

CDR NELSON DENMAN SALMON - 12 March 1952 - 17 February 1954

CDR Nelson D. Salmon acquired the nickname "Sockeye" because of his surname, but was known to his fellow senior officers as "Sock." CDR Salmon was considered to be a great commanding officer for junior officers to learn under. He came to the ship after having been Assistant Naval Attache in Taipei. He read Chinese with ease, spoke Mandarin and two other accents fluently. He wasn't Annapolis, rather, NROTC Berkley, '39. He commanded an AKL in WWII. That ship was the same class as the one Doug Roberts served aboard in the movie Mister Roberts. The skipper was still a bachelor when I reported aboard, but he married a very charming widow in Long Beach after that deployment. I still have enormous respect for his ability to handle very tight situations.

I always regretted that Captain Salmon never made it to admiral, as I thought he was one of the best CO's with junior officers that I ever met. Considering how totally short of experienced officers we were after the five WW II veterans left the ship in Hong Kong without replacements accompanied by the CIC officer who went home on emergency leave. I don't think there was an OOD left aboard with much over two years service. I then knew how it must have been during WW II when new ships were being commissioned at a very rapid rate with very little experience in their crew. Luckily, we had some experienced CPO's and l/c PO's who could provide real leadership and experience for ship's company.

LTJG Douglas Legg