Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an

Oral History Interview with

Daniel S. Turner

Hydrographer, Navy, World War II.

1995

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Turner, Daniel S., [1917-2001]. Oral History Interview, 1995.

User Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 80 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.
Master Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 80 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.
Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. {1 folder)
Military Papers: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder}

Abstract:
Daniel S. Turner, a Madison, Wisconsin native, discusses his service as a hydrographer with the Navy in the Artic and the South Pacific during World War II. Turner discusses attending Nakoma Grade School and Wisconsin High School in Madison. After high school, Turner attended the University of Wisconsin, earning a bachelors in geology and civil engineering in 1939 and a masters in geology in 1941. Turner explains he volunteered for the Navy in 1941, hoping to become an officer before the war in Europe escalated. He reveals he chose the Navy because he grew up around water and was a competitive swimmer in high school. Turner discusses in detail his induction at Great Lakes Naval Training Station [Illinois] in July 1941. He mentions he expected to be assigned to the Naval Air Service because he had a civilian pilot's license from Madison Municipal Airport. Instead of a Navy pilot, Turner became a research analyst at the Hydrographic Office in Washington D.C. He states he was "a file clerk" and characterizes the job as dull. Turner mentions he met his future wife, a Navy WAVE from Milwaukee, while there. Because of his engineering background, Turner was asked to lead a surveying party to build airbases in the Canadian Arctic. Turner states he spent the early war on two airbases; Crystal I Air Base on the Koksoak River [Quebec] and Crystal II in Baffin Island [Nunavut]. Turner reveals the U.S. Navy surveying team worked with Captain Robert Bartlett, a Canadian explorer, on his ship the *FEM Morrisey.* Turner describes military life in the Arctic and interactions with the Inuit. He mentions he ate fresh salmon, seal, and polar bear meat. Turner also discusses communications; for security reasons, the Navy surveyors and Army engineers building the airbase could only contact the mainland by telegraph. In November 1942, Lieutenant Turner and the hydrographic unit left the Artic because they were "frozen out" of Frobisher Bay. After returning to Washington to finish his calculations, Turner was reassigned to Hawaii to lead a group of hydrographers on Naval Intelligence missions, surveying islands and tides before invasions in the Pacific. Turner explains his new assignment was a response to poor hydrographic charting during the Battle of Tarawa; Marines miscalculated the height of the tides when invading Tarawa Island and their boats were trapped on coral reefs, resulting in heavy casualties at the hands of the Japanese. Turner describes in great detail hydrographic reconnaissance, surveying, and triangulation at sea. Turner characterizes his unit, Hydro Team #1, as the "first Frogmen team in the Pacific." He states they examined Japanese-controlled islands at night in small rubber boats and swam to shore with only light flotation devices. Although the team was protected by Navy bombardments, Turner comments these were risky missions, as the Japanese fired mortars at the water. He describes developing new "frogmen" techniques for the Navy: the Hydro Team used

frosted acetate film and hard pencils to make notes and draw maps underwater during their missions. Also, Turner tells how he won a bronze star for installing a navigational light on Mt. Suribachi in preparation for Iwo Jima. Using a tarpaulin and a clothesline, the Hydro Team secretly installed an acetylene lamp timed to flash in code on the mountain so the battleships could see the island from the harbor. Turner states he participated in eleven different landings in the Pacific, including: Kwajalien, Eniwetok, Saipan, Tinian, Rota, Guam, Leyte [Philippines], Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. In 1944, Turner explains the hydrographic unit finally got their own ship, the *USS John Blish*. In addition to "recon," Turner's role was to makes sure atolls and channels on the Pacific Islands were clear of coral and safe for U.S. ships to dock. Turner touches upon hazing in the Navy, mentioning he crossed the international dateline and the equator on the same day and "got beaten for both." Turner mentions he was on the beachhead in Okinawa when journalist Ernie Pyle was killed. He also recalls meeting Peter Stackpole, a photographer for *Life* magazine, whose brother served alongside Turner. Next, Turner recalls the celebrations for V-J Day in 1945. He recalls U.S. ships fired rockets in the air, but the shrapnel fell down on the decks. He claims four men were killed as a result, so the Naval command stopped all celebratory firing. After V-J Day, Turner was assigned to China. The hydrographic unit charted the Yangtze and Huangpu Rivers and marked the channel to Shanghai with buoys. In December 1945, Turner states he was discharged on points and returned home on the *USS National.* Turner spends time discussing his readjustment to civilian life. In 1946, he used the G.I. Bill to get a Ph.D. in geology from UW-Madison. Turner mentions his wife also used the G.I. Bill to get a degree in home economics from what is now the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Turner also addresses the postwar housing crisis in Madison. He states he and his wife lived with his parents for a year because housing was so scarce. During the summer, Turner returned to his pre-war job as a park ranger for the Wisconsin Park Service. He also discusses the baby boom and the challenges of raising a child on grad student salary. In addition, Turner addresses his family's reaction to the war. He thought it was strange that his parents never asked about his war experiences, and he suggests the media told families that veterans did not want to talk about combat. Turner mentions fellow veterans attending the university did talk about their experiences in the war. In 1948, Turner finished his Ph.D. and moved to Colorado to work for the Atomic Energy Commission. He outlines his career as a geologist and mining engineer. Finally, Turner discusses the religious and psychological effects of combat. He recalls waiting on the *USS John Blish* in the "line of departure" prior to an invasion and watching chaplains give communion to sailors on the decks of other ships in the fleet. A few minutes later, many of these sailors were killed by Japanese mortars. Turner shares how the broken communion wafer and communion wine became connected in his mind with seeing bodies and blood in the water, to the point where he was unable to take communion at church for many years.

Biographical Sketch:
Turner [1917-2001] was born in Madison, Wisconsin. His father was an electrical engineer for the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. Turner attended Nakoma Grade School and Wisconsin High School, graduating in 1935. He then attended the University of Wisconsin, earning a bachelor's in geology and civil engineering, and a master's in geology. In 1941, before Pearl Harbor, Turner volunteered for the Navy, hoping to become an officer. His first assignment was as a research analyst at the Navy Hydrographic Office in Washington D.C. From May 1942 to November 1942, Turner, now a lieutenant, went on surveying missions in the Canadian Arctic. In 1943, he was reassigned to the Pacific where he carried out dangerous reconnaissance missions as a Navy "frogman," earning a bronze star. In 1944, the hydrographic survey unit was given its own ship, the *USS John Blish*. While on leave in 1944, Turner married a WAVE he first met in Washington. His wife, Ruth, was a home economics teacher from Milwaukee, and both of them returned to school on the G.I. Bill after the war. Turner got his Ph.D. in geology at the University of Wisconsin in 1948. Starting in 1949, he worked for the Atomic Energy Commission in Colorado. He moved to several states, including Wyoming and Michigan, throughout his career as a geologist, mining engineer, professor, and volunteer fire fighter. For many years, he worked as a professor of geology at Eastern Michigan University before his retirement to Englewood, Colorado where he died in 2001.

Interviewed by Mark Van Ells, 1995
Transcript by Karen M Emery, WDVA staff, ca. 1998
Transcript edited and abstract written by Darcy I. Gervasio, 2010

Interview Transcript:

Mark: A brief introduction for the transcriber and then we're ready to go.

Turner: Yeah, okay.

Mark: Today's date, what is today? May 18, 1995. This is Mark Van Ells, Archivist, Wisconsin Veterans Museum doing an oral history interview this morning via telephone with Dr. Daniel Turner, now of Colorado, formerly of Madison, Wisconsin and distinguished veterans of World War II. Good morning, how are you doing?

Turner: Good morning to you, sir.

Mark: I appreciate you taking the time to talk to me here.

Turner: It's been real great. Appreciate it very much. Okay?

Mark: Okay. Let's start by having you tell me a little bit about where you were born and raised, and a little bit about your upbringing and that sort of thing and what you were doing prior to your entry into service in 1941.

Turner: Yeah, fine, okay. Well, it was mentioned earlier that my dad was electrical engineer for the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin and was most of his professional life employed there. I was born in '17 so just about that time the war was over, and he didn't get in and he had a critical assignment job in energy, and I suppose that was the reason they had in those days. I mean, why they had not shipped him off [to fight in World War I], in other words. Then let's see, they built a home in the 1915, '16 out in Nakoma on Waban Hill which was way out in the boonies at that time in Madison. A lot on top of the hill where you could see all of Lake Wingra and part of Monona, and of course today that's impossible. This is, that's where I was born and where I grew up and went to school at Nakoma Grade School and Wisconsin High School which building has just recently been destroyed on the university campus. I graduated from there in '35, the spring of '35 and went to the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Started out in Forestry in the Agricultural College. We had pre-forestry at that time. I started out in Forestry and then decided in mid-stream of getting a degree that openings for foresters were extremely limited, but there was--and I thoroughly enjoyed--the geology program that we had to take relative to forestry, so I changed over and graduated in Geology in '39.

Mark: I see.

Turner: Then we went to—then [I] continued on until '41 with a Masters degree in Geology.

Mark: In graduate school?

Turner: Graduate school, yeah.

Mark: Now this, of course, was the Depression. Did you have trouble financing your education in some ways?

Turner: Well, yes. It was tough but my folks helped as much as they could. One of the good fortunes in our family was that Dad was with the state and the state did not cut back, at least in his department, during the big Depression. I worked, as a high schooler, I worked at physical labor on Nakoma, odd jobs here and there. As a matter of fact, I worked some of the times for the Department of Agriculture,[at the] University [of Wisconsin], in the corn pollination program that they were running, experimental, and things like this during the summer so that I could earn some money to get along. We got through. Got through the Depression in pretty good shape. By '39, of course, things were smoothing out considerably, and I could go on, I found, at the university grad school, with a graduate assistant's position so that I could help finance that operation.

Mark: I'm sorry, go ahead.

Turner: Just happened to think, the grand, glorious paycheck every month was $60. That went a long ways in those days. Got my masters degree in '41 in Geology. And then Pearl Harbor hit us, of course, in '41, and I had already applied and had received a commission in the Navy.

Mark: I'm interested in this. When did you decide to join the Navy and why the Navy?

Turner: Well, growing up in Madison, I had always been around the water. We had a cottage on Lake Kegonsa and we spent a lot, in the very early days when I was just a toddler practically on up, we tried to spend as much time in the summers as we could down there. The cool air off the water and so forth. So I'd always enjoyed it. I had gone to professional--not professional, competitive swimming in high school and then into college at the university so aquatics were always very attractive to me. We had boats. So I sort of grew up on the water. So it just appealed to me to go to sea more than it did be an infantry man in the trenches or something like that.

Mark: Yeah. I mean, but why volunteer at all? That's what I'm--

Turner: Oh, I volunteered.

Mark: --trying to get at. Was it an ideological commitment? Did you feel that your turn was going to come sooner or later anyway? I mean, what possessed you to do this?

Turner: Well, both really. When Germany started tramping on Poland in 1939, I was just getting out of school, getting out of undergraduate school. I thought it certainly looks and everybody was talking, of course, that we were going to get in it sooner or later. So, well, the best thing I can do right now is to, while it's available, is to apply for a commission as an officer. Of course, as a university grad, why it ought to be easy. So that's what happened.

Mark: If you'd describe for me your actual entry into the service. When did you first go and sign the papers, and what sort of questions did they ask you, and where did you go get your training and your haircut and the whole business like that?

Turner: Oh, I see.

Mark: The personal experience of signing up.

Turner: Well, I had been working in the National Park Service in Yellowstone since the summer of '39 and so I went--back in the summer I hadn't been called, I was commissioned, but I hadn't been called up to active duty. So I was out there in uniform with the Park Service as a park naturalist, ranger naturalist, correction--the naturalist is the full-time director of the nature program. So I was out there in Canyon Junction in Yellowstone as one of the ranger staff and got my orders to report to Madison for the signing in. It just happens that I have somewhere here a copy of a note, I think, that has to do with that. Yeah, I have a telegram here I saved over the years and this was the 29th of July of '42. It says, "Canyon Ranger Station. You are called to active duty as ensign in naval reserve. Plane travel not necessary but report to me in Madison as soon as possible." Signed by Lt. Hilgers. That was the first, the only call to duty, so I had to sell my automobile that I had driven out there with and jump on an airplane at West Yellowstone and fly back to Madison. That was the Naval ROTC representative on campus there. I grabbed my initial papers that and then filled them out at home and they sent me down to Great Lakes Naval Training Station on Lake Michigan.

Mark: And what took place there?

Turner: Well, it was more or less just a very cursory sort of physical exam. Asked if not more than anything else--how do you feel, have you got any aches or pains that would restrict you in performing in the Navy in any category and I said, "No." The asked my preferences in assignments. I had been qualified and

commissioned as an AVS at that time--that was Aviation Volunteer Specialist. Well, it was not flight training but anything regarding the Naval Air Service that they decided to put us in. At that point I had already gone through the civilian pilot training program in Madison out at Madison Municipal Airport with Howard Morey [sp??] was in charge out there and I had gotten my wings there. So I went into the Navy expecting that I would be assigned to something Naval Air related, which it turned out I was. They said, "Well, we have orders here for you to report to the hydrographic office" in the Navy building in Washington. "Hydrographic office," that doesn't sound like Naval Air. Well, it turns out they had set up an air wing I guess you'd call it--navigation hydrographic course--water navigation--they had an air wing that they called the Air Nav section and I was assigned to the Air Nav section and became, for almost a year, became a file clerk more than anything else.

Mark: In Washington.

Turner: In Washington. I was called research analyst--I guess that shows on my sheet there. Yeah, that's what they mean there, it was a fancy name for a file clerk.

Mark: So, it wasn't terribly exciting work?

Turner: Well, it wasn't exciting at all. As a matter of fact during that first fall and early winter I found out that the--I'm trying to think of the right word--the furniture man was trying to fly aircraft across--the fighter, short-range aircraft--across to the European Theater because the U-boats had been sinking our cargo ships that were loaded with aircraft that we were shipping over there. So they decided that they'd have to install some airfields as refueling bases on the great circle across the Arctic to London, or to the British Isles. So I found out that they were sending a surveying party--there were a couple of surveying parties--up into the Arctic to start navigational examinations and soundings and sweeping acreages and things. In order to bring in the cargo ships for the heavy duty equipment and supplies, it was necessary to build these bases. So they were looking for trained civil engineers or, in this case, I had a degree, a dual major, let's put it that way, in civil engineering, mining engineering, and geology. So they found this, apparently, on my record--in the days before computers even--they found that I had a background in civil engineering, so they spoke to me about this Arctic job if I'd be interested, and I'd just been dying to get to the Arctic—anyplace!--so I said, "Absolutely, let's go." Formed the party and flew into, well out of Presque Isle, Maine and to Gander, Newfoundland and from Gander, Newfoundland we had two different bases that we were working on, and that's where I spent the early part of the war. One was called Crystal I. They had them all code named for obvious reasons. Crystal I was on the Koksoak River which is a river that runs north into Ungova Bay off of Hudson Straits.

Mark: So this is in Quebec somewhere?

Turner: This is, well it's, yes. It's the north coast of Quebec. That's right. Then the other one was on Baffin Island in a fjord and bay called Frobisher Bay. Are you familiar with it?

Mark: I'm familiar with Baffin Island. I'm not exactly sure where Frobisher Bay is.

Turner: Oh, is that right? Well, what is your connection there? That's interesting.

Mark: I'm just a geography nerd kind of person.

Turner: Oh, I see. You're a geographer. I've got you.

Mark: Well, I'm interested in it.

Turner: Well, it's on the southeast coast. It's a considerable notch in the southeast coast of Baffinland where they, way up at the head end of the fjord they found enough gravel outwash planed to be able to move some dirt around and make a flat spot, and that's pretty rare in that part of the world--finding a flat spot or being able to make one.

Mark: I'm sure. So, what were your impressions of this Arctic area?

Turner: Oh, I--

Mark: Did you have contact with some of the natives for example?

Turner: The Eskimo? Inuits, as they're called. Yes. As a matter of fact, we had direction connection with them. The interesting facet of this is that when we got to Koksoak River and Crystal I, we were met there by a famous Arctic exploration ship and their crew and captain. That was Captain Robert Bartlett of Newfoundland and his crew, and he'd turned his ship over to the Navy, hadn't given it to them, he volunteered his services and his crew and his ship, as a Navy specialty assignment vessel that was equipped for breaking ice and, of course, he had been in the Arctic for four years at that point. Anyway, so he was well known and well advised on navigation, and he knew those coasts up there very well because he used to spend a lot of time up at Thule, Greenland on the Baffin coast and various other places, and Labrador. So we joined this sailing ship, it's a schooner, full schooner rig, sailing ship, in Koksoak River where we did the charting to find an anchorage for Crystal I. And then when the ice went out in the Hudson Straits and Frobisher Bay we cruised north and started another job up there. Left one crew to finish in Ungava Bay or in the Koksoak, and we went on into the Arctic where we surveyed and did the soundings. That was in the early days--also the very beginning, I guess, of the

Loran and Shoran navigational systems. In order to set those transmitting stations they had to have very precise geographic location, spot on land and that was one of our duties was doing the astronomical work at night with an asteroid to fix a spot and mark it permanently in the rocks a the air base. So we surveyed that and eventually during the summer got that one set. I was in charge of the sounding boat crew that did the soundings for the harbor and made a new chart--sent the material in for a new chart. So that was where we were stationed in that first--well, we were there from May, about this time in May, to, well, we were frozen out of the Arctic in Frobisher Bay in the latter part of October, first part of November. Ice started to form on salt water. When that happens you better get moving.

Mark: Yeah, I suppose.

Turner: I haven't answered your question, I guess. You were saying, how did I like the Arctic?

Mark: Yeah. Just your impressions of it in general. Did you meet the natives? Did you look at it in terms of a geologist and find it professionally interesting?

Turner: I found it very interesting and the fact this kind of survey work requires that you go ashore in many different places to set up triangulation equipment or beacons, towers, flags and whatnot that you can use from out in the open water, you can use them for sighting, triangulation. So we were ashore for that reason. I could apply my geology as I was doing my Navy work. That was very interesting. I saw parts that very few other geologists have ever seen. One other geologist was in our crew so we both got to see it and talk about, observe and study the geology as we were working. So it was great. Now, I've got off the subject on the ship the *FEM Morrisey*, the sailing ship, under the captain of Bob Bartlett. He had been in those islands so much, so many years that the Eskimos knew the ship. They'd see it coming and, of course, they'd all come tearing out to get a handout and trade trading goods and whatnot for food, mainly. They liked white man's food. So they'd come alongside. Not begging; they usually came prepared to trade off.

Mark: Yeah.

Turner: Souvenirs or some of their carvings or if the captain wanted some seal meat or polar bear meat why they'd get that for him, too. And that's the way we ate. And also fishing. Of course, they were professional fishermen from Newfoundland to begin with so they always had their fishing gear and we could learn to eat the salmon, sea salmon, and polar bear and seal meat. That was a real fun experience.

Mark: I'm sure it was. What does polar bear meat taste like? Did you try it?

Turner: Oh, yeah, sure. Why I would say it tastes quite a bit like venison, but it has a slightly fishy fort of a--you don't really smell it but you can taste it--a little fish because their set to their diet. I don't double that they've got a lot of fish in them someplace.

Mark: Did you worry about Germans up there at all? Or was this--

Turner: Well, we didn't do a lot of worrying but we were advised that if we were to keep an eye open for anything suspicious.

Mark: Like submarines or airplanes.

Turner: Yeah, right. If we could see a periscope up in one of the branch fjords or if we actually ever sight a ship, a submarine, we were told to, of course, report it right away. We had, let's say, very rudimentary radio. Most of it was in telegraphic, no voice at all. Of course, one of the things they preferred us not to be on the air for that reason; that we might give away our location and these bases were top secret, too. So that we weren't to be broadcasting. We could take the information ashore to the Army engineers that were building the bases and they had communication facilities that they could get out and were powerful enough to get back to Washington with them. We could communicate that way but that was all. Most of the time we were out of communication all summer except for taking the news, the radiomen would take the news off the code wire and then type it all up for us so we knew what was going, but we couldn't contact anybody out there.

Mark: I see. Was this an American operation? Or were there Canadians?

Turner: No, this was all strictly American.

Mark: I see.

Turner: The construction was. Of course, it was Canadian property.

Mark: That's why I was wondering.

Turner: It had Canadian approval obviously. They had another two bases over on West Greenland--Basitooly [??] and I can't even remember the other one--we never got there. But that, of course, was not Canadian but Baffinland is and was. We'd see a Canadian aircraft come in once in awhile but nothing significant.

Mark: I see. I'm sorry, go ahead.

Turner: You go ahead. I'll try and keep with your questions otherwise I get quite carried [away] here.

Mark: That's okay with me. So you left the Arctic sometime in late '42? November? You were frozen out.

Turner: Yeah, we were frozen out of the Arctic. Then we put in to the captain's base in Newfoundland--Briggas [??], Newfoundland. We disembarked there, our whole group did disembark there and were driven by a military transport down to Argenta, Newfoundland and flown back to Washington with all our data and our charts and everything we'd been working on. Then a month or so reworking and recalculating notes, survey notes, field books and that sort of thing and cleaning them up and recalculating 'cause we had electric calculators there that we didn't have in the field. All of our calculations in the field at that time were all in pencil. Then, of course, the little pocket computers, didn't come in until a long time after that. So we were working in the drafting room on drafting tables, recalculating notes and plotting some of the information and so forth. I got a tap on the shoulder one day--I was in uniform of course--and here is the chief hydrographer--he's a rear admiral. Very quietly he said, "Lieutenant Turner, would you please join me in my office" very quietly. I don't know, but I didn't say "oh, my word, what have I done now?" And he comes, this other guy that was up in the Arctic with me, he was doing the same thing I was, and we both went in and we sat in his office with the full Navy captain, his executive officer, a couple of the other officers in the hydrographic office and he said to the two of us, he said, "Does the name Tarawa mean anything to you guys?" Oh, yeah, we'd heard about Tarawa but we hadn't had any newspapers, of course, or anything. So we'd heard about it. And he said "Do you know what happened there, the Marine landing?" Well, we had an idea. And he said, "Do you know why that happened?" The holocaust there, the tragedy. Boy, oh, boy.

Mark: So what did happen? Why don't you explain your recollections and your knowledge of what did happen.

Turner: Okay. Well, as we had observed it as much as we could having been out of the country, we could get it off the typescripts and off the wire. Every operation in the amphibious world, since amphibious landings were new to the military and to the Navy and the military, they hadn't any experience, drink experience, of the landings anywhere from the sea. Our program that the amphibious boats, the boats and amphibious vehicles, would have to land on a rising tide at high tide; that is, start off in the rising tide and hit the beach where it was the furthest inland. And this always had to be--and of course *should* be--in the dark so they couldn't be seen and detected. Since we didn't have radar at that time, nobody had radar at that point, so we sent these guys in, in the dark, onto a beach in which the tide was receding and that was

burying the heads in the coral reefs and the boats, of course, were fully loaded with men and equipment and, of course, they touched bottom. As soon as they touched bottom they were grounded for good because they couldn't back off. The water was falling out from under them. So the Japs just mortared them and some of them were close enough to be machine-gunned. They just slaughtered 27,000 men there on the landing beaches before they ever hit dry land. Of course, eventually, they put enough men in there and they knew now what the tide was. Tide hadn't been miscalculated; it had been not observed--the currents, the winds, the prevailing winds, and the currents do some odd things with the tide sometimes, and in this case the wind was such that it was helping to blow the water back and burying the beach. This was enough--very, very shallow water, of course--and this was enough to ground the boats. So, now going back to the admiral, he says, "Do you guys know what happened?" We told him what we knew about it--landing on a receding tide which was lethal. So he said, "Gentlemen, what would you do about that if you were asked?" The two of us officers said, "Could we retire somewhere for a few minutes and get our heads together? This is a shock." So we decided that the only thing that really could happen was that somebody would have to go there on reconnaissance and check the calculations of the tides on the various proposed beaches because a lot of these landings were multiple beaches, too. I mean, opposite sides of an island for instance so the tide in one place would be different than in the other place. And again because of tides, because of currents, just oceanic currents and tidal currents and wind. So we went back and said, well, it looks like the only thing we can come up with that we don't have aircraft out there in sufficient numbers to risk the chance of doing anything with an airplane so somebody's got to get in there and calculate the tide and then get in there and measure it and check for currents and water depths so that the boats can get through in the proposed channels and things like this. And so the admiral came over and he said, "Gentlemen, I'll have your orders cut to report to San Diego [the Naval base] as soon as possible. Pack your bag and be ready to go and we'll send the equipment and we'll order personnel for you to meet you there and you'll be boarded on the first ship going out to the islands, I mean, out to Hawaii." That was it.

Mark: Did he make it clear that you were going to be the one going onto the beach before the invasion?

Turner: Oh, yeah. Yes. We would be in charge. Just two officers would be in charge of two parties, and we were to train them on surveying techniques at sea, literally. I mean while we were at sea, be up on top deck doing triangulation work and plotting and this kind of thing because we were in convoy and we could plot ships and this kind of thing. So we had to train these guys, all enlisted men, rated by the way, rated enlisted men they were. Mostly yeomen, signal men, radiomen--boys that had proven themselves enough to be rated.

Mark: It was a fairly elite bunch then.

Turner: Yeah, it was a special group. And so when we got there, of course, we tran-shipped from Hawaii onto another troopship and crossed the equator right at the international dateline and had the usual towel off services for 24 hours. Excuse me. I've got to take a cup of coffee or something. I anticipated this so I brought coffee down here. They have quite a ritual there as you cross the equator but we hit it right at the right spot where we got both--you get beaten up for crossing the dateline and you get beaten up again for crossing the equator. We went in to Iron Bottom Bay at Guadalcanal and, fortunately, the island, the air strip--Henderson Field there--had just been taken over from the Japs so we gathered our fleet in the pass in what they called Iron Bottom Bay between Florida islands and Guadalcanal.

Mark: Right.

Turner: And then we took off from there to the north. They wouldn't tell us where we were going; they just get ready to do a survey then tell us when we get out in the open sea so there wouldn't get any communications getting loose. And they told us we were going to the Marshall Islands and Kwajalien. So we made the first reconnaissance of Kwajalien on D Minus 28, which of course, is one lunar cycle. That's what they picked. They had to have the darkness of the moon and, of course, with the moon in the new moon phase, it would be totally dark and the tide would be high. That's the spring tide period when the moon and the sun are all in conjugation.

Mark: So this was your first reconnaissance mission then?

Turner: That's right.

Mark: I would imagine that you would have had to learn how to use the scuba equipment and all that sort of stuff?

Turner: Oh, we didn't have any.

Mark: Didn't have any?

Turner: Didn't have scuba at all--it hadn't been invented as far as I know.

Mark: Why don't you just explain to me then the sort of steps involved in doing this sort of thing. How did you sneak in there and do your surveys? Were you protected or not?

Turner: This was, it sounds pretty risky. Well, it was. Did you read the citation, by the way, the bronze star?

Mark: I glanced over it.

Turner: That more or less gives it in a nutshell what we did. And that is in the month before the D-Day invasion somebody had to be on the beach, or close to it, to be able to measure the tide so we had to go from the--mostly the bombardment fleet--see, now, at this point, in 30 days they were already they'd been pounding them be the air from Johnson Island and other carriers way out at sea--dive bombing and heavy artillery--and then they'd move in to within gunnery range of the island or the landing beaches and start shelling, and so they have this all down to a schedule. They'd start shelling the beach and then sweep inland with their artillery, Naval artillery, and during the daytime, day light of course, the bombers would come in overhead and plaster it. So we had this cover. We could work under this canopy of bombardment. For that reason a few ships were within firing range of the beach and they were the big ships where they could fire from over the horizon and the Japs couldn't see them. By that time the airports, strips, had been knocked out by bombing so they couldn't put observer aircraft in the air and so we were--yeah, we were at risk, that's for sure. By the fact that we could work by the clock and we knew what the schedules of, bombardment schedules were going to be, we could get in and make our observation and get back out in a rubber boat or swim or, in a couple of cases, we went in in submarines. Laid out in the dark there, put the conning tower above the water and we'd scramble out over the side and away we'd go. Push a boat or float gear--oh, you asked about scuba. Our uniform of the day was Marine, tropical Marine fatigue greens and low tennies, period. We didn't have masks, we didn't have scuba, we didn't have fins, we didn't have a blasted thing except just the way we were. This is an interesting one. I've recited it to other people. When we went through the interview process right there in the admiral's office I don't ever remember having been asked if I could swim.

Mark: That's interesting.

Turner: Because at this point, the direction of this thing, it was not known how we were going to do this. That was the only thing that was available to us, of course, was to swim. And we didn't have any swimming aids. We had some light floatation gear so that we didn't have to swim constantly. We could lie out there with our heads just above water and drop lead lines and whatnot for sounding and maybe swim far enough ashore to stand on bottom to see what the bottom was like and that sort of thing and then head back out during the dark of the morning and disappear over the horizon in whatever we were going aboard. That's the way it started out, and so we were therefore the first frogmen team in the Pacific. We didn't know ourselves as that. That was conjured up by the television and the media, I think, after the war was over for

the wartime shows. I can't remember this guy's name that, oh, he had scuba gear, well, anyways--

Mark: I don't know either.

Turner: It may come to me. He was one of the famous actors in Hollywood that introduced the ideas and made popular the frogman idea and the scuba diving where he did all sorts of exploring and so forth. Well, that's where the name came from. We were designated in our orders as Hydro I which read hydrographic team, our squad, number one. I'm just looking at my— to see if it mentions that here in my discharge papers. I don't think it does.

Mark: It doesn't but it's something you mention on the biographical sheet I had you fill out.

Turner: Oh, that's right, that's right.

Mark: So I've got that information. I've got a couple of questions about these operations. For one thing, I would imagine it would be hard to concentrate on measuring things and being precise while all this firing is going on. Could you perhaps describe the experience of trying to conduct this sort of research in a combat zone.

Turner: Well, that's what it was. Yeah, they, there were enough fool-hardy Japs that they could stick their heads out of a bunker or something and somewhere and fire a mortar shell at us if they saw us or if they suspected something out there. And sometimes we did not get back away from the beach during the dark and light would start to break and we would have to get out of range. They were trying to pop us with mortars and they were deadly with them. It was amazing. Then they're just knee mortars. They're just like a piece of pipe that you put against your knee and touch it off. We were, basically, we were out of range of machine-guns or anything that way. Of course, we tried to keep a very low profile as possible. We learned, trying to answer your question here at the same time, we learned that if they started shelling or any shells were falling short from the Navy that our best defense was to get up and float flat, make a low profile as well as get your soft parts out of the water. Concussion, good night! Some of those shells if they were close enough, you know, they'd collapse your chest, your lungs. So we could float. Of course, as I say, we had these light flotation; they were just belts is all they were, but at least it kept us from not having to swim all the time. The reaction, of course, to all the shelling, oh my, I tell you, the concussions were just incredible. We knew they were coming because we could hear the detonation from say the battleships way out over the horizon. We couldn't see them. But they were over the horizon and, of course, they could fire, they'd fire all day and all night with continuous around the clock bombardments so that we

could tell when they were firing because we could hear the detonation of the gun and then the shell would pass over and then we'd see where it landed. These were, oh, some of these were 16 inchers. I'm trying to think of ideas, I mean, reactions. On Kwajalien for instance, the Japs dug in such that they had made a whole spider web or tunnels and then had concreted them, concrete made out of the coral, and then they concreted them and then put slabs like blocks of sidewalk squares across the top. So they were all loose. They were covered loosely and were only about six inches below the coral so then they'd push the coral back over the top. Some lived in there for quite awhile. You know they were coming after us in due time because, as we found out, some of them were even grown over with tropical brush already. What I was going to say was some of these tunnels radiated from underground bunkers set way down, oh, 20, 30 feet into the coral and with different levels. Kwajalien for instance, there were three levels of bunkers that were--ammunition storage in the lower level and living quarters in the middle level and the big postwar artillery. You know, the guns in the crown just like a flat crown of concrete with a slot in it that they could aim the guns towards the seas. And they had these scattered all over the island connected with these underground tunnels so that the Japs could get back and forth under cover. Some of these, you couldn't see these things except you could tell where these bunkers were. Once in awhile a shell would land on one with the tunnels and blow up. Of course, it would take the entire whole half a mile--half a mile's worth of the loose lids on the tunnels and flip them up and over. It would just open the whole tunnel up so here you've got like a drainage ditch half way across the island. Then, of course, when they finally got the troops ashore they could find these bunkers, guns, the Naval guns, and in many cases I watched them 'cause I was on the beach at that point. After the first wave, by the way, I didn't mention, after the first wave of the landings why we were always back and the preparations for the landing, of course we were done, our job was done at the time. So we were back on board something or other out there in the fleet and then after the beach was secure, why in some places they had to have surveys made of the channels to the insides of the atoll. This is where they were going to put their ships for unloading and so forth; was inside. That was a new wrinkle, too, because all these coastal guns, the bunkers, were all aimed out to sea. It's a typical atoll. It's more or less circular. Why all the guns faced out; nothing facing in. So they realized this from the air photos and intelligence they had that this was the case. The Marines then would go in with TNT charge, like dynamite, and put it on the, climb up one of these darn things and, fool if there ever was, climb up on the top of these concrete domes--they were real flat domes, sort of shield shapes and they put on, oh, there's a name for it, it's plastic, it's a plastic charge.

Mark: I don't know what it's called either.

Turner: Again, maybe that will come to me. I should have thought of some of these after I got your letter, but I didn't think of going into that. Anyway, they'd fuse it and touch it off and run like heck and it would blow the roof down, it would blow the top down, even though they're concrete, reinforced concrete buildings, it would blow them down into the cavity and touch off the ammunition storage in the lowest level. Well, that was just like a rifle. It blew their gun and everything else straight up in the air. I don't know how many of those I saw go off. Of course, everything was falling--concrete and broken guns and bodies and whatnot falling from all around these things so you wanted to stay away from the troops working inside the island.

Mark: Oh, I'm sure.

Turner: As I say, we had to go back and, like in Kwajalien, there were three channels--what they are is tidal surge channels since the tides run in, the tide runs out into the circle of the atoll. Why, of course, that discharge would keep that channel open and coral wouldn't grow in 'cause there was a current running one way half the day and running the other way half the day so nothing could really get on the bottom and hang there like coral heads or anything. That's what we had to depend on was to check these channels out and make sure we could put ships through them. I mean ships, not just boats, but ships.

Mark: Big ships.

Turner: Yeah. Equipment and troops, the troop ships even. And then get into the interior of the island where we could eventually get into the lagoon of the atolls and check for adequate anchoring facilities and depths and whatnot. After an operation was over we were usually called back in to finish out a chart or to do a chart or something and swing some anchorage circles and whatnot on them so the ships would know where it was clear.

Mark: I see. Okay.

Turner: That went on for 11 different landings.

Mark: I've got a couple more questions here about your operation.

Turner: Sure.

Mark: First of all, did you--second of all I suppose--did you take many casualties? It sounds like risky work, you're being shelled and that sort of thing.

Turner: It was risky work and we lost one man and that was, I hate to say it but it was his own fault. When we were in Okinawa we were, by the way, just off the island where Ernie Pyle was killed in Lejima, just off the west side of

Okinawa, and I was on the beach at that time when Ernie Pyle was shot, oh fifty feet away or something like that, and he was, they say it was a sniper. I thought it was shrapnel but they say it was a sniper. Oh, while I'm on that, let me ask you a question. I'll come back.

Mark: Sure.

Turner: There was an article in the *Denver Post* here a couple of weeks, no it must have been a month or so ago, about the new Ernie Pyle museum in Albuquerque. Have you heard of that?

Mark: No, I haven't.

Turner: I've got an article here and it refers to Peter Stackpole who was a *Life* photographer during the war and Charles Stackpole, his brother, was a Navy man. He went looking for, I've got myself all tied up, Stackpole was a Navy man, was in New Caledonia in Nouméa and knew that this Stackpole brother was there so he went in to see him and when he was there Ernie Pyle came in. Ernie wanted to see this guy, too. So he got to meet Ernie Pyle. Well, I've got an article here that I was going to duplicate and send in to his new museum in Albuquerque. But I was going to see if you're interested, since this is a Wisconsin man, he lives in Brookfield, would you like to talk to him?

Mark: I'd be curious to. I'd appreciate it to contact him.

Turner: Here's his name--Charles Stackpole, he was a chief pharmacist's mate and he had charge of the officers club at Noumea, New Caledonia--and his address is 13755 Tulane Street, Brookfield, Wisconsin 53005.

Mark: I'll drop him a line.

Turner: And you can refer to me if you'd like 'cause I called him--the reason I have all this information is I called him right away when I saw this and told him about being on Lejima when Ernie was killed and wondering if he'd like to have the article. I have some pictures of Ernie's grave site, temporary grave there on Lejima as well, and the monument that they built later on after the airport was serviceable that the built. By the way, that was the big airport where the Japs' surrender aircraft came in and landed and were transferred at the end of the war, after VJ Day, that was the island, Lejima. Not many people knew or heard of it.

Mark: I actually interviewed a gentleman who was on the island at the time. I happen to be familiar with that, yeah.

Turner: Well, for goodness sake. Yeah, we were there. We were doing a landing chart, harbor chart at the time, getting started at it anyway. The forces had just gone ashore and cleared the beaches, you see, so we had to be right behind them to start our surveys so that we could bring the LSTs in and the support groups, you see. Support operations. That's why I happened to be on the ground when Ernie was killed. Well, anyway, that was--how'd I get off on this one?

Mark: We were talking about casualties.

Turner: Casualties, yeah.

Mark: And you had one.

Turner: We had one, yeah. We were off Lejima and it was in the last days of the war when the Japs had, in desperation, kamikaze attacks, were sending everything that could fly into the fleet and trying to knock us down as a fleet and they had bi-planes and float planes with the pontoons filled with gasoline and trying a bomb that was maybe 100 pounder or something like that was tied to a strut. And then they'd just fly it into a ship. Anything went up.

Mark: Sort of crude but it worked, I take it?

Turner: Scared the heck out of everybody. They were guided missiles is what they were; piloted aircraft. In our, by this time by the way, we had a small ship that was a converted minesweeper--

Mark: All of your own?

Turner: Our own. Yeah, we had our own AGS which is Attack General Survey Number 10. That was the *USS John Blish*. We had been, by this time, we had been back to Hawaii to regroup and they gave us this ship to carry our gear with and whatnot, then we were mobile and independent. We didn't have to use submarines and battleships and whatnot. We were, being small, were on the outside of the fleet, anchorage so speak--most of them who had power on all the time but they were staying in the same place pretty much--so we were always stationed on the very outside. We might be 8 or 10 miles from the big ships like the carriers and the battleships and whatnot that were in close to the anchorage or close to the island. General quarters, of course, everybody on ship had a battle station and this one boy was assigned to one of the machine-gun tubs up on the port side, quite a ways above the deck, and he saw this kamikaze coming at us and, of course, we were firing like mad and we had a 3-inch .15, we had two .50 caliber machine-guns and--I said 350, didn't I--artillery--and he thought we were going to take it broadside, those kamikaze, so he jumped over the side and we were under flank speed with twin screws.

Of course, that produces a vortex of white water behind the ship, you know, and maneuvering, snake track all over trying to dodge, keep moving as fast and as erratically as we could move, and he just jumps over the side and disappeared. And I'm sure it made hamburger out of him 'cause we turned back as soon as the raid was over--we turned back to whereabouts where we thought we'd lost him and, of course, we couldn't hunt for him while they went over--and the guys were firing like mad that were in the tub with him so they didn't know--all of a sudden he was gone. They didn't see him go. They were watching their target. That's the only man we lost. That was very, very fortunate. Considering it had never been before and the fact that it was pretty well planned out and pretty well timed. We could have used things like portable radios, sure. Of course, again, like in the Arctic we had no communications after we got off ship.

Mark: This kind of touches on the question I was going to ask anyway. That involves the evolution of the techniques you used to do this 'cause, as you mentioned, this was a brand new thing. I'm sure, over time, you got better at it. You learned new things. So I wonder if you could describe for me some of the evolution of frogman techniques, for lack of a better term.

Turner: It was mainly just learning by experience how to most efficiently do a little quick chart when you're under water. This evolved--at first we were just going in and checking the channels and say, yeah, it's clear, you've got six feet of free board there and later on we got some assignments--the first one I think was Guam--that's one of our old Navy bases that had been taken over by the Japs years before. And so we had some charts of Apra Harbor in Guam but they had been changed considerably and there were some wrecks in there in the war. We were assigned to do a landing beach on the outside of the harbor to access the harbor from the land side. We, at that point, devised a new system of taking heavy duty acetate film that was frosted on one side that we used in the drafting room and tape it down, or staple it down to a clip board and put a string on it, tie it to a belt loop--we didn't even wear belts on our greens--just tie it to a belt loop so if it got away from us it wouldn't float in the tide. That was one of the first developments that we had that was any different from anything else. We, at Iwo, we--well, one thing that was different and you may have read this--was about setting the light, the navigational light on Iwo Jima?

Mark: No, I'm not familiar with this.

Turner: Didn't I send you a copy of the award, the Bronze Star award, that has two of us on it?

Mark: Yeah.

Turner: Well, the first guy--they wrote up that, by the way--

Mark: Here we have it. I only read your thing.

Turner: Oh, yeah. Read Gunther above that. I think I have a note on the side that says, "I don't know why they left me out of Iwo." I was right there, too.

Mark: Yeah. It says, he "directed installation of a central navigational light while under continuous mortar fire."

Turner: Yeah. That was a little different because they decided, some wise guy back in Washington or at Admiral Nimitz's office or somewhere, had decided that the nicest thing would be to have a light on the southeast side of Mt. Suribachi so that the incoming fleet--at night, of course, it would be pitch dark--so that the incoming fleet could take a bead on the island. And both Tom and I said, "Oh my gosh. How are we going to pull this one off?" You've got to get ashore and you've got to get, you've got to be up--well, the principle was you had to be able to see 22 miles at least which is basically the gunnery range of the big ships. And also that's the curvature of the earth, too. From sea level that's about as far as you can see if your eyes are down at sea level or if you're standing on--

[End of Tape 1, Side A]

Turner: Okay. Yeah, my throat gets dry.

Mark: Yeah, I know. So, we're back anytime you want to start.

Turner: Oh, you are? Okay. So we had to devise a way to do that which was entirely different than we'd ever done. And that was we had acetylene lamps, sort of on the principle of the miner's hardhat lamp that burned with an acetylene flame. It had an automatic screen that would screen, in other words, to the dark phase and then for a light phase like a rotation on a lighthouse. That's basically what this was to be was to be a coded light and they gave us the code and, of course, the fleet knew what the code was so we devised the idea of taking one of the big Navy tarpaulins and tying a clothesline rope to the grommets in the corners, fold it all up, roll it all up, and two of us would go up the side of the mountain--hope we didn't fall into a trap. At this point, again, it's not as bad as it sounded because the bombardment on Iwo, good night! They had extended the bombing by this time in the war 'till three or four months of continual bombing and artillery and whatnot. So the idea, of course, was wear out the Japs, they couldn't get any sleep, and to drive them underground as much as possible and just keep them underground all the time if they had underground facilities. Of course, Suribachi was loaded; it was honeycombed. We were aware of that fact, intelligence had told us that. So

we took this tarp, rolled up, and crawled up in the ash, in the clinkers--that's basically what they are, the volcanics--crawled up as far as we could and find a spot where we could put the lamp and face it in the right direction with a compass and lay the tarp over us and spread it out and then light the acetylene and then set the timing--well, we'd set the timing before we left the ship--check the timing, in other words, and all covered up with this opaque tarp, then slide out from under it, take the clothesline ropes, 50 or 60 feet of it, and two of us on a jerk we just, both jerking it, and tumble like heck down the hill, and get back to the beach, and out to sea. That's what that's referring to there. There was, in the dark, they knew there was somebody around. We couldn't be entirely silent; clinkers rolling and this kind of thing. They had their own men there to watch out for, too, so we escaped that one for some reason or other. The good Lord I suppose.

Mark: I suppose.

Turner: So that was different. Oh, and then I mentioned, I didn't finish my story of the clip board did I? The frosted acetate. We could draw on this with a very hard pencil, like a 9H pencil--it was sort of like writing on fine sandpaper--and it wouldn't wash off. What we could do would be to draw on this the best outline that we had from a chart or air photo or something that we had in our collection, the rough outlines of say a channel that we were supposed to be looking at. Then we'd go ashore with a lead line, which was just a clothesline with a weight on it with knots--you're familiar, I guess, with the origin of the word "knot" in the Navy?

Mark: No, I'm not. I was in the Air Force myself.

Turner: Oh, I see. Yeah, the "knot" measured in speed, a ship is traveling so many knots--

Mark: Oh, I see what you're saying.

Turner: Yeah. Okay. Then the "knot" word came from the knot that they tied in the lead line every six feet or one fathom, so we could just tie the knots in the line at one fathom depths, therefore we could go ashore, we could swim in, and with this sketch in hand, we'd have to, of course, violate the daylight rule and recon in the dark and then get out where we could do some sounding and sketch it in with a hard pencil and take it back to the ship. Most of the bigger ships had, at that time, they were osalin [??] machines--blue line duplicators--and we could put this acetate right on the duplicator and make a print of it and that's what they'd have to run it over to the fleet command and they'd distribute, they'd print it and then distribute it among the fleet as fast as they could get it out. So that was one of the ways that the coxswains on the boats had of knowing their course or knowing where the headwaters were, the open

channels and stuff. So that was somewhat unusual, too. That had never been done before.

Mark: As for your boat. When did you get your boat again? I don't remember.

Turner: Oh, gosh. That's something I would have to research I guess.

Mark: I'm sure it's in the official records.

Turner: Oh, yeah. As a matter of fact, I've got a whole scrapbook of communications and signal light translations and this kind of thing where our ship is identified as the addressee. I think I can go back, as a matter of fact, and find something in there of when we actually picked up the YMS. It was in Pearl Harbor. Yeah, we were retired to Pearl Harbor, as I say, after one operation. I'm trying to think which one it was. I guess it was after the Marianas--Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam. Yeah, that was it. We were retired back to Hawaii for reassignment or regrouping and then right back out in the Pacific again to the, let's see--I'm trying to think of the sequence. We went into the Philippines and then we went from the Philippines at Leyte Gulf to Iwo and then down to Okinawa in the ship. We had a ship, but let's see, five landings in the Marianas. If you're familiar with wartime history out there that was the one that was very, very highly underrated by us, by the US forces--that they had far more men in placements and whatnot there than they gave them credit for. We had to churn around there for 30 days and we were running out of fuel and out of food and everything else. While the fleet went back to regroup then they came in, then they ordered us out. That's when we went back to--I've lost my track here--we went back to--we went to Hawaii after--oh, shoot, I'm sorry.

Mark: That's okay.

Turner: Anyway, I've lost the sequence here. I better check my notes. Oh, by the way, I say checking notes, one of the reasons for the fact that, well, Farrington Daniels is after me to do this sort of thing is, see, we couldn't take any notes, per se. We couldn't keep a diary in case we were captured or in case they got a hold of--

Mark: ____ they did.

Turner: Yeah. So that's where I was terribly short was in my memory or what I could salvage out of other sources for a scrapbook. Like I had my folks in Madison saving all the *State Journals* of any new landing operations. Say, "Well, I can't tell you where I am or where I've been, but I'll read them when I get home." which I did. So we had opportunity to collect, had people collecting. I had family, friends on Honolulu and I asked them the same question. I said,

"Would you please save the *Honolulu Bulletin* for any new landing operations 'cause I may be there." So then, of course, I could fill in the slots. Anything else?

Mark: Yeah, I've got a couple more questions about some of your operations. Did the Japanese know what you were doing? I mean, if they saw you guys taking measurements in the beach, did they know an invasion was coming and when it was coming?

Turner: I dare say they may have suspected something because we were different. I mean, we had a raft maybe, a little rubber raft, we're just two or three guys out there swimming around, you know. They must have had telescopes and binoculars and could recognize we weren't Japanese probably--and just our statures, of course. I'm 6'3" and my buddy was, too. We could sound out a whole fathom of water, you see, standing up. I don't think they really did. They may have been suspicious that something was happening on shore because, of course, they'd been under bombardment for so long. So they probably assumed that something was happening down there. They were looking down. But, again, there's another aspect that we discovered that they wouldn't reveal their location up on the hills. Let's say if it was hilly like Guam is or Okinawa, if there's any relief to the island, why they, of course, were way up above us and they could look down on us and see. Of course, in the atolls in the mid-Pacific, it was all flat. I dare say that they figured that something was going on, but they didn't dare reveal their location because our gunners were too accurate. As a matter of fact, we could see them in the gunnery, the ships, actually picking out a spot where we'd seen a flare or puff of smoke, we realized it was a mortar or something there, and on board the ships out at sea they'd see these, too, and they'd just drop a shell on it. They were that accurate, they could. So these guys just weren't about to reveal themselves to two or three guys just swimming around virtually nude along their beach. Of course, we didn't get up and walk around until after, I mean on land, until after the beach was taken and fighting was going on inland. So that was, that's a question that's often asked, I'll have to say. Probably just the fact that they couldn't reveal their location, and therefore, maybe some of their manpower and this kind of thing if they revealed too many locations or gunner locations or something.

Mark: So on to some of the more mundane of your experiences in the Pacific. When you weren't preparing for an invasion or something like that, what did you do to occupy your time and what did you do for fun? Did you write letters? Anything going on, whatever the case might be?

Turner: Oh, yeah. I wrote--my folks were still living and in Madison and I was keeping them advised--see after an operation was all over, why we had to retire somewhere and we might go into the harbor at Noumea, New Caledonia,

or they'd send us out. Yeah, we were sent out a couple of times during--whoop, I've run out of coffee--we were sent from Noumea to Espirito Santo in the Hebrides to do a channel survey out there because the battle at Coral Sea was just about to take place. We didn't know it. And the Jap fleet had been seen out to the east of the Hebrides Islands and they had a chain of islands--and the Hebrides is sort of a screen to the southwest Pacific--screen as far as radar--well, again, we didn't have radar--visual screen--but they could come in behind the islands, snap through a channel and be out in the American battle fleets 'cause our fleet was just north of it. So they sent us over there to do a chart and land on the island. It was not an invasion. It was not occupied by the Japs. Our forces never occupied it. So we'd, we stayed down in the officers club at Espirito Santo, American officers club there, and wrote letters back, and of course by that time the last operation was history. It wouldn't make any difference; the Japs had lost. It didn't make any difference then; we could tell them where we were. And so I have a _____ pile of letters that the folks saved all during the war. They saved them and bound them up in chronological order so I have quite a file here. I don't know what I'm ever going to do with it.

Mark: Well, don't throw them away.

Turner: Oh, is that right?

Mark: Huh?

Turner: Is that right?

Mark: Yeah.

Turner: Would you like them?

Mark: Oh, sure.

Turner: You would?

Mark: Oh, we collect those sorts of things.

Turner: Oh, you do?

Mark: Oh, yeah. So don't ever throw them away. That would not be a good thing.

Turner: I've got them right here in my den. I'll have to, as a matter of fact, I think it's in a cardboard box labeled "Dan's war letters" or something like that. Yeah. Sure I can do that.

Mark: Those are very interesting, actually.

Turner: Some of them are very descriptive and I have some things in the scrapbook that would be of interest, too, probably.

Mark: It sounds like it. So when the war ended, do you recall where you were and what you were doing and what you thought at the time?

Turner: Oh, I definitely do. We were at Lejima area on Okinawa, just off of Okinawa, and--where the kamikazes had tried to nail us--and one night, oh, about three days before it was officially announced, some word got loose. I don't know, some radioman I guess heard something and reported it out there in the fleet and the whole Pacific Ocean broke out in flares and rocketry--you wouldn't believe it. Of course, we were all up on deck and didn't know what was going on. We hadn't had any word on anything at that point. Finally, in full English--no code at all--fleet commander came on the air just screaming mad that there'd be no such foolishness. But word had gotten out that V-J Day had taken place and everybody started shooting. They weren't shooting at anything. The shrapnel, that was the problem. There was so much iron up in the air--

Mark: It had to come down somewhere.

Turner: It had to come down, and it came down on decks. Yeah, we had to clean sweep the fore and aft after that. Sweeping up hunks of shrapnel. And let me tell you, nobody got hurt but, again, we didn't get anybody hurt, but we were close. Well, it was about three days later that they did announce that V-J Day had taken place and announced also that the Jap representatives from Tokyo would be flying in to Lejima and transferring this right where we were. We were at anchor right off, well, in the anchorage--we were surveying, actually--when word came, and of course then the commander-in-chief said, "There will be no untoward random firing." There were four men killed in that operation, on deck. So he just terminated it; there won't be any firing. You can enjoy it, but don't fire. So then we, after we finished our chart in Lejima, we were ordered over to the China Sea and the Yangtze River.

Mark: For what reason?

Turner: The Japs had completely wiped out all navigational aids on the Yangtze River.

Mark: I see.

Turner: And there was some shoreline, shore mounted towers for visual sitings and triangulation--the channel had originally been buoyed because, of course, you know, being a geographer, the Yangtze is nothing but thin mud. So the

channel is never visible. Out near the mouth in the delta the Yangtze is not visible at all so the buoy tenders had to find the channels and mark them for navigation into Shanghai up the Huangpu River. So they didn't have any navigational aids at all when the war ended. And, of course, they quit in China, the Japs had quit in China, so they ordered us in to do a survey and to chart, not a chart, find a channel and mark it in other words. And they sent a buoy tender along with us--we could do the surveying and the buoy tender would plunk the buoys down right on up to the mouth of the Huangpu and the signal tower at the mouth of the Huangpu on Shanghai--it's a big, like a lighthouse, watchtower. When we went ashore there to put in our shore based aids, navigational aids, we went up to the tower--here's a Jap still on guard up there with his musket. Of course, there were two or three of us. We hadn't anticipated that but they still left him up there. For some reason the Japs thought they still controlled the harbor I guess. It was a little bit of a surprise.

Mark: I'm sure it must have been.

Turner: But we didn't take him prisoner or anything like that. And we couldn't talk to him, of course. He didn't know any English. Then we laid over tied up to the dock for the first time in four years and went ashore and on the blend in Shanghai. Oh, I was going to say, in setting these markers--the Chinese Customs Office is like a combination of like our Treasury Department, Coast Guard, Coast and Geodetic survey--it's all three wrapped in one. So they had their survey officers there in Shanghai that were familiar with the river so they put one of their officers on board with us to be the communicator to the Chinese and to the people on shore, the Chinese on shore, because--he's an interesting angle. When the Japanese took over the Yangtze River they ran into the fact that the Chinese Customs Office had erected these bamboo towers, but 80 feet high kind of towers that were painted black so they could be seen against the sky and they had picked up some coolies on the dikes and in the rice paddies to be, picked them up, selected them as overseers or guards of these towers. They were actually, and they got paid for it. I don't know how much in Chinese money. The towers actually were under scrutiny by these Chinese coolies that lived right there under threat of death if they were to let those towers be vandalized in any way. So when the Japs came in they went ashore and the caretakers, you know, object to the fact that they were going to burn their towers down and _____ summarily execute. So that would take out all the evidence of a marker of any kind on the land. They were shown on the chart, of course, but there's no marker. So this officer and I would go ashore with a couple of other of our officers--he would speak Chinese in their dialect and ask who it was that was supposed to be the caretaker of the tower at this approximate place and where is it? I mean, where is the marker? Well, what they'd done when they built them they put a concrete pyramid down below in the mud, down below the surface about two feet and then they erected the tower centered over that so that these guys that

had been paid over the years for taking care of the towers, you know, they couldn't fight the Japs about it, they had to let the tower go but they knew where the spot was so they'd grab a shovel and we'd grab a shovel and go out there and start digging. Point down in the dirt, right here, right here and we'd dig down and sure enough, there it would be. They have specialists in bamboo work over there and they split bamboo and this kind of thing for weaving and using--oh, these bamboo legs on these towers were bamboo that's about five inches in diameter at the base and then they lash them together with rattan and then they have a big six foot sphere. Incredible the way they could weave these spheres out of split bamboo and then they painted them with tar and they'd hoist them up on top when they got the tower built and you have this big round black ball up on the top of the tower. So we had this guy to visit with and he stayed right with us all the time we were surveying. He slept and ate with us and everything onboard ship. So we had a personal introduction you might say to Shanghai.

Mark: I see. So you got to come home then finally? Just before Christmas I guess?

Turner: That's right. It was, one of our missions was to get the battle fleet into the harbor of Shanghai and Huangpu. The *USS National*, the heavy cruiser, came in and anchored there. My time had long expired in the--what did they call it--the eligibility? That wasn't the right word. When you've been at sea so many years or so much time?

Mark: You had points.

Turner: Yeah, you got points for your service, that's right. Well, I had more than enough points.

Mark: I can imagine so.

Turner: They notified us that the *National* was headed back home to the mainland and we could hitch a ride. So I went on the *National* and had a place for a ride home to Pearl Harbor where we refueled and restocked, reprovisioned. Then we went into San Diego.

Mark: How'd you get back to Madison?

Turner: On a troop train. I forget the route now but we took a train. They fixed it up for us. They were going through many of the larger cities. I think the train took us into Chicago, yeah. Train took us into Chicago and I was able to contact the folks and tell them I was coming in. Oh, let's see, I'm trying to think now. Oh, I know. Yeah, they took us into Chicago and then bused us up to Great Lakes Naval Training Station at Great Lakes. Does that still exist by the way?

Mark: Yeah, it does.

Turner: It does?

Mark: Yeah.

Turner: Well, they took us up there, and I called the folks en route and told them that I'd be at Great Lakes about so-and-so, and they came over and got me and brought me home and I went back to, as you say, it was Christmas time. I forgot, the very biggest thing in my life I guess. I got married in 1944 on leave.

Mark: Oh, yeah?

Turner: Yeah. Met a WAVE in the hydrographic office in Washington and we were--on R&R I came back to the mainland and flew home and we decided to get married. I said I'd never do that but I did it anyway.

Mark: But you did. So then after the war you came back to Madison and your new wife, she wasn't from Madison, I--

Turner: Milwaukee.

Mark: Oh, Milwaukee.

Turner: Yeah, she grew up in Milwaukee.

Mark: So it wasn't a big, it wasn't a big relocation that had to be done necessarily. She was from the same state.

Turner: Yeah, that's right. Her folks were still living in Milwaukee. So, of course, we visited around. I went back to school from then until '48.

Mark: Right. And when you went back to school--you went to get your Ph.D.--did you use the GI Bill or any sort of--

Turner: Oh, yes. I used everything I could get. So did she. She wanted to add on. She was a graduate of what is now the University of Wisconsin-Stout up in Menomonie in Home Ec. and she wanted to go on and do some graduate work in Home Economics. She had been a Home Ec. teacher before the war and joined up in the WAVES. So she wanted to go to school. I intended to go back to school, so we did. We lived at home with my folks for a little while.

Mark: Right. Now, you mention on this data sheet that you filled out that you had trouble finding a place to live as a young couple.

Turner: Yeah, that's right. After the war, everybody was coming home and during all the war days there hadn't been any massive building projects or developments anywhere, you know. We had to bunk in wherever we could find a place. We stayed with the folks awhile.

Mark: Was that difficult? You know, with your new bride, to be with your parents?

Turner: Yeah, we decided after awhile that it wasn't going to work very well. One of the problems was my new wife didn't particularly get along with my mother. So we found a neighbor in Nakoma, a neighbor, that was widowed and had a palatial home out there in Nakoma and had unused bedrooms. He was living alone. So we propositioned--I had known him for years--propositioned him to let us move in with him, and we'd do the housework and the cooking, cook his meals and do the laundry, do all the housekeeping. So we stayed there for, oh, gosh, I guess it was all of a year – no, not a year, six months maybe--six or eight months. And then we found, there was a place way over in Monona Village, a tiny little house that was available for rent. So we moved out lock, stock, and barrel to Monona Village. I commuted from there into campus. Finished out--oh, I picked up, by coming back to school, I got an instructorship then 'cause I had been a grad-assistant before. I came back and with that kind of seniority--there were quite a few of us, as a matter of fact, in Geology that had been out and come back to finish, so we had a whole crew of Ph.D. candidates there. A couple of us got instructorships. That helped a lot in paying our way.

Mark: I'm sure.

Turner: The two of us. I mean, being married and whatnot. I was teaching then until I got my degree.

Mark: Which was when?

Turner: In '48. June of '48.

Mark: Now, on this data sheet here you mention the baby boom and your contribution to it. Not to get too personal but did you have kids soon after the war?

Turner: Yeah. '46. Yeah, we--I went back to the Park Service. Summertime of course, I wasn't teaching, so I went back to the Park Service with Ruth, and we had a little ranger shack to live in for the summer. At that time she was pregnant. When we got back in the fall, our first baby was born.

Mark: Did it complicate the financial matters? I mean, you kind of mention that you were living--it was difficult to get by, kind of?

Turner: Well, that's basically yes. The Park Service job, it paid but even in '46 the annual, oh gosh, quote the salary base--interesting, I can't remember the actual total.

Mark: That's all right.

Turner: Well, it wasn't enough to really support a family or I might have stayed in the Park Service. It wasn't enough even as a permanent ranger, staff member, wouldn't be enough. After I got my degree, of course, right out of school I went to work out here in Colorado with the Atomic Energy Commission. That was the best kind of a deal that was going at that time.

Mark: Why is that?

Turner: Financially. Atomic Energy Commission was staffing up for the uranium boom so they were hiring new geologists fresh out of school.

Mark: Now, this is a federal position, right?

Turner: Yeah.

Mark: Was there any veteran's preference that came into play that you know of?

Turner: Not that I know of. I don't remember having to face any inquisition or anything.

Mark: I see.

Turner: No, I don't think there was. The only interviews really that we had was the representative from the AEC came to the school and were soliciting, they were interviewing at school, at Madison there.

Mark: I'm sorry.

Turner: Right there at Science Hall. I had an office down in the basement of Science Hall for about what, four years, three years before, no five years--three years before the war and two after. I went back to school in '46, you see. I had an office right there. They came in and interviewed a whole bunch of us.

Mark: I've got just one last question about GI benefits after the war and then we can move on to a couple of other topics. There were the various housing loans.

When it came time for you to buy a house did you use any sort of loans or did you have enough, or were you well off enough financially to afford--?

Turner: Both of us had--no, both of us had the GI allowance so we could use those.

Mark: I see.

Turner: As a matter of fact, we bought a house when we moved to Grand Junction out here. Again, there still wasn't any housing available. There was one house that we found out about that was just being finished. Oh, I think it had maybe 800 square feet or something like that. Very small place. Only one floor. By this time, of course, we'd had the baby and I was working out in the field all the time in geology, so we finally put a down payment on this house and stayed in a motel until the house was finished. As a matter of fact, we both went over there and helped him finish. It was one guy, one guy building it.

Mark: You just couldn't wait to get it done, huh?

Turner: Oh, yeah. We went over and helped him paint and varnish and clean up and sweep down and everything. And we only stayed there, oh, when did I--I finally left the AEC, they offered me a professorship at Laramie, Wyoming so I left the AEC. It wasn't going quite like they'd anticipated it was supposed to be doing. I thought, well, as long as I have this opportunity I might as well get out and go to teaching. That's one reason I went to the Ph.D. degree also.

Mark: To teach.

Turner: Some day I would want to teach 'cause I had been before as a grad-assistant instructor. I liked it. Apparently the staff and the students didn't mind so I went back to the teaching game in Laramie.

Mark: I've got two last areas I want to cover. First involves sort of personal and psychological readjustments back in this establishment.

Turner: Oh, yeah, right.

Mark: Some of the problems the Vietnam vets complained about after the war, did you experience any sort of--

Turner: Yes, I can recite one. You know what, I've got to get something to drink. I've got a cordless phone here and I'm going to have to run upstairs and put something--can you hear me all right?

Mark: Yes.

Turner: I'm on the cordless now. I can talk to you going up the steps.

Mark: Sure.

Turner: This is something that I found rather curious and interesting. That is, when I got home my folks, of course I had all these letters and everything, and they didn't ask me any questions particularly, like your question, did I have any reactions or hangovers or whatever from combat. Well, I just didn't know what to do. Whether I should bring it up. Maybe the blood and gore and everything--they weren't interested or didn't want to hear about, so I didn't say anything. They were going under the premise that it had been publicized in the media, don't irritate--I guess that's as good a word as any--don't irritate the veterans coming back from service because they've got some very--probably have had some very unfortunate experiences and they don't want to think about it or talk about it or be reminded about it. That's the way--

Mark: There's this kind of miscommunication going on.

Turner: Yeah.

Mark: I see.

Turner: That was one of the things I found rather curious that they…well, a lot of the people, a lot of my friends and whatnot…of course, the GIs in Geology, we could talk around all our experiences, you know. Very few of them had any reactions that I know of, that I can think of.

Mark: Like I've spoken to a lot of veterans who say they had dreams for a couple of months afterward, for example. Is that something you experienced?

Turner: No. Interestingly enough I didn't. I don't know 'cause I'm quite a dreamer, really. I dream every night. I don't remember that I had any untoward sort of nightmares or anything. No. One of the things that I can recite and my whole family knows about it is, excuse me, I've still got to get that drink, please.

Mark: Sure, yeah.

Turner: Get in the refrigerator here so I can get something cold. How is it in Madison today? Hot?

Mark: No, it's, I think it's beautiful, actually. It's about 68 degrees and it's partly sunny, it's starting to get green, you can smell the flowers. It's one of my favorite times of year. It's a beautiful day.

Turner: Oh, great. Okay. See if that will clear my throat. One of the things that stuck with me for years wasn't a dream, not dreaming, but a reflection back to riding troopships all over the Pacific. These troopships would have, well, they overloaded all the bunks. In the south--when I say the south I mean the South Pacific--guys were sleeping on deck and this kind of thing. They had, oh, you know, in other words these troopships were just mobbed. So when D Day came around and H Hour, hour of the landing was called, the chaplains that were traveling with the troops would call for communion and they'd have one up in the bow and one on the fantail and one maybe down in the mess hall or someplace for each of the denominations--for Catholic or Protestant or Jewish or whatever else chaplains they had--and the policy was that, particularly the Catholics, would meet up in the bow on the one ship that I was on, the first time I experienced this, and they'd have communion up there on the bow in the dark. Then as the day began to break, why, see again going back to the schedule of them landing--the approach of the fleet with all the landing boats and the LSTs, the landing force in other words, were to be at what they called the line of departure--actually the boats all lined up just at the break of dawn when they could just see. In other words, they'd disembark during the dark and chug down to the line of departure and, as a matter of fact, that little ship that we had, finally got our ship--we were usually worn in to the line of departure and they had to line up between us and our sister ship, and we may be two or three miles apart, but the point of it was that they threw landing nets over the side of the ship and when they went over the side, of course, they dropped into the LCVPs and the landing vehicles and whatnot and take off for the line of departure, and this was immediately after the communion. I watched these--now it's starting to break dawn and the boats are taking off and the Japs are shelling and raising hog and hitting these boats, you know, and blowing them all to heck. Lost a lot of men, of course, in every landing that way. Even with all the bombardments, you know, they were still clever enough to use mortars and be mobile enough to get around and drop these slugs and the landing boats. Well, part of it was that it got so routine for me that they'd have communion--what is your faith, by the way?

Mark: Um, Catholic.

Turner: Good. I've never been--I'm Protestant so I've never been to a Catholic, well, I have been to. Yes, I've been, sure. I don't remember though how it was done but "This is my body broken for you, this is my blood, etc." in the communion service. At least onboard ship they had, I suppose it was unleavened bread or something, at least it cracked. You could hear this thing crack, _____ the cracker, cracked, and then "this is my blood shed for you." This I could see as soon as the boats were out in water, I could see men dismembered, blood, bodies--oh, boy, broken bodies. "This is my body broken for you." Sometimes we'd have to go ashore for, as I say, a pickup job of some kind and still blood hanging around in the water. It just so turned my stomach and my

head that I just--I couldn't go to communion for years. I'd go to church but when they'd have communion I'd just have to get up and leave. That has lasted until, well, the present church we're going to here in Denver, we changed churches in eight years--no seven years ago--and this present church is non-denominational, the church that we go to. I don't know, their communion is different. I told the pastor before we joined the church, I said, "Well, I've got a problem." And I described what I told you and he said, "Well, why don't you come. You don't have to participate, you know, if you don't want to. If it causes you problems, you don't have to." I said, "Well, I think I should and I would like to." And my gosh after he talked to me for awhile, I volunteered to usher and I started ushering for communion. Then I was starting to take communion and it's all gone now. I'd walk into communion now and no problem at all.

Mark: But it took almost 40 years.

Turner: Yeah, that's right. Exactly.

Mark: That's interesting, actually.

Turner: That's amazing, yes. And you know, I have talked, we have been to many churches in our moving around the country, and even in town we've been members of lots of churches, and I've always presented this to the minister before we signed on the dotted line. And nobody, as a matter of fact, I was in the hospital a couple of times in a Catholic hospital where the nuns would come around and offer communion at bedside, you know. I would, of course, deny it and I'd tell them I just can't do it. It isn't because I'm not Catholic but I said I sure would if I could. And I'd tell the story and would ask them if they had any kind of panacea for this kind of thing or if they'd ever heard of it before, a similar reaction. No, everyone that I've talked with never heard of this kind of reaction. As I say, I've talked to nuns, I've talked to--well, my wife and I went to a marriage encounter--are you familiar with that program?

Mark: No.

Turner: It's a marriage counseling, renew your vows kind of thing. You spend the whole weekend at it.

Mark: I've been married five years. It hasn't been that long.

Turner: I see, yeah. That's the, it's for renewing your vows and counseling or marital problems and that sort of thing. From our church, a Lutheran church at that time. A couple had been to one of these and said "Let's all go, let's go down there as a group." So we did, Ruth and I went. Excuse me. Here I am again. I need to take another sip. You realize I've been talking for two hours.

Mark: Uh hum, almost.

Turner: Oh, this marriage encounter group was meeting at the, it's a secured facility sort of place. It was at a nunnery, Catholic nunnery, that was available for over a weekend--board roomers. At the end of the session--this was run by the priesthood, the whole meeting was--so at the end of the marriage encounter session on Sunday afternoon, why they're all going down to communion in the gym. So I went down to the gym and two or three priests lined up and we all filed by just like a production line, and I'd never seen or heard of that one before, but that was so unlike any communion I'd ever seen. I took communion that time, and that was oh, gosh, that was about in--when was it? I'm trying to think when we were in Michigan--well, it was ten, fifteen years ago, I guess. Yeah, something like that. Well, that was the only time I ever broke in the reaction area to communion was that one time because it sure wasn't--in a gymnasium walking along a production line. It was sort of an odd one. That's the way it works.

Mark: I've got one last area and about five or ten minutes worth of tape so we can perhaps cover it fairly quickly, and that involves any sort of veteran's organizations you may have joined after the war or did not join. Did you join some of these sort of groups like the Legion or some of the smaller groups and why or why not?

Turner: Yeah. Let me go back on the wire-line phone now.

Mark: Okay.

Turner: Yeah, I'm on the wire now. Yes, I did. I tend to be sort of a joiner. I won't say socialite or anything like that. I like these kind of groups, so yeah. I joined the, let's see, where was it--oh, right here in Denver. When we moved into Denver in 1952 there was a big VFW club, unit, whatever, chapter here in Denver that was fairly well known and it was fairly close to the house where we lived so I joined the VFW and never went to a meeting.

Mark: Never once?

Turner: Never once.

Mark: Did you go hang out in the bar or anything? Or were you just--

Turner: I did when I went down and joined up. I went in and had a drink or two at the bar, talked to some of the guys that were around. Well, I don't know why. I got busy doing something else. I was in the field of geology, so I was out of town a lot, in the field, and sitting on oil wells and gas wells. Also had a

degree in mining engineering so I was doing some mining consulting work and it just got so that I just didn't get around to getting there.

Mark: I see.

Turner: Let's see, that was the VFW and that only lasted a couple of years I guess. I finally resigned. No, I didn't have any other veteran's group at all. I had several other things when we moved into Denver--excuse me again, hang on. We were living--I bought a home in an area that was not covered with fire protection, so we organized our own fire district and bought some land and bought the rig and build a firehouse and so forth, and I was tied up with that all the time for seven years. I ended up being chief before I left. In other words, I had lots to do other than go down and sit at the bar and drink at the VFW.

Mark: Too much work to do.

Turner: When we moved in it was--excuse me--my voice ain't non-sequitor. Okay. No, I didn't, can't think of anything else we had going as far as an organization at all.

Mark: Those are all the questions I had. Is there anything you'd like to add before we finish up and give your voice a rest?

Turner: I can't think of anything right now that--I can ask you this, did you say you have this transcribed in a printed page?

Mark: We're eventually going to, yes. But that's a rather slow process. Eventually it's going to be transcribed. And I was going to tell you if you want a copy of the tape, if you send me some blank cassettes, I'll be more than happy to--

Turner: Regular audio cassettes? Okay, I think I've got them.

Mark: For financial reasons I can't give you a tape, but if you give me some tapes, I'll do the labor for you.

Turner: One tape of how many minutes? Sixty a side?

Mark: Yeah. You've almost filled up two hours here. So, yeah, you'll need two 60 minute tapes.

Turner: Two 60 minute tapes or both sides?

Mark: Yeah.

Turner: Wait, I'm not with you. I don't want to do it wrong. You mean two separate tapes?

Mark: Yeah. I think you'll need two separate tapes. You've got 120 minutes, about 2 hours worth of interview.

Turner: In other words, you want 120 minutes worth of tape? Okay. Does it make any difference if it's all on one?

Mark: Yeah, I've got these special 2 hour tapes here. They were hard for me to find. You might have to get two tapes.

Turner: I know what I've got. I haven't run a tape player for so long. Live taping, I don't know what my stock is, so I'll have to do that. Yeah, I'd sure like to hear that.

Mark: You can do it now or in a couple of months or next year. It's always going to be here. It's completely up to you.

Turner: Oh, yeah. Okay.

Mark: Well, I thank you for taking two hours of your time.

Turner: Oh, for heaven sakes, I'm delighted to be able to do it. I don't know whether I'll be around long enough to get the paper copy or not.

Mark: Oh, you'll be around long enough. I wouldn't worry about it.

Turner: I'll tell you what. My wife's got Alzheimer's and what they call multi-infarcted dementia which has put her in a nursing home and so I'm living by myself, and I'm 78 years old so I'm, I've got my time cut out for me I think. Okay?

Mark: Yeah. And the letters, whenever you get around to it, throw them in the mail.

Turner: Oh, I've forgotten that already. You see, there's my memory. My memory for the war isn't too bad, I guess.

Mark: It was very excellent actually.

Turner: Good. I didn't know whether you were going to ask about ships, ship names and dates and how long on board and all that sort of thing.

Mark: No, that's not my area.

Turner: That would be something I'd have to research. I think I've got all the files to do it but. The kids have been wanting me to write my story that I've told you and this might be--

Mark: This might be a way to start anyway.

Turner: This might be a way to start, yeah. I got a copy of this conversation and then I can duplicate, and I've never written it. That's the problem. I like to write but just to sit down and jot off the stories and the anecdotes and so forth, I just haven't done it.

Mark: Yeah, it takes time.

Turner: Oh, it sure does.

Mark: So, anyway. Thank you once again. You'll be hearing from me. I'll send you the release form that has to be signed. And, again, I appreciate all your help.

Turner: Well, I appreciate it real much and being able to contribute to the new museum. It is new isn't it?

Mark: Yeah. Well, we appreciate it.

Turner: Thanks so much.

Mark: Sure. Thank you.

Turner: Good-bye.

[End of Interview]