

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN MELROSE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

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Kurt Piehler: This is an interview with John Melrose on August 3, 1994 in Hallowell, Maine with Kurt Piehler

Robert Lipschitz: and Rob Lipschitz.

KP: I guess I'd like to begin with your parents. With your father. Do you know why your father came to the United States?

John Melrose: Well like all Europeans, he came here because he saw the future was here. It wasn't in Scotland where he'd been born and raised. He had served his apprenticeship over there in Brechin Castle and learned landscape architecture and design. And he had the opportunity or saw the opportunities. And many Scottish people did come to the country at that time ... around the turn of the century. ... He immediately hooked up with the Olmsted firm up in Boston. Mr. Olmsted was dead by then, but his son continued that, and that's the firm that did Grand Central Park in New York, so it was one of the finest. My mother, she came here through a tragedy in the family. Her mother was kicked in the head by a carriage horse, and [the horse] killed her. She came from a large family. My mother was the middle of the family, so it was decided they would send her over to America to live with an aunt who lived in Boston. And that's how she came here. She was old enough to take care of herself with her aunt's help, and the other older ones were needed back home to take care of the young ones, so she had naturally no choice.

KP: And your father worked for the Olmsted firm. This would probably be one of the [most] prestigious places to work in landscaping.

JM: Oh, yes, yes. And several other, ... several other Scottish people came over, went with him, Billy Mills who had worked with him over in Scotland at Brechin Castle. He also wound up with the Olmsted firm, and the two of them followed a similar path because Billy Mills wound up down in Long Island in Glen Cove with the senator down there. He was killed in an airplane accident. I can't remember his name now, but he wound up in Glen Cove, Long Island. My father [wound up] with DeForest estate in Cold Spring Harbor, Long Island. But before he did that, why he landscaped a number of places in Connecticut and New Hampshire and Maine, and so he was around all through the Northeast. He just happened to like Mr. DeForest, the relationship he had with him. He had met my mother down in Boston. He had marriage on his mind. Everything came together at one time. Mr. DeForest said he'd like him to consider coming down and staying with him.

KP: So he had already done part of the DeForest estate as part of the Olmsted firm?

JM: Yes he had been down there involved in the design of the flower garden that would go into it and the lay out of the estate generally, the roads that went through it. It was about 275 acres in all.

KP: So Mr. DeForest was impressed with your father's work?

JM: Well he had a good relationship, and they continued that right up till the time of his death. He was bird shooting over in Scotland, and the horse he was ridding, the girth saddle hadn't been fixed properly, and he slid over and fell and landed on his back and broke his back. And of course he was in his late 70's, early 80's at that time, and he never really recovered from it. And it was rather interesting because the last time he ever saw my father before he died from pneumonia, he said, Melrose, he said, I think we finally got it the way we wanted it. And he was looking over the garden in which they had all ..., two of them together had spent 27 years of their life designing, working and putting it in place. To give you an idea, it was a five acre garden, and it had a stone wall around it. All the stone was shipped down from up here in New Hampshire, block by block, and barged across Long Island Sound and then hauled by sledge horses and what not up to the garden, and then fitted it into place precisely. We did approximately 25 feet of wall every day.

KP: So you very vividly remember your father working on this garden?

JM: Oh, yes. All I remember [are] his stories about it, as much as I think. I was born in 1922 and by then [the] garden was virtually complete.

KP: But this was one of his pride and joy?

JM: Oh yes.

KP: You lived in Cold Spring Harbor?

JM: Yes.

KP: Where did you live?

JM: We lived in a house on the estate. It was a house my mother and father had. Originally it was just one upstairs bedroom to it, and then they added to it as we children arrived. We lived in that house all of our lives until the estate was ultimately broken up in the late [19]30's after Mr. DeForest died. The inheritance taxes and all, just broke up all those estates down in Long Island, Marshall Fields and many other big estates that were down in that area, and they all splintered up afterward.

KP: What happened to the garden that your father [built]?

JM: It was all eventually ... destroyed. There were some houses built on the fringes of it, but nobody really, it's a matter of upkeep, it's a tremendous amount of upkeep. Nobody could afford to keep it up.

KP: What was it like growing up on the estate?

JM: It was very, it had an element of loneliness to it because when your boy friends were, you know, each of them a mile or two miles away, there was nothing of being able to yell across the yard a mile and say, hey Bill.

KP: Come on over.

JM: And there were only about a half dozen of us in the wintertime, and maybe in the summertime some of the wealthier families would arrive. Their boys would come with them, and we would all play ball together. One of my closest friends is Tommy (Platt) who's now the Chief Judge in the Eastern District down in New York, a federal judge, has been for many years. Tommy and I still keep in touch. And Harry Platt was president of Tiffany's because they were all grandsons of Louis Tiffany. He had his estate down there in Cold Spring Harbor too. But it's a funny situation because when I went to go in the service, or I guess when I went to be admitted to the bar in New York, and I had to trace them through my residences. I lived in one house all of my life, but I had gone to school in Cold Spring Harbor, in Huntington. We were actually in the township of Oyster Bay when I was born. The wealthy people decided to incorporate the village into Laurel Hollow. We got our mail in Cold Spring Harbor, but we were actually residents of Oyster Bay if you wanted to say so. And then during World War II, for convenience and saving money, they shifted our post office address from Cold Spring Harbor to Syosset. But I had always been in the same house, but I had all these different addresses. And after a while the interviewers would just say, "The hell with it." We're not going to try to figure this out further, go on.

KP: ... How did the Great Depression affect your family?

JM: Well, indirectly it affected us because obviously with the Depression and more really the New Deal as it came in, effected it, because that put the impact and the real squeeze on the estates. We were somewhat insulated from it because during the Depression, life went on for the DeForests. In fact, he was a corporate lawyer in New York, Henry DeForest, and when the Southern Pacific Railroad went into bankruptcy, well he was in charge of the reorganization of the Southern Pacific. So he had plenty of work during the Depression. Lawyers do make money in good times and bad times. So it didn't have a serious effect, but you knew it, you could feel it all around you.

KP: When was the estate broken up? ...

JM: 1936 approximately it started to break up. He died in early '35 and immediately after that there was obviously, well he had laid the plan for how the estate would have to be liquidated and sold. ... They had built a large mansion on the upper part of the estate for their daughter, and she actually moved up to that area and took that house over afterward. And then there was another mansion that had gone back to the Revolutionary War days that was on the estate. Another daughter had that, and that was later turned over to the Carnegie Institute, which had a large research facility adjacent to the estate, so that was used by them. The main mansion that he had built, that he and she had built, they tore that down completely. So that no one else would live in that.

KP: How big was it?

JM: I don't know, about 20 rooms I would imagine. But nobody was ever going to be able to take it over and live in it and afford to keep up the rest of the properties. So it was ideal [to destroy it]. It was turned over as a development for fairly substantial homes. I mean, nothing like what had been there before.

KP: How did the break up of the estate affect your family?

JM: ... we moved to another house that was on the estate, in the upper portion of it, closer to where she was, had been the boarding house where people lived. My mother and father moved there. I was over in the Pacific at the time. And my dad started to feel ill around '44, and he had periods of time after that that he wasn't too strong, too well. And there wasn't too much work to be done. Nothing like had been before. He had two people, I think, still working for him. He used to have 12 to 15. So it was sort of a passive life for my father in his later years, and he died at the age of 68, 69 in 1949.

KP: He died on the estate?

JM: Yes, yes he died there.

KP: So when the estate was broken up, your family wasn't ...

JM: No, they weren't effected by it.

KP: You went to grammar school in Cold Spring and then to the Huntington High School.

JM: That was a big deal. [It was] one building with a sliding door that divided into two rooms so they separated the first four grades from the second four grades. There were 25 of us in all.

KP: So in the winter time, when it wasn't the season, it was a quite isolated place?

JM: Yes, except for the school and the church activities which we had, which were quite active. It was a fairly isolated experience.

KP: When you look upon your one room school house experience, how would you characterize the education?

JM: Oh, it was a wonderful break for me. At least there was pros and cons to this. When I came down there my mother only having me at home, had taught me how to read and write, and I was just turning five. I became five in October and started school in September. They had no kindergarten, and they had no enrollees in the first grade, so they put me in the second grade because I could read and write and the other kids were just about to achieve that. So that's why I wound up at Rutgers at the age of 15. And I thought surely I'd be the youngest at the age of 15,

only to find out that Stan Klion from Brooklyn who just passed away here this past year, was about six months, or seven months younger than I was.

KP: Your mother came from Sweden, but was Episcopalian. How did that ...

JM: She had been a Lutheran, and there weren't any Lutheran churches nearby. So it was a pure matter of geography. In fact, the only church nearby was the Episcopalian church, the others you'd have to go to Huntington. And in those days, you'd have to go by horse, either horse and carriage, or in the wintertime, horse and sled, so that was a pretty good reason to become an Episcopalian.

KP: So your family didn't own a car in the 1930s?

JM: No, no. We always had cars. We had a carriage before that and a horse. That was all furnished by the estate. Wages weren't the greatest thing in the estates, but all the essentials were supplied for, all was furnished to you, the house, the food, ample food, vegetable gardens. Originally there was even meats and things like that, they had pigs and cattle, and they gave that up after a while. No, it was a good life. It was a good life. I think it was life where the family probably meant a lot more those days than it does unfortunately today. Out of necessity your family was close. Your brother, and your sister, you all knew each other, and you weren't going in different directions all the time.

KP: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

JM: I had one brother who was ten years older than I was, and I had a sister who was three years older than I was.

KP: You went from basically a one room school house to Huntington High School. How big was the high school at Huntington?

JM: ... The high school was about 900 students at that time, and it was more than just Huntington. All the surrounding areas like Cold Spring Harbor and what not all had students. When we went to Huntington High School, my school district had to provide transportation for us. And there were only five of us that were going to high school from our district, so we went by taxi cab every day. See life wasn't all that bad.

KP: ... When did you know you wanted to become a lawyer?

JM: I think there was a little parental pressure. I was interested in it myself because I had always enjoyed reading and examining things and analyzing things and that's integral to being a lawyer. But it was sort [of] my mother's ambition. Mr. DeForest must be pretty successful as a lawyer so she thought I ought to be a lawyer.

KP: So there was that notion?

JM: Yes. My oldest brother became an aeronautical engineer and thought aviation was the big thing, and she just observed that at that time. Of course he went on from Brooklyn Poly where he got his mechanical engineering and went on to NYU [New York University] to graduate school and got his aeronautical degree there. He absolutely did walk into a building that housed three companies. One was Seversky Aircraft, one was Grumman Aircraft, one was Fairchild. And he had a letter of introduction to Roy Grumman, and Roy Grumman was in a meeting, couldn't see him, so he walked across the hall and was hired by Seversky which later became Republic Aviation.

KP: Ah ...

JM: And he was with them for 30-odd years until I liquidated the company in 1965-1966.

KP: ... Were most of the people that went to Huntington High School or a large number of people [those] who had worked on the estates?

JM: No, we were a small group. It was Marshall Fields estate, one or two others like that. A few years after my father came to work for Henry DeForest, his brother Robert DeForest had his estate across Cold Spring Harbor, and he mentioned to Henry that he was looking for someone to come and take care of his estate. ...So they asked my father if he knew of anyone, and he said, yes, my brother. He's down in South Hampton, working for the Henry Huddleston and Rogers, and he wants to move up closer to this area. So they hired him, and so we were always a confusing group, which Melrose and which DeForest estate were you living on? No, there were just Marshall Fields and DeForest Estates really in that area at the time

KP: What did most of the parents of the people in your high school do? Were they suburbanites?

JM: Well they were farming groups and Greenlawn was a big farming area. Long Island was famous in those days for potato farming. To some extent the poultry industry was active out there, and many of the others were merchants in the various communities around there. Huntington was a very large township. It was roughly 15 miles square, so it took in quite a ... substantial geographical area, but much of it was potato fields in those days.

KP: What was the expectation in your high school for going onto college? How many ended up going to college?

JM: Very small. Very small probably, I'm just guessing now, but I'd be surprised if any more than 50 of us out of 900 in the school. 50 out of my class, which was probably about 150, entertained any ideas about going to college.

KP: What led you to come to Rutgers? Why did you choose Rutgers?

JM: Economic in part, even though we were out of staters and paid more than the Jersey boys did, Rutgers was the least expensive of the three colleges that I picked out: Amherst, Colgate and

Rutgers. I was accepted to all three of them, but it finally came down to economics. I worked part of my way through college. It was at that time getting to be burdensome from my Dad's standpoint.

KP: Why the three colleges? Do you have any recollection how you derived at Rutgers?

JM: Just reading their manuals, and we had a lady who was a principal and was in charge of the boys in the school, Grace Gilbert, and she was very helpful. She was an elderly lady, extremely sharp. She put a lot of pressure on me to go to prep school. She couldn't imagine my going to college at the age of 15 or 16.

KP: ... why Amherst?

JM: She mentioned Amherst probably to me. Colgate and Rutgers I picked up myself. I don't know why really except I probably read their literature, looked at where they were. They were in the country My brother went to Brooklyn Poly and had to commute into New York all the time, and I just wasn't interested in doing that.

KP: So that's why you ruled out schools like NYU [New York University]?

JM: I wanted to be away from home and get off on my own in college. I still recommend that to my grandchildren. Don't stay at home and commute or something like that. It's half the learning experience of life.

KP: You came to Rutgers very young. How did that go at 15?

JM: No problem, no problem. I adapted to it. Just as long as everybody else adapted to it. I was off and charging and the first week or two I was there. I was up and signed up to be a football manager. I knew I wasn't going to be able to play any sports. I was 135 pounds at that time, so I signed up to be a football manager. There were nine of us and I ultimately wound up as the varsity manager. It probably taught me as much as I learned in the classroom.

KP: Really, in what way?

JM: Well dealing with people, a little ... and people outside that we ran into, and we scrimmaged with them and what not. I got to know all these people, and I would travel with the team. And my senior year, I got to go up ahead of the team, so I knew all the people up in Syracuse, and they'd give me two thousand bucks. I was about 18, at that time, 19 and that was a fair amount of dough to have in my pocket. I had to go up and make all the arrangements for the team. One learned to handle responsibility.

KP: So they would give you cash to take up, and you would be responsible ...?

JM: Yeah. Yes, I'd arrange all the things, the busses and transportation for the team. We'd traveled to Syracuse and to Brown and places like that in my senior year, and I was responsible

for that. It's a sort of a business sense. And I got to know Harvey Harman quite well, and that was a friendship that lasted for many years after I got through school. Harvey was quite an interesting person himself. He had many business contacts, and I gained a lot of experience in turn. How I got to be his friend, and probably ultimately, varsity manager is interesting, if you have a minute.

KP: Oh no, go ahead

JM: Well we used to assign a freshman every week who would be in charge of managerial functions and that was the way you found out how your freshman managers looked and who you were going to ... promote on up to sophomore manager. The week I had the team, we were out for a long practice. I think we were playing Princeton that week. We were out late anyway at night. Got in around at 8:00, and well all the milk was gone. We used to have milk for the Varsity squad after practice, and we came in and the milk was gone. I didn't know that it was gone. I walked in and Harvey was in a real fury, and he could get into quite a fury, and he railed out about, where's the manager? Who's the manager responsible this week, the freshman manager? And I said, I am. So of course he proceeded to dress me down in front of the whole football team. And when he got all through I said, I agree with everything you said coach, except that I'm not responsible for the milk. That's the jurisdiction of the trainer. Mike Stang at that time. He always took care of the milk. And I turned around and walked out of the room and started changing cleats on football shoes. About five minutes later, Harvey came down and apologized, and from that time on, we were the closest of friends. And it was quite ..., I was the only non-fraternity candidate and the Zeeks and the Betas were both after me. They always had the managership. They were after me to join, and I felt that they were after me primarily because of the managership. I didn't particularly care for that. I became a Winants Hall permanent resident and ...

KP: So you lived in Winants when you, the whole four years?

JM: Yeah, I was president of the Winants Club afterwards. I was the monitor, or whatever they called them at that time. I had charge of the building for my senior year. Preceptor. And a short time after that Harvey came to me, and he was a Phi Gamma himself, and he told me that the decision of managership would never be made on a fraternity basis. He sensed what was going through my mind. It was pretty obvious by my sophomore year that I was going to be the varsity manager. That was the way it went. Bob King was a Zeta and was my assistant manager, but Harvey and I developed quite a friendship after that. I used to have the opportunity to drive in his convertible around town. He had a big red convertible. I used to go over and have dinner with him and his wife. She was a very gracious person, so it was a nice relationship.

KP: You had no interest in living in a fraternity?

JM: No, I didn't. I really couldn't afford it. It really came down to a dollars and cents proposition. Look, I had a room in Winants for a hundred bucks a year, a school year. When I look at my grandchildren's prospects these days, I die. I went through college probably, for a little over twelve hundred dollars a year. I got what I needed for pocket money. I usually picked up

work after the football season. I worked in Winants at the cafeteria down there. I was a bus boy, and sometimes, on the same table, and sometimes serving as a waiter for the faculty dining room.

KP: What led you to major in History and Political Science?

JM: Pre-law [was] a large part, although I enjoyed history, and I still do.

KP: Where did you think you'd go to law school at the time, or what was your thinking ...?

JM: I had no idea.

KP: One step at a time?

JM: One step at a time. I'm sure, and of course Uncle Sam took care of that when Pearl Harbor broke out in December of my senior year.

KP: What did you see as divisions on campus when you were going to Rutgers, among the students in your class or in other classes?

JM: I don't think there was any great division among us. Remember we were pretty small. We were 1,800 people over the whole campus at that time. That's pretty small when you think of today's terms. Very little of it, I guess the only division might be between the commuters, the ones who commuted in. We saw very little of them socially or ... campus activities, and I think they missed a great deal, just like I said I would miss if I had commuted to New York from Cold Spring Harbor. I'd have missed a very important part of the college experience.

KP: So what do you think you gained by living on campus? Probably one key thing was the managing of the varsity team, but were there other ...?

JM: Well, the general relationship among our own group. We were a pretty homogenous group. We would have been just about like a fraternity house in the Winants Club. It was in those days, just about as strong as a fraternity group. In fact in my junior year we put together some money, and we got our fellas all tuxes, and we had a bunch of good singers in the group, and we went up, and we won the campus championship. We knocked out the fraternities, in the entirety. The optional song that we had was the "Dartmouth Winter Song", and it went over ... just wonderful. We got a tremendous hand, and we won first prize, and we did [that] just to say .., so there fellows! We were the strongest of the non-fraternity groups.

KP: You elected to stay in the R.O.T.C. ...?

JM: No, no I only went through the first two years. I did not serve.

KP: Did you not want to be in the infantry?

JM: I didn't want to be in anything, and we weren't even thinking about war back then. Remember it was 1940, and we were neutral ...

KP: So you didn't think we would at the time ...?

JM: I guess if I had any thoughts, I don't remember if I did, or if I had any thoughts, I wouldn't have elected the Army. I'm a Navy fellow from the word go. I had been brought up sailing a little dingy down on Long Island Sound. I love the water. I still do.

KP: At the time you made the decision, you didn't think you were going into war?

JM: Well I certainly, even if I thought we were going into the war, I wasn't thinking of signing up for the Army. In fact, it's an interesting thing, when Pearl Harbor came, I was 19, I wasn't even draft age at that point. 21 was the turning point at that point. I decided, I think I may have mentioned, that I wanted to take a fling at a few interviews and get to know a few people, so when the war was over, I could say, remember me, you and I talked back in 1941, and these fellows were interested. I think, I took one with Curtis Publishing. They said, gee, we think you're the kind of fellow we're looking for. Here's my card, come back and see us when you get home. After one or two of those experiences, I decided over Christmas vacation, that I would start actively looking around and see what the Navy was doing. Lo and behold I came back to the campus and the Navy recruiting team was coming down. They interviewed about a hundred fellows down there in two days, and they offered five of us Midshipman's School, in V-7. So that was exactly what I wanted.

KP: So this was very competitive?

JM: Oh yeah, it was competitive. Everybody was looking for a berth whether they liked the Navy or not.

KP: Why was the Navy so popular?

JM: I don't know, and they ... were extremely demanding because they didn't have enough ships, so they could afford to be selective. Even though I was one of five, I failed the dental requirements. I didn't fail them really, but they said that before they would give me a certificate of acceptance, the following day I had to have all these fillings accomplished. I hopped on a train, went home to Huntington, had my dentist standing by, and he looked at the chart, and he said, my God, he says, 50 percent of these I wouldn't even bother with them. But he did them anyway. I said, do it. It's the Navy way already. So, I showed up down there with a dentist thing the next day, and they said, you're accepted. But then mind you we weren't sworn in until they called us up, and I was sworn in when I went to Midshipman's School. I started out at Notre Dame and then went to Chicago.

KP: So you did finish out the school year, and you graduated?

JM: Yes, but we graduated early that year. I think we graduated in April because we were losing people right and left. Even the junior class was starting to be hit pretty significantly. That sort of put a power on the last six weeks of my college career. You couldn't really get enthusiastic about having fun, about much. You saw a lot of your buddies going away, and you were saying good-bye to a lot of people.

KP: They were going off to war?

JM: Yeah, sooner or later you were all going [to go]. My roommate George Hena, ... started with me as a freshman, broke his leg playing football and missed a year, so he was a junior and he signed up for the Army Air Corps. He was off with half of his junior year still to be finished.

KP: When did you report to the V-7 Program at Norte Dame?

JM: Well in August I was called up, and then I went down to New York. Then I was shipped out to Notre Dame, and I was there approximately a month. Then we were moved up to Northwestern in Chicago. All basically Notre Dame served as was really an indoctrination point like Fort Dix, getting you in shape and running the hell out of you and doing exercises and giving you shots and taking a few courses just to keep you out of trouble, just to keep you busy while they had a slot for you up at the Midshipman's School because they were very badly overcrowded. Northwestern and Columbia in New York were handling most of the officer groups. At Columbia some of them were coming ... out of R.O.T.C. programs, out of colleges, and some of them already had commissions in the active reserve. I mentioned Cy Vance. I think he came out of that operation at Yale. I believe he came in as ... an ensign, but an ensign that backdated to college graduation ensign in the reserves.

KP: How effective was your training? What did you learn? How effective did it prove to be?

JM: For a 90-day program and 90-day wonders it was excellent. I mean they did everything they could possibly do for you in 90 days. But it's like driving a car. You and I could sit here, and I could tell you how to drive a car, but until you drive a car, you haven't learned anything yet. And that's very much like that, and that's particularly true of destroyers and some kind of combat ship like that, where you have to have a really highly organized team. It may sound odd, but a destroyer has 320 men, 20 officers and 300 enlisted men They all have to work as a team and function effectively on a destroyer you could learn at sea.

KP: When did you have that sense that that's the way it would operate? When you were actually on the destroyer or was that emphasized in training?

JM: Well, I guess it sort of underlined my old desire of getting into destroyers. I had that in mind when I was out at Northwestern that somehow or another I'm going to get into destroyers, and I didn't know how. The last six weeks of our program out there, the billets started to come up, and about 75-80 percent of them were amphibious LSTs [landing ship, tank], and that to me as a sailor was the last thing in the world I wanted. I don't mind being in harms way. ... Lieutenant Bulkley, of Philippines fame, came out there and interviewed for the PT [Patrol

Torpedo] boats. And that was something I was sure interested in. I didn't make it, and I often think I didn't make it because I was so young. I think age probably militated against me at that point, because basically you're looking for a fellow that's going to be at an early age a commander of the ship. And then they wanted some thin skinny guys, and I fit that bill. That was for bomb disposal to be on board carriers. So if you got a bomb hit that went down into the engine room, or some other segment of the ship underneath there, you could get in there and de-fuze the bomb. They didn't accept me for that. I don't know why. I was certainly young and thin enough. I had long arms. But about two days later, a billet came through for 50 destroyer officers. Very few of our class wanted destroyers

KP: Really?

JM: I was right in the top of those that got it. I was the first guy that signed up for it. And one of my close friends there, with my persuasion, signed up for it. He wound up being a shipmate of mine throughout the war But he never really enjoyed destroyers like I did.

KP: Why were you set on a destroyer and not a bigger ship?

JM: ...I've had experience with carriers and battleships and whatnot, and its like whether you want to go to a small college where you know a lot of people and get ... to work as a group or whether you want to go to [a] 10,000 or 20,000 person school where your just a small operation in the whole thing.

KP: So you liked the idea of a destroyer? It was big enough, but not too big?

JM: Yeah, we were going to see our fair share of combat, and we did. We were going to know all the people on the ship basically, and you are going to be working together as a team. I probably liked that for that reason even more than PT boats. Because PT boats are not quite that same amount. There's teamwork involved, but it's a small team.

KP: You have a very, very small team.

JM: And it was over glamorized in the early part of the war Because we were so short handed, they did some very glamorous things.

KP: Than the actual PT boats do ...

JM: They didn't contribute a hell of a lot to the winning of the war in the final analysis.

KP: What else about your training, also considering in retrospect from your actual being on ship, did you do any sailing when you were at these two schools?

JM: No.

KP: So everything was by the ...?

JM: It was all compressed. There was no time for any fun. At 6:00 in the morning we were up in Chicago, headed toward the lake and no matter what you had to have breakfast, and breakfast was down at Michigan Avenue a half a mile away almost, and you had to march in the teeth of that wind coming off the lake. It was no fun. You didn't have an option. "Move ahead. Do you want to have breakfast this morning, John?" You had to go down there. But I didn't suffer as much as the boys from Louisiana did. They thought that was terrible.

KP: Did they run you through the basic operations of the ship and your duties?

JM: No, we never saw anything about a ship or anything like that. What happened afterward was, see we always talk about the government not being very smart, but they really are. And you couldn't see it at the time, but when I looked back on it afterward, I could see it. I came out of there qualified to be fit to go to destroyers. I was selected for destroyers, and I got that assignment. The first place I was sent to was Norfolk, Virginia. Headquarters for the Atlantic Fleet was down there. And immediately they started sending us out to various schools, ... gunnery schools, 20 millimeter, 40 millimeter, the types of guns that we would have on the destroyers. They sent me to fire fighting school for three weeks, and that's an essential part of being on any ship. I wound up going down to anti-submarine warfare school, down in Key West, Florida. That was for six weeks down there, and that was actual ASW experience, with live submarines, we were doing. And a combination of all that training qualified me to go on board a destroyer, still not knowing my ass from my elbow, literally, I mean because you don't learn until you're out on the ship, working the ship. But the schooling was what gave me the necessary competence to go for the destroyer, and say I'm qualified to be something on this ship.

KP: So you went to a number of different bases for training?

JM: Oh, I was in movement most of the time. For I guess 4 months.

KP: Now you mentioned earlier that you've done a bit of traveling with the football team. ... How much did the war increase the amount of space you saw in the country?

JM: Only on the east coast here it increased. It gave me up and down the Atlantic coast.

KP: Had you'd been to the south before the war?

JM: No. I'd never been down to Florida before I went to Key West.

KP: Had you been out to the Chicago area before?

JM: I'd been out to Chicago, yeah. I'd been out with my mother. She had relatives out in Chicago, so I'd been there before.

KP: What did you think of the south or Florida?

JM: Well again, you didn't have much time in those days to, you got to Key West, and you were on a base. The only time you got off the base was if you got officer patrol duty, shore patrol duty. And then you went up and that was probably more dangerous than the war time. They had an area down there where they kill a man a night. It's off limits for the Navy and during the war at least, it was off limits for people.

KP: Because it was so dangerous?

JM: Yeah. It was a red light district down in that area, and they usually had about a murder a night, some with guns and some with knives. It was that kind of people. It was probably the most exciting thing about being there was if you were called for shore patrol duty once or twice during your six weeks. Hell of a way to go.

KP: Is there anything else about your training that sticks out in your mind on the Atlantic coast?

JM: No, it gave you a broadening of experiences, fire fighting school was run by a bunch of Boston firemen. They were outstanding. They were experts, and they were trying to inspire people. That's what you needed. That's what you wanted. The way you normally teach fire fighting is with a great big cylinder tank. It's a huge thing, and they have a vat inside, and they fill it up with kerosene, or something flammable and put it on fire. You and a group of other fellows are handed a hose, and you're told to go on in there and beat down the fire. Well when you walk through the door, you sure in hell don't want to have any part of that action. You're doing it with foam, which is a very effective way of doing it, you've been taught how to handle the foam, but if you have the slightest amount of hesitancy, you have a Boston fire fighter shooing your ass. The next thing you know, you're in there. So it teaches you a little bit about initiative and going ahead and tackling problems.

KP: Now you mentioned in your memoir, that you wrote to me, that you were sent to gunnery school, and you were sent to Hawaii.

JM: Well that was a special situation. When I got orders to report to the *Badger*, I quickly looked at the *Badger*, and she was a four stack destroyer in the North Atlantic, and so I hurriedly called my wife, and said, hey, I got about 10 days to go to the North Atlantic on a (old?) four stacker, let's get married. So we did get married. And by the time I got to New York, I'd been told then that the *Badger* was actually a destroyer being built over in Staten Island, so we went ahead and got married anyway. But we took an apartment down in New York and lived there. When I reported in on the *Badger*, there was three of us who arrived on the same day. One was a junior grade lieutenant, Pete Lovejoy. He had had destroyer experience in the North Atlantic. And then Fabe Miller, who I mentioned before and myself. Pete made a decision as a commanding officer that we had about 200 sailors out at Lido Beach, and he sent me out there to take charge of that contingent until we got some reinforcements in the way of officers at least. I went out there, and I was fortunate. I came and I said, I don't know what the hell I'm supposed to do to a lieutenant commander who was sitting in the office I had been assigned to. I said, this is my problem. It turned out that he was an Academy graduate, now in the reserves for medical reasons, and he said, the best thing to do with a sailor is to get him off of the base here, either

send him to school, or if he's got leave coming to him, or if he's been out in the Pacific and he's used up his send him home to his wife! Keep him out of trouble. So out of the 200, I never had more than about 15 or 20 on the base at any time.

KP: So you either gave them leave or sent them to school?

JM: And I had 90 kids who were just out of high school. Many of them hadn't graduated from high school, a lot of them from Pennsylvania area. And I sent them all to school. So they went to gunnery school, fire fighting school

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KP: You were ...

JM: Bill Cooper had come out to do an audit really on me and what was happening out at the base ... When he got all through talking with me, and finding out what I'd been doing, and I gave him a briefing on it. He told me he had come out to relieve me, and he had changed his mind. He wanted me to stay there with the crew and finish up what I was doing. He commended me for what I'd been doing, and I told him Commander Collins had been a big help in doing it. I think it's always essential to give credit where it's due. He later came back to me and he said, what position would you like on this ship? What would you like to do? I said, I'd like to be a gunnery officer. So he said, all right, you'll be in the gunnery division. He came back to me a week or two later, and said, you know ... I'm not renegeing on my promise to you, but, ... I'd like when we put the ship in commission to have you be the First Division officer and handle the folks on deck for us. The reason for that is, you know most of the sailors, and they know you. And he said, when we get to Pearl Harbor, ... I'll take you off the ship and send you to Fleet Gunnery School in Pearl Harbor, which is the finest practical gunnery school. He was an old gunnery man himself. So that's how it worked. It was a deal for a deal. But it was the captain negotiating with me in a sense, which is you know, pretty surprising. But that's the kind of man Bill was. He wasn't going to break his word. He didn't want me to feel he had broken his word to me, so I said fine, whatever you want me to do, I'll do it.

KP: But you also had, in a sense, experience on two parts of the ship.

JM: Well yeah, but in a very limited sense. One learns at sea. I could really run anything on the ship, except really two areas. I wouldn't be a navigator immediately, and I wouldn't be an engineering officer. Engineering officers are specially trained and qualified. Like all our engineering officers on our ship, all had engineering degrees from college and had gone through engineering schools.

KP: The ship wasn't actually completed, but before you had mentioned that, you thought you were departing earlier than you ended up doing. How did you meet your wife?

JM: Oh, we had known each other from the time I was a junior at Rutgers. She knows Rutgers. She had been down at the dances at the school and whatnot. We had known each other for several years.

KP: Did the war hasten your marriage?

JM: Yeah, sure, if I had to work my way through law school, I don't think she'd have agreed to marry me.

KP: ... The crew was eventually assembled. When did you take your maiden voyage?

JM: Well we went into, they moved the ship from Staten Island over to the Brooklyn Navy Yard ... just before the Fourth of July, let's say the first of July. We moved the crew over by bus and boarded the ship the day of the commissioning, and when the ship was commissioned we immediately started to tear it apart.

KP: Why?

JM: Because it was so important during the war to keep the ships updated as fast as they could. They knew they need more AA [anti-aircraft] fire on it. We had 20 millimeter guns. They took those 20 millimeter guns at the waist of the ship and the forward part of the ship. They took them off, and we put in quad forties. So we had a tremendous amount AA firepower with that. They had made this decision about two months before, in April or May, but it would have involved disrupting the ship's schedule over in Bethlehem, so actually it was more efficient to go ahead and finish the ship in a configuration that you weren't going to use it in and tear it apart, shortly thereafter, and finish it up the way it was. So the first night ... we were aboard, we had to stay aboard after the commissioning for a day, everybody, we were sleeping down there and drills and all the other stuff was going on up above us. Guys were coming down the corridor with hoses. But we had to live through that. One-third of us were aboard every night,

KP: Throughout the construction?

JM: ... once the ship was in commission, always we had a watch force, for one-third on board. Of course, we didn't have any ammunition on the ship, or anything like that, at that time. About the third week in July, they completed this additional work, which is quite a substantial task. It had to be done 24 hours around the clock. And we shipped off out of there and then went over and loaded up with ammunition and headed out Long Island Sound. The first night out that we were out on our way, we dropped anchor off Cold Spring Harbor, New York, my home.

...

KP: So you looked out and saw where you lived?

JM: I was telling them all the sights to be seen out there. But we ... couldn't go ashore. We were up anchor the following morning. We had a doctor, this is an aside, we had a doctor, Doc

Frieden, who had finished his intern work just about in abdominal surgery, and he was a very fine doctor. He was just horrified of the fact, here he was on a destroyer you know, and what was going to happen to his career. Well while we were off, we had a man overboard on the ship stern of us, another destroyer. It was a young sailor who jumped overboard and tried to go AWOL [absent without leave] and was drowning out there. So we fished him out of the water and revived him. Shortly after we had a light from the destroyer, they had an emergency appendix case over there, and the doctor was just out of school, so he knew that Frieden was a good man to call on so we sent Frieden over, and he took the kid's appendix out on the ward room table. By the time he came back why he was, "Geez this isn't so bad after all!"

KP: Why? He felt like nothing would happen?

JM: We used to kid him about it because after that he never had anything to do except put purple gentian rosette up some guy's butt. [sic]

KP: Your commander, was he an Annapolis graduate?

JM: Yes, Class of 1926, and he was technically too old to command another destroyer, but he had enough connections to talk his way into it. He had won the Navy Cross early in the war with the *McCalla* out in Guadalcanal and the tipoff immediately at Bill was a legit navy man, was the fellow who wound up as our executive officer, was his former gunnery officer on the *McCalla*. And all of a sudden a couple of chiefs showed up who had been on the *McCalla*, and the backbone of the Navy is really the chief petty officers. Make no mistake about that.

KP: So they are really the ones?

JM: Oh Yeah. They are the fellas who you listen to when you hear them say something. They don't tell you what to do, but they make known what their thoughts are. It's probably a very good idea to pick up on them.

KP: So in a sense he reassembled the key elements of his old crew in terms of ...

JM: Well some key men ...

KP: Key men.

JM: Key people, so that he had an instructor at work for us, to begin with, as soon as we got going. Why he knew ... that his fellas would start immediately molding the crew into the proper pattern.

KP: So which key people had he brought ...?

JM: Well he had a chief fireman. He had a chief boatswain mate. He had a chief gunner's mate. Those were the three key guys.

KP: And he brought his executive?

JM: He doesn't bring them. But he ...

KP: He managed to get them ...

JM: Any time that Bill Cooper was not at sea for the Navy, if you look back over his record, he was in Washington. He would be in Washington at the Bureau of Personnel. Now out of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, he would also do extensive lobbying with the Congress. He came from down in Georgia, and he was in tune with all the Congressmen that had to do with the budgets and things like that. So it's a game that goes on. When Bill would be out at sea, why he would have a counterpart that would be back at the Bureau of Naval Personnel. And that's how it works.

KP: So he picked the right people.

JM: Yeah, he was very people oriented. And we had several reserve officers on the ship, who were nice guys, but weren't pulling their weight. And all of a sudden when nine months [came and went], they had orders then to return to the states for new construction or something. And they were the ones who weren't pulling their weight, and they just disappeared.

KP: How many of the officers, was he the only one that was an Annapolis graduate?

JM: Oh, no To start out with we had a captain, an executive officer, a gunnery officer, an engineering officer, again the key, and a navigator. We also had us an ensign. We had one young ensign, who was to be groomed as a navigator. They were from Annapolis.

KP: You had a large Annapolis ...?

JM: We started out with six or seven, and basically they went through all the shake down of the ship, the movement out We moved off the East Coast and the West Coast in December, and they were gone by middle of March. And three of them went just like that.

KP: And who took their place?

JM: Well that was my big chance. I was still an ensign, and I'd been standing my watches in the gunnery group up in Alaska. It was about the first day of March or something up there that we got orders ... for (Grant Hesser?), who was our communication's officer, experienced reserve officer, for (Smiley?), who was our..., (Smoky) was our engineering officer from the Academy, and Rollybey who was our navigator from the academy. And all three of them went, all three of them were watch standers. Bill Cooper called me down and said that he wanted me to be qualified to be officer of the deck within ten days. And I would stand watches under the guidance of (Lonny Klingerman?) who was the gunnery officer from the academy, who had moved on up to become executive officer shortly thereafter. And so ten days of standing watches

with Lonny, I had the deck, and I was in command. When you're an officer of a deck under way, you're in command of the entire ship, including the captain.

KP: Until the captain relieves you.

JM: Until the captain comes up to relieve you. So you got a lot of responsibility. But that was a big break for me because by that time Bill Cooper had confidence in me, and he gave me that opportunity.

KP: You were very young when you got all this responsibility.

JM: I was 20, I guess, 21, I guess I was still 20. Yeah, it was an interesting opportunity. Like the first night that I stood watch. We were coming back from Adak to Attu, and we had another destroyer under our control. The captain of that ship was junior to us. We were moving at 15 knots, and we took water over the bridge. That lasted for about 90 seconds. We couldn't see out of the bridge. It was so rough. I was alone on the bridge, and we took this water over, and no sooner had the water just about stopped when the telephone rang from the chief down there in the chief's quarters. They said that the deck had bowed, and the struts had upheld the deck. The big four inch steel beams, had all buckled across from the port side to the starboard side. There was no evidence of any leakage or water damage, so I slowed down to 10 knots, told the other ship to slow down to 10 knots and called Bill Cooper who was down below. I told him what had happened and what I had done about it. And that was that, and we steamed on and the first lieutenant was notified. It was Pete Lovejoy. He went up and examined the damage, and he gave me a report back, about everything was secured. They had secured the beams so that they wouldn't be swaying around, and we stayed on course and finished up. I got off at midnight. I got down at midnight, and Bill Cooper was sitting down in the Ward Room, playing cribbage, which was our favorite game, and he said, "hey Johnny, let's go down and take a look at what happened." So we went down and got permission at chief quarters, and that was the first time I saw it. But what was interesting was from over on the port side of the ship, which would be odd numbers, so we called it frame thirteen, coming across to the port side, about 22, you could see where the paint had flicked off because what the water had done was depress the nose of the ship into the water with that weight of it on top of the water, and literally a destroyer bends just like an airplane has flexibility to it. A destroyer is flexible too, but it had depressed the bow of the ship and actually twisted the nose of the ship from port to starboard. If that isn't the force of water enough to scare you? That was a good experience. We took water over the top of the gun director that night, which was 90 feet above sea level.

KP: Was this your first really rough sea you had been in?

JM: It was the first time I was officer of the deck! No, we had had similar rough water off Rockland, Maine, there in our shakedown. We were escorting the Battleship *New Jersey*, and she was doing 36 knots. The admiral called back and said it was too rough for them to continue the exercise. I was acting first lieutenant. We got down to Norfolk, and we had a couple of days in the yard, so I had the sailors down cleaning the bilges out and taking a nap myself, when somebody told me that I was wanted down in the bilges so I put my dungarees on and went

down, and we broke into the keel of the ship. That happened up here, off Rockland, Maine, doing that crazy exercise, in that rough weather at 36 knots. The keel was broken like this, and what they did was to put stiffener plates on the sides and stiffener plates on the top, and we were pronounced hail and hearty, and we went through the war that way.

KP: You had mentioned that you went to gunnery school in Pearl Harbor, and that your roommate was Cyrus Vance?

JM: Cy Vance, yeah he had the lower bunk and the seniority. ... I still kid him about that.

KP: Are there any stories, any recollections you have of Cyrus Vance in gunnery school?

JM: Just that, even then, as just another officer, and there were probably 80 of us in school. He didn't stand out in any way, but his manners were always very impressive, that he was quiet. When he spoke it was worth listening to him. He had a very quiet demeanor, very unassuming and obviously a very intelligent person. I mean you could tell that all those things stood out from him. I didn't socialize with him to a great extent. He had other friends in school with him. We didn't have much time to socialize. We were pretty busy cramming stuff into our heads out there. We had home work at night to do, things like that. But the interesting part was that after the war was over, I ran into him at the elevator at 120 Broadway, and his law office was up on the 30th floor, and my company was on the 3rd floor. That was in 1946, so from that time on we became friends. And of course, I was in the aerospace industry, and he associated with the DOD, [Department of Defense] [so] I had the occasion to see him in Washington. I just had the highest degree of respect for him, the job he did with McNamara and the Department of Defense.

KP: But your friendship is very much tied ... [to the military]?

JM: Yeah, the last time we had directly been in contact was when he resigned from the Carter administration as Secretary of State. I wrote a letter to him and told him how highly I thought of his decision, which I did. He stood up for what he believed in, and I had a very nice letter back from him, inviting me to come see him in New York whenever I was in the city. And I know if I walked in (-----?) there tomorrow, ... we'd have a good chat together. An outstanding person.

KP: How was gunnery school? How effective was your training? You had said it was the best gunnery school?

JM: It was very good, very good.

KP: And it was ...

JM: It was practical. Very little book stuff. It was really practical ...

KP: How would they teach you ...?

JM: Well I don't know how to answer that question. The instructors were all fellas who had been there and had been there very recently, and you knew you were getting the straight stuff, right from the battlefield. I mean they were men who had been down through Guadalcanal, through the South Pacific and been through air attacks, and tactics and all of that type of thing.

KP: Would they give you problems? Would they give you targets to ...?

JM: Oh yes, Oh yeah, there were problems. No, by that time the solution to all gunnery problems had gone computer, back in the Navy, even as early as 1942, and you were getting, we were doing computer solutions on everything. We had on board our ship, we had a Ford Computer, and all the gunnery officer up in the gun director had to do was to get his sighter on target. Like if you were shooting birds. Once he got on target, once he was tracking it, he would be pulling all the guns with him, the five inch guns, and we'd do the solution on the problem down in the computer room, and I say, we'd do it down there. All we would do would be watching the dials spin based on what the gun director was doing based on his ...

KP: his movement?

JM: Yeah, and we'd have a solution to the problem within a matter of seconds.

KP: This is a technological advance that was in the likes of World War II ...

JM: Coupled with radar, we could see the Japs. We could shoot them up, and we could do everything to them before they even knew we were there. That was the secret of both our surface success and also our AA success. One fellow who was a Navy boy, was in gunnery school with me, he was a fellow named McGann, and he was the luckiest poker player and card player and everything else you ever saw. Up at Okinawa he got credit for shooting down 33 Jap aircraft in one afternoon. He had three twin five inch guns on it. But anyway, Pete got the Navy Cross that afternoon. We'd already been hit, so I was sitting on our ship listening to what was going on on the combat radio up on our bridge. I heard the code words for his ship and knew his ship was out there. They were 90 miles north of Okinawa, and a bunch of Japs came over, and he just got 33, credit for 33. But again, its people training and then the best computerized and the best electronic equipment. It makes a good winning team on a destroyer.

KP: Now you mentioned that the chiefs were very important to you.

JM: Oh, absolutely.

KP: What was your relationship?

JM: The first fella that taught me that was Bill Cooper too.

KP: Cooper emphasized the importance of chiefs?

JM: Well he didn't tell me. He didn't have to tell me. I just watched, and the people that came to us, and you looked up their service records, and you found out they'd served with Cooper before. I knew that he had hand-selected them. That was telling me that he thought those chiefs were pretty important in pulling together a crew.

KP: And you were a 90-day wonder, so ... how did that relationship go?

JM: Well you learn very early on to listen to what the chief would tell you.

KP: So the chief might recommend something that you ...

JM: Yeah, he wouldn't recommend it. You got a communication level. You let the chief know that you were a regular guy, and he was a regular guy, and you needed his help, and that was all you [needed]. Now I had Boatswain Weiler. He had 13 years in the Navy, and he knew all about handling lines and everything with the sailors and what ought to be done, and I didn't know my ass from my elbow. But Boats. Weiler gradually taught me and educated me without the sailors knowing that he was doing it and everything else. He virtually told me what orders to give from the offset you know. So, you have to work the thing along.

KP: What about the enlisted men on your crew? Where did they hail from?

JM: We had about 300 men. We had a battle hardened group that had already been out in the South Pacific, probably as many as 50-80 people, and then we had a variety of different people. We had 90 raw recruits, and then the groups in the middle came from a bunch of different like, maybe your pharmacist's mates, had come from a hospital, hadn't had any ship board duty, but the actual business of the group that ran the ship, the engine crowd, and the gunnery group, there you have to have your hard core people, the torpedo group. There you had some battle hardened people. Pharmacy and supply people, anything like that, they don't, that's run of the mill.

KP: How important was it to have battle-hardened people? What did they know?

JM: Oh, very important. Just from the standpoint of being able to do the training work to the young people.

KP: So much of the training was in fact done by the experienced?

JM: Well, yeah ... it isn't concentrated organized training, but just telling them, you know, they respected, the young sailors respected these fellow, they'd been there, they'd heard about Guadalcanal. Anybody that got back from the Guadalcanal-Savo Island area and what not must know something, and I'd better listen if I want to get back myself. You know, you've got a lot of ... pressure on you.

KP: I know a destroyer out in Charleston Harbor. It's very small ...

JM: Well it's not so small. It's roughly, we were about 330 feet long. We were a 2,100 tonner. Loaded up we were close to 3,500 tons.

KP: It's not small, but it's not, I mean when I looked at the quarters where crews slept, it was ...

JM: Oh yeah, well air craft carriers are too. The crew doesn't have any more room on an air craft carrier than on a destroyer.

KP: ... Having never been in the military or the Navy, ... what's the sense of living with large numbers of people in such a cramped space for long periods of time?

JM: Well you get no real privacy if you're a bug on privacy. Even in the officers' quarters, you have very limited space. We had 20 officers, and we finally wound up, and it goes by seniority, really, we finally wound up with having to put in an extra bunk, so there would be three officers in one cabin. Just so we could take care of the extra number of officers that we were getting. We went to 20 at one time. We were equipped really for 16, but 18 was a common complement, but we were as high as 20.

KP: I've been told by people of the Navy that it gets quite hot below deck, is that ...

JM: Well, sure, I mean not if you're up in Alaska, but if you're down in the New Guinea area and what not, that's pretty damn hot. It wasn't too bad until, I'll tell you, you don't worry about the air too much. You can always go up above board, and particularly if you're moving, you'll get cooled off. If you're doing 15 knots, going someplace. A destroyer can't go under 10 knots. It looses it's combat readiness if it goes under 10 knots. So when we escorted LST's out from Pearl Harbor that were headed out for the invasion of the Philippines ultimately, we had to stay ahead of them. They were doing 8 knots, and we had to stay ahead of them by zig-zagging at 10 knots. And you go up on deck. You don't get much relief down around the equator, even up there because the deck is pretty hot and the sun's reflection off of it. But, that isn't the bad thing. If you run out of water, or you have a water problem, that's when you really suffer. One of our evaporators went out down around the New Guinea area for about 10 days. We were on water rationing. That meant you could only go in and take a shower in the sense of get under it, get wet and turn the shower off, soap yourself up, get back under it again, now get the soap off and that was it. And do that every two days, and limit amount you drink and all, you're ready to get that other evaporator on line as fast as you can. So water was the more important thing. The heat didn't bother me so much.

KP: Did you take fresh water showers or salt water showers?

JM: Fresh water. We had our own evaporators. The engines on a destroyer, they're more in demand of good clean water than you are as a human being, so we had the best of water. No problem with that.

KP: Did you have any steward's mates?

JM: Yes. We had about 12 black boys that were on the ship. They were all delegated as steward's mates.

KP: And on what part of the destroyer, where were they stationed?

JM: There were separate quarters over on the port side for them. Separate from all the enlisted men. They were thoroughly discriminated against in World War II. The only combat role that they played at all was as ammunition passers. They would go down in the holds and pass and load the ammunition, the five inch ammunition into the belts that would carry them up into the guns. The rest of the time, they worked in the officers' quarters, keeping the officers' quarters tidy and then serving meals. A good bunch.

KP: Were there any problems between them and the rest of the crew?

JM: No, no. They were so segregated you know they couldn't be.

KP: So in the destroyer you could segregate?

JM: Yeah.

KP: ... On the Pacific you'd been to Hawaii and to Alaska. What were your impressions of those when you could get off? Did you land anywhere in Alaska?

JM: Yeah, we usually could get off, wherever we went. Bill Cooper, one of the things he, he was a liberty man. If he had the say on it, and we had other destroyers with us, you could count on one-third of the crew being aboard and two-third's on the shore. No matter where we were. Because that was what he believed in. And it's good policy. ... The sailors had a lot of respect for it obviously, you know they loved it, but also it got rid of a lot of tensions, whether they'd go down and get drunk, or what they'd do, they'd get rid of some tensions, that otherwise would exist. In Hawaii, of course, I got a lot of opportunity. I was around there through Christmas time, and Bob Keller, another academy boy and myself, we went down to the Moana Hotel. We rented a suite. We each of us had to pay four dollars a night, and that was 12 dollars out of our pocket for a night, so we set up a gambling casino down there over [the] Christmas holidays, and let it be known there were games going on, and we provided the booze and the cards and the chips and everything else. We did very handsomely down there. We made money and had a holiday. And in the morning, we'd be down on Waikiki Beach. But there was fairly limited travel around Hawaii because of curfews. We couldn't get out and see a lot of the things the tourists normally would see, and of course it was a wartime base, and the place was crowded with soldiers and sailors and what not. So other than our experience at the Moana Hotel, we didn't have a great deal of cultural

KP: What about Alaska?

JM: We very seldom got ashore to see anything, and we were up there in the real winter time. We'd get these Williwas, they'd call them up there, because all the harbors had a rocky basin to

them, particularly had to set an anchor, and we would frequently have to get underway and get out there, and then we'd tour a mile long stretch. We'd just go down, turn around, come up, turn around, come back down and that's probably the closest to having a mutiny after about ten days of that. You don't like anybody, including your bunk mate, or anyone else. If you say anything wrong, you're going to get snarled back at. Tempers get very short.

KP: How cold was it in those waters?

JM: It wasn't really ... too bad in the sense of it. The only time it gets really bad up there is in the months of December through into February, where if you're out at sea and you're taking water up into the rigging, it'll freeze up there, and you can get top heavy and turn over. So that's a real danger. We went over to the Kurile Islands, and I didn't make that trip, I was in gunnery school. They were over behind the Kurile Islands, in the Sea of Okhotsk, looking for Jap merchant ships, and when they came back into port, I had just returned from gunnery school, and ... there was ice all through the rigging at that time, and that's dangerous. But temperature wise, it was blowing when you were underway. It was awful God damn cold up on the bridge. I mean you're 90 feet above the ocean, and you're traveling at 15, 18 knots, but that's the least of you're dangers and worries really.

KP: What were your principle worries? Obviously it took a lot to be officer of the deck when you had those big waves over the bow.

JM: I wasn't worried about that because I was in control. I knew what to do. I automatically reduced speed, and I took those steps and then told the captain what I had done, and from that time on I was all right, and the chief's quarters told me what the situation was down there, and they were the people right there already and knew [is to] what be done with it, but I notified the first lieutenant, and we had a force ready for any damage control. We had a procedure ready of what to do. If we were taking any water, we'd have gone to general quarters, and we'd have set all the water tight doors shut throughout the ship. But there was ...no need for that, this was localized. We had one experience up there, which I still remember. ... I always thought it was a crazy one. We had an admiral come up ... there, and he decided he was going to be a great guy. I don't know why, but he brought up a couple of old, *Salt Lake City*, and the *Pensacola*, two light cruisers, and he took us out on a bunch of night maneuvers, and we were out there off Attu doing night maneuvers at full speed, 36 knots, in battle formation, and we were crisscrossing in front of each other, and you could see the wake of the other destroyer that was moving ahead of you. And we had no real objective that we were doing all this stuff for, except this admiral insisted that we were going to go through these exercises. That was about the scariest time we had. Our sister ship the *Luce* was lost up at Okinawa passed around 300 yards. That was that night it crossed our bow. After I'd left the bridge as officer of the deck, and Pete Lovejoy had relieved me, he was my roommate, [and] when I saw him the next morning, he was still white. I mean that's a terrifying thing.

KP: And the reasons for this maneuver?

JM: We never knew. We never knew.

KP: You had mentioned that your ship on D-Day was deployed on a mission to attack ...

JM: Yeah, we went over in the Kuriles that night, and ... whenever we went to the Kuriles, I think I mentioned in there, it was really to decoy the Japanese airplanes away from Japan. They were very concerned about something happening to the homeland. The fewer airplanes they had in the South Pacific, the better chances for our guys who were invading Guam or Saipan at that time. So we would go over as a decoy force and shoot up the islands and then hurry back as fast as we could. We always knew at that time, when we were deployed to do that, that something was going to happen down south, and by that time the map was getting pretty obvious, that stepping stones from one island to the other. You knew you were going on a ...

KP: And these operations of being a decoy, are there any memorable stories ...?

JM: No, we'd just go over there, and we'd get the island that we were going to bombard. We did get it on our radar, and we'd go in and we'd shoot, and by the time we finished shooting, the residents were just starting to find out they were being shot at. And we literally turned tail and run for it and get into a fog bank, and headed back home, because we had no air cover. And if Japanese airplanes came after us or found us out there, why we would have been you know, sort of dead ducks for a torpedo attack, or something like that from a Japanese airplane. If you got hit out there, there was nobody waiting for you to come back to pick you up or something like that.

KP: So you'd do this as a solo destroyer?

JM: No, no, ...when we had the two cruisers up there, the *Salt Lake* and the *Pensacola*, we took them along or they took us along, we had nine destroyers in my squadron. We'd all enjoy the shooting. Those cruisers didn't have the fire control system we had. They were back around [19]32 vintage, and if they hit the islands it was fortunate. No deregation of them. They just didn't have that control over there batteries. We could fire from 8 to 10,000 yards, and we could hit a spot that would be within the confines of this apartment. And know that with certainty that we were going to hit that.

KP: Where [were] the cruisers ...

JM: They might be over the island. They might be short of the island, or they might have a pattern that would cover half a mile of a football field.

KP: But you never encountered any enemy aircraft or vessels?

JM: The last time we were over, the big scare we got was we got a lot of surface targets, and they looked like they could be small boats. They could be fishing boats, or they could be PT boats, and we didn't know. And the admiral, as we headed for home, the admiral detached Bill Cooper who was by then our division commander. He was on the *Isherwood* and detached Bill Cooper to stay behind and cover our retreat and told him he could pick one of the small boy[s] to come with him, and so of course he picked the *Badger*, and so the two of us steamed around over

there trying to look at these small boys and find out if we had any legitimate targets. And then we went up to 36 knots and caught up with the other guys a half a day later. And we had a lot of fun with Bill. I saw him in the Officer's Club a couple of days later. I said, Geez, you know ... it's nice to be loved by you, but do you have to love us quite so much? (laughter) He said, I want somebody I can count on.

KP: So your commander was promoted?

JM: He became a full captain and became division commander. Shortly after that he went back to the states.

KP: So you had a new captain?

JM: We had a new captain, and he was also in my view hand picked by Bill Cooper. He was a wonderful guy, and now I got to stop and think of his name. A completely different type...

KP: An Annapolis grad.?

JM: An Annapolis graduate. Cotten, John Cotten. He came from an illustrious Navy family. Very shy, small fellow, very soft spoken, but still ... a man of high caliber. The most amusing incident with him was going into Leyte Gulf, and we got a target off the port bow, and our squadron commander ordered one of the destroyers to go out and investigate it. He didn't move out rapidly, and then he ordered us to go out, and I was the officer of the deck, so I headed out for it. We had the target. I started to circle the target. It looked like a submarine, it could be. I had two five inch guns on it. I was at top speed, 18 knots at that time, I guess, because we were coming in at 10 knots, and I'm circling it, and I identified it. It was a barge, a tug boat and had a barge with it. There were obviously been up there with the pre-invasion forces at Leyte doing something, and they were taking some stuff out there. And I was so enamored. We were circling the thing at that speed, and I got my guns on them, and we're all ready to shoot, and the soft boy says at my elbow, ... John, don't you think we could slow down a bit now? And that was ... [John] Cotten. Cotten had come out. John had come out from his bedroom, which was up on back of the bridge there for an emergency, and I'll always remember him for that.

KP: You saw quite a bit of action around the Philippines?

JM: Not [yet] ... well we were active. We were in all of the areas and all that. We never got in any big scrapes with the battleships or the carriers or big wing dings. We were part of the 7th Fleet, which was an amphibious group, so our main purpose was to support the invasion operations with gun fire and whatever might be called on, anti-aircraft protection.

KP: One of the things you mentioned was you were the fire control officer, the gunnery officer ...

JM: I was a gun control officer, and at that time I was down in the plotting room, so I didn't see most of it. All I saw was when the dials would spin, I'd know they were on a target something.

I'd know if it was a surface target or an air target, but I didn't know much else other than what I would pick up over the phones from the gunnery officer who was up in the gun tower.

KP: So what was it like to experience battle without seeing it? Did you have any thoughts at the time or in retrospect?

JM: Well, I had four enlisted men down there, who were fire control men, and we used to wile away our times figuring if we ever got hit, who was going to be the first guy up the one hatch. And I told Moran from Philadelphia, that I would be standing on his shoulders while I climbed up. No, you just had to be fatalistic about that kind of thing. If your day was up, your day was up. It had been a lot more fun to be up on top looking at things.

KP: So you enjoyed being officer of the deck?

JM: It was a wonderful opportunity. If I had stayed in the Navy, it would have been outstanding on my record. If I didn't stay in the Navy, it taught me that I could handle a dangerous situation with some kind of aplomb.

KP: In a sense you were Commander of the ship when you were officer of the deck.

JM: Yeah, you're responsible for the ship.

----- END OF TAPE ONE SIDE TWO -----

JM: At Okinawa on DT8 we were sent over and put under the command of an Army shore control group, and the Army troops were moving to the south from where they had landed. The Marines went north and the Army Corps went south on Okinawa. ... The Japs were of course ... always trying to infiltrate their lines, and what they wanted us to do was to fire star shells and five inch live ammo ... ahead of the Army groups and where the Japanese infiltrators might be just to put them on notice that we were there. There were two things really wrong with it, but it was Army discipline or Army tactics that led to it. One is that we had to fire every fifteen minutes. You know, like set your watch. They just fired now. Fifteen minutes from now their going to shoot again, so they know exactly where we are, and they know when we're going to illuminate again. That made us dead ducks, and then they wouldn't countenance the idea, that we would be accurate if we would be moving. We had to sit fixed on a certain set of coordinates out there on the water and of course, that gave another advantage to the little enemy, who was ours at that time in the form of ... suicide boats. And there were a lot of them up at Okinawa.

KP: ... We often hear about the Kamikaze plane, but ...

JM: Yeah, you don't hear much about the boats. When we went into Kerama-retto, six days before the landing at Okinawa, ... the Army when they went ashore at this anchorage, found about 1,000 of them in there. We were able to destroy them. We actually picked up one for our own use. We brought it back to Seattle. They had a Chrysler eight cylinder engine in them and a plywood hull, and so they'd go like hell. They were meant to be a suicide boat, in the sense

they'd either have a torpedo warhead in the nose of the boat, and they'd come in and crash into a ship or else they would have depth charges on the stern of them, which they'd roll off under you, and then theoretically the depth charges would blow up, and they may or may not get away. In our case the guy got away.

KP: Oh, he did get away ...?

JM: Oh yeah, he got away, because depth charges were set at a fairly shallow setting, and they went off, and when they went off the shock knocked the guys right off the 40 millimeter guns who were the only guns that could of had a chance at shooting at them. So he got away definitely. And he did a hell of a good job for a night's work. But the whole fault of that was the fact that the Army would not accept the fact that we could shoot as accurately as we could. If we were 8,000 yards away or something, and you wanted me to drop something down on top of that building without hurting you up here, I could do it. I could put a five inch shell down there. But they wouldn't believe that.

KP: Do you think the Army skepticism was because you mentioned that the cruisers weren't as accurate, or they just didn't appreciate the sophistication ...?

JM: No, they had to appreciate destroyer fire control, which is much greater than any big ship would be, even the old, even the new line ships like the *New Jersey*.

KP: Didn't have the accuracy?

JM: ... Weren't really geared in to do the kind of a job we were. So you know it's, and also your batteries on a destroyer can be tuned to two different things, and its how you line up your battery. You can do it for shore fire support which then you're exceedingly accurate, and if you're looking for surface combat, you will open up the gun space so that ... you're going to be sure you're hitting the battleship you're shooting at both fore and aft. So you want a wide range, if you're shooting at that. If you're in anti-aircraft, you want your guns to fit a fairly tight pattern. So you're throwing off a barrage in front of the nose of an airplane. He flies into it. So it's all what tactics your ship is designed for. And the destroyer are very versatile warship[s].

KP: Is that why you had initially picked them, for that versatility?

JM: Well, it's almost, they certainly have an attraction I guess. They're real warships. I mean you feel like you're in a battle when you're with one that's all. It's a real tiger. I guess when you get a little older you get a little more conservative about that kind of stuff.

KP: In many ways you were the ideal vessel for amphibious support because of your versatility.

JM: Well yeah, we could go and be support for anybody, and doing any task they wanted us to. If a submarine tried to attack an amphibious group, we could go after them. If it was aircraft we could go after them. If it was bigger battleships, we could go after them. ... It was quite a battle

fought off the Philippines where several destroyers went down. Lost several friends there that had been to gunnery school with me at Pearl Harbor.

KP: In fact, it's one of the most famous uses of destroyers. It was almost a bluff.

JM: Well the most famous of destroyers, well it wasn't a bluff, they actually came out, they came out. The group came out to the north

KP: Yes.

JM: And the famous battle was really, the Battle of Leyte Gulf ... if you look at it from a history viewpoint, was the Japanese force that came up from the south and tried to come into Leyte Gulf and then turned around. As soon as you got a battle line that starts turning around, you start picking off the lead guy. You know, crossing the T is like shooting ducks. As soon as he heads over the port, why you start pucker him, and you sink him. The Japanese were very stupid when they got into combat. They didn't have the ability to react. I think it's still a difference between the Japanese mentality and the American mentality. I think science today, and scientific innovations, we're still innovative. We're far ahead of the Japanese. Now once the Japanese grasp what the innovation is that we start, they have an ability of applying it to a market or to different areas, more than we do.

KP: Would you sense this as a naval officers that their tactics were very ...?

JM: Yeah, they were under a great handicap. We were technically so far ahead of them, and we were more aggressive too. See like when I talk about a destroyer that fellow who delayed going out, so I had the opportunity to go out and show him my skills and circling this barge that night. That first officer of the deck was, ... I'm no better than he was, but he had a captain who had a doctrine: before you move a God damn inch, tell me. So somebody had to go wake the captain up, and tell him he was going out, and the captain possibly even had to struggle into his pajamas and get up to deck or something you know, and that interval of time is crucial.

KP: Whereas your captain, the officer on your deck, in many ways was in fact the commander.

JM: I never asked. ... I was officer of the deck. I was in command of the ship. I did what had to be done. And well, Bill Cooper, I guess I should say I was instructed, Bill Cooper said to me when I first became officer of the deck, he said, you know, he said, when I come up to the bridge, and he wasn't talking to me, he was talking to a whole bunch of the officers, when I come up to the bridge, and there's problem there, something has to be done even if you don't know what you're doing because even if you don't know what you're doing, and you've done something, you've got a 50 percent chance of being right. If you don't do anything, you've got a 100 percent chance of being wrong. And that was his way of really telling us, I want action from you, and then tell me what you've done, and I'll judge you on what you've done. Not after the fact. But if you are running a destroyer, you've got to move. That was his philosophy. That's aggressive doctrine, running a destroyer is an aggressive operation.

KP: You have a sense that he knew that?

JM: He, oh yeah, and when he would take a ship into a dock even, he would do it aggressively. I mean, down in Norfolk, there were heavy tides, and we would never get screwed up coming into a dock. But Bill would come in there with a lot of power on, and he'd go out the same way. That's ship handling.

KP: You had mentioned your vessel out in the Philippine area, you having a problem with killing a submarine?

JM: That was down off New Guinea, and we were exercising. We were doing the same kind of an exercise in a similar geographical situation to what the beaches would look like up in Leyte, and while we were doing that, acting as an escort for the ships, we were protecting them against submarines, aircraft, whatever might show up. And we picked up a very good submarine contact. And we tracked them, and we dropped two patterns of depth charges on them, and we feel we got a kill, but nothing came to the surface, in the sense of pieces or debris and what not to verify it really for us. So we got a probable kill out of it. At least it was an interesting moment for the afternoon on an otherwise dull day.

KP: ... When you weren't in action, or when there wasn't severe weather, could it be really boring to be on board ship?

JM: We were during the period from the time we left Pearl Harbor at one point in time there I guess, until we made the invasion up at Leyte, I think we had 90 days underway, solid, and you know that's full of activity, and you're doing things and whatnot. But after the Lingayen Operation we did an operation at Subic Bay and then we came back to Leyte Gulf, and we must have been in Leyte Gulf for about near six weeks, and that was probably the longest, most boring part. We were getting ready to go to Okinawa. We were doing provisioning, and we were doing a lot of other things soon as supplies became available. Then we shoved off around the middle of March. But we had I'd say at least of month there just sitting out in Leyte Bay at anchor. And that's pretty damn boring.

KP: Did you have leave?

JM: No.

KP: So you were literally sitting ...?

JM: There was no place to go to on leave. I think we got in, I think we went in and set up an officer's club with a couple bottles of Schenley? Bead? Chablit? and a plank and two orange crates or something like that. We opened the *Badger's* officer's club and closed it that afternoon. I think that's the only time we got for liberty. I made one trip officially with the captain's gig one afternoon. That was a long boring ride. That was, well, it must have been 10 miles one way. It was a long, hot ride.

KP: So you didn't really see any of the Philippines. Did you see any of the other islands?

JM: No. No, only as we passed on a mission.

KP: So you were literally aboard?

JM: We never went ashore in Okinawa. We never got ashore in Lingayen. We never got ashore in Subic Bay.

KP: And you were sent to Okinawa. ... Was this the most severe combat you experienced during the war?

JM: Well we knew it was going to be a bloody one. The closer you get to the home island, the more fighting there was going to be obviously. And we weren't disappointed. The Japs sent down the battleship fleet. As I indicated they never made contact with us, but we were about two hours away from them when [William F.] Halsey got them with aircraft. They certainly threw everything at us, and the kamikazes that they had. We lost a lot of destroyers up in Okinawa. As I indicated, we lost, I think, it was two ships in my group, two out of nine, and then there were three of us that were severely damaged.

KP: So you were under constant Kamikaze attack?

JM: No, not constant. They got, they originally started out, they would come in at dawn and dusk. Then they started screwing up the day by coming in at all times. They found out one of the tactics would be to come in out of the sun at higher altitudes. So ... they'd show up at 3:00 in the afternoon. They'd disturb tea, or whatever you were doing.

KP: So you experienced both air and also these naval kamikazes?

JM: The only, there were very few of the type we had that suffered our damage. There were very few of those. But the majority up in Okinawa was the air kamikazes. And that had started down at Leyte Gulf. That was the first time I saw one. It was just about 1,000 feet ahead of us, a cruiser. He just came out of nowhere, and nobody suspected him of ... doing anything like that. But that was an indication. Then it got heavier a bit when we went up to Lingayen, and a couple months later we saw about a dozen of them up there at Okinawa. As I say, the closer you get to the homeland, the more desperate they became. They really went all out. There must have been, I don't know, it must have been well over several thousand kamikaze airplanes that attacked and were downed, and they would either hit American ships or did a number up at Okinawa.

KP: At the time, how did this affect your view of the enemy, the Japanese?

JM: It's sickening. It really is. If you see an airplane deliberately dive down like I did at Leyte, I saw him hit the cruiser, and I say, there's a human being in there, and he's deliberately committing suicide and diving into the ship. You have a sickening feeling.

KP: Really, even ... if he had dropped a bomb ...?

JM: Oh, I did, at least. I don't know ...

KP: Yeah, but even though the idea of just ...

JM: I guess it's a sickening effect that a guy is doing something like that. If we had shot him out of the sky, we probably wouldn't quite feel that way. You'd say, well that's the chances you take just like that.

KP: Just like you being aboard the ship. But the fact that he deliberately smashed and had no chance

JM: Yeah, and I think it also foretold what was happening, that we were definitely winning the war. At that point we had pretty much confidence [that] it was just a matter of time. See when we were coming out from Pearl Harbor with the LST's in August, 1944, to begin with, we had a long stepping stone operation plan before we got to the Philippines. And it was about the time that we reached Saipan that the communiques were coming in and Halsey virtually demolished the air force over the Philippines, and at that point we moved everything up by about six weeks, and we just knew the war was going to get over sooner, so it was all backs to it.

KP: You had that sense ...?

JM: Oh, yeah ...

KP: Some people have said they had no clue where the war was going.

JM: Oh well we, we pretty much did when we knew they were moving things ahead by that ...

KP: By that amount of time ...

JM: By that amount of time. You know, we knew the daily situation and what was going on through the communiques that would come in.

KP: Do you think you knew more about the way the war was going because you were on a bigger ship than people on smaller vessels?

JM: Oh yeah, the fellas that were on ...

KP: LST's

JM: Well the LST's, they knew virtually nothing. We knew as much of what was going on as the guys on the carrier or the battleship or anyone else did. One of the things was all the communications traffic that came through that was highly confidential was through a coded system, a crypto-system that the Navy had, and only the officers were allowed to break that

down. So whether you liked it or not, you broke down communications messages in your spare time. ... You know I'm a lousy typist. I always have been and with this code if you made a mistake, you had to go back to the beginning. So if you got off watch on the bridge at 4:00 in the morning, you had to get down and break down code, and you'd normally be there an hour or something like that, but if you screwed up a message when you're almost at the end of it, you had to go all the way back to the beginning again. But that way we read a lot of traffic. That gave us a lot of input, and then you had to put the pieces together yourself. No, from the time we ... made that jump up in the invasion schedule to the Philippines, we weren't due to be in the Leyte until about Christmas time, and we were there ... two months earlier. And everything was trying to keep the logistics, to keep us going.

KP: Did you ever have problems with logistics? Although you did mention you had a lot of waiting.

JM: We ate an awful lot of cabbage. It came up from Australia, cabbage and lamb. My father would call it cheap mutton, not lamb. It was tough as could be and stringy. Logistics was difficult to keep up with

KP: What about your mail?

JM: Well when you make a long trip, like someplace, you wouldn't get any mail for, going up to Lingayen, and there's no post office up there. We'd get back and then there'd be mail, six weeks mail. It was pretty good though, all considering. They made a very considerable effort to get mail to us.

KP: ... You were hit by a torpedo boat, which you mentioned earlier. Can you recount what happened after your vessel was hit by the depth charges?

JM: I think there was only one. There's always been debate about it. I think it was one, and it was probably about a 300 lb. depth charge by the extent of the damage that we saw once we finally got into dry dock. It blew a ... concave impression into the hull of the ship about 90, 100 feet long. It probably went in, it was just like if you'd taken your fist in an Atlas or something and hit the hull of the ship, and the main damage that it did immediately, of course, was that it popped all the rivets in the hull of the ship, so you immediately started taking water, and not from a concentrated place where you could stop it. It would be coming through all these, so we immediately flooded the, I guess it was the, after fire room and the forward engine room that were flooded. It also damaged the starboard shaft, so the starboard shaft couldn't turn. And with the degree of flooding we were taking, this happened about 4:15 in the morning, and by 6:00 a.m., we were in dire trouble. Shortly after that we got a tug along side that together with our pumping and their pumping we were able to keep afloat and not go any lower in the water. And with that kind of assistance, we were able to make our way over to the Kerama-retto that we had initially taken for just this very purpose, to use as a place for hospital ships, dry docks and a place of safety for ships in distress. Then we got, a larger tug came along side that had bigger pump capacity, and he was able to pump us dry once we got to Kerama-retto. That would be about two or three days later.

KP: If it hadn't been for these tugboats, you probably would have sunk?

JM: Oh, we'd have sunk. Yeah, we were going down at 6:00.

KP: Did you lose any men?

JM: No.

KP: Really? Despite, this enormous ...

JM: We only had one casualty on board the ship, and that was Kerama-retto afterward. We had a Jap kamikaze attack, and we could fire our 40 millimeter guns, and Frank Raciopsi? from New Jersey was the gun captain and one of my gunner's mates. He got caught in between the 40 millimeter gun and the gun shield. And he got crushed in the hips. And we took him over to the hospital ship, but he died on the hospital ship a few hours later. There was no way of saving him. He was the only man we lost.

KP: During the war?

JM: Yeah.

KP: Do you think you were very fortunate?

JM: Yeah. The thing about destroyers is you either lose a lot of people or you don't lose any. I mean it's pretty much a tin can. It is, I mean if you have a destroyer get hit, you're probably going to lose 60, 80 men. Like some of the ships that were hit by kamikazes up north of Okinawa and went down in our squadron. They lost 60 or 80 men.

KP: Although you had taken a really severe hit ...?

JM: Oh yeah, but the main damage, was that it just literally it heaved the ship up the starboard side, up and the ship rolled over. ... Anybody that got hurt, got hurt by being hurled against machinery or bulkheads or something. And they had some bruises and sore bones, but they were still, their heart was still beating.

KP: This put your ship out of commission for the war?

JM: Well, we were under schedule. We finally got into dry dock, and they took the ships that could be repaired most quickly in dry dock and put them in first, and since we were as severe as we were, we had to have stiffeners put all along the outside of the hull of the ship ... to make us sea worthy, because the front end was moving from the rear end, actually we were disconnected in the middle. And we were hustled back, and I went back by air ahead of the ship to Bremerton and finally, so that we could be in position to be ready for the invasion of Japan on November 1.

KP: So your ship would have been there?

JM: We would have been there, yeah.

KP: Did you think an invasion of Japan was necessary?

JM: Yeah, it would of happened. It would of happened.

KP: Even though you could see Japan was ...?

JM: They would have fought to the last man. That was the nature of the people. That's what we saw in these kamikaze pilots. Because they'd have fought. They'd have fought, and it would of cost us a great deal of our men. I have no second doubts about Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I don't know what anyone feels on the post-nuclear arms, but that was the time and place to use them and Truman was right.

KP: ... When you knew that the bombs [were used], did you think that was it for the war?

JM: I had no idea that we had the weapon.

KP: But when they were used ...?

JM: But when they were used, I knew it would be the end of the war. I thought it would be the end of the war. Certainly it'd be a very demoralized force in Japan that you'd be invading against. And of course the peace came so quickly thereafter. I think the Japanese knew it too. No, we'd have lost many, many ships and many, many men if we had invaded Japan. It would have been no easy task.

KP: So in fact, that's what I meant by your ship being ... You never made it it back in time?

JM: No, we would have been there.

KP: You would have been there.

JM: We were on schedule to get out of there. The only reason our ship was ever put back in the service again, was that when the war ended we were in two pieces in the dry dock, and so they had to put us together to get us out of the dry dock. So they said, we might as well make it a warship again.

KP: Otherwise they might well have ...

JM: No, had we not been in the dry dock infirmary, that's really serious, we would have been scuttled. It was too expensive, it probably cost about eight million to put us back together again.

KP: What eventually happened to the ship? Do you know?

JM: She was in service until 1976. She had quite an interesting career, went around the world several times. She was laid up for a period of time, after when she came out of dry dock infirmary, she was put in moth balls for a period of time. Then in the Korean War, she started out again. She served in the Korean War and around the world ... I have a history of it I picked up out of the mail.

KP: You followed your ship?

JM: Yeah, and she was finally sold for scrap. No, I think she went to South America, I think for possibly a brief while, I'm not really sure, but she was out of commission from 1976 on from the U.S. Navy.

KP: Had you considered a career in the Navy?

JM: Yeah, I came very close to it. We were, Jean and I were down in Washington visiting the Kellers, Bob Keller I talked about before, and we were Godparents for their children, and vice versa, and Bill Cooper came over that night. He was in Washington, in (...?) at the time with his wife, and we had a couple drinks and sat and talked and all of a sudden Bill said, John, he said, I think that your orders are in over in the office. He said, I think you're being transferred. And he said, so ... give me a call in the morning. And I've always had my doubts about this. I called him in the morning, and he told me I had been assigned to a destroyer in Tokyo Harbor as ... the gunnery officer. And I said, that's one crock of stuff you know, I said, here ... I got 30 months on the *Badger*. And I said, I've never been ashore since I first met you. So he made me a proposal. He said, John ... I'd like you to transfer to the Regular Navy, and if you transfer to the Regular Navy, he said I'll send you to the fire control school in Washington, which is a two year assignment. And that's also a necessary element on your record to move on up in destroyers. And he said, if you sign up for the Regular Navy, ... I think I can get those orders changed. I said, that's blackmail Bill. ... There are a lot of interesting ideas about the thought. But I said, hell no. ... I'll go to Tokyo. And so Jean and I went out to Bremerton at the end of my leave, and she figured I'd be going overseas as soon as my replacement arrived about the end of September, but then the point system came in. And that was the end of the war for me.

KP: But you gave it a lot of thought?

JM: Oh, I thought about it, momentarily. If I had stayed in I had a great opportunity because I was so young, and I already had the experience. I'd been an officer of the deck on the destroyer and [had] the qualifications for the gunnery officer's job. And ... the next job up is the executive officer, and then captain. So ... if I had stayed in I would have been a commander by the time of the Korean War, and I probably [would of] had a command before the Korean War was out. I certainly [would have] been an executive officer. And you know, I was only, what, well 19 when I went, in 20 years I would have been out with a pension at 39.

KP: Or you might have just stayed in longer?

JM: I could have gone to law school. I could have stayed in to 30 and been out at 49, and the way things went with the ammunitions' industry and everything there were plenty of jobs for you. I don't think as a reserve officer at the outset, I'd have probably gone at that time beyond the rank of captain, but I could have made captain, probably.

KP: When you say you couldn't have gone beyond captain was that because there was a lot of Annapolis people that wanted to go beyond captain?

JM: Yeah, at that time and then that time frame period, which would have been the 60's, very few people got up to admiral who were reserve officers. And even today, the reserve doesn't make it as fast in the Navy as he does in the Army or the Air Force. And so that's just the practical nature of it. And now the Navy is decreasing to the point where there are probably more reserves in there now than there ... were 30 years ago. But still the dominance is in the academy.

KP: And that entered into your thinking too?

JM: Well that's part of it.

KP: Partly it. You ended up going back to law school?

JM: Yeah.

KP: How crucial was the G.I. Bill?

JM: Absolutely, the greatest thing in the world. I never could've done it any other way. No I went down, searched around for a job in New York, ... looking at marketing and trying to figure how they fit Law School into this. The Lindsay family, John Lindsay, was there in New York. His dad, I knew him very well, lived out in Laurel Hollow there with me, and I went to see him, and he had been a banker and a lawyer, but he had never practiced law, and he told me, he said, the greatest thing he did with his banking career was that he had a law school background. So that turned the table. I wanted to go to law school, and I would have gone there no matter where I wound up. But through a shipmate of mine, his father was president of a Corporation Trust Company, and I stopped to tell him what his son was like when I left him in Seattle, and before I was through he offered me a job with him. Selling for him. Making corporations. That's why I wound up with Corporation Trust Company. Always have a good plan, and then something comes along that's outside the scope of the plan that worked.

KP: So you went to school at night as you worked for the Corporation Trust Company by the day, which must have been a crazy schedule?

JM: Yeah, I commuted out to Huntington, Long Island, didn't see much of my two sons when they were in their formative years.

KP: Your children, they were all post-war babies?

JM: Yeah.

KP: As a lawyer you ended up going the corporate route in a sense?

JM: I wanted to go the corporate route. That was my preference. Again it was an accident in a sense. My brother was working at Republic Aviation, and they were expanding because of the Korean War from two to three lawyers, and he told me that there was going to be a job open[ing] up out there. And I mentioned the Platt boys before, that I played baseball with, and their father, Collier Platt, was in the law firm, Bleakley Platt, just up above me in 120 Broadway, and I got a call from him one day to come on up and talk to him. ... Livingston Platt was the senior partner in the firm, was counsel for Republic, so he told me about the job opening too. He said, would you be interested? I said, I damned sure would. Next thing I know I was in Livingston Platt's office, and the following night I was out at Johnny Ryan's office, who was house counsel for Republic. I used to have his kid in Cub Scouts after I got out of law school. We agreed to agree, and I went to work with him. That was a big deciding moment in my life. I had to make the decision that figuring there, maybe the Republic had three or four good years ahead of them. The Korean War would end and everything would go down hill again. I decided I learned enough about practicing corporate law. This is again like going to gunnery school and then going on a destroyer and actually doing it. You get out of law school, and you have a lot of stuff in your head, but going out and actually doing it counts. And the number two fellow out there died of a heart attack in his sleep about four months later, and the next thing I knew my boss Johnny Ryan didn't like to work too hard, so I had everything in my lap, and you know, I've always been someone, who said, if nobody else wants to do it, I'll do it. And I had a great deal of fun doing it. I started doing work in Washington, seeing a great deal. And was active in Congress.

KP: So you would even do lobbying as part of your ...?

JM: Well not lobbying, but yeah, I guess it's lobbying in the broadest sense of it, but ...

KP: You worked with the Defense Department in terms of (...)?

JM: I went through some of these congressional hearings like we're having now. ... They've just gotten more skilled at being a bunch of bull shitters.

KP: You said you got to do everything. You said you got to go to Washington. Would you do litigation?

JM: Well, I did labor law work. We had a 12,000 person work force by then with the IAM as an bargaining unit. We went through some very hefty negotiations with them every year, or every three years. We had a couple strikes. So you had hands on experience in a lot of different areas.

I did a lot of contract work. I handled all the sub contracts for, we had about 400 million dollars a year in those days, which would be about a billion today in air craft contracts for the F-84's in light of the F-105's, and then I did some trial work on the contracts for the armed services. So, I

was across the board. And it was just a ... wonderful follow up to my law school training, but now I was getting hands on experience.

KP: Which a lot of lawyers, especially corporate lawyers, often do a very narrow area whereas you got to do a little of everything. Did you feel you got a lucky break?

JM: Well it's fortunate. In life no matter how smart you are or anything else, if you don't get the opportunities, call it that if you don't want to, call it luck, if you don't get the opportunity to show your stuff, well you sit in a corner. I went and talked to a friend of mine who was [a] counsel for U.S. Steel, and he would have offered me ... [a] job in U.S. Steel, but he told me not to take it. He said, you'd be in a room John, with 90 lawyers, and you'd be sitting in the furthest right hand corner, and you won't be seen for about 20 years. And he was telling me from his own experience. He'd gone up to be counsel, so he advised against it.

KP: You took part, you were telling Rob, about taking part in the dissolution of Republic Aircraft.

JM: Yeah, what I did after I went up to Harvard Business School, I went up there ... making a deal with the president. I said, when I come back, I want to be out of the law section. He said, why, and I told him Johnny is too young and healthy. I'll never be counsel, and I've been thinking about going elsewhere to practice. So he told me that if I went to Harvard and came back, he'd move me out of the law field, and I went in and worked as the assistant to the vice-president of manufacturing. I knew a good deal about the procurement effort, which I had been working heavily. And then he asked me to give up my summer vacation one year and go out and make a deal with [the] Orion Company that would test fly a vertical take-off airplane. And I said, yes, obviously and told my wife later that we weren't going on vacation, but I went on and did that and came back, and he liked the deal I'd made, which was a pretty good one, and I said, have you picked someone to run the program, and he said, no, he hadn't, and I said, well I've got a couple suggestions if you'd like to hear them. And he said, go ahead, tell me. He said, I do have one person in mind. So I told him two people I thought could do a good job for him, and he said, well, he said, I want you to do it. So ... I was running the flight testing or everything. But again that's part of managerial abilities So we flight tested the airplane on schedule and within our bucks and everything else, and then while I was doing that and finishing it up, why Fairchild came into the picture, and I was approached by Fairchild in their usual delicate manner, would you like to stay with us or do you want us to pay you off? ... Six months severance pay or stay. And they said, if you stay with us we'd like you to be counsel and secretary for the company. Johnny Ryan was gone already. All the executives were gone. They got bounced the first week that Fairchild took over.

KP: So you were one of the few from the old management that ...?

JM: I was part of the old management, and so I said, well, I'd stick around, and I knew that the directors of the company were going to have some help from the inside, and I knew I could do that for them. That's the way it turned out. Livingston Platt, who I mentioned before, was still Chairman of the Board of Directors. ... So I took the job, of course we ultimately had fraction

between the management and Fairchild, the Board of Directors So I had a rocky road for about a year, but it was again a hell of an experience. And I wound up, we went to a stockholder's meeting down in Wilmington, and Ed (Yule?) had approached me before about taking a job with Fairchild, and I told him I didn't want to discuss it until the shareholders had voted, so he came into my room after the shareholder vote, and he offered me two jobs with Fairchild. ... I told him, I decided not to do it, and I went back to New York that night. I was completely adrift. I was counsel for a company that really no longer existed. ... I went to the hotel room in New York, and I wrote up a contract on one piece of yellow paper, and I took it down to Livingston Platt the following day and told him the terms on which I would liquidate the company for him for a 15 month contract. He took it to the Board of Directors that afternoon and presented it to them and asked me to leave the room for sending it to them, and it caught Fairchild by surprise, and they had no alternative except to vote in favor of it. And of course once they did that, why I was in control of the liquidation, even though they were a significant stockholder. And they lost a million dollars as a result of that in the sale of assets. They underestimated the value, so it would be determined by the auditors, and they tried to break the agreement. ...

KP: Why do you think they made the mistake?

JM: They'd made a mistake in judging the inventory that was going to be resulting in the end of the year, what would be included in the numbers. They had carefully worked out the numbers to the point they thought they had got the hardest, best deal they could. And ... in order to do that they just went a little too far. They bit off a little more than they could really. So when the final audit was done by the Lybrand firm, Lybrand produced the numbers, and they were a million dollars in excess of what Fairchild had targeted for the deal.

KP: So they had to come up with an extra ...?

JM: They had to come up with the extra money. So that was sort of sweet revenge.

KP: So in other words Republic in some ways did not want to be ...?

JM: Republic deserved it. ...The president had really, for the past three or four years of that company's existence, had lost interest in doing business and the company. If ... your chief executive starts to get that way, why ... sooner or later you're going to be a takeover.

KP: Did you see any clash in the corporate cultures between Fairchild and Republic?

JM: Oh yeah, Republic was a very high technology company. Oh it was throughout its existence, from all the time my brother came in in '35, we were leaders in technology for a particular type of airplane, a ground support airplane, B-47 Thunderbolt, that type of an airplane, F-84's, and always North American was on the other side of the spectrum with a high altitude interceptor, the P-51's in World War II, and the F-38's up in Korea. So, but we were a high technology company, highly skilled, very competent manufacturing forced. Fairchild was way third rate compared to us as a producing company, probably would have been engineering

technology capabilities. And the only thing they kept, the Fairchild-Republic combined together was an airplane we already had on the board, which was the A-10, which is still called a Warthog and used over in Yugoslavia and was used during the Dessert War by the National Guard. ... But that was on the drawing board when I was leaving Republic, when I closed down the doors.

KP: And you were getting the sense that this war in Vietnam was not going the right way?

JM: That's right.

KP: Is there any particular stories or memories that you have of ...?

JM: No it's just a feel. Ever feel like your car's going to break down the day you say somethings not running right, the engine's not ...

KP: You said there wasn't command and control. In some ways people have commented in terms of Lyndon Johnson's following the war and ...

JM: That was part of it, and there was no coordinated ..., well, you had the restriction on we could only go so far. We can only do this much. It all started with the Chinese up in North Korea. You know war is war. If you're going to conduct war, you got to conduct it the proper way, and that means you go for the jugular. And you go all the way. If not, you don't belong in the war, and you should sue for peace.

KP: So you thought that was a mistake?

JM: Yeah, well it would be like a destroyer you know. If you convince them to torpedo attack and you get within 3,000 yards of the battleship, and then say, stay where you are for another five minutes, ... you're going to get sunk. And it's like what I'm talking about with the Army commanding our fire control up there. Somebody controlling us that didn't know what our capability to deliver was. And that's the type of situation I think you had in Vietnam.

----- END OF TAPE TWO SIDE ONE -----

KP: Rob do you have any questions?

RL: No.

KP: You sure?

RL: Yes.

KP: Is there anything I forgot to ask, or any stories that you can think of regarding the war, or Rutgers, or the post-war?

JM: I'd like to go back to Rutgers. I think all throughout my life, the idea of going down to school and even though I was young, and I don't think it would make any matter whether I was 15 or 18 but being aggressive myself, deciding that I wanted something other than the scholastic involvement. And the first week down there being involved with the football team, and then I went on to be a debater down at school, and I had the opportunity of going out to Ohio and debating the freshman team, that was, Swedish name, big tall fellow. The two of us went out there, and we debated. He came from New York, ... and you know at my age, you start to have about a three minute recall on names, but the two of us had the opportunity of going out there and debating two or three colleges, the small schools in Ohio, and just having that opportunity. It got you involved in exercising responsibility for yourself and doing things that otherwise wouldn't have been able to be done. So the opportunity at that time was at Rutgers for me to do these things and to broaden myself aside from educating myself, broaden myself in other responsibilities. It made it a lot easier for me to move into the business world later on. ... I don't think I am a brash person, but I've always had the confidence in myself to be able to go in and talk to anybody and present my side of the case and usually try to win the argument with him. And I think Harvey Harman was, as an individual, a great, I benefitted greatly from my friendship and association with him, and as you know Harvey went on to serve in the Navy during war. In fact, I was there when he made the first phone calls. He got a call from the football coach down at the Naval Academy and asked him if he would head up the program. He was then the head of the Eastern College Football Coaches Association, I believe, and he was on the telephone that afternoon with a fellow who was the coach at Fordham, who signed up for it, I think (Lew?) Little, I'm not sure whether he came into it or not, but then Harvey went out to the Ohio pre-flight. And Harvey's desire always was to get on board a carrier and get somewhere on the surface. And I think he finally did for a few months before the end of the war. But, he played a good deal in the role in my college experiences.

KP: You ended up in corporate counsel, in a very large corporation and then you went to smaller firms ...?

JM: Well, I was counsel for two New York Stock Exchange firms, but they were smaller companies themselves. Republic went up to 29,000 people while I was with them, and we went down to about 15,000 by the time I left, and then they went lower than that. Sanders was about 5,000 people when I joined them, and they were about 9,500 when I left. But I worked in procurement a good deal, so I had a lot of contact with small business companies. And I saw the problems they had. Usually they'd be delinquent in their deliveries, or they'd be having money problems or something. Because I was heavily involved in the procurement programs of Republic during the Korean days, I got interested in small business, and I thought that was a good niche for me when I started I was practicing law up in New Hampshire, in general practice, and then I was doing consulting work too, and I decided I would work my way towards doing it with small business firms because it gave me an opportunity to help somebody and be more visible than I would with larger firms. ... I had had the opportunity, (Booth Allen?) invited me to come down and join (Booth Allen?), but again I didn't want to do that because I wouldn't be my own person anymore. So that's really how I got involved with small companies. Just being more appreciative of what their problems are. Most small business companies start out with an individual leaving a big company, and say, ... I can do this myself. I know more than anybody

else does. ... So he starts out, and he has a few people, and he becomes the engineer and the accountant and the lawyer, and pretty soon he's doing all the things that he isn't skilled at and the company's going to hell because ... the things he's good at aren't getting done. And usually a small business firm is started, if it survives for five years, it's probably going to be successful. So my job, my interest was in getting them involved with, and before that five years had run out, and trying to head them in the direction. And always with the philosophy, you'd go in and you'd tell them what your thoughts are, but you never tell them what to do. If you have to tell them what to do, and then they do that, then they'll die as soon as you leave. So to make them survive you just have to tell them and then wait and see if they adopt the ideas. But I found it interesting.

KP: What's been your biggest success? If you have any particular successes in terms of your small businesses?

JM: All my former clients are still alive. They're not millionaires, but they're still making it.

KP: So the businesses you advised, you'd get your businesses over a five year hump?

JM: Yeah.

KP: How diverse have the businesses been?

JM: Well one was in software with the Defense Department in the Navy primarily. One was making a textile fabric for composite hulls on speedboats and sailboats and things like that. And they're now working with people like McDonnell Aircraft and working with fiber materials and ... very exotic stuff, that if you make a mistake, it costs 15 times as much money as if it were for a sailboat. A machine shop type company, high tech machine job. All automotive equipment, that type of thing, so a diversity of groups.

KP: You also had a stint in public office?

JM: Well I decided I was due to do something like that. We were in Maine, happened to be in the geographical area of Maine that I didn't know much about, so I decided I'd like to go up there and get familiar with that northern part of Maine. And I went there ... with the idea of being there for four years. Then I had to have a back operation, and I decided at that point it was probably also time for me to drop out of there, and I had a pretty chaotic city council up there. Things got pretty rough politically, and after I did it, I had been working with a company up there that was quite interesting. It was a German company in the machine business, automobile supply parts, and I put together a joint venture between them and a Japanese company, and we formed a company called (Gruer?) Automotive Components and got that started, and that's up to about 50 people and about six million dollars investment in the city right now. And I don't know where we will go from here on because a lot of things have happened, but I put that operation together. When I resigned from the city, why nobody was taking care of the shop over there. So I came back to them and suggested I handled it on a consultant basis for them, and I just worked on that particular project which had interest to me. I didn't really have to do any heavy lifting, so my back ... was all right.

KP: ... You'd been on the corporate side of both large businesses and small businesses. ... What did you learn or any opinion in terms of seeing government at work on the local level, were you actually in government? Did you have any new found appreciation ...?

JM: It's not a pretty sight. No I think my most interesting comments about it, would be, for the benefit of anybody listening, the Harvard Advanced Management Program was the greatest thing ... for me from an educational viewpoint and Mundy Peale, even though I told him I wasn't thinking of leaving him, decided that I ought to go up there. And this was an opportunity to sit down with 150 of my peers, and they were roughly, I'm just judging, seven other lawyers in the class, there were 15 civil engineers, mechanical, aerospace, you name it, and you had people from the oil industry, the aerospace industry, from banking, from government. We had five guys that were headed for admirals, ten that were headed for generals in the military, and to be thrown into that kind of a theater every day, and classes would run from 40 up to the whole class of 150, and exchange views and tell each other, they were absolutely stupid and ignorant and everything else. It was a real tremendous experience, and I learned things up there that you'll never learn out of a book and bull sessions and other things, talking with them and everything else. And that was a tremendous, ... In that stage of my life, I was in my 40's. My family was all formed. I was on a career path and all the rest but to go there and go through that it was ...

KP: ... So you got to see a bigger sense of the picture?

JM: Absolutely. And the government people that were there, I'm sure they left with a far different view of industry, for example and they hadn't before.

KP: Why? What sense did you have that their views ...?

JM: Well just hearing other people talking and realizing how companies work which they, poor people, you know, if you're in the military today in the management, and you're in the Pentagon, you get a very, very convoluted picture of what's happening in the real world. And only once in a while does somebody come into the management down in the Pentagon that's a real breath of fresh air. And in my case, it was again my, his name, it's right on the, it's Hewlett Packard, Dave Packard. Dave Packard came in for three years during the Nixon administration, and I had a problem with the Sanders people. We were in the hole on the F-111 program to the tune of about 30 million bucks. ... We were such a small company, we truly were going to have to declare bankruptcy the following year when we came up with our fiscals unless we'd get some relief. It took me 18 months, but I knew I was on the right track, about eight months before it finally got settled because I got a meeting through my state senator. General Norris Cotton got me a meeting and Tom McIntyre with him, and after the preliminaries and whatnot, I know he was a busy man and everything else, I just looked him in the eye and I said Mr. Packard, we're in a lot of trouble, and we need your help. And I told him, and he said, how much do you need and what it was. He knew what our background was and how much the government needed us. From there on, it wasn't easy, but we got our message across after we had the opportunity to talk to him. It's that kind of people that are lacking in the government. People that you can go to and talk to. And I think that in industry, we lack the people who will be forth right, like I was. I've

always been that kind of a guy. If I need your help, I'll tell you I need your help. And I won't beat around the bush about it. ... There just aren't that many people in the Pentagon. They haven't been properly trained in dealing with industry, so it makes it difficult.

KP: In others words, the understanding of the needs for cash flow, and the needs for ...?

JM: Yeah, understand what the businessman's perspective is, and he understood because he started his business in a garage. Just like Roy Grumman started the airplane business in a garage, he and Hewlett formed the company in their garage. And they worked up the hard way, so he understands what it is to meet a payroll. ... It doesn't matter whether it's the government that's the buyer or your other customer. They have to understand what your problems are. And he was receptive to them. You don't meet people like that. He only lasted about another year, then Nixon took a lot of the procurement things over into the White House, and he packed up his bags and went home. And I had communications with him after that. I have high respect for him. Take people like Bill Allen, who was president at Boeing. He was a lawyer, and he brought Boeing out of the trouble in 1947 and built the company to where it is today, a fine person. ... He was a lawyer. He had no experience in building airplanes or anything else, but that isn't essential. People often think, well if you haven't built an airplane, you can't be head of an airplane company. That's a lot of nonsense. It's management. It's how to deal with people. It goes back again to the destroyers. How do you get 300 people to work harmoniously to fight the ship well? A lot of management can be learned in wartime.

KP: So you think the war-time experience was very positive?

JM: Oh very positive to me. It gave me confidence in myself.

KP: ... Can you imagine how your career would of been different if ... there hadn't been a war or you hadn't enlisted?

JM: Well you take the 90 boots that we got. We got to read their letters. Censorship. The officers have to read all the enlisted men's mail. We had kids that could barely write. I mean their letters were so pathetic, and they were trying to express their deepest feelings to their mother. How much they missed her and all, and they could barely express it because they could barely write. And these kids had never been out of the hills of Pennsylvania. They probably never would have gotten out of the hills of Pennsylvania. They maybe learned some things that didn't help them in the future, but they learned a lot of things that did help them. They learned that if they worked hard and progressed themselves, they could become a machinist second class or third class, and you know, they had the opportunity in the confined limits of their ship to get an education in something practical they could take home with them. ... That means a lot. We have a lot of kids today that would benefit from that. They wouldn't be in trouble with the law.

KP: Have you stayed in touch with members of your crew?

JM: No, some of the officers, a few of us that were really close. I knew Bob Keller. He died 20 years ago now and several others, Pete Lovejoy, I hear from every year. Others have died. I

know our engineering officers did. Both my captains are dead. The executive officers, I lost track of after a while. I kept in touch with a lot of them for 15, 20 years maybe, when I was traveling around the country if I'd be there. I'd be in Washington. I'd see them.

KP: Your ship never had a reunion?

JM: No. Few destroyers have regular reunions of their crew. We never did even though we were a close group. We were a very close group. I was surprised in a sense that it didn't start, but it just didn't start for one reason or another. We always did things different. We were out at Attu for 30 days there in March, and during the time we were out there, they changed the camouflage, instead of steel gray, which I'll show you on your way out, we had to go to a white and black zig zag pattern, so that it would look, when you came over the horizon, like there were three ships coming instead of just one. So the night before we left Attu we had a working party, who went ashore, and we raided the Army's warehouse, and we got all the paint. We knew where it was, and we'd cataloged how much we needed and everything. We were about a day out of Attu. It was calm seas, and we were doing about ten knots and riding by ourselves, so we put the work force over the sides, life jackets and all and we painted the ship from top to bottom. And we arrived in Adak and of course, everybody has got their glasses up looking at this ship coming in, and who the hell this can be, and ... low and behold it's the *Badger*, and the other eight ships in our squadron are sitting at anchor there with a steel gray paint job on. We just were very casual about it. Oh you like our new, oh yeah. How come you fellas haven't painted [your] ship yet? ... It was that kind of esprit de corps that gives to the guys in the ship, you know. Sailors go ashore, and they swagger off from the *Badger*.

KP: You came away from the war also very impressed with your commander's management, leadership style?

JM: Well he later became the president of United Fruit Company. He had 625 ships under his command then. And he had his offices over in the Hague. I'll tell you a story on that. I came back from business, well I had been out to dinner in Paris and about ten o'clock, and I was staying at the American Hotel, the (Hotel Creon?) where everybody stays, and the American bar was downstairs, so I went down to have a nightcap, and I walked into the room and before I got a chance to look to my the left, I hear a voice saying, hey Johnny. And I looked over there. It was Bill Cooper and his wife and two British admirals, and so we had a reunion. He was headed back for Boston, and he was in Paris for the night. I saw Bill several times after that.

KP: Why is there another story that ...?

JM: No, I think that's pretty well covered the areas. I think it covers the outline I gave to you.

KP: No. Your outline was just great.

JM: I have my service record here so I could check back on dates pretty easily if I thought I was wrong on a date or what not.

KP: Rob do you have anything?

RL: No.

KP: ... This concludes an interview with John Melrose on August 3, 1994 at Hallowell, Maine with Kurt Piehler and

RL: Rob Lipschitz.

----- END OF INTERVIEW -----

March 8, 1995, transcribed

June 24, 1996, transcript reviewed

June 27, 1996, transcript proofed by Susan Contente

June 28, 1996, transcript corrections entered

June 28, 1996, mailed to John Melrose

July 19, 1996, corrections entered by Linda Lasko.