

Letters to My Son

By Carlton A. Eddy

“Navy. Let the adventure begin.” This invitation stirs the hearts of many patriotic and adventurous young men and women who seek personal growth, excitement and the opportunity to serve their country as members of the U.S. Navy. How can the parents of these young people communicate their pride and support, share their Sailor’s enthusiasm and accomplishments, and maintain the connection with home and family that is so important to morale? One father does so with “envelope art” depicting shipboard activities on the letters he sends to his son, ABE3 Ethan Eddy, a member of the V2 division on board Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72).

When a son or daughter joins the Navy, not only does that individual enlist but in a sense an entire family goes Navy. To the folks at home, a Sailor on a deployed carrier is engaged in a poignant mixture of daily duty, far away ports and shipborne international peacekeeping and diplomacy. Even though the day-by-day routine while “gray and underway” may be little understood by the family, the experience is shared through the timeless ability of “mail call” to bridge the gap.

To my son and his shipmates,



whose job is to launch, recover and service the 80-plus aircraft on board, an aircraft carrier is a flight deck—4.5 acres of



Dr. Carlton A. Eddy's "envelope art" makes his letters to his son, Ethan, more special. Sometimes a personal touch brings the Sailor closer to home.

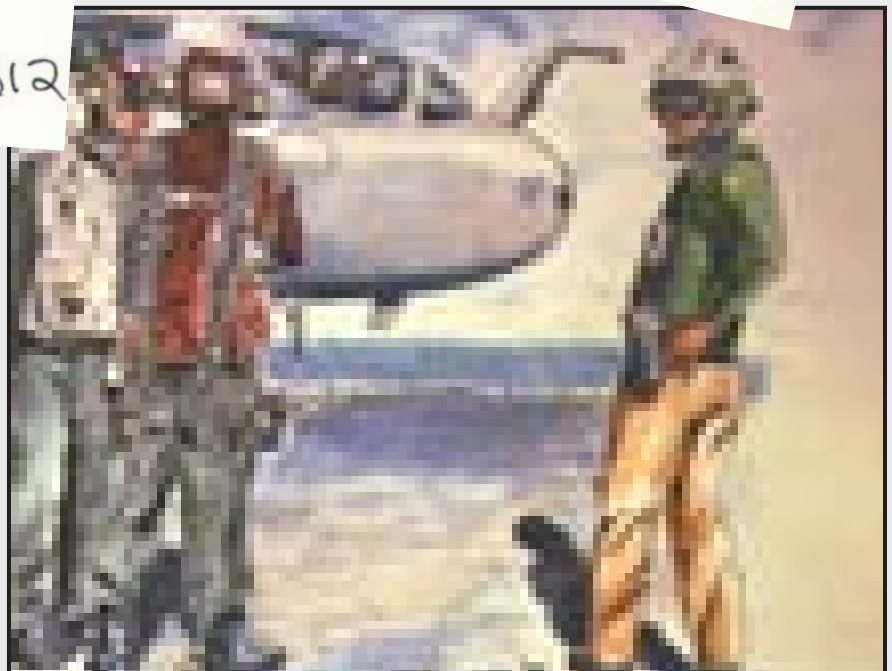


AN EDDY,
 AIR/V2 (BOW)
 U.S.S. ABRAHAM LINCOLN
 CVN-72
 FPO AP 96612

AN EDDY, ETHAN
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it—the scene of endless activity day and night, in blistering 120-degree weather or frigid 40-degree wind and rain. During launch and recovery of aircraft, the carrier’s flight deck is one of the most dynamic, exciting and dangerous environments on earth. Despite the dangers and challenges, the “gang on the roof” transforms flight ops into a coordinated exercise of awesome efficiency. Knowing the folks back home appreciate the commitment and personal effort such activity requires makes the interminable 0-dark-thirty musters, the seemingly endless work cycles, and the Air Boss’s constant, booming exhortations over the public address system more manageable.

To an artist, the aircraft carrier flight deck represents a veritable smorgasbord of artistic opportunities, an ever-changing scene of drama and excitement in which



human and machine are locked in a complex ballet of incredible precision amidst jet blast, whirling props, swirling steam and ear-splitting noise.

As a father, capturing these images on envelopes expresses my pride in a son who proudly serves his country; celebrates the dedication, hard work and professionalism

of those who work the flight deck; portrays the drama of carrier flight operations; and maintains family ties across the miles of ocean that define blue water ops.

Navy. Let the adventure begin. ✈️

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