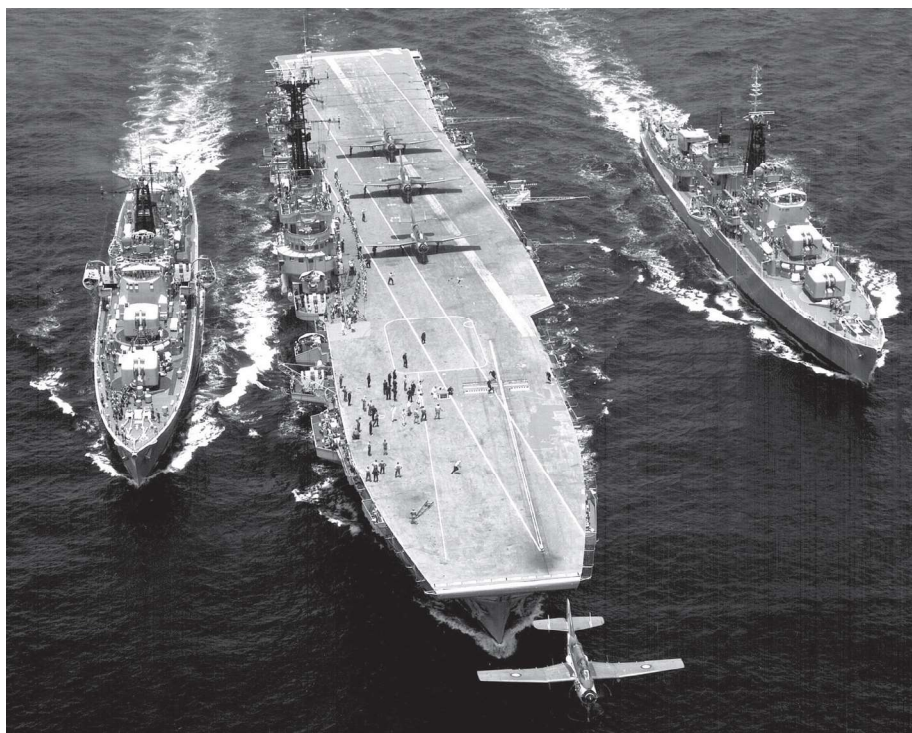


who had commanded *Quickmatch* under VAT when he was Fox 1, to drop by. The officer returned visibly shaken to quietly report the short conversation's parting words "Commander Scrivenor, you may forget this. I never will!"²⁷

Lane's replacement as FDO was Lieutenant Toz Dadswell, who recalled that VAT normally commanded with a quiet voice but could hand out a blast at ten paces or one hundred metres when necessary:

The other thing I remember about VAT blasts - and I copped a few as the FDO on *Melbourne* - was that he would give you a real tongue-lashing and five minutes later be talking to you in normal mode. He would not stew like some senior officers. He had pointed out in clear concise language your error and that was the end of the matter unless you were stupid enough to repeat it.

In under eight months *Melbourne* and her air group had exceeded any previous twelve-month records. VAT was riding high, and his fall was a prosaic but painful one. Sailing from Wellington to Melbourne, the carrier experienced strong southerly winds and rough seas on 9 September. Going down the ladder from the bridge to the wireless office VAT slipped and fell,



Launching Gannets from Melbourne while conducting an underway transfer. The line of men trailing past the island are on the jackstay line between Melbourne and the Daring-class destroyer to starboard.

²⁷ Later Captain Robert Scrivenor (1922-1974). Joined the naval college in 1936 and served mainly in destroyers in WWII. After *Melbourne* he was commander at *Cerberus*. Promoted to captain less than two years later, so VAT must have been scrupulously fair in his confidential personal reports. Scrivenor became Fox 1 himself in *Parramatta*, commanded *Penguin* and was Military Adviser in Bangkok 1967-1969.