ORAL HISTORY OF MARIE LOMBARDO

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MR. RUSSERT: This is an
interview at the New York State Military Museum, Saratoga Springs, New York, the 15 th of March -excuse me, 15th of April, 2005, approximately ten-thirty a.m. Interviewers are Wayne Clark and Mike Russert.

MR. RUSSERT: Could you give me your full name, date of birth and place of birth, please?
A. Cohoes, New York is my place of birth. That's just a small city nine miles north of Albany. I'm sure you all know, but anyhow, right on the confluence of Mohawk and Hudson Rivers. We've got the beautiful Cohoes waltz like A, you wouldn't believe. Right now it was spring with all the rain and the snow melt. They're glory so come on over. If you can't afford to go to Niagara, come to Cohoes.
Q. Okay.
A. The walls are there waiting for you. Well, anyhow, that's where I was born on May 23rd, 1924.
Q. What was your education prior to entering military service?
A. Well -- well, I -- I did get a bilingual education with the -- the Sister's of the French -- French Canadian Sisters. They serve at at St Johns House so -- so that was half a day French and a half a day of English at the parochial school of Saint Vifth (phonetic spelling) in Cohoes. And then after that -- well, then for -for high school I -- I went to the -- the Catholic High School in -- in Cohoes which was Kieve Votra Academy. And that was the Irish parish of Saint Bernards. Saint Jovet was a French parish. Well, I got to meet some nice Irish girls, you know. And so anyhow, I graduated from there and well, anyhow, in my senior year that's when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. And I'll -- I'll never forget that day. I was following it with my father. He had the radio on, the old Atwater Kent radio. And F.D.R., Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the only president $I$ ever knew growing up, interrupted the program to tell us that we had been bombed in Pearl Harbor.

It was a day I'll never forget. And -- and this triggers, you know, like patriotism, like we've never seen it since then.

So many boys in high school just quit, joined the services. My husband was a -- he -- he lived in Troy and he -- he quit school and went in the Marine Corps.
Q. Did you know him at that time?
A. No. No. No. I just knew people in Cohoes.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Never went anywhere.
Q. Did you know where Pearl Harbor
was?
A. I -- oh, yeah. Well, I was good in geography. You know, I was very good in geography and I loved maps. I -- I used to read maps, you know. I had the encyclopedia there and I was over there I always had my maps there. That was -- yeah. And so I knew where Pearl Harbor was. And so anyhow, boys in our class, they -- you know, they quit school, joined the merchant marine. By the time graduation came in June, you know, a couple of them were already dead with German in bombs killed them.

They were doing a real number on us in the North Pacific or -- I mean the North

Atlantic. It was my husband that was out in the Pacific when he was just a kid. He went in at seventeen, you know.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. They had X'd where his parents signature should have been. You know, they were -just came over from Italy and so he was just first generation Italian. Of course I didn't know him then. I didn't know him.

So anyhow, then when I heard that women could go into the military service, oh my God, I couldn't wait to go in. But then I found out you had to be twenty-one to join for women or twenty if your parents signed for you, signed a release. So I couldn't wait. I had always wanted to be a teacher and thought I'd go as, when things were called a normal school which was New York State Teachers College in Albany. I thought I would go there. But I didn't want to be in college for four years with the war going on. Couldn't wait till I was twenty and could go. So my mother said, well, you took a college entrance course, so what are you going to do. So she insisted I go to Bill Melleri's Secretarial School, so I did. So I
would take the bus every day from Cohoes and go to Albany and so $I$ went to Bill Melleri's, got my typing speed up, got my shorthand, Gregg Shorthand, you know, came in handy. Well, anyhow, so I -then I got a job at Bear Manning. Now Bear Manning was a sandpaper place. They made all kind of papers -- of sandpaper and what a relief. But during the war, you know, every factory had to be involved in the war effort and so they had what they called a navigation division. So $I$ went and applied for a job there. I got -- I got a job and in the navigation division in the office and so $I$ was working in the navigation division on -- it was the -- it was called a harness. It was a -- kind of a horseshoe with all wiring that went around the Corsair fighter plane.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. That was a fighter plane for the Navy. So that's what we did there in the navigation division of Bear Manning.
Q. Now did you do soldering and other things?
A. No, I was in the office. I was in the office.
Q. Well, I was referring to --.
A. I believe I -- I had my, you know, office training, Bill Merelli's (phonetic spelling) Secretarial School, so $I$ was in the office. Yes. I was in the office there. It was a very nice place to work.

Well, anyhow, of course when I graduated from high school I was eighteen. When I finished $I$ was nineteen, so after one year at Bear Manning I was twenty. Hurrah. Twenty. Old enough to go in the service.

So anyhow, I met recruiting -the recruiting posters, oh yeah, for the Navy. And I always looked good in navy blue, you know, and -but then $I$ was down at Montgomery Wards in Menands, the big store, shopping, and there was a girl from the Coast Guard on recruiting there. To tell you the truth I had -- you know, didn't know too much about the Coast Guard, but I'll tell you, she was so nice right then and there $I$ decided that would be the service $I$ would go into.

So I went home and I asked my mother if she would be willing to sign for me because I was just twenty and she said yes. She
knew how bad I wanted to go in. So -- so I got sworn in --
Q. Now --.
A. -- down -- down in Albany.
Q. Now were they upset at Bear Manning that you were leaving to go into the Coast Guard?
A. Well, I -- I -- they -- they weren't upset, no.
Q. No?
A. No. I mean they didn't give me a party or anything and I wasn't there quite a year. It was like maybe a month before the year was up.
Q. Yeah.
A. If I had stayed on an extra month
they would have given me a going away present of
like -- I think they gave a hundred dollars --
Q. Oh.
A. -- to anybody who had worked
there a year and was going into the service.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. So they were very patriotic
there. It was really a very nice place to work. But I didn't know about that, but -- so -- but I
was anxious to go in the service. So I forfeited my hundred dollar departing gift.
Q. So when did you enter --
A. Enlisted.
Q. -- when did you enter the Coast Guard?
A. So --.
Q. Do you remember?
A. So let's see. So the date I went down to Albany right on -- well, what used to be the post office there across the street, that's -that's Broadway in Albany. It was right on the corner of that beautiful building there right on -on the corner of -- of Broadway and State Street there.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. And on the second floor, IIll never forget, $I$ went up there and $I$ swore myself in to the Coast Guard. I took the oath. And before I left the house my sister, Frances, who was nine years older than me, she took out the camera and she took a picture of me with my long hair because I always wore long hair, you know. And so I got sworn in and I took the bus back home and when I
got home she was waiting for me with a pair of scissors. And she gave me my short haircut and then she took my picture again with the short haircut. It was the first time that I had my long curls cut off, you know. I had long hair then. Well, anyhow, so --.
Q. Excuse me. Do you remember what month and year that was?
A. Oh yeah, that was September -September 14th -- okay, September 14th, 1944. Yeah, I had graduated from high school in '42. So this was '44. Yes. And you know, so $I$ was in the service for two years, so I got out in '46. And well, anyhow, so then I had to wait for my orders to start out. They came and I was thrilled to pieces. My mother and my girlfriend, Helen, took the bus with me, they all rode the bus, down to Albany to the railroad station in Albany, that beautiful Union Station which is a bank today. And they saw me off on the train and off $I$ went and got off at Grand Central Station. And from there I worked my way on down to -- to Broad Street and met the rest of the gang of the girls that would be the girls that $I$ started into the service with in boot
camp. supper we went to Pennsylvania Station, boarded a train and choo-chooed on down to West Palm Beach, got off the train. It took twenty-five hours then. I still remember it was twenty-five hours from Pennsylvania Station, New York to Palm Beach Station and we got off -- this is my first trip to Florida. And so then we got on a bus and over the -- over plain Quarters to get into Palm Beach. I'm in Palm Beach. Whoa, beautiful.

Of course the Breakers were there, but we weren't stationed in the Breakers. We had the Biltmore. It was another hotel that had been taken over for the Spar Training Station. And -- and so we -- six weeks of boot camp, yeah, it was great. I loved it. Hey, I -- I learned to climb a cargo deck and all that other stuff, crawl around on your belly. It was regular boot camp. Oh yeah. And -- and then we would go to the younger beach for swimming, you know, go wooly-wooly G.I. bathing suits, navy blue of course. And anyhow, it was my first taste of the Atlantic Ocean and I tasted the salt of it and it
didn't taste good.
And well, anyhow, we were only there two weeks and there was a -- a hurricane warning. A hurricane? How -- well, so we had to batten down the hatches and oh, I said, nothing's going to happen. Oh my God, we had to secure the place like you wouldn't believe. Well, anyhow, that was my first taste of a hurricane and the warning, I'll tell you, every palm tree around had lost its top. They were just sticks left. It was really a hurricane. So those were things that I have never seen in Cohoes. Hurricanes, Atlantic Ocean, it was so. And it -- it was -- it was great. I was on K.P. duty, the whole bit, you know.
Q. So did you have to pull guard duty at all?
A. No guard, no, but we had -- you know, we had to learn to march and do all that stuff.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. You know, and I always thought I
was tall. In Cohoes I always thought I was a tall girl, but down there $I$-- I was the last one in the
back because they were all taller than me, you know?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. And for rest parade, every Saturday morning it was Dress parade and oh, I loved that. But I was -- I was always bringing up the rear. So, anyhow, they give you all an aptitude test and decided I would be a good storekeeper. So I started the storekeeper school. So that took six weeks of training at the storekeeper school and it was right there in Palm Beach. So then I graduated from storekeeper school and --.
Q. Now -- now what was that like, the storekeeper school? What did you learn there?
A. Well, I learned that -- to make out order forms and everything, you know, I mean this was for Coast Guard, you know?
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Yeah.
Q. You had to do requisitions and order --?
A. Yeah, all that stuff. You know, it -- and of course I -- I already had typing and
shorthand, but that was more in the other line, so I really didn't have to use my shorthand, but I did use the typing.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. You know, I did use the typing, so that was good. And yeah, so then after storekeeper school permanent duty station, Boston, Massachusetts. So Constitution Wharf, it's still a Coast Guard station. So whenever I go to Boston I go past it for old times sake and it's still a Coast Guard station. Yeah. And you know, so that was my active duty, you know.
Q. Now what was life like for you in Boston? What was your work routine like?
A. Yeah, okay. Well, it was -- we were billeted in Brookline at 1501 Beacon Street Brookline. It used to be an apartment building that they took over for, you know, Coast Guard, for the SPAR's and so you know, you had perfume, you had to be in every night at nine o'clock. I would be in bed every night at nine. And the funny part of it is another girl from Cohoes was on -- on the desk there in the Coast Guard, you know.
Q. And you knew her before you went
A. Oh yeah.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Hey, and I didn't even tell you when $I$ was on K.P. duty down in -- in -- see, every three weeks there was a new recruit team coming in, a new seven recruits and so $I$ went in, $I$ was there three weeks. So I was on K.P., dishing out the grub, down the chow line and who comes -- I go to -- and I look and I said oh, it's Monique -Monique. Monique -- Monica to you. Monique, I mean her father was my dentist. I still got some old fillings he put in here, you know, seven, eight years ago. Well, anyhow, so she was just three weeks behind me in Florida, so -- and then just coincidence, she also got stationed in Boston and so -- yeah, so I used to see her every day. When I'd come in and check in at night she was at the desk there making sure $I$ got in. Oh yeah.

And yeah, so then in -- in -- in
the morning, you know, you'd have reveille, you'd get up out of bed and you'd get dressed and we would go outside and -- and take the $T$, the Boston T. That's the transportation and it was -- and I'd
get off at Saint Marcus Square and walk the whole length of Hanover Street which was very, very long, you know, it's like Little Italy there, Hanover Street, all the way down to Constitution Wharf. I would climb up the stairs to the second floor. That was the supply office and that's where $I$ worked. I had a desk, I had a typewriter, I would get requisition forms from -- from the Coast Guard cutters or -- or the light houses or whoever wanted something and I would type them up. And so -- so we were -- you know, there were quite a few SPAR's that worked there in that -- in that office at -that was the First Naval District there and -- but there are also some civilian girls. Most of them were Irish girls from South Boston. So I got to know some Irish girls from South Boston. And after the war was over and I was home I got invitations to a couple of their weddings and I did go back to Boston to attend their weddings in South Boston.
Q. Now did you work with men also or was it strictly women?
A. Well, it was all women in that office at the desk.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. But we had a male officer, you know, the officer, the head guy there from the supply office was a male, you know.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. So --.
Q. Now were there enlisted men
working there also or --?
A. Well, it -- it was really -- you know, I would just go to the second floor because that was my supply office.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. But the pay office was on the first floor. Okay? So hey, there were a few movie stars who were in the Coast Guard.
Q. Really?
A. And so when it was payday, when the ship came in and -- and we knew, hey, we would look for some excuse to have to go down to the first floor.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. So I saw a few of them. Oh yeah. There were a few. I don't want to mention any names. Caesar Romero was one of them. Anyhow,

1 that -- that was a little, you know, extra that
2 I -- I get to see. That would happen, but hey, it
Q. Now did you get to see any U.S.O. shows at all?
A. No, I didn't see any U.S.O.
shows. But I -- I did get down to the U.S.O. down on the watering place of the cows. That's how Boston's streets were done, you know, they paved behind the cows. And so it was right down in -- in the -- of course there was a public park is here here and then there was the Boston Commons and that was where the water hole for the cows were when you know -- and they paved behind the cow paths, so that's how -- that's why the streets of Boston were all kind of wavy and curly and kind of funny and very narrow. But anyhow, they -- they put up a temporary building there that was the U.S.O. Okay. So I used to go down and jitterbug at night. And hey, that's how you got your exercise in those days. Nothing like jitterbugging. Oh dear, today everybody gets gymnasiums or their garage or the basement or you know, or they go to a gym, you know. I'll tell you the jitterbugging kept me in
shape. And then walking. I -- I used to walk all over in Boston -- walk all over the city. Just used to walk. Loved to walk.
Q. Now could you wear civilian clothes --
A. No.
Q. -- or did you always have to wear a uniform?
A. No. During the war -- where there's war on, and I imagine it's the same today, I'm not sure, but back then World War II, every person who was in the military, whether it was the Army, the Navy, the Coast Guard or whatever, Marine Corps, had to be in -- in full uniform. And the only -- you know, whether they were just out in leisure or going to work or whatever. You had to be in full uniform, except when you were in your own barracks. I suppose you could run around in your -- your tee shirt, but I didn't even have any civilian clothes with me because there was no need for it.
Q. Okay.
A. So I -- I left all my clothes in my closet back home. Well, anyhow, while I was in
the service stationed in Boston my mother and father bought another house up on the hill in Cohoes and so the house where I was born and grew up they moved out of there and they were renting it out. So she had to empty out all the closets. She got rid of all my clothes, everything. So I didn't even have any civilian clothes to come home to. She had cleaned everything out when moving day came, you know, before moving day. I had cousins who lived next door. She gave it all to them, you know, because they were -- we were all thin then. Q. Uh-huh.
A. Nobody was obese then like they are today. Oh my God, all of us couch potatoes. Well, anyhow, yeah, so all my civvies were gone and -- and we didn't know how long the war would last. And when -- when you signed up and there's a war on, if you volunteered, you volunteered for the duration of the war. And you know, nobody knew how long the war would last. It could have lasted ten, twelve years. Who knows? So anyhow, you know, we just thank God it didn't last too long. Q. What was it like when the war did end? Was there a lot of celebration?
A. Oh my God, Boston -- you know, the -- the newspaper photo people really took pictures all over the place, you know, New York City, Boston, all the big cities. Oh my -- I mean people were celebrating in the streets and you know, so anyhow, yeah, so that's how it was.
Q. Do you remember where you were and how you remember? You said that President Roosevelt was the only president you remembered.
A. Oh yeah.
Q. Well, how did you feel when he died?
A. Oh God, you know, I know what he -- he -- he was such a good president and you know, we didn't -- we didn't even know about him till later that he had had, you know, polio and -and you know -- and -- and then when he died, I mean my God, you know, it -- it was, you know, Winston Churchill and I mean God, they -- all these get togethers they had and everything. And you know, finally the Axis's, the Nazi's, you know, and -- and then it all came out about and all those terrible, terrible places that went on, you know. I mean all this stuff was terrible when you think
of it, you know. And we probably will never be anything like that again.

And of course I had uncles and my God, you know, they all went over -- off to World War I and it wasn't even called World War I because they never thought there would be a World War II. It was just called the Great War -- the Great War, the war to end all wars. $O h$, and I mean they went over the hill and in the trenches and everything in France and it's -- it's like a miracle that they returned. But they returned and so you know, my Uncle lived right next to me, my Uncle Paul, they -- and their children, they all grew up right next to me. We all lived -- you know, everybody had a house here on Lake Street, Cohoes, we all had, you know, like grandpa to care of us and he built a brick house, my father, they all sweated and then for Uncle Sharrif and then Uncle Paul, you know, all on the same street, and a big garage. That big garage now was -- they made, oh, I don't know, six or eight apartments out of it now, you know. Yeah.

So it's -- it's -- but anyhow,
when -- when World II was declared and -- you know,

1 and that's what they called the Great War got renamed World War I. So that's how it went, you know.
Q. Was there any person or persons that you remember that left an impression on you or -- or close friends while you were in the service?
A. Oh God yes. I -- I made such good friends. You know, two Italian girls from Brooklyn, they were great friends. And I had gone to their wedding and they came up -- they came to my house in Cohoes for their honeymoon. I -- I gave them my bedroom for their honeymoon. Yeah. I mean, you know, it's not like honeymoons today. Oh, and then they came up to my wedding and -- and then -- and they drove up. They had a car. Now me and my new husband, we didn't have a car. We were married in -- in 1948 and we didn't have a car. And so they came up -- they drove up from Brooklyn and believe it or not, we went to New York City. We got in the car with them and got a free ride down to New York for our honeymoon. So we were two days in a hotel in New York City. That was, you know --
Q. Uh-huh.
A. -- hey, after the war. Oh, it was hard to find a place to live, it was hard to find furniture. You know, that's after the war. That's post-war era. Yeah. And you know, like in Troy they -- they built temporary housing for returning veterans, you know, all over the place. Temporary housing went up in Troy.
Q. Did you ever -- did you ever perform any unusual duties or services while you were --?
A. Well, believe it or not, when I was in Boston in the supply office if they needed a supply that could have been purchased right there -- right there on Atlantic Avenue in Boston, hey, I -- I was the one that would always volunteer to go fetch it. That was part of my walking and I would be out the door and -- and I would go -- I mean it's not like Boston today. I mean this was Atlantic Avenue with all the -- you know, the old wharfs and everything, rat infested and then all these little, you know, marine stores, one after the other all along Atlantic Avenue. Fun.

1 be picked up and brought in, you know, to hasten, hey, I -- I would always volunteer to go. I love to walk. Oh, I used to run all over.
Q. How were you treated by the civilian population?
A. Well, very good. You know, like I said, we had some civilian girls working in our office that $I$ became very friendly with. And like I -- I said, when the war was over I went back to Boston to attend their weddings in South -- South Boston, you know. And so we became good friends. And then $I$ became good friends with girls that I worked with, you know. And -- and -- and girls that $I$ was in boot camp with I'll never forget, you know. Oh yeah.
Q. So have you stayed in contact with a lot of them over the years?
A. Oh yeah. Yeah. Nita from the Bronx, you know, $I$ went to her house in the Bronx and had a -- you know, a beautiful Jewish meal. Her mother cooked me gefilte fish I'd never had, you know.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. Oh yeah, and her -- her
grandfather was at the table with the Skull cap on and -- and you know, and presided at the table, you know. Oh yeah, so -- and then in -- in Brooklyn I went to -- with my Italian girlfriends. You know, like I said, Millie -- Millie Bonarico, you know, oh yeah, and you know, and like I say, she came to my house for her honeymoon, brought her husband, Tiny, Tiny Capello. I still remember all the names. And then $I$ went to reunions. I went to a couple of reunions, you know, Washington D.C. at that big hotel there, the biggest hotel, but I can't -- oh, but it was great, you know, and so this was a SPAR reunion --
Q. Uh-huh.
A. -- in Washington D.C. And then I went to another SPAR reunion at the Commodore Hotel in New York City and at that one I brought my husband with me. I mean he has been discharged from the Marine Corps and he was also in the Marine Corps Reserves and he almost went to Korean War in 1950. Oh, he had to go down to Albany. We were married two years. We were married in 1948 and then in 1950, you know, the Korean War is on. There's another war. And he was in the Marine

Corps Reserves. Hey, they were calling out the reserves for that war. He was in it. So he got his papers to go down to Albany for the physical. And the same day that -- I mean I labored all day Labor Day and this was the next day on a Tuesday and my daughter was born that morning at seven-thirty at the old Veterans Hospital in North Troy. They used to call it Lansingburg. Well, anyhow, and he had to be down to Albany for his physical at eight o'clock.

So here he comes up, oh,
Antionette, we have a beautiful daughter. We'll name her Stella after my mother. I have to be in Albany by eight o'clock for my physical for the Marine Corps Reserves, I'll see you as soon as I get out of there and I'll come back. Off he went. That -- that was it. Off he went. Oh, and it took him all day -- all day, believe it or not, to get rejected on his physical because he had had a knee operation in the spring. Now, when he had that knee operation for a split cartilage, oh, I thought it was terrible. Here I am pregnant for our first child and I didn't know how to drive. We didn't even have a car. And I used to go visit him every
day at the Samaritan Hospital. You know, in those days they kept you in like two, three weeks for Pete's sakes, you know. It's not like today, zoom, zoom. Most everything is -- is not even in the hospital. It's out -- out -- out in the doctor's office.

Well, anyhow, but it -- it turned out to be a blessing in disguise as far as $I$ was concerned because that knee operation was the only thing that rejected him on the -- on the physical to go away in the Korean War. Now there's another war, you know, and that was -- you know, the Vietnam War and the Gulf War and $O$ my god you know? I don't know if the wars will ever end. When -when is mankind going to learn that nobody wins the war? We're all losers. It's terrible. Oh God. How I pray.
Q. How do you think your time in the Coast Guard changed or had effect on your life?
A. Well, I -- I certainly learned to get along so well with so many different ethnic groups and I got to learn my prayers in English. I didn't even know them in English. When $I$ went to confession down in Florida at the Catholic church
there and I told the priest, I said, you know, I don't know my Act of Contrition in English. He said oh, that's all right, just say it in whatever language you learned it in. So $I$ said my Act of Contrition in French. And I got out some emotion. Yes. So -- so I -- I did get to learn about so many wonderful people, you know, and of course just the traveling, you know, I mean Palm Beach. Oh, when I go back to Palm Beach and I do go back just to look it over, you know, and I -- I go looking at the old s.S. Biltmore. That's what we called it, you know, the SPAR training ship, Biltmore. Well, they've made apartments out of it and it's high class. Oh my God, you know, yeah, so it's still there. And a Sun and Surf Club where we used to go swimming, I mean it's -- you know, I mean Palm Beach is Palm Beach. It's high class living down there I'll tell you.

And -- and then Boston. Well,
out of my ten children, one of my daughters is there in Boston. So I go quite often to visit her. And I -- and I care that she has seven sons now.
Q. Uh-huh.
A. She married one of those nice

Italian boys that used to live on Hanover Street, you know, where $I$ used to walk down every morning on my way to Constitution Wharf. And I'm sure he must have been in a baby carriage and I must have rubbed his head and marked him for my daughter when we end of my walk.

And so she married him. She went -- she went to Boston to study architecture. Well, when she met Paul the architecture went out the window. She got married and they raised seven boys. She has restaurants in Troy -- in Troy -- in Boston and The Daily Catch, there's a free commercial, and -- and she lives in -- in -- across the river, Charles. I got to call it the River Charles, not plain old Charles River, it's the River Charles. And -- and I used to see the boys from Harvard and shells you know, it's a new wing down and all that stuff. And it was very nice. I got to see all that, you know, and so where my mother -- my mother -- my daughter, Maria, lives and she lives in the Cambridge, across the River Charles in Cambridge right between M.I.T. and Harvard. And so when I go visit her I take in all the museums -- all the museums. There's museums
galore in Boston. And believe it or not, during the war they were all locked up and moth balled just like the Old S.S. Constitution, Old Ironsides. It was -- it was right there pulled in at Constitution Wharf and I used to see it every day before I'd go up to the second floor to the supply office. It was there and I could never go into it because it was -- everything was moth balled during the war. That's how it was during the war. Everything was locked up. So -- okay. Now we're in a different kind of war.
Q. Okay. And could you show us a
little --?
A. The bombing.
Q. Could you tell us when and where
they are at? Could you hold it up?
A. This -- this -- this was taken
in -- in Boston. See, I've got my chevron shirt.
I'm storekeeper first -- third class here. I was third -- third class storekeeper. And -- and believe it or not, I took all the correspondence courses and I did get to storekeeper second class and so that's -- you know, storekeepers were cross chains and not to be confused with the cross quills
which is a yeoman and -- and second class you get two chevrons. And anyhow, I took another correspondence course and of course then the war was over, so I never even bothered to sew on my third chevron.
Q. Okay. Thank you. You had some others where you were -- they were taken at the Coast Guard Academy?
A. Oh yes.
Q. You want to hold those up?
A. My God, I had never been to the Coast Guard Academy because, you know, I'm -- I was never an officer, but anyhow, my daughter, Cecelia, who's my second oldest daughter, she took me there and we went down and so here's -- here's pictures from -- there's the poster that got me in the Coast Guard and there's me eighty years old seeing -- in the museum at the Coast Guard Academy, the new one in Connecticut. And it was beautiful. If you get a chance go on down to New London and you can visit the museum. It's beautiful. And I did bring back all kind of memories for me, yes, and so the Coast Guard SPAR's and that SPAR's, S-P-A-R, of course it was a nautical term because you know, you were on a
ship, but it stands for Semper Paratus, Always Ready. Did you know that? Semper Paratus like Semper Fidelis is for the Marine Corps. That was my husband's outfit.

Okay. So too bad we still have wars. That's how I feel. And anyhow, my husband passed away and so here -- here's where he's buried up at Saratoga and that's my spot right next to him. And it's there waiting for me. I thought sure $I$ would go before him. I'm still hanging around. He's gone two years already. He died the day after Valentine's Day two years ago. So we never know when we're going to die. So when you got to go there's my spot ready and waiting for me. See, this is my jacket I put over him.

MR. RUSSERT: Okay. Well, thank you very much.
(The interview concluded) pages 1 through 33 inclusive.


This is a transcription of the audio provided to us. It is completed to the best of our skill and ability. The transcript consists of

| A | barracks 19:18 | 21:1,4 24:13,15,19 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| ability 34:3 | basement 18:23 | 25:10,11 29:19,21 30:8 |
| Academy 3:10 32:8,12 | bathing 11:22 | 30:12 31:1,18 |
| 32:18 | batten 12:5 | Boston's 18:9 |
| $\boldsymbol{A c t} 29: 2,4$ | beach 11:4,7,10,11,21 | bothered 32:4 |
| active $14: 12$ | 13:12 29:9,9,17,17 | bought 20:2 |
| afford 2:17 | Beacon 14:16 | boys $4: 1,1830: 1,11,16$ |
| ago 15:14 33:12 | Bear 6:5,5,20 7:9 8:5 | Breakers 11:12,13 |
| Albany 2:12 5:18 6:2 8:4 | beautiful $2: 149: 13$ | brick 22:17 |
| 9:10,12 10:18,18 26:21 | 10:19 11:11 25:20 | bring 32:21 |
| 27:3,9,14 | 27:12 32:19,21 | bringing 13:6 |
| Antionette 27:12 | bed 14:21 15:22 | Broad 10:22 |
| anxious 9:1 | bedroom 23:13 | Broadway 9:12,14 |
| anybody 8:19 | believe 2:15 7:2 12:7 | Bronx 25:19,19 |
| apartment 14:17 | 23:20 24:12 27:18 31:1 | Brookline 14:16,17 |
| apartments 22:21 29:13 | 31:21 | Brooklyn 23:10,19 26:3 |
| applied 6:11 | belly 11:19 | brought $25: 126: 7,17$ |
| approximately $2: 4$ | Bernards 3:11 | building 9:13 14:17 |
| April 1:4 2:4 | best 34:2 | 18:18 |
| aptitude 13:8 | big 7:16 $21: 422: 19,20$ | built 22:17 24:6 |
| architecture 30:8,9 | 26:11 | buried 33:7 |
| Army 19:13 | biggest 26:11 | bus 6:1 9:24 10:17,17 |
| asked 7:22 | bilingual 3:2 | $11: 9$ |
| Associated 34:8 | Bill 5:24 6:2 7:3 | C |
| Atlantic 5:1 11:24 12:12 | billeted 14:16 |  |
| 24:15,20,23 | Biltmore 11:14 29:11,13 | call 27:8 30:14 |
| attend 16:19 25:10 | birth 2:8,8,11 <br> bit $12 \cdot 14$ | called 5:17 6:10,14 22:5 |
| Atwater 3:17 | bit 12:14 <br> blessing | $\begin{gathered} \text { called 5:17 6:10,14 } \\ 22: 723: 129: 12 \end{gathered}$ |
| 20,23 | blue 7:14 11:22 | calling 27:1 |
| Axis's 21:21 | boarded 11:3 | Cambridge 30:21,22 |
| a.m 2:5 | bombed 3:14,20 | camera 9:21 |
|  | bombing $31: 14$ | camp 11:1,16,19 25:14 |
| B | bombs 4:22 | Canadian 3:3 |
| aby | Bonarico 26:5 | $\boldsymbol{\operatorname { c a p }} 26: 1$ |
| back 9:24 13:1 16:19 | boot 10:24 11:16,19 | Capello 26:8 |
| 19:11,24 25:9 27:16 | 25:14 | car 23:16,17,18,21 27:24 |
| 29:9,10 32:21 | born 2:21 20:3 27:6 | care 22:16 29:22 |
| bad 8:1 33:5 | Boston 14:7,9,14 15:16 | cargo 11:18 |
| balled 31:2,8 | 15:23 16:15,16,19,20 | carriage 30:4 |
| bank 10:19 | 18:12,15 19:2 20:1 | cartilage 27:21 <br> Catch 30:12 |

Catholic 3:8 28:24
Cecelia 32:13
celebrating 21:5
celebration 20:24
Central 10:21
certainly 28:20
chains 31:24
chance $32: 20$
changed 28:19
Charles 30:14,15,15,16
30:22
check 15:18
chevron 31:18 32:5
chevrons 32:2
child 27:23
children 22:13 29:20
choo-chooed 11:4
chow 15:9
church 28:24
Churchill 21:19
cities 21:4
city 2:11 19:2 21:4 23:20
23:23 26:17
civilian 16:14 19:4,20
20:7 25:5,7
civvies 20:15
Clark 2:5
class 4:18 29:14,17 31:19
31:20,22 32:1
cleaned 20:8
climb 11:18 16:5
close 23:6
closet 19:24
closets 20:5
clothes 19:5,20,23 20:6,7
Club 29:15
Coast 7:17,19 8:6 9:5,19
13:18 14:9,11,18,23
16:8 17:15 19:13 28:19
32:8,12,16,18,22
Cohoes 2:10,14,18 3:7,9

4:7 6:1 12:12,23 14:22 20:3 22:15 23:12
coincidence 15:16
college 5:18,19,22
come 2:17,18 15:18 20:7 27:16
comes 15:9 27:11
coming 15:6
commercial 30:13
Commodore 26:16
Commons 18:12
completed 34:2
concerned 28:9
concluded 33:18
confession 28:24
confluence 2:13
confused 31:24
Connecticut 32:19
consists 34:3
Constitution 14:8 16:4
30:3 31:3,5
contact 25:16
Contrition 29:2,5
cooked 25:21
corner 9:13,14
Corps 4:4 19:14 26:19
26:20 27:1,15 33:3
correspondence $31: 21$ 32:3
Corsair 6:16
couch 20:14
couple 4:21 16:18 26:10
course 5:8,22 7:7 11:12
11:23 13:24 18:11 22:3
29:8 32:3,3,23
courses 31:22
cousins 20:9
cow 18:14
cows $18: 8,10,13$
crawl 11:18
cross 31:23,24
curls 10:5
curly 18:16
cut 10:5
cutters 16:9

## D

Daily 30:12
date 2:8 9:9
daughter 27:6,12 30:5
30:20 32:13,14
daughters 29:20
day $3: 4,5,16,226: 1$
15:17 20:8,9 27:4,4,5,5 27:18,18 28:1 31:5 33:12,12
days 18:21 23:23 28:2
dead 4:21
dear 18:21
decided 7:20 13:8
deck 11:18
declared 22:24
Delano 3:18
dentist 15:12
departing 9:2
desk 14:23 15:19 16:7,24
die $33: 13$
died 21:12,17 33:11
different 28:21 31:11
discharged 26:18
disguise 28:8
dishing 15:8
District 16:13
division 6:10,12,13,20
doctor's 28:5
doing 4:23
dollar 9:2
dollars 8:17
door 20:10 24:18
Dress 13:5
dressed 15:22
drive 27:23
drove $23: 16,19$

| duration 20:19 | find 24:3,4 | girls 3:12 10:23,24 16:14 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| duties 24:10 | finished 7:9 | 16:15,16 23:9 25:7,12 |
| duty 12:14,17 14:7,12 | first 5:7 10:4 11:8,23 | 25:13 |
| 15:5 | 12:8 16:13 17:14,20 | give 2:7 8:11 13:7 |
| D.C 26:10,15 | 27:22 31:19 | given 8:16 |
| E | fish 25:21 | glory 2:16 |
| education 2:23 3:2 |  | 2:17 5:11, |
| effect 28:19 | 17:20 31:6 | 5:23 6:1 7:11,21 8:1,6 |
|  | Florida 11:9 15:15 28:24 | 9:1 11:20,21 14:9,10 |
|  | following 3:16 | 15:9,23 16:19 17:10,19 |
| eight 15:13 22:21 27:10 | forfeited 9:1 | 18:19,23 24:17,18 25:2 |
| 27:14 | forget 3:15,22 9:18 | 26:21 27:3,24 28:11 |
| eighteen 7:8 | 25:14 | 29:9,10,11,16,21 30:23 |
| eighty 32:17 | forms 13:17 | 31:6,7 32:20 33:10,14 |
| emotion 29:5 | found 5:12 | god 5:12 12:6 20:14,22 |
| empty 20:5 | four 5:20 | 21:1,13,18,19 22:4 23:8 |
| encyclopedia 4:15 | France 22:10 | 28:13,16 29:14 32:11 |
| English 3:5 28:22,23 | Frances 9:20 | going 5:20,23 8:16,20 |
| 9:2 | Franklin 3:18 | 12:6 19:16 28:15 33: |
| enlisted 9:4 17:7 | free 23:21 30:12 | $\operatorname{good} 4: 12,13$ 7:14 12:1 |
| enter 9:3,5 | French 3:3,3,5,11 29:5 | 13:8 14:6 21:14 23:9 |
| entering 2:24 | friendly $25: 8$ | 25:6,11,12 |
| entrance 5:22 | friends 23:6,9,10 25:11 | graduated 3:13 7:8 |
| era 24:5 | 25:12 | 10:11 13:12 |
| ethnic 28:21 | full $2: 819: 14,17$ | graduation 4:20 |
| everybody 18:22 22:14 | fun 18:3 24:23 | Grand 10:21 |
| excuse 2:4 10:7 17:19 | funny 14:21 18:16 | grandfather 26 |
| extra 8.15 18.1 | furniture 24:4 | grandpa 22:16 |
| extra 8:15 18:1 | F.D.R 3:18 | great 11:17 12:14 22:7,7 |
| F | G | 23:1,10 26:12 |
| factory | galore 31:1 | Gregg 6:3 grew 20:3 22:13 |
|  | gang 10:23 | oups 28:2 |
| father 3:16 15:12 20:2 | garage 18:22 22:19,20 | growing 3:19 |
| fed $11: 2$ | gefilte 25:21 | grub 15:9 |
| feel 21:11 33:6 | generation 5:8 | guard 7:17,19 8:7 9:6,19 |
| fetch 24:17 | geography 4:13,1 | 12:16,18 13:18 14:9,11 |
| Fidelis 33:3 | German 4:21 | 14:18,23 16:8 17:15 |
| fighter 6:16,18 |  | 19:13 28:19 32:8,12,17 |
| fillings 15:13 | girl 7:16 12:24 14:22 | 32:18,23 |
| finally 21:21 | girlfriends 26.4 | Gulf 28:13 |


| guy 17:3 <br> gym 18:23 <br> gymnasiums 18:22 <br> G.I 11:22 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 22:15,17 23:12 25:19 } \\ & \text { 26:7 } \\ & \text { houses 16:9 } \end{aligned}$ | Jovet 3:11 <br> Judith 34:7 <br> June 4:20 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | K |
| H | hundred 8:17 9:2 | Kent 3:17 |
| hair 9:22,23 10:5 | Hurrah 7:10 | kept 18:24 28:2 |
| haircut 10:2,4 | hurricane 12:3,4,8,11 | kid 5:2 |
| half 3:4,5 | Hurricanes 12:12 | Kieve 3:9 |
| handy 6:4 | husband 4:2 5:1 23:17 | killed 4:22 |
| hanging 33:10 | 26:7,18 33:6 | kind 6:6,14 18:16,16 |
| Hanover 16:2,3 30: | husband's 33:4 | 31:11 32:22 |
| happen 12:6 18:2 |  | knee 27:19,21 28:9 |
| Harbor 3:15,21 4:10,17 | I | knew 3:19 4:6,178 |
| hard 24:3,3 | II 19:11 22:6,24 | 14:24 17:18 20:19 |
| harness 6:14 | imagine 19:10 | know 2:12 3:12,23 4:5 |
| Harvard 30:17,23 | impression 23:5 | 4:10,13,15,18,20 5:3,6 |
| hasten 25:1 | inclusive 34:4 | 5:8,9 6:4,8 7:3,14,18,18 |
| hatches 12:5 | infested 24:21 | 8:24 9:23 10:5,12 |
| head 17:3 30:5 | insisted 5:23 | 11:21 12:15,19,22 13:2 |
| heard 5:10 | interrupted 3:19 | 13:17,18,23 14:5,11,12 |
| Helen 10:16 | interview 2:2 33:18 | 14:18,19,23 15:13,21 |
| hey 11:17 15:4 17:14,18 | Interviewers 2:5 | 16:3,11,16 17:3,4,10 |
| 18:2,20 24:2,16 25:2 | Int'134:8 | 18:1,9,14,23,24 19:15 |
| 27:1 | invitations 16:18 | 20:9,11,16,19,21 21:1,3 |
| high 3:8,9 4:1 7:8 10:11 | involved 6:9 | 21:6,13,13,15,15,16,17 |
| 29:14,17 | Irish 3:10,12 16:15,16 | 21:18,18,21,21,23 22:1 |
| hill 20:2 22:9 | Ironsides 31:3 | 22:4,11,14,16,19,21,22 |
| HISTORY 1:2 | Italian 5:8 23:9 26:4 | 22:24 23:3,9,14,24 24:4 |
| hold 31:16 32:10 | 30:1 | 24:5,7,20,22 25:1,6,11 |
| hole 18:13 | Italy 5:7 16:3 | 25:13, 15,19,20,22 26:2 |
| home 7:22 9:24 10:1 | - J | 26:3,4,5,6,10,12,23 |
| honeymoon 23:12,13,22 | jacket 33:15 | 27:23 28:1,3,12,12,13 28:14,23 29:1,2,7,8,10 |
| 26:7 | Japanese 3:14 | 29:12,14,16 30:2,17,19 |
| honeymoons 23:14 | Jewish 25:20 | 31:23 32:12,24 33:2,13 |
| horseshoe 6:15 | jitterbug 18:19 | knows 20:21 |
| hospital 27:7 28:1,5 | jitterbugging 18:21,24 | Korean 26:20,23 28:11 |
| hotel 11:14 23:23 26:11 | job 6:5,11,11 | K.P 12:14 15:5,8 |
| 26:11,16 | Johns 3:4 <br> join 5:13 |  |
| hours 11:5,6 <br> house 3:4 9:20 20:2,3 | join 5:13 <br> joined 4:1,19 | $\frac{\text { Labor 27:5 }}{}$ |

labored 27:4
Lake 22:15
language 29:4
Lansingburg 27:8
lasted 20:20
learn 12:19 13:15 28:15 28:22 29:7
learned 11:17 13:16
28:20 29:4
leaving 8:6
left 9:20 12:10 19:23 23:5
leisure 19:16
length $16: 2$
let's 9:9
life 14:13 28:19
light 16:9
line 14:1 15:9
little 16:3 18:1 24:22 31:13
live $24: 3$ 30:1
lived $4: 2$ 20:10 22:12,14
lives $30: 13,20,21$
living 29:18
locked 31:2,10
LOMBARDO 1:2
London 32:20
long 9:22,23 10:4,5 16:2 20:16,20,22
look 15:10 17:19 29:10
looked 7:14
looking 29:11
losers 28:16
lost 12:10
lot 20:24 25:17
love 25:2
loved 4:14 11:17 13:6 19:3

## M

making 15:19
male 17:2,4
mankind 28:15
Manning 6:5,5,20 7:10
8:6
maps $4: 14,15,16$
march 2:3 12:19
Marcus 16:1
Maria 30:20
MARIE 1:2
marine 4:4,19 19:13
24:22 26:19,19,24
27:15 33:3
marked 30:5
married 23:18 26:22,22
29:24 30:7,10
Massachusetts 14:8
meal 25:20
mean 4:24 8:11 13:17
15:12 21:4,18,19,24
22:8 23:14 24:19,19
26:18 27:4 29:8,16,17
meet $3: 12$
Melleri's 5:24 6:2
melt 2:16
memories $32: 22$
men 16:21 17:7
Menands 7:15
mention 17:23
merchant 4:19
Merelli's 7:3
met 7:12 10:22 30:9
Mike 2:6
miles 2:11
military 2:2,24 5:11
19:12
Millie 26:5,5
miracle 22:10
Mohawk 2:13
Monica 15:11
Monique 15:10, 11, 11, 11
Montgomery 7:15
month 8:13,15 10:8
morning 13:5 15:21 27:6
30:2
moth 31:2,8
mother 5:21 7:23 10:16
20:1 25:21 27:13 30:20
30:20
moved 20:4
movie 17:14
moving 20:8,9
museum 2:2 32:18,21
museums 30:24,24,24
M.I.T 30:22

## N

name 2:8 27:13
names 17:24 26:9
narrow 18:17
nautical 32:24
Naval 16:13
navigation 6:10,12,13,20
navy 6:19 7:13,14 11:22
19:13
Nazi's 21:21
need 19:20
needed $24: 13$
never 3:15,22,24 4:9
9:18 12:12 22:1,6
25:14,21 31:7 32:4,11
32:13 33:13
new 2:2,3,10 5:17 11:7
15:6,7 21:3 23:17,20,22
23:23 26:17 30:17
32:18,20
newspaper 21:2
Niagara 2:18
nice 3:12 7:6,20 8:23
29:24 30:18
night 14:20,21 $15: 18$
18:19
nine 2:11 9:20 14:20,21
nineteen 7:9
Nita 25:18

| normal 5:17 <br> north 2:11 4:24,24 27:7 <br> nothing's 12:5 <br> number 4:23 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { pair } 10: 1 \\ & \text { palm } 11: 4,7,10,1112: 9 \\ & 13: 1129: 8,9,17,17 \end{aligned}$ <br> papers 6:7 27:3 | plane 6:16,18 <br> please 2:9 <br> polio 21:16 <br> population 25:5 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 0 | pa | post 9:11 |
| O28:13 | Paratus 33:1,2 | posters 7:13 |
| 0ath 9:19 | parish 3:10,11 | post-war 24:5 |
| obese 20:13 | park 18:11 | potatoes 20:14 |
| Ocean 11:24 12:13 | parochial 3:5 | pray 28:17 |
| office 6:12,23,24 7:3,5,5 | part 14:21 24:17 | prayers 28:22 |
| 9:11 16:6,12,24 17:4,11 | party 8:12 | pregnant 27:22 |
| 17:13 24:13 25:8 28:6 | passed 33:7 | present 8:16 |
| 31:7 | paths 18:14 | presided 26:2 |
| officer 17:2,3 32:13 | patriotic 8:22 |  |
| oh 4:12 5:11 7:13 8:18 | patriotism 3:24 | priest 29:1 |
| 10:9 11:20 12:5,6 13:5 | Paul 22:12,18 30:9 | prior 2:23 |
| 15:2,10,19 17:22 18:21 | paved 18:9,14 | probably 22:1 |
| 20:14 21:1,4,10,13 22:8 | pay 17:13 | program 3:20 |
| 22:20 23:8,15 24:2 | payday 17:17 | provided 34:2 |
| 25:3,15,18,24 26:3,6,12 | Pearl 3:15,20 4:10,17 | public 18:11 |
| 26:21 27:11,17,21 | Pennsylvania 11:3,7 | pull 12:16 |
| 28:16 29:3,9,14 32:9 | people 4:6 21:2,5 29:7 | pulled 31:4 |
| okay 2:19 10:10 14:15 | perform 24:10 | purchased 24:14 |
| 17:14 18:18 19:22 | perfume 14:19 | put 15:13 18:17 33:15 |
| 31:10,12 32:6 33:5,16 | permanent 14:7 |  |
| old 3:17 7:10 14:10 | person 19:12 23:4 | Q |
| 15:13 24:20 27:7 29:11 | persons 23:4 | Quarters 11:10 |
| 30:15 31:3,3 32:17 | Pete's 28:3 | quills 31:24 |
| older 9:21 | phonetic 3:6 7:3 | quit 4:1,3,19 |
| oldest 32:14 | photo 21:2 | quite 8:12 16:11 29:21 |
| operation 27:20,21 28:9 | physical 27:3,10,14,19 | R |
| $\text { order } 13: 17,22$ | 28:10 | radio 3:17,17 |
| orders 10:14 | picked 25:1 | railroad 10:18 |
| outfit 33:4 | picture 9:22 10:3 <br> pictures 21.332 .15 | rain 2:16 |
| outside 15:23 | pictures 21:3 32:15 pieces 10:16 | raised 30:10 |
| o'clock 14:20 27:10,14 | place 2:8,10 6:6 7:6 8:23 | rat 24:21 |
| P | 12:7 18:8 21:3 24:3,7 | 33:2 |
| Pacific 4:24 5:2 pages 34:4 | places 21:23 <br> plain 11:10 30:15 | real 4:23 <br> really $8: 23 \quad 12: 11 \quad 14: 2$ |

$$
11: 7,8,15 \quad 14: 7,9,11
$$

stationed 11:13 15:16
20:1
stayed 8:15 25:16
Stella 27:13
sticks 12:10
store 7:16
storekeeper 13:9,9,11,12
13:15 14:7 31:19,20,22
storekeepers 31:23
stores 24:22
street 9:11,14 10:22
14:16 16:2,4 22:15,19
30:1
streets 18:9,15 21:5
strictly $16: 22$
study 30:8
stuff 11:18 12:20 13:23
21:24 30:18
suits 11:22
Sun 29:15
supper 11:3
supply 16:6 17:4,11
24:13,14 31:6
suppose 19:18
sure 2:12 15:19 19:11
30:3 33:10
Surf 29:15
sweated 22:17
swimming 11:21 29:16
swore 9:18
sworn 8:2 9:24
S-P-A-R 32:23
S.S 29:11 31:3

## T

T 15:23,24
table 26:1,2
take 6:1 15:23 30:23
taken 11:15 31:17 32:7
tall 12:23,23
taller 13:1
taste 11:23 12:1,8
tasted 11:24
teacher 5:16
Teachers 5:18
team 15:6
tee 19:19
tell 3:20 7:17,19 12:9
15:4 18:24 29:18 31:15
temporary 18:18 24:6,8
$\operatorname{ten} 20: 2029: 20$
ten-thirty $2: 5$
term 32:24
terrible 21:23,23,24
27:22 28:16
test 13:8
thank 20:22 32:6 33:16
thin 20:11
thing 28:10
things 5:16 6:22 12:11
think 8:17 21:24 28:18
third $31: 19,20,2032: 5$
thought 5:16,18 12:22 12:23 22:6 27:21 33:9
three 15:6,8,14 28:2
thrilled 10:15
till 5:21 21:16
time 4:5,20 10:4 28:18
times 14:10
Tiny 26:8,8
today 10:19 18:21 19:10 20:14 23:14 24:19 28:3
togethers 21:20
told 29:1
$\boldsymbol{t o p} 12: 10$
train 10:20 11:4,5
training 7:3 11:15 13:10 29:12
transcript $34: 3$
transcription 34:1
transportation 15:24
traveling 29:8
treated 25:4
tree 12:9
trenches 22:9
triggers 3:23
$\operatorname{trip} 11: 8$
Troy 4:3 24:6,8 27:8
30:11,11
truth 7:18
Tuesday 27:5
turned 28:7
twelve 20:21
twenty $5: 14,217: 10,10$ 7:24
twenty-five 11:5,6
twenty-one 5:13
two 10:13 12:3 23:9,22
26:22 28:2 32:2 33:11
33:12
type 16:10
typewriter 16:7
typing 6:3 13:24 14:3,5

## U

Uh-huh 4:8 5:4 6:17
8:21 9:16 12:21 13:3
13:19 14:4 15:3 17:1,5
17:12,21 20:12 24:1
25:23 26:14 29:23
Uncle 22:12,12,18,18 uncles 22:3
uniform 19:8,14,17
Union 10:19
unusual 24:10
upset 8:5,9
use $14: 2,3,5$
U.S.O 18:4,6,7,18

## V

Valentine's 33:12
veterans 24:7 27:7
Vietnam 28:13
Vifth 3:6

Page 43

| visit 27:24 29:21 30:23 | 22:4,8 23:2,20 24:8 | 25:24 26:3,6 29:14 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 32:20 | 25:9,19 26:4,9,9,16,20 | year 3:14 7:9 8:12,13,20 |
| volunteer 24:16 25:2 | 27:16,17 28:23 30:8,8,9 | 10:8 |
| volunteered 20:18,18 | 32:15 | years 5:20 9:21 10:13 |
| Votra 3:9 | weren't 8:9 11:13 | 15:14 20:21 25:17 |
|  | West 11:4 | 26:22 32:17 33:11,12 |
| W | We'll 27:12 | yeoman $32: 1$ |
| wait 5:12,15,21 10:14 | we're 28:16 31:10 33:13 | York 2:2,3,10 5:17 11:7 |
| waiting 2:20 10:1 33:9 | we've 2:14 3:24 | 21:3 23:20,22,23 26:17 |
| 33:14 | Wharf 14:8 16:4 30:3 | younger 11:21 |
| walk 16:1 19:1,2,3,3 | 31:5 | Z |
| 25:3 30:2,6 | wharfs 24:21 | Z |
| walking 19:1 24:17 | Whoa 11:11 | zoom 28:3,4 |
| walls 2:20 | willing 7:23 | 1 |
|  | window 30:10 | 134:4 |
| want 5:19 17:23 32:10 | wing $30: 17$ | 14th 10:10,10 |
| wanted 5:15 8:1 16:9 <br> war $5 \cdot 206.89$ | wins 28:15 | 151:4 |
| war 5:20 6:8,9 16:17 | Winston 21:19 |  |
| 19:9,10,11 20:16,18,19 | wiring 6:15 | $\begin{aligned} & \text { 15th } 2: 3,4 \\ & \mathbf{1 5 0 1} 14: 16 \end{aligned}$ |
| 20:20,23 22:5,5,6,7,7,8 | women 5:11,13 16:22,23 |  |
| 23:1,2 24:2,4 25:9 | wonderful $29: 7$ |  |
| 26:20,23,24 27:2 28:11 | wooly-wooly 11:22 | 1944 10:10 <br> $194823 \cdot 1826 \cdot 22$ |
| $28: 12,13,13,1631: 2,9,9$ | wore 9:23 | $1948 \text { 23:18 26:22 }$ $195026 \cdot 2123$ |
| 31:11 32:3 | work 7:6 8:23 14:14 | 1950 26:21,23 |
| Wards 7:15 | 16:21 19:16 | 2 |
| warning 12:4,9 | worked 8:19 10:22 16:7 | $20051: 42: 4$ |
| wars 22:8 28:14 33:6 | 16:12 25:13 | 23rd 2:22 |
| Washington 26:10,15 | working 6:13 17:8 25:7 |  |
| wasn't 8:12 22:5 | World 19:11 22:4,5,6,24 | 3 |
| water 18:13 | 23:2 | $3334: 4$ |
| watering $18: 8$ | wouldn't 2:15 12:7 | 4 |
| way 10:22 16:4 30:3 | X | 42 10:11 |
| Wayne 2:5 | X'd 5:5 | 44 10:12 |
| wear 19:4,7 |  | 46 10:13 |
| wedding $23: 11,15$ | $\frac{Y}{\text { yeah 4:12,17 7:13 8:14 }}$ |  |
| weddings $16: 19,2025: 10$ | yeah 4:12,17 7:13 8:14 $10 \cdot 9,1111 \cdot 16,2013 \cdot 20$ |  |
| weeks 11:16 12:3 13:10 | 10:9,11 11:16,20 13:20 |  |
| 15:6,8,15 28:2 | 13:23 14:6,11,15 15:2 |  |
| went $3: 84: 3,95: 26: 2,10$ | 15:17,19,20 17:22 |  |
| 6:15 7:22 9:9,18 10:20 | 20:15 21:6,10 22:22 |  |
| 11:3 14:24 15:7 21:23 | 23:13 24:5 25:15,18,18 |  |

