To: Dennis Burke **March 17, 2008**
Corry Historian
11137 Williamsport Pike
Greencastle, PA 17225

Fm: Thomas W. Mazzone
4915 Kilty Ct East
Bradenton, FL

Subj: USS Corry, Historical Letters From Former Corry Crew Members

Dear Dennis,

The article submitted by Lt Bill Baldwin, has brought back a lot of great memories and joy from the past. It is strange how individuals can remember the pleasure of those past years and suppress the hardship that they endured.

I was assigned to the ship in June 1946 to January 1948, in Charlestown, SC.

I wrote a book titled "Where The Train Stopped", in 1998. It is a family, as well as an historical book covering all the world events that had an influence on my life from the moment I was born.

Enclosed are a few pages covering my earlier days in the navy and my time aboard the Corry. This section starts on, on my first day in boot camp.

I hope you can include my story in the final historical book along with stories told by other member of crew.

My military career expands over 42 years. Starting in the Navy as a seaman 2/c in March 1946 and ending as Colonel in the Army National Guard and Brigadier General in the Massachusetts State Guard in 1988.

At age 80, I am still hanging on, in spite of having lost 80% of my hearing. If you have any questions, you can contact me at any time.

Tom

BASIC TRAINING

In charge of that body of unholy looking gaggle of misfits was a Chief Petty Officer and two semi-hard boiled boot pushers. As our superiors, mentors, and instructors, it was their task to make us over into a team of graduating sailors within eight weeks. As soon as the proper head count and roll call were verified, we reassembled in alphabetical order and were soon marching across the cold, windy, gravel parade field to our assigned barracks which were some distance away. The sky was gray and threatening. The boot pushers were lenient with our marching skills because of the extreme cold, and the inexperience we all displayed while carrying our total worldly possessions packed in the long white bag hanging loosely over each right shoulder.

Shorty after marching a few hundred yards it seemed to all of us that the bags had become heavier causing some [illegible] to fall off individual shoulders with some hitting the ground. One by one a few smart ass characters started to drag the bags along behind them. It wasn't long before some of the men in the ranks started heckling and taunting their peers until we reached our new home. Not much was said to any of us until we all got inside the building.

I was lucky, I drew the first floor of a two-story barrack which was located adjacent to the regimental wash hut. Located in large room at the rear of the first floor of each barracks were the open toilets, wash basins and showers. It was one large room without any privacy walls or partitions. At the entrance of the open sleeping areas were two large tables where the men could play cards or write letters. That area was also designated as the smoking area, and you could only smoke when the smoking lamp was lit.

The sleeping racks were two tiers high and arranged in two long rows. Each row was up against the locker bins which were on the outside window walls. The bunks were made up of a two-by-four frame with a series of "S" shaped wires and series of springs attaching them to the wood frame. We each had a very thin mattress, and a small thin pillow and two brown blankets. The bunks were assigned in alphabetical order, and again I was lucky, I drew the upper bunk. After a fifteen minute orientation of the building and emergency and fire evacuation rules, we were given instructions on how to make up our bunks and store our gear in the open bins. The bunks were made up in a head to toe, toe to head pattern, which was the military way to prevent respiratory problems when men were housed in close quarters. We were given one-half hour to accomplish that task before our first formal inspection. All those poor slobs, who had been dragging their white bags across floors and the parade grounds, were shocked to find out those bags, *(some now with holes in them, which were later referred to as "fart sacks.")* were their mattress covers. Those individuals had the task of washing them clean in cold water in the wash hut which was located out back. That task was completed by the next morning.

That problem became the company's first objective lesson on the importance of listening to all instructions and taking care of personnel clothing and equipment. It was also our first official introductions as members of military units, in helping your buddies when they fall behind. Learning team play was the rule, which is the basic ingredient to survival and working as a unit. Before lights out, we were also instructed on the proper

water tank. Two weeks later, I was re-admitted to the hospital for another week with another infection in the same ear. When I awoke the next morning, laying in the next hospital bed was Charlie Mayko, a very close high school buddy I skipped school with. He was having trouble with his nose and his breathing. We both declined a medical discharge. The irony was he eventually ended up in the submarine service and I as a radio striker, all because we both knew how to use a typewriter. After my second hospitalization, I was transferred to another training unit. I had to start basics training all over again because of missing too much training. By that time, I had become an old salt. My hair had grown back, and I had learned how to get around without getting any more gigs.

I was released from the hospital on a Sunday along with eleven other men. We all had cut little notches on both of the heels of our work boots, the left shoe indicated how many weeks we were in the service, the other shoe showed how many shots we had received. We all had to start our basic training over again. We reported to Company 4454 with our sea bags on our shoulders and with complete confidence of seasoned veterans. We were surprised to learn the company had only formed late Saturday. Those new men had not received their hair cuts let alone been formed into platoons, et cetera. The two temporary assigned leaders had no idea what to do with us or where we were to bed down. There weren't enough mattresses for all the bunks in the barracks. Our group soon took over from those ex-boy scouts after they were exposed to ***"You never ask your men to do anything you would or have not done first."*** They quickly gave up their bunks and their positions.

Within the next three days the twelve of us had filled all the best positions within the company. We were what was referred to as the untouchables and became BTO's. (Big Time Operators). One of the group became the company mailman. We assigned the guard and fire watch lists and other specified details. It took the boot-pushers five weeks before they realized that none of the holy twelve ever pulled a dog watch or night details (from 1600 hrs to 0600 hrs) or any weekends. We never had KP, mess hall duty or other menial clean up assignments. We always drew watches between 0800 to 1200 or 1200 to 1600 hours between Monday through Friday for interior guard duty within the barracks.

It was during that period that I learned how to turn disadvantage situations into profitable advantages. For example, at the front of every bunk hung a small white ditty bag which was used to store dirty laundry. Every morning the boot-pushers, using a special sized steel ring, would measure the pregnancy of each bag. Any bags that failed to pass freely through the ring was diagnosed as being a pregnant bag. That was grounds for gig points and restricting its owner to barrack restriction during the unit's free time. Whereas I only pulled the eight-to-twelve or twelve-to-four duty tours twice or three times a week, I would wash the ditty bags during those time periods for a dollar apiece regardless what it contained. Usually it wasn't much. As I had mentioned before, every barrack I had been previously assigned to was adjacent to a wash hut. I had scrounged fifteen or sixteen metal mop buckets that I hid under the barracks or in the boiler room when not in use. I deposited the contents of each ditty bags into a bucket. After adding water, soap and bleach, I used a plumber's helper which was like a small washing machine, moving from one bucket to the other until the clothes were washed. I hung the clothes with clothes stops. (*small lengths of heavy twine used in lieu of clothes pins).* The men picked up

case we capsized the boats. That same screw up realized, as we were marching off, that he still had his wallet and broke ranks in order to put it in his locker. After spending the whole day on the water, and upon returning to the barracks wet and cold, that clown hollers that someone stole his wallet. Needless to say, we were all rousted from the building while a search was conducted. No wallet was found. Consequently we were all confined to the barracks because of the supposed theft. After two days while preparing for a full inspection prior to graduating from boot training, the wallet was found intact. That idiot, when he ran back two days earlier, had hid his own wallet in someone else's bay by mistake. That was another good lesson learned. We always had to watch out for the welfare and the actions of the weakest guy in the section to insure no one gets hurt or confused.

Every recruit company had to pull one week of Garrison duty which meant a full week of KP *(kitchen police detail)* in the regimental consolidated mess hall. KP was dirty and involved long hours, getting up at 0400, serving three meals a day, plus clean up, washing out garbage cans and grease traps, scrubbing pots and pans, and peeling potatoes. If lucky one got back to the barracks by 2200 hours that night.

I was very lucky. During that week, I pulled the rifle range detail. That was a paradise detail. The working hours were between 0800 to 1600 hours for only five days. Saturday and Sunday were security duty at the range. All I did was supervise the work details from the companies going through weapons' qualifications. That involved replacing and repairing targets, collecting and sorting out the expended brass, storing all mattress pads and sweeping floors. I did not do any physical labor, I just supervised. That detail had another excellent and positive teaching point. There were the workers and then there were the supervisors. The latter was by far more prestigious and possessed more authority and was less strenuous. What I quickly learned was one had to display willingness and ability to be counted on as a leader and not as a follower.

After completing basic training, we were all transferred to OGU barracks *(outgoing units)*, to await further duty assignments. Every afternoon it was each individual's responsibility to check the bulletin boards for his shipping orders. During that period, all long term leaves had been cancelled because of a national rail and a coal strike. As a result, many men were held on base. Also during that same period, the policy of colored segregation was still in effect in spite of the humanitarian request from the former first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt, who earlier in 1945 urged her husband, the President, to cease segregation within the services. Segregation was obvious, especially in the south. All the negro's were trained and quartered in separate barracks away from the main area. We had one black kid in my unit. After graduation, he was transferred to the black OGU Battalion. The blacks and Filipinos were always relegated to cooks and steward duties, or in some cases, to long shore man assignments

A newspaper article published in the Bradenton Herald dated February 27, 1995, mentioned how, fifty-two years ago an experimental, fully segregated black crew, stationed on the USS Mason, DE 529, a 289 foot Destroyer Escort had finally received unit and individual worthy commendations for their action while conducting convoy duty in the North Atlantic. They escorted Convoy-119 consisting of twenty cargo ships during a heavy storm which whipped up fifty foot waves and seventy knots winds. Thus, proving their skills and worthiness as member of the ship of the line. It was very obvious and

I were temporarily assigned to base duty until she arrived. During that period, we were in limbo. No one was really watching out for us. None of us got paid because of the missing records. Soon most of us were broke. We could not borrow money from anyone, because we did not know anyone. The base personnel knew that none of us would still be there on payday. We could not even get liberty off the base. We all finally had to borrow money from the Navy Relief Agency. What an ordeal that turned out to be. All we received was five dollars each, and we had to sign our life away to get it. But at least we were able to buy shaving cream and tooth paste. After being on the base three days, I discovered how the KP duty rooster and other base detail assignments were made up.

First: One never slept in the same bunk two nights in a row; one never taped his name on the bunk, and one secured his sea bag in a different location every morning. One also made sure the Master-at-Arms did not know one by name. Every morning he would pick the KP personnel by bunk assignment.

Second: One never fell in on either the first two rows or the last two during morning formation. After each roll call, he would pick the base duty crews by rows. He always started with the last two rows and would assign them to heavy ammunition details at the ammo dump. That group would then be loaded onto a few big trucks and driven quite a few miles from the main part of the base to very large underground bunkers. That was a hot and dirty assignment of loading the ammunition onto smaller pallets which were loaded onto trucks for delivery to the ships. The ammunition ranged in sizes from 40 mm shells to sixteen inch shells and powder bags that would be needed by the various types of ships either tied up to piers or anchored out in the bay. The vessels ranged from submarines to destroyers; to both light and heavy cruisers, to battleships and finally the aircraft carriers. After that experience, I made sure I didn't pull that duty again.

The MAA (Master-At- Arms) would then skip to the first two rows and assign those men to longshoreman duty loading supplies and food onto yard tugs. This was another lousy, sweaty and dirty assignment. He would work the rows from back to front, then start back to front again until he ran out of specific details. Those men still remaining in the center of the formation would be assigned to the dive bomber squadrons. That was a great detail. Each man was issued a three-foot pole, the size of a broom handle. This had a nail attached to one end plus a brown gunny sack. Their mission: to police up the grounds on the entire base. After three hours, you could easily hide your tools of the day and skylark until turn-in time at 1600 hours. There was always a crowd around the Waves and Nurses barracks. It seemed to get the most attention and consequently, it was the cleanest area on the base.

Being assigned as part of the yard tug crew was also a choice job. That duty was relatively easy and turned out to be the best of all the assignments. You were part of an eight-man crew which delivered the food, both wets and dry, and other supplies out to the big ships that were anchored out in the bay. You hardly touched any cargo because it was loaded on by the longshoreman and off loaded by the ships crew. Near the end of our three-week waiting period, several of us were offered permanent duty on the Y-tug. You ate every meal on board. The meal were prepared by the tugs cook. It was practically like home-cooked meals. You had shore liberty every night and three day passes on the weekends. You even qualified for sea pay. But no! We were all cocky soon to be destroyer men. What a mistake I made. What was happening in all the services during

THE USS CORRY, DD 817

The ship finally reached port on the third week. Two days before we were to report officially for duty, another sailor and I went to visit her. It was at that moment that I recalled Al Junevich's advice and decided that as a high school dropout, I was not going to wait for the ship's Executive Officer to control my fate as a new member of the crew. I looked up the Chief Pharmacist Mate whose name was C.R. Poythress. During the short interview, I gave him an oral resume of my past and the level of experience I had achieved while working in the pharmacy department for the Liggett Drug store.

The other sailor had some experience in cutting hair as an apprentice in his father's barber shop. The chief took both our names before we left the ship. Two days later when the twenty-five of us reported for duty as members of the crew, the X.O. called both the sailor who was with me two days earlier to report to sick bay and the barber shop. The ship,s MAA had the rest of the men fall in on two ranks, then he picked the first seven men and assigned them to the engine room as boiler men, engineers, firemen, water and boiler tenders and electrician strikers *(the men who worked the engine room were called snipers or the black gang)*. The next seven became gunners mate, quartermaster, torpedo men, and fire control strikers. The remaining nine became deck apes and worked for the Chief Boatswain Mate. The duty assignments were expeditiously decided regardless of any previous request that were granted at the recruiting stations or had qualified for during boot camp training. We soon learned that the needs of the service had precedents over individual desires. The medical department consisted of Dr. Richard E. Boyer, a full Lt. from Atlanta, Georgia, the chief and Second Class Pharmacist Mate Jimmy Carter from the deep south.

The ship was a Sumner Class Destroyer, with a flush deck commissioned as a general purpose destroyer in February, 1946 at Orange, Texas. That fifteen-million dollar investment for peace and security was built at Consolidated Shipyards and was over three hundred and ninety feet long with an extreme bean of over forty-one feet. She was equipped with three twin mounted 5-inch/38 caliber guns for air and surface action, two gun turrets forward and one aft; two depth charge racks located on the fantail, two depth charge K-guns, one each on the port and starboard side in the aft section. Three quad 40 mm and a few 20 mm guns, plus five torpedoes tubes located amidships above the quarter deck.

The Mark-14 Range Finder system work as controller for the big guns, setting the fuses electronically. An experienced gun crew could maintain a rate of fire of fifteen rounds per minute and twenty-two rounds at an ideal elevation. The basic rounds were semi-fixed, with a fifty-four pound projectile and a twenty-eight pound brass shell case that included fifteen pounds of powder charge. The velocity of the round was 2,660 yards per second for a maximum range of 18,200 yards at 45 degree elevation and a ceiling of 37,200 feet at 85 degree elevation.

Whenever personnel, officer or enlisted men, come aboard or leave a ship, before leaving the quarter deck, just prior to stepping onto the gangplank or ladder or stepping off the same, come to attention facing the ships colors and renders a smartly executed hand salute, then turns and salutes the duty Officer-On-Deck. (OOD).

President Roosevelt's Presidential Executive Order on opening up of all ratings for minority personnel took a couple years to implement after the order had been signed. In the two years of my active service, we had only one Black sailor who held a signalman rating, and he still had to sleep with all the other Blacks in the forward hole.

The rest of the crew's compartments were one deck below the main deck. Since the end of the fighting and the surrender of the axis powers, the crews on many ships were then permitted to sleep by divisions consisting of similar jobs and ratings. I.e.: Engineers and sniper crews in one compartment; deck apes in another and gunners and fire controllers in still another. My compartment and bunk was aft, (aft is the fan tail (rear) of a ship and starboard is the right side of the ship. Port side is the left side). It was made up of 'O' division personnel which consisted of service oriented rates, i.e.: barber, mailman, medics, yeomen, laundryman, cooks, supply and radio men. The bunks were crowded and stacked three high and held up by chains. It was nothing more than a rectangle shaped three-quarter inch metal tube, no wider than a man's body with a tightly lashed canvas and a very thin mattress. That was much better than the old canvas hammocks that were used only one or two years earlier on some ships. The space between the bunks was approximately twenty-four inches high. One had very little room to turn over and could definitely not sit up. When one slept one soon learned to do so with one leg always bent at the knee, while underway to prevent from being rolled out of the bunk while steaming through stormy seas. Occasionally if someone was a wise ass, it was not uncommon to partially cut through the lassing of his bunk, so when he swung himself up to get into the bunk, his body weight would break the remains of the rope and down he'd go. That usually happened after he would leave for liberty for the evening and would return around midnight a little under the weather. After a while, he'd got the message and soon his attitude was back on a corrected coarse. The individual storage lockers were directly below the bottom rack. Every time anyone of the three occupants had to get into his locker one had to lift the bunks up at an angle. That was tough if one had someone sleeping in the bottom bunk at the time. The foot lockers were nothing more than twenty-four inches by twenty-four inches and twelve inches high metal bins each welded to the deck. All personal gear, which really wasn't that much, was stored in the bin. That feat was accomplished by rolling up the uniforms inside out into a tight roll. This included all clothing including socks, hats, et cetera, except one's peacoat. By utilizing that method one was also pressing his clothing. When putting on one's uniform hardly any wrinkles were noticed. It was amazing how we managed to live in those tight quarters. The higher rank petty officers were entiled to the few three stacked wall lockers located throughout the compartment. Again the higher ranks got the first choice selection.

Being that I was only a seaman 2nd class, initially I drew one of the lower bunks located in the middle of the compartment. Higher rank personnel usually warranted a higher bunk, or the ones located against the bulkhead in the customary military pecking order. Eventually, I finally made the top bunk located directly over the starboard screw up against the bulk-head. The advantage was one ended up with a little more head room. The disadvantage was the ventilation air duct was located a few inches from the deck.

The sanitary facilities area was called the 'Head'. The aft 'Head' consisted of two shower stalls, one pro-station, one rack of wash basins to accommodate six men at a time. The head was void of commodes. Instead it was equipped with nothing more than a long

The next day I was assigned the task of storing newly arrived medical supplies in the medical aft storeroom located below decks. Several large boxes were stacked on deck near the small escape hatch located on the fantail. After several attempts to get the boxes down the ladder by myself, I finally asked a couple of the sailors, who were standing next to the wire railing smoking a cigarette, if they could give me a hand. I had never seen them before and had no idea who they were or what rank they held. We all were wearing the same dungaree work detail uniform with no rank showing. They just looked at me and one of them said get some recruit to give me a hand. I responded by saying are you two guys too important that you can't help a shipmate. Finally, one of them did help but the other was real bull shit at me and let me know it. It turned out they were both 1st class petty officers. The Southerner, whose name was Bonneville, response in essence was correct, but on the other hand, his actions and attitude were contrary to the lessons learned in boot camp of helping out your shipmates. That was another lesson I learned and remembered well many years later when I became an NCO and a commissioned officer in the Army National Guard. That was how to treat new men assigned to a unit and giving assistance to your subordinate regardless of rank. It was a very valuable lesson. Later on, that individual also learned from me that pay backs can also be hell, as well as, a little painful.

The next few weeks we were all very busy with minor repairs, taking on fuel, a full load of ammunition, spare parts, medical and commissary supplies which included fresh and frozen foods. All members of the crew went through all sorts of phases on ship board drills and receiving on the job training. Each of us learned how to function as a tight and cohesive trained crew. Every week we would get underway for two or three days at a time going through fire, general quarters and abandon ship exercises.

The Corry was finally assigned as part of destroyer squadron Number 8 (DESRON 8), which consisted of three other destroyers, the USS New, DD 818, the USS Holder, DD 819, and the USS Wilson, DD 847, at times we also worked with USS Rich, DD 820 and the Noa, DD 841. Each ship of the squadron had a big black eight ball logo painted on both sides of the forward stack. Our ship also carried the flag of the squadron commander.

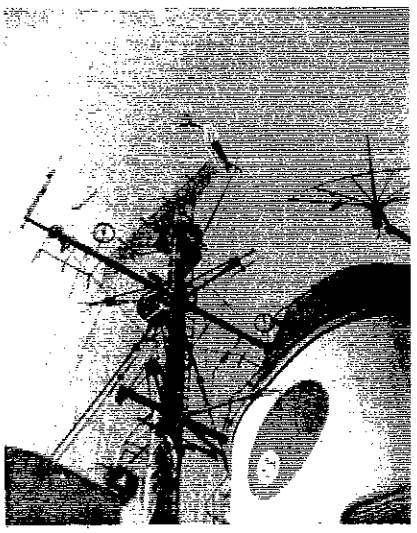
I was getting plenty of hands-on-training and learning quite a bit about minor surgery. Working with Doc and the other two pharmacist mates everyday was both beneficial and enjoyable. I was still not assigned to a solo medical watch. I worked mostly with Jimmy Carter during his watch. Regular sick call became operational at 0800 hours immediately after roll call. Of course, emergency medical call was available 24 hours a day, every day, seven days a week. Whenever the ship was in port I would use the typewriter located in the radio shack to type my letters home. At the time, I did not realize that act would become the cause of my future dilemma. After a few weeks, the ship steamed to Norfolk, Virginia to become part of a Mediterranean Naval Occupation Fleet; The task force consisted of the battleship USS MISSOURI and the IOWA; the aircraft carriers USS ROOSEVELT CV-42 and the MIDWAY, CV-41, the heavy cruisers USS FARGO, CL-102, the LITTLE ROCK, CL-92 and the HUNTINGTON, CL-106 and two destroyer tenders the USS GRAND CANYON, AD 19 and YOSEMITE, AD 27, plus two oil tenders, supply ships and a dozen or so more destroyers.

and supplies in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, all the ships eventually turned east and sailed to the Azures. There we picked up a few British combat ships and continued on to Gibraltar and conducted more intense maneuvers with the task force that we were relieving before continuing on to southern Europe.

My OJT (*on the job training*) was tested two days out of Norfolk. The ship was steaming though some heavy seas just southeast of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, when John Nemett, *(from Troy, N.Y.)* a baker's striker, came to my bunk around 0200 hours and shaked me loose while clutching his right forearm with a blood soaked towel. While we both proceeded to sick bay he told me how he fell on top of the bread slicing machine when the ship rolled with a bad wave. Upon examining his injury, both of us were getting pretty seasick. It was a deep laceration approximately nine centimeters long. I first checked to see if an artery had been severed, then looked for profuse bleeding from a vein, and then checked for any nerve or muscle damage. After applying local antiseptic and using the sterilized surgical kit, I sewed ten or twelve stitches to close the wound. I finally covered the injury with a piece of sterile gauze and a roller bandage and entered his name in the medical journal. All during that minor surgery, I never used any novocaine to kill or numb the pain while sewing him up. Throughout that whole procedure, John was very good about it. He and I went through boot camp together and stood next to each other in ranks. I knew, that he knew I didn't have much experience in minor surgery, but that is what I meant about trust and faith and taking care of a buddy. Through the whole episode, we shared the same bucket while both being sea sick. He returned to work in the galley and I went back to my bunk.

The next morning when Doc Boyer checked the log, he asked the chief how John was doing. Chief Poythress replied he was not aware that anything had happened to Nemett. When Carter showed up, he was asked the same question and his response was the same as the chief. Now they the all got worried and sent Carter to get John and me. After I explained exactly what I had done and the Doc examined my work, he was totally satisfied and immediately indicated that I was now authorized to stand solo medical watch.

Middle sack
my bunk



USS CORRY DD 817
(eight ball logo)
1946

UNITED STATES NAVY
Identification Card

MAZZONE, Thomas W.
Name

Thomas W. Mazzone
Signature

Color Hair blk Eyes brn
Weight 142 Birth 4/25/28
Finger Print Classification 8/11/50
U.S. QUINCY, FLORIDA
Navy Yard *Validating Officer*

U.S.S. CORRY (DD817)
UNITED STATES NAVY
LIBERTY CARD

Mazzone, Thomas No. 417
MAZZONE, Thomas William
NAME
326 10 35 S1
SERVICE NO. RATE
F.L. STQ3, USNR
Validating Officer

Crew from the Corry
July 1946
Taken in Norfolk, Va
L-R
Mathieu, ?, Mc Grath, ?, Mc

convince him and the XO that I was seasick and second, I did not know were the paint locker was located. What saved my ass was that the doctor spoke up for me stating that I and many other unseasoned men were too sick to safely stand a watch during that storm. Needless to say the next morning I was given a personal tour of every inch of the ship to include the bilge areas. When I went back to sick call that's when we both found out how my reassignment came about. At that point nothing could be done about it.

Another incident worth mentioning that happened to me as we were crossing the Atlantic on our way to the Azures. We had a very young Ensign named Cudworth from West Hartford, Connecticut. A real nice guy who liked to kid me a lot. He was only a couple of years older than me. It was during a midnight to four watch, and he was the deck officer on the bridge. As part of my duties, I was to show the deck officers on watch all the incoming radio messages for priority distribution. The duty officer's job was to read and initial all radio messages and also assigned a priority code. Cudworth liked to joke and would say to me, ***"Go wake the old man"*** and would then chuckle with a shit-eating grin and laugh. A couple of times I did just that when it was not really that necessary to wake the old man up. Some messages were of general information, and the CO could read them at 0600 hours. Well this particular morning he did the same thing, but that time I thought Cudworth was joking around again and I didn't bother to wake up the old man. Unfortunately, that time his kidding backed fired. The message had requested that one of the sailors on our ship be sent home on an emergency leave, and the Navy would pick the kid up by a PBY Catalina float plane. By the time the old man received all the routine messages it was after 0700 hours and the ship had steamed beyond the range of the plane. Ensign Cudworth took full responsibility for that incident. That, too became a good objective lesson for me years later when I received my commission as an officer.

The ship's hygienic policy was strictly enforced through self-preservation. Everyone was expected to shower and shave every day, wear a clean uniform every other day if not every day. For those who did not fully participate in that policy, they soon became recipients of the old G.I salt water shower while fully clothed with the use of a large bar of brown caustic salt water soap and stiff brushes. It wasn't a pleasant affair, but the offenders usally got the message fast.

Me, Tony Mazzotta, Stan Kremenitzer

located on the other side of the city. The plumbing in the bathroom was very unusual. There was no toilet bowl. In one corner of the room was a five or six-inch hole in the floor with a pipe that probably lead to a septic or cesspool system. The procedure required the user to squat directly over the hole. In the same corner was a pail of water to flush down what missed the hole. They didn't have any traps to block out the smell. Throughout our stay, they were polite and cordial. They couldn't speak English and Tony and I butchered our Italian. We all just muddled our way through the conversation. We later found out he was a Garabeniero (local police) and when it was time for us to return to the ship around 2100 hours, he offered to escort us both to the car stop. He indicated it could be a little dangerous in that area because of no street lights, and we were quite some distance from the main drag. While we three were waiting for the trolly, we treated him to a cup of gelati (ice cream). It turned out the women, who was operating the stand was an Italian-American citizen who came from New York City and got stranded in Italy because of the war. She was waiting to restore her visa in order to return to the States. It was through her talking to my uncle's brother that he finally understood who I was and why I was paying him the visit. His whole attitude changed. He kept hugging and kissing me and made us promise to revisit him and his family as soon as possible. When Tony and I returned the next week-end, he had a house full of relatives plus a big meal of spaghetti. We both felt badly because we knew they didn't have much. However, they shared what they had with us. I managed to visit them every time the ship pulled in. Each time we went we managed to sneak food and coffee off the ship. It wasn't really hard once you learned a few of the tricks. I would take my camera out of the case and let Tony carry the camera, I then stuffed sugar or dried coffee inside the empty case. The OOD never searched us going off the ship, but they sometimes searched us coming aboard. We also would get a couple of our buddies to carry off some of the goodies, then meet us a block or two outside the gate.

The ship's crew was made up of quite a few men of Italian descent with the majority coming from the northeastern states including a few from the Boston area. The other half came from the deep south, and a few from the mid-west. The red-necks, especially some of the cooks, were initially crude and cruel towards the Italian citizens. The nuns would come down from the orphanage to all the ships that were tied up at the docks after each meal, carrying two five gallons tins with their tops cut off, both hanging from a yoke carried across the top of their shoulders.

They'd picked through the GI cans for leftover food. The northern cooks made an attempt to keep the various foods separated so it would still be edible. The rebel cooks would deliberately mix the coffee grinds, fats and grease and cigarette butts with the leftover mashed potatoes or scramble eggs into inedible waste. Their comments and attitudes were ***"the hell with those dago kids."*** After entering a few ports and witnessing that same depressing scene, the tension between the Rebels and the Yanks started to become obvious throughout the ship. The old man, by the name of Shellenbarger, who came from Colorado, came up with a plan to defuse the situation and instill harmony in the hearts of the crew. Through approval of the Task Force Commander, the ship hosted an 'Adopt A Kid' for a day program for special occasions with the aid of the nuns. The off-duty personnel became the god fathers of each child who was brought aboard. They were escorted around the ship and later would enjoy a shipboard picnic. Those children,

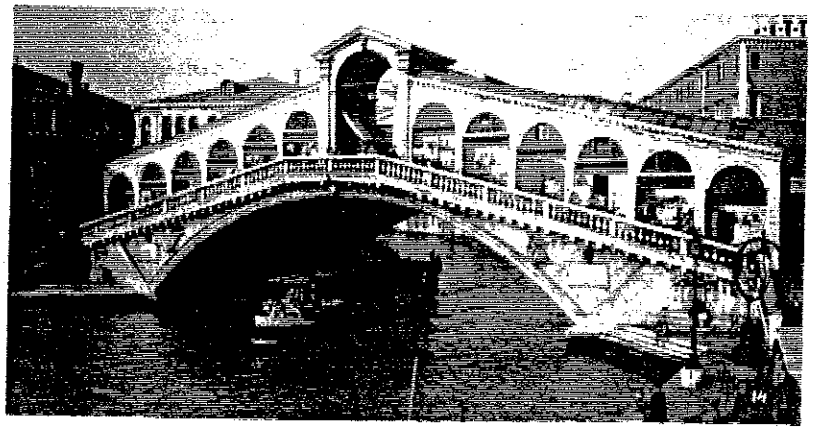
certain that the armed guard or the deck officer were not in the immediate area, each would open up secret compartments on their boats. These were full of all sorts of goods. They would either buy, sell or exchange those items with members of the crew using the two basket hoist system. It worked by throwing a double line up to the sailor on the ship. He would hoist up one empty basket. The other empty basket would be down with the local merchant who would put their souvenirs, or a ball of cheese or a bottle of one week old vermouth in the lower basket. The sailors would either put in money or a carton of cigarettes in the upper basket. When one basket was lowered, the other basket was being hoisted simultaneously. Most of the time it was an honest exchange. At times it was funny, but cruel when each tried to screw or cheat the other with the bait and switch game. It usually worked both ways. Our guys would switch a good cartoon of Lucky Strikes with an unpopular brand, and in some cases, the carton would be stuffed with pieces of cardboard with the ends waxed sealed. When it was a one-sided shame against our boys, there was always some type of retaliation with the locals being the heavy losers. A day or two after their caper, the same bum boat would be coached very close to the ship. While the bartering was going on, a couple of the crew members would be hiding out of sight with high pressure hoses. When the local vender opened up all their secret compartments, our guys would open with heavy streams of salt water either sinking the boat or washing the contents overboard. In a few cases this included the occupants. It was a cold experience either way for them especially during the winter months. Usually when that happened, there would be quite a commotion from the locals seeking monetary compensation from the ship. Every foreign port that any U.S. ship visited all experienced the same bum boat black market concession.

When each ship arrived from State side, all personnel had to turn in all their American currency for occupation scrip. The currency rate, at that time, was two hundred and fifty lire for one dollar in scrip. When the ship returned to State side duty, one had to turn his scrip back in for American currency. The secret learned the hard way was, one could only return the same amount of scrip or lire equal to the original exchange. Many guys got stuck with hundreds, and in a couple of cases, a few thousand dollars worth of scrip. Once you left the occupied country, the scrip was worthless. American currency on the black market was worth anywhere from eight to nine-hundred lire for every U.S. dollar. All the popular American brands of cigarettes sold for twenty dollars worth of scrip. Especially Lucky Strikes. It cost us only sixty cents per carton through the PX, and we were allowed two cartons per week. Being a non-smoker I did quite well. The unpopular brands, like Viceroy and Old Gold cigarettes, were hard to unload. It was almost impossible to buy back American currency while stationed in the foreign countries. It was rumored that the communists paid more for them, and those dollars ended up in Russian hands through their embassy.

While in Greece, the entire crew hit a gold mine. The U.S. government paid us eighteen hundred drachms for every dollar we drew on pay day which was our first day in the country. When we hit the beach, we found we could buy back U.S. currency for eight hundred drachms. It wasn't long before we all went back to the ship and turned in U.S. currency back into more drachms. The pay master finally deduced that something was wrong when some of us came back a third and in one case a fourth time. The Greek

never knew if he was dealing with undercover C.I.D. or Russian agents. There was always some poor fish who got free room and board at the Portsmouth Naval Prison for a good number of years because of that type activity.

One of the first things we all learned when we went ashore, especially in many of the foreign ports, was to put a roll of quarters rolled up in your black neckerchief. The roll of coins fit snugly under your collar in the small of your neck. It became a very handy defensive weapon whenever you got into a tight spot. The navy's enlisted men's dress blues and white uniforms didn't have any pockets in the pants. You soon learned to carry your wallet in your socks on the inside of your ankle. You could also carry a cigarette package on the other ankle. The most common location was to carry a wallet folded over the top of the pants. The jumper concealed the wallet..



Rialto Canal
Venice, Italy

The Pelligrino Family
Naples, Italy

former Italian colony of Tripolitania which is now called Libya. He also wanted control of the Dardanelles, an objective of Russian foreign policy for centuries. That area was part of Turkey which had been neutral during the war. Truman and Atlee did not agree to either of those demands.

It was decided to govern Germany through the Allied Control Council composed of the military commanders of the four occupation zones (the Big Three plus France) rather than re-establish a central German government. Since the main German industrial areas were in the western zones, the United States and England agreed to send ten percent of the capital equipment from their zones to the Soviets in the name of equality, plus another fifteen percent in exchange for food, coal and raw materials from the eastern zone.

Those zones later harden into separate West and East German governments. The Potsdam Conference ended on August 2, 1945, but the conflicts bred from division of the spoils of war lasted for forty-four years until the collapse of the East German regime in 1989.

Through the insistence by the United States and England, France was given a portion of the occupation control from both the United States and the English share. The Russians gave up hardly nothing in retrospect as compared to the other three countries. During the period between 1945 through 1948, the Russians had removed everything of value from Eastern Europe especially from East Germany's industrial factories which included 4,500 miles of railroad tracks. Thus causing the stripping of all remaining wealth in which to rebuild the East German economy. They controlled two and half-million German POW's who later became slave labors within the Soviet Union. Another two and half million Germans soldiers had been killed during the German-Russian battles. Two point nine million soldiers were listed as missing in action. Those figures did not include the civilian casualties. The big problem that faced the conquers was how to re-establish a self-supporting society throughout war torn Europe. In essence, the United States soon became the mid-wife during that recovery. For five years, the occupation authorities set the frame work which the German politicians, industrialists and consumers were forced to react. Eisenhower's army had brought in millions of newly printed Reichsmarks that were printed in the U.S. before the surrender. The Russians were also given a set of the new plates which only could be used to buy goods. In the United States, the marks were redeemable for ten cents each on the exchange. Within a very few weeks, the Russian were to extract an exchange worth five-million dollars. In late July of 1945, both the British and the United States, without warning, announced that the Soviet Marks which were identifiable by a small dash in front of the serial numbers would no longer be exchanged in the west. The black money markets also had their roots imbedded in both Italy, France and Greece as well as other European countries. That activity was the beginning of the currency dispute with the Soviets. That was also one of the principle issues that a few years later led to the Berlin blockade and the splitting of Germany into two separate parts.

To counter the Russian maneuver of extracting U.S. funds, the military in all of Europe were then paid in scrip. The cigarette soon became the reserve currency, especially in Germany. By June 19, 1948 a carton of Lucky Strikes reached an all time high of $2,300 per carton on the black market. To stop the Reichmarks flow, within a few weeks the Deutsche Marks were introduced as the only German currency to be accepted

SHOWING OF THE FLAG

In conjunction with our principle mission as naval occupations forces, our secondary implied mission was the Showing of the American Flag in many ports of call throughout the entire Mediterranean Sea. Other missions included, unit readiness in all phases of Naval Operations, as well as mine sweeping the sea lanes. That was a diffucult task because we really did not know where the mines were actually located, and how many were still active. Whenever possible, they were disarmed or destroyed on location. For months various squadrons had been steaming through the Straits of Messina including our own squadron.

Three months after our arrival in that area while maneuvering through the straits, one of our Tin Cans steaming astern on our starboard side was hit by a mine in the fantail. The location of the damage to that ship was the same location where my bunk was located. One never knew. In spite of the fact that the global hot war had ceased fire several months earlier on August 14, 1945 alertness was the order of the day. The cold war tension with the Russians had peaked and had reached an ignition point in eastern Europe. Two of several major hot spots were the city of Trieste and Pula, Italy. Both are located in the northern portion of the Adriatic Sea on the upper most right hand corner of Italy. Pula was located adjacent to the western Yugoslavian border.

Trieste had been declared as an open city by President Roosevelt, Prime Minister Churchill and Joseph Stalin. The Allied occupation forces consisted of the Americans 88th (Blue Devil) Infantry Division, (Uncle Joe Leone's old division) as well as heavy naval forces, both army and navy British forces, plus French army units. The Russians occupied one portion of the harbor plus the eastern and northern part of the city and all the way into the mountains of Yugoslavia. We had to pass through the Russian check points whenever we went ashore.

While steaming near the port, the Aircraft Carrier FDR had lost three of its air crafts inside of a few days during routine flight operations from supposedly Yugoslavian gun fire. Within a very short time, every main gun battery on every ship within the vicinity of Trieste were trained at the hills northeast of the city. The Russian Embassy cried foul and accused the naval ships of hostile and aggressive acts. From our understanding, the Navy's response was, we were conducting gunnery training exercises. If that was the case, it was the first time I ever saw a show of readiness and that type of training, all while still tied up in port in a tight harbor next too so many other ships. From the bridge of our ship, we could watch through high powered glasses at the personnel in the Russian Embassy who were also looking straight down on us with their field glasses. Needless to say, the tension was at a critical point. While all that was going on, the British and the French were on what was jointly called a training alert status.

When liberty was restored, we had to pass through large concrete tank barriers in order to get into the business district. There were Russian signs warning the allied personnel not to cross here or there. They weren't very friendly at all. We could only go ashore in groups of four or more. It was forbidden to travel alone because of the tension within the city. Demonstrations in Trieste were frequent and occasionally some protestor, while speaking against the communist government, would be killed. One night they killed a Catholic priest using a sickle during one of those demonstration flare ups.

through the movements of bare feet. It had the appearance of twentieth century slaves. That continued well beyond the setting sun. In the morning sunlight, all was quiet and the ship and barges were gone.

After several hours, we sailed through the Suez Canal and entered the Red Sea. A few of the seasoned crew members were always willing to initiate some of the new men by playing harmless tricks on them. For instance, sending someone down to the engine room with an empty bucket equipped with a cover and had him ask for a bucket of superheated steam. Or to have someone stand as a lookout on the bow of the ship and notify the bridge when we were about to cross over into the Red Sea, or to lookout for the mail buoy. Its was amazing how long some of these recruits would stand in the weather, and after a long period of time, never admitted that they were duped.

Our final destination was the Port of Jidda, Arabia. Upon our arrival, we were met by the U.S. Ambassadors of Saudi of Arabia and Iran. In a closed meeting with the four congressmen, plans were firmed up that our ship was designated to become host to Prince Fiasal *(who later became the King)* of Arabia, and the other individual representing the Iranian government. I and five other crew members were selected to be the honor guards for those highly secret meetings. Prince Fiasal passed between us within inches of each other every time he arrived or left the ship. So I suppose one could say I was really close to the prince on special occasions. Within the few days prior to his arrival, tight security aboard ship and the waters around were set in motion. The members of the crew were all briefed by various members of the state department and embassy personnel as to the customs of both Islamic nations. Prior to the actual arrival of the visitors, royal personal guards were soon reinforcing the ship's security. The negotiations lasted for three or four days at which time the three nations set in motion the American-Saudi-Iranian Oil pact. That pact subsequently stopped Stalin and the USSR from securing warm water ports and access to a new source of oil. Because of a massive influx of American petroleum technology and Arab cooperation, the United States was assured and guaranteed large quantities of Arabic and Iranian oil for many decades.

On the return trip back to Naples the two ships stopped over for a couple of days at the city port of Malta, located on the Greek Island of Crete, which is located at the mid point of the Mediterranean Sea just below Sicily. As we entered the harbor some members of the crew recognized this large white schooner flying the British flag. It was strange because it seemed for the past few months no matter what port we entered, that very same schooner was either at anchor or would arrive a day or too later, then would leave a day before our ship left port. It turned out one of the officers who was classified as a Mustang Officer had been dating a wealthy British socialite since we arrived in the Mediterranean area the previous July. She owned the schooner. (A Mustang Officer is an officer who was commissioned from the enlisted ranks in lieu of attending the Naval Academy or had obtained a commissioned through an ROTC program). This officer obviously was tipping her off to our next Port of Calls, thus the rendezvous. He was no Clark Gable and she was no Hedy Lamar, he eventually resigned his commission and they were married.

The island was small, only 3,218 square miles, and had been attacked and suffered heavy damages from many bombings raids during the war. Occupation at the time was under British rule. The terrain was dry and dusty and was mainly made up of whitish rocks and small mountains similar to the terrain of Greece or Sicily.

MEDICAL DUTY REASSIGNMENT

Prior to leaving Jidda, the communication's officer finally realized that I was never going to become a good radio man. He said if I could find someone who could type, I could go back to the medics. It didn't take me long to teach a deck ape named Red Martin, from Boston, who also didn't like his job of chipping paint and repainting every time we were in port. In the meantime, I'm back in good graces with the medics and, in reality, they are the ones who got the communication officer to agree to replace me with someone else. Until Red learned to type, I was pulling split duty, four hours as a radio man and four hours as a medic. One week before we had started on that Arabia mission, Chief Poythress was rotated home and Chief Pharmacist Mate, Marshall Orville Edwards (MOE) was now in-charge of the sick bay. Actually, he was the one who really pulled the strings for my reassignment. Here is another example of someone who can show you the door, but its really you who has to have the determination to open it and pass through it.

During that transition, I got myself into another minor situation. Every time I went to the old man's cabin with the radio messages, I noticed he always had a large bowl of fruit on his desk and most of the time he would let the fruit go bad because he never ate it fast enough or he didn't eat at all. I guess he just liked to look at it. Fresh fruit was never that plentiful when the ship was underway for long periods. After a couple days, I noticed that a large grapefruit had started to shrivel up, so I decided it was not going to get the deep six *(thrown over board)*. I took it and hid it in one of the gunnels in the passageway until my radio tour of duty was over. After I changed watch, I retrieved the fruit and went on medical watch. For some unknown reason, the Doctor had left his white overseas cap in the sickbay. When I arrived, I secured and locked the dutch doors to the office but had forgotten to bolt and lock the top half. While sitting on a stool with my feet raised on the edge of the autoclave and wearing the doctors hat, I proceeded to eat the grapefruit like it was an apple. With the juices dripping down my face and over my hands and with the pulp half down my throat, the top half of the door suddenly swung open. Standing there gaping down at me was the Desron Commander with a surprised look registering across his face. I can't imagine what the expression on my face must have been. He quickly shut the door again, and I assumed left. Within a few minutes, I had recovered from the shock and had cleaned up the evidences of many droplets of juice off the deck when both the chief and the doctor showed up with a shit-eating grin on both their faces. Then Doc commented ***"The old man wants to know if the hat fits?"***

The following day there were new orders issued that no one was allowed to enter the Squadron Commander's quarters without his presence. After thirty years when I was promoted to captain in the Army National Guard, I wrote to MOE, now retired and living in Cincinnati, Ohio stating that a similar hat finally did fit me.

My reassignment to the medical section became official as the ship was steaming though the Suez Canal back to home base. That was the end of standing four hours on and four hours off or those miserable dog watches.

During the Arab negotiations, the ship's softball team was allowed shore leave in order to play ball against the Embassy personnel. While ashore, they ate food acquired from local sources and within two or three days everyone was suffering from severe cases of dysentery. We had a bunch of really sick individuals on our hands. Due to the amount

The officers' mess stewards were the first to recognize what was going on just by the amount of concentrated black coffee we kept asking for. They knew nobody could drink that much lousy mud and still have a stomach. Before long, every available man not on watch was assisting us. It took two men at a time to keep Evans up and walking around the deck to keep him awake and forcing him to throw up. After several hours, the Doc allowed him to crash out with someone watching his vital signs. By the next morning, he was up but had one sore stomach. None of the medical team never was able to eat Thanksgiving dinner that day. We were fortunate that incident took place during the daytime and not at night. We probably would have dispensed more wrong dosages out to other patients who would have gone back to their sacks for the night. We could have lost a couple men for sure.

Within the next few days, the old man held an informal inquiry as to the cause of that near fatal accident. In spite of the extenuating appearance, everyone was totally satisfied as to the cause. From that day on, Mister Evans was as tight with the medical personnel as a person wearing a glove on his hand. From then on, we could do no wrong. Again, that was another example of how tightly a crew will stick together.

Sick call was held every morning at 0800. Overall the crew was pretty good, no malinger or screw offs. When they came in, it was for real. We averaged no more than three or four guys a day, some weeks you would not have anyone. The majority of the injuries were usually the result of some accident. For example, the time the ship was taking part in a general quarters live fire exercise firing at plane-towed targets. One of the 20mm machine guns exploded while firing. A tracer round had blown up in the chamber of the gun. Three men were injured, the loader received the most severe injuries. He was only ten inches from the exploding shell and suffered from a widespread chest wound. It was one big hole exposing the entire chest. As you pumped shots into the wound, the penicillin solution would squirt out just as fast a few centimeter away. He was one lucky sailor, he had no facial injuries. The gunner received burns and injuries to his hands, and the third individual received superficial injures to his head and neck. Both were back to duty within two or three weeks. The loader was finally shipped to the military hospital located in Naples. We later found out he received a medical discharge. There was a formal investigation, but I never did find out the cause of that accident.

Another weird accident occurred while the deck apes were scraping paint on the afterdeck. Some men were using hand held paint chippers and a couple of men were using electrical powered wire brushes. As someone called out to one of the sailors using the power brush, he turned around with the power still on, and quickly swiped the rotating brush across the face of a sailor who was bent over chipping paint.

The whirling brush ripped across the face tearing away part of the cheek, part of the lips and the lower section of the nose. After immediate surgery, that individual was soon transferred back to the states for many more extension face rebuilding operations. Again, we lost touch with him and never learned the prognosis of those injuries and subsequent operations.

accommodated between twenty-five to thirty men at one sitting. We all ate off of metal trays.

All military meals are served according to the master menus. All ships and services serve the same type meal on the same day regardless where it was served. For breakfast, one morning of every week it was SOS *(shit on a shingle, ground hamburger mixed in white gravy and served over two slices of dried toast).* Every Wednesday and Saturday morning it was always navy beans with grits, Thursdays it was collision matts *(pancakes)* and greasy bacon. The remaining days it was always eggs, eggs and more eggs and more grits. The noon and evening meals were always good. You always knew who was cooking on what day just by the little extra touches included in the menus. We also had baked goods with every meal. Sunday night meals were the pits especially when we were in port. It was always a variety of horse cock or donkey dicks *(lousy cold cuts and over sized greasy hot dogs).* I swear the navy must have owned the concession on that stuff especially the spam. On all holidays, it was turkey with all the fixings including special pies. The mess section always happily outdid themselves. The crew's galley wasn't very large and could only comfortably accommodate three to four cooks at the same time. From that one area and by working in shifts, they prepared and cooked all the meals on board. At night, the bakers would bake enough bread and buns to last two or three days. They also baked various types of cakes, pies or plain corn bread and occasionally fresh donuts. The bakery section was also responsible for making keedonk *(ice cream).* The ranges and ovens were equipped with special metal frames that fit both on the top or inside the stoves. These were used to hold any and all pots or pans from tipping over or from falling off the range during rough weather. The condiment rack was also built to hold square containers of various spices without falling all over the deck. One night, cookie had prepared cherry jubilee for the old man in celebration of George Washington's birthday. After pouring several gallons of cherries into the mixing machine, he accidentally dumped in ten pounds of hot red pepper powder in lieu of cinnamon powder on top of the cherries. He could not throw every thing out and start over again. So carefully, he tried removing the hot pepper powder and attempted to mask the adulterated cherries with a couple of other ingredients. He never said anything about the incident until after he received many mixed comments after its consumption from both the officers and the crew the following day.

The officers had their own galley which was half the size of the main galley. At that time, all officers mess were manned by black personnel who prepared their food which was not necessarily the same as the enlisted men's. The food and coffee were served by several Filipino orderlies in the officer's wardroom. During high seas, the mess line was usually thin with many members of the crew skipping meals. Those who thought they had strong stomachs would be standing out in the weather with the wind and sea spray buffing them. As the aroma of cooked meals vented through the exhaust system in their direction, a few stomachs would start to convulse shortly followed by a rush to the railing. It was OK if you were standing up wind. Shortly a few more bodies would soon leave the line permanently. In extreme weather, all outside walking was restricted to only in-side passageways. That brought you right by the galley. The mess hall compartment was usually hot or stuffy with the scent of prepared food, perspiration and expended stomach fluids. The mess tables and benches were long and were welded to the deck. You had to step over the benches in order to be seated. At times, that was not a graceful

While in port, all hands worked on clean-up details. That normally involved chipping and painting, overhauling the guns and machinery in preparation for full inspection which was held every Saturday morning. When I was in the radio gang, Sacky *(the Japanese kid)* and I had to remove all the green mold off the radio antennas located on the ship's mast. That was a lousy detail especially when the wind was blowing the oily exhaust fumes from the smoke stacks towards the mast. Plus you had to be a monkey while moving around up there. It was a good drop to the deck below. Being we were on the low end of the pecking order, that became routine duty.

At sea, the watches involved the ship's internal operations, engine room, boiler and evaporator room and CIC *(Combat, Intelligence and Control)*, radio and the bridge to name a few. In port, the engine room was manned by a skeleton crew sufficient to provide power and life to the ship. The deck watch and armed guards were also in operation. It normally only took one-third of the crew to provide the required coverage. Ordinarily there would be four destroyers tied abreast at the same pier. One ship would rotate every fourth day with the radio and medical watch during both the day and night watch for each other.

When the ship was underway or during fleet operation, everyone was on multiple duty which involved twenty-four hour coverage of all duty stations. The Saturday's ship inspection was modified but was still complete in scope seeking out discrepancies.

Some underway operations involved taking on supplies, fuel and the mail. That was when seamanship from the skipper down to the lowest rated sailor was tested for crew efficiency. The weather conditions and the character of the sea always played a direct part on the success or any degree of failure in each operation. At all times the element of danger was ever present. We would either refuel from oil tankers or larger ships like aircraft carriers, battle wagons. Each were capable of refueling two destroyers at the same time, one on the host ship's port side and the other on its starboard. The wake and turbulence between the three ships created by the bow of the larger vessel took on the force of a boiling current similar to those of white water rapids. The decks of the destroyers facing the sides of the refueling ship were always under wash from the spray of cascading waves. All personnel involved as part of the refueling detail were required to wear life jackets and a few were attached to safety lines To safe guard and maintain the proper distance between the three vessels, two deck hands on all the ships constantly monitored a line that was stretched between the two destroyer's bridge and the refueling vessel. That particular line was marked off in five yard increment with pieces of red and green colored cloth. The purpose of that line indicated the proper safe distant between ships. When the green Irish pennants were within a specified zone, all was OK. Whenever the red markers were reached it always indicated the approaching danger of either splitting lines and hoses or the possibility of a near collision.

The Corry did have the dubious pleasure of experiencing one such incident of the oil lines parting. The ship pitched and rolled causing the hose line to drag below the waves. As the ship recovered to a starboard roll, the hose arched taut in the air and severed approximately ten feet from the side of our ship spewing dark fuel oil along the port side and deck of our ship. It took a few minutes for the carrier to stop pumping. In the meantime the hose whipped like an escaped fire hose. Fortunately, no one was hurt or washed overboard. But the oil gave the recent paint job the appearance of a recluse ship sorrowfully neglected. Immediately, the port side of the ship was sealed off because of the

on the ship. He had been temporally assigned to the Corry at that time. He tells of a series of events that happen to him when the war ended. During the war years all personnel either drafted or who had enlisted in the service were obligated to serve for the duration of the war plus six months. Tony had served in Pacific combat area for three years. Upon his return to state side duty, he along with many other sailors were ordered to report to the Quantico Marine Base in Virginia for additional twelve weeks of basic training in spite the fact they had all previously served in combat during the war, He as well as many others were also short a few points required to qualify for a military discharge.

Due to a governmental decision necessitated by our massive military losses during the early part of the war in the Pacific, he, like so many other recruits were immediately assigned to the combat zone after completing only four weeks of boot camp training. Tony's ship, a LST, took part in many landings of Japanese held islands. Consequently, many young men were killed in combat and their parents raised holy hell with the government because of the lack of training their sons had not received prior to entering combat. Because of that outcry, the members of Congress applied pressure to the armed services to insure that no service man would be discharged without their records showing that they had completed all their required training. His story went on to say that while aboard ship, prior to leaving Quitmo, the base chaplain came aboard and provided both moral and spiritual guidance to the entire crew. It was during which time the chaplain referred to the ship as the Whorry Corry, because of the high percentage of venereal disease the members of the crew had contacted.

Mail call on the ship, as a whole was excellent, when we were in port. It was a different story when we were at sea. It usually took weeks before the mail bags could catch up with us. Mail from service personnel to the civilian world was free postage, and it was usually sent on a one-page V-Mail stationary. When the mail finally did catch up with us, it was a morale booster for the majority of the crew. That was especially the case when packages made the scene. Christmas time, Cookie, one of the bakery men, would play Santa Claus. He would dress up in a home-made red suit and a cotton beard and passed out the packages. It was sad when a few of the men never received any mail let alone a package. As shipmates, we all shared whatever we got, like cookies, cake, or candy bars. Many times it was comical but disappointing when some of the packages arrived damaged or crushed because of poor packaging. In one of my packages my mother sent me, a glass jar of Mulenyam (preserved eggplant strips with small hot red and green peppers preserved in olive oil) and several sticks of pepperoni. Those were only shared with Tony Mazzotta who stuck as close to me as a brother. During mess-call, we would both hide a pepper or a piece of pepperoni in our shirt or pants pockets. Everyone knew what we were trying to do by the big grease or oil stained spots on our uniforms.

When we went to Venice the first time in July, the local peasant women would come down to the ship and bid on washing our clothes. It wasn't a bad deal and inexpensive. The older women wore the traditional black morning dresses and kerchiefs on their heads. Standing alone, away from the older women, was this young girl, (maybe sixteen or seventeen years old with blonde hair), wearing a tattered dress. One of the Italian kids on the ship convinced the guys she was his relative, and we should give her the clothes to wash. Some of the hard-nosed rebels who had previously given us Italians a hard time,

In sickbay, we had a small fresh water distillery unit which was used to make purified water for use in the preparation of certain prescriptions or medical solutions. It could purify up to a gallon of water at a time. Every month or so Chips, one of the ships carpenters who was a member of the Damage Control Team would take the unit to his repair shop claiming it required monthly maintenance. This normally took three or four days to check things out. That went on for months, until the Doctor realized that some thing was wrong. We either had a bad unit or Chips was up to something. Sure enough, every month Chips and his gang were making white lighting or torpedo juice *(alcohol)* with a government issued distiller.

Whenever the ship was being refueled or was receiving ammunition, the Red Baker flag was hoisted on the mast indicating the smoking lamp was off. If it was ammo or supplies or food provisions all hands had to turn too throughout the ship. Again, I was exempt because I had been reassigned as a medic. Whenever food provisions were being handled a couple of the guys would open the lower portion of the dutch doors to sickbay and slip in a case or two of canned peaches or pineapples and the like which I had to hid for later consumption by some of the BTO members. The only place I could hide that stuff was under the deck plates. The plates were removable by taking out the screws and lifting the plates. There was enough space to hide a few cases of goods.

One time one of the guys dropped a large ham on the deck telling me to hide it which initially was no big problem. The problem came later, on how we could cook it. The major problem was every time I had to get stuff out from under the plates, I had to remove several large screws. Doing that several times caused the paint to chip and it became obvious that someone was lifting the plates. I was constantly repainting the deck. The Doctor was unaware that I had been using the sickbay as a hideaway. I got the bright idea to cover the deck with strips of green thick inlaid that I had managed to get from the Destroyer Tender, USS Grand Canyon. Before long we had the best looking sickbay in the squadron and that solved the problem of the chipped paint.

A few days later when the ship was under way, the guys wanted to eat the ham before it spoiled, but we had no way to cook it. I got the bright idea to cook it in the autoclave pressure unit that was used to sterilize the surgical instruments. That worked fine with a couple of exceptions. First, the released steam vented outside the passage way emitting the aroma of cooked ham back towards the fantail letting everyone back there thinking they were going to have smoked ham for lunch. Second, the inside of the autoclave became greasy with melted fat which was hard to clean out without the doctor finding out. I tried several times for the next couple of days to get rid of the smell and grease by placing soap inside and turning the unit on. Every time I was asked why the unit was on and I claimed I was re-sterilizing the surgical packs.

The third problem was we could only eat the ham, or anything else the BTO members came up with, was only after midnight when most of the officers and other personnel were asleep. The night we ate the ham, Cookie had given us a couple dozen of eggs and a few loafs of freshly made bread. Chips used his electric hot plate, and we cooked ham and eggs inside the No. 3 gun mount.

When I was in the radio gang, the policy was that the off-going watch made fresh coffee for the on-coming watch in the radio shack. Initially that worked out fine. Before long, the coffee rings on all the coffee mugs looked like hash marks, and the bottom of the

SUMMARY COURT MARTIAL

It was a few days before Christmas, 1946 and the DESRON 8 squadron ships had been tied up in the port of Genoa, Italy for a few days. I was at that time a member of the radio gang. The admiral's wife, who was visiting her husband for the holidays, convinced him to host a Christmas party for the tin can sailors. Because of the cold weather, it was held aboard the cruiser USS Fargo, CL 109. As was the normal routine, only one-third of the crew were granted four hours in order to make the party. I was one of the lucky ones to attend that festivity. The affair was well attended and enjoyable considering that there were only a dozen or so women on board, and one was the area commander's wife. The ship's band provided the music with sailors dancing with sailors (there was no funny stuff going on). The mess stewards and cooks provided a cold meat and salad meal, and they also served beer. That was the first time I ever saw beer being served on board a vessel of war. Navy beer was only 3.2 % alcohol and had very little kick. As the Tin Can crew members were leaving, we all took two or three bottles of beer back with us for the other members of the crew. We each hid them around our waist and under our arm pits in order to sneak by the marine MP's. As each swabbie stepped off the gangplank, one or two of the Marine guards standing watch would swing his night stick in the belly or in the small of the back and under the arm pit. In most cases, that maneuver by the Jar Heads would break the bottles on the spot. I had hidden my two bottles in both my socks next to my inside ankles. So, I got away without getting caught and nobody searched me when I got back aboard my ship. I very carefully wrapped the two bottles in my dungarees and stored them in my foot locker for later consumption.

The ship spent NewYears in Nice, France. It was cold and wintery, but it was the nicest port we visited. The city was clean and the people were very friendly. During the day, I spent visiting the local carnival. That was were Ensign Cudsworth teamed up with Madden (the laundryman) and myself. It was very unusual for an officer to go around town with enlisted men. That evening (New Years Eve), all three of us attended a party with live entertainment in some public night club. The only problem was the whole show was all in French and none of us understood a word, but we were laughing like hell throughout the act not realizing the comedian was referring to the three sailors who happened to be us. We were the only three Americans in the whole place. Here again, the customs and use of public toilet facilities was not the same as in the states. It was not uncommon for both genders to walk in on each other while one was resting on the bowl. In northern Italy and southern France, men's urinals were on the curb side of the sidewalk behind partially wooded screens with the urine flowing down the curb.

Three days out of port, during the 0800 roll call, all the personnel were kept top side while the MAA and one officer held a surprise locker inspection of all the crews sleeping compartments. I was asleep in my bunk at the time, I had just finished a twelve hour shift, when Mister Evans woke me up and ordered me to open my foot locker. I handed him my keys. As he was going through my belongings, I cautioned him to be careful not to break the two bottles of beer. He asked when and how I happen to obtain those bottles. Like a jack-ass I stated they came as part of a Christmas package. Without further comment, he confiscated the two beers.

Shortly, I was called back in and after going through the normal ritual of court procedures was given my sentence. I received a sixty dollar fine, sixty day restriction while in any port and withheld any future rate during my present enlistment period.

It turned out to both the Board and a disappointing Mister Cudsworth that all fifteen of us pleaded guilty. It appeared we all silently felt that we were being set up as the squadron example which we learned later was exactly the case because we carried the squadron flag. *(In a sense it was similar to the movie 'The Caine Mutiny' scenario. The inspection was originally intended to find out who was stealing from the officers' galley).* After confiscating all the booze and small arms weapons that were purchased or brought aboard, the squadron commander held shake down inspections for all his destroyers. The crews on the other three destroyers only received Captains Mast and a few received only warnings on their records for a specified period.

After three days, all the sentences were officially typed and read at formation which was held on the bow of the ship. Some of the convicted received one-hundred and twenty days and one-hundred and twenty dollars and a few received one-hundred and eighty dollars and one-hundred and eighty days. The variation of punishment depended on the charge. The shame of it all was the Master-at-Arms received the maximum plus lost his gold stripes *(which indicated he had perfect service for over twelve years)*. The funny part was he knew about the inspection. He got caught with several empty fancy looking glass containers that he stated he was saving as collector's items which he had acquired at various ports. As each of us were read the sentence, we were handed the evidence. In my case, I had to open each bottle and pour the contents over the side and gave the now empty container the deep six. Those individuals, who also had small weapons, had to field strip the piece and deep six the parts.

As for my sixty dollar fine, that took forever to pay off, because I was only making ninety dollars a month and was sending sixty dollars home by automatic deductions. By regulations, I was allowed twenty dollars for monthly survival. Whereas I didn't smoke, I sold my two cartons of cigarettes for twenty dollars apiece per week. I did clean-up on Saturdays or Sundays for five dollars per meal, I also did minor sewing on uniforms for a few bucks and occasionally loan sharked. In spite of the promotion freeze and the fine, I was now earning more money than before the courts-martial plus still sending money home. This was another example of the theory of disadvantaged moments.

Several months later while steaming in the Gulf of Mexico off the coast of Pensacola, Florida, our ship was assigned carrier escort duty for the USS Saipan and the USS Wright, which were the two carriers assigned to qualify cadet pilots for possible carrier duty. Those young air men had to make three satisfactory take-off and landings in order to earn their wings. During those type of exercises, many of the crew not on duty would make side bets with each other as to how many wave-offs each student pilot would take. From the position of our ship location, nine out ten times we could accurately call out whether the pilot would receive a wave off or not before the landing officer (LO) would make a determined decision. We all got very good at interpreting the landing approaches of the pilots by the angle and glide path of their planes.

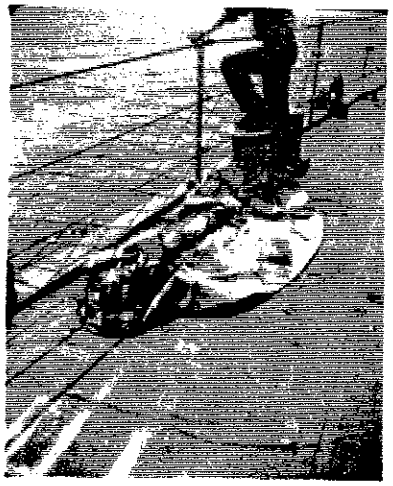
That particular week, I was the only member of the medical section on board. The doctor was on another ship performing minor surgery, Carter was on leave and Chief Petty Officer Edwards was on shore with an injured leg. Normally, the doctor and the chief would be standing ready in sickbay. Carter or myself would be in the whale boat while the other was stationed near the davits ready to assist the medic when the survivor was brought aboard.

A young cadet had taken a third wave off at which point the standing orders were that the pilot was supposed to fly back and land at Corry field located in Pensacola. The student ignored the wave-off and tried to land his plane anyway. The LO made a dive into the safety net as the SNJ plane hit the flight deck and bounced off the starboard side of the carrier. The carrier immediately executed a starboard turn in order to avoid the ship's giant screws from chewing up or washing the aircraft below the surface. Our ship immediately executed a port turn in order to pocket the downed aircraft. While all that was occurring, the sea rescue procedures aboard the Corry were fully underway. At that time, I was now part of the boat crew. As the whale boat approached the crash site, green shark chasing dye dominated a wide area on the surface. I could also hear the duty officer bellowing for the duty pharmacist mate to lay up to the quarter deck and report to sickbay. Typically they forgot that I was the only medic aboard at that time and could not be in three places at the same time. The expression and strain showed on everyone's face as the boat maneuvered in six to eight-foot swells looking for the pilot.

The flier was finally spotted in his yellow may-west jacket just as he slightly raised his arm above a swell. The boat narrowly missed running into him. All we saw was a red blooded face heavily coated with green dye and blank eyes staring at us. As the boat lurched and rose with the pitch of each swell, the two front men missed grabbing him by the collar. As our craft reached the bowel of the last swell, that limp body with his out stretched arm grabbed my extended left arm. He soon was being dragged along side of the whale boat as it rose with the next swell. Simultaneously, the crew members adjacent to me had hastly grabbed various parts of his lower extremity and at the same time rolled him into the safety of our craft. As soon as I released his palm, I noticed that my wrist watch had been pulled from my wrist and was locked in between both our palms as he was towed. A quick physical examination disclosed that his face was bleeding profusely due to several lacerations. He had no other obvious injuries. The signal man quickly wagged the ship of his external injuries. Due to the nature of his facial injuries, I quickly applied a stomach compress across his entire face to slow down the bleeding. Within a very minutes, we were all aboard the Corry and Mister Charles Quinn, the XO, was standing

Even though at the time our country was not engaged in a hot conflict with an identifiable enemy, the Navy, as well as all the other armed services were all engaged in a very serious and dangerous business. Everyone, especially during those intensive training exercises had to be constantly on the alert and fully aware of what each member of his or her crew was doing at all times. This same awareness is just as true in today's environment whether as a civilian or a member of the military community. One thing we must all do every day; especially those who seem to take life for granted and are not willing to carry their share of the load or serve under the nations banner, should reflect for a moment and think of all those thousands of very young men and women. Many, still in their teen years, who stand at the helm in our national security arena. They should be conscious of the enormity those service personnel are accountable, as well as responsible, for the arsenal that guarantees the peace around today's world. That life is a serious undertaking, and we should not take it lightly or waste it..

I recognized that I was very fortunate that throughout my military career, I never had to experience a hot arena and was given the opportunity of an European sea cruise at the expense of the United States Government. Some of the Port of Calls were: Gibraltar, Naples, Genoa, Trieste, Pula, Venice, Italy; Palermo and Messina, Sicily, Pirreatus and Athens, Greece, Malta, Algeria, Stromboli, Tunisia, Port Said, Suez Canal, Jiddia, Arabia, Nice, France and Carthage, North Africa. My stateside duty consisted of spring time at Newport, R.I., a comfortable summer at the Philadelphia Naval Yard in Pennsylvania, and a warm winter at Pensacola, Florida..



Shredded rubber raft
pilot lost at sea
August 1946

after to watch the others and I go through the experience of our first urination through a roll of surgical gauze. All the patients were temporarily transferred to the tender for a week or more. Some of the other medics and the ship's crew hearing of that collection of tortured and skinned men, came around several times a day to tell dirty jokes or leave selected choice magazines around for the patients to review and pass the time of day. The Blacks were extremely vocal when they reached erections. Being I was a working patient, I had a chance to see some of the damage caused by the ring of metal staples attached to their manly extension during those episodes of erections. The removal of the staples a week later was more painful to each one of us.

While still in Newport, each of the destroyers were host to ten to twenty Naval Academy cadets. All those men from our ship who had underwent the recent operation were given a twenty-one day leave in order to make room aboard ship for the midshipmen. I opted for temporary duty aboard the Yellowstone. I wasn't about to go home with Roscoe still in a sling. When the ship returned to Newport, I went for a second eye examination at the naval base. That time they dilated my eyes so I could not see for several hours. I had to use the phone booth to call a cab to take me back to the boat launching area in order to get back to the ship. The telephone operator thought I was blind because I couldn't see the telephone numbers on the pay phone, so she arranged for someone to pick me up and drive me the pier. In those days, everyone went out of there way to help service men. Again, I didn't get my glasses, because the ship pulled out before they were ready. In the meantime I had studied and passed the Seamen 1st class exam. I flunked one question. It was explaining the function of the painter. No! It wasn't some guy who painted the ship. The painter was the line that hung over the side of the ship near the quarter deck and was used to tie up any small craft that pulled up alongside of the ship.

Two months after we anchored in Newport, John Tackyack, the ships mailman, who came from the State of Ohio, was arrested for mail fraud. He was apprehended one night as he returned from a long week-end liberty. John was my age. He was somewhat of corky individual, but a likable kid. Apparently John had been stealing individual checks, and money orders from members of the crew and falsifying postal records. The process of apprehension and the identity of members of the governments Criminal Investigating Division (CID) is always secretive. In this case three or four new men were transferred to our ship as crew members, one of which was the CID agent. During Tackyacks long week-end passe and with fifty percent of the crew on the beach that week-end the XO (Mister Quinn and others conducted an inventory of the mail room. Several days after the arrest the same group plus a few others were reassigned or discharged, thus the identity of the CID agent was kept unknown. What prompt the investigation was one of the senior rated men had purchased one of the first new cars built after the hot war prior to our ship being dispatched to Mediterranean area. It was a Kaiser four door vehicle. Upon our return to state side the mortgage company was short three or four monthly payments, plus some of the others had complained to the XO about missing checks when they received their mail while in Europe. John received a general court-martial and was sentenced to ten years of hard labor at the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Naval Prison.

In the late spring, the ship was ordered to the Philadelphia Naval Yard for a few months to undergo a retrofit and degaussing in drydocks. The hull of the ship was also

been sending money home. He was supporting his parents. Plus I was still paying off my fine. We finally arrived at Larry's house just as they had finished their supper meal. They were very hospitable to the both of us. They had pasta a fagioli that evening and had just cleared the table when we arrived. They kept offering us to have some. Characteristic of our behavior at that age, and not really knowing who they were and both of us being a little bashful, we both kept refusing. Each hoping the other would say yes. Neither of us had eaten anything since breakfast and we were both starving. Subconsciously we had both decided that if they asked us one more time we both would have said yes. They never did. When we finally left that evening, we were invited back for a weekend picnic which we accepted. When we left that evening and after paying bus fares back to the base, Tony and I only had one quarter between us which we used to purchase a chocolate Hershey bar and shared. You can be rest assured we eat plenty on the that next visit. The lesson learned that day was whenever someone offers you something, and you would like some don't be bashful or hesitate, and secondly never travel without sufficient funds in your pocket to get you by for at least that day.

One afternoon Tony had gone ashore alone and met a very nice eighteen year old blonde, named Bebe Woodcock, who worked in the canteen at the USO Club. Tony got brave and made a date with her later in the week. The night of his first date of his life he got cold feet or probably felt guilty about his parents or something. He came to me asking if I would mind keeping his date. That evening I had to give shots every three hours to a couple of the guys who were restricted because of VD. Tony had watched me give those shots on previous occasions and was willing to take care of these men if I would cover for him on that date.

Being a good buddy and all that, I endured the hardship and made the sacrifice. I also enjoyed the night in his behalf. She was a very nice girl as well as a good looker who was living with her sister while they both attended a local college in town. After a few dates, they both went back to Seattle, Washington for a few weeks to visit their parents. Neither one returned to Philadelphia.. A few months later both their pictures were in one of the detective magazines stating how her sister had been murdered while getting into her car at a local shopping mall.

Commander Shellenbarger was reassigned and Commander Roscoe, a former Lighter Than Air (LTA. Blimp Pilot) Commander, was reassigned as the ship's skipper. According to his medical records, he had failed his flight physical and was reassigned to the fleet. He was a real party man. Many times he reported back to the ship with full sheets toward the wind (drunk) usually with the assistance from the ship's white caps. He was constantly seen ashore with members of the enlisted crew. He was a daring and forceful commander always testing the Junior Officers and the crews efficiency while under way. While reentering port one time, he forced a freighter to move astern because he invoked the Man of War right of way. Some members standing duty watch on the bridge felt the CO put the skipper of the freighter in a dangerous situation because the other skipper was forced to sail and steer his ship backwards up a channel in order to make room for the Corry. Another time, going up the same channel, he pulled an after steering emergency exercise. That meant the bridge lost control of the ship,s ability to steer from that location. After steering, which is located below decks at the stern, had to take over and steer the ship without visibility. That was tough exercise to conduct in any

After we arrived in Pensacola, it wasn't long before a few of the crew who became buddy-buddy with him also bought themselves motorcycles. It was strictly a movie scene affair to watch them all noisily return to the ship just after sun up a couple mornings every week. This didn't sit well with the skipper or the XO. One morning the pier was wet when the two wheelers returned, and Atchinson lost control of his bike and it went off the pier. The ship had pulled out that morning for four days for student pilot carrier qualification exercise. I don't think the old man was sorry about the deep six incident, because instructions were passed that we didn't have enough time to retrieve the bike. He probably hoped the salt water would give it a good corrosive bath in our absence. To the old man's dismay upon our return, there was the bike sitting on the pier completely refurbished thanks to the navy divers and few machinist mates who had completely overhauled the machine on government time. He was equally upset, but his hands were tied concerning that incident. In mid November or early December Ensign Atchinson received a telegram stating that his father had crash landed somewhere in China, and the old man felt that was an excellent opportunity and immediately had him transferred off the ship in what appeared as a humane gesture.

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The Medical Crew
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L-R
Late 1947

personal small souvenir items. I was real bull shit about the transfer because nobody talked to me about it. Secondly, I was upset about the missing items which no one claimed to know anything about. Because I recovered sooner than expected, the Navy now wanted me to extend my enlistment. I declined and was immediately granted a Conveyance of the Government (COG) honorable discharge. During that period, the Navy still had more ships than personnel to man them. All personnel still assigned to sea duty, who expected to be discharged within the next three or four months, were being transferred to shore duty and given a COG discharge two months prior to their release dates. All the ships, located in the southern command area, were expected to be deployed to the China Seas or back to the Mediterranean Area or the Baltic Seas. Their mission was to be a Show of the Flag Force. Apparently, the majority of our task forces were scheduled to leave for Europe in February. BUPERS didn't want to sent any personnel back to the States as soon as their ships arrived at the overseas station which made sense. At the end of the sixth day, I was transferred to a transient barrack pending discharge. A few days before I was to be discharged, I visited the ship to say good bye to the crew. After talking to the Chief Yeoman, he had two sets of forged leave papers typed up for me. One was for a thirty-day leave, the other for a fifteen-day emergency leave. The purpose of those leave papers were to obtain a free ride on any military aircraft in lieu of using the train tickets the government had been issuing to all dischargees for their return trip home.

The Chief explained to me that at that time the discharge policy in the Navy was to issue each dischargee a bonus based on his length of service, plus a train ticket to a point of return of his choice. In some cases, that sum amounted to over two-thousand dollars. What a lot of the guys were doing was accepting their discharge bonus from their ships located in Florida, then redeemed their train tickets for cash at the train station which had be made out to as far away as Seattle, Washington. They stuck around for a day or two, then came back to the base and re-up for another hitch, thus qualified for the re-up bonus, then requested assignment back to their old ship. In some cases that boosted the total cash to nearly four to five-thousand dollars and in reality they never left the immediate area.

I had initially opted to take a train to Chicago, then on to Worcester which would have taken four days. The chief suggested that I should turn the train tickets in and take a bus to Maxwell Air Field located in Mobile, Alabama. Then hop a military plane to New England using either one of the leave papers. That is what I did.

January 8th, 1948, was my last day on active service. My departure was with mixed emotions. The morning started with the typical wake up call in the open bay in the second floor dormitory barracks. My final breakfast consisted of corn bread, grits, collision mats and the infamous navy beans. It was an uneventful meal, I didn't know one person in the entire mess hall. All the personnel were transients like myself, either just checking in or checking out.

By mid-morning the out process commenced by getting base clearance chits signed by the Medical Officer after receiving a release physical. Then being cleared by the brig commander, the chaplain, the navy relief fund agency, plus a few other miscellaneous departments, again to insure that no one left the base or mustered out of the service owing the Government any money or property other than ones own gear.

week for fifty-two weeks for unemployment after they were discharged. I could have made more collecting than what I was making by working part time. Near the end of the month, my mother kept asking me when I was going back to the ship. She was worried that I was going to go AWOL. To her surprise and pleasure, she was finally told that I was a civilian and a member of the Naval Reserve. Mike was also in the Naval Reserve, he had joined up several months earlier. Five weeks after I was home, I received a bill from the ambulance company in Pensacola. They had expected me to pay for the ambulance ride and probably had collected from Uncle Sam.

On February 1st, I enrolled at Commerce High School with many other veterans like myself and finished high school. That was the begining of students smoking on school property. That June I passed eight courses, completed school and received my diploma by mail because I was twenty years old and too embarrassed to attend graduation.

As a civilian I was now attending Naval Reserve training meetings one night a week at the local Naval Reserve Center and a two week cruise anytime during any twelve month period. In spite of my sea sick experience aboard the Corry, I opted for an other destroyer crusie to Nassau, Bahamas for that summer. My duty assignment was as hospital corpsman. During the first week of that cruise the ship ran into two major storms just off the coast of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. Half the crew and officers were sea sick for three or four days, yours truly was among them. On the middle week-end we docked at the port of Nassau. Early that Saturday morning one the newly enlisted naval reservist who had also been sea sick during the past few days had died very unexpectedly while a sleep in his bunk. His death created somewhat of a problem with both the British Port Authority as well with the Navy. After notifying his next of kin, his parent refused authorization to perform an autopsy in order to determine the cause of death.

Two days later as the MMA and I were emptying out his foot locker and packing his belongings into his seabag for shipment home, we found a diabetic syringe kit concealed in his shaving bag. Apparently, he required daily shots of insulin. He propably was to sea sick and was afraid to tell anyone about his condition. Somehow he had managed to get by two physical screening test. One to get into the reserve and the other to go on cruise.

When the Korean War started in 1951, everyone in our flotilla including my brother and Frankie Albriziio were activated and sent overseas except me. All enlistments were automatically extended. The reason I was not recalled, I was in the middle of having my courts martial case reviewed in Washington upon my request. The Navy concluded that I would have to retain my own attorney and both of us had to travel to Washington at our own expense. I opted to let the case stand. After six years I was still a seaman first class. hospital apprentice.

During one of our swapping stories, he recalled that during his first month aboard the Corry, he sensed he had not passed muster and acceptance from key members of the crew. One particular day, three first class enlisted men from the Torpedo and the Combat Intelligence Center had asked him to review a torpedo attack problem that they had been working on. They not knowing that Quinn was a recent graduate from the Navy Torpedo School had rigged the problem. Within minutes he recognized the flaw in the attack calculations, and corrected the error without making fools of the three. By using tact he had immediately won the recognition of acceptance as a new member of the Corry. He stated he actual felt the shroud of doubt being lifted from his shoulders. That was one of many ways senior enlisted men used to test the ability of a newly assigned officer as a member of that ships crew. That same technique was also employed in the other services to include the Guard, as I had mentioned in my earlier chapters.

During our relaxing moments I asked Charlie, when the ship was stationed in Pensacola, Florida, who was the dumb son-of-a-bitch, who was the OOD (Officer of the Day) on watch on the bridge, as the ship was pulling away from the docks? The flute of our starboard anchor had caught onto the stanchion post supporting the bridge of an inboard destroyer, causing extensive structural damage to that ship. He smiled and chuckled with a shit eating grin, and stated that it was he and that accident nearly tarnished his Naval career as a potential commander of the line.

That leisurely afternoon I learned once again that the grass in the distant or adjacent pastures are not any greener than the one, one is presently standing in. As our stories went on it became apparent that regardless of ones rank or station in life, being it military or civilian, holding positions of authority or leadership, they all experienced the same strain of total accountability. The requirement to excel beyond ones capability, and possess the willingness to lead and stand above ones peer, accepting the weight of total responsibility, can only be achieved through ones conscience and willingness to try. The yield from ones expended efforts are measured by the euphoria of personal satisfaction.

Captain Quinn and I agreed that this nations military readiness and posture of one being the greatest nation in the global arena of influence for nearly a century has been and still is in the hands of young men and women in their late teens and early twenties serving in their nations uniforms, and commanded by seasoned and experienced military leaders under the stewardship of the peoples representatives. That is awesome responsibility being placed on the shoulders of these young Americas. As in the past the youth of today have the greatest opportunity to carry the mantel of National Security if mentally and physically qualified by ones perseverance to go beyond the call.