

# BROWN SHIPBUILDING COMPANY, INC.

AT INDUSTRIAL ROAD & GREENS BAYOU



P. O. Box 2634

HOUSTON 1, TEXAS

May 4, 1945

Dear Cannon,

You may not be able to read my writing so I've decided to type this letter, Please excuse all misspelled words, strike overs, erased marks and etc. Gracie ask me to write you since I've nothing to do and she is busy. So come what may, here is the letter.

Oh, excuse me maybe I better tell you who I am. Well the name is Elizabeth Fretwell, But better known as "Freddie" in the shipyard. I work with Gracie, and by her discription I am the meanest, lazeest, and most good for nothing she ever knew, but i really think she loves me.

So much for that, lets see if we can't find something more interesting. Shipyard, girls, offices, army, or what may pop into my head. Think I know more about the shipyard so I'll try to describe it for you. If you have been in a Boat-Factory you can be bored by the following, if not you may find something worth while.

To begin we have everything a shipyard calls for, buildings, roads, ways, wet docks and dry docks and plenty of workers.

Shall we travil down this twisting gray road? O.K. we're off.

Theres the time office and clock allies, many feet trod back and forth in them punching in and out, and everytime the clock ticks another man or woman is helping you fellows.

There the Mold Loft, off to the left where all the patterns are built from wood and later to be layed over long gray sheets of steel and cut out to form our little bundles of distuiction we call L.S.M.'s . Most of the steel cutting is done in the Hull Shop, and there it rises behind the mold loft, it is the biggest building in the whole yard, you couldn't miss it if you wanted to.

On the way around the yard are all sorts of little shacks that are supposed to be offices and pretty good ones at that.

We are on the ways now, just a minute till the gantry mover along, it stands over one hundred feet high, and with its long arm it reminds you fo the old dinosaurs.

At last we can now gaze on the hulls that are being built. There are twelve ways here and you can see by each one the different stages the ships must go through before the dunking they get on their launching day.

Theres the keel of one being layed over there. It looks like a fan tail fish.

It doesn't have a keel like other slick ships, but a flat bottom and the fan tail. Look theres one that is all finished but for the bow doors and ramp, it looks like it has been hit and has a busted nose.



Ah, now the one over here close to the water is really nice, it's all ready for launching. It is not painted yet in her war colors, but you can bet she is proud for in a few minutes they will cut the ropes and she will get her first wet bottom. All the workers are gathered around now and every eye is waiting for the big splash. There goes the signal, the flag is down, the cutter comes down and wham she is sliding down on hundreds of pounds of bananas, now the splash, gosh it sounds like a thousand simbles crashing together and a big base drum beating along with them, The wave washed clear up on the other bank as if it were a tidal wave. They are pulling her back now, back to the shore and tow boats are getting ready to put her by the wet dock walls. Won't be long before she'll be sailing beside a thousand like herself. These side launchings are very exciting.

Guess we better move along now the sun is getting pretty warm and there is still some shipyard yet to see. We'll go along the wet dock road now. There is the machine shop and warehouse and a lot of L.S.M.'s along the dock. There are bicycles, trucks, push carts, men, women, crains and just all kinds of things, and if you don't watch where you are going you may run into something. Welding arcs flaring, chippers making the darndest noise, people shouting, whistles blowing and boy your'er out of this world in a mess of noise you've never heard before.

Well we may as well start back now it is almost lunch and we're hungry enough to eat anything even sandwiches. The road back is the same one we came down on, only it is about a half mile farther along from where we first turned off. Just a few yards ahead is where they are digging the road and about two acres of land out to make room for the new dry dock. So don't fall over all the shell, tar, and mountains of dirt on your way or you may break a neck.

After walking all over this place I've just thought about riding the bicycles, but we are out of the gate now, and the guard is looking over your pass and making sure we don't carry off any ships or plates of steel, funny boy is'nt he.

Shall we go in the Adm. Building now? Better button up your coat or you'll freeze. Oh, yes it was hot outside but this Adm. Building is like an ice box.

There are dozens of offices in here and people are crowded into each one. And now we enter dear old Material Control, walk down the long isle and people just set staring their eyes out, and now, yes we are in the typing section. Who should be setting over by the window with a red head sticking out, none other, you guessed, "Grace Lingle". She's my darling, one of the sweetest persons that ever lived and everyone loves her, but none quite as much as I do. Then all the other girls, some beating on the typewriters, some running the ditto machines, some checking, and some seeing how lazy they can be.

Well my dear Cannon the trip is over and I bet you are tired out, From Walking? NO, From reading all this silly stuff I've written, YES. I hope by now you can still see, so I shall close and let you come back to a normal world.

I've enjoyed writing to you and I hope you have enjoyed our little trip around the yard. So till the work again slows down and Gracie decides you need another letter from her by me I will end this but remain.--

Your Shipyard Guide

*"Franklin"*

P.S. In case you ever get a chance drop me a card at 7019 Canal, Houston 11, Texas and let me know you are still able to read.

By Now