

Naval War College
Newport, Rhode Island
World War II Navy Veterans

Interviewee: Carroll Caffrey

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Subject: World War II Navy Veterans

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EMC: This is an Oral history with Carroll Caffrey. The interview is taken place at his home at 164 Creamery Road in Durham, Connecticut. Today's date is March 27th, 2009. Mr. Caffrey, I'm very pleased that you were able to give me sometime this morning to discuss your role and participation in World War II in the *USS New Jersey*. I'd like to begin the interview by asking you where and when you were born?

CC: I was born in Meriden, Connecticut on May 17th, 1926.

EMC: What did you father do for a living there?

CC: My father was a painter, a house painter and wall paper person.

EMC: Did you go to High School in Meriden?

CC: Yes, I did. I graduated in 1943.

EMC: From Meriden High?

CC: Meriden High. Yes.

EMC: What did you do immediately after high school?

CC: I worked on a farm, peddling milk and cutting corn and things like that, for the period from the time I graduated in June until March when I went into the navy.

EMC: March '44, you went into the navy?

CC: March '44, right.

EMC: Let me just double back a minute. You were in high school when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

CC: Right.

EMC: Do you remember that day and do you remember your reaction to it?

CC: I do remember the day. I was thinking about it this morning. I think it was a Sunday, of course. I was peddling milk with a guy by the name of Red Shaffer, was a runner for him. In other words, he had the route and I use to deliver the milk, along with him to the houses. In those days, we brought bottles of milk, not like today. We were outside the "Little Rendezvous Pizza Palace" in Meriden. I was going to go in there, I guess, to have a pizza when we got the news. My first reaction was that it would be too bad for the Japanese because we're gonna be more powerful than them. It's a bad situation. But beyond that I don't remember too much, except that I wasn't afraid or anything like that. I just said, Well, we know that

we're a strong country and what happens is we're going to retaliate in some way. So, basically, that was it.

EMC: Yes. Can you comment on the patriotism that you noticed in Meriden and the surrounding areas after the attack and before you joined the navy?

CC: Very strong patriotism, of course. The Japanese in the sneak attack and so forth and so on. There were a lot of war bond rallies at that time. We were trying to raise money to buy ammunition and stuff like that. Actually, I think they were selling the bonds maybe to control inflation as well. So a lot of patriotism, a lot of rallies, particularly around the sale of war bonds. Your friends were getting drafted into the service and so there was just a tremendous patriotism because we had been attacked and we were now retaliating. There were a lot of rallies. The newspapers were very favorable to us in those days during the war. So, as I say, once I graduated from high school I worked peddling milk and then on some dairy farms in Southington and Meriden, Westfield, places like that.

EMC: Great. Did you enlist in the navy yourself or were you drafted?

CC: I enlisted in the navy myself, at seventeen.

EMC: Wow. That's so young.

CC: I know. Today my grandson is twenty-four, twenty-five and, of course, we're close while he was seventeen and you can't believe what you did at seventeen in those days.

EMC: Right. You can't. It's amazing. How did your parents feel about your enlistment?

CC: My father was a navy veteran as well, in World War I. He was all for it. In fact, my recollection is he had to sign some papers, cause I was seventeen and he did that. My recollection was also that he went to the New Haven recruiting office with me and he was all for it. And then he had crossed another thing. I wanted to chose my own service because I didn't want to be drafted into a service that maybe I wouldn't like. So, I was in a navy family. As you know, my brother, Buck, Robert, was a retired navy commander. Then I had another brother George, who was Chief of Police in Meriden, who was also a navy veteran. So, the family is all navy.

EMC: Right. I guess. Now, were both of your brothers in World War II?

CC: No. I think not Robert and I think that the war was over when George got in. I'm pretty sure. I'm pretty sure because he's a couple years younger than I am.

EMC: I'm looking for future candidates. That's why I asked.

CC: No. He was peacetime navy. Regular navy for George. He was in about ten years.

EMC: Oh, wow.

CC: He went in like-I'm sure it as after the armistice was signed.

EMC: Oh, so your really are a navy family.

CC: Oh yes.

EMC: Oh yes. Very, very definitely.

CC: He was a Bosun's mate.

EMC: So he found the navy attractive, vice the other services.

CC: Yes.

EMC: Here it is March 1944. You've enlisted. You went to New Haven, I presume.

CC: Yes.

EMC: Yes. Where were you sent to boot camp?

CC: Sampson, New York. Sampson Naval Training Station in Sampson, New York. They had a troop train that moved out of New Haven with a whole bunch of us assigned and took us up to Sampson, New York. I spent my boot years there.

EMC: How long was your boot camp experience?

CC: My recollection was about eight weeks, about eight weeks.

EMC: Let me just ask you a question about the training. What did you do? How did they train you there?

CC: We did a lot of marching. Really, an undergrinder. I don't remember too much classroom stuff. It was mostly physical stuff and they made sure they fixed your teeth. Made sure your teeth were okay, gave you all your shots and then I'm sure we had seminars, but I don't recall most of them. Mostly, I remember marching. And what they use to do, put us in a group of maybe fifty or sixty sailors and then they'd take a little guy and put the little guy out front, as a guide. I forget what they call them, a guide or something. And they'd use short people, because their steps were shorter than the big guys. Then they would put the big guys in the front and they would go back. They marched everywhere. We also, I think it's on Lake Geneva, we had boating exercises with the huge whale boats going out on those things. Some entertainment. We had what they called musts. M-U-S-T-S, where you had to go to one of these entertainment things. I remember big orchestras and stuff like that. It was a wonderful experience.

EMC: Oh, great.

CC: Also working in the kitchens. We had to work in the kitchens.

EMC: KP duty.

CC: KP duty. Yes. Cleaning up. I remember particularly cleaning those covers over the stoves. So mainly it was physical and getting you in shape to go someplace later.

EMC: Did you adjust easily to this military discipline?

CC: Not originally. I had the blues originally. I missed my dog. I had a dog named Rusty. Of course, I missed my family.

EMC: Sure.

CC: But, primarily, I missed my dog. I remember when they were piping music when we were at work "where oh where can my little dog be." It really got me upset. So I wrote home to my father and he wrote back that when he was in the navy he got into the blues, too. After a while they would go away, and they did.

EMC: Yes. Well, that's good. Were the people who you were training with, the other fellows, were they gung ho, or did anybody complain?

CC: Yes. We had a couple of them that complained all the time about everything. They were the older veterans. I mean they were the older recruits, people that were married and had kids and families and all that stuff.

EMC: Right.

CC: I had no real ties, except for my family and my dog.

EMC: Right.

CC: Some of those people I remember gripping more, certainly than the rest of us.

EMC: Yes. You were young and you were pretty flexible, I guess.

CC: Yes. It was a great adventure.

EMC: Fabby.

CC: It started out as I say, with the blues, cause I miss my dog primarily. But I got over that.

EMC: Oh, that's great. Were you sent to any special schools after boot?

CC: Yes. They sent me to basic engineering in Gulfport, Mississippi. That was about an eight week deal, where I began to learn about engines, theoretical things on engines, not really getting into a lot of fixing stuff at that particular point, about eight weeks in Gulfport, basic engineering.

EMC: Oh, I see. Well, did you have a rate at that point in time?

CC: I must have been fireman first class, I think, because following the basic engineering I got to Detroit in advanced diesel at the River Rouge plant in Dearborn, Michigan. I was there for several weeks learning how to diagnose, trouble shoot on diesels, diesel engines, and how to repair them. It was an extended period of eight to ten weeks.

EMC: Did you have any talent for doing this?

CC: Yes. I had some talent. They tested me. That's another thing they did in boot camp. They thought that I had mechanical aptitude.

EMC: Oh, okay.

CC: That's why I got selected, I'm sure, for this kind of work.

EMC: Yes.

CC: So I became, in effect, a diesel mechanic. High speed diesels, like you have, a General Motors diesel that I worked on, another one called "Buddha", which was a small one. That's what we would find when we got on a ship. Also LSG's, diesels on there, how to fix those. That's what I did there. I had a great time in Dearborn and Detroit because the people really welcomed us.

EMC: Oh, that's interesting. Comment on that.

CC: Yes. Well, it's interesting also because the Canadian soldiers use to come over from Windsor, Ontario and they would come to Detroit. Then we had Air Force people there, but we were the only navy contingent. So when we went in to Detroit we stood out; there weren't that many of us, so the people, for example, I met one of my first girlfriends there at a dance that was sponsored by a bunch of secretaries. The whole city in those days really took us into their homes, churches. Churches gave us places to sleep. It was great.

EMC: Oh, that's fantastic. That's really amazing.

CC: Like I said, we would bunk into churches there and they made places for us. They fed us, they feted us, treated us like we were their own children.

EMC: Oh, that's very nice. So you can see the patriotism and the support for the troops.

CC: Yes. No question about it. It was nothing like what you hear, even with the Vietnam War and the rest. None of that stuff.

EMC: Right.

CC: It was a different situation, because at that time we were attacked and that's the way it worked.

EMC: Oh, well. That's great. So you had a good time there.

CC: I had a good time.

EMC: In Detroit, Michigan. After you finished your advanced diesel training, where were you sent?

CC: Okay. After diesel training, they sent me to Treasure Island and I guess that's San Francisco.

EMC: Right.

CC: After a few days there, they took myself and many others and put them on the ST Styges. S-T-Y-G-E-S, which is a troop transport. We left San Francisco, headed for Hawaii, and one of the things I remember most of all was-because a whole bunch of

sailors on the ship-was so many people getting sea sick and because of the ground swells between San Francisco and Hawaii.

EMC: Yes.

CC: It was awful for a lot of people. I didn't get very sick because one of the old sailors told me, "you won't get sick if you don't look at the water."

EMC: Oh.

CC: It worked. Now whether it was right or not, it worked for me. I never threw up or anything else. But anyway, a lot of people were throwing up, and the sick bay was full of people, because of the ground wells, you know.

EMC: Oh, yes. Is it don't look at the horizon or look at the horizon? Somebody told me that.

CC: My recollection is don't look at the water that will throw you up. Now maybe the horizon as well.

EMC: Okay.

CC: It was interesting because once we got to Hawaii and then when we went out from Hawaii there were no more ground swells.

EMC: Isn't that interesting.

CC: Something peculiar about between San Francisco and Hawaii.

EMC: And that's a long trip.

CC: Yes. It took several days, as I recall, to get there, on that particular ship. My recollection, too, is that we went

alone, without any support of any kind. There were no tin cans coming along.

EMC: You weren't screened or no destroyers or anything.

CC: No.

EMC: You were probably pretty safe, you know.

CC: I think so.

EMC: What did you do in Hawaii? How long did you stay?

CC: I was only there a few days.

EMC: Oh, really.

CC: I think it was at Ford Island.

EMC: Yes.

CC: We pulled in there. I remember going ashore a couple of days, but we didn't last there very long at all.

EMC: Now this must have been, let me see.

CC: That would have been.

EMC: Twenty-four weeks would be six months, so it was probably sometime in August, maybe September.

CC: Probably. Yes.

EMC: By the time you finished your schools.

CC: But anyway from Hawaii where did you go?

CC: From Hawaii I went to Ulithi. Ulithi, I think is one of the Caroline islands and that was a huge harbor with a whole bunch of ships from the Third Fleet and Fifth Fleet. We pulled

in there and I think within the same day they started calling people up. I was Caffrey, so I saw I was called early, and I was assigned to the *New Jersey*.

EMC: Ah, Ha, that's what they did.

CC: Then I had a good buddy, by the name of Carter, Dick Carter, and he got assigned to the *Alabama*. So let me see. It was CAF, C-A-F and then you got Carter and they were plucking different. He was also a diesel person, as I recall, and so they were manning those ships from the Sturges in Ulithi. There were ships as far as you can see-everywhere.

EMC: Oh, really.

CC: Huge anchorage. It was relatively safe. We were attacked in there once, not my ship, but another ship got wacked once we had got back from some sortie.

EMC: Yes.

CC: Basic engineering, naval station, Gulfport, MS. We were going to River Rouge. At the Ford plant in River Rouge, in Dearborn, was where I learned about diesels. It was a great experience. Treasure Island, I got two inaudible.

EMC: Now you're getting on the *New Jersey*.

CC: Now I'm on the *New Jersey* and a little interesting fact is when I went aboard I was assigned to after diesel. I remember the first night I was there, one of the guys, one of the

shipmates there, took me up to go to the movies. We use to take buckets and take the buckets and put them on the fantail and they use to run the movies on a sixteen inch turret after the ship.

EMC: What were the buckets for?

CC: To sit on.

EMC: Oh, okay.

CC: Like a water bucket.

EMC: I wondered.

CC: One of those old fashion buckets. That's what we had to sit on. But anyway, it's dark and I'm going with this guy from down below, up and then onto the deck. And then I'm going to back of the ship. I'm about near the gang plank and all of a sudden a bump da bum, bump da bum, a trumpet with a Marine. So a Marine is behind him and here comes Bull Halsey.

EMC: Really.

CC: Get out of the way, this guy says to me, here comes the "bull." So the "bull" comes through and he's going to the movies, too. So that was the first sight of him.

EMC: Yes. He had quite a reputation.

CC: Oh, yes. Big deal. So my service there was basically in after diesel.

EMC: What does after diesel mean?

CC: It must mean the aft part of the ship.

EMC: Oh, aft.

CC: Yes.

EMC: I thought it was.

CC: Cause we said after diesel. What we have there were diesels, that if you had any failure of other propelling stuff, like the steam, that they were to kick in and be able to run certain things. Also, we had compressors that we kept track of, low pressure, high pressure compressors, fire main pumps, and all that kind of stuff.

EMC: Oh, that's great. Do you know what your rate was at that time?

CC: I was Fireman First Class.

EMC: Firemen. Okay.

CC: Fireman.

EMC: Oh, alright that was your rate. Well, you repaired the diesels, right?

CC: Yes. What we did was first off we made the rounds of all the engine rooms and the fire rooms and checked the air compressors that were all over the place. I also spent a lot of time on evaporators, in other words, turning the salt water into fresh water, so we can use that for the boilers. You had to have water that was less salty for the boilers than what we

drank, because if you didn't, the salt would cake on the boiler pipes and stuff like that. And so we had a saline meter behind us that we had to watch and we had to operate valves so that we could maintain salt free water. I spent a lot of watches on that particular assignment. And more so, after I got into more maintenance on the air compressors and the diesels. But mostly we were doing rounds by shifts, checking, checking, checking.

EMC: Checking.

CC: Yes. That's only when something broke down or stuff like that, where we have to fix it.

EMC: Did you find that boring?

CC: No.

EMC: Okay.

CC: Not at all.

EMC: That's good.

CC: What I didn't find boring either was by doing the rounds we got to know what we call the mess cook in those days and the mess cooks use to give us eggs and stuff and bread so we can have snacks down in the after diesel, cause we had our own hot plates and stuff.

EMC: Really.

CC: So by going all over the ship, you found out what was going on. Also, when we had what we call breakouts, we would go down

into the bowels of the ship and then take out, like canned goods and stuff like that. Every once in a while maybe a gallon of peaches or something would rollover and we'd to have to pick it up and put it aside and eat it later.

EMC: How many in that gang, would you say?

CC: You mean the ones that were on a breakout?

EMC: No, that had your job as a fire control man?

CC: Oh, I'm trying to think. It was pretty full, must have been forty people or so.

EMC: Oh that's quite a lot.

CC: Oh, yeah. It seems like we were all quartered in the same part of the ship.

EMC: I was going to ask you that. They kept you together.

CC: Yes, because I was six foot five and I had a top bunk. It wasn't big enough. So what happened was if I got a top bunk and then here's the lockers. So I was able to get my feet on the locker. Big deal.

EMC: Yes. Kind of uncomfortable, though.

CC: Yes. When I went onboard we had a Jersey man newspaper and they said that I was going to sleep in one of the sixteen inch bunks cause I was so tall.

EMC: Oh, boy. You wouldn't want to do that.

CC: No.

EMC: Were you impressed by the size of the battleship?

CC: Oh, yes. It was 887 feet long. I got a good picture over there that somebody did. It was a beautiful ship, beautiful lines, (BB 62). It was battleship gray.

EMC: Oh, yeah.

CC: Yes. The *Iowa*, which was the first of that class, was just gray. When they got to leave Japan before we did- after the war was over-we all stood on the side of the ship and sang "The Old Gray Mare, she ain't what she used to be."

EMC: Oh, yes. That's good. Can you describe life on the ship? You talked a little bit about your bunking and a little bit about your recreation. Can you comment on the food?

CC: Yes. The food, to me, was good. A little story. I was doing some work in Kansas City a number of years ago and we had several, about five or six, people sitting around the table at a restaurant. One of them was a Ph.d from Chicago and he was in the navy. He had been in the navy. When he went around, we all agreed that the navy food was good, because, in most cases, it was better than the food that we were getting at home.

EMC: Oh, yeah.

CC: A lot of our mothers were such poor cooks that the navy cooks were good.

EMC: Oh, that's great.

CC: So, the food was good. The camaraderie was good. The recreation when we came into port-it was good. I remember going to play basketball in some place in Hawaii, stuff like that.

EMC: And you had movies on the ship.

CC: We had movies on the boat. Right on the fantail.

EMC: Oh that's great. Did you have a dispensary?

CC: Yes, we did.

EMC: A medic?

CC: Yes. We had a dispensary. We got ice cream. Then we had what they called pogy bait and geedunk.

EMC: What's that?

CC: Well, I guess pogy bait is candy and geedunk is ice cream.

EMC: Oh.

CC: That's how we referred to it, you know. Also, cigarettes, and I smoked in those days. They were five dollars a pack.

EMC: A pack?

CC: Five dollars for a pack of cigarettes.

EMC: That's a lot.

CC: I'm sorry. Five cents.

EMC: That's more like it. It's probably five today.

CC: It is. I don't smoke. When were underway they told us to go topside up in the bow and sit and watch. Sometimes we would see porpoises, you know, floating as if it was peace time.

EMC: Yes.

CC: As if it was peace time. But, you know, I didn't have any-fear-really that much when we were going into battle so forth and so on. I'll tell you more about that.

EMC: Oh, sure. Did you have a chaplain onboard?

CC: Yes, we did. Father Good. He was from New Haven and he was a very nice priest. We went to mass on Sunday there and, of course, we did that. He was a good influence on us.

EMC: Oh, that's good. How large was the crew on the battleship?

CC: I think, I'm going to say three thousand. I'm going to say three thousand, just that number sticks in my head. Three thousand. It was like a city.

EMC: Oh, it certainly was because you wouldn't know everybody on the ship.

CC: No. You wouldn't.

EMC: You know your gang.

CC: Right. You knew your gang and the few you interacted with, but other than that, no.

EMC: Did you make any good friends on the ship?

CC: Yes, I did. I made several good friends and when we came back into port we would go on liberty together. A lot of them were from the Midwest, some from New England. I did keep in

touch with them through a period of time after, including going to one reunion in Florida.

EMC: Oh, you did. When did you go to the reunion?

CC: I want to say ten years ago. Most of them were gone, only a few people that were there and one of them in particular a guy by the name of Sarentino had all kinds of issues that he was dealing with so. I don't know what happened. I guess, just aging, I guess. It's about ten years ago.

EMC: Oh, that's good. I was going to ask had you ever gone to any?

CC: It was fun to a degree.

EMC: Yes.

CC: They had a replica of the *Jersey* and the sailors were getting their wives and girlfriends, I suppose, gathered around a pool and they were operating this ship.

EMC: Remotely?

CC: Remotely, including firing guns and everything. They had a hell of a time. They had a big dinner. It was all *Jersey* people, not just World War II.

EMC: Right. I know that's what they usually are, so it's lucky if you run into somebody.

CC: There were a couple of guys that were recognized.

EMC: Your first CO, I guess, was Admiral Spruance who had his flag in the *Jersey*. Were you there?

CC: Yes. The first Admiral was Halsey.

EMC: Okay.

CC: His flag was with the Third Fleet.

EMC: Yes.

CC: And then Admiral Spruance was the Fifth Fleet.

EMC: Right.

CC: And they use to alternate.

EMC: Right.

CC: One would be at sea and then the other be back in Hawaii and then vice a versa. Spruance was much more, I don't know how to say this, you didn't see him much.

EMC: Yes.

CC: Halsey, you saw lot. Halsey also once in a while would give us a fiery speech.

EMC: Oh, really. Oh good.

CC: Yes, a good one.

EMC: Do you remember sort of, in a general way, what he would say?

CC: He would lament the fact that our people, our sailors are getting killed and so forth and so on. And that he would take different measures that we can't do, because of some of the

people back home, wouldn't go for it, something like that, you know.

EMC: Probably thinking about the bomb or something.

CC: Something yes.

EMC: Maybe. Did you ever run across him and speak to him?

CC: No.

EMC: No. Okay. They were kind of distant.

CC: Oh, yes. I had a buddy who used to take care of the scuttlebutt, the drinking fountain in the wardroom. He said he would be there to fix the machine and he would pick up stuff. He'd hear stuff and then he would pass some of that stuff along to us, but most of the time it didn't amount to anything.

EMC: That's interesting. And Spruance, you didn't see him that much?

CC: No.

EMC: He didn't address the crew over the loud speakers?

CC: No.

EMC: *New Jersey* was in fifty-two operations, they said, against the Japanese in 1944 and '45. You were in some of them. What was the first operation that you were in? I think you were probably there in August, September, 1944.

CC: Here's the thing. I had different general quarter assignments when I went out there, but one of the assignments that gave me a view on everything was smoke watch. Smoke watch.

EMC: What is smoke watch?

CC: Now smoke watch, since we have ear phones that went into the boiler rooms, the engine rooms. Our job was we were above the stacks. We had two stacks that we looked down on and if you saw black smoke that meant they were putting too much oil in. And you would call the boiler room, engine room and say, "we got black smoke" and they would know enough to cut down the oil. On the other hand, if there's white smoke, that meant there was not enough and what we were trying to do is keep the stacks clear, because if you didn't then the Japanese would see us where we were. So that was the key point of their job.

EMC: Yeah.

CC: From that vantage point, I was able to see what was going on. When the kamikazes came in they were heading primarily for the carriers, because the carriers were doing a lot of the damage out in the Pacific.

EMC: Sure.

CC: And so the way we were set up, we had destroyers and DE escorts on the outside and then we might have a cruiser and then we might have another battleship. The flag ship was usually in

the middle of all that stuff because we were the flag. But from the advantage spot, I could see the Japanese hitting our ships. I could see them being shot down. I could see our own planes coming off the carrier, some not making it and going into the water.

EMC: Yes.

CC: I could see the planes overhead that were Japanese, way up there somewhere.

EMC: Wow.

CC: And so I had so many experiences that occurred, for example.

EMC: Oh, tell us about it.

CC: Let me tell you about this one. The *USS Franks*, was a destroyer.

EMC: Frank or Franklin?

CC: F-R-A-N-K-S. The *USS Franks*.

EMC: Okay.

CC: Destroyer.

EMC: Yes.

CC: Was doing what we call picket duty, which means that they were on the outside. In other words, if any submarine or any other ship tried to get to us, they had to deal with them first. Now one dark night they were changing their positions. They

were moving from this place to someplace over here and they came right in front us of. We were underway, maybe about twenty-three knots, and suddenly we hit them just behind the bridge. I saw the *Franks*, rushing by on the left of the port side of the ship, *New Jersey*. Then later I learned somebody was knocked out of the bridge, I think. They were written up anyway. And so I saw that, the way they hit. Now another issue was a typhoon. A terrible typhoon.

EMC: Right. That's December '44.

CC: Yes. That's terrible and we lost the *Hull*, the *Monahan* and the *Case*. They all capsized.

EMC: Right.

CC: We put the lights on to try to pick up the sailors that were in the water. I think we lost, I don't know, the number that comes to mind is three hundred sailors as a result of that. Now the reason they capsized they told us was that they were trying to top off during this typhoon, but they put more fuel in to increase the ballast, but the seas were so rough that our ship said, "you got to get off." They were criticized for doing this, too. You got to get off, we can't keep under these circumstances. So the three of them capsized the *Hull*, the *Monahan*, the *Case*. I'll never forget it.

EMC: Did you pick up anybody from those ships at all?

CC: Well, I don't know if we did. I was on smoke watch so I don't know if we did.

EMC: How did your ship react, the *Jersey*, to the typhoon?

CC: I'll tell you this. I never saw anything like that in my life. The water was like, when you go into the trough it was like a mountain. We were concerned because we were told that if we tilt too much this way the turrets would fall off. It was twenty-six degrees or something like that. So we rocked and we rolled and we rocked and rolled.

EMC: Yes.

CC: We had rope on when we went outside, so we wouldn't get thrown overboard. So we got through that okay.

EMC: How long did it last?

CC: Couple of days.

EMC: Oh, really.

CC: It was a couple of days, yes.

EMC: Were people sea sick as a result of that?

CC: Yes.

EMC: I can imagine they would be.

CC: Yes. I never seen anything like it before or since. The water, the way it was. It was like, I'm telling you like a mountain. Very, very, tough situation.

EMC: Were you scared during that time period?

CC: Yes.

EMC: Was it scary?

CC: Yes. I was scared. Yes.

EMC: It was a scary experience because I've talked to several other people who were in that same typhoon, too.

CC: I was scared.

EMC: It was not a good thing. That was December 1944 when the typhoon occurred.

CC: It's just a mountain of water, just terrible.

EMC: What was the first actual attack by the Japanese that you were in? Do you remember? You got on the ship, let's say, in September '44 about that time. It was Halsey's Third Fleet and was it Okinawa or Iwo Jima?

CC: No. It wasn't. I'm trying to think. It wasn't the shoot out at Saipan either. It was after that. There was a shoot out at Saipan, where the Japanese planes were attacking and they were shot out of the sky.

EMC: The turkey shoot. That's what they called it, the turkey shoot.

CC: The turkey shoot, right. It was after that. We didn't have the kind of information- this or that battle, you know. We were involved in the Philippines, I remember. That would be later.

EMC: Let me see. Philippines, Leyte Gulf, was November '44.

CC: Leyte Gulf.

EMC: Leyte Gulf. Were you involved in Leyte Gulf?

CC: Yes.

EMC: Yes, that was October. Late October '44.

CC: We didn't get. I don't remember any surface battles, particularly. We had two catapults on the back of the ship. We had the King Fisher Planes, pontoon jet planes.

EMC: Oh.

CC: They were what you called forward observers. We had Marine pilots. They would be catapulted off and they would fly over the island, Leyte or whatever. They would spot different targets and then they'd radio us back and then we would bombard them with our sixteen inch guns.

EMC: Oh, great.

CC: Because they could go, my recollection, is twenty-five miles.

EMC: The guns?

CC: No. The projectiles.

EMC: The projectiles. Yes. The fire.

CC: They were about six foot and we had these powered bags that probably weighed seventy pounds. They were silk color covered. Throw that in there and then they would go ahead and shoot.

EMC: Twenty-five miles. That's quite a length.

CC: Oh, yes.

EMC: That's amazing.

CC: Once they were gone you would hear them roaring as they left. So the Marines would say okay here's the coordinates to get this particular mission down for whatever we saw. So that was it. That's what we did. And then the other was.

EMC: You never really fired these guns, did you?

CC: Oh, no.

EMC: No. That wasn't your job.

CC: My job was to load those bags of powder and move them from the conveyor to over here. We would use our five inch guns. We had ten, twin five inch guns and we'd use those to shoot the Japanese planes out of the sky. We got a lot of them.

EMC: Oh, yeah.

CC: We had it painted on the side. Every time we got one, we would paint it, the Japanese target on the side of the ship. That's the kind of involvement we had. The sixteen inch guns and the five inch, thirty millimeter, we called them Chicago pianos. Then we also had twenty millimeter guns. A well armed ship.

EMC: Wow. That was quite something. So at Leyte Gulf you were doing some bombardment.

CC: Bombardment on the shore and also protecting the other ships from the Japanese.

EMC: Yes.

EMC: That was quite a battle, the Battle of Leyte Gulf. And then, let's see, that's October 1944. Then I guess you went back to Ulithi. Didn't you at some point in time? That was kind of your base.

CC: Yes. Went back to Ulithi, I guess, for rearmament and things of that nature.

EMC: Now did you ever do any bombardments of China and the Philippines?

CC: No. The Philippines yes, but not China. We did get into the China Sea. I know we got to Formosa.

EMC: Right. That's what I kind of meant, that area, the Formosa area you did bombard.

CC: Right we did that.

EMC: Did anything exciting happen there that you remember?

CC: No. Nothing. Not that I can remember.

EMC: Yeah. But you were also involved in Iwo Jima, weren't you?

CC: I'm not sure. When was that anyway?

EMC: Iwo Jima was February '45.

CC: We probably were, but nothing comes to mind at all.

EMC: In support of the assault on Iwo Jima, the *New Jersey* screened the Essex groups in air attacks on the island, and gave crucial service for the first major carrier raid on Tokyo.

CC: Yes.

EMC: So you went, you know, toward the Japanese islands then.

CC: Right, right. I'm just trying to think. I know we went to Okinawa.

EMC: Right.

CC: And dropped a bomb there.

EMC: Very definitely. That's a big battle.

CC: Yes. Then I'm trying to think. I know we were heading for Japan, the Japanese sea, when what was called Operation Coronet. Something, I guess, the atomic bomb occurred around that time.

EMC: That would have been August '45.

CC: Yes.

EMC: Yes. Did anything else outstanding happen in Okinawa? That was a fierce battle in April '45.

CC: Same stuff, bombardment, and trying to protect from the air.

EMC: So you weren't really threatened by the Japanese?

CC: No.

EMC: You did go back to Puget Sound, though.

CC: Yes, we did. It was beautiful coming in there and coming back. I remember going through what they called the Juan de Fuca Straits, and seeing Mt. Rainer and going down into, where the hell did we go? I'll think of it.

EMC: Bremerton?

CC: Bremerton

EMC: Bremerton, right. That's the shipyard.

CC: We stayed there

EMC: What did you go there for?

CC: Overhaul.

EMC: Was there anything wrong with the ship or anything?

CC: No. I think routine overall.

EMC: Okay. So you hadn't been damaged at all? You were never really attacked in *New Jersey* by the Japanese?

CC: No. The worse carrier thing that we saw was the *Franklin*. Kamikaze's got her and a couple of hundred sailors were killed on that. She limped back from the Pacific to Hawaii. We helped take her back.

EMC: Oh, you did?

CC: Yeah, which is surprising because you would have thought, the tin cans. But our recollection is that we had tin cans, plus us, to protect her as she tried to get back to Hawaii, which she did.

EMC: So you were kind of an escort vessel then.

CC: Right.

EMC: That was something. Did you celebrate at all on V-J Day, which is August 15, 1945? Do you remember hearing about the bombardment and the dropping of the bomb on Japan?

CC: Oh, yes. We heard about the bombardment. That's where that Coronet came in. We were supposed to be part of the invasion of Japan.

EMC: Right.

CC: The Coronet was obviously cancelled because of the atomic bomb. I don't remember anything dramatic happening on the ship except, late that's a good thing. Also, eventually wanting to come home and having the *Iowa* go home first. They weren't sure what they were doing. An interesting side here is the Yamamoto, was in Tokyo bay, Japanese battleship, and what they were doing they were taking sailors off the various ships to man that ship and they were going to take that to Bikini to use as a test ship for the atomic bomb.

EMC: Yes. Isn't that something?

CC: You didn't want that. We didn't want them to call you and say, okay, we need a motor mac.

EMC: No particular celebration there, but you were wanting to go home, like all the others.

CC: Like we sat in Tokyo Bay, now we went from Okinawa. First off a little side story.

EMC: Sure.

CC: We were in Apra harbor in Guam when we got the word. We had Admiral Nimitz on board; he was the top dog of all the admirals, Chester Nimitz. He was onboard and the word we got- don't forget we were getting everything second hand; we were not in the wardroom, we were the snipes down below and we were getting second word. Anyway, the story was that we were to get underway and go to Manila and that we were going to have the peace signed on our ship. That was supposed to be the deal. So we got underway and we were going about twenty-three knots, escorted and so forth, so on. We got to Manila and then somehow the word got from Harry Truman, the president, that the peace was going to be signed on the *Missouri*. He was from *Missouri* and that ship was what we called the boot ship in those days, because it got into the war late. The *Iowa* was the senior and then the *Jersey*, then *Wisconsin*. *Missouri* was the last of the four ships of that class.

EMC: Oh, I see.

CC: Instead of going to Tokyo to have the peace signed, we went to Okinawa and just sat in Okinawa for a period of time until I guess the peace was actually signed.

EMC: September 2nd.

CC: Then they went up to Yokosuka and anchored there, and that was it. We sat there for the rest, until we came home.

EMC: Oh, really.

CC: Yes. So the duty there was shore patrol.

EMC: Okay.

CC: So we went ashore in Japan, in Yokohama, and Tokyo.

EMC: You did.

CC: I was a shore patrolman. The two of us and we would just walk around the streets? sailors?

CC: Yes. Sailors, particularly sailors, because they were doing liberty there. In fact, some of the characters were getting on a subway in Tokyo and going way out someplace else on the island and so that's what we did. We just walked, two of us together. I remember particularly in Yokohama, walking down the streets. The war had just been ended, the peace, and everything else. And then seeing some Japanese soldiers, who had been let out on some of the corners; they didn't look friendly to us. And also people on the second floor of some of these places and houses, like looking down on us as we walked the streets and that's what we did. Another interesting thing was.

EMC: You encountered some of the Japanese?

CC: Yes. They didn't pay much attention to us.

EMC: Okay.

CC: They weren't friendly or anything else. An interesting side now was, when you got off the boat that took you from the ship to the shore the first time I went ashore, when I got onto the land, there was a pile of cigarettes packs, a good size. What happened was the sailors use to come off the ships and would sell the cigarettes to the Japanese for a yen.

EMC: Yeah.

CC: There were also rules against that type of activity, but it went on. I remember one guy allegedly was able to put cigarettes in his shoe somehow, compress them somehow. He was doing a very good business at that time.

EMC: For heaven's sake.

CC: Yes. The rest of the time-

EMC: Did you pick up any souvenirs there?

CC: Yes. Some picture of some Japanese Kabuki type girls.

EMC: Yeah, but you didn't buy anything.

CC: Yes. Then I sent that home to my girlfriend at the time. I sent her stuff, like scarves.

EMC: Oh, yes.

CC: And things like that. Maybe fans.

EMC: Oh, yes.

CC: I was going with a girl in Detroit at that time.

EMC: Oh, yeah. You were writing to her?

CC: Oh, yes. I wrote beautiful love letters.

EMC: And, of course, we don't have them. She's got them.

CC: That's right.

EMC: Do you ever know what happened to her?

CC: No. But I did go out there after I was discharged.

EMC: Oh, yeah.

CC: I was going with a girl out there and I spent about a couple of weeks with her. I don't know. It just didn't work out.

EMC: That's interesting. Do you have her letters to you?

CC: No. Too bad, you know. I don't.

EMC: It would be interesting for the home front. You know what they were doing and...

CC: Yes. I know. But we were in love that's all. It was love through letters, because I didn't know her that much from Detroit, you know?

EMC: Right. Yes.

CC: I use to write beautiful letters. I had another girlfriend while I was out there.

EMC: On the ship?

CC: Yes. While I was on the ship I had another girl from this town, from Durham, even though I didn't live here.

EMC: Oh.

CC: She sent me a Dear John letter. She met some Air Force guy and went with him and gave me up. So I had this other one, Dolores, anyway.

EMC: Yes.

CC: Until after the war.

EMC: That's interesting. So there you were in Japan, you were walking the streets.

CC: Yes.

EMC: But the bomb was dropped on Nagasaki and in Hiroshima so you really didn't see any of that devastation. Did you?

CC: No.

EMC: That's good.

CC: Yes. It was either going or sitting in Tokyo Bay.

EMC: Okay. Now you stayed there I think until it was January.

CC: I think it was January.

EMC: '46.

CC: January '46. Right.

EMC: Then the *New Jersey* was a troop ship.

CC: Right. We carried a lot of Army people. I remember that. But I kind of remember one time when we did that. They were all over the place.

EMC: Do you know where you picked them up?

CC: I think we picked them up in the Philippines.

EMC: Probably.

CC: I think.

EMC: You were part of the Magic Carpet. That's what they called it.

CC: I was only on one, one time.

EMC: Yes. Because anyway you would be discharged later on. How did you feel about the dropping of the bomb on Japan?

CC: At the time I thought it was a good thing. It did end the war quicker than it would of ended otherwise. I didn't think too much about the fact that it destroyed so much life and everything else. I didn't think about it. All we thought about and others, too, was that this was a good thing that we got. A good thing Harry Truman did that because this way who knows what would have happened in Japan.

EMC: Right.

CC: But not a big political deal, just another weapon and the one that shortened the war we were looking at.

EMC: Actually you saved American lives.

CC: Yes.

EMC: That was good.

CC: You can't say it saved Japanese because I don't know.

EMC: During the war, on the ship was there any grumbling among the enlisted men that you dealt with? Was anybody complaining about the war saying I want to go home?

CC: No. Like I said before, only a few of the older guys. I remember one particular older guy was sorrow, but there wasn't a lot of that either.

EMC: No. Not a lot of grumbling.

CC: Not a lot of grumbling. No. A lot of grumbling to go home, because, like I said, they let the *Iowa* go first and then another thing that was kind of interesting. While we were sitting there, Gene Tunney came on board. He was like a commander or a captain or something. He was gonna make a big announcement. We were all excited about that. We figure okay he's going to tell us were going to go home. So we were waiting eagerly for his telling us we are going home and instead what he tells us is: I know you all concerned about when I was down for the count with Jack Dempsey why I was down there for so long, and I was counting one, two, three, four, five. He said I looked up and I saw that Jack was pretty tired, so I figure I would just lay there a little bit just to give him a rest, something like that. What a downer that was.

EMC: This boxing story.

CC: What a downer. Who cared, you know.

EMC: Was he on your ship or another ship?

CC: He was just on. He was not a regular.

EMC: They probably piped him aboard or got him aboard or something. You were on one Magic Carpet trip and you went back, I guess, to the states, didn't you?

CC: Yes, we came back to Bremerton. I remember that beautiful ride in Juan de Fuca Straits, seeing all the little islands that were along coming into Bremerton. It was just a great day. I think a little bit cold. Then we were coming from Hawaii. I guess we had been at Ford Island, then we came back to Bremerton.

EMC: Where and when were you discharged?

CC: I was discharged from Lido Beach on Long Island, May of '46.

EMC: So what did you do between January and May of '46?

CC: Well, we were sitting in Bremerton. Went on liberty. Did the regular maintenance duties, like checking and we did the other stuff. And that was basically it, mostly recreation. I don't remember any training that was done. So it was just waiting, I guess, to be discharged.

EMC: Yes. You had to have points.

CC: Right. You had to have a certain number of points.

EMC: So it was May of '46.

CC: Right.

EMC: Did you at that point in time want to stay in the Navy?
Did you have any thoughts about that?

CC: Yes, I did. I didn't want to. They use to play the bands and try to get you all excited. We called that shipping over music. You know how it affects you. I don't know. I wanted to get out. I wanted to come back to the States and wanted to do something but not stay in the Navy.

EMC: Oh, okay. How did you feel about your part and your role in the war when you were discharged, or during the time that you were serving in the war?

CC: I felt good about. I felt that this was something I should be doing. I'm happy to be doing it in the Navy and they treated us great. I never had any—I had good fellowship with the guys on the ship and in the tradition of our family. I was happy to wear the uniform and coming home, coming up Bunker Avenue where we lived in our uniform.

EMC: Oh, great.

CC: I had good feelings, nothing negative at all.

EMC: How do you feel about your service in the war now some almost sixty years later?

CC: I look back on it. I got my navy picture here. I got my ship here. I've got postcards of my ship. I went to see the

Jersey with Uncle Buck a couple of years ago; that's where I took these pictures.

EMC: Where was it?

CC: In Bayonne, New Jersey. I'm pretty sure it was Bayonne.

EMC: Probably.

CC: But it could be right across in Camden.

EMC: Camden yards?

CC: Yes.

EMC: Where they build a lot of the ships. That's great. Did you ever experience any post traumatic stress disorder?

CC: No. I don't think so. Let me just explain, when I got out of the navy, I had peddled milk before. That was my job. The guy that I worked for Ralph ? came down to see my parents before I came home and talked to them about me going back to work there. But when I came home I didn't want to do that. What I wanted to do then, for some reason, I thought I should go to college. I never even thought about that before the navy, but we had the GI bill. I felt that, I'll work it out. I'll see what I can do here. I wanted to be an engineer because I figured well on the mechanical side.

EMC: Sure.

CC: So I enrolled. I got into the University of Connecticut, passed the test to get in and one semester of engineering was enough for me. The math was killing me.

EMC: Oh.

CC: So I flipped out and majored in Economics after that. Then I went.

EMC: Did you graduate?

CC: Yes.

EMC: Oh.

CC: I also got my masters there. I got a bachelors and a masters.

EMC: What did you get your masters in?

CC: Economics

EMC: You're an economics major. That's another tough major.

CC: The dismal science.

EMC: Yes, the dismal science.

CC: But I had some anxiety I know the first, maybe in my freshman year. Now there may have been more of the college thing and the demand of the college. There were a lot of veterans, you know, we were competing all over, so forth and so on. I did get some migraine headaches during that time. What's interesting, too, is that I had the first migraine when I was

about sixteen peddling milk, but I didn't know what the heck it was.

EMC: Wow.

CC: I had a migraine. It would affect my eyes and everywhere also.

EMC: Sure.

CC: And so, let me see, I'm just trying to think. I had a migraine when I was sixteen and when I was in the navy I had one in Ulithi. I was in Ulithi for a recreation thing and when I was coming back off the island to get back to the ship I had that aura. When I got on board the ship I went to sick bay and they told me you're probably sea sick. Well, by that time I had been perfect. I was there least a year or so. But I don't fault them now because when I came home and I had a couple more, I went to my regular doctor and he told me I had low blood pressure. So I remember going on a date with Jean and running up and down the road when one of those were coming on, to get my blood pressure pumped up, you know.

EMC: Oh.

CC: Stupid.

EMC: Yes.

CC: I finally found another doctor, Doctor Healey in Meriden. He said your cousin Eddie got a migraine. You got migraines.

EMC: Oh, yes. Not that hard to figure out. I don't think.

CC: I wouldn't think so. So I don't know whether it was school or what the hell it is.

EMC: What is he doing out there?

CC: They're power washing because they're going to paint the house.

EMC: Oh, I see.

CC: Getting ready to lose-

EMC: We'll talk louder. After you graduated from college and got your masters, what did you decide to do with yourself?

Where did you work?

CC: I worked in Boston. I was a field representative for the U.S. Department of Labor in Boston. I use to go throughout New England. Also, I was transferred to New York for a while, to Manhattan. I did work representing the Labor Department in this area. I did that, I guess, for about a year, and then I went to work as a personnel assistant for a company in Stamford, Connecticut and spent my career with different mergers. I became a Vice President in 1979. We had 10,000 employees.

EMC: Of what company?

CC: Northeast Utilities.

EMC: Well, that wasn't the Stamford company, was it?

CC: It was Connecticut Power, then it merged into the Hartford Electric Light Company, then it merged into Northeast Utilities.

EMC: Oh, okay. So you were Vice President of what division?

CC: Human resources.

EMC: Human Resources.

CC: I did all of the labor negotiations, grievance handling, all that kind of stuff. I spent nine years as a VP there and then I retired. While I was there I became an arbitrator. I'm an arbitrator now. I do arbitration of labor issues, labor management.

EMC: Wow.

CC: Also training. I was doing training with unions and companies in how to manage their new union contracts, but that required me to fly all over the country, California, Missouri, every place. I did two jobs this year and I'm too old to be doing that. But I'm still doing arbitration.

EMC: Basically in Connecticut?

CC: No. I've done it in Tennessee.

EMC: Oh, you go all over?

EMC: I'm primarily in Connecticut. That's great. You left your engineering background behind and you went on to another field.

CC: Yes, I did. To this day unions that I dealt with I have no problem with those people and they have no problem with me, even

though we were coming up on different angles and so forth. I've always respected them and they respected me. If they didn't respect me, I'd walk out on them. But I tried to do right voluntarily, make sure they got what they were entitled too, but also protect the company so they could operate.

EMC: Yes.

CC: I love that work. All the pressure.

EMC: It's tough.

CC: You had with strikes and everything else. I never wanted to do something else, except teach. I was an adjunct professor at Central Connecticut for nine years.

EMC: Oh, really.

CC: Yes.

EMC: What did you teach?

CC: Micro, Macro, Labor relations.

EMC: Micro, Macro economics?

CC: Yes.

EMC: And Labor Relations?

CC: Yes, and Labor Relations.

EMC: Well, good for you.

CC: I had a young lady in my class, Micro class, and she wrote me a letter, a two page, went to the Wharton school and she said

that the economics here that you taught me is far superior to anything I'm getting here at Wharton.

EMC: Isn't that something.

CC: Yes. I lost the damn letter.

EMC: Oh, I know. Oh, but that's good because Wharton is a highly rated school.

CC: What was interesting, too, my brother George, who was Chief of Police in Meriden. He retired about ten years ago, I guess. He teaches criminology at Southern Connecticut here, three courses.

EMC: Oh, that's good. Fabulous.

CC: He's doing good.

EMC: That's great. Well, you had quite an occupation after the war.

CC: Yes.

EMC: How many years where you at Northeast Utilities?

CC: Thirty-seven years.

EMC: Good.

CC: Maybe a couple of times I wanted to go someplace else, I had good bosses, people looked out for me, and I looked out for them.

EMC: So when did you retire?

CC: In May of '89.

EMC: Oh, okay. So twenty years ago.

CC: Almost twenty years.

EMC: Wow, that long.

CC: Thank you.

EMC: Twenty years ago. That's for sure.

CC: Jean and I been married since 1952.

EMC: Oh, okay.

CC: I can remember it was a good week. You can't even remember that.

EMC: Why? Do you remember the date?

GC: We can't stand each other.

EMC: Do you remember the date?

JC: No. I remember the date.

CC: She doesn't remember. We had a week. I remember exactly the day. It was April 4, in 1952.

JC: Did you have a good week?

CC: We had a good week.

JC: I didn't remember that.

CC: She doesn't remember any good week at all. That's how we lived so long.

JC: We get up and we fight.

EMC: Oh, really.

JC: Yes. And that's how we stay alive and we stay right up.

CC: We do crossword puzzles.

EMC: We do crossword puzzles together. Oh, that's great.

CC: She takes a whack at them and then we finish it together.

JC: The puzzle. Yeah, yeah, yeah, I didn't even get a chance to look at.

CC: The Hartford Courant here in Connecticut-their puzzles are easier on Monday and they get tougher as the week goes on.

EMC: Same with the New York Times.

JC: It's the same?

EMC: Yes.

JC: Yeah.

EMC: They get tougher. Monday you can do but the others.

CC: Well, we get to Wednesday now.

JC: Together.

CC: We can't get by Thursday.

JC: Oh, yeah, that was a mess. I thought oh maybe you would give me a few little letters there I could add on. I said no.

He's got a mess here. Well, whatever, so today's Friday.

CC: Yes.

JC: I can't believe it.

CC: We were actually planning World War III here.

JC: Are you?

EMC: Okay. A few more questions and than we'll be finished.
Okay, your occupation and then you retired and your post
retirement career. Do you belong to any veterans organizations?

CC: No.

JC: No, and he should.

EMC: Okay.

JC: I guess I better leave.

CC: No. I was selectman in town.

EMC: Oh, yeah. In Durham?

CC: Yes, in Durham. We have a first selectman and two other
selectman. I was one of the others. So that was kind of a
little thing that I did besides. I was president of the
University of Connecticut Alumni Association.

EMC: Wow.

CC: There were a lot of things that I did, but now I'm not.
I'm doing mostly family stuff, you know.

EMC: You've been very active. About medals, I should ask you.
Did you get any medals for your World War II service?

CC: Yes. I got the Asiatic and the Philippine Liberation.

EMC: Yeah.

CC: The American. I don't know, World War II thing.

EMC: Victory medal, probably.

CC: Yeah. Victory medal. Also I'm applying for the Connecticut. We have a Connecticut medal.

EMC: Oh.

CC: Applying for that now and there maybe are others. I want to write to the Bureau of Naval Personnel and see what else I'm entitled to.

EMC: Yeah, you should. People are doing that. We talked about the reunion. You attended one reunion of the *New Jersey*.

CC: Yes.

EMC: Do you have any memorabilia or letters from the war that you wrote? Did you write to your parents?

CC: Yes, I did, once in a while. In fact, my handwriting now is so bad that my mother took the one of my letters down to the Chinese laundry and got six shirts.

EMC: Really? It's that bad? It always looks like Chinese scribble.

CC: It was terrible. I use to have good penmanship before I went in. Why I got so bad I don't know. I was terrible when I was a VP. My writing was so bad that I use to have these commitment sheets that I would send out to the Directors that worked with me, telling them something that had to be followed up on, and the writing was so bad that they use to have to get a

hold of my secretary and she was the only one who could decipher this stuff.

EMC: Yes.

CC: Bad. Bad. Bad. Bad.

EMC: Okay. Did service in the navy have any impact or influence on you later in life?

CC: Well, it did in this sense that I served my country. I'm a veteran and I want to be treated that way. I want to be treated with respect as a veteran. I'm just trying to think as far as feelings are concerned. I'm very proud of my service, an honorable discharge. I did my job. I did it well in the Navy and when I went back to my ship it was thrilling for me. In fact, they offered to take me down to the old after diesel, you know, five decks below. I found out I'm a little claustrophobic, so I didn't want to take it. No. I think pride. And knowing I had gone and done my job, done my service for the country and a good feeling about the time I put in. The fact that I did it, and I meet other navy guys once in a while. I can talk a little bit about those times. So I think more than anything the satisfaction and pride of what I did.

EMC: Great.

CC: I didn't try to draft dodge. I didn't try to do anything. I didn't do anything wrong as far as good conduct. I never hurt the navy and I loved it.

EMC: Great.

CC: I didn't want to stay in it.

EMC: Yeah, right.

CC: You know, for good. I loved it.

EMC: Oh, that's fantastic. Is there anything else you want to add, anything we've missed?

CC: I'm trying to think. I hope this has been useful to you.

EMC: Oh, absolutely. It's been great. You have a fantastic memory.

CC: We didn't go by so much by battle. Identifying battles, this battle, that battle.

EMC: Right.

CC: Another thing I wanted to mention, which was quite exciting, was that in the evening out in the Pacific, you had the Third Fleet and Fifth Fleet and we had four squadrons. So we had 38-1, 38-2, 38-3, 384.4 and at sundown all of those squadrons, in many cases, would come together and as far as you can see, ships. Unbelievable. Unbelievable, so each of those propellers would have a certain amount of destroyers, cruisers,

battleships, carriers and so forth so on. It was just an exciting thing to see. Unbelievable.

EMC: The power of the U.S. Navy.

CC: Yes. Well, we came together and then they were disbursed and it-- just preparing for this brings back memories. I told my children about them and my grandchildren and my oldest grandson just graduated from Lehigh University, a football player about 6'2", three hundred pounds. He just wants some of the navy stuff when I kick the bucket. Grandpa, "I want this and I want that from the Navy." Well, I like the picture, you know, and anything else that you got of the ship." The more I think about and how I still feel about it, a great service. We went down to Annapolis. We all made the same trip to see the *Jersey* a couple of years ago. I went there on a Saturday when they were marching. Wonderful.

EMC: Yes. It is great. Did any of your children join the service? The Navy?

CC: No.

EMC: Not at all attracted to it.

CC: My brother George said that's what Brendan ought to do, because he can't find a job right now.

EMC: Right.

CC: Graduated in December.

EMC: He can join the navy.

CC: He could. He could and he'd be good at it, too. But you know, he'd rather go to graduate school.

EMC: Oh, yes. That's what a lot of them are doing, until they get a job.

CC: His father is a union electrician and has a hell of a time with tuition even though the kids got a scholarship there playing football. He still had to come up with about fifteen thousand, I guess, a year.

EMC: Oh, sure. Expensive.

CC: I can't think of anything else, except I know my brother Buck, is the real navy guy now in our family because he got to be a commander.

EMC: Right. He stayed in for thirty years or twenty-five years.

CC: No. He was a reserve.

EMC: A reserve commander.

CC: He was on the destroyer, the *Berry*. He just came through open heart surgery. They put six, they cleaned our six arteries. He had a hell of a time coming back. It was a couple of weeks ago they operated on him.

EMC: It takes time.

CC: I tried to tell him. Even when we went to Annapolis he took us to an officer's club dance, which was fun, at Annapolis. Then we watched the marching on Saturday and it was thrilling.

EMC: Oh, yes. That's great.

CC: And it was interesting, too. They had an Oriental, whatever they call them, platoon leader or whatever, a woman, which was nice.

EMC: Yes. The girls are in the academy now.

CC: The bands were great.

EMC: Yes. It's quite thrilling to see that.

CC: I can't think of anything else, as far as the War College is concerned. That's what it's called?

EMC: Yes. The Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

CC: They teach.

EMC: It's a graduate school. Thank you for your reminiscences Mr. Caffrey. We'll have this transcribed and get a copy to you.