

USS CORPORAL (SS346)  
Fleet Post Office  
New York, New York 09501

1 February 1967

Dear Mr and Mrs Eggar,

At sea a month from New London finds us an active member of the U.S. Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean with our duty proceeding quite well. We crossed a stormy North Atlantic in company with USS CORBLER. Angry gales and mountainous seas raged the middle latitudes to the extent that we revised our route south to the horse latitudes (about the latitude of Charleston, S.C. where the prevailing wind is from west along a high pressure ring and the skies are frequently cloudless making navigation easier). Even there the going was quite rough with long, tall waves from astern and at times it was not unlike a Nantucket sleigh ride.

We were off the coast of Spain on 14 January and ready to provide expert submarine services to U.S. Navy ships and planes based at Rota. We conducted various games with the nuclear powered Fleet Ballistic Missile Submarine USS ANDREW JACKSON as part of her graduation exercise prior to deploying on a strategic and vital Polaris deterrent patrol.

We moored at the Naval Base in Rota the evening of 16 January and received a most friendly and warm welcome from Submarine Squadron SIXTEEN and the Submarine Tender CANOPUS. The CANOPUS and the Rota Naval Base made considerable efforts to help us with our collective personal needs and with voyage repairs to the ship. The CORBLER arrived later in the evening, and the attack submarines BLENNY and HALFBREAK nested alongside the next morning after transiting from Gibraltar. Our purpose in meeting was to "relieve the watch". After a productive day of discussing all aspects of Sixth Fleet operations, BLENNY and HALFBREAK got underway for New London.

We departed Rota on the evening of 19 January and steamed southeast along the Spanish Coast on the surface. Shortly after midnight, we approached the historic Straits of Gibraltar. Being nighttime, the Rock of Gibraltar was a bit difficult to see, but the lookouts, with better eyesight than mine, could see the Prudential Life Insurance Sign--on so they said! By sunrise we were well into the Mediterranean Sea.

We steamed northeast by east along the African Coast through the Alboran Sea past the Balearic Islands and by the southern tip of Sardinia. The days were clear and the seas calm. Warm and sunny afternoons made stopping for a swim very tempting, but that thought ended abruptly in finding the water temperatures to be 55°F. After clearing the rock bound coast of Sardinia, we nosed into the Tyrrhenian Sea and arrived at the breakwater off Naples, Italy, on the morning of 23 January and were snugly moored shortly after noon.

Naples is a large seaport city and occupies one of the most magnificent sites in all of the Mediterranean. Its locale is one of scenic beauty and great historic interest. Nearby are Pompeii, Herculaneum, Mount Vesuvius, Sorrento, and the Isle of Capri. Naples is the headquarters of the NATO Commander in Chief, Allied Forces Southern Europe. It is also the location of the headquarters of Commander, Submarine Flotilla EIGHT, Captain M.G. FAYNE, USN, and of our immediate tactical commander, Commander J. P. SHELTON, USN, who is also CORPORAL's Division Commander when in New London. The history of Naples is vast and spectacular. Most recently, Naples was heavily damaged during WW II by the Germans during the Salerno campaign and was captured by the Allies in October 1943.

With our Task Group Commander embarked, we weighed anchor in the evening twilight of 25 January and steamed westward into the Turrhenian for our first major exercise with the Sixth Fleet Strike and Anti-Submarine Forces. Before dawn, however, on the 26th news came that the Israeli ship, HASHA LOSHA, was in peril near our position and we broke off the exercise to assist. We learned later that she had sunk and were joined by many ships and planes of several nations in the search of survivors. We retrieved some debris but, unfortunately, no survivors.

After having completed many quite interesting and instructive exercises with Task Force 60, we steamed west through the Straits of Bonifacia, between Corsica and Sardinia, and are enroute Toulon, France, for a brief port visit.

We received mail in Rota and in Naples. One of the highlights of our operations the past week was that of receiving mail at sea. A great deal of effort goes into the prompt distribution of mail after it arrives in the Fleet Mail Center in Naples. It is not held until we are in port but rather forwarded from ship to ship and we may get mail from a destroyer arriving in the area or by helicopter from a cruiser or aircraft carrier. We, in CORPORAL, are no different from any seafaring men in that mail and news from home is the highlight of the day, or week, as the case may be.

We are all in good health and aside from a more than mild touch of homesickness the trip is going quite well. Please write often to your husband, son, nephew, brother or friend in CORPORAL for it means a great deal to him.

Sincerely,



W. E. HURRELL  
LCDR, U.S. Navy  
Commanding Officer