

no doubt about it we thought our main job was pretty glamorous.

The wind was taken out of our sails to considerable extent when we discovered we were to continue as students under the new operational training program. This was somewhat of an anti-climax, but what we minded most of all was the postponement of our leaves home. To add insult to injury they made us wear white cap covers with our otherwise khaki uniforms, to distinguish us from our ensign instructor, actually a perfectly reasonable order, but they also made us continue with the Gene Tunney program of daily required exercise, which as cadets we had had only our last month or so as such. I would have ^{been} more enjoyable if this exercise had not been supervised, since we had had nothing but supervision in almost everything we did for many months. A large swimming pool, however, had been

POOL

completed before the hot months (July was sweltering), and exercise in it always made one feel good. Phil Field had taught me how to swim in relaxed fashion, and in time I came to realize I had never really swum properly before.

As student officers we were theoretically not supposed to get every night off, but there was no way of distinguishing us from any other ensign once we had discarded our white cap covers for the day, so we went "ashore" any night we felt like it. Actually, I found myself too tired to do it often. Phil had long since graduated ^(at least) and left by the time I got commissioned, and few if any of my remaining friends seem to have cars, which meant trying to hitch hike or going by the buses, ever getting more crowded.

DAYS
OFF

Days off were different in that it was worth it to crowd onto a bus to get somewhere. I continued going

ANOTHER
BIRD LOVER

to Mrs. Reid's family regularly, as did some of the other boys, none of them, however, being among my particular friends. A boy by the name of Tibby Stevenson showed up one day, however, and it turned out he had majored in ornithology at Cornell and was still very interested in birds. We got very friendly, going on several trips together, at least two of them to Keyport, and one time Dave Hersting and Steve Hodge, old Squantum friend also in Squadron 14, joined us, all of us going out and back by taxi. Through "Tibby" I got to know the Clifford Paynes, who had a beach cottage almost next door to the Reids as well as a house in town, and they and the Gibbes were the Jacksonville people who were nicest to me in the long time I was in that part of Florida.

Bob Stix and I drove up to Sea Id. Ge. a couple of times to see friends of his, he having carefully

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conserved his gas for the expedition. I remember seeing boat-tailed grackles for the first time on the first trip, when we stayed at the hotel, Stix's friends being away. We had a very good time as it was meeting a very pleasant family, who gave us an excellent brunch Sunday morning.

CANOE
TRIP

On another day off Dave Kenting and I hired a canoe and paddled several miles up the creek that one crosses on the way from N.A.S. to town. Though we didn't see any alligator or particularly interesting birds, the ill-defined banks lined with swamp hardwood made the atmosphere seem pretty tropical, and to paddle a canoe again was more than enjoyable in itself.

The operational training course lasted from late August to the end of October, bad weather here and there after a nearly perfect if hot summer prolonging it a little. In this time my total flight ^{time} was boosted from just under 300 hours