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O hear us when we cry to Thee for those in peril on the Sea

I was a graduating senior from Mt.Dora High School, Florida in 1932 when our church young people's group had an evening beach party and weiner roast with the youth group from nearby Umatilla on Lake Joanna. There I met the most beautiful girl I had ever even imagined seeing! I managed to separate her from the group and we took a walk along the shore. When we were missed and heard the sponsors calling for us, I stopped for a moment and said to her, "I have four years of college and three of seminary before I become a minister. In seven years I am going to marry you". (I am writing this from our home for the last 40 years onLake Joanna)

We did get married seven years later, but these were depression years and I had missed a year while I dug ditches and other forty cent an hour jobs in Pennsylvania to pay for my tuition. So my new wife and I attended seminary together, living in an attic near the school in Louisville, Kentucky. She got a job and put me through that precious year, and then we were called to Carlisle, Kentucky to pastor a church there. A large pastor's home was provided with practically no furniture. The salary was \$125.00 a month, but gifts of farm produce, even a few pieces of furniture, and other expressions of love made our life a happy one. Our first child was born a year later in 1940 and we named him after the town. As it was with my wife and the pastorate, it was "Love at first sight". They followed suit with our baby.

In 1941 war clouds loomed across the Atlantic; US Army personnel had opened a CCC Camp just outside Carlisle and they asked me to hold services for them. Some of the officers attended our church. In 1941 President Roosevelt activated the Kentucky National Guard and we lost many of our young men from our midst. The combination of all this military activity and letters from a seminary classmate, who had become a Regular Navy chaplain and was in Pearl Harbor aboard a repair ship, began to pressure me. Because of that pressure and a draft card I received that indicated that Pastors could not be drafted, I felt I had to make some kind of patriotic gesture. (I really thought I would be rejected!) I applied to the Navy and the Army Air Corps. I received a large brown envelope from the latter when I had reported to Great Lakes Naval Training Station.

By December 7th 1941 I had told our church that I might be called to duty and on that Sunday with my wife playing the organ we had our baby in the narthex where I could see his carriage. It happened only once! That afternoon we got the news by radio; Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese. Monday mail came and I received my orders

My wife and I and our baby son were to make the first sacrifice of twenty two years of Naval service. My indoctrination consisted of the senior chaplain at Great Lakes telling me, "Here is a copy of Navy Regs; I assume you have your own Bible, since you are a Southern B-----" He didn't use the word Baptist, but one sounding a bit like that!

There was something about my wife that made people love her immediately, and our son inherited it. Our landlady of the apartment we found had sworn she would not rent to a couple with children. She didn't have a chance! I had time to buy a uniform and impregnate my wife again when orders to a heavy cruiser in the Pacific came. The landlady accompanied my wife to her parents home in Tennessee. I went to sea by troop train and ship to Pearl Harbor. Passing through Pearl from the Battle of the Coral Sea where she lost the ~~Yorktown~~ <sup>Lexington</sup>, my beautiful cruiser picked me up

Passing through Pearl from the Coral Sea where she lost the carrier Yorktown, the Astoria picked me up and almost immediately we were in the Battle of Midway, where we lost the Carrier Yorktown. Less than two months later we lost our own ship and three other heavy cruisers at Guadalcanal in the First Battle of Savo Island. I still squirm at the thought of the Marines we left on Guadalcanal, but the Navy saw fit to send some back for survivors leave. My wife's first word from me for months was that I was coming home; our daughter was born 13 October 1942, a week after I arrived home! "Thus ever let there rise to Thee, glad hymns of praise o'er land and sea".

"THE GIRL WE LEFT BEHIND"

"THE MEN WE LEFT BEHIND"



In memory of USS Astoria CA-34  
 sunk in First battle of Savo Island  
 at Guadalcanal  
 9 August 1942..

In memory of the First Division  
 USMarines we landed on Guadalcanal  
 7 August 1942...and LEFT!



And the men to whom Christ as Savior was offered for the last time...