

## U. S. S. NORTH CAROLINA BATTLESHIP COLLECTION

## Jerry S. Gonzales Interview

June 25, 1975

I am Jerry S. Gonzales and I am from Houston, Texas. I joined the Navy on April 18, 1942, right after Pearl Harbor. As soon as my brother got out of the hospital, I joined it right away. I went to boot camp in San Diego, California. From there I was assigned and commissioned to the minesweeper U. S. S. Conflict at Portland, Oregon. I was a plank owner at the time on that. We had a shake down cruise and immediately went over and took the first floating dry dock to the Solomon Islands, the ARD-5. Then we got the fleet assigned to the New Hebrides Islands just south of the Guadalcanal. We got off that ship because men were critical in the South Pacific, and they would try to get as many men as they could off every ship. I got off the minesweeper Conflict and spent six months in the New Hebrides Islands. When you are young you want to see action. So I asked <sup>for</sup> a battleship, and after six months in the New Hebrides I went to New Caledonia and I was assigned to the battleship North Carolina which was the newest. I was a right proud man when they told me that.

[Do you remember which day you were assigned?]

It was approximately July. I was assigned around June of 1943, but at the time I went to New Caledonia she was out. In the meantime I heard she was torpedoed and was in Pearl Harbor. So I waited approximately two months in New Caledonia, Rs 131 Receiving Ship. When the North Carolina came up alongside I was a proud man. Incidentally, when I got aboard the North Carolina, I went aboard with a new draft just in from the states. I was the only one that had a sun helmet, dress and khaki