



ON WHICH WE SERVE PART 2

WHERE LIFE-LESSONS ARE LEARNED

EDWARD ATKINS

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Where Life-lessons Are Learned

Edward Atkins

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REVIEWS

“5 out of 5 stars: I truly love this book. Between the beautiful, yet deeply realistic picture of life on the ship and the beautiful photographs that further tell the story, it is a book that EVERY HOUSEHOLD SHOULD HAVE. The greatest generation, as they so fondly have been called, is an important part of our country’s history, and one which is quickly leaving us. Holding on to stories and images like this is vital for going forward.

This book has the ability to transport me through time and try to imagine what it must have been like for those that served during this time. . . . These are truly life-lessons for all of us, and they should be passed on to our children and grandchildren . . . talking about hard work and doing the right thing. Things it sometimes seems as if our society has lost sight of; stopping to think about something other than themselves.”

—*Rhe’s Bookshelf* — *A Military Monday Book Review*, <http://cammostylelove.blogspot.com/2014/05/rhe-bookshelf-military-monday-book.html>.

“As a curator in a museum would take photographs throughout the exhibits and add insight resulting in a higher appreciation and understanding, Edward Atkins curates this book of Naval Archive photographs with his personal story, impressions and insight. His words are captivating as it becomes clearly evident to the reader that each and every word, thought and opinion is there for the reader’s benefit, not the author’s. As there is just so much time a man has in life, it is important to pass along to others the essence of what has happened, how men have created this world in which we inhabit, and why things are the way they are . . . the reader is brought into a first-hand diary of how life was upon a ship for the sole purpose of warfare.

Interestingly, Edward Atkins writes a narration for each photograph using two distinct “voices”. One being a seasoned gentleman of elder years, with the historical knowledge and wisdom earned through his life’s achievements and research; then one of impressionable young man of 18 or 19 years of age, serving in the Navy aboard an aircraft carrier; a man-made creation of immense design excellence of ‘form following function.’ This dichotomy of wisdom and emotion, coupled with the bountiful photographs of exquisite detail, result in an experience one cannot gain nowadays any other way.

—*Pacific Book Review*, 2013

“Edward Atkins narrates his thoughts to the reader in a humble fashion of wisdom, insight and honesty.

—*Pacific Book Review*, 2004

SYNOPSIS

This book (Parts 1 and 2) can be considered to be two books in one. That is, “Book 1” consists of a photograph and an enlarged caption opposite that photograph which describes what is in that photograph and/or what is happening in that photograph. “Book 2” frequently, but not always, is a seamless segue (on the same page) from “Book 1” to a discussion of some social aspect of what just preceded it. These social topics could be such as Responsibility, Accountability, Respect for Others and Self, Earned Self-esteem (those who have it will “never” do anything antisocial), Empathy, Trustworthiness and similar values and virtues (Volume 2 of the Trilogy is more fulsome in this respect). Thus each text-page/photo-page of this (physical) book may be considered a “couplet” in that this couplet is self contained. This means that each text-page can be read as a “standalone” and no continuity is lost by doing so. This has the advantage that the reader can, if you will, “savor” that page and feel no need to hurry on to the next page. It encourages a meditative approach to reading similar, if I may, to reading the Bible. One could even form a discussion group based on a given page (book clubs take note).

(One caveat should be made: Each page might also contain a running commentary on a given subject such as the technology of something such as the gun fire-control system or the process of the war in the Pacific as it moved westward.)

“Book 1” represents the title “On Which We Serve” while “Book 2” deals with the subtitle “Where Life-Lessons Are Learned.” “Book 2” is in no way meant to be “pontifical” or “dogmatic” but rather it is meant to stimulate thoughts concerning a more sane and sanguine society.

One final point: These books (and the Trilogy) can be quite literally said to be “one of a kind for ALL time.” That is, “FOREVER.” Pray

tell, why?? It is simply that no one has ever written a book about the activities on the Flight deck of a WWII fleet aircraft carrier. In addition, no one ever will in the First-Person because those who could have are either dead or very soon will be. Sad but true. Since I was a flight deck crewman (Airdale) for a solid year on a training ship during 1945–1946 I thought it imperative to give those hard-working Airdales their “day in the sun.” They EARNED it.

Note: I have tried very hard not to include politics or religion in these pages. I do not want to stir up animosities that seem to invariably occur when these subjects are addressed. Besides, there are a plethora of such books.

Finally, my approach to writing this book consists of the following:

1. Keep it precise and concise.
2. Be scrupulously accurate.
3. Use words that are appropriate to the meaning you’re conveying.
4. Make each sentence of significance and substance.
5. Don’t use “filler”: Your readers’ time is too important.
6. Try no to use elongated sentences (although sometimes a stream of consciousness is useful, if done judiciously).
7. Remember: Brevity is the soul of wit.
8. Above all, maintain clarity; without it you have nothing.
9. And it doesn’t hurt to think in terms of timelessness.

Now, read on and ENJOY the trip!

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LANDING ACTIVITIES

The landing activity was a little more dicey than the launching activity only because others were directly involved in your well being. (See the Parking Chapter) (But getting to the wheelchocks during launch-time was very often much the most “do-or-die” visceral, fearful situation.)

Prior to landing, the squadrons of aircraft would form a “race track” pattern overhead the carrier, separated by 20-second intervals and at about 1,000 feet altitude. Each aircraft in turn would make his approach to the stern of the carrier from about one-quarter mile away. (The carrier would have first turned into the wind and would adjust its speed so as to have 30-knots of wind come over the front of the flight deck.) Once the aircraft was in the “groove” about 200 yards from the stern of the ship, the LSO (Landing Signal Officer) would take control of the aircraft’s flight path. (the LSO stood on a small platform at the very back part of the flight deck on the port side, offset from the flight deck and flush with it. There was a net outboard of this platform for safety reasons.) The LSO had cloth paddles with which he gave directions to the pilot, correcting for speed, altitude, attitude, and position. If all was well, the LSO had his two arms out, horizontally, on the level. If the aircraft were low, the LSO’s arms would move down. The more urgent he was, the more vigorously he’d move his arms. When all was well, and it was time, the LSO would indicate “cut engine” by bringing the right paddle sharply across his chest. If all was not well, the LSO would wave his paddles over his head. The pilot was required to apply power and get back into the flight pattern.

As the aircraft dropped down to land, the “arresting-gear” came into play. There was a set of about 16 cables, spaced about five yards apart, running across the aft part of the flight deck. Each cable had a set of “knuckles” under it that were ordinarily flush with the deck. But when an aircraft was to land,

the “knuckles” were raised several inches, thus raising the horizontal “arresting-cables” several inches above the deck. This enabled the landing aircraft’s extended tailhook to catch onto one of the cables (when the aircraft touched down, if all went well). If the aircraft was too high at engine cut-off, it would bounce over the “arresting-cables.” In this event, there were also raised horizontal sets of wires across the deck forming a barrier to anything trying to pass. There were three of these barriers that were raised for each landing. Aircraft usually went through several barriers before being stopped. However, if the aircraft bounced too high, it would hurdle all the barriers and proceed forward, doing damage to man and machine.. The arresting wires and barriers were raised for a landing, lowered after the landing to let the aircraft move up forward, then raised again for the next landing. These actions were controlled by the green-shirts, and if possible, every 20 seconds.

Paralleling the “arresting cables,” and built into the flight deck, were “cleats” every five or six yards. These “cleats” allow the Airdales to tie an aircraft to the deck during rough weather.

Once an aircraft has landed, it immediately taxis forward to make room for the following aircraft that’s in the landing “groove.” They usually stay on the flight deck, but when it gets too crowded, or if it needs repair work, it’ll go to either the deckedge elevator or the forward elevator, to be taken down to the hangar deck. This too must be done quickly. If there’s a delay, such as difficulty unhooking the tailhook from the “arresting cable,” the following plane must be waved off to come around again. If the aircraft is closer than a 20- second interval, it’ll be waved off, in all likelihood. During any of these wave-offs, if the aircraft is unable to generate enough power (speed), it’ll go into the water. The escorting destroyer will then pick up the pilot. Many things have to happen correctly, but most landings were without incident.

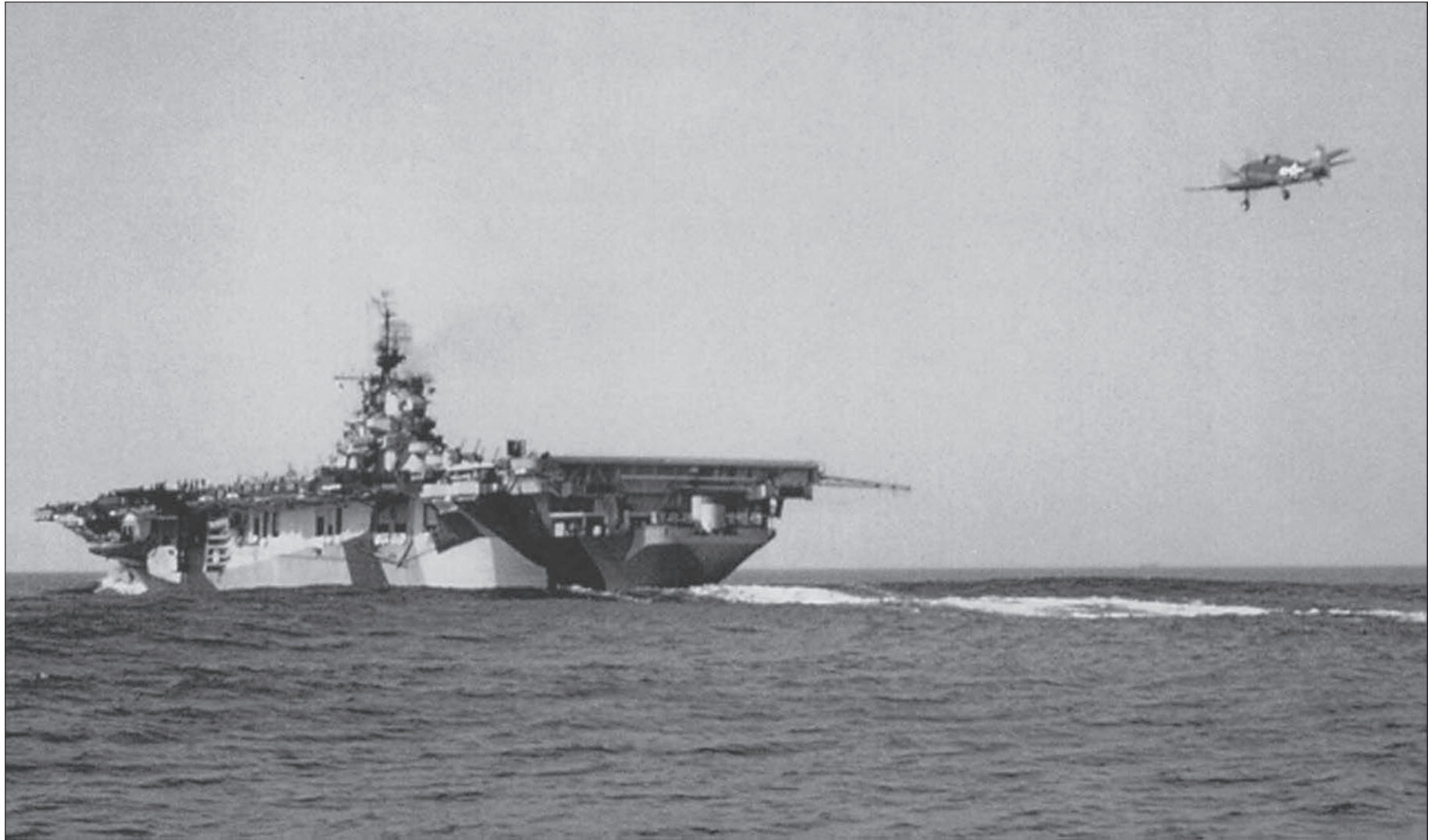
“PERMISSION TO COME ABOARD”

Yes, this Hellcat is much too high to be making a landing. At least, I hope he won't try to set down. If so, he'll bounce over every arresting-wire (12 available ones of 16) and all 5 barriers, landing on and among the personnel and aircraft up forward causing all sorts of havoc. After a while after having watched many landings I became pretty good at knowing whether an aircraft was going to be a small “bouncer” or a large “bouncer”, or whether he wouldn't be a “bouncer” at all. Knowing this made for a more “comfortable” state of mind. While the launch-process of the previous chapter is more precarious and potentially deadly to the Airdale, landings of this chapter are more precarious and potentially deadly to the pilot. This will be more evident in the chapter on “Mishaps”. However, the Airdale (and the rest of the flight deck personnel) were not without jeopardy during the landing process (as alluded to above). [During the launch activity the Airdale had to make his way to a wheelchock in among densely packed aircraft with the wind moving him in a direction of the furiously spinning propellers. This was

bad enough but what made me approach the point of disorientation was that obscene noise (I know, some people seem to actually like noise such as found at “concerts”. To me, noise is the work of the devil and to this day I have ringing in my ears, probably due to that confounded racket made by a large number of cheek-by-jowl high-powered 2,000-hp aircraft engines all revving full up at once, scorning the use of mufflers). I wish I could put this more forcefully to convey the true sensations of being “in the belly of the beast”] In any event, it was the pilots now, during landings, who had the nervous-time with which to contend. Lest they were precisely in the “slot” (lined up directly behind the ship at just the proper height and just the proper speed just before touching down) they were in for a jarring bounce, a crash or a water-landing. To hear the pilots tell of it, a landing was a “controlled crash” in a very limited area (considering that they were going, say 50 mph relative to the deck (about 40 yards).

To all appearances this aircraft is much too high to make a decent landing. Perhaps so, but understand that the ship is moving underneath it and thus there is yet some distance to be covered before touch-down. I can understand one's wondering about the happy outcome of this situation. That is normal. That is good, for what is a person devoid of curiosity? I can't imagine such a person. Some have it more than others, yes, but to be lacking it entirely? No, say it isn't so. A life devoid of curiosity is a life of a balloon uninflected. How in the world is a balloon going to climb without the lift given it by the gas of knowledge? Where does

knowledge come from but curiosity? I can assure one and all that acquiring knowledge is much the easier with the support of curiosity. One should certainly understand that a curious mind is a fertile mind and a fertile mind is a happier mind (because it knows more than one that is not fertile). As I've said before, some of my happiest times have been when I study something and then, of a sudden, “the light bulb comes on”. Oh happy day! Don't scoff if you haven't experienced it. I was not much of a reader when I was young primarily because there wasn't anything that captured my fancy. Curiosity will do that.



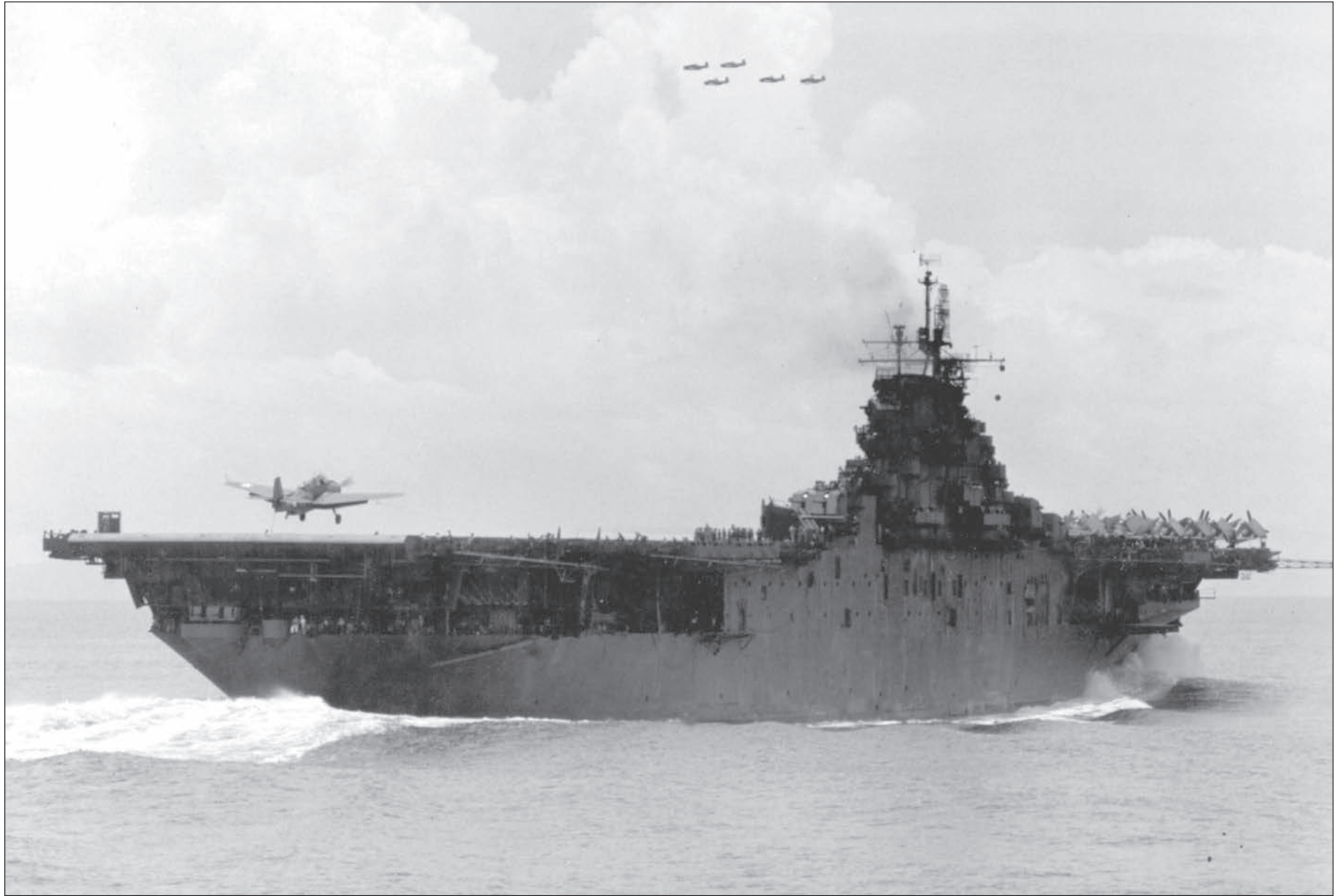
“PERMISSION GRANTED”

The previous page implied that the landing operation was devoid of danger to the Airdale. Not so. It was merely a comparison to the launch operation. When a pilot has trouble landing his plane, there are serious consequences to the Airdales. Not only is the aircraft itself a possible danger, but also the flying debris caused by the aircraft's crash can be deadly. On the Antietam, this fortunately was not that big a problem. However, being a training ship (training aircraft squadrons), you never could tell whether that next landing was going to be a problem, sometimes with dire consequences. Again, it was the unknown that was the villain. And again, I wax melodramatic, but

frankly, with justification. (Visit the “Mishaps” chapter.) Included in the landing scenario are the aircraft taxiing forward after landing. These too could do bodily harm not only by running into you, but also by “chewing up” other aircraft and thus spewing out “shrapnel.” In any case, it was “heads up” time whenever aircraft were moving on the flight deck under their own power. In this picture, notice the screen on the left back corner of the flight deck. This is to protect the LSO (Landing Signal Officer) from the wind at his back as he faces the incoming aircraft. His purpose is to give hand-signals (using paddles) to the pilots as they land.

Study this picture. Note the form of the ship at this particular angle different than the usual angle. Then close in on the details of the outline of the ship. Note the aircraft up forward parked cheek-by-jowl, the details of the antennas topside and then further up the squadron of aircraft flying overhead as they prepare to come aboard. Then go ahead and do it again, only more closely savoring in detailed inspection what you've just seen. This could be called intellectual reflection (don't quake at the mention of “intellectual”). It's difficult, sometimes impossible, to find the time or the place for this kind of reflection. However, if it can be done it can be rewarding. Reflect on a myriad of subjects, intellectual or not. This is the time that you burnish your thinking capabilities and resolve many of the questions that have been bothering you for so long. Reflection is akin to the reverie you feel when listen-

ing to those ballads of days gone by. It is a fact that the more you devote to reflection the easier it becomes till eventually the ideas just flow through your mind. Certainly not all reflection is intellectual for much of it is, and should be, visual. I can even say that if you're interested in improving your athletic skills you need but to visualize yourself doing what you'd like to do in reality. First you visualize it and then you go out and just do it without the baggage of thinking about what you have to do. Try it, you'll like it. On a more serious note, reflection stimulates your mind. It exercises your mind and your mind is you. This is the time to resolve those questions you never had time to do so previously. In this way it's a positive restorative, and we all want to accentuate the positive. Reflect on yourself, reflect on others, reflect on the world but reflect.



VIEW FROM A FOLLOWING PICKET DESTROYER

This is a good landing, nice and easy. Just back of the aft 5-inch guns is a group of Airdales ready to “pick up” each aircraft as it taxis forward after landing. Some of the aircraft go down the deck edge elevator to the hangar deck and the others (most of them) go up forward. The ship’s moving fast since there’s little ambient wind: notice the ship’s wake and

its bow-wave. You also will notice the LSO’s windscreen at the far left of the flight deck, as described on the previous page. The landing aircraft came from the left, always turning to the left until they get into the “groove” (a position directly behind the carrier, about 600 feet away, and lined up with the length of the flight deck).

Observe at the upper left part of the picture an aircraft. It’s heading in the direction opposite to that of the ship but it will soon make a 180 degree turn to its left and begin an approach toward the ship (there is at this time, just out of sight to the left, another aircraft approaching the “slot” inboard toward the ship). Though the first aircraft appears to be going in the wrong direction it is in fact going in the correct direction. So it can be in life: Going against what the “crowd” is doing can be going in the correct direction. This turns out to be a problem for many, especially the young. It’s precisely here that a firm self-esteem, a confidence in self, is a premier asset, more valuable than gold. Too many people, especially the young, get caught in the morass of peer-pressure. Evidently this pressure is a result of not wanting to be left out, not wanting to be isolated. This is perfectly understandable, for not many of us want to be isolated, at least not from the so-called “in crowd”. It’s been my experience that this “in-crowd” is

not all it’s cracked up to be. This is especially true if what this crowd does is misguided, which is not all that infrequent. I’d rather be right than wrong, smart than stupid when it concerns a group. Why compound your situation by compromising your values and integrity and even well-being? No question, sometimes it takes courage to do the right, the correct, thing. It takes courage and strength to oppose the crowd’s beguilements and blandishments. It takes especial intestinal fortitude to stand up to their taunts. Perhaps I speak not as a reliable advocate of standing tall for one’s principles and good judgment since I’ve been essentially a “loner” since I suppose forever. Perhaps here it’s the time to tighten up your belt and take on the attributes of a leader by generating your own “crowd”. This is certainly doable if and when you have shored up your self-esteem and self-assurance and self-confidence. Remember, a first-rate person doesn’t need a second-rate crowd.



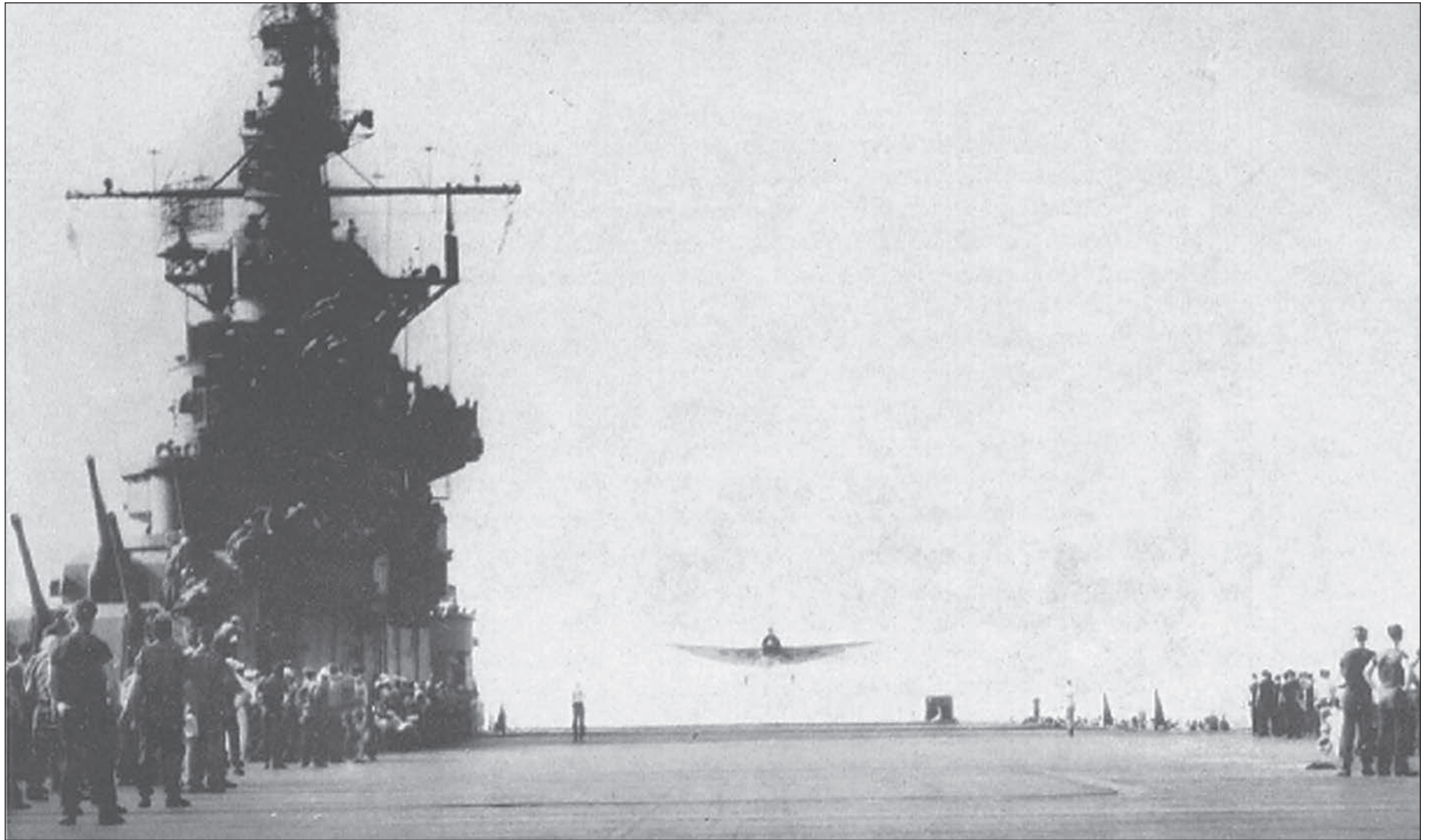
CLEAR DECK

This could well be a different view of the previous page. (I like both of the pictures because they are so similar to paintings). In the lower middle of the picture is the LSO's (Landing Signal Officer, a pilot) wind-screen. This is a good landing, not too high or too low, just before touchdown. The wingspan says it's a TBF/M. The Airdales to the right and left are there to "pick up" the TBF/M as it taxis forward to its parking spot (a separate chapter). Notice the triangular barrier-stanchions to the right are upright. The person to the left, by himself, is a yellow-shirt ready to

direct the TBF/M after it's landed, after its tail-hook is disengaged, and after the barrier-stanchions are lowered 90 degrees. Then an Airdale will run out from both sides, wheelchock in hand, and run alongside the plane as it taxis forward, ready to place the wheelchock around the wheel should the yellow-shirt so direct. (This picture, to my mind, is good because it contains all the essentials of a typical landing without being so detailed that you are distracted from the overall picture. It captures the essence of a normal landing.)

There are those who will not like this picture: It's too dark, it has no action, it doesn't tell a story and what ever else they can find to criticize. To me, this is a superb picture: It reminds me of standing there to the right as an aircraft comes in to land, it's darkness emphasizes the bulk of the superstructure (details don't distract), it's a perfect landing it has sufficient detail to make it interesting. We all have preferences such as indicated above and this is fine. It's meet that it be so. What a dull world if everyone thought alike. The problem arises, though, when we let our prejudices prevent us from fairly considering differing points of view. I can appreciate the fact that others have different ideas from me about this picture. That's fine, as long as they in turn acknowledge my views. Bias on the other hand rejects out of hand differing opinions even to the point of being ugly about it: A closed mind is an ugly thing. A closed mind prevents one from learning. One who is biased is probably one who is afraid to have his opinions examined for

want of confidence in his own views. It takes someone who is strong to not be afraid to evaluate differing viewpoints from his own. Such a person has no confidence in himself and his convictions. There has been much criticism of those who change their minds (politics). Perhaps so, and yet if one is strong enough to seriously reevaluate his position I believe he is to be commended. With the reevaluation he perhaps will change his mind, and perhaps not. Situations change, events occur to make these reevaluations necessary. What profit in a closed mind? Better yet, what a profit in an open mind. Bias implies that I am right, correct, regardless. I won't even consider that I'm wrong. I'm not man enough to say, "yes, you're right and I'm wrong". The worst part of bias is that one will contort the facts to continue his course. The political sphere is rife with such conduct. There are those who say, "My country, right or wrong".. Wrong! It's right to make one's country right.



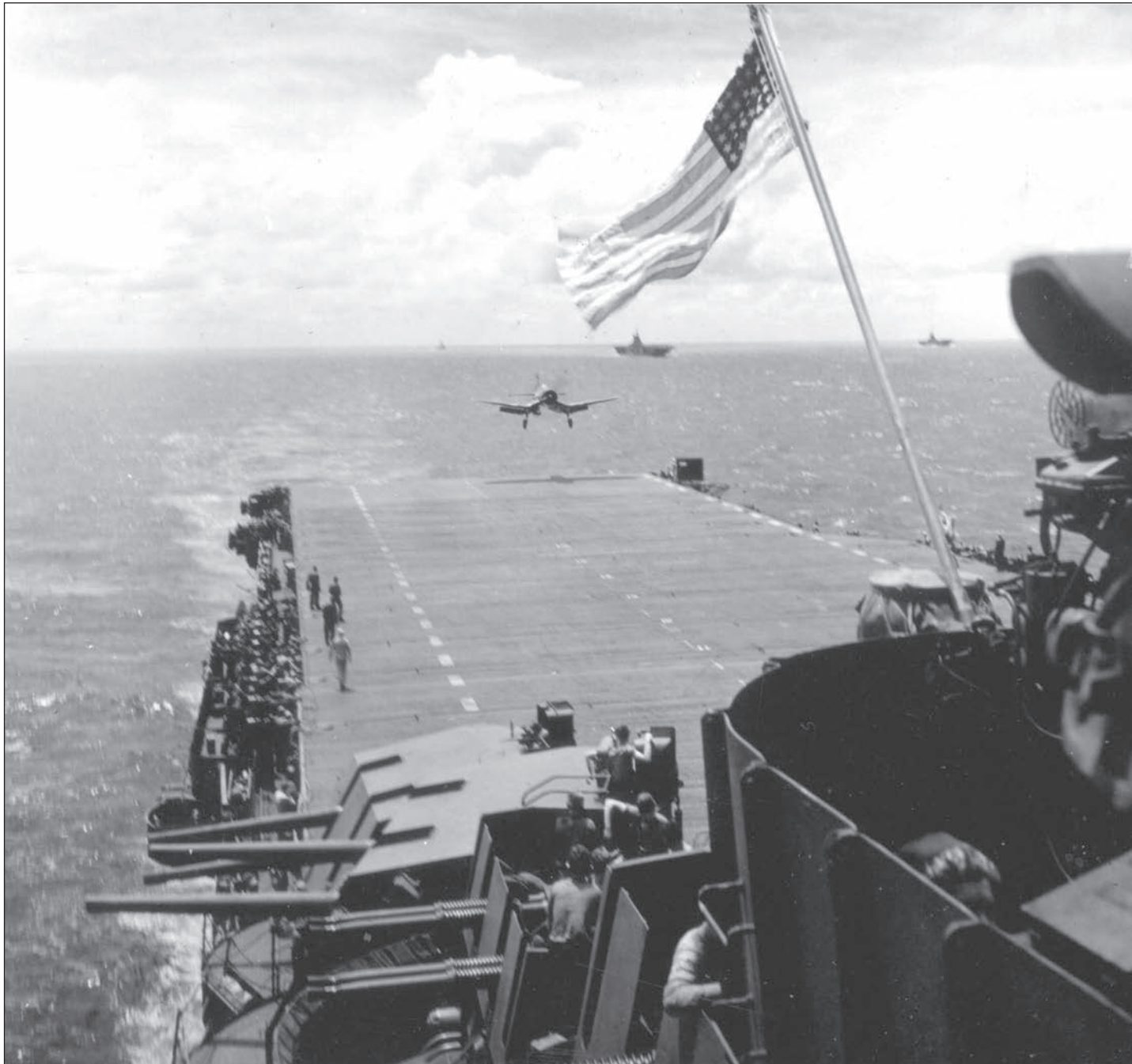
ALMOST IN THE GROOVE

This Corsair appears to be somewhat off the centerline, but in general this is a good landing. Also of note is the lack of a following aircraft. There should be an aircraft in view if the landing pattern is to be spaced at 20-second intervals. In fact in this picture, there should be two aircraft in view, in the landing pattern. All I can say is that many of the pictures in the book do not show

standard operating procedures. This is a typical scene of a landing aircraft, but not a typical scene of landing flight operations. In the background are two other carriers, both steaming in a common direction (into the wind) so as to bring aircraft aboard. The aircraft, the carriers, the flag, the ship, they all make for a pleasing tableau (if you like ships and planes).

There she waves, our nation's proud banner. Many have died doing her honor, many have suffered standing beside her. We who salute her need never deny her. Personally I prefer a quiet pride rather than an unbridled jingoism. Emotional expansiveness is fine but again I personally believe a sound intellectual basis for this effusiveness is necessary. My brief with those who exhibit exhilaration over one's nation tend to offend those who feel patriotism yes, but perfection no. In other words there are those, not unpatriotic in the least, who feel that we can be even better than we are and that over-the top enthusiasm tends to hide those blemishes. We can be patriotic to the core while still searching to improve. To the point, this group that believes "our country, right or wrong" appears to mask the faults, thus making improvements more problematical. That is the nub of those who tend to modulate "our country, right or wrong". This attitude tends to come across as immensely arrogant. With arrogance there can be little likelihood of improving this best of all nations, bar none. It might

also be said that we, being a "superpower", come across as "schoolyard bullies" ("ha, ha, we're better than anyone else and if you don't believe that we'll punch you in the nose") Petty, is it not? Yes, we ARE stronger than anyone else and yes we do have the strongest economy and yes we have our beloved Constitution. However, God knows, there's plenty of room for improvement and God knows there's some room for "noblesse oblige". I prefer not to become involved here in the notion of preemptive war (a political subject) except to say that this country, any country, should be very, VERY careful. War is too atrocious to consider in any way except with very deep understanding of the situation. True, there are those who say a preemptive war is a defensive war in disguise. Be very, very, VERY careful here. I realize that there are also those who promote the concept (and reality) of "Globalism" (a word not yet in my 1664-page dictionary). I presume they believe this will obviate all wars. This remains to be seen and I will again eschew these politics in this book.



RIGHT IN THE GROOVE

From all appearances, it looks like this F6F is making a perfect landing. He's right in the "groove" (over the centerline), at just the right height, and his attitude is almost perfect (his wings are almost level). The only unknown here is his speed. If it's too fast, he'll bounce over the barriers, and then, who knows what the result will be? Notice the 10 or 11 arresting-wires strung across the flight deck. Also notice the "brackets" rais-

ing them up about 2-3 inches. And finally, notice that the F6F's wing flaps are down. Would that all the landings were like this. Actually, the Antietam had a pretty good record as relates to landings. But it's always that next landing that you wonder about. Will it, or won't it, be a good one such as this one in the picture? (The relative landing speed was probably about forty miles per hour.)

Since this appears to be a perfect landing (and thus "sterile") and since it's now in the midst of the football season I'll reprise some comments I made in Volume 2. I said in that volume that, yes, the players now are bigger and stronger and faster than those of "my day" but are they better? Even though football is a contact sport I nevertheless look to skill as being the factor that appeals and holds one's interest. Back then, in effect, we had to hold onto our jerseys when we blocked (no "hand-to-hand combat"). We made copious use of cross-body blocks that gave the ball-carrier running room. We used pulling-tackles frequently. The cerebral single- and double-wing offenses only were used. We wore leather helmets sans face-masks and mouth-guards making so-called "smash-mouth football" a possibility (once I "tackled" a leaping fullback "with my nose", my hands being preoccupied). We played full-time, both offense and defense. When one made a "nice play" nothing was made of it; returning to

your position with only the next play in mind (after all, that's what you're supposed to do). Speed afoot is important once out in the open but it's also quickness in the "trenches" (in the line). Quickness made more tackles than did brute strength and bulk. One thing common then and now was the quick slap on the back side (but-tocks). There was no connotation to this other than it was a lazy pat-on-the-back. That's all it was, pure and simple (for those not attuned to the athletic ethos). [I once paid dearly for this gesture: I was playing badminton with "the love of my life" and in the exuberance of the moment I gave her a very light tap on her derriere along with a big smile. At that she spun around and with a look that could kill she snapped, "Stop it!" As I said, if looks could kill I would have been dead that instant on that very spot. My innocent gesture of camaraderie was completely misconstrued and I have my time spent in athletics to blame for that. To this day I rue that day!!]



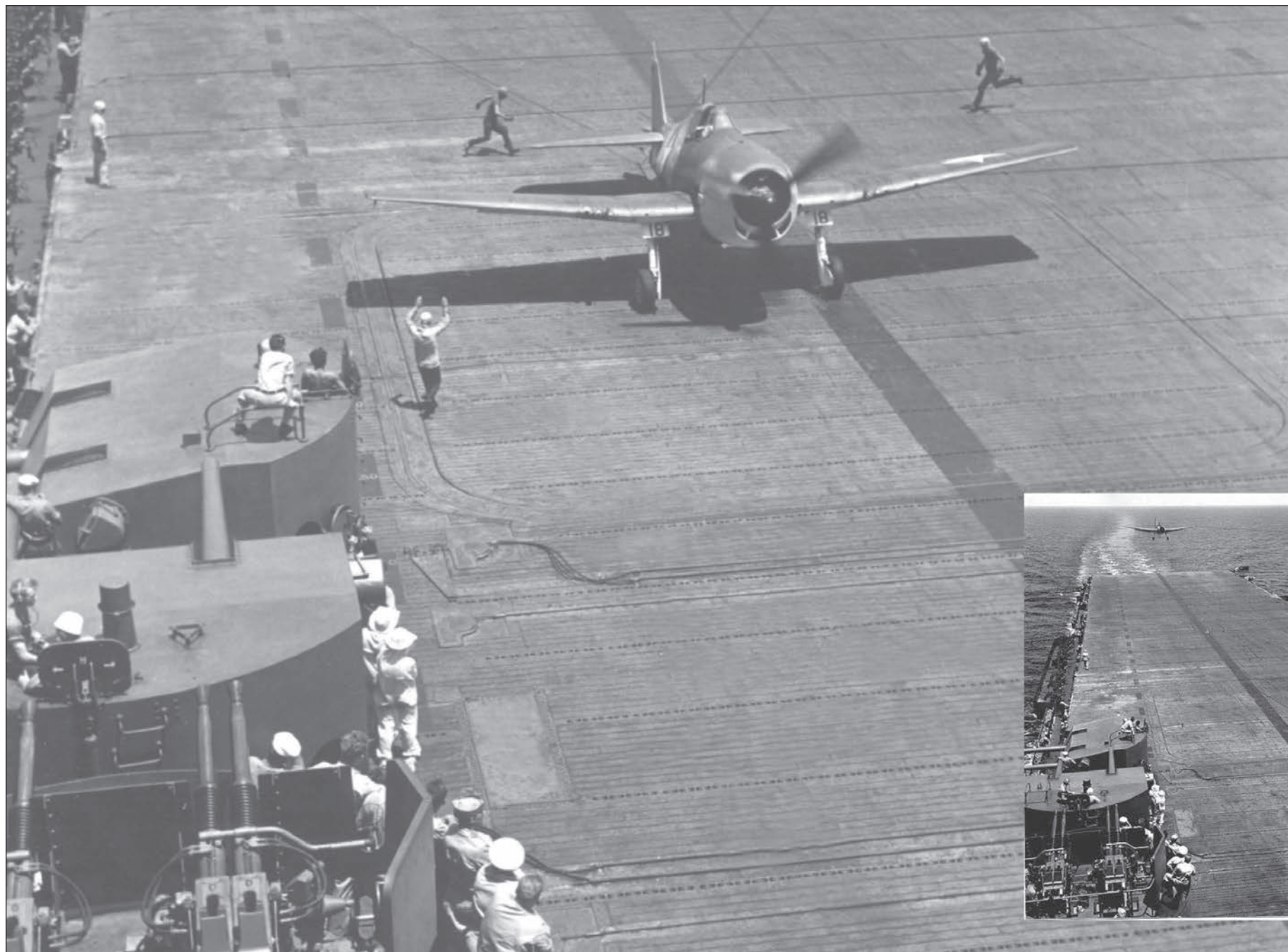
A PERFECT APPROACH AND LANDING

These two pictures were taken about 10 seconds apart. The F6F, in the right picture, has a clear deck on which to land. Notice the two men in white suits next to the closer 5-inch gun mount. They're in asbestos suits, ready to climb onto the aircraft to help the pilot (and crewmen, if it's an SB2G or TBF/M) get out of the aircraft should there be a crash and an ensuing fire. In the picture on the right, there are two green-shirts running out to disengage the arresting wire from the tailhook of the F6F (notice the "V" behind the F6F) after the F6F has been

stopped. The green-shirts also lower the barriers (the triangular objects to the left) so that the F6F can taxi forward. Right now the yellow-shirt on the left is holding up his arms indicating to the pilot to leave the throttle low until the tailhook is disengaged and the barriers are lowered. This is so that the aircraft won't put a strain on the arresting-wire, thus allowing the green-shirts an easier job of disengaging the tailhook. Once disengaged and the barriers are down, the yellow-shirt will signal the aircraft to taxi forward.

This is that perfect landing of the previous page. Would that they were all this way (actually we on the Antietam had good results for the most part, but as they are wont to say, "You never know"). To actually never know something that vitally effects your life is in a way to live in purgatory. I have often felt this way through the years and have probably not handled it to the best of my ability; and what ability is that., pray tell? That ability is to change the things we can change, leave to the Good Lord those things that we cannot change and pray that we have the wisdom to know the difference. I am not all that much of a religious person but I do know that there is something called "a God". I am very much attuned to what is called "Nature" and all the fantastic evident that it presents: the miraculous intricacy of even the smallest of things, which are not unlike those children's toys of an egg inside

an egg inside an egg inside an inside.... As an example of this intricacy consider the brain of an ant: how in the world did "God" make such a miniscule brain that enables the ant to do so many intricate things? This is beyond, way beyond, comprehension. In this way I see no dichotomy (mutual exclusion) between religion and science. To the contrary, they are just two subsets of the same thing: life. Creationism, which I can't say I really understand and evolution thus are two branches of the same phenomenon. I've said it before and I'll say it again: All religions are in essence praying to the same God, only with different "frills" and customs. One has no more ascendancy over the other than the rest. Different garb, different words, same theme. To say "my way or the highway" as concerns religion is gross arrogance. My taste is found in the "vanilla " congregationalism.



A LITTLE TOO HIGH

Being used to being on the flight deck when an aircraft lands, it's somewhat difficult to know whether this will be a good landing or not. This Corsair, an aircraft that had a reputation for having a certain amount of instability (especially at slow speeds), is not level enough considering that it's right over the end of the flight deck. This being the case, it also seems to be a little too high. Even though the ship is moving under the Corsair (less than 20 knots, judging by the ship's wake), the ship won't be moving fast enough to let the Corsair "settle in" (its engine is set to "idle" at this point). Therefore, I'd say this landing will be a "bouncer",

meaning that the aircraft's tailhook probably won't catch the arresting-wires, and instead will crash into the barriers (see the upright stanchion to the left). They usually plow through several barriers before coming to a stop, since there's enough "give" in the barriers to allow this. Alternatively, if the aircraft is coming in too fast, its momentum could cause it to bounce over all the barriers and then cause all kinds of havoc up forward. This is the nature of all landings: will it be THIS time that there'll be a crash? Or will it be the next time? Or the...? Notice the skid marks on the flight deck due to "bouncer" landings.

This Corsair will have a good landing after the pilot adjusts his attitude slightly (he's a little askew). The position of the aircraft is such that it can no longer be waved off; if the LSO (Landing Signal Officer) should do so the aircraft would not have the power (the throttle being almost closed down) to gain altitude and it would crash into the sea. The pilots are always adjusting their attitudes (of the aircraft) as they approach for a landing. Do we also adjust our attitudes when they too become askew? Often a person's attitude turns sour and those around him must suffer the consequences. This is gross conduct, conduct that demands "putting a lid on it". A person's comportment goes a long way toward defining that person. It also goes a long way toward defining the general atmosphere in the area. If one happens to be in a bad mood (and this happens to all of us from time to time) he has no right

to impose it on those around him. Give those around you a break. It's not much different than someone running a high powered, unruffled motorcycle back and forth in front of your house. The best solution is to be smart enough to realize your negative attitude is grating on those around you and so make yourself scarce until your venting is over. This is simply being considerate of those around you. However, if you're too dense and/or too inconsiderate perhaps you need to be made to understand that attitudes count. It sometimes seems that there are those who are so self-centered that they're unable to realize the effect they have on others. We live in a crowded world. We need be intelligent about that world around us. The best solution is for you to fix that bad attitude, for your sake and for our sake. Do us a favor as you do yourself a favor.



TOUCHDOWN, ALMOST

This picture actually is not a follow-on to the previous one. Same ship, same flight operations, different plane. However, to be somewhat picky, the landing is somewhat too far forward. He'll land almost on the elevator. That means that he won't go over enough arresting-wires upon touchdown, thus allowing for fewer chances to hook onto one of the wires. But otherwise, it's a good landing, with the plane's nose slightly

upward. Notice, right behind the upright barrier stanchion, a small rectangular area. This is one of the elevators that bring bombs up to the flight deck. It's only good for bombs up to 250-lbs, and also for ammunition for the aircraft's machine-guns (0.5-cal) and cannons (20-mm). The two men to the right are green-shirts, ready to run out to disengage the tailhook.

Touch down, and "all's well that ends well". In this case that's perfectly true. However, the above implies that what went before is of no consequence. Is this true? Certainly not necessarily. What if you were put into prison in spite of being innocent? Does the above still hold true? No, of course not. How about the saying "Better late than never"? What if your just deserts were deferred for years and years? Of course you wouldn't agree with that saying either. "The moral of the story" is that one should not accept at face value everything said even if it has the ring of truth to it (here we see clearly the difference between "truth" and "honesty"). Over time people come to accept traditional sayings carte blanche. What is written below the saying to elucidate it? Too often arguments are presented "carte blanche" as if the meaning has been written in stone. The art of being critical has as often as not been the means of exposing artfulness (one who's crafty, cunning, deceitful). Unfortunately

there are such people all about us and again, one needs be alert to such deceptions. It's rank (abundant) in the political arena to the everlasting detriment of a democratic form of government. Here again one should be alert to things said that lack precision, that will not stand up to a discriminate mind (again, don't lose the ability to discriminate, in all things). A scientist would not last one week without such a capability and just because you're not a scientist is NO reason that you should not also be discriminating. [They ruined the word "gay"; now don't let them ruin the word "discrimination".] There are those who talk very fast, perhaps because they want to have all their ideas presented before being interrupted. Perhaps they also talk in a fast manner to "put one over on you" (they also may talk post haste merely to show you how "intelligent they are"). Fast talk is at least impolite because it disallows the listener to assimilate what was said before. (They're "blowing smoke")



“WELCOME ABOARD”

Same ship, same flight operations, different plane (he's further to the left than the previous picture). The green-shirts are running out to unhook the plane, the yellow-shirts are going out to “take control of the plane,” and the blue-shirts (out of sight) are ready, with wheelchock in hand, to accompany the

plane as it taxis up forward. It's puzzling why, in the previous two pictures, and this one, why there isn't shown another aircraft “rounding the corner” ready to land. They should be at 20-second intervals. The next picture clearly shows what should be happening, to a degree.

Welcome aboard! The yellow-shirt (plane director) is raising his arms in the “Stop” position until the green-shirts disengage the arresting wire from the tail-hook. He is not raising his arms in a “Hail fellow, well met” gesture although there are those who do so. There are also those who are less effusive about greeting someone and still others who are subdued when doing so (but no less welcoming). Still others give a hug while some merely shake hands. When troops return home there is usually a great deal of hugging and crying and laughing and so on (when I returned home after the war in 1946 everyone had pretty much settled down and I might as well have been taking the Long Island commuter train on my way home for all the reception I received; this is not a complaint, just a factual recounting; actually this was all fine with me, the quieter the better). The point to be made is that it takes all kinds in any situation and that which is most comfortable is how it's done. This concept that “it takes all kinds” carries

over into all our social activities. Some are boisterous, some are quiet and most are in between. We should not be critical or judgmental about those who are not in our mold. Who knows, we might in fact find that we prefer another mold to our present one. Also, as we become older we change our mold. It would seem the best if we accept people as they are and not prejudge them because “they are not like us” In point of fact we probably will learn that there are many things we did not used to like that we now find attractive. One might say one is thus growing up. It's also called learning, which is something we should be doing all our lives. Not only should we be doing it but also we'll find new enjoyable things this way. That guy over there who seems strange could well open up a whole new world to you (and visa versa). You might even change your ideas about who your good friends are. This is especially true toward those of the opposite gender; the change in you could be monumental! Stay tuned.



INCOMING TRAFFIC

This is what's meant by "rounding the corner", to use my phrase. However, this second SB2C is too close and it'll be "waved off", i.e., sent to go around in the landing pattern again. His interval appears to be about 10 seconds. This isn't enough time to unhook the first SB2C, lower the arresting-wires, lower the barrier-wires, taxi the first SB2C forward, and then raise the arresting-wires and raise the barrier-wires. Ten seconds isn't enough. Again, I'd say this SB2C is a tad too high, but the speed of the ship, the speed of the aircraft, and the location of the SB2C in relation to the end of the flight deck all come into play. Perhaps the

SB2C is going slow enough and the ship is going fast enough and it's right over the end of the flight deck and it'll be a beautiful landing. No doubt, that could be the result of this landing. To make a good judgment, one has to observe the dynamics of the situation, not the static. The LSO is the expert in this area. Speaking of the LSO, where is his windshield? (The windshield not only protects him from the wind, but also makes him more visible to the pilots. This picture provides a clear view of the arresting-wires and the moveable brackets that raise the wires. Also clearly shown are the wing-flaps in the down position.

Pretty as a picture, this near perfect 20-second interval between approaching aircraft. This precision makes the world a happier place, at least it does for those of us on the flight deck. Practice makes perfect and that's what the Antietam's purpose in life was: allow the pilots to train and train and train. Doesn't this also apply to school work? In the military schools the instructors told them what they were going to tell them. Then they told them. After that they told them what they told them and voila, there they were smarter than they were just a while ago. Part and parcel in this process was the need to be concise so as not to waste time; after all, there was a war going on. This prescription of precision also applies, with full force, to formulating thoughts and ideas. In the process of doing so one must learn to be precise in the usage of words: words have definite meaning in the context in which

they're used. A previous example was the word "discrimination". It was seen that this word could be both pejorative and exemplary, depending upon how it was used and also if it was used properly. [Don't discriminate against a certain class en mass or do discriminate concerning proper behavior, as examples.] Fortunately (or unfortunately, according to your outlook) the English language has about twice as many words as any other language (so I'm told). This in turn means that there are many times when we are (or should be) obliged to consider the nuances in the use of words. For some "bread and butter" people this is a "drag"; for others this is as it should be: precision of the language can be a beautiful thing just as the precision of a 20-interval can be a beautiful thing. [The preceding was said with all due respect to other languages.]



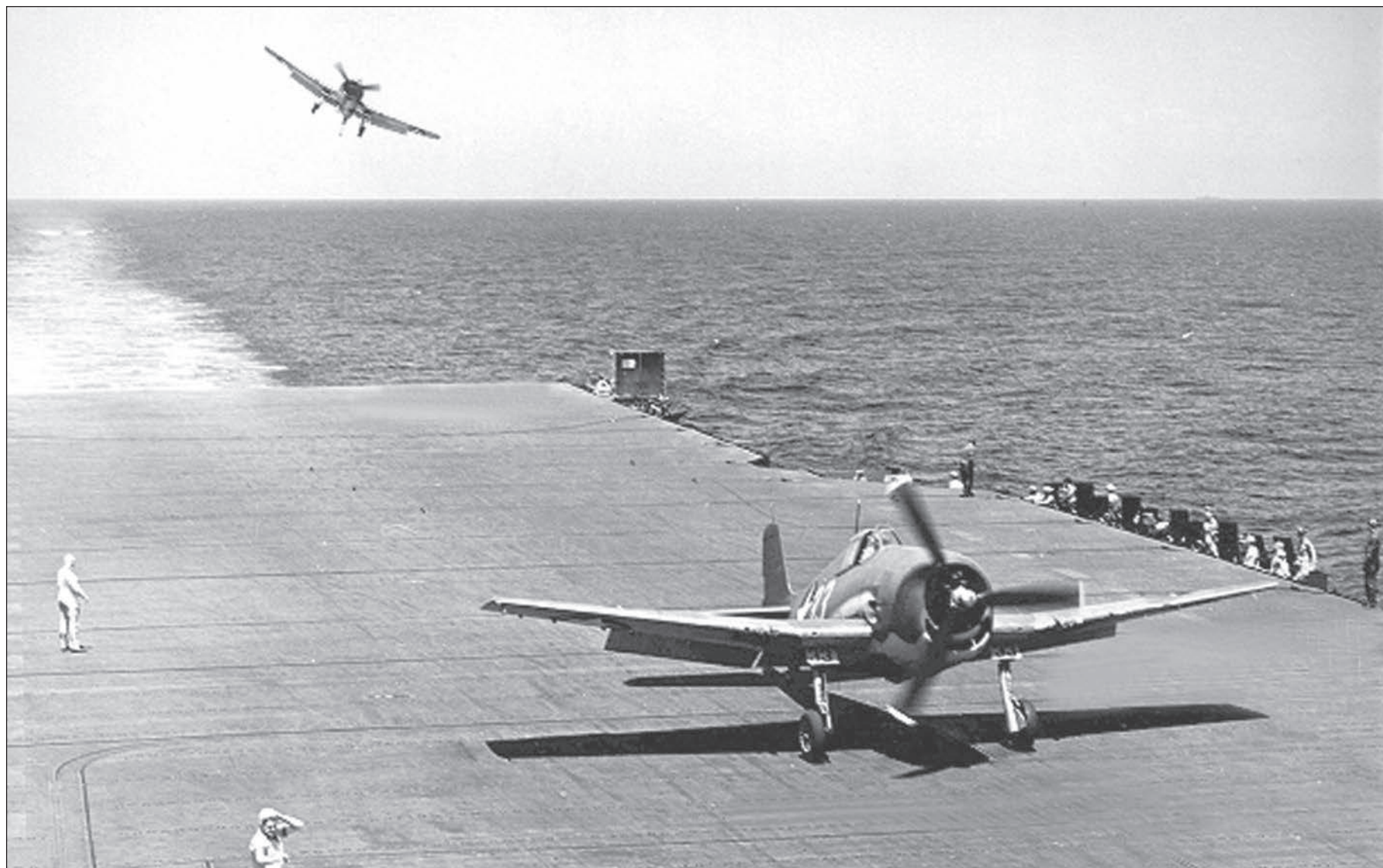
WAVE-OFF

Here an F6F is being waved off. I don't want to imply that every other aircraft was waved off. That's far from the truth. But all of this is what the training is about. Not the only thing, but an important thing. When a plane lands, the pilot has the throttle at "idle" so as to allow the green-shirts to unhook him. At the "all clear" signal, the yellow-shirt motions the pilot to the next yellow-shirt. This is when the pilot applies full

throttle to taxi forward. The process of taxiing forward and parking the aircraft has its own chapter because, from the point of view of the Airdale, this process is high on the list of things that were threatening to him. Personally, I thought it was sometimes excruciatingly critical to my well being. I don't know how any sensible person could have considered it otherwise, but that's for another chapter.

Here we note a bad interval, so bad that the pilot must try it again. (he's being waved off by the LSO). His behavior was bad but it certainly wasn't deliberate. Bad behavior practiced by those who have at least an inkling that their behavior is deleterious often wish to change that behavior. However, for some reason they cannot change that bad behavior. It might be because that bad behavior is an obsession (where obsession relates to the mind while addiction refers to the brain and nervous system). The question then arises as to how willing people can change their bad behavior (such as a predilection for something such as pornography). The simple, easy answer would be to find a substitute for that obsession, something that strongly engages one. I was once told by someone close to me that I should sublimate those (decent) desires I could not fulfill (here those desires were specific, not nebulous such as the above example). [To sublimate: "to divert the energy of

a physical or impulsive nature from its immediate goal to one of a higher nature" (my desires were never "low"). I would add that the means of replacement would be the expenditure of either intellectual or physical energy in socially acceptable ways.] The idea would be to become so engrossed in this new activity that the original obsession was a mere after thought, a mere bagatelle, a trifle. Soon proper behavior will become second-nature to you while bad behavior would become odious (partly because it represents so much baggage). It doesn't hurt if you frequently strive for your "finest hour", that time when you surpass even your own expectations for best results. (These "finest hours" occur when you "set the bar higher" and you exceed your expectations, whether they be intellectual or athletic). You then burnish you self-esteem, that sine qua non of the well adjusted person. Heaven knows we, society, need multitudes of these people. Do your share!



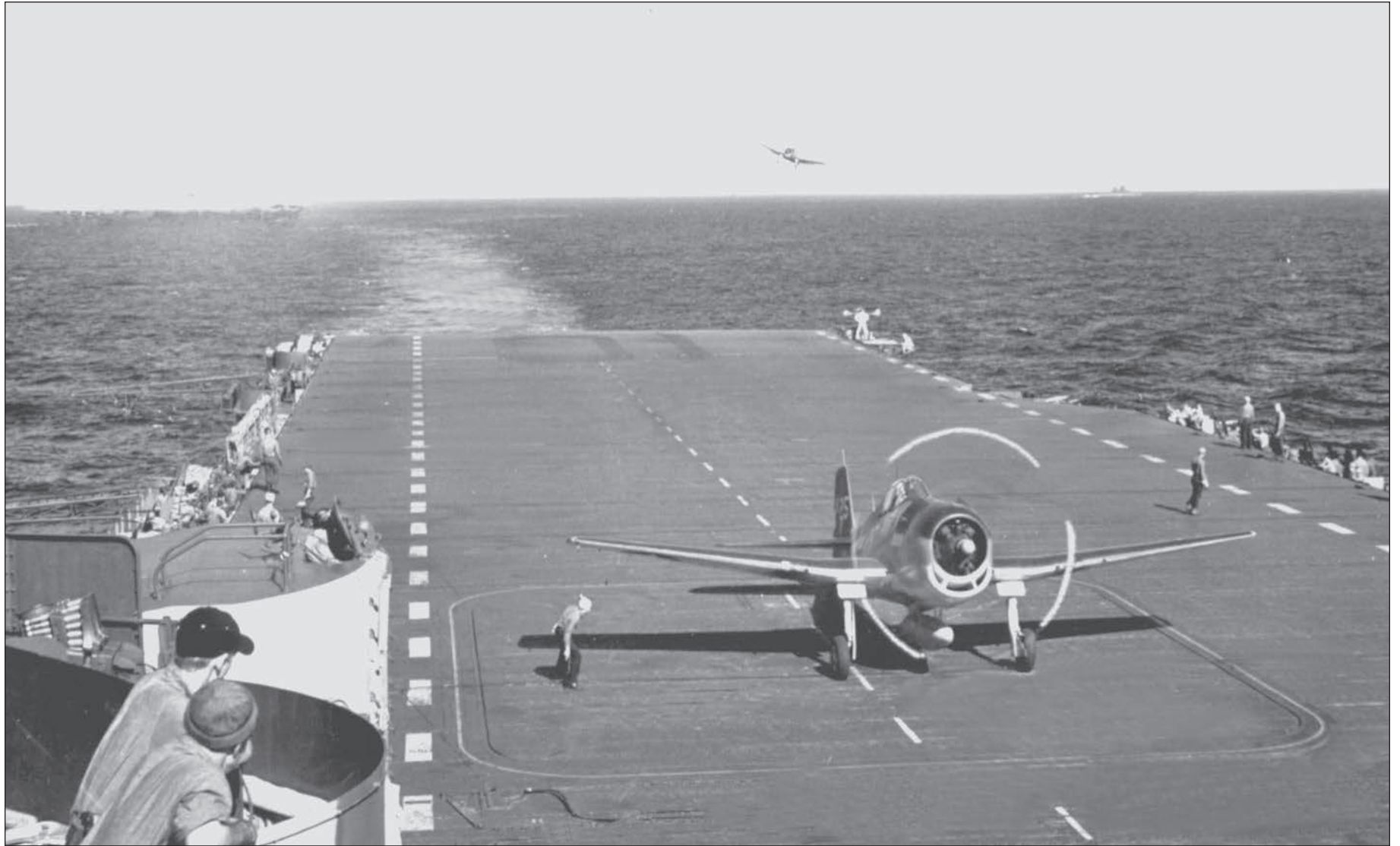
JUST RIGHT, ALMOST

This F6F has just been unhooked and is applying full throttle so as to get up the deck as quickly as possible. The aircraft “coming around the corner” is somewhat tardy, and so is wasting time. Time is of the essence, because the longer the ship is in the landing mode, the longer it’s vulnerable: fixed course at a fixed speed (there are submarines out there, somewhere. Remember, the sonar technology wasn’t as good back then). So it’s “Practice, practice, practice.” Notice the LSO

arms/paddles outstretched as he “takes control of” the aircraft. This isn’t a euphemism in any sense. The LSO literally “tells” the pilot what to do, and those directions have the force of an order. If an aircraft lands after being given the “wave-off” signal, that’s the same as disobeying orders. The LSO is in direct communication with the “Air Boss,” through nearby “phone-talkers.” So he “sees the big picture,” while the pilot only sees the LSO’s paddle-signals.

This is a picture where everything is in its place and there’s a place for everything: This Hellcat has just this moment set down just where it should, the following aircraft is just where it should be, the ship is under full power making a trail of foam straight and true, the sun is shining brightly overhead and all is well with the world at this very moment. It’s moments such as these that one tries to remember amid the harrowing times before and after. It is well to be able to think back on the halcyon days of the good and the true and the beautiful, for we are not allowed all that many. It is this capacity to look back that we should nurture. To be able to reflect on things gone by enable us to better make evaluations of things present and future. A reflective person is a stronger person than one who cannot do so. It has been said that those who forget the past must relive the past (not always a satisfying under-

taking). Reflection is thoughtfulness not directly associated with a caring character. This kind of thoughtfulness, this reflection, is the capacity to think things through and not jump to conclusions. The “look before you leap” saying is well founded for only those who have been reflective over a period of time have that seemingly obtuse capability of intuition. One is not born with intuition; one gains the ability of intuiting based on having “solved” many things over a period of time, things that could have been only hypothetical. Therefore, if you want that valuable quality of intuition you had better do a great deal of quiet reflecting (a quality I personally believe is held by many more women than men). Let’s face it, by in large, women are more reflective than men in the general population; there are of course many exceptions, but by in large I believe I’m correct. Hey, shape up men!



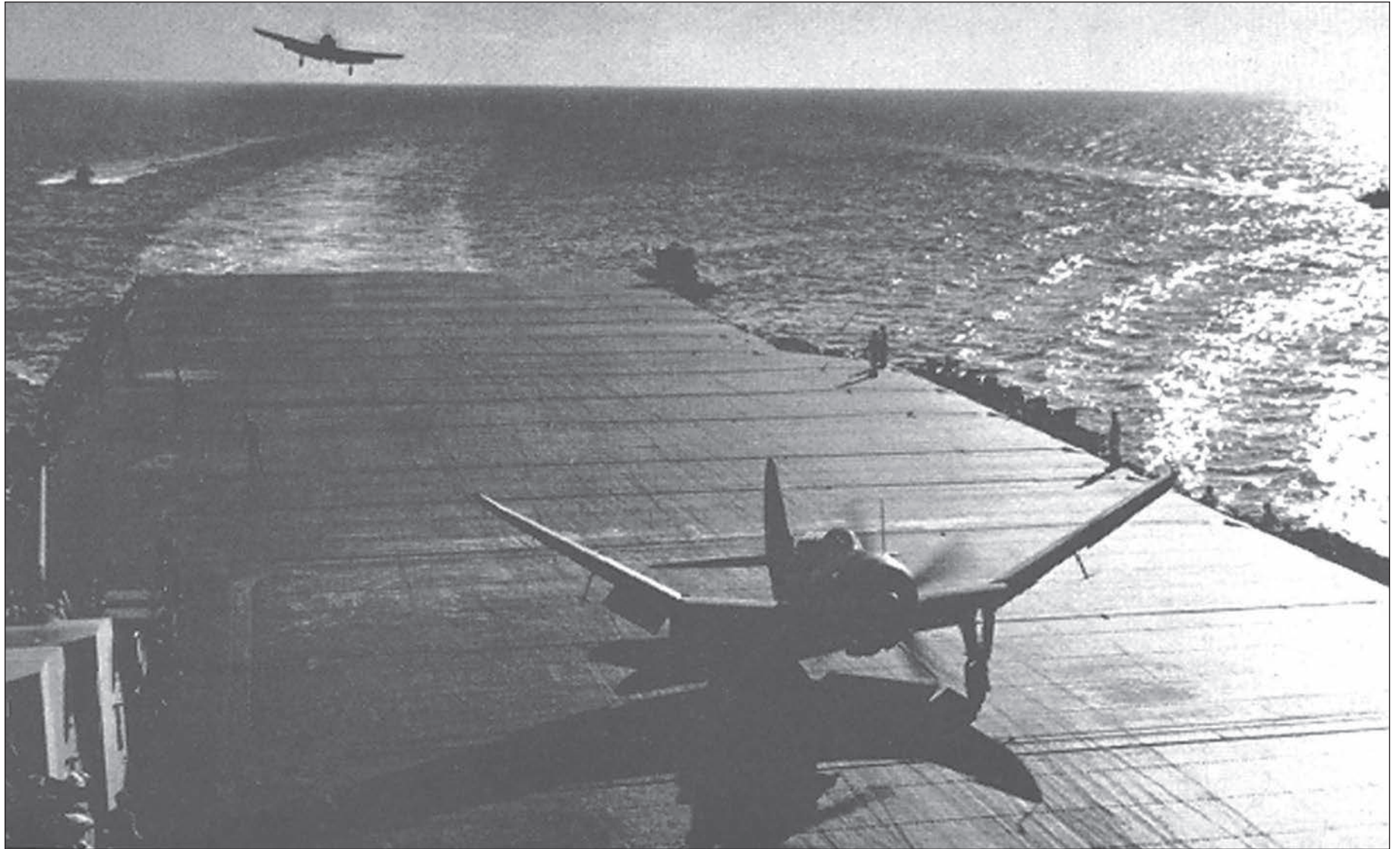
HURRY UP AND MAKE ROOM

Pictured here so well is the “perfect” 20-second interval. The SB2C on the deck has just had its tailhook disengaged and it’s taxiing forward in a hurry so as to allow the barriers to be raised for the following SB2C (the brackets in the flight deck are also then raised to raise the arresting-wires strung across the flight deck). As he taxis forward, the pilot energizes the hydraulics that fold the wings. The revved up engine that accelerated the SB2C forward also provided the power for the hydraulics. On the Antietam, an Airdale would be at each wheel, wheelchock in hand, even as the tailhook was being disengaged by two green-shirts. In effect, an aircraft under power was never unescorted by an Airdale, wheelchock in hand. The idea was, I presume, that there always had to be a wheel-

chock “at the ready” should there be any problems, such as faulty brakes. At any rate, that was how it was always done on the Antietam. My being a “newcomer”, no questions were asked about that, that’s for sure. Some things you did, and some things you didn’t do, and questioning procedures was one of the things you didn’t do. Let’s face it, I was the proverbial follower, and I tried to duplicate everything I observed. That was the key: OBSERVATION, since no one ever said what to do and what not to do. Observation is an excellent learning-tool, and sometimes the only one. Presumably there were those on board who would question the need to learn anything, but I’ll take strong exception to that. Again, simplistic but not simple.

“Clear the area, I’m coming aboard”. You can be sure that all the thoughts and senses are marshaled for these coming seconds. It looks so easy to the onlooker because the pilots do such a good job, usually. When things are done well they look easy but be assured that there’s a great deal of attention and determination right at these moments. We, the Airdales, are quietly cheering for him. Determination is a wonderful quality that we should all possess. For those to whom things come easily determination might be somewhat foreign. However, for most of us, usually, a determination stands us in good stead. We all admire the somewhat inept (at a particular activity) as he labors mightily to accomplish something physical. Do we also admire those who struggle mightily to learn things such as “reading, writing, and arithmetic”? We certainly

should. In fact we should admire anyone who strives with quiet determination which sometimes turns to desperation. It is they who have the intestinal fortitude to stay with a project to its conclusion. These people deserve a medal just as surely as do the renowned athletes. Some people have a so-called photographic memory, allowing them to cram at the last minute and even score good grades. Good for them, but the ones who have to scratch and scrape and dig to learn the lessons deserve almost all of the kudos. It is their grit and determination that should be praised, not the former with the good grades. In fact, if I were evaluating the two I would choose the latter for he his determination and stick-to-it-ness. He has shown that most valuable trait of perseverance and determination.



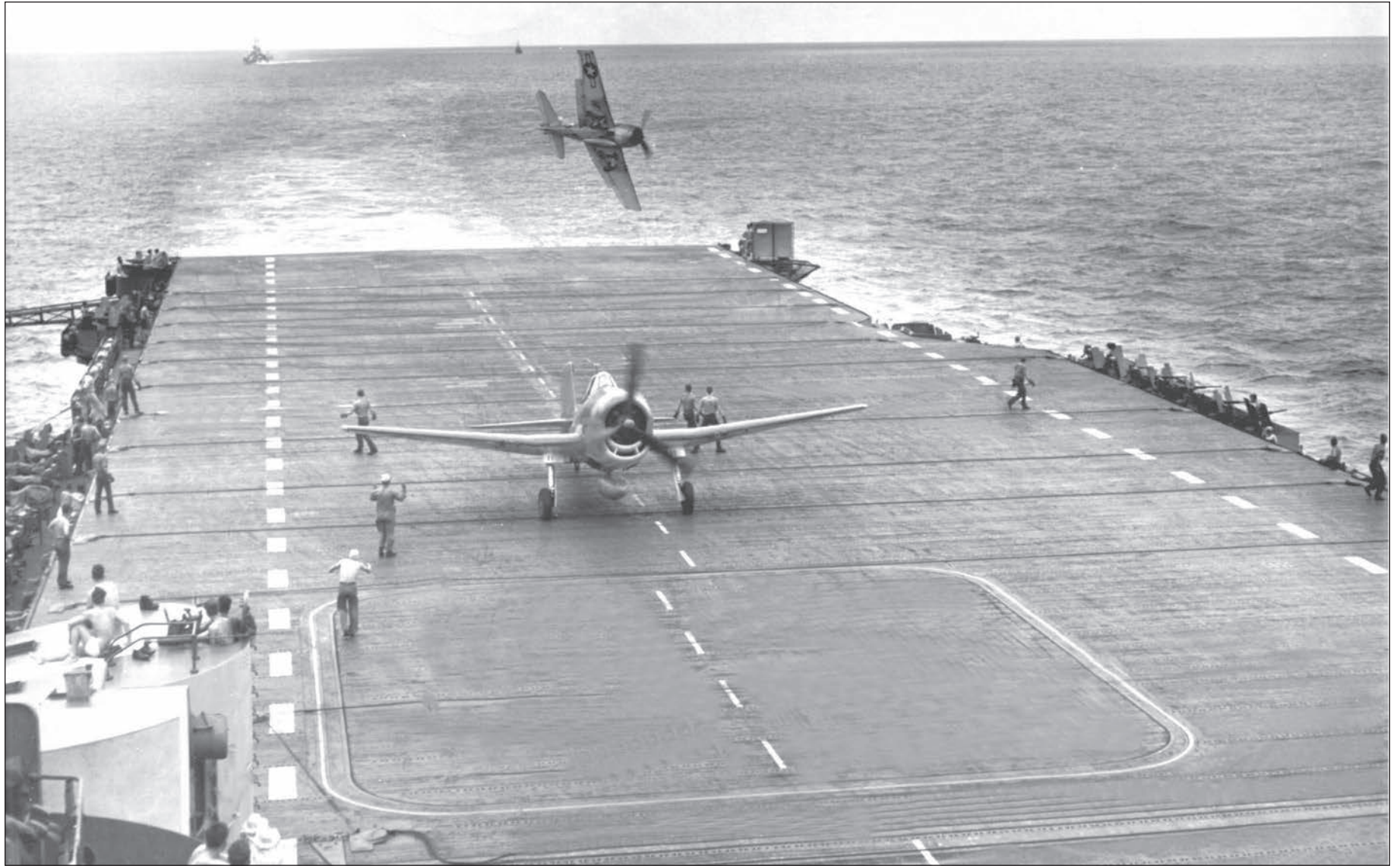
SERIOUS WAVE-OFF

In defense of the pilot being waved off (and water-bound), he could well have been at the correct interval. The problem could have been that the green-shirts had trouble unhooking the aircraft. The extra time they took could have made a wave-off imperative. This implies a lack of

coordination between the LSO and what was happening on the deck. The LSO has a couple of people right next to him to provide this coordination. After all, the LSO has to watch the next incoming aircraft, and not the flight deck. Practice, practice, practice.

He saw the safety of the deck in front of him but he took the wave-off by the LSO even though he knew that it was not in the cards for him to avoid a water crash (to have landed also would have meant a crash, though less serious; however, a LSO wave-off has the strength of an IRON law). Nevertheless, the pilot, in the heat of the moment, could see his survival as being far better if he continued to the deck. So, "to survive or to obey the law and avoid injuring those on the deck"? He of course chose the right thing even though self-survival is a tremendous impulse. In life, doing the right thing is orders of magnitude less critical than that portrayed here (as the succeeding pages show the pilot probably lost his life). We are not called upon to make life-and-death decisions about ourselves in a matter of seconds (could you do so?). However, we can and should make every effort to make decisions that are as right as possible. First of all though we have to have the intelligence to know right from wrong. This is not all that easy at times since what's right for you, for your family and for society

do not necessarily mesh. Sometimes (often) there are hard decisions to be made between the three. Now then, what is right, what is correct? The first thing that comes to mind is "fairness". Fairness for whom? What kind of fairness: emotional or intellectual? Or both? Obviously this cannot be determined in a few lines of text but what can be said is that fairness always considers BOTH parties. This in turn implies a balance of interests and an impartiality that is very difficult to define. This is why it's often best to have an outside party moderate the process for they are separated from the emotional content. The biggest impediment to fairness would seem to be emotional involvement. By the same token the more you can inject the intellectual approach the more fair, the more rational will be the outcome. If at all possible the parties involved should apply as much rationality as they are able. Now you ask what is "rationally". Rationality derives from reason and if I may be so bold, it in turn devolves finally to the scientific method. Check it out.



RESULT OF WAVE-OFF

A few seconds after the previous picture, this is what happened. I dare say the pilot survived and was picked up by the guard-destroyer that always follows. But flight operations continue uninterrupted. Notice that one of the arresting-wires is pulled back from being over the elevator. Sometimes the just landed aircraft is immediately taken down that elevator. It might be that it needs some repair work, and this was radioed to the ship (and the Air Boss) as the aircraft was flying in the landing pattern. This requires fast work because although the F6F can go down on the elevator without folding its wings, it requires about 20 seconds for the elevator to then get back up. We have no reason to believe that this crash was due to incompetence. In any case there are those who enjoy, nay require, disparaging those of competence as their way of compensating for their lack of accomplishments (usually due to their lack of any gumption (initiative, resourcefulness) to do well). Their comfort-level is enhanced by pulling others down, by belittling and besmirching them,

by discrediting and diminishing, others who do well, who achieve and succeed, so that the jealous one won't appear so inadequate by comparison. This is what feelings of inferiority will do to otherwise respectable people. Such displays of jealousy are corrosive not only to society but also to the one who is jealous. Their discomfort can only be assuaged by "getting off their duff", rolling up their selves and expending their muscles, both physical and mental. The truly meritorious have done so, so why can't others also? Now a certain amount of (mild) jealousy can be therapeutic in so far as it impels one, inspires one, "to be all they can be" as the army ad says. We, society, should be pleased and proud of those who have worked to be accomplished and so, successful. It is they who have made the world a better place. I'm reminded once again of those two 2006 Olympic skaters, Shizuka Arakawa and Rena Inoue. They too have made the world a better place for all those who cherish beauty. They have forever claimed our admiration.

A scene of finality from the previous page. There will be no body to return back to the family. His eternal resting place has been determined and will be inaccessible to one and all. This pilot did what he had to do: Take a wave-off which in this case sacrificed his life. He could have broken the rules and done the expedient thing: Do that which is conducive to (one's) advantage and welfare. However he took the correct, the proper, choice and not one that emphasized his well-being. Unfortunately, there are many too many of us who choose not to do that which the pilot did: Take the honorable (and in this case, lawful) path. Yes, there are

times when the expedient choice is the smart choice: Take the longer, less dangerous, route when in a car during a severe storm. This is expediency with merit. This is expediency with intelligence. This is expediency devoid of hubris. On the other hand (as they are wont to say) there are times when a certain elan, a certain dash, is not only proper but also to be desired. It mitigates the cry of "what might have been". Sometimes progress requires the ability to step forward and take a propitious chance (not including life threatening results). Thus expediency is a coin with two sides and the intelligent know one from the other. Use it well.



WAVE-OFF MISHAP

The aircraft in the water (upper right) probably lacked sufficient power when he got the wave-off (from the LSO signaling the approaching pilot to fly around again because of a fouled deck or because he was not in the proper position/altitude to make a decent landing). There should be a destroyer following the carrier nearby to pick up the pilot, presuming he wasn't incapacitated upon hitting the water. This picture also gives a good view of the catwalk beside the flight deck, as taken from the amidships outboard elevator. The catwalk is fifty feet above the water below and the "railing" is merely a flexible wire strung at a little above waist height. This is not the most secure arrangement. (One night when I was delivering a tray of coffee to the bridge (I was a messenger at that time, for about a week, after having been dispatched from the Navigation Division to the Airdales) from the officer's mess, I stepped out onto the catwalk that was in ABSOLUTE darkness. I put the tray down on the flight deck so as to see if I could see my hand two inches in front of my

face. I could not. Probably I needed to adjust to the darkness, but in any event I had to walk up three steps from the catwalk to the flight deck in PITCH blackness, with the "railing" about one foot away and the ship swaying this way and that way and while listening to the water below. Anxiety time.) Notice that where the catwalk extends outward is where there are about six 20-mm machine guns. There never was gunnery practice during flight operations, although they did have it after flight quarters while we were respotting the flight deck and generally preparing to receive the returning flight of aircraft. It was at a time such as this that a 5-inch gun projectile exploded right over the flight deck, killing a couple of Airdales and wounding others. I wasn't in the Airdales at that time. And why they fired over the flight deck is unclear. It was an accident, and accidents happen. I for one was always observant on the flight deck for this reason because there, in among the fired-up aircraft the accidents were usually the Airdale's fault Vigilance!

This is a scene fraught with emotions: One sympathizes with the situation and at the same time feels great frustration in being so impotent to the task of lending help. This person, this pilot, is not even a friend and yet the sentiments prevail. Too often those involved in tragedies as this are thought of only as names and not much more. It's normal, I guess, because we are inundated, saturated, with miseries all around us. We tend to lose a certain humanity. Yet if we bore the grief of every tragedy presented to us we'd "be a basket case". What to do? One thing would be to value our friendships with more sincerity. This brings to the fore the concept

of what really is a friendship? We could start by saying that a friend, a true friend, is one who would be sensitive, both emotionally and intellectually, to your situation, whatever that may be. A true friend would also always be "up front" with you. That is, if they are aware of a problem that's besetting you and has you in a turmoil of some sort, a friend would recognize this and give you the benefit of his/her knowledge, whatever it might be. Friends harbor no secrets. Friends are those with whom you feel very comfortable. Actually, I'm not good in this area and perhaps you could step in and define what is a real friendship. Tread carefully for his is not easy, for sure.



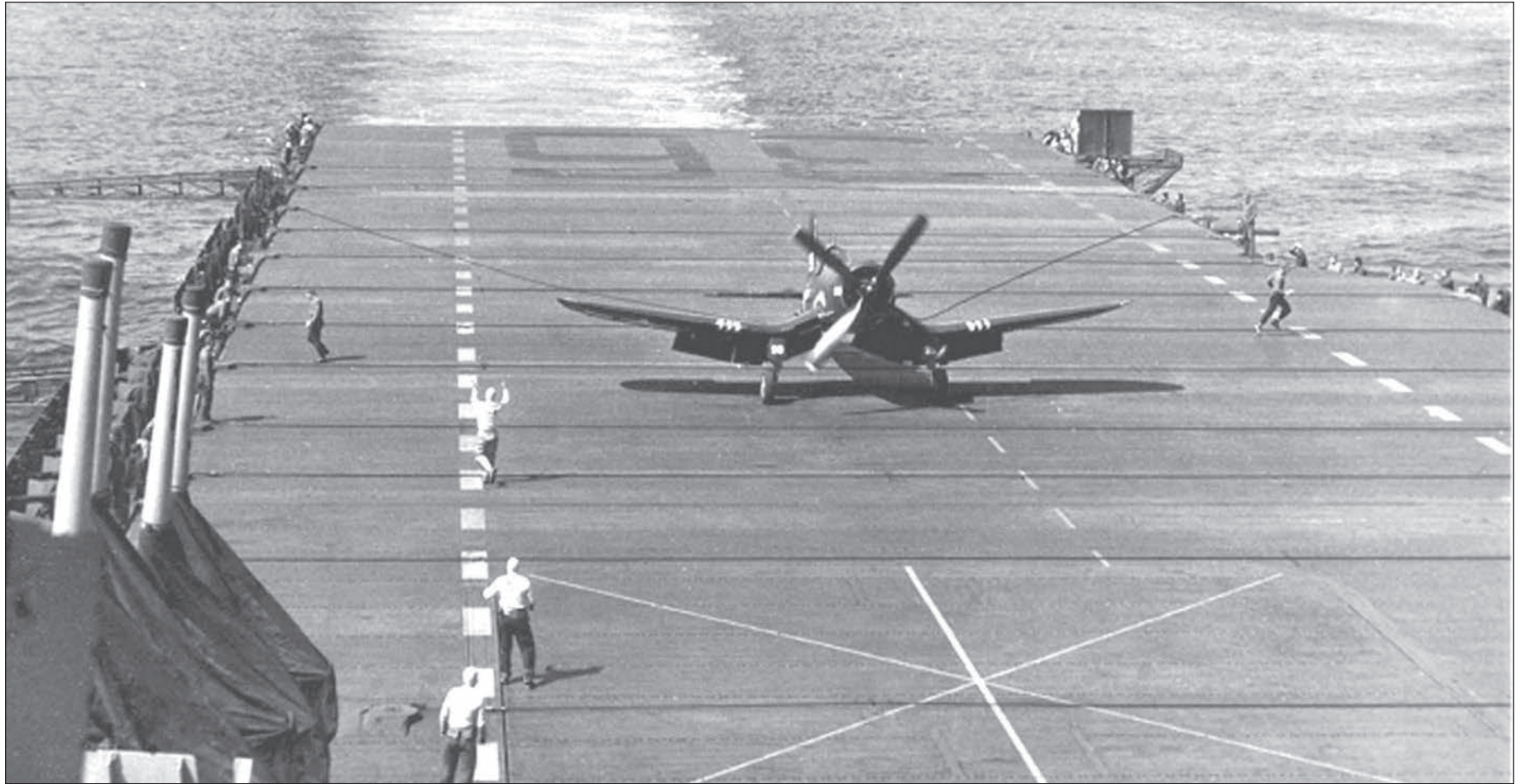
ANTIETAM (CV-36) BRINGS ANOTHER ONE ABOARD

I had to include this picture if for no other reason than that it was taken on the U.S.S. Antietam (CV-36), as witness the number at the far end of the flight deck. The green-shirts have just released the arresting-wire, the first yellow-shirt has “taken control,” and the F4U will be passed to the following yellow-shirts. This then is the “playing field” on which I spent 12 of the 13 months that I was an Airdale. Notice that the 5-inch guns are covered, meaning that the war was over. Also notice that although the arresting-wire is still stretched out, the green-shirt is running away from the aircraft, indicating that the tailhook has been disengaged. Also, the radio-masts, to the left, have been lowered to the horizontal position during landing operations. Even with a perfect landing as shown here, each and every person on the flight deck showed unabashed respect for this high-powered machines as they taxied forward with gusto to the parking area ahead. This was not “fun and games” on a wind-swept, restricted platform 50 feet above the rolling

sea. Things happen faster than you are sometimes prepared to accept. So, no less so should we show respect for one another if we are to maintain a decent society. This applies to everyone we meet, we come across and we conjoin. It also most definitely applies to ourselves: self-respect is the sine qua non of a well functioning society (presuming of course that our standards are sufficiently elevated.). AS you would be respected so too should you respect others (except gross felons). However, your disdain for respect (for yourself) is NO pass to withhold it from others. Mutual respect stands as the lubricant of the machinery of society. Make no mistake about that. [The respect we speak of here is not necessarily respect of accomplishments but rather the respect of one person, regardless of rank, for another person; it’s a respect that treats one another as equals before the law, but even more basically, as one human being to another even while at entirely different “social strata” and with no intention of reducing your level of standards of conduct or ideas or morals.]

Yes, those four blades tell me that this ship is the Antietam (being late in the war we received the more recently produced aircraft, i.e., more powerful). This is an example of being observant. The most of us tend to lack the quality of being observant. This is a quality much to be desired. For starters the process of learning is improved sometimes by orders of magnitude. It also allows non-personnel relationships to fall into place more readily which in turn makes life less complicated. A prime attribute of the ability to observe well is that in the arena of politics one can detect misrepresentations more easily, a quality that’s absolutely essential for a well functioning democracy.

One must observe if the “facts” as presented by the politicians are consistent. This can only be done if one is observant. It’s a matter of not letting them “put one over on you”. There’s a great deal going on within the political arena, so much so that the ordinary citizen will be lost if he/she doesn’t maintain some sort of ledger so as to “ring” it against what is being said today as opposed to what was said yesterday. Without an observant mind you’ll be lost. Being “lost” about such things makes democracy moot thus nullifying the grandeur of the Constitution so ably constructed by our forefathers. It should almost be axiomatic that being observant is to be a good citizen.



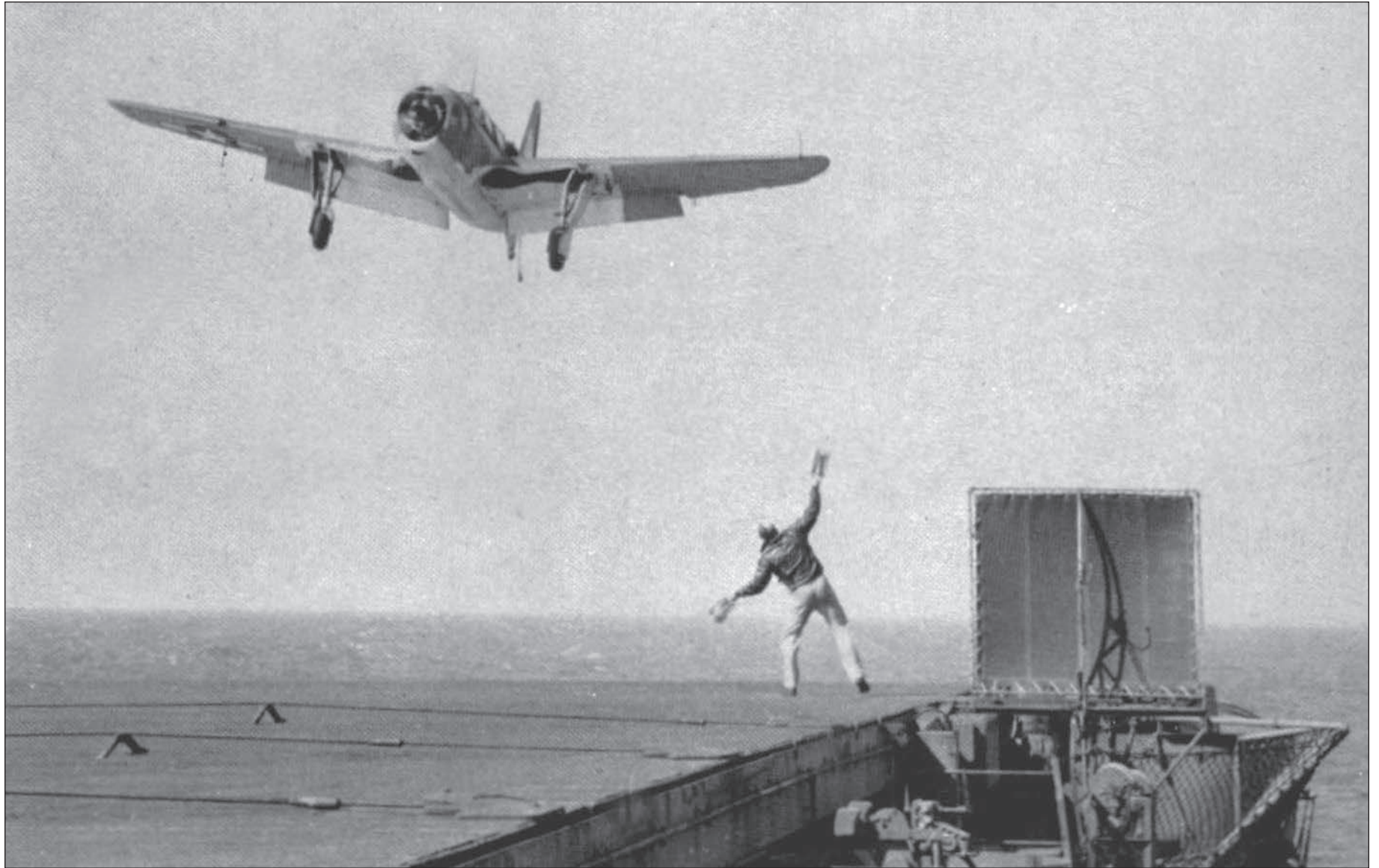
LANDING SIGNAL OFFICER

This LSO (Landing Signal officer) using his paddles, controlled the incoming aircraft by positioning his paddles in certain ways to tell the pilot how to make adjustments to his flight path. The pilot had no discretion here: the LSO was the boss. If the LSO signaled “go lower”, the pilot did so without questioning it. Even with this tight control by the LSO (who was a pilot), strange things sometimes happened to the landing aircraft, things that defied logic, things that defied rational explanations, leading to crashes of various seriousness. (see the “Mishaps” chapter). So then, the aircraft approached, nice and steady, at the right height and velocity and attitude, and then, without warning, it would flip over onto its back, or some such thing. There could have been a reasonable technical explanation for this, and yet, it was still baffling, still upsetting. It was almost as if there were a prescience involved here, similar to someone knowing just what you were GOING to think or do even before you yourself thought it or did it. (If that happened once, it would be amusing. If it happened twice, it

would be perturbing. If it happened three times, it would be upsetting. And if it happened “regularly”, it would be downright scary and maddening. But the flight deck never reached the advanced fourth stage.) It therefore behooved everyone on the flight deck to be alert at all times during landing operations (and launch operations, and parking operations.) If a bomb, or a kamikaze, hit such a deckload, there’d be a literal holocaust. This did occur, most notably on the U.S.S. Franklin when two 550-lb enemy bombs hit its loaded deck and caused 724 killed and 260 wounded. That occurrence was a saga in itself and has been well documented elsewhere. Parenthetically, on that day, 393 medals were awarded, the most ever on a single ship. However, medals don’t tell the story of those who died heroically but unseen. It brings to the fore the question as to how I would have reacted under similar circumstances. You would do well to ask yourself that very same question: do I have similar qualities facing death?

In my opinion this aircraft is too high to have been given the “cut engine” signal (actually the engine is not turned off; it needs power to taxi up the flight deck after being unhooked). This is a matter of opinion and apparently mine does not coincide with that of the LSO. Here opinion refers to what is the appropriate height (for “cut off”)? We are continually being “asked” what is appropriate? Is it appropriate to wear short pants to a formal dinner? (as an absurd example). Obviously in other instances people will disagree about what is appropriate. Yet there would seem to be certain things that are appropriate and certain other things not appropriate. This leads us

to the concept of fundamental standards and already agreed upon values, what is right and what is wrong. Also, what might be appropriate for him would not be appropriate for her. There are times when there are fine lines between what is and what is not appropriate. The answers here then rely on good judgment and good judgment in turn usually relies on what is called “common sense”. We could go round and round with this definition. Perhaps we could turn to the euphemism of “good taste” or propose banishing that which is rude, crude and socially unacceptable. Usually, the circumstances prescribe what is “appropriate” (that most solid of words).



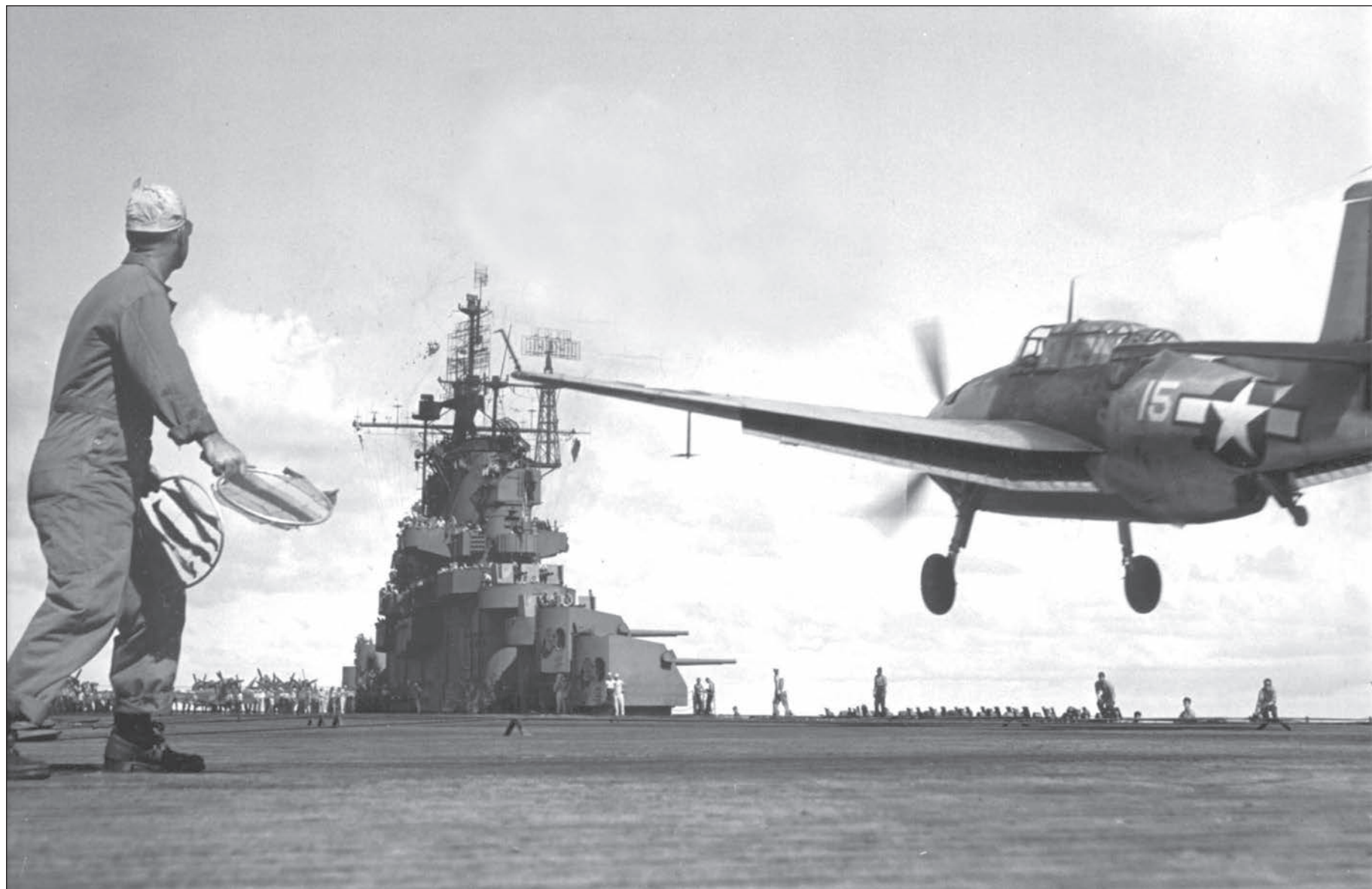
“WELL DONE”

The LSO (left) gave the “cut power” signal a few seconds ago and this TBF/M is making a perfect landing, so it would seem. One can get a good view of a raised arresting-wire at the lower middle of the picture. Remember, this is the biggest single-engine aircraft of the WWII. Everything here looks very normal and typical, with the Airdales down the deck awaiting the aircraft, to then go through the parking process (a chapter itself). While this landing is “well done” not all of the landings can claim such accolades. For instance, some were not landings at all: the LSO didn’t consider an aircraft to be sufficiently “in the groove” and so sent the pilot back into the landing pattern overhead by giving him the wave-off. [On a personal note, does this sound like a girl giving a guy the “kiss off”? Not at all because while the latter was hurt, the former was probably saved from a crash, at the minimum, and maybe preserved of his life at the maximum. This does not even consider those personnel on the flight deck who would be at risk from certain types of crashes.] So

no, all landings are not the same by any means. While this may not be good in terms of efficient flight deck operations it is good as relates to the human condition. Who would want the dull sameness of everyone. Consider entering a room full of people all of whom had the same physiognomy, the same hair-style, the same clothes, the same voice, the same thoughts and ideas, the same mannerisms, the same walk, the same (you get the picture, a room full of clones in all respects). Just so do we relish differences to make life not only more interesting but also, and more importantly, more effective and productive in this complicated thing called life. This is one reason why respecting everyone makes so much sense and is such a firm ramification of the power of reason. One could even make the argument that it’s irrational not to respect others. Different is fine and good (as long as the bounds of propriety are not ignored). However, a businessman has the proper right to say “it’s my way or the highway” just as does the military. Sameness has its place.

Looking at this picture one doesn’t know whether this TBM will catch a wire, miss the wires or hop the barriers all together. It all depends on how high it was at “cut off”, how fast it was going, how fast the ship’s speed is and whether the deck is heaving or not. Many variables, one result. The point here is that things have consequences, sometimes serious ones as here. We should know perfectly well that the same applies in our every day lives: Things have consequences and hopefully we are smart enough to understand that they may be of a serious nature. As in so much of what has been discussed previously the antidote for the possible conse-

quences of foolish behavior can be found in intelligence (that results from learning and inquisitiveness). Almost everything has a consequence. Are we smart enough to be aware of them and if they could be deleterious? Do we understand the near and far ramifications of our ill-advised behavior? Unintended consequences are a sad refrain indeed. With clear thinking one can avoid the more obvious pitfalls. Unfortunately we also learn of these things by unpleasant experiences. Finally, so-called “street-smarts” are not an unimportant means of avoiding inadvertent, baneful consequences.



PERFECT 20-SECOND INTERVALS

This picture shows good spacing of planes during landing: one plane is taxiing forward, one plane is about to land, and one plane is “coming around” the corner. Actually that third plane is a little tardy. The F6F taxiing forward should be starting to fold its wings about now, and there should be Airdales helping out this process. That “undressed” Airdale should be standing next to the wheel of the TBF/M. Actually, that could be me during my first week, when I didn’t know any better. Actually, the TBF/M’s engine is already stopped. The wheelchock should have been placed around the wheel before the propeller stopped spinning, as explained in the Parking chapter. It should have been understandable but it was strange nonetheless: when an aircraft in the landing pattern was far away it seemed to be going in slow-motion. As it approached closer and closer it seemed to go faster and faster until, when it touched down, it seemed to be going excessively fast. This of course was a form of optical illusion, or illusion of some kind. At any rate, it came upon you “before you knew it”, or at least, before you were fully prepared for it. If you were on the far side of the barriers this was no problem (presuming it was a standard landing). However, if you were on the other side, the side where all the arresting-wires lay, it was not so non-threatening (on the Antietam, if not the others, the Airdales would often be on the “active” side of the barriers so that they could get to the aircraft,

wheelchock in hand, before it started its sometimes “frenzied” taxi up forward to the parking area because all aircraft were supposed to be escorted to a parking spot by an Airdale after it was unhooked). In any event, it was necessary to stay alert at all times during landing operations, especially when on the “hot” side of the barriers because the aircraft seemed to move so fast once it touched down on the deck. The “moral of the story” is that things are not always what they seem, either for good or bad (as in this case of landing aircraft). It’s for this reason that we should all be armed with the tools that will protect us from making mistakes of judgment due to miscasting what seems to be. There are those who are hypercritical of what seems to be a slight or some such thing. It seems as if we’re receiving unwarranted discrimination of some kind (who hasn’t felt that way?). Firstly, is the slight or the discrimination incurred worth a response at all? Very often those who deliver the slight or the discrimination are themselves at a nadir and are probably in more need than you. Consider this and act accordingly. Things seem hopeless. Take on a positive view and your condition will improve regardless of the actual situation. Thoughtful cognition will be a boon about that which confounds you. Contemplation improves your capacity for insight and intuition, the salve that soothes what seems to trouble you.

Three perfect intervals. Oh happy day! Things are looking up, at least for now. This is an example of one of the true joys of life: To accomplish something, anything, well. Your accomplishments may be far and few between but they are your accomplishments of which you should take pride. Besides the obvious increment to one’s self-esteem (an absolute essential to your and society’s well-being) to accomplish well is to know happiness. This is what they call a “no brainer”, an irrefutable fact. The

U.S. Army has an ad which says: “Be the best you can”. It couldn’t be said better, for then everyone becomes a winner. While its true that sometimes to do well, to accomplish that goal of yours, it might require a great deal of effort. Good. The harder the assignment, the greater the effort, the greater the happiness generated with the accomplishment. In fact, there are those who deliberately choose the difficult because of the ensuing pleasure on reaching their goal.



ANOTHER GOOD SEQUENCE

In this picture the interval between aircraft is just about right. What's missing is that the forward F6F should be folding its wings, and Airdales should be aiding this procedure. Those are two officers in the foreground, a yellow-shirt in front of them, and Airdales beyond him. However, there are other yellow-shirts and Airdales even further down the deck. But a glaring omission is an Airdale proceeding alongside the F6F, carrying a wheelchock. This was SOP (Standard operating Procedure) on board the Antietam. I guarantee that. (I make it sound as

if the Antietam was a superior ship. While I certainly do have pride in "my" ship, I don't want to imply that the Antietam was a superior ship. For starters, it never saw enemy action. For another thing, each ship had its own operating procedures, its own personality, if you will. And furthermore, being a training ship, not under the duress of the enemy, maybe we were doing some innovating things, such as the Antietam being the first ship in the fleet getting the canted (angled) flight deck (in 1952, I believe).

"All for one, one for all". Everyone on deck is there to aid and abet the pilot as he comes aboard and the pilot in turn does his level best to make the safest landing possible so as not to physically disrupt one and all with a disastrous crash. This will not happen without due diligence and attention to the job at hand. We could all pay adherence to this admonition. Due diligence implies that one maintain a serious demeanor at times like these on the flight deck. While there are times to be relaxed, even frivolous, there are other times to be serious and diligent. Diligence requires that one be persistent even under the most trying of circumstances and difficulties. No dilettantes here, please. Diligence means one applies a constant and earnest effort to promote the job at hand. It also requires one to be persistent even under the most trying circum-

stances. The above paints a rather somber picture for us civilians here at home trying to enjoy life's pleasures. However, the sooner we understand that life is not all "a bowl of cherries" the better for us and society in general. The sooner we realize that there are times and places when and where due diligence is applicable the better. This might be a wake up call for some and if so, take heed. The world fortunately is not all fun and games, honest, for in large measure it is the diligent that make this world go round. As before, it's necessary for those who are riding in the wagon to get off the wagon and help push the wagon. It's as simple as that (as long as you push with diligence). Stop being self-centered and join the crowd (that's doing the work; understand that things are not for nothing; a cost account will make this clear).



GOOD BRAKES, BAD LANDING

This Hellcat apparently missed all the arresting-wires (stretched across the deck) and then was compelled to apply his brakes. This is somewhat unusual because if an aircraft misses hooking onto an arresting-wire, it means that it made a bounce landing. That is, he was too high when he cut his power, and so, hit the deck hard. This in turn would cause the aircraft to bounce, making a hook-landing less likely (because the aircraft bounced over the arresting-wires which are elevated about four inches above the deck). Thus the braked wheels would have nothing to brake against. An alternate explanation is that the mechanism that raises the arresting-wires did not work properly, so that a nice-and-easy touchdown of the aircraft made no difference. In this case, note the barrier-wires across the deck, to the left. These wires are about 5-6 feet high and are suppose to stop the aircraft that miss the arresting-wire from proceeding into the parked aircraft up forward. Sometimes that works, and sometimes not.

Some aircraft make such poor landings that they bounce over the arresting-wires, then over the barrier-wires, and then into the parked aircraft and personnel up forward. This can cause havoc of major proportions.

Insight and intuition, what do they mean? Perhaps the following will lead to a better understanding of these terms. One could say that insight is the piercing of the fog of irrelevancy and then perceiving the essence and intricacies of a subject. Intuition on the other hand might be the following: by having had long experience in adroitly reasoning from cause A to result Z by means of having traversed the path of A to B to C to D to ----- Z, one is then able to immediately reach point z from point A without having to traverse the path A to B to C to Z. These two capabilities require strict attention to contemplation, reflection, using intellectual and reasoning abilities.

"Good Brakes, Bad Landing". Wow! Almost another catastrophe! To be sure, a bad event was averted but I can assure you that there were no outward expressions of this ("another day, another landing"). "Back in my day" there was very little, if any, melodrama in everyday life. Exaggeration was not the mode, sensationalism was not the vogue. For the adults, sensational activities no, sensational architecture (for example) yes. Vicarious pleasures were foolish (presuming sensationalism is a pleasure). The bizarre was the bottom but mind you, the superb could be thrilling. The

useful unique, the outstanding, were applauded. At the same time things were much more low-key and it wasn't, for the most part, necessary to put up "applause" signs. Achievers were unassuming in comportment. Yes, the football games had their "Rah Rahs" and "bulldog, Bulldog, Eli Yales" Yet, by in large, sensationalism was an anomaly. I don't think we needed that to rouse ourselves. Perhaps I'm being too hard on the present and the culprit for this is, you guessed it, commercial TELEVISION. My apologies.



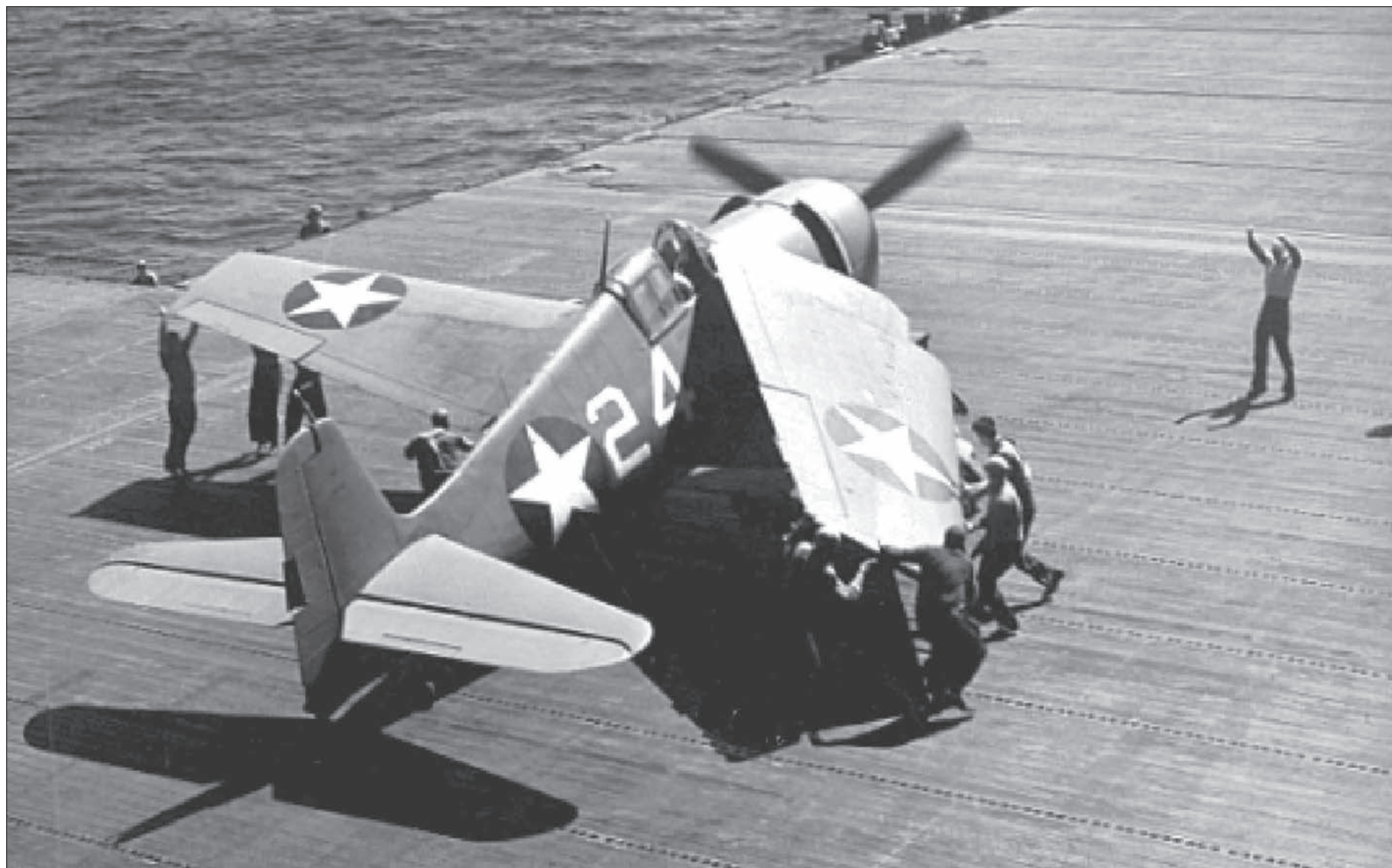
HELLCATS NEED HELP WITH THEIR WINGS

Here then we see the Airdales helping the F6F fold its wings, which was SOP on the Antietam. This only applied to F6Fs (something to do with hydraulics and engineering, and position of the wing). When the wings are folded, the yellow-shirt will pass the aircraft forward. Right now he's showing "apply brakes." The pilot, at this time, and until the engine's shut off, is not a free agent. To the contrary, he's under constant control of the yellow-shirts. Here again, just as with the LSO, the pilot is under constant control of the yellow-shirts. It was my observation that all the pilots, all the time, were very diligent in taking directions from the yellow-shirts. After all, those aircraft were very powerful machines, and there were a lot of high-priced machines around and about, not to mention the "high-priced" personnel. The Hellcats required help and the Airdales were always "Johnny on the spot" to help them fold (and unfold) their wings. Not once do I remember a yellow-shirt shouting at us (and you had to shout to be heard on the flight deck during opera-

tions), not once did they yell, "hey you guys, hurry up and fold those wings". This is a perfect example of someone helping someone else to help himself. That is how it should be; helping someone to help himself (naturally there are those who cannot help themselves and they need unconditional help). Actually, it is to do someone a gross disservice to do for him what he should do for himself. If nothing else, it saps his initiative and sense of responsibility. Here though we are considering those who have at least a partial ability to accomplish what needs to be done. Let him at first exert himself and in so doing learn what it is he lacks in ability or knowledge. Don't deny him this learning opportunity. After that, if it's clear he has reached his legitimate limit or capability, then roll up your selves and help to push (as here; but we already know the Hellcat's limitations so we don't wait). Don't contribute to a person's laziness; to do so is a disservice to him: he should "get off his duff" and take responsibility, at the very least. Case closed.

Even a big, powerful thing such as this Hellcat needs aid. In fact, we all need aid of one sort or another at some time or another. Of course this aid is forthcoming here because it's part of a job-description. However, very often aid should and can be provided that is not in someone's job-description. This is called generosity (that's probably based on empathy (which is the innate feeling of concern for the plight of others)). Such people are by nature unselfish (although it could be a learned trait). Benevolence, as defined above, is not just the act of a "do-gooder". Benevolence has a very practical aspect. It's been said before and it should be said again, the welfare of others directly and indirectly impinge on

all of us: The better off others are, the better off we all are. Who wants to live beside someone (a group) who live in poverty? (the world is becoming smaller and smaller) As the wag has said (somewhat cruelly): "There goes the neighborhood". We want our "neighborhoods" to be agreeable; even though we aren't necessarily humanitarians. [Please, workfare, not unending welfare] Empathy is a wonderful thing and it's too bad that it has received a somewhat pejorative meaning in the minds of some hard-knuckle people. If they were more astute they would realize that in a crass way empathy can be self-serving to a large degree (where self-serving is now a good thing).



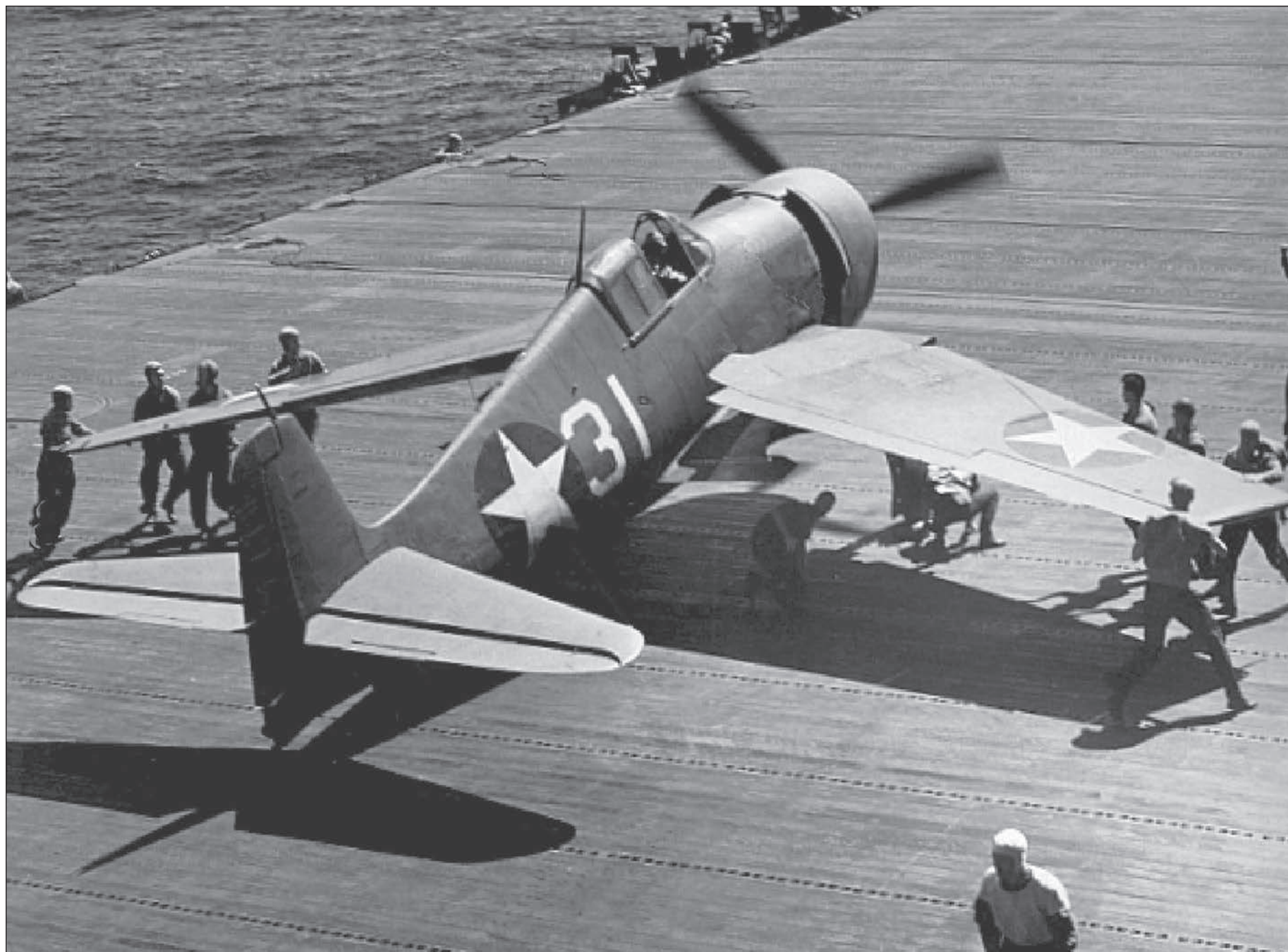
ALL TOGETHER

Upon landing, this Hellcat needs help folding its wings. Neither the Corsair nor the Avenger nor the Helldiver needed this help. The capability to fold their wings enabled the Essex-class carriers to carry 100 aircraft. It also greatly simplified the movement of aircraft on the flight deck (and the hanger deck especially). In addition, it enabled the aircraft to be parked close together, cheek-to-jowl. This of course presented problems to the Airdales as they tried to negotiate their way among and about the aircraft, so closely packed together. It meant not being able to give a wide healthy berth when going past aircraft that are almost touching each other, as was the case on a training ship such as the Antietam. Much of the time there was only room enough to “scrape” by in between two parked aircraft as they warmed up their engines during pre-launch time. Fortunately, the folded wings extended out further than the distance between adjacent aircraft’s wheels (for the Hellcat and the Corsair, the propellers’ diameters were as wide as the distance between their wheels). But the folded wing extended beyond the wheel by only about a foot. Thus, an Airdale would walk between two parked Hellcats, or two parked Corsairs, with the propeller tips sometimes only a couple a feet from each shoulder. What made it worse was the fact that the propeller was only a blur. With an unstable deck and a strong wind at your back, caution was the word. LOTS of caution. As is the case in all things concerning the flight deck the Airdales are working together as a team in achieving a common goal: expedit-

ing the preparation and movement of all the aircraft up forward to their respective parking spots. This theme of cooperation will always be an integral part of all the activities on the flight deck both during and after flight operations. However, this certainly is more than simple cooperation. It is a unison of effort toward a unified goal supported by a desire to accomplish these tasks with smooth dispatch. For one thing, the sooner done the sooner it’s done. The above isn’t to imply any less usefulness derived from individualism. Yet cooperation must be considered the engine of an improving enterprise (and the activity on the flight deck was definitely an enterprise of real significance). Cooperation works best when there’s a feeling of a common cause to motivate it. [Motivation is sometimes a tough nut to crack. Leading by example usually is the beat path to instilling the desire to overcome one’s inertia: inertia is the well-spring of a flagging lack of motivation; that and the absence of interest in a given subject or activity are what stand in the way of a spirited effort to do one’s duty which DOES include making oneself more knowledgeable. Personally, I’d throw in the sine qua non of motivation: self-respect -----if you don’t respect yourself, who will??] Furthermore, without intent there will be but desultory effort. It goes without saying that for a useful cooperation all concerned must “be on the same page” so that everyone will be pulling the wagon in the same direction. [I once knew a girl who pulled a little red wagon. Her determination impressed me.]

Continuing that important quality of empathy from the preceding page, how would society prevail without it? There’s no law that one has to be empathic. There’s no required ethic of compassion. Perhaps there should at least be a moral imperative for empathy and compassion to counteract what at times seems to be a pervasive egoism (avarice/greed). It has been said that there can be no progress without the impetus of people trying to upgrade themselves, even at the expense of treading on oth-

ers. Is that progress? “United we stand, divided we fall”. No, progress does not need to be accomplished on the backs of others. Initiative and empathy are not mutually exclusive. In fact a case can be made that they go hand-in-hand because empathy and generosity are the personification of understanding (and what progress is possible devoid of understanding)? HOWEVER, hard work should usually trump the need for empathy and make it (empathy) moot.



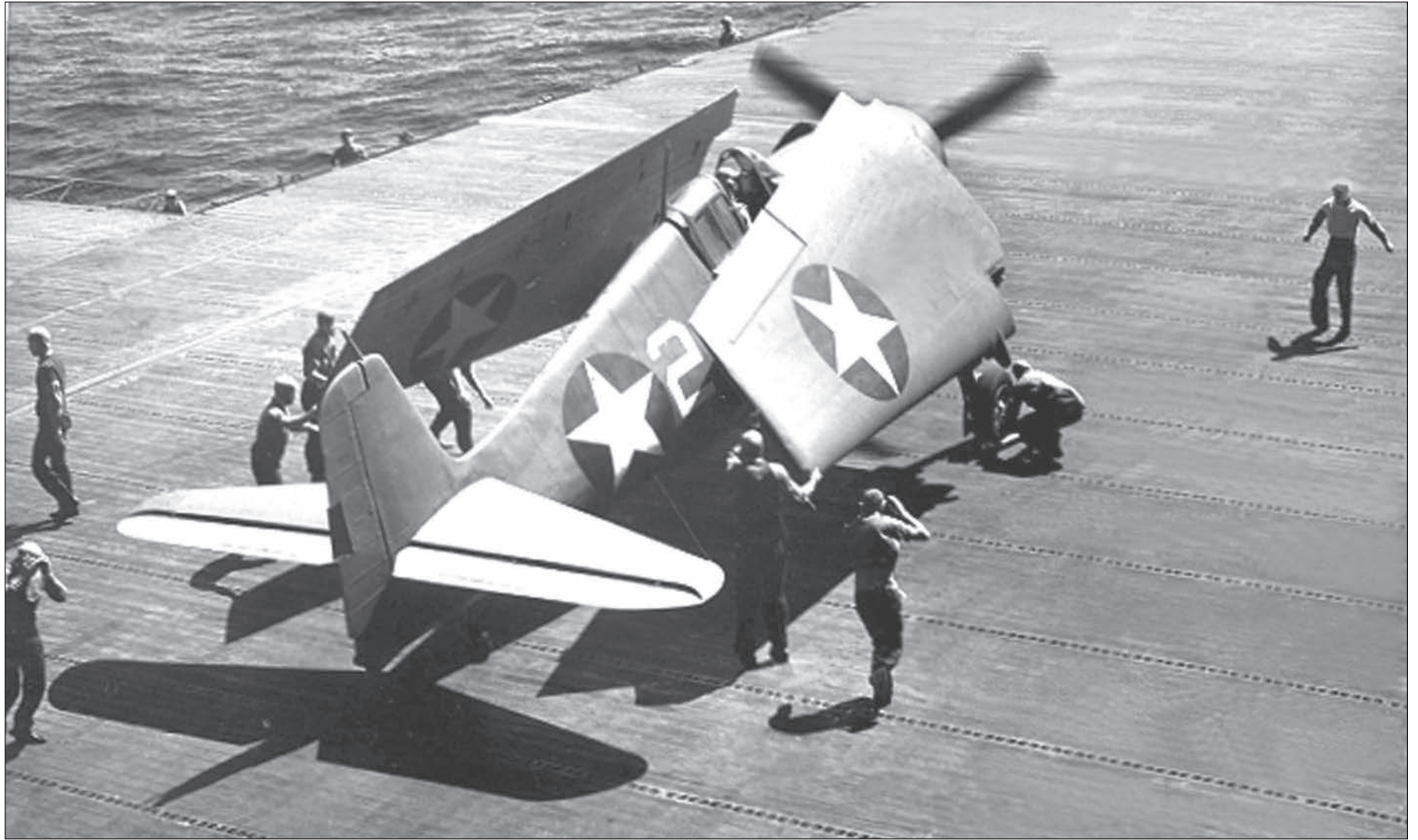
WINGS FOLDED, WHEELS UNCHOCKED

The Airdales have just finished folding this Hellcat's wings. For some unknown reason, an Airdale's chocking the wheel. This is obviously no place to park an aircraft during landing operations, unless this flight consists of only one aircraft. For normal landing operations, an aircraft is moved up the flight deck post-haste. The intervals of succeeding touchdowns is 20 seconds. That is, 20 seconds after one aircraft lands,

so too will another one land, and another, etc. Folding the wings requires only several seconds, so this should be no problem. The problem probably is further up the deck where there's a profusion of aircraft all seeking (being directed to) a parking spot. This is definitely a difficult time, to the point of being harrowing (and dangerous). This will be discussed in the "Parking" chapter.

Carrying on the subject of "egoism" from the previous page we can agree that this trait puts the egoist at the center of his world, first and foremost. An egoist can do for others but almost always after he himself is served. This is the antithesis of the definition of a true friend and society needs true friends else everyone would be denigrating the other. A society could not long survive such an environment. Are egoists two-faced? Probably, and who wants such associations? Egoists tend to become easily jealous of others, with reason or not. Jealousy in turn turns the atmosphere rancid. Egoists thus tend to make society caustic and corrosive. Egoists play one person against another person thereby creating tensions that need not be there. Egoist believe there can be only winners and losers instead of winners and winners (forget the stop-watch). [If I were King I would say that everyone in

the Olympics who bested a certain time was a winner; there would just be gradations of winners (but I'm not King).] Egoists are not trustworthy, not loyal, not helpful, not kind, not often courteous and thus unsatisfactory boy scouts. [I of course am just "sounding off" and you, the reader, should do your own.] How does one become an egoist? In my humble opinion he becomes one because he hasn't attained sufficient abilities to have reached a satisfactory level of self-esteem (I forever refer to self-esteem as the Golden Chalice of a felicitous society). "Now hear this' (over the PA system), "solid self-esteem translates into solid contentment (and happiness)" but do NOT let this stop your constant endeavors to work to improve. In conclusion, perhaps an egoist's biggest fault is his lack of respect for others, and thus society pays.



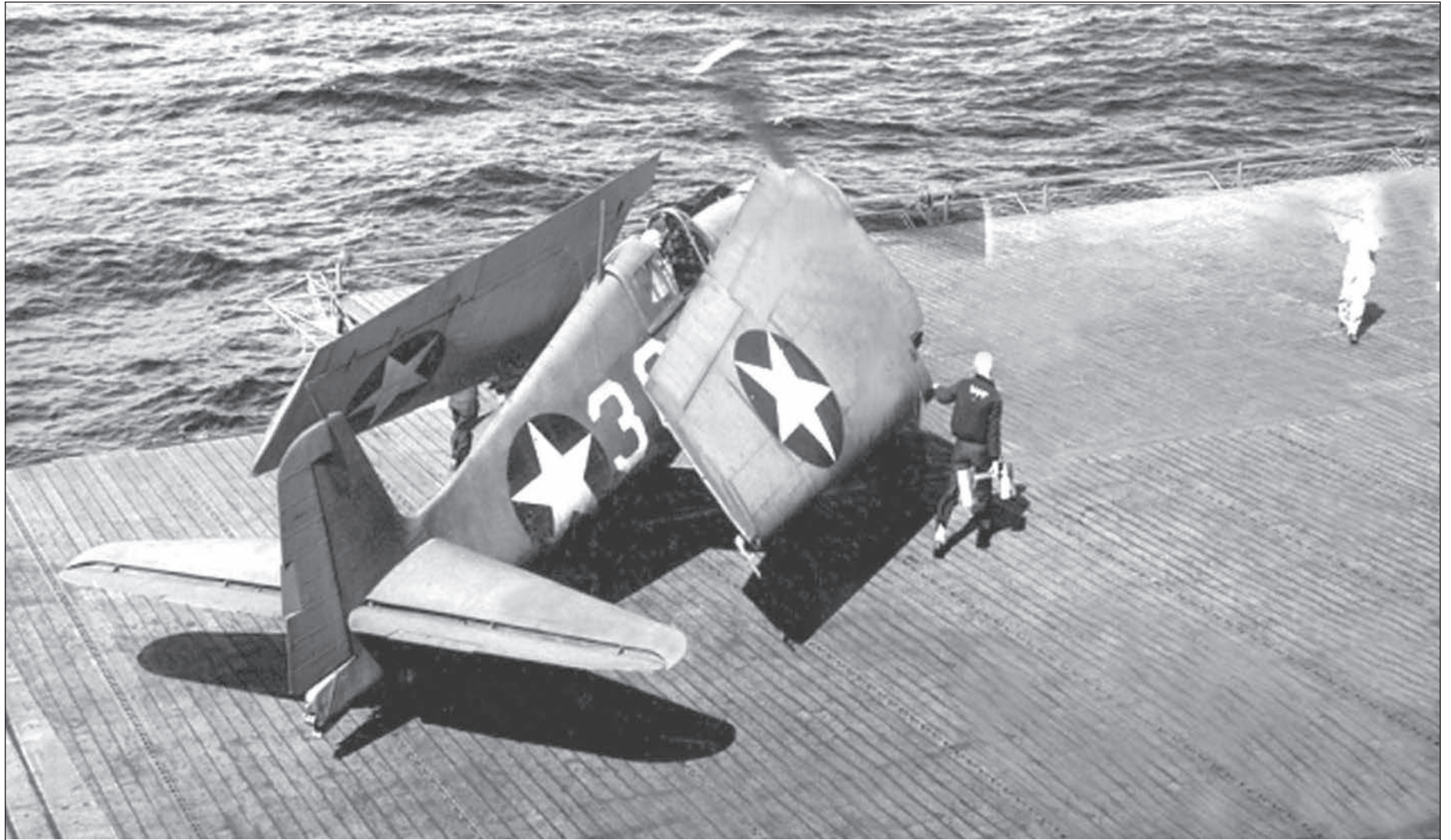
HELLCAT TO THE HANGER DECK

Having just landed, this Hellcat is being directed by the yellow-shirt to the deckedge elevator at midship. These elevators take about five seconds to complete the trip from the flight deck to the hanger deck, and visa versa. The Airdales (both sides of aircraft) always accompany an aircraft whenever it moves about under its own power. The presumption is that, should its brakes fail for any reason, an Airdale will be right there to immediately chock the wheel and thus stop the aircraft. Not only is there momentum to stop, but also the motion caused by the propeller which itself has a lot of momentum. So, an aircraft never taxis anywhere without the Airdales as "Pages". And sometimes the aircraft taxi at a fast pace. That wouldn't be so bad except for the fact that as you're trying to keep up with it, you're at the same time running against a very strong wind (the faster the aircraft taxi, the stronger the wind.) Sometimes you have to grab onto the aircraft to stay up with it, and even then you're actually being dragged by it, chock in one hand, aircraft in the other hand. The Airdales here have been directed to move this Hellcat down below on the deck edge elevator. This is all well and good but there were some things that the Airdales did on their own recognizance. After a while, as in any occupation, the Airdales know what has to be done and they do it, undirected and unspoken. They recognize these things, making an air operation that much more smoothly done. This faculty to recognize requirements stands us all in good stead. It is a ramification of learning that we all do all the time, even if subconsciously. It's part of the growing process which

takes place even when we don't realize it. It's good. What is not good about the process of recognition is that it can also make one vulnerable (in very special cases): to be (continuously) reminded to recognize words and symbols that pertain to a very painful experience. At best, to inflict this on someone is shameful and at worst it is malicious. Besides that it's the antithesis of what is meant by friendship and friendliness. When it becomes a way of life, what has life to offer? (Here is a situation where one might try to rationalize the purpose of the words and symbols. I for one recognize the need for symbols but utterly reject their use for remembrance of things in the painful past because that is absolutely private.) On a more interesting note, recognition is also used to acknowledge achievements (of varying degrees). I strongly support the use of recognition as a means of encouraging those struggling to improve themselves. This is a noble cause. What I suspect are those unfortunate souls who feel the need to seek and obtain recognition for its sake alone. I have wondered why. Recognizing others as a way of promoting achievement is fine but the near obsession, or even the desire, for recognition of oneself baffles me. Surely one must realize that once recognition is achieved, a personal life is in jeopardy (presuming a personal life is desired). Each one must make that calculation, and mine is, on a scale of 1 to 10, 0-5 for recognition and notoriety and 9.5 for privacy. Others have other values but I'd counsel them that to lust after recognition and notoriety has very serious consequences. However, it's a free country; let them choose their own ratio.

Closing out the "egoism" discourse, it would seem that the egoist is most susceptible to peer-pressure (and all its ill effects). Unfortunately it appears that the "ring-leader", the "playground bully" seems to dominate the scene. True, it's difficult at times not to be in the "in crowd" but when you come to know this crowd you wonder why the

attraction? Are the so-called perks worth the inevitable, "invisible" in-fighting". I was never asked to join a fraternity which was well because it saved me the trouble to say "no". Am I wrong to believe that fraternities are havens for egoists and super egoists? Perhaps I'm being too broad-brush here but then I wonder. Do you?



LOOKS LIKE A GOOD LANDING

The LSO can only watch now, now that he's given the "cut engine" signal. The engine isn't actually cut-off; it's only put in idle so that it can be ready to apply power to taxi up the deck after the tailhook is unhooked. This is a good view of the wing-flaps in the down position. It's also a good view of the tailhook and the angle it makes with the vertical. That "stick" sticking

out from the end of the wing is a pitot tube that's used to detect the aircraft's speed, a very important parameter when landing an aircraft. While the actual landing speed is, I believe, 75-knots, the speed relative to the flight deck is about 40-knots (because the combination of the wind-speed over the front of the flight deck and the ship's speed should be 35-knots).

Ready to touch down, very nicely Well done. Good for him, good for us on the flight deck. Here the pilot has a very strong desire to accomplish his mission well because he and others seriously depend on it. Excellence is expected and excellence is delivered. However, how about you and you and you? Is excellence a priority? If not, why not? it should be because our self-esteem depends on it (self-esteem will be, or should be, a recurring theme throughout this book because it is the foundation of a happy society and the coin of the realm). To excel is to know solid contentment.. To excel is to improve society. To excel well is to encourage others to do the same. However, it be wrong to think that excellence can be achieved without effort. While it may be true that some can accomplish good results with seemingly little effort this is because the better one becomes the easier it is to do even better. There should be some mathematical formula that specifies this: The amount of effort expended times the amount of time spent times the positive attitude exhibited times the support

received (verbal and otherwise) times the persistence expended equals a result squared. Excellence is self-perpetuating and it feeds on itself. Too often there are those who become discouraged too soon, and most of their positive inertia is lost. This makes it more difficult to "crank up" a flagging spirit. That maligned saying of "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again" is spot on. To overcome the disappointments of failure, over and over again, is a character builder if there ever was one. One could well say that such a person is stronger than the one who achieved without effort. The former, in effect, traded time for intestinal fortitude (not a bad bargain). To excel, to achieve excellence, is the coin of the realm and it is available to one and all. It's a mistake to believe that you need to excel in many areas (if you do so, so much the better but it is not a prerequisite for that gold medal of solid self-esteem). In fact, it's not the number of merit badges you earn, it's the quality of those badges. Whatever that badge, choose the one that pushes you.



LANDING/LAUNCHING

This TBF/M pictured here is actually taking off (notice there's no tail-hook or arresting wires). However, it's a very good view of what a landing looks like. Wing-flaps are seen to be used for both landing and launching. Also, this attitude is typical just before the plane touches down: it flares slightly upward, thus slightly slowing air speed. This picture also affords a good view of the wheel-wells in the wing. All the aircraft had retractable landing gear. Launch or land. Which is it? It's obviously one or the other as is deemed so by classical logic. However, as mentioned previously, classical logic does not always suit the circumstances. Life is not so accommodating that people can be put into one of two categories: friends and not friends. They say that we are known by the company we keep, but this is not, should not, be hard-bound. If it were so it would exclude all those with whom we associate but who were not our friends. That is, casual friends and acquaintances would be shunned, a patently absurd idea. Human relations are not an either/or

situation as too many young people seem to assume. Perhaps I'm mistaken and the casual dress that is *de rigueur* (strictly required) is a reflection of the casual approach people take to one another. In a way this is fine; in other ways it is not fine because casualness can too easily lead to unconcern for those who could use a cheerful "how're you doin'". It's been my history to shy away from contact even though I know it's plainly wrong (too many "slings and arrows") but I'm still learning (though I'll never become a "hail fellow well met"). [This book has been primarily about others with me being a narrator so I feel somewhat uncomfortable making comments about myself except certainly when speaking about the trials and tribulations on the flight deck during flight operations. I will say though that my idea of a nice person, even though I'll never meet them, are the two women Olympic skaters of 2006. They are the ones with whom I'd feel comfortable, they are "my type".] Now the question is, "Sincerely, what is your type"? It makes a difference.

This TBM could be equally landing or launching (since its tail-hook is retracted it's actually launching). This brings up the subject of equality, a basic tenet of our Constitution ("All men are created equal....."). In point of fact everyone, while created equal, is not in fact equal. Part of this is due to our heritage and part of it is due to our initiative, etc. We can do nothing about our heritage but we certainly can do something about the latter. Do we have the gumption to do so? There will be those who say that we're not on a level playing field because of lack of opportunities. They would be right but is that sufficient reason to sit back on our haunches and bray about how we're put upon? Certainly not because there is no such thing as an equal playing field. (Someone very close to me once said to me that 'Life is not fair". She was

saying the obvious. She also wrote to me saying "I pray that you won't be lazy". In that, I was almost completely true to her words.) The smart thing in all of this is to play the cards you were dealt and not waste your time bemoaning those cards. If you're helped along the way, fine, but do not think that you're owed this help. Furthermore, even after you've put forth full effort do not expect equality of outcome with others. There are too many variables involved to expect this. Be brave, roll up your sleeves and dig in. Maybe you'll succeed and maybe you won't. However, recall a previous statement in which it was said that 80% of the enjoyment is the trip, not the destination. Yes, I understand that life is not fair but I also understand that life in large measure is what YOU make of it.



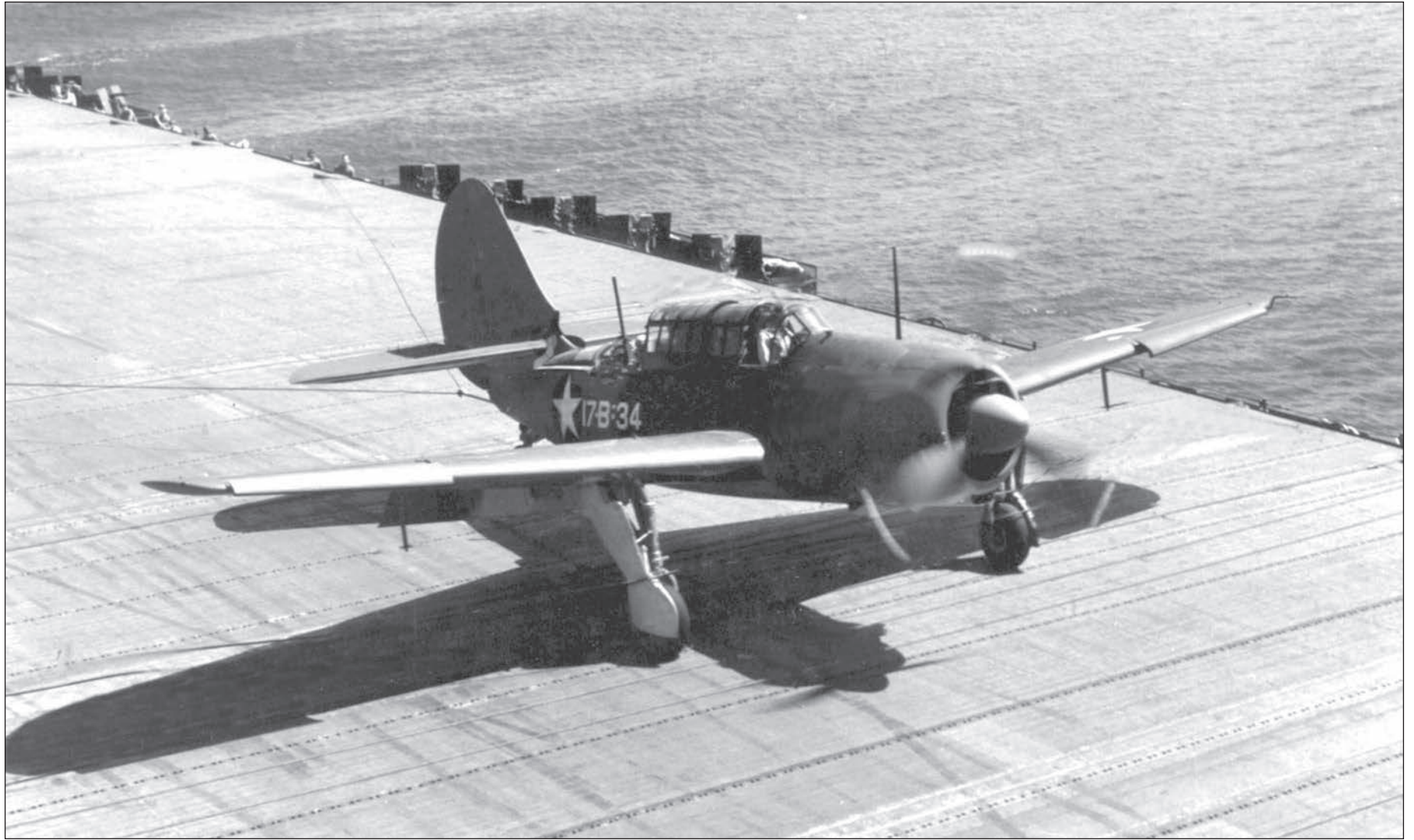
HELLDIVER ON-BOARD

The hook caught on the arresting-wire is evident in this picture. The wire seems to have “paid out” a considerable distance, more than usual. The aircraft is beyond and atop the barrier-wires, which are immediately brought flat on the deck the moment the hook catches an arresting-wire. It’s seen that this aircraft caught the last arresting-wire, allowing it to reach the barrier-wires. Notice the two brackets, upper left that are raised, raising the arresting-wires. In a moment, a green-shirt will run out to unhook the aircraft. The Helldiver will then taxi forward, and the barrier-wires will be raised again, in preparation for the next aircraft, only 20 seconds behind this Helldiver. And so it goes for all incoming aircraft. So it goes for the Airdales, every 20 seconds, doing their job conscientiously. This was without a doubt an integral part of the Airdale’s job-description. Conscientiousness is a deep belief in doing the right as the right is seen. There were, to my knowledge, no malingerers in the Airdales on the Antietam. (though I wasn’t all that familiar with most of

them). This attitude was in spite of the fact that, in truth, the process of traversing a path in among the fired-up aircraft at launch-time was harrowing to one degree or another. Still, we did not shirk what was our assigned job. Admittedly, if you were the only one doing this it would have been a much more intimidating undertaking; but there was support in numbers. To be conscientious was to be dutiful to one’s obligations without searching for a reason to mitigate that obligation. To be conscientious was to be prompt along with full effort. It was in a word to be “honorable”, that most desirable trait and attribute and to be proud of having done a job to the best of one’s ability. During WWII there were those who were “conscientious objectors”. They refused to serve in the combatant military because of their religious convictions that making war was sacrilegious. They were granted deferment but at, I presume, an honest and earnest protestation against the war. They were relatively few in number, fortunately for our war effort of preservation.

All alone and needing help (unhook the arresting wire). Often we find ourselves alone, both actually and figuratively. I happened to be a loner when I was in the navy because that’s how I wanted it. During flight operations I of course was part of the crew, working closely with all the other Airdales. However, during free time after evening chow I sought out the solitude of the island superstructure (which I had to myself for reasons unknown). This was a “precious” time, a time to gather my thoughts quietly and undisturbed, away from the often foul-mouthed guy-talk. We should all be so lucky to have the opportunity once in a while to be detached from the hubbub of endless chattering and (very) small

talk. I personally like this quiet-time, this time to be alone. I do recommend it on occasion to others while realizing that I’m different in my desire for solitude and quiet. I make no special brief for it even though I believe others would find it therapeutic at times. It’s a fine time to resolve those things that nag at you, things that bewilder you, things that stimulate you intellectually and times to reminisce. Yes, isolation can be the pause that refreshes after a hectic day on the flight deck. There’s time enough for the busy activity that calls upon you. Why not take the luxury of solitude whenever you can grab it? [I can’t resist mentioning that song that comes to mind titled: “In My Solitude”.]



THE TAILHOOK HELD

The tailhook of this TBF/M has caught one of the arresting-wires, pulling that wire forward under hydraulic tension, until the plane stops after about 40 feet. This makes the stop fairly abrupt on both pilot and aircraft. The two green-shirts are running to the tailhook to disengage it, one to hold the tailhook, and one to disengage the tailhook from the arresting-wire. After the aircraft's forward motion, the arresting-wire is retracted only slightly, pulling the aircraft backwards just enough to provide slack to enable the tailhook disengagement. Once this was accomplished, the green-shirt, on the catwalk, operated the controls to fully retract the arresting-wire. The tension on the tailhook and the aircraft is considerable, sometimes enough to break off the tailhook and even a part of the tail of the aircraft. This would cause a moderate crash (if any crash could be called "moderate"). There are those who have wondered how I felt on the flight deck during flight operations. There were essentially two emotions during this time: the feeling that a serious misfortune

might happen (worry) and the feeling that a serious misfortune will happen (fear). Initially the latter prevailed but as time went by the former held sway. That's the simple, off-the cuff answer. It was of course much more complex than that and there were no fixed feelings concerning this subject. Part of it depended on the particular mood at the particular time (a reason to cultivate a positive and upbeat attitude; unfortunately mine was at a low point most of the time and it was a lesson learned the hard way). Then there was the attitude that if you take care of yourself and keep your wits about you, whatever will happen will happen. Actually I believe this was my predominate feeling during my sojourn on the flight deck. Most anyone can adjust himself to the conditions in which he finds himself (as long as he doesn't do something patently foolish). Caution in the face of fear will normally see you through most of the situations. At least that was my conclusion and it served me well in the sometimes maddening environment of an active flight deck.

Will it hold or will the cable snap and allow this TBM to crash into those up ahead? That cable has endured many a landing. Consider all the constant stresses this cable must withstand; how many more can it take? There are many, many in this world who must endure real catastrophes. There are many, many who have to contend with real, bone fide discouragements and real disappointments. There are those whose woes make our petty ones seem, well, petty. I include in this category the efforts being made by many students nation-wide. Is it asking too much of them to endure the difficulties of educating themselves while communities, rich AND poor, contribute one half of their yearly budget to

the "education community"? Yes, learning can be a hardship of a certain sort, but consider that this effort is self-serving. How can you not endure the travails of study, study, study. (when your future, and the country's, depends on it)? Don't be a "wimp" by giving up. Here's a "secret": To endure is to grow stronger and stronger (surprise: it's cumulative). If a mere inanimate cable can endure time after time so can you. Stand tall and learn to learn. I have a peculiar memory in that I recall very well "that special girl" telling me, "Never give up" with an unmistakable sincerity in her voice. She also said to me at another time, "All you need is some success". I hesitate to say so but those are words to live by.



TAILHOOK ENGAGED

Since everything else is somewhat blurred here, it indicates that the plane (SB2C) was still moving. The stress on the arresting-wire must have been great during these “traps.” Note the radioman-gunner is straining forward due to the sudden stop. That’s a .30 cal machine-gun pointing upward. The SB2C is somewhat chunky and large, so the pilots apparently called it

the “beast.” It replaced the SBD Dauntless dive-bombers which were responsible for their hitting all four of the Japanese carriers in the Battle of Midway. All four of those carriers were at the bottom of the sea that same day, and the next. The Battle of Midway was “The turning point of the battle in the Pacific” and is well documented in the film “Midway” (1976).

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11)

Now I’ll devote the next group of pages to summarizing the exploits of that storied carrier, the U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11). I’m choosing this one, of the 14 Essex-class carriers, because it is now a museum ship (in New York City) and because it was one of the first of this magnificent class of ships (the third one). It need not be said that all the Essexes were of much more than of note, for they were all “storied” and they were all heroic. What does one think of when they hear the stirring Navy march, “Anchors Aweigh”? To me it’s the long steel gray ships such as the battleships and cruisers and destroyers, but most especially the stately Essex-class carriers, strong and proud, pushing its way at 30 knots through a parting sea with a bow-wave leading and churning foam-white wake trailing: full speed ahead, destination unknown: strike up the band! With that little bit of drama alluded to, let’s take a more careful look at that illustrious U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11). As said, the Intrepid was the third of the Essexes, having been commissioned in September 1943. Through 1942 to October 1943 the naval war had taken place in the New Guinea area. Not to be forgotten was that seminal victory at the important Battle of Midway. The first squadron came on board in November of 1943. There followed a month’s worth of shake-down operations where the crew and squadrons prepared

themselves for the actions to come. On January 10, 1944 the Intrepid docked at Pearl Harbor in preparation for the campaigns to come. On January 29, 1944 the Intrepid launched its first strike of the war. This was in support of the invasion by the marines of the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands, about 1600 miles northeast of New Guinea. They are a group of very small islands within a circle of about 600 miles in diameter. The squadrons from the Intrepid provided close-in support for the marines in their battle to take Kwajalein. On February 4, 1944 they dropped anchor at one of the newly seized islands along with the battleships South Carolina, Alabama, and North Carolina, the cruiser San Diego and 10 destroyers. Through this period the pilots of the Intrepid conducted 528 sorties, of which 429 were combat missions. Air Group Six pilots shot down seven enemy aircraft and destroyed many on the ground, losing 2 fighters and one torpedo bomber to enemy anti-aircraft fire. One pilot was lost and one was missing in action. During operational flight deck activity one enlisted man was killed and 7 were injured. On February 3, 1944 the Intrepid celebrated its 3,000th landing. The next target was set for February 16 against Truk Island, the Japanese “Pearl Harbor” (about 1000 miles to the

(Continued on next page)



HELLDIVER RECEIVING ATTENTION

Frankly, I liked this picture because of the clouds and the semi-silhouettes. This SB2C is taxiing forward after having landed. However, it also looks like it's being readied for a catapult. But that doesn't make sense because the SB2C up forward is parked and tied down. Also puzzling is that aircraft are only tied down in preparation for a storm and/or rough weather. So just accept this picture for its artistic content. It's very evocative to me, artistic or not. Also, notice that the wing-flaps of the SB2C

are perforated with small holes. When a Helldiver makes a dive, it extends its wing-flaps to slow its decent. This makes the dive more accurate, but also makes the SB2C more vulnerable. I'll leave it to the experts to sort this out. This area is open and so not so intimidating as further up forward in the crowded parking area with the guttural noise of the lurching aircraft inching forward to its spot I don't care, I never did get used to this close-in work as described in the chapter on parking.

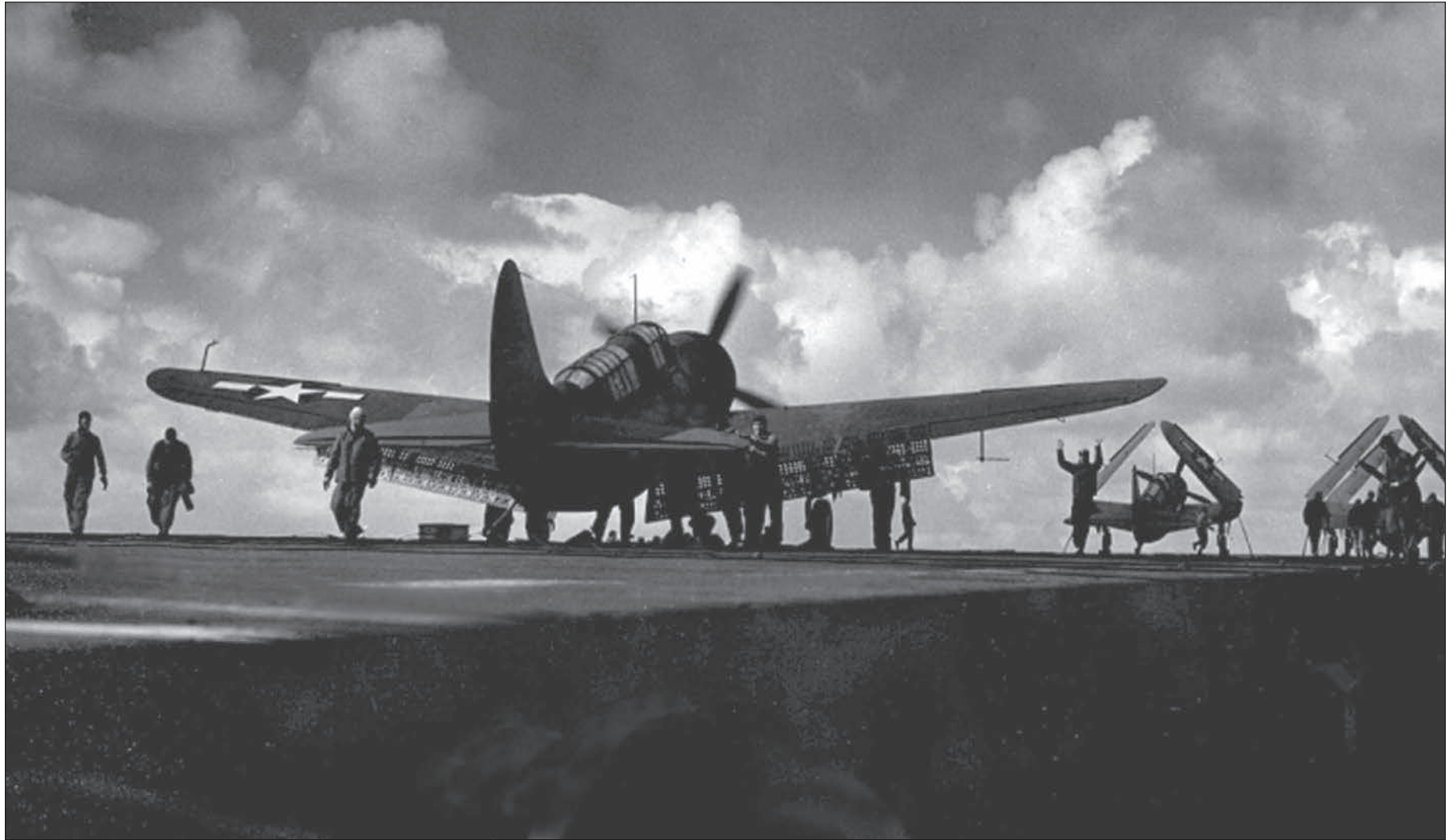
(cont. from p. 416) Yes, we are always communicating who we are. We certainly communicate who we are by our actions, by our attitudes. We definitely communicate who we are by our character and our conduct, by our comportment. You communicate who you are by whether you "ride in the wagon or whether you get out of the wagon and help push the wagon". You communicate who you are by your preference for "rights" over "responsibility" or visa versa. Let me count the ways that you communicate who you are: Are you accountable? Are you honest? Are you respectful? Are you diligent? Earnest? Sincere? Friendly? Persevering? Conscientious? Considerate? Thoughtful? Courteous? Reliable? Trustworthy? Trustworthy? Trustworthy? Were I still in the "mating game" one of the important things I would consider would be the kind of music she listens to. Don't laugh. Think on it. (cont.)

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

west of the Marshalls, in the Catolines). The opposition was light because much of the Japanese fleet was elsewhere. Nevertheless, numerous ships (30) were sunk and over 200 aircraft destroyed. The Task Force lost 25 aircraft. This raid against Truk included 5 large carriers (including the Intrepid), 4 light carriers, all together able to launch 600 aircraft. Also included were 6 battleships, 10 cruisers, 29 destroyers plus submarines and auxiliary vessels, all of which were designated Task Force 58. [Recall that the Japanese strike against Pearl Harbor included "only" 260 aircraft, enough to do enormous damage. Truk was retribution of sorts.]

At the end of the first day's strike darkness settled over the fleet. The night-fighter CAP (Carrier Air Patrol) was aloft and all seemed secure. However, the ship's radar picked up "bogies" and the fighters were vectored to intercept them. It's not clear whether General Quarters was sounded at this time but a few minutes after midnight a Japanese torpedo aircraft dropped its load to hit the Intrepid's stern, starboard side causing a gaping hole, killing 11 and wounding 17 men. One of the problems with detection of this bogey was that it was so low to the water. Nevertheless, a night-fighter was able

(Continued on next page)



A LITTLE BODY-ENGLISH

This is a “you are there” picture. Sometimes the LSO uses “body English” as well as his paddles to guide aircraft on board. Notice the extended tail-hook and depressed wing-flaps and the tailing “plane-guard” destroyer. This looks like it’ll be a good landing. It’s about ten feet over the flight deck as it reaches the end of the flight deck. While certainly not a pilot, this is what I

observed to have been the best situation for the most felicitous outcome for a landing aircraft. However, even in the most favorable position, an aircraft could have problems, due to perhaps the vertical motion of the flight deck. If the deck were heaving upward just at touchdown, then the aircraft would be pushed upward and perhaps bounce over the barriers.

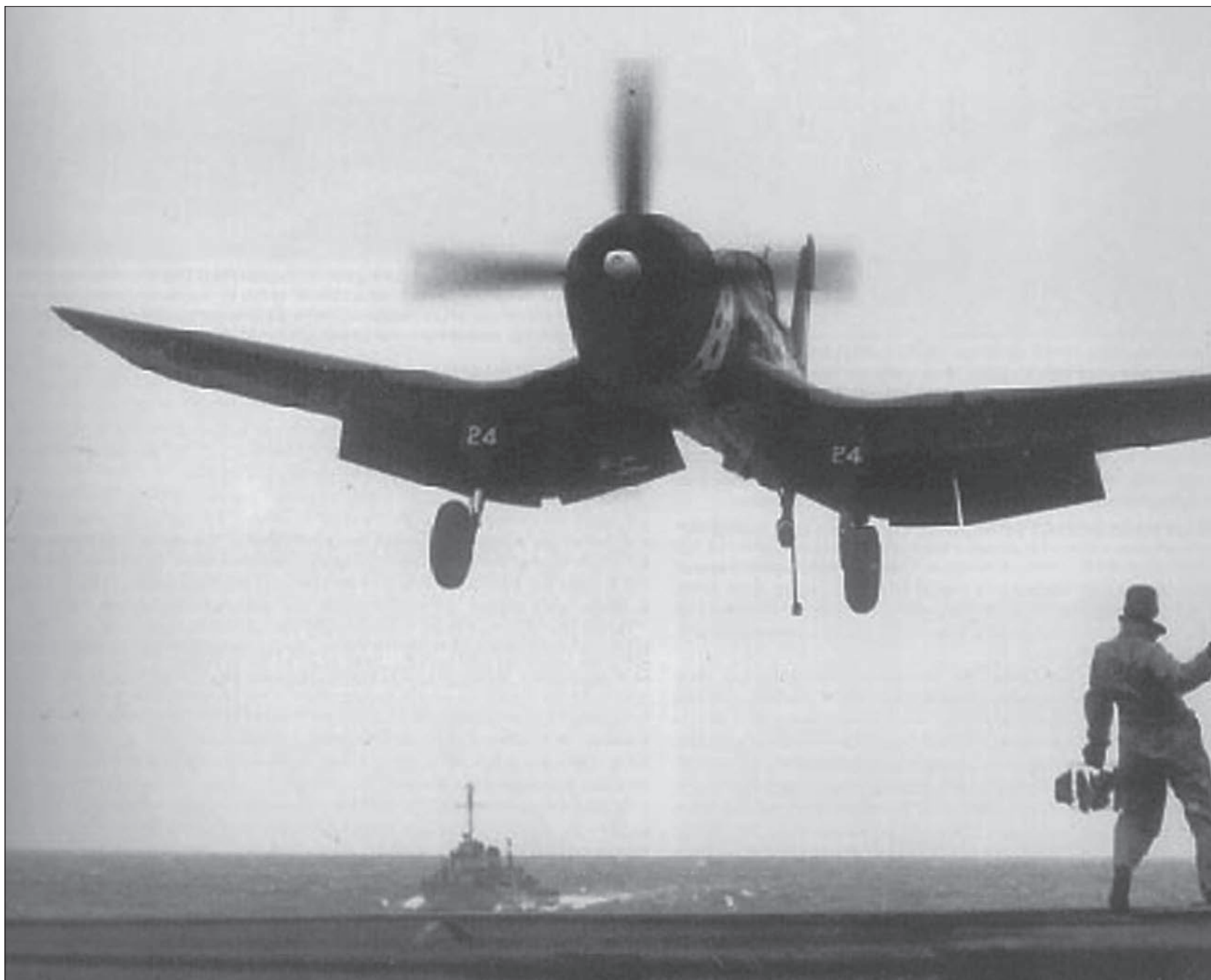
Another way that we communicate is whether or not we are stable (or erratic). A ship must know what is and what is not stable (recall the fire control system and the search radars). This is accomplished by the Stable Element which is in fact a complex gyroscope which is to follow: In the days of yore ships navigated by dead reckoning (as well as celestial navigation) The former method required a stable platform and it was found in the Ship Inertial Navigation System (SINS). Dead reckoning navigation measures speed and heading and then uses these values to compute the change of position. This system makes use of a gyroscope, accelerometers, servo systems and a computer. An accelerometer measures changes in speed and direction. Its output is a voltage proportional to the amount of movement to which it is subjected. First, a gyroscopically stabilized platform is required to maintain a horizontal position despite ship’s motion. The accelerometers are attached to the platform by means of a gimbal structure whose vertical axis is aligned parallel to the earth’s polar axis (cont.).

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

to “splash” the intruder, too late. This attack was the most significant opposition put up by the Japanese forces during this two-day attack on Truk. The Intrepid had its rudder damaged putting it out of action for a period of about four months. It limped back to the West Coast for repairs which were completed on June 10, 1944. The Intrepid’s record to date was 55 enemy aircraft destroyed in the air and on the ground, 5 enemy ships sunk, 5 probably sunk and two heavily damaged. [By the way, the meaning of “intrepid” is “fearless and brave”. The former requires good sense and judgment while the latter must be cultivated by adherence to sound princi-

ples. Consider also that these qualities need not necessarily refer to physical implementation only. Again, intrepid means fearless and brave where the former implies mindlessness and the later mindfulness, but not inertia. In this way “brave” is braver than “fearless”.] On September 9 to 11 the Intrepid sent aircraft to bomb and strafe airfields on Mindanao, the large southern-most island of the Philippines. The Japanese fleet did not oppose them but land-based aircraft did. On September 12 the Task Group, built around the Intrepid, struck the Islands of Letye and Samar, both at the center

(Continued on next page)



CLOSE TO TOUCHDOWN

This could be the same F4U as the preceding picture, but it's #18, not #24. This picture was taken from the fantail (stern of the ship, standing in one of the 40-mm guntubs, a nice place to watch the ship's wake). The LSO's assistant, an enlisted man, uses his binoculars to determine if the aircraft's in the proper condition by saying "hook's down, flap's down, deck's clear". The LSO has a cloth-paddle in each hand and so isn't able to determine the aircraft's status, not having the binoculars. The assistant also has phone-contact with the "Air Boss" station overlooking the flight

deck to receive verbal direction from there. If all is "go", then the aircraft is "brought aboard". The hoped for results are seen on the next page, one of my favorites, and something I watched many thousands of times (I calculated it to be 60,480 times: 90 aircraft/flight x 2 flights/day x 7 days/week x 4 weeks/month x 12 of the 13 months that I was an Airdale (actually, it was $180 \times 365 = 65,700$ launches and landings and parkings). And yes, the above numbers ARE accurate.- This of course is only "by the numbers" and not in any way "official".)

This allows the N-S accelerometer to be aligned along a longitude meridian and the E-W accelerometer to be aligned along a latitude meridian. Now the stable platform will be described rather succinctly: A platform (plate) has affixed to its surface three gyros, x, y and z. This platform is attached to a gimbal which in turn is pinned to another gimbal such that the inner gimbal can rotate within the outer gimbal. The inner gimbal has a roll servo motor attached to it and the outer has a pitch servo motor attached to it. The inner gimbal also has an azimuth servo motor attached to the bottom of the platform. Finally the inner gimbal has an x-accelerometer and a y-accelerometer attached to it. The inner gimbal is the pitch gimbal and the outer gimbal is the roll gimbal. So much for the graphical description. (cont.)

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

of the Philippine Archipelago. The usual targets were ships and airfields, with opposition from land-based aircraft. Three enemy aircraft were shot down but the Intrepid is hit; damage being superficial. Six more enemy aircraft are shot down following the hit. For the next two days this action continues now and again. Another 6 enemy aircraft are shot down. The action continues the next day with enemy ships and aircraft and shore-based facilities destroyed or damaged. Cargo ships were sunk along with the military targets. The three Task Groups destroyed 478 aircraft (173 in the air) and at least 60 ships were sunk. The Task Force lost only 6 pilots in these

4 days of combat. On the 17th, carrier aircraft provide support for the marine landings on Peleliu. The 21st of September saw Intrepid's aircraft bomb the docks and storage areas of Manila on Luzon Island, the large, northern-most island of the Philippines. On September 22 the Task Force was attacked and 14 enemy aircraft were shot down and several strikes destroy aircraft on the ground. A Japanese torpedo-carrying aircraft made a run on the Intrepid but it was shot down before any damage could be done. During this time General Quarters was sounded periodically as

(Continued on next page)



A HARD LANDING

This picture rates high in my book because of its artistic content as well as its operational content. The silhouette context is very evocative to me and nicely shows the Corsair's configuration, as well as that of the island superstructure. Concerning the operational content, the first thing to notice is how high the F4U is. It caught an arresting-wire but it's probably somewhat lucky. The hook is much more apt to catch a wire if it's dragged over the wires rather than bouncing over them. Notice the three barriers across the deck. There are about four barriers that are used, and as said previously, it usually

takes at least three of them to stop an aircraft. Actually, it looks as if there are only three barriers upright at this time. The two people to the right standing in the catwalk are green-shirts operating the arresting gear (arresting wires/cables and the barriers). The F4U up forward to the left is folding its wings as it taxis forward. The other F4Us are already parked. Then there are the spectators up forward on the portside catwalk. All in all it's a very typical scene except "Where are the Airdales?" I don't know. On the Antietam we were on the starboard side by the island structure.

The three-gyro-stabilized platform is maintained in the horizontal position regardless of the pitch, roll and yaw of the ship. When the ship's heading changes, the gyro signals will cause the servomotors to operate to maintain the platform stable. This system requires high performance servos to maintain the desired accuracy. [Are you of sufficient accuracy to keep your life stable?] This self-contained navigation system continuously computes longitude and latitude by accurately sensing the accelerations of the ship with respect to the earth's surface. A computer is needed to convert distance traveled into corresponding changes in longitude and latitude. After a period of time the SINS required a resetting of the system to maintain system accuracy. {Would that we could be so accurate in our life's dealings.} (cont.)

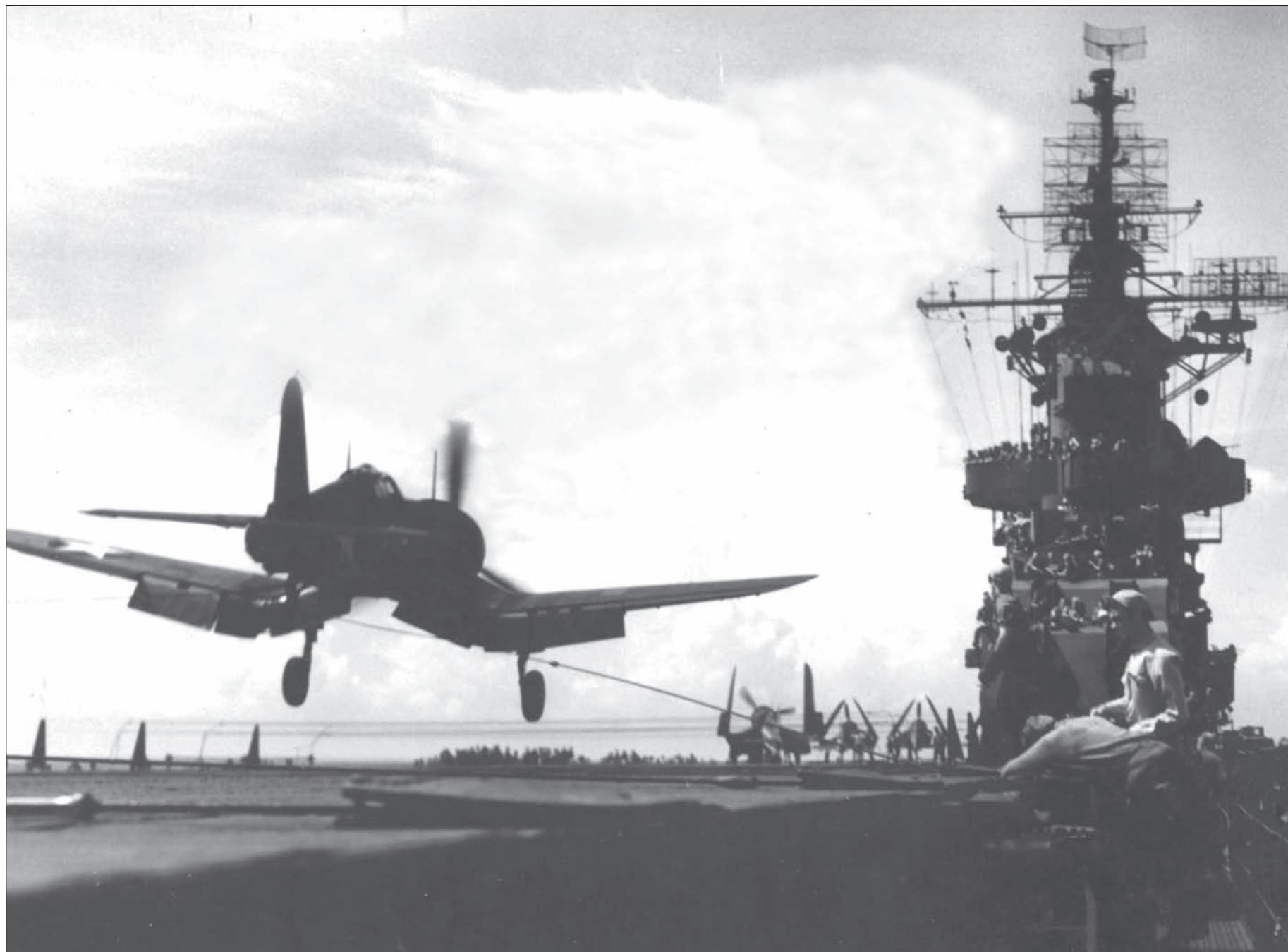
U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

enemy incursions were made. There were crash-landings due to damage received during the missions.

This same process continued through September 24th. A number of pilots had to make water-landings due to enemy action but many of them were picked up by destroyers. Others had to land on the nearest carrier which were not theirs. After the operations were over this was all sorted out with aircraft returning to their own carrier. Between 6 and 24 September the Intrepid's pilots made 1,341 sorties of which 1,149 were combat missions with the rest being CAP and anti-submarine operations. Over 385 tons of bombs were

dropped and over 280,000 rounds of aircraft ammunition (30 and 50 caliber and 20-mm) were fired. There were 32 enemy ships totaling 50,000 tons confirmed sunk and another 15 ships totaling over 60,000 tons probably sunk. Forty-six ships totaling about 35,000 tons were damaged. Shot down were 36 enemy aircraft and 92 others were destroyed on the ground. There were losses though that consisted of 2 pilots known dead, 7 other pilots and 8 enlisted crewmen missing and presumed lost. For the entire Task Force, over these September attacks on the Philippine Islands, there were at

(Continued on next page)



NEXT

Here's a picture that could be either a launching event or a having-just-landed event. It's probably the latter, what with the yellow-shirt on the left having just motioned this Corsair to continue taxiing up forward (to its parking spot). On the other hand, it could be that the Corsair has just been given the "GO" launch signal. This might be the more likely scenario in view of the fact that there can be seen another Corsair, at the deckedge, preparing to taxi forward to this launch-spot. (Why that Airdale is hanging onto the wing, I don't know. He should be next to the

wheel with the wheelchock in hand.) So if it's a launch-situation, all the aircraft are back aft; if it's a landing-situation, then there are aircraft up forward, and one (or two) back aft. In any NEXT case, who can deny that "that's all airplane", made to fly fast and fiercely. To close out this page on a proper note, let it be said that just as a lonely landscape resonates with one who is lonely, so too does this mist-shrouded flight deck conjure feelings of angst, where a menacing "enemy" wheels and deals about, here and there, with tumult and threat pervading throughout.

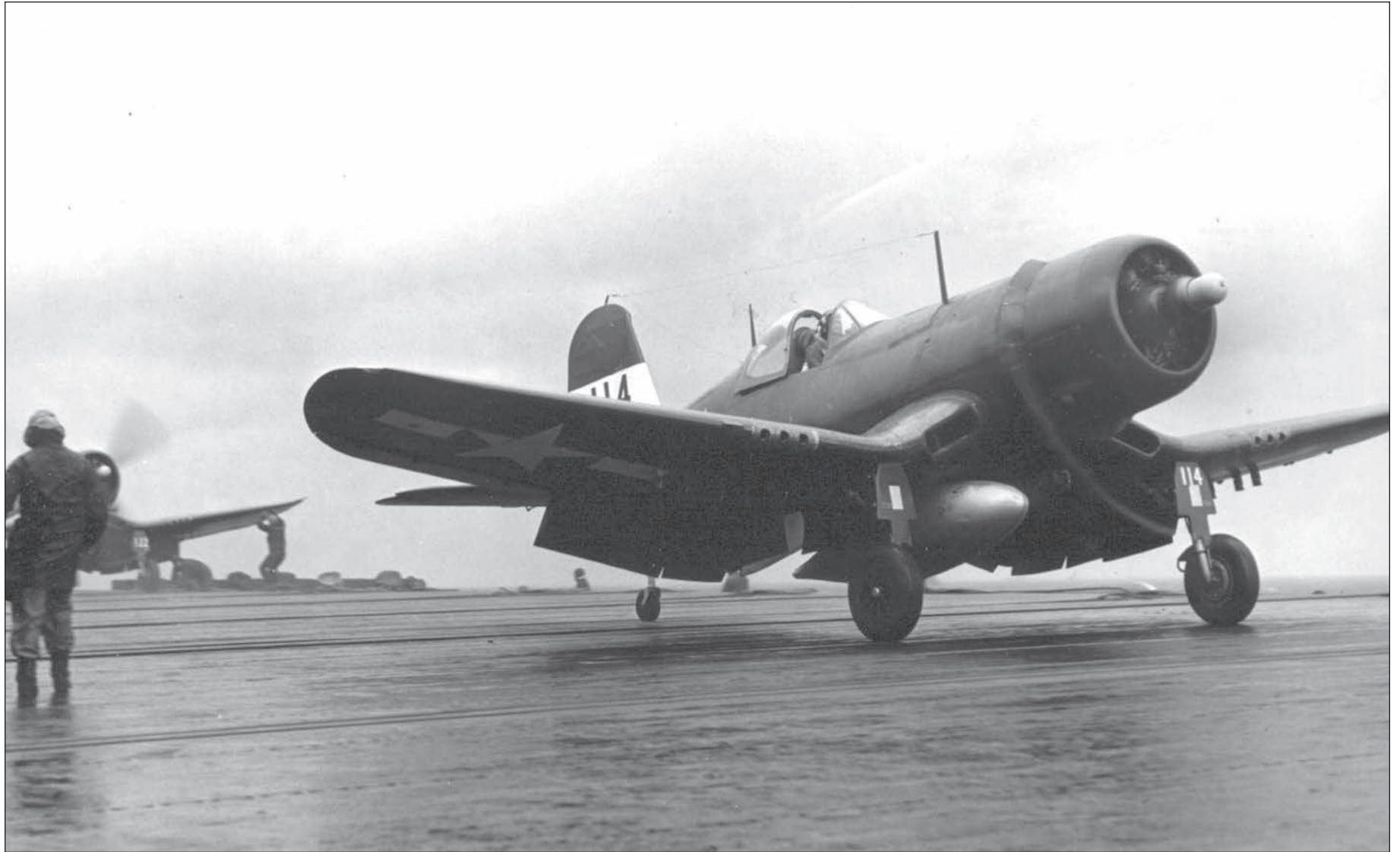
Just as there was a stable platform in the SINS so too was there required a stable attitude on the flight deck. It wasn't without reason that the Airdales learned well the advantages of maintaining an equanimity that carried them through the perils of a raging, deafening flight deck during flight operations. To change the subject to a much more benign environment lets consider the realities of a sea-going airport and its needs for also maintaining up to 100 large military aircraft that were used twice daily, "every day". [On the flight deck everyone "pushes the wagon, no one rides in the wagon. Those who push the wagon tend to be they who are concerned with creating wealth while those who ride in the wagon tend to be they who are concerned with distributing that wealth (which they had no part in creating). One group creates while the other group uses (the fruits of others). (cont.)

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

least 840 confirmed Japanese pilots killed, and at least 100 ships sunk. This does not even consider the destruction of aircraft and facilities on the ground. On October 4th the Ulithi anchorage, about 700 miles due east of the Philippines, was hit by a typhoon. Seven aircraft were blown over the side of the Intrepid.. A portion of the Intrepid's flight deck, the forward port side, was twisted and bent downward as the seas kept breaking over, then pounding, the deck. Up to this point I've presented a rather sterile recitation of the facts and figures of the travails of the Intrepid as the action was racketed up in the Western Pacific campaign. [It so happened that I

entered the navy in August of 1944. At the time I had no idea that I would be assigned to a fleet carrier which was at the crux of most of the action in the naval warfare. I had yet to learn a great deal more about such things even though we never did see enemy action (all our action was on the flight deck with twice daily air operations, daily.) I did this deliberately to show that numbers are a small indication of what really happens in a war where real flesh-and-blood people are involved: an enemy aircraft is shot down and another unit is added to the total. However, does this new statistic reveal the

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PERFECT LANDING

A good landing, a “sharp” looking airplane. Those two objects (“sticks”) on top of the fuselage are the “masts” for the radio aerial, which is strung between them. That insignia on the cowlings of the Corsair was unusual. The Navy “never” had any markings on their aircraft except the star and a number. This was admittedly quite different from the Army Air Force, back then, which had all kinds of unique insignia on their aircraft to distinguish their units. Also, the Navy painted their aircraft various shades of gray-blue, sometimes darker on top, lighter on the bottom. (The

Army Air Corp either used brown, or no paint at all.) The dark blue-gray on top of the aircraft blended with the ocean below as viewed from above the aircraft, while the light cream color on the underside of the aircraft blended with the light sky above when viewed from underneath the aircraft. And then there were aircraft that were dark blue all over. But generally speaking, the Navy aircraft were painted (adding weight) while the Army Air Corps left their aircraft unpainted (except their B-17 Flying Fortresses).

The former group savors independence while the latter group seeks dependence. The latter group tends to be generous (with other people's wealth.) The former group wants to enlarge the “pie” while the latter group thinks only of reapportioning the “pie”. Businesses create, governments takes. After having castigated one group it must be said that many of them have a beneficent (?) heart; it's just that they have misplaced methods of trying to secure their generous inclinations. For instance, “affirmative action” is a travesty because firstly it's intrinsically wrong and secondly it denigrates the very people they try to help. Besides, “no one” likes favoritism. Favoritism is completely counterproductive (as well as being “unfair”). One should not try to redress presumed former wrongs (cont.)

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

tensions that went into this new number? No, because where has it been revealed that here, probably, is a pilot who has seen the enemy very little if at all. Here is a pilot who not that long ago was perhaps a bank trainee. Here is a pilot who, as he sits atop the catapult wondering if he has the wherewithal to confront someone intent on killing him. Some perhaps relish the “contest” but certainly others do not. One could postulate that if he didn't feel as if he were up to the task he would have long since parted company from the pilot-program because after all it was a voluntary occupation. Others might have been attracted by the flight and combat pay, or the

“excitement” of it, or the patriotism of it, or who knows. Even with this, most people are not “fearless” and thoughts would enter their minds which would give them pause and generate anxieties (who's the better pilot, the fearless one or the brave one?) In any event, being human there was a range of emotions that no set of statistical numbers could possibly reflect. Numbers are necessary, yes, but always keep in mind that numbers often belie the events represented by them. With that, we'll continue on with the Intrepid's “itinerary” (keeping in mind the human agonies represented in the facts

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ONE MORE ABOARD

This Corsair just landed and its tailhook has just been released from the arresting-wire. As it starts to taxi forward to go to a parking spot up forward, it's also folding its wings. The wings are folded, obviously, to make possible the packing together of more aircraft in the limited space on the flight deck (and hanger deck). The yellow-shirt (plane-director) in the foreground is signaling the pilot to apply some brake-pressure to his left wheel so as to pivot somewhat about it, thus to proceed straight down the deck. The yellow-shirt makes a fist with his right hand, while at the same time waving "come on" with his left hand. This way the pilot is headed to a succession of yellow-shirts toward the parking area up forward. This process must proceed apace so as to get out of the way of the following aircraft, "20 seconds"

back of him. Thus, with 90 aircraft in a flight that have to land, theoretically it will take 90 x 20 seconds, or 30 minutes to bring them all aboard. This is the shortest time possible, and in practice, it takes longer if there's a tie up or too much congestion up forward where the parking is taking place, requiring some of the aircraft to be "waved off." They then have to get back into the landing pattern. (This is discussed in the "Parking chapter." Parking is important enough to deserve its own chapter.) In its way, the parking process was, I felt, one of the most harrowing activities on ship. There would be times when you felt you were but six inches from oblivion, and you were utterly helpless to do anything about it. In effect, two strangers held your fate in their "hands." But I digress. Let's move on.

by an openly wrong approach. (be careful about that which you desire). The nicest thing that can be said about those in the giving-group is that their generosity is misplaced. "Rights" are not the exclusive domain of one group or another (would you spoil your children? Such are not the fiber of a strong society. Self-reliance might be lonely but certainly it's restorative and far better than inert "hope"). They who take control of their lives are far happier than those who depend on others, for whatever reason. Now let's get off the soapbox and return to that all-important function of maintaining all the (cont.)

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

and figures (of both friend and foe). To do otherwise would be to blaspheme humanity which perhaps is known best by those who have entered and then exited the wrath of war. Those who experience the blasphemy of war are those who most strongly resent it and reject it (I would imagine, but yes, there are exceptions and no, no one has a monopoly on this commentary: is it not true that "comments" are in the 1st person while "commentary" is in the 3rd person?). Retuning to the exploits of the Intrepid, we are taken to the areas of Formosa (Taiwan) and Okinawa. On 10 October the Task Group 38.2, with the Intrepid as the flag ship, sent squadrons to Okinawa

(which is in the Ryuku Islands some 370 miles SSW of the lowest Japanese Islands and about 300 miles NE of Formosa). These actions north of the Philippines were to make MacArthur's landing on Leyte in the Philippines less vulnerable. These attacks consisted of 60 Hellcat fighters, 47 Helldiver bombers and 30 Avenger torpedo bombers. Airfields, hangers, work shops and fuel dumps were the targets. Nine small ships were sunk and 5 others probably sunk. At least a dozen aircraft were destroyed on the ground and many others seriously damaged. The Task Group added several times

(Continued on next page)



FOLDING WINGS TO JOIN THE FOLD

This picture appears to be a follow-on to the proceeding one. One thing that's particularly noticeable here is the distance the pilot is from the front of the aircraft. Essentially he's in the middle of the plane instead of up forward. This presents some problems when a Corsair lands. I can't comment further because I don't know enough about it. However, I'm told that the

Corsair had some stability problems when its air speed was low and it was making a banking turn while in the landing pattern. I've seen one take a plunge into the water during this maneuver. So the "book" on the Corsair was "high performance at high speed" and "low performance at low speeds." That's the extent of my "inside" knowledge about the Corsair.

multitude of aircraft and equipment on board a fleet aircraft carrier. There are "ratings" for all manner of technologies (the enlisted men in the navy start with apprentice seaman, then seaman 2/c, seaman 1/c, electrician 3/c, electrician 2/c, electrician 1/c, and several levels of chief electrician, who are non-commissioned officers and who I personally thought "ran the ship"). Some of the "rates" on board ship are, electrician, electronics, radio, radar, machinist, aircraft mechanic, ordnance (bombs, 0.50 caliber machine gun, 20-mm machine gun, 40-mm cannon, 5-inch cannon), fuelers (aviation gasoline), catapult/arresting gear, radio/gunners (aircraft), gunner's mate, all on the flight and hanger decks. (Then of course elsewhere there were the electricians, radar (search), pipe fitters, boiler makers, machinists, mechanics and others (of course there were the non-technical rates such as quartermaster (navigation), yeoman (clerical) and others that were necessary to run a small town of 3,000 men plus several hundred officers. (cont,)

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

these figures This one-day strike cost the group 21 aircraft. Also on this day the Intrepid was attacked by two enemy aircraft and two of Intrepid's aircraft, an Avenger and a Helldiver, went into the water on take-off (this could have been the combination of a heavy bomb-load and a heavy sea that caused the ship to dip downward just as the aircraft left the flight deck: the launch officer tries to send the aircraft off at the time the ship pitches upward but this is a sometime thing; in addition, the strong winds that stir up the sea is also useful in giving an aircraft lift; the 1942 Jimmy Doolittle raid off the Hornet had the twin-engine B-25 bombers lift off the deck rap-

idly in the strong gales at launch-time). On October 12, 1944 the same treatment was applied to Formosa that was dished out to Okinawa two days earlier. This time though there was more enemy opposition. The pilots also suffered heavy losses as the Task Force lost 48 aircraft (most often, when "aircraft" is written, understand that this means that a pilot is lost, either killed or considered unaccounted for.

Recall that a Task Force is made up of at least 3 Task Groups which consist of one or two fleet carriers such as the Intrepid, a light

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HELLCAT UNLEASHED

This Hellcat has just landed, and two green-shirts have just disengaged the arresting-wire to allow it to taxi forward up the flight deck to its parking spot. The yellow-shirt director is signaling the pilot to come forward. He'll immediately "pass him on" to the next yellow-shirt a little farther up the flight deck. At the same time two Airdales should be jogging out to the Hellcat, with wheelchocks in hand, to accompany the Hellcat up forward to its parking spot. Notice that the arresting-wire just in front of the Hellcat has been allowed to fall back to the deck as allowed by the brackets that are

brought back flush with the flight deck. (These brackets rise out of the deck several inches so as to lift the arresting-wire several inches, thus allowing the aircraft's tailhook to catch the arresting-wire.) All the arresting-wires are thus lowered, as are the wire-barriers further forward. (These 5-foot high wire-barriers are there to prevent aircraft that don't catch the arresting-wire from crashing into aircraft up forward of them. This of course don't always work the way it should.) After the Hellcat taxis forward, arresting-wires and wire-barriers are again raised for the next incoming aircraft.

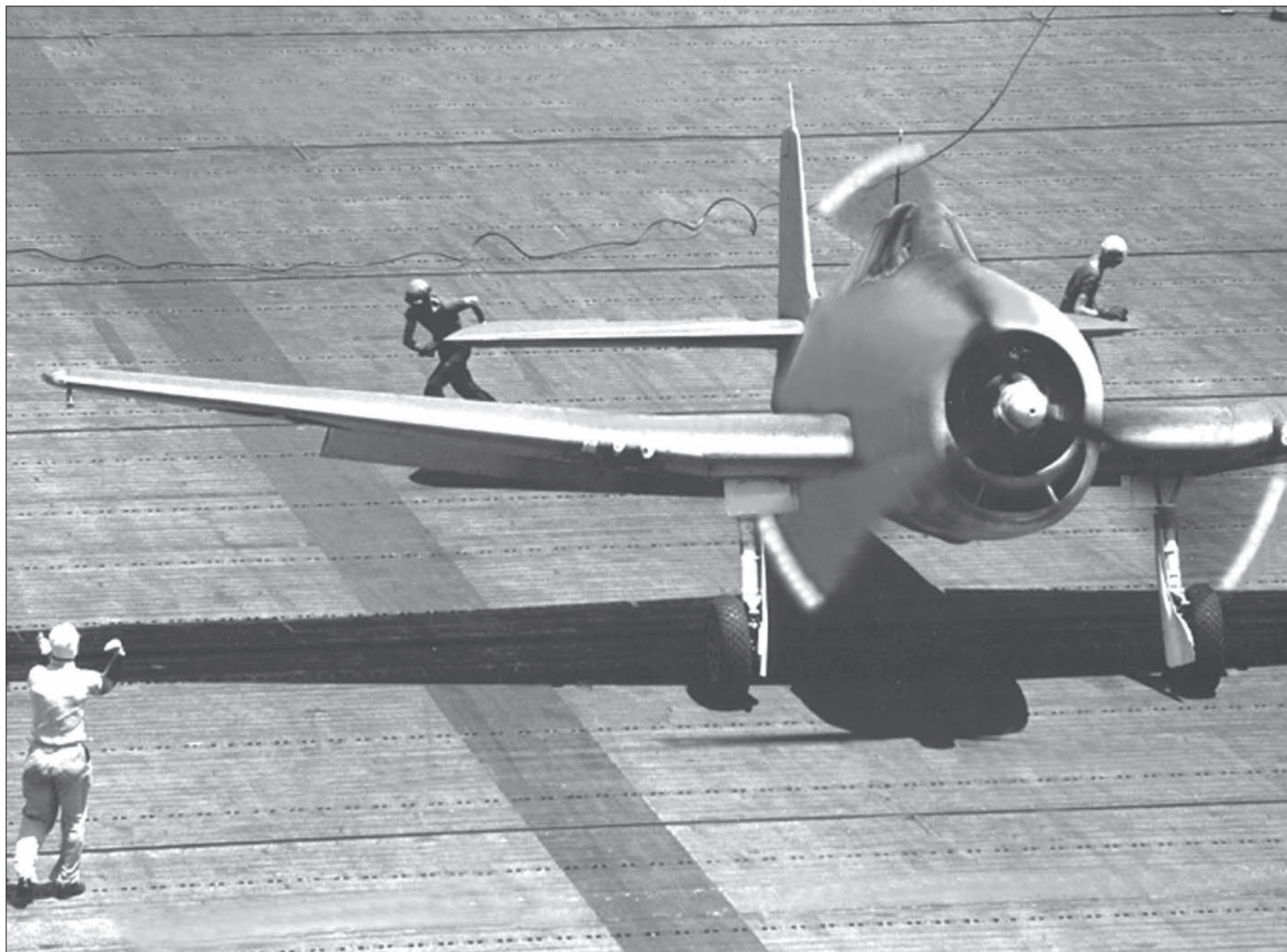
Only preventive aircraft maintenance was done topside on the flight deck while the corrective maintenance was done below on the hanger deck. The corrective maintenance concerned engine or fuselage repair when a crash occurred on the flight deck. If the crash was severe enough the aircraft was given the "deep six" (pushed overboard). It was fascinating to watch these young sailors crawl all over the aircraft making repairs. This was a big responsibility for such young people. Much of this work was done during the night trying to get an aircraft ready in time for the next day's launch. This would provide me with some "entertainment" in the evenings watching the work being done. Of course the "big" jobs were overseen by the chief mechanics and machinists. Nevertheless, this was pretty heady (cont.)

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carrier, some escort carriers, a battleship or two or three, some cruisers and a multitude of destroyers. This is a large assemble of "hardware". However, it was dispersed over a large area so that one was not aware of the huge amount of force and power that was assembled. A Japanese pilot on high must have had his breath taken away on seeing such an awesome array down there below him. (wouldn't you?). The 14th of October saw a massive strike by this massive force. In addition to 109 B-29 army superfortresses from mainland China the navy sent up 146 fighters to protect them. Two days before the Japanese sent up 230 land-based fighters on Formosa to

oppose that day's strike. Eighty of these were shot down in air combat (consider this multitude of aircraft "mixing it up" and imagine the amount of adrenaline being pumped by those on both sides of the "argument". This is the real drama, the high, at the moment, to live or to die. We can sermonize all we care to about patriotism and the like but for these men on both sides it was usually do or die (not quite the same as the "Charge of the Light Brigade" in which they actually did "do and die"). Forty more enemy aircraft were in turn shot down as they attacked the fleet. Task Force 38 lost 48 aircraft

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HELLCAT NEEDS SOME HELP

The Airdales are about to fold the wings of this Hellcat. The yellow-shirt director is signaling the Hellcat forward, and simultaneously as the Hellcat moves forward the pilot will release the wing-folding mechanism. Thus, the forward motion of the aircraft will help the Airdales fold the wing. The Hellcat is fairly far forward of the spot where its tailhook was disengaged, by the green-shirts, from the arresting-wire. As the Hellcat taxied forward from that spot, the Airdales ran out, grabbed the wing, and then the pilot accelerated forward. The weight of the Airdales on the wing makes easier the folding of the wings. The smoother and the more coordinated these actions are, the faster the aircraft clears the deck for the next aircraft that is just about touching

down on the flight deck (out of sight, to the left). This allows the landing of aircraft every 20 seconds. If there's a foul-up in this process, the following aircraft is waved off and must go around again in the landing pattern. With 90 aircraft per flight, as on the Antietam, a landing process took thirty minutes as the minimum. (That's an auxiliary gasoline tank underneath the Hellcat, and not a bomb.) Notice that some of the personnel are wearing life-belts around their waists. These are inflated by lung-power, once a person is in the water. I sometimes wondered about them because by wearing them out in the sun so much, they became stiff instead of retaining their flexibility. But in truth, I never gave that too much thought: "we'd never be sunk. (or would we?)".

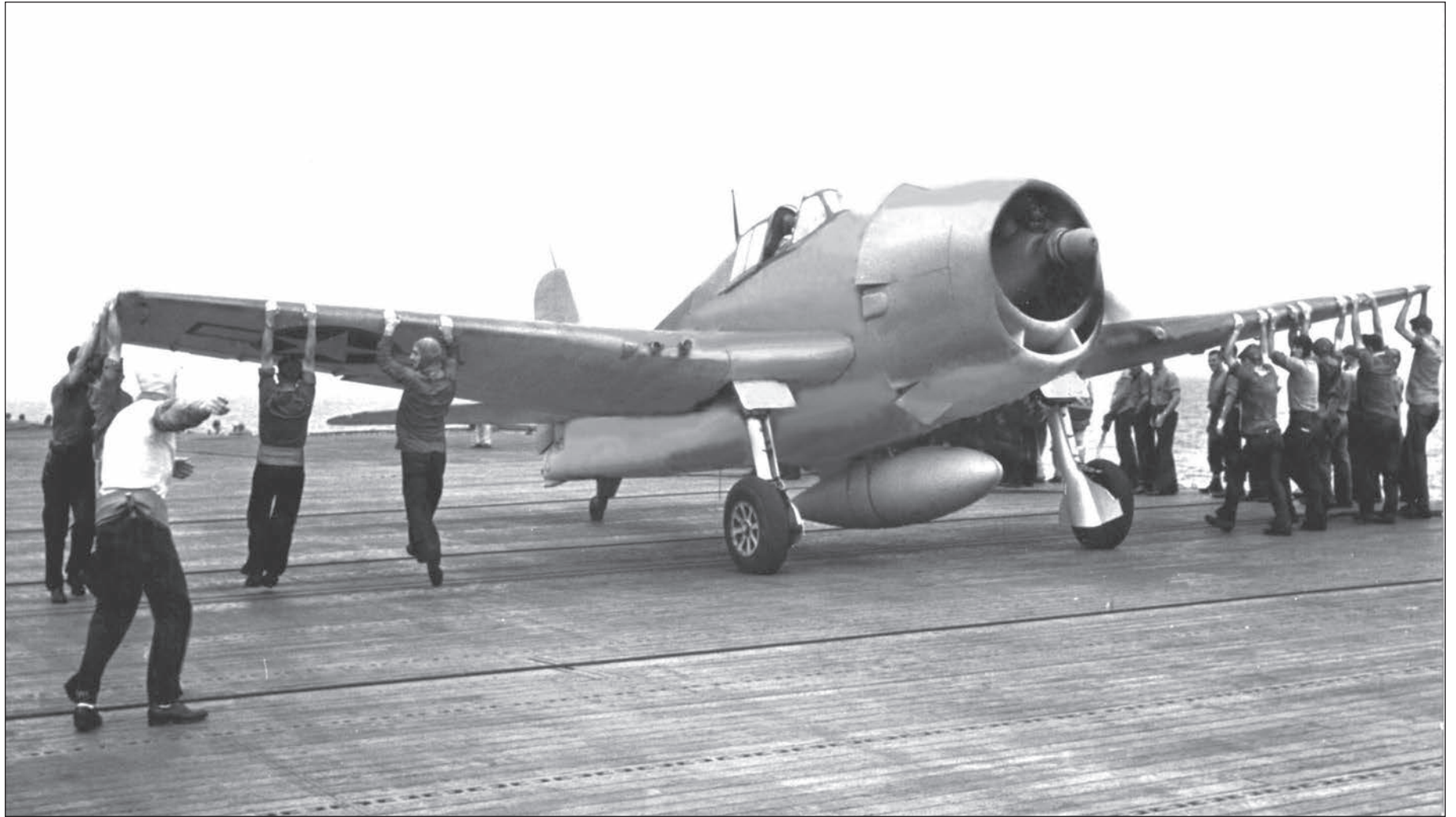
"stuff" for those so young (how would you and you and you do in such a situation? This was especially so when the pilot of that aircraft came over to keep tabs on what was being done to "his" aircraft). Not all the repairs were of a mechanical nature. The aircraft had radio and radar equipment that also had to be maintained and checked out. It was all a new world to me and I must say that I felt somewhat deflated watching sailors not much older than I doing this solid type work. When I left the navy I always had this in the back of my mind but I didn't follow up on it when I went to college: I majored in Applied Economics instead. However, after a few dismal (cont.)

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this day to combat and operational incidents, i.e., crashes. Task Group 38.3 was attacked by 80 aircraft on the fourteenth and 20 of these were "splashed". The Japanese had multiple thousands of land-based aircraft spotted throughout the Philippines which meant that any time the ships were in the area they were susceptible to incursions by marauders. The battles off Formosa and Okinawa during October 10 through 16 cost the Japanese about 600 aircraft lost and about 40 ships sunk by Task Force 38 (Intrepid was lead ship of Task Group 38.2). T.F. 38 lost 90 aircraft of which 64 pilots and air crewmen were killed or missing. At least 600

enemy aircraft were sent against T.F. 38 during these seven days off Formosa and Okinawa. (Statistics yes, but grim ones for those directly involved: consider an aircraft diving from on high "directly at you" (or so it seems). You stand and gaze initially in fascination but as it draws closer and closer the fascination starts turning to questions and then outright anxiety as the time of impact shortens to mere seconds. Hiding is not an option. Even "hitting the deck" is pointless. It's pure destiny that takes hold and you either live or die (or sustain injuries too cruel to even mention)). At this point the

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AIRDALES FOLD WINGS

Here the Airdales are helping the F6F Hellcat fold its wings. Some muscle-power was required to help the Hellcat's hydraulic-system fold its wings. The Airdale underneath the wing has just mechanically released the latch in the wing to allow this process shown to happen. (Being "the new boy the block", I never pulled the latch.) This was for all Hellcats, but no other plane. Again, the white auxiliary fuel tank. Also the spectators on the catwalk. The Hellcat was responsible for shooting down most of enemy aircraft in the Pacific Theatre, but then they were out there for

a longer period of time. The action going on here is of course what happens just after the Hellcat landed and just before it taxis forward for the parking process. I say "process" because that's just what it was, as will be discussed in the Parking chapter. In a way, the parking process was the most anxious type of activity, but more on that at a later time. But before leaving this picture, it should be noticed that ordinarily (at least, on the Antietam) there would be an Airdale at each wheel, wheelchock in hand, escorting the Hellcat forward.

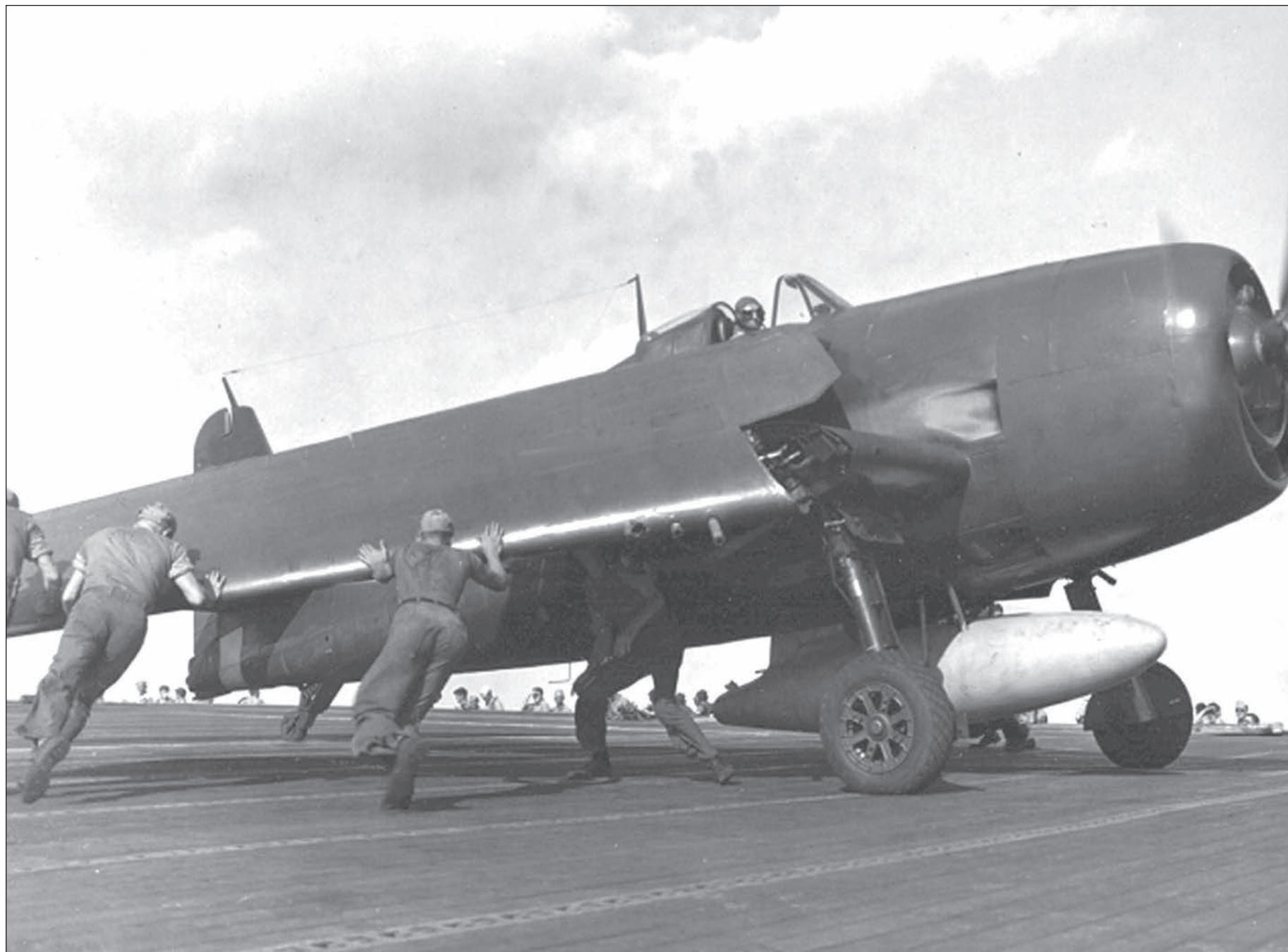
years at NYC banks I went to work for some electronic companies until finally I took the sensible step of going back to college full time to earn an electrical engineering degree. This led to my eventually working for the Navy Department in the fields of management engineering in computers and communications (though my real love was motion control (servomechanisms)). I would strongly urge one and all to do due diligence in determining one's interest and then assiduously pursue that goal. As has been said, if you do what you enjoy its not work (and if it's not work you'll seldom become tired). A "happy warrior" is a productive one and society will be the better for it. To me this is what a purpose-driven life means (with all due respect to those who have assigned a religious connotation to one's purpose in life) To be productive does wonders for one's self-esteem. As I've said in previous pages I seriously wonder if there would be any need for rules and regulations and laws and restrictions and etc, if everyone had a healthy and earned self-respect. This may (cont.)

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enemy had lost virtually all its naval aircraft and were left with only the land-based aircraft (of which there were still a great many on Formosa, Okinawa and Japan itself). Now we'll merely itemize the rest of the Intrepid's record because detailed accounts abound and can be found in many other publications. Again, realize that the following summary does not do justice to what this fine ship did during the days of September 1944 to August 1945. Also, this is not to exclude all the other ships, large and small, that also had exemplary records (but space will not allow otherwise). Now the battles tend to intensify as the U.S. forces approach closer and closer to Japan,

starting with the largest, most comprehensive naval battle of all time: the Battle of Leyte Gulf. On October the 20th the Intrepid sent aircraft to support MacArthur's army landings on Leyte Island in the central Philippine Archipelago. The second stage of this battle was started on October 24 when Intrepid's aircraft locate and attack the Japanese central force in the Battle of Sibuyan Sea, central within the archipelago. Intrepid aircraft then help to sink the Japanese super battleship Musashi while also damaging other warships. The night of October 24 the third stage of this largest of all

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LAST FLIGHT OF THE DAY

An F6F, its tailhook extended, is about to touch down. Again, this silhouette and cloud-scene made this picture a must, although color would have made this an outstanding picture. What's shown here is a classic juxtaposition of the beautiful and the ugly, with the "ugly" being a war-machine whose sole purpose was to rain death and destruction on the many, including most importantly, the innocent. In a way, this picture is an allegory of life: one must need take the good with the bad; or, one must try to see the good even when engulfed with the bad. Certainly this can often be a challenge of the first order. This picture can also represent the conflict of hope versus despair. Choose your own allegory. On a less philosophical note, this picture also represents the end of a full day. A day filled with activities that were at times anxious to the fullest degree, a day that had a full measure of sound and fury, a day of

incessant winds, a day in which the propwash winds buffeted one unmercifully. But, ah then, after all the tumult of the long day, there would be the calm, the quiet, the skyward beauty at evening-tide, when all the others would be below decks, doing whatever. This was the "good" that could almost be tasted after the long day's "ugly." Thoughts would easily turn homeward. Even though those thoughts would not necessarily be happy ones, they would at least bring about reconnection to what was, and what hopefully might be. It was a play of hope against despair, and, sad to say, it was usually despair that won the day. It was then that the song "Smile" should have held sway. But looking skyward, hope persevered. That sky was God-given. In any event, this picture is one of my favorites, and it must be included in this book of "conflict" and strenuous endeavor.

seem extravagant but I urge the reader to think on it seriously and with thoughtful consideration. I realize it's a fantasy in our present environment but it's an ideal that would make our world (world-wide) a place of joy. Fanciful, yes but also wondrous.

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battles was fought in the Surigao Strait, just above the island of Samar which forms the upper part of the Leyte Gulf. On October the 25th the Intrepid, along with the rest of the fleet carriers, race northward to the east of Luzon Island to intercept a fleet of Japanese carriers. It so happened that this was a decoy force of carriers with very few aircraft. Their purpose was to draw the U.S. carriers away from the Leyte Gulf to allow the Japanese Central Force to destroy MacArthur's landings in Leyte Gulf. The plan worked perfectly, unfortunately leaving the landings to be protected by the much weaker escort carriers. They paid dearly when confronted by the

heavy Japanese surface ships. They fought gallantly against overwhelming odds even to the extent that the Japanese force inexplicitly turned and retreated. naval historians have been discussing this fourth stage voluminously. This points out the crucial importance of intelligence in any form of warfare. The Intrepid and the rest of the fleet carriers, after sinking or badly damaging the essentially defenseless Japanese carriers, race south to attack and route the retreating Japanese forces in this fifth and final stage of the Battle of the Philippine Sea. October the 29th is the first day of an attack by

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A HARD LANDING

Here's an obvious "bouncer." For whatever reason, this F6F bounced high on touching down. Maybe he was too high when he was told to cut power, or maybe the ship heaved upward just as he touched down, causing the plane to receive a sharp upward thrust. The F6F is fairly far down the flight deck, and so, past the arresting-cables. So it's the barriers

for this F6F. Then too, if the bounce is high enough, it's over the top of the barriers and beyond, to wreak who knows what havoc. This picture shows the most common type of mishap in the making. It was usually pilot error that caused this type of mishap, but as was mentioned, a heaving deck could also be the culprit. Who knows?

Not much has been said about the guns around the periphery of the flight deck. There are rows of 20-mm guns along the edge of the flight deck, both fore and aft, on both starboard and port. These are manned by sailor gunner's mates and by the contingent of marines that all large ships had (they were the "policemen" of last resort although there were also navy master-at-arms aboard who provided the day-to-day police functions (similar to the long blue line that are society's police between us and the bad guys). To my knowledge there was never a need for these "police" on board ship, perhaps because we were all so busy that no one had time to run into trouble. (Now there's a neat idea: keep everyone busy so that no one gets into trouble. This has probably been said since forever. Could one say that this is a quintessential conservative (conserving) idea? Could one also say that conservatism is, or should be, a bulwark of society? Regardless of one's political leanings I say basic conservatism has to be the rock upon (cont.)

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a kamikaze aircraft against a fleet carrier, the Intrepid, with slight damage. These attacks intensify as the carriers carry out additional raids against the airfields and depots. There were 440 enemy aircraft destroyed on November 5th. Come November 25, the Intrepid is seriously damaged by two simultaneous bomb-laden kamikaze attacks. In the aftermath, 64 are killed and 81 are wounded but the Intrepid survives. This requires that the Intrepid return to the U.S. for repairs. By March 18 the Intrepid is back on station off the coast of Japan. Task Group 58.3 was conducting raids against Kyushu, the southern-most island of Japan. On March 14 a twin-engine

Japanese bomber broke through the protective perimeter to head directly at the Intrepid. It was a Kamikaze intent on finally eliminating the Intrepid. It was low to the water as the 5-inch guns put out a tremendous barrage. No luck Then the 40-mm guns added their fire. Still no luck. Finally, at about 1500 yards distance the 20-mm guns joined the effort. It seemed inevitable that the Intrepid would be hit again. Incredibly, at about 50 to 100 feet away, it flipped upward and crashed in the sea. However, the explosion of the bomb was so violent that the ship was showered with fragments

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HELLDIVER INTO THE BARRIER

The SB2C missed all the arresting-cables, and it too is headed for the barriers, or over them. Notice that the SB2C's wing-flaps are not only used for landing, but since they're "perforated," they're also used as diving-flaps to slow the plane down as it's making its semi-vertical dive. Notice the radio aerial mast in front of the cockpit, and the pitot tube on the front of the aircraft's left wing. The green-shirted arrest-

ing-gear men in the background can only stand and watch. It's for sure that the Airdales, up the flight deck to the left, will be, should be, watching. Even though that aircraft is only going 40-knots relative speed (relative to the deck), there isn't all that much time to get out of the way. And besides, there isn't all that much room (space) to which you can run.

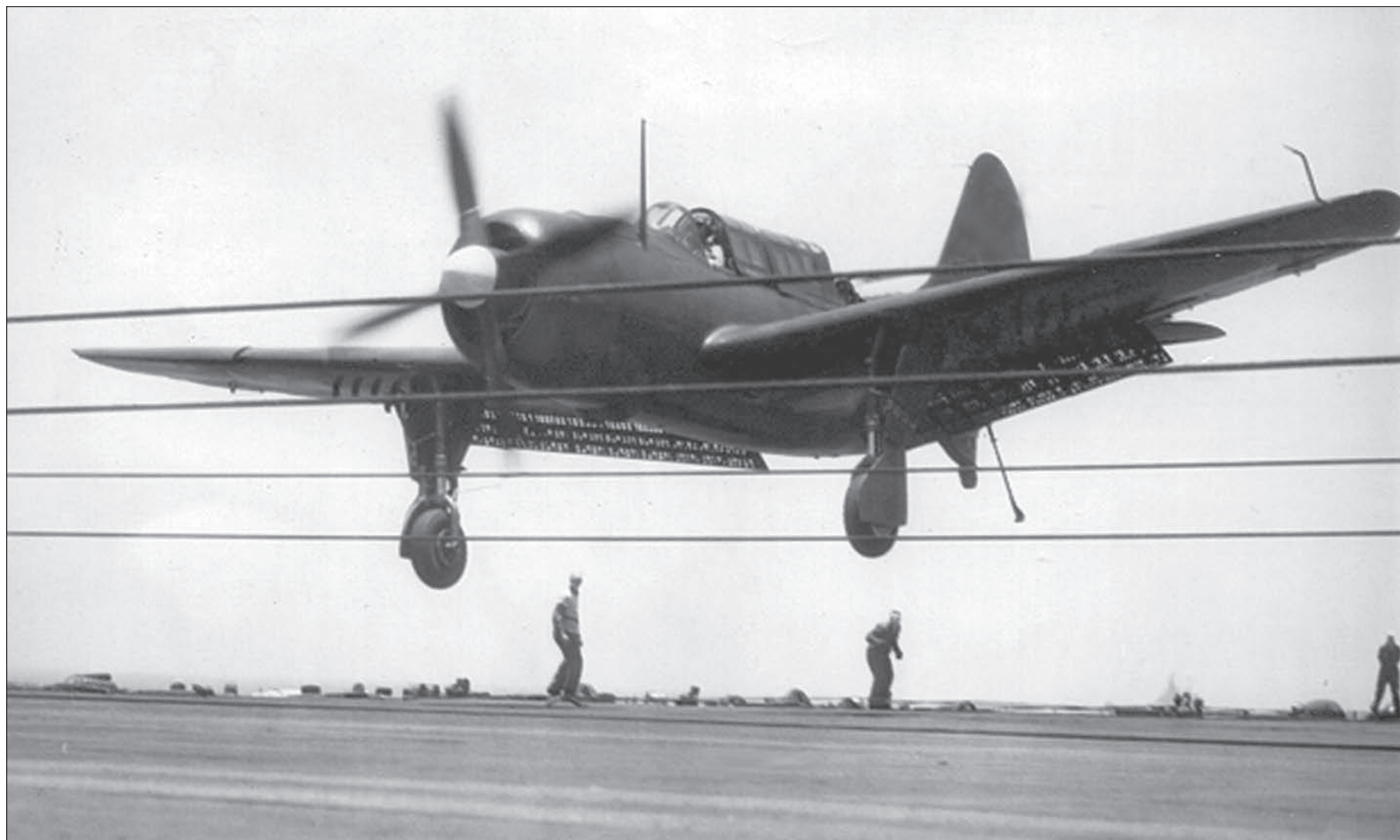
which society stands. Returning to those 20-mm guns, the gunner's mates and marines would frequently, after gunnery practice, disassemble the guns to apply a thorough cleaning to all parts of the gun. This would be a fascinating thing to watch, realizing that all those diverse parts would have to be meticulously reassembled. They were pretty smart, those gunner's mates and marines because there was never any extra parts laying about after they were done. In effect, these guns were their "babies", even more so than the teenager and his car. After all, these weapons might be the thing that separates them from death (as well as us Airdales). There were also 40-mm guns: two at the port side of the ship just below the level of the flight deck, fore and aft. There were also five of these 40-mm quad guntubs on the starboard side of the ship (not accessible from the flight deck). One of these was right outside our compartment so that sometimes I'd stand in the tub and watch the waves break over the bow of the ship. On Sunday evenings (cont.)

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of the disintegrated aircraft. Minor gasoline fires were started but they were quickly put out by the fire-fighters (Airdales). On April 1, 1945 Okinawa was invaded by the marines along with massive support by the fleet which incurred the wrath of the Japanese land-based aircraft on Okinawa. This required further strikes against Kyushu as well as the aircraft from Okinawa. It was during this Okinawa campaign that the kamikazes materialized in overwhelming force (because this was the last stop before the defenses of the home-islands would be tested. Once they were breached it would be a literal fight for survival. The kamikazes wanted most of all to

destroy the large fleet carriers because they of course had the aircraft that punished them so much. Many of the Essexes were hit, some grievously such as the U.S.S. Franklin (CV-13) and the U.S.S. Bunker Hill (CV-17), among others. On April 16 a kamikaze slipped through the screen and headed straight for the Intrepid. It struck its flight deck after an almost vertical dive, crashing through it and into the hanger deck where it caused all kinds of serious damage. The kamikaze's bomb exploded on the hanger deck causing many casualties but the damage control party on the hanger deck

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THIS CORSAIR HAVING HARD TIME

This F4U apparently has been hooked because the yellow-shirt is running out to “take control” of the F4U via the pilot. The F4U’s obviously a little askew, and so bad things are (were) a possibility. This yellow-shirt is an officer, because of his tan trousers. The enlisted yellow-shirts wear blue dungarees (as do all enlisted men, including

Airdales). But the Chief Petty Officers (non-commissioned) also wore blue dungarees (what is now called “blue denim,” a designer’s term, I suppose). The brackets uplifting the arresting-wires are clearly seen here, and this must be an earlier picture because the F4U has no auxiliary fuel tank.

I'd take my sandwich to this guntub to have my supper there. Not very often though because the gunners of that guntub didn't like that. In any event it was a nice little "private balcony" to watch the waves swish by. I should interject here that there were those many who complained about the chow served aboard ship. I had no complaints whatsoever about the food served. This is akin to a form of complaint that I find to be very offensive in the affairs of society. It concerns those who have done well and who are very competent at what they do. I believe in the idea of "meritocracy", that idea that one should be measured in part by one's ability (not so much one's achievements because that very often implies arbitrary assessments by people who are obviously biased). "Meritocracy" shuns favoritism, that scourge. "Meritocracy" favors competence, the ability to do well (hopefully for the benefit for all, but not necessarily). By the sweat of his brow shall he do well. By his hard earned intelligence shall he contribute his talent. (cont.)

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was able to contain and control the fires (but the ship was once again put out of commission (not literally)). This then was the fourth time a kamikaze had hit the Intrepid which is, I believe a record (of dubious distinction but uncommon fortitude and indomitableness). The Intrepid went state-side again for repairs to return to Eniwetok on August 7th. Eight days later the fleet was ordered to cease operations as peace terms were accepted by Japan. At this time the Task Unit 30.3.9 was formed consisting of the Intrepid, the Antietam and the Cabot (CVL). This unit was sent to join the fleet off Japan to participate in the surrender ceremonies.

On the way the Antietam received some damage to its hull and had to turn back to Eniwetok. It wasn't until later that we were able to reach Tokyo Bay. The Antietam was in good company during those few days, in company with a ship that had seen the worst that the Japanese could “throw at it” This Intrepid, as all Essex-class carriers, was a great ship, a marvelous ship, big in size and majestic in appearance. Yet it is but gray paint covering angular steel fitted out with a multitude of wonderful, but inanimate, equipment and devices. This all has significant merit, however a ship comes to life

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CRASH IMMINENT

This seems like a “wave-off” instead of a “bouncer”. The aircraft’s direction and height imply this. (Incidentally, notice that the following aircraft in the landing pattern is very far away, perhaps as much as 120 seconds instead of the normal 20 seconds.) A likely conclusion to this episode is that the SB2C will veer off to the left and pancake into the water not far from the carrier, to be picked up by the following destroyer. It would seem that the pilot got the LSO’s “wave-off” signal pretty late, when it was too close to the carrier. (Or perhaps the pilot responded too slowly to the LSO’s “wave-off.”) It’s at this close distance that the

throttle is set low. Then, when the “wave-off” had been given, there just wasn’t enough power available, even upon giving it full throttle, to allow the SB2C to gain altitude. If the pilot keeps the direction of the aircraft in a straighter direction, he’s less likely to lose lift. So, he must make a split-second decision: go straight to gain more lift, but maybe crash into the parked aircraft up ahead, or veer to the left, getting less lift, but more likely to crash into the water? This is a serious dilemma requiring a fast response, but SOP required the latter course of action. If only the “wave-off” were given, or responded to, sooner.

There are those who feel very uncomfortable concerning those who are superior to them in talent and/or intelligence and the like. This discomfort turns into that truly ugly trait of jealousy. It's with this that the meritorious ones becomes pilloried. The "little ones" can't stand being figuratively bested by the ones of merit. Their jealousy, that corrosive, will do whatever it takes to bring the one of merit down. Their mode: Take others down, not bring themselves up. This is vile jealousy. Good jealousy will inspire others to emulate the one with merit. This dichotomy of jealous, vile and ugly or ennobling and restorative, is a two edged sword. Do yourself, do society, well by eschewing the former and embracing the latter. The world will rejoice!

U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11), continued from previous page.

only, and is known, by the quality, by the character, of those who crew it. The least of these, the Airdales, can be said to have given it the most of its life as, with nerve and sinew, they surmount the elements of noise and lashing wind in a sea of flashing blades, day in, day out. In large measure they determine the ebb and flow of the activity on the flight deck as the flight operations of 100 aircraft are released (launch) or spotted (landing). In its perverse way it was exhilarating while at the same time it was in fact extremely debilitating. However, a healthy teenager could certainly handle any situation that arose (and yet debilitation saps one’s energy, both phys-

ically and emotionally, so it’s not a bagatelle (a trifle, a snap)). [There are those who no doubt wonder how someone can write a book about such a simpleminded and repetitious job. First and foremost, this is a picture book in which “a picture is worth a thousand words”. Secondly, the job merits consideration because it involves situations that are literally on the edge of eternity. This should raise some sort of interest in those who give their all to an endeavor crucial to our nation’s welfare.]



BOUNCE, THEN THE CRASH

This F4U obviously has cleared the barriers by a pretty good margin and is well on its way to aircraft and people up ahead. Presumably everyone is “heads-up” and are out of harm’s way. However, floating or flying debris are sometimes not avoidable. Then too, fire is a distinct possibility, especially since high-octane gasoline is being used. An airborne aircraft is an unpredictable thing, so one must keep one’s wits about him. No personal distractions are “allowed.” Clear views of the barrier-stanchions are evi-

dent. There seems to be a dearth of barriers here. There should be at least three of them. There’s probably another one to the right. It’s been said on previous pages that the Corsair’s an unstable aircraft. This picture probably represents that, but even giving that, this aircraft is probably a “bouncer” and not an out-of-control aircraft that hasn’t yet touched the deck (which certainly is a possibility). Notice the light-source directly behind the subject (the Corsair) making for an nice silhouette.

We will return for brief time to the chapter that illustrated the protective guns on board the Essex-class carriers:

To implement the fire control problem of the 5-inch guns servomechanisms were required. (These are used pervasively throughout industry in such applications as robotics and machine tools and the like.) A servomechanism, or servo, operates by comparing the output of a system to the input of the system. Any discrepancy between the two is called the error, which error is used to bring the output in conformance with the input. This concept can be and is used throughout the world whether it be robots or chemical manufacture or even an economic system. Most especially it makes our human existence possible: When we reach for an object the difference between the position of our hand and the object is the error that has to be corrected. The input to this process is our desire to pick up the object and the output is the actual position of our hand. Our eyes enable us to detect the error, the brain interprets this error and our arm is the power source (motor) to pick up the object. Thus a servo has an input, an output, an error detector and a power source or actuator. Biology is rife with servo systems such as the body’s temperature, the hormone balance and the like. Biologists do not call it a servo

system even though it is in fact just that. In our applications, servos control the position of gun training and elevation as well as the positioning of the radar directors on which are attached the radar dishes, enabling the directors to track (follow) the moving aircraft target. A servomechanism (servo) is based on the principle of applying a control signal to move a gun or director whose motion is constantly being monitored and corrected for any deviation between the commanded position and the actual position. This difference, this error signal, assures that the desired positioning is maintained. The greater the deviation of actual from desired the greater the error and thus the greater the applied signal to correct the difference between the two. There are many causes for the lack of correspondence between the actual and desired positions. To name a few, there are disturbances such as wind, such as varying friction, such as change of load, such as excessive acceleration due to extreme speed and /or changeability of the target position. This feedback error signal therefore must be modified in various ways that are beyond the ken of this presentation (that is, it can be an extremely difficult engineering problem that during WWII was essentially solved by damping,
(Continued on next page)



EXCESSIVE BOUNCE

This is not a “wave-off.” It’s a “bouncer,” because the F4U is too close to the flight deck. In the next few seconds there’ll be a resolution to this mishap. Some of this is covered in the next chapter. Since the pilot cut power down to idle at the LSO’s “cut power” signal, he can’t muster enough power to gain altitude. This isn’t like present-day carrier operations where as they land, they apply full power (taking advantage of an angled deck). The angled deck,

installed well after the war, enabled landing aircraft to approach the flight deck at about 10 degrees off the flight deck’s center-line. This prohibited any landing aircraft from crashing into aircraft that had already landed. This saved a great deal of destruction to men and material during landing operations and made life on the flight deck much safer and healthier. As was mentioned, the Antietam was the first ship to get the angled deck, in 1953.

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physical and electrical, and various other means. Now it is almost exclusively done by adjusting computer programs as derived from mathematical models. All servos operate as described above while at the same time there are a multitude of variations on that theme. An obvious one is the physical size of the system; some servos move a small instrument while others move very large guns. Some servos make use of various size electric motors while others make use of hydraulic motive power and some use a combination of hydraulics and electrical power. During WWII extensive use was made of what are called psychos to transmit signals such as error signals and position signals. A synchro can be considered as a form of electrical transformer where an electrical current through one coil generates an electrical signal in another coil. The position of a moveable coil determines the value of the electric current in this coil and so can represent the angular position of a moveable object (such as a radar director or gun). There are many kinds of synchros such as transmitting, receiving, control, and differential synchros. They are all concerned with developing and moving signals within a system such as a servo. Essentially, one only need remember that the error signal drives

the output of a system in such a manner as to reduce the error signal. When there’s no error signal there’s no motion and the director or gun is on target. This is the basis of automatic tracking without which many more ships would have been hit by the terrifying kamikazes. Before going to a more comprehensive consideration of servos it should be said that there are three prime aspects of any fire control servo system. They are the attributes of stability, speed of response and accuracy. Without stability, the capability of a servo to “settle down” after an initial overshoot of the desired output there can be no useful control of a gun’s train and elevation motions. Constantly oscillating about the desired point of aim is of no value. Once stability has been accomplished we are concerned with the speed with which the gun points at the “point of aim”. If it takes too long to reach this point the target aircraft will have continued on its way untouched by your fire power. Speed of response is critical here but one need also to be concerned about overshooting the proper point of aim (thus tending toward “hunting” for the target). When those two items are accomplished the system of course must also at the same time achieve accuracy. Thus, be accurate with as much speed of
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TROUBLE AHEAD

This F6F didn't "catch a wire" and so it's going awry. (This is why spectators aren't allowed on the catwalk during landing operations.) This F6F is a "bull in a china-shop". Brakes would be of little help here because of the aircraft's speed and direction and position. The most logical interpretation of this picture is that, again, there was a wave-off and insufficient power was available to enable the Hellcat to gain altitude. And again, maybe the "wave-off" was given, or responded to, too late. An explanation of why a "wave-off" was given is the obvious one of the aircraft being out of the "groove", being too high, too low, being in an improv-

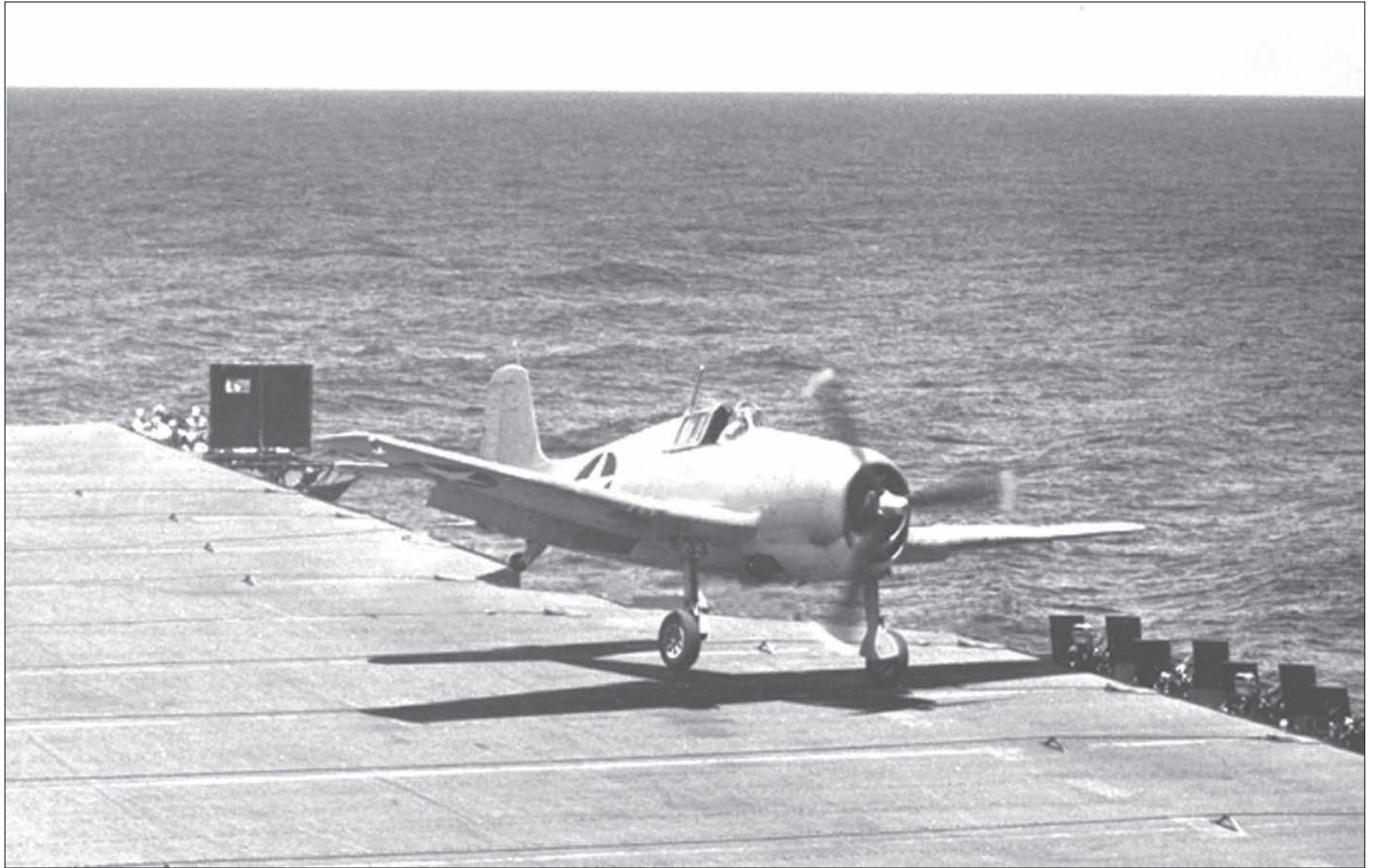
er attitude, being too fast, being too slow, or, it could be that there was a "fouled deck". A fouled deck could be any situation where there's an impediment in the landing area of the flight deck, such as an aircraft that wasn't unhooked fast enough, thus preventing its taxiing up the flight deck to clear the area. Or, it could have been that the previous aircraft developed a flat tire upon landing. One solution to that would be for the Airdales to get under the wing on that side and lift up on the wing, thus allowing the aircraft to (slowly) taxi up the deck, and make room for the following aircraft that's in the landing pattern.

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response as possible without at the same time overshooting the proper point of aim. Gun train and elevation to the required point of aim requires all of these as simultaneously as possible. Stability, speed of response and accuracy leads to a highly effective servomechanism (fire control system). Keep in mind that during the years 1942-1945 there were no electrical/electronic computers, either analog or digital. The computing elements of computers of yore consisted of gears and cams and mechanical linkages and synchros (transmitting, receiving, differential and control). This in turn made for sloppy results as compared to present day systems that make use of digital

computers to move a motor in the sub micron range. So one can appreciate the invention of the proximity fuse at that time whose calculations depended on electrical circuits of resistors and capacitors and of course primitive radar. The first of the following two pages is a brief diagram of the servo system as it appeared circa 1945. It can be seen that there is an input, an output and the developed error signal. To the right are the symbols for friction F and the load L . This diagram is as basic as it can be. The next diagram shows various examples of the output: underdamped to critically damped to over damped. The abscissa represents the time-axis.

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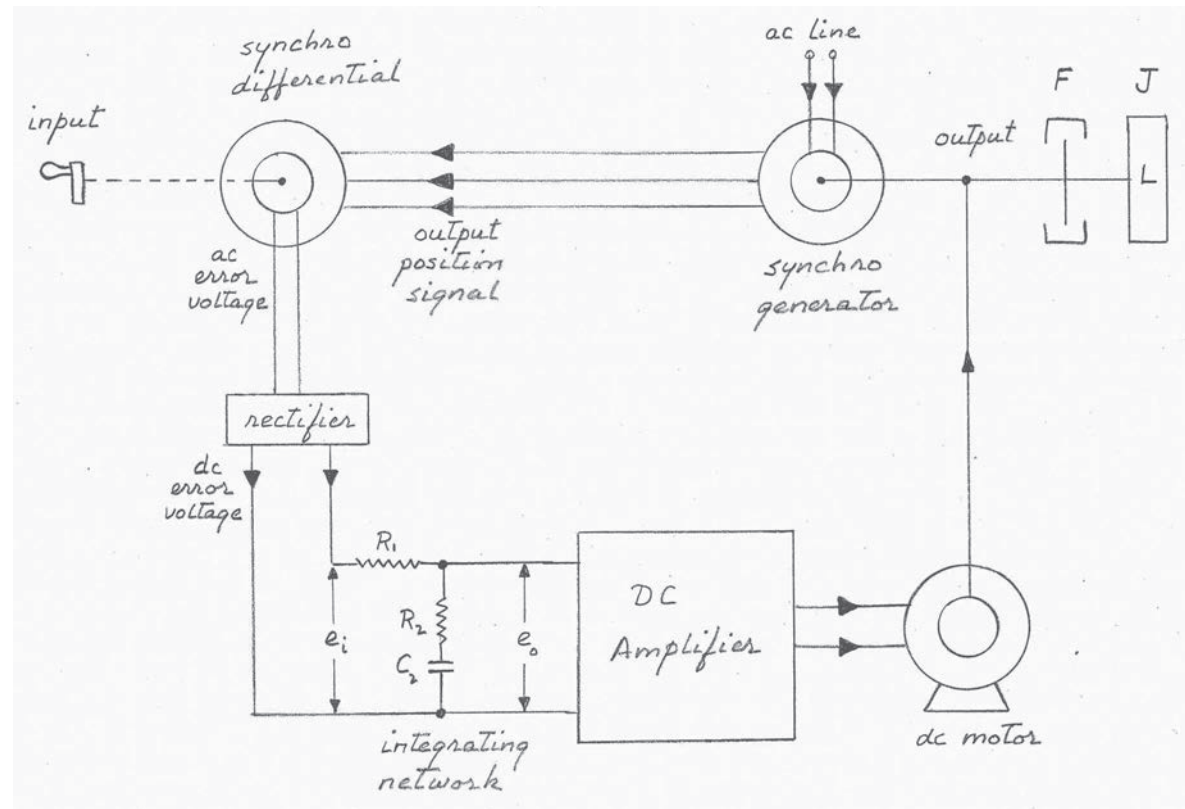
WATERBOUND

This is the aircraft of the previous picture. It's no doubt on its way to the water below, damaging the 20-mm guns on the way. A fifty-foot plunge is no picnic, but these pilots usually survive. It's also possible that the guns will prevent the F6F from going over the side. Also, notice how the Hellcat is now on its right wheel, while in the previous picture it was on its left wheel.

This means that it was bouncing from side to side as it was moving forward at about 40-knots. This represents a fairly unstable landing, a landing the pilot no doubt didn't want to make. The aircraft are buoyant enough to allow the pilot plenty time to get out of the cockpit and maybe not even get his feet wet for a while. But the aircraft is lost, permanently.

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Consider the rotating 5-inch gun turret consisting of mass, turning friction and spring-absorbing capability. Any system with energy storage (mass (m) and spring (k)) and energy dissipation (friction (b)) is a second-order system with a math model of velocity (for this physical configuration) $m/k[dv^2/dt^2] + b/k[dv/dt] + v = \text{input velocity}$ (here a step input). This can be written as velocity output $= [w(n)]^2/[s^2 + 2zw(n)s + (w(n))^2]$ times velocity input (here a step input velocity). With this nomenclature the value of z (zeta) is equal to $[b/2][k/m]^{1/2}$ and $w(n)$ is equal to $[1/mk]^{1/2}$. Finally, $w(n)$ is the natural frequency of the system (oscillation with no energy absorbing friction and $z = \text{zeta}$ is the damping ratio (actual over critical). $w(c)$ is the system cutoff frequency at the 0 db gain on the Bode frequency diagram and is close to $w(n)$.]



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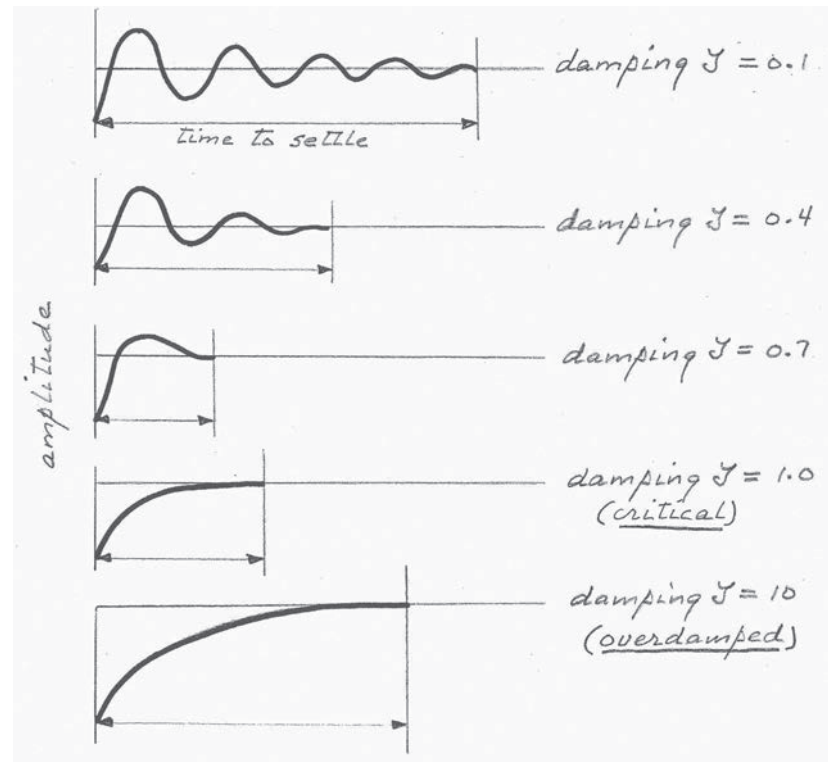
AN AVENGER CAUSING HAVOC

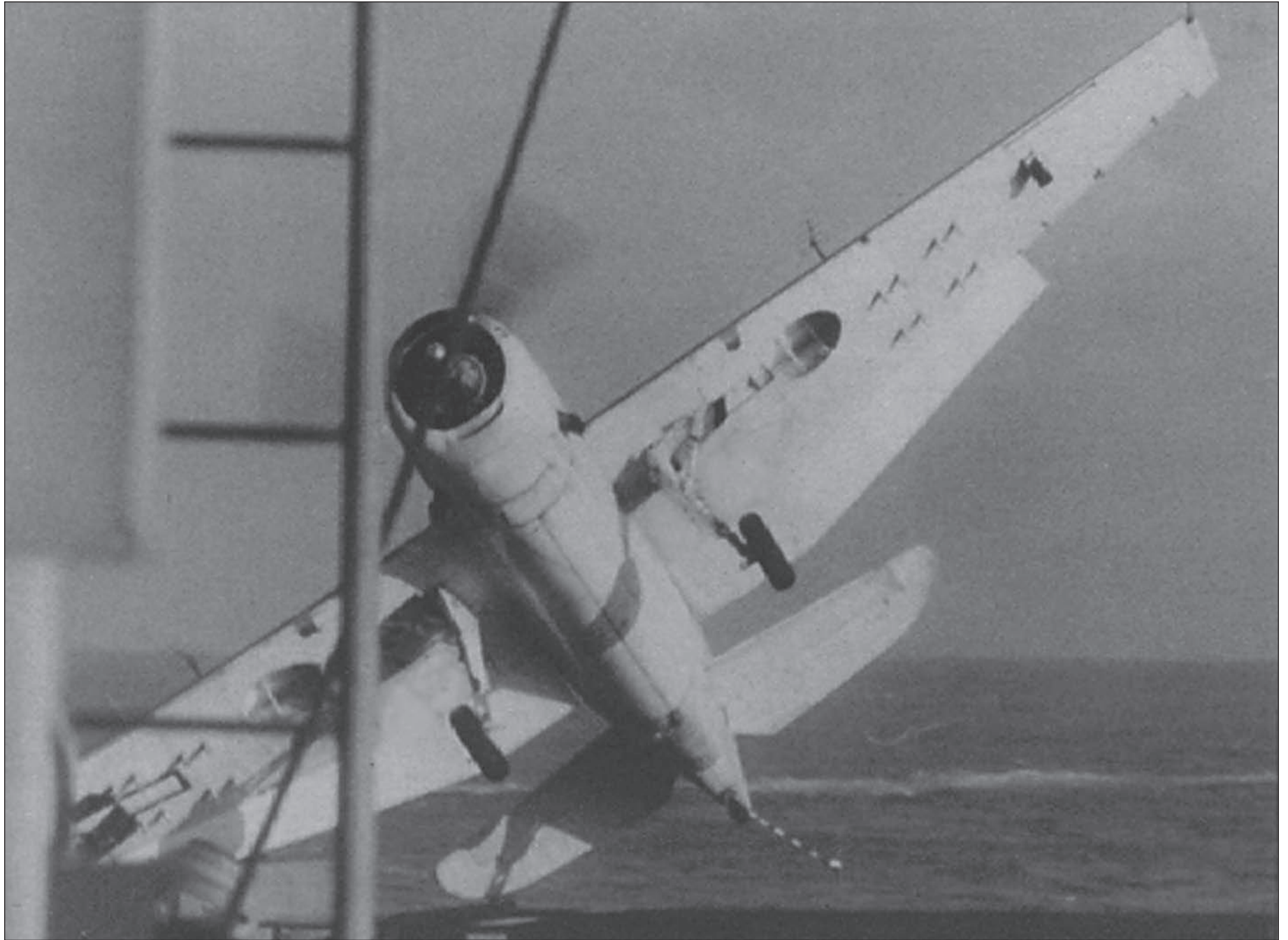
This TBF/M appears to be on its way to the island superstructure. Those spectators there are now in jeopardy. This seems to be more than a bounce, and it does not look like an under-powered wave-off because wave-offs go to the port side, away from the island. He does seem to be giving the engine full power, as witness the propeller. Of course this means more collateral damage will be done. I'm puzzled by what caused this to happen, and can only say

that aircraft sometimes want to do strange things in strange ways. Although most landings were without incident, each landing was potentially one that could become as is shown in this picture. To not pay attention to each and every landing was to do so at your risk. Sometimes the landings seemed automatic, but there were other times when they weren't. After watching many, many landings, one was able to recognize possible problems.

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The damping ratio ζ is the ratio of the actual damping over the critical damping. In practice the system parameters are adjusted such that the damping ratio is 0.7. This is considered the optimum ratio so that the steepness of the response provides sufficient speed of response while the overshoot of the response does not generate too much oscillation (oscillation will destroy a system while lack of steepness will only slow down the system). The most difficult input to follow is a step input. For fast response the system gain should be high at the outset. Very soon thereafter the gain should be decreased to mitigate overshoot and oscillation (which renders the system moot). Shortly thereafter the gain should again be increased to counter errors in the output. However this in turn might cause oscillation. Response times are in the microsecond and millisecond range while the errors achieved by high-end equipment can go as low as microns.





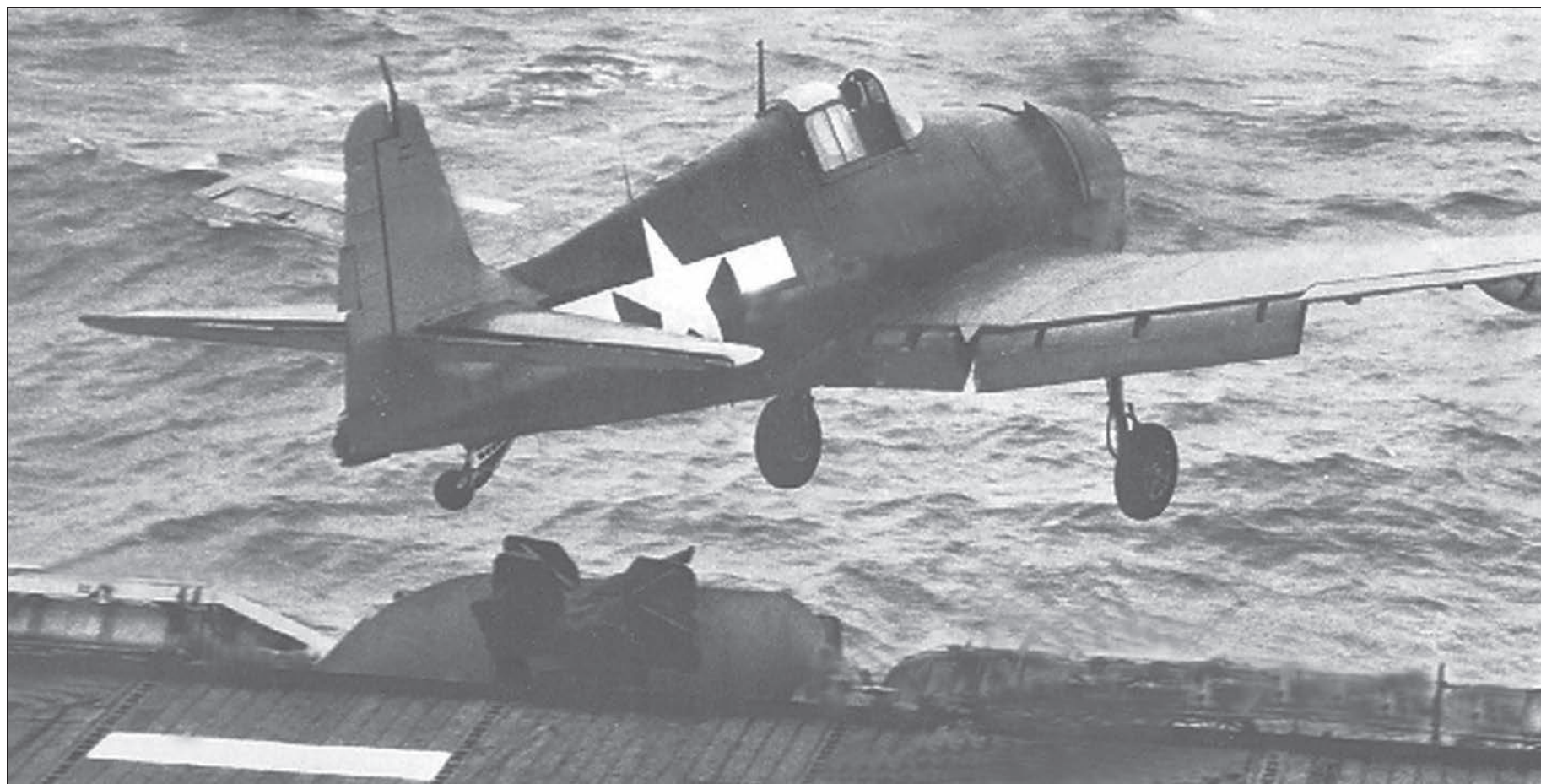
50-FEET TO THE WATER

There he goes! And it's 50-feet down. This is a peculiar one, for sure, and it makes very clear that there were no "safe havens" on the flight deck during landing operations. It also makes clear why it is one should watch each and every landing. I don't know about other ships, but I guarantee that there was no idle talk on the flight deck of the Antietam during landing operations. There was absolutely NO "kidding around" there either. Absolutely none, ever, in any way, for as long as I was there. And there was never any need, whatsoever, to impose a strict attitude,

ever. It was clearly understood that this was serious business, because you never ever knew if "that next landing" was going to be the one that would cause havoc. Let's just say that the flight deck was a sober place, by mutual consent. As to the Hellcat #319, my only explanation is that the Hellcat missed the arresting-wires, and before the pilot reached the barriers, he applied the brakes hard, with only the left one taking hold, thus wheeling him to the left. There was still too much speed, and over he went. I'm sure the pilot was picked up, but scratch one Hellcat.

Oops! This pilot seems to have lost his way. Not so. He was perhaps hit by a sudden, sharp gust of wind, or it could have been an abrupt engine torque at the last second, or who knows? I don't pretend to know, and yet after having watched hundreds of landings one can in a way divine what will happen as the landings unfold. This is similar to what the psychologists call intuition: an immediate recognition of an impending result without previous knowledge of a similar occurrence. I believe it's going from A to E without any intervening analysis whereas others must arrive at the same conclusion by going from A to B to C to D to E. Intuition can also be stated as the ability to have direct perception of a truth or fact independent of any apparent reasoning process. In my opinion this definition is somewhat flawed in that intuitive people have had previous experience of the same or similar nature that

has been tucked away in their subconscious, being available immediately without the steps B, C and D. In any case, an immediate conclusion is reached sans reflection. The key words are "direct" and "insight". I'll further say that I believe intuition, or insight, results from a person's observant nature such that he/she has accumulated facts, knowledge and the like over a period of time. Thus again, it is the observant one who adds to one's store of knowledge which rests dormant in the subconscious ready to spring into action. Intuitive people seem smart, and indeed they are because they have been observant as a way of life. This being the case, why are you not observant? Although those with intuition are able to anticipate what might well happen, it would be folly, it would be foolhardy to conduct your life based on intuitions (hunches). Leave that to the gamblers.



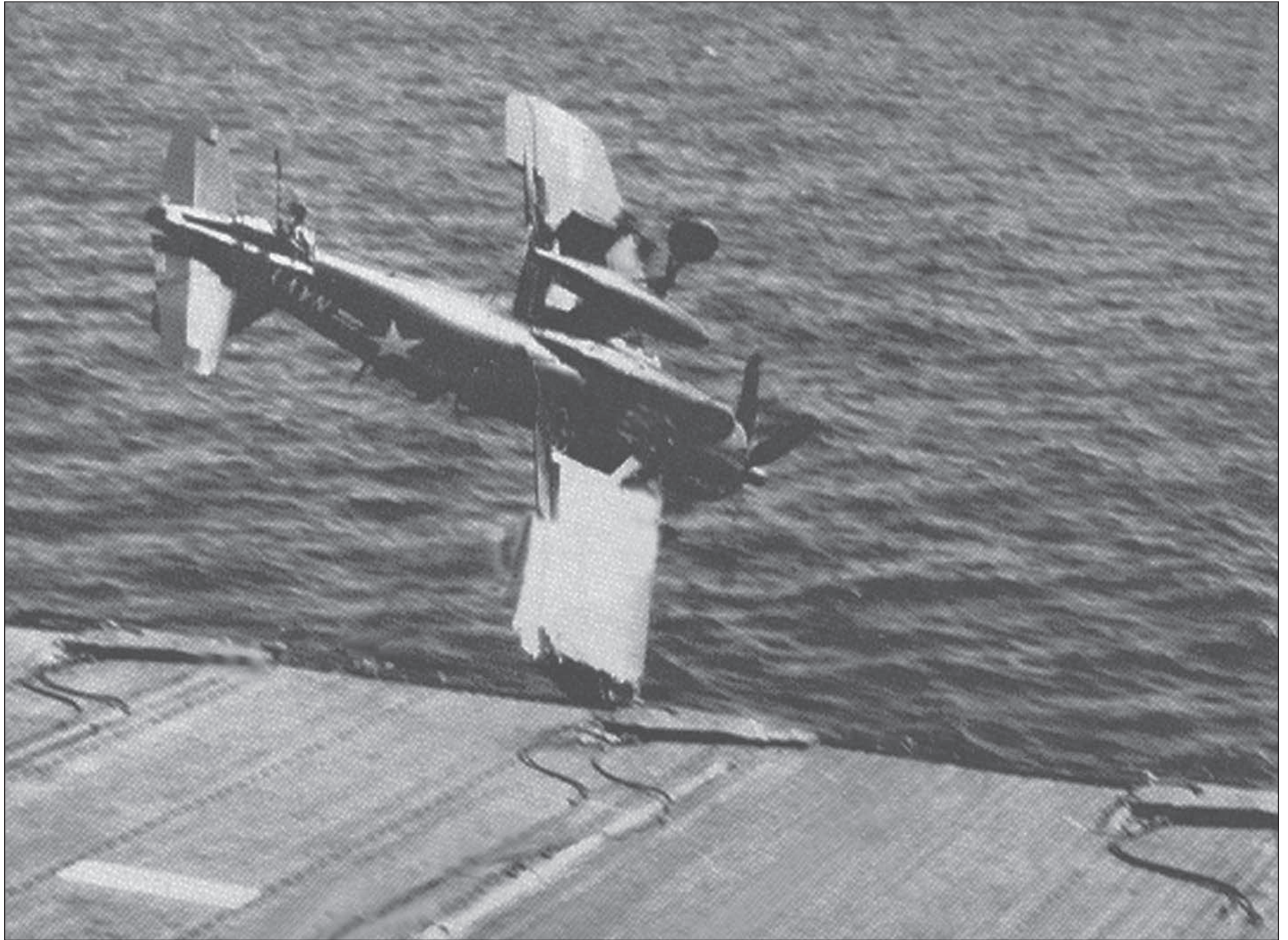
SOMETIMES STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN

Now this certainly is bizarre. Perhaps the pilot applied full power to the engine while throwing the joystick hard to the left to bank away from the ship during a wave-off. The problem here could be that the engine stalled, and that, with the hard left joystick, it produced this result. Included in this equation of why this happened should be the effect of propeller-torque. (Think of a gyroscope.) The reason it does not seem

to be a factor in this particular case is that the propeller is not rotating, a peculiarity in and of itself. Again, a pilot needs to produce the answer. These pictures are provided to show that strange things do happen on a flight deck. (I don't have a clue as to why the barriers are in a reclining position. This situation never occurred "on my watch," to use the vernacular.)

Apparently here the LSO gave a signal to apply a little throttle just before the "cut signal". The pilot, in a moment of reflex action, gave a sudden, excessive application of the throttle. This in turn caused an abrupt torque to the engine and the aircraft flipped over. If I'm off base here, I apologize and I defer to the more knowledgeable. In life we often exhibit excessive actions or thoughts or feelings. As has been said by others, "Everything in moderation". Excessive anything can often lead to unhappy results and put unnecessary burdens on yourself and others. Excessive borrowing is a prime example of this (yes, I know, there are those who say that borrowing is the engine that makes our economy the greatest in the world but we are after all one of the largest countries with a wealth of natural resources). Speaking of engines, the governor was invented to prevent excessive speed of an engine:

The faster the governor spun the greater the centrifugal force which in turn caused it to "fly" outward which in turn caused a valve to close which in turn slowed the engine down which in turn saved it from shattering itself. A line must be drawn beyond which we do not go at the expense of "shattering" ourselves. Right now this country is experiencing grave financial problems presumably caused by multitudes extending themselves excessively beyond their means. What is needed is personal responsibility to know the difference between excess and moderation. It is here that we in turn must be intelligent enough to know what is and what is not moderation. But first we must develop that character trait in which moderation, in ALL things, is well established. Are you smart enough to know what is meant by moderate drinking. If you're young you probably do not (and WE pay).



SOMETIMES STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN, II

This last picture adds the exclamation point to the previous picture. How could this happen? It was previously said that F4U Corsairs were unstable at slow speeds. The landing air speed was less than 100 mph and not that much above stall speed. At stall speeds strange things happen, so perhaps these pictures are not so strange after all. Those in the catwalk are green-shirts (arresting-gear operators) and a few Airdales (all are wearing cloth helmets). This picture leads directly to “Mishaps.” Although these last two pictures show that bizarre things do happen on a flight deck during land-

ing operations, most accidents (crashes) are of the more mundane type, such as bouncing over the barriers. And although crashes do happen, the attitude taken is that there need not be crashes, and that crashes should be an anomaly. That they weren’t an anomaly is not a reflection on the professionalism that was exhibited throughout the flight deck. It was a matter of, with so many launches and landings, chance playing a part, a part that realistically could not be avoided. The solution is to avoid any and all “sloppiness,” i.e., be a professional.

Once again the pilot has his troubles: going into the water upside-down. This is a terrible situation in which to find yourself. This is an extreme example of a “bad day at work”. While we seldom have such days as this we all do have bad days but also good days, the vicissitudes of life. Hopefully we can have more of the latter than of the latter. Some of these vicissitudes are by chance and some may be by outside design. (There are even those who feel that they are the object of a “conspiracy” (which might actually be true but won’t be considered here)). A possible antidote for this might be a full dose of enthusiasm for a solid, substantial activity or activities. If you become so wrapped up in the likes of these then the hurts will not hurt so much (or even at all). Keeping one’s self active is a wonderful cure for what ails you. Enthusiasm is contagious and so the enthusiasm thus generated will reinforce your enthusiasm. This also can be an area where friends could step in to provide encour-

agement (low key). Encouragement by others will serve as a palliative. Speaking of encouragement, it’s a superb way of boosting someone’s efforts to improve himself (such as school lessons learned or athletic abilities gained). Encouragement of any kind is a gift that should be bestowed to one and all. It isn’t necessary to be known as a benefactor and it can and should be given with “abandon”. Perhaps I feel so strongly about this because I don’t ever remember having been given encouragement about anything; nothing at all and so I can appreciate what it can mean. [On a personal note, as I think back on it I can only remember a couple of times when someone gave me a “nice one” for having made a play. To be perfectly honest about this, this lack of recognition didn’t bother me at all because what I did pleased me. There was no need for any outside recognition. Inwardly I recognized myself and that was plenty enough.]



AFTERTHOUGHT: Earned SELF-ESTEEM (those who have it will “never” do anything antisocial). You note that I precede the word Self-Esteem with the word “Earned”. This modifier is crucial. It implies, no, it requires that the self-esteem must be EARNED thus making the “those with it will ‘never’ do anything antisocial” valid. The “sweat and tears” of earning the self-esteem makes one cognizant of the worth of one’s efforts and achievements. The self-esteem is earned and thus justified. Those who EARN their self-esteem are thus content with their self-esteem and therefore there is no need to be concerned about their feeling of self-esteem. This frame of mind makes them at ease with themselves and not feel compelled to do antisocial things to embellish that feeling of accomplishments. This in turn means that they would not “go out on a limb” to achieve that elusive notoriety that so often leads to antisocial actions. Their self-esteem derived from EARNED achievements leads to a well-adjusted life, one devoid of temptations toward antisocial behavior. It’s this “contentment” that makes antisocial conduct, or even thought of antisocial conduct a thing so far fetched as to be virtually nonexistent. One could also say that with this earned self-esteem “life is good” and the confrontations of antisocial behavior are nonexistent.

How about the person who runs a Ponzi Scheme? He has acquired a certain amount of self-esteem in having successfully made it work. And he “earned” that self-esteem by learning how to do it. However, he embarked on an antisocial scheme at the outset. He was “tarnished goods” from the outset. He, and his ilk, do not qualify for inclusion in the EARNED self-esteem group. Be reasonable; consider those who are just beginning to enter the world of work and responsibility. A person is not clear as to what he/she wants to do. In the process of searching for that goal he/she takes up a hobby or an athletic activity or the like. They like this activity and so progress to a certain level of capability. This spurs them on and eventually they achieve even more success in

this activity. So it goes. More effort, more success. They now feel a sense of accomplishment. They enjoy the success. They are now in the realm of a certain, subdued glow of self-esteem. They especially feel this because they EARNED that glow. And with that glow there is no trace of participation in social misbehavior or doing anything but “what’s right.”

One might ask just what are these things that qualify to be the “correct activities”? That’s the easy part: Anything which enthuses you and is legal. It might be playing the piano. Or knitting. Or gardening. Or playing tennis. Or learning math. Or you name it. Anything that gives you pleasure and involves a certain amount of skill and persistence. The more difficult the activity the more self-esteem you accrue. In any case, make the activity have a certain amount of difficulty for you.

For young people, there is an obvious choice for what activity one could indulge. And that is scholastics. Yes, that’s right, school. You will be “killing two birds with one stone”: School grades and yes, earned self-esteem. Now there’s a deal you can’t refuse. Here is where you will definitely earn self-esteem. Who cares about the “school football hero.” You and I, we both know that the math major will turn out to be the real “hero” (especially in this day and age of new and exciting things on the horizon in the fields of automation and the safety of so-called driverless cars). Or the organic chemistry major who will discover that new pill that will cure whatever disease you choose. This is now getting into the Big Leagues. Dare I say that it is there that real self-esteem grows? I’ll wind up this discussion by saying that this discussion is not really about self-esteem. Rather, it’s about setting your sights high without concern with success/no success. As is said, it’s not the destination but rather it’s the journey. You can’t necessarily “be anything you want to be” but you can certainly enjoy the trying.

MISHAPS

Most of the time the aircraft would land without mishaps. However, when there are about 180 landings a day, every day, for twelve months, incidents can turn into accidents. Consider what's taking place: a "hot" aircraft (especially the semi-stable F4U Corsair at low speeds) moves in toward a moving platform that's pitching and rolling and HEAVING at the same time. Even a perfect approach can be disrupted under these conditions. Add to that the fact that an aircraft could be damaged during its flight away from the carrier. Also, the pilots are fatigued after a certain time. As was mentioned previously, if the landing plane isn't in the right location in the right attitude at engine cut-off, bad things can and will happen. And presumably, there are no "gremlins" in either the aircraft or the flight deck. So you could never know that maybe this next landing will do that which it's not meant to do: bounce over the arresting gear and barriers and into the parked aircraft and anyone who's in the way. Or, an aircraft could burst into flames due to sparks igniting the aviation gasoline in

a leaking belly-tank. This requires the making of a fireman out of an Airdale, right there on the spot. (I had only one day of training, fighting an intense fire at the Pearl Harbor fire-fighting school.) Aircraft could flip over at or before touchdown, for whatever reason, again causing havoc. Or whatever. It was the unpredictability that sometimes was nerve-wracking. But all in all, things usually went as they should, even as the unknown was ever present.

There were many pictures of crashes and mishaps, but these are limited in this book because it's preferred to emphasize the normality of flight deck operations, reflecting that reality. Let's just say it was an accident-prone environment that was kept under control. The potential to have mishaps was always in mind. That turned out to be the worst part.

AIRDALES TO WORK

“Flight Quarters” has just sounded, as witness the sailor putting the white flag into the flag-holder (top middle). So the Airdales are going to the aircraft back aft, row on row, column by column, packed side by side. Although there are about 30 Airdales shown here, my recollection is that there were about 45 Airdales on the flight deck, total. This appears to be a well-ordered group, all “in uniform”, the way it was on the Antietam. (As it has been mentioned before, each ship no doubt had its own “personality”, and ours on the Antietam was by in large “by the book”. Who knows, this may be a picture of the Antietam. Let’s face it, it’s clear that I’m partial to the Antietam, EVEN though I was “counting the days” when I could go home.) One of the Airdales even appears eager to get to the wheelchocks first. Now that’s the right attitude! The sailor above the Airdales, below center, with his back to the action, is a signalman on the signal bridge where there are the signal lights and signal flags. His non-chalance about the proceedings probably represents a “been there, done

that” attitude. Above him is where the Air Boss runs things (the officer with the microphone in his hand). He’s usually surrounded by other officers during flight operations instead of those sailors. There’s always one sailor there with a sound-powered phone headset who has contact with the LSO, among others (he’s to the right) . And beyond the Air Boss, out of sight, is the Navigation Bridge and Pilot House where the OOD (Officer of the Day) and helmsman and others are. This is where I stood my watch for a month before “I was so rudely transferred” to the Airdales (see Prologue) . But look on the bright side: if that hadn’t happened, I wouldn’t be able to put together this book and so honor the memory of the gallant Airdales. (So I stretched the word “gallant”, but I assure you, that’s the only word that’s been stretched in this book.) I always try to make a sincere effort to use the proper words and to then properly use those words. Too often too much misunderstanding ensues from not doing so.

Here, grouped under PRI FLY (Air Officer’s station), are a band of Airdales and brown-shirts (plane captains). It can be seen that at least a couple of Airdales are alert to a problem back aft. As in any group some people are more sentient (alert to their surroundings than are others). However, it’s not enough to only be alert. One should also have an understanding of what it is that he is seeing. This capacity to understand is of course, again, based on the accumulation of knowledge which in turn becomes learning as that knowledge becomes understood. The capacity to understand is an attribute to be greatly desired. Over a period of time this capability turns into that nebulous, “ethereal” quality called wisdom. Yet

perhaps of more immediacy is the capacity to understand others. To do so is to grant them a golden gift. What’s more dismal than to be misunderstood? How many disputes turn into rancor because the two sides do not understand each other? How many good things might have been had there been understanding? How many friendships turn sour because of lack of understanding? This necessity of learning the ability to understand in no way implies that one need or should change one’s mind. To the contrary, understanding allows one to better confront an differing opinions. However, understanding is the glue that holds society together.



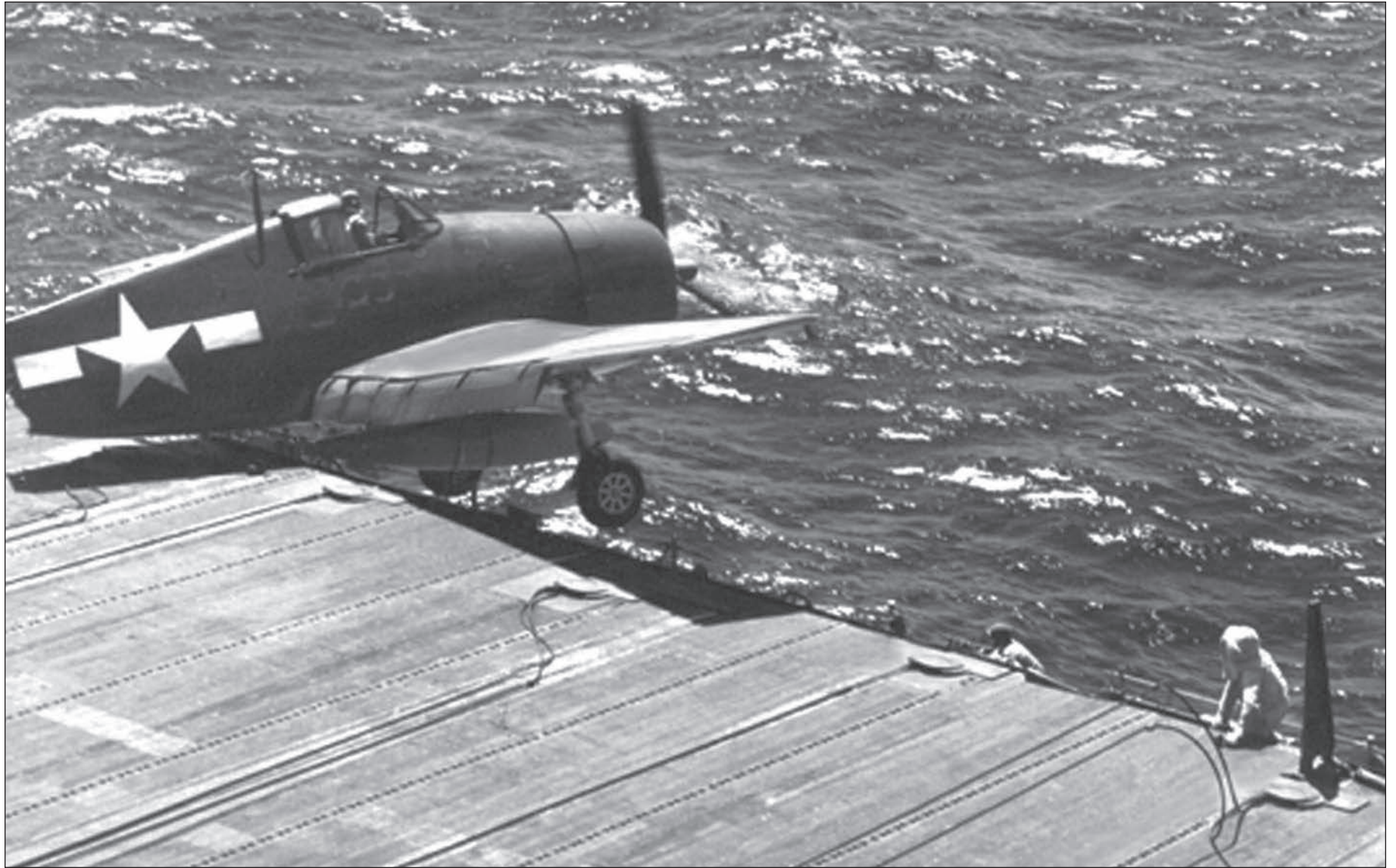
STRUCTURAL MISHAP

The interesting part of this picture, besides the F6F going over the side with the pilot, is that this F6F lost its tail section. Why it would swerve to the side is not clear, unless it was the fact that the right brake didn't work. Notice that the F6F didn't reach the erected barrier, shown at the lower right. Every landing has the potential of being a mishap, and you never know what will happen as the aircraft approaches the ship. But after a while you get a knack for determining if the approaching aircraft is "in the groove", if it's too high, if it's too wide, too fast, too slow, too askew, too whatever looks too irregular. I feel like I became an "expert" at this type of evaluation. At any rate, each approach became an adventure, at least to those who took an interest in them. (And true, there were those who didn't. They just wanted to "get on with it".) One thing

not clear in this picture is the fact that two of the barriers are down flat (by the right wheel and by the white star) . This is strange. They should be upright until the aircraft is ready to taxi forward. The tail-section of this aircraft broke off apparently because the tension of the tailhook was too great for the fuselage tail-section. This implies that the landing was at too great a speed, I believe. Others could have other explanations. I made mention of the fact that at least one of the barriers was lying flat on the deck when all five of them are normally upright at each touch down of a landing aircraft. This I don't understand (unless it was inoperative). All five are necessary because it usually takes three barriers to stop an excessively errant, active aircraft (which is a possibility at each and every landing).

So it can also be in life: we don't understand the rhyme or reason for so much that happens around us and to us. For the most part, the cause for this is that the facts are obscure or even obliterated or willfully withheld (even when one has an intrinsic right to know). A problem arises when we think we know all the facts when in fact we know few if any of the facts. Add to this the propensity of some to wantonly and of aforethought try to mislead by knowingly promoting "facts" known to be incorrect . Unfortunately such scoundrels abound in society. Our discussion here concerns the understanding of things that happen in the outside world, not the ability to understand the workings of individuals which requires a fine-honed empathy (in brief defined as one who has the capacity to be able to Walk in another's moccasins"; it's not unlike the capacity for intuition, that ability to resolve questions by going from A to Z without the need of transiting B-C-D-...Y due to hav-

ing resolved the same or like questions many times over; intuition is a first cousin to insight). Basically, understanding the outside world (events) requires the requisite, relevant facts, either by afore determined knowledge (LEARNING) or by being presented the facts by others which facts are validated (assurance of their being well-founded) and verified (assurance of accuracy). It doesn't hurt to also have a well-behaved, rational imagination (no, imagination and rational are not mutually exclusive). However, be careful not to take the facts out of context by comparing apples and oranges. Be careful of those who seek to deliberately misinform (if you are on your toes you can use your ability of reasoning to discredit those who seek to deceive) [I've said it often: there can be no realistic democracy without a properly informed, educated populace. This can never be overstated: democracy, freedom, liberty, justice, all the
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COLLISION IN PROGRESS

This F6F (#35) clearly hurdled the barriers and smashed into taxiing aircraft. Those Airdales aren't out of danger because I'd say that that plane is still in motion with a fully revved up engine. That object in the foreground is #35's canopy jarred loose. Though not obvious, there's "shrapnel" flying around due to #35 "chewing up" the tail of the F6F in front of it. That puts people behind #35 in jeopardy. Since the propeller didn't reach the fuel tank, there's no danger of fire. This is one obvious

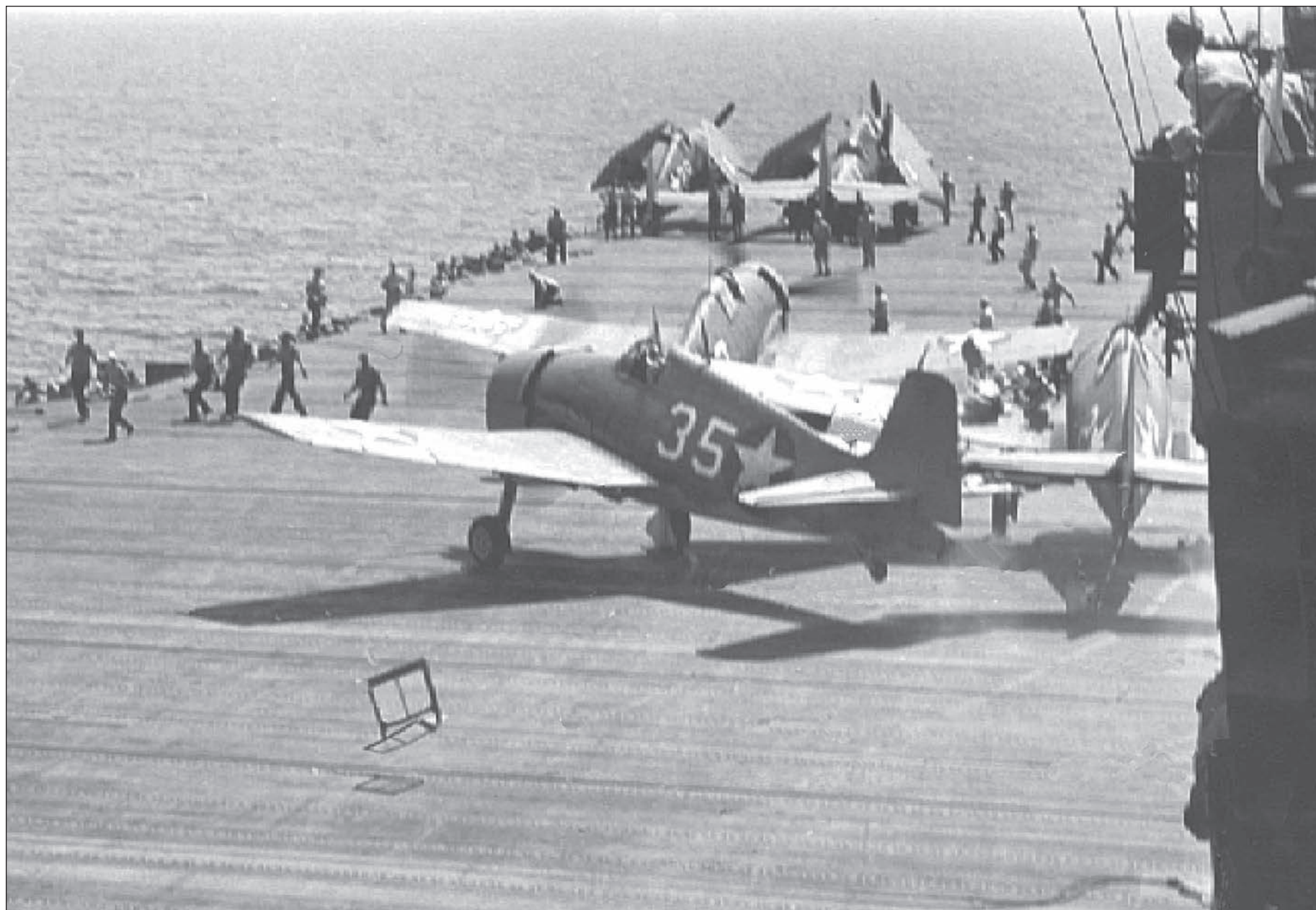
reason that all flight deck personnel should be aware of what's happening on the flight deck, at all times. Things that are happening elsewhere could have a direct impact on you. Nothing is to be taken for granted. There are big, powerful machines in the air and moving about, usually in parallel rather than sequence. And the constant noise on deck doesn't allow for "clues" of what's about to happen. So it's "heads up" time, all the time.

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values we prize are essentially for naught without an EDUCATED people.] Be advised, to be able to understand is not necessarily to agree with or condone; it is, if you will, to adjudicate (not that we are all to be judges). In this world to be able to understand properly is in effect the groundwork for sensible action (yes, I know, what is meant by "sensible"? Try, "Do no emotional/physical harm". Nevertheless, it's incumbent on all Airdales to be alert (for their own welfare), aware (for fulfilling their job), and responsive (for aiding the pilot should he need it). This is true, actually, for all of us in our daily lives. We don't have careening aircraft with which to contend but we do have to maximize our opportunities if nothing else. What is happening around us? Away from us? How do we respond to these things? These are functions of our intelligence and the more intelligent ones do better than those who are less intelligent as a result of their casual approach to awareness. Don't forget, your mind is a "learning machine" and usually to the fittest go the spoils. Being aware is a bare minimum, a mere exercise of the mind. Just as the body needs exercise so too does the mind. (the

brain could be considered rather than the mind. However, one could also say that the brain is the (computer) "hardware" while the mind is the (computer) "software." Thus we will consider the "software" (the mind) and leave the "hardware" (the brain) to the neuroscientists. Just as it's possible to upgrade the software it's possible to train the mind in useful thought. This mental agility is what we'll call intelligence. A big, very big, subject this, this intelligence. What is it really? Can it be measured? Can it even be defined? [As another of those asides charged to the viability of a democracy, it is fundamentally imperative that most all of us recognize the veracity of statements made by those of a political bent. To wit, intelligence allows us to determine to varying degrees if what has been said is valid, and even rational (upon examination), or whether what has been said is a (deliberate) lie -----aren't all lies deliberate? It could be that one is inadvertently being misinformed due to lack of intelligence of the speaker. Remember, irrationality refers to those things that do not stand up to reason where A logi-

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BARRIER CRASH

This plane did reach the barriers, and one of them upended him. There's smoke coming from the engine-compartment, so a full-fledged fire could break out momentarily. I would say the Airdales here are not "Johnny-on-the-spot" with their hoses, ready for any eventuality. It's the Airdales who are the flight deck firemen. And the sooner you get to a fire the better. So where are they? Normally, hoses are at the ready during landing operations. They are located on both sides of the flight

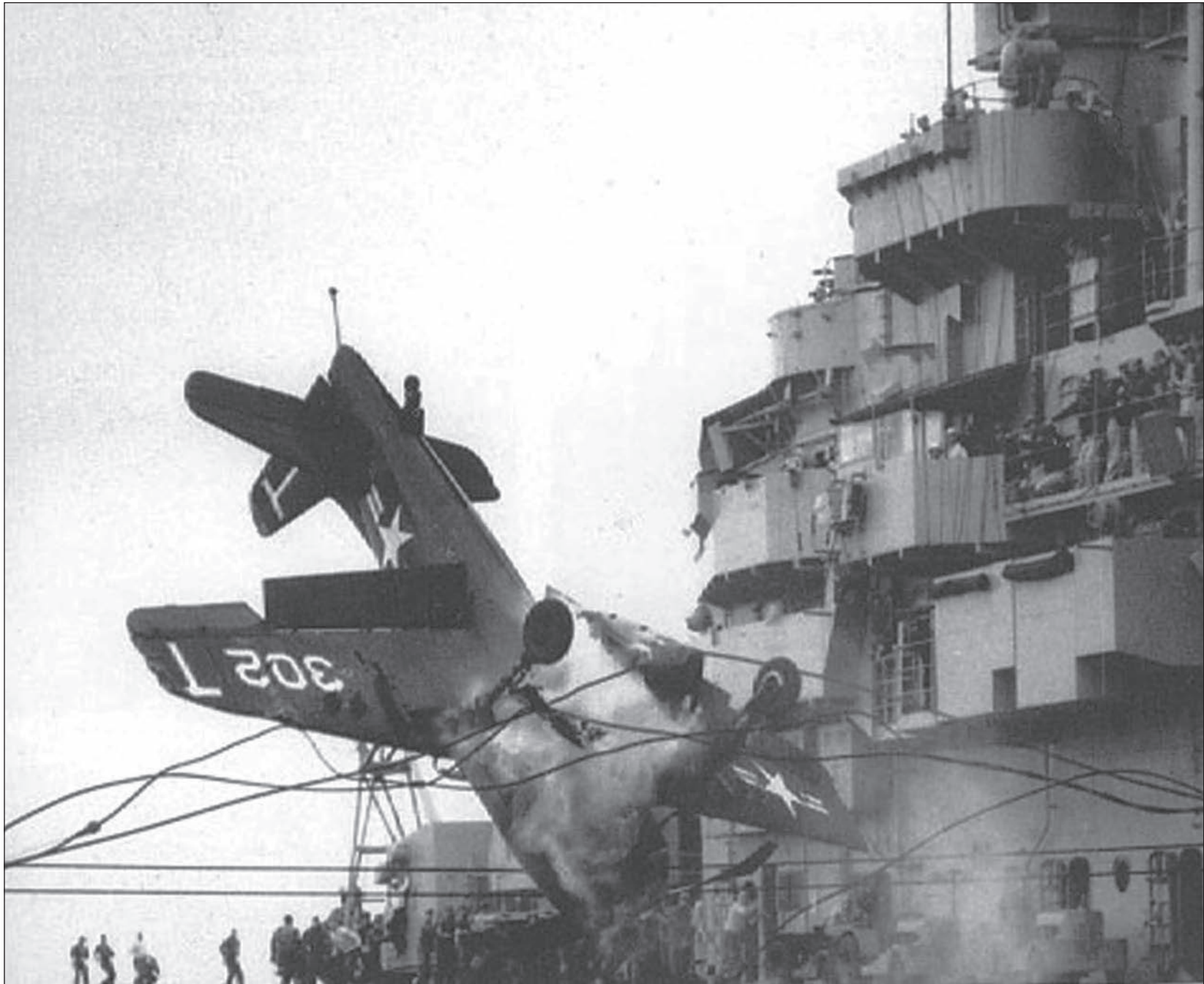
deck, but not necessarily "manned." This is because there aren't enough Airdales to do the parking job, and also have them sitting beside a hose in the event of an accident. However, since they are certainly always close to a hose, there's no need to "man" them. It's for sure that this aircraft will be quickly surrounded by Airdales manning the hoses. That's their job. (This picture came from the book "No Easy Days, The Incredible Drama of Naval Aviation", by William Butler.)

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cally leads to B, all the premises being accurate and the path to B makes (common) sense. ("Reason, logical, sense", these terms must be defined but space is limited).] Returning to the subject of intelligence, can it be separated from motor skills? That is, is a squirrel intelligent? A squirrel has marvelous motor skills but does this imply intelligence? Have you ever seen a squirrel figure out how to acquire the seeds of a bird-feeder when you have used your ingenuity to prevent this? A squirrel not only has the physical agility to accomplish feats that must be seen to be believed. No one ever "taught him" to do this. Our accomplished athletes must be coached and trained and admonished but a squirrel does his "thing" seemingly in a casual manner. How does this "miniature" brain control all aspects of his physical agility? How does a fly's "brain" allow it to careen about with abandon? Yes, a brain is truly a marvelous thing. Retuning to the squirrel, it has a problem, sometimes acute, which it solves in short order aided by persistence. Is not this intelligence of a "high order"? Well no, because apparently only as human brain can contemplate itself and this

apparently determines higher intelligence (as defined by humans). Nevertheless, that little squirrel merits our admiration and then some (yes, they can be a nuisance but what a marvelous nuisance!). It's the cerebrum that's largely responsible for our, and the squirrel's, motor skills. Let's return to intelligence that's found in the cerebral cortex, that thin covering over the top of the primitive brain. What can be said of intelligence? What follows will be comments on the subject of "intelligence". Someone said that intelligence is to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with the environment. This the squirrel does with panache (verve, style, flair). Thus we can say that intelligence is not the domain only of humans. Others have said that reasoning, judgment, comprehension and capacity of self-criticism are the essentials of intelligence (this seems to beg the question as to what accurately defines "reasoning and judgment"). Then others question whether intelligence is a general ability or a series of many unrelated aptitudes (why not a combination of both as a more compre-

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TAKING IT ON THE CHIN

This F4U must have made a “bouncer” landing (bounced over the arresting-wires). Why it did that is not clear, but one could theorize that it came down too hard because it was too high when the LSO gave the “cut engine” signal. By the same token, it could have been the ship heaving upward just as the aircraft was about to land. If there was a little roll to starboard at the same time, that would account for the F4U going askew to the right at the same time, thus ramming into the 5-inch gun mount. It’s not clear if there’ll be a fire that breaks out because of the impact rupturing the gasoline tank. It would seem that this would happen since it was (probably) a hard impact.

Another reason why the F4U went askew was that as it landed, and as it didn’t catch a wire, the pilot might have applied his brakes and the right one took hold more than the left one. (Actually, brakes normally aren’t applied during a landing. It’s only if the aircraft doesn’t catch a wire that the pilot will apply his brakes. The normal landing procedure doesn’t include the application of brakes. The stop would be too abrupt.) Now that there is a crash, where are the Airdales with the hoses? They should have seen that they weren’t in jeopardy on this one, and so they should have been “Johnny-on-the-spot”. Easy to say, maybe hard to do.

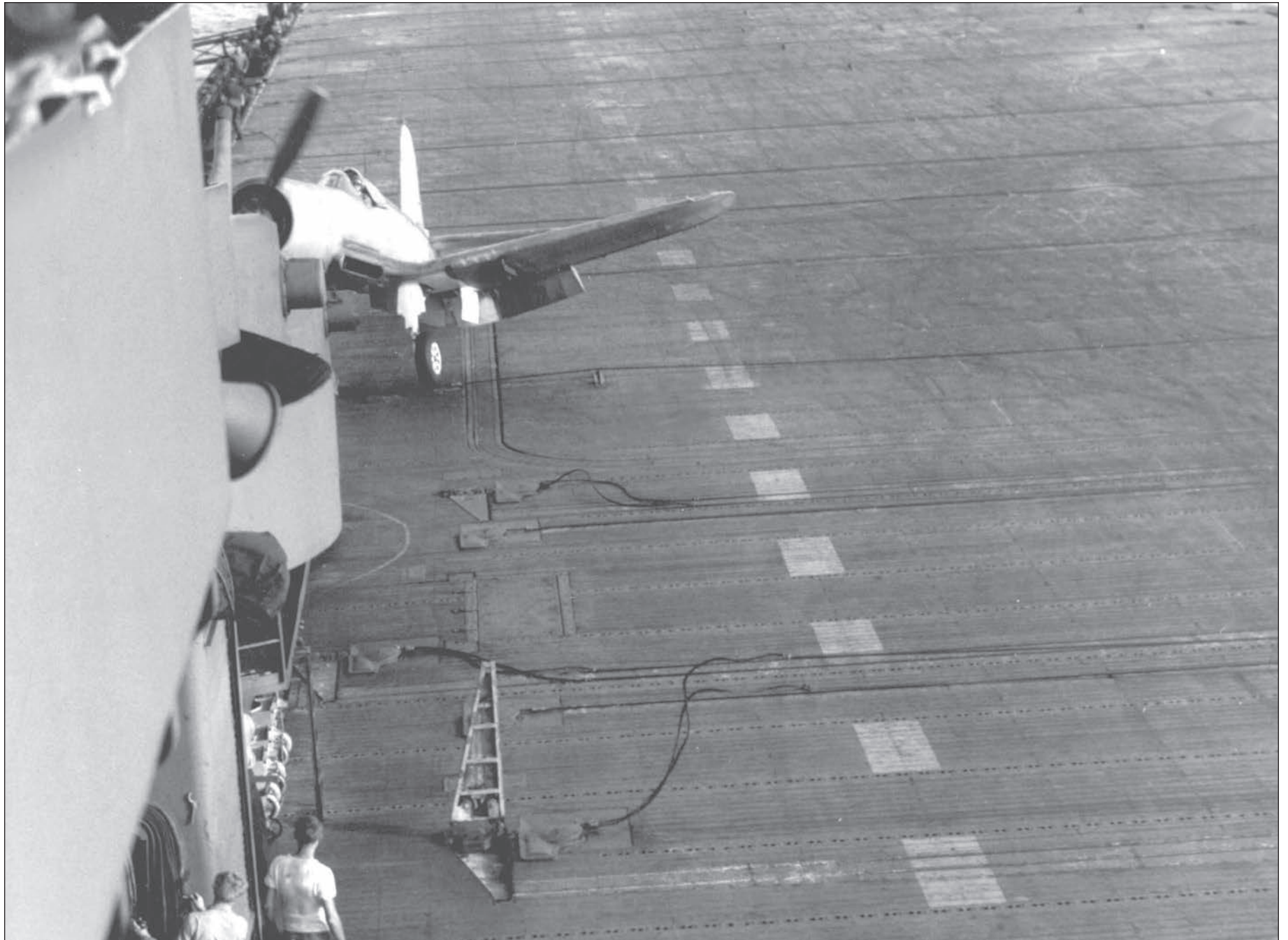
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hensive description of what it means to be intelligent, keeping in mind that we consider only intellectual capabilities here (yet can’t physical prowess be considered “intelligence”-----remember that clever squirrel which figured out and accomplished feats that would put a “mere” human to shame)). A psychologist looked to seven attributes that spelled intelligence: memory, numerical ability, reasoning (?), word fluency, verbal comprehension, perceptual celerity, and spatial visualization (using the “mind’s eye”). Yet as mentioned, many consider physical ability as at least a form of intelligence (the squirrel). Another researcher defined intelligence in two forms: fluid intelligence where one has the ability to mentally perceive relationships and solve problems and crystallized intelligence where the collection of mental skills and abilities were acquired through experience (or should I say, “through practice, practice, practice”). The subject of intelligence has been complicated somewhat by the apparent fact that the left-hemi-

sphere thinking consists of analytical thought (taking ideas apart), linear thinking (taking one step followed by another step). By contrast, the right-hemisphere’s thinking is synthetic (putting ideas together), holistic (understanding relationships in a single step, similar to intuition), and imagination (visual thinking with one’s “mind’s eye”). Intelligence tests primarily seek to evaluate one’s ability to perform convergent thinking (deducing from premises to correct conclusion) as opposed to testing divergent thinking where one must derive new answers (as in inductive thinking which entails a large amount of creativity).

Tests have not been developed for qualities such as leadership, motivation and intuition but this doesn’t mean that those attributes of mind can not be defined. (Leadership is primarily accomplished by proper example of someone who is respected; motivation is the almost irresistible desire to do better, be better, have bet-

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SALVAGE OPERATION

This smashed aircraft is being cannibalized by aircraft mechanics for parts before being jettisoned. It's amazing to see a crash with such force as to cause this without there having been any fire. Again, you'd never see anyone shirtless on the Antietam. I guess being a training ship; we were run as a "tight ship." Who knows? But then, I guess the exigencies of

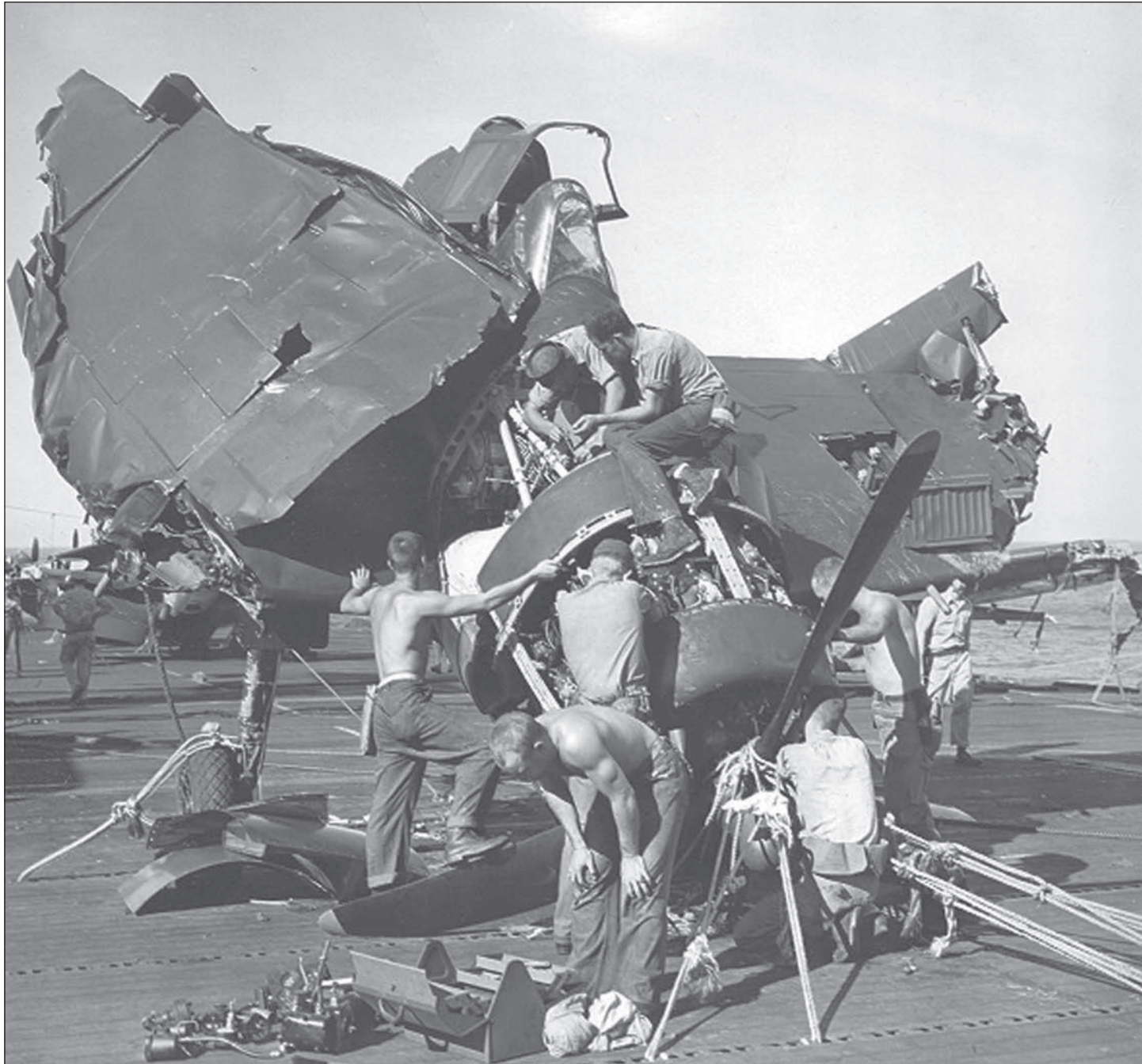
being always in the war-zone allowed for more freedom of action. I suppose it's universally true that the closer you are to the war-zone, the less "spit-and-polish." But that's just a supposition on my part. And it doesn't take into consideration the idea that each ship, each unit, had its own personality.

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ter than that which exists at the present time (I've often wondered what motivates a bird, with its tiny brain, to fly here instead of there-----is there a thought-process going on here>); intuition has been very briefly considered a short way back but in any event it is not an ephemeral gift, it is the result of serious cognition and cogitation even if done "unconsciously" and unwittingly). Carrying on, there are those who believe physical reaction-time is a measure of intelligence ("the faster the brain-cells fire the quicker the mind". Maybe so but it also implies that those individuals might be prone to making snap judgments, possibly leading to serious mistakes; a deliberate, reasoned approach usually is better (except when physical danger intrudes; on the other side of the coin thinking can be maddeningly protracted). [There are those who advocate brain-wave pattern testing as a measure of intelligence. The neuroscientists have not yet arrived at that stage (to my limited knowledge).] Other researchers advocate measurement of intelligence by determining how well individuals handle stress: given a limited amount of time and resources, how well do they deal with the situation: effectively and in a rational manner. There are those who say that a person's abilities and capabilities (intelligence) is

determined by the brain with which he/she was born while others say that intelligence is a function of the world in which he/she was born (the standard nature/nurture "teeter-board"). There are some things, some tasks, that can not be measured in terms of intelligence: they are those that spring from imagination, are guided by reason and result in the wonders of creativity. Who can define such feats? Is it novel insight? Shouldn't it also be fitting? One might say it requires an eclectic combination of intuition and logic, fantasy and precision, inspiration and perspiration, and what other opposites? While it's thought that the physicist, the chemist, the biologist, the mathematician accomplish their results by rational, analytical thinking, they are no less intuitive and creative than the poet, the composer, the painter. Even Einstein, acclaimed a genius, ascribed his talent as more due to his propensity, his gift, toward fantasy than to his ability to absorb positive knowledge. By the same token, artists must have the mental technical tools and acuity to be masters of their arts. We'll make a limited attempt to describe the process of creativity as a "creative" exercise. There are four stages to the creative process: Stage One consists of preparation

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BARRIER CONTACT

This Corsair missed all the arresting-wires and is in the process of running into the first barrier-wire: the propeller has already severed one of the wires of the first barrier. The Corsair will go through several wire-barriers before it's stopped. This Corsair's headed in the direction of the island structure where there are many personnel. About ten seconds before this picture was taken, everyone was clearing the area, post haste. It's entirely possible that some were unable to get out of the way fast enough, thus ensuring casualties

of various severities. After all, there were only four small-sized hatches (doors) along the island structure. How long does it take to get five people through a hatch? Often people become casual about eventualities and aren't fully prepared to vacate an area fast enough. After so many repetitions, vigilance isn't always on your mind, as it always should be. But then, "accidents will happen" even in the most innocuous situations. It goes with the territory. Let's hope this picture wasn't a prelude to casualties.

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in that one tries to accumulate all the elements of a problem (Freud said that unresolved conflicts (problems) were the source of creative activity). This requires the immersion into the high-ways and byways of the situation. This is the "roll up your sleeves" stage and demands much of the hard work (this I know because I went through this long ago during a trying personal situation that cried out for creativity). This stage has to be crucial for the creative process to succeed. (Einstein spent about ten years forming his special theory of relativity). The second stage involves a certain period of "incubation". The ideas conjured in the first stage have to be "percolated". Actually, the problem can be set aside from conscious thought to allow the subconscious time to mentally massage data accumulated in the first stage. (An Einstein can take years for this process; I had to resolve my problem post haste lest it grind me down to pulp.) Ideas and relationships are the ingredients of stage two. Long walks of quiet meditation (in my case, filled with anguish) are very beneficial. The next stage is sometimes called the illumination stage, the "Aha" stage. Suddenly, as

the haze of perplexity seems to lift, the possible solution grows brighter and brighter. The answer even seems to express itself in physical terms rather than in an ideation format. As Archimedes was said to have said, "Eureka" when he visualized that a floating body is buoyed up by a force equal to the weight of the fluid it displaces. My epiphany (a sudden, intuitive perception of or insight into the reality or essential meaning of something, only sometimes initiated by some simple occurrence or explanation (I could not claim simplicity)). It seems that after all the work of stage one and the percolation of stage two, everything falls into place in stage three. Consciously and unconsciously the various combinations of ideas are formed and one of them eventually stands out as "the one". It almost seems magical (but this only seems so). The fourth and final stage is verification by testing the theory so devised (divined?). One can now verbalize/record the concept or theory. This stage really is anticlimactic as compared to the illuminating insight of the third stage, a condition of great relief, the "Aha".



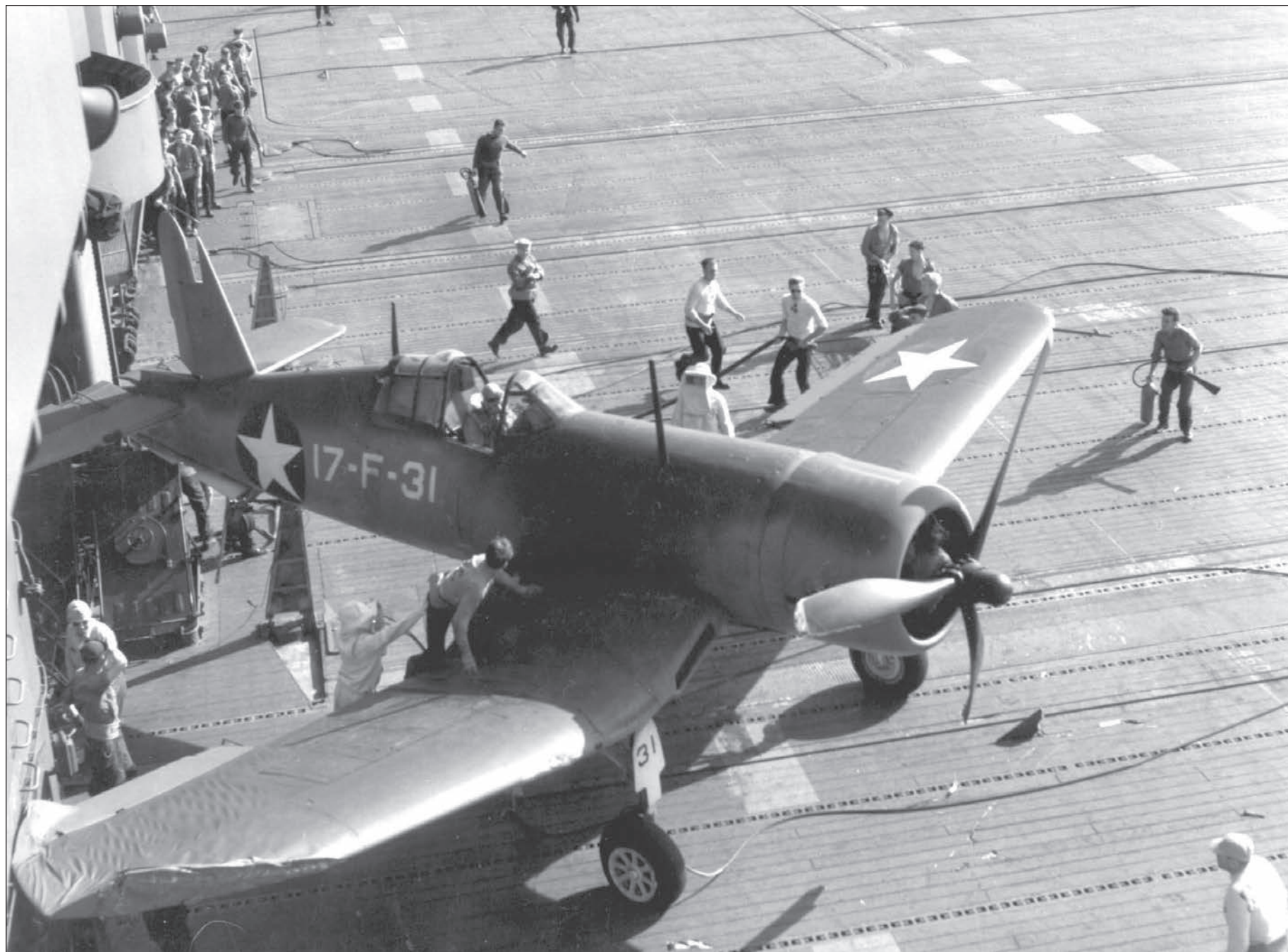
AND THE RESULT

This is the follow-on to the previous picture. There seem to be no casualties after all. The damage to the aircraft is remedial, and the collateral damage is also minimal, and there was no ensuing fire. All in all things can get back to normal fairly quickly. The Airdales have to turn to, clearing up sufficiently so that the rest of the flight can land. At least one barrier-wire ensemble is out of operation, so the remaining landing will have to hope that they are all “clean.” There’ll probably be about five “wave-offs” before aircraft resume landing. Notice a few Airdales have fire extinguishers in hand, but for some reason there are no fire hoses

apparent. The two men in fire-resistant asbestos suits (in white) are there in case of fire, requiring their climbing on the wing to retrieve the pilot if he was incapacitated. But in fact, this was one of the “better” crashes. This Corsair will be hustled down below to the hanger deck; and normal landings will continue; less the one or two wire-barriers. One more thing needs to be said. If there are too many “wave-offs” or the deck is unusable for too long, then aircraft fuel-depletion will be a problem. So, the Airdales have to set things aright as quickly as possible. Time is of the essence, really.

Yes, “another bad day at the office”. You can be quite sure that this pilot does not walk away from this crash with a spring in his step. However, he must pull himself together in preparation for tomorrow’s flight. There’s no point in moping for tomorrow’s another day and there’s no point on being down on yourself for any extended period of time (I know whereof I speak: There was too long a time when I thought “the world was (unfairly) against me”, I wasn’t accomplishing anything and I never received any recognition at all for even being; I thus inexcusably imposed my moodiness on others, a big NO NO). Those who are blessed with a naturally cheerful disposition are a gift to society (however, cheerfulness is certainly inappropriate when there are legitimate reasons for grieving). During World War I there was a song (“Look For The Silver Lining”) which was a palliative to both the front and the home front. The

song’s a point well taken. Cheerful people tend to look forward to better times rather than dwell on the sorrows of the past. One can say, “What is done is done” even if what was done was bad to terrible (evil is another story). This of course is not necessarily an easy thing to do but it’s wiser and smarter than moping (as I once did). “Cruel” as it may sometimes seem it’s counterproductive to carry old, corrosive baggage. A cheerful attitude will get one over the vicissitudes of life as well as make life more enjoyable (we all want to enjoy, and why not?). It would seem axiomatic that the cheerful ones are the favorite ones and the morose ones are the left-behinds (but over-the-top cheerfulness, especially if it’s inappropriate, can be a “drag”). Is it not true that if everyone were cheerful the world would turn a little more easily? (Should I mention that cheerful people live longer? Yes, I will mention it, again and again.)



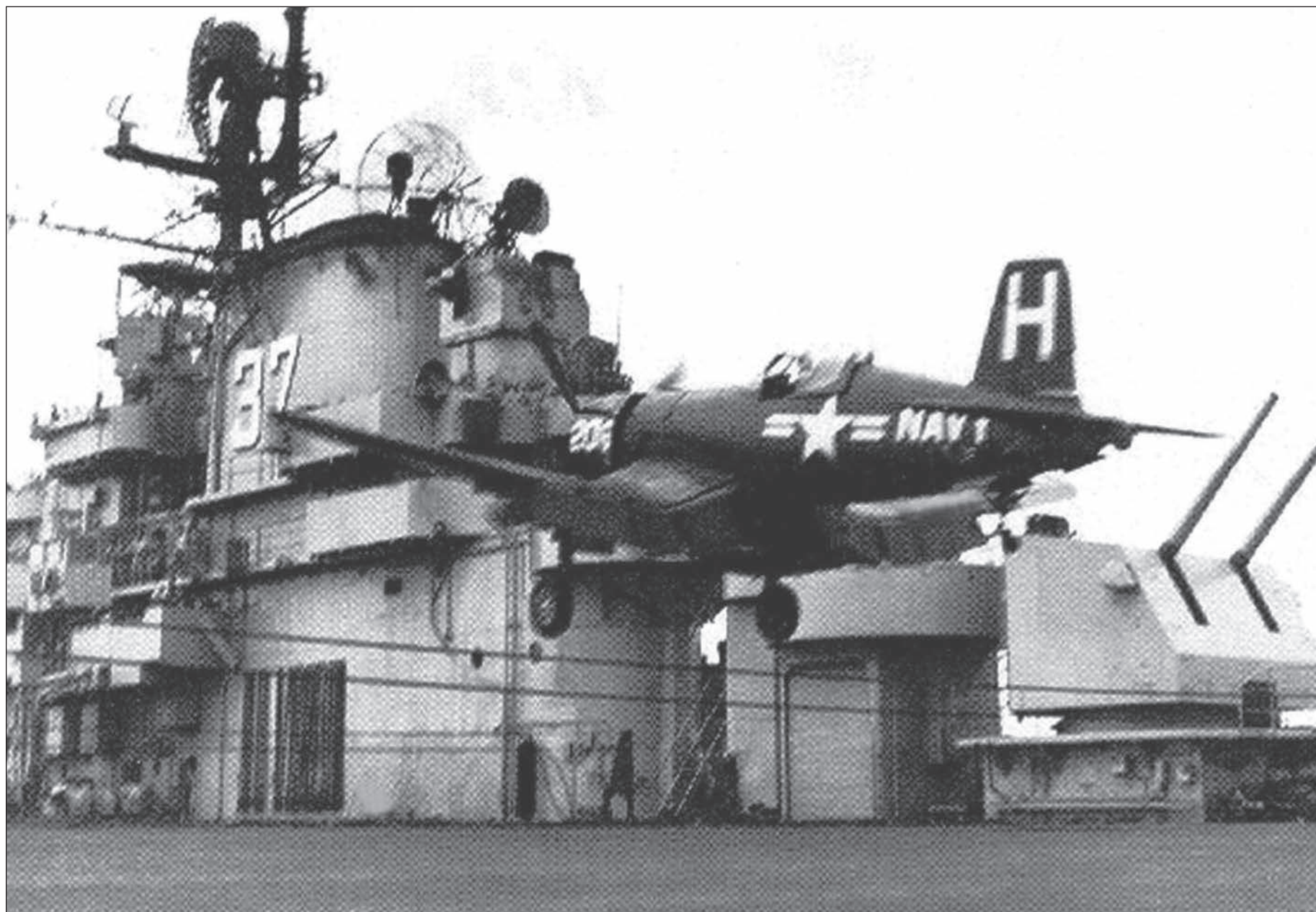
BARRIER-HOPPING

It's apparent from this picture that this F4U is bouncing too high to catch its tailhook, and in fact is probably too high to be stopped by the barrier. I'm struck by the fact that there's no one next to the island structure, but I guess everyone was alert enough to get out of harm's way. There aren't even people up above in the superstructure. My only

thought about this situation is that this is post-war and many, many personnel have been discharged. This is the U.S.S. Princeton (CV-37) which was commissioned after the war (November 1945). Crews, and squadrons, were minimal at that time, and this may explain the scarcity of personnel in this picture.

This Corsair, as is their wont, hit the deck on landing to bounce excessively causing it to "fly high" over at least this first of five barriers. "Flying high", or being enthusiastic, is as is the previous page a wonderful attribute. Would that all of us, especially the students in all the classrooms in all the country, were so enthusiastic as this Corsair seems to be. (Again, excessive enthusiasm as excessive cheerfulness might be somewhat "over the top".) It can be a filip to watch an enthusiastic person at work or at play (or at anything). Enthusiasm can be the engine of progress that would not otherwise be forthcoming. As has been emphasized previously, real, bona fide interest in something can be the impetus for unbounded enthusiasm. In fact, enthusiasm and interest might well be interchangeable. The path usually is from interest to enthusiasm to "eureka"! It would be foolish to restrict enthusiasm to only emotional feelings even though an unbridled enthusiasm, an uninhibited cheerfulness, a "joie de vive" are the keys to a

happy disposition that leads to a happy life. What could be better? To be sure, the enthusiasm being considered here is of an intellectual nature, not that visible kind in which one jumps with joy and makes much commotion. In comparison to a thoughtful enthusiasm the visible kind so often is counterfeit. To reiterate, the (intellectual) enthusiasm here is to be considered comparable to a very strong interest in something. Hopefully included in one of these things are scholastic subjects. A problem arises here when a student does not consider a given subject worthy of his/her attention. Even if a particular subject does not meet one's criteria of what is important and what is not important the student should defer to the grown ups and self-generate an enthusiasm. Be smart, be strong, be brave and train yourself to do something you don't want to do. Draftees have done much harder things in their young lives. Are you going to be a "baby", a "wimp"?? Do you have pride?



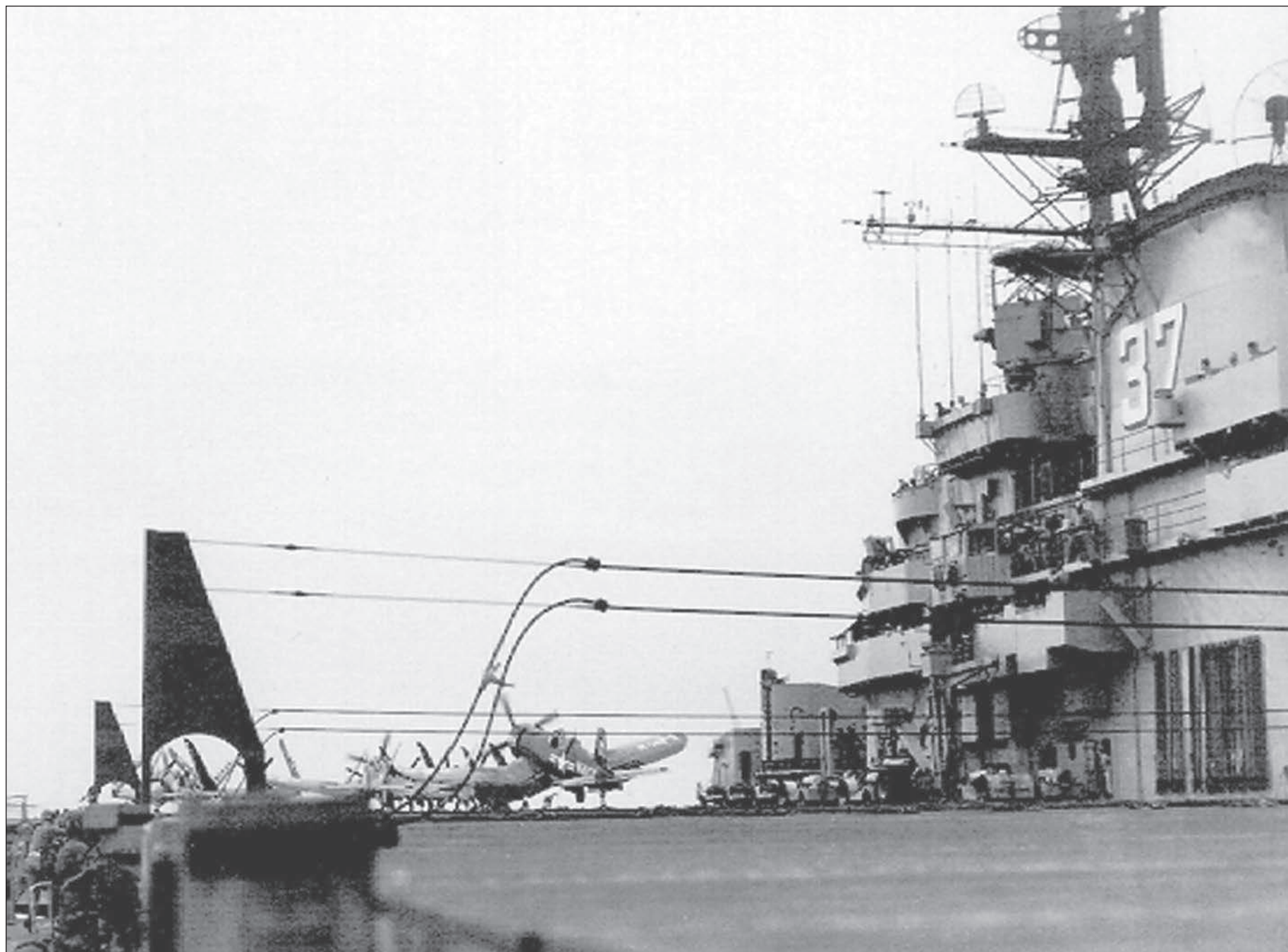
RESULT OF BARRIER-HOPPING

Yes, the plane did clear the barrier and is about to “chew up” some of the parked aircraft in front of it. It’s not clear from this picture, but there are people (Airdales) among those aircraft that are being parked up forward. An unfortunate aspect of this is the fact that taxiing aircraft mask the noise that’s made by the signal that’s sounded when a crash is taking place. So, the Airdales parking those aircraft aren’t in a “heads up” mode. Even if they were, there’d be precious little time to avoid the oncoming F4U and precious little space in which to find refuge. This is especially so when you realize that the

crash will scatter shrapnel in the area of impact. I would judge that this F4U was going about 60 mph: 90 mph landing (air) speed equals 30 mph ambient wind speed plus 60 mph ground speed. These are sequential pictures as noticed by this ship being the U.S.S. Princeton (CV-37). Even with the F4U past the island, there are still no Airdales to be seen. This is a bizarre picture in that respect. There aren’t even any people in the superstructure. What goes on? But there must be SOME Airdales up forward to park those aircraft. (This will be seen in the chapter “Parking”).

Yes, the aircraft of the previous page did jump all five barriers and careened pell-mell into the parked aircraft (AND Airdales) up forward. It’s not a pretty picture as this chapter demonstrates (this and the previous picture were on the U.S.S. Princeton (CV-37) named after the Battle of Princeton during the Revolutionary War). Could it be said that those Airdales up forward were valorous? No, because they’re doing nothing other than their normal job. To be valorous is to be willing to be bold and determined in the face of great and grave danger which places one’s life in jeopardy. That person can be said to be valorous while a person who does the same in the process of trying to save another’s life is what is called “heroic”. There is not too great a distinction here. The former might be considered the more meritorious because he’s endangering himself for lesser stakes while the latter is more commendable because another’s life is at

stake. These are what might be called nuances which many scorn but which carry great import. I feel strongly that words such as “valorous” and “heroic” should not be devalued by using them to describe, for instance, someone who lost his job and worked for a pittance for a year and helped someone to paint his house and coached Little League and This person had a tough go of it and should be commended for his work ethic and his gumption, etc. but he should not be called “heroic”. To my way of thinking heroes are those who put their life on the line while trying to save another’s life (a fireman could well be a hero; an Airdale is a fireman so an Airdale could well be a hero). It would seem to me that one does not say to himself, “I’m going to be a hero; rather one does what he does and it may turn out that he is in fact a hero. However, the measure of a person is not found in book definitions.



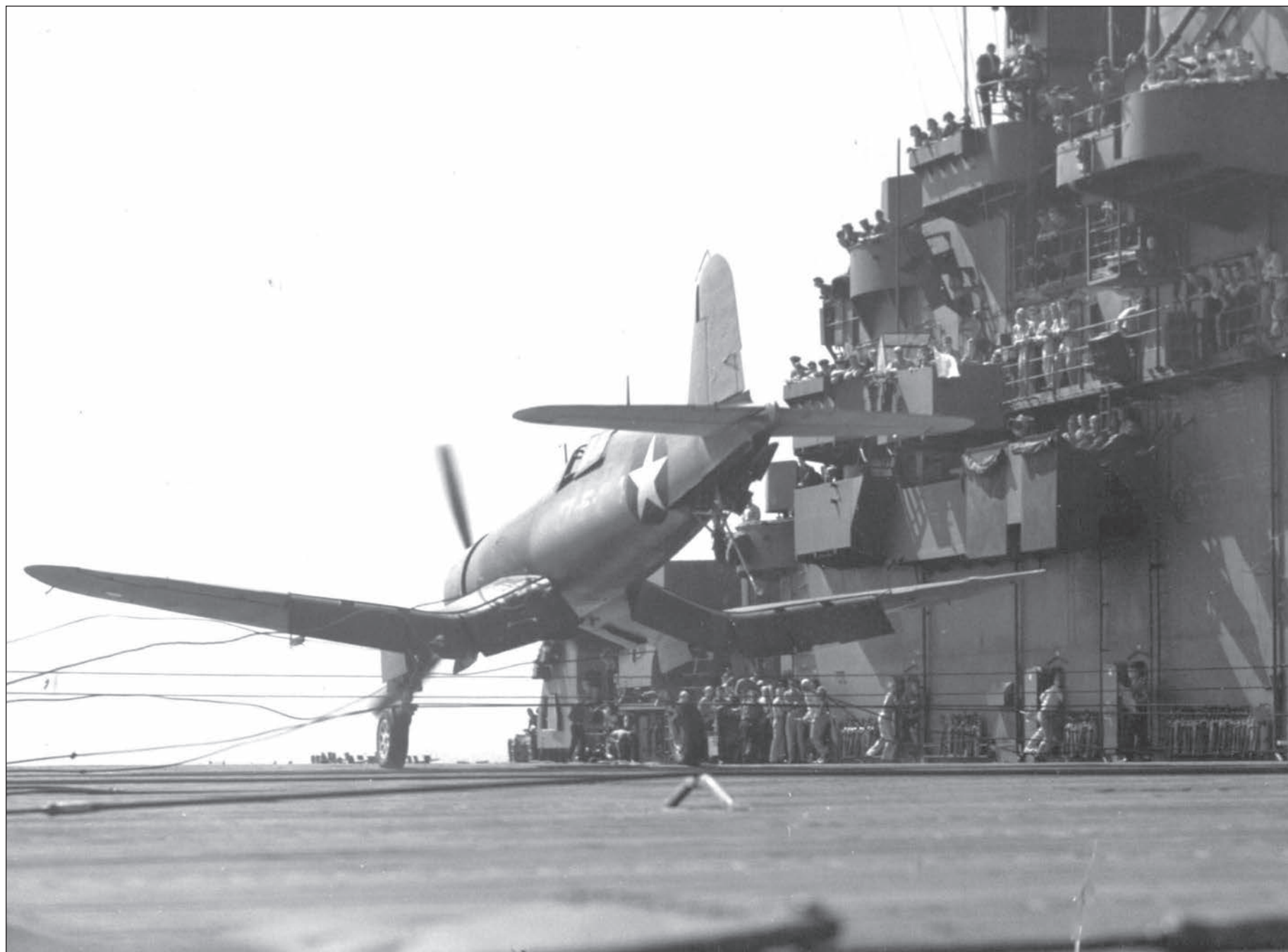
ANOTHER BARRIER CRASH

This Corsair has missed the arresting-wires and is in the process of barging through a wire-barrier. This picture provides a good view of the bracket that's raised from within the flight deck, thus lifting the arresting-wire about four inches above the flight deck. The fact that the tail of the Corsair is so high ensures that its hook will not catch that arresting-wire: the hook is only about four feet in length. There are many variables that are involved in the landing of an aircraft: its height at power cut-off; its attitude at power cut-off (nose higher than the tail, or

visa versa); its speed at power cut-off; ship's attitude at power cut-off (is it pitching up or down; is it rolling to port or starboard; is it heaving up or down); the forward speed of the ship at the power cut-off; the wind velocity at power cut-off; and any and all combinations of the foregoing. Every landing was unique because of the foregoing, and just because most landings were successful, that was no reason to think that the "next" one would be. There's someone's law that says that "If something can go wrong, it will." Well anyway, it might.

This Corsair did in fact catch the final, fifth barrier. It's not clear whether it will break through that barrier and continue forward. In any event damage seems to be minimal and there's no need for trepidation. Trepidation, or agitated fear, varies on a flight deck: sometimes its apparent and sometimes it's nonexistent, depending on circumstances. The object is to be able to differentiate what is and what is not fearful. Unfortunately there are many who have not been able to make this determination and as a result are in an ever too frequent state of agitation which is unnecessary. It not only saps one's energy but also it therefore impedes one's efforts (such as that homework assignment). It's a talent to be able to know what is what isn't a "threat" (one obvious way of obviating this condition is to "do your homework every day"). As President Roosevelt said during the war, "We have nothing to fear

but fear itself". Whether this is true or not, it is I believe a good frame of mind. We, people, tend to put the worst face on situations, especially if we are not knowledgeable about the situation. In fact, there are unfortunately those who will deliberately try to keep others in the dark simply to raise fears. The obvious answer, AGAIN, is to inform oneself as much as possible and in so doing allay one's fears (or at least reduce them). Knowledge is a wonderful thing, for itself, for an optimal democracy, for peace of mind, for good grades, for you name it. Fear does not stand up well in the light of day so it's your job to create that light of day. The charlatans will try to make a mockery of your sense of right and wrong (which we all have, right?). Let's banish the feelings of trepidation to the flight deck where they belong so as to restore our proper perceptions.



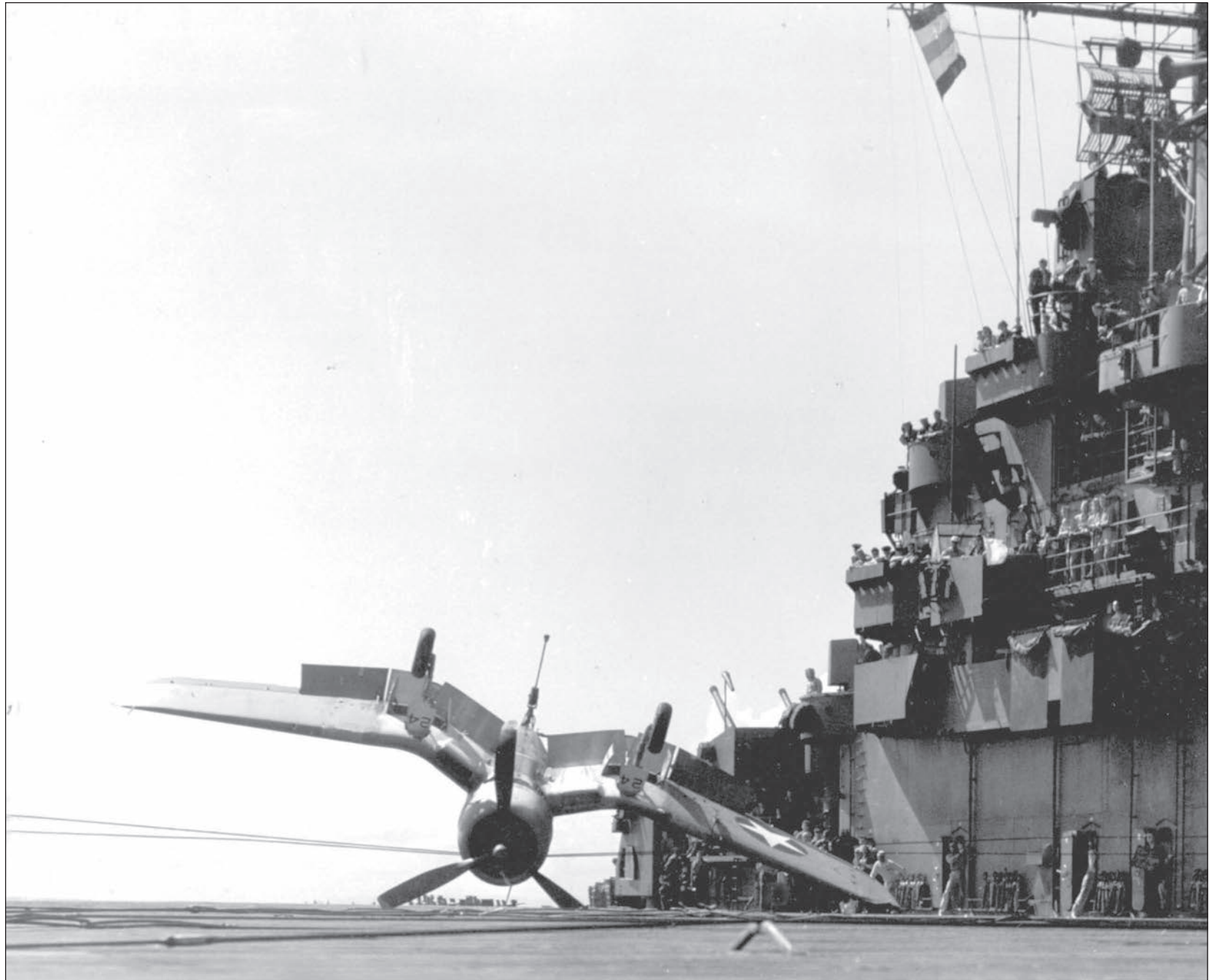
IT HAD TO HAPPEN

All that can be said here is that it was bound to happen. This picture was taken seconds after the picture of the previous page. My only observation here is the dearth of personnel up forward. Where is everyone? Another thing I notice in this picture is that this ship was one of the older Essex's. This is so because the Flag Bridge (Admiral's Bridge when he's aboard) is truncated: right above the white star of the Corsair's right wing is the silhouette of a lone figure; he's standing in a 40-mm guntub; the newest

Essex's had this guntub removed so that the Flag Bridge could be elongated, to be extended out to where he's standing. The Antietam had the elongated Flag Bridge. Since we had no admiral on board, I used to spend some time there when I was in the Navigation Division. It was supposed to be "off limits," but no one ever chased me off, so I would spend some off-duty time INSIDE the compartment to do my letter writing. Some audacity! (But no one ever made an appearance.)

No, the Corsair of the previous page did not go beyond the fifth barrier but instead overturned at that spot. So it turns out that there was no need for trepidation after all. This was a learning lesson of sorts. We learned that not everything is as it seems. Mention of learning has been made frequently (because it's of GREAT importance). What hasn't been mentioned is an important aspect of the process of learning: LISTENING.. True, much of what we have to listen to is misleading if not bogus. Here is an example of "Catch 22" : do we listen to learn correctly or do we learn to listen correctly? Listening with effect requires that we have had a fulsome dose of learning. In most cases we must listen first to learn and then once we have learned we are in a position to listen further with greater effect. This comes close to circular reasoning but who said which came first: The chicken or the egg? In

reality listening is a subset of learning where learning can also be had by acute observation. Unfortunately there are too many who think, or feel, that they must do all the talking regardless of their content. Sometimes we have to at least mentally stop listening so as to "clear the air". Do others a favor by not reeling off thought after thought in quick succession (one thing it implies is that you're afraid of having the listener assimilate your statements and thus "call you" on them. Learn to be a good listener, for who knows, you might learn something. In any event, listening well is a mark of courtesy (a quality in short supply). Also, remember that a great deal of what we learn is not in the formal classroom; it's almost everywhere else. Books are a fine place to learn whereas listening is available everywhere you're sentient (which includes listening).



HAVOC AFTER BARRIER-HOPPING

There are several Airdales here that can be seen to be in “touch-and-go” situations. First, notice one of them, to the far left, crumpled over on the deck, wheelchock tumbling near him. It looks like he was struck by the wing of the crashing aircraft. Then, right above the crashing aircraft is an Airdale who apparently tried to get above the fray. But he seems to be in a less precarious situation than the Airdale on the deck right below him. I notice the chain has already been installed across the front of the flight deck, but this isn’t much to keep him from a fifty-foot fall. This

picture isn’t really from the Essex-class album. The barrier-cables are much, much too close to the front of the flight deck. This is no doubt an escort carrier, and the crashing plane is an F4F Wildcat, not its follow-on F6F Hellcat. Notice the flying debris, and the two Airdales to the right seeking refuge under the TBF/M’s wing. Also note that the aircraft in the middle of the picture has its wheel unchocked. The impact it’s receiving could well cause it to go over the front edge of the flight deck, taking some Airdales with it (a nasty consideration).

This aircraft hurdled the last barrier and smashed into the aircraft parked up forward. causing all sorts of havoc. This will get your attention every time, especially if you’re one of the Airdales up forward there. This is the attention you’d like to avoid, for sure. It’s not unlike the pretentious behavior of some who feel so wanting that they have to “show off”. They might as well wave a flag over their head which says, “I feel very insecure”. A pretentious person is one who is pretending to be someone or something he is not. It’s difficult not to feel sorry for such a person even though he’s in effect lying to you. At base such a person lacks a fundamental sense of self-confidence (self-esteem again) and is trying to camouflage this. This type of conduct is something you should avoid because others will lower their opinion of you, either overtly or covertly. Usually such pretentious conduct is trivial and a cause for unspoken sympathy. However, if his conduct acts to

make others feel belittled then it is fundamentally wrong. Probably there aren’t that many people who’d be affected this way. Should there be, pretentiousness is a habit that should be controlled: it pits one person’s insecurity against another person’s insecurity (the overbearing vs. the meek, two unhappy characters). Pretentiousness serves no one well and as such would be well to discontinue. Perhaps I make too much of this and if so I back down. However the trait does smack of unattractiveness and does such a person no good whatsoever. Actually probably most would consider the above of little consequence and if so, fine. Yet if it does impose on the “fragile” understand this and refurbish your self-esteem. You’ll be glad you did. (When my book first came out I sent it to an old buddy. He said he liked it all right but I shouldn’t be conceited about it. What a laugh! In seven years I’ve sold six copies. The day I become conceited is the day I die.)



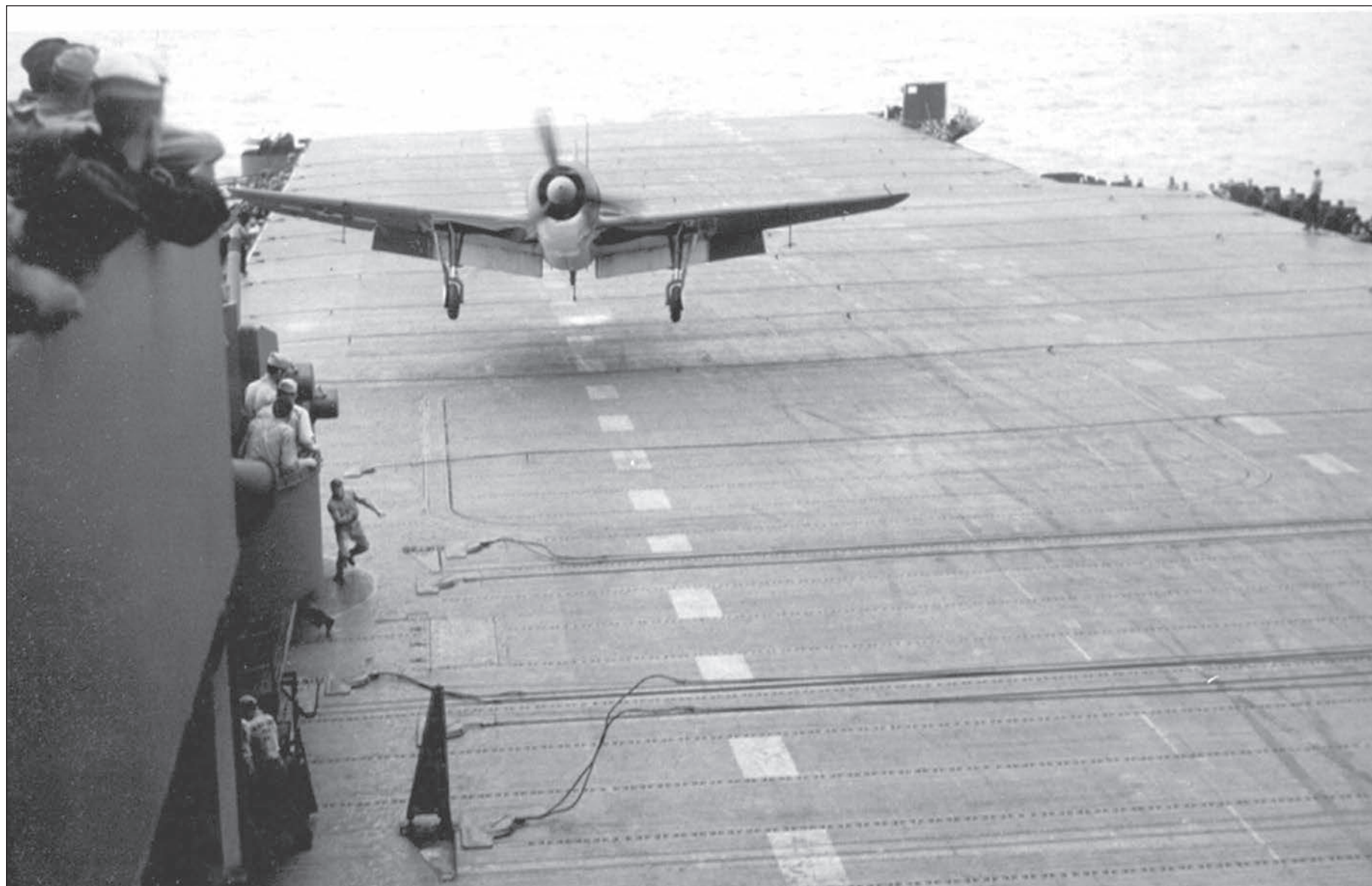
COMING IN ON A WING AND A PRAYER

This, and the next three pictures, are a sequence of events that were not that unusual. The SB2C Helldiver was too high when he cut the power to the engine (at the signal to do so from the LSO, who's behind that wind-screen at the upper right). To compound that error, the pilot probably landed on his left wheel, thus "throwing" his aircraft to his right. He's probably going about 45 mph at this point (relative to the deck). As is seen, one of the Airdales didn't "read" the situation well enough (or wasn't paying attention) to vacate the area sooner. Did he make it to safety? And why are those spectators in the 40-mm guntub above him so blasé? Well, probably because they've seen all this before. One thing that's not at all clear, though, is why the barrier, opposite that running Airdale, why is it in the reclining

position? That's a puzzle. Also, notice the arresting-wire crossing right over the elevator just below the SB2C's wheels. Usually this wire is pulled toward the bottom of the page, off of the elevator, so as to allow the use of this elevator. (Evidentially, they don't plan to use this elevator at this time.) This would speed up the pace of the landing operation, always the priority because of the dwindling gasoline supply of the circling aircraft. (Notice in other pictures the large, streamlined gasoline tanks underneath the fuselage of the aircraft. This allowed for extended ranges of flights, but it's also a concern if the tank breaks loose upon landing, spilling gasoline on the deck. This invariably will ignite, causing a nasty fire, which the Airdales will have to put out. But let's find out what happened next here.

Here it comes, this rambunctious Helldiver, right at your, head on, straight up. Would that the world were so direct. Do you ever feel that people aren't being "straight up" with you? Do you ever feel that things are not real That things are contrived? That things are being deliberately orchestrated? That people are in cahoots to your detriment? That people try to beguile you with deviousness? That the "powers that be" control your environment with malice aforethought? Are you automatically suspicious of others? Then you have a problem but the good news is that you're not alone. There are those who will say you're paranoid (but how many times are "paranoids" actually correct?). Another problem here is that one loses all respect for the culprits. A sticking point in all

this is that those who seek to deceive may actually be trying to do what is best overall. It then becomes a conundrum: do you hate or admire these people? Once again, the panacea for this problem is knowledge, and more knowledge. (It also doesn't hurt to learn to "roll with the punches" especially when there are those who persist on trying to needle you; if that doesn't work, change the subject, at least for the nonce). Sometimes (often?) it's not a pretty world what with all the swirl of deceit, deception and outright lying. Also, it's alright to be skeptical in this day and age of those who try to sell you "snake oil". [I hesitate to include this page because of its negative content but sometimes the ugly must be considered.]



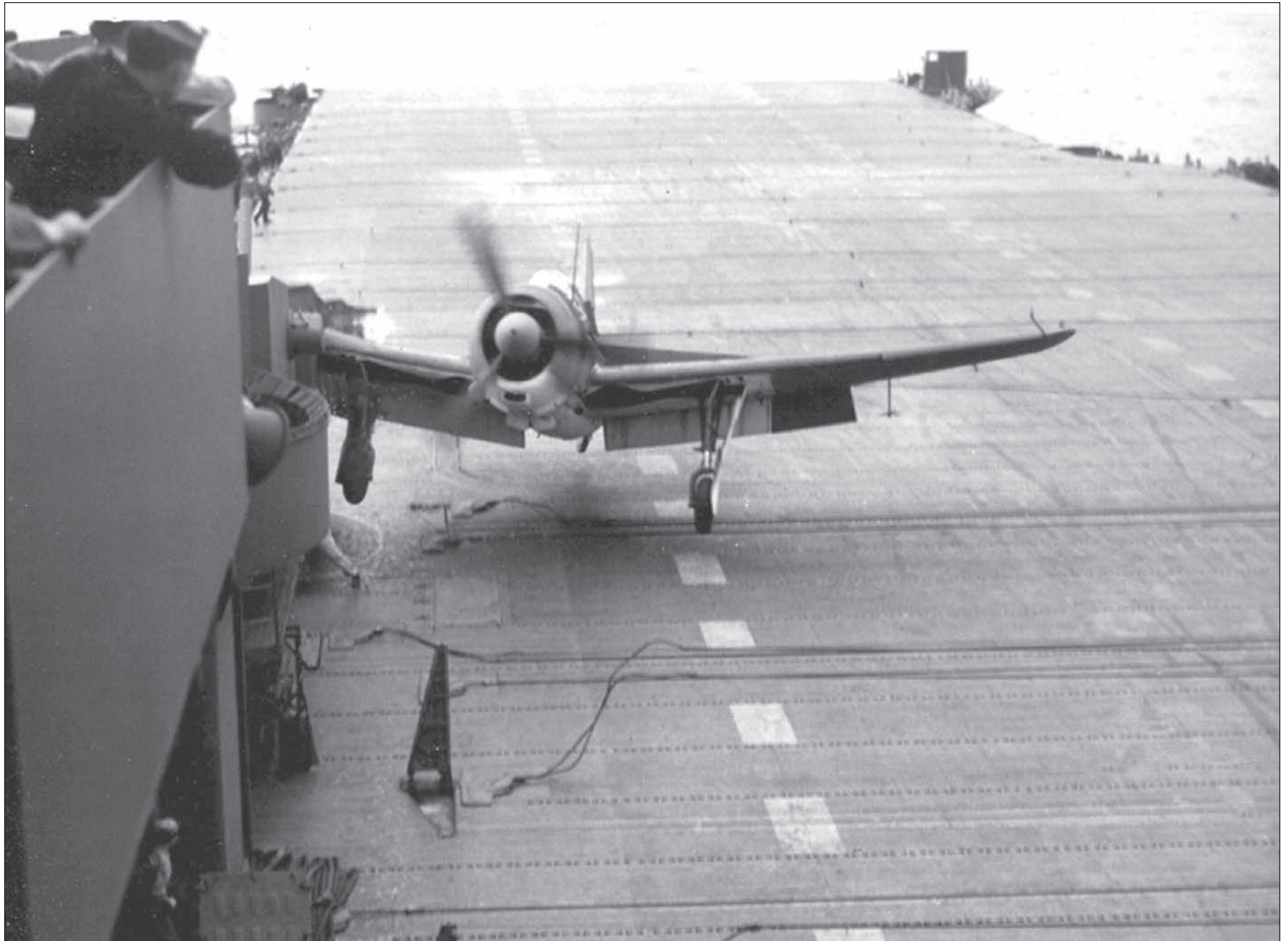
“STAND CLEAR!”

The next three pictures show a sequence of a fairly typical happening. The SB2C missed all the arresting-wires, but didn't yet reach the barriers. Notice the leg of someone trying to get out of the way. For this crash to have happened in this way, probably this SB2C touched down too far down the deck (too close to the barriers). And possibly, the pilot applied

the brakes, with the right brake taking hold more strongly than did the left brake. In any event, the SB2C made a bad landing by probably touching down too far down the deck. It's puzzling that no one can be seen back aft. The place looks deserted, and so it looks very strange. The Antietam always had people “everywhere,” and here, everywhere it's empty.

Hey, clear the deck! Helldiver on the loose. One's perspective is very clear here. Would that one's perspective were always so clear. Differing perspectives may explain, but not necessarily justify, what was said on the previous page. My view of a given subject may not coincide with your view of the same subject (I have the sun in my eyes while you have the sun at your back; I'm on the deck while you're up above looking down from the superstructure) and hence differing opinions (“views”). One can also view not only from differing physical locations but also from differing mental mindsets. There may be facts known to others but not to you, causing differing perspectives (points of view). These things must be considered if we're to have any possibility of rational discussions about anything. So why do I go on about the obvious? I don't know, maybe reinforcement of ideas is a valid concept. However, in all this there are those who have a better faculty to recognize what here seems clear. This faculty can not be acquired willy-nilly.

It must be nurtured by conscious effort of using one's ability to observe and then evaluate. It does no good to observe and then not be able to make cogent interrelationships of what was observed. These relationships need must be relevant and meaningful. It requires the ability to think after having separated the chaff from the wheat. I don't propose that everyone take a course(s) in science and/or engineering (or even “lawyering”) but those courses will demand a healthy degree of disciplined thinking. Where it concerns others this type of thinking should be mandatory. In fact, try it, you'll like it. If nothing else it will strengthen you. (“In our day” we had to take Latin because it was supposed to sharpen our ability to speak correctly and communicate with precision. Is that the norm today?) Let's face it, sloppy thinking leads to unnecessary problems in our daily lives (such as misunderstandings and the like). Returning to perspectives, realize that in life there are many differing points from which to view a given situation.



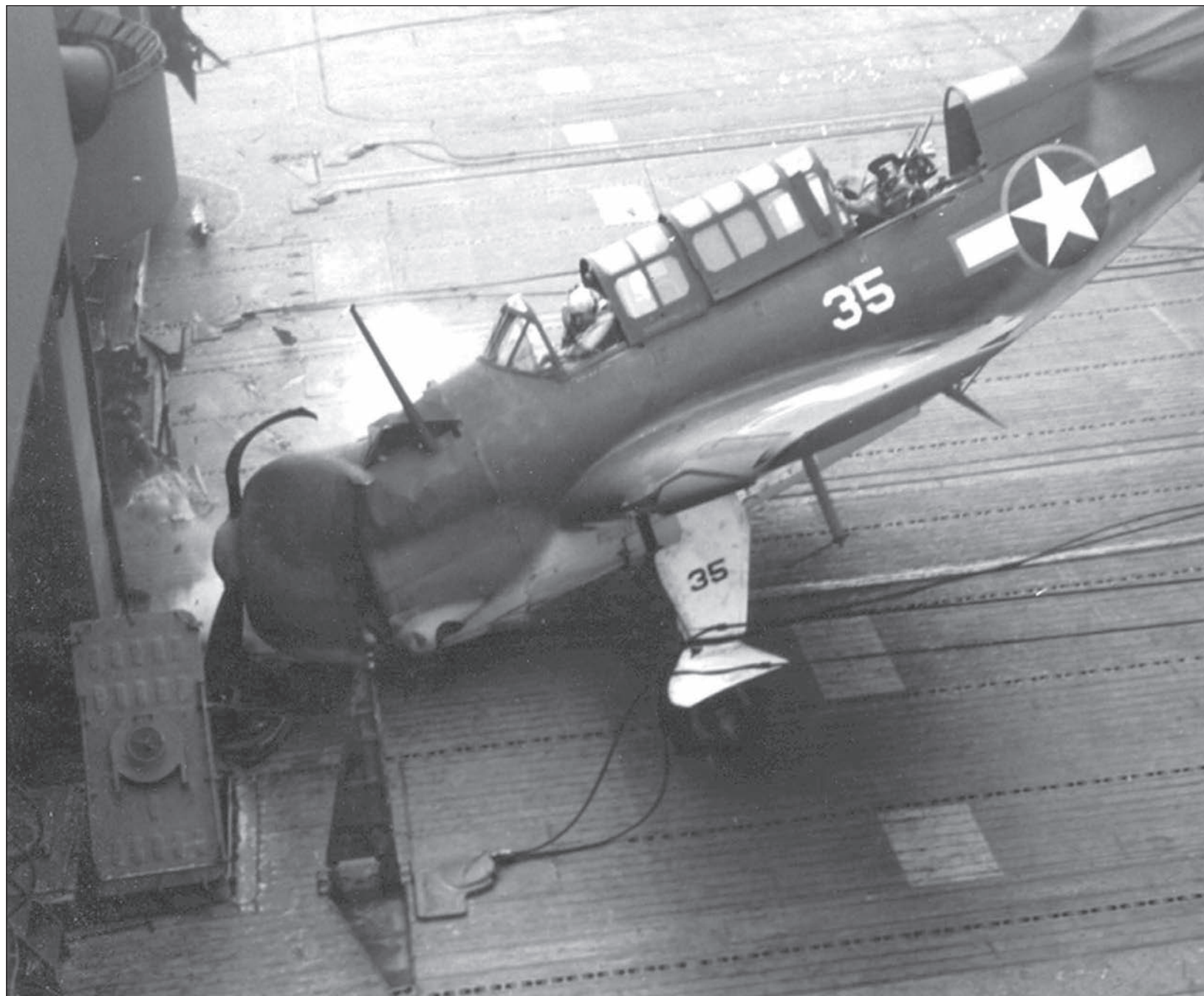
CRASH IN PROGRESS

The SB2C went through the first barrier with ease and is approaching the second barrier. This was probably a 60 mph impact, slow enough, given the distances involved, for everyone to clear the area, but fast enough to cause real damage. Notice the physical attitude of the gunner in the rear of the SB2C. (He too was called an Airdale, but obviously of

a different variety.) The area of this crash is one that is normally occupied by numerous people. They all crammed into the island superstructure through several doors on the flight deck level. Sometimes quick reactions in situations like this aren't enough, and casualties ensue. So it's always "heads up" time during landing operations.

Well yes, this Helldiver bloodied its nose and will need some serious attention. You will, I hope, note that none of the pictures displayed in this book are staged, not one iota. This (not the accidents) is deeply refreshing to me. I can not imagine why the viewing public of present day TV is not wearily saturated with the extreme "over the top" depictions of almost all of the action movies. In a very real way it's pathetic that anyone over the age of nine would acquiesce to such nonsense as extremely exaggerated explosions, cars flying sky high and the like. It would seem that constant exposure to such tripe would distort and skew their image of real life (they wallow in a cartoon world that would bore a grown up to utter distraction). A danger here is that these "adults" will become stunted intellectually and lose that vital quality of proportionality. Proportionality is not only found in pictures but also in thoughts and ideas (Here I will

not comment on what I personally believe are gross and grotesque pictures by the so-called School of Modern Art where objects are deliberately distorted (for its stark effect?); I will even go out on a limb vis-à-vis the "politically correct" by saying that whatever might be said about Hitler he at least generated some very well rendered pictures (of architecture). These pictures were vilified (because he did them?) and in their stead these weird modern art pictures by others were extolled by the critics of Hitler. I beg your pardon but Hitler was far superior in this category). Returning to present day it would seem to me that the arts in large measure reflect the taste of the time. If that time rejects proportionality as depicted in the movies we're in a bad place. We might be good but we aren't great as some would have it. Let us have proportionality in all things, whether art or thought or decorum or comportment or



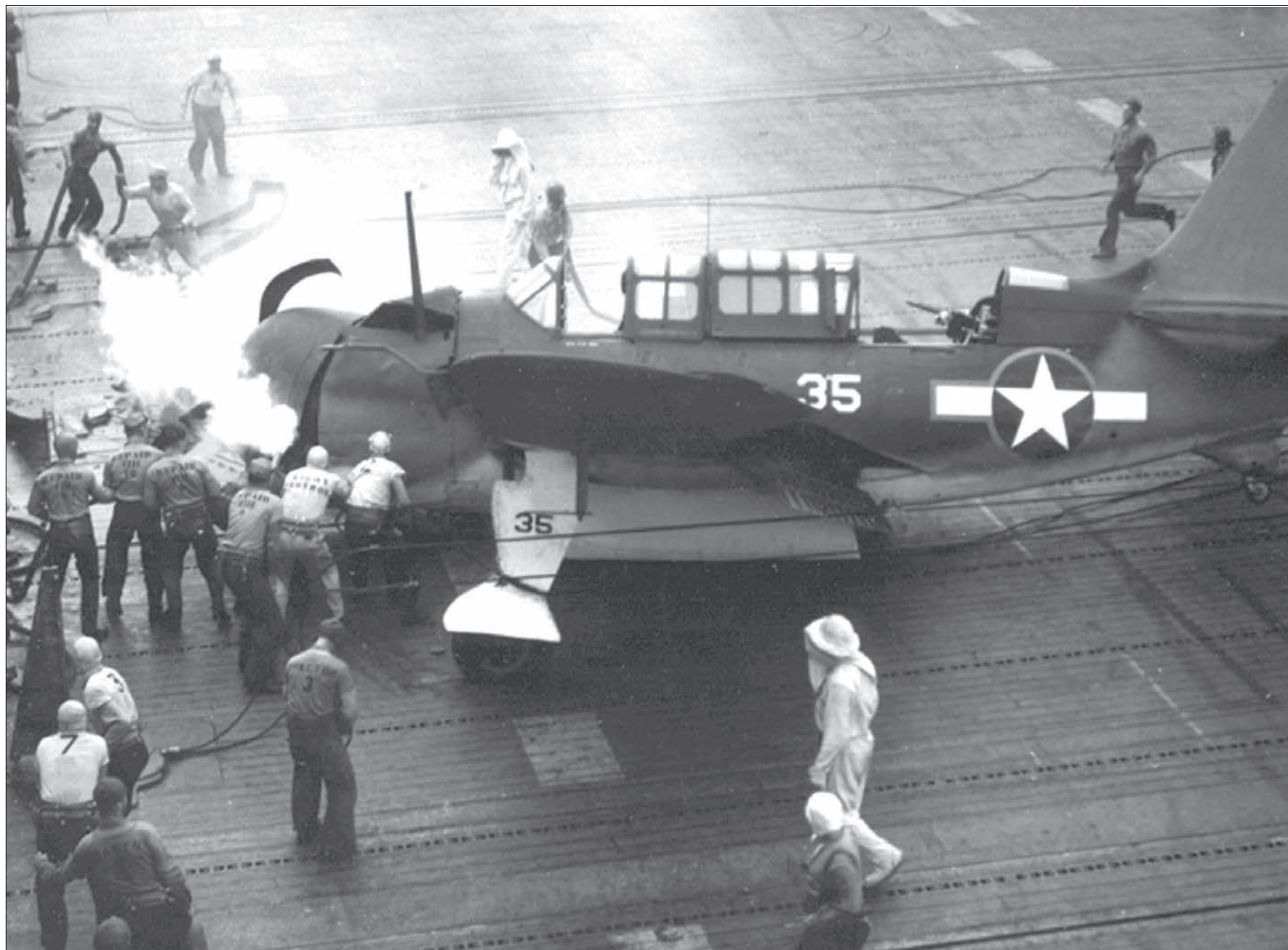
“AIRDALES TURN TO!”

Moments later, the Airdales are out in force. The smoke is probably from the fire extinguishers. This picture was taken long enough after the event to allow the pilot and radioman/gunner to either get out of the plane, or be pulled out. Notice the asbestos-clad man in the foreground. Since there was no fire, he wasn't needed. As shown, the Airdales become the firemen. This was one of their important duties, even though it was intermittent. Other aircraft in the landing pattern will have to maintain their flight paths as the Airdales, under the directions of the yellow-shirts, go about the job of clearing up this crash. When, and if, the landing gear is damaged, a derrick is required to lift the aircraft so that it can be moved. All of this takes a certain amount of time, and when in a war-zone, time is of the essence. This is also important because the aircraft might be running low on fuel. So it's everyone "turn to!" Why turn to? The reason is that time is a precious commodity, made more so as you grow older. The young are, for the most part, almost completely obli-

ous of this. I know: I was young once upon a time. A certain amount of "down time" is all well and good. Even "hanging out" with the cohorts has a limited benefit in that one learns about others, and themselves, in a fairly natural setting. It can be overdone though and it becomes merely an excuse for just plain laziness. One of my friends once said to me, while still a teenager, "I pray you won't be lazy". As a teenager I was clear on the meaning but mystified as to the intent. At the time I was a very busy teenager, being at a school all day that expected much from you, then going to football or basketball practice, then spending up to an hour and a half taking public transportation home, dinner and the dishes next and finally spending the rest of the evening doing my homework (diligently, I must say). Admittedly, this left about 20 minutes of telephone-talk with "my girl". I presume she meant when I was on a career path. In any event, don't make the serious mistake of squandering your time; it's absolutely irretrievable/irredeemable.

What with all the tangle of fire-hoses this picture brings to mind: "Oh what a tangled web we weave when at first we seek to deceive". In the first instance, consider the effort required to maintain the artifice of the effect of the deception. One needs to then constantly remember the original deception so as to maintain the thread of that deception: Everything that follows must adhere to that original deception. Then other deceptions must

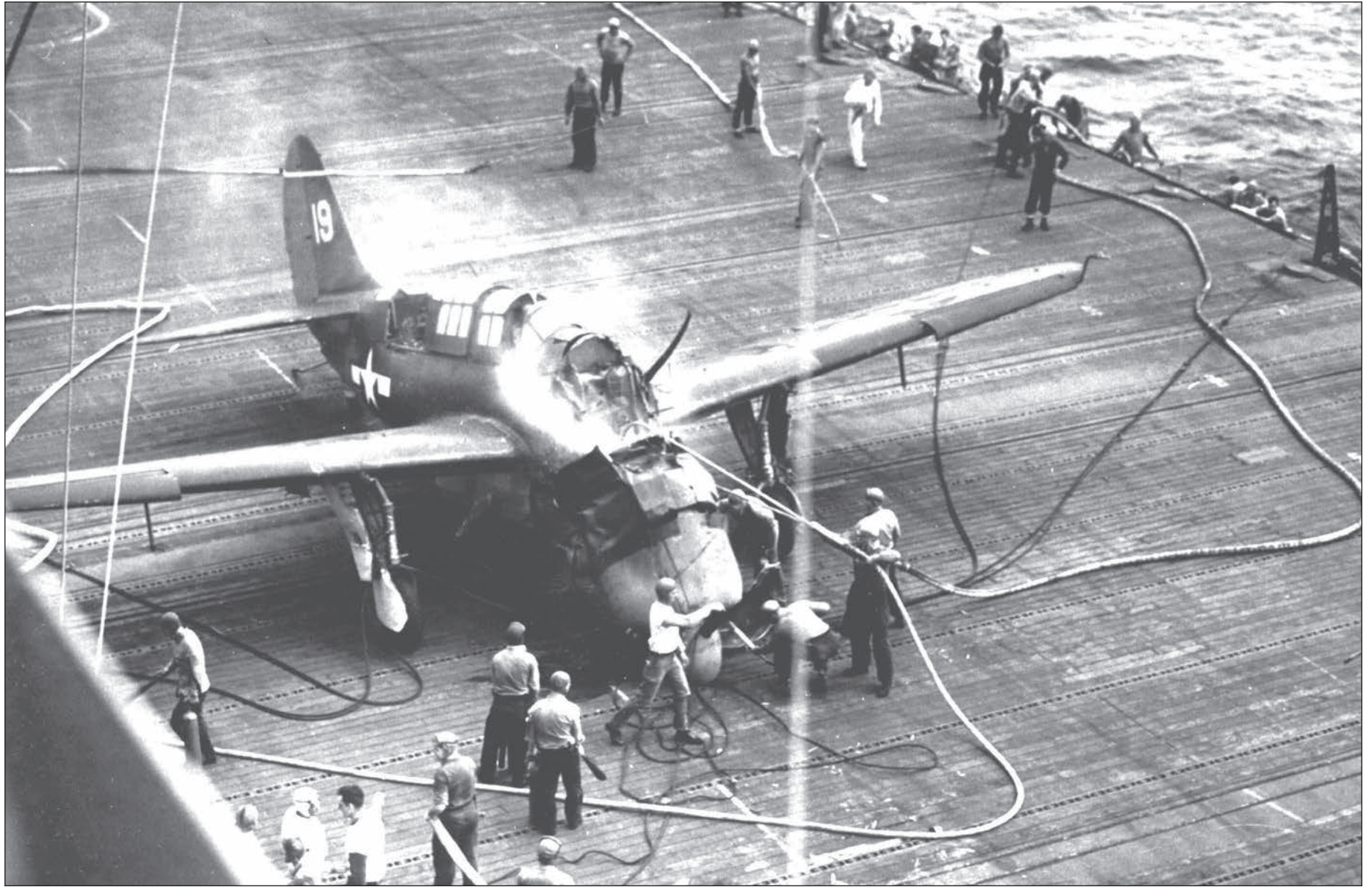
meld properly with the original deception. It's a puzzle all of whose parts must engage each other flawlessly lest you are found out. (You have a strange hair-do but are complimented on it; this is not artfulness). Deceptions interacting with other deceptions raise the chaos exponentially. If you're unable to be honest keep mum. Again, "truths" are facts while "honesties" are accurate representations of yourself. Cherish both.



SCRATCH ONE HELLDIVER

This is a typical scene: a wrecked aircraft surrounded by Airdales with fire-hoses in hand, and yellow-shirts directing the proceedings. Some of the hoses have long metal-pipe extensions that allow for placing a concentrated spray of water at a specific location. This method is effective if used before the fire spreads. There are also hoses that spread foam on the fire to smother the fire. I can say for myself that I spent only one day at a fire-fighting school in Pearl Harbor. That was the extent of my “training” for fighting fires. Mainly, it consisted of going into a compartment that had trays of combustible liquids that were set on fire. We would then follow the instructor into this compartment as he sprayed everything in front of him, and actually put out a fairly significant fire (inside the compartment). Thus it was that we Airdales were also “fire-men”. But putting out an aircraft fire wasn’t the only thing that had to be done. In quick order the damaged, often immobile aircraft had to be removed, one way or another (there were still aircraft up there in the landing pattern). If the aircraft was immobile, a mobile derrick was used to move the wreck. Hoses had to be put away and the flight deck cleaned up. Then, back to landing operation. The flight deck was the Airdales domain, and the faster he worked, the better things would be. This was an active “airport” after all, and again, time was of the essence. Yes, this was the Airdales’ domain, this sometimes hectic flight deck full of noise and fury then, but now archly full of pain. Underlying all the

“thens” and the “nows” was the pervading sense of responsibility that the Airdale embraced as an integral part of his composition. He did not consciously enumerate that this was his responsibility and that was not. If there was a problem he responded and reacted automatically to remedy the situation. Here, responding to a “bad landing” he reacts automatically, doing whatever has to be done. (yes, the pilots will tell you (not me) that any landing you can walk away from was a good landing; I believe the Air Officer had a different “take” on this attitude, but that’s between those “fraternity members”, not my milieu certainly; and yes, I was excluded from the pilot training program (V-5) because they said I had a “sensitive nervous system” that elevated by blood-pressure when under stress--- so what could be more natural than to putt me in the V-1-F (Airdales) Division?! However, I must come to my defense by saying that I do not become overly wrought by stress and what with the “training” I had on the flight deck, I do not become overly excited by tempestuous happenings; I’d like to call it a “cool (and clear) head” when things go wrong. Yet, who knows the next time?) Responsibility implies not only what you ought to do, what you should do, what you are bound to do, but also doing the above without having to be told to do so, nor should each and every step of the prescribed responsibility need itemization. It’s called being an adult. Responsibility is a synonym for dependability.



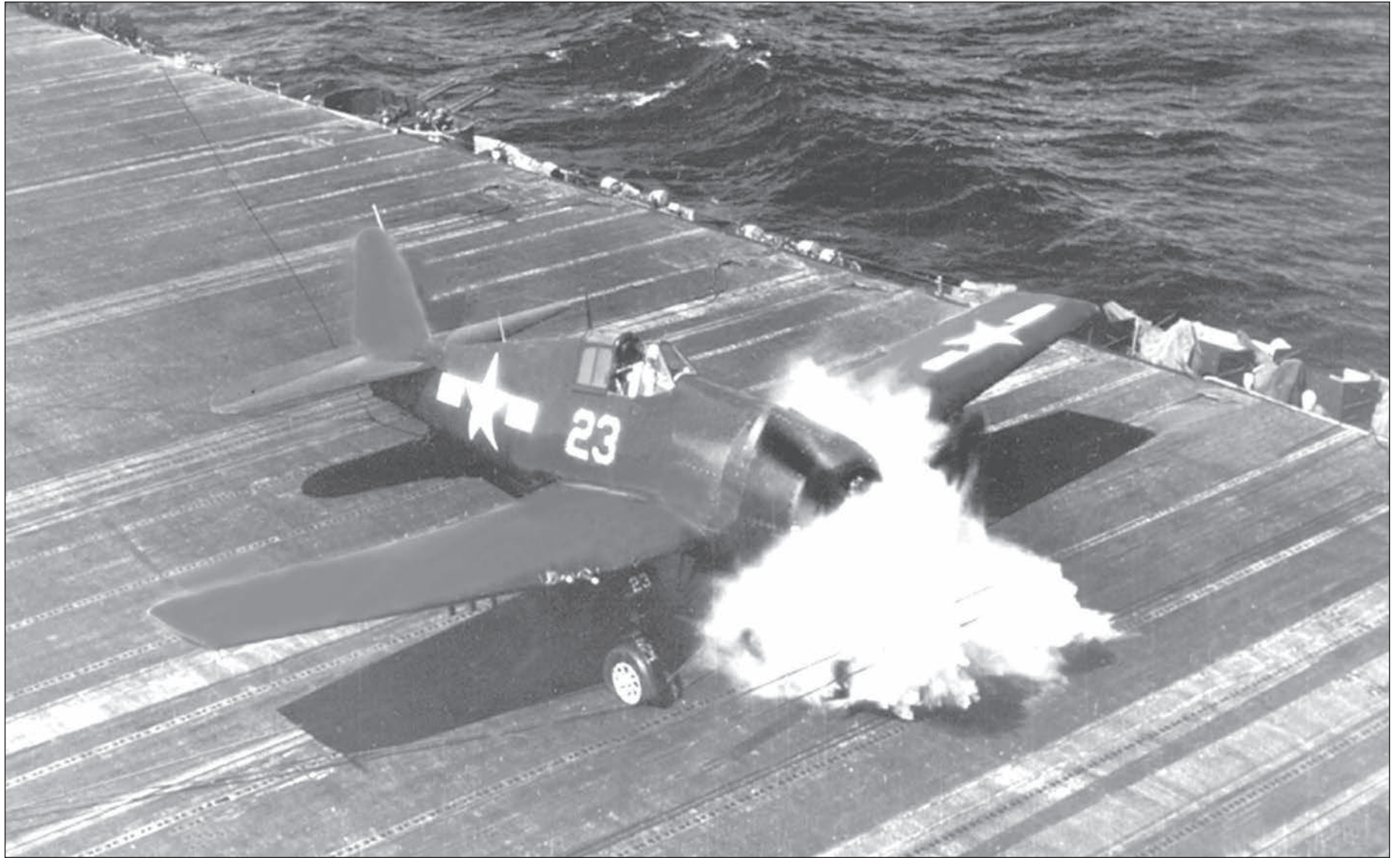
SERIOUS BUSINESS HERE

This next sequence of four pictures shows this F6F in a serious situation. This aircraft was brought to a halt by an arresting-wire. Apparently, what happened was that the auxiliary gasoline tank ruptured. This could have been due to mechanical failure. In any event, it poses a serious situation. That white material is highly volatile aviation gasoline, and it's falling on a wooden deck sealed with a tar product. This combination makes for a serious fire. (No "firemen" on the scene

yet.) Notice the flat right tire. This implies a hard touchdown (landing) which in turn could have caused the rupture of the external fuel-tank, in turn leading to this event pictured here. And yet, one would think that the fuel in the external tank would be used first. On the other hand, maybe the fuel from the external tank goes through the regular, internal fuel tank, making the fuel in the external tank the last to be used. I must confess that all this is only conjecture on my part.

A 2,000-hp engine gone amuck. It will not be a pretty sight and it's not a pretty sight when a person goes amuck either. We all have the responsibility to maintain our self-control, our "cool" because if we have a pulse we all at one time or another "get angry". At the same time we all have the responsibility to keep that anger under wraps (who are we to disrupt everyone else?) Some are better at this self-control business than others and for sure it's a learned trait. The old saw "count to ten" may work for some but it's tenuous at best. Perhaps a better way to go is to determine why you get angry in the first place and then confront that. Often times one learns very soon that many things are just not worth the effort of supporting anger. In addition, why allow someone, or something, take control of your mood? You're in effect being controlled by someone else. Is this what you want? I would think not. Say to yourself, "I'm not going to let that person or that thing take over my disposition. No way Jose." After doing

this consciously for a time it will then become second-nature to you and you have then essentially beaten it (your lack of self-control). Often, too often, there is that low-life who deliberately tries to make you lose your temper, to "get your goat". Would you give him the satisfaction of your losing "your cool"? I would think not. In fact, if you show absolutely no signs of anger it will in turn annoy him no end (though I don't recommend this "mental duel"). At times someone will directly confront you with something that's meant to annoy you. I believe the best rejoinder here is to literally laugh just enough to show that he was of no effect. If someone directly insults you with purpose aforethought then the best response, I think, is to turn away slowly and continue to ignore him as if his remarks are but a bagatelle (a trifle). Indicate a sufficient disdain and walk away; he's not worth a dime's worth of attention. (The foregoing are but suggestions for further thought.)



HIGH-OCTANE GASOLINE ON THE DECK

The gasoline tank did rupture, and high-octane aviation gasoline has been grossly spilled. By the looks of the right tire, it too seems to have been ruptured. This implies a hard touchdown on the deck, and this in turn could have caused the detachment of the gasoline tank from the plane. The “smoke” probably is vaporized gasoline. The high-pitch crash-alarm has no doubt already sounded, and all hands should be converging on this Hellcat. The sooner they get there, the easier will be their job, obviously. But where are they? Notice that the pilot is still in the cockpit. Maybe the impact stunned him. And where’s the man in the asbestos suit? For some things, reactions should be automatic. But most of us are only human.

That is, once acceded to, the task is as good as done. Perhaps the classic example of responsibility/dependability can be found in the story of “The Message To Garcia”. As a boy I was rapt in watching a movie-short of this arduous journey made by one who was commissioned to take a message to Garcia through jungle and all kinds of impediments, one directly following the other. Intrepid perseverance followed unflagging fortitude (only repetitious words can somehow allude to the trials the messenger underwent to deliver the message). One should find this story and “make it your own”. Speaking of responsibility, I was at a graduation yesterday for those about to move on to the college experience. In the course of his speech (straight talk) he said that the five values

accepted by everyone throughout the world were the following: integrity, respect, fairness, compassion, and responsibility. Responsibility can be learned on the flight deck of a fleet aircraft carrier but it can also be learned right at home: are you responsible for mowing the lawn? If so, how well do you embrace that responsibility? An obvious and very important responsibility that everyone can acquire is that which can be found in every homework assignment. There is absolutely no excuse for saying that one has no opportunity to develop that critical attribute of responsibility. Of course each of these above enumerated values require fulsome essays to define them. Very briefly, as starters, the following are suggested: integrity encompasses not only honesty but also dependable honesty. Integrity does not allow for “cutting corners”. Fairness encompasses the equality of opportunities, the equal chance to prevail (given one’s sincere effort). Respect, while it refers to attitudes toward others, would certainly seem to require that one first has self-respect. If you can’t respect yourself how can you respect others? (Build your EARNED self-esteem.) Everyone deserves respect (not criminals). Compassion can be summed (should it?) by repeating over and over, “There but for the Grace of God go I”. Responsibility has been touched upon but brevity is not an option for these and all other values. Optimally we should live these values second-naturedly.

Here we note the lull before the storm: The gasoline outpouring onto the deck bespeaks a “grave and present danger”. It is the most relevant item in the picture. To have a cogent discussion one must address and refer to only the relevant aspects of the situation. Irrelevancies only serve to becloud the conversation and in some cases render it all to be meaningless. To be able to exclude irrelevancies one must be sufficiently knowledgeable about the subject at hand. If one interjects

items which are not germane one tends to make what follows to be spurious (false) at best, leaving both sides frustrated and/or unconvinced. We find this very often in the political field. I have felt the pang of myself being considered irrelevant: Over a month ago I took it upon myself to send a registered copy of this book to the administration of the Naval Academy, thinking (naively) that this would be a fine book for nascent naval officers. The silence from them has been deafening.



GASOLINE IGNITES

There was a spark from somewhere that ignited the gasoline. The pilot was able to climb out of the cockpit, and there should be someone there to help him down. At the bottom of the picture is an Airdale with a spray-applicator in hand. However, the water should be turned on as they approach the plane. The spray is not only to put out the fire, but it's also to protect the Airdale. Actually, instead of water, it's foam that should be used on a gasoline fire. But

water will work. A strong spray of water, as from that spray-applicator (bottom center) was excellent for suppressing the flames, even if it didn't put the fire out right away. One can go very close to the flames if one is close to the applicator. This enables others, with foam-hoses, to get close, to actually smother the fire. The key factor here is to get there fast before the fire gets too hot. The hotter the fire, the harder to put it out, obviously.

Right now Nature is superior to Man but Man will soon overcome Nature (in this case). There are many forces of Nature on board a carrier at sea (fire, wind, waves, explosions to name a few) and Man must be resilient to these drastic, dramatic changes. Ah, changes, that's rub: for good or for ill? We all want changes for the better, but better than what and better for whom? (Believe it or not there are those who are comfortable with the status quo,) Yet before a change can be made one must be able to accurately define what is the present. It does no good to go from the frying pan to the fire. What is "better"? What you consider better I consider worse and visa versa. As they are wont to admonish, "Be careful what you wish for, you might get it". This has a certain supercilious tone to it but there are grains of truth to it. It might well be valid. That's precisely why it's important to know from whence you're coming. Is what you desire going to put you in a worse place? So dig deep, away from

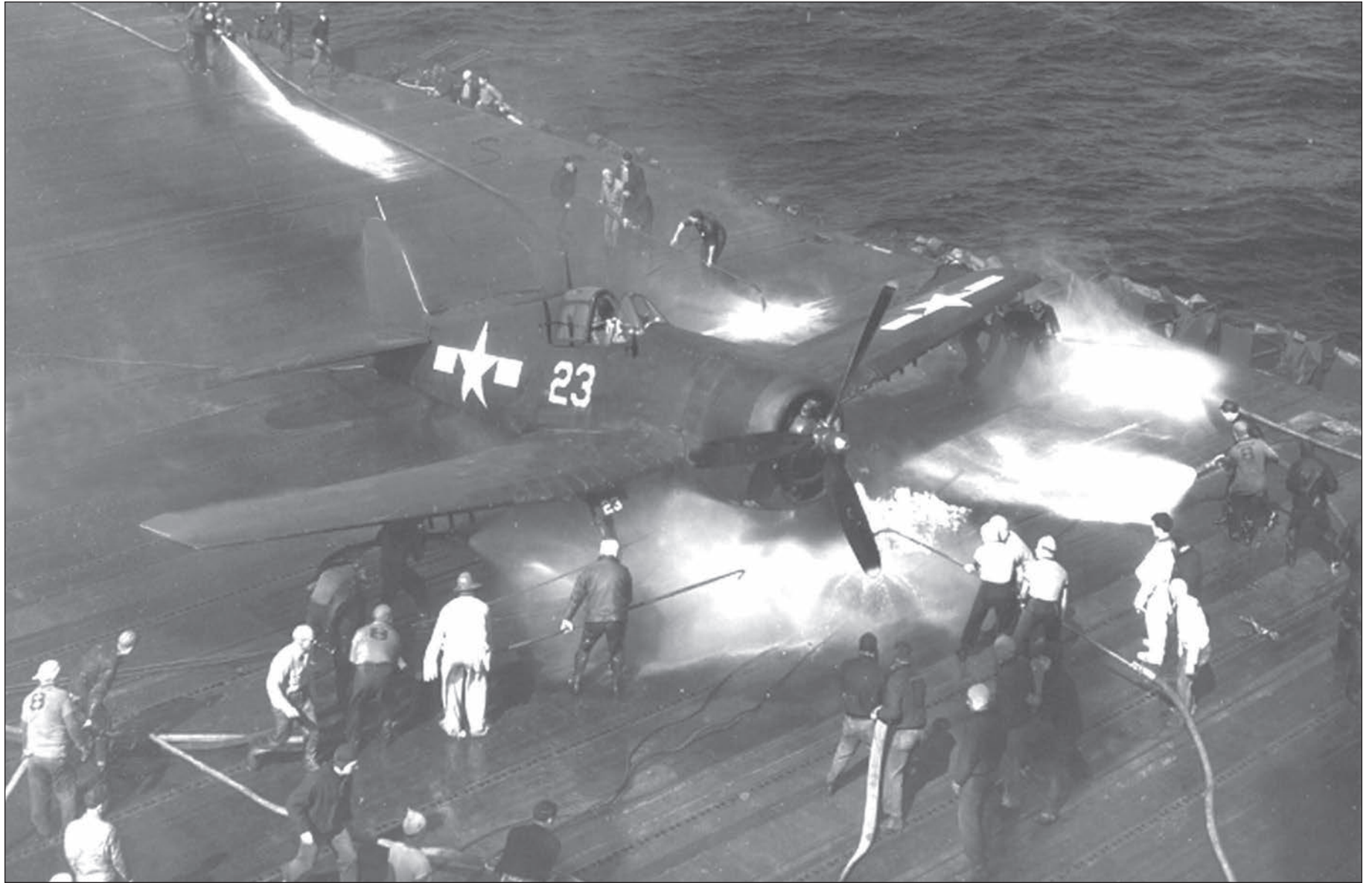
your emotions and delve into your reserve of intellect. Emotions can often betray your better judgment. Not enough people appreciate that change can be a slippery slope when one charges pell mell to the "promise land". I'm as enthusiastic as the next person for changes for the better, as long as it's done with precision aforethought. Included in this is the actuality that what is better for thee is worse for me, and visa versa. It seems to all boil down to comparing lists of criteria and then assigning weights to each criterion. Hmm, this sounds like a job for a computer programmed to evaluate all possible combinations. I know of a perfect neural network that will make this task actually enjoyable (what could be better? ---speaking of "better"). The crux of the matter seems to be that when we seek change we rely on our emotions to the exclusion of our intellect. I don't want to pour water on "emotions", I only want to try to promote rationalism. (a large subject in itself for later).



AIRDALES BECOME FIREMEN

Now, some minutes later, everything is under control. The fire actually was on the deck, and the plane was damaged but not destroyed. There are seven hoses out there that are operational. This is good. It's interesting to see a group of yellow-shirts manning a hose. But why not? Notice the man in his white suit, with the hat-part off. His main duty is to get the pilot, and since the pilot is safe, he's on "stand-by." There was no foam used on this fire, probably because it was brought under control fairly quickly. Now, again, it's time to clean up the mess, move the Hellcat, and make things right for those aircraft still circling overhead. One could well say that the purpose of the Airdale, pulling and putting wheelchocks, is simpleminded (but not simple). However, a less frequent though more complex function is that of putting on his fireman's hat at times such as these. Each crash has its own "signature" though the purpose is the same: put out the fire, save the pilot and then clean up the mess. (A crash with no fire maims the aircraft, or parts of it, are salvageable. Here the prime problem is clearing the deck as quickly as possible because this is a busy "airport". Unnecessary delays could mean loss of aircraft and even pilots.) [I don't know how much fire-fighting training the Airdales received because I didn't join the V-1-F Division (Airdales) until after we set sail for the Pacific. My training was limited indeed, being only one day at a fire-fighting school in Pearl Harbor when I was still in the Navigation Division (which included going into a compartment set ablaze with troughs of oil on the bulkheads (walls) of the compartment. We were of course preceded into the compartment by a fire-fighting instructor.] That lack of extensive training was alright though because the function of putting out a fire on the flight deck was partly instinctive: a fire on a ship is serious business and time is of the essence so one tends to react instead of deliberately thinking it through (let the boss ---yellow-shirt---do that). Most all of us have a purpose in life as does the Airdale and everyone else in the service.

However, don't feel as if you have to administer benevolences to have worthwhile purposes. The point to be made is that one's purpose need not be grandiose to be considered worthwhile and you certainly don't need to be a leader, a "shaker and mover" to have beneficial impact on others. However, it serves you well to have at least a general idea as to what your purpose is and will be. It could be something as straightforward as being better than you think you can be. Always set the bar for yourself a little higher each time you achieve the goal you set for yourself. There's no question that as you improve, and improve, your satisfaction increases with it. This is one of the reasons that those who participate in a sport can enjoy it: the satisfaction derived as you become better and better. Naturally the activity doesn't have to be a physical sport; it can be any activity that calls upon your efforts to improve and attain more and more excellence. Excellence should be the goal of everyone whatever the activity. You benefit and others also benefit from your accomplishments (an engineer designs a better "mousetrap" so both the engineer and society benefit from excellence. Thus your purpose should be to do the best you are able in whatever it is you do (presuming it's legal). Unfortunately, there are those who become jealous of those who achieve. Such is counterproductive for both that person and society in general, at several levels. Much better to laud and appreciate the achievements of others because it really is true that the water raises all the boats (some would say not equally. I would say that that is not nearly as relevant as the fact that all the boats rise (it should NOT be a "zero-sum game"). Would it not also be fine if everyone had as their purpose the ability to have a cheerful attitude whatever the conditions (this does not imply a mindlessness. [I'll be the first to admit that this is easy to say but sometimes hard to do: I for one have been guilty of having had a dour attitude, and even if it was perhaps justified, it was altogether wrong (and I knew it: easy to say, hard to do). One could say that those who are dour are probably intending to punish others who



THIS WON'T BE PRETTY

This is a similar situation of the ruptured gasoline-tank, only at a different place. It could have been due to a hard landing, and this is due to being too high at engine-power cut-off. At least that's a feasible possibility. But there are other things that could have caused this accident. There are many paths to an accident on the flight deck. That "cloud" enveloping that aircraft is again gasoline, only more extreme than the previous pictures. A bad thing here, other than the

crash, is that it happened so far away. Fewer hoses can be brought to bear, and the longer it takes for the Airdales to get there. Bad business here. In this situation it's better to have the hoses empty until they can be brought up close to the fire. No point in slowing yourself down by carrying a full hose, because when full, the hose is heavy. Also, the water-pressure to the hose makes it necessary to have several Airdales manning a hose.

We hold our breathe and hope for the best. Most of us are endowed with the quality of sensitivity to the plight of others. It seems almost ingrained, the feeling that there but for the grace of God go I. Our intellect tells us that bad things are about to happen and we try to will a happy outcome. Sensitivity to others' difficulties is something with which we're born (or so I believe) and it is the travails of our lives that tend to harden some of us to varying degrees. There are some who wish the worst for others because "it's the righteous" thing to

do. Others wish ill on others because they had it bad, so (perverse-ly) let others feel the same. "Someone hurt me so I'm going to hurt someone in return ". When I'm hurt my response is much more focused, only on the perpetuator, no one else. Even here, a "tit for tat" response is usually counterproductive unless it can be very precise and purposeful and comparable. It's "human nature" to want to strike back but is it smart! Naturally, if the hurt was inadvertent it should be a "no foul" call.

Continued from previous page.

are "against them". Personally, I don't understand how this could happen if that person had friends (but he's dour, so who wants to befriend him?) Well, a generous purpose might be to try to befriend the friendless. That would be a purpose that would rank high on the list of worthwhile and beneficial things to do. Befriend the friendless; what nobler effort could there be? It will

be difficult because the friendless have placed a barrier between themselves and the rest of the world. How then to break through that barrier? Empathy and compassion ("There but for the Grace of God go I") are good starting points as long as one does not come across as an intruder. The friendless are a suspicious lot. Give them some slack and a little time.



SERIOUS BUSINESS, THIS

It didn't take long for the fire to turn into a conflagration, typical for a gasoline fire. It's not clear whether the pilot will survive. Presumably the aircraft caught a wire because it hasn't moved forward. This fire, then, is perilously close to the LSO and his aides, who have no place to go. That's one of the problems with an aircraft carrier: the "real estate" is very limited, and on occasions like this, there's literally no escape. This crash could have happened right next to the island superstructure, and then more casualties would have occurred. That's why each landing is more than a

routine experience; the consequences can be very serious, as is shown here. To the right middle of the picture, down one level out of view, is a platform for two 5-inch open-mount guns. If the gunners were working there on those guns, they and others there would have been in dire straits right about now from spilling, ignited gasoline. This crash, though "far away" could easily have snuffed out the lives of about twenty people in the matter of seconds. It was comparable to a bomb explosion in its effects. And this all started out as a normal, standard landing operation.

Woe is me! The deed is done and the sensitivity has been shattered. Most normal people feel the terrible impact of this event with great sensibility. Now the "firemen" will have to rush to render aid to this unfortunate pilot post haste (immediate reaction by the Airdales might possibly be of happy effect). Both the words sensitivity and sensibility were used above. Though similar they have separate meanings: sensitivity refers to the intensity of the emotional feelings of sensibility which in turn implies a capacity to respond emotionally to some stimuli. Sensitivity is a degree of tangible response to a condition of the intangible sensibility. The former is material while the latter is "immaterial". The former can theoretically be measured while the latter is involved in that nebulous world of empathy. Both these terms depend on the quality of susceptibility and both can be affected by either internal or external factors. Had enough? While we tend to use these two words interchangeably we ought to have

a basic understanding of them. In any case, rare is the individual who does not empathize with this, and other pilots, who meet similar results. Each landing has the potential of ending thusly. The pilots know this and yet they carry on intrepidly. You should know that each and every pilot was a "volunteer": no one was required to climb into the cockpit and fly off the ship to engage in mortal combat. This is a breed apart. True, many were attracted by the glory associated with being a naval pilot but nevertheless they did a "dirty" job that had to be done. It seems that the least we can do is to understand both sensitivity and sensibility, not only for those brave pilots who flew off the decks of the carriers but also for anyone in pain and "extremis". You can, and should, learn the art of "walking a mile in someone else's moccasins". There are far too many out there who are much too glib when considering others. I truly suspect that such is nothing but rank jealousy. Knock it off!!



MORE SERIOUS BUSINESS

Again, here's a situation of a gasoline tank probably rupturing when a hard landing jarred loose the fuel-line connections. And again, the aircraft is far away from the island where most of the Airdales (firemen) are situated. Of course there are Airdales, hoses, and hose outlets on the portside too (where this F4U sits in its own conflagration.) Fast action's required here before this fire gets out of hand. Gasoline fires progress unusually fast. It is

not clear if the pilot's still in the aircraft or not. It's probably just as well that these crash pictures aren't in such good resolution. If they were, the reader would probably spend time examining the detail of the picture and thus not absorb the horrendous impact that these images represent. Realism is fine, but excessive realism only caters to morbid fascination. This book solidly rejects that formulation. Factual, yes; fascinating, no.

Two men in white fire-resistant garb will rush into the flames to pull the pilot to safety (hopefully). It would not be rational for an Airdale to try this at this stage. There are times when in the "heat" of the situation one tends to do something rash or irresponsible, in an unthinking way. Rationality is one of our most treasured qualities: it keeps us safe, it keeps us out of trouble, it promotes the welfare of one and all. Rational here means using reason as developed over time; the more time the better reasoning abilities. To be rational is to reason logically (If A then B, etc.) and it's measured against results over time, each time fine tuning the degree of reasonableness. Reasoning, and by association rationality, are the accumulations of good results turning into better results. These good results reflect a maturing of one's reasoning abilities. In the process one develops one's belief-system that carries one through life. One trait of reasonableness is the lack of excessiveness. This smacks of moderation and indeed moderation is usual-

ly the reasonable approach most of the time. For those who care, rationality and reasonableness are aspects of well honed intelligence (and who doesn't want to be intelligent? Or at least thought to be intelligent!). A word that applies here is that of realism, that act of being realistic (not "far out", with all due apologies to the creative in the crowd). [I firmly believe that realism and creativity are NOT in conflict with each other; to the contrary, I firmly believe they complement each other in a very synergistic way. It could be argued that lack of realism is destructive of creativity, but that is another subject entirely.] Rational, reasonable, realistic are all of a feather and well worth the while spent considering them. It's disturbing when someone acts irrationally, is it not? This has nothing to do with differing opinions which of course can both be perfectly rational. It's when someone does something deliberately destructive that it becomes upsetting (as well as anti-social).



FORTUNATELY, NO FIRE

This wreck apparently didn't require hoses, but still, that hose should be inflated with water just in case. This crash "only" involved structural damage and not gasoline-related problems. But in any event, it'll require removal of the wreck. Since both wheels and struts are intact, it'll be easy enough to remove this wreck, another one of the Airdales' jobs. Some of these crashes damage the flight deck, since it's made of wood. If the propeller gouges the deck sufficiently, carpenters have to be called out to make repairs if they're relatively minor. If the damage to the deck is extensive, a steel plate is brought out to cover the damage temporarily until after flight operations, at which time a full repair is made. This consists of digging out the damaged wood and replacing it with new lumber. The joints are then sealed with tar. This lumber is 2 _ inches thick, and it is not hardwood. It's necessary to give close consideration to things such as the integrity of the deck because flat tires due to jagged deck planks would disrupt the smooth operation of the flight operations. Again, and again, time is of the essence during flight operations (and many others things also).

This consideration, this respect if you will, for the deck can be carried over into everyday life. However, just as "rationalization" has two distinct meanings (to find and make excuses or to reason accurately and wisely) so too does respect have two distinct meanings (the English language has many words whose meanings are unique in two or more ways depending on the context in which they're used. Thus care must be taken that the listener understands the precise meaning that you're using. You have the advantage because you already know that meaning while the listener has to pick it up as you zip through your argumentation. Just a cursory reading of a decent-sized dictionary will tell you that words have specific meaning in specific usages. Some words have as many as 10 to 15 meaning in different contexts. All this of course is understood by most of us even though we tend to be sloppy about it.) "Respect" for the flight deck bears this out:

this transitions easily to people where we all should respect others, no matter what their station in life (other than felons). It means that we give each and everyone due courtesy and consideration, usually in a neutral manner (nowhere is it written that we should faun over others -- unless this suits your fancy; I recommend against it except under extreme circumstances). Mutual respect in this meaning is the lubricant to a felicitous society. It costs absolutely nothing, its benefits for both parties is great. It is also the precursor to what is called the Golden Rule: while this has similar forms, it can be said that one should "do unto others as you would have them do unto you". Care must be taken here because what you would like done unto you may not be what someone else would like to have done unto him. Various customs in various countries is one area where this might intrude. Sensitivity and nuance comes into play here even though the "macho men" would scoff. Better that than confrontation (and war, the ultimate insanity and expression of failure). Moving on, the other prime example of the word "respect" is an expression of admiration for others, their ideas, their thoughts, their actions, their inactions, their conduct, their composure, their work ethic, their treatment of others, their value system, their courtesy and respect for others (others' rights and personhood), their "you name it". By the same token, one might not respect another's actions and ideas. One may have no respect for those who deliberately intimidate others, badger others, manipulate others, lie to others, impose grievously on others, sully others' trust in them, etc. (having left out the more egregious sins where the concept of respect is woefully inadequate). Turning to another aspect of respect, the Airdale had to show a great deal of respect for the exigencies occurring on the flight deck during flight operations: whirling propellers and wind-blasts for the most part. Respect is a many-faceted word; learn it.



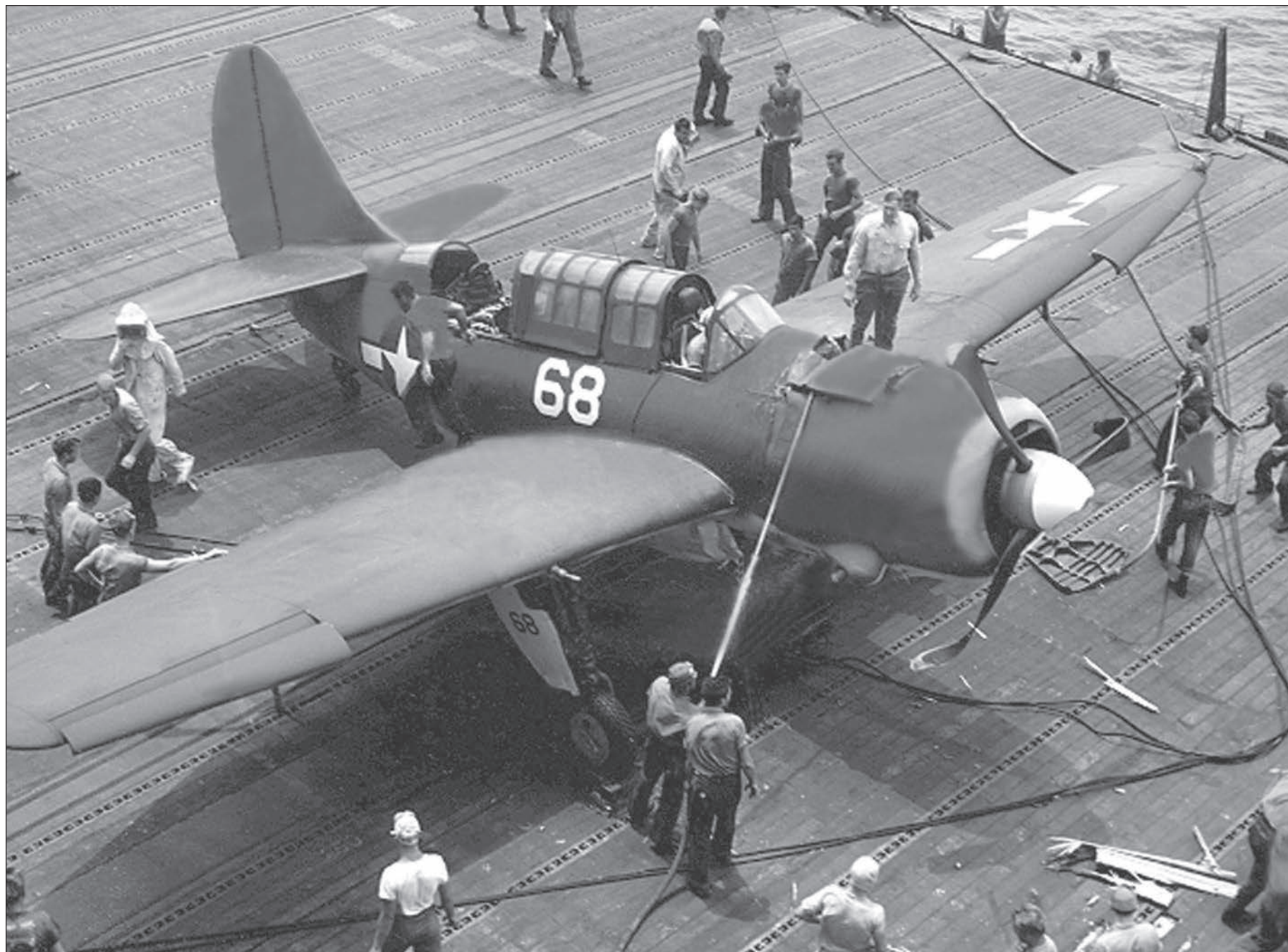
ACCIDENTS DO HAPPEN

Notice that the Airdales at the right have a spray-applicator attached to the hose. This allows the Airdale to not only apply a spray of water, but also to keep himself (the distance of the applicator) away from the fire. Usually, one of the senior yellow-shirts is directing the “exercise” of fighting the fire, as well as removing the damaged aircraft. This has to be expedited because there are still aircraft overhead in the landing-pattern waiting to land. This picture shows some splintered wood that was

“dug up” by the propeller. When the propeller is abruptly stopped, as when it digs up the flight deck, the engine also is severely damaged. Although I’m certainly not a mechanic, I would imagine the crank shaft and its bearings connecting to the pistons would undergo severe strain and damage. In other words, the aviation mechanics have their work cut out for them, including the structural mechanics. Notice the wing’s leading-edge flaps are open. These too affect the lift-function.

Let’s be truthful about this: this was not a serious accident. (Note the use of the word “truthful”, not “honest”; the former is a fact while the latter is an opinion. Honesty is closely related to sincerity; you feel a sincere person is being honest with you and does not temporize. It’s difficult to imagine that someone who is sincere is not being honest (even though such can easily be the case). It would seem that “sincere dishonesty” is an oxymoron (but one must be aware). Over time if you gain confidence in a person then you probably will accept his sincerity at face value. (Life, unfortunately, can become complicated, or at least, an unnecessary burden.). “Dishonest sincerity” is tantamount to low-level lying. All of this has nothing to do with genuine friendships in which trust is a given. Frankly I like people who are not excessively sincere and I don’t mean to imply that a sincere demeanor need be full-time. It’s true that there are a lot of those who like to “rib” others and so all bets are off. However these

people are doing it, for the most part, as good-natured interplay. It helps to have a good sense of humor and with friends this should be second-nature. Nothing has been said so far of great import but why is that necessary? It should have been apparent long ago that most of what has been presented on these pages are for the purpose of generating discussions and not making pronouncements to be written in stone. If I can put a burr under your saddle every once in a while that’s good. Besides, It would be impossible to say things that are not contentious to others, and that’s fine with me. I will say, though, that by in large (in fact, all the time) I stand by what I present on these pages. It’s absolutely foolish to try to have everyone agree with you. And I would be remiss if that were the case. Who wants to “preach to the choir”? I wouldn’t waste my time if I thought I was doing so. In point of fact, it is hoped that there are some interesting tidbits on these pages for the thoughtful readers.



AIRDALES TAKE CONTROL

Apparently this F6F lost all power upon having landed. It's being pushed up forward out of the way. It probably would have been faster to pull it with a tractor, but who knows what the rest of the situation is. At least, all the hoses seem to be filled and ready to do a job. With no power from the engine, the Airdales will have to apply real muscle to fold the wings. On the other hand, maybe they'll leave the wings spread until the engine is repaired. When

there is a fire and the water-valve on the hose is turned on, it requires several people to hold the hose to control it, because of the force of the water coming out of the nozzle of the hose. Unless it's held firmly, the hose will "have a mind of its own." Notice that the Airdales have CO2 fire extinguishers. These aren't of much value unless you have one of those hose-applicators nearby to allow you to get close to the source of the fire.

All seems the model of decorum here, thankfully. No fire, no bruised or smashed aircraft, no operating hoses. All is well except that the aircraft still overhead in their echelons are probably getting somewhat antsy. Let's turn to and clear the deck. Decorum is always better than chaos, both here on the flight deck and in society. Decorum refers to proper behavior to suit the circumstances. Comportment does matter in a well regulated society (please, no political connotations here). Respectability implies proper manners and this should be absolutely automatic. Just how hard is it to act responsibly and respectfully? (both at the same time). To be courteous is not an imposition within the general society. If it's such a burden to you, "get yourself hence"! Part of respectability consists of clothing yourself properly rather than in a slovenly manner. Whether you like it or not you're part of the "scenery". What has happened to your self-respect? What has happened to your sense of propriety? Only a dunce would

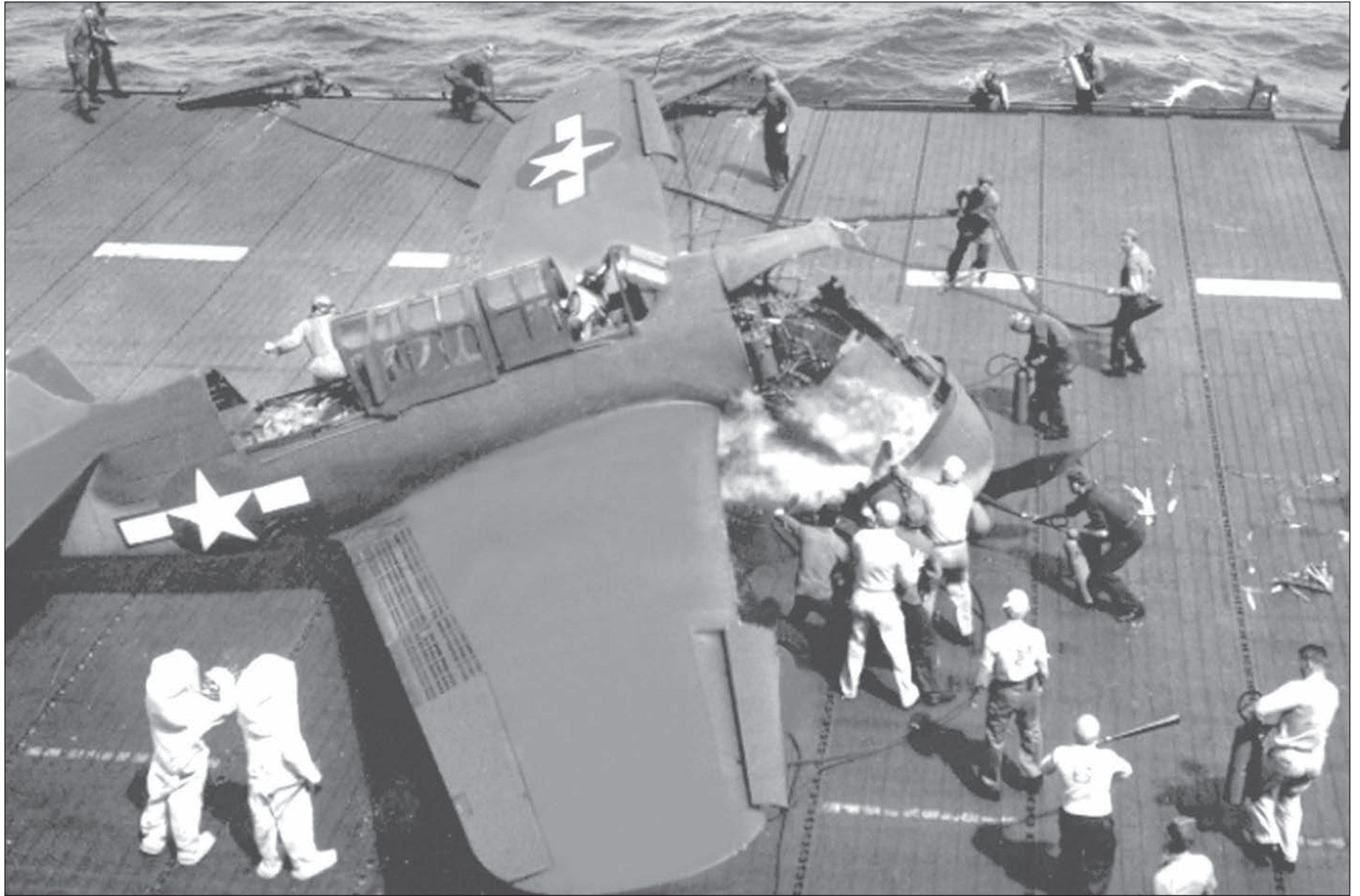
not know what is and what is not proper under given circumstances. When in Rome do as the Romans do (unless the "Romans" are uncouth vulgarians. Most people try to dress to the occasion (except those above "Romans"). We're not talking about over-the-top respectability here; we're talking about free-spirits within the parameters of what we'll call good breeding. There might be a mistaken idea that overly respectable people can not do anything worthwhile. Wrong! Those people ordinarily never generate any social friction and thus allow for progress unhindered by "issues". There are those who like to make "statements" by their behavior. If this doesn't offend the normal person, that's fine. Otherwise, wise up. The point of respectability is to not offend others by offensive actions and conduct. Is this asking too much? Save your shenanigans for your own home or club house. I suppose we'll always have those who want to thumb their nose at the "establishment". Tis a pity.



NO FIRE THIS TIME

The smoke from the engine is probably from the fire extinguisher being applied by the Airdale at the right. This is being done as a precautionary action, no doubt. There are two other fire extinguishers at the lower right, and another one straight above. After each crash that has no immediate fire, the fire extinguishers are always brought to bear. Once the fire is already big, these extinguishers are of little use, not the least of which reason is that you can't get close enough. Only a spray allows that. The SB2C has a habit of "losing its nose" after a crash, but that's only an observation. The maxim that "where there's smoke there's fire" is taken seriously. At every crash, as a minimum, there are several fire extinguisher bottles, to "nip in the bud" any possible outbreak of a fire. Notice the two asbestos-men to the left. And here, there is a good view of the Helldiver's wind-brakes (trailing edge of wing) and the lift-augmenting flaps on the leading edge of the wing (making the wind take a longer path over the wing than under the wing). The scene here perhaps looks haphazard. This is not so. These Airdales know what they are doing and they are doing it with dispatch, and if I may be so bold as to say, with professionalism. Perhaps it doesn't look pretty but it will be done and done expeditiously, as you would expect on a fleet carrier. Pride in "workmanship", if nothing else, is the driving force. The standards have been set high, the will to do the best they are able has been inculcated by experience if nothing else. There may be those who look upon this scene with condescension, with a superior attitude. They would be mistaken for these activities are "the real thing"; this is not a game, and again, time is of the essence in operating procedures on the flight deck during flight operations.

Condescension is a particularly odious trait that is unfortunately prevalent in society. "Looking down one's nose" is not a pretty sight, either visually or figuratively. To belittle someone is to open a Pandora's Box with no redeeming features. Instead of pushing someone down we should be helping them up. (clarifying, we should help them help themselves; permanent welfare makes one dependent, a most damaging and unhappy condition). [This is not to be construed as a political statement, merely as a "fact of life".] In addition, one who condescends is "looking downward, not upward" as in an affirmative style of life (though looking downward in a caring attitude must be part of one's make-up. (I hesitate to use the word "caring" because there are those who will jump all over that term as a reflect of "softness"; those people only show their ignorance, for a caring person is figuratively much stronger than one who isn't; the "macho man" syndrome has its place but it is actually a small niche.; now physical strength is another story and it has useful applications.)). On the other side of the coin, there are those who, inadvertently or otherwise, "dumb-down" society by shunning the well-established code of ethics that all societies require for a decent environment in which to live. Ethics is a code of conduct that over time has proven itself to account for a well-regulated society that leaves ample room for freedom of action (we of course have laws for the more fundamental restrictions that act as a shield to the innocent of society). These standards of conduct, appearance, intelligence downward tend to diminish the social fabric throughout. A sense of inertia takes hold and improvement wanes. Now society must "carry" the "dumbed-down".



WHERE THERE'S SMOKE THERE'S FIRE

It's hard to tell whether the smoke is from the fire extinguishers, or from an incipient internal fire. In any case, look how far the hoses must be extended. As was mentioned before, since most all the Airdales are congregated by the island, they use the hoses that are sourced there. The

hose in the center is turned on, and doesn't have an applicator-pole. Also note that there are no aircraft to be seen. The landing pattern is far to the right, or just to the left maybe 500 yards on the starboard side at 1,000 feet.

As you might expect these occasions are not orchestrated, they are not scripted (as is so much in our society). There's a job to be done, so do it and don't complain. No one ever received preferential treatment in fulfilling his job on the flight deck. [As has been said elsewhere in this book the Airdales were at the bottom of the totem pole; they were the least of the many on board ship because their job was the most menial. Yet they were never singled out for deferential/preferential treatment because they were "put upon and things had to be equalized" to redress their lower status. "Airdales were not accorded the favor of going to the head of the chow-line because they had it harder than anyone else". No no, this was the navy and the navy wasn't going to give the Airdales any advantages over others because they had tough times day after day on the flight deck or because they were low down on the ladder of skills. No special advantages for the Airdales were forthcoming because they were in a lowly position and needed special attention. Certainly not, and why should they,

pray tell? Their lot was established and they did their best as best they could without burdening others with what "should be". This was precisely as it should have been. Furthermore, there was never any consideration of redistribution of advantages to compensate for their "lowly condition". Not in this navy and hopefully not in society either where we MUST learn to stand on our own two feet (as long as we are not infirm, etc.). The best way to "equalize" society is clearly to expand the economy (goods and services and the attendant jobs.] We've gone a little astray here but it's deemed important (and necessary) because life will never be equal: the Airdales will always be at the bottom unless and until they move up on their own recognizance. If Airdales have no special advantages why should others be so favored? Each individual is primarily responsible for his own station in life (other than the infirm and the like). If the young Airdales can do it so can the adult citizen. Where's your pride? Where's your gump-tion? Do NOT depend on others!



AIRDALES WORKING TOGETHER

The fire from this (unseen) aircraft has spread with the flowing gasoline. I like this (silhouette) picture because everyone seems to be involved. Notice that each hose is manned by several Airdales. Those full hoses are too heavy for one person to handle alone. Again, quick action is required so as not to let things get out of hand. This seems to be primarily a deck fire because all the Airdales are congregated on this side of the fire. It also looks like some gasoline has spread to the 20-mm gun platform. One gets a good idea of the aft elevator (outlined by the sun's back lighting). (An effective picture, despite the circumstances.) As long as the fire burns the men and the ship are in jeopardy and they fight the fire with determination. Because it's so important I'll make this point again: most adults have a genuine concern for the welfare (non-political) of others in dire straits. (Unfortunately, there are adults who have the thought-processes of adolescents, they who are motivated by the exigencies of the emotions, male or female, rather than the rational and considered deliberations of those who are educated beyond the eighteenth year. The former want the result they want rather than the result as prescribed by rational reasoning.) A mature adult is thoughtful and hopefully understanding. [It must be said here that hope can be ardent or no, but what can certainly be said about it is that it is passive. On the other hand, an optimistic attitude tends to accommodate an active response to situations: hope is fine, positivism is better.] Yes, consideration and concern are fairly universal human traits and these paradoxically are prevalent in war (this is no brief for that insanity called war). Also, how can one help but feel sympathetic toward those full of anxieties? With difficulty. However, don't let these

sympathies impede a person's transition from dependence to independence, the sine qua non of satisfaction. Instead, help them to help themselves. One caveat: be careful of dispensing kindnesses, admirable as that may be, because there are those who resist kindnesses for the "simple" reason that they will then feel obligated to the giver: they even abhor being beholden. The better one knows another the easier it is to evaluate the situation. I would suppose that the same applies to the "kindness" of loving another (only here the emotions are perhaps more vehement). Understanding these situations is not a sometime-thing. In fact it may require a superb sensibility acquired only over a period of years. Not to be discouraged, one need only to keep a mind open to being able to "walk in another's moccasins". Strangely, this requires both introversion and extroversion. Whatever "version" you use, don't let its capability atrophy (would you let your body atrophy?). Part of the problem is that we don't allow ourselves, or have enough of, "down-time". I would suggest that one-half hour before falling off to sleep be devoted to just such ruminations. You then are able to "sleep on it" Trivial but true and the "empathy-muscles" can be developed (as you sleep). (Empathy is the emotional and intellectual identification with another; you "feel his pain", not to be scoffed at by the smart-alecks. [Actually, there are many too many smart-alecks (who are probably so because of an inadequacy of some sort.) Finally, it can be stated that no man should impose himself on those not so disposed. I've always known this even though I've also been so "advised". One final note: one is happy if and when the one you care about is happy. OBVIOUSLY.



JOB WELL DONE

This is another interesting picture, one that shows many onlookers. This isn't a scene of General Quarters action because no one is wearing a (steel) helmet and there wouldn't (probably) be so many people on the

flight deck. To be honest, it's difficult to interpret this picture since the F4U is sitting there by itself. However, the backlighting made this picture such an effective one that I had to include it.

A stark picture indeed for a grim reality perceived. On the deck it's not so much perceived as felt. Those Airdales down there have done this drill before, probably to the point that it all becomes automatic. However, putting out fires consisting of combustibles such as high-octane aviation gasoline can never become routine. At least they don't have to evaluate what are the priorities. In fact there is only one priority: PUT OUT THE FIRE! A ship at sea becomes very vulnerable, to the point that one almost literally is "caught between the devil and the deep blue sea". We at home don't have it so "simple": we have to prioritize our lives and our responsibilities. In effect when we do so we're putting our lives in order (a high priority in itself). We might start by developing and firming up our work ethic (which absolutely involves making real quality time for homework). You can be sure that those young Airdales and others in the picture have honed their work ethic, so why in the world can't you? Just as it's a mistake to cater to one group over another so too is it a mistake to favor the easy over the

difficult (it's almost as bad as the government choosing, and then making, winners and losers). This is where responsibility comes into play: It's irresponsible to do the easy trivial task as against the difficult important job. (Unfortunately, "job" seems to be a pejorative word to the young.) When I was young I remember my father telling me I was to rake the yard of leaves. I grumbled, as youth are wont to do when "put upon" because the other guys were going to play football and I wanted to join in the fun. In a repressed snit I did as I was told; I raked the leaves with a vim and a vigor so that I could maybe catch part of the game being played nearby. Mind you, I did a very good job of it; there was "not a leave" to be found by the time I finished the job. My father came out to look the yard over and then told me it was a job well done. I must tell you I was inwardly pleased as punch, not just because he praised me (that counted) but also because I HAD done a good job. Do yourself a favor: Get the enjoyment of doing hard work well. You'll be glad you did.



THERE'S NO REST FOR THE WEARY

These hoses are applying foam to the fire, and apparently very effectively. Notice the yellow-shirts also manning a hose. The fire extinguisher in the foreground was either used up, or not powerful enough. It looks like this fire was put out quickly. Also note that everyone was involved here. This is very typical. Also note that a hose has to be manned by several Airdales. It isn't that they're weaklings, but rather that the water-pressure in the hose, and at the nozzle, is so strong that a very strong man would be required if he did it alone. Otherwise, the hose-nozzle would have "a mind of its own". The best way to handle these fires is to attack it very quickly, before it gets the upper hand. Do as was done here: overwhelm the fire at first impact plus a hand-full of seconds (NOT minutes).

No, there's no rest for the weary when there's a fire on the flight deck during flight operations. Putting out a fire on the flight deck is a high-visibility job, one in which there is zero-tolerance for failing to do so. It is there for all to see (whether it has been done). The accountability is stark

and the ambiguity is nil. The result tells the tale; the result must be fire-out. Accountability refers to an assigned job being accomplished with a prescribed result and without the requirement of monitoring. In other words, the job-doer is presumed to be a grown-up. I recall well my father letting me know in no uncertain terms if I didn't complete a job (rake the leaves) or if I didn't do the job well (he had a drill sergeant's voice if needed). In effect, I had a "contract" to fulfill (though I didn't get paid; why should I? I lived there and so deserved no special treatment.) I had to learn to be accountable. Dependability is an integral part of accountability. The world would grind to a halt without accountability (which certainly encompasses those who attend school and do home-work). The most stringent form of accountability is the unmonitored type. It is here that the men are separated from the boys. And it is here that the boys should be "kept after school". (It seems that the girls have no need for staying after school. Kudos to them. Well done.)

A big bird, a big mess. There was no fire to speak of so the "man in white" did not have to make a rescue. This Helldiver was preceded by an aircraft called the Dauntless. There was a carrier, maybe this one, called the Intrepid. These Airdales at times had to be both undaunted and intrepid in their duties of fighting fires, whether caused by crashes as here or bombs as found in Chapter 8. They also had to be resolute and resourceful at these times of stress. They were, after all, mere youth just out of high school and still wondering what it was all about. Are you resolute in your activities, whether for fun or for work? Perhaps you have no need, now, for resourcefulness and dauntlessness and intrepidity but who knows about your future? Remember, what these young

Airdales do is there for all to see. Whether they perform with steadfastness or not can not be hidden from view, and there are no crowds to cheer them on as is done now for absolutely trivial things. I know I'm perhaps a party of one in thinking that there is so much blatant cheering done in our society that it has been reduced to irrelevance. To my way of thinking here again something has been almost completely devalued in mindless cheering. Sure, cheer for the home team when a batter hits a home-run or a tailback weaves his way down field for a long gain but please, not for mediocrity. If done, the value of applause has been reduced. We must learn how to evaluate and value things and actions properly.



RUPTURED FUEL TANK CAUSES FIRE

It looks like the auxiliary gasoline tank detached from this F4U caused external fires (see oblong object in front of the F4U), but not before having pretty much destroyed the F4U. This is a pretty typical scene, and a good portrayal of what happens in response to a fire (if you will, a mishap). Again, all hands are involved. This is good: the stalwart Airdales are doing their duty with dispatch and vigor with, again, little regard for the hazards imposed each time fire and the unexpected assault them at crashes' end. It's their duty, it's their job. Where once was the splendor of an aircraft beautiful is now a hulk, burned to dismissal. Similarly, at times it seems that when I attempt to consider the "nuances and niceties" of life there intrudes the crudities and obscenities of vulgarism. (which have absolutely nothing to do with "manliness"; a truly manly person is a gentleman in both deed and thought as were the fabled Knights of the Round Table of King Arthur's Court where daring deeds and chivalry held sway; no "wimps" they). It's almost as if one

is trying diligently to paint a landscape containing the etched, filigreed branches of a "winterscape" at sunset when someone comes, with a broad-brush, to smears and splatters all kinds of garish strokes on the other side of the painting.. If one were of a mind, one could rationalize by saying the broad-brush serves to augment the filigree by contrast. (personally, I'd nix that idea.). One could also say it emphasizes the optimizing vs. the depressing, the uplifting of culture vs. the "dumbing-down" of culture. Yet we should still hope for the best (even though I previously said to hope is to be static). I can also say that those without hope of a better life to come have become marginalized even while feeling that often the world "out there" is in many ways but paper-mache. However, such pessimism is tantamount to taking the path to futility, a very bad idea. One good idea would be to marginalize all those who deliberately try to irritate others. Perhaps they're just plain mean-minded. Certainly, they're a large block of inertia on society.

Even the strong and powerful can be rendered helpless. This is a rather ignominious conclusion to a proud warrior. Is there a lesson here? "The meek shall inherit the earth"? I would not subscribe to such a question because only the strong can create the wealth needed to make the meek viable. (I have nothing against the meek. In fact, it's probably the meek who make the rest of us understand what is worthwhile in life.) The strength of which I'm thinking is that strength which allows us to persevere against that difficult math problem or to design that bridge that takes us to where we want to go and the like. An added advantage of the difficult is the joy we receive in overcoming it (how many times

have I said this. If not many then I've thought it many times.) One might say, "Why should I persevere? " It's been said that anyone who does the same thing over and over and still gets the same undesired result is not very smart. True, but perseverance does not imply the preceding. Perseverance means to continue to try over and over but implicit in this is the presumption of trying different approaches if good results are not forthcoming. The object of course is to not become so discouraged that you give up. "No body likes a quitter". I don't know who made that unkind remark but it must be acknowledged that there is merit in the concept of perseverance. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again".



QUICK RESPONSE

This aircraft has just landed, as can be seen by the lowered wing-flaps. What caused the debris is not clear. But the picture does show a disaster of some sort and the response to this disaster. The aircraft doesn't seem to have suffered any great damage, but perhaps it is the engine of the destruction, such as having run into another aircraft. Personally, I admire that lone "fireman" doing what has to be done. He sees the job, and then he does it. That's my kind of person. It can also be seen that he's wearing a steel helmet, which implies that what has happened has happened due to enemy action. The debris covering the lower part of the picture also implies enemy action. (By "sitting" on the hose, that Airdale is able to handle it by himself, apropos to what was said on the previous page. But also, why a single, lone "fireman"? I don't know.) The next to last segment of the video series "Victory at Sea" ("Micronesia") included a portion devoted to an aircraft such as this one. It so happened that the rear gunner, top, had his head literally detached from his body by enemy

gun-fire. This appalling occurrence caused the decision to be made that he would not be removed from the aircraft. Instead, the aircraft would be his coffin. They covered him over in deference to his condition and before pushing the aircraft over the side of the ship to a watery grave, the chaplain reverentially gave the following prayer as dramatically intoned, partially, by the narrator: "..... and may this sailor find repose within the plane in which he gave his life that that we might live. Into Thy Hands, Oh Lord, we commend the soul of Thy servant departed, now called into eternal rest and we commit his body to the deep. Amen". A gun salute was then sounded and the Airdales, with deliberation, pushed the Avenger overboard. The prayer was presented in measured tones of finality, as was done many other times such as during the two and one-half months of the Okinawa campaign from April 1, 1945 to June 21, 1945. "The Fleet That Came To Stay" is depicted in the final segment of the series "Victory at Sea". View it.

The Airdale to the right is kneeling down to more easily hold the hose which is producing a high pressure stream of water. Usually there are at least two Airdales per hose to control this pressure. To be honest I wonder at the dearth of Airdales. Yet hold on he does, hold on he must. This brings to mind those lines from the poem "IF" which says in part: ".....If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew, To serve your turn long after they are gone, And so hold on when there is nothing in you, Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!" (see this entire, monumental poem on page 743). Again we're talking about perseverance, in a most inspiring way. It's too easy to say "Hold on!" to someone who's on

the edge. Again, we should do more than just say "hold on!". We should do more than just empathize with someone. We should do our level best to understand the situation so as to render aid and abetment. If nothing else, understanding another's plight is a form of moral support, truly valuable. However, the poem referred to above deals primarily with holding onto to your values and principles and standards. These after all are what define you and make you the person you are. It's what others find laudable about you. It's what brings others to you. However, you must first establish those values, principles and standards as you grow and mature and solidify your persona and your good name.



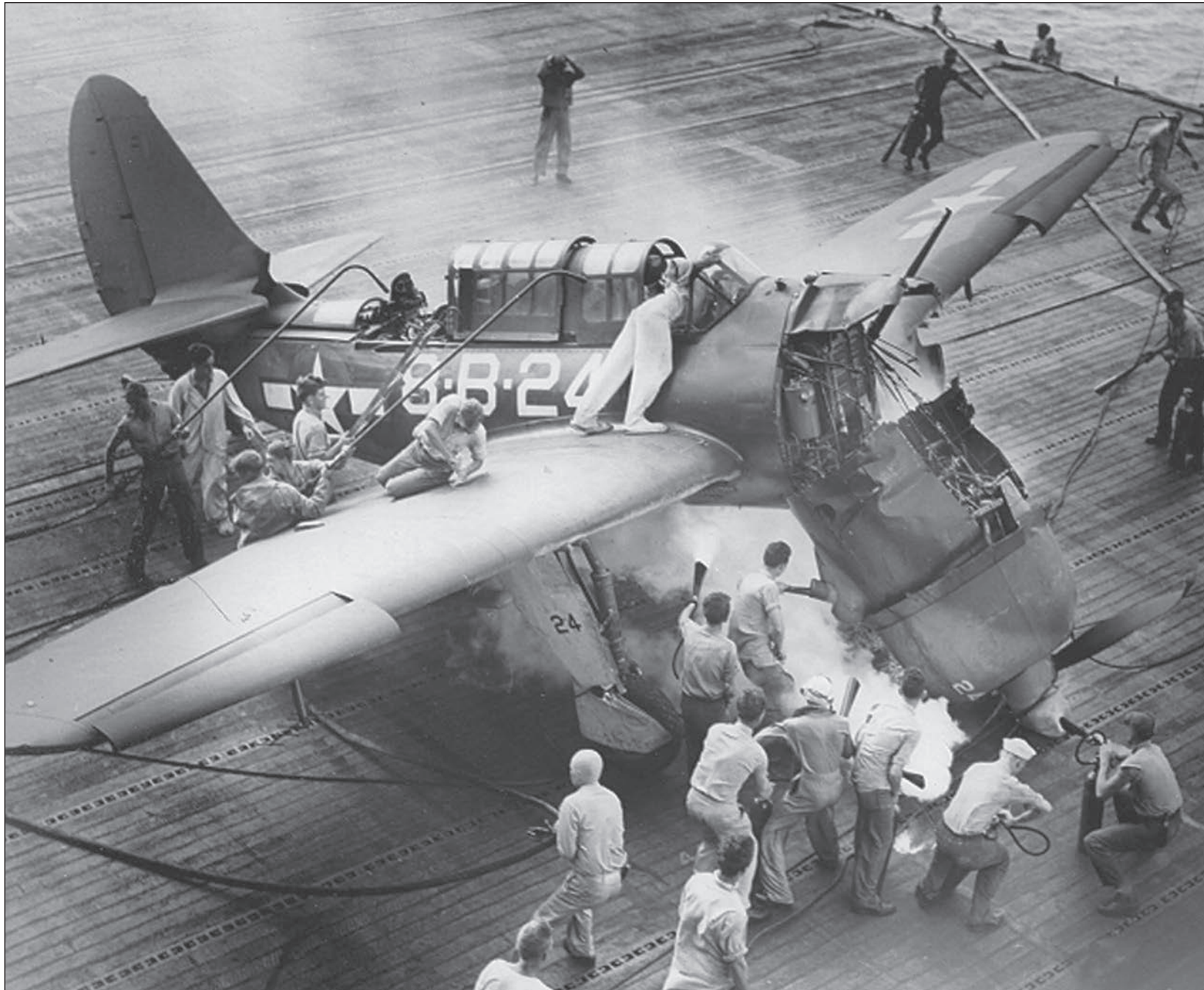
“ALL HANDS, TURN TO!”

You see it all here: the man in the asbestos suit doing his assigned job, Airdales with fire extinguishers doing their job, as are those with the hose spray-applicators. Probably that smoke is from the fire extinguishers. Fortunately, not that many landings finish like this. Again, since the wheels and struts are intact, it will be easier to remove the plane. The nose of the plane will be put on a dolly and it'll be pushed out of the way so that landings can continue. And again, there's that SB2C with that drooped nose. That man on the wing is unscrewing a panel on the wing; to what effect, I don't know. Here too, all hands are doing their part. That's good. As they say, accidents will happen, especially when high-powered aircraft, weighing up to 12,000 pounds, try to set down on an area 50 yards long by 25 yards wide (especially when the ship is pitching and rolling and heaving, all at the same time). As has been said, the pilots say that any landing you walk away from is a good landing (with exceptions by the Air Officer even though he was once a pilot (it's

called different perspectives)). At any rate, perhaps the pilot of this aircraft does feel sorry for himself (and who are we to deny him this?) However, as a policy it does little or no good to feel sorry for yourself except and unless it stimulates you to action and/or improvement. [You'll find that feeling sorry for yourself will elicit little if any sympathy from most others because everyone "has their own problems" and most everyone is primarily self-absorbed..] Again, feeling sorry for yourself saps you of a clear head and a vigorous outlook. To say that it's negative is an understatement. There are those who believe a little black cloud follows them wherever they go. Granting them this, sulking won't dispel those clouds. A better approach, if not the best one, is to become angry with the situation and in effect take hold of the situation (I was going to say, "Get mad" and a little of this will be beneficial because it'll energize you, if nothing else. The point to be made is: "take the bull by the horns" and confront the situation actively/smarty.

There's no need for the "man in the white suit" because the fire was of minimal proportions. (Now that's a good word: "proportion", as in "everything in proportion" and in balance and in moderation; all are valuable concepts.) When conditions warrant, when the fire rages, the man in white is extraordinarily necessary and worthwhile. This too can be a very useful word, for what really is it that is worthwhile. There'll probably be as many answers as there are people answering. For instance, I believe this book is worthwhile whereas it has been made abundantly clear that no one else has placed any value at all on it, after seven years. That's alright, I guess, because all who have seen it are expressing their opinions as to what is and

what is not worthwhile. The word itself explains itself: what is worth your while, your time, your attention? In large measure this is based on your experiences, your priorities, your values and principles, etc. For instance, the mood right now seems to be radically against anything that has to do with war and this is a "war book" (unless one takes the time to actually find out of what it concerns (which is not about war per se). Is it worth while to view a nonsensical movie? Is it worthwhile to attend a football game? Is it worthwhile to provide aid to those in need? Is it worthwhile to read? Is it worthwhile to do your homework? Do you even know what is worthwhile?? Perhaps it would be well to take a serious inventory of what is worthwhile.



FIRE'S A REAL DANGER HERE

It seems like only fire extinguishers are used here which is unusual considering the extent of the damage. This aircraft will be jettisoned over the side in short order after whatever can be salvaged is salvaged. There appears to be someone hurt at the lower right. It could well be the pilot, but if that were so there'd be medics around him. During landing operations there are always medics standing by the island structure. (That white "smoke" to the left is actually produced from the fire extinguishers, but nevertheless, it's unusual that no hoses or foam were required for such a crash.) Some crashes are worse than others: some look as if they'll be benign and turn out badly while others are just the reverse. There's no such thing as a sure thing on an active flight deck. The adventurous would have it no other way while we rational ones look to sanity. It would seem as if it comes down to what one values.(which in turn tells us a great deal about who we are; that is, we are in large measure defined by the values we embrace). Beyond that, why do we value what we value?

This says even more about us. Most of us value integrity but why specifically do you value it? Can you verbalize lucidly the reasons? Sloppy thinking will not do here; precision of the meaning of language is a must. [Why do we spend so many years in school studying the English language?] Often this is where the "nuances and niceties" enter the picture. Many an argument founders on the lack of precision in expressing ourselves. Not only our values define us but also the emphasis we put on particular values sharpens the picture. Sloppy speech reflects sloppy thinking which in turn diminishes ones impression on others. I would suppose that those who act as translators between nations have an enormous responsibility to convey accurately the thoughts and ideas of the two representatives of the two countries. On proper interpretation of speech hinges the destiny of nations (wouldn't you say?). Values matter and the proper understanding of those values one person to the other can determine their relationship, one to the other.

Irretrievably broken and soon to receive the "deep six" burial (in which the Airdales push it over the side). This is not a trivial job. A mobile derrick has to lift it onto a dolly so that Airdales can push it to the deck edge elevator from where it's pushed overboard. In the meantime there are aircraft circling overhead awaiting a clear deck. "Turn to !" Airdales. This is an extreme example of "rejection and exclusion". There are too many people who have a "holier than thou" attitude in which they exclude others who do not meet their particular requirements. Yet why care about being excluded by a snob? To arbitrarily exclude someone(s) can have

the effect of mental cruelty. To exclude others based on no legitimate cause is just a passive form of bullying. Apparently bullies are incapable of feeling another's pain (could it be because they had previously felt the strong sting of someone else's snobbery?). This circular state of affairs must be broken. Why aren't you the one to do it? One possible reason is that you, like so many others, are thoughtless and/or don't understand that you're not the only one who deserves recognition. Giving others a cold-shoulder perhaps makes you feel better but have you tried to "walk in someone else's moccasins"? Try it.



THE FIRE'S OUT

This aircraft obviously was a “bouncer” that probably hit the island. This meant that the Airdales in the area had to do a lot of scrambling. And there weren't too many places to which to scramble. There were five hatchways (doors) into the island and a little space up forward of the island. But nevertheless, they had little time in which to do this scrambling. As mentioned earlier, the aircraft are going 60 mph and their path can be erratic. (I was always paying attention; no idle chatter during landing operations.) Notice that the hoses were brought from the port side of the ship. This is because those on the starboard side were probably unavailable due to the location of the crash. Apparently, the fire's all out, and now it's clean-up time. Since this crash happened so far up the flight deck, landing operations could start up very quickly. Some of us liked to stand near the landing-zone during landing operations (to pick up the aircraft, wheelchock in hand, right away) while others preferred to stand next to the island structure as here (to pick up the aircraft as they

taxied forward to their parking spot). Those in the latter case were in harm's way as the aircraft jumped the barriers and caused casualties among those there standing. However, if they were alert (and alertness was the watch-word on the flight deck at ALL times) they could have cleared the area before havoc was spread. A person's preferences and likes has an influence not only on his welfare but also, as here, his likes go a long way toward identifying what type person he is (just as do one's values). If you like violent activities (boxing, car racing, etc.) are you then a violent person? If you like loud music are you then a loud (and showy) person? Do you like vivid colors or subdued colors? Likes define one's personality but does it also reflect one's character? Consider also what makes one laugh. Does slap-stick comedy (?) tickle your funny-bone? How about double-entendre? This takes us into somewhat obscure territory but it also is a valid subject for evaluation (if one is disposed to taking the time to do so). Introspection helps.

The wreck's gone but the “melody lingers”: the damage to the superstructure remains. After a cursory cleanup the landing action must continue. Since most of the brown-shirt plane-captains congregate around the base of the superstructure during landing operations the loss of life of that division was probably great. However, “the show must go on”. While the plane-captains aren't necessary for the landing operation they are necessary for the launch operation. Therefore they'll need to double up during launch-time. (The plane-captains are necessary to assure that the aircraft are in ship-shape.) Some things are necessary in life and some things are not necessary. Some things are more necessary

than other things. It takes intelligence to know the differences between these things. To do so can make the difference between a gain or a lose (and I'm NOT talking about the stock market). Is it really necessary to have that expensive car when there are those things that are, in the last analysis, of more lasting importance. I don't mean to be preaching a hierarchy of the most important things in life but wouldn't a life insurance policy trump that expensive car as an example of making the RIGHT choices. Yes, it's intelligence again that comes to the fore. And where does this intelligence come from? Right. Learning and a well developed sense of prudence. Learn, learn, learn.



A BOUNCER CAUSED THIS

Either this picture shows the results of enemy action (the final chapter) or it's a case of a "bouncer" gone wild. I've chosen the latter situation because it's just as applicable as the former possibility. For one thing, I don't see any guns shooting, and for another reason it appears that that F6F to the left was in the process of taxiing forward. Another possibility could be that a plane brought back a bomb(s) that couldn't be released, and it, or a rocket went off when the aircraft impacted the deck. Errant bombs and rockets have a way of detonating when brought back to the carrier. After all, they're armed. But I claim no expertise about bombs and rockets. It's a fact though that pilots try to dispose of their bombs and rockets before landing on the carrier, if possible, because they can cause problems on touchdown. Again, this painting-effect makes this picture more evocative. As a matter of fact this destruction occurred on the Enterprise due to enemy action. I included it in this chapter (instead of the final chapter) because a bounding aircraft could have indeed

caused the scene seen here. Destruction is destruction, no matter how it was caused, either by enemy action or by "friendly fire", either by physical impact or by mental assault. For instance, how does this devastation, shown opposite, differ from having someone discarded, made worthless and rendered hopeless and helpless, encapsulating a lifetime? While the former is physical the latter is mental and thus can last indefinitely. So which one is the worse? Both represent man's inhumanity to man. And it could be argued that they both reflect what is popularly called mental illness. This is out of my ken even while I briefly discuss it. To my way of thinking, a physical mental illness is a real problem but the "other kind" of mental illness is a problem that should not be. The human spirit would seem to be very resilient and after taking the mental blows, restoration and rejuvenation should take hold as an expression of the will to live. Easy to tap out on a keyboard but also worthy of consideration. Most of us will strive to reaffirm life.

A grim scene, this, all smoke and Airdales enmeshed in the job at hand. This is no time to count your loses. This is no time to figure out what went wrong This is the time to act decisively because here time is of the essence.: There are those overhead who need a safe haven down below. To be sure, it's time for the Airdales to reorder the disorder on deck into order. This is also often necessary in life. A great deal of wasted effort can be obviated by having a well regulated life-style, for instance. Another example can be found in an orderly, logical thinking process (yes, it's true that creativity can best be sought and served by taking paths less well trod, and the like, but we're only

considering the orderly here). An orderly mind has a real advantage over one with a disordered jumble of incoherent ideas. In the field of engineering order is almost synonymous with stability. Without stability machines would tear themselves apart. In fact the human body is a marvel of many interacting systems that depend, one on the other, on their orderly, stable activity. Study habits are much more effective when maintained in an orderly manner. Knowledge stored in one's brain is only useful if orderly. In fact, knowledge can be much more easily grasped and retained if it is stored in an orderly fashion. Do yourself a favor; put yourself in order.



AFTERTHOUGHTS: TRUSTWORTHINESS. Friendships are based on a shared “openness,” an openness that has no bounds. There’s an underlying feeling of sharing one’s most fundamental feelings and thoughts without concern about how these will be accepted. Even disagreements are part of the closeness one feels toward a friend. Disagreements are not really that but rather merely an expression of closeness in that disagreements are part of the friendship. One does not need to “be on one’s guard” about disagreements (although disagreements are few). In a way disagreements are merely an occasion to bring each other closer together. Friends can share thoughts unencumbered by doubts about acceptance.

This leads to the original topic of “Trust.” The above implies that a friend can be trusted to be what he/she embodies. Trust is, or needs to be, the “coin of the realm.” Without trust there can be little of value in terms of interrelationships. In dire circumstances we all require at least the feelings of “trust.” Without trust one can find oneself “high and dry” vis-a-vis a given situation. What ever happened to the saying, “My word (assuredly) is my bond?” A lack of trust can have deleterious, harmful effects not only on relationships but also on outcomes of every color. Trust is the “mother’s milk” of any functional society. There’s a correlation between trust and honesty/integrity. Without the latter there would be no former. “Honor” is a word bandied about now and then in terms of achievements scholastically and otherwise. However, its most useful meaning is the expectation of being true to one’s word. (The military, for good reason, places “Honor” high on its list: The Navy motto is “Honor, Commitment, Courage.”)

The above thoughts are to serve as the starting point for the reader to elucidate his/her own thoughts on the subjects of Friendship, Trust, Honesty, and Honor.

AFTERTHOUGHTS: EMPATHY. Empathy knows no border. It resides in every corner of the world (as it should). It is of course that emotion that one feels for others, usually those in distress. It seems to be a natural emotion, almost as if we were born with it. The world would be a very inhospitable place without it. It causes us to be “human,” as in a common humanity. Usually it concerns those in distress and in dire need of help. This is certainly all to the good for society in general. Without it society would be dysfunctional. But it’s too bad that there are those who are more concerned about what they consider overriding circumstances (such as being reelected).

Thus, while I have said that I do not want to interject politics in this book I find myself being drawn into it (this once). To wit, there are those who are disturbed by the nation’s inequity vis-a-vis the income disparity of the nation. First, this is to be expected in any society: Some are more capable than others for whatever reason. Society profits from their expertise and rewards them for services. This is right. Others have no such skills and so are not rewarded nearly as much. This also is right. The problem arises though that the disparity in many cases is far too great. People EMPATHIZE with this situation. This is also right. (I personally hold that society is best in which the financial disparity is not all too large. But what’s too large?) Thus they believe that society (the taxed) must fess up some of their hard earned money to support “those slackers.” (This in turn can be a very unfair attitude. Such is life.) But the point is well taken. If the hard workers must support the “slackers” animosities arise. This is not good. It is also NOT good that making able-bodied people DEPENDENT by giving them money. It’s a bad idea. What if Congress, in its political wisdom, decides their pet project (for reelection) is more important than donating money? Here is a “corollary”: Making people dependent is cruel and unusual punishment. Yes, ALTRUISM is a good and even noble thing (that makes one feel good about oneself). But be careful about that which you ask: It could well make the situation worse than what preexisted. Life is “funny” that way. Be aware. (The solution of course is a strong economy.)

PARKING

There are no doubt those who would ask, “What’s the ‘big deal?’” about parking an aircraft. Well, it was this activity that was the most worrisome to me, in large part because your well being was entirely dependent on two other people, the pilot and the yellow-shirted aircraft director. (More later.) When an aircraft parks, it’s under its own power, i.e., it uses the motive power of its propeller to go from point to point. This of course puts anyone and anything in front of it in immediate jeopardy. And of course, anyone behind it and its full-power prop-wash, is under duress of being forced to go where he again is in jeopardy: another whirling propeller. It’s definitely “heads-up time.” The force of the wind of a revved up engine produces an almost irresistible force. A hurricane comes to mind.

But to the beginning: after an aircraft has landed and the barriers have been lowered, it applies full power to its engine so as to move out of the landing area as quickly as possible. (Recall that aircraft land at 20-second intervals.) As the aircraft taxis forward, an Airdale, with a wheelchock in hand, runs along side the aircraft’s wheel. Perhaps a better description is that he grabs hold of the wheel-strut and is dragged along. If you don’t do this, you’ll have a very hard time staying up with the taxiing aircraft, because of the hurricane-like winds you’re trying to run into. A taxiing aircraft must always be escorted by an Airdale carrying a wheelchock. If there’s an emergency, he must be there to chock the wheel.

As the aircraft is “handed over” from yellow-shirt to yellow-shirt, the pilot is in their control. As the aircraft approaches the parked aircraft in front of it, it slows down, at the yellow-shirt’s direction. Now the aircraft

must be maneuvered. To accomplish this, the yellow-shirt might, for instance, hold out his left arm, with a fist (“apply right brake”) and give the “come on” motion with his right hand. This pivots the aircraft to the right. Thus, using hand-signals, the aircraft is “coaxed” toward its parking space. This means bringing it very close to the aircraft beside it, and VERY close to the one in front of it. This is the dicey part, the part where your well being is dependent on two strangers, the pilot and the yellow-shirt. In practice, the aircraft “lurches” forward as the pilot alternately applies full power to the engine, and then the brakes. And so it goes until the propeller finally “creeps” forward the last few, literally, inches, to within a foot or LESS, of the tail of the aircraft in front of it. Keep in mind that aircraft are landing at 20-second intervals, so time is of the essence. But to hurry too much could mean the aircraft’s propeller might lurch forward too far before the pilot could apply the brakes, thus “chewing up” the tail of the aircraft in front of it, spewing shrapnel in the process. (We had some deaths due to this. This was my greatest worry.) I will say, it was at first agonizing to watch the propeller creep closer and closer to the aircraft in front of it. But after a while, fatigue produced fatalism.

One might wonder why it’s necessary to stand beside the wheel, wheelchock in hand, while this micro-parking was going on. The answer is that when the yellow-shirt gave the “cut engine” signal to the pilot, if the pilot forgot to set the brakes at that point, the aircraft would have rolled forward, causing it to “chew up” the aircraft in front of it. So the Airdale had to immediately, repeat, immediately chock the wheel to obviate the chance of this happening.

PARKING DUTIES

Here's a good overview of respotting the deck after launch operations. (The fact that the radio-masts, starboard side forward, are in a down position indicates that they were in a launch mode just previously.) These are aircraft that weren't launched, for whatever reason. They all now must be moved forward to make way for the just launched aircraft to land. Apparently every one of these aircraft are being pushed by Airdales, because there are no tractors in evidence. And they aren't taxiing under power (their engines aren't fired up) because if they were, each one of those planes would definitely be under the control of a yellow-shirt. So, it's the Airdales, using muscle-power to move the aircraft from back aft to up forward. Notice how close the forward aircraft are to the front lip of the flight deck. They have to pack the aircraft tightly to make room for the aircraft that are going to return aboard after their flight. These are all SB2Cs, and since we had twenty of them, only about seven of them are airborne. There are probably about five Airdales pushing each aircraft,

and with such a calm sea, there's no need to "push them uphill" as the ship pitches upward. Also, each aircraft has someone in the cockpit to apply the brakes. Here also this isn't that important with a calm sea. However, if the aircraft get a little momentum going, someone on the brakes is a must. Often, these are the brown-shirted plane-captains. Considering that an aircraft lands every 20 seconds, optimally, the activity up forward can not be (and is not) desultory, especially on a capital ship of the line. Laxness and lack of purpose on the flight deck during flight operations is a non sequitur (conclusion does not follow from the premise(s)). Alertness is not only the watch-word, it is by definition *de rigueur* (strictly required not only by fashion but also by efficacy, efficiency and every-day common sense). These very same comments can be made about what one does in the class-room. As has been said (often), time is of the essence here on the flight deck, and especially also in the class-room. Why in the world waste it?

There she goes steaming smartly over the bounding main in all her majesty, that magnificent Essex-class aircraft carrier. Think not of her mission (war), think rather of how well she does it. All looks serene and sharp from up here on high while down below is where we know not of all the sound and fury across her long and sturdy deck. Is this a phenomenon of the times: all is not what it seems? It's incumbent on everyone to be alert to the world around them. Even recognized professors have their biases. It could be that misinformation is inadvertent or it could be deliberate to take advantage of fools. Who wants to be a fool who's fooled (again)? Some things are patently false and then again some things require an inquisitive mind. If you're patriotic you'll

take it upon yourself to be well informed for there can be no real democracy in which the electorate is deliberately misled. True, there are those who couldn't care less about this, and they've in effect abdicated their responsibilities. [As an aside, I'd like to say that in my mind Kong Edward, of yore, abdicated in name only. If he honestly did not feel that he could do the job as well as it should be done, he was doing the honorable by abdicating (in my view, while others were vitriolic in the opposite opinion: easy for them to say so but when directly in the area, it is, as they say, "a whole new ballgame". There, I've interjected myself in an ancient, foreign controversy, and I'm glad I did it. He's been maligned enough.]



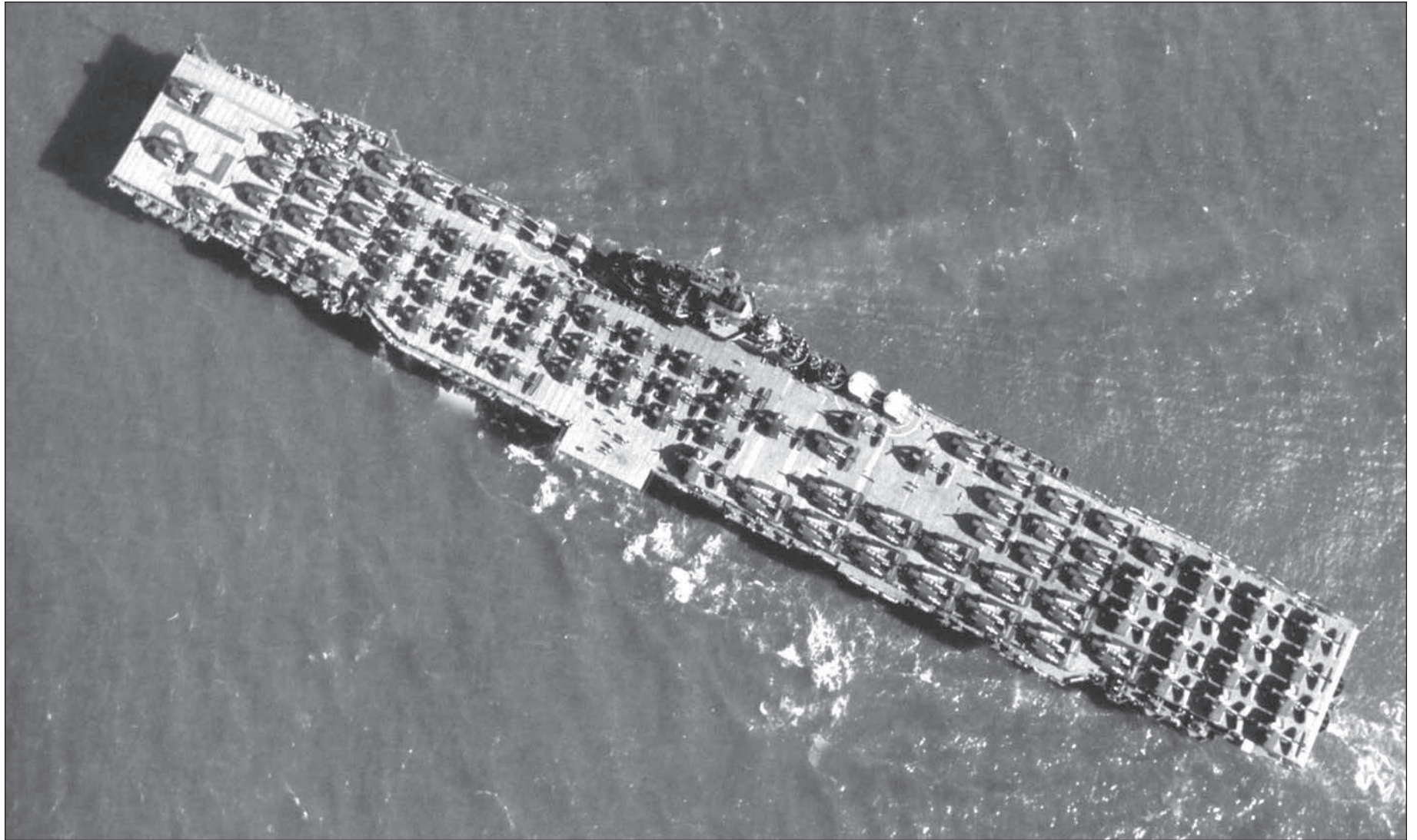
FULL HOUSE

By my count there are 89 aircraft on the flight deck as shown here. That means that there are 11 aircraft on the hanger deck (see a picture of the hanger deck in the “Flight Deck Activities” chapter). This is so because a typical Essex-class carrier carried 30 F6F Hellcat fighters, 30 F4U Corsair fighters, 20 SB2C Helldiver dive-bombers, and 20 TBM Avenger torpedo aircraft. The question arises “How can they launch aircraft from such a crowded deck?” The answer of course is that they made use of the two catapults on the forward part of the flight deck. This then meant that those aircraft up forward had to be moved. But where? Down below onto the hanger deck, using the forward, amidships, and aft elevators. That is, “Airdales turn to”. The hanger deck could hold almost half of what the flight deck could, so by judicious moves, the aircraft were “spotted” on the flight deck in preparation for a launch, moving some below , and some topside. The normal arrangement was to have the fighters up forward and the bombers back aft. But some aircraft had to undergo special attention. They were moved down below. This sort of constant rearrangement of the aircraft, twice a day, meant that there was “no rest for the weary”. Actually, that wasn’t entirely accurate, because when the aircraft were airborne, there were but a few left behind that needed attention. The flights were usually

several hour long, allowing some time for whatever other duties were required. But too soon back they came, one by one, every twenty seconds, with all their noisy “intrusions” demanding your attention (and vigilance), until all the ninety plus aircraft were on board. As the aircraft started to populate the forward part of the flight deck, some went directly to an elevator to the hanger deck. And so they came, 20 seconds by 20 seconds, allowing precious little time to be careful (enough) about packing the aircraft into as small a space as possible, without “chewing up” the aircraft in front of or next to it. Space was definitely at a premium on a carrier, and sometimes lack of it could be very costly in damaged aircraft, to say nothing of life and limb. But as has been said before, “Hey, it’s just another day at the office”. This probably sounds somewhat supercilious and cavalier but such an attitude stands one in good stead when it’s realized that this must go on again the next day and the next day and.....Thinking thus tends to diminish the sense of peril as you approach the parking spot, wheelchock in hand, and wonder on the conditions in which you find yourself: two essentially strangers will momentarily have your survivability in the hands of their acumen (this will be discussed anon in the next pages; if this sounds melodramatic, believe me, to me it was).

Same ship, different time-period. Have you ever seen something so neat? Now that’s a load! I count 91 aircraft on deck, leaving 9 down below on the hanger deck. If they packed them tightly with 6 fighters across the deck they could have them all top side. In a situation such as this the aircraft must be “man-handled” (tractors would not be able to be used and the Airdales would have their work cut out for them). They look like toys down there but be reminded that these aircraft range from 9,000 to 12,000 pounds each., unloaded of ordnance and gasoline. You’ll be relieved to

know that an aircraft can be catapulted from about 160 feet from the bow (after some of them have been relegated to the hanger deck). This is a picture of order and orderliness, traits that will serve everyone well. An orderly mind makes possible orderly thinking which in turn makes possible orderly conclusions. While those conclusions should ordinarily conform to the text book, do not be constrained from giving a certain amount of free rein to your thought processes. I would prescribe creativity under the sway of orderliness. What say thee?



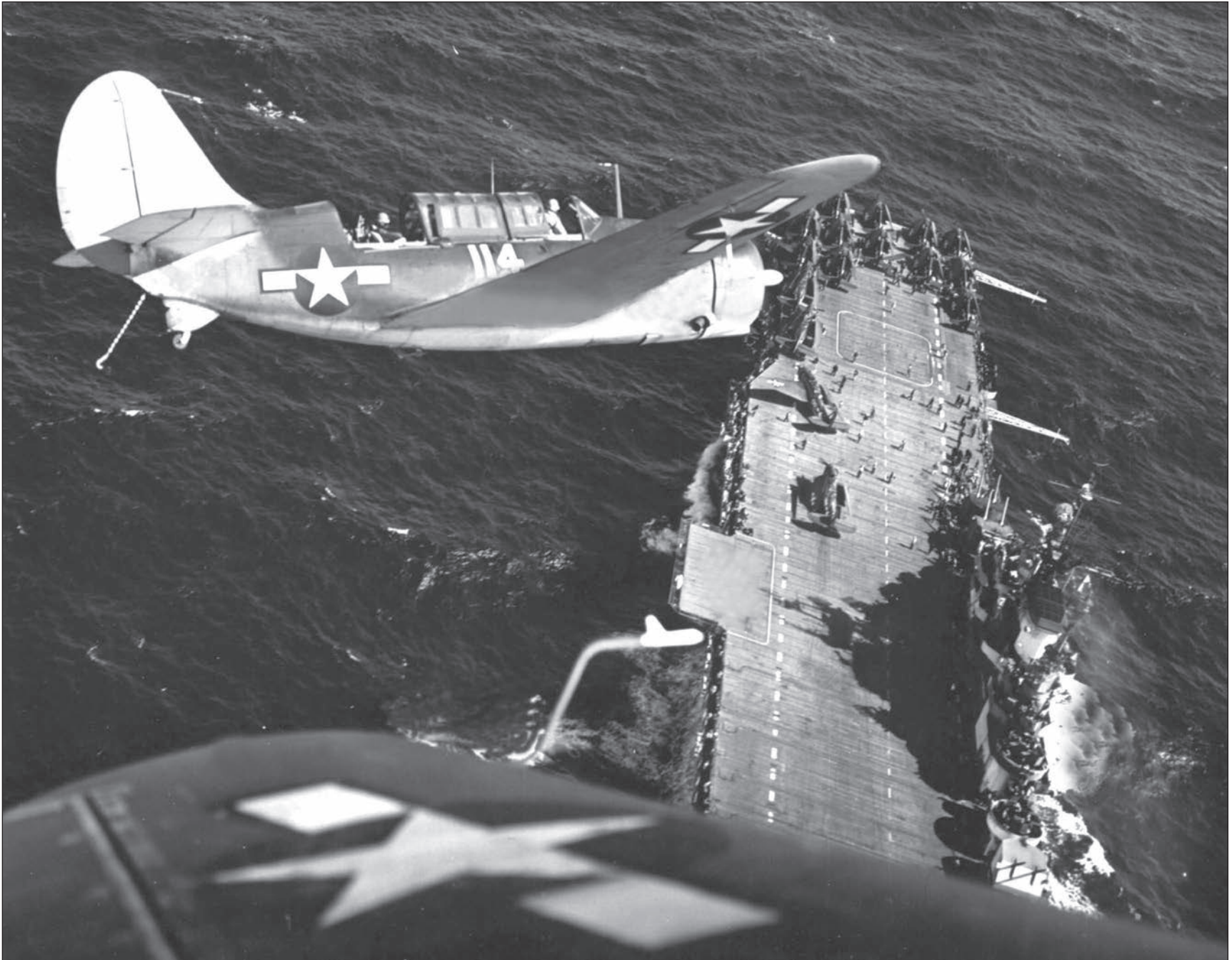
PARKING, FROM ABOVE

The next three pictures are essentially all the same photograph. We now start the actual parking process, a process that, to me, was the most anxiety-generating time of all (even more so than finding yourself “stranded” among all those “raging beasts” during launch operations when going to a wheelchock; at least there I felt I had some modicum of control over my well being). This is why I’ve devoted a chapter to “parking”. It may appear at first glance to be a ho-hum process, but I guarantee you that that is completely wrong. It’s true that there could be those who, having done the parking process, would say it was a “piece of cake.” I would only question their sagacity. At any rate, we see here two aircraft, under their power (their engines fired up) and always under the control of a yellow-shirt, making their way to their parking spot. And their parking spots are very close to each other. VERY CLOSE, as you’ll see. (This is a great picture!) It contains the very *raison d’etre* (reason for being) of an aircraft carrier: being a self-contained airport that serves large military aircraft

while at the same time roaming the seven seas. It’s also a nice view because it’s a different view, from afar yet close enough to make you feel a part of it. Yes, it’s a nice picture, especially if you dwell on it. Speaking of control on the flight deck and because this is the year of the World Cup in soccer, it occurred to me that the fans are a peculiar bunch: it puzzles me no end why they become so worked up over an event over which they have no control. It seems as if the very valuation of their personhood is dependent on the outcome of what a group of strangers do or do not do. That’s the crux”: to depend on others for their apparent well-being is odd. They seem to invest their all, their emotional integrity, on what others do. Often we must do this but to do it unnecessarily is a puzzle. To cheer on your favorites is one thing, to invest “your all” is quite another. It counters every precept of eschewing dependence on others except where absolutely necessary. (My interest is to enjoy ability by athletes, even the “enemy”).

“Home, sweet home”. What a beautiful sight after having traveled hours over a trackless ocean. Note how the width of the flight deck widens opposite the superstructure to act as a counterweight. Try to imagine how difficult it was for the naval engineers to calculate this accurately. Pretty smart people, those engineers. To most people that’s just a ship that they’re looking at but to me that’s a marvel of engineering. Yes, that marvel of engineering is also “home sweet home”. What a shame it is that there are many who find this phrase esoteric. It could be well said that that fact is responsible for much of what’s wrong with society (and I’m not talking about that arcane subject of economics; my father was a

consulting economist and I know what arcane means, besides having majored in economics at college. I went back to college to earn a degree in electrical engineering to get away from that arcane subject of which I remember one thing quite well: inelastic demand, such as food, that which you cannot do without). Returning to a less arcane subject, the malady of society, there will be no rest unless and until the functional family becomes the overriding norm of society. Without this bell-wether there will be no stability in which to nurture a robust populace in a thriving nation. A happy family is the rock needed upon which a nation will rise, or fall without it. No question.



PARKING, FROM ABOVE, II

Here we're a little closer to the "field of play." Perhaps you can see the yellow-shirts, the ones who are directing the aircraft. What you can't see is that every taxiing aircraft has an Airdale at each wheel, wheelchock in hand. He "picks up" the aircraft shortly after it's released from the arresting-wire so that the aircraft can be chocked at any time thereafter, for safety reasons. That's a fairly normal number of people on the deck during the parking process. It's apparent from the closeness of these two aircraft how tight the timing is. Even as this picture was taken there was (or should have been) another aircraft in the landing area back aft having his tailhook disengaged, while another aircraft was approaching the "landing groove" about 20 seconds aft of the stern of the ship. These 20-second intervals between the aircraft is the driving force that dictates that the actual parking of the aircraft on the flight deck be done post-haste. That lack of available time to park aircraft is one of the main reasons why this process is so dicey but then that's a dicey environment down there below.

As long as the engines are fired up the mind is concentrated: there's no such thing as a casual mind on an activated flight deck. I can guarantee that to a man those that are there among the parking aircraft are also alert and not all that sure that something serious will not happen, if not to them, then to others. To me, this is a neat picture, an encapsulation of "my world", even my destiny. Speaking of neat, why is it that there are those who are not neat: they blithely toss litter to the four winds with nary a thought? It bespeaks of a careless, unkempt mind and even unconcern for others (I realize I'm in the minority but why can't people be more refined? Crudeness bespeaks a crude mind.) Those that litter should be made to police their mess and thus become aware of their careless treatment of the environment (to "police the area" in the military means to clean up and make neat the grounds; to some cleanliness is next to Godliness; I won't go that far but there's merit in "looking sharp" as is the wont of the military establishment).

Closer to home. This bird's eye view provides a better look at the action on the flight deck during a parking process, one rife with possible harm as the aircraft approach their parking space. No parallel parking here; it's straight up parking and if the aircraft strays from the straight and narrow there'll be "pain to pay" for that Airdale holding a wheelchock with one hand and the wheelstrut with the other hand for support. I knew perfectly well that danger was lurking: The senses were fraught with anxiety for the parking process was in no way benign. Just as support is necessary here on the flight deck so too is support very necessary in that family unit spoken of on the previous page. Yes, there'll be bick-

ering in a family but without that underlying support people will be "set adrift". Bickering may be unpleasant but giving one another hard-times is quite another story: The trust that's the basis of any functional family has been demolished when "giving and receiving" hard-times. The rancor generated will rear its ugly head and the cycle continues. The gold that is support can never survive under such conditions. Support, trust, trust, support, they're that which binds people together whether in a family or in a world community. This in turn means that an easy-going give-and-take is the atmosphere most conducive to functional families. Please, don't make the family environment a "contest".



PARKING, FROM ABOVE, III

Getting even closer, you get a better idea of what's going on. The yellow-shirt in the lower right corner is awaiting the next aircraft that has presumably just landed. A lot of coordination is required during the landing/parking process, and it usually goes very smoothly. Pilots are very attentive and yellow-shirts very competent. They have to be, because if one aircraft runs into another aircraft, it'll surely ruin their day, besides ruining government property and maybe someone's life. When the aircraft start getting closer to those that are already parked, this is when it becomes "dramatic" (for those who like dramas, to which I never catered). However, I do cater to those who fulfill their duty by staying with the aircraft right up to the point of engine cut-off. Most all of the Airdales were conscientious about this. They do not shirk or evade their responsibilities, "letting the other guy do it" (when there are only so many Airdales available. (throughout, I will improperly interchange the present and past tenses as the spirit moves me; I apologize for this tendency but sometimes

I "inadvertently" step back in time). The dictionary defines the word "conscientious" as follows: just, upright, honest, faithful, careful, particular, painstaking, devoted, dedicated. One can be assured that the conscientious person is a good and valuable person, one who is an asset to society, the "salt of the earth" without whom society would not prosper. A conscientious person earnestly tries to do his job (earnestness, when appropriate, is a trait that has always appealed to me; this is not to say that an easy-going demeanor is not engaging; there's a time and place for both, just not at the same time). A conscientious person tries hard; making an honest and valiant effort at whatever it is he does; one could not ask for more. What he does might be pushing aircraft till the last one has been pushed. It might be putting one foot in front of the other as he faces that phalanx of aircraft warming up their engines in preparation for a launch. A truly conscientious person is he or she who doesn't shirk those nightly homework assignments.

Still closer to home. Imagine, if you will, each one of these aircraft first revving up its engines to burst forward and then "taking their foot off the accelerator" and applying the brakes. (Time is of the essence here, now.) This alternate lurching forward and slowing was disconcerting: First it's here, now it's there. It was always "heads up", pay attention, be alert. It's much too easy to say that one should pay attention and stay alert in school, but I'll say it anyway: PAY ATTENTION AND STAY ALERT. Yes, maybe you've been over this material before and yes maybe you're "smarter" than the next guy but who knows when some material about which you're not so smart will be discussed. A teacher's not a

baby-sitter for smart alecks who think they know everything (or at least everything THEY think is important). Don't be so arrogant, or stupid, that you should define what is and what isn't important (I must digress here somewhat by expressing what I and a huge multitude of others believe to be an almost ludicrous course of study in many colleges that should know much better. "In my day" the joke was that so and so was taking a course in basket weaving. Compared to some courses now given that would be a serious study. I'm so appalled at some of the courses today that I'm speechless (\$40,000 per year??)). I said I would eschew politics in this book, but the Liberals have to shape up (or ship out).



THE PARKING BEGINS

First, notice the yellow-shirt in the middle bottom of the picture awaiting the next aircraft. That aircraft is tardy, because it should be in view by now. Perhaps there's some problem with unhooking the tailhook, or maybe there was a barrier crash, or ... In the upper left, one aircraft is being parked (A) while the one behind (B) is about to have its wings folded, with the help of the Airdales. An Airdale can be seen, wheelchock in hand, next to the right wheel of aircraft (B). There's another one, out of sight, at the left wheel, wheelchock in hand. It's these two Airdales who will have the "traumatic" experience awaiting them in about 10 seconds (to be discussed later). [The Airdales of aircraft (A) are just about to undergo this experience of parking an aircraft.] In addition to the chock-holders just mentioned, there are the wing-folders of aircraft (A) who are also in a touchy situation: aircraft (B) is closing in on their aircraft (A), i.e., getting very close to them, while the propwash of their aircraft (A) is exerting tremendous force on them at aircraft (A).

That is, the propwash is forcing them back toward (and into?) the propeller of aircraft (B) which is not all that far away (say about 10 feet away). The point here is that aircraft park under their own power (Airdales don't push them), and so there is always propwash in the "work area" pushing in various directions, because the aircraft are not always going straight ahead. Throw into that mix the fact that there are 13-foot diameter "broadwords" whirling dangerously close. All in all, it's a tricky situation, but manageable, AS LONG AS you're alert. Otherwise, it can hurt. Actually, the problem is too many aircraft in too small a space. On the other hand, some would say that 100 aircraft are not enough aircraft. The fact of the matter is that even with the availability of the two catapults there can be essentially "only" about 75 aircraft topside on the flight deck at one time. This means that the other 25 must be down below on the hanger deck (which can hold up to 60 aircraft). This is why there is a decked elevator to expedite launches.

Many of those on the deck are the brown-shirt plane captains. They're there because they want to meet "their" aircraft to determine if anything must be done to them before the next launch. They're personally "attached" to the aircraft and the pilot of that aircraft. What happens to either of them is of more than a little importance. This attitude personifies the feelings of loyalty that's so important in the military and could be, should be, emulated in the general society. Loyalty usually refers being loyal to a cause or even a commitment to ideals. When one makes a pledge one has committed oneself to fulfill that pledge. This is loyalty (which is not directly in the realm of pledges to charities and the like). An

obvious and fundamental act of loyalty is to one's spouse: It is prescribed in the marriage vows. It is a promise of loyalty in thick and thin. (To most of us, marriage and loyalty are synonymous.) It's easy to be loyal to those to whom you're close, but can you also be loyal to, committed to your ideals, your values, your standards? That's the real test of loyalty, a most precious attribute. Loyalty implies faithfulness to a person, a cause, a idea. One could even say that one should be loyal to one's future by bearing down on those educational studies that seem so difficult for you. Let's be frank: Sometimes loyalty requires that one exhibit intestinal fortitude, to "have guts". Sometimes you even have to be "heroic".



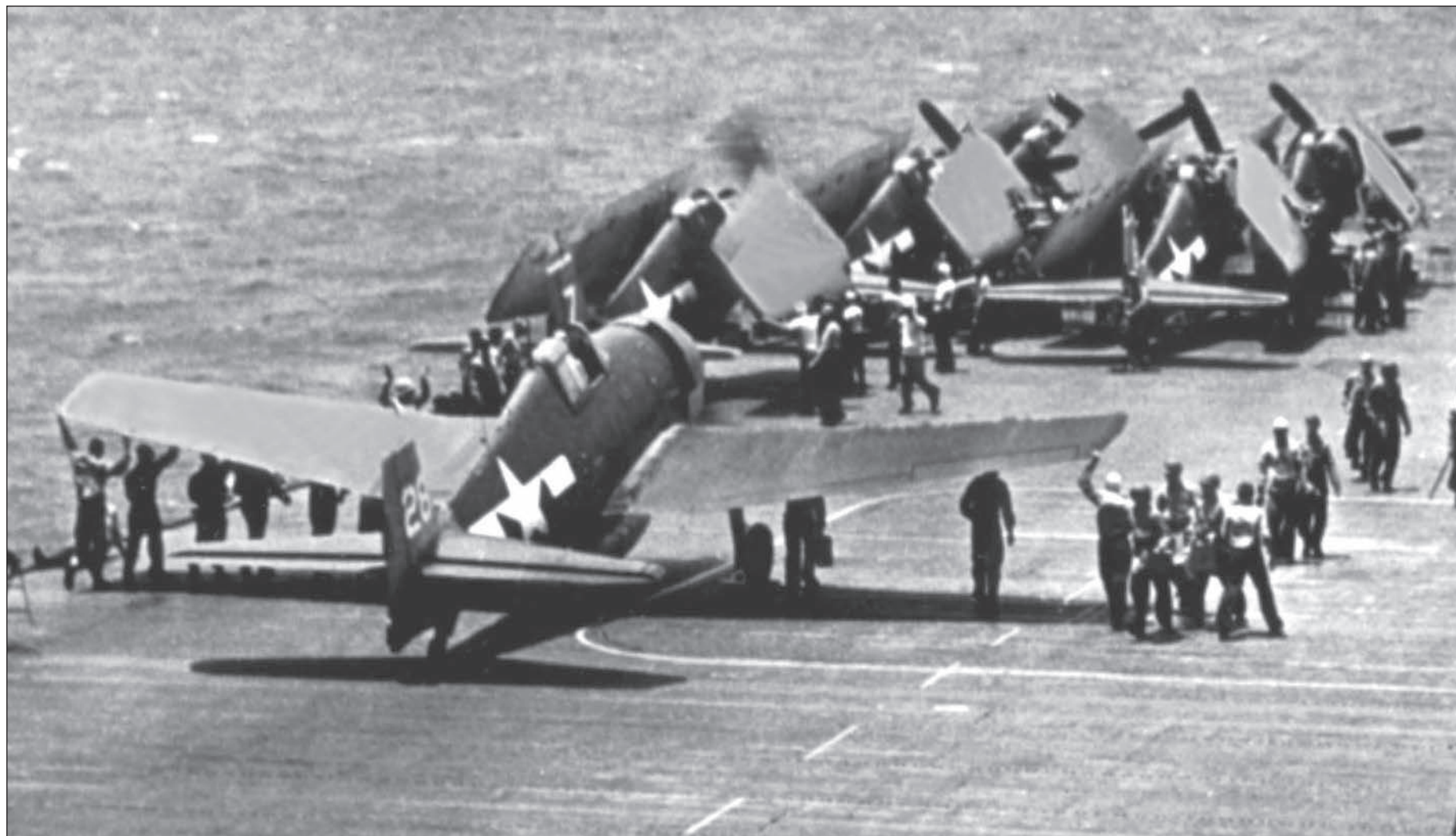
THE PARKING BEGINS, II

Here's a closer look at the preceding picture. As long as an engine is fired up in close quarters, bad things can happen. The yellow-shirt directing F6F #28 is to the left of that aircraft with his arms upraised. A dicey situation is when #28 is being brought up beside the F6F to its left, while that aircraft is still fired up and maneuvering, and when the yellow-shirt is trying to pack the #28 as close as possible to both the aircraft in front of it and to the aircraft to its left. Always keep in mind that these things must be done posthaste; the aircraft are landing in 20-second intervals. And yet, if you (i.e., the yellow-shirt) feel too hurried, bad things can happen: one aircraft ripping into another aircraft, with all the attendant "shrapnel" flying about. This is an excellent picture insofar as it shows what is involved in the parking process: aircraft moving about under their own power, close quarters, little time available, closely packed aircraft, everyone knowing what to do, and doing it. What is not evident in this picture is the intense roar and noisiness, and the strong winds

coming from various directions. One could say that it's all controlled chaos. This is NOT a static situation as represented by a still picture! One can gain only a mere inkling of what's involved as portrayed by this picture: monstrous noise, monstrous wind, monstrous propellers, and monstrous nerves giving way to feelings of foreboding, all in close quarters. A fearsome mix, this, in absolute contradiction to the aura of a "still" picture. It's immensely deceiving, this "frozen in time" picture. I could say that you became used to this process but I won't because it's not true. I don't rightly know how many of these parking situations I was a part of but there were many, many more than I had expected. (the war was over in August and we were doing these flight operations till I left the ship in May of 1946). The "redeeming" factor was the fact that there were others involved in this "game" (games are supposed to be fun, something to enjoy; this was not one of those games; they seemed one-sided (but satisfying when you "won").

Here the Airdales are going to help this Hellcat fold its wings prior to it's being parked. Only the Hellcat required this help, both to fold its wings and to unfold them. In life some people also require help while others do not. To do so for the former is fine, even perhaps generous. However, to give a helping hand to the latter group is to make a mistake, sometimes a big mistake. Helping others who can fend for themselves is to diminish them and set them off in the wrong direction: Coming to expect help all of the time. Again, it's a matter of others making recipients feel that they deserve the help they're receiving when in fact they are not deserving at all (in relative terms). Why should I receive a grant

when I have the wherewithal to do for myself? What if I don't have that wherewithal? Should I be given it just because I want it? Just because someone else has it? A helping hand is fine but a helping check is not (unless destitution is involved). No, too often that "helping hand" is merely a device to bring others into a condition of dependence. I realize that there are those who genuinely like to give but in fact they are doing the recipient a disservice (again because it surreptitiously makes for dependence where independence is a precious condition indeed). Necessary help, yes, otherwise control your empathetic tendencies.



PACK ‘EM IN

Actually, this picture should be in the “Flight Deck Activity” chapter because it shows the Airdales and tractors moving the aircraft back aft after a landing operation. Most of the aircraft have already been moved back aft at this point in time. However, this picture also portrays what it was like when an aircraft landed and taxied up forward. You can imagine that F4U Corsair closest to you maneuvering its way forward and ready to wheel sharply to the right, and then sharply to the left, so as to be right in front of the 5-inch gun mount. There’s very little wiggle-room in doing this, and maybe not enough. Instead, perhaps the Corsair will taxi straight ahead after pivoting somewhat on its left wheel (left brake applied). In any event, this was done alternately applying power and then brakes, power and then brakes, as it “hiccups” its way forward, close yet CLOSER to the Corsair in front of it. Pilot and yellow-shirt aircraft-director are putting on a performance whose ramifications could change a person’s life, especially the Airdale who carries a

wheelchock as he leans into the propwash as he holds onto the Corsair’s wheel-strut. What’s pertinent in this picture, and what’s normal, is the congestion of man and machine. Especially notice the two columns of Corsairs on the right. Now imagine making your way between those two columns (towards you, the observer) during launch operations, with the hurricane-like wind-blasts at your back and the deafening roar of the engines and wind in your ears and the blurs of the propellers to your right and left. Be there, and then you’ll have some understanding of the world of the Airdale. If you believe this picture to be all confusion and even chaos you’d be wrong. Everyone out there knows exactly what is being done even if they are not directly involved. The key-word here is “involved”, whether it’s direct or not. This is because when it’s not direct, it can quickly become direct: aircraft wheel and pivot about as they “jockey” for position in the process of “finding their own particular stable” (parking spot). At the end they’ll all be neatly packed.

The Airdales here on the flight deck were a fairly independent lot: they were left to their own recognizance to a great extent. That’s because they knew what had to be done and so they did it. I don’t mean to imply that they were just a bunch of free spirits out there. Far from it. We were given directions as to which aircraft went where and then we did just that. It was a loose and tight environment at the same time: loose because we were left to our own devices and tight because we were under strict control of the plane directors (yellow-shirts). That is, we had to obey what we were told. One might say this also applies to life in general: we are free to do what we want to do within a set of laws and estab-

lished customs. Obeying life’s constraints is not a bad thing; it’s a good thing. When we obey the rules and regulations things run smoothly (presuming that the rules and regulations are sound; if they aren’t, don’t take the law into your own hands, go to the arbiters (courts)). Freedom of actions must have constraints in any kind of society (if you don’t like obeying laws and customs live the hermit’s life; there you have complete freedom of action (freedom of thought is immutable) There’s a reason for obeying the law, and it’s for your welfare. I can assure you I don’t like to be on the highway with a bunch of crazies using the highway as a racetrack. Lives are at stake; OBEY the laws; punish the speeders.



HELLCAT ON THE PREMISES

From the looks of things it appears that this Hellcat is lacking its brakes (at least its right brake). The yellow-shirt, with arms upraised, is motioning the pilot to come forward, i.e., apply power to the engine. It's also evident that since the brake(s) doesn't function, the Airdales are pulling the tail in a CCW direction to cause the Hellcat to move to the left as it moves forward. It could be moving to the deckedge elevator, in front of it, to go below to have its brakes repaired. As it's moving forward, notice other Airdales going to the Hellcat's wings. They'll then help the Hellcat fold its wings by pushing backwards on the wings. (Only the Hellcat needed help in folding its wings.) The Airdales to the left of the Hellcat have to be careful about that other Hellcat which is powered up. Ordinarily, a yellow-shirt should be in control of the Hellcat to the left, but he's nowhere to be seen. (In fact, EVERY aircraft that's powered up MUST be under the control of a yellow-shirt at ALL times. Usually he'd be standing right where that star on the left wing is located so that the pilot could see him.) There's a lot of noise out there, and there are moving aircraft out there too so that those Airdales must be "heads up" all the time. It's not as if an aircraft goes in prescribed directions. It could go right or left or forward or wheel "on a dime". It could inch along, or it could "get up a head of steam" in its hurry to

clear the deck. When that happens, STRONG blasts of propwash could knock you over in a blink if you're not prepared for it. (Also remember that there's always a 35-mph ambient wind over the front of the flight deck all during flight operations.) As shown here, sometimes you run, sometimes you crouch, sometimes you lean, and all the time you stay alert. For those who don't have their mind on the business at hand, woe be unto you. It was aircraft to the front of you, aircraft to the left of you, aircraft to the right of you, and most especially, aircraft behind you, usually moving forward. If they're behind you, they'll "chew you up," and if they're in front of you, they'll knock you flat with their propwash (unless of course you're approaching their "business end" during launch operations). Let's face it, there was no safe haven whenever those aircraft were "fired up". And it was always the wind and the noise, the noise and the wind, always grinding you down. Even though not THAT much work was done, you nevertheless felt like you had done a day's work at day's end. But again, it was "just another day at the office". I don't mean to be flip about this. However, it just so happens that this was precisely how I felt, day after long day ("at the office"). [Then there will be those who ask what did I know about offices at that "young tender age"? Just say that it was early indoctrination.

Here the Airdales are pushing the aircraft backward; when done forward they have to be careful of the moveable surfaces such as the ailerons of both the wings and the tail sections. Pushing on them could damage these control surfaces leading to catastrophe. In a way we were being "kind" to the aircraft. Kindness is one of the virtues that often, too often, gets short shrift in society. Why? It costs absolutely nothing (unless you're so sensitive and egocentric that you think it belittles you). To the contrary, it is the self-assured

who are most forthcoming with a kind word or gesture. However, at the same time there are those who feel uncomfortable being the recipient of a kindness (they feel belittled to "have" to return or acknowledge the kindness; I'd just give them some slack for their shortcomings). Kindness is not a weakness; witness the burly pro football player giving a helping hand to an opponent on the ground, a kindness no matter how you slice it. Furthermore, a single kindness can cause a chain reaction that we can all appreciate.



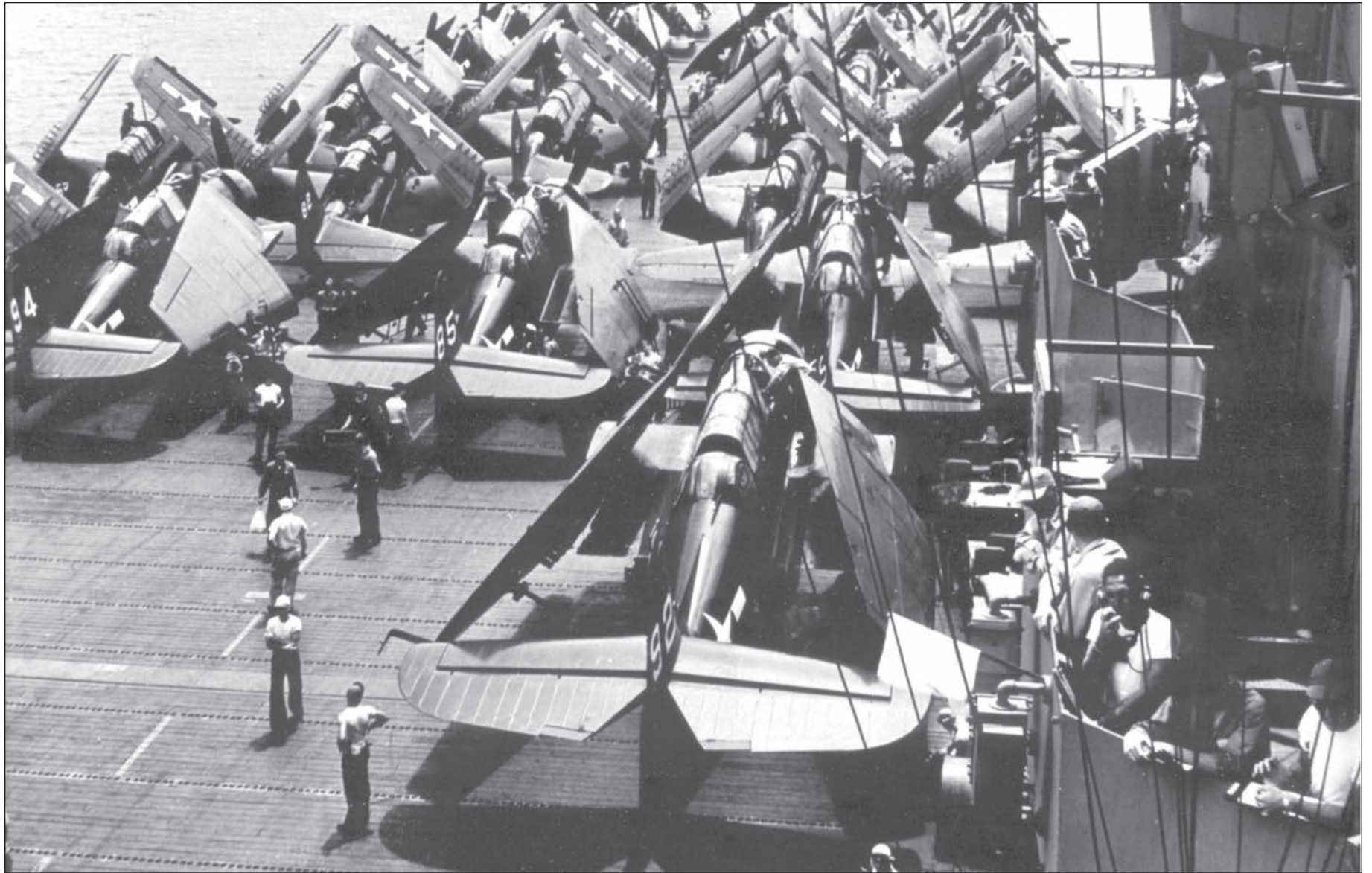
ANTIETAM SHAKEDOWN

This picture was included because it was taken on April 2, 1945 during the Antietam's one month shakedown cruise off of Trinidad (South America). (A "shakedown cruise" is that time during which a newly minted ship is put through its paces, testing all aspects of its capabilities. In addition, it also tests the ship's crew as to how well it can perform their assigned duties.) Here, the yellow-shirts are awaiting the next aircraft to taxi forward. Part of the flight deck crew's training was measuring how well the yellow-shirt aircraft-directors could pack the aircraft as they taxied forward, keeping in mind that there was a landing every 20 seconds. Here, there was too much space between aircraft. After all, we were to get 100 aircraft when we went to the Pacific. After a while the yellow-shirts became very proficient. During most of the shakedown cruise I was in the Navigation Division as a quartermaster striker. As such, my duty station was on the bridge (upper right corner of the picture), and in the wheel-house to the right of the bridge where I was sometimes at the helm ("steering wheel"). This duty I enjoyed, very much, and in all honesty, did well. However, as previously mentioned, this was not to last for long. They transferred me to the Airdales: something about the Assistant Navigator having a personal friend whose son was in the Airdales. ("But why me?". Maybe it was

because I was a "loner". My middle name is, after all, "Moody". But that's a long story, better left unsaid.) Notice in the lower right the "Air Boss", he who literally oversees all the flight deck operations and generally controls what happens below, using the loudspeaker to do so (which he didn't do very often). I'd be lying if I said I wasn't, deep down, thrilled by being on the bridge, looking down on the activity below, and wondering how it was that I should find myself here on this mighty ship where "important things were happening". Even though various circumstances contrived to make me a "loner", I was pleased underneath to be a part of this team and this ship. And it wasn't because I was a "starry-eyed" teenager. It was a genuine emotion felt because of being a part of a worthwhile cause, and even though on the surface I probably appeared disgruntled, beneath, I felt, in a peculiar way, privileged. The pulling and putting of wheelchocks wasn't a "privilege", but it was a peculiar "satisfaction" of a doing an unpleasant task for a worthy purpose. And so there she is, the U.S.S. Antietam, my home, my domicile for almost 15 months steady including two weekend passes and about fourteen half day passes: Norfolk, Panama, Sandiego, Pearl Harbor (2), Guam, Tokyo, Yokosuka (Japan), Tsingtao (China), Manila, Hong Kong (2). Nice but too short.

It's becoming very crowded here now, with less room for error. The picture looks benign enough but looks can be deceiving. The noise seems to increase here in the close quarters and the anxiety level keeps pace. It's similar to a party: More people , more noise (conversation?) and the soft-spoken need not apply to those parties. Personally, I like soft-spoken people (even though a strong voice is useful when conditions warrant it). Speaking quietly tells me that that person is probably well-adjusted and feels good about himself.

There's no need to impress others with one's vitality and yet I must confess that with this life-long ringing in my ears it helps to have someone "speak up". What's a body to do? Unfortunately a soft-spoken person might appear to be obsequious. (excessively deferential and compliant). This is certainly not necessarily true. I think I like Teddy Roosevelt's maxim: "Talk softly but carry a big stick". Nevertheless, "it takes all kinds". As long as you're not bombastic you're alright with me.



A TYPICAL SCENE

This picture shows very well a landing operation. The green-shirts have just disengaged the tailhook from the arresting-wire. Now, the yellow-shirt at the right, is motioning to the pilot (to rev up) the engine to taxi forward to the parking and parked aircraft. What I relate to is that Airdale, wheelchock in hand, moving up to intercept the moving Corsair so as to place himself next to the right wheel. (Notice below the propeller another is doing the same thing at the left wheel.) This picture captures the process beautifully. This is another case of the silhouette capturing the essence of the action (the pilot is gunning up his engine about now, so the Airdales have to step lively.) Yes, they should step lively but no one is telling them to do so. In effect, they are left to their own recognizance, an obligation placed on themselves and only required of them by inference (of the yellow-shirts). There is no yellow-shirt shouting at him (shouting won't do on an active flight deck) or even signaling him to join up with this Corsair as it accelerates forward. No, each Airdale is expected to do his job without the least hectoring or admonishing (that I was aware of). An Airdale was expected to be reliable and dependable and knowledgeable (yes) and trustworthy (presumed to do his job expeditiously). Especially was the Airdale to show fortitude in persevering the "slings and arrows" of continual confrontation with those large and "cantankerous" machines, up close and personal. This training stood me in good stead when I

attended college after my discharge from the navy to undergo the four worst years of my life, unrelated in any way with my navy experience:: there were many who took great exception to me for reasons that were inexplicable (yes, it was weird); I had to contend with and desperately try to understand happenings to me that were both bizarre and unsettling and that defied my desperate understanding (also weird); I was losing/lost "my girl"; I was deathly tired both physically and mentally (probably psychosomatic); and these distractions played havoc with my concentration which in turn made my scholastic grades less than barely adequate (I believe I left after four years with a "gentleman's C"). To most, this would not in any way be a success. To me, considering the conditions, it was a success (of a sort). Thus we must redefine what is meant by "success" and realize that it is after all a relative concept. Strive as best you can and what is derived can well be a success in terms not to be measured by others. However, the bigger point to be made is that if there is fortitude, if one tries to the best of his/her ability, one can claim success. Be determined, be resolute, be tenacious and you'll win "your day". I truly believe my bad four years were overcome by just these attributes. If I can do it so can you. As they say in the sports world, "He too puts his pants on only one leg at a time" Regardless of what others say, life is relativistic: my victory certainly is mine, your victory certainly is yours. We contest ourselves.

The Airdale with the chock in his hands is about to grab hold of the Corsair's wheel-strut and accompany it up forward to the parking space. The yellow-shirt to the right is motioning the pilot to proceed up forward. No one told that Airdale to go to the Corsair. He did it on his own recognizance as all good Airdales do. This type of initiative is SOP (Standard Operating Procedure). Would that we would all show such initiative: Not require someone else to tell us what to do and

when to do it. If ever there was an instance of this initiative being necessary it resides in the domain of the student. Grown ups do not need someone to tell them they have to do their homework now. Grown ups do not need someone to tell them to prepare sufficiently in advance for that test. Grown ups are self-motivators, children are not. Those Airdales seen in this book, though they were technically youths, were in fact grown ups. You have my word on it. I was there.



ATTENTION ON DECK

This Corsair should be folding his wings by now. It appears as if the yellow-shirt is bringing this aircraft to a stopped condition: probably too much congestion up ahead. But then there's another Corsair approaching from behind so decisions need to be made. Note the accompanying Airdale at the left wheel. But where's the one at the right wheel? This "never" happened on the Antietam. It's about now that the Airdale's apprehension starts to turn to anxiety (unless you were a very "cool customer.") It wasn't a matter of being scared; that did no good. It was a matter of being concerned, very concerned, about whether the pilot and the yellow-shirt will BOTH be competent. As it turned out, they most usually

were. But it was almost impossible to rid oneself of doubt. Sometimes you'd build a load of outright anger to counteract that inevitable doubt. The anger would quickly dissipate until the next task arose. And so it went, this routine. It was a strange mixture of intense anxiety and kismet. Sometimes one, and then the other, would predominate. I know that. (Notice the aircraft circling the ship overhead, preparing to enter the landing pattern. Also, notice the barrier-wires, down the flight deck, are erected for the next aircraft that is about to land. Obviously, these barriers are lowered to allow an aircraft to taxi forward, and then they are immediately raised again for the next aircraft that lands.

The yellow-shirt plane-director to the left has eye-contact with the pilot of this Corsair. He's signaling the pilot to come forward. To the right is an Airdale holding onto a wheelchock as he holds onto the wheel-strut. He'll accompany the Corsair to the parking spot and remain with it until the "cut engine" signal is given by the yellow-shirt. One gets the impression that there's a great deal of "congeniality" between the Corsair and the Airdale. How accurate this is I wouldn't say but I do know that congeniality in life can be the lubricant of a salubrious society (a society that produces health). Congeniality, as politeness and kindness, costs nothing. One could even say that society gets a very good return on this investment. Certainly you and you will enjoy life much more where congeniality and conviviality reign. I can understand that this can be overdone, but better that than underdone. As with

kindness, congeniality can set off a chain-reaction that will inevitably cause your life to lighten up in return. There should be no boundaries to congeniality for it's usually contagious (a good type of contagion). Congeniality should not be restricted from any group; for each group is equally deserving (some groups are more congenial than others to the point that it can be overwhelming to some of us). Thus it's incumbent on you to be deferential to those who have not seen the spirit that animates your congeniality. Congeniality "makes the world go round" and who wants to stop the world from doing that? The ability to be congenial with others may seem to be somewhat trivial. This is wrong headed for those who are reclusive tend to "give the wrong vibes" and throw cold water on others' enjoyment. However, there's a legitimate limit to mindless frivolity.



FINE TUNING

The Airdale behind the aircraft is moving the tail-bar to the right or left to adjust the tail-wheel which in turn changes the direction of the aircraft as both wheels are unbraked. He has to keep a sharp eye on the yellow-shirt to make sure the aircraft goes where the yellow-shirt wants it to go. The tail-bar isn't used when parking a powered up aircraft, but is used fairly frequently when respotting (parking) aircraft back aft in preparation for a launch operation. The yellow-shirt at the left is waving the Avenger forward while holding its left wheel-brakes by pointing his right fist at that wheel. Again, there are no Airdales, wheelchocks in hand, at the TBM's wheels. This is not SOP (Standard Operating Procedure). I can't explain this lack of Airdales. They definitely should be there. But then, there aren't even any spectators on the catwalk (next to and below the flight deck). Most always they were there, at least for the launch operations.

(The landing operations made these catwalks a more dangerous place to be, what with errant aircraft landing where they shouldn't.) That's the tail-section of a TBM over the head of the Airdale. This gives some idea as to the size of the TBM, the largest single-engine aircraft of WWII. It was surprising how much larger they appeared to be when they were "fired up". And the noise they made with their unmuffled exhausts made them positively DOMINANT when you were right next to them. It wasn't something to which you could become easily acclimated. But like everything else during flight operations, you did come to terms with the wind and the noise and the ebb and flow of the tumult on deck. And you learned that there WAS life after your having daily negotiated those imposing and furiously gyrating blades of steel called propellers. Although others might have reached a "comfort zone", I never did.

As the Airdale uses the tow-bar to help maneuver the aircraft into its parking slot the yellow-shirt, to the left, is signaling the pilot to apply right brake, apply left brake, apply throttle, decrease throttle and "do not take your eyes from me". Of course this book is about the Airdales. However without the pilots there would be no need for Airdales (obviously). During WWII the pilots were made up of both Annapolis graduates and those from civilian life who were college graduates. I'm told that the former were called the "trade school boys" by the non-Annapolis graduates (the latter group). This was not a pejorative term. It was a recognition that for the most part the former were technically trained while the later were "liberally" trained (from liberal arts colleges). [It should be said that

universities (and colleges) also provided technical courses in the sciences and engineering.] The point that I'm leading up to is this: The U.S. Navy is made up of both trade school boys and college graduates. The officers were college graduates and the enlisted men were the true "trade school boys": electricians, electronic technicians, radio technicians, pipe fitters, mechanics, steam fitters, carpenters, welders and on and on. In sum, the navy could not function without its actual trade school boys. The same may be said concerning our society: our society could not function without the technicians of every variety. We, society, desperately need all of those technicians lest society comes to a grinding halt. If not college, then sign up for a "trade" school.



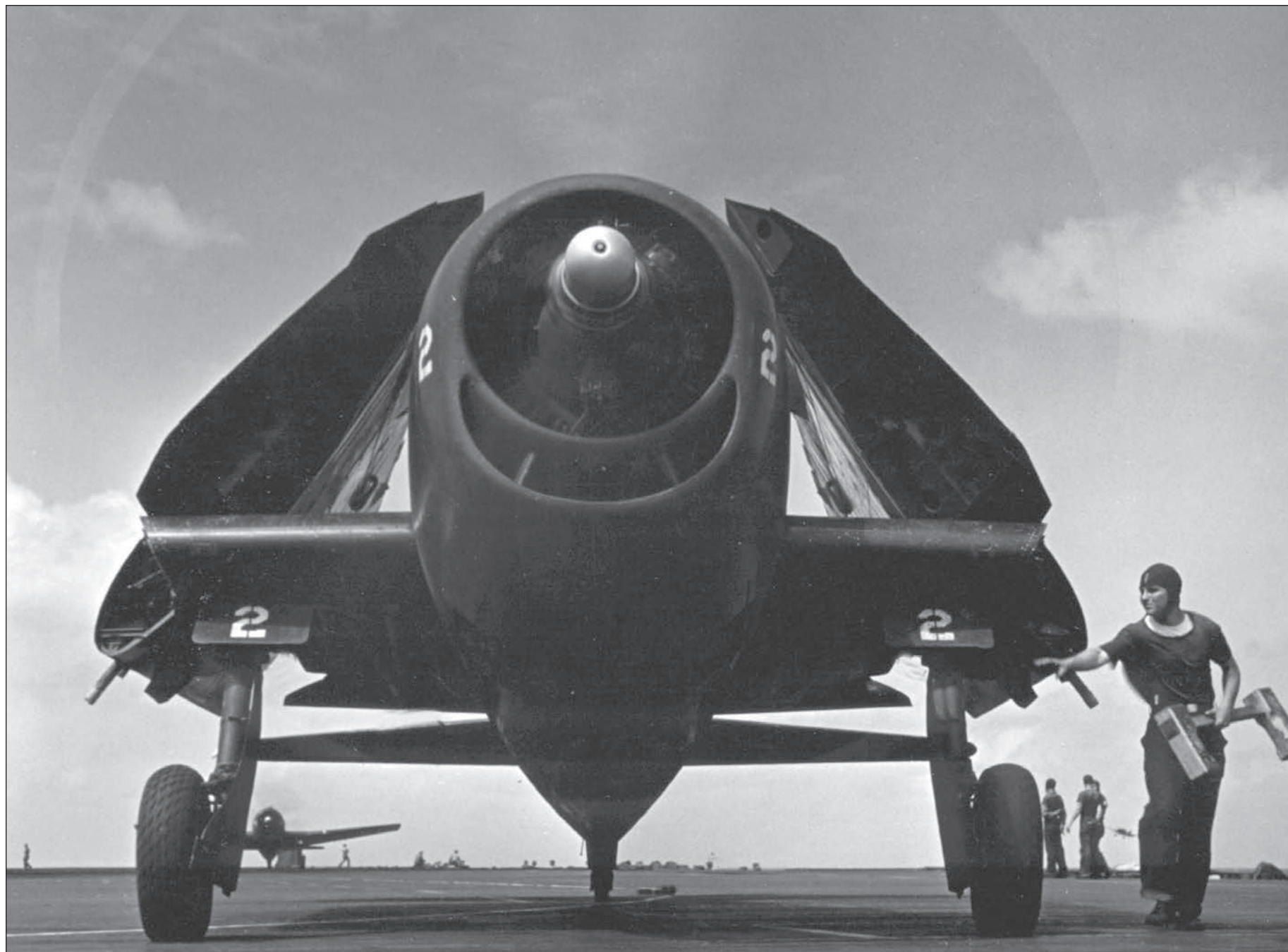
BUSINESS END OF F6F

This is what it looks like as an F6F approaches the parking area. A glaring omission is the Airdale at the other wheel. This F6F landed about 20 seconds ago, has had the arresting-wire disengaged, and is taxiing forward to the parking area. There must be a lack of Airdales on this ship because of the missing Airdale at the right wheel. In the background is another F6F, just landed. F6F's have to have manual help to fold their wings, and the Airdales to do this are not in evidence. Again, where are all the Airdales? One thing you don't see here in this picture are the tips of the propeller. If you had a stroboscopic light, you'd see that they reach out as far as each wheel. This was discussed in the chapter on "Launch Activities." This is also the view you might see as you crawled around trying

to reach a wheelchock (during launch operations). Even though you may not see the propeller, you never forget where it is. And you never forget that this is the "business end of an F6F". Again, as has been mentioned, what's only inferred in most all of these pictures is the malevolent wind in conjunction with the atrocious noise. True, this Airdale isn't under that much duress now, but when the pilot "guns" the engine to move the aircraft forward at a faster pace, the wind and the noise that's thereby generated will have an infernal effect on what limited composure you still might possess. All looks fairly benign here, but in fact what's going to happen is a literal eruption of the environs in being shattered by a 2200-hp unmuffled engine turning a 13 foot propeller to a fair-the-well.

Yes, there really is a propeller in front of you even though you don't see it. If you could see it you would see that it extends to the outer edge of the wheel. Thus an unseen propeller-tip is spinning about 6 feet from the Airdale's nose as he stands next to an unruffled 2,000-hp engine sending a blast of air into his face as his ears are truly being assaulted. Now keep in mind that there are 100 of these "beasts" apportioned among 30 Airdales. Is there no respite from all this palpable energy? If you like peace and calm and are of the low-key type this is no place for you. However, life is not necessarily served up to one's liking. It's already been asserted that life can be unfair, but that's no reason to sit down and complain. I know full well that it has been said over and over that back at the origin of this country people lived in conditions that would have made such

complainers derelicts. I believe God make us to all have gumption and those who default from this mode are being "abnormal" (unless one has physical disabilities). Perhaps this seems "easy to say" but that makes it no less true. Life does not serve us "equal hands" and perhaps this is hard to accept. Better to accept it and forge ahead than to mope and remain inert. The next person may not understand your woes and unless you expect something from him what difference does that make? The above does not provide any special answers but I believe it will be useful if it generates some serious thought. Whatever else you do, do not sit on your duff awaiting outside relief (even if relief is deserved). Yes, help is on the way but it will be hollow if you are not up and running when you receive it. Receive the relief as does a baton-runner.



CUT ENGINE

It appears that the Airdale is about to place the wheelchock around the wheel, meaning that the aircraft has just about reached its final parking spot. These of course are the most critical moments of the parking process. Consider that the right edge of the picture is exactly the rudder of the aircraft up forward. That is not an unusual arrangement and that being the case, there's precious little room for error by the pilot, who might be too slow in applying the brakes, or error by the yellow-shirt in bringing aircraft too far forward. Keep in mind that the nose of the aircraft is inclined upward, so that the lower part of the propeller is a few inches forward of the propeller-hub, which is what the yellow-shirt uses to gauge the forward position of the aircraft. The Airdale to the left is carrying rope to be used to tie down the aircraft to the cleats in the flight deck. (But this isn't ordinarily done unless heavy weather is on its way. It should be said that the Pacific wasn't, apparently, as stormy as is the Atlantic. But nevertheless, heavy weather did make its rude, unpleasant

appearance in the Pacific, and with a vengeance when a typhoon struck.) An Airdale always looks to be on the OTHER side of a spinning propeller: the wind is going from right to left because of the wind over the front of the flight deck and the aircraft up ahead. Naturally there are times when you have to be on the right side; these are the times when extreme prudence is not only required but also MANDATORY. The sensation is that of a giant, invisible hand forcing you inexorably toward that terrible instrument of death, that whirling propeller. Prudence is a very good word for us all. It will keep us out of trouble where conduct verging on thoughtlessness will lead in the opposite direction. Caution is not the antithesis of robustness; it is its companion. Energetic forethought isn't an oxymoron. It validates a "look before you leap" philosophy and the wisdom of "discretion is the better part of valor" motto. Initiative need not be impeded by prudence for prudence ratifies initiative. This was proven time and again on the flight deck.

Another Hellcat being "shepherded" by an Airdale to its parking spot. Note some other Airdales going about their business unguided by others: That is, they're doing a job, whatever it might be, on their own recognizance. This is a characteristic of the Airdale, namely, to be semi-independent in his duties. This independence should be a characteristic of most all of us: If there's a job to be done, do it and not wait to be told to do so. On the flight deck there is so much going on that it was not possible to give everyone specific guidance. This is a fine attribute to have developed for oneself. It implies self-motivation, that ability to do what has to be done without being told. Of course this in turn implies that one knows what it is that should be done. For exam-

ple, it was my job to rake the leaves from around the house. As has been mentioned earlier my father had to tell me to rake the leaves when I had wanted to play football. This was a tough call on my part: Do my duty or play. At that time I "fell down on the job" by opting to play and was called on it by my father. The moral of the story is that even while wanting to do something I enjoyed it was incumbent upon me to instead do my duty first. This is a trivial example but it makes the point that duty must always precede "play". Naturally there are many more, more stringent examples. The earlier this is LEARNED the easier things will be in the future. One might even call it growing up. Airdales grew up fairly fast on the flight deck.



THE TWO FACES OF A HELLCAT

This then could be called the ultimate bane of an Airdale's existence—the powerfully spinning propeller. What it did do and what it didn't do determined, for the most part, what did and what didn't happen to the Airdale. Foolish as it sounds, the aircraft sometimes took on its own “animal characterization”. It was mobile, it was vocal, and it was very physical. “It deliberately meant you harm. It looked down on you always, and it taunted you in your smallness and weakness. It never let up, it never called a hiatus, and it never got tired. It was haughty, and it was impervious to your condition which it caused.” You could even say it was “arrogant” in its own superiority. But as a machine, it was a beautiful mechanical work of art, a tour de force of man's ingenuity. What a dichotomy! (Here the Airdale gives this powerful, mobile, dangerous giant wide berth when in fact he should be right next to the wheel, holding onto that 20-mm gun-barrel seen pointing downward from the folded wing. To stand clear of this “monster” is one's normal inclination,

always. But no, this is not “by the book”. It looks all the world as if the Airdale's casting a wary eye on his “protagonist” as he wonders what malevolent tricks this “beast” has up its sleeve. Fanciful talk, this, but a fairly accurate description of an 18-19 year old's mindset). Wary or not, this Airdale, all Airdales, had a direct obligation to accomplish his job: “the show must go on”, the wheelchock must be pulled, the aircraft must be parked the fear-factor must be overcome. Yes, we all have obligations of one sort or another. Some obligations are required such as homework while other obligations are less well defined: be respectful, be courteous, be friendly, be cheerful, be forthright, be earnest band of course be honest and trustworthy. Why would you expect others to fulfill their obligations to you when you don't fulfill yours to them? Obligation responsibility is a cornerstone of a functional society. Of equal importance is the obligation to yourself such as the accumulation of knowledge that is obtained from a (expensive) college/university. Acquire it!

Eventually this Airdale will have to draw close to this Hellcat as the area becomes crowded (I would always grab hold of the wheel-strut or that 20-mm cannon protruding from the wing, all the way to the parking conclusion; better to know where you are). It's also better, far better, to know where you stand on issues of importance. (I know I dislike “hard rock” as if it were the plague but that's an easy call). It's the difficult things in life that one should sort out for themselves, things which have their strong points and their weak points. Everything is not either black or white (except things such as “hard rock”). This can be especially true in the realm of political elections (fear not, there'll be no politics here). However, one candidate perhaps has strong

points here and weak points there. It's usually the case where some things pale by comparison with other things. I will say, in the realm of politics, that a candidate's character is and should be of paramount importance. A candidate's views on various political issues can change, legitimately. It's much more difficult for character-change to occur in a mature adult. Thus, the young still have a chance to make amends for their poor choices in terms of values and virtues and morals (the last item should never have to come to being changed; it should be hard and fast on the side of propriety in spite of Mother Nature “urging” otherwise. Here, the best advice is to CHANGE THE SUBJECT (it's called sublimation).



UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

This picture spells D-A-N-G-E-R (and more obvious, death). An Airdale of course “never” came this close to the business end of an aircraft. But not infrequently, it certainly seemed that way. This is because, as aircraft land, they have to taxi forward as quickly as possible to make way for the next aircraft coming in to land (which occurs at 20-seconds intervals.) This in turn makes for a “traffic jam” in the parking area. It doesn’t help that the yellow-shirt directing an aircraft has his back to the “parking area” (he’s looking at the pilot) so the yellow-shirt has a difficult job: give directions to the pilot while all the while having to be aware of the activity behind him. In addition to this, since there were so many aircraft (100) in a ship’s complement, space was at a premium. This translates into the requirement to pack the aircraft closely, both on either side of the aircraft, and more critically, close behind the aircraft in front of it. To compound the difficulties, time, as always, was also at a premium (remember that 20-second interval). As a consequence of all this, aircraft

that are moving seemed to be closer that they really were. The fact that the aircraft were large only seemed to magnify this impression of closeness. Not to overdo this portrayal of the parking activity, a further factor in all this “commotion” and noise was the fact that the aircraft seldom moved in a steady, smooth manner. To the contrary, they invariably moved in spurts, first lurching forward, then braking to a stop, then again lurching forward, now pivoting about one of the wheels, next braking, ever more close to the aircraft to either side, and the one in front of it. All the while you, the Airdale, were beside one of the wheels, wheel-chock in hand, windblasts in your face, watching and wondering, wondering. Without a doubt the most gripping, the most chilling moments on the flight deck for an (this) Airdale were those just before cutting the engine during a parking process. Though shorter in duration those moments were tenser because others had control. It was worse than even the “descent” into that tumultuous phalanx at launch-time.

If you’re an Airdale (or anyone else) this is a position in which you never want to find yourself. [I have said previously that none of the pictures in this book were staged. I believe I’ll have to retract that statement for this picture. The propeller-tip is less than one foot from the deck and so it’s certain death to try to crawl under a fired up Hellcat or Corsair head on; to one side is feasible but nonsensical. Let’s just say it’s staged.] As one grows older one becomes more skeptical and more inclined to believe a great deal of what happens is staged. Some things are staged purposely and everyone is aware of this. However, there are other things that are staged in which there is deliberate deception. The sad thing is the

uncertainty. It’s not right that people have to try to figure out if something is legitimate or not. If nothing else consider all the wasted effort trying to determine what is and what is not true (remember, truth refers to facts while honesty refers to thoughts and feelings). A propagandist once said that if you tell a big enough lie long enough people will believe the lie. Not considered here is when reasonable people can look at the same “fact” and interpret it differently. Such are matters of opinion. This is why it’s so important to develop a sense of impartiality. Do not allow biases to creep into your thinking processes. Again, be alert and garner all the facts possible before making up your mind.



HELLDIVERS, NOSE TO TAIL

This picture wasn't included to show the 20-mm cartridge belt (and again, on the Antietam, nobody went shirtless. Each ship had its own personality I guess). This picture was included to show how close the aircraft are brought to those in front of it as it taxis to its "spot." Notice that, since the propeller is pretty much a blur as it taxis forward, the yellow-shirt uses the propeller-hub to gauge distance as he "coaxes" the plane forward. The picture also makes clear that the propeller-tip is a few inches further forward than is the hub. So the fact that the yellow-shirt uses the hub to bring the plane to its final resting "spot" is disconcerting. I always wondered if he was taking into consideration that distance-differential as he motioned to the pilot to "keeping the plane moving forward," inch by terrible inch. Such a benign setting as this belies that "terribleness." And I repeat myself when I say that all this discussion about "inches here, inches there" is couched in the ambient conditions of extreme noise and wind. Taken all together, it gets your undivided attention. However, that was then and this is now when our attention must reluctantly turn to another form of terrible situations, that of violence on others (warranted or not). This conduct becomes disruptive to the point of menace to those of us nearby and is sometimes as lethal as those 20-mm projectiles slung over that shirtless red-shirt's shoulder. Violence is a disease of the "mind", what there is of it. It's directly traceable to a gross self-centeredness leaving no room for anything resembling generosity of spirit that would quell their hair-trigger anger predicated on their massive self-absorption. Unfortunately there are those whom I consider very misguided who seek to excuse the inexcusable, thus encouraging the very behavior that gives us a misshapen society. There's no justification for this code of violence, usually the domain of the bully. Behavior that threatens others unjustly can be squashed, ruefully, only by counter-violence. Society should not coddle, should not excuse violence. Society should tell the miscreants, "GROW UP!"

What makes for a superior society? (did you know that the dictionary has 82 definitions of the word "make"? Thus should make one and all pay

attention to precision and appropriateness of the words used). The obvious (?) answer is to constantly reprimand those miscreants, hoping that it will "rub off" on them (recall the comment that "hoping" was passive?) A more dynamic approach would be to encourage people to improve themselves in various (legal) ways. Specifically, promote the concept of self-esteem (which has been earned by hard work). Not only will this generate self-satisfaction but it will also create a much happier environment, much less prone to altercations. Let's be honest, have you ever noticed anyone with self-esteem who is not also congenial? Actually, it'd be an oxymoron to say that a person with self-esteem was also in any way cantankerous and disruptive. Some are envious of those with self-esteem (again, grow up). Actually, self-esteem is a beautiful thing. First, they are congenial with most everyone. Secondly, they are probably achievers. More importantly, they are also leaders who do so by setting good and proper examples. Perhaps of even more importance is the fact that they provide a counter-weight for those who are so fragile they can not resist the bad influence of aberrant peer-pressure. I know, almost everyone wants to be liked. (or at least not disliked) and yes, it takes sometimes a great deal of courage and will to resist the blandishments of being "one of the crowd". Who wants to be excluded from the group? Almost no one. Yet, what if you know that the "group" is wrong-headed? Why would you want to be liked by such people? I'd rather be right than liked. To use the vernacular, why let a bunch of certified jerks mess around with my outlook on life? Yes, I'm too proud to let that happen. As was said on a previous page, I was ostracized (at college) by many (for unknown reasons) and, truth be known, I couldn't have cared less. If they don't like me, I don't like them (only to the extent of thinking, "good riddance"). In all candor, there are too many other people and things in which to immerse yourself to be distracted by the fact that so-and-so doesn't like me (who cares? I don't and you shouldn't). The one thing that you should also not do": don't think that they're better than you. *Prima facie*, their actions prove otherwise. Note: you lose if you allow your (high) standards and values to diminish.



CLOSE ENOUGH!

This picture further illustrates the situation discussed on the previous page: both the closeness and the angle of the propeller. This picture shows, perhaps even better, that closeness by observing the shadows made by an overhead sun. There is of course some distortion, but not that much. I'm wondering whether that sailor isn't doing the same thing I'm doing right now: just HOW close are those propellers? (he's thinking as he looks over the situation. I must admit I did exactly the same

thing after we parked the aircraft. When you're standing by the wheel, wheelchock in hand, you had a very distorted view of just how close the propeller was from the tail-section in front of it. Lacking an accurate knowledge of this distance (propeller-to-tail) was the most onerous part of the parking activity. It was entirely mental, and it was done from a position of complete helplessness. And for one who has an imaginative way of perceiving things, it was often close to being excruciating.

Helldivers, head to tail, resting on deck (by the look of the shadows it's chow time). Note the angle of the propeller: the tip extends as far as the nose and thus the closeness to the aircraft in front of it cannot be lightly considered by the nose position (realizing that the propeller is almost invisible as the engine is revved up to advance the aircraft forward. Technical this but also very critical to the Airdale). Note the curved tail-section of the Helldiver. This is quite different from those of the other aircraft which have straight tail-sections. Different engineers, different opinions as to which is best. No doubt each is best for its purpose. This is seen to be usually true in most things but often there can be legitimate differences of opinions in many areas of life. There are not necessarily only the best way of doing things. As they say, "It's a matter of opinion". We should acknowledge this right up front and not arbitrarily criticize someone because his idea does not conform to your idea (it's a mat-

ter of opinion). In fact there can be many opinions, all valid, for a given situation. This is not to say that someone can be outright wrong, factually. A fact's a fact and its truth cannot be disputed. So how does one establish something as being a fact? Also how does one separate fact from opinion? With difficulty sometimes. Also, realize that biases can insinuate their way into so-called opinions. Here too one must be alert to separate biases from facts. Now we're dealing with facts and opinions and biases. What's a body to do? We go back to that old "maxim": Learn, learn. Learn. Learn how to differentiate between facts and opinions. It'll serve you in good stead, always. To eliminate bias from fact is somewhat more difficult. This will probably require keen observation over time, not a pleasing undertaking. To make matters worse there are those who have agendas that will supercede all else. People with agendas are more intransigent than all the rest. I say, "Good luck".



NOT CLOSE ENOUGH

Just another picture to highlight the situation. It should be remembered that this picture shows a static state of affairs. During the “parking-process” things are definitely not static. And there was that mind-rattling noise that somehow seemed to magnify the distress of watching, watching that propeller-hub inexorably inch forward, and forward, and then more forward again. Sometimes it literally bordered on agony just to watch. So the smart ones didn’t watch and so weren’t agonized by all of it. I could never quite reach that point. I was either (usually) watching intently, and suffering the pangs of my overwrought imagination, or

sometimes I’d just accept the mantra of kismet: whatever will be will be. For you see, what was happening was ENTIRELY out of your hands: your fate, literally, was in the hands of two strangers, a pilot and a yellow-shirt. The problem was, you could see your fate unfold before your very eyes. Fortunately, this process was over within a minute. (I have to make the point that throughout this book almost everything that’s said is from the point of view of a neophyte of 18-19 years of age. I believe this type of recollection is valid. So, if what is said sounds melodramatic, it’s because it WAS melodramatic to that neophyte.)

These Hellcats are not as close as they could be and usually as they should be when all the aircraft are present and accounted for. The closeness has been determined by the yellow-shirt plane-director and the pilot during the parking process. It requires a good dose of care and steady nerves because lives could be at stake if and when mistakes are made. In effect, it demands a solid sense of responsibility. There’s that word again, “responsibility”. Let’s face it, that word crops up in many ways all the time throughout life. It’s for that reason that I’ll break my commitment not to discuss politics in this book. Actually, I’m doing it because I can’t let stand what was said in only 20 seconds time during a presidential “debate”. The question was, “Are medical services a right, or a responsibility?” One said the former, the other said the latter. Unbelievably I didn’t hear one commentator even

mention one word about this difference of opinion (in the “debate”). One could say that that 20-seconds interval epitomized all the major differences for the whole campaign. Yes, medical service is important, extremely important but then so is food and many can not survive without gasoline for transportation or fuel oil for heating. Do I have a right to a house? (if I don’t have a house does someone “owe” me a house as my right?). (I agree, it would be wonderful if everyone had a house (which was earned).) Then there are lesser “rights” which can be enumerated such as property and a college education. All these things are good and necessary, but am I, are you, owed them? It would be great if everyone had a full cornucopia of goods and services (that derive from businesses, not government).

(Continued on next page)



HELLDIVERS, NOSE TO TAIL, II

Just a nice picture again showing a couple of SB2Cs. Up above is the Flag Bridge where the admiral held sway (actually, the captain of the ship “called the shots” on board the ship, while the admiral, if there was one on board, was the commander of a group of ships). Above the Flag Bridge is the Captain’s Bridge, which encloses the Pilot House where the OOD and helmsman are, among others. Incidentally, notice the exhaust port of the SB2C. It certainly is not muffled. Notice the tailhook

of aircraft #36. As an aside, also notice the small tab in the rudder of #36. This was adjusted to the right or left so as to compensate for something such as the propeller rotation, or some anomaly that caused the aircraft to veer to the right (or left?) when the rudder was lined up with the tail-fin. Finally, notice the “dogs” (levers) on the hatch (door). These were used to secure the hatch. They were necessary for water-tight integrity (but on the flight deck?)

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We have it on the authority of the Constitution that we have “the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”. Other rights are found in the Bill of Rights. Now our other rights must be derived from common sense: the right of one person vs. the opposing right of another person. The effect of these “rights” is to emasculate the concept of rights. “Right” implies that someone is owed something. Who’s to say that that person even deserves that something? Who’s to say how much of something a person is deserved? Why should this person deserve a largess when someone else is denied that same thing? The “rights” people have opened up a Pandora’s Box. Why is your “right” stronger than my “right”? When X gets a “right” Y is incensed because he didn’t receive the same “right”. Who’s the Solomon to adjudicate these “rights”? Why are you better at this than I am? Is there a better adjudicator elsewhere? The questions are

unending, the mischief that is derived is exponentially multiplied. No, “rights” is not the way to go because some are more deserving than others. But who? Why do I feel like “rights advocates” are pampered and petulant children who want what they want, now. What is required is tipping the balance on favor of “responsibilities”. These people are not “mean”; one could say they are generous in that they encourage those who “want” to get up on their own two feet and work for their wants (admittedly, this requires the availability of jobs, jobs, jobs). To encourage the “rights” people is to perpetuate the concept of dependence (an ugly word). Responsibility requires a work ethic that in itself can be very uplifting and reassuring of one’s self-esteem (that golden word). Has the “me” generation destroyed the will to take on responsibility for one’s own welfare? (prove me wrong). This country was built by hard work by those who took it upon themselves to be responsible. Don’t lose that spirit!



AVENGERS, PRETTY CLOSE

Here are some of those big TBF/Ms, up close and personal. I don't know what the distance is between the front and back aircraft, but it's very close. In fact, they're almost touching. However, since they're tied down (see lower right), they've probably been respotted from up forward to back aft, in preparation for the next launch. Thus they've been pushed to their present positions rather than having taxied there. So, this actually shouldn't be in the Parking Chapter. But it's so similar to the results of taxiing to a parking spot that I decided to include it in the Parking Chapter. Those are mechanics trying to start the engine without using a cartridge, by turning a crank. Once they get the engine fired up (started), presumably they'll do some repair work. This wasn't often done on the flight deck, but because the aircraft are tied down (notice that the tail-section is secured by ropes), they're probably in port and so no flight operations are in the offing. Notice the unmuffled exhaust pipe. (All the aircraft had unmuffled exhaust pipes.) It's not only foolish but it's also

inappropriate to be casual around and about aircraft that are fired up. Surely, to use the vernacular, it's doubly foolish and inappropriate "to play chicken" with a fired up aircraft's unseen propeller. In these cases prudence is absolutely appropriate. Yet is appropriate behavior usually so clear-cut? No. Appropriate behavior, as well as appropriate words, question whether the behavior or word is fitting to the situation. It requires intelligence and thoughtfulness and a willing attitude. For instance, when writing, who is the readership? Are they young or old, men or women, popular or erudite, and so on. We conduct ourselves with decorum when in church, We don't yell "fire" in a crowded theater. Our demeanor strikes a quiet note at the opera while it seems to go appropriately berserk at the popular concerts. Appropriateness requires adherence to standard mores and respect toward others' condition, such as those who are hurting. Laugh at a funny joke but cry at a funeral. Feel good when others feel good and learn what is and isn't appropriate.

Here we are in that zone of terror when the engines are fired up and the aircraft lurch forward inch by tremulous inch. Sometimes I would look at that nose-bulb ominously approach the tail-section in front of it and sometimes I wouldn't. Basically I exhibited three modes during this time: curse to a fare-the-well, render supplications to the Gods-of-the-Flight-Deck-Above or just plain resign myself to whatever shall be shall be. I would say that the three approaches were equally divided over the 12 months I did duty on the flight deck. The last approach was probably the most sensible one but resignation is ordinarily close to being a "dirty word". In this situation here it had some merit because I had

absolutely no control over what happened. When one has no control perhaps resignation is the smart way. Otherwise, one should never give up even if the desired goal is out of reach. One must then learn to cope (that word "learn" keeps insinuating itself, and for good reason). Coping is an art-form that involves a little resignation, a little moxie and a lot of intestinal fortitude. If you're resigned in one area because of outside control do the intelligent thing: find "another line of work". The world offers a wealth of things to do. In my case I was thwarted in my efforts to make something of myself in the area of automatic controls because it was my "passion". That's it: find your passion and "go for it"!



LAUNCHING/PARKING

At the outset, this is a “launching” picture, and although the aircraft were respotted here back aft (and so, placed very close to each other), the propeller-to-tail configuration here is so similar to what the aircraft looked like after they were parked that I decided to put this picture in the Parking Chapter. In truth, those yellow-shirts would take a professional pride in seeing how close they could bring an aircraft to the one in front of it. It’s also true that the yellow-shirt was beyond the approaching aircraft, and so was out of harm’s way if the aircraft under his control overran the one in front of it. And it’s also true that in being beyond “his” approaching aircraft, his view of the propeller-to-tail distance was at a skewed parallax. That is, since the aircraft under his control never reached him, he was looking at the propeller-to-tail distance at an angle (not perpendicular to the travel of the controlled aircraft). Thus, his determination of that propeller-to-tail distance was less accurate than if he was directly in line with

the propeller’s plane of rotation. In fairness to him (the yellow-shirt), he had to be further in front of where the aircraft was in order that the pilot could see him. And also, almost no such accidents happened (gratefully). But what about the next time? And the next time and the NEXT time and? (This situation was critically looked at because it was the crux of one of the most harrowing experiences on the flight deck, as far as this neophyte was concerned. And in addition, these scenarios took place EVERY day, multiple times a day (at least eight times). The emotions would swing from fear to fatalism to fear, and back again. But that’s right, it was “just another day at the office!”) I’m afraid I’ve used this euphemism too often and yet because this was precisely how it felt, it is “appropriate”. It fit the circumstances of my world for what seemed to be a solid thirteen months. In a way it was reassuring in that I knew fairly well what would transpire that day and the next.... It was “reassuring”.

If you’ll look closely you’ll see an Airdale leaning forward, head depressed against the wheel-strut of a Helldiver bomber. For all the world he appears to be beaten down, emotionally “beaten up”, a casualty of “battle fatigue”. For this reason he could well be ready to be cashiered out of the Airdale Division. I don’t know if any of our Airdales received a similar fate because, having been a loner, I wasn’t all that cognizant of who was in the Airdale Division. They could have been replaced and I wouldn’t have known the difference. Yes, they all wore royal blue shirts and cloth helmets and were in effect interchangeable. I agree, this was lamentable on my part: What’s all this talk of a “band of brothers”? I

do not recommend being stand offish in any situation (at school, at work, at play). While not shirking my duties, a recluse is a drag on any group. I can absolutely guarantee that my exclusiveness was not because I was previously in the Navigation Division and therefore “better” than the lowly Airdales. This would have been reprehensible. While it didn’t affect my carrying out my duties it flew in the face of a common goal by a group of workers. At the time I didn’t think about this but I do now. No, the reason for my deplorable conduct was that I was completely distraught and “dying inside” over the process of my losing the “absolute love of my life”, pure and simple. She was leaving me high and dry.



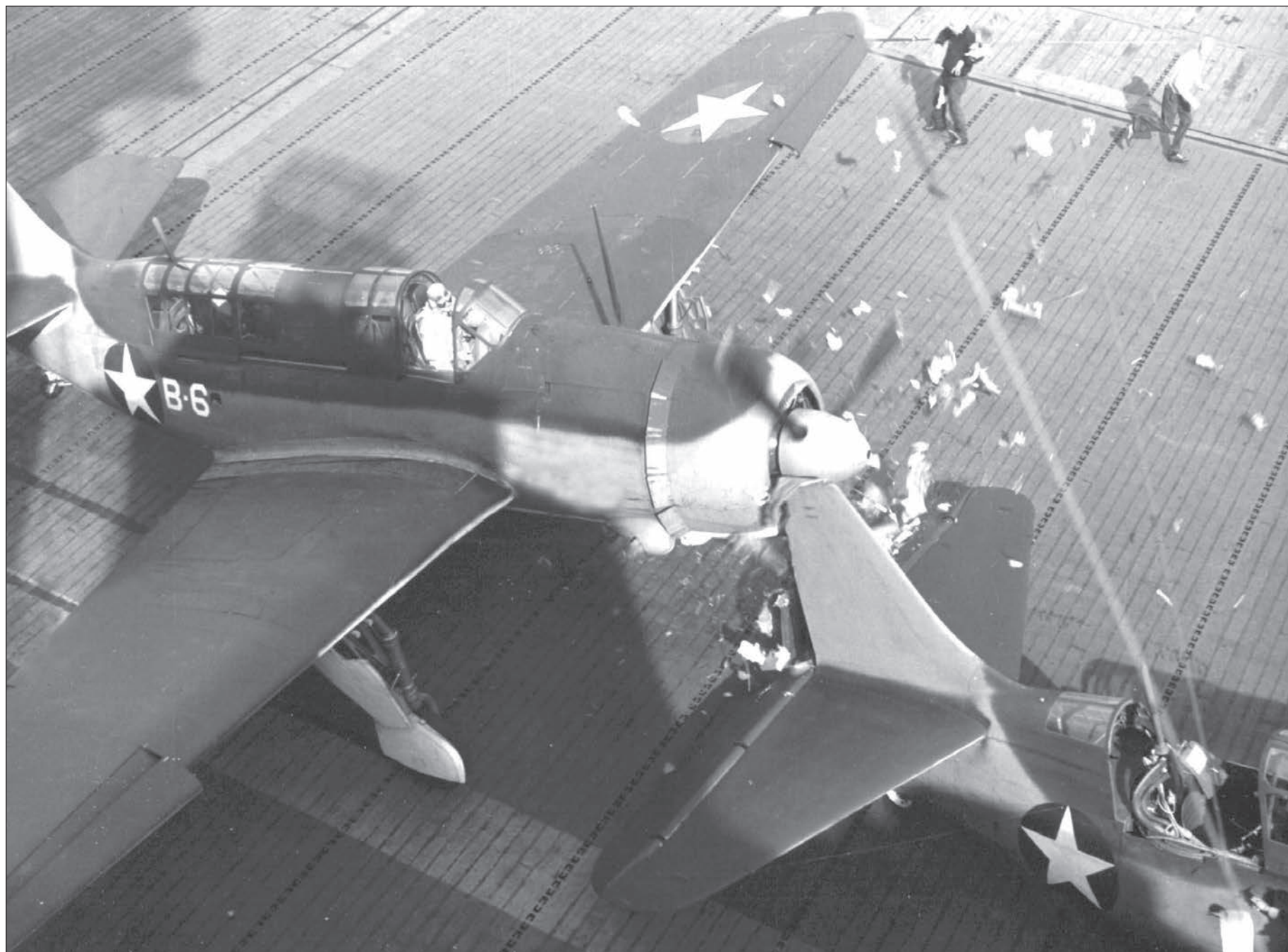
FLYING SHRAPNEL

What caused this mishap is not clear, but it does illustrate what can happen as aircraft taxi forward to their parking spot. The yellow-shirt controlling the SB2C to the left is not in view, but perhaps he didn't realize the SB2C to the right had stopped, for whatever reason. This is why the yellow-shirts have to work as a team, and not as individuals. The pilot of the left SB2C is looking, as he should, up to this point, at the yellow-shirt that we don't see to the right. The result is flying debris and "shrapnel" that can be harmful, if not lethal. What's puzzling here though is, "where are the Airdales?" There should be one at each wheel, with wheelchock in hand. I don't know what either of those people above are doing. They certainly aren't accomplishing anything useful. Another explanation to this picture could be that the SB2C to the left was taxiing faster than the one to the right. When overtaken, this is the result. Also, this must have happened further back aft, because there are no Airdales in view. The SB2C to the right was being cleared out of the landing area to make room for the next incoming aircraft (B-6), and it apparently could have even been in a stopped condition due to congestion up forward. If there was an Airdale next to the left wheel of B-6 (as there should have been), there would have been probable injuries (and possible death) to that Airdale due to the shrapnel having been spewed

back toward him from the tail-section of the aircraft in front of B-6. This is the danger that is always part and parcel of the parking procedure. And of course, this can happen any time aircraft are "wheeling about" as they taxi up forward to their parking spots, especially when there are multiple aircraft doing this at the same time (which is most often the case; remember the "20-second" scenario"). This then is the essence of the "parking imbroglio" which could often be nerve-wracking in the extreme. Powerful machines moving about in close quarters was a recipe for incipient danger, spelled with a capital "D". (Please excuse the repetition throughout this book, but 60,000 times IS repetition.) Yes, here we see the ever-present danger that besets one and all who venture forth on the flight deck during the parking process. It can happen at any time without warning unless you're directly involved. By definition it happens with suddenness because "time is of the essence" (I'll say over and over). The problem pervading is that some are moving forward in haste while others ahead are stopped, and the yellow-shirts don't have eyes at the back of their heads. Thus there will be times when one slams into another with a resounding and sometimes lethal effect. This is not a frequent occurrence but it IS an ever-present possibility devoutly to be avoided every day.

Oh-Oh. A bad day for this pilot, not to mention the Airdales up above. It's hard to figure where the yellow-shirt is to guide the pilot. Never, ever did we have an aircraft move on the deck under power without a yellow-shirt having full control (the pilots paid absolute attention to the yellow-shirts). Here is an example of the necessity for absolute control: It will prevent accidents such as this one. The same can be said for our paying strict attention to the authorities such as the police doing their duty. The most of them

are not intent on "throwing their weight around" at your expense. Those are usually relieved of their badges. We must obey the "men in blue" for our own benefit and those around us. Don't ever be a smart aleck or try to second guess them where they're in charge. Sure, they can make mistakes but your interference will only make the situation worse. If they're in dereliction of their duties they'll be brought to task. If not, our courts will redress the situation. Be a good citizen by obeying the law (for all our sakes).



THE AIRCRAFT THEY CALLED THE BEAST

This SB2C Helldiver was a big aircraft, and for some reason the pilots called it “the beast.” I suppose that’s the opposite of “sleek.” Anyway, this yellow-shirt is in the classic pose, arms upraised, giving the “come on” signal to the pilot, as he walks backward. Shortly, he’ll turn around and point to the next yellow-shirt director further up the flight deck, thus “passing” the aircraft up the flight deck. That Airdale, wheelchock in hand, stays with this aircraft until it’s in its parking space. When the engine is finally cut, the Airdale puts the wheelchock around the wheel and then heads back down the flight deck to “pick up” another just-landed aircraft. He’ll probably go through this routine three times per landing operations (of about 90 aircraft). Sometimes the pilots give the engine full power so as to get to the parking area as fast as possible. When that happens, the Airdale is in a full-fledged propwash of such force that it’s necessary to grab hold of the wheel-strut so as not to be knocked down. The combination of the propwash and the speeding aircraft

means that, as you hold the wheel-strut, you’re being literally dragged along as you “run” beside the taxiing aircraft. And the taller you are, the harder it is to stay with the aircraft. One may inquire, “why not await the aircraft at the parking area? The first answer is that that isn’t how it was done, and the second answer is that any aircraft that was under power had to have an Airdale, with a wheelchock, attending it. It was necessary to be at the ready should the aircraft’s brakes become defective. In any case, it was the protocol on board the Antietam, and that was that. First fast, then slow, the Helldiver “impatiently seeks its spot of repose” as designated by the yellow-shirt. All the while the Airdale can only sidle along as he watches and waits, watches and waits for that which cannot be foretold. The parking process would appear to be the benign operation but to me it was in fact insipidly dangerous and unforgiving because your fate was to be determined by others. Fortunately those others performed very “professionally”.

Here again it’s an illustration of the yellow-shirt taking absolute control of the situation (in terms of authority; this is interesting because the yellow-shirt is a chief petty officer while the pilot is a commissioned officer of at least the lieutenant jg rank; it was my lame opinion that the navy was in effect run by the noncommissioned petty officers (there’s some truth to that assertion)). Actually what’s involved here is that one person, the pilot, is taking direction from another person, the yellow-shirt. This is necessarily pervasive in society because one person is more knowledgeable than another person, so it’s correct and proper. We all must

take direction from others, and sometimes we bridle at this, often with good cause. However, stick with the designated authority and seek change if that authority is being misused. Life can often be messy that way but the alternative, anarchy, is worse. To many of the young this may seem onerous but remember that the young are, comparatively speaking, “still wet behind the ears”. There’s still growing up that needs to be done. You may think the teacher is a dunce but you’re probably just being arrogant (a very, very unpleasant attitude). Taking direction should in no way
(Continued on next page)



HELLCATS NEED HELP

As the yellow-shirt is holding this Hellcat in place, the Airdales are ready to help the Hellcat fold its wings. It's just landed and before it can taxi forward to its parking spot, this has to be done. Only the Hellcat needed this help. Notice the yellow-shirt has his fists closed, telling the pilot to apply his brakes. To maneuver the aircraft, one or the other brake was applied, causing the aircraft to wheel about. Thus, all hands had to always be aware of the "business-end" of the aircraft, as well as the resulting propwash. There was a "cylinder of space" behind an aircraft that was "fired up," and within that space one could easily be flattened and/or thrown back (into an oncoming aircraft). That "cylinder of space" was at least 13 feet in diameter (and horizontal), and it extended backward, with extreme force, as much as 40-50 feet. So, this "cylinder of wind" was much like a moving searchlight and woe be unto you if you were not aware of where it was "shining." In truth, as it swiveled in your direction, it was as if you were being grossly slammed by an unseen hand. But one

soon learns to become aware of such things, and to be prepared for it, so nothing untoward happens. Vigilance was the (unspoken) watchword, always. One of the relevant things about the Hellcat is that it needs help as shown here. In life there are things that are relevant and there are things that are not relevant. Thus it's for us to know the difference so that we don't "spin our wheels" on things that make very little difference in the scheme of things. This, again and again, requires intelligence based on knowledge (the former can be difficult, the latter is a matter of (hard) work; to use the vernacular, again, "don't be a wimp"). To me and my efforts, it's relevant that my father for a time was special assistant to the President and CEO of General Motors (after having taught economics at the University of Chicago after having received his PhD from the University of Paris; it's relevant because I had a standard to which to aspire, and in this I had an advantage as expressed when he said to me: "you should do twice as much as others").

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diminish your creativity and initiative. To the contrary, it should stimulate it in that "you know of a better way". To accept direction is a mark of discipline, a trait without which society could not function. I realize that there are those who dislike the military (it make war) and I can understand that. Yet, the military is exemplary in instilling the concept of discipline (there are those who suggest everyone should spend a year in the military for that reason---we won't talk about costs, etc. but I have been one to semi-seriously advocate such a thing; much of youth have shown such remedial requirements are necessary (so if you don't want to go into the mil-

itary, shape up!)). Naturally, self-discipline is the way to go (and this does not imply "spit and polish" discipline; leave that to those who genuinely like it). Believe me, self-discipline will serve you in very good stead. In the process of taking direction we will come across those whom we admire, giving us someone to emulate (a LEARNING process). Part of this process involves the preceding feelings of trust for that person. In this way you'll come to better understand the importance of trust. "In God we trust" but of almost equal importance is trust one for the other. We seem to have too little of this, to our undying detriment. Love, trust, the most important of these is trust. (the precursor of love). (We can't "love everyone")



STILL HOLDING

This picture could be a continuation of the previous picture, but it isn't (aircraft #20 and #18). Here the wings are being folded as the Airdales push on the wings to make sure that they catch in a locked condition. So, upon landing, a Hellcat needed to have its tailhook disengaged as well as have its wings folded before it could taxi forward to the parking area up forward. But first a couple of Airdales had to run out to the wheels with wheelchocks in hand. The pilot kept the engine at idle at this time, as well as applying the brakes to the wheels. Notice that there weren't any spectators on catwalk beside the flight deck. This was because aircraft that were landing couldn't be relied upon to land where they were supposed to land: on the flight deck. Sometime they would careen to one side or the other, finishing up in the catwalk, if not the water fifty feet below. Although most landings turned out to be without incident, there were always enough dubious variables involved to make all aircraft landings somehow potentially dangerous. And this was a danger that

involved all those in the area of the flight deck. But for those so-called "danger-freaks," a carrier landing was not going to be satisfying. (There were always exceptions to this, though, and sometimes, spectacularly so.) It's just that you never knew when these things would happen.) These things can put one in a valley of depression. Speaking of depression, if it's not organically derived, perhaps, even probably, it's not depression but varying degrees of discouragement and disappointment (no, I don't consider that to be depression). In fact, discouragement can be made to be a catalyst to generate further efforts on your behalf: it acts as a stimulant to "try, try, try again" (despite the bad name this received when quoted by Neville Chamberlain after "negotiating" with Hitler). One need not necessarily try the same thing over and over (where Einstein said that to do so experimentally, always receiving the same result, was a form of insanity). Make discouragement and disappointment in your efforts an incentive for increased determination, NOT vice versa.

The signal here is "hold your brakes on". It's of course much to be desired that you trust the one from whom you take direction. Since we take direction, indirectly, from our leaders we would expect them to be trustworthy. How do we determine if they're trustworthy? I would say by accumulating as much knowledge about them as possible. Gaining knowledge of their qualifications is derived from the techniques of learning, whether in school or college or elsewhere. Most all rational people would want to learn of a leader's past experience as well as his qualifications. Character of course is an important quality for a leader, right along with the experience/qualifications. Would you want a

welder to fix your computer? Of course not, so why would you want a leader who has no work experience in governance or economics whatsoever to lead a governmental entity. The bigger that entity the more experience required and it's incumbent on you and you to use your God-given intelligence as derived from study to choose a leader who should be followed. Leaders cannot expect to be followed if they do not also have the trust of the followers. Be smart enough not to be beguiled by flowery rhetoric, the "siren's song". A leader's too important to be foisted on us willy-nilly. Are his qualifications appropriate to the job at hand?? Be absolutely careful! Examine his qualifications assiduously.



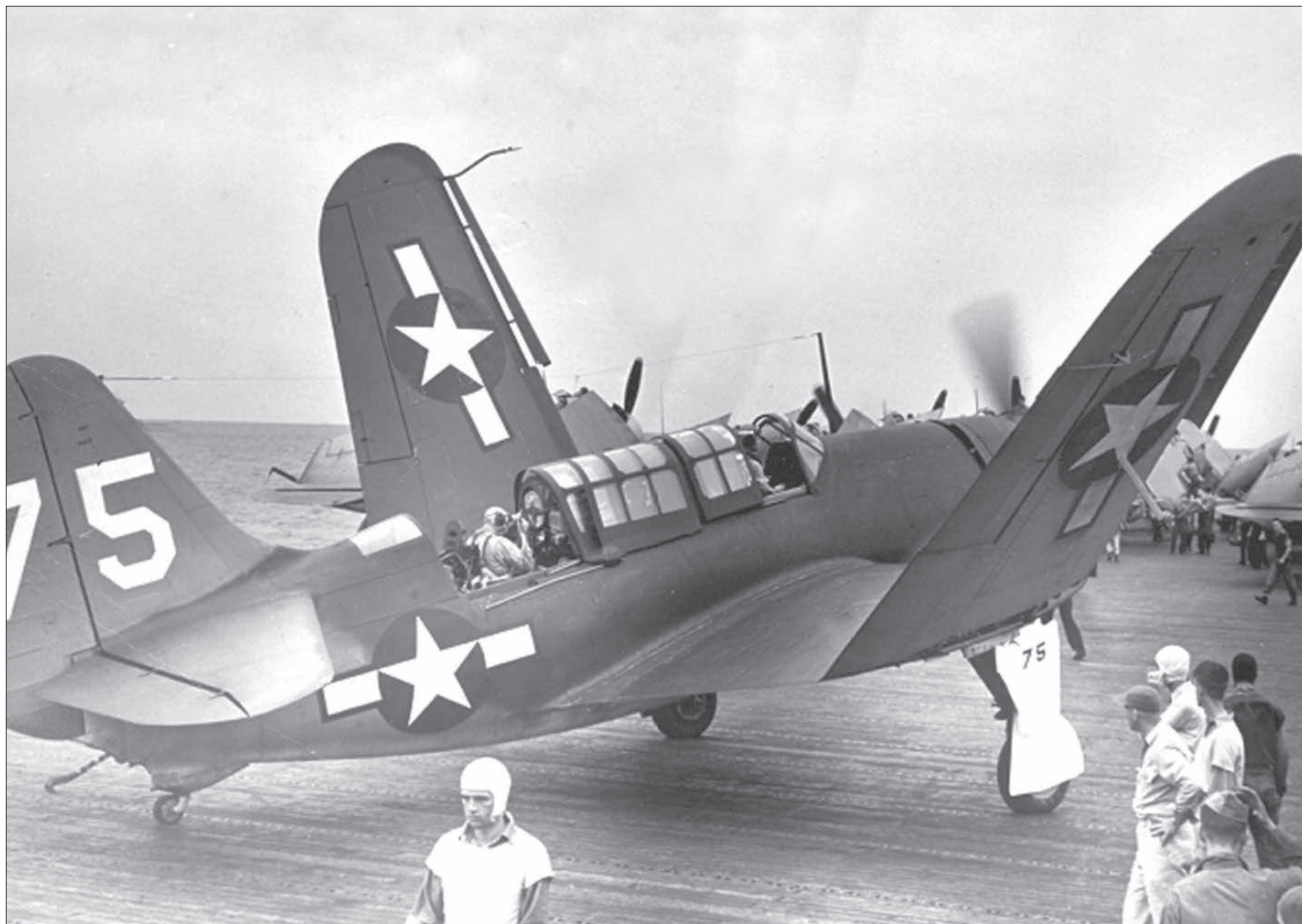
WHERE'S THAT PARKING SPOT

Folding his wings as he taxis forward, after having just landed, this SB2C and its pilot is looking for the next yellow-shirt in front of and to the right of him, after having just been passed on by the yellow-shirt in the foreground. But again, there MUST be an Airdale at each wheel. This was just plain SOP (Standard operating Procedure) on the Antietam. There were no two ways about it. For some reason, that yellow-shirt to the left looks somewhat young to be a yellow-shirt. Usually they were older (upper 20's) because directing and PARKING an aircraft was a very responsible job. Not only aircraft were involved, but also the well being of people were directly involved. Diligence had to be an integral part of their makeup. There was little room for any kind of joviality on the flight deck during flight operations. It was very definitely a business-like atmosphere at all times. There was no time to "let your guard down" as long as the aircraft were fired up and even during the respotting process; jocularity was missing. Good cheer took a holiday during

the daylight hours. However, most people prefer being cheerful. Thus, as you would be cheerful, as you would be happy, so too should you be generous in affirming friendliness toward others. Furthermore, it stands to reason that the happier the environment that you're in, the happier will you be. Therefore if you do things that put others in a funk you will have to reap the results of your actions. One could say that making others happy will make you happy. What could be easier? However, there are those who will say that without the monetary wherewithal there can be no happiness. This is patently nonsense and perhaps the opposite is the case (not that financial security is not of vital importance). Of course money makes for a smoother existence but it is not existence that is at issue here. It is happiness. The caveat must be stated that it takes a certain amount of intelligence to be happy with less than optimal financial resources. Enjoying a balmy summer evening with the sweet smell of the earth is priceless, to name but one of a multitude throughout.

As it taxis forward this Helldiver folds its wings while advancing to a parking spot. It doesn't require help in folding its wings as does the Hellcat. It's a fine thing not to have to depend on others, to be self-sufficient. If at all possible most people want to be independent in their activities because dependency is a drag on the spirit (would that government would realize and appreciate this). One way to assure one's independence is to be "smart". Yes, we're talking education here. "Smart" is much better than "smart alecky" as seem to be too many young people (it could be that their attitudes and behaviors are merely cover ups for their basic feelings of inadequacy). It would seem so obvious that those who

are competent are much better adjusted than those who are not. It isn't necessary to be competent in everything or in "important" things. If one can do something well, that's not trivial, that one will have a leg up on developing that all important self-esteem. As has been said before (and probably will again) those with earned self-esteem will "never" be a burden to society. [It would seem a good and noble idea to reach those in prison in this respect of developing a sense of self-esteem. It would be difficult what with others there being "reverse" cheerleaders but if successful it would be a life-changer.] That Helldiver has self-esteem so why can't you ? Be brave by working at it and for it.



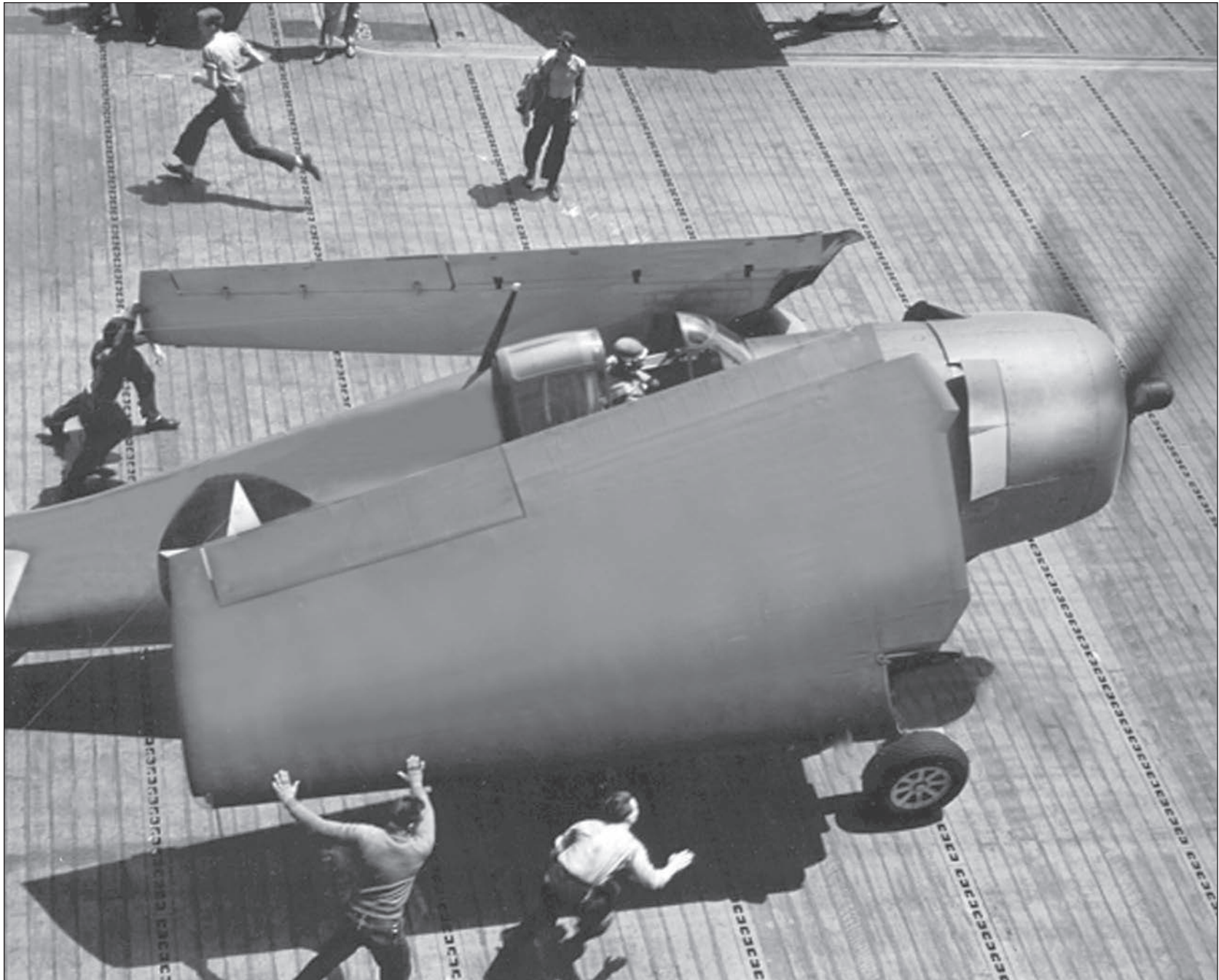
FOLD WINGS, TAXI FORWARD

This F6F just had its wings folded in preparation for parking up forward. The Airdale, middle bottom, is feeling the effects of the propwash as the pilot “guns” his engine to accelerate up the deck. I feel remise showing these pictures of aircraft taxiing up forward WITHOUT an Airdale at the aircraft’s wheel, with a wheelchock in his hand. He should be there in case the yellow-shirt indicates to the pilot to apply the brakes and the brakes don’t respond. Its not enough to just shut down the engine in an emergency. The Airdale must be there to stop the plane if all else fails: brakes and/or ignition. However, I must say I never had to respond to such a scenario, and I never saw anyone else do so. But that’s no excuse for not being prepared. Staying next to an aircraft as it taxied up the deck, at a fast pace, was not easy. That’s because the faster it goes, the stronger its propwash. Often they’d go as fast as 12 to 15-mph (to clear out of the landing area). It was then that you were dragged along by the aircraft, trying to stay with it (by hanging onto the wheel-strut.

After all, you were running into a “hurricane”).It’s not easy to run into a 50-mph wind that I estimate is present here in this picture. It does in fact generate fatigue even for a healthy teenager as were the Airdales. They all gave it full effort and it is this earnestness of purpose that I find so appealing in a person: earnestness leads to sincerity which usually leads to honesty, that Holy Grail of interpersonal communication. In fact, there’s a direct relationship between earnestness, sincerity, honesty and communication (and I’m not talking about the mechanical kind with transistors and capacitors and coils of wire moving a cone that moves air as in a loud-speaker). There’s something refreshing and attractive about someone who deals with serious subjects with sincerity and earnestness. You feel drawn to them because they are willing to put their thoughts right out front with confidence for you to evaluate: you’re dealing with a real person concerning something of substance. An honest person is one who is giving you a gift. You should cherish it.

As the Hellcat thunders up the deck the Airdale, bottom center, tries to keep up with it (usually he’s right next to the wheel). Sometimes it’s difficult to keep up. Sometimes it’s difficult to be as you should. The Boy Scouts have a code, some of which says. “A scout shall be trustworthy, loyal, helpful, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful and brave”, among others He’s trustworthy because genial interactions would not be possible without it. He’s loyal because trust would not be possible without it. He’s helpful because loyalty would not be possible without it. He’s courteous because true helpfulness would not be possible without it’ He’s kind because courteousness would not be possible without it.

He’s obedient because that encourages kindness. He’s cheerful because obedience becomes more palatable. He’s brave because it takes a brave man to be all of the above. That foregoing rendition was probably too cute by halves but it does emphasize the fact that these admirable traits seem to be all tied together in one way or another. Thus one trait merges into the other traits to make a satisfying whole. These traits are all about character that combine to make up a fine addition to society. It’s not the good thing to do; it’s the smart thing to do. If one looks at it that way there’ll be no problem with “being a nice guy”. It’s been said, “Nice guys finish last”. What contest was he talking about? ?



“WHERE’S MY PARKING SPOT?”

What was said about the previous picture can be said here. And again, on the Antietam, all the flight deck personnel wore a shirt and cloth helmet of the color that represented their duties: red, armament or gasoline; green, catapult and arresting-gear; white, safety; brown, plane-captain; yellow, plane director; and last but not least, royal blue, plane-pusher and wheelchock puller/placer and fire-fighter and crash-removal expediter (the Airdale). The Airdale to the left is feeling the effect of the propwash, but it doesn’t look like he’s carrying a wheelchock. If he were, he’d be right next to the aircraft’s wheel. What is probably happening is that he’s running up to help other Airdales fold the F6F’s wing. (The right wing’s already been folded.) That Airdale probably is a good self-motivator. How does one motivate oneself to do what needs to be done, to say nothing of what one could usefully/profitably do? Being a self-starter is what “separates the men from the boys”. To depend solely on others to initiate action is not only to abrogate one’s obligations and

responsibilities but also to make one more dependent on others (as it’s been said previously, to allow oneself to become unnecessarily dependent on others is not only grossly unsatisfying but also it’s to be the fool). To generate motivation, use your emotional and intellectual wherewithal to stoke your imagination for reasons why something would be good for you and/or others----or bad for you if not done. That is, if something is not done imagine, think of, the dissatisfaction that would accrue. This requires intelligence, the intelligence you accumulated while, for instance, you were/are in school. Those with added gumption will think through the consequences of not acting (in an expeditious manner). The things one cares about are easily catalyzed by one’s interests; it’s the disagreeable thing that requires the accumulation of character to “get off of one’s high-horse”, roll up one’s sleeves and do the unpleasant “like a man” (the female gender is not excluded). Self-motivation can well be a good measure of a person’s character.

This Hellcat has to have its other wing folded before roaring up the deck. Airdales are “plane-pushers” but there’s no pushing during the parking process. That process is all under power with a deft turn here and a deft turn there. The perception of this process of someone standing on the bridge looking down on the activity is quite different from those involved in the parking process itself (I know. I was on the bridge once looking down and it’s very different. From above it’s just a matter of this aircraft moving to that spot, and that aircraft moving to this spot. On the deck though there’s suffering in store if a slight mistake is made.). The same applies in normal life. What you “see” is not what I “see”. It’s not

just the different physical positions that make for the difference. Two people can see the very same activity from the very same spot and have two very different opinions as if they weren’t even looking at the same thing. How explain this? Much of it comes from what preceded in their lives. My history will color how I see things. They even say that two people record the same image differently because their brain tissues are not carbon copies. If that’s true think of the differences due to predispositions of attitudes. In this political environment it seems axiomatic that differing opinions are going to be widely dispersed based on from whence they came. Hence cold logic is of special importance.



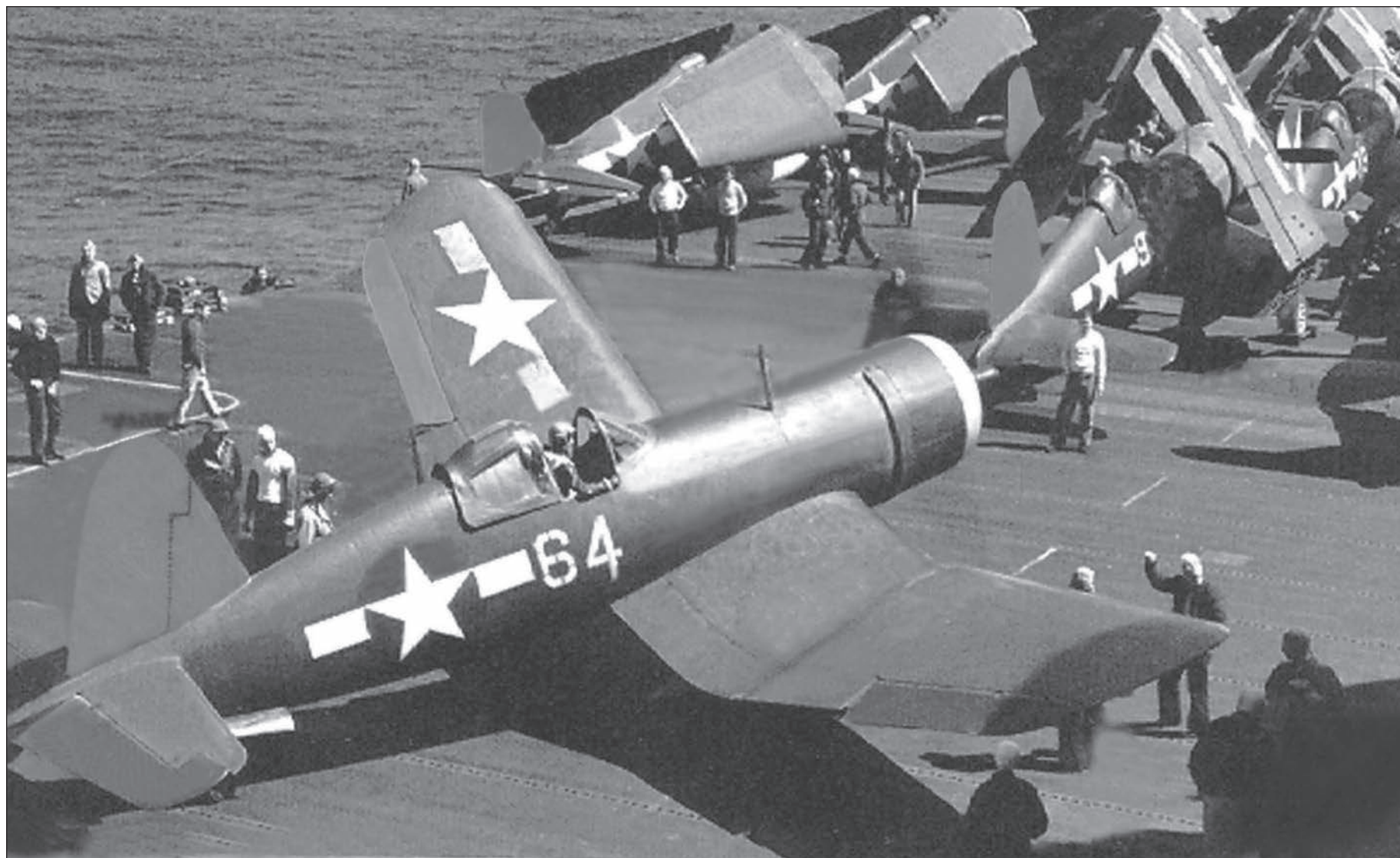
“STAND CLEAR!”

The yellow-shirt to the right, with arms upraised and both fists clenched, is holding this F4U in place until it folds its wings. Everyone else up ahead seems to be already in place and engines shut off. The yellow-shirt uses arm-signals to direct the pilot: left fist clenched and right arm waving “forward” will cause the plane to pivot to its right. The reverse signals cause the plane to wheel about to the left. Both arms upraised and beckoning vigorously “forward” will cause the pilot to release both brakes and apply power to the engine. In this mode the plane advances up the deck in quick-time. You, the Airdale, must stay up with the aircraft. Since the pilot “gunned” the engine (remember those 20-second intervals), you, the Airdale, are essentially trying to run into a “hurricane,” i.e., the aircraft’s propwash. So, with one hand holding the wheelchock, you (the Airdale) grab the wheel-strut and half run, half be-dragged, alongside the aircraft. Up the deck, another yellow-shirt now puts both arms downward and slowly pumps his hands (his palms) downward to

slow the aircraft down so as to do some serious parking maneuvers. This represents a good idea of a typical “parking” scenario. The yellow-shirt appears to be close to the propeller, and indeed he is. But as long as he stays outside the extent of the Corsair’s wheel, he won’t be struck by the propeller. Caution is certainly *de rigueur* on the flight deck during flight operations but it is also a good idea in our normal everyday lives. An obvious but often scoffed at idea is the one that says prudent people don’t take chances such as driving too fast for the conditions on the road. I believe my physical reactions are still quite good but I sheepishly admit that when I was young I thought I could handle any situation on the road. To this very day when I think back to my youth I shudder at the sheer “insanity” I displayed by driving at excessive speed, at night, on a residential road. It was monstrous and what was ABSOLUTELY inexcusable was that I knew it at the time. I’ll never forget nor will I ever forgive myself that night of “insanity”.

This Corsair folds its wings (which it also can do as it lunges forward heading up the deck to its parking spot). One might ask if it takes courage to accompany an aircraft during this time. The answer would be a qualified “yes” but we’re interested here in another kind of courage: The courage of your convictions including standing tall beside your standards. What good does it do if your adherence to your convictions and standards melt away when they are put to the test? Peer-pressure can be a daunting thing, especially for the young. To stand up to this pressure is called “the strength of your convictions and your character”. To do so signifies whether you even have a character of merit. Yes, this often takes a great deal of courage. The young especially don’t want to be left out, weighing what’s right, what’s correct against being included in the “in crowd”. Frankly, if that crowd is “off

base” who would want to be a part of that crowd? Although I was never asked (even remotely) to join a fraternity I felt no pangs. In fact they couldn’t have paid me to join a fraternity because since I didn’t drink I would have been an anomaly, “unfit” for their milieu. I didn’t have the slightest tinge of regret; it would have been a terrific drag. Another kind of courage is the courage to not be discouraged. Often it might be easy to just give up, to be overwhelmed by disappointment, to be disheartened. The more valid the discouragement the more courage it takes to right yourself. Often this emotion/intellectual courage is more difficult to handle than a pure physical courage. Often one knows the stakes in the latter situation while the former situation deals with the unknown. Here is where real courage can be displayed. Here the weakest may be the braver than the strongest.



LOOK SHARP

Now, slowly approaching the prescribed parking spot, the pilot, at the hand-signals of the yellow shirt, would alternately rev up the engine to move the aircraft forward, and then apply the brakes to slow down the aircraft. In this way the aircraft would incrementally “lurch” forward, in smaller and smaller amounts as it approached its final parking spot. The closer and closer the propeller came to the aircraft in front of it in these progressively smaller and smaller lurching movements, the more anxious I became. (Remember that this is a neophyte recounting this.) In fact, it’s during those last 12 inches, before the final 6 inches, as the propeller inexorably inches (lurches) forward that the anxiety would build up exponentially. “Would the next few moments be the ‘moment of truth’? Or would it be the NEXT time?” So it was each and every time, except that fatigue would sometimes make it all “academic”. That is, you knew there was absolutely nothing you could do to change the outcome, so why be concerned? While there were no doubt those Airdales who merely ignored the implications of the situation, I was never able to do so, except, as already mentioned, when I was too fatigued (mentally) to care one way or the other (“resignation” is the appropriate word here, I suppose.) Very often, during the parking operations, I would internally shout “cut the *%#!&%! engine!”, and this would act as a

relief-valve of sorts. Having been a “loner”, perhaps I was more touchy about all of this parking business than were the others. Mere supposition. Let’s just say that perhaps I was too insular to have had a more detached attitude. But I will absolutely guarantee that those occasions were what I’ll call, to this day, very, VERY dicey. One other thing: there are no doubt those who will question the numbers that I enumerated above. I stand by them. “Twelve inches”, “six inches” are valid, absolutely valid! I looked at those diminishing inches too many times to be mistaken. This isn’t a question of pleading a case, it’s rather a matter of presenting the facts (admittedly as I saw them). But again, I stand by them. Enough said. Enough said except for saying that I was eternally grateful for the professionalism shown by the pilots and yellow-shirts (whom I knew personally not at all). Gratitude is a fine thing of which there seems to be a short supply. A very beneficial exercise would be to periodically count your blessings (and you DO have blessings if you’d only be more perceptive and not dwell on your wants and misfortunes (sad though they may be). An appreciative attitude is “money in the bank”. Don’t squander it on habitually feeling sorry for yourself. Again, it’s a matter of “accentuating the positive and eliminating the negative” as in the WWII song.

Each parking process is different enough that you never get used to it and each person is likewise different. Diversity is differences, diversity is fine, as long as one is not brow-beaten or shamed into participating in it. The main point to be made is that we are all different, all diverse. It would be a shame if all the cultures and customs of the world were homogenized into one culture. It’s my opinion that to force-feed a thing such as diversity is to be strictly counterproductive (and are there those who are selfishly promot-

ing what they call racism for their own little “cottage industry”?) Yes, it would be entirely sad to lose all the diverse cultures that provide such an interesting panorama of differences. Acceptance of local diversity will happen much faster if left to its own devices. A key here is to stop associating diversity with inequality. They are not synonymous. As has been said before, people are accepted or rejected based on their character and personal conduct. If a person exhibits his gaucheness he’ll be avoided.



STAND BY

This Hellcat, churning up a storm, is about six feet away from its parking spot, a point about six to twelve inches from the tail-section of the aircraft in front of it. The yellow-shirt (out of sight on the right or left) signals the pilot to either rev up the engine and ease off the brakes, or rev down the engine and come down on the brakes. The resulting effect becomes a series of alternate halting/surging motions, lurching now, then slowing, then lurching, and so on until the final resting-place is reached, where the propeller is but 6 to 12 inches away from the tail-section. Not to be sacrilegious, but this is “prayer-time”, every time. It’s somewhat like “how steady is the surgeon’s hands?” Keep in mind that you’re looking at a 2,000-hp engine stirring up quite a storm. The power generated here is fearsome, and it implies pure and simple dread. The noise makes sounds that seem palpable. One would think one would become accustomed to this, but no, it never happened. However, it was no doubt true that there were those who couldn’t care less about this situation, and then there were those who did care, very much. Yours truly resided somewhere near the median. All in all, it came down to very ordinary people doing very unordinary things, such as accompanying these aircraft as they’re being parked. I’ve tried to describe these, and other flight deck activities, throughout this pictorial essay, making every

honest effort not to misrepresent or embellish any of it. I’ll stand by what’s been presented herein. (A closing comment: painted in large letters on the side of the island structure were the words “BEWARE OF PROPELLERS”. Actually, it should have read “BEWARE OF WINDS”. This was so because as the aircraft wheeled about on the flight deck during the parking operations (and other times also), VERY strong winds were generated, but NOT in a consistent manner (the forces were variable. BAD). And most importantly, they came from various directions at once, first from the right, then the left, then at your back, and so forth. Without those winds, the propellers would be manageable. With the winds, the propellers were DANGEROUS. The wind on the flight deck was similar to, say, a person who put you down every time that person had a chance to do so. Such a thing was disconcerting, to say the least, if not grossly disheartening. The former was physical, while the latter was emotional, but both had the same diminishing and belittling effect. (The latter was mentioned to illuminate the former.) Here, my perspective differs markedly from yours. In effect we’re considering two different things. Thus it’s incumbent on us to realize that differing opinions are often due to differing perspectives. Usually this is so. Be aware.

As an “obedient” Airdale accompanies a Hellcat a pilot stands and waits. While it’s important that one be obedient to one’s commitments to others and the proper authorities it’s equally important that one is obedient to the commitments to oneself (such as working hard, being upstanding, being true to one’s standards and one’s compliance to ethical conduct). You don’t have to be a Boy Scout to adhere to the admonition of being obedient. How do you expect others to comply with your requests or require-

ments if you show a lack of fidelity? Loyalty begets loyalty so it’s best to learn this trait early on. Obedience need not be onerous. In fact it should be a good way of being self-serving. The consistency derived from obedience to standards should be reassuring to one and all. It’s your “gift” to others. Obedience bespeaks of dependence (as in others being able to depend on you). Wouldn’t you like this in others? Yes, of course you would and you should expect it.



“HOW MUCH CLOSER?!”

The difference between this picture and the previous one is the Airdale at the wheel. He is crouching because as the pilot applies power to the engine, the propwash is a physical force of note. It'll literally remove you from the scene unless you're crouched down and holding onto the wheel-strut. The Airdale has to be there, next to the wheel, because when the yellow-shirt gives the “cut engine” signal, he has to quickly throw the wheelchock around the wheel so that the plane's momentum won't take it that additional six inches, before the pilot sets the brakes. While keeping an eye on the yellow-shirt, most of my attention was on the tail of the plane right in front of me. (The yellow-shirt was “upstream” of the propwash, so he was essentially out of harm's way. But then, he was supposed to be there so that the pilot could see him. By the same token, his line of sight was not “squared away” vis-a-vis the propeller-tail distance. This wasn't reassuring.) Notice the F6F right behind the Airdale. Expanding on the above, the yellow-shirt had to be beyond the plane of the propeller so that the pilot could see him (without the wing of the aircraft being in his line of sight to the yellow-shirt). This meant that the yellow-shirt had a distorted parallax view of the propeller and the tail assembly in front of it. This distorted parallax view, in turn, meant that the yellow-shirt had a distorted idea of the

closeness of the propeller to the tail assembly in front of it. This in no way inspired confidence in what was happening. “How could the yellow-shirt know, PRECISELY, how far that propeller was from that tail-assembly?” These conditions absolutely required preciseness. But let it be said that we had only one such accident (of a propeller “chewing up” the tail assembly in front of it and spraying shrapnel backwards). A couple of Airdales were killed and others were injured. The ramifications of an aircraft overtaking the one in front of it are obvious. However, in our lives how often do we realize the ramifications of our words and deeds? Do we have any idea of the unintended consequences of what we say or do? This seems not to be the case in so much of life. People become so wrapped up in how clever they think they're being when in fact they are precipitating consequences that completely negate their intended purpose. Purpose alone isn't enough as witness the phrase, “What a web we weave when at first we seek to deceive/ Never were truer words spoken. Another one can be said, “Good intentions could cause serious problems”, which means that even worthy causes must be thought through lest those in proximity and elsewhere are crushed in the zeal to “do good”. “Doing good” can be fine but only if all the unintended consequences are evaluated.

This Airdale crouches against the blast of wind, a hand holding the wheel-strut, as he studies the yellow-shirt's every motion. He's putting his every mental effort into this sequence of events, ready in an instant to throw the wheelchock around the wheel at the signal from the yellow-shirt. This example of (mental) industriousness should be emulated by one and all. This is a great habit to learn at an early age. It's the industrious nature of the American workers (I think) that has contributed greatly to the strength of this

nation. There are plenty of “talkers” to go around but in the last analysis it's the workers who roll up their sleeves and go to work. Industriousness is an outstanding trait which we all should learn. However, “all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy”. Try to find time for quiet contemplation (of whatever). I used to take long walks away from all commotion so that I could (try to) sort things out. It was a good palliative to the mind and soul. It allowed me to keep going to survive another day, way back when.



CAREFUL NOW

The yellow-shirt is giving the “brake” signal, with some force (note the body English of his leaning forward). The Airdale at the right wheel seems to be concentrating on how close this Hellcat is to the aircraft in front of it. The intensity of the yellow-shirt’s body language implies that any further forward motion of the Hellcat will spell disaster by overrunning the aircraft in front of it. If that happens, the Airdale at the right wheel will receive a hail of shrapnel (pieces of the forward aircraft). Right about now that Airdale is literally counting the fractions of a foot between just another parking situation and catastrophe. (Actually, there’s no such thing as “just another parking situation.” Every parking situation is dicey; I will guarantee that. Can you see the anxiety on his face? I can.) Momentarily, the yellow-shirt will give the pilot the “cut” signal, at which the pilot will cut the engine and the Airdale will chock the wheel (put the chock around the wheel). Missing here are the Airdale’s goggles. They help out, a lot. The Hellcat arrived at its present

position by pivoting around its left wheel. As the pilot applied the brake to the left wheel (at the yellow-shirt’s direction) he at the same time gunned the engine. In so doing, the Hellcat’s right wheel made an arc as it swung around to face forward (having approached the edge of the flight deck at an angle). The touchy part here is that, as the right wheel swung around to face forward; would it overshoot the edge of the flight deck and end up in the catwalk (the walkway next to the flight deck and about, four feet down)? If so, the Airdale would no doubt be crushed and the propeller would add to the woe. It all looks so prosaic, but indeed, it is not. That’s a large LOUD machine of 2200-hp wheeling about there in close quarters. Everyone, beware, for they impose on your sense of self-sufficiency. To impose on someone is at least a discourtesy up to a gross injury. Courtesy, politeness, costs us nothing but provides innumerable social dividends. Contrary to popular opinion, a polite person is not a weak person: actually, it’s to the contrary.

Note the yellow-shirt’s body-language: He’s leaning forward as if to stop this Hellcat (actually his clenched fists are accomplishing that). This intensity of body-language is akin to that endearing trait of enthusiasm (when properly directed). If nothing else, enthusiasm spices up life (and it’s definitely not necessary to show enthusiasm by mindless noise). Enthusiasm tends to come naturally in our play activities which is all well and good. However, when we consider our work, enthusiasm often is absent, to our detriment. Would that we could all find a job about which we’re enthusiastic. If so, the world would be a much better place in which to live, naturally. Yet, a little rationalization (which I have

previously deplored) can be very useful here. For one thing, we have a job which someone was “good enough” to provide you (and in fact they were being beneficial to you). They took the risk of creating a business from which you benefit, both in goods and services and in the creation of your job. So you don’t like your job? Don’t blame your employer. Learn to appreciate your job and even be grateful for it. Without it you’d be looking for another one (which would probably be a good idea). Don’t EVER forget that it’s the “businesses of the world” that allow you to prosper (relatively). Thank your lucky stars and work to make your job more satisfying (and put that in the bank).



EASY DOES IT

Sometimes Airdales have to crawl instead of crouch. Actually, this could be a launch operation where a lot of crawling is done, but it could just as easily be a parking situation. During a launch operation, the engine was essentially always fully revved up, so crawling was the mode. During parking, you had to move along with the plane. But I did my share of crawling. I saved, and still have, the dungarees I wore on the Antietam. They have very ample tears in both knees from having been worn thread-thin. Who knows, maybe that's me on my knees. "I can remember it well". The yellow-shirt is motioning the pilot to come forward. This means the pilot is applying full throttle, and that makes for a hurricane-force blast right in your face. So yes, he's crawling, and maybe grabbing hold of the cleats in the flight deck, if not the wheel-strut. I'll guarantee that that's a real BLAST that that Airdale's getting right about now. And every time the pilot revs up the engine, that odious, deafening roar splits

the air. You not only hear the sound, but you "feel" the sound. It was a visceral sound, a threatening sound. And it boded no good, the closer you came to those aircraft up ahead of you. The wind, well you wanted to turn away, but you couldn't turn away because you were "transfixed" by those "terrible swift swords" that were those propellers. It's easy to note the danger inherent in this situation, but is it easy to discern the essential difference between right and wrong, good and bad, proper and improper? No, because it requires a well-developed sense of discrimination to do so. (The word "discrimination" has been debased in recent years by having been given only a negative connotation: to "discriminate is to put someone down". This may be true but it certainly should not be associated only in that way. It is a disservice.) A discriminating mind can detect that which is good, correct, noble, honorable, beautiful and so on. Surely a discriminating person is an educated person.

Kneeling keeps this Airdale less exposed to the wind-blasts (but he'll have to get up when the Helldiver resumes its motion, which will be soon). We put value on our actions (as here) and our judgments. Values are put on the things of commerce also. This is represented by money. In essence, money represents value. That's the purpose of money. The problem arises when values are assigned to goods (products) and services. What's the value of a CEO's services? Is what he does worth 10,000 times what an electrician does? [Personally I believe that it's middle management that's responsible for a company's success and the CEO is "along for the ride", but what do I know?] In my view the value of a product is,

basically, the cost of production (producing the product) plus a given profit (among other things the ingredients of the product have to be bought out of profits; of course auditors are necessary). I chaff at the idea that someone external to the company can somewhat arbitrarily set values when they are essentially ignorant of the internal functioning of a company. Also, how does one assign the value of a welder versus a lawyer? How does one determine the value of a house years after it was built? Yes, I know: By how much someone is willing to pay for it. That person in effect is "creating money" by overvaluing that house. Overvalue something and you've "created money" (??).



“THAT’S CLOSE ENOUGH!”

Recall the parallax problem I referred to a few pictures back. Here’s a good example of that: the yellow-shirt (in a dark jacket) is beyond (further forward of) the F6F being parked. So, can he accurately determine how close that propeller-hub is to the tail of the plane in front of it? I always wondered about that. I always saw this situation as one in which perhaps my very life was in the hands of two people I didn’t know, whose competence was unknown, and who were perhaps as fatigued as I was, where literally inches mattered. Can you tell what the clearance is here? Notice that there is an Airdale, wheelchock in hand, next to the F6F’s wheel. (The yellow-shirt is giving the “brake” signal, and actually they did their jobs well. But as is said, “You never KNOW.”) It looks like they want a fast turn-around time of flight operations as witness the presence of the armament-man. (This picture aptly shows the “Parking Problem”. Here, in your chair, you can think rationally about it. There, you didn’t so much think about it as you “felt” it, sometimes with a

LOT of feelings, even at times verging on the irrational. A whole gamut of thoughts and feelings filled your head, sometimes from “so what” to other times to a “living nightmare” as you watched the gap between the propeller-hub and the tail-section inexorably close. At the “cut engine” signal, the thoughts turned to thankfulness while the emotions turned to silent profanity (my relief-valve). The thoughts balanced the emotions, and so another aircraft had been parked, until the next one.) I have of necessity eschewed (abstained from) the balance and proportionality that should be the proper mode in life. I’ve emphasized the anxieties and tensions rife (widespread) on the flight deck because that was how it was. However, proportionality and balance of word and deed turns out to be most useful: extremes of righteousness, and of course of iniquities, result in aberrations of a salubrious (healthful) life. “All things in moderation” will in the long haul be the most effective and efficient and sensible way of life: equilibrium is nature’s way.

As the “U.S. Navy” and the Airdale to his left watch the slashing blades jerk forward inexorably to that possible ultimate confrontation with the aircraft in front of it to generate in a face-full of shrapnel, do you think there’s panic in the air? (even though its “just another day at the office”). Well yes, why not? This is a visceral panic, usually of short duration unlike an intellectual panic. As long as short emotional panics do not turn into hysteria, Nature has taken its proper course. In the affairs of man it’s the latter type of panic that must be faced up. This panic could be considered “better” because it’s susceptible to an intellectual resolution (where there’s knowledge available to counteract that which caused the

panic). It’s important here not to let the panic induce you into doing foolish things. The dictionary states that panic is an overwhelming fear without a cause. This description accounts for many panic attacks but often there’s plenty of reason to, shall we say, be stunned. Hopefully the situation that caused the panic will not also cause irrational, frantic behavior (which is self-defeating). This tends to breed on itself. The prime antidote to an intellectual panic is, as usual, knowledge (derived from LEARNING). Knowledge and rationality. Sometimes merely changing the subject can so stifle the cause of the panic that it merely goes on the discard heap. It’s easy to say but some panics are just not worth it.



“START PRAYING NOW”

In this picture the yellow-shirt has a little better parallax. It also looks like he's giving the “brake” signal. (No, he's not shielding his eyes.) At this point he'll give the “put chocks” signal: with arms lowered and fingers pointing inward, he'll swing his arms in front of him as if they were a pendulum. Also remember that because the nose of the aircraft is slanting upward (due to the tail-section being lower) the propeller-tip at the six o'clock position is more forward than is the propeller-hub (the rotation-point of the propeller).

This means that as the yellow-shirt is concentrating on the hub, the propeller-tip is getting that much closer to the aircraft in front of it. This picture was taken from almost where the Airdale is standing. From this position it's easy to see how uneasy you'd feel as the propeller inches its way forward, in spurts. Since the aircraft is pulled forward by the propeller (and not by the wheel on the deck), this forward motion can never be smooth, i.e., it proceeds in increments as the pilot alternately applies the throttle

and the brakes. Quiet prayers were said at these times, and I won't deny that at other times, the opposite were said. But talk about a helpless feeling! This was it, in spades! (It was the NOISE, it was the PROPWASH, and it was “am I going to die right here and now?” An overwrought imagination, yes. Was it justified? Well, yes and no, because all you could do was brace yourself and hope and pray that these two strangers (pilot and yellow-shirt) would do their job “perfectly”, with inches to spare. And they did.) The parking process (problem) always engenders explicit concern about its satisfactory outcome. In normal life, one could well posit (propose) that there is a direct relationship between peoples' concern for others and the degree to which a person is civilized. This makes a near barometer of a person's sensibilities. We're not talking of extreme emotions but rather a “bread-and-butter” variety. For heaven's sake, even warring nations have “rules of engagement”. (Here, “war” is NOT related to brutal insurgencies, etc. where conduct is even more monstrous).

Anxiety is written all over the face of that Airdale as he watches intently the Hellcat being parked (remember, there are two Airdales at each wheel right now). The yellow-shirt has clenched his fists to stop the forward motion of the Hellcat (the lower part of the propeller-circumference being very close to shattering that tail-section in front of it). We absolutely depended on the strict reliability of that pilot-yellow-shirt combination to do their job precisely. “Close” is relative unless you're on the receiving end of the result here. Reliability is more than just projecting a sense of dependability. There's a certain confident certitude about one who is reliable (but it does not imply infallibility; it implies that one will do one's

level best to fulfill one's word (of honor). Reliability borders on trustworthiness. Society would in effect come to a grinding halt less reliability. I know that I sometimes prayed that the pilot-yellow-shirt combo was reliable in their parking duties. Reliability is not necessarily a duty but it surely is a glue that holds society together. Is it an oxymoron to say “unreliable friend”? Yes. Then also, who wants an unreliable car, an unreliable dentist, etc., etc.? If you expect others to be reliable, to be dependable why should not you too be the same? “Dependable” should not be confused with “dependent”. Yes, the former is gold while the latter is fool's gold, so don't fool around with unreliability and the like.



A NICE PICTURE

I included this picture primarily because it's a nice picture. But it also shows a typical proximity of a propeller to the tail-section of an aircraft in front of it. This was a familiar procedure, albeit, dicey. Actually, this is probably a pre-launch situation because the wheels are chocked (with small wheelchocks), and that Airdale ("undressed") isn't in an active mode. If this were the Antietam, then that ship out there would be either the U.S.S. Boxer or the U.S.S. Bon Homme Richard. But again, this picture shows typical spacing that you'll find on the carriers. This picture also shows clearly the auxiliary fuel tank underneath the F6F. As has been mentioned, these tanks sometimes are detached when a hard landing is made. This in turn will likely cause a fire of sizeable proportions. (A good question is "Why isn't the fuel in the auxiliary fuel tank used first to preclude possible fires?" I don't know.) So take from this picture the fact that space on a carrier deck is at a premium, and this in turn causes safety problems. Also, one should appreciate the fact that parking an aircraft on

this crowded deck is then necessarily difficult, and thus an unavoidably fearsome thing that will cause significant distress to those so inclined. So ends the Parking chapter. (How close do you think that prop is from the tail-section? This was typical, and somehow the engine-noise made it seem closer than it actually was.) During a parking process (problem) there are two main priorities: first safety then dispatch in spotting the aircraft. So it should be in our lives: what are our key priorities? What are our predetermined requirements in prioritized order? This becomes a form of road-map for getting from here to there. (it's not quite like the movie title, "From Here To Eternity", a WWII film of events just preceding Pearl Harbor. To determine what is and what is not important to you is important. For the most part it's the intellectual/emotional aspects of life that are the more important than the material ones. Do well to make a list. (One advantage of becoming old is that you no longer care what others think of you. Yours, though, is a broad vista.)

What fills his thoughts? What is it that concerns him? Is he alone, never able to share the things that trouble him? Has it always and always been so? Or is it more immediate, such as the panic he feels when he must engage himself in amongst those fired up aircraft at launch time? Perhaps the panic is that which he feels in the memory of visualizing "his girl" with that naval officer candidate back home when on a double-date. We'll never know, will we? It could possibly be that he's thinking of more intellectual things such as ethics. Yes, no fooling. Ethics permeates all aspects of our lives. I believe I'm an ethical person:. For example, only once in my life have I ever been unkind to my former "girl-friend". It occurred

when, after many years, I wrote to her telling her I wished I could give her the same cold-shoulder that she had always given to me since we were 19 years of age. It was a petty outburst but it was put on paper so it was more than a momentary thing. I have been sorry for that adolescent and petulant venting ever since. Yes, ethics are the linchpin of our society. Ethics are the rules of conduct for all members of the society. Those rules are based on the concept of equality of treatment one to all the others. These codes of conduct are hopefully pervasive across all classes of society. A civilized society demands it. Basically, just say that everyone should respect everyone. No problem.



ENEMY ACTION

Although we on the Antietam never saw enemy action, as a tribute to those Airdales who did, I believe at least mention should be made of the devastation that had to be endured by the flight deck personnel when enemy aircraft bombed a carrier, keeping in mind that they were on an exposed deck, fifty feet above the water (and their demise). In addition, if that deck had aircraft on it, and the aircraft were loaded with bombs and rockets, not to mention high-octane gasoline, then an enemy hit would be (and was) devastating. Keep in mind that out there at sea there's no place to hide. Once spotted, you not only can't hide, but you effectively can't run. You must "stand" and defend yourself as best you can. The ship's armament was there to do that. However, starting in October 1944, the Kamikazes made their appearance, greatly increasing the level of danger. When a pilot is intent on crashing his bomb-laden aircraft onto the deck of a carrier, it's a case of those fighting to die against those fighting to live. If the former wins, as in the case of the U.S.S. Franklin, the results were awesomely destructive. As a tribute to the Essex-class carrier, despite its heavy damage, the Franklin didn't sink. Is there any battle-situation where one is so exposed to death and destruction as that which happened

on the U.S.S. Franklin? This was why the Essex-class carriers were so heavily armed: twelve 5-inch guns (15 rounds per minute), sixty-four 40-mm automatic guns, and fifty 20-mm automatic guns.

For reasons not completely understood, our ship and the accompanying U.S.S. Boxer would be widely dispersed. This in turn made for a strong feeling of isolation, causing this neophyte to wonder and worry what sort of menace lay "out there" just beyond the horizon. That fear was for naught. Nothing ever came to pass. And such thoughts were fairly well ameliorated by the ever present "here and now". And yet, one never KNEW what was just over the horizon.

This chapter then is short because since this book is my "diary" and since the Antietam saw no enemy action, it seemed appropriate not to emphasize enemy-action scenes. But that in no way means to diminish what those who suffered enemy action did while doing their duty. My hat's vigorously off to them. It was very nasty, enemy action at sea. So, instead of my trying to describe their travails, inject yourself into these pictures and empathize with what you see, and then you too doff your hat to them, those stalwarts, those Airdales, those who gave so much.

SHELL-BURSTS OVERHEAD

To me, this picture engenders a woeful feeling of isolation, a vivid sensation of being utterly alone in an unforgiving environment: the shot and shell from above, the all-encompassing, hostile sea below. All is doom. All is gloom. All is insecure. All is threatening. Only bad things are imminent. And yet, and yet, when looked at when devoid of the above commentary, one can see beauty in the shapes and tones of the ethereal sky and the substantial sea, punctuated by the dark, man-made puffs. This is a composition by man and nature that can be contemplated without end. Try it, and try to figure out the paradox of simultaneous gloom and beauty. Perhaps there are those who would concentrate on the former, while others would contemplate the latter, or alternate, from one to the other. (For those of you who are purists, the superstructure of the carrier is that of a pre-Essex-class carrier. But I couldn't exclude this picture. It's a "work of art", not dissimilar to Ansel Adam's work.) The black 5-inch shell-bursts give a rich definition to the grays and whites of the

threatening sky while the more broadly stated sea adds its own contribution to the awe now felt by the flight deck crew but specks in this dramatic panorama that bodes naught but depression. Depression tends to be determined by those things we can not control while discouragement is due to things we can control but are unable to. It's very depressing when one watches with ever increasing anxiety as an enemy aircraft has singled out your ship for his load of death and destruction. There is little an Airdale can do but watch and wait and perhaps do some praying. This kind of depression soon passes though, for good (being missed) or evil (being hit). One can limit depression by realizing there is nothing that can be done and "God's will be done". Since nothing can be done, let God do his will (even as you "enjoy the view"). However, if discouragement takes hold there most always is a remedy: "turn to". Discouragements are there to be overcome, enjoying this result. It's a real joy to succeed where once was discouragement (in school).

The shell-bursts tell of the enemy above. The atmospherics speak to the doom to come. A terrible sense of aloneness pervades. There are those here and now who wish you dead. Just who are the enemy? Are they by nature implacable killers or are they susceptible to rational reasoning? It will be said at the outset that this war, of which this book chronicles, was a so-called "good war". We were deliberately and savagely and hugely attacked. "Turning the other cheek" was not an option. Obvious evil could not stand. We are now engaged in a war that would seem to be a misnomer: There is a violent "gang" that must needs be eradicated for the general welfare of all to be secure. This sore, this phantom gang,

should, I believe, be eliminated by a kind of beefed up version of a "SWAT" team of international proportions (INTERPOL). Uniforms are grossly self-defeating. I cannot help but to harken back to the days of yore when he who initiates a war leads the troops in that war. The cry of "My country, right or wrong" is definitely no longer valid in this day and age. Have we lost our character traits which should precede "Duty, Honor, Country"? In a small world jingoism can be a form of insanity. Yes, yes, I know that there are those many who will take strong umbrage with me about the above. I would say to them, "When are we ever going to rid ourselves of the notion that we can not function without an enemy?"



DOWNED ENEMY AIRCRAFT

The flaming arc of an enemy aircraft is seen above an escort carrier. Since there are no black puffs in the sky indicating 5-inch gun-fire, this aircraft was presumably hit by one of our aircraft, the CAP (Carrier Air Patrol). Those actions usually take place some distance from the ships, before the enemy is a direct threat to a ship. If the enemy should break through the CAP, the ship's guns then go to work (the CAP is some distance away so as not to be inadvertently hit by friendly ship anti-aircraft gun-fire). The white smoke is probably from the escort carrier's own 20-mm and 40-mm guns, so perhaps that's how the enemy aircraft was hit. However, it doesn't seem possible that the range of the 20's and 40's would have been sufficient to have reached the enemy aircraft. I must defer to the "gunners" in the audience about this. It's possible that this is a Kamikaze trying to crash onto the escort carrier. Its trajectory seems to be "satisfactory" (as can be ascertained by the smoke from the escort carrier: its smoke looks to be horizontal, implying that it's going full speed ahead so as to be on a collision course with that arc. But then, maybe it's only the ambient wind that's in play here.) If there's a hit, the casualties will be heavy. Such was the nature of naval warfare back during the WWII, especially during 1945. (Notice the gun-fire smoke in the foreground. Perhaps there were

other "bogies" in the area. (A "bogie", a naval term, is a hostile aircraft in a threatening position.) And perhaps this bogie was a Kamikaze: he makes it obvious that he's picked you as his target as he turns his aircraft menacingly AT YOU. He starts his dive first as a small object, and then, watching, watching, he moves closer and CLOSER, becomes larger and LARGER, sounds louder and LOUDER. It's really become personal now, this object hurtling faster and FASTER "straight at YOU". Not being a gunner, you can only stand and watch and wait, and think: is it really YOU he wants to send to "eternity"? Where to run? Where to hide? Does helplessness turn to hopelessness? And still he roars down, while shot and shell have no effect. What to do if, yes, it IS you he has in his sights. It's YOUR name he's assigned to oblivion. There were those who lived this scenario, and only they could know the mental anxieties and anguish that accompanied such a harrowing experience. To say anything further would be presumptuous, and so, finis. The definition of this picture leaves something to be desired but its emotional impact is there for all to see. Fortunately the physical impact is awry, otherwise there'd be dire mayhem in terms of seared sinew and rendered bones. Pretty pictures can deceive in their fundamental content: please do not deceive yourself.

There's a certain sense of foreboding and finality displayed here as someone has made the supreme sacrifice as indicted by that fiery arc. Do we know how to make more mundane sacrifices? Sacrifice means giving up something you strongly desire for something that will benefit someone else (a war sacrifice is not being considered here). When I refer to a "mundane" sacrifice I mean something much more manageable. such as not going to that great movie because an important test looms the next day. Let's face it, becoming educated will require sacrifices of you, some-

times seemingly harsh ones: It's a perfect Fall day outside and the gang is going on a picnic. What to do? Unless you can find time elsewhere to bone up for that test "bite the bullet" and stay home to study. Be brave, show your "guts". You won't be making the supreme sacrifice as shown here but you will think more highly of yourself if you stay home. Your self-esteem will love you for it. Our society produces those who sacrifice for a good cause and it produces those who have so little self-respect that they have to be carried by others.



KAMIKAZE INBOUND!

This is a picture of a Kamikaze trying to crash his aircraft onto the aft part of the flight deck. The Kamikazes were Japanese pilots who took a vow to dive their aircraft onto the Navy's ships to create a horrendous crash. These suicide missions represented, as someone said, "Those fighting to live against those fighting to die". To us, it was macabre, while to them, it was done for the preservation of and to the glory of the homeland. Consider this: one man and his aircraft possibly causing the destruction of a 30,000 ton ship and many (or all) of the 3,000 man crew. It never happened though, because although some of the Essexes suffered grievous damage, none were lost. Credit the crew, credit the ship, or credit both. In any event, they took the blows and never succumbed. The Essexes were a gallant ship, and they will go down in history as a magnificent ship. The nation should be very proud of what those who saw action did for this country. They did what they had to do, and they did it well. I doff my hat to them. And who among us could

ever fully understand what it was like to watch and wait as a large and lethal object approached us with the INTENT of destroying us? The Kamikaze was a unique "instrument of war" that should bring chills to anyone who contemplates the vicissitudes of war: death and destruction, sometimes on a huge scale that can only make one wonder "what is this thing called 'war'"? On reflection this picture reflects the cross emotions of fascination and fear, with first fascination that fast evolves into that chilling fear transcending all else. In mere moments some will die and some will lie dying. When one of those kamikazes approaches, the Airdale can only stare helplessly (but not necessarily hopelessly even though passively---- while the gunners can vent their emotions of anger by raking the foe with "hot lead"). How face up to one who fights to die while you fight to live? Shake your fist at the zooming machine of your possible demise? No, and there's no need to hide because there's nothing behind which to hide. The reality is that only time will tell your fate.

Just who was the photographer who held fast to take this picture? Was he killed as a result of his steadfastness? I don't know but I do know that such as he are few and far between. Can you be steadfast in your duties (we're not considering the military here)? Can you show gumption in your responsibilities (we're not talking about taking out the trash here)? Can you remain true to your obligations (we're not referring to obeying the speed limit here)? Perhaps that physics test is looming large and you're nervous about it. Do you shut out the world and dig in? This steadfastness often involves courage as much as does asking the boss for a raise. One of the admirable characteristics of participating in a sport is

that it often requires a steadfastness to eventually prevail in accomplishing competence. You try and you try to no avail to hit that "perfect" shot in tennis. Even if it doesn't seem to come to you, do you quite? "Rome wasn't built in a day". "Stick-to-it-iveness" is a trait to be sorely desired. Here the brave will prevail. Make steadfastness of your domain. Think of how much your jewel of self-esteem is burnished by overcoming obstacles. Can you give your full measure till you succeed? Yes, that photographer perhaps gave his last full measure to record this picture (even though this particular action is not to be recommended). By instinct he was steadfast to the end. Do you have a fraction of this?



DECKLOAD OF AIRCRAFT ON FIRE

This unpleasant sight is what happened when a Kamikaze, or a bomb, hit a carrier that had a deckload of aircraft that were gassed up and loaded with bombs. Topside personnel were very vulnerable, and so also were those below in the hanger deck. As would sometimes happen, the bomb would go through the wooden flight deck, the gallery deck, and explode on the steel-armored hanger deck. This was absolutely devastating to everyone on the hanger deck, what with the reverberating concussion, if nothing else.

Every morning, during April to August 1945, we would have available a page-long bulletin that detailed the activities of the fleet. When there was enemy action, these bulletins would recount the casualties in men and ships, such as ships damaged, ships sunk, which ships were attacked by the Kamikazes, how many were killed and/or wounded on each ship, how bad the ship-damage was, and of course the Japanese ships damaged or sunk. It was often disconcerting and disturbing reading, but it did make you realize that you and the

accompanying U.S.S. Boxer weren't the only ones steaming around out there. Actually, at the same time it did make you feel like you were "part of the team". This was good. Also, after reading those bulletins, one could not but be thankful for being spared the trials and tribulations that other ships were undergoing. This is not even mentioning all the miseries, worldwide, undergone by the military and civilians alike, which we civilians read about and saw in the newspapers, magazines, and newsreels which I did (up to Aug. 1944). The "score" was particularly dismal at the two-month battle for Okinawa where 3500 kamikazes attacked with a vengeance. This was the battle of the "Fleet That Came To Stay" as memorialized in the series "Victory at Sea" (the last segment). One of seven men of the 1500 ships were casualties and 300 U.S. ships were sunk while 223 were damaged. Eight carriers were hit but none of the large ones were sunk. The enemy went to suicidal effort to keep the Americans from their shores but 300 miles from Kyushu.

Now we know war: Death and destruction. Yet do we really know? Do we know the agonies endures by those souls who but a while ago were sentient beings? Do we have even a remote comprehension of the reality of what we see before us? Do we have empathy for those who once were just going about their business of pulling wheelchairs and accompanying the aircraft forward? Are we born with empathy or do we have to learn it? Can it be unlearned? Empathy is what makes us human, and the more empathy the more human we are (by definition). What is empathy? One could say that empathy is the intellectual identification with or the vicarious experiencing of another's feeling,

thoughts or attitudes of others. Empathy implies a well developed imagination as refers to activities external to oneself. Empathy relies on well honed sensitivities and sensibilities. Is empathy important to society? It is if society is not to self-destruct. Is empathy hard to develop? Apparently empathy can be nurtured only in a humanistic society where people are concerned for the moral welfare of others. There are probably those who wonder if it's manly to be empathetic. The answer of course is yes because here I have to refer you to the poem "IF" on page 743 of this book. Manliness is a great deal more than physical presence, for sure.



SAME SHIP, DIFFERENT VIEW

This is a picture of the same ship, but from a different view. The cruiser U.S.S. Santa Fe is on the left. Those sailors watching the carrier burn, could well be thinking “There but for the Grace of God go I”. While other ships were targeted, and hit, by enemy bombs, it was a maxim in naval warfare, by both sides, to “get the carriers!” Since the carriers could hurt you the most, they were the most sought after. Although it’s true that we, the uninitiated, can only barely surmise what agony those on the flight deck (and elsewhere) were undergoing in the situation shown here, it’s also true that we, the uninitiated, if we were of such a mind, could also bear the burden of anticipation of such an event. If one had seen the many newspaper and magazine articles and newsreels and read the aforementioned daily bulletins of ships hit and sunk and the resulting casualties from the Kamikazes, then all this was grist for the fertile mind. Anticipation had a way of turning into expectation if

that anticipation was of unpleasant possibilities, war-zone or no. Maybe it’s a quirk of human nature that uses expectations to somehow lessen the impact, or even forestall, eventualities. Be that as it may, all the personal thoughts expressed here, as well as throughout this book, are those of a nineteen year old as recorded by a seven-five year old who’s merely “the Boswell to the Johnson”. A cruiser sidles up to this carrier in distress to lend a hand. This desire to help those in need is a natural impulse of the human kind similar to the strong emotional feelings of protecting and promoting the well-being and happiness of those we love and care about, a very normal human sentiment. This desire to help out those in need has been called volunteerism by some but whatever it’s called, it comes naturally to those who are normal and well-adjusted. Here of course such is secondary to the requirement of conducting the “business of war” in a business-like manner. Sentiments are secondary.

“A friend in need is a friend indeed”. Here the cruiser sidles up to the stricken carrier as our emotions are suspended between disbelief and horror. Can there be anyone alive on that deck being consumed by an inferno? To those who survived, this approaching ship takes on that endearing role of a true friend. To render aid in time of need is the trademark of a true friend. Just what can we say about true friendship? It is certainly not those shenanigans that occur between casual friends. No, that can not be considered a true friendship. As a start a true friend will not keep the truth from you. Instead, a true friend will confide in you in confidence. A true friend will truly empathize with your tra-

vails, understanding the hurt that besets you. True friends are there in bad times as well as the good times. (Am I talking about a marriage here? Well, yes, a good marriage is a relationship between two true friends among other things, including romantic love. But I digress). As part of friendship high on the list is the ability to encourage and reassure. Support one for the other is integral. It’s the ability to convey the feeling that “you’re not alone”. Friends are forthcoming one to the other and express concern for each other. Sympathy is freely given as is the true test of forgiveness. Need I mention honesty and loyalty? Where would society stand devoid of true friends?



SO AIRDALES ARE FIREMEN TOO

The Airdales' role included that of being a fireman whenever catastrophe struck, whether it was due to an aircraft crashing on the flight deck or due to enemy action, as here. Certainly useful results in response to such a catastrophe depended greatly upon the knowledge and ingenuity of the damage control officers, both commissioned and non-commissioned, but in large measure a great deal of that optimum outcome also relied upon the quick initiative and pure doggedness of each individual Airdale. That's not to say that every Airdale was a paragon of a "model fireman". Rather, it's to say that history will show that many Airdales, when presented with the task of subduing a terrible conflagration, were energetic and resourceful in doing what had to be done (no doubt, some set the example for others, but that merely showed that when one or a few showed the way, the others were more than willing to "turn to"). And no Essex-class carrier was ever lost due to enemy action, though

many suffered egregious punishment from that enemy action. This picture shows Airdales in action. Since they were topside, they wore steel helmets, though seen here, some were "hatless". All topside personnel were supposed to wear steel helmets whenever "General Quarters" sounded because bomb-hits created shrapnel that could kill on board a ship as well as it could on land. The Airdale at the right is wearing a floatation device around his hips, also standard equipment that should have been worn by everyone at all times, at least during GQ. Obviously, there were those who did not, or would not. My recollection about this is that I did so, but certainly not all the time. In fact I kept mine; I figured that since I had my name stenciled on it, I'd keep it. In this picture, those that can, do and those that can't, are treated (for wounds sustained in the explosion). War is "a business" and as such it must be treated in an expeditious manner with the "product" handled professionally.

Now we are on that deck among those who survived. Now comes the time when duty and honor come to the fore. ("Duty, Honor, Commitment"). Honor commits you to duty. Honor is the commitment to do what is "right" no matter the cost. That, in a nutshell, is the meaning of "honor". (Here we definitely do not refer to "high public esteem".) An honorable person also has the attributes of honesty and integrity. These are a given. What is not a given is the meaning of "right", correct? Essentially each situation has to be evaluated separately to determine what is "right" (we're not talking of a person's "rights" here). Perhaps we could say that the "right" thing to do is that which benefit's the most people in a given situation but without treading on the minority's rights. This is a tricky

area and not susceptible to a few lines of text. In fact, books and tomes have been written to try to establish a set of rules in any given situation. Good judgment and sagacity is required here to define what is "right" and upright. Where does this come from? Certainly a large part of it is derived from knowledge over time which in turn comes from, that's right, education. This is not to imply that the well educated person is therefore well versed in what is "right". I would suggest a large measure of what is "right" is to be found in the ability to empathize. There are those who belittle this ability to empathize. It's thus doubtful that they can understand the meaning of honor. No matter how substantial the cost, the honorable person will do that which is "right", that which is upright.



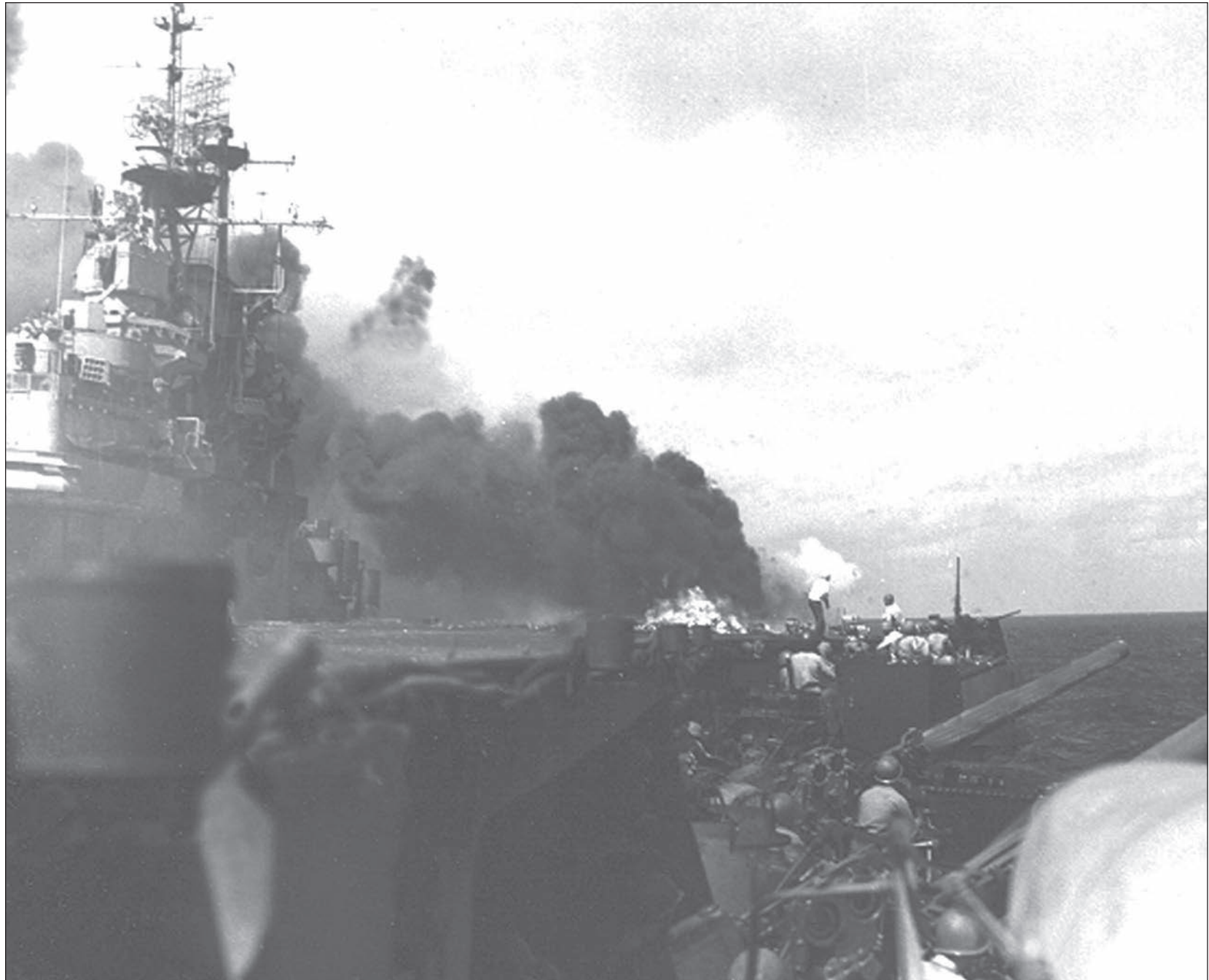
SAME FIRE, DIFFERENT VIEW

About one-half of the flight deck, and what's on it, is being consumed by the same fire of the previous pictures. This is a view from up forward, looking back aft from the port side. Since no one's in sight here, it's presumed that "everyone" (Airdales) are somewhere in all that smoke, doing what they were semi-trained to do. Again, this comment is made by one who was originally in the Navigation Division, and thus had but one day's worth of fire-fighting training. Those assigned to the Airdales in the first instance could well have had maximum training in the art and science of squelching explosive fires fed by high-octane gasoline (which generate dense smoke and heat). It should be mentioned that the seeming dearth of people topside was no doubt the result of the initial blast incinerating those in the area. For those that remain, this was definitely the time to react post-haste in whatever it was that they were trained to do. This domain, this place, this ship, this very deck was their "sanctuary", if you will. If it goes, and then they go. It's true that there were other ships in the area to lend support, especially if the ship sinks, but once in the water, one becomes but a very small insignificance bobbing about in the vastness of the ocean. Rescue would be extremely problematical, what with a war going on all about you. But here again, those that went through this will have to be the raconteurs. Only they know what it was like, and yours truly definitely will pass. One of the reasons for including this picture was to give one a sense of the confinement of being on a

restricted deck with a conflagration on one side, and the "limitless" ocean, and oblivion, on the other side. There was little room for retreat; it was stand and fight, do or die. (In the foreground is a gunner and the barrel of a 5-inch gun. The damage to the ship has been done, the enemy is gone, and the guns are silent, at least until the next hostile action by the enemy. He can only watch and wait and wonder about his fate.) Has the world come to an end? One would not be amiss to feel such upon viewing the after-effects of this horrific kamikaze attack all too plain to see. The beleaguered Airdales apply themselves with all the vigor they have as would anyone whose "sanctuary" is at risk far out on that unforgiving sea. As with all kamikaze attacks there are casualties, sometimes entire cadres of them. On a particular episode, as chronicled in the video series "Victory At Sea" (Micronesia), there was a row of coffins at the edge of the flight deck. A large group of sailors, surviving, gathered around this array with caps doffed and heads bowed. It was then that the chaplain gave the following prayer, said in a deep, deliberate and reverential tone of voice and manner: "Oh God, we pray Thee, that the memory of our comrades fallen in battle be ever sacred in our hearts and that the sacrifice which they have offered in our country's cause be accepted in Thy sight". The marines then fired a volley followed by the white-clad sailors tipping the coffins into the waiting sea. All was silent, all was still, except for the swishing, all-engulfing sea below: God be nigh.

The truth of the matter is that this is a serious situation. It's a fact. Truth is a fact and a fact is truth. Of course even facts have to be evaluated to ascertain its factualness. Presumably facts have to be verified first and this allows for interpretations. Thus truth is not necessarily evident. Remember, truth and honesty are not the same; honesty involves the emotions such that we come to despise those who lie to us concerning substantial things. Truth is different in that

their can be a legitimate difference of opinion as to the truth of something. However, for the most part truth is in theory absolutely represented by a fact. "The sun rises every morning". "Electric current flows from the positive to the negative (by convention)". It would certainly help, especially in politics, if the truth were obligatory. It would simplify things immeasurably. The admonition, "The truth will out", should get one's attention.



AIRDALES WEARING A “FIREMAN’S HAT”

Never having been in such a situation, my comments will only be drawn from the picture (the fire’s to the right). The smoke in this picture seems to have engulfed those in the superstructure, and hence they must be completely ineffective in whatever it is that they want to do (a ship out of control). Not having been trained as an Airdale, my knowledge of an Airdale’s training to fight fires was nil. However, fighting fires was definitely in an Airdales job-description: fight fires wherever he finds them, whether during flight operations or during enemy action as here (since they’re wearing helmets, this is obviously enemy action). I had one day of fire-fighting school while at Pearl Harbor, but that was inside a compartment. Here, what with the smoke and the limited-size of the flight deck

which was fifty feet above the water, sometimes an Airdale would be trapped between the fire on one side and the “deep blue sea” below. No such duress seems to be operative here though. Another consideration to be made is that if the bomb hit among aircraft fully loaded with armament and high-octane gasoline, then one explosion could lead to another explosion, and another explosion. All kinds of debris (mostly metal) would be flying about the area. This could quickly lead to a “Dante’s Inferno”, as in the case of the U.S.S. Franklin. It was devastation of the highest order. And it was not a kamikaze that caused this devastation. It was instead two 500-lb bombs, dropped by a single aircraft. The history books cover this catastrophe in detail, so it won’t be done here.

The overwhelming gloom confronting these intrepid Airdales is palpable (remember, Airdales are also “firemen”). These Airdales were not told to grab that hose and spray it here or there. They took it upon themselves to do what had to be done without being told. They saw the need and they responded to it. To be sure, this is their duty: To help each other fight the fires. How would the world function without one another helping each other? When we perform our particular functions, be it to repair a car or drive a bus or lay down a pipeline or whatever we are in effect helping others. We are essentially unable not to help others. Of course these are our jobs and so we do them. However the concept of helping others has become a part of the fabric of our

lives. This is good. We cannot have it otherwise. As has been said before, to help others is a part of the Scout Law. Eventually it become second nature to us, as it should. We don’t say to ourselves, “What do I get from it”. There are such crass people but they are hopefully in the minority. Just as we help ourselves so too do we help others. It need not be a monumental example; sometimes it’s the little things that make the most impression on the recipient. We are not talking about a largesse. We are primarily talking about a state of mind. The good thing in all of this is that you really do feel a little better in having at least made the gesture. If those around you are happy then so too will you (be happy).



U.S.S. SANTA FE TO THE RESCUE

The U.S.S. Santa Fe goes close to the U.S.S. Franklin so as to put water on the fires. Why they don't do so on the flight deck, rather than at midships as they're doing here, is a puzzle. Why they have that seaplane catapult turned toward the Franklin is also a puzzle (it looks like a battering-ram). The blazes back aft on the Franklin are still intense, and that's where the attention is needed. Perhaps it was because there were continuing explosions that would have endangered the Santa Fe. But on the other hand, it's precisely those explosions that needed to be controlled. There are no doubt books written about this occurrence, and this book will certainly defer to them. Again, the damage control officers certainly earned their keep on this fateful day. It's probably safe to say that everyone and anyone on the back third of the flight deck, at the time of the enemy action, were all lost because they were completely exposed and completely vulnerable. They "didn't have a prayer" of surviving those multiple explosions, to say nothing of the ensuing fires. The only good thing that might be said is that they didn't see those two 500-lb bombs coming that caused all the death and destruction. We did it to them, and they did it to us. No one was immune out there on that wide-open, desolate ocean. Heaven knows, there surely is no place to hide

from those dedicating their very lives to your destruction. Those Kamikazes, those guided missiles, were surely the true and genuine fanatics. Does one admire them, or does one despise them? And yet, it was a "mere" two 500-lb bombs that caused what is shown here. Does this amount to much in the larger scheme of things? Whether it's one casualty, or one million, the answer can only be "yes". / Were you by some quirk on this carrier's flight deck at this time it would have seriously jeopardized your chances for survival if you deceived yourself in thinking that the outcome of this situation would be either good or bad. Honesty occurs not only between you and others but also between you and yourself. If you're not absolutely honest with yourself, you're playing the fool. I firmly believe my life would have been much more difficult had I not been scrupulously honest with myself: long ago had I not been seriously honest with myself I would not have known that I was never to have the respect of others. This in turn allowed me to adjust to this lack of respect and thus I was able to find my path through life in the most efficacious (efficient) manner. Thus, "maybe yes, maybe no" would show more honesty with yourself than "yes or no" to the survival situation. Self-honesty is absolutely essential!

The two ships are now close enough to each other so as to allow the cruiser to apply water onto the carrier (how effectively it does so is not all that clear). The two helmsmen on each ship must work very closely with each other lest they collide. This cooperation here is mandatory. We on the other hand have opportunities to work together in much less stringent circumstances. This doesn't make such activity less useful. Just as we helped each other on the previous page so too should we voluntarily cooperate with each other

on projects to the betterment of both parties. Sometimes this cooperation is all but mandatory, as in the construction of a house. Other times these situations suggest mutual benefit for both parties if only we would recognize them. It's foolish to overlook these opportunities merely because we're too self-involved to notice them. Instead we should seek such arrangements where both benefit. In college I wrote a thesis about the cooperation of the BENELUX countries after WWII to their strong mutual benefit.



GETTING CLOSER

Still the Santa Fe pours water into (onto) the Franklin. To what end? Again, it would seem more beneficial to do so back aft on the flight deck. But then, what do we know? Not much, except that a lone enemy aircraft dropped two 500-lb bombs on a deckload of aircraft fully fueled and fully loaded with bombs and 5-inch rockets. The ensuing death and destruction is only implied in this set of pictures. We can only imagine the jagged steel debris being hurled in all directions, the high-octane gasoline igniting and detonating other bombs, the fires begetting other fires, and a very small island, the flight deck, must endure this cataclysmic inferno in stunned disbelief. But why go on trying to conjure

what's happening within those scorching flames and fumes? It's ghoulish. What we do know is that the U.S.S. Franklin, on that infamous day, lost 724 men dead, and 265 wounded. There were 393 medals bestowed, 19 Navy Crosses, 22 Silver Stars, 5 Gold Stars, and 235 Commendation Ribbons awarded. Many of the wounded, and not wounded, were transferred to the Santa Fe. The U.S.S. Franklin made it back to New York under her own power, and was decommissioned in Bayonne, NJ on February 1947 where she was put into mothballs, as her final resting place. So ended the career of a ship that endured one of the most horrific episodes in US Navy history, a ship that would not die.

The ships have drawn close to each other and a collision is a possibility. What with the wash of the waves between them a sway of either ship will bring them into contact. Here the cruiser has the responsibility to avoid the stricken ship by keeping a suitable separation. In life we all have responsibilities, some larger than others. Optimally we will not shy away from any of them. In fact, the more we accept our responsibilities the easier it becomes to do so. Just what are our responsibilities? Very basically, do what you should do and do not do what you should not do. That leaves the question as to what we should do. Again very basically, we should of course obey the laws, the rules, the standards of a civilized society. Then there are the more esoteric things such as using good judgment in all that you do. Again, good judgment requires a modicum of plain old-fashioned good common sense. Again, this in turn depends

on having accumulated sufficient knowledge of the "world" (requiring, yes, learning at school and elsewhere). These are the basics. Further along one must understand what it means to be accountable (for you actions or lack thereof). The rules of society specify fairly well established rules of conduct. Your comportment in situations is a clear indication as to whether you know what the rules and standards and established customs are. Don't be a dummy and act as if you don't know. If you actually don't know, ask a responsible person. Society will not function decently when it's populated with irresponsible people. Adhere to what you know, deep down, is "right". Remember, a responsible person is dependable and is able to discharge his obligations without having to be told. Being aware of and accountable for your conduct is to be responsible.



WHERE THERE'S SMOKE THERE'S FIRE

The saying “where there’s smoke there’s fire” certainly applies here. The cause of this fire was most probably due to a bomb(s) having been dropped on a deckload of fueled and bomb-loaded aircraft. A carrier’s most vulnerable condition is precisely that: a large number of aircraft on deck, all ready to launch on a bombing mission. When a bomb(s) is dropped into this mass of aircraft, a conflagration is the inevitable result, as witness this picture. But beyond that, for the pilots in the warming-up aircraft, and the Airdales manning the wheelchocks of those aircraft, this picture represents a true holocaust where survival was non-existent for all those in the area. If the original detonation and subsequent explosions didn’t cause them to die, then the dense smoke would. Water is already being put on the fire as witness the water flowing out of the 40-mm gun sponson (this water found its way from the flight deck to the hanger deck and then to the ocean via the sponson). Another observation is that the 20-mm and 40-mm guns are unmanned. This implies

that the ship is now out of harm’s way and the gunners are topside on the flight deck fighting the fires (since so many of the Airdales, the normal firefighters, perished in the initial explosions. Certainly this catastrophe could have been caused just as well by a Kamikaze who specifically aimed for the parked aircraft. And so the first guided missile made its appearance. Duty here’s rife, it’s salvation. Too often duty seems to imply distaste and the difficult if not an outright onerous aspect. At times, as here, duty represents salvation and an act of self-interest (as in studying for that exam). The mandatory aspect of duty now becomes irrelevant (would that all duty were so neat). Herein lies the key to solidifying that most admirable character-trait of duty-done: access the benefits of your obligations, a clear translation of “putting your nose to the grind-stone” (for that homework assignment). Develop your ear to pick up that clarion call to duty. Too many people think that the word “duty” applies only to the military as demonstrated here. We all need disciplined attitudes.

Even a fool can recognize the extent of the destruction done to this mighty ship that will not die. What devastation! Some things are easy to recognize: It’s staring right at your besmudged face. Other things are not so easy to distinguish. They require a well developed ability to discern subtleties This is the domain of the scientist and even the student. This astute discernment is not acquired overnight. It may take years to develop, so you might as well start right now to develop this necessary precision of thought. We mentioned the importance of being observant most all of the time. Take care that some things are distinct and some are fuzzy (fuzzy logic actually is a fairly precise discipline when using a computer

program; where standard logic deals in “on and off”, “ones and zeros” and fuzzy logic says the “white fence is not really white (1) but only 70% white (0.7) white”). This is a form of discrimination, a most useful “device”. We must learn to discriminate more often so as to distinguish a 1.0 white fence from a 0.7 white fence. Scientific discoveries depend on a scientist having great discernment. While you might not need all of that, it certainly makes life easier if you’ve developed that capability to discern slight differences. For one thing your teachers will appreciate this quality in you (as you should also). Discern, discriminate, differentiate, they all put you ahead of the game. Why wait?



ANOTHER DIRECT HIT

While the previous picture showed a bomb(s) hit back aft among aircraft, this picture shows one amidships. It seems to be an “active” situation in that there is debris flying overhead. This definitely puts those fire-fighting Airdales in immediate jeopardy. Those after-explosions often punctured the hoses, making them inoperable. Damage-control on a ship was often very difficult because, among other things, the equipment used to control and suppress the damage was itself damaged by the initial explosion(s) and ensuing fires. Lack of water-pressure was one of the most pressing problems. (Perhaps it should be said that damage-control below decks was a much more difficult situation: close quarters, smoke, lack of ingress and egress, inoperable equipment, etc.). On the flight deck, one of the problems was restricted “real estate”. If the smoke and/or fire forced you back, “back” could mean back to the edge of the flight deck and a fifty foot drop to the ocean below, and then certain oblivion: there was no turning back for “man overboard”. This presumes that a man

going overboard was even noticed doing so. That’s a good explanation of the phrase “between a rock and a hard place”, and similar to someone trapped in a burning building fifty feet in the air. “You’re doomed if you do, and doomed if you don’t”. A cruel choice. So which is right? A more fundamental question is, “What is upright”? An obvious admonition is “don’t cheat, steal or lie”. Often the appropriate thing is the right thing, but what is appropriate? It means that certain conduct or words do not properly comport to given conditions. Now then, what is “proper”? (We’re fast approaching circular reasoning, a no-no.) Even presuming you know right from wrong, do you do the former and shun the later? You are probably a person of rectitude if you’re sincerely sympathetic for others’ woes, are genuinely considerate of others and actually concerned with their (nonpolitical) welfare. If one constructs a fairly restricted boundary of moral values one will most likely know right from wrong and act on it (hopefully).

If I would leave the reader with one thing from this book it would be the admonition to hold dear the attribute of trustworthiness so as to do honor to those on this and other ships who made the supreme sacrifices for the preservation of this, your nation. Never ever forget that there can be no legitimate democracy without the scrupulous trust we have between our government and the people. Lincoln once wrote (said) that, “You can fool some of the people all the time and all the people some of the time but you can’t fool all the people all the time”. Why should it be so (that there are those who deliberately attempt to fool (lie to) the people whom they govern? The very bedrock of a viable democracy is the trust

that exists, government to people. A felicitous society demands it. The news business should not believe they’re immune from this necessary “commandment”. When I was about 12 years old my father said to me, “I don’t care what you do later in life as long as it isn’t in the news business”. What wasn’t he telling me? That the news business is nefarious? Who can legitimately deny that that (monkey) business isn’t abjectly and utterly biased? (and that they have a completely undisguised agenda). Without impartiality what becomes of a healthy democracy? Do we look the other way and in so doing completely denigrate the sacrifices made on their behalf? Now that’s an atrocity!



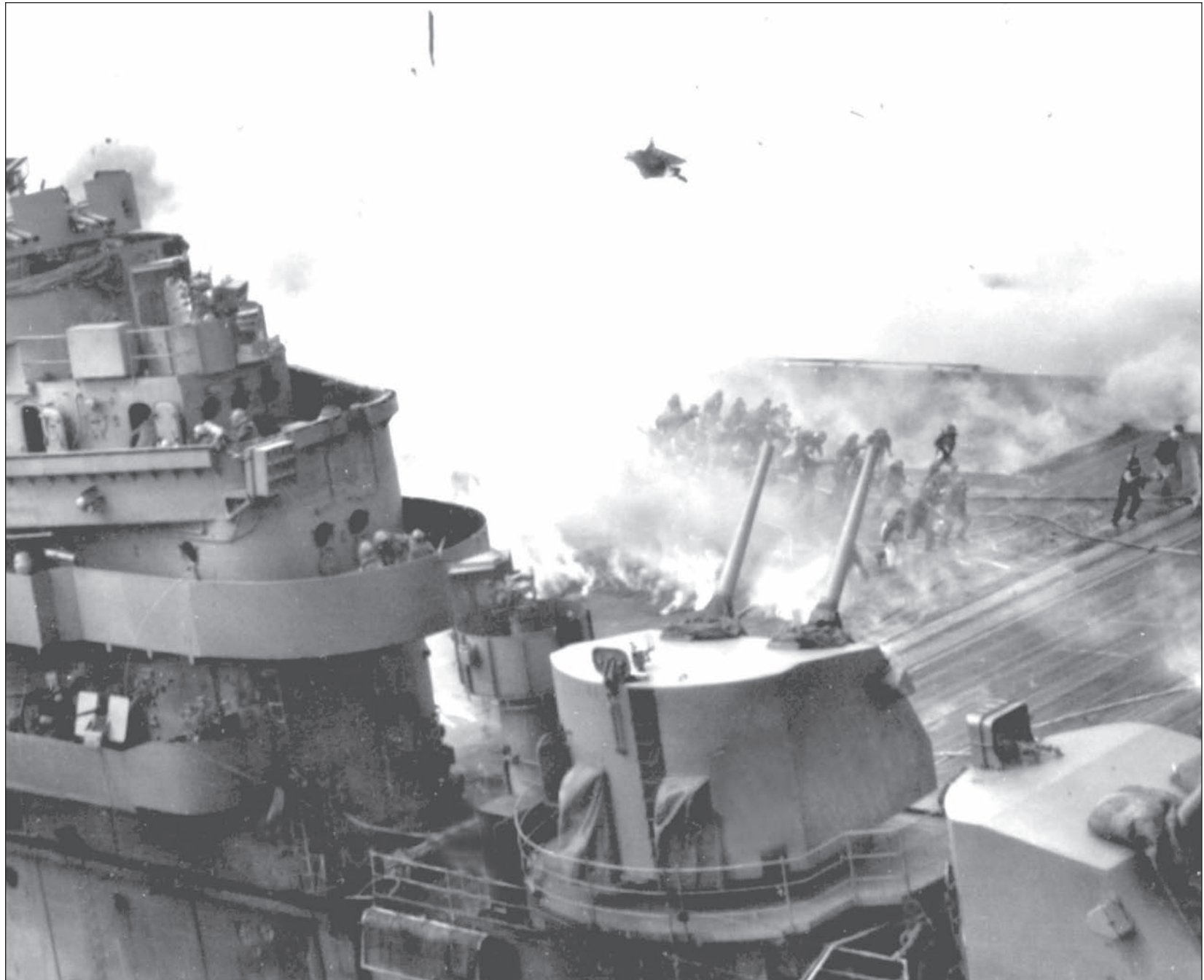
SAME SHIP, CLOSER VIEW

This picture brings home a little more closely those Airdales under severe duress (presuming shrapnel is flying about in the air). Soldiers will say “this is old hat”. True perhaps. But consider that the “playing field” in question is very small and confined, and there’s no place to go to if unduly pressed. Again what’s considered here is a restricted platform fifty feet above an unforgiving ocean. However, how often does this situation occur? Certainly not that often, but its possibility is always there, lurking in the recesses of one’s mind. So, is the thought worse than the possible actuality? Only those who have gone through the actuality can answer that. However, it seems axiomatic that thoughts comprise a large part of what we call “us”. We go through a thousand “thoughts”, but only one actuality. This then is said in the context of the accompanying picture, But it would be best to ask one who was there: is the anticipation worse than the actuality? (Obviously not in this scenario.) Violence has been done this ship as only war will have it and knows it, yet violence knows

no boundaries, at all. However, those facile with violence all will surly feel its steely sting anon while nature knows nothing so vile as violence against those but weak and vulnerable. Retribution need not be considered uncivilized in a civilized world where true justice, under law, is upheld throughout (with justice being represented by the blindfolded holder of the weighted balance). Thoughtfulness and courtesy in turn does much to smooth the ruts in life throughout. To me, one of the most potent, civilizing forces extant is to be found in those who have attained a valid, earned self-esteem (it’s unimaginable to envision such a person not being fully civilized in the true sense of the word). Among other things, it is they who intelligently comprehend and thus appreciate the blessings that have accrued to them in life external to their own efforts. This in itself is a gift. Such people are fully aware that they must be accountable for their actions and fully understand the worth of such a mindset. Self-esteem is essential!

In keeping with trustworthiness of the previous page we could well say that those, still alive, on this ship are right now perhaps saying to themselves, “In God we trust” (which appears on all our currency (money; look for it). This was definitely not an “afterthought”. It’s difficult to believe that everyone, even agnostics and atheists, do not believe in some higher being who’s responsible for the world in which we live. Different peoples have different names and different impersonations of “God” but to deny “his” existence is almost beyond comprehension. Whether one goes to church or not seems completely irrelevant to this basic concept of an Almighty Being. Faith is of course a personal matter. Some wear it

on their sleeve while others keep it buried deep within them. As long as this personal faith is not imposed on others there should be no recriminations. One religion has one set of customs and another religion has another set of customs. No one is closer to God than someone else. This would be the height of arrogance to so think. It’s even childlike. Be glad that they worship the same God, if you are so inclined to religion. Knowing about different people’s faiths is not my strong suit but I feel that as long as no one believes that they are the “chosen ones” all will be well. As long as one behaves and obeys the law, “live and let live” should be the motto for all. God respects no “superior” peoples.



THE LONG VIEW

This is the long view of the picture three pages back. This clearly shows water pouring out of the hanger deck. It also shows the ship listing to starboard, probably due to the captain deliberately turning the ship to “off-load” this accumulated water. This ship’s in “extremis”, and for that reason, an attraction for more punishment. That’s how the military mind works, apparently. Perhaps part of the reason this is so is that when a ship is woefully damaged, it is at the same time woefully inept in its own defense. Does this sound like the “law of the jungle”? But then, no one ever said that war is fair. If it were fair, there would be no war. A fair war is an oxymoron. A sporting event can be, and should be fair, while a war, it never can be fair. In any event, the enemy never did sink this ship, or any other Essex-class carrier. These ships bent, but never did break, and some of them took fierce punishment. It’s a tribute to both the men and the ship. The safety and security of the ship is now surely dependent on the fortitude and staying-power of the crew, to say nothing of their training.

A ship can only do so much to sustain itself against the deep wounds incurred. In no way does a person mimic a ship: over time he should have learned how to depend on himself. The self-reliance gained by practicing independence is invaluable. One aspect of this condition of independence (yes, the Fourth of July is nigh) is to inform oneself concerning all phases of society. This requires the effort of gaining knowledge (remember school?). It will serve you and society well as well as being demanded by a vibrant democracy. Unfortunately, there are those who want to (deliberately) misinform and mislead you. If there be one message I would want to convey, it would be this: do NOT let yourself be hoodwinked by nefarious others who want to sway you with half or even no truths. PLEASE put to use your God-given gifts of rational reasoning to ferret out statements that are opinions only and not facts. Otherwise we are in danger of losing our independence to charlatans with ulterior motives. Honesty is the BEST policy.

Is there any way that we can imagine what those Airdales are undergoing there on that raging flight deck? Do we have any concept of the struggle transpiring on a ship afire at sea? Do we wonder how others cope when in the “extremis” of life and death? Yet at other times and other places are we piqued by events elsewhere? Beyond that do we give sufficient thought to what makes the “world go round”? To the point, how is our curiosity quotient? Curiosity is a God-given trait that makes for an interesting life. Inquisitiveness will take us a long way toward our goals of achieving success. Curiosity, interest, inquisitiveness will in effect make the so-called drudgery of school be a thing of beauty. Honestly. If

you are able to generate an interest in a subject you’ll have opened up a whole new world. Do not spurn the intellectual life for it has spawned most of the things that make your life bearable and doable. Yes, there are those who say “let the other guy do it” and then take advantage of all those “neat things” such as computer games and the like. Those things didn’t just grow on trees. Someone who took a genuine interest in the world around him/her dug in and created new devices and new ways of doing things. Where were you when all this was happening? Why didn’t you contribute? Where is your gumption? Realize that a whole new world will open to you if only you’re curious and have interest.



THE DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE

There they are, those guns, upraised and silent, now that the damage has been done. What a sad and forlorn sight this is, this gallant ship, unbowed, but showing the pain it sustained. How does one who has never gone through that form of unmitigated pain and overwhelming distress discuss what it was that those Airdales (and others) endured in that raging inferno of final perdition? How does one render a true bill of particulars as represented by this picture? Who among us can tell their story? Who among us can imagine their final agony? There it was, a majestic tour de force, and now, here it is a struggling, wretched vessel out on a vast and lonely ocean, limping as best it can toward sanctuary and respite. As it turned out, she regained her strength and steamed her way back to safe harbors. But yet again, who among us could know that special Hades, that place of torment, on that fateful day they went in harm's way? This action earned her the moniker "The ship that would not die". She was a brave ship, she was a valiant ship, and she is a ship that will be etched forever in the annals of

the U. S. Navy, because it can be said with pride, "she fought the good fight". How does one "fight the good fight"? One way, a good way, is to establish for oneself a set of principles by which to live. A code of conduct that you adopt will stand you in good stead. These are nothing more or less than guide-lines for living the upright life (having been briefly discussed previously). When I was young, well before my sojourn in the navy, I made up a list of those values and principles that I thought were sound and useful as I made my way through the labyrinth of life. They were, if nothing else, a source of reassurance to me. Periodically I'd look at the list's contents and compare it with my previous experiences and perhaps add or subtract an item or two. It was not by any means a hard-bound process but it was a helpful guide when I needed it, not a bad thing to have in times of adolescent bewilderment. Everyone has to have their own list, emphasizing this and not that. Hopefully these lists are not all that different concerning what's "good & proper".

Here's a situation where peer-pressure is a good thing. We take the lead of a leader who is correctly showing the way by grabbing the fire-hose and opposing the fire. There is also bad peer-pressure when we (meekly) follow the popular but disreputable group (we want to be liked; everyone does). The best way to counteract bad peer-pressure is earned self-esteem. I had occasion to do that when I was about 12 years old at a summer camp. Since I was an "old-timer" (since 7 years old) I had the opportunity to go on a hike with the "big guys" a few years older than I was. Our hike covered 30 miles in one day and traversed two of the highest mountains in Vermont (Mt. Killington and Pico Peak; actually Mt Mansfield was

the highest). I hefted a 30-lb. pack on the hike. I felt pleased as could be for having made this hike. My self-esteem was upgraded. I didn't feel as if I had done anything remarkable but I did feel as if I had done something difficult. It wasn't an accomplishment about which to boast but it was difficult and it was done (boasting is a no-no). The point to be made is that one should try to achieve something a little beyond your present reach. Having done so will automatically boost your self-esteem and thus make you more immune to the blandishments of those who would lead you astray. Earned self-esteem is your shield and your sword to fend off bad judgments and misguided activity.



TWO KAMIKAZES DELIVER SUCH DESTRUCTION AND DEVASTATION

Here's the famous, or infamous, picture of the U.S.S. Bunker Hill after having been struck by two of those infamous kamikaze aircraft. It was on the morning of May 11, off of Okinawa, that the Bunker Hill had 25 of her aircraft flying strikes against Okinawa while 48 aircraft were on the flight deck ready for launch and 27 were on the hanger deck being fueled and loaded with bombs and rockets. A Japanese Zero aircraft appeared out of the clouds and dropped a bomb aft of the number three elevator (where the aircraft were warming up their engines in preparation for launch). The Zero then crashed into the 48 aircraft. Soon after this, another Zero made a vertical dive onto the flight deck at the base of the superstructure. Thus the Bunker Hill became a blazing inferno, killing 360 men. Only the U.S.S. Franklin suffered more than the Bunker Hill. She would not return to the war. It can probably be said that most all of the Airdales were lost in this catastrophe. But so also were pilots and red shirts and green shirts and yellow shirts and personnel on the signal bridge and navigation bridge and many others below deck. Unlike an artillery event where the casualties never see the impending disaster (if you hear it, it's already over your head), the personnel on the flight deck can watch as a Kamikaze makes its way toward them, closer, ever closer, bigger, ever bigger, louder, ever louder,

wondering, ever wondering, if its his turn to be turned into ashes. While not wanting to make this a contest of which is worst, it's edifying to be put in touch, once in a while, with that which is real. (Although Heaven knows, there's already too much of it in civilian life, if one watches the news.) These Airdales (these "firemen") were an intrepid breed, a breed which maintained its fortitude in time of serious distress by opposing a situation that would determine its, and others', life or death, what with detonating bomb-laden aircraft at random without warning. [A small portion of this book is dedicated to the proposition that your forefathers were not such a pedestrian lot after all.] So we speak of the brave. Who are they? One could well say that the brave are those who have the courage to face up to their fears and in so doing, overcome them (whether they be a raging inferno or whether it be that domineering final exam). Those who can muster the intestinal fortitude to overcome their fears have won have the battle of bravery. Our fears abound, large and/or small and it is for us to cut them down to manageable size. Seldom will they be of the magnitude as experienced by the crew of the U.S.S. Bunker Hill (CV-17). However perhaps we feel as if we have our "Bunker Hills". The least of us can screw up our courage to demonstrate our bravery. Stand tall!

The looming dark, menacing clouds of smoke silhouetting the weary fire-fighters tells the story. What a depressing sight as the conflagration engulfs the now dead sailors. The essence of the picture presents a stark impact. It's here and now that the flight deck needs the strong and steady hand of experience bred in years of such immersion. True experience is not gained, not granted cheaply. This experience that's of true value must of necessity bear the scars of the "battles" encountered. This explains why the youth should bear (manageable) burdens so as to strengthen their

resolve in times of difficulty. Dare I say that that calculus test is one such occasion? Do you wilt only because that assignment is difficult? Do you have the intestinal fortitude to dig deep when researching a project? Yes, experience is the sine qua non when the crucial issues arise. Again, "School work should be considered one of your primary efforts". These young sailors didn't have the requisite experience but they definitely applied themselves to this hole cost. Can you do less? [Good times are fine but that wild beer party is in effect to blaspheme.]



WHAT HATH BEEN WROUGHT?

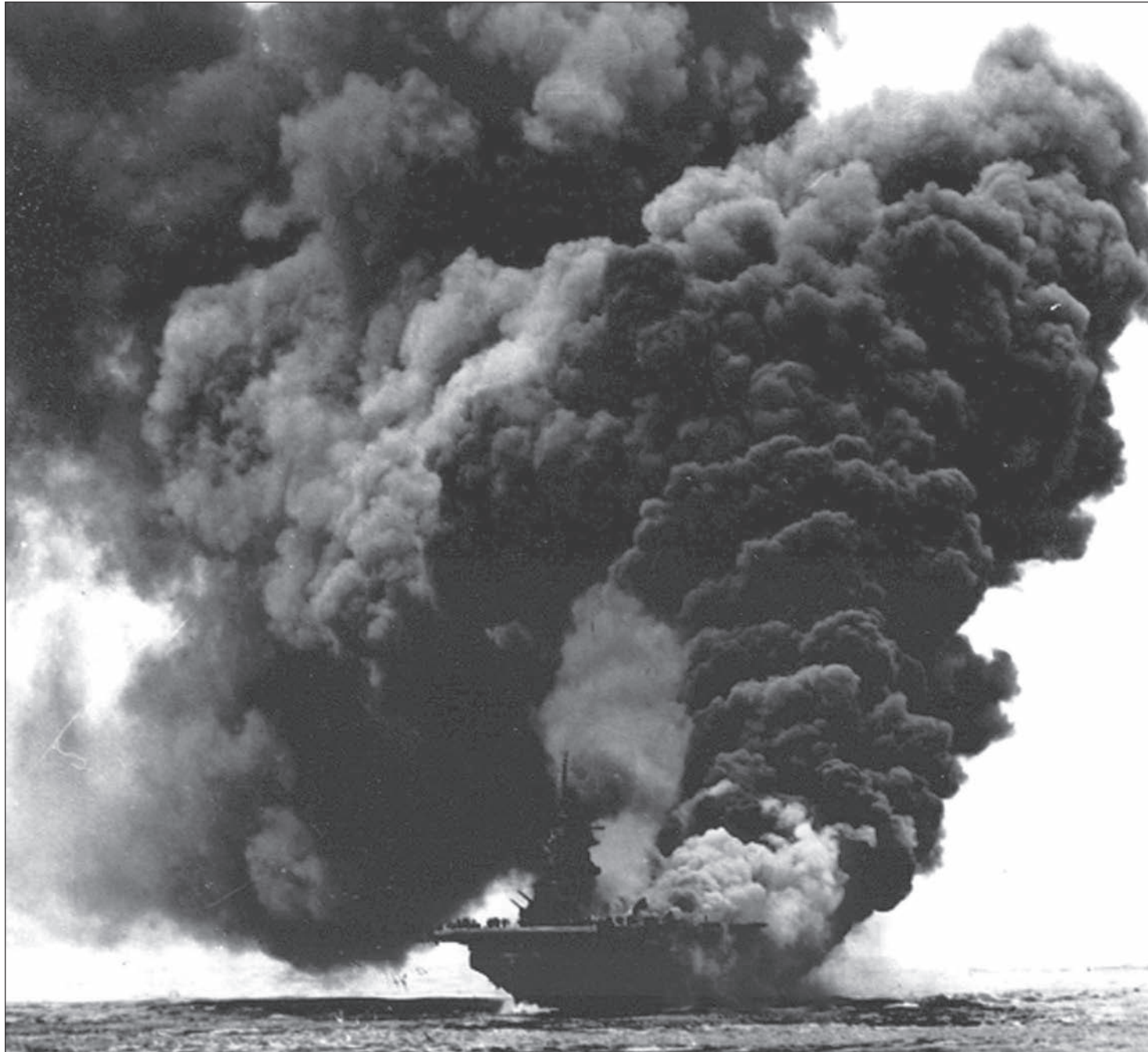
Here, it would seem that if the explosion/concussion didn't cause death, then the smoke would. How could anyone on that platform survive such a thing as this monstrosity, this "Dante's Inferno"?

A carrier is, by the very parameters of the situation, under severe vulnerability: a big sky overhead and a big ocean below where there's nothing to provide cover or some semblance of security. Danger couldn't be avoided, whether it was from above, from below, or from straight ahead. And there was no such thing as retreat (from an enemy overhead). If the enemy was aggressive (and the Japanese were), a fight

couldn't be avoided (a "fight" being a euphemism for a life and death confrontation). You could be sure there'd be punishment meted out until you were staggering. You struggled mightily to stay viable. And if they didn't finish the "job", they'd be back, because they knew where you were, and because you knew they wouldn't leave you alone. (Those who are hurt seem to attract more hurt.) And yes, they were back, and with vengeance, trying, trying to see the deed done. Here, in this picture, things did not go well. No, not at all, where war knows no mercy.

Dante's Inferno found its way to the flight deck of this carrier and no matter how it turns it can not escape it. We look at an image but do we really see? Do we really comprehend what we see? Do we understand the essence of what we see? So often in life we look but only relate to the irrelevant. We tend to overlook the reality of what we see, especially in this day and age of over-the-top movies and the computer games and computer-generated "reality". Too often reality is not interesting enough. We have to give our senses an unnatural jolt. We become jaded, an ugly word. Nothing normal seems to delight us. We say the niceties are much too dull and the normal is too mundane. Those of such a genre probably have never grown up. Be assured that those on that flight deck grew up in a hurry. Is one's life so uninteresting that one needs to live in fantasyland and/or vicariously to escape reality? No good

comes from the diminution of reality. To achieve that reality seek the essence of the thing. Learn to detect that which is pertinent and that which is peripheral. This is the way of the scientific mind, the critical mind. Such a mind will serve you well in your school work (note the use of the word "work"). Are we coming to the point where we can not differentiate the difference between reality and fantasy? Please say I'm wrong. One aspect to look for is consistency (though reality is certainly not always consistent, as you should be). The consequences of not being straight with reality can often be detrimental to your well being. We all know about unintended consequences which come back "to bite you". When I was young we "guys" would have in our vocabulary the term "get real" It of course meant be honest, be real. You can do this by seeking the essence of the thing.



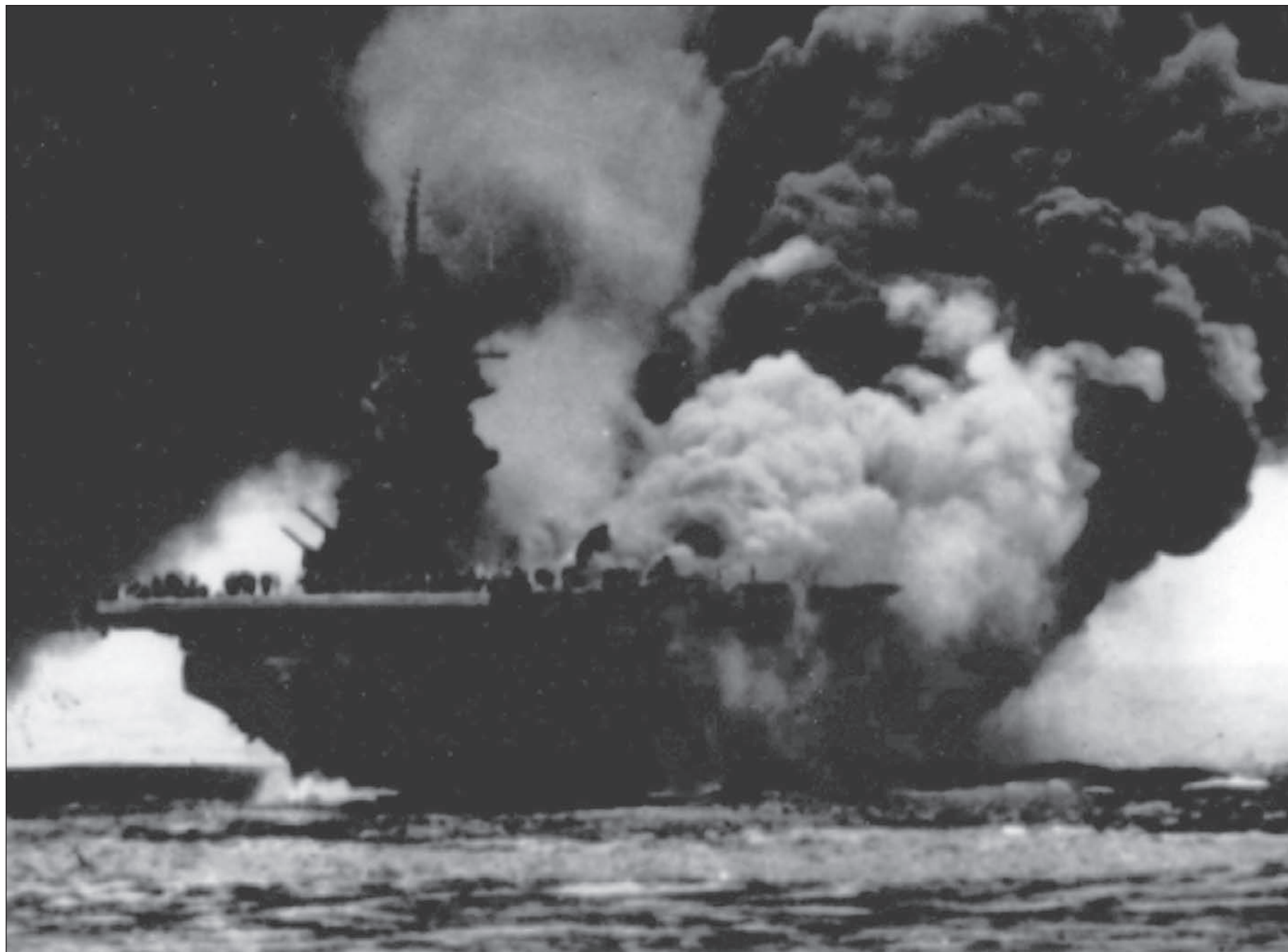
SAME SHIP, CLOSER VIEW

Same ship, closer view. It would seem that the back two-thirds of the flight deck is “no-man’s land”, where no man could exist. And yet, what’s to be done? Are there any intact hoses available? Is the water-pressure there? Can the situation be surveyed: where are the fires? What’s the extent of the damage? What are the problems? Where are the problems? Are there those who need to be saved? Can they be saved? What’s the wind direction? Who’s available to fight the fires? Who survived? What are their specialties? What local communications exist? Has burning gasoline penetrated the lower spaces? Ask your own questions. To my knowledge there were no oxygen-masks available to topside personnel. And all the while, as the heat of the conflagration increased, more bombs detonated, more gasoline was ignited, and more fragmented metal was hurled far and wide. Heat, smoke, shrapnel, no visibility, limited area of movement, unknowns, all made for a place of inescapable pain and death and destruction, on a magnificent ship that would not die. Notice the bow-wave

indicating that the ship was going fairly fast, which in turn diverted the smoke, but at the same time fanned the flames. The damage-control officer earned his pay that day, in spades. As a closing comment, it’s suggested that the reader put him/herself on board that platform and then exercise his/her powers of empathy, even with his/her limited knowledge of what’s involved as depicted by this picture. (Tragedies abound throughout the world, true, but here the flight deck crew knows full well that it’s deliberately going in harm’s way where calamity will be not an unnatural outcome, and where he must “stand and take it”, unable to fight back, seeing the threat and danger unfold before him. The situation here certainly is unique, while tragedies are “universal” throughout the world and time.) How can one but weep at the predicament seen here? Where to go? What to do? How to survive? Yet on the ship goes, this poor benighted ship plowing aimlessly over the sea which seems to seek it for its own. It’s denied: the gods have looked down in pity.

Up close and personal, that’s where we are now. Though unseen we can be sure that there are those Airdales right now manning the fire-hoses. How well could you, and you, do this under these circumstances? How would you “stack up” under these conditions? Take a reality check. Those of you who are resourceful would do this job well. If you were at the same time conscientious you’d do even better. Resourceful people are those who are able to deal skillfully and promptly with new situations and difficulties as they arise while those who are conscientious are those who are faithful and painstaking in their duties and responsibilities. Conscientious people are devoted, even dedicated, to do the job

at hand whether it be for others or for themselves (think homework). To me, he who is conscientious is the salt of the earth. He is, by definition, an outward thinking person (just the kind you want on the flight deck when tragedy occurs). While we’re talking about those here on the flight deck doing physical work, resourceful and conscientious people are also sedentary people. (think homework). While to be resourceful usually involves physical prowess the attribute of conscientiousness is a result of a state of mind (and is easily learned). It’s a close relative of the quality of sincerity (also one who is the salt of the earth). Growing up to adulthood is not necessarily an easy endeavor but it can be done.



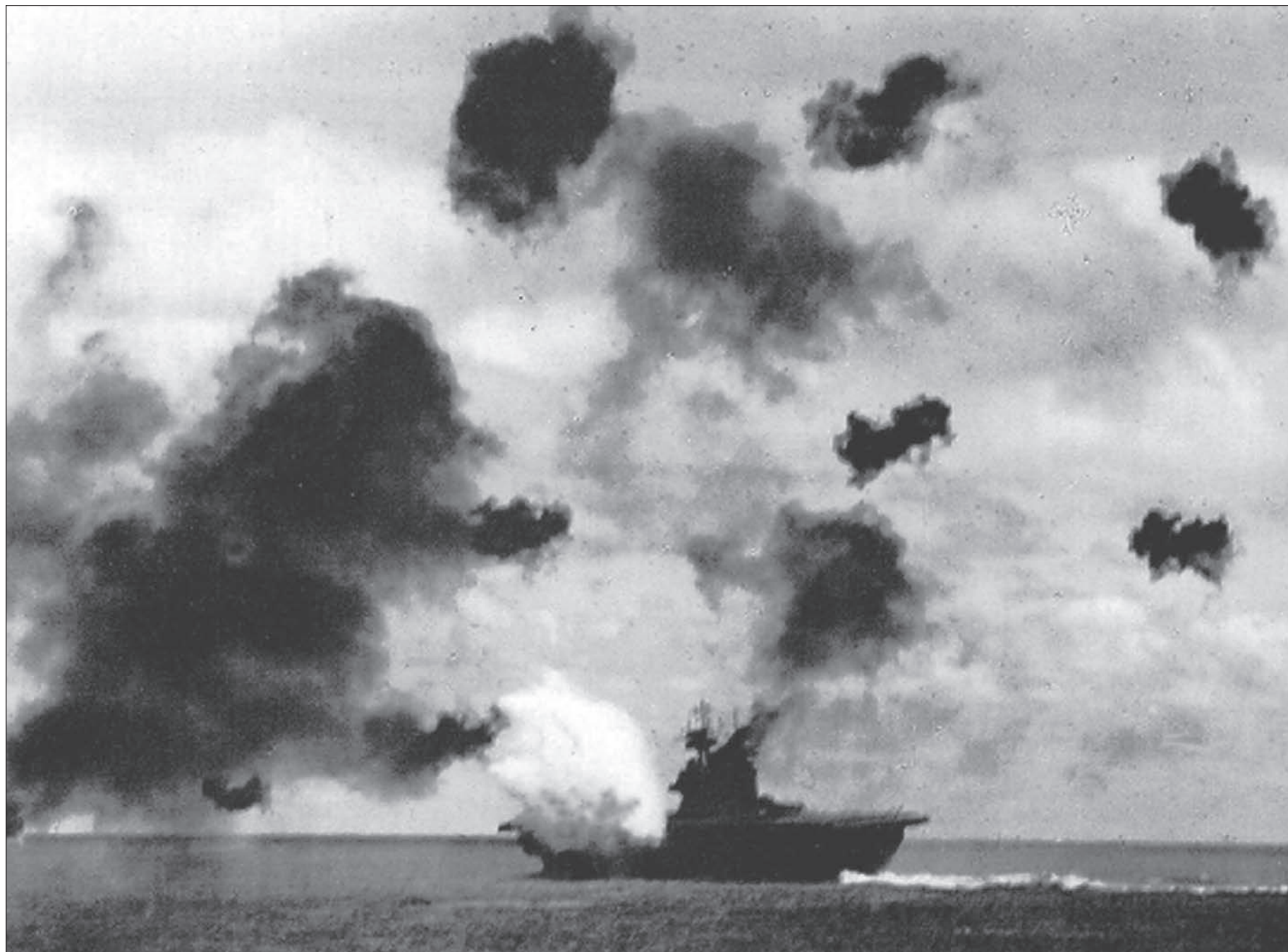
NO PLACE TO HIDE

This is probably the U.S.S. Enterprise (CV-6) which is taking a Kamikaze hit off the coast of Okinawa in 1945 (the Enterprise is not an Essex-class carrier, but the picture is so evocative that it had to be included in this book). Those small black bursts are 5-inch proximity-shell explosions. Keep in mind that the Enterprise was about 900 feet long, so that the impact shown here is about 100 yards wide (the length of a football field). To give an idea of the kind of attention a carrier could receive, note the following from “Flat-tops and Fledglings” (as paraphrased): in 1942 the U.S.S. Hornet was attacked by Japanese aircraft that dropped two bombs on the flight deck, followed a minute later by an aircraft crashing on its deck, followed almost immediately by two torpedo hits, quickly succeeded by two more 500-lb bombs dropped on the flight deck. Later on that day another attack slammed a torpedo into the Hornet, and another bomb on the flight deck. The ship was then abandoned and was finally sunk by enemy destroyers. In this “game” of war

there is no mercy. And, where to hide to avoid the punishment? At least in this instance there appear to be no aircraft on deck which would “feed” the blow dealt by the “kamikaze”, where the ensuing secondary explosions could be worse than the initial one. Is that not a forlorn sight, the titan of the seas, in extreme distress, ALONE and suffering on that broad expanse of ocean? And there’s NO PLACE TO HIDE. // Yet they did not die in vain (it is to be devoutly hoped): to those, the hapless, the cheerless, the defeated all, these men here have met with disaster, their fate to suffer and die. Thus then to those far from the roaring crowd, do you not owe them, these men, by doing them proud in living a life that shows the worth of a person shines brightly through by being known by the spirit within. Yes, in life we all suffer setbacks and discouragements but who are we to sniffle about that when measured against the significance of this panorama here portrayed? Life can be tough but to the mentally and emotionally tough go the joys of life. Think hard on that.

From here that massive carrier, from afar, seems small and vulnerable as it suffers severe punishment (of a bomb-burst covering a football field). Yet, alone as it is it must exhibit a stout self-reliance. The ship, the crew, must be solely self-responsible. There is no 911 available. How many of you are self-reliant and self-responsible? You who are not alone and have direct contact with 911. Has this nation lost its ability to be responsible for themselves? [I feel as if I have of late been too much in the hectoring mode, but why do I think thusly? Why do I pose so many questions? It’s because I see the need for such.] Self-reliance is a beautiful thing, not only for one’s self but also for all those around us. In addition, this nation

will not, can not, prosper without such a mindset. The optimum situation occurs when we are not forever having to be told to “grow up”, roll up our sleeves and dig in. The sooner learned the sooner benefits accrue. At the risk of being redundant, this attitude of self-reliance and self-responsibility will immeasurably improve the school results (no, school should absolutely not be thought of as drudgery; in point of fact, school should be a large part of your salvation if only you’d clear that hurdle of disinterest. If I leave this book with one thing (again) I would say that if you generate a sincere, robust, and effervescent interest in things scholarly you’ll “have it made”.



ALL ALONE AND ISOLATED

This scene, this dismal “painting”, calls forth a profound sense of being completely isolated and all alone in a very hostile world. The somber, billowing clouds of destruction are punctuated with flashes of brilliant light signifying further destruction. At a distance, one could say this view is “artistic”, but as one mentally, slowly zooms in toward the ship, one is appalled by what one beholds: where once there was order, there was disorder; where once there was life, there was havoc. Along with this, the very vastness of the ocean emotionally overwhelms, connoting nothing but helplessness and then hopelessness. And yet, at other times and places, this very vastness is the source of a deep and abiding calmness and contentment and even a God-given joy, a priceless gift. The boundless sky is a powerful engine of either sadness or joy, with the color and the texture and the myriad cloud configurations being a magnificent tapestry for our self-content. The previous words must have been the thoughts of those entrapped on that ship that we observe so objectively and clinically. The

end to this great ship seems to be near. And yet, presumably, if one diligently puts one’s mind and heart and sinews to the task at hand (saving the ship), one regains the will to survive, and thrive, even against all odds. But who knows? Only the one who’s been there and done that can attest to that. Before we go, let us bow our heads to those intrepid souls “who gave their last full measure”, to those there in their suffering and pain, who in doing their duty to ship and country, did themselves proud! // It’s fitting that we close with the last chapter of “Victory At Sea” (Okinawa) when the men of the “fleet that came to stay” stood tall with courageous and selfless fortitude against the frightful ferocity of the determined kamikaze attacks. Their valiant efforts were not to be denied as their actions belied the odious stance of those with arrogance. They fought the good fight for the freedoms we all cherish (and take for granted in times of relative ease). May the fallen rest in eternal peace and may one and all give thanks for our many blessings. Amen.

Has the world come to an end? Is this doomsday? If you were on those ships you might well think so. You might also think it was time, as on the Titanic, to intone the song and words of “Nearer My Go To Thee”. During the WWII it was said that “there were no atheists in foxholes” (for the uninformed, a foxhole was a small trench dug by a soldier in which to conceal himself). I end this book with a due acknowledgment of the word “reverence” as it would apply to the scenario here. Some would say if there is a God why does he allow the horrors of war. I don’t know. Do you? What can be said about reverence is that it has brought uncounted numbers of people joy and contentment and more. Reverence can be said

to instill those many with deep felt feelings of awe and hope and an overriding sense of deference to the Almighty, our one God who is the Maker of us all. He is found in all of Nature. There are of course those who worship in their own way, whether in a formal setting or in much more restricted and personal ways. Each to his/her own. It does seem tragic that over history there has been so much suffering and contention over who’s method and thoughts are “right”. Who’s to say that they aren’t all “right”? In any event, we all are the creation of a Being who created us and the world in which we live. We all, in our own way, revere this entity we call God. Let us be considerate of all who worship in their own way.



NEARER MY GOD TO THEE

This last picture also can be considered a “painting”, though it too, like all the other pictures in this book, are actual photographs from the National Archives’ Navy Collection. This picture, this requiem to a dying ship, in a way is a fitting tribute to all those who perished at sea and never had a fitting burial. One could say that this is a “funeral

pyre”, so poignant is this picture. It makes one realize how insignificant one is in the larger scheme of things. And again, that chilling loneliness in that vastness of the everlasting ocean. So I’ll close this book by reciting the first stanza of the Navy hymn, sung by naval people in chapels throughout:

The “Navy Hymn”

*“Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
Who bidd’st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep;
O hear us when we cry to Thee,
For those in peril on the sea!”*



EPILOGUE

I would be remiss if I closed this book without mentioning the four aircraft carrier Museum Ships, and the heritage that they are to all of us. They are the U.S.S. Intrepid (CV-11) in NYC, the U.S.S. Yorktown (CV-10) in Charleston, SC, the U.S.S. Lexington (CV-16) in Corpus Christi, TX, and the U.S.S. Hornet (CV-12) in the San Francisco area. All of these ships served with great distinction in the Pacific Theatre during WWII. They were an important and integral part of the victory there. It should be said that these ships were modified from their WWII configuration sometime after that war such that their island structure is now diminished by having their armaments removed. Specifically, all the 5-inch and 40-mm guns were removed after WWII, and the island structure had a major reconfiguration. Also, the flight deck was modified by having the straight-ahead configuration changed to a canted-deck configuration. This allowed landings without the problem of possible crashes with aircraft up ahead. Many of the decks below the hanger deck are not open to the public, yet. This is less so with the Lexington because she was deactivated much later than the other three ships. Because of this, she is also in better condition than the others. However, the others are being diligently upgraded, and the Yorktown is well along in that effort. But it must be reiterated, these are not the original ships from the WWII era. They've been modified. I strongly recommend visits to these ships as honored and valuable parts of our history. They are also extremely interesting in their own right, as well as a grand tribute to the American ingenuity and industrial capability. They all were (are) marvelous ships. They deserve your homage, if nothing else, as a magnificent chapter in the U.S. naval history.

Being most familiar with the U.S.S. Intrepid, it is chosen for some observations about what one will see when visiting it. The other ships are all well worth the visit too. For instance, the U.S.S. Yorktown has multiple tours such as the following: "Living and Working Spaces", "Engine Room", "Flight Deck and Bridge", "World War II Carrier Rooms", "Memorial Hanger Bay", "Captain and Flag Officer In-Port

Quarters", and "Shipyard Exhibit". They also have a destroyer, a submarine, and a coast guard cutter there. An excellent shop is nearby, and the entire area is pleasantly attractive and open, with plenty of parking. Back to the Intrepid: its flight deck carries many military aircraft of the 1970-1990 era. Down on the hanger deck there are a couple of well refurbished WWII aircraft. Since displays are changed periodically, no attempt will be made to be too specific. To best describe the Intrepid suite, their brochure will be quoted verbatim:

United States Navy Hall

Upon entering the 900 foot long museum, visitors will begin their first journey as they "go to sea" aboard a modern super carrier. Throughout the bright and colorful hall onlookers will be introduced to the key components of the contemporary Navy's battle group and view its essential worldwide roles. Featured will be the people, ships, and aircraft which constitute today's thoroughly professional team. Highlighting the hall is a wide screen, intensified sound movie which will place the viewers in the midst of a busy, flight deck as super sophisticated jets take off and land simultaneously. Staged throughout the hall will be examples of modern carrier aircraft and related equipment, supplemented by mini-theaters, displays, and optic boards. Visitors will then leave the present day world behind as they step back in time and enter INTREPID'S hanger during October and November of 1944.

Intrepid Hall

Here the mood is completely different. The lights are dim, the colors are the blue-grays of the wartime Pacific. The time-travelers now find themselves aboard the INTREPID on the eve of the epic Battle for Leyte Gulf. An emotional and

highly dramatic audio/visual presentation recreates INTREPID'S finest hours. We fly with her pilots, we steam thousands of miles and operate continuously. We support the liberation of the Philippines and we prevent the Japanese Navy from sinking troop-laden transports off the invasion beaches. We also witness INTREPID'S life and death struggle during a massive kamikaze attack. Ordinary men exhibit extraordinary qualities as both sides battle to near exhaustion. Battle-fatigued visitors then pass through another time zone and enter a bygone era. They will now enjoy the lighthearted spirit and bravado of aviation's pioneers.

Pioneers Hall

Daring young men, in flimsy flying machines, will take the visitors from the turn of the century through the pioneering 30's. The entire hall is a festival to life, bright and lively with the sights and sounds of the times. The onlooker cannot help but become enchanted as new horizons are conquered and dramatic breakthroughs enable man to climb into the hitherto forbidden heavens. Aeroplanes, built of wood and fabric, graphically demonstrate the state of the art of that period. Old films and new clips, combined with antique artifacts, enhance the charm and romance of this hall. Features will include ship-borne aviation, Navy racers, the early aircraft carriers, lighter-than-air dirigibles, the first trans-Atlantic flights and the birth of commercial aviation. Next, the visitors will return to the present and enter a vast hall which is a museum unto itself.

Technologies Hall

The largest and most diverse hall is a panorama of modern man's ability to defy gravity and his natural environment. Exhibits range from submarines deep in the ocean, to the modern surface Navy, to proposed colonies out in space. Having just left a hall with petite and frail aeromachines, visitors are now overwhelmed by presentations depicting jumbo jets, mam-

moth rockets, gigantic submersibles, complex weapons systems and 21st century designs. Several galleries, staged throughout the Technologies Hall, will be periodically revised to reflect the contemporary and futuristic concepts. Typical of the galleries are: Vertical Flight, Civil Aviation, Space Travel, Man on the Moon, and Guided Missiles. The highlights of space technology will be dramatically present during the "Men and Ships in Space" movie--on the very spot where Mercury and Gemini space capsules were recovered and brought aboard the Intrepid. Visitors will then ascend to the huge flight deck, where diverse types of aircraft will be staged along the length of the flight deck, some illustrating the techniques of aircraft launch and recovery. There they will have the opportunity of climbing to the control bridges and command centers, high in the island structure experiencing some of the sensations felt in the nerve-center of the ship.

The Future

As funds become available, additional spaces will be opened below decks which divide into two distinct categories. First, a series of adjacent compartments will be restored to "as they appeared" while the Intrepid was an operational ship. This will include typical living quarters, workshops, mess halls, and engineering spaces complete with massive boilers and turbines. Second, numerous existing spaces will be converted into display halls which will present a comprehensive sea, air, and space story. (The hanger deck halls provide only some of the highlights). Both the military and civilian sectors will be represented. This will include the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine, and Civil Aviation. Representative topics will vary from amphibious operations to test flying and test pilots to New York's sea and airport complexes to the story of Polaris to the military sea transportation service to super tankers, and more. (Go to Intrepid Square Pier 86, West 46th St. and 12th Avenue.)



It's hoped that by now the reader is infused with an abiding interest in our Naval history and heritage. This book has tried to engender such a feeling. There are many, many books and videos that are available to augment this interest. Below are a few such books and videos:

"No Easy Days: The Incredible Drama of Naval Aviation" by William Butler (both a book and a video (Jaguar Home Video, Avion Park) that depicts starkly and vividly the actions referred to in the chapter "Mishaps")

"The Aircraft Carrier Intrepid" by John Roberts, Naval Institute Press, 1992 (Excellent)

"Essex-class Carriers" by Alan Raven, Naval Institute Press, 1988 (This is an excellent, though smallish, compendium)

"The Fighting Lady" available from the Yorktown Naval Museum, (This is an excellent 1-hour documentary that depicts what it was like on board a carrier, including gun-camera shots)

"The Story of the 'Fighting I' U.S.S. Intrepid" (Intrepid Naval Museum) (This is a 1-hour documentary of the Intrepid's history)

"Task Force", Warner Bros., 1949, with Gary Cooper (This film, on video, was shot on board the U.S.S. Antietam. It's a history of the aircraft carrier and has a good story-line)

"Wing and a Prayer", 20th Century Fox, 1944, with Don Ameche and Dana Andrews (An Oscar winner with good photography on board an actual Navy carrier)

"Midway", Universal, 1976 (depicts the Battle of Midway, in color, and is a fairly accurate rendition. Try to get the 2 1/2 hour version)

"Flat Top", Monogram, 1952 (not a bad movie of WWII)

"Men of the Fighting Lady" (flashbacks to WWII)

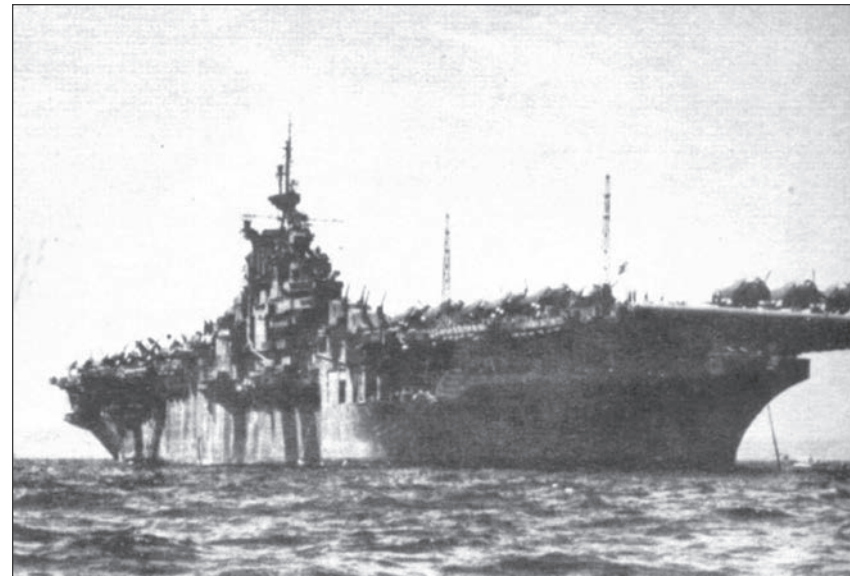
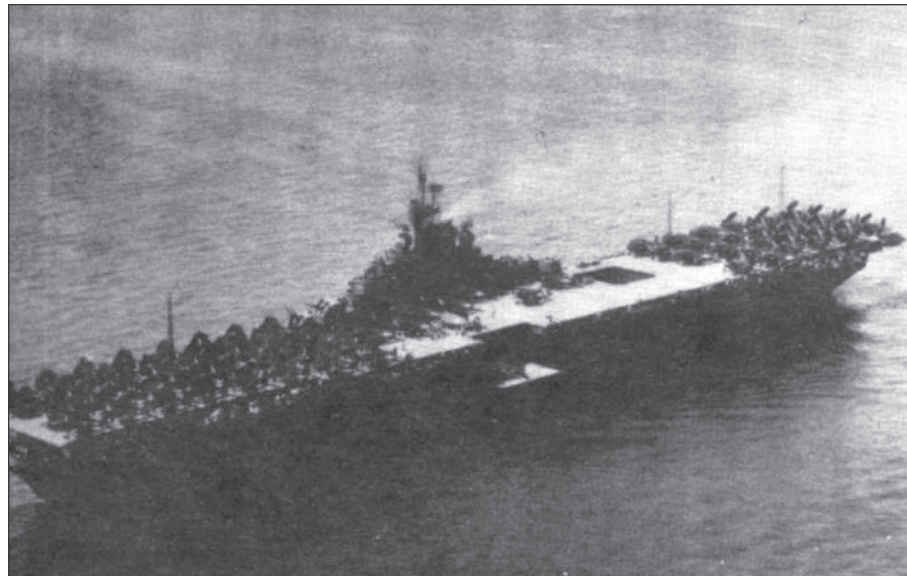
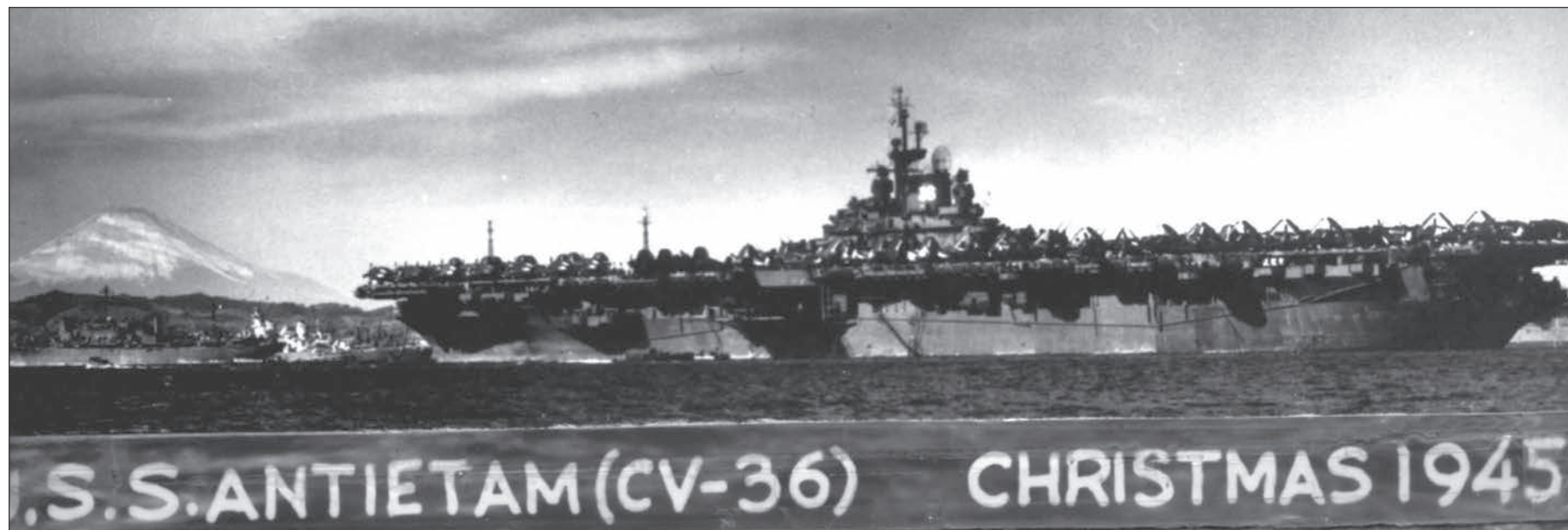
CLOSING THOUGHTS

I would feel remise if, within this entire book, I didn't show a picture of my ship, the U.S.S. Antietam (CV-36). (True, the resolution is poor, but the image is rich in my mind.) These three pictures were cards that I sent to my mother and father, and at the time, I thought little of them. But now, after fifty-five years and with reflection and fondness, they've become my "heirloom". This book, this recitation of "a day in the life of an Airdale" will end with a salutation, a "hail and farewell", if you will, to the U.S.S. Antietam. It was, after all, my home for seventeen months and on which I spent almost every night of those seventeen months (less four days of leave). About thirteen of those months were spent out overseas, and about twelve of those thirteen were spent conducting flight operations (of about 180 flights a day). So it's to the day-to-day flight operations and those who made it happen to which this book is dedicated. An aircraft that's launched, an aircraft that's landed and an aircraft that's parked, all these things would seem to be, after all, just routine, especially when they happen many, many thousands of times. In a way, this is certainly valid. That is, objectively, it was (a) an aircraft launched, (b) an aircraft landed, and (c) an aircraft parked. Simple. But SUBJECTIVELY, it was (a) a propeller evaded, (b) a large hurtling machine within required parameters, and (c) a hailstorm of shrapnel avoided. THIS time. But what about the NEXT time? So in fact, routine though it appeared, EACH launching, EACH landing, and EACH parking was a significant event. It wasn't so much the criticality of the situation that prevailed, but instead it was how much, or how little, control one had in such situations. One aspect of control is the "fight or flight" scenario. Tools, or lack of them, is another aspect of control. And knowledge, or lack of it, is still another element of control. In my humble opinion, Airdales lacked each one of these means of control

in those critical situations with which he was constantly faced. In some cases, such as parking aircraft, he had ABSOLUTELY NO control. Somehow, this lack of control is an insidious drain on one's psyche, to say nothing of one's stamina. The flight deck was no place to have such deficits. Bad things could happen. But then, the statisticians among us would point to the statistics: how many Airdales perished compared to pilots, to soldiers, to marines, to submariners, to airmen, to paratroopers, to merchant seamen, to you name them? For Heaven's sake, how about the multitudes of civilian casualties of war? All this certainly, certainly is true, and we all should humbly acknowledge our blessings. (I'll leave it to the reader to sort this out.)

A comment about the picture of the Antietam: notice in the lower right picture that there are five 40-mm gun sponsons "tacked" onto the side of the ship just below the flight deck level. This can be detected by observing the five shadows projected below the sponsons. With four 40-mm guns per sponson, and five sponsons, there were twenty 40-mm guns in total along the side of the ship. These guns were added to many of the ships toward the end of the war because of the threat posed by the introduction of the Kamikazes in October of 1944. As it turned out, the Antietam never did need this added protection.

I'll close this book with a citing of the Navy's motto as expressed subsequent to WWII: "Honor, Commitment, Courage". It means, I believe, the following: Honor in not shirking one's duty, Commitment in fulfilling that duty, and Courage in being intrepid in doing that duty. I firmly believe the Airdales of the Antietam were exemplars of that motto, and they did so with quiet determination.



I'd like to close this book with two poems by Rudyard Kipling, an English poet (1865-1930). The first one has been on the wall of my room ever since my father gave it to me when I was a boy. It was on his wall, and I asked him if I could have it. All these years it's been my "unspoken companion", and although I won't say it's been my daily guide and inspiration, I will say it's always been "there", through thick and thin. I commend it to each and everyone. The second poem is more personal, and it has a certain resonance to it that I believe is a good closure to this book, this book that, while not a summing up, is nevertheless a good window on an important part of my life.

IF—

*If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;*

*If you can dream—and not make dreams your master;
If you can think--and not make thoughts your aim,
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;*

*If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'*

*If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings--nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And--which is more-- you'll be a Man, my son!*

Tommy

*I went into a public 'ouse to get a pint o' beer,
The publican 'e up an' sez, "We serve no red-coats here."
The girls be'ind the bar they laughed and giggled fit to die,
I outs into the street again, an' to myself sez I:
O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Tommy go away";
But it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins", when the band
begins to play,*

*The band begins to play, my boys, the band begins to play,
O it's "Thank you, Mister Atkins", when the band
begins to play.*

*I went into a theater as sober as could be,
They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none for me;
They sent me to the gallery or round the music-'alls,
But when it comes to fightin', Lord! they'll shove me in the stalls.
For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' Tommy wait outside";
But it's "Special train for Atkins", when the trooper's on the tide,
The troopship's on the tide, my boys, etc.*

*O makin' mock o' uniforms that guard you while you sleep
Is cheaper than them uniforms, an' they're starvation cheap;
An' hustlin' drunken sodgers when they're goin' large a bit
Is five times better business than paradin' in full kit.*

*Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that an' "Tommy
'ow's yer soul?"
But it's "Thin red line of 'eroes" when the drums begin to roll,
The drums begin to roll, my boys, etc.*

*We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no blackguards too,
But single men in barricks, most remarkable like you;
An' if sometimes our conduct isn't all your fancy paints,
Why, single men in barricks don't grow into plaster saints.
While it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' Tommy fall be'ind";
But it's "Please to walk in front, sir," when there's
trouble in the wind,
There's trouble in the wind, my boys, etc.*

*You talk o' better food for us, an' schools, an' fires, an' all:
We'll wait for extry rations if you treat us rational.
Don't mess about the cook-room slops, but prove it to our face
The Widow's uniform is not the soldier-man's disgrace.*

*But it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck him
out, the brute!"*

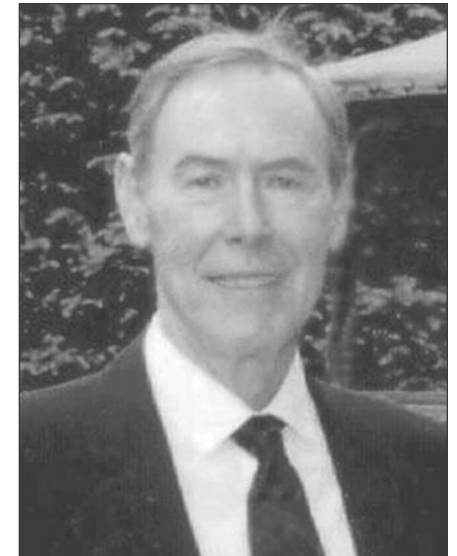
*But it's "Savior of 'is country" when the guns begin to shoot;
An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an' anything you
please;*

An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool--you bet that Tommy sees!



Here I am in the Yale Freshman 1946 Yearbook two years after enlistment in the U.S. Navy from fledgling to “old salt” in two short (long) years, wiser if not smarter I was discharged in May 1946, long after the end of hostilities. The photographer was not happy with my dour appearance so with effort I managed what might be called a smile. I was still so distraught by that “Dear John” letter I received on my way home across the Pacific on a slow freighter that I showed up for my picture without a coat or tie (which I borrowed from the next in line). That wane smile tells it all: utter despondency. But as they say in the Navy, “Now hear this!”: difficult as it may, salvation is to be found in applying yourself wholeheartedly to a project of some sort. In my case I had the opportunity, as well as the responsibility, to work diligently at my studies. As it turned out my regime, that first year at Yale was almost literally “study, eat and sleep, study, eat and sleep for the entire year. This is true, however, I had other ancillary problems with which to contend. My troubles are not important; what is important is the gumption to never succumb to despair. Easy to say, yes, but a sure as the sun also rise this too is written in stone.

My course through the years has not been auspicious but it has not been for want of effort. I spent from 1939 to 1944 at Newark Academy as a somewhat middling student, not good enough in my opinion. While I was a serious student I was not adequately serious (that my mother was French and earned a master’s degree here at Syracuse and that my father earned a phi beta kappa at Yale and a Doctor’s degree at France’s preeminent Sorbonne wasn’t inspiration enough to demand more of myself. I rue this. I kept my nose to the grindstone but perhaps sports and a long commute took their toll. However, excuses are not accepted. From 1944 to 1946 it was the Navy life. Then I graduated from Yale in 1950 with a degree in Business Administration .after which I worked in NYC banks for two years. Being disenchanted with this, I turned to jobs in the electronics industry until 1959. At this point it was clear that to do the things that appealed to me I had to go back to school full-time where I earned an Electrical Engineering degree. Thus in 1961 I went to work with Western Electric/Bell Labs, thence to Vitro Labs that managed the Navy’s Polaris Ballistic Missile System. Finally, I went to work for the Navy Department from 1962 to 1991 after which I retired. .I now “keep my hand in” the study of automatic control systems, my “first love”. Should I mention the three “Flight Deck” books I’ve worked on since 1999? Yes, I should.



A GRACE NOTE

The pain and suffering of the affliction of a hard-fought war was over and the wounds now had to be assuaged and addressed. It was time for the former implacable foes to reexamine their fierce animosities. The times cried out to reconstitute the peace from the aberration of war as engendered by zealots on one or both sides. It was a time for healing and reconciliation and understanding the mindset one of the other. It was time to break the barriers that separate our mutual interests. Important things need to be accomplished to our mutual benefit, with war being the prime impediment. (War has no sanction except in self-defense.) It is at war's end that nations can be magnanimous by going from the negative of death and destruction and suffering to the positive of reconstruction and reconciliation and economic revitalization. Vanquished and victor alike benefit. This was demonstrated admirably in both Japan and Europe. There is much we can learn one from the other. Hopefully we can learn and modify without changing the intrinsic nature of a society's culture which is different but good and wholesome. To homogenize cultures would be a grave travesty. What a terrible loss it would be if the world were bereft of these diverse cultures. It would indeed be tragic if the world were deprived of the elegance and beauty and courtesy and restraint of the traditional Japanese culture. What an everlasting loss it would be to lose such a culture! Just such was exemplified in the 2006 Winter Olympics. There during the ice-skating competitions two young

Japanese women exhibited such beauty and grace that it took one's breath away. I was enthralled. There Shizuka Arakawa won the Gold Medal in the Ladies singles competition and Inoue Rena (now a U.S. citizen) was in the pairs competition. They both were marvelous exemplars of the traditional Japanese culture, albeit with commensurate strength. They were the personification of exquisite grace and beauty, even amplified by the haunting melody of Puccini. Such elegance can rarely be seen. They are our eternal benefactors because of their incomparable performances (one had only to see them to understand the meaning and definition of the word "enchantment"). The images of them in face, form and figure as they glided over the ice will be indelibly etched as an enduring representation of an important part of Japanese culture. Long may it live! Long may those exquisite images remain in the mind's eye. Such beauty, such grace in the realm of athleticism as accompanied by inspiring music is our treasure. This is joy, this is gladness where a physically restrained joy is the true one. I for one bow to their beauty and grace as much as I bow to them. And so I close by saying what a pity it is that such as this is denied us due to an ignorant misunderstanding of those "different" from others. We should at the very least respect those differences and as here, we can not but laud them. Thus it is seen that two women from Japan help to show what a terrible mockery can be engendered by the confrontations between nations. When will it end?



There we are, a friend and I (I with my hands in my pockets0) standing in front of the Shrine of Buddha in Kamakura some sixteen miles south of Tokyo, Japan. Although Kamakura has long been a city it appeared to me as being located in a rural, tree-surrounded locale. The world-famous bronze-cast Buddha sits cross-legged 42 feet high. He was surrounded by many lit candles in a serene temple-style edifice. All was calm, all was reverential. Kamakura was the capital of Japan long ago (twelve hundreds) and has been the location of many shrines and temples, some dating back to the thirteenth century. Buddha was cast in 1252 while Buddha was born in the fifth century BC in what is now India. Many of the temples in Kamakura were built in the twelve hundreds when Buddhism flourished. While those in India put off Buddhism in favor of the high-caste Hinduism. The teachings of Buddha migrated to South East Asia, China, Japan and Korea. (At that time Hinduism was the practiced by the high priests while Buddhism was here for the common man.) Buddha himself was born into a sheltered he did with royalty but by thirty years of age he saw enough of the real world to revolutionize his views on life. He didn't so much wrestle with the imponderables of what happens after earthly life as he did the vicissitudes of daily life here and now. One of the main tenets of Buddhism is the obligation of man to be accountable for all his acts. Buddhism at heart is a gentle philosophy and it finds many cohorts in Japan. In closing, "in Pure Land sects stress is placed on the compassionate man: generosity, courtesy, benevolence, honesty, cooperation and service". And how could we do better?

HERITAGE OF ANTIETAM

It was September 17, 1862. The early morning was dull with a gloomy drizzle that soon burned off. It was also a day, a day that would soon become the bloodiest day in American history, as more than 23,000 men would fall in battle. And it was a day that would change the course of history for it was this day of death that would prompt President Abraham Lincoln to write the draft of his Emancipation Proclamation in which all would be given the rights of freedom within the Constitution of the United States of America (which at that time was

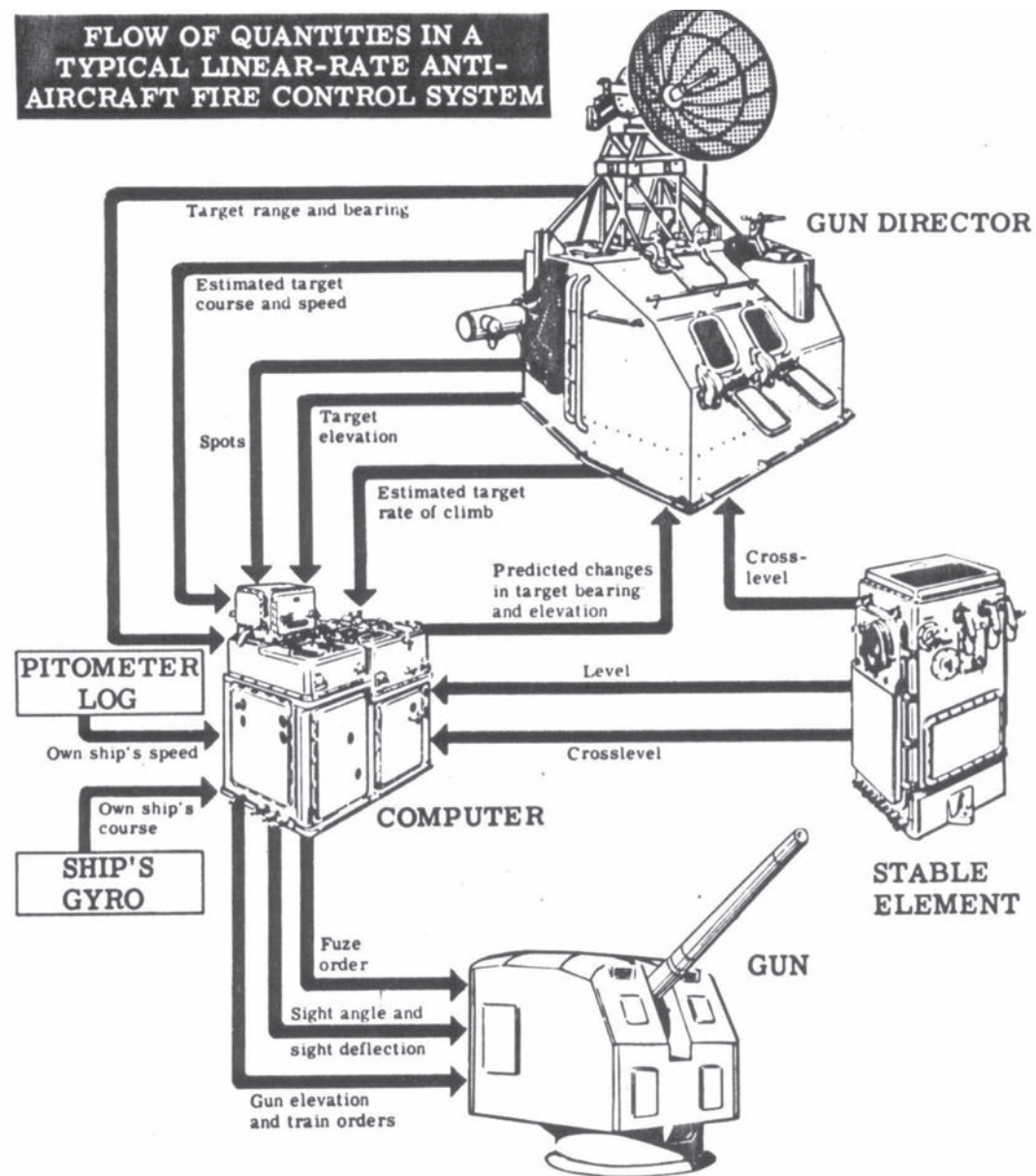
essentially the sole bastion of democracy in the world; this was emphasized later by him during his incomparable Gettysburg Address later that year when he said, “Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure”). It so happened that that day was also the genesis for the name of the U.S.S. Antietam, my home for seventeen solid months. I steered this magnificent ship as well as trod her flight deck, day long, day after day. And now, can you believe, I miss her.



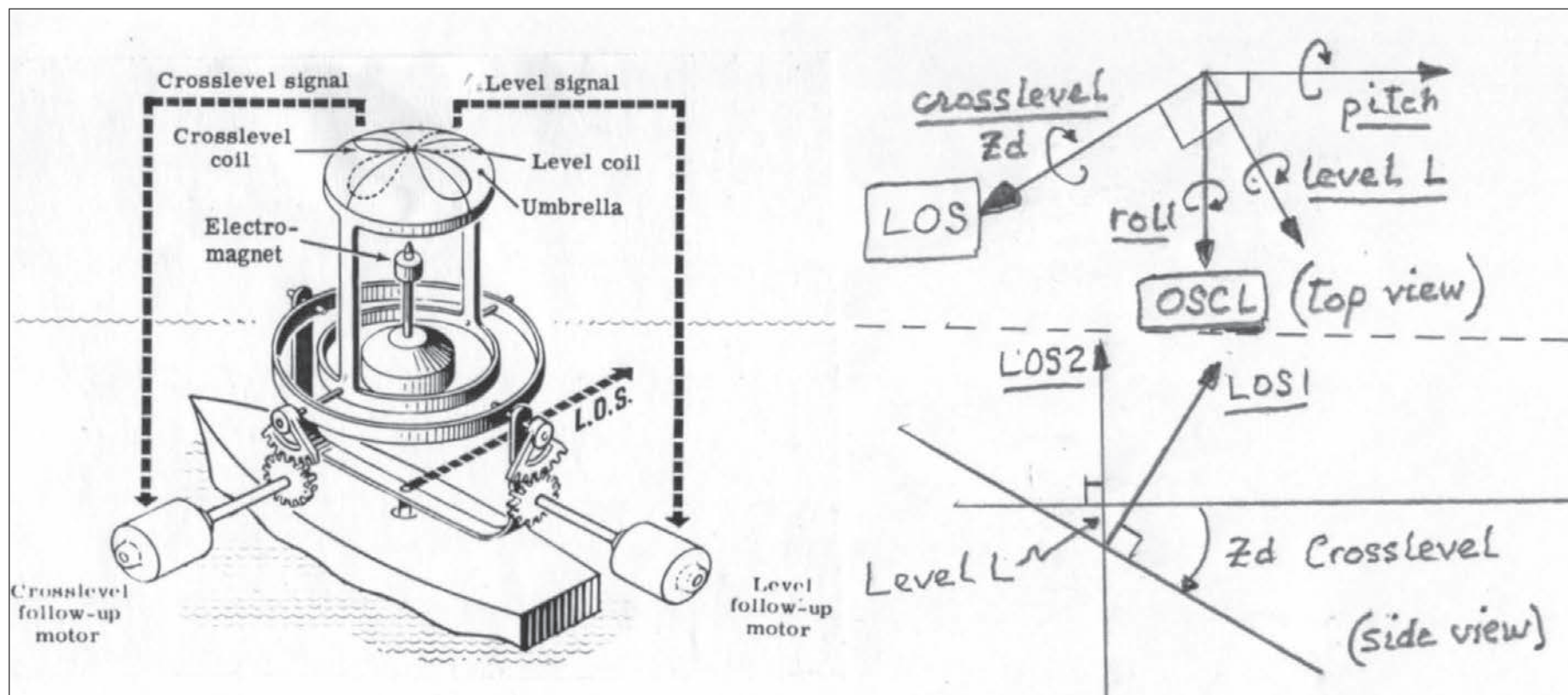
Photo # 80-G-442409 USS Antietam leaving Pearl Harbor



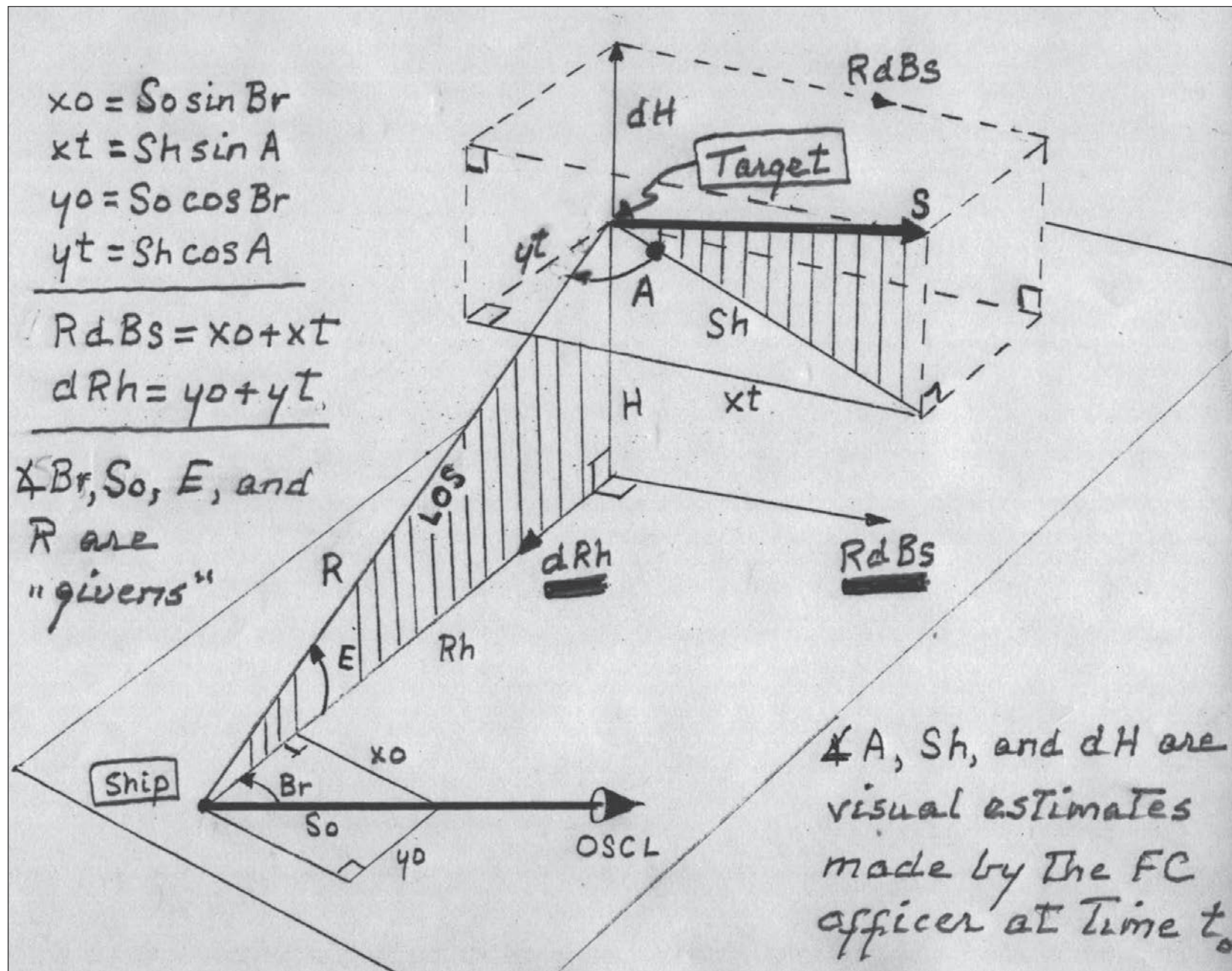
FLOW OF QUANTITIES IN A TYPICAL LINEAR-RATE ANTI- AIRCRAFT FIRE CONTROL SYSTEM



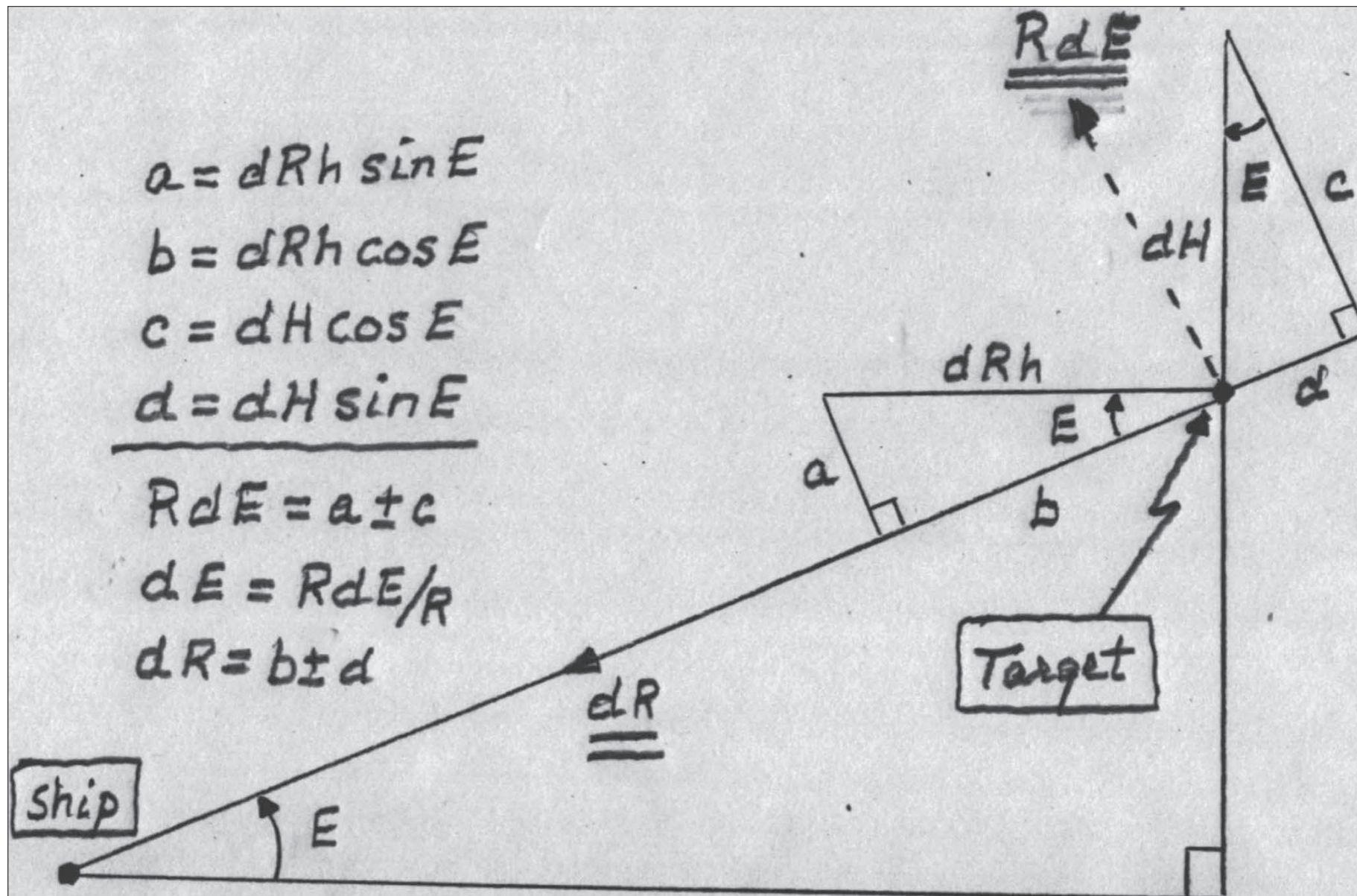
See discussion of Gun Director Mk 37 starting on page 98



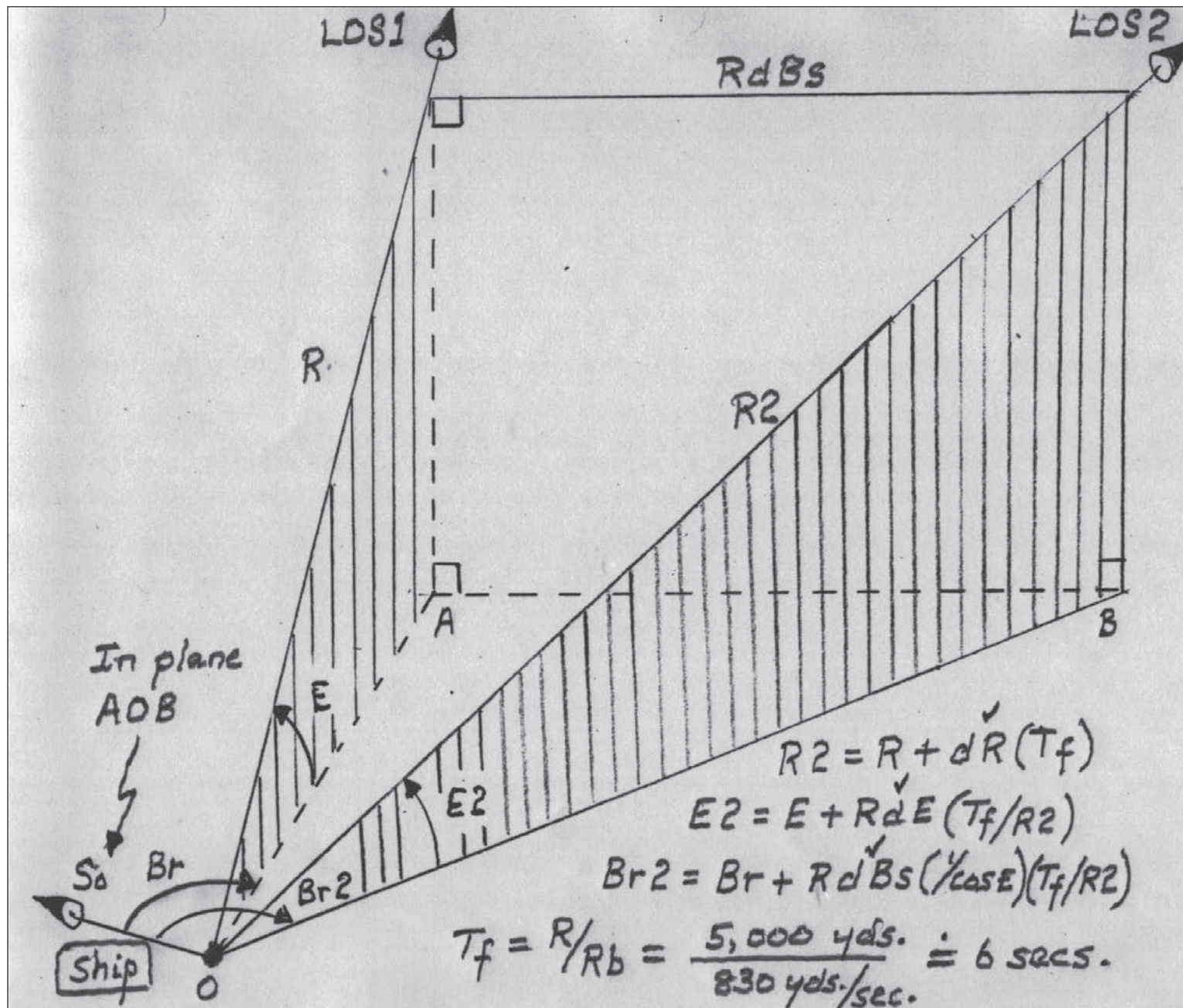
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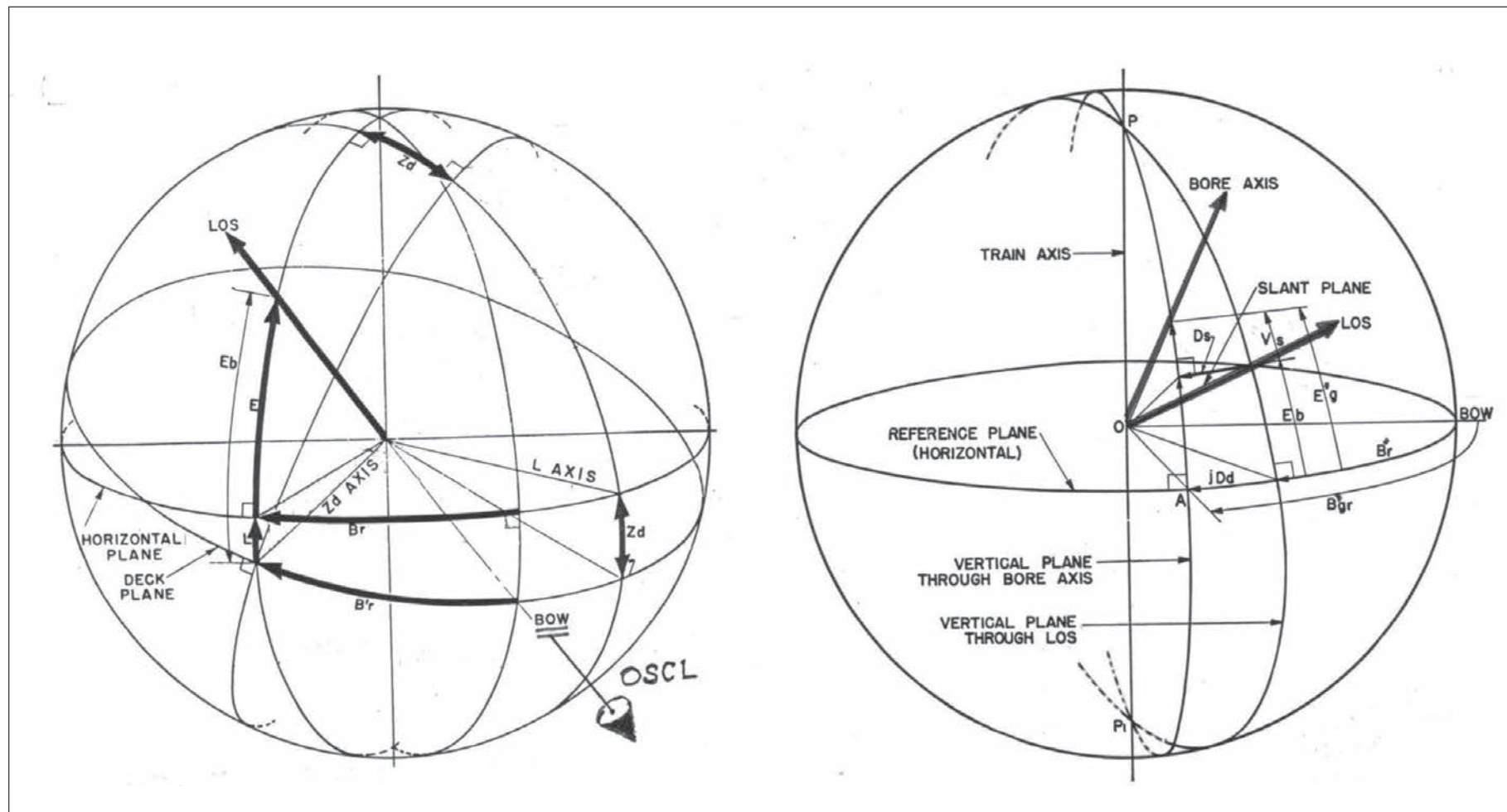
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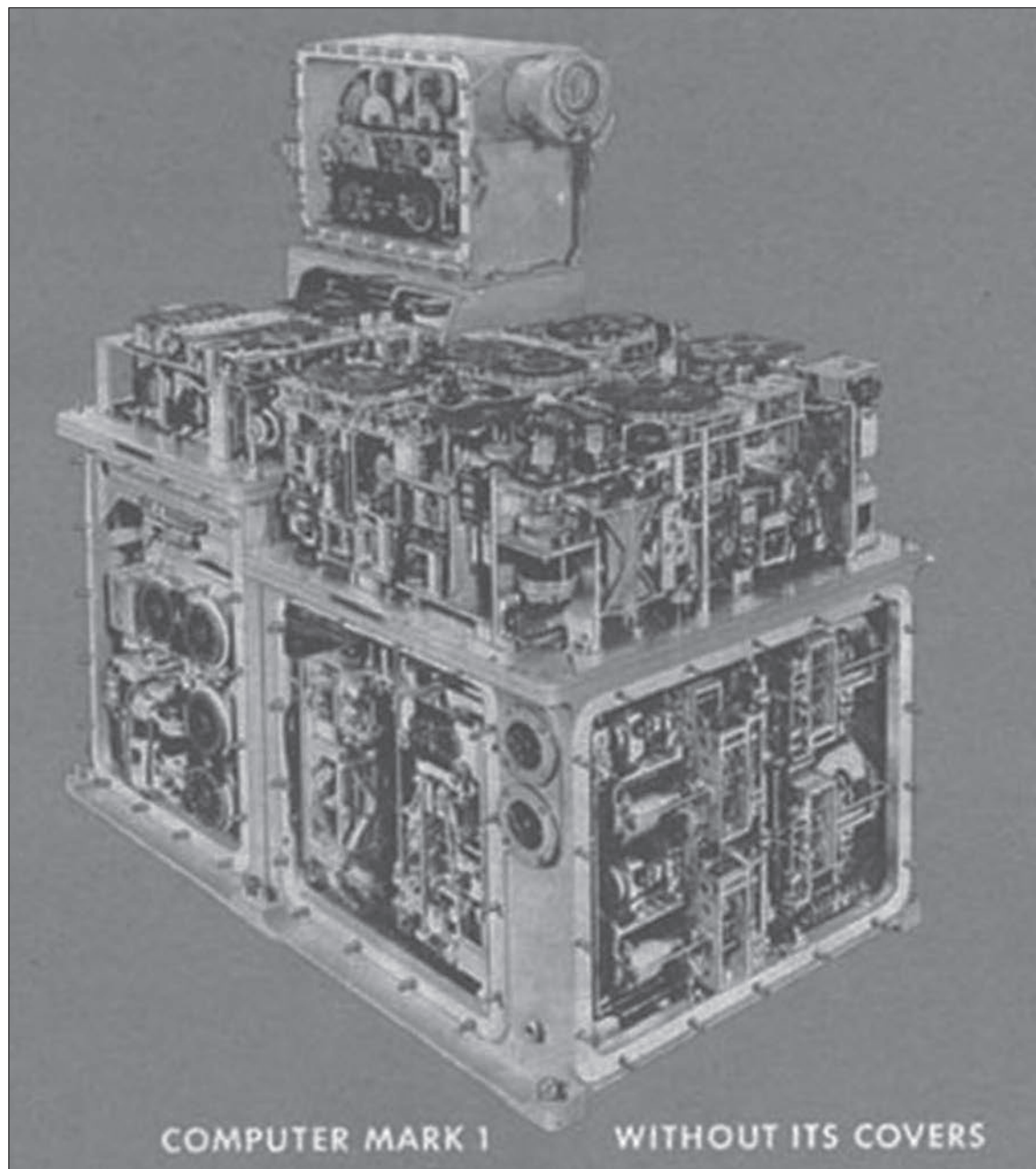


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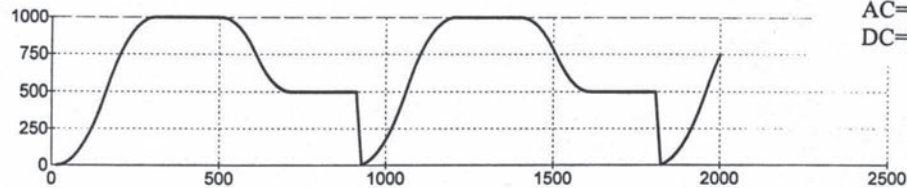
MODERN SERVOMECHANISM

Below is a computer program I wrote for my demonstration servomechanism. The kit makes use of a standard digital circuit board, as found in any computer, as well as a motor with an attached encoder that generates 4000 counts per one revolution of the motor shaft. There is also of course an electronic detector that determines the difference between the desired input signal and the actual output, thus generating an error signal (the servo requires at least a very small error signal which is amplified before it is used to drive the motor). Finally, and most importantly, there is a digital filter which modifies the error signal such that the system does not oscillate (instability), has a fast response with a minimum error. The error is differentiated to prevent instability, has a proportional gain applied to it to increase the speed of response and finally the error is integrated to assure accuracy. The program below was set up using default values for the PID (proportional-integral-derivative) allowing the designer to then determine the correct values of PID. Note that the x-axis on the next page is the time-axis, in milliseconds (1/1000 of a second). The program commands the system to make the prescribed motions while the second graph is the actual output. The third graph indicates the resulting error (note that one count is equivalent to 0.09 degrees so that the maximum error is about 1/2 degree and the time to complete the motion is fractions of a second.

#MOVE 10	'label		
KD=3000	'value of controller's derivative	SP=6000	'set speed to 6000 counts per second
KP=300	'value of controller's gain	AC=50000	'set acceleration to 50000
KI=55	'value of controller's integral	DC=50000	'set deceleration to 50000
i=0	'set counter to zero	BGX	'begin motion on x-axis
#LOOP	'label	AMX	'await motion on x-axis
DPX=0	'define initial position to be zero on the x-axis	WT 200	'wait 200 milliseconds
PRX=1000	'set the relative position to be 1000 counts on the x-axis	i=i+1	'increment counter by one
SP=6000	'set the speed to 6000 counts/sec	JP#LOOP;i<5	'jump to "#LOOP" if i<5
AC=50000	'set the acceleration to be 50000 counts per second squared		'else drop down to the
DC=50000	'set the deceleration to be 50000 counts per second squared		'following instruction
BGX	'begin motion on the x-axis (start motor)	MG "DONE"	'print "DONE"
AMX	'await end of motion on x-axis	EN	'end of program
WT 200	'wait 200 milliseconds		
PBX=-500	'set relative distance on the x-axis to be 500 counts CCW		

1 count = 0.09 degrees

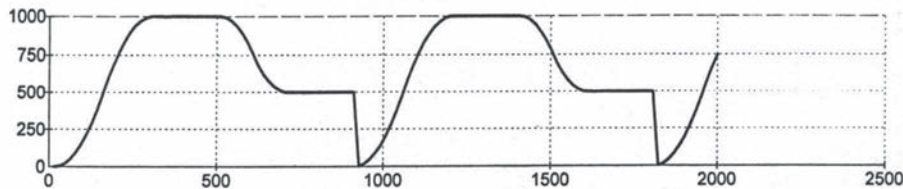
X
Commanded Position
Normal



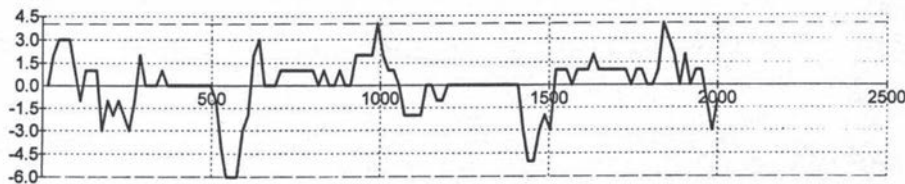
D=3000
P=300
I=55

SP=6000
AC=50000
DC=50000

X
Actual Position
Normal



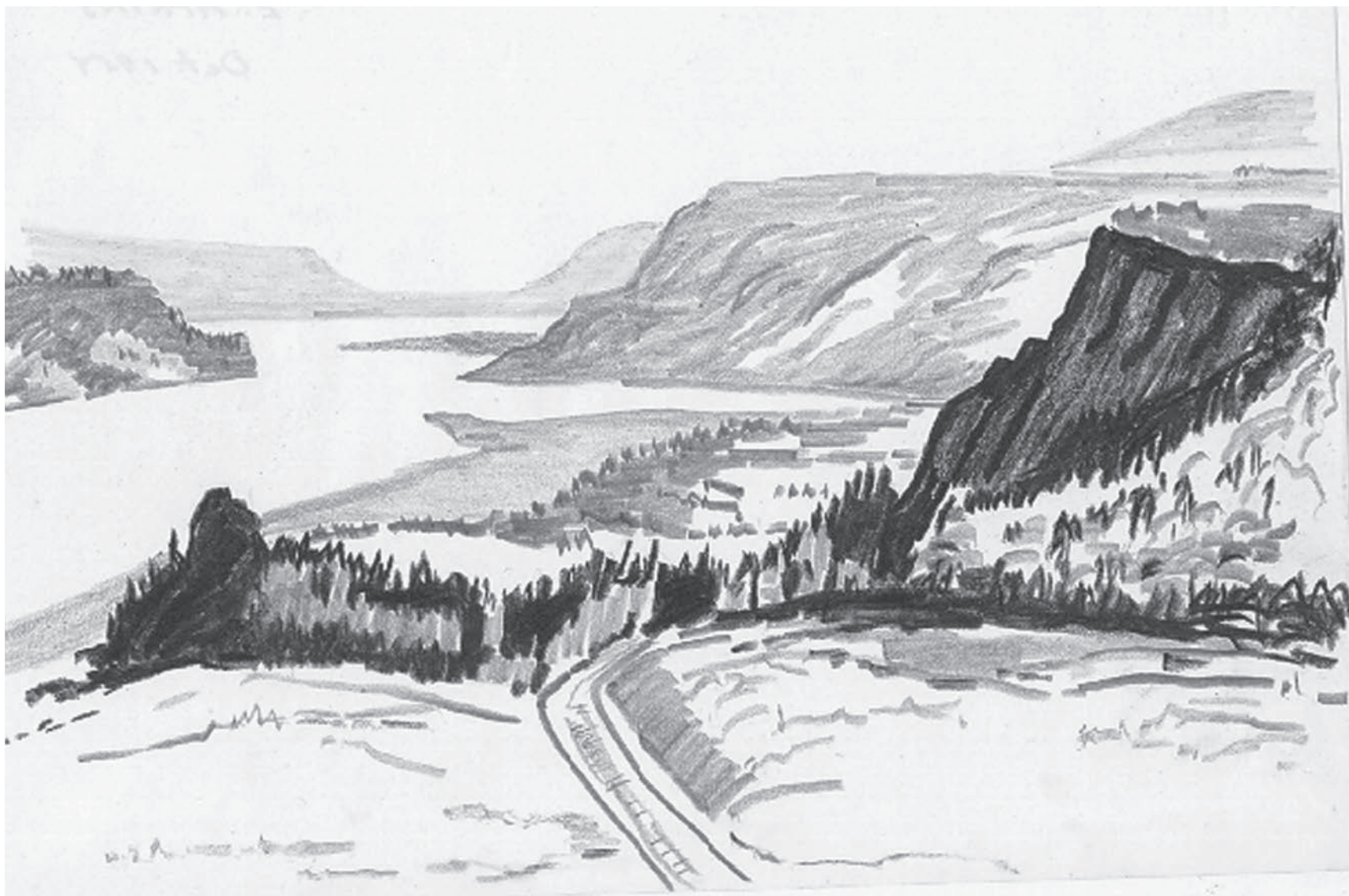
X
Position Error
Normal

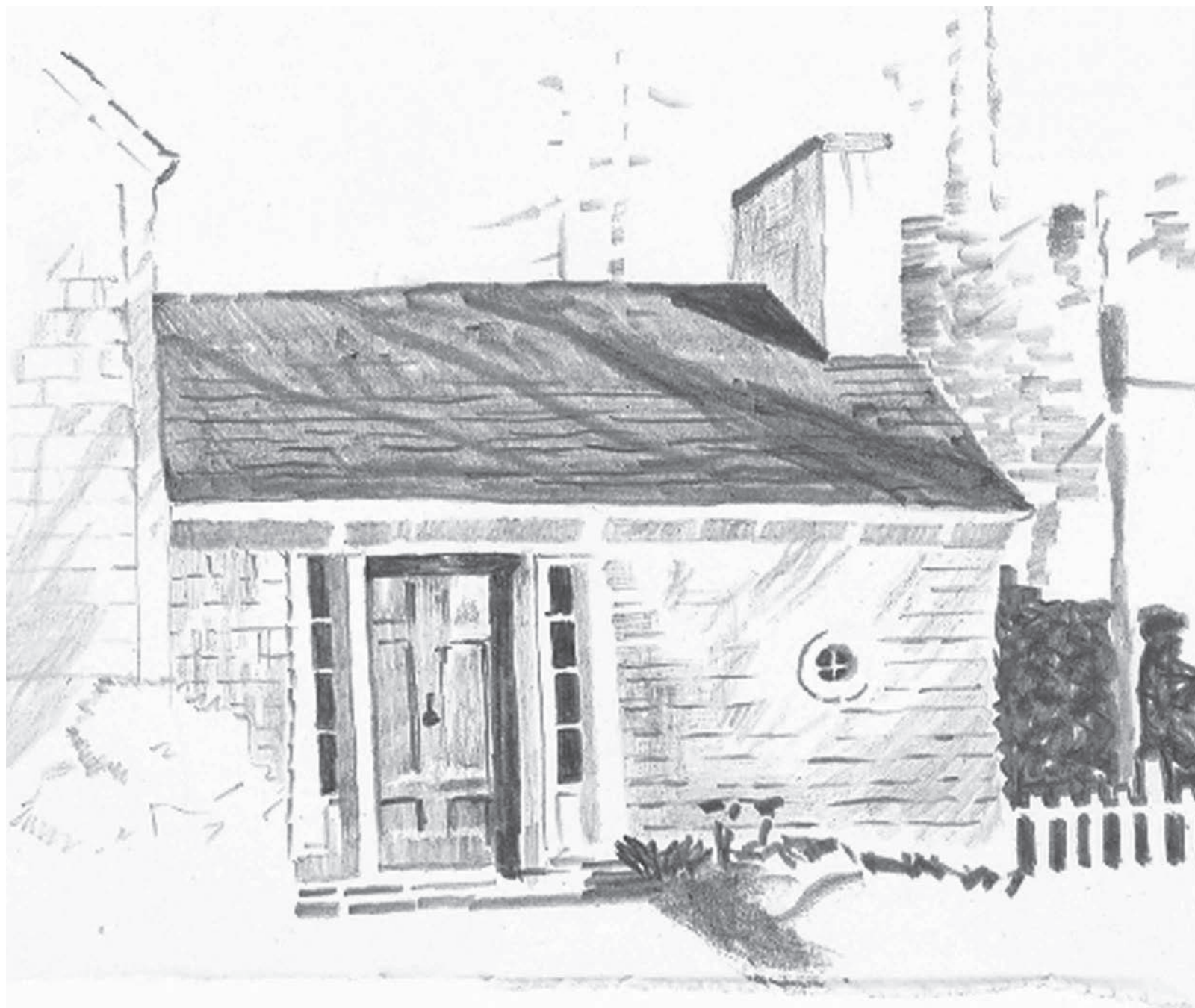


It can be seen that the commanded motion (top diagram) is 1000 counts (which is a 90 degree motor shaft rotation where 4000 counts equals 360 degrees of rotation). [This angular motion is converted to linear motion by rack-and-pinion gearing.] Since there is friction in gearing the command generated was not an instantaneous step input. Instead, the command requires the maximum motion to occur at approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ second (1000 milliseconds equals one second.) The response output is seen in the second diagram while the third diagram provides the error between the input and the output. Here we note that the maximum error is 6.0 counts, equivalent to about $\frac{1}{2}$ degree ($6 \times 0.09 = 0.54$). This is not too bad for my small demonstration kit: "To obtain the best speed of response with the minimum of overshoot specify initially a large bandwidth, say 100 hertz by increasing the gain on the Bode open-loop diagram. With this bandwidth compute the resulting Bode phase margin. Optimally it should be between 30 and 45 degrees (phase margin and bandwidth are inversely proportional). Increasing speed of response increases tendency to oscillation/overshoot.... Thus we must adjust the gain K for speed of response (or P of PID) as we simultaneously adjust the derivative D of the error signal for proper stability. With this we must also adjust the integral I of the error to decrease the output error....". Computer programs make all this not only possible but also enable microsecond stable response to micron accuracy.

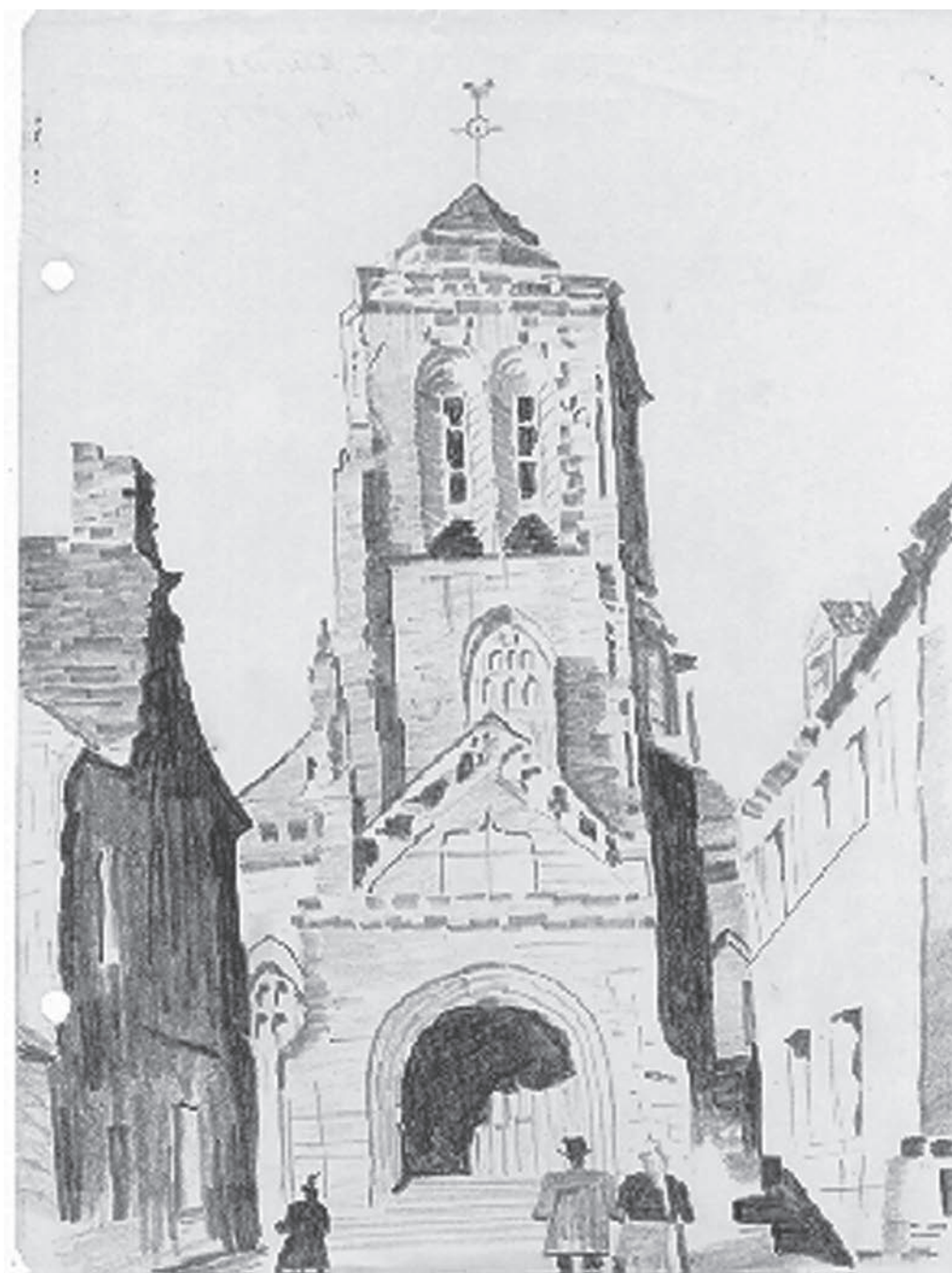
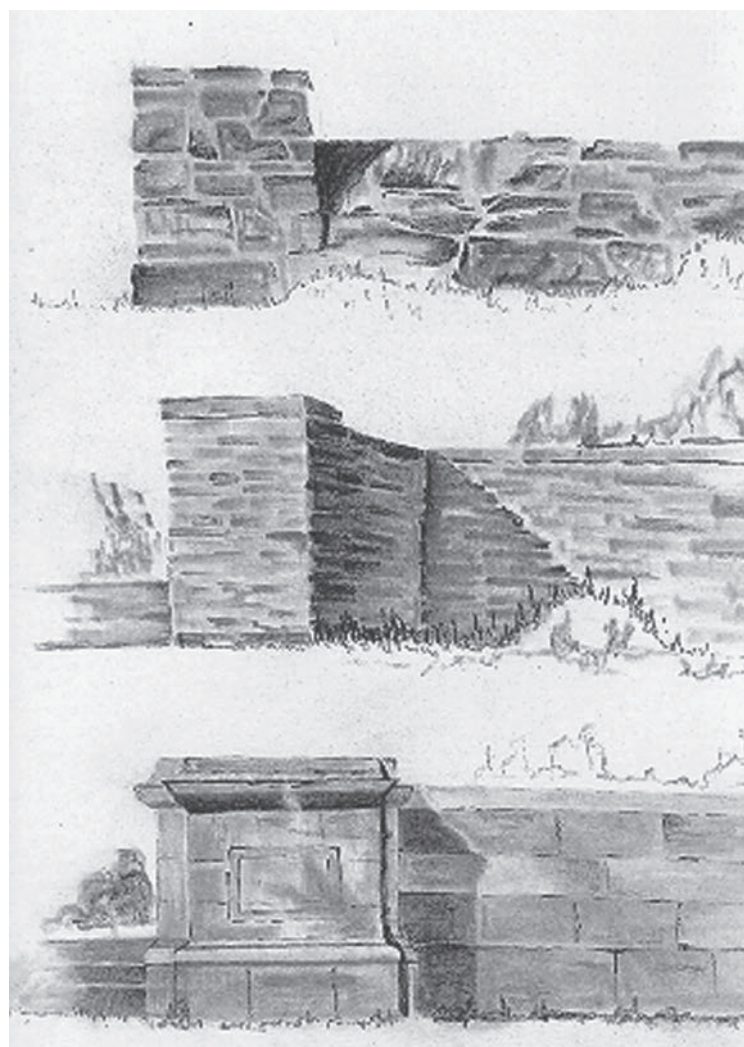
This concept can be found in all robotic production-lines extant.

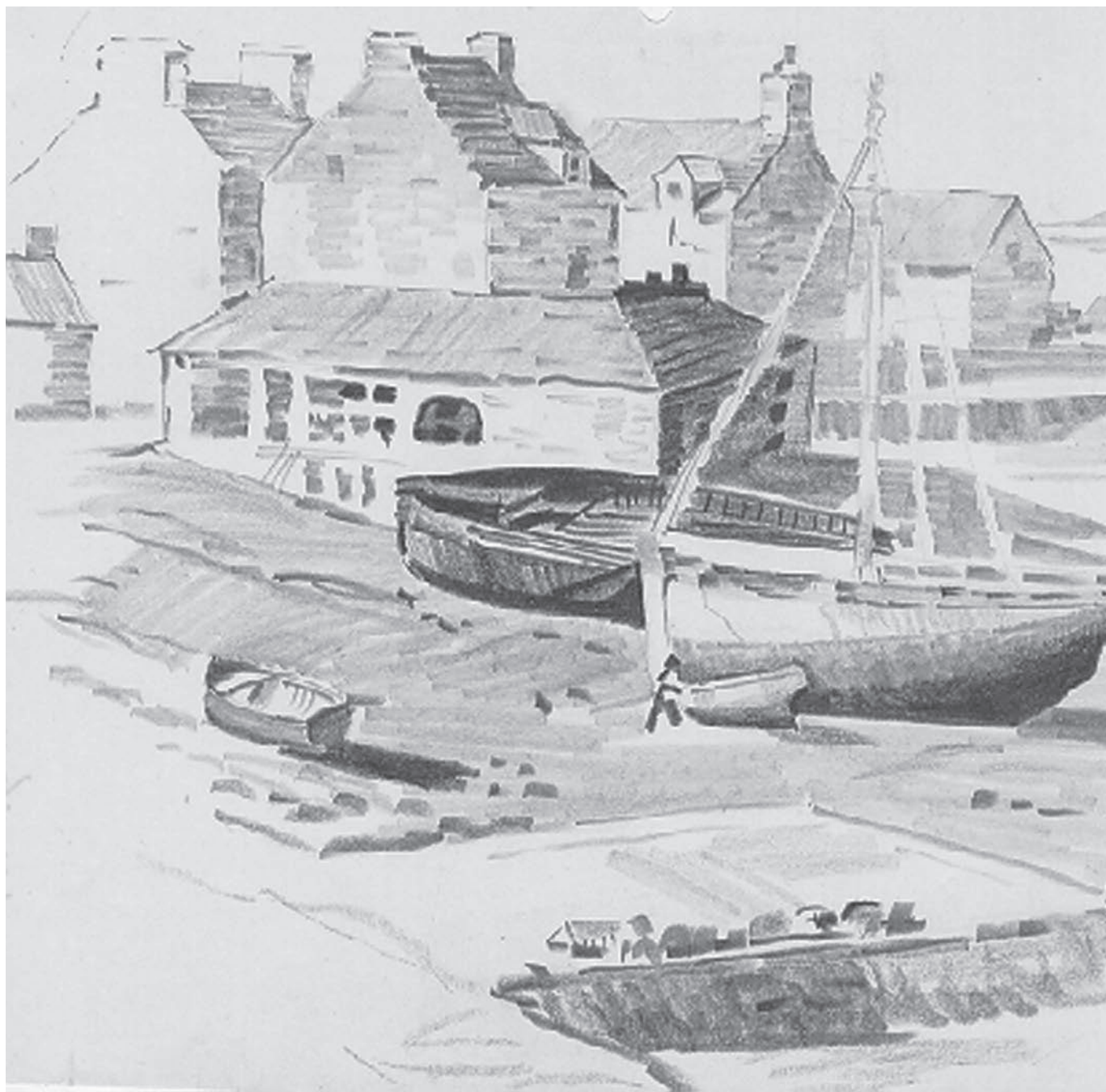
What follows are some pictures I drew around 1956 because I had been dealt some dull jobs during that period. This activity kept me going through that period until I “got up on my high horse” and did the sensible thing by going back to school full time to earn a degree in electrical engineering in two solid years (1957-1959). There are no captions because “pictures are worth a 1000 words”. There were other pictures but they seemed even more inappropriate for this book. The pictures of the cat were inspired by my Siamese cat, probably the most loving and beautiful creature extant. I thus dedicate this book to my best friends, two cats and two dogs.





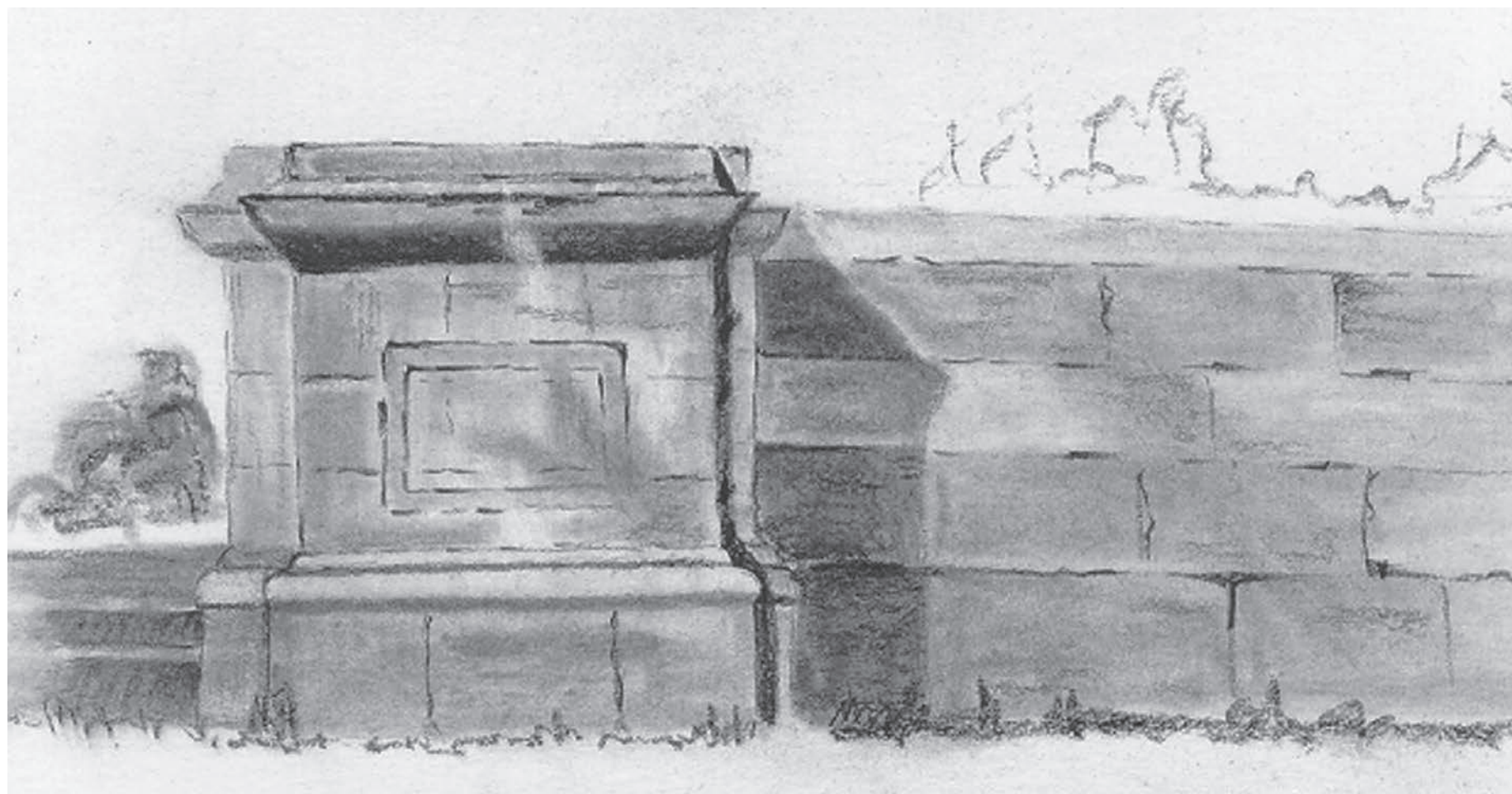




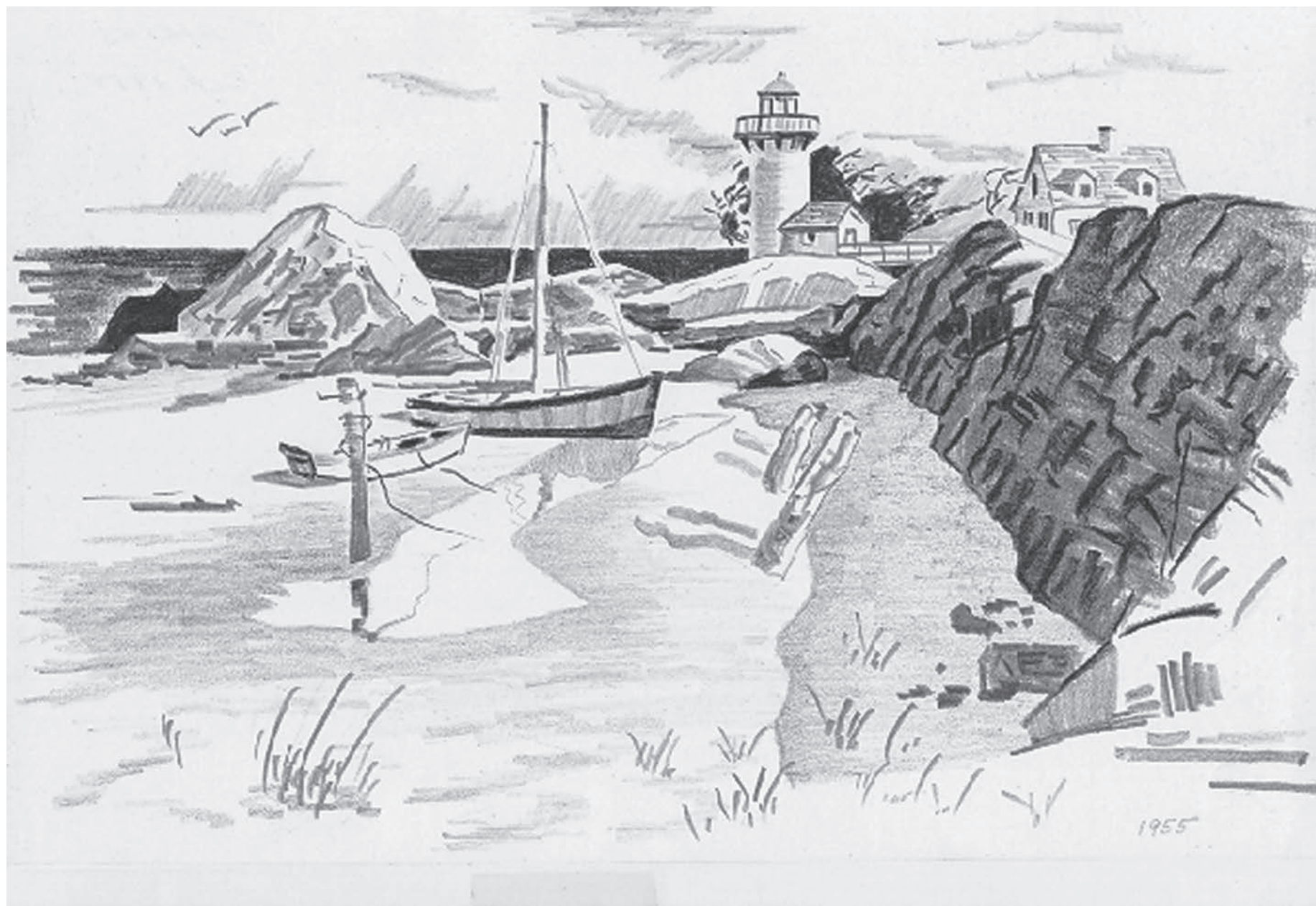


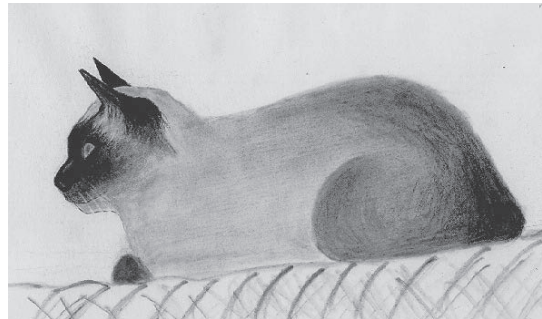
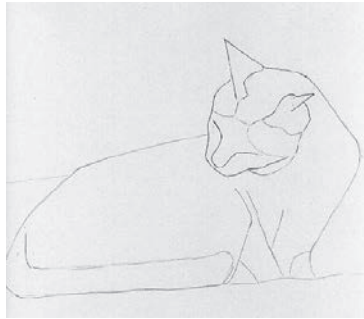
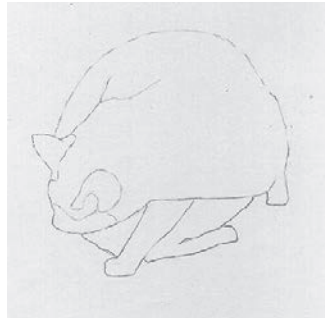
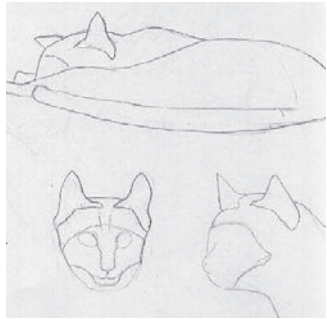












I have said throughout this book that I did not want to discuss things of a political nature. I wanted instead to deal with things of a timeless nature such as character and conduct, not topical items such as politics. I will make an exception as I close this book by enumerating the ten “Cannots” ascribed to President Lincoln because they refer to the essence of our society: Values and principles by which to live. Those principles are as follows”

1. You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift.
2. You cannot help small men by tearing down big men.
3. You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.
4. You cannot lift the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer.
5. You cannot help the poor man by destroying the rich.
6. You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than your income.
7. You cannot further the brotherhood of man by inciting class hatred.
8. You cannot establish security on borrowed money.
9. You cannot build character and courage by taking away man’s initiative and independence.
10. You cannot help men permanently by doing for them what they could and should do for themselves.

Finally, I will posit a thought about democracy that there can be no valid democracy without an accurately and fully informed citizenry; anything less tends toward mob rule. As Lincoln said: “You can fool some of the people all the time, all the people some of the time but you can’t fool all the people all the time” (would that it were so).

Since a Presidential Election is upon us I’ll add a few comments about economic politics: We should not try to cut the fixed economic pie in new configurations; we should endeavor to enlarge that economic pie as the only solution to poverty. We should not “kill the goose that lays the golden egg” (we should try to foster businesses by not taxing them into oblivion or to overseas). At the same time we should also foster an environment of competition to keep prices in check. We would be rid of most of our problems if there were a good supply of good paying jobs (and more jobs). Those who create jobs create wealth while “playing the market” does not. To my way of thinking the middle management people who design, create and maintain production lines are the “heroes” of society. Without engineers we would be but one cut above oblivion.. Cheer the athletes, the entertainers, cheer the politicians and the rest but for heaven’s sake, CHEER THE ENGINEERS (and scientists)!! Your very life depends on it.

Let me now close the circle of this book by recounting the importance of learning, in all societies and all social strata, by paraphrasing what can be found in all religious texts:

Teach them how to GROW the grain (capitalism) rather than GIVE them the grain (with all due respect to socialism).

This is true generosity which is the fruit of learning.

Let's now close this book of 1st principles with a view of A Day In The Life Of An Airdale on the flight deck of the U.S.S. Antietam. It's a day as is every other day, a day where yesterday merges seamlessly into today and today merges seamlessly into tomorrow. It's a day full of the sound and the fury of a multitude of imposing machines whipping up punishing gales that must be fearfully resisted. Yet it's also a day daily devoted to the cause of promoting that liberty we cherish so much while putting down the tyranny that shells humanity of its God-given dignity. So now, after so many years, I shall say "Antietam, Hail and Farewell !"



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The title, "On Which We Serve", is an anthology of values and virtues as derived from the activities taking place on the flight deck of a WWII fleet aircraft carrier as experienced by the author. This book consists of 355 full-page National Archive photographs, each of which has a half-page caption that seamlessly segues into a half-page discussion of life-lessons learned on that flight deck based on First Principles. These topics are such as responsibility, accountability, respect for others and self, earned self-esteem, empathy, trustworthiness, (those who have such will "never" do anything antisocial) and similar values and virtues. The title also embraces the Navy motto: Honor(to see one's duty), Commitment (to do one's duty) and Courage (to fulfill one's duty). This book is truly unique in that it is one of a kind for all time (first person) as well as being timeless.



The author grew up in Montclair, NJ where he attained the Eagle Scout Badge w/ Bronze Palm at age 14 and played on the Newark Academy Varsity football and basketball teams. He then served in the navy during WWII, then graduated from Yale University (BS Business Administration). Next he worked in NYC banks and electronic companies. After seven years, he earned a BS Electrical Engineering degree. Next he worked for a company managing the Polaris Missile System for the U.S. Navy. This led to working for the U.S. Navy Electronic Systems Command in Washington, DC as a management engineer until retirement in 1991. His outside interests centered on the field of robotic devices and the use of computers to develop neural network applications (in medicine, maintenance, decision-making, and other IF-Then problems). Later on he compiled a Trilogy consisting of this volume and two additional volumes (www.navy-wwii-memoir.com, with a changed Volume 1 front cover).