

Finding Aid to The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr.

Overview of the Collection

Repository:	The HistoryMakers®1900 S. Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60616 info@thehistorymakers.com www.thehistorymakers.com
Creator:	Thompson, Robert Edward, 1923-
Title:	The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr.,
Dates:	May 10, 2022
Bulk Dates:	2022
Physical Description:	6 uncompressed MOV digital video files (2:50:25).
Abstract:	Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson, Sr., (1923 -) served aboard the USCG Sea Cloud during World War II, the U.S. military's first racially integrated warship since the Civil War. Thompson was interviewed by The HistoryMakers® on May 10, 2022, in Washington, District of Columbia. This collection is comprised of the original video footage of the interview.
Identification:	A2022_050
Language:	The interview and records are in English.

Biographical Note by The HistoryMakers®

Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson, Sr., was born on February 20, 1923 in Uniontown, Pennsylvania to Annie Thompson-Angel and Matthew Thompson. He graduated from Cardozo High School in Washington, D.C. in 1942.

After graduating from high school, Thompson enlisted in the United States Coast Guard in Baltimore, Maryland and completed his boot camp training at the U.S. Coast Guard training station in Manhattan Beach, Brooklyn, New York. After serving on shore patrol in Brooklyn and Boston, Thompson received sonar technician training at the Naval Submarine Base in New London, Connecticut and the U.S. Navy Sonar Training Facility in Key West, Florida. Thompson then was stationed aboard the USCG *Sea Cloud*, a former private yacht repurposed to patrol a one-hundred square mile area between Boston and Maine to generate weather reports for the First Naval District. With the addition of his crew, which included *HistoryMaker* Jacob Lawrence, and under the command of Lieutenant Carlton Skinner, the USCG *Sea Cloud* became the U.S. military's first racially integrated warship since the Civil War. After his time on the USCG *Sea Cloud*, Thompson served ashore in Boston, New York and California. In 1945, Thompson was honorably discharged from the United States Coast Guard and began working for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and General Services Administration. In civilian life, he also worked for the Department of State and the Washington Metropolitan Police Department in Washington D.C.

Thompson joined the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary in 2000 and is a member of Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 24-09.

Thompson lives in Washington, D.C. He has three sons, Robert Thompson II, Eric Thompson, and Gerald Thompson.

Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson, Sr., was interviewed by *The HistoryMakers* on May 10, 2022.

Scope and Content

This life oral history interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr. was conducted by Larry Crowe on May 10, 2022, in Washington, District of Columbia, and was recorded on 6 uncompressed MOV digital video files. Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson, Sr., (1923 -) served aboard the USCG Sea Cloud during World War II, the U.S. military's first racially integrated warship since the Civil War.

Restrictions

Restrictions on Access

Restrictions may be applied on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of The HistoryMakers®.

Restrictions on Use

All use of materials and use credits must be pre-approved by The HistoryMakers®. Appropriate credit must be given. Copyright is held by The HistoryMakers®.

Related Material

Information about the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview, as well as correspondence with the interview subject is stored electronically both on The HistoryMakers® server and in two databases maintained by The HistoryMakers®, though this information is not included in this finding aid.

Controlled Access Terms

This interview collection is indexed under the following controlled access subject terms.

Persons:

Thompson, Robert Edward, 1923-

Crowe, Larry (Interviewer)

Hickey, Matthew (Videographer)

Subjects:

African Americans--Interviews

Thompson, Robert Edward, 1923---Interviews

Organizations:

HistoryMakers® (Video oral history collection)

The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection

United States. Coast Guard

Occupations:

Sonar Technician

HistoryMakers® Category:

MilitaryMakers

Administrative Information

Custodial History

Interview footage was recorded by The HistoryMakers®. All rights to the interview have been transferred to The HistoryMakers® by the interview subject through a signed interview release form. Signed interview release forms have been deposited with Jenner & Block, LLP, Chicago.

Preferred Citation

The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History Interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr., May 10, 2022. The HistoryMakers® African American Video Oral History Collection, 1900 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Processing Information

This interview collection was processed and encoded on 5/30/2023 by The HistoryMakers® staff. The finding aid was created adhering to the following standards: DACS, AACR2, and the Oral History Cataloging Manual (Matters 1995).

Other Finding Aid

A Microsoft Access contact database and a FileMaker Pro tracking database, both maintained by The HistoryMakers®, keep track of the administrative functions involved in scheduling, researching, and producing the interview.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I: Original Interview Footage

Video Oral History Interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr., Section A2022_050_001_001, TRT: 1:28:51 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr., Section A2022_050_001_002, TRT: 2:31:27 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr., Section A2022_050_001_003, TRT: 3:29:11 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr., Section A2022_050_001_004, TRT: 4:27:56 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr., Section A2022_050_001_005, TRT: 5:41:44 ?

Video Oral History Interview with Sonarman 3rd Class Robert E. Thompson Sr., Section A2022_050_001_006, TRT: 6:11:16 ?