

Bill and Helen - After Pearl Harbor

Dad was ordered to the USS *Mugford*, a destroyer; he was to travel by FAGTrans (First Available Government Transport.) They had some leave and they were going down to the desert, where Dad planned 10 days of quail hunting, and they had a small car that Catherine had loaned to them. The car had no radio. They spent the night of the 6th in a motel in Bakersfield (but Dad says they spent the night at the Big House) and arrived at the ranch in Indio about 11 AM. Jim Bunnell, husband of a friend of Catherine, came out and said “the Japs are bombing Pearl Harbor.⁴” And Mom said, “Just like that. Wow.”

There was a General Order that naval personnel report to the nearest naval station, which for Dad was the Naval Air Station at Terminal Island.. Mom says she guesses they had lunch and then in another car, (the little car they had been in had only 2 seats,) Dad and Mom, Ruth and Catherine headed to Los Angeles. On the way Dad & Mom announced to Catherine & Ruth that I (Lana) was on the way ... to raise their spirits. They all spent the night in a motel in Pasadena that Catherine apparently knew about, and the next day Dad reported to Terminal Island.⁵

It was “a grey, grey day” on Dec 8. Mom spent a lot of time sitting in the car watching P-38's fly in, fly out. There were a lot of planes going to and fro, but were all the same planes and they had not a stick of ammunition. Late in the afternoon Dad came and got his suitcase, and told Mom to go back to Catherine & Ruth. Mom saw a lot of Japanese, adults and children, standing by the road, Mom said that at the time she “cussed them to a fare-thee-well.” but now says they were probably just as sad as she was.

Mom had to find her way back from Long Beach, without a map, without having done it before, and without lights. She said it took hours. At one point she turned on her lights to see a street sign, and was chided “Shut them off, you Jap!”

They had radios in motels, but you had to put in a dime for an hour (or so) of service. But that night the radios didn't work for more than 5 or 10 min so Japanese planes couldn't home in on the radio stations' signals.

Mom thinks she must have stayed in Pasadena for several days; Dad's orders to a destroyer in Pearl Harbor were changed and he was sent to section base in San Pedro for coastal defense. How

long.??? They spent a week or two at the Honolulu Motel on PCH near Banning Park. They had a Christmas tree in the motel room, Mom decorated it. Then they went to Hards Real Estate in San Pedro looking for housing.. Mrs. Hards was the owner. She had a rental property, 1122 22nd St . There were three tiers of triplexes, and Dad and Mom were popped in one. “It was just great.”

They were there for 1½ years. They paid \$45/month and had access to washing machines and a mangle, and a vacuum for everyone’s use. Mom & Dad’s unit overlooked the harbor. One time Dad called Mom, and said, “Look out the window; you may never see anything like this again.” There were 8 battleships coming into the harbor.

Morgan Adams Sr. sold to the Navy two sailboats (apparently for \$1) because the Navy had, at that time, nothing that could be out of port for more than a few days. The two boats were “*Radio YAG-5*,” a 110' Gloucester Schooner, which had been used in one of the McMillan expeditions to the Arctic. It was built for the expedition and had a double oak plank hull to protect it from the ice. The other was *Enchantress*, a 126' steel racing schooner. “*Enchantress*” was briefly used as a station vessel in San Pedro. Then Dad was assigned to a sailboat on Coastal Defense. The ship was the “*Radio*,” and Dad was the only person on the base who knew anything about sailing ships. So he was the skipper⁶.

The *Radio* was used as a pilot vessel off San Pedro; it carried pilots and armed guards to be placed on all foreign ships. Then Dad was assigned to the *Volador*, a 114' racing schooner owned by a Mr. Valentine of the L.A. Yacht Club. Dad sailed her on offshore patrol - out three weeks, in one, 300 or 400 miles off Baja California.

After a while spent doing this Dad got a bit bored “I was in a rut” and requested Lighter-Than-Air duty. About the time he was to begin training, the Navy got



“Last trip on ‘Offshore Patrol,’ Feb 24-Mar 8 1943.
Don McCrory, exec; Bill Lucking, skipper;
Wendell Shore, communications officer; Phil Mumford, radio.
“Sailing Ship *Volador*.”

out of the blimp business. So then Dad was assigned to subchasers (first a cram course in Miami), and had duty out of Miami, in the Gulf Stream with 3 or 4 antisubmarine vessels. Finally he got destroyer orders, on the *Prichett*, (DD-561).

This dollar bill (both sides) is dated August 1943, and seems to suggest that they went from San Francisco to Honolulu. ??? Inquiring minds want to know.



In October, November & December of 1943 Dad was assigned somewhere up in San Francisco and Dad & Mom had an apartment near Golden Gate Park. Dick Cleveland, also a boyhood friend of Dad's, came to visit and was horrified to find Mom bathing me, Lana, in the washing machine. This was just before Bill was born. Dad left and that was it until Dad was discharged except for a 2-week leave in March when he got to see his son, who was by all accounts a pretty homely baby.

4But Dad says that it was his wife.

5Dad says that he reported to TI the night of the 7th, and just as he got there a squadron of P-38's landed.

6 Carly's light on Mom's front porch was from the ship, the *Radio*. Morgan Adams, after the war, retrieved the boat, and asked Dad where the lamp was, and Dad said, "Well, I took it." And apparently that was okay.

7DD-792 Commissioned: November 27 1943 Fate: Sunk by Japanese Aircraft off Okinawa 7/28/45

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