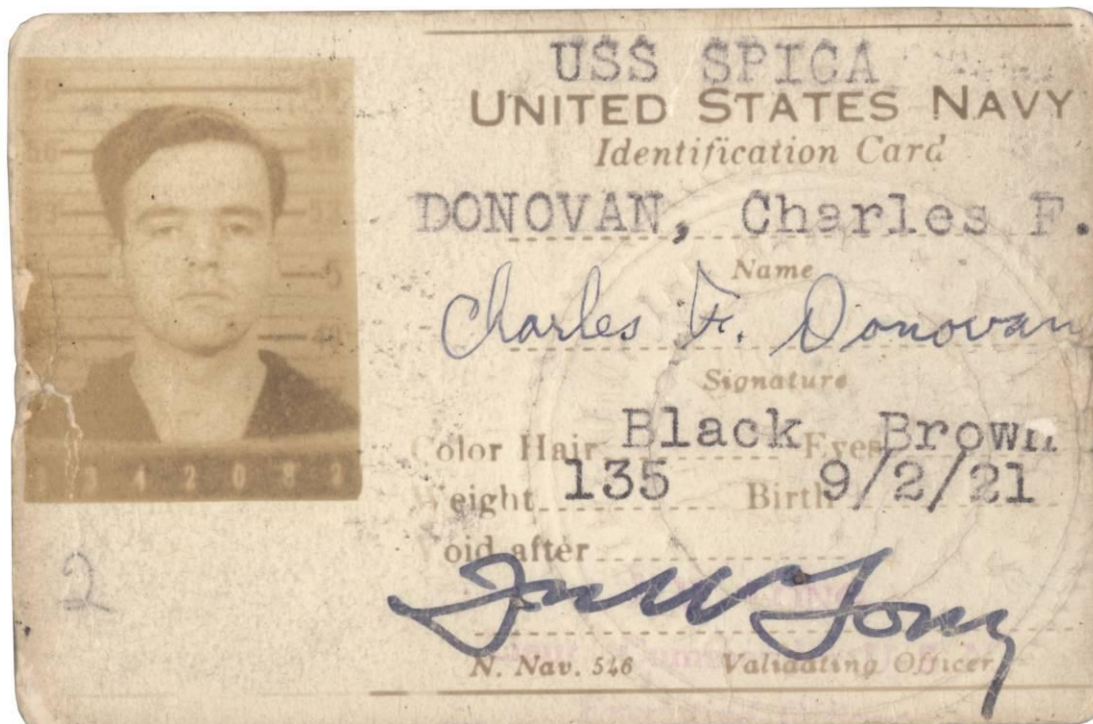


Janis Kozlowski: I'd like to start off in finding out exactly how you got involved in World War II – what were you doing when the war broke out, and what was your thinking at the time about the whole thing?

Charles Donovan: Well, I ... let's see, when I enlisted in the Navy in 1939, before the war ... I enlisted in October of 1939 before the war. And I went to Newport, Rhode Island – did boot camp there. And then during my tour there, I heard about, well, I eventually heard about the war – later on, of course. But, I went from there - from Newport, Rhode Island - I went to the Brooklyn Navy Yard after I graduated from the training center. And after the Brooklyn Navy Yard was assigned to the USS Spica – [which] was a cargo carrier. And ... we had to re-commission the ship, because it was in mothballs. And we did the whole thing - we chipped the paint all off, and scraped it all off. And when we got it all off, we lead it, and then put the battleship gray paint on it. We re-commissioned it. And our first tour was to run cargo down to San Juan, Puerto Rico and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.



U.S. Navy service from 1939-1945. Courtesy Charles Donovan

Janis Kozlowski: What kind of cargo did you ship down there?

Charles Donovan: Well, regular cargo for the naval bases – lumber and supplies, food stuffs, and can goods, and everything that was needed at the stations ... at the bases.

Janis Kozlowski: Was it still peace time then?

Charles Donovan: Oh, yes, yes – 1940.

Janis Kozlowski: OK.