

# CLOUDBUSTER

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U. S. NAVY PRE-FLIGHT SCHOOL, CHAPEL HILL, N. C.

Friday, January 12, 1945

## Carolina Coeds Entertain Cadets



Girls . . . girls . . . girls . . . eight of them in the cast of the University's Sound and Fury organization which entertained the cadets with a musical comedy in Memorial Hall last Wednesday evening are shown in the huddle above. Starting at the top and going clockwise, the Carolina coeds are: Peggy Stanton, Jane Auten, Peggy Teague, Barbara Pennington, Barbara Boyd, Patty Harry, Betty Folsom, and Fran Cheshire. The phone numbers are the photographer's secret.

## Increase Of Naval Pilots Will Speed Pacific Rotation

The upward revision of scheduled output of Navy pilots announced early in December was not caused by an unexpected increase in the attrition rate, but by a number of other personnel factors, it was disclosed in a Navy Department release last week.

An important factor leading to the change is the Navy's plan to speed up the rotation of its flyers, thereby giving aviators more frequent periods in the United States for rehabilitation and refresher training in new equipment. Also, the war in the Pacific is now ahead of schedule, and as the drive against Japan proper is pressed home, the Navy has to be prepared for the more difficult job of fighting at accelerated tempo to keep the enemy constantly off balance.

Reassignment of former cadets, who were separated from the

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## 61st Batt Cadet Sees Dad In Soundie Film

Cadet Henry T. Stanley, Jr., of the 61st Batt, was viewing the "Cavalcade of Aviation" soundie in Navy Hall with little more than academic interest last Monday, until scenes of the first Navy flight to Alaska flashed on the screen.

The cadet's interest in the film then picked up briskly for in the PM-1 Martin patrol bomber was an unmistakably familiar figure. Piloting the twin-engine flying boat and serving as squadron commander of the Alaskan-bound flight was Lt. Comdr. Henry T. Stanley, Sr.

## Van Wie Tops 63rd Academics

J. A. Van Wie, Jr., led the 63rd Batt academically with an average of 3.752, being followed closely by H. L. Schwartz with 3.692, P. W. Kolchin with 3.682, D. E. Oberg with 3.655, and J. H. Paradis with 3.63.

## Ensign Critcher Of 18th Batt Decorated For Smashing Japs

Four Jap planes definitely shot from the sky, four other probables, and five destroyed on the ground represent the up-to-date battle score which has won the Distinguished Flying Cross and two Air Medals for Ens. Burras A. Critcher, 18th Battalion Cloudbuster who visited the station last week.

In compiling one of the most impressive combat records thus far reported for an alumnus of this station, Ens. Critcher piloted a Hellcat with the Fighting 19 group based aboard an Essex class carrier in Vice Admiral Marc A. Mitscher's vaunted fast carrier task force.

Victim No. 1 was shot from the sky on Aug. 4 of last year when the former Pre-Flighter went to the aid of an American sub under attack off an island of the Kazan group. It was Ens. Critcher's first tiff with a Zero, and he scored 4.0 by sending it spinning into the sea. For this feat he was awarded his first Air Medal.

### Five Destroyed On Ground

Just five weeks later on Sept. 12, Ens. Critcher shot down his second Jap plane in the Philippine area and so badly damaged another that it is believed to have crashed into the sea. This brought him his second Air Medal.

Then came the big sea, air, and land battle for Leyte. With Admiral Mitscher's forces moving against a wing of the Jap fleet, Ens. Critcher went into action on Oct. 24 and rid the sky of two more Jap planes to raise his sure total to four. Three probables were added on subsequent days to bring his air combat record to its present total. He also gained credit for five destroyed on the ground during action in the Philippine fighting.

Ens. Critcher's heroics in the fight for Leyte won him the Distinguished Flying Cross with the following citation:

"For distinguishing himself by heroism and extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight as a pilot of a carrier-based fighter aircraft assigned to intercept a large formation of enemy planes attacking our surface units on 24 October 1944. Following his division leader in the original contact he personally shot down two enemy dive bombers despite at-



Ensign Critcher

tacking enemy fighters. Disregarding unfavorable weather and poor visibility, he pressed home attacks on remaining enemy planes until all were dispersed and retiring. On 24 October 1944 he was assigned as a fighter cover of a strike against a carrier of the enemy fleet. His determined low level strafing attacks in the face of intensive anti-aircraft fire contributed greatly to the damage inflicted by our bomber and torpedo groups. His courage and skill were at all times inspiring and in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

### Tagged By Ack-Ack

Ens. Critcher, who won his wings at Pensacola in November, 1943, has logged 180 combat hours on 48 sorties during duty in the Pacific. Fortune, he admits, has flown with him, for he has yet to be at the receiving end of fire from enemy planes. Only once has his plane been tagged by ack-ack, and that was a 40 mm. shell which did little damage.

## 12 Million In Armed Forces

Washington (CNS) — There are 109,000 women in the Navy-nurses, Waves, Spars and Marines—and 80,000 Wacs, it has been reported by Maj. Gen. Lewis B. Hershey, Selective Service Director, to the Senate Military Affairs Committee. Net strength of the U. S. Armed Forces was 11,859,000 on Oct. 1.