

May 1988

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Captain, USNR, (Ret)

Born 1/25/16, New York, N.Y. Married Virginia Louise Moore who was born in Bozeman, Montana 7/41. Now legally separated but have one son born in N.Y. 3/16/46 while on active duty as a Commander in the Navy. Christened Robert Allen he graduated from Annapolis in 68' winning a prestigious award sword. He was an excellent student on the Deans list and a Varsity tennis player. He resigned from the Navy in 1973 after service off Viet Nam and at sea. He is now married and has a son.

1933 Graduated from George Washington High School, New York.

1935 Graduated from the New York State Merchant Marine Academy with Diploma and a Third Mates License. The school is now the State University of New York, Maritime College.

1935 & 36 sailed in the Grace Line, American Export Line, and the West African Line as a licensed officer.

1936 Started employment as Junior Third Officer in the SS WASHINGTON of the United States Lines, and remained with that company until I was called to active duty in the US Navy December of 1939. In addition to the WASHINGTON I served in the sistership MANHATTAN, and in between made two trips in the AMERICAN SHIPPER and AMERICAN MERCHANT. All were transatlantic passenger liners and most of the time was served in the two sisterships, MANHATTAN and WASHINGTON which were the largest and fastest US Flag ships. My last trips made in the MANHATTAN were after the war started in Europe and in which we were engaged in evacuating US Citizens. I was first called to temporary active duty in the USS TEXAS in early 38 before rejoining the MANHATTAN.

12/39 to 8/46 Active duty in the US Navy.

12/39-11/41 Served as an Ensign in the USS KANAWHA, AO-1 Pacific Fleet. Was the Gunnery Officer the entire time period, but had many other collateral duties in every other department on the ship.

11/41 to 5/42 spent a few weeks at Gunnery School in San Diego when the war started and I was detached to arm and command the USN Armed Guard in the SS MATSONIA. We sailed with the First Marines in the first fast convoy to Samoa on 1/42, and after three more trans Pacific trips to New Zealand and Australia I was transferred to SCTC in Miami.

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7/42 Completed the course in Anti Submarine Warfare and commissioned the new USS SC 981 serving as C.O. of the vessel, escort commander of small convoys, and on general anti-submarine warfare patrols in the Caribbean, as far east as Trinidad.

1/43 Received orders as Executive Officer of the USS EDWARD C. DALY, DE-17 commissioning in Mare Island, CA. After completion of shakedown and arrival at Pearl Harbor and trial runs, and inspections by Admiral Nimitz and his staff, the Admiral arranged for me to assume command the next day. At the time I was the youngest commanding officer of a major combatant ship in the US Navy. I only held this distinction for a short time as my good friend and later Admiral Kinney soon after also received command of a DE, and held this distinction for a long time. The remainder of the year was mostly spent in the Central Pacific, Ellice Islands area in preparation for the Tarawa invasion. During this time I was escort commander of convoys, task group, and unit commander.

1/44 Received orders to command a new and larger Destroyer Escort building in Charleston, SC, the USS COFER, DE 208. I commanded the ship through shakedown in Bermuda, receiving a commendation. After post shakedown repairs in Charleston the ship made two Trans Atlantic/Mediterranean round trips escorting convoys and going as far east as Bizerte. By June/July we were being converted to a 5"gun APD, and the first of its class in Todds Brooklyn. While handling my ship work at night and on the weekends I sat for and passed my Merchant Marine Officer's Masters exam which took a period of 10 days. COFER made a fast voyage to the Pacific war area via Panama, Galapagos, Bora Bora, New Guinea, arriving in time for the Philippine campaign and other island operations. I had commanded the COFER in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and in the Mediterranean and Philippine Seas. The COFER earned 8 Battle Stars.

2/45 With the war over in Europe, I was first assigned to my Alma Mater, but did not like it, and requested transfer back to the Pacific. The detail officer was an ex DE Captain and a friend, and to quote, "he did not desire to be responsible for my being killed at the end of the war." He ordered me to the Staff for Operations of the Third Naval District, N.Y. Shortly after the war ended, and in my new position, the Maritime College was under my authority. In the interim period that followed wherein it was returned to the State of New York, I was able to ensure that the deplorable conditions I experienced there were corrected. I was able to continue my activities in this respect even after leaving active duty. I was influential in the appointments of excellent Presidents such as Admirals, Leary, Durgin, Moore, O'Donnell, Kinney, and Miller all who presided over the school in a credible manner.

2/45-4/46 My activities on the Staff of Admiral Kelly for Operations continued until I made a decision as to whether or not to stay in the Navy, return to the US Lines, or seek employment ashore. I had been promoted to Commander in November of 1945, and I liked the Navy, yet I had a physical problem resulting from concussion with respect to my hearing, and although I might have gotten waivers physically if I had tried, the annual physicals required in the Regular Navy could have forced my retirement at any time. Reserve Duty only required a quadrennial physical, and as I was 30 in 1946, I had spent my life at sea, and if I was to make a change this was the time.

My duties on the staff were extremely interesting and I enjoyed this first encounter with an office. I found the work much easier and less trying than commanding a vessel at war and in combat, and I decided that I would try to have the best of both careers. With inactive duty and a Reserve assignment I could carry on my love affair with the US Navy, and still take a crack at the outside world. The US Line had carried my seniority as if I had never left, and I was well established on the Master's list. Still this was in a sense more of the same. And so prior to resigning I started to look around for a new career.

My Navy career had been rewarding:

I received my original commission as Ensign 2/38. My permanent commission as Lt(jg) was dated 2/41, and from the beginning of 42, it was a series of temporary commissions later being made permanent some time later, a budget situation coming into play which is still very much the same today. By 6/42 I was a Sr. Lt., and by 4/44 a Lt. By 11/45 I was a Commander at the age of 29. None of these temporary commissions in the Regular or Reserve Navy were ever down graded as were what is known as spot promotions which I could have had but did not seek as they were only in effect when you were in the job that called for a higher rank. I believe that I was one of the youngest Commanders, if not the youngest.

My connection with the Reserve continued until my retirement in 1969 after 31 years. From 1949 to 52 I commanded one of the largest Reserve Battalions in the USA. It was during the Korean War and I had the unpleasant duty of turning over my complement of officers and enlisted men several times as they were called up for this new war. I had excellent Reserve assignments including the Naval War College, USS MISSOURI, USS HAYNESWORTH, WASHINGTON, ASW Test and Evaluation Center in Key West, and the USS DUPONT during the Bay of Pigs. I also commanded the Naval Reserve Unit at Kings Point, and completed difficult Correspondance courses from the Naval War College. The first time eligible I was selected for Capt. in 1957. After three

years as a Captain, and in 1960, I had to stand for another selection for retention in the Reserve. Only a few Captains were selected, and they were considered flag officer candidates. I was selected for retention, but by that time I was unable to give the Reserve the attention required although I was called for active duty during the Bay of Pigs incident in which I served in the USS Dupont. This in reality was the end of my activity in the Reserve even though I remained until retired in 1969 after my son graduated from Annapolis in 1968. I did not come up for selection for Admiral until 1968, and by that time I was unable to meet the active duty requirements due to the nature of my work in industry.

On went on terminal leave from the Navy on 16 March 1946 for a period of four months. On that day together with William Rittenhouse Blackburn, and Walter Henry Roder a partnership was formed around a project I developed while checking out a job being discussed with the late Robert Stone. The job was to operate a river company in Colombia. While checking into the costs of living with the Naval Attache in Colombia I was placed in contact with a Colombian with whom I got the account to develop a steamship company. Blackburn was a 1930 graduate of the Merchant Marine Academy, and Walter Roder was a 1937 graduate of Colgate.

We were successful in forming the company still operating under the same name, Flota Mercante Gran Colombiana, but while doing this also did Marine Consulting. Among our early accounts were Maersk Moller, Time Inc, Great Lakes Carbon Co. and many others. We also delivered ships to China and many other places ultimately going into ship chartering, ship sales, ship management, ship agency, ship ownership, line ownership, stevedoring, and many other phases of the business.

Over a period of time the company grew into a number of related corporations including Chester, Blackburn & Roder, Atlantic Line, Pan American mail Line, Pan Atlantic Line, American Atlantic Line, and many other companies. There were offices in New York, Miami, Chicago, Panama, Trinidad, Oslo, Central America, and other places in addition to many agencies. The business grew to over \$100,000,000 a year, and we operated over 5,000 voyages. I started stepping down in 1979 turning over to an Executive Committee, and soon after relinquishing control to a new President, and then a new C.E.O. I returned again a few months before sale as C.E.O. in an attempt to stop same and get control of costs which I was beginning to do when the company was ultimately sold in November of 1982. I have been in semi retirement since that date.