

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE, NEWPORT, R.I.

HISTORY
OF THE
NAVY IN NARRAGANSETT BAY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

No. 5

Mrs. Mary Smith

HISTORY OF THE NAVY IN NARRAGANSETT BAY

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Naval War College

1983

PREFACE

This volume consists of the transcript of two hours of taped interviews with Mrs. Mary Smith, wife of the late CDR Roy Campbell Smith, Jr. The HISTORY OF THE NAVY IN NARRAGANSETT BAY Collection, in January and February 1985, for the Naval War College Oral History project entitled "The History of the Navy in Narragansett Bay."

Mrs. Smith, herself a member of a family with long military connections, married into the Smith family, one also with a long tradition of naval service. She married Roy Campbell Smith, son of Captain Roy Campbell Smith, USN, in 1912 in Annapolis, MD, and was a Navy wife for over thirty years. She lived in China, Panama, Hawaii, and Newport, RI, during her husband's distinguished career. Her reminiscences of life in the "Old Navy" as well as her recollections of the Naval Torpedo Station, the Naval War College, the Naval Base, all in Newport, R.I., and personalities associated with these commands shed light on a bygone era. Her reminiscences will be of interest and value to researchers of the early and mid-twentieth century.

Both Mrs. Smith and Dr. Cherpak have read the typescript and have made some editorial changes for clarity. In essence, however, the typescript strives to preserve the spoken word.

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NEWPORT, RI

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

THE HISTORY OF THE NAVY IN NARRAGANSETT BAY

Interviewee: Mrs. Mary Smith

Interviewer: Dr. Evelyn M. Cherpak

Subject: The History of the Navy in Narragansett Bay

Date: January 30, 1985

C: This is the first oral history interview with Mrs. Roy Campbell Smith. My name is Evelyn Cherpak and today's date is January 30, 1985. It's two o'clock in the afternoon, and the interview is being conducted at Mrs. Smith's home on 26 Mann Avenue in Newport, Rhode Island.

Mrs. Smith, I've been looking forward to this interview for a long time. I've been wanting to hear about your reminiscences as a young Navy wife at the turn of the century and later, and about life as a Navy wife here in Newport, Rhode Island, during the last fifty years.

Mrs. Smith, can you tell me when and where you were born?

S: Well, let me begin at the beginning! My father graduated

in the Class of 1880, head of the class, a brilliant mathematician. He was ordered and went to sea in PENSACOLA, and I mean the ship, we don't say the, and he was ordered then to Washington for duty in the Ordnance Department. He and two others then created what they call modern ordnance. The early guns were those funny little things you see in the CONSTELLATION, those old ships. They supervised the invention and introduction of modern of explosives, shells, guns, and armor plate--the works--that were used in the first World War, what they called the big guns. They did that. He was there on duty. He was married, and I was born there the 1st of May 1892, in Washington, D.C. Then he was ordered to Annapolis as the Head of the Department of Mechanics. They wanted to keep him right handy! They asked him if he would be willing to leave the Line and go into the Corp of Professors. In those days there was a Professors' Corps; there was Mathematics; there was Religion; there was Law, you know. He said yes, so we had to live at Annapolis as Head of Department and all the time he was working in Washington, also, you see. He was always dashing out to big steel industries, and they were always making him do things. I remember one day he brought us home--they just invented smokeless powder. He brought us home a big stick of smokeless powder, it was for Oh, what do you call it? Fourth of

July? It was really big, it was like a candle; it was translucent looking, tall. It burned just like a candle, but it was lovely because it did not go out like a candle, it went right on down. But anyway that went on like that and then I went to boarding school and came back and then I was married to Roy Smith. Of course in those days the Navy had my husband's file number, and in 1910 it was only 7,300, mind you, this is 1910, you know how small the Navy was and they prided in calling themselves "a band of brothers." And they were. Anyway, they all knew each other pretty well and of course Roy Smith, Sr., my family had known, and so then I ended up married to his son.

C: Can I stop you for just a second and ask you--what life was like in Annapolis for a young girl on the grounds of the Naval Academy?

S: Oh, it was a ball. That you knew and wanted, and you had maybe 10 or 20 midshipmen, and you invited as many girls

C: What kind of social events did you take part in?

S: Of course I went to a boarding school and when I came back--social life--for heavens sakes. There were millions of midshipmen to date, there were St. John's College to date,

and junior officers to date who lived in bachelors quarters in town. I had lots of friends. We went sailing, we went and watched the games, the sports, we, well, we had a great time together. We had dates all over the place, you could imagine. School that no longer existed: it was nothing but a sort of finishing school.

C: How did you meet these people? Did you meet them at tea parties? did you learn there? what did you study?

S: Midshipmen? supposed to study French, history, and music and some Math. I said I don't understand this math stuff,

C: Right. Were you formally introduced? why should you ever should. You undoubtedly will be married some day, why should

S: Dozens of them came to call because their fathers had been classmates of my father. Besides, everybody in those days used to have such a thing as Midshipmen's Tea. There was no such thing as liquor at a Midshipmen's Tea and you asked all the midshipmen that you knew and wanted, and you had maybe 10 or 20 midshipmen, and you invited as many girls as you wanted or that you knew, you know! My friends used to come home from boarding school with me and used to go to the hops, and we used to go to games. I'm telling you we were busy as bees. You had a ball!

C: Can I ask you where you went to boarding school, the name of your boarding school?

S: I went to a boarding school in Washington called the Bristol School that no longer exists. It was nothing but a sort of finishing school.

C: What did you learn there? What did you study?

S: Well, I was supposed to study French, history, and music and some Math. I said I don't understand this math stuff, and my father said: "My dear I don't really see why you ever should. You undoubtedly will be married some day, why should you need it or even bother with it," says he the mathematician! To this day I can't add two and two. I never been good at math; my mother was no better. Now my sister graduated cum laude from Radcliffe. She's the big wheel! But not me, I'm considered the family butterfly. Well, you know. But then we really had a marvelous time and then I got engaged and my mother disapproved because she thought I was too young.

C: How old were you when you got engaged?

S: About 18, I guess. I was married when I was twenty.

The girls that lived at a distance, I don't know what they do.

C: Oh, you waited two years then?

S: Yes, because in those days midshipmen were not allowed to marry until they'd been out in the service for two years, which is a damn good thing and they still ought to do it. In my day if you went to a hop with a midshipman he was proud to invite his friends to meet you. Today the custom is you go down with Jack and you don't see anybody but Jack. Nobody, but nobody. Therefore you are Jack's girl. You have no variety, you don't meet any new people, and he doesn't meet any new girls because you're stuck together and the result is I think, half the time, when they graduate, it's taken for granted, and I think that's crazy. that?

C: Did you have chaperons when you went out on dates? he was Captain in the Professor Corps.

S: Well, we had dates in the afternoon walking around in the Naval Academy. All we could do was walk around and we walked hundreds of miles, round and round the Naval Academy. If we went to a hop at night, yes, my unfortunate mother had to go up with me. Because in those days nobody had cars. Cars were a rarity, there were only three cars in Annapolis.

And you didn't hire a horse and carriage to go to a hop. The girls that lived at a distance, I don't know what they did. When my father was head of the department, Mr. Roosevelt, and Theodore, suddenly announced that he thought it was ridiculous that midshipmen spent all of their time with books, they didn't need all of that mathematics. They should be sent out in ships and learn to handle ships and become seamen. Ridiculous as the world has turned out, sounds crazy doesn't it? So he did away with the Department of Mechanics and put it with mathematics, and my father then went on with his Washington duty.

C: Your father's name, can you tell me that?

S: Philip Rounseville Alger. Then he became Professor, he was Captain in the Professor Corps.

C: What happened after they did away with the Department of Mechanics or joined it with the Department of Mathematics? What did he do?

Joseph Searock Taylor. He died of what they used to call Chickensky fever, which I think was typhoid, during the

S: Well, as I said, the whole time he was on duty in Washington, also. And he also was running the US Naval Institute and its professional magazine, oh, what did they call it?-- The Naval Institute Proceedings. Yes, he started that more or less at its beginning when it was a little magazine. And he nourished it and built it up and built it up. He was secretary and treasurer of it. So he had that and he had his Washington duty, and my mother decided it was better to live in Annapolis instead of moving to Washington. So I was married when I was twenty.

S: Well, Army as far as I know.

C: Can I ask you about your mother's family? Was that a Navy family too?

S: It was an Army Family. from Kentucky (originally, Virginia). They had a big place in Kentucky called, I forget

C: An Army family, can you tell me what her name was before she married?

S: She was Louisa Taylor, her father was Colonel, oh what was his first name, I can't think of it at the minute? My grandmother called him Hanny, but that wasn't his name. Only Joseph Hancock Taylor. He died of what they used to call Chickahominy Fever, which I think was typhoid, during the

Civil War. And then my mother went back to live with my great-grandfather who was General Montgomery C. Meigs who was Quartermaster General for the Army for Lincoln and who also was an Army Engineer. He built the Washington water system, Cabin John Bridge, put the dome on the Capitol and finished the building, and the Pension Building. ~~did a whole lot of other things like that so he was a very distinguished~~

C: Where were they from, what State, may I ask? Your mother's people?

C: Architect and engineer then.

S: Well, Army as far as I know.

S: I meant he did a lot of building in Washington, and he

C: No specific place? ~~was Mr. Lincoln's Quartermaster General of the Army. So my grandmother spoke of Lincoln like you'd~~

S: Well, the Taylor's came from Kentucky (originally, and Virginia). They had a big place in Kentucky called, I forget what. It was long over my head, but my greatgrandfather was a very distinguished person, because my sister still has or she's turned them in, some newspapers, accounts, Washington papers, that crazy Army Engineer is going to put the dome on the Capitol. Now the capitol, such as you know it today, ~~now~~ was a picture of it on the wall, and the dome was apparently made of one piece of something else, I don't know, I wasn't there. But anyhow, the idea was he was going to put the ~~re~~

dome on the Capitol and the paper said he should never be allowed. Oh, but he did it. If you go to Washington and look at the Capitol, it will still be there just like he fixed it. He also was the first person to introduce "Cabin John Bridge", which is the first aqueduct for the city of Washington; they had no water except wells. He did a whole lot of other things like that so he was a very distinguished person in his own way.

C: That was General Winfield Scott?

C: Architect and engineer then.

S: I don't know, who was the other one that Grant?

S: I meant he did a lot of building in Washington, and he also at the same time was Mr. Lincoln's Quartermaster General of the Army. So my grandmother spoke of Lincoln like you'd speak of anybody else, he was especially distinguished and wonderful. Chief of Staff of the Army when the war began and offered Lee command of the U.S. Army. He retired soon after

C: Do you have any special recollections from your grandmother about Lincoln?

S: Well, General Grant fought in the Mexican business too.

S: No, I have not, that's what I was going to say, you know in those days, gee whiz, when you're eight, nine and ten, he you don't care about that. I wish now that I had, because she had various stories to tell that made you laugh. There

was one about General Scott, I think it was, who his staff thought he'd been drinking too much and pulled themselves together and finally had a meeting. They said General, General, General, we think you should ease up on your drinking, you are drinking too much, you are ruining the coating of your stomach. Very well, my grandmother said he said, my stomach will have to rough it in its vest!

C: That was General Winfield Scott?

S: I don't know, who was the other one that drank? Grant. It may have been Grant, I'm not sure which.

C: General Winfield Scott was in the Mexican War. So you probably mean General Ulysses S. Grant of Civil War fame.

(Scott was Chief of Staff of the Army when the war began and offered Lee command of the U.S. Army. He retired soon after First Manassas.)

S: Well, General Grant fought in the Mexican business too. They all were army and they were everything. And then one of my uncles went to West Point, my mother's brother, and he was in Peking with the Boxer business. His brother, who was a midshipman, was in the Philippines chasing Aguinaldo. And

he was also with Dewey in the Battle of Manila Bay. So we had service and Army and fights, battles, war in the atmosphere. My grandmother used to tear her hair out about her boys and what they were doing and you can see why. I couldn't see why then, it was too silly. I was busy with my own life, I wasn't fooling with them. I paid no mind to anything else, and then that's what went on at Annapolis. It didn't touch me at all, I mean you know, I lived in the Academy mostly. I knew some St. John's boys, I had a good time with them. I used to know some junior officers who were living there. I just had a general good time, you know. I was very frivolous and had a lovely time.

C: Could you tell me when and where you married Roy Campbell?

C: How many sisters and brothers did you have?

S: I had two sisters and two brothers.

C: What were their names?

S: Louisa was a Radcliffe graduate, Phillip was an engineer for General Electric and they got out a book for a while and called it Our Greats which had Einstein and had my brother in it too, but he died. And then there was my brother Mont-

the nursery, however, at the end of the year, I found myself

gomery who graduated the Naval Academy and died of diabetes and my sister Louisa, the Radcliffe one.

C: Is she still alive?
first post then, so to speak, your first assignment up in Jamestown, Rhode Island.

S: Yes.

S: No, I came to see him. I was perched there, but his

C: Where does she live?
SOUTH CAROLINA, I think. It was in the fleet, the fleet was lying there. So I came up in order

S: In Cambridge, Massachusetts. I had another sister. She was married and divorced and now lives in Florida.

C: Did you live in Jamestown?

C: Could you tell me when and where you married Roy Campbell Smith Jr.?
boarded. Nobody could afford to live anywhere.

Do you know what our pay was? It was one hundred and sixty

S: In Annapolis on the 1st of August in 1912.

C: Did you have a large wedding? Was it a church wedding?

S: Well, my father died in 1912 in February so I was married at home. I didn't have many people, I couldn't care less, the idea was to set forth with the best of my love and have a marvelous time. The last thing I planned was to go into the nursery, however, at the end of the year, I found myself

with baby Roy and then I followed the ship up here to Jamestown. In those days the ships came and lay in the harbor.

the west coast, they would send you to the west coast. And

C: Yes, that was your first post then, so to speak, your first assignment up in Jamestown, Rhode Island.

the government until it got permanent. And nothing was perma-

S: No, I came to see him. I was perched there, but his ship was the FLORIDA. or SOUTH CAROLINA, I think. It was in the fleet, the fleet was lying there. So I came up in order to see him.

C: No furniture, or?

C: Did you live in Jamestown?

S: You couldn't afford to. A hundred dollars a month, me

S: Well I boarded. Nobody could afford to live anywhere. Do you know what our pay was? It was one hundred and sixty dollars a month.

C: But didn't money go a little further in those days?

All of us young wives boarded.

S: Well, of course it did. But I don't care how far it went. I had one hundred and he kept sixty for his mess bill and his laundry and his expenses aboard ship.

S: No it was 1914, it was the year the war broke out. Then

C: Did the Navy pay your way at all? They had the Sarajevo

S: No. They would pay your way if it was a homeport. Now supposing your ship changed homeport from the east coast to the west coast, they would send you to the west coast. And then if the ship went to Kalamazoo or God know's where and disappeared, you couldn't move. You couldn't move again on the government until it got permanent. And nothing was permanent or ever stayed any way. You had to pay your way, the government didn't pay a cent for what you took with you. BACH, So, none of us owned anything. Luckenbach line, a big old

wooden ship, naturally. And on board they had one lieutenant-C: No furniture, or? or and one gun. And the gun, they

were very proud of the gun, because instead of being fixed

S: You couldn't afford to. A hundred dollars a month, me and the baby. How could you afford to? Try and see. forth

with. Fortunately, those were the early days of submarines,

C: So you rented or boarded? together, and they missed them,

so he got safely to Saint Nazaire. They unloaded all of the

S: We boarded in Jamestown, certainly, everybody boarded.

All of us young wives boarded. didn't fit. So they loaded it

all back aboard and brought it back. And of course in those

C: That was around 1912 or 1913? ere no radio, no TV, no

communications and you knew he'd gone when he said: "when

S: No it was 1914, it was the year the war broke out. Then

you can imagine how pleased I was. They had the Sarajevo

business and my father-in-law said this is going to mean war and everybody said to him you are silly, don't talk like that. But it did mean war. The next thing I knew, my dear husband was ordered to Admiral Gleaves' first armed guard. Well, whether he was second or third armed guard, I had no idea, because after I got him safely back, I didn't care how many armed guards there were. It was a big convoy of ships laden with ammunition and his ship was the EDWARD LUCKENBACH, which was a cargo ship of the Luckenbach line, a big old wooden ship, naturally. And on board they had one lieutenant, my j.g., one sailor and one gun. And the gun, they were very proud of the gun, because instead of being fixed like this, it could be raised up. and if there should be an airplane they could shoot at it. That's what they set forth with. Fortunately, those were the early days of submarines, they hadn't gotten themselves together, and they missed them, so he got safely to Saint Nazaire. They unloaded all of the stuff and found out that the British and French guns which desperately needed ammunition didn't fit. So they loaded it all back aboard and brought it back. And of course in those days you have to remember there were no radio, no TV, no communications and you knew he'd gone when he said: "when my letters stop, you'll know I'm gone." In the meanwhile, all you knew about the war was the newspaper saying "big

battle so many men killed and thus and so." Or, they'd say "ship sunk, ship sunk," and, of course, no name. So then you had the pleasure of holding your breath until you felt it was safe because if he was lost, drowned, prisoner, killed or anything. In the course of time, if the government knew it, they would send somebody or Washington would send somebody to your home and tell you he's dead, he's gone, he's finished. But you can imagine how dreadful it was waiting in between. You couldn't tell how long you should wait or anything. Praise the Lord he got through that safely.

C: Can I ask you a question now, we'll continue on about your husband's career and your life later, but I wanted to ask you a question about your father-in-law, Captain Smith. As I told you before, we have his papers in the Naval Historical Collection and I wonder if you can give me any impressions of him. He was still in the Navy during WWI.

S: This is interesting about him. My cousin Willy Rodgers, they graduated together in the class of '78, they were great pals. They went to sea together in the CONSTELLATION. Have you ever seen the CONSTELLATION in Baltimore? We used to see a lot of Cousin Willy after we were married. He used to

come to see us and he described the early days of the ~~cture~~.
CONSTELLATION. He said as a midshipman the only heat you
had in your room was a round-shot, a bucket of sand heated
in the galley and put in the messroom. That was the heat.
Have you ever seen the Japanese method, they have a thing
filled with sand and they put something hot in it and that's
the heat. Later on when Pa did the ordnance, in the Navy
Yard you often saw lots of piles, little piles of shot put
around, and little round missiles tied up, and those would
be round shot. Someone said to me how could that be, and I
said "listen in my husband's day in the galley and certainly
his father's day in the galley they had wood, coal." In
fact, he as a midshipmen used to coal ship often. Any anyway
he said that was the only heat they had and the only light
they had was one candle apiece. As he, Pa Smith, and cousin
Willy liked to read, they were both students, loved to read,
they used to go through all kinds of fancy shenanagins to
try and persuade their shipmates to go to bed early so that
they could have the one candle. Can you imagine that. Willy
Rodgers also used to infuriate, when he got older, his sis-
ter. He never married and his sister used to keep house for
him. He never ate a biscuit or a roll without tapping it on
the table, and she'd say "Willy you shouldn't do that," and
he'd say "its a habit I learned as a midshipmen, we always

did that to knock the Weevils out." Here is a nice picture. This is the two of them, they went out to sea together and this is the background. And I want to tell you before the first World War, Pa Smith commanded ARKANSAS and cousin Willy commanded GEORGIA. That's two of our scarce battleships. That's a hell of a long stride. And when you think about the kind of primitive existence that they were used to in the CONSTELLATION. Now those battleships were primitive compared to now, still they were awfully different compared to when they first went to sea. Now my Pa Smith was very quiet, very reserved, and Margaret Sampson, my mother-in-law told me that her father, Admiral Sampson, prided himself on telling jokes. He loved telling jokes, without cracking a smile. He believed in being perfectly expressionless, if possible, and this was his ambition. I never saw him, he died before I came on the scene, but I think, I'm quite sure that my father-in-law, when he was courting Miss Sampson, and all the Sampson girls married into the Navy, you see. So think of all the uncles we had. Cluverius, Jackson, and Smith wasn't an uncle but still, Oh, I forgot what I was saying.

Jackson, and the fourth one married an Army officer, Capt. Harry Scott USA. I never did know her or him.

C: You were talking about William T. Sampson and the fact that he told jokes without cracking a smile.

S: Admiral Sampson, not only joked but wished to look perfectly impassive like in his pictures, and I'm sure that my father-in-law aimed to be like him, he served with him. I think he did, I'm sure he did.

C: Yes, in the Spanish American War. He was in the INDIANA.

S: I know he admired him extravagantly and I think he probably tried to be like him. My husband was brought up with the same idea. You should not express any feelings. I found it amusing to break him down. I could always make him laugh. So I succeeded in breaking him down. I found him very diverting, but if he hadn't met a frivolous person like me, he'd probably have gone on being impassive. Pa Smith was very impassive and so was my mother-in-law. She was like a Dresden China lady, always very elegant.

C: That was Margaret Sampson Smith, wasn't it? sea, which always fascinated me but my father-in-law had the same early

S: That's right. Cluverius married Hannah. Aunt Kate married Jackson, and the fourth one married an Army officer, Capt. Harry Scott USA. I never did know her or him.

C: Did you correspond with your father-in-law?

S: No. Never. I wasn't really fascinated, you really don't give a damn. But you see, after all, I've been either army

C: Do you remember his telling you about his experiences as the governor of Guam from 1916-18. 12 wars, Senior Officer of the Navy 1918-1938, they tell me, had the first Lieutenant's

S: No. He never sat down and just chatted, pointed because he was a Scot and he was a seaman. He was quite young, in

C: So it was a more formal relationship between you and your in-laws's ship. When he was in his twenties he had a ship. Some sea captains were young like that. And so when

S: Well, it was in a way. We stayed with them off and on for a few days and that kind of thing, but he was always very formal. How are you and that sort of thing. family--a long time ago. But I imagine it was true because it fits in

C: But he never chatted about his naval career? one, except seamen. Men who had had ships and who knew about ships.

S: No and, of course, cousin Willy used to tell us. I told you about his descriptions of the early days at sea, which always fascinated me but my father-in-law had the same early days at sea and never talked about it any more than you sit and talk about your kindergarten days. You might, if the subject came up and someone said that I went to kindergarten, you would say so did I. But, normally, if you were talking to your children, unless there is some special reason and

your children aren't really fascinated, you really don't to give a damn. But you see, after all, I've been either army or navy always. In fact, one of the Rodgers, John Rodgers, Commodore, French, Barbary, and 1812 wars, Senior Officer of the Navy 1818-1838, they tell me, had the first Lieutenant's commission in the Navy. They said he was appointed because he was a Scot and he was a seaman. He was quite young, in his twenties. They couldn't sail on the holidays so they left the He had his ship. When he was in his twenties he had a ship. Some sea captains were young like that. And so when they were going to try to cook up a navy, they had to look around for people like that and he was of those that they did. I have forgotten who told me that in the family--a long time ago. But I imagine it was true because it fits in alright, you know. Where would you get the first one, except seamen. Men who had had ships and who knew about ships.

C: Can I double back just a minute? You mentioned, when your husband was in the SOUTH CAROLINA, that you boarded in Jamestown. Was this in the winter or the summer?, if you

S: In the first place, ships didn't come in the winter. They went to . . . Oh where the deuce did they go? . . . heavens sake, I ought to know because they left at one

o'clock in the morning after New Years and they went down to Cuba. What's the name of the place in Cuba they went?

C: Guantanamo. I did. No I didn't, not for Roy.

S: Yes, how right you are. They all went to Guantanamo, the Fleet, where they sat and had target practice and went in and out. They couldn't sail on the holidays so they left the day after New Years.

C: I mean took care of the baby, and...

C: Did you fraternize at all with the summer colony when you were in Jamestown? Jamestown was quite a summer watering hole. We had a, what do you call the girl who sat with him

sometimes? Yes, a babysitter. There was no place to go, no

S: Yes it was. Well, I had two or three old friends, old friends, who were there, but not necessarily that, they were navy. Their roots were navy. I didn't see any socialites, if that's what you mean, like Bellevue. I've known a few at Bellevue Avenues types in my time, but they had nothing to do with Bellevue. 'Cause I knew them on the side, if you know what I mean. No, I had no social life in Jamestown, besides I had a baby, don't forget, and no money, don't forget.

Nothing, there was no other way to go. How do you think you would get there weren't any cars. There weren't any of

C: Did you have any help? Did you have a nursemaid or a maid? unless you walked. In those days, it was rather nice

on the train. Certainly, not that I was crazy about it,

S: Oh yes, later I did. No I didn't, not for Roy. He was very fussy about girls did this and girls did that and girls

C: So you just kept house during that summer? My oldest friend's father was Captain of the Navy Yard in Portsmouth.

S: No, I didn't just keep house, I boarded. The ships were in we used to be gay and do things like that. But, on the way

C: I mean took care of the baby, and . . . I was then I guess seventeen or sixteen and would tip the porter, tell

S: Yes, and did what we could. I don't really remember. I think we had a, what do you call the girl who sat with him,

sometimes? Yes, a babysitter. There was no place to go, no place on earth to go. If you went out to supper with

friends, you took him. Didn't do any socializing. And then you forgot that when I was there, I had hardly been there

any time when he got sent off to the armed guard. When that happened I went back to Annapolis and stayed with my mother.

dreadful time. It was such a contrast. Then you didn't do

C: Did you go back by train? to my grandmother in Washington in the hotel. I was engaged then and wanted to go down to

S: Darling, there was no other way to go. How do you think you could go? There weren't any cars. There weren't any of

buses. Certainly weren't any planes. And you had to go by train unless you walked. In those days, it was rather nice on the train. Certainly, not that I was crazy about it, light- because, after all, see when I was growing up, everyone was very fussy about girls did this and girls did that and girls didn't do so. And I used to come up to Portsmouth. My oldest friend's father was Captain of the Navy Yard in Portsmouth. I used to come up and visit her. And when the ships were in we used to be gay and do things like that. But, on the way up, my mother would take me to the station. I was then I guess seventeen or sixteen and would tip the porter, tell the conductor that I was coming by myself. I had a compartment you know, and I was met and so on. And two years later, or whenever it was, I was traveling with Roy, just me and this large heavy baby. And I couldn't see how I was going to get any dinner, because I couldn't leave him and couldn't take him with me. Today you do, but then you didn't. I was scared to put him in the upper berth and he would fall out. So I had to sleep with him in the lower berth. I had a dreadful time. It was such a contrast. Then you didn't do things. I remember staying with my grandmother in Washington in the hotel. I was engaged then and wanted to go down to the desk and get my mail. Grandmother thought it was unseemly for me to go down by myself. She didn't approve of

my going down in the elevator. Too soft, you were supposed to walk. So she went down with me, if you please. Then in no time, we had the war and girls began signing up and fighting and doing things. You can't believe how different it was. When I was married, there were three automobiles in Annapolis. I was lucky because one belonged to a friend of mine whose father was amazingly open-minded. He taught her to drive and we used to go out driving around. We'd go five miles in one day and thought we were doing something marvelous. People used to run after us and shake their fists and say we were scaring the horses. Get off the street and in that dreadful thing.

C: In 1918, he was assigned to the Academy. What did he

C: The roads must have been in poor condition.

S: They were only horse roads. Not that they were in poor condition, but they were just like any road, any road that horses and wagons has got to be reasonably smooth cause the wagons would go bang, crash and break an axle easy as not.

C: To pick up where you left off . . . you mentioned that World War I had started and that your husband was assigned to the armed guard and had made a trip across the Atlantic to France delivering ammunition and then had to return.

S: Delivering ammunition and then he got back and to his wrath and fury he and a couple of other young officers found they had gotten orders to go to Annapolis and teach. And they rushed up to Washington screaming and yelling and were told teaching midshipmen was just as important as fighting at sea. And whatever you think about it, shush and just go back and do it.

C: What year was this?

S: The war was over when? In 1918? Well, then it was 1918.

C: In 1918, he was assigned to the Academy. What did he teach?

S: Oh, Marine Engineering, I guess. What did he teach? Nothing he was especially crazy about.

C: So he wasn't pleased about this assignment!

S: Do you think any up and coming young navy officer wants to teach midshipmen instead of going to sea and fighting a war? Darn crazy if you do. So we had three very nice years

in Annapolis. We lived in the town and then he was ordered to sea. ~~ng our own friends, nothing dramatic, but there weren't any great goings on as I remember.~~

C: Could I just double back to the Annapolis years a little bit. You said you spent three years there.

S: This is where I find myself getting mixed up. Time is like leaves in a book and they slip together so that I forget. I get the wrong leaf and the wrong context. Or leave one out or add one. We lived on King George Street in a rented house, then he was ordered to sea.

C: Do you remember social life in Annapolis among the instructor's wives? Did you have any social life? I don't really know.

S: Heavens no. The instructor's wives were older than God. I mean, in the first place, I had four children.

C: Oh, by then you had four children? I told you, they called themselves a band of brothers. Everybody knew every-

S: Yes. By the time he finished duty in Annapolis, I had them one, three, five and seven years. I had no time for anything outside and my husband was teaching, of course, and he was crazy about golf. He played golf on Sundays. Here

wasn't going to sit with any females. Oh, we did some partying among our own friends, nothing dramatic, but there weren't any great goings on as I remember.

C: Let's continue with what happened after his assignment.

C: Entertaining was more at home, I assume. Do you remember the ship?

S: Yes, I think so. No big entertaining. Besides many of the men were at sea.

C: The ship went down to Guantanamo in the spring and stayed and

C: Do you remember how large the Academy was then, student body wise?

C: Did you remain in Annapolis?

S: No. Of course, when I lived there as a girl, I should say there were not very many. Few hundred, I think. I don't really know.

C: He came home when he could. I lived mostly with my mother

C: So it was a smaller, more familial navy then.

C: We had to do something and bought a house, in Annapolis on

S: The whole navy was very small. As I told you, they called themselves a band of brothers. Everybody knew everybody. It was very friendly and pretty close knit because I think people at the Naval Academy were inclined to visit with each other. I don't say they didn't know people in the town, they did, but there was plenty of society right there

for them at home. Right within the walls, you might say. And you don't go prospecting around.

C: Let's continue with what happened after his assignment at the Academy ended about 1918. Where did he go then? Do you remember the ship?

S: He was in the SOUTH CAROLINA and then the FLORIDA. The ship went down to Guantanamo in the spring and stayed and went places, and I couldn't go much with four children.

C: Did you remain in Annapolis?

S: I had to stay in Annapolis most of the time. Who could travel around with that crew? Don't think it was my plan! He came home when he could. I lived mostly with my mother and then when he went to sea the next time, from Annapolis, we had to do something and bought a house, in Annapolis on Southgate Avenue, right opposite my mother's. So then I was there and got off occasionally to meet him and Ma would take over the kids. But she couldn't do that too much. Then he came back. I'm mixing up the times because he was there on duty and then he came back to duty there because we were there when he got orders to China.

C: When did he get orders to China? That was in the 20's, wasn't it. (S)

S: Yes, we went to China in June of 1925. He called me up from Washington. He was supposed to have a ship based in Boston and I was wondering how I was ever going to Boston with all the kids. I had never done any travelling at all by myself, except up to Portsmouth and back. And travelling around with all those kids! I thought how am I ever going to do that. He called me up and said you'd better sit down. We're going to China. I said we are? I've been ordered to China and we leave early in July.

C: Was he ordered to a specific ship? you got the "free run of your teeth." We all climbed aboard. The kids were

S: He didn't know anything about a ship then. Because we were six or seven people all on duty at the Academy and we were all ordered out to get our duty assignments when we got there. And the reason we went commercially, which was gorgeous for us, was because there were 20 congressmen, don't forget, this was prohibition, 20 congressmen who decided to go and they were not as blatant as today and they decided they would take the transport and send us commercially. See? (In those days transport mess bills were \$1/day, much

cheaper for the Congressman than dollar line--so preempt the spaces for us)

S: It was run by the warlords. And we had no base. The

C: What ship did you go on? Do you remember the name of the ship?

S: The missionaries and the businessmen insisted on staying in China even though I told a million times this was a

S: The Dollar Lines. President GRANT. This was marvelous because otherwise you would have to pay \$1.50 a day to the government each. That's what happened. That's what my husband had to do. His people were shot at going in and out. What

C: Oh, if you went on the transport you would have to pay the government. "Of course, if you weren't here, your ships weren't here, there wouldn't be any trouble." And then you'd

S: Yes. This way, as the Captain said, you got the "free run of your teeth." We all climbed aboard. The kids were 6, 8, 10, and 12. And don't think I didn't have the world come down on me like a ton of bricks. Those four little children--they'd all have dysentery and they'll never be able to get rid of it. And they'll have no education. How can you be such a wicked woman! How can you, can you? to Manila, some went up river, and others went here and there,

C: Oh, just taking the family to China! the NCA, which naturally thrilled him to death. He was a Lieutenant Com-

S: In the 20's China had absolutely no government at all.

C: It was the China of the warlords, wasn't it?

S: It was run by the warlords. And we had no base. The only reason we had a base in Manila was that ships were and there. The missionaries and the businessmen insisted on staying in China even though told a million times this was a dangerous place. We had a ship there and it would come into the harbor, and presumably the crew would go ashore and rescue them and that's what happened. That's what my husband had to do. His people were shot at going in and out. What did the missionaries care. When we were out there, the women would say to me, "Of course, if you weren't here, your ships weren't here, there wouldn't be any trouble." And then you'd hear the bloody screaming and yelling if they thought they were going to be hurt. four children to fend for yourself in Shanghai.

C: Where did you arrive when you got there?

S: Of course, you were not made a Navy wife for nothing.

S: We arrived on the upper side of Shanghai. And there we met a young officer who gave us our orders. Some went to Manila, some went up river, and others went here and there, and my husband got command of a destroyer, the NOA, which naturally thrilled him to death. He was a Lieutenant Commander. So I go to the Customs and they speak pidgin

C: This was an opportunity for him. It was illegal to bring in obscene literature, salt, because there was a tax

S: Well yes, any command is an excitement and he was told the RIZAL, which is another destroyer, was in the harbor and it was going to take him up the next morning at 6 o'clock to meet his ship. He was going up to Chefoo and take command of his ship. You see what it left me, don't you?

C: So you were left in Shanghai?

S: I was hoping he was going to show up and help me find a place to live. He had to leave immediately with all his gear. And I had an awful time with customs.

C: Was it the Bund?

C: You were left with four children to fend for yourself in Shanghai. Nobody lived on the Bund; that was the waterfront.

It was the Avenue Joffre, it's a big wide avenue that goes

S: Of course, you were not made a Navy wife for nothing. If you didn't have guts, you had better not do it. However, it did scare the pants off of me in case you want to know. We signed for customs at sea before we got in. So my husband had signed up, he had a gun. He had a small gun. Don't know why he brought it, but he did, and he just had it with his things. So I go to the Customs and they speak pidgin

French. I had an awful time with them. It was illegal to bring in obscene literature, salt, because there was a tax on it or arms. I wasn't likely to have obscene literature, was I? Or salt. I had the gun. I finally sweated my way out of that and got free. And I didn't know where on earth to look for housing and one of the people aboard had said they knew a missionary lady that might help. I'd ordinarily have. Supper was, you know, nothing much. Bread and butter.

C: Finding housing, that is?

G: A light meal?

S: Yes. So, I met her and she took me to a house on the big wide street. I covered later, that milk was sold by having a Chinese boy walk around the street with a mare and a leather

C: Was it the Bund? The milk, he milks the mare and gives you the cup. Would you say American sanitary? Mare's milk is

S: No, nobody lived on the Bund, that was the waterfront. It was the Avenue Joffre, it's a big wide avenue that goes through the city. I forget what the name of the street was. So we went and Mrs. Doyen was there. Now in the WWI, General Doyen was a very distinguished Marine general. And his family lived in Annapolis. So I knew her by name at least and my family knew her, you know what I mean. It was a Chinese boarding house and she lived there and gave her name out so when the young officers wives came down and it would appear

safe to go to there. If you went to a Chinese boarding house, you'd be scared. Probably. Anyhow, I talked to her and she gave me two rooms for all of us. I was glad to have anything. So we moved in and the #1 boy came up and said "Missy, small boy wants his supper? Now I didn't think there was going to be any milk and how was I going to give him anything for supper. Dinner was what you'd ordinarily have. Supper was, you know, nothing much. Bread and butter.

S: No, a white lady. Seems to be dead. I don't know.

C: A light meal? year old jumps up like mad and I grabbed him by the seat of his pants and said, "No, you can't go out

S: Well, I discovered later, that milk was sold by having a Chinese boy walk around the street with a mare and a leather cup. If you want some milk, he milks the mare and gives you the cup. Would you say American sanitary? Mare's milk is horrible. I said, we've got to have dinner. Then the price went up. I was a bit scared about that because of my limited money. Of course, by that time we had taken a "dead horse." Do they have "dead horses" in the Navy anymore? If you were going to go to a foreign place and couldn't be sure about money, you could draw a "dead horse," which is a month's or more pay ahead. And you put it into traveler's checks or something safe. So you had something to escape with if you got in trouble. Well, I had my "dead horse" tacked in my

paw, but I was certainly not going to go into it, not at this time of day. So we arrived. We go down for dinner and sit down and they're shooting on the street. They open the dining room door to the hall and carry in a female and lay her on the floor. Far as I could see she was dead.

C: A Chinese woman? antiseptics around with them in those days. Today, you run around with a whole lot of mess. No,

S: No, a white lady. Seems to be dead. I don't know. Naturally, my 12-year old jumps up like mad and I grabbed him by the seat of his pants and said, "No, you can't go out there! There's shooting going on. You're not going." It was a restful meal! And then I found out afterwards what happened to her. This was in the French concession. The Annamite police were chasing two jailbreakers and they shot one and killed him and the other one they caught. And the lady fainted from fright. But I didn't know that till the next day. Later we went upstairs and went to bed and the mosquitos in Shanghai are as big as flies, or bigger and twice as vicious. And there are no screens and the windows are merely great large open squares just like that door. That's all. So they could fly in in droves. And get fresh white meat. My poor Mary had the most awful night, she asked me if I would like to crew and housekeep for him. I

almost died of fright. The small children, I think, just bore it. They don't have regular shops like home. Well, if you don't

C: You didn't carry any medication with you? Any antiseptics? And his wife has gone home, so it is Mr. Bernard and his two children. I thought to myself, well . . . in those

S: No. Nobody took antiseptics around with them in those days. Today, you run around with a whole lot of mess. No, we didn't take anything. My husband has no idea. Wouldn't you hesitate?

C: So, you just had to endure the discomfort.

S: Yes, had to endure it. But I kept thinking, We can't take this. What am I going to do? Can't you imagine how I'd feel? The ship had vanished into the skies. I had no idea where the ship was and had no means of getting in touch with it. My husband couldn't do anything anyhow. So, the next morning the lady appeared again and she said to me she thought maybe I wasn't too comfortable. And she knew a man, a Mr. Bernard, who had a nice house in the French concession, out on the edge of where the shooting was. As long as you stayed in the concessions you were alright. There were police, but you were not supposed to go outside. Mr. Bernard asked me if I would like to come and housekeep for him. I

said how in the world could I housekeep in this country? I don't speak the language, don't have the faintest idea. They don't have regular shops like home. Well, if you don't want to do that, maybe you could come and stay there if you like. And his wife has gone home, so it is Mr. Bernard and his two children. I thought to myself, well . . . in those days I was 35 and not past being made passes at you might say. I thought should I go live alone with a perfectly strange man in Shanghai. My husband has no idea. Wouldn't you hesitate? And I think the shroffs, who are the bill-collectors, banged on the doors all day long.

C: Was he an American?
I was out of jail for money. What I was paying him was saving him, so to speak. He was awfully,

S: Oh, yes, he was an American but I had never seen him. Wouldn't you have hesitated? So I said to Mrs. Doyen: "what do you think about that, isn't that rather awfully funny." She said, "well, after all there will be six children in the house." I said: "I know there will, but what's he like? I had no idea how old he is or anything about him. And after all children do go to bed and go out, you know what I mean." I said: "I'm not pinning any bouquets on myself, but I just think it maybe is rather unconventional." She said: "It's up to you, my dear." I decided nothing could be worse than what I had. So I went. It was the best thing I ever did.

He was a very nice middle-aged gent who had been in China for years selling sewing machines. We were very comfortable there. The children went to the Shanghai American school. It was a good school. They had a big garden there and we were very comfortable.

C: Did you end up actually housekeeping or did he have Chinese servants?

S: He had Chinese servants. And I think the shroffs, who are the bill collectors, banged on the doors all day long. I think I was keeping him out of jail for money. What I was paying him was saving him, so to speak. He was awfully, awfully nice. On the Fourteenth of July, Bastille Day, he took us all to the park and they had the most marvelous lights in the sky. Firecrackers. Fireworks. Marvelous ones. So we really were very comfortable. And it was very satisfactory and I hated to leave. But come Thanksgiving, the ship was ordered to Manila so I figured I'd take the rest of my government ticket and go to Manila.

C: I wonder if I could ask you a few questions about China before we proceed to the story of Manila. Can you tell me

what the attitude of the Chinese was toward Americans at this time period.

Q: I don't know how they felt about the French, because I

S: They hated the hell out of us. In the first place, they were furious with the British because the British had a concession. The French had a concession, but they behaved more quietly. For instance, when I was there, if you walked across the street and a coolie got in the way, the British Sikhs, the policemen, would take a billy and crack him on the head and he would fall in the street screaming and yelling. And the Sikh would go over and give him a kick in the gutter and nobody did anything. But, on the other hand, my children had to go to the hospital to have their eyes checked in case they had an eye infection. They didn't have, but had to go and check. Then on the way up, I saw this old man lying along on the side of the road his coffin beside him. When I got into the hospital I said, "How can you let him die out there like that and not do anything about it?" They said, "We can't bring him in because then they'd say we chopped him up to use his meat for experiments and we can't do anything about it. If he wants to come in or be brought in, that's one thing, but we don't. We have a terrible time with patients."

Q: I asked at the hotel about the money and they said how much to pay them and they said they will make an

C: So they hated the Americans and they hated the British.
 you should go on and if you don't give them enough they make

S: I don't know how they felt about the French, because I
 didn't know any French. I don't know if they hated the
 Americans, but they lumped us with the British. They
 couldn't tell the difference in our faces. We all had faces
 with big noses. You're a big nose, you know. They didn't
 like us at all.

C: Did you ever go out to any shops on your own either
 within the French concession?

S: Sure, certainly we did. Carolyn Tobin had been out there
 longer than I had and Carolyn and I went exploring, we went
 over the edge into Chinese territory. And I bought those
 bookends cause I thought they were so pretty. Soapstone.
 But we didn't dare do much. We did go one time in to buy
 some silk. We thought we were alright. A little bit.
 Here's the main road, a big wide avenue and then a narrow
 road goes through like this. So we dashed to this shop and
 we had to have coolies to get there. I mean with rickshaws.
 We went in rickshaws and they were angry with us about the
 money. And I asked at the hotel about the money and they
 said how much to pay them and they said they will make an

awful noise if you give them too much because then they think you should go on and if you don't give them enough they make an equally awful noise. They'll probably make an awful noise anyway. So we put the money on the bottom of the rickshaw and walked off. And such screaming and yelling as you never heard! So we finished our business in the shop, bought some silk, we came out and thought we wouldn't go back the same way we came in and we'd go to the other end of the little road. But they were smart, they were there. And they met us with screams and yells, hoots and hollers. They didn't actually hit us, but they went after us with their coats lashing at us just not quite hitting. It scared the life out of us. We didn't know what they were going to do cause now and then people got carried off and disappeared. One of the men on the ship when we landed there, he said, you shouldn't stay here. I went to shore last night and was lucky because he was going along and a couple of them came and grabbed him. I don't know what they were going to do to him, probably ask for money. But anyhow, we were frightened. We saw an old Chinese gentleman with a long black silk robe and black silk hat. He was walking along very slowly. Well, we couldn't converse with him, but we rushed out in the middle of the street and stood beside him and told him in excited voices our troubles. He didn't do anything, but

raised his hand like this. Meanwhile, the coolies were sort of hesitating and while they were hesitating we ran like Billy-be-damned to the main road. That was enough of going into Chinese territory for me. That really did it. Once I had someone rush out and spit in my face, but mostly I had a very nice amah. I had to have one, my little Monty was then of course six. He had black hair, rosy cheeks, was plump, and just the type that they admire. And so I took him with me. I didn't dare put him in a separate rickshaw. I took him on my lap and had an extra rickshaw coolie run beside me on either side reaching in and giving him a pat, little friendly pats. One day you'd see a Chinese soldier in green and two or three other ones, the next day you'd see Interview No. 2 that would mean another warlord had taken the city. But you didn't have anything to do with it. If

C: This is the second oral history interview with Mrs. Roy Campbell Smith Jr. My name is Evelyn Cherpak. I'm the Curator of the Naval Historical Collection. Today's date is February 7, 1985. The interview is being conducted at Mrs. Smith's home at 26 Mann Avenue in Newport, RI. It's about 1:40 p.m. now.

C: Mrs. Smith, I believe we were talking about China last week when we left off, your experiences there, your living

in Mr. Bernard's house, and helping him out financially. This was a more suitable place for you to inhabit. You told me about some of the harrowing incidents that occurred during your stay in China and I was wondering if you witnessed any fighting between the warlords. This was the era of the warlords., there was plenty, I imagine. The warlords had thousands of men. Just crazy rabble, a great many of them, you

S: No, the warlords were very careful. In the first place, we lived in the concession. The French and British concessions were thoroughly policed and nothing went on in them. The local police, the British and the French, would take care of what went on. One day you'd see a Chinese soldier in green and two or three other ones, the next day you'd see them in brown. That would mean another warlord had taken the city. But you didn't have anything to do with it. If you went out into the Chinese city, you would get in trouble and Mr. Bernard told me that his house was right on the limits of the French concession. The Chinese territory was just one field beyond. People used to come and sit on his back fence and watch the fighting. But mostly they fought with money.

C: He was involved in the Hankow incident in 1927 is that right?

C: How was that? What do you mean? Do you remember anything he told you about it?

S: One warlord bought the other one out. They didn't fight with guns. You've probably got that. I've got a copy of it here.

C: There wasn't any physical violence then?

S: Oh, there was plenty, I imagine. The warlords had thousands of men. Just crazy rabble, a great many of them, you know. I don't know, the ones I saw were soldiers walking around downtown. Didn't bother you, but you stayed where you belonged--in a concession. Of course, America had no concession, so we were glad to take refuge with our friends.

C: How often did you see your husband when you were in China? Did he have periodic leave?

S: Oh, heavens no. He was aboard ship. Didn't get any leave at all. How you talk! Certainly not. He was aboard ship, if the ship was ordered out, he went out with the ship. When the ship came back, he came back. He came and went. He was ordered off to mind missionaries now and then.

C: He was involved in the Nanking Incident in 1927 in the USS NOA. Can you tell me about it? Do you remember anything he told you about it?

S: Well, my husband wrote an article about it for the Naval Institute. You've probably got that. I've got a copy of it here.

as you went ashore with, and you'd be sure they were
and very good friends. But, anyway, they went up to Nan-

C: Yes, we do. there were rumblings in the distance. The

Standard Oil people were there. The lady who wrote Oil for

S: Well, he was a little tried with it because he said that the missionaries had been told that it was not very safe, that there might be trouble and they went right on living where they were and the ship was sent up from Shanghai. You see you'd be living in Shanghai and your ship would be sent to Chefoo or anywhere. You never knew where or when. You just sat and waited. However, they were ordered to Nanking. Roy went along, so my husband really didn't expect trouble. He was 14.

other missions had been sur-

C: Your son went along? my husband then decided he had to

take it all on his own shoulders because he had no earthly

S: Well, there were two boys out there whose fathers were captains of ships and they were both 12 to 14. They travelled with their Dads for three years off and on and they had permission to go on their fathers' ships. They took great pains to be useful and good. They polished brass, worked with the men and they had a great time. Any good captain or

knows his men and a lot of them are very young, not much older than Roy and nice boys. So they could be hand picked, the ones you went ashore with, and you'd be sure they were amidst very good friends. But, anyway, they went up to Nanking and sat and there were rumblings in the distance. The Standard Oil people were there. The lady who wrote Oil for the Lamps of China, Alice Tisdale, and also Pearl Buck, were there. There were oil people, missionaries scattered here and there. My husband set up a watch you might say, planted on the roof of the house so they could see. It was flattish there, they had cut down all the trees years ago. In the distance they could see things boiling up, the beginnings of trouble. And so they told the people in the place and they said, "Don't be silly." Then it became very clear that they were about to be surrounded. Other missions had been surrounded, they'd been raped and robbed, killed, and the rabble didn't care. So, anyway, my husband then decided he had to take it all on his own shoulders because he had no earthly right with a competent ship belonging to the United States to fire on a country with whom we were at peace. You could see their problem. Now, Admiral Hough was the admiral in command and he was up river. Not more than a few hundred miles, but he couldn't communicate with him. You had to do it by hand, you see. So, he had to either act on his own or

not act and the missionaries would or would not be damaged. He decided to go ahead, so he put down a barrage, which is like a little curtain of fire in the back of the house, you see, and the army approaching saw that and kept back from it. Naturally, they weren't going to walk through it. While that was going on, Roy and the sailors were on watch, and the rest of them got everybody out and down across and over the walls (tremendous high walls in Nanking, 60') and into the ship. Some were sent off to rescue the missionaries. Roy never got over that because one of the missionaries asked to help carry some of the equipment. They took along something in the way of guns in case they were attacked. They might be surrounded and attacked. The missionary didn't approve of guns, so he threw it away. Roy, who saw his father and his ship under fire, took a dim view of that missionary. So they all piled aboard and NOA took them all down to Shanghai. And naturally there was a terrible crowd. They stopped somewhere on the way down and the steward went and bought something to assist the lot I'm sure I don't know what. I'm sure he didn't do anything reckless. The missionaries, perhaps Mrs. Tisdale too, I don't know, they may have had a germ in them already because they wrote to Washington and said thank you, thank you, we were wrong in saying you shouldn't be here. When I was in Shanghai going to parent

teacher's meetings when the children were going to Shanghai-American school (which is mission and business men run), they'd say if you were it here there wouldn't be all this trouble. We're friends of the Chinese. It's you people who cause the trouble. So you can imagine how friendly I felt towards them when this blew up. So they wrote to Washington and said so so sorry, they were grateful. Then some of them got sick and they wrote again and took it all back. We got poisoned on the NOA and ate something that disagreed with them, all of which annoyed me. Some people ask me why I am so down on missionaries. And I'd say because I saw quite a lot of them in China. Some of them were magnificent, but most of them were a self-seeking, poisonous lot. After all, here's my husband's young men going out walking through the countryside exposed to guerrillas shooting in all directions and suppose they were killed saving the missionaries for nothing. (Naturally Roy didn't go on that, but came quickly back to the ship) I'm not reasonable on the subject. That's basically the Nanking story. Basically, pretty accurate. And then another time, we were in Shanghai at Mr. Bernard's, I guess. We had just gotten there and there was a hurry-up call. A ship was being attacked. It was coming in with a lot of silver. Taels is their weight of silver and the ship had so many thousand taels of silver aboard coming up to the

Hong Kong Shanghai Bank and it was run aground, surrounded by pirates. NOA went quick, quick to the rescue. The NOA's mere presence scared them and they sort of withdrew a little bit. Then NOA sent over a couple of long boats, big, the kind the crew goes ashore in, and they unloaded the silver on the boats and scared the pirates off. The pirates didn't know if they were going to be blown to smithereens by these big guns. Of course, there weren't any, but still. So, they salvaged it and brought it all back up to the bank, and the law of the sea is that if you salvage anything like that you are entitled to a percentage of the value. You can think I was thrilled. I'll have you know our pay was \$160 a month. That's not much, even in those days. I guess by then it had gone up to \$200. But that was it. I didn't have any money to buy rugs. You can imagine how thrilled I was. Before we go home, we can buy rugs! Well, Admiral McVay, an old friend of my father's, we had all known him since when, although that didn't make any difference. But he announced that all they had done was their normal duty and he wouldn't have his men, his officers and men, rewarded for something that was only their plain ordinary everyday duty. They shouldn't get anything extra. The whole ship went boom. Everybody on the ship down to the smallest sailor should have been awarded something because, I've forgotten how many thousands taels

it was, it would have given you something. So then the bank felt so badly about that that the bank gave my husband a set of pictures. That's one up there. Gave him four, gave one to the Exec and I forget whether he has three on the walls or the boys have one. They were painted by the man out there who was considered the top flight junk painter. There's a book about him I think in this country. Maybe Roy has one, I don't know. Anyhow the bank gave the captain that and the crew got the most elaborate baseball outfits you can imagine. Clothes for everybody, down to scorepads and pencils, shoes, everything. The bank felt very apologetic, but Adm McVay said certainly not.

C: Did you ever get your rug?

S: I got my rug because Cam wrote an account of Nanking and sold it to the Naval Institute.

C: So from the proceeds from that you bought your rug?

S: Yes, we bought the dining room rug. Because this one was my uncle Admiral Taylor's rug. Heavens knows where he went and what he did. He was a merry bachelor.

C: I think you mentioned just at the end of the interview, last week that you were going to Manila, Philippines, with the family for a bit.

S: Well, because you see, after all, the ships went to Manila in the winter for overhaul, rest, and so on and I went down there for Thanksgiving. The ship was due to go in for some overhaul work and I had the end of my ticket cause the Government gave us a ticket all the way to Manila in case we got duty there. So I used the end of my ticket.

That was very nice. Then Monday morning the ship went out. Back over at the Navy yard I get a message saying ship's on its way back to China. I could have died, you can imagine how I felt. Here I am, all of us, in Manila. I couldn't afford Manila.

C: It was expensive, I assume?

S: Well, it was expensive, but anything was expensive for me and four children. But besides that, we decided to go up to Baguio, which is an army rest camp in the mountains. And there was an excellent boy's school up there, boy's and girl's school, the Brent School. So I promenaded up there so I could live in army housing. And the kids all went to

the Brent School, which is good all around. And, of course, wherever you went in those days there were always Navy people to be friends. In those days the navy called itself a band of brothers and they behaved like that, and I mean nice brothers, not bad brothers. So wherever you went somebody always turned up to greet you and tell you the ropes. ~~but they hung around in the harbor there. The destroyers went~~

C: How long did you stay? ~~at to Tsingtao.~~

S: We stayed in Baguio till spring, I guess. We were there over Christmas. I was all the time worrying about what to give the girls. Let's see, the girls were then ~~. . .~~ when we went out the children were 6, 8, 10, and 12. Difficult ~~pe~~ to do Christmas out there. Mary and Lou went out and cut ~~here~~ down some poor palm leaves and made themselves what they called a Christmas tree. ~~me~~ Had to give them something. ~~month~~ Couldn't dream of what to give them. Went to market and looked and looked and all they had to sell was burial blankets. Big old burial blankets. I couldn't see giving them that for Christmas. There was nothing else. So finally I wrote to some friends who were still in the Manila, and they brought up two dolls. That's why I remember Christmas so firmly. 'Cause it was flat as a pancake. ~~people name Kater-glass who were Russian refugees. The place was full of~~

C: When spring came and you . . . who had fled. I mean Shanghai was too. There were some lovely looking Russian young

S: When spring came we gathered ourselves together and went up to Chefoo. Back to China. The ship was in North China. The destroyers were in North China. There was no formal base. You couldn't go ashore or anything like that, but they hung around in the harbor there. The destroyers went there and the submarines went to Tsingtao.

C: How long did you stay in Chefoo? conditions and finding accommodations in Chefoo.

S: Well, I went up to Chefoo and I forget the dates in the spring and we stayed up there until the autumn when the ships went back to Manila. And I trailed them back to Manila where we spent another winter. We were there three years all together. We finally came up to Shanghai and spent a month in Shanghai waiting to come home. had any housekeeping chores. You couldn't very well rent a house or anything.

C: Did you find Chefoo a different situation than Shanghai? Did you have trouble finding living quarters there or schools? . . . because there was no talking what I would find.

And I thought well they are crazy. Bedding would be five

S: Well, I had heard in Chefoo about some people name Weinglass who were Russian refugees. The place was full of mainly

Russian refugees, White Russians who had fled. I mean Shanghai was too. There were some lovely looking Russian young women walking around. We felt sorry for them. They had no country, they had no nothing. If you were walking down the street and somebody attacked you, you had nobody to appeal to. Chinese police don't care, who else? You were free game for anybody. And the poor things ended up as you can imagine, many of them. *shape naturally, and they lived in those big, southern boarding houses, pensions.* And they

C: We were talking about living conditions and finding accommodations in Chefoo.

S: Oh, somebody had told me who had been there before. There again word passes around, about the Weinglasses and I wrote to them and said could they put me up? So we stayed with the Weinglasses the summer we were in Chefoo and we just boarded. You see none of us had any housekeeping chores. You couldn't very well rent a house or anything. When we got our first orders, I got a notice from the Navy Department saying we were supposed to take our bedding and mattresses, because there was no telling what I would find. And I thought well they are crazy. Bedding would be five beds. It's crazy. Can you see taking five mattresses. So, I said the hell with it, we'd take a chance. And I certainly

never needed a mattress. We could always rent, just like in Jamestown in the summer. People from Philadelphia came regularly and used to rent houses up there. But here in Newport people lived in the big hotels or the big boarding houses. There's a great big one on Spring Street they tell me. They told me that when I first came. It's a big yellow house, or was. No apartments. In the Civil War people came up from the South, in ships naturally, and they lived in those big, southern boarding houses, pensions. And they lived there in the summer. They didn't make any effort to do anything else.

C: What did you do during this summer? You say you had no housekeeping chores or duties. How did you pass your time?

S: I don't remember having any difficulty at all. Well, after all, I had the girls to look out for and Monty. Roy was often on the ship. Had to see that they were clean and that their clothes were in order and we went to the beach a lot. We went swimming a lot. We belonged to the Chefoo Club. There was an establishment there of British who lived there. We did a lot of swimming which was good. And I played lots of mahjongg which took a lot of time. And the kids, I never knew what they did exactly, but Roy spent a

great deal of time aboard ship, when the ship was in. Monty had a friend his age and they played together. And Mary and Lou were together a lot. They played their own games amongst one another. And of course I had an amah for them, naturally. Mary was so funny. Mary said; "this amah is no good." "I said why not." She said: "cause she won't do a thing I tell her," Mary being ten. I said:"She's not supposed to, you're supposed to do what she tells you." "Huh," said Mary; "you couldn't expect me to do what that stupid woman says, could you? She hasn't got any brains at all." I had to laugh.

C: Did you have trouble communicating between the amah and the children? Did the amah speak English?

S: Had to speak English. You had to be very careful getting a big foot amah and one who spoke English or else she was no good to you. And then a small foot amah was no good with children. I mean she would have had her feet bound. Plenty of them had bound feet, poor little creatures tottering around. But they couldn't keep up with the kids. So I had to get a big foot amah. We did have a small foot amah somewhere cause Mary persuaded her to unbind her feet and show her what they had done to her. What they do is when they're

very young they crush the first part of you foot like that
underneath, just push back by force. In Shanghai we didn't
go out in the country, naturally, but stayed in our con-
cessions; but Mr. Bernard who knew the whole country used to
sell Singer sewing machines and go around the country every-
where, and he used to take us for rides. So we'd see other
parts of the country and sometimes going through the little
villages and we'd see the little girls sitting, just sitting
with their arms around their legs like this you know. We'd
say are they sick and he'd say no, they're having their feet
bound. Agony, just pure agony. How could it be anything
else? It was, but if you didn't do that, you didn't get a
husband. It started, of course, in the Manchus to keep you
from running away.

A: The Torpedo Station.

C: When did you finally leave China? You said you were
there for three years. Do you remember the year?

S: My husband was ordered home in 1928 and we were ordered
here to the War College. You came on the ferry, and
walked up the hill. There was the Commanding Officer's

C: Oh, you were ordered here to Newport to the War College?
I thought it was the Torpedo Station in 1928? I've nice com-
fortable houses--five in a row like that and the walk in

S: Wait a minute, you're right. It was. We had three years at the Torpedo Station.

the bay and took the torpedoes out and fired them. I don't

C: What was his position there? Can you tell me? Do you remember what job he held?

E: Who was in command of the Torpedo Station then?

S: They were still firing torpedoes in those days. He was Proof officer, I think. I can't be sure. It's funny, because when we moved into the house that he had lived in when he was 4 as a small boy, and his father was in the same job, the same house.

E: Yes, he was there. I knew him when he was a lieutenant.

C: What street was the house on? Was it there, DeWitt?

S: The Torpedo Station. Was it with the Harts?

C: Oh, you lived on Goat Island then. The Navy doesn't go for this, how much money have you got, who

S: You call it Goat Island, but to me it will never be anything but the Torpedo Station. You came on the ferry, and walked up the hill. There was the Commanding Officer's house, which used to be the fort in colonial days, then there was a string of houses. I think there were five nice comfortable houses--five in a row like that and the walk in

front. And water around this island you see. And then over that end of the island was the works and then they went up the bay and took the torpedoes out and fired them. I don't know where they fired them.

C: Who was in command of the Torpedo Station then?

S: Admiral Hart.

C: Admiral Thomas Hart, then Captain Hart.

S: Yes, he was there. I knew him when he was a lieutenant.

Thomas Hart was there and somebody else was there, Dufreese.

C: Did you ever socialize with the Harts?

S: Oh sure, we knew the Harts. The Navy isn't stuffy. The Navy doesn't go for this, how much money have you got, who you are. The Navy is all perfectly even, except that I wouldn't say the sailors would rush around and call on the Admiral, but all the officers, all the commissioned officers. If you were a commissioned officer, you belonged in that rank, so to speak. People always can be fussy about other people, you know that, but it isn't like this Bellevue

Avenue nonsense. When we first came here, I was told that a farmer named Bailey owned a great deal of land which is now all that area of big estates and the beach. And he sold a parcel of it to some very rich gent. Perhaps it was Vanderbilt or some other and he built a palace and his friends liked the palace and liked the country life and what not. So they all came in, building and trying to outdo each other like mad. So that's where the name Bailey came from, and they built up the beach and built up the tennis. Just like Jamestown, the tennis, the golf and all those things were usual. You did your formal entertaining in the city, but here you didn't do that. You know what I mean. You just lived comfortably and pleasantly, so to speak. But that was the way it started.

C: And you had visitors come?

C: Do you remember anything unusual or interesting about the Torpedo Station? Can you tell me how large it was then or how many people worked there? *torpedo and you could take the ferry over and pay your visit and pay another visit.*

S: About 1500 people worked there until the Navy changed its mind, or Congress changed its mind, whatever it was that happened. As far as the officers are concerned, I've forgotten if there were six or seven houses and then over in the area where the shops were, there was another house for

an officer. Captain Tiernan used to live there. There were that many officers. We all did things together. If you have seven neighbors, you see them or don't see them as you enjoy each other's company. Nothing formal about it. And, of course, it's true in those days that we did have when we first got there a formal day at home. Each week the station had a day at home. And the band came and played and, of course, the ferry ran every 20 minutes anyway. The idea was that people ordered there for duty complained that it was hard for people to come and see them. So the word was given out that we had a day at home. I've forgotten what day of week it was. And it was very nice. As I said, the Government band sat out there and played merry tunes.

C: And you had visitors come?

S: And if you wanted to come call on someone at the Torpedo Station, you might say Tuesday afternoon and you could take the ferry over and pay your visit and pay another visit. And if you felt that taking a ferry to go to pay a call was a difficult job, you could do it all in one piece. And it was all very gay and pleasant, you see. And that's when I asked Mrs. (what's her name--the St. George's lady), I met her somewhere and I had been told the St. George's people

were very delightful. They were interesting to talk to and interesting to know. We were always interested in knowing people in town as well as our own circle who were cheerful. I said to her our day at home is such and such, do come and see me. She was one who said to me, "Well, you know, it's hardly worth it for us to make friends with you Navy people because you're gone so soon." After that slap in the face, she did not come and I did not care. I thought if that's the way St. George's feels, the hell with them. We have plenty of society of our own. In those days Newport was divided very sharply. In rich--if you were rich, you called them townies, otherwise you called them the residents and the Navy. The Navy was kind of the poor third, not that they gave a damn. The Navy had plenty of good times on their own. C: What kind of entertainment did you have in those days? It was about 1928-31 when you were there.

S: In those days the Torpedo Station had a big dance every year, the War College had one and Fort Adams had one. So during the winter you had three big wingdings. C: Where were they held?

S: Fort Adams was held at Fort Adams, the Navy one was held over--probably the building has been torn down by now, at the family theater overlooking the present gas station.

C: It was on the station?

S: And ours was held over on the station in "Jacks House" on the end of the island where the Hotel is now. Well then, of course, in between you didn't make any straining effort. In the winter you can't do a mad lot of entertaining because there's no pool of skilled servants around here. And they won't come with you. I imagine if you had one of the big houses you could then bring them, they had maybe 20, 30 servants, you brought them all and put them in the house. That's a different story, but most people couldn't do that. If you wanted to bring four or five, they were not about to come.

C: Did you have any help at the Torpedo Station?

S: Yes, I did. I had a colored woman, Florence, who had worked for the family in Annapolis pre-China and was waiting in the dock when we got to Newport. Everybody I knew had a cook. There was also a male house cleaner and a gardener provided by the Navy. They both came one day a week.

C: What did the woman that you hired do? Very, very well known place where they know all about fine furniture, they

S: My goodness me. She served breakfast, and I mean served. I don't mean just threw it at you--put it nicely on the table. She served breakfast and after that my husband had to go to work of course. We had breakfast at 8:00. And she served lunch at 1:00, and she served dinner at 6:30. Meanwhile, she had to clean house. She didn't really have to have laundry to do, didn't expect that too. I had a laundress. But she cleaned house and she cooked. She did all the cooking. Nobody else was there. Mabel came along after that. Mabel has been with me forty years, more than forty years. I mean she was here and we'd go away and she'd come back. She used to be like part of the family, if you grew up in the South you'd know what I mean. Any colored servants you had as long as that were really members of the family.

S: I went to Panama.

C: Was Mabel from Newport?

C: What was your husband's position there?

S: She came from Savannah. I asked her the other day, I said: "Mabel, how did you get up here?" And she said, well she was ailing and she had an aunt and she came up to visit the aunt and she married Leon who was working for Vernon.

C: You were in the Canal Zone then.

Did you ever hear of Vernon? Vernon was a very, very well known place where they knew all about fine furniture, they re-upholstered, they mended, they put in order your furniture and they sold furniture. They repaired, restored, anything and also, for instance, suppose you had the Breakers, you would notify them and they would come in and you'd say I'm leaving tomorrow and they would send a crew in put the whole house in order, put the furniture under the sheets, take down the draperies, all that stuff, have the house ready and when you're coming back, you'd tell them and they'd open the house and you'd walk in as if you never left. His father worked there before him, so she married Leon and came to live in Newport.

S: He was a student and then he was invited to stay on the

C: You left the Torpedo Station in 1931 . . .

S: I went to Panama. . . back to his student days, he was in the Class of 1934, I believe. Do you remember any of the

C: What was your husband's position there? program at the College? What did he think of his War College education?

S: He was aboard ship. He was the Navigator, he was responsible for their not running aground. . . . because almost everybody that I knew would say, "I can't cope out this

C: You were in the Canal Zone then.

S: Well, we started out in one end of the Canal, ended up on the other. Started out in Balboa and ended up in . . . to do all this reading. I said to my dear husband: How come?

C: Panama City. do all that reading you're perfectly care-free, why don't you do all that reading? He said, "I've

S: That's right. It had another name in the beginning. We lived in one then the other. From there, we came up here to the War College.

C: So he was kind of one up. He was one up on the other

C: In 1933, you returned to Newport, to the War College. Now your husband at that point was a student at the War College. He was a member of the Senior Class. I told you, but

cousin Willy Rodgers, Admiral William Rodgers, over the

S: He was a student and then he was invited to stay on the staff. . . when, but he told me that when Admiral Lane and the secretary of the navy decided the War College would be a

C: Can we just double back to his student days, he was in the Class of 1934, I believe. Do you remember any of the comments he made about the curriculum study program at the College? What did he think of his War College education? What am I going to tell him he can't tell me? Is this silly?

S: He was interested and he used to amuse me because almost everybody that I knew would say, "I can't come out this Willy. My cousin Willy was a student by nature, you know

evening, I can't do anything, I can't do this, I can't do that." My husband said: "You have to keep quiet, I've got to do all this reading. I said to my dear husband: "How come? You don't have to do all that reading you're perfectly care-free, why don't you do all that reading?" He said: "I've already done it, I did it for pleasure, aboard ship years ago."

C: What were his impressions of the College? Do you remem-

C: So he was kind of one up. He was one up on the other students.

S: He enjoyed it very much. Well, I think that everybody

S: Well, he was, he was. I don't know if I told you, but cousin Willy Rodgers, Admiral William Rodgers, over the certain course of time was president at the War College, I don't remember when, but he told me that when Admiral Luce and the secretary of the Navy decided the War College would be a good idea, the Navy as a whole said certainly not, how silly can you get! We all have been to sea, we have all handled ships and all handled our crews, and you expect us all to sit down there and tell each other what we already know. What am I going to tell him he can't tell me? Is this silly? And he said, even Admiral Mahan didn't approve of the idea. Admiral Mahan had to be talked to quite sharply by cousin Willy. My cousin Willy was a student by nature, you know

what I mean. It's a most amusing thing. They fought the idea at first and it wasn't really as silly as it sounds because they didn't see how, after all you go to sea in a ship, what else can you know? You handle your ship through all sorts of things, maybe through war, maybe not. But anyhow, who is going to tell you how to do it in advance? with high blood pressure. My son had a bad appendix and was oper-

C: What were his impressions of the College? Do you remember? Did he think it was a value to his future career? I can't, I'm too busy. I don't have time to stop and have my

S: He enjoyed it very much. Well I think that everybody we felt that if you didn't have War College in your record you were sorry. In fact, I think that is still true to a certain extent. My Roy would have loved to have gone to the War College. He'd madly like to go. I've just never heard of anybody who thought it was a waste of time. at this period?

C: Where did you live when your husband was in Newport at the College? had lectures off and on. I had been there various times.

S: Well, we lived on Cranston Avenue, in the stables of the Gray Estate, which had been made into an apartment. We had a furnace on the second floor and the coal was delivered up

the back stairs and put in a big old bathtub. I, for the first time in my life, had to run a coal furnace.

C: Pringle Hall was just being built in that time period.

C: That must have been an experience. P. Pringle:

S: That was the winter my husband went to the hospital with high blood pressure. My son had a bad appendix and was operated on. My Lou had a baby. Everybody said to me, I would think you would have high blood pressure, but I said: "I can't, I'm too busy. I don't have time to stop and have my blood pressure taken." Then the next time we came again we lived on Kay Street, in the first floor apartment there, for a long time. We were there when Cam died.

Loge, Luke H. Loge was President. Do you remember meeting

C: Do you remember going to the War College for social events or visiting the campus yourself during this period?

S: Well, I imagine so. I mean it was customary for the

S: Well, if I remember, I may be blurring things together because they had lectures off and on. I had been there various times.

of that sort. I never knew the McNamee's personally, so to speak, because when it was all said and done,

C: But back in the 1930's when your husband was a student, 1933, 1934, did you often go then?

the same age. If you had any lieutenants in, they were like

S: No, I don't think there was anything to go for. lieutenant-
commanders, they were like going out with your father and

C: Pringle Hall was just being built in that time period,
1933-34. It's named after Admiral Joel P. Pringle. Don't you?

Don't you find that you stick to your own age group, pretty

S: I know. I knew Pringle when he was lieutenant. You
see, I have a worm's eye view. When Admiral Pringle was
Duty Officer, my husband's midshipmen all hated him. They
said he wore sneakers. He came around to check on their
rooms or to see if they were doing anything that was naughty.
Caught them all.

C: No, I understand what you're saying.

C: During the year your husband was a student at the Col-
lege, Luke McNamee was President. Do you remember meeting
him or attending any social events at his Quarters?

to do all this reading. My husband did all his reading, but

S: Well, I imagine so. I mean it was customary for the
Admiral to have a reception off and on when he came or what
have you, and for the staff to give a reception back and we
had parties of that sort. I never knew the McNamee's per-
sonally, so to speak, because when it was all said and done,
I regarded them as quite antique. You stayed, as a rule,
within your age group. For instance, captains were all about
the same age. If you had any lieutenants in, they were like

your children. If you had any admirals in with lieutenant-
commanders, they were like going out with your father and
mother. I mean you could and you did, if you understand
what I mean. But basically, I think that's true, don't you?
Don't you find that you stick to your own age group, pretty
well?

C: Well, let's just double back a bit, I wonder if you

C: Yes, more or less. Kalbfus. Edward C. Kalbfus was presi-
dent during this time period.

S: I don't mean all the time but . . .

B: I certainly remember Kalbfus. I remember when he was

C: No, I understand what you're saying. of the Superinten-
dent of the Naval Academy. Ma, I was an irreverent specta-

S: There was no mad entertaining because I'm telling you,
most of the students at the War College felt that they had
to do all this reading. My husband did all his reading, but
he didn't take it so hard. figure of fun and nobody's real
gallant, as you might say. No, I don't remember that they

C: Now he stayed on at the War College on the staff in 1935
and he was in the Lecture, Theses and Law Section, in 1936
in the Department of Intelligence, and in 1938 he had tempo-
rary duty there again, so he was at the College for a good
three years, four years after he completed the course. Do

C: A cocktail party.

you remember anything specific about that time period that's outstanding?

the cartoon with Charlie Brown? Charlie Brown is feeling

S: I remembered that he enjoyed the intelligence bit, but he didn't talk about it. From here we went to Honolulu.

company? He says, no. Now in those days if you wanted to

C: Well, let's just double back a bit, I wonder if you remembered President Kalbfus. Edward C. Kalbfus was president during this time period.

interesting and kept going, people didn't just sit, wondering

S: I certainly remember Kalbfus. I remember when he was courting his wife. She was the daughter of the Superintendent of the Naval Academy. Me, I was an irreverent spectator, if you know what I mean. My friends and I we were ten or twelve then. The Academy was small, walled in and only so many houses around, you know, and we used to observe him. We thought he was rather a figure of fun and nobody's real gallant, as you might say. No, I don't remember that they did a mad lot of entertaining, not in the sense that you think about down here. Of course, now you have a crowd of people and give them liquor and they stand there and talk like that and you think you've entertained.

They were also on the staff. Did you ever socialize with

C: A cocktail party. socially?

S: In those days you had a dinner party and people talked. You know Charlie Brown and the Snoopy thing? Did you see the cartoon with Charlie Brown? Charlie Brown is feeling very depressed. They say to him, what can you do? Charlie Brown says he doesn't know. They said, can you sparkle in company? He says, no. Now in those days if you wanted to have success with a dinner party, you asked one couple or one person who could sparkle in company and you usually could find one, sometimes two, so the conversation was merry and interesting and kept going, people didn't just sit, wondering what they were going to do next.

C: Yes, you do need a lively person or two.

S: In those days the days of Kalbfus, you went and ate or you went and danced or you went and talked. We were not of an age to be joining the talking group of that kind, so to speak. Besides, I said I'd known them since childhood. They were as old as my Ma and Pa.

C: When your husband was at the College, Raymond Spruance was there as well as Richmond Kelly Turner and Isaac Kidd. They were also on the staff. Did you ever socialize with them or know them personally?

S: Yes, oh yes, I knew Margaret well. I met her at the Torpedo Station, just prior to World War II, I believe, in 1940.

C: Margaret Spruance? And did you know Admiral Spruance? Station at that time period?

S: Yes, sure, Raymond.

C: Raymond Spruance.

S: I wouldn't say I was cozy with them, but I called them by their first names. I don't think people did entertain in the sense that you're talking about to any great extent.

C: Can you comment at all on their personalities? When you left the War College in 1935, you mentioned you went to

S: Well, I think Mrs. Spruance was a very charming, delightful person and her daughter was charming, as friends of my Mary's and she married a very attractive young officer.

Well, I don't know. We didn't. In the first place, we were inclined to lead a rather quiet life, I suppose, because we didn't do a lot of dropping in and dropping out like all of them because we had to do a lot of reading. Not had to, but enjoyed it. I mean, in the evening, for instance, (the kids were big by then) after the kids had gone to bed or gone about their own affairs, we used to settle down and read.

C: Your husband came back for an assignment at the Torpedo Station, just prior to World War II, I believe, in 1940, again. Can you tell me what he was doing at the Torpedo Station at that time period?

S: What do you mean he came back? In 1940?

C: Well, yes. In his biography it says he was temporarily assigned to the Torpedo Station in 1940.

S: Who wrote it? He did?

C: No, this is a Navy Department biography. But when you left the War College in 1935, you mentioned you went to Panama again.

S: No, never back to Panama, but to command OGLALA, flagship of Mine Force Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii.

C: Did you go along with him?

S: Sure. He had command of the ship. She was an old mine layer. But he had extra duty there, also. Then he developed a small swelling on his ankle. I told him he ought to see

the doctor, just on general principles. He didn't want to, but he finally said he would, so he did. We had been, as a matter of fact, that weekend, he'd played 18 holes of golf and we'd gone out dining and dancing that night. We could in those days, believe it or not. Even I could in those days! I said it couldn't be anything much. However, the doctor informed me that it would require surgery. It was bland, and he took it out. He informed me that it was bland, it was nothing that mattered, but they sent a slice to the Queen's Hospital in Honolulu and another slice to the Naval Hospital and they said don't worry. They didn't tell me that they sent one slice to Washington. Then he was back on duty and as far as we knew everything was okay and then I came home for lunch one day and there he was, and he said: "we're going home." I said; "what do you mean home, we are home, aren't we?" Because in those days my six year old when we were in China used to say: "where do we live?" I said; "Wherever your father hangs his hat, that's home. That's home, that's it!" So I said: "well, we are home." He said: "No, I mean we're going back to the States. He said: "They say I have to go back and report to the hospital, Memorial Hospital." I never heard of Memorial Hospital. Neither had he. So in three days, we sold the car, packed up and came rushing back home. We went back home and he was

on duty in Brooklyn, in the Navy Hospital. Roy was working, Monty was in school in New England, Lou came with us and Mary stayed with the Kenneth Whitings at Pearl Harbor. I could not find out anything. The second day I went over there and I chased the doctor into his private place where they sit and rest. I said: "I want you to tell me what is the matter with my husband." He said: "he has lymphosarcoma, which is cancer of the lymph glands and he will be very fortunate if he lives another three months." Can you imagine the jolt that would give you?

S: Hand me my calendar and I'll get that date. I'll wait.

C: Well, what did you do then? Did he resign from the Navy?

S: They said to me it is very vitally important that you remain perfectly calm and cheerful. Don't tell your children, don't tell anybody, don't mention it. Pretend that nothing has happened because we have told him that he will have treatment and he will go back to duty. It will make all the difference to him if he has a normal time. So it was up to me. I went in the bathroom to wash my face and cried my head off, and come out and was cheerful. Don't think it was easy, however, he fooled me and lived for ten years and mercifully he never lost his wits, or his courage, there and we didn't know what to do. We thought about it

or any of those things, but at the same time it was a long time. So then he retired. to have him; and Jerry Tiernan, a retired Captain, too. They told my husband that they would

C: Do you remember what year he retired in? and a desk, and they would go there regularly, according to their own

S: I wrote it down for you. would then translate Clausewitz and others. Somebody said: "did you know your husband did a

C: 1940, perhaps? Well, we can go back to that, don't trouble yourself now. ing it and he spoke fluent French. The College had a number of books about tactics or whatnot which

S: Hand me my calendar and I'll get that date. I'll wait and do that afterwards. illegal they were doing something useful, interesting, and worthwhile.

C: Yes, do that afterwards, that's fine. We can fill that in later. Did you decide to come back to Newport at that time?

S: And benefited them, and gave them a feeling of not being

S: Well, in the first place, here we are stuck in New York, what are we going to do now? The girls were parked out with their uncles and aunts. Monty was parked out with his grandfather and Roy was working for US Gypsum. We had to have some place to live. My mother lived in Annapolis, my father was gone then, so she was alone and she wanted us to come there and we didn't know what to do. We thought about it

and what drew us to Newport was that the War College told my husband they would be glad to have him, and Jerry Tiernan, a retired Captain, too. They told my husband that they would give him and Jerry a room, a typewriter, chairs, and a desk, and they would go there regularly, according to their own feeble health and my husband would then translate Clausewitz and others. Somebody said: "did you know your husband did a lot of translating in French?" I said: "yes, I did." Because he enjoyed doing it and he spoke fluent French. The College had a number of books about tactics or whatnot which he translated on sight. He would read it off and Jerry would type it. At the War College they were doing something useful, interesting, and worthwhile.

C: It benefited the institution. when you came back?

S: And benefited them, and gave them a feeling of not being over taxed, you see; they came back, both of them came back, had a long nap, and they had dinner and they didn't feel that they had sat around all day. So it was good. Of course we didn't know about that then, but he knew that there would be lectures at the College which he would go and listen to, and I knew there would be Redwood Library, and he knew there would be a golf course as long as he could walk about. I

knew there would be a beach, none of which existed at Annapolis. So we decided that we would come, and then of course, you see, his grandfather was Admiral Sampson. His mother grew up here and she had a lot of old time friends, not a lot, but two or three old ladies around the avenue and stuff that she'd known. Not that they meant anything to us, me especially, but you know, it was the atmosphere, you might say. We liked Newport, I mean, we liked the climate, we liked the place. Annapolis was nice too, but it was too hot. So we decided, and then we had to live within easy distance of New York because we had to go down to and check in to the Memorial Hospital every month. So we used to drive down and back. We'd just do it. I said, "God no, I don't

love another patient." But as long as he was able to do

C: Where did you live in Newport when you came back?

S: We boarded. I think it was on Bull Street. Then we took an apartment on the corner of Kay Street, Kay and Bull.

C: When did you buy this house on Mann Avenue?

S: We bought this house in 1947. My husband died the first of June, 1946. I bought the house in the next year, 1947. I think it was the fall, when we bought it.

C: Did he continue at the War College during World War II?

S: He went on at the College as long as he was able to do it. He went over there translating. Jerry died, I don't remember when especially, it kind of blurs together. Besides, you must remember, my mind was so, I say, full like a fog. I couldn't tell, at the time, you know, every time we went to New York he would disappear with doctors, a cloud of doctors, and be gone forever and I would die. Then he would come back. The doctor would pat me on the shoulder and say: "You've done wonders, it's marvelous, I can't believe it, it's true, he's doing fine. He's wonderful. Would you like another patient?" I said: "God no. I don't love another patient." But as long as he was able to do anything, he used to go over there, and then as he gradually lost energy, he lost his ability to do things. We used to go to Cooperstown sometimes after. We only had to go to New York every two or three months.

C: So that was your life during that time period.

S: My whole life during that time was just taking care of him. They kept saying to me all the time it was very miracu-

lous, he may go anytime. So every time he had a cold, or a sniffle, or took one extra drink, I had a thousand fits. I enjoyed our interviews.

C: When I first phoned you told me that you were called Mother Navy. Can you tell me how that came about? Who called you that?

S: The Captain of a ship I christened. I christened the JOHN RODGERS. I was talking to the Captain and I said: "You know, it does seem to me looking at this beautiful new ship, all so modern and smart and I can stand here and I remember the RODGERS, I remember it, because of Willy. He was the only one who I ever saw informally and casually as a friend." I said: "He used to describe to me going to sea with one candle, as I told you, and all that stuff. You don't know how absolutely primitive it was" and I said: "To me, now, I have a picture of that in my mind, then of course, I have a picture of destroyers as my husband knew them, and of the FLORIDA, one of the big ships he was in, and now look at this, so to speak." He said: "You were practically Old Mother Navy." He was the only person who ever called me that. That pleased me.

C: I want to thank you, Mrs. Smith, for participating in the Naval War College Oral History program. I thoroughly enjoyed our interviews.