

full written transcript of the interview

A: Alex - interviewer

E: Eugene - interviewee

J: Joy - helping with interviewee

A: Okay. Hello. This is being recorded. Are you okay with that?

E: Sure. Yes.

A: Okay. Hi. This is the oral history interview of Eugene Biernacki, a Korean War veteran. This interview is being recorded on October 27, 2023, and is being conducted by Alex Thomas. How are you feeling about the interview, Grandpa? Do you have any questions?

E: No, I'm feeling fine.

A: Can you please introduce yourself?

E: Well, my name is Eugene Biernacki. Right now, I am in a retirement facility in Northbrook, Illinois. And I've been here about a year and a half. And that's about it for right now.

A: Perfect. Okay. So, just to get a little bit of biographical information - when and where were you born, and in what family status context were you raised?

E: I was born in Chicago in 1932, and I lived with my mother and grandmother mainly. My father died when I was three years old, so when my father died, my mother moved in with her mother, my grandmother, and I was brought up in the household of my mother and grandmother. There was no male figure there. My grandpa died, and my brother and I were very young at the time, and we were brought up in an ethnic type of atmosphere.

A: What were the circumstances of your deployment and service in Korea? Were you drafted or were you already in the Navy?

E: No, I joined up. I was going to be drafted in a couple of days. My brother got drafted on a certain date. I don't remember the date, but I know it was in May. And I noticed that I was going to be drafted and I should be ready to go on a certain date again in May. But in the meantime, they gave me the choice of being drafted or joining up in the armed services. And I chose to join the Navy at that time.

And then from there, I went to do basic training in Great Lakes for several months. I think it was three months. And then we were sent to California, and then when we got to California, we were put on-board ship. We were going far east, going toward Korea. In the meantime, we had a lot of other stops to make. We were on a Goodwill Tour also, so we stopped at a lot of other countries. And met Goodwill ambassadors, and, uh, what would I say, I shouldn't say parties, but, uh, receptions for all the dignitaries on board our ship.

Because our ship was a flagship, whatever that means, it meant that we were the ship that other ships were guarding, because our ship was very large. And we had destroyers around us. And they were guarding us so that we wouldn't get attacked because we didn't know when we were in Korean waters, or what the Koreans had in store for us.

Before we got to Korea, we were in Hawai'i for about a month, which was a very pleasurable type of thing because we had a lot of time off of the ship to go and visit and take tours. We all had other duties, which were cleaning and stripping the ship of the paint. The rust could have started. So it wasn't like it was a complete pleasure trip.

We also had other trips duties to do. Uh, not so much in my post, in the Navigation Department, since there isn't much going on in the Navigation Department. But otherwise we're out to sea. I was the navigation yeoman, which took, I took notes and took everything that happened and kept

a log of all the happenings that day on ship, which had changes, of course, and different changes of officers at the helm, meaning who was steering the ship.

And I had to keep track of, I didn't do any of that type of stuff, because I was the, you know, when I took care of the paperwork, I did all the keeping of the log and writing all the happenings of the day, as I said, changing of the courses and keeping track, and then I kept track of all the maps and charts that were filed away up in the, up in the bridge for the captain and the other officers to keep track of where we're going, what they were going to be doing. And all those charts didn't mean anything to me because I wasn't familiar with that type of work. All I did was file the stuff and kept everything going as neat as possible as far as paperwork is concerned.

And then after Hawai'i. That's when we started off to Korea. We were, let's see, on board ship for about, oh, from around Christmas time till Easter. About those, about that time, we were up and down the coast of Korea, and we were getting notices of where the Koreans had their, I don't want to try to say, where they were, had their... I'm looking for a word.

J: Their fleets?

E: Well, the Koreans didn't have a fleet, I don't believe, at least we never ran across it. Well, they had their encampments, and I don't remember how we got the information. Anyhow, we trained our cannons on those positions. We were bombarding them.

There were several places along the coast. And, we didn't get a lot of encampments. But then as the war was progressing, we got more and more information on what the enemy was doing, and the ship would take course toward those encampments and try to find out how successful we were. I don't know because that was probably top-secret type of stuff. I was a very lowly, lowly person.

I didn't get all that top-secret stuff. Most I got was confidential stuff, which is all stuff that anybody could read on board ship. Top secret stuff was all sent through certain channels and certain files and only certain people could read those things. And a few times the Koreans did send out bombardments to our ship. Of course, we didn't get hit by any of them, but narrowly missed. But we were all pretty safe, although a lot of times, we had general quarters, which everybody had to go to their battle stations. And if you didn't have battle stations, you had to stay where you were and get locked into a part of the ship that was watertight. So they closed the doors so you couldn't get in or out. Something like a fire drill, where the doors get automatically locked during an attack. So that the whole ship doesn't get flooded with water when we have a compartment that is hit. So there were a lot of times that I just sat in my office on the floor for hours and hours and hours because we were bombarding the shoreline and the encampments inland, too, and they were shooting back at us, and fortunately we were never hit.

A: Were you ever scared when you were sitting there?

E: Scared? Worried, I guess. I wouldn't say scared, because we were never hit. I never heard of a ship around there being sunk by the Koreans. I remember hearing about the ships during the Japanese war that were being struck. I never heard anything about ships being struck by the enemy from Korea.

A: Got it.

E: But they tried. Apparently, we were far enough away from Korea that their bombs or whatever didn't reach us successfully. We couldn't aim properly to be hit, although there were a lot of times that we could see the water around us being hit by bombs or whatever they were sending across the ocean towards the naval ships. There were about, oh, well, at least five. That were in a group. They were going, going, they were going along the shoreline. So if anything was gonna happen,

they wanted to guard the big ship, which I was on. The little ships would've taken the bombardment first and given us a chance to get away because our ship was next to the largest ship in the Navy at that time. Yeah, the aircraft carrier was the biggest ship. Our ship was, uh, like a heavy cruiser, which was a complement of about 2,000 men, which was a lot.

Then after that, we started a good little cruise again, going into different port in the South Pacific, and every once in a while, we'd come back to Korea, because we couldn't stay in these foreign ports forever. We had to go to these foreign parts to refuel and get new supplies because we were out to sea for, like they say, for around Thanksgiving till Easter time.

So, at different times, we had to stop at different ports. At that time, we were allowed to get off the ship if places were safe enough for Americans to get into. The ship's captain or whoever made arrangements for anybody who wanted to go to shore and take tours of the city or any of the towns, and see what the occupation was of the people who were in these towns.

Now this all sounds kind of trite, but oyster farms and somehow, it's like for tourists. And, we had a chance to go to the USO show, a very important part in getting us into these ports, too.

They knew that after being at sea for a long time that we were going stir crazy sometimes. A lot of the guys got very nervous and at that time, they didn't have psychiatrists and psychologists, or officers on board ship to handle this. So they just put you in the brig or something, so you cooled off. There was a case where there were two guys that committed suicide that jumped off the ship.

I don't remember where it was.

A: They were on your ship?

E: They were on our ship, yeah. It's hard to handle being away from home. The stress of being on board ships for so long. Being confined.

A: I want to get a timeline of how long you were actually in Korea.

E: Oh, in Korea... The Korean War ended, well, I was in the Navy, so it wasn't like I was there for four years. The war ended about 1955 [Editor's Note: An armistice was declared in 1953, but US troops remained stationed in Korea as a permanent presence].

I remember there were a lot of guys that were on board ship that were very unhappy because they were in the Navy and they were enlisted for X amount of time and they were due to be released before the Korean War. Then the Korean War started up. And they were recalled to duty, so a lot of the guys were very unhappy, maybe that was one of the reasons why two of those guys went a little off the deep end, so to speak. Two of the guys that I worked with had been in the Navy for four years when the Korean War started, and after it started, they had to stay in because they were recruited all over again. No one was released from the service.

Even though the war ended, I still had to fulfill my four-year obligations with the Navy. So I was only on-board ship for two years, and then I was requested shore duties. That's why I was sent to Washington, D.C. to work with the Pentagon. So that isn't part of Korea. But I do remember where, while we were in Korea, there was no such thing as being politically correct, even between the enlisted men or the officers.

A lot of times when we were in Korea, and even in Japan, they would use the politically incorrect word for the Japanese. I don't know if I could repeat it. It began with a G. It was used by, like I said, everyone. Especially when we were in Korea. And the ship was engaged in, uh, in a war zone. They would call it the, uh, Korean (derogatory term). Which was very politically incorrect. It was used for a time. At that time, now you wouldn't use a word like that. So that was a strange thing. I didn't understand why they... We'd use such a discouraging word for the enemy, they could have called them the Koreans or some other name, but not the G word. So that was my experience on the ship.

While I was aboard ship, even though we weren't in the war zone, we were always preparing for the war zone. What they call general quarters when the alarm would go off and everybody would have to go to their...

A: Their battle positions?

E: Their battle positions, right. And, uh, make sure that everything would be ready in case of an attack. And we didn't know if the attacks were, if the general quarters, were for real. It's for practice. So this happened out of nowhere. Because when you're off the coast of Korea in the war zone, you don't know if and when you're going to be hit.

But you have to be ready. So you have to practice all the time. Just practice. The fact is this could have been that we were being bombarded, but fortunately it never happens. But that's when you have to be concerned about being hit. Everybody was, whatever they were doing, they had to stop doing what they did to their battle stations. And get ready for retaliation.

A: What do you remember about being deployed to Korea and, and can you tell me a little bit about leaving home and going to a brand-new place to fight a war? Have you ever been out of the country? Like, how did you feel leaving home and going to a new place?

E: Leaving home was not a big problem. I always wanted to get away. And going to another place was no problem. I felt free. I felt like I was being dominated by my mother and grandmother. So this is my way of escaping.

A: How did they feel about it, your mother and grandmother?

E: Well, my brother left home for the Navy three days before I went into the Navy. He went into the Army three days before I went into the Navy, so she was left alone with my grandmother.

But when I think about it, my mother was still young at that time. She was only 54. But I thought of her as being an old lady. Really, my grandmother was really ancient. I have no idea how old she was.

But my mother continued to go to work. She worked down in The Loop. She had other activities that she was involved in, mostly musical activities. So she had a lot of outside hobbies, too. As far as leaving home? Well, I guess they missed us, but there was no big deal about it. It was something that was expected. I mean, after all, we were 18 years old, or 19 years old at the time. So it wasn't like we were young kids leaving home. It's like, you know, we were going away to college for four years. Fortunately, nothing happened to my brother or me. My brother never went overseas, he was stationed someplace down south. I'd say down south in the United States. Korean deployment wasn't that much. Most of the time we were sailing from one port to another. Because when you're sailing out at sea, you're using a lot of fuel. So you have to pull up to different ports. And those ports are usually very interesting as far as places that you would want to visit, probably. Way back then, they weren't as sophisticated and built up as they are now. I'm not sure I would recognize these places. I remember when we went to Hawaii, we walked up and down the main street, and there were hotels here and there, and you could still see the ocean. And there were places where there was... Places that were just overgrown with weeds, next to the beach, and nowadays it's all built up with hotels from when we were there last. But we always had a chance to go around and see different things in different cities.

J: So that was kind of exciting?

E: Yeah, it was. Plenty of time. Like I say, usually when you're in the major cities, the armies were there also. So the USO played a big part in entertaining, and we had big stars performing there, comedians, singers.

We were dancing, but mainly orchestras and singers and comedians, that type of thing. It was always first-class type of stuff. It wasn't amateur type of... These are all professionals who came to entertain the servicemen.

J: Like who? Like Bob Hope?

E: You know, and Danny Thomas. Remember Gertrude Burke from Goldberg's? She was there.

A: So that was your like, that was in Japan? So that's kind of what you and the fellow soldiers did?

E: Japan also. We were in Hawai'i. Singapore, Hawai'i, Manila. All major cities. All these major cities had ports for big ships to come in to refuel, get fresh water. We always had fresh water on board ship, until we got to Korea. Then we had to use desalinated water, which was okay, but it was always... So it's kind of salty. I enjoyed traveling around different countries because I've never gone to those places. My first thought was that if I were going to be in service, I'd want to go to Europe. It turned out they sent me to the Pacific. This is a good place to go.

As far as the war is concerned, nobody talked about how bad the war was and how good the war was. We did see film strips and newsreels that were sent over from a helicopter from the mainland. They were sent, they transported these things back and forth from one ship to another by line, if you know what I mean.

So, we did see what was going on in Korea, about how the boys were being killed. They were boys. They were sent over there being killed and how they had to go through the jungles. So, we did see what was going on there. It was like we were oblivious to the fighting that was going on there. It was very similar to some films and newsreels that you saw about Vietnam, the same type of fighting in the jungle, very hot and very radiant. It's just a sad type of thing to see our American boys being killed over there.

A: Do you remember what the commanding officers or the higher ups on your ship told you about Korea?

E: I don't remember. I don't remember anything like that. It's just that we were told that they had to bombard Korea encampments.

A: Day-to-day routine?

E: The name of the ship was Rochester. It was a heavy cruiser. At that time, it was the second largest ship in the Navy. Day to day activities – There was always something going on. You, you know, you had to clean or you had to... get involved. Some of the guys had to work in the kitchen. It was departmentalized.

There were like so many different departments, and each department had their own type of duty to do. Like mine was the office duties, then there were guys who had to do the kitchen duties, and then there were electricians, and then there were the radar people, and then the boiler room guys. There was always something going on. It wasn't like you had time to just sit around and do nothing. It kept you busy. Because if they didn't keep you busy, you'd go crazy too, you know, you didn't have a computer or TV sets to watch. We're lucky if they sent over some movies from the mainland to other ships that were sending them to our ship, so you got to see a lot of old movies in the evening, but all that day-to-day activity was just routine.

Maintenance, cleaning, more maintenance, uh, preparing for battle, going to battle stations in case of an attack, so you knew what to do. It was like preparation, so you didn't hesitate about where you were going to go or what you were going to do. It just automatically would go to your battle stations.

They get prepared in case there was an attack, which if they call for battle stations, it could be a war, or it could be somebody bombing, or it could be just a practice session, and you know, so

you have to be prepared. So it was like a fire drill, you know. Yeah. Sometimes it's a fire drill, sometimes it's a real thing. You have to be prepared.

A: Before we move on to, um, historical events, I just want to ask one more time about the ports and, you know, the overall mood of you and other fellow soldiers on the ship. Did you like going to the ports? Did you feel like a freedom from a sheltered life or anything like that?

Like, did you feel like you went, like you got that freedom when you went to ports and had that free time and went to see like music? Was that kind of like a fun adolescent period away from home?

E: I wasn't expecting that type of thing when I joined the Navy. It was just a side effect, a sideline that happened. I was very happy with that. I went to a lot of different ports. You know, we were in Manila, and then we went to Singapore, Manila...

J: He's looking at a cruise book from 1952 to 1953 that he has.

A: Oh nice. About the USS Rochester?

J: Yeah.

E: It's all about Rochester. It's like a high school yearbook with all the pictures, and it's really quite nice.

A: That's really cool.

J: I wonder if I can turn this so I can show you some of the pictures. You want me to hold that up and maybe show it to her?

A: That's a big ship.

J: Yeah, that's the Rochester.

E: Here are the ports we were at. We went to Hawai'i, Bangkok, Saigon, and Manila. A lot of places in Japan. Of course, in Japan, that was when the army still occupied Japan after the Second World War. So that was interesting, because we covered a lot of territory.

J: Manila, Saigon, Bangkok, Singapore. E: Hawai'i, and a lot of... places in Japan.

A: Very cool.

J: Why don't you maybe show her some of these pictures? So this is the ship and you're like putting out bombs. So like here's another picture of like the ship.

A: Did anyone ever hit your ship? Or other than the two suicides no one died from like a bombing or anything like that?

E: No, and that's probably kept secret. I knew somebody who was in the captain's office. Did routine work for the captain. And I knew somebody in there, and he told me about the suicide type of thing. I'm sure they heard a lot of other things that were going on, because everything that happened on board ship had to go through departments and end up in the captain's office. The captain did everything that was happening on board ship. It was like a prison. We have all these different senators, congressmen, taking care of the country, so to speak. But it all boils down to getting back to the captain and knowing what's happening.

J: But can I also show them these pictures? Here's him working in navigation.

A: Wow, you look just like Uncle Adam!

J: So like, here's like in Hawai'i. Oh, here's the beach in Hawai'i. So like they had some good free time too, right?

E: This was in Japan.

J: So look at this is, going to like dinner in Japan. So there's some cool stuff here.

A: That's awesome. Grandpa.

E: I don't remember what country it was in, but Angkor Wat. Did you ever hear of Angkor Wat?

A: Angkor Wat? Angkor Wat. Angkor Wat?

E: Yeah, it's a big tourist attraction now. It's this old, old city. J: In where? What country?

A: It's in Cambodia.

E: In Cambodia, okay. And that was a high spot. They returned a small plane for us, and they flew us. One of the 20 or 30 guys went on this trip. Very, very, very interesting. Old, old, old civilization that still had practically overgrown this jungle. And they just started out to, send companies out there to renovate the area and to clean it all up. And it's like a great big place.

A: Very cool!

J: So he got to see a lot of cool places.

E: A lot of places I've never even thought about going to, till service. And uh, I really didn't write home too much. Now and then I'd send a letter back home, but there wasn't too much to talk about. Once I got on board ship, after leaving the Chicago area, I was talking about my daily routine. Some of the guys had girlfriends, they would write letters back every day. But I had no one to write to. My girlfriend got married while I was in the service.

A: What? Wait, move a little bit closer. You said your girlfriend got married?

E: Yeah, I mean, I went on to service, and I heard from Ronald Betts, another friend of mine, who wasn't in the service, who was back here, and he wrote and told me that she got married about a year or two after I was in the service.

A: How did you feel about that? Well, you met Granny. You found Granny and you had 50, what? I think, what was it? Almost 60 beautiful years.

E: My wife you mean? Yes. Almost 60 years. 59 years. I miss her. I miss having someone around. I miss her. If you saw mother, you saw me. If you saw me, you saw mother. We were inseparable.

A: Yep. You're always together.

E: Yeah. We never took separate vacations or separate trips. You never even thought of that. Yeah.

A: Well, I guess, I guess it was a blessing in disguise that she got married while you were at service. Do you mind if we get into some historical events? More into the actual history part of it. Do you remember having an opinion about America's involvement in Korea? Did you know what you were fighting for, basically?

E: I don't remember. We're talking about... 70 years ago.

J: 70 years ago.

A: Do you remember knowing what you were even fighting for or why you were there at all?

E: No, I don't. I don't remember at all.

A: The Korean War had one of the largest civilian casualties ever. A lot of Korean civilians.

E: You know more about this than I do.

A: I know, because I'm in a class about it! So did you know about all the civilians that were dying during the war when you were there?

E: No.

A: So you guys didn't really know a lot about what was happening in land?

E: We didn't know what was happening until, like, afterwards. I mean, there were times when they would send over newsreels, like news that they used to show in movie theaters years ago before the movie started. They would show you what's happening in world news around the

world. And they would show what was happening. It's the war mainly. Watching battle scenes and the destruction of the cities and people running. You know, just like you see, like you see in war today. It's about aggression. We really didn't want the North Koreans to take over the whole country. And it ended up being divided into North Korea and South Korea. But North Korea wanted the whole country. Mainly, that was one of the reasons why we were fighting. To keep Korea being divided. They wanted Korea to be independent and democracy didn't turn out that way. So, I don't know how and when it turned out, where they divide the countries. By the 38th parallel, I don't know if you heard about that. Yeah.

A: Because this was a conflict between North and South Korea. And it was basically like some authors have called it like a civil war between the two. Did you feel it was right that America was there and that there were American soldiers dying for a cause that was between North and South Korea?

E: I don't remember any of that.

A: Do you, did you think it was right? Do you still agree with it now? That America went there?

E: Sure. Because they helped with Korea being divided into two parts, so that the southern part had the democracy, where the war that we were in, Korea would've been one big country. Well, it's still one country, but there's South Korea and North Korea, but South Korea is a democracy now. We were fighting communism.

A: Yeah. How does it feel that the Korean War is known as the Forgotten War? Does it make you sad that, like, Vietnam is more recognized, and that veterans of the Korean War aren't as recognized because it's the Forgotten War?

E: Well, I guess by the number of casualties the Korean War was a very minor war, and that's why it's been forgotten. Whereas in Vietnam, you have a lot of casualties there. Really, it doesn't

bother me that the Korean War wasn't, isn't as recognized as the Vietnam War is. This is a minor skirmish, it's called a policing action, more than anything else.

A: Yeah.

E: What else is there to say about the Korean War? I can't think of anything right now.

A: That's okay. So one of the massacres that happened, I know you, you don't remember the specifics, but I want to tell you about this massacre that happened with all these civilian casualties was hidden from the public for so long. So I'm just asking for your opinion now. Do you think that like this is contributing to the reasons why it's the forgotten war? A lot of the American public doesn't know about these major massacres that went on.

E: Probably the American public didn't know about it because communication isn't like it is today. Like any time someone passes over a certain area of land, it makes the news.

If someone gets killed, it makes the news nowadays. Years ago, you had to have a cameraman there right away. Whereas nowadays, you have cameramen and war correspondents all over the world. So, I suppose that's why a lot of it was forgotten. There's just no interest from the news people to send people to Korea to see what's happening. I didn't, this is the first I hear about this massacre you're talking about. Perhaps if I knew more about history in Korea or the Korean War.

A: And the news outlets weren't reporting it. So, do you think the government was hiding a lot of this information, too? Because they didn't want people to know about what was actually happening?

E: Well, I think people knew what was happening because they, when people were, when the Americans were killed, the parents and the officers had to be notified about people that were being killed over there. It wasn't like guys were killed and forgotten. Their parents were all

notified. Even nowadays they're finding remnants of bones and whatever, and trying to find out who these guys were. Trying to get info to families.

J: I think it was a different time. Like, there wasn't, like you said, there weren't newsmen there. Like, you didn't have iPhones to, like, capture everything, so there just wasn't much known about it.

A: Yeah. Do you remember how it felt when you were going home? Did they tell you like this, or was there like a celebration when the war was over? Do you remember how it felt that you got to go home?

E: Not really a celebration. I don't think there was a celebration. I remember a celebration after World War II. That was a biggie. That was all over the world. Crowds out on the roofs celebrating. It was like a New Year's Eve celebration.

A: So you remember like New Year's Eve kind of parties and like celebrations after World War II, but when you got home there was no, the public didn't care in a sense about you coming home? About soldiers returning?

E: It wasn't a celebration because it was like a win. It wasn't really a war, so to speak. It was virtually a war, a forgotten war. But there were no big winners. You know, the country got divided.

A: You would call it more of a policing action, rather than fighting a war. I like that you said that there were no big winners. I agree with that. I don't think anyone really won the war.

E: That's true of almost any war. Are there any big winners?

A: Did you ever return to Korea or the Pacific after the war? Like, throughout your life, did you ever return?

E: No, I have not gone back there.

A: But you said you enjoyed it?

E: Well, yeah, but I was there on land. I mean, I was on board ship cruising around the country of Korea, making sure that the North, they didn't invade the South, keeping them free. The Koreans didn't have a navy, it was such a small navy, but you still had to be careful so that they didn't attack us. You know, it caused damage.

J: You've never had a desire to go back there, even though you enjoyed, like, the ports that you went to.

E: Oh, the ports that I went to were fine. I mean, I'd go back to those, like, I've been back to Hawai'i twice or three times.

A: You've been back to Hawaii?

E: But that was a long time ago.

A: Yeah, have you ever been to the Korean War memorial in Washington, D. C.?

E: Yes, I was.

A: What did you think about that?

E: I don't remember it at all. I think there was a wall, a wall like for the Vietnam War. It's just monuments. I don't remember.

A: There was there were no feelings evoked from, from being there? It was just interesting to you?

E: I guess I'm not very emotional.

A: You're not very emotional? But, how did it feel? Was your family, were you excited to see your brother again when you came home? See your family again? Or did you miss that freedom, freedom of being away?

E: I missed it when I was out of service. I went back home till I got married. I had more freedom. I had a job. I was working. I had a car. I could go wherever I wanted. I was an adult. I could go to bars in case I wanted. I went to Mexico a couple of times.

J: So you left as a kid, but you came back as an adult.

E: Yeah.

J: It was a different lifestyle.

A: That's great. Is there anything else you'd like to add? Did you ever stay in contact with anyone? Meet any other Korean War veterans?

E: There were two that I was friends with. Three. Three of them.

A: See! That's why this is important! This is history. They're all gone.

E: I mean, you know, I'm 90 years old, and most of the guys died years ago. Probably the last I heard from someone was probably when I was still, before I was married.

A: So that long ago.

J: You kept in touch with some of them after you returned.

E: Yeah.

J: But it wasn't like today where you had a phone and you called them.

E: Yeah. Postcards. That's how you say when you're visiting. Oh, another one, there's another guy. He also died. I mean, most of the guys were older than I was that I was on board ship with. A lot of them were there because they had their enlistments extended. So when they went in and they were 18, 19, or 20 years old, they were maybe 26, 27 years old when they came out. The war, like I said, their enlistments were extended until the war ended, and that's when they got released, which was in 1955, I believe. I don't remember a lot.

A: You told me you weren't going to remember a lot, but this interview was great. You remembered a lot and especially talking about your feelings of going there and what you remember about, you know, just going to shows and the ports and the freedom. I think that that's amazing.

J: Maybe we can get this book in your hands before your class ends. We can let you bring this book. Um, like his yearbook that he's talking about and you can see.

A: Yeah. When you guys come, come out for Bowdoin, that'd be awesome, because I can show it to my teacher the last, the last week of classes then. That'd be awesome. Okay. Well, thank you so much. I'm going to end this recording. Is there anything else you'd like to add or just say bye?

E: Everything's fine. Goodbye.