Ropeyarn Sunday â€œSea Storiesâ€• and Open Trackbacks

Description

One day, open trackbacks will actually get some good reading links here. Until then, suffer from my story telling (thatâ€™s your cue to link in and get some distracting links to be clicked onâ€¦).

I canâ€™t recall the transgression, maybe something like the Quarterdeck not rendering honors to a senior officer driving down the pier, but â€œweâ€• did something wrong. I donâ€™t recall the details of why my division (OI) was detailed to carry out the â€œpunishment,â€• but needless to say, it happened.

It seemed that retied ADM Arleigh Burke, USN, was in town and would be spending the day at sea on a greyhound of the fleet. Those familiar with the Norfolk Operating Base (NOB) know the layout and the way to/from sea, and where the fat ships, vs the small, sleek combatants moor. So, on the appointed morning, I assembled my division of operations specialists (OSs) and electronic technicians (ETs) on the spacious flight deck aft (we were port side to, bow in) in two ranks, awaiting the transit to sea of some DD with ADM Burke aboard.

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The ship came into view, and others ships south of us could be heard rendering honors on their topside announcing circuits, finally we came to attention, saluted and dropped the salute in accordance with the whistle signals over our speakers.

With ADM Burke safety beyond eye shot, as they headed north up the southern branch of the Elizabeth River towards the Hampton roads area and to sea, I executed a sharp about face in accordance with FM 22-5 and directed my men to face left in my well practiced command voice from just about a year before, having actually marched units around parade fields for three years. They did the left face fine, then I turned right and commanded â€œForward, MARCH!â€• They got this right also.

Picture us now, about 20 sailors in two columns, having been centered on the centerline, now marching towards the starboard side of the flight deck. I watched the approach to the safety nets, gauging when to issue the next order, also from FM 22-5, to avoid an officer induced multiple man overboard situation while in port.

â€œColumn Left, MARCH!â€• Well, the deck edge was close, and the command was apparently not well practiced. The two columns began to disintegrate, as the front men stopped, and the middle and rear ones kept coming, but allowing for the â€œstoppage.â€•

I gave up, and dismissed them. They easily found their way to the watertight door on the side of the helo hanger that led below to berthing.

So much for trying to march sailors.

Category

1. "Sea Stories"

2. Military
3. Military History
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