

U. S. S. NORTH CAROLINA BATTLESHIP COLLECTION

Lester B. Tucker Interview

June 25, 1975

My name is Lester B. Tucker and I enlisted in the U.S. Navy on November the 9th, 1939. I went aboard the U.S.S. Memphis after a short tour of duty in Hawaii, as our neutrality patrol, blockading German and Italian ships out of Tampico, Mexico, during that phase of the so called Quiet War.

[Do you remember anything interesting about that?]

We blockaded all nine ships; none of them escaped.

[Out of Tampico?]

Out of Tampico, Mexico; German and Italian ships refueling the submarines plying on the trade between Aurbian South America and Great Britain. We did operate with a British cruiser Delhi in those days. Not suppose to but we did .

I was ordered to the North Carolina to put her in commission in 1941. However due to some prostatic treatment I reported to the Boston Naval Hospital and was delayed from the actual commissioning ceremonies, but my orders covering the period to the North Carolina was for commissioning. I rode the North Carolina until 1943, a little over two years about two and a half years.

[What was the date you went on again?]

It was in May, I can not remember the specific date, of 1941. She hadn't even gotten underway yet. I was on her first trial run.

[Do you remember what was going on on the ship when you first went aboard?]

Well, certainly we were outfitting her with her material and her supplies and so forth, and trying out all of the new equipments, and training