

Index to the Oral History of Rear Admiral Almon C. Wilson, Medical Corps, U.S. Navy (Retired)

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Eske, Captain Louis H., MC, USNR

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Gordon, Commander Charles Vance, Jr., MSC, USN

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Japanese Army

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In December 1944 a Japanese suicide plane inflicted heavy damage on the high-speed transport Liddle (APD-60), which was operating in the Philippines, 12-13

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Laird, Melvin R.

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Landis, Captain Cary E., USN

In the early 1970s was involved in the program to home-port U.S. Navy ships in Athens, Greece, 171

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Liddle, USS (APD-60)

High-speed amphibious transport that in early 1945 was repaired at San Francisco after being damaged by a kamikaze in the Philippines, 12-14; post-repair sea trials, 15-16; wartime deployment in 1945 to the Western Pacific, 17-25; the ship operated as part of Transport Division 103, 17-18; in April 1945 put Army troops ashore during an amphibious assault at Legaspi in the Philippines, 18-20; in 1945 conducted further amphibious operations in the Philippines and Borneo, 22-25; appendectomy on board for an Australian soldier, 25-26; postwar activities in the Western Pacific included the transportation of personnel, 26-31; difficulties in riding through typhoons, 28-31; visit to Tientsin, China, 31-32; return to the United States for inactivation and decommissioning in June 1946 at Green Cove Springs, Florida, 32-33

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Lowery, Rear Admiral Clinton H., MC, USN

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Mahin, Rear Admiral Harry Paul, MC, USN

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Role in the early 1970s in ensuring that the designs for new hospital facilities were satisfactory from a medical standpoint, 177-180

Mine Squadron Three

In late 1950 performed minesweeping operations on the east coast of Korea, 40; in late 1953 ships of the squadron patrolled off the coast of South Korea and conducted minesweeping exercises, 41-42, 44; ship crew members had a variety of medical problems, 44-45

Mine Warfare

In the period right after the end of World War II floating mines posed a hazard in the Yellow Sea, 26, 28, 31; the attack transport Colbert (APA-145) hit a floating mine, 30; U.S. minesweeping operations in 1950 on the east coast of Korea, 40; in late 1953 ships of Mine Squadron Three patrolled off the coast of South Korea and conducted minesweeping exercises, 41-42, 44

Minter, Vice Admiral Charles S., Jr., USN (USNA, 1937)

In the early 1970s, as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Logistics), reluctantly agreed to a large new naval hospital in New Orleans because of the political clout of Congressman F. Edward Hebert, 182-183

Moorer, Admiral Thomas H., USN (USNA, 1933)

From 1972 to 1974, while he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had Wilson as his personal physician, 189-195; 1973 trip to the Middle East, 190-191, made his trips in a specially configured KC-135 aircraft, 192-195; personality of, 193-194

Moxley, Dr. John

Around 1980, as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, pushed for the Navy to obtain hospital ships, 253-254

Murray, Captain Dermot A., MC, USN

After service as an anesthesiologist, in the early 1970s he was director of the planning division of the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, 175

Naval Activities, United Kingdom

In the early 1970s was involved in logistic support of U.S. Navy activities in the area, 155; work of the medical dispensary, 155; in the early 1970s U.S. Navy personnel attended a "Save the Children Ball" at Thurso, Scotland, 165; supply of medical care to service personnel and their dependents involved various clinics, 168-169; in 1971 members of the staff held a party in London to celebrate the supposed 100th anniversary of the U.S. Navy medical department, 172-173

Naval Facilities Engineering Command

Role in the early 1970s in planning and designing naval hospitals in various places, 176-180; in the mid-1970s and beyond was involved in the fleet hospital program to develop transportable health care facilities, 237, 239, 243

Naval Forces Europe, U.S.

In the early 1970s was a far-flung command, and Wilson visited many of the activities to get a sense of their activities, 153-160; staff included a number of officers who did not have promising careers ahead of them, 159-160; the staff wore civilian clothes in London to keep a low profile, 161

Naval Reserve

In World War II young men received both college education and naval training as part of the V-12 program, 2-10; top-notch reserve doctors served on active duty during the Korean War, 39-40

Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island

In the late 1960s Wilson was a rare exception as a Navy medical officer assigned to attend the war college, 139; one of the great side benefits of the school is making contacts that will be useful in future years, 142-143; contact with foreign students, 143-144; the curriculum in the late 1960s was useful but not as demanding as it became in the 1970s, 144-148, 150-151; discussion in the late 1960s at the Naval War College about U.S. nuclear strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, 145; visiting speakers were useful, 149-150; war games, 152; value of war college teaching when Wilson took a subsequent job in London, 154

Navy League

In the mid-1970s the local chapter in the Chicago area got involved with the Great Lakes Naval Training Center, 228-229

New Orleans, Louisiana

In the early 1970s the city was programmed to receive an unnecessarily large new naval hospital as the result of the political clout of Congressman F. Edward Hebert, 181-183

Norris, Rear Admiral Frank T., MC, USN

In the late 1950s headed the professional division in the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, 47; in the late 1960s corresponded with Wilson about the possibility of Wilson being assigned to the Naval War College, 139; in 1969 arranged for Wilson to be assigned to the staff of Commander in Chief Naval Forces Europe, 153; asked Wilson to check on conditions in Morocco, 159; in 1970 arranged to assign Captain Louis Eske as Sixth Fleet medical officer, 163; negotiations in the early 1970s with Wilson to transfer him from London to Washington, 174

Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

During World War II was the site of midshipman training for young men in the V-12 officer program, 5-10

Nuclear Weapons

Discussion in the late 1960s at the Naval War College about U.S. nuclear strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, 145

Okinawa

In 1965 served as a way station for Marines and Navy medical personnel en route to Vietnam, 72-73

Olongapo, Philippines

The town became raunchy in the period around 1960, after the U.S. Navy gave up control of it, 48

O'Neil, Rear Admiral Warren H., USN (USNA, 1945)

In the mid-1970s was in command of the large naval complex at Great Lakes, Illinois, 206, 211, 228

Parsons, Captain William Seavey, USN (USNA, 1928)

In 1945, right after the conclusion of World War II, commanded Transport Division 103 in the Western Pacific, 27

Pay and Allowances

Pay of \$50.00 per month in the early 1940s for seamen training to be officers through the V-12 program, 3, 9-10; before the ship's serviceman rating was created enlisted men who worked as tailors received extra pay, 4; the Navy has to pay bonuses to retain medical officers on active duty, 203-204

Pendleton, Camp

See: Camp Pendleton, Oceanside, California

Penn, Commander Buddie Joe, USN

In 1974 was part of an Inspector General team that went to the Great Lakes Naval Hospital to investigate problems with a racial awareness seminar facilitator, 210

Perloff, Lieutenant Milton M., USNR

Officer who had shipboard duty in World War II and then taught in the midshipman school at Northwestern University, 5-6

Persian Gulf

See: Gulf War; Iran; Kuwait

Philippine Islands

In December 1944 a kamikaze suicide plane inflicted heavy damage on the high-speed transport Liddle (APD-60), which was involved in the Battle of Ormoc Bay, 12-13; condition of Subic Bay in 1945, 18; in April 1945 the ships of Transport Division 103 put ashore Army troops during an amphibious assault at Legaspi, 18-20; further 1945 amphibious operations, 21, 24; in 1959-61 the small station hospital at Subic Bay handled a variety of medical problems, 48-58; in 1965-66 badly wounded men were evacuated from Vietnam to the Clark Air Force Base Hospital, 81, 85, 89-90, 93, 100, 107, 124-125; in the mid-1960s, the top medical officer for the Pacific Command, Rear Admiral John S. Cowan convened annual conferences with medical representatives from throughout the theater at Baguio to discuss the treatment of Vietnam War casualties, 123-124

Phillips, Captain George L., USN (USNA, 1925)

In the mid-1950s commanded Mine Squadron Three, which was based in Sasebo, Japan, 43-44

Planning

In the mid-1960s the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BuMed) made plans to build new naval hospitals in several locations, 64-65; Sixth fleet medical planning enabled it to have necessary offshore resources in October 1983 when terrorists bombed the Marine barracks at Beirut, Lebanon, 164, 168; work of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in the early 1970s in planning for the design, construction, and upgrading of naval hospitals, 175-183, 187-188; response of BuMed when Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara introduced the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System in the early 1960s, 197; attempts in the late 1970s to get the BuMed and the rest of Navy medicine into the Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System, 232-233; the fleet hospital program began in 1976 and progressed from there as a means of planning and developing transportable field hospital facilities that could be set up when and where needed, 234-251

Quinn, Captain James J., MC, USN

Served in the late 1970s in the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery and kept the Surgeon General, Vice Admiral Willard Arentzen, well informed, 230-231, 269

Racial Issues

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the Great Lakes Naval Training Center experienced unpleasant racial incidents, 206; in the early 1970s the CNO, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, pushed racial awareness training through UPWARD seminars, 207-216

Radar

In 1944 was considered to be highly classified at the naval training center in Miami, Florida, 10-11; in 1945 the junior officers on board the high-speed transport Liddle (APD-60) were inexperienced in the use of radar, 15-16

Rockets

In 1945 U.S. LCI(R)s were used for shore bombardment during amphibious assaults in Borneo, 23

San Diego Naval Hospital

In the early 1960s treated a variety of patients, including retired senior officers, 58-62

San Francisco, California

In early 1945 the Matson shipyard in San Francisco repaired battle damage to the high-speed transport Liddle (APD-60), 12-14; during World War II it was a bustling city, particularly on the waterfront, 16

Sasebo, Japan

In the early 1950s served as a support base for U.S. Navy ships operating in the Far East, 43-44

Scotia, New York, Naval Supply Depot

In 1946, right after World War II, had huge stocks of a wide variety of shipboard equipment and parts, 34-37; postwar changes, 37

Scotland

In the early 1970s U.S. Navy personnel attended a “Save the Children Ball” at Thurso, 165; Holy Loch was the base for ballistic missile submarines, 168

Seabees

In October 1965 the Viet Cong attacked the Seabee compound at Danang, South Vietnam, 79-80; supervised the framing of hospital tents at Danang, 87; in the early 1970s built a pontoon barge to support a U.S. Navy medical facility in Bolivia, 183-184; in the early 1980s provided support for the fleet hospital program to develop transportable medical facilities, 244, 248-249

Seaton, Vice Admiral Lewis H., MC, USN

From 1983 to 1987 served as the Navy’s Surgeon General, 259, 266-267, 272-273; career background, 259

Shore Bombardment

In 1945 U.S. LCI(R)s fired rockets ashore during amphibious assaults in Borneo, 23

Sixth Fleet, U.S.

Involvement in September 1970 in the Jordanian crisis in the eastern Mediterranean, 162; in 1970 Wilson suggested the fleet staff needed a more senior medical officer than a lieutenant and started a process by which BuMed supplied a captain, 162-164; Sixth fleet medical planning enabled it to have necessary offshore resources in October 1983 when terrorists bombed the Marine barracks at Beirut, Lebanon, 164, 168; operations in the early 1970s involved political tensions, 167-168; in the early 1970s, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, the Chief of Naval Operations, strongly pushed to have U.S. Navy ships home-ported in Greece, 170-171

Skelly, Lieutenant Robert S., MSC, USN

Officer who in the mid-1960s was aggressive in supporting the Third Medical Battalion at Danang, South Vietnam, 94-95

Small, Admiral William N., USN (USNA, 1948)

In the early 1980s, as Vice Chief of Naval Operations, had a role in reorganizing the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery as the Naval Medical Command after perceiving a number of shortcomings, 272-273

Soviet Union

In 1969, after graduating from Sophia University in Tokyo, Geoffrey Wilson traveled to the United States via the Soviet Union, including a trip on the trans-Siberian Railroad, 141-142; discussion in the late 1960s at the Naval War College about U.S. nuclear strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, 145

Sparks, Captain Henry A., MC, USN

In the early 1970s was in charge of the U.S. Navy medical research unit in Egypt, 155-156

Stein, Colonel Ignatius J., MC, USAF

Air force doctor who performed valuable service in the mid-1960s when wounded men from Vietnam arrived in the Philippines for further treatment, 85

Stoecklein, Captain Herbert, MC, USN

In 1965, as detailee for BuMed, arranged for Wilson to serve a year in Vietnam, then go to the naval hospital in Yokosuka, Japan, 70

Strange, Captain Robert E., MC, USN

In 1974, as psychiatric consultant to the Surgeon General, went to Great Lakes Naval Hospital to investigate a problem with a racial awareness instructor, 210-211

Subic Bay, Philippines

Condition of in March 1945, shortly after being captured from the Japanese, 18; construction of an airstrip in the 1950s at Cubi Point, 18; in 1959-61 the small station hospital handled a variety of medical problems, 48-58

Swope, Captain John P., MC, USN (USNA, 1958)

In the early 1980s took over as head of the fleet hospital program to develop transportable medical facilities, 248

Third Medical Battalion, Third Marine Division

See: Vietnam War

Tientsin, China

Multinational atmosphere in the city in late 1945, right after World War II ended, 31-32

Tower, Senator John G.

Was involved in a congressional investigation following the October 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, 273-274

Training

During World War II, young men received education and Navy officer training through the V-12 program, 2-10; antisubmarine training during World War II at Key West and Miami, Florida, 10-12; mid-1960s training exercises at Camp Pendleton

provided useful background for Wilson and Navy hospital corpsmen before they headed to Vietnam, 70-71; training of Navy doctors to be effective managers, 200; in the early 1970s the CNO, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, pushed racial awareness training through UPWARD seminars, 207-216; in the mid-1970s Wilson went to a “charm school” for newly selected rear admirals, 229-230

Transport Division 103

Composition of during the latter part of World War II, 17-18; in April 1945 the ships of the division conducted an amphibious landing at Legaspi in the Philippines, 18-20; further 1945 amphibious operations in the Philippines and Borneo, 22-25

Turco, Lieutenant Commander Ronald F., MSC, USN

In the mid-1970s became involved with the fleet hospital program to develop transportable medical facilities, 234

Turner, Vice Admiral Stansfield, USN (USNA, 1947)

In the early 1970s, as president of the Naval War College, made the curriculum much more demanding than it had been, 148

Uganda

In 1971 Wilson and his wife visited during a safari trip in East Africa and had to escape after dictator Idi Amin seized power in a coup d'état, 166-167

Union College, Schenectady, New York

Wilson's studies there in the early 1940s, 1-4; after World War II Wilson returned to the college to complete his degree and attend medical school, 37-38; huge influx of returning veterans as students after the war, 38

United States, SS

Mothballed commercial passenger liner that was considered around 1980 for possible conversion to a Navy hospital ship, 253-254

UPWARD Seminars

Program in the early 1970s through which the CNO, Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, pushed racial awareness training, 207-216

V-12 Program

During World War II, young men received education and Navy officer training through this program, 2-10

Venereal Disease

Treatment of in the 1959-61 period at the naval hospital at Subic Bay in the Philippines, 56

Vietnam War

Early U.S. involvement included a Marine Corps landing in March 1965 at Danang, 69-70; 1965 training exercises at Camp Pendleton provided useful background for Navy medical personnel on the way to Vietnam, 70-71; in 1965 Okinawa served as a way station for Marines en route to Vietnam, 72-73; as the Third Medical Battalion was established in 1965 near Danang, it was short of needed supplies, 72-73, 76, 84-86, 119-120; description of the Third Marine Division headquarters and affiliated facilities at Danang, 73-76; in 1965-66 the Third Medical Battalion at Danang treated combat casualties and the usual assortment of illnesses and injuries, 76-121; October 1965 Viet Cong attack on Danang, 79-80, 86-87; badly wounded men were delivered from Vietnam to medical facilities in other countries, 81, 85, 89-90, 106, 124-125; helicopters were used for the evacuation of combat wounded within Vietnam and the delivery of medical teams, 81-83, 89, 98-99, 103-104, 108; in December 1965 U.S. Marines launched an offensive operation called Harvest Moon, 87-89, 91, 98-99; Viet Cong use of land mines, 100-101, 111; provision for handling the bodies of Marines killed in Vietnam, 107; rest and recreation facilities, 111; role of psychiatrists in dealing with young Marines who have been in combat, 114-116; those serving in Vietnam itself often had little information about the war as a whole, 116-117; in the mid-1960s, the top medical officer for the Pacific Command, Rear Admiral John S. Cowan convened annual conferences with medical representatives from throughout the theater to discuss the treatment of Vietnam War casualties, 123-124; the Yokosuka Naval Hospital expanded its capacity greatly in the mid-1960s to handle casualties from the Vietnam War, 124-130; a number of Marine Corps gunnery sergeants who were promoted to platoon leaders suffered ulcers because of the additional stress, 130-131

Walt, Lieutenant General Lewis W., USMC

As commanding general of the III Marine Amphibious Force in the mid-1960s was concerned about the welfare of his Marines fighting in Vietnam, 84, 91-94; personal characteristics, 93-94; weekly meetings with battalion commanders, 116

Weather

Shortly after World War II ended the high-speed transport Liddle (APD-60) was buffeted by typhoons in the Western Pacific, 28-31

Weinberger, Caspar W.

As Secretary of Defense, testified before Congress in the wake of the October 1983 bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, 274

Wendt, Admiral Waldemar F. A., USN (USNA, 1933)

Positive assessment of this admiral who served from 1968 to 1971 as Commander in Chief Naval Forces Europe, 153, 160-161; involved in the command's social events, 161; supported Wilson's initiatives in various areas, 162-163; had to make adjustments to civilian life in 1971, when he retired from active duty, 170

White, Commander Robert L., MSC, USN

In the mid-1970s developed a computer program to predict casualties in the event of combat, 235

Wilson, Rear Admiral Almon C., MC, USN (Ret.)

Boyhood in the 1920s and 1930s in upstate New York, 1-2; parents of, 1-2; siblings of, 1; education of, 1-4, 37-39, 137-138; reserve officer training through the V-12 program resulted in a commission in 1944, 2-10; in 1944-45 took antisubmarine training at Miami and Key West, Florida, 10-12; served as a junior officer in 1945-46 on board the high-speed transport Liddle (APD-60), 12-34; wife of, 12, 14-15, 35, 38, 67-68, 70-71, 137-140, 142, 149, 154, 161, 165, 167, 173-174, 194, 276, 280; worked at Ellis Hospital in Schenectady, New York, when he was a college student, 15; served for a few months in 1946 at the Naval Supply Depot, Scotia, New York, 34-37; returned to civilian life in 1946 and finished his undergraduate studies, 37-38; son Geoffrey, 38, 48, 67, 70-71, 140-142, 154, 280; in 1952 completed his degree from Albany Medical College, 38-39; internship in 1952-53 at the Bremerton Naval Hospital, 39-40; service in 1953-54 as medical officer for Mine Squadron Three in the Far East, 40-46; in the late 1950s worked in a Veterans Administration hospital in Utah, 46-47; served from 1959 to 1961 as a surgeon at the naval hospital at Subic Bay in the Philippines, 48-58; augmentation into the regular Navy, 58; surgery duty from 1961 to 1964 at the San Diego Naval Hospital, 58-62; served in 1964-65 as a surgeon at the Chelsea Naval Hospital near Boston, 63-69; service in 1965-66 as commanding officer of the Third Medical Battalion, the facility in Danang that served Marines fighting in the Vietnam War, 69-121; provided post-tour briefings following his return from Vietnam, 122-124; served from 1966 to 1968 as chief of surgery at the naval hospital in Yokosuka, Japan, 124-141; attendance in 1968-69 as a student at the Naval War College, 142-154; in the late 1960s earned a master's degree from George Washington University, 147-149; from 1969 to 1971 served in London as medical officer on the staff of Commander in Chief Naval Forces Europe, 153-174; in 1971-74 served as deputy director and then director of the BuMed planning division in Washington, 175-188, 195-205; additional duty in 1972-74 as personal physician to Admiral Thomas Moorer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 189-195; in 1974-76 commanded the naval hospital at Great Lakes, Illinois, 205-229; in the summer of 1976 was selected for flag rank, 217-218; served 1976-79 as assistant chief for material resources in BuMed, 229-244; in the early 1980s ran the fleet hospital program to develop transportable medical facilities, 244-259; in 1982-84 served as head of the BuMed resources division and deputy to the Surgeon General, 259; activities following retirement in 1984 from active naval service, 275-280; grandsons, 280

Wonsan, North Korea

In late 1950 was the site of U.S. minesweeping and an amphibious landing, 40

Wulfman, Captain William A., MC, USN

In the mid-1960s served in Vietnam as medical officer for the III Marine Amphibious Force, 84-85

Wygant, Captain Benyaurd B., USN (Ret.) (USNA, 1901)

During World War II, as commanding officer of the V-12 midshipman school at Northwestern University, provided sound lessons in leadership, 9

Yokosuka, Japan, Naval Hospital

Expanded its capacity greatly in the mid-1960s to handle casualties from the Vietnam War and also treated patients with other medical problems, 124-136; initiated a facility for treating burn patients, but the result was disappointing, 131-132; in the mid-1960s established an intensive care unit, 133; Japanese employees of, 135-136, 138-139

Yokota, Japan, Air Force Base

In the mid-1960s Vietnam wounded were staged through the airbase at Yokota, then to the naval hospital at Yokosuka, 125-127

Zimble, Vice Admiral James A., MC, USN

Did a fine job from 1987 to 1991 while serving as the Navy's Surgeon General, 273; conducted an investigation about the medical aspects connected with the bombing of the Marine barracks at Beirut, Lebanon, in October 1983, 275

Zumwalt, Admiral Elmo R., Jr., USN (USNA, 1943)

In the early 1970s, as Chief of Naval Operations, strongly pushed to have U.S. Navy ships home-ported in Greece, 170-171; did not follow the chain of command in various personnel initiatives, 172, 215-216; was involved in programs to support South American navies, 186; in the mid-1970s his gatekeeper tried to prevent the Surgeon General, Vice Admiral Donald Custis, from seeing Zumwalt, 201-202; in the early 1970s, as CNO, pushed racial awareness training through UPWARD seminars, 207-216