

TO  
N.A.S.  
ATLANTA  
WITH  
PHIL FIELD

Phil Field and I drove down to Atlanta in his sporty Ford convertible sedan, a relic of his recent days at Howard, some five years after mine. After a night along the road (in a cabin) somewhere in Delaware, we made a longer stop at "His Lordship's Kindness", his mother's and step father's house outside Washington and a lovely old place, the building supposedly by Wren, the grounds by L'Enfant. It was there I saw the first of many new birds seen while in the service, a red-bellied woodpecker, though the old house and the magnificent hollys, tulips, cedars and other trees surrounding it stole the show.

FIRST  
NEW  
BIRD

ATLANTA

We had to leave for Atlanta after only one night there, however, arriving at Georgia's <sup>pleasant</sup> capital on Dec. 10. That made a new "furthest south" for me by a very small margin (over San Bernardino, Cal., passed through in '37). Both South

Carolina and Georgia were new states for me, my 35<sup>TH</sup> and 36<sup>TH</sup> respectively.

The Atlanta sojourn of some three and a half weeks went an overwhelming success. We and other groups like us from the various "Elimination" bases from Squantum south were there only to make up a feeder pool for the cadet program at Jacksonville. They kept us busy all the time, however, with ground school, drilling and watch standing, and the whole program was supervised in a very strict manner by Lt. Comdr. Shefflin, a classmate of Uncle Ham's, at Groton, our "boss," and by his associates. The ground school courses wouldn't have been so bad had they been planned so that we could finish them, but, as is so often the case in the Navy, no one knew just how long we would be there. There was one very genuine and justifiable "gripe" and that was concerned the radio code. For each of the first two weeks we were there

L.T. COMDR.

SHEFFLIN

RADIO CODE

a single code test determined whether one got any liberty at all that week, and not only that, a single mistake, or one needless letter wrong, was an automatic fumble. I remember one sender whose dits and dashes were so nearly the same that his sending was hopelessly unintelligible.

DRILL

The drill certainly did us no harm, in fact was good exercise since we used rifles. Somehow some of us got stuck with more four hour watches along the fence in the wee hours than others got, but that sort of thing seemed to be inevitable. Considering the recent news of events at Pearl Harbor it was hardly surprising that possible sabotage was considered not only a threat but a probability. Mr. Shefflin gave us, <sup>shorthands after an animal</sup> perhaps the toughest fight talk I've ever heard. Under the circumstances it was not inappropriate, and though we thought at the time

That he took his job altogether too seriously, he did impress me as a very fine officer. Had we been able to enjoy the pleasures of the nearby city, he might even have been popular. Recreational facilities at the base <sup>were, incidentally, not, or nearly so.</sup>

Well, along towards Christmas time the situation improved with the word that everyone was to get some leave either over Christmas or over New Years. Though it meant getting a little less time off, I chose the first leave because of invitation to Christmas Eve dinner at the Charlie McGeebees and Christmas day dinner at the Schepplins. Asked to bring along two friends <sup>for good</sup>, I got Dave Kersting and "Hap" Langstaff, and at both parties we were treated like kings and enjoyed ourselves and our turkey immensely. A trip up the bald dome of Stone Mt., made possible by Dave's ancient Chevrolet, gave us a good look at the countryside on "Boxing Day." Shortleaf <sup>(?)</sup> pines and red soil were

CHRISTMAS  
DINNERS

STONE MT.