

#24,010
U. S. S. NORTH CAROLINA BATTLESHIP COLLECTION

Joseph E. Iacono Interview

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My name is Joseph E. Iacono. I live presently at 329 Thornacroft Ave. in Staten Island, New York. I enlisted in the Navy in November 28, 1940. I was seventeen. I was on what they called a minority cruise or kiddy car cruise and I went up to Newport, Rhode Island, training station up there. From there I was assigned to the U.S.S. Camden which was a receiving ship for the North Carolina, somewhere about commissioning time which was April 9, '41. We went aboard somewhere around that time. I served from that time until September of '43; we were at Pearl Harbor at the time. At that time I was an apprentice seaman on one of the working parties. The Navy was new and I was in a deck force at the time. The food was good. Navy's good food, I don't care where you go. My battlestation at that time was in the magazine room of number three turret; and then again all you did, was as far as I was concerned, was take a bag of powder out of a canister and pass it into a hopper.

I must have been a stupid kid because I don't remember being afraid until the day after we were torpedoed. We had been in an air attack prior to that and the day after was the first time I remember the incident too. I was sent back aft. I worked in the machine shop at that time, and I was sent back to the starboard catapult to check out a crack that probably happened when we were torpedoed. I was straddling the catapult and in my mind the guy on the P.A. system was screaming "all hands stand clear of the starboard side." Well we were so well trained to go forward on the starboard and aft port. My battlestation was down in damage control on the third deck. Practically at the location where she was hit. Here I am running down the starboard side down the ladders and finally