

A Message to Aviation Cadets Entering the U. S. Naval Flight Preparatory Schools (April, 1943)

Preface

This pamphlet, originally prepared by Lieutenant R. H. Robinson, U.S.N.R., is considered of such value that it should be made available to all students of the United States Naval Flight Preparatory Schools. The high quality and standards achieved by Naval Aviation during the current conflict can be maintained only by the individual and all-out efforts of each officer and man within its organization.

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A. W. RADFORD

Captain, U.S.N.

Director of Aviation Training

Bureau of Aeronautics

A Message to Aviation Cadets

You have been selected for flight training from a large number of applicants. The U. S. Navy welcomes you as an Aviation Cadet and future officer. You now have the most important job of your life to do. Absolutely nothing must stop you from achieving success-in this, your greatest venture. To attain your objective you will have to exercise to the fullest those qualities with which you have been endowed.

The transition from civilian life to military routine may not be easy at first and will require considerable adjustment on your part. You must "grow up" quickly and discard schoolboy ideas. You must learn to do things the Navy way, but, as you progress through the various stages of instruction, things will come easier to you. It is the purpose of this pamphlet to answer some of the questions which undoubtedly are in your mind and to give you a few hints which will aid your adjustment.

The modern airplane is an ingenious piece of machinery, extremely delicate and complicated, and to fly one well requires the greatest skill. The U. S. Navy is not interested in developing a corps of "aerial truck drivers"; instead, it needs trained men thoroughly proficient in the fine art of flying and fighting as a team. You must think straight and act quickly in order to handle successfully the powerful planes which you will fly. You must have the courage and ability to beat your opponents, even when the odds are against you.

During your course of instruction at the Flight Preparatory School and in your later training, the Navy will spend many thousands of dollars to equip you for active combat service and the serious business of prolonging your own life. It is up to you to concentrate, study, persevere, and give absolutely everything you have. You are now playing for keeps. If you learn thoroughly the subjects that will be taught to you here and in the schools to follow, you will be, when you receive your wings, one of the best trained aviators in the world.

You may as well know now that if your ground work here is careless and halfhearted, you soon will return through the same gate you entered. We are at war, and the Navy does not have the time or money to waste if you are not deadly serious! A commission and the coveted wings of a Naval Aviator await you if you strive hard for this goal with all you have — **and don't give up.**

During your training on the ground and in the air, there are apt to be times when something is said or done that is over your head. Do not be afraid to ask questions. The officers and civilian instructors teaching you are just as anxious to impart their knowledge with thoroughness as you are to acquire it, and they welcome intelligent questions. It is **our duty** to instruct you with all the knowledge that we have — it is **your duty** to absorb it.

You must be conscious of your position at all times, remembering that Aviation Cadets are future officers. You must be correct in behavior and appearance and must create a good impression of the Naval service with all whom you contact. Do not smoke on the streets nor do anything which may reflect upon your training. The honor system is in force here and it is up to you to live up to the trust placed in you. Violations may result in dismissal.

The Meaning of Discipline

Naval discipline is a habit of intelligent obedience instilled in you by education and training. It insures order, precision, and promptness at all times. Without discipline, a group of men becomes a mob, incapable of accomplishing an assigned mission.

Those who are destined to command must first learn to obey.

Discipline means that you subject your-self to control exerted for the good of the whole. It is absolutely indispensable in a military organization.

Two essentials of discipline are obedience to proper authority and uniform obedience by all.

Discipline is a necessary component of every phase of military life. If you willingly subject yourself to its standards, you will soon learn to respect it and therefore never have to fear it. Unlike small boys who try to see how much they can get away with, Aviation Cadets must enforce regulations upon themselves and later upon others. Willful infraction of regulations will result in punishment for the offender. You will find, however, that discipline at the U. S. Naval Flight Preparatory School is used chiefly to mold, correct, improve, and develop qualities of leadership in cadets.

Three reasons why men accept discipline are fear of punishment, cheerful and spontaneous acquiescence because of faith in their cause, and respect for the confidence their leaders place in them.

Most of the discipline of the Navy rests either upon tradition or on the basic laws that comprise The Articles for the Government of the Navy. These "Articles" comprise the "Constitution" of the Navy and from them most Naval regulations and instructions have been derived.

The Rules of Discipline are:

1. Obey orders cheerfully and willingly.
2. Obey the last order received from any responsible authority.
3. Show respect to your seniors at all times.
4. Remember that you will soon be a leader and will be giving orders. You will be responsible then to see that those under you obey. You must first learn to be obedient yourself before you can expect to be a leader of other men.
5. Discipline does not mean short liberties, restrictions of personal conduct, and forced obedience to all sorts of rules and regulations. It does mean self-control, a cheerful obedience to necessary laws and regulations, and a square deal to your fellowmen.

You must learn by observation, study, and by asking questions. Pending acquisition of a more thorough knowledge of Naval customs, you will do nothing very wrong if you exercise good common sense, never forget that you are a gentleman, and bear in mind that you are a member of the finest military organization in the world. Undoubtedly there are many questions in your mind right now which the following may help to clear up.

The Salute

Your right hand is raised smartly until the tip of your forefinger touches the lower part of your headdress above and slightly to the right of your right eye. Your thumb and fingers are extended and joined, palm to the left, upper arm horizontal, forearm inclined

at about 45 degrees, and hand and wrist straight. If necessary, turn your head and eyes toward the person saluted. To complete the salute, drop your hand and arm smartly to your side in one motion.

The salute is an exchange of courtesy and mutual respect between individuals in a military organization. It is in no sense an admission by the one who salutes first that he is mentally, morally, or physically inferior to the one being saluted. In a sense, you are saluting the uniform that a man wears. When saluting, you are reiterating your oath of allegiance to the Service.

Nothing gives a better indication of the state of discipline than the observance of forms of military courtesy such as the salute. From time immemorial, it has been strictly and conscientiously observed by men of every nationality who follow the profession of arms.

Whom and When to Salute

Juniors always salute seniors first.

Every officer senior to you in the Navy, Army, Marine Corps, and allied or friendly foreign service should be saluted upon meeting or passing on the street. If uncertainty exists, render the salute. Better to err on the side of courtesy than be thought ignorant of the rules or expose yourself to censure.

You will salute all commissioned officers on every occasion of meeting, passing near, or being addressed.

Salutes are begun by juniors at six paces distant, when meeting, or at the nearest point of passing if greater than six paces.

Salutes are supplemented generally by a brief greeting, i.e., "Good morning, sir."

Salute only when covered. If uncovered, come to a halt and greet the senior. He will return the greeting with a salute.

Salute even though the senior is uncovered. He will return the salute with a greeting.

Don't salute when double timing. Come to a walk, salute, then resume double time. If uncovered, come to a halt and give a greeting.

Always salute, if covered, when given a personal order. In addition you acknowledge with, "Aye, aye, sir," signifying that the order is understood and will be obeyed.

Do not salute when in ranks unless you are the senior in command. He renders the salute for the entire organization, whether it be a regiment, battalion, company, platoon, squad, or detail.

Ladies of your acquaintance upon being introduced are saluted, usually with a slight bow. Never take your cap off when talking to ladies out of doors.

When passing an officer going in the same direction, you say, "By your leave, sir," as you reach his side, accompanied by a salute. Pass on his left.

In accompanying officers, juniors walk or ride on the left of their seniors unless there be special reason for the contrary. When-ever you are in a room and an officer enters, you will come to attention, at the same time calling all other cadets in the room to attention. You will remain at attention until told to "Carry on," or until the officer has left

The Uniform

The uniform with its various insignia and devices is designated primarily to indicate on sight those belonging to the Naval service. It shows at a glance the rank, corps, or rating, and hence the authority and responsibility imposed by law upon those wearing it.

Many times you are judged by your appearance. You are expected to make sure that your uniform is at all times clean, neatly pressed, and completely buttoned. Hands will not be carried in pockets nor will pockets be used to carry articles which show from the outside or because of their bulkiness, create an unmilitary appearance. Care, of course, should be taken to make sure that shoes are shined, ties correctly tied, and that other articles of uniform are properly worn. You also will keep your hair neatly trimmed and your person fresh and clean.

War regulations require that you must be in uniform at all times except when in the confines of your own home and even then when there are three or more guests present.

Qualities to Develop

Having familiarized yourself with the contents of this pamphlet, try to develop in yourself these qualities which are essential to your success as a naval officer:

- ✦ **Be a leader.**
- ✦ **Be cooperative.**
- ✦ **Be loyal.**
- ✦ **Show Initiative.**
- ✦ **Have confidence in yourself.**
- ✦ **Be willing to accept responsibility.**
- ✦ **Be fearless but not foolhardy.**
- ✦ **Be honest and truthful at all times.**
- ✦ **Be a gentleman always.**
- ✦ **Be tactful, patient, fair, and just.**
- ✦ **Reflect credit at all times on the uniform you wear and the Service you represent.**

It is obviously impossible to anticipate and answer all of your questions in a booklet of this size but it is hoped that these few "hints" may prove helpful. Follow instructions, work hard, stick to the job, and above all obey orders.