

## Chapter XXIX

### Answering the Call

January 1, 1951 – May 31, 1951

In addition to celebrating the arrival of the new year, they also celebrated the engagement of Craig and Edith. Being Sheffield's niece, she had always been a part of the family, now she would become an integral part of their family. Sheffield and the girls went back to school on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January 1951, but Ricks College didn't start again until the following Monday. Sheffield's team had a wrestling match on Friday, so he took them back on Saturday and returned home the next day, this time without any weather delays.

In the middle of January the cows calved, with one calf that didn't survive. Sheffield mailed out more than six thousand announcements for the ship's reunion, which was still year and half away. It kept himself, Ramona and the girls busy on two Saturdays getting them ready to take to the post office. The wrestling team continued to produce wins with the exception of one loss.

Janet celebrated her fifteenth birthday in January. The one thing she wanted the most was for her dad to give her driving lessons. As he did with Craig and Norma, he took her into the court house to get a learners permit. She had driven the pickup in the pasture and had the basic idea down, but driving on the open road was a new experience. Each weekend Sheffield took her out in the kid's car, except for when Norma needed it. On those occasions, they took the family car. By June, she would be ready to get her license.

In early March, Sheffield's received another call from John Steinmann. This time John wanted him to fly out to Los Angeles for a few days to consult with them on the script, casting selections, and set designs. MGM would pay for his plane tickets, hotel, and meals, plus compensation for his time. Ramona was invited too. There was no way that she was going to stay home and substitute his government class while he was hobnobbing with movie stars in Hollywood.

Sheffield found a substitute teacher to cover for him with no problem. On the afternoon of the 11<sup>th</sup> they flew up to Washington in the Staggerwing and spent the night with Mason and Pat Owen. Early Monday morning, they caught the first flight to Los Angeles, where they were met by a representative of Mr. Steinmann. They were taken to their hotel and checked in and got settled. That's when they discovered that Chet and Debra Mayfield and John and Kathryn Godfrey were all staying at the same hotel.

Debra's reunion with the German sea captain who had held her and Molly as captives on his ship was an amiable one. She soon found him to be the warm and friendly person that Sheffield found him to be. He was far from what one would expect from the ruthless pirate that some had made him out to be. His was a terrible job, yet he had managed to plunder the Indian Ocean and South Atlantic with mercy and compassion. He intended to spare life whenever possible and treated those who he captured with dignity.

On Tuesday morning, they were given the grand tour of the MGM studios. That afternoon, they met

with the script writers and were presented with a draft of the screenplay. It had been through several revisions and still needed polished. The input from the three participants in the story was very helpful. Mr. Steinmann's goal was to be as accurate as possible with the story.

He said, "Sometimes true life drama is more exciting than what a creative mind could conceive. What we have here is a classic story with a hero, a damsel in distress, and a villain.

"We had trouble coming up with a title without focusing on one particular element of the story. One suggestion was 'The Captain's Red Dress' referring to how Captain Brason was finally able to let go of his wife and children who had been killed at Pearl Harbor precisely one year prior to the setting.

"Another title that was proposed was 'The Widow's Plight' referring to ordeal of Mrs. Watson and her daughter in returning to the United States with the body of her husband who had been murdered in Rio de Janeiro, having been pulled from the sea twice. Once by the villain who held them captive and once by the hero who gave her his wife's dress and saw to it that they got home.

"One other title we considered was 'Edelweiss' referring to the notorious German raider plundering the South Atlantic who's Captain had compassion for his victims.

"What we needed was a title that pulled the three story lines together. The opening sequence is the ship crossing the equator into the Neptune's Realm with the traditional naval ceremony. Since the story is set in the South Atlantic, we decided on 'Neptune's Realm'."

Mr. Steinmann went on to briefly unfold the story of each of the three main characters, bringing them all together. The story stayed true to Sheffield's account with a few things thrown in to enhance the telling of the story. For example, he wanted to include the part about Murry Puchesky in the movie, even though it actually took place prior to the time frame.

When he was finished he asked for comments and suggestions. They were mostly small things, but there was one thing that Sheffield insisted be removed from the script. They had him portrayed as turning to alcohol to drown his sorrows. Instead he requested that he be portrayed as turning to God for comfort. It wasn't what Hollywood was used to, but it was agreed to make the change.

On Wednesday morning as Sheffield and Ramona were walking across the studio lot to the conference room where their meeting was to be held, they ran right into someone who looked very familiar. As they were approached by two women dressed as old west saloon girls, one of them immediately ducked around a corner, but not before Sheffield recognized her.

He went around the corner to find her hiding in the shadows. "Ruth Ann." he said to her.

"You must be mistaking me for someone else, mister."

"Yeah." the other woman agreed. Her name is Ann Ruthridge."

"Come out here in the light so we can see you." Ramona encouraged.

Concurring with the request, she stepped forward. "Uncle Sheffield. Aunt Ramona." she said.

Without hesitation, Ramona rushed to her and took her in her arms. "Thank goodness you're alright. Everyone has been so worried about you."

"What are you doing here?" Sheffield asked.

"I work here. This week I'm an extra in a western."

"Do you have time to talk?" Sheffield asked.

"Only for a minute. I'm due on the set. What are you doing here anyway?"

"They're making a movie about my old ship and I'm here to consult with the producers and writers.

Now I have one question for you that I want you to answer, Why?"

"Because I enjoy it. I can be all kinds of people that I'm not. I've been everything from a dead body in a murder mystery to a saloon girl in a western."

"That's not what I mean. Why did you run out on Joseph and your children?"

"Because that wasn't me. I've never been able to be me." she sobbed, causing her makeup to run.

"Couldn't you at least have let your folks know where you were. They've been so worried."

"Well, I suppose now they'll know."

"That's right."

"Look Uncle Sheffield. I really have to go. Now I need to redo my makeup. I'm going to be late as it is."

"Alright. But is there anything you want me to tell anyone?"

"Yeah, tell them that I'm alright and that I'm finally happy."

"Is there anything else?"

"Yeah. Tell them to not try to come looking for me, except in the movies." She said as the other girl took her by the arm and pulled her away from the uncomfortable situation she was in.

Shocked by the unexpected encounter, they watched as Ruth Ann disappeared into the crowd. Now they were late for their appointment as well, but it was worth it. Now they could at least let everyone know that she was alive and well.

At the meeting that morning the set design and filming was presented. They had acquired a reels of film from the National Archives that had been taken of the Reprisal from a blimp prior to sailing for North Africa. There was also some shipboard film of air operations that could also be incorporated. All in color. The main set would include the Admiral's and Captain's suites. Shipboard sequences would be filmed aboard whatever carrier the Navy had available at the time.

As far as the Edelweiss was concerned, there was a good amount a film available of her from her world cruise prior to the war. It was black and white and would have to be colorized. Again, shipboard

sequences would be filmed aboard an actual ocean liner. They were still negotiating with a cruise line on which ship could be used. As for the Cutthroat, the Navy was also making available one of her sister ships still in its wartime configuration.

There was plenty film available of Rio de Janeiro, including a shot from the Christ the Redeemer Statue showing the Reprisal in the bay. The rest of the Rio sequences would be filmed in the studio. All in all they had covered all of their bases and the whole project was beginning to take shape. Not only was Mr. Steimann pleased but so were the people the story was about.

That afternoon they actually got to meet the actors who were cast to play the major roles. It was exciting for Sheffield and Ramona and the others to actually meet the faces that they had seen on the silver screen.

The actor chosen to play Captain Brason was Ronald Reagan whose film career dated back to 1937 and had starred in a number of war movies and westerns. During the war he had been an officer in the Army Reserve but due to nearsightedness never served outside of the United States. Sheffield's only comment was that he needed to grow a mustache and go bald. Mr. Regan said that he could manage the mustache but the bald part was out of the question. The way he said it brought the room to laughter.

Debra Watson was to be played by Maureen O'hara. She was faltered to be portrayed by such a beautiful and well known actress. Miss O'hara's film career was nearly as long as that of Ronald Reagan in which she had played a number of leading roles. Molly was to be played by the eight year old child actress Donna Corcoran who was from an acting family. This would be her first movie role.

Captain Gottfried was to be played by Curt Jürgens, a German film and stage actor who spoke excellent English. During the war he had been critical of the Nazis and was sent to an internment camp in Hungary as politically unreliable. Because of that, he could identify very much with the role that he was to play.

As for the other major characters, Commander Owen was to be played by William Holden, another veteran actor. Morris Gover would be played by Cliff Roertson, a younger actor who had been in two previous films. He was joined by another young actor by the name of James Dean who would play Murry Puchesky. This was to be his second film.

Satisfied with the three days of meetings, the production was set to go forward. It would be at least a year if not more before it would be ready for release. Hopefully in time for the ship's reunion.

Each evening and all day Friday, the three couples were free to see the sights of the Los Angeles and Hollywood at the expense of MGM. On their last night in Los Angeles, the Brasons, Mayfields, and Godfreys had dinner together. Over the last few days, Debra had got to know Captain Gottfried and found him to be completely different from what she thought him to be based on the few hours that she spent as his

“guest” aboard the Edelweiss. During dinner John extended an invitation to Debra and Chet to sail with him on the S.S Florida and promised a different experience than the last time that she sailed with him. Debra admitted that she still had a fear of ships and being at sea after all those years. He also renewed his invitation to Sheffield and Ramona to sail with him. They promised that they would when school let out for the summer. On the other hand the Godfreys accepted an invitation to have the missionaries call on them. Chet took down their contact information and assured them that someone would call on them. On Saturday they all returned to their homes.

The first thing Sheffield did when he got home was to call his brother and tell him that they saw Ruth Ann and about the very brief encounter that they had with her. Shenan was relieved to know that much about her. After talking to Sheffield, he placed a long distance call to Joesph with news.

Sheffield's next call was to Coach Karrington. He learned that the Magicians had finished their regular season with another win, bringing them to nine wins and three losses for the regular season going into the district tournament in two weeks.

The next Saturday was the Two Star Ranch Round Up. This time, Janet was was careful to stay out of the way and still be helpful. The following Friday and Saturday, the Jefferson High Magicians won the district wrestling tournament and were headed for the state championships in two weeks.

During the first three months of 1951, Communist forces had driven the American and South Korean troops southward in a desperate retreat. By springtime, however, American forces had regained some of the lost ground and organized a successful defensive line not far from the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, halting the Chinese advance. In a series of offenses and counter offenses, neither side made any headway. The war began to settle into a stalemate and appeared that it was going to be a long one.

On Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> Sheffield received a letter from the Navy Department. At first he thought it was a pension statement, but the return address said Bureau of Naval Personnel which was responsible for making command assignments, among other things.

Before opening it, he new what it was. He had known all along that it was possible to be recalled to active duty. He waited until supper when the family was together to open it and read it out loud. “Dear Admiral Brason, this notice is to inform you that you are once more needed in the service of your nation. As you know, we are embroiled in a war that has not gone well. In order to aggressively pursue the war to victory, the Navy has recommissioned a large number of vessels, including aircraft carriers. Due to the lack of flag officers to command the revitalized fleet, it has become necessary to call upon some who have demonstrated the ability to lead and win.

“Admiral Forrest P. Sherman, the Chief of Naval Operations personally recommend you and issued

the order for your recall with the rank of Rear Admiral. This order is contingent only on your passing the minimal physical requirements for flag officers. You are to report to Bethesda Naval Medical Center on Monday April sixteenth, nineteen fifty one at ten o'clock a.m. Providing that you pass the physical, you will have sixty days to put our affairs in order and report for duty on June first, nineteen fifty one. You will be notified prior to that time of your command assignment. Please sign and return the attached form indicating that you have received and plan to comply with these orders.

“Thank you for your long career of service and responding once again to the call of a grateful nation. And its signed, George M. Nichols, Vice Admiral US Navy.”

After reading the letter, Ramona asked, “What are you going to do, Babe?”

“The only thing I can do. Answer the call.”

“Well that sure changes things.” Ramona said. “I was afraid that it might come to this.”

“I know. All of a sudden there is so much to figure out in such a short time.” Sheffield added.

“That's cutting it close with two graduations and weddings at the end of May, not to mention Craig going into the Reserve all at the same time. And so much for our cruise to Havana. I'll have to let the Godfreys know we won't be coming.”

“Tell them we'll go some other time.”

Norma and Janet listened to the discussion in silence. Emotion was building in Janet's breast. “I don't want you to go Daddy. I don't want you to leave us.” Sobbing she threw her arms tightly around his neck.

“It will be alright, Sweetheart.” he said trying to reassure her. “It will only be for a little while.”

“How long?”

“I really don't know. But I promise you I'll come home as soon as I can.”

Janet let go and tried to regain her composure. “Promise?”

“I promise.”

Norma got up and planted a kiss on the top of his head. “I'll miss you, Dad, but I'm proud of you.”

“Listen, it'll just be you girls and your mom around here for a while, but I know that you'll manage just fine. We'll have to do something about the cows and I'll need to do something about my class and the team. Like I said, there's a lot to think about.”

“Yes, Babe. But we don't have to figure it all out tonight. Why don't we forget about fixing supper and go to the Pizza Joint. What do you say?”

That night Sheffield and Ramona talked about it between themselves. Sheffield asked her if she'd consider being a permanent substitute for him while he was gone, rather than quit his teaching position. She thought about it and the next morning told him that she would do it. It was only three classes, which still gave

her time to conduct her own business.

Sheffield left earlier than usual and went by the district office to inform them of this sudden change. He explained that it was temporary but of an indefinite duration. He really wanted to keep his position open for when he did come back. He proposed the idea that Ramona teach his government class, since she has already substituted for him on occasion. He also recommended that Coach Karrington be named the acting coach while he was gone. They were agreeable to both of his requests.

By the end of the day, word got out that the Admiral had been recalled. Coach Karrington was summoned to the office and had a brief meeting with the principal and superintendent and agreed to the arrangement. For him, it was an opportunity to show what he could do and perhaps it could be a springboard to a head coaching position somewhere.

There was one thing still to be taken care of. Sheffield had to decide what to do with the ranch. He talked to Roger about it and he agreed to look after things. He'd see to it that the hay and the livestock were taken care of. The cows were pretty low maintenance most of the time, except for in the winter. One final thing, Roger told him that he'd find someone to take his Sunday School class, if he'd teach it for a couple more weeks.

During that first week a lot of things fell into place. He still had to turn the ship's reunion over to someone. After thinking about it for a few days, he called Mace Owen to talk to him about what to do. Mace wasn't certain how much longer he would be in Washington since he was up for reassignment to other duties. Therefore he wasn't sure he'd be able to take over. He suggested that Sheffield talk to Hank Terry. He had retired from the Navy in 1946 and had returned to his hometown of Boise, Idaho where he worked for the city as the manager of the airport. Sheffield called him and talked to him about the idea and he agreed to take over for him.

At the end of week, Sheffield and the Magicians traveled to Richmond for the state wrestling tournament. After the best season yet, Jefferson brought home the championship trophy. Several of his team members won the state championships in their weight classes. Most of them would be returning the next year giving Coach Karrington pretty much a ready made team.

Word reached the Roanoke Branch that President George Albert Smith had died on the 4<sup>th</sup> of April. He held a special place in the hearts of the Brasons. Not only was he the Prophet when they joined the Church, but he had performed their sealings in the Salt Lake Temple. A few days later, David O. McKay was set apart as the President of the Church, as expected. The whole process of naming a new leader of the church was so smooth and orderly. It was a testimony to Sheffield and Ramona that it was all in God's hands.

During the second week in April. "In the Right Place" was released and sent to bookstores across

the country. Again Sheffield received a case to do with as he pleased. He donated copies to the local libraries and sent some as gifts to those who had been part of that time in his life, including Shorty, Freddy, Scoop, and Cowboy.

He agreed to book signings at The BookEnd and the stores in Richmond and Norfolk that he had done before. The fact that the Virginian war hero was returning to duty actually helped to sell a lot of books across the state. It was estimated that pretty much anyone who bought his first book also bought this one too. In fact the release of "In the Right Place" spurred additional sales of "Reprisal: The Forgotten Carrier".

Now that Sheffield had been recalled for duty, he paid closer attention to the news coming from the war. The stalemate continued and he felt that in large part it was because of the way that President Truman was mishandling the war. He wasn't the only one who felt that way. General MacArthur sent a letter to congress that was highly critical of the President's limited-war strategy. Because of his remarks, President Truman fired him for insubordination and replaced him with General Matthew B. Ridgeway, the commander of the 8<sup>th</sup> Army in South Korea. Sheffield's dislike for Truman was elevated a couple of notches over this incident. But he was the President, the Commander in Chief and as a professional military officer, he was bound to follow orders, regardless of his opinion of the one issuing the orders.

On the morning of Monday April 16<sup>th</sup> Sheffield left Ramona to teach his government class and he flew up to Bethesda in the Stagerwing. He landed at the College Park Airport and took a cab to the hospital for a day filled with routine physical examinations.

Mace took time off and met him for lunch to talk about the plans for the reunion. Mace had some good news. He had just been notified that he had finally received the long awaited promotion to Rear Admiral and had orders to report on June 1<sup>st</sup> to the Commander of the Sixth Fleet headquartered at Nice, France the as the Deputy Commander of Naval Air Forces in the Mediterranean. Unlike his assignment in Japan, this time Pat was going with him.

After lunch, Sheffield returned to the hospital for general dental and vision check ups. At the end of the day he was found to be in good health, pending the results of some lab work, he was declared fit for duty. The only downside was that he was found to need glasses. He wasn't all that surprised because lately he had noticed that he had to hold printed material farther away in order to for the words to focus. His distance vision was still excellent. He picked out a pair of frames and once the lens were made, they be mailed to him. He was finished at the hospital by four o'clock and flew home. A few days later he received his reading glasses in the mail along with a report on his lab work which cleared him for duty. Now all that remained was to receive his orders.

The rest of April passed without much excitement. It was almost life as usual, except for the fact that he would be leaving his family and his home. They often talked about what his assignment might be,

Ramona hoped that it would be a desk assignment in Washington or Norfolk and he could fly home on the weekends. From the wording of the letter that he had received, Sheffield thought that it might be a sea command. It had been five and half years since he had been to sea and he missed it. A few months at sea would be a nice change.

Finally the question was answered when a couple of weeks later he received his orders. He was to report to San Diego on June 1<sup>st</sup> and assume command of Carrier Division One with the recently recommissioned USS Essex as his flagship. The orders further stated that he was then to report to the Commander of the Seventh Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan for duty off Korea. He was going off to war.

Ramona was dismayed. "I had to worry about you all through the last war. Now I have to worry about you all over again."

"This is different." Sheffield tried to reassure her. "Unlike the Japanese, The North Koreans and the Chinese don't have the capability to attack our ships a sea. I'll be just fine."

"But what about the Russians? What if they get involved?"

"Then we'll have a really big problem on our hands won't we. Look, I promise, I'll be fine."

"Alright then. I believe you. But I'm going to miss you. We can go back to writing letters."

"I'll bet the mail has a better chance of getting back and forth than it used to. We can stay in touch."

Now that Sheffield had his orders, the time seemed to slip away. By the first of May, there was only one month left and it was going to be a busy month. Shenan's son Delbert got to come home for a week before shipping out. Rather than going to Korea, his unit was heading for Germany.

Sheffield did as much as possible to have things in order around the house and the ranch. He took the time to show Ramona his lesson plans and tests so she would be familiar with the overall course. He knew that Ramona was pretty independent after all those years that she was alone. He wasn't too worried about her, she pretty much took care of things as it was. He was confident that she could manage without him for a while.

He took advantage of things that he wouldn't have a chance to do while he was gone. They spent Mother's Day weekend at the cabin. He made sure that he and Red had some time together. Where he was going, he wouldn't be doing any horseback riding. He also put in a good deal of time in the Stagewing just flying around, sometimes alone, sometimes he took someone along for the ride, especially Ramona and the girls. He spent as much one on one time with Norma and Janet as he could. He also stopped in to see his parents often. In the shape that his dad was in, he wasn't sure that he'd ever see him again in this life.

The last week and a half was particularly busy. On Wednesday the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Norma graduated from Jefferson High. Sheffield had been invited to be the commencement speaker. Dressed in his uniform, it was his opportunity to say goodbye to the school that had been a big part of his life for the last five years. In his

closing remarks, he promised to be back.

That evening, they celebrated Norma's graduation by going out to the Pizza Joint. Then she and her friends went to a graduation party hosted by the senior class advisor.

The very next day, Sheffield, Ramona, and the girls took off in the Staggerwing for the trip to Idaho, taking the usual route, with stopovers in St. Louis and McCook. Craig met them at the airport and took them to the Idamont. Friday was Craig's graduation from Ricks College with an associates degree in automotive repair. Also graduating were Edith Austin and Read Rowan, so there was a large contingent from the Roanoke Branch in attendance.

Rather than driving cross country as they usually did on their annual trek to Idaho, the Rowan's had to fly into Idaho Falls on this trip since their daughter, Jolene, had also just graduated from Jefferson. Stirling and Mary Ann Austin weren't as pressed for time and they came on the train.

That evening, Craig had an appointment in the high council room of the Rexburg Tabernacle. There, under the direction of a member of the North Rexburg Stake High Council, he was ordained an Elder by Sheffield with the high councilor, his home branch president, and his soon to be father in law standing in. He had previously been interviewed by the stake president and sustained in stake conference two weeks earlier.

After the graduation, the Virginians all celebrated together with a picnic in the park across the street from Chantelle's parents' home. That also happened to be Norma's eighteenth birthday and she was not left out of the celebration.

Saturday was even a bigger day, with even more celebrate. Sheffield and Ramona had to be at the Idaho Falls Temple with Craig at seven a.m., as did Edith and her parents. Norma and Janet stayed behind and would come down later. After getting all of the paperwork taken care of, both Craig and Edith received their initiatory ordinances. Then they were escorted to the Creation Room to begin the endowment session. Naturally their parents were there as were Roger and Chantelle Rowan.

After proceeding through endowment session, they emerged into the Celestial Room. After basking in the Spirit for a few minutes, they and their company were taken to one of the sealing rooms where they were were married for time and all eternity.

Following the ceremony, the bride and groom changed clothes, Edith into her wedding dress and Craig into his suit. Their small wedding party, including Norma and Janet who came down later with Read Rowan and his sisters, were waiting for them as they came out of the temple. Unlike the nice day the day before, the weather was rather fickle. On moment it was clear and the sun was out, only to cloud up and try to rain. Not to mention the cool, stiff breeze that was blowing.

From the temple, the party made their to the Hotel Bonneville, seven blocks away in downtown Idaho

Falls for the wedding breakfast, hosted by and paid for by Sheffield and Ramona, in a semi private dining room for a more intimate setting. Craig and Edith didn't have a lot of time for a honeymoon and understandably they were anxious to get off by themselves and take advantage of their honeymoon suite.

Stirling and Mary Ann stayed at the Rogers hotel in Idaho Falls that night so they could fly out the next day and get prepared for the reception. When Sheffield, Ramona, and the girls arrived back at their hotel in Rexburg, Hank and Teri Terry, who had flown over from Boise, were waiting for them.

This was the first time that Sheffield had seen his former executive officer in a long time. They spent what was left of the afternoon and evening getting reacquainted and discussing the plans for the ship's reunion. Sheffield turned over the rest of what he had to Hank. Now that he was returning to active duty, Sheffield wasn't even sure that he'd be able to attend. Hank assured him that he'd take care of everything and that it would be a successful reunion. That night the Terry's also stayed at the Idamont.

On Sunday morning, the Terry's flew back to Boise and the Brasons flew down to Clarkston and spent the rest of Sunday with their friends, the Govers and attended sacrament meeting with them. Sheffield, half way serious and and half way joking, tried to persuade Morris to come with him. Morris was tempted by the offer but had to decline.

On Monday they flew back to Roanoke and had Tuesday to rest up from the whirlwind they had just been through before the next one started. Wednesday was Memorial Day and the Brasons got together at the ranch. Walt and Sarah had taken it upon themselves to sponsor it this year since Sheffield and Ramona had so much going on. All they had to do was to show up.

In the meantime, Craig and Edith had driven more than two thousand miles in three days, making as much of a honeymoon out of driving twelve to fifteen hours days as possible. They stayed Sunday night in North Platte, Nebraska and Monday night in St. Louis Missouri, making it home on Tuesday evening.

Memorial Day is an odd time to have a wedding reception, let alone a Wednesday, but that was the way it had to be. Mary Ann had been working on it for weeks prior to wedding and after returning from Edith's graduation and wedding had Monday and Tuesday to bring it all together. Ramona and the girls also helped when they got back.

The first order of business on Wednesday was as it was every Memorial day and that was a visit to the cemetery. After the picnic, Ramona and the girls helped to decorate the cultural hall for the reception. It was fairly simple, a backdrop, a table for the cake and tables and chairs for the guests.

At seven that evening, the reception line began receiving well wishers. The reception was well attended by the members of the branch as well as old friends from the Methodist Church. More than one person commented on the fact that this wasn't the first time for the Brasons and Austins to intermarry. Of course the first were Walt and Sarah followed by Sheffield and Geannie. This union brought the two families

even closer. They received a lot of nice gifts and ended up with the things they needed to set up housekeeping, however their immediate plans were to stay with Stirling and Mary Ann, who had a big house with plenty of room since nobody else was living at home.

Early the next morning, Sheffield, Ramona and the girls were off again. This time they boarded a DC-3 for a flight to Norfolk followed by a flight across the country to San Diego aboard a Naval Air Transport Service R6D, the Navy's version of Douglas DC-6 air liner. That night there wasn't time for much except for dinner at the hotel where they were staying near the Navy base.

In the last eight days, Norma had had her two big days when she graduated from high school and celebrated her eighteenth birthday, Craig had his three big days when he graduated from Ricks College, got married, and had his wedding reception. Now, tomorrow would be Sheffield's big day.

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The cast of Neptune's Realm are all actual actors.

Vice Admiral George M. Nichols is fictional but Admiral Forrest P. Sherman was at that time the Chief of Naval Operations from November 2, 1949 to July 22, 1951.

For an introduction to Hank Terry, see The Business of War Chapter 26