

MULLINIX



MULLINNIX UNITAS-GRAM Number III

En route to MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY

Hello again,

We have now completed our visits to Brazilian ports, having been in Recife from 30 August until 1 September and in Rio de Janeiro from 6 to 10 September. These few days in foreign ports were hectic, tiring, but fascinating.

Recife is a city situated in the State of Pernambuco in north-eastern Brazil, a poverty-stricken region suffering from chronic agricultural and economic depression. Such regions as this are vulnerable to communist agitation. I am pleased to report that there were no unpleasant incidents.

This is a very historic region, Recife being founded about the time New Amsterdam was established in what is now the United States. The architecture reflects this rich historical background, ranging from the very old to the very new. Unfortunately, as a result of the economic distress prevalent here, much of this priceless historical heritage is in a state of decline.

While in Recife, as a part of our good-will program, I had occasion to visit several charitable institutions, where we donated food, books, and the like. In one particular orphanage for girls, I had tears come to my eyes. One hundred thirty-eight ragged little girls aged from 4 to 15 were being cared for by several elderly nuns who were really in need of care themselves. Such tragic circumstances really made me certain we should all count our blessings. I wish that my six children could have been with me so that they might realize how fortunate they are.

Incidentally, Recife (the word means "reefs") claims that it is the lobster capital of South America, and we can testify from personal experience that they do have lobsters of excellent quality there.

We found the Brazilians to be a very proud and friendly people, extremely conscious of the fact that geography has decreed that Brazil will be the predominant nation in all of South America.

The morning of our arrival was quite busy, as the quarter-deck was swarming with the Governor, Mayor, Chief-of-Police, Generals, Commanding Officers and Staff Representatives. There were many exchanges of official calls that first day, and the MULLINNIX rendered more honors to visiting dignitaries than I have ever seen on any one day in my career. Naturally, the ship came through with flying colors.

The initiation itself was short, but by no means sweet. "Kissing the Royal Baby", visiting the "Royal Barber" and the "Royal Doctor", aided and abetted by solid whacks on the backside by other "trustworthy Shellbacks", made this an initiation happily completed by all former Pollywogs.

We are now exercising at sea with units of the Brazilian, Uruguayan, and Argentine navies. We arrive at Montevideo, Uruguay on Tuesday, 18 September. The weather here is cold, the seas rough, and we are in the midst of a heavy fog. This is quite a change from the bright, warm and clear skies over smooth seas we encountered until we left Rio. Until I write again;

Best wishes,

William H. Shaw
WILLIAM H. SHAW
Commanding Officer