

13 Aug 68
Tuesday

They sure have kept us busy lately. Right now I am monitoring an exam with another midshipman. They are trying to make 1st class Petty Officer (E-6). Sunday night I went on shore patrol duty in Port Chicago but nothing happened. These enlisted men and I made the rounds of the bars (there were only 2 open of 4) so it wasn't bad.

We left Alameda Saturday (10th) and have been loading ammo since Sunday at the Naval Weapons Station in Concord. We were supposed to load Saturday after we arrived but couldn't get water to the boilers again. At Alameda we had shore services, but here there are none. We still are scheduled for the fleet exercise near San Diego but the next port we'll be in will be in the Misso area.

24 Aug 68
Tuesday

We did make it to the fleet exercise and had no major problems. Right now we are heading for San Clemente Island to offload what ammo we have left, at link. The scheduling for the past week has been pretty full. We left Concord NAS Wednesday morning the 14th at 1100. We got in the operating area around midnight the 15th. Since then we have had underway replenishments (UNREPS) with 8 ships; an oiler, 2 destroyers, 1 frigate, 3 cruisers, and 1 carrier. We had the UNREP with the carrier this morning starting at 0500. It was the Coral Sea which was in port with us in Alameda. I also stood an officer of the deck with this morning from 0000 - 0400. I did manage to catch a few winks.

Last week all the midshipmen were given instruction in small arms. We all shot a .45 caliber pistol, a Browning automatic, a Thompson, and another rifle, of which I forgot the name ~~the~~. We just fired into the water off the stern of the ship. We also made chalk tests of water tight fittings and tomorrow we'll have instruction on foam generators, Navy all-purpose nozzle and a portable pump to dewater a compartment.

This morning after we UNREPED the Coral Sea a midshipman and our navigator left the ship via helicopter. The midshipman starts school in a few days and the navigator got new orders. They went to the Coral Sea, which will reach port first.

I got 2 more Sun. Times while in Concord dated the 6th & 9th. I am

still missing the 3rd, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th, 10th - 20th issues, but each day the news comes off the teletype. I see the White Sox won a double header Sunday (18th) while the Cubs lost 2.

21 Aug 68
Wednesday

I just finished rigging a pump to de-water a compartment this morning from 4-8. I had watch on the bridge again, having the conn the whole time. One other morning there I took control of the helm and executed a 180° turn. Payday is tomorrow for the officers and crew. For the midshipmen, payday is usually 1 day after. So far I have accumulated just under \$250.

There still is no definite word on the date of debarkation, but the Captain said last night that we may get to San Diego. We'll have to stay in the fleet exercise

area until the 22nd.

22 Aug 68
Thursday

We are now pulling into San Diego (113p). The mail goes out in $\frac{1}{2}$ hour so I'll add a quick line. As it is now we are going to anchor in the channel and ^{one of} the ship's boats will be making liberty runs. Now I'll have a chance to call up Arthur and have a game of Chess. But tonight I have the watch from 2400 to 2400 so I'll have to wait until tomorrow. On Monday we start refresher training because next Friday there will be a change of command ceremony. There is an outside chance that we may get off earlier than the 28th. It would be nice to get home early and relax. I'll see if I can catch a standby flight and I'll call you from there. I'll have my 6th roll of film finished by then.

Tom.