

KOREAN AIR WAR



POWERFUL emotions are betrayed in these men's faces as eager hands help to minister to Robert L. French, A11, aboard the destroyer USS Halsey Powell. French was one of ten men who survived when a P2V-5 was ditched and Coast Guard plane crashed

Twin Crash at Sea

Not once, but twice the crewmen of a P2V-5 *Neptune* patrol bomber were cast into the sea to await rescue from their tiny life raft.

The VP-22 patrol bomber was on a routine patrol in the Formosa Straits when it was hit by ground fire and the crew was forced to ditch. The Navy and the Coast Guard immediately dispatched planes and ships to search for survivors. A Coast Guard rescue plane picked up the men from this first mishap, but it crashed and burned on takeoff.

Once again the Navy and Coast Guard men abandoned the plane and took to the heavy seas in life rafts. Ens. Donald K. McElroy dived into the rough seas to assist the weakened survivors to

safety. The destroyer *Halsey Powell* was the first to sight survivors of the second mishap. Seven men were found alive in a life raft and taken aboard and three others were rescued later.

Clay Pigeons

Day in, day out, during the Korean war, helicopter pilots and crewmen have carried on their rescue work without benefit of headlines. It's part of their job and they don't hesitate at all when it comes to hovering over a downed pilot while the Reds take pot shots at them.

Lt. Leonard A. Henke and Lt. (jg) James B. Overton of VC-3 call the appearance of a helicopter the most welcome sight a combat pilot can ask for.

They were spotting for the guns of the USS *Los Angeles* which was shelling targets in the Wonsan area, when Overton's *Corsair* was hit. Flak was intense and accurate and several times Henke's plane was rocked by the exploding anti-aircraft shells.

Henke was at 4,000' and Overton about 2,000' below when he was hit. The first thing Henke noticed was that Overton's tank, still partially full of gas, was on fire. Soon the flames were licking the cockpit and the engine exploded. The plane banked sharply and dove into the water at a 30° angle.

Henke hadn't seen his fellow pilot bail out and so he assumed that from the speed of the plane and its angle of impact with the water Overton was

killed. He radioed the *Los Angeles*, asking them to send their helicopter to the area. He directed the pilot to the spot where the plane had gone in.

The chopper flew low over the crash scene and the pilot reported that he couldn't see anything but bits of debris floating on the water. The helicopter was being fired on by small arms from the beach, so Henke began strafing runs with his 20 mm cannon aimed at the source of the ground fire. As he flew over the 'copter pilot, he could see bursts in the water all around him as he hovered practically motionless a few feet over the water's surface, like a clay pigeon in a shooting gallery.

The helicopter pilot was about to give up and return to the *Los Angeles* when the ship radioed that they had spotted Overton on the beach. Henke and the chopper pilot spotted Overton at the same time. Henke began making more strafing runs to give covering protection to the downed pilot and the 'copter.

Overton would run a few steps toward the incoming helicopter, then hit the sand. He repeated this performance two or three times until the 'copter reached him. The last thing Henke saw, before flying south to land at a friendly airfield behind the lines, was his fellow pilot dangling from the "whirlybird's" rescue line as they flew off to the *Los Angeles*.

Only two weeks prior to this incident, Overton was hit by AA in this same area and crash landed wheels up on a friendly strip on Yodo Island in Wonsan Harbor. At about that same time, Henke, flying in pre-dawn darkness, spotted a truck moving along with its lights on. He made a low strafing dive and the truck blew up as he passed over it, putting 20 holes in his plane.



DAMAGE to "Grey Ghost" pains LCdr. Roberts as he and Lt. (jg) Schlosser examine plane

It Happened to a "Ghost"

The "Grey Ghost" of the carrier *Kearsarge* won't be haunting the Reds over North Korea for some time, because one of the enemy found out that even a ghost can be hit.

The F9F *Panther* jet from VF-141 received its name because it sports a natural aluminum color instead of the conventional Navy blue paint job. It is being tested against the elements to determine how well the metal surfaces will resist corrosion.

Ordinarily, the *Starbuster's* skipper, LCdr. Frenchie Roberts, flies the "Grey Ghost," but one day operational commitments necessitated a change in pilots and Lt. (jg) Jocko Schlosser went out instead. The "Ghost" and two other *Panthers* were on a reconnaissance mission near Songjin when Schlosser's plane received a direct hit in the left wing from an enemy 37 mm shell.

The resulting hole was large enough for a man to put his head and shoulders through. Although the plane was extremely difficult to control, Schlosser managed to return to the *Kearsarge* and land without mishap.

When LCdr. Roberts saw the damage that had been done to his plane, he growled at Schlosser in mock anger, "That's the last time you'll get the keys to the family car."

High Man at 23

First man of Capt. W. R. Hollingsworth's carrier, the *Princeton*, to pass the 100-mission mark in Korean combat hops was Lt. (jg) William F. Moore. Only 23 years old, Moore led all other pilots on the flattop, now operating off North coast. His 100th mission was flown to within four and a half miles of Manchuria and nine miles from the Russian border.



TAILPIPE of jet furnishes heat for VF-51's Swanson, Belanger, Angelo on Valley Forge

Ride 'Em, Cowboy!

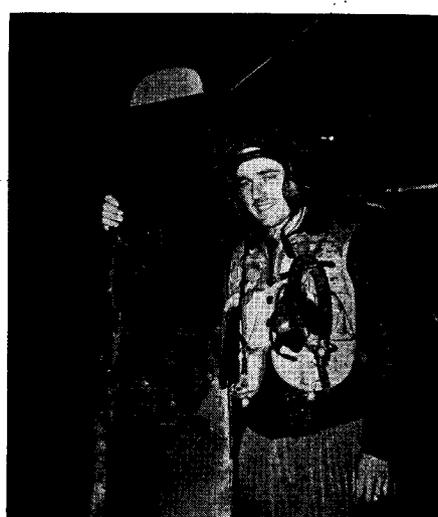
Texas-born Ens. Bill Doggett of VA-145 aboard the *Kearsarge* probably has had many a rough ride on a bucking bronco, but he had to go all the way to Korea to get the roughest ride of his life.

Doggett was flying in an eight-plane strike against an enemy gun position in "Artillery Valley," when a 37 mm anti-aircraft shell hit the propeller of his *Skyraider* and exploded. There was a loud bang and then he saw an orange puff of smoke blossom just forward of the cockpit.

The explosion had torn a hole the size of a grapefruit in one blade of the propeller and had punched over 100 holes in the engine cowling and right wing. Jagged, foot-long streamers of metal threw the propeller off balance and set up a terrific vibration that threatened to shake the plane apart. Doggett described the sensation as "a cross between a reducing machine and a Texas bucking bronco." To add to his troubles the engine began smoking heavily because of a damaged oil line.

For 40 minutes he fought the bucking aircraft as he skimmed 100 miles over the tops of mountain ranges, occasionally skirting towering peaks he couldn't clear. Finally, the airstrip came into sight. He circled once, then set the plane down in a perfect landing. The weary but happy pilot was flown to his carrier while his plane was turned over to amazed repair crews at the airstrip.

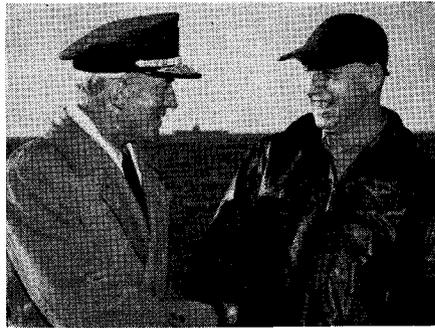
When LCdr. Harry McClaugherty, CO of VA-145, saw the damaged plane, he remarked that he had never seen a plane that badly mangled make it back. The plane needed a new prop, new engine and hydraulic and structural repairs. All Ens. Doggett wanted was some sleep. His rough ride had tired him.



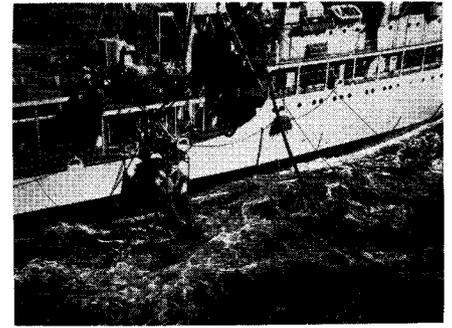
HE GOT home with this damaged prop. Ensign Doggett holds prop with foot-long streamers



AFTER passing 100 mark in Korea, flight instructor duties await Lts.(jg) Harris, Adams



TWO TOP air bosses, RAdms. Soucek and Hickey meet on the flight deck of Kearsarge



TWO MARINES from Adm. Hickey's staff hover above waves between Guatalupe and Oriskany

Veteran Carriers End Tour

As the *Essex* completed her second Korean tour, Lt. (jg) John Harris and Lt. (jg) Joseph Adams were the only pilots in Air Task Group Two who owned 100 combat missions. Harris led Adams in missions flown over war-ravaged Korea by 137 to 114.

Only five months after Harris won his gold wings at NAS PENSACOLA, he took part in the first Navy strike in Korea, flying from the *Valley Forge*. Adams made his debut against the Communists as a *Princeton* pilot in May 1951. He has since completed two tours on the *Essex*, while Harris flew from the *Princeton* on his second tour.

The jet photo detachment of VC-61 aboard the *Essex* completed the first full combat tour with F2H-2P *Banshee* photo planes aboard a carrier. Although other detachments of this squadron have used *Banshees* during their Korean tours, the *Essex* detachment was the first to use them from start to finish.

With the departure of the *Badoeng Strait*, ending her third tour of duty in Korean waters, the famed Marine *Checkerboard* squadron, VMA-312, transferred its operation to the *Bataan*.

When the *Bing Ding* staged its homecoming celebration at NAS SAN DIEGO, the guest of honor was Miss Nina Warren, daughter of California's Governor. Miss Warren, once a polio victim, accepted a check for \$5,400 on behalf of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis. The ship's crew dug deep into their pockets to raise the money to help fight the dread disease.

Happenstance

A unique situation occurred in the Sea of Japan off the Korean east coast when RAdm. Apollo Soucek, ComCarDiv Three aboard his flagship *Valley Forge*, relieved RAdm. R. F. Hickey, ComCarDiv Five aboard the *Kearsarge*, as Commander TF-77.

It was the first time in the history of the Korean war that a commander of TF-77, riding his own flagship, has commanded his own carrier division in

the task force. CarDiv Three consists of the *Valley Forge*, *Philippine Sea* and the *Kearsarge*.

The unusual situation arose because of the different rotation dates of the ships operating in the Korean combat zone. Carriers are relieved on the combat line for stateside maintenance and overhaul singly, rather than in divisions. As a result, their dates of detachment and return to the line must vary. It was purely by chance that these attack carriers in CarDiv Three were united in combat.

Waltz Over the Waves

Moving day is enough of a problem on dry land to give anyone a headache, but when it comes at sea, it's no fun at all. That's what happened to the 112 officers and men who make up the staff of COMCARDIV 5, RAdm. Robert F. Hickey. They went bag and baggage over the highline from carrier to tanker to carrier.

The transfer came about when the admiral received orders to shift his flag from the *Kearsarge* to the *Oriskany*. TF-77 was restocking depleted ammunition and provision stores when the transfer was effected. Despite towering waves and icy winds, the entire operation went off like clockwork. The shift of personnel plus approximately 10 tons of freight and baggage went without incident.



FORMING a near-perfect triangle, three jets from *Bon Homme Richard* reform after strike

Tragedy Aboard Oriskany

A young Navy cameraman aboard the *Oriskany* recorded on film the tragic moments before a wild bomb exploded, killing him. Thomas Leo McGraw, Jr., was at his station, standing by to take photos of any untoward incidents during carrier landings, when Lt. Edwin Kummer landed his *Corsair* with a bomb still dangling from the wing. Kummer had been on a mission over North Korea and the bomb had failed to be released over the target.

McGraw saw the bomb drop and started his camera. The film shows the action as the bomb bounced twice on the deck, skidded toward McGraw and exploded. The photographer was killed instantly, and the camera was shattered by the explosion. Somehow, the film escaped destruction.

Hot fragments and flames killed Thomas M. Yeager and wounded 15 others. Yeager was struck by the shrapnel while repairing electrical circuits of a plane parked on the hangar deck. Langford W. Henshaw, seriously wounded with a large piece of shrapnel in his own back, dragged Yeager from the debris and burning area in an effort to save his life.

More heroism was displayed as Airman Richard Donovan plunged through flames and exploding ammunition, disregarding his own personal safety, to rescue the unconscious pilot. Lt. Kummer miraculously escaped death, suffering only burns and minor injuries. Donovan cut the pilot from his parachute harness and with the help of Airman Michael J. Yok carried him to safety.

The ship's medical department was on the spot immediately, administering aid. The ship's doctors and medical corpsmen worked throughout the night and the following day. Hundreds of blood donors lined up to donate to their wounded shipmates.

The greatest danger to the ship came when the gas tanks of an F9F *Panther* on the hangar deck were pierced by hot bomb fragments. The hangar bay, flood-

ed with gasoline, was immediately isolated. Thoroughly-trained, tireless repair parties worked continuously throughout the night to repair the damage. The next day the *Oriskany* was fully operational. Special memorial services were held for McGraw and Yeager.

The rapid repair of the flight deck to full operational status brought a "Well done!" from VAdm. J. J. Clark, Commander 7th Fleet.

The Rugged Corsair

With all the to-do the newspapers have been making over "The Last of the Corsairs," Ens. Dan Bryla's veteran plane added one more striking performance to a long list of battle feats.

Flying a *Corsair* from the *Valley Forge* on a coordinated strike against the Chosen Number One hydroelectric

pulling the *Corsair* through a half loop or "Split S." More speed built, the stick began to freeze and the dive steepened. The pilot grabbed the stick with both hands and pulled back with every ounce of his strength. At the same time, he was exerting all the pressure he could put on the left rudder pedal to compensate for the speed.

He began to "grey out" and saw, as he slowly began to reach a level flight attitude, that he was headed straight for the middle of a 4,000' ridge of mountains surrounding the target area. By this time, Bryla was sure his number was up and he was plenty scared.

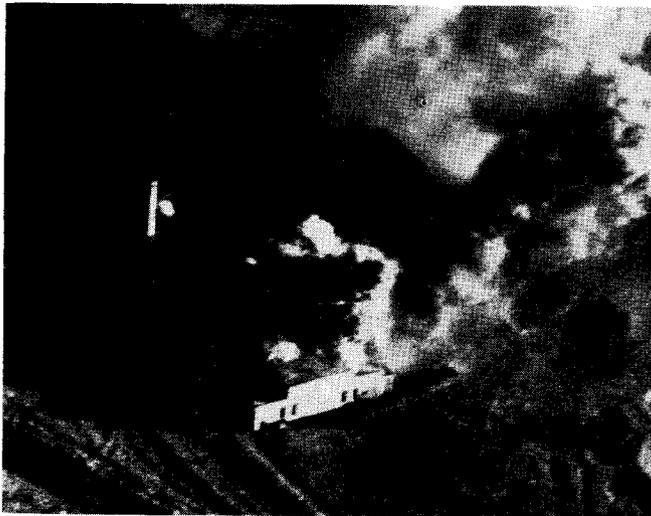
Luckily, the *Corsair* barely skimmed over the ridge and Bryla began to join up with his group from the *Valley Forge*, at the same time trying to avoid the flak bursting all around him. With

Seemed like an Eternity

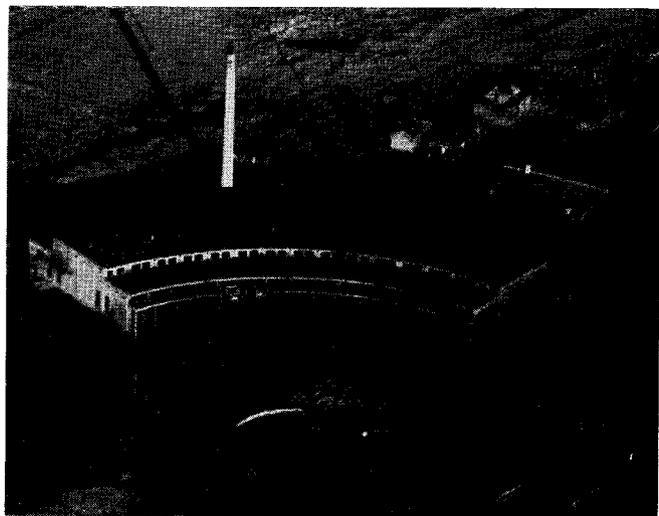
A really grim moment cropped up in TF-77 when Phillip Tucker, a young deck crewman on the *Philippine Sea*, fell overboard while pushing a jet into launching position. The ship's helicopter, manned by Lt. (jg) Leroy Kile and Richard A. Myers, lifted Tucker from the churning waters in less than a minute.

Although thoroughly chilled, Tucker was unharmed. Rushed to sick bay, he chattered out his story while consuming hot beef broth. "I don't know just what happened, but there I was bouncing in the sea. I waved and hollered as loud as I could to make sure the helicopter pilot could spot me. Seems I was there an awful long time."

He was told the official log showed he was in the water only 50 seconds.



SKYRAIDERS from the *Essex* unload thousand-pound bombs on the Najin (Rashin) roundhouse, northernmost Korean port near USSR



ESSEX bombs punched seven holes in reinforced concrete structure. It still stands as major force blasted down and inward

power plant, Ens. Bryla underwent an experience every pilot dreads. He began a steep attacking dive from 17,000' and the target was closing in on his gunsight, when, midway in his dive, his plane began to shudder and buffet about violently.

At first he thought it was caused by the enemy's antiaircraft fire which was bursting around him as he closed on the target. As the shaking and yawing became worse, he realized that his plane was travelling fast enough to cause compressibility shock waves to develop around his control surfaces, making control of the plane almost impossible. He immediately released his bombs, chopped off his power and pulled back on the stick to recover from the dive.

Before he reached a horizontal position, his plane suddenly flipped over on its back. The ailerons froze and Bryla was unable to roll out to an upright position. He attempted a recovery by

some of the strain of his hairy experience passed, he began to notice excruciating pains in his left hip, stomach and shoulders. He was faint and felt very weak, but, after turning on 100 percent oxygen, he began to feel better.

When he approached the *Valley Forge* for a landing, he rocked his wings to let the LSO know that he needed to land at once and didn't think he could take a wave off and circle the carrier traffic pattern again. The LSO signaled a cut and he landed. The jerk of the arrested landing shot sharp pains through his body, but he found them almost enjoyable, knowing he was back home and in one piece.

Bryla was taken to the carrier's sick bay where medical examination revealed a broken left hip and strained shoulder and back muscles. Of the two, the plane withstood the experience far better. The next day, the rugged *Corsair* was back in the air, flying on combat missions.

Korean "Thanks"

When a Marine Commandant says, "Well Done!" the *Leathernecks* know that they've done a bang-up job. When the people of Pyongteck turned out for "Marines' Day," the men of MAG-12 were given an ovation they will always cherish, as Koreans are just as reticent as "the old man."

The citizens of Pyongteck were grateful for funds and clothing given them by MAG-12 and they took particular pains to say so. All city officials made speeches about the *Leathernecks'* generosity. They were flanked by principals from 15 grade schools and one high school, and representatives of the Women's Club and the Junior Chamber of Commerce.

Lt. Sidney E. Walters, who has been working with the Junior Chamber of Commerce, presented a Marine fund which will allow an additional 10 children to attend Pyongteck's school.