

SHORT HISTORY OF THE U.S.S NOA
(FROM MEMORY AND SUBSTANTIATED SCUTTLEBUTT)

By Lt. COMMANDER H.W. BOUD (SKIPPER 1943-1944)

OFFICIAL "COMMAND FILE" FROM U.S. NAVY RECORDS

THE U.S.S. NOA WAS NAMED AFTER A MIDSHIPMAN WHO WAS KILLED WHILE LEADING A LANDING PARTY AGAINST SOME HEAD-HUNTERS IN THE PHILIPPINES. THE NOA (EX DD343) IS FAMOUS AMONGST THE OLD-TIMERS IN THE NAVY AS BEING THE SAVIOR OF A WHITE COLONY FAR UP THE YANGTZE RIVER. SOME CHINESE BANDITS WERE ON THE LOOSE AND CAPTIAN SIMS OF THE NOA (SON OF THE ADMIRAL), ON HIS OWN RESPONSIBILITY, OPENED FIRE ON THEM AND HELD THEM OFF UNTIL HE GOT ALL THE WHITE SETTLEMENT ON BOARD. THEN MADE HIS WAY DOWN THE RIVER.

THE CAPTAIN FEARED THIS WOULD CAUSE AN INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT AND THAT HE WOULD GET A GENERAL COURT MARTIAL OUT OF IT. IT PREYED ON HIS MIND SO HE FINALLY COMMITTED SUICIDE. LATER HE WAS AWARDED THE NAVY CROSS CROSS POSTHUMOUSLY. THIS WAS IN THE 1920'S I BELIEVE.

THE NOA ALSO WENT AGROUND IN THE YANGTZE RIVER AND WAS PULLED OFF BY THE SAME COMMANDER GENEREUX WHO IN 1944 PULLED US OFF IN NOUMEA.

ALSO WHILE ON THE ASIATIC STATION SOME "DOUGHHEAD SNIPE" TURNED THE WRONG VALVE IN A RAPIDLY WHIRLING GENERATOR TURBINE AND THE WHOLE BUSINESS EXPLODED, KILLING AND WOUNDING SEVERAL INNOCENT BYSTANDERS. PRESUMABLY THIS WAS BEFORE THEY HAD SAFETY VALVES ON GENERATOR TURBINES AND MAY HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE REASONS FOR INSTALLING SUCH.

THE NOA IS ALSO ONE OF THREE "PIG IRON" BOATS, MEANING THE NOA AND TWO OTHER TWELVE-HUNDRED TONNERS. UNLIKE ALL THE REST, HAVE UNGALVANIZED DECK PLATES. THERE ARE TWO STORIES ON THIS: WHICH IS CORRECT, NOT KNOWN TO THE WRITER. ONE IS THAT THE DECK HAD TO BE RENEWED IN CHINA AND THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANY GALVANIZED PLATE THERE. THE OTHER, THAT THE NOA, BEING ONE OF THE LAST OF THE WORLD WAR I SHIPS TO BE BUILT (COMMISSIONED 1921), "SCRAPS" WERE USED IN HER CONSTRUCTION. SHE WAS BUILT IN THE NORFOLK NAVY YARD AND THERE ARE MEN THERE STILL WHO BUILT HER.

THE NOA WAS DECOMMISSIONED ABOUT 1934 IN THE PHILADELPHIA NAVY YARD. SHE LAY IN "RED LEAD ROW" FOR YEARS AND FINALLY WAS RECOMMISSIONED ON 1 APRIL 1940 (APRIL FOOL'S DAY). LIEUTENANT (JG) "DUTCH" SCHWANER WAS THE OFFICER LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR PUTTING HER TOGETHER AGAIN. HE FIGURED HE WAS GOING TO BE ENGINEERING OFFICER AND CONCENTRATED ON THAT DEPARTMENT, BUT WHEN SHE WAS RECOMMISSIONED, HE WAS MADE FIRST LIEUTENANT AND GUNNERY OFFICER. THE SO-CALLED "PLANK OWNERS" WHO ARE STILL ON BOARD ARE McDANIELS, W.E., CMM, (THEN MM1C); RICHARDS, J.H., MMIC, (THEN WT2C) AND JOSEPHI, R., SC1C, (THEN S1C).

THE NOA HAD SOME INDETERMINATE DUTY AT THE MOUTH OF THE DELAWARE RIVER AT FIRST -- PROBABLY LARGELY A SORT OF SHAKEDOWN.

SHE WAS ON "NEUTRALITY PATROL" FOR A WHILE AND HAD HER INTRODUCTION TO KEY WEST, FLORIDA.

AN AIRPLANE WAS PUT ABOARD FOR EXPERIMENTAL PURPOSES AND THE NOA WAS FITTED WITH A CRUISER TYPE MAINMAST FOR A KINGPOST AND A HEAVY BOOM WITH OUTRIGGERS AND WINCHES FOR HANDLING THE PLANE. OUR FIRST PLANE SUNK AND THE CAPTAIN REPORTED ABOARD IN A SEAMAN'S UNIFORM. A METHOD WAS DEVELOPED WHEREBY WE COULD LOWER THE PLANE INTO THE WATER AND LAUNCH IT AT FIFTEEN KNOTS. WE PICKED THE PLANE UP USUALLY AT A SOMEWHAT SLOWER SPEED. FROM CONSTANT PRACTICE WE BECAME VERY ADEPT AT THIS, BUT IN ANY KIND OF ROUGH WATER IT WAS NOT PRACTICABLE. FOR ONE THING, OUR SHIP WAS TOO SMALL TO MAKE ANY KIND OF SLICK FOR THE PLANE TO LAND IN. AS A RESULT

OF THESE EXPERIMENTS, LARGELY CONDUCTED INSIDE THE CHESAPEAKE BAY, SEVERAL TWENTY-ONE HUNDRED TON DESTROYERS WERE FITTED WITH CATAPULTS AND PLANES IN PLACE OF THE #4 TURRET. THE SHIP DESIGNERS CAME ABOARD THE NOA FOR ADVICE. WE WERE KNOWN THEN AS "THE FLYING TIN CAN", THE ONLY PLANE CARRYING DESTROYER IN THE WORLD AND RECEIVED CORRESPONDENCE AS AN "AIRCRAFT CARRIER".

THE NOA WAS STATIONED AT THE NAVAL ACADEMY, ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND, FOR PRACTICALLY ALL OF THE YEAR 1941. OUR PRIMARY MISSION WHILE THERE WAS TO TAKE THE MIDSHIPMEN OUT ON THREE OR FOUR CRUISES AND GIVE THEM PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION. WE ALWAYS LAUNCHED AND PICKED UP THE PLANE AS A DEMONSTRATION. WE ALSO TOOK OUT THE OFFICERS ATTENDING THE OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE SCHOOL AT WASHINGTON, D.C. MANY OF THESE OFFICERS WERE EX-NEWSPAPERMEN, ETC. WHO NEVER HAD BEEN ON A MAN-OF-WAR BEFORE THEY CAME ABOARD THE NOA. ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF BEING STATIONED AT ANNAPOLIS WAS THAT HUNDREDS OF VISITORS TO THE NAVAL ACADEMY WOULD LOOK US OVER EVERY WEEK AND WE HAD TO KEEP A VERY PRETTY SHIP -- BY ORDER OF THE ADMIRAL. THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE NAVAL ACADEMY. HOWEVER, THERE WAS RUNNING FRESH WATER ON THE DOCK, TELEPHONE SERVICE, AND ELECTRIC CONNECTIONS. WE SELDOM GOT UNDERWAY BEFORE 0900 NOR CAME IN LATER THAN 1700. ABOUT ONCE EVERY TWO WEEKS WE WOULD GO UP TO BALTIMORE TO FUEL. LT. JG. R. DONALDSON WAS OUR AVIATOR.

IN THE SPRING OF 1941 THE NOA HAD AN OVERHAUL AT THE BALTIMORE DRY DOCK COMPANY, A PRIVATE SHIPYARD. THIS ACCOUNTS FOR MANY OF THE NON-STANDARD ALTERATIONS THAT MAY BE FOUND ABOUT THE SHIP. MR. BRANDT CAME ABOARD WHILE SHE WAS AT THE BALTIMORE DRY DOCK COMPANY. YOUR PRESENT SKIPPER CAME ABOARD IN JULY OF 1941, WHEN SHE WAS AT ANNAPOLIS.

THE SKIPPER AT THE TIME WAS LIEUTENANT COMMANDER RAE E. ARISON, AN EX-SUBMARINER AND, INCIDENTLY, A MATH INSTRUCTOR OF MINE AT THE NAVAL ACADEMY. HE WAS NAVIGATOR OF THE SAN FRANCISCO WHEN SHE TANGLED WITH THE JAP BATTLESHIPS OFF GUADALCANAL AND IN THE SAME EXPLOSION THAT KILLED ADMIRAL CALLAGANHAN AND CAPTAIN CASSIN YOUNG HE WAS BLOWN FROM THE BRIDGE AND WRAPPED AROUND #1 FIVE-INCH GUN. LIEUTENANT COMMANDER BRUCE McCANDLESS TOOK OVER -- ACTUALLY OUR "CAPTAIN. ARISON WAS THE SENIOR" SURVIVING MEMBER -- BUT OF COURSE, HE WAS IN NO SHAPE TO DO ANYTHING FOR A LONG TIME THEREAFTER.

DURING OUR STAY AT ANNAPOLIS WE WERE SENT TO THE NORFOLK NAVY YARD TO HAVE THE FIRST UNDERWATER STREAMLINED SOUND DOME IN THE U.S. NAVY PUT ON. (COST \$6000). IN ORDER TO HAVE OUR BOW IN THE CORRECT POSITION, THEY HAD TO BACK US INTO THE DRY DOCK. AFTER THIS WE MADE A TRIP TO NEW LONDON, CONN. FOR SOUND EXPERIMENTS IN COMPANY WITH OTHER EXPERIMENTAL SOUND SHIPS. AS A RESULT OF THESE EXPERIMENTS IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE NOA'S GEAR WAS THE BEST. ON OUR RETURN TO ANNAPOLIS WE MADE THE PASSAGE ON THE ISLAND WATERWAY FROM THE MOUTH OF THE DELAWARE TO THE HEAD OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY. ON THIS ROUTE WE HAD THE UNUSUAL EXPERIENCE OF TRAVELING AT TEN KNOTS WITH LAND A FEW FEET ON EACH SIDE OF US HIGHER THAN OUR MAST.

SUBSEQUENT TO THIS WE ESCORTED THE CARRIER HORNET ON HER BUILDER'S TRIAL. AN UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE ON THIS TRIAL HAPPENED WHEN THE NOA WAS MAKING A FLANK SPEED TRYING TO CATCH UP WITH THE HORNET. JUST AS WE CAME ABEAM OF THE HORNET SHE BACKED DOWN FULL AND WAS MAKING WELL OVER TWENTY-FIVE KNOTS IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION IN AN EXCEEDINGLY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. THE NOA HAD OVER SHOT BY ABOUT FIVE MILES BEFORE WE COULD GET TURNED AROUND TO RESUME THE CHASE.

THE NOA WAS IN ANNAPOLIS LONG ENOUGH FOR ALL HANDS TO GET WELL "SITUATED" AND THERE WAS MUCH MOANING AND GNASHING OF TEETH WHEN WE PULLED AWAY FROM THE SANTEE DOCK TO GO TO BOSTON FOR AN OVERHAUL. LIEUTENANT COMMANDER BOSQUET N. WEV HAD TAKEN OVER, HAVING PREVIOUSLY BEEN OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE OFFICER'S CLUB AT ANNAPOLIS.

WE WENT TO BOSTON THROUGH THE CAP COD CANAL AND WHILE AT THE BOSTON NAVY YARD OUR AFTER SEARCHLIGHT WAS TAKEN OFF AND SOME FIFTY CALIBER MACHINE GUNS ADDED.

UPON LEAVING BOSTON OUR ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARMAMENT CONSISTED OF ABOUT FOUR 50 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS AND WE HAD NO K-GUNS. WE WERE IN BOSTON NAVY YARD AT THE TIME WAR WAS DECLARED. ON DECEMBER 9, 1941 THERE WAS AN AIR ALERT THROUGHOUT THE EAST COAST. THE NOA'S PLANE, A SCOUT OBSERVATION BI-PLANE WITH ONE FIXED AND ONE "FREE" 30 CALIBER MACHINE GUN, WAS THE ONLY ARMED PLANE IN THE AIR TO PROTECT BOSTON. SHORTLY WHEREAFTER WE LEFT BOSTON FOR NORFOLK. OUTSIDE BOSTON WE PICKED UP OUR PLANE IN A DRIVING SNOW STORM.

THE NIGHT OF DECEMBER 12, 1941 OFF BLOCK ISLAND THE NOA, WITH A TOTAL DEPTH CHARGE ARMAMENT OF TWO SHORT RACKS, MADE THE FIRST ANTI-SUBMARINE ATTACK ON THE EAST COAST SUBSEQUENT TO THE DECLARATION OF WAR. CAPTAIN WEV CLAIMED TO HAVE SEEN A TORPEDO WAKE. A MERCHANT SHIP IN THE VICINITY REPORTED BEING CHASED BY A SUBMARINE. WE BELIEVED WE DREW A LITTLE OIL.

ON OUR ARRIVAL IN NORFOLK WE WERE GREETED BY A BEVY OF OFFICIALS INQUIRING ABOUT THIS FIRST ANTI-SUBMARINE ATTACK. WE THEN TOOK THE HORNET OUT ON HER POST-REPAIR TRAILS. THE SECOND DAY OUT WE OBTAINED A SOUND CONTACT ON WHAT WE LATER BELIEVE WAS A SAND BANK. BY THIS TIME WE WERE CIRCLING TO MAKE OUR SECOND RUN. THE HORNET WAS DISAPPEARING OVER THE HORIZON. ABOUT TEN O'CLOCK THAT NIGHT WE CAME ACROSS HER AGAIN SAFELY ANCHORED ABOUT HALF WAY UP THE CHESAPEAKE. OFF WOLFTRAP LIGHT.

THE DAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS OF 1941 NOA TOOK ABOARD A LARGE GROUP OF TWENTY BOOTS, AMONGST WHOM ARE BAILY, W.C. (SM1C), GOODWIN, T.R. (QM1C), HILBURN, T.E. (BM2C), AND CLEVELAND, C.J. (GM2C).

THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS WE WENT OUT AS PART OF THE SCREEN ON THE SHAKEDOWN CRUISES OF THE HORNET, THE WASHINGTON, AND THE NORTH CAROLINA. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT AT THIS TIME THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE HORNET WAS THE SAME CAPTAIN MITSCHER WHO IS AT PRESENT COMMANDER TASK FORCE 58, THE TASK FORCE WHICH RECENTLY TURNED BACK THE JAP FLEET.

THE NOA WITH HER PLANE HANDLING GEAR WAS SPECIFICALLY ASSIGNED TO SCREEN AND ACT AS PLANE GUARD FOR THE HORNET. THERE WERE NO OTHER SCREENING VESSELS. THROUGH JANUARY WE STEAMED IN THE GULF OF MEXICO OCCASIONALLY MAKING FAST TRIPS INTO KEY WEST, FLORIDA FOR FUEL. ONCE WE WENT INTO PENSACOLA AND TWICE WE FUELED FROM THE HORNET. ON ONE OCCASION WE WERE OVERTAKEN BY THE NORTH CAROLINA IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND HAD THE UNCOMFORTABLE EXPERIENCE OF STEAMING ALONG IN THE GLEAM OF HER POWERFUL SEARCHLIGHTS WITH HER GUNS TRAINED ON US. WE WERE ALSO PRIVILEGED TO WITNESS THE FIRST LONG RANGE GUNNERY EXERCISES HELD BETWEEN THE NORTH CAROLINA AND THE WASHINGTON.

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SHAKEDOWN THE TASK FORCE HEADED NORTH AROUND THE END OF FLORIDA AT HIGH SPEEDS. DUE TO HEAVY WEATHER THE NOA'S BRIDGE WAS BASHED IN AND AT ONE TIME THERE WAS FOUR FEET OF SOLID WATER IN THE PILOT HOUSE, THROWING THE HELMSMAN ON TOP OF CAPTAIN WEV. THE NOA HAD TO PULL OUT OF THE FORMATION AND MADE HER WAY AT SLOWER SPEED TO CHARLESTON FOR EMERGENCY REPAIRS.

WHILE AT CHARLESTON, THE U.S.S. MCKEAN APD-5 CAME ALONGSIDE US. UPON LEAVING CHARLESTON WE ESCOTED A TRANSPORT TO BERMUDA. THE U.S.S. DAHLGREN ASSISTED US. OFF OF BERMUDA WE WERE DETACHED AND PROCEEDED DIRECTLY TO BOSTON. ENROUTE IN PASSING FROM THE GULF STREAM TO THE LABRADOR CURRENT, THE SEA WATER TEMPERATURE DROPPED FORTY DEGREES IN ABOUT TWO MINUTES.

WHILE AT BOSTON NAVY YARD OUR PLANE WAS REMOVED. K-GUNS, BASES FOR 20MM GUNS, NEW GENERATORS, PERMANENT DEGAUSSING, FIBRE GLASS, AND AN ENCLOSED BRIDGE WERE INSTALLED.

WE LEFT BOSTON AS ESCORT TO A LIGHTSHIP ENROUTE TO CASCO BAY, MAINE. THE FIRST NIGHT, DUE TO HAVING TO CLOSE THE LIGHTSHIP TO MEGAPHONE COMMUNICATION AND THE HEAVY WEATHER, WE COLLIDED AND BOTH RETURNED TO BOSTON. THIS TIME THE NOA OBTAINED A NEW BOW.

WE ALSO WERE DOCKED IN THE LARGEST DRYDOCK IN THE U.S. TO OBTAIN EXPERIMENTAL TILTING-HEAD SOUND GEAR. THIS DOCK HAD TAKEN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH AND COULD HAVE EASILY TAKEN TEN OF THE NOA. WE WERE A MERE SPECK DOWN AT ONE END OF THE DOCK.

WE WERE THEN ASSIGNED TO NEW YORK AND OPERATED OUT OF TOMPKINVILLE, STATEN ISLAND, ON SUBMARINE HUNTS AND RESCUE MISSIONS. OUR FIRST JOB WAS TO SEARCH FOR SURVIVORS OF THE S.S. CAROLYN, WHICH HAD GONE DOWN IN FLAMES THREE DAYS OUT ON HER FIRST CRUISE. THE CAROLYN WAS THE SISTER TO THE EVELYN ON WHICH OUR SAME LIEUTENANT SCHWANER IS NOW STATIONED.

OUR SCENE OF OPERATIONS SHIFTED TO NORFOLK AND WE WORKED WITH THE U.S.S. HERBERT, NOW APD-22, IN SUBMARINE HUNTING BETWEEN THE DELAWARE RIVER AND CAPE HATTERAS. AT THIS TIME SUBMARINE ACTIVITY IN THIS AREA WAS AT A PEAK. "FLOATERS", DEAD BODIES FLOATING AROUND IN THE WATER, WERE A COMMON SIGHT AND SELDOM WERE WE OUT OF SIGHT OF A BURNING TANKER. ONE AREA OFF CAPE HATTERAS WAS A REGULAR GRAVEYARD OF SUNKEN SHIPS. WE CALLED THIS "TORPEDO JUNCTION" LONG BEFORE THE NAME WAS GIVEN TO ANY OTHER AREA AND I DOUBT THAT THERE IS ANYWHERE ELSE SUCH A CONCENTRATION OF TORPEDOED SHIPS. IT WAS IN THIS VICINITY, MORE SPECIFICALLY NEAR WIMBLE SHOALS BUOY, THAT THE NOA AND HERBERT MADE THEIR FIRST KILL. BETWEEN US WE DROPPED ONE HUNDRED DEPTH CHARGES ON OUR CONTACT AND WATCHED AIR BUBBLES RISING TO THE SURFACE ON THE SPOT FOR TWO DAYS THEREAFTER. THE NAVY DEPARTMENT LATER SENT OUT A SALVAGE TUG TO INVESTIGATE, BUT DUE TO HEAVY WEATHER THEY WERE UNABLE TO SEND DOWN A DIVER. IT WAS DURING THIS PERIOD WE MADE OUR FIRST CONTACT WITH THE MANLEY APD-1. SHE PICKED UP OVER A HUNDRED SURVIVORS FROM A TORPEDOED SHIP IN THE VICINITY. ONE TANKER BURNED VIOLENTLY FOR AT LEAST EIGHT DAYS BEFORE SINKING. THE HERBERT AND THE NOA WERE THE FIRST SHIPS TO ESCORT COASTAL CONVOYS ON THE EAST COAST. AT FIRST WE HAD TO MAKE UP OUR OWN CONVOYS. WE WERE THEN SENT TO KEY WEST, FLORIDA AND ATTACHED TO THE FLEET SOUND SCHOOL THERE. BY THIS TIME GERMAN SUBMARINE ACTIVITY HAD SPREAD TO THIS AREA AND WE SPENT THE BETTER PART OF THE NEXT FEW MONTHS OPERATING OFF THE NORTH COAST OF CUBA ON SUBMARINE HUNTS. NORTH OF MIAMI THERE IS ANOTHER SHIP GRAVEYARD. ONE NIGHT WE SIGHTED A SUBMARINE ON THE SURFACE AND THE ACTIVITY ON THE NOA IMMEDIATELY SUBSEQUENT TO THIS SIGHTING IS A STORY IN ITSELF. SUFFICE IT TO SAY HERE THAT THE SUBMARINE CRASHED DIVED AND GOT AWAY WITH ONLY SLIGHT DAMAGE.

WE WERE EXTREMELY "TRIGGER HAPPY" IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER AND WENT SO FAR AS TO ATTEMPT TO OPEN FIRE ON A PATROL VESSEL WHICH CAME BETWEEN US AND OUR CONVOY. FORTUNATELY THE FIRST 4" SHELL USED WAS A DUD AND BY THE TIME WE REPLACED IT WE RECOGNIZED THE CRAFT AS FRIENDLY. ENROUTE TO A RENDEZVOUS WITH ONE CONVOY, MCGUIRE, T.W. FC2C ACCIDENTLY FIRED ONE OF OUR TOPEDDOES, WHILE TESTING THE CIRCUIT. FORTUNATELY NOTHING WAS IN THE WAY. ANOTHER TIME AN ARMY BOMBER MISTOOK US FOR A GERMAN SUBMARINE AND DROPPED BOMBS CLOSE TO OUR FANTAIL, COVERING THE AFTER PART OF THE SHIP WITH WATER. ONE GERMAN SUBMARINE SURFACED IN BROAD DAYLIGHT WITHIN FIFTY MILES OF KEY WEST AND FIRED OVER SIXTY-FIVE LARGE CALIBER SHELLS INTO A HONDURAN FRUIT SHIP LEAVING IT ABANDONED, AND IN FLAMES. THE REASON THEY COULD DO THIS WAS THAT WE HAD NEGLIGIBLE PLANE COVERAGE OF THE SEA FRONTIERS AT THAT TIME. THE NOA IN COMPANY WITH THE PC-451 AND TWO PBY'S OBTAINED HER SECOND KILL AT THIS TIME. THIS WAS IN THE VICINITY OF REBECCA SHOALS, WEST OF KEY WEST. THE PC-451 OBTAINED ONE OF THE FIRST DIRECT HITS WITH THE THEN NEW ANTI-SUBMARINE CONTACT BOMB.

ON ONE OCCASION THE NOA WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SALVAGE OF A VERY LARGE AND VALUABLE OIL TANKER. SHE HAD BEEN TORPEDOED, ABANDONED AND LEFT BURNING. SHE HAD BEEN REPORTED UNSALVAGEABLE BY INVESTIGATING PLANES AND SHIPS, BUT THE NOA HAPPENED BY THE FOLLOWING DAY AND SEEING THAT THE FIRE SEEMED CONFINED TO ONE SECTION, RADIOED IN THAT SHE COULD BE SALVAGED AND SHE WAS. WE HAD MUCH FUN THEREAFTER FIGURING OUT HOW MANY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WOULD HAVE BEEN OUR "CUT" UNDER SIMILIAR CIRCUMSTANCES IN PEACETIME -- FOR WE WOULD HAVE BEEN ENTITLED TO HALF THE VALUE OF THE SHIP AND CARGO.

WE CARRIED TWENTY-ONE MILLION PESOS (VALUE OVER TWENTY-ONE MILLION DOLLARS) FROM MIAMI TO HAVANA. THIS CONSISTED OF OVER TWO HUNDRED REGISTERED MAIL BAGS FULL OF MONEY WHICH WE STORED IN OUR FORWARD FIREROOM. AS ONE SAILOR PUT IT, "I NEVER REALIZED HANDLING MONEY COULD BE SUCH HARD WORK." OUR ONE NIGHT IN HAVANA WAS PROBABLY THE HIGH SPOT OF OUR ENTIRE STAY IN THAT AREA. A POST OFFICE TRUCK DELIVERED THE MONEY, I SIGNED FOR IT, AND THE CUBAN ARMY RECEIVED IT.

ON A TRIP TO THE TODD JOHNSON SHIPYARDS IN NEW ORLEANS WE MADE A HALF-HEARTED SUBMARINE ATTACK ON A MEDIOCRE SOUND CONTACT AND TWO MONTHS LATER DISCOVERED THAT WE HAD SERIOUSLY DAMAGED A U-BOAT AS EVIDENCED BY HIS SURFACING TWO SUCCESSIVE NIGHTS THEREAFTER AND BROADCASTING TO BERLIN A LIST OF HIS DAMAGES AND THE FACT THAT HE WAS FORCED TO RETURN TO HIS BASE. WE HAD BEEN THE ONLY ONES TO DROP DEPTH CHARGES IN THAT AREA THAT AFTERNOON. THAT'S HOW THE OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE FIGURED IT WAS US. WHILE LYING-OFF THE MOUTH OF THE MISSISSIPPI TO PICK UP A PILOT, WE NOTICED TWO LARGE EXPLOSIONS ON THE JETTY AT THE MOUTH OF THE RIVER. UPON OUR ARRIVAL AT NEW ORLEANS THAT AFTERNOON THE ARMY ENGINEERS ACCUSED US OF HAVING FIRED TORPEDOES AT THEIR JETTIES. WE REALIZED THEN, THAT UNBEKNOWN TO US, WE MUST HAVE BEEN A SITTING TARGET FOR AN ADVENTUROUS ENEMY SUBMARINE. OUR THREE NIGHTS IN NEW ORLEANS WERE A PLEASANT CHANGE. ENROUTE DOWN THE RIVER AT NIGHT A HEAVY SQUALL SET IN AND WE WERE FORCED TO ANCHOR IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RIVER WHEN WE COULD SEE NEITHER BANK.

THE OVERTON, ROPER, AND DICKERSON, ALL NOW APD'S, FREQUENTLY CAME INTO KEY WEST AT THIS TIME. ON ONE OF OUR TRIPS A TRANSPORT LOADED WITH TROOPS BROKE DOWN A FEW MILES FROM WHERE A SUBMARINE HAD BEEN SIGHTED. ON ANOTHER CONVOY TANKERS WERE SUNK JUST AHEAD AND JUST BEHIND THE ELEVEN THAT THE NOA ALONE WAS ESCORTING. AT THIS TIME KEY WEST HAD A LARGE CONVOY ANCHORAGE ACCOMODATING HUNDREDS OF MERCHANT SHIPS. THE STURTEVENT, A TWELVE-HUNDRED TON DESTROYER OPERATING OUT OF KEY WEST, WAS SUNK BY AN "UNDERWATER EXPLOSION" WHILE MAKING A SUBMARINE ATTACK. THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER HAD THE PRESENCE OF MIND TO SET ALL DEPTH CHARGES ON "SAFE" AND WHEN HE STEPPED INTO THE WHALEBOAT ALONGSIDE HE WAS ALREADY KNEE DEEP IN WATER COVERING THE MAIN DECK.

WE BEGAN TO GET PATROL PLANE COVERAGE THEREAFTER AND SUBMARINE ACTIVITY DECREASED CONSIDERABLY. NEVERTHELESS THE NOA WOULD FREQUENTLY GET CALLED OUT ON HURRY CALLS DURING THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT TO CHASE DOWN A SUBMARINE OFF BAHIA HONDA, CUBA, YUCCATAN PENINSULA, MEXICO, CABO SAN ANTONIA OFF THE WESTERN END OF CUBA, CAY SAL BANK IN THE WESTERN BAHAMAS, NICHOLAS CHANNEL OFF THE NORTHWEST COAST OF CUBA, AND THE FLORIDA STRAIGHTS. WE WERE WITHIN SIGHT OF HAVANA MANY TIMES.

THE SUBMARINE R-12 SANK MYSTERIOUSLY OFF KEY WEST AT THIS TIME. THE NOA ASSISTING IN HER LOCATION. THE NOA WAS FREQUENTLY THE TARGET FOR THE SOUND SCHOOL SUBMARINES IN THEIR WEEKLY TORPEDO PRACTICES AND OBTAINED MUCH VALUABLE EXPERIENCE IN DETECTING SUBMARINES AT PERISCOPE DEPTH AND IN AVOIDING TORPEDOES. ON ONE OCCASION WE FIRED A TORPEDO IN A PRACTICE WITH THE U.S.S. DAHLGREN, THE TORPEDO SWERVED AND CHASED A PC BOAT FOR SEVERAL MILES, FINALLY PASSING IT CLOSE ABOARD. FORTUNATELY ONLY THE PC'S FEELINGS WERE HURT.

"CAPTAIN" ALLEN AND "CAPTAIN" McGRATH WERE SKIPPERS AT THIS TIME AND THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS REPORTED ABOARD DURING OUR STAY AT KEY WEST: ENSIGNS POLANSKY, ROBINSON, YOUNG, AND WILLIAMS.

IN JULY 1943 WE LEFT KEY WEST FOR THE LAST TIME AND WENT TO NORFOLK NAVY YARD TO BE CONVERTED TO AN APD. WHILE THERE PRACTICALLY EVERYONE ON BOARD OBTAINED SOME LEAVE. THE FIRST AND THE LAST FOR CONSIDERABLE TIME. THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE CONVERSION WERE THE REMOVAL OF TWO BOILERS AND ADDITION OF TROOP FACILITIES, BOATS, AND RADAR GEAR. WHILE THERE ENSIGN HARGRAVE AND HIS BOAT CREWS REPORTED ON BOARD.

WE HAD A TEN DAY SHAKEDOWN IN THE CHESAPEAKE INVOLVING A TRIP TO ANNAPOLIS WHERE WE TIED UP ALONGSIDE OUR OLD FAMILIAR SANTEE DOCK AND ANCHORED SEVERAL TIMES OFF SOLOMONS ISLAND, MARYLAND.

OCTOBER 18, 1943 WE LEFT NORFOLK ENROUTE TO PEARL HARBOR, T.H. IN COMPANY WITH THE U.S.S. SUMTER, AN ATTACK TRANSPORT. WE HAD ONE NIGHT IN CHRISTOBAL, C.Z.; THREE NIGHTS IN SAN DIEGO; THREE NIGHTS IN PEARL HARBOR. WE WERE ROUTED QUICKLY ONWARD; HAD A FEW HOURS IN PAGO PAGO, TUTUILA, AMERICAN SAMOA; ONE NIGHT IN ESPIRITU SANTO, NEW HEBRIDES; ONE NIGHT IN MILNE BAY, NEW GUINEA; TWO DAYS THEREAFTER WE WERE PATROLLING OFF FINSCHAFEN, IN COMPANY WITH THE DD BAGLEY. FROM NORFOLK VIRGINIA TO OUR FURTHEST LINE OF ADVANCE IN THE PACIFIC, DIRECT, IN FIFTY DAYS. "NO MORE POLLYWOGS" WE HAD CHAPLAINS ABOARD AS PASSENGERS.

THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS 1943, WE TOOK PART IN THE LANDING AT CAPE GLOUCESTER NEW BRITAIN, 250 MILES WEST OF RABAUL. OUR FIRST LANDING STARTED OUT RATHER INAUSPICIUSLY IN THAT WE WERE REQUIRED TO TOW A YMS MOST OF THE WAY. ABOUT THREE PRIOR TO H-HOUR THE NOA'S "CHARLIE NOBLE" CAUGHT FIRE, GIVING FORTH A MONSTROUS GLOW AGAINST THE BLACK NIGHT FOR MANY MINUTES. THE LANDING CAME OFF WELL ENOUGH, THOUGH ONE OF OUR BOATS WAS HUNG UP FOR SEVERAL HOURS AND WE HAD TO LEAVE WITHOUT THEM. SEVERAL DAYS LATER THE BOAT AND CREW ARRIVED ON A RETURNING LST. HARGRAVE, THE BOAT OFFICER, RECIEVED A COMMENDATION FROM THE ADMIRAL OF THE SEVENTH FLEET FOR HIS WORK THERE. WE MISSED THE JAP AIR ATTACK WHICH SANK ONE OF OUR NEW DESTROYERS. WE ALSO MADE A SECOND ECHELON TRIP TO CAPE GLOUCESTER, THE DAY AFTER NEW YEARS 1944. WE TOOK PART IN THE LANDING AT SAIDOR, NEW GUINEA. ON OUR RETURN FROM THIS LANDING TRANSPORT DIVISION 16, OF WHICH WE WERE A PART, WAS TOLD TO MAKE PREPARATIONS FOR A TRIP TO SIDNEY, AUSTRALIA FOR REST AND RECREATION. AT THE LAST MINUTE THE NOA WAS ELIMINATED AND INSTEAD WE GOT TO GO TO NOUMEA, NEW CALEDONIA.

WHILE AT NOUMEA WE WERE BLOWN AGROUND BY A TROPICAL HURRICANE. INCIDENT TO THIS GROUNDING A PC BOAT WAS BLOWN BROADSIDE ACROSS OUR SHARP BOW AND WE NEARLY CUT IT IN TWO. DUE TO THIS UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCE, OUR REST WAS SOMEWHAT CURTAILED.

THE FIRST OF FEBRUARY 1944, WE REPORTED IN TO GUADALCANAL AND PURVIS BAY, FLORIDA ISLAND, NEAR TULAGI. WE PICKED UP SOME NEW ZEALANDERS AT VELLA LA VELLA, HAVING ESCORTED SOME LST'S TO MUNDA, NEW GEORGIA, ENROUTE. THEN WE TOOK PART IN THE LANDINGS AT GREEN ISLANDS, 120 MILES EAST OF RABAUL. WE GOT UNDERWAY FOR THIS TRIP ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY. WE WERE BESIEGED BY JAP SNOOPERS ON THE WAY UP, OUR FIRST CLOSE CONTACT WITH JAP PLANES. AT THE LANDING ITSELF WE UNDERWENT OUR FIRST AIR ATTACK THOUGH THE APD'S WERE NOT MOLESTED AND DID NOT GET TO DO ANY SHOOTING.

WE RETURNED TO HATHORNE SOUND, BETWEEN KOLOMBANGARA ISLAND AND RICE ANCHORAGE WHICH ARE ON THE KULA GULF. WE PICKED UP MORE NEW ZEALANDERS AT VELLA AND PROCEEDED TO GREEN ISLANDS AND MADE A SECOND ECHELON LANDING. AFTER THAT WE MADE A SHORT ESCORT TRIP TO THE RUSSELL ISLANDS, ANCHORING FOR TWO NIGHTS INN TILLOTSON COVE, RENARD SOUND. ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY WE GOT UNDERWAY TO MAKE A LANDING ON EMIRAU ISLAND A FEW MILES NORTH OF KAVIANG. THIS WAS OUR FIRST LANDING IN WHICH WE WERE COVERED BY CARRIER PLANES, NEARBY KAVIENG AT THE SAME TIME BEING BOMBARDED BY BATTLESHIPS, AND THE ENTIRE PROCEDURE WENT OFF WITHOUT INCIDENT. WE WERE THEN ORDERED TO PROCEED TO MILNE BAY TAKING AS PASSENGERS A GROUP OF ABOUT FORTY MIXED NATIVES (MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN) WHO PROVED TO BE BETTER BEHAVED THAN ANY OTHER PASSENGERS WE HAVE HAD. COAST WATCHERS I WISH I HAD ????

WE HAD A REHEARSAL ON LAE LANDING BEACHES THEN PROCEEDED IN COMPANY WITH THE LARGEST FORCE WE HAD EVER BEEN WITH AROUND THE ADMIRALTY ISLANDS TO THE LANDINGS AT AITAPE, HOLLANDIA, AND TANAH MERAH BAY. THE GROUP SPLIT UP INTO THREE PARTS AND MADE SIMULTANEOUS LANDINGS AT AITAPE, HOLLANDIA, AND TANAH MERAH BAY. OUR GROUP WENT TO AITAPE AND THE NOA WAS ASSIGNED AN OFF-LYING ISLAND, NAMED ALI, AS A BOMBARDMENT TARGET. THIS WAS OUR FIRST EXPERIENCE OF THIS SORT AND WE PLASTERED IT TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY.

THE FOLLOWING DAY WE RETURNED TO THE SAME AREA AND MADE A LANDING ON SELEO ISLAND. WE BOMBARDED SELEO ALSO AND IN CONNECTION WITH THIS HAD SOME MORE UNUSUAL EXPERIENCES. WE HAD COMMENCED OUR BOMBARDMENT OF SELEO WHEN WE WERE TOLD THAT WE WERE IN THE LINE OF FIRE OF A DESTROYER BOMBARDING ANOTHER NEARBY TARGET AND WERE TOLD TO MOVE ON. THIS INVOLVED OUR PASSAGE BETWEEN THE OFF-LYING REEFS OF SELEO AND ALI ISLANDS. AT ONE TIME WE HAD BREAKERS CURLING OVER THE REEF EDGES A HUNDRED YARDS ON EACH SIDE OF US. A CRUISER, THE NASHVILLE, MANAGED TO DROP A 6" SALVO A FEW HUNDRED YARDS FROM OUR PORT QUARTER AND A FRIENDLY (?) DIVE BOMBER DROPPED A BOMB A FEW HUNDRED YARDS ON OUR PORT BOW. FORTUNATELY "CEASE FIRING" WAS ORDERED AND THE ASSUALT WAVES WENT IN SHORTLY THEREAFTER. WE WERE FAIRLY CLOSE TO AND OFF TO ONE SIDE OF OUR BOATS XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX XXXXX FOR THE FIRST TIME XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX ASSAULT TROOPS HITTING THE BEACH. THOUGH IN THE DARKNESS THERE WAS BOUND TO BE SOME CONFUSION. THE RUBBER BOATS CAME IN HANDY HERE. SEVERAL MEN HAD BEEN KNOCKED INTO THE WATER AT THE TIME OF THE COLLISION, BUT THERE WERE NO CASUALITIES.

SUBSEQUENTLY WE PICKED UP TROOPS AT SAIDOR AND WERE ABLE TO WITNESS THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AREA WE HAD HELPED TO OCCUPY.

WE WERE ORDERED BACK TO PEARL HARBOR, WHICH WE MADE ALL THE WAY. IN THE COMPANY WITH THE U.S.S. KANE, STOPPING BY FUNA FUTU. ENROUTE WE ALMOST RAN AGROUND ON A UNCHARTED "FLOATING" SANDBAR. A FEW DAYS AT PEARL HARBOR AND WE PICKED UP MARINES AT KAPUNA BAY ON THE ISLAND OF HAWAII AND PROCEEDED TO A LANDING AT SAIPAN, MARIANAS ISLANDS. IT WAS DECIDED NOT TO LAND OUR TROOPS AS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED AND THEY WERE TAKEN TO AN ALREADY SECURED BEACH ON D PLUS ONE DAY.

IN SCREENING THE U.S.S LOUISVILLE AT MAGICIENNE BAY, SAIPAN WE UNCONSCIOUSLY HAD BEEN CLOSE TO DANGER FROM THREE DIRECTIONS. FIRST, SHORTLY AFTER WE LEFT THE LOUISVILLE SHE UNDERWENT A BOMBING ATTACK. SECOND, SHE ALSO DISCOVERED A FLOATING MINE THERE AND THIRD, SEVERAL DAYS LATER WE LEARNED THAT THE JAPS STILL HAD SHORE DEFENCE GUNS IN THE CAVES ALONG THE COAST NEAR WHICH WE HAD CURIOUSLY PASSED.

THE FIRST WEEK OR SO AFTER THE LANDING AT SAIPAN THERE WERE EVENING AIR RAIDS, THOUGH NONE OF THE NIP PLANES CAME TOO CLOSE TO THE NOA.

ON THE NIGHT JULY 5/6 THE NOA, WHILE CARRYING OUT A HARRASSING MISSION ON TINIAN TOWN AND HARBOR, UNDERWENT HER FIRST TEST OF FIRE. WHILE STEAMING AT SLOW SPEED LESS THAN TWO MILES OFF THE COAST WE SUDDENLY HAD SHELLS WHISTLING OVERHEAD AND SPLASHES WITH DETONATIONS IN THE WATER ALL ABOUT US. THE USUAL CONFUSION ENSUED BUT WE QUICKLY SPEEDED UP AND OPENED THE RANGE AND FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE NIGHT, THOUGH JAP FIRE FROM THE SHORE CONTINUED, IT NEVER AGAIN CAME CLOSE. IT HAS SINCE BEEN DETERMINED THAT THE JAPS HAD THREE 6" GUNS IN CAVES ALONG THE CLIFF AT THE SOUTH EDGE OF TOWN. THIS SAME BATTERY KILLED 98 AND WOUNDED ABOUT 140 ON THE BATTLESHIP COLORADO A FEW WEEKS LATER. THERE WAS ALSO CONSIDERABLE SMALLER CALIBER FIRE, BUT WE WERE WELL OUT OF RANGE OF THAT. WE SET FIRE TO TWO CANE FIELDS WITH OUR STAR SHELLS, AND BELIEVE SOME OF OUR HIGH CAPACITY DEFINATELY HARRASSED THEM. HOWEVER, WE WERE HARRASSED ALSO. NO CASUALTIES SUFFERED ON THE NOA OTHER THAN BRUISED KNEES, ELBOWS, AND NOSES WHEN CERTAIN OF OUR "QUICK REACTERS" HIT THE DECK AT THE FIRST JAP SALVO.

AFTER THIS WE WERE IN ON THE GUAM INVASION, BUT ONLY AS A SCREENING VESSEL. ON OUR RETURN FROM GUAM TO ESPIRITU SANTO, THE NOA'S ENGINEERING PLANT BROKE DOWN 31 TIMES IN 24 HOURS AND WE SPENT MOST OF OUR TIME CHASING THE CONVOY WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE SCREENING. THIS WAS AN EXTREME CASE OF WHAT SO OFTEN HAPPENED WITH THESE APD'S. WE WERE ALWAYS ON THE MOVE WITH NO TIME ALLOWED FOR REPAIRS AND OVERHAUL. AT THIS TIME, FOR EXAMPLE, THE NOA HAD LOGGED 6000 STEAMING HOURS SINCE LAST CLEANING BOTH HER BOILERS, JUST EXACTLY FIVE TIMES THE PEACETIME "MAXIMUM". THE NOA HAD TO BE FUELED AT SEA TWICE AS OFTEN AS THE NEW DESTROYERS, DUE TO HER REDUCED ENGINEERING EFFICIENTLY.

FROM ESPIRITU SANTO WE WENT TO PURVIS BAY VIA THE RUSSELS -- HERE WE RECEIVED TWO ENSIGNS, FRANCIS AND HERNDON, AND 42 BAGS OF MAIL, OUR LAST 6 MONTHS' SUPPLY OF NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES... AND MANY 1943 CHRISTMAS PRESENTS -- JUST 8 MONTHS LATE, 10 MONTHS IN THE MAIL. AT PURVIS BAY WE PREPARED FOR WHAT PROVED TO BE THE NOA'S LAST TRIP - THE INVASION OF PELELIU ISLAND IN THE PALAUS. WE TOOK ABOARD UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM "ABLE" WITH THEIR SUPPLIES, INCLUDING NINE RUBBER BOATS AND FIFTY TONS OF TETRYTOL.

AT 0451 ON 12 SEPTEMBER 1994 THE NOA FINALLY MET HER WATERLOO IN THE SHAPE OF AN AMERICAN DESTROYER, THE DESTROYER FULLAM (DD-474). IN THE PREDAWN MANEUVERING PREPARATORY TO OPENING THE INITIAL SHORE BOMBARDMENT ON PELELIU AND ANGUAR ISLANDS IN THE PALAU GROUP, TWO OF THE AMERICAN BATTLESHIP, CRUISER, FORMATIONS TANGLED WITH EACH OTHER... WHILE THE NOA AND THE FULLAM WERE IN A COLLISION -- THE FULLAM HIT US A GLANCING BLOW ON THE STARBOARD SIDE FORWARD OF THE AFTER BULKHEAD, OF THE AFTER ENGINE ROOM, ABOUT 10 FEET FORWARD OF OUR 50 TONS OF TETRYTOL. SHE PULLED OUR STARBOARD SCREW AND SHAFT OUT WITH HER BOW. WE FLOODED AFT IMMEDIATELY AND ABANDONED SHIP IN GOOD ORDER, THOUGH IN THE DARKNESS THERE WAS BOUND TO BE SOME CONFUSION. THE RUBBER BOATS CAME IN HANDY HERE. SEVERAL MEN HAD BEEN KNOCKED INTO THE WATER AT THE TIME OF THE COLLISION, BUT THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES.

CERAVOLA, GM3C, WENT BACK ON THE FANTAIL AND CHECKED DEPTH CHARGES IN THE DECK RACKS FOR SAFE SETTING -- THIS WAS EXTREMELY DANGEROUS, AS IT WAS DARK, THE DECKS WERE WET AND SLIPPERY WITH FUEL OIL, WITH WAVES WASHING OVER THE RACKS, WHILE THE SHIP WAS RAPIDLY SINKING STERN FIRST AT THIS TIME. DESPITE THESE PRECAUTIONS, LATER AFTER SALVAGE ATTEMPTS FAILED, ONE OR MORE OF THE DEPTH CHARGES DID EXPLODE WHEN THE NOA SANK. IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE 50 TONS OF TETRYTOL WAS DETONATED OF SYMPATHETICALLY SINCE THE EXPOSITION WAS TERRIFIC ABOUT SIX MINUTES AFTER THE SHIP DISAPPEARED BENEATH THE SURFACE.

WHEN IT BECAME LIGHT, AND WE DETERMINED BY MUSTERING ON THE FULLAM, THAT ALL HANDS WERE ACCOUNTED FOR, WE COULD SEE THAT THE NOA WAS NOT SETTLING AS RAPIDLY BY THE STERN AS IT HAD BEEN. A SALVAGE PARTY WAS ASSEMBLED AND WE RETURNED TO DO WHATEVER WE COULD TO SAVE OUR SHIP. WE TRIED TO LIGHT OFF HER "DRY" BOILERS, BUT HAD TO STOP WHEN THEIR RUMBLING INDICATED THAT THEY WERE ABOUT TO BLOW UP. IN THIS CONNECTION, ENSIGN FRANCIS, JUST 25 DAYS ON BOARD, DID WHAT IN CIVILIAN LIFE WOULD BE CALLED YEOMAN WORK, BUT IN THE NAVY, TO AVOID CONFUSION, WE SHALL CALL IT GOOD WORK UNDER VERY DANGEROUS CONDITIONS. WE TRIED JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING, AS ONE BY ONE OUR MEANS OF SAVING THE SHIP WERE ELIMINATED. WE RAN OUT OF OXYGEN AND ACETYLENE, OUR GASOLINE PUMPS GAVE OUT, AND THE SHIP CONTINUED TO SETTLE SO THAT WE COULDN'T EVEN ENTER THE FORWARD ENGINE ROOM DUE TO WAVES WASHING DOWN THE HATCHES. JUST ABOUT THE TIME WATER HAD BEGUN TO LAP AROUND THE FIREROOM HATCHES, IT WAS REPORTED THAT SALT WATER WAS SLOWLY ENTERING THE BOILERS, FOR LIGHTING-OFF PURPOSES, THE STERN LOST ITS BUOYANT MOTION AND BECAME LOGGY. THE SALVAGE PARTY WAS FORCED TO GIVE UP AND ABANDON SHIP. ABOUT FIVE MINUTES LATER THE NOA POINTED HER NOSE STRAIGHT UP, AND WITH GREAT HISsing OF AIR COMING OUT OF HER FORWARD ESCAPE HATCHES, SHE SANK IN THOUSANDS OF FATHOMS OF WATER, WEST OF PELELIU, AND INCIDENTLY ALSO WEST OF TOKYO. IT HAD BEEN A HEARTBREAKING ATTEMPT AT SALVAGE AND THE SALVAGE PARTY CIRCLING HER IN LANDING BOATS AS SHE WENT DOWN ALL HAD EXTREMELY MOIST EYES.

AN AFTERMATH OF THE NOA'S SINKING WAS A GENERAL COURT MARTIAL HELD IN SAN FRANCISCO. THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE NOA WAS ACQUITTED ON ALL COUNTS AND COINCIDENCE, WHICH SEEMED TO PLAY SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE NOA'S HISTORY, ONCE AGAIN MADE ITS APPEARANCE. THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE COURT HAD BEEN A CLASSMATE OF MIDSHIPMAN LOVEMAN NOA, U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY CLASS OF JUNE 1900, WHILE ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE COURT WAS A SHIPMATE OF MIDSHIPMAN LOVEMAN NOA AT THE TIME HE WAS KILLED IN THE PHILIPPINES... OCTOBER 26, 1901.

BOTH HE AND SHE DIED WITH THEIR BOOTS ON.

H. W. BOUD
LT. COMMANDER, U.S.N.R.
LAST COMMANDING OFFICER