

# Water And Ships Life Of Custom's Collector

BY DAVID PETERSON  
Star - News Staff Writer

Water and ships are the essentials in the life work that E. C. Snead, assistant collector of customs in Wilmington, has accepted. Immediately upon termination of his high school studies, Snead began his marine career by enlisting in the United States Navy. He followed the sea and ships since then.



SNEAD

His early education was gathered from public schools, at his birth locality, and he was first employed as an office boy with the Construction Quartermaster, when Fort Bragg was first being built.

This job ended after one year, and his civilian occupational pursuits were over for a period of time.

Then he donned the seaman's

garb of the U. S. Navy, in March, 1923, at the "boot" camp in Hampton Roads, Va., and continued through with the basic training, and was later assigned to Yoe-man's school.

While in this school, Snead was designated as one of a funeral escort, detailed to honor the late President Harding.

Finishing yoe-man's school, he was transferred to sea duty aboard the U. S. S. Canopus, which was the flagship commander of the Submarine division, Pacific.

In 1924, this sub was ordered to Asiatic station, along with six other undersea vessels, and became flag ship of submarine division, Asiatic. His ship relieved the famous Rainbow, that gained recognition in that sector.

While operating in this area, the Canopus was ordered to China on several different occasions, to quell uprising of Chinese who threatened American interests in that country.

Two years later, in February, 1926, Snead returned to the States with his ship, and was discharged from the service.

After a brief period of relaxation from service with the Navy, he took a position with Cannon Mills in Kannapolis, working in the production department. While at this job, he did some extension work for the University of North Carolina.

In the early '30s, he accepted a Civil Service job in the Department of Commerce, and worked in Washington for two months, then transferred to Wilmington as customs inspector.

According to Snead's revelations this work was a rather hectic in those days, as prohibition was in full swing, and smugglers were doing a land office business along the Carolina coast.

In citing one of his interesting experiences, Snead told this story. "We obtained information from a good source that a certain boat crew were scheduled to put in an appearance at a pre-arranged spot, and men were dispatched to apprehend the boat load of liquor and the crew."

The plans were spoiled, for, as the small craft approached the coast-line, a Coast Guard cutter, the old Mendota, surprised the "rum-runner" by sneaking up on them from out of the sun. The boat was taken into custody, and turned over to the authorities ashore.

The cutter apprehended the boat exactly nine and eight-tenths miles from shore. In international law, there are two treaties that deal with these cases. One law states a 12-mile limit, and the other cites a limit in miles that the craft in question can make in one hour's run.

In checking the speed of the captured boat, the official could not squeeze more than nine miles an hour out of the boat, and the court could not convict the crew, because of the eight-tenths margin that saved the day for the "rum-runners."

In 1936, Gastonia was designated "port o'entry" for this sector, and Snead was transferred to that city, as deputy collector of customs, in charge.

Working there for a year, he returned to Wilmington as deputy collector in charge of customs administration, and in '38 was promoted to assistant collector of North Carolina district.

Prior to United States entry into the war, and during the time when the German submarines were taking a toll on shipping, Snead performed duties of port director, in addition to his regular customs duties. He continued to serve this capacity until qualified Navy personnel became available, to make possible the establishment of a full time office in this city.

During the early war period, to illustrate a function of his office, an Italian vessel, the Villa Parosa, was stranded in this port, and remained here, making no attempt to leave. Its presence was conspicuous and threatening, and customs officers began to suspect the intentions of the skipper and crew.

Fearing that the ship would be scuttled in the river, blocking all traffic, Snead and officers of the customs boarded her and requested the skipper to move his ship to a better anchorage and to remove this threat to shipping. The skipper obliged, and added that he would move in a couple of weeks.

Action was then taken, by calling in neighboring Coast Guard men, and moving in on the ship quietly. They took possession of the craft and interned the captain and crew.

Investigation into the ship revealed that sabotage had been the intentions of the crew, and the officers and crew were charged and tried for attempted sabotage, to be sent to penitentiaries upon conviction.

Col. John B. Hill, who was collector of customs, was called to the Army in 1942, and Snead was named acting collector for the N. C. district and assumed these duties until he was called to the Navy in 1943.

His first duty was Charleston, S. C., and he remained there for three months, to be transferred to Wilmington, a Lt. Comdr. in the Navy, and became port director until May 1, 1945, at which time, he was ordered to the West coast and given a short period of special instruction, prior to being sent to the Philippines, acting as assistant port director and operations officer.

He was returned to the States in December of '45 and placed on inactive duty at the separation center, Norfolk, Va.

Assuming the duties of assistant collector, he occupied the office alone until the return of Hill in March of '46.

In April of 1946, Snead was elected commander of James A. Manley Post No. 2673 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and is now a candidate for North Carolina Department Commander.

During his term as commander of the VFW, a notable incident is the aid given by that organization in purchasing the Lake Forest ma-

# DONALD FINDS TRICKY GRAPH

## Contract For Mail Order Business Causes Gets Him In Dutch

CHICAGO, April 26—(U.P.)—Robert Donald was a full-fledged business man today, but he wished he had stuck to his job at the steel mill.

Donald, a steel roller, bought a mail order business for \$150. He didn't realize that he also was buying the company's liabilities.

Then, he learned the company had taken in \$80,000 without even having filled a single order for the nylons and diapers it advertised.

Since he bought the company last March 21, Donald has been besieged by letters from complain-

sonary units, and thereby setting an example to the nation for disposing of surplus government housing to benefit returning veterans.

His life has been surrounded by water, and his business and duties deal with ships. Even his office is located so that it overlooks the Cape Fear river, a constant reminder of his career.

ing person who sent in their money but got no merchandise. When he bought the business, Donald signed a single-page, type-written contract. In it was a paragraph indicating that he was accepting the firm's liabilities.

Donald's lawyer has filed suit to nullify the contract, and has called the case to the attention of postal investigators.

The postal investigators, however, said they already knew about it. They said they were investigating the case before Donald ever bought the business.

Federal authorities said they had learned that an Iowa radio station in good faith broadcast advertisements for the company.

When the station began to get complaining letters from listeners, who said they never got the merchandise, the radio station paid out \$8,000 to the listeners to keep their good will.

Donald said he would rather not discuss the case. "I'll never live it down," he said.

Freezing sandwiches saves time, labor and expense. Sandwich fillings suitable for freezing are cheddar or cream cheese, sliced ground meat, or poultry, fish and a cooked egg yolk. Frozen sandwiches packed in the lunch-box before school time will thaw nicely by noon.

# NC Symphony Playing To Capacity Crowds

CHAPEL HILL, April 26. The North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, now in the midst of its spring tour, is drawing capacity audiences in almost every town where it appears, and the attendance at the children's concerts is so large in most instances that many of the youngsters often have to be turned away for lack of space, according to reports received here.

The orchestra appeared in Fayetteville, Goldsboro, Rocky Mount and Roanoke Rapids on the first four nights of this week and is to give a concert in Raleigh Friday night in honor of Governor and Mrs. R. Gregg Cherry. The concert will be in the Hugh Morson High School auditorium at 8:30.

Governor and Mrs. Cherry will give a reception at the mansion for the symphony following the concert.

A feature of the Raleigh concert will be Thad Jones' "Suite for Strings". Jones is now stationed in the United States Navy School of Music Washington, D. C., where he teaches composition and orchestration. He is a native of Asheville where his father was superintendent of Biltmore school and later president of Biltmore College.

Jones' composition will also be featured in the programs in Durham April 29 and Greensboro May 3.

Young Jane Winfield of Washington played Mozart's Coronation Concerto with the Symphony at the Washington, Greensboro and Wilmington concerts. Even he, an overwhirlig aviation enthusiast, is following the rehearsals with them.

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