



# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Jesse Murray Dowell, Jr.

Part of the Illinois Public Media – WILL AM-FM-TV Central Illinois  
World War II Stories project

Interview # VR2-V-D-2008-110

Jesse Murray Dowell, Jr., a United States Navy Air Corps veteran who served during World War II, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Illinois Public Media – WILL AM-FM-TV Central Illinois World War II Stories project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: 14 March 2008

Location: Illinois Public Media, Urbana, IL

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: H. F. Williamson, Illinois Public Media affiliate

Technical Support (cameraman, etc):

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview being  
processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 45 min/ 0.75 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on (   date   ).

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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# Abstract

Jesse Murray Dowell, Jr., *Veterans Remember*, VR2-V-D-2008-110

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Jesse Murray Dowell, Jr. was born on July 25, 1926 in Champaign, Illinois. He volunteered to join the United States Navy Air Corps and was ordered to report for duty on August 8, 1943. He started to receive his basic training at the Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Florida. He was introduced to a new radar bombing practice that allowed the military to bomb at night in absolute darkness. In the summer of 1945, Dowell trained at the Naval Air Station in Corpus Christi, Texas for a potential invasion on the southern end of the Japanese mainland.

As a bombardier, Dowell was responsible for aligning the bomb between the crosshairs for the intended target. He learned he would fly at 500 feet and shell all Japanese landmines and bunkers before invasion. Ultimately, Dowell was informed on August 1, 1945 that he would invade in approximately two weeks. However, the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan ended any possibility of invasion.

Eventually, Dowell was ordered to Great Lakes, Illinois for discharge. After a brief homecoming, he decommissioned ships on Whidbey Island, Washington. He was officially discharged in Washington and returned to Champaign, Illinois.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Champaign, Illinois; United States Navy Air Corps; Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Florida; Naval Air Station in Corpus Christi, Texas; Great Lakes, Illinois; Whidbey Island, Washington.

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