

GILBERT ISLANDS

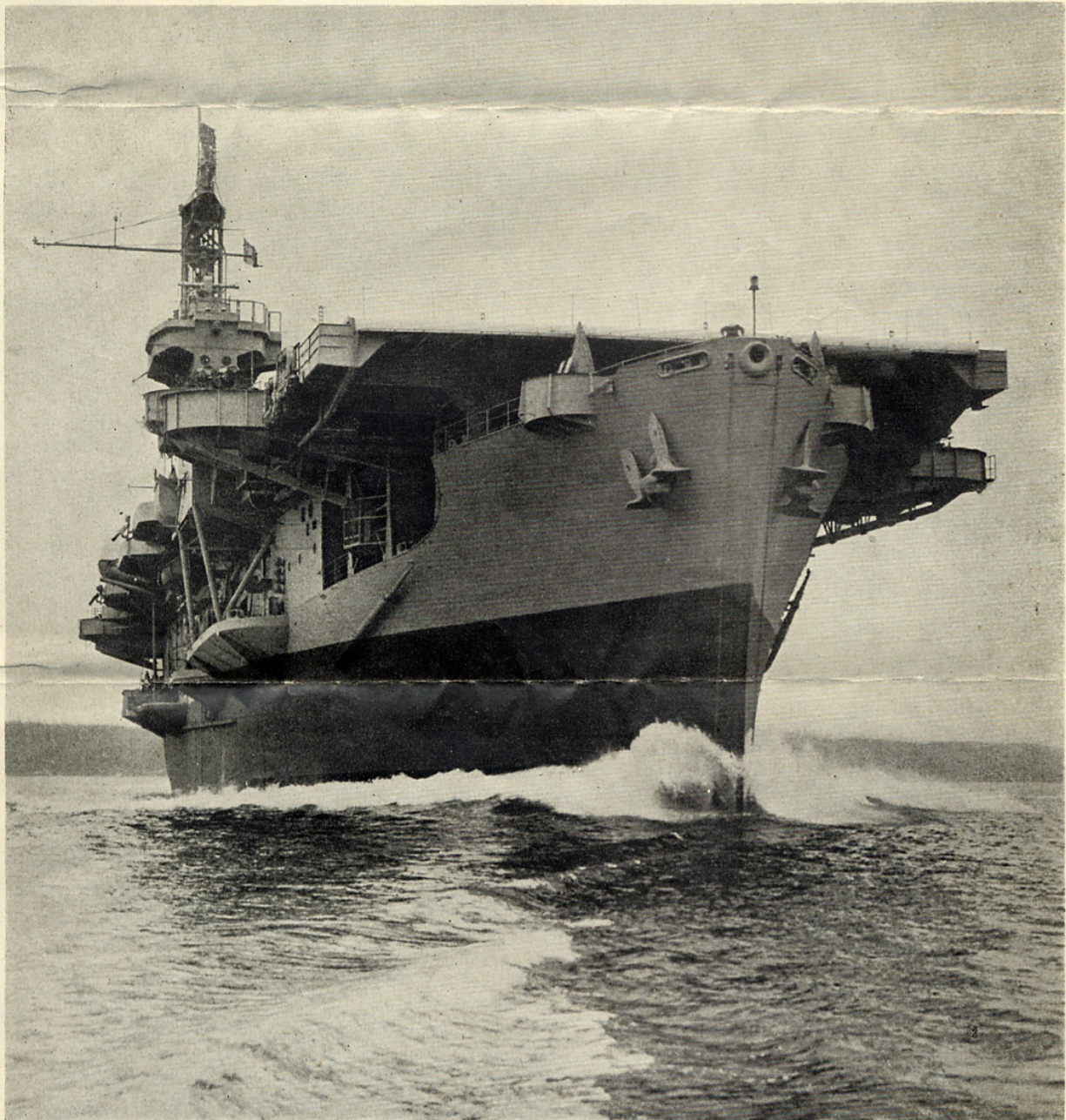
LOG ITEMS

COMMISSIONING ISSUE

Vol I, No. 1

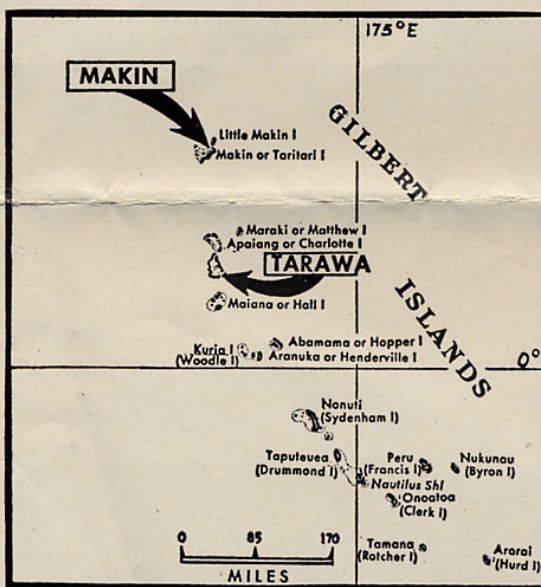
U. S. S. GILBERT ISLANDS

5 February 1945



ABOUT OUR NAME

In the Central Pacific about 2300 miles southwest of the Hawaiian Islands and 3500 miles east of the Philippines, there is a group of islands called the Gilberts. They bear the name because they are believed to have first been visited in June, 1788, by an English merchant ship, the Charlotte, whose master was Thomas Gilbert, and his name was given to the islands. Early in the present war the Japanese took them and built strong fortifications. In the possession of our enemy, these islands became a direct menace to our supply lines to Australia and it was impossible to send the full reinforcements we desired to this area. Consequently, in November, 1943, we began our big drive in the Central Pacific by invading and taking the Gilbert Islands. The amphibious force was under the command of Rear Admiral Richmond K. Turner, who had at his disposal naval vessels of all classes with attached and supporting aircraft. The amphibious corps was under command of Major General Holland McT. Smith, U. S. M. C., and consisted of the Second Marine Division, the Twenty-seventh Division, U. S. Army, and corps troops.



GILBERT ISLANDS

On the morning of 21 November 1943 the assault began with the main points of attack being Makin and Tarawa. On Tarawa the fortifications were especially strong which indicated their intention to hold this island at all costs. Heavy fighting continued for three days ending with the wiping out of a fanatical suicide charge by all the Japanese left on that day.

The Japanese losses were severe, as only a few prisoners were taken out of the entire garrison, but our victory was won at terrific cost to our own forces also. More than one thousand men were killed and over twenty-five hundred were wounded. Our first escort carrier to be lost in this war, the Liscome Bay, was sunk with many of her men going down with her. The base our men won, however, insured the protection of our supply route to Australia and gave us a strong position for waging offensive

warfare in this area of the Pacific.

Our ship bears the name, U. S. S. Gilbert Islands, to commemorate this significant engagement, and it is the high privilege of the officers and men who serve under this command, to make her worthy of the courageous efforts and the heroic sacrifices made there.

COMMISSIONING PRAYER

Eternal God, Our Father, Who alone hast fashioned the heavens and earth and rulest the raging of the sea, send Thy blessing upon us as we commit ourselves, with Thy help, to this new responsibility. We express our gratitude for our country with her noble heritage, for the ideals which have made her great, and which continue to inspire us in the difficult task which confronts us at this hour.

We pray that Thou wouldst accept into Thy most gracious protection and care this ship, and all the officers and men who shall serve aboard her. Preserve us from the perils of the sea and from the

violence of the enemy, and enable us by Thy Divine Grace, to bear our responsibilities and perform our duties with honor and courage. In the times of testing, undergird our souls with Thy strength, and in the days of adversity suffer not our faith in Thee to fail us. Comfort us when we are distressed and forgive us when we are disobedient.

Let Thy Spirit lead us, O Lord, and the light of Thy countenance shine upon us that our lives may be ordered according to Thy holy will. We ask in His name Who is our only Refuge and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

OUR COMMANDING OFFICER



CAPTAIN L. K. RICE, USN

Captain Lester Kimme Rice, U. S. Navy, was born in Douglas, Wyoming, on 15 May 1901. He attended the local schools and graduated from Converse County High School in 1919; entering the U. S. Naval Academy the same year.

After graduation from the Naval Academy in 1924, our Captain's first tour of duty was on the U. S. S. Idaho in Battleships, Pacific Fleet. From the battleships, he went to flight training at Pensacola, Florida, in February, 1926—obtaining his wings as a naval aviator in January, 1927.

On the 25th of January of that year, he was married at White Plains, New York, to Miss Katherine Virginia Paxton.

His first tour of duty in Naval Aviation was with Fighting Squadron Five, one of the squadrons comprising the first air group of the now famous U. S. S. Lexington. In the spring of 1928, this fighting squadron, using Curtiss Hawk planes, conducted the first experimental dive bombing practice on a towed target, using live bombs.

There followed a tour of duty at the Naval Air Station, Pearl Harbor, in torpedo planes, after which he returned to the Lexington and the old fighting squadron.

After completing this second tour of duty on the "Lex," he was

ordered to the Bureau of Aeronautics in the spring of 1934 for a two-year tour of duty in the Maintenance division. From the Bureau, in 1936, our Captain went to duty in Observation Squadron Four on the U.S.S. West Virginia, completing this tour as Commanding Officer of the squadron.

From the West Virginia he went to shore duty at the Naval Air Station, San Diego, as superintendent of the Engine Overhaul division in the Assembly and Repair department. He left San Diego in the Spring of 1941 to go to the North Atlantic Air Patrol as Operations officer of Patrol Wing Seven, which was then based at Argentina, Newfoundland, and this is where he was serving when the present war broke out. This wing had planes based in Newfoundland, Greenland and Iceland and saw some arduous service escorting convoys in the fog and heavy weather of the North Atlantic.

In October of 1942, Captain Rice was ordered to command the U. S. S. Matagorda (AVP-22), remaining in command until April of 1943, when he was ordered to the Bureau of Naval Personnel in the Navy department as Aviation Detail officer.

Our Captain remained in the Navy department until he was ordered to proceed to Tacoma, Washington, and take command of our own ship, the U. S. S. Gilbert Islands.

OUR EXECUTIVE OFFICER



COMMANDER W. L. DAWSON, USN

Commander William Lockhart Dawson, United States Navy, was born in Amsterdam, New York, on 1 March 1910. Later his family moved to Boston, Mass., where Commander Dawson attended public schools until 1923 when he entered the Mount Hermon School for Boys near Northfield, Mass. He spent four years there, graduating in 1927.

After a year and half at Georgia Tech, Commander Dawson received his appointment to the U. S. Naval Academy and entered the Academy in April, 1929. He received his commission as Ensign in June, 1933. While at the Academy he was a member of the football and gym teams.

His first tour of duty was on the U. S. S. New Mexico. In December, 1935, he was ordered to Pensacola, Florida, for flight training, receiving his wings as a naval aviator in March, 1937.

Our Commander was married on 22 March of that same year to Jean Elizabeth McIlroy of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Commander Dawson's first tour of duty as an aviator was in Bombing Squadron One aboard the U. S. S. Ranger. Several months later this squadron was redesignated as Torpedo Squadron

Two and transferred to the U. S. S. Lexington. This squadron pioneered the use of monoplanes (TBD's) in place of the biplanes used on carriers up to that time.

In June, 1938, Commander Dawson was ordered to the Aviation unit of the U. S. S. Indianapolis and later became the senior aviator of that unit. In November, 1940, he was transferred to the Naval Air Station, Jacksonville, Florida, for shore duty; he remained there as Engine Overhaul officer in A&R until August, 1942. At that time he reported to the staff of Commander Battleship Division Two as squadron commander of Observation Squadron Two. While serving in this capacity he took part in the invasion of Attu. After the occupation of Attu was completed he was ordered to the staff of Commander Battleships, Pacific Fleet, as the Observation Wing commander. He was detached from this duty in August, 1944, and ordered to the U. S. S. Gilbert Islands as Executive officer.

Commander Dawson has participated in practically every major campaign in the Pacific from the time of the Attu invasion up to and including the occupation of the Mariannas, and he has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal.

OUR DEPARTMENT HEADS



BACK ROW (left to right): Lt. Cmdr. W. N. Davies, First Lieutenant and Damage Control officer; Lt. R. E. Boucher, Gunnery officer; Lt. J. Ralph Clayton, Chaplain; Lt. L. H. Youngvorst, Communication officer; Lt. Cmdr. C. T. Neizer, Supply officer.
FRONT ROW (left to right): Lt. A. H. Randall, Engineering officer; Lt. Ray Vandervoort, Navigator; Lt. Cmdr. T. D. Harris, Air officer; Cmdr. R. F. Carmody, Senior Medical officer and Flight Surgeon.

Damage Control Message

Accumulating war experience emphasizes the need of the entire ship's company knowing damage control principles and methods and being trained to act in accordance with them. Action reports continue to illustrate how ships can be lost by failure of personnel outside of the designated damage control organization to employ damage control methods and procedures under adverse conditions and situations.

The point which is to be stressed throughout damage control training aboard the U. S. S. Gilbert Islands is that no one, from the Captain to Seaman 2/c, has a reserved spot on the ship which is safe from sinking. A very famous Admiral has said, when commenting on the importance of realizing that damage control is an ALL HANDS evolution, that when the bow goes down the stern follows as does everything in between.

The Damage Control motto on this ship is to be

"KNOW YOUR SHIP." This statement interpreted means every man must know all the main systems which comprise the damage control implements of the ship; among many, some of these are: Fire Main, Drainage, Sprinkler, CO₂ Smothering and Steam Smothering. Every man must know the meaning of X, Y, Z, and W closure classifications and apply that knowledge in his every day ship board life. A very valuable cruiser was lost early in the war because a sailor did not know he should not open a "Y" hatch during battle.

Our ship is strongly made—well designed to withstand battle damage and there isn't a man aboard who isn't proud of her. Let's all—every man and officer—treat her well and respect her and she will be our return ticket home.

LT.-CMDR. W. N. DAVIES
First Lieutenant and Damage
Control Officer.

THE LAUNCHING OF THE SHIP



MRS. EDWIN D. McMORRIES, Sponsor

It was a colorful day—July 20, 1944—at the huge sprawling Tacoma yards of Todd Pacific Shipyards Inc.

It was on that mid-summer day that the U. S. S. Gilbert Islands, her gay bunting flapping in the breeze, slid down her ways to dip gracefully into Commencement Bay on her maiden voyage.

There was a tense moment of suspense, shattered by the cheers of onlookers, as the huge new-type carrier was christened and bid Godspeed by the gracious sponsor—Mrs. Edwin D. McMorries, wife of Capt. McMorries, (MC) USN, of the naval hospital at the Puget Sound Navy Yard in nearby Bremerton.

Included in the sponsors' party were Capt. McMorries, Comdr. and Mrs. Satterfield, Miss Barry Wheeler, Admiral Edgar Wood, Mrs. Jack Duncan and Miss Jane Duncan.

When the Gilbert Islands settled in the bay she won the distinction of being the 57th launching at the Todd Tacoma yard and the third of a series of sister carriers built at Tacoma for the U. S. Navy.

Besides the sponsor's group there was the official party on the gaily-festooned launching platform. These included R. J. Lamont, president of Todd Pacific Shipyards, and Mrs. Lamont; Capt. J. L. McGuigan, USN, supervisor of shipbuilding, Tacoma area, and Mrs. McGuigan and daughter, Miss Anna McGuigan; O. A. Tucker, vice-president and general manager for Todd's, and Mrs. Tucker, and George F. Kachlein, Jr., and A. B. Terry, assistant general managers, and their wives, and Lt. Cmdr. S. B. Moser of the supervisor of shipbuilding department.

There were many distinguished guests attending the impressive ceremonies. Stirring music was furnished by Joe Rausch and his Todd band.

Our Appreciation to—

We are indebted to Mr. Howard Wood, editor of the Todd paper, the Keel, and to Mr. Jim Brummett, photographer, for valuable suggestions, photographs, and copy for this first issue of Log Items.

Our appreciation is also due the Dammeier Printing Company for the high quality workmanship displayed here, and to Lt. (jg) H. Primeaux, USNR, and the artists in his department at the CVE Pre-Commissioning school, Bremerton, for their cooperation in producing the attractive masthead.

In addition to the above, we express for all the officers and men, our sincere appreciation to Mrs. W. C. Gilbert, wife of Captain Gilbert, Officer-in-Charge of the Commissioning Detail; to Mrs. L. K. Rice, wife of our own Commanding Officer; to the Navy Mothers Club, and to all the ladies whose names appear below for their help in preparing surgical dressings to equip the battle dressing stations on the ship.

Mrs. Paul Savidge	Mrs. M. E. Witting	Mrs. W. E. Ripley
Mrs. S. J. Bargh	Mrs. W. L. Dawson	Mrs. B. W. Drew
Mrs. W. F. O'Toole	Mrs. R. Vandervoort	Mrs. R. E. Herzog
Mrs. J. H. Wendell	Mrs. W. N. Stalcup	Mrs. H. D. Ramsden
Mrs. W. S. Aten	Mrs. T. D. Harris	Mrs. J. L. Andrews

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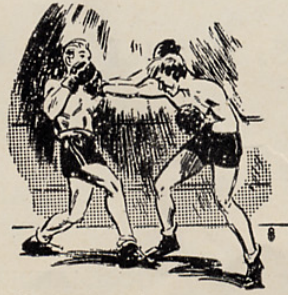
From the Chaplain



All of us have some kind of religious faith whether or not we make any formal adherence to any particular creed or church organization. One's religion is simply his total response to the mystery of the universe and life and all of us have certain definite beliefs about these great realities. It may be that we have never put them into so many words, but they are there in our attitude, our approach, or our outlook. Many of us have found expression for these convictions we hold in our loyalty to some church organization. Perhaps some of us have never been identified with any religious group but we still have a very real religious faith and ultimately it is this faith that sustains us daily. Experiences like those we have known in recent years and which lie immediately before us, make heavy demands upon us and we must have a more satisfying sense of certainty about the convictions we hold that give strength to life. Every man needs the refreshing experience of worship to make more clear to him this realm of spiritual reality, to impress upon him his own responsibility to the Creator of life, and to give him strength to achieve his best. You are encouraged, therefore, to attend Divine Services as often as possible and to cultivate your own religious devotion. Let us be prepared for our tasks and responsibilities not only mentally and physically, but spiritually as well.

If there are matters you would like to discuss with the Chaplain regarding this or any of his collateral responsibilities, please feel free to do so. You will find a welcome and a sincere desire to render every assistance possible.

From the Athletic Officer



The Navy has always advocated a vigorous program of physical training and feels that competitive athletics are an excellent training device, not only in time of war but also in peace time.

The late Secretary of Navy, Frank Knox, said "There is a very definite relationship between the spirit that makes great athletes and the spirit that makes good sailors and soldiers." He believed, as we believe, that one of our most important tasks is the building up of the physical side of young men now and in the days after the war is over.

All of us realize the value of good physical condition. Each of us aboard this ship has definitely assigned duties and these duties require that each man be competent. How well we do our jobs depends on knowledge, a high degree of physical skill and the proper functioning of the human organism.

The events of this war are daily disclosing the necessity for physical fitness. We must, if we are to become one of the great fighting ships of the United States Navy, be able to withstand the hardships, mental and physical, of long sustained battle.

We will have an extensive athletic and physical training program that will embrace every man aboard ship, competitive team games as well as individual athletic activities. These will include volley ball, basketball, badminton, deck tennis, swimming, tumbling, boxing and wrestling. For a light daily workout we plan to have rowing, punching bags, trampoline, etc. The Navy has provided us with adequate and splendid athletic equipment. It will be made available to all at suitable and opportune times.

It is each man's responsibility to keep himself in good physical and mental condition so that he may be equal to the tasks that lie ahead.

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From the Medical Officer



Our primary mission is the conservation of physical power for combat. To aid in the performance of our duties the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery has furnished us an abundance of the most modern scientific hospital equipment.

We are sincerely grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Peter McIlroy, of Pittsburgh, Penna., parents of Mrs. W. L. Dawson, for their gift of a check with which to purchase a new piano for the officers and men of the U. S. S. Gilbert Islands. This gift will bring much pleasure in the months ahead and their generosity will be long remembered.

U. S. S. GILBERT ISLANDS (CVE-107)

Roster of Officers

CAPTAIN L. K. RICE
Commanding Officer

COMMANDER W. L. DAWSON
Executive Officer

Comdr. R. F. Carmody
Lt.-Cmdr. W. N. Davies
Lt.-Cmdr. T. D. Harris
Lt.-Cmdr. C. T. Netzger
Lt.-Cmdr. R. H. Daniel
Lieut. R. Vandervoort
Lieut. W. Whaley
Lieut. R. E. Boucher
Lieut. A. H. Paddock
Lieut. A. H. Randall
Lieut. R. S. Campbell
Lieut. L. H. Youngvorst
Lieut. E. C. Walsman
Lieut. W. N. Stalcup
Lieut. E. G. Rietz
Lieut. C. E. Waid
Lieut. W. T. Porch, Jr.
Lieut. G. W. Parr
Lieut. J. R. Clayton
Lieut. H. G. Moore
Lieut. D. Dopuch

Lieut. J. A. Ariano
Lt.(jg) R. W. Marcum
Lt.(jg) R. G. Graves
Lt.(jg) W. E. Ripley
Lt.(jg) J. L. Andrews
Lt.(jg) L. B. Vaughn
Lt.(jg) M. M. Lipowitz
Lt.(jg) G. R. Bassmann
Lt.(jg) N. H. Rasch
Lt.(jg) D. W. Jacobus
Lt.(jg) R. A. Yaussi
Lt.(jg) W. W. Gentry
Lt.(jg) G. L. Eggert
Lt.(jg) T. E. Silverstein
Lt.(jg) R. C. Hecht
Lt.(jg) C. V. Plath
Lt.(jg) M. E. Davis
Lt.(jg) M. W. Bell
Lt.(jg) W. B. Kerfoot
Ensign D. P. Armstrong
Ensign N. W. Werner
Ensign R. G. Boylan

Ensign F. A. Hight, Jr.
Ensign B. W. Drew
Ensign H. D. Ramsden
Ensign T. L. Scales
Ensign E. J. Hutchinson
Ensign E. S. Sumner
Ensign R. R. Rouse, Jr.
Ensign C. E. Hopgood, Jr.
Ensign R. E. Herzog
Ensign G. W. Meeker
Ensign R. A. Reynolds
Gunner I. Ledesma
Ch. Elec. R. A. Muir
Rad. Elec. J. M. Miller
Ch. Mach. V. K. Bennel
Mach. G. L. Hammond
Carp. J. K. Street
SCLk. E. Grauer
PCLk. B. E. Tarleton
Ch. Mach. W. R. Michael
Ch. Bos'n. T. F. Fitzgerald

FROM

CAPT. A. H. PATTERSON

U. S. S. GILBERT ISLANDS

c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, Calif.



TO

A. H. PATTERSON

Box 27 MIDLAND, OREGON

