P.-T.A. Activities

Phoenix P.-T. A. Phoenix Parent-Teacher association will meet Friday, December 1 at 2:30 p. m. in the home economics room of the school. Seventh grade pupils will present a program and mothers of seventh grade pupils will serve refreshments. The association president urges a large attendance.

Use Mail Tribune Want Ads.

CUPP PURCHASES STRING OF FAMED WALKING HORSES

Of interest to valley horsemen, John Cupp, owner of Snowy Butte ranch, at Central Point, announces the purchase of ten registered Tennessee walking horses from the estate of the late Col. Manning, Santa Barbara, Cal. The horses arrived in the valley this week and are now stabled at the Snowy Butte ranch. The purchase consists of one 6-year-old stallion and seven brood mares and two young horses. All these horses were purchased in Tennessee by the late Col. Manning and were very carefully selected for blood lines and quality.

The stallion "Chocolate Soldier," was awarded first place for the outstanding stallion when 18 months old at the Lewisburg, Tenn., show. Chocolate Soldier will stand at stud at the Snowy Butte ranch this coming season and all horsemen are invited to inspect him and the rest of the string of horses.

These horses are under the supervision and management of C. A. McCrab, well-known horse trainer and showman who has trained and shown horses for the late Col. Manning. Mr. Cupp also announced that there will arrive in about ten days, six registered quarter-type Palomino brood mares from the Palomino farm of C. R. Upham of Palisades, Cal. These brood mares are all in foal to El Tovar, the registered Palomino quarter-horse recently sold by Mr. Upham for \$4,000 to a Texas breeder of Palomino quarter-horses.

Phoenix Navy Man Home On Furlough

Phoenix, Nov. 30—Clifford Lee Birk, 31-c and former member of the crew of the U. S. S. Card, is in Phoenix on leave from the navy for the first time in two years. Crew members of the Card received the presidential citation for sinking more enemy submarines than any other boat in naval history, the seaman reports.

Birk, who is the son of Mr. and Mrs. E. L. Birk of Phoenix, will report December 21 at Corpus Christi, Tex., for shore duty Birk's brother, Staff Sgt. Eugene Birk, is in the south Pacific with the army.

In 1944 there were 1,065 schools of nursing in the United States which offered wartime nursing courses to candidates for the U. S. Cadet Nurse Corps, the U. S. Public Health Service reported.



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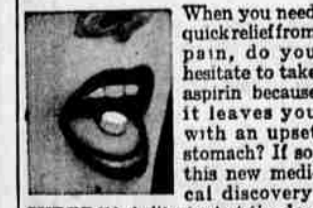
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