

Chapter 3: 1951: To War Again

*When at grips with the enemy on the sea,
beneath the sea and in the air,
no task force commander ever had enough destroyers.*

Vice Admiral Walden L. Ainsworth, USN

Poor Seoul fell again in early January. Once again the Communists achieved a major breakthrough, cutting off the Americans at Wonju on the Korean peninsula and rupturing the entire United Nations front. Lieutenant General Matthew B. Ridgway, MacArthur's new Eighth Army commander, plugged the Wonju gap and recaptured the capital by mid-March. The two great armies again squatted on the 38th Parallel, facing each other in a hot stalemate. In April President Truman fired Douglas MacArthur, and the famous general returned to America for the first time in fourteen years, to a hero's welcome. The American public argued that Truman, rather than MacArthur, should be fired. But the die was irrevocably cast. MacArthur made his "Old Soldiers Never Die" speech to a joint session of Congress. Meanwhile, under General Ridgway, there remained much fighting to do in war-ravaged Korea.

Lieutenant Commander Gale Felton was a thoroughly experienced destroyer officer when he got orders in early 1951 to take command of the recommissioned *USS Colahan (DD-658)*. In the ten years since his graduation from the Naval Academy, he had served aboard five destroyers, two of them *Fletchers*. In fact, all of his sea duty had come on destroyers, nothing more and nothing less. He started on a "four-piper" in World War II and wound up a decade later on a hefty *Gearing* at the start of the Korean War.

In 1941-43, as a young officer aboard the *USS Trever (DMS-16)*, Felton saw much action in the Pacific War's early rounds, starting at the very beginning, in what was then a sleepy Hawaiian anchorage called Pearl Harbor. In 1944-45, as the brutal war drew to its ceremonial climax in Tokyo Bay, he served as gunnery officer of the *USS Ingraham (DD-694)*, and as executive officer of the *USS McDermut (DD-677)*. His tours in the *Ingraham* and the

McDermut carried him through the bloody Philippine and Okinawa campaigns, and then to the shores of a defeated Japan.

The Pacific War was finally over. There were no more enemies to fight. The American fleet, awesomely huge at war's end, was allowed to shrink to something close to a peacetime level. Briefly, Felton was assigned as skipper of the *USS Halsey Powell* (DD-686), one of many *Fletchers* slated for suspended animation. But soon enough a new war in Korea found him back in the second-in-command spot, as XO of the *USS George K. MacKenzie* (DD-836). And once again, in an expanding fleet, Felton was needed elsewhere. Now he would get his chance to command a fleet destroyer in combat. The *USS Colahan*, a class sister of the *McDermut* and the *Halsey Powell*, was waiting for him, along with a promotion to full commander.

He was thirty-two years old, and had fought in two wars. There was the “Big One,” as his first war was now called, and then came this uncapitalized “police action” in Korea. The new one was big enough to be called a war but, inexplicably to those who fought it, was not. In a strict sense, “Ol’ Man” Felton was still a young man, with a long way to go in both life and career, and with much to prove to himself and others. Command of the *Colahan* was certainly the high point of his naval career thus far, and he was eminently qualified for it, but he remained a bit uptight about it, as events would show.

Gale Seaver Felton was born on 19 November 1918 in New York City's Brooklyn, but he grew up in Montclair, New Jersey, which he would forever view as his hometown. Seaver was his mother's maiden name. He entered the U.S. Naval Academy in 1937 and graduated with the class of 1941, which gave him barely enough time to find his sea legs before he jumped into the greatest naval war the world had ever known, or ever would know. Just a month out of the academy, the twenty-two-year-old ensign joined the *USS Trever*, a Pacific Fleet flush-deck “four-piper” that had been converted into a minesweeper. He served aboard her for two and a half years, initially as communications officer, then as first lieutenant, finally as gunnery officer.

The old *Trever*, built as a *Clemson*-class destroyer in the years immediately after World War I, was tied up at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese made their



USS Colahan and Asia

Commander Gale Felton, who skippered the *Colahan* during her first Korean War tour, 1951-52.

sneak air attack in December 1941. She and three sister minesweepers lay moored in West Loch, nested comfortably together off the Pearl City Yacht Club. Ensign Felton was duty officer that Sunday morning, tending to routine shipboard matters. The *Trever*'s crew, anticipating no more than another lazy day in port, was suddenly and shockingly called to General Quarters. *This is no drill!* Impatiently, shavetail Felton manned a machine gun and threw angry .50-caliber rounds at the "Jap bastards" swooping over the harbor. The Jap bastards, seeking bigger targets, paid little attention.

Like other ships, the *Trever* fled from Pearl Harbor as soon as she could get up steam. Racing for the narrow passageway that led to the open and relatively safe sea, she took station just behind the *USS Henley (DD-391)*, which was skedaddling as well. The *Craven*-class *Henley* was commanded by a mere lieutenant, the ranking officer aboard. Her captain and executive officer were enjoying themselves ashore on that Sunday morning, as was the *Trever*'s captain, in fact.

By a fluke that could only happen in real life, the *Henley*'s crew was standing at battle stations when the bombs and torpedoes began falling. Someone, praise the Lord, had made a mistake, sounding General Quarters instead of Quarters for Muster. It was a fortuitous fuck-up. The *Henley*, distinct from all other warships at Pearl Harbor on this terrible day, was ready and waiting when Japanese planes swarmed overhead, and she fired the first destroyer shot at the attackers. Then she got the hell out of there, captain or no captain, exec or no exec. Meanwhile, the *Henley*'s two top-ranking officers rushed to the harbor, but they arrived too late to catch their prudently fleeing ship. They boarded Felton's *Trever* instead. Since the underway destroyers could not halt to transfer passengers, the *Henley* cleverly streamed a life raft on a long manila line from her fantail, and her CO and XO sprang into the raft and thus were hauled in. The *Trever*'s own commanding officer, Lieutenant Commander D.A. Agnew, came aboard in mid-afternoon as his ship swept the Pearl Harbor channel for any mines the Japanese may have left behind.

A few months later, under peaceful skies in San Francisco, Ensign Gale Felton married Edith Lillian Kilburn, daughter of Charles S. Kilburn, an Army officer who would rise to the rank of brigadier general. But there was a war going on, and America, at this early stage, was losing it, so the young naval officer could not be spared for leisurely marital bliss. His ship headed for a new hot spot, a place called Guadalcanal in the South Pacific.

On 25 October 1942 the *Trever* and another old minesweeper, the *USS Zane (DMS-14)*, fought a daylight engagement with three Japanese destroyers. Early

that morning the little minesweepers delivered torpedoes, ammunition and aviation fuel to Tulagi in the Solomons. Then they learned that three hefty enemy warships were standing down the strait, presumably with intentions of bombarding the airstrip at Henderson Field. The *Trever*'s Captain Agnew, who commanded the two-ship task unit, faced a choice. He could run and hide in the Maliala River, where a couple of large, friendly non-combatant vessels already lay. But if he did that, the Japanese might be drawn into the waterway, and the well-camouflaged but highly vulnerable American ships surely would be destroyed. Doing nothing and getting caught at Tulagi like "rats in a trap" was not an option at all, Agnew reasoned. So he made a dash for safety.

The "black gangs" on the *Trever* and the *Zane* pounded and cajoled twenty-nine knots out of the ancient machinery. No matter. Three menacing silhouettes rose quickly above the horizon, hull-down and "bones in teeth," as sailors say when they see enemy warships coming straight toward them. Making thirty-five knots, the Japanese destroyers gained rapidly, and they opened fire with their 5.5-inch guns while still out of range of the Americans' four-inchers.

The first enemy shells whistled overhead and sent up geysers several hundred yards beyond the fleeing Americans. The second salvo fell three hundred yards astern. That amounted to being straddled. The next might drop on their heads. But the *Trever* and the *Zane* dodged nimbly and barked back with their pop guns as exploding Japanese shells drenched their decks with spray. The good luck could not last. The enemy gunners drew blood, hitting the *Zane* and killing three men. Then, as suddenly as it started, it was over. The Japanese broke off the action and withdrew, perhaps remembering their primary mission back at Tulagi. The American minesweepers scooted gratefully to safety. They had not damaged the enemy, but simple survival in some situations can be considered a triumph. The *Trever* and the *Zane* received a Navy Unit Commendation for this and other Pacific War actions.

Felton left the *Trever* in September 1943, just as the Navy was gearing up for its great Central Pacific island-hopping campaigns. He would not return to the war for a full year. After six months of gunnery training on the East Coast, he reported to the *USS Ingraham (DD-694)*, a *Sumner*-class destroyer that was being fitted out in Kearny, New Jersey. Commissioned in March 1944, the spiffy new ship conducted shakedown trials off Bermuda, as did most of the Navel vessels built on the East and Gulf coasts. With Felton aboard as her plank-owning gunnery officer, the *Ingraham* sailed that autumn for duty with the Pacific Fleet, arriving at Eniwetok in October, just in time for the Luzon campaign. In mid-December, while supporting the landings on Mindoro, the

Ingraham employed her five-inch guns to sink a Japanese cargo ship. Gunnery Officer Gale Felton's precisely aimed salvos did the job nicely, thank you.

The Sumners were overgrown Fletchers, heavier and better armed but slower by several knots. A few additional men were needed to operate them in wartime. For a Sumner-class ship, the official complement was 336 officers and enlisted men. For a Fletcher, it was 329. The brand-new destroyers began showing up in the last year of the long war. The Fletchers, which had been the biggest "little boys" until then, suddenly started looking, in comparison, slightly dowdy. The most noticeable topside difference was the five-inch gun mounts. Instead of five guns in an equal number of single mounts, the Sumners carried six guns in three twin mounts — two forward and one aft. This six-gun battery arrangement was considered more effective against kamikazes and other enemy aircraft. Sumner hull lengths and beam widths were virtually identical to those of the Fletchers, but the new kids on the block weighed a hundred tons more and thus squatted deeper in their sea cradles. Maneuverability in confined waters — a definite problem for single-rudder Fletchers — was significantly enhanced in the Sumner class, in which twin rudders were introduced. As might be expected, Fletcher sailors looked on Sumner destroyers with a mixture of admiration and jealousy, taking only cool comfort from the fact that Fletchers were faster.

Felton completed the Pacific War as executive officer of the *Fletcher*-class USS *McDermut*. In January 1945 he boarded the battle-hardened destroyer at Ulithi Atoll in the eastern Philippine Sea, where the ship was being overhauled after impressive combat performances in the Philippine campaigns. Just a few months earlier, on a dark night in late October, the *McDermut* and four other DesRon 54 *Fletchers* fired forty-seven torpedoes at a Japanese squadron advancing up Surigao Strait. Massive damage was suffered by the enemy ships, which included two battlewagons. The *McDermut*'s torpedoes struck three destroyers. One of her targets sank immediately, while the other two were left disabled and drifting. Rear Admiral Jesse Oldendorf's waiting battleships and cruisers, with their big guns, "crossed the T" and annihilated the cripples in what would be seen as the world's last line-of-battle confrontation. The admiral gave high praise to the five *Fletchers*. Their torpedo attacks, he said, were "brilliantly conceived and well executed."

With Lieutenant Commander Felton on board as second-in-command, the *McDermut* participated in the Okinawa invasion in the spring of 1945, and in

strikes on the Japanese mainland that summer. The American fleet was under constant attack by kamikazes. Like the *Colahan* in those battles, the *McDermut* emerged unscathed by enemy action, but in April, off Okinawa, she was badly slashed by friendly antiaircraft fire. Two *McDermut* crewmen were killed and thirty-three wounded. The ship was struck by two five-inch projectiles and a fusillade of 40- and 20-millimeter fire from the *USS Missouri (BB-63)*. The huge new battleship, one of four *Essex*-class warships, was firing at low-flying Japanese planes, unmindful of where her shells were going, as perhaps was excusable in heated combat. Anyway, the unlucky destroyer found herself on the receiving end, in the wrong place at the wrong time. There was only one consolation. The little *McDermut* had survived a barrage from “The Mighty Mo” herself, which soon would become the most famous battleship in the world, the official host for Japan’s Tokyo Bay surrender.

Late in the war, the fast carriers repeatedly struck the enemy’s home islands. In early July the *McDermut* performed a mission of mercy that benefited her enemies rather than her friends. She was sent to intercept the Japanese hospital ship *Takasago Maru* and divert the misery-laden vessel from a course that would have taken her into the American task force’s fueling area. On July 8th the hospital ship was located and a *McDermut* boarding party was dispatched with a message guaranteeing safe conduct if the Japanese captain and crew would comply with instructions issued by the Americans. By the 10th, the warships of Fast Carrier Task Force 38 had refueled and were underway to conduct strikes against the Tokyo industrial area. The *McDermut* released her Japanese charge and rejoined Task Group 38.4 for further strikes on Honshu, Hokkaido and the Kuriles.

After the Pacific War, Felton served three months as skipper of the *USS Halsey Powell*, then spent nearly three years as an instructor in an NROTC unit at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire. In mid-1949 he reported to the *USS George K. MacKenzie (DD-836)* as executive officer. The *MacKenzie*, a *Gearing*-class destroyer commissioned in July 1945, should not be confused with the *USS MacKenzie (DD-614)*, a *Benson*-class destroyer commissioned in November 1942. The *Gearing* destroyer, several tons heavier than a *Sumner* and thus a hefty boy indeed, was born too late for World War II glory. She missed the big war, while the little *Benson* destroyer earned four battle stars in European waters. With Lieutenant Commander Felton aboard, *DD-836* was shifted from the Atlantic to the Pacific when the Korean War broke out in 1950, and she was there, off Korea, when Felton received orders to take command of the *Fletcher*-class *USS Colahan (DD-658)* in San Francisco.

Felton's inaugural wardroom dinner aboard the *Colahan*, in March 1951, was a memorable affair. His wife Lillian and his father-in-law, retired Brigadier General Charles Kilburn, shared his pride as he settled into the captain's chair at the end of a long wardroom table. The ship's senior steward, Lafayette McIntosh, served as maitre d'. To this day, forty-six years later, Felton remembers the menu. Fruit salad came in "bowls" carved from grapefruit halves. Soup was followed by New York strip steaks cooked to order. Dessert was apple pie *à la mode*, and the pie was fresh from a *Colahan* oven, baked to perfection.

Having operated for several years as a Reserve training ship out of San Francisco's Treasure Island, the Colahan was once again placed in full commission on 16 December 1950, and three weeks later entered the San Francisco Naval Shipyard for overhaul. Under the command of Commander Gale S. Felton, USN, she joined the active Pacific Fleet on 14 April 1951 and sailed to San Diego, reporting to Commander Fleet Training Group for shakedown training. After a month of intensive training, the ship reverted to operational control of Commander Cruiser Destroyer Force, Pacific Fleet, and was assigned with the Twining, the Shields and the Erben to Destroyer Division 172. The division was officially activated in July 1951, and on 20 August the Twining, the Shields and the Colahan sailed for duty in the Far East, with Captain W.D. Kelly, USN, as ComDesDiv 172 in the Twining.

Navy Department, Office of Naval Records and History

Bob Darling, now retired in Beloit, Wisconsin, reported for duty aboard the *Colahan* in June 1951. As an ensign and then a lieutenant junior grade, he would serve in the the destroyer's Engineering Department for two years, and he would make two tours to the Korean War. Like Jack Sellers, an ensign who would step aboard four years later, Darling wrote often to his parents, telling them what was happening to him and his ship. Like Jack's letters, Darling's survived the decades, and in the mid-Nineties they made valuable contributions to the *Colahan's* Korean War story. Darling, a lifelong resident of Beloit, gleaned pertinent details from his letters, and shared them with the author of this modest volume.

"When I reported to the *Colahan* in late June of 1951," Bob Darling wrote, "there were lots of disgruntled reservists on board. The ship had recently been put back into active service, having recently come to San Diego from San Francisco. Many were World War II veterans, and they thought they would never be recalled to active duty. We also had a lot of young sailors who were

Colahan Officer Roster

August 1951

		Primary Duties
FELTON, Gale S.	CDR	Commanding Officer
SPIELMAN, James S.	LCDR	Executive Officer
HOFFMAN, Lyle E.	LT	Gunnery Officer
MOORE, James D.	LT	Chief Engineer
BROWN, Bardwell	LT	Operations Officer
CULHANE, Frank J.	LT	Communications
CRAIG, William D.	LT	R Division Officer
LINDSAY, Earl E.	LTJG	1st Division Officer
DEPEW, Hunt J.	LTJG	E Division Officer
KENNEDY, J.P.	LTJG	G Division Officer
RUSSELL, John J.	LTJG	2nd Division Officer
VIARD, W.S., Jr.	LTJG	Ship's Doctor
PETTIT, James W., Jr.	LTJG	O Div., Air Controller
SHANNON, J.D.	LTJG	O Div., Radar & Sonar
JONES, Ray P.	ENS	O Div., Radio Officer
YOUNG, Noel S. "Jack"	ENS	Plotting Room Officer
DARLING, Robert F.	ENS	E Div., Electronics
LUINE, Art	ENS	R Division
CROOK, C.L., Jr.	ENS	S Div., Supply Officer

inexperienced and thought little of the consequences of their behavior. Twenty-two men were transferred to the *Colahan* from another destroyer in July, and eighteen from this batch were restricted. We had two special court-martials the first two weeks I was aboard, and one general court-martial was pending, if we could just locate the guy."

BD **Ensign Ray Jones** was given responsibility for training radiomen. We did not have any qualified radiomen aboard when we sailed for WestPac! Unbelievable! Ray went to sub school after he left the *Colahan*. I met him two years ago [1994] living near my sister-in-law in Rye, New Hampshire. He is

retired now from the Navy. He reached the rank of chaptain. His last duty was officer in charge of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, back in 1980 or the late Seventies.

RPJ First, my apologies for not getting back to you sooner. I have now started my 7th session of Chemotherapy for this Multiple Myeloma and am just now feeling like doing anything. I gave up the clock repair business last January when I came down with this and haven't felt like doing very much.

RPJ I reported to COLAHAN in June 51. She went to overhaul in June 52 (Hunter's Point, SFO, CA. It was during this overhaul that the tripod mast was installed and (AIR) the forward torpedo tube mount was removed. We already had the hedgehog mounts (two fixed mounts) when I came aboard. I cannot remember the setup on the 40mm or the 20mm. I'm pretty sure the midship 40mm mounts were quads, can't recall the rear mount at all. Somehow 6 20mm twin mounts (3 each side) come to mind, but I'm not at all sure. None of the pictures I have are clear enough to do a PI job on.

RPJ As I said, I reported to 658 in June 51, a boot ensign if ever there was one. Man I was so green I even made the mistake of going ashore on a Saturday afternoon in my uniform with the bright gold ensign stripe and starting to walk up Broadway from the San Diego fleet landing to the Grant hotel for a drink. Of course it being Saturday all the boots were in town from NTC and after 9 million salutes in the first block, I said stick this and caught a cab.

RPJ There were 5 ensigns. One USNA, Noel S. Young, who considered himself above the rest of us — but you've undoubtedly heard the old adage about "Rank among Ensigns is about as common as Virtue among prostitutes". There were 3 of us from the NROTC, Bob Darling, Art Luine, and myself. And one OCS grad, Tom Bunn, who had one year of law school.

RPJ There were some real jewels in the 658 crew. Many of the ones recalled were bitter but most did their jobs with the same dedication and competence they had shown in WWII. Many were quite surprised to find themselves with a set of orders to active duty. When WWII had ended in 45, they were in such a hurry to get out and get home they didn't pay much attention to the piece of paper they signed agreeing to remain in the "Inactive Reserve". After all, they were told, no drill sessions had to be attended; they didn't have to do anything. Most had signed an Inactive Reserve Enlistment for SIX years. '45 plus 6 equals '51. When Korea hit in '50 and the reserve call up began, many were not worried at all. Until President Truman signed a Presidential Order extending all enlistments for 12 months!! Yikes!! Now it began to get tight. DD-658 was filled with troops in this category.

RPJ CL Crook, the Supply Officer, had a 3rd class Disbursing Clerk who had gotten out at the end of WWII gone home and worked his way to the position of Comptroller in a good sized firm. AIR, he was older, 35-40 years old and while not happy he did his job in a most competent and uncomplaining manner. When he was around, the gripers shut up.

RPJ I was the 1st of the '51 crop of ensigns to report on board. The XO had me slated to be the ASW officer with a school starting in about 5 weeks, but he had a quota on the following Monday for "Custodian of RPS pubs" which was supposed to go to Art Luine who was to be Asst Communications — and Art had not yet reported. So Guess who went to RPS school and ended up as Custodian — moi!

Bob Darling and Ray P. Jones remember the officers and chief petty officers with whom they served aboard the Colahan during the Korean War:

Commander Felton, our CO, was tough. When he gave an order, it was aye-aye, sir, no doubt about it. That didn't mean he was totally calm. When things didn't go right, he didn't say much but you could see he was seething inside.

RPJ: The skipper in 51 was Gale S. Felton. An experienced destroyerman, he knew his business. He was a competent CO and ship handler, but a bit nervous with his first command — especially when the Division Commander chewed tail which was whenever anyone didn't do something just right. I grew to hate Destroyer Division Commanders and loved it in later years when I was senior to them and could wreak revenge!

LT Moore was the chief engineer, my boss and roommate. He, too, was tough. He was an ex-chief boilerman who really knew his engineering spaces. If he had had enough hands, he could have lighted the boilers and started the engines all by himself. He had the confidence of the captain and executive officer. I couldn't ask for a better mentor, but he chewed me out good one time when I tried to get away with "not too perfect" paperwork. When we had an excess of chief petty officers in Engineering (on our second cruise [1952-53] we had four), he would put them on watch. This, at the time, was unheard of. Chiefs were supposed to be "on call" while they drink coffee in the chiefs' quarters. J.D., as Moore was called, was transferred to the squadron flagship in February 1953. I met him for the last time in September 1957 while I was on two weeks of active duty for training. He was in charge of the officers' engi-



USS Colahan and Asia

After five dead years as a West Coast training ship, the *USS Colahan* goes to war again, sailing from San Diego on 20 August 1951. She made seven trips to the Western Pacific in the hot/cold wars of the Fifties.

neering school in San Diego. I believe he made captain before his career was over. Haven't seen or heard from him since.

RPJ The Eng off was JD Moore, most competent, ex-enl, in fact he had the skipper buffaloed into never using more than a 2/3rds twist to turn—the result of which was that we had to go halfway to Tiajuana to turn around if the wind was against us when trying to make a moor in San Diego harbor. Explanation: The first ship to tie up or to pick up the buoy was always the flagship, Twining, she could go straight in; next came the senior CO, Shields. We were always third, and if there was a current running or a side wind the ships would start to swing and we had a helluva time making an approach often 180 degrees.

Our first executive officer was **Lt. Cdr. Jim Spielman**, a quiet, confident man. Everyone liked him. He was relieved by Lieutenant Commander (???) Nelson in September 1952. The last time I saw Jim was on television, when he was introduced on the Ed Sullivan show as skipper of “The Sullivans.”

RPJ The XO was Jim Spielman, most competent, good shiphandler, knew how to handle the crew and to keep things running smoothly. I heard he went on to command his own DD. I really liked him. I hated his replacement (more on that later).

E.R. “Bull” Alger was the chief boatswain’s mate on the *Colahan*. He reminded me of the actor Wallace Berry. He would order his men to paint the deck, and when they were finished, if he found them standing around doing nothing, he would order them to paint it again **K.A. Henderson** was senior engineering chief. He had over 20 years service. A very good chief **G.S. McCain** was the chief quartermaster. He also was a veteran, considered by many to be the best chief aboard. Very helpful as an instructor to the younger officers.

RPJ Another one with whom I worked every day was QMC(SS) McCain. (Can’t for the life of me remember his first name; he was always CHIEF — in capital letters — to me. Sometimes it was “MAC”). Mac had done WWII in submarines and made umpteen war patrols, been depth charged so many times he said it had stunted his growth (look at him in the Cruise Book, he’s about 5 foot 2). He had retired to the Fleet Reserve, started an Avocado ranch in the San Diego vicinity, THEN came the orders to come back to active duty. Now if That wasn’t bad enough, They didn’t send him back to the boats, They put him on a Destroyer! (And let me tell you as I later learned — THAT is worse than catching your wife in the sack with a Boatswain’s mate!). And as the final straw, the XO sent him a snotty nosed ensign (me) to wet nurse. His comment, “Oh the ignominy of it all!” (...which he actually said more than once when my naviete tried his patience. (I’ll have more to tell about him in later paragraphs)

RPJ When I first talked to the XO, I told him I was interested in Navigation (Having sailed most of my life in New Orleans). He said, “Great, I hate like hell to get up for morning stars. You’ll be my Assistant Navigator, go see Chief McCain, the Navigator’s Assistant. There began the real start of Jonesey’s education. Crypto school followed the Custodian course and a few weeks later, ASW officer’s school. When we operated I stood watch in CIC where I was quickly trained by the recalled radarmen to stand in the corner and keep my mouth shut. Actually once I learned RT voice procedure, they couldn’t keep me off the circuits — I was such a ham - “This is INSTEAD, roger out” “ What did they say to do?”

RPJ Being Asst Nav got me to the bridge for Special Sea Detail and I learned a lot about piloting. But what an education when we started the transit

to WESTPAC and the star sights began. During WWII, the submarines could not surface until after dark to start their battery charge. By then it was too late for evening twilight and stars, so they developed another way. They took one barrel of a set of 6X30 binoculars mounted to a fixture which would align to a standard Navy sextant. Needless to say these were personal and jealously guarded and QMC(SS) McCain had one! Thank goodness he brought it with him. When I got good enough with the bare sextant he even let me use it. One evening it was very cloudy at star time, and none of the ships could get a star sight. Then we hit a patch of clear sky about 1900 long after the horizon had disappeared for the night and thanks to Mac's Tool (as we called it), we were able to get a terrific star sight — 6 stars to a point. The DIVCOM had each ship report its 2000 posit and method of observation. We reported our Lat/Long as obtained by stars. The Division Navigator, a smart ass, know it all LT, was highly ticked (pissed off - if you prefer) and embarrassed to admit to the DIVCOM that everybody else had reported fixes by Loran and they were all over the place — except for the COLAHAN who had reported a star sight and they had to be lying because it was cloudy! The DIVCOM got on the radio and demanded to know why we lied. It was with the greatest of pleasure that we explained how our submarine QMC had the right tool for the job.

Lieutenant Lyle Hoffman, the senior lieutenant, was the gunnery officer. I believe he was also an ex-chief petty officer. He was a very personable fellow. I corresponded with him for many years through annual Christmas cards until he died of pneumonia in September 1989. He was allergic to penicillin. Since he had only one lung at the time, the doctors could not find an antibiotic that would help him.

RPJ The SWO was an Ex-enl Lt Lyle Hoffman. A nice guy but a bit slow. As gun boss he got into the real deep chimchee with Brooks in 52.

Lt. Culhane died in an automobile accident in Chicago in 1975 or 1977. Lt.j.g. Crook died unexpectedly in the late '50s, I was told.

RPJ Ltjg Frank Culhane was Communications Officer. He was practicing law in Chicago when recalled to active duty. The CIC officer was **Jim (?) Shannon** who had just graduated from Law School when recalled to active duty —BEFORE he could take the bar exam — and was very bitter about it. **Ltjg Bill Craig**, DCA and Repair Div, was USNA grad and was recalled from his post as a 2nd Secretary with the State Department in Havana. **Jim Pettit**,

one of my roomies, was a USNA grad and hero of the 19whatever ARMY game where he scored the winning touchdown — which was probably the only positive thing he ever did (FYIO). He slept, ate, stood CIC watches and controlled Aircraft when he had to. He was never seen above the main deck.

RPJ The Ops officer was **Bard Brown** a recalled Reserve (we had a bunch of them — most of the crew in fact- Off and Enl). Bard was a nice cheerful, friendly person, but lazy as hell. Stood watch, ate and slept and maybe played a bit of poker.

RPJ The Supply Officer was **CL Crook** (He claimed his roommate at Supply School was named Cheatem). CL was USN and most competent. He could count a stack of bills with one hand so fast you wouldn't believe it. He roomed with the Division Medical Officer, **"DOC" Viard** (the spelling in the cruise book is wrong). 'old' doc, got an extra \$134.00 a month as a medical officer which he allocated as his poker ration. We sometimes had arguments in the Officer's stateroom area as to who had taken more than their share of the doc's money. Suffice it to say he financed more than one of my shore leaves!

BD I correspond every Christmas with **Lt. John Russell** (now Lcdr. Russell, USNR-Ret). He was at our last reunion in 1994. He lives in San Diego on Pt. Loma, 3522 Dumas St., San Diego 92106. Phone 1-619-222-5205. He knew **Lt. Craig** well. Craig was a vice counsel at the embassy in Cuba before joining the Colahan.

RPJ There were others, most of whom were recalled reservists and very competent and experienced. John Russell was recalled from his job as a 6th grade school teacher and unfortunately tried to treat the crew as he had his students, needless to say that went over like a lead balloon.

BD 6-29-51 My first "duty officer in port" job.

BD 7-2 & 3-51 Colahan on plane guard duty with Antietam (CA-?).

BD 7-5 & 6-51 Colahan at sea with the Antietam.

BD 7-9 & 10-51 Plane guard duty with Antietam. Anchored at Coronado Road (7-10-51).

BD 7-11 thru 13-51 ASW exercises with another destroyer and submarine.

BD 7-14 thru 17-51 In port.

BD 7-18 & 19-51 Gunnery practice at sea, shooting at a towed sleeve.

BD I remember on one occasion during gunnery practice we were supposed to fire at a sleeve being towed by a drone (pilotless aircraft). The Colahan shot down the drone. Big mistake! The captain felt the heat for that.

BD 7-20 thru 30-51 In port.

BD 8-2-51 Full power run to Long Beach.

BD 8-3-51 Load ammo at Long Beach and back to San Diego.

BD 8-6 thru 9-51 Screen and gunnery practice. Group consists of 9 DDs along with the USS Manchester and USS Rochester.

BD 8-10-51 At Pier 2, San Diego Naval Station.

BD - Officers on board prior to our trip to the Far East, as well as I remember:

Lt. W.D. Moore, transferred soon after I came aboard.

It wasn't raining [when the Colahan left San Diego for Pearl Harbor on 20 August 1951] but it was sure trying. As always, there was some last-minute scurrying on deck as lines were laid out a little neater, or an Irish pennant secured. Most of the crew had shifted into the uniform of the day a little early. They stood in groups making small conversation, or gathered on the fantail to listen to the Shields' band. Once special sea details were set, it didn't take long for the word to come down from the bridge to single up, then to take in all lines. Down came the jack and ensign, up went the call sign and steaming colors. We were underway. The men stood at quarters quietly that morning as the Colahan made her way past Fifth Street Landing, Fleet Landing, Lindbergh Field, Ballast Point and Point Loma, and headed out to open sea.

"USS Colahan and Asia," 1951-52 Cruise Book

As the days went by, the weather turned balmy, and the sea changed from blue black to bright blue. *Colahan* sailors took off their shirts and soaked up the sun. Foul weather jackets were hung up, blues were put at the bottom of lockers, and whites were sent to the laundry in anticipation of liberty in Hawaii. Finally, one morning, the fabled islands rose from the horizon, and soon Diamond Head and Waikiki lay off the *Colahan's* beam. By 1500 the ship was

tied up, and the liberty party — those lucky bastards — could go ashore for sightseeing, swimming, steaks and beers. The men who had to stay aboard could look forward to mail call, and there would be early liberty for them the next day. On the ship's first Sunday in Pearl Harbor, local YMCA representatives brought a bus to the pier and asked if anyone wanted to go on a conducted tour of the island. They were mobbed! The crew saw no natives in grass skirts, but they learned more about Hawaii's Oahu than any of the *Colahan's* barflies.

After a week of training and upkeep in the Pearl Harbor area, where the Erben joined the division, the four ships of Division 172 sailed for Yokosuka, Japan, via Midway Island. A few days after crossing the 180th meridian, the ship encountered a fierce tropical storm and minor topside damage resulted in all units with this first tussle with heavy seas and high winds. On arrival in Yokosuka on 15 September 1951, the Colahan commenced her tour of duty under Commander Naval Forces, Far East, and on 19 September entered the Korean Combat Zone.

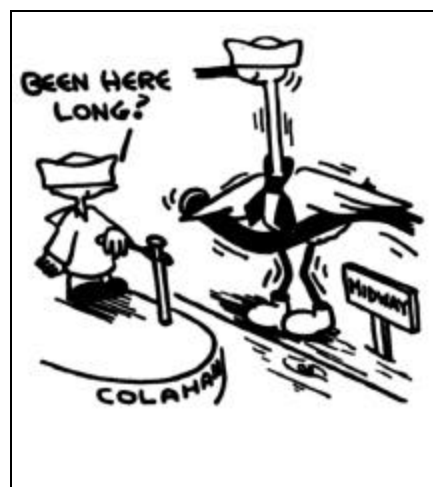
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BD Last wk of Aug-51 Colahan in and out of Pearl for gunnery practice.

BD 9-5-51 Colahan and DesDiv 172 leave Pearl Harbor for Midway.

BD 9-8-51 Colahan arrives Midway Island, fuels in 3 hours and off to Japan.

Fletcher destroyers had to be refueled somewhere between Hawaii and Japan. Their cruising range of 4,800 (?) nautical miles at 15 knots fell a bit short of the distance between those two land masses. And so the Navy maintained a fueling depot on the appropriately named island of Midway. "Just think, if the Navy didn't have Midway, they couldn't send so many destroyers to the Far East." This was idle speculation by *Colahan* sailors leaning on the rails and taking their first looks at a flat speck of land surrounded by nothing except ocean and white birds. "Those are gooney birds," explained The Bull (?). "They live noplacelse in the world, only here." The young sailors agreed among themselves that any creature choosing to live on such an island must be gooney. But the *Colahan* did not stay long



USS Colahan and Asia

enough for a proper investigation. “We tied ’er up, fueled ’er up, checked the post office for mail, of which there was none, and shoved off,” according to the ship’s cruise book.

BD 9-12-51 Colahan in typhoon. Described on Pages 24 and 25 of cruise book. Terrible storm. I was on bridge during 8-12 watch with Lt. Brown as OOD and Lt.jg. Russell as JOOD. Heavy rolls had me holding the peloris (?) with a death grip. Motor whale boat broke loose. We had to pull out of formation to lash it down and still keep bow into the waves. We were tied to our chairs in the wardroom, with chairs lashed down. Dinner didn’t stay down anyway. I thought we were darn close to capsizing. Our cruise book says we rolled 50°. I thought it was more like 44°. [Felton agrees: No 50° roll. Felton says he took the conn from Brown and held it for 32 hours.]

A full lieutenant on a *Fletcher*-class destroyer enjoyed considerable status in the wardroom. Most of the ship’s junior officers — those falling below the captain and the executive officer — were one-stripe ensigns or one-and-a-half-stripe lieutenants junior grade. A lieutenant, equal in rank to a captain in the Army, wore two half-inch gold stripes on his sleeves when he donned dress blues. In khaki uniform, he displayed those impressive stripes on shoulder boards, in addition to double silver bars on collar wings. His rank placed him near the captain’s end of the long wardroom table during meals and meetings.

Five full lieutenants went to war aboard the *USS Colahan* in August 1951.



USS Colahan and Asia

Lieutenant Commander James Spielman chased down an errant lieutenant upon arrival in Yokosuka.

Frank Culhane ascended to the rank that very month, just before the ship departed for WestPac, and two other LTJGs, Earl Lindsay and John Russell, were promoted two months later as the ship steamed off the coast of Korea. With seven two-strippers falling immediately below the skipper (with his three stripes) and the executive officer (two and a half stripes), the wardroom could be viewed as slightly top-heavy. It just worked out that way, as it did aboard many warships of that time. The Navy had an over-



USS Colahan and Asia

Bardwell Brown, a thorn in Captain Felton’s side, went ashore a bit early. The exec dragged him back to the ship.

abundance of “senior” junior officers in the years following World War II.

In 1996, forty-five years after the *Colahan* sailed for her first Korean War tour, retired Commander Gale Felton of Southern Pines, North Carolina, assessed, once again, just as he did in 1951, the character of the five lieutenants who went to Japan with him. He remembered Lieutenant J.D. Moore, the chief engineer, as “the finest engineering officer I have ever known.” He expressed high regard for Lieutenants Lyle Hoffman and William Craig. He saw Culhane, the communications officer, as “an exceptionally fine officer.” And then came Lieutenant Bardwell “Bard” Brown of Denver, Colorado, etched forever as “a constant embarrassment” in the mind of this seventy-seven-year-old ex-naval officer. “My tour aboard the *Colahan* was pleasant,” Felton said. “I enjoyed everything except my encounters with Bardwell Brown.”

Bob Darling, a shavetail ensign in the wardroom, saw Lieutenant Brown as “Felton’s *nemesis*,” which perhaps was too strong a word, but close enough. “Bard was too calm, too laid back, too easygoing to suit Felton. Bard darned near missed our departure to WestPac from San Diego. He caught the underway *Colahan* just as she was leaving the bay. As I recall, Bard boarded a boat at the sonar school. The boat was going to an aircraft carrier moored at Coronado, but it made a detour for Bard, and he reached his rapidly departing ship in the nick of time. The captain stood aft on the flying bridge, frowning, watching the tardy lieutenant come up the main deck. ‘Hi, captain,’ Bard said, cheerful as always. ‘Bet you thought I wouldn’t make it.’ Ha-ha.”

Ray P. Jones: “The skipper was really pissed, but it rolled off Bard like water off a duck.”

On 15 September the *Colahan* dropped her anchor off Yokosuka at the mouth of Tokyo Bay. The last time she had been in those waters was six years earlier, at the end of the Pacific War, when she patrolled the bay’s entrance as the Japanese surrendered aboard the battleship *USS Missouri*. She was back, with a fresh crew, ready for a new war in seas west of Japan. But first her sailors would sample the seaport’s fabled delights — wine, women and song, available for a pittance in the beckoning terraced hillsides. The eager young men waited to be turned loose, then they waited some more. “The captain delayed everyone’s liberty,” Ensign Darling wrote to his parents. “The liberty section was very unhappy.” The crew blamed Captain Felton for the agonizing delay, but it was actually Lieutenant Bardwell Brown’s fault.

Upon arrival in Yokosuka, Felton was obligated to confer with the Destroyer Division 172 commander, Captain W.D. Kelly, who was embarked on the *USS Twining* a short gig trip away. Liberty would commence as soon as

the skipper got back. The only exception was the mail clerk, who would be ferried ashore immediately in the *Colahan's* other whaleboat. Overseas sailors were always eager to get mail from home, and no opportunity to collect it was ever passed up or delayed. Also, any letters from sweethearts and mothers would comfort the poor souls in the duty section who were required to stay aboard while their lucky peers gallivanted ashore.

When Felton returned to the ship with his operational orders, he discovered that someone was missing, one of his own officers, in pointed fact. Happy-go-lucky Bardwell Brown had gone ashore in the mail boat. That might have been all right, if he had merely supervised the trip, but the lieutenant did not bother to come back aboard with the mail clerk. Why go back? Liberty would be called at any minute. If he returned to the ship, he would just have to catch another boat to carry him to the spot where he already stood. His logic was impeccable, but it was also a little too personally convenient. A few weeks earlier, in San Diego, Brown almost missed the ship's departure for WestPac, narrowly escaping serious charges. Now, upon arrival in Japan, he had grabbed unauthorized liberty, blithely leaving others to cold duty. In a nutshell, the lieutenant was the last to board the *Colahan* at the beginning of the voyage, and the first to get off at the end. Furious, Felton sent Executive Officer James Spielman and the ship's chief master of arms to bring back the wayward lieutenant. They found him at the Yokosuka Officers Club bar, tossing a cool one. With Brown finally on board again, and firmly restricted to *Colahan* decks, the rest of the crew could commence their long-postponed liberty.

Felton credited J.D. Moore for scraping a new bearing off Songjin (sp?) This is dealt with elsewhere.

Early on the morning of September 20th, the division rendezvoused with Task Element 92.11 for refueling prior to joining Task Force 77, the fast carrier task force. After fueling from the USS Navasota, the Colahan proceeded with the division and joined the carrier task force, screening the USS Boxer, the USS Bon Homme Richard and the USS Los Angeles. For the remainder of the month the destroyer became thoroughly indoctrinated in fast carrier task force tactics and the many additional duties assigned to the "small boy" of the screen. With frequent underway fueling, rearming and provisioning, the officers and crew came to look upon underway replenishment as just another day's work — and most of all, as the time to receive mail from the tankers of the replenishment group.

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BD 9-21-51 In the Sea of Japan, TF-77 with CAs Bon Homme Richard and Boxer and BB New Jersey. Planes flying are F4U-4s.

BD 9-22-51 Colahan fuels at sea. Our worst fear is being hit by a floating mine, especially colliding with one while fueling. Glass fishing floats look like floating mines.

Felton: Went alongside the New Jersey's starboard side to refuel. Hoses across and refueling commenced. Mine was sighted dead ahead. NJ turned to starboard. Felton stayed with her thru the turn and back to the original course.

On 1 October the Colahan was assigned as screen and escort for the New Jersey to form Task Element 70.10. Vice Admiral Harold M. Martin, USN, Commander Seventh Fleet, was embarked in the battleship. All hands received their first look at the east coast of Korea as the two-ship task element proceeded to the vicinity of Kansong. While the Colahan screened to seaward during the afternoon, General Omar Bradley, USA, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff; General Matthew B. Ridgway, USA, Commander in Chief Far East, and Mr. J. Bohlen, State Department representative, visited the Seventh Fleet commander on board the New Jersey, having been flown in by helicopter from a friendly airfield nearby.

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BD 10-1-51 Left TF-77 to escort New Jersey to Kansong, South Korea. (See details on Page 21 of cruise book.)

On October 2nd the Colahan was relieved of her battleship escort duties by the DeHaven. Under orders from ComSeventhFleet, she proceeded to the Kansong area, the point where United Nations front lines meet the coast. During the afternoon, the Colahan relieved the Hanson. The Colahan's commanding officer assumed duties as Commander Task Element 95.28, a part of the U.N. Blockading and Escort Force, responsible for providing gunfire support to the Eighth U.S. Army and R.O.K Army units ashore at the front lines, commonly known as "The Bomblines." Just after relieving the Hanson, the Colahan was directed temporarily by orders of ComSeventhFleet to proceed to the vicinity of a friendly coastal airfield to the south to embark a South Korean intelligence team. Later that night she went alongside the New Jersey to receive by highline a naval officer for transportation to Wonsan. On completion of this mission, on the morning of the 3rd of October, the destroyer fueled from the

Tolovana and then went alongside the Diphda in Wonsan's swept channel to receive ammunition. When replenishment was completed, the Colahan hastened to her assigned station on the "Bombline." At 1421 on the afternoon of 3 October 1951 she commenced firing her first projectiles at the enemy in Korea. During the next two weeks the Colahan continued to provide gunfire support for friendly troops in the Kansong area, and made occasional patrols and bombardment raids along the coast north to enemy-held Kojo.

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Felton remembers receiving the naval officer headed for Wonsan. Approached NJ's port side at night. Got too close but didn't know it, felt comfortable but NJ suggested a distance line (with lights attached). A mere 25 feet, when 80 was preferred.

BD 10-2-51 Detached from New Jersey for duty on the "bombline" 28th parallel.

On the night of 9 October the Colahan steamed southward from her station to join a British Commonwealth task group heading north for an air and surface strike on Kojo. Commander Task Group 95.9 was Rear Admiral Scott-Moncrief in the British heavy cruiser Belfast. Other ships in the group were the carrier HMAS Sydney and destroyers HMS Concord, HMS Comus, HMCS Cayuga and USS Shields. On 10 October the Sydney, screened by the Shields, the Comus and the Cayuga, conducted flight operations to seaward, while the Belfast, the Concord and the Colahan took assigned bombardment stations off Kojo. From first light until dusk, coordinated air strikes and heavy bombardment from the surface units pounded the Kojo area, inflicting considerable destruction on enemy personnel and material. Having completed the scheduled bombardment, the Colahan was called upon to return to the "bombline" to provide gunfire support. She arrived on station early that night. On 16 October the Colahan was relieved at the bombline by the Waller. In the two-week (?) period at the bombline, the Colahan fired approximately 3,000 rounds from her five-inch main battery, resulting in nearly 400 enemy personnel casualties and destruction of four gun positions, six buildings, two mortar positions and many supply piles and bunkers. On one particular "call-fire" mission, the Colahan's firing completely disrupted the advance of an enemy company, resulting in many casualties.

The Colahan returned to Task Force 77 for a day. She joined the other ships of DesDiv 172. On the night of 17 October she proceeded from the task force operating area to Yokosuka, screening the Los Angeles and the the Bon Homme Richard. After eight days in port for upkeep alongside the tender Bryce

Canyon, the division (the Colahan, the Twining, the Erben and the Shields) rejoined Task Force 77 off the east coast of Korea.

Navy Department, Office of Naval Records and History

BD 10-20-51 Colahan back in Yokosuka after 34 days at sea. We escorted the Bon Homme Richard and New Jersey back to Yokosuka. Tied up alongside the tender Bryce Canyon.

BD 10-22-51 The captain loved movies and I as movie officer either gained his favor or caught hell, depending on the results of a movie procurement. At this time it became a bureaucratic nightmare when exchanging with the land bases (Navy or Army).

BD mid-Oct-51 Earl Lindsey and John Russell promoted to Lt.

BD 10-28-51 ASW exercises and then rejoined TF-77 about 11-1.

BD 11-1-51 I was given additional duty as Electrical Officer.

The 2nd of November saw the Colahan once again join with the battleship New Jersey when the two ships departed Task Force 77 to form Task Element 77.15, with the New Jersey's commanding officer, Captain D.M. Tyce, USN, in command and the 7th Fleet commander, Vice Admiral H.M. Martin, USN, embarked in the battleship. The two-ship task element proceeded immediately to the Wonsan area to receive the latest target information from the officer in command of Wonsan forces. It is interesting to note that the Colahan received her target bombardment plan by guardmail from the New Jersey at 1000, entered Wonsan harbor for the first time at 1130, and began firing at designated targets at 1200. Interdiction firing continued all afternoon, with the New Jersey and the destroyer escort Naifeh sharing the crowded quarters of the Wonsan inner harbor swept area. During the next four days, the destroyer-battleship team steamed up and down the Korean east coast, shelling enemy rail facilities, buildings, factories and gun positions at Hungnam, Tanchon, Songjin and Chongjin. On November 3rd the Colahan rescued a downed Air Force pilot in swept waters just off the coast of Hungnam. Within a half hour after parachuting to the water, the pilot was safely delivered to the New Jersey, which was standing by. On November 6th, while the Colahan was screening ahead of the New Jersey in Kyojo Wan off Chongjin, North Korea, an alert lookout sighted a floating mine. Timely warning permitted the battleship to avoid the potential danger, and the Colahan sank the mine (a Russian type) with her machine guns. The destroyer-battleship task element rejoined Task Force 77 on

7 November, and the Colahan remained with the force as a screening unit for a week. It was during this period that the destroyer's gun and director crews reached a peak of operational training, with frequent antiaircraft firing exercises and air defense exercises conducted by the task force commander. Joining with the Antietam and DesDiv 172 (less the Shields), the Colahan proceeded to Yokosuka on 14 November.

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BD 11-2-51 Colahan and New Jersey reroute to Wonsan, North Korea, area. (See details in cruise book, Page 32.) Pilot rescue, etc.

BD 11-11-51 Refueled at sea.

BD 11-16-51 Colahan arrives back in Yokosuka. Ens. Tom Bunn reports aboard.

The ship enjoyed ten days in Yokosuka for upkeep alongside the tender Hamul. Necessary repairs of the master gyro compass prevented the Colahan from sailing with the remainder of the division for ASW exercises off Okinawa. One day later, on 26 November, the destroyer proceeded independently to rendezvous with the Twining, the Shields and the Erben in the operating area off Okinawa. After several days of antisubmarine warfare exercises with the submarine Ronquil, Division 172 entered Buckner Bay for refueling.

Navy Department, Office of Naval Records and History

BD 11-22-51 Thanksgiving Day. Mr. Crook has a wonderful meal for crew and officers in port. Meals were very good. So good in officers' wardroom that we started to feel the inflation pinch. Mess bills were \$25/month, then \$30 and going up. We had an \$80 coffee bill. No one wanted to cut out anything, especially desserts.

BD 11-24-51 DesDiv 172 leaves for Okinawa. However, Colahan's gyro tumbled again and we had to stay in port for repair. This was an on-going problem ever since we left San Diego. A full commander came aboard to fix it. Colahan left Yokosuka on 11-26-51 to catch up with DesDiv 172. We operated about 50 miles east of Okinawa for ASW exercises. [Felton says the gyro never did get fixed properly.]

BD 11-28-51 Arrived Buckner Bay and fueled ship. Starboard section had liberty but there was a fight on the beach and Ens. Young had to bail one sailor out of jail and the doctor also had some work to do. As the ship was leaving the dock, there were strange engine noises. Engineering had to inspect the main thrust bearings, and loosen the packing on the main shafts. Never did discover the cause; however, the next day we had 6 feet of water in the shaft alley and 2 feet of water in the electrical storeroom which discharged fifty 1½-volt dry cells. Forgot to retighten shaft packing.

On the morning of December 2nd the Colahan sailed from Buckner Bay in company with the escort carrier Badoeng Straits and ships of Destroyer Squadron 17 (less the Marshall) for ASW hunter-killer training exercises enroute to Yokosuka. Carrier Division 17's commander, aboard the CVE, was in command of the task group. Excellent training in coordinated air and surface ASW tactics was received during the following week, although heavy seas and strong winds hampered operations on several days. While alongside the Badoeng Straits for refueling on 6 December, the Colahan lost all power due to water in fuel oil. Alert action of the well-trained fueling and deck details averted any damage to either ship. On 7 December, Division 172 was detached prematurely from the hunter-killer group to proceed immediately to join Task Force 77 off the Korean east coast. The Shields and the Erben were detached for other duties, while the Twining and the Colahan proceeded via Shimonoseki Straits to join the fast carriers.

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BD 12-2-51 Sailed in company with DesRon 17 and CVE Badoeing Straits to ASW exercises enroute Yokosuka. However, on the 7th, we were detached prematurely to rejoin TF-77. Before we left the day before, we tried to refuel. We were alongside the Badoeing Straits. The sea was rough. Hard to get into position. After we did and had all lines across and pumping, we got a slug of water in the oil and lost the electrical load. The fuel lines were stretched to the limit before we disconnected just in time. Our generator slowed down and the gyro siren went off, but the switch was made to batteries and in 20 minutes we were OK. The captain was having a fit. We went alongside later that day to try to refuel. Everything was OK.

Back in the States, Captain Felton and wife Lillian had two little daughters. There were five-year-old Catherine Gayle and six-year-old Lillian Serena. On 3 December 1951, in San Francisco where the family was living while daddy fought a war, the girls got a baby brother, Charles Emory Felton. If one is inclined to figure such things (and the author, without apology, is), the boy must have been conceived around the time his father took command of the USS Colahan. Many a life is created when a sailor comes home from the sea. How long will you be in town, sailor? Long enough.

BD early Dec-51 (See the cruise book, Pages 34 and 35.)

Rendezvous with the task force was made very early on 9 December. At 0130 the Colahan went alongside the carrier Antietam for much-needed fuel —

a new arrangement of an old tune. On 10 December the ship's master gyrocompass again exhibited a troublesome erratic variation. The Colahan remained in the screen of the fast carrier force for the following month. Christmas and New Years were enjoyed at sea. Late at night on 26 December, in the midst of a blinding snow storm, the Colahan, Twining and Erben were temporarily detached from the force to search for and rescue the crew of a Navy patrol plane with "ditched" about twenty miles south of the formation. The alertness of the three destroyers was proven when the Erben sighted the raft and survivors on the cold, choppy seas, and made the rescue one hour and forty minutes after the initial report of the downed plane was received.

Navy Department, Office of Naval Records and History

BD 12-21-51 Lt.jg. Hunt DePew goes on emergency leave and was transferred by highline to an AO (oiler). I took over his duties as E-Div. officer, and Ens. Young takes over as electronics officer. Sometime during this time, or shortly after, electronics became part of O or C Division. I became permanent E-Div. officer on 1-6-52.

BD around 12-23-51 Just before Christmas, the oil king or his helpers goofed. They were shifting oil between tanks. They tried to fill a tank already almost full. A valve was only cracked open. The tank became pressurized and about 800 gallons went up the overflow pipe and into C-205-L quarters, leaving about 5 inches of oil on the deck. Clothes in the crew's lockers were ruined. It was a good thing someone was in these spaces to sound the alarm.

BD 12-24 thru 26-51 On Christmas Eve the Valley Forge had a half-hour Christmas program piped over the tactical radio circuit. However, it was interrupted by signals, reports, etc. "So much for trying." Christmas at sea with TF-77.

BD 12-26-51 Army plane down. DesDiv 172 to the rescue. Searched seas using 36-inch search lights. Six men on a raft were picked up. (See cruise book, Page 35, for details.)

Felton: Engineers won the Xmas tree contest. They had an advantage over other departments. They had access to a metal lathe and could fashion ingenious decorations.