

Interview No. 7 with Captain Willard F. Searle, Jr., U. S. Navy (Retired)

Place: His residence in Alexandria, Virginia

Date: Tuesday morning, 25 July 1972

Subject: Biography

By: John T. Mason, Jr.

Q: This morning, Captain, I believe you are going to talk about your tour of duty as Chief Engineer in the USS PROVIDENCE which began in July of 1959.

Cpt. S.: Yes, in fact you might say that the tour began in the early spring of 1959. The PROVIDENCE was a cruiser, a Cleveland Class cruiser which had been pulled out of mothballs, taken to the Boston Naval Ship Yard, and was being given a very thorough and comprehensive conversion program. The ship was to be renumbered the CLG - 6. She was getting the complete TERRIOR Missile System aft. The six inch guns were retained in the forward gun turrets. I guess I was fortunate to be tapped to get this ship. It was, as I say, the lead ship of a class. The crew and the officers on this ship were more or less handpicked.

Q: Who was the Skipper?

Cpt. S.: A fellow by the name of Ken Veth was the Skipper. He was a fair haired boy, a very fair haired boy. He was a line officer, destroyer type, but he at the time had command as the Chief of Staff of one of the ASW squadrons, a composite squadron of aircraft carriers and destroyers.

and so forth, operating in the Atlantic. I came to learn later that he had all sorts of political muscle in the Navy and in Washington. Subsequently when he became Rear Admiral, he was Chief of Legislative Liaison here in Washington.

Q: He is now in Philadelphia.

Cpt. S.: Now he is ^{COMFOUR} ~~ComFer~~ in Philadelphia, having come there from Vietnam where I guess he was relieved in ~~Vietnam as~~ ^(ComNav 4 V) by Zumwalt and sent back here. I presume he is getting ready to retire. It's about time.

At any rate, Ken Veth, ~~a guy~~ ^{a fellow} who got this ship, and a real fair-haired fellow in NavOrd, in those days BuOrd, ^{a fellow} by the name of Captain Kendall Simmons, was the Exec. Kendall was in Washington. He goes by the name Ken Simmons. He since retired as a Captain. Ken knew his way around Washington very well too. Between Veth and Simmons they were handpicking the officers and the crew. They got a hold of me. When BuShips offered me up, I subsequently had a meeting or two with them in Washington. We went into the procedure of handpicking the Warrant Officers and the more or less senior officers in the Engineering Department.

I am getting ahead of my story when I say that the PROVIDENCE got all kinds of honors and E's and was subsequently the flag ship of the Seventh Fleet. Of course, we knew when we were going into commission that we were eventually going to be the flag ship of the Seventh Fleet. Consequently, this ship got all kinds of goodies in the flag quarters and so forth. Anyway, I have often thought as a BuShips/NavShips type fellow charged with the responsibility of building and commissioning new ships, that if every ship could have a handpicked crew we wouldn't have half as many problems as we do.

Q: Yes, but where do you get the handpicked men?

Cpt. S.: Well, you can't handpick all the people. On the other hand I have preached in later years in NavShips and at the Ship's Characteristic Board that at least for the prototype of a new class ship, it should, in fact, be given kid-glove treatment to shake it down. Put some people, the Skipper, the Exec, the Chief Engineer and the OP's Officer, people of that type, on the ships who have plenty of experience in putting ships into commission, who are genuinely mature about the problems about the Navy, problems of administering ship yard work, problems of administering money, and who understand ship building programs and things of this nature.

Now, Simmons certainly was an excellent man. In fact he had been in the development game in BuOrd, in fact in the development of the TERRIOR Missile System itself. Of course, Veth in my estimation was one of the smoothest, savviest, ^{maturest} ~~maturest~~ guys around. He is certainly a different type person from Zumwalt. After serving under Veth for two years I can see that he is a completely and totally politically motivated person. That is to say, he makes every decision in the light of not only military and immediate operational problems, but of political problems too. It was my first experience with a gentleman like that.

Q: Does that lend to the good of the service?

Cpt. S.: I think yes. I definitely think that it does in that case.

Veth to me had a very good balance of operational, financial, ^{and} political perimeters as they operated on every decision. I'm very complimentary towards Veth, certainly not in the least critical of Veth. I personally, in the light of the last five or six years of experience in

South Vietnam, suspect that Veth's personality was not the proper kind of personality to send to (ComNav 4 V.) Zumwalt was.

I didn't understand the problems in (ComNav 4 V) when I went to lunch one day with Ken Veth just before he left for there. I was happy for him. It seemed to me that it was a big plum feather in his cap to be selected to go out there. I think Westmoreland was still there. It was even before Abrams took over. I am told that people who were on his staff in Nav 4 V were frustrated that he was somewhat reticent in making decisions. I don't believe that to be the case. I suspect that in an operational theater like that, people who he was interfacing with were people who expected decisions to be made entirely in the light of operational necessity, bedamn money and bedamn politics. Veth isn't built that way. Veth was built to weigh all the perimeters. To the uninitiated, frequently it looked as if the peripheral perimeter was the controlling one. Not so.

Q: All operating people were under raps, weren't they, to a certain extent?

Cpt. S.: Well, that's right. It's another story and one I'll probably never know as to whether or not Veth was in favor as far as Westmoreland was concerned or not in favor. In my book, knowing Veth well and certainly knowing of Zumwalt and knowing his type of people and personally knowing a number of people on his staff, I can't cross Veth off. He probably was the wrong kind of a guy to be in Vietnam at the time. He is a wonderful man. In present day here in July 1972, he is probably the kind of guy who ought to be in Northern Ireland in a very political situation.

Well, notwithstanding that, Veth did a fine job on the PROVIDENCE in my estimation. We had a magnificent crew, got all kinds of honors. That's really preamble for going to the PROVIDENCE paragraph.

I went up there to Boston in probably early June of 1959. I was the first department head to report aboard. There were a couple of Warrant Officers there, a yeoman or two. I was greeted by the people in the Boston Naval Ship Yard with open arms. Since I was an EDO, a BuShips type, I think they thought they were going to have a patsy on their hands and all the decisions that they had been struggling with, and they didn't know which way to jump because they didn't want to take the responsibility for the color of the Admiral's wallpaper, and what kind of pictures to go in the Flag Cabin's head and so forth, that I would make all these decisions for them and that the decisions they wanted made, which were to their favor, I would make them. They were sadly mistaken because my job was not the boss of the ship yard, but the boss of the ship. We established a very fine working relationship across the table.

I ran into a number of my old friends from the Boston Navy Yard which dated back to my days as an MIT student. It had only been 8 or 9 years earlier. Many of the people I had worked with as leading men were now quartermen and so forth. In fact I remember clearly a ^{fellow} ~~fellow~~ who had been a leading man in the Electrical Shop, Shop 51, was now a Chief Quartermen. His name happens to be Russell Searle. It's easy to remember.

Well, the office for the prospective crew of the PROVIDENCE was in a mezzanine in the foundry. If you can imagine a dirtier, hotter place. No air conditioning. Had a hell of a time getting them to put in a telephone. It was appalling to me that a big naval ship yard, which was putting a new ship into commission, had no better facilities to handle the prospective crew. It was disgraceful, and I let them know I thought it was disgraceful. It didn't do any good because they didn't have any other space available.

When ~~about~~ starting to get my engineering crew together and so forth, we had a few disciplinary problems that you have with sailors. But not very many because at that time we had nothing but the senior petty officers and the warrant officers and so forth. This went on for about a month.

I should add that we were to get only the senior key people. The balance of the crew were trained at the Naval Training Center in Norfolk, Virginia. The Exec and Simmons went down there and ran that show.

After about a month, in July, Captain Veth arrived and we prepared a little office for him. As I say it was a disgraceful place. He was used to better treatment than that.

Q: What kind of a complement were you having on board the PROVIDENCE?

Cpt. S.: How many?

Q: Yes.

Cpt. S.: Gosh, Jack, my memory doesn't

Q: In terms of 100.

Cpt. S.: Well, I'm thinking there were 750 people or something like that.

One of my impressions of being the Chief Engineer on a cruiser as compared with previous experience of being Chief Engineer on a destroyer or on an APD was that these guys on a cruiser were fast. Boy, I mean they were fast. We struggled and worked our tail off on the destroyers and APD's. We never had enough people and we never had enough money. On this cruiser we had more people than we needed. I had more in the Engineering Department and, Lord knows, they had more in the deck and the Gunnery Department than they needed because they didn't have any guns. I always

had more quarterly operations money, quarterly OPTAR money, than I needed. I couldn't understand it. I don't to this day understand it. I think it was a hoax or it was a result of the fact that you had more senior senior people.

It seems to me that life as a department head on a cruiser was a whale of a lot easier than the life of a department head on a destroyer for reasons of money, for reasons of manpower, for reasons of talent, and as you suggest, Jack, for reasons of having superior officers who were a hell of a lot more influential.

I don't think there is a great deal to be said about the remaining three or four months in the Boston Naval Ship Yard. It was a typical period of frustration of getting the ship finished. Everybody who has ever been in a ship yard knows that the last 5% take as long to complete as the first 50% practically. The Boston Naval Ship Yard perpetrated a few boo-boos, but nothing of the type that aren't perpetrated in other places.

I remember we went out on the builder's sea trials. That's the sea trial that is the responsibility of the ship builder and in this case the ship yard. By this time most of our department heads were there. Captain Veth was aboard. Most of my division officers in the Engineering Department were aboard. We went along as observers. One of the tests that the Boston Naval Ship Yard was to run was the anchor drop test. The administrative officer of the ship yard was the Skipper for the day. They went out to some predesignated spot on the Massachusetts Bay, dropped the anchor, held the brake, dropped the anchor, held the brake, as they went on out. All of a sudden the brake didn't hold and the anchor went racing out of the pipe. Up on deck came the yellow shot and up on deck came the red shot. It cleared the deck and over the side

it went. My first and only experience seeing the anchor run all the way out, and it does run all the way out with a lot of noise and a lot of smoke.

We were damn lucky that we didn't hurt anybody on the boat. The ship's boatswain was way up on the fore piece, our ~~chief~~ boatswain, a fellow by the name of Craft. He hid or ducked down behind a structure up on the ^{forecastle} ~~forecastle~~ which he referred to as the beer can. This was the foundation for a hyperbolic antenna. Very fortunately, it didn't hurt anybody. Well, there was a big investigation of that as far as the ship yard was concerned because they lost the anchor and the chain. They discriminately picked the place to drop the anchor and they didn't really know exactly know where they were. Besides, that, it was too deep to recover it.

I mentioned the flap about selecting decor for the Admiral's Cabin and the Flag's Cabin. I was presented with ^{this} ~~these~~ problem immediately when I arrived in Boston. I did my best not to answer to the problems. Fortunately before it was totally resolved, Veth showed up and he took this one over as a pet project. He is a great guy to work for because he didn't dabble in everybody else's business. It's also fortunate, I guess, that he found some business for himself. He always had classmates and political type activities for him to occupy himself with--a morning staff meeting. He was a bachelor and had been a bachelor all his life. He had lots of lady friends. He liked to play golf. He was one that you never really knew what he was doing but you always suspected he was a gay liberal on liberty.

At any rate, he took hold of this problem of decor for the Flag and Captain's Cabins. We also had on this ship several guest cabins. These had to be decorated in the best decor too. He put enough pressure

on the Boston Naval Ship Yard to hire W. J. Sloane's interior decorators to come up from New York. Two of the sweetest, prissiest men that you ever saw in your life came up to Boston. We took them down to the ship that was just swarming with yard birds, leaves, air hoses, all manner of activity on the ship in the last month of completion. Here these prissy-types down there with Veth deciding how they are going to decorate these cabins. Well, they did a hell of a fine job. I don't think it is necessary for me to describe what they did, but they did a very fine job. Veth I am sure drove the ship yard right up the wall. When he made up his mind he wanted something, he always got his way. It was a good lesson for me to observe him in those early days. It didn't make any difference to me because I later learned ~~he~~ always got his way--always. Some of my fellow ED's used to come down and moan to me and try to get me to try to intercede. I said, "No, indeed. All you ^{have} got to do is do what the Captain wants and everybody will be happy." It was a very interesting time.

I should footnote here to say that the Skipper of the ship yard was a fellow by the name of Bill Howard. You may have ^{run} into him before. Bill Howard was a Rear Admiral, had been in the Boston Navy Yard for a number of years, probably overtoured. He was overtoured because he had had a confrontation with the unions in Boston. The unions in Boston are tough. He fired somebody. There was a big lawsuit against him. I don't know the exact story about it but it comes to my mind that it was a personal loss. The Navy Department and the Department of Justice had decided to fight the thing, and they fought it all the way to civilian court, and subsequently won it in behalf of Howard. They couldn't move Howard until it was resolved. Howard was a fine, fine ship yard commander. I know that Veth had a good working relation with him.

The Production Officer was a chap by the name of Bill Brooks. I may have mentioned him in this story back in the Charleston Days. Bill was a Commander in Charleston when I was a Lieutenant, and it was Bill who had nicknamed me A. P. Searle for Advanced Planning Searle. So, I had a good working relationship with him. He was a great guy. Unfortunately, Bill Brooks was diagnosed as a leukemic, was dying. In our six or eight months in Boston in the later period, he would drive down in the dock in his khaki uniform with his hard hat on but he couldn't get out of the car. It was a tragic thing.

The Repair Superintendent was a fellow by the name of Steigelman who was sort of an old woman. He and I made sparks. I didn't give an inch to Steigelman and Steigelman would try to pull his rank on me a little bit. I was a Lieutenant Commander. Steigelman was a Captain. I wouldn't have any of that. With friends like Bill Howard and Bill Brooks in the ship yard and a Skipper like Veth to back me up, I didn't have any problems at all. I really had no problems.

I can't remember the name of the guy who was the type desk officer. Oh, yes, it was a fellow by the name of Lieutenant Commander Charles Middleton, who was the type desk officer in Planning. He was a very cooperative guy. He is now retired. He and I have had activities together over the years.

Both Bill Howard and Charlie Middleton are currently associated with Old Dominion University in Norfolk. Bill Howard is the Missions Officer, I think, something like that. Brooks subsequently died. Steigelman just retired from NavShips about a year or two ago.

Well, I mentioned about dropping the chain. I think the first time that we ever took the PROVIDENCE to sea ourselves, that is the PROVIDENCE crew took her out from the Boston Navy Yard on a trial run, there were a number of Boston newspaper reporters aboard, and tugboats

or somebody in the harbor were taking pictures. We got about halfway down the channel off City Island or something like that, and one of my boilers (all four boilers lit off) or one of my fire rooms lost the load. The boilers died. It was a terrible situation. As far as being dangerous is concerned, it wasn't really dangerous to life, limb or property, but it was an embarrassing thing for the Skipper and an embarrassing thing for a Chief Engineer to have happen. In the first place it imperils the ship a little bit. It doesn't have as much power in the channel. As far as the Chief Engineer is concerned, he becomes the butt of all jokes and it makes smoke. Well, it turns out that we made one of the most horrendous masses of smoke out of our smokestacks that you ever saw. Television cameras and the pictures were clicking away. There was a fantastic picture of the PROVIDENCE with all this black smoke coming out of the stack that was subsequently given by a newspaper photographer to the Captain. Captain Veth presented this picture to Dirt Chief for information.

Q: Chief Polluter.

Cpt. S.: Well, that is right. In this day and age people would have worried about the ecological aspects of the thing. All I was worried about was the fact that we had lost the load.

Well, it was fortuitous that we lost the load because there were some goofy valves in the auxiliary steam system on this ship. We subsequently lost a load a number of times before we got out of Boston Navy Yard ^{and} until we got the Navy Yard and our people down there to trace out the lines and find out what the problem was. The problem was basically one of the ship's generators. The auxiliary ship's generators in the After Fire Room stealing steam. There was some kind of a bypass there

^{that} and ~~this~~ had to be repaired. We had all kinds of experts from General Electric and other people close to Lynn, Mass., where they make the General Electric equipment. They had lots of talent down there to help with this thing.

When we had our ^{INSURV} ~~insure~~ inspection, the people from Washington came up and we had a real strict ^{INSURV} ~~insure~~ inspection. Veth was all over the place. We made lots of comments ^{of what} ~~that~~ we didn't like about the ship and put a lot of pressure on the Navy Yard to get the things fixed. I am convinced that Veth was a great thing for that ship, a great thing for putting new cruisers into commission.

I should footnote here that there was another missile cruiser.

Q: The BOSTON?

Cpt. S.: No, the BOSTON was a different bag of wax. The BOSTON was in and out of Boston Navy Yard, and the ALBANY was in and out of the Boston Navy Yard at the same time we were there. In fact, the ALBANY was in conversion at that time. She was really getting ~~the~~ left out as far as manpower was concerned because between my pressure on the ship yard and my friendship with Howard and Brooks, and the fact that the Navy Yard just simply could not pull any wool over my eyes at all, and the fact that Veth was so skillful and the ^{Operations officer} ~~Communicator~~ was so skillful, (I'll talk about him in a minute ~~by~~ a guy by the name of Joe Fiester) we had that damn Navy Yard jumping through hoops. No other ship in the Ship Yard was getting any manpower. The ALBANY was falling way behind.

What I started to say was that the ROCHESTER. (I think it was the ROCHESTER. That doesn't ring a bell either. Well, it is suffice to say that I'll remember it another time.) There was another cruiser under conversion in the Philadelphia Naval Ship Yard. This cruiser

was to be the first Talos Missile Cruiser. She had been converted. I had, in fact, noticed the ship and walked through it a time or two when I was in Philadelphia on the MISSION SAN FRANCISCO operation. There had been nothing but grief with the missile system, nothing but grief between the Ship Yard and the ship's personnel. The ship just had the worst reputation you could ever imagine. Every time we would have a problem or think about our own problems or forethink possible problems, we would think about that cruiser down in Philadelphia.

In fact, I arranged for our people, my people in the Engineering Department, to go from Boston down to Philadelphia, talk to the ship's crew, talk to the Ship Yard, and learn lessons from their grief. Veth did the same thing, or maybe he was encouraging me to do it. I don't really take credit for it. We had a good operational thing there and the Skipper was such a great guy. You sometimes tend to be a little egotistical and you shouldn't be because under those kind of circumstances the Skipper was a guy who was doing everything. Anyway, we were determined that we weren't going to have any grief ^{like} that that Talos ^{Missile} ~~Missile~~ cruiser had. She had been out to sea and back again and so forth. We were really motivated to make this ship right. Say what you will about the Boston Navy Yard, I think the Boston Navy Yard was ^{motivated} too.

Well, sometime right after the Board of Inspection, ^{and} Survey came and looked at us, and we were really putting pressure on the Navy Yard to get finished, Veth was determined to get that ship out of the yard on schedule. We were scheduled to go up and down the East Coast making port visits and then to Guantanamo. He was going to make his name on this ship. Arleigh Burke came to visit us. This didn't hurt anything either. If I remember rightly, and I am not really positive of this, but I am pretty confident that Admiral Veth himself contacted the Chief of Naval

Operations and encouraged him to come and visit our ship because it was going to be a good ship and it was going to be the flag ship of the Seventh Fleet and so forth. That didn't hurt anything either for Arleigh Burke to come walking down into my Engine Room and Fire Rooms. He did, in fact, walk down into one Engine Room and one Fire Room. Man oh man, that really had my people up on their toes. We were very pleased and very fortunate.

I said I would mention the Ops Officer, Joe Fiester. Joe Fiester, Alabama boy, went to University of Alabama. He didn't go to the Naval Academy. His wife's name is Jean. A specialist communicator, a fine officer, a really fine officer. He and I got to be pretty good friends on the ship. We have subsequently been in contact. I am very disappointed in this very most recent flag list that he wasn't on it. I think he has been passed over a couple of times now. He is the Commanding Officer out at the Communications Station but he is leaving there pretty soon. He did a fine job. He had the Communications Department and he had the CIC. The CIC on the ship was unbelievable for 1959.

Again to be the flag ship of the Seventh Fleet, it had all kinds of things. This ship had some of the first computers that were put on the ships, not only computers for the missile system but computers stuffed down in CIC. It had the first ship's internal TV system. It was the first cruiser that was going to handle helicopters on the fantail--all kinds of stuff that were really new and pushing.

Q: The refitting must have cost a considerable amount of money.

Cpt. S.: Oh, it cost a lot of money--a lot more than they planned for it to cost, too. When you put guys like Fiester and myself and Veth on a ship and you start terrorizing the Ship Yard and terrorizing the Naval

Ship Systems Command, or BuShips in those days, it cost even more.

You know, when we conceive ships, we conceive them in generalities. When we design them, we design them in a bureaucracy. We design them without allowing for emotion and also without allowing for influential people to put them in commission. I think more importantly though is the fact that we design them and don't allow for emotion, for personal taste. Emotion equals pressure ^{and} influence. Then, we build this ship in a vacuum, and then before we are complete building it we all of a sudden interject vigorous, emotional, influential people on the new ship's crew. These people immediately begin to undo everything, not everything but do all kinds of things, that redesign the ship. I talked to people when I was in the ship building program. What is the solution? One solution is don't assign a crew to the ship until the damn thing is delivered like when you buy an automobile.

Q: Don't let them get around it.

Cpt. S.: Don't let them get near the thing until it is done. Then, give them the ship, let them go to Guantanamo, come back and tell you what their griefs are and fix the griefs.

Q: This has never happened.

Cpt. S.: This is exactly the way you design and sell automobiles. Oh, no, this has never happened because the influential people (I am not knocking the system) but the influential are the operators in CNO and they want to interject their people and their needs into the ships. Also, we do it this way because it takes so damn long to design and build and test out a ship. But, God sakes, it doesn't make a hell of a lot of difference whether the valve is here or there or the color of the State Room is yea

or nay. It costs a fantastic amount of money when you put people on the ship who all of a sudden think that it makes a hell of a lot of difference whether the valve is here or there or the color is yes or no.

I learned a great deal by being involved in putting the ship in commission. I don't know that I would have learned as much and benefitted as much from it had I done it four or five ten years earlier. I don't think I would have been as saavy and as mature. It's an experience that everybody ought to go through.

Q: Was Providence, Rhode Island at all interested in the ship?

Cyt. S.: Yes. I'll talk about Providence.

Let me finish. I was talking about Fiester and then I've got to mention the other major department head. There were two other major department heads.

The Supply Officer was a fellow by the name of Tom McDonald, a Captain now. He was a Lieutenant Commander then. He is still in, a Naval Academy graduate. He was a fair haired guy in BuSanda, and he was subsequently sent to a Ph.D. program. This gives you a measure of the kind of people we had. Tom and I were good friends and extreme antagonists. I thought the Supply Department was there to serve the rest of the ship, not only to pay me my pay check, but also to get me the spare parts and the bales of rags and oil I needed. He sometimes thought the ship was there to serve the Supply Department. We didn't see eye to eye on a lot of things. The Exec had to arbitrate from time to time.

The other department head was a fellow out of the Class of '44 by the name of Jim Lowry, who was a specialist in Special Weapons.

You've got to remember that this was 1959 in the heyday of nuclear

weapons. It was back in those days when every naval officer had to go to these special weapons orientation courses and so forth. The PROVIDENCE carrying the TERRIOR Missile was to be one of the first surface ships that had a nuclear warhead capability. We never had one aboard the whole time I was there, but we did have the capability and a number of officers in the ship, the senior one of which was Veth, of course, but then Lowry and Fiester were special weapons qualified. We had an extra number of Marines and special magazines to take care of them and so forth.

... extra number of Marines?

1. Lowry was probably I think the weaker of the department heads. I had known him. I was in his company. When he was ^a first I was a plebe. We were good friends. He had some good people for him. I think he had impeccable credentials. He wasn't the strongest of the department heads. They had a hell of a time getting their missile systems running. Because Exec Simmons was an ordnance expert he kind of made sparks with the gun boss. The gun boss subsequently left the ship after a full tour, went to Yorktown and retired as a Commander. I think Lowry didn't make out as well on the ship as everybody else did, but he is a hell of a nice guy. That's all the department heads on the ship.

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You mentioned Providence. Yes, that is interesting. When we left (going way ahead of the story) the Navy Yard and made some port on the East Coast and went to Gitmo. In the spring when we came to Gitmo in the spring of '60, Veth had arranged through the Navy for us to pay a port call to Providence, Rhode Island.

He appointed Joe Fiester, the Ops Officer as the Ship's PIO Officer. At least the Ship's PIO Officer was in his Department. Fiester was a masterful guy at this stuff. He is a good man. Joe Fiester would have made a good Chief of Navy Legislative Liaison. He is that kind of a guy.

He is a hard working and a tough, mean, son-of-a-bitch. A good man. He did a magnificent job under Veth's tutelage. Veth was great for policy, but also great for detail. We went into Providence, Rhode Island.

I didn't get involved in all this stuff. All I had to do was keep that ship running perfectly, make all the valves, don't put oil in the water, don't spill oil over the side. (I did a couple of times. I'll tell you about that.) But I was completely in awe of the polish and the detail that these guys put into this port.

Including the Captain, the Exec and all the department heads ^{we} went up to the State Legislature and in session were introduced. There had never been a ship the size of the PROVIDENCE go all the way up in the center of Providence. I mean right up just before the lock gate, before the flood gates, right in there. There was the PROVIDENCE. The mayor came down. There were all kinds of receptions in the city and receptions in the hotels and the State House. They had us in the Governor's Mansion. This went on for about three or four days. It was a great time, but it was punctuated by a near tragedy.

We were in Newport ready to go up there, and they had arranged for the press and some of the bigwigs to take a bus down from Providence to Newport to come aboard. You know the story?

Q: No.

Upt. S.: It was a rather dreary day. I don't remember what time of the year it was. I think it was in June because though it was dreary this particular morning in Newport it subsequently got hotter than blazes in Providence. It was in late May or June. Veth was all fired up for this thing. It is clear that I had high respect for him, but he could be an old woman when something important was getting ready to go on. Some of

his critics would say that he was very on edge about making flag. He may have been. I've seen other Captains that way. On the other hand, he may have been that intent about things that were important to him.

The bus from Providence was late. It was nobody's fault on the ship, but everything had to be smart and the plan of the day and everything. The getting under way orders, were such and such to light off and to ^{signal} single up the lines. We were signalled up and tested engines with permission of the bridge. I had to test the engines because the turbines are hot and the Captain wanted to get underway promptly as soon as these people got aboard. So, you just had to test the engines.

The Captain was (I had seen him in the Wardroom or some place), while he was waiting) he went into the Barber Shop to get his hair cut. He got his hair cut about every other day. That's an exaggeration, but I mean he kept himself really well groomed. I think it was one of the luxuries he really enjoyed being the Captain of a ship because he got his hair cut any time) he liked. I don't know if you have heard this from other people but it used to gripe me so at the Naval Academy after having to sit in line once a week to get your hair cut. Of course the first classmen had the privilege of going ahead of the line. To this day I hate to get my hair cut because I hate to wait for my hair to be cut. The greatest of luxury is to get your hair cut at the snap of a finger. Frequently, I'll get my hair cut in an airport or something. I'll be walking by a barber shop and the chair is empty. I'll go sit down. Not so much that I need a haircut, but just because of the luxury of not waiting. I suspect maybe Veth was that way too.

Anyway, to make a long story short, the bus arrived in the pier somewhat late. Veth met them at the quarterdeck. He was standing at the quarterdeck. I was in the Engine Room manning the controls in

communication with the bridge. About that time we spun the engines, ^{putting} ~~put~~ a little surge on the ship, and as a couple of the people were coming into the gangway, the gangway dropped into the water. Two or three of the people hung on and a couple of them went into the water. One of the visiting dignitaries, a newspaper man, as a matter of fact, but he was a nephew of the mayor ~~was~~ something like that. I don't know, the nephew of somebody, a bigwig in Providence, fell in and it was pretty hairy. He almost drowned. He broke his back. There was a subsequent big investigation of this. Veth was just--he had a temper. That was the first time I had seen his temper really. He was very upset and very angry. There was a major investigation. Of course, CruDesLant was right there in Newport. No, DesLant was in Newport. In those days we had a BatCru Lant. They were in Norfolk. Anyway, the investigation was really smoothed over. I wouldn't say hid. It hit the newspapers, but it was in fact a true accident. There was, I am confident, a ^{major} ~~major~~ effort not to besmirch Veth's record. It wasn't besmirched at all that I know of. He did make flag. It was a tragedy. I guess I did testify. All the engineering records and so forth were put into the investigation. I never really got too involved with the thing one way or the other. The guys on the bridge and the guys on the quarterdeck were involved. The fact that the Skipper was right on the quarterdeck when it happened was helpful too. Nobody got singed. It was a tragedy.

This fellow who broke his back subsequently sued the government, and I don't think it was opposed too much by the Navy Department. He got a pretty substantial compensation over the years.

Joe Fiester pretty well managed the thing. Fiester functioned as a confidant and as a sort of a chief of staff for Veth.

Another observation that I have in serving my cruiser is ~~that the~~

department heads are in fact department heads and coequal but junior to the Exec. This was a new experience for me having been a junior officer on destroyers and those type ships where you are really under the finger of the Exec. The experience on the cruiser was entirely different. It was great. Maybe it was just me. I don't know, but it was different.

I missed something of major importance about Veth. While we were in Boston still putting this ship into commission, the All Navs came out which dealt with the elimination of the Tombstone Law. Veth had one or two Legions of Merit, one of which was a Combat Legion of Merit with a star or V or whatever is is. Anyway, he was one of the guys. He was a Captain at the time. He was eligible to retire and become a Rear Admiral in the Tombstone List. He sweat that. I must say that I never had conversations with the Captain on this kind of thing. I was somewhat naive and it didn't have anything to do with engineering.

Joe Fiester and I were close friends, and Joe Fiester was very close and friendly to the Captain. Joe was always interpreting or explaining to me these things. It was sort of I really was learning about line officers. These two guys were influential to me on various occasions.

Veth sweat out what should he do, ~~what should he do~~. He decided that he loved the Navy. God, he loved the Navy. Here is this guy from Minot, South Dakota. He was a hell of a good naval officer, but he decided to stick it out. I suppose that put him even under the gun more because he wanted to be an admiral and he had passed up one way of doing it and he couldn't do it the other way. So, this tragedy, this accident in Newport on the way to Providence, was what we all thought of ~~that~~ in those days. Will this effect the Captain's chances of making flag? Then, all of us on the ship were very aware of the fact that the Captain wanted to make flag. Hell, I didn't understand the significance in those days of

that sort of thing. We were working to make him an admiral. Well, that covers Veth's intensity to make admiral.

I guess I got ahead of the game talking about Providence, Rhode Island. We got the PROVIDENCE out of Boston in the dead of winter, shortly after the Christmas holidays. I guess I should say here that we had a very successful formal commissioning ceremony. I was a bachelor in those days, having been divorced. My first wife had remarried. I was particularly thrilled at my daughter Janie, the oldest one who was about 14 or 15 at the time. Let's see, she was 14. ^{She} Got all dolled up and came up for the commissioning ceremony. My mother and dad were there.

I sent commissioning invitations to a number of old friends, among them Andy Magus, who I think I mentioned back under the MEREDITH days. Andy Magus was the guy who was a first class electrician's mate when I was Chief Engineer on the MEREDITH. He was a reserve fellow during World War II, a superb electrician's mate. It was he who was getting paid off in Norfolk and came back down to the Ship and Receiving Station and taught me, a young ensign, how to light off the gyro because there was nobody else on that ship in those days who knew how to light up a gyro except me. In those days of 1949 when all the qualified people were getting out of the Navy and leaving us poor guys to run ships with half complements. I was particularly pleased that Andy Magus had come to the commissioning ceremony. I hadn't seen him in five years, and I haven't seen him since.

Another fellow who came to the commissioning ceremony was Howard Benzel from Scott Aviation, who I had done a lot of work with at the Experimental Diving Unit.

I guess what I am saying is that a number of people pleased me and surprised me by showing up at this commissioning that I hadn't expected. Apparently the Navy PIO people, Chinfo, had been doing a good job of

publicizing the ship. Of course it was in those days, again in 1959, when the threat of Russia was ever apparent and the Texas Towers had just been built and put off into commission off the East Coast of the United States, and so forth, and so on. There was a lot of flag waving in those days. So, we got the ship commissioned.

I guess I should mention here before we get the ship out of Boston that I was living in just the swellest basement apartment in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Emerson. Jack Emerson was the guy in Boston who I had worked with at the Experimental Diving Unit building and designing Diving equipment of the J. H. Emerson and Co. They rented me an apartment in their basement. They had this built for a son, college boy, and he was no longer living at home. I had my own kitchen and little dining room, bedroom and bath. It was really great, right on Spy Pond just off Route 2 in Arlington. It took me about 15 minutes to get down to the Navy Yard. I was having a really great time living the gay bachelor life in Boston, a repeat performance of Washington in those days. The Emerson Company owned an island off Crane's Beach above Cape Ann. I went out there every weekend and dove and picked cranberries and all kinds of things. I had a genuinely fine time in Boston. I had a couple of girlfriends. I almost got married to one of them. Thank goodness I didn't.

Anyway, we got the PROVIDENCE out of Boston and went down to Norfolk and checked in there with the Type Commander. We had a few little odds and ends picked up at the naval base. The Ship Yard came over and did some work for us, brief items. Then we left for Guantanamo. Two events occurred.

The first one we were doing some work on one of our engines when we left Norfolk and consequently got underway on three engines instead of four. I had permission from the Captain. It was no great sweat. We

clearly had pushed ourselves and pushed the Boston Navy Yard to get out of there. There was plenty of work still to be done. We had a really great crew and there was no problem that we could do it ourselves. We had a lot of confidence.

We got out of Norfolk and about two days out of Norfolk I got a secret message from some outfit I had never heard of asking the ship to identify itself and what was it doing with its machinery on such and such an hour on such and such a day which was the day we came around Cape Charles and headed south. I pulled out this secret communication and filled out the Form ABCD and sent a message back. I did this. My first experience with SOSUS overseas. I was really impressed. Of course, I was not saavy on ASW and all that sort of thing. Joe Fiester and the Exec explained to me what was going on, what SOSUS was. It turns out that our noise signature on three engines was considerably different than it was on ^{four} ~~two~~ and these listeners wanted to know what the hell was going on. I guess they put our three engine signature into their data bank. I was very impressed by the fact that there was somebody listening to us wherever we went. You can't get away from them.

The other incident was a lot of fun, while we were in Norfolk. I am sure it was Admiral Veth's idea, having come out of the ASW business and having been the Chief of Staff of an ASW airdale type squadron before he came to the PROVIDENCE, ^{He} sent Joe Fiester out to Oceania. They made arrangements with the hotshot airdales out there to give us a little exercise.

Now this is typical of the PROVIDENCE in those days. We were always thinking about training the ship and getting the ship up to speed and cooking up ideas and ways of getting more training. When we left Norfolk, man, all we were doing was transit. First to Roosevelt

Roads, I guess, then to Gitmo.

Those guys, Fiester and Veth and probably Simmons too, but I don't give Simmons too much credit, they had arranged for these airdales to give us a little air battle as we were going down off Virginia Beach and, by God, they did. We had all kinds of things. This was early 1960. The F-4 was a brand new airplane. It was the hottest thing going. Those guys were out there. We were operating all the way down the Virginia and North Carolina Coasts. We were operating with these high airplanes. They got the missile radars going like hell. The ship's radar was on. The CIC was exercising itself. The Engineering Department just came along--no problems--three engines as a matter of fact.

Anyway, when this was all done, the Captain came up on the LMC, on the ship's announcing system, and said we did a very good job. Before that, I guess they passed the word that they were going to give us a fly-by. So, they had a fly-by, but Veth leaves the quarter, leaves the bridge, and goes down the ladder on the outside of the ship and runs back to the fantail. On the fantail of the PROVIDENCE way back behind the helicopter platform were two great big steel ventilators. They are flat, low, so that the helicopter propellers or rotor blades wouldn't get fouled up. Veth gets up on top of these things. He had a baseball cap on. He always wore a baseball cap. He had gotten two semaphore flags from the signalman as he went past the signal bridge. There is old Veth back there on the stern of the ship wigwagging these airdales. They came in on the deck, came right up our wake, you know. Old Veth is down there wigwagging them just like a landing signal officer on an aircraft carrier. They were wiggling their wings at him as they flew by. Apparently Veth was very well liked by the Airdale Navy. They were having a great time.

One of my pictures of Ken Veth is that. There was a great deal of

humor and humanity in the guy. Again, I never knew a man who could weigh all the perimeters and he never ~~slided~~^{slighted} the political perimeter and never ~~slided~~^{slighted} the Chinfo perimeter.

We went to Gitmo. We went down the coast. A memorable experience occurred the first or second night, probably the first night after we left Norfolk. I had come up to the bridge. It was winter--January or February. I had come up to the bridge to make the 8 o'clock report. The Exec was on the passageway outside the navigator's shack. As it was my habit, I went up to the bridge to have a little conference with the Captain and ask if he had any special notes for me or what were my orders or anything. He liked that. Again, it was a one-for-one relationship between the Captain and all the department heads. I was on the open bridge. It was a balmy night. We were steaming south on the Gulf stream, just after dusk. The Captain was busy doing something else. I was waiting.

Somebody said, "Look at that." Way down south on the horizon, southwest of the horizon, was a huge flame going straight up in the air. What we were seeing was a big missile shot out of Canavarel, a big one.. We watched the flame trail until it faded, and then we could watch the missile itself as it climbed all the way to the heaven and became a star. It was a very impressive thing--my first and only real experience of seeing a big missile shot. Mind you, this was 1960. John Glenn hadn't made it yet. All they were doing in those days was putting little packages up there--very impressive.

We went on down and went to Roosevelt Roads. We had a lot of missile trials with drone aircraft. No problems. We went to Guantanamo. The Chief Engineer who had the Damage Control Department under him was a very busy, busy person in Guantanamo. We went through Guantanamo with no problems.

I must tell you a couple of stories about it. ~~When we got there,~~
~~We steamed down there.~~ No problems. The other engine had been fixed. Whatever the problem was, it wasn't anything important. I had a main propulsion assistant by the name of Earl Wilmeroth. We called him Will. He was an LDO Lieutenant--subsequently made Lieutenant Commander and subsequently made Chief Engineer of a cruiser. Will was a superb machinist, superb handler of men. He had been, in the early part of World War II, an enlisted man as an optical machinist. He is the guy who overhauled the old Ford computers, overhauled range finders. He was one of these kind of guys who goes to the toughest kind of school there is in the Navy. He was really good.

My M Division Officer was a fellow by the name of Vic Thorp who was an ex-machinist, a Chief who had made Lieutenant, I guess from Chief to Lieutenant JG. ^{He} was a nondrinking enlisted man, LDO type. He had a wife and two children he was very devoted to. He is the kind of guy who as chief petty officer had taught himself to fly, had taught himself electronics, a real superb guy; subsequently went to two or three jobs. I am still in contact with him. In fact, this spring I was doing a lot of work trying to get his son into the Naval Academy. I don't know whether he made it or not. His son was an Eagle Scout. This fellow now is head of something down in Jacksonville.

Wilmeroth had a heart attack. He lives out in Dallas or someplace out in Texas.

The Warrant Officer in charge of the B Division I should really tell you a little bit more about him before we get into this Guantanamo thing. His name was Harold Finsterwald, like the famous professional golfer. He came aboard the ship. I had already reported to Boston. He came in a couple of days later. He walked in my office. He was a ten stripe

Warrant Officer. I had seen his name on the list of orders that he was coming, but I didn't put two and two together. When he walked in my office in the Boston Navy Yard, I recognized him. I don't remember if I told you the story under the MEREDITH or not, but when I was the Chief Engineer on the MEREDITH, this fellow was the Assistant Engineer Officer.

I was very interested in the men we got aboard. Whenever they would send us new people, and we would get a hell of a flow of people in those days after the war, I'd call for each guy's service record and read his service record from stem to stern. Well, in the first place it was fascinating. It was like reading a dime novel. Some of the cases were a number of AWOL's, court martials, or one thing and another that those guys had had. I was always interested in where they had gone to high school, what their hobbies were, and all this kind of stuff.

One day on the MEREDITH I got a fellow who was a fireman (these firemen second class today would be firemen apprentice) by the name of Finsterwald. I called him into my office as a young boy and interviewed him. The name Finsterwald was familiar to me from my hometown. My junior high school principal was a fellow by the name of Finsterwald. That family of Finsterwald were friends of my family. They had all come from Southern Ohio. I asked this boy if he knew this fellow, my principal. "Yes, he is my uncle." This fellow Finsterwald that I am talking about, Harold, we called him Fin, was from Southern Ohio. There was this close, almost kinship, with this real young, wet behind the ears, sailor who came on the MEREDITH. So, I assigned this kid Finsterwald to the Forward Fire Room because the Forward Fire Room had my best people ^{and} a real good mature chief who I though the world of. Fin quickly made fireman first and then Third Class Water Tender while I was still on the MEREDITH. I had never seen him again nor corresponded with him.

Here he is. I last saw him in 1947-48 and here it is 1959. He walks aboard as my B Division Warrant Officer on the PROVIDENCE. He was a godd man. In the meantime he had made Boilermaker. That's different from Water Tender. He went to Boilermaker to Chief Boilermaker. He was an expert in repairing boilers and was really a fair haired guy. So, Fin was there. He subsequently got commissioned as an Ensign on the PROVIDENCE. I think he went from Warrant Officer straight to JG. He retired about a year ago as Lieutenant Commander. I have a little bit of contact with him now on the West Coast. He lives in San Diego.

These are the kind of guys I had. I didn't have any problems at Gitmo. All these guys were LDO's. Of the senior people in the Engineering Department, I was the only one that wasn't an ex-enlisted man. With this kind of crew, you can't lose. They had Gitmo right down to a T.

Anyway, we got to Gitmo, had our conference on the beach the first day, went to get underway the next morning, and all the damn brass from Gitmo came down for the arrival inspection afloat. Light up the engines. Everything is going smoothly. We already had our crew pretty well trained before we got to Gitmo. I will be a son-of-a-gun. We light up the #3 engine. That is on the port side. We get the most horrible extreme vibration in the engine than you can ever imagine. I've never seen anything like it. By, God, it felt like the reduction gears were ready to come right out of the ship. We spun the engine and then we did all kinds of things. We cooled them down. We backed them down. Nothing would go.

The Captain is on the bridge. I am in the main control. I am keeping him well informed of what is going on. Captain Veth, I guess, had been a Chief Engineer and was very understanding of Chief Engineer's problems. He is very patient. I know he has a temper but he is very

patient. We were keeping him very well informed. Well, we did everything we could do. Nothing did any good. I finally got on the telephone to the Captain on the bridge. I said, "Well, I don't think there is anything we can do about it now. Potentially it is too dangerous." One of the things we can do is get underway on three engines and go on through with this arrival inspection. The Captain said, "Yes, we will do that." We cast off on the dock right on schedule underway. The Captain on the bridge told the rear admiral. I think it was a rear admiral. I forget who it was. I think it was someone I knew. Anyway, the Gitmo people were understanding. We went through their arrival inspection.

We got underway. After we got underway, we got out of the Port of Guantanamo, secured the special sea detail. I went up to the bridge to speak to the Captain and tell him what we had done and tell him really, we didn't know what the hell it was. We had the engine locked and we could do anything on three engines that he wanted to do. We got underway from Norfolk on three engines. There wasn't anything exciting. I explained the problem to Veth. I told him and let him know that it was my problem. I was worrying about it. He put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Oh, Chief, don't let that worry you. Three engines--hell, that's one more than I had on a destroyer and two more than I had on a tanker." That's the kind of guy he was.

We laid to at noontime during the lunch period. We played with the engine again just as we had alongside the pier. Same kind of problem. Didn't ever find out what it was so we went to port that night. I forgot if we went to sea on three engines the next day or not. But anyway, at the first opportunity, which was a Saturday morning I think, we played with the engine again and had the same problem.

So, I took my diving gear. I didn't tell you but having been a

diver and everything, I also got appointed as the Chief of the Recreation Council or something on the PROVIDENCE, and I saw to it when we were outfitting the recreation locker that not only would we have baseball gear and golf clubs, we also had a very good supply of diving equipment. The ship didn't rate any divers, but there were a couple of guys on the ship that had diving training, a couple of enlisted men. There were several young officers who wanted to be trained and I had agreed to train them. We had scuba diving equipment.

I took this second class boatswain mate, who was a second class diver, and I. ~~We~~ rigged ourselves out and we went down and did the diving under the stern of the PROVIDENCE. We could have gotten divers from Gitmo, but we wanted to do it ourselves. We went down and we looked. What had happened was that the rubber coating on the shaft of this particular engine had rolled back when we were steaming down from the East Coast of the United States. It had peeled back just like rubber coming off a condom. It had piled up underneath the rope guards on the ship. What was happening ^{was} when we would spin this engine at relatively low speed from a dead stop and spin it, it was just vibrating the hell out of these. All I did was take a knife out of my weight belt, cut this rubber out, send some samples of it up to topside, and cut the rest off and dropped it on the bottom, cleared this rope guard, came back aboard. That was the end of our problem. We subsequently, that afternoon, tested the engine. Everything was fine. No problems. We had repaired our own sick engine without any recourse to Guantanamo Bay Repair Facility. That made me very happy and proud of myself.

Anyway, while the water wasn't particularly cold in Guantanamo I went back up to the Wardroom to shower. The water was very polluted. It was just about noontime. I called the doctor on the ship. The doctor

by the name of Sageback is a practicing physician here in the Washington area. I got ~~a~~ hold of the doctor or maybe the Chief Pharmacist Mate and told him that it was tradition in the Navy for divers to be issued a ration of cognac when they come out of the water, that that is done on every diving ship for medicinal purposes. The Pharmacist Mate brought two little minature bottles of brandy up to my room.

As I say, it was lunch^{time} so I quickly got dressed and I quickly went into the Wardroom. I had my two little brandy bottles alongside me. I am sitting on the left hand side of the Exec, who was the President of the Wardroom Mess. The gun boss, Jim Lowry, is sitting opposite me, and the Exec is sitting there. Somebody said grace. We all sat down. I turned around to the steward and said, "Will you bring me a glass of ice, please." I guess I had the bottles in my pocket. So the steward brings me a glass of ice, and I take out my two bottles of minatures brandies and I poured them on ice. I toast the Exec and drink my brandy down at noontime lunch hour. The Exec didn't like that very well but everybody else did.

That's about the gist of it. Well, I think we have time for a tale or two more. This guy Veth was just so superb. Related to the Guantanamo episode, I've got to tell you about a visit to Haitai, a visit to Ciudad Trujillo, and a subsequent visit and near disaster in San Juan. All this was before we came back to Providence. Things went swimmingly at Gitmo. We had no problems at all.

After two or three weeks, we went and spent one weekend in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. I couldn't really tell you whether it was a planned R&R weekend or whether there was some tactical reasons, you know, show the flag. There was, in fact, a revolution in Haiti. Anyway, we went over to Haiti and spent a weekend. It was well planned ahead of time so I presume

it was really an R&R weekend. I was extremely impressed by the poverty. The poverty is unbelievable. The government, Papa Doc was still the President, of course. This was in 1960. There had been a year or two before that an effort to have the World Fair or Trade Fair or something there and the buildings were still in evidence but they were ratty.

My mother and dad were spending the winter in Florida and I informed them we were going to be there. So, they flew over. They had never been to Haiti either. They flew over and I spent the weekend with them. They had a nice motel right up on the mountainside.

Nothing very memorable occurred that I can remember while we were in Haiti. I had a day of shore patrol there I believe. That's about that. We went back to Gitmo.

Two or three days later after the episode or visit to Haiti, we were underway again. This time we were enroute to Ciudad Trujillo. This was definitely an operational requirement. Washington had sent the cruiser over to Ciudad Trujillo. There was a major threat of a revolution and an invasion of the Dominican Republic. The PROVIDENCE was sent there to show the flag and to put additional Marines at the U. S. Embassy, I believe.

I was sent ashore as the senior Shore Patrol Officer. We sent jeeps ashore. We set up command posts. We ensconced ourselves in the Embajador Hotel. We had a little bit of social activity. We were entertained by the Navy people there and were entertained also by the Ambassador Lunch who was a political appointee. Veth went ashore. Veth was counseling with the Ambassador. I didn't know what the hell was going on outside. I was Shore Patrol Officer and my job was to keep our sailors out of trouble.

One of the things that impressed me there was going ashore with the

doctor. The Chaplain was a Presbyterian guy, an ex-Navy flyer who got out of the Navy, ^{had} gone to a Divinity school and come back in as a Chaplain. He was a good guy. I could tell you the tale about helping him serve communion on the ship. I remember one day I was helping serve communion on the ship. He had a bad cold so he couldn't drain the chalice, so I wound up having to drain the chalice. I thought that was the greatest thing that ever happened.

At any rate, ^{also with us was} with the guy who was appointed as my Assistant Shore Patrol Officer, D. W. Pew, an LDO Lieutenant who was an ex-gunner's mate, a really fine guy. We called on the Chief of Police, the Military Police really, and we proceeded to make a tour in the afternoon of the bistros and the whorehouses. I was very impressed. It was a military dictatorship. They had everything under control. Things were pretty clean.

We were going into whorehouses. The Chaplain would look around. The doctor would look at the heads and the cleanliness of the place. I was just following them around. I was snooping. I guess I was a very naive young man in those days, but I was appalled, ^{that} in each whorehouse that we went into, to find in a little room a very well decorated Catholic shrine with candles burning and pictures of the Madonna, the Mother and so forth. I got back on the ship and I was talking to the Chaplain about this thing. I guess my biblical history or my knowledge of the Bible isn't very good. He said "Oh, well, that is not unusual." "Their saint is Mary Magdalene." Having been brought up as a stiff Methodist and then having taken aboard the Episcopal Church pretty seriously, I was somewhat appalled the dichotomy of sin and saintliness in this place. I still can't reconcile that even to this day. I guess I am a little puritanical.

Anyway, we spent about five or six days in Ciudad Trujillo, sitting on top of this revolution. There were some riots in the city, but basically

the city was very quiet. The streets were almost deserted at night.

There was a beautiful sailing yacht. I would hazard a guess that it was 100 feet long alongside the pier just opposite where my Shore Patrol Headquarters were. We had strict orders in our Shore Patrol activity to keep an eye on this yacht, to log comings and goings. We kept a Shore Patrol walking up and down this deserted seawall watching this yacht. We never saw anything coming or going. It was reported that this yacht was either the getaway yacht for Trujillo, or that it was the yacht of Trujillo's son, an heir apparent.

Another incident occurred there that I thought was interesting. I hired a taxi cab and took a tour of the city the first afternoon I was there as the Shore Patrol Officer. I got a taxi driver who spoke good english and was used to taking people on tours. As far as he was concerned, the high point of the city was out in the affluent neighborhood-- a big mansion with a beautiful statute you could see from the street, a statute fountain of a couple of nudes holding each other. That must have been his number one stop on the tour because that is where Porfilio Rubirosa lived, the great lover. I think he was Doris Duke's former lover or husband or something.

Having come to Ciudad Trujillo from Port-au-Prince, the contrast was amazing. Ciudad Trujillo is a beautiful city. The poverty is not in evidence, and I don't really think that there is as much poverty there. By order of magnitude, there is less poverty there. You get an appreciation of the problems these two countries have, the geopolitical problem of existing on this one island, both of them dictatorships but different kind of dictatorships. The economy of the Dominican Republic is so much better. The society, that which is in evidence, is so much better. Apparently it is not as black as Haiti. You almost felt as though Ciudad Trujillo was a Western nation and Port-au-Prince was an African nation.

The hotel we were in, the Embajador, was a magnificent hotel, relatively new, sort of a Hilton place, had a fine casino in it. Then there was another even bigger and even more magnificent hotel down towards the city on the waterfront which was closed, ^{it} was owned by the government and boarded up. I think it was the Americana, but I am not sure.

There were many public works in evidence. Beautiful boulevards and damn few automobiles on them. There was a huge area which had been sort of a World's Fair or a Caribbean Fair or something that Trujillo had put on a few years before with magnificent buildings which were being used as government buildings. I don't know if you call it a benevolent dictatorship, but there was a dictatorship where there had been a fantastic amount of public works. It was an impressive place. As I said the revolution didn't precipitate while we were there.

There was an incident of interest regarding Veth. Veth got mad at me. I was the Shore Patrol Officer. I was coming and going to the hotel more or less on my own schedule. I knew what my responsibilities were. The most important time of the day for me was the time of day when liberty started and the time of day when liberty ended and towards the later evening. We had a curfew on our sailors. Nobody was allowed to stay overnight. I think it was 11 o'clock or something like that. I certainly stayed downtown from 9 - 12 or something like that.

I had been out at the hotel this particular afternoon. Joe Fiester and Jim Lowry and all the guys were there in a lovely cocktail lounge overlooking the swimming pool, beautiful pool. There were a nominal number of American tourists, not very many. The hotel was anything but full.

The top two floors of the hotel were out of bounds to everybody.

It was reported that that was where Trujillo held forth with his girl-friend or something like that. There was a lot of spookiness about the whole place.

Anyway, to finish this tale. At this cocktail hour, I got very friendly with one of the tourists who ^{Fiester} ~~Piefer~~ or one of the guys had picked up or ^{was} having a drink with us. She was a school teacher from Minneapolis. I made a date with her for that evening. She was a lovely girl. I did make a date with her, and we had a great time in the casino dancing and one thing and another. It turns out that Veth had his eyes on this girl and was trying to make a date with her at the swimming pool and had sort of made a vague date with her, but Veth had been involved in some social activity at the Embassy or something. It hadn't been a very definite date. This gal and I got quite enamoured with each other. She stuck with me that evening. Veth came in about 11 or 11:30-12 o'clock to the casino looking for his date, and she was obviously my date. He got a little miffed about that thing, not outwardly so. Fiester and he were kidding me. Subsequently when we got to Japan or something, Veth and I used to kid about how I swiped the Captain's date at Ciudad Trujillo.

Q: A dangerous thing to do.

Cpt. S.: That's right, especially when he is a suave bachelor like Veth.

The only other incident was that I made contact with the local Episcopal minister and spent a very lovely evening or tea time, I think, at their home. It was pleasant. It was a good experience to go see those people. Now I must secure.