

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
NEW BRUNSWICK
AN INTERVIEW WITH CALVIN MOON
FOR THE
RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Lauren O’Gara: This begins an interview on November 13, 2001 in Van Dyke Hall, Rutgers University with Dr. Calvin Moon. Conducting the interview is Lauren O’Gara, Shaun Illingworth and Sandra Stewart Holyoak.

LO: I’d like to begin the interview by asking you to tell us a little bit about your family. Where was your father born?

Calvin Moon: My father was born in Lakeside, New Jersey, which is about five miles east of Trenton, on a small lake, called Gropp’s Lake.

LO: Were his parents born in the United States?

CM: Yes, our family goes back to William Penn, all of my ancestors. A James Moon came over on the ship *Welcome* with William Penn.

Sandra Holyoak: Have you done any work on the family history?

CM: Yes, basic stuff. He actually, on the ship, William Penn got remarried. I think his first wife died. My ancestor was his best man ... probably one of convenience, because he happened to be there. The family settled in Bucks County. They had a land grant, of course, and they were in the nursery business, which has been in continuous operation since 1790, and still exists today. Somewhere in there, my immediate family got separated from the landholders. I think they had too many kids. My grandfather was a mason on the Pennsylvania Railroad, and a foreman. His claim to fame was, he put a new floor on the Penn Station in New York without closing the station one day, which was evidently quite a feat in those days. My father left school at the end of his fourth grade, not unusual back then. He was born in 1904, from a large family. I think he had nine siblings, and at the age of fifteen, he went to the Pennsylvania Railroad as an apprentice boilermaker, and had worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad until the Depression. He had, I think, one year to go, and he and thousands of others, had about a year to go to collect their pensions and, of course, there weren’t any pensions. So, he was jobless in the middle of the Depression with a family. At that time, he only had two kids. By the time it ended, he had four. I remember he worked for a nurseryman a couple of times, (Ribsom’s?) Nursery, and, also a builder, where he did all the landscaping. I think his builder went broke, and, again, he was without a job. He ended up working for the WPA, for the grand total of twelve dollars a week, which fed the family ... and at that time, he built his own house. He had a small mortgage. He could not pay his mortgage payment one month and the mortgage company took his property. That can’t happen today, because you’re allowed to pay the interest on it, *ad infinitum*, I guess, but those days, you miss a payment, psst, you’re out. So, we lived in multiple housing, renting, wherever we could find a home. I think the average rent in those days was eighteen dollars a month. Then in 1938, my father was working on an estate with a friend of his, making a tennis court, and the lady of the manor saw that he was interested in the shrubbery landscaped around the tennis court. They had a pretty large estate. It was the Kuser Family on the Georgetown Road in Bordentown area. She hired him on the spot, and he worked there until the war started, whereupon he went back to his boiler making trade and worked in the New York Ship Building in Camden, where he worked on the *North Carolina*, from the time the keel was laid until it was

launched. After that, he had different jobs in that field after the war, and, of course, he finally died at the age of seventy-five and I'm seventy-seven. So, I outlived him by two years.

Shaun Illingworth: When your father worked for the Pennsylvania Railroad, do you know if he belonged to a union?

CM: I don't believe they had unions back then. Some of the industry did have them, but I think railroad workers were guaranteed a pension. They had, for that time, probably reasonable benefits, although I don't know what they were. But there was no union that I know of. He did belong to a union when he worked at the shipyard in World War II.

SI: Did he ever talk about how involved he was [in the union]?

CM: Not in the union. He never got involved. They took their dues out of his salary, of course. My father did invent an acetylene torch that would burn at about double the temperature that they were used to, and that development helped them cut the armored plate, which was anywhere from twelve to eighteen inches thick, and the machine he developed could burn right through it. But, of course, the company took credit for that.

SH: Did he ever talk about unions in general?

CM: Back in the depression, there was an organization called Workers of the World, and I think most people caught up in those times ... this was basically a communist organization in its background, although nobody talked about it being such a thing ... But, in any event, after the war, it was discovered that it was a communist organization, and what they would do to get men to come to the meeting was to put on a half a keg of beer and usually have it at a quoit court, so the guys would play quoit and drink beer and vote "Aye." Of course, they never accomplished anything. They were a bunch of rabble rousers, actually.

SH: Can you tell the tape and my intern, what a quoit court is?

CM: Well, quoits are the round, steel rings that's kinda like horseshoes, except they're perfectly round, and it's the same game. You toss it on a hub, I forget the distance apart, but it was quite a bit ... and the guys got pretty good at it, when they weren't drinking too much.

SH: Now, tell us about your mother, please.

CM: Well, my mother managed to make it through eighth grade. She was an avid reader, although I think I got most of my brains from my father. Even though he only went to fourth grade, the man could do almost anything. If he saw a job done once, he knew how to do it, and he was very handy. One time, he had a job as a millwright in Lenox Pottery. It was owned by the man that hired him to be his landscaper, the Kusers. They owned that factory, the Lenox Pottery, for, maybe, ten years or so. They gave my father a job in the millwright there, because he practically rebuilt their heating system in the mansion, it was a derelict. One of the brothers, he did landscaping for them at Kuser Mountain in Titusville, New Jersey, it's up along the river.

LO: Did your mother work at all, especially during the Depression?

CM: Everybody worked back in the early 1900s. She also was from a large family. My sister has worked out all the genealogy on her side of the family. They were basically English colonists, lived at a farm in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. Her grandfather was a Douglass, her mother was Rebecca Douglass, who married an Englishman who was, today you would call him a stationary engineer, but they took care of boilers and things like that. He had a large family. My mother's mother died during her birth, and she was raised by my aunt. After eighth grade, she went to work in a cotton mill, actually, these big spinning mills, and worked six days a week. I think she made twelve dollars a week.

SH: What year was that?

CM: That would have been, now let's see, eighth grade, how old are you? So at thirteen, she would have been, that would have been 1915.

LO: How did your parents meet?

CM: They lived in the same little town, Lakeside. The town built a community house. I assume they met there, at a dance or something, and there was the local lake that provided a lot of swimming beaches, so it's hard to say, but they met. I'm the oldest, so I was the immediate result.

LO: How many siblings do you have?

CM: Let's see ... three sisters. I had one sister died in infancy, not childbirth.

LO: What town did you grow up then, mostly? There was a lot of moving around.

CM: Well, good question. I guess, the part of my childhood I liked best was when we lived on the estate because I had a trap line and I was the only one trapping in that area.

LO: What were you trapping?

CM: Oh, muskrats, skunks, possums, raccoons, fox, anything I could catch, weasels.

LO: What did you do with them?

CM: Sold the pelts. I didn't make anything. I sold them to the furrier. The little guy in the shack in Allentown used to buy the stuff. I had fun just roaming around the woods.

SH: Did you spend a lot of time on the river?

CM: That was ... it's not really near the river.

SH: Okay, my geography of New Jersey leaps. You said Allentown. I keep forgetting that there's an Allentown in southern New Jersey and not the one in Pennsylvania.

CM: Yes, that's my mail address, right. Now, my boyhood, I guess, my high school years, I did live in Bordentown while I was going to high school. Then when the shipyard opened up, my father moved back to Hamilton Township and I went in my junior year to Hamilton High School, and then in my senior year, I was back in Bordentown. So, I moved around a lot.

LO: Was your family very religious?

CM: I wouldn't say so. I went to Sunday school for twelve years, but that's because somebody came, picked me up, and took me. I don't think my mother and father were very religious at all. My father knew he was of Quaker background but he never went to Quaker meetings.

LO: Did you have any relatives involved in World War I?

CM: World War I?

LO: Yes.

CM: Gee. I think one of my uncles, my father's oldest brother, I think, was in it. He was dead before I was born. I don't know much about that.

SH: Since your parents were from large families, did you interact with a large, extended family?

CM: I had lots of cousins. Back in those days, people visited around. You never called up, you just dropped in. So, I lived in Lakeside, some of my cousins lived in Yardville Heights, there's two communities around this Groppe's Lake, so I had some interaction with them. I think our families got together quite a bit. Of course, my mother's sister, who was my aunt, they didn't live too far from us, and I spent a lot of time in her house when I was little. She had three sons, one died of diphtheria, from raw milk, actually, and she had two sons, two other sons. The oldest one became a veterinarian, he graduated from vet school in 1938. He didn't start ... he had worked for the New Jersey Highway Department for ten years, and then went to vet school. The reason he did, he and his brother raised beagle hounds, and they got distemper in their dogs. Of course, they lost a lot of them. In those days, there was no satisfactory treatment, and he took them to a veterinarian who didn't seem to know anything about it or how to help them. Of course, there wasn't anything he could have done. So, that perked my cousins interest ... well, he was my cousin, and he started reading up on the disease and then he decided he'd go to vet school and figure out a cure.

LO: So was he an influence on your decision [to become a veterinarian]?

CM: Oh, a big influence. He graduated in 1938. I was a freshman in high school that year. He started a practice in Trenton. I worked for him from that freshman year until I left for the Navy. Summers, I worked when I wasn't here at Rutgers. Well, no, the first summer I worked for him,

after high school, no I didn't either. Okay, when I graduated from high school, I turned eighteen, got a job at John A. Roebling Steel Mill ... and guess what I was making.

LO: Torpedo nets.

CM: How did you know that?

LO: I pay attention.

CM: Anyway, I did. I made big money, like ninety-five to a hundred dollars a week, back then, was more than my father made, well, no, he was working on a shipyard by then. But anyway, my father seemed to be shocked when I told him I was gonna quit and go to Rutgers. But the reason I did, I had a state scholarship.

LO: What did you get the scholarship for?

CM: Just academics. I think I took a test up here. I was the only one from our high school at that time, and you know what that scholarship was worth?

LO: I couldn't begin to guess.

CM: Ninety dollars a semester. That was the tuition at the Ag School.

LO: It's a little more, now.

CM: Yes, I think. Anyway, I came up here. My father brought me up here and rented me a room, four dollars a week. He had to supply me with a twenty dollar meal ticket for the cafeteria, and that was his input. I came to register, and they said, "You need twenty or thirty dollars for an athletic ticket." I didn't have a dime on me. I said, "I'm here on scholarship." The guy says, "Well, you got to buy books, you got to buy this." So, I managed, but I don't know how. I didn't have the money that day, I know that.

SH: To back up just a little bit, to talk about when you were growing up. Did you have a lot of pets?

CM: My father always had a hunting dog, and I remember when I was very little, maybe five, I had a puppy. I was sick with the measles, and the puppy ran out on the road in front of our house and a car hit it, and I cried for about a week ... My father brought another hunting dog in and claimed it was mine, but it was really his. I really liked that little dog, and, of course, I was a very emotional child anyway.

SH: What were your favorite subjects and what did you do for fun? Did your family travel?

CM: No one traveled much in the Depression.

SH: I know. You'll understand why we ask these questions, later.

CM: Traveled to White Horse, to the grocery store. I have a pretty cute story. My uncle, the man who raised my mother, his name was Shrieve Wood. Actually, he was related to the guy that was the engineer on the John Bull, the first railroad in the United States, from Bordentown. He had a little Model T Ford. We lived in this town, Lakeside. It was one mile to White Horse and about a mile and half to his job in an oilcloth factory, in Yardville, New Jersey. He walked to work everyday, from Lakeside, there and back home. His wife always said he never drank, but I found out, there was a bar at the bottom of that hill in Lakeside Park, and he would stop there and have a beer, and then walk home. He did that everyday he went to work, and she didn't know it. Anyway, his youngest son was in the National Guard, they both were in the National Guard, the 112th Field Artillery, and the older brother, who became a vet, was a polo player. He was an officer, and his brother was an enlisted man. Anyway, the enlisted man had to go in the Army, and, I guess, he went down there in '39 ... first contingent of the National Guard that left. They went to, down the Shore, where the State Police are right now, Sea Girt, New Jersey. They went to Sea Girt for training. So, he's getting ready to ship out and the whole family piled in, I guess ... my father drove down, he had a Chevy, or something ... and uncle Shrieve, he was at that time pretty old, seventy-nine. We took him to Sea Girt. He got out of the car, walked down the beach, to the ocean, and he stood there and looked out across the water and he said, "You really can't see England from here, can you?" He turned around, got back in the car, came back home. That's the farthest he'd ever been from where they lived. He used to take his wife, once a week, to the grocery store in his little Model T. It was one mile up and back. That was it. The rest of the time he had a beautiful garden. That was his thing. He grafted fruit trees, and he was pretty good at it.

SH: What were the subjects that you found most interesting, even in elementary school, but in high school particularly?

CM: In high school, I was enrolled in the academic course. I liked it all. Things came easy to me, I must say. Not bragging about my brain, because I have no control over it, but I enjoyed math particularly. I was pretty good at it ... and the sciences, chemistry, physics, did very well on those subjects. English, I liked English.

SH: Did you have any extra-curricular activities that you had time for?

CM: Well, we had a football team, and, I think, at that time, I weighed about 150 pounds and was skinny as a rail, so that was out. I went out once for it and the coach told me, "You're gonna break your arms and legs. Just forget it." But we played intramural basketball in high school, and sandlot basketball and sandlot football. Actually, when I came to Rutgers, 1942, after I worked that summer in the steel mill, I went out for JV football. One of my teachers, George VanDer Noot, from Rutgers, from the Ag School, he was the coach, so he knew me ... and they kept me on for some reason. I had a big load of academic subjects and I had no idea what the plays were, or what they're gonna do, but I loved getting in there and mixing it up. So, the big event in my life in football, which only was one game, we went up to West Point and played the Plebes, right. You probably don't know these guys, but there were three, Blanchard and Davis were All American football players ... they were on the freshman team. There was another guy named Stanowitz, who went to Blair Academy. He was All State, New Jersey. We went up

there with eleven guys, and in those days, you played the whole game, but you didn't have to sit out one, you know, defense or ... you played everything. My position was safety, which meant I was the last guy in front of the goal line, usually. Anyway, they beat us forty-six to nothing. They used about three whole, different teams against us. But I got to run back a kick, I caught a pass. When I caught the pass, this guy, Stanowitz, slammed into me. His nose went right into my eye socket, and I broke his nose, and I forgot that I'd caught the pass, so I went back in my safety position, not knowing that we still had the ball, because I got knocked cookoo a little bit ... and the quarterback's calling me. Then the very next time West Point had the ball, Blanchard and Davis, Blanchard ran interference for Davis ... Blanchard's legs were bigger around than my body, even today ... and he hit me and I bounced about twenty feet, and they made another touchdown. That decided me right there, I better stick to the books and forget football. I did get a letter for JV football, for that great performance.

SH: That's a great story, thank you. Those men don't realize how much they owe you, do they?

CM: Well, the guy, Stanowitz, became an Army officer, of course, and he was actually the professor of ROTC here. I was always gonna come in and ask him if he remembers who broke his nose, but the rest of that story ... after the game, we were taking a shower and he came in with his nose all bandaged up, and he looked in the door, and took one look at me and burst out laughing. He couldn't believe I broke his nose, because I looked like a stick. Anyway, that was my athletic career.

SH: When you were here in your freshman year, did you have a favorite professor? You were talking about how hard it was.

CM: Well, I don't think I worked even too hard then.

SH: I meant financially, you said you were having to work.

CM: Well, I took a job at the Camp Kilmer, unloading freight cars from eight o'clock till midnight. So, that gave me a few bucks. So, I joined the fraternity and ...

LO: Your freshman year, you did?

CM: Yes. I didn't stay there. I was still living in my little room, but I had enough money to pay the dues of the fraternity and I still ate at the cafeteria. But anyway, all those guys, mostly from the Ag School, we all worked at Camp Kilmer ... And you asked me about subjects.

SH: Right, your favorite professor.

CM: Well, as a freshman, at the Ag School, at least, and I expect the engineering school, we were all told to sign up for the War Issues course and where we took engineering drawing, which I hated. Of course, we had to take ROTC and one other subject. I can't remember what it was, something related to the war, anyway. So, I took chemistry, math, which was trigonometry, mostly, or analytic geometry and trig, which I had in high school ... kind of a repeat, English, of course. That English course was probably my best subject. When you came here, in those days,

you took an English exam. If you passed it, you went to a special English class. The rest of the kids had to take remedial English. There were twelve people in my class ... give you some idea how good their English was. Anyway, we mostly wrote papers and Professor Cameron, who became the librarian ... for quite a number of years, he was the librarian here. He was a good man, and we lost one of our class, got killed. That was my favorite class, I think.

SH: Can you tell us which fraternity that you joined?

CM: I was trying to think of the name of it now. It was an Ag fraternity.

SI: You wrote here, Beta Theta Pi?

CM: No, that was after the war.

SI: Okay. Was it Alpha Zeta? That's the honor fraternity.

CM: I was in Alpha Zeta, but that was from the Ag School.

SH: We can get this later.

CM: I can't think of it, sorry. The old brain is not clicking.

SH: When you said that you lost one of your classmates, was this from that English class?

CM: Yes, just from that small English class, one of us got killed.

SH: Do you remember his name?

CM: I know what he looked like. He had very blond hair, blue eyes, tall guy. If I saw his name on the list of victims, I wouldn't remember it by, I can't think of it at the moment.

SH: We can show that to you later. I want to back up again to talk about when you were in high school, and what was going on in Europe. Was it discussed in your high school curriculum at all?

CM: About the war?

SH: Yes, and what was going on in Europe and those kinds of issues.

CM: Well, of course, they taught history in those days, which they don't do anymore, sad to say. Did you have history in high school?

LO: Yes.

CM: A specific history course?

LO: US history.

CM: Was it called Social Studies?

LO: In middle school, we did that.

CM: Okay. Well, things have changed a little bit for the better. Anyway, I remember for many years, it was only Social Studies ... the time the kids learned how to vote and about their government. There was very little history taught, and it shows to this day. You watch *Jeopardy*, they don't know anything. What were we talking about?

SH: I wanted to know about, in high school, was there any discussion about what was going on in Europe?

CM: Yes, we all belonged to the airplane spotters. We went out and watched for airplanes, because there was a thought that we would be bombed someday. So, every high school kid, I think, in the country did, I think we had to go for two hours and we had a ... if we see a plane, we reported it.

SH: Was this before Pearl Harbor or after?

CM: No, this was afterward.

SH: I wondered if there was discussion in your high schools, or around your kitchen table, even with your parents, about what was taking place in Europe ... Hitler's invasion of Poland.

CM: Yes, I think so. If you went to the movies, the newsreels were there. The kids, most of us, couldn't wait to get in it. I mean, as seniors, they were old enough to enlist. A lot of them enlisted at the age of sixteen and lied, and their mothers signed the paper.

SH: I wondered if there was discussion about whether we should get into the war, or not get into the war?

CM: Only on the radio. I don't think the school actually took a position one way or the other. Of course, you know, you had two schools of thought in this country; we had to stay the hell out of it, and that our President was gonna get us into it. That was the discussion, mainly.

SH: What stand did your parents take?

CM: I think they tried to ignore it. I think they knew that ... my father was already working in a shipyard, so he worked very hard. When he got home from work he went to bed, as long as I can remember. There wasn't much family discussion. Let's see ... mostly it was on the radio. The kids talked about what they wanted. "I'm gonna be a Marine, or a Sailor," or whatever, that kind of talk, but ...

SH: Can you tell us how you heard about Pearl Harbor?

CM: Yes, I was working for my cousin, the veterinarian, sitting in his living room, reading the funny papers. It was a Sunday, and the announcement came over, and I stopped reading right away and I looked at my cousin. I said, "Well, I guess that's it." That's how it happened for me.

SH: So you were a senior in high school then?

CM: 1941, I was a junior.

SH: How did things change for you and your community after Pearl Harbor?

CM: The guys were off, going away, and our high school class, I think about five or six guys, right away, just quit in their senior year, maybe more than that. Recently, the State, our ex-governor, gave them all an honorary high school diploma, because throughout the State, a lot of kids just quit and went in the service.

LO: What were your plans?

CM: I already had the scholarship. I figured, "I'll hang in there and see what shakes out." I figured, I had my pictures as being a hot pilot. In fact, I applied for the Navy Air Force, but there was a three month waiting list when I was at Rutgers. Then my draft number was about to come up, so, I decided I was gonna go sooner or later, and I wasn't gonna wait three months, because I would have been drafted and ended up in a trench in Europe. So, I was what's called a Selective Volunteer. I went ahead of time and picked the Navy, and managed to pass my physical, even though I have an overbite, a little bit, and some doctors said, "Oh, that's nothing," and let me in.

SH: They were very strict then even about things like that.

CM: Yes. I think, if you had flat feet, you could probably get out of it. I don't know. I don't remember much about that.

LO: What made you choose the Navy?

CM: I like to sleep in a bunk. I didn't like sleeping in the mud. That was basically it. I just didn't feel like being a soldier. Am I talking loud enough, do you think?

SI: That's fine.

CM: That's how I got in the Navy. Inducted in Camden, New Jersey, put on a bus and sent to Bainbridge, Maryland.

LO: You traveled to Bainbridge, had you traveled before at all?

CM: Not really. Went down there on a train. I remember that.

LO: Anything you remember from the train ride or were you scared?

CM: No, I wasn't scared. I was excited, really. When we got to Bainbridge, it was just a mud hole. It had only been in operation a few months, and we were Company 22, something like that. Because I had ROTC, for one semester, I got to be a patrol leader, or platoon leader, I should say. Patrol leaders are in Boy Scouts. I was a Boy Scout.

SH: Were you?

CM: Oh, yes.

LO: What was boot camp like? What did you have to do?

CM: Oh, it was tough. Mostly you shined shoes, marched a lot, and did physical training a lot, sit-ups. It was really, basically, to get you whipped into shape. At the end of your, I think, maybe about the middle of it ... I think it was twelve weeks, if I'm not mistaken ... you had to take an examination to see where you were gonna fit in. If you had a certain background, they would give you what's called the Edy Test, and the Edy Test, if you passed, you went right into electronics. That's how I got into that.

SI: Do you remember your drill instructors from boot camp?

CM: Well, actually, my instructor was a football player from Penn State, big tough guy, Italian. I can't remember his name at the moment, but he was a good guy, tough, but very fair. The barracks had one company downstairs and one upstairs. The one upstairs was, actually, the track coach I had in Hamilton High School, which is coincidence.

LO: Why did you go to Wright Junior College in Chicago?

CM: That's where they sent us for the so-called introduction to electronics. I actually saw my first television there. They had a camera out on the sidewalk, and then showed you the picture on the screen inside, which was quite a revelation. At that time, they said, "Well, we're gonna send bombs with television cameras in front of the bomb and you'll be able to see a picture as it is going down." That didn't quite happen, but close to it. So, Wright Junior College was another twelve weeks, I guess, basic electrical theory and electronic math. It wasn't a big deal.

SH: Were you somehow affiliated with Great Lakes if you were at Wright?

CM: No.

SH: You were totally separate?

CM: No, Great Lakes was another place for a boot camp. They had some schools there, but these technical schools were Wright Junior College. Today it's a big college, but they're the kind of places they used to send these guys that passed that test. There was one in Grove City,

Pennsylvania, which was another, I think that was a small college. Some of my friends went there.

SH: Then you went to radio materiel school in California also?

CM: Before that we had to take electrical engineering at Texas A&M. That was in the summer of 1943. Hot as hell down there, no air-conditioning, we had barracks with a big fan at each end ... I remember that. It was pretty intensive. You studied at the engineering school, mostly motors and electrical stuff. Then, from there we got shipped to Treasure Island, California. It was a long train trip through the desert and with horrible train cars. They were hard seats, I mean, they had some kind of like green velvet on the seat, but it was hard as that [bangs table], no cushioning at all and we stayed on that damned train for four days, I think. One time, it stopped in the middle of the desert and I'm looking around, we're all wondering, "Why are we stopped here?" When they gave us our next meal, we had prickly pears. So, I think, they stopped and went out and picked prickly pears. Then the train dumped us off in Los Angeles for the night. We went to a flophouse, believe it or not. The Navy paid twenty-five cents a night for a bunk for us, and all the stumble bums around one side and we were on the other side. It's a wonder we all didn't get cooties or something worse, scabies, but we didn't. The next day we were shipped up to Treasure Island.

LO: Did you notice a heightened fear of Japanese invasion in California? What was the security like there versus Bainbridge?

CM: Well, it's an island. You had to go through a gate, past Marines, I mean, it was pretty tight. At the Oakland let's see what they call it ... from San Francisco to Oakland, there was an elevated train and it stopped at Treasure Island to let the sailors off, and then went on to Oakland, but you had to show your ID to get through the gate.

LO: Did you notice the difference in the mentality there, in general?

CM: Yes, it was patrolled. The bay was patrolled heavily ... Marines always at the gate. It was pretty tough to sneak out. Bainbridge, you never got out anyway, you were there for the duration. You went in and then you went out, and that was it ... But we had liberty. We went to school twelve hours a day, seven days a week. If you flunked the test, you went to school on Sunday, too. That's the way it was. We had a break in the middle of the day for lunch, and we had a break for supper, and then we went back to class.

SH: Were you housed in ...

CM: Barracks

SH: Right on Treasure Island.

CM: Yes, we lived there. Fog horns all night, blasting away.

SH: What do you remember about the liberty in San Francisco?

CM: Pretty great. We had a favorite bar and a restaurant we went to all the time. Met lots of girls, went to a lot of dances. It was pretty nice.

SH: When you were doing all this traveling, were you able to appreciate, or were you horrified at what you saw, or what were your reactions?

CM: About the country? Oh, I loved San Francisco. Of course, it's a cosmopolitan city, which I've never been exposed to. I had taken Spanish at Rutgers, and, you know, you met people from other countries there and I got a chance to practice my Spanish after I had a few beers. I think my youngest sister died while I was in class that year and they gave me a leave to go home. Red Cross paid my way, but they took it out of my pay afterward. They always got their money back. But I went home on a train, went back on a train. I actually crossed the States about seven times, I guess, once by plane.

SH: Really? When did you do that?

CM: After the war, when we came back. I went home on a train, and then a friend of mine who was on our boat, and we flew back from Newark. That was exciting, it was a DC6, or something, with two engines, propellers, and we were coming in, to San Diego, and it was fogged out. I remember looking out the window and seeing a church steeple like I could reach out and touch it. The guy goes up to Los Angeles and we had to hitchhike back to San Diego. That was after the war.

SH: You were talking about using your Spanish, did you use your Spanish at all at Texas A&M?

CM: No, I was too busy studying. Although, if the guys acted up, which sailors do occasionally, they were sent out to pick cotton with the Mexicans. That was a cheap labor source for the farmers around there, half sailors and half Mexicans. It's true. I don't know who got paid for the labor, but the sailors didn't.

SH: I assume you were not on this.

CM: No, I didn't have to do that.

SH: Tell us then about getting assigned to the ... did you volunteer to be on submarines?

CM: Yes. Well, when you graduated, if you had over eighty grade point average from the radio materiel school, you got to be a second class petty officer without ever going to sea. It was a technical rating, but the surface sailors thought that was horrible that anybody could be a second class petty officer and never even set foot on a ship. So, anyway, the handful of us, I think, five that volunteered for submarines and we were sent to New London, another trip across the country. At New London, we studied the Sj radar, that's all we did. We never went to sub school. So, when I got on a submarine, I didn't know the first thing about it ... but we studied this radar for, I think, eight weeks, and then I happened to volunteer to go on the *Razorback*, because the guy that had my job was sick and sent to a hospital. So, he actually had a venereal

disease, and, sadly to say, he went on another boat that our original skipper had and was sunk. So, that was too bad.

SH: Tell us about being in New London and this school for this radar. How new was this?

CM: Well, of course, radar at that time was hush-hush, I mean, it was one of our top secrets things. The British developed it, actually, but we had superior ten meter equipment, which this was ... ten centimeters ... and that was a big breakthrough in radar. In fact, that's what helped the Air Force spot submarines and the German subs ... that practically defeated the German submarine force, because they could pick up these subs when they surfaced.

-----END OF SIDE ONE, TAPE ONE-----

CM: ... While at the sub base, I had a couple of unpleasant experiences. Number one, I lost my ID card on liberty one weekend, and to get in the base you had to have your ID card. So, I was sent to the blue room, which was a prison, and I had to scrub floors, or wax floors, for a week, at night, after class all day. So, I got about three hours sleep for a week. That wasn't too pleasant, and then the other thing happened. I went home on leave once while I was there, and going back on the train, I fell asleep and ended up in Providence, Rhode Island. I had to get off and go back to New London on the next train back. But, I didn't get there on time, anyway. Every time a sailor was severely disciplined, Saturday mornings, they lined us all up on the parade ground and they would bring this guy up in handcuffs and talk about he is, "Gonna do five years at Portsmouth Naval Prison cracking rocks." So, that woke everybody up. They did that every week.

LO: Were they bluffing?

CM: No. These guys were bad actors, they had gotten into all kinds of trouble ... but they wanted us to know that if we messed up, that's where we were going.

SH: What about the security that you had to go through? Was there a security check, like they do now, with clearances?

CM: At the gates of all the naval installations, there was strong security, yes. That's why it was important not to lose your ID.

SH: They didn't do any background checks on you for serving on submarines?

CM: By then we pretty much established that we were blue blooded, American kids. I don't think a stranger could get into a sub base, in any case. Civilians had to be checked thoroughly. That was pretty tight.

SI: Just looking at all your training, it seems like it was very different from what you've been doing before the war. How did you take to all these technical training and learning all these new things?

CM: I kind of enjoyed it. It was a new exciting life for me. I knew that, eventually, I'd be out in the fleet somewhere. Once I volunteered for submarines I was preordained, and, as I say, we did not go to sub school. When we first went there, we had a psychological examination, basically, to see if we could handle the stress of being cooped up for months at a time. After that, we had to go in a pressure chamber to see if we could handle, I guess, what was the pressure in there? Four pounds above atmospheric, I guess. You had to sit there, and some of the guys would go whacky and pound on the door, "Let me out." Then you had to go on a diving tower, where you went down and put on a Munson Lung, stepped out and had to go fifty feet. You could volunteer to go 100 feet, but I didn't. I didn't like the it first time, but I made it anyway. That was, supposedly, the way you escaped from a submarine. Unfortunately, in my experience in the North Pacific, the water is so deep there and your chance of survival with a Munson Lung was pretty unlikely ... and besides, we stored potatoes in the escape hatch. That was a problem.

SI: Did you notice if there was a high wash out rate in any phase of your training?

CM: Well, I didn't go to sub school, but I understand they had a pretty good flunk out rate ... The guys that made it, attended a radio school. I think, probably, was very low, people flunking out. For one thing, they grade it on a curve. Like I said, if you got over eighty, you were guaranteed to get a first or second class, which is pretty cool ... and the guys that got a seventy made third class. Anybody below that, if they made it, they were just strikers, is what they call. That answer that question?

SI: I think so.

SH: How did you volunteer for the *Razorback*, or were you just a replacement for the other man?

CM: They had a list. The guys in my group there were being sent to Pearl Harbor. Once they got there, they would be put on any submarine that needed a technician, or they went to a [submarine] tender and worked on equipment on a tender. They also had a notice for the *Razorback*, and I grabbed the chief and said, "I'll take that." He said, "Are you sure?" I said, "Why do you ask that?" He said, "Well, they ran aground out here on Fisher's Island, had to go back to Portsmouth and get patched up." The commander and the exec both were cashiered, put on disciplinary leave and assigned to other boats, eventually. Our new captain was Roy Benson, who was on the *Trigger*, sunk an aircraft carrier, I think, so he was pretty famous. But his job was just to take us out for our first patrol, kind of watch what we're doing, make sure we're doing things right and then when we got back with that patrol, our exec took over. Our executive officer was Mr. Brown, who was a skipper on a school boat out of New London, and he volunteered to go with Benson to be on the *Razorback*.

SH: Did you know this when you volunteered?

CM: No.

SH: You just picked the *Razorback*.

CM: Well, he told me about that, and I said, “Well, they got their accident out of the way, maybe it will be okay now.” That wasn’t quite the case, but that’s why I grabbed it, anyway.

LO: You are an optimist.

CM: Yes.

SH: Did you then come back home on leave, or did you go straight out?

CM: No, they sent me right out, I picked the boat up in Key West, that’s where it was. It had just gone down the coast, and they were operating out of Key West on training. I arrived there on my dress blues in July, the 5th, the temperature is about 110 in the shade. I had to wait around for a couple of hours till the boat came back in, and then I went aboard. They went back out and they told me to go in the crew’s mess and sit on a bunk. So, I did and, oh, I know what. They had some repair work done, and they had to go out and do a deep dive and test it. So I’m sitting on this bunk and right above me is this patchwork there and the water was pouring in. We were at 400 feet, I think. My first time on a submarine, nobody around, I’m sitting on a bunk, and the water was pouring in and a guy comes through from the engine room. I say, “Is this thing supposed to be leaking?” He says, “Oh, Jesus Christ,” he ran up to the control room and we surfaced and went back. What had happened, that was what they call a soft patch, which was a whole bunch of bolts, and, I guess, they had some kind of a rubber grommet or something, but they hadn’t tightened it up enough, and this was the area where they took the batteries out of the battery wells to replace batteries. So, they had to fix that. I think they welded it shut, actually. Anyway, that was my first dive on a submarine, and I didn’t know what to make of it. I figured, “Well, nobody’s paying attention, can’t be all that bad.” The serious thing about that, that water, salt water, and if it got down into the battery, there would be all hell to pay because of salt in the battery, you get hydrogen gas and then you’re dead. So, most of it went to the bilges, there wasn’t that much.

SH: Did you have to qualify for other parts of the boat?

CM: Yes, I qualified. I got on the boat, well, I could tell you about my problems as a technician,

SH: Please do.

CM: My job was battle station radar. So, when we went out on all these practice battle stations, my job was to run the radar, and deliver the ranges and bearings of the targets to the Captain, which I did, and we had no problems. When we got to Panama, on our way to Pearl Harbor, and went through the Canal, we had high priority. All traffic stopped for submarines. We went through at twenty-two knots across that lake. Yes, pretty fast, our top speed, and we got to the Pacific side and we had to do operations there for maybe a couple of days. Then we left, and my radar stopped working. The Captain would yell, “Technician to the bridge. Fix that goddamned thing.” The lookouts were fine and pointing out ships and the radar didn’t have anything on the scope. So, I practically tore that thing apart. I couldn’t find out what went wrong with it. It was really messed up. So, what saved me, we were about two days out of Pearl Harbor and they decided that while we practice dives, when the officer of the deck went up with the lookout,

which was the quartermaster, that they would make sure everything was okay and then they would blow the diving alarm three times, which meant, surface, stay up. Well, they forgot to tell the chief of the boat that was down in the control room. So, as soon as he heard the claxon, he pulled the plug, so they dove the boat. The conning tower hatch to the deck, to the topside to the bridge was open, and these two guys climbed up on the periscope shears, ... neither one of them could swim very well, the boat dove. The hatch between the conning tower and the control room was closed, but they flooded the conning tower right up to here. The helmsman was in water up to his chest. I wasn't on the radar at that time, thank God, but all of our equipment up there, which was all the electronics, was flooded out. So, when we got to Pearl, I got all new radar, new sonar, we got a new torpedo data computer. They had to redo the whole conning tower. So, then after they fixed all that, they put us through them bloody paces, I mean, we were practicing day and night, usually with a destroyer, and, coincidentally, that destroyer had a bunch of guys from my boot camp on it, from Bainbridge.

SH: The guys that were topside when you dove, I assume you got them.

CM: Oh, yes, they were fine. We got up before they were submerged completely. They were hanging on for dear life.

LO: So what became your specific duties primarily?

CM: Well, I was called the radio technician, that was the rate I had. We rarely ever had to fix radio equipment. Some of the minor stuff, the radioman could do it, minor, changing the tube or something. They knew right away what was wrong. My main job was radar and sonar. The sonar was pretty stable, not much problem with that, either. So, basically, I took care of the radar, and then, of course, on my battle station, that was my job. I didn't have to stand any watches for a long time, regular watches. I had to be available to fix the radar if anything went wrong. So, that's all I did for most of the time, but then we got a new piece of equipment called an airborne pulse receiver. That would tell us when a Jap plane was homing in on us. On our first patrol, we'd go up to charge batteries at night, practically every night a plane would drive us down two or three times, but that little gear saved our life. So, I had to, basically, I had to perform a watch on that equipment. What it did was sweep through a whole series of frequencies to pick up these plane radars. It was not directional, you had graph on there, and as the signal got stronger, you knew he was homing on you and you dive, pull the plug.

SH: Can you tell us about what it was like to be on the submarine, or what an entire day would be like aboard the boat?

CM: Well, actually, we spent a lot of time on the surface, traveling back and forth from wherever we were based to our station. This would usually take at least a week, sometimes longer. Frankly, unless you were on watch, as a lookout, or, you know, diving the boat or something, it was pretty boring.

SH: What did you do?

CM: Slept a lot, read a lot, studied for my qualification, because I had a lot of free time at that point. Radar was working perfectly, and no problems there, so I studied to be qualified, which I did in November of '44.

SH: What kind of messages did you receive? What kind of communication was there for a crew like yourselves?

CM: Well, the radioman, of course, copied all the stuff that came from Pearl Harbor and a lot of it was routine stuff to confuse the Japs. These guys copied, it was called a fox schedule, and they typed, they listened on the radio. It was all Morse code, but the letter groups, five letters, like a word would be five letters and some of it didn't mean a damned thing, but it was so the Japanese would have trouble breaking the code ... and we had a cipher machine, which he took the message, put it in the machine, you made settings for each day and that thing would decode it back into normal English. So, the messages, some of the messages were from observers in China that report a convoy moving up the coast, coast watchers in the Philippines, the southern Philippines, and the islands would report, by radio, that so many ships going this direction, this course, how fast they were going, how many ships. That information went to Pearl, and if it was in our area, they would send you the special message. It would say "special to *Razorback*."

LO: How informed was the crew by the captain of important messages?

CM: Pretty much. Of course, I knew what was going on all the time, because my battle station was up in the conning tower. During an attack, the crew down below, really didn't know what was going on. We had a talker up there to talk to the torpedo room, and he would try to squeeze in some information if he could, but usually they were busy, and, you know, they were saying, "Fire three, fire four," whatever. There wasn't much time to do that, so the people in the conning tower knew what was going on, the guy down below just heard what was going on.

LO: But you were pretty much always well informed.

CM: Not only through the radio room, which I didn't operate the gear at all, but the guys tell me what's going on.

SH: What was your duty station and where were you, what part of the Pacific?

CM: Well, the radar was all up on the conning tower, and I spent a lot of time up there. I did watches on the APR, and we had a sonar station up in the forward torpedo room where a guy would just, it was unlike a sound head, it was a horizontal thing and they would rotate it by hand and it was pretty sensitive to ocean noises. Usually, sometimes, it would pick up the screw sounds from a ship before the regular sonar equipment ... and they were big massive sound heads, big round things. They were directional and they rotated around till you had a contact. We didn't use the pinging range so much. During an attack you did, if it was a submerged attack, but, in general, you just listened, and that's the way it is today. But if you send out a ping, it automatically tells that ship that you're there and what direction you're there, so we didn't use it very much. We had one radar, which was like a beacon. It's a low frequency radar for detecting airplanes, and if you turn that baby on, the Japs would home right in on it. So, we

kept that thing off most of the time. The only time we used it, was we were on lifeguard duty in Tokyo Bay, just off of Tokyo Bay, and we'd have it on to know when the air attack started, because, you know, there was all kinds of radar frequencies flying around from the planes, and so forth, so we weren't too worried about Japs picking it up. But it's not uncommon to see 200 pips on the radar from those big bombing raids.

SH: What is a life guarding duty?

CM: Lifeguard was the name given to the pilot rescue service, which we provided. We ran around on the surface within, sometimes, half a mile from the shore in Japan, also some of the islands, but, basically, I was only involved in the Japanese attacks. We had voice communication with the planes, and they had homing beacons on their rafts if they went down. We would pick those up and use a direction finder and go get them, if you could. A lot of times, we couldn't find them.

SH: Did you, in fact, find some people?

CM: Yes, we saved a crew from a B-29, four guys, and we picked them up down around Kobe, Nagoya ... southern part of the island ... and then in Tokyo Bay, we picked up a P-51 pilot. He was in the water less than ten minutes, and we were talking to him when he said he was gonna bail out. We had him in sight. He hit the water and we headed, went right over, and grabbed him off his raft and his life jacket, brought him on board and within fifteen minutes, he was in the shower.

SH: Where did you take them, once you rescued one of them?

CM: Okay, well, generally we would be on station, say, two months. After we saved these guys, there would be a boat that was scheduled to go back to Guam, or Midway, or wherever, so we transferred those at night on a rubber boat over to, in our case, it was a *Spadefish* that was going back to Saipan, I think. So, those guys went over there and we just continued our normal patrol. There wasn't much shipping activity then, all of those planes flying around, but we had a secret weapon, which was an acoustic torpedo and that thing, supposedly, you pushed it out of your torpedo tube ... you had to go to silent running, everything was shut off ... you pushed this thing out with a real gentle puff of air, and then, it would turn on and circle around like this, right in front of your boat, until it picked up a set of screws. Then, when it hit that sound, it would zoom right in on it. The idea was it would go right to the propellers and blow up the ship. Great idea, except we were too close to the beach, and this was a small, small coastal vessel and it would have been a nice target, except the beach made too much noise so the torpedo ended up in the rocks. Well, what happened, the guy was, I think he had sails up, so we surfaced and made a lot of smoke, figured that would make him turn on his engine and get out of there. Well, he didn't do it, because when we submerged, there were no screw sounds, so the captain fired the thing anyway, but it just ended up in the rocks and blew up. The ship got away. So much for the secret weapon.

SH: Now you went to Pearl after you left the Panama Canal.

CM: Yes.

SH: Then, where were you stationed?

CM: Well, we have to get all that new equipment. So, then we had to go on our first patrol, which was the Palau Islands campaign. We went to Midway, got rid of a couple of guys who had chronic seasickness, then we went to Saipan ... no we didn't either, no, we didn't go to Saipan then. We went down past Wake Island and another island there, I can't remember the name of it, and down into that part of the Pacific, which I guess is called the Philippine Sea. Our job was a scouting line, us and five other submarines, because they expected the Jap fleet to come out, out of the Philippines and attack our fleet, but it didn't happen. So, we didn't see any battleships, or aircraft carriers, or anything. So, then we had Roy Benson as our captain, who was just, you know, training us, actually. So, they sent us from there to Formosa, which is Taiwan now, and we patrolled up and down the coast, but every time we picked up a ship, we'd go down, hide, because Roy Benson was just supposed to see that we got back to Midway. We had a lot of training there because we got chased down by planes a lot, you know, like four or five times a day, or night, and, so we got pretty good at detecting planes and getting under. We could dive that boat to sixty feet in about thirty-two seconds, which was pretty good. We had a few bombs dropped on us, but they missed. So, that part of it was good training. Then, we went back to Midway, had a change of command ceremony and, that was that.

SH: Where did you patrol then from that point with your new Captain ... Brown, right?

CM: Yes, Captain Brown, he took over. We went to ... our second patrol was our most productive because it was in 1944, actually, more shipping was sunk in that year because they had fixed all the problems. ... Remember, our torpedoes didn't work very well. They had wrong depth settings. The firing mechanism wouldn't work unless, if you hit a vessel straight on, the thing wouldn't go off. So, there were big problems, which is why they didn't do too good in the beginning of the war. A lot of skippers got sent back home because they thought they were not too aggressive, which, in some cases, that was true because of the training they had. But they fixed those problems by end of 1943, and, so everything worked pretty well for us. On that patrol, we went from Pearl Harbor directly to Saipan, and we stayed there, just to get on stores and water and stuff. I had found that my cousin was stationed on Saipan. So, one of my buddies was on the tender and I asked him, I told him the last address I had, and if he could ... when I first got there, I saw him, and he said he'd try to find him. So, two days later, we're getting ready to pull out and I look up, and there's my cousin with my friend, up on the tender, waving goodbye. So, we went out and shot up all our torpedoes except two. We had carried twenty-four fish, which they were called, and we came back for a reload to Saipan. So, while we were there, and this took about a week, I guess, I sneaked off the boat, went to where my cousin used to be stationed and found out he was moved to the north of the island. So, I asked the guy how to get there, and he told me. I walked six miles up a dirt road, saw nobody, or nothing, but me in my dungarees walking up this road. I got to the end, north of the island, I saw the sign for their outfit. I'm walking up the hill and I heard a shot. So, I go in the first tent I came to and asked about my cousin. He says, "Oh, he's a cook. He's over in the cook tent. Somebody just took a shot at him." I say, "Does that happen often?" He said, "Oh, every couple of days, they get hungry." Anyway, there were still Japs up there wandering around, and then I'm thinking, "I

just walked six miles up a dirt road with nobody with me, saw nothing.” I have absolutely nothing the whole time I walked up that road. If there was a sniper, I would have been shot. They probably thought it was a trick, because nobody would be that stupid. Anyway, that was pretty interesting, and I had a nice visit with my cousin. They took me back to the boat in an armored personnel carrier, and about five guys went with me, and they wanted to see the boats, so I took them on board. The cook gave them all a steak dinner and then I showed them my radar thing, and all that. Then when they left, I gave them a big canned ham. They thought they died and went to heaven. They were living in tents and eating dehydrated potatoes, and stuff like that, and dehydrated eggs. So, that was pretty good, although, if the Skipper knew I had done that, he would have been really pissed. I was a key personnel. They couldn’t afford to have me disappear. If I got killed, they probably would have been there, oh, no, they had technicians on that tender, they would have taken over. We always had replacements. Everybody is expendable. Anyway, that worked out.

SH: Go on with the stories.

CM: So, we got a reload and we went back out there again, and we attacked a convoy one morning, just at daylight or dawn, early dawn, and we sunk one ship, then sunk a destroyer that was coming in to sink us. We blew the bow off of it and all the crew of the Japanese destroyer went to the back, to keep the bow up out of the water. We made a circle and finished it off. So, that went to Davy Jones’ Locker. Then we were attacked by the remaining escorts, so we had to submerge. This wasn’t the first attack we made, but this was the second patrol, middle of it, when we went back with a reload ... We finally evaded those ships and surfaced in a rain squall, which I had picked up on radar. Then we tracked that boat, that convoy, and, I think, there were four ships and some escorts left, and tracked them all day. We’d be about, I’d say, anywhere from eight to ten miles away from them, but we had them on radar, so we just followed them ... and our speed was twenty-two knots on the surface, and we could stay ahead of them. Then, when night fell, we got ahead of the convoy, we knew what their course was, direction they were going by then, we knew how they zigzagged, we knew everything about them. So, when they caught up to us, why, we attacked them on the surface. That’s the most efficient way to shoot torpedoes out with radar. We sank, damaged, or sunk, we don’t really know, two more ships, and, yes, that left, like, one ship left, and that was burning. So, then we’re out of torpedoes. We went back to Guam for rest camp. That was the ... the early part of that patrol, before we went back for the reload, we attacked a hunter killer group at dawn. My buddy picked it up on radar. We were getting ready to submerge and he said, “Hold on, I got a pip.” So, it turned out to be a three ship ... one tanker, destroyer, and two other escorts. So, we got fairly close, I guess. We think we sank the destroyer. We were gonna sink the tanker but the destroyer was heading for us, so, they shot it and the Captain dove immediately. So, we didn’t watch to see what happened, but the sonar people, we have loud speaker on, so you could hear the explosions, and, to us, it sounded like the ship was breaking up. So, we didn’t get credit for that either, but we went down to ... our test depth was 400 feet, but there was a thermocline, of cold water. If you got under that, the sonar would bounce off the cold water and they couldn’t find you. So, we ended up at 590 feet, something like that, close to 600 feet, which was way below our test depth, and the boat made all kinds of weird noises, moaning and groaning. The racks that held the torpedoes were bent up, like that, but as we surfaced, they straightened out, but that was just the compression on the boat.

LO: Why did you go down that low?

CM: To get under that thermocline. They were dropping depth charges on us. Altogether, that patrol, I think, I counted over a hundred depth charges, and ninety-five of them were on that second part of the patrol. The ones these guys dropped weren't close at all, because they didn't really know where we were.

SI: So what's it like to be in a submarine when you get depth charged?

CM: Well, you're nineteen years old, you have no fear and you know if anything happens, it's all over anyway. You got to be a fatalist, that's all. If your number is up, it's up. That's the way you think at that age. I still think that way. I'm still here. So, that's the way it works. Most young people ... I never saw anybody crack up, or, you know, act like they're scared to death, or crying, or any of that.

SH: Talk a little bit about the make-up of the crew and how often it changed.

CM: It depended on your job, but, normally, they would remove maybe a third of the crew each patrol and put them on a tender or transfer them to another boat. The lucky ones that had been in for a while would go back to the States for reconstruction, for a new boat. If you had a job like mine, or radioman, or head torpedo man, the guys in the auxiliary room, who fixed all the pumps, and air banks, and had charge of everything down there, they kept you because you knew how to do your job and they want to keep you. So, that's how I stayed on the boat for five runs. Normally, after three runs, I think, you had to be transferred, unless the captain said, "No."

SH: Were there people from all over the country?

CM: Oh, yes. A lot of the south, a lot of the guys from the South. Don't forget, these are the cream of the crop, this crew. From the time you get on a submarine and go to sub school, you're the best the Navy has got to offer, and they all did their jobs, they were all good people. We had very little animosity, or wrangling, or complaining, none of that.

SH: You talked about an R&R at Guam. That may not have been the term you used.

CM: Yes, it's a rest camp they called it.

SH: How was that set up for you?

CM: Well, these camps, there was, of course, one on Midway, one on Guam. I don't think they had one on Saipan. If they did, I didn't know about it. If you'd been out a year, you go back to Pearl Harbor and stay in the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. We stayed there twenty-one days. That was pretty nice. I don't remember much about it, but I was there. The rest camp, I think, was basically, about two weeks. You know, they gave us point two beer once a day and played baseball a lot, hang around, reading, taking it easy, good food, not as good as we had on the boat, but pretty good.

SH: Did you interact with the other branches?

CM: Played baseball with different boats, that kind of a contest, athletic contest.

SH: So you pretty much stayed with other submariners?

CM: Yes, at a rest camp, there might be, depending on the capacity, I guess, I remember, maybe four boats tops would be in at one time. There were 220 boats, I think, altogether, and we lost fifty-two. So, basically, one out of five didn't make it.

SH: What about the other services, did you have any interaction with the Army or the other services?

CM: No. On Guam, the time before we got there, a crew, and I forget the name of the boat, but five guys went out with the Marines, and they all ended up dead. They went out on patrol with the Marines on Guam and the Japs were hiding in caves and, still, they were trying to dig them out, and they just got ambushed. So, they didn't allow any of that anymore. Likewise, we used to be able to hitch a ride with a bomber or fighter pilot, maybe, if you could work the electronics. They didn't allow that anymore, either.

SH: Really.

CM: So, you were pretty much stuck with your own deal.

SH: What was the interaction between the officers on the boat and the men? Was it a little more relaxed than it would have been on a carrier?

CM: Yes, that was one of the best things about submarine service. The crew as a whole, officers and enlisted men, had to work together to make the thing work and, of course, you didn't want anything to agitate people, so the officers were laid back. There was no saluting. They walked around their underwear, just like we did. We wore, basically, shorts and sandals. Of course, it was pretty warm there. We made one patrol in the cold, our last patrol, but, basically, it was pretty warm wherever we went. So, they treated, the officers, the captain particularly, treated you with respect. They knew you knew your job, you had all this training, and, you know, it was their neck on the line also. If everybody didn't do their job, we all suffered. So, the officers ... we had one officer on our boat that we generally disliked. He did his job well, too well. He was the disciplinarian, although that wasn't his job. He was pretty hard-nosed. For instance, we had a battle station on Christmas day, and pretty much were on battle stations most of the day. The next day, he turned everybody out to clean the boat, field day, and we were gonna have a delayed Christmas dinner. So, before we could get that, we had to clean the boat up. I mean, everybody had to turn to. In fact, I was a first class, and that's the first time I ever had to do anything like that. I didn't particularly like it. I had to clean the bilges where the sound heads were, repaint them and all that business. Anyway, he was not well liked and the chief of the boat hated him. He often said, "I'm gonna push him overboard some night." But that's as far as it went. I mean, there was no overt stuff like that.

SH: Had you thought of applying for OCS at all?

CM: Well, my radar assistant, who went to a prep school out in Pennsylvania ... anyway, it was a pretty posh school, and he was pretty smart but he couldn't get a rate. I mean, he was a radar operator, but there was no rate for that, so they made him, third class electrician, I guess. They talked to him about going to Annapolis. They send you to a prep school to get your rating, so he passed the entrance exam, but he turned it down. He didn't want to go ... and they didn't want to lose me. I was the only one who could fix the radar, so I was stuck. But, no, I never. I really wanted to be a veterinarian then. I knew it.

SH: You already knew you did.

CM: Yes. I'll give you an example. We had a new piece of equipment put on the boat, and it was called torpedo direction indicator. What this thing would do, was supposedly pick up any other submarine that fired a torpedo at you, and give you an alert that there was a torpedo heading your way, in case the lookouts didn't see it ... and the thing, we turned it on, we were leaving Midway with it ... and they put it on in there, at Midway ... and we were trying it out and the first night, we dove about twenty times because whoever was on deck and watching this, they got the word from this machine, "Torpedo, incoming," so we would dive the boat. So, I go up and look at the thing and I'm trying to figure out, "What the hell it is this thing is hearing, something that's on the boat probably." So, the captain called me down and he said, "What's going on with that thing?" I said, "Well, Captain, in my opinion we ought to turn it off." He says, "So be it." So, you know, you had that kind of interaction that you wouldn't have on a surface ship. They'd have a committee of twenty officers to decide that the thing wasn't working, but on a submarine, it's a different deal. So, I got along good with most of the officers. In fact, the guy that, the only officer that was not universally liked was the one that qualified me, and I was scared to death, because he had a reputation for being a real bastard, but I passed. I think the captain told him, "You will pass him." That's probably why I got qualified. Although, I didn't make any mistakes, on the things he asked me. He could have asked me a lot of stuff I didn't know.

SH: What about the mail back and forth to the States? How often did you get your mail?

CM: Usually, our patrols lasted anywhere from sixty to seventy days, and we would come in, and most of the times, there would be a bag of mail waiting for us. At the time, I had a girl friend that wrote me every week, twice a week. That was kind of neat to get mail from home. I don't ever remember my parents writing to me. Of course, they didn't hear much from me, either. You couldn't tell anybody anything. I mean, you wrote, "I'm alive and well, having a great time. Wish you were here." Everything else was censored. There wasn't much you could say. I don't think, this girl, I don't think I wrote to her more than once a month, if that. Of course, they never knew where you were. That's why they called it the silent service; nobody knew anything. The story about that is, that a congressman in 1942, the end of '42, or early '43, made a statement on radio that the Japanese weren't setting their depth charges deep enough, so that our subs were escaping. So, right away, we started to lose boats. I mean, within a month

they sunk a whole bunch of boats and just for that so-called, “slip of the lip,” which was true. They were setting their depth charges at around 250 feet.

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

LO: This is tape two of the interview with Dr. Calvin Moon.

CM: Thank you, where were we?

SH: We were talking about the slip of the lip of the congressman.

CM: Many boats, we think, were sunk just because of that. The Japanese suddenly became very efficient with their depth charges. We lost a few boats, probably directly the results of his statement. So, that was the end of that. The other thing that I might mention, a lot of times, you'd be on patrol and you could hear Tokyo Rose on the broadcast bands. We had a broadcast receiver in the crew's mess. We heard her say, “The *Razorback* was sunk today. All those brave young men died for nothing,” and we're all sitting there listening to this. You wonder how they know, there's a *Razorback* submarine out there to begin with. Well, one of the things that probably did it, when we got rid of our garbage, it would be put in burlap bags, and this included stuff that came, the radio stuff, the stuff that was in code, of course, there would be a heading to *Razorback*. I think they could figure that out, probably, and they were stuffed in these bags along with the rest of the garbage, and they put weights in them, and threw them over the side at night. Hopefully, they all sunk, but I suspect some of them didn't. You know, if you tie a bag with enough air in it, it's gonna float for a while. We would do this right off the coast of Japan, so it wouldn't be unusual for a ship to come by or a patrol craft and see a bag floating in the water and scoop it up. That may be one of the ways they got information. They never stopped doing that, as far as I know.

SH: Did you ever have any interaction with the Japanese submarines? Encounter maybe is a better word?

CM: Yes, we had, I think, once, we had a torpedo fired at us. As far as we know, it was probably a Japanese sub, hopefully. It could have been one of ours. There wasn't supposed to be one of our submarines in that area. So, one of our boats, the *Batfish*, was operating near Okinawa and it sank, within two days, sank three Japanese submarines, because they happened to be right in their training area. So, the poor Japs would go out for training and bang. So, that was pretty unusual. But they're the only boat that ever did that. I think, a few other boats sank Japs subs that they caught on the surface. The Japanese did not use their submarines properly. They had so many troops isolated on different islands that they used these submarines to resupply them, and even though they had the best torpedoes in the world, outside of the *Indianapolis*, and a carrier, and a couple of capital ships in the Battle of Coral Sea, they never used them to any effect. Their torpedoes were much more powerful than ours, more explosive power. They were more accurate and faster, and we never did have a decent torpedo. We had a magnetic torpedo, which, theoretically, would go under a ship and the change in the magnetic field around that ship would cause this thing to explode. So, the idea was that, if it got close enough, or even under the ship, there would be more of a chance of sinking it. The other thing

about those, they had no wake. They were electric torpedoes, so, you know, when you see in the movies, the bubbles on the torpedo, that's from the steam torpedo, which, about half of our torpedoes were operating that way. The other half were electric, without any wake to show where they were, so that was an advantage. But these magnetic warheads didn't always work the way they were supposed to. We had premature explosions, where the torpedo would just get out past the ship and blow up. Now, that's a scary thing, very loud noise.

SH: What's the closest call that you had on the *Razorback*?

CM: Well, during combat, we had some close depth charges, but not ... only in that second patrol. That final night of that particular patrol, we got pretty close depth charges, but nothing outside of a rattle and a few light bulbs and cork ... we had cork insulation, so that would be shook loose and fall down, but we never lost any major equipment, or anything. So, we were lucky in that way, more luck than good management, I'd say. The closest call, I guess, was after the war. We were in San Diego, and half of the crew was on vacation, on leave, and we were taking the boat out and making dives off of ... in real deep water. This would be south of San Diego, probably off of Mexico. One of our ... when you bring a submarine into the dock, you want to make sure that it's not gonna flood down and sink, so that you had safety valves on all these ballast tanks, which are normally open at the top. That's how they worked. There's nothing underneath, they're open underneath, but if you open the top, then they fill up with water and the boat sinks. So, one of these main ballast tanks on the right side, starboard side, was messed up. The valve didn't work. We dove the boat and with just that big ballast tank still full of air, it was enough to roll our boat over like this, as we're going down, and I happened to be in the conning tower and the captain was there when this happened. We started to roll over like a dive bomber, and if you roll over too far, you know, you'll never gonna get back up. So, I looked over to him and he was about the of color this ...

SH: White.

CM: He said, "Blow all ballast," and we just about made it. I mean, the water was very deep there. It was just a couple of seconds probably, and we would have been over too far. So that was scary.

SH: What did you do?

CM: We had to blow all the water out of all ... there are other tanks filled, that's filled with water, like up front, you have a bow buoyancy tank and a negative tank. The design of these is to get the front of the boat down quick, and they were full of water. So, as soon as something happens, you have other ballast tanks, and I forget how many, but once you have an emergency, you blow everything with high-pressure air. So, all the tanks are blown, and then you can come back up. So, that saved our bacon that day. The captain did it, really. But everybody in that conning tower knew what happened, and knew why we did that. Then, they tried to blame the ensign. Before you leave, the officer of the day, these valves are on both sides of the boat, starboard and port, over those tanks, and you got to go through, make sure that they are, as you go to sea, that they're gonna be functional. You test by hand or look at them, see what position

they're in, something. So, everybody said, "That dumb ensign didn't check these tanks." But it turned out the valve was defective. It had to be fixed. That's how things get sunk.

SH: What kind of interaction did you have with shore patrol?

CM: Very little, because we never were anywhere where we had a liberty. After the war, submarine crews are kind of a tightly knit group, and in San Diego, we had a favorite bar. One night, I met a friend from high school, he was on a Liberty ship, so I just saw him on the street. I said, "Come on, go with me, you're not doing anything." So, we went to this bar and we started to have a good time, had a couple of beers and in comes about ten Marines. I tapped him on the shoulders, and I said, "We're leaving. All hell is gonna break loose here in about five minutes." So, we got out of there. I don't know if the shore patrol came, but it'd be unlikely that there wouldn't be a fight there. It may be likely that there would be a fight, because Marines and submariners, it was like [makes cracking noise.]

SH: Why do you think it's that way?

CM: Well, they think they are the elite of the Navy, too. No, we know we won the war. Anyway, let's see, we had, when we were in Pearl Harbor, we had a luau put on for us. The whole crew went, officers included, and they served poi and roast pig, and all this, pretty neat ... and nice Hawaii gals waiting on us, and their husbands are cooking or serving up, or boyfriends, whatever. So, the guys had a few beers and they started making a play for the girls, and then the fun started. Their boyfriends, or husbands, or whatever, started fighting with the guys that were hitting on their women, and within about twenty minutes, the shore patrol was there. That was the end of the luau. None of us got put in the pokey, but we were sent back to our boat. The place was a mess, I mean, there was poi all over the floor. People were throwing it at everybody, just to get in on the action. I didn't do any fighting.

SH: Of course, you didn't.

CM: No.

SH: Were there stewards on board the ship, on board the boat with the captain? Did he have a steward that, I don't think the answer is going to be yes.

CM: Have a what?

SH: A steward.

CM: Oh, yes.

SH: Did he?

CM: Absolutely. This is the sad part of the Navy, really ... very discriminating service. We had two black kids on board, one was from Philadelphia and the other one, and I don't know where he was from. His name was Blue. He was pretty dark, and, anyway, their sole function was to

serve the officers. They didn't have to cook, but they had to go back to the galley and get them, officer's food, take it back in their pantry and prepare it, and serve it on fancy pottery and silverware, and they kept them supplied with coffee, and that was what they did. They both had a battle station. One of them was on a fifty-caliber machine gun, the other guy was just damage control, I think, but the crew got along with them. I wouldn't say they were ... occasionally, they go on liberty with them but not very often, they kind of kept to themselves in that respect. That was not unusual in the Navy. I think Truman stopped all that business. Anyway, they had no official ratings. They were called stewards, and that was it ... not very fair, because they had to have the same, they had to go to sub school, they had to pass these examinations. They weren't stupid, but that's what their job was. Harry Truman stopped that. That was the same throughout the Navy back then.

LO: So you went on five patrols?

CM: Correct.

LO: What defines a successful patrol? Did you have five successful patrols?

CM: Unfortunately, no. What defined a successful patrol depended on the admiral, I guess, but we had three out of five. Two of them, you have to remember, in 1945, there were very few Japanese ships left. What was left were small things that we usually polished off with a gun. They weren't worth a torpedo. So, there was a lack of targets and many a boat went out and never saw a Jap ship. [They] did their job patrolling their area, but found nothing and came back and still had their torpedoes. That was unsuccessful. Now, on our fourth patrol, we didn't sink any ships. We tried with a sneaky torpedo, but it didn't work. Because we picked up five aviators, that was considered a successful patrol. So we had three, that was one. Our second patrol, we sunk a destroyer, our captain got the Navy Cross for that. That's first thing down from a Congressional Medal or the Medal of Honor, I should just call it. So, the Navy Cross is pretty prestigious, and, then, I think our last patrol, we were in the Sea of Okhotsk, little island called Etorofu Shima, [now known as Iturup] and we intercepted a bunch of small coastal vessels that were loaded with troops and supplies going to resupply the Kuril Islands. Here we are in the Sea of Okhotsk with all these supply luggers, sea trucks coming. We surfaced and had a battle action, and they were shooting back at us. We had two men on the gun crew that got wounded with a fifty-caliber machine gun bullet, not seriously. One had a streak down his arm, the other one got nicked somewhere, and they got the Purple Heart. Not too many submarine sailors got the Purple Heart, unless they were dead. So, that patrol was considered successful. After that, there's a couple of them escaped, got into this harbor. So, we bombarded their shipyard, and the first round went up on the hill, started a forest fire, and then they got the range and the buildings start burning. As we left, the whole place was on fire. So, we caused that damage. But our captain was a married man with two children, and I liked that idea because I figured he wasn't gonna be acting too cooky out there. You know, we did our job. I don't think ... there was one submarine commander that was, everybody thought he was half nuts, but he did get the Medal of Honor. He did such things as putting rocket launchers on his boat. He blew up a train on Sakhalin Island. He found a whole bunch of Jap ships on the shore of China. They were anchored for the night, and he went in shallow water, about twenty miles, and devastated that anchorage. Then, on the way out, they had to dodge rocks and fishing boats. He got the Medal

of Honor, but not many skippers were that gung-ho. He was young. His name was [Eugene Bennett] Fluckey, Admiral Fluckey, now admiral. He's retired. He was probably, the, had the best reputation as far as weird stuff.

LO: Where were you when the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

CM: Okay, that was our last patrol. After we did this devastation, we thought, we were sent north to Paramushiru Island, which is the northern-most island in the Japanese Kuril Islands, and it's kind of opposite from Alaska, Dutch Harbor, and those places. So, they were bombarding that and we were to do lifeguard duty up there. The first thing I remember, we went through a Japanese drift net and it tore our SD antenna whip off, and I had to go up and fix it. So, we were on the surface, and when I got up on the bridge, [there] was this fine powder in the air, drifting down like snow, only it was very light. It was volcanic ash. So, it was kind of weird because we were inside where a volcano had erupted. I got up there and fixed this thing. It took me about fifteen minutes, I guess, and I kept yelling down to the officer of the deck, "Don't sink this thing without letting me know." Anyway, then, the next day we were on station, waiting for these planes to come. The weather got bad and they had never taken off, so it was cancelled. I can't remember the exact time frame, but either a day after that we found out about the atomic bomb, and then a couple of days later, the team got news that the Emperor had surrendered.

LO: At that time, how aware were you of what an atomic bomb meant?

CM: I pretty much knew what it was. In 1942, in our chemistry class, our professor of chemistry, and I can't think of his name, he was an older gentleman, he said at the moment the guys out in Brookhaven were breaking the atom apart. Up to that time we were told the atom could be neither destroyed nor divided into its parts. So, that was all above board after that. He mentioned the fact that, you know, there's a potential for a bomb and all that. We knew that in 1942. So, I wasn't surprised and maybe some of the crew didn't quite get it, but I knew the war would be over.

LO: What were your feelings about of the atomic bomb?

CM: I thought it was great. It would have been a horrendous bloodbath if we had to invade Japan. We were ready for it. I mean, they were ready to go, after Okinawa was secured, that was the next thing. It was on the schedule. There was no question about it. But it would have been, you know ... Okinawa and Iwo Jima were toughest battles, and the fact that the Japanese were dug into these mountains, all their gun emplacements, everything. They were hard to root out. You had to burn them out. You had to get there to do it first.

LO: What do you mean by burn them out?

CM: Flamethrowers. They weren't gonna come out and surrender. They made them into crispy critters. That's what the Marines and the Army did on Okinawa. They didn't have bombs like they had in Afghanistan, these bombs that were made of pave something, they're called, paveware? I forget the term, but their idea was, this huge bomb would penetrate the earth and then blow up and destroy everything, you know, down to 100 feet. They have those today. They

weren't available in WWII. They had a lot of bombs, but they weren't that powerful. So, the Japanese were hard to dig out of these caves. They were two bloody battles ... and I hate to admit it, but we have a Battle Star for each one, and, I think, we were 200 miles from Iwo Jima and probably the same amount from Okinawa when it happened. Because we were in the area, we got a Battle Star on our ribbon ... part of the operation, I guess, you could say. After we found out about the surrender, we were told to proceed to Tokyo Bay, to the mouth of Tokyo Bay, where we were to meet a destroyer that would take us into the bay and in to the surrender ceremonies. So we had, I think, eleven or twelve submarines at the surrender. Our tender was there, the *Proteus*, and, I think, it was six on one side and five on the other, whatever, but we watched the whole thing, very impressive. The sky was full of planes flying over, it was amazing. All these capital ships were in the bay, the *King George*, the British battleship, *Duke of York*. The Russians had a ship there, I don't even know what the name of that was. We had a lot, the *Missouri*, of course, is where they had held the surrender. It was quite impressive, and the whole time the ceremony was going on, it was broadcast to all the other ships in the area. So, you could hear it and watch it at the same time.

SH: Oh, really?

CM: We weren't close enough to see the actual thing, but we weren't that far away from it.

LO: What exactly was going on?

CM: They signed the surrender. Each one of these Japanese diplomats had to sign for the Japanese and we had Admiral Nimitz, and MacArthur, and, I guess, Admiral King were there, I don't remember. They all had to sign off. The Russian had to sign it. The British Admiral ...

SH: Were you standing at attention on topside?

CM: No, we were just laying around, kinda casual. Even on the *Missouri*, the guys were just hanging all over the place looking down on this thing. They did have a delegation of Marines there, you know, to put on a show, but the crew was just hanging around the boat.

SH: Where did you proceed then from the surrender?

CM: Well, we got to Tokyo Bay on the first of September. We were taken into Yokohama, where the tender was, then we were moved up the bay to Yokoska or Yusuka [Yokosuka], I don't know how you pronounce it, the main Japanese Naval Base, and anchored off of that. We all got fastened up to the tender and the *Segundo*, which we had operated with a couple times, captured a Japanese sub on the way down to Tokyo Bay, and they hustled that in front of them. That was pretty exciting. Although, the Japs were told to surrender, most of them did, but I guess this boat, I don't think they really knew the war ended and they had caught them on the surface, and then they didn't sink him. So, they told them what was going on and then herded them back down to Tokyo Bay. I think that made twelve boats there. That was the culmination of my Navy career, right there ... practically over after that.

SH: What did you do after that?

CM: We were sent right back to the States. They had a Navy Day celebration in San Diego. I know we were there for that, I don't know what date it was.

SH: You came back on the surface? Did you stop in Pearl again?

CM: No. We might have been refueled there, I don't remember, but we went back in a group. Some went to San Francisco, some San Diego, some went through the Canal to the East Coast. So, there were pretty much fleet submarine in every major city, when they had this Japanese surrender day, whatever it was. The people came onboard, went through the boats. It was all very exciting. Then, I had enough points to be discharged, so I got my orders and said, "You will report to the *Steelhead*, where you will accompany the boat back to Pearl Harbor." I had to go all the way back. I didn't do a thing on that boat, except sleep in my sack the whole time. As soon as I got to Pearl Harbor, I was discharged. Came home on an aircraft carrier, the *Chenango*.

LO: What was the date of that?

CM: Well, I got out in February, I guess, early February. I went back on the carrier to Long Beach, California, stayed there a day because my train left the next day ... Played basketball, I remember that, and took the train to Long Island. When we got there, it was hardly anytime at all before I was on my way home. I was discharged in Long Island and took a train back to Trenton.

SH: Did you use the GI Bill? Did you decide to stay in the Reserves? What were your options at that point?

CM: We were automatically in the Reserve. If they wanted us, they could whistle you up, but I came back here, and, of course, the GI Bill was worth a lot more than ninety dollars. I asked the purser, "What happens to my scholarship?" He said, "You don't need that." I said, "Oh, what happened to it?" He says, "Oh, you don't need it. The GI Bill is gonna pay for everything." So, it did. Made life very easy for me.

SH: How much time between your discharge and coming back to Rutgers?

CM: Well, when we got out of the service, in those days, you got, you were paid ... fifty-two dollars a week, for I don't know how many weeks, you could collect. I only did it for, like a month, and then I was up here. March I came to school. I'd already missed part of the semester. I sat in on a ... math class, I thought I was just gonna catch up. I actually got a mark for it, which kind of blew my mind because I wasn't, I didn't think I was gonna be graded, so I wasn't doing very much with listening. I managed to pass, but not by much. The GI Bill worked out very well. I was accepted at veterinary school. I went to school every summer, two summers, so I can graduate in '48. Normally, I was Class of '46, so while I was in the Navy for three years, I only lost, basically, one year, or two years. So, I managed to graduate in '48, went to veterinary school and GI Bill paid for that up until the last semester of my senior year ... and my father-in-

law, paid the bill, it was five hundred bucks. Now it cost \$25,000 a year for tuition there, plus books and board. It's tough. I sent a daughter through there, so I know.

LO: Was there resentment on campus because of your educational benefits?

CM: I don't think so. No.

SH: What was it like to come back to campus? Compare the two Rutgers, the one you left in '42 and [the one you returned to.]

CM: We were so naïve as freshmen and wet behind the ears, as they say. We were men of the world when we came back. I mean, you know, we'd been threatened by death everyday of our lives, almost, and we were more mature. We knew what we had to do. We knew we had to get our education, get a job, get married, have kids, which a lot of them did, way before they graduated. We had a regular camp over there, in, where Livingston is. All the GIs lived in some kind of shack over there ... the guys that have wives and children, many of them did. I didn't get married until I got into veterinary school, in between, from '48, yes, I got married in '48, in the summer. I have been married fifty-three years.

SH: Congratulations. What about coming to school now, as you said, men of the world, with the eighteen year olds that were coming in as freshmen?

CM: I think we, in the fraternities, we didn't actually ignore them, but we didn't have a hell of a lot in common, let's put that way. We pretty much hung with our own groups ... go down to the Corner Tavern, have a beer. That was about it.

SI: You said that you joined Beta Theta Pi after the war?

CM: Yes.

SI: You said you were in a fraternity before, how did that happen?

CM: I had two friends that were in the Betas, when I was a freshman. They were from Cleveland, Ohio. They played 150 pound football, they were bright kids. They were members of that fraternity, and a lot of the guys that were in the Ag fraternity didn't come back ... guys that I knew. So, I didn't have a lot of reasons to stick with it, and now I have money in my pocket, so I could afford to be a Beta. Actually, I waited on tables, anyway. I washed dishes and waited on tables all the time. So, the fraternity house worked to my benefit that way.

SH: And you lived there.

CM: Yes. I had a great time in Beta Theta Pi. Now, we have lost that building. We had to sell it. The fraternity was growing marijuana up in the attic. They lost the charter and were kicked off campus, so we sold the building, as well we should have.

SI: From interviewing Betas, who were in the fraternity before the war, they talked a lot about a very difficult initiation. Since you were a veteran coming back, did you have to go through that?

CM: Yes, they did that, but that was nothing to me. After what we went through, that was [phuff.]

SH: I wonder how that will transcribe, [phuff.]

CM: That's what my grandson said when I said to him, "Did you donate money for the children of Afghanistan?" He said "[Phuff,] they're gonna be back here killing us as soon as they grow up." He's twelve years old.

LO: How has the experience of serving affected your life since the war?

CM: Well, I think it was probably the greatest adventure of my life. You relive it more or less the rest of your life. We have a strong submarine veterans group, The Submarine Veterans of WWII, and while we don't meet our crew every year, we've had about six or seven reunions of our crew, our own crew. Then we go to these national meetings, usually see four or five guys from our boat. So, we get together, of course, a lot of them are dead. We keep in touch, I'll put it that way.

SI: You were in the Veterinarian Corps after the war.

CM: Yes, I joined the ROTC in vet school for one reason. I was married, I had a kid, and I got paid thirty dollars a month, I think. I wasn't anxious to be a military veterinarian. We actually, between my junior and senior year, we were sent to Texas, Fort Sam Houston Medical Field Service Center, and while we were there, we took all these courses about food inspection, and nuclear emergencies, and all that kind of stuff. We had to go on bivouac, we all got chiggers. We had to go to the shooting range and shoot, and became second lieutenants. Practically all of us that had been in the service resigned those commissions, because while we were there the Korean War started, and we knew we probably wouldn't be called up, but we didn't want to take any chances. We'd been there and done that, if you know what I mean. Once was enough. I got to become a first lieutenant before I resigned.

SH: How would you compare the Army Veterinary Corps, I guess you would call it, to being in the Navy as an enlisted man?

CM: Oh, no comparison. Actually, I knew a lot of veterinarians who were in WWII. When I worked for my cousin, these guys all belonged to 112th Field Artillery. They had horses then, and, as I recall, at least three of them came out of the service as alcoholics, because as an officer, they had clubs in every base, they didn't actually get into any fighting. The Veterinary Corps mostly took care of that. In Burma, they took care of the pack mules, which they used to transport stuff over the mountains to China. They weren't in actual combat, but they were exposed to bombings, and so forth, but a lot of them were stationed in the States or in Europe, or whatever, and had officers clubs and had plenty of time on their hands. Their jobs mostly were

sanitation, food inspection, that kind of thing. While it was very important, it wasn't time consuming. So, that was my observation, that a lot of them became alcoholics. Sad, but true.

SH: When, and how, did you meet your wife?

CM: My wife went to Douglass. My fraternity brother, Frank Irving, set me up with a blind date. His girlfriend from high school went there, and this was after the war, and we went out on a blind date and that was it. I saw her quite a few times after that. I never had any money, so we didn't go anywhere. Her father used to send her ... well, what happened, my wife was so madly in love with me, she almost flunked out her freshman year. So, her father and mother decided that she'd be better off in nursing school and the family doctor convinced her that it would be a good career. So, she went to Clara Moss Nursing School, in Newark. So, I would ride up on the train and meet her, and her father gave her an allowance, I think it was ten dollars a week, so she would take me out to dinner. That's how we carried on our romance, and, finally, it got so that we couldn't stand being apart, so I called her up one day and proposed on the telephone. She accepted and we got married in August of 1948, right after I graduated. We had a civil ceremony. I was working for my cousin at that time, and we had a weekend in New York City. That was it. That was our honeymoon.

SH: Did she become a nurse?

CM: No. When we got married, they tossed her out. You weren't allowed to be married, to be a nurse, back then. That was a no, no. So, that was the end of her nursing career. She was the head of her class. So, then we had kids. I think they have married nurses now, but at that time, you couldn't do that. We had all these kids, my wife went to classes at Trenton State College, at the time it was called, now it's New Jersey College [The College of New Jersey]. Anyway, she graduated with a BS after a couple of years of night courses, me paying thousands of dollars out in babysitters. She got a BS, she taught biology in high school ... and then she managed my office for a couple of years, till my daughter graduated, then she decided that wouldn't work. So, she started to work for New York Life and became very successful at that, and my daughter and I ran the hospital. My daughter graduated in 1983.

LO: She's a veterinarian?

CM: Yes, and in 1983, Christmas, the day before Christmas, my hospital blew up ... gas explosion and my daughter was working. It was a Saturday morning, the day before Christmas. We had no animals in the place, and I was duck hunting, and my daughter called my wife and said, "We smell gas out here, and the Public Service just finished looking in our basement," and my wife said to her, "Get the hell out of there." So, she was driving one block away from the hospital, it blew up. Unfortunately, the two guys from Public Service, they were out on the curb. One guy was behind the truck reaching in for something and it blew all his clothes off, and the other guy was outside of the car, going in on the side away from the building, he didn't get hurt at all. A lady going by in a car, the glass in her car window broke, cut her face up a little bit. The funeral parlor across the street got a lot of damage. They got more money out of the deal than I did. The rectory of the Episcopal Church was right next door to my building, and the whole back end of that was blown out. The minister's wife was in the bathtub with the baby,

sitting there with it, in front of, full view. The minister was fixing a sandwich. You find that funny? The minister was making a sandwich and the refrigerator fell over on him and dislocated his shoulder, and they couldn't find their little boy. So, he was sitting in a big chair, of course, the whole room collapsed in, and he was under this big armchair, so he wasn't even hurt. He was watching TV when this happened. The mother and the baby were standing right up there, in the bathtub.

SH: Let's back up a little bit, can you tell about going to veterinary school and how you came about having your practice?

CM: Well, I told you I worked for my cousin before, while I was in high school. I decided that I would probably end up working for him. He had a good practice. When we went to vet school back then, everybody was a GI, except for two girls in my class. Today, eighty percent of the classes are female in vet schools throughout the United States. That's the way it is. My daughter has five young ladies working for her. That's what happened to our profession. It's a good thing too, really. The guys all went into the large animal, or research, or horse work, a lot of them.

SH: So you went to work for your cousin.

CM: Yes, when I graduated in 1952, he gave me a job, eighty-five dollars a week, and I had at that time, and I had two kids. I had one while I was in school, and then in '52, my son was born. So, I had two kids, and I had to find a house, do all that. Eventually, I had two more kids. Nobody has four kids anymore. They can't afford it.

LO: The next two are girls.

CM: Yes, three girls and one boy. I have seven grandchildren, three boys, four girls.

SH: Only one followed you into veterinary medicine?

CM: Yes, and she only did it because she felt sorry for me, but she ended up liking it. It worked out. Well, I worked very hard, I worked long hours, and, I guess, she ...

LO: [Felt sorry.]

CM: I think so.

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

LO: Comparing Pearl Harbor and the terrorist attack that happened on Sept. 11th, what are your thoughts?

CM: I think it was worse, because it was an attack on our country, something that never happened before. It would be like Pearl Harbor happening in New York. So, in that respect, I think it was the worst thing, and it was a wake-up call. Everything had been said about it, but, basically, that's what it was.

SI: Do you see any parallels between how the country reacted in 1941 and how we're reacting to that?

CM: Well, I think it was pretty much the same reaction, except it's closer to home, so people had a more closer experience than to watch a movie about Pearl Harbor, or even to see the original news pictures that came in the movies. We didn't have television yet. So, it was more up close and personal. I actually worked over there one night, on the search-and-rescue dogs. It was pretty grim.

LO: So you had these dogs trained?

CM: No, we treated them. They had cuts on their feet, and got dehydrated, and eye problems from that dust that was all over. Basically, there are three things that happened. We only treated two dogs the night I worked. They were winding down the operation then. They figured people below the ground level were pretty much incinerated. So, they kept, you know, less and less, they were still there looking but not like in the beginning.

SH: One of the questions we wanted to ask was, had you ever read a book or seen a movie that depicts what you went through in WWII?

CM: Well, I guess, in the late '50s and '60s, they had video shows on TV called *Silent Service*, and they were individual episodes of different boats. It was pretty much the way it was. I don't know how they did that, but it looked pretty realistic. They had the patrol reports of these things that happened to these boats, so they reenacted it, so to speak. In fact, the *Razorback* was used for several of those episodes. At that time it was stationed at San Diego.

SH: Whatever happened to the *Razorback*?

CM: It was sold to Turkey. They renamed it. It was a training boat for quite awhile in the Black Sea. Then, I heard that they had sunk it at the dock and still use it for training and familiarization with controls, and so forth, and then eventually, it was scrapped. The *Razorback* stayed active in the US Navy for quite awhile. That didn't happen until, maybe the '70s, I'd say.

SH: You've mentioned that you stayed active with the WWII submarine groups. Are there any passions that you have or hobbies, things that you do?

CM: I have a passion for hunting, even though I'm a veterinarian. I'm a turkey hunter and a deer hunter. I like to fish. I like the outdoors, whether I kill anything is immaterial to me. I just want to be out there. I'm also heavily involved in amateur radio. I started that when I retired in 1997. I decided to get my operator's license and worked my way up, passed all the tests and now I'm a top operator, called extra license ... high as you can get. I'm enjoying it very much. I talked to over 350 countries already. So, last night I talked to a guy in Crimea, on the Black Sea. Talked to a bunch of guys in Siberia, Russians ... Sakhalin Islands, where I was on my submarine. You know, it's very interesting, and they all speak English to a certain extent, the Russians, particularly, they are pretty good English speakers. All European countries speak

English. Most of the South American countries speak English. They teach it in their schools, unlike us. Well, I guess, we do teach a lot of Spanish.

SH: Have you ever gone back to the South Pacific?

CM: No. That's one thing, well, I've been back to the South Pacific, but not to the individual islands where we were, you know, went to rest camp or anything. I would like to do that. The Japanese, for instance, have a memorial on every island they occupied, and they visit them. They have memorials there and they go there. Of course, their people were killed there, but, you know, unlike us, we have hardly anything. We have a cemetery on Guam, a very big one. We have a cemetery in Korea, at Pusan, but on the islands, like Saipan, Guadalcanal and New Britain and, all that, there's nothing ... pretty sad ... Peleliu, which was a vicious, vicious battle.

SH: One of the questions was, that students would like you to explain, how you maintained your air quality when you were submerged?

CM: Well, what happened, somewhere in late '42, I guess, they started to air condition all the boats. So, we had air conditioning, which was a big improvement. The air was recirculated and it was cleaned. It really was quite efficient. So, that made a big difference to our quality of life onboard. As you know, a submarine is not a true submarine, it's a boat that can submerge, a ship that can submerge, called a boat. So, we could stay down for about a max of seventeen hours, but when it got up to around fourteen, fifteen hours, you had to use, you got to bleed air into the boat, oxygen. You had to put down CO2 absorbent, and all you had was powder, which you sprinkled on the deck and that absorbed the CO2. So, it was kinda hairy if you couldn't get up on the surface, and you had to go up on the surface to recharge your batteries. Our propulsion was, we had four diesel engines, two on each side, and they were hooked onto generators, electric generators, and those generators fed electric motors, which actually made the propellers go around. So, we could shift from diesel power to battery power, and the batteries would run the electric motors when we were submerged. So, you had to get up topside to charge the batteries. We could only go top speed, about nine knots, underwater. Today, they go forty and fifty knots. I'm not supposed to tell you that. Anyway, we could go nine knots, full speed, and if we did that, within an hour or so, we would have exhausted our battery supply. So, we could go about two knots all day underwater, but we had to come up every night and charge the batteries up again to full power. Otherwise, if we were in an attack, say, we couldn't maneuver, we'd be in bad shape. The Japs would find you and [makes choking noise.] That would be the end of it. So, it was important to keep a full battery charged. We actually surfaced in a typhoon, a big typhoon in 1944, I think it was, I'm pretty sure it was '44 ... sunk a bunch of destroyers, they just capsized. We were in the middle of that thing, as was most of the fleet, Admiral Halsey's fleet, and some controversy about that, that he could have avoided it, but nothing ever happened. I mean, it's speculation.

SH: That is was Halsey's fault, that he ordered the fleet there?

CM: Yes, I think there was some criticism on that, but they blamed it on the weather reporting, and so forth, so nothing happened. Anyway, we were in the middle of that thing and we had to charge our batteries because we'd been down and pretty much exhausted the charge, and I saw

waves, seventy, eighty feet high, just break right over the whole sub. The water will just pour down into the conning tower.

LO: How long did you have to stay up for recharging?

CM: At least four hours. We usually charge them all night. We would surface at dusk and submerge at dawn, depending on where we were. A lot of times we stayed on the surface in daytime, especially in 1945 because, you know, nothing much left, except airplanes, the biggest danger. So, that's why we had to go up on the surface, and there was no way we could avoid that. Today, they go down and they stay down. They're true submarines. They don't have to come up.

SH: Did you ever had any meetings with Halsey or MacArthur, did you ever see any of the big generals?

CM: No. Of course, at the surrender they were all there. We didn't actually get to see them. We could hear them talk. Admiral Lockwood was the ComSubPac, Commander Submarine, Pacific, and when you came in from patrol, a lot of times, he would come onboard, and you know, make everybody feel good. He's a good man. They had another, SouthWesPac Commander, which was Admiral Christy. He was the designer of the torpedoes that didn't work, and he would never admit that there was a problem with them, so he wasn't respected as much as Lockwood. Lockwood got to be that way because the original command group was flying back to San Francisco and their plane crashed. They all died. Lockwood was immediately sent to take over, and he was the best man for the job, as it turned out.

SH: Any other questions? Well, we thank you very, very much for taking this time.

CM: I hope I remembered everything I was supposed to.

SH: Is there anything that you would like to add before we turn the tape off?

CM: No, I think you can be comfortable in the fact that we still have the best submarine service in the world. These boats are like hotels compared to the one I lived on, and the guys are as sharp as a tack. I went to the commissioning of the USS *Pennsylvania*, and my son-in-law was engineering editor for *Aviation Week & Space Technology*, so he got permission to go to the commissioning and also take a tour of the boat, which is hard to do, to get shown the boat like that. So, we were shown all over this *Pennsylvania*, and the boson's mate was a black kid. He knew everything there was to know about that boat. You know, sharp as a tack, and all the crews are like that. They're purposely picked to be the best there is. The electronics, it's much more complicated than when I was on board. All we had were vacuum tubes, now everything is digitalized, transistorized, miniaturized, and pretty complicated, computerized. But the submarine force is in good shape. Not to worry.

SH: With that we'll end this interview. Thank you very much.

CM: Okay.

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

Reviewed by David D'Onofrio 3/28/03
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 4/3/03
Reviewed by Calvin Moon 4/03

Military Awards and Ribbons:

New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal for combat in the Pacific in World War II
Submarine Dolphins
Submarine Combat Pin with two stars
Navy Commendation Ribbon and Medal for battle station proficiency
Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Ribbon with five Battle Stars
Combat Ribbon
American Defense
Phillipine Liberation Medal
Victory Medal
Occupation Ribbon (Japan)
Electronic Tech, Mate First Class