

we could have pulled into port for some liberty long ago. Since we left Mayport close to two months elapsed without a single footstep on solid ground. We sailed around watching subs, the ship's main duty, and watched closed circuit T.V. about Bierut. I pursued my OCS app and Beneficial Suggestion as well as I could while we sailed. The few spare hours weighed heavy so I ran around the ship on those two little missions, and put in some time for the Public Relations Officer writing of the Vreelends exploits. I completed a few correspondence courses to beef up my service record for OCS with the rest of the time. When you are off of watch you want out of the heat of the fireroom. It only makes good sense. The Navy has standards for exposure to the heat that are seldom met so you take the time out of the workstation as much as you can in between watches and casualties. Basically the life of a snipe is routine as long as it is done right and trouble is caught early and taken care of. Considering everything that could foul up we had a miraculous time of it and didn't break, and felt better when we heard of other ships who did break and some quite badly. Things just seemed to keep rooling along like a ball downhill. All the problems we had were minor. A couple of valves in line blew gaskets were isolated and changed. A feed pump was opened up under suspicion, it was O.K. The only real breakage was in one of the steam driven air compressors, but they were a cheaply designed unit from conception, didn't keep the ship moving, and were subject to some unskilled abusive lightoffs. I watched one petty officer light one off with out blowing the turbine down. A turbine runs on steam, pure steam, and with leaks and all this guy was putting it on the line with a cup of water in it as it wasn't blown down right. So that is how things break. We get orders spelled out step by step on the gear and how to operate it, but some just don't have it and barge ahead operating without thinking. I guess the fatigue plays a factor in this sort of incident, maybe dope to who knows. You really can't, and who wants to, watch everybody all the time. As long as we were out I imagine the dope onboard dried up we had some real personalities changes as time went on. Some of the regular users turned quite vile with out their little helpers, and chemical releases.

Finally we got liberty, no Greece. Naples. We anchored in a manner known as "Med moored". We put our stern up against the pier side by side with the rest of the squadron. The reasons being, if we had to pull out on short notice, no tug boats would be needed. We could light off from cold in an hour really hurrying and sail off. The first impression of Naples for a sailor is nasty to say the least. The water looks like you can walk on it. Garbage chunks of wood, rubbers, oil, and dead dogs float in the harbor. We sort of expected a dead body to float up. It seems farcical that we manned the rail pulling in. We were met by a few greaseballs, a couple line handlers in t-shirts. The grand Italian fleet sits at the fleet landing, two or three used world war two light destroyers.

Once off the pier you find that Naples has three castles and some of the old fortress walls remain. I visited two of the castles and neither of them was restored as you might expect. one was entirely vacant, and cursed the damn thing for looking so romantic