

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
HARRY ROUSE
Yeoman, Navy, World War Two

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Rouse, Harry, (1916-). Oral History Interview, 2010.

Master Copy: 1 audio cassette; analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

User Copy: 1 audio cassette; analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Abstract

Harry Rouse, from Oshkosh, Wisconsin, relates his service in the US Navy during World War Two. The interview begins with Rouse giving a very brief overview of his life before entering the service, including his moving from Oshkosh to Rockford, Illinois in search of employment in the food business. Rouse was drafted some time post-Pearl Harbor at the age of twenty-seven, and underwent training at Naval Station Great lakes in Illinois before being shipped to Pearl Harbor. He explains how he did not have a specified occupation within the Navy at this time, but when he went overseas to Enewetak, an atoll in the Marshall Islands, he assumed the rank of yeoman. Rouse goes on to say that he performed the clerical and administrative tasks required of yeomen due to his having some skill in typing. Rouse continues, recounting the ship he served on, the USS Capps, which functioned as an escort ship for smaller aircraft carriers on supply routes from Pearl Harbor. Rouse then explains how, in preparation for the invasion of Iwo Jima, he was assigned to the radar crew onboard as a sonar recorder and was responsible for logging all radar activity in his four-hour shifts. Rouse goes on to describe how his daily sonar recording work differed from his battle station, which had him passing powder kegs and ammunition from below deck to the ship's gun crews. He then tells a few anecdotes about his time offshore of Iwo Jima, including that he was able to see the American flag raised on Mt. Suribachi. Rouse says the only casualty on his ship was a man who was lost during a typhoon while en route to protect fuel coming from Okinawa. He then describes the event, including the burial at sea. Rouse continues by relating several experiences with Japanese kamikaze forces while stationed off Okinawa. After Okinawa, Rouse was sent home with his destroyer for re-arming, and that is when he learned of the war's end. He transferred to San Diego, helping with the administrative tasks associated with discharging returning servicemen. He was discharged in 1946. Rouse then describes his postwar work with the Piggly Wiggly franchise in Madison, Wisconsin, and his recent desire to go on an "Honor Flight" to see the service monuments in Washington, D.C. He concludes by saying he was glad to have been in the military, but the life did not suit him.

Biographical Sketch

Harry Rouse was born in 1916 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. While living in Rockford, Illinois, and at the age of twenty-seven, he was drafted into the United States Navy, serving as yeoman on the USS Capps, a destroyer. He participated in both the Iwo Jima and Okinawa campaigns, and was discharged in 1946.

Interviewed by Patrick Gould, 2010.

Transcribed by Amy J. Williams, 2014.

Edited and Abstracted by Joe Fitzgibbon, 2014.

Interview Transcript:

- Gould: Good morning, it is October 13th, 2010. My name is Patrick Gould. We're interviewing Mr. Harry Rouse today. We're at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. Good morning, Mr. Rouse.
- Rouse: Good morning.
- Gould: Why don't we begin with telling us something about yourself--where you're born, where you came from.
- Rouse: Originally? Uh, [laughs]--born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin on December 23rd, 1916. [pause] I grew up in Oshkosh. Until my marriage, worked--working in the food business, and unfortunately, in my labors I lost my job in Oshkosh, and, in those days—nineteen [inaudible]--tough times. Jobs were not a dime a dozen, and so, my opportunity to get work and support a wife, I moved to Rockford, Illinois--and from Rockford, Illinois, I continued in the food business until, until the war, and conscription, all such things. Hmm--
- Gould: Now where were you when Pearl Harbor began?
- Rouse: I was in Rockford, Illinois [laughs].
- Gould: Okay, so it's December 7th, 1941. You're in Rockford, Illinois, and you went into--what did you do from December 7th? The war's on; FDR has made his announcement--
- Rouse: I continued in the food business, and, I had opportunities to join the service, but never accepted them, and I let conscription lead my life. In, oh--later part of the uh, conflict, I was called to serve my country, so I joined. That was in the tail-end of the war.
- Gould: Okay, so you were--you were drafted, or you joined the--?
- Rouse: No, I was drafted into the service.
- Gould: You're drafted--do you remember what year that was when you're drafted?
- Rouse: No--forty--I don't know; in the early forties. And, I was shipped to Milwaukee, and then to the Great Lakes Naval Station [IL]. I didn't choose naval service; I was assigned to the naval service. I never thought I'd ever get into the Navy because I can't swim! Couldn't swim, don't swim! I always had the choice of going to the bottom, first shot. They found that out, too! [laughs] So, but, uh, I don't know how many days I spent at Great Lakes naval training station. There weren't too many of them. At that stage of the war it was, "when do we quit?"

Because it was over, by that time. But, I was sent to the west coast, and I-- to a recruiting center, somewhere--someplace in California, and, uh, eventually was sent to Pearl Harbor. And boy--

Gould: It sounds like you're about twenty-seven years old when you, you entered into the naval service--

Rouse: That's correct, yeah.

Gould: Okay. Twenty-seven years old, and you get sent--you go through Great Lakes, then you get to Pearl Harbor. What's your job? What do you do? What's your assignment?

Rouse: I was in limbo! I didn't have a job. I didn't have nothing, I was in transportation-- and I stayed there, in the naval center, and then a ship to, Long Beach, California, for overseas assignment, and got aboard—LSTs [[Landing Ship, Tank] are the ones--LSTs--five different ships were taking recruits from Long Beach to Hawaii. Honolulu [pause]--a short duration there, when we boarded another transport ship and was assigned as a sailor, and went aboard [?] eventually at Enewetak [an atoll of the Marshall Islands in the Pacific], as a sailor, third class. On that--on that ship, I was assigned as a--because of my education, I was assigned as a, hmm-- [pause]. I lost my memory for a minute, here.

Gould: What, what type of education did you have?

Rouse: Well, I only had a high school education, but in it was, uh, several years of typing, and this, this ship was in dire need of someone to do some typing, and I was chosen as a recruit to work in the ship's office, as Yeoman [perform clerical and administrative tasks]. And I--of course, I pursued that throughout the short term that I was in the Navy.

Gould: Okay, so you went from--you went from Hawaii to Enewetak. But what time of the--I'm assuming this is late 1944, [pause], before Christmas?

Rouse: No, I, Enewetak, uh, we went from Hawaii--no, from California to Hawaii— Pearl, Pearl Harbor--Enewetak--huh--where did we go--? Oh, I got that mixed up, I think. Enewetak--[pauses]—because, we went from Pearl to the Marshall Islands! Where they had some problems, I guess? I don't know--

Gould: So the Marshalls are things like Tinian and Saipan?

Rouse: Uh, yeah, but—huh. This isn't as easy as I thought it would be [laughs]!

Gould: So, you were a sailor on board a ship. You were in the office, because of your typing skills.

Rouse: Yeah.

Gould: And where did you go, on the ship? The ship was an LST, a landing ship, tank?

Rouse: No, no the ship was a, was a destroyer. Yeah--

Gould: Do you remember the name of the destroyer?

Rouse: Oh yeah. USS Capps--somewhere in there I got onto the "Capps" [chuckles]!

Gould: Capps. C-A-P--

Rouse: --P-S. DD550! I honestly don't know what that D-D is. I don't, either! [laughs] [inaudible] Yeah, that was DD550. Then we spent the rest of my time as escort ship, you know, we'd escort CVEs [escort aircraft carriers], which are the small, uh, carriers from Pearl or any of the other tours, you know? [pauses, inaudible] From Pearl, to every place that needed supplies. We'd escort those CVEs which were the small carriers, to those places that needed the supplies they had. That [pause], that was our job throughout the war--the end of the war. Because, well, that included the Marshall Islands, we spent a lot of our time in Ulysses.

Gould: Where?

Rouse: Ulysses.

Gould: How do you spell--

Rouse: --Which was the biggest anchor--anchorage in the world. And that's South Pacific.

Gould: How do you spell that?

Rouse: I, I don't have it. It's U-L--

Gould: And where is it?

Rouse: South Pacific. South Pacific [taps fingers] and it's the largest anchorage in the world--

Gould: In Australia? The Philippines?

Rouse: Well, in that area I suppose, South of, uh, [taps fingers], Vietnam. But it was the-- it was the largest naval, uh, anchorage in the world, during the war, until they, I suppose it's back to its wild kingdom. I don't know, but that's, that's where--I suppose that information wasn't out, but that's where we, uh, had a--had a sneaking Japanese two-man submarine penetrate the anchorage. And we, we, uh,

depth-charged that thing until we had all the fish killed, too. So [laughs] it's a big place. It was a--it was a place that they, uh, collected the fleet that was gonna invade-- Uh, what's the one with the flag--?

Gould: Iwo Jima.

Rouse: Iwo Jima. From that, from that base I was assigned to the radar crew. For four hours you had a job to record everything that went on, you know? And, it had a-- [pause], a picture of the fleet; you know---each ship did--a picture of the fleet. And every one had a "blip". Every ship had a "blip", and that's--what the heck did they call those things--? Uh, well, I won't think of that, I suppose [taps fingers].

Gould: So, you went from being a ship's clerk, in the office, to being some sort of a sonar--?

Rouse: Oh! Recorder! Yeah, Yeah! Sonar--it showed all the ships in that fleet.

Gould: So, that's your new job. You're no longer typing in the office--

Rouse: Oh yeah! No, no! This was just, uh, [inaudible], you know? We're on our way to Iwo Jima from Ulysses. Now, there were so many ships that you couldn't count 'em [taps fingers], that everybody else knew where their station was, you know? [Inaudible] was one of the [taps fingers]--one of the controllers of that fleet, and uh, [taps fingers] that was the most excitement of my tour, was Iwo Jima; had a lot of other ones. We never lost a sailor--one sailor we lost [taps fingers] from a typhoon in the Philippines. But, we, we never had any problems up--we were scheduled one time to picket ship between Japan and Okinawa, when that was going on, but that's later.

Gould: Okay, it's February, 1945 when Iwo Jima occurs.

Rouse: Uh-huh.

Gould: So what are you doing? What is your role on this destroyer?

Rouse: My role in this--was in the magazine--of the--USS Capps--two stories below the deck--to pass powder kegs up to the five inch guns.

Gould: Is that your--

Rouse: [Inaudible]

Gould: Is that your battle station?

Rouse: That's my battle--yes, yes, yeah.

Gould: So, you're doing sonar work--

Rouse: Well, sonar work--that's my daily thing--

Gould: Right.

Rouse: Yeah.

Gould: When you're working, but, but when you're at battle stations, you're passing ammo bags up--

Rouse: No. They were cans!

Gould: --Ammo cans--up, up the elevator.

Rouse: Up to the next thing--

Gould: Up to the elevator. You put it in the elevator, right?

Rouse: No, I didn't--it was all hand--

Gould: Hand moved, okay.

Rouse: I don't know how many star shells we used up in that campaign. But Iwo Jima was never dark while it was going on. They had enough ships that that island was daylight—light with shells; you know--light shells. Land was daylight. You could read a book, do anything you wanted, if you didn't have all the other commotions. But, some people, uh, think that that wasn't possible, but it was. That island was never in the dark, when war was going on. [pause] In that, in that duty of, uh, recording on the bridge--I had that thing to do, too. Or, all of us had to take care of that, [pause]--I want to get that in there, huh. We had other duties, you know; not only did we have to record everything that went on, during that battle—and we sunk one of our own ships, because it got hit by a shell from the shore--from the Japanese. It was a little ship, you know--they used 'em to ferry those guys in to the shore. It got hit, but it, it didn't do any damage. No one got killed or anything, but it was a nuisance for the other ships to maneuver a floating thing that wasn't worth nothing anyway. So we sunk it [laughs]! So, but, uh, in, in that process, I was--among other people, you know, I wasn't the only guy!--I was one of the recorders of what went on in that thing. In that, in that--oh gosh--[laughs] we sunk that ship--oh! [taps fingers] And then of course we had to record everything else that transpired in that, so I went to--went, got off my duty, and the next morning when I got up to take that same duty, I went up on the deck of our ship, and there was that flag, up there. First, first time I saw it, you know, I says, "My God, they got that thing. They got her up!" You could see the, see the

situation as it was transpiring, you know. But no one ever expected them to get that flag up, so--suddenly.

Gould: So, from the deck of your destroyer, you could see the flag that was raised up on Mount Suribachi.

Rouse: Oh, yeah. I'd seen the soldiers, but don't know who they were; didn't recognize them, but you knew somebody was there for that flag. That was really something. We thought it was--the thing was over, you know--which was a mistaken identity. Still going on! The most weird thing I saw over there was--in the battle--was the guy that had the phosphorus [?], if you know what I'm saying. It's a--is a guy with a big tank on his back--

Gould: Flame-thrower.

Rouse: And when he pulled the trigger there was a flame that came out that went right into the caves that the Japanese were in! And, of course that guy was the first target. They always went after the guy with a tank on his back, but, boy--that was just something awful, just awful. I says, "I'm glad I'm on the boat!" [laughs] I don't need somebody shooting gas at me, or whatever it is. Just awful--

Gould: Were you ever ashore at Iwo Jima?

Rouse: No, never ashore. We spent—I don't know how many, three weeks, there? That was a sight, too. Of all the ships, there were little bitty boats, you know, and then there's a bigger boat, and there's a bigger ship, and there's big ships right there. They were way out of reach. Although, one of 'em got hit with a Japanese shell. And I can't--I can see it, but I can't remember the name of the ship. There was only one that I knew of that got hit, at Iwo Jima. Probably were more, but that's the only one I know of. [pause] Then, of course, came the Okinawa trip.

Gould: Did you--let's go back to Iwo for a moment. Did you deal with any casualties, any of the Marines coming off of Iwo, or POW's that were captured on Iwo Jima--

Rouse: Not a one, not a one.

Gould: Okay.

Rouse: Nope, not a one.

Rouse: The only action that we came across ourselves was, in the campaign, in Iwo Jima--in a typhoon--you have to know something about, uh, refueling to understand what happened in the typhoon. Uh, [William Frederick Bull] Halsey was the controller of the whole program at this particular time, and, some of these smaller ships--like destroyers--have to fuel more often than bigger boys. So, in that

Okinawa deal, we had to have some fuel, I guess. Anyway, Halsey ordered fuel, um--trip to Okinawa, and a typhoon [inaudible]. We got right in the middle of the dumb thing, and I swear we were under water more than we were on water. But, uh, you can, you can--when I say that, you can understand that the waves were monstrous, because I say we thought we were under water more than we were on top of it. And this ship would go with the waves, you know, they didn't--they didn't-- try to buck 'em or anything, but they had to go with 'em. So, the ship goes back and forth. Now, the guy on the top deck is a lookout--the highest peak of the ship had a lookout on it, and they changed, uh, [inaudible], every four hours. And so, this is the midnight hour. The guy that was up there has a--I don't know why he was up there--in a typhoon, you know. Of course, he's strapped in--no problem--but it was on the break, that they had to relieve this guy fifteen minutes, before his time is out. And, so, he unbuckled himself to get out of the job--his turn was done, four hours in. And it so happened that he unbuckled himself just on wrong time, so the wave came, and we lost the guy. Well, I was on, on duty that night, and we had to take a DRT meeting--reading of where this happened--because we lost this guy, we don't know where, we think he went overboard.

Gould: What does DRP stand for?

Rouse: G-R-P? No--

Gould: You said you had to do a DRP reading?

Rouse: DRT, yeah. That's some mechanical thing that we, we get the recording of where that ship was at that very moment, you see, so they could go back--I don't know what they would do, but, it--the ship didn't stop, you know, but they had a record of where that spot was, in jargon that you don't understand, you see. But that wasn't the--that wasn't the, the thing of it all, because at daylight, we found out that he didn't drown in the water. He didn't go into the water at all. Evidently, when he went over, the ship went with him, you know, and he landed on the deck! He was killed landing on a deck--

Gould: Hmm.

Rouse: We had a funeral.

Gould: When was this typhoon?

Rouse: When was this typhoon? At Okinawa.

Gould: So, it was May 1945?

Rouse: No. [Taps fingers] 1945?! [Taps fingers]. No, no, no, it was before that--1945, the war is over, isn't it?

Gould: Iwo Jima occurs in February/March of 1945

Rouse: Four-

Gould: Okinawa is May of '45, and then the bombs are dropped in August of '45--

Rouse: Oh! Now, what was the question?

Gould: I'm trying to determine--when was the typhoon? Was it before Okinawa, or--

Rouse: Oh! I, I think it--well, I don't have any record of it, but, uh, I think it was, uh, in the campaign of Okinawa.

Gould: Okay. What was your--what was your destroyer doing during the Okinawa campaign?

Rouse: We were protecting, uh, ammunition--

[recording stops abruptly at 31:32.04, picks up again at 31:47.04]

Rouse: Yeah, we were protecting--protection of materials to Okinawa.

Gould: What were you protecting them from?

Rouse: Uh, we were--we weren't protecting them; we were protecting the product--gasoline, and I suppose other, many other things--

Gould: What was the threat?

Rouse: Well, no--we were the aggressor; there were no threat. We were landing--soldiers, and what-have-you--somebody had to protect those people from getting--[pause] I can see what you're talking about now--

Gould: Did you have any encounters with *kamikazes*?

Rouse: No [drawn out for emphasis]. We--oh, *kamikazes*? Is that the--air *kamikazes*, yes! We were part of the group of destroyers that were stationed between Japan and Okinawa, because they needed protection from those kamikazes coming from Japan to Okinawa! Uh, [taps fingers], our sister ship got practically blown apart because of a *kamikaze* landing on the deck and exploding. Now, those guys were protecting Okinawa! Not hand-to-hand or anything like that, [voice becomes louder, more emotive], but they--these ships that were stationed between Japan and Okinawa were three-four-five-six-ten--I don't know how many--[taps

fingers]. We were, we were--had a big fuss about who was going to have that duty! Luckily we had a captain aboard who had seniority. We didn't have to go--we were, thought we were going to Aoshima. Japanese island--one of the smaller ones--[taps fingers], on the south end of that thing--[taps fingers].

Gould: So, I'm not quite clear--was the USS Capps on picket duty away from the fleet at Okinawa? Or was it inland, closer to the island where you were protecting the ammunition ships as they went ashore?

Rouse: We were closer to the--to the island.

Gould: You could see the island.

Rouse: Well, yes, yeah. [Taps fingers] Oh yeah, sure. Many other ships, you know? We weren't all alone. Yeah, no--we could see it. We couldn't see the fighting of course, because they were going gung-ho. But, they were being harassed by these *kamikazes* coming down, and we were there to alert them, [voice becomes louder, more emotive] that "Here comes one!" Down here--but, fortunately, we didn't do it, but our sister ship--one of our sister ships [taps fingers] was [inaudible]. I don't know how many, uh, how many of those, uh, picket--they call 'em picket ships--uh, that were stationed between Japan, and when that *kamikaze* came south--coming south to Okinawa to bomb 'em! [Voice becomes louder, more emotive] why, they knew they were comin'! They knew when--about they were comin', and so they take precaution.

Gould: Okay, what role did you play--did you, personally—play onboard the ship during Okinawa?

Rouse: [Taps fingers] N-nothing. No, no, just normal operations.

Gould: Were you loading ammunition?

Rouse: No. We weren't firing--no ammunition, no.

Gould: Not firing in support of the land forces--?

Rouse: No. No, no, we were strictly assigned to get that product ashore safely. As were many, many other ships. [taps fingers]

Gould: So, Okinawa ends; now we're into July, 1945. What are you thinking about when eventually, early August, Hiroshima and Nagasaki occur? What's--where are you at, and what are you thinking at that time?

Rouse: I-I don't know. We were in the area somewhere, but we spent most of our time--this sounds so--watching B-29s. From where? I don't know, from--

Gould: Tinian.

Rouse: Tinian was the first ones, you know, [taps fingers], and there were three. And two of 'em didn't come back. I don't know where they went, but they didn't come back, until they got to twenty, or more, and you could realize how many B-29s were manufactured, or how they were manufactured--how, how fast they were manufactured, so, it was a foregone conclusion--that the war couldn't last very much longer. Everybody knew--

Gould: Do you remember where you were at when someone told you the war was over?

Rouse: Uh, yeah! I was home.

Gould: You were back--

Rouse: When we, when we talk about that—when, uh, [inaudible] destroyer got smashed, and the *kamikaze* landing on 'em, they decided that all those model destroyers were unfit for war--this kind of war, that we're having. They had five-inch guns as their main weapon on ship--on a ship. That's the biggest gun we had. We had five of 'em. We had a lot of Quad 40s [armature type]. That means you have four forty-millimeter guns. And, we had a lot of rifles, we had a lot of twenty-millimeter guns, you know. They're, all right for regular war--naval war--but they weren't worth a damn, you know, when you're trying to fight off an airplane. It wasn't a match at all. So they decided to come—take, take some guys back to the States and re-arm 'em.

Gould: So, if I'm understanding you correctly-Okinawa finishes, and again--it's gonna be around May, June--

Rouse: Yeah.

Gould: --of 1945. They send you back to the States?

Rouse: Yep.

Gould: You go back to San Diego, San Francisco?

Rouse: Oh, we went back--no, I think they went back, south. I think this was closer to San Diego, yeah? I don't know. I don't remember where it was--

Gould: So, you went back to California?

Rouse: Yeah.

Gould: And then you got liberty--you got to go home to--

Rouse: Home--

Gould: --Home to Wisconsin.

Rouse: Yes.

Gould: So you're at home in August of 1945.

Rouse: Yes!

Gould: Okay, now describe that.

Rouse: Ha! That was a--that was a bargain for us, you know, as it turned out. We were home, we were having fun, and the war ends. What else would be --I had to go back though! [Laughs] Yeah, that was something else--

Gould: So, you went back to San Diego, or you went back to--?

Rouse: San Diego, yep.

Gould: Did you ever deploy again, after that?

Rouse: No.

Gould: So, you had to go back to San Diego to muster out.

Rouse: [Laughs] No. Well, again, I was a yeoman. And that--typing thing--I was a yeoman, and that's the life of a, a ship--is a yeoman. And they do nothing with personnel, unless it's on paper, and I was a paper guy, so I didn't get out of there; I didn't go home, from California--not yet, anyway.

Gould: You didn't go home, you say?-or you didn't-?

Rouse: No.

Gould: So, what did you do once you got back-the war's ended, and--

Rouse: Yep, yeah. And I'm back into California, and [finger tapping/scratching sound] doing nothing but discharging individuals. And, being that type of individual they have need of very much. So, I had points enough to get out, but they wouldn't let me go. I was transferred to a bigger destroyer, in California. The Capps was decommissioned--put in moth balls, and eventually was sold, to--I don't know, somebody, and then junked.

Gould: So, how long are you in the Navy before they eventually discharge you?

Rouse: Oh, that's hard to say--couple months--

Gould: So, are you out of the Navy by 1946?

Rouse: I, I think so. I don't know--ask my wife, she knows [laughs].

Gould: So the war ends--

Rouse: War ends--

Gould: You go back to--you're in Wisconsin when you hear the word, you gotta go back to San Diego to be mustered out--

Rouse: Yeah, yeah.

Gould: And, you get outta the Navy, and what happens afterwards? What do you do for a living when you get the rest of your life--

Rouse: I do--I went back to the same company that I was working for before the war, and I went to get my own, my old job back, which was--it was a small outfit, [taps fingers] but my boss had different thoughts of where he's going to put [taps fingers] rehire me, you know. And so, I said I had a right to get my job back, you know. It was only, what, couple years, isn't it? Yeah. [taps fingers] Oh, yeah, he says, "You can. You can have your job back, if you insist, but, I'm giving you some advice," he says, "the money in this business is in retail, not in wholesale." I was in the wholesale end of it, you see. And, and he was the owner, and he says, "If you want to make some money for yourself, get in the retail business" And so, he suggested I move to Madison [pauses] to pursue the almighty dollar [taps fingers]. And that's what I did. My wife and I moved to Madison--had been there ever since--

Gould: What did you do in Madison?

Rouse: Madison--I--I worked in places you--you never knew of, or don't know of. We were a--a franchise outfit called Piggly Wiggly--and we bought--we--I say "we" because I was a--charter member of the company--we bought the Twentieth Century Stores in Madison--the three of 'em--yeah, from the [inaudible] company--coal and oil outfit, here. In nineteen--forty--January of 1944--that was before the war [finger tapping]--wasn't it?—No, '41, wasn't it? When was the war?

Gould: December '41 was Pearl Harbor--

Rouse: Yeah.

Gould: So, January '41 would be before the war with the United States.

Rouse: Uh--

Gould: Okay, so--the war, again—now, you come back to Madison; you're in retail, with--you're working with the Piggly Wiggly, or you bought the Piggly Wiggly?

Rouse: Yep-I was working with the Piggly Wiggly, yes. We changed the names--were "Twentieth Century Store", and we changed the name to "Piggly Wiggly."

Gould: Were you one of the buyers, or were you-?

Rouse: No, but I was one of the--the guy that bought it, I was a friend of his.

Gould: Okay.

Rouse: He took me under his--

Gould: Did you use any of your G.I., G.I. Bill benefits, when you got out?

Rouse: From--no, nope, never did--

Gould: Did you belong to either the Veterans of Foreign Wars, or the American Legion when you got out?

Rouse: Not until last month [laughs].

Gould: To do what?

Rouse: To do what? I, I joined 'em, I don't know. I wanna, I wanna go on that--I've wanted to go--they, they've started--to go on that airplane tour to Washington [D.C.; narrator is speaking of "Honor Flights" that take veterans to Washington, D.C. to see the memorials there]--

Gould: Oh.

Rouse: They were recruiting them from this--this one in Madison, this post in Madison--thirteen, eighteen, or something? I don't know. But they said, "You better join!"--VFW--I don't want to say it on this thing, here--

Gould: All right, this sounds like a very interesting story, Mr. Rouse. I'm going to turn it over to you now, just final thoughts on, just overall--your opinion of your naval experience, World War Two, and anything else you'd care to share with us today.

Rouse: Thank you, much. I must confess that I am not a gung-ho—military individual. I, I prolonged my service time as best I could. I think it's two years of my life that was wasted, and it's a bygone situation, and I'm glad I'd been in and got a taste of it, but I still am not anyone who would be a good recruiter. That's all I have to say. I'm just, just not it. Turn her off.

Gould: Thank you very much!

Rouse: Okay, well, I'm sorry I'm not a better recruit, and military is not for me.

[End of Interview]