

Heroes of the Washington Area



REAR ADMIRAL THOMAS L. GATCH.

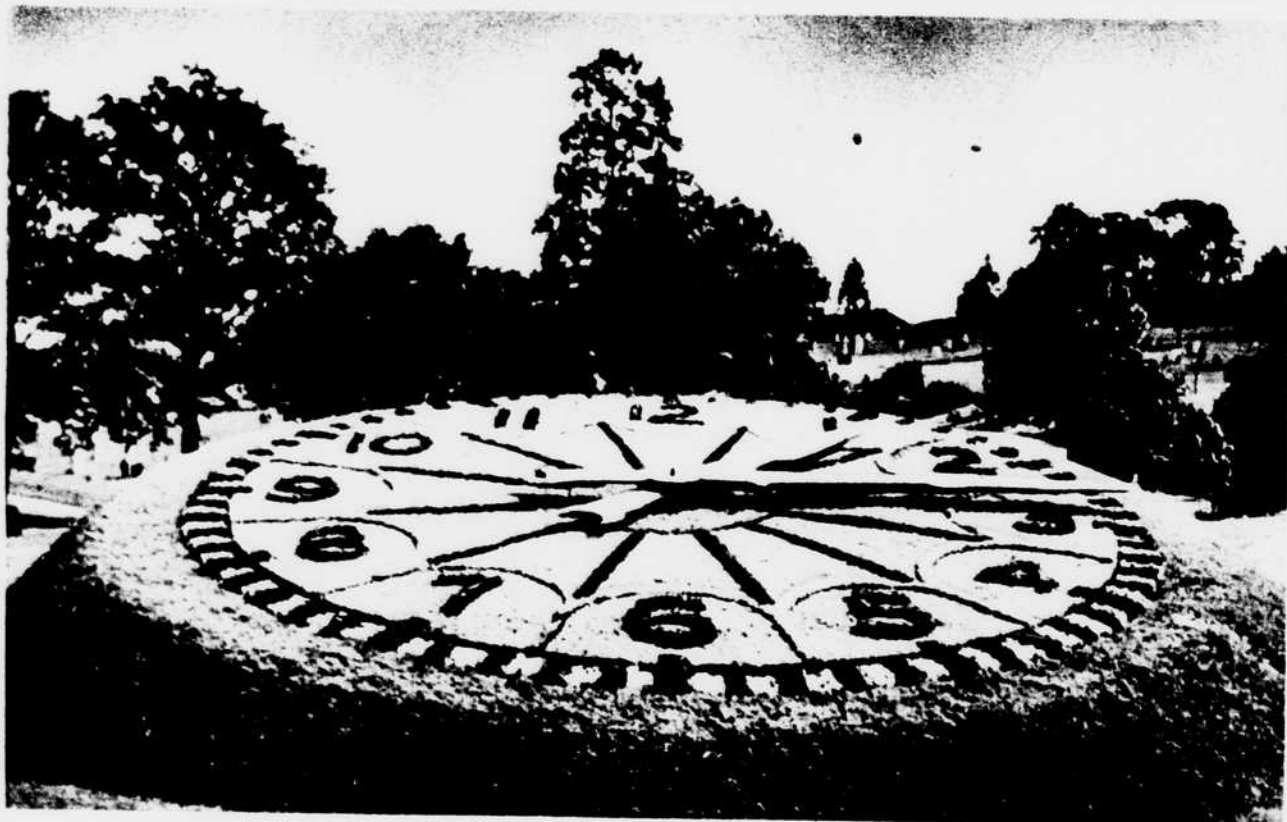
Hero of two great battles of the Southwest Pacific, in which as a captain he commanded one of the Navy's newest battleships, Rear Admiral Gatch has been awarded the Navy Cross and Gold Star for the two actions which now are a celebrated chapter of American naval tradition. Recovered from wounds received in those critical engagements of last fall which cost the Japanese so heavily in ships and planes, the naval hero became a rear admiral recently upon assuming the post here of Judge Advocate General of the Navy.

The Navy Cross was awarded Rear Admiral Gatch for the brilliant achievement of his as yet unidentified battleship in shooting down 32 enemy dive bombers and torpedo planes in the battle of Santa Cruz Islands on October 26, 1942. In the one bomb hit scored on his ship near the end of the attack, Rear Admiral Gatch received wounds which forced him to relinquish command.

Although still partially disabled from his wounds, Rear Admiral Gatch less than three weeks later had returned to his battleship command in the great battle off Savo Island on the night of November 14-15. It was in this battle that the Japs' boldest attempt to overwhelm Guadalcanal was smashed by American forces. In the second citation awarding him the Gold Star in lieu of a second Navy Cross, Rear Admiral Gatch's ship is credited in this action with "sinking at least one Japanese cruiser and assisting in the destruction and damage of other enemy vessels." The award cites his "calm coolness in the face of great danger and inspiring leadership" as contributing to his ship's "high combat efficiency."

Rear Admiral Gatch makes his home here with Mrs. Gatch at 3103 Macomb street N.W. He was an earlier resident of Washington during tours of duty on the staff of the Judge Advocate General, after taking his law degree from George Washington University. He was assistant judge advocate general when assigned to command of a battleship in February, 1942.

This is one of a series of drawings of decorated war heroes by Newman Sudduth of The Star's art staff.



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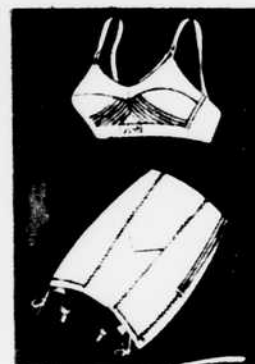
All the brave are not soldiers. Ronnie Doublet, 14, who lost both legs as a result of one of the many bombing raids on the island of Malta, looks over one of the artificial limbs with which he is being fitted at Queen Mary's Hospital at Roehampton, England. A Nursing Sister of the hospital shows him the limb.

A. P. Photo

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Not all of America's heroines are in uniform... many a staunch patriot wears L-85



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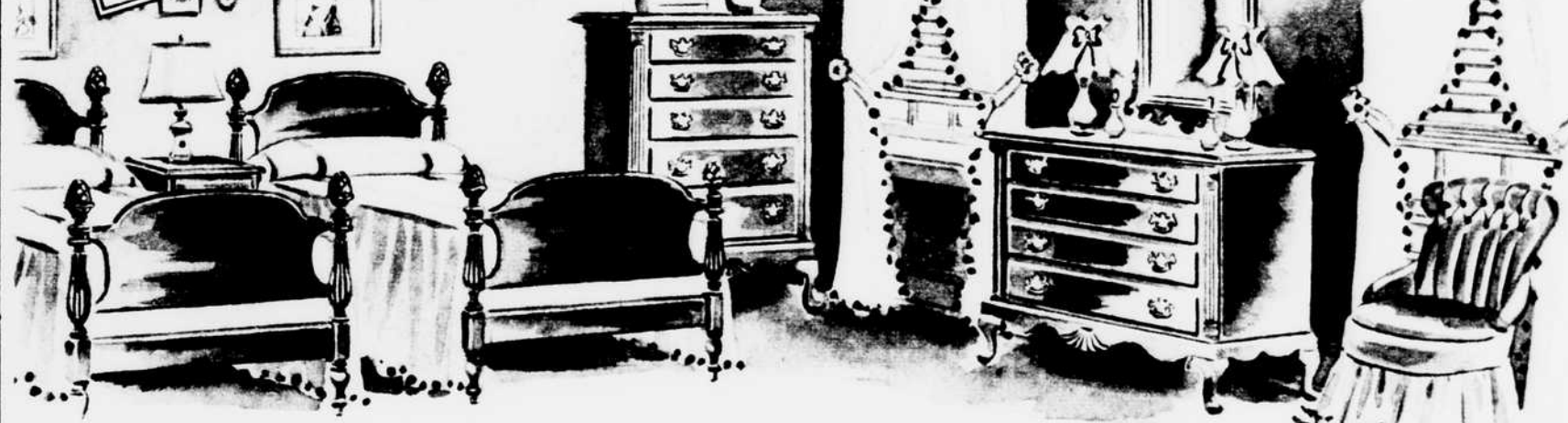
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