



Captain B. L. Braun

NEW COMMAND FOR BENNINGTON

Capt. Braun Relieves Capt. Sykes

When Captain B. L. Braun, USN, reported aboard the BENNINGTON to assume command he brought with him some 24 years experience, all directed to qualify him as skipper of a first line, fast carrier. His last sea duty preceding this command was as Captain of the USS MANILA BAY, CVE, from October 1943 to September 1944. The MANILA BAY went through a lot of action—the strikes preparatory to the major offensive of last year's operations and the reconquest of the Philippines. Captain Braun commanded his ship in combat against Eniwetok and Kwajalein, Hollandia and Eniwetok.

Back of his combat experience is a long list of other assignments all designed to give him the necessary knowledge to command the most complex of all modern men-of-war. As naval aviator, Captain Braun flew from the old LEXINGTON as a member of both Torpedo and Bombing Squadrons One. He was mighty glad to see the new VI and VB Squadrons report aboard the BENNINGTON. He had added flying experience in Patrol Squadrons 7 and 9.

The new skipper graduated from the Naval Academy in 1921. He has had duty on board the battleships NEW YORK and ARIZONA. To Annapolis training he added courses in advanced Ordnance. He has had a tour of duty in Washington working in Fleet Training and the Bureau of Ordnance. Prior to reporting to the BENNINGTON he was Operations Officer on ComAirPac's staff.

Like everyone else he has his pet hobbies and ambitions, but they have all been relegated to the background. His hobby now is, and there are his own words, "killing Japs until they say quits!" And his ambition is to see the BENNINGTON the fightingest and best carrier in all respects in the Fast Carrier Task Force. The crew and officers are glad to have Captain Braun aboard, and to help fulfill his ambition.



Comdr. E. E. Colestock

Exec Remembers Pearl Harbor

December 7, 1941 is more than an infamous date in history for Commander E. E. Colestock, USN, recently appointed Executive Officer of the BENNINGTON. Serving as Operations Officer at NAS, Kaneohe, T. H., he witnessed the treacherous Jap attack. During those tense hours, as reports of casualties and damage poured in, he determined to do all in his power to avenge the death of his friends and shipmates.

Born in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, in 1907, he entered the Naval Academy in the Class of 1930. Taking the varsity basketball squad, he captained the team his first class year. His first sea duty was aboard the USS OKLAHOMA as an Engineering Officer.

Interested in Naval aviation from the beginning of his Academy days, he next took flight training at Pensacola, receiving his wings in October, 1932. His first DIF took him to the already famous USS SARATOGA, where he flew with Fighting Squadron Six, "The Riteest Squadron", for three years. The following three years took him to Pearl Harbor with the VP4F Squadron.

Orders came in 1938 to a second great carrier, the USS LEXINGTON, where he remained for three years as one of the Flight Deck Officers. Then to NAS, Kaneohe, T. H.

Beginning in 1943, Commander Colestock had an important part in the commissioning of three new carriers. He served as Air Officer aboard the USS PYBUS until she was turned over to the British. In 1944 he commissioned the USS MIDWAY and served as Executive Officer until after the battle of Saipan.

The splendid record of the BENNINGTON to date could not have been made without an efficient and smoothly operating Air Department. Much of the credit is due to the leadership of Commander Colestock, Air Officer until promoted to Exec.