



Fair Winds and Following Seas: Reflections on the Navy Career of a Teenage Ensign

Ronald Vail

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This book relates the military experiences compiled from a twenty-five year naval career of a small town boy whose elementary and high school endeavors were somewhat less than satisfactory, but who was given the opportunity, provided by that inconceivably destructive event, known as World War II, to redeem his poor educational activity and serve in the Navy reasonably successfully. The book follows his career as he rose from a very young and inexperienced Ensign to the rank of Commander. Early on, he acquired a specialty designation as cryptologist, dealing with codes and ciphers in the Naval Communications system. This book depicts the good times, the hard times, and the difficult times of the voyage to the top of the military organization in which he spent the biggest part of his Navy career. He spent many years in the field spreading the communication security gospel directly to the communication officers of various ships and stations. Finally, after 20 years of total service, he was assigned to the Naval Security Group Headquarters in Washington, D.C. as deputy to the head of the Communication Security Organization with oversight and management responsibilities over the field activities. Later, when his boss was assigned to duty at a field activity, he was elevated to the head of the organization. After about a year as head of the Communication Security Organization, he was given a very promising assignment as Commanding Officer of a newly established Naval Security Group command in California. As expressed in the book, this was a "Camelot" assignment. Shortly after World War II ended and very early in his career, he met and married his lifetime companion. This relationship produced six children, five daughters and a son, who survived a change of venue every two to three years and all became college graduates, including one daughter who was born with a physical disability denying her the ability to get around



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