

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Robert Mitchler

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VR2-A-L-2011-028

Robert Mitchler, a navy chief petty officer and stenographer during World War II and the Korean War, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: June 29, 2011 Location: Mitchler home, rural Oswego, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston MA

Edited by: Rosie Camille and Rozanne Flatt, ALPL Volunteers

Total Pages: 97 Total Time: 3:04 + 2:33 / 3.07 + 2.55 hrs = 5.62 hrs

Session 1: Mitchler's early life through his service in the Navy during WW II

Session 2: Mitchler's marriage and service in the Navy during the Korean War

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on 8/5/2011.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Robert Mitchler, *Veterans Remember*, VR2-A-L-2011-028

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Robert (Bob) Mitchler was born on June 4th, 1920 in Aurora, Illinois. He grew up during the depression and World War II, with his Austrian immigrant father instilling in him values of hard work and being a friend to all. Mitchler graduated from high school in 1937, and worked at the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad as an office boy. Over the next several years he earned promotions and steadily moved up in the company, mastering the skills of a stenographer. In November 1941, after one year of college, he decided to enlist in the U.S. Navy, and following his training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, was assigned to a series of west coast postings. In 1944 he asked for combat duty, and was assigned to the USS Oxford (APA-189), a liberty ship used for personnel transport. His ship supported the landings at Lingayen Gulf in the Philippines, and at Okinawa. In 1945 he was reassigned to the USS Scoter (AM-381), a mine sweeper, which helped sweep Japanese coastal waters following the Japanese surrender.

Mitchler returned to the states in May, 1946, and to Aurora College, using G.I. Bill benefits. He also joined the Naval Reserves, and on June 16th, 1950 married Helen Drew. While on their honeymoon, he heard the news of the North Korean invasion of the south, which soon led to his return to active duty. Chief Petty Officer Mitchler spent the bulk of this tour as a writer for Admiral Allen E. Smith on the USS Dixie, (AD-14, destroyer tender), who commanded a multi-national organization blockading North Korea. In November of 1951 he was reassigned to work as a stenographer at the Panmunjom armistice talks. He was released from active duty in January of 1952 and returned to his new bride and to school. As a civilian, he went on to serve for many years in the Illinois state Senate, and championed many veteran causes.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Aurora, Illinois; navy petty officer - WW II; Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad; Athol, Idaho; USS Oxford (APA-189); USS Scoter (AM-381); USS Dixie (AD-14); actions at Lingayen Gulf, Philippines; naval actions during battle of Okinawa; mine sweeping off coast of Japan; Panmunjom armistice talks; Aurora College

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