

Hader, Kenneth

Young Naval Officer Home for Birthday Recalls Close Shave

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"Pretty rough business!" was the brief comment of Petty Officer First Class Kenneth Hader, son of Mr. and Mrs. George J. Hader, of 520 Second Avenue, as he recalled his 16 months uninterrupted service as



P O 1/C KENNETH HADER

an aerial gunner on a B-24 in the Central Pacific.

The young Navy officer returned home yesterday in time to celebrate three memorable events. It was his

22nd birthday. He greeted for the first time his 13-months-old son, Kenneth George Hader, and to his wife, the former Ruth Goff, of West Virginia, he brought the first news of his elevation in rank to Petty Officer First Class in a Navy Liberator Squadron.

Stories of bombing in Saipan, Tinian, Wake Island and Iwo Jima, which Gunner Hader's parents and friends are eager to hear, have not been forthcoming.

"It's great to be home. My mind is filled with memories for which I will never find words," he said.

However, one experience tops the rest for excitement. He didn't expect to come out of it alive.

The B-24 was flying low, 50 feet above water, when the men spotted two Jap ships which they promptly started to strafe. So intent were they on the job of sinking this precious cargo that a Jap Zero swooped over their plane unnoticed and began "letting them have it." But the Zero was doomed! Two loops over their B-24 and the Zero was in the sea while Gunner Hader and the other Blue Rangers let out one long whoop of relief.

After a brief leave, the young Navy officer will report for further orders to Jacksonville, Fla. Though home seems "too wonderful to be true," he wants to get back into the fray until it is over. He is a graduate of Liberty High School, a former Bethlehem Steel worker, who entered service January, 1942,

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