

MEMORIES
of Stories Told by
GRANDPA MALCOLM TROWBRIDGE, JR

of his

NAVY PERIOD
June 1944 - June 1946

Retold by

Grandma Beverly Trowbridge

Supplemented with hers and friends
Intertwined with documented events

July 1995

SPRY PICKS UP
WITH
REPORTING FOR DUTY
TO USS GEARING DD 710

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We were all stunned on April, 12, 1945, when the radio and newspaper EXTRAS announced that President Franklin D. Roosevelt had died of a brain hemorrhage, and wondered how Vice President Harry S. Truman would handle war decisions. We left Norfolk a short while later.

Malcolm was assigned to the lead destroyer of the GEARING (or long hull) CLASS DESTROYERS, the USS GEARING DD-710. His job assignments were as officer of narcotics, mail, photography, and the radar group, CIC, Combat Information Center. With few officers on a destroyer, each one had several duties, besides standing watch on deck as O.D.

Brief History on the GEARING quotes: "The USS GEARING DD-710 is the first and only vessel named in honor of Commander Henry Chalfant Gearing, Captain Henry Chalfant Gearing, Jr. and Lt Henry Chalfant Gearing III. The keel was laid on 10 August 1944, and working with a speed which may never again be witnessed in a shipyard, the Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company sent GEARING down the ways at Port Newark, New Jersey on 18 February 1945 in a total of just 192 days."

"The daughter of the late Commander Gearing, Mrs. Thomas M. Foley sponsored the ship at commissioning ceremonies 3 May 1945." Malcolm and I both attended the commissioning at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, since wives were invited and allowed to tour the ship in places.

Our home in New York City was the McAlpin Hotel, taken over mostly by Navy personnel and wives. Navy men rode the "New York subway A-Train to Sand Street Station, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard", according to Tom Tolar, another of GEARING's officers, with whom I spoke on 5/20/95.

What a thrill for a West Virginia gal, to live in a hotel on "42nd Street" in New York City, a block from the Empire State Building, which we could see from our hotel window, and across Harold's Square from Macy's and Sack's 42nd Street department stores. These were the stores in a Christmas movie, "Miracle on 42nd Street," also where I would check early each day for the pick of incoming fabric, some of the best quality in 50 years of sewing. Would cut out pattern shapes on our bed and rent a sewing machine by the hour at a Singer store wherever we lived, to sew dresses, suits and sportswear.

One of the first things we did, after checking into the McAlpin, was take the short subway ride to Times Square to see the famous New York Times Building, with constant news wording moving around the building and where the lighted ball has been dropping on TV every New Years Eve, signaling the end of the old year and start of the new.

It seems to me that Malcolm had duty aboard ship on May 8, 1945, when rumors were flying around that the war in Europe was ending and there would be an announcement that day. When telling Tom Tolar of going to Times Square to see the announcement when it first came across the Times Building, he said he was there with his wife, Margaret. She and I chummed around while in New York, along with the wife of Beverly Stagg, (also in CIC) only man I've known with my name.

Am writing this paragraph on May 11, 1995. The first three days of this week TV coverage was full of the 50th anniversary of V-E Day, Victory in Europe, May 8, 1945. When it showed newsreels of Times Square that actual day, I was one of those thousands of people there, watching words come across the Times Building that war in Europe was finally over. Such yelling, singing, crying and hugging and kissing there was! We GEARING wives just watched others, perhaps tearfully, knowing the Pacific war was where our men would be headed.

Hasty victory celebrations were held all over New York City. Ours was a dance for the original GEARING crew (who did not have to stand duty that night) and wives or rounded-up girl friends, as seen in 9" x 18" photo I have, with Malcolm and me in the center back of the room just under the right table corner against the wall below a red, white & blue draped butterfly banner. Photo caption reads, "Ship dance, Palm Garden, May 9, 1945." I see Bishop, Cave, Copeman, Walker, not Tolar.

One story Malcolm told about was while Officer of the Deck (who signed people on and off ship). A Gearing sailor came zooming down the dock, jumped off a motorcycle, charged up the gangplank, and passed Malcolm without reporting in; BECAUSE, right behind were some MILITARY POLICE!

The MP's rushed up to Malcolm demanding to have him produce the sailor who just ran aboard the ship, because he had stolen the motorcycle belonging to the Commandant of the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Malcolm said he didn't know; it had happened so fast. He was almost court marshalled for negligence of duty over that incident, but was saved by his captain, Cmdr T.H. Copeman, who took over the discipline. Malcolm had assisted him on occasion, coming aboard ship inebriated, and helped him to his cabin. Lt Bishop, noted "tippled a few with Capt Tom myself...modifications in GEARING CIC came as a result of my combat experience in the Pacific including Battle of Surigao Straits."

The aircraft carrier FRANKLIN was towed from the Pacific to Brooklyn with gaping holes in its sides and deck from bombs or Japanese kamikaze planes diving into it. When Gearing men complained about rancid butter being served, it was learned that it came from the FRANKLIN. When the whole wheat bread became "whole wheatier", as Malcolm put it, one officer swore he saw legs on the whole wheat. An inspection of the galley found the flour crawling with weevils, but the ship doctor, Malcolm's roommate, wouldn't condemn the bread, said bugs have protein and are sometimes eaten as delicacies. In their Boardroom/lunchroom, officers solved the problem by spreading gobs of rancid butter on the weevily bread and leaving it on their plates to be thrown out.

A cooking malfunction that received mixed reactions was when they were served the most delicious cherry pie Malcolm said he'd ever eaten, except you could only eat a tiny slice, being made of all maraschino cherries. Tom Tolar said it was terrible, that most wouldn't eat it.

The "shakedown" cruise timing, in Lt. Ed Bishop's records of GEARING logs, sent to me June 1995, had the GEARING "in Guantanamo, Cuba, from May 25, 1945,...arriving in Brooklyn on June 29, 1945,...until July 21, when we left for Norfolk....." which fits GEARING History: "After shakedown off Cuba, GEARING reached Norfolk on 22 July 1945..."

Jack Chittum, who served aboard both the CLEMSON and METCALF, said 6/24/95, a "shakedown cruise" was to test all workings of a new ship, shake anything loose that might at some time malfunction or come loose, then go back where the ship was built (Port Newark, NJ) to have everything put ship-shape. Bishop in letter 7/27/95 added "to train all personnel in all operations and functions...(to be) combat ready."

During shakedown Malcolm learned you could not day dream or have your attention diverted, because one day the captain called down to CIC where Malcolm was on radar watch with some crewmen, and asked (in MT's words), "Trowbridge, seen anything on your radar screen?" CIC was to report any sightings to the bridge where the captain was. "No, sir," Malcolm said he answered after quickly looking at the clear monitor.

"Well, come up on the bridge and take a look," was essentially the captain's response. Up on the bridge Malcolm was astounded and very embarrassed to see almost along side the GEARING a Swedish freighter, which at that close range did NOT show up on radar. An object above the water's surface had to be detected farther away. The CIC crew learned they were also being "shaken down" to stay on constant alert.

CIC crew member Beverly Stagg in Kansas (5/21/95) read me the list of ships that were in Destroyer Division 135, Squad 68: GEARING DD-710, GREEN-711, GYATT-712, BAILEY-713, RUSH-714; & in Destroyer Division 136 were VOLGELGESANG-862, STEINAKER-863, ELLISON-864 & WARE-865.

Tom Tolar said the GEARING crew had shown such exemplary performance during their shakedown cruise, that on the night when their orders were to leave for the Pacific at "0400 hours" or 4:00 am, GEARING's orders were changed at midnight for them to remain behind. Tom added that some of the men were so angry to be left behind, they talked of jumping ship; but then they learned later, that within 45 days, of the destroyers in their squadron (or shakedown group?) that did leave, two were sunk, and the rest damaged in battle off Okinawa, near Japan.

I remember Malcolm returning unexpectedly in his gray uniform to NYC McAlpin Hotel very late one night in July, saying something "strange" was going on; orders for the GEARING were suddenly changed. Their ship was to proceed to Norfolk, and he came back to tell me to change my plans in the morning and go to Norfolk instead of to Huntington. We had said our "Goodbyes" that day, expecting Malcolm to ship out. He indicated other ships were to proceed as planned to the Pacific.

At some point, I don't remember when, Malcolm said, while listening to communications between ships, he heard President Truman's voice over the ship radio. Among his Navy photos is one of which he said the guns were fired like that for Truman. Whatever his words were left me thinking he meant in Truman's honor, whereas now, I wonder if he meant to view the impact of the guns firing.

This supposition is based on whether Truman may have ventured to sea to get the feel of battle and the young men who would be losing their lives if the United States invaded Japan, knowing the massive loss of US lives in retaking Pacific islands of Guam, Midway, the Philippines, etc., plus Japanese dedication to the death to win, as kamikaze pilots were trained, to fly headlong with bombs into our big ships.

Jack Chittum's voice was recorded in Washington D.C. for the TV series "Reaching for the Skies," produced in 1980's by British Broadcasting Company (BBC) telling of seeing kamikaze planes diving into our ships.

Mike Korte, my Canterbury Drive neighbor, once saw six kamikaze planes dive at his battleship USS IDAHO. Marine gunners shot five down but the 6th hit the ship's waterline, creating a hole that took in enough water to cause the battleship to list 35 degrees, until they limped back to Guam for repairs. Mike watched Marines being shot up in their landing at Iwo Jima, and said kamikaze planes were constantly diving at them at Okinawa, yet he only left for the Pacific in early 1945. IDAHO was third behind the MISSOURI into Tokyo Bay for peace signing.

The 30-poster display in May '95 at Lake-Sumter Community College from the United States National Archives called, "World in Flames - World War II", stated, "American high command predicted an appalling 250,000 casualties in an invasion of Japan, but President Truman believed he could end the war more quickly with fewer casualties.....use this terrible weapon against Japan as a way of shortening the war."

Jim Pettapiece, who attended our wedding 12/23/44 at the Norfolk Naval Base Chapel, was radio communications officer on the HANSON, and said, by listening to background messages, Malcolm could have recognized Truman's voice. It was so unique. Jack Chittum 6/24/95 said he was in the invasion of Okinawa from April 1, 1945 on, and recalled reading a bulletin later that Truman had gone to sea before the A-Bombs were dropped, and Malcolm might have heard inter-ship conversations then.

Tolar said, because the GEARING operated with such efficiency during shakedown, it was held back to serve as a training destroyer. I wonder if it was also held back because they were planning to drop the A-bomb and felt it would be a waste sending it to the Pacific theater of war. Tolar was right, GEARING History said it. "...trained pre-commissioning crews for other destroyers until....5 October 1945." Bishop, 7/27/95, wrote that GREEN and GYATT accompanied the GEARING through Dec. 1945.

One should always date and give some simple description of a photo's subject. It's difficult to remember exact things after 50 years. Ed and Jack both thought the A-bombs were dropped in July and war ended in August, but the latter depends on whether you mean a cease-fire or signing of a peace treaty. I remember GEARING's christening, being aboard ship, seeing the big guns, going inside, talking to the Walkers on deck, but thought it was in Norfolk instead of Brooklyn Navy Yard.

AM certain, however, of visiting that July with my close friend, Jo Ann Shivel, whose mother was in New York City Hospital, of leaving New York by train, arriving in Norfolk late July to find Bondale Apts. full, but a vice-admiral's wife, whose husband was in the Pacific, rented us a room. She took photos of us in her front yard. On Aug. 6, 1945, I was with her when learning the unbelievable news, that a US bomber (Enola Gay) had dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan!

Our emotions were a mixture of horror and relief, thinking of the monstrous tragedy of an entire city destroyed with ONE bomb, but that such a gigantic disaster would surely cause the Japanese to surrender. It left an unsafe foreboding atmosphere. Bishop copied from GEARING log: "6 Aug 1945 shows that at 0635 Malcolm reported on board..."

Malcolm was coming and going out on the ship; don't remember how many days at a time he'd be gone, but do remember my landlady letting me use her sewing machine, instead of renting one at Singers as I did in April when making my green suit, hat, and purse that matched. Pulled her hobnail bedspread off the bed to cut the fabric on smooth sheets.

LSCC display said: "Factions within....the Japanese government were already searching for a way to end the war. This stalemate continued despite the collapse of the Japanese economy, the defeat of Okinawa, fire bombing of Japanese cities, and the atomic bombings. Allies demanded unconditional surrender, but the Japanese, uncertain of the place of the Emperor after surrender, asked for assurances that he would be allowed to continue to reign.....the Americans gave these assurances, the Emperor broke the deadlock and Japan surrendered."

September 2, 1945, (V-J Day) the Tokyo Bay Peace Treaty was signed aboard the USS MISSOURI and brought Victory in the Pacific.

Lists showed number of people killed in WWII per country per thousand:

|               |     |              |        |         |       |
|---------------|-----|--------------|--------|---------|-------|
| United States | 408 | China        | 2,200  | Italy   | 220   |
| Great Britain | 456 | Poland       | 6,600  | Germany | 6,200 |
| France        | 650 | Soviet Union | 15,000 | Japan   | 2,000 |

After this the United States began pouring Marshall Plan money into both of the perpetrator countries of World War II, Germany and Japan, launching them into the superpowers of today. That was a reversal from the centuries old practice of "To the victor belongs the spoils." This war to end all wars, we hoped, resulted in a humanitarian effort by the US to rebuild the enemy countries, the first time in recorded history Pastor Jerry Little could remember such a monumental effort occurring after a major military war.

I posed this idea to him in Sunday School 7/2/95, two days before our nation's birthday, founded on religious freedom, whose Constitution and Bill of Rights were written by mostly Christian leaders. Oh yes, that was the economically feasible thing to do, repairing the damage to promote democracy. Wasn't democracy the goal of our Constitution?

After 170 years, our country acted with attitudes stated as a new philosophy nearly 2000 years before, of, "Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all....if your enemy is hungry, feed him," but still - defend yourself if necessary.

By September 1945, I had enrolled in the fall semester at Marshall College, since Malcolm was out at sea so much aboard the GEARING. They left early October for Casco Bay, Maine, sailed in the North Atlantic, down to Trinidad and Cuba, then around to Pensacola, FL.

Beverly Stagg remembers the 710 being there for Thanksgiving of 1945, because he took leave from there to be in Kansas that holiday, while Tom Tolar had his wife down from North Carolina to share Thanksgiving dinner with him and other officers aboard ship. A major mishap, that Tom laughed over, was when the cook brought the large turkey in on a platter, but tripped, and the turkey went sliding onto the floor. Tom said the turkey was picked up, wiped off a little, and served anyway.

During this voyage Malcolm found himself in trouble again, this time as mail officer. Complaints of little mail near the end of the cruise caused an inspection of the mail room and locker of the seaman who was responsible for distributing mail. Bags of mail were found that he had not bothered to sort and pass out - thought he was on a fun trip?

The DD-710 returned "to Norfolk 21 March 1946." says GEARING History; which I did, also. The Pettapieces allowed us to use their Bondale apartment while they were gone. Unexpectedly saw my brother, Wayne, walking along the dock on the naval base shortly before he was discharged, plus other boys Malcolm and I knew from high school and invited out to our apartment.

Everyone who was in the Navy then must have been to the Norfolk Naval Base. Sometimes when I walked along a street on the base, a voice would yell, "Beverly". I would seek out the source and then exchange news of friends at home or around the world.

Malcolm was discharged from the United States Navy in June of 1946, not a combat hero, but he survived. That's why you're here.

NOW - have you been absorbing all this and the dates? They are important to help substantiate Malcolm's story about President Truman, since Tolar and Bishop do not remember it, nor did Lt. Cmdr Hayler, the Executive Officer; but after sending Bishop GEARING photocopies, 7/27/95, he wrote "there is absolutely NO question in my mind that Malcolm did hear Truman's voice on the ship's radio...It was common practice for CIC personnel to listen to other radio frequencies...(and) possible that it was heard on a regularly assigned frequency."

Am including as many of Malcolm's stories as I can remember for you children and grandchildren, despite other's memories, but as Bishop implied - how good was his memory at 80? Malcolm may have embellished a few stories in retelling them, but always had an actual situation involved. If he told a story for a joke, he would say he was kidding; so his Truman story, told in seriousness and not being remembered by his shipmates, became an obsession for me to prove its validity.

Called our Leesburg Library today, 7/5/95. A librarian read some dates from a new 1117-page biography by David McCullough called, "TRUMAN":  
 July 7, 1945, Truman aboard USS AUGUSTA bound for Europe  
 July 15, 1945, USS AUGUSTA docks in Antwerp, Truman flies to Berlin  
 July 15/Aug 2, Truman at Potsdam, Germany, with Churchill & Stalin  
 Aug. 2, 1945, Truman flew to Plymouth, Eng., boarded AUGUSTA for US  
 Aug. 5, 1945, Truman's "day extremely tense, looking worried"  
 Aug. 6, 1945, Truman aboard USS AUGUSTA, S. of Newfoundland given news - shortly before noon, "Hiroshima had been bombed four hours earlier."  
 Aug. 7, 1945, USS AUGUSTA docks at Norfolk Naval Base just before 5pm

I checked out the book today 7/8/95, began copying interesting quotes from it: "Truman's Committee...in its report on the loss of U-boats ...said 12 million tons of American shipping were destroyed in 1942... 1 million tons more than all..nation's shipyards were then producing."  
 4/12/45, "day...Roosevelt died, the total of American casualties, (in WWII) killed, wounded, missing and prisoners was 899,390, (196,999 dead) more than 900 a day. In...Pacific...cost of victory was rising."

5/9/45 (page 390-1) Meeting of eight persons (Presidents of Harvard, MIT, Carnegie Inst., Truman, Sec. of War, Stimson and two more) plus physicists Fermi, Crompton, Lawrence & Oppenheimer. All agreed new bomb should be used against Japan as soon as possible, against war plants, and without warning; Byrnes agreed reluctantly."  
 5/23/45 p393 "...five square miles of Tokyo obliterated....Stimson's directive to Gen Groves in 1942 had been to produce the bomb at the earliest possible date to bring the war to a conclusion..."

6/6/45 "Stimson discussed report with Truman in detail, said he was troubled by B-29 fireraids on Japan. He insisted on precision bombing, but Japanese industry scattered among ..houses of employees.. 300 B-29 bombers swept such devastation on Tokyo...March 9-10....Japan vowing anew to fight to the end.....Admiral Leahy had been assuring Truman that 'the damn thing' (bomb) would never work.... Oppenheimer ...nerves on edge....detonators were not firing as they should."



p397, "....conclusions of the committee were similar to (Stimson's) own....to extract a genuine surrender from the Emperor and military advisers, there must be administered a tremendous shock..(that) would save many times the number of lives, both American and Japanese, that it would cost." It was suggested to warn the Japanese, but they might bring American prisoners of war to the designated areas. "Oppenheimer's estimate was that 20 thousand would die. (Stimson) It was the 'shock value' of the weapon that would stop the war."

"Okinawa was on their minds... attack on the armada by hundreds of Japanese suicide planes, the kamikaze, had had a devastating effect ..30 ships sunk, more than 300 damaged..The battle on Okinawa still raged.....In the end, more than 12,000 Americans would be killed, 36,000 wounded, 110,000 Japanese killed and as later studies show, civilian deaths on the island may have been as high as 150,000, a third of the population....on just Okinawa...The enemy fought from caves and pillboxes with fanatic ferocity." p395

"We regarded the matter of dropping the bomb as exceedingly important ....The first day of the invasion of Iwo Jima had been more costly than D-Day at Normandy...The Japanese had demonstrated in each case (American recaptured islands) they would not surrender and they fight to the death."

6/18/45 At meeting: "Invasion plan presented by General Marshall.... ..begin in Nov. (45) on the southern most islands....Japanese island KYUSHU, 350 miles from Okinawa...would be as difficult as Normandy... First thirty days, losses estimate would be similar to ..LUZON..about 31,000...Admiral King said Okinawa a bitter judge at 41,000. Admiral Nimitz..forecast 49,000 casualties in thirty days." Adding invading "Japan proper" Pentagon estimate was "220,000 casualties."

General Hardy of Marshall's staff said Americans would save no less than 500,000 to one million lives by avoiding the invasion...Stimson was certain Japanese would fight as never before..cost of life on both sides would far exceed all other campaigns of the war." Code name of invasion plan was "Downfall"..assault on KYUSHU called "Olympic" was to begin Nov 1, 45; "Operation Coronet" the "larger invasion of Japan proper, the main island of Honshu, would follow in March 1946."

"Truman approved the plan..as meeting ended..beginning to get papers together...(Truman) said, "McCloy, nobody leaves this room until he's heard from. McCloy replied that the threat of the bomb might provide a 'political solution'. The whole invasion could be avoided. An immediate hush fell on the room...(he) would tell the Japanese, 'We have the bomb....what kind of weapon it is...Our moral position will be stronger if we give them warning.'.....Truman indicated he would think about it."

6/26/45 Aboard the Presidential plane, "The Sacred Cow", Truman flew to San Francisco..officiated at the signing of United Nations Charter, told delegates..."keep the world at peace and free from fear of war."

7/2/45 Ratification of UN Charter

7/7/45 Truman left on cruiser AUGUSTA for Potsdam Conference, Germany

7/15/45 p 409, USS AUGUSTA docked at Antwerp; Truman flew to Berlin.  
 7/16 to 8/2/45 Truman viewed his main purpose at Potsdam Conference to get a commitment from Russia to help defeat Japan; they were trying to talk peace to Soviets, "messages were intercepted by Americans.... Japanese code ....broken years before, but 'unconditional surrender' they would not accept." This information reached Truman who had "bitter memory of Japan peace talks in Washington in Dec. 1941, at the very time of the attack on Pearl Harbor."

7/16/45 At 5:29 a.m. New Mexico, "first nuclear explosion in history.. at 7:30 that evening..top secret telegram to Truman..."Operated on this morning....already exceeds expectations."

7/18/45 A 2nd secret..telegram...of 2nd explosion. Truman & Churchill decided to tell Stalin as he told of secret peace feelers by Japan.

7/20/45 No word on bomb..Eisenhower opposed use..not beg Stalin's help  
 7/21/45 Description of bomb tests took hour to read, Churchill saw it.  
 7/22/45 p436, Message from Washington....."about ready for final operation....decision on the target cities was needed. Hiroshima was 'depot for Japan's homeland army.'"

7/23/45 A warning message to Japan was nearly ready.....to be an ultimatum known as "Potsdam Declaration."

7/24/45 Top secret message, "'Operation may be possible anytime from Aug 1..almost certain before Aug 10'..Consensus at Potsdam of six top US men there....that the bomb should be used...Gen Marshall's opinion ..invasion would cost a minimum of a quarter...million Am..casualties.

p 437, "In the three months since Truman took office, American battle casualties in the Pacific were nearly half the total of three years of war in the Pacific....Truman had...authorized..to move more than one million troops for a final attack on Japan.....30 divisions were on the way to the Pacific from the European theater."

p 438, "Japan had 2.5 million regular troops on the home islands, every male between 15 & 60, every female between 17 & 45 armed with everything from ancient brass cannons to bamboo spears (told to aim for the abdomen), ..taught to strap explosives on their bodies and throw themselves under advancing tanks...Thousands of planes were ready to serve as kamikazes."

"Twenty-five warfront correspondents....guess was the war would not end...until June 1946... talk of Japanese forces in China..fighting on...if Tokyo were to give up...Japanese atrocities....Bataan death march...Palawon Massacre...lured 140 American prisoners into air raid trench, doused them with gasoline and burned them alive."

p 439, "At Potsdam, Bohlin (wrote).....'spirit of mercy was not throbbing in the breast of any Allied official...What if, when the war was over, after a bloodbath in an invasion of Japan, it became known that a weapon sufficient to end the war had been available...and not used?..Had the bomb been ready in March....and shocked Japan into surrender...it would have saved nearly 50,000 American lives lost in the Pacific in the time since.'..Leahy (said), 'Roosevelt would have used it in a minute to prove he hadn't wasted 2 billion dollars.'"

p 442, Churchill: "The decision whether or not to use the atomic bomb to compel the surrender of Japan was never an issue." George Elsey: "He (Truman) could no more have stopped it than a train moving down a track....It's all well and good to come along later and say the bomb was a horrible thing. The whole goddam war was a horrible thing." Truman stated: "The final decision of where and when to use the bomb was up to me."

7/24/45 Am & British Chiefs of Staff convened with Truman & Churchill ...from this point it was settled... the bomb would be used within a few weeks....Truman casually mentioned to Stalin that we had a new weapon...Stalin said he was glad to hear it", but asked no questions. 7/25/45 "...order was issued to the Air Force to proceed with the plan...to use it so that military objectives...are the target... not the old capitol (Kyoto) or new (Tokyo)."

7/26/45 Churchill returned to England to find he had lost the election to Clement Attlee for Prime Minister.....In the Pacific, cruiser INDIANAPOLIS delivered the U-235 portion of an atomic bomb (Little Boy). "That evening Truman and Byrnes decided to release the Potsdam Declaration telling Japanese conditions of surrender."

7/30/45...late top secret cable decoded but held until morning to give to Truman, "'Time schedule..progressing so rapidly...essential that statement for release by you be available not later than Aug 1.'" Time had come for Truman to give the final go ahead for the bomb."

7/31/45, 7:48 a.m., Berlin time, Truman gave his answer, "Suggestion approved. Release when ready not sooner than Aug 2." Truman wanted to have everything completed at the Potsdam Conference, dividing up Germany, Poland, German navy, etc., leave and be gone by August 2.

8/2/45 Truman flew to England, boarded USS AUGUSTA, set off for US

8/6/45 S. off Newfoundland "Shortly before noon" (Truman) told ship's crew and officers news of first message, then..."a second message was \* brought in: 'Big bomb dropped on Hiroshima August 5 at 7:15 PM \* Washington time'....Within minutes, the ship's radio was carrying \* news bulletins from Washington about the bomb. Then came...broadcast \* of the President's message, the text of which had been released at \* the White House only moments before, at 11:00 am Washington time..."

"Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. It is an atomic bomb....If they do not now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen by earth." No particular details were given, and Truman's whereabouts may not have been wanted known to the public.

After reading above \* and underlined words today, 7/8/95, am guessing Aug. 6, '45, may be the date of Malcolm's hearing Truman's voice on the ship radio, (assuming by "President's message" it was prerecorded expecting to drop the bomb before his return) because the USS AUGUSTA, possibly farther away than GEARING, heard the "President's message" on their ship radio from Washington, in the pretaped announcement from our nation's leader that an atomic bomb was dropped.

My memory is predominantly visual, not verbal. I don't remember when Malcolm left Norfolk or returned, only that he was out Aug 6, 1945, when I heard the news with the vice-admiral's wife in her kitchen, in the home where we rented a room. Malcolm could have been Officer of the Deck wearing earphones and heard the President's message from Washington, with the captain announcing the bombing to GEARING's crew.

Years later it seems I remember Malcolm saying at one point it sounded like Truman was questioning someone aboard another ship about where he was from, about his family, etc. The book, "TRUMAN", stated the AUGUSTA was accompanied by the light cruiser USS PHILADELPHIA, so Truman could have wiled away his spare time by trying out AUGUSTA's radio between the ships when they approached Norfolk on Aug. 7. A GEARING officer at one of the ship's radios could have heard this.

Truman, who said, "The buck stops here," had to give the go ahead to drop this bomb. Whether Malcolm took the photo with guns firing after or before Truman's Washington announcement about dropping the A-bomb or about V-J Day, Malcolm must have felt on some occasion like they were shooting off fireworks in Truman's honor to say, "Hooray for Truman, for giving the okey to drop that atomic bomb and end the war!"

One story in "TRUMAN", of a now newsman, when he was 40% disabled with a broken leg and ordered back into battle, said he broke down and cried when hearing that terrible bomb was dropped, and thought, now he wouldn't die, he'd live, and grow older, and see home again.

With these incidents being 50 years ago, nearly lost amid accumulation of many experiences in our lives, and their facts faded into a mist of memories from seldom being triggered to recall, the subject of Truman's words dwindled away, but not the fact that Malcolm had retold this Navy story of recognizing the President's voice over the ship radio. I can still recognize it, or Ike's or FDR's.

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Such a trivial concern, why go to great lengths to prove the validity of one insignificant story? It is to uphold Malcolm's integrity, by trying to prove he did not make up the story. If one is faithful and perseveres in small things, then those who question the source giver may be willing to acknowledge the findings.

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Why so many details? To try and help you children and grandchildren understand the reason for decisions, the magnitude of destruction, loss of life, and anxieties in that global war, that led to such a sense of relief, when the shock of this never-before-seen gigantic explosion gave us an immediate feeling that the war would surely end quickly. These details were vital to the outcome of our lives then.

Young liberals, who so easily criticize our generation for being glad the A-bomb was used, never lived as we did, under fear of fascism and fanaticism that put so little value to life, including THEIR LIVES - that might not be here had the atomic bomb not been used by the United States - NOR - if our enemy of that era had used it.