

**Transcription: William McDonald**

---

*My name is Tom Single. I'm with the Texas General Land Office. Today is February the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009. It's approximately 1:33 p.m. I am interviewing William McDonald by telephone. I am located at the General Land Office and Mr. McDonald is in his home. The interview is in support of the Voices of Veterans Program of the State of Texas Veterans Land Board. The purpose is to create a permanent record of military service experiences of veterans. Mr. McDonald, as you know, I am about to interview you relating to your military experiences. The interview is by telephone and I will be using a tape recorder to record this interview. The interview will be transcribed and made into a permanent record at the Veterans Land Board in Austin, Texas. Does the Veterans Land Board have your permission and consent to conduct this interview and make it a part of the permanent records of the Veterans Land Board?*

**William McDonald:** Yes.

*OK, now the format for the interview and the purpose of the interview is to record your recollections of your military experience especially during the World War II years. We will follow somewhat a question and answer format, but please feel free to expand on your answers and add anything that you think may be helpful in refreshing your recollections so that future generations will have the opportunity to know what it was like for you during your military life and how those experiences shaped your life since then. We will discuss your experiences in somewhat chronological sequence. We understand that some of your experiences may be difficult to discuss and if so, you are free to limit the interview to the extent you are comfortable in relating those experiences. OK, we'll begin with some general background. Could I have your name and your present address?*

**William McDonald:** My name is William Logan McDonald. I do not have my address written down here beside me.

*OK, is it 4409 Gaines Ranch Loop?*

**William McDonald:** That is correct.

*#440, Austin, Texas?*

**William McDonald:** That is correct.

*OK, and could you tell me your age, sir?*

**William McDonald:** I'm 88.

*OK, how about your family information? Could you tell me about your immediate family, your parents, and any siblings you may have had or have?*

**William McDonald:** My parents were Robert Leander McDonald and Sudi May Dellingham McDonald. I have three brothers and one sister. My oldest brother is John Alexander McDonald, was, he is deceased. He was a career soldier. He enlisted as a private, served 35 years. At the time he was discharged, he was a lieutenant colonel. The next brother, Robert Wellington McDonald, was a business person, a salesperson, and he lived to be 89, but he's

deceased. The next sibling was our sister, Lois McDonald Boatner, and she lived to be 84, she's deceased, and she was a homemaker. The next sibling was a brother, Durham Newton McDonald, and he worked for Bell Telephone Company for years and retired from Bell Telephone Company. That comes down to me, and I went to school in Round Rock, Texas, and from there I enlisted in Civilian Conservation Corps at Bartlett, Texas, Company 3805.

*OK, before you go that far, let's go back a little bit. Were you born in Round Rock?*

**William McDonald:** Yes.

*OK, and your family lived there?*

**William McDonald:** Yes.

*And what did your father do?*

**William McDonald:** My father had several different jobs. At the time I was born, I think he was a rural mail carrier. He worked also as assistant postmaster, and at one time as postmaster. He was also a druggist. His father was a doctor who owned a drug store, and my father worked in his father's drug store, filled prescriptions, and sold whatever was for sale in the drug and chemical store.

*OK, and you started school in Round Rock?*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*In the grade schools?*

**William McDonald:** Well no, my first grade was at Merriltown, Texas, about five miles south of Round Rock, a small community.

*Does that not exist anymore?*

**William McDonald:** The community is still there, but it has different names now, and I transferred from Merriltown to Round Rock when I was in the second grade, back to Round Rock. We moved to Merriltown in 1924, and moved back to Round Rock in 1927. We tried farming for three years. That Merriltown community was a farm community.

*OK, and did you go through high school?*

**William McDonald:** No, I was a 9<sup>th</sup> grade dropout.

*Do you recall why you dropped out?*

**William McDonald:** Mainly malnutrition. It was in the Depression, in the mid-30s, past mid-30s, and at that time my mother and I were alone. She owned the house that we lived in, but she had never worked outside the home and she rented rooms for when she could, and the income was very limited. I had a paper route so I delivered the San Antonio Morning Express and San Antonio Evening News, two runs per day, and I earned about \$6 to \$8 per month.

*Did your father die during this period of time?*

**William McDonald:** No, they separated when I was 12 years old.

*So you continued to live with your mother.*

**William McDonald:** Yes, I stayed with my mother.

*And you stayed with her and you went through the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and then what did you do?*

**William McDonald:** Well, I went to San Antonio for a while and worked for my keep as a hop boy on a horse drawn milk wagon.

*And what was a hop boy?*

**William McDonald:** I went from the milk wagon to the house with the milk, delivered the milk, picked up the empty bottles and ran back and hopped on the wagon.

*And for how long did you do that?*

**William McDonald:** I did that for several months until I became eligible to go into the Civilian Conservation Corps at age 17.

*And you then joined the Civilian Conservation Corps?*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*And how long were you in the Corps?*

**William McDonald:** 18 months.

*18 months, and where did you serve?*

**William McDonald:** At Bartlett, Texas.

*And what did you do?*

**William McDonald:** I had several different occupations while I was in there. We built fence a lot, and I learned to use a drop auger posthole digger, and I boasted that that's where I got my PhD, in posthole digging.

*That's a fine occupation.*

**William McDonald:** So I moved on also and I worked in the engineering crew. I learned to set up the level and shoot lines for terraces and strip crop contour tillage. That strip crop contour was like around the side of a hill instead of straight across or straight up and down, and we followed a level line so that the water didn't run down the furrows. Each furrow served as an individual, small terrace.

*Where did you live while you were with the Conservation Corps?*

**William McDonald:** In the camp.

*And tell me something about the camp. What was it like?*

**William McDonald:** Well, there were 200 of us there. There were four barracks, and 50 men to each barrack, and we had three meals a day. If we went to the field, we got a sack lunch in the field, three sandwiches – bologna, cheese, and apple butter. Usually it was apple butter. We called it a jam sandwich, two pieces of bread jammed together with enough apple butter to hold ‘em together. That was always our noon lunch, plus a piece of fruit – apple, orange, banana. And then at night we had a good hot meal. In the morning, we had a good hot breakfast. When I went into the Civilian Conservation Corps, those meals to me were like banquets, I had been on such limited rations.

*That was a period of time that none of us who didn’t experience that could ever understand, could we?*

**William McDonald:** No, it would be hard to understand. You would have to live it, you’d have to go to bed hungry and there’s no food in the house, and get up and go to school the next day with your stomach growling, and try to concentrate on learning in school.

*So I would assume you consider your experience in the Conservation Corps to be very positive?*

**William McDonald:** Very positive.

*And very helpful in getting you through a most difficult time.*

**William McDonald:** Yes, it helped me adjust and I learned, I got a small part of my earnings to keep for myself. I kept \$8 a month and \$22 a month was sent home to my mother, and she lived pretty well on that \$22 a month, and she was able to do some improvements, repairs on the house so that she could rent apartments or overnight rooms, and then a piece of another building on the property was converted into a café building, and she rented it out so that by the time I came out of the Civilian Conservation Corps, she had enough income to live on. Not extravagant, but reasonable. And so I came out of the Civilian Conservation Corps in the spring of 1939, went to work for a neon sign company, and I learned to build the sheet metal neon signs, and wire them, but I never did blow glass and I never did the lettering. I did defining painting of the sign, but we had a sign painter who did the letter work, and we had a glass blower who blew the neon tubing.

*Was that in the Round Rock area?*

**William McDonald:** Yes. We had the shop in Round Rock but we operated as far as Brownwood, Texas, Llano, San Marcos, and all around Round Rock.

*How long did you work in that?*

**William McDonald:** I worked there for about two years.

*So that was into 1941.*

**William McDonald:** Well, let me see, no I didn't work there that long. I worked there one year. It was 1940 that I was offered a job for the dairy company where I had been a hop boy in San Antonio. It would pay me more than I was making for the sign company, so I took that job as a milk man, delivered milk. I went to work with a new territory made up of pieces of old territories around it, and new truck, new international milk delivery truck. I worked at that until I went into the Navy in 1942.

*So you were in San Antonio as a milk man when the second World War started for the United States?*

**William McDonald:** That's right. I learned about it on the morning news. I was on the milk route and customers told me that Pearl Harbor had been attacked.

*Did that come as a surprise to you?*

**William McDonald:** Yes, I didn't even know what Pearl Harbor was.

*But were you anticipating that there was going to be a war and that you were going to be dragged into it?*

**William McDonald:** Yes I was.

*But the circumstances and how it happened were a shock to you.*

**William McDonald:** Yes, I was expecting it to be with Germany.

*And you didn't know where Pearl Harbor was when you first heard.*

**William McDonald:** No, I just heard that it was somewhere in the Pacific, and then when I heard it was at Hawaii, well my oldest brother that was in the Army had served at Hawaii, but he had been transferred back to the States and was working at assignments in the United States at the main one I remember was at Fort Benning, Georgia.

*So he was in the Army before the war started.*

**William McDonald:** Oh yes, he went into the Army in 1924 as a private. He was 21 years old and he had been a cook at a café restaurant there in Round Rock, and the recruiters picked him up on Thanksgiving Day after he had cooked the Thanksgiving dinner for that restaurant, and took him to Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio. He became a cook and then he became an instructor for bakers and cooks, and he was a staff sergeant, and I believe either shortly before Pearl Harbor or shortly after, he was promoted, sent to officer candidate school, and he became a trainer for instructors in baking and cooking, and setting up field kitchens.

*So how did his younger brother get in the Navy?*

**William McDonald:** I got in the Navy, I went from my milk route in San Antonio into the Navy when I got my notice that I was going to be drafted. I wanted to enlist in the Navy as soon as Pearl Harbor, but my employer told me he would not hold a job for me unless I waited until I got a draft notice. He said if you were drafted, I have to give you your job back, but I don't have to if you enlist now. And he said I guarantee you if you wait until you get your draft notice, that'll

be plenty of time for you to enlist in the Navy and you'll have a job when you come back, even if I have to make a job, you'll have a job.

*Did that turn out to be the case?*

**William McDonald:** Not exactly. When the war was over and I came back, he said now, I'll put you to work, but you have already exceeded the qualifications needed to be a milk man, and he said you can go on and do much better things now. And he said I would recommend that you do that. However, if things don't work out otherwise and you want the job, come back. As long as I am manager here, you'll have a job.

*That sounds like a pretty fair fellow.*

**William McDonald:** Yes, well he had been a Navy man in World War I, so he was happy to see me going in the Navy. So anyhow, after I came out, he told me that, but I found out that I had entitlements as a World War II veteran, such as rehabilitation. I came out of the Navy with a 50 percent disability, and I was entitled to rehabilitation and education, and I, even though I didn't complete high school, I took some tests and I qualified for college. So I went to East Texas State Teachers College when I got back home.

*OK, we'll get into that, but I want to kind of cover this chronologically in your going into the service. So how did you get into the service? Why did you leave your milk job to go in, because I assume you knew you were going to get drafted?*

**William McDonald:** That's right, so I enlisted in the Navy at San Antonio.

*Why did you choose the Navy?*

**William McDonald:** Because that's what I wanted to be in. I wanted to be in that. I would've gone from the Civilian Conservation Corps into the Navy but my mother would not sign the release for me and I was under age.

*As a central Texas boy, what excited you about the Navy?*

**William McDonald:** Well, movies I had seen about the Navy and I liked the fact that I would not be in the trenches, I would not be in the mud, I would be on the ship, I thought, and the recruiter told me that there was a possibility I could be in the Navy aviation sector, and I said I'd like to be a tail gunner in a bomber. He said you can do it, ha ha, but anyhow, the Navy was attractive to me. I like the uniform, I like the thought of being on the sea.

*Prior to that had you ever been on the ocean? Had you ever been out of Texas?*

**William McDonald:** I had been out in Corpus Christi Bay, but never on a ship, never actually on a seagoing vessel.

*Were you ever out of Texas before you joined the Navy?*

**William McDonald:** Yes, let me see, I had been into Oklahoma one time when we were transferring some neon signs for Texas Power & Light Company.

*Other than Texas and Oklahoma, that was pretty much the world in which you knew when you went into the Navy.*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*OK, tell me about when you went in. Where did they send you?*

**William McDonald:** They sent me to Houston for a physical, and to be sworn in, and then I was put aboard a troop train under cover of darkness, and we headed up north to Great Lakes, Illinois. It was warm, I was in short sleeves when I went aboard that troop train. I woke up the next morning and we were in Oklahoma and there was snow on the ground, and all I had was a light shirt. So we went on, and the farther north we went, the colder it got, and we got to Chicago, Illinois, and we were put on a siding, and we waited there for a couple of hours for a switch engine to hook onto us and take us out to Great Lakes Naval Training Station, and I got real cold there.

*I would imagine. I'm originally from Chicago, so I'm very familiar with Great Lakes Naval Training Center and that whole area.*

**William McDonald:** We got out there, and we didn't train right in the Great Lakes Center, its proper, we were marched out to Camp Green Bay, which was a mile or so away from the Great Lakes, and we were trained out there at Camp Green Bay.

*How did you like it when you first got in, your basic training and things like that?*

**William McDonald:** Oh, I thought it was a lark. It was exciting, interesting. The hard part I thought well, they're just trying to make us tough, and see if we can take it, and that was something I had already had in the Civilian Conservation Corps and our motto there was "we can take it." So mine, personally, and the Navy was, I can take it.

*So you were able to deal with all they threw at you as a basic trainee.*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*What were some of the things you found the toughest in the transition into the military?*

**William McDonald:** I don't know. I guess later on being assigned under some sorehead superiors that decided to make life as miserable for me as they could, and I just went ahead and took it and got along as best I could. I never got in any trouble, never had to go before the captain's mast, and never served any penalty.

*Is it safe to say that you somewhat enjoyed your basic training?*

**William McDonald:** Well, some of it got pretty hard.

*What was the most difficult for you?*

**William McDonald:** What they now call, at the time I was in there, I've forgotten now, it was a course, anyhow it was in physical endeavors, climbing ropes hand over hand, running and jumping, and swimming, and all that sort of thing.

*Were you much of a swimmer before you went into the Navy?*

**William McDonald:** Well I thought I was. And I did better than average in the Navy because I grew up about three blocks from Brushy Creek over at Round Rock and I spent a lot of time down there fishing and swimming and hunting.

*Any particular experiences in basic training that stand out in your mind?*

**William McDonald:** Let me see, no, one thing early on, our drill instructor was a real horse's butt to start with, and the thing was to break us down and humiliate us, and he called us all a bunch of draft dodgers, which I was. I went in the Navy to avoid the draft. That's what he called the whole bunch of us. He said you're nothing but a bunch of draft dodgers. You don't even belong in the Navy and you're gonna wash out probably before you complete your boot training. And then he said something about if there's anybody that thinks he doesn't have to take my abuse, show your hand or step forward or something, and one old boy stepped forward and he said get back right before you get court marshaled. And that tickled us. He dared him to step out and that old boy stepped out.

*Do you recall how long your basic training was?*

**William McDonald:** Oh, about four weeks.

*Did they have a graduation ceremony and everything?*

**William McDonald:** No. Not to speak of, I don't remember. We just got our pictures taken and when I went home on boot leave, I didn't even have a dress uniform. I didn't have a midi-blouse. I had an undress blue uniform. No stripes, no nothing, plain. People asked me what part of the Navy I was in that I didn't have all the stripes and everything. I said I can't tell you. And they'd say why can't you? I'd say it's a military secret.

*So you went home for a leave?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, boot leave.

*And when you were finished, how long did they give you?*

**William McDonald:** On leave, I think a couple of weeks, I'm not sure.

*And where did they send you from there?*

**William McDonald:** Went back to Great Lakes, Illinois, and back with my group, an outgoing unit, and suddenly I was called out of the bunch, and had to report to a certain place. I was taken there by a messenger. And I went in and they said you're gonna be going out.

*Going out where?*

**William McDonald:** Out of the outgoing unit, you're not going out with your regular group. And I said what's the matter, why? They said well, don't question it. Just be glad you're going out. You're not going to have to lay around in that stinking outgoing unit like the rest of them

are. You're going to be gone. So I went back to my unit, and they said go back to your unit and stay there until you are called, but keep your gear ready to move and stay with it. So I did, and I got back and the others asked me what happened to me. I said nothing, I just got assigned, given a special assignment. And they said what kind? What is it? I said I don't know, they won't tell me. I said they just told me that I was going to be shipping out. So sure enough, I was called out. I found out later, a long time later, that there were two William L. McDonald's, and both of us had been to sick bay at the same time and in the hospital at the same time. You know, I told you I'd gotten real chilled on that train, and so I was in the hospital for about a week, and so was this other William L. McDonald. So they transferred, they sent us one place and our paper's another. So when it came time to ship out, they had me ready to go and this other guy not, so they sent me in his place.

*Is that right? So he was supposed to go somewhere.*

**William McDonald:** That's right. He was supposed to have gone to Moffett Field Naval Air Station in California.

*And instead you did.*

**William McDonald:** And instead I did. Now I did not go there for aviation. We went there, and it was just for some more advanced training.

*What did they train you in there?*

**William McDonald:** Mostly just drilling and physical conditioning, and to some extent, sorting us out. In other words, are there any carpenters in this group? Are there any electricians in this group? And I said well, I was an electrician. I worked in a neon sign shop for a year and a half, and so I was going to be drafted into the boat pool when I got overseas to work as an electrician in boatworks.

*Now this would have been about when? Give me a rough idea when you got to California for more training.*

**William McDonald:** That would've been in November of '44.

*Of '44? Couldn't be that late.*

**William McDonald:** No, '42.

*OK, November of '42. By this time the war has been going on in the Pacific for a year, and the word I assume was not good. Things were not happening well for the United States in their first year of the war in the Pacific.*

**William McDonald:** No, and we were getting news of that when the Hornet was sunk and things like that, well we got the news.

*I assume you were starting to get a little concerned.*

**William McDonald:** Yes I was, but I wanted to get out there and help put a stop to it.

*OK, you did, you were anxious to get out there.*

**William McDonald:** Yes.

*And this was late '42, you got out of the cold weather of Chicago, and then to the sunny climes of California.*

**William McDonald:** That's right. I was there through the end of the year.

*OK, so the end of '42.*

**William McDonald:** In early '43, I shipped out to the South Pacific.

*Did you get any leave before you left?*

**William McDonald:** No, I'd already had my boot leave and the only leave I got was just a few days at Christmas time when a buddy of mine had a sister living in California, and she invited us to come spend Christmas Day with them.

*So other than that, once you had your boot leave, you were in California and then you were shipped out to the South Pacific.*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*OK, tell me about that. You went by ship I assume?*

**William McDonald:** That's right. We went on a ship named the Del Brazil. It was a commercial vessel that had been converted to a Navy transport. It also held a lot of cargo and after we were put aboard, we went on down the coast from Oakland, California to Port Benemi where some more cargo was put aboard. So I just got tired of it, it was gonna be a long dry spell, and I went ashore there and went to the ship service store and bought several boxes of candy.

*Had a sweet tooth, huh?*

**William McDonald:** I did, I had a sweet tooth, but I found out later on that I could sell a nickel bar of candy for a quarter, so I made some money.

*Should have gotten more.*

**William McDonald:** But I sold all the candy that I didn't eat, and I wished I hadn't sold so much because I got hungry for it. But anyhow, that was a long, tedious ship cruise out to the New Hebertes Islands.

*So you went directly to the New Hebertes, you didn't stop at Hawaii, anything like that?*

**William McDonald:** No, but we took a devious route. We didn't go just straight across. We approached by way of the Coral Sea right shortly after the Coral Sea battle, and when we got to Sea Gun Channel in the New Hebertes Islands, that channel was full of damaged ships. There were more ships there than I had thought about there being in the whole United States Navy.

*Is that right?*

**William McDonald:** It was just full of ships and some with a bow shot off, some with a big gaping hole in the side, one that had taken a bomb down the stack and it exploded in the engine room, and they were picking pieces of bodies out with crowbars. Oh, three days after we were there, I volunteered to be a crew member in a 40-foot motor launch, and about three days after that, I was put in charge of that 40-foot motor launch. I was a coxswain on it.

*Why did you volunteer for that?*

**William McDonald:** To get off the ship. The ship was laying at anchor out in Sea Gun Channel, and there was no place for us to bunk on the beach, but the CB's were building Quonset huts just hand over fist.

*I see, so you knew you were going to be stationed there, but when you got there, there wasn't a place for you, so you had to stay on ship.*

**William McDonald:** That's right. We were told back at Moffett Field that our mission was to go to a place and set up a naval advanced base and operate it, and then serve as replacement personnel as needed on ships. So I was expecting that, and I was glad to get that duty on the 40-foot motor launch because that got me off the ship, and I was going all around the channel. I was coxswain for a lieutenant commander, Commander Yost, who was in charge of all the shipping. So I took him to all the ships that had cargo on them, and back and forth between those ships and between the ships and the beach.

*Now you had never operated a boat before this had you?*

**William McDonald:** No, nothing but a row boat. But it was simple enough.

*Did you find yourself enjoying it?*

**William McDonald:** Yes, I enjoyed it. Immediately we had to turn our rifles in. We were issued 30 odd 6 Springfield bolt action rifles, but when we got out there, we had to turn them in, and I didn't like the idea at first. I thought what if we are attacked? I don't have anything to defend myself with. But we were told we were not in the position of defending because we had plenty of soldiers and Marines to defend us, and we were there to work. So -

*Do you recall what island this was?*

**William McDonald:** Yes, it was Esperitu Santo.

*How do you spell that?*

**William McDonald:** Esperitu Santo. Two words.

*OK, and that became a pretty big base, didn't it, supply base?*

**William McDonald:** Yes it did.

*In the South Pacific.*

**William McDonald:** At that time it was the largest and I think it was the largest throughout the war.

*So you were there at the time that it was starting to really develop and be put together.*

**William McDonald:** That's right. When I ate food on the beach, it was cooked out in the open in the field kitchen, and ate out of a mess kit.

*What kind of facilities did you live in while you were first there?*

**William McDonald:** Well, by the time I moved ashore from the ship, I moved into a Quonset hut and I had a cot. I had my mattress with me and my bed roll, and so I just rolled my mattress out on that cot and I was at home. Then they shortly after that they had a mess hall in operation, and a galley kitchen, so it was pretty much routine. The rain, oh man, it rained and filled foxholes up with water. The water, we were wading in water maybe almost to our shoe tops and we had high top shoes. All of a sudden you'd step into one of those foxholes and you were in up to your armpits.

*There were no Japanese on the island that you were at, I assume.*

**William McDonald:** Not to our knowledge. They were suspected of being hidden out in caves. There were caves there on the island.

*But there were no forces.*

**William McDonald:** No, they would've been just hiding out to keep from being captured. That was one assignment I got was to take officers in my boat up the river to the mouths of some of those caves, and those officers looked around and looked in 'em, and where we could enter with the boat, we went in with the boat. Later on, I got to handling cargo, hauling it either in the boat I was operating or towing a barge, and more and more it became towing barges. And we hauled troops to and from ships, and hauled them from the transport ships to the beach, where they stayed in outgoing unit, and then we hauled them from the beach to the ships that were to go aboard, and sometimes Marines, sometimes it was soldiers. I asked when am I going to be transferred aboard a ship? I was told you're not. You're here to operate this base. I said well I was told that we would be serving as replacement. They said why do you think we would send you aboard a ship after you already trained and know what you're doing here, and take a raw recruit to replace you, and you go aboard ship, and you're not experienced to board ship? So that pretty well explained the matter.

*So you were there then for how long?*

**William McDonald:** I was there for 18 months.

*18 months, that's a long time to be on one island.*

**William McDonald:** That's right, and the mosquitoes were so big and so thick, that there were all kind of stories and jokes told about 'em, but they went up and down around our camps with a fogging machine, fogging with DDT. Then they gave us little aerosol DDT canisters to spray around their bunks.

*Did you ever get malaria?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah. Dinky fever, malaria.

*So it wasn't all a lovely tropical island life.*

**William McDonald:** Oh no. Eleanor Roosevelt did visit us though.

*Is that right?*

**William McDonald:** Yes, she said why this is the Coney Island of the South Pacific. It's just beautiful out here. They took her up to the officer's club, took down the signs that said officer's country, and there was a work party of enlisted men out there. They took all them in, lined them up at the bar, and served 'em drinks for Eleanor to come in and find them in there.

*So it looked like one big happy family.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, those guys, that was all the chance they ever had to ever get into the officer's club.

*I assume you weren't one of them.*

**William McDonald:** No, I was not one of 'em, I was just told about it by the others that were there.

*So she came all the way out to there?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, she got around a good bit during the war.

*So tell me about some of your other experiences while you were on Esperitu Santo.*

**William McDonald:** Well, I frequently was called on for special missions, like to take a group of officers to a plantation where they would visit the plantationer, and I would stay with the boat with my engineer, and the plantationer's boy would fix us a meal there on his boat. But one time I got to go to the plantationer's house and was served a meal, a noon meal there, and it was delicious. It was stew made out of what I would call doves but they called them pigeons out there.

*What nationality was the plantation owner?*

**William McDonald:** French. Now that's something about those islands out there. They had a duplex I guess you could call it, government, half Danish and half French. They had a French post office and an English post office. French schools and English schools. And anything that they had that was French, they also had one that was English, and there were English plantationers out there.

*Wow, kind of a split government.*

**William McDonald:** Yes. They had a name for it, duplex or condominium, I've forgotten what now, but I know at the time that sounds like real estate.

*So how did you find life there? I mean 18 months is a long time in one spot.*

**William McDonald:** Well, a lot of the time we were busy. When the taskforce was in there to be serviced, we worked day and night. The only rest we got was while we were being loaded or unloaded, and we'd lay down on the engine cover over our engines that was warm, because it was raining a lot of the time. And we had the choice of putting our lifejackets over us for cover or using them for a pillow and cushion under us. The rest we got was while our boat was being loaded or unloaded. A lot of the time, we didn't stay. We towed a barge loaded with supplies to a ship and left it, and went back and got another barge and took it to another ship and left it, and then went to another ship and picked up an empty barge and towed it back to the beach. We were just going back and forth. So we got rest whenever and however we could. After the taskforce was supplied and they had pulled out, things then settled down and got fairly quiet, but we were still having to transfer a lot of equipment and supplies from cargo ships to the beach, and I mean everything from nuts and bolts to airplane wings and motors.

*Everything needed to fight a war.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah.

*What was the designation for your boat, the Navy designation?*

**William McDonald:** Oh, the first boat that I operated was a 40-foot motor launch. The second that I operated was an LCM, that's landing craft motorized. It was large enough to haul two weapon carriers or two or more jeeps, or a big stake-bed truck or a tank, and it would take a tank. It had a ramp on the front of it. You'd just try to ram it up as far as you could onto the beach and let them drive out of it. I hauled cargo in those, but then it was also a good towing vessel, tugboat type. You could push with it, you could pull with it, you could tie onto a side of a barge and haul it along that way.

*Was it the kind that had the front that went down?*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*Was it similar to the ones that you would see like on invasions?*

**William McDonald:** That's what it was for. There was a smaller one called a VP, vehicle personnel, that would haul a couple of jeeps, but it was mainly for personnel, but it had a ramp on it that dropped down. It's the one that dropped down and you saw the service men come running out of it and jump into the water waist deep or so, and head for the beach.

*But that was a smaller one.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, it was a VP, vehicle personnel. And then there was a little P boat for personnel only, and it had a little ramp in the front of it.

*Did they call yours a mike boat?*

**William McDonald:** Not to my knowledge. Now they might have in other places, other people, but I was not up where the invasions were taking place all this time. Later on, I was on a transport ship with those VP's, but -

*So yours was it about 40-foot long?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah.

*And so what were some of your great experiences while you were there, and what were some of the not so great experiences?*

**William McDonald:** Well, I can't think right now. One experience was when the taskforce came in and they had a bunch of wounded, and at that time I was coxswain on a 40-foot motor launch and I was ordered to go out and meet a destroyer that was coming in and pull up on the starboard side of it and tie onto it, and take passengers off of it, wounded men, into my 40-foot motor launch. And I did that, and then as soon as my boat was full of those wounded men, I peeled off, was released from the destroyer, and headed for the beach and unloaded them there for the ambulances to take them. That was something. Then another time, I had to tow barges out to be tied up along ship, and they brought the wounded out on litters, and they were so heavily sedated that you didn't know whether they were dead or just sedated, and they would load up a 50-ton barge with the litters right jammed up together side by side, enough room at the head and foot for litter bearers to walk. They loaded that barge up with those wounded and then I towed it to the beach and they were unloaded there and hauled in ambulances to the hospitals. We had a large hospital there.

*So you experienced not direct fighting, but you certainly were in the midst of all that was happening.*

**William McDonald:** Yes, now one thing that was stirring, worked on your emotions, and that was when you had to go alongside and be loaded with body bags that were pieces of people, and they would just get the equivalent of a body and a dog tag and put it in that body bag. The Tennessee rammed the California, and the California had to go in. We had a floating dry dock that would lift the battleship and the California went into that dry dock and they lifted her up, and they found that the collision occurred, the Tennessee rammed a berthing compartment on the California and just caved it in, crushed it in, and all the metal framing on the bunks was strewn with bodies, and they had to just cut that away and dig out and pick out the bodies. They found a dog tag of one sailor that was on the California but his dog tag was hung on the bow of the Tennessee. Those things -

*That must have been horrendous duty, whoever had to do something like that. It had to be unbelievably gruesome.*

**William McDonald:** I couldn't have done what those guys had to do that went in there and picked with bars and picks and picked out pieces of bodies and that sort of thing.

*Luckily you didn't have to experience that.*

**William McDonald:** No, never did. And I had some close calls. One time, a crew on a tanker threw off a bunch of line instead of paying out as I pulled it away with my boat, and they just kicked off a whole bunch of mooring line, and about that time just as it hit the water, well they

reversed the engines on that tanker and started backing down and pulled that right into the propeller. And it was pulling my boat in with it. And I had two soldiers that were with me as observers learning how to do this, how to moor a ship to a buoy, and then I had a coxswain, and I was in charge, and as that thing was drawing us, it got us so close that one propeller hit the taft rail on the boat I was on, but I had drawn my sheath knife and made one slash and cut the rope that tied the ship's mooring line to my boat, and my boat bobbed out of there like a cork had been pulled under water by a fish.

*And you're talking about the propeller on a large vessel.*

**William McDonald:** On the tanker, yeah.

*Wow.*

**William McDonald:** So that was a scary event.

*They say that during the war, that a lot of people weren't killed or wounded in combat, but just in the danger of the daily work that they had to perform, there were so many opportunities to be hurt or killed that it happened a lot more than we ever imagined.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, that's true. One of the men in my group, the group I was in, was killed in a truck wreck. He was driving a stake bed truck and turned over, flipped and killed him. It shouldn't have happened. He was probably speeding, driving too fast for the road he was on.

*Did you make many endearing friends there while you were there for 18 months?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, one good friend that I got acquainted with back when they were having advanced training there in Moffett Field Naval Air Station and out on the island. He and I were main buddies, but he got transferred back to the States and I saw him after the war was over. But he was kind of broken up, mentally imbalanced.

*That happened to a lot of people out there, didn't it?*

**William McDonald:** Yes it did.

*And a lot of people don't realize that, that there was a substantial number of personnel who lost it for God knows how many reasons or for whatever, and you were disabled, right?*

**William McDonald:** Yes.

*What happened to you?*

**William McDonald:** Fatigue, operation fatigue, and just worn out.

*So you worked a lot harder than you were willing to admit.*

**William McDonald:** Well I looked at it this way, if I'm not going to be there shooting and fighting and lose my life there, if I worked myself to death, so be it. So I never refused, when asked to volunteer, I did, and a lot of times I took duty because I could operate any \_\_\_ we had, and I would stay on duty and let several others go to see Bob Hope or something like that,

whereas if I went, they would have to keep several of them there to operate any of the boats that might be called on. So I did things like that.

*You eventually got onto a ship though, didn't you?*

**William McDonald:** Yes I did. After I had been out there 18 months, I came back to the States and -

*Oh, so you came back, you left Esperitu Santo back to the United States?*

**William McDonald:** Yes.

*And that's how you had to get a ship, coming all the way back to the States?*

**William McDonald:** October of '44, yeah, and it was in a roundabout way that I got the ship.

*Were you glad to leave?*

**William McDonald:** Yes, I was glad to leave out there. I'd had enough of it. Things were changing, too.

*The war was really moving much further north by that time.*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*So you were kind of in the back end of it anymore instead of right at the dead center.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, they had gotten around to where when ships came in there, troops and whatever that had been further up, they said when are you guys going to join the war? They ribbed, harassed us about it.

*So you finished your tour, your 18 months, and you got sent back to the States.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, I got sent back to the States for 30 days' leave, recreation and recovery.

*And what did you do?*

**William McDonald:** I got married.

*That's a profound change. Was that somebody you knew before?*

**William McDonald:** I knew the family. I didn't know her personally, but I knew her older brothers and her older sister, and I knew the family.

*So you came back to the United States and you came back to Texas I assume, and within the 30 days of your leave you found a lady, you fell in love and you got married.*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*All within 30 days.*

**William McDonald:** We courted 11 days and married on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

*Is that right?*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*That's pretty much love at first sight, isn't it?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, I didn't have but 30 days' leave.

*You had to move it along, right?*

**William McDonald:** And I wanted to take her back to California with me when I went back because I had to report back to a base in California, and didn't know how long it would be before or if I would get a ship out, but she did go back to California with me, and I was assigned to a beach battalion school to train for making beach landings, putting troops on the beaches. OK, she said this phone's about to go dead and need to get another phone. Just a minute and I'll pick up another one.

*OK.*

**William McDonald:** OK, you hear me now?

*Yes sir. So is your wife of today the same wife?*

**William McDonald:** She is, 64 years.

*64 years. That's pretty terrific for somebody who you courted and married within 30 days, and it's lasted all that period of time. She's either a saint or you both are.*

**William McDonald:** Well, it took some patience and some struggle, and there were some hard times.

*I bet your military experience helped you to handle those situations.*

**William McDonald:** After I went back, we were married, she went back out to California with me until I shipped out. I finished my beach battalion school and while there, I took an examination for advancement and passed that and got promoted to boatswain mate first class.

*And got on ship.*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*And what was the name of the ship?*

**William McDonald:** The SS Colusa.

*And what kind of ship was it?*

**William McDonald:** It was an amphibious personnel assault transport.

*What they call an APA?*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*Oh I dearly remember those.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, that's what you told me.

*Not dearly, but I remember them.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, well that's what I was on.

*So you were a boat operator then on board?*

**William McDonald:** No, I was a beach platoon boatswain mate. I went on the boat, we went to the beach, we set up and staked out the different areas on the beach for different boats to land. In other words, there was a medical section, and then there was a transportation section, then there was an infantry section, and we directed traffic to some extent, and mostly we were responsible for the boat traffic coming in because sometimes the boat crews would panic and they didn't want to go back out. They wanted to get off the boat when it hit the beach.

*Is that right?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, and my job was to make sure that that boat left even if I had to get on it and head it out to sea and then jump off. So I never had to do it, but that was my orders.

*When did you get on the Colusa?*

**William McDonald:** I went on the Colusa in December of '44.

*So there was still a good six, seven months left of war in the Pacific.*

**William McDonald:** That's right. We went to the Pacific. Our first stop in the Pacific was at Pearl Harbor, and the water in Pearl Harbor was black, like black coffee, and the wake of our boat, you'd look behind your boat, and it looked like somebody had poured cream in the coffee.

*That was from the oil?*

**William McDonald:** From all those ships that had been sunk and damaged, yeah.

*And that was three years later.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah.

*It was still that way.*

**William McDonald:** We always reduced speed when we went past the Arizona.

*I assume that was a matter of honor for those who had died on it.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah.

*So you went to Pearl Harbor.*

**William McDonald:** We unloaded some personnel there and then we took on some personnel, and went back to the States. Then we took a load of troops out and we went to Saipan and unloaded them and picked up casualties and took the casualties back to Hawaii.

*So you were at Saipan after the invasion of Saipan, after it was already taken over.*

**William McDonald:** Yes, but they still had a bunch of casualties there that needed to be evacuated. Then we got back to Pearl Harbor and they stripped us of all of our boats and we came back to the States and got a new supply of boats, landing craft for the Colusa. Then we went back.

*Your landing boats?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah.

*They got rid of the other ones and got you brand new ones?*

**William McDonald:** They took the ones that we had and put them aboard other ships that had lost boats, or were damaged so much they couldn't use them anymore. Then we went out again and we went to Tinian, then we went to Anawetok, then we went to Guam. Those places, we were taking troops or picking up troops.

*That must have consumed just about the rest of your time.*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*Where were you when you heard about the A bomb?*

**William McDonald:** Oh, that was one of the greatest things that happened while I was in the Navy. I was on the hospital ship, the *Repose*, headed back to the States. I was transferred off the *Colusa* to Iea Heights Hospital in Hawaii, and I was there for six weeks and then I was transferred to the *Repose*, and I went aboard that ship and I was treated like royalty.

*Were you there because of your fatigue?*

**William McDonald:** Yes. I got aboard ship, they made me undress, get in my bunk, and anything that I needed was brought to me, and I had a large picture window practically at the side of my bunk where I could look out and see the waves going by. At night, our ship was lit up like a Christmas tree, and you could see the reflection of our lights out on the waves.

*By then I assume they had decided there was no more submarine –*

**William McDonald:** I think it was to identify us as a hospital ship and that we were not a man of war. I don't know for sure. But I do know that we were treated royally, and then after we'd been out a couple of days, they tried to get us interested in some kind of handcraft or something to do to pass the time, and let us get up then if we wanted to dress. So I did that and I got a bunch of Belfast cord and made a belt for Beth, and a cigarette holder to put a pack of cigarettes in, a case, made that out of blue and white Belfast cord, pretty neat looking.

*Do you still have it?*

**William McDonald:** No, it went somewhere sometime. She outgrew it. It was a novelty thing. It looked pretty neat when it was first made and given. Then when we came back, we got to San Francisco. As we entered the bay there, all the ships called attention and all men on the weather decks facing us, and they said welcome home.

*Wow. That still carries a great memory for you.*

**William McDonald:** It does.

*I can imagine after all of that.*

**William McDonald:** We were taken from the Repose to the naval receiving hospital, and oh, I was on the Repose when we got word of the atomic bomb. You asked me about that. And of course a big cheer went up all over the ship when we heard of the first bomb.

*Did anybody realize what it was, the significance of it, the size of it was?*

**William McDonald:** Not really, but we knew it was the big one. It was the big one.

*Something mighty big had been dropped on Japan.*

**William McDonald:** We figured OK, it's been a military secret, we were not supposed to know about it, but all along we were feeling and thinking and maybe hearing that there's going to be a big explosion, it's going to be a big one, and it's going to practically end the war, which it did.

*So you knew about that before the bomb actually fell?*

**William McDonald:** We just had hints of it, suspicions. We didn't really know.

*Rumors and things such as that.*

**William McDonald:** And rumors go thick in the Navy.

*So was the war over then by the time you got back to San Francisco?*

**William McDonald:** No, in fact the first night we were in the naval receiving hospital in San Francisco, they announced that Japan had requested a cease fire, and that the war was over with Japan, and boy they went wild there. The patients in the hospital there where I was, they slipped out, went under or over the fence, went downtown and hooped it up.

*How about you?*

**William McDonald:** And they said there were two women stripped off and went skinny dipping in the fountain there in front of some civic building or something in San Francisco. And they were telling big stories about all the crowd downtown.

*So you didn't go over the fence, you stayed in the hospital.*

**William McDonald:** Oh no, I wasn't going to do anything to jeopardize my chances of getting home to my wife.

*I'll bet.*

**William McDonald:** When we came home after being out 18 months, came home on 30 days' leave, we were told, now if any of you want to go on a pass tonight, you can go into town and come back tomorrow and pick up your leave papers, and some of them did. And when we got back out there after I had had my 30 days' leave, was back out there, some of those guys came by double time with PAL stenciled on the back of their shorts, prisoner at large or something like that.

*They had not gotten back when they were supposed to.*

**William McDonald:** They went on leave and got in fights and brawls, and thought that because they had been out for 18 months that they should be treated royally and allowed to do their thing. One of them had been a shore patrol out there in New Heberdes.

*Is that right?*

**William McDonald:** But we were standing at attention, and here these guys came by double time. And some of us recognized some of them and yelled out and called them by name, and they waved back.

*They wished they were in your shoes instead.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, they still hadn't gotten their 30-day leave yet. I guess they did get it eventually, but anyhow, a lot had happened to me in those 30 days, getting married and all.

*So you came back, the war was over. Where did they muster you out?*

**William McDonald:** From the naval receiving hospital in San Francisco, they put us aboard a hospital train, a whole trainload of us, and shipped us back to the naval base at Corpus Christi, Texas.

*Had your wife gone home in the meantime? When you went back overseas, she went back home?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, she went home, and came back and stayed a while out in California, and when our ship would come in, well I'd call her and we'd meet and have a night or two, and so then she was back home, and as soon as I got a chance to call home, I called and I got her sister, and they sort of gave me a run around because Beth, my wife, was in the hospital. She'd had a tonsillectomy. But anyhow, I got to the naval base in Corpus Christi, and I had a brother

living in Corpus Christi that worked for the telephone company, and he was a contract service man for the naval base. That was his job and he contracted and he did all the, supervised all the telephone work on the naval base. So I called him and he came right to the hospital to see me, and brought his assistant along with him, and we set outside the hospital under the shade of a tree and visited for a while. He said well, when you get leave, my house is yours. He said now, Harriet and I, that's his wife, are planning to take a vacation, so you just take the key to our house and while we're gone on vacation, you and Beth can make yourselves at home there. So every night that I got liberty, I went and spent there at his house. We got real acquainted.

*That's terrific.*

**William McDonald:** I got discharged there. I got some good advice from an officer when I mustered out.

*What was the advice?*

**William McDonald:** He said, there's gonna be people coming at you from all directions trying to get your mustering out pay. They're gonna be wanting to sell you anything and everything that is easy to buy and find, and hard to get things they can get for you for twice what they're worth. He said don't be too quick to buy, and said whatever you do, don't give up your GI insurance, your national service life insurance. He said you keep it. You'll never find a better insurance policy for that amount of money. And he said they'll try to talk you out of it, insurance people tell you that's just temporary, and it's not gonna last, but they're long. It'll last you the rest of your life.

*And you hung onto it.*

**William McDonald:** I hung onto it.

*Good for you.*

**William McDonald:** I converted it to 20-year pay and I reduced the amount because I couldn't at that time, I felt I couldn't afford the full premium, so I reduced it to half the amount, but now since I paid it out, I'm still drawing dividends on it and they are accumulating, and it's almost to where the gross amount was, and I'm not paying anything there. Just every year there's another dividend deposited to it.

*That was terrific, that was a very wise thing for you to do.*

**William McDonald:** And sure enough, there were insurance salesmen tried to tell me it wasn't any good.

*So you got mustered out in Corpus Christi. When approximately was that?*

**William McDonald:** That was in October of '45.

*And what did you do after the war?*

**William McDonald:** Well, I went home and my brother-in-law, my sister's husband, was a carpenter, and he got me a job as a carpenter's helper, and I was trying to get on as an apprentice

carpenter, but with the GI Bill of Rights assistance, and so he did get me on and I was working as an apprentice carpenter, but my contact officer in the VA said why don't you go to college? I said I can't go to college. I didn't graduate from high school. He said yeah, but your achievement list showed that you qualified for college. So I did. I went to East Texas State. I still was interested in construction work, so I took industrial education courses and math, and I got 36 semester hours with a B grade average, and by that time we had a baby, and there were a lot of pretty little co-eds there on campus, and my wife didn't like the idea of me being around them, mixing it up with them, and she wanted to get back home to Round Rock to show off her baby and her other classmates that had babies, she wanted to get with and talk baby talk, so I went back to Round Rock and started at carpentry, and I made good money at it when I was working. But if I got weathered out or laid off, the money stopped. The job was finished, well OK, here's your check, goodbye. So it wasn't too good and we made some pretty slim winters, and in 1952, I decided that I wanted something steady even if it was less. I'd heard about firemen that worked on the side, and a lot of them were carpenters, so I went and signed up, put in my application and took the civil service exam for the fire department and passed it, and went to work in May of 1952 in the fire department and worked 30 years.

*Is that right? In Round Rock?*

**William McDonald:** Austin.

*In Austin, with the Austin Fire Department.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah. 13 years I drove a fire truck most of the time. In the last 17 years, I was a lieutenant, so I had a driver driving for me, tailboard man on the back, and all I had to do was blow the siren and answer the radio until we got to the fire, and then I had to direct our operations. I retired in '82, 30 years after I had gone to work, 30 years and three or four months later.

*Wow, that's terrific. That's a fine occupation. Well, it's been great talking to you. We're kind of at our limit now, so I want to ask you, and I'm sure you're getting a little tired of talking, and what I'd like to do is ask you a couple of follow up questions as we finish up here, then you give me the answers as you see fit. The first one I'll ask you is as you look back at your time in the military service, how do you think the military service during the second World War affected your life?*

**William McDonald:** Well, I grew up a lot. I thought I was grown up when I went in, but I became more seasoned, and I learned to take disappointment, I learned to take the bad with the good. Just like a friend of mine says, if you're gonna be a plumber, you've got to take the bitter with the sweet, and he was a plumber. That was the way it was in the Navy. I had to take the bitter with the sweet, and it seemed like there was a whole lot more bitter than there was sweet, but it's pretty much that way in life.

*That was a good way to learn about life, what life is. Some good things come, some bad things come, and the only difference between the two is how you deal with them.*

**William McDonald:** That's right.

*Do you think of the war years often?*

**William McDonald:** Yes, and when I watch movies, I think about ‘em, and I will watch World War II type movies, John Wayne, whoever else, and it brings back memories, but I’m proud of the time I spent in the Navy.

*I bet you are and you should well be.*

**William McDonald:** I figured I did my best and I did what I was assigned to do, not what I would have chosen, but what I was assigned to. That last six months in the Navy pretty well did me in, and the doctor told me I’m gonna have to transfer you, that’s the only way we’re going to get your health back. So that’s what he did, transferred me to the hospital in Hawaii.

*And it was a very wise decision, wasn’t it?*

**William McDonald:** Yes, I sure appreciated that doctor.

*He probably saved your life.*

**William McDonald:** On the beach, he stood up for us men even when it came to bucking our commanding officer. So we appreciated him, and I came home and found another doctor that was just like him, and turned out that he had been a Navy doctor, too.

*And things worked out for you.*

**William McDonald:** Yup.

*Great. OK, I got one more question for you, then we’re going to let you relax. It’s this one. Is there anything else you would like to add for this interview that will be kept forever so that future generations will have a fuller understanding of what your generation went through during the second World War?*

**William McDonald:** Oh, I don’t know of anything in particular, just if they would read history, watch the History Channel on TV, and pay attention to it. The History Channel on TV tells it like it was.

*Yes it does, I watch it all the time.*

**William McDonald:** And that would give an idea of what it’s like. I hope they never have to experience it, but there’s a chance they will. In that case, it make the \_\_\_ of a bad issue.

*Yes. Well, Mr. McDonald, it’s been a real honor and a privilege to talk to you. You related some great experiences and added to our program immensely by giving us kind of an aspect of the war that a lot of people didn’t know about and don’t understand that it took a whole group of people to make the other people get things done, and if it wasn’t for you guys who were there doing the daily grind, they wouldn’t have had the opportunity to do the other things that had to be done.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, I never did the shooting part, but I moved a lot of men who did.

*Yes, and you provided them with the ammunition and the food and the medicine and all the other things that they needed to survive.*

**William McDonald:** That's right. The nearest I ever came to getting hit was when a bomb was dropped and killed a native's cow there on the island.

*Was it one of the Japanese nuisance raids?*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, they had a name for 'em.

*Washing Machine Charlie.*

**William McDonald:** Yeah, Washboard Charlie, Washing Machine Charlie. The servicemen had one that was a little more vulgar.

*They always do.*

**William McDonald:** But that was all that we had where I was there on Esperitu Santos, was nuisance raids. Sometimes they didn't do anything but take pictures. One time they dropped bombs where the Enterprise had been anchored, but the Enterprise pulled out at 4 o'clock that afternoon.

*A little bit late?*

**William McDonald:** And they were a little bit late and they dropped bombs where it had been but it was not there. They said they sunk it, but they didn't.

*Well, you did your job, you did it honorably, and we all owe you a debt of gratitude, and I certainly appreciate the time that you've given us and the opportunity to share your experiences with you.*

**William McDonald:** Well thank you, I appreciate someone being interested enough to ask.

*I'm always interested. I enjoy this immensely and it's a real honor to talk to you.*

*[End of recording]*