

Arthur Patcke *interviewed by Ed Metzler*
#1194

Ed Metzler: This is Ed Metzler, and today is the fourth of September, 2004. I'm located in San Antonio, Texas, and I'm interviewing Mr. Arthur Patcke. This interview is for the National Museum of the Pacific War. Let me start out, Arthur, by thanking you for spending the time to share your experiences with us. I'd like to go back to the beginning. Tell me where you were born and something about your family, etc.

Arthur Patcke: I was born in Chicago on July 13, 1927. My parents were John and Helen Patcke. I went to high school at the **Lane Technical High School** in Chicago. Ah...

EM: How many brothers and sisters?

AP: No brothers and sisters, I'm the only child. Ah...

EM: So where were you when you first heard about Pearl Harbor?

AP: Oh, I was just a youngster.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: This was in '41. Lets see, I had to be how old? Twenty-seven, three, ten, what, eleven years old, or so. And it was a big deal because I remember the newsboys going down the street selling extra copies, extra copies of newspapers. And that's when we heard of it. And of course, it was a surprise and a shock to me, but being eleven years old, you don't realize really what it meant. And, but, ah, as I grew older, why, it took on more of a meaning, and, ah, something I wanted to do. In fact, I wanted to enlist early, but my folks wouldn't let me.

EM: They wouldn't let the eleven-year old go to war, huh?

AP: No, ha, ha! No, this was a little further on in age, you know, maybe when I pushing sixteen or seventeen, when you needed parental consent.

EM: So, but how did the war, when it started, change your life and your family's life?

AP: Oh, it disrupted it some. It completely, you know, the aspirations I had changed. I wanted to go, and I concentrated on that, and, ah... So, as a result, I was eager to go, and then, when the opportunity presented itself, why, I was there. But I had to wait for a draft notice.

EM: Yep. So, how old were you, then, when you got the draft notice?

AP: Well, I had just turned eighteen. And they called me up, and I went through the physical for the Army and everything.

EM: So, what year was that?

AP: That had to be 1945.

EM: Okay, so...

AP: Toward the end of the year. September, as I recall.

EM: Okay, so, the war was just about... World War II was just about over, there.

AP: Well, the ironic part about this, is I got my draft notice of VJ-Day. As the mailman rang the doorbell, my mother went to the door, and he said to her, lady he says, how lucky can you be? Praise the Lord. Ha ha!

EM: They say timing is everything.

AP: Amen, amen. So, anyway, I went down to the, to the draft board, I went through the _____ of all of this, you know. Then, when I was called, when I had to report, I went down to the depot in Chicago. It was on Plymouth Court, and they lined us all up and says, we need some recruits for the Navy. So, I had a friend, my best friend was in the Navy, so I says, I'll go, you know. So he said, well go home and report to the Navy depot tomorrow. The next day I went down there, they lined us up, and he says, count off in twos. And whatever number I was, I was in the Marine Corp. Ha ha!

EM: So that's how you got in the Marines.

AP: Yeah.

EM: Okay.

AP: Yeah. Was drafted it. And so, ah, I don't know if we left from there or not, but it was shortly after that, we just went down to Parris Island, and had a great time.

EM: Oh, boot camp was a great time, was it?

AP: Ha ha! Oh yeah. Not really. I was a skinny kid then, and I lost fourteen pounds.

EM: So tell me what that was like.

AP: Well, I had somewhat of an idea 'cause I spent four years in ROTC. So, I was a little bit ahead of the, the group, you know. Not much, but a little. And so, it was, to me it was terrific. You know, I bitched and moaned, but I didn't mind it. And, so the things we went through, you know. The DI asking, do you love me? You know, ha ha. You give a no sir! And they'd march you through, through the latrine canal, you know, and all this.

Ha! And, ah, but, we had, we had four DIs, I think, during this period. It was eight month, eight week period. And, ah, we had...

EM: Just to be clear, DI?

AP: Drill Instructor.

EM: Alright. Just want to make sure. The person who types this up will not know DI means.

AP: Oh, I see. So, one of 'em was Indian. Stood about six foot six. And he had one expression on his face, and that was stone. He was happy or sad, it was one expression.

EM: American Indian?

AP: American Indian. Yeah, and you heard the scuttlebutt about him, you know, the things he did on Iwo and, ah, they'd, ah, find dead Japs in the foxholes at night, you know, the next day, and just stamped to death. Anyway, I don't know if it was true, or false, but knowing this guy and seeing him, I tend to think that he was able to do it, you know? So, that, that was interesting. We had one drill instructor who was a hell of a nice guy, and I think he was on the verge of a Section Eight, and, ah...

EM: As in nervous breakdown.

AP: Yeah, yeah, and, ah, but he was a hell of a nice guy. And didn't bother us too much. So, we learned the things, you know, and...

EM: So, then, after training camp, then what?

AP: We were shipped immediately overseas....

EM: So you went....

AP: ... to China

EM: ... to what? Troop train to San Diego or...?

AP: No, no, no. We went to the East Coast, to **Norfolk** .

EM: You went to the East Coast?

AP: Yeah. We went to the East Coast. I guess it was **Norfolk** we took, we took off from.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: And just went directly overseas.

EM: So, where did you land, then?

AP: Well, we went to, we stopped at Pearl Harbor for rations.

EM: So, you went down through the canal?

AP: Yeah. We went through the, ah, the Panama Canal, and then in.... We got to Pearl Harbor, I think it must have been about the twenty-second of December, 'cause I remember we took off a few days later, and it was probably on Christmas Eve. And we spent Christmas Day at sea, just out of Pearl Harbor, you know, and singing *White Christmas* and all that good stuff, you know. Tears rolling down the cheeks. Ha!

EM: Homesick already.

AP: Yeah. Ha! _____ anyplace though. So we did that, and...

EM: So, what was this? Just a troop carrier...?

AP: This was the- yeah- I'm pretty sure, it was the *Wakefield*.

EM: Okay.

AP: I know the *Wakefield* was in there and the *Breckenridge* was in there. And I think I came back on the *Breckenridge*. And, ah...

EM: Now, had you been assigned to a unit, a squadron, a division, or anything at this point yet?

AP: Not that I was aware of.

EM: Okay.

AP: We still used our, our, our, ah, basic training _____, you know.

EM: Right. So you're still general draft type.

AP: Yeah, yeah.

EM: Okay. Keep going.

AP: And, well, after we left Pearl Harbor, we continued on. And the interesting part of the trip was that we got into the China Sea, and there were huge storms. And they locked the whole ship up- everybody had to stay below, you know? And, ah, the, ah, bow of the ship would go down into the water, and the screws come up. Ha!

EM: Were you troubled with seasickness during...?

AP: No. not at all.

EM: You were one of the fortunate.

AP: No, not at all. I loved every bit of it. But the screws came out of the water? Those ships would shake, you know? Until they got back down in the water again. And then the bow would come up, and balance of the ship would change, and they'd go down into the water again. Ha! It's not that bad.

EM: So this would be like what we call a typhoon, then? These storms?

AP: Well, it was pretty bad. Those things were, I bet, a hundred feet high, those waves, you know. The whole front of the ship would just go down into the water, then shoot up again, you know. So anyway, I enjoyed every minute of it.

EM: Well. That's good.

AP: Well, anyway, we got to, ah, **Tsingtao**. And the ship could not enter the harbor. The draft was too great, and so then they latched a barge onto the ship, from our ship to a landing craft. And, ah, I don't know, we had to put on our overcoats with a field pack, a rifle, a duffle bag, and, ah, a sleeping roll. And the seas were rolling. I'm afraid that the hierarchy there made a little mistake there, 'cause....

EM: Because the pack probably weighed as much as you did.

AP: Just about. And the, some guys were injured because they'd step on to that, that, um, barge, and it would be rising and falling with the waves, you know, and they'd fall and bang themselves up. Anyway, we finally got on there, and, ah, got to our, to the trucks, and they took us out to where we were going to stay. We went to an artillery battalion company, artillery, and so that was alright.

EM: So, you had been assigned, then, to that company at this point, or...?

AP: Yeah, well, I guess I was. I didn't know it yet, see.

EM: You never know. You're the last guy to find out, it seems like.

AP: Yeah. Ha! So I was, I was put in the HNS company, and then **the old souls would indoctrinate us**, you know. And, we hadn't had any liquor all this time, **you know, all eighteen years old**, you know. The guys went out for Chinese vodka. That stuff is terrible, you know. I got sicker than a dog. So, anyway, I was put in the HNS, in the communications. And we had pretty good duty 'cause we had... I was on the switchboard watch. And we were on for six hours and off for twenty-four. So that was good duty. And half of the time I spent in HNS. Then the fur hit the fan, and I got put in sea battery.

EM: So tell, tell me what the HNS stands for then?

AP: Headquarters in Service.

EM: Good.

AP: Headquarters in Service company.

EM: Okay, keep going.

AP: And then I got put into **Charlie** company. And in communications, yeah. But being an artillery company, we had, um, we had, let's see, six, we had ten one-oh-fives, howitzers, the smaller gun. And our company had the fourth one. There were three companies, each had three, and we had one extra, four. That wasn't too bad. But then, we were issued, five 155 mms, and our captain volunteered for all of them. Ha! I'm still looking for 'em. We had nine guns, then. You know, and five were a 105. And even though I was in communications, we still had to spend time cleaning those guns. And, it was a pain in the butt. So...

EM: You knew every square inch of those guns.

AP: Just about, yeah. In addition to that, we- you don't have to clean 'em everyday- but we, the guy I was teamed up with was **Red Manner** from Lansing, Michigan. And, I, we still did our duties with the, with the communications, only it was different now. It wasn't switchboard, it was radio monitor and jeeps. And so we had to see that the jeeps were maintained and runnable, you know, and useable, and the radios worked. And so we'd test them every so often, you know, and do that. So, that wasn't so bad. Ah, we did have one scare, and that was the Communists were attempting to take over the airport. And, we were called....

EM: This is at **Tsingtao**.

AP: **Tsingtao**, yeah. And we were called out, and we were standing by, and it was about two in the morning when they called the whole thing off, and decided to send a tank battalion or tank company out there. And so they called the whole thing off. That's as close as I came to combat.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: Ha! In fact, just prior to that, I was at the hotel downtown for communications and radio classes. And we, we learned how to string wire, you know, for telephones, and everything. Climb poles and all this. Well, we never finished, because this incident occurred, and so everybody at the school was dismissed, cancelled, and everybody was sent back to their units.

EM: Now, what, roughly, what date is, are we talking about here? I mean, not exactly, but just...

AP: Oh, we got to be talking about the middle of '46.

EM: Okay.

AP: The middle of '46. Somewhere in through there.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: And, then, we were sent back. That killed the school. I never went back to it. And, ah, basically, we did what we were assigned to do with the jeeps and occasionally cleaning the guns and everything, you know. And so, it was alright. And, well, my, ah, my mother visited with the ladies down the block. And one lady had a son on a Destroyer Escort that had the mail run between Shanghai, Tsingtao, and Taku. Taku was the harbor for Beijing, Peking at the time. And so she wrote me, and she told me that Eddie was on this Destroyer Escort. So I called the Harbor Master and found out when the ship would be in, you know. And so, he came in, and he says he's gonna be here on such and such a day, so I got liberty, and I went out to visit him. Well, he was, had something to do with the heating unit, the power unit on the, on the DE. Probably was diesel driven, you know, because he had to clean this stuff up, you know, as soon as the boat docked and they shut the engine down. And so I went up to see him, it was about ten in the morning. He had just got through working all night, see, dirty, never took a shower, just got in the bunk. And so I went to see Eddie, and I said Eddie wake up, you know. And he raised his head, and he looked at me and he looked at me, he went back to sleep. Ha ha!

EM: Now, did he actually know you?

AP: Oh sure.

EM: So, okay.

AP: We played together...

EM: Back in the old days

AP: Sure, we were... we played...

EM: Down the block.

AP: ...we played ball and everything.

EM: You clearly didn't impress him too much.

AP: No, not too much...

EM: Especially since he'd been working all night...

AP: ...So, I shook him again, and oh my God, he jumped out of the sack, you know. It was a great experience, so. And then we came home. And that's when, we went, we picked up a contingency, our contingency at **Tsingtao**. Went up to Taku, picked up another contingency. We were a day or two out, then they asked us, they asked for volunteers to work on the ship's newspaper, you know. And I don't know him, but this kid from the East Coast, **Tom Macanough**, I think his name was, and we were strangers, but we got together, we were sitting on the same place, you know. He said, let's go down and volunteer. I said, I don't know nothing about writing, I said. But let's see what they have. So, we went down, they said, we need **mnemographers**. And he said, you know how to turn a crank? I says, yeah. So we became **mnemographers**. And then we distributed the paper, you know, that was written. And I got copies of it yet, and I keep forgetting to bring 'em. We just moved, and so I don't know where all of this stuff is yet, so, I hope to bring it.

EM: Good.

AP: And, so, uh, we did that. And then, shortly after we left Taku, ah, a Marine from Taku, from Beijing, um, died of encephalitis. And I guess we didn't know too much about it then, because it was pretty dangerous stuff, you know. And everybody was concerned, because as soon as he died, they buried him. You know, just buried him at sea. And we took part in that, you know, then of course we came home. And, ah, I was fortunate to this degree, and I'm not really sure about the technicalities of it. But if you were discharged under fifty weeks, under fifty-two weeks, the military had the right to call you back. Now, I don't know how true that is, but, I put in fifty weeks, that's all, and... But a friend of mine, who was in the Army, they did the same thing to. Fifty weeks, discharged him. Now, he was called back during the Korean situation, and he put in two years. Now, I feel the reason I was not called back is because at that time the Corp was up to six divisions. And I think by law, we're only allowed three divisions. So they didn't need me. So I was fortunate in that respect.

EM: So, they drew the line somewhere, and, ah...

AP: Yeah.

EM: ... you didn't have to go back.

AP: Yeah, yeah. So I, I was fortunate in that.

EM: Let's go back to when you were in China, in **Tsingtao**. Tell me about the housing situation. Where did you stay? I mean, did they have special barracks for you? What, what was the arrangement?

AP: We were stationed, we were billeted in the German Stables, where the Germans had horses. Ha! We cleaned it up, it was clean there when we got there. It was already in good, good shape, you know.

EM: So what were the Germans doing in China?

AP: Well, I guess this goes back to the time of the Boxer Rebellion. But, I don't know, it was in the late '30s or something? And, ah, so, there were several countries there, you know.

EM: They had their own spheres of influence there.

AP: That's right.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: Yeah. And, I guess this movie, *the Sand Pebbles* had a little...

EM: Great movie.

AP: Yeah, yeah. Had something to do with it, when the, when the various countries had contingencies, and they were up the Yangtze, and the Boxer Rebellion, you know, ended. And then they got relief in time, so contingency... I don't know who, what country, maybe Marines came up, you know and got 'em out all, you know, got 'em out safely.

EM: Right.

AP: So...

EM: So tell me about the German, ah, horse stables.

AP: Ha! Well, well they weren't too bad. We had two heaters, and we had a rather large room. And I don't know...

EM: So this is a big wooden building or what?

AP: Yeah, it's a, it's a long, like a barn. Except for horses, you know, they had a long stables, you know. And, ah, they still had the feeding troughs there, and we just painted them over, you know, and so it looked alright. Ha!

EM: You didn't have to eat your food out of those troughs, did you?

AP: Oh no, no. Heavens no.

EM: Ha!

AP: And then of course, you had, we had about one, oh, I'm guessing two, four, six, eight, we had probably had fifteen guys in the room there. We had two stoves, you know, and you'd heat 'em with wood, or oil. I think we had oil, kerosene, you know. And, ah...

EM: So, where'd you eat your meals? I mean, did they have a separate mess facility?

AP: Oh, they had a separate mess for that, yeah. Yeah.

EM: So, how many guys would you say total? How many Marines were there on site with you? I mean, how many folks are we talking about?

AP: You're talking about a company of men.

EM: Okay.

AP: And I don't know, fifteen, ten, ah. Geez, I should know this off the top of my head.

EM: Oh, I mean just roughly.

AP: Well, I'm, I'm saying, ah, a platoon, ah, one, two, three, four, ten, thirty, probably a hundred.

EM: Okay. So let's go through, now, which Marines were you in?

AP: I was in the Fifteenth Marines...

EM: Okay.

AP: ... which was an artillery battalion, I think. Shows you how I... I'm not well versed on all of these. And they were at that time part of the Sixth Marine Division.

EM: That's what I was looking...

AP: And, I had people contradict me and say, no, that isn't true.

EM: **Charlie** company.

AP: **Charlie** company. First HNS and then **Charlie** company. And then, um, it appears to me that we brought the colors, the flag for the Sixth Marine Division back with us when we came to the states. And people disagree with me there, but it appeared to me that that's what we did. I was eighteen years old, you know, that was the furthest thing from my mind.

EM: Probably didn't care, I know.

AP: Ha ha! But, anyway, ah, they say we brought 'em back. Now there is a Sixth Marine battalion, I think, some smaller unit...

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: ... that's, that still remains the Sixth Marine Division. In fact, I have a member of the Sixth Marine Division, and they're also slowly dying, because there's no division anymore. Ha ha! So...

EM: So, you were in this stables, and, ah, were you in town, or was this on the outskirts?

AP: No, this was on the outskirts of town.

EM: Okay. Tell me about the town. What is a Chinese port town look like? We're on the coast, right?

AP: Yeah, but this was a big city, this was a city.

EM: Big city, there.

AP: Big city, yeah. The hotel that we went to for instruction was an international luxury hotel on the China Sea. And they had very up-to-date appointments in it. But of course, the military was at it, and they tore 'em up. You know, they had bidets in there. And, um, it was a, it was a very exclusive hotel, but now it was a military and it...

EM: That changes it.

AP: ... a kind of different character. Completely. And, ah, but the city... It appears to me that the population was about three and a half million.

EM: So, it was huge.

AP: It's a big city, yeah. They had a great big beautiful Catholic cathedral there. Which I visited, and enjoyed participating in the, ah, in the services some. And so, we did that, and we were warned against eating any food out, you know.

EM: Really?

AP: And, I took 'em for their word. I believed them. But old **Red Manner**, he had to have an egg sandwich one night. Got sicker than a dog.

EM: He paid for that, did he?

AP: Oh, did he pay for it. But we had an enlistments club downtown, and so we could visit that and get food there. Hamburgers and stuff like that, you know.

EM: So what about your interactions with the Chinese people themselves? Tell me about that, I mean, were you able to communicate? Did they seem to be friendly?

AP: Well, yeah, they seemed to be friendly. Except, well, we resurrected them, you know, we helped get the Japs out. And then of course the Communists and the Nationalists were fighting, see. The Communists were the people at the airport that we were supposed to go and round out. But it seemed to me they took that pretty nonchalantly, because you'd, on weekends, you'd see both armies in town celebrating.

EM: Really?

AP: Yeah. It would appear that way. And, then Monday morning everybody would go back to the lines again.

EM: So, this was a nine to five war, huh?

AP: Something like that. But it, they really weren't out to, you know, they didn't have their whole heart in it.

EM: How interesting.

AP: You know, it, it was amazing, you know. And of course, the situation developed where the Communists just took over, you know, wherever they got their help from.

EM: Did you have any interactions with Nationalist troops?

AP: No, not at all. Not at all. We had... The other thing is the guard duty. One of the first posts I was on was a vacant warehouse building. And, you know, I was hoping at least for a clip of ammunition I could put into that one. But no, no ammunition at all. All we had was a bayonet. And that also was true for the, ah, for the ammo dumps that we had. We had it on a, there were dumps on the mountain. And they had a spiral road going all the way up to the top. And along the spiral road, they dug revetments in there, and they would stack ammunition and then cover it with tarp, you know. We also were on these without ammunition, see. So we had no ammunition at all. I guess they didn't trust us. Ha! So...

EM: Well, they were probably trying to avoid an incident that could occur by accident.

AP: Accidents, yeah that's right.

EM: Because sometimes that happens. So tell me some more about your interactions with the Chinese themselves. I mean, did you go into town? Did you shop at any of their shops?

AP: Oh yes.

EM: Did you go to their bars?

AP: I, I came back with several items, you know? Are you going to be at the ball tonight?

EM: No.

AP: But I came back with jewelry, and some of its very nice. Ah, I sent my aunt a jacket, a three-quarter length jacket, blue. In fact, my wife is going to wear it as part of her costume tonight.

EM: Nice. Did you have American money when you were over there?

AP: Ah, yeah, it appears to me we did use American money. Now, I don't know for the more expensive items, I might have used American money. But you know, you can get a rickshaw into town for ten cents, you know. And we were mad at the sailors, because they came in and they didn't have a lot of time to spend, so they would pay higher prices. Then we had to pay the higher prices too. So...

EM: Inflation.

AP: Inflation. Ha! But what you got with, ah... I lost my train of thought. But anyway, we could get by with a dime...

EM: A little bit of money went a long way.

AP: ... fifteen. Yeah. Except for these items, you know. And I don't know what I paid for them anymore. Bought like a ring that's, ah, that's in good shape and some broaches and things like that. They had pretty nice craftsmen.

EM: What about your officers that, you know, your commanders. Did you see much of them? Were they good guys? Were they...?

AP: As an eighteen year old, I didn't give a darn toot. The guy I interacted with was the corporal and the sergeant, you know, and the buck sergeant. And, but for the most part, they were pretty reasonable people.

EM: And what about the food? Was it...?

AP: Ha! No...

EM: I take that as a...

AP: As a no.

EM: as a negative comment?

AP: Yeah, it wasn't the best. So, you know... While we were in, on the switchboard, you know, we had, there were a couple of old salts there, you know. And they were, had an in with the sergeant in charge of the mess, you know. And so, on certain nights, we would get a, get the flat cake, you know, the pancakes, just for our contingency. We had maybe, I don't know, sixteen, eighteen guys in there, see. And then, somewhere they would appropriate a sixteen millimeter camera, and we'd shoot films you know, right in our own room. We didn't have to sit out in the open. Ha!

EM: You were special.

AP: Yeah, we were. That was, that was nice duty, you know. And, ah...

EM: What about communications home? I mean, and you mentioned, um, I guess mail, there's the normal mail, and was that the main way you stayed in contact with ah...?

AP: Well, you know, I, I'm not too much of a writer, but I would write home occasionally, you know, and...

EM: It seems to me like a communications expert like you would be in a lot of communication.

AP: Ha ha! It would appear so, but I'm not a writer, so I didn't write often. And, but, occasionally, you know, short letters. And so, and it was good receiving letters, you know from...

EM: So, when you think back on that fifty, or fifty or so weeks, what's the funniest thing that you can think of that happened to you? Or the most humorous that comes to mind? If anything.

AP: I don't know. I, I did a lot of complaining but I'll tell ya, down deep in my heart I didn't mind it at all. I kinda liked it.

EM: Why did you like it?

AP: Well, it was strange, and it was something that impressed me as our landing craft hit the dock, and that here we are, a nation, and we're coming into a foreign country, and we've got everybody doing our bidding for us. They were carrying our luggage, they were doing this, they were cleaning our rooms, they were doing our laundry, and you know, it's like a **poorhouse** coming into a situation, and...

EM: So how did you feel about that?

AP: It was a mixed, mixed emotions, you know. It, to a degree it felt good, but then you look at all the poverty around you. God almighty, I'll tell you, it was bad. And see the Chinese taking food out of the rubbish bin. And this is what they were eating, you know.

And you know, that was a little frightening too. Made you, made you really feel bad about it.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: That people had to live in those conditions. And it was just like a great big old nation coming into another one. But they're doing pretty good now, I guess.

EM: Yeah, I think they've made a lot of progress.

AP: Oh yeah, yeah.

EM: Did they seem to respect the Americans and the Marines?

AP: As long as you had money, you know.

EM: So, money talks.

AP: Yeah, yeah. And, you talk about the Communists, well, there's one thing that this guy Ho Chi Min did, and that was straighten them out, you know.

EM: _____ think so.

AP: Right. Ha ha! I'll say so.

EM: They all found alike.

AP: I... ha ha! And they, they changed so many things, you know. They would use the wrong kind of fertilizer for gardening, you know, human waste. And, so from that aspect, the communists did a good job. Well, I guess it's still not like freedom.

EM: What's the most troubling thing that happened to you or that you saw when you were there? You know, the thing that...

AP: Well, basically, the poverty, the extreme poverty. And they say, and I don't know, I don't think I experienced it, but if someone is injured by accident or something, and you help them, that you're responsible for 'em. You know, and I don't know if this is a wife's tale, or something.

EM: This is kind of an eastern, Chinese vision of how things are, then?

AP: Yeah. Yeah. Then there was an accident I, I know he witnessed, ah, a fellow had a donkey cart, and somebody ran into him, and ran one of the shafts into his abdomen or chest or something, you know. And I just envision somebody trying to help him, or nobody helping him because they'd be responsible for them for the rest of their life. Now this may be an old wife's tale, or something, but, ah, that's part of it.

EM: That system kind of inhibits people from helping others, then...

AP: Yeah, oh yeah.

EM: because then you're responsible.

AP: That's right. You take on the responsibility for looking after that person, so... Ah, I don't know humorous things.

EM: So, when you, ah, while you're thinking about that, when you came back after this... okay, so here's a, you know, young American, young man, never seen much of the world. All of the sudden, you're overseas in this foreign country, for almost a year, seeing all these things, how did it change you? How were you different when you came back to the US?

AP: Well, you're aware of the fact that there are countries that, where people live in a different way than we do. And, unfortunately, in conditions that are far below our standards of living. And, but still, you have people who are artisans there. That stuff I brought home was, some of it was just beautiful, you know. And what the rest of the population is, is, or a good part of it, aren't living in poverty, you know. And, uh, they still have the opportunity to do something about it, but I don't know, maybe we ought to get some Americans, some businessmen in there.

EM: Well, I think they are doing some of that.

AP: But they've got them. They're doing it, yeah. And, ah...

EM: Have you, have you been back to the Far East since then?

AP: No, I wanted to go, and there was a military travel agent who....

EM: I heard about that.

AP: yeah, who put, ah, who put a trip together, or at least advertised for it, and I subscribed to it, but it never took place because they just didn't have enough people to go. And, so, but, yeah, I'd like to go back. And, I may, if he's not going, I may go back with a civilian group, you know.

EM: It would be interesting to see how much has changed...

AP: Oh yeah.

EM: ... and how much progress they have made.

AP: Yeah, yeah. Trouble is, the military was going back to the various posts for the Corp, you know, and I don't know if I could get back. I think I would have to find a contingency that went to, um, to **Tsingtao**.

EM: Yeah, who knows if its one the, the normal tourist path...

AP: Yeah.

EM: ... that they permit.

AP: Normally it wouldn't be, because I've been checking them.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: And so they go to Beijing and then to Shanghai, and on the...

EM: Forbidden City.

AP: Yeah. And the Great Wall, and...

EM: Did you ever get into Beijing, or Peking, while you were there?

AP: No. I was, I was just there at, just at **Tsingtao**.

EM: Mmm hmm. Well, what else can you mention to us of your experiences while you were over there?

AP: Nothing great happened.

EM: One always thinks of these things after we turn...

AP: I know.

EM: ...the recorder off, so I'm, I'm giving you that one last blank page to fill in here.

AP: Well, I, I just don't know. I made some good friends there, uh, **Ray Fisher**. I've been trying to find him, but I couldn't. **Red Manner**, the fellow that I, ah, I, ah, met. We had things in common. We were interested in flying and aviation. We went out to the Air Wing, and we said, look, we'll re-up for four years if we get to transfer to the Air Wing. The guy says, sorry fellas. He says...

EM: We're all full.

AP: We're full, we're going down to **strength**.

EM: Sure.

AP: Now, one thing happened, I just remembered I was hiring a man down in Texas here. A fellow by the name of **Al Mannis**. And we were chatting, and I was asking questions, where his military service... He was in **Tsingtao**, in the Air Wing, as a fighter pilot, the same time I was.

EM: So...

AP: I hired him. Ha!

EM: Right away.

AP: Right away. Ha!

EM: Bound to be a good man.

AP: Amen.

EM: Small world.

AP: Yeah.

EM: And are you still in contact with some of these buddies that you?

AP: No. Can't find them. Al had passed on. But he worked for me, you know, so we were in touch for several years. And, ah, and I just, this fellow Eddie...

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP:that was on the DE. I was looking in the obituaries and I found his name, his last name. His brother had passed away. And I read the obituary, and the names of his brothers and sister were listed there, so I figured it had to be him. And this is on the day before I left to come out here. So I call the funeral parlor, and left my name and address for him to call me. So maybe I'll have a call back.

EM: So maybe you'll have a contact here.

AP: That's right.

EM: That's good.

AP: And, ah, after all these years. Since '46, I haven't seen him, you know.

EM: That would be good.

AP: Yeah.

EM: Okay.

AP: Ah, geez, I don't know.

EM: Well, that's fine. I think this is, ah, you're the only guy I've talked to that's stayed in the German horse, ah....

AP: Yeah.

EM: ... ah, barn.

AP: Now, let me mention, there is a lady in Woodstock, Illinois whose last name in **Avang**. Her husband, who is now deceased, was in the Marine Corp in China. And she's written several books. And, ah, I don't know if you'd be interested in what she wrote, or ah, but I remember part of the article, 'cause she was written up in the local newspaper.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: Her husband went over on one of the ships that I had gone over on, the *Breckenridge* or the *Wakefield*...

EM: *Wakefield*.

AP: ... yeah.

EM: Mmm hmm.

AP: Or the *Wakefield*. So, uh, I don't if you'd be interested in hearing from her?

EM: Well, yeah, I'd like to, I'd be interested in the reference. And let me, ah, let me look it up and, ah, I can pursue it on the internet...

AP: Okay.

EM: ...and get in contact.

AP: **Avang**.

EM: Okay.

AP: Um.

EM: Well good. I'll get that after we finish the interview here.

AP: Okay.

EM: But, ah, so anyhow. What else comes to mind? You still haven't got that humorous event yet, huh? That's good, it...

AP: Oh, ha ha! I don't know, this isn't too humorous, but ah...

EM: Well, you're laughing.

AP: Ha! Well, 'cause I was made a sap of. This is on me.

EM: Well, let's hear it.

AP: Uh, I, I met somebody who was going to, and I forget what I was trading him for, but I traded him for two cans, my contribution was two can of peaches or something, I forget what it was. And, so, I was sucker enough to give it to 'em on the supposition that he was going to return the, that he was going to give me something in return. I forget what it was. I never saw him again. Ha!

EM: So this is a, this is a another Marine, or was this a Chinese...?

AP: No, this was a Chinese.

EM: Well... so he, he took advantage of the wide eyes, then, huh? Ha!

AP: Ha ha!

EM: Ha ha! Oh my gosh.

AP: So, ah...

EM: Well, Arthur, thank you for spending the time with us today. I appreciate it.

AP: Well you're entirely welcome.

EM: And, ah...

AP: I enjoyed reminiscing about these old things.

EM: Yeah. It was an interesting period, and I know certainly we've learned a lot about what happened to the Marines in China. And your comments and contribution are well appreciated, so...

AP: You are entirely welcome.

EM: Thank you.

AP: Yes.

TAPE ENDS.