

TAFFRAIL TALK

EVER HAD A TOUR of picket duty midway between New Zealand and Deepfreeze? If not, let's hear no complaints about rough duty.

It seems that, en route to her last ocean station assignment for the year, uss *Calcaterra* (DE 390) picked up a reporter for a New Zealand paper to show him what sea duty was like. (We can't tell you the name of the paper because, when LCDR William Earl, CO of *Calcaterra* sent us the clipping, he inadvertently clipped too closely and removed the paper's name).

The reporter was impressed. Also seasick. And, before we saw dry land again, pretty tired of it all.

Tired of waves breaking over the bow and spray pounding on the bridge. Tired of sitting on the floor to eat because all the wardroom chairs had been lashed down. (That's right—the crew ate sitting down on the deck.) Tired of lying in his bunk, unable to sleep because, if he did, he'd be tossed out and into a bulkhead. Tired of watching movies, both new and old. Tired of a rolling ship, gray cold skies, and waiting to go home.

But there were compensations. Great excitement at the sight of their first iceberg. Really impressive. About 250 feet high, 1150 feet across and some two miles long.

The midnight sun, with sunset lasting an hour and a half.

Excitement at the prospect of encountering their relief ship bearing mail from home.

We hope to make our point with this brief quote from LCDR Earl's covering letter:

"We began our homeward bound trip on 10 February. We are looking forward to it of course with anticipation. We have been gone five months today."

Speaking of the Destroyer Navy, as we have in our lead articles, this item points up to the tremendous job done by the greyhounds of the sea. The destroyermen rate a 4.0 in determination, tenacity and achievement—wherever they go.

★ ★ ★

As mentioned before in these pages, ALL HANDS receives a sizable share of change-of-command stories. On the assumption that there are about 860 commissioned ships plus many times that number of units in the U. S. Navy today, that works out to about three changes of command per day. (There may be a fallacy here, but our editor-in-charge-of-statistics has just stepped out for his 6.3 cup of coffee for the day.)

Nevertheless, for the statistical minded, it's worth mentioning a recent change of command with an unusual news angle.

Captain Carl A. Hering, USNR, relieved Captain George J. Haltiner, USNR, of his command of Naval Reserve Research Company 12-8 in just one-half second, in what can be said to be a "brief ceremony" at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

At precisely 2000, the two captains stepped smartly to a computer, saluted, pressed a button and, before you could say "Anchors Aweigh," that was that.

It seems that the usual references to orders dated such and such, with the time-honored expressions of "I relieve you, Sir," and "I stand relieved," were transferred from the computer's memory to the printer, and Captain Hering had the helm.

A PIO release from PGS Monterey claims this to be the shortest change of command. Any takers?

The All Hands Staff