

This command worked in mysterious ways, nothing was up front. I asked for correspondence courses from the Educational officer for the last three months since I got on board, and nothing came. Those used to be available in a couple of weeks otherwise. People in charge on this ship really jerked me off. I suppose they wanted to hear me whine. I picked up what I could and ran around doing shipboard qualifications, but mostly got gaffed off on that too. I think I ran ten times to authorized people to get a signoff on things I knew before they would even pretend I existed. Then another ten time to get a single signature. If there was a real training program that ship would not have broken as much gear as it did. I saw an efficient ship on the Vreeland, this on was a floating disaster. I heard one of the chief engineers had covered up a huge oil spill for something like a year and nobody knew about it. After a time it seemed to be forgotten as a new chief engineer showed up to relieve the first when his tour of the Barbour County was up. Some crew members knew. I understand a fireman ratted the command off about it with no results. A yeoman, who acted squared away, got disciplined and ratted them off as well, and plea bargained for a mild court martial. The attitude off this ship stunk.

But, we were off to vacationland. The pacific turned out to be kind of rough in February. A LST pulls up to the shore at times to discharge its tanks and jeeps. Therefore, it is flat-bottomed. On the ocean it acts just like a cork. A destroyer, frigate, or cruiser, is V hulled and rocks predictably in twenty foot seas doing 20 or 30 degree rolls. In a storm it just rocks wildly back and forth and plunges into waves and busts them. An LST goes up on top of a swell, usually at a slow speed, and slides jerkily down the other side. If the sea is irregular and heavy and hitting from a side of the ship the whole darn thing shudders and creaks. Although bigger than an FF an LST is hard to walk on even on lower decks in ten foot seas. We luckily only saw that size of a ocean at the worst and hit no real storms. The men looked funny as they were knocked around on their feet. In the mess line there would be meals when most everybody lost their trays and the deck was awash in food. the men slipped and fell. OH boy, we had one guy who got named sea sick. It was pitiful to watch him skulk around all white in the face. Others would make phony barfing sounds and we really would. He lost ten pounds before he could eat, but we couldn't drop him at the next bus stop.

We took a week to get to peral harbot. We came in the back door to Hawaii so to speak. The weather is great in winter. We came into port up a river past the Arizona monument. There is quite a fleet at that base. We had two days to fuel up a head to the Phillipines. Still broke Waikiki was depressing. The action entailed tourist prices. Big Bucks. So liberty was not truly enjoyed. I took a run and did inexpensive, meaning boring, things as was becoming usual. I walked and took in the famous sights. I went hog wild and weaseled a three dollar beer out of my budget and drank at the Hilton. It was nice to sit and pretend I was rich and look at the odd decorations of the bar. They had puff fish lighting fixture. I always wanted to pay three bucks for a beer and look at puff fish lighting fisture. A waterfall gurgled behind me somewhere and eased my troubled mind, as a huge ornamental Tiki doll watched intently on. Otherwise a beach is a beach. One of the jokers who later was booted out of the Navy rented a 4WD and crached and burned out in the jungle that surrounds Honolulu. I settled for a stare at diamond head and the tourist traps, and ogled the chicks that remanded a beach, is a beach, etc. I beleive I found mom a souvenir.