

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH DANIEL MANN

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Patrick Lee: This begins an interview with Daniel Mann on November 6, 2008, in New Brunswick, New Jersey, with Patrick Lee, Sandra Stewart Holyoak and Ashley Gross. Thank you, Mr. Mann, for coming in today. To begin the interview, I would like to state for the record that Mr. Stan Hoffman is also here. [laughter] Mr. Mann, could you please state for the record when and where you were born?

Daniel Mann: I was born August 22, 1926, in Flushing, New York.

PL: All right, thank you. Mr. Hoffman, do we need to do him?

Sandra Stewart Holyoak: No, today's interview is going to focus on Mr. Mann.

Stan Hoffman: It's on Mr. Mann. [laughter]

PL: Let us begin by talking a little bit about your family's history. We will begin by talking about your father's background.

DM: Well, my father was born in Hungary, which was then part of the Austrian Empire. As far as I know, ... he was born in 1888. He came to the United States as a child, somewhere around the Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, who was his idol, and his family had been farmers in Hungary. [Editor's Note: President Theodore Roosevelt's administration ran from September 1901 to March 1909.] ... He came over here and his mother, my grandmother, had a farm in Lisbon, Connecticut.

SSH: Did they immigrate as a family unit? Do you know?

DM: To the best of my knowledge, no. They came over one at a time. One would come over [to the United States] and, when they had enough money, another one would come over and another one. So, they didn't all come at the same time and right [away].

PL: That would be the traditional immigration method, in which one member would come, probably the male member of your family, your grandfather, perhaps.

DM: Well, my grandfather did not come. He died in Europe. He never came over, and one of the reasons that I heard for him possibly not coming over was because of his religious orthodoxy, which did not permit him to travel on Saturday. ... Going back over a hundred years ago, you couldn't get here ... within a week. [laughter]

PL: Right, the whole shipping thing.

DM: Yes.

SSH: In Lisbon, Connecticut, were there other family members there besides your grandmother and her children?

DM: To the best of my knowledge; well, there is no knowledge. I don't know. [laughter]

SSH: Okay, that is a fair enough answer. Can you tell us about your father's growing up there? Did he work on the farm? What was his job?

DM: Well, my father had a series of occupations. I'm not sure of the sequence, but he had told me about some of the work experiences. He worked for the railroad for a time. The railroad, at that time, was called the Brooklyn Rapid Transit. That was in New York City, and they had freight trains and passenger trains, and he worked for the railroad for a number of years. He also was in business for himself in the early part of the twentieth century. He owned a garage in Manhattan in which important people in Manhattan, who never drove their own cars, they always had an automobile, [stored their cars]. An automobile driver was a career in itself. So, the wealthiest people had people who drove their cars and, in my father's garage, they had, like, a dormitory for their chauffeurs. ... When someone like [American conductor, cellist and composer] Victor Herbert wanted his car, he would phone to the garage and his chauffeur would bring his car to his residence. ... So, that's one of my father's careers, but his main career, his training, [which] wasn't [gained through formal] training, it just came to him because of his life experience on the farm in Hungary, was as a butcher, and a kosher butcher, which is entirely different from a regular butcher, because, on the farm, ... [while] somebody else killed the animal, they had to know how to cut it up, to be a butcher, and that was a skill and a knowledge in itself. So, [at] various times, my father drifted in and out of that type of job. He didn't like it, but he knew he could fall back on it at any time.

SSH: How old was your father when he came over from Hungary? I do not think I asked that.

DM: I imagine he was a young teenager; I'm not exactly sure, because he was born in 1888 and he came here during the time of Theodore Roosevelt, approximately.

SSH: That is very young. Go ahead, Patrick.

PL: Your mother, can you tell us about her?

DM: Yes, my mother was born in New York City. Her family had emigrated from Hungary. So, that's probably where they [Mann's parents] met, somewhere, through some of the organizations of immigrants from Hungary. My mother grew up in New York City and they were [married]. Well, they were married rather old for that generation, because my mother, I believe, was over twenty when they married. ... They lived in Flushing, which is where I was born, and my father was in the real estate business at that time. He was buying up properties. He'd buy up properties and mortgage them heavily and use the money to buy other properties and rent them out.

PL: Like modern-day real estate developers who would buy properties.

DM: Yes, in some respects, yes.

SSH: Did your mother and father keep a kosher home?

DM: Yes.

SSH: Can you tell us a little bit about some of the customs that would have been part of your family growing up, from Hungary, perhaps, that you are aware of?

DM: Not that I'm aware of.

SSH: Were any of the foods or handiwork customary of Hungary?

DM: No ethnic foods, not that I'm aware of; of course, the Friday chicken and soup, yes, Friday night chicken and soup, yes.

Ashley Gross: I just had that last week. [laughter]

SH: Boy, you're bringing back memories for me. ...

SSH: You said you were not sure how your mother and father met, but they did meet in New York. Did your father say why he left Connecticut and came to New York? Was it because of work?

DM: He didn't say, but I do know that, well, it was a tradition in the family that one son would always ... remain unmarried to take care of his mother. ... My father was not the youngest son, but he resented, to some extent, that his younger brother got married first and left my father to care for his mother. So, my father couldn't get married until his mother, my grandmother, passed away. So, that's one of the reasons why they married a little late.

SSH: Can you tell us how many siblings your father had?

DM: Let me go through the names, which will help me remember, [laughter] because he had a brother Adolph, Isaac, Izzy, Aaron, and my father. That's five brothers. There were two other brothers, so, that was seven brothers in all. ... Well, one brother passed, died as a youngster, in Europe, and one brother remained in Europe. He never got a chance to immigrate, because they [Mr. Mann's father's family] were coming over, I don't know how frequently. Maybe once every two years or so, one of them would come over, and then, World War I broke out, ... so that that brother stayed there, probably the youngest brother, stayed there with his father, who was my grandfather, and they remained in Europe. ... That brother, who was in Europe, because he corresponded, with postal correspondence, I believe he had nine children. So, we saw pictures, but they were all killed in the Holocaust. My grandfather had probably passed away before that, but that uncle of mine, that I never met, and his family, they all perished.

SSH: Wow. Was this something, during the war, that you remember? You would have been very young. Do you remember when the correspondence stopped with the family?

DM: No, I don't remember it, but I would guess that it stopped when Germany and the United States went to war [in December 1941], probably, because Germany occupied Hungary.

SSH: Did your father ever talk of any efforts that they had gone through to try to get some of the family out when they realized what was happening in Europe at that point?

DM: I don't recall any discussion of that. We were children and we were shielded, perhaps, or, anyway, kept from much of what was going on.

SSH: What are some of your earliest memories of growing up as a child in Flushing? Was that where you grew up then?

DM: No, I have an unusual history in that respect. As I said, my father owned real estate in Flushing, New York, and, in 1929, my father took me on a cruise and left my mother with my infant brother. I imagine they were [separated]; they had a rocky problem. I imagine they had a problem, ... but I was only three years old at the time.

SSH: Very young.

DM: So, I don't remember it, but [I surmised that] just from conjecture and from other things that happened. Anyway, my father took me on a cruise, which was unusual, in 1929, to go from New York to San Francisco on a cruise, and, when we got to Los Angeles, there was a telegram for my father that he was wiped out. All of his property was gone. That was the time of the market crash, [the Stock Market Crash of October 1929]. ... People couldn't pay the rent and, when they couldn't pay the rent, you couldn't pay the mortgage, and everything went. So, instead of going to San Francisco, he got off the ship in Los Angeles and went to look for a job, and so, I remained with him in that area, in the West, for almost three years.

SSH: Until you were school age.

DM: Yes, until I was six years old and ready to go to school, and then, we came back to the East Coast. ... During that time, my father took various jobs, whatever he could get. He worked as a construction laborer, building roads in the Hollywood Hills, and then, when they started to build the Hoover Dam, he worked on that, on Boulder Dam. [Editor's Note: The Hoover Dam, constructed between 1931 and 1936, was originally named the Boulder Dam.]

SSH: What did he do with you for child care?

DM: I was at a boarding school; he put me in a boarding school. Part of the time, I was boarded with a Hungarian family, and then, part of the time, I was in a boarding school, and I have some memory of that, of that period, yes.

SSH: Was there any conversation with or letters that your mother sent?

DM: No. I have no knowledge, nothing that I know of.

SSH: However, you were very aware that your mother was in New York.

DM: I really can't remember what happened almost eighty years ago. [laughter]

SSH: I know. We are trying to put the pieces together there.

DM: ... Anyway, when I was about six years old, we came back to the East Coast and I joined my mother and my younger brother, who lived in my grandfather's house.

SSH: Your father's?

DM: My mother's father.

SSH: Your mother's father, okay. What was your mother's maiden name?

DM: ... Weiss. My mother's father owned a large house in Rockaway Beach, New York. I imagine that Rockaway Beach, at one time, was an upper-class summer resort, and people built [homes there].

PL: Right. During that time, it was one of the highest places to go. It was like the Hamptons of the day.

DM: Possibly, and so, [we lived with] my grandfather, and there was a lot of real estate speculation that went on in the 1920s, and so forth. ... Anyway, my grandfather ended up owning a large house, called the Wave Crest Mansion. ... In the summertime, he would rent out rooms, ... a family to a room, in this house, and they had communal bathrooms, but a family to [a room]. He'd rent out these rooms to, he'd have, perhaps, fifteen different families living in that house. ... My mother and my younger brother stayed there and I joined them when I was six years old, and my father came East and looked for a job.

SSH: Was he successful?

DM: Yes. He was successful because he had this skill as a butcher. He went to work for the Bedford Hills Country Sanitarium as a butcher. The Bedford Hills Country Sanitarium was run by the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, and it was a home for people with tuberculosis. ... So, he went to the Federation, told them he was a kosher butcher and they found a job for him there, ... but he had to live there, be on site, but he'd come home, he'd come to see us, every weekend.

SSH: It is a wonderful story. [laughter]

DM: Well, it's the story. In fact, ... to get from Bedford Hills to New York, you had to take a train into Manhattan, take a subway out to the end of the subway line and take a bus to get out to Rockaway Beach, and he'd come off that bus carrying four big shopping bags in each hand with food. ... He was a butcher. He'd bring meat and he'd bring juices and vegetables and other things he'd [bring], to supplement our diet, because the income he had was very little.

SSH: Was your mother working as well at this time?

DM: No, my mother was not working, no.

SSH: How much age difference is there between your younger brother and you?

DM: My younger brother's three years younger than I.

SSH: He truly was an infant when you left.

DM: Yes.

SSH: Were there other siblings there in this household with your mother and her father?

DM: Yes, my mother was one of five sisters, and Ella, Rose, Lena, three of her sisters lived in that house with my grandfather, with their families. One sister, the oldest sister of the group, was very fortunate. She was married to a man who actually owned a car, and the reason he owned a car is because he had a job. All through the [Great] Depression, he had a job. ... To backtrack, he got a job as a postal clerk, but it was a steady job and he worked through the Depression, and he got the job as a postal clerk because he'd been in the Navy. He was in that Great White Fleet that [President] Theodore Roosevelt sent around the world. ... [Editor's Note: The Great White Fleet was a US Navy battle fleet, primarily consisting of battleships, that circumnavigated the globe from December 1907 to February 1909 for the purpose of demonstrating the United States' capabilities as a naval power.] So, this is additional [information].

SSH: You were just living in this big, huge house of extended families then.

DM: Yes, extended families, and, also, ... renters in the summertime, yes.

SSH: Were there other children there?

DM: Oh, yes, yes.

SSH: Your mother's sisters that were living there were each married with families.

DM: One of my [aunts], my mother's youngest sister, was not married and she took care of her father, who was my grandfather. My mother's other sisters, I told you, the oldest didn't live there because they were ... comparatively well-off, [because her husband] worked for the post office. ... Two of my mother's other sisters did live there with their children.

SSH: You had playmates built in, so-to-speak.

DM: Yes.

SSH: Where did you go to school?

DM: Well, we lived in Rockaway Beach, [New York]. ... We lived on Beach 72nd Street, which was about a hundred feet from the ocean, which is a wonderful place to grow up.

PL: Yes, it probably is.

DM: And we went to school, Public School 42, which was located on 65th Street, which was five blocks over and about four blocks north, [laughter] up towards Jamaica Bay.

SSH: Did you walk alone to school?

DM: Well, that was a problem. I was supposed to walk with my older cousin. You know, if I was six and she was ten or eleven, I suppose, I didn't want to have to walk with a girl. [laughter] So, my father gave me a route where I could walk by myself. Paralleling the [Atlantic] Ocean, there was a boardwalk. So, instead of having to cross all those seven blocks, ... we were right near, about a hundred feet, from the boardwalk, he said, "Walk on the boardwalk up until 65th Street, and then, walk up that block and there's a policeman there directing traffic at the corner." He says, "Walk up that block and walk to the corner. If the cop doesn't see, you say, 'Officer,'" and so, that was his recommendation, and I did that ... some of the time while I was growing up.

SSH: [laughter] That is great. Did you stay in Rockaway Beach through junior high?

DM: No. I stayed there and graduated elementary school in Rockaway Beach, and graduated elementary school in June of 1940. In the meantime, my father had been looking around for something else and my father's brother, Aaron, had a farm in Ellington, Connecticut. He was the younger brother who got married before my father, but ... I think they patched that up. ... They were in pretty close communication much of the time, and my father's brother helped him to locate a farm also in Ellington, Connecticut.

SSH: Is this near where the grandmother originally had her farm?

DM: ... Not too near, no. We never got to Lisbon, Connecticut, which was, I don't know how far away, but it wasn't ... in the same county, to my knowledge. ... So, my father bought a farm in Ellington, Connecticut, and we moved. Now, while my father was out West with me, in the early 1930s, he and my mother got divorced. So, that's one of the reasons, I suspect, that, when we came back, he didn't live with us. He lived at the hospital where he worked. ... Apparently, they [Mann's parents] reconciled, or tried to reconcile, and so, we, my brother, my mother, my father and I, moved to this farm in Connecticut and we lived on the farm from 1940 until 1943.

SSH: Tell us about your memories of what you were required to do on the farm and making that transition into school. Was it difficult to go from living right on the ocean to now living on a farm?

DM: ... Well, it was different. ... The summer before we moved there, the Summer of 1939, I spent on my uncle's farm, had a chance to see what they went through. ... It was different, definitely, because my uncle had four boys and they all worked on the farm. ... They worked, you know, from the time the sun came up until the sun went down, and then, ... after that as

well. There's always work to do on a farm. My uncle's farm, ... first of all, he had three thousand chickens. So, that was a lot of work, ... but he also raised cucumbers. That was his crop that he raised to sell for money. ... Well, to continue back at my uncle's farm, my brother and I spent the summer there and I worked with my cousins. ... We lived with my four cousins and we worked from early in the morning until late at night, every day except Saturday. My uncle was Orthodox and he didn't work on Saturday, but we saw that they did work and we understood it, [that] when ... my father had his farm and we moved to the farm, we had a lot of work to do.

SSH: Was your father also considered Orthodox?

DM: No, he was much more modern, liberal, iconoclastic, if you will.

SSH: Okay. [laughter] Did your mother make the transition well? Was that harmful to the relationship?

DM: They made the transition and it was rocky. ... They tried [to fix the marriage], but it didn't work out well.

SSH: Going to school in Connecticut, did you have to travel far to be able to go to junior high school?

DM: First, there was no junior high school; it was a high school. ...

SSH: You went in as a freshman.

DM: Yes, the town of Ellington did not have a high school, so, we had to be bused to the nearby city, small city, of Rockville, and many of the other towns in Tolland County, Connecticut, also did not have high schools. ... Students were bused to what nowadays might be called a regional high school, because they took students from Somers and Tolland and Ellington, ... and possibly Broad Brook. Other little towns around went to that high school, because, in the town of Ellington, they had four one-room schoolhouses at the different corners of this [town], ... where children went up to the sixth grade with one teacher, one room. ... For the seventh and eighth grade, they were bused to the center of town where there were two classes, a seventh grade class and an eighth grade class, and then, they went to high school in Rockville, Connecticut.

SSH: Did this arrangement allow you to participate in extracurricular activities?

DM: No, because, when school was over, we got on the bus and went home.

SSH: And went to work.

DM: And went to work. There was always work on the farm.

SSH: Was there anyone encouraging you to continue your education? Was this something that was even thought about, because, by now, World War II has broken out?

DM: Well, many of us were handicapped by the thinking of the older generation. Most of the students who went to high school with me were expected to, when they reached the age of sixteen and were able to leave school, ... go to work on the farm or get a job, and college was not thought of by most of us.

SSH: Really?

DM: Yes.

SSH: What kind of courses did you take then? Was it more technical, commercial?

DM: Well, it was kind of a combined course, because I excelled in math and science. So, I took ... what we would call the academic or college-bound programs in math and science, but, as a practical matter, I wanted to have some skill, I took machine shop in high school and drafting.

SSH: What do you remember of the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941?

DM: All right. I was working on the farm on December 7th and my father came home and said we were attacked. The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, and we went in to listen to the radio. ... The next day, everybody in my high school went to the auditorium and listened to President [Franklin Delano] Roosevelt, his speech about how we were attacked, and we came out of the auditorium, and I was fifteen years old, and we were all excited. We were attacked, we were going to defend our country. You know, we couldn't wait to get in there and defend the country. Of course, I was fifteen years old, [laughter] so, I couldn't go in, but I couldn't wait. ... A couple of weeks before my seventeenth birthday, my father and I went to the recruiting station in Hartford and I had a physical exam, so that on my seventeenth birthday, a couple of weeks later, I could go right into the Navy.

SSH: How was that decision made? Why not wait for the draft? What was your thinking then?

DM: Well, there are several elements that are peculiar to my situation.

SSH: That is what we are talking about. [laughter]

DM: Okay. First of all, my father and mother were not getting along. So, he decided to sell the farm, and he was able to sell the farm because of a peculiar situation. There were people, refugees from Europe, who came to the United States. One family in particular had been a very wealthy German family, but they left Germany and were living in Paris. They were very wealthy, living in Paris, and either when the war broke out with France and Germany [on September 3, 1939], or just before, they left and came to the United States. They were able to transfer some of their money to a bank in the United States, but, when the United States went to war [in December 1941], he was an enemy alien. He was a German citizen.

SSH: Right.

DM: So, he couldn't touch his money. His accounts were frozen, but there was a deal with the [government], or a ruling in the American financial structure, that if ... he did farming, he could access the money to use to run a farm.

SSH: I have never heard of this.

DM: So, he came around and he wanted to buy the farm and my father wanted to break up with my mother. He made a deal. He sold the farm to this man and my father left and went to New London, [Connecticut], to work in a navy yard, in the submarine base, and my mother and my younger brother went to New York, where she had family.

SSH: Did she go back to the same place?

DM: I don't think ... my grandfather had that house anymore [in Rockaway Beach].

SSH: Okay.

DM: I'm now not sure, because what had happened [was], when I lived in that house, we all lived there all year round, but, by this time, ... or by the time we bought the farm, my grandfather only lived in the house in the summertime and went back, rented an apartment in Brooklyn, in the winter. Anyway, when my father and mother broke up, my father went to the submarine base to work, my mother took my younger brother, went to New York, and I went into the Navy.

SSH: [laughter] It all fits together.

DM: So, there's a combination of reasons why I went into the Navy at that time.

SSH: Did you meet the family that was moving into your farm?

DM: Yes, I met them, yes. In fact, I did some work for them.

SSH: Did you?

DM: Yes, I did, because they knew nothing about farming.

SSH: That is what I was going to say; who was teaching them?

DM: And they were very wealthy, what would you call them ...

PL: Merchants?

DM: No, I'm reaching for the word, you know, the people who don't work, but have income from various sources, [investors].

SSH: How big was the family?

DM: I only remember that they had a son. He was a year or two older than I, and that's why I remember him. ... He would say to me, "Well, what do you do? Where do you go for a social life?" and I [thought], "What is a social life?" you know. [laughter] He was used to going to dances and theaters and all that, and there just wasn't any in rural Connecticut.

SSH: What were you raising on your farm?

DM: On our farm? Well, first of all, we had our own cow, which is a source of milk and cheese, and we had chickens, so, we had eggs. We had a garden, we had vegetables, ... but our money crop was, same as my uncle's, we raised cucumbers to sell. Oh, we also had a couple of acres of peaches and an acre of asparagus. All of this was on the farm when we bought it, and each in its season. The peaches would come in, I'm trying to remember which was first, the peaches or the asparagus, but after school every day, my brother and I would pick peaches. ... At a different time, we would cut the asparagus. ... My father would take the peaches and the asparagus and we'd weigh it up and bundle it up at night, when it was too dark to work outside. ... The next day, he'd take it into town and sell it to the supermarket. ...

SSH: He sold directly to the store.

DM: Yes. So, they had farm fresh, direct products, yes.

PL: Yes, but we crave now the organic.

DM: Yes. Well, we didn't know about organic. [laughter] ... Everything was organic.

SSH: Were you *bar mitzvah*-ed?

DM: Yes.

SSH: In Connecticut?

DM: In Connecticut. Actually, I was thirteen the summer that I worked on my uncle's farm, so, I was *bar mitzvah*-ed there.

SSH: Really?

DM: In a one-room synagogue, with no electricity and no running water. ... That was the synagogue that my uncle went to in the town of Ellington.

SSH: When your father took you to join the Navy, did you want to be in the Navy or was that just the best choice for you?

DM: I wanted to go in the Marines.

SSH: Why not go into the Marines then?

DM: My father wouldn't sign for me. I was too young to go in on my own; my father had to sign. He wouldn't sign. ... His rationale, or what he told me, is, "In the Army and the Marines, you sleep in the mud. In [the] Navy, you always have a clean place to sleep," ... which was true. [laughter] So, I went into the Navy.

SSH: Before we talk about the Navy, was your family politically involved? What did they think of Roosevelt and the New Deal programs?

DM: I don't recall anything about that, anything about politics, no.

PL: Did you ever visit New York City when you were living in Rockaway?

DM: In Rockaway? A couple of times, ... my father took us to the circus in Madison Square Garden.

PL: They still have that there.

DM: I don't know how much detail or digression you want, but my father ... took us to Manhattan, but, after the circus was over, he had to go back up to Bedford Hills to work Sunday. He had to be back by Sunday night. So, he put my brother and me, and I was perhaps ten and my brother seven, something like that, ... on a subway train, and we went, rode the subway, from Manhattan out to the end of the line in Brooklyn, New Lots Avenue, where we got on the bus to go to Rockaway. I got on the bus and gave the bus driver a nickel for each [of us], my brother and myself, and we got on the bus and we got about halfway to Rockaway, to a place called Howard Beach, which is crossing Jamaica Bay.

PL: Yes, I know the area. I live in New York.

DM: You know the area, okay. I noticed that the people getting off the bus were giving the bus driver a nickel. Apparently, when you went beyond a certain point, you paid to get off as well as to get on [the bus]. I didn't have any more nickels. I was practically in tears. I went up to the bus driver, and, by this time, he'd gone over the bridge into Rockaway Beach, and I said, "We don't have any more money. We can't go all the way to 72nd Street, where we wanted to go. I guess you have to put us off here. We don't have any more money." He said, "Sit down, kid." So, I sat down. We got to 72nd Street and he said, "Get off." [laughter]

SSH: That is a wonderful story. Can you talk a little bit about how you saw the events in Europe as they unfolded from the mid-1930s on? Were you aware of what was happening?

DM: Not too much aware. ... I think most people in America were not too aware or too concerned with [what] happened in Europe. We know, ... from what we have read since then, that the politicians had a great difference of opinion and [President] Roosevelt, I think, wanted to get us involved, wanted to help England, but he had a Congress that didn't want to get involved and he had to overcome that. ... I don't know if I remember or I've read, you know, about lend-lease and how he gave some of our ... destroyers to England, and so forth, and wanted to help

England. [Editor's Note: In September 1940, as a means of aiding the cash-strapped United Kingdom, President Franklin Roosevelt arranged for the transfer of fifty US Navy destroyers to the Royal Navy in exchange for long-term leases on bases in British possessions in North America. In March 1941, the Lend-Lease program opened a steady channel of supplies and war materiel from the United States to the Allies. The materiel itself was often commonly referred to as lend-lease.]

SSH: That is one of the things that we want to know, how aware were young men such as yourself, who were about to enlist, of what was happening.

DM: I didn't know too much about it, oh, but there's something I do remember. You know, things [come to mind]. When I was a freshman in high school, it was 1940 and [Republican Presidential Nominee Wendell] Willkie was running against Roosevelt. ... One of the students in the school was very politically active and he was a Willkie spokesman. ... Well, most of the kids in the school, of course, favored Roosevelt, [because] he was our President, and so forth. ... I suspect their parents liked Roosevelt very much, because he's given credit for helping bring us out of the [Great] Depression.

SSH: There were politics in school.

DM: Yes. I wasn't involved in it and, after that election, I don't remember any other politics being discussed. [Editor's Note: President Franklin Roosevelt defeated Wendell Willkie in 1940]

SSH: After the attack on Pearl Harbor, were you aware of young men leaving?

DM: Well, I was certainly aware of young men leaving, yes.

SSH: Did you have older cousins leave?

DM: Yes, one of my cousins, who lived ... on my uncle's farm in Connecticut, was one of the first draftees. I think he was drafted in 1940. He was twenty-one years old and they started the draft and he was drafted. [Editor's Note: Congress passed the Selective Training and Service Act of 1940, the nation's first peacetime draft, in September of 1940. The first conscripts were inducted in October 1940.] ... After he went through his basic training, I don't know just where he was shipped, but, when the war broke out, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor [on December 7, 1941], he was sent to the Pacific and he was there for about five years.

SSH: Your cousin went to the Pacific after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

DM: Yes, as far as I know, he went to the Pacific, and, of course, we weren't supposed to know where he was. We knew he was someplace.

SSH: He was in the Army.

DM: He was in the Army.

SSH: Did you have other older cousins that enlisted prior to your going in?

DM: Yes. In fact, I had a cousin who was much older than I was and he went to college in the 1930s and, to help to pay for the college, he was in the ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps]. So, when he graduated from college, ... he was commissioned a lieutenant in the Army. Of course, he was in the [Army] Reserve, but, once they started the draft, they activated him and he helped to train the draftees. ... Eventually, he ended up in a very dangerous job; he was a purchasing agent for an officers' club. [laughter]

SSH: Do you remember which school he went to?

DM: No, I don't. ... I don't know what school he went to. He went to college in New York City, but I am not certain of what college. It could have been City College.

PL: On your pre-interview survey, you said that one of your close relatives, a George Morris ...

DM: I'm sorry?

PL: George Morris.

DM: George Morris, yes, okay, thank you for reminding me, yes. Two of the cousins who lived with us in my grandfather's house, when I was younger, were older than I. One was George, and the last name was Morris, and the other brother, his younger brother, was Keva. ... Neither of them could get a job during the Depression, during the 1930s, but Keva was somewhat of an athlete and he used to play basketball. You know, they'd play a nickel a game and he picked up a few bucks that way. ... Keva went into the Civilian Conservation Corps, CCC, and he was sent out to Winnemucca, Nevada, and he was there during the late 1930s while I was still living in my grandfather's house. [Editor's Note: The Civilian Conservation Corps, established in 1933 as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal work relief initiatives, marshaled unemployed young men to help preserve natural resources.] ... George, who was trying desperately to become a lifeguard, ... spent his days on the beach helping the lifeguards, trying to become a lifeguard, but I think ... becoming a lifeguard in those days was political. ... Somebody had to like you and give you the job. [laughter] So, George joined the Army and, at the time of Pearl Harbor, he was in Hawaii, at Hickam Field. Yes, that was my older cousin, George, and, later, when I got to Hawaii, I went to the Red Cross, because they would help you to locate a relative. ... I asked them to find my cousin, George. After all, he's in Hawaii, I'm in Hawaii, and the Red Cross went through the records and they found that he'd been shipped back to the States. [laughter] So, I didn't get to meet him.

SSH: It would work that way.

PL: Were you at all concerned when you heard that your older cousin, George, was at Pearl Harbor when the attack occurred?

DM: No. I was not in close communication with him at that time, because I was up in Connecticut, and I hadn't seen him or spoken to him for a couple of years at that time.

SSH: Were you even aware that he was near Pearl Harbor during the attack?

DM: I don't know if I was aware or I found out later.

PL: [laughter] When you visited New York with your brother to see the circus, did you ever go to movie theaters at all?

DM: Not in New York, no. However, when I was growing up in Rockaway Beach, I do ... remember that, on a Saturday afternoon, for ten cents, you could go into the movies, which we did, when we had ten cents. ... You could see two pictures and a newsreel and a serial [a chapter of a movie] and a cartoon and ...

SH: And they gave away dishes.

DM: I beg your pardon?

SH: And they gave away dishes.

DM: Well, not to the kids on a Saturday afternoon. What they did do for the kids on a Saturday afternoon is, they often had some type of contest, like playing with the yo-yo or the paddleball or something like that, as well. So, you got about four hours or more of entertainment for your ten cents, on a Saturday afternoon. [laughter]

PL: Did the newsreels ever mention anything about the war?

DM: No, I don't recall, but I'll tell you something else that you didn't ask about. The movie theater that I went to in Rockaway, I believe, was called the New Theater, and the theater had a balcony. ... I was not aware, as a child, that what we now call African-Americans, were [then] called colored people or black people, ... they had to stay in the balcony. This was in the 1930s.

SSH: In New York?

DM: In New York. They were in the balcony. I was not even aware of it until sometime ... about the time I was ready to leave to go to Connecticut, some time late in the ... '30s. They were picketing outside the theater, saying it's not fair that they had to stay in the balcony. So, that's why I'm aware of it, but, otherwise, I didn't even know, as a child, that there were people up there [in the balcony].

SSH: Were the schools that you attended in Rockaway integrated?

DM: Yes, but there were very few African-Americans. You know, there might have been one in ... each grade.

SSH: What about high school?

DM: Well, my high school was in Connecticut.

SSH: I know, but was it integrated?

DM: Yes, it was integrated, but, again, there were very few African-Americans. There was, I think, one family in Ellington.

SSH: How far were you in your education when your father took you down to enlist?

DM: I'd finished my junior year of high school.

SSH: Did you want to delay enlisting until you finished high school?

DM: No.

SSH: Was enlisting something that you were ready to do?

DM: I wanted to get in there and save the United States. [laughter]

PL: Did you have any animosity toward the Japanese?

DM: Yes, I resented them attacking our country. [laughter]

SSH: Did you view the Japanese any differently than you viewed the Germans?

DM: Yes, yes, I think I did. I felt more hostile to the Japanese. I was not aware, on a conscious level, of what the Germans were doing, but I certainly was aware of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. ... In our setting, in Connecticut, they [the Japanese] were the ones who attacked us.

SSH: You talked about going down for the induction with your father and him signing for you. Can you then walk us chronologically through what happened next?

DM: Okay. He signed for me to join the Navy, and, actually, my birthday came on Sunday, so, I couldn't go in, [because] they were closed. Imagine that, wartime and they close the recruiting station? So, ... bright and early Monday morning, I went down to the recruiting station in Hartford, Connecticut, and was sworn into the Navy. ... I was all ready to go and they said, "Here's a ticket. Tomorrow morning, get on the train to New Haven." I thought I was in the Navy already and they said, "Tomorrow morning, get on a train to New Haven and go to the recruiting station in New Haven." So, there I was, I'd cut my ties, I'd left Ellington and I was in Hartford. So, I walked around Hartford. I went to the USO, [a facility run by the United Service Organizations]. They had, like, a dormitory for servicemen, and I showed them my orders, that I was in the Navy, and they let me sleep in a bunk there. The next morning, I got on the train and went to New Haven. [At the] recruiting station in New Haven, enlistees from all over Connecticut had ... to report to that station that morning, and, from there, we got on a train and went up to Providence, I believe, where there was a bus that took us to ... the Naval Training

Station in Newport, Rhode Island. So, that was the next sequence of events. By that time, I was way past seventeen. I was, like, seventeen and two days. [laughter] ...

SSH: Was your father already working at the submarine base?

DM: Yes, my father was already working at the Navy base in New London.

SSH: What was his job there?

DM: Well, he didn't have a skill, so, he was hired on as a laborer and, actually, his work assignment was disposing of material that had to be burned. ... I don't think he had access to secret material, but material that was disposed of by burning.

SSH: He was physically on the base itself then.

DM: Yes.

SSH: Not in the building of submarines?

DM: Well, in the submarine base. I don't know exactly which building he was in, but ... he worked in the submarine base and lived in New London.

SSH: Please, continue, now that you are seventeen and two days. [laughter]

DM: ... I went into recruit training in the Navy and I joined a recruit company. Most of the recruits in that company were draftees who had been drafted from, ... you'll pardon the expression, New Jersey, ... mostly from the cities of New Jersey, Elizabeth and Jersey City, and so forth. ... The rest of us were enlistees from New England. ...

SSH: You were probably much younger.

DM: Exactly, we were younger. They were much more streetwise and experienced, older and tougher, and we're these farm kids from New England, and we were in one company. ...

SSH: What month was this?

DM: This was August 1943.

SSH: Boot camp starts.

DM: Yes, boot camp. So, we went through our training and, you know, you had to march and you had to go to classes and you had to learn signals and other [things], and get medical care, medical examinations and dental examinations. ... I had not been to a dentist. We were poor; we couldn't afford a dentist. I went to a dentist once when I had a bad toothache and he pulled the tooth. That's [the extent of] what they did, but, when I went into the Navy, I got much more modern dental care. ... Within my first week or two in the Navy, they gave me eighteen fillings

and one extraction. [laughter] They gave me the care that I probably should have had years before.

SSH: Were you also undergoing tests?

DM: Yes. We were tested for our skill in various areas. ... We had to learn how to swim and ... we rowed boats and marched and, ... as I say, went to classes, and one of the tests that we took was an aptitude test or a test of scholastic ability. ... That's what kind of steered me into a course that ... led me, in the Navy, into a course of study. Well, we finished recruit training. ...

SSH: How long was your training?

DM: About six weeks.

SSH: Boot camp lasted six weeks.

DM: Finished recruit training. We went into, like, a holding area and, gradually, from there, we were sent on to other places. Most of the people in my boot company, recruit company, were sent on to a new aircraft carrier that was being commissioned called the [USS] *Wasp* [(CV-18)], in Boston. [Editor's Note: The second USS *Wasp* was launched from the shipyard at Quincy, Massachusetts, in August 1943.] So, most of the people in my company went on the *Wasp*. A few of us had different skills, and I had done exceptionally well, apparently, in math and science. I always did well in high school math and science. ... There was an area where I met with what's called a classification specialist and he said to me, "What do you want to do in the Navy?" and I said, "I want to fly a plane and shoot down the enemy, tat-tat-tat. I want to shoot down enemy planes." So, he said, "Well, you can't just go shoot down planes. You have to have a skill in the Navy. You can also be a gunner, but you have to have a skill, like radio." So, I said, "Okay, radio," and he said, "Okay, go over to that table over there." They were waiting for me. I didn't realize it was a setup. I came over there, he said, "You want to study radio, right?" I said, "Yes, as long as I get to fly that plane." ... Okay, so, they sent me from there first to pre-radio training, where they weeded out some. We spent a couple of weeks there in Chicago, pre-radio. ...

SSH: Was this after you had been assigned to the *Wasp*?

DM: No, I was not assigned to the *Wasp*. The rest of, most of, my recruit company was. ...

SSH: I thought you went with them.

DM: I was one of the few who, because of some particular skill, were not allowed to go out onto the ship right away. We had to go through training, further training. Here, I was anxious to get out there, win the war, and the Navy had other plans. So, they sent me to Chicago, where we learned a very little bit about skill with hand tools and we did some soldering and built some radios and things like that.

SSH: Was the school at the Great Lakes Training Center?

DM: No. It was on; I don't remember the name of the building, but it was in Chicago. It was not at Great Lakes, it was in Chicago. We slept ... at the Navy Pier in Chicago. That's where we slept and we ... marched to class every day. An aside, while I was at the Navy Pier, that was in the month of November of 1943, I was there for Thanksgiving and, for Thanksgiving, they brought [in] a show. ... Our bunks were about five or six high, [and there were] hundreds of us on this pier, but there was an open space in the middle of the bunks where they brought the entertainment from a nightclub called the Chez Paree, and they came [the] evening of Thanksgiving to entertain us. [Editor's Note: The Chez Paree nightclub in Chicago's Streeterville section operated from 1932 to 1960.] ... It was a dance team called Tony and Sally DeMarco. There was a comedian called Jerry Mahoney, with his puppet; what was his puppet's name? I don't remember. He was on television in the early days. [Editor's Note: Jerry Mahoney was a dummy frequently used by ventriloquist Paul Winchell.]

SH: Yes, yes.

DM: Anyway, they entertained us that night and that was Thanksgiving in 1943. I finished the training there and got on a train for Texas, because we had a choice. They gave us a choice of where we wanted to go for the next phase of our training, and I wanted to see Texas. My father had always told me about Texas. He had a thing for the West. Well, of course, he took me out West. So, I put down Texas A&M [University] and I got it. So, we got on a train in Chicago and we spent three days getting to Texas A&M. We must have gone through every desert in Texas. One day, we rode a whole day and, suddenly, somebody hollered, "There's a tree," and everybody went over to see a tree, [laughter] because we saw nothing but desert all day long. Apparently, the railroads were getting paid by the mile and they took us all around Texas to get to Texas A&M. We got to College Station, Texas, [to the Texas A&M University campus], and we took a course in radio, or electronics, as we call it now, at Texas A&M. We went to school eight hours a day, five days a week. Saturday morning, you took an exam, about a four-hour exam, and the lowest few failed out. Every week, a few failed out, a few failed out. We got through the course at Texas A&M [and we were asked], "Where do you want to go next?" I was given a choice of going to Anacostia, which is outside of Washington, DC, or I wanted to go in the planes, so, I went to Corpus Christi, Texas, and I was at Corpus Christi studying aviation radio and radar, particularly radar. So, I was still going [to school]. The Navy was still sending me to school. I spent at least six months at Corpus Christi studying radar. I finished the program there and they said, "We have a new type of radar, [laughter] [called] microwave radar," two weeks more, study microwave. So, [I] studied microwave. Then, they said, "Now, you can go to a special school." So, I was going to school again. They sent me out to an island called San Clemente Island, which is off the coast of California. They gave me my orders, "Report to San Clemente Island." So, I [then] had a leave, the Navy gave me a leave, and I went to see my father in New London. ... The house he was living in, there were also sailors who ... lived there when they were [in port], and their families lived there, sailors who were in the submarines, and I talked to them. I said, "How do you get to San Clemente Island? My orders just say, 'Go to San Clemente Island.' How do you get there?" [laughter] So, they told me where to report. They said, "Report to the Navy base in San Diego. Show them your orders and they'll bring you to San Clemente." So, that's what happened. ...

SSH: Did you then take the train back across the country?

DM: Yes. I took a train across country. Of course, in those days, you could not take a train across country [in one trip]. You took a train to Chicago and you had to get out and go to another [train]. There was a different railroad that went from Chicago to the West Coast. So, when you bought a train ticket in New York, you got a ticket to Chicago and a voucher for a cab to the other station, and take the other railroad out to [the West Coast from] Chicago. ... I remember, later, seeing ads in the paper that said, "A pig can travel a train from California to New York without having to get off the train. Why can't people?" ... Anyway, I'm digressing, [laughter] but I think it might be interesting.

SSH: No, that is okay. It is a part of your history.

DM: Okay. So, I got to San Diego and showed my papers and they took me on a ship called a YO, a Navy designation, yard oiler. Actually, it had been built as an oiler, but they used it to carry water, because San Clemente Island had no fresh water. ... [Do] you know where ... Catalina Island is? Well, this was part of that group of islands, [the Channel Islands of California], but it was a Navy island and, before the Navy took it over, there's no humans living on it. So, I went to San Clemente Island to study. I'd already studied radar. Now, I studied radar countermeasures, and that was my specialty, to make the enemy radar ineffective. So, I went through the program at San Clemente Island.

SSH: How long was that program?

DM: I think it was about six weeks.

SSH: Were there security issues involved in all of this?

DM: Security?

SSH: For the training that you were getting?

DM: Security, absolutely.

SSH: Do you want to talk about that a little?

DM: And, at San Clemente, ... the Navy has designations of security. I think it's restricted, there's another designation, and then, secret and top secret. Well, San Clemente Island was secret there and, while I was at San Clemente Island studying, I compiled a notebook. Well, the notebook was secret, [and] was stamped, "Secret." ... When I left San Clemente, I didn't take the notebook with me. They had the notebook, but that's another part of the story. If I can, I'll get to it later. So, I was at San Clemente and, ... every two weeks, we got to go four days to go to California for a leave. While there, we were armed. I carried a .45. ...

SSH: In California?

DM: On this island. Yes, ... they were very concerned about a Japanese submarine, [thinking they] might come and take over the island, and the island was patrolled by Marines on horseback.

SSH: Really?

DM: Unusual. ... The latrines were not in the buildings where we slept. There was no fresh water on the island and, to get to a latrine, you had to walk from your barracks a little distance. ... If you had to go during the night, you can be sure that a Marine would challenge you. They loved it. [If] they catch you out of your barracks, [they would yell], "Halt." You could hear them in California, [laughter] you know, and, if you didn't halt, they shot. We were told, "Yes, halt." Yes, so, that's what San Clemente was. We finished the program at San Clemente and we were given a leave and told to report to the Navy base at San Diego. ... I had to report to the Navy base at San [Diego], but I'd gone back to the East Coast again, you know, for my leave, and I met my father and my mother, [my] family. ... I wanted to get back to, I had to get back to, San Diego. I left New York on a train, couldn't get a seat. I was standing on a train eighteen hours [straight] from New York to Chicago. When I got to Chicago, I knew it was another three, four days to get to the West Coast. So, I went into an airlines office. I said, "I'd like to buy a ticket to San Diego." So, they said, "We don't fly to San Diego. We'll fly you to Los Angeles, then, you'll take a plane to San Diego." [I said], "Okay." So, I bought the ticket to Los Angeles and I was in Los Angeles and, you know, instead of a three, four-day train trip, possibly standing, I was in LA. So, I was three days ahead of time. [laughter] So, I had three days to spend in Los Angeles and, when it came time for me to report to San Diego, that day, instead of flying down, I had a little leisure time, I got out on the road and hitchhiked, and I was picked up by a huge Cadillac. I don't know, ... I'll tell you the story; a huge Cadillac that was owned by a very wealthy man who owned a fleet of taxicabs in San Francisco. ... He was going on vacation to Mexico with three showgirls, what they called "chorus girls" in those days. [laughter] ... There were two sailors that they picked up in the car and there were three girls, and this old man who was drunk out of his skull, and there were three girls. So, I was hitchhiking. So, they picked me up. ... We rode down to San Diego that way, and one of the girls was driving. [laughter]

SH: You'll tell me more later. [laughter]

DM: Yes, and ... she was driving about eighty miles an hour and we got to San Diego and, sure enough, the police pulled us over. ... The man had cases of champagne in the trunk. So, when the police pulled us over, one of the sailors was smart enough to tell him, "Well, we have to [get there]. Our ship is leaving tomorrow morning. We have to be at the base tonight." So, the cop says, "All right. Go ahead, go ahead." They let us go, and we each took a couple of bottles of champagne and we went to the bus station in San Diego and put the champagne in a locker and we went to the Navy base. ... I stayed at the Navy base there in San Diego for a few days, waiting for transportation. ... Each of us who had been in that radar countermeasures class was assigned to an aircraft carrier.

SSH: A separate one or the same carrier?

DM: A separate one; each one had a separate aircraft carrier. So, we're waiting there, ... at San Diego, to get to the aircraft carrier. ... After [we were] there a couple of days, we got on a ship and went to Hawaii.

SSH: What time of year was this?

DM: This is December 1944.

SSH: Before we move on, for someone who has been in school like you, in secure facilities, how aware were you of how the war was progressing in both the European and the Pacific Theaters?

DM: As well as any civilian was, because we read the newspapers or heard the radio. We didn't have any access to any other information, and, in fact, ... when I was assigned to the [USS] *Hancock* [(CV-19), an aircraft carrier], I knew I was going to the *Hancock*, but I didn't know where it was. Now, in fact, I didn't know about the *Hancock* until I got to San Diego. I reported there and they had my orders waiting for me to report to the *Hancock*.

SSH: That was when you knew you were going to the *Hancock*.

DM: Yes, but how do I get there? They took care of that.

SSH: You talked about being picked up hitchhiking both on the East Coast and the West Coast. Did you travel in uniform? How were you treated by civilians?

DM: Yes, oh, yes, always traveled in uniform.

SSH: How were you treated by civilians?

DM: Very, very well. We were; [Mr. Mann takes a deep breath] I can't begin to tell you how well the people treated us. When I was at that training in Chicago, for example, you rode free on the streetcars. You could have almost anything you wanted to.

SSH: Before we talk about your leaving the States, since you went in as an enlisted man, how quickly were you advancing in rate and how were you being treated by your NCOs and officers?

DM: Yes, I was very fortunate in that respect, because, as I went through each of these schools, I got a promotion and a promotion and a promotion. By the time I was eighteen years old, I had what was called second class petty officer, which would be the equivalent of staff sergeant in the Army. Some people'd been in the Army for years before they became a staff sergeant. By the time, in fact, when we left San Diego to go to Hawaii, I was on a troop transport taking us to [Hawaii], the first day out, because I had all the ratings, they put me in charge. They said, "Take these ten men and have them paint the kingposts." [Editor's Note: Like a mast, but shorter, kingposts are vertical poles often utilized to support booms for loading cargo.] I didn't know what a kingpost was. [laughter] Fortunately, some of the men who were under my charge, they were experienced in the Navy and they knew what a kingpost was and they knew what had to be

done. ... They said, "We go to the paint locker and draw out paint and brushes and stuff." They told me what [to do], and so, I stood there and said, "Paint the kingposts," and they did.
[laughter]

SSH: At any point in your training, up until you left the States, were you ever given the opportunity to apply for Officer Candidate School?

DM: No. Well, there was one. What did happen [was], I realized, while I was at Corpus Christi [Naval Air Station], that there was a big distinction between enlisted men and officers. Now, of course, I realized that in boot camp, but I was even more [aware then], and there was a notice posted on the bulletin board that anyone who wished to apply for the Naval Academy should see so-and-so. So, I went to him. I had excellent marks in high school, everything in the nineties or high nineties, and I said, "I'd like to apply to go to Annapolis." So, it turned out that because I hadn't ... attended the senior year in high school, I was only a high school junior, he said, "You won't have a chance. No, I'm not going to put you in. We have to put in the [best candidate]. Every base can put in somebody; we want to put in the man who's best qualified, and we have people here who've gone to college." So, I was aware, but I had shot myself in the foot.
[laughter] So, there was no chance to go to Annapolis, but what did happen [was], while I was at Texas A&M, some of the fellows who failed, because, every week, they'd take an exam and the few lowest were thrown out of the program, some of them went to officers' school. They had had college experience and they went to OCS.

SSH: That is very interesting.

DM: Yes. It was a rigorous program. Anyway, where should we go now, ... leaving the States?

SSH: Let us go back to San Diego. You were assigned to a troop carrier to Hawaii.

DM: A troop transport, right.

SSH: Were you traveling in convoy or were you traveling alone?

DM: I don't recall any other ships traveling with us, no.

SSH: Was this a bunch of replacements? Were they all sailors? Was there Army personnel?

DM: They were all sailors, but I don't know where they were going. They were just going to Hawaii. Some were going to be stationed in Hawaii, some were going to ships. I don't know where they were going. I knew only that the ones who graduated with me, from San Clemente, that's the name of the island, we were going to ships. Each of us had a name of a ship.

SSH: When you arrived in Hawaii, did you see the destruction that was left in Pearl Harbor?

DM: No.

SSH: You said your cousin was at Hickam Field.

DM: Yes. ... We didn't see any destruction at all, that I could recall. This was a couple years later. Yes, I didn't recall any destruction. I waited there a couple of days for [transportation]. What happened is, when I reported to San Diego, they had, I think, [my] papers ready. They took me to Hawaii and I stayed in the barracks and handed my papers in. ...

SSH: You were at Pearl Harbor.

DM: Yes, Pearl Harbor. That was the big Navy base. ... I waited for a couple days, and then, they called my name, and the rest of my colleagues, and they put us on a plane. ... Apparently, we had high-priority transportation. They put us on a plane and we flew for eighteen hours, island hopping across the Pacific. ... We didn't have any seats on the plane, but we were fortunate [that] we were in the back of the plane and we could sleep, lay down, stretch out our legs and sleep on whatever luggage was back there, whatever supplies were being brought out, emergency supplies, like the newspaper, *Honolulu Advertiser*. [laughter] That was the newspaper. They were flying it out. Okay, so, we flew from Hawaii for eighteen hours. We stopped at, I think, ... Howland and Kwajalein and Baker, some of those little islands, and we got to Guam, got off at Guam, went into the [office], at the airport there, handed in my papers, and they said, "You'll get transportation. Come back tomorrow morning, you'll get transportation." So, if I didn't come back the next morning, I could have stayed on Guam for the rest of the war. They said, "Come back," and, anyway, I couldn't stay in Guam. It was hot, it was humid.

SSH: What time of the year were you there? Would it be January?

DM: This is about December.

SSH: December of 1945.

DM: '44, December, and there was no good drinking water. The water was in these rubberized containers hanging from poles and you'd pour it.

SH: But, you had water.

DM: And we slept in tents and there was mosquitoes. ... It was almost as bad as being in the Army. [laughter] So, the next morning, bright and early, I went down to the airport and showed them my papers. ... There was a Red Cross counter there, where the Red Cross girls were serving coffee and doughnuts. ... I went up to the counter and the girl said, "Sorry, this is only for officers," and so, I had a little grudge against the Red Cross. ... Anyway, we got on a small plane to join our ships, because the ships were anchored in, or the ships would anchor in, a lagoon, a string of coral islands that probably were the rim of an extinct volcano. It was called ...

PL: It was called Ulithi, or something like that.

DM: Ulithi. [Editor's Note: The interviewer mispronounced the name and Mr. Mann corrected the pronunciation.]

PL: Ulithi, yes.

DM: Ulithi.

PL: I did some research on your ship, actually.

DM: Oh, you know about it, okay. So, as I approached Ulithi from the air, this little string of islands that had no more land sticking above the surface of the ocean than our community in Monroe, you know, but ... one of the little islands was a little bigger than a football field, so, they could land this little plane that flew from Guam. [laughter] So, we flew in to Ulithi and, from Ulithi, then, we got on to, like, a landing craft, which they used to shuttle people around in the lagoon, and took us to a troop transport, which was to be our home while we waited for our carriers to come in. The carriers were out and involved with the Philippine invasion. ...

SSH: Did you know that? Were you aware the invasion was taking place in the Philippines?

DM: No, no. We didn't know any more than the people back home in the States, or maybe less, because we didn't have access to radios and newspapers much of the time. So, we waited for the ships to come in. My ship, well, the *Hancock*, came in and they called my name over the loudspeaker. We had to be very careful when they called your name over the loudspeaker. If they called your name as one of a hundred names, you didn't report down there where they told you to report, because what they were looking for was work parties. ... My buddy, his name was MacKenzie, now, that's another story, but he was there two weeks before me, because he didn't take that course in microwave that I took. I took the advanced course in microwave. So, he was there two weeks before me. So, he told me, he put me wise, he says, "When they call a hundred names, don't go down. They'll take whoever they can get and they put you on a work party, unloading a ship or loading a ship." So, we waited until they called, you know, [only] a few names. ... So, when they called a few names, then, we went down to where they told us to assemble, with our gear, whatever we had, and they brought us to our ships. MacKenzie was on the [USS] *Lexington* [(CV-16), an aircraft carrier] and I was on the *Hancock*. MacKenzie had been with me almost from the day we left boot camp. He was at Newport when I was at Newport, and because his name was so close, alphabetically, to mine, we were bunked next to each other in Chicago, we were roommates at Texas A&M, we got to Corpus Christi, our bunks were next to each other. So, we were [close], and we went on liberty together. The only thing is, because he didn't take that course in microwave, he got to Ulithi two weeks before me. Anyway, there was MacKenzie and [we] spent a few days together, and then, he joined the *Lexington* and I joined the *Hancock*.

SSH: Talk about what it was like to get on your ship.

DM: Well, I reported on the *Hancock*, showed them my papers, and they told me where to report. I reported to what was called the aviation, I think they called it the radio shop, at that

time, and that's where I was assigned. ... Then, I was assigned to a bunk, down below, a place to sleep, and given a little locker to keep my belongings in.

PL: What was your impression of the *Hancock* when you first saw her?

DM: Huge, so big, [laughter] and it just happened that the day the *Hancock* came in, Admiral [William F.] Halsey came aboard to discuss something with the Captain. ... He didn't tell me what it was about, [laughter] but, you know, everybody was all excited, "Admiral Halsey," you know. So, that's my recollection of the ship, and then, I was assigned to the radio shop, and our job mostly was, because the ship would fly out and bomb the enemy, every day, before the ...

SSH: The planes would fly off of the ship.

DM: Yes, the planes would fly off to bomb the enemy. ... Well, part of the time, not at this time, but later, we used our guns to bomb the enemy ashore with the ship's guns, but not at this time. This time, ... this was the Philippine landing, [which] had already taken place, but we flew in support of them. ...

SSH: Did you remain in Ulithi?

DM: Yes, we remained in Ulithi for a few days at least, because what happened at Ulithi; oh, I have to back up a little. As I flew in to Ulithi, I thought I was flying into a continent. The ocean was covered for miles with thousands of ships. I was so impressed with the industrial might and determination. Let's pause for a moment.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SSH: We are back on tape.

DM: Okay, let's get back to when we ...

SSH: The harbor is filled with ships.

DM: Yes. Well, as we flew into Ulithi, in this little plane, and as we approached Ulithi from the air, it looked like a continent, thousands and thousands of ships. ... As I said, I was so impressed with the industrial might and determination of [the] American people. Eight thousand miles away from America and they had all these ships. There were tankers and oilers and troop transports and everything to service the ships, the combat ships, and that's what we did in Ulithi. We came in to Ulithi to re-provision, take on food, take on fuel, take on ordnance. Every so often, whether it's a few weeks [or more], we'd come back to re-provision.

SSH: Ulithi was where you would come back to.

DM: Ulithi, yes, at least at that stage of the war, yes. ...

PL: According to the USS *Hancock* Association's website, the *Hancock* originally came out from Pearl Harbor and Ulithi was the secondary port where they would go midway through the war.

DM: Yes; really? We're on the same page, yes. [laughter]

SSH: Tell us what a day-to-day activity would be for you. What was a typical day like?

DM: Okay, well, we had two types of days. The days when we were in combat, we were bombing and attacking, and being attacked, we'd get up early in the morning, like four o'clock in the morning. ... One of my jobs, early in the morning, was to change the frequencies of the radios in the planes, so that pilots could communicate with one another, but the enemy would not know, would not be able to tune in on it, because they wouldn't know what the frequency was. So, early in the morning, we'd pull the radios out of all of the planes and reset the frequency to the frequency of that day.

SH: You had to take them out to change them?

DM: Yes, and we took them out, we put in a crystal. They were crystal tuned.

SH: Okay, got you.

DM: And then, tune them up to that frequency.

SSH: How many were on your crew? How many were doing this?

DM: I have pictures of the radio shop. I would say there were twenty of us in the radio shop, aviation radio, as distinguished from the ship [radio shop].

SH: They all had taken the same course you took?

DM: No, no. Very few of them had taken the electronics course that I took. Most of them were radiomen and they didn't have the technical training that I had, no.

SSH: To do this, how many planes are you actually changing radios for?

DM: About eighty, every morning that we were in combat. ... The planes would fly off and we would go to our battle stations, because, if we were close enough to bomb them, they were certainly close enough to come out to us.

SSH: What was your battle station?

DM: Well, they're two different parts of the war. Before we ... hit the worst, at Okinawa, my station was there in the radio shop. After we were hit, my station was on the forward starboard catwalk. I could show you a picture of it, and I was in charge of five twenty-millimeter guns, and so, I wore headphones and we had a central combat information center.

SSH: This is in your first station, in the radio shop. Tell me what a typical day was like in the beginning in your radio shop. What was your battle station there? What would you do there?

DM: I don't recall that I had specific duties at that time in the radio shop. Later on, when I was in charge of these guns, of course, I had a very specific assignment.

SSH: Why were you sent to the guns then? What was the change?

DM: Ah, okay, [laughter] very perceptive. I'll tell you what the change was. Before we were hit and damaged pretty badly and sent back to Pearl Harbor for repairs, my papers told me to report to [the] USS *Hancock* and I was assigned to the USS *Hancock*. Now, an aircraft carrier is like an airfield, for instance, Newark Airport. An air group is like an airline. They're two separate commands. The air group is, they use the airport, ... but the captain of the ship is in charge of everybody. ... My papers said USS *Hancock*, and that's what happened to all of us who were trained in radar countermeasures. We were sent to a ship, and so, we served under the [ship's company], on the ship's ... roster. After we were hit very badly and sent back to Pearl Harbor, they got it straightened out and I was assigned to the air group. So, it's a different command completely.

SSH: Then, let us not jump too far ahead. Talk about when you were hit badly. Talk about that battle, and then, being sent back to Pearl.

DM: Well, we're jumping a little bit. That battle was at Okinawa, April [1945].

SSH: Okay. How long were you in the radio shop?

DM: ... Actually, I stayed in the radio shop all the time I was on the ship, but I was assigned to the ship's company from the time I arrived in December until we were back in Pearl Harbor in April.

SSH: Let us build chronologically then from December.

DM: Yes, I'm trying to remember what I did when we were under attack. I was, part of the time, maintaining a [relay station?]. You see, we had a number of parallel communications systems set up throughout the ship. In case one gets knocked out, the other one would still be in effect. ... Since I was considered in communications, I had one of these communications [setups], where I ... wore headphones and had this speaker. ... If I got information, I was to relay it to somebody else. So, some of the time, I was assigned to that type of duty.

SSH: No matter where you had been prior to being called to battle stations, you would report there.

DM: Yes, [when] we were in battle stations, yes. Generally, when we were close enough to bomb them, we were close enough to be bombed, and we would go to battle stations and remain at battle stations pretty much all day, although we had two conditions, a "condition easy" and a

"condition," I don't know what else, "zebra," somebody. So, [under] the easy condition, you could leave your station and go get something to drink or walk around or something like that, and then, when they came close, we'd report to your battle station immediately. So, it was kind of a semi-battle station much of the day, but, when they were imminent, [we went on alert], because you just couldn't stay there all day long without going to the bathroom, without eating. ... [laughter]

SSH: When you were assigned to the ship's roster, did you know that perhaps you had been assigned incorrectly and that you needed to be with the air group?

DM: No. Not only did I not know it, but there was another fellow who had graduated from the same radar countermeasure school a few months before I did and he was also assigned to [the] ship's company. ... From what I heard, that happened to all of us. ... The paper said, "Report to the *Hancock*," they reported to the *Hancock*, or the *Lexington*. The air group came on, they left, a new air group came on, but you stayed at the *Hancock*, yes. [laughter]

SSH: Okay, I was curious about that. Did you get excited when you knew that you were now at your battle station? Was there a sense of adrenalin?

DM: Absolutely, when you reported to your battle station, because your life was imminently in danger.

SSH: Were there other incidents before you had the major damage done to you?

DM: Yes, there were other incidents, when we were attacked and we were damaged slightly.

SSH: When was the first time you were under attack that you remember? How long had you been on the ship?

DM: Well, once we left Ulithi, well, I don't recall exactly, but a few days after leaving Ulithi, we were in combat and we were under attack.

SSH: Did you have any idea where you were heading?

DM: No, I don't recall that I knew, at that time, that we were involved with the Philippines. ... I'm not sure, but I think that we may have suspected it, because that was the big action, but I really don't recall.

SSH: When you were on Ulithi, before you got on to the *Hancock*, was it just one big military base?

DM: Not big, it was very small.

SSH: Just Navy?

DM: As far as I recall, it was just Navy, yes.

SSH: You did not see any Australians or any other Allied forces.

DM: No, not at Ulithi. It was small. All I can recall is, we got off the plane and went over to a pier and got into this little landing craft, were taken to a transport, the troop transport, where we stayed waiting for the ships, for the aircraft carriers, to come in.

SSH: Okay, I just wanted to clear that up.

DM: Yes.

SSH: The first time that you were under attack was really very shortly after you reported to the *Hancock*.

DM: Well, yes. Well, ... the ship stayed, as I recall, a few days in Ulithi, re-provisioning, and then, when all the ships were together, they went out.

SSH: How spit-and-polish was the carrier?

DM: At that time, very relaxed, because it was combat conditions.

SSH: Even with Halsey onboard that day?

DM: Yes. Yes, they gave him a salute, but we were not wearing our white uniforms. ... We were wearing dungarees. We were working all the time.

SSH: Were there work parties other than the one working in the radio shop?

DM: Yes. When the ship had to be re-provisioned, every division of the ship had to send out a work detail to help to load the ship, to actually carry boxes of whatever it was, whether it was food or other supplies.

SSH: How well were you provisioned at that point in the war? How was the food? How were the letters from home? How was the entertainment?

DM: Had a lot of letters from home. [laughter] We had an unfortunate incident. Well, first of all, we couldn't get any mail until we were in Ulithi. When we were in Ulithi, at that time, just before Christmas, one of these little troop landing craft, loaded with mail, came out to the ship and he was sinking in the water as he came to the ship. ... He approached to the nearest gangplank of the ship and they said, "This is the officers' gangplank. Go around the other side," [laughter] and he [the sailor in the sinking craft] said, "I'm foundering." He [the man at the officers' gangplank] said, "Go around to the other side," and it was sinking lower, and so, some of the men jumped off. I didn't see this, I was told about it. Some men jumped off and they took some of the mailbags off this boat, ... you know, to relieve the load, ... but some of the mail got wet. We don't know if some of it got lost or not, but that created a lot of resentment.

SH: The most important thing was mail from home. ...

SSH: He was at the wrong gangplank, sinking.

DM: I'm telling you, there were things, there were incidents.

SSH: Was there a good gel between the people that you were working with?

DM: Yes, the people we worked with, we worked together pretty well.

SSH: They were all basically equally trained.

DM: No.

SSH: No?

DM: No. As I said, I went through all this program in the Navy. I was in school for a year and many of these others had come right from boot camp. They had, you know, six weeks of boot camp and they were sent on a ship. ... Then, when they reported to the ship, they said, "You go to the bakery and you go to the laundry and you go to the radio shop." ...

SSH: Did you have to train them?

DM: Yes, we had to tell them what to do.

SSH: Okay.

DM: Yes. We had one man who couldn't read or write and his job was to clean, sweep. Sweep and clean and mop, that's all he could do. I'm not saying he's stupid, I don't think he was, but he didn't have any education or skills and, in the Navy, as they told me, you have to have a skill.

SSH: I asked you about food. Did you have good food on the *Hancock*?

DM: Well, yes and no. We had steaks, but, when you're at your battle station, the steaks were brought to you in a bucket. [laughter] You ate at your station, sometimes. You could hold a steak and eat it. On the other hand, we had powdered milk and powdered eggs

SH: No kidding.

DM: And the bread had weevils in it. Well, we knew, you'd hold up a slice ...

SH: That's protein.

DM: You had a choice. Yes, it was protein. You had a choice; you could hold up a slice of bread and pick the weevils out, if you wished, or you could pretend they were seeds and just eat

the bread. It was baked, it was cooked. [laughter] ... So, we had powdered food, to some extent, yes.

SSH: What did you do to pass the hours away that you were not at your battle station or were not in the radio shop?

DM: Okay, there were some days when there was spare time, like when we were in Ulithi, and if you weren't [on duty], people played cards. I tried [to study]. I applied [for], they had something called the Armed Forces Institute, where you could take high school and college courses by mail. It was run by the University of Wisconsin, out at Madison. ... I wrote to them and I started to take a course in history, because I needed American history for my high school diploma. I started to take the course, but whenever they'd come into the radio shop and ... everybody's playing cards except me, "Oh, you're not doing anything, you're just reading," I'd get the work detail. [laughter] So, I never really completed the course from the Armed Forces Institute. I never got a chance to do that, but they played cards or dice.

SSH: Did you write home often?

DM: Yes. I wrote home. Mail was infrequent, came a long time later.

SSH: Now, we can move ahead and talk about after loading up and getting in your positions onboard and everything. This was your first time on a ship. There must be people there as green as you, but, also, much more ...

PL: Seasoned.

DM: Yes, they'd been at sea more, yes.

SSH: Were there people who were helpful?

DM: I don't recall. I know we got along fairly well. The fellow who was in charge of the radio shop, who gave the orders, [was] a tall Texan with eyes like slits, [laughter] typical cowboy, but he ran the radio shop. ... The one who was nominally in charge, a chief who'd been in the Navy Reserve for years in the '30s, he was supposed to be in charge. He kept away from us and didn't interfere, so, we were able to get our work done. [laughter] I guess that's typical.

SSH: There is always the question onboard ship as to the access to alcohol. How did that affect the *Hancock*?

DM: As far as I know, we didn't have any access to alcohol in my shop. There may have been some who were, because there was supposed to be something that they used for the torpedoes that they could have brewed or could have used, but ... we were not involved with that, to my knowledge. We didn't have any of that.

SH: Didn't the officers have their ...

DM: Oh, the officers is a different [story]. ... It was called "officers' country;" it's a different world, yes. [laughter]

SSH: Tell us about what it was like to be under fire for the first time, where you were and what your memories are about that.

DM: The images, when we're under attack, we were very busy; more than anything else, busy. [laughter] [I] wasn't really worried or frightened until the day after we were hit the worst.

[Editor's Note: On April 7, 1945, the USS *Hancock* was attacked by a *kamikaze* which caused enough damage to force them back to Pearl Harbor for repairs on April 9th.] The next day, ... they came out after us again ... and the ship was damaged and we were limping towards Pearl [Harbor]. We were very concerned then. That was a scary day, that they might hit us again.

SSH: When you were hit, where were you? What did you see and what did you feel or smell?

DM: I think the day that we were hit, I was in the radio shop and, in that, everything was filling with smoke. ... We ran up on the flight deck and the plane that attacked us dropped his bomb forward on the ship and he crashed into the planes we had parked aft [the rear or stern of a ship] on the ship. There, where he crashed into the planes, they were exploding and on fire and their ammunition was going off. ... A lot of men were jumping off the ship to escape that. I was ready to jump off, but I'd seen movies of sailors drifting at sea for days and being eaten by sharks, and so forth. I wasn't too anxious to jump off, but there was a life raft there. ... I felt, "If I could get that life raft off, I'd jump," but the pin that held the life raft was rusted so ... into its socket, I couldn't budge it. So, I couldn't do that, so, I didn't jump off. So, I stayed up on deck and helped put out the fires. We dragged hoses around the deck and played ... the water on the planes that were burning and exploding until we got the fires out.

SSH: Walk us through what happens next. How are you given your orders? What are you told to do? Is there chaos or is it organized?

DM: Both. I think there was some chaos and some people knew what to do and some people told everybody what to do. You tried to follow instructions. We had to put out the fires. Hopefully, I would like to think that there were people who were trained in firefighting who told us what to do, but, you know, you can't anticipate what the situation would be, so, you can't train for something that you don't know about. So, you have to rely on your instincts and training. So, we followed orders and they dragged the hose. I, you know, grabbed the hose and [helped] bring it over here and somebody played the nozzle on the planes, and so forth. ... We got a little too close to the planes and I got a little scorched on my hands a little bit, but we had to get those fires out, because, otherwise, those planes would explode and they would leak gasoline onto the rest of the ship and the fires would spread.

SSH: You were able to contain it in that section of the ship.

DM: Yes, ... the planes were aft. In the back of the ship, they were parked there in case they had to take off, and their ammo and their gasoline was exploding.

SSH: Did you lose all your planes? What was the outcome of it?

DM: I'm sorry, I don't understand.

SSH: Did you lose all the planes?

DM: No, only the ones that were back [aft], parked back there. We had planes in the air at the time. Most of the planes were in the air.

SSH: Where did they land then?

DM: Well, what happened was, before the planes came back, we had these large metal plates and the men who were working in that area, that is, that type of work, they laid the plates down over the beams that supported the flight deck. ... They just quickly welded them into place, so that, within a few hours, we were landing planes, within a few, yes. ... Other planes that came back before we were ready landed on other carriers. You know, we had a lot of other carriers with us.

SSH: Did other ships come alongside to help with anything?

DM: Yes, they came. The other ships came alongside to pick up the men who'd jumped into the water.

SSH: Did they?

DM: Yes, and, somewhere, we have pictures, I don't know if I have the book, of men jumping off the ship, and then, being picked up by these other ships.

SSH: When this was all over with, were you thinking, "What just happened?" You are the big age of, what, eighteen now?

DM: ... Yes, eighteen. I was actually eighteen-and-a-half. Yes, this was in April, yes. [laughter] ...

SSH: Where did this take place? Where was this first attack?

DM: This attack, that I was describing, when we [were] hit the worst, took place off Okinawa.

SSH: What had happened just prior to that? What was your ship involved with? What were you doing?

DM: Pretty much what we talked about before. We would fly the planes out to attack enemy installations and they would fly planes back to attack our ships. ...

SSH: Had they successfully landed on Okinawa at that point when you were hit?

DM: Yes, I think they had landed. We had been off the coast. I'm not sure when the landings took place. I wasn't involved in the landings, because we had been off the coast of Okinawa, flying planes in and bombing them, and I believe our ship's guns also pounded the beaches before we landed. [Editor's Note: The invasion of Okinawa commenced on April 1, 1945.]

SSH: Okay, that was what I wondered. How long is it before your duty station changes and you are assigned to the air group?

DM: Well, after we were hit and we went back to Pearl for repairs, while we were there, my assignment was changed to the air group.

SSH: How does that change your work and what you have to do?

DM: I still worked in the same radio shop, except I had a lot more latitude to do some countermeasures work, radar countermeasures, which is what I was trained for to begin with. [laughter]

SSH: Okay. You had not been doing that at all.

DM: No, no. Well, I did some, but not as much, because, one night, I don't know how involved I was with this, but, one night, when we were under attack by enemy planes, we launched some rafts with big, aluminum sails to reflect the radar. ... All the lights on the ship were out, ... any external lights, so, they couldn't see us. ... The Japanese were relying on radar to spot our ships and these rafts, with the big, aluminum sails, the wind blew them away from us. So, we sailed away and the Japanese planes bombed those rafts. So, we did some of that.

PL: Yes, it was like chaff. [Editor's Note: Chaff was a radar countermeasure consisting of packets of aluminum foil pieces that, when dispersed into the air, would produce a false reading on the enemy's radar.]

DM: ... Well, that was before the chaff. Chaff is something else.

PL: However, it was a similar idea.

DM: Similar idea, reflecting enemy radar. I'll tell you about chaff. When I joined the air group, we also had an officer come aboard who joined the air group, who was trained, ... somewhat, in countermeasures. He knew about it and he was anxious to implement it, because, before that, nobody on the ship wanted to bother too much with it. So, one of the first things we did, when he came to the air group, was we equipped a plane with a receiver to receive the Japanese radar and a tape recorder, not an audio tape recorder, but a tape recorder that made marks on a tape. ... They flew this plane ... over the enemy, over Japanese areas, and recorded the Japanese radar, recorded the frequency and the pulse width and the pulse frequency, different technical areas of Japanese radar. Now, with that information, particularly knowing the frequency, we were able to cut the chaff, which is strips of aluminum foil, to the proper frequency, because wavelength is a function of frequency, the length of it. So, we cut them to that length and we're able to use them and we equipped a plane ... with a chaff dispenser. ... So, pilots didn't want to

have this. They said, "If I'm going to fly a plane, I want to have either guns or bombs on it. I don't want to bother carrying this--looks like a coffin--under the plane," but they [did it], because we had this radar officer to implement it. So, they flew that plane and they dispensed this chaff and they watched as the wind blew the chaff that way and they flew that way. The Japanese anti-aircraft was all going into the chaff. They were sold. After that, they all wanted it. They were throwing it out, man. They were happy to get it, yes. [laughter]

SSH: Would a plane that was the chaff dispenser not be able to be armed at all?

DM: Oh, yes, it had to be. They had guns, they had bombs, but it was extra weight, so, they had to cut down on something.

SSH: Where did you get the material to implement this? Was it something you picked up in Pearl Harbor?

DM: I don't know where it came from, but we had it. We probably had it on the ship all the time, but nobody would authorize the use of it, you know; you know the Navy.

SSH: Yes, that is interesting. The other man that had also been assigned to the roster months before is working with you and this officer.

DM: Yes, yes. When I wanted to put the antenna on a plane to pick up the Japanese radar, I couldn't get any cooperation from anybody, but what I did [was], here's a little initiative, I called down to the aviation metal shop, and they wouldn't do it. They wouldn't put ... this antenna on the plane. So, I said, "This is the radio shop. We're sending a man down to put an antenna on a plane. Could you please give him the drill and the extension cord?" and so on. So, they had somebody come out with a drill and the extension cord and I drilled the holes in the bottom of the plane and mounted this antenna and ran the wire and that's what you had. [laughter]

SSH: When did you do this?

DM: I don't remember when, but I know I did it, and probably about the time that I was in the air group and I had a little leverage, yes.

SH: And, even if you didn't have leverage, it was the thing to do.

DM: Yes, but, you know, people ...

SH: That's the difference between the Army and the Navy. In the Army, if you felt you could do something and you wanted to take a chance, you took a chance. You didn't worry about the [consequences]. ...

DM: Well, there were people who wouldn't let you. You know, you had to follow orders. It's unfortunate. ... Some of the most senior officers were also older and more experienced in the Navy and experienced in the old ways. You know, there was always resistance. ...

SSH: This officer that had the radar experience, do you know what his background was?

DM: No, I knew that he [was a radar officer].

SSH: Had he just been recently trained in this?

DM: I don't know. I know, I am assuming, that he was an engineer and a college graduate as an engineer, possibly electrical engineer.

SSH: Were there other aircraft carriers that were implementing the same things that you were using?

DM: I'm sure they were going through the same thing. ... After all, from my graduating class in countermeasures, one went to every carrier.

SSH: That is what I was wondering. Did you ever get a chance to find out how that was implemented?

DM: ... No, I don't know what happened on [other ships].

SSH: I wondered if everyone had the same frustrations that you had in getting it to work.

DM: No, I don't know. I have no way of knowing. I had no communication with the other carriers and, when we were damaged and went back to Pearl, we went by ourselves. We didn't go with the other carriers. You know, they were still out there.

SSH: Did you have an escort?

DM: I don't recall that we did. Once we got away from Okinawa, we got far enough away, we felt we were pretty safe from the Japanese, which was a mistake, because you know what happened to the [USS] *Indianapolis*. They thought it was safe. [Editor's Note: The USS *Indianapolis* (CA-35) was sunk by a Japanese submarine on July 30, 1945.]

SSH: As you said, after you were damaged and you were trying to limp back to Pearl Harbor, the next day, you were under attack again.

DM: We were concerned about an attack again, and I remember, either a day or two later, a hospital ship pulled alongside and we transported the wounded to that hospital ship. So, by that time, you know, we were a few hundred miles away and they probably felt it was safe to do that.

SSH: How many wounded did you have?

DM: I don't recall, but I have the numbers here. ...

SSH: Were there people that you knew personally that were wounded or killed that day?

DM: Yes, yes. One of the fellows in the radio shop, in fact, a fellow named George Eis, was injured that day, and he had to be transferred to the hospital ship.

SSH: Were there burials at sea on your way back?

DM: There were burials at sea the next day, the full [ceremony], right away. I have pictures of it, yes.

SSH: What was your position? What did you have to do during that?

DM: During the burial? nothing. We just were observers. We stood at attention and watched the bodies being [buried]. They had a little ceremony and the bodies being assigned to the deep.

SSH: Okay. The whole ship's crew was part of it.

DM: Well, those who were available to observe this. It certainly wasn't the whole ship's crew, because there are a number of men who are necessary to keep the ship going and a number of men who are necessary to cook the food and everything else.

SSH: The air group, you talked about how they were separate from the ship's roster.

DM: Yes.

SSH: You talked about how it changed for you, in that you had the support of the lieutenant who was in charge of the shop.

DM: Yes.

SSH: In the pecking order on the ship's roster, where does the air group fit? Is it not an elite group?

DM: Well, it's a separate group, but everybody is under the overall command of the captain of the ship.

SSH: If you are part of an air group, are you not just a little more above the average sailor? Do you consider yourself that way?

DM: Well, you might feel that way, but everybody has to work together, so, I don't know. We also had a contingent of Marines who were a separate group. ... In that case, we were separate. They did their thing and we had little contact with them, but what the Marines did is, they manned the forty-millimeter antiaircraft guns, where we manned the twenty-millimeters and the five-inch guns.

SSH: When you came back to Pearl, what did you do at that time? How long did the refit last?

DM: I think we were there, if I remember, something like six weeks, maybe less, because, let's see, we were in maybe six weeks. ... The first thing we do when we got to Pearl is we got recreational leave, not that we could go anywhere, but the pilots and some of the officers had cabanas on the beach, well, for a couple of weeks, while they were recuperating or recreating, [laughter] and I went to the other side of the island. I remember, we took a train with wooden cars over the mountains to the other side. There was a beach and we stayed in tents, on cots, but we had no assignments. We were on a beach, go in and eat when you want, sleep when you want, left us all for a couple of weeks of ... R&R. So, we could do what we wanted. That was for a couple of weeks, and then, we reported to the naval air station, and I think it was at Kaho'olawe in Hawaii, or Breezy Point [NAS Barbers Point?]. We were put at the naval air station there and I don't remember what duties we had, but I know it was that, every night, instead of going into the mess hall for dinner, we'd have barbecue and hamburgers. They would buy it. You could buy it. We had money; we had no place to spend it. So, you could have a hamburger and a beer every night for dinner. [laughter] That was a big treat.

SSH: You really were not living "on the economy," so-to-speak.

SH: Oh, I was in the wrong outfit. [laughter]

SSH: You were really with Navy people all the time. You were not out at the beach.

DM: Yes. No; well, it depends. While we were at this naval air station, we'd get some time to leave, ... liberty, in the afternoon. You'd go into Honolulu for a few hours. Of course, you had to be back [early]. I think, enlisted men had to be off the streets by three o'clock in the afternoon.

SSH: Really? [laughter]

SH: Wow.

DM: Yes, had to be back on the base.

SSH: Were you given different instructions because of your security clearance and what you knew, your talent?

DM: Oh, you brought up something that I [forgot], a memory; I told you I left my secret notebook back at San Clemente. I was on the ship for a couple of months when a destroyer pulled alongside and they shot across a line and a breeches buoy, which is a way of transporting a person from one ship to the other. ... An officer came onto our ship with a handcuff and a little chain and a little locked bag; it was my secret notebook. They sent him out with the secret notebook. [laughter] I was called down to the Captain's office. I was told, "Your notebook has arrived. We're locking it in the safe." It was secret. [laughter]

SSH: Really?

DM: Really, and I never saw it again. [laughter]

SSH: You actually did not even get a chance to look at it again.

DM: No. ... I really had no need to look at it, but I had no use [for it]. I wasn't doing anything that I would need the notebook [for], but it's just the Navy's way of doing things. It was a secret notebook and ... it had to catch [up] to me and it did, and I never saw it again. [laughter]

SSH: Were you personally restricted from different areas because of your knowledge or training?

DM: No, no.

SSH: You said you were there for about six weeks.

DM: Where? at Hawaii, yes, in Hawaii

SSH: Then, where do you report? Do you go back to the ship?

DM: Back to the ship, and the ship sailed back to join the fleet.

PL: Right. This incident happened on April 7th, the *kamikaze* attack on the *Hancock*. Yes, I have it right here.

DM: Yes.

SSH: This is some time in May that you are back out in the Pacific.

DM: Yes, May or early, ... beginning of June, yes. Well, we went first to the Philippines and we pulled into some [harbor], probably San Pedro Bay [on Leyte] or ... some bay, and a number of us got into one of the ships. The ship has these small boats. We got into these small boats and we went to the beach and went swimming, while the Captain probably went to some meeting to discuss ... what was going to happen next. We had this [free time]. So, we went to the beach, we went swimming and natives came out of the jungle. This was, apparently, a remote part of the Philippines, came out of the jungle, because jungle bordered the beach, and I was able to swap my underwear for bananas, fresh fruit. [laughter]

SH: Boy, I had to throw my underwear away. I couldn't get anything for it. [laughter]

DM: Well, we had a laundry on the ship and we had our clothing washed regularly. That, we had. The Navy was cleaner in that respect.

SSH: Were there other items to trade for, other than bananas?

DM: I don't know what it was and I don't know or remember what else anybody else traded, but I didn't need the underwear. I mean, I had ... the rest of my clothes, my dungarees. I could put them on again when we went back to the ship.

SSH: [laughter] Did you have any other interaction with natives in any of the places that you went?

DM: No, not there, not in the Philippines. That was the only day that I met people, Filipinos.

SSH: Where did you go next?

DM: Okay, after we left the Philippines, and this was probably in June of 1945 ...

SSH: Before we go further with June of 1945, what was the reaction when you heard the war was over in Europe?

SH: In May of '45.

DM: Yes.

SH: Did they tell you? [laughter]

DM: Yes, we knew the war was over in Europe, but [it] didn't matter. The war was here. ...

SSH: Many times, we hear people say that there was this big sigh of relief, "Now, we will finally get everything that we need to finish the job."

DM: Yes. Well, I know that a lot of the soldiers who thought they were going to go to Europe, or who were in Europe, were afraid they were going to have to come back to fight Japan, yes, but I don't recall that we [had any strong reaction]. ...

SSH: Was there a ship's newspaper?

DM: Yes, we had a ship's newspaper, but not very often. I think we had it more once the war was over.

SSH: Okay. In June, you took off again from Hawaii.

DM: Yes. June, after we left the Philippines, we cruised off the coast of Japan. We cruised for about seventy days without stopping, right off the coast of Japan. When we needed something, another ship would pull alongside and refuel, sometimes re-provision, but we stayed there and we flew in. We were close enough so [that] our planes could fly in in the morning, bomb, come back, re-provision, refuel and rearm, go back and bomb again. ... We were that close to them, so, they could come out to visit us as well.

PL: You were basically always on standby, at battle stations easy.

DM: No. We were close enough so [that] we were at battle stations much of the time, because we were that close and they could come out. However, as I later learned, the Japanese Air Force was pretty much depleted ... by August of 1945.

SSH: Did anything change in your specialty? You talked about being able to finally get an antenna on the plane and to use the chaff. Did anything change when you were off the coast of Japan, as far as your work was concerned?

DM: No, we pretty much did, mostly did, the same thing. We got the planes ready for the attack. ... The planes were flying in and out twice a day, so that it was more involved, but I wasn't so much involved with supplying the plane. I didn't supply the plane with ammunition or fuel anything, because that was not my job. I was ... at my guns.

SSH: That is why I was going to say, did anything change for you? This was when you were assigned to the guns.

DM: Yes. I was assigned to the air group, so, as a result of it, I was given a battle station on the ship. [laughter]

SSH: Did you feel you were trained to do that?

DM: No, it was on-the-job training. [laughter]

SSH: How do you do that?

DM: Well, I went to my battle station, I put on these phones and I listened to instructions. ... First thing that happened is, right when we went to general quarters, "Go to your battle stations," I go to the battle station. As soon as all my men were there, I'd report in. No, I've forgotten the number of the station, but I'd report, "This-and-this battle station manned and ready," and then, they would tell us if there was something we had to do. They'd say, you know, "There's a bandit so many miles out at this bearing, such altitude," and they'd keep us apprised of where the planes were coming from. When they were quite a distance away, our twenty-millimeter guns were no effect, you know, but, when they got in close, that's when we were told, ordered, you know, "Start firing, this bearing, this distance," and so forth.

SSH: Were some of the others in the gun crew better trained or more experienced than you?

DM: I don't know if they were or not.

SSH: Did you ever hit anything, that you know of?

DM: ... We don't know. We threw up this big screen of antiaircraft fire and hoped that somebody ... would fly into it or that we'd hit somebody. ... The sky was covered with antiaircraft, antiaircraft fire, so, we hoped that ... somebody would hit something.

SSH: Were you ever aware of any press being on your ship?

DM: No.

SSH: Any photographers?

DM: There must have been, but I was not aware of them, because I've gotten pictures now. I've got Navy photographs of a lot of the things that happened, but I didn't see anybody take any pictures.

SSH: Tell us how the war wound down for you. This is June. You were there seventy days

DM: Yes. Actually, it was probably the end of June, July and up until August 15th, we were doing that.

SSH: How does the word progress down to you as to how the war is going and ending?

DM: We didn't know. I'm not even sure if we knew about the atomic bomb then or not. I don't know when we found out about it, I don't recall, but I know ... vividly that, on August 15th, ... we heard on the loudspeaker that the Japanese have asked for a ceasefire and our planes that were off were ordered to drop their bombs in the water and come back. So, that was a very memorable day.

SSH: What was the reaction on the ship?

DM: I'll try not to get too emotional, but it's hard. [Editor's Note: Mr. Mann takes a deep breath.] Everybody, well, not everybody, everybody who could, ran up on the flight deck. We're all excited and we broke out the biggest flag we could find and flew the flag up as high as we could, and that was the most memorable moment of the war for me.

SSH: How long did it take for you to know that all your planes were back and safe?

DM: Well, what happened was, our planes were ordered to return to the ship, that the Japanese asked for a ceasefire, and, while our planes were returning to the ship, Japanese planes came out and wanted to bomb anyway. I don't know if they knew that ... their high command had agreed to surrender or they were just determined to die for the Emperor anyway. So, even after they had agreed to cease fire and our planes had dropped their bombs in the water, some of our planes shot down some of those Japanese planes. ... The last Japanese plane to be shot down, as far as I know, was shot down by a pilot from the *Hancock* that afternoon. [Editor's Note: Fighters from the USS *Hancock* shot down a Japanese aircraft attacking a British task force three hours after the Japanese accepted the surrender.]

SSH: You talked about getting the flag up and the celebration. Were there other types of celebrations on the ship that day, that you remember?

DM: No, it was just all the cheering, everybody excited.

SSH: How long did you keep patrolling? What were your orders from that point on?

DM: Well, we were off the coast of Japan and we flew in, flew over the POW camps. ... The POWs had put signs on their roof, I have pictures of that, too, put signs on their roof, ... "POWs," and, "Thank you, *Lex*," and things like that, and we dropped supplies to the American POWs. ... Then, sometime later, sometime in the next week or two, we went into Tokyo Bay. ... We're told we could send letters home and say where we were and everything, which we had not [been doing], we were told not to do up until that time, and I have a letter somewhere in an envelope, postmarked. We were able to frank, to sign our names, and we didn't have to pay postage, but I wanted to send a letter airmail to my father. So, I was able to buy stamps and send the letter and he saved the envelope for me and it says on the envelope, "With Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet in Tokyo Bay."

SSH: Oh, my.

DM: Yes. I don't know if I have that envelope with me now. ...

SSH: You were tied up with part of the surrender.

DM: We went into Tokyo Bay and we went ashore. The first time I went ashore in Tokyo Bay, I went ashore armed, because we weren't sure of the reaction of the Japanese. ...

SSH: This would be before the surrender has been signed.

DM: Right, before the surrender was signed, but the ceasefire was in effect. I had an SP armband, you know, shore patrol, and a .45 and I went into Tokyo, and the Japanese were not belligerent. They were frightened, they were afraid of us, but, anyway, polite and they didn't bother us. We didn't know what their reaction would be. Apparently, the Emperor had ordered them to behave and they did. They were [cooperative]. You know, it's unlike the situation in Iraq, where people do what they want to do. They don't care what their government tells them. [Editor's Note: Mr. Mann is referring to the War in Iraq, which began in 2003 and was still ongoing at the time of the interview.]

SSH: What were you told to do when you were sent ashore?

DM: Just patrol, no specific [duty].

SSH: You were not to disarm people.

DM: No, I didn't disarm anybody. I just walked the streets as ...

SSH: You were walking.

DM: Yes, walking the streets, observing.

SSH: Were you walking in pairs, or threes or fours?

DM: No, pairs. We walked in pairs, yes. On a subsequent [visit], a few days later, I went ashore again, this time not armed, I went on my own, and the situation had changed dramatically. When we first went ashore, the Navy, we went wherever we [wanted]. We really weren't told to go any place in particular. We walked around. The next time we came ashore, as we came off the little boat [that] brought us to the pier, there were Army MPs on the pier and they took away all the cigarettes we had. They didn't want us trading with the Japanese. We were driving down the prices. So, the Army confiscated our cigarettes, but I had been warned by other men from the ship who'd gone ashore since that time. I didn't bring any cigarettes ashore to trade, but I also had read some books. I took a canteen, filled it with sugar and took the canteen ashore to trade sugar.

SSH: What had you read that told you to take sugar ashore?

DM: I read that, you know, in one of the books by [Erich Maria] Remarque. I think it was called *The Road Back*, about ... the end of World War I. He wrote *All Quiet on the Western Front*, he wrote *The Road Back*, and [it was] about how the soldiers traded things, like sugar and butter. So, I'd filled the canteen with sugar and took it ashore and traded. I met a Japanese woman. She took me to her house and she and her daughters and I had tea and I traded my sugar and they gave me kimonos.

SSH: Really?

DM: Yes.

SSH: That is very interesting, American ingenuity. [laughter] What were you told to expect? You said that you did not know what to expect.

DM: We didn't know what to expect. ... I don't remember any specific instructions, no.

SSH: No one ever said to you, "Do not engage with the Japanese."

DM: Yes, they probably did, but I don't recall. ...

SH: We were told no fraternization.

SSH: Yes, that is true.

DM: Yes. We were probably told that, too, but I don't remember.

SSH: How long was it between the time you first went ashore and when the actual surrender was signed?

DM: Well, probably a week or so.

SSH: Did other ships join you?

DM: Yes, the other carriers came into Tokyo Bay, they all [did], yes, and, of course, the battleships, including the [USS] *Missouri* [(BB-62)], where they signed the peace treaty.

SSH: Where were you in relation to the *Missouri*?

DM: I don't know. We were in Tokyo Bay. [laughter]

SSH: Just in the bay. [laughter]

DM: Yes.

SSH: What did you expect that your next orders would be at this point? Were you starting to make plans to return?

DM: Well, my plans ...

SH: Excuse me, didn't the Navy have a point system the way the Army did?

DM: Yes, they did, for discharge.

SH: For discharging.

DM: Yes, but I wasn't thinking discharge at the time and I wasn't planning; I was following orders. I was not that higher up on the hierarchy to make plans. ...

SSH: I meant personal plans, not plans for the Navy. [laughter]

DM: Yes, well, ... personal plans were to get back home, yes. What happened is, they converted the ship. They took off the planes and they put bunks on the hangar deck, I think they were five high bunks, and we took two thousand soldiers and Marines, ... slept on the hangar deck, to bring them back to the States. So, they used our ship as a transport to bring these soldiers and Marines back to the States.

SSH: You talked about dropping supplies to the POWs.

DM: We dropped supplies to the POWs.

SSH: Did any of those POWs ever return to your ship?

DM: No, no, I don't know what happened to them. ...

SSH: Okay, I just wanted to check on that. From Tokyo, then, you were loaded down with ...

DM: We stopped at Okinawa on the way back and picked up soldiers and Marines.

SSH: That was where you picked them up, not in Japan.

DM: Yes, and we picked them up and brought them back to the States.

SSH: Where were you refitted with the bunks, in Tokyo or in Okinawa?

DM: I don't recall.

SSH: Okay, all right.

DM: Probably Okinawa, because we had a base on Okinawa by that time, for a few months.

SSH: What was your duty at this point? What were you doing?

DM: I really don't recall that we had any duties. We mostly recreated there. We started boxing and, no, for recreation, ... played baseball on the ship. [laughter] Of course, it was a very small field, [laughter] still, [we played] softball, things like that.

SH: But, there were things to do.

DM: Yes.

SSH: How long did it take you? You came back from Okinawa to Pearl Harbor, or did you go straight to the States?

DM: No, we went straight back to the States, to Long Beach, California.

SSH: Did you? What did you do then?

DM: For a few days, we stayed on the ship, and then, since I was attached to the air group, the air group left the ship and we went to San Diego, to, I believe it was Camp Elliot, a Marine Corps base. Either Camp Elliot or Camp Pendleton, I'm not sure which one. We were there, awaiting further orders, and it was October, October-November 1945, and, even though it was California, it got very cold at night. ... In this base, we were in wooden huts and ... each hut had a little cast-iron, pot-bellied stove and, during the war, they supplied them with coal ... for heat. The war was over; there was no coal. So, every night, we'd go out and tear down one of the huts and burn it to keep the hut warm. [laughter] The Navy didn't know what to do with us and they sent us, after awhile, after a few days, ... up to the Naval Air Station at Alameda, California, which is outside of San Francisco. I remember, I spent New Year's there, at Alameda. Then, they put some of us on a train and we went to Norfolk, Virginia, and we got a leave. I got a leave and ... I went to see my parents and I had thirty days leave, and then, I reported to Pier, I think it was Pier 90.

SSH: In New York?

DM: In Manhattan, ... and then, they sent me to the Navy base in Brooklyn, Brooklyn Navy Yard, and, there, I was assigned to doorman duty. I had to stand at the door of the officers' club at ... the Navy yard in Brooklyn and, when an officer came in with his girlfriend, I held the door open for [them]. I saluted, held the door open for them and closed the door when they went in. [laughter] ... After a few days there, I went to Norfolk, where I spent the rest of my time in the Navy, at the Norfolk Naval Air Station.

SSH: [laughter] What were your duties there?

DM: All right. Well, when we're at the naval air station in Norfolk, I was in charge of the barracks, of a barracks. We had a luggage storage area. When a sailor would check in and be assigned to that barracks, we would have the luggage storage room and we'd keep his luggage there that he didn't need and he'd be in a bunk and sleep there. ... I was there, and then, sometimes, at night, they asked you, "Are you going to sign over again? Are you going to stay in the Navy?" and I said, "No, I don't think so." So, those of us who weren't going to sign over, after they [determined that]; I was officially in a squadron of PBMs, flying boats, HEDRON Eight, Headquarters Squadron Eight, the flying boats. When the planes would fly out during the day, ... they come back at night, some of the oil ... would spread over the plane from the engines. We were told the commander of that squadron was looking for a promotion. So, he wanted those planes scrubbed down every night. So, sometimes ... at night, in the evening, you know, after work, we'd have to go up there and scrub down those planes, those of us who were not being discharged. ...

SSH: Not a way to talk you into staying in, I would not think. [laughter]

DM: Not only that, but the young ensign who was in charge of us, he didn't like the job, either, but he was given the charge, "Make these men scrub these planes." When you get up on the wing of a PBM, you're three stories off the ground. The wing curves, soap suds; it's very slippery. You're very liable to fall three stories to the ground. It was a nasty job, and for what? The next day, that plane's going to fly again and get covered with oil. We resented it. ... This ensign had a heck of a job with us and he was cursing us and telling us, "You'll be court-martialed, you'll be court-martialed." [laughter] Yes, so, that's another reason that I [left]. ...

SH: Your whole life changed after the declaration, the end of the war.

DM: Yes, once the fighting stopped, it became ...

SH: You went back to basic.

DM: Right, we went back to what it was.

SH: And all the "chicken" that they gave out in the Army and Navy. [Editor's Note: "Chicken" refers to the enforcement of rules and protocols considered too strict or petty.]

DM: Yes, I didn't like what it was, yes.

SSH: Would there have ever been a way that they could have talked you into staying in?

DM: Yes, if they'd been nicer. ... Originally, I wanted to stay in. I had a nice rating.

SSH: What were you at the end of the war?

DM: At the end of the war, I had not been promoted for the last year of the war, because, first, I was with the ship, and then, I was with the air group. ... The fellow who was there a couple of weeks before me in the same category, he had some seniority. So, the air group was able to ... promote one of us. They had an opening on their roster for one; they promoted him, which was understandable. Eventually, I would have been promoted to first class, which would be ... just like top sergeant. [laughter] So, I didn't get promoted.

SSH: You made the decision to get out. Did you use the GI Bill? What were your plans then? This would have been in 1946.

DM: ... Exactly. I was discharged in April of '46. By this time, I was already going with my wife.

SSH: Where had you met your wife?

DM: On one of the leaves, I went to my aunt's house in Brooklyn, for Thanksgiving dinner. My mother's family gathered for Thanksgiving. My wife was a girlfriend of one of my cousins. So, my wife was there and that's where I met her, at my aunt's house at Thanksgiving, on one of my leaves. ... So, we were planning to be married. I got discharged and, some months later, we did get married, yes. My plans, originally, were to continue my education, but getting married kind of changed it. What I did do [was], as soon as I got discharged, I stayed at my aunt's house in the Bronx, New York, so [that] I could be near my fiancée, among other things, and, also, I went to an evening high school, George Washington Evening High School, in Washington Heights, if you know Manhattan, Upper Manhattan. I went to evening high school because I'd communicated with my high school about getting a diploma. ... They were quite willing to recognize the math and science that I had at Texas A&M as equivalent of another year of math and science, but they said, to get a diploma, I had to have credit for a year of American history, that was a requirement, and another year of English. So, I took those two courses at night, evening high school at George Washington High School. I took the courses. I took what New York called the Regents exams. [Editor's Note: New York State requires students to take Regents exams after every level of study; students must pass these exams in order to move on in their studies.]

PL: I took those as well.

DM: I took those courses and passed the courses and sent the records, ... or had them send the records, to my high school and they said, "All right, you're a high school graduate." So, I had the high school diploma after I got out of the Navy, but I got married and didn't go back to school. Well, I did and I didn't, because I was looking for a job. [At] first, I didn't look. I couldn't find something very much [worthwhile], but I was living with my wife's family and my wife's mother

wouldn't say anything, but, you know, she'd look at me. I didn't have a job. [laughter] I felt very uncomfortable. So, I went to the US Employment Service, said, "I want a job." So, they said, "Take your twenty dollars a week. You got 52/20; can you take twenty dollars a week for a year?" and I said, "No, I have to have a job." [Editor's Note: The "52/20 Club" was a slang term for the unemployment insurance (twenty dollars for up to fifty-two weeks) offered to veterans under the GI Bill.] So, they said, "Well, we don't have any jobs." ... I said, "Any job." So, they ... sent me to a factory and their director of personnel was ... an Army colonel. He'd been discharged as a colonel, this director of personnel. He wanted to see my discharge. He looked at it and he says, "Eighteen commendations, huh? Seventy cents an hour." So, I started at the glorious salary of seventy cents an hour, which works out to twenty-eight dollars a week. When you take off for car fare, I would have been better off with the 52/20 Club, but I made a little extra money working there. ... Anyway, I worked there for awhile and, in fact, I knocked around in a number of jobs after I got out, ... but I took some exams and one of the exams I took was for the Post Office. ... I worked for the Post Office for a year, and then, ... we're not in the military experience now. We're post war, if that's appropriate. Okay, I saw an ad in the paper. RCA was looking for electronics technicians; right up my alley. So, I went to apply for that job. I applied for the job. ... They had me fill out all the papers and all that. They said, "Well, we don't really need anybody right now." There was the ad in the paper; they didn't need anybody right now, didn't make sense, but [they] didn't need anybody right now. Meantime, my father-in-law and I bought a house in another part of Brooklyn. I had lived in a Jewish neighborhood with my father-in-law in Brooklyn when I applied to RCA the first time. A few weeks later, I see the ad in the paper again, "RCA is looking for electronics technicians." This time, I lived in an Irish neighborhood. [laughter] I went down there, applied for the job. They gave me a test. I said, "Do you want to see what I've forgotten?" They said, "No, we want to see what you remembered," and they said, "You did very well. You're hired, forty dollars a week." I was making a little more at the Post Office, but it was [that] this was what I wanted to do. So, I went to work for RCA, as an electronics technician. RCA had come out with something ... called television. So, that was my job. They were bringing television to the public, and I worked for RCA for fifteen years.

SSH: Basically, based on the education that you had gotten ...

DM: In the Navy.

SSH: In the Navy.

DM: But, while I worked for RCA, I went to RCA Institutes at night. ... Essentially, you learned what I had already learned, but I had the diploma from RCA Institutes as well. I went there at night and I went there under the GI Bill, although, as an employee, I should have been entitled to go free, but they saw a chance to get some money. So, they said, "You're going under the GI Bill." So, they charged the government for what I could have gotten free if I had not been a veteran. [laughter]

SSH: Oh, my word.

DM: So, I graduated from RCA Institutes and I worked for RCA for fifteen years. How much further you want to go with this?

SSH: As far as you are comfortable, whatever you would like to do.

DM: And, after working for RCA for a number of years, the working conditions changed and I was not happy anymore. I was very happy when I first started to work for them. I felt I was doing something, and where people were so appreciative. You brought television into their homes and you repaired television and all that. Well, after awhile, it changed. When RCA first brought television servicing in and brought television into their homes, they just wanted to get television established. They didn't care if they made money, they wanted to get it established, because RCA owned two networks, broadcasting television. They made a lot of money [there], ... but, after awhile, they wanted the service company to make money and they were talking about layoffs and things. ... After a few years, the dealers who'd been selling the television sets started their own servicing companies and they were in competition. ... RCA would sell their products to us, to their own service company, at full price and they'd sell it to the dealers at wholesale price. ... There's a lot of complications, but, anyway, I was unhappy with the situation there and I was looking for something else. So, I decided to go to college. Well, I had a buddy that I was working with who had been in college before he was drafted in Korea. So, I went to Brooklyn College. ... That's another story in itself, but I went to college at night and I got a degree from Brooklyn College. It took nine years at night, working for RCA, and, also, I was doing a little television repairs on my own at night, but I went to college at night as well. I got my degree, a degree in physics, and I graduated from Brooklyn College. Before I graduated from Brooklyn College, as I said, I was unhappy with RCA, I heard that people who could do television repair could get a job as a teacher for [the] New York City school system, in a vocational high school. So, I applied and I got the job. I got a call one day, "You passed the exam. You want to come to teach?" I said, "I didn't even hear that I passed." They said, "You passed. You want to come to teach?" This was in September, September of 1962. I said, "Well, I've been working for RCA for fifteen years; I've got to give them two weeks' notice." They said, "Okay, come down, talk to me today, and then, come back to work two weeks later," and that's what happened. So, after fifteen years at RCA, I went into teaching. I didn't have my degree yet, but, as a vocational teacher, you didn't need a degree. So, I started teaching in '62 and I got my degree in '69; '68, got my degree in '68. ... You may have looked at some of the colleges I went to and you may say, "How could that be?"

SSH: Yes, I did.

DM: I'll try to explain it. ... To the surprise of the United States' scientists, who thought they had it locked in space, the Russians launched *Sputnik* and, as they do periodically, the American scientific community [said], "Oh, we've got to do something to improve the teaching of science and math." Every few years, they go through that. [Editor's Note: The Soviet Union launched *Sputnik I* on October 4, 1957. In September 1958, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act which provided funding for science-oriented initiatives at all education levels in the United States.] So, they decided they're going to improve the education in science and math of teachers of science and math. So, they had a program where you could go to college and the government would pay you and pay your expenses, the National Science Foundation would do

this, in the summertime, ... but you had to be teaching for three years. [Editor's Note: The National Science Foundation was created in 1950 by Congress to promote the progress of science. It supports research in American colleges and universities.] So, in my third year of teaching, I applied and I was accepted and they sent me to Brown for one summer to take a couple of math courses. That was, I believe, the Summer of '65. That's why I went to Brown and took two courses there. The next summer, I was accepted at Yale, but my boss in the school said, "No, I need you to teach summer school. I'm counting on you. You can't go." All right, so, I worked summer school, [laughter] but the next year, in 1967, ... I went to Union College. I went there three summers and got a master's, again, through the National Science Foundation. ... Meantime, I had my vocational teaching license, but I wanted to teach physics, and I had the college degree now. I took the exam and I passed it, and ... I could teach physics. However, in order to get a license in New York City, or New York State, for that matter, to teach physics, you also had to sometimes be prepared to teach general science, and so, you had to have courses in biology and earth science if you're going to teach physics. So, to get ... the credits in biology, I went to Pace. Again, under the National Science Foundation, they paid for me to take a couple of courses in biology. So, that's why I went to Pace. The other course that I took at Union, I took geology, so, that qualified me in earth science, and I continued on. Then, I went to Yeshiva University, took a few courses in math. The National Science Foundation paid for it. I can't recall what other colleges I went to. I told you Pace, I told you about Brown, I told you about Union, told you about Yeshiva, [laughter] and, of course, in the Navy, I went to Texas A&M. So, I went to all these schools, [laughter] and most of it was education I never used again.

SSH: Really?

DM: Yes. You get all these graduate math courses, esoteric subjects, saddle curves and things like that.

SSH: Did you finally wind up being able to teach physics like you wanted?

DM: Yes. I ended up teaching physics and it was very enjoyable.

SSH: Where did you teach?

DM: Where? at Fort Hamilton High School in Brooklyn.

PL: A few of my friends went there, I think.

SH: That's how I started out. I was going to be a physics teacher and, when I came home, my father says, "Do me a favor. Come up to my lawyer's office. I'll have my accountant there. We'll talk." So, the first thing they did was, they asked me, "You planning on getting married?" "Sure, I do." "You planning on having children?" "Sure." "Are you planning on sending them to college?" I said, "Of course." So, they said, "How do you plan to do it on four thousand dollars a year?" [which] was what the teachers were making in those days.

DM: Yes.

SH: So, ... next day, I went up to school and I changed it to finance. [laughter]

SSH: You talked about how Korea came in shortly after you got out; really, four years later. Had you stayed in the Reserves? Was there any chance that you would be called back?

DM: Yes, there was, if I'd stayed in the Reserves.

SSH: Did you? You did not stay in.

DM: I didn't stay in the Reserves.

SSH: That was why you stayed in and finished your tour. Was there ever a chance you could have gotten out of the Navy earlier if you had stayed in the Reserves?

DM: I don't know. They had a system, as they had in the Army, of points and you got points according to how many years you were in and whether you were overseas and how old you were and your family and other things.

SH: And your awards counted. ...

SSH: You talked about the awards that you have gotten. What were some of those that you received while on the *Hancock*?

DM: I didn't even know that I'd received the eighteen commendations until I got my discharge; it was listed on the discharge paper.

SSH: Presidential Unit Citations, that kind of thing.

DM: ... Well, the ship got a unit citation and the air group got a unit citation, so, I was in both of those, two unit citations, but, individual, I got eighteen commendations and what they called captain's meritorious mast, it says on my discharge, which I never knew about until I got my discharge, but, evidently, ... you know, a captain's mast is like a court ceremony, yes.

SSH: What about the Shellback Society? Did your ship ever go below the Equator?

DM: I joined the Order of the Golden Dragon when we crossed the [International] Dateline.

SSH: The International Dateline, okay.

DM: ... If the ship crossed the [Equator], went south of the Equator, and I think we did, they did it before I came onboard and they had the ceremony before I came onboard. So, when I came on, there was no ceremony of the Shellback for anything like crossing the Equator.

SSH: We talked earlier about how shocked you were to find out that the African-Americans were required to sit in the balcony in New York. On the ship, was there any integration in your gun crew at battle stations?

DM: There was no integration on the ship. All of the African-Americans that were on the ship, who I never saw all the time I was on the ship, were officers' servants. We called them stewards. They were still [segregated].

SSH: That was the only place they were serving on a carrier.

DM: As far as I know, that's the only duty they had. It was the old Navy.

SSH: You were teaching in Brooklyn during the Civil Rights Movement. Were there any incidents that you would like to recall about that time?

DM: There's some incidents that I don't like to recall.

SSH: I am sure, because I am thinking of the dates.

DM: Okay. In 1968, a group of community activists took over public schools in their section of Brooklyn called Ocean Hill. It was an African-American neighborhood, but most of the teachers, maybe all of the teachers, were white. ... For whatever their motivations, [the] community activists wanted black teachers to teach the black kids, whether they wanted power for themselves or they wanted their teachers who could empathize with the kids or whatever, ... and they went into the schools and drove the teachers out, in some cases, literally at the point of a spear. They chased the teachers out of the schools and I was a teacher at Fort Hamilton High School at that time and the teachers' union went on strike. They said, "If the City of New York will not protect the teachers ... in those schools, none of the teachers will teach," and so, there was a good deal of activism at the time, and there were people on both sides of the issue.

SSH: You said you started out teaching in the vocational school.

DM: Right.

SSH: Was that school integrated when you started teaching?

DM: Not when I started, but it became integrated later, not when I started. ... In a way, it was unique. I started in a small school in Brighton Beach. You know where that is?

PL: Yes, I know Brighton Beach.

DM: And almost all of the students in that school were students of the Catholic parochial schools, who evidently were not academically gifted enough to go into the academic ... parochial schools. So, the student body in that high school was almost all students of Italian and Irish extraction, graduates of the parochial school system. So, at that time, it was not integrated and, ... when I went to Fort Hamilton High School, it was not integrated, but they began, at that time, ... bussing kids from Bed-Stuy, ... and there was some friction, into Fort Hamilton.

SSH: Did you become involved in the teachers' union?

DM: Well, I was automatically a member of the teachers' union and, when they called the strike to protect the teachers in Ocean Hill-Brownsville, we all went and walked, but not only did teachers go out, but the principal of Fort Hamilton High School closed the school. Nobody was allowed in, and we teachers were out for a number of weeks.

SSH: There were no incidents like Newark, the riots in Newark. There were no riots in the area of New York that you were in.

DM: No, not in the areas where I was in, no. ... There were all these incidents in Bed-Stuy, in that area, and the white teachers were determined to go in. ... There were police in the school, but the police were ordered not to interfere. So, that's why they went on strike. The police wouldn't protect them.

SSH: Were you ever given any courses in how to deal with this?

DM: Yes, after that, there were all kinds of courses in sensitivity and tolerance, and so on, and it was mandatory for teachers to attend these sessions, which was resented ... by some teachers.

SSH: Is there an area of your life that we have not covered that you would like to have on record?

DM: Well, I'd like to just pause for a moment, if I [may].

[TAPE PAUSED]

PL: I want to go back to when you were on the *Hancock*. Was there any sort of anti-Semitism?

DM: Not really anti-Semitism there, because, ... when you're in a fighting situation, side-by-side, you can't really hate the guy next to you. ... One of the men in the radio shack was named, I think his name was (Lundberg?), which is a Scandinavian name, I think it's Swedish, but one of the other fellows didn't know the difference and he was angry with him and he called him, "A. B. Stein," because it indicated his disdain for him, right? ... When I was going ashore in Japan, one of the fellows that I'd worked with for almost a year on the ship, Buddy, he said to me, "You know, you're going ashore, you're going to do business with the Japanese; don't let them Jew you down." So, I said, "Rudy, they can't out Jew me," [laughter] but he didn't mean anything by it. ... It was an expression that he used, but, other than that, I didn't have anti-Semitism on the ship, that I can recall.

PL: What about the naval bases?

DM: The only time I encountered anti-Semitism, that I can recall, was when I first went into recruit training. As I said, we had young men from the streets of Elizabeth and Jersey City and Newark, and some of them probably belonged to some gangs. ... In any case, they started out where they had one fellow who was a fighter and he would provoke the Jewish members of our unit and try to get into a fight and beat them up. In the Navy, you're not allowed to fight, severe

punishment, but, if you go into the ring and put on gloves, you can kill each other. [laughter] So, you know, he'd provoke people into that type of situation, and he did that. They were starting through the list of Jewish members of the unit and it was that he had his group who was working with him on this. ... Then, he challenged a young fellow who'd gone to City College, a fellow named (Green?), he was Jewish, and they went into the ring and (Green?) broke a couple of ribs of this fellow. Gee, (Green?) had been a boxer, which nobody knew. [laughter] So, that's the anti-Semitism that I encountered, that I can recall offhand, in the Navy.

PL: Did you attend any USO shows?

DM: Yes.

PL: What were your experiences with those like?

DM: That was in Hawaii. I don't know if you remember Bing Crosby; you've heard of him?

PL: [laughter] I think I am a little too young for that.

DM: Okay, Bing Crosby, he had a brother named Bob Crosby. Bob Crosby had a Navy band, called Bob Crosby and his Bobcats. They were stationed permanently in Hawaii and they put on a show for us. The other show, I think I mentioned the one in Chicago. Yes, that was not necessarily USO, may have been sponsored by the USO, was the entertainment from that nightclub, the Chez Paree.

SSH: Was there any music onboard the ship? You talked about the band being permanently stationed there.

DM: ... Yes, we had records. We could play a record. In those days, a record was a flat, black disc. [laughter]

PL: Yes. Actually, they are coming back in popularity now.

DM: You've heard of that? and we had one called *Frankie and Ginny*.

SH: [Singing] "Frankie and Ginny were sweethearts."

DM: Right. This was Frankie and Ginny, because it was Frank Sinatra and Ginny Simms. Do you remember that?

SH: And Ginny Simms, yes.

DM: And Dinah Shore. The three of them [were] on this record. We played this record over and over, yes. [laughter]

SSH: Did you have a ship's library and things like that?

DM: No, not that I recall. ... Most of the men on the ship weren't into reading then.

SH: A lot of them couldn't read. [laughter]

DM: Yes.

SSH: We talked about your life in the 1960s and 1970s, but, in closing, because I know we are under time constraints now, what are you most proud of?

DM: Well, I'm most proud of my children, but, of my own life, I'm most proud that I tried to be of service. I tried to do work that was rewarding because it was good deeds, and that's one of the reasons, as I almost indicated, that I left RCA, because, at first, we were doing great [things]. We were bringing television to people and they enjoyed it and they thanked us, but, after awhile, RCA was interested only in making money. ... The company rewarded those who could sell people things that they didn't need at prices they couldn't afford, just like today with movies, right? So, those are fellows they recognized and rewarded and, if you weren't selling stuff, they didn't think much of you. They didn't care if you could repair electronic equipment or not, "Sell." ... Then, when they came out with some products that we knew were not good, you know, we mentioned [it] and they said, "We have no problems that a great sales job won't cure. Get out there and sell."

SSH: Have you ever been back to any reunions of the *Hancock*?

DM: Absolutely, yes. We have reunions every two years. I missed the last one in '08. My wife and I are not as well as we used to be. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SSH: Please, continue. I apologize.

DM: What were we talking about? [laughter]

PL: We were talking about RCA and how they changed.

DM: Oh, yes, they changed.

SSH: We were talking about reunions.

DM: Reunion, yes. I've gone back to the reunions. At one of the reunions, one of the pilots came up to me and he said, "You saved my life." He said, "I didn't want that ... chaff," he said, "but, when I first threw it out and I saw the anti-aircraft going into the chaff and not hitting my plane, I realized it was [okay]," because they even rebelled against it. They didn't want to be bothered with that at first, but he said, "You saved my life," at one of the reunions.

SSH: Do you go to reunions for the *Hancock* or for the air group?

DM: Both; they're together. In other words, they have reunions of everybody who served on the *Hancock*, including members of the air group. Now, the air groups may have their own reunion, although I've never have a reunion of my air group, Air Group Six, but I do go to reunions of the *Hancock*. It's every two years.

SSH: How soon did you start doing that?

DM: I think I went to my first one in '86, if I remember correctly. I hadn't even heard about the *Hancock* Association. Somehow, somebody told me about it. ...

SSH: Forty years later. Did you keep in contact with any of the people that you served with prior to that?

DM: No, but I met some, like the chief that I told you about before, who used to sit in his office and make them play tapes. I met him at the reunions and we corresponded after the reunions. ... When I joined the air group, the air group had some perks that the ship's company didn't have, like, they had air-conditioned ready rooms. [laughter] So, I used to hang out [in there]. ... So, one of the fellows that I hung out with was an electronics technician, but his specialty, they had a group called night fighters, because we flew combat air patrol day and night. ... The ones who flew at night flew by radar and did everything by radar. ... That's what he did and I met him at one of the reunions and we corresponded for awhile. He's passed away since; so did that chief.

SSH: When did you join your first service organization? I see you are involved with the American Legion.

DM: Yes.

SSH: When did you first join a service organization?

DM: Well, actually, I joined the American Legion years ago, when I was a teacher. I had a somewhat selfish motivation; I wanted the American Legion to push [for legislation]. You see, teachers could get credit for time spent in the military if they had been teaching before they went into the service. Well, I spent my time in the military before I went into the service and I wanted the American Legion to push the legislature to grant us pension time for the time spent in the service before going into the teaching, and the American Legion didn't want to be bothered. So, I joined them and I tried and, after a year or two, I quit. ... When I moved here to New Jersey, about seven years ago, they decided to form a post of the American Legion in my community and it was actually formed through the men's club in the community. ... I didn't belong to the men's club, so, I didn't hear about it at first, but, when I did hear about it, I decided to join. So, I joined about seven years ago. I joined the American Legion post. ... The one I belong to mostly consists of people who live in my community.

SSH: Just for the record, would you like to state what you have done as a post?

DM: I'm sorry.

SSH: Would you like to put on the record what you have done for the veterans in Walter Reed Army Medical Center?

DM: Oh, what we just did? Actually, what we did [was], I was the commander of this post about four years ago and I called the commanders of all the other veterans organizations in the area and I said, "You know, we can do a lot more together than we're doing separately," and so, I met with the commanders of the other organizations and we decided to form a group called the Veterans' Council of Monroe and we did some things ... together. One of the first things we did was to have a program called "Salute to Veterans" in the high school. ... We got a band to play and we ... gave free tickets out, and we also worked with one of the local middle schools and we had salutes to veterans, and then, ... we looked for issues where we could be of help to veterans. ... One of the first issues was the treatment of the wounded soldiers and the treatment of the old veterans, as far as their medical care is concerned, and we expressed that concern to our Congressman and he invited us to come down to Washington, and so, we did. We brought a busload of veterans to Washington, DC, and these government officials and Congressmen came and told us about all the wonderful things they did. We told them about the need for adequate funding for veterans' medical care. ... Whatever we might have accomplished, we at least let them know that we were concerned about this. That was our first trip to Washington and, after that, we heard about the soldiers at Walter Reed. In this war, unlike previous wars, a soldier can be wounded on the battlefield and they immediately know about his wound and his location and they helicopter him, or other ways bring him out of the battlefield, to a medical station and to a hospital. Within hours of his wounding, he can be on a hospital operating table, and then, transported back to the United States, where ... in the Civil War, a soldier could be wounded and could lay in the mud and bleed to death and nobody knew where he was. So, it's a different situation. So, we ... do have a lot more wounded coming back from the battlefield now.

SH: But, they come back with nothing.

DM: They come back in a hospital gown.

SH: Just a hospital gown.

DM: They don't have clothes, they don't have toothpaste, they don't have anything.

SH: Here's our card. He's the president and I'm the vice-president.

SSH: Okay, thank you.

DM: He's the vice, and so, we asked, "What do these soldiers need most?" and we found out and we publicized it in the neighborhood and people were overwhelming in their generosity. They gave us the items that we requested and we brought it to the soldiers at Walter Reed.

SH: Not only that, we got the schools involved and the teachers cooperated.

DM: Fantastic.

SH: And these kids are wonderful.

DM: So, this was our third trip to Walter Reed yesterday, and it was a long trip. At six yesterday morning, we were loading trucks with the stuff.

SSH: Thank you so much on their behalf.

DM: It's rewarding. ...

SH: You go home with a feeling. ... It's the same thing when we go to Menlo Park and we played bingo with them, when we have a barbecue; you can't buy a feeling like that. ...

DM: Yes, which brings me back to what you said before, "What do you feel proud of?" Well, I feel proud that I always tried to do something where I could be of service, whether it was ... when I went into the Navy, when I first in started [in] television, when I went into teaching, opportunities to be of service, ... to give you a feeling you're accomplishing something.

SSH: I think that is a wonderful place to end; thank you so much.

DM: Okay. Now, if you'd like to continue another time, give me a call.

SSH: Thank you. ...

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

Reviewed by Kathryn Robitzski 10/15/10

Reviewed by Michael Jacquin 10/15/10

Reviewed by Sydney Rhodes 12/1/10

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 12/20/10

Reviewed by Daniel Mann 1/13/11