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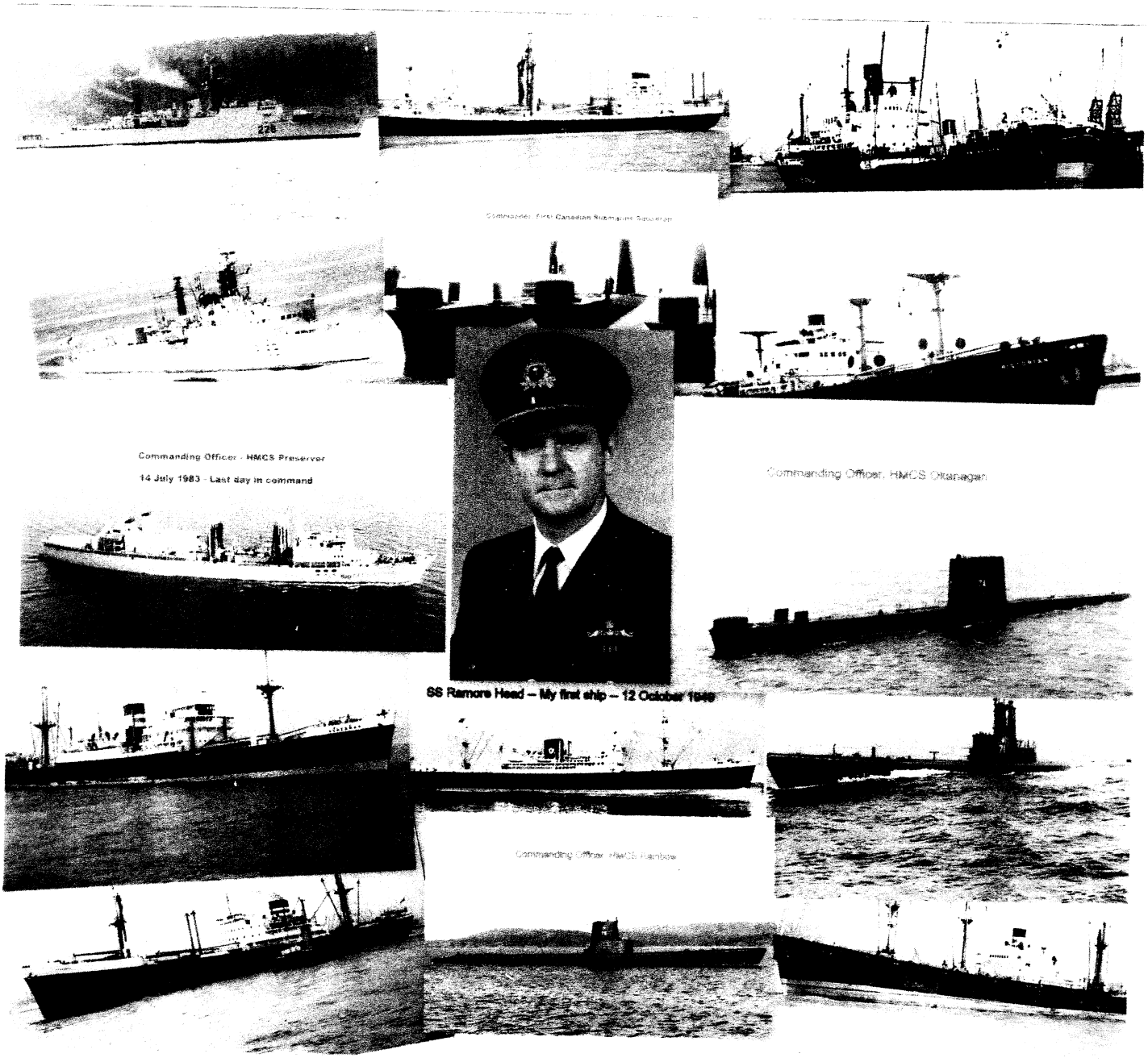
SIMPLE SAILOR



RAY HUNT

A SIMPLE SAILOR

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Without the generous help of the following people I would not have been able to put this labour of love together. Thelma Thompson, my cousin, who I have always thought of as a sister, for providing me with a great deal of information about my younger years, plus the background on her own and the Lunn family. Reverend Doctor John Pace, my brother's school friend, and now mine, for reviewing the style and content. To Captain Michael Jones, my very good friend and former shipmate, for providing me with some of the background on my father and uncle's history with the Harrison Line. To Olaf Hunt, my cousin and friend, who gave me the missing information I needed on his and my father's family.

I must also acknowledge my friends, former shipmates and all the people who I have mentioned in this book -- for without them my life as a sailor would have been less fulfilling. And finally, to someone who is not mentioned in this book -- Roger Morrison, my cousin, who died several years ago. It was seeing his words to his children -- on who he was, and what he had done with his short life, that prompted me to write this account of my life at sea.

A SIMPLE SAILOR

PREFACE

The term "Simple Sailor," is an expression that is occasionally used by seamen of all ranks, from ordinary seaman to admiral. When one uses that expression about oneself it is mainly used to tell somebody that explanations about a subject should be kept simple, because after all, the listener is just a simple sailor. Of course, it could also have other connotations!

This account of my early life, and my life at sea, is not written as an ego trip, or a wish to become immortal. It is simply to tell my story, through my eyes, of the events that I can recall during that period.

What prompted me to put my story on paper was due to something that I had missed in my own life. My father's father and mother had died before I was born, therefore I had no information about them -- who they were, or what they did. Although I now have some vague information about where my grandfather may have come from, even that could be suspect. All I really have is my father's birth certificate stating that his father was a "Sailor." I would love to have known something more about him and his family, other than just being a sailor. By the same token my grandparents on my mother's side also died before I was born, so I really never knew anything about them except from the odd things my mother would tell me about them.

This story of my life at sea may give my successors a better starting point than I had, if they are interested enough to wonder about who I was, what I did, and what I thought about my life.

This account of my life was written for Lindsey and Kerry.

Ray Hunt
Halifax, Nova Scotia -- August 1994

CHAPTER ONE -- IN THE BEGINNING

A respectful, but decisive knock at the door. My Executive Officer, Commander Jim Barlow, stuck his head around the curtain as he had done so often in the past two years. "Boat's crew mustered sir." "Thanks Number One" I replied. In a few minutes after thirty-four years at sea I was about to end my seagoing career with those few matter-of-fact words. Although I was not leaving the Navy, I was leaving the sea, which had been my way of life since the age of sixteen -- thirty-four years ago.

Looking back on it, what led this sixteen year old kid to climb up the gangway of the ss.Ramore Head on the twelfth of October 1949 is still a bit of a mystery to me? I think it was a second-choice solution, because when I was fifteen I had some thoughts of going into the Royal Navy as a midshipman. It was time to reflect.

For some reason or another I must have wanted to go to sea, but I can't recall why. There was no burning desire to go -- nor was there any thought of what else I might do. I wish I could be more definitive, but I don't actually remember the day when I made the decision that I wanted to go to sea more than anything else in the world. In retrospect, I don't think that ever came into it. Even now, I have no idea when, how, and why I became interested in a life at sea. I think my interest in the Royal Navy probably was due to my father's war service, but I don't really know.

It's possible that my lineage may have had something to do with it. My father was one of three brothers who had all gone to sea. Their father, I recently discovered, had also been at sea before them. So perhaps there is some truth to the old expression about the sea being in a person's blood. However, I'm getting ahead of myself.

I was born in London, England, on the fifth of February 1933 -- the younger brother of Geoffrey, who was born on the first day of the year 1928, and older brother of Aileen, who was born on the twenty-eighth of May 1937. Our parents were Edith and William Hunt.

Whether it was due to a lack of inquisitiveness, or some other unknown reason, my knowledge and recollection of my early childhood, before the age of about five or six, is almost nonexistent. What knowledge I do have of that period was gained through anecdotes that my mother or other relatives told me as I was growing up. For some strange reason the only anecdotes that were ever relayed to me showed me as either mischievous, or downright rotten. There was never any hint that I might have been extremely bright, witty, bold and audacious, or anything like that! Of course, on the other hand, no matter how hard it is to believe, it could have been true.

Each story commenced with some phrase like, "You were such a scruffy little kid" -- -- or some other ego-boosting introduction. I don't think these little glimpses of my activities at a young age gave me a complex. In fact, I think that it gave me some form of status. Just like the time when I got my revenge on the detractors in my family, when I proudly announced to my parents that my schoolteacher had made me "Captain of the Dunces." Now that was an honour and achievement! Obviously my teacher was a person of vision -- someone who had seen the leadership potential of this young genius at an early age.

To avoid being accused of conveniently forgetting some of the less auspicious aspects of my early childhood, and to get them out of the way early in this account of my life, I will recount a couple of my childish, harmless pranks, as relayed to me by my mother. Whether they were true or not will be left for you to decide, based on the evidence.

I was once accused by my mother -- but the case was never proved -- of painting the wooden rollers on her mangle (clothes wringer), and my brother's new bicycle, with a very attractive, royal blue enamel paint. From what I can understand I was found guilty by a kangaroo court (my mother), simply because I was the only person in the garage covered in blue paint. Very circumstantial evidence indeed!

Another time, I allegedly hit my cousin Ralph over the head with a wooden mallet and gave him concussion, after he had been explaining to me the many uses of such a tool. As he had his back to his assailant it was never proved that I was the perpetrator. But whoever assaulted him obviously showed him another use for a mallet!

While I am sure I was totally innocent of those heinous crimes, the unkindest cut of all was when my vengeful cousin Thelma, tied me to a drainpipe with my mother's clothes line. She tied me so tight that my mother couldn't untie the knots. My mother, being ever mindful of the cost involved, left me tied to the drainpipe until my father came home some hours later. I believe she saw it as some form of retribution for the blue paint incident.

I have used the above instances to show how the alleged playful acts on my part, totally obscured the many acts of exemplary behaviour that I am sure I also displayed. I believe that is why, in my mind, any information about me and my family's background when I was very young is almost nonexistent, or at the best, sketchy -- which is one way of saying that I did not have an inquisitive mind until later in life

My father, William Henry Thomas Hunt, had been born in Belfast, Northern Ireland on the fourth of March 1901, the youngest of three

brothers. They had all joined the Merchant Navy as officer cadets, at the age of sixteen -- all of them eventually becoming Master Mariners.

He joined his first ship, the ss.Barrister, on the 25th February 1918. Within a couple of days of sailing, his ship was torpedoed in the Irish Sea, with the loss of 29 lives. My father, who couldn't swim, clung on to some wreckage until he was picked up. While that incident could easily have discouraged a sixteen-year old lad from going to sea, it obviously didn't. He, like many others, just accepted it and got on with the job in another ship.

The information I have about my father's family is very limited. Only in recent years, after my mother died, did I first see my father's birth certificate. It showed his father's name as William Henry, and his occupation as, "Sailor" -- nothing more. Just that one word. Having met some of my father's cousins and other relatives when I was a child, I had deduced that his mother's maiden name was McClean, and she probably came from the Dungannon, Cookstown area of Northern Ireland. This was recently confirmed when I saw her name as Nancy Matilda McClean.

Years ago, when I was about ten or so, I remember my aunt in Belfast telling me that my grandfather was a "Bluenoser." This meant nothing to me, except that he obviously had a blue nose. In subsequent years I was to hear her use that term again, but this time it was qualified by comments about Nova Scotia. For years, that was the only thing I knew about my grandfather -- he had a blue nose and he was somehow connected to some place in Canada called Nova Scotia.

Only in very recent years have I been able to get a slightly clearer picture of where he may have come from. Not who he was -- but where he might have come from. As I subsequently learned, people from Nova Scotia are traditionally called "bluenosers" -- a fact that now confirmed his origin. The Public Archives in Halifax, Nova Scotia, show that there were 72 people with the name of Hunt living in Queen's County between the years of 1864 and 1873, which would probably be within the range of the date of birth of my grandfather. I can only assume that my grandfather was one of those 72 people.

But how did this Nova Scotian get to Northern Ireland at the latter part of the nineteenth century, when the trend was for people from Britain, Ireland and Europe to cross the Atlantic to the New World? Why had he reversed the process?

The shipping company that my father and his brothers had joined as cadets was called Rankin and Gilmore. In the nineteenth century Rankin and Gilmore (then Pollock Gilmore) had their sailing ships built in Nova Scotia, which was famous for its soft woods -- ideal

for sailing ship hulls. It's possible that my grandfather signed on, or stowed away, on one of those new ships as they left Nova Scotia to sail over to Britain to start their life of trading around the world; hence the designation "Sailor" as my father's birth certificate showed for the occupation of his father. I understand that he died when my father was about five, so my father's recollections of him would have been very limited too. Perhaps I will learn more one day.

My grandparents, on both my father and mother's side of the family had died many years before I was born. Therefore, it's understandable why a young child wouldn't ask questions about people he didn't know, or were seldom mentioned? Unfortunately, the people who could have answered my questions are all dead now.

It was only at the beginning of the Second World War that I first learned that my father had two brothers. The oldest, David, was, many years later, instrumental in finding me a place as cadet in a shipping company when I first went to sea. He continued to take a great interest in my career for the rest of his life. He had also played a large part in getting my father to sea.

In those days the parents of a cadet had to pay the shipping company a sum of money for the "privilege" of the company training their son. This money was then repaid to the cadet over the four-year period of the apprenticeship. Any interest in the account was paid back at the end of the apprenticeship. I only mention this because my father's parents were dead before he went to sea. It therefore fell upon the oldest brother, David, to find the money to pay for his two younger brothers to go to sea.

Uncle David lived in Belfast, Northern Ireland, with his wife Peggy and son Olaf. The other brother, Joe, lived in Mumbles, South Wales. From what I can gather, he was the wild one of the three. I have a document from a shipping company where he was once employed, stating that he had been fired because he, "disagreed with the Master." Having only met him once, this does not surprise me.

Another story I remember hearing -- and I don't know the full story, was that he was Master of some ship during the war that had been torpedoed. He was injured, and spent many months recuperating in a hospital in the United States. Somehow or other his wife thought he had been killed, because he hadn't contacted her. To say that she was somewhat surprised when he arrived home one day is a bit of an understatement. I only met him once, when he breezed in to our house in Belfast just after the war. He arrived totally unannounced -- having not seen my parents for about fifteen years. He was different.

My mother's family was from London. Later, when my mother was in her twenties, there was a strong association with Liverpool, which

was to continue into my generation and to our children's as well. My mother's parents, Charles and Ellen Lunn, owned and operated a Newsagent and Tobacconist's shop on Lower Road, near the Surrey Commercial Docks in the heart of London's dockland. That area is now home to many expensive condominiums (apartments). A few years ago operating a small shop near the docks would be seen as a risky, if not a foolhardy business to be in. But in those days, at the turn of the century, Britain was made up of a "nation of shopkeepers."

My grandfather was known as a Master Tobacconist, which I believe was a highly coveted title, as it was recognized as a very honourable trade. He was also a Councillor for the Borough of Bermondsey, which was a suburb of London. The shop itself was ideally located for the large number of men either employed on the docks, or on the many ships that plied the oceans of the world from those docks. Ironically, that same area today is very fashionable, and has changed its name from Surrey Docks to Surrey Quays, obviously to give it an air of sophistication. It is now the site of some of London's most expensive homes and apartments.

As was the case on my father's side, my mother's parents had died before I was born, therefore everything I know about them is from stories that I have heard from my mother, aunts, uncles and cousins. However, because I saw a lot more of my mother and her relatives than my father and his relatives -- and the fact that they talked about their family a lot more than my father's family did, I know a little more about them. Some of the stories I heard about them only became known after the death of my mother.

Apparently my grandfather was a great gambler. From what I understand he was either rich or poor, depending on the racing form of the horses he backed. When he was not doing so well, the family lived above the shop in Lower Road, but when he was in the money the family would live in the Old Manor House, which from its name suggests a certain affluence. The only link I have found with the Manor House is that today there is a public house (bar) of that name in the area. There is also a painting of the Manor, painted in 1826. While that house was probably only a century or two old, its predecessor had been, almost certainly, the home of the various Lords of that Manor for many centuries. I doubt if I will ever find out just why the family lived in this house periodically.

If my childish misdemeanours (and another subsequent brush with the law which I shall discuss later) give the impression of a criminal past, I have recently discovered that I come by it fairly. My grandfather, in addition to being a betting man was also involved in passing betting slips, which meant that he was an illegal agent for a bookmaker. Needless to say he was caught, prosecuted and went to Wormwood Scrubs Jail for three months. In those days, the normal punishment for most crimes was incarceration for a period of time.

Today, he would have been fined. If I could have had a choice of some criminal connection in the family I would have preferred to say that I had a highwayman as one of my ancestors, rather than a bookie's agent!

My mother, Edith Lilian Lunn, and her twin sister Florence Daisy, were born in London on the sixteenth of June 1901. The family was living in the Old Manor House at the time, so the horses must have been running well! They were the second youngest of six other children -- Charles, Len, Bert (who emigrated to the United States at age 16), Ivy, and her twin who died at birth, and another sister named Marjorie.

As I understand it, and as was the custom at the time, the boys in the Lunn family went to work outside the family business, whereas the girls worked behind the counter. It is therefore not surprising that the three girls -- Ivy, Florence (Flo) and Edith, met and married three Merchant Navy officers -- Archie, David and William respectively.

Archie was an Engineer with the Cunard Line, and was quite a bit older than the others. Ivy was ten years older than Flo and Edith. David was a young Radio Officer, who was with the Marconi company, which provided shipping companies with Radio Officers. The third, William, known as Billy, who was to become my father, was a Second Officer with a shipping company called Rankin and Gilmore.

My father and mother were married on the thirteenth of June 1925. My mother was three days short of her twenty-fourth birthday, and my father was twenty-four. Shortly thereafter they bought a house on Lonsdale Avenue in East Ham, London. It was from that house that my mother's twin sister was married to David Crombie. It was also the house in which my brother and my cousin Thelma were born.

As my father worked for a Liverpool-based shipping company, my mother and father must have decided that as the ships spent most of their time in that port when they were in the UK, it would make more sense to live there. So, after obtaining his Master's Certificate in the late 1920's they sold the house in East Ham and bought a house in Liverpool.

So why was I born in London? In the early thirties, Britain and the rest of the industrialized world were in the throes of the worst depression in history. Large and small businesses went bankrupt, throwing millions of people out of work. Britain was in chaos. Suicides were a common occurrence. Many people were starving. It obviously affected my father's shipping company, because if there was no money to buy and sell goods, there was no requirement to transport them.

Many years later I remember my father using the expression,

"there was many a Master's ticket in the focsle." What this meant was that there were many officers with Master's Certificates who were now serving as deckhands, because it was the only job they could get, as so many ships had been laid-up. Those that had these jobs unfortunately replaced the regular sailors. It was a bad period.

Like many other people in the shipping industry my father was laid off during the "great depression." He had his Master's Certificate, but as I explained, that didn't guarantee a job. After losing his job my father decided to start a one-man business as a supplier of personal articles to men who were still lucky enough to have a job at sea. He must have decided to do this from a London base. So my mother, father and brother moved to London, to live with my mother's twin sister Flo and her husband David, at Grove Park, where my cousin Thelma still lives.

My father obviously needed a car to carry out his business, so he took a risk and bought one. Until recently I didn't know why my father had a car, but I remember being told that he had one -- mainly because of another anecdote from my mother. Apparently, when riding in the back seat of the car, I used to get great delight as a young kid in tipping my father's hat over his eyes while he was driving. I was just testing his ability in blind pilotage! Another one of these stories that may, or may not, have been true.

Unfortunately this business venture went the way of so many others in those days -- so once again my father found himself without a job. My mother and father owned the house in Liverpool, but with no job, there was little point in returning there. If there were any jobs, they would probably have been in or near the capital, and not the provinces. Therefore they stayed in London and my father went looking for work there.

Luckily for my father, my aunt's next-door neighbour, Mr. Wood (who, when I was a kid, I would address as "Big Woody," as was my polite style to my seniors), was the head porter at The London Hospital. He found a job there as a porter for my father, which although it was not in a position that my father had spent so many years training for -- it was a job that thousands would have been glad to have had. I was born while my parents were living at Grove Park.

Shortly after my father started working again, we moved in with my mother's spinster aunt (Billy) and her bachelor brother (Fred) at 34 Senlac Road. It was just a short walk from where my parents had been staying at Coopers Lane, Grove Park. They did not sell their house in Liverpool until about 1952 -- nor did they ever live in it again. Absentee landlords for about twenty years!

As I said earlier, there is very little that I can remember about my early childhood up to the beginning of World War II. One of my earliest recollections of a specific event was when I was about

five years of age. This was when my father was employed at the London Hospital. The reason that it stands out in my memory so well was that I had developed a protruding navel and that I had to see a specialist. Isn't it amazing to think that the one big event in my life that I can remember from that period is something as exciting as a protruding belly button?

It was arranged that I would go up to town (London) with my father to the hospital where he worked. That was my first recollection of going "up town." The outcome of my visit was that I had to wear a type of corset with a protruding pad on it which help push my navel back where it belonged. I had now learnt my first medical term -- umbilical hernia!

I cannot recall specific events involving my mother during that period, but I have a photograph of my mother's twin sister, Auntie Flo, with her daughter Thelma -- the same cousin who had tied me to the drainpipe, walking along the front at Cliftonville with me in tow. I believe that it must have been when my mother was in hospital giving birth to my sister in 1937. I cannot actually recall the occasion, but there is something in my mind that says I do. I think it has more to do with the auto-suggestive nature of the photograph than remembering the event.

While I have some difficulty believing all the anecdotes that were told about me, I do actually remember one event, which I readily admit to. School was not a part of my life that I particularly enjoyed at the time. Therefore, on the way to school I used to roll the halfpenny that I had been given for my milk, down the drain in the gutter. This did not make me popular with my mother, and even less so with my brother, who was responsible for getting me back and forth to school. I believed that if I "lost" my milk money on the way to school, then my mother would let me stay home that day. For some reason it did not seem to work -- but I certainly found out how easy it was to get my brother upset!

Another thing that I do remember during those early years was being taken to my Uncle Len and Auntie May's house on sunny Sunday afternoons. They had a beautiful garden with a badminton court, where the various members of the Lunn family, their offspring and friends would enjoy themselves on those lovely days. I stress the word "sunny" because that is how I remember them. I'm sure not every one was a sunny day, but in my mind they always were.

The "Lunn gatherings" became quite an event in my life. The practice was shifted to Liverpool during and after the war, where my aunt (Ivy) enjoyed playing hostess to any and all of the Lunn family descendants, their families and their many friends. Those gatherings, which lasted for many years, became famous throughout the family until her death in the mid-1960s.

I believe that we have now lost that feeling of the total family, which like many other things at the time I assumed just "happened." Although attempts have been made occasionally to have similar gatherings, I feel that the family members are now too widely dispersed and too busy with their own lives. That is not a criticism of anyone -- it is just an unfortunate sign of the times. We have lost something, never to be regained.

CHAPTER TWO - THE WAR YEARS

Most people would never say that their memories of war -- any war, were particularly pleasant ones. But for me, as a young boy, those years were filled with so much excitement. Years later, as I grew into adulthood, I saw war for what it was -- a struggle for power by a person, or a group of people, to inflict their will on those that don't agree with them, regardless of the cost in life and property. There is no glory in war, but as a youngster, and in my particular case, through my eyes, it was a time to enjoy. Fear never entered into it.

As a six-year old I had heard talk of Munich, Hitler, Chamberlain and the Maginot Line. These were just names to me, and not half as interesting as rolling halfpennies down a drain. But even as a six-year old I can remember that warm Sunday morning of the 3rd of September 1939, when Mr. Chamberlain, the Prime Minister, announced that we were now in a state of war with Germany.

To me, those words had little meaning, because the sky didn't fall in immediately after the announcement, and the sun rose again the next day. In fact, the only thing that seemed different was that a few hours after the announcement we heard a strange wailing sound of alternating pitches on a siren, which for some years to come, although I never realized it at the time, meant death and destruction for so many people. We would come to live with that sound -- and life would go on regardless.

That beautiful day in early September was just a continuation of the warm sunny weather we had experienced on our holidays at Warner's Holiday Camp at Dovercourt a month earlier. But that day, as it did for many others, changed our way of life forever. For my father, who had changed his lifestyle once to come ashore, it was about to change again.

Unless you were in a protected job, such as a fireman, or some other form of essential service, men, between the ages of eighteen and forty were to be conscripted. Most of those conscripted went into the army. Others, who had some specialty, such as a civil flying licence, would probably be sent for pilot training in the Air Force.

My father, because of his background and qualifications, volunteered for the Navy. He was near the top end of the age limit, and was not yet in line for conscription, but he decided that this is what he wanted to do. On January 9, 1940 he was appointed a Temporary Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve. I don't recall his exact movements after that, but he probably was required to carry

out some shore training with the Navy. I do remember however, that he had been stationed up in Scapa Flow, in the Orkneys, for a while.

The period from when war was declared until the early summer of 1940 was given the name, "the phoney war." Even for me, as a child, it was strange. I couldn't understand what was going on around me. There were numerous activities taking place to prepare the civilian population for war, but I couldn't understand why it was being done, because in my mind, today was just the same as yesterday. But things were to change rapidly a few months later.

There were instructions issued for this and that. For instance, we were told to listen for church bells, because if we heard them it indicated that we were being invaded by paratroopers. We were issued with ration books, which were to control and reduce the food intake, so that resources could be directed away from nonessential industries, to industries that would support the war effort.

While I cannot remember the actual quantities of all the rationed commodities that we were allowed to buy, I can remember some of them. We were allowed two ounces of butter, two ounces of other fats, ie. cooking fats, eight ounces of meat, and four ounces of sugar each per week. I can recall that somebody told us that a spoonful of syrup was the equivalent of a spoonful of sugar. We tried it occasionally when sugar was running low. It tasted fine, but it looked horrible. It turned a cup of tea into a murky purple colour.

Everybody was provided with gas masks, in their ubiquitous brown cardboard boxes, which we were told had to be carried at all times. They even had special ones for babies. Later, some entrepreneurs manufactured fancy covers for the gas mask boxes -- which just proves that there will always be someone who sees a market for something.

The government provided people with rolls of sticky brown paper tape, which had to be applied to windows in a lattice work pattern. This was to prevent flying glass in the event of bomb blast. What bomb blast -- what war? How little I knew at that time.

Windows also had to be, "blacked out." There were many innovative methods used to achieve this, from heavy dark curtains to wooden frames lined with black felt. Families sitting listening to their favourite radio programs at night lived in fear and trepidation of hearing the Air Raid Warden outside their house shouting, "Put that light out."

The Air Raid Wardens, like so many other organisations at that time, were a volunteer group of men and women, who, in the case of men, were either too old to be conscripted, or were waiting for the call. Women were not conscripted in the early stages of the war, so they took over many roles previously held by men.

Just before war was declared the government decided it would be safer to move those people in London with young families out of the city. This seemed like a prudent decision, because there was little doubt that if Britain was to be bombed, London would be a prime target. It was therefore decided that we (our school) were to be evacuated. Another word was just about to be added to my vocabulary. We had become, "evacuees."

As I said, the decision to evacuate was a good one, but there was one slight problem. We were to be evacuated to Folkestone, on the south coast, where, on a clear day, one could see the coast of France -- a country which, although it hadn't been overrun yet by the Germans, was a buffer between mainland Europe and Britain.

The enemy was advancing through Europe at an alarming rate -- getting ever closer to Britain, day by day. There were only twenty-one miles of sea separating us from France, and when the enemy arrived on the French coast, which they would surely do within a few days, or at the most, a few weeks, we would have been within range of his long range guns. This was later borne out when the German guns in Calais regularly shelled Dover, a small port on the coast, next to Folkestone.

My brother didn't come to Folkestone with us, as his school had been evacuated as a separate unit to Wadhurst, near Tunbridge Wells. We were assigned to live with a woman who had a large house next to the main post office. I don't recall a husband -- but he could have already been conscripted.

After about six weeks with nothing happening, as far as we (the evacuated families) were concerned, my mother decided to return to London, during this "phoney war" period. During our stay in Folkestone I had not been in school, as this was something that the authorities had not managed to organize. With my love of school, this situation had really worried me!

When we returned to Senlac Road I was duly dispatched to a new school -- Coopers Lane. Previously, in my halfpenny-rolling days I had been to Baring Road School, but in the interests of consolidation that school was closed and its pupils transferred to Coopers Lane. There is a particular reason for mentioning this school, because an incident happened there, which I think my father would have remembered to his dying day.

My father had been away from home since he first joined the service, and he was now home on a few days leave. My mother had given me a note asking my teacher, a Miss Walker, to let me out a little early that afternoon, as my father was home on leave. The note said that he would come to the school to pick me up. He was easily spotted by Miss Walker, through the classroom's ceiling to

floor windows, as he arrived by way of the playground in his brand new naval lieutenant's uniform. She immediately bounded to the window to welcome him, and then said to the class, "We should show our thanks to the Navy through Ray's father." She then led the entire class in unison, saying, "Thank you Navy." My father was so embarrassed, he didn't know where to look. As I said, it's an incident that he probably never forgot -- nor have I.

One night in December 1939 I remember being woken up by voices outside my room. Next morning I was told that Uncle Fred had died on the stairs on his way to bed. Hence the voices. I mention this incident for two reasons. Firstly, because I can actually remember it, and secondly, because, although he had apparently died of a heart attack, for many years later I told people that he had died of a "broken heart."

Among my toys at that time I had a bugle. Just the sort of toy you never want to give a kid -- but I had one. The morning after Uncle Fred (my mother's uncle in fact) had died, I wanted to play my bugle. I don't know why -- I just did! For some reason this did not seem to be appreciated by the assembled mourning relatives and friends -- so I was taken to Uncle Len's house to get me out of the way -- but not without my bugle. I think I resented not being allowed to play the "Last Post."

The early summer weather of 1940 was a repeat of the previous year --warm and sunny, with clear blue skies, except that things were supposed to be different because we were at war. As the days changed to midsummer it was apparent that other things were changing as well. The air raid warning sirens would become a regular way of daily life, and although we had not been bombed yet, we heard various reports on the BBC that enemy aircraft had crossed the coast. They were mainly attacking aerodromes and strategic targets on, or near, the south coast. At this time Hitler had not made his decision to try to bomb London into submission. But it was soon to start.

I don't remember the first raid we had, because to me we had moved from a sense of unnecessary precautions in my childish mind, to a state of hostilities within a short space of time. During the "phoney war" most people with any space in their garden had air raid shelters installed. They were called Anderson shelters. They were made out of curved sheets of corrugated metal, half buried in the ground, covered with a foot or more of earth over the entire structure. Just clear of the entrance, a wall of bags of earth, or sand, would prevent blast from penetrating the entrance. It was a simple design, and would have been very effective against most forms of bomb damage, except a direct hit. People who didn't have shelters in their gardens had the option of going deep underground at a Tube (subway) station.

As the ferocity and intensity of the air raids increased into what came to be known as the, "London Blitz," the family, which had now grown by the addition of Auntie Flo and Thelma, spent more and more time in the shelter. At the height of the blitz, we stayed in the shelter throughout the night, because it was the only practical thing to do. Otherwise, we would have been up and down to the shelter from our beds continuously.

I can't use the word "slept" with respect to being in the shelter at night. How could one sleep when the world outside was filled with a cacophony of sirens, anti-aircraft guns and exploding bombs? Things had changed a lot since the "phoney war." Thousands of Londoners now spent their nights in the Tube (subway)stations, all around London.

There are many memories of that period for me. I think -- no, I know, that the thing that sticks in my memory more than anything else during those beautiful summer and early autumn days, was watching the "dog fights" between our fighters and the Germans. As I write this now I can vividly recall what went on above me.

I would stand outside the shelter and look up at the sky, and see what looked like separate irregular patterns of strands of white wool against that brilliant blue background. I was watching people trying to kill each other at fifteen to twenty thousand feet, but I didn't see it that way. At the age of seven all I could see was an exciting spectacle going on above my head. In fact, often I couldn't even see the aircraft. All I could see was their condensation trails, twisting and turning in a fight to the death. It was these condensation trails that became wool-like after a minute or so, as the wind would start to dissipate the sharply defined trails emanating from the aircraft. Very occasionally, but not very often, you would see something white slowly come into view as a parachute drifted slowly down to earth. They were the lucky ones. Too often, the pilots would not be so lucky, as the white wool would blend into a black or grey, as an aircraft would slowly start to spin and fall out of the sky.

I had become so used to watching this type of thing, that the fact that people were killing each other within my sight, didn't really register with me. To me, as a seven year old it was just a thrilling, exciting spectacle. In fact, what I was watching was what came to be known as the "Battle of Britain."

One evening the entire northern sky glowed red and orange. The Germans had been concentrating on the London Docks for days, and they had left them in flames. Another time I can recall, was the day when the Tate and Lyle sugar factory had been bombed. Although we lived about twenty miles from it, the strong stench of burning sugar permeated the air for days.

The sights at night were very spectacular during a bombing raid,

particularly watching the searchlights sweeping the sky looking for enemy bombers. However, it was extremely dangerous being outside, due to the tons of shrapnel from the anti-aircraft shells that were falling all over London. A bomb could kill or injure you from a direct hit or a near miss, but the shrapnel being showered down could cut you to pieces, with its razor-sharp jagged edges.

Thelma and I would often go looking for shrapnel after a raid. The pieces varied in size. Most of it was small, but occasionally we would find a part of a fuse or nose cone. It was all still a game --of who could find the biggest or most interesting piece -- often to be traded with your friends. It was just like hunting for bigger and better horse-chestnuts. Death and destruction had nothing to do with it.

Auntie Billy, Uncle Fred's sister, who was in her eighties then would not come down to the shelter. She felt safer in the house. However, there was a slight problem. When a raid would start at night she would get up, open the curtains and switch on the lights! Not a very popular person with the Wardens.

All the houses around us received some form of damage or other. Mrs. Clark's house, just down the road from us, was very badly damaged. Her husband had been killed in an air raid in Grove Park. We had some structural damage. A large piece of masonry had been blown on to my young sister's bed. Had she been there, she surely would have been killed.

Because Hitler had not managed to achieve air superiority, he made the decision not to invade Britain. Instead, he had decided to open another front against the Russians in the east. We came so close to invasion, and what surely would have been our defeat, during that period. How different life would have been had that happened. I didn't realize it at the time, but I was watching one of the most heroic battles in history taking place above my head.

By late September, the ferocity and intensity of the raids seemed to have reduced somewhat. They were still heavy -- but it was all relative.

My father had been posted to Belfast, Northern Ireland, during this period. He was very aware of what we were going through in London, so he managed to obtain a Travel Permit for us, which would allow us to move to Belfast. While my father had tried to obtain Travel Permits for all of us, Auntie Flo and Thelma were refused, because they were not going to join their immediate family. This turn of events effected Auntie Flo's health considerably.

The morning we were due to start our journey to Belfast, she had a terrible hemorrhage. I couldn't understand what was going on, except that I had never seen so much blood in my life. Last

minute decisions had to be made to get Auntie Flo from the shelter. We were still living there, right up to the day we left for Belfast. Luckily, while this was going on we were not under air raid conditions. An ambulance took Auntie Flo off to hospital, and arrangements were made to have Thelma stay with Uncle Len and Auntie May for the time being.

My mother, brother, sister and I had a taxi take us to Euston Station for our train to Stranraer in Scotland. From there we would be taking a ship for a three-hour passage to Larne, Northern Ireland, and then on to Belfast -- and peace.

While waiting on the platform at Euston I remember hearing someone barking, "Make way for the German prisoners." And there, walking down the platform towards us, under armed escort, was this motley bunch of about half a dozen men, in what seemed to be a mixture of blue and grey uniforms. They didn't have horns, and they didn't look superior or arrogant. They just looked dejected, dazed and frightened. But at least they were alive, unlike many of their friends.

After a long and tiring journey we arrived in Stranraer, where my father was waiting to meet us and take us on the last part of our journey to Belfast. The only thing I remember about the ferry trip to Larne was that my father advised us not to shut the cabin door, in case we were torpedoed. Apparently, in some ships that had been torpedoed or mined, the cabin door had jammed on the impact of the explosion, preventing the occupants from getting out. He told us to leave the door on the hook. After our experiences in London, and the journey north, we really didn't want our escape to be marred in any way like that. We arrived in Belfast on 21st October 1940.

The next forty-eight hours were a total blur for me. I was so tired I had no idea where I was -- nor did I care. After a couple of days staying with relatives -- Uncle David, Auntie Peggy and my cousin Olaf, we moved into our fully furnished house at 11 Galwally Park.

For my mother in particular this must have been marvellous. She had finally left the bombing behind her and had moved into this nice big house in a city that appeared to be at peace. At the same time she must have been very worried about her sister's health. My mother and Auntie Flo were like many other twins. There was a close bond between them that existed until the day that Auntie Flo died. I cannot recall any incident involving an argument between the two of them, yet we lived as one family together in Belfast for four years -- and before that, in London. While we are not twins, or even brother and sister, a similar bond exists between Thelma and me, and has done ever since I can remember. I never had that bond with either my brother or my sister.

In this peaceful environment I again took up my favourite pastime -- going to school. Only this time I had outgrown rolling my money down the drain. And besides, it had lost much of its appeal, as my brother was attending a different school, whereas I was still at an elementary school.

In January 1941 Auntie Flo's health had improved somewhat. She again applied for a travel permit, which this time was granted for health reasons. It was a happy reunion when we saw her and Thelma again in Belfast.

One evening when we were just sitting around the fire, my mother cocked an ear, and said to my father that she was certain that she could hear an air raid siren. Her comments of course caused a great deal of amusement to the family, especially my father, who mentioned something about her having sirens on the brain. She was adamant about what she had heard, so my father and mother went outside -- and sure enough, there it was -- an air raid siren -- the first one sounded in Northern Ireland. This, within about six months of leaving London. My mother's uncanny hearing ability remained with her until she died.

From then on there would be the occasional siren heard, but nothing ever happened. Then one night in April it all changed. The very familiar sounds of German aircraft, which in London we had nicknamed "Jerky Jerry," because of their distinctive engine sound, were back again. It seemed that they were following us.

It started all over again, although this time the air raids were over a period of days, rather than weeks and months. We had no shelter to go to here, so we did the next best thing -- we went to a cupboard under the stairs. Not very comfortable trying to share the space with three adults and four children.

Belfast was badly bombed. Their aim was obviously to hit the docks, and while they partially succeeded, they also bombed a populated area that was near the waterworks. At the time, it was said that because visual bombing was the only means of identifying a target, the aircraft probably saw the reflection of the water in the lake at the waterworks, thinking it was the water by the docks. Hence the undue amount of damage to civilian areas.

Uncle David's house was badly damaged by the bombing, so he, Auntie Peggy and Olaf came to live with us at Galwally Park. They lived with us for a few months until they found a house. It was during this time that Olaf and I came to know each other very well. A friendship formed that has remained strong to the present day.

Uncle David, who had been the Pilot Master in Belfast, had been transferred to the Royal Naval Reserve on the outbreak of war to

CHAPTER THREE --POST WAR

Although the war was over by mid-1945, it took sometime for the thousands of volunteers and conscripts to be demobilized -- or demobbed, as it was called at the time. My father's turn came in the autumn of 1946. He was to be demobbed in London, so we went over there to meet him.

I went with him to Wembley Stadium, which was one of the demob centres. I can't recall everything that went on there, but I do remember the assembly line process of turning a serviceman into a civilian again. You moved from one booth to the next -- selecting, trying-on and finally agreeing on the items that were going to make you look like a civilian again. Each person was given a suit, or a sports coat and slacks, several shirts, socks and hankies -- and just like magic, they were civilians again. One important thing it did not provide was a job.

When we got back to Belfast we were to learn (I think my mother had been told already) that we were going to live in France. As you can imagine, this was somewhat of a surprise to us. My mother was to go over to Paris for a short visit with my father, to meet a couple, Jacques and Genevieve (Gene) Le Blanc, with whom he was going into business.

My father had met this couple in Algiers during the war. I believe that they had been working for the French Government at the time. They owned a large house in northern Provence, in the foothills of the Dauphine Alps. The plan was to open this house as a convalescent home for people recovering from lung problems, such as tuberculosis and emphysema.

It was very apparent when my mother returned from Paris that she had grave doubts about the whole idea. Gene returned with my parents to Belfast. I believe that this was to meet us, the children. It was clear that my mother did not like Gene. I think she might have been jealous. Gene was younger, with dyed blonde hair (a no-no in nice British families in those days), thick makeup and flashy. Perhaps I'm stressing those characteristics as a reason my mother didn't like Gene, because that is the way I saw her when I first met her. Maybe my mother had other reasons. I don't know.

I'm not sure how I felt about going to France. I was sorry to leave my friends -- and even my school. I was now playing for the Under-13's rugby team, and enjoying it tremendously. But I suppose I was sorriest of all to be leaving Galwally. That house had so many happy memories for me. Unfortunately, with the death of Auntie Flo it also had its sad times. It's the place that I

associate with growing up. So much happened there in the six years we lived there. All my friendships originated there -- but it's ironic, that unlike Geoff and Thelma, contact with my school friends did not last. I don't know why.

We also had to say goodbye to Thelma. In retrospect, what we did to Thelma was wrong. She had no mother, her father was at sea, and in effect we were deserting her. She was still at school, so she stayed with her friend Oonagh, until she finished her schooling. When she finished school, she went back to London to her home at Coopers Lane. Because she had tenants occupying her house, she was unable to move in without taking them to court.

My brother had finished his schooling and was now an officer-cadet in the army, so he would be staying in the UK. In early January 1947 we left for France.

We spent a few days in Paris before we went south. Naturally we did all the things that tourists do when they are in Paris. However, what I remember more than anything else during my first visit to Paris, were the small marble plaques secured to pockmarked walls in different parts of the city. Each one of these commemorated the spot where a member of the Resistance had been executed by the Germans.

In Paris we stayed in the Hotel Terminus, Gare St.Lazare. It was one of those grand hotels, with beautiful chandeliers everywhere. It must have cost a lot to stay there, but it didn't seem to cause any concern to my father.

We took the overnight Paris to Marseilles train -- but our destination was Montelimar, which we reached about five or six o'clock on that January morning. We had a large amount of luggage, because, although all our furniture would be coming over to France, we would be living out of suitcases for some weeks. So there we were -- my father, my mother, Gene, Aileen and me, standing amongst a great pile of suitcases in the pitch dark, on a snowy, cold morning at Montelimar railway station, waiting for a bus to take us to Dieulefit. I was not too impressed.

After a bone-shaking ride from Montelimar to Dieulefit on a rickety old bus, we were set down in the main square of the village. Some people -- I don't know where they came from -- loaded a big cart with our bags. From then on we were on our own. My father and Gene knew where they were going, but we didn't. I will never forget it. We pushed this cart through the village and down a narrow alley for what seemed miles. It probably was no more than half a mile -- but this whole thing was totally foreign to us. We were in a strange country, pushing a luggage laden cart through the snow and cold to who knows where.

We finally arrived at our destination and unloaded our luggage

in what looked to be a very strange house. Once inside, the furniture also looked to be very old and dark. There was no heat, and we were frozen. I think we (except my father) would have been delighted if we could have woken up and discovered that this whole thing was a ghastly nightmare. Unfortunately, it was real, and was an indication of further trouble ahead. The house belonged to Gene's parents, who were living in Paris. But now we were in "her" house, and there was no doubt who was boss.

I have already given my impression of her. My opinion never changed. If anything, it became worse. She interfered between my father and my mother. She would tell Aileen and me what to do, which would naturally be resented by my mother. Also, she would complain to my father about something or other that we did, cutting my mother out of the picture entirely.

There were some good times I suppose, but they were mainly overshadowed by the bad times. I never met Gene's husband. He was a geologist, and was out of the country. His mother and father were very pleasant. We had the impression that his father was not a fan of Gene's either. They lived in a big farm house called Les Cedres. I would often walk to Les Cedres on fair days and spend the afternoon kicking my rugby ball around one of the fields. Occasionally Aileen would come with me, other times she wouldn't. It was a very lonely period. I knew nobody of my own age.

In those days my closest companion was a small radio which I used to listen to the cricket Test Matches between England and Australia on the BBC World Service. After all the happiness and joy of Galwally, this was a very depressing time for Aileen, my mother and me.

We were to stay in this old house in Dieulefit, while we were waiting for Gene's house in the nearby village of Poet-Laval to be renovated for us. It was called Le Manoir, and although I had only seen it from the road -- from about a quarter of a mile away, it looked lovely.

One day we went into Montelimar to make arrangements for me to start school, as that was the location of the nearest secondary school. I was going to go to the College Moderne, which would mean travelling back and forth on that rickety bus twice a day. But none of this was to come about.

While both Aileen and I were not happy, our feelings could not have compared to those of my mother's. Gene was either interfering between my mother and father, or she was completely ignoring her, but raising her eyes to the heavens every time my mother did something that she thought was odd.

Gene spoke a little English, but my mother spoke almost no

French. My father spoke good French, so all conversations with Gene were conducted in that language, which further isolated my mother. She was living in this totally foreign environment that she hated, which was bad enough -- but she didn't need to have a husband who would not support her, and another woman living in the same house who looked upon my mother with derision. She put up with this for some months, then she must have told my father that she was packing up and taking us home.

This situation had evolved because my father had not thought it all out. He was wrong. Totally wrong. However, he had now committed himself. He did not have a job to go to when he came out of the Navy. So the idea of running a convalescent home must have sounded very attractive to him. But why was he in the act at all? Gene and her husband owned Le Manoir. They didn't need him. He had no medical expertise. He had no business experience. He was a sailor without a job. I will never understand his thinking at all. We had given up the house in Belfast. He had cut his ties with the UK. The furniture was in France, waiting to be moved into our new home -- but he forgot the most important aspect of it all -- his family's feelings.

My mother, Aileen and I came back to England, and stayed with my mother's sister, Ivy, in Liverpool. Her husband, Archie, had died a few years earlier, so she only had her youngest son, Roy, who was my age, living at home. My aunt also had a maid, or family retainer, who was an institution in the area. Emma could neither read nor write, but she made up for that by her enthusiasm in every thing that she did. She was known and loved, not only by the family, but by the surrounding neighbourhood, and the many other people that had met her, in many places throughout the world.

My aunt had a Tobacconist and Newsagent shop in Larkhill Place, West Derby. We all lived above the shop, where it was relatively spacious. All we had were the clothes that had accompanied us back from France. Everything else was in Poet-Laval.

As my cousin Roy was attending Liverpool Collegiate School, it was arranged that I would join him there. I quite enjoyed it, but I wasn't really there for long. I don't think I excelled academically, but I did very well at cricket. I moved from the Under-15's to the Second Eleven after only about two games, which was seen as being quite remarkable for my age at the time.

It was decided that I should return to my old school in Belfast, while my mother and Aileen would remain in Liverpool. I'm not sure why, or who made this decision, but as I liked both Methody and Belfast, I was happy to be going back.

My aunt in Belfast found a lady who was happy to have a student as a boarder, so I went to live with this lady in a house on the Antrim Road. Unfortunately, life at my new home was not all we had

hoped. I forget the details, but after a few weeks my aunt decided that I should not stay there any longer. My next move was to move in with my aunt and uncle, and of course, my cousin Olaf. I was happy again.

Olaf and I had always got along well. While I mentioned earlier that my own school friends and I lost contact after we left school, which was not the case with Olaf. He has been, and remains a very close friend to the present day. We enjoyed ourselves. We both liked rugby and cricket, and would go to all the big games together. I met and made friends with his friends Olaf was a great prankster and had a ready sense of humour. In one particular incident I ended up in juvenile court partly through my cousin's sense of humour -- and his self-preservation.

I'm not sure if it was actually Halloween, but it was certainly around that time. Olaf, his friend Sydney, and I were walking up the road not far from my aunt's house. Sydney, who was eighteen, was smoking a cigarette, and was holding it down by his side. I thought it would be fun to light one of the fireworks which I had hidden in my hand, by lighting the touch paper on Sydney's cigarette, without him knowing. It may not have been fun -- but it was interesting. As the firework was jumping and cracking all over the road, I turned to run from it, as did Sydney, who was totally surprised by the whole thing. My surprise came when a heavy hand landed on my shoulder. It was the arm of the law! He had both Sydney and me in his grasp -- but Olaf was nowhere to be seen, yet he had been standing right beside us.

While the policeman was taking our names and addresses, the firecracker was still bouncing all over the road, which added a certain amount of amusement to the whole thing. In the midst of this chaos Olaf appeared, walking towards us. Passing us, he looked in our direction with a quick nod and a, "Good Evening," to the three of us! Two of us were caught -- the third was just walking away!

After about two months I thought the whole thing had been forgotten, when an official looking envelope was delivered to my uncle, who was now my guardian. He was summoned to appear in court with me, on a certain date, on charges of letting off fireworks in a public place. Sydney, because of his age, had to appear in the Petty Sessions Court on the same day.

My court appearance was a laugh. Before we went in to the court, a policemen came into the waiting room and read out the names of about a dozen boys. When they all acknowledged their names, he said, "OK, that's the football team -- follow me." When my turn came, Uncle David pleaded guilty, on my behalf. The Magistrate, I can see him still, a Major McCallum, gave me a lecture on the dangers of fireworks, then fined me seven shillings with three shillings costs -- a total of approximately one dollar! Poor Sydney was

fined about twice my fine, because the Magistrate told him that an eighteen year old should know better, which was a bit unfortunate as he was an innocent party! I had to note that conviction on my application to emigrate to Canada.

Later that year my mother and Aileen returned to Belfast to live. They had been provided with a brand new council house, in Innisfayle Gardens, not far from where my uncle and aunt lived. I obviously moved in with them, but because it was only a short distance from where Olaf lived, this did not cause any disruption with regard to our friendship.

It was during this period that I was now playing for the school's Medallion rugby team. Not only was I playing on the team -- I was vice-captain of the team. I had moved from Captain of the Dunces to vice-captain of the rugby team. The following year I was elected vice-captain of my house -- Bedell. I was getting there -- slowly. This was also the school year when I would be sitting for my Junior School Certificate, which meant that I would have to get down to working on the academic side of my life.

I don't recall many events of my life during this period. Geoff, who was now a second-lieutenant in the Royal Signals, would come home on leave occasionally. He didn't have too many of his old school friends left in Belfast, as most of his close friends had emigrated to Canada in 1947.

Either because my father wanted me to go, or because I wanted to go -- I can't recall who, but I went to Poet-Laval for my summer holiday in 1948. My original views of Le Manoir were confirmed. It was a beautiful, spacious house, and its name was well suited. I got on better with Gene this time, although I could never have liked her. I don't know what the relationship was between my father and Gene was -- but I doubt that it was anything other than a business relationship. I was never to meet Jacques, Gene's husband. He was always away surveying.

Another couple, the Cristaldi's, also lived at Le Manoir. He was an artist -- mainly pottery, and he sold quite a lot of his work. It certainly looked very good. I think his wife helped Gene with the running of the house. Also, while I was there on my holidays, there was a boy of about my own age. He had suffered with tuberculosis, and was now convalescing. It was very noticeable that he was the only patient, and from discussions I had with my father, it was apparent he was one of the very few patients that they had ever had.

While I was there I phoned home to see how I had done in my Junior School Certificate. The news was good, so I now had that hurdle out of the way. I was not that keen to stay at school for another two years to take my Senior Certificate, so that may have

played a part in my decision to go to sea.

I enjoyed that holiday. It was the first time I had travelled so far by myself. Another worthy thing of note was that during that holiday I learned to swim. Although I was 15 I had never learned to swim before now. Le Manoir had two swimming pools. One was in working condition and the other one required extensive plastering work, before it could be used again.

I used to shoot snakes in the damaged pool. No, that's not quite true. I would walk round the edge -- lift a piece of masonry lying on the bottom of the pool with a rake to see if any snakes were lying in the shade. If I found one, I would shoot at it with a .22 rifle. Unfortunately for me, they were faster at slithering out of the way than I was on the trigger, so the score was slightly one-sided. Hence the reason for qualifying my statement about shooting snakes. I tried shooting magpies -- with the same result!

It was during this holiday that my father and I discussed what I was going to do after I left school. He was keen on me going into the Royal Navy, which to me sounded like a good idea at the time. But there was never a, "golly gee, what a great idea," approach to that suggestion. It was agreed that I would look into it when I went back to school.

Northern Provence, with its old stone houses and their pink and red tiled roofs, was, and is, a beautiful part of the world. Le Manoir, was half way up a hill, with a panoramic view of the valley and lavender fields below us. Behind us, further up the hill, were the ruins of the old village of Poet-Laval, including the church and castle which had been built by the Knights of Malta in the twelfth century. In spite of the domestic situation it was an idyllic place to live.

To me, the thing that I remember most about that holiday was lying in one of the many hay fields below Le Manoir, and looking up at the beautiful deep blue sky surrounded by the mountains, and being totally absorbed by it all. I was all by myself, in a world of my own. Now, many years later, I realise I have always been an addictive sky watcher. Day or night, I have a fascination for a clear sky, whether it's a clear blue one, or a black one with a million stars. I can sit back in a deck chair and gaze up at the sky, and I am no longer in this world.

By September I was back at school. I passed any information I had about joining the Royal Navy on to my housemaster, Mr. Todd, otherwise known as "Sweeney." After a month or two he informed me that I was too old to write the Dartmouth entrance examinations. My father was very upset over this, because he blamed the school for not acting quickly enough. He may have been right. I don't know.

Uncle David, Olaf's father, had hoped that Olaf would follow in his footsteps, and go to see as a cadet in the Merchant Navy. Unfortunately, Olaf failed the eyesight test, which immediately disqualified him from entry. This was a terrible disappointment to Uncle David. It was probably about this time that I started thinking about going to sea myself. I didn't want to stay at school -- so it only remained for Uncle David to encourage me, which he did with great effect.

Because of his high profile in Belfast's shipping circles, it wasn't too difficult for Uncle David to have my name accepted as a prospective cadet with the Head Line of Belfast. As there was a waiting list, and it would take some time before a vacancy occurred, Uncle David managed to find me a place at Captain Boyd's Nautical School. I left Methody at Easter 1949, and started the Nautical School at the same time.

Captain Boyd's Nautical School was a strange place. In effect, it was a one-room school house on the second floor of an office building, just opposite St.Anne's Cathedral. There were about 20 students, ranging in age from approximately 30 years, to me and another lad, at 16 years of age. The students were studying for examinations from Master Foreign Going to Mates Home Trade -- plus the two sixteen-year olds, still waiting to go to sea.

The day always started with about twenty minutes of flashing light and semaphore exercises, in which everybody participated. This was followed by each student working through his text books, on a subject designated by Captain Boyd. Each student worked at his own pace, with Captain Boyd being available to assist if anyone needed help. How he kept up the pace remains a mystery to me. Every so often we would stop one subject and start another. I will never know how he could keep up with who was doing what. The man was magic -- as well as being a prince.

One day a letter arrived requesting my presence at the Marine Superintendent's office of G.Heyn and Son -- the Head Line. I was to be interviewed by a Captain Finlay, who I found to be a very cantankerous old man. He had served as Master in sailing ships, and my immediate reaction was that he could have been a reincarnation of Captain Bligh. I don't recall the content of the interview -- just the interviewer. Anyway, I must have been acceptable, because he told me to go home and tell my parents to buy me a uniform.

It was with great excitement that I went to get measured for my uniform. When it finally arrived I hung it up on the back of my bedroom door, so that I could see it from my bed. Needless to say I was very proud of it, with its gold striped lapel patches. But I couldn't understand the laughs and sarcastic remarks from my fellow students, who had the advantage over me of having spent a considerable amount of time at sea. They made a lot of comments

about me not spending much time in uniform, and that I was better off getting a few good sets of overalls.

For the first time in my life academic subjects took on a new meaning for me at Captain Boyd's school. Navigation and its mathematical principles opened up a new world for me. At school my best subjects had tended to be English and French, followed by History and Geography. I had been an average student, but now I was doing something I could really understand. But not only that -- I was actually using mathematics that had a practical use, which I found refreshing and challenging. For the first time I was starting to enjoy academic subjects such as trigonometry, algebra and physics. Subjects that I had never enjoyed before.

Seamanship was a subject that seemed to come easy to me, because Uncle David had taught me a lot already. He had taught me many knots and splices, long before I went to the school. I owe a lot to Uncle David's early coaching, including learning verbatim the thirty-one (at the time) Rules and Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea. Once learned, they were never to be forgotten -- even now.

Finally a letter arrived at my home instructing me to come to the Head Line Building with my mother, to sign indentures as an apprentice for four years with the Head Line. The indentures spelled out how much they were going to pay me over the four years. During my first year I was to receive the princely sum of four pounds five shillings a month -- approximately nine dollars at today's rate. This was to increase annually until my last year, at the age of 20, I would receive the sum of eight pounds per month -- approximately 16 dollars! I was not going to get rich in a hurry!

Shortly after that, I received another letter instructing me to join the ss. Ramore Head at 0900, on Wednesday the 12th of October 1949, at the Pollock Dock in Belfast -- and that the ship would be sailing that day for Montreal.

CHAPTER FOUR -- MY FIRST SHIP

Prior to joining the Ramore Head I had received a letter from the company with a list of suggested items that I should take with me when I joined my first ship. For some reason that I couldn't understand, there was this fixation about dungarees, work shirts and heavy sweaters. I wasn't sure why I would need these, because I already had what I needed to do my job -- my uniform.

In a state of excitement, and a certain amount of hidden apprehension, which was disguised as bravado, I was driven down to the Pollock Dock by Uncle David. There, before my eyes, was the pride of the Headline fleet, the Ramore Head. I looked up at this big black-hulled ship -- the largest ship I had ever seen close up. It was a relatively new ship, having only been built the year before. It was also the flagship, which meant that the senior Master in the company was its Captain. I looked up at its black funnel with the emblem of Ulster -- a contoured red hand with three drops of blood dripping from it, superimposed on a white shield. It looked as though it had been newly painted.

The story behind the emblem is one that has been, and will be, open for debate for years to come. It is said that two brothers, the O'Neils, were coming over by boat from the mainland, hundreds of years ago. They had agreed that the first one to touch this new land would become king. As they got close to the shore, one brother being smarter than the other, cut his hand off and with blood dripping from it, threw it ashore -- thus becoming the first one to touch the new land, and securing his title as king.

While it is an interesting story, it doesn't end there. It has been a topic of debate for many years for the people of Ulster -- the question being, was it his left hand or his right hand? If he were right-handed he would have used that hand to cut off his left hand -- and vice versa. Sometimes it is shown as a right hand and other times it is a left hand. Therefore, the argument will go on forever.

Uncle David left me at the bottom of the gangway, because after all, how would it look if I were seen as having my uncle holding my hand arriving on board for the first time. I was now a seaman -- albeit a slightly apprehensive one. As I climbed up the gangway I had the nagging thought of what would happen if I didn't like life at sea? The thought was quickly dismissed from my mind.

I had two pieces of baggage. An old Royal Navy green canvas suitcase, which my father had given me -- and what else -- a seabag! It required two trips up the gangway to get my bags on board. When

I got to the top of the gangway I noticed that my brand new uniform was getting covered in grain dust. The ship was discharging grain from the holds through long tubes, which were sucking the grain out of the holds, and the dust was everywhere.
Someone about my own age appeared beside me and said, "You must be the new cadet," which was fairly observant of him, seeing I was wearing a cadet's uniform. I couldn't figure out who this person was, because he was in scruffy working clothes, covered in grain dust -- but he was wearing a uniform cap. Surely he couldn't be a cadet, not dressed like that. I was wrong -- he was. He introduced himself as Frank Best, and then helped me with by bags up to the cadets' accommodation. In the cadet's mess I was to meet two other scruffy people -- Frank Sadler, the senior cadet, and Joe Paskins.

My three colleagues were all from the south of Ireland. Frank Sadler was from County Monaghan -- Frank Best from Dun Laoghaire, and Joe Paskins was from Courtown, County Wexford.

Frank Sadler took me to meet the Chief Officer, Norman Stark. My first impressions of this man never changed. He was a small, fat man of about 28 years of age. He had the bumptious attitude sometimes associated with many small men. I was later to find out that he was arrogant, crude and spiteful -- a man of very few redeeming features. His first words to me were, "Get out of that uniform and start scrubbing out the wheelhouse." So much for, "Welcome aboard."

This was my first job as a cadet, on my first day. It was to happen many times over the next two years. Sometime during the day we, "signed on," the ship's articles. The various tasks we were given by Mr. Stark that day were often interrupted by the requirement to have the cadets assist the ship's carpenter, commonly known as "Chippy," to secure and batten down hatches, as each hold gave up its last grains of wheat to the giant suckers.

That day, we seemed to have done so many different things in such a short time that my head was spinning. Late that afternoon we battened down the last hatch, and stood by to sail. Frank Best and I were assigned to the after end of the ship for sailing, under the direction of the Second Officer, Mr. Cyril Pringle. He was everything Norman Stark wasn't. A big, bluff man with a great sense of humour and a twinkle in his eye. Since those days our paths have crossed at times. He is now a good friend of mine -- forty-five years after I first met him.

Sam McBroom, the "Lamptrimmer," was responsible to Mr. Pringle for taking charge of the sailors and the two cadets who handled the ropes and wires that we hauled in, as they were slipped off the bollards on the quay. Sam was a gruff elderly man with a weather-beaten face, who looked as though he had spent a hundred years at sea. He had spent his whole life there, and knew everything there was to know about being a seaman. His fingers were like marlin

spikes. He taught me a great deal over the next two years -- always giving the impression that he was telling you things grudgingly, and that you were wasting his time, as you would never make a seaman anyway -- but secretly delighted that he could teach you something. I met many an old sailor like him over the years.
It was just my luck to have the dogwatch that day. That was the period between four and eight in the afternoon and evening. Unfortunately, Mr. Stark had that watch on a regular basis -- so it was not a good start for my first day at sea. It was to get worse.

After we cleared Belfast Lough, I was told to go aft and, "stream the log." I knew what was required, because I had read about it at the nautical school -- but I didn't know how to accomplish it. When I went aft, the log clock and the governor were attached to the top of the bulwark, as they should have been. It all looked very simple. All I had to do was to attach a coil of rope (called the log line) that was lying at my feet, to the governor, and then throw the remainder of the coil over the side. The other end of the coil had a rotor vane attached to it, which would cause the line to rotate, which would then turn the mechanism in the clock, showing the distance that we were travelling through the water. All very straightforward.

What I didn't know was that the coil of rope was supposed to be flaked up and down on the after deck, so that it could be "streamed," to prevent kinks and knots forming. That is where I ran into a little trouble. I just hooked one end on to the governor and then threw the coil over the side. I couldn't believe what was happening in front of my eyes. I had never seen such a mess. With the line spinning under strain, it didn't take long before the coil of line was a mass of tangles, knots, kinks, loops and knots forming in the loops and kinks -- all spinning round under the control of the rotor. It was terrible -- and of course, as the ship was moving through the water at fifteen knots, the whole line was under a heavy strain, which only caused the knots to tighten. I really didn't know what to do next. Luckily, Sam McBroom appeared. He couldn't stop laughing at a situation which I saw as a lot less humorous than he did.

He told me he had never seen a log line in such a mess. However, as the great seaman he was, he came to the rescue. It took us some time to haul the line in and re-stream it correctly -- and by the time we finished, everything was working just the way it was supposed to. I never made that mistake again.

My next problem was with Mr. Stark. Streaming the log should have taken about ten minutes, so it was very hard to explain why I had taken nearly an hour! He was not impressed.

The cadets' accommodation consisted of two sleeping cabins, a shower and toilet, and a small mess or eating area. We were

responsible for keeping these areas clean. I shared a cabin with Joe Paskins, and on that first night I couldn't wait to get to bed, to try to block out the images of my first day at sea.

"Seven bells," was the next thing I heard. Frank Best was calling me from a deep sleep at three-thirty in the morning. I had to be on the bridge by four to start my watch. Frank put a steaming mug of tea in my hands, while I was still trying to wake up and become accustomed to my new surroundings. I found out pretty quickly that putting the mug in your hands was done to make sure you would stay awake. If you fell asleep again, you would soon wake up when you spilt your tea -- hence the reason for making sure your relief got his mug in his hands. It worked.

The watches were arranged so that you were on watch for four hours -- then an eight hour period off watch (but you worked during the daylight hours) -- followed by another four hours on watch. This meant that as well as being on the four to eight o'clock in the morning, which I was just about to start, I would also be on watch from four to eight during the evening as well. It was the same for the other watchkeepers who were on the eight to twelve, and twelve to four watches. The fourth cadet would be on day work, which meant that he did not keep watches, but worked between seven in the morning and five in the afternoon. He also acted as our messman, and was responsible for keeping our accommodation clean and getting our meals from the galley. We would rotate through the watches between the outward and homeward passages.

A cadet would spend his four hours on watch during the non-daylight hours on the open wing of the bridge, regardless of the weather. His main job was as a lookout -- reporting any lights seen to the mate on watch. He also acted as bridge messenger. Depending on the weather, it could be a most miserable four hours -- or a boring four hours -- or both. On a dirty night, when you were wet and cold, all you wanted was for the clock to race ahead to get you somewhere near the end of your watch. You spent your watch wishing the hours, and eventually the minutes away. Depending on the mate on watch, you might be lucky enough to be able to leave the bridge, to go below for a short while and enjoy the heat of the galley, if he wanted you to make him a mug of tea.

At "seven bells," or half an hour before your watch was to end, you would go down to call both the mate's relief and your own. The normal practice was that you were required to remain on watch until both your relief, and the mate's relief arrived on the bridge. If they were late in arriving -- you were late in leaving. Hence the hot mug of tea placed in their hands, while they were still in their bunks. This tended to wake people up in a hurry.

The last hour of the morning watch was always allocated to scrubbing the wheelhouse deck. Mr. Stark used to take a great delight

in walking through a patch that was covered in soapy water and trailing it over an area you had just scrubbed. He seemed to get a perverse delight in doing it. He was that type of man.

It was during those early days at sea, on clear nights, that I first started to take a great interest in the heavens -- locating planets, stars and their constellations. The names were magic -- Castor, Pollux, Sirius, Vega, Aldabaran, Arcturus, Capella -- and a million more. I would use stars as pointers to direct me to different constellations. It took me many years, but I made a point of studying the heavens, so that I could locate and name most of the important stars in the various constellations -- not forgetting the Constellation of Orion -- or the Constipation of O'Brien as it was irreverently known.

Not only was stargazing interesting, but it helped beat the boredom of four hours by yourself on the wing of the bridge. I found it fascinating for instance, to discover such things as the star Aldabaran was nine hundred light years away and that it gave off over one hundred and fifty times the light that the sun did. Even now, I find myself in awe of those facts. It just shows how insignificant we mortals are.

During those four lonely hours in the middle of the night on the bridge there was very little to do except think. Sometimes the mate on watch would come out of the wheelhouse and have a chat with you, but not that often. I think one of the subjects that was most thought about, was what you would do if you won the football pools. Earning four pounds five shillings a month, (nine dollars in those days) the thought of winning seventy thousand pounds gave you a lot of latitude. I must have spent millions in my mind over the years!

The weather at sea during my first trip was excellent. It took about five and a half days to cross the Atlantic from the north of Ireland to Belle Isle on the north tip of Newfoundland. The remaining two and a half days were through inland waters. My first trip up the St Lawrence was marvellous. The weather was warm and clear, and it was fascinating seeing all the villages on the shore come into view, dominated by the huge churches with high spires.

We would, in most cases, sail from the UK without any cargo. Therefore, on the way across the Atlantic the cadets would work with Chippy in erecting shifting boards in the holds. These were heavy wooden boards that would be erected from the bottom to the top of the hold, which provided a temporary wall, which prevented the grain from shifting from side to side during a sea voyage. These were huge boards, and in a rough sea this was a dangerous evolution -- but it had to be done.

We spent about five days in Montreal loading grain and flour. On our time off in the evenings, and if you weren't duty (every

fourth day), the cadets routine in Montreal -- and in fact most ports, was to go to the movies the first or second night -- followed by a banana split at a Diner, then back to the ship. The remainder of the time in port was spent going to the Mission to Seamen, for free dances or movies. It was just a place to go to get off the ship. With our round trips lasting about three weeks -- four at the most -- nine dollars a month didn't go very far in Canada.

While in port, each day a different cadet carried out a gangway watch during the daylight hours. This involved being in uniform, standing at the top of the gangway -- in effect, acting as a glorified doorman. Now I knew why I had to have a uniform! You were also supposed to keep undesirables off the ship. How do you recognize an undesirable among a hundred or so longshoremen? At night you remained on board in case your services were required.

Christmas Day and gangway duty were the only times you wore your uniform. On Christmas Day the cadets were "invited" to eat with other officers and passengers in the main Dining Saloon. Other than that, we ate in our own mess. I was now beginning to see what my fellow students at Captain Boyd's Nautical School meant when they said I was better off buying some overalls -- and why the letter from the company stressed work clothes and heavy sweaters.

It soon became very apparent that cadets were a very cheap form of labour. If there was some extra work to do, it was much cheaper to get the cadets to do it, rather than paying sailors overtime. I had no objection to that, but I think what I resented more than that, was that we received only very limited training in practical navigation subjects. There was certainly never any formal instruction. You had to rely on the second or third mate explaining specific aspects of navigation when you were on watch with them. Otherwise, you were expected to study by yourself and pick things up on the job, or in your own spare time -- which was fairly minimal.

While those were the negative aspects of the job, the positive ones far outweighed them. I was sixteen, and I was starting to see the world -- and there was a fairly secure future ahead of me. In addition, I liked the life, and enjoyed working with the sailors and other cadets. We also got on very well with two of the three officers.

Coming home at the end of my first voyage -- it was only six weeks, I was looked upon as a bit of a celebrity by my friends who were still at school. I can't remember, but I'm sure I secretly revelled in it. Most of the time we had about five or six days in Belfast -- occasionally discharging the remainder of our grain and flour in Liverpool. Then we would start the cycle all over again, only this time it would be from Liverpool to Montreal.

My next trip -- it was now November, we ran into what was to be my first full Atlantic storm. I had seen movies about ships in gales and hurricanes, but nothing ever prepared me for what I was to witness during this trip. In the many years to come, I would experience similar situations -- each slightly different from the other. It doesn't matter whether I'm talking about this specific voyage, or the hundreds I've made in the thirty-four years I've spent at sea, in all cases it showed one simple thing -- the tremendous power of the sea. I can write about it, but it has to be experienced before you can fully understand it.

On that particular voyage I can remember standing on the bridge -- about 50 feet above the waterline -- or the equivalent height of a five-storey building, and looking up, at the boiling seas above my head, with the blowing spindrift stinging your face and totally obscuring visibility. The seas would come thundering down on the decks, crushing steel ventilators, just like you would crush a piece of paper. Our "jolly boat," stowed aft, just disappeared from its davits.

I have never been afraid of the sea, but I have always treated it with the utmost respect. In normal circumstances, in a seaworthy ship, taking reasonable seamanlike precautions, you will come through. If you don't take seamanlike precautions you will reduce your odds of survival, because the sea is very unforgiving.

We were hove-to for three days, which meant that we found a course, cruising at minimum speed, where we could ride out the storm, and hopefully keep damage to a minimum. Sleep was impossible. The best that could be hoped for was to be able to jam yourself in your bunk and not roll out.

It was during this trip that I was seasick for the first and last time. When people say that they don't care whether they live or die when they are seasick -- I can understand them. It is a terrible feeling. What doesn't help, is when your "friends" revel in your condition, and bring a garbage can containing the scraps of a meal they have just eaten, including fatty pork, pea soup and other such appetizing contents, to your bedside. Later, I must admit to taking part in similar episodes, in an effort to give a sick person an appetite! It didn't seem to work for some reason.

Other than the bad weather, this trip was similar to my first one. In Montreal, we would share a cab up to Phillips Square -- fifty cents each -- go to a movie -- have our banana split, then back to the ship. After that it was the Mission to Seamen in the evening, for the rest of the time in Montreal. If you had a bit of money to spend, it went on nylon stockings. I can't remember the details, but the term 15 denier and something else seems to come to mind. As nylons had not come back on to the market in the UK yet, they were very much sought after. At that time I didn't have

a girlfriend, so my mother and Aunt Peggy were the lucky recipients.

Normally, because of the quick turnaround times in either Liverpool or Belfast we would only manage to get a few days leave between trips. This really didn't bother the cadets, as we looked upon any port other than Belfast, as a foreign port.

We were told that our next trip was to be to the States, and that we would be loading grain and flour in Baltimore, and tobacco in Norfolk. My mother wrote to her brother, Bert, who lived in New York, a three hour train journey from Baltimore, to tell him about my visit. He wrote back to say that he was writing to the Master, asking him if I could come and visit him in New York, while the ship was in Baltimore. He would also enclose a rail ticket for me in the letter to the Master. With this in the offing the trip started on a high note for me.

When you travelled to Canada there was no requirement for a smallpox vaccination, but to the States there was. As a child I had never been vaccinated. For some unknown reason my mother never believed in it. As a result I had a terrible reaction to it. I developed a high fever and in fact, had all the symptoms of smallpox. I was in my bunk for two or three days -- and my arm felt like lead. Slowly I recovered, but I wished that my mother had me vaccinated as a child.

This trip we were to spend Christmas at sea. This was the day we got dressed up in our uniforms and had Christmas dinner with the "Big Boys" -- the officers and passengers. Only Christmas dinner mind you -- anything more would have been too much democracy being shown to the cadets!

One embarrassing and humiliating requirement before ships were allowed to go alongside in the States in those days, was a medical inspection by the port authorities. When the pilot boarded the ship at the harbour approaches he was accompanied by an immigration officer and a doctor. It was the doctor's task to inspect the private parts of all the crew, one by one. He was supposed to be checking for signs of venereal disease, but I found it ironic that he only checked sailors and cadets -- and not the officers and passengers. Obviously they were immune from any such diseases!

Once we were alongside I phoned my uncle, who told me that he had written to the Master and enclosed my rail ticket to New York. That was on a Sunday morning, and because I had the gangway duty that day I couldn't get away until the next day.

Sundays were normally quiet, as no cargo was worked that day, so it was a fairly easy, but sometimes boring duty. That afternoon I had a smartly dressed gentleman come on board asking to see Mr. Stark. I took him to Mr. Stark's cabin, and knocked on his door,

only to discover he was taking an afternoon nap. I told him he had a visitor, and left. Shortly after the visitor left the ship, Mr. Stark came out on deck in a flaming temper, yelling and shouting about me disturbing his sleep. He then told me that the Master had given him my rail tickets, but that I could forget all about going anywhere, as I was to have my leave stopped for the duration of the port visit. This was all because I had woken him up from a nap on a Sunday afternoon. I was very disappointed, but it was in keeping with the man's personality. It was another few months before I was to meet my uncle and his family, when the ship went to New York.

Most merchant ships on a regular run would normally carry up to twelve passengers. Any more than twelve meant that you had to carry a doctor -- hence the magic figure of twelve. Many of the passengers we carried were people from the UK who were emigrating to Canada. Most of them did not have a job to go to. They often spent the first night in Montreal at the YMCA or YWCA, but quite often, before the ship left Canada, five days later, most of them had jobs. Such was the job market in Canada in those days. Many worked in the Montreal area until they had saved up enough to move to other parts of Canada. Quite often, some months after a husband had travelled with us, his wife would also come out with us to join her husband, once he was established. Other passengers would make the round trip with us, usually in summer. Sometimes we would get Canadian passengers who would cross over with us to the UK -- spend a month there, then come back with us on the next trip.

During the winter months, when we couldn't get up to Montreal, because of the ice in the St.Lawrence, we would normally go to Saint John, New Brunswick, although occasionally we would go to the States. My first winter visit to Saint John was an experience that stuck in my mind for years. I had been used to British winters of windy, cold, raw days -- but nothing like the bitter cold of the Saint John waterfront, or trudging down King Street, after getting off the bus in West Saint John, to walk back to the ship.

Except for the cold, we enjoyed Saint John -- mainly due to some friends of Frank Best, who came from Dublin. The entire Rigby family was extremely kind to us. They made us feel very much at home, where we were all treated like family by these genuinely fine people.

While we would normally return to Belfast or Liverpool with our cargo, occasionally we would go elsewhere. One trip took us to Cork. In Belfast or Liverpool the grain was discharged by large suckers -- the same type of thing that covered my new uniform with dust on my first day on board. In Cork we were met on the jetty by an army of horse-drawn carts, and dozens of men with burlap sacks and shovels. Where it would normally have taken four or five days to discharge elsewhere, it took us four weeks to shovel, bag, sling and transport by horse and cart in Cork.

We were berthed on a main road with pubs the whole length of it. This made it very difficult to account for the sailors at times. It was not uncommon to see a sailor go on to the jetty to feed a horse with a handful of grain, even though the horse was up to his ankles in the stuff. The sailor would work his way along the horses until he got close to the nearest pub -- and then he would nip inside, and you'd lost him for an hour or two.

Cork was also the only place I had ever been where the girls coming in from the surrounding countryside to the Saturday night dance would wheel their bicycles across the dance floor around the dancing couples, to park them at the far end of the hall. Cork was different!

Frank Sadler left the ship after I'd been there a few months, to go as uncertificated third mate on one of the company's smaller ships. He was relieved by a Terry McDowell, from Banbridge, who for some reason or another got the nick-name of McGinty. He was a twin, whose brother was on one of our other ships. Frank Best became the senior cadet.

Joe Paskins was a pleasant enough person, but he was always scheming, and did some odd things. We picked up our food, which was already on plates, from the galley, which was only about thirty feet from our mess. When it was Joe's turn to act as messman, we discovered it was not uncommon for him, when he was en route to our mess, to take food off one or two of the plates and put it on his own. If questioned about the unequal portions on the plates he would invariably say that the ship's rolling had caused the food to move from one plate to the other!

I haven't mentioned the engineers yet. The Chief and Second Engineer ate in the main Dining Saloon with the rest of the officers and passengers. However, the other four junior engineers ate in their own mess, next door to ours. I could never understand this. Did they have to pass a knife-and-fork test when they wrote their Second Engineers certificate that qualified them to eat with the other officers?

The Chief Engineer was a pompous, arrogant individual, who cared only for himself. One day in heavy seas, one of the junior engineers who was packing a piston on a deck winch, was hit by a large wave that came sneaking over the bulwarks. It threw him around all over the place, banging his head, arms and legs on the various bits of deck equipment. He could quite easily have been washed overboard. Badly shaken, he went up to the mess to calm down and collect himself. The Chief happened to be there at the time, so he told him what had happened. The Chief's only comment was, "I hope you didn't lose any tools over the side."

One thing that I encountered when we went to places like Norfolk was the overt racism. There is nothing subtle about a sign that says, "Whites only." Of course this was 1950, or 1951 and that's the way life was. Segregation was alive and well and living in the South. You had to be sure that you drank out of the "White" side of the water fountain when you went to the movies. The same was true of the toilets. It was strange really, because the coloured people (as they were called at the time), didn't want you to use their water fountain any more than the whites wanted the coloureds to use theirs. What the coloureds wanted was the right to choose, and not be told what fountain they were to drink out of.

Another thing I had to come to grips with was travelling on buses. A bus may have had many empty seats at the front, or white section of the bus, with the back of the bus full and standing room only for the coloureds. We just accepted it, because that was the way it was.

In France, my father had finally realized that the convalescent home idea was not going to work. I wasn't that it was not a good idea. It was just that it was before its time. The war in Europe had only been over a year when this venture started. People just didn't have the money for things that were seen as frills. Thirty-two years later I visited the area again, to find several such homes in the area -- all thriving. It was just a matter of being the wrong time.

With the business in France closed, my father came home to Northern Ireland, and went back to something he knew -- the sea. He joined a company called Leneghens, which had their ships registered in Belfast, but ran all over the world. My visits to Belfast between trips never coincided with his, so I was never to see him again, from the last time I saw him when I was on holiday in France.

Thelma's father, Uncle David was still at sea. He was now sailing with the Canadian Pacific Steamship Line, which ran from the UK to the east coast of Canada, on a similar run to our own. I hadn't seen him for some time -- certainly not since I had been to sea. Then one day I saw his ship, the Beaverlake, coming into Montreal. I went round to see him, and we had a good long chat. We talked about going to the movies, but he said he didn't feel too well, so we never went. It was nevertheless good to see him again. He was such a kind, gentle man. Within three months, on 3 January 1951, he died of coronary thrombosis, after having renal surgery. He was 51. Thelma had now lost both her mother and her father by the time she was 21 years of age.

I spent two years on the Ramore Head, and my only complaint about those two years, was not with the ship. It was with the part of the world that we were operating in -- the North Atlantic. I made twenty voyages, which meant a lot of bad weather in the winter, and a lot of fog off the Grand Banks in the spring and summer. It was a comfortable ship and I had good shipmates. We had a few changes

among the officers, but our nemesis, Mr. Stark was still there when I left.

In September 1951, I was transferred to the ss.Dunmore Head. I was now 18 years old.

CHAPTER FIVE -- JEEPS AND SMALL SHIPS

The Dunmore Head was a much smaller ship than the Ramore Head. It had been built during the Second World War in the Great Lakes. Because of their size, they were small enough to sail out of the Great Lakes complex and into the open ocean. As with their big sisters, the Liberty ships, many of these ships were put up for sale at the end of the war. They were given the generic name of "Jeeps."

The Head Line used these ships -- they had four, to great advantage. They had been built as "coal-burners." Some companies converted them to the modern system of oil-fired boilers, but not the Head Line -- and for good reason. Their normal run was to load coal in the UK, and to discharge it in Denmark. Once the coal was discharged, the holds were swept out and hosed down -- by the cadets of course. This was done while the ship was in transit to Sweden or Finland to load timber for the UK. Because timber is light, and ideally shaped for carrying as deck cargo, we would carry the timber stacked so high that it was almost level with the bridge, once the holds were filled.

It was not an uncommon sight in the past to see ships with a timber deck cargo coming into harbour with a list to one side or the other. As oil-burning ships burned the fuel oil that was contained in tanks at the lowest part of the ship, it would reduce the ship's stability -- because weight was being taken away from low down in the ship, making it slightly top heavy. This would make the ship unstable, until it found a new stable waterplane area -- hence the list. This condition could be further exacerbated by having sea water break over the deck cargo. Because it was wood, it would absorb a considerable amount of water, thus increasing its weight and making the previous condition worse -- or even dangerous.

By retaining the original configuration as a coal-burner, the above situations were not experienced. The coal bunkers were stowed high up in the 'tween decks, and as such the coal was always being trimmed downwards towards the stokehold, where the coal was fed to the boilers. As you burned fuel, this meant that the ship's stability was always improving. These ships were ideal for the role for which they were being used. That is the end of my physics lecture in this chapter.

I couldn't get away from the name Stark. Stanley Stark, Norman's older brother, was Master of the Dunmore Head. While he had many of the features of his younger brother, he was not the vicious, vindictive person his brother was. The Mate was Cyril Pringle, who had been the Second Mate in the Ramore Head -- a breath of fresh air.

There were only two cadets on that class of ship. Shaw Heddles,

the other cadet, was an easygoing, casual, friendly person. Nothing worried him, and we became good friends.

I was now seeing many new places, both in Britain and northern Europe. We would often load our coal cargo in a small village near Edinburgh, called Methil, in the Kingdom of Fife. It didn't take very long to load, so if you arrived first thing in the morning you would probably sail again that evening. If we managed to get a night in, we would descend en masse to the nearest pub, "The Brig Tavern." There we would spend the evening knocking back pints and having sing-songs. Stanley Stark was occasionally "bounced" from The Brig because he had become drunk and obnoxious! I visited the same Brig Tavern in 1993, and told them that the last drink I had there was 41 years earlier. I didn't have to buy a drink all evening!

When you were loading coal it didn't matter how hard you tried to seal your cabin to make it airtight, the fine coal dust particles would get into everything. Sometimes it wouldn't be obvious until you moved something in your cabin, only to notice that there would now be a clean spot where it had been. It even got into the clothes that were in your lockers. It was a very dirty cargo. Needless to say, cleaning the holds was not a job we enjoyed.

The homeward bound cargo from northern Europe was always some form of wood. We brought back everything from dressed lumber, to pit props. We even brought back telegraph poles from a place called Onega, in northern Russia. Onega was a town totally enclosed by a wooden wall around it, to keep out the wolves! It was a very basic town -- but we were still invited to the local ballet. In the evening we would watch the gazelle-like ballet dancers (the only entertainment in town) -- and during the day we would watch amazon women with bulging muscles throwing telegraph poles around just as though they were little sticks. Definitely a town of contrasts.

I enjoyed life in the Dunmore Head. I think that being in a small ship with a small crew, had a lot to do with it. Years later I think that it may have played a small part in my decision to go into submarines. On that same subject, one day while we were in Cardiff discharging pit-props, I bought a book called, "One of our Submarines." It was written by an Edward Young, Commander, RNVR, who, prior to the war, had been a publisher. His book, with its descriptions of his life in command of submarines, was the biggest single factor in interesting me in submarines.

After reading the book -- I couldn't put it down -- I was enthralled by submarines. I mentioned earlier, that as a teenager at school I had no burning ambition to go to sea, which was true. But after reading that book I couldn't get submarines out of my mind. It lit a fire inside me that was never extinguished. When I read that book in 1952, little did I realize that I would actually meet, and in one case, become a good friend of one Lieutenant Miers, Victoria Cross, mentioned in the book, but more on that subject later on. 1 have that same book on my bookshelf at home. However, again I am getting ahead of myself.

When we weren't on the northern Europe run, we would occasionally make a trip to the Mediterranean. I enjoyed these trips particularly, because it meant that I could finally get away from the rough and foggy North Atlantic, and the grey short winter daylight hours of northern Europe. Sun at last!

Sailing down the coast of Portugal and Spain was particularly enjoyable, using my binoculars to peer at the clumps of white houses that were dotted all along the coast. Then finally, before entering the Mediterranean, we would pass close to Tarifa, and then through the Straits of Gibraltar.

For me, there has always been a sense of anticipation and excitement when you were waiting to make a landfall, or the sighting of a specific headland or navigational aid. I never lost that feeling of excitement throughout my life at sea, almost willing the object, or piece of land, to peep over the horizon. You knew that what you were looking for would eventually appear, but there was that sense of anticipation and excitement, while you were waiting. The Rock of Gibraltar was an ideal place for making a landfall, because of its shape. Little did I realize at the time how familiar Gibraltar would become in the future.

It was about this time that some of the North African countries were flexing their muscles about their independence. In Sousse, near Tunis, we woke up one morning to the sound of small arms fire. The ship was berthed very close to the main square of the town -- just below the Casbah. The Casbah, or the Arab quarter, was where the unrest always started. Occasional shooting, mainly sniping, continued throughout the day. It didn't seem to disrupt too many people, as we continued loading esparto grass, without any interruption.

A curfew had been imposed by the local military authorities, but it didn't effect Shaw and me. We had met some French Foreign Legionnaires the previous day, and they had invited us to go ashore with them to explore the town (bars) that evening. So there we were, going from one bar to the other with an escort of heavily armed Legionnaires -- not the sort of people that most civilians would want to upset. It was just one of the many interesting experiences that happened to me over the years.

Occasionally, on the way down to the Mediterranean, we would call into Lisbon to load coal bunkers. It was carried out in the most basic fashion I have ever seen. It was loaded on an assembly line arrangement -- only the assembly lines were women. Women would walk up one gangway with huge baskets of coal on their head -- tip the contents into the bunker hatch, and then go down another gangway to pick up another full basket. This process took many hours to top up our bunkers.

Years later, when I wanted to "one-up" some young naval engineers, who were waxing eloquently about their new gas turbines and cruise diesels, I would ask them what they knew about coal burner

ships. During the silence that usually followed that question, I would then go on to explain how, when I was a cadet, we would trim coal from the bunker space down to the stoke hold. You could tell, that in their eyes, I must have been a lot older than they originally thought, because I was only one step away from sail -- which in effect I was.

It was sometime during my time in the Dunmore Head that we heard about the death of Norman Stark in the Ramore Head. There were various theories attached to his death, but the story that was the most accepted was the following one.

The story goes that he sent someone up to paint around the radar antenna one morning as they were steaming up the St.Lawrence. When the weather deteriorated Stark started the radar, forgetting the man on the mast. The man fell to his death after being struck by the rotating antenna.

This apparently played on Norman Stark's mind, and next trip on the way up the St Lawrence, while he was on watch, he left the bridge to go down to his cabin. When he didn't return the cadet on watch raised the alarm. The ship was turned round and a long search took place, without any success. It was assumed that he had jumped over the side because he was still depressed about being responsible for the death of a sailor during the previous voyage.

There were many people who did not subscribe to that conclusion. Norman Stark was a hated man, by most people. At sea,in a small cargo ship with very few people around at night, it is very easy to throw somebody over the side, particularly when it was dark. There was a strong suspicion that he had upset someone once too often, and that he paid for it. His body was never found, so the truth will never be known.

One of the things that the Head Line did, was to take senior cadets and appoint them as Third Mate as they went into their fourth year. While this provided excellent experience before sitting for your Second Mate's Certificate, it was not done for that reason by the company. They would have to pay a certificated Third Mate about twenty-eight pounds a month, whereas an uncertificated Third Mate need only be paid fifteen pounds. However, as a fourth year cadet, fifteen pounds a month was a lot better than the eight pounds I would receive as a cadet. Everybody was happy.

I wasn't transferred to another ship. Instead, I became Third Mate of the Dunmore Head on 25 November 1952, approximately three years after I first went to sea. I took down my lapel patches and had a stripe sewn on my sleeve instead.

As Third Mate I kept a standard watch between eight and twelve, both morning and evening. I thoroughly enjoyed navigating the ship. It was much more interesting navigating around the coast, with its tides, lights and headlands, than spending five or six days on a North Atlantic crossing, taking the occasional sight (when you could

see the sun or the stars). Because we didn't have radar, we used all the basic principles of navigation, which were being used a lot less in some companies, which had up-to-date electronic aids.

The Third Mate on entering and leaving harbour was like a one-man-band. He took the wheel -- he wrote the log -- he operated the telegraphs -- he sounded the whistle, and manned the phone to the engine room. Years later, when I was part of the vastly overcrowded bridge team in a warship, I often felt like telling people about my tasks on the bridge of the Dunmore Head, but I didn't -- because I don't think they would have believed me.

Once, leaving Dublin, the Master, Stanley Stark, was drunk as we sailed. Cyril Pringle, seeing the state of the Master, remained on the Bridge for the departure. As the one-man-band, I was supposed to take my rudder and speed orders from the Master. Had I done so we would have been aground within minutes of sailing. The problem was solved by the Master shouting his orders at me, and the Mate whispering the correct ones in my ear. We left Dublin safely, and Stanley Stark probably thought that he had made another successful departure!

In Londonderry one day I received a letter from my mother telling me that she had heard from my father, saying that he would not be coming home again. After he had gone back to sea, he spent a lot of time around the coast of Australia. Sometime during this period he had found himself a job as a Superintendent Stevedore in Cairns, Queensland. The last thing I had heard from my mother was that he wanted her to come out to join him there, so it was quite a shock to receive this letter saying that he had changed his mind, and that he didn't want her to go out there, nor was he coming home.

I managed to get a few days special leave. She was dreadfully upset. Although she hadn't spent a great deal of time with him since the beginning of the war, she obviously still loved him.

I remained in the Dunmore Head until June 1953, when I was told that I was to join the Delgany in Dublin. Who, or what was the Delgany? All our ships were named after headlands around Ireland.

The ss. Delgany was a ship owned by a company in Dublin that was a subsidiary of the Head Line -- Palgrave Murphy. They needed a Third Mate -- and I was selected from a host of non-volunteers. The ship itself had been built in the mid-twenties. Tonnage-wise it was about the same as the Dunmore Head. The officers' cabins had beautiful wood panelling. It had also carried passengers during its early days.

We were still carrying passengers after a fashion -- at least, warm bodies. Our cargo was a mixture of horses and cattle that were to be unloaded in Antwerp, with the abattoir as their final destination. The horses had been shorn of all hair, as the shipper could probably make some money out of the hair, before he shipped them.

The people who loaded these animals had an agreement with the union that required them to travel with the animals, "to look after their welfare." It also meant that they remained on board for the remainder of the voyage with nothing to do, except get drunk and start fights ashore in Antwerp or Rotterdam. In fact what happened, was that the company paid these men their wages, on condition that they did not make the voyage. It was easier to pay them, than have them disrupt the voyage. They all belonged to a gang in Dublin, called the "Animal Gang." They knew they were on to a good thing.

The round trip was from Dublin to Antwerp, then to Rotterdam, Cork and back to Dublin. It only took twelve days in all, but the experience of the transits up and down the English Channel, with its heavy volume of shipping traffic, was invaluable.

By August 1953, having met the minimum sea time requirements to sit for my Second Mate's Certificate, I came ashore and started my studies at Belfast Technical College.

CHAPTER SIX -- CHANGE OF SCENE

I was now a student again, albeit a slightly more mature one. As part of the company's agreement with a cadet, the company was bound to pay you for up to three months to study for your Second Mate's Certificate, or "ticket," as it was usually referred to. Studying at the "Tech" was a lot more structured than it had been at Captain Boyd's Nautical School -- but not necessarily any better.

I have not mentioned anything about girlfriends. That's for a very good reason. There wasn't one -- or certainly not a steady one. I had gone out with girls occasionally, both at home in Belfast, and in other parts of the UK, but I don't recall dating any girls when I was in the States or Canada -- mainly because it was too expensive in those countries at that time. For some months I had been seeing a girl called Iris Cregan, who worked in the Head Line office. She was probably the first girl that I considered as a steady girlfriend. Being at home for a couple of months now was a good chance for us to see how compatible we were.

It's not that I was an extremely bright student, because as I have stated earlier, at school I was just average -- but I didn't find anything we did during my studies there as being difficult in any way. So after nearly three months I sat for my "ticket." There were three parts to it -- written exams, orals and signals. You could sit one at a time if you wished, or you could do them all at the same time. However, if you did them one at a time you paid each time you did one. Being cheap, I chose to do the lot -- and passed!

Obtaining this qualification was the first step on a three rung ladder to the top qualification of a Master's Certificate of Competency, Foreign Going, which was now my goal. One down -- two to go. I now had to get another eighteen months seatime in before I could sit for my Mate's Certificate -- the next rung. This was not calender time -- this was time spent at sea, signed on the ship's articles, which could sometimes take over two years.

With the ink hardly dry on my new "ticket" I was sent to the ss.Rathlin Head for a short trip. This was the newest ship in the company, and was very comfortable. Unfortunately it went downhill from there.

In December 1953 I was posted to the ss.Torr Head as Third Mate, the oldest ship in the fleet. This ship was built in 1936 -- and looked every bit of it!

I spent five months in that ship. The only redeeming feature

about my time in the Torr Head, was that instead of going to Saint John for the winter months we went to Savannah, and then Norfolk and Baltimore, which meant that we avoided the terrible cold up north.

Luckily for me I was home on leave when my cousin Thelma was to be married to a young lieutenant in the army, called Ernie Thompson. I had never met him before, so it was a real pleasure when my mother, sister, Iris and I flew over to London for the wedding. I remember that Iris was less than impressed when I was ushered away by Ernie, his best man, my brother and other male invitees, to go on a pub crawl. Ernie and Thelma were married on the twenty-seventh of February 1954.

It was during my time in the Torr Head when I asked myself whether I really wanted to spend the next forty years, making ten voyages a year, across one of the most inhospitable oceans in the world -- or should I be looking elsewhere, where I might enjoy more temperate conditions. I decided to look for better weather.

I left the Head Line in April 1954. I had no complaint with the company. They had some archaic ideas, but so did many other companies. They had always treated me fairly and I had made some good friends.

The next five months I spent at home, without doing much. I'm not sure why I took this amount of time off, because it was not like me to do that. I was living at home with my mother and sister, and while I was supporting my mother, by supplementing the allowance she was getting from my father, I still seemed to have money in my pocket. I couldn't decide which shipping company I should write to. All I knew was -- I wanted sun!

One day, in the local newspaper there was an article about a man who had bought a fishing trawler somewhere in Ireland, and that he was looking for a navigator to get him to New Zealand. The idea attracted me, so I wrote to him, care of the newspaper, offering my services. Much to my surprise, a few days later, at about eight o'clock one morning, my mother woke me to say that there was a man at the front door looking for me. It was the Captain of the fishing boat, wanting to know if I wanted the job.

Over a cup of tea he gave me the details. In effect, it was a case of working my passage. I was to get fed etc., and in return, I would navigate the boat to New Zealand. If I had been guaranteed my passage home I would have gone like a shot, but I didn't fancy the idea of being left on the beach in New Zealand, with possibly very little money. Reluctantly, I turned down his offer. It would have been interesting -- but if I had accepted his offer, I probably would not have been writing this now -- at least, not with the same story to tell.

I finally decided to write to a Captain Stocks, who had been an old friend of my father's, and was now the Senior Marine Superintendent of T and J Harrison Ltd. They had taken over Rankin and Gilmore, the company that my father had been with, about twenty-five years earlier. They were known as, "Two of fat and one of lean," because of the two white stripes on either side of a red stripe on their funnel markings. They were also known as, "Hungry Harrison's." Nick names for shipping companies were common, so those derogatory terms did not deter me. Before I wrote to Captain Stocks I checked out which parts of the world their ships visited. Their normal voyages were of about three to four months duration, mainly to East and South Africa, the West Indies and Gulf of Mexico. That sounded sunny enough for me!

Unfortunately, it didn't have quite the same ring to it as far as Iris was concerned. Some time in the past year we had become engaged, which in retrospect was a stupid thing for both of us to do. I think we got engaged because it sounded like a good idea, and some of our friends were doing it. Exactly the type of reason why one should become engaged! Anyway, the idea of long voyages did not go down too well with half our team so we terminated our engagement amicably.

I went over to Liverpool for an interview with Captain Stocks at the company's office in Mersey Chambers -- occasionally called Misery Chambers, as I was to find out later. The Harrison Line ships were named after trades and professions, and I subsequently joined the ss. Speaker in Glasgow on 9th September 1954, as Third Mate.

The Speaker was a Liberty ship -- one of the many that had been built during the war. They were very basic in design, but very functional. They were floating warehouses. There was no pretence at fine lines and good looks. They had been built in the United States for one purpose, and one purpose only -- to get supplies across the Atlantic to Europe. If they managed to make one trip across the Atlantic before being torpedoed, they were seen as cost effective. The ships were very slow, with a maximum speed of ten knots. Because of their bluff bow, they seemed to push the ocean in front of them.

The Speaker was undergoing a refit when I joined her on Clydebank. Steve Richardson, the Master, was a very affable man. The Chief Officer, "Canadian" Johnston, was also a pleasant man, but I didn't think he was very bright. His wife was living on board while we were in refit. He told me she had been a painter, which I assumed, meant that she was an artist. Wrong! She painted ships hulls!

My first trip with the Speaker was to South Africa. Although I had been at sea for over four years now, this was all new to me. Our first stop was in Las Palmas, in the Canary Islands, to take

on fuel. We then had a long passage to Durban -- in fact it took twenty-eight days from Liverpool to Durban. That was more time than it took to make a round trip in the Head Line.

When we crossed the equator into the South Atlantic I saw my first albatross. What a marvellous bird. With its twelve-foot wing span it seemed to soar forever, skimming above the waves by inches, with barely a movement of its wings. They were so graceful. Another thing that was different. While I had seen quite a few dolphins before, I had never seen them keep station on the ship by diving in and out of the ship's bow wave for long periods. I loved it all.

There is a world of difference from being at sea in the tropics to ploughing across the Western Ocean. I enjoyed being on watch at night when I could continue my star gazing in the southern hemisphere. The tropics certainly agreed with me.

Just to make sure that I didn't get a sense of false security about the weather always being idyllic in the South Atlantic, things changed when we neared the Cape of Good Hope. Because there is no land between the Antarctic and South Africa, the weather around the Cape can be just as bad as any North Atlantic storm. When there has been a storm in the Southern Ocean, the swell comes rolling in over those miles of unbroken ocean. Over the next few years I was to experience that weather frequently.

Between the Cape and Durban we hugged the coast. This was to take advantage of a close-in-shore counter-current, to the normally south-flowing Aghullas Current. With our maximum speed of ten knots we needed all the help we could get.

I remember the exhilaration I felt when we first sighted the Bluff at the approaches to Durban. As we passed around the Bluff it was full of whale-catchers, as they used Durban as their base for their forays into the Southern Ocean. The smell was terrible.

I was very lucky that my first trip was to Durban, because I had a contact there. My brother's current girlfriend came from there, so she asked me to contact her father, which I did. He, in turn, introduced me to his nephew, Peter Kettle, who was about my age. That was the start of a long friendship. Although I haven't seen him for 35 years we still correspond at Christmas time.

I thoroughly enjoyed Durban. It was a lovely clean city, with absolutely fabulous beaches. Peter had a car, so therefore I managed to see much of the surrounding countryside as well. In my subsequent travels all over the world, Durban still ranks as one of my favourite places. It was also the first place where I ran into apartheid.

One afternoon walking along South Beach I stopped to talk to a beach photographer about cameras. He was very interested in my

new Voightlander which I had just bought. During our discussion, one of his previous customers came up to him to enquire if his photos were ready. He asked him to go over to his booth with his "boy," who would check for him. His comment was, "You don't expect me to walk along with this black bastard, do you?"

After discharging our cargo, we headed south down the coast again, loading in East London, Port Elizabeth and Capetown. While I enjoyed Durban, I think nothing in that part of the world can compare to the scenery on the approaches to Capetown. If you arrive in the late afternoon, a long thin layer of white cloud, called the "table cloth," sits just above Table Mountain. With the Lion's Head and Table Mountain as a back drop, the city of Capetown rises gently up their lower slopes.

Our next stop was to be Liverpool. We had been away about three months -- longer than I had ever been away before -- and I was smitten with what I had seen of Africa.

CHAPTER SEVEN - AFRICA

I remained in the Speaker until March 1955, having made one more trip to South Africa. On completion of each voyage one normally managed to get two or three weeks leave. The amount of leave due was determined by a complicated formula of so many days a month, plus one day's leave for every Sunday spent at sea, providing it was more than eight hours! I normally managed to get about three weeks leave.

On completion of my leave, I received instructions to join the mv. Governor in Liverpool. She was one of our relatively new motor ships, with very comfortable accommodation. After loading the majority of our cargo in Liverpool, we then sailed for Milford Haven in the Bristol Channel to load bombs for the Royal Air Force in Kenya, before sailing for Mombasa via the Suez Canal.

About this time, in the early to mid-fifties, the "winds of change" (to quote the Prime Minister of the day) were taking place in Africa. Independence was the war cry -- and sometimes, it was more than a war cry -- it was war. As were many other colonial powers, Britain was reluctant to see her colonies gain independence. They knew it had to come, but they wanted it on their terms -- not the Africans.

In the case of Kenya, the leader of the independence movement, Jomo Kenyatta, had been arrested, jailed without trial, and sent into exile to the arid northern border of Kenya, where he could do no harm. However, Britain was not prepared for the support that Kenyatta had amongst many of his people, particularly his own Kikuyu tribe, and the Meru and Embu.

What stemmed from this surge of support for Kenyatta was an organization that was called Mau-Mau. Those words meant nothing, but the Mau-Mau had become a terrorist organization whose aim was independence for Kenya. It's interesting to note that organizations that fought for their independence, were mainly called terrorists -- but once independence was gained, they became freedom fighters!

The British government decided to bomb the Mau-Mau into submission -- hence the reason why we had been to Milford Haven, loading bombs for the RAF. It used to be called gunboat diplomacy, but as the Mau-Mau were three hundred miles from the coast, a gunboat was not quite the right vehicle. Therefore, the might of the RAF was to be used, "to teach the wogs a few lessons about who's running their country." The Mau-Mau fought the authorities with home made rifles and long-bladed knives called pangas. This was gunboat

diplomacy at its finest!

While I had been in the Mediterranean before, I had never been through the Suez Canal and beyond. Once through the canal and the Gulf of Suez, we came into the Red Sea. I had never experienced heat quite like it. It was like an oven. Night and day, the temperature hardly changed. It remained with us for our five days passage between Suez and Aden.

At the southern end of the Red Sea, are the Straits of Bab-el-Mendab - the Gates of Hell -- a most aptly named spot. In those days ships did not have air-conditioning. The only way to get any air into your cabin was by using wind scoops which fitted in your port hole -- and even then, whatever air you managed to get was hot and dry.

When we arrived in Mombasa we were told that we were to go alongside the berth to discharge our bombs, because they received high priority. However, once we had landed the bombs, we would have to go out in the stream and remain at anchor, until a berth became available for us to discharge our general cargo. We were told that we would probably be at anchor for about three weeks, due to congestion in the port. This was mainly caused by giving priority to ships with supplies for the Royal Air Force.

On our first day alongside I became very friendly with two of the RAF officers who had come down from Nairobi to arrange for their bombs to get to their destination. Because of my interest in the Mau-Mau and the whole East African situation, they invited me to spend a week at RAF Eastleigh in Nairobi with them. Of course, first and foremost I had to get the Master's permission. As the ship was not going anywhere except the anchorage, he gave me the permission I needed. Captain Herbert Jones, the Master, was an extraordinary man whom I respected very much. I will spend some time on that subject later.

Before we flew from Mombasa I had to sign a "Blood Chit," which absolved the Air Force from any blame should I be killed or injured during my time with them. We flew up to Nairobi in an old Lincoln bomber, which had been used in the Second World War. I was sitting behind the Navigator as we took off. What I saw did not fill me with confidence -- and I then realized why they were so insistent that I sign the Blood Chit. As we trundled down the runway, the wings were actually flapping, as the aircraft built up speed! Regardless, we made it.

I stayed in the Officers Mess at RAF Eastleigh while I was there. My two friends arranged with Air Operations for me to go on some bombing runs in the Lincolns. After that, I would then fly in the back seat of Harvards for some low level bombing and strafing runs. They were normally used as trainers, but had been converted to carry

20-pound fragmentation bombs under the wings.

I attended both the pre-flight briefs and debriefs with the rest of the aircrew, which I found very interesting. The briefer stressed the need for accurate bombing, as our ground forces were not very far away from where we were bombing.

Before we took off, the briefer gave us "Survival Chits" (see the Photo Gallery at the end of the book). These chits were written in English and Swahili. If your aircraft had to make a forced landing or some such thing you were supposed to wave this chit in the faces of the Mau Mau, who were approaching you with the one intention of removing your head with their pangas (machetes). You were supposed to talk to them in Swahili telling them that the British government would reward them if they assisted us. The main problem being that nobody in the aircrew could speak Swahili, and with them charging at you, there was very little time to learn! I don't think waving a piece of paper in front of a charging Mau Mau warrior, who could not read was a well thought out idea! However, I suppose some bureaucrat in London thought that he was doing a good job in preparing these Survival chits!

On the five sorties in which I took part, our targets were either in the Aberdare Forest, or on the slopes of Mount Kenya. After we dropped our bombs we would make a couple of low passes, strafing the area with machine gun fire, then head for home.

The aim of the raids was not so much to kill the Mau-Mau, as it was to force them out of the thick forest, where our ground forces could engage them. The forests were so thick you couldn't see anyone. All we could see were the explosions where our bombs fell. Aircraft went on separate sorties, with the idea of keeping an aircraft up in the air on a continuous basis during daylight hours.

While I was there, I went into the city of Nairobi a couple of times. It was a strange sight to see women dressed in their summer dresses with pistols around their waists, having afternoon tea at the New Stanley or Norfolk Hotels. The farmers and their wives would come into town in their Landrovers with an arsenal of rifles and sidearms. This was for real. This was not for fun -- whites were being attacked and killed by the Mau-Mau. They wanted "Uhuru" -- their independence.

One evening I was invited to have dinner at the home of one of my RAF friends that I had met in Mombasa. Over the years I have eaten many meals, under many different circumstances, but nothing has ever compared to this. It was the strangest setting I've ever experienced. There we were, with the men dressed in suits and the ladies dressed in their evening finery, eating dinner, carrying out normal dinner conversation, with loaded revolvers on the table!

The Mau-Mau had developed a pattern of attacking white people

while they were eating their evening meal, usually by coming in through the back door -- overpowering the house-boy, and then attacking those having dinner with their pangas. Therefore, most white families took all necessary precautions, including having guns at the ready on the table.

Unfortunately, my week in Nairobi went by much too quickly. I had experienced something that I don't think any other Merchant Navy officer had managed to do -- to fly with the Royal Air Force on operational missions. But not only that, I had experienced this world where normal people continued with their everyday lives, except that they were armed and prepared to defend themselves if need be. When I returned to my ship in Mombasa I was given the name of "Bomber Hunt." That name stayed with me for some time. It was an experience I will never forget.

It's ironic to think now, that Kenyan independence was one of the very few reasonably successful stories associated with independence on that continent. Kenyatta became President, and governed the country fairly and justly, which was the opposite of most of the results, where other countries obtained their independence. Even today, Kenya is one of the more stable countries in Africa.

Many of those countries that obtained independence twenty to thirty years ago are still embroiled in tribal wars, which have killed hundreds of thousands of people. If that's the price of democracy, then colonialism may not have been too bad after all.

I know that it's not a popular view in this era of not being able to speak one's mind in case it upsets somebody, but frequently the results of democracy in Africa speak for themselves. On the other hand, many colonists did not adequately prepare the Africans for independence -- so who is right?

We were eventually given a berth alongside, where we discharged the rest of our Mombasa bound cargo. Then it was down the coast, discharging more cargo in Tanga, Dar-es-Salaam, and over to the spice island of Zanzibar. From there, our next stop was Beira and Lorenzo Marques (now called Maputu), where we loaded our homeward-bound cargo.

Because many white Kenyans were worried about their future in Kenya, quite a few of them returned to the UK, to start life anew. That must have been a very hard decision to make, because, not only were they leaving a country where, in most cases, they had lived for years -- but they were going to have to change their lifestyles as well. Life in Britain was different from life in the colonies.

I felt particularly sorry for one elderly gentleman that returned to England with us as a passenger. He was taking a very

large amount of Kenyan cheese back to the UK with him for his family. He took great pains to ensure that the Chief Steward would keep the cheese in the ship's refrigerator for the passage home. The only problem was that the Chief Steward didn't tell the Second Steward, who was responsible for bringing up the provisions for the crew from the refrigerator. As a result, I, and about sixty other people on board, thoroughly enjoyed this new cheese that we thought the Chief Steward must have purchased in East Africa. Not only had this poor man lost his country -- he had lost his cheese as well!

After some leave when we returned to Liverpool, we were off again to East Africa. This time we would be going clockwise, right round Africa, through the Mediterranean to East Africa, then onwards to South Africa -- before returning to the UK via the South Atlantic.

It was during this voyage that I received word that my father had died. We were in Mombasa at the time, and I can remember exactly where I was standing when the Second Mate, Tom Wilson, handed me a letter from my mother. Apparently my father had died on the 3rd of July 1955, but because there had been a problem trying to locate his next of kin, my mother only received the news in mid-September.

It was the Salvation Army that had finally managed to track her down, after much sleuth work. Since then I have always been an avid financial supporter of the Salvation Army. I have been very impressed with the work they do all over the world. My father had died from cancer of the bladder, in Hobart, Tasmania, where he had been a Cargo Superintendent. As my mother never knew that he had been ill, the news came as an awful shock to her.

Even now, it's difficult to say how this news affected me. I suppose I was sad, but I wasn't heartbroken. He was a man I hardly knew. He was a kind man -- and I don't recall ever having a falling out with him -- but we weren't close. Years later, in fact, only a year or two ago, I realized that neither he, nor I, had ever said, "I love you." Maybe it wasn't necessary. Maybe it was understood, but it was never stated. Perhaps I didn't know him well enough and love never entered into it. I just don't know.

When my mother died in September 1991, I felt grief, but not that all consuming grief that one is supposed to feel when one loses a loved one. But just like my father, I know I never told her that I loved her. Nor can I recall her saying it either. Is it because we were raised in a different era, where love between parent and child was assumed, or was it because one did not express intimate feelings to your parents -- or was it just me? One thing I do know, is that I have always told my girls that I love them -- and continue to do so today.

I made two more trips in the Governor to South and East Africa. The Second Mate during that period was Michael Jones. From the

beginning we formed a strong friendship over those few months that has endured to the present day. I can say quite unequivocally that today, both he and his wife Jean, are my closest friends. I had the honour of being best man at their wedding. Many years after we first met, Michael was to become the Marine Superintendent of Harrison's. It's just unfortunate that we now live three thousand miles and an ocean apart. However, even so, we have managed to see each other quite regularly.

Earlier I made a passing reference to Captain Herbert Jones. He was a man whom I respected and admired. I think I have always respected men who were gentlemen. By that, I don't mean gentlemen of means. I mean men who have good manners and are considerate of others. You don't need to have means to do that. In the world of today those ideas may be archaic to some people, but I still feel that there is always a place for good manners.

Herbert Jones was a character with a supreme ego. At night, he would come up to the bridge while I was on watch and regale me with his stories. He covered every subject that one could think of, and in each case he was the hero of the story. I think that one of his favourite quotes says it all -- "If you are in any doubt about something, just say to yourself, what would Herbert Jones have done?" I really enjoyed sailing with him.

I left the Governor in May 1956 to come ashore to study for my First Mate's Certificate. While I obviously wanted to get on with obtaining further qualifications, I was sorry to be leaving the Governor. I had enjoyed myself there. I liked my shipmates, and it was really where I got my first taste and love for East Africa.

This time I passed the writtens and orals exams, but failed the signals part of the examination. As this was only a minor setback I was happy to go back to sea again, when they needed a Third Officer in an emergency, before attempting, and passing, the examination again on my return at the end of the voyage.

In August 1956 I joined the ss. Historian in London. She was a Liberty ship, similar to the Speaker. This was going to be my first trip to the West Indies. The Master was George Harvey, who appeared to be a very nervous and weak man. The Chief Officer was a drunk, who, when he was in that condition, was a violent man. Some time after I had left the Historian he was fired for chasing George Harvey with a fire-axe. No wonder Captain Harvey gave the impression that he was nervous!

We made the standard Harrison's West Indies voyage -- Trinidad, Barbados, Antigua and Demerara, then back to Liverpool. Whenever the ship was in Liverpool I would spend a considerable amount of time at my aunt's house. She was the same aunt that my mother, sister and I had stayed with on our return from France. Her son Roy, with

whom I went to school when we returned from France in 1947, was about my age, and we got on well together. That month, October 1956, Roy was going to get married to Dorothy Benbow, who lived nearby. Luckily, I was going to be home for the wedding.

One Saturday afternoon, just before the wedding, I was sitting watching television in the lounge above my aunt's shop, when in walked this lovely blonde girl, who said, "You must be Ray." It was Shirley Norris, who had been a friend of Roy and Dorothy's for many years. She actually remembered my sister from when we lived there in 1947. I was certainly very attracted to this blonde beauty, although I found out that she was going out with a Royal Air Force officer at the time.

While I was in Liverpool during this period I sat and passed my signals examination, only to be sent back to the Historian again -- but this time as Second Officer. We were off again on another couple of short voyages to the West Indies.

When I was in Liverpool I normally stayed with my aunt. Emma, her maid, enjoyed looking after me, whether I liked it or not! There are so many stories about Emma that a whole book could be written on that subject alone. Once, when Roy and Dorothy were in the shop at lunch time, Emma fed me my soup before they came in. She would always wait at the door of the dining room to get my reaction to her cooking, so of course I always told her it was excellent. That day the soup tasted terrible, but I ate it -- as all good guests do. When Roy tasted it, he spat it out and called for Emma. She was very upset, pointing out to him that Ray had liked this chicken soup. He asked her to produce the can, which she did. There was one small can of chicken soup and one large can of evaporated milk! Emma had never learned to read or write -- but the cans looked the same to her!

Although I was getting all the sun I wanted on the West Indies trips, I preferred the South and East African run. I enjoyed those parts of the world more than anywhere else I had ever been, therefore I was delighted when I was told that I was going back to the Governor as Second Officer.

CHAPTER EIGHT -- SHIRLEY

In January 1957, Shirley and I became engaged. Due to the uncertainties of dates and my future schedule, it was impossible to set a firm date for the wedding -- except that it would be some time in the autumn.

Shirley's father and mother were delightful people. Different in so many ways, but nevertheless a good match. Bert Norris, who was born in Liverpool on the 31st July 1902, was a very gentle, shy man. He was a man who loved music -- from classical to popular, and whenever he sat down at a piano, he created magic with his fingers. During the thirties he was a professional musician, travelling and playing with different bands, all over Britain. Unfortunately, his war service interrupted that. When he came out of the army after the war, only the big bands had survived, so that was the end of his music career. It was such a pity, as he had this great talent. He was in his own world when his fingers touched the keyboard. At this time he was working for the Cunard Line.

Shirley's mother San (whose real name was Frances), was born in Liverpool on the 27th June 1904. She was the driving force in the family. That expression should not be seen as derogatory in any way. She had the sole responsibility of bringing Shirley up during the war years. She was a lady of great principle, who lived by what she thought was right, and she would stick to those principles through thick and thin. I think because of the impression she gave to those who didn't know her well, she could be seen as being slightly stern and unbending, which was far from the truth. In truth, she was really quite a shy person. She brought Shirley up with the same set of values that she had, which is the highest compliment that I can pay her.

I always had a good and warm relationship with both of Shirley's parents, but for some reason or another, I never felt comfortable about calling them, "Mum and Dad." I don't know why.

The other dominant force in Shirley's family was her grandmother, or Nanny, as she was called. When you met Nanny, you knew exactly where Shirley's mother got her no-nonsense approach from. She was as tough as nails on the outside, with a heart of gold on the inside, filled with compassion for others. It's just that she didn't want that side to be exposed too much, lest she be thought of as soft.

On the 4th of February 1957, I joined the Governor as Second Officer. Herbert Jones was still there as Master, as were several other people that I knew from my previous time with the ship. I

remained with that ship for another fourteen months. They were happy days.

Most of our time was spent on the East African run. I now had quite a few friends in Mombasa. One in particular, Dick Norton, had come out to East Africa some years before. Like many people who came out to the colonies in those days, they came out for different reasons. Some had been in trouble with the law. Some had been the black sheep in a wealthy family. Others just wanted to live a pleasant life in the tropics. I never did find out why Dick was there. He was obviously well educated and very articulate, and money did not appear to be a problem. He and his wife would occasionally invite me to their cottage at a place called Malindi. Their cottage, which was really a very spacious beach house, overlooked the Indian Ocean. It was called Kikambala, which in Swahili means crooked. This was because not one wall was at right angles to the next.

I think the most vivid memory that I have of those trips to the cottage, was waiting for the rope-powered ferries that would take us across the numerous creeks. At night, I would sit in the back seat of the car, with my eyes closed, and the windows open to let in some of the cool ocean air, and with no other noise around, just listen to the sounds of the jungle. Dick could identify many of the sounds, but to me it was so totally different from anything that I had ever experienced. I can't describe the feeling. All this just added to my total enjoyment of East Africa.

Shirley and I finally settled on a date for the wedding. It was originally going to be on the 12th of October, which coincidentally would have been my eighth anniversary of going to sea. However, because there was some doubt whether the ship could get home in time, we settled on the 19th of October.

My cousin Olaf, the same one who had deserted me to the arms of the law all those Halloweens ago, was my best man. Shirley's cousin Freda, who lived in Southampton, was her bridesmaid. We were married in St.Andrew's Church, at the corner of Queens Drive and Muirhead Avenue. I must admit I enjoyed the day tremendously. It was a beautiful day, which complemented a beautiful bride.

Apparently, Shirley's Nanny was sitting with her hat on, waiting to go to the wedding about three hours before it was due to take place. This was the only wedding that she ever attended of any of her grandchildren.

Our honeymoon was spent in Barcelona. The weather was good and we did the normal tourist things, even if I couldn't get eggs and bacon for breakfast in the hotel where we were staying! However, you could get octopus, which Shirley thoroughly enjoyed! All too soon we had to come back to reality, which in my case meant going back to sea, and in Shirley's case, back to managing the office at

a firm which sold and repaired cash registers.

Although Harrison's did not allow wives to go to sea with their husbands in those days, they did allow them to stay on board in ports away from Liverpool. Quite often, Herbert Jones's wife would drive Shirley and the Chief Engineer's wife from Liverpool to wherever the ship might be. It might be Glasgow or Avonmouth, or another such place.

Although the visits were only for three or four days normally, we enjoyed those moments, as it increased the amount of time we could spend together while the ship was in the UK. The final event of any of those visits was to watch Herbert Jones start the car for his wife -- because obviously he was the only person who could do it properly! I wonder how she managed when he was away at sea for three or four months?

When we were first married we lived with Shirley's parents at 78 Ferguson Road, in West Derby. After a few months we moved to our own flat. We couldn't afford much -- and that's what we got -- not much. I remember brushing the carpet in the sitting room with a stiff brush because we could see it was very dirty. As I brushed, we discovered the carpet had a pattern. That's how dirty it was.

We were allowed to have one bath a week, as we shared a bathroom with the other tenants, which was not uncommon in those days. When it was your turn, you had to get the key from the landlord. Once, he allowed Shirley to have a bath halfway through the week. However, that meant she had to forgo her regular bath day. I think the final straw was when Shirley put her heel through the floor. We gave our notice, and found a very attractive flat in Southport.

We enjoyed Southport, although it was a bit far from Liverpool, which meant we had to take the train to get into town. While we were there, Shirley became ill and had to spend a few weeks in hospital. When she first became ill, before she was admitted to hospital, I didn't think it was as serious as it was. I just thought she wanted a rest from work. Shirley took great exception to my views, and even to this day, she is still upset about it. If I had only thought, I should have known that she wouldn't do that. She was her mother's daughter, and that was not the sort of thing she would do.

Shirley now worked for an agency, which allowed her the opportunity of working when I was at sea, and taking time off when I was at home. Occasionally we would spend part of our leave in Belfast with my mother. Shirley enjoyed Belfast. We also went up to Catterick in Yorkshire, to stay with Thelma and Ernie, where he was now stationed. It was close to his home of Richmond. Visiting Ernie and Thelma was always fun. They now had a new daughter, Valda,

who had been born on the twenty-fifth of November 1956.

In April 1958 I was transferred to the mv. Herdsman. Her Master was a very fussy little man called Thompson. Luckily, I only had to make two trips with him, before a new Master was appointed -- a Captain John Sharman, Royal Naval Reserve. We also got a new Chief Officer, Bob Harvey. I really enjoyed my time with Captain Sharman and Bob Harvey. So did Shirley. We became very good friends with Bob and his wife Sellis -- a friendship that still exists with Sellis, as unfortunately Bob passed away some years ago now.

Normally, the Chief Steward was the "doctor" on board, unless a qualified doctor was carried. I have no idea what qualifications the Chief Steward had to perform these duties, but in most ships he did. In the Herdsman, the Chief Steward was squeamish about blood and injections, and asked me if I would help him if he ever needed my assistance. On departure from Port Sudan one trip, one of the stokers developed gonorrhea, after being with a Fuzzy-Wuzzy debutante.

The Chief Steward asked me if I would give the man the standard injections of penicillin, as prescribed by the doctor before we left Port Sudan. I had never given an injection before, but it looked simple enough, so I told this hulking brute of a man to drop his pants as I prepared the injection. Putting the needle in was not difficult, but I didn't know that after pushing in the plunger, one was supposed to keep one's thumb on it, to avoid any back pressure as the needle was being withdrawn. As a result, as soon as I lifted my thumb off the plunger everything I had put into this man's backside was now back in the syringe.

I was now in a dilemma. Should I press the plunger again, or should I withdraw the needle and tell the man to come back tomorrow. Looking at this man's size, I took the latter course of action for two reasons. Firstly, I was sitting beside the Chief Steward's washbasin, so I quickly removed the syringe, and squirted the contents into the washbasin. Also, if I had made a second attempt to inject the man, he may have thought that I didn't know what I was doing -- and I didn't want a seven-foot stoker angry at me. The next few days of treatment went fine. I just added another day's treatment for the first treatment that went wrong. He never found out!

Some members of our West Indian crew had formed a steel band, and they were excellent. That was in the days when steel bands were never heard of outside the West Indies. They would practise for hours -- and when Shirley was on board in the UK, they would play for us. One of our favourites was, "Yellow Bird." Whenever I hear that song today, my mind goes right back to those days on the Herdsman.

For the first two Christmases after we were married I sailed on the 24th of December one year and the 23rd the next year. Sailing

within a day or two of Christmas was very hard, especially as we would be apart for three or four months. That was one time of the year when I wanted to be home -- but that was life in the Merchant Navy. In the world of commerce, ships were only making money for their owners if they were underway -- not sitting in harbour.

On the long passage down to South Africa, Captain Sharman and I would have many long and interesting discussions about the Royal Navy. He was interested in what my father had done, and I was very interested in his exploits during the war. I had never lost my interest in the Royal Navy, and the more I spoke to Captain Sharman the more focused it was becoming.

I left the Herdsman in March 1959 to come ashore to study, and sit for my Master's Certificate, Foreign Going. -- the top rung of the ladder as far as a Merchant Navy officer was concerned. This would allow me to sail as Master on any British merchant ship, regardless of tonnage or geographic boundaries.

After Shirley's illness we gave up the flat in Southport, and moved back in with Shirley's parents. This time I found the workload a lot harder than my previous tickets. I spent every night studying in the dining room until about ten, when I would come into the sitting room, and have a cup of tea, before going to bed. I did that solidly for three months, with very few breaks. However, in a perverse way I enjoyed it. Subjects that I had not liked in school, such as trigonometry and physics, were now interesting and challenging. Quite often, I would enlist Shirley's help when I wanted her to listen to me reciting the Rules of the Road -- nautical, that is. I know that she can still remember such phrases as, "a green light without a red light, or a red light without a green light is seen anywhere but ahead, etc., etc."

I wrote and passed my writtens and signals, but failed my orals. Shirley just couldn't believe I'd missed my orals. She was astounded. She had so much faith in me. But like many others who had failed part of their exams, I was just human. However, it didn't take long to rectify the problem, and on 29th July 1959 I had it -- my brand new Master's Certificate.

A few weeks after I got my ticket, Shirley and I decided to take a small sail boat out on the artificial lake in Southport. Shirley felt quite indignant when the man who ran the Marina asked if we knew how to sail. Luckily she didn't say anything, but she was going to tell him that her husband had a Master's Certificate, so of course he knew how to sail. She was extremely glad she didn't say anything, when ten minutes later I ran the boat up on top of the revetment.

Harrison's told me that I was going to stay ashore for a while to relieve officers who were on leave while their ships were in

Liverpool. After that I was to go to their newest ship, the Adventurer, which was being built in Sunderland. I was also delighted to hear that Captain Sharman was going to be the Master.

It was during this period that Shirley and I discussed the subject of me joining the Royal Naval Reserve. We both thought it was a good idea, and it was also something that I felt that I would like to do, so I applied. After various interviews and medical examinations in both Liverpool and at the Admiralty in London, I was told that I would be appointed as a Temporary Probationary Acting Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve. When I told Captain Sharman he was delighted.

CHAPTER NINE -- THE NAVY

I knew that at sometime or another I would be required to carry out my first period of training with the Royal Navy Reserve (RNR), so I had to discuss this with the company. It was agreed that I would join the Adventurer in Sunderland, and leave her in Hamburg, where she was to be fitted out. I signed off the Adventurer on 2nd of December 1959, and started RNR Course P-39 about a week later, at the Royal Naval Barracks in Portsmouth. It was a course of five months' duration.

The first part, up until Christmas, was really to teach this dozen or so Merchant Navy officers what the Royal Navy was all about. We learned such things as how to salute, how to march -- after a fashion -- and the basic administrative procedures of the Navy. We also learned about the Divisional system, which is the heart of the Navy. It is about people, and how to get the best out of them. It is a system that makes an officer, through his chiefs and petty officers, responsible for the training, discipline, and what is most important, the welfare, of several men in his "Division."

The Divisional system stays with you regardless of rank -- from sub-lieutenant to admiral. You are always responsible for, and to, people. I think that is probably the biggest difference in philosophies between the Merchant and Royal Navies. In a merchant ship you did your own job, under someone's direction, but you never became personally involved in a sailor's business outside his actual work on board, such as his training, or his, or his family's welfare. Those needs were met by organisations ashore, usually. There was never a close personal involvement, mainly because it's a business, and it's something business cannot afford. But as I said, it's the heart of the Navy.

During the period before Christmas I managed to find a flat for Shirley and me in a lovely old house called Pelham Lodge, at 37 St. Edwards Road, in Southsea. It was owned by an Electrical Commander, who worked in Portsmouth Dockyard. This was the first Christmas that I had spent at home since we were married, so it was to be enjoyed.

Just after the New Year we moved down to Portsmouth, where I started the next part of the course. During the next few months we took courses in gunnery, anti-submarine warfare, communications, navigation, operations and nuclear, bacteriological and chemical defence.

While some subjects on the course were more interesting than others, the one that has been imprinted on my mind, more than any

other over all these years, was parade training. This training took place in HMS EXCELLENT, at Whale Island, the Royal Navy's Gunnery School. Here, we learnt to carry out every form of marching and parade training possible, with and without rifles, and fixed bayonets, to full ceremonial, involving sword drill.

I think the best part of the course for me, was learning to be an officer of the guard. Being guard officer, and being totally confident that you knew the "script," was a marvellous feeling. It took a while to get to that stage, but when you did, you felt good about yourself.

We were all inhibited at first, because we didn't want to appear foolish if you gave the wrong orders, as is so often shown in comedy movies. And of course, you can't whisper the orders, although you would sometimes like to, just in case you have made a mistake. When you make a mistake, the whole parade ground knows about it. But slowly the confidence builds, until you know you have it right. Then comes that magic day, when all the nervousness has gone, and in a very loud clear voice, which you want the surrounding countryside to hear, you hear yourself saying, "Guard and Band -- by the left, quick, march."

The course was mainly run by Chief Petty Officer Gunnery Instructors, who we nicknamed, "Little Polished Men." These Chiefs would yell and scream at us, and tell us how stupid we were, but would always finish off the tirade with the word "Sir." We had one we called the "Screaming Skull," who told us something I will never forget. He told us that when you are marching with a military band you should be marching as though you were ten feet tall. I didn't realize the significance at the time, but later the penny dropped. He was right. There is nothing more inspiring than marching in a military parade, with a good band leading the way. It really does make you feel ten feet tall! Of course, this goes back centuries. It was marching to war with a band that kept morale high. In the Second World War, Lord Lovett always had a piper lead his Commandoes into battle. As I said, it goes back for centuries.

These Chiefs were excellent men. On the parade ground they were actors, who were there for one reason only -- to give their officer students confidence in themselves. If you did something stupid, the standard punishment was, "Once round the parade ground, sir," which meant that you had to double march around the perimeter of the parade ground. Something really stupid, like being caught wearing a watch on parade, was, "Once around the island, sir" -- a distance of nearly a mile. As they knew exactly how long it should take to double around the island, they would time you, to see if you had taken a rest. If you had -- it was round the island again. You normally only tried that trick once.

These Chiefs were carefully selected, because they were dealing with officers, and they had to gauge how far they could go without

being offensive. They taught us a lot more than parade training.

Ever since that course I have always enjoyed the pomp and ceremonial aspects of the military. I like things to be done smartly. I like the smart exaggerated movements of a military parade. Anything less, always gives me the impression that the people on parade are self conscious about their movements, and that even worse, their leader lacks self confidence. To me, there is nothing smarter than watching the guard and band of the Royal Marines. It makes the hairs on my neck stand on end -- to attention of course!

We really enjoyed living in Pelham Lodge. The owners, Molly and Philip -- we called him, the Commander, were marvellous. After some weeks Shirley found a job with the Admiralty Pay Section in the Dockyard. It was just as well that she did, because we were rather tight for money. We had to pay five pounds a week (ten dollars) for our flat. I was earning about sixty pounds a month (a hundred and twenty dollars). I can remember a particular time when we tried to figure out how we were going to pay for a battle dress I had to buy for five pounds. We really didn't know how we were going to do it -- but of course, we did.

I was becoming more interested in everything about the Royal Navy. As well as the interest in the workings of the Navy, there was a pleasant social life too. We were often invited to cocktail parties on some of the visiting ships. Once we were invited to a party on a submarine -- HMS/M TRESPASSER -- my first visit to a submarine. We decided that if Harrison's agreed, I would apply to do some more training with the Royal Navy. They were not short of officers at the time, so were happy to let me stay on. Also of course, the Navy was paying me -- not Harrison's.

I had always had this fascination with submarines, ever since I had read Edward Young's book, "One of our Submarines," years before as a cadet in the Dunmore Head. So I decided to apply for submarine training.

When my initial training completed, I lost two of my handles. I was no longer Probationary Temporary. I was now an Acting Lieutenant, and as such I was instructed to report to the Submarine School in HMS DOLPHIN, the home of the Royal Navy's submarines. Here I would undergo six weeks basic training, on completion of which I was to be appointed to HMS SCORCHER in Portland.

My course officer was a Lieutenant Sandy Woodward, who many years later, was to become famous in the Falkland's War as the Task Force Commander. Our paths have crossed occasionally over the intervening years. He is now Admiral Sir John Woodward. Before the actual course started there was a requirement to carry out escape training from the hundred-foot escape tank. Without passing that hurdle, further training could not take place.

After a medical examination you are put in a small compression chamber to see if you can clear your ears as the pressure is increased to the equivalent of a depth of one hundred feet. This is done before you get anywhere near the tank, and is carried out to prevent injuries and holdups in the actual tank. At about fifteen feet I experienced severe pain in both my ears, and despite the tank staff's efforts to reduce and raise the pressure a few times to see if I could clear my ears, it was unsuccessful. My submarine career was finished before it was even started.

I was extremely disappointed, but accepted the outcome. What else could I do? I decided that I still wanted to continue my training, but that it would now be with the surface navy. I was appointed to HMS WAKEFUL, a Type-15 destroyer, which carried out navigation training for regular officers at the navigation school. Luckily it was based in Portsmouth, so we could stay at Pelham Lodge for another seven months.

We enjoyed living in Southsea. Our one regret was that we didn't have a car, because it restricted our movements and ability to tour around as much as we wanted to. At the weekends in the good weather, we would spend a lot of time at the beach. Our favourite spot was a place we called, Dead Man's Gulch -- so named because a man who was sitting in his deckchair nearby, had a heart attack and died right in front of us -- hence the name. Sick isn't it?

There was no doubt that I was becoming increasingly interested in warships, and a possible career in the Royal Navy. Unfortunately, the Royal Navy was not accepting any officers, unless they came in through the normal officer entry from Dartmouth -- and besides, I was now 27 years old. However, I heard that the Royal Canadian Navy was interested in officers who had a Royal Navy watchkeeping ticket, which I hoped to obtain during my time in WAKEFUL.

There were some serious considerations that required examination before making any commitment in that direction. Firstly, did we want to go to Canada? And secondly, was there a career in it for me? I would be 28 years old before we went -- about eight to ten years older than other officers that would have approximately the same seniority. Did I want to stay in the Merchant Navy for another 37 years, mainly spent at sea? We had even discussed the possibility of going to East Africa, where I might become a cargo superintendent. Shirley and I discussed all these issues, and decided that I should at least apply to the RCN, because until you signed your name, there was no commitment.

I went up to London for medicals and interview Boards at Canada House, the eventual outcome of which was an offer of a three year short service commission as a Sub-Lieutenant, with an acting rank of Lieutenant. I felt that I didn't want to go back to the Merchant

Navy. Not because I didn't like it, because I had enjoyed my life there. It was simply because I felt that the Navy was where I belonged, and where I felt absolutely and totally at home. We discussed it, and so I decided to accept their offer.

One anecdote of interest is when Shirley and I were at Canada House, and we were filling in one of the countless number of forms. As Shirley completed her form I noticed that she was grinning. I then discovered why. They wanted to know if you ever had a conviction in court. My criminal past as a demolitions expert (throwing fireworks) had caught up with me!

I told Harrison's about my decision, and I must admit they were very gracious about it. I received a very friendly letter from the Marine Superintendent, Captain Fraser, wishing me the best of luck for my future. I resigned from Harrison's on the 13th February 1961, having spent a very enjoyable twelve years in the Merchant Navy. Now at age 28, I was about to embark on another career, in the Royal Canadian Navy.

We arrived in Quebec City at the beginning of April, after a truly marvellous voyage across the Atlantic as a First Class passenger in the RMS Ivernia, a Cunard liner. Had I joined a few months later we would have flown across the Atlantic, instead of that unique experience for me of being a passenger, and not having to work on the ship. On our way across the Atlantic we passed close to the Adventurer, and received a message from Captain Sharman -- "Best of luck to the west bound adventurers from the east bound Adventurers."

After a long and dreary train ride from Montreal, looking out at the dirty snow and uninspiring clapboard houses, we arrived in Halifax. That night, one of the officers from the ship that I was going to, came to the hotel and took us for a walk, to show us down town. We walked from our hotel to downtown and back in about twenty minutes! It was terrible. What had we let ourselves in for? What didn't help was the cold and the mounds of dirty snow at the side of the roads.

We had left England halfway through their spring, with the daffodils and tulips in full bloom -- and we had moved from that, to the Ice-Age, in more ways than one. It was then that I recalled the words of the Canadian Immigration Officer at Canada House in London, who, on learning that we were coming to Halifax, said, "That's a pity -- it's a hundred years behind the rest of Canada." It also reminds me of what Jacques Cartier wrote in his diary when he was looking for China, but found Labrador. He wrote, "This land must have been allocated to Cain."

CHAPTER TEN --THE NEW WORLD

I joined HMCS CRESCENT on the 12th of April 1961, the morning after our arrival in Halifax. I was only on board for an hour or two before I was told that I was to be Second Officer-of-the-Day that day -- which meant that I had to stay on board that night. While I can understand the senior watchkeeper wanting me to be in the watch bill as soon as possible, I felt it was a bit much on my first day on board. Within a couple of days, we were off to sea for a week, so Shirley and I had little chance to get settled in.

As we left Halifax harbour for the first time, I asked a petty officer who was on the focsle with me, what the huge brick building was that I could see on the Dartmouth side of the harbour. With a straight-face he informed me that it was the Naval Officers College. I subsequently found out that it was the Nova Scotia Hospital -- a mental institution!

After staying in a hotel for a couple of days, Shirley found a furnished housekeeping apartment. We decided we could use that as our base until we found permanent accommodation.

When I returned from sea Shirley had already achieved a considerable amount. She had no transportation, other than buses, which seemed to run very infrequently. Nevertheless, she had found an apartment -- better than we had ever seen before. She had also opened a bank account and arranged for a loan so that we could buy a car.

Our disenchantment with the first couple of weeks in this new country was somewhat countered by the people in Halifax. Bus drivers would wait for you. They would explain where to get off, where to transfer, and even attracting the attention of the driver of the bus that you were transferring to, so that he would wait for you. We found Halagonians to be very friendly and helpful in any way they could.

Having been raised in another culture, it was very difficult to adapt to a new one. Even now, over thirty years after coming to Canada, I cannot honestly say that I feel totally Canadian. My culture and my way of thinking is British, and I doubt if it will ever be anything else. That has its advantages, because it allows me to see the best and the worst in both Britain and Canada, and I am not blindly nationalistic to one or the other.

Luckily for us, Shirley had taken driving lessons while we were living in Portsmouth. We were only here for a very short time before it became apparent that North America was a place that thought of

a car as part of your personal belongings. We found it strange that nobody could tell us what bus to catch, until we realized that people who used a bus, only knew the number of the bus they caught to go to work. They certainly didn't know the number of any other bus route. This was mainly because, other than going to work on a bus, they never used one -- they used their cars.

The Loans Officer at the bank amazed us. It was obvious that we could not exist very long without a car, so we found a dealer who gave us a price of $1395 on a new Austin Mini. The bank wanted to give us just about any amount we wanted. They couldn't believe that we only wanted a $1400 loan, whereas we couldn't believe that this man, who had never seen us before wanted to give us money, with no checking of references, or anything like that! It was a different approach from banking in the UK at that time.

We picked up our new fire-engine red Mini, and parked it outside our apartment so that we could see it. It was our pride and joy. We treated it like a baby, even to the extent that we would get upset when it rained on it!

Another thing we found strange was when we went to buy a chest of drawers. We wanted to pay cash for it, because that's the way we were brought up. You bought something if you had the money. If not, then you didn't buy it. The salesman recommended to us that as we had no credit rating, we should buy it over time. In that way we would establish a credit rating. He was correct of course, but all this was so new and strange to us.

I liked the officers in CRESCENT. Of the ten or so officers in the wardroom, we had three Masters' Certificates and one Mate's ticket. That was more Master's tickets than the average merchant ship. Of course, this was because those officers had taken the same route to Canada as I had. I wasn't so keen on the Captain. He was known as "Ricochet Red," due to his propensity for bouncing his ship off the jetty when he was coming alongside!

During our first summer in Halifax we went on a camping holiday to New England in our new car. We drove 3200 miles, which of course to us was a tremendous distance. In North America, that was not considered a long trip, but it was to us. We went as far as St. Catharines, Ontario, where Shirley's cousin and her husband lived. Camping was a new experience for me. Of course, the whole thing was totally new for us. Our trip to New England gave us hope that everything on this continent was not like Halifax.

Halifax, as a city, didn't appeal to us, but we liked the people. There were some lovely spots outside Halifax, such as Chester, which was about forty-five miles from Halifax. We did a lot of exploring during that period. One thing we particularly liked was that in the summer, it was summer. Not like Britain, where the summer weather

was always so changeable.

I remained in CRESCENT until July 1963. I particularly enjoyed the job I was given as Navigator, because this was my forte. As Navigator, you did it all. The Captain relied upon you totally. If he lost confidence in you, your days as Navigator were over. We made a couple of deployments to the UK and Europe, which were interesting and challenging professionally. It also meant that I managed to see Shirley's parents and my mother.

The best part about my time in CRESCENT had nothing to do with the ship. It had to do with somebody called Lindsey. Lindsey Clare was born on the 11th of April 1963, and the world became a better place. We adopted her shortly thereafter. She was a chubby baby with bracelets around her wrists and ankles, caused by her chubbiness. Lindsey was a lovely baby with huge eyes, which is still her most striking feature. She was also a very placid baby.

At about the same time, I was offered a permanent commission in the Royal Canadian Navy, which I accepted, although my seniority was adjusted as a confirmed Lieutenant to April 1964. I was now a 31-year old Lieutenant with no seniority. Officers coming through the normal entry system could expect to become Lieutenants at about 23 years of age.

Shortly after Lindsey was born I was sent on a ten-month course, called the Junior Officers Leadership Training Course (JOLT). As I had spent a considerable amount of time at sea in CRESCENT, I welcomed the break.

In many ways the course was similar to the course I had done with the RNR in Portsmouth. It covered many of the same subjects, except that they were Canadianized. On the last day of the course I was the Guard Officer for the final inspection. So there I was, with the full pomp and ceremony of commanding a ninety-six-man guard, and the band playing, "Hearts of Oak." The Screaming Skull was right -- I did feel as though I was ten feet tall! I loved it.

It was while I was on that course that I started thinking about submarines again. I had heard that it was possible to pass the compression chamber test one day, and fail it a day or so later, if you had any sinus problems, or a cold. So I felt that I had nothing to lose if I applied for submarine training again.

I had the usual medical examination, and then on to the dreaded pot, as the compression chamber was called. This time I had no problems clearing my ears right down to one hundred feet. It was a very satisfying feeling . I then had to take a battery of psychological tests, followed by an interview with a psychologist. As quite a few officers were applying for submarines, there was a lot of competition. Also I was now 31 years of age -- which was

the age of many submarine commanding officers.

The JOLT course completed in March 1964, at which time I was appointed to HMCS INCH ARRAN, a River Class frigate, built just after the Second World War. We felt that this was a good time for Shirley to make a long overdue visit to the UK, particularly now she could show off our new daughter to her family and friends.

In April, Shirley went off to the UK with Lindsey, and I went to join HMCS INCH ARRAN in Sorel, Quebec, where she was finishing a refit. We arrived back in Halifax in June, at which time we commenced work-ups to get the ship, and the ship's company, into an operational state. In the midst of work-ups I received a message, posting me to the United States Submarine School, in New London, Connecticut, to commence submarine training. I could hardly contain myself. At last, twelve years after I first became interested in submarines I was getting my wish.

Then the doubts set in. What happened if I failed the course -- because it was technically oriented, and I was no engineer? What would happen if I passed the course, but then found out I didn't like submarines? What happens if I failed the Escape Training? There were so many doubts. Anyway I was committed now, and I would just get on with it.

I think the biggest joy for me was writing to Shirley and telling her that she didn't have to come back to Halifax. Instead she would be returning to the United States.

CHAPTER ELEVEN -- CONNECTICUT

Shirley and I decided that she should stay in the UK until I found a place to live in the New London area. I managed to get someone to take over the lease on our house in Halifax, and arranged to put the furniture in storage, as we were not allowed to take it with us for a posting of less than one year. My posting to New London was for just over six months.

At the beginning of August 1964, I set out for New London in our new Morris Oxford. We had the new car because Shirley had been rammed by a car going through a red light the year before. She had received head injuries, but luckily was not seriously hurt, whereas the Mini was a total loss.

A few years earlier, the Royal Navy and Royal Canadian Navy were new to me -- now here I was entering the home of the United States Navy Submarine Force in New London. Sometimes I had to pinch myself to really confirm in my mind that this ex-Merchant Navy officer was now going to be part of the mightiest navy in the world. What made it even more unlikely was that I was the only Canadian officer among twelve thousand personnel on the base.

When I first arrived in New London, I moved into the Bachelor Officers Quarters (BOQ). After completing an administrative in-routine, I was told that I was not required until the day after Labour Day (8th September). This gave me plenty of time to find a house or apartment for Shirley and me. The Base Housing Office gave me a list of addresses to investigate, so during the next couple of weeks I became very familiar with the area.

One house I particularly liked was an "olde-worlde" house in Stonington. The village of Stonington is a pretty New England fishing village, with several old houses with such names as,"The Captain Edward Brown House." They were lovely old homes. For North America, old meant eighteenth century. The house I was interested in was owned by a famous author. I was very taken with it, but I wanted to look at one other house closer to the Base before I committed myself.

The other house was in a privately owned area called the Mumford Cove Colony. It was a big, modern house on the water, overlooking Long Island Sound. It was in an area of beautiful homes. The house was owned by a vice president of Texaco, who only used it occasionally. He had other homes in New York and Paris. Governor Dempsey, the Governor of Connecticut, had a house there, just a few doors away. I knew Shirley would love this place just as much as I did, so I became the occupant of 79 Neptune Drive in Noank. Luckily the Navy

paid half the rent, otherwise we certainly wouldn't have been able to afford such luxury. Our neighbours must have thought the Canadian Navy were paid very well to have this two-striper living in this location.

A week or two later, I started the course. In the past, I had been on courses where there may be twenty or so people on it, but I was not prepared for the hundred and sixty-five officers on this course. Most were Ensigns or Lieutenants (Junior Grade), in their very early twenties, who had come straight from either the Naval Academy at Annapolis, or from Nuclear Power School in Idaho. There were four other Lieutenants on the course, who, like myself, had some sea experience. I was in one of the two diesel submarine syndicates -- the rest were nuclear syndicates.

Shirley and Lindsey arrived in Providence, Rhode Island, on a beautiful sunny Saturday afternoon in mid-September. They had flown from London, via Boston, so I drove up to Providence to pick them up. On the return trip, as we approached Mumford Cove, I asked Shirley to cover her eyes as we were coming to the crest of a hill. As we crested the hill, I had her open them. We were high up overlooking Long Island Sound, and the view was magnificent. After Halifax, Shirley must have thought she had died and gone to heaven.

She loved the house and the back garden, where there was a transition from lawn to beach, leading down to the water's edge in Mumford Cove. The house was nicely furnished, but it didn't have a television. We didn't miss it at all, because we spent so much time doing other things. Our next door neighbours (about three hundred feet away) became our very dear friends. In many ways, they also became surrogate parents and grandparents.

Betty and Bill Ingalls were the warmest, kindest people you could ever meet. Betty took a great liking to Lindsey, mainly, I think, because Lindsey was so well mannered for a one year old. Shirley and Betty had many of the same interests -- and they also shared the same set of values. Betty treated Shirley as a daughter, and Lindsey like her own grandchild.

Bill had a boat, as did most people in Mumford Cove. We spent many an enjoyable time in that boat -- as we have done for the next 30 years in its successors. Occasionally, I would go out fishing for Bluefish in the Sound with Bill and some of his friends. I never brought anything back, but you should have seen some of the ones that I almost had. Swordfish, great white sharks, marlins -- the lot! Honest !

While Bill and I were out in the rough weather off Race Rock, Betty and Shirley would sit in a rowboat, just off the jetty behind the house, and fish for bottom fish. It was very embarrassing when we came back with nothing, and they would have caught half a dozen

flatfish.

One evening, after the course had been in progress for about six weeks, there was a Ladies Night at the School. The staff showed the wives everything, and let them fire simulated torpedoes and missiles. When Shirley was telling me about her evening, I found out that she had been in the missile building and fired a simulated missile. I was not allowed to enter that building because I was a foreign student. It was for US eyes only. Being with the wives, and not wearing a uniform, nobody thought to check about a "foreign" wife. When I asked her for other information about that evening, she would say, "Sorry, I'm not allowed to tell you!" She loved that.

I found it interesting that we were half way through the course before we did our escape training. Although I felt confident that my ears would be all right this time, I still had a lingering doubt. We did the pot, and things were fine -- and then to the tank. There was no doubt that I was a little apprehensive looking up at that tower of water for the first time. Later, when we carried out escape training regularly every two or three years, it was easy -- but I was a little worried the first time I did it.

The actual escape training is a very interesting evolution. About ten students in swimsuits, stand in the dry escape chamber at the bottom of the hundred-foot tank. There is a canvas skirt, or trunk, extending downwards from the top of the chamber to about chest height. Only a hatch at the top of that trunk is keeping the water out. The heavy side door is secured and water is then flooded in through a four-inch pipe at about knee level. It is warm water, which makes it hot and sticky in the chamber.

When the water level is just above the bottom of the canvas skirt, the flooding is stopped, and high pressure air is bled in, to equalize the pressure in the chamber with the water above. The noise of the high pressure air is deafening and quite frightening the first time you hear it. Once the pressure in the chamber is equalized, an instructor dips under the skirt and opens the hatch at the top of the chamber. Once the hatch is open there is only one way out -- up!

The requirement is to take a big breath -- fill your lungs with air, which of course is now compressed at the equivalent of a hundred feet of pressure, duck down under the trunk, then start to blow out as you ascend. It takes about fifteen seconds from top to bottom, and you must breathe out the whole way up until you reach the surface.

If the instructors in the tank, who are in scuba gear, see that you are not breathing out, they will hold you until you start to breathe out again, then let you go. There are instructors all the way up. If you don't expel the compressed air in your lungs, you

would most certainly have an air embolism on reaching the surface, and probably die. It's certainly an exhilarating feeling when you've made it!

With that out of the way it was back to academics. Most of my classmates had degrees in nuclear and/or electrical engineering, so the standard was very high. If you averaged less than 2.5 out of 4.0 you were called before the Academic Board, to explain why you should not be removed from further training. Luckily I was never called before them, but we lost over twenty officers via the Board.

The whole course was very technically oriented, with a certain amount of operations included. The aim was to teach you the basics of submarining, so that you wouldn't be dangerous when you went to your first submarine.

During the course we went to sea twice. The first time was to practice what we had been taught in the shore trainer about diving, controlling, trimming and surfacing a submarine. Various types of emergency situations are simulated, to see how you cope under stress. We lost about another twenty students after the first trip underway. The second underway is near the end of the course when you do everything you have been taught in the classroom, from paralleling generators, operating the diesels, and firing torpedoes. We lost some more officers there too.

At least a couple of my original doubts about submarines had now been satisfied. I thoroughly enjoyed the underways in the submarines. Claustrophobia was not an issue. Nor were the living conditions and cramped quarters. I felt very comfortable in my mind about the decision I had made.

We met some marvellous people when we lived in Connecticut. When we first arrived, we had the typical British jaundiced eye when dealing with "things American." The British attitude was, and still is, in some cases, that Americans aren't completely civilized yet. As more British people travel to the States these days, I believe that these myths are being dispelled. At least I hope they are.

I don't intend to dwell on this subject, but having lived on this side of the Atlantic for over thirty years, nothing more annoys me when somebody uses the expression "typically American." Having lived there, and travelled extensively in the States, and having so many Americans I call friends, there is no such thing as a typical American. A cabby from the Bronx bears no resemblance to a cowboy from Cody, Wyoming -- a shopowner from Biloxi bears no resemblance to a farmer from a small town or village in Iowa. I will say this without any reservation -- Americans are the most generous, friendliest and kindest people I have ever met. Of course, there are exceptions, as there are anywhere, but I have a very warm feeling when I am in the United States among my American friends.

My brother Geoff, who had been married three weeks before Shirley and me, now lived in Peru. He came to see us on his way through New York en route to London. That was in November 1964. I was not to meet him again until August 1988, in London, when we met for about an hour over a drink. I never saw him again after that, although we would miss each other by only a day or so during visits to London, when we would be visiting our mother. We just never managed to be there at the same time. I think that was very sad. He died of liver cancer in September 1990.

All too soon our sojourn in Connecticut ended. When we graduated on 4th February 1965, Betty accompanied Shirley to the ceremonies. Our class was now down to less than one hundred officers. We had lost slightly less than a third through various problems of one sort or another along the way.

I had received a posting to the submarine, HMCS GRILSE in Victoria, British Columbia. We decided to make a vacation of the drive across country, including a visit to Mexico. As it was winter, we decided to head south, and generally stay down there until we arrived in California -- then head north again.

Leaving Connecticut was bittersweet for us. We were looking forward to going to the West Coast, and at the same time we were sorry to be leaving Connecticut, where we had made so many friends. We said then, and I feel the same today -- the best time we had in North America was the six months we spent in Connecticut.

CHAPTER TWELVE -- WEST COAST

We left Connecticut on the 6th of February 1965, to spend our first night in New York City. We had driven there a couple of times before, to see some Broadway shows. This time we did the normal tourist things, such as the Empire State Building and the Statue of Liberty. Our next stop was Washington, D.C., where I had to report to the Canadian Embassy for an out-routine.

We continued driving south until we got into the heart of Dixie. I can't recall the names of all the places we stopped, but some names just stuck, such as, Opelika, Alabama -- Pascagoula, Mississippi -- Sweetwater, Texas, -- and many other places whose names had an interesting ring to them. Some were just overnight stops, while others were for two or three days.

In New Orleans, Shirley bought a new pair of shoes. Next morning as we were getting ready to leave the motel, a busybody who shall remain nameless, but was 22 months old at the time, hid the shoes in a drawer just after Shirley had emptied it, so of course they were left there. I hope they fitted the maid.

While we thoroughly enjoyed the whole trip, I think we enjoyed the southwestern states more than anywhere else. It was probably because it was so different from anything we had ever seen before. The vast spaces, the desert, the old cow towns, the sandstone monoliths. There were so many things to see. We visited Tombstone, Arizona, the site of the Gunfight at the OK Corral. I don't believe Tombstone had changed a great deal from those days. You just came upon the town, in the middle of nowhere, driving in from the desert, with all its sage and tumble weed. It was marvellous.

At one place, we stayed at an old Navajo Indian Trading Post, in a town called Cameron, not far from the south rim of the Grand Canyon. We found the Grand Canyon breathtaking, with its many colours of rock, its steep sides, and the Colorado River snaking through it a mile below.

Our first sight of the Pacific Ocean was at Morro Bay, a small town about halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. From there we headed north, staying on the Pacific Coast Highway, through beautiful Carmel and Monterey, and the artists' colony of Big Sur.

Then it was north again, through the giant Redwood country, where trees, hundreds of years old, stood nearly four hundred feet high. Eventually we arrived at Port Angeles, in Washington state, just a two-hour ferry ride from Victoria, our ultimate destination. We had taken twenty-two days, and covered over six thousand miles.

The morning after we had checked in at a motel in Victoria, I reported on board HMCS GRILSE, at HMC Dockyard Esquimault, a suburb of Victoria. She was owned by the United States Navy, but was on a long-term lease to Canada. GRILSE had been built just before the end of the Second World War and had conducted two war patrols in the Pacific, before the cessation of hostilities. She was a Fleet Class submarine.

As the junior officer on board, even though I was the same age as the Captain, I was made the Supply Officer. Unless you were a professional Supply Officer, very few people wanted to be one. You looked after food, stores, pay, laundry, canteen, and anything else that was not technical or operational. In addition to your job, your main aim was to become qualified in submarines.

The Submarine Qualification Program was a structured course of learning, which would ensure that you knew your own submarine inside and out by the time you had finished the program, and were qualified to wear your "dolphins." For a rating, ie, non-officer, the program took about seven or eight months. For an officer, the program was usually about twelve to fourteen months. The difference in time was due to the additional amount of detail that an officer was expected to know about his submarine.

Each month you concentrated on different systems in the submarine. For example, the first month was a complete knowledge of all the tanks and their fittings. The second month was all air systems. Third month was hydraulics, and so on. Officers were also required to answer the written questions in the qualification notebook each month. Not only were the answers to be written, but they had to be typewritten. Needless to say, I called upon the expertise of the same person who helped me when I was doing my Master's ticket. Just as she learned a few things about the Rule of the Road then, Shirley learned quite a bit about submarines over the next year.

In addition to the written work, you had to pass an oral and practical examination each month. This was administered by the Executive Officer, who assigned one of the qualified officers to examine you on a walk through the submarine. If you didn't pass, you couldn't progress until you were re-examined and passed. The whole process was very intense, but as submarines were for volunteers only, you just got on with it. Even so, there were many times when you would ask yourself whether it was worth it. And of course the answer was obvious to me -- that's why I was there.

This system of "know your boat" engendered a real camaraderie amongst the ship's company. You knew that when you were eventually qualified and were awarded your dolphins, you could trust anybody wearing that insignia with your life, whatever his rank and trade.

A cook or a steward would know the boat, just the same as any technical trade. It might take him longer to qualify because he may not have the technical background, but when he qualified, he had the same level of knowledge as the next man. Rank or trade had nothing to do with knowing your boat. I was fascinated with submarines. It was hard work, and the living conditions were a bit unhygienic, but the whole thing appealed to me. I couldn't get enough of it.

The interior of diesel submarines had a very distinctive aroma, which was very apparent if the submarine had been deployed for a considerable amount of time. The smell was a combination of diesel fuel, stale cooking odours and unwashed bodies. It permeated everything. Ashore, one could always tell when a submariner walked into a room, even when he was dressed in a suit, if that suit had been stowed in a locker on board. It took some days for the smell to dissipate when you brought your clothes home.

Although there were shower stalls in diesel submarines, the showers themselves were rarely used, except in harbour. This was due to the limited quantity of fresh water that diesel submarines carried. The capability to make water was there, but that required electrical power, which came off the battery. As a submarine's lifeblood was its battery and air systems, battery power was conserved for more demanding requirements than making fresh water for someone to have a shower. Perhaps the fact that conditions were less than pristine, and the fact that this did not unduly worry me was a throwback to my childhood days, when I was always regarded as that "scruffy kid."

Shortly after we arrived in Victoria we managed to rent an attractive, but small, two-bedroom house on Allenby Street, in Oak Bay. We lived opposite my Executive Officer (second-in-command) and his wife, Maurice and Diane Tate, who are still my very good friends.

Victoria was, and is, a beautiful city. It's known as the City of Gardens -- a name that's very much justified. It was everything Halifax was not. It was clean. It was white collar. It was a very structured society. Because of its mild climate it had become a haven for retired wealthy seniors, and as such it had the oldest per capita population in Canada. It was sometimes referred to, jokingly, as the only graveyard in Canada with a bus service. Our only negative feeling for Victoria was that it was very obvious that you lived on an island, as the only way off was by air or ferry.

Some months after we arrived in Victoria, GRILSE was to deploy through the Panama Canal to the West Indies and the east coast of South America. This was a long trip for a submarine, but although conditions in the submarine might become a little rank with such a long time at sea, we were all looking forward to it. It was also my first trip through the Panama Canal.

When we arrived in Trinidad, we spent the first day at anchor in Chagauramus Bay, by the Coast Guard Base. They came out to greet us, and I could hardly believe it when I discovered the Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard was a David Bloom, who had been an officer in Harrison's when I was there. It was a small world.

That evening, after the reception on the aircraft carrier that was in our group, David brought his Coast Guard steel band on board the submarine. I believe a certain amount of liquor was involved that evening. I'm still intrigued how the band managed to get their steel drums down the hatch into the boat!

Our West Coast ships had now been joined by our East Coast fleet, including a Royal Navy submarine, HMS ACHERON. We conducted anti-submarine exercises every day all the way to our next port of Rio. While the harbour and the beaches of Rio are very impressive, we were appalled by the petty crime, from stealing towels or clothes on the beach, to slipping off a person's wristwatch while walking down the street and running away.

Our next port of call was Montevideo, in Uruguay. The thing I remember most about that port was the laundry. When we arrived, as Supply Officer I arranged for a contractor to come down to pick up the laundry. I asked the ship's company to put their belongings in individual bundles, with their names and a list of contents inside the clothes. When it was returned on board it came back in two big linen bags, with all the clothes together in two great bundles! We had seventy-two people standing on the casing going through identical (more or less) underwear and work clothes, to find their own. The laundry man was not very popular!

On entering and leaving harbour, I was the casing officer, and was responsible for securing the casing (upper deck) when we left port. On departing Montevideo, the anchor had not been secured properly. It could be heard banging from inside the submarine, so I had to take my team out on the casing again to secure it. Because there are no deck rails on a submarine, when you go on the casing at sea you must wear a safety belt. A rope line on the belt is hooked into a track on the deck, which allows you to walk along the casing.

The weather wasn't bad, but there was a large swell running. While we were working on the anchor, our bow dipped under the water, and I found myself being picked up and washed over the side. Because of my safety belt I didn't go far, but as the bow came up again I was washed back on board, landing in a kneeling position with a grease nipple on the deck having pierced my knee. If I had not been wearing a safety belt, I may not have been writing this now.

Safety belts were nothing new in submarines. When a submarine is on the surface in bad weather, the entire bridge staff are open to the sea from waves above them, and the water filling up the bridge

from below the free flooding casing. It is not uncommon to have the entire bridge full of water, which means that safety belts are mandatory under those conditions. The last words you wanted to hear when someone woke you up to go on watch at midnight were, "It's cold and very wet on the bridge." It used to be, "Seven bells, sir." Things had changed. Is it any wonder why submariners would much rather be dived, out of the cold and wet weather? Submariners do not like being on the surface, unless they have to.

I had damaged my leg, but it didn't put me out of action. We were now bound for "Harrison country" -- Barbados. As we came around the breakwater I could see the familiar "two of fat and one of lean" funnel markings, further down the jetty. It was the mv. Diplomat, and its Master was -- Captain John Sharman.

I invited Captain Sharman and his Chief Officer over for a drink after dinner that evening, because they were sailing next morning. They must have come over at about seven-thirty, and it was gone three in the morning before they left! We had more than one drink. That was the last time I saw Captain Sharman, but we still keep in contact through Christmas cards.

We eventually arrived back in Victoria, after spending a couple of days in San Diego. Because we had spent quite a bit of time away, I had managed to progress my submarine qualification reasonably quickly. However, I had written my notebook in long hand, so I still had to have it all typed. Shirley was not impressed.

With the notebook finally typed and having been coached as much as possible by my fellow officers, I was ready for my qualification. This involved a Commander from the USN coming to sea with us, and spending a week on board. When I wasn't on watch, we would walk through the submarine, where he would test my knowledge about everything in that submarine. This involved questions on equipment, followed by me operating the equipment -- then further questions on general submarine matters. It was a very intensive few days.

I was very proud the day I received my dolphins from Commander Charles Miko, USN. I think Shirley deserved a good deal of the credit, due to her efforts in trying to decipher the notations in my notebook, written by my Captain, John Rodocanachi.

Shortly after I became qualified, the ship received a visit from the Director of Officers Posting and Careers, or Career Manager as he was called. Career Managers were supposed to map out your individual careers, but the feeling was, that they used a dart board when they decided where you were going next.

Any officer who wished to see his Career Manager could ask for an interview, which normally resulted in you being told all the things you wanted to hear -- but were not necessarily true. Career Managers

liked to have happy clients!

In light of my subsequent career in the Canadian Navy, I have copied part of the written reply I received from the Career Manager, as a result of my request for a prognosis of my career prospects in submarines:

> "In view of the fact that you are now thirty-three years of age, and that you have only recently qualified in submarines, it is possible that you might advance to the position of Executive Officer of a submarine. A career in submarines beyond that point is extremely doubtful.
>
> Yours sincerely,
>
> Leslie J. Hutchins
> Captain, Royal Canadian Navy."

In March 1967, Lindsey's sister was born. Kerry Elizabeth Hunt was born on the 4th of March, the same date as my father's birthday. She was placed with us about a month later. Now the world was twice as good as it was before. We now had two lovely daughters, born at different ends of the continent -- four thousand miles and four time zones apart. Kerry was as skinny as Lindsey was chubby. She also had lovely eyes. Unfortunately, she was troubled with colic, which made her a very noisy baby. I didn't know so much noise could come out of anything so small. Whereas Lindsey was calm, Kerry was into everything. We thought that there was some monkey in her!

Unfortunately, at about that time, the injury to my leg was causing me some problems, so I had to go into hospital to have some work done on my knee cap. I am still not clear about what happened while I was in there, but somehow or other, after the operation I lost the use of the muscles in the same leg and the opposite shoulder. The doctors spent months trying to find out what happened, without ever producing a real diagnosis.

When I came out of hospital I had to have physiotherapy for nine months on both my arm and leg. Even today, my right thigh muscle has a lot less bulk than my left one. Shirley was convinced that I had developed polio while I was in hospital. I am not convinced -- but whatever it was, it attacked my leg and shoulder muscles.

My medical problems nearly curtailed my career. At one time there was talk of bringing me ashore permanently, but I convinced them that I had recovered sufficiently, and that I was now fit for sea. The doctors agreed, so I was back in submarines again.

At about this same time, Canada was building three new submarines in England. This required a substantial number of trained submariners to crew them. As a result, we started to lose some of the more senior lieutenants that we had, as they were posted to

England.

What with them being posted, and the Executive Officer being selected for submarine command training, I was told that I would be staying on board, and would become Executive Officer, or second in command, of HMCS GRILSE. Things were starting to look up, as at that time I only had three years service in submarines, and four years seniority as a Lieutenant. On April Fools Day 1968 I became Executive Officer of HMCS GRILSE. Was there some significance in the date?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN -- EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Executive Officer goes by a number of names -- XO, First Lieutenant, Number One, Jimmy the One, The Jim -- and those are the polite ones! In the Royal Canadian Navy, the term normally used was "XO."

The XO is responsible to the Captain for the general running of the ship or submarine. All the department heads report through him, including the Engineering Department. This is different from the Merchant Navy, where the engineering department is totally separate from what one would call the seamen or deck department. He is also the second-in-command.

During the previous three years I had rotated through the various departments in the submarine, such as operations, communications electrical and engineering -- in addition to the first job I had as Supply Officer. This is one of the advantages that submarine officers have over their surface ship colleagues. By rotating through all these positions, you get a good knowledge of what each job entails. Therefore, by the time you become XO you have an appreciation of every department in the submarine.

Shortly after becoming XO, we were told that we would be making a deployment to Japan. It's a country I had never been to, so this was going to be new for me. On the way across the Pacific we stopped at Pearl Harbour, where we were hosted by two submarines -- the USS GREENFISH and the USS REMORA. The hospitality was intense, from luaus to receptions, to house parties and formal dinners. The Americans had ganged up on us. We were required to attend everything, whereas, because there were two of them, they were only involved every other day. We were glad to get back to sea, so that we could get some rest!

When we arrived back in Victoria from Japan, the submarine was bulging at the seams with "goodies." Things were very cheap in Japan in those days, so we had bought just about everything that one could get. There were stereos, tape-recorders, bicycles (broken down to the smallest part that would fit down the submarine hatch), jewellery and material. We had been away for just under two months.

Until this time Shirley and I had always lived in rental housing. It was Shirley who took the initiative in buying a house. She felt that we should not be giving money to somebody else, when we could be investing in our own home.

We bought a brand new house on Thornhill Crescent. Naturally, like so many other things, we couldn't afford it, but of course we

found the money. Shirley was the financial manager. She was excellent at it, and it was to her credit that we bought that house. I think she learnt from her mother, who was also an excellent money manager. If it had been left to me I don't think I would have done it, because I would have been worried about how we were going to manage.

Living on the West Coast gave us the chance to see the western states. We camped in the Glacier National Park in Montana. We saw the rugged majesty of the Grand Teton mountains in Wyoming -- and of course we had to "do" Hollywood, California. The scenery in the western states was so different from that of the eastern states. I can't decide, even now, which one I prefer.

One trip, when we were in Escondido, just outside San Diego, we had our room burgled while we were in it -- asleep! We woke up to find that Shirley's purse and my wallet had disappeared. We were 1500 miles from home with no identification, money, travellers cheques or credit cards.

I reported it to the motel manager, and then went for a walk, on the off-chance that he may have discarded the things he didn't want. Sure enough, I found the bag and wallet, with their contents scattered all over the ground by the swimming pool.

Luckily, all that had been taken was our American money -- about thirty dollars in all. Our credit cards, travellers cheques and Canadian money had not been touched. The police told us that it had probably been a drug addict, who needed money right away for a fix, and that's why he wasn't interested in the cheques etc. That night we went to bed with my wallet and Shirley's purse underneath the bed clothes, by our feet!

In 1968 the United States Navy was paying off many of their diesel submarines. Every time another nuclear attack submarine was commissioned, they paid off the next oldest diesel submarine. GRILSE had first gone to sea in 1944, and was a very tired, noisy submarine. Her electronic equipment was state-of-the-art 1944, and while we nursed her along with tender loving care, her days were numbered.

Meanwhile, negotiations were under way between Ottawa and Washington over the acquisition of a newer submarine from the USN surplus inventory. Finally, the word came that we were going to buy the USS ARGONAUT, which was two years younger than GRILSE.

I took three senior Chief Petty Officers with me, and flew to Norfolk, Virginia, to be the advance guard of the Canadian crew that was going to commission the "new" submarine. When we arrived at the submarine pier in Norfolk there were numerous boats tied up three abreast. I was looking for one that had the number "475" on its

fin. Of all the submarines there -- and there must have been fifteen, only one had a bent jackstaff (forward flagstaff), and a flag that was torn. It had a number 475 on its fin!

Space and time does not permit me to give a full description of that sorry excuse for a submarine. I could write a book -- and perhaps I should, about that boat when we took her over from the USN. I will permit myself just two or three brief accounts of events that occurred, concerning the commissioning of HMCS RAINBOW.

Our full ship's company was flown from Victoria to Norfolk, but before we took responsibility for her, we insisted on taking the submarine to sea to make a dive to test depth, with a combined Canadian/USN crew. When we got to test depth without incident, which of course should have been a normal evolution, there was a distinct sigh of relief that went through the USN crew. We thought it strange, but in light of later developments, we shouldn't have done.

On the passage between Norfolk and Victoria we were unable to dive, even if we had wanted to. The air compressors wouldn't work, and as you needed high pressure air to surface the submarine we couldn't dive. There were so many fresh water leaks in the main engines that the engine room watchkeepers had to wear wet-weather gear. When we arrived back alongside in Victoria we daren't stop our diesels until we were absolutely sure they would not be required again -- because we had no compressed air left to start them. As I said, the RAINBOW commissioning was a story in itself.

We arrived back in Victoria on 23 December 1968. We could have taken GRILSE to sea at any time, because we had literally walked off GRILSE and on to RAINBOW. However, politics came into play, in that it would have looked bad for someone if, after acquiring RAINBOW, we immediately walked back on board GRILSE and took her to sea. As a result we remained alongside in Victoria until April, while repairs were carried out to RAINBOW.

That summer I was told that I was to go to the UK to take the six week Attack Coordinators (AC) Course, which is supposed to prepare one to become an XO. I had already been XO for over a year, but I was certainly not going to object to a trip to the UK.

About a month or two before I was due to depart for my six weeks in the UK, I received word that in addition to taking the AC Course, I had been selected for the Royal Navy's Submarine Commanding Officers Qualification Course (COQC), commonly referred to as "Perisher." (See the Picture Gallery) The name Perisher was derived from the course's original name of the Periscope Course. However, it later became known by that name because of the large number of officers that failed, or perished, on the course.

The pass rate for Perisher was about fifty percent. Of course this meant that you could have three or four passes, followed by

the same number of failures one after another. In a small submarine force like ours (we now had four boats), a string of failures could be disastrous, in that there may not be enough Captains available for the submarines. That, in fact, was what had happened in my case. I was going on Perisher due to somebody's misfortune.

I had been in submarines for less than five years, and I was now on my way to Perisher, having bypassed other officers with more seniority than I had. Normally, one would spend from eight to ten years in submarines before being selected for Perisher. The course was due to start in December 1969.

Besides being sent on Perisher I was to be posted to Halifax. As these changes had taken place at short notice, we had many things to do before we left Victoria. We had to decide what we were going to do with the house. Should we sell it, or rent it? We had only lived in it for a short time, so we decided to rent it, after we found a professor who was coming to the University of Victoria from the States.

We decided that Shirley and the children should come to the UK with me. As the Perisher would take me to many locations, we felt it best for them to stay with Shirley's mother and father in Liverpool. The girls would go to Shirley's old elementary school, and I would use Liverpool as my base, much the same as I had done many years ago when I was in the Merchant Navy.

While we were getting ready to leave Victoria, Shirley's parents arrived for a holiday which had been planned for some time. It was the latter part of the summer, and the weather was beautiful. They so enjoyed their visit, particularly Shirley's mother. I can still see her lying on a chaise-longue on our sundeck in pure ecstasy, absorbing the sun. The pleasure that they were obviously getting from this holiday also gave us pleasure. We enjoyed having them.

It was particularly good that they could spend some time with their grandchildren. This was one of the problems of us living on two different continents. I know that Shirley felt very concerned about this. Unlike my mother, who had two of her grandchildren in the UK with her, Shirley was an only child, therefore our girls were Shirley's parents only grandchildren. It was a problem that was never resolved, although they saw more of the girls as they got older. However, they never saw them "growing up."

Within a couple of weeks of Shirley's parents leaving, we were on our way ourselves. We decided that this time we would drive across the country on a different route to the one we had taken on our way out to Victoria from Connecticut.

Kerry was now two years old, and still very active. In addition, she had taken to telling her mother what she thought of the many

toilets that she visited. That wasn't too bad normally, but she did it in people's houses too. Whenever Kerry used a toilet in a friend's house, we would be on pins and needles waiting for the report, which was usually delivered in a loud voice. I think our friends made a special point of cleaning their toilet, if they knew that we would be visiting with Kerry!

On the trip across country, one way to make sure that Kerry would not run away when we stopped at the side of the road for a pit stop, was to say, "Kerry, would you let us know if you find a snake." That seemed to work.

We stopped in Connecticut to see our friends, Betty and Bill Ingalls. The girls had a great time in their swimming pool, and Shirley and I were just happy to see them again, although they had visited us in Victoria a year or two earlier. By the time we arrived in Halifax we had been through a total of twenty-six states on this, and other trips. We felt that there were so many options by crossing the country through the United States. In Canada your route was limited, mainly by the Trans Canada Highway.

After doing an in-routine at the First Canadian Submarine Squadron Headquarters in Halifax, I was free to go over to the UK. As we were not looking for a house until we came back from the UK, we had arranged to put our furniture in storage in Halifax.

We arrived in Liverpool about the end of October 1969. Once Shirley and the girls were established at home, I made my way south to join COQC 1/70, at HMS DOLPHIN in Gosport. This was the same establishment that I had left nine years earlier after failing the escape tank training -- thinking that my career in submarines was over before it had started. Here I was, at the same place, about to take the ultimate course in submarines -- the Submarine Commanding Officers Course. It was a strange old world.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN -- PERISHER AND COMMAND

It was good to be back at DOLPHIN, with its tastefully appointed Wardroom, overlooking the approaches to Portsmouth Harbour. It also overlooked two of Old Portsmouths's most well-known pubs -- the Still and West, and the Coal Exchange. It was very hard for me to believe that I was now on this course, which was recognized throughout the submarine world as the toughest and most prestigious of all submarine courses.

Everybody who takes this course is fully aware that there is a high failure rate, and for those that fail, their submarine career is at an end. There is no second chance. You don't go back to a submarine to get more experience. It's over. If you fail, you will have to return to the surface navy. However, it's interesting to note that despite the terrible disappointment of failing Perisher, those that failed usually went on to an excellent career in the surface navy.

Perishers, as we were called, were treated with a certain reverence by other submariners, mainly because of the mystique of being part of the Perisher. Occasionally, when I was by myself I would often wonder how I got here. Here I was -- a former Merchant Navy officer, nearly thirty-seven years of age -- hopefully about to become qualified to command a submarine. My fellow Perishers were at least five years younger than I was, and all of them had over nine years experience in submarines, compared to my less than five. It was as though I had a ticket for an economy class seat, only to find myself being given a seat in first class, and wondering how I got there, -- then hoping that nobody would notice. Of course, that wasn't the case, but sometimes before the course started I felt that way.

There were five other officers on my Perisher. Four from the Royal Navy and one other colonial -- from Australia. The Commanding Officer of the Perisher, who is traditionally called "Teacher," is always an experienced submarine commanding officer, of Commander's rank, who is very carefully selected for that position. As well as having had at least two submarine commands, he must be scrupulously fair-minded. Whether a student passes or fails is his decision, and only his decision, based on his observations of how a student performs.

There are no examinations, either written or oral. Should there be a personality conflict between Teacher and a student, as there sometimes is, he must cast aside his personal views. He is required to judge the student solely on his performance, and whether he would make a competent and safe commanding officer.

If we thought there was a certain amount of reverence shown to the Perishers, it paled significantly compared to the way Teacher was treated. His was a highly prestigious position. Our Teacher was a Commander Dick Husk, Royal Navy. He was everything Teacher should be.

The first part of our course, until Christmas, was the easy part. It was spent reviewing tactical doctrine and the classroom aspects of attacking and special operations. After Christmas, we would travel to the Attack Teacher in Rothesay, on the Isle of Bute, in the Clyde.

Having enjoyed our Christmas with Shirley's parents, we travelled up from Liverpool to Glasgow in a very cold railway carriage. Our fellow passengers couldn't understand why we didn't suffer in silence as they did, whereas I was running round chasing people to get some heat on. Perhaps we had become used to different standards of acceptance since living in North America -- but we managed to get some heat.

The Perishers stayed in the Glenburn Hotel, a lovely old grand hotel. While we were at the Attack Teacher, Shirley would go for long walks on the hills behind the Glenburn. We stayed there for a week before returning to Gosport, at which time Shirley went back to Liverpool.

The Attack Teacher was a place where you could afford to make mistakes. It was the only place where mistakes were allowed – but not too many ! It was housed in a two-storey building, with the lower part laid out the same as a submarine control room, with a periscope extending through the floor to the upper part. The upper part was where Wrens (lady sailors) would control the movement of scale wooden models of ships, which represented our targets. This is where you learnt the art of attacking, with the safety of your submarine being paramount at all times.

As I said, this is where you could make mistakes, and get run down by ships you had either missed seeing, forgotten about, or had miscalculated their range. Being run down by a ship was signified by the Wrens above us all jumping up and down. The noise left you in no doubt what had happened. I think the Wrens enjoyed that part best of all. We all took our turn at being duty attacker or Captain.

Before you got involved with tactics you had to have complete confidence in your capability to keep the surface picture in your head at all times. Much of this involved what we called, "mental gymnastics." The aim was quite basic. It was to make sure that the submarine was on its way down to a safe depth, before any of the surface ships could run you down. At the same time, you also had to refrain from firing until the target was as close as he was going to come -- but still ensuring your submarine's safety.
As periscope exposure is one way to get caught, the aim is also to

reduce the number of "looks," as they are called, to a safe minimum. In spite of the John Wayne movies, a periscope should not be up for more than ten seconds at a time. Five is better-- and in that time you have to observe and remember <u>everything you see</u>.

While I don't want to bore the reader with many unnecessary details, I feel that I should explain how there is more to raising and lowering a periscope than the movies would suggest. Firstly, you must either assume the target's masthead height, or obtain it from previous intelligence. When you raise your periscope, you line up the cross-hairs on the target and announce, "Bearing is - that," simultaneously turning the range handle to measure the angular distance between masthead and waterline, barking out, "Range is - that." The periscope assistant calls out the figure, and you calculate the range as the periscope is going down.

For simplicity sake I won't go into the mathematics of the range calculation, but will assume a calculated range of 2000 yards. Having already assumed that the target's maximum speed is 30 knots, and knowing that our speed is six knots, the worst condition (most dangerous) could be a closing rate speed of 36 knots, or 1200 yards every minute, or 100 yards every five seconds.

That means that our target, which is now at 2000 yards, could be right overhead in 100 seconds. We always allow 60 seconds for our submarine to get from periscope depth to a safe depth, where even if the target came over top, you would be safe. That means that we <u>know</u> we are safe for another 40 seconds before we <u>have to</u> have another look at the target. You don't raise you periscope after 20 seconds just out of curiosity. However, you must look before the 40 seconds are up.

While I have just shown a simplified situation, it can become a lot more difficult when you have three escorts approaching you. Then you are calculating ranges and "go-deep" times for all the escorts, each time the periscope goes up. It's in the heat of battle that it is easy to forget, or lose one of your targets -- which could be fatal for the submarine.

It's not like a surface ship, where there are other people on the bridge to help you look for other ships. Here, there is only one pair of eyes, and the owner of those eyes is responsible for the safety of about seventy people, as well trying to sink his enemy. That's why it is essential that the Captain must have the total surface picture in his head at all times.

You must use those few seconds that the periscope is above the surface to absorb as much information as you can. Besides taking a range and bearing, you must make a complete mental picture of everything you see concerning the target. Is he zig-zagging, or weaving? You can see if he is weaving by looking at his wake. Does the speed

we are using for the target in the fire control calculation look about right? You can get a good indication by looking at the height and length of the target's bow wave. When we went to sea, Teacher would occasionally tell a ship to fly a flag hoist -- then, after you had lowered the periscope, ask you what he was flying. This was to see if you remembered <u>everything</u> you saw.
During the subsequent sea time, all the Perishers ended up with scars on the bridge of their noses, through trying to ride the periscope on its way down, by keeping their eyes glued to the periscope, until it was below the surface. This was to ensure that you saw everything that you were looking at, in the limited time the periscope was up.
The Panel watchkeeper, who was responsible for raising and lowering the periscope under the orders of the duty Captain, would keep a score on how many noses he could get during his watch. It became a bit of a competition between the Panel watchkeepers!

Even in the Attack Teacher, by the time the duty Captain had finished his attack, he was physically and mentally drained and exhausted -- and we hadn't even been to sea yet. That was to come after about six weeks in the Attack Teacher in DOLPHIN. I found it interesting in this phase of the course to watch one's fellow Perishers. You could see some were struggling already, and not improving. Others got better every time they did an attack. I think I was in-between.

In mid-February the Perishers flew to Gibraltar to start our sea phase. We were booked in at the Montarik Hotel, just off the main street. Having passed Gibraltar many times in a merchant ship it was interesting that I was finally there, on the Rock. We were going to be there for five weeks for the most intense part of the course.

It was a regular routine. Up at five in the morning. Transport to our submarine, HMS/M OSIRIS at five-thirty. Breakfast on board and underway at six, with the duty Perisher Captain taking the submarine out of the harbour. By seven, we were in the exercise area, having made a rendezvous with our target, normally a Leander Class frigate.

Shortly after seven we would dive and start our attacks for the day. Normally the frigate would open from the submarine to about 10,000 yards before starting its approach. Each attack would take about 30 to 40 minutes. The Perishers would take it in turn to be the duty Captain, but when they weren't doing that they would rotate through the various positions in the attack team, such as running plots or the fire control calculator. We were all employed, but it was the duty Captain's attack. After each attack the duty Captain would sit in the Captain's cabin with Teacher, where he would critique the attack, while the target was opening for the next run.
We would continue attacking until we ran out of daylight, usually returning to the hotel at about eight in the evening. Despite being dead tired, we would invariably end up in the bar for a couple of

beers with Teacher just to relax, before going to bed about ten, to start the routine all over again next morning. We did this for six days a week. On Sundays we didn't go to sea. That was because Sunday was reserved for analysis of our attacks and torpedo firings, ie, would you have hit your target with your torpedoes?

While the timing of the daily routine did not change for the five weeks we were there, the routine at sea changed each week. For the first week we had one surface ship target. For week two, we had two ships -- so that by the time we started week five, we were up against five ships. This is where all the mental gymnastics that we did in the Attack Teacher really bore fruit. This was "for real." They were real ships up there, which could ruin your whole day if you did the wrong thing. When you see a ship boring down on you at full speed it certainly attracted your attention. This is where Teacher came into his own.

There are two periscopes in a submarine. The Attack periscope was the duty Captain's, and the Search periscope was Teacher's. That's how he kept you out of trouble. If he thought that you had lost the picture and things were becoming dangerous, he would assess the situation, and if necessary, order the submarine to descend to a safe depth. This was not uncommon during the first two weeks, but it should not be happening to any of us during week three and beyond. If it did, there was a clear message for that individual.

Sometimes, just to prove a point, when a ship was coming right at you at high speed, and was at a range of, say, 1900 yards at your last look, Teacher would send the duty Captain to the galley to find out what was on the menu for lunch. When this first happened, I thought Teacher had gone mad. Here we had a situation where a ship was last seen racing towards us, and we weren't looking at it -- and he was sending the duty Captain to talk to the cook! What he was really doing was proving that you didn't <u>need</u> to look at the ship for another 35 seconds -- which gave you time to get to the galley and back.

Week five was normally the week where Teacher had made up his mind about his Perishers for this phase. I believe that each of us knew in his heart how he was doing -- and who was having problems. Unfortunately, we lost two of our team during that week. It wasn't really a surprise, because you could see them struggling, while the rest of us were improving.

The normal procedure is that once Teacher makes his decision to remove someone from the Perisher, he arranges for a boat to come alongside from one of the surface ships. He then takes the student into the Captain's cabin to tell him the bad news. Within minutes, the failed student is off the submarine on his way ashore. He will have checked out of the hotel before the remaining Perishers return that evening.

The thinking behind this rather dramatic departure is to prevent the remaining Perishers from becoming upset by attempting to console their former Perisher-mates, if they remained on board, or seeing them when they got back to the hotel that evening. While that may seem hardhearted, it was necessary, to make sure that none of the remainder lost sight of the aim. Nevertheless, we knew what our two friends must be going through.

At the end of the five weeks in Gibraltar, the remaining four Perishers were given a free weekend to play tourist. All we really wanted to do was to get home for a weeks leave, and some rest. Those five weeks were, without doubt, the most intense in my life. Of course, one of Teacher's aims was to get you so tired, both mentally and physically, to see if you would crack, or make bad decisions under those extreme conditions.

We flew back to London, and I took the train up to Liverpool to see Shirley and the girls. Although I was tired, I had a tremendous sense of exhilaration. While there was still a long way to go on this course, I knew that the hardest part was over. If I didn't make any stupid mistakes, I felt confident that I was going to make it. However, people had been failed on the last day of the course, so there was no cause for complacency.

The next phase of the course involved visits to various Royal Navy establishments. This was more of value to the Royal Navy officers on the course. We were now down to two RN officers and two Colonials! One visit particularly intrigued me. It was to the RN Detention Quarters in Portsmouth. It was really spartan. The prisoners' routine was a daily round of rifle drill, physical exercise and cleaning everything that you could see. At 7pm the prisoners were allowed to stand outside their cells at attention, to watch the BBC news on television. When the news was over it was "one pace step back, march," into their cells for the night. Very few prisoners wanted to return, once their sentences were served.

After the visits it was back to the classroom again. Here we learnt the tactics and considerations when carrying out such things as Special Operations with the Special Boat Section of the Royal Marines. We also learned how to conduct an underwater look at a ship's bottom through the periscope, how to conduct a minelay, how to make a submerged rendezvous, and some of the considerations when tracking and trailing other submarines. Then it was back to the Attack Teacher for two weeks to hone up on our periscope skills again.

The final phase of the Perisher was a concentrated two-week period at sea, where everything we had learned would be thrown at us. We were supposed to do this phase in the Clyde, but luckily for us they couldn't find enough ships for us to operate with in that area, so it was back to Gibraltar again.

This time we were in HMS/M OTUS, which was commanded by a Lieutenant Commander Geoffrey Biggs, one of the scruffiest looking officers I had ever seen -- but he was a warm, helpful person, with a great sense of humour. I only mention this event because he is now Admiral Sir Geoffrey Biggs, KBE. I believe he is still scruffy -- but he's now called "Sir Scruffy!"

That last two weeks were most interesting. We did everything from attacking surface ships, to sliding underneath a ship, with the top of our periscope about eight feet from its keel or propellers, to take photos of its sonar dome. Whenever we were doing something covert, and just when it looked as though we were about to achieve our aim, a frigate would appear on the scene as if by magic. It was really Teacher magic. He would always be talking to the surface ships on the radio, giving them directions, and telling them when and where he wanted them to appear on the scene. This often meant aborting the evolution and rescheduling it, without getting caught. It was very much a game of cat and mouse.

At the end of the two weeks at sea, we were individually debriefed on our performance by Teacher. In my case, I was delighted to hear that I had passed. Our remaining team of four had all passed. If someone asked me, either then or now, whether I would like to do the Perisher again, the answer would have to be no. It was a fantastic event in my life that only a few manage to experience, but it's something that once you've done it, you would never want to repeat it. It's too draining.

That afternoon when we arrived back alongside, there was one almighty champagne party in the wardroom of OTUS. Later that evening we poured Terry Roach, our Australian, on to a plane for London, and onward to Australia. We never found out if he ever got there!

Next day the rest of us flew back to London and went our separate ways. Since Perisher, I have run into Terry a few times. I have also stayed at his home in Sydney when I visited Australia. Of the other two RN officers, I have only met one of them since -- Barry Carr, who eventually became Teacher himself. The other left the Navy, and now runs an Outward Bound school in North Wales. I have run into Teacher many times since Perisher, most recently in January 1994, when we had dinner at his Club in London.

Shirley and I had planned a holiday for the whole family on completion of Perisher. We were going to the west of Ireland, where we intended to rent a car and tour Ireland. When I reported in to Canada House in London, on my return from Gibraltar, I was told that they had been trying to get in touch with me, because they wanted me to get back to Victoria as soon as possible, where I was to join RAINBOW as Commanding Officer.

I didn't mind going back to Victoria and RAINBOW, but I thought that I deserved some leave. They (the Navy) were adamant that I had to be out on the west coast right away, so there was little to be done. Shirley and I were very disappointed, because it was something we had always wanted to do. Now it will never happen.

I flew back to Halifax, where I had to pick up my car for the drive west. We'd left our car with a friend, and of course our furniture was in storage in Halifax. That meant that our furniture would be making a round trip of eight thousand miles back to Victoria, before it came out from under its covers.

This time I was crossing the country by myself. As they needed me in a hurry I decided to take a route across the northern states. I was snowed in for one day in South Dakota, but arrived in Victoria in about nine days from Halifax.

When I reported on board I was informed that there really was no need for me to be there so soon, as the submarine was in refit. It would be another three months before it was ready to go to sea! I was very upset that somehow, when I was in London, I had been told that my presence was required in Victoria right away. Yet when I arrived, I was told there was no such urgency. Nobody seemed to know where the misinformation had come from. There was nothing I could do. I couldn't go back to the UK. All I could do was seethe.

The only thing that tempered my annoyance was that I was now about to go in command. On 20th April 1970, I sent the traditional message to my Admiral, which at one time I felt that I would never send -- "I have this day assumed command." It was time to have another look at the letter I had received from my Career Manager four years earlier.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN -- FIRST COMMAND

I must admit, there is something special about being "piped aboard" for the first time as Captain. Normally, a Commanding Officer is piped aboard when he arrives in the morning, and again when he departs in the evening. Other than that most Commanding Officers dispense with the formality in their own ship. I stress own ship, because I was determined to be piped on board our surface ships, just to make a point. I did it to ensure that although our submarine force was only a small part of the navy, we were to be recognized as equals with our surface colleagues.

Also, I wanted to make sure that the Commanding Officer of RAINBOW was being piped -- even though he was only a Lieutenant. It was to impress on them that it was a Commanding Officer they were piping -- not a Lieutenant -- not Ray Hunt -- and that the situation was the same for all Commanding Officers, regardless of rank. At times, because we were such a small force, there was a tendency to disregard us. I just made a point of reminding them. There was also a certain amount of jealousy, because we were seen as an elite group, because of our training and camaraderie.

The lease on our house did not expire until August, so I found accommodation for myself at the Base. Also, there was little point in Shirley and the girls coming back yet, so they stayed in England until our house was vacant again.

When a ship comes out of refit, it must be worked-up to get the crew back into an operational state again. RAINBOW was going to be in refit until the early summer, which gave me plenty of time to plan for the follow-on Work-ups. This involved various types of shore training, which was required before the ship ever went to sea for the first time after refit. As Canada did not have training facilities unique to submarines, much of this training had to be carried out San Diego and Pearl Harbour. In addition, arrangements had to be made with the United States Navy, specifically the Commander, Submarine Force Pacific, commonly referred to as COMSUBPAC, to carry out our sea Work-ups from Pearl Harbour.

When we carried out our sea trials after refit, we took our insurance policy along with us. By that, I mean that we insisted that the foremen of the shops, whose personnel worked on our refit, came to sea with us on our first deep dive. It's amazing how safe you feel with them along, knowing that some of them had their own people working on the watertight integrity of the submarine!

All the trials were successful, after the normal adjustments and modifications. We were delighted with the refit. After the

fiasco of the original commissioning in Norfolk, and the subsequent passage to Victoria, we almost had a new boat.

Shirley and the girls came back in July, and we moved into our house shortly thereafter. It was nice to get back to living in our own house again, but what was even better, was that we arranged for Shirley to come out to Hawaii when the submarine was there.

I was like a kid with a new toy. This big black tube was all mine. I was responsible for everything that happened in this submarine, whether I did it or not. There was a certain amount of awe at being in command for the first time -- but it was a marvellous feeling. Another aspect of submarine command that one does not think about on Perisher, is that in your cabin a loudspeaker near your bunk is on constantly, night and day. Even when you are asleep the loudspeaker is on. It is on the circuit between the officer-of-the-watch and the sound room, where the sonar watch is closed up. I don't know how it happens, but even when you are dozing -- for some unknown reason, your mind manages to filter out the unimportant information that is being passed back and forth, but is immediately alert if the situation warrants it. There is also a microphone close by your hand, so that you can talk to the control room. A surface ship CO gets a lot more sleep than a submarine CO -- but we don't complain.

In a submarine, your mind and hearing is very alert to changes. There are so many different noises in a submarine that changes are easily detected. A trim pump or ballast pump that stops and starts. A hydraulic pump that suddenly goes quiet. High pressure air being used. Even if you are asleep, your mind notices the changes, and again, for some unknown reason, it alerts you to sounds, or lack of sounds, which tells you something is not quite right.

After a seven-day passage we arrived in Pearl Harbour. My first action after the initial greetings from our host boat, the USS PUFFER, was to call on Admiral Walter Small, COMSUBPAC. The thing that surprised him was that the Captain of this Canadian submarine was only a Lieutenant, whereas his Commanding Officers were all Commanders -- two ranks above me.

This strange phenomenon became the talk of the Submarine Base. It was even more strange in their eyes, because all the officers in RAINBOW were the same rank -- all Lieutenants. In their submarines they would have a Commander as the Captain, a Lieutenant Commander as XO -- then a mixture of other Lieutenant Commanders, Lieutenants (senior and junior grade) and Ensigns. I suppose it was different, but I never thought of it as a problem. The Captain had his job to do, as did everybody else, so the situation never bothered me.

We had a good Work-up. We worked hard and the Americans gave us tremendous support by providing us with many targets, from aircraft

carriers to opposing submarines. Shirley stayed for a week, and we had a marvellous time, being showered with hospitality. We stayed with the friends that I had met, from the days when GRILSE was hosted by REMORA on the way to Japan a couple of years earlier.

The Viet Nam war was still in progress at this time, and many of the USN ships based on the west coast were over in the western Pacific. Before they left the United States there was a requirement to work them up to a war state. As part of the quid pro quo for our Work-ups, my Admiral in Victoria, offered our services to the Americans. This meant that we were barely back from Pearl Harbour before we were on our way to San Diego.

On arrival there, my junior rank caused the same amount of interest that it had in Pearl Harbour. I was the only Lieutenant in the Canadian Navy in command of a major warship, and I must admit it was wearing a bit thin. It was now late 1970, and I had been wearing two stripes on my arm for ten years. Admittedly, the first five years were as an Acting Lieutenant, therefore technically I only had five years seniority as a Lieutenant.

Working with the USN was a marvellous experience for all of us. I tried to let as many of my officers as possible carry out attacks on the targets that presented themselves. I was determined that my officers, especially my XO, would get as much experience as possible in carrying out attacks, before they went on Perisher. This was because I had only been "allowed" two attacks before I started Perisher!

One of the crosses that a submarine captain has to bear is his "playful" crew. Submariners are different. There are no two ways about it. There is a tendency to try to "outdo" their colleagues. In my career I experienced it a few times, but I can still remember the first time.

On the way back from Pearl Harbour on one trip, my Executive Officer (who is currently the equivalent of the First Sea Lord, or Chief of Naval Operations -- "Top Man"), carried out his usual evening rounds of the submarine, on the first evening out. Normally, on completion of rounds he reported to the captain that rounds were correct. However, this evening he asked me to come back to the after engine room with him to look at something. He said he felt I might recognize it.

When I saw what it was I felt ill. There, still rolled up because of its large size, was the door mat from outside Admiral Small's headquarters. It was about ten feet by six feet. It was made of heavy rubber, in a lovely shade of blue, surrounding the insignia of the US Submarine Force -- gold dolphins. Some of my "playful" crew decided that they needed a souvenir of Hawaii, and they fancied the Admiral's doormat.

Admiral Small was not noted for his sense of humour, and I was sure that it wouldn't have taken too long for his staff to figure out who had removed his mat. Luckily, I knew that one of his submarines, the USS TANG, was about to visit Victoria shortly after my return. On TANG's arrival I made arrangements with the captain to return Admiral Small's mat, having already written him a letter apologizing for its removal. I also bought a huge British Columbia salmon, and asked TANG's captain to give it to him on his arrival in Pearl.

About a month later I received a letter from Admiral Small saying how much he had enjoyed RAIBOW's visit to Pearl Harbour. He also thanked me for the salmon, without any mention of the returned mat, until the last paragraph. He said that it was very kind of me to send him the lovely mat which matched others in his building, because he had been looking for a new one ever since somebody had removed his! Who said he didn't have a sense of humour?

When we were operating out of Victoria we tried to arrange Family Days about twice a year. We would take out the families for a day at sea, so they could see what their husbands or sons did. It also helped some of the wives, who were a little worried about their husbands being in submarines. We showed them everything, and they also saw how everybody knew exactly what to do in the event of an emergency. This helped them understand that because everybody knew their job, there was no reason to be concerned about the safety of the submarine, or their loved ones.

One particular Family Day proved to be very embarrassing for me. We had brought the families over to Vancouver by bus and ferry -- the idea being that we would then take them back to Victoria in the submarine. I could see that leaving the berth was not going to be easy, because I had a ship close ahead of me and another directly astern. I decided to twist the stern out first -- then without any headway I would twist the bow out. When my bow was clear of the ship ahead, I started to make headway, and applied some rudder to give me more clearance ahead. However, I had misjudged how close my stern was to the jetty, and as my head paid-off, my stern clipped the jetty.

If it hadn't been so embarrassing, with Shirley and other visitors on the bridge, the scene was quite amusing. As my stern hit the first wooden piling on the jetty, knocking it over, I now had enough headway to clear the jetty. However, as I was moving away the scene astern of me was like watching dominoes falling. The first piling hit the next, which also collapsed, hitting the next one, and so on.

Sometime later there was an investigation, resulting in no further action. It was found that the timber in the pilings was rotten, which exacerbated, and added to the carnage that I had left

behind me. Also, there was no damage to the submarine. In my home, I have a table decoration of a propeller sitting in the cuts that my own propeller had made in the original wooden piling. It had been presented to me by my Admiral, who obviously had a sense of humour. Nevertheless, it had been an embarrassing day in full view of the families.

Occasionally, we would take the press to sea for the day, to show them what life was like in a submarine. You just kept your fingers crossed until you saw the article in the newspaper, hoping that someone hadn't given the press a totally untrue, juicy story, on which the press seemed to thrive.

The crew loved playing jokes on the press, and particularly the occasional psychologist, who came with us to see what made submariners tick. One stunt involved a sailor walking through the submarine trailing a dog's leash, talking to an imaginary dog, telling it to jump over the hatch coamings. It was also not uncommon when these people were on board, to see two sailors walking along hand in hand, or cuddling in a corner. Submariners do it differently!

The press have never been my favourite people. This is mainly because they want a story on which they could put their own slant, or which they could make controversial. The truth did not matter. Nor did responsibility. Some of their reporting was harmless, but at other times it was embarrassing. On one of our many trips to San Diego, I was asked whether I would be willing to give an interview to the local press. They had found it interesting that a Canadian submarine was working-up USN ships before they went to Viet Nam.

It didn't seem to be controversial, so I agreed to do it. However, I insisted that a USN officer be present at the interview, because I did not wish to embarrass our hosts, by making what they might think was an inappropriate remark.

The reporter was a Robert Dietrich from the San Diego Tribune. He seemed a pleasant man who was interested in what we were doing. I spent about thirty-five minutes talking about the Canadian Navy and the reason why we were now wearing green uniforms, as opposed to the traditional blues.

He wanted to know what we were doing in San Diego this time, and what the difference was between operating in San Diego than at home. I explained that as far as I was concerned it was the variety of targets that we had in the San Diego area. He wanted more details, so I naively told him how we attacked the USS RANGER during this current exercise, pointing out that we did not have any aircraft carriers in Canada, so that this was a new experience for us. We couldn't have spent more than five minutes on that subject.

"Canada Sub Sinks Super Carrier." Those were the words that

appeared on the front page of the next edition of the San Diego Tribune. I could hardly believe my eyes. The story read like a movie script. It even described the "red-bearded steely-eyed captain," who fooled the crew of one of the US Navy's largest aircraft carriers, culminating in its simulated sinking! There was no mention of green uniforms and life in the Canadian Navy. It concentrated on the one subject of this Second World War submarine being able to get inside the protective screen and sinking one of the navy's finest ships. I felt sick and embarrassed. I was down in San Diego, supposedly helping the USN -- yet the article gave the impression that I was saying how easy it was to sink them!

Luckily for me, I had the USN officer who was present at the interview to corroborate my side of the story. The US Admiral was very gracious and could see the funny side of it, and told me not to worry about it. I didn't have the nerve to seek out the Captain of the USS RANGER, to get his views.

Unfortunately, the story wouldn't go away. About a month later, I received a message from our Attache in Moscow, saying that an article had appeared in Pravda, with the caption, "Deeds of glory by Canadian submarine." Apparently its theme was that this "old" submarine could easily sink one of the US Navy's newest ships. A few weeks after that, the "Stars and Stripes," the magazine of the entire United States forces, reprinted the article from Pravda.

I couldn't believe that this thing wouldn't go away. It resurfaced again about a year later, when a Royal Air Force crew was passing through San Diego, after working with RAINBOW, off Victoria. They had an interview with Mr. Dietrich, and must have told him that they had been working with RAINBOW. So in the article on them, it referred to "the Canadian submarine that had been so successful against RANGER." To my relief, the story seemed to die after that.

Just before New Year's day, I received a call at home from my Admiral, informing me that I was to be promoted to Lieutenant Commander on the first of January 1971.

We were still spending a good deal of our time in San Diego and Pearl Harbour, working with the USN. Shirley made a second visit to Hawaii during this period. We hadn't arranged for Shirley to come out, but some of our American friends called her while we were on our way to Pearl, and insisted that she come out.

The first thing I knew about it was when I was invited on board the Royal Australian Navy's submarine ONSLOW for a drink, when we arrived alongside. When I walked into ONSLOW's wardroom, there was Shirley, her hand wrapped round a gin and tonic. It was a lovely surprise. Again, we had a wonderful time in Hawaii.

As I have mentioned, the Viet Nam war was in progress during this period. It was only natural therefore that when we were in Hawaii, we would meet many officers who were either on leave from Viet Nam, or those that were recovering from their wounds.

I will always remember one major from the Marines that I met at the Officers Club. He had been injured by a mortar, when he was in a dugout in the jungle. He remembered nothing more until he woke up in the ambulance taking him to Tripler Army Hospital, the huge and busy military hospital, just outside Honolulu.

What surprised him was that when he woke up, he was in the same combat clothes, still covered in mud and sand, which he had been wearing when he was hit. He had been airlifted out of the jungle by helicopter and taken to Da Nang. Because there was a medical evacuation flight just about to leave Da Nang, he was then transferred to the C-141 and flown to Hickem Field in Pearl Harbour, and then to hospital. He had been transported from the jungle to a fully staffed hospital, half a world away, in less than eight hours. In the Second World War he would probably have died before they could have got him out of the jungle.

One of the most interesting operations that I was involved in, was on our way up into the Gulf of Alaska to take part in an exercise. I was exercising with three Canadian destroyers, when we received a message that a Soviet Task Group was on its way through the Aleutian chain of islands. Our exercise was terminated, and we all received separate orders. I was told to chop to American control, and shortly after that RAINBOW was ordered to patrol in the area of Unimak Pass, halfway down the Aleutian chain. The aim was to obtain as much intelligence as possible, without being detected.

We spent about two days patrolling the area, with no sonar contacts, except the occasional fisherman. Then one morning about six o'clock, we obtained our first sonar contact, which was classified as a Krupny Class destroyer. On coming to periscope depth I could see that the visibility was restricted -- probably about fifteen hundred yards at a maximum. We continued to close the target on a steady sonar bearing, which would ensure an interception. The target's range was estimated at about sixty miles when we had first gained contact.

I felt quite confident that in this visibility the Krupny would have a problem seeing my periscope, if I kept exposure to a minimum. Just before ten o'clock it was obvious that he was now very close -- and there, out of the fog and gloom I saw this grey hull passing ahead of us at about a thousand yards. What a target! I couldn't have missed! The adrenalin was flowing fast and furious.

We took the required periscope photos, and of course as we had been tracking him on sonar for four hours, we also had made many

audio tapes for analysis. Apparently, the Soviet force had split and transited the Aleutians separately. That is why we only had the one ship. I had been hoping for more!

We were ordered into Kodiak, where all our intelligence information was packaged and flown to Victoria. Because we were under the operational control of an American Admiral the information was then sent on to Hawaii, as we had been operating in part of his waters.

The unfortunate thing about that type of operation is that the Captain is the only one to see the target. Unlike Hollywood movies, the periscope is not kept up, so that every man and his dog can have a look through it. If you don't want to get caught, you only put the periscope up when you need to. It's very difficult to contain yourself when you are telling your team that you are now looking at the Russian lifebuoy sentry, only a thousand yards away, probably daydreaming about his girlfriend in Petropavlosk. For my crew, although they were the same distance away as I was, I could have been fantasising. It was almost like being a Peeping Tom. However, it was amazing to see how everybody was caught up in the excitement. I still have one of those periscope photos today, above my desk, just to prove I was there.

A month or two later Admiral Aurand, the Admiral to whom I was responsible for the Soviet operation, flew to Victoria to award me with a United States Navy Commendation for my part in the operation. I prefer to see the Commendation as an award to RAINBOW, because there were many people involved in the operation. For instance, there would have been no operation if the sonarman on watch hadn't picked up the sonar contact that turned out to be the Krupny. He classified it as such -- not me. Without the Plotters we would not have been able to intercept our target. It's not a one man effort. It's a team effort -- but as Captain, I received the Commendation on their behalf.

Each year the Canadian Navy was represented at the Portland, Oregon, Rose Festival. This was a four-day event that was nonstop entertainment for everybody, from beginning to end. We were berthed right up in the middle of town, alongside a six-lane highway, separated from the harbour by a grassy patch running past the end of our gangway. It was about a five-hour car ride from Victoria, so Shirley would collect some of the wives and drive down. It was always a good visit, and as usual, the hospitality was lavish.

During my time in RAINBOW many strange things happened, but space prevents me from putting all those incidents down on paper. However, there is one particular event that I think is particularly amusing. It's a different type of fisherman's story, about the one that got away!

On one particular exercise I was ordered to be in a certain location at four o'clock one morning, ready to attack some destroyers as they passed through my area. I had remained on the surface until three o'clock, keeping clear of some Soviet trawlers that we had seen on the horizon. At three o'clock we dived and went deep, with our sonarmen listening for the approach of our destroyers. I lay in my bunk reading, expecting to get a report of a sonar contact at any time.

As I was reading I felt the submarine starting to heel over to starboard. I was out of my bunk and into the control room in seconds. We were now heeled to about fifteen degrees, and a report came from the Manoeuvring Room at the after end of the submarine, that a loud scraping sound could be heard passing down the port side. Simultaneously, sonar reported loud all-round hydrophone effect (HE), which meant that whatever was above us, was now threshing its propellers very rapidly.

Just as suddenly as it began, it was all over. The noises aft ceased, the HE disappeared and we were upright again. It didn't take long to realize what had happened. We had been trawled by one of the Soviet trawlers that we had seen on the horizon when we had dived.

Later, after we had made our attack on the destroyers I surfaced to see if any damage had been done. The only evidence of contact was a very polished after casing on the port side, which was obviously where the trawler's steel cables, attached to his trawl, had dragged down our side. We started to imagine some of the comments on the trawler about the huge catch they had that got away. Just like any fisherman who comes back with the story of the one that got away, probably nobody believed the Russians either!

In this instance it was an amusing event, but there have been similar incidents where submarines travelling at high speed dragged the trawler over, with the loss of lives and the ship. In my case I was proceeding very slowly, going round in circles.

I brought RAINBOW into a maintenance period for a period of six weeks in the spring of 1972. As there was no requirement for the Captain to be on board during that period, my Admiral was contacted by an American Admiral friend of his. He wanted to know if I would be available to be on his staff, as submarine operations advisor, for a few weeks. I was delighted of course, so off I flew to San Diego.

I was on the American Admiral's staff for three weeks, and thoroughly enjoyed it, as we were always on the move. He would shift his flag from aircraft carrier, to cruiser and to destroyer, then back again. It was a very busy time. When I was on the carriers I would ensure that RAINBOW's name never came up -- just in case

somebody from RANGER was now on board these carriers.

As I still had a couple of weeks before RAINBOW went to sea I was selected for an anti-submarine course in Nowra, near Sydney, Australia. Unfortunately, Shirley had to go into hospital for a hysterectomy at that time, so I was going to turn the course down. Shirley would have none of it, and told me to go to Australia. As we were going by a military propeller-driven aircraft with only the one crew, we had to make a couple of stops along the way for crew rest.

It was very good of Shirley not to be upset about my trip, but her reasoning was that it was probably going to be the only opportunity that I would ever have of getting to Australia, and that she would be fine. However, I heard that her views changed significantly when she received a post card from me from Fiji, saying how tired I was after the long flight. She was lying in hospital with all sorts of tubes in her, and didn't appreciate seeing a picture of Latoka, an island paradise in Fiji, with me complaining that I was tired. Of course, I only heard about it when I returned, but I put her displeasure down to post-operative stress, causing a temporary loss of her sense of humour!

An exercise was being planned by the Australians, in which Canada would be invited to participate. However, my Admiral decided that he did not want to send RAINBOW all the way to Australia. He was happy for us to exercise with the Canadian surface fleet on the way across the Pacific, but we could not go the whole way. I was asked to choose a furthest-on destination -- so after studying the chart for some time I settled on Tahiti. As Papeete was also a French Naval base, I had little problem in convincing the Admiral that it was an acceptable destination.

My Navigator and I spent a great deal of time organising our visit, getting all the necessary diplomatic clearances etc. Even though I had travelled a great deal in different parts of the world, I had never visited the islands of the South Pacific. I was really looking forward to this trip, when one day I received a phone call from my Career Manager informing me that I had been selected for Staff College, a course that was a must if one hoped to be promoted to a senior rank. It was to commence in Toronto, starting 4 September 1972 -- the day we were due to arrive in Tahiti.

There was nothing I could do about it. My posting was just part of the whole posting plot, so there were many others involved. However, at the same time I was surprised to be selected for Staff College, because you were selected on your potential for higher rank. The maximum age for selection was forty, so, as I wouldn't be forty until February 1973 I was just eligible.

I had spent just over two years in command, and it had been

a marvellous experience. Every naval officer strives for command, but unfortunately many do not make it, especially in submarines. In the surface navy, it's just that there are not enough ships available, for the number of officers qualified to command them. The whole selection process is very tight. Although I was reluctant to give up my command, I knew that I had no choice. I considered myself very fortunate to have had the opportunity to command.

This time we sold our house in Victoria, as we didn't see much chance of returning there. People killed to live in Victoria, and we had been there for seven years, with the exception of Perisher. So it was off in the car again for another cross-country jaunt, only this time it was a three thousand-mile journey, instead of the usual four thousand.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN -- STAFF COLLEGE AND HALIFAX AGAIN

The Staff College in Toronto was a beautiful, ivy covered building, not far from the centre of the city. Because the grounds were so spacious and raised above the road level, you couldn't hear the traffic. It was like living in a lovely old mansion in the country.

There were one hundred and two students at the College. As nearly all of us had been posted in from other parts of Canada, and the fact that we were only going to be there for eleven months, we mostly lived in rented accommodation. Most of us lived in one of three different ghettos, as we called them. We lived in the Thornhill ghetto, just a few miles north of the city limits. For rental housing it was quite good.

Staff College was considered as a place of higher learning for military officers, who had been selected because of their potential to reach a senior rank. It was for army, navy and air force officers, as well as foreign officers of the same three services.

The students were all at the Major/Lieutenant Commander level, whereas the staff were either Lieutenant Colonels or Commanders, or above. We covered many subjects, including Canadian politics, international politics, military strategy, Soviet strategy, world trouble spots and other global issues. There was a great deal of reading to do, because the subjects were normally discussed in syndicates of about a dozen students. We also had some excellent lectures and presentations, including visits to the United Nations in New York. That visit confirmed my impression of the UN !

On a visit to Rapid City, South Dakota, where we had been visiting a Strategic Air Command base, we were snowed-in. We had finished our visit and were due to fly out next morning, but awoke to find about three feet of snow on the ground, and still snowing. The amusing part of this was that the lobby of the Holiday Inn, where we were staying, had about a dozen Sioux Indians lying there.

They were from a place, not far away, called Wounded Knee, which was under siege by United States Marshals. To beat the siege, the Indians put cloth over their horses' hooves so they couldn't be heard. This allowed them to sneak through the Marshals' lines, to get food from a local store. Unfortunately, on this sortie, because of the weather, they couldn't get any further than the Holiday Inn. They asked a sympathetic night manager if they could stay in the lobby until the snow stopped. This scene and story was a cross between a movie and the nineteenth and twentieth century!

On one of our other visits we went to the Royal Air Force Staff College at Bracknell, just outside London. During this visit I

managed to fly over to Belfast to see my mother -- but just for one day. I haven't managed to get back to Belfast since.

I also saw Thelma for a couple of hours in London, when she came to our hotel the night before we flew back to Canada. She had told me some months before, how the army had sent Ernie home to the UK from Singapore for a heart operation, and that the military doctors had then sent him to the Middlesex Hospital. During the operation something went terribly wrong. She had told us what had happened in general terms, but now she told me the details of this tragic affair.

The operation had left Ernie with severe brain damage, to the extent that he had totally lost his short term memory. This meant that he couldn't even go for a walk by himself, because he couldn't remember how to get back. He had no peripheral vision and was also colour blind. Ernie had been a bright, young, intelligent army officer, when I had last seen him, and he was now out of the army attending a rehabilitation school, because of somebody's negligence.

This sort of thing is a terrible tragedy for anyone, but even worse for this smart officer who could have achieved a high rank in the army. I felt so sorry for both Ernie and Thelma, and their children. To make matters worse, the medical profession closed ranks and refused to accept any liability. Thelma had lost both her parents when she was young, and now her husband was brain damaged and severely disabled. When was she ever going to get some good luck?

The eleven months at the College was the only time in my naval life that I was not responsible for some one, or some thing. If you were going on a visit a student's only responsibility was to arrive at a certain place at a certain time to catch a bus. We even had a corporal to make sure we could get that right!

As I said, there was a lot of reading to do. A good deal of our time was also spent on preparing material for syndicate presentations, but I believe that most of us enjoyed our year there. The naval officers amongst us, in our superior way, let on that it was an unnecessary year out of our lives. It was all right for "jet jockeys and pongos," who had a problem stringing two sentences together, but it was totally unnecessary for a naval officer!

Sometime in April 1973 we received a visit from our Career Managers. I had asked for an exchange posting to the UK or the United States, but I doubted if I would get it. I was correct -- I didn't. Career Managers must take a special course in acting, because my man told me that it was essential that when the course finished that I drive to Halifax immediately, because the First Canadian Submarine Squadron just couldn't do without me. It made me wonder how they had ever managed without me long before now!

In July 1973 we arrived in Halifax, where I was to be the Submarine Squadron Operations Officer, and Spare Crew Commanding Officer. We were pleasantly surprised by the change that had taken place in the city in the intervening years. It was much cleaner (though not as clean as Victoria). There were some excellent restaurants and some fine hotels. While the down town area had diminished somewhat (there wasn't much to diminish in the first place), there were now many, large, modern shopping centres in various parts of the city. Also, large, modern office buildings were being built all over the place. Things had changed in Halifax in nine years.

We found an attractive Dutch Colonial house located on the Halifax peninsula, with the interesting address of 2231 Blink Bonnie Terrace. At first I didn't like the house, as all I could see was a house that had been neglected, and needed a great deal of work. However, Shirley could see its potential, and she was quite correct. Between us, we made it into a very pleasant home.

The Squadron Operations Officer, or SOO as he was called, was responsible to the Submarine Squadron Commander for the operations of the three submarines which comprised the First Canadian Submarine Squadron. There was no second squadron. That was planned for the west coast eventually. The submarine Commanding Officers would report, through me, to the Commander. I acted as advisor to the Commander on all aspects of submarine operations. It was an interesting job, and one that I enjoyed.

While I was in that job I took advantage of the time ashore to study for my Surface Ship Command Board. Unlike submariners, surface ship officers wrote a number of examinations on the standard naval subjects. They could either write them at the same time, or over a period of years. Once they had completed them, they could then sit an oral Board. If they passed that, they were qualified and eligible for surface ship command. In a way, it was similar to obtaining your Master's Certificate.

Submariners, if they wanted to have the opportunity to be selected for a surface ship command, in addition to their submarine command, were required to sit the same written examinations and Board that their surface ship colleagues did. During this period I completed all my surface ship command qualifications. This made me the only person that I know of who was qualified to command a merchant vessel, a surface warship and a submarine. I know of people who are qualified to command a merchant ship and a surface warship, or a submarine and a surface warship, but I don't know of anyone with the three qualifications.

The east coast navy deployed to the Puerto Rican operating areas during the winter months. They were normally gone from the beginning

of January until the end of March. Our submarines would also go south at this time. As our boats were operating in USN operating areas, we were required to provide the USN with an officer to act as the Submarine Operating Authority, responsible for all submarines in their areas.

I flew down to the US Navy Operating Base at Roosevelt Roads, about fifty miles from San Juan, to become the Operating Authority. I worked directly for an American Admiral in Roosevelt Roads, but I was also responsible for submarine safety to the Commander, Submarine Forces Atlantic, the senior NATO submarine authority, in Norfolk, Virginia. It was rather amusing that, because I was working for an American admiral, I was responsible for operations of all American nuclear submarines operating in the Caribbean. It was a tough way to spend the winter months -- but somebody had to do it!

On my return from Puerto Rico I was asked by the Squadron Commander if I would like to take command of HMCS OKANAGAN later that year. I couldn't believe it. Would I like to do what?

As I had done my initial submarine training in the United States, and had spent all my time in USN class submarines, except Perisher, I needed to get some experience in the O-Class submarines, before I took command. It was decided that I would ride HMCS ONONDAGA for a few weeks, during her deployment to the UK on an exercise.

When I was on Perisher, I found out very quickly that a great deal of the terminology in the O-Class was different from my USN terminology. The operation of the equipment was similar, and of course, the general operating concept was the same, but frequently the terminology was different. On Perisher, I only had to learn the terminology as it applied to attacking, but now, if I was going in command of an O-Class, I would need to know a lot more.

Also, because of my previous training, I decided that I wanted to know everything about the technical systems of the O-Class. I think it surprised and amused some of the young sailors in ONONDAGA, who were carrying out their own qualification program, to be sharing spaces with a CO when trying to trace an air or hydraulic line through a compartment. We pooled our knowledge in an effort to help all of us. Such was the thinking of submariners.

On the 4th of August 1974 I assumed command of HMCS OKANAGAN. I joined the submarine in Cornerbrook, Newfoundland, and immediately went into an exercise off the east coast of Canada for two weeks. OKANAGAN was a much newer submarine than RAINBOW. Twenty years newer, in fact. I had now been in command of the oldest and newest of Canada's submarines.

Being British designed and built, the accommodation was spartan. Accommodation in submarines, is, by the necessity of space limitations, restricted. However, there was no excuse in this day

and age to design accommodation, based on the use of sleeping bags. Six to eight officers lived in the wardroom. This was in a space approximately twelve feet long, and seven or eight feet wide.

During the day it was used as an office, where the officers could do their paper work. It was also where they dined, which meant that approaching meal times, all paperwork had to be off the table so the table could be set for meals. At night the settees were transformed into bunks, where the officers slept in their sleeping bags.

It didn't take much to see why all submariners take a battery of psychological tests before they come into submarines. You have to be the sort of person who doesn't get upset easily. For instance, you have to be fairly easygoing to accept a big foot, fresh (or not so fresh) out of a sweaty sleeping bag, being placed next to your bacon and eggs as you were eating breakfast! The only way out of the sleeping bags and bunks was by standing on the table. Remember -- showers were not part of daily life!

Operationally, the O-Class were far superior to the American Fleet Class -- but as I said, they were twenty years newer. As a CO I enjoyed the superior speed and manoeuvrability that I now had. My only criticism, was that the designers forgot that people had to live there as well.

Each year we exchanged a submarine with the Royal Navy. They would send a boat over to Canada, which would operate as though it was part of the Canadian Navy. We would do the same with the Royal Navy. It was normally for a period of about three months. It was my luck that OKANAGAN was going to be the exchange boat this year.

Before we left Canada, we were given a copy of our program for our deployment. Part of the joint agreement was that each submarine could choose a place for a recreational port visit during the exchange. I requested a visit to Liverpool, which was immediately approved. I had always wanted to bring my own ship into Liverpool, and it was now about to happen. We arranged that Shirley and the children would fly over while I was there.

It was beautiful weather when we arrived in DOLPHIN in mid spring. This had been my "home" during Perisher, so it was good to be back. It was even nicer, knowing that I didn't have that to go through that torture this time. The main part of our operations was to take place in the Mediterranean, and off the Spanish coast. We would be using Gibraltar as our base, so again I was delighted at the thought of going back there again.

While the submarine was in DOLPHIN I came up to London to meet Shirley. We stayed with Ernie and Thelma for a couple of days. It was good to see them both again. I found it difficult to realize

at times that Ernie had any problems, let alone brain damage. He was so intelligent, that he knew what his limitations were, and therefore was able to counterbalance them. Carrying out a conversation with him now was almost like the old days. But they weren't the old days -- he just knew how to manage.

Arriving in Liverpool from Gosport was a great thrill for me. The last time I had arrived in Liverpool by sea was in the Herdsman in 1959 -- fifteen years earlier. As I approached the Gladstone Locks I thought of all the other times that I had been through them. On my first trip to sea in 1949, as a cadet, we had returned to Liverpool through these locks. In those days I never thought that I would be bringing my own submarine into these locks, so well known to merchant sailors from all over the world. Shirley and the girls were on the locks to meet us. To me, it was a lovely homecoming.

We had a marvellous time in Liverpool. We did so many things in only four days. On the first day, Shirley was interviewed by the press. They could see they had a local human interest story and played it up to the hilt. The caption under a photo of Shirley and the children in the Liverpool Echo read, "Canadian Submarine Visit Like Homecoming." Shirley's mother and father enjoyed everything about that visit. Not only did they have the family with them, but they enjoyed meeting the many people at our reception, including the Lord Mayor of the city that they had lived in for most of their lives. Shirley received a personal tour by the Lord Mayor of the magnificent Liverpool Town Hall.

My old Captain from my days in the Governor, Herbert Jones (he was now eighty-four) and his wife, came to our reception on board. They also took Shirley and me out to dinner one evening. I wondered whether he was still starting the car for Mrs. Jones, as he had done many years before!

My brother's son, Patrick who lived in Peru, was at a boarding school in the Isle of Man. I managed to get permission from the school to allow him to visit me. He was only sixteen, but looked quite a bit older. My officers "adopted" him, and he stayed with them in their hotel. They also took him to see the, "Grandmother Stripper" at some local club! I'm sure his school didn't think he was doing the things he was doing. I have never seen him since. He now runs the family business in Lima.

The highlight of that visit was meeting Jean and Michael Jones again after all those years. We hadn't seen them since we had come to Canada, so I could scarcely believe my eyes when I saw them walking into OKANAGAN's Control Room halfway through our reception. Shirley had invited them, and hadn't told me. It was the best part of our visit for me -- and what a lovely surprise.

The day before we left Liverpool I received a phone call from

my XO, telling me that he was going to have to send one of our sailors back to Canada, because he had injured himself. He then went on to tell me what had happened. I could tell that he was enjoying himself as he recounted the story.

The sailor, Leading Seaman "Pig" Lloyd (the name tells a story by itself) had caught his high heels in the hem of his dress as he stepped off his bar stool! When I heard this I thought one of two things. Either the XO was drunk, or I hadn't heard correctly. The XO wasn't drunk -- and I had heard correctly. Apparently, as Lloyd fell, he put his hands out in front of him to break his fall. It broke his fall all right, but it also broke both his wrists.

I never did find out why Lloyd was wearing a dress -- and I don't think I wanted to know. However, it's not too difficult to guess that a certain amount of liquor was involved. Apparently his main concern was to get the lipstick and makeup off his face before he got to the hospital! The reason I mention this incident is because of the outcome.

Our Engineer Officer was flying back to Canada in a day or so, therefore the XO decided that he would be a good escort to get Lloyd back to Canada, with his two broken wrists. When we arrived back in Canada a couple of months later, we were met by a very irate Engineer Officer. He was not impressed with what his escort duties entailed. He had to spend two days with a big hulking sailor, who had both wrists in plaster, and therefore could not use his hands for anything -- for <u>anything</u> Think about it!

After a wonderful visit to Liverpool we sailed for Gibraltar. En route we made a rendezvous with three other submarines -- two Brits and a Dutchman. For the first time in my life I took part in a sailpast with four submarines on entering Gibraltar. The salute was taken by Admiral Sir Iwan Raikes, Flag Officer Submarines. I had read about him in, "One of our Submarines," when he had been a sub-lieutenant during the war. I never thought that I would meet and work for someone that I had read about in 1952, when I first became interested in submarines.

It was marvellous being back in Gibraltar. This time without the pressures of Perisher to worry about. There was certainly a difference going back there as a CO. We had an excellent exercise working out of Gibraltar, especially working with the other submarines. After about three weeks operations in the Gibraltar area we returned to the UK. Our next assignment was to operate in the English Channel, where we worked for Flag Officer Sea Training, who was working up ships.

All too soon our deployment came to an end, and we returned to Halifax, and some well-earned leave for everyone. Shortly after that trip I returned to my previous position as Squadron Operations

Officer.

One day in that summer of 1975, I was sitting in the garden with my late-afternoon scotch and water by my side, reading the newspaper. I happened to glance at a photo in the newspaper of someone that I thought I recognised. In the split second before I started to read the caption, my mind had gone back about thirty years, because I was looking at a face I last saw in 1947. Sure enough, it was John Pace, who had been a good friend of my brother's at school. Like many of our friends he had spent many hours in our house in Belfast. He, along with many of my brother's friends, had emigrated to Canada in 1947.

According to the newspaper article, he had been transferred from Hamilton to Halifax to run the Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre. I contacted him, and shortly after that we met when he came down to the Submarine Squadron for lunch.

It was marvellous seeing him again and catching up on his news -- twenty-eight years of news! I must admit having subsequently heard that he had come out to Canada on a liberty ship, I was a little perturbed. I thought that I was the one who knew about liberty ships -- only to discover that John had been on one a few years before me. His parents had flown out to join him a few months after his arrival in Canada.

He updated me on where many of my brother's other friends were, which I was then able to pass on to my brother. John had married a Canadian girl, Margaret -- and they had two children, a boy and a girl, approximately the same age as our two girls.

At school, John was my brother's friend, so while I knew him because he spent a lot of time in our house, he was still my brother's friend. The age difference separated us in those days, which it doesn't do as one becomes older. Now of course, John and Margaret are amongst my dearest friends.

John had been an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church some years before coming to Halifax, but for his own reasons turned to something else. St. David's Presbyterian Church in Halifax had been without a permanent minister for sometime when John arrived in Halifax. Therefore, it was not very long before John was asked to preach there occasionally. This ultimately led to him being asked to return to the church permanently. On April Fool's Day 1976 John was inducted as the minister at St. David's, where he remains to the present day as the Reverend Doctor Pace.

On his occasional visits to the UK for his study leave, he renewed his acquaintance with my family, whom he had known in Belfast. My mother called him "little John Pace," which showed how long it had been since she had seen him. He has also visited Thelma and her

family.

I remained in the Submarine Squadron until October 1975. I was more than a little upset when I received my posting to the Admiral's staff as Staff Officer Personnel Services. It was ridiculous -- I was a sharpender -- a driver --so why was I being posted to this nothing position? In the new job I was responsible for such things as reviewing grievances, approving liquor supplies to ships, and writing precis of recommendations for honours and awards for the Admiral to review. However, I realized I shouldn't complain, because I had just finished my second command, whereas most people only get one chance -- and others not even one.

Working for Admiral Boyle was different. He was known as "Fester" Boyle. Another story about him was that he didn't have an ulcer, but that he was a carrier! As one could guess by those comments, Admiral Boyle was a little awkward -- to say the least. I think he used to eat raw meat for breakfast! However, I got on reasonably well with him. I found that he didn't want you to present him with a problem, without you having some good, logical solutions to it. He felt that you were on his staff to help him, not just to give him problems. As a result, I always made sure I had done my homework before I went to see him.

In November I received a message promoting me to Commander, effective the 1st of January 1976 -- five years to the day from when I had been promoted to Lieutenant Commander. Apparently my Career Manager knew of the future promotion before I left OKANAGAN, so that's why he put me in a holding billet until my promotion date. Now I understood why I had gone to this strange job.

My new appointment was as Senior Staff Officer Training, but still on Admiral Boyle's staff. I was now responsible for the training policy of the officers and men of the Canadian Navy. It was an interesting job, but it wasn't the real thing as far as I was concerned. I wanted to get back to the operational side of the navy -- but so did many others.

Two years after being promoted to Commander I received the news that I had wanted to hear, but that I had hardly dared hope for. It was a message appointing me as the Commander, First Canadian Submarine Squadron, effective the first of January 1978 -- the top position in the Canadian Submarine Force. I had managed to get to that position in spite of my age. I was now almost forty-five, and it had been thirteen years since I first joined submarines.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN -- CANCOMRAY

The military thrive on acronyms. It doesn't matter which country it is, they love them. They couldn't live without them. The countries within NATO established some classic acronyms, so that every body within NATO could easily understand them. For instance, everyone should recognize CANCOMSUBCARRIBSEAFRON and COMCARRIBAIRFRON as the Canadian Commander Submarine Caribbean Sea Frontier and the Commander Caribbean Air Frontier!

I believe there must be little men in the bowels of the Pentagon, MOD (UK), NDHQ and the other NATO capitals, who do nothing but produce acronyms. They are probably the same people who do the same for newspapers.

The reason I mention acronyms is because I finally made it -- I became an acronym. I was CANCOMSUBRONONE -- the Canadian Commander of the First Canadian Submarine Squadron. It was a very impressive title. However, I was quickly brought down to earth by Shirley who called it CANCOMRAY. In naval circles it was further shortened to SM1.

As SM1, I had three submarine CO's reporting to me, while I in turn reported to the Chief of Staff to the Admiral. However, I was also double-hatted, which meant that I was the Senior Staff Officer Submarines (SSO Subs) on the Admirals staff. This had several advantages, because it meant that as SM1 I could write a letter to the Admiral recommending a certain course of action -- then as SSO(Subs) I would draft a reply for the Admirals signature approving my request. It certainly avoided the bureaucracy of going through the system. Of course, it was also much faster and more efficient. It was amazing some of the things that I managed to do by playing that game.

From the first day I arrived in the Submarine Squadron it was apparent that personnel shortages were going to be my biggest challenge. I wasn't worried about operations, because I knew that the people in the submarines were very professional and very competent -- and as good, if not better, than their NATO colleagues. It was just that I didn't have enough of them in certain technical trades at the Chief and Petty Officer level.

Because service in submarines was voluntary, it was sometimes difficult to keep certain senior people. This was not necessarily because they didn't like submarines, but was mainly due to outside pressures. By the time a rating had spent twenty years in the navy he was probably a Chief Petty Officer, or at least a senior Petty Officer. If he were serving in a destroyer, because of the larger

numbers, he would probably be the duty Senior Rate every thirty or forty days. In a submarine, with perhaps ten senior rates available for duty, he would probably be duty every ten days. This meant that he was away from home, in his home port, for thirty-two hours (ie, from eight o'clock one morning until four o'clock the next afternoon) every ten days. This did not compare very favourably with the surface navy -- a point that did not go unnoticed by the wives of men serving in submarines. As a result, many senior rates returned to the surface navy.

The same problem existed to a lesser extent with the junior rates. However, because they were still relatively junior, they mainly accepted that they were still paying their dues. I doubt that their wives necessarily felt that way.

If I was to keep the submarines operating safely, I would have to obtain some senior rates from somewhere. If I had any doubts about the safety of the submarines, due to a shortage of senior qualified personnel, I would have had no hesitation in recommending to the Admiral that we tie up a submarine alongside, rather than send it to sea with an inadequately qualified crew. Therefore, I knew I had to solve this problem as soon as possible.

After giving my Admiral a briefing on the subject, I asked for his approval to approach the Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy in an effort to alleviate our problem. He gave me carte blanche to negotiate any deal I could arrange with them, which gave me the freedom I needed for some innovative ideas. I decided to try the Royal Navy first.

Our Attache in London arranged for me to meet the senior personnel and operational staff at the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in London. I will never forget those negotiations. We met at the London Playboy Club in Mayfair for lunch with our British guests. Our Attache, Captain Jim Wood, now a retired Vice Admiral, was our host, so he chose the Playboy Club to impress our guests. By the end of a long lunch hour (or two, or three) we had traded one Canadian submarine to go on loan to the Royal Navy for three months (they were short of diesel submarines), for four Chief Petty Officers, Engine Room Artificers, for a year. It was a good deal for us, but I still needed more senior rates, so my next stop was Australia.

I spent the first weekend in Sydney with my old Perisher colleague, Terry Roach, who was now a Captain. After that, it was to HMAS PLATYPUS, the home of my opposite number -- COMAUSSUBRONONE! After a couple of days we negotiated a deal. They had a large backlog of young sailors waiting for submarine training, without enough hulls to train them. They also had more senior rates than they had bunks for in their submarines, so I agreed to train their young trainees in Canada, in return for the loan of half a dozen senior rates. We also agreed to an exchange of submarine commanding officers --

an arrangement which still exists today. The sight and sounds of Australian submariners in Halifax Dockyard for the next year caused many a raised eyebrow. Only those involved in the deal knew the story.

With the assistance of the Royal Navy and Australian personnel, this allowed us to get our own people ashore for training -- subsequently returning them to sea on completion of their courses. To achieve this I had to restrict OKANAGAN's operations for a short period to carry out the changeover of some senior Canadians for some senior Brits and Aussies. I didn't want to prolong this changeover, so I came up with an idea to keep up morale, which is so important in any ship, and particularly a submarine. I had been asked if we could provide a submarine for the interior shots of a movie that was to be shot by a joint US/Japanese film company. They also wanted some of the crew as extras. As submariners were a bunch of hams anyway, I offered up OKANAGAN.

The film company spent a week on board. The movie was called "Virus." I saw it some time later, and I can honestly say it would not have won an Oscar. I took Shirley and Kerry down to the submarine to watch some of the filming, because watching the techniques was interesting. The star, Chuck Connors, had a TV series in the sixties called "The Rifleman." As a cowboy, he did not give the ideal image of a Royal Navy submarine captain, so Shirley ended up as his dialogue coach, teaching him to sound "English." As hard as she tried, it didn't work. However, we became good friends with Chuck, and I've stayed with him in his Beverly Hills apartment, and also at his ranch at Tehachapi in the Mojave Desert. The last time I saw him was when I had dinner with him in Los Angeles sometime in 1990. He died shortly thereafter, but I did enjoy our friendship.

I didn't realize how interested OKANAGAN's ship's company were in being part of the movie. Some were dressed as dying Russian sailors and others as dying British sailors. We had sailors dying all over the place -- but the morale of the dying sailors was very high! Once the movie was over and the transition of the crews complete, we never had any further personnel problems for the remainder of my time as SM1.

The submarine that I had lent to the Royal Navy was OKANAGAN, my old submarine. It was arranged for OKANAGAN to visit London during her deployment. This gave the British sailors serving in her a chance to bring their relatives down to visit "their" submarine. It also gave me an opportunity to fly to London to meet the submarine when she came alongside HMS BELFAST, just below Tower Bridge.

As usual, the submarine hosted a reception for friends and dignitaries. I invited Thelma and Ernie, along with their children -- who weren't children anymore -- Valda, Wendy and Michael. There were two highlights of that evening. One, I was delighted to see.

The other was showstopping and interesting.

Firstly, it was marvellous that Ernie could make it. He had problems breathing, and the long haul up the gangway on to BELFAST, then the steep gangway on to OKANAGAN was a challenge for many people, but for someone with Ernie's problems the situation was a lot worse. Anyway, by taking it very slowly, he made it. I can still see him sitting in the corner of the wardroom with a drink in his hand talking away to people who had no idea of his problems. If only Ernie's eldest daughter could have shown such courage and reserve. In fact, what she showed were long legs and knickers!

As I mentioned, the gangway on to OKANAGAN was very steep, causing some people to have problems getting on board. Valda decided to climb down the gangway frontwards, although it would have been easier to come down backwards. She was having problems, so she eventually came down on her bottom, with her skirt nearly up to her waist. In all my years in submarines I had never seen such an arrival! Other guests arriving on board, and officers greeting them, must have been very impressed with this display. I pretended I didn't know her. Unfortunately her arrival was only part of it. There was more to come.

A party or a reception in a submarine is a chummy affair. That's the term we use, because you are cheek and jowl -- or another part of your body, with everybody else. Valda found herself in the very narrow passageway outside the wardroom, where for some unknown reason to her, one of the sailors kept squeezing by her regularly. He was the duty roundsman, responsible for doing rounds of the submarine every hour -- not every ten minutes! Squeezing past Valda every ten minutes was a much better proposition for him than sitting in his mess watching television!

I have subsequently changed Valda's name to "Submarine Sal." If I thought she would have been offended by this story I would not have included it, but I know she has a marvellous sense of humour. I think we all enjoyed ourselves that evening. I know of one sailor who certainly did! Unfortunately, it was to be the last time I was to see Ernie.

Thelma phoned us one day to tell us that Ernie had died on the 15th of August 1980. We had known about his bad heart of course, but because of the handicaps that he had already overcome with his brain damage, we thought, mistakenly, that he was invincible. He was only forty-nine years old. Again, Thelma was to lose another loved one at an early age. She was just 50.

The First Canadian Submarine Squadron was formed in 1966, transferring the responsibility from the Royal Navy's Sixth Submarine Squadron, which had been based in Halifax for many years. In all that time there had never been a submarine reunion, so I decided

to organize one.

A ship or a submarine is always sponsored by a lady, often the wife of a senior politician or military officer. HMCS OJIBWA was sponsored by Lady Miers, the wife of Admiral Sir Anthony Miers, VC - the officer whose exploits I had read about in "One of our Submarines", so many years ago. Having first found out that I could get them over to Halifax on military flights, at no cost to them, I asked Admiral Miers to be our guest-of-honour. He was delighted to accept, so we now started to work out the details of the reunion.

Part of the program included briefings for those people that had retired, or had left submarines, to update them on submarine matters. We had an all-ranks reception for serving and former submariners and their wives. On the last night we organized a Mess Dinner with Admiral Miers as our guest speaker. And what a speaker he was. He had us enthralled with his wartime submarine stories. It was interesting to watch our young officers, with their eyes transfixed on that small maroon piece of material above a bronze coloured cross, that Admiral Miers had on his dinner jacket.

Before we had invited Admiral Miers, I had been warned about him. He was now 78, but looked as tough as nails. He was known for his tough reputation. It was common knowledge that when he had a defaulter up in front of him when he was a submarine CO -- if the unfortunate sailor was found guilty, which he invariably was with Tony Miers, he would give him the choice of a week's stoppage of leave, or three rounds with him on the jetty!

Another story that I had heard about him was when he was the Commandant at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. He was a keen sportsman and went to every sporting event held at the College. Once, during a rugby game the opposition scored a try, and as the dejected college team was waiting for their opposition to convert the try, Tony Miers ran to his team behind the posts and punched one of his players in the eye, with the words, "Don't you ever miss another tackle."

In naval circles he was a legend and an eccentric, ever since he refused to accept his Victoria Cross from King George the Sixth, until he could bring his entire ships company with him to Buckingham Palace.

I had managed to get an extension to the bar hours at the Base where we were having our Mess Dinner. I asked the Admiral if he would like to have another drink, explaining that the bar was about to close. His answer to that, was to say that if he was in DOLPHIN he would go down to a submarine for a drink, and suggested we do the same here. He was the Admiral and our guest of honour, so it was off to the Dockyard to find a drink in a submarine -- which of course, is not very hard to do -- even at two in the morning. The

Admiral and Lady Miers, by this time Pat, returned to the UK next day. He wanted me to contact him on my next visit to the UK, which I promised I would.

Some months later I arrived in London after an all night flight. I was barely in the hotel when he phoned to say that our Attache had told him where I was, and that the following were the plans he had made for my visit. He totally took over my visit, although my mother, and Thelma and her family, lived in London. That was just his style.

I was told, not asked -- to meet him and Pat outside Wimbledon tube station at a certain time, because we were going to the movies. He and Pat were there when I arrived, and we drove to the movie theatre. The strange part of all this was that we sat in the back of the car with Pat driving. He asked me whether I thought this was strange. Not being sure how to answer that, he immediately continued by saying that Pat had been his Wren driver in Australia during the war, and that he hadn't sat up front with her then, so this was no time to start!

Some years later when I invited them to a reception on board HMCS Preserver (which I shall talk about later),they drove up to the gangway -- she got out and opened the door for him, and he strode up the gangway. Lady Miers then went away to find somewhere to park the car, and then came on board. There was no doubt he was a character.

Admiral Miers died when he was about eighty-two. There were many stories about Tony Miers during his life, but another one surfaced after his death that was damaging to him, and embarrassing to the Navy. It was fairly well documented that while he was in command of one submarine, that he surfaced after sinking a ship and ordered his crew to machine gun the survivors in the water. A couple of his old shipmates came forward and confirmed the incident. The Navy was embarrassed because it would hardly have been fitting to charge one of their heroes with war crimes. The whole thing faded away after a few weeks of media sensationalism.

As SM1, I could choose when I wanted to go to sea in a submarine. Unfortunately, my duties ashore kept me quite busy, so I didn't manage to get to sea as often as I wanted to. I had an excellent staff, but other than my secretary, there had been little thought about finding a place for women in this very male-dominated service.

One of our officer's wives was an extremely bright Wren officer. So over a drink one lunchtime at the Base, I asked her if she was interested in a job in the Submarine Squadron. She told me that she didn't want to be the token woman officer in the squadron, and that she only wanted a job that would be meaningful. That was exactly what I had wanted to hear, because I needed an Assistant Squadron

Operations Officer, or A/SOO.

I realized that there was a certain amount of quiet opposition to my idea, but because she was very bright, nobody could fault her. Within a short time, even the most chauvinistic people in the Squadron became impressed with her ability. If she had been a man she wouldn't have to have worked half as hard as she did to get recognition. There is still a long way to go -- even over a decade since I first brought a woman into the operational side of a submarine staff.

During my time as SM1 I had many interesting visitors -- but none more so than Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse. At the time he was Flag Officer Submarines (FOSM), which meant that he was in the senior submarine billet in the Royal Navy. When he visited me he signed my Guest Book, and wrote, "It's nice to meet my opposite number." Of course, technically he was correct -- I was in the senior submarine billet in the Canadian Navy, but I thought it was a nice touch that he wrote what he did.

The position of SM1 was, in my mind, the best Commander's billet in the Navy. My surface colleagues would probably not agree with me, because as they saw it, a Commander's rank gave them the licence to command. In the case of a submariner, we had already been in command as Lieutenant Commanders, and in my own case, as a Lieutenant as well. The actual billet of SM1 was really a Captain's position, not a Commander's -- but it had never been filled by a Captain.

One day my Career Manager called me to ask me what was my preference for my next job. Shirley and I had always wanted to go on an exchange posting, and I knew that there was a position for a submarine command qualified Commander becoming available in Norfolk, Virginia, in the summer of 1981. I therefore asked for that billet, and kept my fingers crossed.

In April 1981 I received a call from my Admiral, congratulating me on being promoted to Captain. That was the furthest thought from my mind. I had been quite resigned to finishing off my days in the navy as a Commander, which I felt wasn't too bad at all, considering that at one time I thought I would be very lucky to progress beyond Lieutenant Commander. Not only was I being promoted to Captain, but I was also going in command of the largest ship in our navy. I couldn't have been happier. I even thought of the letter I received from my Career Manger many years earlier !

I had spent three and a half years as SM1. It had been a very satisfying, but challenging job. I left in the knowledge that the submarines were running well, and that we had resolved our personnel problems.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN -- PRESERVER

On the fourth of September 1981 I assumed command of HMCS PRESERVER. I was now forty-eight years old. The average age for promotion to Captain was about forty-two.

PRESERVER was a 22,000-ton Fleet replenishment ship -- or to use its NATO designator, an AOR. In many ways it was like being back on a merchant ship again, because in effect, it carried fuel, stores, ammunition and food for the fleet. It was not a warship in the strict sense of the word, although it had a gun and a sonar, and was also fitted for missiles. Our other role was as a floating air maintenance base for the fleet's helicopters. We carried a large air detachment, including three helicopters and their air crews.

Not having served in a surface ship for seventeen years, it was a new experience. Firstly, there was the space. After years in submarines, where one lived in very primitive, cramped conditions, my new cabin (suite) was seventy-six feet wide. I had two washplaces (bathrooms), two sleeping cabins (bedrooms), two day cabins (sitting rooms) -- but only one dining room!

There was a reason for the duplication. The additional space was in case I carried a senior officer. I could then shut the folding bulkhead between the two halves of the suite, thereby giving both of us some privacy. Luckily for me, I rarely carried a senior officer -- and if I did, it was usually only for a day or two. On the other hand, it was very handy to have that extra space, when I carried my own guests.

There is no doubt I was a bit overwhelmed by all the space, not usually found in a warship. On my first day in command I realized that I couldn't remember my way to the flight deck to attend morning Divisions (at school we called it Assembly). Luckily for me, the senior Chief Petty Officer on board, the Coxswain, must have realized that the new CO was a bit of a dummy, so when I left my cabin, he was standing right outside. We made our way together through a maze of doors and hatches, until eventually, on opening one last door, we were on the flight deck -- and there were three hundred people fallen in waiting for their Captain to arrive. He nearly didn't!

When the Coxswain and I had been making our way to the flight deck we carried out a normal conversation, while I was desperately trying to remember the route for next time. The amusing part of all this was that I knew I didn't know the way -- the Coxswain knew I didn't know the way, but neither of us ever mentioned it the whole time I was in that ship. That's why the Navy could never exist without their Chief Petty Officers. After a short while I managed to find my way around without embarrassing myself, or anyone else. The next problem was my

totally dedicated steward.

In a British or Canadian surface ship the Captain does not live or eat in the wardroom with the other officers. He is not a member of the Wardroom Mess, and would never dream of entering the wardroom without the invitation of one of his officers, normally the XO. He lives in splendid isolation all by himself -- so of course, he has to have his own steward. I don't believe that he needs one, but the system says he has to have a steward -- because Nelson had one.

After I had been on board for a while, I suggested to the XO that I was perfectly happy to use one of the wardroom stewards, when I needed one at meal times, etc. That was not the thing to say. The XO looked at me as though I was a Philistine. He was probably asking himself what terrible sin he had committed that his Career Manager had sent him to this ship, with that submariner and his radical ideas. However, all he said was, "I don't think that's a good idea, sir." I never raised the subject again.

The problem really didn't go away. My steward, Leading Seaman Trudel, was determined to look after his Captain. If I would be sitting in my cabin reading, it wouldn't be very long before a cup of coffee or tea would appear, as if by magic. He would hover in his pantry, just waiting to see what next he could do for me.

At first, I decided that I would fool him, by escaping up to the bridge. This didn't last for very long, because I'd barely sat down in my chair, when there he was, standing just behind me, ready to put another cup in front of me. I realized after a couple of weeks of this, that I would have to go along with the old adage of, "if you can't beat 'em --join 'em." He was a pleasant young man, who was so keen to please. I never let him know of my frustration.

Shirley had been used to submarine wardrooms, where if you wanted a gin and tonic it meant that you had to stand up, so that somebody could retrieve a can of tonic from the inside the bench-like stool that you were sitting on. The first time Shirley came on board for a drink, after looking round at the spacious cabin, she jokingly asked the steward if she had to stand up if she wanted a gin and tonic. As it was an "in" submarine joke, the steward didn't understand it.

My first couple of weeks in PRESERVER were spent alongside in Halifax. Then it was off to sea to take part in an exercise. I had never been involved in a Replenishment-at-Sea, or RAS, as it was called. When I had last been in a surface ship our destroyers didn't have that capability. I had been reading every publication I could get my hands on, about RAS-ing. It didn't take long to get the hang of it, and of course, I was surrounded by experts, who had been doing it for years. That was their job -- and I didn't want to get in their way. Besides, I had my own job to do. I would do what had to be done if I was not happy with the evolution.

Our first port of call was Quebec City. The first evening, after the usual round of official calls and receptions, I went to my cabin to turn-in. When I put my head on the pillow all I could hear were the bass notes of the wardroom stereo, which was mounted on the bulkhead below me. When I lifted my head, the sound disappeared. It only happened when I put my head on my pillow. Obviously there was a sound short between the stereo and my bunk frame.

Next morning, when my XO came up to my cabin for his normal after-breakfast cup of coffee, I told him I wanted to show him something. I asked him to call the wardroom to get them to turn on their stereo. I then invited him into my sleeping cabin, and in all innocence asked him to put his head on my pillow. All I wanted to do was to show him what had happened last night. He looked very surprised and said, "I'd rather not sir -- I've heard about you submariners!" Another story for my XO to tell about his strange Captain.

Jim Barlow, my XO, was an excellent officer and a fine person with a great sense of humour, who ran the ship very efficiently. I had nothing but admiration for him. I think he got a kick out of trying to educate his submariner Captain! Unfortunately, during our time together, his son, who was a cadet at the naval college, was killed in a car accident as he drove across the country to attend his sister's wedding. Many of the wedding guests had already arrived in Halifax, having come from various parts of the country. Therefore, the Barlows made the decision to continue with the wedding. They had to go through the torment of having a wedding one day, followed by a funeral the next.

I thoroughly enjoyed driving PRESERVER. It was a very comfortable ship, even in bad weather. When we were refuelling destroyers on either side of us, they would be bouncing around all over the place, while we remained steady. It was a pleasant way to go to sea.

Although most of my officers were very good, they did not have the total dedication to the job that submarine officers did. They did their jobs well, but they just didn't have that esprit de corps that submariners had. Perhaps I am being too critical.

During a RAS in the tropics I liked nothing better than to sit in my chair on the upper bridge and watch what was going on around me. The chair was raised so that I had a good view of everything, in case some emergency action was required, as sometimes happened.

It took about forty minutes to top-up a destroyer with fuel. We would often rendezvous with a task group in the middle of the night and carry out a RAS with them for four or five hours. However, this didn't mean that we didn't try to maintain as normal a routine as possible.

In a surface ship the officers always changed into either Mess Dress or Red Sea Rig in the evenings, which must be one of the remaining bastions of civilized dining. After dinner I would normally be invited

down to the Wardroom to watch their evening movie. If the time for a RAS coincided with the wardroom movie, the movie was delayed until the RAS was over.

In the Caribbean, I would spend many hours in my upper bridge chair in the evening, looking up at the jet black sky and a million stars. My passion for stargazing had never diminished, from the time I first became interested in it, to help pass the watch when I was a cadet. I would normally go up to the upper bridge after the Wardroom movie. For me, it was an ideal form of relaxation, before turning in.

The nearest I ever came to being involved in what could have been a disaster was one early morning at the start of a RAS. We were to carry out a simultaneous RAS (one destroyer on each side). The exercise was to be carried out without navigation lights, which we practised regularly. It just required a little more care.

At the start of the RAS, one ship was coming into station up my port side from astern, which is the normal approach. The other, ATHABASKAN, made her approach from ahead on the starboard bow. That type of approach is very impressive, as the destroyer swings towards the AOR from ahead. If they get it right, they should end up right alongside the AOR. But if they don't . . . !

In this case, ATHABASKAN miscalculated, and started the swing too close and too early. Through the darkness, I could see that if nothing was done she would go right under my bows, and that I would probably cut her in two. I also had the other destroyer on the port side to think about, which was now almost level with my stern -- and would shortly be alongside me. I went full astern and ordered hard-a-starboard -- while telling the destroyer on my port quarter what I was doing, and ordered him to break away.

From my position on the upper bridge I could actually see the faces of some of ATHABASKAN's sailors at their RAS position as they started to pass under my bow. They were lit up by their deck lights, which all ships had now switched on. They disappeared below my bow as we swung to starboard and ATHABASKAN increased speed. Their fate now depended on how fast my bows swung to starboard and how fast ATHABASKAN could move ahead. As my bow continued to pay off to starboard, my stern was now getting closer to the destroyer who was breaking away on my port side. Both our sterns were closing, but luckily she was at full speed ahead now and I was hardly moving through the water. We missed ATHABASKAN by about fifty to sixty feet. Within minutes everything was back to normal again -- just the same as a close call on the highway. You feel shaken, but you continue to drive, because nothing actually happened.

There was a subsequent investigation, because it would have been a horrendous accident if all of us hadn't taken some avoiding action. The investigation was carried out, not so much as to point a finger at someone. It was really done to find out what lessons we could all learn from the incident, and how to try to avoid similar incidents

happening in the future. I had been through my career so far without any major mishap, but that time I was very close to disaster.

We took part in many multinational exercises. I enjoyed them, because it gave us an appreciation of how well, or how badly different ships were handled during a RAS. In retrospect, but not in order of priority, I felt that the most professional evolutions were conducted by the Dutch, German, Canadian and Royal navies.

After one of our exercises we visited Mobile, Alabama. As usual I called on the Mayor, and conducted the standard inane conversation. I expressed surprise when he told me he had been Mayor of Mobile for twenty years. I asked him what he was doing right that got him re-elected each time. Without batting an eyelid, he said, "The people of Mobile don't like niggers -- and nor do I." His answer completely floored me. Later during our visit, I noticed that the only blacks I saw at the numerous receptions and dinners were waiters and barmen. Segregation was still alive and well in Alabama.

At the start of the Falklands War we were on our way across the Atlantic with ships of the Standing Naval Force Atlantic, or STANAVFORLANT (another marvellous acronym). We received orders from Halifax to detach, and rendezvous with a Royal Navy task group that was now heading south after coming out of the Mediterranean, en route to the Falklands. Although they had their own AORs with them, we were asked to top up their ships from our tanks, so that they could keep as much of their own fuel intact until it was needed. My floating gas station stayed with them for three days -- then gave them a final drink of fuel and wished them luck, as we turned round and headed north. There were many of us on board who wished we could have continued south.

There were many instances where help was provided on a navy-to-navy basis during the Falklands War. It would have been too difficult and too time consuming, to try to arrange assistance through political channels. And of course, the Falklands was a politically sensitive issue, because Canada and the United States were part of the Organization of American States.

It was so much easier for an Admiral in the UK to pick up the phone to old friends in Canada or the States, who were also Admirals, to see what assistance they could give. The radars in my three Sea King helicopters disappeared over a weekend. By the following Monday they were in Ascension Island, in the South Atlantic, waiting to be transported south. Many things like that happened during the Falklands War.

There were some joyous times and some sad times in PRESERVER. I have already mentioned the death of Jim Barlow's son. Another tragic incident happened when we were alongside in San Juan, Puerto Rico, during our winter operations in that part of the world.

I had just finished my breakfast one Sunday morning when the XO

came into my cabin, as white as a sheet. He said that our doctor was dead, and that it looked as though he had committed suicide. I went down to the Sick Bay, and saw the doctor sprawled out in his office chair, with a syringe lying on the floor. On his desk was a small, empty bottle. It was labelled Cocaine Hydrochloride.

Our Medical Assistant had found the doctor when he went into the Sick Bay to open up for his normal Sick Parade. We decided that we should tell the other officers, to see if we could get some idea how this had come about.

Apparently, the doctor had been ashore with some of the other officers the night before. They had been at one of the Casinos. He decided to stay ashore longer than the other officers, but eventually returned on board at about two o'clock. The Quartermaster, who had been on the gangway, said that he seemed to have had a reasonable amount to drink, but that he wasn't drunk. That was the last time anybody saw him. The officers that he'd been ashore with said that he was in high spirits, as he'd just been offered a job in Atlanta, Georgia.

We checked his cabin to look for a suicide note. All we found was a partly completed article that he was writing for some medical journal. His pen was lying across the page, as though he intended to complete it later. It dawned on us that he had not committed suicide. He must have died from an accidental overdose.

We then had our Dentist and Medical Assistant carry out a muster of all the controlled drugs in the Sick Bay. They found that a considerable amount of Cocaine Hydrochloride was missing. The amount remaining was a lot less than there should have been, according to the drug register. A small amount of the drug had been used on someone with a bad nose bleed, but that was all. It is often used as a coagulant in throat and nose operations, where there is always a large amount of blood. I became an expert in the uses and abuses of Cocaine Hydrochloride over the next few days.

We told the ship's company what had happened, but also told them that we could not confirm any of the information until an autopsy had been carried out. I then managed to contact the Chief of Staff in Halifax to let him know what we thought had happened. It was up to the Halifax chaplains and social workers to let his next-of-kin know now.

An incident like this puts a pall over the whole ship, with everybody trying to figure out what had happened. I didn't know the doctor well, but I knew that he was highly regarded in the military medical profession. He was only twenty-six, with a marvellous future ahead of him. What had gone wrong?

Next morning I received a call from the Chief of Staff in Halifax. He informed me that the local papers had headlines, such as, "Naval Doctor Kills Himself." Apparently the article was written with the

strong hint that he had committed suicide. I felt so sorry for his father, who must have been wondering what the true story was. I decided that as the ship was going to be in San Juan for a few more days I would fly home to Halifax and see his father.

The morning after I arrived home I went with a naval padre to visit Mr. Larsen, my doctor's father. He was much older than I had anticipated. He seemed to be a very gentle person. His other son, who lived in Norway, had just arrived -- and his fourteen year old daughter was also there.

I told him everything -- and I specifically wanted to assure him that his son had not committed suicide. The padre had told me that the thought of his son committing suicide had shattered the old man. He was obviously relieved somewhat when I told him what had happened.

The most telling comment came from his brother, who said, "I thought he'd kicked that habit before he qualified." Later, the autopsy report showed that he had damaged scar tissue on the inside of his elbow, caused by the over-use of needles. The official result was that he'd died through a self-inflicted overdose of Cocaine Hydrochloride. We believe that he simply made a mistake.

As I said, we had some joyous occasions as well. Without doubt the best for me was being able to bring PRESERVER into Liverpool, to coincide with our Silver Wedding Anniversary.

We were scheduled to take part in a large NATO exercise off the Western Approaches, and at the end of the exercise we were allowed to select two port visits in the UK. I asked for Liverpool and Southampton -- and both were approved.

This meant a busy period of sending invitations to receptions and dinners to our personal friends in both places, before the ship left Halifax. In Liverpool, we asked all the people who had been to our wedding, plus a few more friends that hadn't. In Southampton, we invited many of our friends and relatives that lived in the south of England.

One morning after the exercise had completed, we were in approximately the same position that I had been in, about seven years before -- entering Gladstone Lock, into the port of Liverpool. It felt marvellous to be back home.

Although I had asked for Liverpool for personal reasons, I also knew that it was very popular with the sailors. The people of Liverpool have always opened their hearts to sailors. After all, that had been its raison d'etre -- one of the world's greatest ports in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early part of the twentieth centuries. In the Second World War of course, it had been the home port to thousands of sailors on the convoy escorts. So I had no qualms about how the sailors would

like Liverpool.

On our first day, I gave a lunch for some of our friends, including Jean and Michael Jones, and some of the local dignitaries. I had also invited my brother Geoff, who had been in London on business. He said he could make it, but had not arrived with the other guests. Eventually, my steward took a call from him to say that he was very ill and had to return to Lima immediately. That was very sad and unfortunate, as I hadn't seen him since 1964 in Connecticut -- so I was to miss another chance to see him.

We had decided to have our official reception on the second night in Liverpool. The flight deck of an AOR was a marvellous place to have a reception. It was so spacious, after the cramped space of a submarine, but it wasn't as "chummy."

One of our guests was my old captain in the Governor, Herbert Jones. Although he was now in his late eighties he was as sprightly as ever. Because he had to come from North Wales and didn't want to drive back at night, I invited him to stay the night in my spare cabin, with the promise of a detailed tour next day. He was in his element.

As we sat and talked (or he talked) into the night and early morning, with a bottle of Scotch nearby, sometimes my mind would wander. I would see him going down the gangway to start his wife's car for her, because obviously only he could do it when he was home. And I would think about that supreme ego of, "Now you should ask yourself -- what would Herbert Jones have done?" It was a case of the Scotch and nostalgia taking over.

Next morning I had the XO organized to take Herbert on the grand tour, including discussions with the helicopter pilots. I didn't want to miss that one -- and he was true to form.

One of our pilots put Herbert into the pilot's seat, and then explained how to fly a helicopter. Herbert had his hands on all the controls, and was continuously asking questions about how to fly the bird. After spending about half an hour in the pilot's seat we walked back to my cabin. In true Herbert Jones fashion, he turned to me and said, "You know Ray, it shouldn't really take me long to learn to fly that thing." Classic Herbert Jones!

The following evening we were to have our Silver Wedding party in my cabin. We were expecting about thirty guests. That morning the XO came to see me with a problem. He had been listening to the local radio station as he was having breakfast, to hear that there was an open invitation to the young women of Liverpool for a party to be held on board that night on the flight deck. Apparently, one of our sailors had used what he saw was initiative to find himself a girlfriend, by inviting all the women in Liverpool!

The XO told me that he had phoned the radio station to ask them

to cancel the invitation. However, how were we to know if anybody had heard the cancellation being announced? The XO and I had horrible visions of standing at the gangway, trying to separate my guests from the ladies of Liverpool. Luckily, only our guests arrived in my cabin. I have no idea what happened on the flight deck. I didn't want to know.

Our Anniversary dinner went well. Shirley's mother and father thoroughly enjoyed it. They only had the one child, and I think they were very happy for her. Freda, Shirley's bridesmaid, and her husband, had driven up from Southampton. It was a long drive after being at school all day. Olaf, my best man, and Janet his wife were also there. It was lovely to see all those people again. But not only that, it was just so delightful that we had managed to get the ship to Liverpool at that specific time.

My friends, the press, had been down during our visit. There were the usual photos and short articles in the local newspapers. However, we had one reporter who came on board looking for the "big" story. He asked the Officer-of-the-Day if it was true that the Captain had broken off from a large-scale NATO exercise, just so that he could bring his ship into Liverpool for his Silver Wedding dinner party. The Officer-of-the-Day gave him the real story -- so he wasn't interested anymore. It's not very difficult to see why I have no love for the media.

In Southampton, we also enjoyed ourselves again, seeing some more old friends. It was here that Lady Miers drove her husband, the Admiral, up to the gangway, and after dropping him off went to find a place to park. What a man! Thelma and her children were also there. It was sad that Ernie was no longer with us to enjoy himself, as he had done in the submarine a few years ago -- in spite of his difficulties in getting aboard.

After one exercise we were to go into New York with the rest of the participants. PRESERVER's allocated berth was to be Pier 92. When I heard that news, it took me back thirty-three years, to 1950, when, as a cadet, I had stood at the head of that pier watching the Queen Mary docking in the same berth. A lot had happened in those intervening years.

I knew that I could only manage to stay in PRESERVER for about two years, because there were many officers of Captain's rank who were hoping to get a "drive". Some of them would never get the chance, because of a shortage of Captain's billets at sea. There were only seven Captains' sea billets in the entire Canadian Navy.

The term Captain can be confusing for a layman, because it is really used as a generic term. In a merchant ship the Captain is actually the Master. The Commanding Officer in a warship, regardless of his actual rank is called the Captain. For example, I was a Commanding Officer in the rank of Lieutenant, Lieutenant-Commander, Commander,

and Captain -- but in all cases I was "the Captain." As I said, it can be a bit confusing.

Having managed to get PRESERVER into Liverpool, there was one final port that I wanted to visit as my swan song. I wanted to get my ship into New London, Connecticut -- the area that we had come to love, ever since we had lived there nineteen years before.

For me, it was a great thrill to be passing Race Rock Lighthouse, and New London Ledge Light, on our way into New London. This was the area where I had fished those many years ago with Bill Ingalls. More correctly, it's the place where we didn't catch fish, while Shirley and Betty Ingalls were catching them in Mumford Cove.

One of my old Submarine School classmates, was now an Admiral in the Base, so it was nice to see him again. Of course, Shirley came down. Kerry came with her, but unfortunately for her, her mouth was wired shut, because of some orthodontic work that she was having done. We felt particularly sorry for her at the receptions and dinners, of which there were many. The poor girl (she was sixteen) had to have all her food put in a blender, which she then took with a straw. However, there was one advantage for everybody. Things were a lot quieter!

It gave me great pleasure to have Bill Ingalls as my guest from New London to Norfolk, Virginia, our next port. On the way down there we had a chance to show Bill what we did at sea. To me, it was marvellous to have him as my guest, on my last trip to sea.

I knew that my time in command was coming to an end, as I had been there for nearly two years now. When we arrived back in Halifax, after our trip to New London, I received a phone call from my Admiral. He said that he knew that I had been looking for a foreign posting for some time, and that he a couple of options for me. The first option was on SACLANT's staff in Norfolk, Virginia. The other was as the Defence Attache to Norway, Sweden and Denmark, residing in Oslo. He gave me a day to decide. There was no doubt in my mind which one I preferred, but I wanted to make sure that Shirley felt the same way. Next day I told the Admiral that we would like to go to Norway.

Had I been posted to Ottawa in a staff job, my last days in PRESERVER would have been depressing. However, because we were going to Norway, Shirley and I were very busy getting ready to take up our new appointment. I say "our," because many tasks associated with an Attache's job are done jointly by husband and wife. We spent quite a bit of time in Ottawa, particularly with the intelligence people. We learnt how to check if you were being "bugged," or followed. I also had to take a course in covert photography. All these preparations for our next posting kept me so busy that I didn't have time to feel depressed about my imminent departure from command.

When the day came for my successor to come on board to start our change of command, I told him the story of not being able to find the

flight deck on my first day. We made a point of covering that route many times during the next few days. I noticed that he paid a great deal of attention to it. Although I had been busy getting ready for my next job, now that my successor was on board to start the turnover, reality set in. These really were my last few days in command.

It took about four days for the turnover. On the last day, the new Captain, out of courtesy, remains ashore until the departing Captain has left the ship for the last time.

I came on board that day at my usual time. And again, as usual, I was given a cup of coffee by my ever faithful, ever watchful steward (now a Leading Seaman Matthews). I found my way, without difficulty this time, to the flight deck for my last Divisions. Then back to my cabin, and another coffee with Jim Barlow, my XO -- as we had done almost every day over the last two years.

This time there really wasn't any business to discuss, so we just talked in generalities. We confirmed a time for my departure by boat, and I was then left to myself -- even Matthews disappeared at the XO's direction. It was just a time to sit and remember.

CHAPTER NINETEEN -- TIME TO GO

I'd better not keep the XO waiting. It was time to go. It was a strange feeling, as I had one last look around the huge cabin that had been my home at sea for the past two years. I thought about the many other cabins and "spaces" that I had lived in during my career in three different navies. I also thought about the changes that had taken place in my life since I first went to sea in 1949 -- just four years after the end of World War Two. From my time as a cadet in merchant ships with the most basic of navigation instruments, to the present, in command of the largest ship in the Canadian Navy, with highly sophisticated electronic and navigation aids, which could tell you where you were within a few yards, at the touch of a button. All those changes -- some for the better, some for the worse. But what a full, satisfying career I had been privileged to enjoy over those years.

There must be many other people who have enjoyed their chosen profession. I just felt extremely thankful that the path I had decided to take, with a certain amount of apprehension so many years ago, had been so enjoyable and reasonably successful.

Leaving my cabin, I went down the three sets of ladders taking me to the main deck and into the bright July sunshine, where I was met by the Officer-of-the-Day. A sea of faces awaited me, with the ship's company lined up along the guard rails to bid farewell to their Commanding Officer. With such a large ship's company it had always been very difficult to remember all their faces. Those that I recognised were the ones that had spent most of their time working on, or around the bridge and Operations Room -- or the ones who regularly appeared at Captain's defaulters!

It was only natural that most of the ship's company should recognise their Captain -- but I was always conscious of the fact that I might have caused unintended offence or embarrassment to one of my ship's company, by not recognising and acknowledging him, if we were both ashore in civilian clothes. This had always caused me concern. It was strange that this should enter my mind at this time.

The Officer-of-the-Day commenced the time-honoured ritual of piping the Captain over the side when I was one pace from the top of the accommodation ladder, leading down to the ship's whaler. "Stand by to pipe," followed by the order, "Pipe the side," when my foot touched the top grating of the ladder.

I descended the ladder, looking down at the faces of my officers, who, in the long tradition of the Navy, were manning the whaler ready

to pull their Captain ashore for the last time. I thought of that day thirty-four years ago when a skinny, apprehensive, redheaded cadet, in his brand new cadet's uniform, climbed, unnoticed, up the gangway of the ss."Ramore Head," to begin his seagoing career.

When the whaler left the ship's side, I stood up and saluted in acknowledgment, one last pipe from the piping party at the top of the accommodation ladder. I looked up at this big grey ship, with its rails lined by the ship's company that was no longer under my command. I was witnessing, and truly appreciating, this fine example of pomp and ceremony staged, not for Ray Hunt, but for a Commanding Officer's departure. What a fulfilling life at sea I had experienced -- but it was now time to go.

CHAPTER TWENTY -- REFLECTIONS

It's now over ten years since I left my last ship, PRESERVER. Since then I have had plenty of time to reflect on my thirty-four years at sea.

In writing this, I have avoided long discussions about operations at sea, unless the particular anecdote I was recounting needed some qualifying information. However, as one reads this, it could give one the impression, that over the years, I have used ships and submarines to get me from one party or reception to the next. That is not quite true -- it's just that there is nothing more boring than reading a great deal of technical detail about a subject which is only interesting to the teller of the story.

I suppose it's only natural that the first question one might ask is whether I have had any regrets about going to sea? The simple answer is -- no. However, as my life at sea was totally intertwined with my personal life, the answer to what seems a simple question is a complex one. It is filled with a series of, "if this hadn't happened," and, "because this happened," etc. I certainly regret some of the decisions I made, and the actions I took, in the course of my life -- but whether I ever regret going to sea -- never.

When I am asked whether I miss it, and whether I would like to be back at sea, I can only say that I miss what was then -- not what is now. I couldn't go back to sea now, expecting things to be as they were, because, even since I last went to sea, vast changes in technology have taken place. I would be out of place there now.

On the other hand, I recently spent some time on board one of the navy's new frigates. While the technology was far beyond me, the people were the same. They thought and acted like sailors. Being with those people was just like old times -- and I missed it.

I suppose, professionally speaking, my biggest regret is that I did not reach the rank of Admiral. That is not a facetious statement from someone who always dreamed of being an Admiral from the time he was a young sailor. When I joined the Canadian Navy, I never thought about progressing beyond the rank of Lieutenant Commander -- and that was only if they didn't release me at the end of my original three-year short service commission.

Promotion to a more senior rank had never been a consideration, even in my wildest dreams. After all, look what my Career Manager had told me in his letter to me some years before, ***"In view of the fact that you are now thirty-three years of age, and that you have***

only recently qualified in submarines, it is possible that you might advance to the position of Executive Officer of a submarine. A career in submarines beyond that point is extremely doubtful".

It was only during my last five years in the navy that I even gave it a fleeting thought. However, in my heart, I knew that I could never make it to Admiral, simply because I was going to run out of time, before I had to retire at the compulsory retirement age of fifty-five.

Considering the way my career progressed over the twenty-five years I served in the RCN, I am not being immodest when I say that if I had joined the Royal Canadian Navy at eighteen or nineteen years of age, and spent thirty-five years in the navy, I would almost certainly have made it to Admiral. Joining the navy at twenty-eight years of age, and reaching the rank of Captain in twenty years was an achievement that I accept as a reasonable compromise. In short, because of having two careers, both of which I enjoyed, I just didn't have enough time left to make Admiral before I had to retire.

I had been extremely fortunate, in that nearly all my postings, from my first command onwards, were to high visibility positions. Some people tend to serve for many years in staff positions ashore, which, through no fault of their own, does not allow them the exposure to the high profile positions. On the other hand, some people can get promoted that way, because they are good staff officers, and any negative aspect of their job does not get the publicity that a collision at sea would receive. In the high profile positions, ie, command, everything you do is noticed, whether it's good or bad. However, I wouldn't have had it any other way.

In my personal life I think the biggest regret was that, because we lived in Canada when the children were growing up, they missed the special relationship that normally exists between children and their grandparents. I experienced this in my life so I am aware of the impact this has. This was particularly hard in our case, because our two girls were Shirley's parents only grandchildren. They would only see each other every few years, and as such they didn't see the children changing as they were growing up. They just saw the resultant change, but not the changing process.

I must also add a few words about sailor's wives; and it doesn't matter if it's a junior seaman's wife, or a Commanding Officer's wife. They are left at home to carry out the tasks that would normally be carried out by both husband and wife. They do the shopping ,the cleaning, the taking kids to school, getting the car fixed, cutting the grass, clearing the snow. I could go on, but the average wife not married to a sailor does not realise how much more is imposed on a sailor's wife – and I use the word "imposed" intentionally.

To a lesser extent I also missed seeing our children growing up, by my many absences away from home. I saw them and loved being with them when I was home. However, I always had the good parts. I didn't have them twenty-four hours a day on the days when things weren't going right.

As I said, I wouldn't have missed my first career in the Merchant Navy for anything. I have very fond memories of those times. I was there at what I believe was the right time. The pride of the world's finest shipping companies were sailing the seas. I will never forget seeing the great liners, either at sea, or alongside in Liverpool, Glasgow, New York or London. All the famous shipping companies -- Blue Funnel, Elder Dempster, Royal Mail, Bibby, Union Castle, and many more. They're all gone now -- although Harrison's have survived. But I was there in their heyday.

The same with the world's greatest shipyards, which in those days were mainly in Britain -- Cammell Laird's in Birkenhead, John Brown's on Clydebank, Harland and Wolff's in Belfast, and many others. I had seen them all when they were in full production.

I have served with four different navies. The Merchant Navy, the Royal Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy and the United States Navy. I enjoyed them all. I have often been asked which of my "lives" I enjoyed most. The answer to that query is the same one I give when asked whether I enjoyed life in submarines, more than my very comfortable life in PRESERVER. Each was different. There were some high points and some low points in each, but I could never say I enjoyed one more than the other. They were all enjoyable.

The book, "One of our Submarines," which I read when I was a cadet in 1952, was the biggest single factor that led me to submarines. There is no doubt that I found my niche there many years later, culminating in two submarine commands and command of the Canadian Submarine Force. I often think about the letter I received from my Career Manager in 1965, saying that because of my age I might get as far as Executive Officer of a submarine, but that any future in submarines beyond that position was very doubtful.

I have always liked an orderly life, therefore the military life suited me. While that life was structured and there were certain parameters in which one operated, there was still room for individuality. I don't like sloppiness -- whether it's in dress or performance. Professionalism was my creed. Anything less in me, or anyone else was unacceptable. I have always wanted to do things "right" -- and have them done right. Punctuality has always been important to me. For instance, when I called a meeting for two o'clock, I didn't expect people to appear at two minutes past the hour.

I believe that life in general must be disciplined. Not only

in a military life, but in family life as well. I don't mean a rigid discipline -- but without some form of discipline, whether it's imposed discipline or self-discipline, society breaks down. The best example of this is when a city has a strike by the police force. There are those in society who see this as their opportunity to create havoc and anarchy.

In the military, discipline is essential. The mark of a good leader is his or her ability to have their subordinates carry out their orders with a willing obedience. I think one of the reasons I enjoyed life in submarines so much, was that imposed discipline was less visible than in other arms of the military. The norm was self-discipline , due to the requirement for everybody to work together, regardless of rank. There was no doubt that the hierarchical system was in place, and everybody knew who was in charge of whom. However, there was only one common aim -- to ensure submarine safety, and to make that submarine the most efficient unit in the fleet. The term, esprit de corps, still exists in submarines.

A Commanding Officer's powers are beyond the scope of most other judicial systems. He is judge and jury -- and therefore he must be very careful to ensure that the punishment fits the crime. He is also in the unique position of having the person who is appearing in front of him on a charge, actually working for him. He can award everything from a "Caution," which is a slap on the wrist, to two years in jail, depending on the severity of the crime. All severe punishments awarded are reviewed by the Judge Advocate, and if the punishment does not fit the crime, the Commanding Officer will receive a letter from his Admiral, asking for an explanation. I believe that the system, with all its problems, works well. I cannot see how it could work any other way in a ship.

People are your biggest asset. They must be treated fairly and with consistency. If you are inconsistent, or indecisive with people, they do not know where they stand, and you create doubts in their minds about your intentions. You will get more respect from people, even if you are issuing unpopular orders, if you are consistent. One of my pet peeves has always been when the person who is issuing an unpopular order, says, "The Captain said . . . ," or "the XO said . . . " I have always felt that is a gutless way of issuing orders, to blame someone else for something unpopular -- but it happens.

Life is too short to harbour grudges. If one has a problem with someone, it should be aired and resolved. The resolution does not necessarily mean that either of you has to change your mind. It may even mean you just agree to disagree -- but life should then go on. Differences of opinion should never sour a relationship or friendship, because I believe that as you are only on this earth for such a short time, you should leave it without hate or rancour in your heart. That may be very simplistic, but it's my philosophy.

Training for war. One of the most expensive aspects of maintaining a military is training. All training in the military is geared towards being prepared to fight a war, or some other confrontational situation. The idea behind such training is to ensure that you are ready to wage war -- but with the hope that you will not be required to put that training to use for the real thing. However, while what I am about to say is controversial, I believe it to be true in many cases.

A professional soldier, sailor or airman wants to practice his profession -- just the same as any other professional. However, it is one of the only professions where the aim is not to practice it. In peacetime, he can do it to a limited degree by taking part in exercises. For instance, in a submarine, you indicate that you have simulated an attack on a ship by firing a green flare. But it is a peacetime exercise, and unlike a doctor who actually operates on someone, the results are simulated, or estimated. The thrill of the real thing is missing.

We all know that war is so futile, and brings killing, pain and suffering to so many innocent people. In the west we train our people in the hope that we will never have to go to war. Yet you have only to see and hear the enthusiasm which returning pilots show after a sortie, in something like the Gulf War, to realize that they had just completed something that they had been trained to do -- and it was real.

In most cases they admit a certain amount of fear that they could become targets themselves. But that is what they had trained for, and at last they were putting their training into practice. Whether they admit it or not, and most will not -- but the majority of professional warriors would like to practice their craft in some form of conflict.

As I said, a controversial statement -- but one which I believe to be true. It can probably be summed up by saying that a person in the profession of arms does not want war -- but if there is one, he would like to be part of it. It's what I call the dichotomy of being a professional soldier, sailor or airman.

In the inner workings of my mind I have never thought of myself as being a true Canadian. Although I have lived in Canada for thirty-three years, my culture is too deep-rooted in the way I was brought up, with my British and Irish backgrounds -- and that can never change. To do so would be to deny my past. I have enjoyed living in Canada, and it has brought me many material things that I might never have had if I had stayed in Britain.

I am loyal to Canada, and I like living in Canada (except the

winters). Usually I will support Canadian views. However, I cannot abide nationalistic Canadians, whose thinking is so narrow that they believe that everything about Canada is good. Loyalty to one's country is admirable -- but nationalism can be unhealthy, because one either closes one's eyes to deficiencies, or worse still, thinks there are none. Perhaps because I have spent so much time travelling the world, and living in many places, I prefer to think of myself as an internationalist, who can see the best and worst of places like Britain, Canada and the United States, and the people who live there -- and accepts those traits, warts and all.

Everything I have written in this account of my life at sea has been my own personal opinion. I have given my views on many subjects, over many years of experience. What I have not done is to tell you what other people think, or thought of me, so I felt that I should be fair to other people's opinions. Usually, it is difficult to obtain an objective assessment of how other people see you, but it is possible.

Since leaving the navy, I was required for business purposes, to take two psychological profile tests. I found the results interesting. In the first one I was assessed as a "Benevolent Autocrat." With that report I didn't have any details -- just the assessment. The other report, which I "acquired" unofficially is included in its entirety:

> *"Working at a faster-than average pace (and always by the book) he is attentive to details, and both quick and accurate in handling them. He is, however, too impatient to enjoy working with details as repetitive routine, or as his primary responsibility.*
>
> *Anxious to be sure that things are done exactly right (he worries a good deal about that) he will follow up closely and carefully if his work requires that he delegate details to others -- and when it is necessary for him to be critical, he will try to do that in a constructive, pleasant manner. His sense of urgency and his sense of duty combine, to make him actively concerned about the timeliness as well as the correctness of any work for which he is held responsible.*
>
> *A fluent persuasive talker, he is a very effective communicator -- able to stimulate and motivate others while being aware of, and responsive to, their needs and concerns. His warm personality and friendly, interested attitude, make him approachable. He gets along easily with a wide variety of people.*
>
> *In general, this is a cautious and careful individual, respectful of authority and tradition. A specialist who avoids risk and uncertainty, by taking care to do things "by the book," working within a formal organisational structure."*

Of interest here were the additional comments appended to the report in long hand, as follows, *"Others may see him as being aggressive and introverted. He may be less of a people person than this report would indicate."* Surely not!

My last position in the Navy was as a diplomat – yes,me! I was appointed to the Canadian Embassy in Oslo, Norway, as the Canadian Forces Defence Attache to Norway, Denmark and Sweden. It was a different experience from being at sea, but nevertheless very enjoyable. But that's another story. However, through it all I just see myself as a simple sailor who thoroughly enjoyed doing what he was doing.

EPILOGUE

It's now eighteen years since I first wrote this account of my early life, and my life at sea until I "swallowed the anchor" (stopped going to sea). Since that time, as I briefly mentioned in the book, on my last appointment I became a diplomat at the Canadian Embassy in Oslo, serving as the Canadian Defence Attache to Norway, Denmark and Sweden. Following my retirement from the navy in 1987 I entered industry for a short time, after being asked to head a submarine building program that the Canadian government had proposed. Like many government programs they were not serious and the project was cancelled, so I then decided to act like a retired sailor, and do nothing. Also during this period Shirley and I were divorced.

Always liking challenges, and having been interested in flying for many years, I decided at the age of 62 to learn to fly. After getting my licence I became a partner in the purchase of a four-seater aeroplane. I flew all over eastern Canada and the eastern United States. Like my previous life I enjoyed it tremendously, even after a "non-airport landing" in a farmer's field. But as they say,"every landing that you can walk away from is a good landing". I continued flying until I became 70. I gave up flying because I never wanted to end up in a position where I was ever in any doubt about my ability to fly a plane safely, and even more importantly, that any passenger I had never felt anything but safe while flying with me.

I have now been married for fifteen years to a very lovely lady, Jean Cudmore, from Kensington PEI.. We spend as much time travelling as we can, because at some time in the future, one, or both of us, will become too frail, or medically unfit to travel.

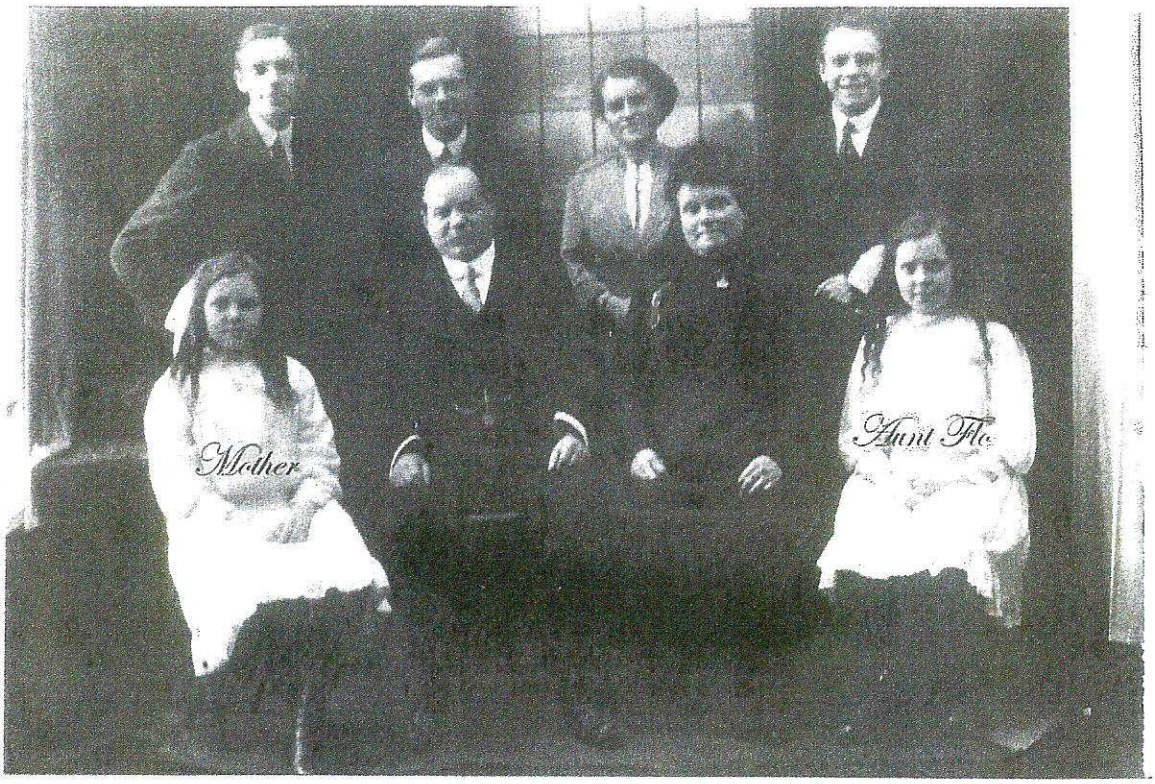
Do I miss going to sea? No! What I have written about is a totally different era from life at sea today. I will always have a high regard for sailors of all ages, knowing somewhat of the life that they lead. As I said a long time ago, I just enjoyed my life as ------ a simple sailor.

Since I first wrote this book, two more ladies have entered my life, Lindsay's children, Alexandra and Amanda. This book was written for them as well.

Ray Hunt
Halifax, NS

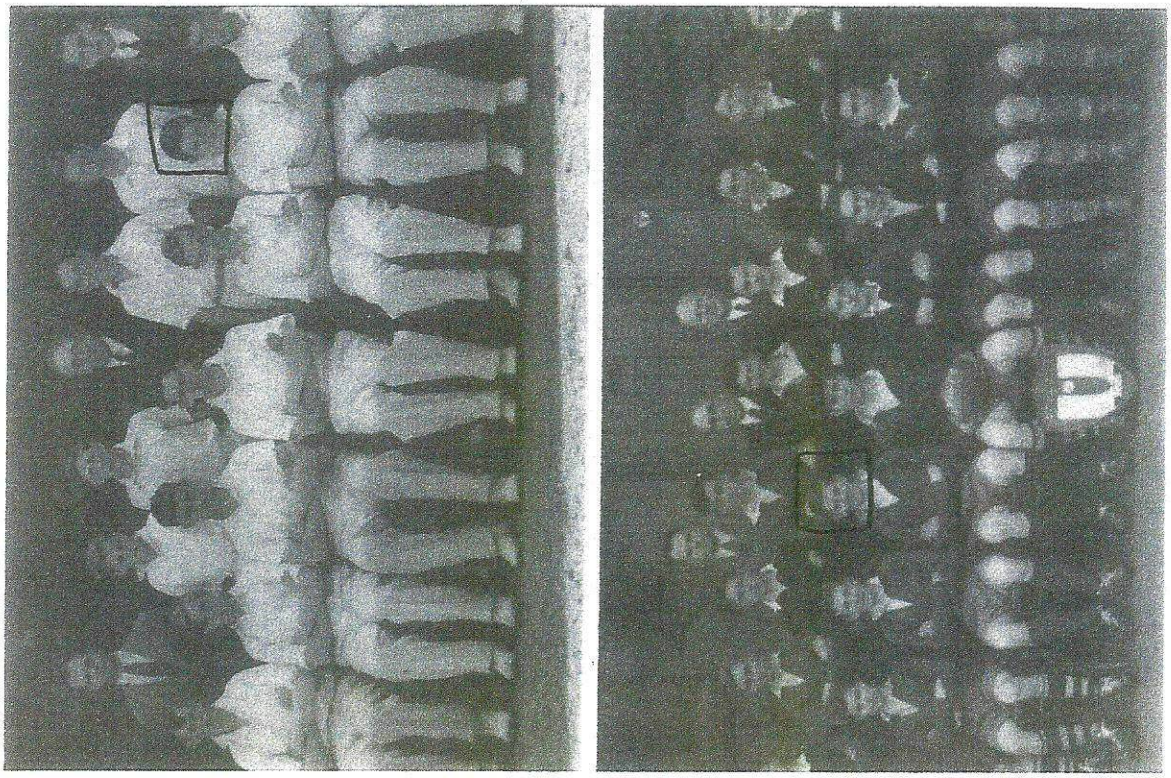
20 February 2012

PICTURE GALLERY



My Mother's family, including all brothers and sisters

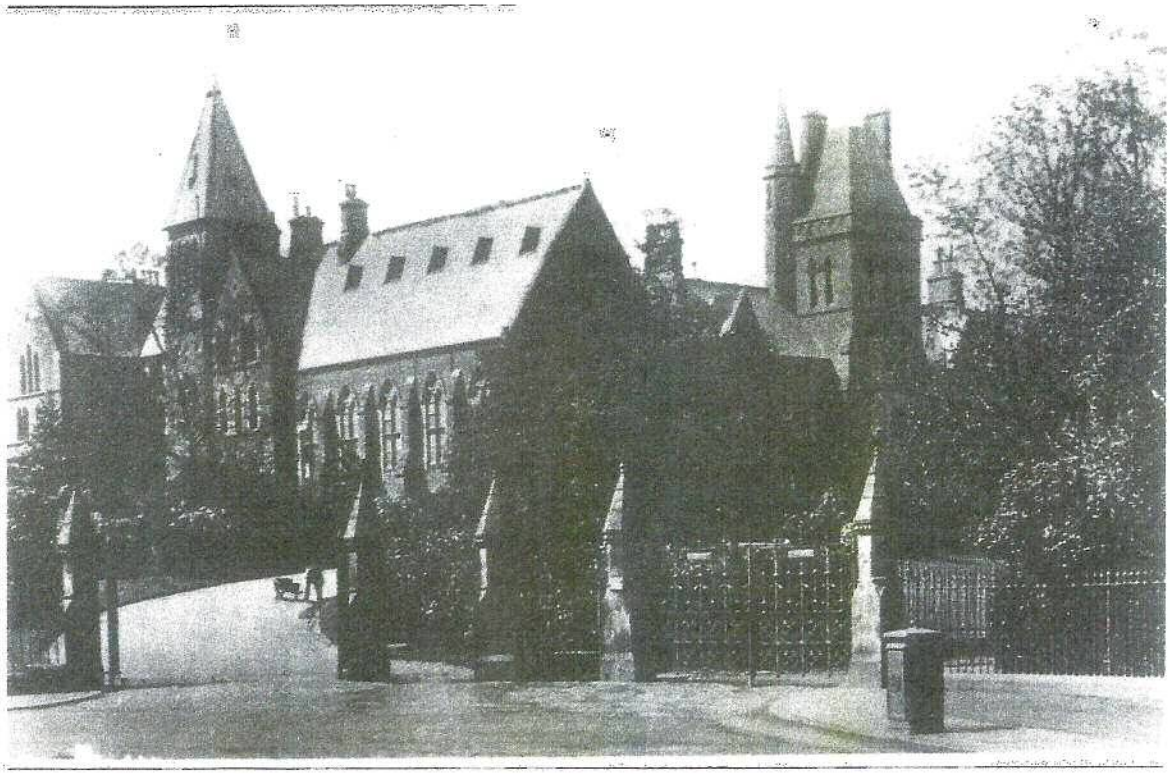
Child labour !



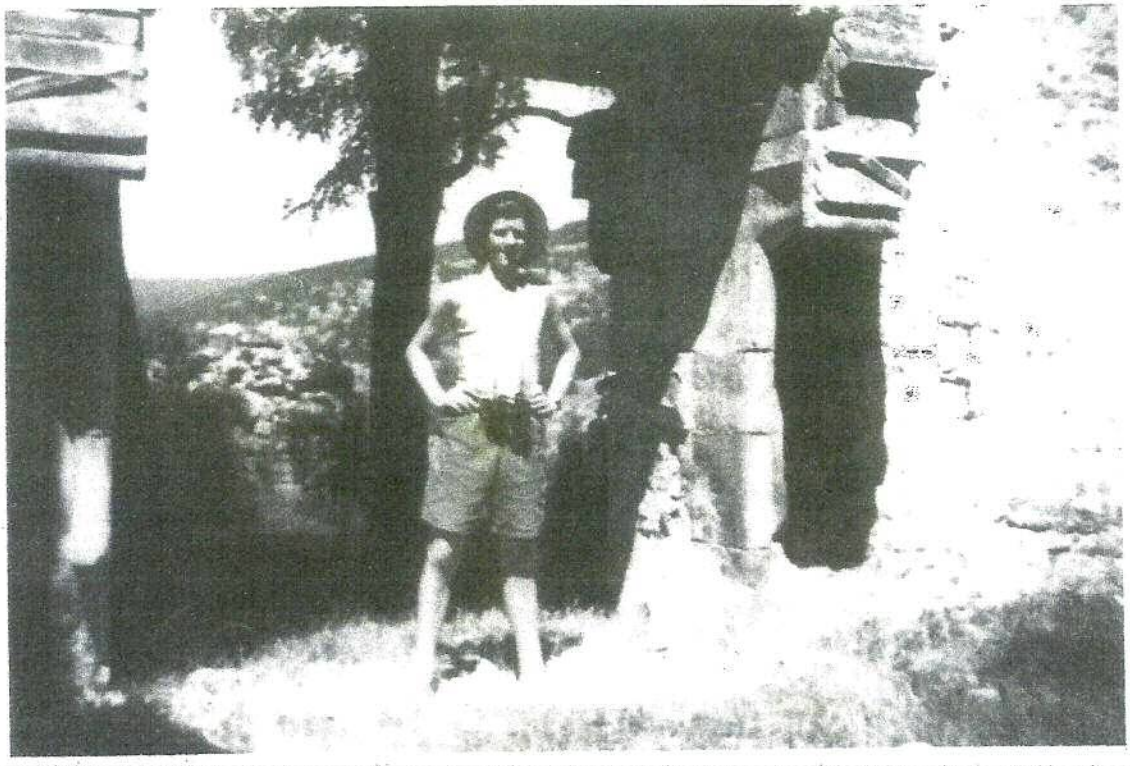
MCB School's Rugby and Cricket teams

Isn't he sweet ?

PICTURE GALLERY



Methodist College Belfast



Poet Laval, France --- 1947

3 4 R52050

SEAMAN'S RECORD BOOK AND CERTIFICATES OF DISCHARGE CRI

1st ISSUE. 2/6 Paid

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

National Insurance Number	Union or Society
/05/21/A	Name ... No. ...

Income Tax Code Number and Date: M 30/11/58

Pension Fund and Registered No. MNOPF 123 347

NAME OF SEAMAN.

Surname (in Block Letters)	Christian Names (in full)
HUNT	RAYMOND CHARLES.

Date and Place of Birth	Nationality
5-2-33 LONDON	BRITISH.

Height	Colour of Eyes	Colour of Hair	Complexion
5-11	Blue Grey	RED	FRESH.

Tattoo or other Distinguishing Marks

DECLARATION.
DECLARE (i) that the person to m this Discharge Book relates has fied me that he (she) is a seaman (ii) that the photograph affixed ing my official stamp is a true ness of that person, that the ature within is his (her) true ature, that he (she) possesses the sical characteristics entered within has stated to me the date and e of his (her) birth as entered in.

Photograph of Holder

R520503

M.M.O. Embossing Stamp

Signature of Supt. at Mercantile Marine Office— M. Walsh

Date 7/11/49

Grade Number and Date of Issue of Certificates of Competency Held

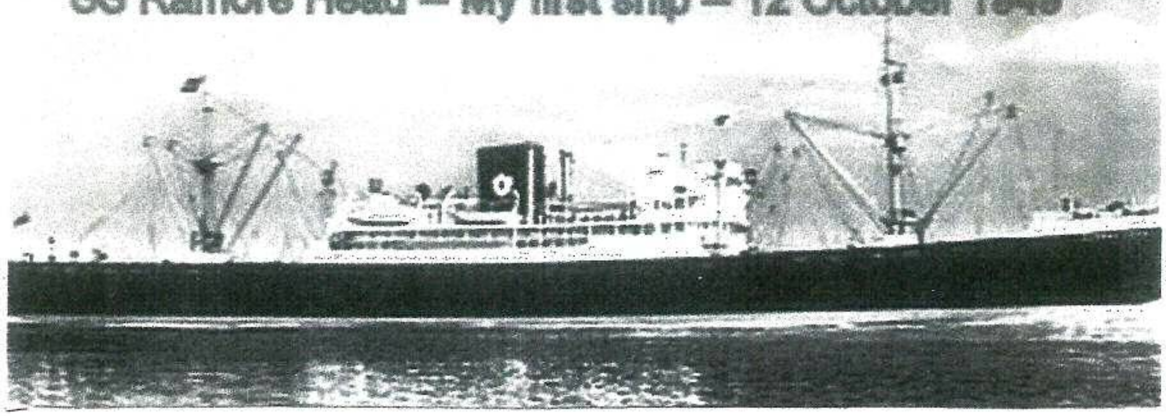
1st Mate (F.G.)	78324	29/1/..
Master (F.G.)	89678 L'pool	18/8/59 B.I

B.S.I.C. Serial No. 308399

Signature of Seaman: Raymond C. Hunt.

The start of my first career in the Merchant Navy–
Everyone in the Merchant Navy gets one of these, regardless of rank.
It is a record of service, ie every voyage.

SS Ramore Head – My first ship – 12 October 1949



PICTURE GALLERY

My Mother and I --- circa 1956

Kerry and Lindsey with my Mother

CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY

AS

MASTER

OF A FOREIGN-GOING STEAMSHIP No. 85678

To Raymond Charles Hunt

WHEREAS you have been found duly qualified to fulfil the duties of Master of a Foreign-going Steamship in the Merchant Service, the Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation, in exercise of his powers under the Merchant Shipping Acts and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, hereby grants you this Certificate of Competency.

SIGNED BY AUTHORITY OF THE MINISTER OF TRANSPORT and CIVIL AVIATION and dated this 11th day of August 1959

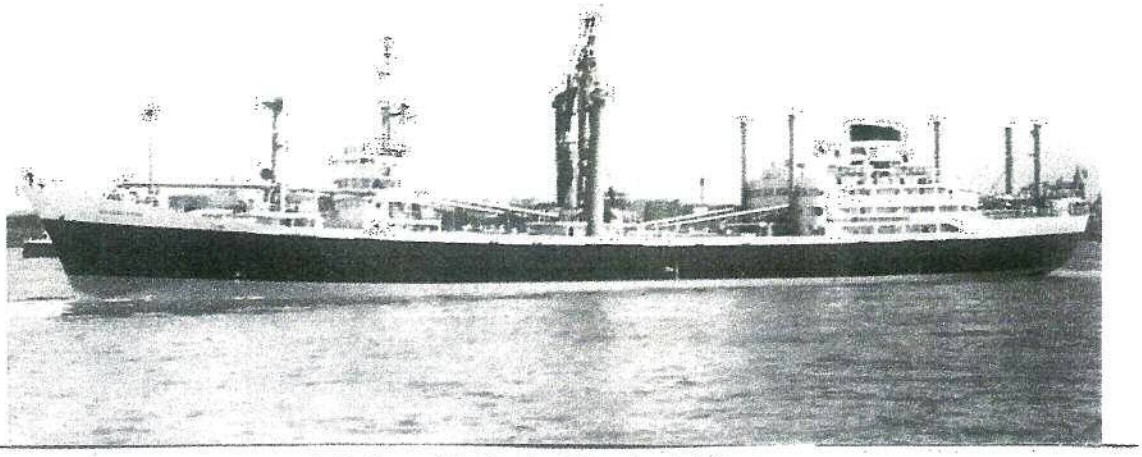
Countersigned

Registrar General

A Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation.

REGISTERED AT THE OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL OF SHIPPING AND SEAMEN.

The ultimate achievement --- your Master's "ticket.



My last ship in the Merchant Navy –
MV. Adventurer
25 October 1959

F.1.

ACCOUNT OF WAGES
(Sec. 132, M.S.A. 1894)

Keep this Form as a record of your National Insurance and Income Tax.

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND CIVIL AVIATION

NAME OF SEAMAN: R. HUNT.

Dis. A. No. R520503.

Name of Ship and Official No.	Class	Income Tax Code	Rating	Ref. No. in Agreement
[illegible] LIVERPOOL. [illegible] B.H.P. [illegible]	~~U.~~ ~~G.S.~~ C.S. ~~List.~~	M	2ND. OFFCR.	3
		Nat. Insurance No.		
		Contributions commence Monday	(Date)	

Date Wages Began	Date Wages Ceased	Total Period of Employment: Mths.	Days	Allotment Note given for: Amount	Date 1st Payment	Interval
24.10.58	26.10.58	•	3			

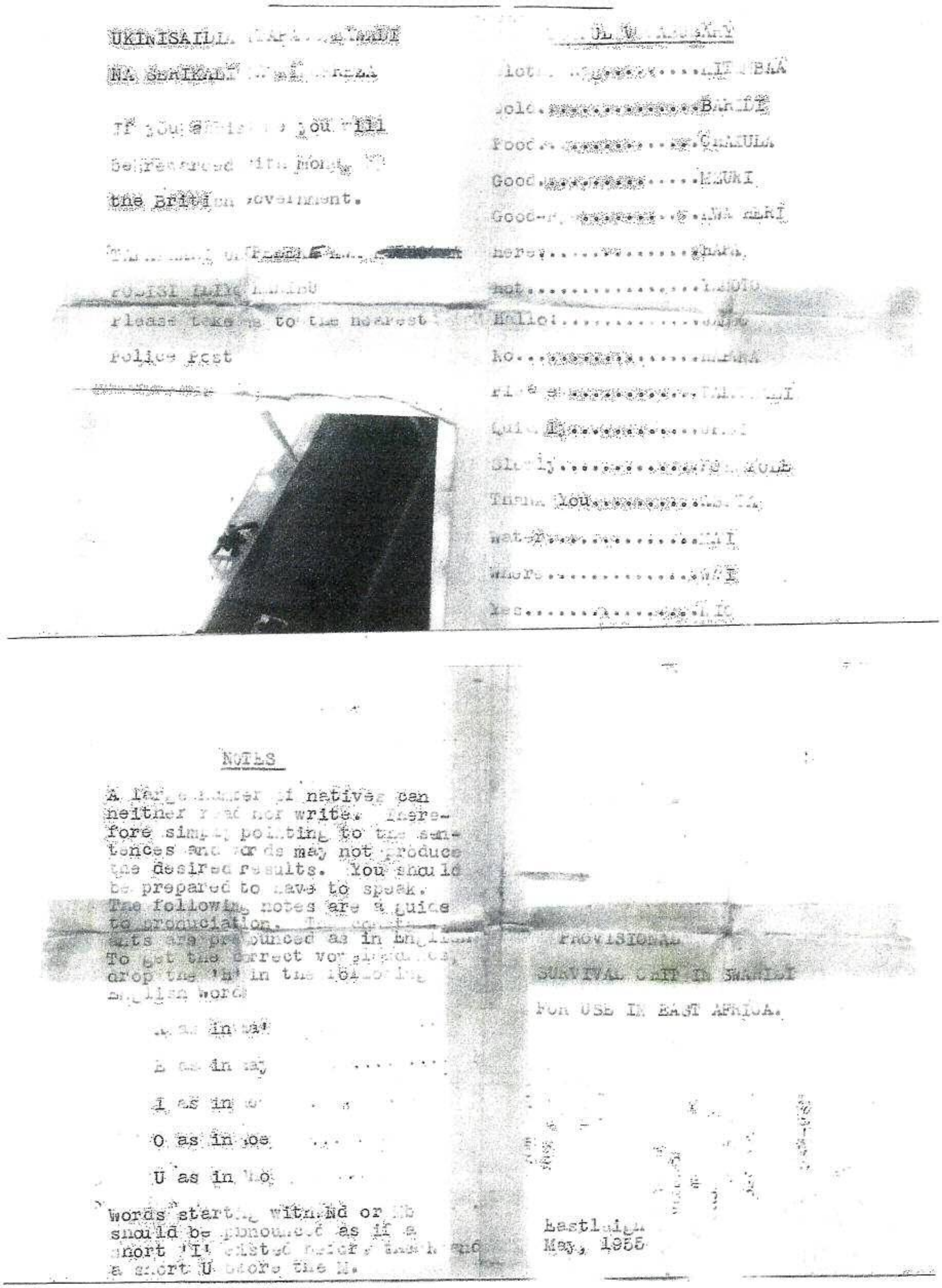
A. EARNINGS	£	s.	d.
Wages ...... Months at £ 62.0.0 per month	6	4	•
...3... Days at £ ...... per day			
Increases in wages (promotions, etc.)			
From ...... To ...... at £ ...... per mth. ...... mths. ...... days			
From ...... To ...... at £ ...... per mth. ...... mths. ...... days			
Overtime ...... hours at ...... per hour			
...... hours at ...... per hour			

	Days	£	s.	d.
Leave and Subsistence Brought Forward ...... days				
Voyage Leave		-	-	-
Sundays at Sea	1	-	-	-
	1	-	-	-
Total		-	-	-
Leave taken				
Balance Due ... days at £ 2.1.4 per day	1	2	1	4
Subsistence ... days at £ 5.4 per day			5	4
Delete as necessary: Carried Forward to next Voyage / Paid—to be shown in Earnings Column.		2	6	8

	£	s.	d.
(Paid—to be shown in Earnings Column)	2	6	8
Gross Earnings	8	10	8
Less Reduction by £ ...... p.m. ...... mths. ...... days.			

My, they paid us well!
(about $99 per month as a middle ranking officer)

PICTURE GALLERY


UKINISAIDIA [illegible]

NA SERIKALI [illegible]

If you [illegible] you will
be rewarded with money [illegible]
the British Government.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Please take me to the nearest
Police Post

[illegible]

Hot.................BARIDI? [illegible]
Cold.................BARIDI
Food.................CHAKULA
Good.................MZURI
Good-[illegible]..........[illegible]
Hurry.................HARAKA
Hot.................[illegible]
Hallo!.................[illegible]
No.................[illegible]
[illegible]
Quick.................[illegible]
[illegible]
Thank you.................[illegible]
Water.................MAJI
Where.................WAPI
Yes.................NDIO

NOTES

A large number of natives can neither read nor write. Therefore simply pointing to the sentences and words may not produce the desired results. You should be prepared to have to speak. The following notes are a guide to pronunciation. The consonants are pronounced as in English. To get the correct vowel sounds, drop the 'h' in the following English words

A as in Bah

E as in [illegible]

I as in [illegible]

O as in [illegible]

U as in Who

Words starting with Nd or Mb should be pronounced as if a short 'I' existed before the N and a short U before the M.

PROVISIONAL
SURVIVAL CHIT IN SWAHILI
FOR USE IN EAST AFRICA.

Eastleigh
May, 1955

Survival Chit provided by the RAF if you were attacked by Panga (machete) swinging Mau Mau terrorists ------ except as it says, they couldn't read --- not an expected high survival rate

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

CANADA

MINISTÈRE DE LA DÉFENSE NATIONALE

Director of Postings - Drivers (Navy)
Room 2119 "G" Bldg.
Canadian Forces Headquarters
Ottawa 4, Ontario

Lieutenant J.S. Hunt, RCN
HMCS CHILCO,
FMC Victoria, B.C.

Dear Lieutenant Hunt,

You indicated during your recent interview with me that you particularly desire to remain in submarines for a considerable period observing that you will be 33 years of age early in 1966.

I agree that the age factor in your case is somewhat critical and that if you are to have a chance of becoming at least an Executive Officer of a RCN submarine, it is necessary for you to obtain as much practical experience as is possible. In this respect, you will have completed one year in CHILCO in March 1965 and I trust that you will be granted your "on board qualification" at that time.

It is my intention to have you continue to serve in submarines for at least 2-3 years after obtaining your qualification so that you will be in a position to earn the necessary recommendation for Executive Officer. However, I cannot say for certain that you will remain in CHILCO until 1968 or 69 as it may be necessary to provide experienced officers for the new "O" class. However, it would not be my intention to move you until you have had at least one year in CHILCO as a qualified "submariner" and thus I do not foresee you leaving the West Coast until at least the summer of 1967.

Yours sincerely,

L.J. Hutchins
Captain, RCN

He didn't get it quite right !!!!

SKIPPER DESCRIBES WAR EXERCISE

Canada Sub 'Sinks' Supercarrier

By ROBERT DIETRICH
EVENING TRIBUNE Military Writer

"If the sailor had seen my periscope he would surely have sounded the alarm," the skipper of the Canadian submarine Rainbow chuckled here yesterday.

Red-bearded Lt. Raymond C. Hunt and his 78-man crew is credited with "sinking" the U.S. supercarrier Ranger in Southern California war games which ended Thursday.

"I saw the sailor clearly," Hunt said. "He was on the stern of a destroyer, apparently standing a lifeguard watch."

Glides Between Destroyers

The Rainbow, a former U.S. World War II submarine, glided at periscope depth between two destroyers protecting the Ranger to make the "kill" with a simulated spread of six torpedoes.

It was done under daylight conditions at about 8 a.m.

"I'll admit we were helped by sea conditions which hampered the destroyers' sonar (listening devices)," Hunt added.

The Rainbow worked with three U.S. submarines in playing the enemy in week-long exercises involving 41 U.S. and Canadian warships.

Positions Kept Secret

"The exercises were planned a bit differently this time," Hunt said. "The anti-submarine forces were not given the starting positions of the submarines in advance."

To let the Ranger know it was "sunk," Hunt fired a traditional green war game flare from beneath the surface. Then he dialed one of the protecting destroyers with his underwater telephone.

The destroyer told him he had been "sunk" in turn by an antisubmarine torpedo.

"That was all right," Hunt grinned. "A 78,000-ton 'heavy' was worth our sacrifice."

The Rainbow, the ex-U.S. Argonaut, was transferred to the Canadian Maritime Forces in 1968. It is the only Canadian submarine based on the West Coast of Canada.

Lauded by U.S. Officers

"We are quite proud to fly the colors of Canadian Submarine Force, Pacific," he said.

Hunt and his crew were commended by U.S. commanders.

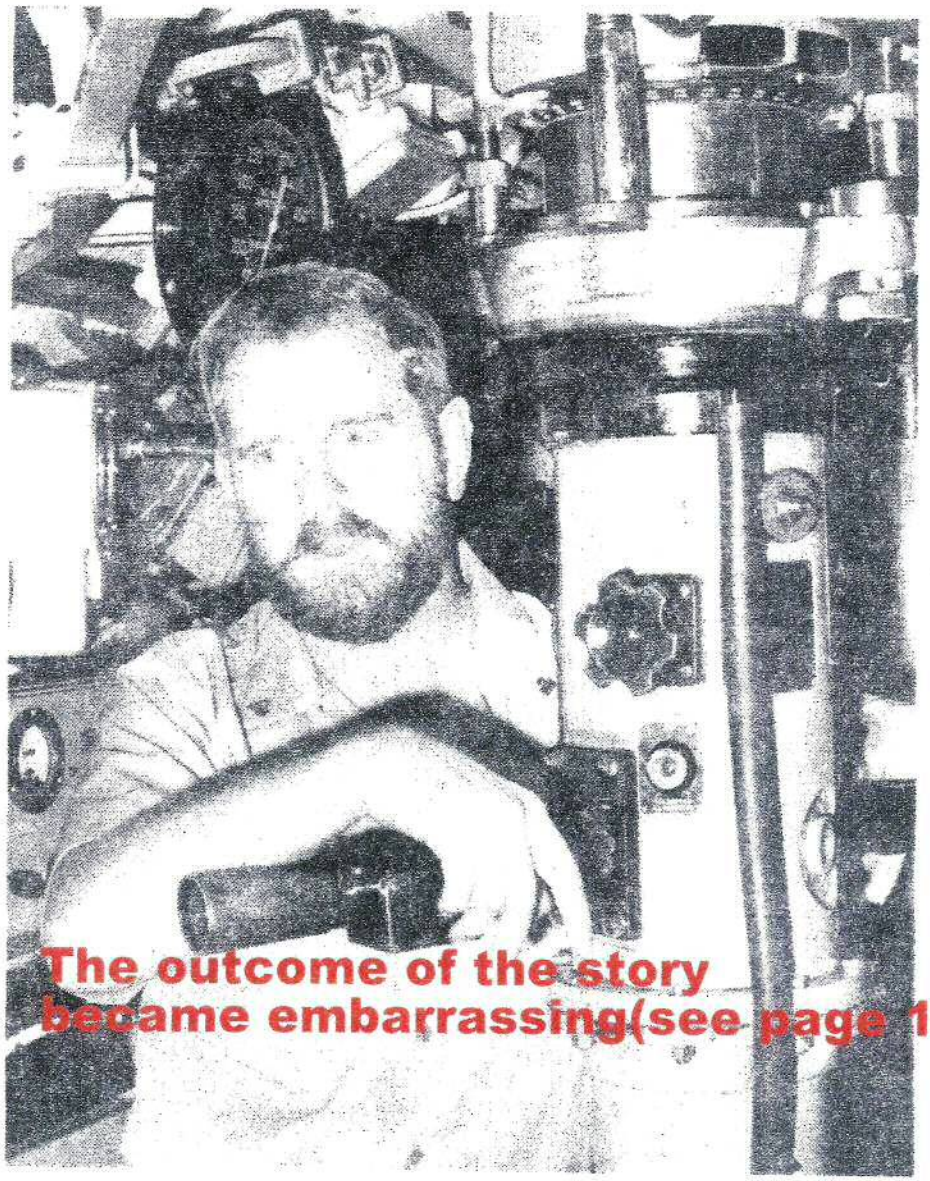
"This sort of exercise sharpens the skills of both the surface and submarine forces. The destroyers know we are going to do all we can to sink ships and we know they are determined to keep us from doing it."

Later in the war game, Hunt noted, the Rainbow was flushed by destroyers during another stealthy approach at the "heavies."

A native of Belfast, Hunt reported on the way the Argonaut became the Rainbow two years ago.

"The American crew waited patiently until the Canadian colors went up, then they cheered as we ordered 'splice the mainbrace' and opened up the bar."

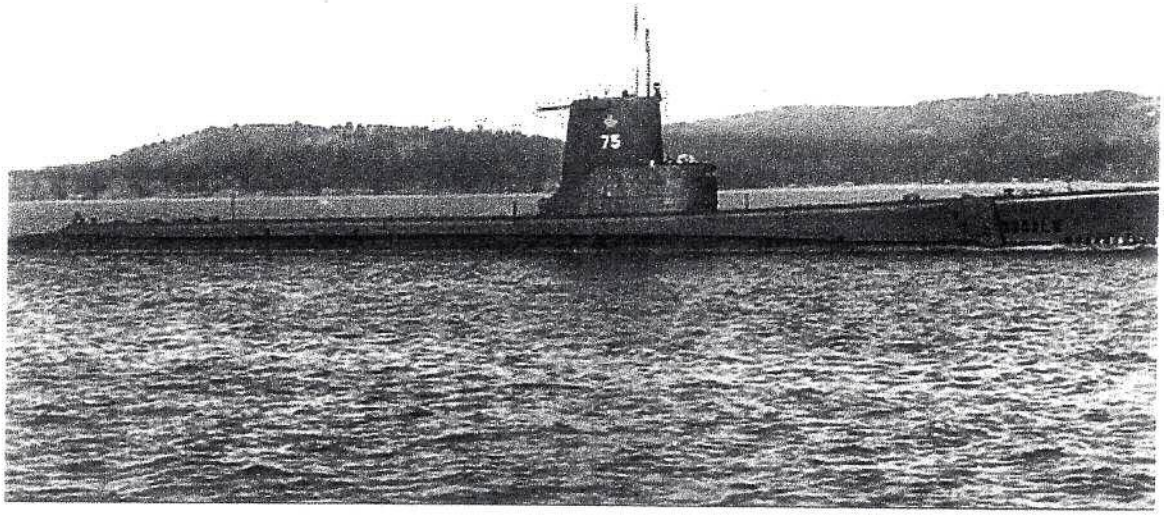
The Argonaut had been "dry" under U.S. Navy regulations since 1945.



DEADLY GAME—Lt. Raymond C. Hunt, skipper of the Canadian submarine Rainbow, describes how he moved past defending U.S. destroyers to "sink" the U.S. supercarrier Ranger in war games which ended here this week.

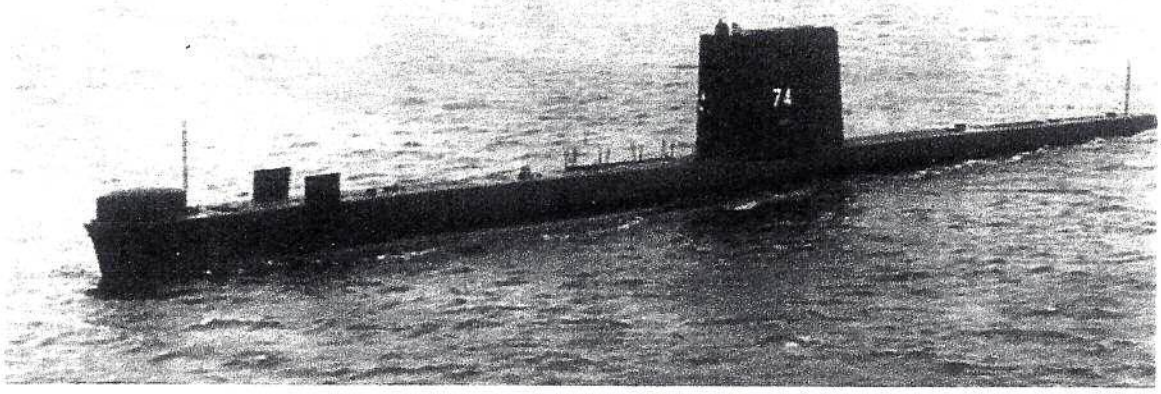
The outcome of the story became embarrassing(see page 105)

Commanding Officer, HMCS Rainbow



My first command

Commanding Officer, HMCS Okanagan



Second command

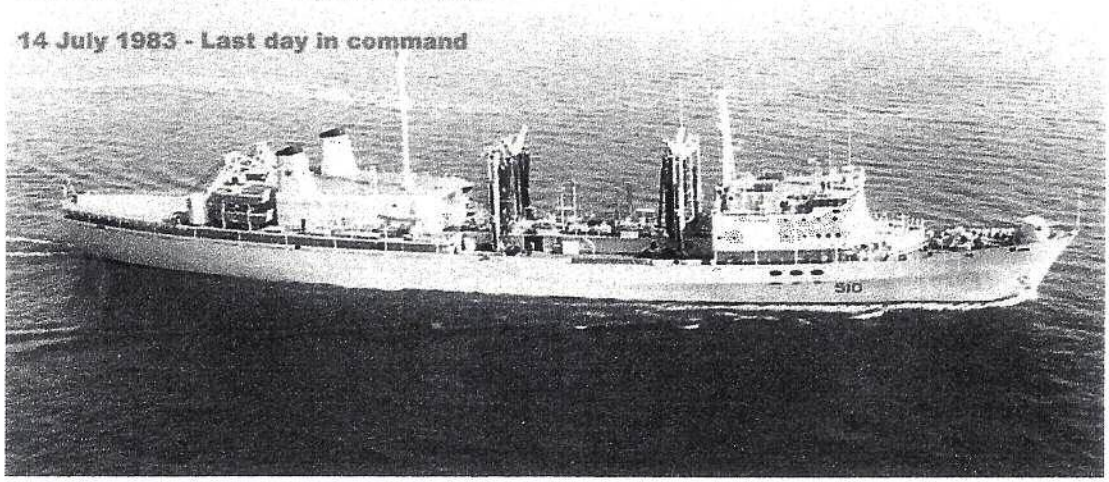
PICTURE GALLERY

Commander, First Canadian Submarine Squadron

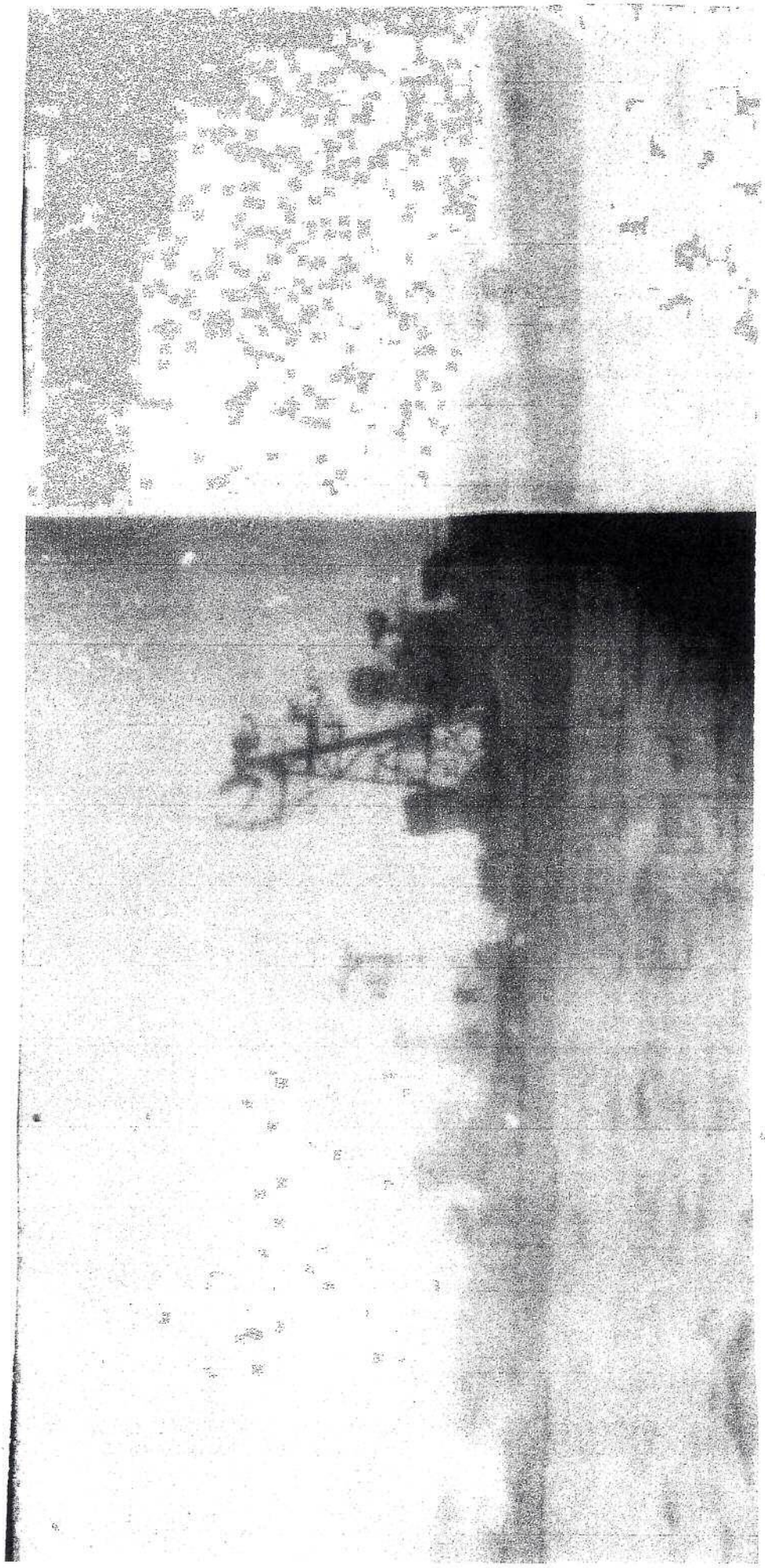
Third command, as Commander Canadian Submarines

Commanding Officer - HMCS Preserver

14 July 1983 - Last day in command



Last command -- the "big ship".



Periscope photo of a Soviet Krupny Class destroyer
taken in Unimak Pass, Aleutians

PICTURE GALLERY

COMMANDER ANTISUBMARINE WARFARE FORCE
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET

Commander Antisubmarine Warfare Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

takes pleasure in commending

Lieutenant Commander RAY D. HUNT, Canadian Forces

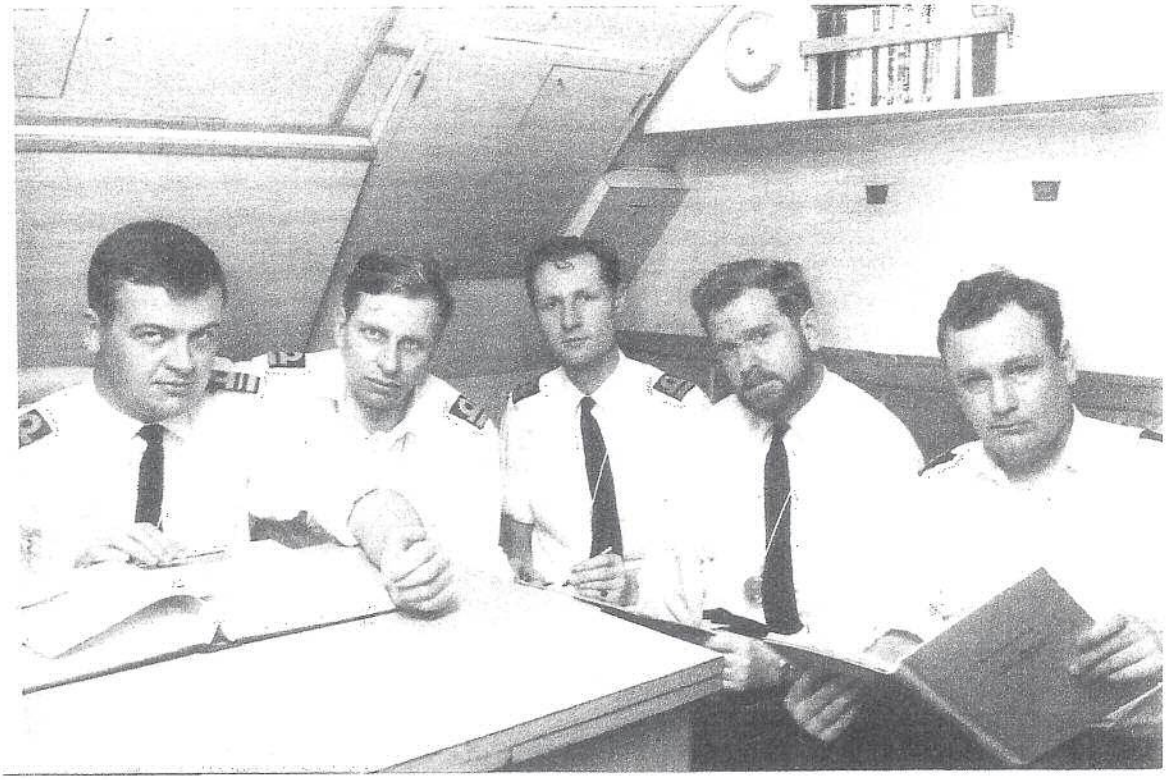
for service as set forth in the following

CITATION

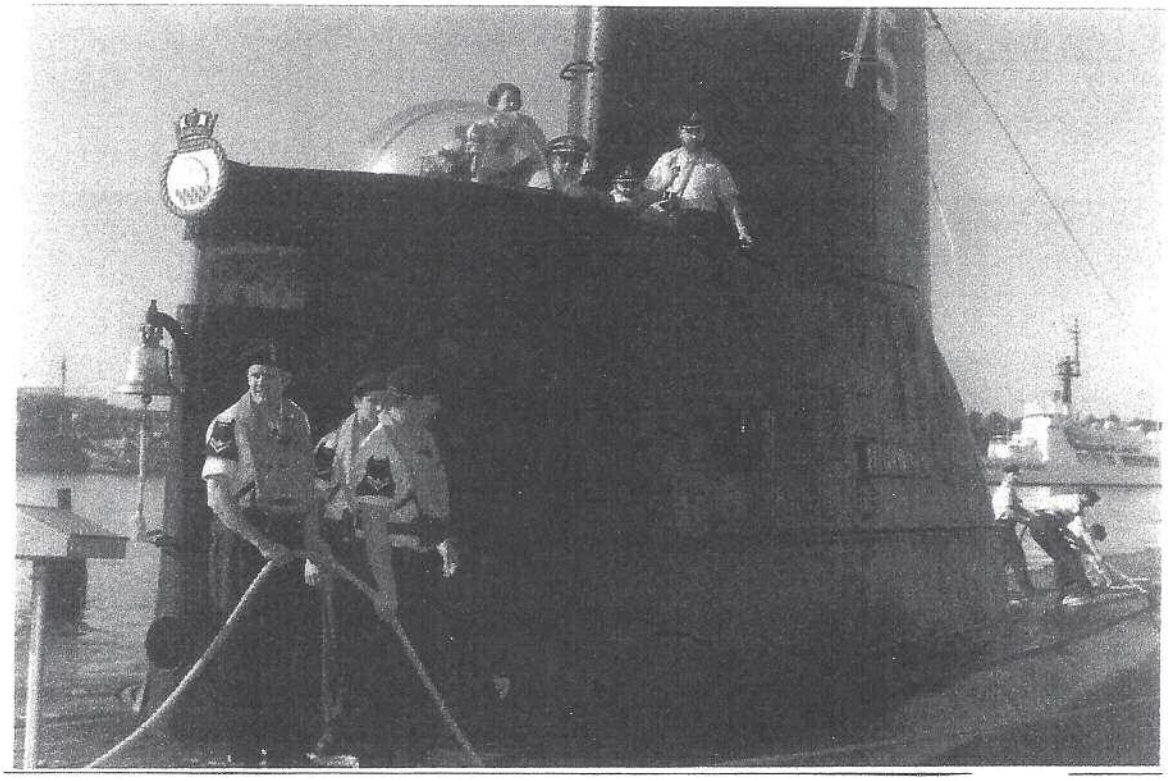
For meritorious achievement while serving as Commanding Officer of Her Majesty's Canadian Ship RAINBOW during the period 31 August 1971 to 10 September 1971. During this period Lieutenant Commander HUNT served as a Task Element Commander under the command of Commander Task Force Thirty in combined surveillance of Soviet out of area naval units operating in waters in the vicinity of the Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska from 31 August to 10 September 1971. In this capacity Lieutenant Commander HUNT accomplished in an outstanding manner all tasks assigned by Tactical Commanders of both the United States and Canadian Navies. Of particular note was the establishment of a submarine barrier in an area of restricted waters that assured detection of any passage of the Soviet unit which was known to have included both conventional and nuclear powered submarines. In addition, Lieutenant Commander HUNT employed maneuvers to confuse and perplex the Soviet force. These actions as well as good seamanship and sound tactical judgment significantly contributed to the success of the surveillance effort. Lieutenant Commander HUNT's actions while commanding HMCS RAINBOW under operational control of Commander Antisubmarine Warfare Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet are such as to bring great credit to his country and the Canadian Forces.

E. P. AURAND
VICE ADMIRAL, U.S. NAVY
Commander Antisubmarine Warfare
Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

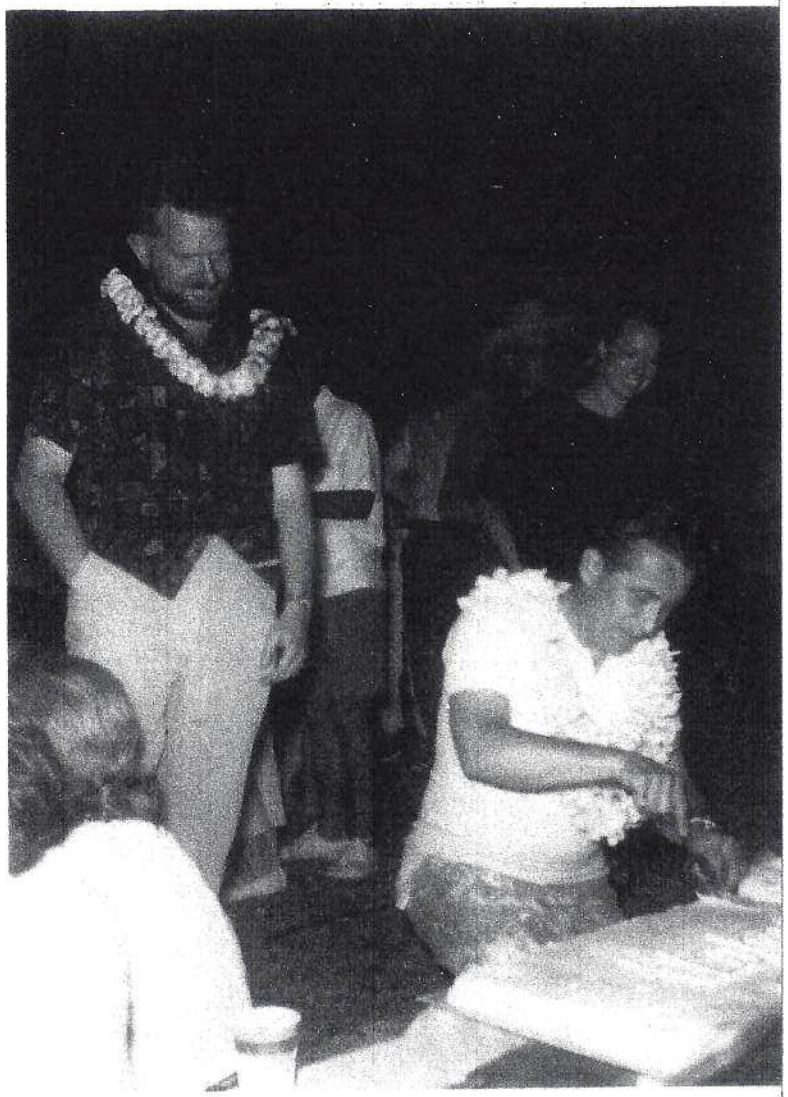
The Citation



The "Perishers" – Submarine Commanding Officers Qualification Course



Bringing HMCS RAINBOW alongside in Pearl Harbour, Hawaii



Luau in Hawaii

Mo Tate cutting

Citation presentation fromVice Admiral Aurand USN