

**Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
Research Center**

Transcript of an  
Oral History Interview with  
MAURICE W. MILLARD  
Amphibious Service, Navy, World War II

2004

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**Millard, Maurice W.** (1912-2010). Oral History Interview, 2004.

Approximate length: 58 minutes

*Contact WVM Research Center for access to original recording.*

**Abstract:**

In this oral history interview, Maurice Millard discusses his service with the World War II service with the Navy as a motor machinists mate aboard AKA-54, his time working at Farragut Naval Training Station [Idaho], training amphibious troops at Coronado [California], and his return to post-war work. Millard discusses his decision to join the Navy and boot camp at Farragut. He details his bout with rheumatic fever and working at Farragut while recovering. Millard outlines his training as a motor machinists mate in San Francisco and training amphibious troops on landing crafts in Coronado. He describes joining the AKA-54 as a First Class Motor Machinists Mate and his work delivering cargo and troops to islands in the South Pacific. He comments on his reactions to the death of FDR and announcement of V-J day. Millard then discusses his post-war work as a Door County policeman and his involvement in AMVETS and the VFW.

**Biographical Sketch:**

Millard (1912-2010) served with the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946. After being discharged he worked as a Door County policeman for twenty-five years.

Interviewed by Terry MacDonald, 2004.

Transcribed by Telise Johnsen, 2012.

Reviewed by Jennifer Kick, 2016.

Abstract by Jennifer Kick, 2016.

## Transcribed Interview

MacDonald: This is an interview with Maurice W. Millard, who served with the United States Navy during World War II. The interview is being conducted at approximately 10:15 a.m. at [REDACTED], on the date of December 30, 2004. The interviewer is Terry MacDonald. Now Muzz can you give us a little background about your life circumstances, such as the year you were born, your hometown, and things?

Millard: I was born in the little village of Marquette, Wisconsin, on the edge of Lake Puckaway. That's down in Green Lake County. And my dad and mother were postmaster and mistress therein, in that little village of Marquette. And then we moved later out about three miles west of Marquette onto a farm. And I worked on the farm until I was thirteen years old, when my parents moved to Ripon. And I went to Ripon High School and graduated from Ripon High School. I did get a athletic scholarship from Ripon to Ripon College for football *and* basketball, but at that time we had a big family, and my folks couldn't even afford to buy me books and stuff like that. So I had to turn that down. That was back in 1943—uh, 1933—and it was right after the big bash of '29, and you couldn't buy, beg, or steal a job. So I went on and done odd jobs, odd jobs, until I joined the Tiger Store in Ripon, which is a branch of Gambel's. And I worked at Gambel's out of high school for a couple of years. Then I was transferred to Appleton, and from Appleton to Sturgeon Bay. I worked over ten years for Gambel's. And when I was up here and the war was being—World War II was starting pretty strong. And I was asked several times to come to the shipyard, 'cause they needed people. So finally I resigned from Gambel's and went to the shipyard. And I worked down there about nine months. And I decided that all my friends were gone to the service, and so I would just go when I could. But I come home from the shipyard one afternoon at 3:30, and here was a notice that I should be inducted. And it was the next morning I was supposed to go at four o'clock—be at the courthouse at four o'clock to go to Milwaukee. Well, I knew I couldn't do it, because when I came to Sturgeon Bay I transferred my service thing. But, evidently, some school up in—oh, I can't think of the town now, where I—it was just right next to Appleton. And I lived on the side that I had to go to this other city. And so I called there and got the woman that was on the draft board, and she said, "Well, come down when you can." She says, "I'll put you back for the next month," or "I'll put you back into Door County." And then she called later and said, "Well, when you come down," she says, "I set you back a month, because Door County's going in the next day. And it doesn't give you

much more chance.” So she transferred me over and, end of the following month, I went in.

MacDonald: How old were you when you got drafted?

Millard: I was twenty-nine. And I went to Farragut, Idaho.

MacDonald: When you went to Milwaukee, how did you end up being in the Navy, then?

Millard: There was three of us that wanted to go. At that time you had a choice. You could go over to the Marines, or whatever. And three of us wanted to join the Marines. And we went in there and, just before we went in, three guys had come in—young fellows—and they had joined the Marines and filled their quota. So we went back. We were kinda undecided. We were going to go over to the headquarters there and see what was next. Well, on the way over we saw the Navy induction pod. So we went over there, and all three of us joined the Navy.

MacDonald: Were the three all from Sturgeon Bay, then?

Millard: Yeah.

MacDonald: And who were the other two fellows?

Millard: Uh, one was Darryl Herbolt[[?]], and the other one I can't remember his name, but he lived out on [Highway] S a ways. Anyway, we joined the Navy. On the way over there, we was contacted by these people that went ahead and built roads and stuff like that. What do they call them? As you get older your memory is kind of--.

MacDonald: Engineers? Corps of Engineers?

Millard: Yeah, Corps of Engineers. They wanted us to join them. But we decided that we wanted to go into Navy. We could get in. And I wanted to get into the submarine field, but I couldn't get in there because of my hearing. My hearing was slightly bad. I was okay then with that. So I went in.

MacDonald: So, how long did the boot camp last in Idaho?

Millard: Eight weeks, and I come home from boot camp and came back here to Sturgeon Bay. And I contracted rheumatic fever. On the way back, some of the guys that were in Farragut, Idaho, were taken off the train because of rheumatic fever. Come to find out the Indians used to call that “Fever Valley.” And a lot of them got rheumatic fever out of there.

So when I come home I got it here. And I spent forty-nine days in the old hospital, which is a gallery now. And from there they took me to Great Lakes [Naval Training Station] in one of the ships that I'd worked on. It was going out, that ship, and they come up to the hospital and took me in a cot and then took me right down to Great Lakes. And I spent two months in Great Lakes Hospital with rheumatic fever. And then one day I finally got up and could walk around a little bit. And I went down to the movie. It was in the middle of winter, and the gals there, the nurses, bundled me all up and everything. And a couple of guys took me down to the theater just a half a block. Just got in there, and they called for me to come back to headquarters. And they said, "You've got to get over to a outgoing unit at headquarters." And I went over there, and the gal said, "Have you got your return ticket to Farragut, Idaho?" And I said, "Yeah, I've got it, but I'm not going to use it." "Oh, yeah, you are," she said. So I did. I got back into Farragut, Idaho, at two o'clock in the morning. And, lo and behold, nobody knew, but they were closing up Farragut, Idaho. They looked and looked and looked to try to get me a bunk. Finally they found one in a barracks that had nothing but brig releases. So I got into bed about three o'clock in the morning. And five o'clock here they are, "Everybody out. Everybody out." I had nothing but my dress blues and oxfords, and there was snow—about two foot of snow on the ground up there. No sidewalks or anything. You just tried for trucks and cars and stuff. So I got up that morning, and I got out there with the bunch of them. And this officer standing up on the steps of the barracks, he's talking about brig releases, brig releases, brig releases. And I tried to get up to him to talk to him a couple of times. And he wouldn't listen to me at all. So, I went out on a helping crew to take stuff over to the eating place. And it was to lift up a quarter of beef off the hook and carry it over and put it on the truck. Well, I got up with that quarter of beef, and down I went with my hands pinned underneath. That was [laughs] the first time I ever got thrown by a quarter of a beef. But anyway, I laid there. And I couldn't get up. And the guy that was in charge of the committee come over. And he says, "What's the matter with you? You look like death warmed over." And I says, "Geez, I just got out of the hospital a couple of days ago, and I feel weak." He said, "You sure do." He helped me get up and he said, "I'll get a jeep and you go back to the barracks." He said, "On the way, stop over at Headquarters and tell them where you're going to be." So I did, and then I got back into the barracks. And I was laying there on that bunk that I had, and I kept thinking, "Geez, if I could only get over to Camp Scott and talk to somebody over there." I got up, and I got dressed. And I vaguely knew where Camp Scott was. It was probably a half a mile down the trail. So I got into—oxfords and all—I walked that half mile. I got over there, and the only place that was open was a Reverend Ferrington[??], or something like that. He was a—what do you call it for the Catholic Church?

MacDonald: A priest?

Millard: A priest. He was a priest—young fellow. I went and I rapped on the door. He says, “Come on in.” And I got in, and he says, “Well, what can I help you with? Are you sick?” I says, “Well, I don’t feel very good.” And I told him some of the history.” And he said, “Well, those damn fools—excuse my expression,” he said, “but they should’ve never left you up here in this godforsaken country.” And he said, “Let me see your knee.” And my knees were starting to swell up again and get red. And he said, “I’m going to call and get a jeep for you and send you back over to headquarters.” And he said, “I’ll have a note there that you give to Dr. So-and-So”—Robinson, I think. “And don’t give it to anybody else,” he said. And I said, “Okay.” So he gave me the note, and the jeep came and they had a blanket for me [laughs]. And they took me back over to headquarters. And I went in, and one of the—can’t even think of the names anymore—but anyway, he come out, and he says, “What do you want?” And I says, “I want to see Dr. Robinson.” And he says, “What do you want to see him for?” And I said, “I got a note for him.” And he says, “I’ll give it to him.” And I said, “No, the orders are that I’m supposed to give it to Dr. Robinson.” “We’ll see about that,” he said. So he went, and he come right back out, and he said, “He’ll see you now.” [Laughs] I went in and I talked to Dr. Robinson, and he read the note. And the doctor looked at me, and he said, “Do you feel like going back to the hospital?” And I said, “No, not if I can help it.” He said, “Okay, I’m going to go out of rules and regulations.” He said, “I’m going to give you medicine for three days.” And he said, “If you need anything, you get to the chief there and tell him what you want.” And he said, “I’ll write a note for the chief.” So he did, and they got a jeep for me, and I went back to the barracks. And I walked in there, and I could hardly wobble anymore, I was so tired. And the chief looked at me, and he said, “Are you in this barracks?” And I said, “Yes, I am.” He said, “Well, what’s that?” So I gave him the note. And he read it, and he said, “Why didn’t you say something to me?” And I said, “Chief, I tried to get to you, and all’s I got was this.” “Oh,” he says, “I’m sorry. I’m sorry,” he says, “I’ve been handling these brig releases so long, that,” he said, “I’m kind of against them.” But he took me back, and he got me a better bunk and blankets and whatnot, and he said, “If you feel as though that you can’t go over to the eating place, then I’ll have it brought in for you.” Well, I took my medicine and I could walk over. It was right next door. And I walked over there and got chow. And they had it so I didn’t have to go through the chow line. They’d give me a plate and I could sit right down and eat. And, oh, I got along pretty good. Then when I got so I was on my feet, Dr. Robinson came in to see me one day. And he said, “How are you doing?” And I said, “Pretty good. I’m getting up and getting

around pretty good.” He said, “How would you like to go over to the office and work in there for guys that are going out, getting their records ready and stuff like that?” And I said, “That would be wonderful.” So he put me in there, and I worked about three weeks in there. And I wanted to get out. And there was a motor machinist’s mate thing going out, and I had gone on to motor machinist, you know. And there was one of them going out to Great Lakes. Well, I’d been in Great Lakes, and I had felt pretty good there in that kind of weather that I had in Wisconsin. So I was used to it. So I said, “Yeah, I’d like to go to Great Lakes.” So, when that crew was going out I was over there, and I stood there and they called all the names, all the names. The train went out, and I’m still standing there [laughs]. And I went back over to the office to a buddy that was there. And he said, “What the hell happened to you, Muzz?” He says, “I thought you were long gone.” I said, “They never called my name.” “Oh my god,” he says, “that’s my fault.” He said, “Usually when they’re working here in the office, we let them take their own records out and get them ready and everything” “Oh!” he said, “I’m sorry.” And he got up and he walked out, and he came back and he said, “There’s another motor machinist that’s going out through San Francisco.” I said, “Boy, that would be good to get into that warm weather.” And he said, “Okay. We’ll get your records all ready.” And that’s where I went.

MacDonald: So you went to a school, then, out there? And what year was this, then? What year was that, Muzz, that you went to San Diego? [*Note that interviewee refers to ‘San Francisco’ above.*]

Millard: Yeah. Well, it was into ’43 already, what dates I can’t remember. All’s I can remember is December fifteenth of ’45 I got out [laughs]. But, I got in there. And I kept feeling pretty good. And I went to Richmond, Virginia, in a motor machinists’ school, and several other places. And Coronado, California, I went to motor machinist’s mate school. And then we went back to—

MacDonald: Can you just tell us what exactly what a motor machinist’s mate—what was that?

Millard: Well, it’s working with diesel, like, Gray Marine diesels and things like that—which we had in the landing craft—that Gray Marine. And most of the lighter ships had Gray Marine motors on them.

MacDonald: Okay, so it was like a diesel mechanic type of thing?

Millard: Yeah. When we go on landing craft, there’d be a coxswain, a flagman, a motor machinist’s mate, and a recruit—a junior guy, or something or other. And finally we were in Coronado, California. We were going

around, almost over to San Diego, and back around on the other side of the island. And we'd train amphibious troops all day, in and out of the beach, in and out of the beach.

MacDonald: Okay, so you were running landing crafts.

Millard: Right. And, in fact, the second time that I went out around that thing, I was in a repair boat. There was three repair boats would go out with about fourteen landing craft, training all that day. And we'd have our lunch and everything there. If anything happened to one boat, we'd go in and see if we could fix it right there. If not, we'd have to tow it in. So that's what I done for about two months.

MacDonald: Now, these landing crafts, were they what they called the Higgins Boats, or something similar to that? Higgins Boat was the ones they used on the invasions.

Millard: Yeah, I forget just what they call them. But there was fourteen-footers and sixteen-footers--big, broad, you know, with a drop-down ramp. In one instance, we had taken a bunch of recruits into an island, over there on Coronado Island. And we got up to the beaches as close as we could get—and loaded the ramp, and they were going out. And one JG [lieutenant junior grade], he said, "Go over the side. Go over the side," he said. "You don't have to all go out straight. Go over the side—like this." And he jumped in the deep. He went way over his head [laughs]. He come up, "Wum, wum, wum, wum, wum. I guess it's better you go straight," he says. Those kids would get *so* sick. Oh, they'd get so seasick.

MacDonald: Most of them, were they Marines, or Army, or who were you dropping?

Millard: No, most of them Navy.

MacDonald: Navy, oh, okay.

Millard: They would get so sick, and then they'd want to lay down, you know, on the deck of the boat. And that's the worst thing you could do. You have to get them up. And we even had some straps so we could strap them up, so they'd stand up there a long time and breathe in that air, you know. Oh, God, some of them would get so sick, they'd just turn green. Yeah, it was a great experience, I'll tell you. In Coronado, California, I got to be the head of one of the barracks. And then I had a battalion that I would march over to the—. And I had about forty landing craft under me that I had to see that they were in good repair to go out at any time.



MacDonald: What was your rank at that time, when you were at school?

Millard: [Laughs] I was a seaman.

MacDonald: They give you all that responsibility of all those boats?

Millard: Yeah. And I had--well, a friend of mine from Ohio, he was up in the coxswain rate. And he and I were kind of buddies. We went out off the base together a couple of times, and he was from Ohio. And he recommended that I be in charge of that battalion and that group over in that barracks. And then I'd have to go over there and check the barracks out and have someone that was in my group go in there to clean up the barracks and do stuff. And I had, I think it was around forty boats, landing craft, that were all in their saddles up on the beach, you know. And this Butch Bodewin—I don't know where he ever got that thing for those lifts that they have for lifting boats—?

MacDonald: --out of the water, yeah.

Millard: Yeah. But, hell, we called them—huh, I'll think of it after while. Anyway, we had those things. They had two right down into the bay. And you go in with those hooks, and you'd hook them in, one of them front and one of them back. And they'd take you right up, right up on the beach and into the saddle. Usually, six or eight of us were in charge of boats. They'd come the day before and say, "You've got to have so many boats ready to go out at such-and-such a time in the morning." And, so, I done that for quite a while. Have to march the guys over to the barracks and such. But then I went over to the islands and was ready to go out to sea, you know? And I was in the Hawaiian Islands, and one day—I was a Second Class Seaman, but the rate is the same as a Second Class Motor Machinist's Mate. And I was in there, and I was way up on a big, tall ladder scrubbing the wall. And a guy come in, and he said, "Hey, Millard." And I said, "Yeah." He said, "Get your stuff together. You're going aboard ship." And I said, "I am? Why?" "Well, we got an order for three First Class Motor Machinist's Mates. We had three of them on here, but two of them we got back from leave, and the third one we can't find. He's out on leave, and we couldn't locate him. You're the next one in line, and you get First Motor Machinist's Mate when you get aboard ship."

MacDonald: First Class Petty Officer.

Millard: First Class, yeah, when you get aboard ship. Well, hell, the rates were closed. And this ship that I got on was an AKA-54.

MacDonald: What type of ship was that?

Millard: It was a “cargo or personnel.” And it could change over from hauling cargo on the way. When I left there, there were still sixty Marines aboard that ship. And I’ll tell you how we got them. We got orders to take those sixty Marines up the Yellow River in Japan—take them up there and leave them in a Marine camp in Japan. Of course, then, we figured from all the reports that it was really cold up there in Japan. And we had to put fluid in the radiators, and all that kind of stuff to get them prepared for cold weather. We were working pretty hard on that stuff when we got a call. We were about two miles up the Yellow River: “Come on back. They don’t want them up there. They’re closing out that camp.” So we turn around and come back. And then we went to up near Bougainville. That’s where the Japs had this march for the Americans and the Austrians, or whatever. They’d march them about fifteen miles through creeks and every damn thing. And if they’d fall down, they’d poke them with a bayonet. And if they were almost dead, they’d kill them and threw them in a truck and took them off someplace to bury them. Well, we got up near there, and we were supposed to meet another ship that was coming over from the Atlantic, because the war was practically over there. They were coming over. And I had already gone through the—what do you call it; you get from a pollywog to a--?

MacDonald: Cross the Equator?

Millard: Yeah, cross the Equator. Our ship had all been across the Equator. And this one coming over from the Atlantic, the pollywogs took the ship over. And our skipper called their skipper and asked him if he wanted some help. He said, “Hell, no! I’m a pollywog myself.” [Laughs] So, anyway, they followed us. And we had these Marines, and they had some people who were supposed to be delivered up around Bougainville. And when we got to Bougainville, the Americans that were still head of Bougainville and were guarding it and everything were going to leave, and the Austrians were taking over. So we went in there, and then we started back with the sixty Marines. And, lo and behold, we went right into Japan, and we were right in the—oh, the big harbor. And, ships! I’ll tell you every place you looked there was ships of *all* makes and kinds—every ship that you could think of. There must have been four thousand ships right in there, ready to go into Japan. And we had guns on our ship that were big guns, because when landing crafts go over they clear that off first. Luckily, we never had some real bad firing when we went in with some troops. Had that a couple of times, but very fortunate that none of us were hit.

MacDonald: Now, where were some of the places you did landings at, then?

Millard: Well, uh, I can't remember all those islands that we went in on.

[Break in recording][End of Tape 1, Side A]

MacDonald: --with Muzz Millard on the AKA-54 that he was working on. And they were involved in some invasions in the South Pacific.

Millard: Well, we were delivering cargo to—I can't think of that island's name now. Anyway, we were in and out, and in and out. And all of a sudden back to the ship, and they said, "You're going to have to go in someplace out of the weather, because there's a typhoon coming. And there's going to be a big tidal wave. And get in there in a group. And we've got to go out to sea, because we got a half a load, here. And if it shifts, it could sink the ship." So we go back. We got supplies and everything from the ship, and we go back. And on the way back this tidal wave come along. They said it was a sixty-foot tidal wave. Luckily, we were lined up so that we just went in like this, right alongside each other, all fourteen boats. And on the other side, when the wave went back out, we were over about a fourteen-foot cement rock--.

MacDonald: --breakwall, or something like that.

Millard: —breakwall. And it was about fourteen foot high and six foot thick. And here our boats are lined up all on the other side, on a hillside. The hill went right up like that, and there was the boats just sitting there like that.

MacDonald: High and dry.

Millard: High and dry. Well, of course, they had the captain's gig, which was a pretty nice-looking yacht. And they come over with food and stuff like that. And so we got to work when we found enough chisels and mallets, big pounding things, to chisel a hole in that wall. You can imagine a bunch of sailors trying to--. But we did.

MacDonald: Didn't you have any explosives to blow it apart?

Millard: No, no.

MacDonald: Is that right?

Millard: No. Anyway, we got a hole big enough. And then the captain's gig had a long cable, and they'd come and they'd pull the boat backwards over there until we got enough of us that we could swing it around. That water had gone. Of course, it'd left quite a bit of water back of that

thing, but not enough to float a boat. It was mud. Oh, God, we were in mud from head to foot! You'd try to get a footing and you'd slip behind it. We had a lot of fun doing it. It took us two weeks to get those boats off of there and back into the water. Of course, then, we couldn't run them. The screws were so fouled up and everything, we had to take them back to the ship and work on them. Put new screws on and whatnot. Luckily, they could get back to those screws to have them flown in for us. And so, well, it was quite a while. But while we were sitting out there in Japan in front of the harbor, waiting to go in--had our guns all polished up and ready to go, and V-J Day come. Of course, then, you could see the ships just spreading out and going this way and that way and that way. But those that had enough points to get out--.

MacDonald: But were you in the harbor during the period of the signing of the surrender?

Millard: Yep.

MacDonald: You were there, huh?

Millard: Yeah. And those that had enough points to get out, they sent in an APA, that's a personnel thing. And there was about twenty of us, I guess, off our ship that could go out. And we got on that APA, and we got in there about, oh, I'd say the fourth or fifth of December 1945. And this captain [inaudible] started out with the APA towards San Francisco. And every day or so, he'd tell us, "Well, we're going into a real bad squall." And he'd turn around and go back. He wanted to get into San Francisco as close to Christmas as possible. And we finally got in on the fifteenth of December. And we found out later that he was sent out the next day [laughs] back out into the Pacific.

MacDonald: What happened when you arrived in San Francisco? This was in December.

Millard: December fifteenth.

MacDonald: Was there anything going on at that time—I mean, people to meet you, or anything?

Millard: No, no.

MacDonald: Because it was late, you know?

Millard: Yeah, yeah. No, they just got us there and got us in the barracks. But we did have some time in San Francisco, anyway.

MacDonald: What was your feelings when you heard about V-J Day?

Millard: Well, it was really good. The boat was celebrating. The whole ship was celebrating, and that kind of stuff. But the sad part of it was before I went overseas, was when FDR died. And everybody really loved that guy. And it was a bad day, bad day for everybody when we got news that FDR had passed away. But things like that happen, you know.

MacDonald: So, when you were in San Francisco, did you get discharged at that time?

Millard: I was discharged right away.

MacDonald: Okay. What did they do? Did they give you any money to get back, or--

Millard: Yeah, we got, oh, about a hundred and ten dollars, I guess, or something like that, and our tickets or our transportation wherever we were going. In the meantime, when I was in San Francisco, my brother Lloyd was in very bad condition, and I got permission to come home. I was married at that time, and she was out there in San Francisco. She had a job in the Navy office. And, so the two of us—I borrowed money from the Red Cross—and came home. And I got there just in time. My brother Lloyd passed away. And then right back. One night, we were traveling along, I don't remember just where we were going with our ship. But it was a beautiful night out on the ocean. The moon was up there, a big full moon. And it was just beautiful out there. And all of a sudden we got a call to go to man the guns. And everybody was up and out of their bunks and whatnot. And here's a torpedo, evidently that had missed—and how far it had traveled, I don't know. But it wasn't going too fast. And our ship got out of its direction, but it was right in its path. And it went about fifty yards behind our ship. And that was after we had this ship from the Atlantic with us. And our captain said, "We'll get lined up opposite of that torpedo, and we'll blast it." So they got the guns and they put it onto the torpedo. And we got further away from it, maybe a hundred or two hundred yards away from it. And they blasted, and the third shot exploded it. She was fully charged and would have really raised hell if it would have hit our ship. But that's the closest we came when I was aboard ship. But all the ones before that—this ship had some really pretty good marks on, when I went aboard ship. But this crew that was on that ship was just like I had been there all the time. There was none of that rookie stuff.

MacDonald: When you were onboard the ship, was the ship manned with a lot of people? And what were the living conditions like?

Millard: Oh, very good, very good. Of course, we had to clean our own compartments and stuff. But we had bunks, you know, along the side of the ship. Oh, ours we only had about six high. But on that APA, boy, they were way up there. There were probably ten, twelve, fourteen high. And you had to put a belt on to strap your self in there in case you, you know--.

MacDonald: Hmm. How was the food aboard the ship?

Millard: Very good, except on that APA. The guys on that APA had traded all the food and stuff to the Japs for kimonos and watches and whatnot. And then they'd sell them. What we had for Thanksgiving on that APA, we had brown beef gravy and oatmeal and stuff like that [laughs].

MacDonald: You didn't get a turkey dinner, then, huh? [Laughs]

Millard: No, no turkey dinner.

MacDonald: So you got back, and you got discharged. Did you come back to Wisconsin, then?

Millard: Yeah, I came back to good old Sturgeon Bay.

MacDonald: And did you take advantage of the GI Bill at all?

Millard: Well, yes and no. I knew a guy, Arnie Barr[?]. I don't know if you ever knew him. He was the coach here in Sturgeon Bay. But he had gone to Ripon College. And when I was going to Ripon High School, we used to practice against the college in football and basketball. And I knew Arnie Barr real well. And when I come back, he was working down at the fruit growers at that time. I went down to see him, and he said, "We don't have any opening here, Muzz, but the county highway shop, they have an opening, I think." He said, "Do you have any way to get out there?" I said, "No." He says, "I'll pick you up tonight, and I'll get ahold of Russ Barry and ask him."

MacDonald: Russ was a foreman, then?

Millard: He was a highway commissioner. And so I went out there, and Russ says, "Well, fine, but we're going to have an examination." And they did—what was that? No! He put me right on, uh, Bill of Rights. Then come to find out they only had three diesel outfits there. And one of them was an old snow blower, a big old snow blower that they only used wintertime a few times. But I didn't qualify for the Bill of Rights, then, in the Highway Department. But when we got off the ship, we were talking about, "Boy! We're going to get up to a dollar and a half

and hour when we get out of there.” But I didn’t. I went at seventy-five cents an hour out at the highway shop. Russ kept me on. And then I was on there for, oh, all winter. And I got to those old FWDs. I drove a ’28--1928 FWD--no power steering or anything like that. And I went out snow plowing. Russ called me one Sunday, and he said, “Did you ever drive a snow plow?” And I said, “No, but I’d sure like learn.” And he says, “Okay.” He liked that. He said, “I’ll send one of the guys up with a truck. Pick you up.” So he did, and I drove a damn old ’28 FWD for fourteen hours that day, snow plowing. Then they were going to hire a county policeman and a city policeman. And Russ come out, and I asked him. I said, “Do you have any objections if I take the exam for policeman?” And he said, “Do you mean the county or city?” And I said, “The county.” “No,” he said. “In fact, I’m all in favor of it.” And he said, “If I can help in any way, I will.” So I asked him about a state law book, and he said, “Well, Jim has got one in the office there. Hell, he don’t need it.” So I went in and asked Jim, and he says, “Well,” he says, “I kind of plan on taking that test, too.”

MacDonald: What was his last name?

Millard: Jim, Jim—you probably never knew him, because he committed suicide while he was there working at the county shop. He was in the office, uh, Jim—boy, it comes and goes—anyway, he said, “You can use it tonight. But I want it back.” I said, “Okay.” So—Pollster, Jim Pollster—and so I did. And Russ Barry come a day or so after, and he said, “How you doing?” I says, “Okay, but I still haven’t got a state law book.” And he said, “What about that one that Jim’s got?” “Well,” I said, “Jim plans on taking that test, and he needs that book.” “The hell he does,” he says. So he went in and he said to Jim, “You know, if Millard gets that job, it’s going to be on probation for six months. If you got it, I can’t break somebody into this office to take your job. But if Muzz got it and he didn’t make it in the probation, or they decided not to put the man on, well, you know, I could fill him right in to the position that he had before.” So Jim says, “Okay.” So he came out, and they gave me the book and said, “Take all the time you need.” So I did. I studied up. And there was forty-five guys took that test. And the guy that was, uh—Mildred—I think she worked up in the judge’s office, the courthouse--her husband, he was the parts for \_\_\_\_ [??]. And he and I were—But, Paul Robely[??], a state patrolman then, he was the tester. And he said, “That first test, you take all the time you need on that, because that’s the test that you’re going to be hired on. The other one,” he said, “is just my own. I just want to see how you’re thinking, and stuff like that. So when you get through with your first test, you go on to that one.” So I did, and this guy that worked for \_\_\_\_ [??] and I were tied. I had eighty-five on the first test, seventy-five on the second one. And he had just the opposite: seventy-five on the first one and eighty-

five on the second one. So I had an interview, and I got the job. And there I stayed.

MacDonald: Did they give you any credits for your veterans—?

Millard: No.

MacDonald: They didn't give you any—? Huh!

Millard: I didn't get the five points for that.

MacDonald: So, then, how many years did you spend on the Sheriff's Department, total, before you retired?

Millard: No time on the Sheriff's Department.

MacDonald: Oh, I'm sorry. That's right. There was a different organization at that time.

Millard: Uh, twenty-five years. I retired in February of 1970. And I went in, in February of 1946, just a few months after I got out of the service.

MacDonald: Now, Muzz, were you a member of any veterans' organizations after you got out?

Millard: I was one of them that organized the AMVETS. And I belonged to the American Legion right after I got out. But then, also, the Veterans of Foreign Wars were meeting where the White Lace is now. That was the old Kohl House. And I went there. The chief of the city police, Frank Parkman, was the Commander at that time. And I joined. But then I got on the police force, and I was working nights all the time. And I just could never make a meeting or anything. They gave me a shift of six at night till three in the morning. I was the only policeman out there in Door County all of that time, from six o'clock at night till three in the morning.

MacDonald: You mentioned one time that you made some friends in the service when you were on the ship and stuff. Did you ever keep in touch with any of the people you served with?

Millard: Well, Darryl was from here—Darryl Herbolt.

MacDonald: He was from Sturgeon Bay, and he went in with you?

Millard: Yeah. Well, we sent Christmas cards and stuff like that to the one in Ohio. And several of them from Brown County that I vaguely met up



in--But when I was in Farragut, Idaho, that was—I don't know why they ever had a training base up there in Farragut, Idaho. And we come in on the train. Athol was the base. We didn't pronounce it that way, though. [Laughs] And then we had to go from the railroad station about four miles. And they usually picked us up, when we were coming in, on trucks or something. But the only water was Lake Pend Oreilles, and that was right near Sand Bay, Idaho. Sand Bay was noted for its longest wooden bridge. [Laughs]

MacDonald: So, it was out in the middle of nowhere, huh?

Millard: Yeah, right.

MacDonald: Well, looking back, what are your feelings about serving in the Navy and in the War? Do you have any feelings at all, or thoughts about it?

Millard: Well, yes and no. The Navy was good. And I think that I joined the Navy particularly because I was pretty sure of always having someplace to eat and sleep. I had two brothers that were over on the other side, the Atlantic, but they were in the Army, both of them. And my younger brother, Pert, his whole battalion had been killed or wounded. And he was just a buck private at that time. And when he come through he was hit. And it was so cold, and they were in dugouts. And he carried a lieutenant that was wounded in both legs, he carried him on his shoulders to get back into safety. And they made him a top sergeant for that. But he always had trouble with his feet after that, because he had frostbite in his feet. And I thank my lucky stars that I joined the Navy, because I was always aboard ship or on some island or something like that. When we were tied up with our boats there, I shouldn't say "tied up," we were on the hillside with our boats, trying to get them out, we had time to go back up into the hills. And the little shacks were there, but they were all deserted. Rather than taking them out, they had left on their own. And I picked up six ivory chopsticks, about that long--beautiful ivory chopsticks. And I had them in my duffle bag. And I had some other stuff from there. But somebody got into it on the way home and got them all. I didn't have any of that left.

MacDonald: In general, what impact did your war experience have on you? You, know, that was a major thing in your lifetime.

Millard: Well, the thing of it is, a lot of those people that were supposed to be in the service took off and went to Canada, and went all over. And then after the war was all over, they give them a, "Come on back home. We want to see you here." And, by gum, they didn't get any penalty whatsoever. But I didn't like that too much, because it was over three years that I was out. Fifty-four dollars a month was the most that I

made, and good enough to go out on a party one night. That's about it. But we had to have it, I guess. And then if you had to go, you had to go. I have no kinds of qualms about having to go. I was ready and willing.

MacDonald: Well, do you have anything else you want to say about your experiences during World War II at all?

Millard: Well, probably they'll come to me afterwards. But I did get some good occasions. I was in Richmond, Virginia. When we were in Richmond, Virginia, you know, down in that area they still were fighting the Civil War, a lot of them. For instance, you go out to a meeting for veterans of all types, go to a dance or something like that. What do they call them? Anyway, you'd be dancing with a girl, and soon as she heard your Northern accent, they'd drop you like a hot potato. And there you stand. But, we couldn't go on leave from the base unless we went on the bus that they had to take us there. And they'd always send a landing craft or something over there to pick us up to come back. And from the city to the base where they parked the landing craft, you had to go through a lumberyard. And they put that out of bounds because so many servicemen got hit in there and robbed. And some of them got killed in that lumberyard. So they put that out of bounds. But I had a lot of fun in San Francisco in those days.

MacDonald: Okay, well, I appreciate you talking with me, Muzz.

Millard: Okay.

**[End of Interview]**